STEADFAST LITERAL BIBLE

STUDY EDITION

Complete Bible

Andrew Dominguez
Trinfinity Enterprises

Steadfast Literal Bible: Study Edition

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andrew@trinfinityenterprises.com

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How to Use This Study Bible

The Bible text

The Scripture is the Steadfast Literal Bible, a word-for-word translation from the Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek. Words in bold italic were added in English to make the sense clear; they are not in the original. Many names are given in their familiar English form, with the Hebrew or Greek form in parentheses the first time the name appears in a chapter.

Book introductions

Each book opens with an introduction: its title, author and date, background and setting, themes, where it points to Christ, the hard passages, and an outline. The outline headings appear again in the Bible text, so you always know where you are in the book.

Study notes

The notes at the foot of each page explain the verses on that page. Each note begins with the chapter and verse in bold and the words it explains in italics. The notes come from my verse-by-verse Bible studies, tightened to fit beside the text. Where good Bible teachers hold different views, the notes say so plainly and tell you where I stand.

Cross-references

The band between the text and the notes lists other passages that speak to the same subject, quote the verse, or are quoted by it. Each line begins with the verse in bold.

Abbreviations

Bible books in the notes and cross-references are shortened, for example Gen for Genesis, Judg for Judges, Matt for Matthew and 1 Thess for 1 Thessalonians. B.C. means before Christ. A.D. means in the year of our Lord.

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GENESIS

Introduction

Title

Genesis is the first book of the Bible and the first of the five books of Moses, often called the Law or the Torah. The name Genesis comes from a Greek word meaning origin or beginning. The Hebrew title is the book's first word, which means "in the beginning" (1:1). Genesis is the book of beginnings. It tells where the world came from, where we came from, how sin entered the world, and how God began His plan to save us. Every major teaching of the Bible starts here.

Moses marked the parts of the book with a repeated heading, "These are the generations of" (2:4; 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10; 11:27; 25:12; 25:19; 36:1; 36:9; 37:2). Each one opens a new part of the story. Because Esau's heading appears twice, the count is sometimes given as ten and sometimes as eleven.

Author and Date

Genesis does not name its author, but Jewish and Christian tradition have long held that Moses wrote it, along with the next four books. Jesus spoke of the Law as the writings of Moses (Luke 24:44; John 5:46-47). Moses was not alive for the events of Genesis, so he would have used records and accounts handed down from earlier generations, guided by the Holy Spirit. Many modern scholars believe Genesis was put together from several sources long after Moses, and they point to a few later notes in the text, such as place names updated for later readers (14:14). I hold that Moses wrote it, and that a few of those notes may have been added by later scribes.

Moses wrote during Israel's forty years in the wilderness. Many conservative scholars place the exodus about 1446 B.C. (1 Kgs 6:1), which dates Genesis to about 1445 to 1405 B.C. Others place the exodus in the 1200s B.C.

Background and Setting

Genesis was written to the people of Israel, newly brought out of Egypt and headed for Canaan. Before they could understand the Law, they needed to know who their God was, where the world came from, why it is broken, and why God chose Abraham's family and was giving them the land of Canaan.

The book runs from creation to the death of Joseph in Egypt, about 1805 B.C. Scripture does not give a date for creation, and I won't try to set one. Adding up the ages Genesis gives, the call of Abraham to the death of Joseph covers about 285 years. The story moves from Eden and Babel in the land of the Tigris and Euphrates, to Ur and Haran, into Canaan where Abraham, Isaac and Jacob lived as sojourners, and finally down to Egypt, where Jacob's family settled in Goshen.

Genesis is history, written as history, and the rest of the Bible treats it that way. Jesus spoke of Adam and Eve, Abel, Noah, Abraham and Lot as real people (Matt 19:4-6; Luke 11:51; 17:26-32; John 8:56), and Paul built his teaching on sin and salvation on Adam and Abraham (Rom 4; 5:12-19). These notes take Moses at his word.

A note on the names of God: "LORD" in capital letters stands for God's personal name, Yahweh, which He made known to Moses (Exod 3:14-15). "Lord" in regular letters translates a word meaning master. "God" usually translates Elohim, the general Hebrew word for God. Genesis uses all of these.

Themes

Genesis falls into two parts. Chapters 1 to 11 cover the whole human race: creation, the fall, the first murder, the flood and the tower of Babel. Chapters 12 to 50 slow down and follow one family: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph.

God is the Creator of all things, and He made everything good. Man was made in His image (1:26-27), and sin came into the world through man's disobedience. Right after the fall, in the middle of judgment, God promised a seed of the woman who would crush the serpent's head (3:15). The rest of the book follows that promise through Seth, Noah, Shem and Abraham.

At the center of the book is God's covenant with Abraham. God promised him a land, a great nation, and a blessing: "in you all the families of the earth will be blessed" (12:3). Abraham "believed in the LORD, and He counted it to him as righteousness" (15:6), and that is still how God saves. God alone passed between the pieces (15:17), so the covenant rests on His faithfulness, and He has never broken it. I believe the land promise still stands and God still has a future for Israel.

Again and again God chooses the younger and the unlikely: Abel, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, Joseph, Ephraim. His blessings come by grace, not by birth or merit. And through every family failure, God rules over human choices for His good purpose. Joseph sums up the book: "you planned evil against me; God planned it for good" (50:20).

Christ in Genesis

Jesus is the promised seed of the woman who crushes the serpent's head (3:15), born of a woman (Gal 4:4). He is the seed of Abraham through whom all nations are blessed: "And to your seed," who is Christ (Gal 3:16). Melchizedek, king of Salem and priest of God Most High, points to Christ, a priest forever (14:18-20; Ps 110:4; Heb 7). On Mount Moriah, Abraham told Isaac, "God will see to the lamb for Himself" (22:8), and many see in the father offering his only son a picture of God giving His Son. Jacob foretold that the scepter would not depart from Judah (49:10), and Jesus is "the Lion who is of the tribe of Judah" (Rev 5:5). Many also see in Joseph a picture of Christ: loved by his father, rejected by his brothers, raised from the pit to the throne, and then the savior of the very men who sold him.

Hard Passages

How long were the days of creation (1:1-31)? I take them as six ordinary days. The notes also name the day-age, framework and gap views held by other Christians. They give no age for the earth.

Who were the sons of God (6:2)? Some say fallen angels, others the godly line of Seth, others powerful rulers. The notes give the views fairly without taking a hard side.

Was the flood worldwide (7:19)? I believe it covered the whole earth, as the text says. The notes name the local flood view and its best argument.

What of the children who died in the flood and at Sodom? Genesis does not answer every question, but the Judge of all the

earth will do right (18:25). I believe little children who die are safe with God.

Does the curse on Canaan (9:25) fall on a race? No. It fell on Canaan, not on any race, and using it to defend slavery or racism was wrong.

Several chapters record terrible sins: Sodom (19:1-11), Lot and his daughters (19:30-38), the defiling of Dinah and the revenge of her brothers (34), Judah and Tamar (38). Genesis records them without approving them, and the notes handle them with care.

Why did God tell Abraham to offer Isaac (22:2)? It was a one-time test of faith. God stopped Abraham's hand, and He later forbade child sacrifice. God never asks anyone to harm a child.

Outline

I. Creation (1:1-2:25)
- A. The six days of creation (1:1-31)
- B. The seventh day (2:1-3)
- C. The man and the woman in the garden (2:4-25)

II. The Fall and Its Results (3:1-5:32)
- A. The fall (3:1-24)
- B. Cain and Abel (4:1-26)
- C. From Adam to Noah (5:1-32)

III. The Flood (6:1-9:29)
- A. Wickedness and the ark (6:1-22)
- B. The flood (7:1-8:22)
- C. God's covenant with Noah (9:1-17)
- D. Noah's sons (9:18-29)

IV. The Nations and Babel (10:1-11:32)
- A. The table of nations (10:1-32)
- B. The tower of Babel (11:1-9)
- C. From Shem to Abram (11:10-32)

V. Abraham (12:1-25:18)
- A. The call of Abram (12:1-20)
- B. Abram and Lot (13:1-14:24)
- C. God's covenant with Abram (15:1-17:27)
- D. Sodom and Gomorrah (18:1-19:38)
- E. Abraham and Abimelech (20:1-18)
- F. Isaac born, Ishmael sent away (21:1-34)
- G. The testing of Abraham (22:1-24)
- H. Sarah's death and a bride for Isaac (23:1-24:67)
- I. The death of Abraham and the line of Ishmael (25:1-18)

VI. Isaac (25:19-26:35)
- A. Jacob and Esau born; the birthright sold (25:19-34)
- B. Isaac among the Philistines (26:1-35)

VII. Jacob (27:1-36:43)
- A. The stolen blessing (27:1-28:9)
- B. Jacob's dream at Bethel (28:10-22)
- C. Jacob and Laban (29:1-31:55)
- D. Jacob wrestles with God and meets Esau (32:1-33:20)
- E. Dinah and Shechem (34:1-31)
- F. Return to Bethel (35:1-29)
- G. The descendants of Esau (36:1-43)

VIII. Joseph (37:1-50:26)
- A. Joseph sold into Egypt (37:1-36)
- B. Judah and Tamar (38:1-30)
- C. Joseph in Potiphar's house and in prison (39:1-40:23)
- D. Joseph rules in Egypt (41:1-57)
- E. The brothers come to Egypt (42:1-44:34)
- F. Joseph makes himself known (45:1-28)
- G. Israel settles in Egypt (46:1-47:31)
- H. Jacob blesses his sons (48:1-49:33)
- I. The deaths of Jacob and Joseph (50:1-26)

GENESIS

GENESIS 1

The Creation of the World

1 In ***the*** beginning God created the heavens and the earth. **2** And the earth was formlessness and emptiness, and darkness ***was*** over the face of ***the*** deep, and the Spirit of God ***was*** hovering over the face of the waters. **3** And God said, "Let ***there*** be light," and ***there*** was light. **4** And God saw the light, that ***it was*** good; and God separated between the light and the darkness. **5** And God called the light "Day," and the darkness He called "Night." And ***there*** was evening and ***there*** was morning, day one. **6** And God said, "Let ***there*** be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it be separating between waters and waters." **7** And God made the expanse, and He separated between the waters which ***were*** under the expanse and the waters which ***were*** above the expanse. And it was so. **8** And God called the expanse "Heavens." And ***there*** was evening and ***there*** was morning, a second day. **9** And God said, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered to one place, and let the dry land be seen." And it was so. **10** And God called the dry land "Earth," and the gathering of the waters He called "Seas." And God saw that ***it was*** good. **11** And God said, "Let the earth sprout vegetation, plant seeding seed, fruit tree making fruit according to its kind, whose seed ***is*** in it, on the earth." And it was so. **12** And the earth brought forth vegetation, plant seeding seed according to its kind, and tree making fruit whose seed ***is*** in it according to its kind. And God saw that ***it was*** good. **13** And ***there*** was evening and ***there*** was morning, a third day.

Lights, Sea Creatures, Birds and Animals

14 And God said, "Let ***there*** be luminaries in the expanse of the heavens to separate between the day and the night, and they shall be for signs and for appointed times and for days and years, **15** and they shall be for luminaries in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth." And it was so. **16** And God made the two great luminaries, the great luminary for the rule of the day and the small luminary for the rule of the night, and the stars. **17** And God set them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, **18** and to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate between the light and the darkness. And God saw that ***it was*** good. **19** And ***there*** was evening and ***there*** was morning, a fourth day. **20** And God said, "Let the waters swarm ***with*** swarms of living beings, and let flying things fly over the earth on the face of the expanse of the heavens." **21** And God created the great monsters and every living being that moves, ***with*** which the waters swarmed, according to their kind, and every winged flying thing according to its kind.

1:1 Heb 11:3; John 1:1; Isa 45:18
1:2 Jer 4:23; Ps 104:30; Isa 45:18
1:3 2 Cor 4:6; Heb 11:3; John 1:5,9
1:4 Eccl 2:13; Gen 1:10,12,18,25,31; Eccl 11:7
1:5 Ps 74:16; Ps 104:20; Isa 45:7
1:6 2 Pet 3:5; Jer 51:15; Ps 104:2
1:7 Ps 148:4; Prov 8:28,29; Job 26:8
1:8 Gen 1:5,10; Gen 5:2
1:9 2 Pet 3:5; Ps 95:5; Jer 5:22
1:10 Gen 1:4; Deut 32:4; Ps 104:31
1:11 Matt 7:16; Matt 7:17; Matt 7:18
1:12 Isa 61:11; Mark 4:28; Isa 55:10,11
1:13 Mark 14:30
1:14 Luke 21:25; Mark 13:24; Acts 2:19
1:15 James 1:17
1:16 Rev 16:9; Ps 8:3; Deut 4:19
1:17 Acts 13:47; Gen 9:13; Job 38:12
1:18 Jer 31:35; Ps 19:6
1:20 Gen 2:19; Ps 104:24,25; Ps 148:10
1:21 Matt 12:40; Ps 104:24-26; Gen 6:20

1:1 *In the beginning God* The Bible does not argue for God. It starts with Him. He was there before the beginning, and He is the reason there is a beginning at all. You are not an accident. The world was made on purpose by Someone who had a purpose for it.
1:1 *God* The Hebrew word is Elohim. It is plural in form, but the verb "created" is singular. Many Christians see here an early hint of what the rest of Scripture makes clear: one God who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. John 1:1-3 says the Word was there in the beginning and all things came into being through Him.
1:1 *created the heavens and the earth* The Hebrew word for "created" is used in the Bible only for God's work. People make things out of what already exists. God brought the universe into being out of nothing (Heb 11:3). "The heavens and the earth" means everything that exists.
1:2 *formlessness and emptiness* The earth had no shape yet and nothing living on it. In days one to three God gives the world form, and in days four to six He fills it. God takes what is empty and dark and makes it full and good. He still does that in human lives.
1:2 *the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters* "Hovering" pictures a bird over its nest, the same word used in Deuteronomy 32:11. The Holy Spirit was there at creation, ready to bring order and life.
1:3 *And God said* Ten times in this chapter God speaks, and each time it happens. He does not wrestle with the material. He speaks, and the universe obeys (Ps 33:6).
1:3 *Let there be light* Light comes first, even before the sun (1:14-16). God Himself is the source of light, and the city to come needs no sun because God is its light (Rev 21:23; 22:5).
1:5 *there was evening and there was morning, day one* The day is counted from evening, which is still how the Jewish day begins. In the ancient world, to name something showed authority over it, and God names the day and the night.
1:7 *the waters which were above the expanse* The "expanse" is the sky. We are not told exactly what the waters above were. Some think of clouds and water in the air, others of a different arrangement of the world before the flood. The main point is plain: God divided one mass of water and made room for the sky. Day two is the only day not called good, since the dividing of the waters is finished on day three.
1:11 *according to its kind* The phrase appears here for the first time and repeats all through the chapter. God built order into living things. Plants produce plants like themselves. Life comes from life, and all of it comes from God.
1:14 *for signs and for appointed times and for days and years* The lights have jobs. Israel's feasts would later be set by the moon and the sun.
1:16 *the great luminary for the rule of the day and the small luminary for the rule of the night* Genesis does not even use the names sun and moon. The nations around Israel worshiped them as gods. Genesis puts them in their place: lamps God hung in the sky. "And the stars" is almost an aside. If the sky is God's handiwork, look to the One who made the stars, not to the stars (Isa 40:26).
1:21 *the great monsters* The huge creatures of the sea. Whatever the people of that day feared in the deep, God made it, and it answers to Him.

And God saw that ***it was*** good. **22** And God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let the flying things multiply on the earth." **23** And ***there*** was evening and ***there*** was morning, a fifth day. **24** And God said, "Let the earth bring forth living beings according to their kind: livestock and moving things and living things of the earth according to their kind." And it was so. **25** And God made the living things of the earth according to their kind, and the livestock according to their kind, and every moving thing of the ground according to its kind. And God saw that ***it was*** good.

God Creates Mankind

26 And God said, "Let Us make mankind in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the flying things of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every moving thing that moves on the earth." **27** And God created mankind in His image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. **28** And God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the flying things of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth." **29** And God said, "Look, I have given to you every plant seeding seed that ***is*** on the face of all the earth, and every tree in which ***is*** the fruit of a tree seeding seed; to you it shall be for food. **30** And to every living thing of the earth and to every flying thing of the heavens and to everything that moves on the earth in which ***is*** a living being, every green plant ***is*** for food." And it was so. **31** And God saw all that He had made, and look, ***it was*** very good. And ***there*** was evening and ***there*** was morning, the sixth day.

GENESIS 2

The Seventh Day

1 And the heavens and the earth were completed, and all their host. **2** And God completed on the seventh day His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. **3** And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because on it He rested from all His work which God had created to make.

The Man in the Garden

4 These ***are*** the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day ***that*** the LORD God made earth and heavens. **5** And no shrub of the field was yet on the earth, and no plant of the field had yet sprouted, for the LORD God had not caused ***it*** to rain on the earth, and there ***was*** no man to work the ground. **6** And a mist would go up from the earth and would water all the face of the ground.

1:22 Gen 8:17; Gen 1:28; Gen 9:1
1:24 Job 40:15; Ps 50:9,10; Gen 6:20
1:25 Gen 2:19,20; Job 12:8-10; Job 26:13
1:26 Col 3:10; James 3:9; Eph 4:24
1:27 Matt 19:4; Mark 10:6; 1 Cor 11:7
1:28 Matt 17:27; Gen 9:1,7; Lev 26:9
1:29 Gen 9:3; Ps 145:15,16; Ps 104:14,15,27,28
1:30 Ps 147:9; Ps 104:14; Ps 145:15,16
1:31 1 Tim 4:4; Mark 7:37; Ps 104:24,31
2:1 Acts 7:42; Heb 4:4; Ps 33:6,9
2:2 Heb 4:4; John 5:17; Exod 31:17
2:3 Heb 4:4; Heb 4:10; Heb 4:9
2:4 Gen 1:4; Gen 5:1; Gen 10:1
2:5 Gen 3:23; Ps 104:14; Heb 6:7

1:22 *And God blessed them* The first blessing in the Bible. A blessing is God's favor spoken over someone, usually with the power to make it happen. God wanted His world full of life.
1:26 *Let Us make mankind in Our image, according to Our likeness* The pace changes, as if God pauses before the crowning act of creation. Who is "Us"? Some say God speaks with the angels, but angels never create, and man bears God's image, not theirs. Others see a royal way of speaking. I believe, with many Christians through the centuries, that it is the first hint of the Trinity (compare 1:2; John 1:3).
1:26 *in Our image* Man was made to reflect God. We are not God, but we can think, love, choose, create, speak and know our Creator. No animal was made this way. That is why every human life has worth, young or old, strong or weak, born or unborn (9:6).
1:26 *let them have dominion* To rule the earth as God's representative, like a governor ruling a province for his king. It is a trust, not a license to abuse what He made. We will answer to the real King.
1:27 *male and female He created them* The verse is poetry in Hebrew, with "created" three times. Both the man and the woman bear God's image, and neither more than the other. Jesus quoted this verse when He taught about marriage (Matt 19:4). Adam and Eve were real people, and Jesus and Paul treated them that way (Rom 5:12-14). That dignity belongs to the person you like least, too.
1:28 *fill the earth and subdue it* Man is the one creature God speaks "to." Children are a blessing (Ps 127:3). To subdue the earth is to bring it under order: to farm it, build on it, care for it. Work was part of God's plan before sin. This creation mandate still stands. Sin made the job harder (3:17-19), but God never took it back.
1:29 *to you it shall be for food* Plants were given for food. Meat is not given until after the flood (9:3). Many who read Genesis this way believe there was no death among God's creatures before the fall.
1:31 *look, it was very good* Six times God called His work good. Now, with man and woman in place, it is "very good." No sin, no sickness, no death. The pain in the world today was not there at the start. Chapter 3 tells what went wrong.
1:31 *the sixth day* I believe these were ordinary days. Each has a number and an evening and a morning, and the Sabbath law points back to this week (Exod 20:11). Bible-believing Christians hold other views: the day-age view (long ages), the framework view (a literary pattern), and the gap view (a long time between verses 1 and 2). The Bible gives no date for creation, and I won't put a number on the age of the earth.
2:1 *the heavens and the earth were completed* Nothing was missing. God did not rest because He was tired, for He does not grow weary (Isa 40:28). He rested because the work was done. "Rested" is the root of the word Sabbath, which means to stop or cease.
2:3 *God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it* To sanctify is to set apart as holy. God later built this pattern into Israel's week (Exod 20:8-11). The seventh day alone has no closing evening and morning, and Hebrews 4:9-10 speaks of a rest that remains for God's people, entered by trusting Christ's finished work. We are not machines. Stopping to rest and worship is a way of trusting God to hold the world together.
2:4 *These are the generations of the heavens and the earth* This heading appears about eleven times in Genesis and marks each new section of the book, much like a chapter heading. Here it opens a closer look at the making of man.
2:4 *the LORD God* The first time we read this name. LORD in capitals stands for God's personal name, Yahweh. Chapter 1 shows the mighty Creator. Chapter 2 shows the same God coming close in a personal relationship with the people He made.
2:5 *there was no man to work the ground* No cultivated plants yet, and no rain. A mist watered the ground (2:6). The world was waiting for a gardener.

7 And the LORD God formed the man ***of*** dust from the
ground, and He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life,
and the man became a living being. **8** And the LORD God
planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and He put there the
man whom He had formed. **9** And the LORD God caused to
sprout from the ground every tree desirable in appearance
and good for food, and the tree of life in the midst of the gar-
den, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. **10** And a
river was going out from Eden to water the garden, and from
there it was divided and became four heads. **11** The name of
the one ***is*** Pishon; it ***is*** the one that goes around all the land
of Havilah (Chavila), where the gold ***is***. **12** And the gold of
that land ***is*** good; the bdellium and the onyx stone ***are*** there.
13 And the name of the second river ***is*** Gihon (Gichon); it ***is***
the one that goes around all the land of Cush (Kush). **14** And
the name of the third river ***is*** Tigris (Chideqel); it ***is*** the one
that goes east of Assyria (Ashur). And the fourth river, it ***is***
Euphrates (Perat). **15** And the LORD God took the man and
settled him in the garden of Eden to work it and to keep it.
16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "From
every tree of the garden you may surely eat; **17** and from the
tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat from
it; for in the day you eat from it you shall surely die."

The First Marriage

18 And the LORD God said, "***It is*** not good ***for*** the man to be
alone; I will make for him a helper corresponding to him."
19 And the LORD God formed from the ground every living
thing of the field and every flying thing of the heavens, and
He brought ***them*** to the man to see what he would call it; and
whatever the man called it, a living being, that ***was*** its name.
20 And the man called names for all the livestock and for the
flying things of the heavens and for every living thing of the
field; and for Adam he did not find a helper corresponding to
him. **21** And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on the
man, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs and closed up
flesh in its place. **22** And the LORD God built the rib which He
had taken from the man into a woman, and He brought her
to the man. **23** And the man said, "This ***one*** this time ***is*** bone
from my bones and flesh from my flesh; this ***one*** shall be
called 'Woman,' because from man this ***one*** was taken."
24 Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and
clings to his wife, and they become one flesh. **25** And they
were both of them naked, the man and his wife, and they

2:7 1 Cor 15:45; 1 Cor 15:47; John 20:22
2:8 Ezek 28:13; Gen 13:10; Joel 2:3
2:9 Rev 2:7; Rev 22:14; Rev 22:2
2:10 Ps 46:4; Rev 22:1
2:11 Gen 25:18; Gen 10:7,29; 1 Sam 15:7
2:12 Num 11:7; Exod 28:20; Exod 39:13
2:13 Gen 10:6; Isa 11:11
2:14 Rev 9:14; Dan 10:4; Gen 15:18
2:15 Eph 4:28; Gen 2:8; Ps 128:2
2:16 1 Sam 15:22; 1 Tim 6:17; Gen 2:9
2:17 1 Cor 15:22; Rom 5:12; James 1:15
2:18 1 Cor 11:9; Matt 19:10; 1 Cor 11:8
2:19 Gen 1:20-25; Gen 2:22,23; Gen 6:20
2:21 1 Cor 11:8; Gen 15:12; 1 Sam 26:12
2:22 1 Tim 2:13; Ps 127:1; Gen 2:19
2:23 Eph 5:30; Matt 19:5; 1 Cor 11:8,9
2:24 Matt 19:5; Mark 10:7-8; 1 Cor 6:16
2:25 Gen 3:7,10,11; Exod 32:25; Ps 25:3

2:7 *the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground* "Formed" is the word for a potter shaping clay (Jer 18:6). The Hebrew for man is adam, and ground is adamah. We are made of dirt, and that should keep us humble.
2:7 *He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life* No other creature receives life this way. Man is more than a body. Every breath you take is borrowed from the One who gave the first one. Paul compares Adam, the first man, with Jesus, the last Adam, who gives life (1 Cor 15:45).
2:8 *a garden in Eden* Eden likely means delight. God prepared a beautiful, fruitful home before He placed the man in it, and every tree was "desirable in appearance and good for food" (2:9). God cares about beauty as well as usefulness.
2:9 *the tree of life in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil* The tree of life appears again in the New Jerusalem (Rev 22:2). The other was the tree of testing. To eat from it was to decide for yourself what is good and evil instead of trusting God to define it. The rest of the Bible tells how we lost the first tree and how God, through Christ, opens it to us again.
2:10 *four heads* The Tigris and Euphrates are known rivers in what is now Iraq. The Pishon and Gihon, and the lands of Havilah and Cush, are hard to place. Many think Eden lay in Mesopotamia. I believe the flood changed the face of the earth so much that we cannot trace the garden today, and the later rivers may have been named after the earlier ones. What matters is that Eden was a real place.
2:12 *the bdellium and the onyx stone* Bdellium is a sweet-smelling resin. God filled the earth with treasures for man to find and use.
2:15 *to work it and to keep it* Work was part of paradise. To work is to serve the ground, and to keep is to guard it. The same two verbs describe the priests who served and guarded the tabernacle, Israel's worship tent (Num 3:7-8). Many see Eden as the first sanctuary and Adam as its first priest. Work done before God can be worship.
2:16 *From every tree of the garden you may surely eat* God's first words to the man are generous. Only one tree was off limits. God gives far more than He holds back.
2:17 *in the day you eat from it you shall surely die* Adam and Eve did not drop dead that day. I believe the warning came true two ways: that day they died spiritually, cut off from God and hiding in shame (3:8), and that day physical death began its work (3:19; 5:5). Death came into the world through sin (Rom 5:12). The one tree gave Adam a real choice to trust and obey freely.
2:18 *It is not good for the man to be alone* After "good" seven times in chapter 1, this is startling. Sin had not entered, yet something was not yet good. We were made for relationship.
2:18 *a helper corresponding to him* "Helper" does not mean someone less important. The same word is used of God, Israel's helper (Ps 33:20). It names a role, not a worth. "Corresponding to him" means like him and yet different, a partner who completes what is lacking.
2:19 *He brought them to the man to see what he would call it* Naming showed Adam's authority over the animals (1:28), and it took careful study.
2:20 *for Adam he did not find a helper corresponding to him* Every animal had a mate, and none was like him. God let Adam feel his need before He met it, so he would receive the gift with gratitude.
2:21 *He took one of his ribs* The word can also mean side. An old saying fits well: the woman was not taken from his head to rule him, nor his feet to be walked on, but from his side to stand with him.
2:22 *He brought her to the man* "Built" pictures God carefully making the woman. God Himself gave away the first bride. Marriage was God's idea from the beginning.
2:23 *This one this time is bone from my bones and flesh from my flesh* The first recorded human words in the Bible, and they are poetry. You can hear Adam's joy. Woman (ishah) and man (ish) sound alike in Hebrew. She shares his nature. They are equal in worth and made for each other, each with a distinct role.
2:24 *a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh* Moses draws the lesson for every marriage. Leaving: a new family begins. Clinging: holding fast, for marriage is a covenant, a binding promise before God. One flesh: the union of two whole lives, including the physical union. Jesus quoted this verse on divorce (Matt 19:4-6). God's pattern is one man and one woman for life, and Paul says it pictures Christ and His church (Eph 5:31-32).
2:25 *they were not ashamed* Nothing to hide from each other or from God. The first thing that happens after sin is that they know they are naked and cover themselves (3:7). Shame came with sin. God does not leave us there. He covers them (3:21), and in Christ He clothes us in righteousness (Isa 61:10).

were not ashamed.

GENESIS 3

The Serpent and the Fall

1 And the serpent was more shrewd than every living thing of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden'?" **2** And the woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; **3** and from the fruit of the tree which ***is*** in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it, and you shall not touch it, lest you die.'" **4** And the serpent said to the woman, "You shall not surely die. **5** For God knows that in the day you eat from it, your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." **6** And the woman saw that the tree ***was*** good for food, and that it ***was*** a delight to the eyes, and the tree ***was*** desirable to make ***one*** wise; and she took from its fruit and ate, and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate. **7** And the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they ***were*** naked; and they sewed together fig leaves and made for themselves loin coverings.

God Judges Sin and Promises a Savior

8 And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking about in the garden at the wind of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from before the LORD God among the trees of the garden. **9** And the LORD God called to the man and said to him, "Where ***are*** you?" **10** And he said, "I heard Your sound in the garden, and I was afraid because I ***was*** naked, and I hid myself." **11** And He said, "Who told you that you ***were*** naked? Have you eaten from the tree which I commanded you not to eat from?" **12** And the man said, "The woman whom You put with me, she gave to me from the tree, and I ate." **13** And the LORD God said to the woman, "What ***is*** this ***that*** you have done?" And the woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate." **14** And the LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, you ***are*** cursed more than all the livestock and more than every living thing of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. **15** And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise you ***on the*** head, and you shall bruise him ***on the*** heel." **16** To the woman He said, "I will greatly multiply your pain and your pregnancy; in sorrow you shall bear children; and to your husband ***shall be*** your desire, and

3:1 2 Cor 11:3; Rev 12:9; Rev 20:2
3:2 Ps 58:4
3:3 2 Cor 6:17; Gen 2:16,17; Job 1:11
3:4 2 Cor 11:3; 1 Tim 2:14; Rev 12:9
3:5 2 Cor 11:3; 2 Cor 11:14; Ezek 28:2,9
3:6 1 John 2:16; 1 Tim 2:14; Rom 5:12
3:7 Gen 2:25; Gen 3:5; Job 9:29-31
3:8 Heb 4:13; Jer 23:24; Ps 139:1-12
3:9 Gen 4:9; Gen 16:8; Josh 7:17-19
3:10 Gen 2:25; Gen 3:7; Exod 3:6
3:11 Rom 3:20; Gen 4:10; Ps 50:21
3:12 James 1:13; Job 31:33; Gen 2:18,20,22
3:13 2 Cor 11:3; 1 Tim 2:14; Rev 12:9
3:14 Isa 65:25; Mic 7:17; Ps 72:9
3:15 Rom 16:20; 1 John 3:8; Rev 12:17
3:16 1 Tim 2:15; John 16:21; 1 Thess 5:3

3:1 *the serpent was more shrewd* Genesis does not say at once who spoke through this animal, but the rest of the Bible does. Revelation 12:9 calls the devil the ancient serpent, and Jesus called him a murderer from the beginning and the father of lies (John 8:44). Satan used the serpent like a mask.
3:1 *Has God indeed said* His first move was a question, not an open attack. He planted doubt and twisted God's words, making a generous God sound stingy (2:16-17). That is still his method. When a voice makes God's commands sound like a cage, be careful. That is an old voice.
3:3 *and you shall not touch it* God never said this. The woman added to His word and softened His warning. We are not told why. A small change to God's word left her more open to the next lie. Adding to God's word is as dangerous as taking from it (Prov 30:6).
3:4 *You shall not surely die* The first lie in the Bible, a flat denial of what God said (2:17).
3:5 *you will be like God, knowing good and evil* Satan made God sound jealous. Yet they were already like God, made in His image (1:26). The lie offered what they already had, on terms that would destroy them. Every temptation makes the same offer: be your own god and decide good and evil for yourself.
3:6 *good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and the tree was desirable to make one wise* John names the same three pulls: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life (1 John 2:16). Jesus faced testing in the wilderness, and where Adam failed, He stood firm (Matt 4:1-11).
3:6 *she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate* Adam was right there and did not speak up. Eve was deceived, but Adam sinned with his eyes open. That is why sin entered the world through one man (Rom 5:12). As head of the family, he bore the responsibility.
3:7 *they sewed together fig leaves* Their eyes were opened, but what they saw was their own shame. They now knew evil from the inside. Fig leaves were the first attempt to cover sin by human effort, and fig leaves wilt. Good deeds, religion and excuses do no better. Only God can cover sin (3:21).
3:8 *the man and his wife hid themselves* God walking in the garden suggests He had come to meet with them before. This time they hid among the trees He had planted. Sin breaks fellowship with God, and it makes us foolish. No one can hide from Him (Ps 139:7-12).
3:9 *Where are you* God knew. The question was for Adam's sake, calling him to come out and face what he had done. God came seeking the sinner before the sinner sought God. Jesus came to seek and to save the lost (Luke 19:10).
3:12 *The woman whom You put with me* Adam blamed his wife and blamed God for giving her. Eve blamed the serpent (3:13). Passing the blame came with the first sin. Real repentance stops pointing and simply says, I sinned, and God forgives (1 John 1:9).
3:14 *dust you shall eat* God asked the serpent no questions. Eating dust pictured total defeat (Mic 7:17). Many teachers see the curse on two levels: the animal, and above all Satan who used it. He is a defeated enemy.
3:15 *I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed* The first promise of the gospel, the good news, given in the middle of judgment. Enmity is a state of war. "Seed" means offspring and can mean many or one. Satan's seed are those who follow his ways (John 8:44).
3:15 *he shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel* The promise narrows to one Person. A blow to the heel hurts but heals. A blow to the head is fatal. Jesus was born of a woman (Gal 4:4). At the cross Satan struck His heel, but by dying and rising He crushed the serpent's head (Heb 2:14; 1 John 3:8; Rom 16:20). The final blow comes in the lake of fire (Rev 20:10). Before God said a word about thorns, He promised a Savior.
3:16 *I will greatly multiply your pain and your pregnancy* The very thing that would bring the promised Seed into the world would now come with pain.
3:16 *to your husband shall be your desire, and he shall rule over you* Teachers read this two ways. Some see a longing for her husband even when he treats her badly. Others note the same words in 4:7 and see a desire to control him, with the husband pushing back by ruling harshly. Either way, the partnership of chapter 2 is strained by sin. Harsh rule is a result of the fall, not God's design. Husbands are to love their wives as Christ loved the church (Eph 5:25).

he shall rule over you." **17** And to Adam He said, "Because you listened to the voice of your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat from it,' cursed ***is*** the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat it all the days of your life. **18** And thorns and thistles it shall cause to sprout for you, and you shall eat the plant of the field. **19** By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread until you return to the ground, for from it you were taken; for you ***are*** dust, and to dust you shall return."

Driven from the Garden

20 And the man called the name of his wife Eve (Chava), because she was the mother of every living ***one***. **21** And the LORD God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skin, and He clothed them. **22** And the LORD God said, "Look, the man has become like one of Us, in knowing good and evil; and now, lest he stretch out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat and live forever—" **23** And the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. **24** And He drove out the man; and He caused to dwell at the east of the garden of Eden the cherubim and the flame of the sword that was whirling, to guard the way to the tree of life.

GENESIS 4

Cain Murders Abel

1 And the man knew Eve (Chava) his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain (Qayin), and she said, "I have acquired a man with the LORD." **2** And again she bore his brother, Abel (Hevel). And Abel was a shepherd of a flock, and Cain was a worker of ***the*** ground. **3** And it came about at the end of days, and Cain brought from the fruit of the ground an offering to the LORD. **4** And Abel, he also brought from the firstborn of his flock and from their fat. And the LORD looked to Abel and to his offering, **5** and to Cain and to his offering He did not look. And Cain burned ***with anger*** exceedingly, and his face fell. **6** And the LORD said to Cain, "Why do you burn ***with anger***, and why has your face fallen? **7** If you do well, ***is there*** not a lifting up? And if you do not do well, sin ***is*** crouching at the door; and to you ***is*** its desire, and you shall rule over it." **8** And Cain said to Abel his brother. And it came about when they were in the field, and Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him. **9** And the LORD said to Cain, "Where ***is*** Abel your brother?" And he said, "I do not know. ***Am*** I my brother's keeper?" **10** And He said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood ***is*** crying out to Me from the ground. **11** And now you ***are*** cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. **12** When you work the ground, it shall no

3:17 Rom 8:20; Rom 8:21; Rom 8:22
3:18 Heb 6:8; Rom 8:20; Josh 23:13
3:19 Rom 8:20; 1 Cor 15:47; Ps 104:29
3:20 Matt 1:23; Gen 2:20,23; Acts 17:26
3:21 Isa 61:10; Rom 3:22; 2 Cor 5:2,3,21
3:22 Rev 2:7; Rev 22:14; Rev 22:2
3:23 Rev 2:7; Rev 22:2; Gen 2:5
3:24 Rev 2:7; Rev 22:2; Heb 1:7
4:1 1 John 3:12; Gen 3:15; Gen 4:25
4:2 1 John 3:12; 1 John 3:10,12,15; John 8:44
4:3 Heb 11:4; Jude 1:11; Num 18:12
4:4 Heb 11:4; 1 John 3:12; Prov 3:9
4:5 Heb 11:4; 1 John 3:12; Jude 1:11
4:6 Matt 5:22; 1 John 3:12; Jude 1:11
4:7 1 John 3:12; Jude 1:11; James 1:15
4:8 Matt 23:35; Jude 1:11; 1 John 3:12
4:9 Luke 11:51; 1 John 3:12; Jude 1:11
4:10 Heb 12:24; James 5:4; Luke 11:51
4:11 Gal 3:10; Gen 3:14; Deut 28:15-20
4:12 Deut 28:23,24; Lev 26:36; Gen 3:17,18

3:17 *cursed is the ground because of you* Adam listened to his wife instead of God. God did not curse Adam himself but the ground he worked. Work was good before the fall. Now it comes with toil, thorns and sweat. All creation groans while it waits to be set free (Rom 8:20-22). Jesus wore a crown of thorns (John 19:2) and became a curse for us (Gal 3:13). One day there will be no curse (Rev 22:3).
3:19 *for you are dust, and to dust you shall return* The warning of 2:17 came true. Every funeral since then echoes this verse.
3:20 *Eve* The name sounds like the Hebrew word for life. Adam had just heard the sentence of death, and also that the woman's Seed would defeat the serpent. I believe naming her Eve was an act of faith.
3:21 *garments of skin, and He clothed them* For skins to be made, an animal had to die, perhaps the first death in the Bible, and God Himself provided it. Fig leaves were replaced by God's provision. Many teachers see here the first hint of sacrifice, a picture fulfilled when Jesus died so we could be clothed in His righteousness. Apart from the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness (Heb 9:22).
3:22 *the man has become like one of Us, in knowing good and evil* The "Us" echoes 1:26. Man now knew evil by doing it.
3:23 *the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden* This was a mercy. Living forever in a body of sin and death, cut off from God, would be a nightmare. God closed one door to open a better one through Christ.
3:24 *the cherubim and the flame of the sword that was whirling, to guard the way to the tree of life* Cherubim are powerful angels who guard God's holy presence. Later they were woven into the tabernacle curtain that kept people out of the Most Holy Place (Exod 26:31; Heb 9:7). When Jesus died, that curtain tore from top to bottom (Matt 27:51). In the end the redeemed have the right to the tree of life again (Rev 22:14).
4:1 *the man knew Eve his wife* The Bible's modest way of speaking of marriage intimacy.
4:1 *I have acquired a man with the LORD* Eve knew life came from God. Some teachers think she hoped Cain was the promised Seed of 3:15. If so, she was about to learn painfully that he was not.
4:2 *Abel* His name means breath or vapor, something that passes quickly. It fit his short life. Farming and shepherding were both honorable work, and nothing suggests one was holier than the other.
4:4 *from the firstborn of his flock and from their fat* The firstborn came first, and the fat was the choicest part. Abel gave God his best, and gave it first.
4:5 *to Cain and to his offering He did not look* Why? Some point out that Abel's offering involved blood, like the skins of 3:21. The New Testament puts the weight on the heart: Abel offered by faith (Heb 11:4), and Cain's deeds were evil (1 John 3:12). God looked at the worshiper before the gift. Cain sulked. If his heart had been right, he would have asked what he did wrong.
4:7 *If you do well, is there not a lifting up* God came to Cain with questions, as He came to Adam (3:9). It was not too late. Cain could still turn and be accepted.
4:7 *sin is crouching at the door; and to you is its desire, and you shall rule over it* Sin is pictured as a wild animal waiting to spring. "Desire" is the word of 3:16. Sin wants to control us, but we must rule over it. Anger fed becomes the door sin uses, and Jesus taught that anger in the heart is the root of murder (Matt 5:21-22). Deal with it while it is still at the door.
4:8 *Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him* The first human death was a murder. Moses keeps repeating "brother." In one generation sin went from a bite of fruit to bloodshed. Jesus called him "Abel the righteous" (Matt 23:35), the first martyr, killed because he was right with God (1 John 3:12).
4:9 *Am I my brother's keeper* A lie and a sneer. The honest answer is yes. God made us responsible to love and care for one another (Gal 6:2).
4:10 *The voice of your brother's blood is crying out to Me from the ground* Cain thought no one saw. God did. Innocent blood cries for justice. The blood of Jesus speaks better than Abel's (Heb 12:24): it speaks mercy to all who come to Him.
4:12 *a wanderer and a fugitive you shall be on the earth* The ground that soaked up Abel's blood would no longer yield to Cain. The farmer who gave God a careless offering could no longer farm.

longer give its strength to you; a wanderer and a fugitive you shall be on the earth." **13** And Cain said to the LORD, "My iniquity ***is*** too great to bear. **14** Look, You have driven me today from the face of the ground, and from Your face I shall be hidden; and I shall be a wanderer and a fugitive on the earth, and it will be ***that*** everyone who finds me will kill me." **15** And the LORD said to him, "Therefore, anyone who kills Cain, sevenfold he shall be avenged." And the LORD put a sign for Cain, so that anyone who found him would not strike him. **16** And Cain went out from before the LORD and dwelt in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

The Line of Cain

17 And Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch (Chanokh). And he was building a city, and he called the name of the city according to the name of his son, Enoch. **18** And to Enoch was born Irad; and Irad fathered Mehujael (Mechuya'el); and Mehujael fathered Methushael (Metusha'el); and Methushael fathered Lamech (Lemekh). **19** And Lamech took for himself two wives; the name of the one ***was*** Adah (Ada), and the name of the second ***was*** Zillah (Tsila). **20** And Adah bore Jabal (Yaval); he was the father of dwellers ***in*** tents and ***with*** herds. **21** And the name of his brother ***was*** Jubal (Yuval); he was the father of everyone handling lyre and pipe. **22** And Zillah, she also bore Tubal-cain (Tuval-Qayin), a sharpener of every cutter of bronze and iron; and the sister of Tubal-cain ***was*** Naamah (Na'ama). **23** And Lamech said to his wives, "Adah and Zillah, hear my voice; wives of Lamech, give ear to my word: for a man I have killed for my bruise, and a young man for my wound. **24** For sevenfold Cain shall be avenged, and Lamech seventy and seven ***times***."

Seth Is Born

25 And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and called his name Seth (Shet), "for God has appointed for me another seed in place of Abel, because Cain killed him." **26** And to Seth, to him also a son was born, and he called his name Enosh. Then calling on the name of the LORD was begun.

GENESIS 5

From Adam to Noah

1 This ***is*** the book of the generations of Adam. In the day God created mankind, in the likeness of God He made him. **2** Male and female He created them, and He blessed them and called their name Mankind in the day they were created. **3** And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and he fathered ***a son*** in his likeness, according to his image, and he called his name Seth (Shet). **4** And the days of Adam after he fathered Seth were eight hundred years, and he fathered sons and daughters. **5** And all the days of Adam which he lived were

4:13 Rev 16:9; 1 John 3:12; Jude 1:11
4:14 2 Thess 1:9; Job 15:20-24; Num 35:19,21,27
4:15 Heb 11:4; 1 John 3:12; Ezek 9:4,6
4:16 2 Kgs 24:20; Jer 23:39; Gen 4:14
4:17 Gen 5:18,22; Gen 11:4; Eccl 2:4-11
4:18 Gen 5:21; Gen 36:2
4:19 Gen 2:18,24; Matt 19:4-6,8
4:20 1 Chr 2:50-52; 1 Chr 4:4,5; John 8:44
4:21 Rom 4:11,12; Gen 31:27; Job 21:12
4:22 Exod 25:3; Num 31:22; Deut 8:9
4:23 Num 23:18; Judg 9:7; Judg 49:6
4:24 Matt 18:22
4:25 Luke 3:38; Heb 11:4; 1 John 3:12
4:26 Acts 2:21; Luke 3:38; Rom 10:13
5:1 James 3:9; Luke 3:38; Gen 1:26,27
5:2 Gen 1:27; Acts 17:26; Mal 2:15
5:3 Rom 5:12; Luke 3:36-38; Gen 4:25
5:4 1 Chr 1:1-3; Luke 3:36-38; Gen 5:7,10,13,19,22,26,30
5:5 Rom 5:12; Rom 5:14; 1 Cor 15:22

4:13 *My iniquity is too great to bear* The word can mean the sin or its punishment, and the rest of his words show which weighed on him. He was sorry about the consequences, not about what he had done.
4:14 *everyone who finds me will kill me* Adam and Eve had other sons and daughters (5:4), and Cain lived a long time. In time many relatives might want to avenge Abel.
4:15 *the LORD put a sign for Cain* God showed mercy to a murderer. We are not told what the sign was, and guesses are only guesses. God, not man, would deal with Cain. He is just, and He is patient.
4:16 *the land of Nod* Nod means wandering. Cain "went out from before the LORD," and even when he settled he was a wanderer at heart.
4:17 *Cain knew his wife* Adam had sons and daughters (5:4), so Cain married a sister or a niece. The laws against marrying close relatives came much later (Lev 18:9). In the first generations it was the only way the race could grow. Many teachers also suggest that so near creation the human family did not yet carry the inherited weaknesses that make such marriages harmful now.
4:17 *he was building a city* Cain refused to be a wanderer on God's terms, so he built security for himself.
4:19 *Lamech took for himself two wives* The first polygamy in the Bible. God's pattern was one man and one woman (2:24). Scripture records polygamy honestly, never as God's ideal, and Genesis will show again and again the pain it caused.
4:20 *Jabal* Cain's line was full of talent: herdsmen, the first musicians (4:21), metalworkers (4:22). Music, farming and craft are good gifts under the creation mandate (1:28). But Cain's line built a culture without God. A society can be clever and successful and still be lost.
4:23 *a man I have killed for my bruise* A song of revenge. Lamech brags that he repays far more than he suffers.
4:24 *Lamech seventy and seven times* God promised to avenge Cain sevenfold. Lamech needed no God. By the seventh generation from Adam, murder in secret had become murder in song. Jesus answers Peter with unlimited forgiveness (Matt 18:22), and Paul tells us to leave revenge to God (Rom 12:19).
4:25 *God has appointed for me another seed in place of Abel* Seth's name is linked to the word appointed. Through Seth God kept the line of the promised Seed going, and Luke traces Jesus back through Seth to Adam (Luke 3:38).
4:26 *Then calling on the name of the LORD was begun* While Cain's family built cities and sang of revenge, Seth's family prayed and worshiped. To call on the LORD's name is to pray, trust and worship Him openly. Whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved (Rom 10:13). That has been the way from the beginning.
5:1 *This is the book of the generations of Adam* A new section begins, and it looks back to creation before it lists a single name. Every person here, and every person who has ever lived, carries the image of God. This is a list of real people God knew by name.
5:2 *called their name Mankind* The Hebrew word is adam, the first man's name and the word for mankind.
5:3 *in his likeness, according to his image* The wording echoes verse 1. Adam was made in God's likeness, and Seth was born in Adam's. Seth carried God's image, but he also inherited Adam's fallen nature, as every child since has (Ps 51:5; Rom 5:12).
5:5 *and he died* It took more than nine centuries, but God's warning came true (2:17). The serpent said, "You shall not surely die" (3:4). Every "and he died" in this chapter shows who was telling the truth.

nine hundred and thirty years, and he died. **6** And Seth lived one hundred and five years, and he fathered Enosh. **7** And Seth lived after he fathered Enosh eight hundred and seven years, and he fathered sons and daughters. **8** And all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years, and he died. **9** And Enosh lived ninety years, and he fathered Kenan (Qenan). **10** And Enosh lived after he fathered Kenan eight hundred and fifteen years, and he fathered sons and daughters. **11** And all the days of Enosh were nine hundred and five years, and he died. **12** And Kenan lived seventy years, and he fathered Mahalalel. **13** And Kenan lived after he fathered Mahalalel eight hundred and forty years, and he fathered sons and daughters. **14** And all the days of Kenan were nine hundred and ten years, and he died. **15** And Mahalalel lived sixty-five years, and he fathered Jared (Yered). **16** And Mahalalel lived after he fathered Jared eight hundred and thirty years, and he fathered sons and daughters. **17** And all the days of Mahalalel were eight hundred and ninety-five years, and he died. **18** And Jared lived one hundred and sixty-two years, and he fathered Enoch (Chanokh). **19** And Jared lived after he fathered Enoch eight hundred years, and he fathered sons and daughters. **20** And all the days of Jared were nine hundred and sixty-two years, and he died.

Enoch Walks with God

21 And Enoch lived sixty-five years, and he fathered
Methuselah (Metushelach). **22** And Enoch walked with God after he fathered Methuselah three hundred years, and he fathered sons and daughters. **23** And all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years. **24** And Enoch walked with God, and he ***was*** not, for God took him. **25** And Methuselah lived one hundred and eighty-seven years, and he fathered Lamech (Lemekh). **26** And Methuselah lived after he fathered Lamech seven hundred and eighty-two years, and he fathered sons and daughters. **27** And all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred and sixty-nine years, and he died. **28** And Lamech lived one hundred and eighty-two years, and he fathered a son. **29** And he called his name Noah (Noach), saying, "This ***one*** shall comfort us from our work and from the pain of our hands, from the ground which the LORD has cursed." **30** And Lamech lived after he fathered Noah five hundred and ninety-five years, and he fathered sons and daughters. **31** And all the days of Lamech were seven hundred and seventy-seven years, and he died. **32** And Noah was a son of five hundred years, and Noah fathered Shem, Ham (Cham), and Japheth (Yefet).

GENESIS 6

Wickedness on the Earth

1 And it came about, when mankind began to become many on the face of the ground, and daughters were born to them, **2** and the sons of God saw the daughters of mankind, that they ***were*** good, and they took for themselves wives from all whom they chose. **3** And the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not remain in mankind forever, in that he also ***is*** flesh; and his days shall be one hundred and twenty years." **4** The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God went in to the daughters of mankind and

5:6 Gen 4:26
5:9 Luke 3:37; 1 Chr 1:2
5:12 Luke 3:37
5:15 1 Chr 1:2
5:18 Jude 1:14; Gen 4:17; 1 Chr 1:3
5:21 Heb 11:5; Luke 3:37
5:22 Heb 11:5; 2 Cor 6:16; Heb 11:6
5:23 Heb 11:5
5:24 Heb 11:5; Heb 11:6; Jude 1:14
5:25 Gen 4:18
5:29 Matt 24:37; Luke 17:26; Heb 11:7
5:32 Gen 6:10; Gen 7:13; Gen 9:18,19,22-27
6:1 2 Pet 2:5; Gen 1:28
6:2 2 Cor 6:18; 2 Pet 2:5; Mal 2:11
6:3 Gal 5:16; Rom 8:4; Rom 8:5
6:4 Num 13:33; Deut 2:20,21; Deut 3:11

5:6 *Seth lived one hundred and five years* Seth, Enosh, Kenan, Mahalalel, Jared: each lived for centuries, had children and died. Luke lists the same names in Jesus' family line (Luke 3:36-38). We are not told why they lived so long. Some suggest the world before the flood was different, and bodies so near creation were not yet worn down by sin and disease. After the flood ages fall, until seventy or eighty is a long life (Ps 90:10). I take the ages as written. If the list has no gaps, Adam lived to know Lamech, Noah's father.
5:22 *Enoch walked with God* Something changed around the birth of his son, and from then on Enoch walked with God. To walk with God is to live in daily fellowship with Him, agreeing with Him and going His way (Amos 3:3). It was three hundred years of ordinary days while raising a family. Walking with God is for ordinary people.
5:24 *he was not, for God took him* No "and he died" for Enoch. He was taken so he would not see death, and he pleased God by faith (Heb 11:5-6). Jude says he prophesied the Lord's coming in judgment (Jude 14). Many teachers, and I am one, see in Enoch a picture of the rapture: he was taken before the flood judgment fell, while Noah was carried through it. I believe Christ will take His church to Himself before the Tribulation (1 Thess 4:16-17).
5:27 *nine hundred and sixty-nine years* The longest life in the Bible. Add 187 (5:25), 182 (5:28) and 600 (7:6), and Methuselah died in the year of the flood. Many see God's patience in that, not wanting any to perish (2 Pet 3:9). Yet long life is not the same as a good life. His father lived 365 years and walked with God. What will be said of yours?
5:29 *This one shall comfort us from our work and from the pain of our hands* Noah's name is close to the Hebrew word for rest or comfort. This Lamech is not the killer of 4:23. One sang of revenge, and this one hoped in the LORD. Noah would not end the curse, but God would give the world a fresh start through him. Every longing for rest points to Jesus, who gives rest to the weary (Matt 11:28).
5:32 *Shem, Ham, and Japheth* No "and he died" yet, for Noah's story fills the next four chapters. All nations come from these three (10:32). Through Shem come Abraham, Israel and the Messiah, which means Anointed One, the Hebrew form of the title Christ.
6:2 *the sons of God saw the daughters of mankind* Bible-believing Christians hold two main views. Some say fallen angels, since "sons of God" means angels in Job 1:6 and 2:1, and Jude 6-7 and 2 Peter 2:4-5 speak of angels who sinned near the story of the flood. Others say godly men of Seth's line who married ungodly women of Cain's line, since angels do not marry (Matt 22:30) and the judgment falls on mankind. A third view sees powerful rulers. I won't take a hard side. In every view, evil crossed God's boundaries, and they "took" whom they "chose," following their eyes as Eve did (3:6).
6:3 *My Spirit shall not remain in mankind forever* God's Spirit had been pleading with people and holding evil back, but God's patience has a limit. "Flesh" means man is weak, short-lived and bent toward sin.
6:3 *his days shall be one hundred and twenty years* Some take this as a limit on the human lifespan. Many take it as the time left before the flood, a last season of grace. I lean toward the second, since people lived far longer for generations afterward (11:10-26). Either way God was patient while the ark was built (1 Pet 3:20).
6:4 *The Nephilim* The word may come from a Hebrew word meaning to fall. Older translations call them giants. The only other place they appear is Numbers 13:33. Were they the children of the unions in 6:2? The verse can be read that way, or it may only give the setting. The text does not settle it. The world celebrated these "men of renown." God was about to judge them.

they bore ***children*** to them. Those ***were*** the mighty ***men*** who ***were*** from long ago, the men of renown. **5** And the LORD saw that the evil of mankind ***was*** great on the earth, and every inclination of the thoughts of his heart ***was*** only evil all the day. **6** And the LORD regretted that He had made mankind on the earth, and He was pained to His heart. **7** And the LORD said, "I will wipe out mankind whom I created from the face of the ground, from mankind to livestock to moving things and to the flying things of the heavens; for I regret that I made them." **8** And Noah (Noach) found favor in the eyes of the LORD.

Noah Builds the Ark

9 These ***are*** the generations of Noah. Noah ***was*** a righteous man; blameless he was in his generations; with God Noah walked. **10** And Noah fathered three sons: Shem, Ham (Cham), and Japheth (Yefet). **11** And the earth was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled ***with*** violence. **12** And God saw the earth, and look, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted its way on the earth. **13** And God said to Noah, "The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is full ***of*** violence because of them; and look, I am about to destroy them with the earth. **14** Make for yourself an ark of gopher wood; ***with*** compartments you shall make the ark, and you shall cover it inside and outside with pitch. **15** And this ***is*** how you shall make it: the length of the ark approximately 450 feet (three hundred cubits), its breadth approximately 75 feet (fifty cubits), and its height approximately 45 feet (thirty cubits). **16** You shall make a roof for the ark, and to approximately 18 inches (a cubit) you shall finish it from above; and the entrance of the ark you shall put in its side; ***with*** lower, second, and third ***decks*** you shall make it. **17** And I, look, I am about to bring the flood ***of*** waters on the earth to destroy all flesh in which ***is*** the breath of life from under the heavens; everything that ***is*** on the earth shall perish. **18** And I will establish My covenant with you; and you shall go into the ark, you and your sons and your wife and the wives of your sons with you. **19** And of every living thing, of all flesh, two of every ***kind*** you shall bring into the ark to keep ***them*** alive with you; they shall be male and female. **20** Of the flying things according to their kind, and of the livestock according to their kind, of every moving thing of the ground according to its kind, two of every ***kind*** shall come to you to keep ***them*** alive. **21** And you, take for yourself from all food that is eaten, and you shall gather ***it*** to yourself; and it shall be for you and for them for food." **22** And Noah did according to all that God commanded him; so he did.

6:5 Matt 15:19; Mark 7:21; Rom 3:19
6:6 Eph 4:30; 2 Pet 2:5; 1 Sam 15:11,29
6:7 2 Pet 2:5; Ps 24:1,2; Ps 37:20
6:8 2 Pet 2:5; Luke 3:36; Gen 19:19
6:9 2 Pet 2:5; Heb 11:7; Luke 3:36
6:10 Luke 3:36; Gen 5:32
6:11 Ezek 8:17; Gen 7:1; Gen 10:9
6:12 2 Pet 2:5; Job 33:27; Ps 53:2,3
6:13 Heb 11:7; 1 Pet 3:20; 1 Pet 4:7
6:14 Matt 24:38; Luke 17:27; 1 Pet 3:20
6:15 1 Pet 3:20; Gen 7:20; Deut 3:11
6:16 1 Pet 3:20; Gen 8:6; 2 Sam 6:16
6:17 2 Pet 2:5; Heb 11:7; Matt 24:39
6:18 Heb 11:7; 1 Pet 3:20; Gen 7:1,7,13
6:19 1 Pet 3:20; Gen 7:2,3,8,9,15,16; Gen 8:17
6:20 Gen 1:20-24; Acts 10:11,12; Gen 1:28
6:21 Gen 1:29,30; Job 38:41; Job 40:20
6:22 Heb 11:7; Luke 3:36; 1 Pet 3:20

6:5 *every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the day* Every inclination, only evil, all the day. The problem went down to the heart (Jer 17:9; Matt 15:19). That is why better rules and better surroundings can never fix sin. We need new hearts, and only God can give them (Ezek 36:26).
6:6 *the LORD regretted that He had made mankind* God did not make a mistake. He is not a man that He should repent (Num 23:19), and He knew all from the start. These words show His heart. "He was pained to His heart." Sin wounds God, and we can still grieve the Holy Spirit (Eph 4:30).
6:7 *I will wipe out mankind* A holy God cannot let evil go on forever. The animals suffer too, because man was the head of creation, and when the head fell everything under him suffered.
6:8 *Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD* The first time the word favor, or grace, appears in the Bible. First Noah found favor, then we read that he was righteous (6:9). Grace comes first. Noah became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith (Heb 11:7), saved the same way we are (Eph 2:8).
6:9 *Noah was a righteous man; blameless he was in his generations* Blameless does not mean sinless, as chapter 9 shows. It means no one could rightly point a finger at how he lived. "With God Noah walked," like Enoch (5:24). Noah lived in a deeply wicked generation and still walked with God. You cannot blame your surroundings for your choices.
6:11 *the earth was corrupt before God* Corrupt means ruined, like rotten fruit. The same word is "destroy" in 6:13. Man had already ruined the earth by sin, and judgment would bring that ruin to its end.
6:13 *God said to Noah* God does not usually hide His plans from those who walk with Him (Amos 3:7). Noah knew what was coming and preached to a world that would not listen. Peter calls him a preacher of righteousness (2 Pet 2:5).
6:14 *an ark of gopher wood* No one can identify gopher wood with certainty. Some suggest a resinous wood like cypress. Pitch is a tar-like coating. The Hebrew word for "cover" is related to the word later used for atonement, covering sin, and many have seen a picture there.
6:15 *the length of the ark approximately 450 feet* The Hebrew gives 300 cubits by 50 by 30. A cubit, elbow to fingertip, was about 18 inches. The ark was a long box built to float and stay stable, not to sail. In the early 1990s a team of Korean ship researchers studied these proportions and argued that such a box would be very stable in rough water.
6:16 *the entrance of the ark you shall put in its side* One door, one way in. Jesus said He is the door, and whoever enters through Him will be saved (John 10:9).
6:17 *I am about to bring the flood of waters on the earth* God Himself would bring it. The flood was deliberate judgment on sin, not a natural accident. Jesus pointed to it as a warning of His coming (Matt 24:37-39). People ate, drank and married right up to the day. The time to get into the ark is before the rain starts.
6:18 *I will establish My covenant with you* The first time the word covenant appears. A covenant is a solemn, binding agreement, and when God makes one He binds Himself by His word. It is spelled out in chapter 9. God's grace reached Noah's whole household. Parents, your walk with God matters for your children.
6:19 *two of every kind* Clean animals went in by sevens (7:2). "Kind" echoes chapter 1. Many who hold to a worldwide flood believe Noah needed only representatives of each kind, and much of today's variety came later.
6:20 *two of every kind shall come to you* Noah did not hunt the animals down. God brought them. Noah's job was to build, gather food and obey. God took care of what Noah could not do.
6:22 *Noah did according to all that God commanded him* Building took many years, with no sign of rain and very likely mocking neighbors. Noah did all of it. He acted by faith about things not yet seen (Heb 11:7). His obedience did not save him. God's grace did. But his obedience showed his faith was real.

GENESIS 7

Into the Ark

1 And the LORD said to Noah (Noach), "Go into the ark, you and all your household, for I have seen you ***to be*** righteous before Me in this generation. **2** Of all the clean livestock you shall take for yourself seven ***by*** seven, a male and its female; and of the livestock that ***is*** not clean, two, a male and its female; **3** also of the flying things of the heavens seven ***by*** seven, male and female, to keep seed alive on the face of all the earth. **4** For in seven more days I am about to cause ***it*** to rain on the earth forty days and forty nights, and I will wipe out every existing thing that I have made from the face of the ground." **5** And Noah did according to all that the LORD commanded him. **6** And Noah ***was*** a son of six hundred years, and the flood ***of*** waters was on the earth. **7** And Noah went, and his sons and his wife and the wives of his sons with him, into the ark because of the waters of the flood. **8** Of the clean livestock and of the livestock that ***is*** not clean, and of the flying things and of everything that moves on the ground, **9** two ***by*** two they came to Noah into the ark, male and female, just as God had commanded Noah. **10** And it came about after the seven days, and the waters of the flood were on the earth.

The Flood Begins

11 In the six hundredth year of the life of Noah, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on this day all the springs of ***the*** great deep were split open, and the floodgates of the heavens were opened. **12** And the rain was on the earth forty days and forty nights. **13** On this very day Noah went, and Shem and Ham (Cham) and Japheth (Yefet), the sons of Noah, and the wife of Noah and the three wives of his sons with them, into the ark, **14** they and every living thing according to its kind, and all the livestock according to its kind, and every moving thing that moves on the earth according to its kind, and every flying thing according to its kind, every bird, every wing. **15** And they came to Noah into the ark, two ***by*** two of all flesh in which ***was*** the breath of life. **16** And those that came, male and female of all flesh, came just as God had commanded him; and the LORD shut ***it*** behind him.

The Waters Cover the Earth

17 And the flood was forty days on the earth; and the waters multiplied and lifted up the ark, and it rose up off the earth. **18** And the waters prevailed and multiplied exceedingly on the earth, and the ark went on the face of the waters. **19** And the waters prevailed exceedingly, exceedingly on the earth, and all the high mountains which ***were*** under all the heavens were covered. **20** Approximately 22.5 feet (fifteen cubits) upward the waters prevailed, and the mountains were covered. **21** And all flesh that moved on the earth perished, among the flying things and among the livestock and among the living things and among every swarming thing that swarms on the earth, and all mankind. **22** Everything in whose nostrils ***was*** the breath of the spirit of life, of all that

7:1 Matt 24:37; Heb 11:7; Luke 17:26
7:2 Gen 8:20; Lev 11:1-47; Gen 7:8
7:4 Gen 7:12,17; Gen 6:17; Gen 6:7,13,17
7:5 Matt 1:24; Heb 11:7; 1 Pet 3:20
7:6 1 Pet 3:20; 2 Pet 2:5; Gen 5:32
7:7 2 Pet 2:5; Heb 11:7; 1 Pet 3:20
7:9 Luke 17:26; 2 Pet 2:5; Gen 7:16
7:10 Matt 24:38; Luke 17:27; Matt 24:39
7:11 Matt 24:38; 2 Pet 3:6; Luke 17:26
7:12 Matt 4:2; 2 Pet 3:6; Gen 7:4,17
7:13 1 Pet 3:20; 2 Pet 2:5; Heb 11:7
7:14 Gen 7:2,3,8,9
7:15 Luke 17:26; 2 Pet 2:5; Isa 11:6
7:16 Matt 25:10; Gen 7:2,3; Luke 13:25
7:17 1 Pet 3:20; 2 Pet 2:5; Gen 7:4,12
7:18 1 Pet 3:20; Exod 14:28; Job 22:16
7:19 2 Pet 3:6; Job 12:15; Ps 46:2,3
7:20 2 Pet 3:6; Ps 104:6; Jer 3:23
7:21 Gen 7:4; Gen 6:6,7,13,17; Job 22:15-17
7:22 Gen 2:7; Gen 6:17

7:1 *Go into the ark, you and all your household* The word can also mean come, as if God invited Noah in where He was. Noah had built the ark, but he waited for God's word. His family came in because of God's grace to him. One man's righteousness brought blessing to many, and in the fullest sense that is what Jesus does for His people (Rom 5:19).
7:2 *Of all the clean livestock you shall take for yourself seven by seven* Clean animals were those later allowed for food and sacrifice (Lev 11). Noah knew the difference long before Moses wrote it down. The extra clean animals were needed for Noah's sacrifice (8:20) and for food (9:3). "Seven by seven" may mean seven pairs or seven animals, and teachers take it both ways.
7:4 *in seven more days* One last week of mercy. Forty is often linked with testing and judgment: Israel's forty years, Jesus' forty days of temptation.
7:5 *Noah did according to all that the LORD commanded him* Said again, as in 6:22. Noah's obedience is the steady drumbeat of these chapters.
7:9 *two by two they came to Noah into the ark* God brought them. If the neighbors watched animals of every kind walking into the ark, even that did not move them to repent.
7:11 *in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month* That is how a historian writes. Genesis presents a real event. Other peoples of Mesopotamia told flood stories too, and many Christians see them as distant memories of what Genesis records truly.
7:11 *all the springs of the great deep were split open, and the floodgates of the heavens were opened* Water from below and from above. On day two God separated the waters (1:6-7). Now in judgment He let them rush back together, as if creation were being undone to the watery state of 1:2.
7:13 *the three wives of his sons with them* Eight people in all. Peter says eight souls were brought safely through water (1 Pet 3:20). Out of the whole world, only eight.
7:16 *the LORD shut it behind him* Noah did not shut the door. God did. Noah was safe because God shut him in, and those outside were lost because God shut them out. Jesus told of a shut door and people knocking too late (Matt 25:10-12). Today the door is open, and Jesus is the door. Now is the time to enter.
7:17 *the waters multiplied and lifted up the ark* The water that brought death to the world lifted the ark to safety. Peter compares this to baptism, which pictures our being saved through Christ's resurrection (1 Pet 3:20-21).
7:18 *the ark went on the face of the waters* No sail, rudder or oars. Noah could not steer. In Christ you may not control where the waters carry you, but you are safe, because God has you.
7:19 *all the high mountains which were under all the heavens were covered* I believe the flood covered the whole earth, as the text says. A local flood would not need such an ark, since Noah could have moved and birds could have flown away, and God's promise in 9:11 would not hold. Peter says the world then was destroyed by water (2 Pet 3:6). Some Christians hold a local flood, noting that "all the earth" can mean a region (Deut 2:25; Gen 41:57). I respect them, but here every kind of universal language is piled up, with more than a year in the ark.
7:20 *Approximately 22.5 feet upward the waters prevailed* The Hebrew says fifteen cubits, above the highest peaks.
7:22 *Everything in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life* The breath of life God gave in 2:7 was taken back. The repetition makes us feel the weight of it. These were real people under the judgment of a holy God.

was on the dry ground, died. **23** And He wiped out every existing thing that ***was*** on the face of the ground, from mankind to livestock to moving things and to the flying things of the heavens; and they were wiped out from the earth, and only Noah was left, and those who ***were*** with him in the ark. **24** And the waters prevailed on the earth one hundred and fifty days.

GENESIS 8

The Waters Recede

1 And God remembered Noah (Noach) and every living thing and all the livestock that ***were*** with him in the ark; and God caused a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters subsided. **2** And the springs of ***the*** deep and the floodgates of the heavens were shut up, and the rain from the heavens was restrained. **3** And the waters turned back from off the earth, going and turning back; and the waters decreased at the end of one hundred and fifty days. **4** And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on the mountains of Ararat. **5** And the waters were going and decreasing until the tenth month; in the tenth ***month***, on the first of the month, the tops of the mountains were seen. **6** And it came about at the end of forty days, and Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made. **7** And he sent out the raven, and it went out, going out and returning, until the waters dried up from off the earth. **8** And he sent out the dove from with him to see whether the waters had abated from off the face of the ground. **9** And the dove did not find a resting place for the sole of its foot, and it returned to him into the ark, for water ***was*** on the face of all the earth; and he stretched out his hand and took it and brought it to him into the ark. **10** And he waited yet another seven days, and again he sent out the dove from the ark. **11** And the dove came to him at the time of evening, and look, a freshly plucked olive leaf ***was*** in its mouth; and Noah knew that the waters had abated from off the earth. **12** And he waited yet another seven days and sent out the dove, and it did not again return to him anymore. **13** And it came about in the six hundred and first year, in the first ***month***, on the first of the month, the waters were dried up from off the earth; and Noah removed the covering of the ark and looked, and look, the face of the ground was dried up. **14** And in the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth was dry.

Noah Leaves the Ark and Worships

15 And God spoke to Noah, saying, **16** "Go out from the ark, you and your wife and your sons and the wives of your sons with you. **17** Every living thing that ***is*** with you of all flesh, among the flying things and among the livestock and among every moving thing that moves on the earth, bring out with you; and they shall swarm on the earth and be fruitful and multiply on the earth." **18** And Noah went out, and his sons and his wife and the wives of his sons with him. **19** Every living thing, every moving thing, and every flying thing, everything that moves on the earth, according to their families went out from the ark. **20** And Noah built an altar to the LORD, and he took from all the clean livestock and from every clean flying thing, and he offered up burnt offerings on

7:23 2 Pet 2:5; 1 Pet 3:20; Heb 11:7
7:24 Gen 8:3,4
8:1 Luke 3:36; 1 Pet 3:20; 1 Sam 1:19
8:2 Gen 7:11; Prov 8:28; Jonah 2:3
8:3 Gen 7:11,24
8:4 2 Kgs 19:37; Isa 37:38; Jer 51:27
8:5 Gen 7:11
8:6 Gen 6:16; Dan 6:10
8:7 Lev 11:15; 1 Kgs 17:4,6; Job 38:41
8:8 Gen 8:10-12; Song 1:15; Song 2:11,12,14
8:9 Deut 28:65; Ezek 7:16; Matt 11:28
8:10 Ps 40:1; Isa 8:17; Isa 26:8
8:11 Neh 8:15; Zech 4:12-14; Rom 10:15
8:12 Ps 27:14; Ps 130:5,6; Isa 8:17
8:13 Gen 7:11
8:14 Gen 7:11,13,14
8:16 Heb 11:7; Gen 7:1,7,13; Josh 3:17
8:17 Gen 1:22; Gen 9:1,7; Gen 7:14,15
8:18 1 Pet 3:20; Ps 121:8
8:20 Gen 12:7,8; Gen 22:9; Lev 11:1-47

7:23 *only Noah was left, and those who were with him in the ark* Everyone outside died, and everyone inside lived. It made no difference how good, strong or famous anyone outside was. The only question that matters for us is whether we are in Christ (Rom 8:1). What of the children who died? Genesis does not answer every question. The Judge of all the earth will do right (18:25), and God cares even for those too young to know right from wrong (Jonah 4:11). We can trust Him with what He has not told us.
7:24 *one hundred and fifty days* About five months. The rain stopped after forty days, but the water stayed. Faith is for the long days of waiting, too. Noah had only God's promise, and the next chapter opens with "God remembered Noah."
8:1 *God remembered Noah* When God remembers, He acts on His promise, as with Hannah (1 Sam 1:19) and Israel in Egypt (Exod 2:24). He remembered the animals too (Ps 36:6). If God seems silent in your season, He has not forgotten you. At the right time He will act.
8:1 *God caused a wind to pass over the earth* The Hebrew word for wind and spirit is the same. As at creation God's Spirit hovered over the waters (1:2), now His wind passes over them, and a new world appears. Chapter 8 reads like a second creation.
8:2 *the springs of the deep and the floodgates of the heavens were shut up* The God who opened them (7:11) shut them. He controls the waters and the timing.
8:4 *the mountains of Ararat* Ararat was a region north of Mesopotamia, in what is now eastern Turkey and Armenia. The text names a mountain range, not one peak, and claims to have found the ark should be treated with caution. "Rested" sounds like Noah's name, which means rest (5:29).
8:7 *the raven* A raven eats dead things and could live on what floated, so it did not need to come back.
8:9 *he stretched out his hand and took it and brought it to him into the ark* The dove needs dry ground and clean food. The detail is tender. Noah was patient and waited for clear evidence.
8:11 *a freshly plucked olive leaf was in its mouth* Life was returning to the earth. The dove and the olive branch have stood for peace ever since, and this story is one of the oldest sources of that picture.
8:12 *it did not again return to him anymore* The land was ready, yet Noah still did not leave until God told him. Evidence is good, but God's word is better.
8:13 *in the first month, on the first of the month* New Year's Day, the start of a new world. Comparing 8:14 with 7:11, Noah's family was in the ark about a year and ten days. Faith often means a long, unglamorous stretch of waiting and daily chores.
8:16 *Go out from the ark* God shut Noah in (7:16), and now God sends him out. He went in at God's word and came out at God's word.
8:17 *be fruitful and multiply on the earth* The blessing of creation is repeated (1:22, 28). The earth had a fresh start, and God's purpose for it had not changed.
8:20 *Noah built an altar to the LORD* The first altar in the Bible, a raised place for sacrifice. Before a house or a field, Noah worshiped. A burnt offering was wholly burned, given completely to God. It pictured surrender and the need for a substitute, pointing to Jesus, who offered His body once for all (Heb 10:10).

the altar. **21** And the LORD smelled the soothing aroma; and the LORD said to His heart, "I will not again curse the ground anymore because of mankind, for the inclination of the heart of mankind ***is*** evil from his youth; and I will not again strike down every living thing anymore, as I have done. **22** All the days of the earth yet ***to come***, seed and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease."

GENESIS 9

God Blesses Noah

1 And God blessed Noah (Noach) and his sons and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. **2** And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be on every living thing of the earth and on every flying thing of the heavens, on everything ***with*** which the ground moves, and on all the fish of the sea; into your hand they are given. **3** Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you; like the green plant, I have given to you everything. **4** Only flesh with its life, its blood, you shall not eat. **5** And surely your blood, for your lives, I will require; from the hand of every living thing I will require it; and from the hand of man, from the hand of each man's brother, I will require the life of man. **6** Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man his blood shall be shed; for in the image of God He made man. **7** And you, be fruitful and multiply; swarm on the earth and multiply on it."

The Covenant of the Rainbow

8 And God said to Noah and to his sons with him, saying, **9** "And I, look, I am about to establish My covenant with you and with your seed after you, **10** and with every living being that ***is*** with you, among the flying things, among the livestock, and among every living thing of the earth with you, from all who came out of the ark, to every living thing of the earth. **11** And I will establish My covenant with you, and all flesh shall not be cut off again by the waters of the flood, and there shall not again be a flood to destroy the earth." **12** And God said, "This ***is*** the sign of the covenant which I am setting between Me and you and every living being that ***is*** with you, for everlasting generations: **13** My bow I have set in the cloud, and it shall be for a sign of a covenant between Me and the earth. **14** And it shall be, when I bring a cloud over the earth, and the bow is seen in the cloud, **15** and I will remember My covenant which ***is*** between Me and you and every living being among all flesh; and the waters shall not again become a flood to destroy all flesh. **16** And the bow shall be in the cloud, and I will see it, to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living being among all flesh which ***is*** on the earth." **17** And God said to Noah, "This ***is*** the sign of the covenant which I have established between Me and all flesh which ***is*** on the earth."

Noah's Sons and the Curse on Canaan

18 And the sons of Noah who came out from the ark were Shem and Ham (Cham) and Japheth (Yefet); and Ham, he ***was***

8:21 Eph 5:2; Mark 7:21; Jer 17:9
8:22 Jer 5:24; Jer 33:20-26; Ps 74:16,17
9:1 Luke 3:36; Gen 1:28; Gen 9:7
9:2 James 3:7; Gen 1:28; Gen 2:19
9:3 Deut 12:15; Lev 11:1-47; Lev 22:8
9:4 Acts 15:20; Deut 12:16,23; Lev 17:10-14
9:5 Luke 11:50; Exod 21:12,28,29; Gen 4:9,10
9:6 Rom 13:4; Matt 5:21; Matt 23:35
9:7 Gen 9:1,19; Gen 1:28; Gen 8:17
9:9 Rom 1:3; Gen 6:18; Gen 9:11,17
9:10 Gen 9:15,16; Gen 8:1; Job 38:1-41
9:11 2 Pet 3:7; Isa 54:9; Gen 8:21,22
9:12 Gen 17:11; Exod 12:13; Exod 13:16
9:13 Rev 4:3; Ezek 1:28; Rev 10:1
9:14 Rev 4:3
9:15 Luke 1:72; Rev 4:3; Ezek 16:60
9:16 Rev 4:3; Gen 17:13,19; 2 Sam 23:5
9:18 Luke 3:36; Gen 10:1; Gen 9:23

8:21 *the LORD smelled the soothing aroma* God accepted Noah's worship. Paul says Christ gave Himself as a fragrant offering to God (Eph 5:2).
8:21 *the inclination of the heart of mankind is evil from his youth* Almost the words of 6:5. The flood did not change the human heart. Sin came through the flood inside the ark. God chose mercy anyway. The answer was never to wipe out sinners and start over, but to send His Son to bear sin's judgment.
8:22 *seed and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease* God has kept this every year since. "All the days of the earth yet to come" means this order will not last forever. One day comes a new heaven and a new earth (Rev 21:1). God's covenant is as sure as day and night (Jer 33:20-21). If you doubt His promises, look out the window.
9:1 *Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth* The new world begins as the first did, with God's blessing (1:28). God had not given up on the human race or His purpose for it.
9:2 *the fear of you and the dread of you shall be on every living thing* Man still has authority over creation, but no longer the easy harmony of Eden. Many animals now keep their distance. One more thing broken by sin.
9:3 *Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you* Before the flood God gave plants (1:29). Now He gives animals as well. Eating meat is God's gift, and Jesus later declared all foods clean (Mark 7:19).
9:4 *Only flesh with its life, its blood, you shall not eat* Blood stands for life, and God gave blood on the altar for atonement (Lev 17:11). Pouring it out said that life belongs to God. The early church asked Gentile believers to keep this rule so as not to offend Jewish believers (Acts 15:20).
9:5 *I will require the life of man* God Himself will hold to account anyone who takes a human life. After Cain and Lamech filled the world with violence (4:8, 23-24), God drew a firm line.
9:6 *Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man his blood shall be shed* God gave people the duty to punish murder. Many see here the beginning of human government, which does not bear the sword for nothing (Rom 13:4). Most conservative teachers believe this supports the death penalty for murder when carried out justly by rightful authority, never by personal revenge.
9:6 *for in the image of God He made man* The heart of the verse. Murder is wrong because every person bears God's image. That is why the unborn child, the elderly, the disabled and the stranger all matter to God.
9:7 *be fruitful and multiply* Said twice, as bookends around the teaching on life and blood (9:1, 7). After such a judgment, Noah's family might have feared to start over. God tells them to live. Children are part of His blessing, not a burden.
9:9 *I am about to establish My covenant with you and with your seed after you* Promised in 6:18, spelled out now, with all people and every living being. That includes you and me.
9:11 *there shall not again be a flood to destroy the earth* This covenant is unconditional. Nothing is required of Noah. God binds Himself. There have been terrible local floods since, but never one like Noah's, one more reason I believe that flood was worldwide (see 7:19).
9:13 *My bow I have set in the cloud* The word is a warrior's bow. Some see God hanging up His weapon, pointed away from the earth. Either way, the rainbow is a sign of peace. A covenant sign is a visible reminder of a promise. Abraham's would be circumcision (17:11), and Israel's at Sinai the Sabbath (Exod 31:16-17).
9:16 *I will see it, to remember the everlasting covenant* God does not forget. He tells us in words we understand that when we see the rainbow, He sees it too and is keeping His word. John saw a rainbow around God's throne (Rev 4:3). The covenant-keeping God still reigns.
9:18 *Ham, he was the father of Canaan* Moses mentions Canaan because it matters in a few verses, and because Canaan's people would later live in the land promised to Israel.

the father of Canaan (Kena'an). **19** These three ***were*** the sons of Noah, and from these all the earth spread abroad. **20** And Noah, the man of the ground, began, and he planted a vineyard. **21** And he drank from the wine and became drunk, and he uncovered himself in the midst of his tent. **22** And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and he told his two brothers outside. **23** And Shem and Japheth took the garment and put ***it*** on the shoulder of both of them, and they walked backward and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces ***were*** backward, and the nakedness of their father they did not see. **24** And Noah awoke from his wine, and he knew what his youngest son had done to him. **25** And he said, "Cursed ***be*** Canaan; a slave of slaves he shall be to his brothers." **26** And he said, "Blessed ***be*** the LORD, the God of Shem; and let Canaan be a slave to them. **27** May God make room for Japheth, and let him dwell in the tents of Shem; and let Canaan be a slave to them." **28** And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years. **29** And all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years, and he died.

GENESIS 10

The Sons of Japheth

1 And these ***are*** the generations of the sons of Noah (Noach): Shem, Ham (Cham), and Japheth (Yefet); and sons were born to them after the flood. **2** The sons of Japheth ***were*** Gomer and Magog and Madai (Maday) and Javan (Yavan) and Tubal (Tuval) and Meshech (Meshekh) and Tiras. **3** And the sons of Gomer ***were*** Ashkenaz and Riphath (Rifat) and Togarmah (Togarma). **4** And the sons of Javan ***were*** Elishah (Elisha) and Tarshish, Kittim and Dodanim. **5** From these the coastlands of the nations were separated in their lands, each according to his language, according to their families, in their nations.

The Sons of Ham

6 And the sons of Ham ***were*** Cush (Kush) and Mizraim (Mitsrayim) and Put and Canaan (Kena'an). **7** And the sons of Cush ***were*** Seba (Seva) and Havilah (Chavila) and Sabtah (Savta) and Raamah (Rama) and Sabteca (Savtekha); and the sons of Raamah ***were*** Sheba (Sheva) and Dedan. **8** And Cush fathered Nimrod; he began to be a mighty ***man*** on the earth. **9** He was a mighty ***man*** of hunting before the LORD; therefore it is said, "Like Nimrod, a mighty ***man*** of hunting before the LORD." **10** And the beginning of his kingdom was Babylon

9:19 Acts 17:26; Gen 5:32; Gen 8:17
9:20 Gen 3:18,19,23; Gen 4:2; Gen 5:29
9:21 1 Cor 10:12; Eph 5:18; Prov 20:1
9:22 Gal 6:1; Ps 35:20,21; Ps 40:15
9:23 Gal 6:1; Exod 20:12; Lev 19:32
9:25 Josh 9:23,27; Deut 27:16; John 8:34
9:26 Luke 1:68; Luke 3:36; Deut 33:26
9:27 Luke 3:36; Rom 11:12; Rom 15:12
9:29 Gen 5:5,20,27,32; Gen 11:11-25; Ps 90:10
10:1 Gen 2:4; Gen 5:1; Gen 6:9
10:2 Rev 20:8; Ezek 38:2,6,15; 1 Chr 1:5-7
10:4 Num 24:24; Isa 23:1,12; Dan 11:30
10:5 Jer 2:10; Jer 25:22; Zeph 2:11
10:6 Gen 9:22; 1 Chr 1:8-16; 1 Chr 4:40
10:7 Ezek 27:22; Ezek 27:15; Ps 72:10
10:8 Mic 5:6
10:9 Gen 6:4; Gen 25:27; Gen 27:30
10:10 Gen 11:9; Gen 11:2; Gen 14:1

9:19 *from these all the earth spread abroad* Every person alive comes from Noah's three sons. The human race is one family, made from one man (Acts 17:26). Chapter 10 gives the family tree.
9:21 *he drank from the wine and became drunk* The righteous man who built the ark fell. The Bible does not hide its heroes' failures, nor does it approve of them (Prov 20:1; Eph 5:18). Some excuse Noah as not knowing what wine would do, but Genesis is silent. Even a godly man can fall, often after a great victory, when his guard is down (1 Cor 10:12).
9:22 *Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and he told his two brothers outside* Some think Ham did something worse, but the text says only that he saw and told. Instead of covering his father's shame, he spread it.
9:23 *covered the nakedness of their father* Shem and Japheth honored their father at his worst. When a brother falls, will we spread the news or cover it with love? This does not mean hiding sin from those who must deal with it. It means refusing to make a show of someone's shame (Prov 10:12; Gal 6:1).
9:25 *Cursed be Canaan* The curse fell on Canaan, not on Ham or Ham's other sons (10:6). Scripture does not say why. Perhaps Canaan was involved, or Noah, speaking as a prophet, saw that Canaan's line would go further in Ham's sin. The Canaanites became known for gross immorality (Lev 18:3, 24-25), and some later served Israel (Josh 9:23).
9:25 *a slave of slaves he shall be to his brothers* This must be said plainly: it was not a curse on any race, and not on Africans or people with dark skin. For centuries some misused this passage to defend slavery and racism. That was wrong and twisted God's Word to excuse terrible sin. Every person bears God's image (9:6), all nations come from one man (Acts 17:26), and heaven will be filled from every nation (Rev 7:9).
9:26 *Blessed be the LORD, the God of Shem* Noah blessed Shem's God, the highest blessing he could give. From Shem came Abraham, Israel and Jesus the Messiah (Luke 3:36). The word Semitic comes from Shem.
9:27 *let him dwell in the tents of Shem* Japheth sounds like the Hebrew for making room. His descendants spread widely (10:2-5). Many see this fulfilled when Gentile nations came to share Israel's blessings through her Messiah. Paul pictures Gentile believers as wild branches grafted into Israel's olive tree, and warns them not to be proud, for God still has a future for Israel (Rom 11:17-26).
9:29 *all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years, and he died* If chapter 11 has no gaps, Noah died either a couple of years before Abram's birth or when Abram was about fifty-eight, depending on Terah's age (11:26, 32), and Shem lived well into Abraham's life. The flood washed the world but could not wash the heart or defeat death. We need a greater Savior than Noah.
10:1 *these are the generations of the sons of Noah* Moses lists Japheth, then Ham, and saves Shem for last. Genesis often deals briefly with the side branches and then returns to the line of promise. In time, chapter 10 overlaps chapter 11: it shows the map before telling how the map came to be at Babel.
10:2 *The sons of Japheth* Many scholars link these names with known peoples. Javan is the Hebrew name for the Greeks, Madai the Medes. Gomer, Magog, Tubal and Meshech are often placed to the north, around the Black Sea and what is now Turkey. Tarshish was a distant seaport, possibly in Spain, and Kittim is usually Cyprus.
10:5 *each according to his language* Japheth's family spread north and west along the coasts, as Noah prayed (9:27). "Language" looks ahead to Babel (11:7-9).
10:6 *the sons of Ham were Cush and Mizraim and Put and Canaan* Mizraim is the Hebrew name for Egypt. Cush is the region south of Egypt, Put is often Libya, and Canaan is the land later promised to Abraham. Sheba and Dedan (10:7) point to Arabia, likely the home of the queen who visited Solomon (1 Kgs 10). Africa and Arabia are part of the Bible's story from the start.
10:9 *a mighty man of hunting before the LORD* It may simply mean God saw him, or he was great in God's sight. Many teachers see something darker. His name resembles a Hebrew word for we will rebel, and some think he hunted men as well as animals, gathering power by force. We cannot be sure.
10:10 *the beginning of his kingdom was Babylon* In Hebrew, Babel. Shinar is Babylonia in southern Mesopotamia. Nimrod also built Nineveh (10:11), later Assyria's capital. Both cities would become cruel enemies of God's people. Nimrod is the first man said to have a kingdom. Man was building his own kingdoms apart from God, and the rest of the Bible tells how God builds His.

(Bavel) and Erech (Erekh) and Accad (Akad) and Calneh (Kalne), in the land of Shinar. **11** From that land he went out ***to*** Assyria (Ashur), and he built Nineveh (Ninve) and
Rehoboth-Ir (Rechovot-Ir) and Calah (Kelach), **12** and Resen between Nineveh and Calah; that ***is*** the great city. **13** And Mizraim fathered the Ludim and the Anamim and the Lehabim (Lehavim) and the Naphtuhim (Naftuchim) **14** and the Pathrusim (Patrusim) and the Casluhim (Kasluchim), from where the Philistines came out, and the Caphtorim. **15** And Canaan fathered Sidon (Tsidon) his firstborn, and Heth (Chet), **16** and the Jebusite and the Amorite and the Girgashite **17** and the Hivite and the Arkite and the Sinite **18** and the Arvadite and the Zemarite and the Hamathite; and afterward the families of the Canaanite were scattered. **19** And the border of the Canaanite was from Sidon, as you go toward Gerar, as far as Gaza (Aza); as you go toward Sodom (Sedom) and Gomorrah (Amora) and Admah (Adma) and Zeboiim (Tsevoyim), as far as Lasha (Lesha). **20** These ***are*** the sons of Ham according to their families, according to their languages, in their lands, in their nations.

The Sons of Shem

21 And to Shem, the father of all the sons of Eber (Ever), the brother of Japheth the elder, to him also ***sons*** were born. **22** The sons of Shem ***were*** Elam and Asshur (Ashur) and Arpachshad (Arpakhshad) and Lud and Aram. **23** And the sons of Aram ***were*** Uz (Uts) and Hul (Chul) and Gether (Geter) and Mash. **24** And Arpachshad fathered Shelah (Shelach), and Shelah fathered Eber. **25** And to Eber were born two sons; the name of the one ***was*** Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided; and the name of his brother ***was*** Joktan (Yoqtan). **26** And Joktan fathered Almodad and Sheleph (Shelef) and Hazarmaveth (Chatsarmavet) and Jerah (Yerach) **27** and Hadoram and Uzal and Diklah (Diqla) **28** and Obal (Oval) and Abimael (Avima'el) and Sheba **29** and Ophir (Ofir) and Havilah and Jobab (Yovav); all these ***were*** the sons of Joktan. **30** And their dwelling place was from Mesha, as you go toward Sephar (Sefar), the hill country of the east. **31** These ***are*** the sons of Shem according to their families, according to their languages, in their lands, according to their nations. **32** These ***are*** the families of the sons of Noah according to their generations, in their nations; and from these the nations were separated on the earth after the flood.

GENESIS 11

The Tower of Babel

1 And all the earth was ***of*** one language and ***of the*** same words. **2** And it happened, as they set out from the east, and they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and they dwelt there. **3** And they said each to his neighbor, "Come, let us make bricks and burn ***them*** with burning." And the brick was to them for stone, and the bitumen was to them for mortar. **4** And they said, "Come, let us build for ourselves a city and a tower, and its top ***will be*** in the heavens; and let us make for ourselves a name, lest we be scattered over the face of all the

10:11 Mic 5:6; Ps 83:8; Jonah 1:2
10:13 1 Chr 1:11,12; Jer 46:9; Ezek 30:5
10:14 Jer 47:4; 1 Chr 1:12; Deut 2:23
10:15 Mark 7:24; Acts 27:3; 1 Chr 1:13
10:16 Judg 1:21; 2 Sam 24:18; Zech 9:7
10:17 Gen 34:2
10:18 Ezek 27:8; Josh 18:22; 2 Chr 13:4
10:19 Mark 7:24; Gen 14:2; Gen 15:18-21
10:20 Gen 10:6; Gen 11:1-9
10:21 Luke 3:36; Num 24:24; Gen 11:10-26
10:22 Luke 3:36; Isa 66:19; Gen 9:26
10:23 Job 1:1; Jer 25:20
10:24 Luke 3:35; Gen 11:12-15
10:25 Luke 3:35; 1 Chr 1:19; Gen 10:21
10:26 1 Chr 1:20-28
10:27 1 Chr 1:20-28
10:28 Gen 25:3; 1 Kgs 10:1; 1 Chr 1:20-28
10:29 1 Kgs 9:28; 1 Kgs 22:48; 1 Chr 8:18
10:30 Num 23:7
10:31 Gen 10:5,20; Acts 17:26
10:32 Acts 17:26; Gen 10:1,20,31; Gen 5:29-31
11:1 Zeph 3:9; Isa 19:18; Acts 2:6
11:2 Gen 10:10; Gen 14:1; Dan 1:2
11:3 James 4:13; James 5:1; Gen 14:10
11:4 James 4:13; Deut 1:28; Deut 9:1

10:14 *from where the Philistines came out* Israel's long-running enemies, Goliath's people. Scripture also links them with Caphtor (Amos 9:7), which many identify with Crete. Moses gives Israel the background of the peoples they would meet, all descended from Noah, all under the God of the whole earth.
10:15 *Canaan fathered Sidon his firstborn, and Heth* Heth is the ancestor of the Hittites. Jebusites, Amorites, Girgashites and Hivites appear again and again in Moses and Joshua as the peoples of the promised land (15:18-21). Israel, about to enter Canaan, needed to know its real borders and real neighbors (10:19).
10:21 *the father of all the sons of Eber* Eber's name most likely gave us the word Hebrew. Asshur gave his name to Assyria, Elam to a people east of Babylon, and Aram to the Arameans of Syria, where Abraham's relatives later lived (24:10). The line that matters runs Shem, Arpachshad, Shelah, Eber, toward Abraham (11:10-26) and Jesus (Luke 3:34-36).
10:25 *Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided* Peleg means division. Most teachers take it as the scattering at Babel, which fits this chapter about nations divided into their lands. Some suggest a division of the land masses, but the text gives little to build on. The world was being divided, but God kept His promised line intact.
10:29 *Ophir* Famous for gold in Solomon's day (1 Kgs 9:28). Joktan's sons are linked with Arabian tribes. Sheba and Havilah appear in Ham's line too (10:7), so families sometimes settled in the same regions or used similar names.
10:32 *from these the nations were separated on the earth after the flood* About seventy names. Some link the number with Deuteronomy 32:8. God knows every nation by name, and all come from one family (Acts 17:26), so there is no room for racial pride. This is a missionary chapter. God chose Abraham to bless all the families of the earth (12:3), and people from every nation will stand before His throne (Rev 7:9). Genesis 10 is the beginning of the guest list.
11:1 *all the earth was of one language and of the same words* Chapter 10 listed the nations with their languages. Chapter 11 steps back to tell how those languages came about.
11:2 *they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and they dwelt there* Shinar is Babylonia, in what is now southern Iraq, where Nimrod built his kingdom (10:10). God said fill the earth. These people found a flat spot and stayed. Settling down is not a sin, but settling down against God's word is.
11:3 *let us make bricks and burn them with burning* Southern Mesopotamia had little stone, so they baked bricks and used bitumen, a natural asphalt, for mortar. Ruins in that region show many stepped towers called ziggurats, often topped with a small temple, and many believe Babel was an early one.
11:4 *let us make for ourselves a name, lest we be scattered over the face of all the earth* A tower to heaven, a name for themselves, and no scattering, the very thing God had commanded. It was human pride and security with God left out. In the next chapter God promises Abram that He will "make your name great" (12:2). The world grasps for a name. God gives one to those who trust Him.

earth." **5** And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of mankind had built. **6** And the LORD said, "Look, ***they are*** one people, and one language ***is*** to all of them, and this ***is what*** they begin to do; and now nothing that they plan to do will be withheld from them. **7** Come, let Us go down and let Us confuse their language there, so that they will not understand, each the language of his neighbor." **8** And the LORD scattered them from there over the face of all the earth, and they ceased to build the city. **9** Therefore ***one*** called its name Babylon (Bavel), because there the LORD confused the language of all the earth; and from there the LORD scattered them over the face of all the earth.

From Shem to Abram

10 These ***are*** the generations of Shem: Shem ***was*** a son of a hundred years, and he fathered Arpachshad (Arpakhshad) two years after the flood. **11** And Shem lived after he fathered Arpachshad five hundred years, and he fathered sons and daughters. **12** And Arpachshad lived thirty-five years, and he fathered Shelah (Shelach). **13** And Arpachshad lived after he fathered Shelah four hundred and three years, and he fathered sons and daughters. **14** And Shelah lived thirty years, and he fathered Eber (Ever). **15** And Shelah lived after he fathered Eber four hundred and three years, and he fathered sons and daughters. **16** And Eber lived thirty-four years, and he fathered Peleg. **17** And Eber lived after he fathered Peleg four hundred and thirty years, and he fathered sons and daughters. **18** And Peleg lived thirty years, and he fathered Reu. **19** And Peleg lived after he fathered Reu two hundred and nine years, and he fathered sons and daughters. **20** And Reu lived thirty-two years, and he fathered Serug. **21** And Reu lived after he fathered Serug two hundred and seven years, and he fathered sons and daughters. **22** And Serug lived thirty years, and he fathered Nahor (Nachor). **23** And Serug lived after he fathered Nahor two hundred years, and he fathered sons and daughters. **24** And Nahor lived twenty-nine years, and he fathered Terah (Terach). **25** And Nahor lived after he fathered Terah a hundred and nineteen years, and he fathered sons and daughters. **26** And Terah lived seventy years, and he fathered Abram (Avram), Nahor, and Haran.

Terah's Family Moves to Haran

27 And these ***are*** the generations of Terah: Terah fathered Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran fathered Lot. **28** And Haran died in the presence of Terah his father, in the land of his birth, in Ur of the Chaldeans (Kasdim). **29** And Abram and Nahor took wives for themselves. The name of the wife of Abram ***was*** Sarai (Saray), and the name of the wife of Nahor ***was*** Milcah (Milka), the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah and the father of Iscah (Yiska). **30** And Sarai was bar-

11:5 Eph 4:9; Gen 18:21; Exod 19:11
11:6 Gen 11:1; Gen 9:19; Luke 1:51
11:7 Acts 2:9; Acts 2:10; Acts 2:11
11:8 Luke 1:51; Gen 10:25,32; Gen 11:4,9
11:9 Gen 10:5,10,20,31; Isa 13:1-14; 1 Cor 14:23
11:10 Luke 3:34-36; 1 Chr 1:17-27; Gen 11:27
11:11 Gen 5:4-32; Gen 1:28; Gen 9:7
11:12 Luke 3:36
11:16 Gen 10:21,25; Num 24:24; 1 Chr 1:19
11:18 Luke 3:35
11:20 Luke 3:35
11:22 Josh 24:2
11:24 Luke 3:34
11:26 Josh 24:2; Gen 12:4,5; Gen 22:20-24
11:27 2 Pet 2:7; Luke 3:34; Gen 11:31
11:28 Acts 7:2; Luke 3:34; Acts 7:4
11:29 Luke 3:34; Gen 17:15; Gen 22:20
11:30 Gen 15:2,3; Gen 16:1,2; Gen 18:11,12

11:5 *the LORD came down to see the city and the tower* They thought their tower would reach heaven. It was so small God had to come down to look at it. Moses is gently mocking human pride. God knows all, but Scripture speaks this way to show He looks closely before He judges, as at Sodom (18:21).

11:6 *nothing that they plan to do will be withheld from them* Not that they could storm heaven, but that a united humanity set against God would go further and further into rebellion. The judgment was also a mercy that slowed the spread of evil.

11:7 *Come, let Us go down and let Us confuse their language* The builders twice said "Come, let us" (11:3-4), and God answers with His own. The plural echoes 1:26 and 3:22. Some see a royal way of speaking or God with His heavenly court. I believe, with many teachers, it is an early hint of the Trinity.

11:8 *the LORD scattered them from there* What they feared most is exactly what happened. You cannot build your way out from under God's command.

11:9 *one called its name Babylon, because there the LORD confused the language* In Hebrew the name is Babel, which sounds like balal, to confuse. Babylon's people said the name meant gate of god. Moses says it means confusion. Babylon becomes a picture of the world organized against God, all the way to Revelation 17-18. At Pentecost people from many nations heard the gospel in their own languages (Acts 2:5-11). Babel scattered. The gospel gathers (Rev 7:9).

11:10 *These are the generations of Shem* The story narrows to the line of blessing (9:26). Life spans are already falling: Shem 600 years, Arpachshad 438, Eber 464, Peleg 239. Something changed after the flood, though Genesis does not say what. Eber likely gave us the word Hebrew (10:21), and Peleg's division many link with Babel (10:25).

11:24 *Nahor lived twenty-nine years, and he fathered Terah* The ages keep dropping. Nahor lived 148 years. Abraham will live 175, and Moses 120. These lists show God keeping the line of promise through every generation, down to Jesus (Luke 3:34-36).

11:26 *Terah lived seventy years, and he fathered Abram, Nahor, and Haran* Not all in one year. Abram is named first as the most important, not necessarily the oldest. Terah died at 205 (11:32), Abram left Haran at seventy-five (12:4), and Stephen says he left after his father died (Acts 7:4). That puts Abram's birth when Terah was about 130.

11:27 *these are the generations of Terah* From here on Genesis is mostly about Abram and his family.

11:28 *Haran died in the presence of Terah his father* Haran died young. Lot had lost his father, and his uncle Abram seems to have looked after him.

11:28 *Ur of the Chaldeans* Most likely the great city of Ur in southern Mesopotamia, wealthy and advanced, where the moon god was worshiped. Some argue for a northern Ur near Haran. The Chaldeans are known from later times, so the name may tell later readers which Ur was meant, as Dan is used in 14:14. Terah's family served other gods (Josh 24:2). God called Abram out of idolatry by grace.

11:29 *The name of the wife of Abram was Sarai* She was his half sister (20:12), a marriage later forbidden (Lev 18:9) but not yet in Abram's day. Milcah, Nahor's wife, becomes Rebekah's grandmother (22:20-23).

11:30 *Sarai was barren; she had no child* Said twice so we will not miss it. A family without an heir had no future, yet God is about to promise this couple a great nation. He often begins where human strength runs out. To anyone who has longed for a child: Sarai, Rebekah and Rachel were part of God's unique plan to bring the promised line into the world. Their stories are not a promise that every couple who prays will have a child, and childlessness is not a sign that God is angry or your faith is too small. The God who saw Hagar (16:13) sees you.

ren; she had no child. **31** And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran, his son's son, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, the wife of Abram his son; and they went out with them from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to the land of Canaan (Kena'an); and they came as far as Haran (Charan), and they dwelt there. **32** And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years, and Terah died in Haran.

GENESIS 12

The Call of Abram

1 And the LORD said to Abram (Avram), "Go for yourself from your land and from your kindred and from the house of your father, to the land which I will show you. **2** And I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great; and be a blessing. **3** And I will bless those who bless you, and the one who disdains you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth will be blessed." **4** And Abram went, just as the LORD had spoken to him, and Lot went with him. And Abram ***was*** a son of seventy-five years when he went out from Haran (Charan). **5** And Abram took Sarai (Saray) his wife and Lot the son of his brother, and all their possessions which they had accumulated, and the souls whom they had acquired in Haran; and they went out to go to the land of Canaan (Kena'an), and they came to the land of Canaan. **6** And Abram passed through the land as far as the place of Shechem (Shekhem), as far as the terebinth of Moreh (More). And the Canaanite ***was*** then in the land. **7** And the LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your seed I will give this land." And he built there an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him. **8** And he moved on from there to the mountain east of Bethel (Bet-El), and he pitched his tent, Bethel ***being*** on the west and Ai (Ay) on the east; and he built there an altar to the LORD, and he called on the name of the LORD. **9** And Abram journeyed, going on and journeying toward the Negeb (Negev).

Abram in Egypt

10 And ***there*** was a famine in the land, and Abram went down to Egypt (Mitsrayim) to sojourn there, for the famine ***was*** heavy in the land. **11** And it happened, as he drew near to enter Egypt, and he said to Sarai his wife, "Look, please, I know that you ***are*** a woman beautiful of appearance. **12** And it will be, when the Egyptians see you, and they will say, 'This ***is*** his wife,' and they will kill me, and you they will keep alive. **13** Please say ***that*** you ***are*** my sister, so that it may go well for me for your sake, and my soul will live on account of you." **14** And it happened, when Abram entered Egypt, and the Egyptians saw the woman, that she ***was*** very beautiful.

11:31 Acts 7:2; Acts 7:4; Luke 3:34
11:32 Luke 3:34
12:1 Acts 7:3; Heb 11:8; Acts 7:2
12:2 Acts 13:17; Heb 7:6; Heb 11:8
12:3 Acts 3:25; Gal 3:8; Gal 3:16
12:4 Heb 11:8; Acts 7:4; Gen 11:27
12:5 Acts 7:4; Acts 7:2; Acts 13:19
12:6 Acts 7:16; Deut 11:30; Heb 11:9
12:7 Gal 3:16; Acts 7:5; John 4:20
12:8 Acts 2:21; Rom 10:12; Rom 10:13
12:9 Gen 13:3; Gen 24:62; Ps 105:13
12:10 Acts 7:11; Acts 2:10; Gen 43:1
12:11 Gen 26:7; Gen 29:17; Gen 12:14
12:12 Gen 20:11; Gen 26:7; 1 Sam 27:1
12:13 Matt 26:71; Gen 20:2,5,12,13; Gen 26:7
12:14 Gen 3:6; Gen 6:2; Gen 39:7

11:31 *they came as far as Haran, and they dwelt there* God first appeared to Abram in Mesopotamia, before Haran (Acts 7:2-4), so the move began with God's call. Haran lay far north, in what is now southern Turkey, and was another center of moon worship. The family stopped halfway. Many of us start to follow God and then settle somewhere comfortable short of where He told us to go.

12:1 *Go for yourself from your land and from your kindred and from the house of your father* Abram did not go looking for God. God came to a man from an idol-worshiping family (Josh 24:2), by grace. Each step was harder: land, relatives, father's house. In that culture family was safety, income and identity.

12:1 *to the land which I will show you* God did not give the address. Abram went out not knowing where he was going (Heb 11:8). Faith often takes the next step before it sees the road. God usually gives enough light for today.

12:2 *I will make you into a great nation* God answered every loss with a promise. A great nation from a couple who could not have one child (11:30)? Only God could do it, and that was the point.

12:2 *make your name great; and be a blessing* The builders of Babel tried to make a name and were scattered (11:4). Abram received greatness as a gift, and his name is honored around the world. God never blesses us only for ourselves.

12:3 *I will bless those who bless you, and the one who disdains you I will curse* God tied His own honor to Abram and his family. I believe this still applies to how nations treat Abram's descendants, the people of Israel. Many Christians see it at work in history, though we should be careful about claiming to know exactly how God has judged any nation.

12:3 *in you all the families of the earth will be blessed* Babel scattered the families of the earth, and God answers by blessing them through one family. Here God preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham (Gal 3:8), and the blessing comes through Abraham's Seed, who is Christ (Gal 3:16; Matt 1:1). If you are a Gentile who believes in Jesus, you are part of the answer to this promise. This begins the Abrahamic covenant, resting on God's "I will," spelled out in chapters 15, 17 and 22.

12:4 *Abram went, just as the LORD had spoken to him* No argument. Faith shows in what we do. Abram was seventy-five. God's call does not retire people.

12:5 *the souls whom they had acquired in Haran* Servants and workers, a large household. Some Jewish teachers also saw people Abram had led to the true God, but the plain meaning is his servants.

12:6 *the terebinth of Moreh* Shechem lay in the middle of the land between two mountains, about thirty miles north of Jerusalem. Moreh means teacher, and the great tree may have been a place where pagans sought guidance.

12:6 *the Canaanite was then in the land* The land was already full of people. Faith trusts God's promise when circumstances seem to say the opposite.

12:7 *the LORD appeared to Abram* The first time Genesis says God appeared to someone. We are not told what Abram saw.

12:7 *To your seed I will give this land* Now a homeland for the nation, repeated again and again (13:15; 15:18; 17:8). God's gifts and calling are irrevocable (Rom 11:29), and I believe that includes this land, so His promise of it to Israel still stands. Abram's altar was worship and a public statement in a pagan land: this ground belongs to the LORD.

12:8 *he pitched his tent* Wherever Abram went, a tent and an altar. The tent showed he was a traveler, and the altar showed whom he lived for. He was looking for a city whose builder is God (Heb 11:9-10). He called on the LORD's name out in the open.

12:9 *toward the Negeb* The dry southern region of Israel, often spelled Negev today.

12:10 *Abram went down to Egypt* Right after obedience came a famine. Obeying God does not mean life will be easy. Egypt had the Nile and often had food. We are not told God sent him, and he built no altars there. Many teachers see a step out of faith into his own planning. The text itself does not judge the move, but it did not go well.

12:13 *Please say that you are my sister* Sarai was his half sister (20:12), but a half-truth told to deceive is a lie. His plan protected himself and endangered his wife. Strong faith in one area does not mean strong faith in every area. Abram repeats this in chapter 20, and Isaac does it too (26:7). Our sins often get passed down.

15 And the officials of Pharaoh saw her, and they praised her to Pharaoh; and the woman was taken ***to*** the house of Pharaoh. **16** And he did good to Abram for her sake; and he had sheep and cattle and ***male*** donkeys and ***male*** servants and female servants and female donkeys and camels. **17** And the LORD plagued Pharaoh ***with*** great plagues, and his house, on account of Sarai, the wife of Abram. **18** And Pharaoh called Abram and said, "What ***is*** this ***that*** you have done to me? Why did you not tell me that she ***is*** your wife? **19** Why did you say, 'She ***is*** my sister,' and I took her for myself as a wife? And now, look, your wife; take ***her*** and go." **20** And Pharaoh commanded men concerning him, and they sent him away, and his wife, and all that he had.

GENESIS 13

Abram and Lot Separate

1 And Abram (Avram) went up from Egypt (Mitsrayim), he and his wife and all that he had, and Lot with him, to the Negeb (Negev). **2** And Abram ***was*** very rich in livestock, in silver, and in gold. **3** And he went on his journeys from the Negeb as far as Bethel (Bet-El), to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Ai (Ay), **4** to the place of the altar which he had made there at the first; and there Abram called on the name of the LORD. **5** And Lot also, who ***was*** going with Abram, had sheep and cattle and tents. **6** And the land did not support them to dwell together, for their possessions were great, and they were not able to dwell together. **7** And ***there*** was a quarrel between the herdsmen of the livestock of Abram and the herdsmen of the livestock of Lot. And the Canaanite and the Perizzite ***were*** then dwelling in the land. **8** And Abram said to Lot, "Please let there be no strife between me and you, and between my herdsmen and your herdsmen, for we ***are*** men, brothers. **9** Is not all the land before you? Please separate from me. If the left, then I will go right; and if the right, then I will go left." **10** And Lot lifted up his eyes and saw all the district of the Jordan (Yarden), that all of it ***was*** well-watered, before the LORD destroyed Sodom (Sedom) and Gomorrah (Amora), like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as you go to Zoar (Tso'ar). **11** And Lot chose for himself all the district of the Jordan, and Lot set out toward the east; and they separated, each from his brother. **12** Abram dwelt in the land of Canaan (Kena'an), and Lot dwelt in the cities of the district, and he moved ***his*** tent as far as Sodom. **13** And the men of Sodom ***were*** evil and sinners against the LORD, exceedingly.

God Renews His Promise

14 And the LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, "Please lift up your eyes and look from the place where you ***are***, northward and southward and eastward and westward; **15** for all the land which you are seeing, to you I will give it, and to your seed forever. **16** And I will make your seed like the dust of the earth, so that if a man is able to

12:15 Gen 20:2; Esth 2:2-16; Prov 29:12
12:16 Gen 20:14; Gen 13:2; Gen 24:35
12:17 1 Chr 16:21; Gen 20:18; 1 Chr 21:22
12:18 Gen 20:9,10; Gen 3:13; Gen 4:10
12:20 Exod 18:27; 1 Sam 29:6-11; Ps 105:14,15
13:1 Gen 12:9-20; Gen 20:1; Gen 21:33
13:2 Gen 24:35; Ps 112:1-3; Prov 10:22
13:3 Gen 12:6,8,9
13:4 Gen 12:7,8; Jer 29:12; Eph 6:18,19
13:5 Gen 4:20; Gen 25:27; Jer 49:29
13:6 Gen 36:6,7; Eccl 5:10,11; 1 Tim 6:9
13:7 1 Cor 6:6; Gen 26:20; Gen 12:6
13:8 Acts 7:26; 1 Cor 6:6,7; Ps 133:1
13:9 Gen 20:15; Gen 34:10; Ps 120:7
13:10 Deut 34:3; Isa 51:3; Joel 2:3
13:11 Gen 13:9,14; Gen 19:17; Ps 16:3
13:12 2 Pet 2:7; 2 Pet 2:8; Gen 19:29
13:13 2 Pet 2:6; Jude 1:7; Matt 9:10
13:14 Gen 28:14; Deut 3:27; Isa 49:18
13:15 Gal 3:16; Gen 12:7; 2 Chr 20:7
13:16 Num 23:10; Gen 15:5; Gen 22:17

12:15 *the woman was taken to the house of Pharaoh* Pharaoh was the title of Egypt's king, not his name. Sarai was taken to become one of his wives.
12:16 *he did good to Abram for her sake* Abram got rich and lost his wife. Hagar, the Egyptian maid of chapter 16, may have come from this trip. Gains won by sin often bring a hidden cost.
12:17 *the LORD plagued Pharaoh with great plagues* Abram failed, but God did not. He would not let His promise be lost in Pharaoh's palace. If we are faithless, He remains faithful (2 Tim 2:13). These plagues preview the ones God will send on Egypt in Moses' day.
12:18 *What is this that you have done to me* The pagan king acts with more honor than the man of God, and Abram has no answer. He is called the friend of God (James 2:23), yet he was a real man with real weakness. God does not use perfect people. He uses forgiven people who keep coming back to Him.
13:1 *Abram went up from Egypt* In the Bible you go down to Egypt and up to the land of promise. Canaan's hill country is higher, but it is also a picture: leaving Egypt was a step back up.
13:2 *Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver, and in gold* Wealth was counted mostly in animals. God blessed Abram in spite of his failure. Riches are not a sin, but they bring their own tests, and this chapter shows one.
13:4 *to the place of the altar which he had made there at the first* Abram went back to the last place he had walked closely with God. That is how you recover after failing: go back to where you left the path, confess, and pick up again in worship and prayer.
13:7 *the Canaanite and the Perizzite were then dwelling in the land* The pagan neighbors were watching. When God's people fight over money and property, the world sees it (1 Cor 6:1-8). Problems of plenty can be as hard as problems of want. Many families have been split by fights over an inheritance.
13:8 *for we are men, brothers* Abram was Lot's uncle. "Brothers" was used for close relatives. Family should not fight.
13:9 *Is not all the land before you* As the elder and head of the family, Abram had every right to choose first, and he let Lot choose. He could be generous because he trusted God, who had promised him the whole land. When you know God is caring for you, you can let others go first (Phil 2:3).
13:10 *Lot lifted up his eyes and saw all the district of the Jordan* It looked like paradise and the best deal. Lot chose by sight. We read nothing of prayer or of what the place would do to his family's soul. And Moses adds, "before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah."
13:11 *Lot set out toward the east* In Genesis moving east is often a move away from God, as with Adam and Eve and with Cain (3:24; 4:16).
13:12 *he moved his tent as far as Sodom* First he looked toward Sodom, then chose the valley, then pitched near Sodom. Next he is living in it (14:12), and by chapter 19 he sits in its gate. Spiritual drift usually comes one small step at a time.
13:13 *the men of Sodom were evil and sinners against the LORD, exceedingly* Lot knew, or should have known. Peter calls him a righteous man tormented by what he saw there (2 Pet 2:7-8). He was saved, but he and his family paid a high price.
13:14 *Please lift up your eyes and look* Abram had just given up the best land. Lot lifted his eyes to what he wanted. Abram lifted his at God's command and saw what God was giving him.
13:15 *to you I will give it, and to your seed forever* An everlasting possession. As at 12:7, I believe this promise still stands.
13:16 *I will make your seed like the dust of the earth* Abram still had no child. Later God uses the stars (15:5) and the sand (22:17) for the same promise.

count the dust of the earth, your seed also can be counted. **17** Arise, walk about in the land, through its length and through its breadth, for to you I will give it." **18** And Abram moved ***his*** tent, and he came and dwelt by the terebinths of Mamre, which ***are*** in Hebron (Chevron); and he built there an altar to the LORD.

GENESIS 14

War of the Kings and Lot Captured

1 And it happened in the days of Amraphel (Amrafel) king of Shinar, Arioch (Aryokh) king of Ellasar (Elasar), Chedorlaomer (Kedorla'omer) king of Elam, and Tidal king of Goiim (Goyim), **2** ***that*** they made war with Bera king of Sodom (Sedom), and with Birsha king of Gomorrah (Amora), Shinab (Shinav) king of Admah (Adma), and Shemeber (Shemever) king of Zeboiim (Tsevoyim), and the king of Bela, that ***is*** Zoar (Tso'ar). **3** All these joined together at the Valley of Siddim (Sidim), that ***is*** the Salt Sea. **4** Twelve years they served Chedorlaomer, and ***in*** the thirteenth year they rebelled. **5** And in the fourteenth year Chedorlaomer came, and the kings who ***were*** with him, and they struck the Rephaim in
Ashteroth-karnaim (Ashterot-Qarnayim), and the Zuzim in Ham, and the Emim in Shaveh-kiriathaim
(Shave-Qiryatayim), **6** and the Horites in their mountain Seir (Se'ir), as far as El-paran, which ***is*** by the wilderness. **7** And they turned back and came to En-mishpat, that ***is*** Kadesh (Qadesh), and they struck all the country of the Amalekite, and also the Amorite who ***was*** dwelling in Hazazon-tamar (Chatsatson-Tamar). **8** And the king of Sodom went out, and the king of Gomorrah, and the king of Admah, and the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela, that ***is*** Zoar; and they arranged battle with them in the Valley of Siddim, **9** with Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of Goiim, and Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar, four kings with the five. **10** And the Valley of Siddim ***was*** pits, pits of bitumen; and the king of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, and they fell there; and those who remained fled to ***the*** mountain. **11** And they took all the possessions of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their food, and they went. **12** And they took Lot and his possessions, the son of the brother of Abram (Avram), and they went; and he ***was*** dwelling in Sodom.

Abram Rescues Lot

13 And the one who escaped came and told Abram the Hebrew; and he ***was*** dwelling by the terebinths of Mamre the Amorite, the brother of Eshcol (Eshkol) and the brother of Aner; and they ***were*** covenant partners of Abram. **14** And Abram heard that his brother had been taken captive, and he drew out his trained men, born in his house, three hundred and eighteen, and he pursued as far as Dan. **15** And he divided himself against them by night, he and his servants, and he struck them, and he pursued them as far as Hobah (Chova), which ***is*** north of Damascus (Dameseq). **16** And he brought back all the possessions, and also Lot his brother and his possessions he brought back, and also the women and the people.

Melchizedek Blesses Abram

17 And the king of Sodom went out to meet him, after his return from striking Chedorlaomer and the kings who ***were*** with him, to the Valley of Shaveh, that ***is*** the Valley of the

13:18 Gen 14:13; Gen 35:27; Gen 8:20
14:1 Gen 10:10; Gen 11:2; Isa 11:11
14:2 Gen 13:10; Gen 10:19; Deut 29:23
14:3 Num 34:12; Deut 3:17; Josh 3:16
14:4 Gen 9:25,26; Ezek 17:15
14:5 Gen 15:20; Deut 3:11,20,22; Deut 1:4
14:6 Deut 2:12,22; Gen 21:21; Num 12:16
14:7 2 Chr 20:2; Gen 16:14; Gen 20:1
14:8 Gen 13:10; Gen 19:20,22; Gen 14:2
14:10 Gen 19:17,30; Gen 11:3; Josh 8:24
14:11 Gen 14:16,21; Gen 12:5; Deut 28:31,35,51
14:12 Gen 11:27; Gen 12:5; Gen 13:12,13
14:13 Phil 3:5; Gen 13:18; Gen 14:24
14:14 Gen 15:3; Judg 18:29; Eccl 2:7
14:15 Acts 9:2; Acts 22:6; Ps 112:5
14:16 Gen 14:11,12; 1 Sam 30:8,18,19; Gen 12:2
14:17 Heb 7:1-2; 2 Sam 18:18; Judg 11:34

13:17 *Arise, walk about in the land* Walking over land may have been a way of claiming it, and many teachers read it so. Abram walked as owner while he held not one acre. He never received even a foot of it in his lifetime (Acts 7:5). We too trust what God has promised before we see it.
13:18 *the terebinths of Mamre, which are in Hebron* Hebron, about twenty miles south of Jerusalem, became Abram's main home, and the patriarchs would be buried near there (23:19; 49:29-31). Lot moved toward Sodom, and Abram moved to an altar: in the land, in a tent, worshiping God.
14:1 *Amraphel king of Shinar* Shinar is Babylonia, and Elam lay east of it in what is now southwest Iran. Chedorlaomer seems to have led. Scholars have tried to match these kings with names in ancient records, and older writers linked Amraphel with Hammurabi, but no match is certain. Moses writes real names and places, as history.
14:3 *the Valley of Siddim, that is the Salt Sea* The Salt Sea is the Dead Sea. The five cities are most often placed near its southern end.
14:4 *Twelve years they served Chedorlaomer* They paid tribute, money or goods paid to a stronger king.
14:5 *they struck the Rephaim* The Rephaim, Zuzim and Emim were known as tall and strong peoples (Deut 2:10-11, 20-21), and the Horites lived in Seir, later Esau's land. This army had beaten giants, which makes Abram's victory all the more striking.
14:10 *the Valley of Siddim was pits, pits of bitumen* Natural asphalt, still found floating on the Dead Sea. The word is the same as at Babel (11:3), and Moses may want us to link the two as centers of human pride.
14:12 *they took Lot and his possessions* Lot pitched near Sodom (13:12), and now he is "dwelling in Sodom." When judgment fell on Sodom, it fell on Lot too. When we make our home among the world's ways, we often share the world's troubles. He chose Sodom for its riches and lost them all.
14:13 *Abram the Hebrew* The first time the word Hebrew appears. It may come from Eber (10:21) or from a word meaning one who crossed over. It marks Abram as an outsider. He lived at peace and in treaty with his Amorite neighbors while worshiping only the LORD.
14:14 *he drew out his trained men, born in his house, three hundred and eighteen* Abram could have said Lot made his choice. He went after him. With women and children, his household may have numbered over a thousand. Abram was a peaceful man, but not helpless.
14:14 *as far as Dan* The town was Laish in Abram's day and was renamed Dan much later (Judg 18:29). Moses or a later inspired editor used the name readers would know. Some suggest an earlier Dan.
14:16 *he brought back all the possessions, and also Lot his brother* The army that beat giants was beaten by a shepherd's household, because God delivered them (14:20). Abram fought to rescue, not to conquer. He took no land and made himself no king.
14:17 *the Valley of the King* Many think it was near Jerusalem (2 Sam 18:18). Two kings now come to Abram. One offers the riches of this world, and the other the blessing of God.

King. **18** And Melchizedek (Malki-Tsedeq) king of Salem (Shalem) brought out bread and wine; and he ***was*** a priest of God Most High. **19** And he blessed him and said, "Blessed ***be*** Abram by God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; **20** and blessed ***be*** God Most High, who has delivered your adversaries into your hand." And he gave him a tenth of everything. **21** And the king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give me the souls, and the possessions take for yourself." **22** And Abram said to the king of Sodom, "I have lifted up my hand to the LORD, God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth, **23** that from a thread even to a sandal strap, I will not take anything of all that ***is*** yours, and you will not say, 'I ***myself*** made Abram rich'; **24** apart from me, only that which the young men have eaten, and the share of the men who went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their share."

GENESIS 15

Abram Believes the LORD

1 After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram (Avram) in a vision, saying, "Do not fear, Abram. I ***am*** a shield to you; your reward ***will be*** exceedingly great." **2** And Abram said, "Lord GOD, what will You give me, and I ***am*** going childless, and the heir of my house ***is*** Damascus (Dameseq) Eliezer?" **3** And Abram said, "Look, to me You have not given seed; and look, a son of my house ***is*** inheriting ***from*** me." **4** And look, the word of the LORD ***came*** to him, saying, "This one will not inherit ***from*** you; but ***one*** who will come out from your inward parts, he will inherit ***from*** you." **5** And He brought him outside and said, "Please look toward the heavens, and count the stars, if you are able to count them." And He said to him, "So will your seed be." **6** And he believed in the LORD, and He counted it to him ***as*** righteousness.

The Covenant Between the Pieces

7 And He said to him, "I ***am*** the LORD who brought you out from Ur of the Chaldeans (Kasdim) to give you this land to possess it." **8** And he said, "Lord GOD, by what will I know that I will possess it?" **9** And He said to him, "Bring Me a heifer three years old, and a female goat three years old, and a ram three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon." **10** And he brought Him all these and cut them apart in the middle, and he set each piece to meet its neighbor; and the birds he did not cut apart. **11** And the birds of prey came

14:18 Heb 5:6; Heb 5:10; Matt 26:26
14:19 Luke 10:21; Acts 16:17; Eph 1:3
14:20 Acts 16:17; Heb 7:7; Gen 28:22
14:21 Acts 16:17
14:22 Acts 16:17; Acts 17:24; Exod 6:8
14:23 2 Kgs 5:16,20; Esth 9:15,16; 1 Kgs 13:8
14:24 Prov 3:27; Matt 7:12; Rom 13:7,8
15:1 Matt 5:12; John 10:35; Heb 11:6
15:2 Acts 22:6; Gen 25:21; Acts 7:5
15:3 Gen 14:14; Prov 29:21; Gen 12:2
15:4 Gen 17:16; Gen 21:12; 2 Sam 7:12
15:5 Rom 4:18; Heb 11:12; Deut 1:10
15:6 Rom 4:3; Rom 4:22-24; Gal 3:6
15:7 Acts 7:2; Acts 7:3; Acts 7:4
15:8 Luke 1:18; 2 Kgs 20:8; Ps 86:17
15:9 Luke 2:24; Gen 22:13; Lev 1:3,10,14
15:10 Lev 1:17; Jer 34:18,19; 2 Tim 2:15
15:11 Ezek 17:3,7; Matt 13:4; Ps 119:13

14:18 *Melchizedek king of Salem* His name means king of righteousness, and Salem means peace (Heb 7:2). Salem is most likely the early name of Jerusalem (Ps 76:2). He was king and priest. A priest stands between God and people with sacrifices and prayers. In Israel no king could also be a priest, but Melchizedek was both.
14:18 *brought out bread and wine* A meal of welcome for tired soldiers. Some connect it with the Lord's Supper, but the New Testament does not, so I would not press it.
14:18 *God Most High* In Hebrew El Elyon. Even in pagan Canaan, God had a priest who knew Him. God was at work where Abram did not expect.
14:20 *he gave him a tenth of everything* The first tithe in the Bible, a tenth given to God, centuries before the Law required one, given out of thankfulness. The Messiah would be "a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek" (Ps 110:4), and Hebrews 7 says Jesus is that King and Priest. With no recorded parents, birth or death, Melchizedek was made like the Son of God (Heb 7:3). The greater blesses the lesser (Heb 7:7), so Jesus' priesthood is greater than Levi's. Some believe Melchizedek was the Son of God Himself. Most see a real human king used as a picture of Christ, and I believe that fits Hebrews best.
14:21 *Give me the souls, and the possessions take for yourself* It sounded generous. Melchizedek brought bread and a blessing. The king of Sodom brought nothing and made a deal that would tie Abram to Sodom.
14:22 *I have lifted up my hand to the LORD, God Most High* Raising the hand made a solemn promise. Abram adds "the LORD," God's personal name: God Most High is the LORD he worships.
14:23 *from a thread even to a sandal strap* Not even a shoelace, so no one could say Sodom made Abram rich. Some offers look like blessings but come with strings. Abram had just met God's priest. He had no need of Sodom's gold.
14:24 *let them take their share* Abram did not force his standard on his allies, and he excepted what his young men had eaten. He was strict with himself and fair to others.
15:1 *Do not fear, Abram. I am a shield to you; your reward will be exceedingly great* Abram had made enemies of four kings and turned down a fortune. God answers both. He is Abram's protection, and He will reward him far beyond Sodom's goods. This is the first "Do not fear" in the Bible, and not the last. God rewards those who earnestly seek Him (Heb 11:6).
15:2 *Lord GOD, what will You give me, and I am going childless* "Lord GOD" stands for Adonai, Master, with Yahweh, God's personal name. Abram calls God Master, but he does not hide his disappointment. God welcomes honest prayer. That is faith talking to God about what it cannot yet see.
15:2 *the heir of my house is Damascus Eliezer* His chief servant. Some scholars point to ancient contracts, such as tablets from Nuzi, where a childless man adopted someone to care for him and inherit. How closely they match is debated.
15:4 *one who will come out from your inward parts, he will inherit from you* Abram's heir would be his own son.
15:5 *count the stars, if you are able to count them* Out in the dry country, with no city lights, the sky was full. First the dust (13:16), now the stars. Every clear night would remind Abram of the promise. God often gives reminders of His word in ordinary things.
15:6 *he believed in the LORD, and He counted it to him as righteousness* Few verses matter more. Abram took God at His word when nothing he could see made it look possible (Rom 4:20-21). "Counted" means credited to his account. Righteousness, being right with God, was not earned. God credited it. Paul builds his teaching on this verse (Rom 4:3), noting it came before circumcision (Rom 4:10) and centuries before the Law (Gal 3:17). It has always been by grace through faith. We are made right the same way, believing God's promise fulfilled in Jesus, who was raised for our justification (Rom 4:23-25). Those who believe are sons of Abraham (Gal 3:7).
15:7 *I am the LORD who brought you out from Ur of the Chaldeans* The whole journey was God's doing, with one purpose: to give him the land.
15:8 *by what will I know that I will possess it* Some hear doubt. I believe it was a request for assurance, since verse 6 says Abram believed. God did not scold him. He answered with a covenant.
15:10 *cut them apart in the middle* The same kinds of animals later used in Israel's sacrifices. Covenants were sometimes sealed by walking between the halves, saying in effect, may I be cut in pieces if I break this covenant (Jer 34:18-20).
15:11 *Abram drove them away* Abram waited and guarded the sacrifice. Waiting on God is often part of receiving His promises.

down on the carcasses, and Abram drove them away. **12** And it happened, as the sun ***was*** going ***down***, and a deep sleep fell on Abram; and look, dread, a great darkness, ***was*** falling on him. **13** And He said to Abram, "You will surely know that your seed will be a sojourner in a land ***that is*** not theirs, and they will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years. **14** And also the nation which they will serve I will judge; and afterward they will come out with great possessions. **15** And you, you will go to your fathers in peace; you will be buried in a good old age. **16** And ***in*** the fourth generation they will return here, for the iniquity of the Amorite ***is*** not yet complete." **17** And it happened, the sun had gone ***down***, and ***there*** was thick darkness; and look, an oven of smoke and a torch of fire which passed between these pieces. **18** On that day the LORD cut a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your seed I have given this land, from the river of Egypt (Mitsrayim) to the great river, the river Euphrates (Perat): **19** the Kenite and the Kenizzite and the Kadmonite, **20** and the Hittite and the Perizzite and the Rephaim, **21** and the Amorite and the Canaanite and the Girgashite and the Jebusite."

GENESIS 16

Sarai and Hagar

1 And Sarai (Saray), the wife of Abram (Avram), had not borne ***children*** to him; and she had an Egyptian female servant, and her name ***was*** Hagar. **2** And Sarai said to Abram, "Look, please, the LORD has restrained me from bearing. Please go in to my female servant; perhaps I will be built up from her." And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai. **3** And Sarai the wife of Abram took Hagar the Egyptian, her female servant, at the end of ten years of the dwelling of Abram in the land of Canaan (Kena'an), and she gave her to Abram her husband, to him as a wife. **4** And he went in to Hagar, and she conceived; and she saw that she had conceived, and her mistress became of little account in her eyes. **5** And Sarai said to Abram, "The violence ***done*** to me ***is*** on you! I ***myself*** gave my female servant into your bosom, and she saw that she had conceived, and I became of little account in her eyes. May the LORD judge between me and you." **6** And Abram said to Sarai, "Look, your female servant ***is*** in your hand; do to her ***what is*** good in your eyes." And Sarai afflicted her, and she fled from before her.

The God Who Sees

7 And the angel of the LORD found her by the spring of water in the wilderness, by the spring on the way of Shur. **8** And he

15:12 Gen 2:21; Job 33:15; Dan 10:8,9
15:13 Acts 7:6; Gal 3:17; Acts 7:7
15:14 Acts 7:7; Gen 46:1-34; Exod 6:5,6
15:15 Acts 13:36; Job 5:26; 2 Chr 34:28
15:16 Matt 23:32; 1 Thess 2:16; 2 Pet 3:9
15:17 Jer 34:18,19; Judg 6:21; 1 Chr 21:26
15:18 Gal 3:16; Gen 12:7; Deut 1:7,8
15:19 Num 24:21,22
15:20 Gen 14:5; Isa 17:5
15:21 Gen 10:15-19; Exod 23:23-28; Exod 33:2
16:1 Gal 4:24; Gen 15:2,3; Gen 12:16
16:2 Gal 4:22; Gen 17:16; Gen 18:10
16:3 Gal 4:25; Rom 4:10; Gal 4:22
16:4 1 Cor 4:6; Gal 4:22; Gal 4:24
16:5 Gen 31:53; Exod 5:21; Luke 10:40,41
16:6 Gen 13:8,9; Prov 14:29; Prov 15:1,17,18
16:7 Acts 7:30; Gen 25:18; Exod 15:22
16:8 Acts 7:30; Gal 4:24; Gen 3:9

15:13 *they will afflict them four hundred years* Egypt. God told Abram ahead of time so his people would know they were not forgotten. Four hundred is likely a round number. Exodus 12:40 gives 430 years. Teachers count the period differently, and some, following Galatians 3:17 and the Greek Old Testament, count from Abraham's time.
15:14 *afterward they will come out with great possessions* The plagues and the exodus foretold, when Israel left with Egypt's silver and gold (Exod 12:35-36). God's people may suffer, but He judges their oppressors and brings them out.
15:15 *you will be buried in a good old age* Abram would not see the slavery or the return. He died in peace at 175 (25:7-8).
15:16 *the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete* The Amorites stand for the peoples of Canaan. God would not give the land yet, because their sin had not reached its full measure. He was patient even with the Canaanites. Scripture presents the later conquest as God's judgment on centuries of wickedness, not a land grab (Deut 9:4-5). God gives time to repent (2 Pet 3:9), but His patience has an end.
15:17 *an oven of smoke and a torch of fire which passed between these pieces* Smoke and fire often show God's presence (Exod 13:21; 19:18). Only God passed between the pieces. Abram was asleep. God took the whole weight of the promise on Himself. That is why I believe this covenant is unconditional. Its fulfillment rests on God alone.
15:18 *from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates* The river of Egypt may be the seasonal stream at Canaan's southern edge (Num 34:5) or the easternmost branch of the Nile. Teachers differ. Israel came closest in David and Solomon's days (1 Kgs 4:21), but I believe the full promise still awaits a future fulfillment.
15:21 *the Amorite and the Canaanite and the Girgashite and the Jebusite* Ten real peoples, and God promised their land to Abram's descendants. God's gifts and calling are irrevocable (Rom 11:29).
16:2 *the LORD has restrained me from bearing* God had promised Abram a son of his own body (15:4) but had not yet said it would be through Sarai. She drew her own conclusion.
16:2 *Please go in to my female servant; perhaps I will be built up from her* Ancient law codes such as the Laws of Hammurabi, and marriage contracts from Mesopotamia, show this custom: a childless wife gave her servant to her husband, and the child counted as hers. The servant became a concubine, a secondary wife with fewer rights. It was legal and normal in their world, but it was not God's way or God's plan.
16:2 *Abram listened to the voice of Sarai* The words echo 3:17. In both cases a husband went along with a plan he should have brought to God. When we tire of waiting, we are tempted to take matters into our own hands.
16:3 *at the end of ten years* Abram was eighty-five and Sarai seventy-five. Scripture records this honestly but does not approve it. God's pattern is one man and one woman (2:24; Matt 19:4-6), and every time the Bible shows a man with more than one wife, trouble follows. Hagar the Egyptian may have come from Abram's shortcut in Egypt (12:16).
16:4 *her mistress became of little account in her eyes* The plan worked, and it was a disaster. Sarai got what she asked for and lost her peace. Getting what we want by our own methods often brings pain we did not expect.
16:5 *The violence done to me is on you* It was her idea, yet she blamed him, as Adam blamed Eve (3:12). Still, Sarai was not entirely wrong. Abram was head of the home and let his responsibility go.
16:6 *Sarai afflicted her, and she fled from before her* Abram washed his hands of it and did not protect the woman carrying his child. "Afflicted" is the word later used of Egypt's treatment of Israel (15:13; Exod 1:11-12). Everyone here did wrong, and the most powerless person paid the highest price.
16:7 *the angel of the LORD found her* His first appearance in the Bible. Hagar was not looking for God, but God came looking for her, on the road home to Egypt. "Angel" means messenger, yet this angel speaks as God, makes promises only God can make, and Hagar calls Him God (16:10, 13). Many teachers believe He was the Son of God appearing before His birth in Bethlehem. Others see a created angel speaking with God's full authority. Later notes point back here.
16:8 *Hagar, female servant of Sarai* Abram and Sarai never call her by name in this chapter. God does. His two questions still speak to anyone running from a hard place: where have you come from, and where are you going?

said, "Hagar, female servant of Sarai, where have you come from, and where are you going?" And she said, "From before Sarai my mistress I am fleeing." **9** And the angel of the LORD said to her, "Return to your mistress, and humble yourself under her hands." **10** And the angel of the LORD said to her, "I will surely multiply your seed, and it will not be counted because of ***its*** multitude." **11** And the angel of the LORD said to her, "Look, you ***are*** pregnant, and you will bear a son, and you will call his name Ishmael (Yishma'el), for the LORD has listened to your affliction. **12** And he will be a wild donkey of a man; his hand ***will be*** against everyone, and the hand of everyone against him; and in the face of all his brothers he will dwell." **13** And she called the name of the LORD who spoke to her, "You ***are*** a God of seeing," for she said, "Have I also here seen after Him who sees me?" **14** Therefore ***one*** called the well Beer-lahai-roi (Be'er-Lachay-Ro'i); look, ***it is*** between Kadesh (Qadesh) and Bered. **15** And Hagar bore Abram a son; and Abram called the name of his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael. **16** And Abram ***was*** a son of eighty-six years when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram.

GENESIS 17

Abram Becomes Abraham

1 And Abram (Avram) was a son of ninety-nine years, and the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I ***am*** God Almighty; walk before Me, and be blameless. **2** And I will set My covenant between Me and you, and I will multiply you exceedingly, exceedingly." **3** And Abram fell on his face, and God spoke with him, saying, **4** "***As for*** Me, look, My covenant ***is*** with you, and you will become a father of a multitude of nations. **5** And your name will no longer be called Abram, and your name will be Abraham (Avraham), for a father of a multitude of nations I have made you. **6** And I will make you fruitful exceedingly, exceedingly, and I will make you into nations, and kings will come out from you. **7** And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your seed after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your seed after you. **8** And I will give to you and to your seed after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan (Kena'an), for an everlasting possession; and I will be God to them."

The Sign of Circumcision

9 And God said to Abraham, "And you, you shall keep My covenant, you and your seed after you throughout their generations. **10** This ***is*** My covenant which you shall keep, between Me and you and your seed after you: every male among you shall be circumcised. **11** And you shall be circumcised ***in*** the flesh of your foreskin, and it shall be for a sign of

16:9 Acts 7:30; Eccl 10:4; Eph 5:21
16:10 Acts 7:30; Acts 7:31; Acts 7:33
16:11 Matt 1:21; Luke 1:13; Luke 1:31
16:12 Gen 25:18; Job 39:5-8; Gen 21:20
16:13 John 1:10; John 1:18; Acts 7:30
16:14 Gen 24:62; Gen 25:11; Num 13:26
16:15 Gal 4:22-23; Gal 4:24; Gen 25:12
16:16 Gal 4:24
17:1 Matt 19:21; 2 Cor 6:18; Rev 1:8
17:2 Gal 3:17; Gen 15:18; Gen 12:2
17:3 Matt 26:39; Luke 17:16; Gen 17:17
17:4 Luke 1:72; Rom 4:16; Rom 4:17
17:5 Rom 4:17; John 1:42; Matt 1:23
17:6 Luke 1:72; Gen 35:11; Gen 17:16
17:7 Acts 2:39; Mark 10:14; Gal 3:16
17:8 Gal 3:16; Acts 7:5; Acts 2:39
17:9 Acts 3:25; Acts 7:8; 2 Cor 11:22
17:10 Acts 7:8; Col 2:11; John 7:22
17:11 Rom 4:11; Acts 7:8; Mark 10:14

16:9 *Return to your mistress, and humble yourself under her hands* A hard command. God did not approve of Sarai's treatment, but out in the wilderness Hagar and the baby might well have died, and God went with her and protected her. This was God's word to Hagar in her place. It is not a rule for anyone being mistreated. God never asks anyone to stay where they are abused. If you are in danger at home, reach out to a pastor, a counselor or the authorities and get safe.
16:10 *I will surely multiply your seed* The angel says "I will," as only God could. A slave woman received a promise much like Abram's.
16:11 *Ishmael, for the LORD has listened to your affliction* Ishmael means God hears. Every time Hagar called her son's name, she would remember that God heard her when no one else did.
16:12 *a wild donkey of a man* Not mainly an insult. The wild donkey was a free, untamed desert animal. Ishmael would live free and independent, often in conflict. His descendants became desert tribes in Arabia (25:12-18). Some read the phrase more negatively.
16:13 *You are a God of seeing* In Hebrew, El Roi. Hagar is the only person in Genesis to give God a name like this: a foreign slave woman, pregnant, mistreated and alone. If you feel unseen today, used by others or overlooked by your family, the God who saw her sees you.
16:14 *Beer-lahai-roi* The well of the Living One who sees me. Isaac later lived near it (24:62; 25:11).
16:16 *Abram was a son of eighty-six years* Thirteen years pass before God speaks again of the promised son (17:1). God loved and blessed Ishmael (17:20), but he was not the son of promise. Paul uses the two sons to show the difference between doing God's will in our own strength and receiving it as a gift of promise (Gal 4:22-31).
17:1 *Abram was a son of ninety-nine years* Thirteen silent years since chapter 16. Abram may have settled on Ishmael as the promised son, and Sarai was far past the age for children. Every human hope was gone. That is when God speaks.
17:1 *I am God Almighty* In Hebrew, El Shaddai, the first time God calls Himself by this name. It speaks of His power to do what no one else can, even give a son to a man of ninety-nine and a woman of eighty-nine.
17:1 *walk before Me, and be blameless* To live every day in His presence, knowing He sees. Blameless means wholehearted, a life of integrity, not sinless. Grace comes first, and then God calls us to live in a way that fits it.
17:3 *Abram fell on his face* Worship and humility. God is confirming and expanding the covenant of chapters 12 and 15. Abram never got casual with God. The closer we walk with Him, the more we bow.
17:5 *your name will be Abraham* Abram means exalted father. Abraham sounds like father of a multitude. Picture an old man with one teenage son introducing himself that way. It took faith to say his own name. Paul says Abraham is the father of all who believe, Jew and Gentile (Rom 4:16-17), and if you belong to Christ you are his child (Gal 3:29).
17:6 *kings will come out from you* Israel's kings, David among them, and the greatest King, Jesus, "son of David, son of Abraham" (Matt 1:1).
17:7 *to be God to you and to your seed after you* The best gift of the covenant is not land or children but God Himself. The whole Bible moves toward this, to the day God dwells among His people and is their God (Rev 21:3).
17:8 *all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession* I take "everlasting" plainly. God has not rejected His people (Rom 11:1-2), and His gifts and calling are irrevocable (Rom 11:29). I believe God still has a future for the nation of Israel, including the land. Gentile believers share Abraham's blessing through Christ, but that does not erase what God promised his physical descendants.
17:10 *every male among you shall be circumcised* God's part is the promise, and Abraham's part is to receive it and carry its sign. Circumcision is the cutting away of the foreskin. Other peoples practiced it, but God gave it new meaning. It was a seal of the righteousness Abraham had by faith before he was circumcised (Rom 4:11). The sign never saved anyone. It pointed to God's promise.

the covenant between Me and you. **12** And a son of eight days shall be circumcised among you, every male throughout your generations, one born of ***the*** house and one bought with silver from any foreigner who ***is*** not of your seed. **13** He shall surely be circumcised, the one born of your house and the one bought with your silver; and My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. **14** And an uncircumcised male who is not circumcised ***in*** the flesh of his foreskin, that soul shall be cut off from its kinsmen; he has broken My covenant."

Sarah and the Promised Son

15 And God said to Abraham, "Sarai (Saray) your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, for Sarah (Sara) ***is*** her name. **16** And I will bless her, and also I will give you a son from her; and I will bless her, and she shall become nations; kings of peoples shall be from her." **17** And Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and he said in his heart, "Will ***one*** be born to a son of a hundred years? And will Sarah, a daughter of ninety years, bear?" **18** And Abraham said to God, "If only Ishmael (Yishma'el) might live before You!" **19** And God said, "Indeed, Sarah your wife ***is*** bearing you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac (Yitschaq); and I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, for his seed after him. **20** And concerning Ishmael, I have heard you. Look, I have blessed him, and I will make him fruitful and multiply him exceedingly, exceedingly; twelve princes he will father, and I will make him into a great nation. **21** And My covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you at this appointed time in the next year." **22** And He finished speaking with him, and God went up from Abraham. **23** And Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all those born of his house, and all those bought with his silver, every male among the men of the house of Abraham, and he circumcised the flesh of their foreskin on this very day, just as God had spoken with him. **24** And Abraham ***was*** a son of ninety-nine years when he was circumcised ***in*** the flesh of his foreskin. **25** And Ishmael his son ***was*** a son of thirteen years when he was circumcised ***in*** the flesh of his foreskin. **26** On this very day Abraham was circumcised, and Ishmael his son. **27** And all the men of his house, one born of ***the*** house and one bought with silver from a foreigner, were circumcised with him.

GENESIS 18

Three Visitors at Mamre

1 And the LORD appeared to him by the terebinths of Mamre, and he ***was*** sitting ***at*** the opening of the tent in the heat of the day. **2** And he lifted up his eyes and saw, and look, three men ***were*** standing by him; and he saw ***them***, and he ran to meet them from the opening of the tent, and he bowed down to the ground, **3** and he said, "Lord, if, please, I have found favor in Your eyes, please do not pass by from Your servant. **4** Please let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. **5** And let me bring a piece of bread, and sustain your heart; after ***that*** you may pass on, for because of this you have passed by your servant." And they

17:12 Luke 2:21; Luke 1:59; John 7:22
17:13 Acts 7:8; Acts 15:1; Exod 12:44
17:14 Acts 7:8; Acts 15:1; Exod 4:24-26
17:15 Gen 17:5; 2 Sam 12:25; Gen 32:28
17:16 Rom 4:17; Gal 4:27; Gal 4:30
17:17 John 8:56; Rom 4:19; Rom 4:20
17:18 Jer 32:39; Acts 2:39; Gen 4:12,14
17:19 Luke 1:13; Gal 4:28; John 8:56
17:20 Rom 4:17; Gen 21:13,18; Gen 16:10-12
17:21 Luke 1:72; Rom 9:9; Heb 11:9
17:22 Gen 18:33; Gen 17:3; Gen 35:9-15
17:23 Rom 4:9; Rom 4:12; Gen 17:10-14,26,27
17:24 Rom 4:11,19,20; Gen 17:1,17; Gen 12:4
17:26 Gen 12:4; Gen 22:3,4; Ps 119:60
17:27 Gen 18:19
18:1 Heb 13:2; Gen 13:18; Gen 14:13
18:2 Heb 13:2; Gen 18:22; Gen 19:1
18:3 Heb 13:2; Gen 32:5
18:4 1 Tim 5:10; Heb 13:2; Gen 19:2
18:5 Heb 13:2; Judg 13:15; Judg 6:18

17:12 *a son of eight days shall be circumcised among you* Babies and servants, even foreigners in the household, came under the sign. It marked them as God's people from the start, and they would be taught what it meant.
17:13 *My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant* The covenant went as deep as the body. Moses and the prophets taught that God wanted circumcised hearts that love Him (Deut 10:16; 30:6; Jer 4:4).
17:14 *that soul shall be cut off from its kinsmen* Removed from the covenant community and its blessings. Refusing the sign meant refusing the covenant. Christians need not be circumcised, as the church settled in Acts 15 (Gal 6:15). What it always pointed to is a heart changed by the Spirit (Rom 2:28-29; Col 2:11). Today God's mark on His people is that changed heart through faith in Christ (Eph 1:13).
17:15 *Sarah is her name* Both names likely mean princess. A new beginning for her too.
17:16 *I will give you a son from her* For the first time God says plainly the son will come through Sarah. She had felt left out and tried to help through Hagar. Now God names her the mother of the promised line.
17:17 *Abraham fell on his face and laughed* Unbelief or amazed joy? Perhaps some of both. Paul says Abraham considered his body as good as dead and still did not waver (Rom 4:19-20). God did not rebuke the laugh. He turned it into the boy's name. Some teachers see more doubt here.
17:18 *If only Ishmael might live before You* Abraham loved the son he had raised thirteen years and asked God to bless him.
17:19 *you shall call his name Isaac* Isaac means he laughs. Abraham laughed, and God named the boy Laughter (21:6). The line would go through Isaac. God's plans do not bend to our preferences, even our loving ones.
17:20 *concerning Ishmael, I have heard you* Ishmael means God hears, and God heard. Twelve princes came from him (25:12-16). God can bless many people while keeping one line of promise.
17:21 *at this appointed time in the next year* After twenty-four years of waiting, the son would come within a year.
17:23 *on this very day, just as God had spoken with him* Abraham did not put it off. He circumcised himself at ninety-nine, Ishmael at thirteen and hundreds of men (14:14), leading by example. Faith in chapter 15 led to obedience in chapter 17. That is always the order (James 2:21-24).
17:25 *Ishmael his son was a son of thirteen years* Though the line went through Isaac, Ishmael received the sign as a member of Abraham's household.
18:1 *the LORD appeared to him by the terebinths of Mamre* Moses tells us up front who the visitor is, though Abraham may not have known at first. As the story goes on we learn one was the LORD and two were angels (19:1). Many believe this was the Son of God appearing before His birth (see 16:7). We are not told how, but the text plainly says the LORD was there, speaking and eating at Abraham's table.
18:2 *he ran to meet them from the opening of the tent* A man of ninety-nine running in the midday heat, when most people rested. Bowing was a common way to honor a guest.
18:3 *Lord, if, please, I have found favor in Your eyes* Some believe Abraham already knew he spoke to the LORD. Others think he first meant a polite sir, and the SLB's capital follows what the story reveals. Either way he speaks humbly and calls himself "Your servant."
18:5 *let me bring a piece of bread* Polite understatement for the feast to come. Hospitality was a sacred duty, since travelers could die without it. Some have entertained angels without knowing it (Heb 13:2), and Abraham is the clearest example. He was simply kind.

said, "So you shall do, just as you have spoken." **6** And Abraham (Avraham) hurried into the tent to Sarah (Sara), and he said, "Hurry, approximately 21 quarts (three seahs) of meal, fine flour! Knead ***it*** and make cakes." **7** And Abraham ran to the herd, and he took a young one of the herd, tender and good, and gave ***it*** to the young man, and he hurried to prepare it. **8** And he took curds and milk and the young one of the herd which he had prepared, and set ***it*** before them; and he ***was*** standing by them under the tree, and they ate. **9** And they said to him, "Where ***is*** Sarah your wife?" And he said, "Look, in the tent." **10** And He said, "I will surely return to you when the time revives, and look, Sarah your wife ***will have*** a son." And Sarah ***was*** listening ***at*** the opening of the tent, and it ***was*** behind him. **11** And Abraham and Sarah ***were*** old, advanced in days; it had ceased to be with Sarah ***after*** the way of women. **12** And Sarah laughed within herself, saying, "After I have become worn out, will I have pleasure, and my lord is old?" **13** And the LORD said to Abraham, "Why ***is*** this ***that*** Sarah laughed, saying, 'Will I also truly bear ***a child***, and I am old?' **14** Is anything ***too*** wonderful for the LORD? At the appointed time I will return to you, when the time revives, and Sarah ***will have*** a son." **15** And Sarah denied ***it***, saying, "I did not laugh," for she was afraid. And He said, "No, but you did laugh."

Abraham Pleads for Sodom

16 And the men arose from there and looked down over the face of Sodom (Sedom), and Abraham ***was*** walking with them to send them off. **17** And the LORD said, "Shall I conceal from Abraham what I am about to do, **18** and Abraham will surely become a great and mighty nation, and in him all the nations of the earth will be blessed? **19** For I have known him, so that he may command his sons and his house after him, and they will keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice, so that the LORD may bring on Abraham that which He has spoken concerning him." **20** And the LORD said, "The outcry of Sodom and Gomorrah (Amora), indeed, is great, and their sin, indeed, is exceedingly heavy. **21** Let Me go down, please, and see whether they have done altogether according to its outcry which has come to Me; and if not, I will know." **22** And the men turned from there and went toward Sodom, and Abraham ***was*** still standing before the LORD. **23** And Abraham drew near and said, "Will You also sweep away the righteous with the wicked? **24** Perhaps there are fifty righteous in the midst of the city; will You also sweep ***it*** away and not forgive the place for the sake of the fifty righteous who ***are*** in its midst? **25** Far be it from You to do according to this manner, to put to death the righteous with the wicked, and it would be, the righteous as the wicked. Far be it from You! Will not the Judge of all the earth do justice?" **26** And the LORD said, "If I find in Sodom fifty righteous in the midst of the city, then I will forgive all the place for their sake." **27** And Abraham answered and said, "Look, please, I have undertaken to speak to the Lord, and I ***am*** dust and ashes. **28** Perhaps the fifty righteous will lack

18:6 Matt 13:33; Heb 13:2; Isa 32:8
18:7 Heb 13:2; Gen 19:3; Judg 13:15,16
18:8 Luke 24:43; Heb 13:2; Gen 19:3
18:9 Gen 24:67; Gen 4:9; Gen 31:33
18:10 Rom 9:9; Gal 4:23; Rom 9:8
18:11 Heb 11:11; Luke 1:7; Rom 4:19
18:12 1 Pet 3:6; Heb 11:11; Rom 4:19
18:13 Rom 4:19; Gal 4:23; Heb 11:11
18:14 Rom 9:9; Luke 1:37; Jer 32:17
18:15 1 Pet 3:6; Gen 4:9; Gen 12:13
18:16 Acts 20:38; Acts 15:3; Acts 21:5
18:17 John 15:15; James 2:23; Amos 3:7
18:18 Gal 3:8; Acts 3:25; Gal 3:14
18:19 John 15:15; Acts 18:25; Deut 4:9,10
18:20 Jude 1:7; Gen 19:13; Gen 4:10
18:21 John 6:38; Gen 11:5,7; Exod 3:8
18:22 Gen 19:1; Ps 106:23; Jer 18:20
18:23 Num 16:22; 2 Sam 24:17; Gen 20:4
18:24 Isa 1:9; Jer 5:1; Gen 18:32
18:25 Rom 3:5; Heb 12:23; Rom 2:16
18:26 Acts 27:24; Jer 5:1; Isa 65:8
18:27 Isa 6:5; Gen 3:19; Luke 18:1
18:28 Num 14:17-19; 1 Kgs 20:32,33; Job 23:3,4

18:6 *approximately 21 quarts of meal, fine flour* The Hebrew says three seahs, a great deal of flour. Meat (18:7) was a rare luxury.
18:8 *he was standing by them under the tree, and they ate* Abraham stood ready to serve. The LORD ate with His friend (2 Chr 20:7; Isa 41:8; James 2:23). The risen Jesus ate with His disciples too (Luke 24:41-43). God draws near to His people around a table.
18:9 *Where is Sarah your wife* How did a stranger know her new name (17:15)? This was no ordinary guest.
18:10 *Sarah your wife will have a son* God had told Abraham. Now He said it where Sarah could hear. Women usually did not join male guests, so she listened out of sight.
18:11 *it had ceased to be with Sarah after the way of women* She was past the change of life. Humanly speaking, it was impossible.
18:12 *Sarah laughed within herself* A quiet laugh inside, from someone who had hoped too long and been disappointed too often. She still called Abraham "my lord," and Peter points to her respect and trust in God (1 Pet 3:5-6). His point is trust in God, not that a wife must go along with wrong. Sarah's story shows the harm when a husband endangers his wife to protect himself (12:13; 20:2).
18:13 *Why is this that Sarah laughed* He heard a laugh she never said aloud. Only God knows the heart.
18:14 *Is anything too wonderful for the LORD* The center of the chapter. Nothing is too hard for God, and Gabriel said much the same to Mary (Luke 1:37). God gave a son to a barren old woman, and one day a Son to a virgin. This is not a promise that every couple who prays will have a child (see 11:30). But no need of ours is too hard for Him, and none is outside His care.
18:15 *No, but you did laugh* Sarah lied out of fear. God did not let the lie stand, nor did He punish her. He is gentle and always honest. Later she would laugh with joy (21:6), and by faith she received power to conceive (Heb 11:11). Her doubt was not the end of her story.
18:17 *Shall I conceal from Abraham what I am about to do* God shares His plans with His friends (Amos 3:7; John 15:15).
18:19 *that he may command his sons and his house after him* God chose Abraham to raise a family that would keep "the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice." The covenant blessing was to be passed down through godly parenting. Christian parents have the same job today.
18:20 *The outcry of Sodom and Gomorrah* The word is used for the cry of people suffering injustice. Sodom's victims were crying out, and God heard.
18:21 *Let Me go down, please, and see* As at Babel (11:5). God already knew, but He never judges on rumor. The Judge gathers the evidence before the verdict.
18:22 *Abraham was still standing before the LORD* The two angels went on to Sodom (19:1). Abraham stayed because he had something to say. Some ancient Hebrew scribes noted that the verse may first have read that the LORD remained standing before Abraham, as if waiting for him to speak.
18:23 *Will You also sweep away the righteous with the wicked* Abraham "drew near," and prayer is coming near to God. He was thinking of Lot, but his prayer was bigger than one man.
18:25 *Will not the Judge of all the earth do justice* Abraham was not accusing God but holding on to what he knew God to be. The best prayers are built on who God is and what He has said.
18:27 *I am dust and ashes* Humble and bold together. We come knowing we deserve nothing, and we come boldly because God invites us (Heb 4:16).

five; will You destroy all the city for five?" And He said, "I will not destroy ***it*** if I find there forty-five." **29** And he spoke to Him yet again and said, "Perhaps forty will be found there." And He said, "I will not do ***it*** for the sake of the forty." **30** And he said, "Please let the Lord not be angry, and let me speak: perhaps thirty will be found there." And He said, "I will not do ***it*** if I find there thirty." **31** And he said, "Look, please, I have undertaken to speak to the Lord: perhaps twenty will be found there." And He said, "I will not destroy ***it*** for the sake of the twenty." **32** And he said, "Please let the Lord not be angry, and let me speak only this once: perhaps ten will be found there." And He said, "I will not destroy ***it*** for the sake of the ten." **33** And the LORD went, when He had finished speaking to Abraham; and Abraham returned to his place.

GENESIS 19

The Wickedness of Sodom

1 And the two angels came to Sodom (Sedom) in the evening, and Lot ***was*** sitting in the gate of Sodom. And Lot saw ***them***, and he arose to meet them, and he bowed down ***with his*** face to the ground. **2** And he said, "Look, please, my lords, please turn aside to the house of your servant, and spend the night, and wash your feet; and you may rise early and go on your way." And they said, "No, but we will spend the night in the square." **3** And he pressed them exceedingly, and they turned aside to him and came into his house; and he made a feast for them, and he baked unleavened bread, and they ate. **4** Before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, surrounded the house, from young man even to old man, all the people from ***every*** end. **5** And they called to Lot and said to him, "Where ***are*** the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us, and let us know them." **6** And Lot went out to them, to the entrance, and the door he shut behind him, **7** and he said, "Please, my brothers, do not do evil. **8** Look, please, I have two daughters who have not known a man; please let me bring them out to you, and do to them as ***is*** good in your eyes; only to these men do not do anything, for because of this they have come under the shadow of my roof." **9** And they said, "Draw back!" And they said, "This one came to sojourn, and he keeps judging! Now we will do evil to you more than to them." And they pressed hard against the man, against Lot, exceedingly, and they drew near to break the door. **10** And the men stretched out their hand and brought Lot to them into the house, and they shut the door. **11** And the men who ***were at*** the entrance of the house they struck with blindness, from small even to great, and they wearied ***themselves*** to find the entrance.

Sodom and Gomorrah Destroyed

12 And the men said to Lot, "Whom else do you have here? A son-in-law, and your sons, and your daughters, and all whom you have in the city, bring ***them*** out from the place; **13** for we are about to destroy this place, because their outcry has become great before the face of the LORD, and the LORD has sent us to destroy it." **14** And Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who ***were*** taking his daughters, and he said, "Arise, go out from this place, for the LORD is about to destroy the city." And he was like one who jests in the eyes of his sons-in-law. **15** And when the dawn came up, the angels urged Lot, saying, "Arise, take your wife and your two daughters who are found ***here***, lest you be swept away in the iniquity of the city." **16** And he lingered, and the men seized his hand and the hand of his wife and the hand of his two daughters, in the compassion of the LORD on him; and they

18:29 1 Tim 2:1; Eph 6:18; Heb 4:16
18:30 1 Tim 2:1; Gen 44:18; Judg 6:39
18:31 1 Tim 2:1; Gen 18:27; Matt 7:7,11
18:32 1 Tim 2:1; Judg 6:39; James 5:15-17
18:33 Gen 18:16,22; Gen 32:26; Gen 31:55
19:1 Heb 13:2; Luke 19:5; Gen 18:1-3,22
19:2 Heb 13:2; Luke 24:28; Luke 19:5
19:3 Luke 24:28; Heb 13:2; Gen 18:6-8
19:4 Gen 13:13; Prov 4:16; Gen 18:20
19:5 Jude 1:7; 1 Cor 6:9; Luke 17:28
19:6 Luke 17:28; Judg 19:23
19:7 Jude 1:7; Gen 19:4; Lev 18:22
19:8 Judg 19:24; Gen 19:31-38; Exod 32:22
19:9 2 Pet 2:7; Luke 17:28; Exod 2:14
19:10 Luke 17:28
19:11 2 Kgs 6:18; Acts 13:11; Jer 2:36
19:12 2 Pet 2:7; Luke 17:28; Gen 7:1
19:13 Gen 18:20; Gen 13:13; James 5:4
19:14 Luke 17:28; Mark 4:15; Luke 17:29
19:15 Mark 13:15; Luke 17:28; Num 16:24-27
19:16 Ps 119:60; John 6:44; Exod 34:6

18:32 *I will not destroy it for the sake of the ten* God never lost patience. Abraham stopped asking before God stopped answering. We are not told why he stopped at ten. There were not ten, but God remembered Abraham and rescued Lot (19:29). God is more willing to show mercy than we are to ask. Pray this way for your city, your nation and those who do not know God (1 Tim 2:1-4).
19:1 *Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom* The gate was where a town's leaders sat to do business and judge. Lot was now one of Sodom's leading men. His slide (13:12; 14:12) was complete. Peter calls him righteous, tormented day after day by what he saw (2 Pet 2:7-8). He believed in God, but he chose to live where his soul was vexed.
19:3 *he pressed them exceedingly* Lot showed hospitality as Abraham had, and he knew what could happen to strangers outside at night in Sodom.
19:4 *from young man even to old man, all the people from every end* The whole city took part. There were not ten righteous men (18:32).
19:5 *let us know them* "Know" is a Hebrew way of speaking of sexual relations. The men of Sodom meant to gang rape the visitors. Sodom's sin included this homosexual violence (Jude 7), and Ezekiel adds pride, plenty, careless ease and neglect of the poor and needy (Ezek 16:49-50). It was a whole way of life turned from God. We must be honest about what Scripture teaches and humble too. None of us stands by our own goodness, and the gospel is for sinners of every kind (1 Cor 6:9-11).
19:7 *Please, my brothers, do not do evil* He knew it was evil, yet he called them brothers, a sign of how much he had become part of that city.
19:8 *I have two daughters who have not known a man; please let me bring them out to you* Hard to read. A host's duty to protect guests was very strong, but nothing excuses offering his own daughters to be abused. Long years in a wicked place had twisted a believer's judgment. God did not let the offer be carried out.
19:9 *This one came to sojourn, and he keeps judging* Lot gave his life to Sodom, and Sodom never accepted him. The world rarely loves the believer who tries to fit in.
19:11 *they wearied themselves to find the entrance* Struck blind, they still groped for the door. Their lust was stronger than their fear. Sin blinds long before any physical blindness falls.
19:14 *he was like one who jests in the eyes of his sons-in-law* Lot had lived in Sodom so long that his warning meant nothing. His life had not backed up his words. Our witness is built over years, and people judge our words by our lives.
19:16 *he lingered, and the men seized his hand* His house, wealth and position were all in Sodom. He was rescued "in the compassion of the LORD on him," not because he was quick to obey. None of us runs to God on our own. He takes hold of us.

brought him out and set him outside the city. **17** And it happened, when they had brought them outside, and he said, "Escape for your life! Do not look behind you, and do not stop in all the district; escape to the mountain, lest you be swept away." **18** And Lot said to them, "Not so, please, Lord! **19** Look, please, Your servant has found favor in Your eyes, and You have made great Your steadfast love which You have done with me by keeping my soul alive; and I am not able to escape to the mountain, lest the disaster cling to me and I die. **20** Look, please, this city ***is*** near to flee there, and it ***is*** a little ***one***; please let me escape there (is it not a little ***one***?), and my soul will live." **21** And He said to him, "Look, I have lifted up your face also concerning this matter, not to overthrow the city of which you have spoken. **22** Hurry, escape there, for I am not able to do anything until you come there." Therefore ***one*** called the name of the city Zoar (Tso'ar). **23** The sun had come out over the earth, and Lot came to Zoar. **24** And the LORD rained on Sodom and on Gomorrah (Amora) sulfur and fire from the LORD out of the heavens. **25** And He overthrew these cities, and all the district, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and the growth of the ground. **26** And his wife looked from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt. **27** And Abraham (Avraham) rose early in the morning ***and went*** to the place where he had stood there before the face of the LORD. **28** And he looked down over the face of Sodom and Gomorrah, and over all the face of the land of the district, and he saw, and look, the smoke of the land went up like the smoke of the furnace. **29** And it happened, when God destroyed the cities of the district, and God remembered Abraham, and He sent Lot out from the midst of the overthrow, when He overthrew the cities in which Lot had dwelt.

Lot and His Daughters

30 And Lot went up from Zoar and dwelt in the mountain, and his two daughters with him, for he was afraid to dwell in Zoar; and he dwelt in the cave, he and his two daughters. **31** And the firstborn said to the younger, "Our father is old, and there is no man in the earth to come in to us according to the way of all the earth. **32** Come, let us make our father drink wine, and let us lie with him, so that we may preserve seed from our father." **33** And they made their father drink wine that night, and the firstborn went in and lay with her father; and he did not know when she lay down and when she arose. **34** And it happened on the next day, and the firstborn said to the younger, "Look, I lay last night with my father; let us make him drink wine tonight also, and go in, lie with him, so that we may preserve seed from our father." **35** And they made their father drink wine that night also, and the younger arose and lay with him; and he did not know when she lay down and when she arose. **36** And the two daughters of Lot conceived from their father. **37** And the firstborn bore a son, and she called his name Moab (Mo'av); he ***is*** the father of Moab to this day. **38** And the younger, she also bore a son, and she called his name Ben-ammi (Ben-Ami); he ***is*** the father of the sons of Ammon (Amon) to this day.

19:17 Luke 17:31; Gen 19:26; Matt 24:16-18
19:18 Luke 17:29; Gen 32:26; 2 Kgs 5:11,12
19:19 Matt 8:26; Ps 18:1-50; Ps 40:1-17
19:20 1 Cor 10:13; Prov 3:5-7; Ps 119:175
19:21 1 Cor 10:13; Gen 4:7; Job 42:8,9
19:22 Mark 13:15; 2 Pet 2:7; Gen 14:2
19:23 Luke 17:29
19:24 2 Pet 2:6; Jude 1:7; Matt 11:23
19:25 Luke 17:29; Jude 1:7; Rom 9:29
19:26 Luke 17:32; Mark 13:15; Jude 1:7
19:27 Hab 2:1; Ps 5:3; Gen 18:22-33
19:28 Rev 18:9; Rev 9:2; Jude 1:7
19:29 2 Pet 2:7; Gen 8:1; Deut 9:5
19:30 Gen 49:4; Jer 2:36,37; James 1:8
19:31 Gen 16:2,4; Deut 25:5; Gen 19:28
19:32 Gen 11:3; Gen 9:21; Prov 23:31-33
19:33 Lev 18:6,7; Prov 20:1; Prov 23:29-35
19:34 Isa 3:9; Jer 3:3; Jer 5:3
19:35 Ps 8:4; Prov 24:16; Eccl 7:26
19:36 Gen 19:8; Lev 18:6,7; Judg 1:7
19:37 Deut 2:9,19; Num 21:29; Num 22:1-41
19:38 Deut 2:9,19; Deut 23:3; Judg 10:6-18

19:17 *Do not look behind you* The command was clear: flee to the mountain and do not look back.
19:20 *it is a little one* Even in rescue, Lot bargained for a small piece of the life he was leaving. Zoar means small (19:22).
19:22 *I am not able to do anything until you come there* God held back judgment until Lot was safe. The Lord knows how to rescue the godly and keep the wicked for judgment (2 Pet 2:6-9). As with Enoch (5:24), I believe this pictures God taking His church out before the judgments of the Tribulation fall (1 Thess 1:10; Rev 3:10).
19:24 *sulfur and fire from the LORD out of the heavens* Sulfur, called brimstone in older translations, burns with fierce heat. Genesis does not explain the means. Some suggest God used natural forces of the region, its tar pits (14:10) and gases. Whatever the means, it was His judgment. Many place Sodom near the southern end of the Dead Sea, while some suggest sites to the north.
19:25 *He overthrew these cities, and all the district* The valley Lot chose because it looked like the garden of the LORD (13:10) was gone in a morning. Jesus pointed to this day as a picture of His return, when people will be eating, buying and building as judgment falls (Luke 17:28-30). Sodom stands as a warning that God's judgment is real (Jude 7).
19:26 *she became a pillar of salt* She was out of the city, but her heart was still in it. She disobeyed a clear command out of longing for what she left. Jesus said, remember Lot's wife (Luke 17:32). It is possible to be close to rescue and still be lost because our hearts cling to what God is judging.
19:28 *the smoke of the land went up like the smoke of the furnace* Abraham went back to the place where he had prayed. There were not ten.
19:29 *God remembered Abraham, and He sent Lot out* Abraham's prayer was answered, not as he asked, but in the way that mattered most to him. Lot never knew his uncle had stood before the LORD for him. Your prayers for others matter.
19:30 *he dwelt in the cave, he and his two daughters* Lot ended up in the mountains after all. He came into the land rich (13:5), chose the best, sat in the city gate. Now he lived in a cave, his wife a pillar of salt, his sons-in-law dead. Choices that look wise by sight can end in ruin.
19:32 *let us make our father drink wine, and let us lie with him* This was incest, a sexual relationship between close relatives, later plainly forbidden (Lev 18:6-7). Scripture does not excuse it. Yet these young women had just lived through terrible things: a father who offered them to a mob, a dead mother, dead fiances. Fear and despair drove a terrible plan. Lot is not excused either. His drunkenness left him open to shame, as with Noah (9:21). If your own family has been a place of abuse, the shame belongs to the one who did the wrong. Talk with a pastor, counselor or the proper authorities (see 34:2).
19:37 *Moab* The Moabites and Ammonites (19:38) lived east of the Jordan and were often Israel's enemies. Yet generations later a Moabite woman, Ruth, trusted the God of Israel and became David's great-grandmother (Ruth 4:13-17), named in Jesus' family line (Matt 1:5). No family history is too broken for God's grace to reach.

GENESIS 20

Abraham and Abimelech

1 And Abraham (Avraham) set out from there toward the land of the Negeb (Negev), and he dwelt between Kadesh (Qadesh) and Shur, and he sojourned in Gerar. **2** And Abraham said concerning Sarah (Sara) his wife, "She ***is*** my sister." And Abimelech (Avimelekh) king of Gerar sent and took Sarah. **3** And God came to Abimelech in a dream of the night and said to him, "Look, you ***are*** about to die because of the woman whom you have taken, and she ***is*** married to a husband." **4** And Abimelech had not come near her. And he said, "Lord, will You kill even a righteous nation? **5** Did he not ***himself*** say to me, 'She ***is*** my sister'? And she, she also said, 'He ***is*** my brother.' In the integrity of my heart and in the innocence of my hands I have done this." **6** And God said to him in a dream, "I also know that in the integrity of your heart you have done this, and I also withheld you from sinning against Me; therefore I did not let you touch her. **7** And now return the wife of the man, for he ***is*** a prophet, and he will pray for you, and live. And if you do not return ***her***, know that you will surely die, you and all who ***are*** yours."

Abimelech Restores Sarah

8 And Abimelech rose early in the morning and called all his servants, and he spoke all these words in their ears; and the men were exceedingly afraid. **9** And Abimelech called Abraham and said to him, "What have you done to us? And how have I sinned against you, that you have brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? Deeds which ought not to be done you have done to me." **10** And Abimelech said to Abraham, "What did you see, that you have done this thing?" **11** And Abraham said, "Because I said, 'Surely there is no fear of God in this place, and they will kill me on account of my wife.' **12** And also she truly ***is*** my sister, the daughter of my father, only not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife. **13** And it happened, when God caused me to wander from the house of my father, and I said to her, 'This ***is*** your steadfast love which you will do for me: to every place where we come, say of me, "He ***is*** my brother."'" **14** And Abimelech took sheep and cattle and ***male*** servants and female servants, and he gave ***them*** to Abraham, and he returned Sarah his wife to him. **15** And Abimelech said, "Look, my land ***is*** before you; dwell where ***it is*** good in your eyes." **16** And to Sarah he said, "Look, I have given a thousand ***pieces*** of silver to your brother; look, it ***is*** for you a covering of the eyes to all who ***are*** with you, and with everyone; and ***you are*** vindicated." **17** And Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelech and his wife and his maidservants, and they bore ***children***. **18** For the LORD had surely shut up every womb of the house of Abimelech on account of Sarah the wife of Abraham.

20:1 Gen 18:1; Gen 26:1,6,20,26; Gen 16:1,7,14
20:2 Gen 26:7; Gen 12:15; Gen 12:11-13
20:3 Matt 27:19; Matt 19:9; John 4:18
20:4 Gen 18:23-25; 1 Chr 21:17; Gen 20:6,18
20:5 Rom 2:15; 1 Kgs 9:4; Ps 7:8
20:6 2 Cor 6:17; 1 Sam 25:26,34; Gen 31:7
20:7 1 John 5:16; John 9:31; 1 Sam 7:5,8
20:9 Rom 4:2; Gen 12:18; Gen 26:10
20:10 Rom 4:2
20:11 Rom 3:18; Rom 4:2; Gen 12:12
20:12 Gen 11:29; Gen 12:13; 1 Thess 5:22
20:13 Gen 12:1,9,11-20; Acts 7:3-5; Heb 11:8
20:14 Gen 12:16; Gen 20:11; Gen 20:2,7
20:15 Gen 13:9; Gen 34:10; Gen 47:6
20:16 Gen 20:5; Prov 27:5; Gen 24:65
20:17 James 5:16; Phil 4:6; Gen 20:7
20:18 Gen 12:17; Gen 20:7; Gen 16:2

20:1 *he sojourned in Gerar* To sojourn is to live somewhere as a temporary resident, a foreigner without full rights. Gerar lay in the southwest, between Gaza and Beersheba. Perhaps Abraham moved for pasture, or to be away from the sight of Sodom's smoke (19:28).
20:2 *She is my sister* The same lie as in Egypt (12:13), after years of walking with God and a promise of a son within a year (18:10). Old sins can return even after great spiritual experiences. We need God's grace every day.
20:2 *Abimelech king of Gerar sent and took Sarah* Abimelech may have been a title for Gerar's kings, like Pharaoh. Sarah was about ninety. We are not told why the king wanted her, her beauty or an alliance with a wealthy chief. The mother of the promised son was in a pagan king's house.
20:3 *God came to Abimelech in a dream of the night* God rules kings and nations whether they know Him or not. Taking another man's wife deserved death even in ignorance, for God's standard for marriage is for all people. God was also guarding His promise. Isaac was about to be conceived, and there could be no doubt who his father was.
20:5 *In the integrity of my heart and in the innocence of my hands I have done this* Abimelech had a good argument. He was deceived by the people who should have been most honest. Sarah went along. When a husband leads his family wrong, they often follow.
20:6 *I also withheld you from sinning against Me* A hidden mercy, perhaps through illness in his household (20:17). We do not know how often God has kept us from sin in ways we never noticed.
20:7 *he is a prophet, and he will pray for you* The first time the word prophet appears, someone God speaks to and through, and it is used of Abraham in the middle of a failure. His calling rested on grace, not performance. Yet the man who prays for others caused the trouble.
20:8 *the men were exceedingly afraid* Lot's sons-in-law laughed at God's warning (19:14). A pagan court took it seriously.
20:9 *Deeds which ought not to be done you have done to me* The man of God is rebuked by a man who did not know God, and the rebuke is right. When believers act dishonestly, the world sees, and it shames the LORD's name.
20:11 *Surely there is no fear of God in this place* Abraham assumed the worst, and he was wrong. We can be quick to think we are the only ones who take God seriously.
20:12 *she truly is my sister* Technically true, but a half-truth told to mislead is still a lie.
20:13 *to every place where we come, say of me, He is my brother* The plan had been in place since they left home. Fear had a long-standing hiding place in his heart. There is no clear word of repentance, and Isaac will tell the same lie in the same town (26:6-11). Unconfessed patterns tend to be passed down.
20:16 *it is for you a covering of the eyes* The silver was a public statement that Sarah had done nothing wrong with the king. "Brother" may carry a gentle sting. God protected Sarah's name as well as her body.
20:17 *Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelech* Abraham prayed for another household's wombs to open while his own wife was still barren, and God answered. The next chapter opens with God doing the same for Sarah.
20:18 *the LORD had surely shut up every womb of the house of Abimelech* A specific act to protect Sarah and the promise. It does not mean a childless couple today is under judgment (see 11:30). This chapter shows God's faithfulness more than Abraham's. He keeps His promises because of who He is, not who we are.

GENESIS 21

Isaac Is Born

1 And the LORD visited Sarah (Sara) just as He had said, and the LORD did to Sarah just as He had spoken. **2** And Sarah conceived and bore a son to Abraham (Avraham) in his old age, at the appointed time which God had spoken ***of*** with him. **3** And Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him, whom Sarah bore to him, Isaac (Yitschaq). **4** And Abraham circumcised Isaac his son, a son of eight days, just as God had commanded him. **5** And Abraham ***was*** a son of a hundred years when Isaac his son was born to him. **6** And Sarah said, "God has made laughter for me; everyone who hears will laugh for me." **7** And she said, "Who would have said to Abraham, 'Sarah has nursed children'? For I have borne a son in his old age."

Hagar and Ishmael Sent Away

8 And the child grew and was weaned, and Abraham made a great feast on the day Isaac was weaned. **9** And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, mocking. **10** And she said to Abraham, "Drive out this maidservant and her son, for the son of this maidservant shall not inherit with my son, with Isaac." **11** And the matter was very bad in the eyes of Abraham on account of his son. **12** And God said to Abraham, "Let it not be bad in your eyes concerning the lad and concerning your maidservant. All that Sarah says to you, listen to her voice, for in Isaac seed will be called for you. **13** And also the son of the maidservant I will make into a nation, for he ***is*** your seed." **14** And Abraham rose early in the morning and took bread and a skin of water and gave ***them*** to Hagar, putting ***them*** on her shoulder, and the child, and he sent her away. And she went and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba (Be'er-Sheva). **15** And the water in the skin was used up, and she threw the child under one of the bushes. **16** And she went and sat down by herself opposite ***him***, at a distance about a bowshot, for she said, "Let me not look on the death of the child." And she sat opposite ***him***, and she lifted up her voice and wept. **17** And God heard the voice of the lad, and the angel of God called to Hagar from the heavens and said to her, "What ***is it*** to you, Hagar? Do not be afraid, for God has heard the voice of the lad where he ***is*** there. **18** Arise, lift up the lad and make your hand firm on him, for I will make him into a great nation." **19** And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water; and she went and filled the skin ***with*** water and gave the lad a drink. **20** And God was with the lad, and he grew; and he dwelt in the wilderness, and he became a shooter, a bowman. **21** And he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran, and his mother took a wife for him from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim).

The Covenant at Beersheba

22 And it happened at that time, and Abimelech (Avimelekh) and Phicol (Pikhol) the commander of his army said to Abraham, saying, "God ***is*** with you in all that you are doing.

21:1 Rom 4:19; Heb 11:11; 1 Sam 2:21
21:2 Gal 4:22; Heb 11:11; Luke 1:36
21:3 Matt 1:2; Acts 7:8; Rom 9:7
21:4 Acts 7:8; Luke 1:59; Luke 2:21
21:5 Rom 4:19; Matt 1:2; Gen 17:1,17
21:6 John 16:21; Heb 11:11; Gal 4:28
21:7 John 16:21; Gen 18:11,12; Num 23:23
21:8 1 Sam 1:22; Ps 131:2; Hos 1:8
21:9 Gal 4:29; Gal 4:22; Gal 4:24
21:10 Gal 4:30; Matt 8:11; Gal 3:18
21:11 Gal 3:29; Gal 4:30; Gen 17:18
21:12 Rom 9:7; Heb 11:18; Rom 9:8
21:13 Gen 21:18; Gen 16:10; Gen 17:20
21:14 Gal 4:24; Gal 4:25; Gen 19:27
21:15 Exod 15:22-25; 2 Kgs 3:9; Ps 63:1
21:16 Gen 44:34; 1 Kgs 3:26; Esth 8:6
21:17 Gen 16:11; Exod 3:7; Exod 22:23,27
21:18 Gen 21:13; Gen 16:10; Gen 17:20
21:19 Num 22:31; 2 Kgs 6:17-20; Isa 35:5,6
21:20 Gen 28:15; Gen 39:2,3,21; Gen 16:12
21:21 Num 10:12; Num 12:16; Num 13:3,26
21:22 Gen 20:2; Gen 26:26; Gen 26:28

21:1 *the LORD visited Sarah just as He had said* Said twice so we will not miss it. This birth came from God's word, not human effort. The Hagar plan brought only trouble. Now God does what only He can do.
21:2 *at the appointed time which God had spoken of with him* Promised a year before (18:14), after twenty-five years of waiting. God's timing often feels slow, but He is never late. As at 11:30, this was God's unique plan for the promised line, not a promise to every couple who prays.
21:4 *Abraham circumcised Isaac his son, a son of eight days* Abraham gave the name God chose (17:19) and the covenant sign (17:10-12). The son of the promise received the sign of the promise.
21:5 *a son of a hundred years* Abraham's body was as good as dead, and so was Sarah's womb (Rom 4:19). Saving faith trusts the God who gives life to the dead.
21:6 *God has made laughter for me* A year before she laughed in unbelief (18:12). Now she laughs for joy. Every time she called Isaac, whose name means he laughs, she would remember both laughs. When God does something wonderful, it is meant to be told.
21:8 *Abraham made a great feast on the day Isaac was weaned* Children were usually nursed two or three years, and weaning celebrated a child surviving the dangerous early years.
21:9 *mocking* Ishmael was now about sixteen or seventeen (16:16). We are not told what he did. The word is related to Isaac's name, so he seems to have mocked the child and the promise. Paul calls it the son of the flesh persecuting the son of the Spirit (Gal 4:29).
21:10 *Drive out this maidservant and her son* Sarah would not use their names. Her concern was the inheritance, the father's property and blessing.
21:11 *the matter was very bad in the eyes of Abraham on account of his son* Abraham loved Ishmael. This grief grew from the plan of chapter 16. A second wife went against God's pattern (2:24), and everyone paid for it.
21:12 *in Isaac seed will be called for you* God told Abraham to listen, not because Sarah's anger was right, but because the line of promise ran through Isaac. Paul quotes this to show that being a child of promise is God's choice, not physical descent (Rom 9:7).
21:13 *also the son of the maidservant I will make into a nation* God's choice of Isaac did not mean He had no love for Ishmael.
21:14 *took bread and a skin of water and gave them to Hagar* Abraham obeyed at once, but it was very little for a mother and son facing the desert. Hagar paid the cost. The wilderness of Beersheba is the dry far south of Canaan.
21:16 *Let me not look on the death of the child* A woman used, then pushed out, expecting to lose her son. If you have been cast aside by people who should have cared for you, Hagar's story is for you.
21:17 *God heard the voice of the lad* Ishmael means God hears (16:11). God named the boy for this very moment. "Do not be afraid." As in chapter 16, God met her in the wilderness (see 16:7).
21:19 *God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water* The well may have been there all along, and she could not see it through her tears. God's help is often closer than we think, and we need Him to open our eyes.
21:20 *God was with the lad* Ishmael was not the son of promise, but he was not forgotten. He lived by his bow, a free man of the wilderness (16:12). Paran is the desert south of Canaan in the Sinai Peninsula. His twelve sons became princes (25:12-18), as God promised (17:20).
21:22 *God is with you in all that you are doing* Abraham had failed badly before this man (20:2), yet Abimelech saw God's hand on him. Neighbors notice when God is blessing us. Bringing the army commander showed they meant business.

23 And now swear to me by God here that you will not deal falsely with me, and with my offspring, and with my posterity; according to the steadfast love that I have done with you, you will do with me and with the land in which you have sojourned." **24** And Abraham said, "I, I will swear." **25** And Abraham reproved Abimelech on account of the well of water which the servants of Abimelech had seized. **26** And Abimelech said, "I do not know who has done this thing; and also you did not tell me, and also I, I have not heard ***of it*** except today." **27** And Abraham took sheep and cattle and gave ***them*** to Abimelech, and the two of them cut a covenant. **28** And Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock by themselves. **29** And Abimelech said to Abraham, "What ***are*** they, these seven ewe lambs which you have set by themselves?" **30** And he said, "For seven ewe lambs you will take from my hand, so that it may be for me a witness that I dug this well." **31** Therefore he called that place Beersheba, for there the two of them swore. **32** And they cut a covenant at Beersheba; and Abimelech arose, and Phicol the commander of his army, and they returned to the land of the Philistines. **33** And he planted a tamarisk in Beersheba, and he called there on the name of the LORD, the God of eternity. **34** And Abraham sojourned in the land of the Philistines many days.

GENESIS 22

God Tests Abraham

1 And it happened after these things, and God tested Abraham (Avraham), and He said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." **2** And He said, "Take, please, your son, your only ***son***, whom you love, Isaac (Yitschaq), and go for yourself to the land of Moriah (Moriya), and offer him up there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains which I will tell you." **3** And Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and he took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son; and he split the wood of the burnt offering, and he arose and went to the place which God had told him. **4** On the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place from a distance. **5** And Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here by yourselves with the donkey, and I and the lad will go over there, and we will worship, and we will return to you." **6** And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and put ***it*** on Isaac his son, and he took in his hand the fire and the knife; and the two of them went together. **7** And Isaac said to Abraham his father, and he said, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." And he said, "Look, the fire and the wood, and where ***is*** the lamb for a burnt offering?" **8** And Abraham said, "God will see to the lamb for Himself for a burnt offering, my son." And the two of them went together.

The LORD Will Provide

9 And they came to the place which God had told him; and

21:23 Josh 2:12; Gen 20:14; Gen 14:22,23
21:24 Gen 14:13; Rom 12:18; Heb 6:16
21:25 Gen 26:15-22; Gen 29:8; Exod 2:15-17
21:26 Gen 13:7; 2 Kgs 5:20-24
21:27 Gen 14:22,23; Prov 17:8; Prov 18:16,24
21:29 Gen 33:8; Exod 12:26; 1 Sam 15:14
21:30 Gen 31:44-48,52; Josh 22:27,28; Josh 24:27
21:31 Gen 26:33; Gen 21:14; Gen 26:23
21:32 Gen 21:27; Gen 14:13; Gen 31:53
21:33 Gen 4:26; Gen 12:8; Ps 90:2
21:34 Heb 11:9; Gen 20:1; 1 Chr 29:15
22:1 Heb 11:17; James 2:21; 1 Pet 1:7
22:2 John 3:16; Heb 11:17; 1 John 4:9,10
22:3 Heb 11:8; Heb 11:17; Heb 11:18
22:4 Matt 17:23; Luke 13:32; 1 Cor 15:4
22:5 Heb 11:19; Heb 11:17; Heb 12:1
22:6 John 19:17; Heb 11:17; Isa 53:6
22:7 John 18:11; John 1:29; Heb 11:17
22:8 John 1:36; John 1:29; Rev 5:12
22:9 James 2:21; Acts 8:32; Heb 11:17

21:23 *swear to me by God here that you will not deal falsely with me* After chapter 20, the request stung, but it was fair.
21:25 *the well of water which the servants of Abimelech had seized* In dry country a well was life for a herdsman and his flocks.
21:30 *so that it may be for me a witness that I dug this well* By accepting the seven ewe lambs, Abimelech publicly agreed the well was Abraham's.
21:31 *Beersheba* Beer means well, and sheba sounds like seven and oath: the well of the seven and of the oath. It later marked Israel's southern edge, "from Dan to Beersheba" (Judg 20:1).
21:32 *the land of the Philistines* We are not told how these early Philistines relate to the later nation. Many think the name is used for the people of that coastal area.
21:33 *the LORD, the God of eternity* The Hebrew is El Olam. The tamarisk, a hardy long-lived shade tree, showed Abraham meant to stay. He had a treaty with a king, but his real security was the God who never changes.
21:34 *Abraham sojourned in the land of the Philistines many days* He owned a well but not the land. He lived in tents, looking for a city whose builder is God (Heb 11:9-10). We too are only passing through.
22:1 *God tested Abraham* After a long road of faith comes the hardest test. Satan tempts to draw us into sin (James 1:13-14). God tests to prove and strengthen faith, as fire proves gold (1 Pet 1:6-7). God knew Abraham's heart. The test was for Abraham's good and ours.
22:1 *Here I am* Abraham was available before he heard the assignment.
22:2 *your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac* Each phrase tightens the grip. Ishmael was gone, and Isaac was the son of promise (21:12). This is the first time the word love appears, the love of a father for his only son. It is hard not to think of John 3:16. Abraham was asked to do what the Father would one day really do.
22:2 *offer him up there as a burnt offering* Some ancient peoples sacrificed children (2 Kgs 3:27), and God later forbade it in the strongest terms (Lev 18:21; Deut 12:31). God never meant for Isaac to die, though Abraham did not know that yet. This was a one-time test in God's plan. God will never ask anyone to harm a child, and any voice that says so is not from Him.
22:2 *the land of Moriah* Solomon built the temple on Mount Moriah in Jerusalem (2 Chr 3:1). Many believe the temple stood on this very ridge, not far from where Jesus was crucified.
22:3 *Abraham rose early in the morning* No argument, no bargaining, no delay, as at 21:14. Delayed obedience is a kind of disobedience. Then three days to think, and every step a choice to keep obeying.
22:4 *On the third day* In Abraham's mind Isaac had been as good as dead three days, and he received him back as a figure of resurrection (Heb 11:19).
22:5 *we will worship, and we will return to you* We, not I. Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead (Heb 11:17-19). God had promised Isaac descendants, so if Isaac died, God would raise him. Worship at its heart is giving God what He asks because He is worthy, even when it costs everything.
22:6 *put it on Isaac his son* Isaac was strong enough to carry wood up a mountain and could have resisted his old father, but there is no hint he did. Many see a picture of Jesus carrying His own cross (John 19:17). "The two of them went together," said twice (22:6, 8).
22:7 *where is the lamb for a burnt offering* The question must have pierced his father's heart.
22:8 *God will see to the lamb for Himself* God did, that day with the ram, and later far more. John the Baptist answered Isaac's question when he saw Jesus: "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29).
22:9 *he bound Isaac his son and put him on the altar* Moses slows down so we feel each movement. A young man could have run from a father over one hundred, yet he let himself be bound. He trusted his father, and his father trusted God.

Abraham built the altar there and arranged the wood, and he bound Isaac his son and put him on the altar, on top of the wood. **10** And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son. **11** And the angel of the LORD called to him from the heavens and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." **12** And he said, "Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, and do not do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, and you have not withheld your son, your only ***son***, from Me." **13** And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and look, a ram behind ***him*** caught in the thicket by its horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering in place of his son. **14** And Abraham called the name of that place "The LORD Will See," as it is said this day, "On the mountain of the LORD it will be seen." **15** And the angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second ***time*** from the heavens, **16** and said, "By Myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, that because you have done this thing and have not withheld your son, your only ***son***, **17** that I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens and as the sand which ***is*** on the shore of the sea; and your seed will possess the gate of his enemies. **18** And all the nations of the earth will bless themselves by your seed, because you have listened to My voice." **19** And Abraham returned to his young men, and they arose and went together to Beersheba (Be'er-Sheva); and Abraham dwelt in Beersheba.

The Family of Nahor

20 And it happened after these things, and it was told to Abraham, saying, "Look, Milcah (Milka), she also has borne sons to Nahor (Nachor) your brother: **21** Uz (Uts) his firstborn, and Buz his brother, and Kemuel (Qemu'el) the father of Aram, **22** and Chesed (Kesed), and Hazo (Chazo), and Pildash, and Jidlaph (Yidlaf), and Bethuel (Betu'el)." **23** And Bethuel fathered Rebekah (Rivqa). These eight Milcah bore to Nahor, the brother of Abraham. **24** And his concubine, and her name ***was*** Reumah (Reuma), and she also bore Tebah (Tevach), and Gaham (Gacham), and Tahash (Tachash), and Maacah (Ma'akha).

GENESIS 23

Sarah Dies and Is Buried

1 And the life of Sarah (Sara) was a hundred years and twenty years and seven years, the years of the life of Sarah. **2** And Sarah died in Kiriath-arba (Qiryat-Arba), that ***is***
Hebron (Chevron), in the land of Canaan (Kena'an); and Abraham (Avraham) came to mourn for Sarah and to weep for her. **3** And Abraham rose up from before his dead, and he spoke to the sons of Heth (Chet), saying, **4** "I ***am*** a sojourner and a resident with you. Give me a possession of a grave with you, and let me bury my dead from before me." **5** And the sons of Heth answered Abraham, saying to him, **6** "Hear us, my lord: you ***are*** a prince of God in our midst. In the choicest of our graves bury your dead; none of us will withhold his

22:10 James 2:21; Heb 11:17; Heb 11:18
22:11 Heb 11:17; James 2:21; Gen 16:7,9,10
22:12 Heb 11:19; Matt 10:37; Matt 16:24
22:13 Gen 22:8; Ps 40:6-8; Ps 89:19,20
22:14 Exod 17:15; Gen 22:8,13; Gen 16:13,14
22:15 Acts 7:30; Heb 6:13
22:16 Heb 6:13; Heb 11:17; Ps 105:9
22:17 Heb 6:14; Heb 11:12; Rom 9:27
22:18 Acts 3:25; Gal 3:16; Gal 3:8
22:19 Gen 21:31; Josh 15:28; Judg 20:1
22:20 Gen 11:29; Prov 25:25; Gen 24:15,24
22:21 Job 1:1; Job 32:2; Gen 24:10
22:23 Rom 9:10; Gen 24:15,24,47; Gen 25:20
22:24 Gen 16:3; Gen 25:6; Prov 15:25
23:1 Gen 17:17
23:2 John 11:35; Gen 23:19; Gen 13:18
23:3 Gen 10:15; Gen 23:5,7; Gen 27:46
23:4 Acts 7:5; Heb 11:13; Heb 11:14
23:6 Gen 24:35; Gen 14:14; Gen 18:12

22:10 *took the knife to slaughter his son* In his heart the sacrifice was made. Abraham was declared righteous by faith years before (15:6). On Moriah his works proved his faith was real (James 2:21-22).
22:12 *now I know that you fear God* To fear God is to hold Him in such awe and trust that you obey Him above everything. The test brought into the open what was true in Abraham's heart. The angel speaks as the One to whom the offering was made (see 16:7). If He was the Son of God, the One who stopped Abraham's hand would one day not be spared Himself.
22:13 *offered it up as a burnt offering in place of his son* The ram died so Isaac could live. Substitution, one dying in another's place, runs through the Bible: the skins in the garden (3:21), the Passover lamb (Exod 12), and the cross, the just for the unjust (1 Pet 3:18).
22:14 *The LORD Will See* In Hebrew, Yahweh Yireh, sometimes written Jehovah-jireh. Many translations say will provide, and both are true: God sees our need ahead of time and sees to it. On Moriah God gave a ram. On another hill near Jerusalem He gave the Lamb. God stopped Abraham's hand. No one stopped the Father from giving His Son (Rom 8:32).
22:16 *By Myself I have sworn* God could swear by no one greater, so He swore by Himself (Heb 6:13). The oath makes the promise doubly sure.
22:17 *your seed will possess the gate of his enemies* The city gate was the place of defense and rule. They would overcome their enemies.
22:18 *all the nations of the earth will bless themselves by your seed* The wording differs a little from 12:3, but either way the nations' blessing comes through Abraham's Seed, and Paul says the seed points to one Person, Christ (Gal 3:8, 16). Every Gentile who comes to Jesus is part of its fulfillment.
22:18 *because you have listened to My voice* The covenant was already sworn unconditionally (15:17-18). Abraham's obedience did not earn it. It showed he truly believed, and God confirmed what He had given. Some teachers see a conditional element here. I believe these promises still stand, the land included.
22:19 *Abraham dwelt in Beersheba* Life went on. Mountaintop tests are few. The daily walk with God is where we live. Isaac surely came home with his father, and we should not build anything on the silence.
22:20 *Milcah, she also has borne sons to Nahor your brother* This short list sets up what comes next. Reumah was a concubine (see 16:2).
22:23 *Bethuel fathered Rebekah* The key name. The girl who will be Isaac's wife has already been born. God prepares the next step before we know to ask.
23:1 *the life of Sarah was a hundred years and twenty years and seven years* Sarah is the only woman in the Bible whose age at death is recorded. Isaac was about thirty-seven. She was not perfect, yet the New Testament honors her faith (Heb 11:11; 1 Pet 3:6).
23:2 *Kiriath-arba, that is Hebron* Moses gives the old name and then the one his readers knew. Hebron lay south of Jerusalem near Mamre (13:18).
23:2 *to mourn for Sarah and to weep for her* The first time Scripture tells of a man weeping. Faith does not mean we do not grieve. Jesus wept at Lazarus' tomb (John 11:35). Believers grieve, but not as those without hope (1 Thess 4:13).
23:3 *the sons of Heth* The Hittites living around Hebron. Scholars are not certain how they relate to the larger Hittite empire to the north in what is now Turkey.
23:4 *I am a sojourner and a resident with you* Over sixty years in Canaan, all of it promised to him, and he owned none of it, not even a foot's length (Acts 7:5).
23:6 *you are a prince of God in our midst* They had watched Abraham for years and saw God's blessing on him.

grave from you, from burying your dead." **7** And Abraham rose and bowed down to the people of the land, to the sons of Heth. **8** And he spoke with them, saying, "If it is your desire to bury my dead from before me, hear me, and intercede for me with Ephron (Efron) the son of Zohar (Tsochar), **9** that he may give me the cave of Machpelah (Makhpela) which ***is*** his, which ***is*** at the end of his field; for full silver let him give it to me in your midst as a possession of a grave." **10** And Ephron was sitting among the sons of Heth; and Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham in the ears of the sons of Heth, of all who entered the gate of his city, saying, **11** "No, my lord, hear me: the field I give to you, and the cave that ***is*** in it, to you I give it; before the eyes of the sons of my people I give it to you. Bury your dead." **12** And Abraham bowed down before the people of the land. **13** And he spoke to Ephron in the ears of the people of the land, saying, "Only if you, if only you would hear me! I give the silver of the field; take ***it*** from me, and let me bury my dead there." **14** And Ephron answered Abraham, saying to him, **15** "My lord, hear me: a land of approximately 10 pounds (four hundred shekels) of silver, between me and you, what ***is*** it? And bury your dead." **16** And Abraham listened to Ephron; and Abraham weighed out for Ephron the silver which he had spoken ***of*** in the ears of the sons of Heth, approximately 10 pounds (four hundred shekels) of silver, passing with the merchant. **17** And the field of Ephron which ***was*** in Machpelah, which ***was*** before Mamre, the field and the cave which ***was*** in it, and every tree that ***was*** in the field, that ***was*** in all its border all around, was confirmed **18** to Abraham as a purchase before the eyes of the sons of Heth, among all who entered the gate of his city. **19** And after this Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah facing Mamre, that ***is*** Hebron, in the land of Canaan. **20** And the field and the cave which ***was*** in it were confirmed to Abraham as a possession of a grave from the sons of Heth.

GENESIS 24

A Wife for Isaac

1 And Abraham (Avraham) was old, advanced in days; and the LORD had blessed Abraham in everything. **2** And Abraham said to his servant, the elder of his house, who ruled over all that he had, "Please put your hand under my thigh, **3** that I may make you swear by the LORD, the God of the heavens and the God of the earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I am dwelling; **4** but you will go to my land and to my kindred, and you will take a wife for my son, for Isaac (Yitschaq)." **5** And the servant said to him, "Perhaps the woman will not be willing to go after me to this land. Shall I indeed take your son back to the land from which you came out?" **6** And Abraham said to him, "Guard yourself, lest you take my son back there. **7** The LORD, the God of the heavens, who took me from the house of my father and from the land of my kindred, and who spoke to me and who swore to me, saying, 'To your seed I will give this land,' He will send His angel before you, and you will take a wife for my son from

23:7 Gen 18:2; Gen 19:1; Prov 18:24
23:8 1 Kgs 2:17; Luke 7:3,4; Heb 7:26
23:9 Rom 12:17; Rom 13:8
23:10 Gen 34:20,24; Gen 23:18; Ruth 4:1-4
23:11 Luke 19:24; Gen 23:6; 2 Sam 24:20-24
23:12 Gen 23:7; Gen 18:2; Gen 19:1
23:13 Gen 14:22,23; 2 Sam 24:24; Acts 20:35
23:15 Ezek 45:12; Exod 30:15
23:16 Acts 7:16; Jer 32:9; Zech 11:12
23:17 Gen 25:9; Gen 50:13; Gen 23:20
23:18 Gen 34:20; Ruth 4:1; Jer 32:12
23:19 Gen 3:19; Gen 25:9,10; Gen 35:27-29
23:20 Ruth 4:7-10; 2 Sam 24:24; Jer 32:10,11
24:1 Gal 3:9; Gen 13:2; Gen 18:11
24:2 Gen 47:29; Gen 39:4-6,8,9; Gen 15:2
24:3 2 Cor 6:14; 2 Cor 6:16; Gen 26:34,35
24:4 Gen 28:2; Gen 11:25-32; Gen 22:20-23
24:5 Gen 24:58; Exod 20:7; Exod 9:2
24:6 Gal 5:1; Heb 10:39; Heb 11:9,13-16
24:7 Rev 11:13; Luke 1:73; Gen 13:15

23:7 *Abraham rose and bowed down to the people of the land* Wealthy and respected, yet polite and humble. Believers should be people of courtesy, in business too, and with those who do not share our faith.
23:9 *for full silver let him give it to me* Abraham wanted a place of his own, not a borrowed grave. A gift could be taken back or claimed by heirs. A purchase before witnesses made it his beyond question.
23:10 *in the ears of the sons of Heth, of all who entered the gate of his city* The gate was where business and legal matters were settled (19:1). Everyone present was a witness.
23:11 *the field I give to you* Many commentators note that a generous-sounding offer could be a polite way to open bargaining. It may have been sincere, or the first move in setting the price. Abraham answered courteously and firmly.
23:15 *approximately 10 pounds of silver* The Hebrew says four hundred shekels. A shekel was a weight of about two-fifths of an ounce. Most commentators think Ephron asked a lot. Jeremiah later paid seventeen shekels for a field (Jer 32:9), though times differed.
23:16 *passing with the merchant* Silver in the weight traders accepted, so no one could say he was cheated. Abraham did not haggle. He wanted clear title. A believer's dealings should be honest and above reproach.
23:17 *every tree that was in the field, that was in all its border all around* Spelled out like a legal deed. In a land promised to him, Abraham now owned one field and one cave.
23:19 *Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah* Abraham, Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob and Leah would lie here too (25:9; 49:29-31; 50:13). Many believe a building in Hebron still stands over the cave. Burying Sarah in Canaan was a statement of faith: this land is home because God promised it. The patriarchs died in faith, seeing the promises from afar (Heb 11:13). That small field was a down payment, and I believe the land promise still stands (15:18). God has prepared a city for those who trust Him (Heb 11:16).
24:1 *the LORD had blessed Abraham in everything* Abraham was about 140, and Isaac about forty (25:20). After all the waiting, testing and grief, God had been faithful at every turn.
24:2 *his servant, the elder of his house* Parents arranged marriages in that culture. Many think this was Eliezer (15:2), but the text does not name him.
24:2 *Please put your hand under my thigh* A solemn way of swearing an oath. It seems connected with a man's descendants, fitting an oath about the family's future. Jacob asked Joseph to swear the same way (47:29).
24:3 *you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites* They worshiped false gods, and their ways were deeply corrupt (15:16). Abraham wanted a wife who would share the family's faith. Christians are not to be bound together with unbelievers (2 Cor 6:14). Faith in God belongs at the center of marriage.
24:6 *Guard yourself, lest you take my son back there* God called Abraham out of that land and promised him this one. To go back would be to turn from God's call.
24:7 *He will send His angel before you* Abraham did not know who the bride would be, but he knew the God who would lead the way.

there. **8** And if the woman is not willing to go after you, then you will be free from this oath of mine; only you shall not take my son back there." **9** And the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and he swore to him concerning this matter.

The Servant Meets Rebekah

10 And the servant took ten camels from the camels of his master and went, and every good thing of his master ***was*** in his hand; and he arose and went to Mesopotamia (Aram-Naharayim), to the city of Nahor (Nachor). **11** And he made the camels kneel outside the city by the well of water, at the time of evening, at the time when the women who draw water go out. **12** And he said, "O LORD, God of my master Abraham, please make ***it*** happen before me this day, and do steadfast love with my master Abraham. **13** Look, I am standing by the spring of water, and the daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water. **14** And it will be that the young woman to whom I say, 'Please lower your jar, that I may drink,' and she says, 'Drink, and I will also give your camels a drink,' her You have appointed for Your servant, for Isaac; and by it I will know that You have done steadfast love with my master." **15** And it happened, before he had finished speaking, and look, Rebekah (Rivqa) was coming out, who was born to Bethuel (Betu'el) the son of Milcah (Milka), the wife of Nahor, the brother of Abraham; and her jar ***was*** on her shoulder. **16** And the young woman ***was*** very good of appearance, a virgin, and no man had known her; and she went down to the spring and filled her jar and came up. **17** And the servant ran to meet her and said, "Please give me a little water to sip from your jar." **18** And she said, "Drink, my lord." And she hurried and let her jar down on her hand and gave him a drink. **19** And she finished giving him a drink, and she said, "I will also draw for your camels, until they have finished drinking." **20** And she hurried and emptied her jar into the trough, and she ran again to the well to draw, and she drew for all his camels. **21** And the man was gazing at her, keeping silent, to know whether the LORD had made his way successful or not. **22** And it happened, when the camels had finished drinking, and the man took a ring of gold, its weight approximately 1/5 ounce (a beka), and two bracelets on her hands, their weight approximately 4 ounces (ten ***shekels***) of gold. **23** And he said, "Whose daughter ***are*** you? Please tell me. Is there room ***in*** the house of your father for us to lodge?" **24** And she said to him, "I ***am*** the daughter of Bethuel, the son of Milcah, whom she bore to Nahor." **25** And she said to him, "Both straw and fodder ***are*** plentiful with us, and also room to lodge." **26** And the man bowed low and bowed down to the LORD. **27** And he said, "Blessed ***be*** the LORD, the God of my master Abraham, who has not forsaken His steadfast love and His faithfulness from my master. As for me, on the way the LORD has led me ***to*** the house of the brothers of my master."

Laban Welcomes the Servant

28 And the young woman ran and told the house of her mother according to these things. **29** And Rebekah had a brother, and his name ***was*** Laban (Lavan); and Laban ran to the man outside, to the spring. **30** And it happened, when he saw the ring and the bracelets on the hands of his sister, and when he heard the words of Rebekah his sister, saying, "Thus the man spoke to me," and he came to the man; and look, he ***was*** standing by the camels at the spring. **31** And he said, "Come in, blessed of the LORD! Why do you stand outside? And I, I have prepared the house, and a place for the camels." **32** And the man came into the house, and he unloaded the camels; and he gave straw and fodder to the camels, and water to wash his feet and the feet of the men who ***were*** with him. **33** And ***food*** was set before him to eat, and he said, "I will not eat until I have spoken my words." And he said,

24:8 Josh 2:17-20; Num 30:5,8; Josh 9:20
24:10 Acts 2:9; Deut 23:4; Gen 11:31
24:11 1 Sam 9:11; Exod 2:16; John 4:7
24:12 Matt 22:32; Gen 24:27; Gen 26:24
24:13 John 4:7; Gen 24:43; Ps 37:5
24:14 Judg 6:17,37; Gen 15:8; Gen 24:44
24:15 Gen 24:45; Gen 24:24; Gen 22:20-23
24:16 Gen 26:7; Gen 39:6; Gen 4:1
24:17 John 4:7; 1 Kgs 17:10; Gen 26:1-35
24:18 Prov 31:26; 1 Pet 3:8; 1 Pet 4:8,9
24:19 Gen 24:14,45,46; 1 Pet 4:9
24:21 Gen 24:12,56; 2 Sam 7:18-20; Ps 34:1-6
24:22 Exod 32:2,3; Gen 24:30; Esth 5:1
24:24 Gen 24:15; Gen 11:29; Gen 22:20,23
24:25 Gen 18:4-8; Judg 19:19-21; Isa 32:8
24:26 Gen 24:48,52; Exod 4:31; Gen 22:5
24:27 Luke 1:68; Eph 1:3; Gen 24:48
24:28 Gen 24:48,55,67; Gen 31:33
24:29 Gen 29:5; Gen 24:55,60
24:31 Gen 26:29; Ruth 3:10; Ps 115:15
24:32 Gen 43:24; Judg 19:21; Gen 18:4
24:33 Job 23:12; Ps 132:3-5; Prov 22:29

24:8 *if the woman is not willing to go after you, then you will be free* Abraham did not force anything. God guides, but He does not drag anyone into His plan against their will.
24:10 *he arose and went to Mesopotamia, to the city of Nahor* Mesopotamia means between the rivers. The city of Nahor was Haran or a town near it, weeks away. Ten camels loaded with gifts showed Abraham's wealth.
24:12 *O LORD, God of my master Abraham, please make it happen before me this day* The servant had learned from his master to bring everything to God.
24:14 *Drink, and I will also give your camels a drink* He did not ask for magic but for a woman who showed kindness, hard work and generosity to a stranger, the very qualities a godly wife would need. He was on a special mission before Scripture was written. Today God guides mainly through His Word, prayer, wise counsel and His Spirit. But we can and should pray specifically about the details of our lives.
24:15 *before he had finished speaking* God answered while the prayer was still being prayed (Isa 65:24). Rebekah was from the very family Abraham named.
24:19 *I will also draw for your camels, until they have finished drinking* A thirsty camel can drink many gallons, and there were ten. She ran to the well again and again, doing far more than she was asked, and cheerfully.
24:21 *the man was gazing at her, keeping silent* It is good to pray, and also good to wait quietly and watch how God answers.
24:22 *its weight approximately 1/5 ounce* The Hebrew says half a shekel for the ring and ten shekels for the bracelets. A nose ring was common jewelry for women there (24:47).
24:26 *the man bowed low and bowed down to the LORD* Before another word to Rebekah, he gave thanks.
24:27 *on the way the LORD has led me* He set out not knowing where the road would end, kept walking and praying, and God led him to the right house. God usually guides people who are already moving in obedience.
24:30 *when he saw the ring and the bracelets* A clue to Laban. His eye was on the gold. We will see much more of him in chapters 29 to 31, and money will always be on his mind.
24:33 *I will not eat until I have spoken my words* His master's errand came before his own comfort. A faithful servant keeps the main thing the main thing.

"Speak." **34** And he said, "I ***am*** the servant of Abraham. **35** And the LORD has blessed my master exceedingly, and he has become great; and He has given him sheep and cattle, and silver and gold, and ***male*** servants and female servants, and camels and donkeys. **36** And Sarah (Sara) the wife of my master bore a son to my master after her old age, and he has given him all that he has. **37** And my master made me swear, saying, 'You shall not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I am dwelling; **38** but you shall go to the house of my father and to my family, and you shall take a wife for my son.' **39** And I said to my master, 'Perhaps the woman will not go after me.' **40** And he said to me, 'The LORD, before whom I have walked, will send His angel with you and will make your way successful; and you will take a wife for my son from my family and from the house of my father. **41** Then you will be free from my oath, when you come to my family; and if they do not give ***her*** to you, then you will be clear of my oath.' **42** And I came this day to the spring, and I said, 'O LORD, God of my master Abraham, if You are, please, making successful my way on which I am going, **43** look, I am standing by the spring of water; and it will be that the maiden who comes out to draw, and I say to her, "Please give me a little water to drink from your jar," **44** and she says to me, "Both you drink, and I will also draw for your camels," she ***is*** the woman whom the LORD has appointed for the son of my master.' **45** I, before I had finished speaking to my heart, and look, Rebekah was coming out, and her jar ***was*** on her shoulder; and she went down to the spring and drew, and I said to her, 'Please give me a drink.' **46** And she hurried and let her jar down from upon her, and she said, 'Drink, and I will also give your camels a drink.' And I drank, and she also gave the camels a drink. **47** And I asked her and said, 'Whose daughter ***are*** you?' And she said, 'The daughter of Bethuel, the son of Nahor, whom Milcah bore to him.' And I put the ring on her nose and the bracelets on her hands. **48** And I bowed low and bowed down to the LORD, and I blessed the LORD, the God of my master Abraham, who had led me in the way of truth to take the daughter of the brother of my master for his son. **49** And now, if you are doing steadfast love and faithfulness with my master, tell me; and if not, tell me, that I may turn to the right or to the left."

Rebekah Agrees to Go

50 And Laban and Bethuel answered and said, "The matter has come out from the LORD; we are not able to speak to you bad or good. **51** Look, Rebekah ***is*** before you; take ***her*** and go, and let her be a wife for the son of your master, just as the LORD has spoken." **52** And it happened, when the servant of Abraham heard their words, and he bowed down to the ground to the LORD. **53** And the servant brought out articles of silver and articles of gold and garments, and he gave ***them*** to Rebekah; and he gave precious gifts to her brother and to her mother. **54** And they ate and drank, he and the men who ***were*** with him, and they lodged; and they arose in the morning, and he said, "Send me away to my master." **55** And her brother and her mother said, "Let the young woman stay with us ***some*** days, or ten; after ***that*** she will go." **56** And he said to them, "Do not delay me, and the LORD has made my way successful; send me away, and let me go to my master." **57** And they said, "Let us call the young woman and ask her mouth." **58** And they called Rebekah and said to her, "Will you go with this man?" And she said, "I will go." **59** And they sent away Rebekah their sister and her nurse, and the servant of Abraham and his men. **60** And they blessed Rebekah and said to her, "Our sister, you, become thousands of ten thousands; and may your seed possess the gate of those who hate him." **61** And Rebekah arose, and her young women, and they rode on the camels and went after the man; and the servant took Rebekah and went.

24:35 Gen 24:1; Gen 13:2; Gen 12:2
24:36 Rom 4:19; Gen 25:5; Gen 21:1-7
24:37 Gen 24:2-9; Gen 6:2; Gen 27:46
24:38 Gen 24:4; Gen 12:1; Gen 31:19
24:40 Rev 22:8; Gen 17:1; Gen 24:7
24:41 Gen 24:8; Deut 29:12
24:42 Neh 1:11; Gen 24:12-14; Acts 10:7,8,22
24:43 John 4:7; Gen 24:13,14
24:44 Gen 24:14; Isa 32:8; 1 Tim 2:10
24:45 Acts 4:27; Gen 24:15-20; Isa 58:9
24:47 1 Pet 3:3; Gen 24:22,53; Ps 45:9,13,14
24:48 Gen 24:26,27,52; Gen 22:23; Ps 32:8
24:49 Gen 47:29; Josh 2:14; Gen 32:10
24:50 Mark 12:11; Matt 21:42; Gen 31:24,29
24:51 Gen 24:15; Gen 20:15; 2 Sam 16:10
24:52 Gen 24:26,48; 1 Chr 29:20; 2 Chr 20:18
24:53 Exod 3:22; Exod 11:2; Exod 12:35
24:54 Gen 24:56,59; Gen 28:5,6; Gen 45:24
24:55 Gen 4:3; Lev 25:29; Judg 14:8
24:56 Gen 45:9-13; Prov 25:25; Josh 1:8
24:58 Ps 45:10,11; Luke 1:38
24:59 Gen 35:8; Gen 24:50,53,60; Num 11:12
24:60 Gen 22:17; Gen 17:16; Gen 1:28
24:61 Gen 31:34; 1 Sam 30:17; Esth 8:10,14

24:34 *I am the servant of Abraham* He does not give his own name. His identity was wrapped up in his master. Moses records the retelling in full because the servant saw everything through God's hand at work.
24:36 *he has given him all that he has* Many see here a picture of the Father sending His Spirit to call out a bride for His Son. The Spirit does not speak of Himself but points to the Son, and all the Father has belongs to the Son (John 16:13-15). The New Testament does not make this comparison directly, so hold it lightly.
24:45 *before I had finished speaking to my heart* He had prayed silently. No one at the spring knew what he asked, so Rebekah's offer could not have been staged.
24:49 *tell me, that I may turn to the right or to the left* He laid out the facts of God's leading and let them decide, without pressure.
24:50 *The matter has come out from the LORD* Even this family, which seems to have mixed the LORD's worship with other gods (31:19, 30), could see God was in it. When God's hand is this clear, there is nothing left to argue.
24:52 *he bowed down to the ground to the LORD* Every step of this journey was marked by prayer before and praise after.
24:53 *he gave precious gifts to her brother and to her mother* Part of the marriage custom: a bride price to the family and gifts to the bride.
24:55 *Let the young woman stay with us some days, or ten* A natural request. They were losing her, likely forever.
24:56 *Do not delay me* When God has made His will clear, it is wise to act on it.
24:58 *I will go* Brave and simple. She left home, family and country to marry a man she had never seen, because she believed the LORD was in it. She walked Abraham's road of faith (12:1).
24:59 *her nurse* Deborah, mentioned again at her death many years later (35:8).
24:60 *may your seed possess the gate of those who hate him* Echoing God's promise on Moriah (22:17). Without knowing it, her family prayed in line with God's covenant.

Isaac Marries Rebekah

62 And Isaac had come from going ***to*** Beer-lahai-roi
(Be'er-Lachay-Ro'i), and he was dwelling in the land of the
Negeb (Negev). **63** And Isaac went out to meditate in the field
at the turning of evening; and he lifted up his eyes and saw,
and look, camels ***were*** coming. **64** And Rebekah lifted up her
eyes and saw Isaac, and she got down from upon the camel.
65 And she said to the servant, "Who ***is*** this man who is walking in the field to meet us?" And the servant said, "He ***is*** my
master." And she took the veil and covered herself. **66** And
the servant recounted to Isaac all the things that he had
done. **67** And Isaac brought her into the tent of Sarah his
mother, and he took Rebekah, and she became his wife, and
he loved her; and Isaac was comforted after his mother.

GENESIS 25

The Death of Abraham

1 And Abraham (Avraham) again took a wife, and her name
was Keturah (Qetura). **2** And she bore to him Zimran and Jokshan (Yoqshan) and Medan and Midian (Midyan) and Ishbak
(Yishbaq) and Shuah (Shuach). **3** And Jokshan fathered Sheba
(Sheva) and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were Asshurim
and Letushim and Leummim (Le'umim). **4** And the sons of
Midian ***were*** Ephah (Efa) and Epher (Efer) and Hanoch
(Chanokh) and Abida (Avida) and Eldaah (Elda'a). All these
were the sons of Keturah. **5** And Abraham gave all that he
had to Isaac (Yitschaq). **6** And to the sons of the concubines
whom Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts; and he sent them
away from Isaac his son while he ***was*** still alive, eastward, to
the land of the east. **7** And these ***are*** the days of the years of
the life of Abraham which he lived: a hundred years and seventy years and five years. **8** And Abraham breathed his last
and died in a good old age, old and satisfied, and he was gathered to his people. **9** And Isaac and Ishmael (Yishma'el) his
sons buried him in the cave of Machpelah (Makhpela), in the
field of Ephron (Efron) the son of Zohar (Tsochar) the Hittite,
which ***is*** facing Mamre, **10** the field which Abraham bought
from the sons of Heth (Chet). There Abraham was buried,
and Sarah (Sara) his wife. **11** And it happened after the death
of Abraham, and God blessed Isaac his son; and Isaac dwelt
near Beer-lahai-roi (Be'er-Lachay-Ro'i).

The Line of Ishmael

12 And these ***are*** the generations of Ishmael the son of Abraham, whom Hagar the Egyptian, the female servant of Sarah,
bore to Abraham. **13** And these ***are*** the names of the sons of
Ishmael, by their names, according to their generations: the
firstborn of Ishmael, Nebaioth (Nevayot); and Kedar (Qedar)
and Adbeel and Mibsam (Mivsam), **14** and Mishma and
Dumah (Duma) and Massa (Masa), **15** Hadad (Chadad) and
Tema, Jetur (Yetur), Naphish (Nafish), and Kedemah
(Qedma). **16** These, they ***are*** the sons of Ishmael, and these
are their names, by their villages and by their encampments:
twelve princes according to their tribes. **17** And these ***are*** the
years of the life of Ishmael: a hundred years and thirty years
and seven years; and he breathed his last and died, and he
was gathered to his people. **18** And they dwelt from Havilah
(Chavila) to Shur, which ***is*** facing Egypt (Mitsrayim) as you
go toward Assyria (Ashur). In the face of all his brothers he
fell.

Jacob and Esau Are Born

19 And these ***are*** the generations of Isaac the son of Abra-

24:62 Gen 16:14; Gen 25:11; Gen 12:9
24:63 Ps 1:2; Ps 119:15; Josh 1:8
24:64 Josh 15:18; Judg 1:14
24:65 Gen 20:16; 1 Cor 11:5,6,10; 1 Tim 2:9
24:66 Mark 6:30
24:67 Gen 37:35; Gen 38:12; Gen 18:6,9,10
25:1 Gen 23:1,2; Gen 28:1; 1 Chr 1:32,33
25:2 1 Chr 1:32,33; Jer 25:25; Gen 36:35
25:3 1 Kgs 10:1; Job 6:19; Ps 72:10
25:4 Isa 60:6
25:5 Rom 9:7; Gal 3:29; Gal 4:28
25:6 Rom 4:17; Gen 21:14; Judg 6:3
25:7 Rom 4:17; Gen 12:4
25:8 Acts 5:5; Gen 49:33; Gen 25:17
25:9 Gen 35:29; Gen 50:13; Gen 49:29,30
25:10 Gen 23:16; Gen 49:31
25:11 Gen 16:14; Gen 24:62; Gen 12:2
25:12 Gal 4:24; Gen 16:10-15; Gen 17:20
25:13 1 Chr 1:29-31; Isa 60:7; Gen 36:3
25:14 Isa 21:11,16
25:15 1 Chr 5:19; Job 2:11
25:16 Gen 17:20,23
25:17 Gen 25:7,8; Gen 15:15
25:18 Rom 4:17; Gen 16:12; Gen 20:1
25:19 Matt 1:2; Luke 3:34; Acts 7:8

24:62 *Beer-lahai-roi* The well where the angel of the LORD met Hagar (16:13-14). The Negeb is the dry south.
24:63 *Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the turning of evening* Alone, perhaps praying, perhaps grieving his mother.
24:65 *she took the veil and covered herself* Modesty and respect, a bride meeting her groom.
24:67 *he loved her; and Isaac was comforted after his mother* An arranged marriage filled with love. God provided a ram on Moriah, and now a wife and comfort in grief. He cares about the details of our lives.
25:1 *Abraham again took a wife, and her name was Keturah* We are not told when. 1 Chronicles 1:32 calls her a concubine, and 25:6 speaks of concubines, so some think it was while Sarah lived. Midian fathered the Midianites, among whom Moses would later live and marry (Exod 2:15-21). Sheba and Dedan became Arabian trading peoples (25:3). The father of many nations (17:4-5) was taking shape.
25:5 *Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac* Isaac, the son of promise, was chief heir.
25:6 *he sent them away from Isaac his son while he was still alive* Abraham made his wishes clear before he died, leaving less room for fighting, and kept the line of promise in the land God gave Isaac. Parents today do well to plan with the same care.
25:7 *a hundred years and seventy years and five years* He came into Canaan at seventy-five (12:4), so he lived exactly a hundred years in the land as a sojourner.
25:8 *old and satisfied, and he was gathered to his people* A beautiful epitaph. Being gathered to his people is separate from burial (25:9) and hints that he joined those who died before him. God is the God of Abraham, the God of the living (Matt 22:32). Abraham is alive with God now.
25:9 *Isaac and Ishmael his sons buried him* The half brothers, once separated, stood side by side at their father's grave.
25:11 *God blessed Isaac his son* The blessing passed to the next generation.
25:12 *these are the generations of Ishmael the son of Abraham* Twelve princes, just as God promised (17:20). Nebaioth and Kedar appear later as Arabian peoples (Isa 60:7). Every promise God made about Ishmael came true.
25:18 *In the face of all his brothers he fell* The Hebrew can mean he lived in hostility toward his relatives, or that he settled east of them or alongside them. It recalls 16:12. Then Moses sets Ishmael aside to follow Isaac.
25:19 *these are the generations of Isaac the son of Abraham* A new section begins.

ham: Abraham fathered Isaac. **20** And Isaac was a son of forty years when he took Rebekah (Rivqa), the daughter of Bethuel (Betu'el) the Aramean of Paddan-aram (Padan-Aram), the sister of Laban (Lavan) the Aramean, for himself as a wife. **21** And Isaac entreated the LORD for his wife, for she ***was*** barren; and the LORD was entreated by him, and Rebekah his wife conceived. **22** And the children struggled together within her, and she said, "If ***it is*** so, why ***am*** I this ***way***?" And she went to inquire of the LORD. **23** And the LORD said to her, "Two nations ***are*** in your womb, and two peoples from your inner parts will be separated; and ***one*** people will be stronger than ***the other*** people, and the elder will serve the younger." **24** And her days to give birth were fulfilled, and look, twins ***were*** in her womb. **25** And the first came out red, all of him like a cloak of hair; and they called his name Esau (Esav). **26** And after that his brother came out, and his hand ***was*** grasping the heel of Esau; and he called his name Jacob (Ya'aqov). And Isaac ***was*** a son of sixty years when she bore them.

Esau Sells His Birthright

27 And the lads grew, and Esau was a man knowing hunting, a man of the field; and Jacob ***was*** a blameless man, dwelling ***in*** tents. **28** And Isaac loved Esau, for game ***was*** in his mouth; and Rebekah was loving Jacob. **29** And Jacob cooked stew, and Esau came from the field, and he ***was*** exhausted. **30** And Esau said to Jacob, "Please let me gulp some of the red, this red ***stew***, for I ***am*** exhausted." Therefore ***one*** called his name Edom. **31** And Jacob said, "Sell me your birthright as of this day." **32** And Esau said, "Look, I am going to die; and what ***is*** this to me, a birthright?" **33** And Jacob said, "Swear to me as of this day." And he swore to him, and he sold his birthright to Jacob. **34** And Jacob gave Esau bread and stew of lentils; and he ate and drank, and he arose and went. And Esau despised the birthright.

GENESIS 26

Isaac and Abimelech

1 And ***there*** was a famine in the land, besides the former famine which was in the days of Abraham (Avraham). And Isaac (Yitschaq) went to Abimelech (Avimelekh) king of the Philistines, to Gerar. **2** And the LORD appeared to him and said, "Do not go down to Egypt (Mitsrayim); dwell in the land which I will tell you. **3** Sojourn in this land, and I will be with you and will bless you; for to you and to your seed I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I swore to Abraham your father. **4** And I will multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens, and I will give to your seed all these lands; and all the nations of the earth will bless themselves by your seed, **5** because Abraham listened to My voice and

25:20 Gen 24:29; Gen 22:23; Gen 24:67
25:21 Rom 9:10; Acts 7:8; 1 Chr 5:20
25:22 Rom 9:10; Rom 9:12; 1 Sam 9:9
25:23 Rom 9:12; Rom 9:10; Rom 9:11
25:24 Rom 4:17
25:25 Gen 27:11,16,23
25:26 Matt 1:2; Luke 3:34; Acts 7:8
25:27 Heb 11:9; Gen 21:20; Gen 10:9
25:28 Gen 27:4,19,25,31; Gen 27:6
25:29 Judg 8:4,5; 1 Sam 14:28,31; Prov 13:25
25:30 Gen 36:1,9,43; Exod 15:15; Num 20:14-21
25:31 Heb 12:16
25:32 Heb 12:16; Job 21:15; Job 22:17
25:33 Heb 12:16; Gen 27:36; Gen 14:22
25:34 Heb 12:16; Eccl 8:15; Isa 22:13
26:1 Gen 12:10; Gen 25:11; Gen 21:22-32
26:2 Gen 12:7; Gen 17:1; Gen 18:1,10-20
26:3 Luke 1:73; Matt 1:1; Gal 3:16
26:4 Gal 3:8; Acts 3:25; Gal 3:16
26:5 Matt 5:19; Heb 11:8; James 2:21

25:20 *Paddan-aram* The plain of Aram, the region around Haran. Rebekah's family were Arameans.
25:21 *Isaac entreated the LORD for his wife, for she was barren* Again the family of promise depended on a miracle. Isaac did not take a second wife as his father had. He prayed. The twins came when he was sixty (25:26), so they waited and prayed about twenty years. This was God's unique plan for the line, not a promise to every couple (see 11:30).
25:22 *she went to inquire of the LORD* The right response to confusion. Take it to God.
25:23 *Two nations are in your womb* Israel from Jacob and Edom from Esau. Their struggle in the womb pictured a struggle lasting centuries.
25:23 *the elder will serve the younger* Custom gave the firstborn greater honor. God turned it upside down, choosing before the twins had done good or bad (Rom 9:10-13). Paul pairs it with Malachi 1:2-3, loved Jacob and hated Esau. "Love" and "hate" can describe choosing one and not the other (compare Luke 14:26). Many read Malachi mainly of nations, others of individuals too. Some read Paul as teaching God's choice of individuals for salvation, others His choice of nations and their roles. Good teachers land on both sides, and I won't settle it here. God is free to show grace as He wills, and no one can claim to have earned it.
25:25 *they called his name Esau* Red and hairy. The word for hairy sounds like Seir, where Esau's descendants would live.
25:26 *his hand was grasping the heel of Esau; and he called his name Jacob* The name is linked to the word heel and came to mean one who grabs the heel or supplants (27:36). Hosea looks back on it (Hos 12:3). Jacob grasped from the start. His life is the story of God making a grasping man into a man of faith.
25:27 *Jacob was a blameless man, dwelling in tents* Blameless here can mean complete, settled or whole, not sinless, as the next verses show. Esau was rugged and outdoors. Jacob stayed near home and the flocks.
25:28 *Isaac loved Esau, for game was in his mouth; and Rebekah was loving Jacob* Each parent had a favorite, and Isaac's love was tied to his appetite. It will tear the family apart (27), and Jacob will repeat it with Joseph (37:3). Parents, love each child fully. Children notice, and the wounds last.
25:30 *Therefore one called his name Edom* Edom means red. Esau was so hungry he did not even name the food.
25:31 *Sell me your birthright as of this day* The birthright usually meant a double share (Deut 21:17) and family leadership. In this family it was tied to God's covenant promise to bless all nations.
25:32 *what is this to me, a birthright* He was hungry, not dying. He traded what was eternal for what would be gone in minutes.
25:34 *Esau despised the birthright* Both brothers were wrong. Jacob schemed and took advantage of his brother instead of trusting God. But Moses puts the main blame on Esau, who treated it as worthless, a profane man who sold his birthright for one meal (Heb 12:16). What does it profit to gain the world and lose your soul (Mark 8:36)? Don't sell your birthright for a bowl of stew.
26:1 *Isaac went to Abimelech king of the Philistines, to Gerar* Gerar lay in the western Negeb. As at 21:32, we are not told how these early Philistines relate to the later nation. Many decades had passed since chapter 20, so this was probably not the same Abimelech. The name may have been a royal title, or he was a son or grandson.
26:2 *Do not go down to Egypt* The first time God is said to appear to Isaac. Abraham went to Egypt in a famine and got into trouble (12:10). Isaac was to stay in the land.
26:3 *I will establish the oath which I swore to Abraham your father* Presence, blessing, land, descendants like the stars, and blessing for the nations (26:4). The covenant passed to Isaac. God did not renegotiate it each generation. He confirmed it.
26:5 *because Abraham listened to My voice* Abraham's obedience did not earn the covenant. He was declared righteous by faith long before (15:6). But his obedience showed his faith was real, and God honored it. Our faithfulness can bless our children and grandchildren.

kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws." **6** And Isaac dwelt in Gerar. **7** And the men of the place asked about his wife, and he said, "She ***is*** my sister," for he was afraid to say, "My wife," ***thinking***, "Lest the men of the place kill me on account of Rebekah (Rivqa), for she ***is*** good of appearance." **8** And it happened, when the days had been long for him there, and Abimelech king of the Philistines looked down through the window and saw, and look, Isaac ***was*** playing with Rebekah his wife. **9** And Abimelech called Isaac and said, "Surely, look, she ***is*** your wife! And how did you say, 'She ***is*** my sister'?" And Isaac said to him, "Because I said, 'Lest I die on account of her.'" **10** And Abimelech said, "What ***is*** this you have done to us? One of the people nearly lay with your wife, and you would have brought guilt upon us." **11** And Abimelech commanded all the people, saying, "He who touches this man or his wife shall surely be put to death."

Wells and Quarrels

12 And Isaac sowed in that land and found in that year a hundredfold; and the LORD blessed him. **13** And the man became great, and he kept on going and becoming great until he had become exceedingly great. **14** And he had livestock of flocks and livestock of herds and many servants; and the Philistines envied him. **15** And all the wells which the servants of his father had dug in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines stopped them up and filled them ***with*** dust. **16** And Abimelech said to Isaac, "Go away from us, for you have become much mightier than we." **17** And Isaac went from there and camped in the wadi of Gerar, and he dwelt there. **18** And Isaac again dug the wells of water which they had dug in the days of Abraham his father, and the Philistines had stopped them up after the death of Abraham; and he called their names according to the names which his father had called them. **19** And the servants of Isaac dug in the wadi and found there a well of living water. **20** And the herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with the herdsmen of Isaac, saying, "The water ***is*** ours." And he called the name of the well Esek (Eseq), because they contended with him. **21** And they dug another well, and they quarreled over it also; and he called its name Sitnah (Sitna). **22** And he moved on from there and dug another well, and they did not quarrel over it; and he called its name Rehoboth (Rechovot), and he said, "For now the LORD has made room for us, and we will be fruitful in the land."

The LORD Appears at Beersheba

23 And he went up from there ***to*** Beersheba (Be'er-Sheva). **24** And the LORD appeared to him in that night and said, "I ***am*** the God of Abraham your father. Do not be afraid, for I ***am*** with you, and I will bless you and will multiply your seed for the sake of Abraham My servant." **25** And he built an altar there and called on the name of the LORD, and he pitched his tent there; and the servants of Isaac dug a well there. **26** And Abimelech went to him from Gerar, and Ahuzzath (Achuzat) his friend, and Phicol (Pikhol) the commander of his army. **27** And Isaac said to them, "Why have you come to me, and you, you hate me and have sent me away from you?" **28** And they said, "We have surely seen that the LORD has been with you; and we said, 'Let there be, please, an oath between us, between us and you, and let us cut a covenant with you, **29** that you will do no harm with us, just as we have not touched you, and just as we have done with you only good and have sent you away in peace.' You ***are*** now the blessed of the LORD." **30** And he made a feast for them, and they ate and drank. **31** And they rose early in the morning and swore, each to his brother; and Isaac sent them away,

26:6 Gen 20:1
26:7 Gen 12:13; Gen 20:2,5,12,13; Prov 29:25
26:8 Judg 5:28; Prov 7:6; Song 2:9
26:10 Gen 12:18,19; Gen 20:9,10
26:11 Ps 105:15; Gen 20:6; Prov 6:29
26:12 Gen 26:3,29; Gen 24:1,35; Job 42:12
26:13 Gen 24:35; Ps 112:3
26:14 Gen 37:11; Eccl 4:4; Gen 12:16
26:15 Gen 21:30
26:16 Exod 1:9
26:18 Gen 21:31; Num 32:38; Ps 16:4
26:19 John 7:38; John 4:10,11; Song 4:15
26:20 Gen 21:25
26:21 Ezra 4:6
26:22 Gen 17:6; Exod 1:7; Ps 4:1
26:23 Gen 21:31; Gen 46:1; Judg 20:1
26:24 Acts 7:32; Matt 22:32; Mark 12:26
26:25 Gen 13:18; Ps 116:17; Gen 12:7
26:26 Gen 20:3; Gen 21:22-32
26:27 Judg 11:7; Gen 26:14,16; Acts 7:9,14,27,35
26:28 Gen 21:22,23; Gen 39:5; Josh 3:7
26:29 Acts 15:33; Gen 24:31; Ps 115:15
26:30 Gen 19:3; Gen 21:8; Gen 31:54
26:31 Gen 19:2; Gen 21:14; Gen 22:3

26:7 *She is my sister* Abraham told a half-truth (20:12). Rebekah was not Isaac's sister at all, so this was a plain lie. Sins often pass down in families unless God breaks the pattern. Isaac had just heard "I will be with you," and he let fear crowd out the promise.
26:8 *Isaac was playing with Rebekah his wife* Showing affection plainly as husband and wife. Once again a pagan king had to correct a man of God (26:10).
26:11 *He who touches this man or his wife shall surely be put to death* God protected them anyway. His faithfulness did not depend on Isaac's.
26:12 *Isaac sowed in that land and found in that year a hundredfold* In a famine, a crop a hundred times what he planted. Good farming alone could not explain it. "The LORD blessed him."
26:14 *the Philistines envied him* Blessing often draws envy. Not everyone is glad when God is good to someone.
26:15 *the Philistines stopped them up and filled them with dust* In a dry land, stopping a man's well was hostility meant to drive him out.
26:18 *he called their names according to the names which his father had called them* Isaac honored his father's work and faith. There is something good about reopening the old wells, the truths that sustained the generations before us.
26:19 *a well of living water* A spring, a great prize.
26:20 *he called the name of the well Esek* Esek means contention, and Sitnah (26:21) means opposition.
26:22 *Rehoboth* Broad places, room. Isaac was a man of peace. He let others take what was his, and God gave him room in the end. Be at peace with all, as far as it depends on you (Rom 12:18). Sometimes peace means letting go and trusting God to provide.
26:24 *Do not be afraid, for I am with you* God came to Isaac the night after he chose peace. He had been lied about, envied and driven out. God reminded him He was with him.
26:25 *he built an altar there and called on the name of the LORD* Worship first, then home, then work, as his father always did.
26:27 *you, you hate me and have sent me away from you* Isaac was blunt.
26:28 *We have surely seen that the LORD has been with you* They drove Isaac away but could not stop God from blessing him. Now they wanted a covenant, a treaty of peace.
26:29 *just as we have done with you only good* They bent the truth. Isaac could have argued. He made them a feast instead. When a man's ways please the LORD, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him (Prov 16:7).

and they went from him in peace. **32** And it happened on that day, and the servants of Isaac came and told him concerning the well which they had dug, and they said to him, "We have found water." **33** And he called it Shibah (Shiva); therefore the name of the city ***is*** Beersheba to this day. **34** And Esau (Esav) was a son of forty years, and he took ***as*** a wife Judith (Yehudit) the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath (Basmat) the daughter of Elon the Hittite. **35** And they were a bitterness of spirit to Isaac and to Rebekah.

GENESIS 27

Rebekah's Plan

1 And it happened, when Isaac (Yitschaq) was old and his eyes were too dim to see, and he called Esau (Esav) his elder son and said to him, "My son." And he said to him, "Here I am." **2** And he said, "Look, please, I am old; I do not know the day of my death. **3** And now, please take up your weapons, your quiver and your bow, and go out to the field and hunt game for me; **4** and make savory food for me such as I love, and bring ***it*** to me, and let me eat, so that my soul may bless you before I die." **5** And Rebekah (Rivqa) was listening when Isaac spoke to Esau his son. And Esau went to the field to hunt game, to bring ***it***. **6** And Rebekah said to Jacob (Ya'aqov) her son, saying, "Look, I heard your father speaking to Esau your brother, saying, **7** 'Bring me game and make savory food for me, and let me eat, and let me bless you before the LORD before my death.' **8** And now, my son, listen to my voice, to that which I am commanding you. **9** Please go to the flock and take for me from there two good kids of the goats, and let me make them savory food for your father, such as he loves. **10** And you will bring ***it*** to your father, and he will eat, so that he may bless you before his death." **11** And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, "Look, Esau my brother ***is*** a hairy man, and I ***am*** a smooth man. **12** Perhaps my father will feel me, and I will be in his eyes like a mocker, and I will bring on myself a curse and not a blessing." **13** And his mother said to him, "On me ***be*** your curse, my son; only listen to my voice, and go, take ***them*** for me." **14** And he went and took ***them*** and brought ***them*** to his mother; and his mother made savory food, such as his father loved. **15** And Rebekah took the choice garments of Esau her elder son, which ***were*** with her in the house, and she clothed Jacob her younger son. **16** And the skins of the kids of the goats she put on his hands and on the smooth part of his neck. **17** And she put the savory food and the bread which she had made into the hand of Jacob her son.

Jacob Takes the Blessing

18 And he came to his father and said, "My father." And he said, "Here I am. Who ***are*** you, my son?" **19** And Jacob said to his father, "I ***am*** Esau your firstborn. I have done just as you spoke to me. Please arise, sit and eat of my game, so that your soul may bless me." **20** And Isaac said to his son, "What ***is*** this ***that*** you have been quick to find ***it***, my son?" And he said, "Because the LORD your God made ***it*** happen before me." **21** And Isaac said to Jacob, "Please come near, that I may feel you, my son, whether you ***are*** really my son Esau or not." **22** And Jacob came near to Isaac his father, and he felt him and said, "The voice ***is*** the voice of Jacob, and the hands ***are*** the hands of Esau." **23** And he did not recognize him, for his hands were hairy, like the hands of Esau his brother; and he blessed him. **24** And he said, "Are you really my son Esau?" And he said, "I ***am***." **25** And he said, "Bring ***it*** near to me, and let me eat of the game of my son, so that my soul may bless you." And he brought ***it*** near to him, and he ate; and he brought him wine, and he drank. **26** And Isaac his father said to him, "Please come near and kiss me, my son."

26:32 Gen 26:25; Prov 2:4,5; Prov 10:4
26:33 Gen 21:31; Gen 26:28
26:34 Heb 12:16; Gen 36:2,5,13; Gen 24:3
26:35 Gen 27:46; Gen 6:2; Gen 28:1,2,8
27:1 Gen 48:10; 1 Sam 3:2; John 9:3
27:2 Gen 48:21; 1 Sam 20:3; Prov 27:1
27:3 Gen 25:27,28; Gen 10:9; 1 Cor 6:12
27:4 Gen 48:9,15-20; Gen 49:28; Heb 11:20
27:7 Deut 33:1; Josh 6:26; 1 Sam 24:19
27:8 Gen 27:13; Gen 25:23; Acts 4:19
27:9 Judg 13:15; 1 Sam 16:20
27:11 Gen 25:25
27:12 Deut 27:18; Job 12:16; 2 Cor 6:8
27:13 Matt 27:25; 1 Sam 25:24; 2 Sam 14:9
27:14 Gen 27:4,7,9,17,31; Gen 25:28; Ps 141:4
27:15 Gen 27:27
27:19 Gen 27:21,24,25; Gen 25:25; Gen 29:23-25
27:20 Exod 20:7; Job 13:7
27:21 James 4:8; Ps 73:28; Isa 57:19
27:23 Heb 11:20; Rom 9:11,12
27:24 1 Sam 21:2,13; 1 Sam 27:10; 2 Sam 14:5

26:33 *he called it Shibah* It sounds like oath and seven. Abraham had named the place Beersheba after his own treaty (21:31). The name may have fallen out of use when the wells were stopped up. The son walked in his father's steps, and God was faithful to both.
26:34 *he took as a wife Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite* Abraham took great care that Isaac not marry a Canaanite (24:3). Esau did not care, and he took two wives at once.
26:35 *they were a bitterness of spirit to Isaac and to Rebekah* He despised his birthright, and now his family's faith. This sets the stage for chapter 27.
27:1 *his eyes were too dim to see* Isaac thought he might die soon, though he lived many more years (35:28).
27:4 *so that my soul may bless you before I die* A father's final blessing was solemn: a spoken word that passed on the family leadership and, in this family, the covenant promises. Once given it could not be taken back. Isaac very likely knew what God said before the twins were born (25:23), and he knew Esau's Hittite wives. Yet he planned to bless Esau, privately, driven by appetite and favoritism (25:28). If he knew God's word, he was working against it.
27:5 *Rebekah was listening* She overheard and moved fast.
27:8 *listen to my voice, to that which I am commanding you* Rebekah was right about God's promise and wrong about how to get there. She did not pray or speak to her husband. She schemed. Like Sarah with Hagar, she tried to help God by doing wrong. God does not need our sin to do His will. The end never justifies sinful means.
27:12 *I will be in his eyes like a mocker* Jacob's only worry was getting caught, not whether it was wrong.
27:13 *On me be your curse, my son* It sounds like great love, and maybe it was, but it was reckless. In the end she did bear the cost.
27:16 *the skins of the kids of the goats she put on his hands* The whole household was caught up in the lie. The family chosen to bless the world was acting like any family without faith.
27:19 *I am Esau your firstborn* Jacob looked his blind father in the face and lied.
27:20 *Because the LORD your God made it happen before me* The worst lie of all, using God's name to cover sin (Exod 20:7). He said "your God," not my God. Jacob did not yet speak of the LORD as his own.
27:22 *The voice is the voice of Jacob, and the hands are the hands of Esau* His ears told the truth, but he trusted his hands.
27:24 *I am* Lie upon lie. Each lie needs another to hold it up.

27 And he came near and kissed him; and he smelled the smell of his garments, and he blessed him and said, "See, the smell of my son ***is*** like the smell of a field which the LORD has blessed. **28** And may God give you of the dew of the heavens, and of the fatness of the earth, and abundance of grain and new wine. **29** Let peoples serve you, and let nations bow down to you. Be lord over your brothers, and let the sons of your mother bow down to you. Cursed ***be*** those who curse you, and blessed ***be*** those who bless you."

Esau's Bitter Cry

30 And it happened, as soon as Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, and it happened, Jacob had only just gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, and Esau his brother came in from his hunting. **31** And he also made savory food and brought ***it*** to his father; and he said to his father, "Let my father arise and eat of the game of his son, so that your soul may bless me." **32** And Isaac his father said to him, "Who ***are*** you?" And he said, "I ***am*** your son, your firstborn, Esau." **33** And Isaac trembled ***with*** a very great trembling, and he said, "Who then ***is*** he who hunted game and brought ***it*** to me, and I ate of all before you came, and I blessed him? Yes, he will be blessed." **34** When Esau heard the words of his father, he cried out ***with*** a great and very bitter cry, and he said to his father, "Bless me, me also, my father!" **35** And he said, "Your brother came with deceit and took your blessing." **36** And he said, "Is it because ***one*** called his name Jacob that he has supplanted me these two times? My birthright he took, and look, now he has taken my blessing." And he said, "Have you not reserved a blessing for me?" **37** And Isaac answered and said to Esau, "Look, I have made him lord over you, and all his brothers I have given to him as servants, and ***with*** grain and new wine I have sustained him. And for you then, what shall I do, my son?" **38** And Esau said to his father, "Is it one blessing you have, my father? Bless me, me also, my father!" And Esau lifted up his voice and wept. **39** And Isaac his father answered and said to him, "Look, from the fatness of the earth will be your dwelling, and from the dew of the heavens from above. **40** And by your sword you will live, and your brother you will serve; and it will be, when you break loose, that you will tear his yoke from off your neck."

Jacob Is Sent Away

41 And Esau held a grudge against Jacob because of the blessing with which his father had blessed him; and Esau said in his heart, "The days of mourning for my father are drawing near, and I will kill Jacob my brother." **42** And the words of Esau her elder son were told to Rebekah; and she sent and called Jacob her younger son, and she said to him, "Look, Esau your brother is comforting himself concerning you, to kill you. **43** And now, my son, listen to my voice, and arise, flee for yourself to Laban (Lavan) my brother, to Haran (Charan). **44** And you will stay with him a few days, until the fury of your brother turns back, **45** until the anger of your brother turns back from you and he forgets what you did to him; and I will send and take you from there. Why should I be bereaved also of both of you in one day?" **46** And Rebekah said to Isaac, "I loathe my life because of the daughters of Heth (Chet). If Jacob takes a wife from the daughters of Heth, like these, from the daughters of the land, what ***is*** life to me?"

27:27 Heb 11:20; Song 2:13; Song 4:11-14
27:28 Heb 11:20; Deut 33:28; Deut 33:13,28
27:29 Heb 11:20; Gen 12:3; Num 24:9
27:30 Heb 11:20; Heb 12:17
27:31 Heb 11:20; Heb 12:17
27:32 Heb 11:20; Heb 12:17
27:33 Heb 11:20; Heb 12:17; Gen 28:3,4
27:34 Heb 12:17; Luke 13:28; Heb 11:20
27:35 Heb 11:20; Gen 27:19-23; 2 Kgs 10:19
27:36 John 1:47; Acts 3:25; Heb 11:20
27:37 Rom 9:10; Acts 3:25; Heb 11:20
27:38 Acts 3:25; Heb 11:20; Heb 12:17
27:39 Heb 11:20; Acts 3:25; Heb 12:17
27:40 Acts 3:25; Heb 11:20; Heb 12:17
27:41 Gen 37:4,8; 1 John 3:12-15; Gen 50:3,4,10,11
27:42 Gen 37:18-20; Gen 42:21,22; 1 Sam 30:5
27:43 Gen 27:8,13; Gen 11:31; Gen 28:7
27:44 Gen 31:38
27:45 Prov 19:21; Lam 3:37; James 4:13-15
27:46 Gen 26:34,35; Gen 28:8; Gen 24:3

27:27 *the smell of my son is like the smell of a field which the LORD has blessed* Esau's clothes did their work.
27:29 *Cursed be those who curse you, and blessed be those who bless you* Dew, fat land, grain and wine, rule over peoples and brothers, and words that echo God's promise to Abraham (12:3). Isaac thought he blessed Esau, but God guided the blessing to Jacob as He had said. By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come (Heb 11:20). His faith was weak and his methods wrong, but the words were God's, and they came true.
27:33 *Isaac trembled with a very great trembling* He had been fooled, but more: God had overruled him. He tried to bless the son God had not chosen, and God steered the blessing anyway. "Yes, he will be blessed." Isaac seems to have bowed to God's will.
27:34 *he cried out with a great and very bitter cry* Esau was wronged, and we should feel sorrow for him.
27:36 *Is it because one called his name Jacob that he has supplanted me these two times* The name sounds like one who takes another's place by trickery (25:26). Yet Esau sold the birthright willingly (25:33).
27:38 *Esau lifted up his voice and wept* He sought the blessing with tears but found no place for repentance (Heb 12:17). He wept over losing the blessing, not over despising it. Worldly sorrow grieves lost benefits but never turns to God (2 Cor 7:10).
27:39 *from the fatness of the earth will be your dwelling* The Hebrew "from" can mean away from, and that is how it turned out. Edom, south and east of the Dead Sea, is rugged and dry.
27:40 *by your sword you will live, and your brother you will serve* Edom lived by war and came under Israel when David conquered it (2 Sam 8:14). Under Jehoram of Judah it broke loose and set up its own king (2 Kgs 8:20-22). Isaac's words reached centuries ahead.
27:41 *I will kill Jacob my brother* The grudge became a plan for murder, the sin of Cain (4:8). Hatred left to grow will always look for a way out.
27:44 *you will stay with him a few days* The few days became twenty years (31:38, 41). Scripture never records that Rebekah saw Jacob again, and her death is not described, only her nurse's and her burial place (35:8; 49:31).
27:45 *Why should I be bereaved also of both of you in one day* If Esau killed Jacob, she would lose both sons. Deception brought the family to the edge of ruin. What a man sows he reaps (Gal 6:7). Jacob deceived his father with a goat and his brother's clothes. His sons will deceive him with a goat and their brother's coat (37:31-33).
27:46 *I loathe my life because of the daughters of Heth* Her concern was real (26:35), but she used it to steer her husband without the whole truth. For all the sin here, God's plan moved forward. He did not approve the lies, and everyone paid. He works through broken families because His grace is greater (Rom 8:28).

GENESIS 28

Isaac Sends Jacob to Paddan-aram

1 And Isaac (Yitschaq) called to Jacob (Ya'aqov), and he blessed him, and he commanded him and said to him, "You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan (Kena'an). **2** Arise, go to Paddan-aram (Padan-Aram), to the house of Bethuel (Betu'el), the father of your mother, and take for yourself from there a wife from the daughters of Laban (Lavan), the brother of your mother. **3** And may God
Almighty bless you, and make you fruitful, and multiply you, and you shall become an assembly of peoples. **4** And may He give to you the blessing of Abraham (Avraham), to you and to your seed with you, ***for*** you to possess the land of your sojournings, which God gave to Abraham." **5** And Isaac sent Jacob away, and he went to Paddan-aram, to Laban, the son of Bethuel the Aramean, the brother of Rebekah (Rivqa), the mother of Jacob and Esau (Esav). **6** And Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and had sent him away to Paddan-aram to take for himself a wife from there, and ***that*** when he blessed him he commanded him, saying, "You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan," **7** and ***that*** Jacob had listened to his father and to his mother, and had gone to Paddan-aram. **8** And Esau saw that the daughters of Canaan ***were*** evil in the eyes of Isaac his father. **9** And Esau went to Ishmael (Yishma'el), and he took Mahalath (Machalat), the daughter of Ishmael, the son of Abraham, the sister of Nebaioth (Nevayot), in addition to his wives, for himself for a wife.

Jacob's Dream at Bethel

10 And Jacob went out from Beersheba (Be'er-Sheva) and went toward Haran (Charan). **11** And he came upon the place, and he lodged there, for the sun had set; and he took from the stones of the place, and he put ***it*** at his head, and he lay down in that place. **12** And he dreamed, and look, a stairway ***was*** set up on the earth, and its top ***was*** reaching toward the heavens; and look, the angels of God ***were*** going up and going down on it. **13** And look, the LORD ***was*** standing above it, and He said, "I ***am*** the LORD, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac. The land on which you are lying, to you I will give it, and to your seed. **14** And your seed shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread out toward the west and toward the east and toward the north and toward the south; and in you and in your seed all the families of the ground shall be blessed. **15** And look, I ***am*** with you, and I will keep you in all ***places*** where you go, and I will bring you back to this ground; for I will not forsake you until I have done what I have spoken to you." **16** And Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, "Surely the LORD is in this place, and I, I did not know ***it***." **17** And he was afraid and said, "How awesome ***is*** this place! This ***is*** nothing other than the house of God, and this ***is*** the gate of the heavens." **18** And Jacob rose early in the morning, and he took the stone that he had put at his head, and he set it up ***as*** a pillar, and he poured oil on its top. **19** And he called the name of that place Bethel (Bet-El); but Luz ***was*** the name of the city at the first. **20** And

28:1 Gen 24:3,37; Gen 27:46; Gen 28:3,4
28:2 Gen 25:20; Hos 12:12; Gen 28:5
28:3 2 Cor 6:18; Rev 21:22; Rev 1:8
28:4 Gal 3:14; Gal 3:8; Gen 12:7
28:6 Gen 27:33
28:7 Gen 27:43; Exod 20:12; Lev 19:3
28:8 Gen 24:3; Gen 26:34,35; Gen 28:1
28:9 Gen 36:3,13,18; Gen 25:13-17
28:10 Acts 7:2; Gen 11:31; Gen 32:10
28:11 Matt 8:20; Gen 28:18; Gen 31:46
28:12 John 1:51; Matt 2:19; Num 12:6
28:13 Matt 22:32; Matt 1:1; Mark 12:26
28:14 Acts 3:25; Gal 3:8; Gal 3:16
28:15 Josh 1:5; Isa 41:10; Gen 26:24
28:16 Acts 7:32; Exod 3:5; Josh 5:15
28:17 Heb 10:21; 1 Pet 4:17; Exod 3:6
28:18 Gen 35:14,20; Gen 31:13,45; 1 Sam 7:12
28:19 Gen 48:3; Gen 12:8; Gen 35:1
28:20 2 Sam 15:8; Gen 31:13; 1 Tim 6:8

28:1 *Isaac called to Jacob, and he blessed him* No disguise this time. Isaac knew whom he blessed. He had accepted what God had done (27:33). Like Abraham (24:3), he protected the family of promise from Canaan's idolatry.
28:3 *may God Almighty bless you* El Shaddai, the name God used with Abraham (17:1). "An assembly of peoples" looks ahead to the twelve tribes.
28:4 *the blessing of Abraham* Including the land. Jacob was leaving it, yet his father blessed him with the promise that it would be his.
28:5 *the mother of Jacob and Esau* Both sons were hers, and she was losing them both, one to anger and one to exile.
28:9 *Esau went to Ishmael, and he took Mahalath* He tried to please his father, but he added a third wife without sending the others away, and he married into the line set aside from the covenant (21:12). Religion that only fixes appearances never reaches the heart.
28:11 *he took from the stones of the place, and he put it at his head* No tent, servants or family. Abraham's servant went to Haran with ten camels (24:10). Jacob went with a walking stick (32:10). At the lowest point of his life so far, God met him. God often meets us at the end of ourselves.
28:12 *a stairway was set up on the earth, and its top was reaching toward the heavens* The Hebrew word appears only here and may mean a ladder, stairway or ramp. Most know it as Jacob's ladder. Babel's builders wanted their top to reach heaven (11:4). This way was God's doing. Jesus gave its meaning: the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man (John 1:51). Jesus is the ladder, the only way to the Father (John 14:6). Jacob saw it in a dream. We know His name.
28:13 *I am the LORD, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac* God gives Jacob the same covenant: land, countless descendants, and blessing for all families (28:14).
28:14 *in you and in your seed all the families of the ground shall be blessed* God did not tell Jacob to clean up first. He had just lied to his father and cheated his brother. That is grace. The covenant rested on God's choice and faithfulness. The blessing points to Christ, Abraham's Seed (Gal 3:8, 16). I believe the land promise to Jacob's descendants still stands, and God has not finished with Israel.
28:15 *I will not forsake you until I have done what I have spoken to you* God spoke to each fear: I am with you, I will keep you, I will bring you back, I will finish. He who began a good work will complete it (Phil 1:6), and Jesus is with His people always (Matt 28:20). If you belong to Christ, this promise has your name on it.
28:16 *Surely the LORD is in this place, and I, I did not know it* Jacob thought of God as the God of his father's tent, not of a lonely field. Many believers can look back on a dark time and say the same.
28:17 *How awesome is this place* Holy fear, awe in God's presence. The stones did not make it holy. God's presence did.
28:18 *he set it up as a pillar, and he poured oil on its top* Oil was precious, and pouring it set something apart for God. The pillar was a memorial of what God did there, not an object of worship.
28:19 *Bethel* House of God, about eleven miles north of Jerusalem. God will send Jacob back here (35:1). Centuries later a king set up a golden calf at Bethel (1 Kgs 12:28-29). Places that once meant meeting God can become empty religion when hearts turn away.
28:20 *If God will be with me* Some see Jacob still bargaining. Others note God had just promised all this, and some think "if" carries the sense of since here, though its normal meaning is if. Either way, Jacob was a young believer with far to go, but for the first time he speaks of the LORD becoming "God to me" (28:21).

Jacob vowed a vow, saying, "If God will be with me, and will keep me on this way on which I am going, and will give me bread to eat and clothing to wear, **21** and I return in peace to the house of my father, and the LORD will be God to me, **22** and this stone, which I have set up ***as*** a pillar, will be the house of God; and all that You give me, I will surely give a tenth of it to You."

GENESIS 29

Jacob Meets Rachel

1 And Jacob (Ya'aqov) lifted up his feet and went to the land of the sons of the east. **2** And he saw, and look, a well in the field, and look, three flocks of sheep ***were*** lying there beside it, for from that well they watered the flocks; and the stone on the mouth of the well ***was*** large. **3** And all the flocks would be gathered there, and they would roll the stone from over the mouth of the well and water the sheep, and they would put the stone back over the mouth of the well, in its place. **4** And Jacob said to them, "My brothers, where ***are*** you from?" And they said, "We ***are*** from Haran (Charan)." **5** And he said to them, "Do you know Laban (Lavan), the son of Nahor (Nachor)?" And they said, "We know ***him***." **6** And he said to them, "***Is there*** peace for him?" And they said, "Peace. And look, Rachel his daughter ***is*** coming with the sheep." **7** And he said, "Look, the day ***is*** still long; ***it is*** not the time for the livestock to be gathered. Water the sheep, and go, pasture ***them***." **8** And they said, "We are not able, until all the flocks are gathered, and they roll the stone from over the mouth of the well; and ***then*** we water the sheep." **9** He ***was*** still speaking with them, and Rachel came with the sheep that ***belonged*** to her father, for she ***was*** a shepherdess. **10** And it came about, when Jacob saw Rachel, the daughter of Laban his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban his mother's brother, and Jacob drew near and rolled the stone from over the mouth of the well, and he watered the sheep of Laban his mother's brother. **11** And Jacob kissed Rachel, and he lifted up his voice and wept. **12** And Jacob told Rachel that he ***was*** her father's brother, and that he ***was*** the son of Rebekah (Rivqa); and she ran and told her father. **13** And it came about, when Laban heard the report of Jacob his sister's son, and he ran to meet him, and he embraced him and kissed him and brought him to his house. And he recounted to Laban all these things. **14** And Laban said to him, "Surely you ***are*** my bone and my flesh." And he stayed with him a month of days.

Jacob Marries Leah and Rachel

15 And Laban said to Jacob, "***Is it*** because you ***are*** my brother that you should serve me for nothing? Tell me, what ***will*** your wages ***be***?" **16** And Laban had two daughters: the name of the older ***was*** Leah (Le'a), and the name of the younger ***was*** Rachel. **17** And the eyes of Leah ***were*** weak, and Rachel was beautiful of form and beautiful of appearance. **18** And Jacob loved Rachel, and he said, "I will serve you seven years for Rachel your younger daughter." **19** And Laban said, "My giving her to you ***is*** better than my giving her to another man; stay with me." **20** And Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they were in his eyes like a few days, because of his love for her. **21** And Jacob said to Laban, "Give ***me*** my wife, for my days are completed, and let me go in to her." **22** And Laban gathered all the men of the place, and he made a feast. **23** And it came about in the evening, and he took Leah his daughter and brought her to him, and he went in to her. **24** And Laban gave to her Zilpah (Zilpa) his female servant, to Leah his daughter ***as*** a female servant. **25** And it came about in the morning, and look, she ***was*** Leah. And he said to Laban, "What ***is*** this you have done to me? Did I not serve with you for Rachel? And why have you deceived me?"

28:21 Judg 11:31; Deut 26:17; 2 Sam 15:8
28:22 Gen 14:20; Lev 27:30-33; Gen 28:17
29:1 Judg 6:3,33; Num 23:7; Ps 119:32,60
29:2 Ps 23:2; Song 1:6,7; Isa 49:10
29:4 Acts 7:2; Acts 7:4
29:8 Mark 16:3; Luke 24:2
29:11 Gen 33:4; Gen 43:30; Gen 45:2,14,15
29:12 Gen 24:28
29:13 Gen 45:15; Exod 4:27; Exod 18:7
29:17 Matt 2:18; Gen 12:11; Gen 24:16
29:18 Hos 12:12; Gen 31:41; Exod 22:16,17
29:20 1 Cor 13:7; Gen 24:67; Song 8:6,7
29:21 Judg 15:1; Gen 29:18,20; Gen 31:41
29:22 Matt 22:9; Matt 22:10
29:25 John 21:17; Gen 27:35,36; Judg 1:7

28:22 *all that You give me, I will surely give a tenth of it to You* Abraham gave a tenth to Melchizedek (14:20). Jacob would give back from what God first gave. Everything we have comes from God, and giving says so.
29:1 *Jacob lifted up his feet* He set out again, with a new spring in his step after Bethel, toward the region east of Canaan.
29:2 *the stone on the mouth of the well was large* The stone protected precious water from dirt, evaporation and anyone taking more than his share. The shepherds rolled it away together when all the flocks gathered (29:3). Abraham's servant found Rebekah at a well (24:11), and Moses will meet his wife at one (Exod 2:15-21). God was guiding Jacob's steps.
29:7 *Water the sheep, and go, pasture them* Jacob, used to managing things, gives advice at once. He may simply have wanted the shepherds gone so he could meet Rachel alone.
29:10 *Jacob drew near and rolled the stone from over the mouth of the well* A stone that usually took several men, moved by one.
29:11 *Jacob kissed Rachel, and he lifted up his voice and wept* A kiss was a normal greeting among relatives. The tears showed what this meant to a man who had traveled hundreds of miles alone, running from a brother who wanted him dead. God had led him straight to his family.
29:13 *he ran to meet him, and he embraced him and kissed him* The last time Laban ran out to a visitor, his eye was on the gold (24:30). Jacob came with nothing, but Laban may have hoped there was more to come.
29:14 *Surely you are my bone and my flesh* You are family. Meanwhile Laban watched what a capable worker he had.
29:15 *what will your wages be* It sounded generous, but it turned a nephew into an employee. For twenty years the relationship would be about work and wages, and Laban would take advantage.
29:17 *the eyes of Leah were weak* The Hebrew can mean tender or soft, so it may mean her eyes lacked sparkle, or it may be a compliment. Either way she is set in contrast to Rachel.
29:18 *I will serve you seven years for Rachel your younger daughter* A man paid a bride price to the bride's family. Jacob had no money, so he offered his labor.
29:20 *they were in his eyes like a few days, because of his love for her* Love makes hard work light. When we love Christ, His commandments are not burdensome (1 John 5:3).
29:23 *he took Leah his daughter and brought her to him* The bride was veiled, and it was dark.
29:25 *why have you deceived me* Jacob asks the question Esau and Isaac could have asked him. He deceived his blind father in his brother's clothes, and now he is deceived in the dark by a woman in her sister's place. God is not mocked (Gal 6:7). He did not cause Laban's sin, but He used it to teach Jacob how it feels on the other side of a lie. Leah likely had little choice, and her marriage began with her always feeling second.

26 And Laban said, "It is not done so in our place, to give the younger before the firstborn. **27** Complete the week of this one, and let us give to you this one also, for the service that you will serve with me yet another seven years." **28** And Jacob did so, and he completed the week of this one; and he gave him Rachel his daughter, to him for a wife. **29** And Laban gave to Rachel his daughter Bilhah (Bilha) his female servant, to her for a female servant. **30** And he went in also to Rachel, and he also loved Rachel more than Leah; and he served with him yet another seven years.

Leah's Sons

31 And the LORD saw that Leah ***was*** hated, and He opened her womb; and Rachel ***was*** barren. **32** And Leah conceived and bore a son, and she called his name Reuben (Reuven), for she said, "Because the LORD has looked on my affliction; for now my husband will love me." **33** And she conceived again and bore a son, and she said, "Because the LORD has heard that I ***am*** hated, and He has given me this one also." And she called his name Simeon (Shimon). **34** And she conceived again and bore a son, and she said, "Now this time my husband will be joined to me, for I have borne to him three sons." Therefore he called his name Levi. **35** And she conceived again and bore a son, and she said, "This time I will praise the LORD." Therefore she called his name Judah (Yehuda). And she ceased from bearing.

GENESIS 30

Rachel's Rivalry and Jacob's Children

1 And Rachel saw that she had not borne ***children*** to Jacob (Ya'aqov), and Rachel was jealous of her sister, and she said to Jacob, "Give me children, and if not, I ***am*** dying." **2** And the anger of Jacob burned against Rachel, and he said, "***Am*** I in the place of God, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?" **3** And she said, "Look, my maidservant Bilhah (Bilha); go in to her, and let her bear on my knees, and let me also be built up from her." **4** And she gave him Bilhah her female servant for a wife, and Jacob went in to her. **5** And Bilhah conceived and bore Jacob a son. **6** And Rachel said, "God has judged me, and He has also listened to my voice and has given me a son." Therefore she called his name Dan. **7** And she conceived again, and Bilhah, the female servant of Rachel, bore a second son to Jacob. **8** And Rachel said, "***With*** wrestlings of God I have wrestled with my sister; also I have prevailed." And she called his name Naphtali (Naftali). **9** And Leah (Le'a) saw that she had ceased from bearing, and she took Zilpah (Zilpa) her female servant and gave her to Jacob for a wife. **10** And Zilpah, the female servant of Leah, bore Jacob a son. **11** And Leah said, "Good fortune has come!" And she called his name Gad. **12** And Zilpah, the female servant of Leah, bore a second son to Jacob. **13** And Leah said, "In my happiness! For daughters will call me happy." And she called his name Asher.

God Remembers Rachel

14 And Reuben (Reuven) went in the days of wheat harvest, and he found mandrakes in the field and brought them to

29:30 Luke 14:26; Gen 29:18; Gen 30:25,26
29:31 Luke 14:26; Rom 9:13; Deut 21:15
29:32 Luke 1:25; Exod 4:31; Deut 26:7
29:33 Gen 34:25,30; Gen 35:23; Gen 42:24
29:34 Rev 7:7; Num 18:2-4
29:35 Gen 49:8
30:1 Acts 7:8; Gen 29:31; Gen 37:11
30:2 Mark 3:5; Acts 7:8; Gen 16:2
30:3 Gen 50:23; Job 3:12; Gen 30:9
30:4 Acts 7:8; Gen 16:3; Gen 21:10
30:5 Matt 1:2; Acts 7:8
30:6 Ps 35:24; Ps 43:1; Lam 3:59
30:7 Matt 1:2; Acts 7:8
30:8 Matt 4:13; Gen 49:21; Gen 23:6
30:9 Matt 1:2; Acts 7:8; Gen 30:4
30:10 Matt 1:2; Acts 7:8
30:11 Gen 49:19; Gen 35:26; Gen 46:16
30:12 Matt 1:2; Acts 7:8
30:13 Luke 1:48; Luke 2:36; Prov 31:28
30:14 Gen 25:30

29:26 *It is not done so in our place, to give the younger before the firstborn* A sting. The younger had taken the firstborn's place back home. Laban may not have known it, but God did.
29:27 *Complete the week of this one* The seven days of wedding celebration. Then Rachel, for seven more years of work.
29:29 *Bilhah his female servant* Zilpah for Leah (29:24) and Bilhah for Rachel. Their names matter in the next chapter.
29:30 *he also loved Rachel more than Leah* Two wives, two sisters, and a home filled with rivalry. God's pattern was one man and one woman (2:24; Matt 19:4-6), and the Law later forbade marrying a wife's sister as her rival (Lev 18:18). Jacob's household shows why. Favoritism was now built into his marriage.
29:31 *the LORD saw that Leah was hated* In this setting the word means loved less (29:30). God saw her pain and opened her womb. The wife her husband loved less was the one God blessed with children.
29:32 *Reuben* The name sounds like see, a son, and like He has seen my misery. Leah knew God saw her, but her heart was still set on winning Jacob's love. Like Hagar (16:13), she found that God noticed her when her husband did not. If you feel unloved, the LORD sees you.
29:33 *Simeon* Related to the word hear. Levi (29:34) sounds like attached. Three sons, and still she hoped her husband would love her.
29:35 *This time I will praise the LORD* Judah is related to the word praise. For the first time she does not mention her husband. Her eyes moved from what she lacked to the God who gave so much. We can spend years trying to get from people what only God can give. From Levi came Moses, Aaron and the priests. From Judah came David and Jesus, "the Lion who is of the tribe of Judah" (Rev 5:5). The line of the Messiah came through the unloved wife. God delights to lift up the lowly.
30:1 *Give me children, and if not, I am dying* Rachel had her husband's love, Leah had four sons, and each wanted what the other had. Jealousy is never satisfied. Childlessness was felt as deep shame in that culture, and her pain was real, but she turned it on her husband instead of taking it to God.
30:2 *Am I in the place of God* True, only God gives children, but he spoke without compassion. Isaac prayed for barren Rebekah (25:21). We are not told Jacob prayed for Rachel. When someone we love is hurting, pray with them and for them.
30:3 *let her bear on my knees* Rachel received the baby as her own, the path Sarah took with Hagar (16:2). Ancient law codes and contracts, such as the Laws of Hammurabi and tablets from Nuzi, mention a similar practice. Accepted, perhaps, but not God's way, and it brought more rivalry.
30:6 *Dan* Judge or vindicate.
30:8 *With wrestlings of God I have wrestled with my sister* Naphtali comes from the word for wrestling. Rachel saw her family as a contest she was winning.
30:9 *she took Zilpah her female servant and gave her to Jacob for a wife* Not to be outdone. The rivalry now pulled four women and one man into a tangled household.
30:13 *Asher* Happy, and Gad (30:11) means good fortune. Children named as trophies in a war between sisters. The names say more about the mothers than the babies. Yet each boy would head a tribe of Israel. God built His nation from very imperfect people.
30:14 *mandrakes* A strong-smelling plant whose root can look a little like a human figure. Many believed it helped a woman conceive. The Hebrew name is related to the word for love.

Leah his mother. And Rachel said to Leah, "Please give me some of the mandrakes of your son." **15** And she said to her, "***Is*** your taking my husband a small ***thing***, and ***now you would*** take also the mandrakes of my son?" And Rachel said, "Therefore he will lie with you tonight in exchange for the mandrakes of your son." **16** And Jacob came from the field in the evening, and Leah went out to meet him and said, "You will come in to me, for I have surely hired you with the mandrakes of my son." And he lay with her that night. **17** And God listened to Leah, and she conceived and bore to Jacob a fifth son. **18** And Leah said, "God has given ***me*** my wages, because I gave my female servant to my husband." And she called his name Issachar (Yisashkhar). **19** And Leah conceived again and bore a sixth son to Jacob. **20** And Leah said, "God has endowed me ***with*** a good endowment; this time my husband will honor me, for I have borne him six sons." And she called his name Zebulun (Zevulun). **21** And afterward she bore a daughter, and she called her name Dinah (Dina). **22** And God remembered Rachel, and God listened to her and opened her womb. **23** And she conceived and bore a son, and she said, "God has taken away my reproach." **24** And she called his name Joseph (Yosef), saying, "May the LORD add to me another son."

Jacob's Flocks Increase

25 And it came about, when Rachel had borne Joseph, and Jacob said to Laban (Lavan), "Send me away, and let me go to my place and to my land. **26** Give ***me*** my wives and my children, for whom I have served you, and let me go; for you, you know my service with which I have served you." **27** And Laban said to him, "If, please, I have found favor in your eyes—I have learned by divination that the LORD has blessed me on account of you." **28** And he said, "Name your wages to me, and let me give ***it***." **29** And he said to him, "You, you know how I have served you, and how your livestock has been with me. **30** For the little that you had before me has increased to abundance, and the LORD has blessed you at my foot. And now, when shall I also provide for my house?" **31** And he said, "What shall I give you?" And Jacob said, "You shall not give me anything. If you will do this thing for me, I will again pasture your flock ***and*** keep ***it***. **32** Let me pass through all your flock today, removing from there every speckled and spotted one of the flock, and every dark one of the flock among the lambs, and the spotted and speckled among the goats; and ***these*** shall be my wages. **33** And my righteousness will answer for me on a day to come, when you come concerning my wages before you: every one that ***is*** not speckled and spotted among the goats and dark among the lambs, it ***is*** stolen with me." **34** And Laban said, "Look, if only it may be according to your word." **35** And on that day he removed the male goats that ***were*** striped and spotted, and all the female goats that ***were*** speckled and spotted, every one on which ***there was*** white, and every dark one among the lambs, and he gave ***them*** into the hand of his sons. **36** And he set a journey of three days between himself and Jacob; and Jacob ***was*** pasturing the rest of the flock of Laban. **37** And Jacob took for himself branches of fresh poplar and almond and plane tree, and he peeled white streaks in them, laying bare the white that ***was*** on the branches. **38** And he set the branches that he had peeled in the troughs, in the watering channels of the water, where the flock came to drink, in front of the flock; and they mated when they came to drink. **39** And the flock mated at the branches, and the flock bore striped, speckled, and spotted ***ones***. **40** And Jacob separated the lambs, and he set the faces of the flock toward the striped and every dark one in the flock of Laban; and he

30:15 Num 16:9,10,13; Isa 7:13; Ezek 16:47
30:16 Matt 1:2; Acts 7:8
30:17 Matt 1:2; Acts 7:8; Gen 30:6,22
30:18 Rev 7:7; Gen 35:23; Gen 46:13
30:19 Matt 1:2; Acts 7:8
30:20 Matt 4:13; Gen 35:23; Gen 49:13
30:21 Gen 34:1-3,26; Gen 46:15
30:22 Gen 29:31; Gen 8:1; 1 Sam 1:19,20
30:23 John 16:21; Isa 4:1; Gen 29:31
30:24 Acts 7:9; Heb 11:21; Rev 7:8
30:25 Heb 11:9; Gen 24:54,56; Gen 18:33
30:26 Hos 12:12; Gen 29:19,20,30; Gen 31:26,31,41
30:27 Gen 26:24; Isa 61:9; Exod 3:21
30:28 Gen 29:15,19
30:29 Gen 31:6,38-40; Gen 30:5; Matt 24:45
30:30 1 Tim 5:8; Deut 11:10; 2 Cor 12:14
30:31 2 Sam 21:4-6; Ps 118:8; Heb 13:5
30:32 Gen 31:8,10; Gen 30:35
30:33 Gen 31:37; 1 Sam 26:23; 2 Sam 22:21
30:34 Num 22:29; 1 Cor 7:7; 1 Cor 14:5
30:35 Gen 31:9
30:37 Gen 31:9-13; Ezek 31:8
30:39 Gen 31:9-12,38,40,42; Exod 12:35,36

30:15 *Is your taking my husband a small thing* Leah's reply shows how deep the wound went. The wives bargained over their husband, and Jacob went along. He was living with the results of marrying two sisters.
30:17 *God listened to Leah* She had been praying. Rachel had the mandrakes, but Leah had the baby. Children come from God, not from charms.
30:18 *God has given me my wages* Issachar sounds like wages. Leah thought God was rewarding her for giving Zilpah. Genesis does not say God saw it that way.
30:20 *this time my husband will honor me* Zebulun is related to gift and to honor or dwell. Even after six sons she longed for her husband's love. Some wounds run deep.
30:21 *Dinah* The only daughter of Jacob whose birth is recorded. We meet her again in chapter 34.
30:22 *God remembered Rachel* God acted for her at the right time, as He remembered Noah (8:1). Not the mandrakes, not the maid, not her schemes. God opened her womb.
30:24 *Joseph, saying, May the LORD add to me another son* Joseph means may He add. God answered with Benjamin, though it would cost Rachel her life (35:16-18). Out of a home of rivalry and pain, God brought the son through whom He would save the whole family.
30:25 *Send me away, and let me go to my place and to my land* Fourteen years of service were done. Jacob wanted to go back to the land of promise.
30:27 *I have learned by divination that the LORD has blessed me on account of you* To divine is to seek secret knowledge by pagan practices such as omens, later forbidden (Deut 18:10). Laban kept household gods (31:19). Yet even he could see God's blessing on Jacob, a small fulfillment of 12:3.
30:30 *when shall I also provide for my house* God blessed Laban "at my foot," but Jacob had nothing of his own. A man who loves his family wants to provide for them (1 Tim 5:8).
30:32 *these shall be my wages* Sheep there were usually white and goats dark. Jacob asked only for the unusual animals, the speckled goats and dark sheep, so any normal-colored animal in his flock could be counted stolen. It looked like a very good deal for Laban.
30:35 *he removed the male goats that were striped and spotted* Laban took away the very animals Jacob was to start with and put three days between them. He cheated again, and changed Jacob's wages ten times (31:7).
30:37 *he peeled white streaks in them* Many in the ancient world believed what an animal saw while mating affected its young. Science would say no. Jacob later explains that God showed him in a dream He was causing it, because He saw what Laban did (31:10-12). The rods were Jacob's idea, and the blessing was God's. Jacob also seems to have been a skilled breeder, choosing the strongest (30:41).

made droves for himself alone, and he did not put them with the flock of Laban. **41** And it would be, whenever the vigorous ***ones*** of the flock were in heat, and Jacob would put the branches before the eyes of the flock in the troughs, for them to mate at the branches. **42** And when the flock was feeble, he would not put ***them***; and the feeble were Laban's, and the vigorous Jacob's. **43** And the man increased very, very ***much***, and he had many flocks, and female servants and ***male*** servants, and camels and donkeys.

GENESIS 31

Jacob Flees from Laban

1 And he heard the words of the sons of Laban (Lavan), saying, "Jacob (Ya'aqov) has taken all that ***belonged*** to our father, and from what ***belonged*** to our father he has made all these riches." **2** And Jacob saw the face of Laban, and look, it ***was*** not toward him as before. **3** And the LORD said to Jacob, "Return to the land of your fathers and to your kindred, and I will be with you." **4** And Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah (Le'a) to the field, to his flock. **5** And he said to them, "I see the face of your father, that it ***is*** not toward me as before; and the God of my father has been with me. **6** And you, you know that with all my strength I have served your father. **7** And your father has deceived me and changed my wages ten times; and God has not allowed him to do harm to me. **8** If he said thus, 'The speckled shall be your wages,' and all the flock bore speckled; and if he said thus, 'The striped shall be your wages,' and all the flock bore striped. **9** And God has taken away the livestock of your father and given ***it*** to me. **10** And it came about at the time the flock mated, and I lifted up my eyes and saw in a dream, and look, the male goats that were going up on the flock ***were*** striped, speckled, and mottled. **11** And the angel of God said to me in the dream, 'Jacob,' and I said, 'Here I am.' **12** And He said, 'Please lift up your eyes and see: all the male goats that are going up on the flock ***are*** striped, speckled, and mottled; for I have seen all that Laban is doing to you. **13** I ***am*** the God ***of*** Bethel (Bet-El), where you anointed a pillar, where you vowed a vow to Me. Now arise, go out from this land, and return to the land of your kindred.'" **14** And Rachel and Leah answered and said to him, "***Is there*** still a portion and an inheritance for us in the house of our father? **15** Are we not regarded by him as foreigners? For he has sold us, and he has also completely consumed our money. **16** For all the wealth that God has taken away from our father, it ***belongs*** to us and to our children. And now, all that God has said to you, do." **17** And Jacob arose, and he lifted his children and his wives onto the camels. **18** And he drove away all his livestock and all his possessions that he had gathered, the livestock of his acquiring, which he had gathered in Paddan-aram (Padan-Aram), to go to Isaac (Yitschaq) his father, to the land of Canaan (Kena'an). **19** And Laban had gone to shear his flock, and Rachel stole the teraphim that ***belonged*** to her father. **20** And Jacob deceived Laban the Aramean, in that he did not tell him that he ***was*** fleeing. **21** And he fled, he and all that ***belonged*** to him; and he arose and crossed the River, and he set his face ***toward*** the hill country of Gilead (Gilad).

Laban Pursues Jacob

22 And it was told to Laban on the third day that Jacob had fled. **23** And he took his brothers with him, and he pursued after him a journey of seven days, and he overtook him in

30:43 Gen 30:30; Gen 24:35; Gen 26:13,14
31:1 Eccl 4:4; Gen 31:8,9; Job 31:31
31:2 Gen 4:5; Deut 28:54; 1 Sam 18:9-11
31:3 Gen 28:15,20,21-29; Gen 32:9; Gen 31:13,18
31:5 Gen 31:2,3; Gen 32:9; Gen 48:15
31:6 Gen 30:29; Gen 31:38-42; Eph 6:5-8
31:7 Num 14:22; Neh 4:12; Zech 8:23
31:8 Gen 30:32
31:9 Gen 31:1,16; Esth 8:1,2; Ps 50:10
31:10 Gen 31:24; Gen 20:6; Gen 28:12
31:11 Isa 58:9; Gen 31:5,13; Gen 16:7-13
31:12 Exod 3:7,9; Gen 30:37-43; Gen 31:42
31:13 Gen 31:3; Gen 32:9; Gen 28:12-22
31:14 Ruth 4:11; Gen 2:24; Gen 29:24,29
31:15 Gen 29:15-20,27-30; Gen 30:26; Gen 31:41
31:16 Gen 30:35-43; Ps 45:10; Gen 31:1,9
31:17 Gen 24:10,61; 1 Sam 30:17
31:18 Gen 27:1,2,41; Gen 28:21; Gen 35:27-29
31:19 Gen 31:30,32; 1 Sam 19:13; Hos 3:4
31:21 Luke 9:51; Luke 9:53; 2 Kgs 12:17
31:22 Gen 30:36; Exod 14:5-31; Job 5:12,13
31:23 Gen 13:8; Gen 24:27; Exod 2:11,13

30:43 *the man increased very, very much* He came with a staff and now had flocks, servants, camels and donkeys. God kept His Bethel promise (28:15) while Jacob was still a schemer. Work hard and honestly, but "the blessing of the LORD" is what makes rich (Prov 10:22).
31:1 *Jacob has taken all that belonged to our father* Not true. Laban cheated Jacob for years, and God blessed Jacob anyway (30:43). Jealousy rarely tells the whole story.
31:3 *Return to the land of your fathers and to your kindred, and I will be with you* A cold welcome is not always a sign to leave, but this time God spoke plainly, repeating His Bethel promise of twenty years before (28:15).
31:4 *called Rachel and Leah to the field* Probably so Laban's household would not overhear.
31:7 *changed my wages ten times* Perhaps a round number for over and over: a man who kept moving the line. "God has not allowed him to do harm to me."
31:9 *God has taken away the livestock of your father and given it to me* In chapter 30 it may have looked like Jacob's cleverness. Now he admits it was God all along. That is growth. The young Jacob trusted his schemes. The older Jacob is learning that blessing comes from the Lord.
31:12 *I have seen all that Laban is doing to you* This explains chapter 30. The flocks came out in Jacob's favor because God was watching. Jacob felt alone and used, but God sees every wrong done to His people.
31:13 *I am the God of Bethel* The angel of God calls Himself God and recalls the pillar and the vow (28:18-22), speaking as the angel of the LORD did to Hagar (see 16:7).
31:15 *For he has sold us, and he has also completely consumed our money* Jacob paid the bride price with fourteen years of work (29:18, 27). Their words suggest they expected some of that value as security, but Laban kept it all. Two sisters who fought for years speak with one voice, united by their father's greed.
31:16 *all that God has said to you, do* Good advice in any home.
31:18 *to go to Isaac his father* Isaac was still alive, and Jacob had not seen him in twenty years.
31:19 *Rachel stole the teraphim that belonged to her father* Images of household gods, many small, though one in David's day could pass for a man in bed (1 Sam 19:13). We are not told why she took them. She may still have trusted them. Older books suggested holding them supported an inheritance claim, but many scholars now doubt it. Rachel had married into the family of the true God but kept a foot in her father's religion.
31:20 *Jacob deceived Laban the Aramean* In Hebrew he stole Laban's heart, the same word as Rachel's theft. Jacob obeyed God by leaving but chose a sneaky way. Old habits die hard.
31:21 *he arose and crossed the River* The Euphrates. Gilead is the hill country east of the Jordan.

the hill country of Gilead. **24** And God came to Laban the Aramean in a dream of the night, and He said to him, "Guard yourself, lest you speak with Jacob from good to bad." **25** And Laban overtook Jacob. And Jacob had pitched his tent in the hill country, and Laban pitched ***his tent*** with his brothers in the hill country of Gilead. **26** And Laban said to Jacob, "What have you done, that you have deceived me and have led away my daughters like captives of the sword? **27** Why did you hide yourself to flee, and deceive me, and not tell me? And I would have sent you away with gladness and with songs, with tambourine and with lyre. **28** And you did not allow me to kiss my sons and my daughters. Now you have acted foolishly in doing ***so***. **29** It is in the power of my hand to do harm to you; and the God of your father spoke to me last night, saying, 'Guard yourself from speaking with Jacob from good to bad.' **30** And now, you have surely gone, because you have surely longed for the house of your father; why did you steal my gods?" **31** And Jacob answered and said to Laban,
"Because I was afraid, for I said, 'Lest you tear away your daughters from me.' **32** With whomever you find your gods, he shall not live. Before our brothers, examine for yourself what ***is*** with me, and take ***it*** for yourself." And Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen them. **33** And Laban went into the tent of Jacob and into the tent of Leah and into the tent of the two maidservants, and he did not find ***them***. And he came out from the tent of Leah and went into the tent of Rachel. **34** And Rachel had taken the teraphim and put them in the saddle of the camel, and she sat on them. And Laban felt through all the tent, and he did not find ***them***. **35** And she said to her father, "Let it not burn ***with anger*** in the eyes of my lord that I am not able to rise before you, for the way of women ***is*** on me." And he searched, and he did not find the teraphim. **36** And Jacob burned ***with anger***, and he contended with Laban; and Jacob answered and said to Laban, "What ***is*** my transgression? What ***is*** my sin, that you have hotly pursued after me? **37** For you have felt through all my goods; what have you found of all the goods of your house? Set ***it*** here before my brothers and your brothers, and let them decide between the two of us. **38** These twenty years I ***have been*** with you; your ewes and your female goats have not miscarried, and the rams of your flock I have not eaten. **39** The torn I did not bring to you; I, I bore the loss of it; from my hand you required it, stolen by day and stolen by night. **40** ***Thus*** I was: in the day the heat consumed me, and the frost in the night, and my sleep fled from my eyes. **41** These ***have been*** for me twenty years in your house: I served you fourteen years for your two daughters and six years for your flock, and you changed my wages ten times. **42** If the God of my father, the God of Abraham (Avraham) and the Fear of Isaac, had not been for me, surely now you would have sent me away empty. My affliction and the toil of my hands God has seen, and He decided last night."

The Covenant at Mizpah

43 And Laban answered and said to Jacob, "The daughters ***are*** my daughters, and the sons ***are*** my sons, and the flock ***is*** my flock, and all that you see, it ***is*** mine. And to my daughters, what can I do to these today, or to their sons whom they have borne? **44** And now come, let us cut a covenant, I and you, and it shall be for a witness between me and you." **45** And Jacob took a stone and raised it up ***as*** a pillar. **46** And Jacob said to his brothers, "Gather stones." And they took stones and made a heap, and they ate there by the heap. **47** And Laban called it Jegar-sahadutha (Yegar-Sahaduta), and Jacob called it Galeed (Galed). **48** And Laban said, "This heap ***is*** a witness between me and you today." Therefore he

31:24 Gen 20:3; Gen 24:50; Gen 31:42
31:25 Heb 11:9; Gen 12:8; Gen 33:18
31:26 1 Sam 30:2; Gen 31:36; Gen 3:13
31:27 Exod 15:20; Gen 31:3-5,20,21,31; Judg 6:27
31:28 Gen 31:55; Ruth 1:9,14; 1 Kgs 19:20
31:29 Gen 31:42,53; Gen 28:13; Ps 52:1
31:30 Gen 31:19; Judg 18:24; Exod 12:12
31:31 Gen 31:26,27; Gen 20:11; Prov 29:25
31:32 Gen 31:19,30; Gen 44:9-12; Gen 31:23
31:33 Gen 24:28,67
31:34 Gen 31:17,19
31:35 Lev 19:32; Exod 20:12; Lev 19:3
31:36 Gen 30:2; Gen 34:7; Gen 49:7
31:37 Gen 31:32; Josh 7:23; 1 Sam 12:3,4
31:38 Gen 30:27,30; Exod 23:26; Deut 28:4
31:39 Luke 2:8; Exod 22:10,31; Lev 22:8
31:40 Luke 2:8; Exod 2:19-22; Exod 3:1
31:41 Gen 31:38; Gen 29:18-30; Gen 30:33-40
31:42 Mark 12:26; Gen 31:53; Gen 29:32
31:44 Gen 15:18; Gen 21:22-32; Gen 26:28-31
31:45 Gen 28:18-22
31:46 Gen 31:23,32,37,54; Josh 4:5-9,20-24; Josh 7:26
31:47 Heb 12:1
31:48 Josh 24:27; Gen 31:23; Deut 2:36

31:24 *Guard yourself, lest you speak with Jacob from good to bad* A Hebrew way of saying try nothing at all. God protected Jacob though he fled less than honestly. His protection is grace, not a reward for perfect behavior.
31:27 *with gladness and with songs, with tambourine and with lyre* Hard to believe from a man who cheated Jacob for twenty years.
31:29 *It is in the power of my hand to do harm to you* Laban had the men and the will, but he knew whose hand was on Jacob.
31:30 *why did you steal my gods* A god that can be stolen and carried off on a camel is no god at all. Laban's gods could not even keep themselves at home.
31:32 *With whomever you find your gods, he shall not live* A rash promise that put the wife Jacob loved most in real danger.
31:35 *the way of women is on me* The Law later treats that time as ceremonially unclean, keeping a woman from worship for a while (Lev 15:19-20), a matter of ritual, not sin or worth. Laban's precious gods spent the search under her. The story mocks idols, but that does not make her lie right. Deception ran deep in this family.
31:36 *What is my transgression? What is my sin* Twenty years of bottled-up hurt came out.
31:39 *The torn I did not bring to you; I, I bore the loss of it* Shepherds were not normally held responsible for animals torn by beasts (Exod 22:13). Jacob paid anyway.
31:40 *in the day the heat consumed me, and the frost in the night* Honest work for a dishonest boss. He did not cut corners because Laban cheated. Work as for the Lord (Col 3:23). God sees the work no one notices.
31:42 *the Fear of Isaac* An unusual name for God: the God Isaac feared and worshiped with reverence. Jacob gives God the glory again.
31:43 *all that you see, it is mine* Laban never answers the charges. He never stopped thinking of people as property.
31:46 *they ate there by the heap* A shared meal sealed the agreement, as with Isaac and Abimelech (26:30).
31:47 *Laban called it Jegar-sahadutha, and Jacob called it Galeed* Both mean heap of witness, in Aramaic and Hebrew. It is the first Aramaic in the Bible, a reminder that the two men came from different worlds.

called its name Galeed, **49** and Mizpah (Mitspa), for he said, "May the LORD watch between me and you when we are hidden each from his neighbor. **50** If you mistreat my daughters, and if you take wives besides my daughters, ***though*** no man ***is*** with us, see, God ***is*** a witness between me and you." **51** And Laban said to Jacob, "Look, this heap, and look, the pillar that I have set up between me and you. **52** This heap ***is*** a witness, and the pillar ***is*** a witness, that I will not pass beyond this heap to you, and that you will not pass beyond this heap and this pillar to me, for harm. **53** May the God of Abraham and the God of Nahor (Nachor) judge between us, the God of their father." And Jacob swore by the Fear of his father Isaac. **54** And Jacob sacrificed a sacrifice in the hill country, and he called his brothers to eat bread; and they ate bread and lodged in the hill country. **55** And Laban rose early in the morning, and he kissed his sons and his daughters and blessed them. And Laban went and returned to his place.

GENESIS 32

Jacob Prepares to Meet Esau

1 And Jacob (Ya'aqov) went on his way, and the angels of God met him. **2** And Jacob said when he saw them, "This ***is*** the camp of God." And he called the name of that place Mahanaim (Machanayim). **3** And Jacob sent messengers
before him to Esau (Esav) his brother, to the land of Seir (Se'ir), the territory of Edom. **4** And he commanded them, saying, "Thus you shall say to my lord, to Esau: 'Thus says your servant Jacob: With Laban (Lavan) I have sojourned, and I have stayed until now. **5** And I have oxen and donkeys, flocks and ***male*** servants and female servants; and I have sent to tell my lord, to find favor in your eyes.'" **6** And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, "We came to your brother, to Esau, and he is also coming to meet you, and four hundred men ***are*** with him." **7** And Jacob was exceedingly afraid, and he was distressed; and he divided the people who ***were*** with him, and the flock and the herd and the camels, into two camps. **8** And he said, "If Esau comes to the one camp and strikes it, and the camp that remains will become an escape." **9** And Jacob said, "God of my father Abraham (Avraham) and God of my father Isaac (Yitschaq), LORD, who said to me, 'Return to your land and to your kindred, and I will do good with you,' **10** I am too small for all the ***acts of*** steadfast love and all the faithfulness that You have done with Your servant; for with my staff I crossed this Jordan (Yarden), and now I have become two camps. **11** Deliver me, please, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, lest he come and strike me, mother with children. **12** And You, You said, 'I will surely do good with you, and I will make your seed like the sand of the sea, which cannot be counted for multitude.'" **13** And he lodged there that night, and he took from what had come into his hand a gift for Esau his brother: **14** two hundred female goats and twenty male goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams, **15** thirty nursing camels and their young, forty cows and ten bulls, twenty female donkeys and ten male donkeys. **16** And he gave ***them*** into the hand of his servants, each drove by itself, and he said to his servants, "Pass over before me, and put a space between drove and drove." **17** And he commanded the first, saying, "When Esau my brother meets you and asks you, saying, 'Whose ***are*** you? And where are you going? And whose ***are*** these before you?' **18** and you shall say, '***They are*** your servant Jacob's; it ***is*** a gift sent to my lord, to Esau; and look, he also ***is*** behind us.'" **19** And he commanded also the second, also the third, also all who were going after the droves, saying, "According to this word you shall speak to Esau when

31:49 Judg 10:17; Judg 11:11,29; 1 Sam 7:5
31:50 Jer 42:5; Jer 29:23; Judg 11:10
31:52 Gen 31:44,45,48
31:53 Gen 31:42; Gen 16:5; Gen 11:24-29,31
31:54 Exod 18:12; Gen 21:8; Gen 26:30
31:55 Gen 31:28; Gen 18:33; Gen 30:25
32:1 Heb 1:4; Ps 91:11; 1 Cor 3:22
32:2 2 Sam 2:8,12; Josh 21:38; Josh 5:14
32:3 Luke 9:52; Josh 24:4; Gen 25:30
32:4 Gen 4:7; Gen 23:6; Gen 27:29,37
32:5 Gen 33:8,15; Gen 30:43; Gen 33:11
32:6 Gen 33:1; Gen 32:8,11; Gen 27:40,41
32:7 Gen 35:3; Exod 14:10; Ps 18:4,5
32:8 Gen 33:1-3; Matt 10:16
32:9 Mark 12:26; Luke 20:37; Gen 28:13
32:10 Gen 24:27; Ps 18:35; 2 Sam 7:18
32:11 Ps 59:1,2; Prov 18:19; 1 Sam 12:10
32:12 Gen 28:13-15; Gen 32:6; Exod 32:13
32:13 Gen 43:11,26; Prov 18:16; Prov 17:8
32:14 Gen 30:43; Gen 31:9,16; Deut 8:18
32:16 Gen 32:20; Gen 33:8,9; Ps 112:5
32:17 Gen 33:3
32:18 Gen 32:4,5

31:49 *May the LORD watch between me and you when we are hidden each from his neighbor* Mizpah means watchtower. These words are sometimes engraved on jewelry as a blessing, but in context Laban meant: I don't trust you, so God had better watch you. Still, God does see what happens when no one else is watching.
31:53 *the God of Abraham and the God of Nahor* Laban lumps the God of Abraham with the gods of Nahor and Terah, who served other gods (Josh 24:2). Jacob would not swear that way. He swore by the one true God his father feared.
31:55 *Laban went and returned to his place* The last we see of Laban in the Bible. God kept His word (28:15) and turned a dangerous chase into a peace treaty.
32:1 *the angels of God met him* When Jacob fled he saw angels at Bethel (28:12), and as he returns angels meet him again. God bookends his years away with reminders that heaven was watching the whole time.
32:2 *Mahanaim* Two camps, Jacob's and God's. Jacob was not traveling alone. Elisha's servant learned the same when he saw the hills full of fiery chariots (2 Kgs 6:17). Believers are surrounded by more help than we can see.
32:4 *Thus says your servant Jacob* Seir is Edom, south and east of the Dead Sea. The stolen blessing said Jacob would be lord over his brother (27:29). Now he calls Esau "my lord" and takes the low place. When we have wronged someone, humility is the right first step.
32:5 *I have oxen and donkeys* Probably his way of saying he was not coming back to take anything.
32:6 *four hundred men are with him* A small army. We are not told what Esau intended. Jacob assumed the worst.
32:7 *he divided the people who were with him* Jacob did what he always did first: he made a plan. God had shown him two camps, His and Jacob's. Now in fear Jacob makes two camps of his own. Planning is not wrong, but his real need was God Himself.
32:10 *I am too small for all the acts of steadfast love and all the faithfulness that You have done with Your servant* A model prayer: he begins with who God is (32:9), recalls God's command, confesses his unworthiness, remembers he crossed the Jordan with only a staff, names his fear honestly (32:11) and stands on God's promise (32:12). Steadfast love is God's loyal covenant love.
32:12 *You, You said* Praying God's promises back to Him is faith, not bossing God. We pray boldly because God has spoken first.
32:14 *two hundred female goats and twenty male goats* A huge present, sent in waves with space between the droves (32:16).

you find him, **20** and you shall say, 'Also, look, your servant Jacob ***is*** behind us.'" For he said, "Let me appease his face with the gift that goes before me, and afterward I will see his face; perhaps he will lift up my face." **21** And the gift passed over before him, and he lodged that night in the camp.

Jacob Wrestles with God

22 And he rose up that night, and he took his two wives and his two female servants and his eleven children, and he crossed the ford of the Jabbok (Yaboq). **23** And he took them and sent them across the wadi, and he sent across what ***belonged*** to him. **24** And Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him until the going up of the dawn. **25** And he saw that he had not prevailed against him, and he touched the socket of his thigh; and the socket of the thigh of Jacob was dislocated as he wrestled with him. **26** And he said, "Let me go, for the dawn has come up." And he said, "I will not let you go unless you have blessed me." **27** And he said to him, "What ***is*** your name?" And he said, "Jacob." **28** And he said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel (Yisra'el); for you have striven with God and with men, and you have prevailed." **29** And Jacob asked and said, "Please tell ***me*** your name." And he said, "Why ***is*** this, ***that*** you ask for my name?" And he blessed him there. **30** And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel (Peni'el): "For I have seen God face to face, and my life has been delivered." **31** And the sun rose on him as he passed Penuel (Penu'el), and he ***was*** limping on his thigh. **32** Therefore the sons of Israel do not eat the sinew of the hip which ***is*** on the socket of the thigh, to this day, for he touched the socket of the thigh of Jacob in the sinew of the hip.

GENESIS 33

Jacob and Esau Meet

1 And Jacob (Ya'aqov) lifted up his eyes and looked, and look, Esau (Esav) ***was*** coming, and with him four hundred men. And he divided the children to Leah (Le'a) and to Rachel and to the two female servants. **2** And he put the female servants and their children first, and Leah and her children behind, and Rachel and Joseph (Yosef) behind ***them***. **3** And he, he passed over before them, and he bowed down to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother. **4** And Esau ran to meet him, and he embraced him and fell on his neck and kissed him; and they wept. **5** And he lifted up his eyes and saw the women and the children, and he said, "Who ***are*** these with you?" And he said, "The children whom God has graciously given your servant." **6** And the female servants came near, they and their children, and they bowed down. **7** And Leah also came near, and her children, and they bowed down; and afterward Joseph came near, and Rachel, and they bowed down. **8** And he said, "What to you ***is*** all this camp that I met?" And he said, "To find favor in the eyes of my lord." **9** And Esau said, "I have much, my brother; let what ***is***

32:20 Job 42:8,9; Prov 21:14; Gen 43:11
32:22 Deut 3:16; Josh 12:2; Deut 2:37
32:24 Hos 12:3-5; Gen 32:28,30; Luke 13:24
32:25 Hos 12:3,4; Gen 32:32; 2 Cor 12:7-9
32:26 Hos 12:4; Ps 115:12,13; Song 3:4
32:27 John 1:48
32:28 Gen 35:10; Gen 17:5,15; 2 Kgs 17:34
32:29 Deut 29:29; Judg 13:16-18; Job 11:7
32:30 Gen 16:13; Num 12:8; Exod 24:10,11
32:31 2 Cor 12:9; Gen 19:15,23; Mal 4:2
32:32 1 Sam 5:5
33:1 Gen 32:6; Gen 27:41,42; Gen 32:7,16
33:2 Gen 29:30; Gen 30:22-24; Gen 37:3
33:3 Gen 42:6; Gen 18:2; Gen 43:26
33:4 Luke 15:20; Gen 45:14,15; Gen 32:28
33:5 Heb 2:13; Ps 127:3; Isa 8:18
33:8 Gen 32:5; Gen 32:13-20; Gen 39:5
33:9 Gen 27:39; Prov 30:15; Eccl 4:8

32:20 *Let me appease his face with the gift that goes before me* To appease is to calm anger. Faith or fear? Probably both. Wise planning and prayer can go together (Neh 4:9), and Jacob may have meant to repay some of what he took. But he still seemed to trust his gifts more than his God. That night God dealt with it.

32:22 *the ford of the Jabbok* A stream flowing west into the Jordan. Jacob sent everyone and everything across and stayed behind. Sometimes God gets us alone, with nothing in our hands, before He does His deepest work.

32:24 *a man wrestled with him until the going up of the dawn* Jacob wrestled all his life: Esau's heel, the birthright, the blessing, Laban. Now he wrestles with God. Jacob says he saw God face to face (32:30), and Hosea calls the wrestler an angel and God (Hos 12:3-4). Many believe this was the angel of the LORD in human form (see 16:7).

32:25 *he touched the socket of his thigh* One touch ended the contest. The match was never in doubt. God let Jacob wrestle all night so he would learn something.

32:26 *I will not let you go unless you have blessed me* With his hip out of joint Jacob could no longer fight, only hang on. The man who always grabbed blessing by strength now clung to God because he had none left. Hosea says he wept and sought His favor (Hos 12:4). A limp can be a gift if it teaches us to hold on to God.

32:27 *What is your name? And he said, Jacob* The last time he was asked, he lied and said Esau (27:18-19). This time he confessed who he was: the heel-grabber.

32:28 *Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel* Israel most likely means he strives with God, or God strives. Jacob prevailed not by overpowering God but by clinging to Him. The whole nation would bear the name, the sons of Israel. When God changes a name, He is changing a life.

32:29 *Why is this, that you ask for my name* The angel of the LORD answered Manoah much the same (Judg 13:18). God reveals Himself on His terms. Jacob did not get every answer, but he got the blessing he needed.

32:30 *I have seen God face to face, and my life has been delivered* Peniel means face of God. No sinful man can see God's full glory and live (Exod 33:20), but God came in a form Jacob could bear.

32:31 *the sun rose on him* When he fled, the sun set on him at Bethel (28:11). Now it rises on a new man, limping. Weaker in body, stronger in faith. God's power is made perfect in weakness (2 Cor 12:9).

32:32 *the sons of Israel do not eat the sinew of the hip* A custom of remembrance, not a command from God.

33:2 *Rachel and Joseph behind them* The safest spot. Everyone could see whom Jacob loved most. Favoritism had already caused trouble between Rachel and Leah, and it will cause worse with Joseph and his brothers (37).

33:3 *he passed over before them, and he bowed down to the ground seven times* The night before, he sent everyone ahead. Now, limping from his meeting with God, he goes first, bowing as a servant before a king. The man who grabbed for the top spot takes the low place.

33:4 *Esau ran to meet him, and he embraced him and fell on his neck and kissed him* Jacob braced for revenge and received a hug. Genesis does not say what changed Esau, but Jacob had prayed (32:11), and God did not just protect him, He gave him his brother back. The father of the prodigal ran, fell on his neck and kissed him (Luke 15:20). Forgiveness runs.

33:4 *and they wept* Most of what Jacob feared never happened. Many of us lose sleep the same way (Matt 6:34). Not every hard meeting ends in hugs, but the God who went ahead of Jacob goes ahead of us, and He can soften a heart we thought was closed.

33:5 *The children whom God has graciously given your servant* Jacob saw his family as a gift of grace, not something earned. His whole family humbled itself before the brother he had wronged (33:6-7).

33:9 *I have much, my brother* Jacob kept saying "my lord," and Esau said "my brother."

yours be yours." **10** And Jacob said, "No, please; if, please, I have found favor in your eyes, then accept my gift from my hand, for therefore I have seen your face, like seeing the face of God, and you have been pleased with me. **11** Please take my blessing that has been brought to you, for God has been gracious to me, and for I have everything." And he urged him, and he took ***it***.

Jacob Settles at Shechem

12 And he said, "Let us set out, and let us go, and let me go before you." **13** And he said to him, "My lord knows that the children ***are*** weak, and the flock and the herd that are nursing ***are*** on me; and ***if*** they drive them hard one day, and all the flock will die. **14** Let my lord, please, pass over before his servant, and I, I will lead on gently, according to the pace of the possessions that ***are*** before me and according to the pace of the children, until I come to my lord, to Seir (Se'ir)." **15** And Esau said, "Please let me leave with you some of the people who ***are*** with me." And he said, "Why this? Let me find favor in the eyes of my lord." **16** And Esau returned that day on his way to Seir. **17** And Jacob set out to Succoth (Sukot), and he built a house for himself, and for his livestock he made booths. Therefore he called the name of the place Succoth. **18** And Jacob came safely ***to*** the city of Shechem (Shekhem), which ***is*** in the land of Canaan (Kena'an), when he came from Paddan-aram (Padan-Aram); and he camped before the city. **19** And he bought the portion of the field where he had pitched his tent from the hand of the sons of Hamor (Chamor), the father of Shechem, for a hundred pieces of money. **20** And he set up an altar there, and he called it "God, the God of Israel (Yisra'el)."

GENESIS 34

The Defiling of Dinah

1 And Dinah (Dina), the daughter of Leah (Le'a), whom she had borne to Jacob (Ya'aqov), went out to see the daughters of the land. **2** And Shechem (Shekhem), the son of Hamor (Chamor) the Hivite, the chief of the land, saw her, and he took her and lay with her and humbled her. **3** And his soul clung to Dinah the daughter of Jacob, and he loved the young woman, and he spoke to the heart of the young woman. **4** And Shechem said to Hamor his father, saying, "Take for me this girl for a wife." **5** And Jacob heard that he had defiled Dinah his daughter; and his sons were with his livestock in the field, and Jacob kept silent until they came. **6** And Hamor the father of Shechem went out to Jacob to speak with him. **7** And the sons of Jacob came from the field when they heard; and the men were grieved, and they burned ***with anger*** exceedingly, for he had done a disgraceful thing in Israel (Yisra'el) by lying with the daughter of Jacob, and thus it is not done. **8** And Hamor spoke with them, saying, "Shechem my son, his soul longs for your daughter. Please give her to him for a wife. **9** And intermarry with us: your daughters you shall give to us, and our daughters you shall take for yourselves. **10** And with us you shall dwell, and the land shall be before you; dwell and trade in it, and acquire possessions in it." **11** And Shechem said to her father and to her brothers, "Let me find favor in your eyes, and what you say to me I will

33:10 Gen 19:19; Gen 47:29; Gen 50:4
33:11 1 Sam 25:27; Gen 32:13-20; Josh 15:19
33:13 John 21:17; Isa 40:11; 1 Chr 22:5
33:14 Gen 32:3; Isa 40:11; Mark 4:33
33:15 Ruth 2:13; Gen 34:11; Gen 47:25
33:17 Josh 13:27; Judg 8:5,8,16; Ps 60:6
33:18 Acts 7:16; John 4:5; John 4:20
33:19 John 4:5; Acts 7:16; John 4:20
33:20 Matt 15:31; Mark 12:26; John 4:20
34:1 Gen 30:21; Gen 46:15; Gen 26:34
34:2 Acts 7:16; Gen 10:17; Gen 33:19
34:3 Ruth 1:14; 1 Sam 18:1; 2 Sam 19:7
34:4 Acts 7:16; Judg 14:2; Gen 21:21
34:5 2 Sam 13:22; Gen 30:35; Gen 37:13,14
34:6 Acts 7:16
34:7 Josh 7:15; Judg 20:6; Deut 22:21
34:8 Acts 7:16; 1 Kgs 11:2; Gen 34:3
34:9 Deut 7:3; Gen 6:2; Gen 19:14
34:10 Gen 13:9; Gen 20:15; Gen 42:34
34:11 Acts 7:16; Gen 33:15; Gen 18:3

33:10 *I have seen your face, like seeing the face of God* The night before, Jacob saw God's face and lived (32:30). Now he sees grace in his brother's face. The God who met him at the river had gone ahead to prepare Esau.
33:11 *Please take my blessing* He uses the word for blessing, not the usual word for gift. Many commentators think Jacob was in some way giving back what he stole. In taking it, Esau accepted the peace that came with it.
33:14 *until I come to my lord, to Seir* Genesis does not say Jacob ever went. Some see old Jacob slipping into half-truth. Others think he was wise to keep distance, since God told him to return to Canaan, not Seir. The text does not judge him. The brothers stayed at peace and buried Isaac together (35:29). Reconciliation does not always mean living side by side.
33:17 *Succoth* Succoth means booths, shelters of branches. Building a house suggests a stay of some years, since Dinah seems a young woman by chapter 34. The brothers' families became two nations, and the peace did not always last: Edom refused Israel passage (Num 20:14-21), and Obadiah rebuked Edom for cheering at Jerusalem's fall. Still, that day God gave two brothers peace.
33:18 *Jacob came safely to the city of Shechem* Safely can mean in peace, recalling his Bethel vow to return in peace (28:21). God did it.
33:19 *he bought the portion of the field* The family's second plot in Canaan after Machpelah (23:16-20). Joseph's bones would be buried here (Josh 24:32), and Jesus would sit by Jacob's well nearby (John 4:5-6).
33:20 *God, the God of Israel* In Hebrew, El-Elohe-Israel. For the first time Jacob uses his new name. The God of Abraham and Isaac is now Jacob's own God. A godly heritage is good, but each of us must call Him our own. Yet Jacob had vowed to make Bethel God's house (28:22; 31:13), and many think he stopped short at Shechem. Settling beside a Canaanite city brought his family into great danger.
34:1 *Dinah, the daughter of Leah* Many think she was a teenager. She went out to see the young women of the city. Scripture does not blame her for going. What happened was not her fault.
34:2 *he took her and lay with her and humbled her* This was rape. The Bible uses plain words because it does not hide evil. If you or someone you love has suffered abuse, God sees, and He calls it what it is. The shame belongs to the one who did the wrong. "The LORD is near to the broken of heart" (Ps 34:18). Please talk with a pastor, a trusted counselor or the proper authorities. You do not have to carry it alone.
34:3 *he loved the young woman, and he spoke to the heart of the young woman* Some soften Shechem because of these words. We should not. Feelings after a violent act do not undo it. He "defiled" her (34:5). He spoke first to his own father, and he kept Dinah in his house the whole time (34:26). Love that honors God waits, honors and protects (1 Cor 13:4-7; Eph 5:25).
34:5 *Jacob kept silent until they came* He may have been wise to wait for counsel. But in the whole chapter Jacob never speaks a word of grief for his daughter or anger at the crime. His silence is troubling.
34:7 *he had done a disgraceful thing in Israel* Israel here stands for Jacob's family as a people. God's people were to have a different standard of purity and honor. The brothers' anger at the wrong was right. What they did with it was not.
34:9 *intermarry with us* Hamor never apologized. He talked business. If Jacob's family married into the Canaanites, the line of promise would disappear into the nations (24:3; 28:1). The world's invitations are often polite. That does not make them safe.

give. **12** Increase upon me exceedingly the bride-price and gift, and let me give according as you say to me; and give me the young woman for a wife."

The Deceit of Jacob's Sons

13 And the sons of Jacob answered Shechem and Hamor his father with deceit, and they spoke, because he had defiled Dinah their sister. **14** And they said to them, "We are not able to do this thing, to give our sister to a man who has a foreskin, for it ***is*** a reproach to us. **15** Only in this will we consent to you: if you will be like us, by every male of you being circumcised. **16** And we will give our daughters to you, and your daughters we will take for ourselves, and we will dwell with you, and we will become one people. **17** And if you will not listen to us to be circumcised, and we will take our daughter and go." **18** And their words were good in the eyes of Hamor and in the eyes of Shechem, the son of Hamor. **19** And the young man did not delay to do the thing, for he delighted in the daughter of Jacob. And he ***was*** more honored than all the house of his father. **20** And Hamor and Shechem his son came to the gate of their city, and they spoke to the men of their city, saying, **21** "These men, they ***are*** at peace with us; and let them dwell in the land and trade in it, and the land, look, ***is*** broad on both sides before them. Their daughters we will take for ourselves for wives, and our daughters we will give to them. **22** Only in this will the men consent to us to dwell with us, to become one people: when every male among us is circumcised, as they are circumcised. **23** Their livestock and their possessions and all their animals, will they not ***be*** ours? Only let us consent to them, and let them dwell with us." **24** And all who went out of the gate of his city listened to Hamor and to Shechem his son; and every male was circumcised, all who went out of the gate of his city.

Simeon and Levi Take Revenge

25 And it came about on the third day, when they were in pain, and two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon (Shimon) and Levi, the brothers of Dinah, took each his sword and came upon the city securely, and they killed every male. **26** And Hamor and Shechem his son they killed by the mouth of the sword, and they took Dinah from the house of Shechem and went out. **27** The sons of Jacob came upon the slain and plundered the city, because they had defiled their sister. **28** Their flocks and their herds and their donkeys, and what ***was*** in the city and what ***was*** in the field, they took. **29** And all their wealth and all their little ones and their wives they took captive, and they plundered, and all that ***was*** in the house. **30** And Jacob said to Simeon and to Levi, "You have brought trouble on me by making me odious among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and among the Perizzites; and I ***am*** few in number, and they will gather against me and strike me, and I will be destroyed, I and my house." **31** And they said, "Should he treat our sister like a prostitute?"

GENESIS 35

Return to Bethel

1 And God said to Jacob (Ya'aqov), "Arise, go up ***to*** Bethel (Bet-El), and dwell there, and make there an altar to the God who appeared to you when you fled from before Esau (Esav) your brother." **2** And Jacob said to his household and to all who ***were*** with him, "Remove the gods of the foreigner that ***are*** in your midst, and purify yourselves, and change your clothes. **3** And let us arise, and let us go up ***to*** Bethel, and I will make there an altar to the God who answered me in the day of my distress, and He was with me on the way that I have gone." **4** And they gave to Jacob all the gods of the foreigner that ***were*** in their hand, and the rings that ***were*** in

34:12 Exod 22:16,17; Gen 24:53; Gen 29:18
34:13 Acts 7:16; Gen 25:27-34; Judg 15:3
34:14 Matt 23:30; Gen 17:11; Josh 5:2-9
34:15 Gal 4:12
34:18 Acts 7:16
34:19 1 Chr 4:9; Gen 29:20; Song 8:6
34:20 Acts 7:16; Ruth 4:1; Gen 22:17
34:23 Prov 1:12,13; Prov 23:4,5; Prov 28:20
34:24 Acts 7:16; Gen 23:10,18; Gen 17:23
34:25 Gen 49:5,7; Gen 29:33,34; Josh 5:6,8
34:26 Acts 7:16; Deut 32:42; 2 Sam 2:26
34:27 Esth 9:10,16; 1 Tim 6:10; Gen 34:2,31
34:28 Num 31:17; Deut 8:17,18; Job 1:15,16
34:30 Josh 7:25; Exod 5:21; 1 Sam 13:4
34:31 Prov 6:34; Gen 34:13; Gen 49:7
35:1 Gen 22:14; Deut 32:36; Ps 46:1
35:2 Gen 18:19; Josh 24:15; Gen 31:19,34
35:3 Gen 31:3,42; Gen 32:7,24; Ps 107:6,8
35:4 Josh 24:25,26; Judg 9:6; Exod 32:2-4

34:13 *the sons of Jacob answered Shechem and Hamor his father with deceit* They had learned deception well, from Jacob and from Laban.
34:15 *if you will be like us, by every male of you being circumcised* A terrible misuse of the covenant sign (17:10-11), used as bait for a trap. Using faith as a cover for our own plans is a serious sin.
34:19 *he was more honored than all the house of his father* His word carried weight in the city.
34:23 *Their livestock and their possessions and all their animals, will they not be ours* At the gate they never mentioned Dinah or the crime. They planned to swallow Jacob's family and wealth. Both sides were scheming, and nobody here is seeking God.
34:25 *Simeon and Levi, the brothers of Dinah, took each his sword* Her full brothers. Their anger was understandable, but they took revenge on a whole city for one man's sin, through lies and murder. The Law later made punishment fit the crime (Exod 21:23-25; Deut 24:16). Believers are to be "not avenging yourselves" (Rom 12:19). Jacob later says, "Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce" (49:7).
34:27 *The sons of Jacob came upon the slain and plundered the city* Taking the wealth, women and children shows justice had turned into greed. Hamor wanted Jacob's goods (34:23), and the opposite happened. Yet two wrongs were done in this city, and God approved neither.
34:30 *You have brought trouble on me* Every sentence is about me and my. Nothing about Dinah, nothing about the slaughter, nothing about God.
34:31 *Should he treat our sister like a prostitute* Their question has force. Someone had to care about Dinah. But it did not excuse what they did. Simeon and Levi would be scattered (49:7), yet Levi was later scattered as priests and teachers after standing with the LORD at Sinai (Exod 32:26-29). God can bring good from a family's worst moment, though that never makes the sin good. We are never told what became of Dinah. Some wounds are not healed within Genesis, but God has not forgotten them.
35:1 *Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there* After the silence of chapter 34, God speaks. He does not scold. He calls Jacob back to where it all began, to keep his vow (28:20-22). When we drift, God often calls us back to where we first met Him (Rev 2:5). The way forward often begins by going back.
35:2 *Remove the gods of the foreigner that are in your midst* Some idols may have come from Laban's house (31:19), others with the captives of Shechem (34:29). Jacob had let them stay. Now he deals with them. Repentance turns from sin back to God. You cannot go up to Bethel carrying your idols. An idol is anything we trust, love or serve in God's place (1 Thess 1:9).
35:4 *the rings that were in their ears* These may have been charms tied to idol worship. Jacob buried the old life.

their ears; and Jacob hid them under the oak that ***was*** near Shechem (Shekhem). **5** And they set out, and the terror of God was on the cities that ***were*** around them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob. **6** And Jacob came to Luz, which ***is*** in the land of Canaan (Kena'an), that ***is*** Bethel, he and all the people who ***were*** with him. **7** And he built there an altar, and he called the place El-bethel (El-Bet-El), for there God had been revealed to him when he fled from before his brother. **8** And Deborah (Devora), the nurse of Rebekah (Rivqa), died, and she was buried below Bethel, under the oak; and he called its name Allon-bacuth
(Alon-Bakhut). **9** And God appeared to Jacob again when he came from Paddan-aram (Padan-Aram), and He blessed him. **10** And God said to him, "Your name ***is*** Jacob; your name shall not be called Jacob again, but Israel (Yisra'el) shall be your name." And He called his name Israel. **11** And God said to him, "I ***am*** God Almighty. Be fruitful and multiply; a nation and an assembly of nations shall be from you, and kings shall come out from your loins. **12** And the land which I gave to Abraham (Avraham) and to Isaac (Yitschaq), to you I will give it, and to your seed after you I will give the land." **13** And God went up from him at the place where He had spoken with him. **14** And Jacob set up a pillar at the place where He had spoken with him, a pillar of stone; and he poured out on it a drink offering, and he poured on it oil. **15** And Jacob called the name of the place where God had spoken with him there Bethel.

The Deaths of Rachel and Isaac

16 And they set out from Bethel, and ***there*** was still a stretch of the land to go to Ephrath (Efrata); and Rachel gave birth, and she had hard labor in her giving birth. **17** And it came about, when she was in hard labor in her giving birth, and the midwife said to her, "Do not be afraid, for this also ***is*** a son for you." **18** And it came about, as her soul was going out, for she died, and she called his name Ben-oni; and his father called him Benjamin (Binyamin). **19** And Rachel died, and she was buried on the way to Ephrath, that ***is*** Bethlehem (Bet-Lechem). **20** And Jacob set up a pillar over her grave; it ***is*** the pillar of the grave of Rachel until this day. **21** And Israel set out, and he pitched his tent beyond the tower of the flock (Migdal-Eder). **22** And it came about, when Israel dwelt in that land, and Reuben (Reuven) went and lay with Bilhah (Bilha), the concubine of his father; and Israel heard. And the sons of Jacob were twelve. **23** The sons of Leah (Le'a): the firstborn of Jacob, Reuben, and Simeon (Shimon), and Levi, and Judah (Yehuda), and Issachar (Yisashkhar), and Zebulun (Zevulun). **24** The sons of Rachel: Joseph (Yosef) and Benjamin. **25** And the sons of Bilhah, the female servant of Rachel: Dan and Naphtali (Naftali). **26** And the sons of Zilpah (Zilpa), the female servant of Leah: Gad and Asher. These ***are*** the sons of Jacob who were born to him in Paddan-aram. **27** And Jacob came to Isaac his father ***at*** Mamre, Kiriath-arba (Qiryat-Arba), that ***is*** Hebron (Chevron), where Abraham and Isaac had sojourned. **28** And the days of Isaac were a hundred

35:5 Exod 23:27; Josh 5:1; 2 Chr 17:10
35:6 Gen 28:19,22; Gen 12:8; Judg 1:22-26
35:7 Gen 35:1,3; Gen 28:13,19,22; Eccl 5:4,5
35:8 Gen 24:59; 1 Sam 31:13; Judg 2:1,5
35:9 Gen 12:7; Gen 18:1; Gen 26:2
35:10 Gen 17:5,15; Gen 32:27,28; 1 Kgs 18:31
35:11 2 Cor 6:18; Rev 1:8; Gen 17:1
35:12 Gen 12:7; Gen 26:3,4; Gen 13:14-17
35:13 Gen 17:22; Gen 18:33; Gen 11:5
35:14 Gen 28:18,19; Gen 35:20; Exod 17:15
35:15 Gen 28:19
35:16 Matt 2:18; Mic 5:2; Gen 48:7
35:17 Matt 2:18; Gen 30:24; 1 Sam 4:19-21
35:18 Matt 2:18; Luke 12:20; Luke 23:46
35:19 Matt 2:6; Matt 2:1; Matt 2:5
35:20 Matt 2:18; 1 Sam 10:2; 2 Sam 18:17,18
35:21 Luke 2:8; Mic 4:8
35:22 Acts 7:8; Rev 7:5; 1 Chr 5:1
35:23 Acts 7:8; Rev 7:7; Gen 29:32-35
35:24 Gen 30:22-24; Gen 35:16-18; Gen 46:19-22
35:25 Gen 30:4-8; Gen 37:2; Gen 46:23-25
35:26 Acts 7:8; Gen 30:9-13; Gen 46:16-18
35:27 Heb 11:9; Gen 13:18; Gen 18:1
35:28 Gen 25:7; Gen 47:28; Gen 50:26

35:5 *the terror of God was on the cities that were around them* Jacob feared attack after Shechem (34:30). God handled it.
35:7 *El-bethel* The God of Bethel. About thirty years earlier he named the place house of God. Now his focus moved from the place to the Person.
35:8 *Deborah, the nurse of Rebekah, died* She came from Haran with Rebekah (24:59) and must have been very old. Allon-bacuth means oak of weeping. Genesis records the nurse's death but never Rebekah's. Faithful servants matter to God.
35:10 *your name shall not be called Jacob again, but Israel shall be your name* Given in a night of struggle (32:28), now confirmed at the place of worship after the idols are gone. Shechem showed the old Jacob still alive. God's word was firm: you are Israel now, live like it. In Christ we have a new identity (2 Cor 5:17), and God does not take back what He has made us.
35:11 *I am God Almighty* El Shaddai, as in the covenant with Abraham (17:1). "Kings shall come out from your loins," and the greatest is Jesus, the Son of David.
35:12 *to your seed after you I will give the land* As at 15:18 and 17:8, it rests on God's faithfulness, and He has not taken it back.
35:14 *he poured out on it a drink offering* Wine or another liquid poured out in worship, the first drink offering in the Bible, a way of giving himself and all he had to God.
35:15 *Jacob called the name of the place where God had spoken with him there Bethel* Again (28:19). The first time he was a frightened young man with nothing. Now he heads a large household, with a new name and a limp. The place is the same, but Jacob is not.
35:17 *Do not be afraid, for this also is a son for you* Rachel's prayer for a second son (30:24) was answered.
35:18 *she called his name Ben-oni; and his father called him Benjamin* Ben-oni means son of my sorrow. Benjamin means son of the right hand, the place of honor and strength. Jacob would not let his son carry a name of grief. He gave him a name of hope. He never forgot Rachel (48:7).
35:19 *Ephrath, that is Bethlehem* Bethlehem's first appearance, later the town of David and the birthplace of Jesus (Mic 5:2; Luke 2:4-7). Matthew recalls Rachel weeping for her children when Herod killed the boys there (Matt 2:17-18; Jer 31:15). Great sorrow and the greatest joy would both come near Rachel's grave.
35:22 *Reuben went and lay with Bilhah, the concubine of his father* We are not told Bilhah's side. As a servant she may have had little power to refuse the firstborn. The sin was Reuben's. He may have been claiming his father's place, as taking a ruler's concubine could do (2 Sam 16:21-22). Jacob said nothing then, but he did not forget. Reuben lost the firstborn's place (49:3-4; 1 Chr 5:1). Sin's consequences can come years later.
35:23 *The sons of Leah* The twelve sons, grouped by mother, became the fathers of the twelve tribes. In spite of favoritism, rivalry and sin, God built His nation from them, and their names will be on the gates of the New Jerusalem (Rev 21:12).
35:26 *These are the sons of Jacob who were born to him in Paddan-aram* Benjamin was born near Bethlehem. The summary speaks of the family as a whole.

years and eighty years. **29** And Isaac breathed his last and died, and he was gathered to his people, old and satisfied with days; and Esau and Jacob his sons buried him.

GENESIS 36

The Descendants of Esau

1 And these ***are*** the generations of Esau (Esav), that ***is*** Edom. **2** Esau took his wives from the daughters of Canaan (Kena'an): Adah (Ada) the daughter of Elon the Hittite, and Oholibamah (Oholivama) the daughter of Anah (Ana), the daughter of Zibeon (Tsivon) the Hivite, **3** and Basemath (Basmat) the daughter of Ishmael (Yishma'el), the sister of Nebaioth (Nevayot). **4** And Adah bore Eliphaz (Elifaz) to Esau, and Basemath bore Reuel, **5** and Oholibamah bore Jeush (Yeush) and Jalam (Yalam) and Korah (Qorach). These ***are*** the sons of Esau who were born to him in the land of Canaan. **6** And Esau took his wives and his sons and his daughters and all the souls of his house, and his livestock and all his animals and all his property which he had acquired in the land of Canaan, and he went to a land away from before Jacob (Ya'aqov) his brother. **7** For their property was too great for dwelling together, and the land of their sojournings was not able to bear them because of their livestock. **8** And Esau dwelt in the hill country of Seir (Se'ir); Esau, that ***is*** Edom. **9** And these ***are*** the generations of Esau, the father of Edom, in the hill country of Seir. **10** These ***are*** the names of the sons of Esau: Eliphaz the son of Adah the wife of Esau, Reuel the son of Basemath the wife of Esau. **11** And the sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho (Tsefo), and Gatam, and Kenaz (Qenaz). **12** And Timna was a concubine to Eliphaz the son of Esau, and she bore Amalek (Amaleq) to Eliphaz. These ***are*** the sons of Adah the wife of Esau. **13** And these ***are*** the sons of Reuel: Nahath (Nachat) and Zerah (Zerach), Shammah (Shama) and Mizzah (Miza). These were the sons of Basemath the wife of Esau. **14** And these were the sons of Oholibamah the daughter of Anah, the daughter of Zibeon, the wife of Esau; and she bore to Esau Jeush and Jalam and Korah. **15** These ***are*** the chiefs of the sons of Esau: the sons of Eliphaz the firstborn of Esau: chief Teman, chief Omar, chief Zepho, chief Kenaz, **16** chief Korah, chief Gatam, chief Amalek. These ***are*** the chiefs of Eliphaz in the land of Edom; these ***are*** the sons of Adah. **17** And these ***are*** the sons of Reuel the son of Esau: chief Nahath, chief Zerah, chief Shammah, chief Mizzah. These ***are*** the chiefs of Reuel in the land of Edom; these ***are*** the sons of Basemath the wife of Esau. **18** And these ***are*** the sons of Oholibamah the wife of Esau: chief Jeush, chief Jalam, chief Korah. These ***are*** the chiefs of Oholibamah the daughter of Anah, the wife of Esau. **19** These ***are*** the sons of Esau, and these ***are*** their chiefs; that ***is*** Edom.

The Sons of Seir

20 These ***are*** the sons of Seir the Horite, the inhabitants of the land: Lotan and Shobal (Shoval) and Zibeon and Anah, **21** and Dishon and Ezer (Etser) and Dishan. These ***are*** the chiefs of the Horites, the sons of Seir, in the land of Edom. **22** And the sons of Lotan were Hori (Chori) and Hemam; and the sister of Lotan ***was*** Timna. **23** And these ***are*** the sons of Shobal: Alvan and Manahath (Manachat) and Ebal (Eval), Shepho (Shefo) and Onam. **24** And these ***are*** the sons of Zibeon: both Aiah (Aya) and Anah. He ***is*** the Anah who found the hot springs in the wilderness when he was pasturing the donkeys of Zibeon his father. **25** And these ***are*** the children of Anah: Dishon and Oholibamah the daughter of Anah. **26** And these ***are*** the sons of Dishon (Dishan): Hemdan (Chemdan) and Eshban and Ithran (Yitran) and Cheran (Keran). **27** These ***are*** the sons of Ezer: Bilhan and Zaavan and

35:29 Gen 15:15; Gen 49:33; Gen 49:31
36:1 Gen 22:17; Gen 25:24-34; Gen 27:35-41
36:2 Gen 9:25; Gen 26:34,35; Gen 27:46
36:3 Gen 28:9; Gen 25:13
36:4 1 Chr 1:35; Job 2:11; Exod 2:18
36:5 Gen 35:29
36:6 Ezek 27:13; Rev 18:13; Gen 13:6,11
36:7 Gen 13:6,11; Gen 17:8; Gen 28:4
36:8 Gen 32:3; Gen 14:6; Deut 2:5
36:9 Gen 19:37
36:10 Gen 36:3,4; 1 Chr 1:35-54
36:11 Gen 36:15,16; 1 Chr 1:35,36
36:12 Exod 17:8-16; Deut 25:17-19; Gen 36:22
36:13 Gen 36:17; 1 Chr 1:37
36:14 Gen 36:2,5,18; 1 Chr 1:35
36:15 Job 2:11; Gen 36:18; 1 Chr 1:35
36:16 Exod 15:15
36:17 1 Chr 1:37; Gen 36:4,13
36:18 Gen 36:5,14; 1 Chr 1:35
36:20 Gen 14:6; Deut 2:12,22; 1 Chr 1:38-42
36:22 1 Chr 1:39
36:23 1 Chr 1:40
36:24 Lev 19:19; Deut 2:10; 2 Sam 13:29
36:25 Gen 36:2,5,14,18; 1 Chr 1:41
36:26 1 Chr 1:41
36:27 Gen 36:21; 1 Chr 1:38; 1 Chr 1:42

35:29 *Esau and Jacob his sons buried him* Gathered to his people hints that death is not the end. The brothers who once fought stood together at their father's grave. Isaac's death closes his story here but likely came years later. Jacob was 130 in Egypt (47:9) and Joseph 39 then (41:46), so Jacob was about 108 when Joseph was sold, and Isaac about 168. Moses often finishes one person's story before moving on.

36:1 *these are the generations of Esau, that is Edom* A new section, as for Ishmael (25:12) and Isaac (25:19). Edom means red, recalling the stew (25:30).

36:2 *Esau took his wives from the daughters of Canaan* The names differ from 26:34 and 28:9, and Genesis does not explain it. Some suggest people often had more than one name, or a woman's name could change at marriage. Others think there were more wives than any one list gives. Clear enough: Esau married into the Canaanites, which grieved his parents (26:35).

36:7 *their property was too great for dwelling together* As with Abraham and Lot (13:6). Esau did not fight for Canaan. He simply moved on. Quietly God sorted it out, so the land of promise went to the heir of promise.

36:8 *Esau dwelt in the hill country of Seir* The rugged mountain country south and east of the Dead Sea. Edom would be a nation Israel dealt with for centuries.

36:11 *Teman* Job's friend Eliphaz was a Temanite, and Job lived in Uz (Job 1:1; 2:11), a name that appears among the Horites (36:28). Some think Job is set among these peoples, but the link is not certain.

36:12 *she bore Amalek to Eliphaz* Father of the Amalekites, the first nation to attack Israel after the exodus (Exod 17:8-16) and bitter enemies for centuries. A name that looks small here grew into a long, painful story.

36:15 *These are the chiefs of the sons of Esau* A chief was a clan leader, and the word may mean leader of a thousand. Edom was organized and powerful long before Israel, while Jacob's sons would soon be slaves in Egypt. God's promises do not always look like they are winning. Israel's time would come on God's schedule.

36:20 *the sons of Seir the Horite, the inhabitants of the land* The Horites lived in Seir before Esau, and his descendants later drove them out (Deut 2:12, 22). The two peoples blended through marriage (36:2, 12, 22).

36:24 *He is the Anah who found the hot springs in the wilderness* Scripture remembers an ordinary man at an ordinary job who found something useful. God's Word is rooted in real places and real people.

Akan (Aqan). **28** These ***are*** the sons of Dishan: Uz (Uts) and Aran. **29** These ***are*** the chiefs of the Horites: chief Lotan, chief Shobal, chief Zibeon, chief Anah, **30** chief Dishon, chief Ezer, chief Dishan. These ***are*** the chiefs of the Horites, according to their chiefs in the land of Seir.

The Kings and Chiefs of Edom

31 And these ***are*** the kings who reigned in the land of Edom before a king reigned over the sons of Israel (Yisra'el). **32** And Bela the son of Beor reigned in Edom, and the name of his city ***was*** Dinhabah (Dinhava). **33** And Bela died, and Jobab (Yovav) the son of Zerah from Bozrah (Botsra) reigned in his place. **34** And Jobab died, and Husham (Chusham) from the land of the Temanites reigned in his place. **35** And Husham died, and Hadad the son of Bedad, who struck Midian (Midyan) in the field of Moab (Mo'av), reigned in his place; and the name of his city ***was*** Avith (Avit). **36** And Hadad died, and Samlah (Samla) from Masrekah (Masreqa) reigned in his place. **37** And Samlah died, and Shaul from Rehoboth (Rechovot) of the River (Nahar) reigned in his place. **38** And Shaul died, and Baal-hanan (Ba'al-Chanan) the son of Achbor (Akhbor) reigned in his place. **39** And
Baal-hanan the son of Achbor died, and Hadar reigned in his place; and the name of his city ***was*** Pau, and the name of his wife ***was*** Mehetabel (Mehetav'el), the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Mezahab (Me-Zahav). **40** And these ***are*** the names of the chiefs of Esau, according to their clans, according to their places, by their names: chief Timna, chief Alvah (Alva), chief Jetheth (Yetet), **41** chief Oholibamah, chief Elah (Ela), chief Pinon, **42** chief Kenaz, chief Teman, chief Mibzar (Mivtsar), **43** chief Magdiel, chief Iram. These ***are*** the chiefs of Edom, according to their dwelling places in the land of their possession; that ***is*** Esau, the father of Edom.

GENESIS 37

Joseph's Dreams

1 And Jacob (Ya'aqov) dwelt in the land of the sojournings of his father, in the land of Canaan (Kena'an). **2** These ***are*** the generations of Jacob. Joseph (Yosef), a son of seventeen years, was shepherding with his brothers among the flock, and he ***was*** a youth with the sons of Bilhah (Bilha) and with the sons of Zilpah (Zilpa), the wives of his father; and Joseph brought a bad report of them to their father. **3** And Israel (Yisra'el) loved Joseph more than all his sons, for he ***was*** a son of old age to him; and he made for him a full-length tunic. **4** And his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, and they hated him, and they were not able to speak to him in peace. **5** And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told ***it*** to his brothers, and they hated him still more. **6** And he said to them, "Hear, please, this dream which I have dreamed: **7** And look, we ***were*** binding sheaves in the middle of the field, and look, my sheaf arose and also stood upright; and look, your sheaves gathered around and bowed down to my sheaf." **8** And his brothers said to him, "Will you really reign over us? Or will you really rule over us?" And they hated him still more for his dreams and for his words. **9** And he dreamed yet another dream, and he recounted it to his brothers, and he said, "Look, I have dreamed a dream again, and look, the sun and the moon and eleven stars ***were*** bowing down to me." **10** And he recounted ***it*** to his father and to his brothers, and his father rebuked him and said to him, "What ***is*** this dream which you have dreamed? Will we really come, I and your mother and your brothers, to bow down to you to the ground?" **11** And his brothers were jealous of him, and his father kept the matter.

Joseph Thrown into the Pit

12 And his brothers went to pasture the flock of their father

36:28 Job 1:1; Jer 25:20; Lam 4:21
36:29 Gen 36:20,28; 1 Chr 1:41,42; 1 Chr 1:38
36:30 2 Kgs 11:19; Isa 23:15; Dan 7:17,23
36:31 Gen 17:6,16; 1 Chr 1:43-50; Gen 25:23
36:33 Jer 49:13,22; Isa 34:6; Isa 63:1
36:34 Gen 36:11,15; Job 2:11; Jer 49:7
36:37 Gen 10:11; 1 Chr 1:48
36:39 1 Chr 1:50; Exod 15:15
36:40 1 Chr 1:51-54; Gen 36:31; Gen 36:15,16
36:43 Gen 36:15,18,19,30,31; Exod 15:15; Num 20:14
37:1 Heb 11:9; Gen 17:8; Gen 28:4
37:2 1 Sam 2:22-24; 1 Cor 11:18; Gen 2:4
37:3 Gen 37:23,32; John 13:22,23; 2 Sam 13:18
37:4 Gen 27:41; 1 John 4:20; Gen 49:23
37:5 Acts 7:9; Gen 28:12; Dan 4:5
37:6 Gen 44:18; Judg 9:7
37:7 Gen 42:6,9; Gen 43:26; Gen 44:14,19
37:8 John 7:3; Gen 37:4; Exod 2:14
37:9 Acts 7:9-14; Gen 37:7; Gen 41:25,32
37:10 Gen 27:29; Isa 60:14; Phil 2:10,11
37:11 Luke 2:19; Acts 7:9; Dan 7:28
37:12 Gen 33:18; Gen 37:1; Gen 34:25-31

36:31 *before a king reigned over the sons of Israel* How could Moses write this? God had promised Jacob kings (35:11), and Moses knew it (Deut 17:14-15), so he could write looking ahead. Others think a later inspired writer added the note. Either way, it is God's Word.
36:33 *Jobab the son of Zerah from Bozrah reigned in his place* No king is the son of the one before, and each comes from a different city. Edom's kings seem to have been chosen or seized power. Israel's kings would come through one promised line, David's, leading to Jesus.
36:43 *These are the chiefs of Edom, according to their dwelling places in the land of their possession* Israel was told not to detest an Edomite, "for he is your brother" (Deut 23:7). Yet Edom refused Israel passage (Num 20:14-21), Obadiah condemned its pride, and Herod the Great came from Idumea, the later name for Edom. Esau gained land, power and kings, but he gave away what mattered most (Heb 12:16-17; Mark 8:36). Moses now leaves Esau's line for Jacob's, where God's plan of salvation goes.
37:1 *the land of the sojournings of his father* Isaac lived in Canaan as a foreigner, and now Jacob does. The land was promised but not yet possessed.
37:2 *These are the generations of Jacob* The final section of Genesis. It is Jacob's family story, but the spotlight falls on Joseph.
37:2 *Joseph brought a bad report of them to their father* We are not told what it was, or whether Joseph was faithful or telling tales. It did not help his standing.
37:3 *he made for him a full-length tunic* A long robe with sleeves, called a coat of many colors in older translations. Not work clothing but a garment of honor, perhaps marking Joseph for the firstborn's place Reuben lost (35:22; 1 Chr 5:1-2). Favoritism runs through this family like a crack in a wall (25:28; 29:30).
37:4 *they hated him, and they were not able to speak to him in peace* The bitter fruit of favoritism shows at once.
37:7 *your sheaves gathered around and bowed down to my sheaf* Joseph may have been young and unwise in how he told it, but the dream came from God. Years later the brothers bowed exactly so (42:6).
37:9 *the sun and the moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me* When God gives a dream twice, the matter is settled (41:32).
37:11 *his father kept the matter* Jacob scolded outwardly but wondered inwardly whether God was speaking, much as Mary "was treasuring up all these declarations, pondering them in her heart" (Luke 2:19).

at Shechem (Shekhem). **13** And Israel said to Joseph, "Are your brothers not pasturing at Shechem? Come, and I will send you to them." And he said to him, "Here I ***am***." **14** And he said to him, "Go, please, see the welfare of your brothers and the welfare of the flock, and bring me back word." And he sent him from the valley of Hebron (Chevron), and he came to Shechem. **15** And a man found him, and look, ***he was*** wandering in the field; and the man asked him, saying, "What are you seeking?" **16** And he said, "I ***am*** seeking my brothers. Tell me, please, where they ***are*** pasturing." **17** And the man said, "They have set out from here, for I heard ***them*** saying, 'Let us go to Dothan (Dotan).'" And Joseph went after his brothers and found them at Dothan. **18** And they saw him from a distance, and before he drew near to them, and they plotted against him to kill him. **19** And they said, each to his brother, "Look, this master of the dreams is coming. **20** And now, come, and let us kill him, and let us throw him into one of the pits, and we will say, 'An evil animal has eaten him'; and we will see what his dreams will be." **21** And Reuben (Reuven) heard, and he rescued him from their hand, and he said, "Let us not strike him ***as to his*** life." **22** And Reuben said to them, "Do not shed blood. Throw him into this pit which ***is*** in the wilderness, and do not stretch out a hand against him," so as to rescue him from their hand, to restore him to his father. **23** And it came about, when Joseph came to his brothers, and they stripped Joseph ***of*** his tunic, the full-length tunic which ***was*** on him. **24** And they took him and threw him into the pit; and the pit ***was*** empty; there ***was*** no water in it.

Joseph Sold into Egypt

25 And they sat down to eat bread, and they lifted up their eyes and saw, and look, a caravan of Ishmaelites ***was*** coming from Gilead (Gilad), and their camels ***were*** carrying gum and balm and myrrh, going to take ***them*** down to Egypt (Mitsrayim). **26** And Judah (Yehuda) said to his brothers, "What profit ***is there*** if we kill our brother and conceal his blood? **27** Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be on him, for he ***is*** our brother, our flesh." And his brothers listened. **28** And Midianite men, traders, passed by, and they drew and brought up Joseph from the pit, and they sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for twenty ***pieces*** of silver; and they brought Joseph to Egypt. **29** And Reuben returned to the pit, and look, Joseph ***was*** not in the pit; and he tore his clothes. **30** And he returned to his brothers and said, "The boy is not ***there***; and I, where am I going?" **31** And they took the tunic of Joseph, and they slaughtered a male goat of ***the*** goats, and they dipped the tunic in the blood. **32** And they sent the full-length tunic, and they brought ***it*** to their father, and they said, "This we have found. Examine, please, whether it ***is*** the tunic of your son or not." **33** And he recognized it, and he said, "***It is*** the tunic of my son. An evil animal has eaten him; Joseph has surely been torn to pieces." **34** And Jacob tore his clothes, and he put sackcloth on his loins, and he mourned for his son many days. **35** And all his sons and all his daughters arose to comfort him, and he refused to be comforted, and he said, "For I will go down to my son mourning, to Sheol." And his father wept for him.

37:13 1 Sam 17:17-20; Matt 10:16; Luke 20:13
37:14 Gen 35:27; Gen 23:2; Gen 29:6
37:15 John 1:38; John 20:15; Judg 4:22
37:16 Luke 19:10; Song 1:7
37:17 2 Kgs 6:13
37:18 Ps 37:12,32; Mark 14:1; Acts 23:12
37:19 Gen 37:5,11; Gen 28:12; Gen 49:23
37:20 Matt 21:38; Mark 12:7; Luke 20:14
37:21 Gen 42:22; Gen 35:22; Josh 10:28
37:22 Gen 42:22; Matt 27:24; Gen 22:12
37:23 Acts 7:9; Gen 37:3,31-33; Gen 42:21
37:24 Jer 38:6; Ps 35:7; Lam 4:20
37:25 Acts 7:9; Gen 37:28,36; Gen 43:11
37:26 Matt 26:15; Gen 37:20; Gen 4:10
37:27 Matt 26:15; Gen 42:21; 1 Sam 18:17
37:28 Acts 7:9; Matt 26:15; Ps 105:17
37:29 Acts 7:9; Gen 37:34; Job 1:20
37:30 Gen 42:13,32,35; Jer 31:15; Gen 37:20
37:31 Gen 37:3,23; Prov 28:13
37:32 Gen 37:3; Gen 44:20-23; Luke 15:30
37:33 Gen 37:20; Gen 44:28; 1 Kgs 13:24
37:34 Matt 2:18; Gen 37:29; 2 Sam 3:31
37:35 Matt 2:18; 2 Sam 12:17; Gen 31:43

37:13 *Here I am* Shechem, about fifty miles north, was where Simeon and Levi killed the city's men (34). Jacob may have been worried. Joseph obeyed though it meant going to brothers who hated him.
37:14 *Go, please, see the welfare of your brothers* Many see in Joseph a picture of Christ: the beloved son, sent by his father to his brothers, who did not receive him (John 1:11). The New Testament never calls Joseph a type in so many words, though Stephen comes close (Acts 7:9-14), but the parallels are striking.
37:15 *a man found him, and look, he was wandering in the field* Without this stranger, Joseph would have gone home. God's guiding hand often hides in small moments. Dothan lay about fifteen miles farther north.
37:19 *Look, this master of the dreams is coming* Years of simmering hatred boiled over.
37:20 *we will see what his dreams will be* Irony. Every step they took to stop the dreams moved them closer to coming true. "The counsel of the LORD, it will stand" (Prov 19:21).
37:22 *to restore him to his father* As firstborn Reuben was responsible for his brothers, and he may also have hoped to win back favor after his sin (35:22).
37:24 *the pit was empty; there was no water in it* A cistern cut in rock to catch rainwater. A dry one could be a prison or a grave. Joseph pleaded, and they did not listen (42:21).
37:25 *they sat down to eat bread* While their brother cried from the pit, they ate. That shows how hard their hearts had become.
37:27 *let us sell him to the Ishmaelites* It sounds like mercy, but Judah traded his brother's life for money. The Law later made kidnapping and selling a person a capital crime (Exod 21:16).
37:28 *they sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver* The value the Law later set for a boy his age (Lev 27:5). Ishmaelites and Midianites were related (16:15; 25:2), and the names seem to have been used loosely for desert traders. Some think a Midianite group traveled with the caravan, or that the Midianites pulled him out and sold him to the Ishmaelites. Many notice that Judah sold his brother for silver, and Judas, the Greek form of the name, sold Jesus for thirty (Matt 26:14-16). The New Testament does not draw that line, but the echo is hard to miss.
37:30 *and I, where am I going* Reuben worried about answering to his father. He meant well but lacked courage to stand openly against his brothers. Good intentions without courage are not enough.
37:31 *they slaughtered a male goat of the goats, and they dipped the tunic in the blood* Jacob deceived his father with goatskins and his brother's clothes (27:9-16). Now his sons deceive him with a goat and their brother's clothes (Gal 6:7). They let him draw his own wrong conclusion (37:32).
37:34 *he put sackcloth on his loins* Sackcloth was rough cloth worn in mourning.
37:35 *For I will go down to my son mourning, to Sheol* Sheol is the Hebrew word for the grave, the place of the dead. The sons watched his grief and kept their secret more than twenty years. Hidden sin does not stay small.

36 And the Medanites sold him into Egypt to Potiphar (Potifar), an official of Pharaoh, the commander of the bodyguards.

GENESIS 38

Judah's Sons

1 And it came about at that time, and Judah (Yehuda) went down from his brothers, and he turned aside to an Adullamite man, and his name ***was*** Hirah (Chira). **2** And Judah saw there the daughter of a Canaanite man, and his name ***was*** Shua; and he took her and went in to her. **3** And she conceived and bore a son, and he called his name Er. **4** And she conceived again and bore a son, and she called his name Onan. **5** And she yet again bore a son, and she called his name Shelah (Shela); and he was in Chezib (Keziv) when she bore him. **6** And Judah took a wife for Er his firstborn, and her name ***was*** Tamar. **7** And Er, the firstborn of Judah, was evil in the eyes of the LORD, and the LORD put him to death. **8** And Judah said to Onan, "Go in to the wife of your brother, and perform the duty of a husband's brother for her, and raise up seed for your brother." **9** And Onan knew that the seed would not be his; and it came about, whenever he went in to the wife of his brother, and he wasted ***it*** on the ground, so as not to give seed to his brother. **10** And what he did was evil in the eyes of the LORD, and He put him to death also. **11** And Judah said to Tamar his daughter-in-law, "Dwell ***as*** a widow ***at*** the house of your father until Shelah my son grows up"; for he said, "Lest he also die like his brothers." And Tamar went and dwelt ***at*** the house of her father.

Tamar Deceives Judah

12 And the days increased, and the daughter of Shua, the wife of Judah, died; and Judah was comforted, and he went up to the shearers of his sheep, he and Hirah his friend the Adullamite, to Timnah (Timna). **13** And it was told to Tamar, saying, "Look, your father-in-law is going up to Timnah to shear his sheep." **14** And she removed the clothes of her widowhood from on her, and she covered ***herself*** with the veil and wrapped herself up, and she sat at the entrance of Enaim (Einayim), which ***is*** on the road to Timnah; for she had seen that Shelah had grown up, and she had not been given to him as a wife. **15** And Judah saw her and considered her a prostitute, for she had covered her face. **16** And he turned aside to her by the road, and he said, "Come, please, let me go in to you"; for he did not know that she ***was*** his daughter-in-law. And she said, "What will you give me, that you may go in to me?" **17** And he said, "I, I will send a kid of ***the*** goats from the flock." And she said, "If you will give a pledge until you send ***it***." **18** And he said, "What ***is*** the pledge that I shall give you?" And she said, "Your seal and your cord and your staff that ***is*** in your hand." And he gave ***them*** to her, and he went in to her, and she conceived by him. **19** And she arose and went, and she removed her veil from on her, and she put on the clothes of her widowhood. **20** And Judah sent the kid of the goats by the hand of his friend the Adullamite to take the pledge from the hand of the woman; and he did not find her. **21** And he asked the men of her place, saying, "Where ***is*** the cult prostitute, she ***who was*** at Enaim by the road?" And they said, "***There*** has been no cult prostitute in this ***place***." **22** And he returned to Judah and said, "I did not find her; and also the men of the place said, '***There*** has been no cult prostitute in this ***place***.'" **23** And Judah said, "Let her take ***them*** for herself, lest we become ***an object of*** contempt. Look, I sent this kid, and you, you did not find her."

37:36 Gen 37:28; Gen 40:4; Gen 25:1,2
38:1 1 Sam 22:1; 2 Kgs 4:8; Prov 13:20
38:2 1 Chr 2:3; Gen 24:3; Gen 3:6
38:3 Gen 46:12; Num 26:19
38:4 Gen 46:12; Num 26:19
38:5 Num 26:20; Gen 38:11,26; Gen 46:12
38:6 Matt 1:3; Gen 21:21; Gen 24:3
38:7 1 Chr 2:3; Gen 46:12; Num 26:19
38:8 Matt 22:24; Mark 12:19; Luke 20:28
38:9 Deut 25:6; Ruth 1:11; Ruth 4:10
38:10 Gen 46:12; Num 11:1; Num 26:19
38:11 Matt 1:3; Matt 22:24; Luke 20:28
38:12 Josh 15:10,35,37; Gen 24:67; 2 Sam 13:39
38:14 Prov 7:12; Jer 3:2; Ezek 16:25
38:15 1 Cor 6:16
38:16 2 Sam 13:11; Matt 26:15; 1 Tim 6:10
38:17 Ezek 16:33; Gen 38:20,24,25; Prov 20:16
38:18 Gen 38:25,26; Jer 22:24; Luke 15:22
38:19 Gen 38:14; 2 Sam 14:2,5
38:20 Gen 20:9; Lev 19:17; Judg 14:20
38:23 2 Sam 12:9; Prov 6:33; Rom 6:21

37:36 *sold him into Egypt to Potiphar* Jacob mourned a son he thought dead, but Joseph was alive. God had not lost track of him. Joseph would say at the end, "you planned evil against me; God planned it for good" (50:20). When all looks lost, God is often at work behind the scenes.
38:1 *Judah went down from his brothers* At the very time Joseph was carried to Egypt. Perhaps guilt drove him, or he could not bear his father's grief. Genesis does not say. Abraham and Isaac worked hard to keep their sons from Canaanite wives (24:3; 28:1), and Judah walked right into it (38:2). He drifted from his family and from God's ways.
38:7 *the LORD put him to death* We are not told what Er did, only that it was evil enough for God to judge him directly. God is patient, but He does not ignore sin forever.
38:8 *perform the duty of a husband's brother for her* A custom already in place and later part of the Law (Deut 25:5-6), called levirate marriage, from a Latin word for brother-in-law. The brother married the widow, and the first son carried on the dead man's name and inheritance. It protected widows and kept a family line alive.
38:9 *Onan knew that the seed would not be his* With no heir for Er, Onan's share of the inheritance grew. He was willing to use Tamar but not to provide for her or his brother's line. His sin was greed and deceit, a refusal to care for his brother's widow and name (38:10).
38:11 *Lest he also die like his brothers* Judah blamed Tamar for deaths caused by his sons' own sin, and made a promise he never meant to keep. A widow without husband or child had little protection. Judah should have cared for her and sent her away instead.
38:14 *she had not been given to him as a wife* Judah's promise was broken. She seems determined to have a child from the family she married into, since Judah had shut every honest door. Her plan was wrong, but Judah created her situation.
38:15 *Judah saw her and considered her a prostitute* The Bible tells it plainly so we see how far Judah had fallen. Widowed and away from home, he gave in without a second thought. Paul says flee sexual immorality (1 Cor 6:18). Judah did the opposite.
38:18 *Your seal and your cord and your staff* A seal was a small carved stone, often worn on a cord, used to stamp a man's mark in clay, like a signature or ID card. Judah handed over what proved who he was.
38:21 *Where is the cult prostitute* A different word from 38:15, related to the Hebrew for holy, usually understood as a woman attached to a pagan shrine. Older books said ritual sex was common in Canaanite religion, but many scholars now question how common. Hirah may have used the more respectable word to dress up the errand.
38:23 *lest we become an object of contempt* Judah cared more for his reputation than his sin. He was about to learn that sin does not stay hidden (Num 32:23).

She Is More Righteous Than I

24 And it came about, about three months ***later***, and it was told to Judah, saying, "Tamar your daughter-in-law has played the prostitute, and also, look, she ***is*** pregnant by prostitution." And Judah said, "Bring her out, and let her be burned." **25** She ***was*** being brought out, and she sent to her father-in-law, saying, "By the man to whom these ***belong***, I ***am*** pregnant." And she said, "Examine, please, to whom ***belong*** these, the seal and the cords and the staff." **26** And Judah recognized ***them***, and he said, "She is more righteous than I, because I did not give her to Shelah my son." And he did not know her again. **27** And it came about at the time of her giving birth, and look, twins ***were*** in her womb. **28** And it came about, when she was giving birth, and he put out a hand; and the midwife took and tied on his hand a scarlet ***thread***, saying, "This one came out first." **29** And it came about, as he drew back his hand, and look, his brother came out; and she said, "What a breach you have broken through for yourself!" And he called his name Perez (Perets). **30** And afterward his brother came out, on whose hand ***was*** the scarlet ***thread***; and he called his name Zerah (Zerach).

GENESIS 39

The LORD Is with Joseph

1 And Joseph (Yosef) had been brought down to Egypt (Mitsrayim); and Potiphar (Potifar), an official of Pharaoh, the commander of the bodyguards, an Egyptian man, bought him from the hand of the Ishmaelites who had brought him down there. **2** And the LORD was with Joseph, and he was a successful man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. **3** And his master saw that the LORD ***was*** with him, and all that he ***was*** doing the LORD ***was*** making successful in his hand. **4** And Joseph found favor in his eyes, and he served him; and he appointed him over his house, and all that he had he gave into his hand. **5** And it came about, from ***the time*** he appointed him in his house and over all that he had, and the LORD blessed the house of the Egyptian on account of Joseph; and the blessing of the LORD was on all that he had, in the house and in the field. **6** And he left all that he had in the hand of Joseph, and he did not know anything with him except the bread which he ***was*** eating. And Joseph was handsome of form and handsome of appearance.

Joseph Refuses Potiphar's Wife

7 And it came about after these things, and the wife of his master lifted up her eyes to Joseph, and she said, "Lie with me." **8** And he refused, and he said to the wife of his master, "Look, my master does not know with me what ***is*** in the house, and all that he has he has given into my hand. **9** He ***is*** not greater in this house than I, and he has not withheld from me anything except you, because you ***are*** his wife. And how shall I do this great evil, and sin against God?" **10** And it came about, as she spoke to Joseph day ***by*** day, and he did not listen to her, to lie beside her, to be with her. **11** And it came about on this day, and he went into the house to do his work, and not anyone of the men of the house ***was*** there in the house. **12** And she seized him by his garment, saying, "Lie with me." And he left his garment in her hand, and he fled and went outside. **13** And it came about, when she saw that he had left his garment in her hand and had fled outside,

38:24 Matt 1:3; Matt 7:3; Matt 7:4
38:25 Gen 38:18; Gen 37:32; Ps 50:21
38:26 Rom 3:19; 1 Sam 24:17; Titus 2:11,12
38:27 Matt 1:3
38:29 Matt 1:3; Luke 3:33; Gen 46:12
38:30 Matt 1:3; 1 Chr 9:6
39:1 Acts 7:9; Gen 37:36; Gen 37:25,28
39:2 Acts 7:9; 1 Sam 18:14,28; Gen 21:22
39:3 Ps 1:3; Gen 21:22; Gen 30:27,30
39:4 Gen 19:19; Gen 39:21; Gen 18:3
39:5 Acts 7:9; Gen 30:27; Gen 12:2
39:6 1 Sam 16:12; Gen 29:17; Gen 39:4,8,23
39:7 2 Sam 13:11; Gen 6:2; Job 31:1
39:8 Luke 12:48; Prov 1:10; Prov 2:10,16-19
39:9 Luke 12:48; Gen 42:18; 2 Sam 12:13
39:10 1 Cor 6:18; Gen 39:8; Prov 2:16
39:11 Job 24:15; Prov 9:17; Jer 23:24
39:12 2 Tim 2:22; Mark 14:52; 1 Cor 6:18

38:24 *Bring her out, and let her be burned* Judah, who had just slept with a woman he took for a prostitute, demanded death for Tamar. It is easy to be strict with others and easy on ourselves (Matt 7:3-5).
38:25 *Examine, please, to whom belong these* The words used when the brothers brought Jacob the bloody tunic (37:32). Judah once asked his father to examine evidence that covered a lie. Now he examines evidence that uncovers the truth about himself.
38:26 *She is more righteous than I* A public confession and the turning point of Judah's life. All three sinned, but Judah bore the greater guilt. The man who sold his brother will later offer himself as a slave in place of Benjamin (44:33). God was beginning to change him.
38:28 *a scarlet thread* The midwife marked the first hand, but the other twin came out first.
38:29 *he called his name Perez* Perez means breach, breaking through. Again the younger takes the place of the elder. Perez is the ancestor of Boaz, David and Jesus (Ruth 4:18-22), and Matthew names Tamar in Jesus' family tree (Matt 1:3). Jesus did not come from a spotless family. He came from families like Judah's, and ours, to save sinners. That does not make the sin right, but it shows how great God's mercy is.
39:1 *Potiphar, an official of Pharaoh, the commander of the bodyguards* Picture Joseph at about seventeen, in a strange land with a strange language and gods, betrayed by his brothers and sold like an animal. Genesis does not name this Pharaoh. Many scholars place Joseph in the early second millennium B.C., but dates are debated. What matters is which God was watching over him.
39:2 *the LORD was with Joseph, and he was a successful man* Said of a slave, not a free man at home. God's presence does not always change where we are. It changes who we are and what happens through us there.
39:3 *his master saw that the LORD was with him* Joseph's faith showed in his work, "in sincerity of heart, fearing God" (Col 3:22). People should see God's hand in how we do our jobs.
39:5 *the LORD blessed the house of the Egyptian on account of Joseph* God's promise to Abraham in action (12:3), as with Laban and Jacob (30:27).
39:6 *Joseph was handsome of form and handsome of appearance* This sets up the next scene. Success and good looks are gifts, but they can bring temptation.
39:7 *Lie with me* Blunt. Joseph was young, far from home and a slave. Saying yes would be easy and saying no dangerous. She had power over him.
39:9 *how shall I do this great evil, and sin against God* Joseph honored his master's trust and the marriage, but above all he saw sin as against God, as David did: "Against You, You alone, I have sinned" (Ps 51:4). He lived in a land where no one knew his God, yet he lived as if God were watching, because He was. Integrity is being the same when no one is looking.
39:10 *she spoke to Joseph day by day* Temptation often comes day after day, wearing a person down. Joseph would not even "be with her." Keep your way far from her door (Prov 5:8). He made his decision ahead of time and kept it daily.
39:12 *he left his garment in her hand, and he fled and went outside* Sometimes running is the bravest thing a person can do (2 Tim 2:22; 1 Cor 6:18). He lost his garment and kept his integrity. Twice a garment was taken from Joseph, by hatred and by lust, and both times it was used to tell a lie about him.

14 and she called out to the men of her house, and she said to them, saying, "See, he has brought to us a Hebrew man to mock us. He came to me to lie with me, and I called out with a great voice. **15** And it came about, when he heard that I raised my voice and called out, and he left his garment beside me, and he fled and went outside." **16** And she placed his garment beside her until his master came to his house. **17** And she spoke to him according to these words, saying, "The Hebrew servant, whom you brought to us, came to me to mock me. **18** And it came about, when I raised my voice and called out, and he left his garment beside me and fled outside."

Joseph in Prison

19 And it came about, when his master heard the words of his wife which she spoke to him, saying, "According to these things your servant did to me," and his anger burned. **20** And the master of Joseph took him, and he put him into the prison house, the place where the prisoners of the king ***were*** confined; and he was there in the prison house. **21** And the LORD was with Joseph, and He extended steadfast love to him, and He gave him favor in the eyes of the commander of the prison house. **22** And the commander of the prison house gave into the hand of Joseph all the prisoners who ***were*** in the prison house; and all that they ***were*** doing there, he was ***the one*** doing ***it***. **23** The commander of the prison house ***was*** not seeing anything at all in his hand, because the LORD ***was*** with him; and what he ***was*** doing, the LORD ***was*** making successful.

GENESIS 40

The Dreams of the Cupbearer and the Baker

1 And it came about after these things, the cupbearer of the king of Egypt (Mitsrayim) and the baker sinned against their master, against the king of Egypt. **2** And Pharaoh was angry with his two officials, with the chief of the cupbearers and with the chief of the bakers. **3** And he put them in the custody of the house of the commander of the bodyguards, into the prison house, the place where Joseph (Yosef) ***was*** confined. **4** And the commander of the bodyguards appointed Joseph with them, and he served them; and they were days in custody. **5** And they dreamed a dream, both of them, each his dream in one night, each according to the interpretation of his dream, the cupbearer and the baker who ***belonged*** to the king of Egypt, who ***were*** confined in the prison house. **6** And Joseph came to them in the morning, and he saw them, and look, they ***were*** dejected. **7** And he asked the officials of Pharaoh who ***were*** with him in the custody of the house of his master, saying, "Why ***are*** your faces sad today?" **8** And they said to him, "We dreamed a dream, and there is no interpreter of it." And Joseph said to them, "Do not interpretations ***belong*** to God? Recount ***it*** to me, please."

Joseph Interprets the Dreams

9 And the chief of the cupbearers recounted his dream to Joseph, and he said to him, "In my dream, and look, a vine ***was*** before me, **10** and on the vine ***were*** three branches; and it ***was*** as though budding, its blossom went up, its clusters ripened ***into*** grapes. **11** And the cup of Pharaoh ***was*** in my hand, and I took the grapes and squeezed them into the cup of Pharaoh, and I put the cup on the palm of Pharaoh." **12** And Joseph said to him, "This ***is*** its interpretation: the

39:14 1 Pet 2:20; Gen 39:17; Gen 10:21
39:16 Ps 37:12,32; Jer 4:22; Jer 9:3-5
39:17 Matt 2:16; Exod 23:1; Gen 39:14
39:18 Luke 12:48
39:19 Job 29:16; Prov 18:17; Prov 29:12
39:20 Gen 40:15; Ps 105:18,19; Isa 53:8
39:21 Acts 7:9; Exod 3:21; Gen 39:2
39:22 Acts 7:9; Gen 39:4,6,7,9; Gen 40:3,4
39:23 Gen 39:2,3; 1 Sam 2:30; Ps 1:3
40:1 Gen 40:13; Gen 39:20-23; Esth 6:1
40:2 Prov 16:14; Ps 76:10; Prov 19:12,19
40:3 Gen 39:20,23
40:4 Gen 37:36; Gen 39:1,21-23; Ps 37:5
40:5 Gen 40:8; Gen 12:1-7; Gen 20:3
40:6 Gen 40:8; Gen 41:8; Dan 2:1-3
40:7 Neh 2:2; Judg 18:24; 1 Sam 1:8
40:8 Gen 41:15,16; Job 33:15,16; Ps 25:14
40:9 Gen 37:5-10; Judg 7:13-15; Dan 2:31
40:11 Gen 40:21; 1 Kgs 10:5; 2 Chr 9:4
40:12 Gen 41:12,25,26; Judg 7:14; Gen 40:18

39:14 *he has brought to us a Hebrew man to mock us* She blamed her husband for bringing him in and played on prejudice against a foreigner. It was a lie built around real evidence, like the brothers' lie to Jacob (37:31-33).
39:17 *The Hebrew servant, whom you brought to us, came to me to mock me* Joseph did right and was still accused of wrong. Suffering patiently for doing right finds favor with God (1 Pet 2:20), and Jesus too was falsely accused. This story shows false accusations happen. It must never make us slow to listen to someone who says they have been abused. Most who speak up are telling the truth, and Scripture calls us to protect the weak (Ps 82:3-4).
39:20 *he put him into the prison house, the place where the prisoners of the king were confined* A slave accused of such a crime might well have been put to death. An old Egyptian story, the Tale of Two Brothers, tells of a wife falsely accusing a young man much the same way. Some think Potiphar doubted his wife, though we are not told. God spared Joseph and placed him where he would meet the king's officials. His feet were hurt with fetters until the LORD's word tested him (Ps 105:17-19).
39:21 *the LORD was with Joseph, and He extended steadfast love to him* The words of 39:2 again. His address changed, but his God did not. Steadfast love is God's faithful covenant love.
39:23 *the LORD was making successful* Faithful in Potiphar's house and punished for it, Joseph kept being faithful in prison. Many see a picture of Christ: tempted without sin, falsely accused, later raised to honor. Jesus "has been tempted in all things according to likeness, without sin" (Heb 4:15).
40:1 *the cupbearer of the king of Egypt and the baker* A cupbearer served the king his wine and may have tasted it first against poison, a post of great trust. Nehemiah held it in Persia (Neh 1:11). The chief baker oversaw the food for the king's table. Their offense is not named.
40:4 *the commander of the bodyguards appointed Joseph with them* Most likely Potiphar himself (39:1). The man who imprisoned Joseph now trusted him with the king's officials. God was setting the stage.
40:4 *they were days in custody* Joseph was sold at seventeen (37:2) and stood before Pharaoh at thirty (41:46), about thirteen years from the pit to the palace. He served faithfully in a place he did not choose, for a time he did not know. Such seasons are not wasted when God is in them.
40:7 *Why are your faces sad today* Joseph had every reason to be wrapped up in his own troubles, yet he noticed others' faces and cared. A hurt heart can grow hard or grow kind. Joseph's grew kind.
40:8 *Do not interpretations belong to God* Egypt had trained dream interpreters, but these men had none. Joseph claimed no power of his own and pointed to God, as Daniel did before Nebuchadnezzar (Dan 2:27-28).
40:10 *on the vine were three branches* A dream about his own job, with growth so quick it pointed to something soon. Not every dream is from God (Deut 13:1-3; Jer 23:28). God has now spoken fully in His Son (Heb 1:1-2), and we test everything by His written Word. Before any Scripture was written, God chose to reveal His plans this way.

three branches, they ***are*** three days. **13** In three more days Pharaoh will lift up your head, and he will restore you to your position, and you will put the cup of Pharaoh in his hand according to the former custom, when you were his cupbearer. **14** Only remember me with you when it goes well for you, and please show steadfast love to me, and mention me to Pharaoh, and bring me out from this house. **15** For I was surely stolen from the land of the Hebrews, and also here I have not done anything that they should have put me in the pit." **16** And the chief of the bakers saw that he had interpreted well, and he said to Joseph, "I also, in my dream, and look, three baskets of white bread ***were*** on my head, **17** and in the upper basket ***were some*** of all the food of Pharaoh, the work of a baker; and the birds ***were*** eating them from the basket, from on my head." **18** And Joseph answered and said, "This ***is*** its interpretation: the three baskets, they ***are*** three days. **19** In three more days Pharaoh will lift up your head from on you, and he will hang you on a tree, and the birds will eat your flesh from on you." **20** And it came about on the third day, the day of the birth of Pharaoh, and he made a feast for all his servants; and he lifted up the head of the chief of the cupbearers and the head of the chief of the bakers among his servants. **21** And he restored the chief of the cupbearers to his cupbearing, and he put the cup on the palm of Pharaoh. **22** And the chief of the bakers he hanged, just as Joseph had interpreted to them. **23** And the chief of the cupbearers did not remember Joseph, and he forgot him.

GENESIS 41

Pharaoh's Dreams

1 And it came about at the end of two full years, and Pharaoh ***was*** dreaming, and look, he ***was*** standing by the Nile (Ye'or). **2** And look, from the Nile seven cows ***were*** coming up, beautiful of appearance and fat of flesh, and they grazed among the reeds. **3** And look, seven other cows ***were*** coming up after them from the Nile, ugly of appearance and thin of flesh, and they stood beside the cows on the bank of the Nile. **4** And the cows ugly of appearance and thin of flesh ate the seven cows beautiful of appearance and fat. And Pharaoh awoke. **5** And he slept and dreamed a second ***time***, and look, seven ears of grain ***were*** coming up on one stalk, fat and good. **6** And look, seven ears of grain, thin and scorched ***by*** an east wind, ***were*** springing up after them. **7** And the thin ears of grain swallowed the seven fat and full ears of grain. And Pharaoh awoke, and look, ***it was*** a dream. **8** And it came about in the morning, and his spirit was troubled; and he sent and summoned all the magicians of Egypt (Mitsrayim) and all its wise men; and Pharaoh recounted to them his dream, and there was no interpreter of them for Pharaoh. **9** And the chief of the cupbearers spoke with Pharaoh, saying, "My sins I ***am*** calling to mind today. **10** Pharaoh was angry with his servants, and he put me in the custody of the house of the commander of the bodyguards, me and the chief of the bakers. **11** And we dreamed a dream in one night, I and he; each according to the interpretation of his dream we dreamed. **12** And there with us ***was*** a Hebrew young man, a servant to the commander of the bodyguards; and we recounted ***them*** to him, and he interpreted our dreams for us; to each according to his dream he interpreted. **13** And it came about, just as he interpreted for us, so it was: me he restored to my position, and him he hanged."

40:13 2 Kgs 25:27; Ps 3:3; Jer 52:31
40:14 Josh 2:12; Luke 23:42; 1 Kgs 2:7
40:15 Acts 25:11; Phil 3:5; Exod 21:16
40:16 Gen 40:1,2
40:17 Gen 49:20; 1 Chr 12:20
40:18 Gen 40:12; Gen 41:26; 1 Cor 10:4
40:19 Acts 20:27; Gal 3:13; Gen 40:22
40:20 Gen 40:13,19; Matt 14:6; Mark 6:21
40:21 Gen 40:13; Neh 2:1
40:22 Gen 40:8,19; Gen 41:11-13,16; Jer 23:28
40:23 Job 19:14; Ps 31:12; Ps 105:19

41:1 Gen 20:3; Gen 29:14; Gen 37:5-10
41:4 1 Kgs 3:15
41:5 Deut 32:14
41:6 Ezek 17:10; Ezek 19:12; Hos 13:15
41:7 Gen 20:3; Gen 37:5
41:8 Dan 4:7; Exod 7:11,22; Dan 1:20
41:9 Gen 40:1-3,14,23
41:10 Gen 39:20; Gen 40:2,3; Gen 37:36
41:11 Gen 40:5-8
41:12 Phil 3:5; Gen 37:36; Gen 40:12-19
41:13 Gen 40:12,20-22; Jer 1:10; Ezek 43:3

40:13 *Pharaoh will lift up your head* A way of saying he would be honored and brought before the king. Joseph did not say maybe. Faith rests on what God has revealed.
40:14 *Only remember me with you when it goes well for you* Trusting God does not mean never asking people for help. Paul appealed to Caesar (Acts 25:11). Pray and also act wisely.
40:15 *I was surely stolen from the land of the Hebrews* Joseph did not name his brothers or blame Potiphar's wife. He simply said he was innocent.
40:17 *the birds were eating them from the basket* In the cupbearer's dream the work was completed. In the baker's, the food never reached the king.
40:19 *Pharaoh will lift up your head from on you* The same phrase with a terrible twist. One head lifted in honor, the other lifted off. Joseph did not soften it. Those who speak for God must give both the good and the hard (Acts 20:27). Hiding the truth would have been the cruelty.
40:20 *the day of the birth of Pharaoh* The first birthday mentioned in the Bible.
40:22 *just as Joseph had interpreted to them* Joseph was no lucky guesser. A true word from God comes to pass (Deut 18:22). His own dreams had not yet come true, but God showed him in a small way that He keeps His word.
40:23 *the chief of the cupbearers did not remember Joseph, and he forgot him* It hurts. Two full years followed (41:1). People forget, but God does not forget His own (Isa 49:15). Had Joseph been freed then, he might have been sent home and missed Pharaoh's dreams. If you feel forgotten, God sees you in the prison.
41:1 *at the end of two full years* Two more years in a cell after the cupbearer forgot (40:14, 23), and Joseph could not see what God was doing with them. Scripture does not name this Pharaoh.
41:1 *he was standing by the Nile* The Nile was the life of Egypt. Almost no rain falls there, and every crop depended on the river rising each year. Fat cows in the reeds pictured a good year (41:2).
41:6 *scorched by an east wind* The east wind blows hot off the desert and can wither crops in a day.
41:8 *all the magicians of Egypt and all its wise men* A class of priests and scholars who studied omens, dreams and sacred writings. Moses would face men like them (Exod 7:11). They had books and methods, yet no answer. The world's best wisdom cannot read the mind of God (1 Cor 1:20-25).
41:9 *My sins I am calling to mind today* Perhaps the offense that jailed him, or forgetting Joseph, or both. He chose his words carefully before a king who had been angry with him.
41:12 *a Hebrew young man, a servant* How the Egyptians saw Joseph: young, foreign, a slave. But his word had come true to the detail (41:13). God used a forgetful man's memory at the exact moment it was needed.

Joseph Is Brought Before Pharaoh

14 And Pharaoh sent and summoned Joseph (Yosef), and they brought him quickly from the pit; and he shaved and changed his clothes, and he came to Pharaoh. **15** And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I have dreamed a dream, and there is no interpreter of it; and I, I have heard about you, saying, 'You hear a dream to interpret it.'" **16** And Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, "***It is*** not in me; God will answer ***for*** the welfare of Pharaoh." **17** And Pharaoh spoke to Joseph, "In my dream, look, I ***was*** standing on the bank of the Nile. **18** And look, from the Nile seven cows ***were*** coming up, fat of flesh and beautiful of form, and they grazed among the reeds. **19** And look, seven other cows ***were*** coming up after them, poor and very ugly of form and thin of flesh; I have not seen ***any*** like them in all the land of Egypt for ugliness. **20** And the thin and ugly cows ate the first seven fat cows. **21** And they went into their insides, and it was not known that they had gone into their insides, and their appearance ***was*** ugly just as at the beginning. And I awoke. **22** And I saw in my dream, and look, seven ears of grain ***were*** coming up on one stalk, full and good. **23** And look, seven ears of grain, withered, thin, scorched ***by*** an east wind, ***were*** springing up after them. **24** And the thin ears of grain swallowed the seven good ears of grain. And I told ***it*** to the magicians, and there was no one declaring ***it*** to me."

Seven Years of Plenty and Seven of Famine

25 And Joseph said to Pharaoh, "The dream of Pharaoh, it ***is*** one; what God ***is*** about to do He has declared to Pharaoh. **26** The seven good cows, they ***are*** seven years; and the seven good ears of grain, they ***are*** seven years; the dream, it ***is*** one. **27** And the seven thin and ugly cows that came up after them, they ***are*** seven years; and the seven empty ears of grain, scorched ***by*** the east wind, will be seven years of famine. **28** That ***is*** the word which I spoke to Pharaoh: what God ***is*** about to do He has shown Pharaoh. **29** Look, seven years ***are*** coming, great plenty in all the land of Egypt. **30** And seven years of famine will arise after them, and all the plenty will be forgotten in the land of Egypt, and the famine will consume the land. **31** And the plenty will not be known in the land because of that famine afterward, for it ***will be*** very heavy. **32** And concerning the repeating of the dream to Pharaoh twice, ***it is*** because the matter ***is*** established by God, and God ***is*** hastening to do it. **33** And now let Pharaoh look for a discerning and wise man, and let him set him over the land of Egypt. **34** Let Pharaoh act, and let him appoint overseers over the land, and let him take a fifth of the land of Egypt in the seven years of plenty. **35** And let them gather all the food of these good years that are coming, and let them store up grain under the hand of Pharaoh, food in the cities, and let them keep ***it***. **36** And the food shall be for a store for the land for the seven years of famine which will be in the land of Egypt, and the land shall not be cut off by the famine."

Joseph Rules over Egypt

37 And the word was good in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of all his servants. **38** And Pharaoh said to his servants, "Can we find ***one*** like this, a man in whom ***is*** the spirit of God?" **39** And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "After God has made you know all this, there is no ***one*** discerning and wise like you. **40** You, you shall be over my house, and on your mouth all my people shall kiss; only ***in*** the throne will I be greater than you." **41** And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "See, I have set you over all the land of Egypt." **42** And Pharaoh removed his signet ring from on his hand and set it on the hand of Joseph, and he clothed him ***in*** garments of fine linen, and he put the

41:14 Acts 7:10; Dan 2:25; Ps 113:7,8
41:15 Acts 7:10; Gen 41:9-13; Ps 25:14
41:16 Acts 7:10; Gen 40:8; 2 Cor 3:5
41:17 Acts 7:10
41:18 Jer 24:1-3,5,8
41:19 Acts 7:10
41:21 Rev 10:10; Ezek 3:3; Rev 10:9,10
41:23 Gen 41:6; 2 Kgs 19:26; Ps 129:6,7
41:24 Gen 41:8; Dan 4:7; Exod 8:19
41:25 Acts 7:10; Dan 2:45,47; Dan 2:28,29
41:26 Gen 41:2,5,29,47,53; Gen 40:18; Exod 12:11
41:27 2 Kgs 8:1; 2 Sam 24:19
41:28 Acts 7:10; Gen 41:16,25
41:29 Acts 7:10; Gen 41:26,46,49
41:30 Acts 7:10; Acts 11:28; Gen 47:13
41:31 1 Sam 5:6; Isa 24:20
41:32 Acts 7:10; Num 23:19; Isa 46:10,11
41:33 Acts 7:10; Dan 4:27; Exod 18:19-22
41:34 Acts 7:10; Num 31:14; 2 Kgs 11:11,12
41:35 Acts 7:10; Gen 41:48,49,56; Gen 45:6,7
41:36 Acts 7:10; Gen 47:13-25
41:37 Acts 7:10; Ps 105:19; Prov 10:20
41:38 Acts 7:10; Job 32:8; Dan 5:11,14
41:39 Acts 7:10; Gen 41:16,25,28,33
41:40 Ps 105:21,22; Prov 22:29; Gen 39:4-6
41:41 Phil 2:9; Acts 7:10; Phil 2:10
41:42 Acts 7:10; Dan 5:7,29; Esth 3:10,12

41:14 *they brought him quickly from the pit; and he shaved and changed his clothes* After years of waiting, everything changed in a morning. Hebrew men wore beards, but Egyptians were clean-shaven. Clothing runs through Joseph's story: the robe stripped (37:23), the garment grabbed (39:12), and soon fine linen (41:42). When God's time comes, it can come quickly.

41:16 *It is not in me; God will answer for the welfare of Pharaoh* His big moment, and he refused the praise, as he had in prison (40:8). In the court of a king thought to be a god, Joseph pointed to the true God. Whatever gift we have comes from God, and He gets the glory.

41:21 *it was not known that they had gone into their insides* The famine would be so severe that even the good years would seem to vanish without a trace.

41:25 *what God is about to do He has declared to Pharaoh* Three times Joseph says God is behind it (41:25, 28, 32). Not luck, fate or Egypt's gods. The God of Abraham rules the Nile and the harvest, and He told the future so lives could be saved.

41:30 *seven years of famine will arise after them* A famine is a long shortage of food from failed harvests.

41:32 *the matter is established by God, and God is hastening to do it* When God says it twice, it is settled. Joseph's own dreams came in a pair (37:5-9).

41:34 *let him take a fifth of the land of Egypt* Twenty percent of the harvest in the good years. Knowing the future is not enough. You must act on it. Joseph trusted God completely and planned carefully, and the two do not fight. The ant stores food in summer (Prov 6:6-8).

41:38 *a man in whom is the spirit of God* Pharaoh did not mean all that we mean by the Holy Spirit, but he could see Joseph's God was with him. People can tell when God is at work in your life.

41:40 *only in the throne will I be greater than you* Second in Egypt, an office some call prime minister or vizier. For thirteen years it looked as if the dreams of chapter 37 had died. Now God brings them to pass in His way.

41:42 *Pharaoh removed his signet ring from on his hand and set it on the hand of Joseph* The ring bore the king's seal and signed documents with his authority. Fine linen was the dress of royalty and high officials, and the gold chain a mark of honor.

chain of gold on his neck. **43** And he made him ride in the second chariot which ***belonged*** to him, and they called out before him, "Bow the knee!" And he set him over all the land of Egypt. **44** And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I ***am*** Pharaoh, and apart from you no man shall lift up his hand and his foot in all the land of Egypt." **45** And Pharaoh called the name of Joseph Zaphenath-paneah (Tsafnat-Paneach), and he gave to him Asenath (Asnat), the daughter of Potiphera (Poti-Fera) priest of On, as a wife. And Joseph went out over the land of Egypt.

The Famine Comes

46 And Joseph ***was*** a son of thirty years when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from before Pharaoh, and he passed through all the land of Egypt. **47** And the land produced in the seven years of plenty by handfuls. **48** And he gathered all the food of the seven years which were in the land of Egypt, and he put food in the cities; the food of the field of the city which ***was*** around it he put in its midst. **49** And Joseph stored up grain like the sand of the sea, very much, until he ceased to count, for there was no number. **50** And to Joseph two sons were born before the year of the famine came, whom Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera priest of On, bore to him. **51** And Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh (Menashe): "For God has made me forget all my trouble and all the house of my father." **52** And the name of the second he called Ephraim (Efrayim): "For God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction." **53** And the seven years of the plenty that was in the land of Egypt came to an end. **54** And the seven years of the famine began to come, just as Joseph had said; and ***there*** was famine in all the lands, and in all the land of Egypt ***there*** was bread. **55** And all the land of Egypt was hungry, and the people cried out to Pharaoh for bread; and Pharaoh said to all Egypt, "Go to Joseph; what he says to you, you shall do." **56** And the famine was over all the face of the land; and Joseph opened all that ***was*** in them, and he sold grain to Egypt; and the famine was severe in the land of Egypt. **57** And all the earth came to Egypt to buy grain, to Joseph, for the famine was severe in all the earth.

GENESIS 42

Joseph's Brothers Come to Egypt

1 And Jacob (Ya'aqov) saw that there was grain in Egypt (Mitsrayim), and Jacob said to his sons, "Why are you looking at one another?" **2** And he said, "Look, I have heard that there is grain in Egypt. Go down there and buy grain for us from there, and we will live and not die." **3** And the ten brothers of Joseph (Yosef) went down to buy grain from Egypt. **4** And Benjamin (Binyamin), the brother of Joseph, Jacob did not send with his brothers, for he said, "Lest harm happen to him." **5** And the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) came to buy grain among those coming, for the famine was in the land of Canaan (Kena'an). **6** And Joseph, he ***was*** the ruler over the land; he ***was*** the one selling grain to all the people of the land. And the brothers of Joseph came and bowed down to him, face to the ground. **7** And Joseph saw his broth-

41:43 Acts 7:10; Phil 2:10; Gen 45:8
41:44 Acts 7:10; Exod 11:7
41:45 Acts 11:28; Acts 7:10; Gen 46:20
41:46 Luke 3:23; Acts 7:10; Gen 37:2
41:47 Gen 26:12; Ps 72:16
41:48 Gen 41:34-36; Gen 47:21
41:49 Ps 78:27; Gen 22:17; Judg 6:5
41:50 Gen 46:20; Gen 48:5; Gen 41:45
41:51 Gen 48:5,13,14,18-20; Deut 33:17; Gen 41:30
41:52 Gen 49:22; Gen 50:23; Gen 29:32-35
41:53 Gen 41:29-31; Ps 73:20; Luke 16:25
41:54 Acts 7:11; Gen 45:11; Ps 105:16
41:55 Acts 7:11; 2 Kgs 6:25-29; Jer 14:1-6
41:56 Acts 17:26; Acts 7:11; Gen 42:6
41:57 Acts 7:11; Gen 41:54,56; Gen 42:1,5
42:1 Acts 7:12; John 13:22; Gen 41:54,57
42:2 Gen 43:8; Gen 43:2,4; Gen 45:9
42:3 Acts 7:12; Gen 42:5,13
42:4 Acts 7:12; Gen 42:38; Gen 35:16-19
42:5 Acts 7:11; Acts 11:28; Gen 12:10
42:6 Rev 3:9; Gen 41:40,41; Gen 45:8,26
42:7 Gen 42:9-12,14-17,19,20; Matt 15:23-26

41:43 *Bow the knee* Many see a picture of Christ: rejected by His brothers, suffering unjustly, then raised to highest authority, and every knee will bow to Him (Phil 2:9-11). The New Testament never calls Joseph a type in so many words, so I hold this loosely.
41:45 *Zaphenath-paneah* Scholars are not sure of the meaning. Suggestions include God speaks and he lives, and the one who supplies the food of life.
41:45 *Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera priest of On* On, in what is now northeast Cairo, was later called Heliopolis, city of the sun, a center of the worship of the sun god Ra. We are not told whether Asenath came to worship Joseph's God. Joseph had an Egyptian name, wife and job, yet he named his sons in praise of the God of his fathers (41:51-52). You can live in a foreign culture without letting it rule your heart, as Daniel did (Dan 1:7-8).
41:46 *Joseph was a son of thirty years when he stood before Pharaoh* Thirteen years of slavery, false accusation and prison lay behind him, and they taught him to run a household, manage a prison and trust God. David was thirty when he began to reign (2 Sam 5:4), and Jesus about thirty at the start of His ministry (Luke 3:23). God often prepares His servants in hidden places a long time.
41:48 *the food of the field of the city which was around it he put in its midst* Each city kept its own fields' grain, close to the people who would need it.
41:49 *like the sand of the sea* The picture of God's promise to Abraham's family (22:17; 32:12). God gave more than enough.
41:51 *For God has made me forget all my trouble and all the house of my father* Manasseh sounds like forget. Joseph did not stop caring about his father. God had healed the sharp pain, and the memories no longer ruled him.
41:52 *For God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction* Ephraim sounds like fruitful. Joseph did not have to leave Egypt to be fruitful. God can help you let go of what was done to you and make you fruitful in the very place that broke your heart.
41:54 *in all the land of Egypt there was bread* "Just as Joseph had said." One man's obedience and planning meant life for a nation.
41:55 *Go to Joseph; what he says to you, you shall do* Many see a picture of the gospel. There is one place to find the bread of life, Jesus (John 6:35), and no other name by which we must be saved (Acts 4:12).
41:57 *all the earth came to Egypt to buy grain* The whole region, the world as people then knew it. Up in Canaan an old man and his sons were running out of food too. God was about to bring the brothers to the man they tried to get rid of.
42:1 *Why are you looking at one another* The family was running out of food, and the brothers just stood there. Some think they hesitated because Egypt was where they had sent Joseph. The text does not say, but guilt can make us freeze.
42:2 *we will live and not die* Famine was life and death. God was using hunger to move this family toward the rescue He had already prepared.
42:3 *the ten brothers of Joseph went down* Moses calls them Joseph's brothers on purpose. This family must face what it did.
42:4 *Lest harm happen to him* Benjamin was Rachel's other son. Jacob's favoritism had not ended. It had moved from Joseph to Benjamin, and the other sons must have felt it.
42:6 *the brothers of Joseph came and bowed down to him, face to the ground* The dream of the sheaves (37:5-8). They sold him to stop it, and now they fulfilled it without knowing. People cannot stop what God has said He will do.

ers, and he recognized them; and he acted as a stranger to them, and he spoke harsh ***things*** with them, and he said to them, "From where have you come?" And they said, "From the land of Canaan, to buy food." **8** And Joseph recognized his brothers, and they did not recognize him. **9** And Joseph remembered the dreams which he had dreamed about them, and he said to them, "You ***are*** spies! To see the nakedness of the land you have come." **10** And they said to him, "No, my lord, and your servants have come to buy food. **11** All of us ***are*** sons of one man; we ***are*** honest; your servants have not been spies." **12** And he said to them, "No, but the nakedness of the land you have come to see." **13** And they said, "Your servants ***are*** twelve brothers; we ***are*** the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and look, the youngest ***is*** with our father today, and the one is not." **14** And Joseph said to them, "It ***is*** what I spoke to you, saying, 'You ***are*** spies.' **15** By this you will be tested: ***by*** the life of Pharaoh, you will not go out from here unless your youngest brother comes here. **16** Send one of you, and let him take your brother, and you, be bound, and let your words be tested, whether truth ***is*** with you; and if not, ***by*** the life of Pharaoh, surely you ***are*** spies." **17** And he gathered them into custody ***for*** three days.

Simeon Held as Hostage

18 And Joseph said to them on the third day, "Do this and live; I fear God. **19** If you ***are*** honest, let one brother of yours be bound in the house of your custody; and you, go, bring grain ***for*** the hunger of your households. **20** And your youngest brother you will bring to me, and let your words be verified, and you will not die." And they did so. **21** And they said, each to his brother, "Truly we ***are*** guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the distress of his soul when he pleaded with us for favor, and we did not listen. Therefore this distress has come to us." **22** And Reuben (Reuven) answered them, saying, "Did I not say to you, saying, 'Do not sin against the boy'? And you did not listen; and also his blood, look, is being required." **23** And they did not know that Joseph understood, for the interpreter ***was*** between them. **24** And he turned away from them, and he wept, and he returned to them, and he spoke to them, and he took Simeon (Shimon) from them, and he bound him before their eyes. **25** And Joseph commanded, and they filled their vessels ***with*** grain, and ***commanded*** to return their silver, each ***man's*** to his sack, and to give them provisions for the way. And he did so for them. **26** And they lifted their grain onto their donkeys, and they went from there. **27** And the one opened his sack to give fodder to his donkey at the lodging place, and he saw his silver, and look, it ***was*** in the mouth of his bag. **28** And he said to his brothers, "My silver has been returned, and also, look, ***it is*** in my bag." And their heart failed, and they trembled, each to his brother, saying, "What ***is*** this ***that*** God has done to us?"

The Brothers Report to Jacob

29 And they came to Jacob their father, to the land of Canaan, and they told him all the ***things*** that had happened to them, saying, **30** "The man, the lord of the land, spoke harsh ***things*** with us, and he took us for ***men*** spying out the land. **31** And we said to him, 'We ***are*** honest; we have not been spies. **32** We ***are*** twelve brothers, sons of our father; the one is not, and the youngest ***is*** today with our father in the land of Canaan.' **33** And the man, the lord of the land, said to us, 'By this I will know that you ***are*** honest: leave one brother of yours with me, and take ***grain for*** the hunger of your households, and go. **34** And bring your youngest brother to me, and I will know that you ***are*** not spies, that you ***are*** hon-

42:8 Luke 24:16; John 20:14; John 21:4
42:9 Gen 37:5-9; Num 13:2,16-20; Josh 2:1
42:10 Gen 37:8; Gen 27:29,37; Gen 44:9
42:11 Gen 42:19,33,34; John 7:18; 2 Cor 6:4
42:13 Gen 37:30; Gen 44:20,28; Gen 43:7
42:14 Gen 42:9-11; Job 13:24; Job 19:11
42:15 James 5:12; 1 Sam 17:55; Gen 42:7,12,16,30
42:17 Gen 40:4,7; Isa 24:22; Acts 5:18
42:18 Lev 25:43; Gen 20:11; Neh 5:9,15
42:19 Gen 40:3; Isa 42:7,22; Jer 37:15
42:20 Gen 43:5,19; Gen 44:23; Gen 42:15,34
42:21 Hos 5:15; Job 36:8,9; Gen 37:23-28
42:22 Luke 11:50; Luke 11:51; 1 Kgs 2:32
42:23 John 16:13,14; 2 Cor 5:20
42:24 Gen 43:30; Isa 63:9; Luke 19:41
42:25 1 Pet 3:9; Gen 44:1,2; Isa 55:1
42:27 Luke 2:7; Exod 4:24; Gen 43:21
42:28 Gen 42:36; Gen 27:33; Lev 26:36
42:33 Gen 42:15,19,20
42:34 Gen 34:10,21; 1 Kgs 10:15; Ezek 17:4

42:8 *they did not recognize him* He was a teenager when they last saw him, now a man near forty, shaved like an Egyptian, in royal linen, speaking through an interpreter (42:23). And they thought him a slave somewhere, or dead.
42:9 *You are spies* Egypt's northeast border faced Canaan, and spies looking for weak spots were a real concern. "Joseph remembered the dreams" and understood that God had kept His word.
42:11 *we are honest* That must have stung. These men sold their brother and lied to their father for over twenty years.
42:13 *the one is not* They told more than they meant. Joseph stood before them hearing them call him dead, and learned his father and Benjamin were alive.
42:15 *by the life of Pharaoh* A solemn oath, the way an Egyptian official would swear.
42:17 *he gathered them into custody for three days* Joseph spent years in prison because of their sin, and they got a small taste. Was it revenge? I don't believe so. Everything Joseph does here aims at one question: had they changed? Would they treat Benjamin as they had treated him? God used the tests to bring them to repentance. Some teachers think Joseph also struggled with his own anger. Scripture does not explain his motives.
42:18 *Do this and live; I fear God* Unknown to them, an Egyptian ruler said he served their God. Even while testing them, he provided "for the hunger of your households" (42:19).
42:21 *Truly we are guilty concerning our brother* Genesis 37 does not say Joseph begged from the pit, but they never forgot it. A guilty conscience can be buried, but it does not die. For the first time they confess their sin aloud. God had begun His work in their hearts.
42:22 *also his blood, look, is being required* Reuben had tried to save Joseph (37:21-22). They believed God was finally calling them to account.
42:24 *he turned away from them, and he wept* The first of many times Joseph weeps (43:30; 45:2, 14-15; 46:29; 50:1, 17). He was not cold. He loved his brothers, and hearing their confession broke his heart.
42:24 *he took Simeon from them, and he bound him before their eyes* We are not told why. Reuben had tried to save him, and Simeon was next in line, with a violent past (34:25). Many suggest he led the plot, though we cannot be sure.
42:25 *to return their silver, each man's to his sack* They sold Joseph for silver (37:28), and he secretly gave them their silver back. He was paying for their food himself.
42:28 *What is this that God has done to us* The first time they speak of God in this story, and they assume His hand is against them. A guilty heart reads kindness as a threat. Sin makes us afraid of God even when He is good. The answer is to confess and come home (1 John 1:9).
42:30 *The man, the lord of the land* Their report is honest but softened. They leave out the prison and Simeon bound before their eyes.

est. Your brother I will give to you, and you will go about in the land.'" **35** And it happened ***as*** they ***were*** emptying their sacks, and look, each man's bundle of silver ***was*** in his sack; and they saw their bundles of silver, they and their father, and they were afraid. **36** And Jacob their father said to them, "Me you have bereaved: Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and Benjamin you will take. Upon me all of them have been." **37** And Reuben said to his father, saying, "My two sons you may put to death if I do not bring him to you. Give him into my hand, and I will bring him back to you." **38** And he said, "My son will not go down with you, for his brother is dead, and he alone is left; and harm may happen to him on the way on which you go, and you will bring down my gray hair in sorrow to Sheol."

GENESIS 43

The Second Journey to Egypt

1 And the famine ***was*** heavy in the land. **2** And it happened, when they had finished eating the grain which they had brought from Egypt (Mitsrayim), and their father said to them, "Go back; buy a little food for us." **3** And Judah (Yehuda) said to him, saying, "The man solemnly warned us, saying, 'You will not see my face unless your brother ***is*** with you.' **4** If you are sending our brother with us, we will go down, and we will buy food for you. **5** And if you are not sending ***him***, we will not go down; for the man said to us, 'You will not see my face unless your brother ***is*** with you.'" **6** And Israel (Yisra'el) said, "Why did you do evil to me by telling the man whether you still ***had*** a brother?" **7** And they said, "The man asked closely about us and about our kindred, saying, 'Is your father still alive? Do you have a brother?' And we told him according to these words. Could we really know that he would say, 'Bring your brother down'?" **8** And Judah said to Israel his father, "Send the young man with me, and let us arise and go, and we will live and not die, both we and you and our little ones. **9** I, I will be surety for him; from my hand you may require him. If I do not bring him to you and set him before you, then I will have sinned against you all the days. **10** For if we had not delayed, surely now we would have returned these two times." **11** And Israel their father said to them, "If so, then, do this: take from the choicest of the land in your vessels, and take down to the man a gift: a little balm and a little honey, gum and myrrh, pistachio nuts and almonds. **12** And take double silver in your hand; and the silver that was returned in the mouth of your bags you will take back in your hand; perhaps it ***was*** a mistake. **13** And take your brother, and arise, go back to the man. **14** And may God Almighty give you compassion before the man, and he will release to you your other brother and Benjamin (Binyamin). And I, as I am bereaved, I am bereaved."

The Brothers Return with Benjamin

15 And the men took this gift, and they took double silver in their hand, and Benjamin; and they arose and went down ***to*** Egypt, and they stood before Joseph (Yosef). **16** And Joseph saw Benjamin with them, and he said to the one who ***was*** over his house, "Bring the men into the house, and slaughter a slaughter and prepare ***it***; for the men will eat with me at noon." **17** And the man did as Joseph said, and the man brought the men into the house of Joseph. **18** And the men

42:35 Gen 43:21; Gen 42:27,28
42:36 Rom 8:28; Gen 43:14; Gen 37:20-35
42:37 Gen 46:9; Gen 43:9; Gen 44:32-34
42:38 Gen 37:35; Gen 37:33,35; Gen 42:4
43:1 Gen 18:13; Gen 41:54-57; Gen 42:5
43:2 Acts 7:12; Gen 43:4,20; Gen 42:1,2
43:3 Acts 20:38; Gen 44:23; Gen 43:5
43:5 Gen 42:38; Gen 44:26; Exod 20:12
43:7 Gen 43:3
43:8 Gen 42:2; Gen 42:38; Gen 44:26
43:9 Heb 7:22; Gen 42:37; Gen 44:32,33
43:10 Gen 19:16
43:11 Gen 37:25; Jer 8:22; Prov 18:16
43:12 Gen 42:25,35; Rom 12:17; Rom 13:8
43:13 Gen 42:38
43:14 Rev 1:8; Esth 4:16; Gen 17:1
43:16 Gen 44:1; Gen 43:19; Gen 15:2
43:18 Gen 42:21,28,35; Judg 13:22; Job 15:21

42:36 *Upon me all of them have been* Did Jacob suspect his sons in Joseph's loss? The text does not say, but his words come close. He saw only loss, yet every one of these things was working for him: Joseph alive, Simeon to be returned, Benjamin safe, the grain a gift. All things work together for good to those who love God (Rom 8:28). You may not see the whole story yet.
42:37 *My two sons you may put to death if I do not bring him to you* Sincere but senseless. Reuben had lost his standing through sin (35:22), and his father did not trust him.
42:38 *he alone is left* Words that must have hurt the other sons. Jacob spoke as if Benjamin were his only son. To "bring down my gray hair in sorrow to Sheol" meant it would send him to the grave.
43:1 *the famine was heavy in the land* Jacob could refuse to send Benjamin, but he could not refuse to eat. God sometimes lets pressure build until we face what we have avoided.
43:2 *buy a little food for us* "A little" shows his denial. He wanted an ordinary shopping trip and to avoid the real issue.
43:3 *Judah said to him* From here on Judah leads. The man who suggested selling Joseph (37:26-27) and who confessed "She is more righteous than I" (38:26) had begun to change. He does not argue with his father's grief. He tells the truth.
43:6 *Israel said* The covenant name God gave him (32:28).
43:7 *Could we really know that he would say, Bring your brother down* Men who once covered sin with a bloody robe (37:31-33) are now honest even when it costs them.
43:9 *I, I will be surety for him* A guarantee backed by his own life. Reuben offered his sons (42:37). Judah offered himself. He once sold his brother for silver, and now he puts himself on the line for his brother. Judah is the ancestor of David and Jesus (Matt 1:2-3; Heb 7:14), and many see a faint picture of Christ, the guarantee of a better covenant (Heb 7:22), who took our blame on Himself.
43:10 *if we had not delayed* Jacob's fear had cost them time, and perhaps Simeon's comfort in prison.
43:11 *a little balm and a little honey, gum and myrrh, pistachio nuts and almonds* Balm was a healing resin and myrrh a sweet-smelling one used in perfume, luxury goods of Canaan. Ishmaelite traders carried balm and myrrh to Egypt when they bought Joseph (37:25).
43:12 *perhaps it was a mistake* Double silver, to repay and to buy. Jacob wanted his sons to be honest.
43:14 *may God Almighty give you compassion before the man* El Shaddai, the name of the promises (17:1; 35:11). Jacob turned back to the God of the covenant.
43:14 *as I am bereaved, I am bereaved* A surrender. Jacob had held Benjamin with all his strength. Now he opened his hands and placed him in God's care. The hardest step of faith is often letting go of what we fear losing most.
43:16 *the one who was over his house* A steward ran a household, its servants and business. Joseph had once been Potiphar's steward (39:4). Now he had one of his own.
43:18 *to take us for slaves, and our donkeys* Being brought into the governor's house felt like a trap. Guilt colors everything. They had sold their brother as a slave and now feared becoming slaves.

were afraid, because they were brought ***into*** the house of Joseph; and they said, "On account of the silver that returned in our bags at the first, we are being brought in, to roll himself upon us and to fall upon us, and to take us for slaves, and our donkeys." **19** And they approached the man who ***was*** over the house of Joseph, and they spoke to him ***at*** the entrance of the house. **20** And they said, "Please, my lord, we surely came down at the first to buy food. **21** And it happened, when we came to the lodging place, and we opened our bags, and look, each man's silver ***was*** in the mouth of his bag, our silver in its weight; and we have brought it back in our hand. **22** And other silver we have brought down in our hand to buy food. We do not know who put our silver in our bags." **23** And he said, "Peace ***be*** to you; do not fear. Your God and the God of your father gave you treasure in your bags; your silver came to me." And he brought Simeon (Shimon) out to them. **24** And the man brought the men into the house of Joseph, and he gave water, and they washed their feet; and he gave fodder to their donkeys. **25** And they prepared the gift until Joseph came at noon, for they had heard that there they would eat bread.

Joseph Eats with His Brothers

26 And Joseph came into the house, and they brought to him the gift which ***was*** in their hand into the house, and they bowed down to him to the ground. **27** And he asked them about ***their*** welfare, and he said, "***Is*** your father well, the old man of whom you spoke? ***Is*** he still alive?" **28** And they said, "Your servant, our father, ***is*** well; he ***is*** still alive." And they bowed low, and they bowed down. **29** And he lifted up his eyes and saw Benjamin his brother, the son of his mother, and he said, "***Is*** this your youngest brother of whom you spoke to me?" And he said, "May God be gracious to you, my son." **30** And Joseph hurried, for his compassion grew warm toward his brother, and he sought to weep; and he went into the inner room, and he wept there. **31** And he washed his face and came out, and he restrained himself, and he said, "Set ***out*** bread." **32** And they set for him by himself, and for them by themselves, and for the Egyptians (Mitsrim) who ate with him by themselves; for the Egyptians were not able to eat bread with the Hebrews, for it ***is*** an abomination to Egypt. **33** And they sat before him, the firstborn according to his birthright and the youngest according to his youth; and the men looked at one another in astonishment, each to his neighbor. **34** And he carried portions from before him to them, and the portion of Benjamin was greater than the portions of all of them, five times. And they drank, and they became drunk with him.

GENESIS 44

The Silver Cup

1 And he commanded the one who ***was*** over his house, saying, "Fill the bags of the men ***with*** food, as much as they are able to carry, and put each man's silver in the mouth of his bag. **2** And my cup, the cup of silver, you will put in the mouth of the bag of the youngest, and the silver of his grain." And he did according to the word of Joseph (Yosef) which he had spoken. **3** The morning became light, and the men were sent away, they and their donkeys. **4** They had gone out of the city; they had not gone far, and Joseph said to the one who ***was*** over his house, "Arise, pursue after the men; and you will overtake them, and you will say to them, 'Why have you repaid evil for good? **5** ***Is*** not this ***the one*** from which my lord drinks, and he surely divines by it? You have done evil ***in*** what you have done.'" **6** And he overtook them, and he spoke these words to them. **7** And they said to him, "Why does my lord speak according to these words? Far be it from your servants to do according to this thing. **8** Look, the

43:20 Gen 42:3,10,27,35; Gen 43:3,7
43:21 Luke 2:7; Gen 43:12; Gen 42:27-35
43:23 Luke 10:5; Luke 24:36; John 14:27
43:24 John 13:12; Gen 18:4; Gen 24:32
43:25 Gen 43:11,16
43:26 Gen 37:7-10,19,20; Gen 42:6; Gen 43:28
43:27 Gen 42:11,13; Gen 37:14; Gen 41:16
43:28 Gen 37:7,9,10; Gen 43:26; Exod 18:7
43:29 Num 6:25; Gen 30:22-24; Gen 35:17,18
43:30 John 11:35; Gen 42:24; 1 Kgs 3:26
43:31 Gen 45:1; Isa 42:14; Jer 31:16
43:32 Gen 46:34; Exod 8:26; Gen 43:16
43:34 Gen 45:22; 2 Sam 11:8; 1 Sam 1:5
44:1 Gen 42:25; Gen 43:16,19; Gen 24:2
44:2 Gen 42:15,16,20; Gen 43:32; Deut 8:2,16
44:4 Ps 35:12; John 10:32; Deut 2:16
44:5 Gen 30:27; Gen 44:15; Lev 19:26
44:7 Gen 34:25-31; Gen 35:22; Gen 37:18-32
44:8 Rom 13:9; Gen 42:21,27,35; Gen 43:12,21,22

43:23 *Peace be to you; do not fear* The steward knew their God, perhaps taught by Joseph, and gave Him the credit. Then Simeon walked out free. They came expecting punishment and received peace, a gift and a brother back, a small picture of grace.
43:24 *he gave water, and they washed their feet* People wore sandals on dusty roads, and foot-washing was hospitality. They were honored guests, not prisoners.
43:26 *they bowed down to him to the ground* Now all eleven brothers bow, as in the dream of the stars (37:9).
43:27 *Is he still alive* Twenty-two years had passed. The question nearest Joseph's heart.
43:28 *Your servant, our father, is well* Jacob is called Joseph's servant, another fulfillment of the dream (37:10), though they had no idea.
43:29 *Benjamin his brother, the son of his mother* His only full brother, a small child when Joseph was taken, now a grown man.
43:30 *he went into the inner room, and he wept there* A powerful ruler with a tender heart. Strength and tears are not opposites. Jesus wept at Lazarus' tomb (John 11:35).
43:32 *for it is an abomination to Egypt* Egyptians thought it shameful to eat with foreigners, especially shepherds (46:34). That separation would later let Israel live in Goshen as a distinct people, not swallowed up by Egypt.
43:33 *the firstborn according to his birthright and the youngest according to his youth* Eleven brothers seated in exact birth order. The odds by chance are tiny. Little by little they were shown that this man knew more about them than they could explain.
43:34 *the portion of Benjamin was greater than the portions of all of them, five times* A test. They hated Joseph for their father's favoritism (37:4). Would they resent Benjamin? They did not. They relaxed and ate. But one more test, the hardest, was coming.
44:2 *my cup, the cup of silver, you will put in the mouth of the bag of the youngest* Joseph set up a scene much like the day he was sold. Again a favored son of Rachel would be in danger, and again the brothers could walk away and save themselves. What would they do this time?
44:4 *Why have you repaid evil for good* They had hardly left the city, happy, with Simeon and Benjamin safe.
44:5 *he surely divines by it* Divination tries to learn secrets or the future through signs. Babylonian texts describe pouring oil on water in a cup and reading the shapes. God's Law forbids it (Deut 18:10-12). Did Joseph practice it? I don't believe so. Everywhere else he insists understanding comes from God (40:8; 41:16). This was his disguise, the way an Egyptian official would talk, meant to make the brothers think he could uncover anything (44:15). Some commentators think he may have adopted the custom.

silver which we found in the mouth of our bags we brought back to you from the land of Canaan (Kena'an); and how would we steal silver or gold from the house of your lord? **9** With whomever of your servants it is found, then he will die; and also we will be slaves to my lord." **10** And he said, "Now also according to your words, so it ***is***: ***the one*** with whom it is found will be a slave to me, and you will be innocent." **11** And they hurried, and they brought down each man his bag to the ground, and they opened each man his bag. **12** And he searched; with the oldest he began, and with the youngest he finished; and the cup was found in the bag of Benjamin (Binyamin). **13** And they tore their clothes, and each man loaded his donkey, and they went back to the city. **14** And Judah (Yehuda) and his brothers came into the house of Joseph, and he ***was*** still there; and they fell before him to the ground. **15** And Joseph said to them, "What ***is*** this deed which you have done? Did you not know that a man who ***is*** like me surely divines?" **16** And Judah said, "What will we say to my lord? What will we speak? And how will we justify ourselves? God has found the iniquity of your servants. Look, we ***are*** slaves to my lord, both we and ***he*** in whose hand the cup was found." **17** And he said, "Far be it from me to do this. The man in whose hand the cup was found, he will be a slave to me; and you, go up in peace to your father."

Judah Offers Himself for Benjamin

18 And Judah drew near to him, and he said, "Please, my lord, let your servant speak, please, a word in the ears of my lord, and let not your anger burn against your servant, for you ***are*** like Pharaoh. **19** My lord asked his servants, saying, 'Do you have a father or a brother?' **20** And we said to my lord, 'We have an old father, and a young child of ***his*** old age; and his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother, and his father loves him.' **21** And you said to your servants, 'Bring him down to me, and let me set my eye on him.' **22** And we said to my lord, 'The young man is not able to leave his father; and ***if*** he leaves his father, then he will die.' **23** And you said to your servants, 'If your youngest brother does not come down with you, you will not again see my face.' **24** And it happened, when we went up to your servant my father, and we told him the words of my lord. **25** And our father said, 'Go back; buy a little food for us.' **26** And we said, 'We are not able to go down. If our youngest brother is with us, then we will go down; for we will not be able to see the face of the man, and our youngest brother is not with us.' **27** And your servant my father said to us, 'You know that my wife bore two ***sons*** to me. **28** And the one went out from me, and I said, "Surely he has been torn, torn to pieces," and I have not seen him until now. **29** And ***if*** you take also this ***one*** from my presence, and harm happens to him, then you will bring down my gray hair in calamity to Sheol.' **30** And now, when I come to your servant my father, and the young man is not with us, and his soul ***is*** bound up with his soul, **31** and it will happen, when he sees that the young man is not, then he will die; and your servants will bring down the gray hair of your servant our father in sorrow to Sheol. **32** For your servant became surety for the young man to my father, saying, 'If I do not bring him to you, then I will have sinned against my father all the days.' **33** And now, please let your servant remain instead of the young man ***as*** a slave to my lord, and let the young man go up with his brothers. **34** For

44:9 Gen 31:32; Job 31:38-40; Ps 7:3-5
44:10 Gen 44:17,33; Exod 22:3; Matt 18:24,25
44:12 Gen 43:33; Gen 44:26-32; Gen 42:36-38
44:13 Num 14:6; Gen 37:29-34; 2 Sam 1:2,11
44:14 Gen 43:16,25; Gen 37:7-9; Gen 50:18
44:15 Rom 11:2; Gen 44:4,5; Gen 3:13
44:16 Mark 14:40; Gen 44:9; Dan 9:7
44:17 Gen 18:25; Gen 42:18; 2 Sam 23:3
44:18 Acts 7:10; Exod 32:22; Gen 18:30,32
44:19 Gen 43:7,29; Gen 42:7-10
44:20 Gen 37:3,19; Gen 49:8; Gen 35:18
44:21 Gen 42:15,20; Gen 43:29; Jer 24:6
44:22 Gen 44:30; Gen 42:38
44:23 Gen 43:3,5; Gen 42:15-20
44:24 Gen 42:29-34
44:25 Gen 43:2,5
44:26 Gen 43:4,5; Luke 11:7
44:27 Gen 46:19; Gen 29:18-21,28; Gen 30:22-25
44:28 Gen 37:33; Gen 37:13,14; Gen 42:36,38
44:29 Gen 42:38; Gen 42:36,38; Gen 44:31
44:30 1 Sam 18:1; Gen 44:17,31,34; 1 Sam 25:29
44:31 Gen 44:29; Gen 37:35; 1 Sam 4:17,18
44:32 Gen 43:8,9,16
44:33 1 John 3:16; Exod 32:32; Rom 5:7-10
44:34 Esth 8:6; 1 Sam 2:33,34; 2 Chr 34:28

44:9 *With whomever of your servants it is found, then he will die* A rash vow, like Jacob's to Laban (31:32).
44:10 *the one with whom it is found will be a slave to me, and you will be innocent* The steward softened the terms, and that was the test. The others were free to go.
44:12 *with the oldest he began, and with the youngest he finished* Every sack clean, the tension growing, then the last one.
44:13 *they tore their clothes, and each man loaded his donkey, and they went back to the city* Jacob tore his clothes over Joseph's robe (37:34). Now the brothers tore theirs over Benjamin. And every one went back. Twenty-two years before they sold a brother and went home. This time they stood with one.
44:14 *Judah and his brothers came into the house of Joseph* Judah is named first. He has become their leader.
44:16 *God has found the iniquity of your servants* Iniquity is guilt, crooked wrongdoing. Judah knew they had not stolen the cup, but he believed God was dealing with their real sin against Joseph. "Know your sin, that it will find you" (Num 32:23). He made no excuses, did not blame Benjamin, and offered them all as slaves.
44:17 *you, go up in peace to your father* The heart of the test. The road home was open. All they had to do was leave Benjamin, the same choice they faced at the pit in Dothan.
44:18 *for you are like Pharaoh* One word from this man could end Judah's life, yet he spoke. Real courage is often quiet and humble. He did not demand or threaten. He pleaded.
44:20 *his father loves him* Said plainly, without bitterness. Such favoritism once filled the brothers with hatred. Now Judah simply accepted it.
44:27 *You know that my wife bore two sons to me* My wife meant Rachel. One sentence shows how Jacob always saw things, and how Leah's sons were not counted in his heart the same way.
44:28 *Surely he has been torn, torn to pieces* Judah repeats the lie they let Jacob believe. Joseph was hearing for the first time how his father grieved for him.
44:30 *his soul is bound up with his soul* Losing Benjamin would kill Jacob.
44:32 *your servant became surety for the young man to my father* Judah meant to keep his word (43:9).
44:33 *please let your servant remain instead of the young man as a slave to my lord* The turning point of the Joseph story. The man who sold his brother offered himself in his brother's place, giving up freedom, family and home. Many see a picture of Christ, the Lion of the tribe of Judah (Rev 5:5), who took the place of the guilty so they could go free. Judah offered to be a slave. Jesus gave His life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:45).
44:34 *how will I go up to my father, and the young man is not with me* Twenty-two years before they watched their father weep over Joseph's robe and said nothing. Now Judah would rather be a slave than cause that grief again.

how will I go up to my father, and the young man is not with me? Lest I see the calamity that will find my father."

GENESIS 45

Joseph Makes Himself Known

1 And Joseph (Yosef) was not able to restrain himself before all those standing by him, and he called out, "Make every man go out from me!" And no man stood with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers. **2** And he gave his voice in weeping, and Egypt (Mitsrayim) heard, and the house of Pharaoh heard. **3** And Joseph said to his brothers, "I ***am*** Joseph. ***Is*** my father still alive?" And his brothers were not able to answer him, for they were terrified before him. **4** And Joseph said to his brothers, "Draw near to me, please." And they drew near. And he said, "I ***am*** Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. **5** And now, do not be grieved, and let it not burn in your eyes that you sold me here; because for preservation of life God sent me before you. **6** For these two years the famine ***has been*** in the midst of the land, and ***there are*** still five years in which there is neither plowing nor harvest. **7** And God sent me before you to set for you a remnant on the earth, and to keep you alive by a great deliverance. **8** And now, ***it was*** not you ***who*** sent me here, but God; and He has appointed me as a father to Pharaoh, and as lord of all his house, and ruler over all the land of Egypt. **9** Hurry and go up to my father, and you will say to him, 'Thus says your son Joseph: "God has appointed me lord of all Egypt. Come down to me; do not delay. **10** And you will dwell in the land of Goshen, and you will be near to me, you and your sons and the sons of your sons, and your flock and your herd and all that you have. **11** And I will provide for you there, for ***there are*** still five years of famine, lest you become impoverished, you and your household and all that you have."' **12** And look, your eyes are seeing, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin (Binyamin), that ***it is*** my mouth that is speaking to you. **13** And you will tell my father all my glory in Egypt and all that you have seen; and you will hurry, and you will bring my father down here." **14** And he fell on the neck of Benjamin his brother, and he wept; and Benjamin wept on his neck. **15** And he kissed all his brothers, and he wept over them; and after that his brothers spoke with him.

Pharaoh Invites Jacob to Egypt

16 And the report was heard ***in*** the house of Pharaoh, saying, "The brothers of Joseph have come." And it was good in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of his servants. **17** And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Say to your brothers, 'Do this: load your animals and go, come into the land of Canaan (Kena'an), **18** and take your father and your households, and come to me; and let me give you the good of the land of Egypt, and eat the fat of the land.' **19** And you, you are commanded: 'Do this: take for yourselves from the land of Egypt carts for your little ones and for your wives, and you will carry your father, and you will come. **20** And let your eye not pity your goods, for the good of all the land of Egypt, it ***is*** yours.'" **21** And the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) did so; and Joseph gave them carts at the command of Pharaoh, and he gave them provisions for

45:1 Acts 7:13; Gen 43:30,31; Isa 42:14
45:2 Acts 7:13; Num 14:1; Ruth 1:9
45:3 Acts 7:13; Acts 9:5; Job 4:5
45:4 Acts 7:9; Acts 7:13; Gen 37:28
45:5 Gen 50:20; Gen 45:7,8; Job 1:21
45:6 Exod 34:21; Deut 21:4; 1 Sam 8:12
45:7 Judg 15:18; 1 Chr 11:14; Ps 18:50
45:8 Acts 7:10; Acts 7:13; Judg 17:10
45:9 Acts 7:14; Acts 7:10; Acts 7:13
45:10 Exod 8:22; Exod 9:26; John 14:2,3
45:11 Gen 47:6,12; Matt 15:5,6; Mark 7:9-12
45:12 John 20:27; Gen 42:23; Luke 24:39
45:13 Acts 7:14; John 17:24; 1 Pet 1:10-12
45:14 Gen 29:11; Gen 33:4; Gen 46:29
45:15 Luke 15:20; Gen 45:2; Gen 29:11,13
45:16 Acts 7:13; Gen 16:6; Gen 20:15
45:17 Acts 7:13; Gen 42:25,26; Gen 44:1,2
45:18 Gen 27:28; Gen 47:6; Num 18:12,29
45:19 Gen 46:5; Gen 45:27; Isa 49:1,23
45:20 Matt 24:17; Deut 7:16; Deut 19:13,21
45:21 Gen 45:19,27; Gen 46:5; Num 7:3-9

45:1 *Make every man go out from me* Judah's words broke through two chapters of restraint. Joseph wanted this private. The Egyptians did not need to hear what the brothers had done. He protected their shame even as he revealed himself. Love covers a multitude of sins (1 Pet 4:8).

45:2 *he gave his voice in weeping, and Egypt heard* Not polite tears. Twenty-two years of sorrow poured out.

45:3 *I am Joseph. Is my father still alive* In Hebrew now, with no interpreter. Judah had just said his father lived, but Joseph asked anyway, the cry of a son who had longed for his father.

45:3 *they were terrified before him* The brother they sold stood before them holding their lives in his hands. Every wrong came rushing back.

45:4 *Draw near to me, please* He drew them near. Then he named the sin plainly: "whom you sold into Egypt." Forgiveness does not say the wrong was not wrong. It faces it honestly and chooses not to hold it against the one who did it.

45:5 *for preservation of life God sent me before you* The heart of the chapter. "You sold me": their choice and sin. "God sent me": God's plan. Both are true. God was not the author of their evil, but He ruled over it to save many lives. Joseph saw that the wrong was not the final word. God was. One caution: forgiving is not the same as trusting again. Joseph revealed himself only after he saw over time that his brothers had changed. If someone has abused you, you can release them to God and still keep yourself safe. Forgiveness is yours to give. Trust must be earned.

45:6 *neither plowing nor harvest* Five more years of famine. Without help, this family would starve.

45:7 *to set for you a remnant on the earth* A remnant is a small part that survives when the rest is lost. God promised to bless the world through this family (12:3; 28:14). If they died, the promise died. God sent Joseph ahead to keep alive the line that would lead to Jesus.

45:8 *it was not you who sent me here, but God* The third time (45:5, 7, 8). Father to Pharaoh was a title for a chief adviser. They tried to make Joseph a slave, and God made him a ruler. This is providence, God's care and control over all things, working through ordinary events and even wicked choices. Jesus was handed over by God's plan, yet His killers were guilty (Acts 2:23).

45:10 *the land of Goshen* A fertile region in the eastern Nile Delta, good for flocks, near Joseph and the road to Canaan. Its exact boundaries are not known.

45:11 *I will provide for you there* The brother they rejected became the one who kept them alive.

45:13 *you will tell my father all my glory in Egypt* Not bragging. A father who grieved twenty-two years needed every detail that his son was safe and able to care for him.

45:15 *after that his brothers spoke with him* He kissed every one of them, the ones who threw him in the pit and sold him. They once "were not able to speak to him in peace" (37:4). Forgiveness opened a door closed for twenty-two years. Where it is safe, ask God whether it is time to open a door in your life.

45:18 *eat the fat of the land* The land's richest food. Pharaoh went beyond what Joseph offered.

45:20 *let your eye not pity your goods* Don't worry about what you leave behind. What we give up to follow God is small next to what He has prepared.

the way. **22** To all of them he gave, to each man, changes of clothes; and to Benjamin he gave three hundred ***pieces*** of silver and five changes of clothes. **23** And to his father he sent like this: ten donkeys carrying some of the good things of Egypt, and ten female donkeys carrying grain and bread and sustenance for his father for the way. **24** And he sent his brothers away, and they went; and he said to them, "Do not be stirred up on the way." **25** And they went up from Egypt, and they came ***to*** the land of Canaan, to Jacob (Ya'aqov) their father. **26** And they told him, saying, "Joseph ***is*** still alive, and indeed he ***is*** ruling over all the land of Egypt." And his heart grew numb, for he did not believe them. **27** And they spoke to him all the words of Joseph which he had spoken to them, and he saw the carts which Joseph had sent to carry him; and the spirit of Jacob their father revived. **28** And Israel said, "Enough! Joseph my son ***is*** still alive. Let me go and see him before I die."

GENESIS 46

Jacob Goes to Egypt

1 And Israel (Yisra'el) set out, and all that he had, and he came to Beersheba (Be'er-Sheva), and he sacrificed sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac (Yitschaq). **2** And God said to Israel in the visions of the night, and He said, "Jacob (Ya'aqov), Jacob." And he said, "Here I am." **3** And He said, "I ***am*** God, the God of your father. Do not be afraid of going down to Egypt (Mitsrayim), for into a great nation I will make you there. **4** I, I will go down with you to Egypt, and I, I will also surely bring you up; and Joseph (Yosef) will put his hand on your eyes." **5** And Jacob arose from Beersheba; and the sons of Israel carried Jacob their father and their little ones and their wives in the carts which Pharaoh had sent to carry him. **6** And they took their livestock and their possessions which they had acquired in the land of Canaan (Kena'an), and they came to Egypt, Jacob and all his seed with him: **7** his sons and the sons of his sons with him, his daughters and the daughters of his sons; and all his seed he brought with him to Egypt.

The Family That Went to Egypt

8 And these ***are*** the names of the sons of Israel who came to Egypt, Jacob and his sons: the firstborn of Jacob, Reuben (Reuven). **9** And the sons of Reuben: Hanoch (Chanokh) and Pallu (Palu) and Hezron (Chetsron) and Carmi (Karmi). **10** And the sons of Simeon (Shimon): Jemuel (Yemu'el) and Jamin (Yamin) and Ohad and Jachin (Yakhin) and Zohar (Tsochar) and Shaul, the son of the Canaanite woman. **11** And the sons of Levi: Gershon, Kohath (Qehat), and Merari. **12** And the sons of Judah (Yehuda): Er and Onan and Shelah (Shela) and Perez (Perets) and Zerah (Zerach); and Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan. And the sons of Perez were Hezron and Hamul (Chamul). **13** And the sons of Issachar (Yisashkhar): Tola and Puvah (Puva) and Yob (Yov) and Shimron. **14** And the sons of Zebulun (Zevulun): Sered and Elon and Jahleel (Yachle'el). **15** These ***are*** the sons of Leah (Le'a), whom she bore to Jacob in Paddan-aram
(Padan-Aram), and Dinah (Dina) his daughter; all the souls of his sons and his daughters ***were*** thirty-three. **16** And the sons of Gad: Ziphion (Tsifyon) and Haggi (Chagi), Shuni and Ezbon (Etsbon), Eri and Arodi and Areli. **17** And the sons of Asher: Imnah (Yimna) and Ishvah (Yishva) and Ishvi (Yishvi) and

45:22 Gen 43:34; 2 Kgs 5:5,22,23; Judg 14:12,19
45:23 Gen 24:10; Gen 43:11; Exod 16:3
45:24 Gen 42:21,22; 1 Thess 5:13; Gen 37:22
45:26 Acts 12:9; Gen 37:35; Gen 44:28
45:27 Judg 15:19; 1 Sam 30:12; Ps 85:6
45:28 Gen 46:30; Luke 2:28-30; John 16:21,22
46:1 Gen 28:10; Gen 21:33; Gen 28:13
46:2 Gen 15:1,13; Job 33:14,15; Gen 22:11
46:3 Acts 7:17; Acts 7:15; Gen 12:2
46:4 Acts 7:15; Gen 28:15; Gen 48:21
46:5 Acts 7:15; Gen 45:19,21,27; Gen 31:17,18
46:6 Acts 7:15; Josh 24:4; Ps 105:23
46:7 Acts 7:15
46:8 Matt 1:2; Exod 1:1-5; 1 Chr 2:1-55
46:10 Exod 6:15; Gen 29:33; Gen 34:25,30
46:11 Gen 29:34; Gen 49:5-7; Exod 6:16
46:12 Matt 1:3; Luke 3:33; Gen 29:35
46:13 Gen 30:14-18; Gen 35:23; Gen 49:14,15
46:14 Gen 30:19,20; Gen 49:13; Num 1:9,30,31
46:15 Matt 1:2; Gen 29:32-35; Gen 30:17-21
46:16 Num 26:15-17; Gen 30:11; Gen 35:26
46:17 Gen 30:13; Gen 35:26; Gen 49:20

45:22 *to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver and five changes of clothes* They sold Joseph for twenty pieces (37:28). Garments, once the cause of jealousy (37:3-4), are now gifts.
45:24 *Do not be stirred up on the way* The word can mean quarrel or be troubled and afraid. Joseph knew his brothers might start blaming each other on the road. Once forgiven, they needed to live at peace.
45:26 *his heart grew numb, for he did not believe them* The news was too good to be true. He had grieved too long. Telling him likely meant confessing what they had done.
45:27 *the spirit of Jacob their father revived* The carts were the proof. The man who said he would go down to Sheol in sorrow came back to life.
45:28 *Joseph my son is still alive* Moses calls him Israel again (43:6), and faith rises. There is even better news: the One rejected and handed over to death is alive, and He reigns. When we believe it, our spirits come alive too.
46:1 *he came to Beersheba, and he sacrificed sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac* The last major stop before the desert road to Egypt, where Abraham called on the LORD (21:33) and God appeared to Isaac (26:23-25). Before leaving the promised land, Jacob worshiped. Before a big move or decision, stop and seek God.
46:2 *Jacob, Jacob* God had not spoken to Jacob in Genesis since chapter 35. A name said twice is a tender, urgent call, as with Abraham (22:11) and Moses (Exod 3:4).
46:3 *Do not be afraid of going down to Egypt* Abraham got into trouble there (12:10-20), Isaac was told not to go (26:2), and God foretold four hundred years of oppression (15:13). Leaving the land was serious. But in Canaan they were a family, and in Egypt they would grow into a nation.
46:4 *I, I will go down with you to Egypt, and I, I will also surely bring you up* God's presence is not tied to one place. Jacob would be buried in Canaan (50:13), his descendants would return in the exodus, and Joseph would close his eyes in death. Wherever God sends you, He goes with you (Matt 28:20).
46:6 *Jacob and all his seed with him* No one was left behind. At 130, Jacob left the land promised to his grandfather for a country of strange gods, because God had spoken and his son was waiting. Many scholars place this in the first half of the second millennium B.C., though the date is debated.
46:8 *these are the names of the sons of Israel who came to Egypt* Exodus 1:1 opens with almost the same words, tying the two books together. The list is arranged by Jacob's four wives.
46:10 *the son of the Canaanite woman* A reminder that some of Jacob's sons married local women.
46:11 *Gershon, Kohath, and Merari* The three families of the Levites. Moses and Aaron came from Kohath (Exod 6:16-20).
46:12 *the sons of Perez were Hezron and Hamul* Hezron is in the line that leads to David (Ruth 4:18-22) and to Jesus (Matt 1:3).
46:17 *Serah their sister* One of the few women named. Each name became a family, many of them clans within the tribes (Num 26). God knows His people by name.

Beriah (Beri'a), and Serah (Serach) their sister. And the sons of Beriah: Heber (Chever) and Malchiel (Malki'el). **18** These ***are*** the sons of Zilpah (Zilpa), whom Laban (Lavan) gave to Leah his daughter; and she bore these to Jacob, sixteen souls. **19** The sons of Rachel, the wife of Jacob: Joseph and Benjamin (Binyamin). **20** And to Joseph in the land of Egypt were born ***those*** whom Asenath (Asnat), the daughter of Potiphera (Poti-Fera), priest of On, bore to him: Manasseh (Menashe) and Ephraim (Efrayim). **21** And the sons of Benjamin: Bela and Becher (Bekher) and Ashbel, Gera and Naaman, Ehi (Echi) and Rosh, Muppim (Mupim) and Huppim (Chupim) and Ard. **22** These ***are*** the sons of Rachel who were born to Jacob; all the souls ***were*** fourteen. **23** And the sons of Dan: Hushim (Chushim). **24** And the sons of Naphtali (Naftali): Jahzeel (Yachtse'el) and Guni and Jezer (Yetser) and Shillem
(Shilem). **25** These ***are*** the sons of Bilhah (Bilha), whom Laban gave to Rachel his daughter; and she bore these to Jacob; all the souls ***were*** seven. **26** All the souls belonging to Jacob who came to Egypt, who came out of his thigh, besides the wives of the sons of Jacob, all the souls ***were*** sixty-six. **27** And the sons of Joseph who were born to him in Egypt ***were*** two souls. All the souls of the house of Jacob who came to Egypt ***were*** seventy.

Jacob Meets Joseph

28 And Judah he sent before him to Joseph, to show ***the way*** before him to Goshen; and they came to the land of Goshen. **29** And Joseph harnessed his chariot, and he went up to meet Israel his father to Goshen; and he appeared to him, and he fell on his neck, and he wept on his neck a long while. **30** And Israel said to Joseph, "Let me die this time, after I have seen your face, that you ***are*** still alive." **31** And Joseph said to his brothers and to the house of his father, "I will go up and tell Pharaoh, and I will say to him, 'My brothers and the house of my father, who ***were*** in the land of Canaan, have come to me. **32** And the men ***are*** shepherds of a flock, for they have been men of livestock; and their flock and their herd and all that they have, they have brought.' **33** And it will be, when Pharaoh calls you and says, 'What ***are*** your occupations?' **34** then you will say, 'Your servants have been men of livestock from our youth and until now, both we and our fathers,' so that you may dwell in the land of Goshen; for the abomination of Egypt ***is*** every shepherd of a flock."

GENESIS 47

Jacob Before Pharaoh

1 And Joseph (Yosef) came and told Pharaoh, and he said, "My father and my brothers, and their flock and their herd and all that they have, have come from the land of Canaan (Kena'an); and look, they ***are*** in the land of Goshen." **2** And from among his brothers he took five men, and he presented them before Pharaoh. **3** And Pharaoh said to his brothers, "What ***are*** your occupations?" And they said to Pharaoh, "Your servants ***are*** shepherds of a flock, both we and our fathers." **4** And they said to Pharaoh, "To sojourn in the land we have come, for there is no pasture for the flock that your servants have, for the famine ***is*** heavy in the land of Canaan. And now, please let your servants dwell in the land of Goshen." **5** And Pharaoh said to Joseph, saying, "Your father and your brothers have come to you. **6** The land of Egypt (Mitsrayim), it ***is*** before you; in the best of the land settle your father and your brothers; let them dwell in the land of Goshen. And if you know, and there are among them men of ability, then you will appoint them chiefs of livestock over what ***is*** mine." **7** And Joseph brought Jacob (Ya'aqov) his

46:18 Matt 1:2; Gen 29:24; Gen 30:9-13
46:19 Matt 1:2; Gen 44:27; Gen 29:18
46:20 Gen 41:50-52; Gen 41:45,50; Gen 48:4,5,13,14,20
46:21 1 Chr 7:6-12; Gen 49:27; Num 1:11,36,37
46:22 Matt 1:2
46:23 Gen 30:6; Gen 35:25; Gen 49:16,17
46:24 1 Chr 7:13; Gen 30:7,8; Gen 35:25
46:25 Matt 1:2; Gen 29:29; Gen 30:3-8
46:26 Matt 1:2; Acts 7:14; Exod 1:5
46:27 Acts 7:14; Matt 1:2; Exod 1:5
46:28 Gen 45:10; Gen 43:8; Gen 44:16-34
46:29 Luke 15:20; Gen 41:43; Gen 45:19,21
46:30 Luke 2:29,30; Gen 45:28
46:31 Acts 7:13; Gen 45:16-20; Gen 47:1-3
46:32 Gen 47:3; Gen 4:2; Gen 31:18
46:33 Acts 7:13; Gen 47:2-4; Jonah 1:8
46:34 Gen 43:32; Exod 8:26; Gen 46:32
47:1 Acts 7:13; Gen 46:31; Gen 45:10
47:2 Acts 7:13; 2 Cor 4:14; Col 1:28
47:3 Acts 7:13; Gen 46:33,34; Amos 7:14,15
47:4 Acts 7:11; Acts 7:13; Gen 15:13
47:5 Acts 7:13
47:6 Gen 47:11; Exod 18:21; Gen 47:4,11
47:7 Luke 2:34; Acts 7:13; Heb 7:7

46:21 *the sons of Benjamin* Called "the boy" in chapters 43 and 44, Benjamin was a grown man with ten sons.

46:27 *All the souls of the house of Jacob who came to Egypt were seventy* Sixty-six direct descendants traveled, and with Jacob, Joseph and his two sons the house numbered seventy. Stephen says seventy-five (Acts 7:14), most likely quoting the Greek Old Testament, the Septuagint, which counts more of Joseph's descendants. Both are honest ways to count the same family. About seventy nations were listed in chapter 10. Seventy went down, and about four hundred years later some six hundred thousand men came out (Exod 12:37).

46:28 *Judah he sent before him to Joseph* The brother who led the way in selling Joseph now leads the way to him. Jacob trusted him.

46:29 *he fell on his neck, and he wept on his neck a long while* The ruler of Egypt did not wait at the palace. He went out to meet his father. Twenty-two years melted away.

46:30 *Let me die this time* He had nothing left to wish for. God gave him seventeen more years with Joseph (47:28).

46:34 *for the abomination of Egypt is every shepherd of a flock* Genesis does not say why. Egyptian art sometimes shows herdsmen as rough and low-class, and Egyptians were wary of foreign herders. Pharaoh himself owned flocks (47:6). Joseph turned the prejudice into protection. Apart in Goshen, the family could grow into a nation without mixing with others as they had begun to in Canaan (38). God can use even the world's prejudice to protect His people.

47:2 *from among his brothers he took five men* Joseph chose five brothers to stand before the king. Moses does not tell us which ones. They answered just as Joseph had coached them (46:33-34).

47:4 *To sojourn in the land we have come* They came to live as foreigners for a time, as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had done. Even in Egypt this family knew it was not home. Their eyes were still on the land God promised, as those who "confessed that they are strangers and sojourners on the earth" (Heb 11:13).

47:6 *in the best of the land settle your father and your brothers* Pharaoh answered generously and even offered the capable brothers jobs over his own herds. God blessed this family through a pagan king's favor, keeping His word to Abraham, "I will bless those who bless you" (12:3).

47:7 *Jacob blessed Pharaoh* An old shepherd who came asking for food blessed the king of Egypt, a man his people thought was a god. "The lesser is blessed by the better" (Heb 7:7). In God's eyes the man who carried His covenant promise was the greater one, and a Gentile king received the blessing promised to all the families of the earth (12:3).

father and made him stand before Pharaoh; and Jacob blessed Pharaoh. **8** And Pharaoh said to Jacob, "How many ***are*** the days of the years of your life?" **9** And Jacob said to Pharaoh, "The days of the years of my sojournings ***are*** a hundred and thirty years; few and evil have been the days of the years of my life, and they have not reached the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their sojournings." **10** And Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and he went out from before Pharaoh. **11** And Joseph settled his father and his brothers, and he gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses (Ra'amses), as Pharaoh had commanded. **12** And Joseph provided for his father and his brothers and all the house of his father ***with*** bread, according to the mouth of the little ones.

Joseph and the Famine

13 And ***there was*** no bread in all the land, for the famine ***was*** very heavy; and the land of Egypt and the land of Canaan languished because of the famine. **14** And Joseph gathered up all the silver that was found in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan, for the grain which they were buying; and Joseph brought the silver into the house of Pharaoh. **15** And the silver was finished from the land of Egypt and from the land of Canaan, and all Egypt came to Joseph, saying, "Give us bread; and why should we die before you? For the silver has come to an end." **16** And Joseph said, "Give your livestock, and let me give ***bread*** to you for your livestock, if the silver has come to an end." **17** And they brought their livestock to Joseph, and Joseph gave them bread for the horses and for the livestock of the flock and for the livestock of the herd and for the donkeys; and he sustained them with bread for all their livestock in that year. **18** And that year was finished, and they came to him in the second year and said to him, "We will not hide from my lord that the silver is finished, and the livestock of the animals ***is*** my lord's; nothing is left before my lord except our bodies and our ground. **19** Why should we die before your eyes, both we and our ground? Buy us and our ground for bread, and we and our ground will be slaves to Pharaoh; and give seed, and we will live and not die, and the ground will not be desolate." **20** And Joseph bought all the ground of Egypt for Pharaoh, for Egypt sold each man his field, for the famine was severe upon them; and the land became Pharaoh's. **21** And the people, he moved them to the cities, from the end of the border of Egypt even to its end. **22** Only the ground of the priests he did not buy, for the priests ***had*** an allotment from Pharaoh, and they ate their allotment which Pharaoh gave them; therefore they did not sell their ground. **23** And Joseph said to the people, "Look, I have bought you today, and your ground, for Pharaoh. Look, ***here is*** seed for you, and you will sow the ground. **24** And it will be at the harvests that you will give a fifth to Pharaoh, and four parts will be yours, for seed of the field and for your food and for those who ***are*** in your households, and to eat for your little ones." **25** And they said, "You have kept us alive; may we find favor in the eyes of my lord, and we will be slaves to Pharaoh." **26** And Joseph set it as a statute until this day over the ground of Egypt: to Pharaoh ***belongs*** the fifth; only the ground of the priests by themselves did not become Pharaoh's.

Jacob's Request

27 And Israel (Yisra'el) dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the land of Goshen; and they acquired possessions in it, and they were fruitful and multiplied exceedingly. **28** And Jacob lived in the

47:8 Acts 7:13; Heb 7:7
47:9 Heb 11:9; Heb 11:13; Acts 7:13
47:10 Heb 7:7; Acts 7:13; Gen 47:7
47:11 Exod 1:11; Exod 12:37; Gen 47:6
47:12 Mark 7:12; Ruth 4:15; Exod 20:12
47:13 Acts 7:11; Gen 41:30,31; 1 Kgs 18:5
47:14 Acts 7:11; Gen 41:56; Luke 16:1,2,10-12
47:15 Matt 6:11; Acts 7:11; Gen 47:18,19,24
47:16 Dan 6:5-7; Prov 12:17; 1 Cor 10:32
47:17 Exod 9:3; 1 Kgs 10:28; Job 2:4
47:18 2 Kgs 6:26; Jer 38:9
47:19 2 Cor 9:10; Neh 5:2,3; Job 2:4
47:21 Gen 41:48
47:22 Ezra 7:24; Gen 14:18; Gen 41:45,50
47:23 2 Cor 9:10; Gen 41:27; Gen 45:6
47:24 2 Cor 9:10; Gen 41:34; Lev 27:32
47:25 Gen 33:15; Gen 6:19; Gen 41:45
47:26 Gen 47:22; Ezek 7:24
47:27 Acts 7:17; Gen 46:3; Exod 1:7,12
47:28 Gen 37:2; Gen 47:8; Ps 90:10,12

47:9 *few and evil have been the days of the years of my life* Abraham lived to 175 (25:7) and Isaac to 180 (35:28). Jacob felt his 130 years had been short and hard, and much of the trouble was his own doing: deceit, flight, Laban, the loss of Rachel, the grief over Joseph. He called his whole life his "sojournings," a pilgrimage. Yet God had been faithful through it all.
47:11 *in the land of Rameses* Another name for Goshen or part of it. Rameses is best known from the store city of Exodus 1:11, linked with the kings named Ramesses in the 1200s B.C. Those who date the exodus to the 1400s B.C. see a later scribe updating an old place name, as 14:14 uses Dan for Laish. Those who date it to the 1200s see the name of Moses' own day.
47:12 *according to the mouth of the little ones* Joseph made sure every household got enough, down to the smallest child. The dream had come true, and Joseph used his power to serve his family, not to lord it over them.
47:14 *Joseph brought the silver into the house of Pharaoh* The grain money all went to the king. Joseph was an honest manager and kept none of it for himself.
47:16 *Give your livestock* When the silver ran out, the people traded their animals for grain. In a famine they could not have fed the animals anyway. Horses appear here for the first time in Genesis. Joseph kept the people alive another year.
47:19 *Buy us and our ground for bread* The people made the offer themselves. They seem to have become tenant farmers working the king's land and paying him a share. That was probably closer to tenant farming than to the brutal slavery Israel would later suffer, though it still cost them their freedom and their land.
47:21 *he moved them to the cities* Perhaps to bring the people near the grain stores (41:48). Some ancient copies read instead that he made the people servants. Some readers find Joseph's policy harsh, since it made Pharaoh far more powerful and may have laid the groundwork for later oppression. Genesis tells what Joseph did without praising or blaming it. What is clear is that the people lived.
47:22 *Only the ground of the priests he did not buy* The priests lived on a regular allowance from Pharaoh, so they never had to sell.
47:24 *a fifth to Pharaoh* The same twenty percent Joseph collected in the years of plenty (41:34). For ancient times that was likely a moderate share. The old Babylonian laws of Hammurabi, for example, speak of fields rented out for a half or a third of the harvest.
47:25 *You have kept us alive* The people did not see Joseph as a tyrant. They saw the man who saved their lives. "Until this day" in the next verse means the rule of the fifth was still in force when Moses wrote.
47:27 *they were fruitful and multiplied exceedingly* A contrast: Egypt lost its land to Pharaoh, but Israel gained possessions. These words echo God's first blessing, "Be fruitful and multiply" (1:28), and His promise at Bethel (35:11). Exodus 1:7 picks them up again. In a foreign land and a famine, God was growing His people.
47:28 *seventeen years* Jacob cared for Joseph for the first seventeen years of Joseph's life (37:2). Now Joseph cared for him for the last seventeen years of his. God gave back to Jacob what he thought he had lost.

land of Egypt seventeen years; and the days of Jacob, the years of his life, were a hundred and forty-seven years. **29** And the days of Israel drew near to die, and he called his son Joseph, and he said to him, "Please, if I have found favor in your eyes, please put your hand under my thigh, and deal with me ***in*** steadfast love and faithfulness: please do not bury me in Egypt. **30** And I will lie down with my fathers, and you will carry me from Egypt and bury me in their grave." And he said, "I, I will do according to your word." **31** And he said, "Swear to me." And he swore to him. And Israel bowed down on the head of the bed.

GENESIS 48

Jacob Adopts Ephraim and Manasseh

1 And it happened after these things, and one said to Joseph (Yosef), "Look, your father ***is*** sick." And he took his two sons with him, Manasseh (Menashe) and Ephraim (Efrayim).
2 And one told Jacob (Ya'aqov), and said, "Look, your son Joseph is coming to you." And Israel (Yisra'el) strengthened himself and sat on the bed. **3** And Jacob said to Joseph, "God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan (Kena'an), and He blessed me, **4** and He said to me, 'Look, I am making you fruitful, and I will multiply you, and I will make you into an assembly of peoples, and I will give this land to your seed after you ***as*** an everlasting possession.' **5** And now, your two sons who were born to you in the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim) before I came to you to Egypt, they ***are*** mine; Ephraim and Manasseh, like Reuben (Reuven) and Simeon (Shimon), they will be mine. **6** And your offspring whom you have fathered after them will be yours; by the name of their brothers they will be called in their inheritance. **7** And I, when I came from Paddan (Padan), Rachel died beside me in the land of Canaan on the way, when ***there was*** still a stretch of land to go to Ephrath (Efrata); and I buried her there on the way of Ephrath, that ***is*** Bethlehem (Bet-Lechem)."

The Younger Before the Older

8 And Israel saw the sons of Joseph, and he said, "Who ***are*** these?" **9** And Joseph said to his father, "They ***are*** my sons, whom God has given me here." And he said, "Please bring them to me, and let me bless them." **10** And the eyes of Israel were heavy from old age; he was not able to see. And he brought them near to him, and he kissed them, and he embraced them. **11** And Israel said to Joseph, "To see your face I did not expect; and look, God has shown me also your seed." **12** And Joseph brought them out from beside his knees, and he bowed down on his face to the ground. **13** And Joseph took the two of them, Ephraim at his right, toward the left of Israel, and Manasseh at his left, toward the right of Israel, and he brought ***them*** near to him. **14** And Israel stretched out his right ***hand*** and put ***it*** on the head of Ephraim, and he ***was*** the younger, and his left ***hand*** on the head of Manasseh; he crossed his hands, for Manasseh ***was*** the firstborn. **15** And he blessed Joseph, and he said, "The God before whom my fathers Abraham (Avraham) and Isaac (Yitschaq) walked, the God who has shepherded me all my

47:29 Acts 7:15; Heb 11:22; Deut 31:14
47:30 Gen 49:29-32; Gen 23:19; Gen 25:9
47:31 Heb 11:21; 1 Kgs 1:47; Gen 24:3
48:1 John 11:3; Gen 41:50-52; Gen 46:20
48:2 Deut 3:28; 1 Sam 23:16; Neh 2:18
48:3 2 Cor 6:18; Heb 11:9; Rev 1:8
48:4 Gen 17:8,13; Gen 35:11; Gen 12:2
48:5 2 Cor 6:18; Rev 7:6; Heb 11:21
48:6 Heb 11:21; Josh 14:4
48:7 Matt 2:18; Luke 2:4; Heb 11:21
48:8 Heb 11:21
48:9 Heb 11:21; Heb 2:13; Gen 33:5
48:10 Heb 11:21; Gen 27:1; Gen 27:27
48:11 Eph 3:20; 1 Thess 2:17; Heb 11:21
48:12 Heb 11:21; Gen 42:6; Gen 18:2
48:13 Heb 11:21
48:14 Acts 3:25; Heb 11:21; Gen 41:51
48:15 Heb 11:21; Acts 3:25; Gen 17:1

47:29 *please do not bury me in Egypt* Jacob asked for the same solemn oath Abraham asked of his servant, the hand under the thigh (24:2). He wanted to lie with his fathers in Canaan, the land God promised his descendants forever (48:4). Egypt was a place to live for a while. Canaan was home. His burial would be a statement of faith in God's promise.
47:31 *Israel bowed down on the head of the bed* He "worshiped leaning on the top of his staff" (Heb 11:21). Hebrews follows the Greek translation, which reads the Hebrew word as staff instead of bed. The Hebrew letters are the same; only the vowels differ. Either way, an old man near death bowed to worship God.
48:1 *he took his two sons with him, Manasseh and Ephraim* The boys were born before the famine (41:50), so they were probably about twenty or a little older by now.
48:2 *Israel strengthened himself and sat on the bed* Watch the names in these chapters. Jacob is the man, weak and dying. Israel is the bearer of God's covenant, and in that role he still had something powerful to give. He gathered his strength to pass on the blessing well.
48:3 *God Almighty appeared to me at Luz* Jacob began with God, not with himself. Luz was the old name for Bethel, where God met him in the dream of the ladder (28:19) and again on his return (35:6-12).
48:4 *an everlasting possession* God gave the land as part of His unconditional covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (15:18-21; 17:8). Everlasting means just that. I believe the promise still stands and God still has a future for Israel (Rom 11:28-29).
48:5 *Ephraim and Manasseh, like Reuben and Simeon, they will be mine* Jacob adopted Joseph's two sons as his own, each to head a tribe. That gave Joseph the double share of the firstborn (Deut 21:17), which Reuben lost by sleeping with his father's concubine (35:22; 49:4). First Chronicles 5:1-2 says this plainly.
48:6 *by the name of their brothers they will be called in their inheritance* Any later sons of Joseph would be counted under Ephraim and Manasseh. That is why later tribal lists sometimes include Ephraim and Manasseh and leave out Levi, who received no land, or list Joseph in place of his sons.
48:7 *Rachel died beside me* Rachel was never far from Jacob's heart. She was Joseph's mother and died young. By adopting her grandsons, Jacob in a way gave her more sons; through Joseph she became the mother of three tribes. Bethlehem is a quiet name in Genesis, but David would be born there, and so would Jesus (Mic 5:2; Matt 2:1).
48:10 *the eyes of Israel were heavy from old age* Jacob once deceived his own blind father to steal the blessing (27:1-29). Now he was the blind father giving the blessing.
48:11 *God has shown me also your seed* Jacob thought he would never see Joseph again. God gave him back his son and his grandsons too. God often gives more than we dare to ask (Eph 3:20).
48:14 *he crossed his hands* Joseph placed Manasseh, the firstborn, at Jacob's right hand, the place of greater honor. Jacob crossed his hands on purpose. All through Genesis God chooses the younger: Abel over Cain, Isaac over Ishmael, Jacob over Esau, Judah and Joseph over Reuben, Perez over Zerah. His blessings come by grace, not by birth order, and He loves to lift up those the world passes over (1 Cor 1:27-29).
48:15 *the God who has shepherded me all my life until this day* Jacob described God three ways. He is the covenant God of Abraham and Isaac. He is a shepherd, and Jacob the shepherd knew what that meant: God had led, fed and protected him, even through his worst years. This is the first time the Bible calls God a shepherd, long before Psalm 23.

life until this day, **16** the angel who has redeemed me from all evil, may He bless the young men; and may my name be called on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and may they teem into a multitude in the midst of the earth." **17** And Joseph saw that his father was putting his right hand on the head of Ephraim, and it was displeasing in his eyes; and he grasped the hand of his father to remove it from the head of Ephraim to the head of Manasseh. **18** And Joseph said to his father, "Not so, my father, for this ***is*** the firstborn; put your right ***hand*** on his head." **19** And his father refused, and he said, "I know, my son, I know; he also will become a people, and he also will become great; and yet his younger brother will become greater than he, and his seed will become the fullness of the nations." **20** And he blessed them on that day, saying, "By you Israel will bless, saying, 'May God make you like Ephraim and like Manasseh.'" And he put Ephraim before Manasseh. **21** And Israel said to Joseph, "Look, I am dying; and God will be with you, and He will bring you back to the land of your fathers. **22** And I, I give to you one ridge above your brothers, which I took from the hand of the Amorites with my sword and with my bow."

GENESIS 49

Jacob Blesses His Sons

1 And Jacob (Ya'aqov) called to his sons, and he said, "Gather yourselves, and let me tell you what will happen to you at the end of the days. **2** Assemble yourselves and listen, sons of Jacob, and listen to Israel (Yisra'el) your father. **3** Reuben (Reuven), you ***are*** my firstborn, my strength and the beginning of my vigor, preeminence of dignity and preeminence of power. **4** Reckless as water, you will not have preeminence, for you went up ***onto*** the beds of your father; then you profaned ***it***: he went up ***onto*** my couch! **5** Simeon (Shimon) and Levi ***are*** brothers; weapons of violence ***are*** their swords. **6** Into their council let my soul not enter; with their assembly let my glory not be united; for in their anger they killed a man, and in their self-will they hamstrung an ox. **7** Cursed ***be*** their anger, for ***it is*** fierce, and their wrath, for it is harsh. I will divide them in Jacob, and I will scatter them in Israel. **8** Judah (Yehuda), you, your brothers will praise you; your hand ***will be*** on the neck of your enemies; the sons of your father will bow down to you. **9** Judah ***is*** a lion's cub; from the prey, my son, you have gone up. He bows down, he lies down

48:16 Acts 15:17; Heb 11:21; Acts 3:25
48:17 Acts 3:25; Heb 11:21; Gen 28:8
48:18 Acts 3:25; Heb 11:21; Gen 19:18
48:19 Acts 3:25; Heb 11:21; Deut 33:17
48:20 Heb 11:21; Acts 3:25; Gen 24:60
48:21 Heb 11:21; Gen 50:24; Gen 46:4
48:22 Josh 24:32; John 4:5; Gen 33:19
49:1 Acts 2:17; Acts 3:25; Num 24:14
49:2 Acts 3:25; Ps 34:11; Prov 1:8,9
49:3 Acts 3:25; Deut 21:17; Gen 29:32
49:4 Gen 35:22; 1 Chr 5:1; Deut 27:20
49:5 Rev 7:7; Gen 34:25-31; Gen 29:33,34
49:6 Ps 26:9; Gen 34:30; Ps 64:2
49:7 Acts 3:25; Josh 19:1-9; 1 Chr 4:24-31,39,40
49:8 Acts 3:25; 1 Chr 5:2; Heb 7:14
49:9 Rev 5:5; Acts 3:25; Rev 4:7

48:16 *the angel who has redeemed me from all evil* To redeem means to rescue or buy back. Jacob set this angel beside God as the one who blesses. Many believe this was the angel of the LORD (see 16:7), the One who wrestled with Jacob and whom Jacob said was God (32:24-30). The Hebrew verb "bless" is singular, as if God and the angel were one, though that point is debated. Ephraim later grew so great that the northern kingdom was sometimes called by its name (Hos 11:8).
48:17 *it was displeasing in his eyes* Joseph had his own idea of how the blessing should go. God had other plans. Our part is to trust God's choices, even when they surprise us.
48:19 *I know, my son, I know* A gentle answer. Jacob was blind in his eyes but not in his spirit. It came true. Ephraim outnumbered Manasseh in the first wilderness census (Num 1:32-35), though the numbers reversed by the second (Num 26:34, 37). Joshua came from Ephraim (Num 13:8), and Ephraim became the leading tribe of the north.
48:20 *May God make you like Ephraim and like Manasseh* Jewish fathers have blessed their sons with these words for generations, and many families still do on the Sabbath. Perhaps it is because the two were born in a foreign land and stayed faithful to their fathers' God, or because they were brothers, one placed above the other, who never became rivals.
48:21 *He will bring you back to the land of your fathers* Jacob was dying, but God was not. His hope rested on God's promise to bring His people home.
48:22 *one ridge above your brothers* The Hebrew word for ridge is shechem, also the name of the town where Jacob bought land (33:19) and where Joseph's bones would be buried (Josh 24:32). Genesis records no battle where Jacob took land "with my sword and with my bow," unless he means his sons' attack on Shechem (34:25-29), which he condemned. We are not told more.
49:1 *what will happen to you at the end of the days* The phrase can mean the future in general, and in the Old Testament it often points toward the last days and the Messiah. Jacob's words came true in stages, first in the history of the tribes and finally in Christ. I believe their full hope will be completed when Jesus returns to reign. The passage gives no timetable, and I don't try to build one from it.
49:2 *listen to Israel your father* Jacob speaks as a father and as the bearer of God's covenant. This is poetry, and it is prophecy.
49:4 *Reckless as water, you will not have preeminence* Water that boils over or floods is wild and unstable, and Reuben acted on impulse. He slept with Bilhah years before (35:22). Jacob said nothing then; now he spoke. The double portion went to Joseph (48:5; 1 Chr 5:1-2) and leadership to Judah. No judge, prophet or king ever came from Reuben. Sin we think is forgotten can shape our future, yet Reuben remained a tribe, named in Revelation 7:5.
49:5 *weapons of violence are their swords* Jacob was remembering Shechem, where Simeon and Levi killed all the men of the city to avenge Dinah (34:25-30).
49:6 *they hamstrung an ox* To hamstring an ox was to cut its leg tendons so it could not walk. It was senseless cruelty, and Jacob wanted no part in their plans.
49:7 *I will divide them in Jacob, and I will scatter them in Israel* Jacob cursed their anger, not his sons. Both tribes were scattered, but differently. Simeon's land lay inside Judah's (Josh 19:1-9), and the tribe faded. Levi received only cities spread through Israel (Josh 21). But when Israel worshiped the golden calf, the Levites stood with the LORD (Exod 32:26-29) and became the priestly tribe, putting teachers of God's Law in every part of the land. By grace, the same judgment became a blessing.
49:8 *Judah, you, your brothers will praise you* The name Judah sounds like the Hebrew word for praise (29:35). His brothers would "bow down" to him, echoing Isaac's blessing on Jacob (27:29). Judah was not the obvious choice. He suggested selling Joseph and sinned with Tamar. But he changed, and offered his own life for Benjamin (44:33). God chose the repentant Judah to lead.
49:9 *Judah is a lion's cub* The lion pictures strength, courage and royalty. No one would dare disturb him. The lion became the symbol of the tribe of Judah.

like a lion, and like a lioness; who will rouse him? **10** The scepter will not depart from Judah, and the ruler's staff from between his feet, until Shiloh (Shilo) comes, and to him ***will be*** the obedience of peoples. **11** Binding his donkey to the vine, and the son of his female donkey to the choice vine, he has washed his clothing in wine, and his robe in the blood of grapes. **12** Dark of eyes from wine, and white of teeth from milk.

Zebulun to Benjamin

13 Zebulun (Zevulun) will dwell at the shore of the seas, and he ***will be*** a shore for ships, and his flank ***will be*** toward Sidon (Tsidon). **14** Issachar (Yisashkhar) ***is*** a strong-boned donkey, lying down between the sheepfolds. **15** And he saw a resting place, that it was good, and the land, that it was pleasant; and he bent his shoulder to bear, and he became a worker at forced labor. **16** Dan will judge his people as one of the tribes of Israel. **17** Let Dan be a serpent on the way, a horned viper on the path, that bites the heels of the horse, and its rider falls backward. **18** For Your salvation I have waited, O LORD. **19** Gad, a raiding band will raid him, and he will raid ***at their*** heel. **20** From Asher, his bread ***will be*** rich, and he will give delicacies of a king. **21** Naphtali (Naftali) ***is*** a doe let loose, the one who gives words of beauty. **22** Joseph (Yosef) ***is*** a son of a fruitful ***one***, a son of a fruitful ***one*** by a spring; daughters step over a wall. **23** And they embittered him, and they shot, and the masters of arrows bore a grudge against him. **24** And his bow remained firm, and the arms of his hands were agile, from the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob, from there ***is*** the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel, **25** from the God of your father, and He will help you, and by the Almighty, and He will bless you ***with*** blessings of the heavens from above, blessings of the deep that lies beneath, blessings of the breasts and of the womb. **26** The blessings of your father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors, up to the boundary of the everlasting hills; may they be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of the one set apart ***from*** his brothers. **27** Benjamin (Binyamin) ***is*** a wolf; he tears; in the morning he will eat the prey, and at evening he will divide the spoil."

49:10 Heb 7:14; Rom 15:12; Matt 2:6
49:11 2 Kgs 18:32; Isa 63:1-3; 1 Kgs 4:20,25
49:12 Prov 23:29
49:13 Matt 15:21; Mark 7:24; Acts 27:3
49:14 Gen 30:18; 1 Chr 12:32; Deut 33:18
49:15 Josh 14:15; Judg 3:11; 2 Sam 7:1
49:16 Gen 30:6; Deut 33:22; Num 10:25
49:17 1 Chr 12:35; Judg 14:1-15; Judg 16:22-30
49:18 Isa 25:9; Mic 7:7; Ps 40:1
49:19 Gen 30:11; Gen 46:16; Num 32:1-42
49:20 Gen 30:13; Deut 33:24,25; Gen 46:17
49:21 Matt 4:15; Deut 33:23; Gen 30:8
49:22 Gen 41:52; Gen 30:22-24; Gen 46:27
49:23 Ps 64:3; Gen 37:4,18,24,28; Gen 39:7-20
49:24 Eph 2:20; Acts 9:22; Ps 132:2,5
49:25 Acts 3:25; Rev 1:8; Gen 28:13,21
49:26 Acts 7:9; Deut 33:15; Hab 3:6
49:27 Phil 3:5; Acts 3:25; Gen 35:18

49:10 *The scepter will not depart from Judah* The verse the whole chapter builds toward. A scepter is a king's rod of authority, and kingship would belong to Judah, fulfilled in David and his line. Shiloh is hard to translate. Many read it as until he comes to whom it belongs; others take it as a title meaning something like the peaceful one. Either way, Jews and Christians have long seen the Messiah here. Jesus "has sprung out of Judah" (Heb 7:14) and is "the Lion who is of the tribe of Judah" (Rev 5:5). The obedience of peoples means all nations will one day bow to Him.
49:11 *his robe in the blood of grapes* A picture of overflowing plenty: vines so many a man ties his donkey to one, wine so common he could wash his clothes in it. It fits the vineyards of Judah's hill country around Hebron and Bethlehem. Many also see the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom, as the prophets pictured (Amos 9:13). Some notice Jesus' ride on a donkey's colt (Matt 21:1-7) and the cup of the Lord's Supper, but the New Testament does not link them to this verse, so I offer them only as pictures some see.
49:13 *Zebulun will dwell at the shore of the seas* Zebulun's land lay in Galilee between the Sea of Galilee and the Mediterranean (Josh 19:10-16). Joshua does not show it touching the sea itself, so many think it means Zebulun would be near the coast and profit from the sea trade. Jesus spent much of His ministry in Zebulun's region, as Isaiah foretold (Matt 4:13-16).
49:15 *he became a worker at forced labor* Issachar received good farmland in the Jezreel Valley, and loving its comfort, the tribe would rather serve others than fight for freedom. Comfort can make us give up what God has given just to keep the peace. Still, in David's day Issachar's men had "understanding of the times, to know what Israel should do" (1 Chr 12:32).
49:16 *Dan will judge his people* Dan means judge. Though the son of a maid, he would be a full tribe with his own leaders. Samson came from Dan (Judg 13:2).
49:17 *Let Dan be a serpent on the way* A small snake can bring down horse and rider. Dan would win by cunning, not strength. The picture has a darker side: Dan set up its own idol shrine (Judg 18:30-31), and one of Jeroboam's golden calves stood at Dan (1 Kgs 12:28-30). Dan is also missing from the tribes in Revelation 7:5-8. We aren't told why, and we should not say more than Scripture does.
49:18 *For Your salvation I have waited, O LORD* In the middle of the blessings Jacob suddenly prays, perhaps after picturing Dan's failure. Whatever his sons did, his hope rested on the LORD. This is the first time the word salvation appears in the Bible. Believers still wait for the full salvation Jesus will bring when He returns (Rom 8:23; Heb 9:28).
49:19 *Gad, a raiding band will raid him* Gad's name sounds like the Hebrew word for raid. Gad settled east of the Jordan, open to desert raiders, but its men were known as fighters (1 Chr 12:8).
49:20 *he will give delicacies of a king* Asher, whose name means happy (30:13), received fertile land on the northern coast, producing food fit for a king.
49:21 *Naphtali is a doe let loose* A doe is quick and free. Some think the words of beauty point to the song of Deborah and Barak (Judg 5:1), since Barak was from Naphtali (Judg 4:6).
49:22 *Joseph is a son of a fruitful one* The picture is a fruitful tree by a spring, never drying up, like the righteous man who is "like a tree planted by streams of water" (Ps 1:3). The daughters stepping over the wall are its branches. Joseph's life spread blessing beyond his family to Egypt and the whole region, and through his sons he became two great tribes.
49:23 *the masters of arrows bore a grudge against him* Joseph was hated, sold, falsely accused and forgotten in prison. People shot at him with arrows of hatred and lies.
49:24 *from the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob* Joseph did not break, because God held his arms steady. Jacob gives God three names: the Mighty One of Jacob, the Shepherd (48:15), and the Stone of Israel, a rock that never moves. Later Scripture calls God the Rock again and again (Deut 32:4), and the New Testament calls Jesus the chief cornerstone (Eph 2:20). When people attack you, your strength can come from the same Mighty One.
49:26 *the one set apart from his brothers* Jacob piled up blessings from above and below: rain and sun, springs and wells, children and healthy flocks. The Hebrew word for set apart can also mean a prince. Joseph had been separated from his brothers for years. Now he was set apart for honor.
49:27 *Benjamin is a wolf* The baby of the family is pictured as a fierce hunter. Benjamin was known for its fighters: Ehud (Judg 3:15) and King Saul (1 Sam 9:1-2) came from it. Its fierceness had a dark side too (Judg 19-21). And Paul, who once hunted Christians and became the great missionary to the Gentiles, was a Benjamite (Rom 11:1).

28 All these ***are*** the twelve tribes of Israel, and this ***is*** what their father spoke to them; and he blessed them, each one according to his blessing he blessed them.

The Death of Jacob

29 And he commanded them, and he said to them, "I am about to be gathered to my people. Bury me with my fathers in the cave that ***is*** in the field of Ephron (Efron) the Hittite, **30** in the cave that ***is*** in the field of Machpelah (Makhpela), which ***is*** facing Mamre, in the land of Canaan (Kena'an), which Abraham (Avraham) bought with the field from Ephron the Hittite as a possession of a burial site. **31** There they buried Abraham and Sarah (Sara) his wife; there they buried Isaac (Yitschaq) and Rebekah (Rivqa) his wife; and there I buried Leah (Le'a): **32** the purchase of the field and the cave that ***is*** in it ***was*** from the sons of Heth (Chet)." **33** And Jacob finished commanding his sons, and he gathered his feet into the bed, and he breathed his last, and he was gathered to his peoples.

GENESIS 50

Jacob Buried in Canaan

1 And Joseph (Yosef) fell on the face of his father, and he wept over him, and he kissed him. **2** And Joseph commanded his servants, the physicians, to embalm his father; and the physicians embalmed Israel (Yisra'el). **3** And forty days were completed for him, for thus the days of the embalming are completed; and Egypt (Mitsrayim) wept for him seventy days. **4** And the days of his weeping passed, and Joseph spoke to the household of Pharaoh, saying, "If, please, I have found favor in your eyes, please speak in the ears of Pharaoh, saying, **5** 'My father made me swear, saying, "Look, I ***am*** about to die; in my grave which I dug for myself in the land of Canaan (Kena'an), there you shall bury me." And now, please let me go up and bury my father, and I will return.'" **6** And Pharaoh said, "Go up and bury your father, just as he made you swear." **7** And Joseph went up to bury his father, and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his household, and all the elders of the land of Egypt, **8** and all the household of Joseph, and his brothers, and the household of his father; only their little ones and their flocks and their herds they left in the land of Goshen. **9** And ***there*** went up with him both chariots and horsemen, and the camp was very great. **10** And they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which ***is*** beyond the Jordan (Yarden), and they lamented there ***with*** a great and very heavy lamentation; and he made for his father a mourning ***of*** seven days. **11** And the inhabitant of the land, the Canaanite, saw the mourning at the threshing floor of Atad, and they said, "This ***is*** a heavy mourning for Egypt." Therefore one called its name Abel-mizraim (Avel-Mitsrayim), which ***is*** beyond the Jordan. **12** And his sons did for him thus, just as he had commanded them. **13** And his sons carried him to the land of Canaan, and they buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah (Makhpela), which Abraham (Avraham) had bought with the field for a possession of a burial site from Ephron (Efron) the Hittite, in front of Mamre. **14** And Joseph returned to Egypt, he and his brothers and all who had gone up with him to bury his father, after he had buried his father.

49:28 Acts 3:25; Num 23:24; Esth 8:7,9,11
49:29 Acts 3:25; Gen 47:30; Gen 50:13
49:30 Acts 3:25; Acts 7:16; Gen 23:8
49:31 Acts 7:16; Acts 3:25; Gen 25:9
49:32 Acts 3:25; Gen 23:17-20
49:33 Acts 7:15; Gen 49:29; Gen 25:8,17
50:1 1 Thess 4:13; Gen 46:4; Deut 6:7,8
50:2 Gen 50:26; 2 Chr 16:14; Mark 16:1
50:3 Num 20:29; Deut 34:8; Deut 21:13
50:4 Esth 4:2; Gen 18:3
50:5 Matt 8:21; 2 Chr 16:14; Isa 22:16
50:6 Gen 48:21
50:7 Gen 14:16
50:8 Exod 10:8,9,26; Num 32:24-27
50:9 Gen 41:43; Gen 46:29; Exod 14:7,17,28
50:10 Acts 8:2; 2 Sam 1:17; Job 2:13
50:11 Gen 10:15-19; Gen 13:7; Gen 24:6
50:12 Gen 47:29-31; Gen 49:29-32; Exod 20:12
50:13 Acts 7:16; Gen 23:16-18; Gen 49:29-31

49:28 *All these are the twelve tribes of Israel* The first time the Bible calls them the twelve tribes. Jacob's sons were becoming a nation. Some words were hard to hear, but each son got what God intended, and even the warnings told the truth and kept them in God's family.
49:29 *I am about to be gathered to my people* As at 25:8, the phrase speaks of life beyond death. Jacob expected to be with his fathers.
49:31 *there I buried Leah* Leah, the wife Jacob loved less, would lie beside him forever, while Rachel lay near Bethlehem (35:19). The cave was the first piece of the Promised Land the family ever owned, bought at full price (23:16). By being buried there, Jacob declared that God's promise of the land was true.
49:33 *he breathed his last, and he was gathered to his peoples* A quiet, peaceful death after a life of struggle. Jacob deceived and was deceived, wrestled with God and grieved deeply. But he ended well, blessing his children, worshiping God (Heb 11:21) and trusting God's promises. None of us chooses the story of our life from the beginning, but by God's grace we can finish well.
50:1 *Joseph fell on the face of his father, and he wept over him* God promised that "Joseph will put his hand on your eyes" (46:4), and He kept it exactly. The most powerful man in Egypt grieved openly. Believers do not grieve "just as also the rest who have no hope" (1 Thess 4:13), but we do grieve. Tears at a graveside are not a lack of faith. They are love.
50:2 *the physicians embalmed Israel* Egyptians dried and preserved bodies with natron, a natural salt, along with oils and resins. Jacob's body had a long journey ahead. Scripture records the embalming of only Jacob and Joseph (50:26). It was not an Israelite custom, and nothing suggests Joseph shared Egyptian beliefs about the afterlife.
50:3 *Egypt wept for him seventy days* The Greek historian Herodotus says Egyptian embalming could take seventy days, and Diodorus says Egypt mourned a king for seventy-two. Jacob was honored almost like royalty as the father of the man who saved Egypt.
50:4 *Joseph spoke to the household of Pharaoh* He may have gone through the household because a man in mourning did not properly come into Pharaoh's presence.
50:5 *I will return* Joseph kept his word to his father and his word to Pharaoh. A man of integrity keeps his word to everyone.
50:9 *the camp was very great* The leaders of Egypt traveled to Canaan to bury a Hebrew shepherd. The family that came hungry was now honored by the whole nation. Centuries later Israel would leave Egypt again with all its flocks and herds, never to return (Exod 12:31-38). This journey was a small preview.
50:10 *the threshing floor of Atad, which is beyond the Jordan* A threshing floor was a flat, open place for separating grain from husks. "Beyond the Jordan" is hard to place. We aren't told whether the procession took a longer route around the Dead Sea or whether the phrase is used from a different point of view.
50:11 *Abel-mizraim* The name means mourning of Egypt, or meadow of Egypt. The Canaanites marked the place by the grief they saw.
50:13 *they buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah* Jacob was laid with Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah and Leah (23:17-20). The family returned to Egypt for many years, but the bones in Machpelah testified that the land was theirs by God's promise and they would come back.

God Planned It for Good

15 And the brothers of Joseph saw that their father had died, and they said, "***What*** if Joseph bears a grudge against us, and he certainly repays us all the evil which we dealt out to him?" **16** And they commanded ***a message*** to Joseph, saying, "Your father commanded before his death, saying, **17** 'Thus you shall say to Joseph: "We beg you, please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin, for they dealt out evil to you."' And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father." And Joseph wept when they spoke to him. **18** And his brothers also went and fell before him, and they said, "Look, we ***are*** to you as slaves." **19** And Joseph said to them, "Do not fear, for ***am*** I in the place of God? **20** And you, you planned evil against me; God planned it for good, so as to do as ***it is*** this day, to keep alive a numerous people. **21** And now, do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones." And he comforted them, and he spoke to their heart.

The Death of Joseph

22 And Joseph remained in Egypt, he and the household of his father; and Joseph lived one hundred and ten years. **23** And Joseph saw sons of the third generation of Ephraim (Efrayim); also the sons of Machir (Makhir), the son of Manasseh (Menashe), were born on the knees of Joseph. **24** And Joseph said to his brothers, "I ***am*** about to die, and God will certainly visit you, and He will bring you up from this land to the land which He swore to Abraham, to Isaac (Yitschaq), and to Jacob (Ya'aqov)." **25** And Joseph made the sons of Israel swear, saying, "God will certainly visit you, and you shall bring up my bones from here." **26** And Joseph died, a son of one hundred and ten years; and they embalmed him, and he was put in the coffin in Egypt.

50:15 Acts 7:9; Prov 28:1; Gen 27:41,42
50:16 Acts 7:9; Prov 29:25
50:17 Acts 7:9; Matt 6:12,14,15; Matt 18:35
50:18 Gen 37:7-11; Gen 27:29; Gen 42:6
50:19 Rom 12:19; Acts 7:9; Gen 45:5
50:20 Rom 8:28; Ps 119:71; Acts 2:23
50:21 Rom 12:21; Gen 47:12; 1 Pet 3:9
50:23 Job 42:16; Gen 30:3; Ps 128:6
50:24 Heb 11:22; Acts 7:32; Gen 26:3
50:25 Heb 11:22; Exod 13:19; Josh 24:32
50:26 Gen 50:22; Gen 47:9,28; Josh 24:29

50:15 *What if Joseph bears a grudge against us* Seventeen years after Joseph forgave and kissed them (45:15), and fed their families all that time, they still feared he was waiting for their father to die. Guilt is hard to let go. Many believers live this way, waiting for God to punish what He has forgiven. In Christ there is "no condemnation" (Rom 8:1).
50:17 *please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin* Scripture never records Jacob giving this instruction. Maybe he did; maybe the brothers made it up out of fear. Either way they finally asked plainly, calling it transgression and sin. Joseph wept, perhaps hurt that they still doubted his love, perhaps moved to hear the words at last. Love that is doubted still hurts.
50:18 *Look, we are to you as slaves* One last time Joseph's dreams came true (37:7-10). The brothers who mocked the idea that he would rule over them now offered themselves as his slaves.
50:19 *am I in the place of God* Joseph refused to play God. Judgment and revenge belong to God, "not avenging yourselves, beloved, but give place to the wrath" (Rom 12:19). Trusting God to be the Judge freed Joseph to be a brother.
50:20 *you planned evil against me; God planned it for good* The key verse of Joseph's story. The brothers were guilty, and Joseph does not pretend otherwise. But the same pit and prison had two purposes. God did not cause their sin. He ruled over it and turned it to save lives, even theirs. This is His providence. "To those who love God all things work together for good" (Rom 8:28) does not mean all things are good, but that God brings good out of them. The greatest example is the cross (Acts 2:23; 4:27-28), and many see Joseph as a picture of Christ, rejected by his brothers and then their savior.
50:21 *he comforted them, and he spoke to their heart* Joseph promised to keep caring for them and their children, and he reassured them again and again. Real forgiveness is more than words. Where it is safe and the other person has truly changed, it shows itself in kindness over time.
50:22 *Joseph lived one hundred and ten years* Egyptian writings sometimes speak of 110 years as an ideal life. One Egyptian tale describes the wise man Djedi as 110 years old.
50:23 *born on the knees of Joseph* This probably means Joseph welcomed Machir's sons as his own family, possibly a kind of adoption, as Jacob did with Joseph's sons (48:12). Joseph lost his childhood home, and God gave him a house full of grandchildren and great-grandchildren.
50:24 *God will certainly visit you* Joseph lived in Egypt over ninety years, with an Egyptian name, wife and office, yet his heart was never there. His hope rested on God's promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. To visit means God would come and act for them. Joseph knew hard times were coming. He also knew God would come.
50:25 *you shall bring up my bones from here* Joseph asked to go with his people when God brought them out. Hebrews 11:22 calls this an act of faith. Moses carried the bones out of Egypt (Exod 13:19), Israel bore them through the wilderness, and they were buried at Shechem in the land Jacob bought (Josh 24:32), a standing reminder that God keeps His promises.
50:26 *he was put in the coffin in Egypt* Genesis begins "In the beginning God created" (1:1) and ends with a coffin in Egypt. Sin brought death in chapter 3. But this coffin is a promise waiting to be kept. God would visit His people and bring them out, and one day He would send the true Deliverer from Judah, who would not stay in His tomb. Jesus rose and broke the power of death forever. Like Joseph, we wait for God to finish what He started.

EXODUS

Introduction

Title

Exodus is the second book of the Bible and the second of the five books of Moses, often called the Law or the Torah. The name Exodus comes from a Greek word meaning going out or departure. The Hebrew title comes from the book's first words, "And these are the names" (1:1), and is often shortened to Shemot, which means names. The book begins with a list of the names of Jacob's sons who came down to Egypt, and so it picks up right where Genesis ends.

Author and Date

Jewish and Christian tradition have long held that Moses wrote Exodus, along with the other books of the Law. The book itself says Moses wrote down God's words and the events he saw (17:14; 24:4; 34:27), and Jesus quoted Exodus as "the book of Moses" (Mark 12:26). Moses was present for nearly everything after chapter 2, and he was raised in Pharaoh's court, where he would have learned to read and write (Acts 7:22). Many modern scholars believe the books of the Law were put together from several sources long after Moses. I take the book at its word and hold that Moses wrote it, with perhaps a few later notes, such as updated place names, added by scribes. He wrote during Israel's forty years in the wilderness, about 1445 to 1405 B.C.

Background and Setting

Genesis ends with Jacob's family in Egypt and Joseph in a coffin. Exodus opens about four hundred years later, when that family has become a great nation of slaves. First Kings 6:1 says Solomon began building the temple in the 480th year after Israel came out of Egypt. That places the exodus about 1446 B.C., and these notes follow that date. Moses was eighty years old at the time (7:7), so he was born about 1526 B.C. Some scholars place the exodus in the 1200s B.C., in the days of Ramesses II, mostly because of the city named Rameses (1:11), but that may be a later name for the place. Exodus does not name the Pharaohs of the oppression or of the exodus, and I won't try to name them.

The book covers about four hundred years quickly and then about one year in great detail, from the exodus to the day the tabernacle was set up (40:17). The story moves from Goshen in the eastern Nile delta, where Israel lived as slaves, to Midian in the desert, back to Egypt, across the sea, and through the wilderness to Mount Sinai, also called Horeb. Israel reaches Sinai in chapter 19 and is still camped there when the book ends.

Exodus is history, written as history. The psalmists and prophets look back to it again and again (Ps 78; 106; Hos 11:1). Jesus spoke of Moses, the burning bush and the manna as real (Mark 12:26; John 6:31-32), and Paul says these things happened to Israel "as examples" (1 Cor 10:11) for us. In the SLB, "the LORD" in capital letters stands for God's personal name, YHWH, which He made known to Moses at the burning bush (3:14-15).

Themes

The theme of Exodus is redemption that leads to a relationship. God brings His people out of slavery so that they can belong to Him and so that He can live among them: "I will dwell in the midst of the sons of Israel, and I will be God for them" (29:45).

The book falls into two halves. In chapters 1 to 18 God saves Israel. He hears their cry and remembers His covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (2:24). He reveals His name, "I AM WHO I AM" (3:14), judges Egypt and its gods with ten plagues, spares Israel by the blood of the Passover lamb ("I will see the blood, and I will pass over you," 12:13), and brings them through the sea. In chapters 19 to 40 God makes Israel His own people. At Sinai He calls them to be "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (19:6), gives them His Law, and tells them to build the tabernacle so He can dwell among them.

The order matters. The Ten Commandments begin, "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out from the land of Egypt" (20:2). The Law was given to a people God had already saved. It was never the way to be saved; it was God's way for a saved people to live.

Exodus also shows God's mercy toward sinners. Weeks after promising to obey, Israel worshiped a golden calf. Moses pleaded for them, and God renewed the covenant and proclaimed His name: "The LORD, the LORD, a God compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and great in steadfast love and faithfulness" (34:6). The book ends with the glory of the LORD filling the tabernacle (40:34).

Christ in Exodus

The New Testament itself makes many of the links. Christ is "our Passover" (1 Cor 5:7), the Lamb without blemish whose blood shields us from judgment, and not a bone of His was broken (12:46; John 19:36). Jesus called Himself the true bread from heaven, of which the manna was only a picture (John 6:32-35). Paul says of the rock that gave Israel water, "the rock was the Christ" (1 Cor 10:4). John says the Word "dwelt among us" (John 1:14), and the word means He pitched His tent, as God lived among Israel in the tabernacle. Hebrews 8 to 10 shows that the tabernacle, the priesthood and the sacrifices were copies and shadows of Christ, our great High Priest, who opened the way to God "through the veil, that is, His flesh" (Heb 10:20). Jesus took the name from the burning bush for Himself: "before Abraham came into being, I am" (John 8:58). On the mountain of transfiguration Moses and Elijah spoke with Him of His departure (Luke 9:31), His own exodus, by which His death and resurrection set His people free from sin and death.

Hard Passages

Who hardened Pharaoh's heart (4:21)? Exodus says both that Pharaoh hardened his own heart and that God hardened it. The notes explain the hardening as God confirming Pharaoh's chosen pride, and they name the view that puts more weight on God's sovereign purpose (Rom 9:17-18).

Why did God strike Egypt with plagues and take the firstborn (11:5; 12:29)? These were warned judgments on a nation that

enslaved Israel and drowned its baby boys (1:22), given by the God who alone gives and takes life, and every plague came with time to repent. A way of escape was open to anyone under the blood. The drowning of Pharaoh's army (14:28) is treated the same way. I believe little children who die are safe with God.

How many left Egypt (12:37)? The notes take the six hundred thousand men as written and name the view that reads the word thousand as a clan or unit. The 430 years of 12:40 are counted two ways, and the notes give both. The place of the sea crossing is left open.

What of the laws on servants, injuries and the death penalty (21 and 22)? The notes explain Hebrew servants as limited debt service, not race-based slavery, and stress the protections the Law gave. The death penalties were for Israel's courts under God's direct rule, not a pattern for the church. At 21:22 both readings of the injured pregnant woman are given, and the life of the unborn is affirmed.

What of the Levites' judgment after the golden calf (32:25-29) and the commands about Amalek and the Canaanites (17:14; 23:23; 34:13-16)? These are handled as God's judgment after long patience, given to Israel for that time, and never a pattern for believers today, for "our wrestling is not against blood and flesh" (Eph 6:12).

Outline

I. Israel Enslaved in Egypt (1:1-22)
  A. Israel multiplies (1:1-14)
  B. Pharaoh orders the boys killed (1:15-22)
II. The Call of Moses (2:1-4:31)
  A. The birth of Moses (2:1-10)
  B. Moses flees to Midian (2:11-25)
  C. The burning bush and God's name (3:1-22)
  D. Signs for Moses and his return to Egypt (4:1-31)
III. The Plagues and the Passover (5:1-12:51)
  A. Bricks without straw (5:1-23)
  B. God's promise and the family of Moses (6:1-30)
  C. The first nine plagues (7:1-10:29)
  D. The last plague announced (11:1-10)
  E. The Passover and the exodus (12:1-51)
IV. Out of Egypt and Through the Sea (13:1-15:21)
  A. The firstborn and the pillar of cloud (13:1-22)
  B. Crossing the Red Sea (14:1-31)
  C. The song of Moses and Miriam (15:1-21)
V. The Journey to Sinai (15:22-18:27)
  A. Bitter water made sweet (15:22-27)
  B. Manna and quail (16:1-36)
  C. Water from the rock and victory over Amalek (17:1-16)
  D. Jethro's visit and counsel (18:1-27)
VI. The Covenant and the Law (19:1-24:18)
  A. Israel at Mount Sinai (19:1-25)
  B. The Ten Commandments (20:1-26)
  C. Laws for life in the covenant (21:1-23:33)
  D. The covenant confirmed (24:1-18)
VII. The Tabernacle Planned (25:1-31:18)
  A. The offering, the ark, table and lampstand (25:1-40)
  B. The tent, the altar and the courtyard (26:1-27:21)
  C. The priests' garments and consecration (28:1-29:46)
  D. The incense altar, atonement money, laver, oil and incense (30:1-38)
  E. Bezalel and the Sabbath sign (31:1-18)
VIII. The Golden Calf and the Covenant Renewed (32:1-34:35)
  A. The golden calf (32:1-35)
  B. The presence of the LORD (33:1-23)
  C. The covenant renewed (34:1-35)
IX. The Tabernacle Built (35:1-40:38)
  A. Gifts and workers (35:1-36:7)
  B. The tent and its furniture made (36:8-38:31)
  C. The priestly garments made (39:1-43)
  D. The tabernacle set up and filled with glory (40:1-38)

EXODUS

EXODUS 1

Israel Multiplies in Egypt

1 And these ***are*** the names of the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) who
came to Egypt (Mitsrayim) with Jacob (Ya'aqov); each man
and his household came: **2** Reuben (Reuven), Simeon
(Shimon), Levi, and Judah (Yehuda), **3** Issachar (Yisashkhar),
Zebulun (Zevulun), and Benjamin (Binyamin), **4** Dan and
Naphtali (Naftali), Gad and Asher. **5** And all the souls who
came out of the thigh of Jacob were seventy souls; and Joseph
(Yosef) was in Egypt. **6** And Joseph died, and all his brothers,
and all that generation. **7** And the sons of Israel were fruitful,
and they swarmed, and they multiplied, and they became
mighty exceedingly, exceedingly; and the land was filled
with them. **8** And a new king arose over Egypt who did not
know Joseph. **9** And he said to his people, "Look, the people
of the sons of Israel ***is*** more numerous and mightier than we.
10 Come, let us deal wisely with it, lest it multiply, and it will
be, when war happens, that it also will be added to those who
hate us, and it will fight against us and go up from the land."
11 And they set over it officers of forced labor so as to afflict
it with their burdens; and it built storage cities for Pharaoh,
Pithom (Pitom) and Rameses (Ra'amses). **12** And just as they
afflicted it, so it multiplied, and so it spread out; and they felt
dread because of the sons of Israel. **13** And Egypt made the
sons of Israel serve with harshness, **14** and they made their
lives bitter with hard service, in mortar and in bricks, and in
all service in the field, all their service which they served
through them, with harshness.

Pharaoh Orders the Boys Killed

15 And the king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, of
whom the name of the one ***was*** Shiphrah (Shifra) and the
name of the second ***was*** Puah (Pu'a), **16** and he said, "When
you help the Hebrew women give birth, and you look on the
stones, if it ***is*** a son, then you shall kill him; and if it ***is*** a
daughter, then she shall live." **17** And the midwives feared
God, and they did not do just as the king of Egypt had spoken
to them, and they let the boys live. **18** And the king of Egypt
called for the midwives, and he said to them, "Why have you

1:1 Rev 7:4; Acts 7:8; Gen 46:8-26
1:2 Rev 7:5; Gen 35:22
1:3 Exod 28:20; Gen 35:23
1:4 Rev 7:5
1:5 Matt 1:2; Acts 7:14; Deut 10:22
1:6 Acts 7:14; Gen 50:24,26
1:7 Acts 7:17; Acts 13:17; Gen 46:3
1:8 Acts 7:18; Acts 7:17; Acts 13:17
1:9 Acts 7:17; Acts 7:19; Acts 13:17
1:10 Acts 7:19; Luke 16:8; Acts 7:17
1:11 Acts 7:17; Acts 7:19; Exod 3:7
1:12 Acts 7:17; Acts 7:19; Ps 105:24
1:13 Acts 7:19; Rev 11:8
1:14 Acts 7:19; Exod 2:23; Exod 6:9
1:15 Acts 7:19
1:16 Acts 7:19; Exod 1:22; Matt 21:38
1:17 Luke 12:5; Acts 7:19; Acts 5:29
1:18 Acts 7:19; 2 Sam 13:28; Eccl 8:4

1:1 *And these are the names of the sons of Israel who came to Egypt with Jacob* The book opens with "And," tying Exodus straight to Genesis. Moses lists the twelve sons of Jacob, the fathers of the twelve tribes. Joseph is set apart at the end because he was already in Egypt.
1:5 *seventy souls* Seventy came down to Egypt (Gen 46:27). Stephen gives seventy-five (Acts 7:14), following the Greek translation of the Old Testament, which counted some of Joseph's descendants too. It is two ways of counting the same small family. Remember the number. By the end of the chapter, seventy people have become a nation that frightens the king of Egypt.
1:6 *Joseph died, and all his brothers, and all that generation* The men who saw God's hand in Joseph's day were gone. But God's promise did not die with them.
1:7 *the sons of Israel were fruitful, and they swarmed, and they multiplied* Moses stacks up the words of Genesis 1:28 and of God's promise that Abraham's seed would be as many as the stars (Gen 15:5). God told Jacob, "into a great nation I will make you there" (Gen 46:3). The people forgot Joseph. God did not forget His covenant, the promise He made by Himself to give Abraham's descendants a land, make them a great nation and bless all nations through them (Gen 12:1-3; 15:18). Exodus is the story of God keeping that promise.
1:8 *a new king arose over Egypt who did not know Joseph* The Bible does not name this Pharaoh. Pharaoh was a title, like king, not a personal name. Some scholars think he came from a new ruling family with no reason to honor a Hebrew who once saved Egypt. Scripture doesn't say which king it was, and I will not guess.
1:10 *let us deal wisely with it* Pharaoh feared the Hebrews would side with Egypt's enemies and leave. Worldly wisdom set against God's people always ends in folly. His plan to stop Israel from growing was a plan to stop God's promise, and no one can do that.
1:11 *Pithom and Rameses* Storage cities to hold grain and supplies. The name Rameses is often taken as a later name for the city that readers would know, the way Genesis updates some place names. Some use this verse to argue for an exodus in the 1200s B.C. This study follows the date of about 1446 B.C. (1 Kgs 6:1).
1:12 *just as they afflicted it, so it multiplied* The more Egypt pressed, the more Israel grew. Pharaoh could make their lives hard. He could not make God's promise fail.
1:14 *they made their lives bitter with hard service, in mortar and in bricks* The words "with harshness" frame verses 13 and 14. At the Passover, Israel would eat bitter herbs to remember these days (12:8). Their suffering was real, but God was not absent. He had told Abraham ahead of time that his descendants would be slaves in a land not their own and would come out with great possessions (Gen 15:13-14). The slavery was part of a story God had already told.
1:15 *the name of the one was Shiphrah and the name of the second was Puah* Two women could hardly serve so large a people alone, so they may have led the other midwives. Scripture gives their names and not Pharaoh's. God remembers the faithful.
1:16 *if it is a son, then you shall kill him* When forced labor failed, Pharaoh turned to murder. Boys could grow up to be soldiers; girls could be married into Egyptian families and lost to Israel. Behind Pharaoh stood an older enemy. From Genesis 3:15 on, Satan has fought the promised Seed of the woman, and here he tried to wipe out the line through which the Savior would come.
1:17 *the midwives feared God* The key to the chapter. They feared God more than the most powerful man on earth. This is one of Scripture's first examples of godly civil disobedience. God sets up rulers, and we are to obey them (Rom 13:1). But when a ruler commands what God forbids, "It is necessary to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29). Two women simply refused to kill babies, and God used them to protect a nation.

done this thing, and let the boys live?" **19** And the midwives said to Pharaoh, "Because the Hebrew women ***are*** not like the Egyptian (Mitsri) women; for they ***are*** vigorous; before the midwife comes to them, they have given birth." **20** And God did good to the midwives; and the people multiplied, and they became very mighty. **21** And it was, because the midwives feared God, that He made households for them. **22** And Pharaoh commanded all his people, saying, "Every son ***that is*** born, you shall throw him into the Nile (Ye'or), and every daughter you shall let live."

EXODUS 2

The Birth of Moses

1 And a man from the house of Levi went, and he took a daughter of Levi. **2** And the woman conceived, and she bore a son; and she saw him, that he ***was*** good, and she hid him three months. **3** And she was not able to hide him any longer, and she took for him an ark of papyrus, and she coated it with bitumen and with pitch; and she put the child in it, and she put ***it*** among the reeds at the bank of the Nile (Ye'or). **4** And his sister stationed herself at a distance to know what would be done to him. **5** And the daughter of Pharaoh went down to bathe at the Nile, and her young women ***were*** walking beside the Nile; and she saw the ark in the midst of the reeds, and she sent her maid, and she took it. **6** And she opened ***it***, and she saw him, the child, and look, a boy crying! And she had compassion on him, and she said, "This ***is*** one of the children of the Hebrews." **7** And his sister said to the daughter of Pharaoh, "Shall I go and call for you a nursing woman from the Hebrew women, so that she may nurse the child for you?" **8** And the daughter of Pharaoh said to her, "Go." And the young woman went, and she called the mother of the child. **9** And the daughter of Pharaoh said to her, "Take this child away, and nurse him for me, and I, I will give your wages." And the woman took the child, and she nursed him. **10** And the child grew up, and she brought him to the daughter of Pharaoh, and he became a son to her. And she called his name Moses (Moshe), and she said, "Because I drew him out of the water."

Moses Flees to Midian

11 And it was in those days, and Moses grew up, and he went out to his brothers, and he looked on their burdens; and he saw an Egyptian man striking a Hebrew man, one of his brothers. **12** And he turned this way and that way, and he saw that ***there was*** no man, and he struck the Egyptian, and he hid him in the sand. **13** And he went out on the second day, and look, two Hebrew men ***were*** struggling together; and he said to the guilty one, "Why are you striking your companion?" **14** And he said, "Who appointed you as a man, a ruler and a judge over us? ***Are*** you saying to kill me, just as

1:19 Acts 7:19; Josh 2:4-24; 1 Sam 21:2
1:20 Acts 7:17; Acts 7:19; Prov 11:18
1:21 Acts 7:19; 1 Sam 2:35; 1 Kgs 11:38
1:22 Acts 7:19; Heb 11:23; Exod 1:16
2:1 Num 26:59; Exod 6:16-20; 1 Chr 6:1-3
2:2 Acts 7:20; Heb 11:23; Acts 7:21
2:3 Acts 7:20; Acts 7:21; Heb 11:23
2:4 Acts 7:20; Acts 7:21; Exod 15:20
2:5 Acts 7:21; Acts 7:20; 1 Kgs 17:6
2:6 Acts 7:21; Acts 7:20; 1 Pet 3:8
2:7 Acts 7:20; Acts 7:21; Exod 2:4
2:8 Acts 7:20; Acts 7:21; Exod 6:20
2:9 Acts 7:20; Acts 7:21
2:10 Heb 11:24; Acts 7:21; Acts 7:20
2:11 Heb 11:24; Acts 7:22; Acts 7:23-24
2:12 Acts 7:25; Acts 7:26; Acts 7:24-26
2:13 Acts 7:26; 1 Cor 6:7
2:14 Acts 7:27-28; Acts 7:35; Luke 12:14

1:19 *the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women; for they are vigorous* Was it a lie? Some think it was at least partly true, since the women were strong from hard labor. Others think the midwives deceived Pharaoh to protect the children, as Rahab later hid the spies (Josh 2). Notice that God blesses them because they "feared God" (1:21), not for what they said. Scripture records their answer without praising or condemning it.
1:21 *He made households for them* God saw what they did in secret and gave them families of their own. The women who protected other people's children were given children and homes. Most of us will never stand before a king, but we may be asked to go along with what we know is wrong. Fearing God is not weakness. It is the beginning of wisdom (Prov 9:10).
1:22 *Every son that is born, you shall throw him into the Nile* Now the plan was public, and all Egypt was drawn into the crime. The Egyptians worshiped the Nile as a god of fertility, and Pharaoh made it a grave for Hebrew babies. When God turns the Nile to blood in chapter 7, He judges Egypt in the very place it sinned. Centuries later Herod would kill the baby boys of Bethlehem, and God would protect His Son (Matt 2:13-16). The enemy keeps trying. God keeps His promise.
2:1 *a man from the house of Levi went, and he took a daughter of Levi* We learn later the parents were Amram and Jochebed (6:20). The plain wording puts the focus on God's work, not on the family.
2:2 *she saw him, that he was good, and she hid him three months* Stephen says Moses "was beautiful to God" (Acts 7:20). Hebrews says his parents hid him by faith, "and they did not fear the edict of the king" (Heb 11:23). This was more than a mother's love. It was the same fear of God the midwives had.
2:3 *she took for him an ark of papyrus* The Hebrew word for this basket is used in only one other place, for Noah's ark (Gen 6:14). In both, God saves a life through the water that brings death to others, in a box sealed with pitch. She obeyed Pharaoh's order in a strange way: she put her son in the Nile, but in a waterproof basket among the reeds where she could watch.
2:4 *his sister stationed herself at a distance* Likely Miriam (15:20). The family did what they could and left the rest with God.
2:6 *she had compassion on him* Of all the people in Egypt, the one who could protect a Hebrew boy from Pharaoh was Pharaoh's daughter. The king's order was undone inside his own family. God does not always remove the danger. Sometimes He places His people right in the middle of it and protects them there.
2:9 *nurse him for me, and I, I will give your wages* Jochebed gave her son up to God at the river, and God gave him back, safe under royal protection, and she was paid to raise him. Children then were often nursed until two or three or older, so she had time to teach him who he was and who his God was.
2:10 *Because I drew him out of the water* The name Moses sounds like a Hebrew word meaning to draw out. It also sounds like an Egyptian word for son, found in names like Thutmose. Moses "was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians" (Acts 7:22). God was preparing the man who would write the first five books of the Bible and lead a nation. Nothing in his life was wasted.
2:12 *he turned this way and that way, and he saw that there was no man* Moses was about forty (Acts 7:23). He looked in every direction except one. He did not look up. Hebrews 11:24-26 praises his choice to suffer with God's people, so his heart was right. But he acted in anger and his own strength. Some teachers see a justified defense of a brother, and Scripture does not directly judge it. Still, God would deliver Israel, but not by one man's hidden violence.
2:14 *Who appointed you as a man, a ruler and a judge over us* Moses supposed his brothers would understand that God was giving them salvation through him, "but they did not understand" (Acts 7:25). The man God sent to save Israel was first rejected by Israel, as Stephen told the leaders who rejected Jesus (Acts 7:35). Jesus came to His own, and they did not receive Him (John 1:11). Like Moses, He will one day be received by the people who first rejected Him.

you killed the Egyptian?" And Moses was afraid, and he said, "Surely the matter has become known." **15** And Pharaoh heard this matter, and he sought to kill Moses; and Moses fled from before Pharaoh, and he dwelt in the land of Midian (Midyan), and he sat by the well. **16** And the priest of Midian ***had*** seven daughters; and they came, and they drew ***water***, and they filled the troughs to water the flock of their father. **17** And the shepherds came, and they drove them away; and Moses arose, and he saved them, and he watered their flock. **18** And they came to Reuel, their father, and he said, "Why have you hurried to come today?" **19** And they said, "An Egyptian man delivered us from the hand of the shepherds, and also he surely drew ***water*** for us, and he watered the flock." **20** And he said to his daughters, "And where ***is*** he? Why ***is*** this, ***that*** you have left the man? Call him, so that he may eat bread." **21** And Moses was willing to dwell with the man; and he gave Zipporah (Tsipora), his daughter, to Moses. **22** And she bore a son, and he called his name Gershom, for he said, "A sojourner I have become in a foreign land."

God Hears Israel's Groaning

23 And it was in those many days, and the king of Egypt (Mitsrayim) died; and the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) groaned from the service, and they cried out, and their cry for help went up to God from the service. **24** And God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham (Avraham), with Isaac (Yitschaq), and with Jacob (Ya'aqov). **25** And God saw the sons of Israel, and God knew.

EXODUS 3

The Burning Bush

1 And Moses (Moshe) was pasturing the flock of Jethro (Yitro), his father-in-law, the priest of Midian (Midyan); and he drove the flock to the far side of the wilderness, and he came to the mountain of God, to Horeb (Chorev). **2** And the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of the bush; and he looked, and look, the bush ***was*** burning with fire, and the bush ***was*** not consumed. **3** And Moses said, "Let me turn aside, please, and see this great sight, why the bush does not burn." **4** And the LORD saw that he had turned aside to look, and God called to him from the midst of the bush, and He said, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I ***am***." **5** And He said, "Do not draw near here; take off your sandals from on your feet, for the place on which you ***are*** standing, it ***is*** ground of holiness." **6** And He said, "I ***am*** the God of your father, the God of Abraham (Avraham), the God of Isaac (Yitschaq), and the God of Jacob (Ya'aqov)." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God. **7** And the LORD said, "I have certainly seen the affliction of My people who ***are*** in Egypt (Mitsrayim), and I have heard their cry

2:15 Acts 7:29; Heb 11:27; Acts 7:26
2:16 Acts 7:29; Exod 3:1; Gen 24:11,14-20
2:17 Acts 7:29; Gen 29:10; Gen 21:25
2:18 Acts 7:29; Exod 3:1; Exod 4:18
2:19 Acts 7:29; Gen 50:11; Gen 29:10
2:20 Acts 7:29; Gen 31:54; Gen 43:25
2:21 Acts 7:29; Exod 2:10; Gen 31:38-40
2:22 Acts 7:29; Heb 11:13,14; Exod 22:21
2:23 Matt 2:19; Matt 2:20; Acts 7:34
2:24 Luke 1:72; Acts 7:34; Luke 1:73
2:25 Exod 4:31; Luke 1:25; Exod 3:7,8
3:1 Acts 7:30; 1 Kgs 19:8; Num 10:29
3:2 Acts 7:30; Mark 12:26; Acts 7:31
3:3 Acts 7:31; Mark 12:26; Luke 20:37
3:4 Mark 12:26; Luke 20:37; Deut 33:16
3:5 Acts 7:33; Mark 12:26; Luke 20:37
3:6 Matt 22:32; Mark 12:26; Luke 20:37
3:7 Acts 7:34; Rev 11:8; Ps 106:44

2:15 *he dwelt in the land of Midian* A desert region near the Gulf of Aqaba, home to descendants of Abraham through Keturah (Gen 25:2).
2:17 *Moses arose, and he saved them, and he watered their flock* Like Abraham's servant (Gen 24) and Jacob (Gen 29), Moses meets his future wife at a well. Even in exile he could not stand to see the weak pushed around. This time he killed no one. He stood up for them and did the work himself. The angry prince is beginning to become a servant.
2:18 *Reuel, their father* He is called Jethro in 3:1. Reuel means friend of God. People then often had more than one name or title, and Jethro may have been a title. Some think Reuel was the clan head or grandfather (compare Num 10:29).
2:20 *Call him, so that he may eat bread* In that world it was shameful to let a man who helped you leave without a meal. The invitation opened the door to Moses' new life.
2:22 *A sojourner I have become in a foreign land* Gershom sounds like the Hebrew for a sojourner there. Moses was not at home in Egypt or in Midian. The patriarchs lived the same way (Heb 11:13), and believers still do, "as sojourners and exiles" (1 Pet 2:11). Moses spent about forty years in Midian (Acts 7:30), learning patience, humility and the desert roads he would one day lead Israel through.
2:23 *their cry for help went up to God* The verse does not say they cried out in faith or even to God by name. They cried out in pain, and it reached Him. God hears the suffering, even when they hardly know how to pray.
2:24 *God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob* Four short statements, each with God as subject: God heard, remembered, saw and knew. In the Bible, when God remembers, He acts on what He promised (Gen 8:1). He had not forgotten.
2:25 *God saw the sons of Israel, and God knew* The verse ends almost abruptly. God knew their pain, their need and their names. If you are in a hard place, God hears, remembers, sees and knows. While Israel groaned in Egypt, God was already preparing a shepherd in Midian.
3:1 *Moses was pasturing the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law* The prince of Egypt now tended someone else's sheep. Forty years had passed (Acts 7:30), and Moses was about eighty (7:7). God often calls people in the middle of ordinary work: Gideon threshing wheat (Judg 6:11), David keeping sheep (1 Sam 16:11), Peter and Andrew fishing (Matt 4:18).
3:1 *the mountain of God, to Horeb* Horeb is another name for Mount Sinai, where God would give the Law. Moses calls it the mountain of God because of what happened there.
3:2 *the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire* In verses 4 to 6 the One speaking from the bush is called the LORD and God, and He says, "I am the God of your father." This is no ordinary angel. Many Bible teachers believe the angel of the LORD is the Son of God appearing before He was born in Bethlehem. Stephen tells the story the same way (Acts 7:30-32). Others see a created angel speaking for God.
3:2 *the bush was not consumed* Fire often shows God's holy presence (19:18), for "our God is also a consuming fire" (Heb 12:29). The bush kept burning because the fire did not need it for fuel. God needs nothing from anyone. Many have also seen in the bush a picture of Israel, small and humble in the fire of affliction, yet not destroyed, because God was in the midst.
3:4 *Moses, Moses* God waited until Moses turned aside to look. Calling a name twice shows warmth and urgency, as with Abraham (Gen 22:11), and Moses answered as Abraham did, "Here I am." How often do we miss God because we never stop long enough to hear Him?
3:5 *take off your sandals from on your feet* There was nothing special about the dirt. It was holy because God was there. Holy means set apart, wholly different from everything common and sinful. Removing his sandals showed respect and humility. Joshua was told the same (Josh 5:15).
3:6 *I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob* Jesus used this verse to prove the resurrection. God says "I am" their God, not I was, so the patriarchs are alive to Him: "He is not the God of the dead, but God of the living" (Mark 12:27). Moses hid his face. He was no longer a curious onlooker but a sinner before a holy God.
3:7 *I have certainly seen the affliction of My people* Warm, personal words: I have seen, I have heard, I know. They pick up 2:24-25. Israel's cry had reached the heart of God.

because of its taskmasters, for I know its pains. **8** And I have come down to deliver it from the hand of Egypt, and to bring it up from that land to a land good and spacious, to a land flowing ***with*** milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Amorite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite. **9** And now, look, the cry of the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) has come to Me; and also I have seen the oppression ***with*** which Egypt ***is*** oppressing them. **10** And now, go, and I will send you to Pharaoh, and bring out My people, the sons of Israel, from Egypt."

I AM WHO I AM

11 And Moses said to God, "Who ***am*** I, that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring out the sons of Israel from Egypt?" **12** And He said, "Surely I will be with you; and this ***shall be*** the sign for you that I, I have sent you: when you bring out the people from Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain." **13** And Moses said to God, "Look, I ***am*** going to the sons of Israel, and I will say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they will say to me, 'What ***is*** His name?' What shall I say to them?" **14** And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And He said, "Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'" **15** And God said again to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.' This ***is*** My name forever, and this ***is*** My memorial to generation ***after*** generation. **16** Go, and gather the elders of Israel, and say to them, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers, has appeared to me, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, "I have certainly visited you and ***seen*** what has been done to you in Egypt. **17** And I have said, I will bring you up from the affliction of Egypt to the land of the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Amorite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite, to a land flowing ***with*** milk and honey."' **18** And they will listen to your voice; and you shall go, you and the elders of Israel, to the king of Egypt, and you shall say to him, 'The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us; and now, please let us go a journey of three days into the wilderness, and let us sacrifice to the LORD our God.' **19** And I, I know that the king of Egypt will not permit you to go, and not by a strong hand. **20** And I will stretch out My hand, and I will strike Egypt with all My marvels which I will do in its midst; and after that he will let you go. **21** And I will give the favor of this people in the eyes of Egypt; and it will be, when you go, you will not go empty. **22** And ***each*** woman shall ask from her neighbor and from the sojourner of her house articles of silver and articles of gold and clothes; and you shall put ***them*** on your sons and on your daughters; and you shall plunder Egypt."

EXODUS 4

Signs for Moses

1 And Moses (Moshe) answered, and he said, "And look, they will not believe me, and they will not listen to my voice; for

3:8 John 6:38; Gen 50:24; Exod 3:17
3:9 Exod 2:23; Exod 3:7; Exod 1:11,13,14,22
3:10 Acts 7:36; Mic 6:4; Ps 105:26
3:11 Acts 7:23; Exod 6:12; 1 Sam 18:18
3:12 Acts 7:7; Josh 1:5; Exod 4:12,15
3:13 Matt 1:23; Isa 9:6; Prov 30:4
3:14 John 8:58; Exod 6:3; Heb 13:8
3:15 Luke 20:37; Acts 7:32; Matt 22:32
3:16 Luke 1:68; Acts 11:30; Matt 22:32
3:17 Gen 15:13-21; Gen 50:24; Exod 2:23-25
3:18 2 Cor 11:22; Exod 7:16; Exod 9:1,13
3:19 Exod 5:2; Exod 6:1; Exod 7:1-14
3:20 Acts 7:36; Acts 7:9; Acts 7:10
3:21 Acts 7:10; Exod 12:36; Exod 11:3
3:22 Ezek 39:10; Exod 11:2; Gen 15:14
4:1 Exod 3:18; Exod 4:31; Exod 2:14

3:8 *I have come down to deliver it* God does not watch from far away. He comes down. This points to the greatest coming down of all, when the Son said, "I have come down out of heaven" (John 6:38). A land "flowing with milk and honey" means rich pasture for herds and plenty of flowers for bees, the land promised to Abraham (Gen 15:18-21).
3:10 *go, and I will send you to Pharaoh* God says, I have come down, and you go. He could have freed Israel without human help, but He chose to use Moses. Forty years earlier Moses tried to save Israel on his own and failed. God's work done in God's way and time, with His call behind it, cannot fail.
3:11 *Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh* The first of five objections Moses raises in chapters 3 and 4. He had lost the confidence of his younger years.
3:12 *Surely I will be with you* God's answer does not tell Moses who he is. It tells him who is with him. The question is never really, Who am I? It is, Who is with me? Jesus gave the same promise, "I am with you all the days" (Matt 28:20). The sign could be seen only after Moses obeyed: Israel would worship at this very mountain (chapter 19). Faith steps out first.
3:13 *What is His name* In the ancient world a name told something about the one who carried it. The people would want to know what kind of God had sent Moses and whether He could stand against the gods of Egypt.
3:14 *I AM WHO I AM* One of the deepest statements in the Bible. God needs nothing outside Himself to exist. He always was, is and will be. He does not change, and He is not defined by what we say about Him. He simply is. Jesus took this name for Himself: "before Abraham came into being, I am" (John 8:58). The leaders picked up stones, because they understood He was claiming to be God.
3:15 *This is My name forever* The LORD in capital letters is God's personal name, four Hebrew letters, YHWH, usually written Yahweh. It comes from the verb to be and is tied to I AM in verse 14. Out of respect Jewish readers stopped saying it aloud and read Lord instead, which is why most English Bibles print the LORD. He is still the covenant-keeping God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the God of all who come to Him by faith in Jesus Christ.
3:16 *I have certainly visited you* The elders were the older men who led the tribes and families. To visit often means to come and act, in blessing or judgment. Joseph had said on his deathbed, "God will certainly visit you" (Gen 50:24). Now that word was coming true.
3:18 *let us go a journey of three days into the wilderness* Why ask for only three days? This was a modest first request that exposed Pharaoh's heart. If he would not allow even this, he would never let them go for good. God was not lying. A trip to worship was the first step, and God never said they would come back. Some teachers see it as an honest first stage of a larger plan.
3:19 *the king of Egypt will not permit you to go, and not by a strong hand* Pharaoh would not give in, even under heavy pressure, at least at first. God told Moses the truth from the start.
3:20 *I will stretch out My hand* Pharaoh's strong hand would meet God's stronger hand. God told Moses the end before the beginning. When God gives a hard task, He often tells us it will be hard, so we will not lose heart when it is.
3:22 *you shall plunder Egypt* God promised Abraham that his descendants would come out "with great possessions" (Gen 15:14). This was not stealing. It was back pay for centuries of slave labor, given freely by people God moved to give. Much of this gold and silver was later given for the tabernacle (35:22). God provided ahead of time for the worship He was about to command.
4:1 *they will not believe me, and they will not listen to my voice* Moses' third objection. God had already said the elders would listen (3:18), so Moses was doubting what God told him. His fear was natural, since his own people rejected him once (2:14). God's Word says one thing and our fears say another. God is patient with honest weakness and answers again.

they will say, 'The LORD did not appear to you.'" **2** And the LORD said to him, "What ***is*** this in your hand?" And he said, "A staff." **3** And He said, "Throw it to the ground." And he threw it to the ground, and it became a snake; and Moses fled from before it. **4** And the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand, and grasp its tail." And he stretched out his hand, and he seized it, and it became a staff in his hand, **5** "so that they may believe that the LORD, the God of their fathers, the God of Abraham (Avraham), the God of Isaac (Yitschaq), and the God of Jacob (Ya'aqov), has appeared to you." **6** And the LORD said to him again, "Please put your hand into your bosom." And he put his hand into his bosom, and he brought it out, and look, his hand ***was*** leprous like snow. **7** And He said, "Return your hand into your bosom." And he returned his hand into his bosom, and he brought it out from his bosom, and look, it had turned back like his flesh. **8** "And it will be, if they will not believe you and will not listen to the voice of the first sign, then they will believe the voice of the latter sign. **9** And it will be, if they will not believe even these two signs and will not listen to your voice, then you shall take some of the water of the Nile (Ye'or), and you shall pour ***it*** on the dry ground; and the water which you take from the Nile will become, it will become blood on the dry ground." **10** And Moses said to the LORD, "Pardon me, Lord, I ***am*** not a man of words, neither from yesterday nor from the day before, nor since You spoke to Your servant; for I ***am*** heavy of mouth and heavy of tongue." **11** And the LORD said to him, "Who has made a mouth for mankind? Or who makes ***one*** mute or deaf or seeing or blind? ***Is it*** not I, the LORD? **12** And now, go, and I, I will be with your mouth, and I will teach you what you shall speak." **13** And he said, "Pardon me, Lord, please send by the hand of ***whomever*** You will send." **14** And the anger of the LORD burned against Moses, and He said, "***Is*** not Aaron (Aharon) the Levite your brother? I know that he, he surely speaks. And also, look, he ***is*** coming out to meet you; and he will see you, and he will be glad in his heart. **15** And you shall speak to him, and you shall put the words in his mouth; and I, I will be with your mouth and with his mouth, and I will teach you what you shall do. **16** And he, he shall speak for you to the people; and it will be ***that*** he, he will be a mouth for you, and you, you will be ***in the place of*** God to him. **17** And this staff you shall take in your hand, with which you shall do the signs."

Moses Returns to Egypt

18 And Moses went, and he returned to Jethro (Yeter), his father-in-law, and he said to him, "Please let me go and return to my brothers who ***are*** in Egypt (Mitsrayim), and let me see whether they ***are*** still alive." And Jethro (Yitro) said to Moses, "Go in peace." **19** And the LORD said to Moses in Midian (Midyan), "Go, return to Egypt, for all the men who were seeking your life have died." **20** And Moses took his wife and his sons, and he made them ride on the donkey, and he returned to the land of Egypt; and Moses took the staff of God in his hand. **21** And the LORD said to Moses, "When you go to return to Egypt, see all the wonders which I have put in your hand, and you shall do them before Pharaoh; and I, I will strengthen his heart, and he will not let the people go.

4:2 Exod 4:17,20; Gen 30:37; Lev 27:32
4:3 Exod 4:17; Exod 7:10-15; Amos 5:19
4:4 Gen 22:1,2; Ps 91:13; Mark 16:18
4:5 John 11:15; John 11:42; John 20:27
4:6 Num 12:10; 2 Kgs 5:27
4:7 2 Kgs 5:14; Deut 32:39; Matt 8:3
4:8 Exod 4:30,31; Isa 28:10; John 12:37
4:9 Exod 7:19; Exod 1:22; Matt 7:2
4:10 Acts 7:22; Mark 7:37; Exod 6:12
4:11 Mark 7:37; Luke 1:20; Ps 94:9
4:12 John 14:26; Jer 1:9; Matt 10:19,20
4:13 Exod 4:1; Exod 23:20; Gen 24:7
4:14 2 Sam 6:7; 1 Kgs 11:9; 1 Chr 21:7
4:15 Isa 51:16; Num 23:5,12,16; Deut 18:18
4:16 Exod 7:1,2; Exod 18:19; Ps 82:6
4:17 Exod 4:2; Exod 7:9,19; 1 Cor 1:27
4:18 Luke 8:48; Acts 15:33; Exod 3:1
4:19 Matt 2:20; Acts 7:29; Heb 11:27
4:20 Acts 7:29; Exod 17:9; Num 20:8,9
4:21 Rom 9:18; John 12:40; Rom 11:10

4:2 *What is this in your hand* Just a shepherd's staff. God usually uses what we already have. Given to God, it became "the staff of God" (4:20).
4:3 *it became a snake* The cobra was a symbol of Egypt's power and appeared on Pharaoh's crown. God told Moses to grab it by the tail, the most dangerous way to hold a snake. God was in control of Egypt's power, and Moses could grasp it by faith. The sign had a purpose: "so that they may believe" (4:5).
4:6 *his hand was leprous like snow* Leprosy in the Bible covers several feared skin diseases that made a person unclean (Lev 13). Only God could heal it. The sign showed His power to strike and to heal, and may have reminded Moses that God could make him clean, whatever he carried from his past.
4:9 *it will become blood on the dry ground* A sign held in reserve, a small sample of the first plague (7:20). The Nile, Egypt's source of life and the grave of Hebrew boys (1:22), would become blood.
4:10 *I am heavy of mouth and heavy of tongue* Moses' fourth objection. Some think he had a speech problem. Others think he was out of practice after forty years with sheep, or no longer spoke Egyptian well. Stephen says he had been "mighty in words and in deeds" (Acts 7:22) in Egypt, so the problem may have been more fear than ability.
4:11 *Who has made a mouth for mankind* God made Moses, weaknesses and all. Our limits do not surprise Him.
4:12 *I, I will be with your mouth* Jesus gave a similar promise to disciples standing before rulers (Luke 12:11-12). God does not wait until we are gifted enough. He sends us and goes with us.
4:13 *please send by the hand of whomever You will send* In plain words, send someone else. This is no longer humility. It is refusal.
4:14 *the anger of the LORD burned against Moses* God answered four objections with patience. The fifth was not a question but a no, and God is not pleased when we simply refuse Him. Even in His anger He made a way. Aaron was already on his way to meet Moses. God arranged it before Moses ever asked.
4:16 *you, you will be in the place of God to him* Moses would receive God's words and Aaron would pass them on, much as a prophet passes on God's words (7:1). The plan brought blessing and trouble, since Aaron would one day make the golden calf (32). Second best often brings its own problems. Still, God used both brothers.
4:18 *let me see whether they are still alive* Moses asked permission of the man who gave him a home for forty years. Following God's call does not give us permission to be rude or careless with others.
4:19 *all the men who were seeking your life have died* One more word of comfort. The danger that drove Moses out was gone.
4:20 *Moses took the staff of God in his hand* He took his wife and sons. Only Gershom has been named so far; Eliezer is named in 18:4. The staff was the same as before, but now it belonged to God.
4:21 *I, I will strengthen his heart, and he will not let the people go* The first mention of Pharaoh's hardened heart. Exodus says both that God hardened it and that Pharaoh hardened it himself (8:15, 32). In the first plagues Pharaoh hardens himself. Later God confirms what Pharaoh chose. God did not take a tender heart and force it to be cruel. Pharaoh was already proud and said, "I do not know the LORD" (5:2). God gave him over to his choice and used it to show His power (9:16; Rom 9:17). Some teachers stress God's sovereign hardening more strongly (Rom 9:17-18). Both are in the text.

22 And you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the LORD: "Israel (Yisra'el) ***is*** My son, My firstborn. **23** And I said to you, 'Let My son go, so that he may serve Me'; and you refused to let him go. Look, I ***am*** about to kill your son, your firstborn."'" **24** And it was on the way, at the lodging place, and the LORD met him, and He sought to kill him. **25** And Zipporah (Tsipora) took a flint, and she cut off the foreskin of her son, and she made ***it*** touch his feet; and she said, "Surely a bridegroom of blood you ***are*** to me." **26** And He withdrew from him. Then she said, "A bridegroom of blood," because of the circumcision. **27** And the LORD said to Aaron, "Go to meet Moses into the wilderness." And he went, and he met him at the mountain of God, and he kissed him. **28** And Moses told Aaron all the words of the LORD with which He had sent him, and all the signs which He had commanded him. **29** And Moses and Aaron went, and they gathered all the elders of the sons of Israel. **30** And Aaron spoke all the words which the LORD had spoken to Moses, and he did the signs before the eyes of the people. **31** And the people believed; and they heard that the LORD had visited the sons of Israel and that He had seen their affliction, and they bowed low and worshiped.

EXODUS 5

Moses and Aaron Before Pharaoh

1 And afterward Moses (Moshe) and Aaron (Aharon) went, and they said to Pharaoh, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel (Yisra'el): 'Let My people go, so that they may celebrate a festival to Me in the wilderness.'" **2** And Pharaoh said, "Who ***is*** the LORD, that I should listen to His voice to let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, and also Israel I will not let go." **3** And they said, "The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Please let us go a journey of three days into the wilderness, and let us sacrifice to the LORD our God, lest He fall on us with the pestilence or with the sword." **4** And the king of Egypt (Mitsrayim) said to them, "Why, Moses and Aaron, are you making the people refrain from its works? Go to your burdens." **5** And Pharaoh said, "Look, the people of the land ***are*** now many, and you make them cease from their burdens." **6** And Pharaoh commanded on that day the taskmasters over the people and its foremen, saying, **7** "You shall no longer give straw to the people to make the bricks as yesterday ***and*** the day before; they, let them go and gather straw for themselves. **8** And the quota of the bricks which they were making yesterday ***and*** the day before, you shall put on them; you shall not reduce ***anything*** from it; for they ***are*** idle; therefore they ***are*** crying out, saying, 'Let us go, let us sacrifice to our God.' **9** Let the service be heavy on the men, so that they may work at it, and let them not pay attention to words of falsehood."

Bricks Without Straw

10 And the taskmasters of the people and its foremen went out, and they said to the people, saying, "Thus says Pharaoh:

4:22 Rom 9:4; 2 Cor 6:18; Matt 2:15
4:23 Exod 11:5; Exod 12:29; Ps 105:36
4:24 Luke 2:7; Gen 17:14; 1 Chr 21:16
4:25 Josh 5:2,3; 2 Sam 16:7
4:27 Exod 3:1; Exod 4:14-16; Eccl 4:9
4:28 Exod 4:8,9,15,16; Jonah 3:2; Matt 21:29
4:29 Exod 3:16; Exod 24:1,11
4:31 Exod 3:18; Ps 106:12,13; Luke 8:13
5:1 Matt 10:18; Exod 10:9; 1 Kgs 21:20
5:2 John 16:3; Exod 3:19; 2 Kgs 18:35
5:3 2 Cor 11:22; Exod 3:18; Deut 28:21
5:4 Exod 1:11; Jer 38:4; Amos 7:10
5:5 Exod 1:7-11; Prov 14:28
5:6 Exod 5:10,13,15,19; Exod 1:11; Prov 12:10
5:7 Gen 24:25; Judg 19:19
5:8 Ps 106:41
5:9 2 Kgs 18:20; Job 16:3; Jer 43:2
5:10 Exod 1:11; Prov 29:12

4:22 *Israel is My son, My firstborn* The firstborn was the heir, given a double portion and the father's special care. God claimed Israel as His own. "Out of Egypt I called My son" (Hos 11:1), words Matthew applies to Jesus, God's true Son (Matt 2:15).
4:23 *Let My son go, so that he may serve Me* Freedom from Egypt was freedom to serve God. That is the point of the exodus and of our salvation. Then the warning: Pharaoh held God's firstborn as a slave and had killed Israel's sons. If he would not let God's firstborn go, he would lose his own. It is measure-for-measure justice, fulfilled in the tenth plague (12:29).
4:24 *the LORD met him, and He sought to kill him* One of the hardest passages in Exodus. Most take "him" to be Moses. Circumcision was the sign of God's covenant with Abraham, and an uncircumcised male was to be cut off (Gen 17:10-14). The man sent to lead God's covenant people had not given his own son the covenant sign. God would not let him ignore the covenant at home while calling others to obey it.
4:25 *Surely a bridegroom of blood you are to me* Zipporah's words sound unhappy. Perhaps she had objected to circumcising the boy. Good teachers read the details differently: some think "him" in verse 24 is the son, and whose feet she touched is unclear. What is plain is that God takes His covenant seriously, and leaders must obey at home what they ask of others. Moses seems to have sent his family back to Jethro after this (18:2-3).
4:27 *he met him at the mountain of God, and he kissed him* One brother raised in Pharaoh's palace, the other as a slave, met after forty years at the mountain where God called Moses. God had been working in both places at once.
4:31 *the people believed* Moses' fear in verse 1 never came true. God said they would listen, and they did. How much worry would we save if we simply took God at His word? Their first response was worship. They were still slaves, but God had spoken, and that was enough to make them bow.
5:1 *Let My people go, so that they may celebrate a festival to Me in the wilderness* Two old men, eighty and eighty-three (7:7), a shepherd from the desert and a slave from the brick pits, walked into the court of the most powerful king on earth. This is the first time we hear the famous command. A festival was a holy feast held in worship. God was not only freeing workers. He was calling His people to worship Him.
5:2 *Who is the LORD, that I should listen to His voice* Pharaoh was treated as a god in Egypt. Why listen to the god of his slaves? He meant it as an insult, but God would answer his question. Again and again God acts so that Egypt "shall know that I am the LORD" (7:5). Many still say, Who is God, that I should obey Him? One day "every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord" (Phil 2:11).
5:3 *lest He fall on us with the pestilence or with the sword* They spoke of God's judgment falling on Israel, not Egypt. Our God has commanded this, and we are in danger if we don't obey. They did not yet threaten Pharaoh.
5:4 *Go to your burdens* To Pharaoh, worship was only a way to get out of work. He saw the people as labor and numbers. The world often sees time given to God as wasted, but we were made for God, and worship is never a waste.
5:7 *let them go and gather straw for themselves* The taskmasters were Egyptian slave drivers; the foremen were Hebrews put over their own people. Straw mixed into clay held bricks together. Now the slaves had to gather it themselves and still make the same number of bricks.
5:9 *let them not pay attention to words of falsehood* To Pharaoh, God's words were lies. If the people were exhausted enough, they would have no strength left to hope. This is still one of the enemy's tools. A crowded life can drown out God's Word as easily as a hard life.
5:10 *Thus says Pharaoh* Moses had said, "Thus says the LORD." Now the slave drivers echo him for their own king. Two kings were giving orders, and Israel had to decide whom to trust.

'I am not giving you straw. **11** You, go, get straw for yourselves from wherever you can find ***it***; for nothing ***is*** reduced from your service.'" **12** And the people scattered in all the land of Egypt to gather stubble for straw. **13** And the taskmasters ***were*** pressing, saying, "Complete your works, the matter of a day in its day, just as when ***there*** was the straw." **14** And the foremen of the sons of Israel, whom the taskmasters of Pharaoh had appointed over them, were struck, saying, "Why have you not completed your allotment in making bricks as yesterday ***and*** the day before, both yesterday and today?" **15** And the foremen of the sons of Israel came, and they cried out to Pharaoh, saying, "Why do you do thus to your servants? **16** Straw is not given to your servants, and ***they are*** saying to us, 'Make bricks!' And look, your servants ***are*** being struck, and the sin ***is*** your people's." **17** And he said, "Idle, you ***are*** idle! Therefore you ***are*** saying, 'Let us go, let us sacrifice to the LORD.' **18** And now, go, serve; and straw shall not be given to you, and the quota of bricks you shall give." **19** And the foremen of the sons of Israel saw themselves in trouble, ***when it was*** said, "You shall not reduce ***anything*** from your bricks, the matter of a day in its day." **20** And they met Moses and Aaron, standing to meet them, as they came out from Pharaoh. **21** And they said to them, "May the LORD look on you and judge, because you have made our odor stink in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to kill us." **22** And Moses returned to the LORD, and he said, "Lord, why have You done evil to this people? Why ***is*** this ***that*** You have sent me? **23** And since I came to Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has done evil to this people; and You have not delivered Your people at all."

EXODUS 6

I Am the LORD

1 And the LORD said to Moses (Moshe), "Now you will see what I will do to Pharaoh; for by a strong hand he will let them go, and by a strong hand he will drive them out from his land." **2** And God spoke to Moses, and He said to him, "I ***am*** the LORD. **3** And I appeared to Abraham (Avraham), to Isaac (Yitschaq), and to Jacob (Ya'aqov) as God Almighty; and ***by*** My name, the LORD, I did not make Myself known to them. **4** And also I established My covenant with them, to give to them the land of Canaan (Kena'an), the land of their sojournings, in which they sojourned. **5** And also I, I have heard the groaning of the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), whom Egypt (Mitsrayim) ***is*** making serve, and I have remembered My covenant. **6** Therefore say to the sons of Israel, 'I ***am*** the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of Egypt, and I will deliver you from their service, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment. **7** And I will take you for Myself as a people, and I will be God to you; and you shall know that I ***am*** the LORD your God, who brings you out from under the burdens of

5:11 Exod 5:13,14
5:12 Exod 15:7; Isa 5:24; Isa 47:14
5:17 Matt 26:8; John 6:27; 2 Thess 3:10,11
5:18 Ezek 18:18; Dan 2:9-13
5:19 Deut 32:36; Eccl 4:1; Eccl 5:8
5:21 Gen 34:30; Exod 6:9; Gen 16:5
5:22 Exod 17:4; 1 Sam 30:6; Ps 73:25
5:23 Ps 118:26; Jer 11:21; Isa 26:17,18
6:1 Exod 3:19,20; Exod 11:1; Exod 12:31,33,39
6:2 Isa 42:8; Mal 3:6; Exod 6:6,8
6:3 John 8:58; Acts 13:17; Rev 1:8
6:4 Acts 13:17; Gen 15:18; Gen 28:4
6:5 Luke 1:72; Acts 7:34; Acts 13:17
6:6 Acts 13:17; Acts 7:34; Deut 26:8
6:7 Rev 21:7; Matt 22:32; Acts 13:17

5:12 *to gather stubble for straw* Stubble is the short stalks left after harvest. Gathering it took hours.
5:14 *the foremen of the sons of Israel, whom the taskmasters of Pharaoh had appointed over them, were struck* The Hebrew foremen were beaten for their people's failure to meet the quota, caught between Pharaoh's demands and their people's limits.
5:15 *they cried out to Pharaoh* They went to Pharaoh, not to God. They still looked to Egypt's king to fix their problem. It is easy to run to the world's systems for help before we cry out to the Lord.
5:18 *straw shall not be given to you, and the quota of bricks you shall give* Pharaoh had no answer for the injustice, only more work. He is a picture of what sin does. It promises nothing and demands everything. "Everyone who does sin is a slave of sin" (John 8:34), and only the Son can make us truly free (John 8:36).
5:21 *you have made our odor stink in the eyes of Pharaoh* You have made us hateful to him. In chapter 4 the people believed and worshiped. A few days later they were cursing Moses. Faith that depends on things getting easier right away will not last, and Israel would show this weakness again and again in the wilderness.
5:22 *Moses returned to the LORD* The best thing Moses does in the chapter. He did not argue with the foremen or run back to Midian. He took his complaint to God. Evil here means harm or trouble, not wickedness. Lord, You have made things worse.
5:23 *You have not delivered Your people at all* God lets us bring honest questions to Him, as many psalms do: "How long, LORD?" (Ps 13:1). It is better to bring our hurt to God than to walk away. But Moses had forgotten that God said Pharaoh would refuse (3:19-20). Things getting worse was not a sign God had failed. Sometimes the darkest hour is just before God moves.
6:1 *Now you will see what I will do to Pharaoh* God did not scold Moses. He told him to watch. Pharaoh had said he would not let Israel go (5:2). God says he will drive them out, and he did (12:31-33).
6:2 *I am the LORD* Everything in this section rests on these words, which appear four times in verses 2 to 8.
6:3 *by My name, the LORD, I did not make Myself known to them* God appeared to the patriarchs as God Almighty, El Shaddai (Gen 17:1). But Abraham did use the name the LORD (Gen 15:7; 22:14). Most conservative teachers understand that the patriarchs knew the name but not by experience all it meant: the God who keeps His covenant and saves with a mighty hand. Abraham received the promises. Israel was about to see them kept. Some read the line as a question, and critical scholars use it to argue for separate sources.
6:4 *the land of their sojournings* The patriarchs lived in Canaan as foreigners, owning only a burial cave (Gen 23). God promised the whole land to their descendants.
6:5 *I have remembered My covenant* Repeating 2:24. Israel did not deserve to be saved. God saved them because He had made a promise, and He keeps His promises.
6:6 *I will redeem you with an outstretched arm* One of the great salvation passages of the Old Testament. Count the promises in verses 6 to 8: I will bring you out, deliver you, redeem you, take you as a people, be God to you, bring you in, and give you the land. To redeem means to set free by paying a price or by power, as a relative could redeem a family member sold into slavery (Lev 25:47-49). Every promise begins with God. Israel only received.
6:7 *I will take you for Myself as a people* This is the shape of our salvation in Christ. He brings us out from sin, redeems us with His blood (1 Pet 1:18-19), makes us "a special people" (Titus 2:14), and brings us into an inheritance kept in heaven (1 Pet 1:4). Long after Moses, Jewish families built the Passover meal around four cups linked to these promises.

Egypt. **8** And I will bring you into the land which I lifted up
My hand to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I
will give it to you ***as*** a possession. I ***am*** the LORD.'" **9** And
Moses spoke thus to the sons of Israel; and they did not listen
to Moses because of shortness of spirit and because of hard
service. **10** And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **11** "Go,
speak to Pharaoh, king of Egypt, so that he may let the sons
of Israel go from his land." **12** And Moses spoke before the
LORD, saying, "Look, the sons of Israel have not listened to
me; and how will Pharaoh listen to me, and I ***am*** uncircum-
cised of lips?" **13** And the LORD spoke to Moses and to Aaron
(Aharon), and He commanded them for the sons of Israel and
for Pharaoh, king of Egypt, to bring out the sons of Israel
from the land of Egypt.

The Family of Moses and Aaron

14 These ***are*** the heads of the house of their fathers: the sons
of Reuben (Reuven), the firstborn of Israel: Hanoch
(Chanokh) and Pallu (Palu), Hezron (Chetsron) and Carmi
(Karmi); these ***are*** the clans of Reuben. **15** And the sons of
Simeon (Shimon): Jemuel (Yemu'el) and Jamin (Yamin) and
Ohad and Jachin (Yakhin) and Zohar (Tsochar) and Shaul, the
son of the Canaanite woman; these ***are*** the clans of Simeon.
16 And these ***are*** the names of the sons of Levi according to
their generations: Gershon and Kohath (Qehat) and Merari;
and the years of the life of Levi ***were*** one hundred and
thirty-seven years. **17** The sons of Gershon: Libni (Livni) and
Shimei (Shimi), according to their clans. **18** And the sons of
Kohath: Amram and Izhar (Yitshar) and Hebron (Chevron)
and Uzziel (Uzi'el); and the years of the life of Kohath ***were***
one hundred and thirty-three years. **19** And the sons of Mer-
ari: Mahli (Machli) and Mushi. These ***are*** the clans of the
Levite according to their generations. **20** And Amram took
Jochebed (Yokheved), his father's sister, for himself as a wife,
and she bore to him Aaron and Moses; and the years of the
life of Amram ***were*** one hundred and thirty-seven years.
21 And the sons of Izhar: Korah (Qorach) and Nepheg (Nefeg)
and Zichri (Zikhri). **22** And the sons of Uzziel: Mishael and
Elzaphan (Eltsafan) and Sithri (Sitri). **23** And Aaron took
Elisheba (Elisheva), the daughter of Amminadab (Aminadav),
the sister of Nahshon (Nachshon), for himself as a wife, and
she bore to him Nadab (Nadav) and Abihu (Avihu), Eleazar
(Elazar) and Ithamar (Itamar). **24** And the sons of Korah:
Assir (Asir) and Elkanah (Elqana) and Abiasaph (Avi'asaf);
these ***are*** the clans of the Korahite. **25** And Eleazar, the son of
Aaron, took for himself one of the daughters of Putiel for
himself as a wife, and she bore to him Phinehas (Pinchas).
These ***are*** the heads of the fathers of the Levites according to
their clans. **26** That ***is*** Aaron and Moses, to whom the LORD
said, "Bring out the sons of Israel from the land of Egypt
according to their armies." **27** They ***are*** the ones who were
speaking to Pharaoh, king of Egypt, to bring out the sons of
Israel from Egypt; that ***is*** Moses and Aaron. **28** And it was on
the day ***when*** the LORD spoke to Moses in the land of Egypt,
29 and the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "I ***am*** the LORD;
speak to Pharaoh, king of Egypt, all that I ***am*** speaking to
you." **30** And Moses said before the LORD, "Look, I ***am*** uncir-
cumcised of lips, and how will Pharaoh listen to me?"

6:8 Acts 13:17; Gen 15:18; Gen 26:3
6:9 Acts 13:17; Exod 5:21; Exod 14:12
6:10 Acts 13:17
6:11 Acts 13:17; Exod 6:29; Exod 3:10
6:12 Acts 13:17; Exod 6:30; Exod 4:10
6:13 1 Tim 5:21; Acts 13:17; Num 27:19,23
6:14 Acts 13:17; Gen 46:9; 1 Chr 5:3
6:15 Gen 46:10; 1 Chr 4:24; Num 26:12,13
6:16 Rev 7:7; Gen 46:11; Num 3:17
6:17 1 Chr 6:17; Num 3:18; 1 Chr 23:7
6:18 1 Chr 6:2,18; Num 3:19; Num 26:57
6:19 Num 3:20; 1 Chr 6:19; 1 Chr 23:21
6:20 Exod 2:1,2; Num 26:59; Exod 6:16,18
6:21 Num 16:1,32; 1 Chr 6:37,38; Exod 6:24
6:22 Lev 10:4; Neh 3:20
6:23 Matt 1:4; Luke 1:5; Ruth 4:19,20
6:24 1 Chr 6:22,33,37,38; Exod 6:21; Num 16:1,32
6:25 Josh 24:33; Num 25:7-13; Num 31:6
6:26 Acts 7:35; Acts 7:36; Exod 7:4
6:27 Exod 5:1-3; Exod 7:10; Exod 6:13,26
6:29 Exod 6:11; Exod 7:2; Exod 6:2,6,8
6:30 Exod 6:12; Exod 4:10; 1 Cor 9:16,17

6:8 *I will give it to you as a possession. I am the LORD* The promise begins and ends with "I am the LORD." God's name is the guarantee.

6:9 *because of shortness of spirit and because of hard service* They were discouraged, worn out, with no breath left for hope. Pharaoh's plan had worked. Yet God did not cancel His promises because the people could not believe them that day. His promises rest on His faithfulness, not the strength of their faith. If you are too tired to hope, God has not given up on you.

6:12 *I am uncircumcised of lips* Uncircumcised means unfit or unready, like an ear that does not respond (Jer 6:10). God did not argue this time. He simply commanded Moses and Aaron (6:13). Sometimes God answers our objections by repeating His command, and the command carries His promise to help.

6:14 *These are the heads of the house of their fathers* Moses pauses the story for a family record. It begins with Reuben and Simeon and stops at Levi, because the point is to show where Moses and Aaron came from.

6:15 *Shaul, the son of the Canaanite woman* A small reminder that some of Jacob's sons married Canaanite women (Gen 38:2).

6:16 *Gershon and Kohath and Merari* The three main clans of Levites, who would later carry and care for the tabernacle (Num 3-4).

6:20 *Amram took Jochebed, his father's sister* Here we learn the names of Moses' parents. Amram married his aunt, which the Law later forbade (Lev 18:12), but the Law had not been given yet. Moses did not hide it. Scripture tells the truth about its heroes. Some teachers think this list has gaps, since four generations seem short for 430 years (12:40), and "son" can mean descendant. Others take the list as complete and count the 430 years from Abraham (Gal 3:17).

6:21 *Korah* Korah will lead a rebellion against Moses and Aaron (Num 16). His sons survived (Num 26:11), and their descendants wrote some of the psalms.

6:23 *Elisheba, the daughter of Amminadab, the sister of Nahshon* Nahshon led Judah and was an ancestor of David (Ruth 4:20). Nadab and Abihu would die for offering strange fire (Lev 10:1-2). Eleazar would succeed Aaron as high priest, and his son Phinehas would be known for zeal for God (Num 25:7-13). The list is full of stories still ahead.

6:26 *according to their armies* Armies means organized groups, tribe by tribe. Israel would not leave Egypt as a mob of runaway slaves but march out in order. The list ends by naming Aaron and Moses twice. These are the men God chose, from a real family, in real history.

6:30 *how will Pharaoh listen to me* The story picks up from verse 12. The chapter began and ended with Moses doubting, and in between stood God saying, "I am the LORD." Our feelings rise and fall. God does not change, and His name is still the anchor for our faith.

EXODUS 7

Aaron's Staff Becomes a Serpent

1 And the LORD said to Moses (Moshe), "See, I have made you ***in the place of*** God to Pharaoh, and Aaron (Aharon) your brother shall be your prophet. **2** You, you shall speak all that I command you, and Aaron your brother shall speak to Pharaoh, and he shall let the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) go from his land. **3** And I, I will harden the heart of Pharaoh, and I will multiply My signs and My wonders in the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim). **4** And Pharaoh will not listen to you, and I will put My hand on Egypt, and I will bring out My armies, My people, the sons of Israel, from the land of Egypt by great acts of judgment. **5** And Egypt will know that I ***am*** the LORD, when I stretch out My hand on Egypt, and I will bring out the sons of Israel from their midst." **6** And Moses and Aaron did just as the LORD commanded them; so they did. **7** And Moses ***was*** a son of eighty years, and Aaron ***was*** a son of
eighty-three years, when they spoke to Pharaoh. **8** And the LORD said to Moses and to Aaron, saying, **9** "When Pharaoh speaks to you, saying, 'Give a wonder for yourselves,' and you shall say to Aaron, 'Take your staff and throw ***it*** before Pharaoh; let it become a serpent.'" **10** And Moses and Aaron went in to Pharaoh, and they did so, just as the LORD had commanded; and Aaron threw down his staff before Pharaoh and before his servants, and it became a serpent. **11** And Pharaoh also called for the wise men and for the sorcerers; and they also, the magicians of Egypt, did so by their secret arts. **12** And they threw down, each man his staff, and they became serpents; and the staff of Aaron swallowed up their staffs. **13** And the heart of Pharaoh was strong, and he did not listen to them, just as the LORD had spoken.

The First Plague: Water Turned to Blood

14 And the LORD said to Moses, "The heart of Pharaoh ***is*** heavy; he has refused to let the people go. **15** Go to Pharaoh in the morning; look, he ***is*** going out to the waters, and you shall stand to meet him on the bank of the Nile (Ye'or); and the staff that was changed into a snake you shall take in your hand. **16** And you shall say to him, 'The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has sent me to you, saying, "Let My people go, so that they may serve Me in the wilderness"; and look, you have not listened until now. **17** Thus says the LORD, "By this you shall know that I ***am*** the LORD: look, I am striking with the staff that ***is*** in My hand on the waters that ***are*** in the Nile, and they shall be changed into blood. **18** And the fish that ***is*** in the Nile shall die, and the Nile shall stink, and Egypt shall be weary to drink water from the Nile."'" **19** And the LORD said to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Take your staff and stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt, over their rivers, over their canals, and over their pools, and over every collection of their waters, so that they may become blood; and ***there*** shall be blood in all the land of Egypt, both in the wood and

7:1 Exod 4:15,16; Ps 82:6; Exod 16:29
7:2 Exod 4:15; Exod 6:29; Deut 4:2
7:3 Acts 7:36; John 12:40; Exod 4:21,29
7:4 Acts 7:36; Exod 11:9; Exod 6:6
7:5 Acts 7:36; Exod 7:17; Exod 14:4,18
7:6 Exod 7:2,10; Gen 6:22; Exod 12:28
7:7 Acts 7:23; Acts 7:30; Deut 31:2
7:9 Isa 7:11; John 2:18; John 6:30
7:10 Exod 4:3; Amos 9:3; Mark 16:18
7:11 2 Tim 3:8; Acts 7:36; Exod 7:22
7:12 1 John 4:4; Exod 8:18,19; Exod 9:11
7:13 Heb 3:7; Exod 4:21; Exod 8:15
7:14 Exod 8:15; Exod 10:1,20,27; Zech 7:12
7:15 Exod 8:20; Exod 2:5; Exod 7:10
7:16 2 Cor 11:22; Exod 3:18; Exod 9:1,13
7:17 Rev 11:6; Rev 16:6; Exod 4:9
7:18 Exod 7:24; Num 11:20; Num 21:5
7:19 Exod 8:5,6,16; Exod 10:12,21; Exod 14:21,26

7:1 *I have made you in the place of God to Pharaoh, and Aaron your brother shall be your prophet* Moses said he could not speak, and God gave him a role. Moses would speak with God's authority, and Aaron would be his spokesman. This is a clear picture of a prophet: one who speaks for another, passing on the words he is given. The true prophets of Israel would say, "Thus says the LORD."
7:4 *I will bring out My armies, My people* God calls slaves His armies. He sees His people not by what they look like now but by what He has made them to be.
7:5 *Egypt will know that I am the LORD* Pharaoh said, "I do not know the LORD" (5:2). God's answer runs through the next five chapters. The plagues were just judgments on a cruel nation that enslaved Israel and killed its sons. They were also lessons, so that Egypt, Israel and the world would learn that the LORD is the one true God. And each plague was a warning, a chance to turn before the next came.
7:7 *Moses was a son of eighty years* At eighty most people think their work is done. Moses' greatest work was just beginning. Stephen divides his life into three forties: Egypt, Midian, and leading Israel (Acts 7:23, 30, 36). God is never done with a willing servant. From here on, Moses does not argue. He obeys.
7:9 *let it become a serpent* Pharaoh would ask for a wonder to prove they spoke for a god. This word for serpent differs from the snake of 4:3. It can mean a large reptile, even a crocodile or sea creature, a fitting sign before a king whose land was the Nile.
7:11 *the magicians of Egypt, did so by their secret arts* Paul names two men who opposed Moses, "Jannes and Jambres" (2 Tim 3:8), and Jewish tradition places them among these magicians. Scripture does not say how they did it. It may have been trickery such as snake charming, or real demonic power, since Satan can work "signs and wonders of falsehood" (2 Thess 2:9).
7:12 *the staff of Aaron swallowed up their staffs* Satan can copy, but he cannot defeat God. The power of Egypt was swallowed up by the power of the LORD.
7:13 *the heart of Pharaoh was strong* Here the text does not say God hardened him. He saw a clear sign and chose not to listen. Seeing a miracle does not change a heart that does not want to change. "If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded if someone rises from the dead" (Luke 16:31).
7:14 *The heart of Pharaoh is heavy* The same Hebrew word can mean glory or honor. Pharaoh's heart was heavy with pride.
7:15 *he is going out to the waters* Many think Pharaoh went to the Nile each morning, perhaps to worship, since Egyptians honored the river as a god. Moses was to meet him there with the staff that had become a snake.
7:17 *they shall be changed into blood* Why the Nile first? It was Egypt's life; without it the land was desert. Egyptians honored the river and its flood, linked with a god they called Hapi. And Pharaoh had used the Nile to drown Hebrew boys (1:22). God's judgment matched the sin. Later He says plainly, "on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments" (12:12). Many teachers pair each plague with a god of Egypt, though some of the specific pairings are debated.
7:19 *both in the wood and in the stone* Even the water stored in wooden and stone jars in people's homes would turn to blood. The judgment reached every canal, pool and household.

in the stone.'" **20** And Moses and Aaron did so, just as the LORD had commanded; and he raised the staff, and he struck the waters that ***were*** in the Nile in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of his servants; and all the waters that ***were*** in the Nile were changed into blood. **21** And the fish that ***was*** in the Nile died, and the Nile stank, and Egypt was not able to drink water from the Nile; and the blood was in all the land of Egypt. **22** And the magicians of Egypt did so by their secret arts; and the heart of Pharaoh was strong, and he did not listen to them, just as the LORD had spoken. **23** And Pharaoh turned, and he went into his house, and he did not set his heart even to this. **24** And all Egypt dug around the Nile ***for*** water to drink, for they were not able to drink of the waters of the Nile. **25** And seven days were completed after the LORD struck the Nile.

EXODUS 8

The Second Plague: Frogs

1 And the LORD said to Moses (Moshe), "Go in to Pharaoh, and you shall say to him, 'Thus says the LORD, "Let My people go, so that they may serve Me. **2** And if you ***are*** refusing to let ***them*** go, look, I am striking all your territory with frogs. **3** And the Nile (Ye'or) shall swarm ***with*** frogs, and they shall go up and come into your house and into the chamber of your bed and on your couch, and into the house of your servants and on your people, and into your ovens and into your kneading troughs. **4** And on you and on your people and on all your servants the frogs shall go up."'" **5** And the LORD said to Moses, "Say to Aaron (Aharon), 'Stretch out your hand with your staff over the rivers, over the canals, and over the pools, and bring up the frogs on the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim).'" **6** And Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt, and the frogs went up, and they covered the land of Egypt. **7** And the magicians did so by their secret arts, and they brought up the frogs on the land of Egypt. **8** And Pharaoh called for Moses and for Aaron, and he said, "Pray to the LORD, that He may remove the frogs from me and from my people; and I will let the people go, that they may sacrifice to the LORD." **9** And Moses said to Pharaoh, "Glorify yourself over me: for when shall I pray for you and for your servants and for your people, to cut off the frogs from you and from your houses? Only in the Nile shall they remain." **10** And he said, "For tomorrow." And he said, "***It shall be*** according to your word, so that you may know that there is none like the LORD our God. **11** And the frogs shall depart from you and from your houses and from your servants and from your people; only in the Nile shall they remain." **12** And Moses and Aaron went out from Pharaoh, and Moses cried out to the LORD concerning the matter of the frogs which He had set on Pharaoh. **13** And the LORD did according to the word of Moses, and the frogs died from the houses, from the courtyards, and from the fields. **14** And they heaped them up, heaps ***and*** heaps, and the land stank. **15** And Pharaoh saw that the relief had come, and he made his heart heavy, and he did not listen to them, just as the LORD had spoken.

The Third Plague: Gnats

16 And the LORD said to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Stretch out your staff, and strike the dust of the earth, and it shall

7:20 Rev 8:8; John 2:9; Rev 16:3-4
7:21 Exod 7:18; Rev 8:9
7:22 Exod 7:11; Exod 8:7,8; Jer 27:18
7:23 Exod 9:21; Deut 32:46; 1 Sam 4:20
7:25 Exod 8:9,10; Exod 10:23; 2 Sam 24:13
8:1 Exod 3:12,18; Exod 5:1; Jer 1:17-19
8:2 Exod 7:14; Exod 9:2; Ps 78:45
8:3 Exod 12:34
8:4 Ps 107:40; Isa 19:11,22; Isa 23:9
8:5 Exod 7:19
8:6 Rev 16:13; Ps 78:45; Ps 105:30
8:7 Exod 7:11,22; Deut 13:1-3; Matt 24:24
8:8 Acts 8:24; Exod 10:17; Exod 9:28
8:9 Judg 7:2; 1 Kgs 18:25; Isa 10:15
8:10 2 Sam 7:22; 1 Chr 17:20; Ps 86:8
8:11 Exod 8:3,9
8:12 Exod 8:8,30; Exod 9:33; Exod 10:18
8:13 Deut 34:10-12
8:14 Exod 8:24; Exod 7:21; Isa 34:2
8:15 Eccl 8:11; Isa 26:10; Jer 34:7-11
8:16 Exod 8:5,17

7:20 *all the waters that were in the Nile were changed into blood* Some suggest natural means, such as red soil or algae in a flood season. God can use natural means, but the timing, command and scope show a miracle. It came at Moses' word, the moment the water was struck. Revelation 16:3-4 describes a future judgment when seas and rivers become blood. The God who judged Egypt will judge the world.
7:22 *the magicians of Egypt did so by their secret arts* They managed to turn some water to blood, but they could not turn blood back to water. They could imitate God's judgment but not undo it. It was enough for Pharaoh, who wanted a reason not to believe.
7:23 *he did not set his heart even to this* His people were thirsty, their fish dead, their river turned to blood, and Pharaoh walked home without a second thought.
7:24 *all Egypt dug around the Nile for water to drink* The people suffered for their king's pride. Leaders' sins often bring trouble on many.
7:25 *after the LORD struck the Nile* Aaron raised the staff, but the LORD struck the river. For a full week God gave Pharaoh time to think and turn. He did not.
8:2 *I am striking all your territory with frogs* The second plague. Egyptians linked frogs with fertility and life, and their goddess Heqet was pictured with a frog's head. What Egypt honored, God turned into a plague. Nothing we worship in place of God can save us. In the end it only becomes a burden.
8:3 *into the chamber of your bed and on your couch* No place would be free of them: bedrooms, ovens, kneading troughs, even Pharaoh's own bed.
8:7 *the magicians did so by their secret arts* Egypt already had too many frogs. The magicians could make more but could not remove one. False religion often works that way. It can copy, but it cannot cure.
8:8 *Pray to the LORD, that He may remove the frogs* For the first time Pharaoh blinked. The king who said, "I do not know the LORD" (5:2) now asks Moses to pray to the LORD, and he promises to let the people go.
8:9 *Glorify yourself over me* In other words, you pick the time. Moses wanted Pharaoh to see that this was no accident.
8:10 *For tomorrow* Why not today? Perhaps Pharaoh hoped the frogs would leave on their own. Many treat God the same way. They know they need Him but put it off until tomorrow. Moses agreed, "so that you may know that there is none like the LORD our God."
8:14 *they heaped them up, heaps and heaps, and the land stank* Moses cried out, and God did as he asked. The frogs were gone, but the smell was not. God can remove a judgment, but the results of sin can linger.
8:15 *Pharaoh saw that the relief had come, and he made his heart heavy* Here the text says plainly that Pharaoh hardened himself. As soon as the pressure was off, he broke his word. How many make promises to God in trouble and forget them when it passes? God wants a changed heart, not a bargain. "Just as the LORD had spoken" reminds us Pharaoh's choice did not surprise Him.
8:16 *strike the dust of the earth, and it shall become gnats* The third plague came with no warning. The word may mean gnats, lice or mosquitoes, tiny biting insects on man and beast. Egypt's ground turned against it. Egyptians were careful about being clean, and their priests shaved their bodies to stay pure for worship. Now no one could stay clean, and the priests could not even serve their gods.

become gnats in all the land of Egypt.'" **17** And they did so; and Aaron stretched out his hand with his staff, and he struck the dust of the earth, and the gnats were on mankind and on livestock; all the dust of the earth became gnats in all the land of Egypt. **18** And the magicians did so by their secret arts to bring forth the gnats, and they were not able; and the gnats were on mankind and on livestock. **19** And the magicians said to Pharaoh, "It ***is*** the finger of God." And the heart of Pharaoh was strong, and he did not listen to them, just as the LORD had spoken.

The Fourth Plague: Flies

20 And the LORD said to Moses, "Rise early in the morning, and station yourself before Pharaoh; look, he ***is*** going out to the waters; and you shall say to him, 'Thus says the LORD, "Let My people go, so that they may serve Me. **21** For if you ***are*** not letting My people go, look, I am sending the swarm on you and on your servants and on your people and on your houses; and the houses of Egypt shall be full of the swarm, and also the ground on which they ***are***. **22** And I will set apart on that day the land of Goshen, on which My people ***are*** standing, so that no swarm shall be there, so that you may know that I ***am*** the LORD in the midst of the land. **23** And I will put a ransom between My people and your people. Tomorrow this sign shall be."'" **24** And the LORD did so; and a heavy swarm came into the house of Pharaoh and the house of his servants; and in all the land of Egypt the land was ruined because of the swarm. **25** And Pharaoh called for Moses and for Aaron, and he said, "Go, sacrifice to your God in the land." **26** And Moses said, "***It is*** not right to do so; for we will sacrifice the abomination of Egypt to the LORD our God. Look, we will sacrifice the abomination of Egypt before their eyes, and will they not stone us? **27** We will go a journey of three days into the wilderness, and we will sacrifice to the LORD our God, just as He says to us." **28** And Pharaoh said, "I, I will let you go, and you shall sacrifice to the LORD your God in the wilderness; only you shall certainly not go far away in ***your*** going. Pray for me." **29** And Moses said, "Look, I ***am*** going out from you, and I will pray to the LORD, and the swarm shall turn aside from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people tomorrow; only let Pharaoh not again deal deceitfully by not letting the people go to sacrifice to the LORD." **30** And Moses went out from Pharaoh, and he prayed to the LORD. **31** And the LORD did according to the word of Moses, and He removed the swarm from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people; not one remained. **32** And Pharaoh made his heart heavy this time also, and he did not let the people go.

EXODUS 9

The Fifth and Sixth Plagues: Livestock and Boils

1 And the LORD said to Moses (Moshe), "Go in to Pharaoh, and you shall speak to him, 'Thus says the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, "Let My people go, so that they may serve Me. **2** For if you ***are*** refusing to let ***them*** go, and you ***are*** still holding on to them, **3** look, the hand of the LORD will be on your livestock which ***is*** in the field, on the horses, on the donkeys, on the camels, on the herd, and on the flock, a very heavy pestilence. **4** And the LORD will set apart between the livestock of Israel (Yisra'el) and the livestock of Egypt (Mitsrayim), and not a thing shall die of all that ***belongs*** to

8:17 Ps 105:31; Isa 23:9; Acts 12:23
8:18 2 Tim 3:9; Exod 7:11; Exod 9:11
8:19 Luke 11:20; 2 Tim 3:9; Ps 8:3
8:20 Exod 7:15
8:21 Ps 78:45; Ps 105:31; Isa 7:18
8:22 Exod 9:4,6,26; Exod 10:23; Mal 3:18
8:24 Ps 78:45; Ps 105:31; Exod 8:21
8:25 Rev 3:9; Exod 8:8; Exod 9:27
8:26 Gen 43:32; Gen 46:34; Exod 3:18
8:27 Exod 3:18; Exod 3:12; Exod 5:1
8:28 Acts 8:24; Exod 8:8,29; Exod 9:28
8:29 Exod 8:8,15; Jer 42:20,21; Ps 66:3
8:30 Exod 8:12; Exod 9:33; James 5:16
8:32 Acts 28:26; Acts 28:27; Exod 8:15
9:1 2 Cor 11:22; Exod 8:1,20; Exod 9:13
9:2 Exod 8:2; Exod 4:23; Exod 10:4
9:3 Acts 13:11; Exod 7:4; Exod 8:19
9:4 Exod 8:22; Exod 10:23; Exod 12:13

8:18 *they were not able* The end of the magicians' contest. They could not make life out of dust. Only God gives life (Gen 2:7).
8:19 *It is the finger of God* God's own direct power. The same phrase describes God writing the Ten Commandments (31:18), and Jesus cast out demons "by the finger of God" (Luke 11:20). Pharaoh's own experts admitted this was beyond them, and still he would not listen. When a heart is set against God, no evidence is enough.
8:21 *I am sending the swarm on you* The fourth plague. The Hebrew word means a mixture or swarm of insects. Many think flies, perhaps biting dog flies.
8:22 *I will set apart on that day the land of Goshen* Goshen was the region in the eastern Nile delta where Jacob's family settled (Gen 47:6). The LORD is not a god of one river or region. He rules "in the midst of the land," and He can protect His people while judging those around them.
8:23 *I will put a ransom between My people and your people* A ransom is a price paid to set someone free. The Hebrew word usually means redemption, while many versions read division or distinction, following the Greek and Latin. Either way God made a clear difference between His people and Egypt, and from here on Israel is spared (9:4, 26; 10:23; 11:7). God still knows His own. Jesus "is delivering us from the wrath that is coming" (1 Thess 1:10), "because God did not appoint us for wrath" (1 Thess 5:9). I believe He will keep His church from the coming day of wrath.
8:24 *the LORD did so* No staff this time. God simply did it. The palace was not safe and the land was ruined, while Goshen, just down the road, was quiet. Egypt could see the God of the Hebrews protecting His people.
8:25 *Go, sacrifice to your God in the land* Pharaoh's first bargain: stay in Egypt and worship here.
8:26 *we will sacrifice the abomination of Egypt* Sheep, goats and cattle were sacred to some Egyptians or detested as offerings, and Hebrew sacrifices in Egypt could cause a riot. Moses would not change what God commanded. Worship must be on God's terms. The world still says, Worship your God, but here, our way, and don't be different. God says, "come out from the midst of them and be separate" (2 Cor 6:17).
8:28 *only you shall certainly not go far away* The second offer was still a trap, keeping Israel close enough to pull back. Satan's offer is often the same: follow God if you want, but don't go too far. Keep one foot in Egypt.
8:29 *only let Pharaoh not again deal deceitfully* Moses had learned from the frogs and spoke plainly about the broken promise.
8:31 *not one remained* God's answers are complete. When He removes a judgment, He removes it fully.
8:32 *Pharaoh made his heart heavy this time also* Each time Pharaoh hardened his heart, the next wrong choice came easier. We are warned not to be "hardened by the deceitfulness of sin" (Heb 3:13). The time to listen to God is when He speaks.
9:3 *a very heavy pestilence* The fifth plague, a deadly disease on livestock in the field. Horses, donkeys, camels, herds and flocks were Egypt's wealth, transport, farming and food, and Egyptians honored some animals as sacred, such as the bull Apis.
9:4 *the LORD will set apart between the livestock of Israel and the livestock of Egypt* Plague by plague God taught Egypt that He protects His own.

the sons of Israel."'" **5** And the LORD set an appointed time, saying, "Tomorrow the LORD will do this thing in the land." **6** And the LORD did this thing on the next day, and all the livestock of Egypt died; and of the livestock of the sons of Israel not one died. **7** And Pharaoh sent, and look, of the livestock of Israel not even one had died. And the heart of Pharaoh was heavy, and he did not let the people go. **8** And the LORD said to Moses and to Aaron (Aharon), "Take for yourselves the fullness of your hollow hands ***of*** soot of a furnace, and let Moses sprinkle it toward the heavens in the eyes of Pharaoh. **9** And it shall become fine dust over all the land of Egypt, and it shall become boils breaking out ***in*** blisters on mankind and on livestock in all the land of Egypt." **10** And they took the soot of the furnace, and they stood before Pharaoh, and Moses sprinkled it toward the heavens; and it became boils ***of*** blisters breaking out on mankind and on livestock. **11** And the magicians were not able to stand before Moses because of the boils, for the boils were on the magicians and on all Egypt. **12** And the LORD strengthened the heart of Pharaoh, and he did not listen to them, just as the LORD had spoken to Moses.

The Seventh Plague: Hail

13 And the LORD said to Moses, "Rise early in the morning, and station yourself before Pharaoh, and you shall say to him, 'Thus says the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, "Let My people go, so that they may serve Me. **14** For at this time I am sending all My plagues into your heart and on your servants and on your people, so that you may know that there is none like Me in all the earth. **15** For now I could have sent out My hand, and I could have struck you and your people with the pestilence, and you would have been effaced from the earth. **16** And yet for this I have caused you to stand: in order to show you My power, and in order to recount My name in all the earth. **17** You ***are*** still exalting yourself against My people, so as not to let them go. **18** Look, I am raining about this time tomorrow a very heavy hail, the like of which has not been in Egypt from the day it was founded and until now. **19** And now send, bring your livestock and all that ***is*** yours in the field to refuge; all mankind and livestock that is found in the field and is not gathered into the house, the hail shall come down on them, and they shall die."'" **20** The one fearing the word of the LORD among the servants of Pharaoh made his servants and his livestock flee into the houses. **21** And whoever did not set his heart to the word of the LORD left his servants and his livestock in the field. **22** And the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward the heavens, so that ***there*** may be hail in all the land of Egypt, on mankind and on livestock and on every plant of the field in the land of Egypt." **23** And Moses stretched out his staff toward the heavens, and the LORD gave thunders and hail, and fire went to the earth; and the LORD rained hail on the land of Egypt. **24** And ***there*** was hail, and fire flashing in the midst of the hail, very heavy, the like of which had not been in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation. **25** And the hail struck in all the land of Egypt all that ***was*** in the field,

9:5 Exod 9:18; Exod 8:23; Exod 10:4
9:6 Ps 78:48,50; Exod 9:19,25
9:7 Exod 7:14; Exod 8:32; Exod 9:12
9:8 Exod 8:16
9:9 Rev 16:2; Deut 28:27,35; Job 2:7
9:10 Rev 16:2; Deut 28:27
9:11 2 Tim 3:8; Rev 16:2; 2 Tim 3:9
9:12 Exod 4:21; Exod 7:13,14; Ps 81:11,12
9:13 2 Cor 11:22; Exod 8:20; Exod 7:15
9:14 John 19:11; Exod 8:10; Lev 26:18,21,28
9:15 Exod 3:20; Exod 9:3,6,16; Exod 11:4-6
9:16 Rom 9:17; Rom 9:22; Prov 16:4
9:17 Job 9:4; Job 15:25,26; Job 40:9
9:18 1 Kgs 19:2; 1 Kgs 20:6; 2 Kgs 7:1,18
9:19 Hab 3:2
9:20 Mark 13:15; Prov 16:16; Prov 22:3,23
9:21 Rev 11:19; Exod 7:23; 1 Sam 4:20
9:22 Rev 11:19; Rev 16:21; Exod 7:19
9:23 Rev 8:7; Rev 11:19; Josh 10:11
9:24 Rev 8:7; Rev 16:21; Rev 11:19
9:25 Ps 105:33

9:5 *Tomorrow the LORD will do this thing* God named the day ahead of time so no one could call it chance.
9:6 *all the livestock of Egypt died* The plague was on livestock "in the field" (9:3), so "all" likely means all the animals in the open fields, or all kinds. Some Egyptian animals were still alive later (9:19; 12:29). The Bible often uses all in this broad way.
9:7 *of the livestock of Israel not even one had died* Pharaoh sent men to check and saw the proof: exactly what God said, on the day He said, with a clear line between Egypt and Israel. Evidence does not change a heart that has made up its mind.
9:8 *soot of a furnace* The sixth plague came with no warning. The furnace may have been a kiln for firing the very bricks Israel was forced to make. The ash of Israel's slavery was thrown into the air and came down as judgment.
9:9 *boils breaking out in blisters* Painful sores covered people and animals. Egypt prided itself on its medicine and healing gods. None of them could help.
9:11 *the magicians were not able to stand before Moses* First they copied the plagues, then admitted "the finger of God" (8:19), and now they could not even stand in the room. We do not hear of them again. Every power set against God will fall in the end.
9:12 *the LORD strengthened the heart of Pharaoh* The first time in the plagues the text says plainly that the LORD hardened him. Before this Pharaoh hardened himself again and again (7:13, 22; 8:15, 19, 32; 9:7). God did not harden a man who wanted to obey. After five refusals, God confirmed Pharaoh in his own choice, as Paul says God "gave them up" (Rom 1:24) to what they chose. Reformed teachers stress God's sovereign purpose more (Rom 9:17-18). Either way, we should take God's voice seriously while we can still hear it.
9:14 *I am sending all My plagues into your heart* The plagues ahead would be heavier and strike the very heart Pharaoh kept hardening, so he would know "there is none like Me in all the earth."
9:15 *you would have been effaced from the earth* God could have wiped out Egypt in a moment. He held back.
9:16 *for this I have caused you to stand: in order to show you My power* Pharaoh thought he was in charge. God says, I have let you stand. His life, throne and stubbornness were all used for God's purpose. It worked. Rahab said Jericho had heard what the LORD did (Josh 2:9-10), the Philistines still spoke of it (1 Sam 4:8), and Paul quotes this verse to show God is sovereign in mercy and judgment (Rom 9:17). We still tell the story.
9:18 *a very heavy hail, the like of which has not been in Egypt* Pharaoh's real problem was pride. Hail in Egypt was rare, and a storm like this was unheard of.
9:19 *bring your livestock and all that is yours in the field to refuge* Mercy in the middle of judgment. God gave a full day's warning and a way of escape for anyone who would listen.
9:20 *The one fearing the word of the LORD among the servants of Pharaoh* For the first time some Egyptians feared God's word. The same warning went to all. Some believed and some ignored it, as when the gospel is preached today. Some of these may have joined the mixed multitude that left with Israel (12:38).
9:23 *the LORD gave thunders and hail, and fire went to the earth* The fire was likely lightning. Egyptians honored gods of the sky and weather, and the LORD showed that He rules the heavens. Revelation 16:21 describes great hail falling on the earth in a future day of wrath. The God who judged Egypt with hail will judge the world.

from mankind and to livestock; and every plant of the field the hail struck, and every tree of the field it shattered. **26** Only in the land of Goshen, where the sons of Israel ***were***, there was no hail.

Pharaoh Hardens His Heart Again

27 And Pharaoh sent, and he called for Moses and for Aaron, and he said to them, "I have sinned this time; the LORD ***is*** the righteous ***one***, and I and my people ***are*** the wicked ***ones***. **28** Pray to the LORD, and ***there has been*** enough of ***the*** thunders of God and hail; and I will let you go, and you shall not continue to stay." **29** And Moses said to him, "When I have gone out of the city, I will spread out my palms to the LORD; the thunders shall cease, and the hail shall be no more, so that you may know that the earth ***belongs*** to the LORD. **30** And you and your servants, I know that you do not yet fear before the LORD God." **31** And the flax and the barley were struck, for the barley ***was in*** the ear, and the flax ***was in*** bud. **32** And the wheat and the spelt were not struck, for they ***were*** late. **33** And Moses went out from Pharaoh, out of the city, and he spread out his palms to the LORD; and the thunders and the hail ceased, and rain was not poured out on the earth. **34** And Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunders had ceased, and he continued to sin, and he made his heart heavy, he and his servants. **35** And the heart of Pharaoh was strong, and he did not let the sons of Israel go, just as the LORD had spoken by the hand of Moses.

EXODUS 10

The Eighth Plague: Locusts

1 And the LORD said to Moses (Moshe), "Go in to Pharaoh, for I, I have made his heart heavy and the heart of his servants, in order that I may set these signs of Mine in his midst, **2** and in order that you may recount in the ears of your son and of the son of your son how I have made sport of Egypt (Mitsrayim), and My signs which I have set among them; and you shall know that I ***am*** the LORD." **3** And Moses and Aaron (Aharon) went in to Pharaoh, and they said to him, "Thus says the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, 'Until when have you refused to humble yourself before Me? Let My people go, so that they may serve Me. **4** For if you ***are*** refusing to let My people go, look, I am bringing locusts into your territory tomorrow. **5** And they shall cover the eye of the land, and ***one*** shall not be able to see the land; and they shall eat the remainder of what has escaped, what remains to you from the hail, and they shall eat every tree that sprouts for you from the field. **6** And they shall fill your houses and the houses of all your servants and the houses of all Egypt, which your fathers and the fathers of your fathers have not seen from the day they were on the ground until this day.'" And he turned, and he went out from Pharaoh. **7** And the servants of Pharaoh said to him, "Until when shall this ***one*** be a snare to us? Let the men go, so that they may serve the LORD their God. Do you not yet know that Egypt has perished?" **8** And Moses and Aaron were brought back to Pharaoh, and he said to them, "Go, serve the LORD your God. Who and who ***are*** the ones going?" **9** And Moses said, "With our young and with our old we will go; with our sons and with our daughters, with our flock and with our herd we will go; for the festival of the LORD ***is*** ours." **10** And he said to them, "Let the LORD be so with you, just as I will let you and your little ones go!

9:26 Exod 9:4,6; Exod 11:7; Exod 10:23
9:27 Rev 11:19; Exod 10:16; 2 Chr 12:6
9:28 Acts 8:24; Rev 11:19; Exod 8:8,28
9:29 Rev 11:19; 1 Kgs 8:22,38; Ps 143:6
9:30 Isa 26:10; Prov 16:6; Isa 63:17
9:31 Ruth 1:22; Ruth 2:23; Amos 4:9
9:32 Exod 10:22
9:33 Exod 9:29; Exod 8:12; Exod 10:18,19
9:34 Exod 7:14; Exod 8:15; Eccl 8:11
10:1 Rom 9:17; Exod 4:21; Exod 3:20
10:2 Deut 4:9; Joel 1:3; Ps 44:1
10:3 Matt 17:17; 2 Cor 11:22; 1 Kgs 21:29
10:4 Rev 9:3; Prov 30:27; Exod 8:10,23
10:5 Rev 9:3; Exod 9:32; Joel 1:4
10:6 Heb 11:27; Rev 9:3; Exod 8:3,21
10:7 Rev 9:3; Exod 23:33; Josh 23:13
10:8 Rev 9:3; Exod 10:16,24; Exod 12:31
10:9 Rev 9:3; Exod 3:18; Exod 5:1,3
10:10 Rev 9:3; Exod 12:30,31; Exod 13:21

9:26 *Only in the land of Goshen* A wall of storm over Egypt and calm skies over Goshen. Again God made a clear difference between His people and those who opposed Him.
9:27 *I have sinned this time* Good words, but "this time" gives him away. He did not see his life of pride as sin, only this one act, and he spoke from fear of the storm, not sorrow over sin. "The grief of the world produces death" (2 Cor 7:10). Real repentance turns from the sin itself.
9:29 *I will spread out my palms to the LORD* The open-handed posture of prayer. The storm would stop "so that you may know that the earth belongs to the LORD."
9:30 *I know that you do not yet fear before the LORD God* Moses was not fooled, yet he prayed anyway. We pray for people even when we doubt their sincerity. Our prayers depend on God, not on how others respond.
9:31 *the barley was in the ear, and the flax was in bud* Spelt is a kind of wheat. Barley ripens earlier than wheat in Egypt, about January to March. It is the kind of detail an eyewitness gives, and it explains why the locusts still had something to eat. God spared part of the harvest, still leaving room for repentance.
9:34 *he continued to sin, and he made his heart heavy, he and his servants* Now the servants hardened with their king. Sin spreads from leaders to those who follow them.
9:35 *just as the LORD had spoken by the hand of Moses* Every refusal was already known to God. Nothing in this story was out of His control, and nothing in ours is either.
10:1 *I, I have made his heart heavy and the heart of his servants* Pharaoh had hardened his own heart many times, and now God was confirming it, so that He might set His signs in Egypt's midst.
10:2 *in order that you may recount in the ears of your son and of the son of your son* The plagues were lessons for Israel's children and grandchildren too. God wanted the story told at every table, generation after generation (Ps 78:4-7). Do the children in your life know the stories of God's faithfulness, in Scripture and in your own life?
10:3 *Until when have you refused to humble yourself before Me* The real issue was pride. Pharaoh would not bow.
10:4 *I am bringing locusts into your territory tomorrow* The eighth plague. Locusts were among the most feared disasters of the ancient world. A swarm could strip a country bare in hours and leave it facing famine. Joel 1-2 uses a locust plague as a picture of the coming day of the LORD. This time Moses did not wait for an answer.
10:7 *Do you not yet know that Egypt has perished* Pharaoh's own advisers told him the truth. Livestock dead, crops broken, water turned to blood, people covered in sores. Only Pharaoh refused to see it. Pride blinds a person to what everyone else can see.
10:9 *With our young and with our old we will go* Pharaoh wanted terms. Moses was clear: everyone and everything would go, "for the festival of the LORD is ours." The worship of God was for the whole family.
10:10 *Let the LORD be so with you, just as I will let you and your little ones go* Pharaoh meant it as a curse, something like, the LORD help you if I ever let your children go. He accused them of plotting escape.

See, for evil ***is*** before your faces. **11** Not so! Go, please, you men, and serve the LORD, for that ***is what*** you ***are*** requesting." And ***one*** drove them out from the face of Pharaoh. **12** And the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the land of Egypt for the locusts, so that they may come up on the land of Egypt, and they may eat every plant of the land, all that the hail has left." **13** And Moses stretched out his staff over the land of Egypt, and the LORD drove an east wind in the land all that day and all the night; the morning came, and the east wind carried the locusts. **14** And the locusts came up on all the land of Egypt, and they settled in all the territory of Egypt, very heavy; before them ***there*** had not been such locusts as them, and after them ***there*** shall not be such. **15** And they covered the eye of all the land, and the land grew dark; and they ate every plant of the land and all the fruit of the trees that the hail had left; and not any green thing was left on the trees and on the plants of the field in all the land of Egypt. **16** And Pharaoh hurried to call for Moses and for Aaron, and he said, "I have sinned against the LORD your God and against you. **17** And now, forgive, please, my sin only this time, and pray to the LORD your God, that He may remove from me only this death." **18** And he went out from Pharaoh, and he prayed to the LORD. **19** And the LORD turned a very strong sea wind, and it lifted the locusts, and it thrust them into the Red Sea; not one locust remained in all the territory of Egypt. **20** And the LORD strengthened the heart of Pharaoh, and he did not let the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) go.

The Ninth Plague: Darkness

21 And the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward the heavens, so that ***there*** may be darkness over the land of Egypt, and ***one*** may feel darkness." **22** And Moses stretched out his hand toward the heavens, and ***there*** was darkness of gloom in all the land of Egypt three days. **23** They did not see each man his brother, and ***each*** man did not rise from his place three days; and for all the sons of Israel ***there*** was light in their dwellings. **24** And Pharaoh called for Moses, and he said, "Go, serve the LORD; only your flock and your herd shall be held back; your little ones also shall go with you." **25** And Moses said, "You also shall give into our hand sacrifices and burnt offerings, and we will offer ***them*** to the LORD our God. **26** And also our livestock shall go with us; not a hoof shall be left behind, for from it we will take to serve the LORD our God; and we, we do not know ***with*** what we shall serve the LORD until we come there." **27** And the LORD strengthened the heart of Pharaoh, and he was not willing to let them go. **28** And Pharaoh said to him, "Go from me! Take heed to yourself; do not again see my face, for on the day you see my face you shall die." **29** And Moses said, "Rightly you have spoken; I will not again see your face anymore."

EXODUS 11

The Last Plague Announced

1 And the LORD said to Moses (Moshe), "Yet one plague I will bring on Pharaoh and on Egypt (Mitsrayim); after that he will let you go from here. When he lets ***you*** go, completely, he

10:11 Rev 9:3; Exod 10:28; Ps 52:3,4
10:12 Rev 9:3; Exod 7:19; Exod 10:4,5
10:13 Rev 9:3; Exod 14:21; Gen 41:6
10:14 Rev 9:3; Rev 9:4; Rev 9:5
10:15 Rev 9:3; Exod 10:5; Joel 1:6,7
10:16 Exod 9:27; Num 21:7; Num 22:34
10:17 Acts 8:24; Exod 8:8; Exod 9:28
10:18 Exod 8:9,28,29; Matt 5:44; Luke 6:28
10:19 Heb 11:29; Joel 2:20; Exod 13:18
10:20 John 12:40; Exod 4:21; Exod 11:10
10:21 Rev 16:10; Matt 27:45; Luke 23:44
10:22 Luke 23:44; Ps 105:28; Rev 16:10
10:23 1 Pet 2:9; Luke 23:44; Exod 8:22
10:24 Exod 10:8,9; Exod 8:28; Exod 9:28
10:25 Exod 29:1-46; Lev 9:22; Lev 16:9
10:26 Exod 12:32; Isa 23:18; Isa 60:5-10
10:27 Exod 4:21; Exod 14:4,8; Exod 10:1,20
10:28 2 Chr 16:10; 2 Chr 25:16; Amos 7:13
10:29 Heb 11:27; Exod 11:4-8; Exod 12:30,31
11:1 Exod 9:14; Lev 26:21; Deut 4:34

10:11 *Go, please, you men, and serve the LORD* He would keep the women and children as hostages. Satan still offers this: go and worship if you must, but leave your children with me. Many are glad to follow God themselves but do little to bring their children. God wants whole families: "I and my house, we will serve the LORD" (Josh 24:15).
10:13 *the LORD drove an east wind in the land all that day and all the night* God used a natural means, the wind, but He controlled its timing and strength.
10:15 *not any green thing was left* The swarm was so thick the land grew dark. Egypt, the breadbasket of the ancient world, was stripped bare.
10:17 *remove from me only this death* Pharaoh, who claimed to be a god, begged Moses for forgiveness. But he said "the LORD your God," not my God. He wanted the locusts gone, not God. He called them "this death" because without crops Egypt faced starvation.
10:19 *it thrust them into the Red Sea* A strong west wind from the Mediterranean swept them away. The Hebrew name is Yam Suph, sea of reeds. God sent the locusts with a wind and took them away with a wind. He controls all of nature. Pharaoh's confession lasted only as long as the trouble.
10:21 *one may feel darkness* The ninth plague came without warning: three days of thick, heavy darkness. The chief god of Egypt was Ra, the sun god, and Pharaoh was called the son of Ra. For three days Egypt's greatest god was blotted out. Some suggest a severe sandstorm as the means, but the focus is God's act.
10:23 *for all the sons of Israel there was light in their dwellings* People in Egypt were frozen where they sat, while Goshen had light. God "rescued us out of the authority of the darkness" (Col 1:13). Those without Christ walk in darkness. Those who follow Him "will have the light of life" (John 8:12).
10:24 *only your flock and your herd shall be held back* Pharaoh's final offer. Without animals, Israel could not worship and would have a reason to return.
10:25 *sacrifices and burnt offerings* A burnt offering was an animal wholly burned on the altar, showing that the worshiper gave himself fully to God. Pharaoh would even have to supply them.
10:26 *not a hoof shall be left behind* Israel did not yet know what God would ask, so they would take everything and hold it ready. That is a good way to live. If we hold all we have ready for God, nothing will be missing when He calls.
10:28 *on the day you see my face you shall die* Pharaoh told God's messenger to go away, and he got what he asked for. There may come a time when God stops pleading with a hard heart. "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts" (Heb 3:15).
10:29 *I will not again see your face anymore* Moses answered calmly. His last message (11:4-8) seems to belong to this same meeting, and then he left in burning anger. Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron again after the tenth plague (12:31), which many read as a message sent through servants or a final meeting Pharaoh called.
11:1 *Yet one plague I will bring on Pharaoh and on Egypt* The last. The king who said, "Israel I will not let go" (5:2) would soon drive them out, as God said from the start (6:1). Many think God spoke these words before Moses' last meeting with Pharaoh ended (10:29), and that verses 4 to 8 belong to that same meeting.

will surely drive you out from here. **2** Speak, please, in the ears of the people, that they may ask, each man from his neighbor and each woman from her neighbor, articles of silver and articles of gold." **3** And the LORD gave the favor of the people in the eyes of Egypt. Also the man Moses ***was*** very great in the land of Egypt, in the eyes of the servants of Pharaoh and in the eyes of the people. **4** And Moses said, "Thus says the LORD, 'About the middle of the night I ***am*** going out into the midst of Egypt, **5** and every firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sits on his throne, to the firstborn of the female servant who ***is*** behind the hand mill, and every firstborn of livestock. **6** And ***there*** shall be a great cry in all the land of Egypt, the like of which has not been, and the like of which shall not be again. **7** And against all the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) a dog shall not sharpen its tongue, from man and to livestock, so that you may know that the LORD sets apart between Egypt and Israel.' **8** And all these servants of yours shall come down to me, and they shall bow down to me, saying, 'Go out, you and all the people who ***are*** at your feet.' And after that I will go out." And he went out from Pharaoh with burning anger. **9** And the LORD said to Moses, "Pharaoh will not listen to you, so that My wonders may become many in the land of Egypt." **10** And Moses and Aaron (Aharon) did all these wonders before Pharaoh; and the LORD strengthened the heart of Pharaoh, and he did not let the sons of Israel go from his land.

EXODUS 12

The Passover Instituted

1 And the LORD said to Moses (Moshe) and to Aaron (Aharon) in the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim), saying, **2** "This month ***shall be*** for you the beginning of months; it ***shall be*** first for you of the months of the year. **3** Speak to all the congregation of Israel (Yisra'el), saying, 'On the tenth of this month they shall take for themselves, each man, a lamb for ***each*** house of fathers, a lamb for ***each*** household. **4** And if the household is too small to be ***enough*** for a lamb, then he and his neighbor who ***is*** near to his house shall take ***one*** according to the number of souls; each man according to his eating you shall count for the lamb. **5** Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male, a son of a year; you shall take ***it*** from the sheep or from the goats. **6** And it shall be for you for keeping until the fourteenth day of this month; and all the assembly of the congregation of Israel shall slaughter it between the two evenings. **7** And they shall take ***some*** of the blood, and they shall put ***it*** on the two doorposts and on the lintel, on the houses in which they eat it. **8** And they shall eat the flesh in this night, roasted ***with*** fire, and they shall eat it with unleavened bread

11:2 Exod 3:22; Exod 12:1,2,35,36; Gen 31:9
11:3 Acts 7:22; Exod 3:21; Exod 12:36
11:4 Matt 25:6; Job 34:20; Amos 4:10
11:5 Ps 78:51; Exod 4:23; Exod 12:12,29
11:6 Exod 12:30; Amos 5:17; Exod 3:7
11:7 Josh 10:21; Mal 3:18; Job 5:16
11:8 Rev 3:9; Exod 12:31-33; Isa 49:23,26
11:9 Rom 9:17; Exod 7:3; Exod 3:19
11:10 Exod 4:21; Exod 10:20,27; Exod 7:13,14
12:2 Deut 16:1; Exod 13:4; Exod 23:15
12:3 John 1:29; John 1:36; John 12:12
12:4 John 1:29; Heb 11:28
12:5 1 Pet 1:19; John 1:29; Heb 11:28
12:6 Matt 26:17; Mark 14:12; Luke 22:1
12:7 Heb 11:28; Luke 22:1; Exod 12:22,23
12:8 Matt 26:26; Mark 14:12; Luke 22:1

11:2 *articles of silver and articles of gold* Promised at the bush (3:21-22) and long before to Abraham, that his descendants would come out "with great possessions" (Gen 15:14).
11:3 *the man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt* The shepherd who fled for his life was now honored across the land. This is not boasting, for Moses "was very humble" (Num 12:3). It explains why the Egyptians gave so freely.
11:4 *About the middle of the night I am going out into the midst of Egypt* The most terrible warning in the story. This plague would come through no staff or hand. The LORD would go through Egypt Himself. Chapter 12 shows it came on the night of the fourteenth day of the first month.
11:5 *every firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die* A hard verse, not to be read lightly. The hand mill was the work of the lowest servant, so no one was too high or too low. Why would God do this? It was the judgment He warned of before the first plague (4:22-23), refused through nine plagues and many months. It matched Egypt's crime of drowning Israel's sons (1:22) and its long cruel slavery. And God, the giver of life, alone has the right to take it. We do not understand all His ways, but He is just, He warned many times, and He opened a way of escape through the blood (chapter 12).
11:6 *there shall be a great cry in all the land of Egypt* Years before, Israel had cried out in Egypt (2:23). Now Egypt would cry.
11:7 *against all the sons of Israel a dog shall not sharpen its tongue* Egypt would be full of wailing, and Israel so quiet that not a dog would growl. God has made a difference again and again (8:22; 9:4, 26; 10:23), and here most clearly. But as chapter 12 shows, Israel was not spared for being better people. They were spared by the blood of a lamb.
11:8 *he went out from Pharaoh with burning anger* Pharaoh's servants did bow and beg them to go (12:31-33). This was not the selfish anger of 2:12 but righteous anger at a pride about to bring death on a whole land. Jesus was angry, "grieved at the hardness of their heart" (Mark 3:5). Moses' anger did not lead him to sin. He gave God's message and left.
11:10 *the LORD strengthened the heart of Pharaoh* A summary of everything since chapter 7. Nine plagues had fallen, Egypt was ruined, and Pharaoh still would not bow. Some Egyptians listened; many did not. God still warns before He judges. The question is whether we will listen.
12:2 *This month shall be for you the beginning of months* God reset Israel's calendar to begin with the month of their salvation, called Abib (13:4), later Nisan, our March or April. Salvation is a new beginning. "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation" (2 Cor 5:17). Israel's life as a nation began with the Passover. Ours with God begins at the cross.
12:3 *each man, a lamb for each house of fathers* Each household chose its own lamb, sharing with neighbors if small, so no lamb was wasted and no family left out. Notice the steps: a lamb, the lamb, your lamb (12:5). It is not enough to know Christ died for the world. Each person must receive Him.
12:5 *Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male, a son of a year* Perfect, young and strong. We were redeemed "with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pet 1:19). Jesus is the only spotless One who ever lived.
12:6 *until the fourteenth day of this month* For four days the family lived with the lamb and saw it had no defect. Many have noticed that Jesus entered Jerusalem in the days before Passover and was examined by priests, Pharisees and Pilate, who said, "I find no cause in Him" (John 18:38). "Between the two evenings" means twilight, late afternoon. Jesus died about three in the afternoon (Mark 15:34-37), about the hour the Passover lambs were killed, though the exact calendar of that week is debated.
12:7 *they shall take some of the blood, and they shall put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel* The lintel is the beam over the door. The blood had to be applied. A lamb killed but its blood left in the basin protected no one. This is the gospel in picture: Christ's death is enough for all, but each must take it by faith. Moses kept "the sprinkling of the blood" (Heb 11:28) by faith.
12:8 *roasted with fire, and they shall eat it with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs* The lamb roasted with fire pictures the judgment that fell on our substitute. Bitter herbs recalled the bitterness of slavery (1:14). Unleavened bread, made without yeast, was the bread of haste. Leaven spreads through the whole lump, and in the Bible it often pictures sin (1 Cor 5:6-8).

and with bitter herbs. **9** Do not eat any of it raw, or boiled at all in water, but roasted ***with*** fire, its head with its legs and with its inner parts. **10** And you shall not leave any of it over until morning; and what is left over of it until morning you shall burn with fire. **11** And thus you shall eat it: your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it in haste. It ***is*** a Passover to the LORD. **12** And I will pass through the land of Egypt in this night, and I will strike every firstborn in the land of Egypt, from mankind and to livestock; and on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments. I ***am*** the LORD. **13** And the blood shall be for you for a sign on the houses where you ***are***; and I will see the blood, and I will pass over you, and ***there*** shall not be among you a plague for destruction when I strike in the land of Egypt. **14** And this day shall be for you for a memorial, and you shall celebrate it ***as*** a festival to the LORD throughout your generations; ***as*** a statute forever you shall celebrate it. **15** Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread; surely on the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses; for anyone eating leavened ***bread***, that soul shall be cut off from Israel, from the first day until the seventh day. **16** And on the first day ***there*** shall be a convocation of holiness, and on the seventh day a convocation of holiness for you; no work shall be done on them; only what is eaten by every soul, that alone may be done by you. **17** And you shall keep the unleavened bread, for on this very day I brought out your armies from the land of Egypt; and you shall keep this day throughout your generations ***as*** a statute forever. **18** In the first ***month***, on the fourteenth day of the month, in the evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first day of the month in the evening. **19** Seven days leaven shall not be found in your houses; for anyone eating what is leavened, that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether among the sojourner or among the native of the land. **20** Anything leavened you shall not eat; in all your dwellings you shall eat unleavened bread.'"

Israel Keeps the Passover

21 And Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and he said to them, "Draw out and take for yourselves flock ***animals*** according to your families, and slaughter the Passover. **22** And you shall take a bunch of hyssop, and you shall dip ***it*** in the blood that ***is*** in the basin, and you shall touch the lintel and the two doorposts with ***some*** of the blood that ***is*** in the basin; and you, you shall not go out, each man from the door of his house, until morning. **23** And the LORD will pass through to strike Egypt, and He will see the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, and the LORD will pass over the door, and He will not allow the destroyer to come into your houses to strike. **24** And you shall keep this thing as a decree for you and for your sons forever. **25** And it shall be, when you come to the land which the LORD will give to you, just as He has spoken, that you shall keep this service. **26** And it shall be, when your sons say to you, 'What ***is*** this service to you?' **27** that you shall say, 'It ***is*** a sacrifice of Passover to the LORD, who passed over the houses of the sons of Israel in Egypt when He struck Egypt, and He delivered our houses.'" And the people bowed low and worshiped. **28** And the sons of Israel went, and they did just as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron; so they did.

12:9 Luke 22:1; Heb 11:28; Deut 16:7
12:10 Luke 22:1; Heb 11:28; Exod 23:18
12:11 1 Cor 5:7; 1 Pet 1:13; Matt 26:19
12:12 Luke 22:1; Heb 11:28; Num 33:4
12:13 Heb 11:28; Luke 22:1; 1 John 1:7
12:14 Matt 26:13; Luke 22:1; Acts 20:6
12:15 1 Cor 5:7; 1 Cor 5:8; Luke 22:1
12:16 Luke 22:1; Num 28:18,25; Lev 23:2,3,7,8,21,24,25,27,35
12:17 Luke 22:1; Exod 7:5; Exod 13:8
12:18 Matt 26:17; Mark 14:12; Luke 22:1
12:19 1 Cor 5:7; Matt 26:17; Luke 22:1
12:20 Luke 22:1
12:21 Mark 14:12; Matt 26:17; Luke 22:7
12:22 Heb 9:19; John 19:29; Heb 11:28
12:23 1 Cor 10:10; Heb 11:28; Rev 7:3
12:24 Exod 12:14; Gen 17:8-10
12:25 Exod 3:8,17; Deut 4:5; Deut 12:8,9
12:26 Deut 32:7; Josh 4:6,7,21-24; Ps 78:3-6
12:27 1 Cor 5:7; Heb 11:28; Exod 12:11,23
12:28 Heb 11:28

12:11 *your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand* To gird the loins was to tuck a long robe into the belt to move quickly. They ate dressed for travel. Passover means the LORD would pass over the homes marked by blood. Those saved by Christ's blood should live ready to go, "awaiting the blessed hope" (Titus 2:13).
12:12 *on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments* None of them could protect even Pharaoh's own son.
12:13 *I will see the blood, and I will pass over you* God did not say, when I see how good you are. Israel's safety rested on the blood, not their goodness. An Israelite home without it would have suffered like an Egyptian home. Scripture does not say so directly, but it seems an Egyptian home under the blood would have been safe, since a mixed company left with Israel (12:38) and the door was open to sojourners (12:48). We are saved because God sees the blood of His Son, for "apart from shedding of blood there is no forgiveness" (Heb 9:22).
12:14 *this day shall be for you for a memorial* God wanted His people never to forget. Jesus ate the Passover the night before He died and said of the bread, "This is My body, which is being given for you; do this for My remembrance" (Luke 22:19). The Lord's Supper was born at a Passover table.
12:15 *Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread* The Feast of Unleavened Bread ran from the fifteenth to the twenty-first (12:18). To be "cut off" meant removal from the community, possibly death at God's hand. Paul applies it: "our Passover was sacrificed for us: Christ" (1 Cor 5:7), so "cleanse out the old leaven" (1 Cor 5:7). Salvation comes first, by the blood. A clean life follows.
12:16 *a convocation of holiness* A holy gathering on the first and seventh days, with no work except preparing food. These were days of rest and worship.
12:19 *whether among the sojourner or among the native of the land* A sojourner was a foreigner living among Israel. Whoever joined the feast was under the same rule. God's way was the same for everyone.
12:22 *you shall take a bunch of hyssop* A small plant with leafy stems, good for sprinkling. It was later used in cleansing (Lev 14:4), "purify me from sin with hyssop" (Ps 51:7), and a sponge on hyssop was lifted to Jesus on the cross (John 19:29). Safety was only inside the house under the blood, until morning.
12:23 *He will not allow the destroyer to come into your houses* Scripture does not define the destroyer. It seems to be an angel acting under the LORD's command (2 Sam 24:16; Heb 11:28).
12:26 *What is this service to you* God built teaching into worship. The children would see the lamb, the blood and the bitter herbs, and they would ask. Our children should see and hear our faith, and we should be ready to tell them what God has done.
12:27 *the people bowed low and worshiped* They believed God's word before the night came.
12:28 *they did just as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron* Saving faith obeys. Israel did not argue about the blood or try another way. "The faith, if it does not have works, is dead by itself" (James 2:17). Their faith showed in a lamb killed and blood applied.

The Death of the Firstborn and the Exodus

29 And it came about in the middle of the night, and the
LORD struck every firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the
firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne, to the firstborn
of the captive who ***was*** in the house of the pit, and every
firstborn of livestock. **30** And Pharaoh rose up ***by*** night, he
and all his servants and all Egypt; and ***there*** was a great cry
in Egypt, for ***there*** was not a house where ***there*** was not ***one***
dead. **31** And he called for Moses and for Aaron ***by*** night, and
he said, "Rise up, go out from the midst of my people, both
you and the sons of Israel; and go, serve the LORD as you
have spoken. **32** Both your flock and your herd take, just as
you have spoken, and go; and bless me also." **33** And Egypt
urged the people, hurrying to send them away from the land,
for they said, "All of us ***are*** dying." **34** And the people carried
their dough before it was leavened, their kneading troughs
bound up in their clothes on their shoulder. **35** And the sons
of Israel did according to the word of Moses, and they asked
from Egypt articles of silver and articles of gold and clothes.
36 And the LORD gave the favor of the people in the eyes of
Egypt, and they granted them ***what they asked***; and they
plundered Egypt. **37** And the sons of Israel set out from
Rameses (Ra'amses) to Succoth (Sukot), about six hundred
thousand on foot, the men, apart from little ones. **38** And
also a great mixed company went up with them, and flock
and herd, very numerous livestock. **39** And they baked the
dough which they had brought out from Egypt ***into*** unleav-
ened cakes, for it was not leavened, because they had been
driven out from Egypt, and they were not able to delay; and
also they had not made provisions for themselves. **40** And
the dwelling of the sons of Israel, which they dwelt in Egypt,
was four hundred and thirty years. **41** And it came about at
the end of four hundred and thirty years, and it came about
on this very day, all the armies of the LORD went out from
the land of Egypt. **42** It ***is*** a night of vigils for the LORD, to
bring them out from the land of Egypt; this night ***is*** for the
LORD, vigils for all the sons of Israel throughout their gener-
ations.

The Passover Rules

43 And the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "This ***is*** the
statute of the Passover: no son of a foreign ***land*** shall eat of it.
44 And every slave of a man, purchased with silver, and you
shall circumcise him, then he may eat of it. **45** A resident and
a hired worker shall not eat of it. **46** In one house it shall be
eaten; you shall not bring out any of the flesh from the house
outside; and you shall not break a bone of it. **47** All the con-
gregation of Israel shall do it. **48** And when a sojourner
sojourns with you, and would do the Passover to the LORD,
every male of his must be circumcised, and then he may
draw near to do it, and he shall be like a native of the land;
and any uncircumcised ***one*** shall not eat of it. **49** One law
shall be for the native and for the sojourner who sojourns in
your midst." **50** And all the sons of Israel did just as the LORD
had commanded Moses and Aaron; so they did. **51** And it
came about on this very day, the LORD brought out the sons
of Israel from the land of Egypt by their armies.

12:29 Ps 78:51; Exod 4:23; Exod 11:4
12:30 Exod 11:6; Amos 5:17; Prov 21:13
12:31 Ps 105:38; Exod 10:9; Exod 10:29
12:32 Acts 8:24; Exod 10:26; Exod 8:28
12:33 Ps 105:38; Exod 11:1; Gen 20:3
12:34 Exod 8:3
12:35 Exod 3:21,22; Exod 11:2,3; Gen 15:14
12:36 Acts 7:10; Exod 3:21; Exod 11:3
12:37 Num 33:3,5; Exod 38:26; Num 1:46
12:38 Num 11:4; Zech 8:23
12:39 Heb 11:27; Exod 6:1; Exod 11:1
12:40 Acts 7:6; Acts 13:17; Gal 3:17
12:41 Acts 7:36; Heb 11:27; Ps 102:13
12:42 Heb 11:27; Deut 16:1-6; Exod 12:14
12:43 Exod 12:48; Num 9:14; Lev 22:10
12:44 Gen 17:12,13,23
12:45 Lev 22:10; Eph 2:12
12:46 John 19:36; Num 9:12; John 19:33,36
12:47 Num 9:13; Exod 12:3,6
12:48 Num 9:14; Exod 12:43; Num 15:15,16
12:49 Num 15:15,16,29; Lev 24:22; Num 9:14
12:50 Deut 4:1,2; Deut 12:32; Matt 7:24,25

12:29 *the LORD struck every firstborn in the land of Egypt* Every word of the warning came true, from Pharaoh's son to the prisoner in the dungeon.
12:30 *there was not a house where there was not one dead* A heavy verse, never to be read with glee. God warned for months, and Pharaoh refused. Many suffered for their king's pride. God's judgment is real, just and terrible. That is why God provided the Lamb.
12:31 *go, serve the LORD as you have spoken* The proud king was broken. No more bargaining. Children, flocks and herds could all go.
12:32 *bless me also* The man who said, "I do not know the LORD" (5:2) now asked a blessing from the LORD's servants.
12:34 *the people carried their dough before it was leavened* They left in such haste that the bread had no time to rise.
12:36 *they plundered Egypt* Slaves who had nothing walked out with the wealth of Egypt, as God said (3:22; 11:2). Much of it would build the tabernacle (35:22).
12:37 *about six hundred thousand on foot, the men, apart from little ones* With women and children the total would be about two million or more. I take the number as written. Some scholars read the Hebrew word for thousand as a clan or military unit, which would make the number much smaller, but the careful count of 603,550 men in Numbers 1:46 is hard to read that way.
12:38 *a great mixed company went up with them* People who were not Israelites, likely Egyptians and others who had seen God's power and chose to go with His people. God's salvation was open to anyone who would come.
12:40 *four hundred and thirty years* God told Abraham of about four hundred years of affliction (Gen 15:13). Teachers count the 430 years two ways. Some take it as Israel's whole time in Egypt. Others count from the promise to Abraham, since Paul says the law came "four hundred and thirty years afterward" (Gal 3:17), which leaves about 215 years in Egypt. The Greek text of this verse reads that way too. Either way, God kept His timetable "on this very day."
12:42 *It is a night of vigils for the LORD* The LORD kept watch over Israel that night, and Israel would keep watch every year in remembrance. "He will not slumber and He will not sleep, the Keeper of Israel" (Ps 121:4).
12:43 *no son of a foreign land shall eat of it* An outsider who had not joined Israel could not eat, nor could a temporary resident or hired worker. A purchased slave could eat once circumcised, as part of the household. The Passover was for those inside the covenant, as the Lord's Supper is for those who belong to Christ (1 Cor 11:27-29).
12:46 *you shall not break a bone of it* The soldiers broke the legs of the men crucified with Jesus but not His, because He was already dead, "so that the Scripture might be fulfilled, 'A bone of His will not be broken'" (John 19:36). Jesus is the true Passover Lamb, down to the smallest detail.
12:48 *he shall be like a native of the land* A foreigner could join Israel's worship by joining the covenant through circumcision (Gen 17:10-14). The door was open to outsiders from the start, because God planned to bless all nations through Abraham's seed (Gen 12:3). In Christ that door is open wide to all who believe (Eph 2:12-13).
12:51 *the LORD brought out the sons of Israel from the land of Egypt by their armies* Moses led and Israel walked, but the salvation was God's. Four hundred thirty years of waiting ended in one night. God's promises can take a long time, but they are never late.

EXODUS 13

The Firstborn Set Apart

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe), saying,
2 "Consecrate to Me every firstborn, what opens every womb among the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), among mankind and among livestock; it ***is*** Mine." **3** And Moses said to the people, "Remember this day, on which you went out from Egypt (Mitsrayim), from a house of slaves; for by strength of hand the LORD brought you out from here; and leavened ***bread*** shall not be eaten. **4** Today you ***are*** going out, in the month of Abib (Aviv). **5** And it shall be, when the LORD brings you into the land of the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Amorite and the Hivite and the Jebusite, which He swore to your fathers to give to you, a land flowing ***with*** milk and honey, that you shall serve this service in this month. **6** Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day ***there shall be*** a festival to the LORD. **7** Unleavened bread shall be eaten the seven days; and leavened ***bread*** shall not be seen with you, and leaven shall not be seen with you in all your territory. **8** And you shall tell your son on that day, saying, '***It is*** because of what the LORD did for me when I came out from Egypt.' **9** And it shall be for you for a sign on your hand and for a memorial between your eyes, so that the law of the LORD may be in your mouth; for with a strong hand the LORD brought you out from Egypt. **10** And you shall keep this statute at its appointed time from days to days. **11** And it shall be, when the LORD brings you into the land of the Canaanite, just as He swore to you and to your fathers, and He gives it to you, **12** that you shall cause everything that opens a womb to pass over to the LORD, and everything that opens, offspring of livestock which you have; the males ***shall be*** the LORD's. **13** And everything that opens ***the womb*** of a donkey you shall ransom with a lamb; and if you do not ransom ***it***, then you shall break its neck; and every firstborn of mankind among your sons you shall ransom. **14** And it shall be, when your son asks you in time to come, saying, 'What ***is*** this?' that you shall say to him, 'By strength of hand the LORD brought us out from Egypt, from a house of slaves. **15** And it came about, when Pharaoh made ***it*** hard to let us go, that the LORD killed every firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of mankind and to the firstborn of livestock. Therefore I sacrifice to the LORD everything that opens a womb, the males, and every firstborn of my sons I ransom.' **16** And it shall be for a sign on your hand and for frontlets between your eyes; for by strength of hand the LORD brought us out from Egypt."

The Pillar of Cloud and Fire

17 And it came about, when Pharaoh let the people go, that God did not lead them ***by*** the way of the land of the Philistines, for it ***was*** near; for God said, "Lest the people regret when they see war, and they return to Egypt." **18** And God led the people around ***by*** the way of the wilderness ***to*** the Red Sea; and the sons of Israel went up armed from the land of Egypt. **19** And Moses took the bones of Joseph (Yosef) with him, for he had certainly made the sons of Israel swear,

13:2 Luke 2:23; Matt 1:25; Num 3:13
13:3 Mark 14:12; Deut 16:3,12; Exod 12:42
13:4 Exod 23:15; Exod 34:18; Deut 16:1-3
13:5 Exod 3:8; Josh 24:11; Exod 6:8
13:6 Exod 12:15-20; Exod 34:18; Lev 23:8
13:7 Matt 26:17; Acts 20:6; Exod 12:19
13:8 Exod 13:14; Ps 44:1; Exod 12:26,27
13:9 Matt 23:5; Rev 18:8; Exod 13:16
13:10 Exod 12:14,24; Exod 23:15; Lev 23:6
13:12 Luke 2:23; Num 18:15; Exod 34:19
13:13 Rev 14:4; Luke 2:23; Exod 34:20
13:14 Luke 2:23; Acts 13:17; Josh 4:6,21-24
13:15 Luke 2:23; Exod 12:29
13:16 Matt 23:5; Acts 13:17; Exod 13:9
13:17 Acts 7:39; Heb 11:27; Num 14:1-4
13:18 Heb 11:27; Exod 14:2; Num 33:6-8
13:19 Heb 11:22; Josh 24:32; Acts 7:16

13:2 *Consecrate to Me every firstborn* To consecrate is to set apart for God. On Passover night God spared Israel's firstborn by the blood. They were alive because God had bought them, so they belonged to Him. Later God took the tribe of Levi in place of the firstborn to serve at the tabernacle (Num 3:11-13). So with believers: "you are not your own" (1 Cor 6:19), "for you were bought with a price" (1 Cor 6:20).
13:3 *from a house of slaves* God wanted Israel to remember where they had been, so they would never want to go back. They did not free themselves. God did, "by strength of hand."
13:4 *in the month of Abib* Abib means ear of grain, the spring month when barley ripened. Israel's new life began in a season of new life.
13:7 *leaven shall not be seen with you in all your territory* Not just in the house but in all the land. Freedom from Egypt was to be matched by a clean break from the old life. God wants His people's whole lives marked by what He has done.
13:8 *It is because of what the LORD did for me when I came out from Egypt* Notice "me." Each father told the story as his own, and generations later every Israelite was to see himself in it. The LORD did this for me.
13:9 *for a sign on your hand and for a memorial between your eyes* The feast would be like a reminder tied to the hand and placed before the eyes. Later many Jews took this and Deuteronomy 6:8 as a command to wear small boxes holding Scripture, called phylacteries or tefillin, which Jesus mentions (Matt 23:5). Whether worn or not, God's saving acts should shape what we do, see and say.
13:12 *you shall cause everything that opens a womb to pass over to the LORD* The firstborn males of clean animals such as cattle, sheep and goats were sacrificed.
13:13 *everything that opens the womb of a donkey you shall ransom with a lamb* A donkey was unclean and could not be offered, so a lamb died in its place, or the donkey was killed. It could not be kept as if it were not God's. That is a picture of us: unclean, unable to come to God, and without a Lamb in our place we would die. Christ is that Lamb.
13:13 *every firstborn of mankind among your sons you shall ransom* Sons were never sacrificed. Israel was never to offer children as the pagans did. Each firstborn son was bought back, later for five shekels of silver (Num 18:15-16). Mary and Joseph presented Jesus at the temple under this law (Luke 2:22-23).
13:14 *when your son asks you in time to come, saying, 'What is this?'* Every firstborn lamb offered or son redeemed meant the story was told again. God tied memory to daily life. Faith is passed on best not only at church but at the dinner table, in the car, and in the questions children ask.
13:17 *God did not lead them by the way of the land of the Philistines* The coastal road was shortest but guarded by Egyptian forts and led into Philistine land. These lifelong slaves were not soldiers, and a battle so soon would break them. The shortest road is not always God's road. Sometimes He leads us the long way because He knows what we are ready for.
13:18 *the sons of Israel went up armed* The word may mean in battle array or organized in ranks. They left as an orderly people. The Hebrew for Red Sea is Yam Suph, sea of reeds. The crossing place is debated (the Gulf of Suez, the Bitter Lakes region, the Gulf of Aqaba and others), but it was a real sea, deep enough to drown Pharaoh's army (14:28).
13:19 *Moses took the bones of Joseph with him* Joseph believed God's promise so firmly that he gave orders about his burial in a land he would never see (Gen 50:25; Heb 11:22). After about four centuries his coffin went with Israel, to be buried at Shechem (Josh 24:32). Every Israelite who saw it was reminded that God keeps His word, even if it takes centuries.

saying, "God will certainly visit you, and you shall bring up my bones from here with you." **20** And they set out from Succoth (Sukot), and they encamped at Etham (Etam), at the edge of the wilderness. **21** And the LORD ***was*** going before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them ***on*** the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give light to them, to go by day and by night. **22** The pillar of the cloud by day and the pillar of the fire by night did not depart from before the people.

EXODUS 14

Pharaoh Pursues Israel

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe), saying, **2** "Speak to the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), that they turn back and encamp before Pi-hahiroth (Pi-Hachirot), between Migdol and the sea, before Baal-zephon (Ba'al-Tsefon); opposite it you shall encamp by the sea. **3** And Pharaoh will say of the sons of Israel, 'They ***are*** wandering in confusion in the land; the wilderness has shut ***in*** on them.' **4** And I will strengthen the heart of Pharaoh, and he will pursue after them; and I will be glorified in Pharaoh and in all his army, and Egypt (Mitsrayim) will know that I ***am*** the LORD." And they did so. **5** And it was told to the king of Egypt that the people had fled; and the heart of Pharaoh and his servants was changed toward the people, and they said, "What ***is*** this we have done, that we have let Israel go from serving us?" **6** And he harnessed his chariot, and he took his people with him. **7** And he took six hundred chosen chariots, and all the chariotry of Egypt, and officers over all of it. **8** And the LORD strengthened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued after the sons of Israel; and the sons of Israel ***were*** going out with a raised hand. **9** And Egypt pursued after them, and they overtook them encamped by the sea, every horse of the chariotry of Pharaoh, and his horsemen and his army, by Pi-hahiroth, before Baal-zephon. **10** And Pharaoh drew near, and the sons of Israel lifted up their eyes, and look, Egypt ***was*** marching after them; and they were very afraid, and the sons of Israel cried out to the LORD. **11** And they said to Moses, "Is it because there are no graves in Egypt ***that*** you have taken us to die in the wilderness? What ***is*** this you have done to us, by bringing us out from Egypt? **12** ***Is*** not this the word that we spoke to you in Egypt, saying, 'Cease from us, and let us serve Egypt'? For serving Egypt ***is*** better for us than our dying in the wilderness." **13** And Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid; station yourselves, and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will do for you today; for Egypt, whom you have seen today, you shall not again see them anymore, forever. **14** The LORD will fight for you, and you, you shall keep silent."

Crossing the Red Sea

15 And the LORD said to Moses, "Why do you cry out to Me? Speak to the sons of Israel, that they set out. **16** And you, raise your staff, and stretch out your hand over the sea, and split it, so that the sons of Israel may go into the midst of the sea on the dry land. **17** And I, look, I am strengthening the heart of Egypt, so that they may go in after them; and I will be glorified in Pharaoh and in all his army, in his chariots and in his horsemen. **18** And Egypt will know that I ***am*** the LORD, when I am glorified in Pharaoh, in his chariots and in

13:20 Num 33:5,6
13:21 1 Cor 10:1; Num 9:15-23; Deut 1:33
13:22 Ps 121:5-8; Rev 10:1
14:1 Exod 12:1; Exod 13:1
14:2 Jer 44:1; Num 33:7,8; Exod 14:9
14:3 Exod 7:3,4; Deut 31:21; Ps 139:2,4
14:4 Rom 9:17; Exod 7:5,17; Exod 7:3,13,14
14:5 Ps 105:25; Exod 12:33; Jer 34:10-17
14:7 Exod 15:4; Exod 14:23; Judg 4:3,15
14:8 Acts 13:17; Num 33:3; Exod 6:1
14:9 Exod 15:9; Josh 24:6
14:10 Heb 11:27; Josh 24:7; Neh 9:9
14:11 Acts 7:39; Heb 11:27; Ps 106:7,8
14:12 Acts 7:39; Heb 11:27; Exod 5:21
14:13 Heb 11:27; Exod 14:30; 2 Chr 20:15,17
14:14 Deut 3:22; Deut 20:4; Deut 1:30
14:15 Josh 7:10; Ezra 10:4,5; Exod 17:4
14:16 Exod 14:21,26; Exod 4:2,17,20; Exod 7:9,19
14:17 John 12:40; Rom 9:17; Exod 14:8
14:18 Rom 9:17; Exod 7:5,17; Exod 14:4

13:21 *the LORD was going before them by day in a pillar of cloud* God did not give Israel a map. He gave them Himself. The cloud led them, shaded them and showed He was near. The fire gave light and warmth in the dark. In 14:19 the pillar is linked with the angel of God.
13:22 *did not depart from before the people* Not once. Through all their grumbling and failure, the cloud stayed forty years (Neh 9:19). Believers today have the Holy Spirit within, and God has said, "I will certainly not leave you, nor will I ever forsake you" (Heb 13:5).
14:2 *encamp before Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea* The sites are not known today. What we know is that God led them into what looked like a dead end, with the sea in front. They did not get lost. Sometimes God leads His people where there is no way out except Him.
14:3 *the wilderness has shut in on them* Israel looked weak. God was setting a trap, and Israel was the bait. They obeyed even though it made no sense. Faith often means obeying first and understanding later.
14:4 *I will be glorified in Pharaoh and in all his army* God would gain glory through Pharaoh's last act of rebellion, so Egypt would know that He is the LORD.
14:5 *What is this we have done, that we have let Israel go from serving us* The grief of Passover night had passed, and they missed their slaves. Sin is like that. When we leave it, it often comes after us to drag us back.
14:7 *six hundred chosen chariots* Chariots were the most feared weapon of the ancient world, fast and deadly against people on foot. Egypt sent its best against former slaves with their families and flocks.
14:8 *the sons of Israel were going out with a raised hand* Boldly, openly, with confidence.
14:10 *they were very afraid, and the sons of Israel cried out to the LORD* Their confidence vanished in a moment. Crying out to the LORD was right. The trouble was what they said next.
14:11 *Is it because there are no graves in Egypt* Bitter sarcasm, in a land famous for its tombs and pyramids. Days after walking out free, they wished they were slaves again, the first of many times Israel would want to go back. Ten plagues and a Passover night were behind them, and still they panicked. How often have we done the same?
14:13 *station yourselves, and see the salvation of the LORD* One of the great words of faith in Scripture. Do not be afraid. Stand still. Watch God save. Salvation here means rescue from danger, and it would be the LORD's work, not theirs.
14:14 *The LORD will fight for you, and you, you shall keep silent* There was nothing for Israel to do but trust. That is how God saves sinners. We cannot fight our way out of sin and death. Christ has fought and won. "By grace you have been saved through faith" (Eph 2:8).
14:15 *Why do you cry out to Me* There is a time to stand still and a time to move. Prayer is never wrong, but when God has already spoken, we are to obey.
14:16 *stretch out your hand over the sea, and split it* The command looked impossible: walk forward into the sea. But God had a road where no one else could see one.
14:18 *Egypt will know that I am the LORD* The phrase runs through the whole story of the plagues. At the sea they would know.

his horsemen." **19** And the angel of God, who ***was*** going before the camp of Israel, set out and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud set out from before them and stood behind them. **20** And it came between the camp of Egypt and the camp of Israel; and ***there*** was the cloud and the darkness, and it lit up the night; and this ***one*** did not come near to that ***one*** all the night. **21** And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the LORD caused the sea to go by a strong east wind all the night, and He made the sea into dry ground; and the waters were split. **22** And the sons of Israel went into the midst of the sea on the dry land, and the waters ***were*** a wall for them on their right and on their left. **23** And Egypt pursued, and they went in after them, every horse of Pharaoh, his chariotry and his horsemen, into the midst of the sea. **24** And it came about in the morning watch, and the LORD looked down on the camp of Egypt in the pillar of fire and cloud, and He threw the camp of Egypt into confusion. **25** And He removed the wheels of its chariots, and He made it drive with heaviness; and Egypt said, "Let me flee from before Israel, for the LORD ***is*** fighting for them against Egypt."

The Egyptians Drowned

26 And the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, so that the waters may return on Egypt, on its chariots and on its horsemen." **27** And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the sea returned at the turning of morning to its enduring ***flow***; and Egypt ***was*** fleeing to meet it; and the LORD shook off Egypt in the midst of the sea. **28** And the waters returned, and they covered the chariots and the horsemen of all the army of Pharaoh that had gone in after them into the sea; not even one remained among them. **29** And the sons of Israel walked on the dry land in the midst of the sea, and the waters ***were*** a wall for them on their right and on their left. **30** And the LORD saved Israel on that day from the hand of Egypt, and Israel saw Egypt dead on the shore of the sea. **31** And Israel saw the great hand which the LORD had worked against Egypt, and the people feared the LORD, and they believed in the LORD and in Moses His servant.

EXODUS 15

The Song of Moses and Miriam

1 Then Moses (Moshe) and the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) sang this song to the LORD, and they said, saying, "I will sing to the LORD, for He has surely risen up in majesty; the horse and its rider He has thrown into the sea. **2** My strength and song ***is the*** LORD, and He has become salvation for me; this ***is*** my God, and I will praise Him; the God of my father, and I will exalt Him. **3** The LORD ***is*** a man of war; the LORD ***is*** His name. **4** The chariots of Pharaoh and his army He has cast into the sea; and the choicest of his officers have been sunk

14:19 Luke 9:34; Exod 13:21; Exod 32:34
14:20 Luke 9:34; Ps 18:11; Prov 4:18,19
14:21 1 Cor 10:1; Heb 11:29; Exod 15:8
14:22 Heb 11:29; 1 Cor 10:1; Acts 27:14
14:23 Acts 27:14; Heb 11:29; Exod 14:17
14:24 Acts 27:14; Heb 11:29; 1 Sam 11:11
14:25 Heb 11:29; Rev 11:12; Exod 14:14
14:26 Heb 11:29; Exod 14:16; Exod 7:19
14:27 Heb 11:29; Acts 7:36; Josh 4:18
14:28 Heb 11:29; Ps 78:53; Hab 3:8-10,13
14:29 Heb 11:29; Exod 14:22; Job 38:8-11
14:30 Jude 1:5; Heb 11:29; Ps 106:8,10
14:31 1 Cor 10:2; Heb 3:5; Heb 11:29
15:1 Rev 15:3; Acts 13:17; Ps 106:12
15:2 John 5:23; Col 2:9; Isa 12:2
15:3 Acts 13:17; Rev 19:19; Ps 24:8
15:4 Heb 11:29; Exod 14:13-28; Exod 14:7

14:19 *the angel of God, who was going before the camp of Israel* The same God who led from the front now guarded from behind. The angel of God is tied to the pillar and to the angel of the LORD at the bush (see 3:2).
14:20 *there was the cloud and the darkness, and it lit up the night* Darkness to Egypt, light to Israel. The same presence that brings light to God's people brings darkness to His enemies, as the gospel is "a scent of death to death" (2 Cor 2:16) to some "and to the other a scent of life to life" (2 Cor 2:16).
14:21 *the LORD caused the sea to go by a strong east wind all the night* God used a wind, as with the locusts, but no ordinary wind splits the waters into walls. This was a miracle.
14:22 *the waters were a wall for them on their right and on their left* Not mud, dry land. Picture two million people, children and old men, flocks and herds, walking all night between walls of water. They passed through "by faith" (Heb 11:29). Israel "were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea" (1 Cor 10:2), joined to their leader and cut off from Egypt for good, a picture of believers joined to Christ and cut off from the old life (Rom 6:4).
14:23 *they went in after them* Pride makes people reckless. They saw the path God made for His people and thought they could use it too.
14:24 *in the morning watch* The last hours before dawn.
14:25 *He removed the wheels of its chariots* Chariots stuck in mud or with broken wheels are useless. Egypt finally said what it should have said months before, "the LORD is fighting for them," just as Moses had said (14:14). But it was too late.
14:27 *the LORD shook off Egypt in the midst of the sea* At daybreak the sea returned to its normal flow, and the fleeing Egyptians ran straight into it.
14:28 *not even one remained among them* A solemn end. The army that came to drag Israel back was gone. The Egyptians who threw Hebrew boys into the water died in the water, after warning upon warning. Exodus 14 does not say whether Pharaoh himself drowned. God "shook off Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea, for His steadfast love is forever" (Ps 136:15). His judgment on Egypt was an act of love for His people.
14:29 *the sons of Israel walked on the dry land in the midst of the sea* Moses repeats it so we will not miss it. The sea that was death to Egypt was a road of life for Israel.
14:30 *the LORD saved Israel on that day from the hand of Egypt* The great salvation event of the Old Testament, recalled by psalmists and prophets (Ps 106:9-11; Isa 51:10). On the mountain Moses and Elijah spoke with Jesus of His departure, His exodus, "which He was about to fulfill in Jerusalem" (Luke 9:31). Jesus' death and resurrection is the greater exodus, freeing His people from sin and death.
14:31 *the people feared the LORD, and they believed in the LORD and in Moses His servant* Fear of the LORD and faith in Him came together. This is the high point of the first half of Exodus, but Israel's faith would soon waver. Faith built on one great moment needs feeding day by day. When the next trouble comes, look back at the shore and remember the great hand of the LORD.
15:1 *I will sing to the LORD, for He has surely risen up in majesty* The song is sung to the LORD about what He did, not about Israel's courage, for they had none. Egypt's chariots were its pride, and in one night God threw them into the sea. Praise is the right answer to salvation. In Revelation those who overcome the beast "sing the song of Moses the slave of God, and the song of the Lamb" (Rev 15:3). The God who saved Israel at the sea will save His people at the end.
15:2 *My strength and song is the LORD, and He has become salvation for me* The LORD does not only give strength. He is the strength, and He is the song. The words return in Psalm 118:14 and Isaiah 12:2. The God of their fathers was now their God. Faith handed down became faith they owned.
15:3 *The LORD is a man of war* Israel had no army that night. The LORD fought for them, as Moses said (14:14). God is a warrior against evil, and Christ will come again, "and in righteousness He judges and makes war" (Rev 19:11).

in the Red Sea. **5** The deeps cover them; they went down into the depths like a stone. **6** Your right hand, O LORD, ***is*** glorious in power; Your right hand, O LORD, shatters the enemy. **7** And in the greatness of Your majesty You throw down those who rise up against You; You send forth Your burning anger; it consumes them like stubble. **8** And by the breath of Your nostrils the waters were piled up; the streams stood up like a heap; the deeps congealed in the heart of the sea. **9** The enemy said, 'I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the plunder; my soul shall be filled ***with*** them; I will draw my sword; my hand shall dispossess them.' **10** You blew with Your breath; the sea covered them; they sank like lead in mighty waters. **11** Who ***is*** like You among the gods, O LORD? Who ***is*** like You, glorious in holiness, awesome ***in*** praises, doing wonders? **12** You stretched out Your right hand; the earth swallowed them. **13** You have led in Your steadfast love the people whom You have redeemed; You have guided ***them*** by Your strength to the abode of Your holiness. **14** Peoples have heard; they tremble; anguish has seized the inhabitants of Philistia (Peleshet). **15** Then the chiefs of Edom are terrified; the mighty ones of Moab (Mo'av), trembling seizes them; all the inhabitants of Canaan (Kena'an) have melted away. **16** Terror and dread fall on them; by the greatness of Your arm they are still like the stone, until Your people pass over, O LORD, until the people whom You have bought pass over. **17** You will bring them in and You will plant them on the mountain of Your inheritance, the place for Your dwelling ***which*** You have made, O LORD, the sanctuary, O Lord, ***which*** Your hands have established. **18** The LORD shall reign forever and ever." **19** For the horses of Pharaoh went in with his chariots and with his horsemen into the sea, and the LORD brought back the waters of the sea on them, and the sons of Israel walked on the dry ground in the midst of the sea. **20** And Miriam (Miryam) the prophetess, the sister of Aaron (Aharon), took the tambourine in her hand, and all the women went out after her with tambourines and with dances. **21** And Miriam sang to them, "Sing to the LORD, for He has surely risen up in majesty; the horse and its rider He has thrown into the sea."

Bitter Water Made Sweet

22 And Moses led Israel out from the Red Sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur; and they went three days in the wilderness, and they did not find water. **23** And they came to Marah (Mara), and they were not able to drink the waters from Marah, for they ***were*** bitter; therefore one called its name Marah. **24** And the people grumbled against Moses,

15:5 Rev 18:21; Neh 9:11; Exod 14:28
15:6 Ps 118:15,16; Isa 51:9; Ps 60:5
15:7 Isa 5:24; Deut 33:26; Isa 47:14
15:8 Ps 78:13; Exod 14:21; Job 4:9
15:9 Judg 5:30; Isa 53:12; Luke 11:22
15:10 Exod 14:21; Isa 11:15; Gen 8:1
15:11 Rev 4:8; 1 Sam 2:2; Isa 6:3
15:13 Gen 19:16; Eph 2:4; Ps 77:14,15,20
15:14 Num 14:14; Josh 2:9,10; Josh 9:24
15:15 Acts 13:17; Josh 5:1; Josh 2:11
15:16 2 Pet 2:1; Acts 13:17; Ps 74:2
15:17 Acts 13:17; Ps 44:2; Ps 80:8
15:18 Rev 11:15; Acts 13:17; Ps 10:16
15:19 Acts 13:17; Exod 14:28,29; Prov 21:31
15:20 Luke 2:36; Acts 13:17; Judg 11:34
15:21 Exod 15:1; 1 Sam 18:7; 2 Chr 5:13
15:22 Gen 16:7; Gen 25:18; 1 Sam 15:7
15:23 Num 33:8; Ruth 1:20
15:24 Exod 16:2,8,9; Exod 14:11; Exod 17:3,4

15:5 *they went down into the depths like a stone* A stone sinks and stays down, a judgment quick and complete. Micah uses the same picture for mercy: "You will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea" (Mic 7:19). What God buries, He does not dig back up.
15:6 *Your right hand, O LORD, is glorious in power* The right hand stands for strength and skill. Moses' staff was lifted, but God's hand did the work.
15:7 *it consumes them like stubble* Dry stalks burn up in a moment. God's anger is not bad temper. It is His holy, settled opposition to evil, and Egypt had stood against Him through ten plagues.
15:8 *by the breath of Your nostrils the waters were piled up* Chapter 14 says a strong east wind divided the sea (14:21). The song tells us whose breath that wind was. What looks like nature is often God's hand at work.
15:9 *I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the plunder* Seven times the enemy says I or my. Pharaoh's army planned the victory, counted the plunder and drew the sword.
15:10 *You blew with Your breath; the sea covered them* One line answers all the boasting. Proud men make big plans. God only needs to breathe. "He who sits in the heavens laughs" (Ps 2:4).
15:11 *Who is like You among the gods, O LORD* The plagues judged the gods of Egypt (12:12): the Nile, the frogs, the sun and Pharaoh himself. None could stand. The answer is no one. This is the first time the Bible calls God glorious in holiness, set apart and wholly pure. The rest of Exodus, the mountain, the Law and the tabernacle, teaches what it means to live near a holy God.
15:12 *the earth swallowed them* The sea is pictured as part of the earth that swallowed Egypt's army.
15:13 *You have led in Your steadfast love the people whom You have redeemed* Steadfast love is hesed, loyal love that keeps its promises. Redeemed means set free by paying a price, as God promised (6:6), paid in the blood of the Passover lambs. God did not save Israel to leave them in the desert. He was bringing them to Himself, as Christ suffered "so that He might bring us to God" (1 Pet 3:18).
15:15 *all the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away* This came true. Forty years later Rahab told the spies their hearts had melted when they heard how the LORD dried up the Red Sea (Josh 2:9-11).
15:16 *until the people whom You have bought pass over* Israel belonged to God because He bought them, as believers are bought with a price (1 Cor 6:19-20).
15:17 *You will plant them on the mountain of Your inheritance* God would plant His people like a tree, to put down roots and stay. A sanctuary is a holy place set apart for God, pointing to the tabernacle, then Mount Zion and the temple. God's goal was always to live among His people.
15:18 *The LORD shall reign forever and ever* Pharaoh claimed to be a god-king, and his reign was over. The LORD's has no end. One day heaven will say, "The kingdoms of the world have become those of our Lord and of His Christ, and He will reign to the ages of the ages" (Rev 11:15).
15:20 *Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron* The first time Miriam is named. She is very likely the sister who watched over baby Moses (2:4-8), though chapter 2 does not name her. A prophetess speaks for God. She led the women in worship with music and joy.
15:21 *Sing to the LORD, for He has surely risen up in majesty* Her song repeats Moses' first line. Worship in Scripture is often loud and joyful when God has done great things. There is a time for quiet awe and a time for tambourines.
15:22 *they went three days in the wilderness, and they did not find water* Shur lay east of Egypt in the northwest of the Sinai Peninsula. Three days without water in the desert, with children and animals, is a real danger.
15:23 *they were not able to drink the waters from Marah, for they were bitter* Marah means bitter. Imagine the hope at the sight of water and then the bitter taste.
15:24 *the people grumbled against Moses* Three days before they were singing. The people who sang of God's power doubted He could give them a drink. Grumbling is complaining that blames, and in Exodus it is really unbelief that says God will not take care of us. It will come up again and again.

saying, "What shall we drink?" **25** And he cried out to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a tree, and he threw ***it*** into the waters, and the waters became sweet. There He made for him a statute and a judgment, and there He tested him. **26** And He said, "If you will surely listen to the voice of the LORD your God, and do what ***is*** right in His eyes, and give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, all the sickness which I put on Egypt (Mitsrayim) I will not put on you; for I ***am*** the LORD who heals you." **27** And they came to Elim, and there ***were*** twelve springs of water and seventy palm trees; and they encamped there by the waters.

EXODUS 16

Israel Grumbles for Food

1 And they set out from Elim, and all the congregation of the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) came to the wilderness of Sin, which ***is*** between Elim and Sinai (Sinay), on the fifteenth day of the second month of their going out from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim). **2** And all the congregation of the sons of Israel grumbled against Moses (Moshe) and against Aaron (Aharon) in the wilderness. **3** And the sons of Israel said to them, "Who will give ***that*** we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the pot of the meat, when we ate bread to the full! For you have brought us out into this wilderness to put this whole assembly to death with hunger." **4** And the LORD said to Moses, "Look, I am about to rain bread from the heavens for you; and the people shall go out and gather the matter of a day in its day, so that I may test them, whether they will walk in My law or not. **5** And it shall be on the sixth day, and they shall prepare what they bring in, and it shall be double over what they gather day ***by*** day." **6** And Moses and Aaron said to all the sons of Israel, "***At*** evening, then you shall know that the LORD brought you out from the land of Egypt; **7** and ***in the*** morning, then you shall see the glory of the LORD, in that He has heard your grumblings against the LORD; and what ***are*** we, that you grumble against us?" **8** And Moses said, "***This shall be*** when the LORD gives you in the evening meat to eat and in the morning bread to be satisfied, in that the LORD has heard your grumblings which you are grumbling against Him. And what ***are*** we? Your grumblings ***are*** not against us, but against the LORD." **9** And Moses said to Aaron, "Say to all the congregation of the sons of Israel, 'Draw near before the LORD, for He has heard your grumblings.'" **10** And it was, as Aaron spoke to all the congregation of the sons of Israel, and they turned toward the wilderness, and look, the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud. **11** And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **12** "I have heard the grumblings of the sons of Israel. Speak to them, saying, 'Between the two evenings you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall be satisfied ***with*** bread; and you shall know that I ***am*** the LORD your God.'"

Bread From Heaven

13 And it was in the evening, and the quail came up and covered the camp; and in the morning there was a layer of the dew around the camp. **14** And the layer of the dew went up, and look, on the face of the wilderness ***was*** a thin, flake-like ***thing***, thin like the frost on the ground. **15** And the sons of Israel saw ***it***, and they said each man to his brother, "What ***is*** it?" for they did not know what it ***was***. And Moses said to them, "It ***is*** the bread which the LORD has given to you for

15:25 Exod 14:10; Deut 8:2,16; Exod 16:4
15:26 Deut 7:15; James 5:11; Ps 103:3
15:27 Num 33:9; Isa 12:3; Ezek 47:12
16:1 Acts 7:36; Num 33:10-12; Exod 15:27
16:2 Acts 13:18; Exod 15:24; 1 Cor 10:10
16:3 Acts 7:36; Acts 7:39; Lam 4:9
16:4 1 Cor 10:3; John 6:31-32; Matt 6:11
16:5 John 6:31; Exod 35:2,3; Lev 25:21,22
16:6 Acts 7:36; Exod 6:7; Num 16:28,30
16:7 John 11:40; Luke 2:9; John 6:31
16:8 Luke 10:16; Matt 10:40; John 6:41
16:9 John 6:31; Num 16:16; Exod 16:2,8
16:10 Luke 2:9; Exod 16:7; Num 16:19,42
16:11 John 6:31
16:12 John 6:31; Exod 6:7; Joel 3:17
16:13 John 6:31; Ps 78:27,28; Ps 105:40
16:14 John 6:31; Num 11:7-9; Ps 105:40
16:15 John 6:31; Matt 4:4; John 6:32

15:25 *the LORD showed him a tree, and he threw it into the waters, and the waters became sweet* The people grumbled at Moses. Moses prayed to God. When trouble comes we can do one or the other. Nothing is said of special wood; the healing came from God. Many Christians see a picture of the cross, called "the tree" (1 Pet 2:24), turning bitterness sweet. The New Testament does not draw that link here, so I hold it only as a picture. God was testing Israel to show what was in their hearts.
15:26 *I am the LORD who heals you* A new name for God. He healed the water and wanted to heal His people. The promise was part of His covenant with Israel, tied to obedience. It does not promise that a believer today will never be sick. But it shows God's heart to heal, and one day "God will wipe away every tear from their eyes" (Rev 21:4).
15:27 *twelve springs of water and seventy palm trees* After Marah came rest, shade and plenty. Twelve springs, one for each tribe, and seventy palms, perhaps one for each of the seventy who went down to Egypt (1:5), though the text does not say so. Marah was a test; Elim was a gift. If you are at Marah today, keep walking with the LORD. He knows where Elim is.
16:1 *the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai* The name has nothing to do with the English word sin. It was a desert region on the way to Mount Sinai. Israel had been traveling a month.
16:3 *when we sat by the pot of the meat* This time the whole congregation grumbled. Their memory had changed. They forgot the whips, the bricks and the drowned boys and remembered only the meat pots. When we are unhappy with where God has us, we often remember our slavery as better than it was. Grumbling always assumes the worst about God and His servants.
16:4 *I am about to rain bread from the heavens for you* God answered unbelief with bread, not judgment. Rain comes from God without our work. They could not earn or grow it, only gather it. God gave enough for each day, so every morning they had to trust Him again. "Give us today our daily bread" (Matt 6:11). Daily bread teaches daily trust.
16:5 *it shall be double over what they gather day by day* God already had the seventh day in mind.
16:8 *Your grumblings are not against us, but against the LORD* When we complain against the leaders God has given, or against our circumstances, we are often really complaining against God. Paul warned the church not to grumble as Israel did (1 Cor 10:10).
16:10 *the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud* The glory of the LORD is the shining, visible sign of His presence. They grumbled, and God showed up. His gifts are meant to show us who He is, "and you shall know that I am the LORD your God" (16:12).
16:13 *the quail came up and covered the camp* Large flocks of quail still cross the Sinai on their spring and autumn migrations, and tired birds land low where they are easy to catch. God used something natural but sent it at the exact time He promised.
16:15 *What is it* In Hebrew the question is man hu, the source of the name manna (16:31). Some try to explain manna as a natural substance, such as the sweet drops some insects leave on tamarisk trees. But that comes in small amounts a few weeks a year. Manna came six days a week for forty years, fed a nation, doubled on the sixth day and stopped on the seventh. This was a miracle.

food. **16** This ***is*** the word which the LORD has commanded: 'Gather of it each man according to his eating, approximately 2 quarts (an omer) per head, ***by*** the number of your souls; you shall take, each man, for those who ***are*** in his tent.'" **17** And the sons of Israel did so, and they gathered, the one who ***gathered*** much and the one who ***gathered*** little. **18** And they measured ***it*** with the omer, and the one who ***gathered*** much had no surplus, and the one who ***gathered*** little had no lack; each man had gathered according to his eating. **19** And Moses said to them, "Let no man leave ***any*** of it until morning." **20** And they did not listen to Moses, and men left of it until morning, and it bred worms and stank; and Moses was angry with them. **21** And they gathered it in the morning, in the morning, each man according to his eating; and the sun became hot, and it melted.

The Sabbath and the Manna

22 And it was on the sixth day, they gathered double bread, approximately 4 quarts (two omers) for the one; and all the leaders of the congregation came and told Moses. **23** And he said to them, "It ***is*** what the LORD has spoken: 'Tomorrow ***is*** a Sabbath rest, a Sabbath of holiness to the LORD. What you will bake, bake, and what you will boil, boil; and all the surplus, leave for yourselves to be kept until the morning.'" **24** And they left it until the morning, just as Moses had commanded; and it did not stink, and a maggot was not in it. **25** And Moses said, "Eat it today, for today ***is*** a Sabbath to the LORD; today you will not find it in the field. **26** Six days you shall gather it, and on the seventh day ***is*** a Sabbath; it will not be in it." **27** And it was on the seventh day, ***some*** of the people went out to gather, and they did not find ***it***. **28** And the LORD said to Moses, "Until when do you refuse to keep My commandments and My laws? **29** See, for the LORD has given you the Sabbath; therefore He is giving you on the sixth day bread of two days. Stay each man in his place; let no man go out from his place on the seventh day." **30** And the people rested on the seventh day. **31** And the house of Israel called its name manna; and it ***was*** like coriander seed, white, and its taste ***was*** like a wafer with honey. **32** And Moses said, "This ***is*** the word which the LORD has commanded: 'The fullness of the omer of it, approximately 2 quarts, ***is*** to be kept for your generations, so that they may see the bread which I fed you in the wilderness, when I brought you out from the land of Egypt.'" **33** And Moses said to Aaron, "Take one jar, and put there the fullness of the omer ***of*** manna, and set it down before the LORD to be kept for your generations." **34** Just as the LORD had commanded Moses, ***so*** Aaron set it down before the Testimony to be kept. **35** And the sons of Israel ate the manna forty years, until they came to an inhabited land; they ate the manna until they came to the border of the land of Canaan (Kena'an). **36** And the omer, it ***is*** a tenth of the ephah.

EXODUS 17

Water From the Rock

1 And all the congregation of the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) set out from the wilderness of Sin by their stages, at the mouth of the LORD, and they encamped at Rephidim (Refidim); and

16:16 Exod 16:18,33,36
16:18 2 Cor 8:15; 2 Cor 8:14,15
16:19 Exod 12:10; Exod 23:18; Matt 6:34
16:20 Matt 6:19; Luke 12:15,33; Heb 13:5
16:21 2 Cor 6:2; Prov 6:6-11; Eccl 9:10
16:22 Exod 16:5,16; Lev 25:12,22
16:23 Luke 23:56; Mark 2:27; Mark 2:28
16:24 Exod 16:20,33
16:25 Exod 16:23,29; Neh 9:14
16:26 Luke 13:14; Exod 20:9-11; Deut 5:13
16:27 Prov 20:4
16:28 Mark 9:19; Ps 78:10,22; 2 Kgs 17:14
16:29 Luke 23:56; Matt 24:20; Heb 12:25
16:30 Lev 23:3; Deut 5:12-14; Heb 4:9
16:31 Exod 16:15; Num 11:6,7; Song 2:3
16:32 Ps 103:1,2; Ps 105:5; Ps 111:4,5
16:33 Heb 9:4
16:34 Heb 9:4; Exod 25:16,21; Exod 27:21
16:35 John 6:49; John 6:31; John 6:58
16:36 Exod 16:16,32,33
17:1 Exod 16:1; Exod 19:2; Num 33:12-14

16:16 *approximately 2 quarts per head* An omer, an old dry measure. Each man gathered enough for everyone in his tent.
16:18 *the one who gathered much had no surplus, and the one who gathered little had no lack* When it was measured, everyone had exactly what they needed. Paul quotes this verse, "He who gathered much did not have excess" (2 Cor 8:15), to teach the church to share. What God gives us is not only for us.
16:20 *it bred worms and stank* The stored manna was proof of unbelief. They did not trust God to send more tomorrow. Disobedience to God's clear word is serious, and Moses was angry.
16:21 *the sun became hot, and it melted* The repeated "in the morning" shows a daily habit. If they wanted bread, they had to rise and gather early. The time to seek God is early, before the heat of the day takes over.
16:23 *Tomorrow is a Sabbath rest, a Sabbath of holiness to the LORD* The first time the word Sabbath appears. It comes from the Hebrew word for stop or rest. God rested on the seventh day of creation (Gen 2:2-3), and here, before Sinai, He gives the seventh day to Israel. How the Sabbath applies to believers today is discussed at 20:8.
16:24 *it did not stink, and a maggot was not in it* The manna that rotted on other days stayed fresh on the Sabbath. Rest is God's gift.
16:27 *some of the people went out to gather, and they did not find it* Some always test the rules to see if God means what He says, and their disobedience showed the heart of the people (16:28).
16:29 *the LORD has given you the Sabbath* A gift, not a burden. Slaves in Egypt never had a day off. Now God gave them one every week. "There remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God" (Heb 4:9), the deeper rest we find when we stop trying to earn God's favor and trust Christ (Heb 4:10).
16:31 *its taste was like a wafer with honey* Coriander seeds are small, round and pale, and the taste was sweet. God gave them not only enough but something good. Psalm 78:24-25 calls it "the grain of heaven" (Ps 78:24) and "the bread of mighty ones" (Ps 78:25), which many take to mean the bread of angels.
16:34 *Aaron set it down before the Testimony to be kept* The Testimony means the tablets of the Law, later kept in the ark (25:16). Moses writes after those things were made. Hebrews 9:4 says the golden jar of manna was kept in the ark.
16:35 *the sons of Israel ate the manna forty years* It stopped the day after they ate the produce of Canaan (Josh 5:12). Every morning but the Sabbath for forty years God fed them, even in the years they wandered for their unbelief. Jesus said, "I am the bread of life" (John 6:35), and "My Father gives you the true bread out of heaven" (John 6:32). Those who ate manna still died (John 6:49), but "If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever" (John 6:51). Have you come to Him for that bread?
16:36 *the omer, it is a tenth of the ephah* A note for later readers. An ephah was a dry measure of roughly two-thirds of a bushel.
17:1 *at the mouth of the LORD* At His command. The cloud led and they followed, so they were exactly where God wanted them, and there was no water. Being in God's will does not mean having no problems. Sometimes God leads us into a dry place on purpose, to test us and show His power.

there was no water for the people to drink. **2** And the people quarreled with Moses (Moshe), and they said, "Give us water, that we may drink." And Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the LORD?" **3** And the people thirsted there for water, and the people grumbled against Moses, and they said, "Why then have you brought us up from Egypt (Mitsrayim), to put me and my children and my livestock to death with thirst?" **4** And Moses cried out to the LORD, saying, "What shall I do for this people? Yet a little, and they will stone me." **5** And the LORD said to Moses, "Pass on before the people, and take with you ***some*** of the elders of Israel; and your staff, with which you struck the Nile (Ye'or), take in your hand, and go. **6** Look, I am standing before you there on the rock at Horeb (Chorev); and you shall strike the rock, and water shall come out from it, and the people shall drink." And Moses did so in the eyes of the elders of Israel. **7** And he called the name of the place Massah (Masa) and Meribah (Meriva), because of the quarreling of the sons of Israel, and because they tested the LORD, saying, "Is the LORD in our midst or not?"

Victory Over Amalek

8 And Amalek (Amaleq) came, and he fought with Israel at Rephidim. **9** And Moses said to Joshua (Yehoshua), "Choose men for us, and go out, fight against Amalek. Tomorrow I will be standing on the top of the hill, and the staff of God ***will be*** in my hand." **10** And Joshua did just as Moses had said to him, to fight against Amalek; and Moses, Aaron (Aharon), and Hur (Chur) went up ***to*** the top of the hill. **11** And it was, when Moses lifted up his hand, Israel prevailed; and when he let his hand rest, Amalek prevailed. **12** And the hands of Moses ***were*** heavy; and they took a stone and put ***it*** under him, and he sat on it; and Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one on this ***side*** and one on that ***side***; and his hands were steady until the sun went ***down***. **13** And Joshua overwhelmed Amalek and his people by the mouth of the sword. **14** And the LORD said to Moses, "Write this ***as*** a memorial in the book, and put ***it*** in the ears of Joshua, for I will surely wipe out the remembrance of Amalek from under the heavens." **15** And Moses built an altar, and he called its name "The LORD ***Is*** My Banner." **16** And he said, "For a hand ***is*** on the throne of ***the*** LORD: war ***belongs*** to the LORD with Amalek from generation ***to*** generation."

EXODUS 18

Jethro Visits Moses

1 And Jethro (Yitro), the priest of Midian (Midyan), the father-in-law of Moses (Moshe), heard all that God had done for Moses and for Israel (Yisra'el) His people, that the LORD

17:2 Matt 4:7; 1 Cor 10:9; Heb 3:9
17:3 Acts 7:39; Exod 16:3
17:4 Num 14:10; 1 Sam 30:6; John 8:59
17:5 Ezek 2:6; Acts 20:23,24; Exod 7:19,20
17:6 1 Cor 10:4; Ps 105:41; Ps 114:8
17:7 Heb 3:8-9; Acts 7:37; Matt 4:7
17:8 1 Sam 15:2; Gen 36:12,16; Num 24:20
17:9 Acts 7:45; Heb 4:8; Exod 24:13
17:10 Exod 24:14; Josh 11:15; Matt 28:20
17:11 1 Tim 2:8; James 5:16; Ps 56:9
17:12 Isa 35:3; 1 Thess 5:25; Col 4:2
17:13 Josh 10:28,32,37,42; Josh 11:12
17:14 Exod 34:27; Num 24:20; 1 Sam 30:1,17
17:15 Gen 22:14; Ps 60:4; Gen 33:20
17:16 Isa 66:1; Acts 7:49; Ps 21:8-11
18:1 Acts 7:35; Acts 14:27; Acts 7:36

17:2 *Why do you test the LORD* The Hebrew word for quarrel is the root of Meribah. It means to bring a legal complaint, and they put Moses, and really God, on trial. To test the LORD is to demand that He prove Himself, as if He had not already done so after the plagues, the sea, Marah and the daily manna.
17:3 *to put me and my children and my livestock to death with thirst* The same old complaint. Thirst is real and hard, but the way they spoke showed they did not trust God at all. Unbelief has a short memory.
17:4 *Yet a little, and they will stone me* Leaders carry heavy loads, and Moses feared for his life. He did the right thing and took the problem to God.
17:5 *your staff, with which you struck the Nile* The staff that brought judgment on Egypt would bring life to Israel. The elders went as witnesses.
17:6 *you shall strike the rock, and water shall come out from it* God Himself stood on the rock at Horeb, another name for Sinai or its range. Water came out for a whole nation and its animals (Ps 78:15-16). Paul says Israel drank "from a spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was the Christ" (1 Cor 10:4). Christ was struck for us so that living water could flow: "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink" (John 7:37). Later Moses struck a rock he was told only to speak to (Num 20), and many teachers see a reason in the picture: Christ was "offered once" (Heb 9:28) and need not be struck again.
17:7 *Is the LORD in our midst or not* Massah means testing and Meribah quarreling, lasting reminders of Israel's sin. The cloud was right there and manna fell every morning, yet they asked if God was with them. Psalm 95 warns, "do not harden your heart as at Meribah" (Ps 95:8), and Hebrews 3:7-19 applies it to us. Jesus answers the question: "I am with you all the days" (Matt 28:20).
17:8 *Amalek came, and he fought with Israel at Rephidim* The Amalekites descended from Esau's grandson Amalek (Gen 36:12). They struck from behind, picking off the weak and tired at the rear (Deut 25:17-18), a cowardly attack by a people who did not fear God.
17:9 *Moses said to Joshua* The first time Joshua is named. He would serve Moses forty years and then lead Israel into the land. His name means the LORD saves, the Hebrew form of the name Jesus. Joshua fought in the valley and Moses prayed on the hill. Both were needed.
17:10 *Moses, Aaron, and Hur* Hur appears again as a leader in the camp (24:14).
17:11 *when Moses lifted up his hand, Israel prevailed* The battle was not won by swords alone but as Moses held the staff of God toward heaven. Raised hands often go with prayer, "lifting up holy hands" (1 Tim 2:8). Victory comes from the LORD.
17:12 *Aaron and Hur supported his hands* Moses was eighty and tired. Even a great man of God cannot hold up his arms all day. This is a picture of the body of Christ. No one serves God alone, and leaders need people who will hold up their hands. Is there a pastor, missionary or tired friend whose hands you could hold up in prayer this week?
17:13 *by the mouth of the sword* That is, by its sharp edge.
17:14 *Write this as a memorial in the book* The first time God tells Moses to write something down, which fits the long belief that Moses wrote the books of the Law. God passed judgment on Amalek for attacking His people when they were weak. It came over centuries, under Saul (1 Sam 15) and David (1 Sam 30), and the last of them fell in Hezekiah's day (1 Chr 4:43). God keeps His word, even when it takes centuries.
17:15 *The LORD Is My Banner* A banner was a flag or pole raised over an army as a rallying point. Israel's banner was the LORD Himself, and the staff lifted on the hill pointed to Him. The root of Jesse "will stand as a banner of the peoples" (Isa 11:10). Jesus Christ is our banner, and we rally to Him.
17:16 *war belongs to the LORD with Amalek from generation to generation* The first words are hard in Hebrew. Some read banner for throne; others see an oath with a hand lifted to God's throne. The point is plain: the LORD swore lasting war on Amalek. Our battles are "against the spiritual forces of evil" (Eph 6:12), and we win them as Israel did, looking to the LORD, praying and standing together.
18:1 *Jethro, the priest of Midian, the father-in-law of Moses, heard* News of the exodus traveled fast. Jethro had taken Moses in forty years before (2:15-22).

had brought Israel out from Egypt (Mitsrayim). **2** And Jethro,
the father-in-law of Moses, took Zipporah (Tsipora), the wife
of Moses, after her sending away, **3** and her two sons, of
whom the name of the one ***was*** Gershom, for he said, "I have
been a sojourner in a foreign land"; **4** and the name of the
one ***was*** Eliezer, "for the God of my father ***was*** my help, and
He delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh." **5** And Jethro,
the father-in-law of Moses, came, and his sons and his wife,
to Moses, into the wilderness where he was encamped, ***at*** the
mountain of God. **6** And he said to Moses, "I, your
father-in-law Jethro, am coming to you, and your wife and
her two sons with her." **7** And Moses went out to meet his
father-in-law, and he bowed down and kissed him; and they
asked each man of his neighbor about ***his*** peace; and they
went into the tent. **8** And Moses recounted to his
father-in-law all that the LORD had done to Pharaoh and to
Egypt on account of Israel, all the hardship that had found
them on the way, and ***how*** the LORD had delivered them.
9 And Jethro rejoiced over all the good which the LORD had
done for Israel, whom He had delivered from the hand of
Egypt. **10** And Jethro said, "Blessed ***be*** the LORD, who has
delivered you from the hand of Egypt and from the hand of
Pharaoh, who has delivered the people from under the hand
of Egypt. **11** Now I know that the LORD ***is*** greater than all the
gods; for in the matter in which they acted presumptuously,
He was over them." **12** And Jethro, the father-in-law of
Moses, took a burnt offering and sacrifices for God; and
Aaron (Aharon) and all the elders of Israel came to eat bread
with the father-in-law of Moses before God.

Jethro's Counsel

13 And it was on the next day, and Moses sat to judge the
people; and the people stood by Moses from the morning
until the evening. **14** And the father-in-law of Moses saw all
that he was doing for the people, and he said, "What ***is*** this
thing that you are doing for the people? Why ***are*** you sitting
by yourself alone, and all the people standing by you from
morning until evening?" **15** And Moses said to his
father-in-law, "Because the people come to me to inquire of
God. **16** When they have a matter, it comes to me, and I judge
between a man and his neighbor, and I make known the
statutes of God and His laws." **17** And the father-in-law of
Moses said to him, "The thing that you are doing ***is*** not good.
18 You will surely wear out, both you and this people that ***is***
with you; for the thing ***is too*** heavy for you; you are not able
to do it by yourself alone. **19** Now listen to my voice; I will
advise you, and may God be with you. You be for the people
before God, and you bring the matters to God; **20** and you
shall warn them ***about*** the statutes and the laws, and you
shall make known to them the way in which they must walk
and the work that they must do. **21** And you, you shall look
out from all the people men of ability, fearing God, men of
truth, hating unjust gain; and you shall set ***these*** over them
as officials of thousands, officials of hundreds, officials of
fifties, and officials of tens. **22** And let them judge the people
at every time; and it shall be ***that*** every great matter they
shall bring to you, and every small matter they shall judge
themselves; and lighten ***the load*** from on you, and they shall
bear ***it*** with you. **23** If you do this thing, and God commands
you, then you will be able to stand, and also all this people

18:2 Acts 7:29; Exod 2:21; Exod 4:25,26
18:3 Acts 7:29; Exod 2:22; Ps 39:12
18:4 Ps 46:1; Isa 50:7-9; Heb 13:6
18:5 Exod 3:1,12; Exod 19:11,20; Exod 24:16,17
18:7 Gen 29:13; Gen 14:17; 1 Kgs 2:19
18:8 Neh 9:9-15; Num 20:14; Neh 9:32
18:9 Isa 44:23; Isa 66:10; Rom 12:10,15
18:10 Luke 1:68; Eph 1:3; 1 Pet 1:3
18:11 John 10:29; Acts 13:17; 2 Chr 2:5
18:12 Gen 31:54; Deut 12:7; Exod 24:5
18:13 Matt 23:2; Judg 5:10; Job 29:7
18:15 Num 15:34; Num 27:5; Exod 18:19,20
18:16 Exod 24:14; 2 Sam 15:3; 1 Cor 6:1
18:17 Matt 17:4
18:18 Num 11:14-17; Acts 6:1-4; 2 Cor 12:15
18:19 Num 27:5; Exod 3:12; Gen 39:2
18:20 Deut 5:1; Ps 143:8; Deut 1:18
18:21 Acts 6:3; 2 Chr 19:5-10; Deut 16:18
18:22 Num 11:17; Exod 18:26; Lev 24:11
18:23 Exod 18:18; Gen 21:10-12; 1 Sam 8:6,7,22

18:2 *after her sending away* Moses had sent his wife and sons back to Jethro, perhaps after the trouble on the road (4:24-26) or for safety during the plagues. Scripture doesn't say why.
18:4 *the God of my father was my help* Gershom recalls exile, "a sojourner in a foreign land." Eliezer means my God is help. The first name speaks of loss, the second of God's help. That is the story of many believers' lives.
18:5 *at the mountain of God* Mount Sinai, where God called Moses (3:1). Israel arrives there in 19:1-2, so the writer may be telling this visit a little out of time order to keep Jethro's story together. Some take the order as strictly chronological.
18:7 *he bowed down and kissed him* The leader of a great nation honored his father-in-law with deep respect. Greatness does not cancel humility.
18:8 *how the LORD had delivered them* Moses told the hard parts and the victories, and the hero was the LORD, not himself. When we tell our story, the hero should be God.
18:11 *Now I know that the LORD is greater than all the gods* This was the purpose of the plagues. A priest from outside Israel came to know the LORD is above every god. Whether he already worshiped the LORD or came to faith here is debated. The rest of the verse is short and hard in Hebrew, but the sense is that God proved greater in the very thing the Egyptians acted proudly about.
18:12 *to eat bread with the father-in-law of Moses before God* A shared meal was a sign of fellowship and peace. God always meant people from every nation to know Him (Gen 12:3). Jethro was a foretaste of that, and so are we.
18:13 *the people stood by Moses from the morning until the evening* Every dispute in a nation of two million came to one man. The line must have been endless.
18:16 *I make known the statutes of God and His laws* Moses was helping people find God's will. It was a good thing done the wrong way.
18:17 *The thing that you are doing is not good* Jethro did not flatter his famous son-in-law. A true friend tells us the truth.
18:18 *you are not able to do it by yourself alone* Moses would burn out and the people would wear out waiting. Many in ministry try to do everything themselves. It may look like faithfulness, but it can be pride or fear of letting go. God never meant one person to carry the whole load.
18:19 *You be for the people before God* Jethro offered his counsel humbly and wanted it tested before God (18:23). Moses would keep the most important work: standing between God and the people in prayer.
18:20 *you shall make known to them the way in which they must walk* Teaching. If the people knew God's laws, many problems would be settled before they reached a judge. The apostles made a similar choice so they could give themselves to prayer and the ministry of the word (Acts 6:2-4).
18:21 *men of ability, fearing God, men of truth, hating unjust gain* Capable, answerable to God, honest, and hating bribes. These are still the right qualities for leaders in church, government and business, and Paul's lists for elders and deacons sound much the same (1 Tim 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9). Skill without character is dangerous.
18:22 *every great matter they shall bring to you* Small cases were judged close to home, and Moses handled the hard ones.
18:23 *If you do this thing, and God commands you* Jethro was wise enough to say, check this with God.

shall go to its place in peace." **24** And Moses listened to the voice of his father-in-law, and he did all that he had said. **25** And Moses chose men of ability from all Israel, and he made them heads over the people, officials of thousands, officials of hundreds, officials of fifties, and officials of tens. **26** And they judged the people at every time; the difficult matter they brought to Moses, and every small matter they judged themselves. **27** And Moses sent off his father-in-law, and he went his way to his land.

EXODUS 19

Israel at Mount Sinai

1 In the third month of the going out of the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim), on this day, they came ***to*** the wilderness of Sinai (Sinay). **2** And they set out from Rephidim (Refidim), and they came ***to*** the wilderness of Sinai, and they encamped in the wilderness; and Israel encamped there before the mountain. **3** And Moses (Moshe) went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob (Ya'aqov), and tell the sons of Israel: **4** 'You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and I carried you on the wings of eagles and brought you to Myself. **5** And now, if you will surely listen to My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be to Me a treasured possession out of all the peoples; for all the earth ***belongs*** to Me. **6** And you, you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These ***are*** the words which you shall speak to the sons of Israel." **7** And Moses came, and he called for the elders of the people, and he set before them all these words which the LORD had commanded him. **8** And all the people answered together, and they said, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do." And Moses brought back the words of the people to the LORD. **9** And the LORD said to Moses, "Look, I am coming to you in the thickness of the cloud, so that the people may hear when I speak with you, and also may believe in you forever." And Moses told the words of the people to the LORD. **10** And the LORD said to Moses, "Go to the people, and sanctify them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their garments; **11** and let them be ready for the third day; for on the third day the LORD will come down in the eyes of all the people on Mount Sinai. **12** And you shall set bounds for the people all around, saying, 'Take heed to yourselves ***against*** going up on the mountain and touching its edge; whoever touches the mountain shall surely be put to death. **13** A hand shall not touch him, for he shall surely be stoned or surely be shot; whether animal or man, he shall not live.' When the ram's horn draws out ***its sound***, they shall go up on the mountain." **14** And Moses went down from the mountain to the people, and he sanctified the people, and they washed their garments. **15** And he said to the people, "Be ready for three days; do not draw near to a woman."

18:24 Exod 18:2-5,19; Ezra 10:2,5; Prov 1:5
18:25 Deut 1:15; Exod 18:21; Acts 6:5
18:26 Exod 18:14,22; Deut 17:8; 1 Kgs 3:16-28
18:27 Num 10:29,30; Gen 24:59; Gen 31:55
19:1 Acts 7:30; Acts 7:36; Exod 16:1
19:2 Acts 7:30; Acts 7:38; Gal 4:24
19:3 Exod 3:4; Acts 7:38; Exod 20:21
19:4 Rev 12:14; Acts 7:36; Heb 8:9
19:5 Titus 2:14; 1 Pet 2:9; Heb 8:9
19:6 Rev 1:6; Rev 5:10; Matt 21:43
19:7 Exod 4:29,30; Exod 3:16; 1 Cor 15:1
19:8 Exod 24:3,7; Exod 20:19; Deut 5:27-29
19:9 Exod 19:16; Exod 24:15,16; Deut 4:11
19:10 Gen 35:2; Lev 11:44,45; Lev 15:5
19:11 Acts 7:38; Exod 19:16,18,20; Exod 34:5
19:12 Heb 12:20; Heb 12:21; Exod 19:21,23
19:13 Exod 19:16,19; Exod 21:28,29; Lev 20:15,16
19:15 Exod 19:11,16; 1 Sam 21:4,5; 1 Cor 7:5

18:24 *Moses listened to the voice of his father-in-law* Moses "was very humble" (Num 12:3). The man God spoke with face to face listened to an older man from Midian. Deuteronomy 1:9-18 adds that the tribes chose wise and respected men.
18:27 *he went his way to his land* Jethro went home, but his counsel shaped Israel for generations. Are you carrying alone what God meant to be shared? "Victory is in a multitude of counselors" (Prov 11:14).
19:1 *In the third month of the going out of the sons of Israel* Israel left Egypt on the fifteenth day of the first month. Now, about seven weeks later, they reached Sinai.
19:2 *Israel encamped there before the mountain* God promised at the bush, "you shall serve God on this mountain" (3:12). Moses stood where he had stood at the bush, now with the whole nation. Sinai is traditionally placed at Jebel Musa in the south of the Sinai Peninsula, though other sites, including some in Arabia, have been suggested.
19:4 *I carried you on the wings of eagles and brought you to Myself* The picture returns in Deuteronomy 32:11, an eagle carrying its young. God brought Israel not only out of Egypt but to Himself. Salvation is rescue from something and for Someone. And notice the order. God saved Israel first and then gave the Law. The Law was not the way to be saved but the way for a saved people to live, just as we are saved by grace through faith and then "created in Christ Jesus for good works" (Eph 2:10).
19:5 *if you will surely listen to My voice and keep My covenant* A covenant is a solemn, binding agreement that sets up a relationship, with promises and duties. God's covenant with Abraham was unconditional (Gen 15). The covenant at Sinai, often called the Mosaic or old covenant, tied blessings to obedience. A treasured possession is a king's private treasure. All the earth is God's, but He chose Israel as His special people.
19:6 *a kingdom of priests and a holy nation* A priest stands between God and people. Israel was to show the nations what God is like and bring them to Him, and to be set apart from them. Peter uses this language for believers: "a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His possession" (1 Pet 2:9). That does not mean the church has replaced Israel, for "the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable" (Rom 11:29). In Christ, believers from every nation share the calling to belong to God and make Him known.
19:8 *All that the LORD has spoken we will do* They meant it, but they did not know their own hearts. Within weeks they would dance around a golden calf (32:1-6). The Sinai covenant would show that left to ourselves we cannot keep God's law. The law "was added because of transgressions, until the seed should come" (Gal 3:19).
19:9 *so that the people may hear when I speak with you* God would speak so the people could hear, confirming Moses as His true messenger.
19:10 *sanctify them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their garments* To sanctify is to set apart as holy, to make ready for God. Washing clothes was an outward sign of inward readiness. You do not come into the presence of the holy God carelessly.
19:12 *whoever touches the mountain shall surely be put to death* Severe, and meant to be. Before anything else Israel had to learn that God is holy and sinful people cannot simply walk into His presence. The boundary protected them. Later the tabernacle, with its curtains, priests and sacrifices, would teach the same lesson every day and point to the One who would open the way.
19:13 *When the ram's horn draws out its sound* A ram's horn, or shofar, was blown as a signal. When it sounded long, the people could come near the mountain. The one who broke the boundary was to be stoned or shot from a distance, so no one would touch him.
19:15 *do not draw near to a woman* For three days husbands and wives kept apart. This does not mean marriage is sinful, for "Marriage is to be honorable among all, and the bed undefiled" (Heb 13:4). It was a time to set everything aside and give full attention to meeting God, as Paul allows couples to agree to do for prayer (1 Cor 7:5).

The LORD Comes Down on the Mountain

16 And it was on the third day, when it was morning, and ***there*** were thunders and lightnings and a heavy cloud on the mountain, and the sound of a ram's horn very strong; and all the people who ***were*** in the camp trembled. **17** And Moses brought the people out from the camp to meet God, and they stood at the lower part of the mountain. **18** And Mount Sinai smoked, all of it, because the LORD had come down on it in the fire; and its smoke went up like the smoke of the furnace, and the whole mountain trembled exceedingly. **19** And the sound of the ram's horn was going on and growing very strong; Moses spoke, and God answered him with a voice. **20** And the LORD came down on Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain; and the LORD called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up. **21** And the LORD said to Moses, "Go down, warn the people, lest they break through to the LORD to see, and many of them fall. **22** And also let the priests who draw near to the LORD sanctify themselves, lest the LORD break out against them." **23** And Moses said to the LORD, "The people are not able to go up to Mount Sinai, for You, You warned us, saying, 'Set bounds for the mountain, and sanctify it.'" **24** And the LORD said to him, "Go, go down, and you shall come up, you and Aaron (Aharon) with you; and let not the priests and the people break through to come up to the LORD, lest He break out against them." **25** And Moses went down to the people, and he spoke to them.

EXODUS 20

The Ten Commandments

1 And God spoke all these words, saying, **2** "I ***am*** the LORD your God, who brought you out from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim), from a house of slaves. **3** There shall not be for you other gods before My face. **4** You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any form which ***is*** in the heavens above, or which ***is*** on the earth beneath, or which ***is*** in the waters under the earth. **5** You shall not bow down to them, and you shall not be made to serve them; for I, the LORD your God, ***am*** a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of fathers on sons, on the third and on the fourth ***generation*** of those who hate Me, **6** and doing steadfast love to thousands, to those who love Me and to those who keep My commandments. **7** You shall not lift up the name of the LORD your God to emptiness, for the LORD will not leave unpunished whoever

19:16 Heb 12:18; Heb 12:21; Rev 4:5
19:17 Heb 12:18; Heb 12:19; Deut 4:10
19:18 Rev 15:8; Heb 12:26; Heb 12:18
19:19 Heb 12:21; Heb 12:18; Heb 12:19
19:20 Neh 9:13; Exod 19:11; Ps 81:7
19:21 1 Sam 6:19; Exod 19:12,13; Exod 3:3,5
19:22 Exod 24:5; Lev 10:1-3; Isa 52:11
19:23 Exod 19:12; Josh 3:4,5
19:24 Gal 3:19; Heb 12:18; Heb 12:19
20:1 Deut 4:33,36; Deut 5:4,22; Acts 7:38,53
20:2 Hos 13:4; Ps 81:10; Rev 11:8
20:3 Rev 19:10; Deut 5:7; Deut 6:5,14
20:4 Rev 13:14; Lev 26:1; Deut 4:15-19,23-25
20:5 John 7:7; John 15:18; John 15:23
20:6 John 14:21; John 14:15; Rom 8:28
20:7 Lev 19:12; James 5:12; Lev 24:11-16

19:16 *all the people who were in the camp trembled* Lightning, thunder, a heavy cloud, and the loud blast of a horn with no one blowing it.
19:17 *Moses brought the people out from the camp to meet God* The meeting was the whole point.
19:18 *Mount Sinai smoked, all of it, because the LORD had come down on it in the fire* Fire often shows God's holy presence, as at the bush. Hebrews 12:18-24 looks back on this day, "so fearful was the sight that Moses said, 'I am terrified and trembling'" (Heb 12:21). Believers in Christ "have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God" (Heb 12:22), to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant. We come with confidence through Christ, but "our God is also a consuming fire" (Heb 12:29). Grace does not make God less holy.
19:21 *lest they break through to the LORD to see, and many of them fall* God knew their curiosity could cost them their lives, and He repeated the warning because He cared. He did not want anyone to die.
19:22 *let the priests who draw near to the LORD sanctify themselves* These were probably firstborn sons or family heads who served before the Levites were set apart, though the text does not say who they were.
19:25 *Moses went down to the people, and he spoke to them* The scene is set for God Himself to speak the Ten Commandments. Some see God as a kind grandfather who overlooks sin. Sinai shows He is holy and to be feared, and yet He came down to meet His people. Through Jesus the way to this holy God is open to all: "No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6).
20:1 *God spoke all these words* Moses did not make up the Ten Commandments. God spoke them aloud to the whole nation (Deut 5:22) and later wrote them with His own finger (31:18). The Hebrew calls them the ten words (34:28). They are the heart of the Sinai covenant, and chapters 21 to 23 apply them to daily life. Jesus said, "I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill" (Matt 5:17). The law shows us our sin, for "through law is knowledge of sin" (Rom 3:20), and it is "our child-guardian to Christ" (Gal 3:24). No one is saved by keeping it, but it still shows what God is like, and nine of the ten are repeated in the New Testament for believers.
20:2 *I am the LORD your God, who brought you out from the land of Egypt* Before one command, God says who He is and what He has done. The commands come after the rescue. That is the gospel pattern. God does not say, obey Me and I will free you, but, I have freed you, now live as My people. We obey because He has already loved and saved us. "If you love Me, keep My commandments" (John 14:15).
20:3 *There shall not be for you other gods before My face* The first commandment comes first because everything flows from it. Egypt and Canaan were full of gods. Before My face means in My presence, and since God is everywhere, anywhere at all. Anything we love, trust or fear more than God becomes our god: money, comfort, approval, success, even family. Paul calls covetousness "idolatry" (Col 3:5). What do you run to first when you are afraid?
20:4 *You shall not make for yourself a carved image* The first commandment says whom to worship, the second how. Egypt worshiped gods shaped like birds, animals and fish. "God is spirit" (John 4:24), and any image shrinks Him to our size. At Sinai "you did not see any form" (Deut 4:15). Israel broke this within weeks with a golden calf they called a feast to the LORD (32:4-5). God has given one true image of Himself: Christ, "the image of the invisible God" (Col 1:15).
20:5 *I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God* Not petty or insecure, but the holy zeal of a husband who will not share his wife's love. Idolatry is spiritual adultery. Does God punish children for parents' sins? "A son shall not bear the iniquity of the father" (Ezek 18:20). Notice "of those who hate Me." When children follow their parents in hating God, the effects of sin pass down, as we see in many families.
20:6 *doing steadfast love to thousands* Judgment reaches three or four generations. Steadfast love reaches thousands, which may mean thousands of generations (Deut 7:9). God's mercy is far bigger than His anger, and one person who turns to God can change a family's course for generations.
20:7 *You shall not lift up the name of the LORD your God to emptiness* To use His name in a false, empty or careless way: a false oath, a curse, a promise we don't mean, or thoughtless habit. It goes deeper than words. To carry the LORD's name and live as if He does not matter also takes it in vain. Jesus taught us to pray, "let Your name be sanctified" (Matt 6:9).

lifts up His name to emptiness. **8** Remember the day of the Sabbath, to sanctify it. **9** Six days you shall labor and do all your work, **10** and the seventh day ***is*** a Sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall not do any work, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant, and your livestock, and your sojourner who ***is*** within your gates. **11** For ***in*** six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that ***is*** in them, and He rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the day of the Sabbath, and He sanctified it. **12** Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long on the ground which the LORD your God is giving you. **13** You shall not murder. **14** You shall not commit adultery. **15** You shall not steal. **16** You shall not answer against your neighbor ***as*** a witness of falsehood. **17** You shall not covet the house of your neighbor; you shall not covet the wife of your neighbor, and his male servant, and his female servant, and his ox, and his donkey, and anything that ***belongs*** to your neighbor."

The People Afraid; the Altar Law

18 And all the people were seeing the thunders and the flashes and the sound of the ram's horn and the mountain smoking; and the people saw, and they trembled, and they stood from a distance. **19** And they said to Moses (Moshe), "You speak with us, and we will listen; and let not God speak with us, lest we die." **20** And Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid; for God has come in order to test you, and in order that the fear of Him may be before your faces, so that you do not sin." **21** And the people stood from a distance, and Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God ***was***. **22** And the LORD said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel (Yisra'el): 'You yourselves have seen that from the heavens I have spoken with you. **23** You shall not make with Me gods of silver, and gods of gold you shall not make for yourselves. **24** An altar of earth you shall make for Me, and you shall sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and your peace offerings, your sheep and your cattle. In every place

20:8 Luke 23:56; John 5:10; Exod 31:13,14
20:9 Luke 13:14; Matt 12:2; John 5:10
20:10 Matt 12:2; Mark 2:24; John 5:10
20:11 Mark 2:27; Acts 4:24; Acts 14:15
20:12 Matt 15:4; Matt 19:19; Mark 7:10
20:13 Matt 5:21; Matt 19:18; Mark 10:19
20:14 Matt 5:27; Mark 10:19; Luke 18:20
20:15 Eph 4:28; Lev 19:11,13,35-37; Matt 19:18
20:16 Ps 15:3; Ps 101:5-7; Matt 26:59,60
20:17 Rom 7:7; Matt 19:18; Luke 18:20
20:18 Heb 12:18; John 12:29; Heb 12:19
20:19 Heb 12:19; Deut 18:16; Exod 33:20
20:20 Rev 1:17; Deut 13:3; Isa 8:13
20:21 1 Kgs 8:12; Ps 18:9,12; Ps 97:2
20:22 Neh 9:13; Deut 4:36; Heb 12:25,26
20:23 2 Cor 6:16; Exod 20:3-5; 2 Kgs 17:33,41
20:24 John 4:20; John 4:21; Deut 12:5,11,21

20:8 *Remember the day of the Sabbath, to sanctify it* Israel had met the Sabbath with the manna (16:23-30). Now it became part of the covenant. The New Testament does not repeat this one as a command for the church. Jesus said, "The Sabbath was made for the sake of man, not man for the sake of the Sabbath" (Mark 2:27), and Paul calls Sabbaths "a shadow of the things coming, but the body is of Christ" (Col 2:17; Rom 14:5). The early church gathered "on the first day of the week" (Acts 20:7). Believers differ: some hold the command now applies to Sunday, some keep the seventh day, and many see it fulfilled in our rest in Christ (Heb 4:9-10) while still valuing a weekly day of rest and worship. God made us to need rest, and He wants part of our time set apart for Him.

20:10 *you shall not do any work, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant, and your livestock* Work is good, and God commands six days of it. But everyone rested on the seventh, servants, animals and foreigners too. Where slaves and animals were worked without end, this was mercy.

20:11 *in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth* The Sabbath follows the pattern of creation (Gen 2:2-3). Deuteronomy 5:15 adds that Israel was to remember they had been slaves and the LORD set them free. Later God called it a sign between Him and Israel (31:13-17).

20:12 *Honor your father and your mother* Now the commands turn to people, beginning at home. To honor is to give weight to: obeying parents while young, respecting them always, caring for them when old (Mark 7:10-13; 1 Tim 5:4). Paul calls it the first commandment with a promise (Eph 6:2-3). A nation of strong families lasts. Honor does not mean following parents into sin or staying under abuse, but how we treat our parents matters to God.

20:13 *You shall not murder* Life is sacred because every person bears God's image (Gen 9:6). The Hebrew word means unlawful killing, which is why the SLB says murder. The same Law allows just war and the death penalty for murder (21:12). Jesus went to the heart: anger and contempt bring judgment (Matt 5:21-22), and "Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer" (1 John 3:15).

20:14 *You shall not commit adultery* God made marriage one man and one woman for life (Gen 2:24). Adultery breaks that covenant, wounds spouse and children, and sins against God (Gen 39:9). "Everyone who looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matt 5:28). All of us, married or single, are called to purity. Where we have failed, Christ forgives those who confess (1 John 1:9).

20:15 *You shall not steal* God gives people the right to own things. Stealing includes cheating in business, unfair wages, a dishonest day's work and unpaid debts. Grace turns the thief into a giver: "Let the one who steals no longer steal, but rather let him labor, working with the hands what is good, so that he may have something to share with the one who has need" (Eph 4:28).

20:16 *You shall not answer against your neighbor as a witness of falsehood* First in court, where a false witness could ruin a man or cost his life. The Law required two or three witnesses and gave the false witness the punishment he sought (Deut 19:15-19). But it reaches all our words: lies, gossip, slander, twisted truth. Jesus was condemned by false witnesses (Mark 14:56-57). "Speak truth each one with his neighbor" (Eph 4:25).

20:17 *You shall not covet* To covet is to desire strongly what belongs to another. The first nine could in part be kept outwardly. This one is all in the heart, where only God sees. It showed Paul his sin: "I also had not known covetousness except that the law was saying, 'You shall not covet'" (Rom 7:7). The law shows us we need a Savior. The cure is contentment: "I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am" (Phil 4:11). If we have God, we have enough.

20:19 *You speak with us, and we will listen; and let not God speak with us, lest we die* They wanted a mediator, and their fear was right in one way: sinners cannot stand before a holy God on their own. God said they had spoken well (Deut 5:28) and promised a Prophet like Moses (Deut 18:15-18), fulfilled in Jesus (Acts 3:22-23). "There is one God, and one mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim 2:5).

20:20 *Do not be afraid; for God has come in order to test you, and in order that the fear of Him may be before your faces* Not a contradiction. There is a fear that runs from God in terror, and a fear that respects Him and stays close in reverence. God wanted them to take Him seriously enough not to sin. "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge" (Prov 1:7).

20:21 *Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God was* The people stood far off, and Moses went in. Through Christ believers can now "draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith" (Heb 10:22).

20:23 *You shall not make with Me gods of silver* Here begins what 24:7 calls the book of the covenant, and it starts with worship. No image even beside the LORD. Within weeks Aaron would make a calf of gold (32:4).

20:24 *An altar of earth you shall make for Me* An altar is a raised place for sacrifice. A burnt offering was wholly burned as a gift to God. A peace offering was shared: part burned, the rest eaten by the worshiper in fellowship with God. The altar was to be simple. God wanted hearts that came His way. He chooses where He meets His people, later one place for His name (Deut 12:5), and now wherever they worship "in spirit and truth" (John 4:24).

where I cause My name to be remembered, I will come to you, and I will bless you. **25** And if you make for Me an altar of stones, you shall not build them ***of*** hewn ***stone***; for you have wielded your tool on it, and you have profaned it. **26** And you shall not go up by steps to My altar, that your nakedness may not be uncovered on it.'"

EXODUS 21

Laws About Servants

1 "And these ***are*** the judgments which you shall set before them. **2** When you buy a Hebrew slave, six years he shall serve, and in the seventh he shall go out free, for nothing. **3** If he comes in by himself, he shall go out by himself; if he ***is*** the husband of a wife, then his wife shall go out with him. **4** If his master gives him a wife, and she bears him sons or daughters, the woman and her children shall belong to her master, and he shall go out by himself. **5** And if the slave surely says, 'I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free,' **6** then his master shall bring him near to God, and he shall bring him near to the door or to the doorpost; and his master shall pierce his ear with the awl, and he shall serve him forever. **7** And if a man sells his daughter as a female slave, she shall not go out as the male slaves go out. **8** If she ***is*** evil in the eyes of her master, who designated her for himself, then he shall let her be ransomed; he shall not have rule to sell her to a foreign people, in his dealing treacherously with her. **9** And if he designates her for his son, he shall deal with her according to the judgment of the daughters. **10** If he takes another for himself, her food, her covering, and her marital right he shall not reduce. **11** And if he does not do these three for her, then she shall go out for nothing, without money.

Laws About Violence and Injuries

12 Whoever strikes a man, and he dies, shall surely be put to death. **13** And ***if*** he did not lie in wait, but God let ***him*** fall into his hand, then I will designate for you a place to which he may flee. **14** And if a man acts presumptuously against his neighbor, to kill him with cunning, you shall take him from My altar to die. **15** And whoever strikes his father or his mother shall surely be put to death. **16** And whoever steals a man, and sells him, or he is found in his hand, shall surely be

20:25 Deut 27:5,6; Josh 8:31
20:26 Lev 10:3; Ps 89:7; Eccl 5:1
21:1 Deut 6:20; Exod 24:3,4; Lev 18:5,26
21:2 Neh 5:1-5,8; Jer 34:8-17; Exod 12:44
21:3 Deut 15:12-14
21:5 Deut 15:16,17; 2 Cor 5:14,15; Isa 26:13
21:6 Zeph 3:3; Exod 21:22; Exod 12:12
21:7 Neh 5:5; Exod 21:2,3
21:8 Gen 28:8; Judg 14:3; 1 Sam 8:6
21:10 1 Cor 7:1-6
21:12 Matt 5:21; Gen 9:6; Lev 24:17
21:13 Josh 20:2-9; 1 Sam 24:4,10,18; Deut 4:41-43
21:14 1 Kgs 2:28-34; Heb 10:26; Num 15:30,31
21:15 Deut 21:18-21; Deut 27:24; Prov 30:11,17
21:16 1 Tim 1:10; Deut 24:7; Exod 22:4

20:25 *you shall not build them of hewn stone* Cut stone could become a work of art drawing attention to the builder. God's altar was to be as He made the stones. We cannot add to what God provides for our approach to Him. Many have seen a picture of the gospel: salvation is God's work, not something we shape (Eph 2:8-9).
20:26 *you shall not go up by steps to My altar* Pagan worship around Israel was often joined to sexual immorality. God's worship was to be modest and pure, and later the priests received linen undergarments (28:42-43). These altars point to the only sacrifice that truly takes away sin, Christ's, once for all (Heb 10:10-14).
21:1 *these are the judgments which you shall set before them* Judgments are legal rulings for the courts. These laws were given to Israel as a nation under the Mosaic covenant. Christians are "not under law but under grace" (Rom 6:14), and no one is saved by keeping law (Gal 2:16). Yet "Every Scripture is God-breathed and profitable for teaching" (2 Tim 3:16). These laws show God's justice, His care for the weak and the worth of every life, and their moral heart is repeated: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Gal 5:14). They were given in a hard world, often limiting customs that already existed, as Moses allowed divorce "in view of your hardness of heart" (Matt 19:8).
21:2 *six years he shall serve, and in the seventh he shall go out free, for nothing* The first law is about servants, fitting for a people just freed from slavery. This was a Hebrew who sold himself or was sold for a debt he could not pay, working it off with another family. It was not the slavery of the American South. It was not based on race and not lifelong. After six years he went free owing nothing, and he was not to be sent away empty (Deut 15:13-15). He was to be treated like a hired worker (Lev 25:39).
21:3 *his wife shall go out with him* His debt was not to break up his family.
21:4 *the woman and her children shall belong to her master* Hard to read. The wife the master gave was herself a servant under her own terms, perhaps a foreigner or one whose years were not finished. The man could go free but not take what was not his. Verses 5 and 6 show how the family could stay together.
21:5 *I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free* Notice the word love. This was a home where the servant was treated well enough that he wanted to stay for life.
21:6 *his master shall pierce his ear with the awl, and he shall serve him forever* "Near to God" may mean before the judges who served in God's name (Ps 82:6 uses the word for judges) or at the sanctuary. The pierced ear at the doorpost was a public sign of a free choice. Psalm 40:6 says, "ears You have dug for me" (Ps 40:6), applied to Christ in Hebrews 10:5-7. Many see in this servant a picture of Jesus, who in love took "the form of a slave" (Phil 2:7), though the New Testament does not tie it directly to this verse.
21:7 *if a man sells his daughter as a female slave* A very poor father might give his daughter to another family, planning that she would become a wife to the master or his son. This law did not let it be done carelessly. It protected her.
21:8 *he shall let her be ransomed* If the master did not want her as his wife, her family could buy her back, and she could never be sold to foreigners.
21:10 *her food, her covering, and her marital right he shall not reduce* In a world where a poor young woman had almost no rights, God's law gave her food, clothing, the rights of a wife and a way out if wronged (21:11). God's design was always one man and one woman (Gen 2:24; Matt 19:4-6). The Law does not praise a second wife. It limits the harm when men took one.
21:12 *Whoever strikes a man, and he dies, shall surely be put to death* Murder was punished by death, going back to God's word to Noah: "Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man his blood shall be shed; for in the image of God He made man" (Gen 9:6). It was not that life was cheap but that it is precious.
21:13 *I will designate for you a place to which he may flee* For an accidental killing God promised a place of safety, later the cities of refuge (Num 35; Josh 20), where the killer was safe until his case was judged.
21:14 *you shall take him from My altar to die* A murderer could not hide by grabbing the altar. God's mercy is not a shelter for the unrepentant.
21:15 *whoever strikes his father or his mother shall surely be put to death* In Israel the family was the foundation of the nation, so attacking parents attacked the order God made. It is the fifth commandment taken seriously (20:12). Such cases came before the elders, not a hot-tempered father (Deut 21:18-21).
21:16 *whoever steals a man, and sells him* Kidnapping to sell a person was a capital crime. The trade that carried millions of Africans across the ocean was built on exactly this sin, and Paul lists "enslavers" among the lawless (1 Tim 1:10). Those who used the Bible to defend that trade twisted it.

put to death. **17** And whoever curses his father or his mother shall surely be put to death. **18** And if men quarrel, and a man strikes his neighbor with a stone or with a fist, and he does not die, and he falls to bed, **19** if he rises and walks about outside on his staff, then the one who struck ***him*** shall be free of guilt; only he shall pay ***for*** his sitting ***idle***, and he shall surely have ***him*** healed. **20** And if a man strikes his male slave or his female slave with the rod, and he dies under his hand, he shall surely be avenged. **21** Only, if he remains a day or two days, he shall not be avenged; for he ***is*** his money. **22** And if men struggle together, and they strike a pregnant woman, and her children come out, and there is no harm, he shall surely be fined, just as the husband of the woman lays on him; and he shall give by judges. **23** And if there is harm, then you shall give life for life, **24** eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, **25** burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe. **26** And if a man strikes the eye of his male slave or the eye of his female slave, and destroys it, he shall set him free for his eye. **27** And if he knocks out the tooth of his male slave or the tooth of his female slave, he shall set him free for his tooth.

Laws About Animals

28 And if an ox gores a man or a woman, and he dies, the ox shall surely be stoned, and its flesh shall not be eaten; and the owner of the ox ***shall be*** free of guilt. **29** And if the ox ***was*** prone to gore from yesterday ***and*** the day before, and it has been testified to its owner, and he does not guard it, and it kills a man or a woman, the ox shall be stoned, and also its owner shall be put to death. **30** If a ransom is laid on him, then he shall give the ransom of his life according to all that is laid on him. **31** Whether it gores a son or gores a daughter, according to this judgment it shall be done to him. **32** If the ox gores a male slave or a female slave, he shall give to his master approximately 12 ounces (thirty shekels) of silver, and the ox shall be stoned. **33** And if a man opens a pit, or if a man digs a pit and does not cover it, and an ox or a donkey falls into it, **34** the owner of the pit shall make restitution; he shall return money to its owner, and the dead ***animal*** shall be his. **35** And if the ox of a man strikes the ox of his neighbor, and it dies, then they shall sell the living ox and divide its money, and also the dead ***animal*** they shall divide. **36** Or ***if*** it is known that the ox ***was*** prone to gore from yesterday ***and*** the day before, and its owner has not guarded it, he shall surely make restitution, ox for ox, and the dead ***animal*** shall be his.

EXODUS 22

Laws About Property

1 If a man steals an ox or a sheep, and slaughters it or sells it, he shall make restitution ***with*** five cattle for the ox and four

21:17 Matt 15:4-6; Mark 7:10; Mark 7:11
21:18 Exod 21:20; Exod 21:22; Exod 2:13
21:19 2 Sam 3:29; Zech 8:4
21:20 Exod 21:26,27; Deut 19:21; Prov 29:19
21:21 Lev 25:45,46
21:22 Deut 22:18,19; Exod 21:30; Deut 16:18
21:23 Num 35:31
21:24 Matt 5:38; Deut 19:21; Exod 21:26,27
21:26 Exod 21:20; Deut 16:19; Neh 5:5
21:28 Exod 21:32; Gen 9:5,6; Lev 20:15,16
21:29 Deut 21:1-9
21:30 Exod 21:22; Exod 30:12; Num 35:31-33
21:32 Matt 26:15; Matt 27:9; Zech 11:12,13
21:33 Ps 9:15; Ps 119:85; Prov 28:10
21:34 Exod 21:29,30; Exod 22:6,14
22:1 Luke 19:8; 2 Sam 12:6; Prov 6:31

21:17 *whoever curses his father or his mother shall surely be put to death* These death penalties were given to Israel's courts under the Mosaic covenant. The church does not carry the sword (John 18:36), though government "does not bear the sword in vain" (Rom 13:4), and Christians differ on how capital punishment applies today. These laws show how serious these sins are and what all of us deserve, since every one of us has dishonored our parents. Christ took the death we deserved (Rom 5:8).
21:19 *only he shall pay for his sitting idle, and he shall surely have him healed* The one who caused harm paid for the lost work and the medical care. Justice in God's law was not only punishment. It made things right for the one hurt.
21:20 *he shall surely be avenged* Around Israel a master could often kill his slave without penalty. Not in Israel. The servant's life mattered to God.
21:21 *for he is his money* One of the hardest lines in the Law. It covers a case where intent to kill was unclear, and the loss of the servant's work was counted as the master's penalty. It does not mean a servant was only property; verses 26 and 27 show the opposite. The New Testament goes much further: "Masters, grant to the slaves what is righteous and fair" (Col 4:1), and a slave is "a beloved brother" (Phlm 1:16).
21:22 *they strike a pregnant woman, and her children come out* Good teachers read this two ways. Many take it, as the SLB's words suggest, as a premature birth. If mother and child are unharmed, there is a fine; if there is harm to either, the penalty matches it, even life for life, so the unborn child counts as a full person. Others read a miscarriage, with the fine for the child and the harm meaning harm to the mother. Even then the unborn life has value. Scripture shows God forms and knows children in the womb (Ps 139:13; Jer 1:5; Luke 1:41).
21:24 *eye for eye, tooth for tooth* The law of equal justice, given to judges, not to people taking revenge. It limited punishment to the harm done, no more and no less, and kept the rich from buying their way out. A payment could stand in for some penalties (21:30), and since a ransom is forbidden only for a murderer (Num 35:31), it seems payment was often allowed for lesser injuries. Jesus taught His followers not to take personal revenge (Matt 5:38-39). He was not overturning justice in the courts but forbidding us to use the law to feed our anger.
21:26 *he shall set him free for his eye* A remarkable law. Even for a knocked-out tooth the servant went free (21:27), and the master lost all his remaining service. Servants were people with rights, not tools, and masters had strong reason never to strike them. Where else in the ancient world would a slave go free for a tooth?
21:28 *the ox shall surely be stoned* Even an animal that took a human life was put to death (Gen 9:5). The owner was free of guilt because he could not have known.
21:29 *also its owner shall be put to death* If the owner had been warned and did nothing, careless neglect that cost a life was a grave sin, though a ransom could be set instead (21:30). We are responsible for what we own and control. If we know something is dangerous and do nothing, we share the blame.
21:32 *approximately 12 ounces of silver* Thirty shekels, the price of a servant. It is the price the chief priests paid Judas to betray Jesus (Matt 26:15; Zech 11:12-13). The Son of God was valued at the price of a servant gored by an ox.
21:34 *the owner of the pit shall make restitution* Restitution means paying back to make things right. If one ox killed another, both owners shared the loss, unless the goring ox was known and unguarded (21:35-36). These small matters show that God cares about everyday fairness. Holiness reaches the farm and the field. Loving your neighbor means covering your pits.
22:1 *five cattle for the ox and four sheep for the sheep* In God's law a thief did not go to prison. He paid back, and more. An ox was a working animal, so the owner lost its plowing too, and once killed or sold it could not be returned. Zacchaeus knew this law: "I restore fourfold" (Luke 19:8). Real repentance wants to make things right.

sheep for the sheep. **2** If the thief is found in the breaking in,
and he is struck, and he dies, ***there is*** no bloodguilt for him.
3 If the sun has risen on him, ***there is*** bloodguilt for him. He
shall surely make restitution; if he has nothing, then he shall
be sold for his theft. **4** If the stolen thing is surely found alive
in his hand, whether ox or donkey or sheep, he shall make
restitution double. **5** If a man causes a field or a vineyard to
be grazed over, and he lets loose his cattle, and it grazes in
the field of another, he shall make restitution ***from*** the best
of his field and the best of his vineyard. **6** If fire goes out and
finds thorns, and the heap of sheaves or the standing grain
or the field is consumed, the one who kindled the fire shall
surely make restitution. **7** If a man gives to his neighbor
money or articles to keep, and it is stolen from the house of
the man, if the thief is found, he shall make restitution dou-
ble. **8** If the thief is not found, then the master of the house
shall be brought near to God, ***to see*** whether he has not
stretched out his hand on the property of his neighbor. **9** For
every matter of transgression, for ox, for donkey, for sheep,
for garment, for every lost thing of which one says, 'This ***is***
it,' the case of the two of them shall come to God; whom God
condemns shall make restitution double to his neighbor.
10 If a man gives to his neighbor a donkey or an ox or a
sheep or any animal to keep, and it dies or is maimed or is
carried off, no one seeing ***it***, **11** the oath of the LORD shall be
between the two of them, ***that*** he has not stretched out his
hand on the property of his neighbor; and its owner shall
accept ***it***, and he shall not make restitution. **12** And if it is
surely stolen from him, he shall make restitution to its
owner. **13** If it is surely torn in pieces, let him bring it ***as*** evi-
dence; he shall not make restitution ***for*** the torn ***animal***.
14 And if a man asks ***an animal*** from his neighbor, and it is
maimed or dies, its owner not ***being*** with it, he shall surely
make restitution. **15** If its owner ***was*** with it, he shall not
make restitution; if it ***was*** hired, it came for its hire.

Laws of Justice and Mercy

16 And if a man seduces a virgin who is not betrothed, and
lies with her, he shall surely pay the bride-price for her ***to be***
his wife. **17** If her father utterly refuses to give her to him, he
shall weigh out money according to the bride-price of the
virgins. **18** You shall not let a sorceress live. **19** Whoever lies
with an animal shall surely be put to death. **20** Whoever sac-
rifices to the gods, except to the LORD alone, shall be devoted
to destruction. **21** And a sojourner you shall not mistreat,
and you shall not oppress him; for you were sojourners in
the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim). **22** Any widow and fatherless

22:2 Matt 24:43; Num 35:27; Matt 6:19,20
22:3 Exod 21:2; Judg 2:14; Judg 10:7
22:4 Exod 21:16; Exod 22:1,7,9; Prov 6:31
22:5 Exod 22:3,12; Exod 21:34; Job 20:18
22:6 Exod 22:9,12; Judg 15:4,5; 2 Sam 14:30,31
22:7 Prov 6:30,31; Jer 2:26; John 12:6
22:8 Exod 22:28; Exod 21:6; Deut 16:18
22:9 Deut 25:1; Num 5:6,7; Exod 23:6-8
22:10 Gen 39:8; Luke 12:48; Luke 16:11
22:11 Heb 6:16; Lev 5:1; Lev 6:3
22:12 Gen 31:39; Exod 22:7
22:13 Ezek 4:14; Amos 3:12; Mic 5:8
22:14 Deut 15:2; Deut 23:19,20; Neh 5:4
22:15 Zech 8:10
22:16 Deut 22:28,29; Gen 34:2-4
22:17 Gen 34:12; 1 Sam 18:25; Deut 22:29
22:18 1 Sam 28:3,9; Deut 18:10,11; Lev 19:26,31
22:19 Lev 18:23,25; Deut 27:21; Lev 20:15,16
22:20 Deut 17:2-5; Deut 18:20; Deut 13:1-15
22:21 Deut 10:19; Exod 23:9; Lev 19:33
22:22 Matt 23:14; Deut 24:17; Deut 27:19

22:2 *If the thief is found in the breaking in* Bloodguilt is guilt for shedding blood. A man defending his home in the dark could not tell whether the thief meant to kill, so he was not guilty.
22:3 *If the sun has risen on him, there is bloodguilt for him* In daylight the owner could see who it was and call for help. A thief's life still mattered to God, and property is never worth more than a human life. A thief who could not pay worked it off under the limits of 21:2.
22:5 *from the best of his field and the best of his vineyard* Not the worst. The best.
22:6 *the one who kindled the fire shall surely make restitution* Farmers burned weeds and thorns, and in dry country a fire spread fast. If you started it, you paid, even without meaning harm. We are responsible for what we start. "How great a forest a small fire kindles!" (James 3:5).
22:8 *the master of the house shall be brought near to God* Without banks, people left valuables with a trusted neighbor while traveling. Near to God probably means before the judges who served in God's name, or at the sanctuary to take an oath.
22:9 *the case of the two of them shall come to God* Every property dispute was finally a matter before God, who sees what no human judge can. "All things are naked and laid bare to the eyes of Him to whom our account is to be given" (Heb 4:13).
22:11 *the oath of the LORD shall be between the two of them* When no one saw what happened to a kept animal, the keeper swore before the LORD, and the owner accepted it. An oath in God's name was serious, because God is the witness.
22:13 *let him bring it as evidence* If a wild animal tore it, part of the body proved it, as a shepherd rescues "two legs or a piece of an ear" (Amos 3:12) from a lion. These laws are practical, fair and full of common sense.
22:15 *if it was hired, it came for its hire* The rental price covered the risk. God cares how we treat what belongs to others. Do you return what you borrow in good shape? A Christian should be the most trustworthy neighbor on the street.
22:16 *he shall surely pay the bride-price for her to be his wife* Betrothed means formally promised in marriage, almost as binding as marriage itself. A bride-price was a gift to the bride's family. A seduced young woman would find it hard to marry, so the man could not use her and walk away. He had to pay and offer marriage.
22:17 *If her father utterly refuses to give her to him* The man still paid the full bride-price. The father, who knew them both, could protect his daughter from a bad marriage. God's plan keeps sex within marriage (Heb 13:4), and where that is broken Christ offers forgiveness and a new start (1 Cor 6:9-11).
22:18 *You shall not let a sorceress live* A sorceress used magic and tried to use spirits or occult powers. In Canaan sorcery was tied to idolatry and sometimes child sacrifice (Deut 18:9-12). It was a direct attack on God's rule over Israel.
22:19 *Whoever lies with an animal shall surely be put to death* Practiced in some Canaanite worship, it twists God's design for people made in His image.
22:20 *shall be devoted to destruction* The Hebrew word is herem, something set apart to God for destruction. To sacrifice to other gods broke the first commandment, the heart of the covenant. These laws were for Israel as God's covenant nation, carried out by its courts. The church does not put such people to death but calls them to repent, as those in Ephesus burned their magic books when they came to Christ (Acts 19:19). Still, God takes the occult, sexual perversion and idolatry very seriously.
22:21 *for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt* Israel knew what it was to be strangers in a land that did not want them. "You shall love him as yourself" (Lev 19:34).
22:22 *Any widow and fatherless child you shall not afflict* Widows and orphans had no husband or father to protect them, the easiest people to take advantage of.

child you shall not afflict. **23** If you surely afflict him, ***then*** if he surely cries out to Me, I will surely hear his cry; **24** and My anger shall burn, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless. **25** If you lend money to My people, to the poor ***who is*** with you, you shall not be to him like a creditor; you shall not lay interest on him. **26** If you surely take the cloak of your neighbor as a pledge, you shall return it to him by the time the sun goes ***down***, **27** for it ***is*** his only covering; it ***is*** his cloak for his skin. In what shall he lie down? And it shall be, when he cries out to Me, then I will hear, for I ***am*** gracious. **28** You shall not revile God, and a leader among your people you shall not curse. **29** Your fullness and your juice you shall not delay ***to offer***. The firstborn of your sons you shall give to Me. **30** Thus you shall do with your ox ***and*** with your sheep: seven days it shall be with its mother; on the eighth day you shall give it to Me. **31** And you shall be men of holiness to Me; and flesh torn in the field you shall not eat; you shall throw it to the dog.

EXODUS 23

Justice for All

1 You shall not lift up a report of falsehood; do not put your hand with a wicked ***man*** to be a witness of violence. **2** You shall not be after many to evil, and you shall not answer in a dispute, turning aside after many to pervert ***it***. **3** And a poor ***man*** you shall not favor in his dispute. **4** If you meet the ox of your enemy or his donkey wandering, you shall surely return it to him. **5** If you see the donkey of one who hates you lying down under its load, and you would refrain from leaving ***it*** to him, you shall surely release ***it*** with him. **6** You shall not turn aside the judgment of your needy ***man*** in his dispute. **7** From a word of falsehood you shall be far; and the innocent and the righteous do not kill, for I will not justify the wicked. **8** And a bribe you shall not take, for the bribe blinds the clear-sighted and perverts the words of the righteous. **9** And a sojourner you shall not oppress; and you, you know the soul of the sojourner, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim).

Sabbaths and Feasts

10 And six years you shall sow your land, and you shall gather its produce; **11** and the seventh ***year*** you shall let it rest and leave it fallow, and the needy of your people shall eat, and what they leave the living things of the field shall eat. Thus you shall do to your vineyard ***and*** to your olive

22:23 Matt 23:14; Luke 18:7; Deut 15:9
22:24 Matt 23:14; Ps 109:9; Ps 69:24
22:25 Luke 19:23; Lev 25:35-37; Ps 15:5
22:26 Luke 19:23; Amos 2:8; Deut 24:6,10-13,17
22:27 Exod 34:6; 2 Chr 30:9; Ps 34:6
22:28 Acts 23:5; Eccl 10:20; Exod 22:8,9
22:29 Exod 13:2,12; Exod 23:16,19; Deut 26:2-10
22:30 Deut 15:19; Lev 22:27
22:31 Ezek 4:14; Lev 19:2; Deut 14:21
23:1 Matt 19:18; Ps 101:5; Exod 20:16
23:2 Exod 32:1-5; Josh 24:15; Job 31:34
23:3 Ps 82:2,3; James 3:17
23:4 Rom 12:20; Deut 22:1-4; Prov 25:21
23:5 Rom 12:20; Deut 22:4
23:6 Exod 23:2,3; Deut 16:19; Deut 27:19
23:7 Exod 34:7; Exod 23:1; Eph 4:25
23:8 Deut 16:19; Prov 15:27; Isa 5:23
23:9 Deut 27:19; Exod 21:21; Deut 10:19
23:11 Lev 25:2-7,11,12,20,22; Lev 26:34,35

22:23 *I will surely hear his cry* Surely is repeated three times. God takes the side of the weak. When no one else hears, He does, and those who make widows and orphans suffer would see their own families suffer the same (22:24). Pure religion is "to visit orphans and widows in their tribulation" (James 1:27). How does your church treat the foreigner, the widow and the fatherless?
22:25 *you shall not lay interest on him* This is about loans to a poor Israelite in need, not business loans, though some Christians have read it more broadly. A creditor here is a harsh lender. Do not profit from your brother's need.
22:26 *you shall return it to him by the time the sun goes down* A pledge guaranteed a loan, and a poor man's cloak was also his blanket. Even a lender's rights had limits. Mercy came first.
22:27 *I will hear, for I am gracious* God is gracious and expects His people to be. "Lend, expecting nothing in return" (Luke 6:35).
22:28 *You shall not revile God, and a leader among your people you shall not curse* To revile is to speak with contempt. Paul quoted this when he spoke harshly to the high priest: "You shall not speak evil of a ruler of your people" (Acts 23:5). We may disagree with leaders, and sometimes we must obey God rather than men (Acts 5:29), but we are to honor and pray for them, not curse them (1 Pet 2:17; 1 Tim 2:1-2).
22:29 *Your fullness and your juice you shall not delay to offer* The fullness is the grain harvest, the juice wine and oil. God gets the first, not the leftovers, and without delay. The firstborn sons were redeemed (13:13), belonging to God because He spared them at Passover.
22:30 *seven days it shall be with its mother* Even in this law there is care for the mother animal.
22:31 *you shall be men of holiness to Me* An animal killed by a wild beast still had its blood in it, and God forbade eating blood (Gen 9:4). Holiness reached even the table. "Be holy, because I am holy" (1 Pet 1:16). We are not under Israel's food laws, which Christ fulfilled (Mark 7:19; Col 2:16-17), but the call to be set apart for God in every part of life has not changed.
23:1 *You shall not lift up a report of falsehood* The ninth commandment applied to everyday speech and the courtroom. Spreading a false rumor is a kind of false witness, and so is lying to help a wicked man do harm.
23:2 *You shall not be after many to evil* Do not follow the crowd when the crowd is wrong. In court that meant not going along with the majority to bend justice. It is hard to stand alone, but a crowd once cried out for Jesus to be crucified, and the crowd was wrong.
23:3 *a poor man you shall not favor in his dispute* Elsewhere God forbids favoring the rich (Lev 19:15). Here He forbids favoring the poor. Justice must be blind to wealth both ways. Feeling sorry for someone is no reason to rule against the truth.
23:4 *If you meet the ox of your enemy or his donkey wandering, you shall surely return it to him* Not your friend's ox, your enemy's. And help lift his fallen donkey too (23:5). This is love for enemies in the Law of Moses. Jesus taught, "love your enemies, bless those cursing you, do good to those hating you" (Matt 5:44), and Proverbs 25:21 says to feed a hungry enemy. God's heart has always been the same. Whose donkey could you help lift this week?
23:6 *You shall not turn aside the judgment of your needy man* Verse 3 forbids favoring the poor; this forbids cheating them. The poor are easy to push aside because they cannot fight back.
23:7 *I will not justify the wicked* Stay far from lies that could condemn an innocent person. God will not declare the guilty righteous. That makes the gospel more wonderful. He "justifies the ungodly" (Rom 4:5) who believe, not by ignoring sin but because Christ paid for it (Rom 3:25-26).
23:8 *the bribe blinds the clear-sighted* A bribe can blind even a good and wise man. That is why Israel's judges had to hate unjust gain (18:21).
23:9 *you know the soul of the sojourner* A tender twist on 22:21: you know how it feels. God uses our own past suffering to make us kind to others who suffer.
23:11 *the seventh year you shall let it rest and leave it fallow* Fallow means left unplanted. Every seventh year the land had a Sabbath (Lev 25:1-7), and whatever grew on its own fed the poor and the wild animals. Israel learned to trust God, who promised a sixth-year harvest big enough to carry them (Lev 25:20-22). Israel did not keep these years, and the exile let the land enjoy its Sabbaths at last (2 Chr 36:21).

grove. **12** Six days you shall do your works, and on the seventh day you shall rest, so that your ox and your donkey may rest, and the son of your female slave and the sojourner may be refreshed. **13** And in all that I have said to you, take heed; and the name of other gods you shall not mention; let it not be heard on your mouth. **14** Three times you shall celebrate a festival to Me in the year. **15** The Festival of Unleavened Bread you shall keep; seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, just as I commanded you, at the appointed time of the month of Abib (Aviv), for in it you came out from Egypt; and they shall not appear ***before*** My face empty. **16** And the Festival of the Harvest, the firstfruits of your works which you sow in the field; and the Festival of the Ingathering at the going out of the year, when you gather in your works from the field. **17** Three times in the year every male of yours shall appear before the face of the Lord, the LORD. **18** You shall not sacrifice the blood of My sacrifice with leaven; and the fat of My festival shall not remain overnight until morning. **19** The first of the firstfruits of your ground you shall bring ***into*** the house of the LORD your God. You shall not boil a young goat in the milk of its mother.

The Angel Who Goes Before Israel

20 Look, I am sending an angel before you to guard you on the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared. **21** Take heed before him and listen to his voice; do not embitter him, for he will not forgive your transgression; for My name ***is*** in him. **22** For if you surely listen to his voice and do all that I speak, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries. **23** For My angel shall go before you and bring you to the Amorite and the Hittite and the Perizzite and the Canaanite, the Hivite and the Jebusite; and I will annihilate them. **24** You shall not bow down to their gods, and you shall not be made to serve them, and you shall not do according to their works; for you shall utterly tear them down, and you shall surely shatter their pillars. **25** And you shall serve the LORD your God, and He will bless your bread and your water; and I will remove sickness from your midst. **26** There shall not be ***one*** miscarrying or barren in your land; the number of your days I will fulfill. **27** My terror I will send before you, and I will throw into confusion all the people among whom you come, and I will give all your enemies to you ***turning the*** neck. **28** And I will send the hornet before you, and it shall drive out the Hivite, the Canaanite, and the Hittite from before you. **29** I will not drive them out from before you in one year, lest the land become a desolation and the living things of the field become many against you. **30** Little ***by*** little I will drive them out from before you, until you become fruitful and possess the land.

23:12 Exod 20:8-11; Luke 13:14; Exod 31:15,16
23:13 1 Tim 4:16; Deut 4:9,15; Josh 23:7
23:14 Deut 16:16; Exod 34:22; Lev 23:5,16,34
23:15 Mark 14:12; Luke 22:7; Acts 20:6
23:16 Exod 34:22; Lev 23:9-21; Lev 23:34-44
23:17 Deut 16:16; Exod 34:23; Deut 12:5
23:18 Exod 34:25; Lev 2:11; Deut 16:4
23:19 Exod 34:26; Deut 14:21; Deut 26:10
23:20 Exod 14:19; Exod 32:34; Exod 33:2,14
23:21 Matt 1:23; Ps 78:40,56; Heb 12:25
23:22 Gen 12:3; Deut 30:7; Num 24:9
23:23 Exod 23:20; Exod 32:2; Isa 5:13
23:24 Exod 20:5; Num 33:52; Deut 12:30,31
23:25 Matt 4:10; Deut 7:15; Deut 6:13
23:26 Deut 7:14; Job 5:26; Ps 55:23
23:27 Deut 2:25; Deut 7:23; Gen 35:5
23:28 Deut 7:20; Josh 24:11
23:29 Deut 7:22; Judg 3:1-4; Josh 15:63

23:12 *so that your ox and your donkey may rest, and the son of your female slave and the sojourner may be refreshed* Here the reason for the Sabbath is mercy, and the ones God names have the least power. Believers hold different views on how the Sabbath applies now (see 20:8; Col 2:16-17), but God's concern is plain. Those who work for us need rest too.
23:13 *the name of other gods you shall not mention* Israel was not to pray to other gods or swear by them. The LORD's name alone was to be on their lips.
23:14 *Three times you shall celebrate a festival to Me in the year* The three feasts were the heart of Israel's year of worship, all tied to the harvest and to God's saving acts. God wanted His people to stop, gather and remember.
23:15 *The Festival of Unleavened Bread you shall keep* In the spring month of Abib, right after Passover, recalling the hasty night they left Egypt (12:15-20). "Our Passover was sacrificed for us: Christ" (1 Cor 5:7). They were not to come before God empty-handed.
23:16 *the Festival of the Harvest* The Harvest came at the wheat harvest fifty days later, later called the Feast of Weeks, in Greek Pentecost. On that day God poured out His Spirit and about three thousand were saved, the firstfruits of the church (Acts 2:1-4). The Ingathering came at the end of the fall harvest, later the Feast of Booths, recalling the wilderness (Lev 23:42-43). At that feast Jesus cried, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink" (John 7:37), and in Christ's kingdom the nations will go up to keep it (Zech 14:16).
23:18 *You shall not sacrifice the blood of My sacrifice with leaven* Leaven often pictures sin spreading (1 Cor 5:6-8). The fat, the best part, belonged to God and was offered at once.
23:19 *The first of the firstfruits of your ground* The best and first go to God. "Honor the LORD from your wealth, and from the first of all your yield" (Prov 3:9). Do we give God the first or the leftovers?
23:19 *You shall not boil a young goat in the milk of its mother* Repeated in 34:26 and Deuteronomy 14:21. We do not know for sure why. Some think it was a pagan fertility rite. Others think it taught respect for the bond of mother and young, like 22:30. Later Jewish tradition built on it the rule of not eating meat and milk together. God's people were to be different, even in the kitchen.
23:20 *I am sending an angel before you* The word angel means messenger. God would not leave Israel to find their own way.
23:21 *for he will not forgive your transgression; for My name is in him* No ordinary angel. He can forgive or not forgive sin, which only God can do (Mark 2:7), and God's own name is in him. Many Bible teachers believe this is the angel of the LORD, the Son of God before His birth, as at the bush (3:2-6). Others see a created angel carrying God's full authority. Either way, to obey him was to obey God.
23:24 *you shall surely shatter their pillars* Sacred stones set up in the worship of Canaanite gods. Israel was not to borrow that worship or blend it with the LORD's. They were to destroy it.
23:26 *There shall not be one miscarrying or barren in your land* Covenant blessings for Israel in the land, tied to faithfulness (Deut 28:1-14). They are not a promise that a Christian will never be sick or lose a child. Godly people like Hannah waited long for children. But they show God's good heart and look ahead to the day when "death will not be any longer" (Rev 21:4).
23:28 *I will send the hornet before you* God says He drove them out "not by your sword and not by your bow" (Josh 24:12). Some take this as real hornets, others as a picture of the panic God sent. Either way, God fought for Israel.
23:30 *Little by little I will drive them out from before you* Israel was not yet large enough to fill the land, and an emptied land would be overrun by wild animals. God often works little by little in us too. We want every battle won at once, but He gives growth over time, and "He who began a good work in you will complete it" (Phil 1:6).

31 And I will set your border from the Red Sea to the Sea of the Philistines, and from the wilderness to the River (Nahar); for I will give into your hand the inhabitants of the land, and you shall drive them out from before you. **32** You shall not make a covenant with them or with their gods. **33** They shall not dwell in your land, lest they cause you to sin against Me; for you will serve their gods, for it will become a snare to you."

EXODUS 24

The Covenant Confirmed

1 And to Moses (Moshe) He said, "Come up to the LORD, you and Aaron (Aharon), Nadab (Nadav) and Abihu (Avihu), and seventy of the elders of Israel (Yisra'el), and you shall bow down from a distance. **2** And Moses alone shall draw near to the LORD, and they shall not draw near; and the people shall not come up with him." **3** And Moses came, and he recounted to the people all the words of the LORD and all the judgments; and all the people answered ***with*** one voice, and they said, "All the words which the LORD has spoken we will do." **4** And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD. And he rose early in the morning, and he built an altar under the mountain, and twelve pillars for the twelve tribes of Israel. **5** And he sent the young men of the sons of Israel, and they offered up burnt offerings, and they sacrificed sacrifices, peace offerings to the LORD, bulls. **6** And Moses took half of the blood, and he put ***it*** in the bowls; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. **7** And he took the book of the covenant, and he read ***it*** in the ears of the people; and they said, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do, and we will obey." **8** And Moses took the blood, and he sprinkled ***it*** on the people, and he said, "Look, the blood of the covenant which the LORD has cut with you concerning all these words."

Moses on the Mountain

9 And Moses went up, and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel. **10** And they saw the God of Israel; and under His feet ***was*** like a work of a pavement of sapphire, and like the substance of the heavens for purity. **11** And against the nobles of the sons of Israel He did not stretch out His hand; and they gazed on God, and they ate and they drank. **12** And the LORD said to Moses, "Come up to Me to the mountain, and be there, and let Me give you the tablets of stone, and the law and the commandment which I have written to teach them." **13** And Moses arose, and Joshua (Yehoshua) his attendant; and Moses went up to the mountain of God. **14** And to the elders he said, "Remain for us in

23:31 Gen 15:18; Deut 11:24; Josh 21:44
23:32 Exod 34:12,15; Deut 7:2; Josh 9:14-23
23:33 Deut 7:16; Ps 106:36; Exod 34:12
24:1 Num 11:16,24,25; Exod 6:23; Exod 28:1
24:2 John 7:19; Exod 24:13,15,18; Exod 20:21
24:3 John 7:19; Acts 5:20; Gal 3:20
24:4 Luke 22:30; Matt 19:28; Heb 8:10
24:5 Heb 9:18; Heb 9:19; Exod 18:12
24:6 Heb 9:18; Heb 12:24; Heb 9:19
24:7 Acts 13:15; Heb 9:18; Matt 26:28
24:8 Heb 9:20; Matt 26:28; 1 Pet 1:2
24:9 Heb 9:19
24:10 Matt 15:31; John 1:18; Ezek 10:1
24:11 Gal 3:19; Heb 9:19; Exod 19:21
24:12 Matt 5:19; 2 Cor 3:7; Gal 3:19
24:13 Exod 33:11; Exod 17:9-14; Exod 32:17
24:14 Exod 17:10,12; Gen 22:5; Exod 32:1

23:31 *from the Red Sea to the Sea of the Philistines, and from the wilderness to the River* The Mediterranean and the Euphrates, matching the promise to Abraham (Gen 15:18). Israel came closest under David and Solomon (1 Kgs 4:21). Some see the promise as fulfilled then (compare Josh 21:43-45). I believe it will be fully fulfilled in Christ's future kingdom.
23:33 *lest they cause you to sin against Me* Why drive out these nations? God waited four hundred years because "the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete" (Gen 15:16), and it was "for the wickedness of these nations" (Deut 9:5), not Israel's righteousness. Their worship included child sacrifice and gross immorality (Deut 12:31). Living beside them would be a snare, as it was in the judges' days (Judg 2:1-3). The lesson is not to hate people but to guard our hearts: "Little children, guard yourselves from idols" (1 John 5:21).
24:1 *you shall bow down from a distance* These words were likely given while Moses was on the mountain (20:21), before he came down in verse 3, though some read them as given after verses 3 to 8. Nadab and Abihu were Aaron's oldest sons, and the seventy elders stood for the nation. Worship begins with humble reverence.
24:2 *Moses alone shall draw near to the LORD* There were levels of nearness: the people below, the leaders part way, Moses all the way. The tabernacle repeats the pattern: people in the courtyard, priests in the Holy Place, the high priest alone in the Most Holy Place. Through Christ every believer can now draw near (Heb 10:19-22).
24:3 *All the words which the LORD has spoken we will do* They had said almost the same in 19:8, and they were sincere. But promises made in our own strength do not hold. Within forty days they broke the first and second commandments. We need God to change our hearts, which the new covenant promises: "on their heart I will write it" (Jer 31:33).
24:4 *Moses wrote all the words of the LORD* The covenant was put in writing to be read and kept. The altar stood for God and the twelve pillars for the tribes. Both sides of the covenant were present.
24:5 *he sent the young men of the sons of Israel* The Levitical priests were not yet set apart. Burnt offerings spoke of total dedication, peace offerings of fellowship shared in a meal. Both sealed the covenant.
24:6 *half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar* Blood stands for a life given. The blood on the altar was given to God.
24:7 *he took the book of the covenant, and he read it in the ears of the people* For the third time the people promised to obey.
24:8 *Look, the blood of the covenant* Covenants were said to be cut, sealed with the death of an animal (Gen 15:9-18). The blood bound God and the people together and warned that breaking the covenant was a matter of life and death. Hebrews 9:18-22 says even the first covenant was put into effect with blood. Jesus used Moses' words on purpose: "this is My blood, the blood of the new covenant, which is being poured out for many for forgiveness of sins" (Matt 26:28). Believers are chosen for "sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet 1:2).
24:10 *they saw the God of Israel; and under His feet was like a work of a pavement of sapphire* Moses describes only what was under His feet, a deep blue as clear as the sky, as Ezekiel saw beneath God's throne (Ezek 1:26). God later says "man shall not see Me and live" (33:20), and "No one has ever seen God" (John 1:18). They saw a vision or form He allowed, not His full glory. John adds that the only begotten Son "has made Him known" (John 1:18), and many believe that whenever God was seen in the Old Testament, it was the Son.
24:11 *they gazed on God, and they ate and they drank* They expected to die, and God welcomed them. The covenant was sealed with a meal in God's presence, a sign of peace and friendship. Jesus gave His church a meal and promises "the supper of the marriage of the Lamb" (Rev 19:9). Yet Nadab and Abihu, who ate with God here, later died for strange fire (Lev 10:1-2). Being near holy things does not guarantee a holy heart.
24:12 *the tablets of stone, and the law and the commandment which I have written to teach them* God Himself would write on the stone, and the purpose was to teach.
24:13 *Moses arose, and Joshua his attendant* Joshua went partway up, being trained for the day he would lead.
24:14 *look, Aaron and Hur are with you* The men who held up Moses' hands (17:12) were left in charge. While Moses was gone, Aaron would give in and make the golden calf (32:1-6). Leaders are tested most when no one seems to be watching.

this ***place*** until we return to you; and look, Aaron and Hur (Chur) ***are*** with you. Whoever has matters shall draw near to them." **15** And Moses went up to the mountain, and the cloud covered the mountain. **16** And the glory of the LORD dwelt on the mountain of Sinai (Sinay), and the cloud covered it six days; and He called to Moses on the seventh day from the midst of the cloud. **17** And the appearance of the glory of the LORD ***was*** like a consuming fire on the top of the mountain to the eyes of the sons of Israel. **18** And Moses went into the midst of the cloud, and he went up to the mountain; and Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights.

EXODUS 25

Offerings for the Tabernacle

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe), saying, **2** "Speak to the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), and let them take for Me a contribution; from every man whose heart makes him willing you shall take My contribution. **3** And this ***is*** the contribution which you shall take from them: gold and silver and bronze, **4** and blue and purple and crimson scarlet, and fine linen and goats' ***hair***, **5** and skins of rams dyed red, and skins of dolphins, and acacia wood, **6** oil for the light, spices for the oil of the anointing and for the incense of the fragrances, **7** onyx stones and stones for setting, for the ephod and for the breastpiece. **8** And they shall make for Me a sanctuary, and I will dwell in their midst. **9** According to all that I am showing you, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its articles, so you shall make ***it***.

The Ark and the Mercy Seat

10 And they shall make an ark of acacia wood: approximately 3.75 feet (two cubits and a half) ***shall be*** its length, and approximately 2.25 feet (a cubit and a half) its breadth, and approximately 2.25 feet (a cubit and a half) its height. **11** And you shall overlay it ***with*** pure gold; from inside and from outside you shall overlay it; and you shall make on it a molding of gold all around. **12** And you shall cast for it four rings of gold, and you shall put ***them*** on its four feet, and two rings on its one side, and two rings on its second side. **13** And you shall make poles of acacia wood, and you shall overlay them ***with*** gold. **14** And you shall bring the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark, to carry the ark by them. **15** In the rings of the ark the poles shall be; they shall not be removed from it. **16** And you shall put into the ark the testimony which I will give to you. **17** And you shall make a mercy seat of pure gold: approximately 3.75 feet (two cubits and a half) ***shall be*** its length, and approximately 2.25 feet (a cubit and a half) its breadth. **18** And you shall make two cherubim of gold; ***of*** hammered work you shall make them, from the two ends of the mercy seat. **19** And make one cherub from the end on this ***side***, and one cherub from the end on that ***side***; from the mercy seat you shall make the cherubim on its two ends. **20** And the cherubim shall be spreading out wings upward,

24:15 Exod 19:9,16; Matt 17:5; 2 Chr 6:1
24:16 Exod 16:10; Num 14:10; Lev 9:23
24:17 Exod 3:2; Heb 12:18,29; Exod 19:18
24:18 Matt 4:2; Exod 34:28; Deut 9:9,18,25
25:2 Ezra 2:68; 2 Cor 9:7; 1 Chr 29:1-30
25:3 Deut 8:9; Job 28:2
25:4 Gen 41:42; Ezek 16:10; Rev 19:8
25:5 Exod 26:14; Exod 36:20; Exod 26:15,26,37
25:6 Exod 27:20; Exod 25:37; Exod 40:24,25
25:7 Exod 28:4,6,15; Exod 28:9-21
25:8 2 Cor 6:16; Acts 7:44; Exod 29:45
25:9 Heb 8:5; Acts 7:44; Exod 25:40
25:10 Heb 9:4; Rev 11:19; Exod 37:1-3
25:11 Heb 9:4; Exod 25:24; Exod 30:3
25:12 Heb 9:4; Exod 25:15,26; Exod 26:29
25:13 Heb 9:4; Exod 25:28; Exod 27:6
25:14 Heb 9:4
25:15 Heb 9:4; 1 Kgs 8:8; 2 Chr 5:9
25:16 Heb 9:4; Acts 7:44; Deut 31:26
25:17 Heb 9:5; Exod 37:6; Rom 3:25
25:18 Heb 9:5; Exod 37:7-9; Gen 3:24
25:20 1 Kgs 8:7; 1 Chr 28:18; Exod 25:18

24:16 *the glory of the LORD dwelt on the mountain of Sinai* The word dwelt is tied to the later word shekinah, used for God's glory living among His people. Moses waited six days before God spoke. Waiting on God is part of meeting Him.
24:17 *like a consuming fire on the top of the mountain* From below the people saw what looked like fire on the mountaintop, and Moses walked into it.
24:18 *Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights* He ate no bread and drank no water (Deut 9:9). In these days God showed him the pattern of the tabernacle and the priesthood (25-31). Jesus also fasted forty days and nights (Matt 4:2). The God whose glory was a fire on Sinai came to live among us: "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory" (John 1:14).
25:2 *from every man whose heart makes him willing you shall take My contribution* The tabernacle would be built from gifts, not taxes. God wanted only what was given freely, for "God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Cor 9:7).
25:3 *gold and silver and bronze* Where did former slaves get gold and fine cloth in the desert? From the Egyptians, the night they left (12:35-36). God provided for His house before He asked for it. What we give to God was His gift to us first.
25:5 *skins of dolphins, and acacia wood* The rare Hebrew word for these skins is also rendered fine leather or sea cow hides. Acacia is a hard desert wood that resists rot. Blue, purple and crimson yarn, fine linen, oil, spices and precious stones complete the list (25:4-7).
25:8 *they shall make for Me a sanctuary, and I will dwell in their midst* The heart of the whole section. God did not want to stay on a mountain far from His people. Sin broke the fellowship of Eden, and now the holy God would camp in the middle of a sinful people in a tent like theirs. John says the Word "dwelt among us" (John 1:14), pitched His tent among us, and at the end, "the tabernacle of God is with men" (Rev 21:3).
25:9 *the pattern of the tabernacle* Moses did not design it. God showed him a pattern. Hebrews says the tabernacle was "a copy and shadow of the heavenly things" (Heb 8:5), where Christ now serves as our High Priest (Heb 9:24). We do not invent our own way to God. He shows us the way.
25:10 *they shall make an ark of acacia wood* An ark is a chest, here about three feet nine inches long and two feet three inches wide and high. A cubit was about eighteen inches, elbow to fingertip. It was covered with gold inside and out. Many have seen in wood covered with gold a picture of Christ, fully human and fully God. The New Testament does not say so of the ark, so I offer it only as a picture.
25:15 *they shall not be removed from it* The ark was always ready to move, because God traveled with His people. It was carried on the Levites' shoulders and never touched by hand, as Uzzah's death later showed (2 Sam 6:6-7).
25:16 *the testimony which I will give to you* The two tablets of the Ten Commandments, God's witness to His covenant. Later the ark also held the jar of manna and Aaron's staff (Heb 9:4). Christ is the One in whose heart God's law was perfectly kept: "Your law is in the midst of my inward parts" (Ps 40:8).
25:17 *you shall make a mercy seat of pure gold* The lid of the ark, solid gold. The Hebrew word comes from the word for atonement, to cover sin and make peace with God. On the Day of Atonement the high priest sprinkled blood on it for the nation's sins (Lev 16:14-15).
25:20 *covering over the mercy seat with their wings* Cherubim are powerful angelic beings who guard God's holiness, as they guarded the way to the tree of life (Gen 3:24). Picture it: inside the ark, the law Israel had broken; above, the throne of the holy God; between, the mercy seat sprinkled with blood. God looked at His broken law through the blood. That is how a holy God shows mercy to sinners.

covering over the mercy seat with their wings, and their faces ***shall be*** each toward its fellow; toward the mercy seat the faces of the cherubim shall be. **21** And you shall put the mercy seat on the ark from above, and into the ark you shall put the testimony which I will give to you. **22** And I will meet with you there, and I will speak with you from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which ***are*** on the ark of the testimony, all that I will command you concerning the sons of Israel.

The Table and the Lampstand

23 And you shall make a table of acacia wood: approximately 3 feet (two cubits) ***shall be*** its length, and approximately 18 inches (a cubit) its breadth, and approximately 2.25 feet (a cubit and a half) its height. **24** And you shall overlay it ***with*** pure gold, and you shall make for it a molding of gold all around. **25** And you shall make for it a rim of approximately 3 inches (a handbreadth) all around, and you shall make a molding of gold for its rim all around. **26** And you shall make for it four rings of gold, and you shall put the rings on the four corners which ***belong*** to its four feet. **27** Close to the rim the rings shall be, for housings for poles to carry the table. **28** And you shall make the poles of acacia wood, and you shall overlay them ***with*** gold, and the table shall be carried by them. **29** And you shall make its dishes and its pans and its jugs and its bowls, with which ***drink offerings*** shall be poured out; ***of*** pure gold you shall make them. **30** And you shall put on the table bread of ***the*** Presence before Me continually. **31** And you shall make a lampstand of pure gold; ***of*** hammered work the lampstand shall be made; its base and its shaft, its cups, its bulbs, and its blossoms shall be from it. **32** And six branches ***shall be*** coming out from its sides: three branches of the lampstand from its one side, and three branches of the lampstand from its second side; **33** three cups, almond-shaped, on the one branch, a bulb and a blossom; and three cups, almond-shaped, on the one branch, a bulb and a blossom; so for the six branches which come out from the lampstand. **34** And on the lampstand ***shall be*** four cups, almond-shaped, its bulbs and its blossoms; **35** and a bulb under the two branches from it, and a bulb under the two branches from it, and a bulb under the two branches from it, for the six branches which come out from the lampstand. **36** Their bulbs and their branches shall be from it; all of it ***shall be*** one hammered work of pure gold. **37** And you shall make its lamps, seven; and he shall lift up its lamps, and he shall give light on the side in front of it. **38** And its tongs and its fire pans ***shall be of*** pure gold. **39** ***Of*** approximately 75 pounds (a talent) of pure gold he shall make it, ***with*** all these articles. **40** And see, and make ***them*** by their pattern which you are being shown on the mountain.

EXODUS 26

The Curtains of the Tabernacle

1 And the tabernacle you shall make ***with*** ten curtains of twisted fine linen and blue and purple and crimson scarlet; ***with*** cherubim, the work of a designer, you shall make them. **2** The length of the one curtain ***shall be*** approximately 42 feet (twenty-eight by the cubit), and the breadth of the one curtain approximately 6 feet (four by the cubit); one measure for all the curtains. **3** Five of the curtains shall be joined each to its fellow, and five curtains joined each to its fellow. **4** And you shall make loops of blue on the edge of the one curtain, at the end in the set; and so you shall do on the edge of the outermost curtain in the second coupling. **5** Fifty loops you shall make on the one curtain, and fifty loops you shall make at the end of the curtain which ***is*** in the second coupling, the loops being opposite each to its fellow. **6** And you shall make fifty clasps of gold, and you shall join the curtains each to its

25:21 Heb 9:4; Heb 9:5; Rev 11:19
25:22 Heb 9:5; Rev 11:19; Exod 29:42,43
25:23 Exod 37:10-16; Heb 9:2; 1 Kgs 7:48
25:24 Exod 25:11; 1 Kgs 6:20-22
25:25 Exod 30:3; Exod 37:2
25:27 Exod 25:14,28
25:28 Exod 25:14,27; Num 10:17; Acts 9:15
25:29 Num 4:7; Exod 37:16; Num 7:13,19,31-33
25:30 Exod 39:36; Exod 35:13; Lev 24:5,6
25:31 Heb 9:2; Exod 37:17-24; 1 Kgs 7:49
25:32 Heb 9:2
25:33 Heb 9:2; Num 17:4-8; Jer 1:11,12
25:34 Heb 9:2
25:35 Heb 9:2
25:36 Heb 9:2; Exod 25:18; Num 8:4
25:37 Matt 5:15; Heb 9:2; Num 8:2
25:38 Heb 9:2; 2 Chr 4:21; Isa 6:6
25:39 Heb 9:2
25:40 Heb 8:5; Acts 7:44; Heb 9:2
26:1 Heb 8:2; Rev 21:3; Heb 9:2
26:2 Exod 26:7,8; Num 4:25; 2 Sam 7:2
26:3 Exod 26:9; Exod 36:10; John 17:21
26:4 Exod 36:11,12,17
26:6 Heb 9:2; Exod 26:11,33; Exod 35:11

25:22 *I will meet with you there* God set forth Christ "as a propitiation through faith in His blood" (Rom 3:25), using the Greek word for the mercy seat (Heb 9:5). A propitiation is a sacrifice that turns away God's anger by paying for sin. "He Himself is the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 2:2). Jesus is our mercy seat, so we "come with boldness to the throne of grace" (Heb 4:16).

25:23 *you shall make a table of acacia wood* About three feet long, eighteen inches wide and two feet three inches high, overlaid with gold, with a rim and rings and poles for carrying. Its dishes and bowls for drink offerings were pure gold (25:29).

25:30 *bread of the Presence before Me continually* Twelve loaves, one for each tribe, replaced each Sabbath (Lev 24:5-9). The bread stood in God's presence, a sign that He provided for His people and kept the twelve tribes before Him in fellowship. "I am the bread of life" (John 6:35). Christ's provision is never taken away.

25:31 *you shall make a lampstand of pure gold* Beaten from one piece of gold, a center shaft with three branches on each side, each with cups shaped like almond blossoms. It looked like a small golden almond tree in bloom, made from a talent of gold, about seventy-five pounds (25:39).

25:37 *you shall make its lamps, seven* The Holy Place had no windows. Without the lampstand the priests would work in the dark. The lamps burned olive oil and were kept burning (27:20-21). Jesus is "the light of the world" (John 8:12), the only true light. His followers are lights too (Matt 5:14), and the seven lampstands of Revelation 1:20 are churches. Our light is borrowed from Him.

25:40 *make them by their pattern which you are being shown on the mountain* God repeats it: build it My way. The tabernacle was a God-given shadow, "not the very image of the things" (Heb 10:1). Christ is the reality the shadow pointed to.

26:1 *ten curtains of twisted fine linen and blue and purple and crimson scarlet; with cherubim* The innermost layer, the ceiling and walls the priests saw from inside, woven with cherubim. Each curtain was about forty-two feet by six. Surrounded by gold walls and a ceiling of color, lit by the lampstand, the Holy Place must have looked like a small piece of heaven, a copy of heavenly things (Heb 8:5).

26:6 *the tabernacle shall be one* Fifty gold clasps joined two sets of five curtains into one dwelling. Many members, one house: believers "are being built together into a dwelling place of God in the Spirit" (Eph 2:22).

fellow with the clasps; and the tabernacle shall be one. **7** And you shall make curtains of goats' ***hair*** for a tent over the tabernacle; eleven curtains you shall make them. **8** The length of the one curtain ***shall be*** approximately 45 feet (thirty by the cubit), and the breadth of the one curtain approximately 6 feet (four by the cubit); one measure for the eleven curtains. **9** And you shall join five of the curtains by themselves and six of the curtains by themselves, and you shall fold double the sixth curtain at the front of the face of the tent. **10** And you shall make fifty loops on the edge of the one curtain, the outermost in the set, and fifty loops on the edge of the curtain of the second set. **11** And you shall make clasps of bronze, fifty, and you shall bring the clasps into the loops, and you shall join the tent, and it shall be one. **12** And the overhang that remains in the curtains of the tent, the half of the curtain that remains, shall hang over the back of the tabernacle. **13** And approximately 18 inches (the cubit) on this ***side*** and approximately 18 inches (the cubit) on that ***side***, in what remains in the length of the curtains of the tent, shall be hanging over the sides of the tabernacle on this ***side*** and on that ***side***, to cover it. **14** And you shall make a covering for the tent ***of*** skins of rams dyed red, and a covering of skins of dolphins from above.

The Boards and Bars

15 And you shall make the boards for the tabernacle ***of*** acacia wood, standing upright. **16** Approximately 15 feet (ten cubits) ***shall be*** the length of the board, and approximately 2.25 feet (a cubit and the half of the cubit) the breadth of the one board. **17** Two tenons ***shall be*** for the one board, fitted each to its fellow; so you shall do for all the boards of the tabernacle. **18** And you shall make the boards for the tabernacle: twenty boards for the side of the south, southward. **19** And you shall make forty bases of silver under the twenty boards: two bases under the one board for its two tenons, and two bases under the one board for its two tenons. **20** And for the second side of the tabernacle, for the north side, twenty boards, **21** and their forty bases ***of*** silver: two bases under the one board, and two bases under the one board. **22** And for the rear of the tabernacle westward you shall make six boards. **23** And two boards you shall make for the corners of the tabernacle at the rear. **24** And they shall be doubled from below, and together they shall be complete at its top to the one ring; so it shall be for both of them; they shall be for the two corners. **25** And there shall be eight boards, and their bases ***of*** silver, sixteen bases: two bases under the one board, and two bases under the one board. **26** And you shall make bars of acacia wood: five for the boards of the one side of the tabernacle, **27** and five bars for the boards of the second side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the boards of the side of the tabernacle for the rear, westward. **28** And the middle bar in the midst of the boards ***shall be*** passing through from end to end. **29** And the boards you shall overlay ***with*** gold, and their rings you shall make ***of*** gold, housings for the bars; and you shall overlay the bars ***with*** gold. **30** And you shall raise up the tabernacle according to its plan which you have been shown on the mountain.

The Veil and the Screen

31 And you shall make a veil ***of*** blue and purple and crimson scarlet and twisted fine linen; the work of a designer he shall make it, ***with*** cherubim. **32** And you shall put it on four pillars of acacia overlaid ***with*** gold, their hooks ***of*** gold, on four bases of silver. **33** And you shall put the veil under the clasps, and you shall bring there, inside the veil, the ark of the testimony; and the veil shall separate for you between the holy place and the holy of holies. **34** And you shall put the mercy

26:7 Heb 9:2; Exod 35:26; Exod 36:14-18
26:8 Exod 26:2,13
26:11 Exod 26:3,6
26:12 Heb 9:2
26:13 Heb 9:2; Exod 26:2,8
26:14 Exod 36:19; Exod 25:5; Num 4:5
26:15 Heb 9:2; Exod 36:20-33; Exod 26:18,22-29
26:17 Heb 9:2; Exod 26:19; Exod 36:22,24
26:18 Heb 9:2
26:19 Exod 38:27,30,31; Exod 26:25,37; Exod 27:10,12-18
26:20 Heb 9:2
26:22 Heb 9:2
26:23 Heb 9:2
26:24 Exod 36:29,30; Ps 133:1-3; 1 Cor 1:10
26:26 Heb 9:2; Exod 36:31-38; Num 3:36
26:27 Heb 9:2
26:29 Exod 25:11,12
26:30 Acts 7:44; Heb 8:5; Heb 8:2
26:31 Matt 27:51; Mark 15:38; Heb 9:3
26:32 Heb 9:3; Exod 26:37; Exod 36:38
26:33 Heb 9:3; Matt 27:51; Mark 15:38
26:34 Heb 9:5; Exod 25:21; Exod 40:20

26:7 *curtains of goats' hair for a tent over the tabernacle* Eleven curtains, each about forty-five feet by six, slightly larger than the linen so they hung over its back and sides (26:12-13).

26:14 *a covering for the tent of skins of rams dyed red, and a covering of skins of dolphins from above* The outer covering was plain and weather-proof. From outside the tabernacle did not look like much; all the beauty was inside. Many have seen a picture of Christ, who had "no form to Him and no splendor, that we should look at Him" (Isa 53:2), plain to those outside but full of glory to those who come in. The red rams' skins recall the ram that died in Isaac's place (Gen 22:13). These are pictures, not direct New Testament teaching.

26:16 *Approximately 15 feet shall be the length of the board* Each upright frame was about fifteen feet tall and two feet three inches wide, with two pegs at the bottom set into silver bases (26:17-19). Twenty boards on each long side and eight at the back made a tent about forty-five feet long and fifteen feet wide and tall, though the exact layout at the back and corners is debated.

26:19 *forty bases of silver* The silver came from the atonement money, half a shekel for each Israelite (30:11-16; 38:25-27). God's dwelling rested on "the silver of the atonement" (30:16), the price of redemption. We were redeemed "not with perishable things, silver or gold" (1 Pet 1:18), but with the precious blood of Christ.

26:28 *the middle bar in the midst of the boards shall be passing through from end to end* Gold-covered bars held the boards firmly together.

26:30 *you shall raise up the tabernacle according to its plan which you have been shown on the mountain* The third time God says follow the pattern (25:9, 40). Every piece could be carried. For almost five hundred years, until Solomon's temple, God's house was a tent that traveled with His people. Our bodies are an earthly "tent" (2 Cor 5:1), our lives a journey, and God goes with us.

26:31 *you shall make a veil* A thick curtain woven with cherubim, hung on four gold-covered pillars.

26:33 *the veil shall separate for you between the holy place and the holy of holies* The Most Holy Place, holding the ark and mercy seat, was most likely a cube about fifteen feet each way, as Solomon's inner room was a cube (1 Kgs 6:20). The veil's message was keep out. Only the high priest went behind it, once a year and with blood (Lev 16; Heb 9:7), "the Holy Spirit signifying this, that the way into the holy places has not yet been made manifest" (Heb 9:8). When Jesus died, "the veil of the temple was torn into two from top to bottom" (Matt 27:51). God tore it, not man. We now enter "by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh" (Heb 10:20).

seat on the ark of the testimony in the holy of holies. **35** And you shall set the table outside the veil, and the lampstand opposite the table on the side of the tabernacle southward; and the table you shall put on the north side. **36** And you shall make a screen for the entrance of the tent ***of*** blue and purple and crimson scarlet and twisted fine linen, the work of an embroiderer. **37** And you shall make for the screen five pillars of acacia, and you shall overlay them ***with*** gold, their hooks ***of*** gold; and you shall cast for them five bases of bronze.

EXODUS 27

The Bronze Altar

1 And you shall make the altar ***of*** acacia wood, approximately 7.5 feet (five cubits) ***in*** length and approximately 7.5 feet (five cubits) ***in*** breadth; the altar shall be square, and approximately 4.5 feet (three cubits) ***shall be*** its height. **2** And you shall make its horns on its four corners; its horns shall be from it; and you shall overlay it ***with*** bronze. **3** And you shall make its pots to remove its ashes, and its shovels and its bowls and its forks and its fire pans; all its articles you shall make ***of*** bronze. **4** And you shall make for it a grating, a work of network of bronze; and you shall make on the net four rings of bronze on its four ends. **5** And you shall put it under the ledge of the altar from below, and the net shall be to the middle of the altar. **6** And you shall make poles for the altar, poles of acacia wood, and you shall overlay them ***with*** bronze. **7** And its poles shall be brought into the rings, and the poles shall be on the two sides of the altar when carrying it. **8** Hollow, ***of*** planks, you shall make it; just as He showed you on the mountain, so they shall make ***it***.

The Courtyard and the Oil for the Lamp

9 And you shall make the courtyard of the tabernacle: for the side of the south, southward, hangings for the courtyard ***of*** twisted fine linen, approximately 150 feet (a hundred by the cubit) ***in*** length for the one side; **10** and its pillars twenty, and their bases twenty, ***of*** bronze; the hooks of the pillars and their bands ***of*** silver. **11** And so for the side of the north in length, hangings approximately 150 feet (a hundred ***cubits***) ***in*** length; and its pillars twenty, and their bases twenty, ***of*** bronze; the hooks of the pillars and their bands ***of*** silver. **12** And the breadth of the courtyard on the side of the west ***shall be*** hangings of approximately 75 feet (fifty cubits); their pillars ten, and their bases ten. **13** And the breadth of the courtyard on the side of the east, eastward, ***shall be*** approximately 75 feet (fifty cubits). **14** And approximately 22.5 feet (fifteen cubits) of hangings ***shall be*** for the ***one*** wing; their pillars three, and their bases three. **15** And for the second wing, approximately 22.5 feet (fifteen ***cubits***) of hangings; their pillars three, and their bases three. **16** And for the gate of the courtyard a screen of approximately 30 feet (twenty cubits), ***of*** blue and purple and crimson scarlet and twisted fine linen, the work of an embroiderer; their pillars four, and their bases four. **17** All the pillars of the courtyard all around ***shall be*** banded ***with*** silver; their hooks ***of*** silver, and their bases ***of*** bronze. **18** The length of the courtyard ***shall be*** approximately 150 feet (a hundred by the cubit), and the breadth approximately 75 feet (fifty by fifty), and the height approximately 7.5 feet (five cubits), ***of*** twisted fine linen; and their bases ***of*** bronze. **19** All the articles of the tabernacle in all its service, and all its pegs, and all the pegs

26:35 Heb 9:2; Heb 9:8; Matt 27:51
26:36 Exod 36:37; Exod 40:28; John 10:9
26:37 Exod 36:38
27:1 Exod 38:1-7; Exod 20:24-26; Exod 24:4
27:2 Ps 118:27; Exod 29:12; Lev 4:7,18,25
27:3 1 Kgs 7:45; Lev 16:12; 1 Kgs 7:40,45
27:4 Exod 35:16; Exod 38:4,5; Exod 25:12
27:5 Exod 38:4
27:6 Exod 35:13-15; Exod 30:4; Num 4:44
27:7 Exod 25:28; Exod 30:4; Num 4:13,14
27:8 Heb 8:5; Exod 25:9,40; Exod 26:30-37
27:9 Exod 38:9-20; Exod 40:8; 1 Kgs 6:36
27:10 Exod 26:19-21; Exod 36:38; Jer 52:21
27:14 Exod 27:9; Exod 26:36
27:16 Exod 26:31,36; Exod 28:39; Exod 36:37
27:19 Exod 27:3; Exod 35:18; Exod 38:20,31

26:35 *you shall set the table outside the veil, and the lampstand opposite the table* In the Holy Place, twice as long as the inner room, the table stood on the north side and the lampstand on the south, facing each other.
26:36 *you shall make a screen for the entrance of the tent* The door into the Holy Place, on five gold-covered pillars set in bronze bases, since bronze marked the things nearer the courtyard and altar. There was one entrance, on the east. "I am the door. If anyone enters through Me, he will be saved" (John 10:9). The whole tent preaches Christ: one door, bread and light, a veil that is His flesh torn for us, a mercy seat sprinkled with blood. It is a picture book of the gospel. Have you come in through the one door?
27:1 *you shall make the altar of acacia wood* The largest piece of furniture, about seven and a half feet square and four and a half feet high, often called the bronze altar or altar of burnt offering, to tell it from the gold altar of incense (30:1-10).
27:2 *its horns shall be from it; and you shall overlay it with bronze* A horn stands for power. Blood of sin offerings was put on the horns (Lev 4:25), and a man in danger might take hold of them to ask for mercy (1 Kgs 1:50). The altar was a place of death and of refuge. Its fire was never to go out (Lev 6:13), and bronze could stand the heat. Gold was used near God's presence; bronze out where sin was dealt with.
27:3 *all its articles you shall make of bronze* Pots for ashes, shovels, bowls for catching blood, forks for the meat, fire pans for coals.
27:4 *a grating, a work of network of bronze* The grate sat halfway up inside the altar. The fire burned on it and ashes fell through. Rings and bronze-covered poles made the altar portable (27:6-7).
27:8 *Hollow, of planks, you shall make it* When set up it may have been filled with earth or stones, like the simple altars of 20:24-25, though Scripture doesn't say. Why was this altar the first thing inside the gate? No sinner can come near a holy God without a sacrifice. Every animal that died here said that sin brings death and God accepts a substitute. Yet "it is impossible for the blood of bulls and of goats to take away sins" (Heb 10:4). They pointed to Christ, who "offered Himself unblemished to God" (Heb 9:14), and "having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down" (Heb 10:12). "We have an altar" (Heb 13:10), the cross. The bronze altar was the shadow.
27:9 *you shall make the courtyard of the tabernacle* An open yard about 150 feet by 75, about half a football field, walled with hangings of white linen on pillars set in bronze, with silver hooks and bands.
27:16 *for the gate of the courtyard a screen of approximately 30 feet* The gate was wide and colorful, in the same colors as the veil, standing out against the white walls. There was only one gate. You could not climb the wall or come in at the side. "I am the door of the sheep" (John 10:7). Wide enough for anyone who would come, but the only way.
27:18 *the height approximately 7.5 feet, of twisted fine linen* From outside no one could see in. The wall marked a clear line between the camp and God's holy ground. The linen may picture the righteousness God requires, as "the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints" (Rev 19:8). God's holiness sets a boundary sinners cannot cross on their own.
27:19 *all its pegs, and all the pegs of the courtyard, shall be of bronze* Even the tent pegs were part of God's house. Nothing in His service is too small to matter. Some are curtains and some are tent pegs, but all are needed. "Enter His gates with thanksgiving, His courts with praise" (Ps 100:4).

of the courtyard, ***shall be of*** bronze. **20** And you, you shall command the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), and let them bring to you pure olive oil, beaten, for the light, to cause a lamp to go up continually. **21** In the tent of meeting, outside the veil which ***is*** over the testimony, Aaron (Aharon) shall arrange it, and his sons, from evening until morning before the LORD; a statute forever throughout their generations from the sons of Israel.

EXODUS 28

The Ephod

1 And you, bring near to yourself Aaron (Aharon) your brother, and his sons with him, from among the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), for him to serve as priest to Me: Aaron, Nadab (Nadav) and Abihu (Avihu), Eleazar (Elazar) and Ithamar (Itamar), the sons of Aaron. **2** And you shall make garments of holiness for Aaron your brother, for glory and for beauty. **3** And you, you shall speak to all the wise of heart, whom I have filled ***with*** a spirit of wisdom, and they shall make the garments of Aaron to sanctify him, for him to serve as priest to Me. **4** And these ***are*** the garments which they shall make: a breastpiece and an ephod and a robe, and a tunic of checkered work, a turban, and a sash; and they shall make garments of holiness for Aaron your brother and for his sons, for him to serve as priest to Me. **5** And they, they shall take the gold and the blue and the purple and the crimson scarlet and the fine linen. **6** And they shall make the ephod ***of*** gold, blue and purple, crimson scarlet and twisted fine linen, the work of a designer. **7** It shall have two shoulder pieces joined at its two ends, and it shall be joined. **8** And the band of its ephod which ***is*** on it shall be like its work, from it, ***of*** gold, blue and purple and crimson scarlet and twisted fine linen. **9** And you shall take two onyx stones, and you shall engrave on them the names of the sons of Israel, **10** six of their names on the one stone, and the names of the six that remain on the second stone, according to their generations. **11** ***With*** the work of an engraver in stone, ***like*** the engravings of a signet, you shall engrave the two stones according to the names of the sons of Israel; surrounded ***with*** filigree settings of gold you shall make them. **12** And you shall put the two stones on the shoulder pieces of the ephod, stones of memorial for the sons of Israel; and Aaron shall bear their names before the LORD on his two shoulders for a memorial. **13** And you shall make filigree settings of gold, **14** and two chains of pure gold; braided you shall make them, a work of cordage; and you shall put the chains of cordage on the filigree settings.

The Breastpiece

15 And you shall make a breastpiece of judgment, the work of a designer; like the work of the ephod you shall make it; ***of*** gold, blue and purple and crimson scarlet and twisted fine linen you shall make it. **16** It shall be square, folded double; approximately 9 inches (a span) its length, and approximately 9 inches (a span) its breadth. **17** And you shall fill in it a setting of stone, four rows of stone: a row of ruby, topaz, and beryl ***shall be*** the first row; **18** and the second row a turquoise, a sapphire, and an emerald; **19** and the third row a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst; **20** and the fourth row a chrysolite, and an onyx, and a jasper; set ***in*** gold they shall be in their settings. **21** And the stones shall be according to the names of the sons of Israel, twelve, according to their names, ***like*** the engravings of a signet, each according to his name;

27:20 Exod 39:37; Judg 9:9; Ps 23:5
27:21 2 Pet 1:19; Num 18:23; Num 19:21
28:1 Heb 5:4; Num 18:7; Exod 6:23
28:2 Exod 31:10; Exod 39:1,2; Lev 8:7-9,30
28:3 Eph 1:17; Isa 11:2; 1 Cor 12:7-11
28:4 Exod 39:8-21; Isa 59:17; Eph 6:14
28:5 Exod 25:3,4; Exod 39:2,3
28:6 Exod 26:1
28:7 Exod 39:4
28:8 Exod 28:27,28; Exod 29:5; Lev 8:7
28:9 Ezek 28:13; Exod 28:20; Exod 39:13
28:10 Exod 1:1-4; Gen 43:33
28:11 Exod 28:21,36; Jer 22:24; Zech 3:9
28:12 Exod 28:29; Josh 4:7; Exod 39:6,7
28:14 Exod 39:15; Exod 28:22-25; Exod 39:17,18
28:15 Exod 28:4,30; Exod 39:8; Lev 8:8
28:17 Rev 21:19-20; Ezek 28:13; Exod 28:9,11
28:18 Exod 39:11; Ezek 27:16; Exod 24:10
28:19 Exod 39:12; Isa 54:12
28:20 Ezek 1:16; Ezek 10:9; Dan 10:6
28:21 Rev 7:4; Rev 21:12; 1 Kgs 18:31

27:20 *pure olive oil, beaten, for the light, to cause a lamp to go up continually* Beaten oil was the best. Olives were crushed gently in a mortar rather than a large press, giving clear oil that burned bright with little smoke. The whole nation supplied it.
27:21 *In the tent of meeting* Another name for the tabernacle, where God met His people. Here Aaron and his sons are first named as the ones who would serve (28-29). The lamp burned all night, every night. Oil is often linked to the Holy Spirit (Zech 4:1-6). The light of Christ in us is kept burning as we "be filled with the Spirit" (Eph 5:18), and it is meant to shine through the night.
28:1 *bring near to yourself Aaron your brother, and his sons with him* Until now Moses and family heads had offered sacrifices. Now God set apart one family of Levi. Aaron did not apply. God chose him. "No one takes the honor for himself, but the one being called by God, just as also Aaron was" (Heb 5:4), and so the Christ "did not glorify Himself to become a high priest" (Heb 5:5). Nadab and Abihu would later die for strange fire (Lev 10:1-2). Holy work is an honor and a serious trust.
28:2 *garments of holiness for Aaron your brother, for glory and for beauty* Holy clothes set apart for God's service, showing that Aaron stood before a holy God and giving his office honor.
28:3 *whom I have filled with a spirit of wisdom* The workers' skill was God's gift. Their leader, Bezalel, appears in chapter 31. God still gives His people gifts to use for His house (1 Pet 4:10).
28:4 *a breastpiece and an ephod and a robe, and a tunic of checkered work, a turban, and a sash* Six pieces in the same materials as the tabernacle (25:4). The high priest was dressed to match God's house.
28:6 *they shall make the ephod* An outer garment like a vest or apron, with shoulder pieces and a woven waistband, with gold thread worked in so it would shine (39:3).
28:12 *Aaron shall bear their names before the LORD on his two shoulders for a memorial* Two onyx stones, six tribes on each in birth order. Every time he served, Aaron carried all twelve tribes on his shoulders, the place of strength. The shepherd finds the lost sheep and "lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing" (Luke 15:5). Our High Priest carries us before God. We do not stand there on our own strength.
28:15 *you shall make a breastpiece of judgment* A square pouch about nine inches each way, folded double, worn on the chest.
28:17 *four rows of stone* Twelve precious stones in four rows of three. We are not sure of the modern names for some of them, and translations differ. Each was different and each precious.
28:21 *like the engravings of a signet, each according to his name* A signet was a seal cut into stone. Each tribe had its own stone and name. No tribe was lost in the crowd. John saw the New Jerusalem built on precious stones with the tribes' names on its gates (Rev 21:12, 19-20). God's people are His jewels.

they shall be for the twelve tribes. **22** And you shall make on the breastpiece braided chains, a work of cordage, ***of*** pure gold. **23** And you shall make on the breastpiece two rings of gold, and you shall put the two rings on the two ends of the breastpiece. **24** And you shall put the two cords of gold on the two rings at the ends of the breastpiece. **25** And the two ends of the two cords you shall put on the two filigree settings, and you shall put ***them*** on the shoulder pieces of the ephod at the front of its face. **26** And you shall make two rings of gold, and you shall put them on the two ends of the breastpiece, on its edge which ***is*** toward the side of the ephod inward. **27** And you shall make two rings of gold, and you shall put them on the two shoulder pieces of the ephod from below, from the front of its face, close to its joining, above the band of the ephod. **28** And let them bind the breastpiece by its rings to the rings of the ephod with a lace of blue, to be on the band of the ephod, and the breastpiece shall not be displaced from on the ephod. **29** And Aaron shall bear the names of the sons of Israel on the breastpiece of judgment over his heart when he goes into the holy place, for a memorial before the LORD continually. **30** And you shall put into the breastpiece of judgment the Urim and the Thummim, and they shall be over the heart of Aaron when he goes in before the LORD; and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the sons of Israel over his heart before the LORD continually.

The Robe and Other Garments

31 And you shall make the robe of the ephod entirely ***of*** blue. **32** And the opening of its head shall be in its midst; an edge shall be for its opening all around, the work of a weaver; like the opening of a coat of mail it shall be for it; it shall not be torn. **33** And you shall make on its hem pomegranates of blue and purple and crimson scarlet, on its hem all around, and bells of gold in their midst all around: **34** a bell of gold and a pomegranate, a bell of gold and a pomegranate, on the hems of the robe all around. **35** And it shall be on Aaron to minister, and its sound shall be heard when he goes into the holy place before the LORD and when he comes out, and he shall not die. **36** And you shall make a plate of pure gold, and you shall engrave on it ***like*** the engravings of a signet, 'Holiness to the LORD.' **37** And you shall put it on a lace of blue, and it shall be on the turban; at the front of the face of the turban it shall be. **38** And it shall be on the forehead of Aaron, and Aaron shall bear the iniquity of the holy things which the sons of Israel sanctify, for all the gifts of their holy things; and it shall be on his forehead continually, for acceptance for them before the LORD. **39** And you shall weave the tunic ***of*** fine linen in checkered work, and you shall make a turban of fine linen, and a sash you shall make, the work of an embroiderer. **40** And for the sons of Aaron you shall make tunics, and you shall make for them sashes, and headdresses you shall make for them, for glory and for beauty. **41** And you shall clothe Aaron your brother ***with*** them, and his sons with him, and you shall anoint them, and you shall fill their hand, and you shall sanctify them, and they shall serve as priests to Me. **42** And make for them undergarments of linen to cover the flesh of nakedness; from the hips and to the thighs they shall be. **43** And they shall be on Aaron and on his sons when they go into the tent of meeting, or when they draw near to the altar to minister in the holy place, and they shall not

28:23 Exod 25:11-15
28:25 Exod 28:14; Exod 39:15; Exod 39:4
28:28 Num 15:38; Exod 28:31,37; Exod 39:30,31
28:29 Exod 28:12; Exod 28:15,30; Jer 30:21
28:30 Lev 8:8; Num 27:21; Deut 33:8
28:31 Exod 28:4,28; Exod 39:22; Lev 8:7
28:32 Eph 4:12; Exod 39:28; 2 Chr 26:14
28:33 Exod 39:24-26; 1 Kgs 7:18; 2 Kgs 25:17
28:34 Ps 89:15; Song 2:3; Song 4:3,13
28:35 Heb 8:2; Lev 16:2; Heb 9:12
28:36 Zech 14:20; Lev 8:9; Exod 39:30
28:37 Exod 28:28,31; Num 15:38; Exod 28:4
28:38 Lev 10:17; Num 18:1; 1 Pet 2:24
28:39 Ps 45:14
28:40 Exod 28:4; Lev 8:13; Ezek 44:17,18
28:41 Heb 5:4; Exod 29:7; Exod 40:15
28:42 Lev 6:10; Lev 16:4; Ezek 44:18
28:43 Exod 27:21; Exod 20:26; Lev 5:1,17

28:28 *the breastpiece shall not be displaced from on the ephod* Gold chains, rings and a blue lace bound the names over the heart to the names on the shoulders, so they could not slip while Aaron worked. "No one will snatch them out of My hand" (John 10:28).

28:29 *Aaron shall bear the names of the sons of Israel on the breastpiece of judgment over his heart* The shoulders speak of strength, the heart of love. Our High Priest carries our names on His heart. "He is also able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through Him, always living to intercede for them" (Heb 7:25). To intercede is to plead for someone, and Jesus does it now for every believer (Rom 8:34).

28:30 *the Urim and the Thummim* The words mean lights and perfections. Scripture never describes them. Kept in the pouch, they were used to learn God's will in important decisions (Num 27:21; 1 Sam 28:6). Many suggest they were lots giving a yes or no answer. We do not need them today. God has spoken fully in His Son (Heb 1:1-2) and given us His Word and Spirit.

28:32 *it shall not be torn* The blue robe was one piece, its neck bound so it would not tear, and the high priest was forbidden to tear his garments (Lev 21:10). At Jesus' trial "the high priest tore his garments" (Matt 26:65), and many see in this a sign that his office was passing away before the true High Priest.

28:35 *its sound shall be heard when he goes into the holy place before the LORD and when he comes out, and he shall not die* Pomegranates and gold bells alternated around the hem. The people outside could hear that their priest was alive and still serving. God's presence was not a place to wander into carelessly.

28:36 *Holiness to the LORD* Engraved on a gold plate tied to the front of the turban, on Aaron's forehead, "the crown of holiness" (29:6).

28:38 *Aaron shall bear the iniquity of the holy things* Even the people's gifts came from sinful hands. The high priest carried that guilt so the gifts would be accepted. Our best prayers and service are mixed with sin, and they are accepted because Christ is holy for us: "holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners" (Heb 7:26). We offer "spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (1 Pet 2:5).

28:40 *for the sons of Aaron you shall make tunics* The ordinary priests received simpler tunics, sashes and headdresses, yet still "for glory and for beauty." Every priest was dressed with honor.

28:41 *you shall anoint them, and you shall fill their hand, and you shall sanctify them* To anoint is to pour oil to set someone apart. To fill the hand is the Hebrew way of saying ordain. To sanctify is to make holy. The priests could not serve until God clothed them. Neither can we: "He has clothed me with garments of salvation" (Isa 61:10), and Christ is our righteousness (2 Cor 5:21).

28:42 *undergarments of linen to cover the flesh of nakedness* Pagan worship often included shameful things. God's worship was modest and pure, as with the altar without steps (20:26).

28:43 *a statute forever for him and for his seed after him* Forever here means as long as that priesthood stood. Aaron's priesthood was a shadow that gave way to a better one: the oath "appoints a Son, perfected forever" (Heb 7:28). Jesus "holds the priesthood permanently" (Heb 7:24), a priest after the order of Melchizedek (Heb 5:6). Some teachers see a role for Levitical priests again in the millennial temple (Ezek 44:15). Aaron needed holy clothes. Jesus is holiness itself.

bear iniquity and die; ***it shall be*** a statute forever for him and for his seed after him.

EXODUS 29

The Consecration of the Priests

1 And this ***is*** the thing which you shall do to them to sanctify them, to serve as priests to Me: take one young bull, a son of the herd, and two rams without blemish, **2** and bread of unleavened loaves, and cakes of unleavened loaves mixed with oil, and wafers of unleavened loaves smeared with oil; ***of*** fine flour of wheat you shall make them. **3** And you shall put them on one basket, and you shall bring them near in the basket, and the young bull and the two rams. **4** And Aaron (Aharon) and his sons you shall bring near to the entrance of the tent of meeting, and you shall wash them with water. **5** And you shall take the garments, and you shall clothe Aaron ***with*** the tunic and the robe of the ephod and the ephod and the breastpiece, and you shall gird him with the band of the ephod. **6** And you shall put the turban on his head, and you shall put the crown of holiness on the turban. **7** And you shall take the oil of the anointing, and you shall pour ***it*** on his head, and you shall anoint him. **8** And his sons you shall bring near, and you shall clothe them ***with*** tunics, **9** and you shall gird them ***with*** a sash, Aaron and his sons, and you shall bind headdresses on them; and the priesthood shall be theirs for a statute forever. And you shall fill the hand of Aaron and the hand of his sons.

The Ordination Offerings

10 And you shall bring near the young bull before the tent of meeting, and Aaron and his sons shall lay their hands on the head of the young bull. **11** And you shall slaughter the young bull before the LORD, ***at*** the entrance of the tent of meeting. **12** And you shall take some of the blood of the young bull, and you shall put ***it*** on the horns of the altar with your finger; and all the blood you shall pour out at the base of the altar. **13** And you shall take all the fat that covers the entrails, and the lobe on the liver, and the two kidneys and the fat which ***is*** on them, and you shall make ***them*** smoke on the altar. **14** And the flesh of the young bull and its hide and its dung you shall burn with fire outside the camp; it ***is*** a sin offering. **15** And the one ram you shall take, and Aaron and his sons shall lay their hands on the head of the ram. **16** And you shall slaughter the ram, and you shall take its blood, and you shall sprinkle ***it*** on the altar all around. **17** And the ram you shall cut into its pieces, and you shall wash its entrails and its legs, and you shall put ***them*** with its pieces and with its head. **18** And you shall make the whole ram smoke on the altar; it ***is*** a burnt offering to the LORD, a soothing aroma; a fire offering to the LORD it ***is***. **19** And you shall take the second ram, and Aaron and his sons shall lay their hands on the head of the ram. **20** And you shall slaughter the ram, and you shall take some of its blood, and you shall put ***it*** on the lobe of the ear of Aaron and on the lobe of the ear of his sons, the right ***ear***, and on the thumb of their right hand, and on the big toe of their right foot; and you shall sprinkle the blood on the altar all around. **21** And you shall take some of the blood which ***is*** on the altar, and some of the oil of the anointing, and you shall spatter ***it*** on Aaron and on his garments, and on his sons and on the garments of his sons with him; and he shall be holy, he and his garments, and his sons and the garments of his sons with him. **22** And you shall take from the ram the fat and the fat tail, and the fat that covers the entrails, and the lobe of the liver, and the two kidneys and the fat which ***is*** on them, and the right thigh, for it ***is*** a ram of installation; **23** and one round loaf of bread, and one

29:1 1 Pet 1:19; Exod 29:21; Exod 20:11
29:2 Num 6:15; Exod 12:8; Lev 2:4
29:3 Lev 8:2,26,31; Num 6:17
29:4 Heb 10:22; Exod 40:12; Exod 26:36
29:5 Exod 28:2-8; Lev 8:7,8; Exod 28:8
29:6 Lev 8:9; Exod 28:36-39
29:7 Lev 21:10; Num 35:25; Exod 28:41
29:8 Lev 8:13; Exod 28:40
29:9 Heb 5:4; Heb 7:11; Num 18:7
29:10 Lev 1:4; Lev 8:14,18; Exod 29:15,19
29:11 Lev 8:15; Lev 9:8,12; Exod 29:4
29:12 Heb 9:21; Exod 27:2; Lev 8:15
29:13 Lev 3:3,4,9,10,14-16; 1 Sam 2:16; Exod 29:22
29:14 Lev 4:11,12,21; Exod 30:10; Lev 8:17
29:15 Exod 29:3,19; Lev 8:18-21; Exod 29:10
29:16 Exod 29:11,12
29:17 Lev 1:9,13; Lev 8:21; Lev 9:14
29:18 Heb 10:8; Gen 8:21; Gen 22:2,7,13
29:19 Exod 29:3; Lev 8:22-29
29:20 Lev 8:24; Lev 14:14; Isa 50:5
29:21 Heb 9:22; Exod 29:7; Lev 8:30
29:22 Exod 29:13; Lev 8:25-27; Lev 3:9
29:23 Exod 29:2,3

29:1 *two rams without blemish* To sanctify the priests was to set them apart for God. They were sinners like everyone else, and something had to be done for them first. Without blemish means without defect, pointing to Christ, "a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pet 1:19).
29:4 *you shall wash them with water* The first step. No one could serve God unclean.
29:7 *you shall pour it on his head, and you shall anoint him* The oil ran "down on the beard, the beard of Aaron" (Ps 133:2). Oil often pictures the Holy Spirit. Notice the order: washed, clothed, anointed. God saved us "through the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit" (Titus 3:5). Messiah or Christ means the Anointed One. Jesus was anointed with the Spirit (Acts 10:38), and through Him every believer is washed, clothed in His righteousness and given the Spirit.
29:9 *the priesthood shall be theirs for a statute forever* The priesthood stayed in Aaron's family as long as the Law stood. To fill the hand means to ordain (28:41). Later Moses actually fills their hands with God's portion (29:24).
29:10 *Aaron and his sons shall lay their hands on the head of the young bull* Laying hands on the animal meant, this one stands in my place.
29:14 *you shall burn with fire outside the camp; it is a sin offering* A sin offering dealt with sin and its guilt so the sinner could be cleansed and forgiven. Before Aaron could pray for others, his own sin had to be dealt with (Heb 5:3). Jesus never needed that. And "so that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered outside the gate" (Heb 13:12), as the sin offering was burned outside the camp.
29:18 *it is a burnt offering to the LORD, a soothing aroma* The burnt offering was burned completely, nothing held back, picturing complete surrender. The sin offering dealt with sin; the burnt offering said, now I am wholly Yours. God was pleased not with smoke but with the heart behind it. Christ gave Himself "for an aroma of fragrance" (Eph 5:2), and we are to present our bodies "as a living, holy sacrifice, well-pleasing to God" (Rom 12:1).
29:20 *on the lobe of the ear of Aaron* A common explanation: the ear hears God's word, the hand does His work, the foot walks His ways. The whole man was marked by the blood and given to God. Every part of a believer's life is bought with His blood (1 Cor 6:19-20).
29:21 *some of the blood which is on the altar, and some of the oil of the anointing* Blood cleanses and oil sets apart. We need both what Christ did for us on the cross and what the Spirit does in us.

cake of bread ***with*** oil, and one wafer, from the basket of the unleavened loaves which ***is*** before the LORD. **24** And you shall put the whole on the palms of Aaron and on the palms of his sons, and you shall wave them ***as*** a wave offering before the LORD. **25** And you shall take them from their hand, and you shall make ***them*** smoke on the altar on the burnt offering, for a soothing aroma before the LORD; it ***is*** a fire offering to the LORD. **26** And you shall take the breast from the ram of installation which ***is*** for Aaron, and you shall wave it ***as*** a wave offering before the LORD; and it shall be for you for a portion. **27** And you shall sanctify the breast of the wave offering and the thigh of the contribution, which was waved and which was lifted up, from the ram of installation, from that which ***is*** for Aaron and from that which ***is*** for his sons. **28** And it shall be for Aaron and for his sons for a due forever from the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), for it ***is*** a contribution; and it shall be a contribution from the sons of Israel from the sacrifices of their peace offerings, their contribution to the LORD.

God Will Dwell With Israel

29 And the garments of holiness which ***are*** for Aaron shall be for his sons after him, for anointing in them and for filling their hand in them. **30** Seven days the priest in his place from among his sons shall wear them, who goes into the tent of meeting to minister in the holy place. **31** And the ram of installation you shall take, and you shall boil its flesh in a holy place. **32** And Aaron and his sons shall eat the flesh of the ram and the bread which ***is*** in the basket, ***at*** the entrance of the tent of meeting. **33** And they shall eat those ***things*** by which atonement was made, to fill their hand, to sanctify them; and a stranger shall not eat ***them***, for they ***are*** holy. **34** And if ***any*** of the flesh of the installation and of the bread is left over until the morning, then you shall burn what is left over with fire; it shall not be eaten, for it ***is*** holy. **35** And you shall do thus to Aaron and to his sons, according to all that I have commanded you; seven days you shall fill their hand. **36** And a young bull ***as*** a sin offering you shall offer each day for atonement; and you shall make a sin offering on the altar when you make atonement on it, and you shall anoint it to sanctify it. **37** Seven days you shall make atonement on the altar, and you shall sanctify it; and the altar shall be a holy of holies; whatever touches the altar shall be holy. **38** And this ***is*** what you shall offer on the altar: lambs, sons of a year, two each day, continually. **39** The one lamb you shall offer in the morning, and the second lamb you shall offer between the two evenings; **40** and approximately 2 quarts (a tenth ***of an ephah***) of fine flour mixed with approximately 1 quart (the fourth of the hin) of beaten oil, and a drink offering of approximately 1 quart (the fourth of the hin) of wine, for the one lamb. **41** And the second lamb you shall offer between the two evenings; like the grain offering of the morning and like its drink offering you shall offer with it, for a soothing aroma, a fire offering to the LORD, **42** a continual burnt offering throughout your generations ***at*** the entrance of the tent of meeting before the LORD, where I will meet with you, to speak to you there. **43** And I will meet there with the sons of Israel, and it shall be sanctified by My glory. **44** And I will sanctify the tent of meeting and the altar; and Aaron and his sons I will sanctify to serve as priests to Me. **45** And I will dwell in the midst of the sons of Israel, and I will be God for them. **46** And they shall know that I ***am*** the LORD their God, who brought them out from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim), that I might dwell in their midst; I ***am*** the LORD their God.

29:24 Lev 7:30; Lev 8:27; Exod 29:26,27
29:25 Lev 8:28; Exod 29:41; Lev 7:29-31
29:26 Lev 8:29; Ps 99:6
29:27 Lev 10:15; Num 18:11,18,19; Deut 18:3
29:28 Lev 10:14,15; Deut 18:3; Num 15:19,20
29:29 Num 18:8; Exod 28:3,4; Num 20:26-28
29:30 Num 20:28; Heb 7:26; Exod 29:35
29:31 Lev 8:31; 1 Sam 2:13,15; Ezek 46:20-24
29:32 Matt 12:4; Exod 24:9-11; Lev 10:12-14
29:33 Num 18:4,7; Lev 10:13-18; Ps 22:26
29:34 Exod 12:10; Lev 8:32; Exod 29:22,26,28
29:35 Exod 40:12-15; Lev 8:4-36; Exod 39:42,43
29:36 Heb 10:11; Ezek 48:18-20; Exod 30:26,28,29
29:37 Exod 40:10; Dan 9:24; Matt 23:17,19
29:38 Num 28:3-8; 1 Chr 16:40; Dan 12:11
29:39 Ezek 46:13-15; 2 Kgs 16:15; 2 Chr 13:11
29:40 Lev 23:13; Isa 57:6; Ezek 45:17
29:41 1 Kgs 18:29,36; 2 Kgs 16:15; Ezra 9:4,5
29:43 1 Kgs 8:11; Exod 40:34; 2 Chr 5:14
29:44 Rev 1:6; Lev 21:15; Lev 22:9,16
29:45 2 Cor 6:16; Exod 25:8; Lev 26:12
29:46 Exod 20:2; Jer 31:33; Lev 11:44

29:24 *you shall wave them as a wave offering before the LORD* The ordination ram's portions and the bread were put in the priests' palms and lifted before God to show all belonged to Him. This is the filling of the hand that gives ordination its name. Aaron's hands were filled with God's portion, and he gave it back.
29:28 *it shall be for Aaron and for his sons for a due forever* From then on the breast and thigh of the people's peace offerings belonged to the priests. A peace offering was shared in a meal, part burned for God and part eaten, a sign of fellowship. The priests had no land, and God fed them from the offerings.
29:29 *the garments of holiness which are for Aaron shall be for his sons after him* Aaron's clothes were put on Eleazar before Aaron died (Num 20:25-28). The clothes stayed and the men changed. "They indeed have become many priests because they are prevented by death from continuing" (Heb 7:23). Jesus abides forever, and we will never need another.
29:33 *they shall eat those things by which atonement was made* Atonement means covering sin and making peace between God and man. The priests ate the meal that made them clean. A stranger here means anyone outside the priestly family.
29:35 *seven days you shall fill their hand* The ceremony was repeated daily for a week, seven being the number of completeness, and the priests did not leave the tent's entrance (Lev 8:33-35). Being set apart for God takes time and care.
29:37 *whatever touches the altar shall be holy* Even the altar, made by sinful hands among a sinful people, needed atonement, for the copies of heavenly things had to be cleansed with blood (Heb 9:21-23). Whatever touched it came to belong to God and had to be treated that way.
29:38 *lambs, sons of a year, two each day, continually* One in the morning and one at twilight, with fine flour, oil and a drink offering of wine poured out before God (29:40). For centuries Israel's day began and ended with a sacrifice, and it never finished the work: these sacrifices "can never take away sins" (Heb 10:11). Jesus is the Lamb they pointed to (John 1:29). Many have noticed He died about the hour of the evening offering (Mark 15:34-37), though Scripture does not draw that link.
29:43 *it shall be sanctified by My glory* All this was not ceremony for its own sake. The blood, washing and priests made it possible for a holy God to meet sinners without consuming them.
29:46 *who brought them out from the land of Egypt, that I might dwell in their midst* The goal of the exodus. Salvation is not only rescue from something but being brought to Someone. The promise runs through the Bible: to Israel in the new covenant (Jer 31:33), to believers, "I will dwell in them and walk among them" (2 Cor 6:16), and at the end, "the tabernacle of God is with men" (Rev 21:3). What God began in the desert, He will finish in the new creation.

EXODUS 30

The Altar of Incense

1 And you shall make an altar ***for*** the smoking of incense; ***of*** acacia wood you shall make it. **2** Approximately 18 inches (a cubit) ***shall be*** its length, and approximately 18 inches (a cubit) its breadth; it shall be square; and approximately 3 feet (two cubits) its height; its horns ***shall be*** from it. **3** And you shall overlay it ***with*** pure gold, its top and its sides all around and its horns; and you shall make for it a molding of gold all around. **4** And two rings of gold you shall make for it under its molding; on its two sides you shall make ***them***, on its two sides; and they shall be for housings for poles to carry it by them. **5** And you shall make the poles ***of*** acacia wood, and you shall overlay them ***with*** gold. **6** And you shall put it before the veil which ***is*** by the ark of the testimony, before the mercy seat which ***is*** over the testimony, where I will meet with you there. **7** And Aaron (Aharon) shall make incense of fragrances smoke on it; morning by morning, when he tends the lamps, he shall make it smoke. **8** And when Aaron lifts up the lamps between the two evenings, he shall make it smoke, a continual incense before the LORD throughout your generations. **9** You shall not offer up on it strange incense, or burnt offering, or grain offering; and a drink offering you shall not pour out on it. **10** And Aaron shall make atonement on its horns once in the year; with the blood of the sin offering of atonement once in the year he shall make atonement on it throughout your generations; it ***is*** a holy of holies to the LORD."

The Atonement Money

11 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe), saying, **12** "When you take the sum of the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) by their enrolled ***men***, then they shall give each man a ransom for his soul to the LORD when enrolling them, and there shall not be a plague among them when enrolling them. **13** This they shall give, everyone who passes over to those enrolled: approximately 1/5 ounce (the half of the shekel) by the shekel of the holy place; the shekel ***is*** approximately 2/5 ounce (twenty gerahs); the half of the shekel ***is*** a contribution to the LORD. **14** Everyone who passes over to those enrolled, from a son of twenty years and upward, shall give the contribution of the LORD. **15** The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less, than approximately 1/5 ounce (the half of the shekel), in giving the contribution of the LORD, to make atonement for your souls. **16** And you shall take the silver of the atonement from the sons of Israel, and you shall give it for the service of the tent of meeting; and it shall be for the sons of Israel for a memorial before the LORD, to make atonement for your souls."

The Laver, Oil and Incense

17 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **18** "And you shall make a laver of bronze and its base ***of*** bronze for washing; and you shall put it between the tent of meeting and the altar, and you shall put water there. **19** And Aaron and his sons shall wash from it their hands and their feet. **20** When they go into the tent of meeting they shall wash ***with*** water, and they shall not die; or when they draw near to the altar to minister, to make a fire offering smoke to the LORD, **21** then

30:1 Exod 37:25-28; Rev 8:3; Exod 40:5
30:2 Exod 27:2
30:3 Exod 25:11,24
30:4 Exod 25:12,14,27; Exod 26:29; Exod 27:4,7
30:5 Exod 25:13,27
30:6 Matt 27:51; Heb 9:3; Heb 9:4
30:7 1 Sam 2:28; Exod 27:20,21; 1 Chr 23:13
30:8 Exod 12:6; Rom 8:34; 1 Thess 5:17
30:9 Lev 10:1
30:10 Heb 9:7; Lev 16:18,29,30; Lev 23:27
30:12 Num 31:50; Exod 38:25,26; Ps 49:7
30:13 Matt 17:24; Lev 27:25; Num 3:47
30:14 Num 1:3,18,20; Num 14:29; Num 26:2
30:15 Prov 22:2; Eph 6:9; Job 34:19
30:16 Exod 38:25-31; Num 16:40; Neh 10:32,33
30:18 Exod 38:8; Exod 40:7,30-32; Lev 8:11
30:19 Isa 52:11; Exod 40:31,32; Ps 26:6
30:20 Exod 12:15; Lev 10:1-3; Lev 16:1,2
30:21 Exod 28:43

30:1 *you shall make an altar for the smoking of incense* Incense is a mixture of spices that gives sweet smoke when burned. This small altar, about eighteen inches square and three feet high, was covered in gold with horns, rings and poles. Why it is described here and not in chapter 25 is not stated. One suggestion is that it belongs with the priests' daily service just described. It completed the Holy Place: table on the north, lampstand on the south, this altar in the middle.
30:6 *you shall put it before the veil which is by the ark of the testimony* It stood as close to the ark as anything could outside the holy of holies, with only the veil between, which is why Hebrews 9:4 links the golden altar with the inner room.
30:8 *a continual incense before the LORD throughout your generations* Morning and evening, as the lamps were tended, incense rose. Incense pictures prayer: "Let my prayer be established as incense before You" (Ps 141:2), and in heaven the elders hold "golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints" (Rev 5:8). While Zechariah burned incense, the people prayed outside (Luke 1:9-10). Our prayers rise to God's throne because our High Priest brings them there.
30:9 *You shall not offer up on it strange incense* Any incense not made by God's recipe. Nadab and Abihu died for strange fire (Lev 10:1-2). God decides how He is approached.
30:10 *Aaron shall make atonement on its horns once in the year* On the Day of Atonement blood went on these horns too (Lev 16:18-19). Even the place of prayer needed cleansing. Our prayers are accepted not because they are pure but because they come through the blood of Christ.
30:12 *they shall give each man a ransom for his soul to the LORD* A ransom is a price paid to set someone free or spare his life. Counting the army could become pride, trusting numbers instead of God, and the people belonged to God, not their leaders. The ransom said, my life is the LORD's. A plague followed David's proud census (2 Sam 24). Scripture does not fully explain why a census without the ransom brought a plague.
30:15 *The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less* Every man twenty and older gave half a shekel, a weight of silver about a fifth of an ounce. Every soul had the same value before God. "All sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom 3:23), and all are saved the same way, at the same price, the blood of Christ.
30:16 *you shall take the silver of the atonement* This silver made the bases on which the tabernacle's boards stood (38:25-28). God's house rested on ransom money, as God's people stand on the price of their redemption. By Jesus' day it had become a yearly temple tax (Matt 17:24-27). Jesus came "to give His life as a ransom for many" (Matt 20:28).
30:18 *a laver of bronze and its base of bronze for washing* A large basin between the tent and the altar. Its size and shape are not given. It was made from the bronze mirrors of the women who served at the tent's entrance (38:8).
30:19 *Aaron and his sons shall wash from it their hands and their feet* Hands did the work and feet walked on holy ground. The priests were washed all over once at ordination (29:4), then washed hands and feet each time they served. "The one who has bathed has no need except to wash the feet, but is wholly clean" (John 13:10). Trusting Christ, we are washed once for all, but walking through a dirty world we need daily cleansing: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous" (1 John 1:9).

they shall wash their hands and their feet, and they shall not die; and it shall be for them a statute forever, for him and for his seed throughout their generations." **22** And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **23** "And you, take for yourself the finest spices: flowing myrrh, approximately 12.5 pounds (five hundred ***shekels***); and cinnamon of spice, half of it, approximately 6 pounds (two hundred and fifty ***shekels***); and cane of spice, approximately 6 pounds (two hundred and fifty ***shekels***); **24** and cassia, approximately 12.5 pounds (five hundred ***shekels***) by the shekel of the holy place; and olive oil, approximately 1 gallon (a hin). **25** And you shall make it an oil of anointing of holiness, a perfume of blending, the work of a perfumer; it shall be an oil of anointing of holiness. **26** And you shall anoint with it the tent of meeting and the ark of the testimony, **27** and the table and all its articles, and the lampstand and its articles, and the altar of incense, **28** and the altar of burnt offering and all its articles, and the laver and its base. **29** And you shall sanctify them, and they shall be a holy of holies; whatever touches them shall be holy. **30** And Aaron and his sons you shall anoint, and you shall sanctify them to serve as priests to Me. **31** And to the sons of Israel you shall speak, saying, 'This shall be an oil of anointing of holiness to Me throughout your generations. **32** On the flesh of man it shall not be poured, and in its proportions you shall not make ***any*** like it; it ***is*** holy; holy it shall be to you. **33** Whoever mixes ***any*** like it, and whoever puts ***any*** of it on a stranger, shall be cut off from his kinsmen.'" **34** And the LORD said to Moses, "Take for yourself spices: stacte and onycha and galbanum, spices, and pure frankincense; part for part it shall be. **35** And you shall make it incense, a perfume, the work of a perfumer, salted, pure, holy. **36** And you shall beat some of it very fine, and you shall put some of it before the testimony in the tent of meeting, where I will meet with you there; it shall be a holy of holies to you. **37** And the incense which you shall make, in its proportions you shall not make ***any*** for yourselves; it shall be holy to you for the LORD. **38** Whoever makes ***any*** like it, to smell it, shall be cut off from his kinsmen."

EXODUS 31

Bezalel and Oholiab

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe), saying, **2** "See, I have called by name Bezalel (Betsalel) son of Uri, son of Hur (Chur), of the tribe of Judah (Yehuda). **3** And I have filled him ***with*** the Spirit of God, with wisdom and with understanding and with knowledge and with all ***kinds of*** work, **4** to devise designs, to work in gold and in silver and in bronze, **5** and in cutting of stone for setting, and in carving of wood, to work in all ***kinds of*** work. **6** And I, look, I have given with him Oholiab (Oholi'av) son of Ahisamach (Achisamakh), of the tribe of Dan; and in the heart of everyone wise of heart I have put wisdom, and they shall make all that I have commanded you: **7** the tent of meeting, and the ark of the testimony, and the mercy seat that ***is*** on it, and all the articles of the tent, **8** and the table and its articles, and the pure lampstand and all its articles, and the altar of incense, **9** and the altar of burnt offering and all its articles, and the laver and its base, **10** and the garments of woven work, and the garments of holiness for Aaron (Aharon) the priest, and the garments of his sons, to serve as priests, **11** and the oil of the anointing, and the incense of the fragrances for the holy place. According to all that I have commanded you they shall do."

30:23 Song 4:14; Ezek 27:19,22; Jer 6:20
30:24 Ps 45:8; Exod 29:40; Num 3:47
30:25 Heb 1:9; Exod 37:29; Num 35:25
30:26 Num 7:1,10; Exod 40:9-15; Lev 8:10-12
30:29 Exod 29:37; Lev 6:18; Matt 23:17,19
30:30 Lev 8:12,30; Exod 29:7-37; Exod 40:15
30:31 Exod 37:29; Lev 8:12; Lev 21:10
30:32 Exod 30:25,37,38; Lev 21:10; Matt 7:6
30:33 Exod 30:38; Gen 17:14; Exod 12:15,19
30:34 Exod 25:6; Exod 37:29; Exod 30:23
30:35 Lev 2:13; Prov 27:9; Song 1:3
30:36 Exod 25:22; Exod 16:34; Exod 30:6
30:37 Exod 30:32,33; Exod 29:37; Lev 2:3
31:2 Exod 36:1; Exod 35:30; Exod 33:12,17
31:3 Exod 35:31; 1 Kgs 7:14; Isa 28:6,26
31:4 Exod 25:32-35; Exod 26:1; Exod 28:15
31:5 Exod 28:9-21
31:6 Exod 35:34; Exod 28:3; Exod 35:10,25,26,35
31:7 Exod 36:8-38; Exod 26:1-37; Exod 27:9-19
31:8 Exod 37:10-16; Exod 25:23-30; Exod 30:1-10
31:9 Exod 38:1-7; Exod 27:1-8; Exod 30:18-21
31:10 Exod 28:1-43; Exod 39:1-43; Lev 8:7,8,13
31:11 Exod 37:29; Exod 30:23-33; Exod 30:34-38

30:23 *take for yourself the finest spices* The anointing oil: about twelve and a half pounds of flowing myrrh, about six pounds each of sweet cinnamon and fragrant cane, twelve and a half pounds of cassia, a spice like cinnamon, and a gallon of olive oil.
30:25 *the work of a perfumer* A skilled maker of fragrances. The rich smell reminded everyone that whatever bore it belonged to God.
30:30 *Aaron and his sons you shall anoint* The same oil was on the house, the furniture and the priests, all set apart together (30:26-29). Messiah means the Anointed One, and Christ is the Greek form. Prophets, priests and kings were anointed, and Jesus is all three: "God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power" (Acts 10:38). Believers have an anointing from the Holy One (1 John 2:20, 27), the Spirit within.
30:33 *shall be cut off from his kinsmen* Either death by God's hand or removal from the community; teachers differ on which is meant. The oil stood for God's own setting apart, and to use it as perfume treated holy things as common. We can do the same with God's name, Word or church. God's gifts are for His glory.
30:34 *stacte and onycha and galbanum, spices, and pure frankincense* Stacte was probably a tree gum, onycha may have come from a shellfish, galbanum was a strong resin, and frankincense a sweet white resin, though the exact substances are debated. Mixed in equal parts, salted, pure and holy.
30:37 *in its proportions you shall not make any for yourselves* Prayer is not a perfume to make us feel good. It is offered to God in His way, through His appointed High Priest. An angel at the golden altar offers incense "with the prayers of all the saints" (Rev 8:3). Not one believer's prayer is lost.
31:2 *I have called by name Bezalel son of Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah* God chose His builder by name. Hur may be the man who held up Moses' arms (17:12) and was left in charge with Aaron (24:14).
31:3 *I have filled him with the Spirit of God* The first time anyone in the Bible is said to be filled with the Spirit of God, and it is for craftsmanship: designing, metalwork, cutting stones and carving wood. Spiritual gifts are not only preaching and praying. The work of an artist, builder or craftsman can be done for God's glory and in His power: "whatever you do, work from the soul, as to the Lord and not to men" (Col 3:23).
31:6 *Oholiab son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan* Judah was the leading tribe; Dan was smaller, from a son of Jacob by a servant (Gen 30:6). In God's work the great and the small serve side by side. And every skilled worker received wisdom for his part: "to each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good" (1 Cor 12:7).
31:11 *According to all that I have commanded you they shall do* God gives the pattern and the gifts to carry it out. When He calls us to a task, He gives what we need.

The Sabbath Sign

12 And the LORD said to Moses, saying, **13** "And you, speak to the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), saying, 'Surely My Sabbaths you shall keep, for it ***is*** a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, to know that I ***am*** the LORD who sanctifies you. **14** And you shall keep the Sabbath, for it ***is*** holiness to you. Those who profane it shall surely be put to death; for whoever does work on it, that soul shall be cut off from the midst of its kinsmen. **15** Six days work shall be done, and on the seventh day ***is*** a Sabbath of Sabbath rest, holiness to the LORD. Whoever does work on the day of the Sabbath shall surely be put to death. **16** And the sons of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations ***as*** an everlasting covenant. **17** Between Me and the sons of Israel it ***is*** a sign forever; for ***in*** six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed.'" **18** And He gave to Moses, when He finished speaking with him on Mount Sinai (Sinay), the two tablets of the testimony, tablets of stone, written by the finger of God.

EXODUS 32

The Golden Calf

1 And the people saw that Moses (Moshe) delayed to come down from the mountain, and the people assembled against Aaron (Aharon), and they said to him, "Arise, make for us gods who shall go before us; for this Moses, the man who brought us up from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim), we do not know what has happened to him." **2** And Aaron said to them, "Tear off the rings of gold which ***are*** on the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring ***them*** to me." **3** And all the people tore off from themselves the rings of gold which ***were*** on their ears, and they brought ***them*** to Aaron. **4** And he took ***it*** from their hand, and he fashioned it with the engraving tool, and he made it a calf of cast metal; and they said, "These ***are*** your gods, O Israel (Yisra'el), who brought you up from the land of Egypt." **5** And Aaron saw ***it***, and he built an altar before it; and Aaron called out and said, "A feast to the LORD ***is*** tomorrow." **6** And they rose early on the next day, and they offered up burnt offerings and brought near peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and they rose up to play. **7** And the LORD spoke to Moses, "Go, go down, for your people, whom you brought up from the land of Egypt, have acted corruptly. **8** They have turned aside quickly from the way which I commanded them; they have made for themselves a calf of cast metal, and they have bowed down to it and sacrificed to it, and they have said, 'These ***are*** your gods, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt.'" **9** And the LORD said to Moses, "I have seen this people, and look, it ***is*** a people stiff of neck. **10** And now, leave Me alone, that My anger may burn against them, and that I may consume them; and that I may make you into

31:13 Ezek 20:12,20; Lev 19:3,30; Exod 31:17
31:14 Luke 23:56; John 5:10; Exod 35:2,3
31:15 Luke 13:14; Luke 23:56; Heb 4:9
31:16 Matt 12:2; John 5:10; Gen 9:13
31:17 Heb 4:4; Gen 1:31; Exod 31:13
31:18 2 Cor 3:3; Luke 11:20; 2 Cor 3:7
32:1 Acts 7:40; Matt 24:48; Rom 11:2
32:2 Judg 8:24-27; Exod 12:35,36; Ezek 16:11,12,17
32:3 Judg 17:3,4; Isa 40:19,20; Isa 46:6
32:4 Acts 7:41; Neh 9:18; Deut 9:16
32:5 2 Kgs 10:20; Lev 23:2,4,21,37; 1 Sam 14:35
32:6 1 Cor 10:7; Acts 7:41; Num 25:2
32:7 1 Cor 10:7; Deut 9:12; Gen 6:11,12
32:8 Rom 3:12; 1 Cor 10:7; Heb 8:9
32:9 Acts 7:51; Acts 13:46; Deut 9:13
32:10 Deut 9:14,19; Num 14:12; Exod 22:24

31:13 *it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations* Why the Sabbath here? The people would be eager to work on God's house, and even holy work stops on the Sabbath (35:2-3). A sign marks a covenant, as circumcision did for Abraham (Gen 17:11) and the rainbow for Noah (Gen 9:13). This was the sign of the covenant at Sinai. Each week, by stopping work, Israel confessed that the LORD made them holy, not their own work.
31:14 *Those who profane it shall surely be put to death* To profane is to treat something holy as common. Working on the Sabbath broke the covenant sign, like throwing away a wedding ring, and one case is recorded (Num 15:32-36). This is hard to read. Israel was a nation under God's direct rule, and the penalty shows how seriously He took His covenant. The New Testament gives the church no such power: "let no one judge you in food or in drink or in respect of a feast or a new moon or Sabbaths" (Col 2:16).
31:15 *a Sabbath of Sabbath rest* A full and complete rest.
31:17 *Between Me and the sons of Israel it is a sign forever* The sign was given to Israel. God was not tired; "refreshed" speaks of Him in human terms, meaning He stopped and delighted in His work (Gen 2:2-3). As at 20:8, believers differ on how the Sabbath applies to Christians: Sunday as the Lord's day, the seventh day, or fulfilled in our rest in Christ (Heb 4:9). All agree God made us to need rest and that true rest is in Him: "Come to Me, all who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matt 11:28).
31:18 *tablets of stone, written by the finger of God* The tablets held the Ten Commandments (34:28), God's witness to His covenant, written by God Himself. The new covenant promises different writing: "on their heart I will write it" (Jer 31:33), believers being a letter "not on tablets of stone but on fleshy tablets of heart" (2 Cor 3:3). Moses held the covenant written by God. Below, the people had already broken it.
32:1 *the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain* Moses had been gone forty days (24:18). Waiting tests what we really trust. Notice their words: this Moses brought us up. They forgot it was the LORD (20:2). With their leader out of sight, they wanted something they could see. When God seems silent, we too are tempted to make something we can see and control and trust that instead.
32:2 *Tear off the rings of gold* Aaron did not argue or remind them of the command they had heard from God's own voice (20:4). This was the gold Egypt gave them (12:35-36), gold God meant for His tabernacle (25:3). The gifts God gives can be turned against Him.
32:4 *he made it a calf of cast metal* Probably a young bull, worshiped in Egypt and Canaan as a symbol of strength and fertility. "They exchanged their glory for the likeness of an ox that eats plants" (Ps 106:20). Stephen remembered it: "they made a calf in those days, and offered a sacrifice to the idol" (Acts 7:41).
32:5 *A feast to the LORD is tomorrow* Aaron called the calf by the LORD's name. He may not have thought he was leaving the LORD at all, but making an image of Him and mixing true worship with pagan ways. That is still idolatry (20:4-5).
32:6 *they rose up to play* Wild partying, and the word can include sexual sin. Paul warns, "do not become idolaters, as some of them were" (1 Cor 10:7), quoting this verse. Idolatry and immorality often go together. When we leave God's way of worship, we soon leave His way of living.
32:7 *your people, whom you brought up from the land of Egypt* They said Moses brought them up, and God speaks the same way, as if handing them over to Moses. A sharp and painful word.
32:8 *They have turned aside quickly* Only weeks after hearing God's voice. God repeats their own words back to Moses. Nothing is hidden from Him.
32:9 *it is a people stiff of neck* Like an ox that will not bend to the yoke or turn when guided. Stephen used the same charge, "You stiff-necked" (Acts 7:51).
32:10 *leave Me alone, that My anger may burn against them* God's anger is His holy, settled opposition to evil, and Israel deserved destruction. But "leave Me alone" in a sense invited Moses to stand in the way. God told him the plan so he would plead, and set a great temptation before him: let them go, and I will start over with you. What would Moses choose?

a great nation." **11** And Moses entreated the face of the LORD his God, and he said, "Why, O LORD, does Your anger burn against Your people, whom You brought out from the land of Egypt with great power and with a strong hand? **12** Why should Egypt speak, saying, 'For evil He brought them out, to kill them in the mountains and to consume them off the face of the ground'? Turn from the burning of Your anger, and relent concerning the evil against Your people.
13 Remember Abraham (Avraham), Isaac (Yitschaq), and Israel, Your servants, to whom You swore by Yourself, and You said to them, 'I will multiply your seed like the stars of the heavens, and all this land of which I have spoken I will give to your seed, and they shall inherit ***it*** forever.'" **14** And the LORD relented concerning the evil which He had spoken to do to His people.

Moses Breaks the Tablets

15 And Moses turned and went down from the mountain, and the two tablets of the testimony ***were*** in his hand, tablets written on their two sides; on this ***side*** and on that ***side*** they ***were*** written. **16** And the tablets, they ***were*** the work of God; and the writing, it ***was*** the writing of God, engraved on the tablets. **17** And Joshua (Yehoshua) heard the sound of the people in its shouting, and he said to Moses, "***There is*** a sound of battle in the camp." **18** And he said, "There is no sound of the shouting of might, and there is no sound of the shouting of weakness; a sound of singing I am hearing." **19** And it was, as soon as he drew near to the camp, that he saw the calf and dances; and the anger of Moses burned, and he threw the tablets from his hands, and he broke them below the mountain. **20** And he took the calf which they had made, and he burned ***it*** with fire, and he ground ***it*** until it was fine, and he scattered ***it*** on the face of the water, and he made the sons of Israel drink ***it***. **21** And Moses said to Aaron, "What did this people do to you, that you have brought on it a great sin?" **22** And Aaron said, "Let not the anger of my lord burn; you know the people, that it ***is set*** on evil. **23** And they said to me, 'Make for us gods who shall go before us; for this Moses, the man who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has happened to him.' **24** And I said to them, 'Who has gold? Tear ***it*** off yourselves.' And they gave ***it*** to me, and I threw it into the fire, and this calf came out."

Judgment and Intercession

25 And Moses saw the people, that it ***was*** running wild, for Aaron had let it run wild, for a derision among those who rise up against them. **26** And Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and he said, "Who ***is*** for the LORD? To me!" And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves to him. **27** And he said to them, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: 'Put each man his sword on his thigh; pass through and return from gate to gate in the camp, and kill each man his brother, and each man his friend, and each man his neighbor.'" **28** And the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses; and ***there*** fell of the people on that day about three thousand men. **29** And

32:11 1 John 5:16; Deut 9:18-20,26-29; Ps 106:23
32:12 1 John 5:16; Num 14:13-16; Deut 9:28
32:13 Heb 6:13; Luke 1:55; Luke 20:37
32:14 1 John 5:16; Ps 106:45; 2 Sam 24:16
32:15 Rev 5:1; 2 Cor 3:7; Deut 9:15
32:16 Exod 31:18; Exod 34:1,4; Deut 9:9-11,15
32:17 Exod 17:9; Exod 24:13; Ezra 3:11-13
32:18 Exod 15:1-18; Dan 5:4,23
32:19 Mark 3:5; 2 Cor 3:7; Deut 9:16,17
32:20 Deut 9:21; Deut 7:5,25; 2 Kgs 23:6,15
32:21 Gen 20:9; Gen 26:10; Deut 13:6-8
32:22 Exod 14:11; Exod 15:24; 1 Sam 15:24
32:23 Acts 7:40; Exod 32:1-4,8
32:24 Exod 32:4; Gen 3:12,13; Luke 10:29
32:25 Exod 33:4-6; Gen 3:10; Isa 47:3
32:26 Josh 5:13; 2 Sam 20:11; 2 Kgs 9:32
32:27 Heb 2:2; Num 25:5,7-12; Deut 33:8,9
32:28 1 Cor 10:8; Heb 2:2; Deut 33:9
32:29 Num 25:11-13; Zech 13:3; Matt 10:37

32:11 *Moses entreated the face of the LORD his God* To entreat is to plead earnestly, interceding for others. Moses handed God's words back: Your people, whom You brought out. He cared for God's honor among the nations (32:12).
32:13 *Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, Your servants, to whom You swore by Yourself* Moses did not plead Israel's goodness. They had none. He pleaded God's character and God's promise (Gen 15:18; 22:16-17). That is the way to pray, on the ground of who God is and what He has promised.
32:14 *the LORD relented concerning the evil which He had spoken to do to His people* Does God change His mind? He "is not a man, that He should lie, and a son of mankind, that He should relent" (Num 23:19; Mal 3:6). Yet He responds to prayer and repentance (Jer 18:7-8; Jonah 3:10). The threat was real, but God always planned mercy through a mediator and used Moses' prayer to bring it. Relented speaks in human terms of a real change in how God dealt with them, not in who He is. Evil here means disaster. Teachers explain this balance in different ways. Moses "stood in the breach before Him" (Ps 106:23). Prayer matters.
32:16 *the writing, it was the writing of God* Moses stresses it twice. These were the most precious objects on earth, God's own handwriting, written front and back.
32:18 *a sound of singing I am hearing* Joshua the soldier thought it was war. Moses knew better. It was not the shout of victory or defeat but singing.
32:19 *he threw the tablets from his hands, and he broke them below the mountain* Moses had prayed for mercy, and now, seeing the sin, he was angry at sin against God. The broken tablets pictured what Israel had done. They had broken the covenant, and Moses let them see it.
32:20 *he made the sons of Israel drink it* Their god could be burned, ground and swallowed. It was nothing. They had to taste the bitterness of their sin, drinking from the stream that came down from the mountain (Deut 9:21).
32:24 *I threw it into the fire, and this calf came out* Aaron blamed the people and made it sound like an accident, though he fashioned it with a tool (32:4). Adam blamed Eve, and Eve the serpent (Gen 3:12-13). True repentance makes no excuses: "Against You, You alone, I have sinned" (Ps 51:4). The LORD was angry enough to destroy Aaron, and Moses prayed for him too (Deut 9:20).
32:25 *Aaron had let it run wild* The camp was out of control, a derision, mocked by Israel's enemies, and the rebellion was still going on.
32:26 *Who is for the LORD? To me* A call to choose sides openly. Moses' own tribe came. Jacob had cursed Levi's anger (Gen 49:5-7), and here Levi's zeal turned to the LORD's side.
32:27 *kill each man his brother, and each man his friend, and each man his neighbor* One of the hardest passages in Exodus, to be read soberly. Israel had just sworn a blood covenant, and its first command was broken in open rebellion. Under the covenant idolatry was a capital crime (22:20). The judgment fell not on the whole nation but on those still running wild after Moses' call, about three thousand of a very large people. The rest were spared by Moses' prayer.
32:28 *there fell of the people on that day about three thousand men* When the law was broken at Sinai, about three thousand died. When the Spirit came at Pentecost, "about three thousand souls" (Acts 2:41) were added. "The letter kills, but the Spirit makes alive" (2 Cor 3:6).
32:29 *Fill your hand today for the LORD* The phrase used for ordaining priests (28:41). The Levites loved God more than their own families, and they were later set apart to serve at the tabernacle (Num 3:5-13; Deut 33:8-9). This is not a pattern for the church, which does not carry the sword (Eph 6:12-17). But Jesus' call is just as costly: "The one who loves father or mother above Me is not worthy of Me" (Matt 10:37).

Moses said, "Fill your hand today for the LORD, for each man ***has been*** against his son and against his brother, and to put a blessing on you today." **30** And it was on the next day, and Moses said to the people, "You, you have sinned a great sin; and now I will go up to the LORD; perhaps I can make atonement for your sin." **31** And Moses returned to the LORD, and he said, "Oh, this people has sinned a great sin, and they have made for themselves gods of gold. **32** And now, if You will forgive their sin—and if not, wipe me out, please, from Your book which You have written." **33** And the LORD said to Moses, "Whoever has sinned against Me, I will wipe him out from My book. **34** And now go, lead the people to ***the place*** of which I have spoken to you. Look, My angel shall go before you; and in the day of My visiting, I will visit their sin on them." **35** And the LORD struck the people, because they had made the calf which Aaron had made.

EXODUS 33

The Command to Leave Sinai

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe), "Go, go up from here, you and the people whom you have brought up from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim), to the land which I swore to Abraham (Avraham), to Isaac (Yitschaq), and to Jacob (Ya'aqov), saying, 'To your seed I will give it.' **2** And I will send before you an angel, and I will drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite, **3** to a land flowing ***with*** milk and honey; for I will not go up in your midst, for you ***are*** a people stiff of neck, lest I consume you on the way." **4** And the people heard this evil word, and they mourned, and they did not put, each man, his ornaments on himself. **5** And the LORD said to Moses, "Say to the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), 'You ***are*** a people stiff of neck; ***if*** I go up in your midst ***for*** one moment, I will consume you. And now, take down your ornaments from yourself, that I may know what I will do to you.'" **6** And the sons of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments from Mount Horeb (Chorev) ***onward***. **7** And Moses would take the tent and pitch it for himself outside the camp, far off from the camp, and he would call it "Tent of Meeting." And it would be ***that*** everyone who sought the LORD would go out to the tent of meeting which ***was*** outside the camp. **8** And it would be, when Moses went out to the tent, ***that*** all the people would rise and stand, each man ***at*** the entrance of his tent, and they would look after Moses until he went into the tent. **9** And it would be, when Moses went into the tent, ***that*** the pillar of the cloud would come down and stand ***at*** the entrance of the tent, and He would speak with Moses. **10** And all the people would see the pillar of the cloud standing ***at*** the entrance of the tent, and all the people would rise and bow down, each man ***at*** the entrance of his tent. **11** And the LORD would speak to Moses face to face, just as a man speaks to his friend. And he would return to the camp; and his attendant Joshua (Yehoshua) son of Nun, a young man, would not depart from the midst of the tent.

32:30 1 Sam 12:20,23; Num 25:13; 2 Sam 16:12
32:31 1 John 5:16; Exod 34:28; Deut 9:18,19
32:32 Rev 21:27; Rom 9:3; Rev 17:8
32:33 Rev 13:8; Rev 20:12; Rev 22:19
32:34 Exod 23:20; Deut 32:35; Exod 33:2,14,15
32:35 Exod 32:25; 2 Sam 12:9,10; Matt 27:3-7
33:1 Acts 7:36; Gen 12:7; Exod 32:13
33:2 Exod 32:34; Josh 24:11; Exod 23:20
33:3 Acts 7:51; Exod 3:8; Exod 32:9
33:4 Num 14:1,39; Ezek 24:17,23; Ezek 26:16
33:5 Acts 7:51; Exod 33:3; Num 16:45,46
33:6 Exod 33:4; Exod 32:3; Jer 2:19
33:7 Exod 29:42,43; Deut 4:29; 2 Sam 21:1
33:8 Num 16:27
33:9 Ps 99:7; Exod 31:18; Exod 13:21,22
33:10 Exod 4:31; 1 Kgs 8:14,22; Luke 18:13
33:11 John 3:29; Num 12:8; Deut 34:10

32:30 *perhaps I can make atonement for your sin* Moses did not call the sin small, but he went to God for them, not sure God would forgive.
32:32 *wipe me out, please, from Your book which You have written* His sentence breaks off. He could not finish it. God's book is the record of those who belong to Him, the book of life (Phil 4:3; Rev 20:12, 15), though some take it here as the record of the living, so that Moses asked to die. Paul felt the same: "I myself was wishing to be accursed from Christ for the sake of my brothers" (Rom 9:3). Moses could not do what he offered, for he was a sinner too. What Moses offered, Jesus did: "He made the One who did not know sin to be sin on our behalf" (2 Cor 5:21).
32:33 *Whoever has sinned against Me, I will wipe him out from My book* God did not accept the offer. Each person is responsible for his own sin (Ezek 18:20), and only a sinless One could take that place.
32:34 *in the day of My visiting, I will visit their sin on them* God did not cancel His promise. Israel would still go to the land with His angel before them. But to visit sin means to bring judgment for it.
32:35 *the LORD struck the people* Scripture does not say what the plague was or how many it touched. Forgiven sin may still have consequences. The calf "they had made" and "Aaron had made": people and leader both bore the blame. Centuries later Jeroboam made two calves and said, "Look, your gods, O Israel, which brought you up from the land of Egypt!" (1 Kgs 12:28). The heart that makes idols is still with us. "Little children, guard yourselves from idols" (1 John 5:21).
33:2 *I will send before you an angel* God would keep His promise of the land and still win their battles. This angel seems to be set apart from God's own presence (33:3, 14-15). Teachers differ on whether he is the same angel as in 23:20-23.
33:3 *for I will not go up in your midst, for you are a people stiff of neck, lest I consume you on the way* God's holiness and their sin could not live side by side. So He offered the gifts without the Giver: the land, but not His presence. Would that be enough? Would we be content with God's blessings if we did not have God?
33:4 *the people heard this evil word, and they mourned* Evil here means grievous. To their credit, they understood what they were losing.
33:6 *the sons of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments from Mount Horeb onward* Their gold earrings had already gone into the calf. Now they removed their jewelry and fine clothes as a sign of sorrow and humility, giving time to show true repentance (33:5), and they did not wear them again.
33:7 *he would call it "Tent of Meeting."* Not the tabernacle, which was not yet built, but a simpler tent, possibly Moses' own, used until the tabernacle was finished. Some see it as the tabernacle described out of order. It stood outside the defiled camp, and anyone who sought the LORD could go. "Let us go out to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach" (Heb 13:13).
33:8 *they would look after Moses until he went into the tent* The people watched their mediator go to meet with God for them.
33:10 *all the people would rise and bow down, each man at the entrance of his tent* The cloud that led them out of Egypt (13:21) came down to the door, and they worshiped from a distance.
33:11 *the LORD would speak to Moses face to face, just as a man speaks to his friend* Face to face means openly and directly, without dreams or visions (Num 12:6-8). It describes the closeness of their talk, not that Moses saw God's full glory (33:20). Moses was God's friend, like Abraham (Isa 41:8). Jesus says, "I have called you friends" (John 15:15), and through Him every believer can speak with God this way. Joshua stayed near God's presence, learning to love it before he ever led.

Moses Asks to See God's Glory

12 And Moses said to the LORD, "See, You are saying to me, 'Bring up this people,' and You, You have not let me know whom You will send with me. And You, You have said, 'I know you by name, and also you have found favor in My eyes.' **13** And now, if, please, I have found favor in Your eyes, let me know, please, Your ways, that I may know You, so that I may find favor in Your eyes; and see that this nation ***is*** Your people." **14** And He said, "My presence shall go, and I will give you rest." **15** And he said to Him, "If Your presence is not going, do not bring us up from here. **16** And by what then shall it be known that I have found favor in Your eyes, I and Your people? ***Is it*** not in Your going with us, and ***in that*** we shall be distinguished, I and Your people, from all the people that ***are*** on the face of the ground?" **17** And the LORD said to Moses, "Also this thing which you have spoken I will do, for you have found favor in My eyes, and I know you by name." **18** And he said, "Show me, please, Your glory." **19** And He said, "I, I will cause all My goodness to pass before your face, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before you; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." **20** And He said, "You are not able to see My face, for man shall not see Me and live." **21** And the LORD said, "Look, ***there is*** a place with Me, and you shall stand on the rock. **22** And it shall be, when My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and I will cover you with My palm until I have passed by. **23** And I will remove My palm, and you shall see My back; and My face shall not be seen."

EXODUS 34

The LORD Proclaims His Name

1 And the LORD said to Moses (Moshe), "Cut out for yourself two tablets of stone like the first ***ones***, and I will write on the tablets the words that were on the first tablets, which you broke. **2** And be ready by the morning, and you shall go up in the morning to Mount Sinai (Sinay), and you shall station yourself there for Me on the top of the mountain. **3** And no man shall go up with you, and also let no man be seen on all the mountain; also let the flock and the herd not graze in front of that mountain." **4** And he cut out two tablets of stone like the first ***ones***, and Moses rose early in the morning, and he went up to Mount Sinai, just as the LORD had commanded him, and he took in his hand two tablets of stone. **5** And the LORD came down in the cloud, and He stood with

33:12 Acts 7:35; Exod 33:17; Exod 32:34
33:13 Ps 25:4; Ps 86:11; Ps 119:33
33:14 Matt 11:28; Isa 63:9; Josh 21:44
33:15 Exod 33:3; Exod 34:9; Ps 4:6
33:16 Num 14:14; Exod 19:5,6; Exod 34:10
33:17 Mark 9:5; Exod 33:12; Gen 19:21
33:18 John 14:8; Exod 33:20; 1 Tim 6:16
33:19 Rom 9:15; Rom 9:16; Rom 9:17
33:20 1 Tim 6:16; John 1:18; Isa 6:5
33:21 Luke 9:32; John 12:41; Deut 5:31
33:22 1 Cor 10:4; Luke 9:32; John 12:41
33:23 John 12:41; Exod 33:20; John 1:18
34:1 2 Cor 3:7; Heb 8:10; Exod 32:19
34:2 Exod 19:20,24; Exod 24:12; Deut 9:25
34:3 Exod 19:12,13,21; Lev 16:17; 1 Tim 2:5
34:5 Luke 9:34; Exod 33:19; Exod 33:9

33:12 *You, You have not let me know whom You will send with me* Moses was not satisfied with an angel. He built his prayer on God's own words: You know me by name, and I have found favor, grace that is not earned.
33:13 *let me know, please, Your ways, that I may know You* What Moses wanted most was not God's help but God Himself. God "made known His ways to Moses" (Ps 103:7). Paul longed "to know Him" (Phil 3:10). And again Moses handed the people back to God: they are Yours.
33:14 *My presence shall go, and I will give you rest* Presence is the Hebrew word for face. God Himself would go. Rest means the peace and safety of settled life in the land.
33:15 *If Your presence is not going, do not bring us up from here* Moses would rather stay in the desert with God than enter the promised land without Him. Do we want God more than His gifts?
33:16 *that we shall be distinguished, I and Your people* What made Israel different was not strength, laws or land but God's presence. The same is true of the church. What sets us apart is not buildings or programs but God living among us by His Spirit (1 Cor 3:16).
33:17 *for you have found favor in My eyes, and I know you by name* God granted it because of the favor shown to their mediator. God accepts us the same way, in His beloved Son (Eph 1:6).
33:18 *Show me, please, Your glory* God's glory is the shining display of who He is. Moses had seen the plagues, the sea and the cloud, and still wanted more of God. The more we know Him, the more we want to know Him.
33:19 *I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious* God's glory would be shown as His goodness and His name, His character, proclaimed in 34:6-7. His grace is His free choice. Israel had no claim on Him after the calf. Paul quotes this: "I will have mercy on whomever I have mercy" (Rom 9:15). Calvinist and Arminian teachers apply Romans 9 differently, but all agree mercy depends on God. That is good news. If it depended on us, none of us would receive it.
33:20 *man shall not see Me and live* No sinner can look on the full glory of a holy God and survive. It would be like staring into the sun, only far more. "No one has ever seen God" (John 1:18).
33:22 *I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and I will cover you with My palm* A cleft is a crack in the rock. God provided a place near Himself where Moses could stand safely, and His hand protected Moses from His own glory. Many hymns and teachers see a picture of hiding in Christ. Paul says the rock that gave water "was the Christ" (1 Cor 10:4), though the New Testament does not say so of this rock.
33:23 *you shall see My back; and My face shall not be seen* God is spirit (John 4:24); this is God speaking in human terms. Moses saw a passing glimpse of what remained after God went by. In Christ we see far more: "the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor 4:6). "The one who has seen Me has seen the Father" (John 14:9).
34:1 *Cut out for yourself two tablets of stone like the first ones* God made the first tablets Himself (32:16). This time Moses cut the stone, but God would still do the writing. The covenant was the same, and God's standard did not change because Israel had failed. Yet He was willing to give it again. That is grace.
34:3 *no man shall go up with you* Moses was to come alone, and not even animals could graze near the mountain. God was ready to renew the covenant, but His holiness had not changed either.
34:4 *Moses rose early in the morning* Moses was past eighty years old, and he went early. He did not drag his feet when God called him to meet with Him.
34:5 *He proclaimed the name of the LORD* God kept His word from 33:19. In the Bible a name tells who someone is. The name is YHWH, given at the burning bush (3:14-15), the One who always exists and keeps His covenant. Now the LORD Himself fills in the meaning of His name.

him there, and He proclaimed the name of the LORD. **6** And the LORD passed by before his face, and He proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD, a God compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and great in steadfast love and faithfulness, **7** keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and He will surely not leave ***the guilty*** unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on sons and on sons of sons, on the third and on the fourth ***generation***." **8** And Moses hurried, and he bowed low toward the earth, and he bowed down. **9** And he said, "If, please, I have found favor in Your eyes, O Lord, let the Lord go, please, in our midst, for it ***is*** a people stiff of neck; and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us as ***Your*** inheritance."

The Covenant Renewed

10 And He said, "Look, I am making a covenant. Before all your people I will do wonders which have not been created in all the earth and among all the nations; and all the people in whose midst you ***are*** shall see the work of the LORD, for it ***is*** awesome, that which I am doing with you. **11** Keep for yourself what I am commanding you today. Look, I am driving out from before you the Amorite and the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite. **12** Take heed to yourself, lest you make a covenant with the inhabitant of the land into which you are going, lest it become a snare in your midst. **13** Rather, their altars you shall tear down, and their pillars you shall shatter, and its Asherim you shall cut down. **14** For you shall not bow down to another god; for the LORD, Jealous ***is*** His name, He ***is*** a jealous God; **15** lest you make a covenant with the inhabitant of the land, and they prostitute themselves after their gods and sacrifice to their gods, and ***one*** invites you, and you eat of his sacrifice, **16** and you take of his daughters for your sons, and his daughters prostitute themselves after their gods, and they cause your sons to prostitute themselves after their gods. **17** Gods of cast metal you shall not make for yourself. **18** The Festival of Unleavened Bread you shall keep; seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, just as I commanded you, at the appointed time of the month of Abib (Aviv), for in the month of Abib you came out from Egypt (Mitsrayim). **19** Everything that opens a womb ***is*** Mine, and all your livestock ***that*** is male, that which opens ***the womb*** of ox and sheep. **20** And that which opens ***the womb*** of a donkey you shall ransom with a sheep; and if you do not ransom ***it***, then you shall break its neck. Every firstborn of your sons you shall ransom. And they shall not appear ***before*** My face

34:6 Joel 2:13; Neh 9:17; Ps 103:8-13
34:7 Rom 3:20; Exod 20:5,6; Jer 32:18
34:8 Exod 4:31; Gen 17:3; 2 Chr 20:18
34:9 Acts 7:51; 1 John 5:16; Ps 33:12
34:10 Deut 5:2,3; Josh 6:20; Josh 10:12,13
34:11 Exod 33:2; Deut 4:1,2,40; Deut 5:32
34:12 Luke 17:3; Exod 23:32,33; Deut 7:2
34:13 Exod 23:24; 2 Kgs 18:4; Judg 6:25
34:14 Rev 19:10; Exod 20:3-5; Deut 6:15
34:15 Num 25:2; Judg 2:17; 1 Cor 8:4,7,10
34:16 Deut 7:3,4; 1 Kgs 11:2-4; Ezra 9:2
34:17 Exod 32:8; Lev 19:4; Isa 46:6,7
34:18 Mark 14:1; Luke 22:1; Acts 20:6
34:19 Luke 2:23; Exod 13:2,12; Exod 22:29
34:20 Exod 23:15; Deut 16:16; Exod 13:15

34:6 *The LORD, the LORD, a God compassionate and gracious* God said His name twice, right after the golden calf, to a people who deserved to be destroyed. The word compassionate is related to the word for a mother's womb: tender love for the weak. "As a father has compassion on his sons, the LORD has compassion on those who fear Him" (Ps 103:13). Gracious means showing favor to someone who does not deserve it.
34:6 *slow to anger, and great in steadfast love and faithfulness* Slow to anger is in Hebrew long of nostrils, a face slow to turn red. God does get angry at sin, but He waits and gives time to repent (2 Pet 3:9). Steadfast love is hesed, loyal covenant love that does not let go. Faithfulness is emet, truth and reliability. John may be echoing this verse when he says the Word was "full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). "The grace and the truth came through Jesus Christ" (John 1:17).
34:7 *keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin* God's love is kept, stored up, for thousands, which may mean thousands of people or of generations (20:6; Deut 7:9). Three words for sin appear: iniquity is crookedness, transgression is rebellion, and sin is missing the mark. God forgives every kind. The word forgive means to lift up and carry away. Micah asked, "Who is a God like You" (Mic 7:18).
34:7 *He will surely not leave the guilty unpunished* God's mercy does not mean He pretends sin does not matter. How can He forgive and also punish? The answer is the cross. There God punished sin fully in His Son, "for Him to be righteous and the One justifying the one who is of faith of Jesus" (Rom 3:26). At the cross both halves of this verse meet.
34:7 *visiting the iniquity of fathers on sons* As at 20:5, this does not mean God punishes innocent children for their fathers' sins (Ezek 18:20). The effects of sin spread through a family, and children who follow it share its judgment. Judgment reaches the third and fourth generation; love reaches thousands. These verses became Israel's creed (Num 14:18; Ps 86:15; 103:8; Joel 2:13; Jonah 4:2; Neh 9:17).
34:8 *he bowed low toward the earth, and he bowed down* When we truly see who God is, the right response is worship.
34:9 *let the Lord go, please, in our midst, for it is a people stiff of neck* God had said He would not go because they were stiff-necked (33:3). Now Moses says, go with us because we are stiff-necked. We need You most because we are so bad. That is faith that has understood grace. Notice "our iniquity." Moses counted himself with the people, and asked God to keep Israel as His treasured inheritance.
34:10 *Look, I am making a covenant* God answered by renewing His covenant. The nations would see the wonders God did with Israel, "for it is awesome." The rest of the chapter repeats key laws from chapters 20 to 23, especially those about worship, the very area Israel had just broken.
34:12 *lest you make a covenant with the inhabitant of the land* Israel was to make no treaties with the Canaanites, "lest it become a snare in your midst." A snare is a trap. The conquest itself is told in Joshua.
34:13 *its Asherim you shall cut down* The pillars were stones set up in pagan worship. Asherah was a Canaanite fertility goddess, and her Asherim were wooden poles or trees set up in her honor. Everything connected with false worship was to be destroyed.
34:14 *Jealous is His name, He is a jealous God* God's jealousy is not petty envy. It is the right jealousy of a husband who will not share his wife with another man. God loves His people too much to share them with idols.
34:16 *they cause your sons to prostitute themselves after their gods* Worshiping other gods was spiritual adultery, and marrying into idol-worshiping families would draw Israel's sons away. That is what happened to Solomon (1 Kgs 11:1-8). The concern was faith, not race: Rahab and Ruth came to trust the LORD. Believers are warned the same way: "Do not become unequally yoked with unbelievers" (2 Cor 6:14).
34:17 *Gods of cast metal you shall not make for yourself* After the golden calf, this command needed no explaining. It was the very thing Israel had just done.
34:18 *in the month of Abib you came out from Egypt* Abib is the spring month later called Nisan. The seven-day Festival of Unleavened Bread reminded them of the night God brought them out (12:15-20).
34:20 *Every firstborn of your sons you shall ransom* The firstborn belonged to God because He spared Israel's firstborn at the Passover (13:2, 11-15). A donkey, which could not be sacrificed, was bought back with a sheep. Children were never sacrificed; they were redeemed. And no one was to come to worship empty-handed. We bring nothing to pay for salvation, but we come with thanks and gifts out of love.

empty. **21** Six days you shall work, and on the seventh day you shall rest; in plowing time and in harvest you shall rest. **22** And the Festival of Weeks you shall observe for yourself, the firstfruits of the harvest of wheat, and the Festival of the Ingathering at the turn of the year. **23** Three times in the year every male of yours shall appear before the face of the Lord, the LORD, the God of Israel (Yisra'el). **24** For I will dispossess nations from before you, and I will enlarge your territory; and no man shall covet your land when you go up to appear before the face of the LORD your God three times in the year. **25** You shall not slaughter the blood of My sacrifice with leaven; and the sacrifice of the Festival of the Passover shall not remain overnight until the morning. **26** The first of the firstfruits of your ground you shall bring ***into*** the house of the LORD your God. You shall not boil a young goat in the milk of its mother." **27** And the LORD said to Moses, "Write for yourself these words, for according to these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel." **28** And he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; bread he did not eat, and water he did not drink. And He wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the ten words.

The Shining Face of Moses

29 And it was, when Moses came down from Mount Sinai, and the two tablets of the testimony ***were*** in the hand of Moses when he came down from the mountain, and Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because of His speaking with him. **30** And Aaron (Aharon) and all the sons of Israel saw Moses, and look, the skin of his face shone; and they were afraid to draw near to him. **31** And Moses called to them, and Aaron and all the leaders in the congregation returned to him, and Moses spoke to them. **32** And after that all the sons of Israel drew near, and he commanded them all that the LORD had spoken with him on Mount Sinai. **33** And Moses finished speaking with them, and he put a veil over his face. **34** And when Moses went in before the LORD to speak with Him, he would remove the veil until he came out; and he would come out and speak to the sons of Israel what he was commanded. **35** And the sons of Israel would see the face of Moses, that the skin of the face of Moses shone; and Moses would put back the veil over his face until he went in to speak with Him.

EXODUS 35

Gifts for the Tabernacle

1 And Moses (Moshe) assembled all the congregation of the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), and he said to them, "These ***are*** the words which the LORD has commanded, to do them. **2** Six days work shall be done, and on the seventh day there shall be for you holiness, a Sabbath of Sabbath rest to the LORD; whoever does work on it shall be put to death. **3** You shall

34:21 Exod 23:12; Exod 35:2; Luke 13:14
34:22 Exod 23:16; Deut 16:10-15; Num 28:16-31
34:23 Exod 23:14,17; Deut 16:16; Ps 84:7
34:24 Exod 33:2; Ps 78:55; Exod 23:27-30
34:25 1 Cor 5:7; Matt 26:2; Exod 23:18
34:26 Exod 23:19; Deut 14:21; Deut 26:2,10
34:27 Heb 8:9; Heb 8:10; Exod 17:14
34:28 2 Cor 3:7; Matt 4:2; Gal 3:19
34:29 Matt 17:2; 2 Cor 3:13; 2 Cor 3:7
34:30 Mark 9:15; Matt 17:2; Acts 6:15
34:31 Matt 17:2; Acts 6:15; 2 Cor 3:7
34:32 Matt 17:2; Acts 6:15; 2 Cor 3:7
34:33 2 Cor 3:13; Matt 17:2; Acts 6:15
34:34 2 Cor 3:16; Matt 17:2; Acts 6:15
34:35 Matt 17:2; Acts 6:15; 2 Cor 3:7
35:1 Exod 34:32; Exod 25:1-40; Exod 31:1-11
35:2 Luke 13:14; John 5:16; Matt 12:2
35:3 Luke 23:56; Exod 16:23; Exod 12:16

34:21 *in plowing time and in harvest you shall rest* The Sabbath was to be kept even in the busiest seasons, when it would be most tempting to work through. Rest was a test of trust. Would they believe God could provide in six days?

34:22 *the Festival of Weeks* The Festival of Weeks came at the wheat harvest and was later called Pentecost, fifty days after Passover. With Unleavened Bread and the Ingathering at year's end, these were the three times every male appeared before the LORD (23:14-17).

34:24 *no man shall covet your land* Leaving the farms empty three times a year was risky. God promised to guard the land while they worshiped. When we put God first, He takes care of what we leave in His hands.

34:26 *The first of the firstfruits of your ground you shall bring* The firstfruits were the first and best of the harvest. Giving them first was a way of saying all of it is God's.

34:26 *You shall not boil a young goat in the milk of its mother* This law appears three times (23:19; Deut 14:21), and Scripture does not explain it. Many believe it was a pagan practice to avoid. Others see a lesson in respect for life, not cooking a young animal in the milk that fed it. Later Jewish tradition built from it the rule of not eating meat and dairy together.

34:27 *Write for yourself these words* Moses was to write down these laws. The covenant was restored.

34:28 *forty days and forty nights; bread he did not eat, and water he did not drink* This was the second forty-day stay (24:18; Deut 9:9, 18). Only God could keep Moses alive that long without food or water. Jesus also fasted "forty days and forty nights" (Matt 4:2) in the wilderness.

34:28 *He wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the ten words* The ten words are the Ten Commandments. God said He would write them (34:1), and Deuteronomy confirms that the LORD wrote them (Deut 10:2-4), while Moses wrote the other words (34:27). These tablets were later placed in the ark (Deut 10:5).

34:29 *Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone* Moses had been with God, and some of God's glory stayed on his face. He did not know it. The people closest to God are often the last to know it shows. The Hebrew word for shone is related to the word for horn, as in rays of light. Some old translations said horns, which is why some old paintings show Moses with horns.

34:30 *they were afraid to draw near to him* The glory on Moses' face reminded them of the glory on the mountain that had terrified them (20:18-19). Even the reflection of God's holiness made sinners afraid.

34:32 *he commanded them all that the LORD had spoken with him on Mount Sinai* Aaron, who had made the calf, came back to listen, and then all the people. Moses gave them God's word. Being close to God is never meant to stop with us. It is meant to be passed on.

34:33 *he put a veil over his face* Paul explains this in 2 Corinthians 3. The glory on Moses' face "was being brought to nothing" (2 Cor 3:7). Moses covered it "so that the sons of Israel would not look intently into the end of what was being brought to nothing" (2 Cor 3:13). The old covenant had real glory, but it faded. Some read Exodus to mean the veil simply calmed the people's fear (34:30).

34:35 *Moses would put back the veil over his face until he went in to speak with Him* Moses took the veil off before the LORD and put it back after speaking. "But whenever it turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away" (2 Cor 3:16). Only Moses' face shone. In Christ every believer comes "with unveiled face" (2 Cor 3:18), and the glory changes us from the inside into the image of Jesus.

35:2 *on the seventh day there shall be for you holiness, a Sabbath of Sabbath rest to the LORD* Before a single board was cut, Moses spoke of the Sabbath. This repeats 31:12-17, where the Sabbath was given as the sign of God's covenant with Israel, and where the penalty is explained.

35:3 *You shall not kindle fire in all your dwellings on the day of the Sabbath* One new detail is added. Even the craftsmen's fires for melting metal had to go out. The holiest building project in the world did not override God's day of rest. God's work is to be done God's way, and busy service is never a substitute for obedience.

not kindle fire in all your dwellings on the day of the Sabbath." **4** And Moses said to all the congregation of the sons of Israel, saying, "This ***is*** the word which the LORD has commanded, saying, **5** 'Take from among you a contribution to the LORD; everyone willing of his heart, let him bring it, the contribution of the LORD: gold and silver and bronze, **6** and blue and purple and crimson scarlet and fine linen and goats' ***hair***, **7** and skins of rams dyed red, and skins of dolphins, and acacia wood, **8** and oil for the light, and spices for the oil of the anointing and for the incense of the fragrances, **9** and onyx stones and stones for setting, for the ephod and for the breastpiece. **10** And let everyone wise of heart among you come and make all that the LORD has commanded: **11** the tabernacle, its tent and its covering, its clasps and its boards, its bars, its pillars and its bases; **12** the ark and its poles, the mercy seat, and the veil of the screen; **13** the table and its poles and all its articles, and the bread of the Presence; **14** and the lampstand for the light and its articles and its lamps, and the oil for the light; **15** and the altar of incense and its poles, and the oil of the anointing and the incense of the fragrances, and the screen of the entrance for the entrance of the tabernacle; **16** the altar of burnt offering and the grating of bronze which ***belongs*** to it, its poles and all its articles, the laver and its base; **17** the hangings of the courtyard, its pillars and its bases, and the screen of the gate of the courtyard; **18** the pegs of the tabernacle and the pegs of the courtyard and their cords; **19** the garments of woven work for ministering in the holy place, the garments of holiness for Aaron (Aharon) the priest, and the garments of his sons, to serve as priests.'"

The People Give Willingly

20 And all the congregation of the sons of Israel went out from before Moses. **21** And they came, every man whose heart lifted him up, and everyone whose spirit made him willing; they brought the contribution of the LORD for the work of the tent of meeting, and for all its service, and for the garments of holiness. **22** And they came, the men with the women, everyone willing of heart; they brought nose rings and rings and signet rings and pendants, every article of gold, and every man who waved a wave offering of gold to the LORD. **23** And every man with whom was found blue and purple and crimson scarlet and fine linen and goats' ***hair*** and skins of rams dyed red and skins of dolphins brought ***them***. **24** Everyone who contributed a contribution of silver and bronze brought the contribution of the LORD; and everyone with whom was found acacia wood for any work of the service brought ***it***. **25** And every woman wise of heart spun with her hands, and they brought what was spun: the blue and the purple, the crimson scarlet and the fine linen. **26** And all the women whose heart lifted them up in wisdom spun the goats' ***hair***. **27** And the leaders brought the onyx stones and the stones for setting, for the ephod and for the breastpiece, **28** and the spice and the oil, for light and for the oil of the anointing and for the incense of the fragrances. **29** Every man and woman whose heart made them willing to bring for all the work which the LORD had commanded by the hand of Moses to do, the sons of Israel brought a freewill offering to the LORD. **30** And Moses said to the sons of Israel, "See, the LORD has called by name Bezalel (Betsalel) son of Uri, son of Hur (Chur), of the tribe of Judah (Yehuda). **31** And He has filled him ***with*** the Spirit of God, with wisdom, with understanding, and with knowledge, and with all ***kinds of*** work, **32** and to devise designs, to work in gold and in silver and in bronze, **33** and in cutting of stone for setting, and in carving of wood, to work in all ***kinds of*** work of design. **34** And to teach He has put in his heart, he and Oholiab (Oholi'av) son

35:4 Exod 25:1,2
35:5 Exod 25:2-7; Ps 110:3; Judg 5:9
35:6 Exod 26:1,31,36; Exod 28:5,6,15,33; Exod 26:7-14
35:8 Exod 27:20; Exod 25:1-40; Exod 30:23,28
35:9 Exod 25:5; Exod 28:9,17-21; Exod 39:6-14
35:10 Exod 31:1-6; Exod 36:1-4
35:11 Exod 26:1,2-37; Exod 31:7-9; Exod 36:8-34
35:12 Exod 25:10-22; Exod 37:1-9; Exod 26:7,31-33
35:13 Exod 25:23-30; Lev 24:5,6; Exod 37:10-16
35:14 Matt 5:15; Exod 25:31-39; Exod 37:17-24
35:15 Exod 30:1-10,22-38; Exod 37:25-28; Ps 141:2
35:16 Exod 27:1-8; Exod 30:18-21; Exod 38:1-7
35:17 Exod 27:9-19; Exod 38:9-20; 2 Sam 7:2
35:18 Exod 27:19
35:19 Exod 31:10; Exod 39:1,41; Num 4:5-15
35:21 Acts 7:23; Exod 25:2; Exod 35:5,22,26,29
35:22 Exod 32:3; Num 31:50; Isa 3:19
35:23 1 Chr 29:8; Exod 35:6-10; Exod 25:2-7
35:24 2 Cor 8:12
35:25 Exod 28:3; Exod 31:6; Exod 36:1
35:26 Exod 35:21,29; Exod 36:8
35:27 1 Chr 29:6; Ezra 2:68; Exod 35:9
35:28 Exod 30:23-38; Exod 35:8
35:29 Acts 7:23; 2 Tim 3:16; 2 Tim 3:17
35:30 James 1:17; 1 Kgs 7:13,14; Isa 28:26
35:31 Isa 11:2-5; Isa 28:26; Isa 61:1-3
35:34 Exod 31:6; 2 Chr 2:14; Ezra 7:10,27

35:5 *everyone willing of his heart, let him bring it* The list is the same as in 25:1-7. Only weeks earlier the people had given their gold eagerly for an idol (32:3). Now they were asked to give it for God's house. The same hands could serve an idol or the living God. "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matt 6:21).
35:10 *let everyone wise of heart among you come and make all that the LORD has commanded* Verses 10-19 summarize chapters 25 to 31: the tabernacle, ark, table, lampstand, incense altar, bronze altar, laver, courtyard and priests' garments. God asked two things for His house: gifts and skills. The church is built the same way; each believer has a part to play (1 Cor 12:4-7).
35:21 *every man whose heart lifted him up, and everyone whose spirit made him willing* No one was forced. They went home, thought it over, and came back with their gifts. The words willing and heart are repeated again and again in these verses. God loves willing hearts.
35:22 *the men with the women* Men and women alike brought nose rings, earrings, signet rings and pendants, "every article of gold." Others brought yarn, linen, goats' hair, skins, silver, bronze and acacia wood.
35:26 *all the women whose heart lifted them up in wisdom spun the goats' hair* Skilled women spun the colored yarn and fine linen. Spinning goats' hair was hard, humble work, but it became the tent over God's dwelling (26:7). The work of women's hands was part of God's house, and Moses wrote it down so we would know.
35:27 *the leaders brought the onyx stones* The leaders gave the costliest gifts, the precious stones for the ephod and breastpiece, along with spices and oil. Leaders should lead in giving.
35:29 *the sons of Israel brought a freewill offering to the LORD* A freewill offering is a gift given freely, beyond what is required. Men and women, rich and poor, leaders and people gave together. "God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Cor 9:7).
35:31 *He has filled him with the Spirit of God, with wisdom, with understanding, and with knowledge* Moses now told the people what God had told him in 31:1-11 about Bezalel of Judah.
35:34 *to teach He has put in his heart, he and Oholiab* One new thing is said here. God gave these men not only skill but the ability to teach it. The work was too big for two men, so they trained others. A gift passed on multiplies. Paul told Timothy to commit what he learned to faithful men "who will be sufficient to teach others also" (2 Tim 2:2).

of Ahisamach (Achisamakh), of the tribe of Dan. **35** He has filled them ***with*** wisdom of heart to do all the work of an engraver and a designer and an embroiderer, in the blue and in the purple, in the crimson scarlet and in the fine linen, and of a weaver, doers of all ***kinds of*** work and devisers of designs.

EXODUS 36

More Than Enough

1 And Bezalel (Betsalel) and Oholiab (Oholi'av) and every man wise of heart, in whom the LORD has put wisdom and understanding to know ***how*** to do all the work of the service of the holy place, shall do according to all that the LORD has commanded." **2** And Moses (Moshe) called Bezalel and Oholiab and every man wise of heart, in whose heart the LORD had put wisdom, everyone whose heart lifted him up, to draw near to the work to do it. **3** And they took from before Moses all the contribution which the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) had brought for the work of the service of the holy place, to do it. And they, they still brought to him a freewill offering morning by morning. **4** And all the wise ***men*** who were doing all the work of the holy place came, each man from his work which they were doing, **5** and they said to Moses, saying, "The people are bringing much, more than enough for the service for the work which the LORD has commanded to do." **6** And Moses commanded, and they caused a proclamation to pass through the camp, saying, "Let neither man nor woman make work anymore for the contribution of the holy place." And the people were restrained from bringing. **7** And the work was sufficient for them for all the work, to do it, and ***there was*** more than enough.

The Tabernacle Made

8 And everyone wise of heart among those doing the work made the tabernacle ***with*** ten curtains of twisted fine linen and blue and purple and crimson scarlet; ***with*** cherubim, the work of a designer, he made them. **9** The length of the one curtain ***was*** approximately 42 feet (twenty-eight by the cubit), and the breadth of the one curtain approximately 6 feet (four by the cubit); one measure for all the curtains. **10** And he joined five of the curtains one to another, and five curtains he joined one to another. **11** And he made loops of blue on the edge of the one curtain, at the end in the coupling; so he did on the edge of the outermost curtain in the second coupling. **12** Fifty loops he made on the one curtain, and fifty loops he made on the edge of the curtain which ***was*** in the second coupling, the loops being opposite one to another. **13** And he made fifty clasps of gold, and he joined the curtains one to another with the clasps; and the tabernacle was one. **14** And he made curtains of goats' ***hair*** for a tent over the tabernacle; eleven curtains he made them. **15** The length of the one curtain ***was*** approximately 45 feet (thirty by the cubit), and approximately 6 feet (four cubits) the breadth of the one curtain; one measure for the eleven curtains. **16** And he joined five of the curtains by themselves and six of the curtains by themselves. **17** And he made fifty loops on the edge of the outermost curtain in the coupling, and fifty loops he made on the edge of the curtain of the second set. **18** And he made fifty clasps of bronze to join the tent together, to be one. **19** And he made a covering for the tent ***of*** skins of rams dyed red, and a covering of skins of dolphins from above.

The Boards and the Veil Made

20 And he made the boards for the tabernacle ***of*** acacia wood, standing upright. **21** Approximately 15 feet (ten cubits) ***was*** the length of the board, and approximately 2.25 feet (a cubit and the half of the cubit) the breadth of the one board. **22** Two tenons ***were*** for the one board, fitted one to another; so he did for all the boards of the tabernacle. **23** And he made the boards for the tabernacle: twenty boards for the side of the south, southward. **24** And forty bases of silver he made under the twenty boards: two bases under the one board for its two tenons, and two bases under the one board for its two tenons. **25** And for the second side of the tabernacle, for the north side, he made twenty boards, **26** and their forty bases ***of*** silver: two bases under the one board, and two bases under

35:35 Exod 35:31; 1 Kgs 7:14; Exod 31:3,6
36:1 Heb 8:2; Exod 28:3; Exod 25:8
36:2 Exod 31:6; 1 Chr 29:5; Exod 28:3
36:3 Exod 35:5-21,27,29; Ps 5:3; Ps 101:8
36:4 2 Chr 24:13; Matt 24:45; Luke 12:42
36:5 2 Chr 24:14; 2 Cor 8:2,3; 2 Chr 31:6-10
36:7 2 Chr 31:10
36:8 Heb 9:2; Exod 31:6; Exod 35:10
36:10 Exod 26:3; Ps 122:3; Ps 133:1
36:11 Exod 26:4
36:12 Exod 26:5,10
36:13 Heb 9:2; 1 Cor 12:20; Eph 2:20-22
36:14 Heb 9:2; Exod 26:7-13
36:19 Exod 26:14
36:20 Heb 9:2; Exod 25:5,10; Exod 26:15-25
36:22 Heb 9:2
36:23 Heb 9:2
36:25 Heb 9:2

35:35 *an engraver and a designer and an embroiderer* Engraving, designing patterns, embroidering and weaving were all gifts of God for His house. God cares about beauty and skill. He made both.
36:1 *in whom the LORD has put wisdom and understanding* This verse ends Moses' words from chapter 35. The skill came from the LORD, and the pattern came from the LORD. The workers' part was to do it.
36:2 *everyone whose heart lifted him up, to draw near to the work to do it* Two things marked these workers. God had given them skill, and their hearts moved them to use it. Skill without a willing heart is not enough. A willing heart without skill can learn.
36:3 *they still brought to him a freewill offering morning by morning* The giving did not stop. Every morning more gifts came.
36:5 *The people are bringing much, more than enough* The workers were honest. They did not keep collecting for themselves; they went to Moses. A few chapters earlier these people had been under God's judgment. Now, forgiven and restored, they gave more than was needed. Forgiven people are generous people.
36:6 *the people were restrained from bringing* Moses sent word through the camp to stop the gifts. It may be the only time in Scripture that God's people had to be told to stop giving.
36:8 *everyone wise of heart among those doing the work made the tabernacle* Verses 8-19 match 26:1-14 almost word for word: ten linen curtains woven with cherubim, eleven curtains of goats' hair, and coverings of red rams' skins and dolphin skins. In chapter 26 God said, "you shall make." Here it says "he made." The command has become a deed. "But be doers of the word and not hearers only" (James 1:22).
36:13 *the tabernacle was one* The two sets of five curtains were joined by fifty gold clasps, so that the many parts became one dwelling.
36:20 *he made the boards for the tabernacle of acacia wood, standing upright* Verses 20-34 repeat 26:15-30. Each board was about fifteen feet tall and stood in two silver bases, a hundred bases in all (38:27). The silver came from the atonement money (30:11-16), so God's house stood on the ransom price of His people. Many have seen a picture of a redeemed people built into God's dwelling (Eph 2:22).

the one board. **27** And for the rear of the tabernacle westward he made six boards. **28** And two boards he made for the corners of the tabernacle at the rear. **29** And they were doubled from below, and together they were complete to its top, to the one ring; so he did for both of them, for the two corners. **30** And there were eight boards, and their bases ***of*** silver, sixteen bases, two bases, two bases under the one board. **31** And he made bars of acacia wood, five for the boards of the one side of the tabernacle, **32** and five bars for the boards of the second side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the boards of the tabernacle for the rear, westward. **33** And he made the middle bar to pass through in the midst of the boards from end to end. **34** And the boards he overlaid ***with*** gold, and their rings he made ***of*** gold, housings for the bars; and he overlaid the bars ***with*** gold. **35** And he made the veil ***of*** blue and purple and crimson scarlet and twisted fine linen; the work of a designer he made it, ***with*** cherubim. **36** And he made for it four pillars of acacia, and he overlaid them ***with*** gold, their hooks ***of*** gold; and he cast for them four bases of silver. **37** And he made a screen for the entrance of the tent ***of*** blue and purple and crimson scarlet and twisted fine linen, the work of an embroiderer, **38** and its five pillars and their hooks; and he overlaid their tops and their bands ***with*** gold; and their five bases ***were of*** bronze.

EXODUS 37

The Ark and the Table Made

1 And Bezalel (Betsalel) made the ark ***of*** acacia wood: approximately 3.75 feet (two cubits and a half) ***was*** its length, and approximately 2.25 feet (a cubit and a half) its breadth, and approximately 2.25 feet (a cubit and a half) its height. **2** And he overlaid it ***with*** pure gold from inside and from outside, and he made for it a molding of gold all around. **3** And he cast for it four rings of gold on its four feet, and two rings on its one side, and two rings on its second side. **4** And he made poles of acacia wood, and he overlaid them ***with*** gold. **5** And he brought the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark, to carry the ark. **6** And he made a mercy seat of pure gold: approximately 3.75 feet (two cubits and a half) ***was*** its length, and approximately 2.25 feet (a cubit and a half) its breadth. **7** And he made two cherubim of gold; ***of*** hammered work he made them, from the two ends of the mercy seat, **8** one cherub from the end on this ***side***, and one cherub from the end on that ***side***; from the mercy seat he made the cherubim on its two ends. **9** And the cherubim were spreading out wings upward, covering over the mercy seat with their wings, and their faces ***were*** each toward its fellow; toward the mercy seat were the faces of the cherubim. **10** And he made the table ***of*** acacia wood: approximately 3 feet (two cubits) ***was*** its length, and approximately 18 inches (a cubit) its breadth, and approximately 2.25 feet (a cubit and a half) its height. **11** And he overlaid it ***with*** pure gold, and he made for it a molding of gold all around. **12** And he made for it a rim of approximately 3 inches (a handbreadth) all around, and he made a molding of gold for its rim all around. **13** And he cast for it four rings of gold, and he put the rings on the four corners which ***belonged*** to its four feet. **14** Close to the rim were the rings, housings for the poles to carry the table. **15** And he made the poles ***of*** acacia wood, and he overlaid them ***with*** gold, to carry the table. **16** And he made the articles which ***were*** on the table, its dishes and its pans and its bowls, and the jugs with which ***drink offerings*** were poured out, ***of*** pure gold.

The Lampstand and Incense Altar Made

17 And he made the lampstand ***of*** pure gold; ***of*** hammered work he made the lampstand; its base and its shaft, its cups, its bulbs, and its blossoms were from it. **18** And six branches ***were*** coming out from its sides: three branches of the lampstand from its one side, and three branches of the lampstand from its second side; **19** three cups, almond-shaped, on the

36:27 Heb 9:2; Exod 26:22,27
36:28 Heb 9:2
36:29 Exod 26:24; Ps 122:3; Ps 133:1
36:30 Exod 26:25
36:31 Heb 9:2; Exod 26:26-29; Exod 25:28
36:32 Heb 9:2; Exod 26:26
36:35 Matt 27:51; Heb 10:20; Heb 9:3
36:36 Jer 1:18
36:37 Exod 26:36,37; Exod 40:28
36:38 Exod 27:10
37:1 Heb 9:4; Exod 25:10-16; Exod 26:33
37:2 Exod 30:3
37:4 Num 4:14,15; Acts 9:15; 1 Pet 1:7,18,19
37:5 Heb 9:4; Num 1:50; Num 4:15
37:6 Heb 9:5; Exod 25:17-22; Lev 16:12-15
37:7 Heb 9:5; 1 Kgs 6:23-29; Ps 80:1
37:8 Heb 9:5
37:9 Heb 9:5; Gen 3:24; Gen 28:12
37:10 Exod 25:23-30; Exod 35:13; Exod 40:4,22,23
37:16 Exod 25:29; 1 Kgs 7:50; 2 Kgs 12:13
37:17 Exod 25:31-39; Heb 9:2; Exod 40:24,25

36:33 *he made the middle bar to pass through in the midst of the boards from end to end* Five bars ran along each side and the back, and a middle bar ran through the whole wall. The boards and bars were covered with gold and held by gold rings.
36:35 *he made the veil* The veil hung on four gold-covered pillars between the Holy Place and the holy of holies. As at 26:31-35, it kept everyone out except the high priest once a year, and it was "torn into two from top to bottom" (Matt 27:51) when Jesus died (Heb 10:19-20).
36:37 *he made a screen for the entrance of the tent* The embroidered screen hung on five pillars with gold tops and bronze bases (26:36-37), the one way into the tent. God's commands began with the ark at the center (ch 25), showing His heart: His presence first. The builders began with the tent and frame, the order a builder follows. Both orders were right for their purpose.
37:1 *Bezalel made the ark of acacia wood* Verses 1-5 match 25:10-16. The ark held the tablets of the testimony and was carried by its poles, never touched.
37:6 *he made a mercy seat of pure gold* The mercy seat, the lid of the ark, with its two hammered gold cherubim, matches 25:17-22. Blood was sprinkled there on the Day of Atonement, and Paul uses the same word when he calls Christ our propitiation (Rom 3:25).
37:9 *toward the mercy seat were the faces of the cherubim* One detail from chapter 25 is missing here: "I will meet with you there" (25:22). The ark was only a box until God came to it, which happens in chapter 40. A beautiful building or a well-planned service is not the same as God's presence. We build and prepare, but only God can come and fill.
37:10 *he made the table of acacia wood* This matches 25:23-30. The table held the bread of the Presence, twelve loaves always before the LORD, one for each tribe. Jesus said, "I am the bread of life" (John 6:35). In Christ, God still provides for His people every day.
37:17 *he made the lampstand of pure gold; of hammered work he made the lampstand* This matches 25:31-40. The lampstand was the only light in the Holy Place, and Jesus is "the light of the world" (John 8:12). It was hammered from one piece of gold. Some have seen a picture of Christ, beaten and bruised for us, who became our light. The New Testament does not say that about the lampstand, so I give it only as a picture.

one branch, a bulb and a blossom; and three cups,
almond-shaped, on one branch, a bulb and a blossom; so for the six branches which came out from the lampstand. **20** And on the lampstand ***were*** four cups, almond-shaped, its bulbs and its blossoms; **21** and a bulb under the two branches from it, and a bulb under the two branches from it, and a bulb under the two branches from it, for the six branches which came out from it. **22** Their bulbs and their branches were from it; all of it ***was*** one hammered work of pure gold. **23** And he made its lamps, seven, and its tongs and its fire pans, ***of*** pure gold. **24** ***Of*** approximately 75 pounds (a talent) of pure gold he made it, and all its articles. **25** And he made the altar of incense ***of*** acacia wood: approximately 18 inches (a cubit) ***was*** its length, and approximately 18 inches (a cubit) its breadth, square; and approximately 3 feet (two cubits) its height; its horns were from it. **26** And he overlaid it ***with*** pure gold, its top and its sides all around and its horns; and he made for it a molding of gold all around. **27** And two rings of gold he made for it under its molding, on its two sides, on its two sides, for housings for poles to carry it by them. **28** And he made the poles ***of*** acacia wood, and he overlaid them ***with*** gold. **29** And he made the oil of the anointing, holy, and the incense of the fragrances, pure, the work of a perfumer.

EXODUS 38

The Bronze Altar and Courtyard Made

1 And he made the altar of burnt offering ***of*** acacia wood: approximately 7.5 feet (five cubits) ***was*** its length, and approximately 7.5 feet (five cubits) its breadth, square; and approximately 4.5 feet (three cubits) its height. **2** And he made its horns on its four corners; its horns were from it; and he overlaid it ***with*** bronze. **3** And he made all the articles of the altar, the pots and the shovels and the bowls, the forks and the fire pans; all its articles he made ***of*** bronze. **4** And he made for the altar a grating, a work of network of bronze, under its ledge from below, to its middle. **5** And he cast four rings on the four ends of the grating of bronze, housings for the poles. **6** And he made the poles ***of*** acacia wood, and he overlaid them ***with*** bronze. **7** And he brought the poles into the rings on the sides of the altar, to carry it by them; hollow, ***of*** planks, he made it. **8** And he made the laver ***of*** bronze and its base ***of*** bronze, with the mirrors of the serving ***women*** who served ***at*** the entrance of the tent of meeting. **9** And he made the courtyard: for the side of the south, southward, the hangings of the courtyard ***were of*** twisted fine linen, approximately 150 feet (a hundred by the cubit); **10** their pillars twenty, and their bases twenty, ***of*** bronze; the hooks of the pillars and their bands ***of*** silver. **11** And for the side of the north, approximately 150 feet (a hundred by the cubit); their pillars twenty, and their bases twenty, ***of*** bronze; the hooks of the pillars and their bands ***of*** silver. **12** And for the side of the west, hangings of approximately 75 feet (fifty by the cubit); their pillars ten, and their bases ten; the hooks of the pillars and their bands ***of*** silver. **13** And for the side of the east, eastward, approximately 75 feet (fifty cubits).
14 Hangings of approximately 22.5 feet (fifteen cubits) ***were*** for the wing; their pillars three, and their bases three. **15** And for the second wing, on this ***side*** and on that ***side*** of the gate of the courtyard, hangings of approximately 22.5 feet (fifteen cubits); their pillars three, and their bases three. **16** All the hangings of the courtyard all around ***were of*** twisted fine linen. **17** And the bases for the pillars ***were of*** bronze; the hooks of the pillars and their bands ***of*** silver, and the overlay of their tops ***of*** silver; and they ***were*** banded ***with*** silver, all the pillars of the courtyard. **18** And the screen of the gate of the courtyard ***was*** the work of an embroiderer, ***of*** blue and purple and crimson scarlet and twisted fine linen; and approximately 30 feet (twenty cubits) ***was*** the length, and the height in breadth approximately 7.5 feet (five cubits), corresponding to the hangings of the courtyard. **19** And their pillars ***were*** four, and their bases four, ***of*** bronze; their hooks ***of*** silver, and the overlay of their tops and their bands ***of*** silver. **20** And all the pegs for the tabernacle and for the courtyard all around ***were of*** bronze.

37:20 Exod 25:33; Num 17:8; Eccl 12:5
37:21 Exod 25:35
37:22 Exod 25:31; 1 Cor 9:27; Col 3:5
37:23 Exod 25:37; Num 8:2; Zech 4:2
37:25 Exod 30:1-5; Exod 40:5,26,27; 2 Chr 26:16
37:29 Exod 30:23-38; Ps 23:5; Ps 92:10
38:1 Rev 21:16; Exod 27:1-8; Exod 40:6,29
38:2 Exod 27:2; Job 6:12
38:3 Exod 27:3; 1 Sam 2:13
38:5 Exod 27:4
38:6 Exod 25:6; Deut 10:3
38:7 Acts 9:15; 1 Cor 1:24; 1 Cor 2:2
38:8 Exod 40:7,30-32; Luke 2:37; Exod 30:18-21
38:9 Exod 27:9-19; Exod 40:8,33; 1 Kgs 6:36
38:14 Exod 27:14
38:18 2 Chr 3:14
38:20 Exod 27:19; 2 Chr 3:9; Ezra 9:8

37:24 *Of approximately 75 pounds of pure gold he made it* About seventy-five pounds is one talent of gold, for the lampstand and all its tools.
37:25 *he made the altar of incense of acacia wood* This matches 30:1-5. It stood in front of the veil, where incense rose morning and evening as a picture of prayer (30:6-8; Rev 8:3-4).
37:29 *he made the oil of the anointing, holy, and the incense of the fragrances, pure* These were made by the recipes in 30:22-38. Every item in this chapter was gold. Inside the tent everything shone; outside in the courtyard things were bronze (ch 38). The closer one came to God, the more precious the materials became.
38:1 *he made the altar of burnt offering of acacia wood* This matches 27:1-8: a bronze-covered altar about seven and a half feet square with horns on its corners and bronze tools. It was the first thing a worshiper met inside the gate. Before anyone could go further toward God, there had to be a sacrifice. It points to the cross.
38:7 *hollow, of planks, he made it* The altar was a hollow frame, light enough to be carried on its poles through the wilderness.
38:8 *with the mirrors of the serving women who served at the entrance of the tent of meeting* This is a new detail. Mirrors were polished bronze. Scripture does not say what these women did (1 Sam 2:22). They gave up what they used every day to look at themselves, so that the priests could be washed. God's Word is also a mirror (James 1:23-25). It shows us what we are and leads us to cleansing.
38:9 *he made the courtyard* Verses 9-20 repeat 27:9-19: a court about 150 by 75 feet, walled with white linen on bronze-based pillars with silver hooks and bands. The wall told everyone outside that God is holy and sinners cannot simply walk in.
38:18 *the screen of the gate of the courtyard was the work of an embroiderer* There was one gate, about thirty feet wide and bright with color. Jesus said, "I am the door. If anyone enters through Me, he will be saved" (John 10:9). There was one way in, open to all who would come God's way.

The Metals Counted

21 These ***are*** the counts of the tabernacle, the tabernacle of the testimony, which were counted at the command of Moses (Moshe), the service of the Levites, by the hand of Ithamar (Itamar) son of Aaron (Aharon) the priest. **22** And Bezalel (Betsalel) son of Uri, son of Hur (Chur), of the tribe of Judah (Yehuda), made all that the LORD had commanded Moses. **23** And with him ***was*** Oholiab (Oholi'av) son of Ahisamach (Achisamakh), of the tribe of Dan, an engraver and a designer and an embroiderer in the blue and in the purple and in the crimson scarlet and in the fine linen. **24** All the gold that was used for the work, in all the work of the holy place, and it was the gold of the wave offering, ***was*** approximately 2,200 pounds (twenty-nine talents) and approximately 18 pounds (seven hundred and thirty shekels), by the shekel of the holy place. **25** And the silver of those enrolled of the congregation ***was*** approximately 7,500 pounds (a hundred talents) and approximately 44 pounds (a thousand and seven hundred and seventy-five shekels), by the shekel of the holy place: **26** approximately 1/5 ounce (a beka) for the head, the half of the shekel by the shekel of the holy place, for everyone who passed over to those enrolled, from a son of twenty years and upward, for six hundred thousand and three thousand and five hundred and fifty. **27** And the approximately 7,500 pounds (the hundred talents) of silver were for casting the bases of the holy place and the bases of the veil: a hundred bases for the approximately 7,500 pounds (the hundred talents), approximately 75 pounds (a talent) for a base. **28** And ***with*** the approximately 44 pounds (the thousand and seven hundred and seventy-five ***shekels***) he made hooks for the pillars, and he overlaid their tops and banded them. **29** And the bronze of the wave offering ***was*** approximately 5,250 pounds (seventy talents) and approximately 60 pounds (two thousand and four hundred shekels). **30** And he made with it the bases of the entrance of the tent of meeting, and the altar of bronze, and the grating of bronze which ***belonged*** to it, and all the articles of the altar, **31** and the bases of the courtyard all around, and the bases of the gate of the courtyard, and all the pegs of the tabernacle, and all the pegs of the courtyard all around.

EXODUS 39

The Priestly Garments Made

1 And from the blue and the purple and the crimson scarlet they made garments of woven work to minister in the holy place; and they made the garments of holiness which ***are*** for Aaron (Aharon), just as the LORD had commanded Moses (Moshe). **2** And he made the ephod ***of*** gold, blue and purple and crimson scarlet and twisted fine linen. **3** And they hammered out the thin plates of the gold, and he cut ***them into*** threads to work ***them*** in the midst of the blue and in the midst of the purple and in the midst of the crimson scarlet and in the midst of the fine linen, the work of a designer. **4** Shoulder pieces they made for it, joined; at its two ends it was joined. **5** And the band of its ephod which ***was*** on it, it ***was*** from it, like its work, ***of*** gold, blue and purple and crimson scarlet and twisted fine linen, just as the LORD had commanded Moses. **6** And they made the onyx stones, surrounded ***with*** filigree settings of gold, engraved ***with*** the engravings of a signet according to the names of the sons of Israel (Yisra'el). **7** And he put them on the shoulder pieces of the ephod, stones of memorial for the sons of Israel, just as the LORD had commanded Moses. **8** And he made the breastpiece, the work of a designer, like the work of the ephod: ***of*** gold, blue and purple and crimson scarlet and twisted fine linen. **9** It was square; folded double they made the breastpiece, approximately 9 inches (a span) its length and approximately 9 inches (a span) its breadth, folded double. **10** And they filled in it four rows of stone: a row of ruby, topaz, and beryl ***was*** the first row; **11** and the second row a turquoise, a

38:21 Acts 7:44; Matt 17:4; Heb 8:2
38:22 Exod 31:1-5; Exod 35:30-35; Ps 119:6
38:23 Exod 35:34
38:24 Num 3:47; Num 18:16; 1 Chr 22:14-16
38:26 Num 1:46; Exod 30:13,15,16; Exod 12:37
38:27 Exod 26:19,21,25,32
38:28 Exod 27:17
38:30 Exod 26:37; Exod 27:10,17
39:1 Exod 31:10; Exod 35:23; Exod 35:19
39:2 Exod 28:6-12; Exod 25:7; Lev 8:7
39:3 Exod 26:1; Exod 36:8
39:5 Exod 28:8; Exod 29:5; Lev 8:7
39:6 Exod 28:9; Exod 25:7; Exod 35:9
39:7 Exod 28:12,29; Josh 4:7; Neh 2:20
39:8 Exod 25:7; Exod 28:4,13-29; Lev 8:8,9
39:10 Rev 21:19; Exod 28:16,17,21
39:11 Exod 28:18; Ezek 28:13

38:21 *These are the counts of the tabernacle* Here begins the record of the materials, kept by the Levites under Ithamar, Aaron's son, who would later oversee the Levites who carried the tabernacle (Num 4:28, 33). God's work should be done honestly. Paul took care to provide "good things not only before the Lord but also before men" (2 Cor 8:21).
38:22 *Bezalel son of Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, made all that the LORD had commanded Moses* The two master craftsmen, Bezalel and Oholiab, are named again. They did all that God commanded.
38:24 *All the gold that was used for the work* The gold came to twenty-nine talents and 730 shekels, about 2,200 pounds by the SLB's reckoning. It made the furniture inside the tent and covered the boards and bars.
38:26 *for six hundred thousand and three thousand and five hundred and fifty* The silver came from the half shekel paid by every man twenty and older (30:11-16). The count of 603,550 men is the same as the census in Numbers 1:46. Some scholars read the word for thousand as a clan or unit and get a smaller number, but I take the numbers as written (12:37).
38:27 *a hundred bases* The silver made the hundred bases under the boards and the veil, a talent for each, and the rest made hooks and bands for the courtyard pillars. God's house stood on the price of redemption.
38:29 *the bronze of the wave offering* The bronze made the bases of the entrance, the bronze altar and its tools, the courtyard bases and all the pegs. Where did former slaves get so much metal? Much of it came from Egypt (12:35-36). God gave it to them before He asked for it, and the giving was so generous they were told to stop (36:6-7). Every ounce was a gift.
39:1 *they made the garments of holiness which are for Aaron, just as the LORD had commanded Moses* Verses 1-7 match 28:6-14, the making of the ephod. The phrase "just as the LORD had commanded Moses" runs through this chapter like a refrain.
39:3 *they hammered out the thin plates of the gold, and he cut them into threads* One new detail tells how gold was worked into the ephod. It was beaten into thin sheets, cut into threads, and woven in with the colored yarn. It was slow, careful work.
39:7 *stones of memorial for the sons of Israel* The two onyx stones engraved with the tribes' names sat on the shoulders of the ephod. As in chapter 28, the high priest carried God's people on his shoulders before the LORD, a picture of Christ, who carries us.
39:8 *he made the breastpiece* Verses 8-21 match 28:15-28 almost word for word: a square pouch about nine inches each way, folded double, set with twelve stones in four rows, each engraved with a tribe's name.

sapphire, and an emerald; **12** and the third row a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst; **13** and the fourth row a chrysolite, an onyx, and a jasper, surrounded ***with*** filigree settings of gold in their settings. **14** And the stones ***were*** according to the names of the sons of Israel; they ***were*** twelve, according to their names, ***like*** the engravings of a signet, each according to his name, for the twelve tribes. **15** And they made on the breastpiece braided chains, a work of cordage, ***of*** pure gold. **16** And they made two filigree settings of gold and two rings of gold, and they put the two rings on the two ends of the breastpiece. **17** And they put the two cords of gold on the two rings at the ends of the breastpiece. **18** And the two ends of the two cords they put on the two filigree settings, and they put them on the shoulder pieces of the ephod at the front of its face. **19** And they made two rings of gold, and they put ***them*** on the two ends of the breastpiece, on its edge which ***was*** toward the side of the ephod inward. **20** And they made two rings of gold, and they put them on the two shoulder pieces of the ephod from below, from the front of its face, close to its joining, above the band of the ephod. **21** And they bound the breastpiece by its rings to the rings of the ephod with a lace of blue, to be on the band of the ephod, and the breastpiece was not displaced from on the ephod, just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

The Robe and the Holy Crown

22 And he made the robe of the ephod, the work of a weaver, entirely ***of*** blue. **23** And the opening of the robe ***was*** in its midst, like the opening of a coat of mail, an edge for its opening all around; it was not torn. **24** And they made on the hems of the robe pomegranates of blue and purple and crimson scarlet, twisted. **25** And they made bells of pure gold, and they put the bells in the midst of the pomegranates on the hems of the robe all around, in the midst of the
pomegranates: **26** a bell and a pomegranate, a bell and a pomegranate, on the hems of the robe all around, to minister ***in***, just as the LORD had commanded Moses. **27** And they made the tunics ***of*** fine linen, the work of a weaver, for Aaron and for his sons, **28** and the turban ***of*** fine linen, and the head-wraps of the headdresses ***of*** fine linen, and the undergarments of linen ***of*** twisted fine linen, **29** and the sash ***of*** twisted fine linen and blue and purple and crimson scarlet, the work of an embroiderer, just as the LORD had commanded Moses. **30** And they made the plate of the crown of holiness ***of*** pure gold, and they wrote on it a writing, ***like*** the engravings of a signet: "Holiness to the LORD." **31** And they put on it a lace of blue, to put ***it*** on the turban from above, just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

The Work Finished and Blessed

32 And all the service of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting was finished; and the sons of Israel did according to all that the LORD had commanded Moses; so they did. **33** And they brought the tabernacle to Moses, the tent and all its articles, its clasps, its boards, its bars, and its pillars and its bases; **34** and the covering of skins of rams dyed red, and the covering of skins of dolphins, and the veil of the screen; **35** the ark of the testimony and its poles, and the mercy seat; **36** the table, all its articles, and the bread of the Presence; **37** the pure lampstand, its lamps, the lamps of the arrangement, and all its articles, and the oil of the light; **38** and the altar of gold, and the oil of the anointing, and the incense of the fragrances, and the screen of the entrance of the tent; **39** the altar of bronze and the grating of bronze which ***was*** for it, its poles and all its articles, the laver and its base; **40** the hangings of the courtyard, its pillars and its bases, and the screen for the gate of the courtyard, its cords and its pegs, and all the articles of the service of the tabernacle, for the tent of meeting; **41** the garments of woven work to minister in the holy place, the garments of holiness for Aaron the priest, and the garments of his sons to serve as priests. **42** According to all that the LORD had commanded Moses, so the sons of

39:14 Rev 21:12
39:15 Exod 28:14; 2 Chr 3:5; Song 1:10
39:16 Exod 25:12
39:18 Exod 28:14; Song 1:10
39:20 Exod 26:3
39:21 Matt 16:24; 1 Cor 1:25,27
39:22 Exod 28:31-35
39:24 Exod 28:33; Gal 5:22
39:25 Exod 28:33,34; Ps 89:15; Song 4:13
39:26 Exod 28:34; Song 4:3,13; Song 6:7
39:27 Ezek 44:18; Exod 28:39-42; Lev 8:13
39:28 Exod 28:4,39; Ezek 44:18; Exod 28:42
39:29 Exod 28:39
39:30 Exod 26:36; Exod 28:36-39; 1 Cor 1:30
39:32 Heb 3:2; Heb 8:5; Heb 9:2
39:33 Heb 9:2; Exod 25:1-30; Exod 31:7-11
39:35 Heb 9:5; Heb 9:4; Exod 25:17
39:36 Exod 25:30; 1 Kgs 7:48
39:37 Matt 5:15; Exod 27:21; Matt 5:14-16
39:38 Exod 30:7; Exod 25:6; Exod 31:11
39:39 Exod 38:30; 1 Kgs 8:64
39:41 Exod 39:1; Exod 31:10; Exod 28:2
39:42 Exod 35:10; Exod 39:32; Exod 23:21,22

39:21 *the breastpiece was not displaced from on the ephod* Gold chains, rings and a blue lace held it fast. Aaron carried the names of God's people over his heart (28:29-30). Our High Priest carries us on His heart, and nothing "will be able to separate us from the love of God" (Rom 8:39). The Urim and Thummim are not listed here; Moses placed them himself (28:30; Lev 8:8).
39:22 *he made the robe of the ephod, the work of a weaver, entirely of blue* This matches 28:31-35, with pomegranates and bells of pure gold around the hem.
39:23 *it was not torn* The robe was woven in one piece with a strong edge around the neck. Many have compared Jesus' own tunic, which was "woven from the top throughout the whole" (John 19:23) in one piece, and which the soldiers would not tear.
39:30 *Holiness to the LORD* After the tunics, turban, headdresses, undergarments and sash (28:39-43), the gold plate was engraved and tied to the front of the turban (28:36-38).
39:31 *just as the LORD had commanded Moses* Why repeat this so often? In God's worship, obedience matters more than creativity. The workers were very skilled, yet they did not try to improve on God's design. Their skill served His plan. The best gift we bring God is not our own ideas about how He should be worshiped, but faithful obedience to what He has said.
39:32 *all the service of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting was finished* Scripture does not say how long it took. Israel reached Sinai in the third month (19:1), and the tabernacle went up on the first day of the second year (40:17). After Moses' two forty-day stays, that leaves about six months, perhaps less, for the work.
39:33 *they brought the tabernacle to Moses* Verses 33-41 list every part, the same list as 35:10-19. Everything God asked for was there. Nothing was missing, and nothing was added.

Israel did all the service. **43** And Moses saw all the work, and look, they had done it; just as the LORD had commanded, so they had done. And Moses blessed them.

EXODUS 40

Orders to Set Up the Tabernacle

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe), saying, **2** "On the day of the first month, on the first ***day*** of the month, you shall set up the tabernacle of the tent of meeting. **3** And you shall put there the ark of the testimony, and you shall screen the ark with the veil. **4** And you shall bring in the table, and you shall arrange its arrangement; and you shall bring in the lampstand, and you shall lift up its lamps. **5** And you shall put the altar of gold for incense before the ark of the testimony, and you shall put the screen of the entrance for the tabernacle. **6** And you shall put the altar of the burnt offering before the entrance of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting. **7** And you shall put the laver between the tent of meeting and the altar, and you shall put water there. **8** And you shall set the courtyard all around, and you shall put the screen of the gate of the courtyard. **9** And you shall take the oil of the anointing, and you shall anoint the tabernacle and all that ***is*** in it, and you shall sanctify it and all its articles; and it shall be holy. **10** And you shall anoint the altar of the burnt offering and all its articles, and you shall sanctify the altar; and the altar shall be a holy of holies. **11** And you shall anoint the laver and its base, and you shall sanctify it. **12** And you shall bring near Aaron (Aharon) and his sons to the entrance of the tent of meeting, and you shall wash them with water. **13** And you shall clothe Aaron ***with*** the garments of holiness, and you shall anoint him, and you shall sanctify him, and he shall serve as priest to Me. **14** And his sons you shall bring near, and you shall clothe them ***with*** tunics. **15** And you shall anoint them just as you anointed their father, and they shall serve as priests to Me; and their anointing shall be for them a priesthood forever throughout their generations." **16** And Moses did according to all that the LORD had commanded him; so he did.

The Tabernacle Set Up

17 And it came to pass in the first month, in the second year, on the first ***day*** of the month, the tabernacle was set up. **18** And Moses set up the tabernacle, and he put its bases, and he set its boards, and he put its bars, and he set up its pillars. **19** And he spread out the tent over the tabernacle, and he put the covering of the tent on it from above, just as the LORD had commanded Moses. **20** And he took and put the testimony into the ark, and he set the poles on the ark, and he put the mercy seat on the ark from above. **21** And he brought the ark into the tabernacle, and he set the veil of the screen, and he screened the ark of the testimony, just as the LORD had commanded Moses. **22** And he put the table in the tent of meeting, on the side of the tabernacle northward, outside the veil. **23** And he arranged on it an arrangement of bread before the LORD, just as the LORD had commanded Moses. **24** And he put the lampstand in the tent of meeting, opposite the table, on the side of the tabernacle southward. **25** And he lifted up the lamps before the LORD, just as the LORD had commanded Moses. **26** And he put the altar of gold in the tent of meeting before the veil. **27** And he made incense of fragrances smoke on it, just as the LORD had commanded Moses. **28** And he set the screen of the entrance for

39:43 Matt 21:6; Luke 2:34; Lev 9:22,23
40:2 Heb 9:2; Exod 13:4; Exod 40:17
40:3 Rev 11:19; Heb 9:3; Heb 9:4
40:4 Heb 9:2; Exod 40:22,25; Exod 25:23-30
40:5 Heb 10:19-22; Exod 40:26,27; Exod 30:1-5
40:6 Heb 13:10; Exod 40:29; Exod 27:1-8
40:7 Exod 40:30-32; Exod 30:18-21; Exod 38:8
40:8 Exod 40:33; Exod 27:9-19; Exod 38:9-20
40:9 Lev 8:10; Exod 30:23-33; Exod 37:29
40:10 Exod 29:36,37; Lev 8:11; Isa 11:2
40:12 Lev 8:1-13; Exod 29:1-35; Lev 9:1-24
40:13 Exod 28:41; Isa 61:1; John 3:34
40:14 Isa 44:3-5; Isa 61:10; John 1:16
40:15 Heb 5:6; Heb 8:4; Heb 8:5
40:16 Matt 21:6; Deut 4:1; Exod 23:21,22
40:17 Num 7:1; Exod 40:1,2; Num 9:1
40:18 Rev 21:3; Heb 9:2; Exod 40:2
40:19 Matt 1:24; Heb 9:2; Exod 26:1-14
40:20 Heb 9:4; Exod 16:34; Exod 25:16-21
40:21 Matt 27:51; Mark 15:38; Heb 9:3
40:22 Heb 9:2; Exod 26:35; John 6:53-57
40:23 Exod 40:4; Exod 25:30; Matt 12:4
40:24 Heb 9:2; Exod 25:31-35; Exod 37:17-24
40:25 Exod 40:4; Exod 25:37; Rev 4:5
40:26 Exod 40:5; Exod 30:1-10; Matt 23:19
40:27 Exod 30:7
40:28 Exod 40:5; Exod 26:36,37; Exod 38:9-19

39:43 *Moses saw all the work, and look, they had done it* These words sound like the creation story: "God saw all that He had made, and look, it was very good" (Gen 1:31), and He finished and blessed the seventh day (Gen 2:2-3). God made a world for people to live in; now His people had made a house for God. One day the Lord will inspect every believer's work (1 Cor 3:13). We hope to hear, "Well done, good and faithful slave" (Matt 25:21).

40:2 *On the day of the first month, on the first day of the month, you shall set up the tabernacle* The first month was the month of Passover (12:2). It had been nearly a year since Israel came out of Egypt. God chose a new year's day for a new beginning. Israel's year began with God dwelling among them.

40:3 *you shall put there the ark of the testimony* The order of setting up starts at the center, with the ark, and moves outward to the table, lampstand, incense altar, bronze altar, laver and courtyard. It is the same order God used in chapter 25. God's presence comes first, and everything else is arranged around it. Is that the order of our lives?

40:9 *you shall anoint the tabernacle and all that is in it* The oil of 30:22-33 was put on the tent, its furniture, the altar and the laver. Everything was set apart for God.

40:15 *their anointing shall be for them a priesthood forever throughout their generations* Aaron and his sons were to be washed, clothed and anointed. This is the ordination described in chapter 29, and Leviticus 8 tells how it was carried out.

40:16 *Moses did according to all that the LORD had commanded him; so he did* This sentence sums up the whole building section. Moses had once argued with God at the burning bush (4:13). Now he simply obeyed.

40:17 *in the first month, in the second year, on the first day of the month, the tabernacle was set up* This is one of the few exact dates in Exodus. About 1445 B.C., in the desert below Mount Sinai, the house of God stood for the first time.

40:19 *just as the LORD had commanded Moses* Moses set it up with his own hands. This is the first of seven times the phrase appears in this section. Every step was done God's way.

40:20 *he took and put the testimony into the ark* The testimony was the second set of tablets (34:1, 28). Inside the box was the law Israel had broken with the golden calf, and over it the mercy seat, where blood would be sprinkled. God's law was not thrown away, and His mercy covered it. That is the gospel in a picture.

40:23 *he arranged on it an arrangement of bread before the LORD* Moses did more than set out furniture. He set out the bread, lit the lamps and burned the incense (40:25, 27). The worship began right away. The house was not a museum. It was a place where God was served.

the tabernacle. **29** And the altar of the burnt offering he set ***at*** the entrance of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting, and he offered up on it the burnt offering and the grain offering, just as the LORD had commanded Moses. **30** And he put the laver between the tent of meeting and the altar, and he put water there for washing. **31** And Moses and Aaron and his sons would wash their hands and their feet from it. **32** When they went into the tent of meeting, and when they drew near to the altar, they would wash, just as the LORD had commanded Moses. **33** And he set up the courtyard all around the tabernacle and the altar, and he put the screen of the gate of the courtyard. And Moses finished the work.

The Glory of the LORD Fills the Tabernacle

34 And the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. **35** And Moses was not able to go into the tent of meeting, for the cloud had settled on it, and the glory of the LORD had filled the tabernacle. **36** And when the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) would set out in all their journeys. **37** And if the cloud was not taken up, then they would not set out until the day that it was taken up. **38** For the cloud of the LORD ***was*** over the tabernacle by day, and fire would be in it ***by*** night, before the eyes of all the house of Israel, in all their journeys.

40:29 Heb 13:10; Exod 40:6; Exod 27:1-8
40:30 Exod 40:7; Exod 30:18-21; Exod 38:8
40:31 Ps 26:6; Ps 51:6,7; John 13:10
40:32 Exod 40:19; Exod 30:19,20; Ps 73:19
40:33 Heb 3:2; Heb 9:6; Heb 3:3
40:34 Rev 21:3; Matt 17:5; Mark 9:7
40:35 Rev 15:8; Matt 17:5; Luke 2:9
40:36 Neh 9:19; Exod 13:21,22; Num 10:11-13,33-36
40:37 Num 9:19-22; Ps 31:15
40:38 Exod 13:21; Num 9:15; Ps 78:14

40:29 *he offered up on it the burnt offering and the grain offering* The bronze altar stood at the door, and the first offerings were made on it as soon as it was in place.
40:31 *Moses and Aaron and his sons would wash their hands and their feet from it* Every time they went into the tent or drew near the altar, they washed. Those who serve a holy God must come clean.
40:33 *Moses finished the work* These words echo Genesis 2:2, where God finished His work of creation. They also point ahead to the cross, where Jesus said, "It has been finished" (John 19:30). Moses finished a tent where God would live among His people for a time. Jesus finished the work that brings God's people into His presence forever.
40:34 *the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle* This is the climax of the book. The cloud that led Israel out (13:21-22), shielded them (14:19-20) and covered Sinai (24:15-18) now settled on the tent. Later Jewish teachers called this glory the Shekinah, from a word meaning to dwell. Exodus began with slaves crying out to a God who seemed far away (2:23-25). Now He lives in their midst, as He promised (29:45).
40:35 *Moses was not able to go into the tent of meeting* Even Moses, who spoke with God face to face, could not enter. The same happened at Solomon's temple: "the priests were not able to stand to minister because of the cloud" (1 Kgs 8:11). John says the Word "dwelt among us" (John 1:14), which means pitched His tent. In Jesus the veil was torn, and believers now have "confidence for the entrance into the holy places by the blood of Jesus" (Heb 10:19).
40:35 *the glory of the LORD had filled the tabernacle* God's dwelling goes further still. Believers together are "a temple of God" (1 Cor 3:16). And one day a voice will say, "Look, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will tabernacle with them" (Rev 21:3). What began in a tent in the desert ends in the new Jerusalem, where "the Lord God the Almighty is its temple, and the Lamb" (Rev 21:22).
40:36 *when the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the sons of Israel would set out* The cloud now guided them. When it lifted, they moved; when it stayed, they stayed, whether two days, a month or a year (Num 9:15-23). They moved when God moved. Do we wait for God to lead, or do we run ahead?
40:38 *the cloud of the LORD was over the tabernacle by day, and fire would be in it by night* Day and night, everyone could look up and see that God was with them. Exodus does not end in the promised land but on the road, with God in their midst. That is where every believer lives now: not yet home, but never alone. The Spirit leads us (Rom 8:14), and Jesus said, "I am with you all the days, until the consummation of the age" (Matt 28:20).

LEVITICUS

Introduction

Title

Leviticus is the third of the five books of Moses, the Law or Torah, and sits between Exodus and Numbers. The name comes from the Greek and Latin Bibles and means the book about the Levites, the tribe of Levi, who served as Israel's priests and helpers at the tabernacle. The Hebrew title is the book's first word, which means "and He called" (1:1). It is the book where many Bible reading plans stall, full of animals, blood, priests and skin diseases. But it answers one of the biggest questions in the Bible: how can sinful people come near a holy God and live?

Author and Date

Moses. Over and over the book says, "And the LORD spoke to Moses," and it closes by saying these are the commandments the LORD gave Moses "on Mount Sinai" (27:34). Jesus pointed to the cleansing law of chapter 14 as what "Moses commanded" (Mark 1:44). Leviticus was given at Mount Sinai about 1445 B.C., about a year after the exodus (about 1446 B.C., 1 Kgs 6:1). Moses may have written it down then or set it in its final form during the wilderness years. Many modern scholars believe priests wrote it much later, perhaps during or after the exile, from several sources. I take the book at its word. It claims to be the word of the LORD through Moses, it fits a people living in tents around a portable tabernacle, and Jesus and the apostles treated it as the Law of Moses.

Background and Setting

Leviticus covers about one month. Exodus ends with the tabernacle set up on the first day of the first month of the second year (Exod 40:17), and "the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle" (Exod 40:34). Numbers begins one month later (Num 1:1). In between, Israel stayed at Sinai and learned how to live with a holy God in the middle of their camp. The only stories are the ordination of the priests and the death of Nadab and Abihu (chapters 8 to 10) and the blasphemer (24:10-23).

The tabernacle was a large tent, the tent of meeting, where God's presence dwelt. It stood in a courtyard with the bronze altar for sacrifices. Inside were the holy place and, behind a veil, the Most Holy Place with the ark of the covenant. Some laws speak to all the people, and some mainly to Aaron and his sons, who had to teach them (10:10-11). Leviticus was given to Israel under the covenant God made at Sinai. Clean and unclean describe whether a person or thing was fit to come near God's tabernacle. Being unclean was often not a sin at all.

Themes

The key word is holy: set apart, separate from what is common and sinful, belonging to God. "You shall be holy, for I am holy" (11:45; 19:2; 20:26). Notice the order. God first brought Israel out of Egypt, and then He called them to be holy. The Law was never the way to become God's people. It was given to a people He had already redeemed.

Sin brings death, and atonement comes by the blood of a substitute: "it is the blood that makes atonement by the life" (17:11). The offerings (chapters 1 to 7) teach full surrender, thanks, fellowship, forgiveness and the paying of a debt. The Day of Atonement (chapter 16) is the high point of the book. The feasts (chapter 23) mark Israel's year with God's appointments. And holiness reaches all of life: the family, the body, business, the poor, the foreigner and the neighbor, for "you shall love your neighbor as yourself" (19:18). No one was ever saved by keeping these laws. The Law shows us our sin and points us to Christ (Gal 3:24).

Christ in Leviticus

The New Testament reads Leviticus as a shadow, with Christ as the substance (Col 2:16-17; Heb 10:1). He is the burnt offering, "an offering and a sacrifice to God for an aroma of fragrance" (Eph 5:2). He is our peace (Eph 2:14), the sin offering made "sin on our behalf" (2 Cor 5:21), and the Servant whose soul makes "a guilt offering" (Isa 53:10). He is the High Priest who never needs to offer for His own sins (Heb 7:26-27). The high priest going behind the veil once a year pictures Christ entering heaven itself with His own blood, "once for all" (Heb 9:12, 24), and the sin offering burned outside the camp points to Jesus, who "suffered outside the gate" (Heb 13:12). Christ is "our Passover" (1 Cor 5:7) and "the firstfruits" of the resurrection (1 Cor 15:20), and the Spirit came on the feast of Pentecost (Acts 2:1). In Nazareth Jesus announced the jubilee's "acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke 4:19). The blood of bulls and goats could never take away sins, but by one offering Christ "has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified" (Heb 10:14).

Hard Passages

Why did God strike down Nadab and Abihu (10:1-2)? The text says only that they offered fire "which He had not commanded them." The notes name the main suggestions and stress God's warning at the start of the priesthood, with care for Aaron's grief.

The laws of childbirth, discharges and skin disease (chapters 12 to 15) are about fitness to come near the tabernacle, not sin. The notes explain why a daughter's time was doubled without making her worth less.

The sexual laws and penalties (chapters 18 and 20) are stated plainly. The New Testament repeats God's standard but not the death penalties, which belonged to Israel as a nation under God. The notes stress the washing of 1 Corinthians 6:11 and care for those who struggle or have been harmed.

The stoning of the blasphemer (24:10-23), "eye for eye" (24:20), the servant and slave laws (25:39-55), the curses of chapter 26 and the valuations of chapter 27 are each explained in their setting. Israel's slave laws were not race-based chattel slavery, and the gospel undermines slavery at its root. Where good teachers disagree, as on Azazel (16:8), the Sabbath for Christians, tattoos (19:28) and the tithe, the notes give the main views.

Outline

I. The Offerings (1:1-7:38)
  A. The burnt offering (1:1-17)
  B. The grain offering (2:1-16)
  C. The peace offering (3:1-17)

D. The sin offering (4:1-5:13)
E. The guilt offering (5:14-6:7)
F. Instructions for the priests (6:8-7:38)
II. The Priests (8:1-10:20)
A. The ordination of Aaron and his sons (8:1-36)
B. The glory of the LORD appears (9:1-24)
C. Nadab and Abihu (10:1-20)
III. Clean and Unclean (11:1-15:33)
A. Clean and unclean animals (11:1-47)
B. Cleansing after childbirth (12:1-8)
C. Skin disease and mold (13:1-14:57)
D. Discharges of the body (15:1-33)
IV. The Day of Atonement (16:1-34)
V. Holy Living (17:1-22:33)
A. The life is in the blood (17:1-16)
B. Sexual purity (18:1-30)
C. Be holy, for I am holy (19:1-37)
D. Penalties for sin (20:1-27)
E. Holy priests and holy offerings (21:1-22:33)
VI. Holy Times (23:1-25:55)
A. The appointed feasts of the LORD (23:1-44)
B. The lamp, the bread and the blasphemer (24:1-23)
C. The Sabbath year and the jubilee (25:1-55)
VII. Blessings, Curses and Vows (26:1-27:34)
A. Blessings and curses (26:1-46)
B. Vows and tithes (27:1-34)

LEVITICUS

LEVITICUS 1

The Burnt Offering

1 And He called to Moses (Moshe), and the LORD spoke to
him from the tent of meeting, saying, **2** "Speak to the sons of
Israel (Yisra'el), and you shall say to them, 'When a man of
you brings near an offering to the LORD, from the livestock,
from the herd or from the flock you shall bring near your
offering. **3** If his offering ***is*** a burnt offering from the herd, he
shall bring it near, a male without blemish; to the entrance
of the tent of meeting he shall bring it near, for his accep-
tance before the LORD. **4** And he shall lay his hand on the
head of the burnt offering, and it shall be accepted for him to
make atonement for him. **5** And he shall slaughter the young
of the herd before the LORD; and the sons of Aaron (Aharon),
the priests, shall bring near the blood, and they shall sprin-
kle the blood all around on the altar that ***is at*** the entrance of
the tent of meeting. **6** And he shall skin the burnt offering,
and he shall cut it into its pieces. **7** And the sons of Aaron the
priest shall put fire on the altar, and they shall arrange wood
on the fire. **8** And the sons of Aaron, the priests, shall
arrange the pieces, the head and the suet, on the wood which
is on the fire which ***is*** on the altar. **9** And its entrails and its
legs he shall wash with water; and the priest shall make all ***of
it*** smoke on the altar ***as*** a burnt offering, a fire offering of a
soothing aroma to the LORD. **10** And if his offering ***is*** from
the flock, from the sheep or from the goats, for a burnt offer-
ing, he shall bring it near, a male without blemish. **11** And he
shall slaughter it on the side of the altar northward before
the LORD; and the sons of Aaron, the priests, shall sprinkle
its blood all around on the altar. **12** And he shall cut it into
its pieces, with its head and its suet; and the priest shall
arrange them on the wood which ***is*** on the fire which ***is*** on
the altar. **13** And the entrails and the legs he shall wash with
water; and the priest shall bring near all ***of it*** and make ***it***
smoke on the altar; it ***is*** a burnt offering, a fire offering of a
soothing aroma to the LORD. **14** And if his offering to the
LORD ***is*** a burnt offering from the birds, then he shall bring
near his offering from the turtledoves or from the young of
the dove. **15** And the priest shall bring it near to the altar,
and he shall wring off its head and make ***it*** smoke on the
altar; and its blood shall be drained out on the wall of the
altar. **16** And he shall remove its crop with its feathers, and
he shall throw it beside the altar eastward, to the place of the
fatty ashes. **17** And he shall tear it open by its wings; he shall
not divide ***it***; and the priest shall make it smoke on the altar,
on the wood which ***is*** on the fire; it ***is*** a burnt offering, a fire
offering of a soothing aroma to the LORD.

1:1 John 1:17; Exod 19:3; Exod 25:22
1:2 Heb 9:19; Lev 22:18,19; Gen 4:3,5
1:3 Heb 10:8; Heb 9:14; 1 Pet 1:19
1:4 Lev 3:2,8,13; Exod 29:10,15,19; 2 Chr 29:23,24
1:5 Lev 1:11; Lev 3:2,8,13; 2 Chr 35:11
1:6 Lev 7:8; Gen 3:21
1:7 Lev 6:12,13; Gen 22:9; Lev 9:24
1:8 Lev 8:18-21; Lev 9:13,14; Exod 29:17,18
1:9 Eph 5:2; 2 Cor 2:15; Phil 4:18
1:10 Heb 9:19; Lev 1:2; Gen 4:4
1:11 Lev 1:5; Exod 40:22; Ezek 8:5
1:14 Luke 2:24; Lev 5:7; Lev 12:8
1:15 Lev 5:8; Ps 22:1,21; Ps 69:1-21
1:16 Luke 1:35; 1 Pet 1:2; Lev 4:12
1:17 Heb 10:8; Gen 15:10; Ps 16:10

1:1 *And He called to Moses* In Hebrew these are the first words of the book, and they became its Hebrew name. At Sinai the LORD spoke from the mountain and the people were afraid (Exod 20:18-19). Now He speaks "from the tent of meeting," in the middle of the camp. The tabernacle was the place where God met with His people (Exod 25:22).
1:2 *When a man of you brings near an offering to the LORD* The word for offering, qorban, comes from the verb to bring near. That is the whole point of the offerings: to bring a person near to God. God does not say "if." He assumes His people will want to come, and He shows them how. The animals came from the family's own herd and flock. A sacrifice was meant to cost something (2 Sam 24:24).
1:3 *a male without blemish* Healthy and whole, with no defect, injury or disease. God deserved the best, not the leftovers (Mal 1:8). The word for burnt offering, olah, means that which goes up. The whole animal went up in smoke to God, and its goal was "his acceptance before the LORD."
1:4 *he shall lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering* Not a light touch. The worshiper leaned his hand on the animal, saying in effect that it stood for him. Atonement means sin covered and dealt with, so the guilty can be forgiven and brought back to God. The Hebrew word, kipper, is often explained as to cover, and many also see the idea of a ransom paid. The animal died and the worshiper lived. That is substitution.
1:4 *it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him* Did the blood of a bull really take away sin? Hebrews says, "For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and of goats to take away sins" (Heb 10:4). But God accepted the offering of a believing Israelite, and it covered his sin until the one true sacrifice came. Every lamb and bull pointed to Jesus, "a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pet 1:19). Old Testament believers were saved as we are, by faith in the God who promised to provide.
1:5 *he shall slaughter the young of the herd before the LORD* The worshiper killed the animal himself. He watched it die, and he knew why. Sin brings death (Gen 2:17; Rom 6:23). A priest was a man God appointed to stand between Him and the people, to offer sacrifices and teach His Law. Only Aaron and his sons could serve (Exod 28:1). The blood mattered because "the life of the flesh is in the blood" (17:11).
1:9 *a fire offering of a soothing aroma to the LORD* God does not need the smell of roasting meat. This is a way of saying He was pleased and accepted the offering. No one ate any of the burnt offering; it all belonged to God, and only the hide went to the priest (7:8). Paul uses the same picture for Christ, who "gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for an aroma of fragrance" (Eph 5:2). The burnt offering held nothing back, and neither did Jesus.
1:10 *from the flock, from the sheep or from the goats* The rules are nearly the same as for the bull. Why repeat them? Because a sheep or goat cost far less. God made a way for more of His people to come. The animal still had to be whole and healthy, but it did not have to be the biggest one.
1:14 *from the turtledoves or from the young of the dove* For those who could not afford a sheep or goat. The priest did more of the work here because a bird is small. When Joseph and Mary brought Jesus to the temple, they offered birds, the offering of the poor (Luke 2:22-24; see 12:8).
1:17 *it is a burnt offering, a fire offering of a soothing aroma to the LORD* The poor man's dove is called exactly what the rich man's bull was called. God does not measure worship by its price tag. We bring no animals now, because Christ offered Himself "once for all" (Heb 10:10). But we still come through a substitute, and once accepted we are to "present your bodies as a living, holy sacrifice, well-pleasing to God" (Rom 12:1). Is any part of your life kept off the altar?

LEVITICUS 2

The Grain Offering

1 And when a soul brings near an offering of a grain offering to the LORD, his offering shall be fine flour; and he shall pour oil on it, and he shall put frankincense on it. **2** And he shall bring it to the sons of Aaron (Aharon), the priests; and he shall take from there the fullness of his handful from its fine flour and from its oil, with all its frankincense; and the priest shall make its memorial portion smoke on the altar, a fire offering of a soothing aroma to the LORD. **3** And the remainder of the grain offering ***is*** for Aaron and for his sons, a holy of holies from the fire offerings of the LORD. **4** And when you bring near an offering of a grain offering baked in an oven, ***it shall be*** unleavened cakes of fine flour mixed with oil, and unleavened wafers smeared with oil. **5** And if your offering ***is*** a grain offering on the griddle, it shall be fine flour mixed with oil, unleavened. **6** Break it ***into*** pieces, and you shall pour oil on it; it ***is*** a grain offering. **7** And if your offering ***is*** a grain offering of the pan, it shall be made ***of*** fine flour with oil. **8** And you shall bring the grain offering which is made from these to the LORD; and he shall bring it near to the priest, and he shall bring it close to the altar. **9** And the priest shall lift up from the grain offering its memorial portion, and he shall make ***it*** smoke on the altar, a fire offering of a soothing aroma to the LORD. **10** And the remainder of the grain offering ***is*** for Aaron and for his sons, a holy of holies from the fire offerings of the LORD. **11** No grain offering which you bring near to the LORD shall be made leavened; for any leaven and any honey, you shall not make smoke ***any*** of it ***as*** a fire offering to the LORD. **12** ***As*** an offering of first ***produce*** you shall bring them near to the LORD, and to the altar they shall not go up for a soothing aroma. **13** And every offering of your grain offering you shall season with salt; and you shall not let the salt of the covenant of your God cease from on your grain offering; with all your offerings you shall bring near salt. **14** And if you bring near a grain offering of firstfruits to the LORD, you shall bring near ***as*** the grain offering of your firstfruits fresh ears roasted in the fire, crushed grain of fresh growth. **15** And you shall put oil on it, and you shall put frankincense on it; it ***is*** a grain offering. **16** And the priest shall make its memorial portion smoke, from its crushed grain and from its oil, with all its frankincense, a fire offering to the LORD.

LEVITICUS 3

The Peace Offering

1 And if his offering ***is*** a sacrifice of peace offerings, if he is bringing near from the herd, whether male or female, he shall bring it near without blemish before the LORD. **2** And he shall lay his hand on the head of his offering, and he shall slaughter it ***at*** the entrance of the tent of meeting; and the sons of Aaron (Aharon), the priests, shall sprinkle the blood all around on the altar. **3** And he shall bring near from the sacrifice of the peace offerings a fire offering to the LORD: the fat that covers the entrails, and all the fat which ***is*** on the entrails, **4** and the two kidneys and the fat which ***is*** on them, which ***is*** on the loins, and the lobe on the liver; with the kid-

2:1 Lev 6:14-18,20-23; Lev 9:17; Isa 66:20
2:2 Lev 5:12; Lev 6:15; Lev 2:9
2:3 Lev 10:12,13; Lev 6:16,17,26; Lev 21:22
2:4 Exod 29:2; 1 Cor 5:7,8; Ps 22:14
2:6 Ps 22:1-21; John 18:1-19; Lev 1:6
2:7 Lev 2:1,2
2:9 Lev 2:2; Lev 6:15; Phil 4:18
2:11 Luke 12:1; Gal 5:9; Exod 12:19,20
2:12 Rev 14:4; Gen 23:10,11,17; Exod 22:29
2:13 Matt 5:13; Mark 9:49; Ezek 43:24
2:14 Lev 23:10,14-17,20; Num 28:2; Prov 3:9,10
2:16 Isa 11:2-4; Isa 61:1; Rom 8:26,27
3:1 Num 6:14; Lev 1:3; Amos 5:22
3:2 Lev 1:4,5; Exod 29:10; Lev 8:22
3:3 Exod 29:13,22; Lev 4:8,9; Lev 3:16
3:4 Lev 3:10,15; Lev 4:9; Lev 7:4

2:1 *an offering of a grain offering* The Hebrew word, minchah, means a gift or tribute, the kind of present a servant brings his master. It was usually brought with a burnt offering (Num 15:1-10). The burnt offering said, I belong to You. The grain offering added, and so does the work of my hands. Fine flour was the best grade, ground smooth. Frankincense was a costly sweet-smelling resin burned as incense.
2:2 *its memorial portion* The priest burned "the fullness of his handful" with all the frankincense. This handful stood for the whole offering, as if to remind God of the worshiper and the worshiper of God.
2:3 *the remainder of the grain offering is for Aaron and for his sons, a holy of holies* A holy of holies means most holy. The priests did not farm land like the other tribes, so God fed them from the offerings (Num 18:8-10). In the same way, those who preach the gospel should be supported by those they serve (1 Cor 9:13-14).
2:4 *baked in an oven* It could also be baked as cakes or wafers, made on the griddle, or made in the pan. God took His people as they were, rich or poor, raw flour or bread baked at home. Some teachers see in the fine flour a picture of the even, flawless life of Jesus and in the oil a picture of the Holy Spirit. The New Testament does not say this directly, so I hold it loosely. Jesus did call Himself "the bread of life" (John 6:35), and His whole life pleased the Father (Matt 3:17).
2:11 *No grain offering which you bring near to the LORD shall be made leavened* Leaven is yeast, or old fermented dough used to make new dough rise. Honey may mean bee honey or the syrup of fruit like dates. Both cause ferment. Leaven often pictures sin spreading quietly through the whole (1 Cor 5:7-8; Matt 16:6). Yet it was not always a picture of sin: leaven and honey could be brought as first produce (2:12), and the bread of Pentecost was leavened (23:17). What went up to God in smoke had to be free of what pictured corruption.
2:13 *the salt of the covenant of your God* Salt does the opposite of leaven. It keeps food from spoiling. In the ancient world people who shared a meal with salt were bound to keep faith with each other. Every salted offering reminded Israel that God's covenant would last (Num 18:19; 2 Chr 13:5). Jesus said, "You are the salt of the earth" (Matt 5:13).
2:14 *a grain offering of firstfruits* Firstfruits were the first part of the harvest, given to God before the rest was used. It was an act of trust: God gave this harvest and He would give the rest (Prov 3:9-10). Paul calls the risen Christ "the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep" (1 Cor 15:20). We still bring God our gifts of thanks: "with such sacrifices God is well pleased" (Heb 13:16).
3:1 *a sacrifice of peace offerings* The Hebrew word, shelamim, is related to shalom: wholeness, well-being, everything right between people and God. The peace offering did not so much make peace with God as celebrate a peace He had made possible. Christ "made peace through the blood of His cross" (Col 1:20), and "He Himself is our peace" (Eph 2:14).
3:2 *he shall lay his hand on the head of his offering* Even a meal of fellowship with God started with blood. No one sits at God's table except through a death in his place. Here the animal could be male or female, but it still had to be without blemish.
3:3 *the fat that covers the entrails* Only the richest inner parts went on the altar: the fat, the two kidneys and the lobe on the liver. In Israel the fat was counted the best part of an animal. God took His portion first, and then His people ate the rest in His presence (7:11-21). "On the burnt offering" (3:5) probably means on top of the morning burnt offering already on the altar.

neys he shall remove it. **5** And the sons of Aaron shall make it smoke on the altar, on the burnt offering which ***is*** on the wood which ***is*** on the fire, a fire offering of a soothing aroma to the LORD. **6** And if his offering for a sacrifice of peace offerings to the LORD ***is*** from the flock, male or female, he shall bring it near without blemish. **7** If he is bringing near a sheep ***as*** his offering, then he shall bring it near before the LORD. **8** And he shall lay his hand on the head of his offering, and he shall slaughter it before the tent of meeting; and the sons of Aaron shall sprinkle its blood all around on the altar. **9** And he shall bring near from the sacrifice of the peace offerings a fire offering to the LORD: its fat, the whole fat tail, which he shall remove close to the backbone, and the fat that covers the entrails, and all the fat which ***is*** on the entrails, **10** and the two kidneys and the fat which ***is*** on them, which ***is*** on the loins, and the lobe on the liver; with the kidneys he shall remove it. **11** And the priest shall make it smoke on the altar, the food of a fire offering to the LORD. **12** And if his offering ***is*** a goat, then he shall bring it near before the LORD. **13** And he shall lay his hand on its head, and he shall slaughter it before the tent of meeting; and the sons of Aaron shall sprinkle its blood all around on the altar. **14** And he shall bring near from it his offering, a fire offering to the LORD: the fat that covers the entrails, and all the fat which ***is*** on the entrails, **15** and the two kidneys and the fat which ***is*** on them, which ***is*** on the loins, and the lobe on the liver; with the kidneys he shall remove it. **16** And the priest shall make them smoke on the altar, the food of a fire offering for a soothing aroma; all fat ***is*** the LORD's. **17** ***It is*** a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings: any fat and any blood you shall not eat.'"

LEVITICUS 4

The Sin Offering

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe), saying, **2** "Speak to the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), saying, 'When a soul sins unintentionally against any of the commandments of the LORD ***concerning things*** which are not to be done, and does any one of them, **3** if the anointed priest sins, for the guilt of the people, then he shall bring near for his sin which he has sinned a young bull, a son of the herd, without blemish to the LORD for a sin offering. **4** And he shall bring the bull to the entrance of the tent of meeting before the LORD, and he shall lay his hand on the head of the bull, and he shall slaughter the bull before the LORD. **5** And the anointed priest shall take some of the blood of the bull, and he shall bring it into the tent of meeting. **6** And the priest shall dip his finger in the blood, and he shall spatter some of the blood seven times before the LORD, in front of the veil of the holy place. **7** And the priest shall put some of the blood on the horns of the altar of the incense of the fragrances before the LORD, which ***is*** in the tent of meeting; and all the blood of the bull he shall pour out at the base of the altar of the burnt offering, which ***is at*** the entrance of the tent of meeting. **8** And all the fat of the bull of the sin offering he shall lift off from it: the fat that covers the entrails, and all the fat which ***is*** on the entrails, **9** and the two kidneys and the fat which ***is*** on them, which ***is*** on the loins, and the lobe on the liver; with the kidneys he shall remove it, **10** just as it is lifted off from the ox of the sacrifice of the peace offerings; and the priest shall make them smoke on the altar of the burnt offering. **11** And the hide of the bull and all its flesh, with its head and with its legs, and its entrails and its dung, **12** even all the bull he shall bring out to outside the camp, to a clean place, to the pour-

3:5 Lev 6:12; Exod 29:13; Lev 1:9
3:6 Gal 4:4; Eph 1:10; Eph 2:13-22
3:7 1 Kgs 8:62; Lev 3:1; Eph 5:2,12
3:8 Lev 1:5,11; Lev 3:2-5,13; Lev 4:4,15,24
3:9 Lev 9:19; Exod 29:22; Lev 3:3,4
3:11 Lev 21:6,8,17,21,22; Lev 3:5; Lev 3:16
3:12 Lev 3:1,7-17; Lev 1:2,6,10; Lev 9:3,15
3:13 Lev 3:1-5,8; Isa 53:6,11,12; 2 Cor 5:21
3:14 Lev 3:3-5,9-11; Ps 22:14,15; Prov 23:26
3:16 Lev 7:23-25; 1 Sam 2:15,16; Lev 3:3-5,9-11,14,15
3:17 Gen 9:4; Lev 6:18; Lev 17:7

4:2 Heb 9:7; Ps 19:12; Lev 4:27
4:3 Heb 7:27; Lev 4:14; Lev 9:2
4:4 Lev 1:3; Exod 29:10,11; Lev 16:21
4:5 Lev 16:14,19; Lev 4:16,17; Num 19:4
4:6 Lev 4:17,25,30,34; Lev 8:15; Lev 9:9
4:7 Heb 9:21; Lev 8:15; Lev 9:9
4:8 Lev 3:3-5,9-11,14-16; Lev 4:19,26,31,35; Lev 7:3-5
4:10 Heb 5:7
4:11 Heb 5:7; Num 19:5; Exod 29:14
4:12 Heb 13:11-12; Lev 6:10,11; Exod 29:14

3:9 *the whole fat tail* The sheep of that region had large fat tails, counted as a choice part.
3:11 *the food of a fire offering to the LORD* God does not eat. The wording pictures a shared meal, with God as the host who takes the first and best portion. This was a meal with God, not just a family feast.
3:16 *all fat is the LORD's* Why list each animal separately when the steps are so close? God wanted every Israelite to know exactly how to come to Him. Worship was not left to guesswork or personal taste, which will matter a great deal in chapter 10.
3:17 *any fat and any blood you shall not eat* A statute is a fixed rule. The blood belonged to God because "the life of the flesh is in the blood" (17:11). The fat rule covered the sacrificial animals, while the blood rule covered all meat (7:22-27). The apostles asked Gentile believers to keep away from blood (Acts 15:20, 29; Gen 9:4), and believers today differ on how that applies. Through Christ we are welcomed to God's table: "I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me" (Rev 3:20).
4:2 *When a soul sins unintentionally* By mistake, by wandering off the path, or without knowing it at the time. It is the opposite of sinning "with a raised hand" (Num 15:30), in open defiance of God. Sin is not only about intentions. It is about God's holiness. We can do wrong without knowing it, and it is still wrong (Ps 19:12). The word for sin offering, chatta't, is the same word as sin itself. Many teachers call it the purification offering, because it cleansed the sinner and the tabernacle.
4:3 *if the anointed priest sins, for the guilt of the people* The high priest, anointed with the holy oil (8:12). He stood for the whole nation before God, so his sin brought guilt on all. When a leader in God's house sins, the damage spreads to everyone. He had to bring the most costly animal, a young bull.
4:6 *in front of the veil of the holy place* The veil was the curtain between the holy place and the Most Holy Place, where the ark of the covenant stood. Seven often speaks of completeness. Why carry the blood inside? The priest's sin had stained the very place where he served, so the blood had to go where the sin had reached. "Apart from shedding of blood there is no forgiveness" (Heb 9:22).
4:12 *he shall bring out to outside the camp, to a clean place* The priest could not eat an offering for his own sin, so the rest of the bull was burned outside the camp. Hebrews draws a straight line to Jesus: the bodies of those animals "are burned outside the camp. Therefore Jesus also, so that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered outside the gate" (Heb 13:11-12). He was carried outside so that we could be brought in.

ing out of the fatty ashes, and he shall burn it on wood with fire; at the pouring out of the fatty ashes it shall be burned.

For the Whole Congregation

13 And if all the congregation of Israel errs, and the matter is hidden from the eyes of the assembly, and they do one of all the commandments of the LORD ***concerning things*** which are not to be done, and they are guilty, **14** when the sin which they have sinned in it becomes known, then the assembly shall bring near a young bull, a son of the herd, for a sin offering, and they shall bring it before the tent of meeting. **15** And the elders of the congregation shall lay their hands on the head of the bull before the LORD, and he shall slaughter the bull before the LORD. **16** And the anointed priest shall bring some of the blood of the bull into the tent of meeting. **17** And the priest shall dip his finger in some of the blood, and he shall spatter ***it*** seven times before the LORD, in front of the veil. **18** And some of the blood he shall put on the horns of the altar which ***is*** before the LORD, which ***is*** in the tent of meeting; and all the blood he shall pour out at the base of the altar of the burnt offering, which ***is at*** the entrance of the tent of meeting. **19** And all its fat he shall lift off from it, and he shall make ***it*** smoke on the altar. **20** And he shall do to the bull just as he did to the bull of the sin offering; so he shall do to it. And the priest shall make atonement for them, and it shall be forgiven them. **21** And he shall bring out the bull to outside the camp, and he shall burn it just as he burned the first bull; it ***is*** the sin offering of the assembly.

For a Leader and for the People

22 When a leader sins, and does unintentionally one of all the commandments of the LORD his God ***concerning things*** which are not to be done, and he is guilty, **23** or his sin which he has sinned in it is made known to him, then he shall bring ***as*** his offering a goat of the goats, a male without blemish. **24** And he shall lay his hand on the head of the goat, and he shall slaughter it in the place where he slaughters the burnt offering before the LORD; it ***is*** a sin offering. **25** And the priest shall take some of the blood of the sin offering with his finger, and he shall put ***it*** on the horns of the altar of the burnt offering; and its blood he shall pour out at the base of the altar of the burnt offering. **26** And all its fat he shall make smoke on the altar, like the fat of the sacrifice of the peace offerings; and the priest shall make atonement for him from his sin, and it shall be forgiven him. **27** And if one soul of the people of the land sins unintentionally, in doing one of the commandments of the LORD ***concerning things*** which are not to be done, and he is guilty, **28** or his sin which he has sinned is made known to him, then he shall bring ***as*** his offering a female goat of the goats, without blemish, a female, for his sin which he has sinned. **29** And he shall lay his hand on the head of the sin offering, and he shall slaughter the sin offering in the place of the burnt offering. **30** And the priest shall take some of its blood with his finger, and he shall put ***it*** on the horns of the altar of the burnt offering; and all its blood he shall pour out at the base of the altar. **31** And all its fat he shall remove, just as the fat was removed from on the sacrifice of the peace offerings; and the priest shall make ***it*** smoke on the altar for a soothing aroma to the LORD. And the priest shall make atonement for him, and it shall be forgiven him. **32** And if he brings a lamb ***as*** his offering for a sin offering, he shall bring it a female without blemish. **33** And he shall lay his hand on the head of the sin offering, and he shall slaughter it for a sin offering in the place where he slaughters the burnt offering. **34** And the priest shall take some of the blood of the sin offering with his finger, and he shall put ***it*** on the horns of the altar of the burnt offering; and all its blood he shall pour out at the base of the altar. **35** And all its fat he shall remove, just as the fat of the sheep is removed from the sacrifice of the peace offerings; and the priest shall make them smoke on the altar, on the fire offerings of the LORD. And the priest shall make atonement for him for his sin which he has sinned, and it shall be forgiven him.

4:13 Lev 5:2-5,17; Lev 4:1,2; Num 15:24-29
4:15 Lev 1:4; Exod 24:1,9; Num 11:16,25
4:16 Lev 4:5-12; Heb 9:12-14
4:17 Lev 4:6,7
4:19 Lev 4:8-10,26,31,35; Lev 5:6; Lev 6:7
4:20 Heb 13:11; Num 15:25; Heb 10:10-12
4:21 Heb 13:11; Heb 7:27; Lev 16:15,21
4:22 Heb 7:27; Lev 4:2,13; Exod 18:21
4:23 Lev 4:14; Lev 5:4; 2 Kgs 22:10-13
4:24 Isa 53:6; Lev 1:5,11; Lev 3:2,8,13
4:25 Lev 4:7,18,30,34; Lev 9:9; Lev 8:10,15
4:26 Heb 9:22; Lev 4:20; Lev 3:5
4:27 Lev 4:2; Num 15:27; Exod 12:49
4:28 Lev 4:23,32; Lev 5:6; Gen 3:15
4:29 Heb 10:6; Heb 10:8; Lev 4:4,15,24,33
4:30 Lev 4:25,34; Isa 42:21; Rom 8:3,4
4:31 Lev 4:26,35; Lev 1:9,13,17; Exod 29:18
4:32 John 1:29; John 1:36; Rev 5:6
4:33 Lev 4:4,29-31
4:34 Lev 4:25,30; Isa 42:21; John 17:19
4:35 Lev 4:20,26,30,31; Lev 1:1-6; Lev 5:6,10,13

4:13 *if all the congregation of Israel errs, and the matter is hidden from the eyes of the assembly* A whole nation can drift into sin together without seeing it. The elders, the older leaders of the tribes, laid their hands on the bull for the people. Churches and nations can sin together too, and we should ask God to show us the sins we have grown used to.

4:20 *it shall be forgiven them* The word forgiven appears here for the first time in Leviticus, and it repeats to the end of the chapter. God does not leave His people stuck in guilt. When sin is found, the answer is not despair but confession and the sacrifice He provided.

4:22 *When a leader sins* A tribal chief or ruler, not a priest. This time the blood went on the bronze altar in the courtyard, and the priest ate the meat (6:26). A leader's sin was dealt with in the open where all could see. Leaders are not above God's law.

4:28 *or his sin which he has sinned is made known to him* Someone might point it out, or his own conscience might wake up. The ordinary Israelite brought a female goat, or a lamb (4:32).

4:31 *the priest shall make atonement for him, and it shall be forgiven him* The same promise given for the high priest and the whole nation is given to the ordinary person. God did not have one kind of forgiveness for important people and a lesser kind for everyone else.

4:32 *if he brings a lamb as his offering for a sin offering* John the Baptist said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29). This lamb covered one man's sin. The Lamb of God takes sin away. God "made the One who did not know sin to be sin on our behalf" (2 Cor 5:21). We come to God through Jesus, whose one sacrifice is enough, and "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous so that He may forgive us the sins" (1 John 1:9).

LEVITICUS 5

Sins That Need a Sin Offering

1 And when a soul sins, and hears the voice of an oath, and he ***is*** a witness, or he has seen or he has known, if he does not tell ***it***, then he shall bear his iniquity. **2** Or a soul who touches any unclean thing, or a carcass of an unclean living thing, or a carcass of unclean livestock, or a carcass of an unclean swarming thing, and it is hidden from him, and he ***is*** unclean, and he is guilty; **3** or when he touches the uncleanness of man, as to any of his uncleanness by which he becomes unclean, and it is hidden from him, and he has come to know ***it***, and he is guilty; **4** or when a soul swears, speaking rashly with ***the*** lips to do evil or to do good, as to anything that a man speaks rashly in an oath, and it is hidden from him, and he has come to know ***it***, and he is guilty of one of these; **5** and it shall be, when he is guilty of one of these, then he shall confess that he has sinned in it. **6** And he shall bring his guilt offering to the LORD for his sin which he has sinned, a female from the flock, a ewe lamb or a female goat of the goats, for a sin offering; and the priest shall make atonement for him from his sin. **7** And if his hand does not reach the sufficiency of a sheep, then he shall bring ***as*** his guilt offering ***for*** that which he has sinned two turtledoves or two young of the dove to the LORD, one for a sin offering and one for a burnt offering. **8** And he shall bring them to the priest, and he shall bring near the one which ***is*** for the sin offering first, and he shall nip off its head from the front of its neck, and he shall not divide ***it***. **9** And he shall spatter some of the blood of the sin offering on the wall of the altar, and what remains of the blood shall be drained out at the base of the altar; it ***is*** a sin offering. **10** And the second he shall offer ***as*** a burnt offering according to the ordinance; and the priest shall make atonement for him from his sin which he has sinned, and it shall be forgiven him. **11** And if his hand does not attain to two turtledoves or to two young of the dove, then he shall bring ***as*** his offering ***for*** that which he has sinned approximately 2 quarts (a tenth of the ephah) of fine flour for a sin offering; he shall not place oil on it, and he shall not put frankincense on it, for it ***is*** a sin offering. **12** And he shall bring it to the priest, and the priest shall take a handful from it, the fullness of his handful, its memorial portion, and he shall make ***it*** smoke on the altar, on the fire offerings of the LORD; it ***is*** a sin offering. **13** And the priest shall make atonement for him for his sin which he has sinned in any one of these, and it shall be forgiven him; and ***the rest*** shall be the priest's, like the grain offering.'"

The Guilt Offering

14 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe), saying, **15** "When a soul acts unfaithfully ***in*** unfaithfulness, and sins unintentionally in ***regard to*** the holy things of the LORD, then he shall bring his guilt offering to the LORD, a ram without blemish from the flock, by your valuation in silver shekels, by the shekel of the holy place, for a guilt offering. **16** And that which he has sinned in ***regard to*** the holy thing he shall repay, and let him add its fifth to it, and he shall give it to the priest; and the priest shall make atonement for him with the ram of the guilt offering, and it shall be forgiven him. **17** And if a soul sins and does one of all the commandments of the LORD ***concerning things*** which are not to be done, and he did not know ***it***, and he is guilty, then he shall bear his iniquity. **18** And he shall bring a ram without blemish from the flock,

5:1 Lev 5:17; Prov 29:24; Lev 7:18
5:2 2 Cor 6:17; Lev 5:17; Num 19:11-16
5:3 Lev 12:1-13; Lev 15:1-33; Num 19:11-16
5:4 Judg 11:31; 1 Sam 25:22; Mark 6:23
5:5 Num 5:7; Lev 16:21; Lev 26:40
5:6 Lev 4:28,32; Lev 6:6; Lev 7:1-7
5:7 Luke 2:24; Heb 10:6; Heb 10:8
5:8 Lev 1:15; Rom 4:25; 1 Pet 3:18
5:9 Heb 12:24; Lev 4:7,18,25,30,34; Lev 4:25,30,34
5:10 Heb 9:22; Lev 1:14-17; Lev 4:20,26,31,35
5:11 Num 5:15; Lev 2:1; Exod 16:18,36
5:12 Heb 9:22; Lev 2:9; Lev 4:35
5:13 Lev 2:3,10; Lev 5:6; Lev 4:20,26,31
5:15 Exod 30:13; Lev 4:2; Lev 7:1,6
5:16 Lev 22:14; Num 5:7; Lev 6:4,5
5:17 Luke 12:48; Lev 5:15; Lev 5:1
5:18 Heb 9:7; Lev 5:15,16; Lev 6:6

5:1 *if he does not tell it, then he shall bear his iniquity* A public oath was a call for anyone who knew something about a crime to come forward. To bear iniquity means to carry the guilt and be answerable to God for it. This sin is something not done. Silence can be sin when the truth is needed (James 4:17). God cares about justice for the one wronged.
5:2 *it is hidden from him* Being unclean meant a person was not fit to come near God's tabernacle until he was cleansed (chapters 11 to 15 explain it). The problem here is that he did not notice and went on as if nothing had happened. When he came to know it, he was guilty.
5:4 *speaking rashly with the lips* A promise made without thinking and then forgotten or broken. Jesus taught that our yes should mean yes and our no, no (Matt 5:37). Careless words matter to God.
5:5 *he shall confess that he has sinned in it* The first time Leviticus speaks of confession. The offering was not a ritual a person could go through while hiding his sin. He had to name it. "My sin I made known to You, and my iniquity I did not cover" (Ps 32:5).
5:6 *he shall bring his guilt offering to the LORD* The Hebrew word, asham, can mean guilt, the penalty for guilt, or the guilt offering. In verses 1 to 13 the animal is clearly a sin offering, and asham describes it as the payment due for his guilt. Some teachers see these verses as a bridge between the two offerings. The guilt offering proper starts at verse 14.
5:7 *if his hand does not reach the sufficiency of a sheep* A Hebrew way of saying, if he cannot afford a sheep. The sin offering bird came first, then the burnt offering. Sin had to be dealt with before the worshiper could give himself wholly to God. We do not start by offering God our devotion. We start by having our sin forgiven, and then we give Him our lives.
5:11 *he shall not place oil on it, and he shall not put frankincense on it* About two quarts of flour, for the very poor. No oil or frankincense, for this was a time for confession, not joy. But is there no forgiveness without blood (Heb 9:22)? Hebrews says "almost all things are purified with blood" (Heb 9:22), and this handful was burned on top of the animal offerings already on the altar (5:12). God would not let poverty keep anyone from forgiveness. No one is too poor to come to Christ (Eph 2:8-9).
5:15 *When a soul acts unfaithfully in unfaithfulness, and sins unintentionally in regard to the holy things of the LORD* The holy things were what belonged to God: tithes, firstborn animals, offerings, the priests' portions. Holding back or using them, even by mistake, robbed God. A shekel was a weight of silver a little under half an ounce, and the ram had to be worth a set amount.
5:16 *let him add its fifth to it* He paid back what he owed plus twenty percent. The guilt offering was about repair. Sin is not only a stain to be washed but a debt. Isaiah says of the coming Servant, "If His soul makes a guilt offering, He will see offspring" (Isa 53:10). We had robbed God of the glory and obedience we owed Him, and Christ made full payment.
5:17 *and he did not know it, and he is guilty* Humbling. We are guilty before God for more than we know. That should keep us from pride and send us often to the cross. It also comforts us: God covers even the sins we cannot see. Paul said, "I am conscious of nothing against myself, yet I am not justified by this" (1 Cor 4:4). Our standing rests on Christ, not on our self-examination.

by your valuation, for a guilt offering to the priest; and the priest shall make atonement for him for his unintentional error in which he erred, and he himself did not know ***it***; and it shall be forgiven him. **19** It ***is*** a guilt offering; he has certainly been guilty toward the LORD."

LEVITICUS 6

Making Things Right with a Neighbor

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe), saying, **2** "When a soul sins and acts unfaithfully ***in*** unfaithfulness against the LORD, and lies to his fellow about a deposit, or about a pledge of ***the*** hand, or about robbery, or has extorted from his fellow, **3** or has found a lost thing and lies about it, and swears to a falsehood, about any one of all that a man may do, sinning in them, **4** then it shall be, when he sins and is guilty, that he shall return the thing robbed which he robbed, or the thing extorted which he extorted, or the deposit which was deposited with him, or the lost thing which he found, **5** or anything about which he swore to a falsehood; and he shall repay it in its principal, and let him add its fifth to it; to ***the one*** whose it ***is*** he shall give it, on the day of his being guilty. **6** And his guilt offering he shall bring to the LORD, a ram without blemish from the flock, by your valuation, for a guilt offering, to the priest. **7** And the priest shall make atonement for him before the LORD, and it shall be forgiven him, concerning any one of all that he may do, becoming guilty by it."

The Law of the Burnt Offering

8 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **9** "Command Aaron (Aharon) and his sons, saying, 'This ***is*** the law of the burnt offering: it ***is*** the burnt offering on the hearth on the altar all the night until the morning, and the fire of the altar shall be kept burning on it. **10** And the priest shall put on his linen garment, and linen undergarments he shall put on over his flesh; and he shall lift up the fatty ashes ***into*** which the fire consumes the burnt offering on the altar, and he shall place it beside the altar. **11** And he shall strip off his garments, and he shall put on other garments, and he shall bring out the fatty ashes to outside the camp, to a clean place. **12** And the fire on the altar shall be kept burning on it; it shall not go out; and the priest shall kindle wood on it morning by morning, and he shall arrange the burnt offering on it, and he shall make the fat ***portions*** of the peace offerings smoke on it. **13** A fire shall be kept burning continually on the altar; it shall not go out.

The Law of the Grain Offering

14 And this ***is*** the law of the grain offering: the sons of Aaron shall bring it near before the LORD, to the front of the altar. **15** And he shall lift up from it in his handful some of the fine flour of the grain offering and some of its oil, and all the frankincense which ***is*** on the grain offering, and he shall make ***it*** smoke ***on*** the altar, a soothing aroma, its memorial portion to the LORD. **16** And the remainder of it Aaron and his sons shall eat; it shall be eaten ***as*** unleavened bread in a holy place; in the courtyard of the tent of meeting they shall eat it. **17** It shall not be baked leavened. I have given it ***as*** their portion from My fire offerings; it ***is*** a holy of holies, like the sin offering and like the guilt offering. **18** Every male among the sons of Aaron shall eat it; ***it is*** a due forever throughout your generations from the fire offerings of the LORD. Whatever touches them shall be holy.'" **19** And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **20** "This ***is*** the offering of Aaron and his sons which they shall bring near to the LORD on the day he is anointed: approximately 2 quarts (a tenth of the ephah) of fine flour ***as*** a grain offering continually, half of it in the morning and half of it in the evening. **21** On a griddle it shall be made with oil; well-mixed you shall bring it in; ***in*** broken pieces, a grain offering of bits, you shall bring it near, a soothing aroma to the LORD. **22** And the anointed priest in his place from among his sons shall offer it; ***it is*** a

5:19 Ezra 10:2; Ps 51:4; Mal 3:8
6:1 Luke 19:8
6:2 Luke 19:8; Col 3:9; Lev 19:11
6:3 Luke 19:8; Exod 23:4; Lev 19:12
6:4 Luke 19:8; Lev 4:13-15; Lev 5:3,4
6:5 Luke 19:8; Lev 5:16; Num 5:7,8
6:6 Lev 5:15,18; Isa 53:10,11
6:7 Lev 4:20,26,31; Lev 5:10,13,15,16,18; Exod 34:7
6:9 Num 28:3; Exod 29:38-42; Lev 6:12,13
6:10 Exod 28:39-43; Lev 16:4; Exod 39:27-29
6:11 Lev 4:12,21; Ezek 44:19; Lev 16:23,24
6:12 Lev 9:24; Num 4:13,14; Mark 9:48,49
6:14 Num 15:4,6,9; Lev 2:1,2; John 6:32
6:15 Lev 2:2,9
6:16 1 Cor 9:13; Lev 2:3,10; Ezek 44:29
6:17 1 Cor 9:13; Lev 2:11; Lev 6:25
6:18 1 Cor 9:13; Lev 6:29; Num 18:10
6:20 Heb 8:4; Exod 29:2; Exod 16:36
6:21 Lev 2:5; Lev 7:9; 1 Chr 9:31
6:22 Lev 4:3; Deut 10:6; Heb 7:23

6:2 *acts unfaithfully in unfaithfulness against the LORD, and lies to his fellow* The sentence starts with the LORD and ends with a neighbor. Every wrong done to another is also sin against God (Ps 51:4). A deposit was something left for safekeeping, a pledge was security for a loan, and extortion is taking by pressure or threat. Each wrong ends with swearing "to a falsehood" to cover it.

6:5 *he shall repay it in its principal, and let him add its fifth to it* Restitution means paying back what was taken. He gave back the full amount plus twenty percent, to the person wronged, and "on the day of his being guilty." Zacchaeus went far beyond this: "I restore fourfold" (Luke 19:8). A changed heart wants to make things right.

6:6 *his guilt offering he shall bring to the LORD* The order matters. First he made things right with his neighbor, then he came to the altar. Jesus taught the same: "first be reconciled to your brother, and then, having come, offer your gift" (Matt 5:24). We are not forgiven by paying people back. But a forgiven person wants to repair the harm he has done.

6:9 *This is the law of the burnt offering* Now the priests are told how to care for the offerings. Even the ashes were treated with respect, carried in clean garments to a clean place outside the camp.

6:13 *A fire shall be kept burning continually on the altar; it shall not go out* Three times God says the fire must not go out. In 9:24 God Himself sent fire on this altar, and the priests fed it every morning. The morning and evening burnt offerings were offered on it daily (Exod 29:38-42). The way to God was always open. For us it is open through Christ, "always living to intercede" (Heb 7:25). And we are to keep our own devotion burning: "Do not quench the Spirit" (1 Thess 5:19).

6:16 *it shall be eaten as unleavened bread in a holy place* God fed His servants from His own table. It was "a holy of holies," most holy, like the sin and guilt offerings.

6:18 *Whatever touches them shall be holy* This probably means anything that touched these most holy foods now belonged to the sanctuary and had to be treated that way. Holiness in Leviticus is real and weighty, not a feeling. Things given to God were set apart from common use.

6:20 *on the day he is anointed* A special grain offering of the high priest, every morning and evening for as long as he served. None of it was eaten. A priest could not be both giver and receiver of his own offering. It reminded him daily to give himself to God all over again.

due forever to the LORD; it shall be made to smoke whole.
23 And every grain offering of a priest shall be whole; it shall not be eaten."

The Law of the Sin Offering

24 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **25** "Speak to Aaron and to his sons, saying, 'This ***is*** the law of the sin offering: in the place where the burnt offering is slaughtered, the sin offering shall be slaughtered before the LORD; it ***is*** a holy of holies. **26** The priest who makes it a sin offering shall eat it; in a holy place it shall be eaten, in the courtyard of the tent of meeting. **27** Whatever touches its flesh shall be holy; and when ***any*** of its blood spatters on the garment, that on which it spatters you shall wash in a holy place. **28** And an earthenware vessel in which it is boiled shall be broken; and if it was boiled in a bronze vessel, then it shall be scoured and it shall be rinsed with water. **29** Every male among the priests shall eat it; it ***is*** a holy of holies. **30** And any sin offering, some of whose blood is brought into the tent of meeting to make atonement in the holy place, shall not be eaten; with fire it shall be burned.

LEVITICUS 7

The Law of the Guilt Offering

1 And this ***is*** the law of the guilt offering: it ***is*** a holy of holies. **2** In the place where they slaughter the burnt offering they shall slaughter the guilt offering, and its blood he shall sprinkle on the altar all around. **3** And all its fat he shall bring near from it: the fat tail, and the fat that covers the entrails, **4** and the two kidneys and the fat which ***is*** on them, which ***is*** on the loins, and the lobe on the liver; with the kidneys he shall remove it. **5** And the priest shall make them smoke on the altar ***as*** a fire offering to the LORD; it ***is*** a guilt offering. **6** Every male among the priests shall eat it; in a holy place it shall be eaten; it ***is*** a holy of holies. **7** Like the sin offering ***is*** the guilt offering; one law ***is*** for them. The priest who makes atonement with it, it shall be his. **8** And the priest who brings near the burnt offering of a man, the hide of the burnt offering which he has brought near ***is*** for the priest; it shall be his. **9** And every grain offering that is baked in the oven, and all that is made in the pan and on a griddle, ***is*** for the priest who brings it near; it shall be his. **10** And every grain offering, mixed with oil or dry, shall be for all the sons of Aaron (Aharon), each man like his brother.

The Law of the Peace Offering

11 And this ***is*** the law of the sacrifice of the peace offerings which he shall bring near to the LORD. **12** If he brings it near for thanksgiving, then he shall bring near with the sacrifice of the thanksgiving unleavened cakes mixed with oil, and unleavened wafers smeared with oil, and fine flour
well-mixed, cakes mixed with oil. **13** With cakes of leavened bread he shall bring near his offering, with the sacrifice of the thanksgiving of his peace offerings. **14** And he shall bring near from it one from every offering ***as*** a contribution to the LORD; to the priest who sprinkles the blood of the peace offerings, it shall be his. **15** And the flesh of the sacrifice of the thanksgiving of his peace offerings shall be eaten on the day of his offering; he shall not leave any of it until morning. **16** And if the sacrifice of his offering ***is*** a vow or a freewill offering, on the day he brings near his sacrifice it shall be eaten; and on the next day the remainder of it also shall be eaten. **17** And the remainder of the flesh of the sacrifice on the third day shall be burned with fire. **18** And if any of the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace offerings is eaten at all on the third day, it shall not be accepted; for the one who brings it near it shall not be reckoned to him; it shall be a foul thing,

6:23 Lev 6:16,17; Lev 2:10
6:25 Lev 4:24,29,33; Lev 1:3,5,11; Lev 4:2,3-20,21,24,33,34
6:26 1 Cor 9:13; Lev 10:17,18; Ezek 44:28,29
6:27 Exod 29:37; Lev 6:18; Exod 30:29
6:28 Lev 11:33; Lev 15:12; Heb 9:9,10
6:29 Num 18:10; Lev 6:18
6:30 Heb 13:11; Lev 4:3-21; Lev 10:18
7:1 Lev 5:1-6; Lev 6:17,25; Lev 14:12,13
7:2 Heb 9:19; Heb 9:22; Lev 1:5
7:3 Exod 29:13; Lev 3:3-5,9-11,15,16; Lev 4:8-10
7:5 Lev 1:9,13; Lev 2:2,9,16; Lev 3:16
7:6 1 Cor 9:13; Num 18:9,10; Lev 2:3
7:7 1 Cor 9:13; Lev 6:25,26; Lev 14:13
7:8 Lev 1:6; Lev 4:11; Gen 3:21
7:9 Num 18:9; Ezek 44:29; Lev 2:3,10
7:10 Exod 16:18; 2 Cor 8:14
7:11 Lev 3:1-17; Lev 22:18-21; Ezek 45:15
7:12 Lev 2:4; Num 6:15; Lev 22:29
7:13 Amos 4:5; Lev 23:17; Matt 13:33
7:14 Exod 29:27,28; Num 15:19-21; Num 18:24-28
7:15 1 Cor 10:18
7:16 Deut 12:6,11,17,26; Lev 19:5-8; Lev 22:18-21
7:17 1 Cor 15:4; Exod 12:10; Hos 6:2
7:18 Lev 19:7,8; Num 18:27; Lev 10:19

6:26 *The priest who makes it a sin offering shall eat it* For the sin offerings of a leader or an ordinary Israelite, whose blood went on the bronze altar outside. The offering was so holy that a clay pot used to boil it had to be broken, since clay would soak up the juices. A bronze pot could be scoured.
6:30 *any sin offering, some of whose blood is brought into the tent of meeting* The offerings for the high priest and for the whole congregation (4:3-21). Their bodies were burned outside the camp, the rule Hebrews 13:11 points to. "We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no authority to eat" (Heb 13:10). Our sacrifice is Christ. All believers are now "a holy priesthood" (1 Pet 2:5), called to handle God's things with reverence.
7:1 *this is the law of the guilt offering* Chapter 5 told the people when to bring it. Here the priests learn how to offer it.
7:7 *The priest who makes atonement with it, it shall be his* The priest who did the work received the meat. The priests grew no crops and lived from serving at the altar. Paul uses this very pattern: "those who attend at the altar share with the altar" (1 Cor 9:13), and so those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel.
7:10 *each man like his brother* These details kept things fair among the priests. No priest was to grab more than his share. Eli's sons did exactly that, taking meat by force before the fat was burned, and the LORD judged them (1 Sam 2:12-17). Greed in God's house is a serious sin.
7:13 *With cakes of leavened bread he shall bring near his offering* The one place where leaven was part of an offering, because this bread was eaten at the meal, not burned on the altar.
7:15 *he shall not leave any of it until morning* A whole animal is a lot of meat. To eat it in one day a family had to invite others: neighbors, servants, the poor, the Levite (Deut 12:18; 16:11). Giving thanks was meant to be shared. Our thank offering now is "a sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of lips confessing His name" (Heb 13:15).
7:16 *a vow or a freewill offering* A vow offering paid a promise made to God, often in a time of trouble (Ps 66:13-14). A freewill offering was given simply out of a glad heart.
7:18 *it shall be a foul thing* In a hot land with no refrigeration, meat spoiled fast, so the rule made good sense. But the main point is spiritual. This was holy food from God's altar, to be eaten God's way. A sacrifice treated carelessly lost its worth.

and the soul who eats of it shall bear its iniquity. **19** And the flesh which touches any unclean ***thing*** shall not be eaten; it shall be burned with fire. And ***as for*** the flesh, everyone clean may eat flesh. **20** And the soul who eats flesh from the sacrifice of the peace offerings which ***is*** the LORD's while his uncleanness ***is*** on him, then that soul shall be cut off from its kinsmen. **21** And when a soul touches any unclean ***thing***, the uncleanness of man or unclean livestock or any unclean detestable thing, and eats of the flesh of the sacrifice of the peace offerings which ***is*** the LORD's, then that soul shall be cut off from its kinsmen.'"

Fat and Blood Forbidden

22 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe), saying, **23** "Speak to the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), saying, 'Any fat of ox and sheep and goat you shall not eat. **24** And the fat of a carcass and the fat of a torn animal may be used for any work, but you shall certainly not eat it. **25** For anyone who eats fat from the animal from which one brings near a fire offering to the LORD, then the soul who eats shall be cut off from its kinsmen. **26** And any blood you shall not eat in all your dwellings, whether of the bird or of the livestock. **27** Any soul who eats any blood, then that soul shall be cut off from its kinsmen.'"

The Priests' Portion

28 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **29** "Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'The one who brings near the sacrifice of his peace offerings to the LORD shall bring his offering to the LORD from the sacrifice of his peace offerings. **30** His own hands shall bring the fire offerings of the LORD: the fat with the breast he shall bring, the breast, to wave it ***as*** a wave offering before the LORD. **31** And the priest shall make the fat smoke on the altar, and the breast shall be for Aaron and for his sons. **32** And the right thigh you shall give ***as*** a contribution to the priest from the sacrifices of your peace offerings. **33** The one among the sons of Aaron who brings near the blood of the peace offerings and the fat, the right thigh shall be his for a portion. **34** For the breast of the wave offering and the thigh of the contribution I have taken from the sons of Israel, from the sacrifices of their peace offerings, and I have given them to Aaron the priest and to his sons for a due forever from the sons of Israel.'" **35** This ***is*** the anointed portion of Aaron and the anointed portion of his sons from the fire offerings of the LORD, on the day he brought them near to serve as priests to the LORD, **36** which the LORD commanded to give to them on the day he anointed them, from the sons of Israel, ***as*** a statute forever throughout their generations. **37** This ***is*** the law for the burnt offering, for the grain offering, and for the sin offering, and for the guilt offering, and for the installation, and for the sacrifice of the peace offerings, **38** which the LORD commanded Moses on Mount Sinai (Sinay), on the day He commanded the sons of Israel to bring near their offerings to the LORD, in the wilderness of Sinai.

LEVITICUS 8

The Ordination of Aaron and His Sons

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe), saying, **2** "Take Aaron (Aharon) and his sons with him, and the garments, and the oil of the anointing, and the bull of the sin offering, and the two rams, and the basket of the unleavened bread, **3** and assemble all the congregation to the entrance of the tent of meeting." **4** And Moses did just as the LORD had commanded him, and the congregation was assembled to the entrance of the tent of meeting. **5** And Moses said to the congregation, "This ***is*** the thing which the LORD has commanded to do." **6** And Moses brought near Aaron and his sons, and he washed them with water. **7** And he put the tunic on him, and he girded him with the sash, and he clothed him ***with*** the

7:19 2 Cor 6:17; Lev 11:24-39; Num 19:11-16
7:20 Lev 15:2,3-33; 1 Cor 11:28; Gen 17:14
7:21 Lev 5:2,3; Lev 15:1-33; Lev 11:10-13,20,41,42
7:23 Lev 3:16,17; Lev 4:8-10; Lev 17:6
7:24 Exod 22:31; Lev 17:15; Lev 22:8
7:26 Gen 9:4; Lev 3:17; Lev 17:10-14
7:27 Lev 7:20,21,25; Heb 10:29
7:29 Lev 3:1-17; Col 1:20; 1 John 1:7
7:30 Num 6:20; Lev 3:3,4,9,14; Ps 110:3
7:31 Lev 3:5,11,16; Lev 7:34; Lev 5:13
7:32 Lev 7:34; Lev 9:21; Num 6:20
7:33 Lev 7:3; Lev 6:1-30; Lev 26:1-46
7:34 Num 18:18,19; Lev 10:14,15; Lev 7:30-32
7:35 Lev 8:10-12,30; Exod 29:7,21; Exod 40:13-15
7:36 Lev 8:12,30; Exod 40:13,15
7:37 Exod 29:1; Lev 1:1-17; Lev 6:9-13
7:38 Lev 1:1,2
8:2 Heb 5:4; Exod 28:2-4,40-43; Exod 39:1-31,41
8:3 Num 20:8; Num 21:16; 1 Chr 13:5
8:4 Lev 8:9,13,17,29,35; Exod 39:1,5,7,21,26,29,31,32,42,43; Deut 12:32
8:5 Exod 29:4-37
8:6 Exod 29:4; 1 Cor 6:11; Eph 5:26
8:7 Exod 28:4; Exod 29:5; Exod 39:1-7

7:20 *that soul shall be cut off from its kinsmen* A serious penalty. Teachers differ on its exact meaning: being put out of the community, death by the hand of God, or a family line ending. Whatever the meaning, it meant losing one's place among God's people. Paul warns in the same spirit about eating the Lord's Supper "unworthily" (1 Cor 11:27-28). We come to the Lord's table not perfect, but having confessed our sin and trusting Christ.
7:24 *may be used for any work* Fat from an animal that died or was torn could be used for lamps or leather, but not eaten. Christians are not under the food laws of Moses (Mark 7:19; Col 2:16-17), but the lesson stands: what belongs to God must not be taken for ourselves.
7:30 *His own hands shall bring the fire offerings of the LORD* A wave offering was lifted up and moved toward the altar and back, showing the gift was given to God and then given back by Him to the priest. The worshiper could not send his offering with someone else. Worship is personal. No one else can bring your thanks to God for you.
7:34 *I have given them to Aaron the priest and to his sons* The right thigh was one of the best cuts. The priests did not take these portions. God gave them.
7:37 *This is the law for the burnt offering* A summary of chapters 1 to 7. The installation is the ordination offering of chapter 8. Five offerings, each with its lesson: full surrender, gifts of thanks, fellowship with God, forgiveness and cleansing, the payment of a debt. Each was a shadow, and Christ is the substance (Col 2:17). His one offering did all they pictured, "once for all" (Heb 10:10). They were never a way to be saved.
8:2 *Take Aaron and his sons with him* Ordination means being formally set apart for a sacred task. It was done before "all the congregation," so the whole nation would know whom God had chosen. Aaron was Moses' brother, but this was not favoritism. No one takes the honor of high priest for himself, but is called by God, as Aaron was (Heb 5:4). Christ did not exalt Himself either (Heb 5:5).
8:6 *he washed them with water* Before they could put on holy clothes, they had to be cleansed.
8:7 *he put the ephod on him* The garments of Exodus 28. The ephod was a sleeveless vest of gold, blue, purple and scarlet thread. On it went the breastpiece with twelve stones bearing the names of the tribes, so Aaron carried Israel on his heart before the LORD (Exod 28:29).

robe, and he put the ephod on him; and he girded him with the band of the ephod, and he bound ***it*** on him with it. **8** And he placed the breastpiece on him, and he put into the breastpiece the Urim and the Thummim. **9** And he placed the turban on his head, and he placed on the turban, toward the front of his face, the plate of gold, the crown of holiness, just as the LORD had commanded Moses. **10** And Moses took the oil of the anointing, and he anointed the tabernacle and all that ***was*** in it, and he sanctified them. **11** And he spattered some of it on the altar seven times, and he anointed the altar and all its articles, and the laver and its base, to sanctify them. **12** And he poured some of the oil of the anointing on the head of Aaron, and he anointed him to sanctify him. **13** And Moses brought near the sons of Aaron, and he clothed them ***with*** tunics, and he girded them ***with*** a sash, and he bound headdresses on them, just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

The Ordination Offerings

14 And he brought close the bull of the sin offering, and Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the bull of the sin offering. **15** And he slaughtered ***it***, and Moses took the blood, and he put ***it*** on the horns of the altar all around with his finger, and he purified the altar from sin; and the blood he poured at the base of the altar, and he sanctified it, to make atonement for it. **16** And he took all the fat that ***was*** on the entrails, and the lobe of the liver, and the two kidneys and their fat, and Moses made ***them*** smoke on the altar. **17** And the bull and its hide and its flesh and its dung he burned with fire outside the camp, just as the LORD had commanded Moses. **18** And he brought near the ram of the burnt offering, and Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the ram. **19** And he slaughtered ***it***, and Moses sprinkled the blood on the altar all around. **20** And the ram he cut into its pieces, and Moses made the head and the pieces and the suet smoke. **21** And the entrails and the legs he washed with water, and Moses made the whole ram smoke on the altar; it ***was*** a burnt offering for a soothing aroma; it ***was*** a fire offering to the LORD, just as the LORD had commanded Moses. **22** And he brought near the second ram, the ram of installation, and Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the ram. **23** And he slaughtered ***it***, and Moses took some of its blood, and he put ***it*** on the lobe of the right ear of Aaron, and on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot. **24** And he brought near the sons of Aaron, and Moses put some of the blood on the lobe of their right ear, and on the thumb of their right hand, and on the big toe of their right foot; and Moses sprinkled the blood on the altar all around. **25** And he took the fat and the fat tail, and all the fat that ***was*** on the entrails, and the lobe of the liver, and the two kidneys and their fat, and the right thigh; **26** and from the basket of the unleavened bread that ***was*** before the LORD he took one unleavened cake, and one cake of bread ***with*** oil, and one wafer, and he placed ***them*** on the fat ***portions*** and on the right thigh. **27** And he put the whole on the palms of Aaron and on the palms of his sons, and he waved them ***as*** a wave offering before the LORD. **28** And Moses took them from on their palms, and he made ***them*** smoke on the altar on the burnt offering; they ***were*** installation ***offerings*** for a soothing aroma; it ***was*** a fire offering to the LORD. **29** And Moses took the breast, and he waved it ***as*** a wave offering before the LORD; from the ram of installation it was for Moses for a portion, just as the LORD had commanded Moses. **30** And Moses took some of the oil of the anointing and some of the blood which ***was*** on the altar, and he spattered ***it*** on Aaron, on his garments, and on his sons and on the garments of his sons with him; and he sanctified Aaron, his garments, and his sons and the garments of his sons with him.

8:8 Ezra 2:63; Exod 28:15-29; Exod 39:8-21
8:9 Exod 28:4,36-38; Exod 29:6; Exod 39:28-30
8:10 Exod 30:23-29; Exod 40:9-11
8:11 Exod 4:6,17; Exod 16:14,19; Isa 52:15
8:12 Exod 30:30; Ps 133:2; Exod 29:7
8:13 Exod 29:8,9; Exod 28:40,41; Exod 40:14,15
8:14 Ezek 43:19; Lev 8:2; Lev 4:3-12
8:15 Heb 9:19; Heb 9:21; Heb 9:22
8:16 Exod 29:13; Lev 3:3-5; Lev 4:8,9
8:17 Lev 4:11,12,21; Exod 29:14; Lev 6:30
8:18 Lev 1:4-13; Exod 29:15-18
8:19 Heb 9:21
8:21 Exod 29:18; Lev 1:17; Lev 2:9
8:22 Rev 1:5; Lev 8:2,29; Lev 7:37
8:23 Lev 14:14,17,28; Exod 29:20; Rom 6:13,19
8:24 Heb 9:22
8:25 Lev 3:3-5,9; Exod 29:22-25; Prov 23:26
8:26 Exod 29:23; John 1:14; Acts 5:12
8:27 Exod 29:24-37; Jer 30:21; Heb 9:14
8:28 Exod 29:25; Ps 22:13,14; Zech 13:7
8:29 Lev 7:30-34; Exod 29:26,27; Isa 66:20
8:30 1 John 2:27; Num 3:3; Exod 29:21

8:8 *the Urim and the Thummim* The words mean lights and perfections. They were used to seek God's will in certain decisions (Num 27:21), but Scripture does not tell us what they looked like or how they worked.
8:9 *the plate of gold, the crown of holiness* Engraved "Holiness to the LORD" (Exod 28:36). The high priest stood for the people, carried their names on his heart and wore God's holiness on his forehead. Jesus truly does all this. He is "holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners" (Heb 7:26).
8:12 *he poured some of the oil of the anointing on the head of Aaron* To sanctify is to set apart as holy for God. Psalm 133:2 remembers this oil running down Aaron's beard. Prophets, priests and kings were anointed with oil. Messiah in Hebrew and Christ in Greek both mean Anointed One. Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit (Acts 10:38), the true Prophet, Priest and King.
8:14 *Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the bull of the sin offering* Washed, dressed and anointed, they still needed a sin offering. Holy clothes do not make a sinful man holy. Even the altar needed cleansing (8:15). Jesus differs from Aaron here: He has no need "to offer up sacrifices first for their own sins" (Heb 7:27), for He offered Himself once for all.
8:18 *the ram of the burnt offering* First the sin offering dealt with their sin. Then the burnt offering showed their full surrender. Before a man can serve God, his sin must be dealt with, and then he must give himself wholly to the One he serves.
8:23 *on the lobe of the right ear of Aaron, and on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot* Many teachers see a simple meaning: the ear set apart to hear God's word, the hand to do His work, the foot to walk in His ways. The whole man was marked by the blood and given to God. A cleansed leper was marked the same way (14:14). "You are not your own, for you were bought with a price" (1 Cor 6:19-20).
8:27 *he put the whole on the palms of Aaron and on the palms of his sons* The word for installation means filling, as in filling the hand. Their hands were filled with the offerings they would spend their lives handling. In this one ceremony Moses served as priest, since Aaron was not yet ordained.
8:30 *some of the oil of the anointing and some of the blood* The blood speaks of forgiveness through a sacrifice. The oil is often a picture of the Holy Spirit (1 Sam 16:13; Acts 10:38). Every believer has both: cleansed by Christ's blood (1 John 1:7) and anointed by the Spirit (1 John 2:20, 27). All believers are "a royal priesthood" (1 Pet 2:9), offering "spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (1 Pet 2:5).

Seven Days at the Tent

31 And Moses said to Aaron and to his sons, "Boil the flesh ***at*** the entrance of the tent of meeting, and there you shall eat it and the bread which ***is*** in the basket of installation, just as I commanded, saying, 'Aaron and his sons shall eat it.' **32** And the remainder of the flesh and of the bread you shall burn with fire. **33** And from the entrance of the tent of meeting you shall not go out ***for*** seven days, until the day the days of your installation are completed; for seven days he shall fill your hand. **34** Just as he has done on this day, ***so*** the LORD has commanded to do, to make atonement for you. **35** And ***at*** the entrance of the tent of meeting you shall remain day and night ***for*** seven days, and you shall keep the charge of the LORD, and you shall not die; for so I have been commanded." **36** And Aaron and his sons did all the things which the LORD had commanded by the hand of Moses.

LEVITICUS 9

The Priests Begin Their Service

1 And it was on the eighth day, Moses (Moshe) called to Aaron (Aharon) and to his sons and to the elders of Israel (Yisra'el). **2** And he said to Aaron, "Take for yourself a calf, a young ***one*** of the herd, for a sin offering, and a ram for a burnt offering, without blemish, and bring ***them*** near before the LORD. **3** And to the sons of Israel you shall speak, saying, 'Take a male goat of the goats for a sin offering, and a calf and a lamb, sons of a year, without blemish, for a burnt offering, **4** and an ox and a ram for peace offerings, to sacrifice before the LORD, and a grain offering mixed with oil; for today the LORD will appear to you.'" **5** And they took what Moses had commanded to the front of the tent of meeting, and all the congregation drew near, and they stood before the LORD. **6** And Moses said, "This ***is*** the thing which the LORD has commanded ***that*** you shall do, so that the glory of the LORD may appear to you." **7** And Moses said to Aaron, "Draw near to the altar, and offer your sin offering and your burnt offering, and make atonement for yourself and for the people; and offer the offering of the people, and make atonement for them, just as the LORD has commanded." **8** And Aaron drew near to the altar, and he slaughtered the calf of the sin offering which ***was*** for himself. **9** And the sons of Aaron brought near the blood to him, and he dipped his finger in the blood, and he put ***it*** on the horns of the altar; and the blood he poured at the base of the altar. **10** And the fat and the kidneys and the lobe from the liver from the sin offering he made smoke on the altar, just as the LORD had commanded Moses. **11** And the flesh and the hide he burned with fire outside the camp. **12** And he slaughtered the burnt offering, and the sons of Aaron handed the blood to him, and he sprinkled it on the altar all around. **13** And the burnt offering they handed to him by its pieces, and the head; and he made ***them*** smoke on the altar. **14** And he washed the entrails and the legs, and he made ***them*** smoke on the burnt offering on the altar. **15** And he brought near the offering of the people, and he took the goat of the sin offering which ***was*** for the people, and he slaughtered it, and he made it a sin offering like the first. **16** And he brought near the burnt offering, and he offered it according to the ordinance. **17** And he brought near the grain offering, and he filled his palm from it, and he made ***it*** smoke on the altar, besides the burnt offering of the morning. **18** And he slaughtered the ox and the ram, the sacrifice of the peace offerings which ***was*** for the people; and the sons of Aaron handed the blood to him, and he sprinkled it on the altar all around; **19** and the fat ***portions*** from the ox and from the ram, the fat tail, and the covering ***fat***, and the kidneys, and the lobe of the liver. **20** And they placed the fat ***portions*** on the breasts, and he made the fat ***portions*** smoke on the altar. **21** And the breasts and the right thigh Aaron waved ***as*** a wave offering before the LORD, just as Moses had commanded.

8:31 Exod 29:31,32; Lev 6:28; Lev 7:15
8:32 Exod 29:34; Lev 7:17; Exod 12:10
8:33 Lev 14:8; Exod 29:30,35; Num 19:12
8:34 Heb 7:16,27; Heb 10:11,12
8:35 1 Tim 5:21; Num 3:7; Num 9:19
8:36 Exod 39:43; Exod 40:16; Deut 4:2
9:1 Lev 8:33; Lev 14:10,23; Lev 15:14,29
9:2 Lev 4:3; Lev 8:14; Exod 29:1
9:3 Ezra 6:17; Lev 4:23; Rom 8:3
9:4 Exod 29:43; Lev 9:6,23; Lev 2:1-16
9:5 Exod 19:17; Deut 31:12; 1 Chr 15:3
9:6 Lev 9:23; Exod 24:16; Exod 16:10
9:7 Heb 5:3; Heb 5:1; Lev 4:3,20
9:8 Lev 1:4,5; Lev 4:4,29
9:9 Heb 10:8; Lev 4:6,7,17,18,25,30; Lev 8:15
9:10 Lev 3:3-5,9-11; Lev 4:8-12,34,35; Lev 8:16,17
9:11 Heb 13:11; Lev 4:11,12,21; Lev 8:17
9:12 Eph 5:2,25-27; Lev 1:1-17; Lev 8:18-21
9:14 Lev 8:21
9:15 Lev 4:27-31; Lev 9:3; Heb 2:17
9:16 Heb 10:6; Heb 10:8; Lev 9:12-14
9:17 Lev 2:1,2; Lev 9:1; Exod 29:38,41
9:18 Heb 9:21; Rom 5:1,10; Eph 2:14-17
9:19 Lev 9:10; Lev 3:5,16
9:20 Lev 7:29-34; Lev 3:14-17
9:21 Lev 7:24,26,30-34; Isa 49:3; Luke 2:13

8:35 *you shall keep the charge of the LORD, and you shall not die* For a full week they stayed at the tent, and the ceremony was repeated each day (Exod 29:35-37). These were not empty words. Coming near a holy God carelessly was deadly, as chapter 10 will show. We have a High Priest who never needs to be replaced (Heb 7:23-25).
8:36 *Aaron and his sons did all the things which the LORD had commanded* The chapter ends with full obedience. For the moment, everything was done God's way.
9:1 *on the eighth day* The seven days of ordination were finished (8:33), and the eighth day was a new beginning. The elders were the leaders of the tribes.
9:2 *Take for yourself a calf, a young one of the herd, for a sin offering* Some have noticed that the first animal Aaron offered for his own sin was a calf, not long after he made the golden calf at this same mountain (Exod 32). Scripture does not draw the link, but it is hard to miss.
9:4 *for today the LORD will appear to you* Every kind of offering from chapters 1 to 4 was brought. Everything pointed toward meeting with God.
9:6 *so that the glory of the LORD may appear to you* The glory of the LORD is the visible sign of His presence, often a bright cloud or fire (Exod 24:16-17; 40:34). Do what God commanded, and you will see His glory. There is no shortcut. Many want God's glory without coming the way He has provided, and for us that way is Christ (John 14:6).
9:7 *make atonement for yourself and for the people* Aaron had to be made right with God before he could stand for others (Heb 5:3).
9:10 *just as the LORD had commanded Moses* Aaron's first day on the job. He tried nothing new or creative. For a priest, faithfulness meant doing what God said, the way God said to do it.
9:17 *besides the burnt offering of the morning* The daily morning burnt offering had already begun (Exod 29:38-42). The order of the day was sin offering, burnt offering, grain offering, peace offering. First sin is dealt with, then the worshiper gives himself, then his gifts, then fellowship at God's table. That is the order of the gospel too. We start with the cross.

The Glory of the LORD Appears

22 And Aaron lifted up his hands toward the people, and he blessed them; and he came down from offering the sin offering and the burnt offering and the peace offerings. **23** And Moses and Aaron went into the tent of meeting, and they came out, and they blessed the people; and the glory of the LORD appeared to all the people. **24** And fire went out from before the LORD, and it consumed on the altar the burnt offering and the fat ***portions***; and all the people saw, and they shouted, and they fell on their faces.

LEVITICUS 10

Nadab and Abihu

1 And the sons of Aaron (Aharon), Nadab (Nadav) and Abihu (Avihu), took each man his censer, and they put fire in them, and they placed incense on it, and they brought near before the LORD strange fire, which He had not commanded them. **2** And fire went out from before the LORD, and it consumed them, and they died before the LORD. **3** And Moses (Moshe) said to Aaron, "This ***is*** what the LORD spoke, saying, 'Among those near Me I will be sanctified, and before the face of all the people I will be glorified.'" And Aaron was silent. **4** And Moses called to Mishael and to Elzaphan (Eltsafan), the sons of Uzziel (Uzi'el), the uncle of Aaron, and he said to them, "Draw near, carry your brothers from before the holy place to outside the camp." **5** And they drew near, and they carried them in their tunics to outside the camp, just as Moses had spoken. **6** And Moses said to Aaron and to Eleazar (Elazar) and to Ithamar (Itamar), his sons, "Do not let loose ***the hair of*** your heads, and do not tear your garments, and you shall not die, and He shall not be angry with all the congregation; and your brothers, all the house of Israel (Yisra'el), shall weep ***over*** the burning which the LORD has burned. **7** And from the entrance of the tent of meeting you shall not go out, lest you die; for the oil of the anointing of the LORD ***is*** on you." And they did according to the word of Moses.

Rules for the Priests

8 And the LORD spoke to Aaron, saying, **9** "Do not drink wine and strong drink, you and your sons with you, when you go into the tent of meeting, and you shall not die; ***it is*** a statute forever throughout your generations, **10** and to separate between the holy and the profane, and between the unclean and the clean, **11** and to teach the sons of Israel all the statutes which the LORD has spoken to them by the hand of Moses." **12** And Moses spoke to Aaron and to Eleazar and to Ithamar, his sons who were left, "Take the grain offering that is left from the fire offerings of the LORD, and eat it ***as*** unleavened bread beside the altar, for it ***is*** a holy of holies. **13** And you shall eat it in a holy place, for it ***is*** your due and

9:22 Luke 24:50; Luke 2:34; Deut 21:5
9:23 Lev 9:6; Num 16:19,42; Luke 1:21,22
9:24 Judg 6:21; 1 Kgs 18:38; Judg 13:19,20,23
10:1 Heb 9:4; Num 26:61; Lev 16:12
10:2 Acts 5:5; Num 26:61; Lev 9:24
10:3 Matt 10:37; Lev 21:6,8,15,17,21; Exod 19:22
10:4 Exod 6:18,22; Num 3:19,30; Acts 5:6,9,10
10:6 Num 16:22,41-47; Josh 7:1,11; Josh 22:18,20
10:7 Lev 21:12; Exod 28:41; Matt 8:21,22
10:9 Luke 1:15; 1 Tim 3:3,8; Isa 28:7
10:10 Lev 11:47; Ezek 22:26; Ezek 44:23
10:11 Deut 24:8; Mal 2:7; Deut 33:10
10:12 Lev 21:22; Num 18:9,10; Lev 2:1-16
10:13 Lev 2:3; Lev 6:16; Num 18:10

9:22 *Aaron lifted up his hands toward the people, and he blessed them* The words are not given here, but Numbers 6:24-26 gives the blessing God later told the priests to speak. After the sacrifices came the blessing. The last thing Jesus did before He went up into heaven was to lift up His hands and bless His disciples (Luke 24:50-51).
9:24 *fire went out from before the LORD* God Himself lit the altar fire, or perhaps added His fire to it, in a way all could see. It was His sign that He accepted the offerings and the priesthood, the fire that must never go out (6:13). Compare 2 Chronicles 7:1 and 1 Kings 18:38.
9:24 *they shouted, and they fell on their faces* Joy and awe together. Real worship is not only happy and not only fearful, because God is both good and holy. At Pentecost the Spirit came with "tongues being distributed, as of fire" (Acts 2:3), God now dwelling in His people. Do you come to worship with both joy and reverence?
10:1 *strange fire, which He had not commanded them* Nadab and Abihu, Aaron's oldest sons, had seen the God of Israel on Sinai (Exod 24:9-10) and had just been ordained. A censer was a small pan for burning coals with incense sprinkled on top. Strange fire means foreign or unauthorized. Scripture does not spell out the wrong, so we should be careful. Many believe they took fire from somewhere other than the altar (16:12). Some think they came at a time or place God had not set, and because of verse 9 some suggest drink. The text says plainly only that they came to God their own way and not His.
10:2 *fire went out from before the LORD, and it consumed them* The same words as 9:24. The fire that showed God's acceptance now showed His judgment, for "our God is also a consuming fire" (Heb 12:29). This was the first day of the priesthood. Had God let it pass, Israel would have learned His commands about worship did not matter. He does not deal with every sin this way, or none of us would be alive. But at the start of new things He has given clear warnings (2 Sam 6:7; Acts 5:1-11). The way to God matters, and God Himself provided it.
10:3 *Among those near Me I will be sanctified* Those near Me means the priests. The closer a person stands to God's work, the more seriously God takes how he handles it (James 3:1). God will be treated as holy, by His servants' obedience or by His judgment.
10:3 *And Aaron was silent* Aaron lost two sons in a moment. He did not argue, accuse God or explain it away. There are times in grief when the only right response is to be still before God. His silence was a kind of trust that God was holy and just even in this. If you carry a loss you do not understand, the same holy God is "compassionate and gracious" (Exod 34:6) and near to the brokenhearted (Ps 34:18).
10:5 *they carried them in their tunics to outside the camp* Mishael and Elzaphan were Aaron's cousins, Levites but not priests. Aaron and his sons could not touch a dead body during their ordination (21:1, 10-12). The fire took their lives without burning up their bodies or their garments. They were carried out still wearing the clothes of an office they had dishonored.
10:6 *your brothers, all the house of Israel, shall weep* Loose hair and torn clothes were the usual signs of mourning. The anointed priests on duty could not leave their post or mourn in public, which would have looked like a protest against God's judgment. But grief was allowed. The whole nation would weep for them. The work of God's house had to go on, even through tears.
10:8 *the LORD spoke to Aaron* Up to now God had spoken through Moses. Right after the tragedy He speaks to Aaron directly, a kindness in itself.
10:9 *Do not drink wine and strong drink* Strong drink means fermented drinks other than wine, like beer. The timing makes many think Nadab and Abihu had been drinking, but the text does not say so. Priests on duty needed clear heads (Eph 5:18).
10:10 *to separate between the holy and the profane, and between the unclean and the clean* Profane means common, not set apart for God. The priests had to know the difference, keep it, and teach it, for they were Israel's Bible teachers (Mal 2:7). Chapters 11 to 15 teach exactly these differences. Anyone who leads God's people needs a clear head and a pure heart.
10:12 *his sons who were left* Ordinary duties after an extraordinary loss. Yet there is grace here. God did not cast off Aaron's family. The priesthood went on through Eleazar and Ithamar, and they still had their place at God's table.

the due of your sons from the fire offerings of the LORD; for so I have been commanded. **14** And the breast of the wave offering and the thigh of the contribution you shall eat in a clean place, you and your sons and your daughters with you; for ***as*** your due and the due of your sons they have been given from the sacrifices of the peace offerings of the sons of Israel. **15** The thigh of the contribution and the breast of the wave offering, with the fire offerings of the fat ***portions***, they shall bring to wave ***as*** a wave offering before the LORD; and it shall be for you and for your sons with you for a due forever, just as the LORD has commanded."

The Uneaten Sin Offering

16 And Moses diligently sought the goat of the sin offering, and look, it had been burned; and he was angry with Eleazar and with Ithamar, the sons of Aaron who were left, saying, **17** "Why did you not eat the sin offering in the place of holiness? For it ***is*** a holy of holies, and He has given it to you to bear the iniquity of the congregation, to make atonement for them before the LORD. **18** Look, its blood was not brought into the holy place within; you should certainly have eaten it in the holy place, just as I commanded." **19** And Aaron spoke to Moses, "Look, today they have brought near their sin offering and their burnt offering before the LORD, and ***things*** like these have happened to me; and ***if*** I had eaten a sin offering today, would it be good in the eyes of the LORD?" **20** And Moses heard, and it was good in his eyes.

LEVITICUS 11

Clean and Unclean Animals

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe) and to Aaron (Aharon), saying to them, **2** "Speak to the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), saying, 'This ***is*** the living thing which you may eat from all the animals which ***are*** on the earth. **3** Everything that divides a hoof and cleaves a cleft of hooves, bringing up cud, among the animals, it you may eat. **4** Only this you shall not eat, of those that bring up the cud and of those that divide the hoof: the camel, for it brings up cud, and a hoof it does not divide; it ***is*** unclean to you. **5** And the rock badger, for it brings up cud, and a hoof it does not divide; it ***is*** unclean to you. **6** And the hare, for it brings up cud, and a hoof it does not divide; it ***is*** unclean to you. **7** And the pig, for it divides a hoof and cleaves a cleft of ***the*** hoof, and it does not chew cud; it ***is*** unclean to you. **8** Of their flesh you shall not eat, and their carcass you shall not touch; they ***are*** unclean to you. **9** This you may eat of all that ***is*** in the waters: all that has fins and scales in the waters, in the seas and in the streams, them you may eat. **10** And all that does not have fins and scales in the seas and in the streams, of every swarming thing of the waters and of every living being which ***is*** in the waters, they ***are*** a detestable thing to you. **11** And they shall be a detestable thing to you; of their flesh you shall not eat, and their carcass you shall detest. **12** All that does not have fins and scales in the waters, it ***is*** a detestable thing to you. **13** And these you shall detest among the birds; they shall not be eaten; they ***are*** a detestable thing: the eagle and the bearded vulture and the osprey, **14** and the black kite and the hawk according to its kind, **15** every raven according to its kind, **16** and the ostrich and the screech owl and the gull and the falcon according to its kind, **17** and the little owl and the cormorant and the great owl, **18** and the barn owl and the desert owl and the Egyptian vulture, **19** and the stork, the heron according to its kind, and the hoopoe and the bat. **20** Every flying swarming thing that walks on four ***legs***, it ***is*** a detestable thing to you. **21** Only this you may eat of every flying swarming thing that walks on four ***legs***:

10:14 Num 18:11; Lev 7:29-34; Lev 9:21
10:15 Lev 7:34; Lev 7:29,30,34; Gen 13:15
10:16 Lev 9:3,15; Lev 6:26,30; Exod 32:19-22
10:17 Exod 28:38,43; Num 18:1; Lev 7:6,7
10:18 Lev 6:30; Lev 6:26,30
10:19 Lev 9:8,12; Jer 6:20; Jer 14:12
10:20 Matt 12:7; 2 Chr 30:18-20; Zech 7:8,9
11:2 Matt 15:11; Heb 9:10; Deut 14:3-8
11:3 2 Cor 6:17; Ps 1:1; Prov 9:6
11:5 Ps 104:18; Prov 30:26; Job 36:14
11:6 Deut 14:7
11:7 Luke 15:15; Mark 5:11; Isa 65:4
11:8 2 Cor 6:17; Isa 52:11; Heb 9:10
11:9 Deut 14:9,10; Acts 20:21; Gal 5:6
11:10 Rev 21:8; Lev 7:18; Deut 14:3
11:13 Deut 14:12-20; Job 28:7; Job 38:41
11:15 Luke 12:24; Gen 8:7; 1 Kgs 17:4,6
11:16 Deut 14:15-18; Ps 102:6; Isa 13:21,22
11:20 Lev 11:23,27; Deut 14:19; 2 Kgs 17:28-41

10:17 *to bear the iniquity of the congregation* The people's sin offering should have been eaten, since its blood was not brought inside (6:26, 30), and Moses feared another failure. When the priest ate it, he in some way carried the people's guilt as their representative. Our High Priest did more: He "Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree" (1 Pet 2:24).
10:19 *would it be good in the eyes of the LORD* On the day he lost two sons for dishonoring God, Aaron did not feel fit to eat the most holy food as if nothing had happened. He was not rebelling. He was afraid of treating it lightly.
10:20 *it was good in his eyes* Moses understood, and since God gave no rebuke, it seems He accepted it too. Some teachers read Aaron's answer differently. Nadab and Abihu acted in pride and were judged. Aaron fell short of the letter out of humble grief and was accepted (Ps 51:17). We come through Christ, the one way God provided, "with boldness to the throne of grace" (Heb 4:16), and with reverence (Heb 12:28-29).
11:1 *the LORD spoke to Moses and to Aaron* Aaron is included because the priests would teach these laws (10:10-11).
11:3 *Everything that divides a hoof and cleaves a cleft of hooves, bringing up cud* A split hoof and chewing the cud: cattle, sheep, goats and deer. Clean and unclean in Leviticus do not mean dirty or sinful in themselves. Clean meant fit to come near God's presence, or fit for God's people to eat. Unclean meant unfit, and an unclean person could not come to the tabernacle until made clean again. Most uncleanness came from ordinary life, not from sin.
11:6 *the hare, for it brings up cud* The phrase describes what people saw, an animal that keeps working its jaw. Hares also eat part of their food a second time, though not as cattle do. Scripture describes animals by how they appear, not by modern scientific categories. Some teachers explain it differently.
11:9 *all that has fins and scales* A simple test anyone could use. A fisherman did not need a priest to check his catch. Holiness was meant to be part of everyday life, down to the dinner table. "Detestable" (11:10) is a strong word: Israel was to hold these creatures in settled dislike, at least as food.
11:13 *these you shall detest among the birds* Most are birds of prey or scavengers. Many of them eat dead flesh or blood, and Israel was not to eat blood (3:17; 7:26), so it fits that creatures who live by it were unclean. That is a common explanation, not the only one. Some Hebrew bird names are hard to identify today, so Bibles name some differently. The Hebrew word for bird means any flying creature, so the bat is listed (11:19).
11:21 *to leap with them on the earth* "Walks on four legs" is the ordinary way of speaking of creatures that creep close to the ground. Insects that hop on jointed legs, like locusts and grasshoppers, could be eaten. John the Baptist lived on "locusts and wild honey" (Mark 1:6).

that which has legs above its feet, to leap with them on the earth. **22** These of them you may eat: the locust according to its kind, and the bald locust according to its kind, and the cricket according to its kind, and the grasshopper according to its kind. **23** And every flying swarming thing which has four feet, it ***is*** a detestable thing to you.

Uncleanness from Carcasses

24 And by these you shall make yourselves unclean: everyone who touches their carcass shall be unclean until the evening. **25** And everyone who carries any of their carcass shall wash his garments, and he shall be unclean until the evening. **26** As to every animal which divides a hoof and does not cleave a cleft, and does not bring up cud, they ***are*** unclean to you; everyone who touches them shall be unclean. **27** And everything that walks on its paws, among every living thing that walks on four ***feet***, they ***are*** unclean to you; everyone who touches their carcass shall be unclean until the evening. **28** And the one who carries their carcass shall wash his garments, and he shall be unclean until the evening; they ***are*** unclean to you. **29** And this ***is*** the unclean to you among the swarming things that swarm on the earth: the weasel and the mouse and the great lizard according to its kind, **30** and the gecko and the monitor lizard and the wall lizard and the skink and the chameleon. **31** These ***are*** the unclean to you among all the swarming things; everyone who touches them in their death shall be unclean until the evening. **32** And everything on which any of them falls in their death shall be unclean, ***whether*** any vessel of wood or garment or hide or sack; any vessel with which work is done shall be brought into water, and it shall be unclean until the evening, and it shall be clean. **33** And every earthenware vessel into whose midst any of them falls, all that ***is*** in its midst shall be unclean, and it you shall break. **34** Any of all the food which may be eaten, on which water comes, shall be unclean; and any drink which may be drunk in any vessel shall be unclean. **35** And everything on which any of their carcass falls shall be unclean; an oven and a stove shall be broken down; they ***are*** unclean, and they shall be unclean to you. **36** Only a spring and a cistern, a gathering of water, shall be clean; and the one who touches their carcass shall be unclean. **37** And if any of their carcass falls on any seed for sowing which is sown, it ***is*** clean. **38** And if water is put on ***the*** seed, and any of their carcass falls on it, it ***is*** unclean to you. **39** And if any of the animals which ***is*** yours for food dies, the one who touches its carcass shall be unclean until the evening. **40** And the one who eats of its carcass shall wash his garments, and he shall be unclean until the evening; and the one who carries its carcass shall wash his garments, and he shall be unclean until the evening.

Be Holy, for I Am Holy

41 And every swarming thing that swarms on the earth ***is*** a detestable thing; it shall not be eaten. **42** Anything that walks on ***the*** belly, and anything that walks on four ***feet***, up to anything that has many feet, of all the swarming things that swarm on the earth, you shall not eat them, for they ***are*** a detestable thing. **43** Do not make your souls detestable with any swarming thing that swarms, and you shall not make yourselves unclean with them, and thus be made unclean by them. **44** For I ***am*** the LORD your God; and you shall sanctify yourselves, and you shall be holy, for I ***am*** holy; and you shall not make your souls unclean with any swarming thing that moves on the earth. **45** For I ***am*** the LORD who brought you up from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim) to be God for you; and you shall be holy, for I ***am*** holy. **46** This ***is*** the law of the animals and the birds and every living being that moves in the waters, and of every being that swarms on the earth, **47** to separate between the unclean and the clean, and between the living thing that may be eaten and the living thing that may not be eaten.'"

11:22 Matt 3:4; Mark 1:6; Exod 10:4,5
11:24 2 Cor 6:17; Lev 11:8,27,28,31,38-40; Lev 17:15,16
11:25 Lev 14:8; Lev 15:5,7-11,13; Num 31:24
11:27 Lev 11:20,23
11:28 Lev 11:24,25
11:29 Lev 11:20,21,41,42; Ps 10:3; Ps 17:13,14
11:31 Lev 11:8,24,25
11:32 Lev 15:12; Lev 6:28; Titus 2:14
11:33 Lev 11:35; Lev 14:45; Jer 48:38
11:34 Prov 15:8; Prov 21:4,27; Prov 28:8
11:35 Lev 11:33; Lev 6:28; Lev 15:12
11:36 Zech 13:1; John 4:14
11:37 1 Cor 15:37; 1 Pet 1:23; 1 John 3:9
11:39 Lev 11:24,28,31,40; Lev 15:5,7; Num 19:11,16
11:40 Lev 22:8; Ezek 44:31; Deut 14:21
11:41 Lev 11:20,23,29
11:42 Gen 3:14,15; Isa 65:25; Mic 7:17
11:43 Lev 20:25; Lev 11:41,42
11:44 1 Pet 1:16; 1 Pet 1:15; Lev 19:2
11:45 1 Pet 1:16; Exod 6:7; Ps 105:43-45
11:46 Lev 7:37; Lev 14:54; Lev 15:32
11:47 Lev 10:10; Ezek 44:23; Mal 3:18

11:24 *everyone who touches their carcass shall be unclean until the evening* The chapter turns from eating to touching. Being unclean until evening was not a punishment for sin, only a short break from coming near the holy things. Death, even of an animal, was the opposite of the life of the holy God. Each washing reminded Israel that death is an intruder in God's world, the result of sin (Gen 3:19; Rom 5:12).

11:29 *the weasel and the mouse and the great lizard* Small creatures that got into houses, pots and food. A clay pot had to be broken, since it soaked up what touched it. A spring or cistern stayed clean, and so did dry seed. These rules had real health benefits, as many have noted, but health was not the reason God gave. The reason, given at the end of the chapter, is holiness. Teachers differ on why God chose these animals.

11:39 *if any of the animals which is yours for food dies* Even a clean animal made a person unclean if it died on its own. Death defiles. Life belongs to God.

11:44 *you shall be holy, for I am holy* The reason for the whole chapter. Holy means set apart, separate from what is common and sinful, belonging to God. Peter quotes this to the church: "as the One who called you is holy, you yourselves also be holy in all your conduct" (1 Pet 1:15-16). The food laws are gone, but the call to holiness is not.

11:45 *I am the LORD who brought you up from the land of Egypt* God saved Israel first, then called them to be holy. The food laws did not make them God's people. They showed they already were. At every meal an Israelite was reminded that he belonged to the LORD.

11:47 *to separate between the unclean and the clean* Israel had to learn to make distinctions. Jesus taught that what goes into the mouth does not defile a man (Matt 15:11), "cleansing all the foods" (Mark 7:19). Peter heard, "What God has cleansed, you must not call common" (Acts 10:15), a vision about the Gentiles. The laws that kept Israel separate are a "shadow" fulfilled in Christ (Col 2:16-17), who makes Jew and Gentile one (Eph 2:14-16). We may eat any food with thanks (1 Tim 4:4-5), but we are still called to live set apart.

LEVITICUS 12

Cleansing After Childbirth

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe), saying, **2** "Speak to the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), saying, 'When a woman conceives seed and bears a male, then she shall be unclean seven days; like the days of the impurity of her infirmity she shall be unclean. **3** And on the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised. **4** And thirty-three days she shall remain in the blood of purification; she shall not touch any holy thing, and she shall not go into the sanctuary until the days of her purification are completed. **5** And if she bears a female, then she shall be unclean two weeks, as ***in*** her impurity; and sixty-six days she shall remain in the blood of purification. **6** And when the days of her purification are completed, for a son or for a daughter, she shall bring a lamb, a son of its year, for a burnt offering, and a young ***one*** of the dove or a turtledove for a sin offering, to the entrance of the tent of meeting, to the priest. **7** And he shall bring it near before the LORD, and he shall make atonement for her, and she shall be clean from the source of her blood. This ***is*** the law of her who gives birth, for the male or for the female. **8** And if her hand does not find the sufficiency of a sheep, then she shall take two turtledoves or two young of the dove, one for a burnt offering and one for a sin offering; and the priest shall make atonement for her, and she shall be clean.'"

LEVITICUS 13

Laws About Skin Disease

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe) and to Aaron (Aharon), saying, **2** "When a man has in the skin of his flesh a swelling or a scab or a bright spot, and it becomes in the skin of his flesh a plague of leprosy, then he shall be brought to Aaron the priest or to one of his sons the priests. **3** And the priest shall look at the plague in the skin of the flesh; and ***if*** the hair in the plague has turned white, and the appearance of the plague ***is*** deeper than the skin of his flesh, it ***is*** a plague of leprosy; and the priest shall look at him and pronounce him unclean. **4** And if the bright spot ***is*** white in the skin of his flesh, and its appearance ***is*** not deeper than the skin, and its hair has not turned white, then the priest shall shut in ***the one with*** the plague seven days. **5** And the priest shall look at him on the seventh day, and look, ***if*** in his eyes the plague has stood, ***and*** the plague has not spread in the skin, then the priest shall shut him in a second seven days. **6** And the priest shall look at him on the seventh day a second time, and look, ***if*** the plague has grown dim and the plague has not spread in the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him clean; it ***is*** an eruption; and he shall wash his garments and be clean. **7** And if the eruption surely spreads in the skin after he has appeared to the priest for his cleansing, then he shall appear a second time to the priest. **8** And the priest shall look, and look, ***if*** the eruption has spread in the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean; it ***is*** leprosy. **9** "When a plague of leprosy is on a man, then he shall be brought to the priest. **10** And the priest shall look, and look, ***if there is*** a white swelling in the skin, and it has turned the hair white, and ***there is*** a raw spot of living flesh in the swelling, **11** it ***is*** an old leprosy in the skin of his flesh, and the priest shall pronounce him unclean; he shall not shut him in, for he ***is*** unclean. **12** And if the leprosy surely

12:1 Luke 2:22
12:2 Luke 2:22; Luke 2:24; Lev 15:19
12:3 Luke 2:21; Luke 1:59; John 7:22-23
12:4 Luke 2:22; Luke 2:23; Lev 15:25-28
12:5 Lev 12:2,4; Gen 3:13; 1 Tim 2:14,15
12:6 John 1:29; Luke 2:24; 1 Pet 1:19
12:7 Luke 2:24; Lev 1:4; Lev 4:20,26,31,35
12:8 Luke 2:24; Luke 2:22; Matt 21:12
13:2 Mark 1:44; Deut 24:8; Lev 14:56
13:3 Rom 3:19,20; Lev 10:10; Ezek 44:23
13:4 Num 12:15; Deut 13:14; Ezek 44:10
13:6 Lev 11:25,28,40; Lev 14:8; Isa 11:3,4
13:7 Lev 13:27,35,36; Ps 38:3; Isa 1:5,6
13:8 Lev 13:3; Matt 15:7,8; Acts 8:21
13:10 2 Kgs 5:27; 2 Chr 26:19,20; Lev 13:3,4
13:12 1 Kgs 8:38; Job 40:4; Job 42:6

12:2 *she shall be unclean seven days* The same time as a woman's monthly period (15:19). Being unclean was not a sin, and having a baby is not a sin. God's first command was to be fruitful and multiply (Gen 1:28), and children are a gift from the LORD (Ps 127:3). The uncleanness came from the flow of blood after birth. Blood is the life (17:11), and its loss, like contact with death, made a person unfit for a time to come near the God of life. It was a ritual matter, not a moral one. There was kindness here too: a new mother had time to rest with her baby.

12:3 *on the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised* Circumcision was the sign of God's covenant with Abraham (Gen 17:10-12). The baby was brought into the covenant people even while his mother was still in her days of purification. Jesus was circumcised on the eighth day and named (Luke 2:21). The true circumcision now is of the heart, by the Spirit (Rom 2:29; Col 2:11).

12:4 *she shall not touch any holy thing, and she shall not go into the sanctuary* After the first seven days she waited thirty-three more, forty in all. She was no longer unclean in the same way, but she could not yet come to the sanctuary.

12:5 *if she bears a female, then she shall be unclean two weeks* The times were doubled for a daughter. Scripture does not say why. Some tie it to the daughter one day bearing children herself, some to a small flow of blood a newborn girl sometimes has, some to Eve and Genesis 3:16. What we can say firmly is that it does not mean a daughter was worth less. The offering was exactly the same (12:6), both are made in God's image (Gen 1:27), and in Christ "there is not male and female" (Gal 3:28).

12:6 *a young one of the dove or a turtledove for a sin offering* A son of its year means a lamb in its first year. Why a sin offering when she had not sinned? Here it worked as a purification offering, cleansing her so she could come back to the sanctuary. It also reminded every family that each new life comes into a fallen world in need of grace (Ps 51:5). The burnt offering was her gift of herself, and likely her thanks for a safe birth.

12:8 *two turtledoves or two young of the dove* Luke quotes this in the story of Jesus' birth. Mary and Joseph brought "A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons" (Luke 2:24), because they could not afford a lamb. Mary brought two birds because she had no lamb, but in her arms was the Lamb of God (John 1:29). Jesus was "born of a woman, born under law" (Gal 4:4), and kept the Law perfectly for us.

13:2 *a plague of leprosy* The Hebrew word, tsara'at, covered a range of skin diseases, and even mold on cloth or walls (13:47; 14:33-53). It is not simply what doctors now call leprosy, Hansen's disease, though that may have been among them. Think of a serious, spreading skin disease that made a person unclean. The priest was not a doctor. He did not treat the disease. He decided whether a person was fit to live in the camp and come near God's tabernacle.

13:4 *the priest shall shut in the one with the plague seven days* A quarantine, a time to wait and see. The priest looked, waited, and looked again. No one was to be declared unclean on a guess. That is a good lesson when we judge others: be slow, careful and fair, and do not put someone outside the camp on first appearances.

13:11 *it is an old leprosy* The open, raw flesh was the mark of an active disease, and the priest did not need to wait.

breaks out in the skin, and the leprosy covers all the skin of ***the one with*** the plague from his head even to his feet, to all the sight of the eyes of the priest, **13** then the priest shall look, and look, ***if*** the leprosy has covered all his flesh, then he shall pronounce clean ***the one with*** the plague; all of it has turned white; he ***is*** clean. **14** And on the day living flesh appears in him, he shall be unclean. **15** And the priest shall look at the living flesh and pronounce him unclean; the living flesh ***is*** unclean; it ***is*** leprosy. **16** Or if the living flesh turns back and is changed to white, then he shall come to the priest. **17** And the priest shall look at him, and look, ***if*** the plague has been changed to white, then the priest shall pronounce clean ***the one with*** the plague; he ***is*** clean. **18** "And ***when*** the flesh has in it, in its skin, a boil, and it has been healed, **19** and in the place of the boil there is a white swelling or a reddish-white bright spot, then it shall appear to the priest. **20** And the priest shall look, and look, ***if*** its appearance ***is*** lower than the skin, and its hair has turned white, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean; it ***is*** a plague of leprosy; it has broken out in the boil. **21** And if the priest looks at it, and look, ***there is*** no white hair in it, and it ***is*** not lower than the skin, and it ***is*** dim, then the priest shall shut him in seven days. **22** And if it surely spreads in the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean; it ***is*** a plague. **23** And if the bright spot stands in its place ***and*** has not spread, it ***is*** the scar of the boil; and the priest shall pronounce him clean. **24** "Or ***when*** the flesh has in its skin a burn of fire, and the raw spot of the burn becomes a bright spot, reddish-white or white, **25** then the priest shall look at it, and look, ***if*** the hair in the bright spot has been changed to white, and its appearance ***is*** deeper than the skin, it ***is*** leprosy; it has broken out in the burn; and the priest shall pronounce him unclean; it ***is*** a plague of leprosy. **26** And if the priest looks at it, and look, ***there is*** no white hair in the bright spot, and it ***is*** not lower than the skin, and it ***is*** dim, then the priest shall shut him in seven days. **27** And the priest shall look at him on the seventh day; if it surely spreads in the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean; it ***is*** a plague of leprosy. **28** And if the bright spot stands in its place ***and*** has not spread in the skin, and it ***is*** dim, it ***is*** the swelling of the burn; and the priest shall pronounce him clean, for it ***is*** the scar of the burn.

Disease of the Head and Beard

29 "And ***when*** a man or a woman has a plague on the head or on the beard, **30** then the priest shall look at the plague, and look, ***if*** its appearance ***is*** deeper than the skin, and in it ***is*** thin yellow hair, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean; it ***is*** a scaly patch; it ***is*** leprosy of the head or of the beard. **31** And if the priest looks at the plague of the scaly patch, and look, its appearance ***is*** not deeper than the skin, and ***there is*** no black hair in it, then the priest shall shut in ***the one with*** the plague of the scaly patch seven days. **32** And the priest shall look at the plague on the seventh day, and look, ***if*** the scaly patch has not spread, and there is no yellow hair in it, and the appearance of the scaly patch ***is*** not deeper than the skin, **33** then he shall shave himself, but the scaly patch he shall not shave; and the priest shall shut in ***the one with*** the scaly patch a second seven days. **34** And the priest shall look at the scaly patch on the seventh day, and look, ***if*** the scaly patch has not spread in the skin, and its appearance ***is*** not deeper than the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him clean; and he shall wash his garments and be clean. **35** And if the scaly patch surely spreads in the skin after his cleansing, **36** then the priest shall look at him, and look, ***if*** the scaly patch has spread in the skin, the priest shall not search for the yellow hair; he ***is*** unclean. **37** And if in his eyes the scaly patch has stood, and black hair has sprouted in it, the scaly patch has been healed; he ***is*** clean; and the priest shall pronounce him clean. **38** "And ***when*** a man or a woman has in the skin of their flesh bright spots, white bright spots, **39** then the priest shall look, and look, ***if*** in the skin of their flesh ***there are*** dim white bright spots, it ***is*** a rash; it has broken out in the skin; he ***is*** clean. **40** "And ***when*** a man's head becomes bare, he ***is*** bald; he ***is*** clean. **41** And if his head becomes bare from the side of his face, he ***is*** bald on the forehead; he ***is*** clean. **42** And if there is on the bald head or on the bald forehead a reddish-white plague, it ***is*** leprosy breaking out on his bald head or on his bald forehead. **43** And the priest shall look at him, and look, ***if*** the swelling of the plague ***is*** reddish-white on his bald head or on his bald forehead, like the appearance of leprosy of the skin of the flesh, **44** he ***is*** a leprous man; he ***is*** unclean; the priest shall surely pronounce him unclean; his plague ***is*** on his head.

The Leper Outside the Camp

45 "And the leper in whom the plague ***is***, his garments shall be torn, and ***the hair of*** his head shall be let loose, and he shall cover over ***his*** mustache, and he shall call out, 'Unclean!

13:13 Isa 64:6; John 9:41
13:16 Rom 7:14-24; Gal 1:14-16; Phil 3:6-8
13:18 Exod 9:9; Exod 15:26; 2 Kgs 20:7
13:20 Matt 12:45; Lev 13:3; John 5:14
13:21 1 Cor 5:5
13:23 Gen 38:26; 2 Sam 12:13; 2 Chr 19:2,3
13:24 Isa 3:24
13:25 Lev 13:4,18-20
13:26 Lev 13:4,5,23
13:29 1 Kgs 8:38; 1 Kgs 12:28; 2 Chr 6:29
13:30 Lev 13:34-37; Lev 14:54
13:32 Lev 13:30; Matt 23:5; Luke 18:9-12
13:34 1 John 4:1; Jude 1:22; Rev 2:2
13:35 Lev 13:7,27; 2 Tim 2:16,17; 2 Tim 3:13
13:39 Eccl 7:20; Rom 7:22-25; James 3:2
13:40 Song 5:11; Rom 6:12,19; Rom 8:10
13:44 Job 36:14; Matt 6:23; 2 Pet 2:1,2
13:45 Luke 17:12; Matt 8:2; Lev 10:6

13:13 *all of it has turned white; he is clean* Why would a person covered in white be clean? The usual explanation is that the disease had run its course and the skin had healed over, no longer open or spreading. If raw flesh appeared again, he was unclean.
13:23 *it is the scar of the boil* Boils and burns followed the same tests: white hair, and whether the sore was deeper than the skin. The steps repeat on purpose so that judgments were fair and the same for everyone. God cared about the health of the camp, and also that no one was put out unjustly.
13:30 *it is a scaly patch* A disease of the scalp or beard. If black hair grew back in it, it was healed (13:37).
13:40 *he is bald; he is clean* Some things looked like leprosy but were not: a dim rash, or plain baldness. The priest was not to declare anyone unclean for something ordinary.
13:45 *he shall call out, 'Unclean! Unclean!'* Torn clothes and loose hair were signs of mourning, and covering the mouth a sign of shame and grief. He had to warn others away by calling out what he was. These are the hardest verses in the chapter.

Unclean!' **46** All the days that the plague ***is*** in him he shall be unclean; he ***is*** unclean; he shall dwell alone; his dwelling ***shall be*** outside the camp.

Leprosy in Garments

47 "And ***when*** the garment has in it a plague of leprosy, in a garment of wool or in a garment of linen, **48** or in warp or in weft, of linen or of wool, or in leather or in any work of leather, **49** and the plague is greenish or reddish in the garment or in the leather or in the warp or in the weft or in any article of leather, it ***is*** a plague of leprosy, and it shall be shown to the priest. **50** And the priest shall look at the plague and shut in the plague seven days. **51** And he shall look at the plague on the seventh day; if the plague has spread in the garment or in the warp or in the weft or in the leather, for all that the leather is made into for work, the plague ***is*** a malignant leprosy; it ***is*** unclean. **52** And he shall burn the garment or the warp or the weft, in wool or in linen, or any article of leather in which the plague is, for it ***is*** a malignant leprosy; it shall be burned in the fire. **53** And if the priest looks, and look, the plague has not spread in the garment or in the warp or in the weft or in any article of leather, **54** then the priest shall command, and they shall wash ***that*** in which the plague ***is***, and he shall shut it in a second seven days. **55** And the priest shall look after the plague has been washed, and look, ***if*** the plague has not changed its appearance, and the plague has not spread, it ***is*** unclean; you shall burn it in the fire; it ***is*** a corrosion on its bald back or on its bald front. **56** And if the priest looks, and look, the plague has grown dim after it has been washed, then he shall tear it out of the garment or out of the leather or out of the warp or out of the weft. **57** And if it appears again in the garment or in the warp or in the weft or in any article of leather, it ***is*** breaking out; you shall burn in the fire ***that*** in which the plague ***is***. **58** And the garment or the warp or the weft or any article of leather which you wash, and the plague departs from them, then it shall be washed a second time, and it shall be clean. **59** This ***is*** the law of the plague of leprosy of a garment of wool or of linen, or the warp or the weft, or any article of leather, to pronounce it clean or to pronounce it unclean."

LEVITICUS 14

The Cleansing of a Leper

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe), saying, **2** "This shall be the law of the leper on the day of his cleansing: he shall be brought to the priest. **3** And the priest shall go out to the outside of the camp, and the priest shall look, and look, ***if*** the plague of leprosy has been healed from the leper, **4** then the priest shall command, and he shall take for the one cleansing himself two living clean birds, and cedar wood, and scarlet of a worm, and hyssop. **5** And the priest shall command, and he shall slaughter the one bird into an earthenware vessel over living water. **6** ***As for*** the living bird, he shall take it, and the cedar wood and the scarlet of the worm and the hyssop, and he shall dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was slaughtered over the living water. **7** And he shall spatter ***it*** on the one cleansing himself from the leprosy seven times, and he shall pronounce him clean, and he shall let the living bird go over the face of the field. **8** And the one cleansing himself shall wash his garments, and shave all his hair, and bathe in water, and he shall be clean. And afterward he shall come into the camp, and he shall dwell outside his tent seven days. **9** And it shall be on the seventh day ***that*** he shall shave all his hair: his head and his beard and the brows of his eyes, even all his hair he shall shave; and he shall wash his garments, and he shall bathe his flesh in water, and he shall be clean. **10** "And on the eighth day he shall take two male lambs without blemish, and one ewe

13:46 Luke 17:12; Matt 8:2; 2 Kgs 7:3
13:47 Jude 1:23; Isa 3:16-24; Isa 59:6
13:48 Lev 13:51; Deut 8:11; Jude 1:23
13:51 Lev 14:44
13:52 Lev 11:33,35; Deut 7:25,26; Isa 30:22
13:55 Ezek 24:13; Heb 6:4-8; 2 Pet 1:9
13:57 Rev 21:8; Isa 33:14; Matt 3:12
13:58 2 Kgs 5:10,14; Ps 51:2; 2 Cor 7:1
14:1 Mark 1:44; Luke 17:14
14:2 Luke 17:14; Mark 1:40; Mark 1:44
14:3 Luke 4:27; Mark 1:44; Luke 17:14
14:4 Heb 9:19; Mark 1:44; Luke 17:14
14:5 Mark 1:44; Luke 17:14; Heb 9:19
14:6 Mark 1:44; Luke 17:14; Heb 9:19
14:7 Heb 9:19; Mark 1:44; Luke 17:14
14:8 Mark 1:44; Luke 17:14; Lev 11:25
14:9 Mark 1:44; Luke 17:14; Num 6:9
14:10 Mark 1:44; John 1:29; 1 Pet 1:19

13:46 *his dwelling shall be outside the camp* He could not live with his family or come to the tabernacle as long as the disease lasted (Num 12:10-15; 2 Chr 26:21). The rule protected the camp and taught that the unclean could not live near the holy God. Leprosy was sometimes a judgment (Num 12; 2 Kgs 5:27), but most often simply sickness in a fallen world. Many teachers see in it a picture of sin: it spreads, defiles, cuts us off, and we cannot cure ourselves. Under the Law, touching a leper made a person unclean. When Jesus touched one, "I am willing; be cleansed" (Mark 1:41), the leper became clean. He "suffered outside the gate" (Heb 13:12). If you have felt outside the camp, He has been there.

13:47 *when the garment has in it a plague of leprosy* Probably a mold or mildew that ate into cloth and leather. If it spread, the garment was burned, a real loss when clothing was costly. A spreading rot could not be kept in the camp.

13:57 *you shall burn in the fire that in which the plague is* Some things can be washed and kept, some must be cut out, and some, if they keep coming back, must be gotten rid of. Jesus said to cut off the hand that causes sin (Matt 5:30), meaning deal with sin seriously and remove what keeps leading us into it. Jude speaks of "hating even the tunic stained by the flesh" (Jude 1:23).

14:2 *This shall be the law of the leper on the day of his cleansing* The law does not heal the leper. God heals. The law only tells how a healed person is declared clean and brought back.

14:3 *the priest shall go out to the outside of the camp* The leper could not come in, so the priest went out to him. The one cut off did not have to find his own way back. Jesus came to us while we were still outside, and He "suffered outside the gate" (Heb 13:12) to bring us in.

14:4 *cedar wood, and scarlet of a worm, and hyssop* Cedar is a lasting wood that does not rot easily. Scarlet of a worm was red dye made from an insect, so red thread or cloth. Hyssop was a small leafy plant good for sprinkling, used for the Passover blood (Exod 12:22). David prayed, "Purify me from sin with hyssop, and I will be clean" (Ps 51:7).

14:7 *he shall let the living bird go over the face of the field* Living water (14:5) means fresh running water. One bird died, and the other, dipped in its blood, was set free. The New Testament does not explain this, so I hold any meaning loosely, but many teachers see a picture of Christ: one bird dying, the other rising alive and free, marked by the blood. It also pictures the healed man himself, once as good as dead, now free.

14:9 *he shall shave all his hair* A clean start. Every hair that might hide a trace of the disease was gone. He was back in the camp but not yet home (14:8). God's cleansing is complete: "the old things have passed away; look, all things have become new" (2 Cor 5:17).

lamb, a daughter of its year, without blemish, and approximately 6 quarts (three tenths ***of an ephah***) of fine flour ***for*** a grain offering mixed with oil, and approximately 1/3 quart (one log) of oil. **11** And the priest who pronounces clean shall set the man who is cleansing himself, and them, before the LORD ***at*** the entrance of the tent of meeting. **12** And the priest shall take the one male lamb and bring it near for a guilt offering, and the log of oil, and he shall wave them ***as*** a wave offering before the LORD. **13** And he shall slaughter the male lamb in the place where he slaughters the sin offering and the burnt offering, in the place of holiness; for like the sin offering, the guilt offering ***belongs*** to the priest; it ***is*** a holy of holies. **14** And the priest shall take some of the blood of the guilt offering, and the priest shall put ***it*** on the lobe of the right ear of the one cleansing himself, and on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot. **15** And the priest shall take some of the log of oil and pour ***it*** on the left palm of the priest. **16** And the priest shall dip his right finger in some of the oil which ***is*** on his left palm, and he shall spatter some of the oil with his finger seven times before the LORD. **17** And some of the rest of the oil which ***is*** on his palm the priest shall put on the lobe of the right ear of the one cleansing himself, and on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot, on the blood of the guilt offering. **18** And the remainder of the oil which ***is*** on the palm of the priest he shall put on the head of the one cleansing himself; and the priest shall make atonement for him before the LORD. **19** And the priest shall offer the sin offering, and he shall make atonement for the one cleansing himself from his uncleanness; and afterward he shall slaughter the burnt offering. **20** And the priest shall offer up the burnt offering and the grain offering on the altar; and the priest shall make atonement for him, and he shall be clean.

Cleansing for the Poor

21 "And if he ***is*** poor, and his hand is not attaining ***so much***, then he shall take one male lamb ***as*** a guilt offering for a wave offering, to make atonement for him, and approximately 2 quarts (one tenth ***of an ephah***) of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering, and approximately 1/3 quart (a log) of oil, **22** and two turtledoves or two young of the dove, which his hand attains; and the one shall be a sin offering and the other a burnt offering. **23** And he shall bring them on the eighth day for his cleansing to the priest, to the entrance of the tent of meeting, before the LORD. **24** And the priest shall take the male lamb of the guilt offering and the log of oil, and the priest shall wave them ***as*** a wave offering before the LORD. **25** And he shall slaughter the male lamb of the guilt offering, and the priest shall take some of the blood of the guilt offering and put ***it*** on the lobe of the right ear of the one cleansing himself, and on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot. **26** And the priest shall pour some of the oil on the left palm of the priest. **27** And the priest shall spatter with his right finger some of the oil which ***is*** on his left palm seven times before the LORD. **28** And the priest shall put some of the oil which ***is*** on his palm on the lobe of the right ear of the one cleansing himself, and on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot, on the place of the blood of the guilt offering. **29** And the rest of the oil which ***is*** on the palm of the priest he shall put on the head of the one cleansing himself, to make atonement for him before the LORD. **30** And he shall offer one of the turtledoves or of the young of the dove, of that which his hand attains, **31** that which his hand attains, the one ***as*** a sin offering and the other ***as*** a burnt offering, with the grain offering; and the priest shall make atonement for the one cleansing himself before the LORD. **32** This ***is*** the law of ***him*** in whom ***is*** a plague of leprosy, whose hand does not attain ***what is required*** for his cleansing."

Leprosy in a House

33 And the LORD spoke to Moses and to Aaron (Aharon), saying, **34** "When you come into the land of Canaan (Kena'an), which I am giving to you for a possession, and I put a plague

14:11 Mark 1:44; Luke 17:14; Lev 8:3
14:12 Mark 1:44; Luke 17:14; Exod 29:24
14:13 Mark 1:44; Luke 17:14; Exod 29:11
14:14 Mark 1:44; Luke 17:14; Exod 29:20
14:15 Mark 1:44; Luke 17:14; Ps 45:7
14:16 Mark 1:44; Luke 17:14; Lev 4:6,17
14:17 Mark 1:44; Luke 17:14; Lev 14:14
14:18 Mark 1:44; Luke 17:14; Lev 4:26,31
14:19 Mark 1:44; Luke 17:14; Lev 14:12
14:20 Mark 1:44; Luke 17:14; Lev 14:10
14:21 Mark 1:44; Luke 17:14; Lev 12:8
14:22 Mark 1:44; Luke 17:14; Ps 68:13
14:23 Mark 1:44; Luke 17:14
14:24 Mark 1:44; Luke 17:14
14:25 Mark 1:44; Luke 17:14; Lev 14:14-20
14:26 Mark 1:44; Luke 17:14
14:27 Mark 1:44; Luke 17:14
14:28 Mark 1:44; Luke 17:14
14:29 Mark 1:44; Luke 17:14; Lev 14:18,20
14:30 Luke 2:24; Mark 1:44; Luke 17:14
14:31 Mark 1:44; Luke 17:14
14:32 Mark 1:44; Luke 17:14; Lev 14:10,21
14:34 Gen 17:8; Deut 32:49; Lev 23:10

14:12 *bring it near for a guilt offering* About six quarts of flour and a log of oil, about a third of a quart, came with the lambs (14:10). For the first time since his illness he could come near God's house. Why a guilt offering? The text does not tie his disease to his own sin. Many teachers think it dealt with all he had been unable to give God during his long exclusion. Coming back to God was not only a matter of health but of atonement.

14:14 *on the lobe of the right ear of the one cleansing himself* The same marks of blood Aaron and his sons received at their ordination (8:23-24). Now an ordinary Israelite, once a leper, received them. Many see the ear, hand and foot as hearing, doing and walking: the whole person set apart for God.

14:17 *on the blood of the guilt offering* The oil came on top of the blood. First the blood that atones, then the oil that sets apart. Many see the oil as a picture of the Holy Spirit, who comes to live in those Christ has cleansed (Titus 3:5-6).

14:20 *the priest shall make atonement for him, and he shall be clean* Music to a man who had called out "Unclean! Unclean!" so long (13:45). He could go home and worship with God's people. Sin offering, burnt offering, grain offering: uncleanness dealt with, the whole life given, thanks brought. This is what Christ does for every sinner who comes to Him (1 John 1:9).

14:21 *if he is poor, and his hand is not attaining so much* "Which his hand attains" (14:22) means what he could afford. The poor man received the same blood, the same oil and the same words. Why take sixteen verses to say nearly the same thing again? I think God wanted no poor leper to doubt that he could come home. Salvation through Christ costs us nothing, because it cost Him everything (Isa 55:1; Eph 2:8).

14:34 *I put a plague of leprosy in a house* Israel still lived in tents, and God was already promising them houses in the land. He says plainly that He is sovereign even over the mold in the walls. This was a spreading growth of mold or rot in the stone walls.

of leprosy in a house of the land of your possession, **35** then he to whom the house ***belongs*** shall come and tell the priest, saying, '***Something*** like a plague has appeared to me in the house.' **36** And the priest shall command, and they shall clear out the house before the priest goes in to look at the plague, and all that ***is*** in the house shall not become unclean; and afterward the priest shall go in to look at the house. **37** And he shall look at the plague, and look, ***if*** the plague ***is*** in the walls of the house, greenish or reddish hollows, and their appearance ***is*** lower than the wall, **38** then the priest shall go out of the house to the entrance of the house, and he shall shut in the house seven days. **39** And the priest shall return on the seventh day and look, and look, ***if*** the plague has spread in the walls of the house, **40** then the priest shall command, and they shall tear out the stones in which the plague ***is***, and they shall throw them to the outside of the city, into an unclean place. **41** And he shall have the house scraped inside all around, and they shall pour out the dust that they have scraped off to the outside of the city, into an unclean place. **42** And they shall take other stones and bring ***them*** in place of the stones, and he shall take other dust and plaster the house. **43** And if the plague returns and breaks out in the house after he has torn out the stones, and after the scraping of the house, and after ***it*** has been plastered, **44** then the priest shall come in and look, and look, ***if*** the plague has spread in the house, it ***is*** a malignant leprosy in the house; it ***is*** unclean. **45** And he shall tear down the house, its stones and its timbers and all the dust of the house, and he shall bring ***them*** out to the outside of the city, into an unclean place. **46** And whoever goes into the house all the days ***that*** he has shut it in shall be unclean until the evening. **47** And whoever lies down in the house shall wash his garments, and whoever eats in the house shall wash his garments. **48** "And if the priest surely comes in and looks, and look, the plague has not spread in the house after the house has been plastered, then the priest shall pronounce the house clean, because the plague has been healed. **49** And he shall take, to cleanse the house from sin, two birds, and cedar wood, and scarlet of a worm, and hyssop. **50** And he shall slaughter the one bird into an earthenware vessel over living water. **51** And he shall take the cedar wood and the hyssop and the scarlet of the worm and the living bird, and he shall dip them in the blood of the slaughtered bird and in the living water, and he shall spatter ***it*** toward the house seven times. **52** And he shall cleanse the house from sin with the blood of the bird and with the living water and with the living bird and with the cedar wood and with the hyssop and with the scarlet of the worm. **53** And he shall let the living bird go to the outside of the city, onto the face of the field; and he shall make atonement for the house, and it shall be clean. **54** "This ***is*** the law for every plague of leprosy, and for the scaly patch, **55** and for the leprosy of the garment, and for the house, **56** and for the swelling, and for the scab, and for the bright spot, **57** to teach on the day of the unclean and on the day of the clean. This ***is*** the law of leprosy."

LEVITICUS 15

Discharges of a Man

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe) and to Aaron (Aharon), saying, **2** "Speak to the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), and say to them, 'Any man, when he has a discharge from his flesh, his discharge ***is*** unclean. **3** And this shall be his uncleanness in his discharge: ***whether*** his flesh runs with his discharge, or his flesh has sealed ***itself*** off from his discharge, it ***is*** his uncleanness. **4** Every bed on which the one with the discharge lies shall be unclean, and every article on which he sits shall be unclean. **5** And a man who touches his bed shall wash his garments and bathe in water, and he shall be unclean until the evening. **6** And whoever sits on the article

14:35 Ps 91:10; Deut 7:26; Zech 5:4
14:36 1 Cor 15:33; 2 Tim 2:17,18; Heb 12:15
14:37 Lev 13:3,19,20,42,49
14:38 Lev 13:50
14:39 Lev 13:7,8,22,27,36,51
14:40 Ps 101:5,7,8; Prov 22:10; Prov 25:4,5
14:41 Job 36:13,14; Isa 65:4; Matt 8:28
14:42 Gen 18:19; Josh 24:15; 2 Chr 17:7-9
14:43 Jer 6:28-30; Ezek 24:13; Heb 6:4-8
14:44 Lev 13:51,52; Zech 5:4
14:45 1 Kgs 9:6-9; 2 Kgs 10:27; 2 Kgs 17:20-23
14:46 Lev 11:24,25,28; Lev 15:5-8,10; Lev 17:15
14:47 Lev 14:8,9
14:48 Lev 14:3; Job 5:18; Hos 6:1
14:49 Heb 9:19
14:50 Heb 9:19
14:51 Heb 9:19
14:52 Heb 9:19
14:54 Lev 14:2,32; Lev 6:9,14,25; Lev 7:1,37
14:55 Lev 13:47-59
14:56 Lev 13:2
14:57 Lev 10:10; Jer 15:19; Ezek 44:23
15:1 Lev 11:1; Lev 13:1; Ps 25:14
15:2 Lev 22:4; Num 5:2; 2 Sam 3:29
15:3 Lev 12:3; Ezek 16:26; Ezek 23:20
15:4 1 Cor 15:33; Eph 5:11; Titus 1:15
15:5 Lev 11:25,28,32; Lev 16:26,28; Lev 17:15
15:6 Isa 1:16; James 4:8

14:35 *Something like a plague has appeared to me in the house* The owner did not claim to know. He let the priest decide. Clearing the house first (14:36) was kind and sensible, so the owner did not lose everything in it.
14:40 *they shall tear out the stones in which the plague is* Hard, dirty work, but it saved the house. A small problem dealt with early could keep the whole house from being lost. So with sin in a life, a family or a church: "a little leaven leavens the whole lump" (1 Cor 5:6).
14:45 *he shall tear down the house* If the plague came back, the house was lost. Sin that is left alone and keeps coming back does not stay small. It can ruin the whole house.
14:53 *he shall make atonement for the house* A house cannot sin, so why atonement? In Leviticus atonement also means cleansing what uncleanness has touched, so it can again be part of the life of God's people. The same word is used for cleansing the altar and tabernacle (16:16-19). God cares about where His people live.
14:57 *to teach on the day of the unclean and on the day of the clean* The point of the law was to teach (10:10-11). Jesus sent a healed leper to the priest "for a testimony to them" (Mark 1:44). The priests had a law for cleansing a healed leper, but who could heal one? Only God (2 Kgs 5:7). Christ does more than declare us clean. He heals and cleanses us by His own blood and brings us home.
15:2 *when he has a discharge from his flesh* An ongoing discharge from the body, most likely from illness or infection. Flesh here is a modest way of speaking of the private parts. Unclean in Leviticus does not mean sinful. A sick man had done nothing wrong by being sick. He was not fit, for a time, to come near God's tabernacle or touch holy things. It was a matter of ritual status, not moral guilt.
15:4 *Every bed on which the one with the discharge lies shall be unclean* His uncleanness passed to things and people around him. These rules reminded Israel all day long that uncleanness spreads by contact and holiness does not. Washing, bathing and keeping apart from the sick also helped stop disease in a crowded camp. That was not the main reason, but it was a mercy in the law.

on which the one with the discharge sat shall wash his garments and bathe in water, and he shall be unclean until the evening. **7** And whoever touches the flesh of the one with the discharge shall wash his garments and bathe in water, and he shall be unclean until the evening. **8** And if the one with the discharge spits on ***one who is*** clean, then he shall wash his garments and bathe in water, and he shall be unclean until the evening. **9** And every saddle on which the one with the discharge rides shall be unclean. **10** And whoever touches anything that was under him shall be unclean until the evening; and whoever carries them shall wash his garments and bathe in water, and he shall be unclean until the evening. **11** And anyone whom the one with the discharge touches, and he has not rinsed his hands in water, then he shall wash his garments and bathe in water, and he shall be unclean until the evening. **12** And an earthenware vessel which the one with the discharge touches shall be broken, and every vessel of wood shall be rinsed in water. **13** "'And when the one with the discharge becomes clean from his discharge, then he shall count for himself seven days for his cleansing, and he shall wash his garments and bathe his flesh in living water, and he shall be clean. **14** And on the eighth day he shall take for himself two turtledoves or two young of the dove, and he shall come before the LORD to the entrance of the tent of meeting and give them to the priest. **15** And the priest shall offer them, the one ***as*** a sin offering and the other ***as*** a burnt offering; and the priest shall make atonement for him before the LORD for his discharge. **16** "'And a man, when an emission of seed goes out from him, then he shall bathe all his flesh in water, and he shall be unclean until the evening. **17** And every garment and every leather ***thing*** on which there is an emission of seed shall be washed with water, and it shall be unclean until the evening. **18** And a woman with whom a man lies ***with*** an emission of seed, they shall bathe in water, and they shall be unclean until the evening.

Discharges of a Woman

19 "'And a woman, when she has a discharge, ***and*** her discharge in her flesh is blood, she shall be in her impurity seven days; and whoever touches her shall be unclean until the evening. **20** And everything on which she lies in her impurity shall be unclean, and everything on which she sits shall be unclean. **21** And whoever touches her bed shall wash his garments and bathe in water, and he shall be unclean until the evening. **22** And whoever touches any article on which she sits shall wash his garments and bathe in water, and he shall be unclean until the evening. **23** And if it ***is*** on the bed or on the article on which she is sitting, when he touches it, he shall be unclean until the evening. **24** And if a man surely lies with her, and her impurity is on him, then he shall be unclean seven days, and every bed on which he lies shall be unclean. **25** "'And a woman, when the discharge of her blood flows many days not at the time of her impurity, or when she has a discharge beyond her impurity, all the days of the discharge of her uncleanness she shall be as ***in*** the days of her impurity; she ***is*** unclean. **26** Every bed on which she lies all the days of her discharge shall be to her like the bed of her impurity; and every article on which she sits shall be unclean, like the uncleanness of her impurity. **27** And whoever touches them shall be unclean, and he shall wash his garments and bathe in water, and he shall be unclean until the evening. **28** And if she becomes clean from her discharge, then she shall count for herself seven days, and afterward she shall be clean. **29** And on the eighth day she shall take for herself two turtledoves or two young of the dove, and she shall bring them to the priest, to the entrance of the tent of meeting. **30** And the priest shall offer the one ***as*** a sin offering and the other ***as*** a burnt offering; and the priest shall make atonement for her before the LORD for the discharge of her uncleanness.' **31** "And you shall keep the sons of Israel separate from their uncleanness, and they shall not die in their uncleanness by their making My tabernacle unclean, which ***is*** in their midst. **32** This ***is*** the law of the one with a discharge, and of him from whom an emission of seed

15:8 Jude 1:4; Isa 1:16; Gal 1:8,9
15:9 Gen 31:34
15:10 Lev 15:5,8; Ps 26:6; James 4:8
15:12 Lev 6:28; Lev 11:32,33; Prov 1:21,23
15:13 Lev 8:33; Lev 14:8,10; Lev 15:28
15:14 Lev 15:29,30; Lev 1:14; Lev 12:6,8
15:15 Lev 5:7-10; Lev 4:20,26,31,35; Lev 12:7
15:16 Lev 22:4; Deut 23:10,11; Lev 15:5
15:18 Lev 15:5; Eph 4:17-19; Eph 5:3-11
15:19 Lev 12:2,4; Lev 20:18; Lam 1:8,9,17
15:20 Lev 15:4-9; Prov 2:16-19; Prov 5:3-13
15:21 Lev 15:5,6; Isa 22:14; 2 Cor 7:1
15:24 Lev 20:18; Ezek 18:6; Lev 15:33
15:25 Matt 9:20; Mark 5:25; Luke 8:43
15:26 Matt 9:20; Mark 5:25; Luke 8:43
15:27 Matt 9:20; Mark 5:25; Luke 8:43
15:28 Lev 15:13-15; Matt 1:21; 1 Cor 1:30
15:31 Num 5:3; Num 19:13,20; Ezek 5:11
15:32 Gal 3:19; Lev 11:46; Lev 13:59

15:11 *he has not rinsed his hands in water* The sick man was not helpless. He was given a simple way to care for others while he was sick.
15:15 *the priest shall make atonement for him before the LORD for his discharge* Two birds, the smallest offerings. The sin offering also dealt with uncleanness, cleansing the person and what he had affected, so he could return to worship. His illness was a reminder that we live in a world broken by sin, where bodies get sick and die.
15:18 *they shall bathe in water, and they shall be unclean until the evening* The marriage relationship is not sin. God created and blessed it (Gen 1:28; 2:24), and "Marriage is to be honorable among all, and the bed undefiled" (Heb 13:4). The reason is not stated, but a common explanation is that the powers of life and the presence of God were kept separate in Israel's worship. Many of Israel's neighbors mixed sexual acts with the worship of their gods. A couple simply bathed and waited until evening. No offering was needed, because nothing was wrong.
15:19 *she shall be in her impurity seven days* Her monthly period. The word has the idea of separation. This is not sin either. It is part of how God made a woman's body to pass on life, and no offering was required at the end, because there was nothing to atone for. Some have used laws like this to look down on women, a misuse of God's Word. The same kinds of rules applied to men, and the chapter ends "whether for the male or for the female" (15:33).
15:25 *when the discharge of her blood flows many days not at the time of her impurity* An illness, not the normal cycle. A woman with this could be unclean for months or years, cut off from God's house and from touch. Mark tells of "a certain woman, being with a flow of blood twelve years" (Mark 5:25). She touched Jesus' garment and was healed at once. Her touch did not make Him unclean. His power made her clean, and He called her "Daughter" (Mark 5:34). He did not let her slip away in shame.
15:31 *they shall not die in their uncleanness by their making My tabernacle unclean* The reason for the whole chapter. God lived in the middle of His people, a great privilege and a serious one. These laws were not meant to shame anyone but to protect the people from coming near a holy God unclean.

goes out, so that he is unclean by it, **33** and of her who is sick in her impurity, and of the one who has a discharge, whether for the male or for the female, and for a man who lies with an unclean ***woman***."

LEVITICUS 16

The Day of Atonement

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe) after the death of the two sons of Aaron (Aharon), when they drew near before the LORD and died. **2** And the LORD said to Moses, "Speak to Aaron your brother, and let him not come at every time into the holy place inside the veil, before the mercy seat which ***is*** on the ark, and he will not die; for in the cloud I will appear over the mercy seat. **3** With this Aaron shall come into the holy place: with a young bull, a son of the herd, for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering. **4** He shall put on a linen tunic of holiness, and linen undergarments shall be on his flesh, and with a linen sash he shall gird himself, and with a linen turban he shall wrap ***himself***; they ***are*** garments of holiness. And he shall bathe his flesh in water and put them on. **5** And from the congregation of the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) he shall take two male goats of the goats for a sin offering and one ram for a burnt offering. **6** And Aaron shall bring near the bull of the sin offering which ***is*** for himself, and he shall make atonement for himself and for his house. **7** And he shall take the two goats and set them before the LORD ***at*** the entrance of the tent of meeting. **8** And Aaron shall put lots on the two goats, one lot for the LORD and one lot for Azazel. **9** And Aaron shall bring near the goat on which the lot for the LORD came up, and he shall offer it ***as*** a sin offering. **10** And the goat on which the lot for Azazel came up shall be set alive before the LORD, to make atonement on it, to send it away to Azazel into the wilderness.

Blood Behind the Veil

11 "And Aaron shall bring near the bull of the sin offering which ***is*** for himself, and he shall make atonement for himself and for his house, and he shall slaughter the bull of the sin offering which ***is*** for himself. **12** And he shall take the fullness of the fire pan ***of*** coals of fire from on the altar, from before the LORD, and the fullness of his hands ***of*** fine incense of fragrances, and he shall bring ***it*** inside the veil. **13** And he shall put the incense on the fire before the LORD, and the cloud of the incense shall cover the mercy seat which ***is*** on the testimony, and he will not die. **14** And he shall take some of the blood of the bull and spatter ***it*** with his finger on the face of the mercy seat eastward; and before the mercy seat he shall spatter some of the blood with his finger seven times. **15** "And he shall slaughter the goat of the sin offering which ***is*** for the people, and he shall bring its blood inside the veil, and he shall do with its blood as he did with the blood of the bull, and he shall spatter it on the mercy seat

15:33 Lev 15:24; Lev 20:18
16:1 Lev 10:1,2
16:2 Matt 27:51; Heb 9:3; Heb 9:7
16:3 Lev 4:3; Heb 9:7,12,24,25; Lev 8:18
16:4 Ezek 44:17,18; Exod 30:20; Lev 6:10
16:5 Heb 10:6; Heb 10:8; 2 Chr 29:21
16:6 Heb 5:3; Heb 9:7; Lev 9:7
16:7 Lev 1:3; Lev 4:4; Lev 12:6,7
16:8 Acts 1:23; Acts 1:26; Num 26:55
16:9 Acts 2:23; Acts 4:27,28
16:10 1 John 2:2; Lev 16:21,22; Rom 4:25
16:11 Lev 16:3,6
16:12 Matt 27:51; Mark 15:38; Luke 23:45
16:13 Heb 9:5; Exod 25:21; Exod 30:1,7,8
16:14 Heb 12:24; Rom 3:25; Heb 9:19
16:15 Heb 9:7; Heb 9:12; Heb 9:3

15:33 *whether for the male or for the female* This ends the section on clean and unclean (chapters 11 to 15). Jesus taught that what truly defiles comes from within, "evil thoughts" (Mark 7:21) and other sins of the heart. We need more than a bath: we "draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith" (Heb 10:22), any day. Treat the body with modesty and respect, and the sick with tenderness, not shame.

16:1 *after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they drew near before the LORD and died* Nadab and Abihu had drawn near in a way God had not commanded (10:1-2). Now God speaks, not to forbid all coming near, but to show how it could be done without dying. That is the heart of this chapter and of the gospel. What they tried by their own fire, God made possible by blood and by His appointed priest.

16:2 *let him not come at every time into the holy place inside the veil* The holy place here is the Most Holy Place. The veil was a heavy woven curtain that closed it off (Exod 26:31-33). Inside stood the ark of the covenant, the gold-covered chest holding the tablets of the Law. Even the high priest could not go in whenever he wished. The Spirit was showing by this "that the way into the holy places has not yet been made manifest" (Heb 9:8).

16:2 *the mercy seat* The gold lid of the ark, with two cherubim, winged angels, over it (Exod 25:17-22). The Hebrew, kapporet, comes from the same root as atonement. It was where the blood was sprinkled. God set forth Jesus "as a propitiation through faith in His blood" (Rom 3:25), using the Greek word Hebrews 9:5 uses for the mercy seat. A propitiation is a sacrifice that turns away God's just anger against sin. Jesus is where God meets sinners in mercy.

16:4 *He shall put on a linen tunic of holiness* Not the glorious garments of Exodus 28, but plain white linen, simpler even than the ordinary priests wore. Linen stood for purity. On the greatest day of the year the high priest came as a humble servant. Many teachers see a picture of Christ, who took "the form of a slave" (Phil 2:7). Hebrews does not draw that line, so I hold it loosely.

16:5 *two male goats of the goats for a sin offering* Both goats together are one sin offering with two parts. One would die. The other would carry the sins away. Together they show the whole of atonement: sin paid for by death, and sin removed far away.

16:6 *he shall make atonement for himself and for his house* The high priest was a sinner too, and he had to be cleansed before he could act for others.

16:8 *one lot for the LORD and one lot for Azazel* Casting lots let God make the choice (Prov 16:33). Azazel appears only in this chapter, and teachers are not agreed. Many take it as the goat that goes away, the source of our word scapegoat. Others take it as a remote place, which fits "a land cut off" (16:22). Others think it named an evil spirit of the desert. If so, the goat was not an offering to him, since 17:7 forbids that. Either way, the point is clear: Israel's sins were carried far out of God's camp.

16:12 *coals of fire from on the altar* Here is the difference from Nadab and Abihu. They brought "strange fire" (10:1). Aaron brought fire from the altar where God's own fire burned (9:24), just as God commanded.

16:13 *the cloud of the incense shall cover the mercy seat* The testimony means the tablets of the Law in the ark. The cloud veiled God's glory so the high priest would not die, for no sinful man can see God's full glory and live (Exod 33:20). Incense is often a picture of prayer (Ps 141:2; Rev 8:3-4).

16:14 *he shall spatter some of the blood with his finger seven times* Under the mercy seat lay the Ten Commandments Israel had already broken. Above it was the glory of the holy God. Between the broken Law and the holy God the blood was sprinkled. God would look on the blood, not the broken Law. That is mercy, and seven times means it was complete.

16:15 *the goat of the sin offering which is for the people* The first blood was for the priest, the second for the people. Jesus needed none for Himself. He does not need "to offer up sacrifices first for their own sins, then for those of the people; for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself" (Heb 7:27). Aaron offered animal blood. Jesus offered Himself.

and before the mercy seat. **16** And he shall make atonement for the holy place because of the uncleannesses of the sons of Israel and because of their transgressions, for all their sins; and so he shall do for the tent of meeting, which dwells with them in the midst of their uncleannesses. **17** And no man shall be in the tent of meeting when he goes in to make atonement in the holy place, until he comes out; and he shall make atonement for himself and for his house and for all the assembly of Israel. **18** And he shall go out to the altar that ***is*** before the LORD and make atonement for it, and he shall take some of the blood of the bull and some of the blood of the goat and put ***it*** on the horns of the altar all around. **19** And he shall spatter some of the blood on it with his finger seven times, and he shall cleanse it and sanctify it from the uncleannesses of the sons of Israel.

The Goat Sent Away

20 "And he shall finish making atonement for the holy place and the tent of meeting and the altar, and he shall bring near the living goat. **21** And Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the living goat, and he shall confess over it all the iniquities of the sons of Israel and all their transgressions, for all their sins; and he shall put them on the head of the goat and send ***it*** away into the wilderness by the hand of a man ***who is*** ready. **22** And the goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities to a land cut off; and he shall let the goat go in the wilderness. **23** "And Aaron shall come into the tent of meeting, and he shall strip off the linen garments which he put on when he went into the holy place, and he shall leave them there. **24** And he shall bathe his flesh in water in a holy place and put on his garments, and he shall come out and offer his burnt offering and the burnt offering of the people, and he shall make atonement for himself and for the people. **25** And the fat of the sin offering he shall make smoke on the altar. **26** And the one who lets the goat go for Azazel shall wash his garments and bathe his flesh in water, and afterward he shall come into the camp. **27** And the bull of the sin offering and the goat of the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the holy place, he shall bring out to the outside of the camp, and they shall burn in the fire their skins and their flesh and their dung. **28** And the one who burns them shall wash his garments and bathe his flesh in water, and afterward he shall come into the camp.

A Statute Forever

29 "And it shall be for you a statute forever: in the seventh month, on the tenth of the month, you shall afflict your souls, and you shall not do any work, the native and the sojourner who sojourns in your midst. **30** For on this day he shall make atonement for you, to cleanse you; from all your sins before the LORD you shall be clean. **31** It ***is*** a Sabbath of Sabbath rest for you, and you shall afflict your souls; ***it is*** a statute forever. **32** And the priest whom he anoints and whose hand he fills to serve as priest in place of his father shall make atonement; and he shall put on the linen garments, the garments of holiness. **33** And he shall make atonement for the sanctuary of holiness; and for the tent of meeting and for the altar he shall make atonement; and for the priests and for all the people of the assembly he shall make

16:16 Heb 9:7; Heb 9:19; Lev 16:18
16:17 Heb 1:3; Heb 9:19; Luke 1:10
16:18 Heb 9:19; Lev 4:7,18; Lev 16:16
16:19 Ezek 43:18-22; Zech 13:1
16:20 Lev 16:16; Ezek 45:20; Lev 6:30
16:21 John 19:17; Isa 53:6; 2 Cor 5:21
16:22 John 19:17; Isa 53:11,12; John 1:29
16:23 Ezek 42:14; Ezek 44:19; Lev 16:4
16:24 Lev 16:3,5; Lev 8:6; Lev 14:9
16:25 Lev 4:8-10,19; Exod 29:13; Lev 16:6
16:26 Lev 16:10,21,22; Lev 16:28; Lev 14:8
16:27 Heb 13:11; Lev 6:30; Lev 4:11,12,21
16:29 Acts 27:9; Num 29:7; Isa 58:3,5
16:30 Jer 33:8; Ps 51:2,7,10; Eph 5:26
16:31 Lev 23:32; Lev 25:4; Exod 31:15
16:32 Exod 29:29,30; Lev 4:3,5,16; Exod 29:9
16:33 Lev 16:6,16,18,19,24; Exod 20:25,26

16:16 *which dwells with them in the midst of their uncleannesses* The people's sins had in a sense defiled God's dwelling through the year. God lived among a sinful people, and once a year His dwelling had to be cleansed so He could go on living there.
16:17 *no man shall be in the tent of meeting* The high priest worked alone. So did Jesus. His disciples fled, and no one shared His work on the cross. He "made purification of our sins through Himself" (Heb 1:3).
16:19 *he shall cleanse it and sanctify it* The whole place of worship was cleansed from the inside out. These earthly things were "copies of the things in the heavens" (Heb 9:23), and the heavenly things needed better sacrifices.
16:21 *Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the living goat* Three words for sin: iniquities (crookedness and guilt), transgressions (rebellion, crossing God's line), sins (missing the mark). Every kind was named and laid on the goat. Usually one hand was laid on an animal. Here it was both, as if to press the whole weight of the nation's sin onto its head.
16:22 *the goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities to a land cut off* The people could watch it go, past the tents into the empty wilderness, until it was gone. "As the east is far from the west, He has removed our transgressions far from us" (Ps 103:12; Mic 7:19). The New Testament does not name this goat, but it says the same of Jesus: "the LORD has caused to fall on Him the iniquity of all of us" (Isa 53:6), the Lamb "who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). The first goat shows sin paid for by death. The second shows sin taken away. Jesus did both.
16:24 *he shall come out and offer his burnt offering and the burnt offering of the people* Once sin was dealt with, priest and people gave themselves wholly to God again. First forgiveness, then dedication. We give ourselves to God not to be forgiven, but because we have been (Rom 12:1).
16:26 *the one who lets the goat go for Azazel shall wash his garments* He had been close to the sins laid on the goat. Sin is unclean, even when it is being carried away.
16:27 *he shall bring out to the outside of the camp* Hebrews uses this very verse: "Therefore Jesus also, so that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered outside the gate" (Heb 13:12). He was crucified outside Jerusalem's walls, in the place of shame. "Therefore let us go out to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach" (Heb 13:13).
16:29 *you shall afflict your souls, and you shall not do any work* The seventh month falls in our September or October. To afflict the soul means to humble oneself before God, which came to mean fasting with sorrow over sin. By New Testament times it was called "the Fast" (Acts 27:9), and Jews still keep it as Yom Kippur. The native and the sojourner, the foreigner living among them, both rested.
16:30 *from all your sins before the LORD you shall be clean* The people could add nothing. The priest did the work. They humbled themselves, rested and received what God provided. That is how salvation works: we stop trusting our own works and receive what Christ has done.
16:31 *It is a Sabbath of Sabbath rest for you* The Sabbath was the seventh day, Israel's day of rest (Exod 20:8-11). This day was the highest kind of Sabbath, a full rest.

atonement. **34** And this shall be for you a statute forever, to make atonement for the sons of Israel for all their sins once in the year." And he did as the LORD had commanded Moses.

LEVITICUS 17

The Place of Sacrifice

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe), saying, **2** "Speak to Aaron (Aharon) and to his sons and to all the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), and say to them, 'This ***is*** the thing which the LORD has commanded, saying, **3** "Any man of the house of Israel who slaughters an ox or a lamb or a goat in the camp, or who slaughters ***it*** outside the camp, **4** and has not brought it to the entrance of the tent of meeting to bring ***it*** near ***as*** an offering to the LORD before the tabernacle of the LORD, blood shall be counted to that man; he has shed blood, and that man shall be cut off from among his people, **5** so that the sons of Israel may bring their sacrifices which they are sacrificing on the face of the field, and they shall bring them to the LORD, to the entrance of the tent of meeting, to the priest, and they shall sacrifice them ***as*** sacrifices of peace offerings to the LORD. **6** And the priest shall sprinkle the blood on the altar of the LORD ***at*** the entrance of the tent of meeting, and he shall make the fat smoke for a soothing aroma to the LORD. **7** And they shall no longer sacrifice their sacrifices to the goat demons, after whom they prostitute themselves. This shall be a statute forever for them throughout their generations."' **8** And you shall say to them, 'Any man of the house of Israel, or of the sojourner who sojourns in their midst, who offers up a burnt offering or a sacrifice, **9** and does not bring it to the entrance of the tent of meeting to offer it to the LORD, then that man shall be cut off from his kinsmen.

The Life Is in the Blood

10 And any man of the house of Israel, or of the sojourner who sojourns in their midst, who eats any blood, then I will set My face against the soul that eats the blood, and I will cut it off from among its people. **11** For the life of the flesh ***is*** in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it ***is*** the blood ***that*** makes atonement by the life. **12** Therefore I have said to the sons of Israel, "No soul of you shall eat blood, and the sojourner who sojourns in your midst shall not eat blood." **13** And any man of the sons of Israel, or of the sojourner who sojourns in their midst, who hunts game, a living thing or a bird which may be eaten, then he shall pour out its blood and cover it with dust. **14** For ***as for*** the life of all flesh, its blood ***is*** its life. And I have said to the sons of Israel, "You shall not eat the blood of any flesh, for the life of all flesh ***is*** its blood; whoever eats it shall be cut off." **15** And every soul that eats a carcass or a torn ***animal***, whether among the native or among the sojourner, then he shall wash his garments and bathe in water, and he shall be unclean until the evening, and he shall be clean.

16:34 Heb 9:7; Exod 30:10; Lev 23:31
17:3 Lev 17:8,12,13,15; Deut 12:5-7,11-15,20-22,26,27
17:4 Gen 17:14; Lev 1:3; Deut 12:5,6,13,14
17:5 Gen 21:33; Gen 22:2,13; Gen 31:54
17:6 Num 18:17; Lev 3:2,8,13; Lev 3:5,11,16
17:7 Exod 34:15; Deut 32:17; 2 Chr 11:15
17:8 Lev 1:2,3; Lev 17:4,10; Judg 6:26
17:10 Acts 15:20; Lev 3:17; Gen 9:4
17:11 Acts 15:20; Heb 9:22; 1 John 1:7
17:12 Acts 15:20; Exod 12:49
17:13 Acts 15:20; Deut 12:16,24; Lev 7:26
17:14 Acts 15:20; Gen 9:4; Deut 12:23
17:15 Lev 22:8; Exod 22:31; Deut 14:21

16:34 *once in the year* Year after year, the same blood and the same walk behind the veil. "But in these there is a reminder of sins every year" (Heb 10:3). Christ entered "once for all into the holy places, having obtained eternal redemption" (Heb 9:12), and then sat down, because the work was finished (Heb 10:12; John 19:30). When He died, the veil was torn "from top to bottom" (Matt 27:51). God tore it. Now every believer may draw near with confidence "by the blood of Jesus" (Heb 10:19).

16:34 *to make atonement for the sons of Israel for all their sins* The day also looks ahead for the nation. One day Israel will "look to Me, to Him whom they have pierced; and they will mourn over Him" (Zech 12:10), and a fountain will be opened "for sin and for impurity" (Zech 13:1). Paul says "all Israel will be saved" (Rom 11:26). Many teachers believe Israel's national mourning and cleansing at Christ's return is the final fulfillment of this day (see 23:27). Others see it fully fulfilled at the cross.

17:2 *This is the thing which the LORD has commanded* A message for priests and people alike, and not Moses' idea. It is God's command.

17:4 *blood shall be counted to that man; he has shed blood* Killing a sacrificial animal anywhere but at God's altar was counted like bloodshed. In the wilderness camp these were the animals used for offerings, and their life belonged to God. Later, spread across the land, Israel could kill animals for food at home if they poured out the blood (Deut 12:15-16). On "cut off," see the note at 7:20.

17:5 *so that the sons of Israel may bring their sacrifices* The animals were to come to the priest as peace offerings, the shared meal with God (chapter 3).

17:7 *they shall no longer sacrifice their sacrifices to the goat demons* False gods or evil spirits that pagans pictured as goats living in desert places. "No longer" shows some Israelites had been doing this, perhaps from habits picked up in Egypt (Josh 24:14). To prostitute themselves is God's strong word for idolatry, for Israel belonged to Him as a bride to her husband. Behind false worship are real spiritual powers (1 Cor 10:20).

17:8 *the sojourner who sojourns in their midst* A sojourner was a foreigner living among Israel. One God, one altar, one place to come. So for us, there is "one mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim 2:5). We cannot come to God by any way we choose.

17:10 *I will set My face against the soul that eats the blood* One of the few places where God says He Himself will act against the lawbreaker. The ban goes back before Moses (Gen 9:4).

17:11 *For the life of the flesh is in the blood* This verse explains the whole system of sacrifice. Life depends on blood, so shed blood means a life given up in death. "I have given it": the sacrifice was not man's way to buy God's favor but God's gift to sinners. The word for life is the same as soul. A life was given in place of a life, which is substitution. The soul that sins deserves to die (Ezek 18:4), but God accepted the substitute. There is no magic in blood itself. It stands for a life given in death.

17:11 *it is the blood that makes atonement by the life* That is why "apart from shedding of blood there is no forgiveness" (Heb 9:22), and why the blood of Jesus is at the center of the gospel. We were redeemed "with the precious blood of Christ" (1 Pet 1:19), and Jesus said, "this is My blood, the blood of the new covenant, which is being poured out for many for forgiveness of sins" (Matt 26:28). The blood of Christ means His death on the cross in our place.

17:12 *No soul of you shall eat blood* "Therefore" ties this to verse 11. Blood was holy because it was God's chosen means of atonement. Each time an animal was drained, Israel was reminded that life belongs to God and atonement costs a life.

17:13 *he shall pour out its blood and cover it with dust* Even game that could not go on the altar was treated with respect. The apostles asked Gentile believers "to abstain from things sacrificed to idols and blood" (Acts 15:29). Some believe that rule still binds, since it goes back to Noah. Others believe it served table fellowship between Jewish and Gentile believers then, and that Jesus made all foods clean (Mark 7:19). Believers differ and should be gracious. We must never treat the blood of Christ lightly (Heb 10:29).

16 And if he does not wash ***them*** and does not bathe his flesh, then he shall bear his iniquity.'"

LEVITICUS 18

Not Like Egypt or Canaan

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe), saying, **2** "Speak to the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), and say to them, 'I ***am*** the LORD your God. **3** According to the deeds of the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim), in which you dwelt, you shall not do; and according to the deeds of the land of Canaan (Kena'an), where I am bringing you, you shall not do; and in their statutes you shall not walk. **4** My judgments you shall do, and My statutes you shall keep, to walk in them. I ***am*** the LORD your God. **5** And you shall keep My statutes and My judgments, which a man shall do and live by them. I ***am*** the LORD.

Unlawful Relations

6 "'Any man, to any kin of his flesh you shall not draw near to uncover nakedness. I ***am*** the LORD. **7** The nakedness of your father and the nakedness of your mother you shall not uncover; she ***is*** your mother; you shall not uncover her nakedness. **8** The nakedness of your father's wife you shall not uncover; it ***is*** your father's nakedness. **9** The nakedness of your sister, the daughter of your father or the daughter of your mother, born ***in*** the house or born outside, their nakedness you shall not uncover. **10** The nakedness of your son's daughter or of your daughter's daughter, their nakedness you shall not uncover; for they ***are*** your own nakedness. **11** The nakedness of the daughter of your father's wife, born of your father, she ***is*** your sister; you shall not uncover her nakedness. **12** The nakedness of your father's sister you shall not uncover; she ***is*** your father's kin. **13** The nakedness of your mother's sister you shall not uncover, for she ***is*** your mother's kin. **14** The nakedness of your father's brother you shall not uncover; to his wife you shall not draw near; she ***is*** your aunt. **15** The nakedness of your daughter-in-law you shall not uncover; she ***is*** your son's wife; you shall not uncover her nakedness. **16** The nakedness of your brother's wife you shall not uncover; it ***is*** your brother's nakedness. **17** The nakedness of a woman and her daughter you shall not uncover; her son's daughter or her daughter's daughter you shall not take to uncover her nakedness; they ***are*** kinswomen; it ***is*** lewdness. **18** And a woman to her sister you shall not take ***as*** a rival, to uncover her nakedness besides her, in her lifetime. **19** And to a woman in the impurity of her uncleanness you shall not draw near to uncover her nakedness. **20** And to the wife of your neighbor you shall not give your intercourse for seed, to become unclean by her. **21** And ***any*** of your seed you shall not give to make ***them*** pass over to Molech, and you shall not profane the name of your

17:16 Lev 5:1; Lev 7:18; Lev 19:8
18:2 Exod 6:7; Lev 11:44; Ezek 20:5,7,19,20
18:3 Ezek 20:7,8; Lev 20:23; Exod 23:24
18:4 Lev 18:26; Lev 19:37; Lev 20:22
18:5 Rom 10:5; Gal 3:12; Rom 7:10
18:6 Lev 20:11,12,17-21
18:7 Lev 20:11; Ezek 22:10
18:8 1 Cor 5:1; Lev 20:11; Deut 22:30
18:9 Lev 20:17; Deut 27:22; Ezek 22:11
18:12 Lev 20:19; Exod 6:20
18:14 Lev 20:20
18:15 Lev 20:12; Ezek 22:11; Gen 38:18,19,26
18:16 Matt 22:24; Mark 12:19; Matt 14:3
18:17 Lev 20:14; Deut 27:23; Amos 2:7
18:18 Gen 4:19; Gen 29:28; Exod 26:3
18:19 Lev 20:18; Lev 15:19,24; Ezek 18:6
18:20 Lev 20:10; Exod 20:14; Matt 5:27,28
18:21 Acts 7:43; Rom 2:24; Lev 19:12

17:16 *if he does not wash them and does not bathe his flesh, then he shall bear his iniquity* The uncleanness from eating a carcass was small and the remedy easy. But refusing even that simple step made a person guilty. God's ways of cleansing are not hard. The danger is in ignoring them. "To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His blood" (Rev 1:5) be the glory.

18:2 *I am the LORD your God* The chapter begins with a relationship, not a rule. Before God tells Israel what not to do, He tells them who He is. "I am the LORD" repeats six times here. They obeyed because He was their God.

18:3 *According to the deeds of the land of Egypt, in which you dwelt, you shall not do* Behind Israel was Egypt and ahead was Canaan, and both had ways God called unclean. Brother and sister marriage was known in Egypt, especially in the royal family, and the worship of Canaan included cult prostitutes (Deut 23:17; 1 Kgs 14:24). God's people were not to take their standards from the culture around them: "do not be conformed to this age" (Rom 12:2).

18:5 *which a man shall do and live by them* For redeemed Israel, keeping God's law was the way to a full and blessed life in the land. These laws were a path of life, not a cage. Paul quotes this verse (Rom 10:5; Gal 3:12) to show that anyone seeking righteousness by the law must keep all of it, always. No one has but Christ, who kept it and died for those who broke it (Gal 3:13). Some teachers read the verse as eternal life offered on condition of perfect obedience.

18:6 *to any kin of his flesh you shall not draw near to uncover nakedness* The heading for verses 7 to 18. Kin of his flesh means close relatives, by blood or by marriage. The family was to be a safe place where love was never confused with sexual desire.

18:8 *your father's wife* A stepmother. Paul was shocked that a man in Corinth had "the wife of his father" (1 Cor 5:1). God's standard did not change from Leviticus to the church. Abraham married his half-sister (Gen 20:12) and Jacob two sisters, but that was before this law. From now on such marriages were forbidden.

18:16 *your brother's wife* One exception came later: if a man died without a son, his brother married the widow to carry on his name (Deut 25:5-6), a duty of family love. Herod took his living brother's wife, and John the Baptist told him, "It is not lawful for you to have the wife of your brother" (Mark 6:18). It cost John his life.

18:17 *it is lewdness* A shameful wickedness.

18:18 *a woman to her sister you shall not take as a rival* Jacob's home with Leah and Rachel was full of jealousy and pain (Gen 29 to 30). Most read this as forbidding marriage to a wife's sister while the wife lives. Some read it more broadly as against having more than one wife at all. Either way, God's plan from the beginning was one man and one woman (Gen 2:24; Matt 19:4-6).

18:20 *to the wife of your neighbor you shall not give your intercourse* Adultery, forbidden in the Ten Commandments (Exod 20:14). It sins against God, against one's own marriage and against the neighbor. "God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterers" (Heb 13:4). Verse 19 refers back to 15:19-24.

18:21 *any of your seed you shall not give to make them pass over to Molech* Seed means children. Molech was a god of the Ammonites and others, and his worship made children pass through fire as offerings (2 Kgs 23:10). It was child sacrifice. It sits here because it, too, twists God's gift of life and family, it was part of Canaan's religion, and it uses people for one's own ends. Israel later did this very thing (2 Kgs 16:3; Jer 32:35). Every generation has its ways of sacrificing children for what adults want. God calls it evil.

God. I ***am*** the LORD. **22** And with a male you shall not lie ***as*** the lyings of a woman; it ***is*** an abomination. **23** And with any animal you shall not give your intercourse, to become unclean by it; and a woman shall not stand before an animal to mate with it; it ***is*** perversion.

The Land Vomits Out Its People

24 "'Do not make yourselves unclean by any of these things, for by all these the nations which I am sending away from before you have become unclean. **25** And the land became unclean, and I visited its iniquity on it, and the land vomited out its inhabitants. **26** And you, you shall keep My statutes and My judgments, and you shall not do any of all these abominations, the native or the sojourner who sojourns in your midst, **27** for all these abominations the men of the land who ***were*** before you did, and the land became unclean, **28** so that the land does not vomit you out when you make it unclean, as it vomited out the nation which ***was*** before you. **29** For whoever does any of all these abominations, the souls who do ***them*** shall be cut off from among their people. **30** And you shall keep My charge, not to do any of the statutes of the abominations which have been done before you, and you shall not make yourselves unclean by them. I ***am*** the LORD your God.'"

LEVITICUS 19

Be Holy

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe), saying, **2** "Speak to all the congregation of the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), and say to them, 'You shall be holy, for holy ***am*** I, the LORD your God. **3** Each man, his mother and his father you shall fear, and My Sabbaths you shall keep. I ***am*** the LORD your God. **4** Do not turn to the worthless idols, and gods of molten metal you shall not make for yourselves. I ***am*** the LORD your God. **5** "'And when you sacrifice a sacrifice of peace offerings to the LORD, for your acceptance you shall sacrifice it. **6** On the day of your sacrifice it shall be eaten, and on the next day; and what remains until the third day shall be burned with fire. **7** And if it is eaten at all on the third day, it ***is*** a foul thing; it shall not be accepted. **8** And everyone who eats it shall bear his iniquity, for he has profaned the holy thing of the LORD; and that soul shall be cut off from its kinsmen.

Love Your Neighbor

9 "'And when you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not finish the edge of your field in reaping, and the gleaning of your harvest you shall not gather. **10** And your vineyard you shall not glean, and the fallen grapes of your vineyard you shall not gather; for the poor and for the sojourner you shall leave them. I ***am*** the LORD your God. **11** "'You shall not steal, and you shall not deceive, and you shall not deal

18:22 1 Cor 6:9; Lev 20:13; Rom 1:26,27
18:23 Exod 22:19; Lev 20:15,16; Lev 20:12
18:24 Deut 18:12; Lev 18:6-23,30; Jer 44:4
18:25 Lev 18:28; Jer 2:7; Jer 9:9
18:26 Lev 18:5,30; Deut 4:1,2,40; Deut 12:32
18:27 Lev 18:24; Deut 20:18; Deut 23:18
18:28 Rev 3:16; Lev 18:25; Lev 20:22
18:29 Lev 17:10; Lev 20:6; Exod 12:15
18:30 Lev 20:23; Deut 18:9-12; Lev 18:2,4

19:2 1 Pet 1:16; Lev 11:44,45; Lev 20:7,26
19:3 Matt 19:19; Exod 20:12; Exod 20:8
19:4 Lev 26:1; Exod 20:23; Exod 34:17
19:5 Lev 7:16; Lev 1:3; Lev 22:19,23,29
19:6 Lev 7:11-17
19:7 Lev 7:18-21; Isa 1:13; Isa 65:4
19:9 Ruth 2:2,15; Lev 23:29; Deut 24:19-21
19:10 Judg 8:2; Isa 17:6; Isa 24:13
19:11 Eph 4:25; Col 3:9; Exod 20:15,17

18:22 *with a male you shall not lie as the lyings of a woman; it is an abomination* This forbids sexual relations between men. An abomination is something God finds detestable, a word also used for dishonest scales (Deut 25:16), pride and lying (Prov 6:16-19). The New Testament says the same (1 Cor 6:9-10; Rom 1:26-27; 1 Tim 1:10). God's design for sexual love is a husband and wife in marriage, going back to creation, "male and female" (Matt 19:4).
18:22 *it is an abomination* Kindly too: Paul goes on, "And such were some of you; but you were washed" (1 Cor 6:11). Thieves, drunkards and adulterers were washed by the same blood. The verse speaks of an act. Feeling a temptation one did not choose is not the same as giving in, and Jesus was "tempted in all things according to likeness, without sin" (Heb 4:15). Christians should welcome those who struggle and never single out one sin while excusing their own. The ground at the foot of the cross is level.
18:23 *it is perversion* A confusion of God's created order, known in the religions of the region. This ends the list.
18:25 *the land vomited out its inhabitants* The land is pictured as a body made sick by what it swallowed. God waited centuries, for "the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete" (Gen 15:16). Now it was, and Israel's coming would be His judgment on those nations. God does not judge quickly or without cause, and sin has real effects even on the land.
18:28 *as it vomited out the nation which was before you* God had no favorites with sin. Israel was not given the land for being better (Deut 9:5). If they lived the same way, they would be treated the same way, and centuries later Israel and then Judah went into exile.
18:30 *you shall keep My charge* The sacrifices were fulfilled in Christ, but God's standard for sexual purity was not set aside: "Flee sexual immorality" (1 Cor 6:18). These limits protect families, children, marriages and the weak. If you have broken them, Jesus says, "Neither do I condemn you; go, and sin no more" (John 8:11). If someone in your family has harmed you, it was not your fault. Please talk to a pastor, counselor or someone you trust, and if anyone is in danger, get help right away.
19:2 *You shall be holy, for holy am I, the LORD your God* For all the congregation, not just the priests. To be holy is to be set apart for God, different from the world because we belong to Him. This is the key verse of Leviticus (11:44-45; 20:26), and Peter quotes it to the church (1 Pet 1:15-16). God's call to holiness did not end with the Law. It is still His call, now made possible by His Spirit in us.
19:3 *his mother and his father you shall fear* To fear one's parents means to honor and respect them. Mother is named first, unusual in the Bible, so both are honored equally. This is the fifth commandment (Exod 20:12), "the first commandment with a promise" (Eph 6:2).
19:3 *My Sabbaths you shall keep* The Sabbath was the seventh day, Saturday, Israel's day of rest and a sign of God's covenant with them (Exod 31:13). Believers today differ on how it applies. Some keep Saturday. Many worship on Sunday, the Lord's day of Christ's resurrection. Others see the Sabbath as a shadow fulfilled in Christ, who gives us rest (Col 2:16-17; Heb 4:9-10). "Let each be fully assured in his own mind" (Rom 14:5).
19:4 *the worthless idols* The first and second commandments in short form (Exod 20:3-4). The word has the sense of nothings. Idols cannot see, hear or save, and anything we put in God's place is just as empty in the end.
19:7 *it is a foul thing; it shall not be accepted* Meat spoiled quickly in the heat, but the reason God gives is holiness. Meat offered to God was not to be kept around like common leftovers (7:15-18). Worship is not to be treated lightly.
19:9 *you shall not finish the edge of your field in reaping* Corners left unharvested and dropped grain left lying "for the poor and for the sojourner" (19:10). It was not a handout. The poor worked and gathered for themselves, keeping their dignity. Ruth gleaned under this law (Ruth 2:2-3), and God brought her into the line of David and of Jesus (Matt 1:5). God expects His people to leave room in their lives, money and work for the poor.

falsely, each man with his fellow. **12** And you shall not swear by My name for falsehood, and ***so*** profane the name of your God. I ***am*** the LORD. **13** "'You shall not oppress your neighbor, and you shall not rob ***him***. The wages of a hired laborer shall not stay overnight with you until morning. **14** You shall not curse a deaf ***person***, and before a blind ***person*** you shall not put a stumbling block; and you shall fear your God. I ***am*** the LORD. **15** "'You shall not do injustice in judgment; you shall not lift up the face of a poor ***person***, and you shall not honor the face of a great ***person***; in righteousness you shall judge your fellow. **16** You shall not go about ***as*** a slanderer among your people; you shall not stand against the blood of your neighbor. I ***am*** the LORD. **17** "'You shall not hate your brother in your heart; you shall surely rebuke your fellow, and you shall not bear sin because of him. **18** You shall not take vengeance, and you shall not keep ***a grudge*** against the sons of your people; and you shall love your neighbor as yourself. I ***am*** the LORD.

Laws for Daily Life

19 "'My statutes you shall keep. Your livestock you shall not make mate ***with*** two kinds; your field you shall not sow ***with*** two kinds; and a garment of two kinds, of mixed material, shall not go up on you. **20** "'And a man, when he lies with a woman ***with*** an emission of seed, and she ***is*** a female slave betrothed to a man, and she has not at all been ransomed, or freedom has not been given to her, ***there*** shall be an inquiry; they shall not be put to death, because she was not freed. **21** And he shall bring his guilt offering to the LORD, to the entrance of the tent of meeting, a ram of guilt offering. **22** And the priest shall make atonement for him with the ram of the guilt offering before the LORD for his sin which he has sinned; and it shall be forgiven him, from his sin which he has sinned. **23** "'And when you come into the land and plant every tree for food, then you shall treat its foreskin as uncircumcised, its fruit; three years it shall be uncircumcised to you; it shall not be eaten. **24** And in the fourth year all its fruit shall be a holy thing, praises to the LORD. **25** And in the fifth year you shall eat its fruit, to increase its produce for you. I ***am*** the LORD your God. **26** "'You shall not eat ***anything*** with the blood. You shall not practice divination, and you shall not practice soothsaying. **27** You shall not round off the edge of your head, and you shall not ruin the edge of your beard. **28** And a cutting for a soul you shall not put in your flesh, and the writing of a tattoo you shall not put on yourselves. I ***am*** the LORD. **29** "'Do not profane your daughter by making her a prostitute, so that the land does not prostitute itself and the land become full of lewdness.

19:12 Matt 5:33; Exod 20:7; Lev 18:21
19:13 James 5:4; Matt 20:8; 1 Tim 5:18
19:14 Rom 14:13; Rev 2:14; Deut 27:18
19:15 James 2:9; Acts 23:3; Deut 1:17
19:16 Exod 23:1; Ps 15:3; Prov 11:13
19:17 1 Tim 5:20; 1 John 2:9,11; Luke 17:3
19:18 Matt 5:43; Matt 19:19; Matt 22:39
19:19 Deut 22:9-11; Matt 9:16,17; 2 Sam 13:29
19:20 Deut 22:23,24; Exod 21:20,21
19:21 Lev 5:1-6
19:22 Lev 4:20,26
19:23 Acts 7:51; Luke 13:7; Lev 12:3
19:24 Deut 18:4; Prov 3:9; Num 18:12,13
19:25 Lev 26:3,4; Prov 3:9,10; Eccl 11:1,2
19:26 Deut 12:23; 2 Kgs 17:17; Lev 3:17
19:27 Lev 21:5; Isa 15:2; Jer 48:37
19:28 Deut 14:1; 1 Kgs 18:28; Lev 21:5
19:29 Lev 21:7; Deut 23:17; Hos 4:12-14

19:12 *you shall not swear by My name for falsehood* Echoes of the eighth, ninth and third commandments. A false oath used God's holy name to cover a lie. Our yes should mean yes and our no, no (Matt 5:37).
19:13 *The wages of a hired laborer shall not stay overnight with you until morning* A day laborer lived on that day's pay, and if it was held back his family might go hungry. Withheld wages cry out to the Lord (James 5:4). Pay people what you owe, and pay on time.
19:14 *before a blind person you shall not put a stumbling block* The deaf could not hear the curse and the blind could not see the stumbling block. No one would know but God, so "you shall fear your God." Holiness shows most clearly in how we treat people who cannot defend themselves.
19:15 *you shall not lift up the face of a poor person, and you shall not honor the face of a great person* Judges were not to favor the poor out of pity or the rich out of fear. Justice must be fair to everyone (James 2:1).
19:16 *you shall not stand against the blood of your neighbor* A slanderer spreads damaging talk. This phrase probably means putting a neighbor's life in danger, perhaps by false testimony, or standing by while his life is at risk. Both are common readings. Gossip does real harm.
19:17 *You shall not hate your brother in your heart* The law reaches into the heart. The cure for hidden hatred is honest, loving correction. If my neighbor has done wrong, I should go to him rather than let resentment grow, or I share his guilt (Matt 18:15).
19:18 *you shall love your neighbor as yourself* Jesus named this the second great commandment, "like" the first (Matt 22:39). "The whole law is fulfilled in one word" (Gal 5:14), and James calls it "the royal law" (James 2:8). Here neighbor means a fellow Israelite, but verse 34 extends it to the foreigner, and when asked "And who is my neighbor?" (Luke 10:29), Jesus told of the good Samaritan. He went further: "love your enemies" (Matt 5:44).
19:19 *a garment of two kinds, of mixed material* Wool and linen woven together (Deut 22:11). Scripture does not give the reason. Many teachers think these rules taught respect for the order of creation, where all was made according to its kind (Gen 1:11-12), and separation from what was unholy. Some note the priests' garments did mix wool and linen (Exod 28:6; 39:29), so mixed cloth may have been kept for holy use. This was part of the shadow fulfilled in Christ, but being distinct as God's people remains (2 Cor 6:14-17).
19:20 *they shall not be put to death, because she was not freed* Normally a betrothed woman's sin was punished as adultery (Deut 22:23-24). This slave woman was not yet fully under the protection of marriage and may have had little power to refuse, so she was not treated as a free woman with a free choice. The man was not excused. He brought a guilt offering, and the inquiry may also mean payment. Israel's servant laws were not race-based slavery, and the Law limited them (chapter 25). In Christ "there is not slave nor free" (Gal 3:28).
19:23 *three years it shall be uncircumcised to you* Uncircumcised here means forbidden, not yet given to God. The fourth year's fruit was holy, "praises to the LORD," and only in the fifth could the farmer eat. It took patience and faith, and it taught that the first and best belong to God. Good farmers also know young trees grow stronger when early fruit is removed.
19:26 *You shall not practice divination, and you shall not practice soothsaying* Divination was trying to learn the future or hidden things from signs, like the insides of animals or the flight of birds. Soothsaying was the reading of omens. Israel was to seek God and His Word, not secret powers (Deut 18:10-12).
19:28 *a cutting for a soul you shall not put in your flesh* Cutting the body in mourning for the dead. These were pagan mourning customs, honoring the dead or the gods of the dead with cut hair, cuts and marks. Israel was to grieve, but as the LORD's people, not as those "who have no hope" (1 Thess 4:13). The setting of the tattoo command is pagan mourning and worship. Believers differ on whether it forbids all tattoos for Christians or only marks tied to false religion. All agree our bodies belong to God (1 Cor 10:31).
19:29 *Do not profane your daughter by making her a prostitute* False worship around Israel included cult prostitutes (Deut 23:17), and poverty could tempt a father to sell his daughter. God forbade it absolutely. A father's duty was to protect her. Sin in families spreads to the whole land.

Honor, Kindness and Honest Weights

30 My Sabbaths you shall keep, and My sanctuary you shall fear. I ***am*** the LORD. **31** "'Do not turn to the mediums and to the spiritists; do not seek ***them*** out, to become unclean by them. I ***am*** the LORD your God. **32** "'Before gray hair you shall rise up, and you shall honor the face of an old ***man***; and you shall fear your God. I ***am*** the LORD. **33** "'And when a sojourner sojourns with you in your land, you shall not mistreat him. **34** Like the native among you shall the sojourner who sojourns with you be to you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim). I ***am*** the LORD your God. **35** "'You shall not do injustice in judgment, in measurement, in weight, and in volume. **36** Balances of righteousness, weights of righteousness, an ephah of righteousness, and a hin of righteousness you shall have. I ***am*** the LORD your God, who brought you out from the land of Egypt. **37** And you shall keep all My statutes and all My judgments, and do them. I ***am*** the LORD.'"

LEVITICUS 20

Penalties for Molech and Mediums

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe), saying, **2** "And to the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) you shall say, 'Any man of the sons of Israel or of the sojourners who sojourn in Israel, who gives ***any*** of his seed to Molech, shall surely be put to death; the people of the land shall stone him with stones. **3** And I, I will set My face against that man, and I will cut him off from among his people, because he has given ***some*** of his seed to Molech, so as to make My sanctuary unclean and to profane the name of My holiness. **4** And if the people of the land at all hide their eyes from that man when he gives ***any*** of his seed to Molech, so as not to put him to death, **5** then I, I will set My face against that man and against his clan, and I will cut him off, and all who prostitute themselves after him, to prostitute themselves after Molech, from among their people. **6** "'And the soul who turns to the mediums and to the spiritists, to prostitute itself after them, I will set My face against that soul, and I will cut him off from among his people. **7** And you shall sanctify yourselves, and you shall be holy, for I ***am*** the LORD your God. **8** And you shall keep My statutes and do them. I ***am*** the LORD who sanctifies you.

Penalties for Sexual Sin

9 "'For any man who curses his father or his mother shall surely be put to death; his father or his mother he has cursed; his blood ***is*** on him. **10** "'And a man who commits adultery with the wife of a man, who commits adultery with the wife of his neighbor, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death. **11** And a man who lies with his father's wife, he has uncovered his father's nakedness; both of them shall surely be put to death; their blood ***is*** on them. **12** And a man who lies with his daughter-in-law, both of

19:30 Lev 26:2; Lev 19:3; Eccl 5:1
19:31 Isa 8:19; 1 Sam 28:3,7-9; 1 Chr 10:13
19:32 1 Tim 5:1; Lam 5:12; Lev 19:14
19:33 Exod 22:21; Exod 23:9; Mal 3:5
19:34 Rom 13:9; Gal 5:14; James 2:8
19:35 Deut 25:13,15; Prov 11:1; Prov 16:11
19:36 Prov 11:1; Exod 20:2
19:37 Lev 18:4,5; Deut 4:1,2,5,6; Deut 5:1
20:2 Lev 18:21; Lev 20:27; Lev 24:14,23
20:3 2 Cor 6:16; Acts 7:43; Lev 18:21
20:4 Rev 2:14; Deut 17:2-5; Acts 17:30
20:5 Acts 7:43; Lev 17:10; Exod 20:5
20:6 Lev 20:27; Isa 8:19; Lev 19:26,31
20:7 1 Pet 1:16; Eph 1:4; Lev 11:44
20:8 Exod 31:13; Lev 21:8; Ezek 37:28
20:9 Matt 15:4; Mark 7:10; Exod 21:17
20:10 John 8:5; John 8:4,5; Deut 22:22-24
20:11 Deut 27:20,23; Amos 2:7; 1 Cor 5:1
20:12 Lev 18:15; Lev 18:23; Gen 38:16,18

19:30 *My sanctuary you shall fear* The Sabbath was holy time. The sanctuary was holy space. To fear it is to come with reverence.
19:31 *Do not turn to the mediums and to the spiritists* They claimed to speak with the dead. "On behalf of the living should they consult the dead?" (Isa 8:19). Saul died after consulting a medium (1 Chr 10:13). Christians should stay far from fortune tellers, seances, horoscopes and the like. We have God's Word and His Spirit.
19:32 *Before gray hair you shall rise up* Standing when an older person came in was a sign of respect. Our culture prizes youth and pushes the elderly aside. God says honor them, and how we treat them shows whether we fear Him.
19:34 *you shall love him as yourself, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt* Israel knew what it was to be a poor, mistreated foreigner. The love of verse 18 now reaches beyond Israel. We too were once strangers, far from God, before Christ brought us near (Eph 2:12-13).
19:36 *Balances of righteousness, weights of righteousness* Merchants weighed goods with stones on balance scales, and a cheat kept a heavy set for buying and a light one for selling. An ephah was about half a bushel, a hin about a gallon. "Scales of deceit are an abomination of the LORD" (Prov 11:1). Honest business is holy business. God saved them first, then called them to live this way. A people saved by grace should look like this chapter, by the Spirit (Rom 8:4).
20:2 *shall surely be put to death; the people of the land shall stone him with stones* Giving children to Molech meant offering them as sacrifices, often by fire (18:21). Israel was a nation with God as its King, and the Law of Moses was its civil law as well as its religious law. These penalties were carried out by the nation's courts after a fair trial, with at least two or three witnesses (Deut 17:6). They were not private acts of revenge.
20:4 *if the people of the land at all hide their eyes from that man* If the community looked the other way, God would set His face against the man, his clan and all who followed him. To ignore evil against children is to share in it. When a church or community covers up harm done to children, God sees and holds them to account.
20:6 *the soul who turns to the mediums and to the spiritists* Seeking the dead or spirits for guidance is spiritual unfaithfulness, like a wife running after other men. Here God Himself acts against the one who goes. Verse 27 gives the penalty for the medium.
20:8 *I am the LORD who sanctifies you* Israel was to sanctify themselves (20:7), and the LORD sanctified them. Holiness is God's work in us and also our work as we obey: "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil 2:12), for "God is the One who is working in you" (Phil 2:13).
20:9 *any man who curses his father or his mother shall surely be put to death* Not a child's angry word. To curse here means to treat with contempt, call down evil on, reject utterly. Parents stood in God's place to teach His law (Deut 6:6-7), and a grown son who cursed them rejected God's order at its root. Deuteronomy 21:18-21 shows such a case brought before the elders, a public trial and not a private act. Scripture records no case of it being carried out. Jesus used this law against leaders who dodged caring for their parents (Matt 15:4-6). The command is repeated for Christians, not the penalty (Eph 6:1-4), and honor runs both ways.
20:9 *his blood is on him* He is responsible for his own death, not those who carry out the sentence.
20:10 *the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death* Both were punished equally. The leaders who brought a woman caught in adultery to Jesus had not brought the man (John 8:3-5). Jesus said, "The sinless one among you, let him first cast the stone at her" (John 8:7), and then, "Neither do I condemn you; go, and sin no more" (John 8:11). He did not call adultery anything but sin. But He offered mercy, which every one of us needs.
20:12 *they have done perversion* These sins broke the family apart from the inside.

them shall surely be put to death; they have done perversion; their blood ***is*** on them. **13** And a man who lies with a male ***as*** the lyings of a woman, both of them have done an abomination; they shall surely be put to death; their blood ***is*** on them. **14** And a man who takes a woman and her mother, it ***is*** lewdness; they shall burn him and them with fire, so that there may not be lewdness in your midst. **15** And a man who gives his intercourse with an animal shall surely be put to death, and the animal you shall kill. **16** And a woman who draws near to any animal to mate with it, you shall kill the woman and the animal; they shall surely be put to death; their blood ***is*** on them. **17** "'And a man who takes his sister, the daughter of his father or the daughter of his mother, and he sees her nakedness and she sees his nakedness, it ***is*** a disgrace; and they shall be cut off before the eyes of the sons of their people; he has uncovered his sister's nakedness; he shall bear his iniquity. **18** And a man who lies with a menstruous woman and uncovers her nakedness, he has laid bare her fountain, and she has uncovered the fountain of her blood; and both of them shall be cut off from among their people. **19** And the nakedness of your mother's sister or of your father's sister you shall not uncover, for he has laid bare his kin; they shall bear their iniquity. **20** And a man who lies with his aunt, he has uncovered his uncle's nakedness; they shall bear their sin; they shall die childless. **21** And a man who takes his brother's wife, it ***is*** impurity; he has uncovered his brother's nakedness; they shall be childless.

Be Holy to Me

22 "'And you shall keep all My statutes and all My judgments, and do them, so that the land where I am bringing you to dwell in it may not vomit you out. **23** And you shall not walk in the statutes of the nation which I am sending away from before you; for they did all these ***things***, and I loathed them. **24** And I said to you, "You, you shall possess their ground, and I, I will give it to you to possess it, a land flowing ***with*** milk and honey." I ***am*** the LORD your God, who has separated you from the peoples. **25** And you shall separate between the clean animal and the unclean, and between the unclean bird and the clean; and you shall not make your souls detestable by animal or by bird or by anything that moves on the ground, which I have separated for you to declare unclean. **26** And you shall be holy to Me, for I, the LORD, ***am*** holy, and I have separated you from the peoples to be Mine. **27** "'And a man or a woman, when there is among them a medium or a spiritist, they shall surely be put to death; they shall stone them with stones; their blood ***is*** on them.'"

LEVITICUS 21

The Holiness of the Priests

1 And the LORD said to Moses (Moshe), "Say to the priests, the sons of Aaron (Aharon), and say to them, 'For a soul he shall not make himself unclean among his kinsmen, **2** except for his kin who ***is*** near to him: for his mother and for his father and for his son and for his daughter and for his brother, **3** and for his sister, the virgin, who ***is*** near to him, who has not belonged to a husband; for her he may make himself unclean. **4** He shall not make himself unclean, a husband among his kinsmen, to profane himself. **5** They shall not make baldness on their head, and the edge of their beard they shall not shave, and in their flesh they shall not cut a

20:13 Lev 18:22; Jude 1:7; 1 Cor 6:9
20:14 Lev 18:17; Deut 27:23; Amos 2:7
20:15 Lev 18:23; Deut 27:21; Exod 22:19
20:16 Exod 19:13; Exod 21:28,32; Heb 12:20
20:17 Lev 18:9; Deut 27:22; Gen 20:12
20:18 Mark 5:29; Lev 15:24; Lev 18:19
20:19 Lev 18:6; Lev 18:12,13-30; Exod 6:20
20:20 Luke 20:29; Lev 18:14; Job 18:19
20:21 Mark 6:18; Lev 18:16; Matt 14:3,4
20:22 Lev 18:25-28; Lev 18:4,5,26; Lev 19:37
20:23 Lev 18:3,24,30; Deut 9:5; Lev 18:27
20:24 2 Cor 6:17; Exod 33:16; Exod 3:8,17
20:25 Lev 11:1-47; Deut 14:3-21; Acts 10:11-15,28
20:26 1 Pet 1:16; Lev 20:7; Lev 19:2
20:27 Lev 19:31; Lev 20:6; Exod 22:18
21:1 Ezek 44:25; Lev 21:11; Lev 10:6,7
21:2 Lev 18:6; 1 Thess 4:13
21:4 Ezek 24:16,17
21:5 Deut 14:1; Ezek 44:20; Lev 19:27,28

20:13 *they shall surely be put to death* The penalty for the act forbidden in 18:22. The New Testament repeats the standard, not the death penalty. It never tells the church to put anyone to death for any sin. Paul told the Corinthian church to remove a man living in sexual sin from fellowship (1 Cor 5:13), hoping he would repent and be restored (2 Cor 2:6-8). This verse shows how serious sin is to a holy God, like every sin here and our own: "The wages of sin is death" (Rom 6:23). Then we look to the cross and to "such were some of you; but you were washed" (1 Cor 6:11). Christians must never use this verse to hate, mock or harm anyone.
20:14 *they shall burn him and them with fire* The most severe penalty in the chapter. Some teachers believe the burning came after stoning, as with Achan (Josh 7:25). The text does not say. The purpose is given: "so that there may not be lewdness in your midst."
20:15 *the animal you shall kill* The animal had done no moral wrong, but it was killed so the shameful act would not be remembered in the camp.
20:20 *they shall die childless* The lighter penalties show that God's law made distinctions, and not every sin was punished alike. Childless may mean God would not give them children, or that children would not be counted as their heirs. Either way their family line in Israel ended, a great loss in that culture. Verse 21 concerns a brother's wife apart from the duty of Deuteronomy 25:5-6.
20:24 *a land flowing with milk and honey* A picture of a rich and fruitful land. The holiness laws were not a burden on a people trying to earn God's love. They were the way of life for a people He had already chosen.
20:26 *I have separated you from the peoples to be Mine* This is the heart of holiness. God did not only separate Israel from something. He separated them to Himself. Believers are "a people for His possession" (1 Pet 2:9). The food laws that marked the separation were fulfilled in Christ (Acts 10:15, 28), but we are still to belong wholly to God.
20:27 *a medium or a spiritist, they shall surely be put to death* Mediums led people away from the living God into darkness, which in Israel was treason against their King. The church does not carry out these penalties. Scripture gives the sword to governments (Rom 13:4), and Christians differ on how far that should go today. This chapter shows what we all deserve, for "all sinned" (Rom 3:23). "While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom 5:8). If this chapter shows you your sin, do not run from God. Run to Him.
21:1 *For a soul he shall not make himself unclean among his kinsmen* A soul here means a dead person. Touching a dead body, or being in the same tent, made a person unclean for seven days (Num 19:11-14). A priest had to stay clean to serve. Yet for his close family he could become unclean (21:2-3). God did not ask a priest to stay away from the funeral of his own mother or child. He made room for grief and love.
21:4 *a husband among his kinsmen* Not easy to translate. Many take it to mean a priest, as a leading man among his people, must not become unclean for those outside his close family. Others take it to mean his wife's relatives. Either way, the circle was small.

cutting. **6** They shall be holy to their God, and they shall not profane the name of their God; for the fire offerings of the LORD, the food of their God, they are bringing near; and they shall be holy. **7** A woman ***who is*** a prostitute or profaned they shall not take, and a woman divorced from her husband they shall not take; for he ***is*** holy to his God. **8** And you shall sanctify him, for the food of your God he is bringing near; he shall be holy to you, for holy ***am*** I, the LORD, who sanctifies you. **9** And the daughter of a man ***who is*** a priest, when she profanes herself by prostituting herself, she is profaning her father; she shall be burned with fire.

The High Priest

10 "'And the priest ***who is*** great among his brothers, on whose head the oil of the anointing was poured, and who has filled his hand to wear the garments, he shall not let loose ***the hair of*** his head, and he shall not tear his garments. **11** And he shall not go in to any souls of ***the*** dead; for his father or for his mother he shall not make himself unclean. **12** And from the sanctuary he shall not go out, and he shall not profane the sanctuary of his God, for the consecration of the oil of the anointing of his God ***is*** on him. I ***am*** the LORD. **13** And he, a woman in her virginity he shall take. **14** A widow or a divorced ***woman*** or a profaned ***woman***, a prostitute, these he shall not take; but only a virgin of his kinsmen he shall take ***as*** a wife, **15** and he shall not profane his seed among his kinsmen; for I ***am*** the LORD who sanctifies him.'"

Priests with Blemishes

16 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **17** "Speak to Aaron, saying, 'Any man of your seed throughout their generations in whom there is a blemish shall not draw near to bring near the food of his God. **18** For any man in whom ***is*** a blemish shall not draw near: a man blind or lame or slit-nosed or overgrown ***in limb***, **19** or a man in whom there is a fracture of a foot or a fracture of a hand, **20** or hunchbacked, or withered, or ***with*** a defect in his eye, or eczema, or scabs, or crushed ***in*** testicle. **21** Any man of the seed of Aaron the priest in whom ***is*** a blemish shall not come near to bring near the fire offerings of the LORD; a blemish ***is*** in him; he shall not come near to bring near the food of his God. **22** The food of his God, from the holy ***things*** of the holies and from the holy things, he may eat. **23** Only to the veil he shall not go in, and to the altar he shall not come near, for a blemish ***is*** in him; and he shall not profane My sanctuaries, for I ***am*** the LORD who sanctifies them.'" **24** And Moses spoke to Aaron and to his sons and to all the sons of Israel (Yisra'el).

LEVITICUS 22

Eating the Holy Things

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe), saying, **2** "Speak to Aaron (Aharon) and to his sons, that they separate themselves from the holy things of the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), and that they not profane the name of My holiness, which they are sanctifying to Me. I ***am*** the LORD. **3** Say to them, 'Throughout your generations, any man of all your seed who draws near to the holy things which the sons of Israel sanctify to the LORD, while his uncleanness ***is*** on him, that soul shall be cut off from before Me. I ***am*** the LORD. **4** Any man of the seed of Aaron who ***is*** leprous or has a discharge shall not

21:6 Lev 18:21; Lev 3:11; Lev 21:8
21:7 Ezek 44:22; Deut 24:1-4; 1 Tim 3:11
21:8 John 10:36; Lev 21:6; Exod 19:10,14
21:9 Rev 17:16; Gen 38:24; 1 Sam 2:17,34
21:10 Lev 16:32; Lev 10:6,7; Lev 8:12
21:11 Matt 12:46; Matt 12:47; Num 19:14
21:12 Lev 10:7; Exod 29:6,7; Lev 8:9-12,30
21:13 Rev 14:4; Lev 21:7; Ezek 44:22
21:15 Gen 18:19; Ezra 2:62; Ezra 9:2
21:17 Lev 10:3; Num 16:5; Ps 65:4
21:18 1 Tim 3:2,3,7; Isa 56:10; Matt 23:16,17,19
21:20 Deut 23:1
21:21 Lev 21:6,8,17
21:22 1 Cor 9:13; Lev 2:3,10; Lev 7:1
21:23 Matt 27:51; Heb 10:20; Lev 21:12
21:24 Mal 2:1-7; Col 4:17; 1 Tim 1:18
22:2 Lev 18:21; Deut 15:19; Lev 22:32
22:3 Matt 25:41; Lev 7:20,21; Exod 33:14,15
22:4 Lev 15:2,3; Lev 15:13-15; Lev 21:1

21:6 *the food of their God* The offerings are called God's food not because He needed to eat, but because they were like a meal presented at His table. Those who served at His table had to be holy, and must not mourn like the pagans (19:27-28).
21:7 *a woman divorced from her husband they shall not take* Profaned probably means a woman who had lost her purity in some way. This law was not saying a divorced woman was worse or could not be forgiven. Many had done no wrong. It concerned the priest's household as a picture of purity. Church leaders too are to be "above reproach" (1 Tim 3:2), with homes in good order (Titus 1:6).
21:9 *she shall be burned with fire* A priest's daughter who became a prostitute shamed her father's holy office and God's name. With cult prostitution part of Canaan's worship (1 Kgs 14:24), this would bring pagan worship to the door of God's house. As in 20:14, some believe the burning followed stoning; the text does not say. Like the Law's other death penalties, it belonged to Israel as a nation, and the church does not carry it out. What we do affects our families and the name of the Lord we serve.
21:10 *the priest who is great among his brothers* The high priest, whose standard was higher still.
21:11 *for his father or for his mother he shall not make himself unclean* He could not attend even his parents' funerals in the usual way, as Aaron could not mourn Nadab and Abihu (10:6-7). He belonged wholly to God. Jesus said, "Follow Me, and leave the dead to bury their own dead" (Matt 8:22), not teaching us to neglect family, but that following Him comes before every other love.
21:14 *only a virgin of his kinsmen he shall take as a wife* His children would carry on the high priesthood, so his marriage had to be above question. Many teachers see a picture of Christ and His church, presented "holy and blameless" (Eph 5:27). The church is not pure because of her past, but by the blood of her Husband.
21:17 *in whom there is a blemish shall not draw near* The animals offered had to be without blemish (22:19-21), and so did the priests who offered them. Everything at the altar pictured perfection, pointing to the perfect sacrifice and Priest, "holy, innocent, undefiled" (Heb 7:26), who "offered Himself unblemished to God" (Heb 9:14). This never meant people with disabilities were sinful or worth less. Jesus said of the man born blind, "Neither this man sinned, nor his parents" (John 9:3).
21:22 *The food of his God, from the holy things of the holies and from the holy things, he may eat* The grace in this law. A priest with a blemish was still a priest and a son of Aaron. He ate the most holy food and was not cast out. He only could not offer at the altar.
21:24 *Moses spoke to Aaron and to his sons and to all the sons of Israel* Nothing about the priesthood was secret. Every believer now belongs to "a holy priesthood" (1 Pet 2:5), and in Christ's church no one is shut out because of a body that does not work as others do (Luke 14:13; 2 Cor 12:9). Those who lead are still held to a higher standard (James 3:1).
22:2 *that they not profane the name of My holiness* The holy things were the gifts the people brought to God, part of which the priests ate. To profane is to treat as common what God has made holy. Being a priest did not give a man the right to treat holy things carelessly. His closeness to them made it more serious.

eat of the holy things until he is clean. And whoever touches anything unclean ***by*** a soul, or a man from whom an emission of seed goes out, **5** or a man who touches any swarming thing by which he becomes unclean, or a man by whom he becomes unclean, in regard to any of his uncleanness, **6** the soul who touches it shall be unclean until the evening, and he shall not eat of the holy things unless he has bathed his flesh in water. **7** And ***when*** the sun goes in, then he shall be clean, and afterward he may eat of the holy things, for it ***is*** his food. **8** A carcass or a torn ***animal*** he shall not eat, to become unclean by it. I ***am*** the LORD. **9** And they shall keep My charge, and they shall not bear sin for it and die by it, because they profane it. I ***am*** the LORD who sanctifies them. **10** And no stranger shall eat a holy thing; a settler of a priest or a hired laborer shall not eat a holy thing. **11** And a priest, when he buys a soul, the purchase of his silver, he may eat of it; and the one born in his house, they may eat of his food. **12** And a priest's daughter, when she belongs to a man ***who is*** a stranger, she shall not eat of the contribution of the holy things. **13** And a priest's daughter, when she becomes a widow or divorced, and she has no seed, and she returns to her father's house as in her youth, she may eat of her father's food; and no stranger shall eat of it. **14** And a man, when he eats a holy thing unintentionally, then he shall add its fifth to it, and he shall give the holy thing to the priest. **15** And they shall not profane the holy things of the sons of Israel, which they lift up to the LORD, **16** and cause them to bear the iniquity of guilt when they eat their holy things; for I ***am*** the LORD who sanctifies them.'"

Acceptable Offerings

17 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **18** "Speak to Aaron and to his sons and to all the sons of Israel, and say to them, 'Any man of the house of Israel or of the sojourners in Israel who brings near his offering, for any of their vows or for any of their freewill offerings which they bring near to the LORD for a burnt offering, **19** for your acceptance ***it shall be*** a male without blemish from the herd, from the lambs, and from the goats. **20** Anything in which ***is*** a blemish you shall not bring near, for it shall not be for acceptance for you. **21** And a man, when he brings near a sacrifice of peace offerings to the LORD to fulfill a vow or for a freewill offering, from the herd or from the flock, it shall be without blemish for acceptance; there shall not be any blemish in it. **22** Blind or broken or maimed or ***having*** a wart or eczema or scabs, these you shall not bring near to the LORD, and a fire offering of them you shall not give on the altar to the LORD. **23** And an ox or a sheep overgrown or stunted ***in limb***, a freewill offering you may make it, but for a vow it shall not be accepted. **24** And ***one*** bruised or crushed or torn or cut you shall not bring near to the LORD; and in your land you shall not do ***it***. **25** And from the hand of a son of a foreign ***land*** you shall not bring near the food of your God from any of these, for their corruption ***is*** in them, a blemish ***is*** in them; they shall not be accepted for you.'" **26** And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **27** "When an ox or a lamb or a goat is born, then it shall be seven days under its mother; and from the eighth day and onward it shall be accepted for an offering, a fire offering to the LORD. **28** And an ox or a sheep, it and its young you shall not slaughter in one day. **29** And when you sacrifice a sacrifice of thanksgiving to the LORD, for your acceptance you

22:5 Lev 15:7,19; Lev 11:24,43,44
22:6 Lev 15:5; Heb 10:22; Lev 11:24,25
22:7 1 Cor 9:13; Lev 21:22; Num 18:11-19
22:8 Lev 17:15; Exod 22:31; Deut 14:21
22:9 Exod 28:43; Num 18:22,32; Lev 10:1,2
22:10 1 Sam 21:6; Matt 12:4
22:11 Gen 17:13; Num 18:11-13
22:12 Lev 21:3; Isa 40:13
22:13 Gen 38:11; Lev 10:14; Num 18:11-19
22:14 Lev 27:13,15; Lev 5:15-19
22:15 Num 18:32; Lev 19:8; Lev 22:9
22:16 Lev 22:9; 1 Pet 2:24; Lev 7:18
22:18 Lev 1:2,10; Num 15:3; Deut 12:6
22:19 1 Pet 1:19; Lev 1:3,10; Lev 4:32
22:20 1 Pet 1:19; Deut 17:1; Deut 15:21
22:21 Num 15:3,8; Lev 3:1,6; Deut 23:21-23
22:22 Lev 22:20; Mal 1:8; Lev 1:9,13
22:23 Lev 21:18
22:24 Lev 22:20; Deut 23:1
22:25 Lev 21:6,8,21,22; Num 15:14-16; Num 16:40
22:27 Exod 22:30; Lev 22:25; Lev 12:2,3
22:28 Deut 22:6,7; Exod 23:19; Exod 34:26
22:29 Ps 107:22; Ps 116:17; Amos 4:5

22:7 *for it is his food* A kind phrase. The holy food was the priest's living, and God did not shut him out for long. He bathed, waited until sundown and could eat again. Uncleanness was serious, but the way back was simple and quick.
22:9 *they shall not bear sin for it and die by it* For other Israelites eating a carcass made a person unclean until evening (17:15). For a priest it was forbidden outright. The memory of Nadab and Abihu was fresh (chapter 10).
22:10 *no stranger shall eat a holy thing* A stranger here is anyone outside the priest's family, even an Israelite. A settler or hired laborer only lived or worked with him for a time.
22:11 *when he buys a soul, the purchase of his silver, he may eat of it* A slave bought into a priest's house counted as a member of the household and shared the holy food. The law treated him as family, not as an outsider (see chapter 25).
22:13 *she returns to her father's house as in her youth* A priest's daughter married outside the priestly family belonged to another household. But widowed or divorced with no children to support her, she could come home and eat her father's food again. God made a place at the table for the woman with nowhere else to go.
22:14 *he shall add its fifth to it* The same rule as the guilt offering (5:16). Even a mistake with holy things had to be made right, with something extra. The priests also had to guard the holy things so no one ate wrongly and became guilty (22:16). Leaders answer for how they lead others.
22:19 *a male without blemish* A freewill offering is a gift given simply out of a willing heart. The worshiper might keep his best for breeding and give God the lame or blind one. God said no. David would not offer burnt offerings "without cost" (2 Sam 24:24). In Malachi's day the priests did exactly what this forbids, offering what they would never dare give their governor (Mal 1:8).
22:22 *Blind or broken or maimed* Each animal pictured Christ, "a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pet 1:19), who "offered Himself unblemished to God" (Heb 9:14). Only a perfect sacrifice could take the place of sinners. Had Jesus one sin of His own, He could not have died for ours.
22:23 *a freewill offering you may make it, but for a vow it shall not be accepted* A vow was a promise made to God, and a promise to God had to be kept with the best.
22:24 *in your land you shall not do it* The verse seems to refer to the animal's private parts. Many read this last phrase as a ban on neutering animals in Israel at all. Others take it only as a ban on offering such animals.
22:25 *from the hand of a son of a foreign land* Buying an animal from a foreigner did not get around the rule. God's standard did not change with where the animal came from.
22:28 *it and its young you shall not slaughter in one day* God's care even for animals. A newborn had its time with its mother (22:27), and a mother and her young were not killed together (compare Exod 23:19). A people who learn tenderness toward animals are more likely to show it toward people.

shall sacrifice ***it***. **30** On that day it shall be eaten; you shall not leave any of it until morning. I ***am*** the LORD. **31** And you shall keep My commandments and do them. I ***am*** the LORD. **32** And you shall not profane the name of My holiness, and I will be sanctified in the midst of the sons of Israel. I ***am*** the LORD who sanctifies you, **33** who brought you out from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim) to be God to you. I ***am*** the LORD."

LEVITICUS 23

The Sabbath and the Passover

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe), saying, **2** "Speak to the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), and say to them, 'The appointed times of the LORD, which you shall proclaim ***as*** convocations of holiness, these, they ***are*** My appointed times. **3** Six days work shall be done, and on the seventh day ***is*** a Sabbath of Sabbath rest, a convocation of holiness; you shall not do any work; it ***is*** a Sabbath to the LORD in all your dwellings. **4** "'These ***are*** the appointed times of the LORD, convocations of holiness, which you shall proclaim at their appointed time. **5** In the first month, on the fourteenth ***day*** of the month, between the two evenings, ***is*** a Passover to the LORD. **6** And on the fifteenth day of this month ***is*** the Festival of Unleavened Bread to the LORD; seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. **7** On the first day a convocation of holiness shall be for you; you shall not do any work of labor. **8** And you shall bring near a fire offering to the LORD seven days. On the seventh day ***is*** a convocation of holiness; you shall not do any work of labor.'"

Firstfruits and the Festival of Weeks

9 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **10** "Speak to the sons of Israel, and say to them, 'When you come into the land which I am giving to you, and you reap its harvest, then you shall bring the sheaf of the first of your harvest to the priest. **11** And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD for your acceptance; on the next day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it. **12** And on the day of your waving the sheaf you shall offer a male lamb without blemish, a son of its year, for a burnt offering to the LORD, **13** and its grain offering, approximately 4 quarts (two tenths ***of an ephah***) of fine flour mixed with oil, a fire offering to the LORD, a soothing aroma; and its drink offering, wine, approximately 1 quart (a fourth of the hin). **14** And bread and roasted grain and fresh grain you shall not eat until this very day, until you have brought the offering of your God; ***it is*** a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. **15** "'And you shall count for yourselves from the next day after the Sabbath, from the day you brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven complete Sabbaths they shall be. **16** Until the next day after the seventh Sabbath you shall count fifty days; and you shall bring near a new grain offering to the LORD. **17** From your dwellings you shall bring bread of a wave offering, two ***loaves***; of approximately 4 quarts (two tenths ***of an ephah***) of fine flour they shall be; leavened they shall be baked, first-

22:30 Lev 7:15-18; Lev 19:7; Exod 16:19,20
22:31 Deut 4:40; Lev 19:37; Num 15:40
22:32 Lev 18:21; Lev 10:3; Lev 22:2
22:33 Lev 11:45; Exod 6:7; Lev 19:36
23:2 Lev 23:4,37; Exod 23:14-17; Hos 2:11
23:3 Luke 13:14; Luke 23:56; Acts 15:21
23:4 Lev 23:2,37; Exod 23:14
23:5 Matt 26:17; Mark 14:12; Luke 22:7
23:6 Matt 26:17; Mark 14:1; Mark 14:12
23:7 Num 28:18-25
23:10 1 Cor 15:20; James 1:18; John 19:31
23:11 Luke 6:1; John 19:31; Exod 29:24
23:12 1 Pet 1:19; John 19:31; Lev 1:10
23:13 Lev 2:14-16; Lev 14:10; Num 15:3-12
23:14 John 19:31; Lev 19:23-25; Lev 25:2,3
23:15 Luke 6:1; John 19:31; Acts 2:1
23:16 Acts 2:1; John 19:31
23:17 Matt 13:33; Rev 14:4; Acts 2:1

22:30 *On that day it shall be eaten* The thanksgiving offering (7:12-15) was stricter than the vow and freewill offerings (19:6). Thanksgiving was meant to be enjoyed right away, with others, while the joy was fresh.
22:32 *I will be sanctified in the midst of the sons of Israel* To sanctify God's name is to treat Him as holy, as Jesus taught us to pray: "let Your name be sanctified" (Matt 6:9). Everything rests on what He had already done (22:33). We still bring offerings, our bodies "a living, holy sacrifice" (Rom 12:1) and "a sacrifice of praise" (Heb 13:15). Am I giving God my best, or what is left over? The widow's two coins were "more than all" (Mark 12:43).
23:2 *these, they are My appointed times* An appointed time is a set meeting, like an appointment on a calendar. A convocation of holiness is a holy gathering for worship. These are not first Israel's holidays but "the appointed times of the LORD." The holy God made appointments to meet with His people.
23:3 *on the seventh day is a Sabbath of Sabbath rest* The weekly Sabbath comes first, the rhythm of Israel's whole life. They remembered God's rest after creation (Exod 20:11) and their freedom from Egypt (Deut 5:15). Believers differ on how it applies now (see 19:3). "There remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God" (Heb 4:9), entered by faith in Christ.
23:5 *between the two evenings, is a Passover to the LORD* The first month, later called Nisan, falls in March or April. Between the two evenings means twilight. Each family killed a lamb, remembering the night the LORD passed over the houses marked with blood (Exod 12). "For also our Passover was sacrificed for us: Christ" (1 Cor 5:7). Jesus died at Passover, and not a bone of His was broken (Exod 12:46; John 19:36). God set this appointment fifteen centuries ahead, and Jesus kept it.
23:6 *the Festival of Unleavened Bread* Israel left Egypt so fast the dough had no time to rise (Exod 12:39). For seven days all leaven was removed. Leaven often pictures sin spreading through the whole. "Let us celebrate the feast, not with old leaven" (1 Cor 5:8). First comes the blood of the Lamb that saves, then a life of putting away sin.
23:10 *the sheaf of the first of your harvest* A sheaf is a bundle of grain stalks. The first barley harvest came in spring, during Unleavened Bread. Before anyone ate from the new crop, the first sheaf was waved before the LORD.
23:11 *on the next day after the Sabbath* Later Jewish teachers disagreed on which Sabbath was meant: the first day of Unleavened Bread, or the weekly Sabbath during the feast, which would put firstfruits on the first day of the week. Jesus rose on the first day of the week during this feast (Matt 28:1). "He became the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep" (1 Cor 15:20). The first sheaf promised the whole harvest, and Christ's resurrection promises ours (1 Cor 15:23).
23:14 *until you have brought the offering of your God* A drink offering (23:13) was wine poured out at the altar. God got the first of the harvest before anyone ate. Giving God the first is an act of faith that all of it comes from Him (Prov 3:9).
23:16 *you shall count fifty days* Seven weeks gave it the name Festival of Weeks (Deut 16:16). The fifty days gave it the later name Pentecost, from the Greek for fiftieth. It marked the end of the wheat harvest, in late May or June.
23:17 *leavened they shall be baked, firstfruits to the LORD* Leaven was forbidden on the altar (2:11), but this bread was waved and given to the priests, and a sin offering came with it. On this very feast, fifty days after the resurrection, the Spirit came, and "there were added on that day about three thousand souls" (Acts 2:41). Christ was the firstfruits sheaf, raised alone. Fifty days later came the first great harvest. Many see the two leavened loaves as Jew and Gentile in one body, not yet free of sin (Eph 2:14-16). Some note that about three thousand died after the golden calf (Exod 32:28). These are pictures I hold loosely.

fruits to the LORD. **18** And you shall bring near with the bread seven male lambs without blemish, sons of a year, and one young bull, a son of the herd, and two rams; they shall be a burnt offering to the LORD, with their grain offering and their drink offerings, a fire offering of a soothing aroma to the LORD. **19** And you shall offer one male goat of the goats for a sin offering, and two male lambs, sons of a year, for a sacrifice of peace offerings. **20** And the priest shall wave them with the bread of the firstfruits ***as*** a wave offering before the LORD, with the two male lambs; they shall be a holy thing to the LORD for the priest. **21** And you shall proclaim on this very day, a convocation of holiness it shall be for you; you shall not do any work of labor; ***it is*** a statute forever in all your dwellings throughout your generations. **22** "'And when you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not finish the edge of your field in your reaping, and the gleaning of your harvest you shall not gather; for the poor and for the sojourner you shall leave them. I ***am*** the LORD your God.'"

Trumpets and the Day of Atonement

23 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **24** "Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'In the seventh month, on the first ***day*** of the month, ***there*** shall be for you a Sabbath rest, a memorial of a loud blast, a convocation of holiness. **25** You shall not do any work of labor, and you shall bring near a fire offering to the LORD.'" **26** And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **27** "Surely on the tenth of this seventh month, it ***is*** the Day of Atonement; a convocation of holiness it shall be for you, and you shall afflict your souls, and you shall bring near a fire offering to the LORD. **28** And you shall not do any work on this very day, for it ***is*** a Day of Atonement, to make atonement for you before the LORD your God. **29** For any soul who is not afflicted on this very day shall be cut off from its kinsmen. **30** And any soul who does any work on this very day, I will destroy that soul from among its people. **31** You shall not do any work; ***it is*** a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. **32** It ***is*** a Sabbath of Sabbath rest for you, and you shall afflict your souls; on the ninth of the month in the evening, from evening until evening, you shall rest ***for*** your Sabbath."

The Festival of Booths

33 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **34** "Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'On the fifteenth day of this seventh month ***is*** the Festival of Booths, seven days to the LORD. **35** On the first day ***is*** a convocation of holiness; you shall not do any work of labor. **36** Seven days you shall bring near a fire offering to the LORD; on the eighth day a convocation of holiness shall be for you, and you shall bring near a fire offering to the LORD; it ***is*** a solemn assembly; you shall not do any work of labor. **37** "'These ***are*** the appointed times of the LORD which you shall proclaim ***as*** convocations of holiness, to bring near a fire offering to the LORD, a burnt offering and a grain offering, a sacrifice and drink offerings, the matter of a day on its day, **38** besides the Sabbaths of the LORD, and besides your gifts, and besides all your vows, and besides all your freewill offerings, which you give to the LORD. **39** "'Surely on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered the produce of the land, you shall celebrate the festival of the LORD seven days; on the first day ***is*** a Sabbath rest, and on the eighth day ***is*** a Sabbath rest. **40** And you shall take for yourselves on the first day the fruit of trees of splendor, fronds of palm trees, and branches of leafy trees, and poplars of the wadi; and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God seven days. **41** And you shall celebrate it ***as*** a festival to the LORD seven days in the year; ***it is*** a statute forever throughout your generations; in the seventh month you shall celebrate it. **42** In booths you shall dwell

23:18 Acts 2:1; Lev 23:12,13; Num 28:27-31
23:19 Acts 2:1; Num 28:30; Lev 4:23-28
23:20 Acts 2:1; Deut 18:4; Lev 23:17
23:21 Acts 2:1; Lev 23:2,4; Lev 23:14
23:22 Lev 19:9,10; Deut 24:19-21; Deut 16:11-14
23:24 Lev 25:9; 1 Cor 15:52; Num 29:1-6
23:27 Lev 16:29,30; Lev 25:9; Num 29:7-11
23:28 Lev 16:34; Isa 53:10; Dan 9:24
23:29 Acts 3:23; Gen 17:14; Lev 23:27,32
23:30 Lev 20:3,5,6; Gen 17:14; Jer 15:7
23:32 Lev 16:31; Matt 11:28-30; Heb 4:3,11
23:34 John 7:2; Ezra 3:4; Neh 8:14
23:35 John 7:2; Lev 23:7,8,24,25
23:36 John 7:2; Neh 8:18; John 7:37
23:37 John 7:2; Lev 23:2,4; Deut 16:16,17
23:38 John 7:2; Col 2:16; Num 29:39
23:39 John 7:2; Exod 23:16; Deut 16:13
23:40 John 7:2; Deut 16:14,15; Matt 21:8
23:41 John 7:2; Num 29:12; Neh 8:18
23:42 John 7:2; Neh 8:14-17; Gen 33:17

23:22 *for the poor and for the sojourner you shall leave them* The gleaning law (19:9-10) repeated in the middle of the feast calendar. A harvest festival tempts people to think only of their own plenty. Worship and care for the poor go together.
23:24 *a memorial of a loud blast* The seventh month, Tishri, falls in September or October. The blast was trumpets, usually the ram's horn, the shofar (Num 29:1), so it is called the Feast of Trumpets, later Rosh Hashanah. Leviticus does not say what it was for, perhaps a call to prepare for the Day of Atonement. In the prophets the trumpet gathers God's people, warns of judgment and announces the day of the LORD (Joel 2:1; Isa 27:13).
23:24 *a convocation of holiness* The spring feasts were fulfilled in order at Christ's first coming, and many teachers believe the fall feasts will be fulfilled at His second. Among those who hold, as I do, that Christ comes for His church before the Tribulation, many see here a picture of the rapture, "with the trumpet of God" (1 Thess 4:16; 1 Cor 15:52). Others link it to the trumpet that gathers Israel at the end of the Tribulation (Matt 24:31). Other teachers see the feasts fulfilled in Christ and the church with no future order. Never set a date (Matt 24:36). The trumpet is a call to be ready.
23:27 *it is the Day of Atonement* The high priest's part is in chapter 16. Here is the people's part: to afflict the soul, humbling oneself before God, usually by fasting.
23:29 *any soul who is not afflicted on this very day shall be cut off* This was the one day the whole nation was cleansed. To go on with business as usual was to say one did not need atonement. A person who refuses the forgiveness God offers shuts himself out. The Hebrew day began at sundown, so it ran from evening to evening (23:32).
23:32 *you shall afflict your souls* Fulfilled for believers when Christ entered heaven "through His own blood" (Heb 9:12). Many teachers believe it also looks ahead to the day "all Israel will be saved" (Rom 11:26), when they "look to Me, to Him whom they have pierced; and they will mourn over Him" (Zech 12:10). Others see no future national fulfillment (see 16:34).
23:34 *the Festival of Booths* A booth was a simple shelter of branches. Also called the Feast of Tabernacles or Sukkot, it was the last and most joyful feast of the year.
23:38 *besides the Sabbaths of the LORD* The feasts did not replace daily faithfulness. They were added to it.
23:40 *you shall rejoice before the LORD your God seven days* God commanded His people to celebrate. Holiness is not gloomy. After the solemn fast of the Day of Atonement came seven days of joy. First atonement, then joy.

seven days; every native in Israel shall dwell in booths, **43** so that your generations may know that in booths I made the sons of Israel dwell when I brought them out from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim). I ***am*** the LORD your God.'" **44** And Moses spoke the appointed times of the LORD to the sons of Israel.

LEVITICUS 24

The Lamp and the Bread

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe), saying,
2 "Command the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), that they bring to you pure olive oil, beaten, for the light, to cause a lamp to go up continually. **3** Outside the veil of the testimony, in the tent of meeting, Aaron (Aharon) shall arrange it from evening until morning before the LORD continually; ***it is*** a statute forever throughout your generations. **4** On the pure lampstand he shall arrange the lamps before the LORD continually. **5** "And you shall take fine flour and bake it ***into*** twelve cakes; the one cake shall be approximately 4 quarts (two tenths ***of an ephah***). **6** And you shall set them ***in*** two rows, six ***in*** the row, on the pure table before the LORD. **7** And you shall put pure frankincense on the row, and it shall be for the bread for a memorial portion, a fire offering to the LORD. **8** On the day of the Sabbath, on the day of the Sabbath, he shall arrange it before the LORD continually, from the sons of Israel, a covenant forever. **9** And it shall be for Aaron and for his sons, and they shall eat it in a holy place, for it ***is*** a holy of holies to him from the fire offerings of the LORD, a due forever."

The Blasphemer

10 And the son of an Israelite woman went out, and he ***was*** the son of an Egyptian man, in the midst of the sons of Israel; and the son of the Israelite ***woman*** and the Israelite man struggled together in the camp. **11** And the son of the Israelite woman blasphemed the Name, and he cursed; and they brought him to Moses. And the name of his mother ***was*** Shelomith (Shelomit), the daughter of Dibri (Divri), of the tribe of Dan. **12** And they put him in custody, to make ***it*** clear to them according to the mouth of the LORD. **13** And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **14** "Bring the one who cursed outside the camp, and all who heard shall lay their hands on his head, and all the congregation shall stone him. **15** And to the sons of Israel you shall speak, saying, 'Any man, when he curses his God, shall bear his sin. **16** And whoever blasphemes the name of the LORD shall surely be put to death; all the congregation shall surely stone him; as the sojourner, ***so*** the native, when he blasphemes the Name, shall be put to death.

Life for Life

17 And a man, when he strikes down any life of mankind,

23:43 John 7:2; Deut 31:10-13; Exod 13:14
23:44 Lev 23:1,2; Lev 21:24; Matt 18:20
24:2 Exod 27:20,21; Exod 39:37; Exod 40:24
24:4 Exod 31:8; Exod 39:37; Exod 25:31-39
24:5 Matt 12:4; Mark 2:26; Luke 6:4
24:6 Heb 9:2; Matt 12:4; Mark 2:26
24:7 Matt 12:4; Mark 2:26; Luke 6:4
24:8 Matt 12:3; Matt 12:4; Matt 12:5
24:9 Matt 12:4; Mark 2:26; Luke 6:4
24:10 Exod 12:38; Num 11:4
24:11 Acts 6:11; Rom 2:24; Job 2:5,9,10
24:12 Exod 18:15,16,23; Num 27:5; Num 36:5,6
24:14 Acts 7:58; Deut 17:7; Deut 21:21
24:15 Lev 5:1; Num 9:13; Lev 20:16,17
24:16 Matt 26:66; John 19:7; John 8:59
24:17 Gen 9:5,6; Deut 19:11,12; Exod 21:12-14

23:43 *in booths I made the sons of Israel dwell* Every year, even in houses in the land, Israel moved into rough shelters for a week, and children heard how God cared for their fathers in the wilderness. "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14), the word having the idea of pitching a tent. At this feast Jesus cried, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink" (John 7:37). Zechariah says the nations will keep this feast in the coming kingdom (Zech 14:16), which I believe will be fulfilled in the thousand-year reign of Christ. And then "the tabernacle of God is with men" (Rev 21:3).
23:44 *Moses spoke the appointed times of the LORD to the sons of Israel* Christians are not bound to keep these feasts (Col 2:16-17), though some Jewish believers keep them as heritage. Passover, Unleavened Bread, Firstfruits and Weeks were fulfilled at Christ's first coming: His death, our putting away of sin, His resurrection and the coming of the Spirit. Trumpets, Atonement and Booths point ahead. God keeps His appointments. He kept the first four, and He will keep the rest.
24:2 *pure olive oil, beaten, for the light* Beaten oil was the finest, made by crushing olives gently in a mortar. It burned clean and bright with little smoke. The lamp in God's house was kept burning by the gifts of ordinary Israelites.
24:3 *Aaron shall arrange it from evening until morning before the LORD continually* The golden lampstand with seven lamps stood in the holy place, which had no windows (Exod 25:31-40). Jesus said, "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12), and told us to let our light "shine before men" (Matt 5:16). He stands among the lampstands, the churches (Rev 1:12-13, 20). A light that burns continually pictures a faithful witness, kept bright by daily care.
24:5 *bake it into twelve cakes* Each used about four quarts of flour, so these were large loaves, the "bread of the Presence" (Exod 25:30) set before God. The twelve loaves are commonly understood as the twelve tribes, every tribe always before God and none forgotten. Jesus is "the bread of life" (John 6:35).
24:8 *On the day of the Sabbath, on the day of the Sabbath* Fresh bread every Sabbath, and the old went to the priests. When David was hungry he ate this bread (1 Sam 21:1-6), and Jesus used it to show that God's laws were given for people's good and that mercy matters more than outward ritual (Matt 12:4, 7).
24:10 *he was the son of an Egyptian man* A man of mixed parents, perhaps of the "great mixed company" (Exod 12:38) that left Egypt.
24:11 *the son of the Israelite woman blasphemed the Name, and he cursed* To blaspheme is to speak against God with contempt. The Name is the LORD's holy personal name. He did not merely lose his temper. He cursed God Himself, a direct attack on Israel's King. His mother's name is recorded, perhaps to make the account exact. Sin affects families.
24:12 *they put him in custody* Moses did not act in anger or decide on his own. He waited for God's answer. When a case is serious and the way is unclear, slow down, pray and seek God's will.
24:14 *all who heard shall lay their hands on his head* Those who heard were the witnesses. Their hands said that they had heard it and his guilt was on his own head.
24:16 *whoever blasphemes the name of the LORD shall surely be put to death* A man put to death for words. Israel was a nation with God as King, and to curse Him openly was treason against the throne. God would not leave unpunished the misuse of His name (Exod 20:7), and at the nation's start He taught that His name is holy, as with Nadab and Abihu. Jesus Himself was condemned under this law: "He has blasphemed!" (Matt 26:65). Yet He prayed, "Father, forgive them" (Luke 23:34). Blasphemy can be forgiven (Matt 12:31; 1 Tim 1:13). The church does not stone blasphemers. We answer with the gospel.
24:16 *as the sojourner, so the native* It did not matter whether the man was a full Israelite or a foreigner. All were under the same King.
24:17 *when he strikes down any life of mankind, shall surely be put to death* This goes back to God's word to Noah, because man is made in God's image (Gen 9:6). A human life is worth so much that taking one unlawfully cost the murderer his own.

shall surely be put to death. **18** And whoever strikes down the life of an animal shall repay it, life for life. **19** And a man, when he puts a blemish on his fellow, just as he has done, so it shall be done to him: **20** fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth; just as he puts a blemish on a man, so it shall be put on him. **21** And whoever strikes down an animal shall repay it; and whoever strikes down a man shall be put to death. **22** One judgment shall be for you; as the sojourner, ***so*** the native it shall be; for I ***am*** the LORD your God.'" **23** And Moses spoke to the sons of Israel, and they brought the one who had cursed outside the camp, and they stoned him ***with*** stones. And the sons of Israel did just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

LEVITICUS 25

The Sabbath Year

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe) on Mount Sinai (Sinay), saying, **2** "Speak to the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), and say to them, 'When you come into the land which I am giving to you, then the land shall rest a Sabbath to the LORD. **3** Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard, and you shall gather its produce. **4** And in the seventh year there shall be a Sabbath of Sabbath rest for the land, a Sabbath to the LORD; your field you shall not sow, and your vineyard you shall not prune. **5** The self-sown ***growth*** of your harvest you shall not reap, and the grapes of your untrimmed vine you shall not pick; it shall be a year of Sabbath rest for the land. **6** And the Sabbath of the land shall be for you for food: for you and for your male slave and for your female slave and for your hired laborer and for your settler who sojourn with you, **7** and for your livestock and for the living things that ***are*** in your land all its produce shall be to eat.

The Year of Jubilee

8 "'And you shall count for yourself seven Sabbaths of years, seven years seven times; and the days of the seven Sabbaths of years shall be to you forty-nine years. **9** And you shall cause a ram's horn of loud blast to pass through in the seventh month, on the tenth of the month; on the Day of Atonement you shall cause a ram's horn to pass through in all your land. **10** And you shall sanctify the year of the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty in the land to all its inhabitants; it shall be a jubilee for you, and you shall return each man to his possession, and each man to his clan you shall return. **11** It shall be a jubilee for you, the year of the fiftieth year; you shall not sow, and you shall not reap its self-sown ***growth***, and you shall not pick ***the grapes of*** its untrimmed vines. **12** For it ***is*** a jubilee; it shall be holiness to you; from the field you shall eat its produce. **13** In this year of the jubilee you shall return each man to his possession. **14** "'And when you sell a sale to your fellow, or buy from the hand of your fellow, do not mistreat, each man his brother. **15** According to the number of years after the jubilee you shall buy from your fellow; according to the number of the years of produce he shall sell to you. **16** According to the abundance of the years you shall increase its price, and according to the fewness of the years you shall decrease its price; for ***it is*** a number of produce ***years*** he is selling to you. **17** And you shall not mistreat, each man his fellow, and you shall fear your God; for I ***am*** the LORD your God. **18** "'And you shall do My statutes, and My judgments you shall keep and do them; and you shall dwell on the land in security. **19** And the land shall give its fruit, and you shall eat to satisfaction, and you shall dwell in

24:18 Lev 24:21; Exod 21:34-36
24:19 Deut 19:21; Matt 5:38; Matt 7:2
24:20 Matt 5:38; Deut 19:21; Exod 21:23-25
24:21 Exod 21:33; Lev 24:18
24:22 Exod 12:49; Num 9:14; Lev 19:34
24:23 Heb 10:28; Lev 24:14-16; Num 15:35,36
25:1 Gal 4:24; Gal 4:25; Exod 19:1
25:2 Lev 26:34,35; Exod 23:10; 2 Chr 36:21
25:4 Lev 25:20-23; 2 Chr 36:21; Exod 23:10,11
25:5 2 Kgs 19:29; Isa 37:30
25:6 Exod 23:11; Acts 2:44; Acts 4:32,34,35
25:8 Luke 4:19; Lev 23:15; Gen 2:2
25:9 Acts 13:38; Luke 4:19; Lev 23:24,27
25:10 Luke 4:18; Luke 4:19; Jer 34:8,13-17
25:11 Luke 4:19; Lev 27:17
25:12 Luke 4:19; Lev 25:6,7
25:13 Luke 4:19; Lev 25:10; Lev 27:17-24
25:14 Lev 25:17; Lev 19:13; 1 Sam 12:3,4
25:15 Lev 27:18-23; Phil 4:5
25:17 Lev 19:14,32; Lev 25:43; Exod 20:20
25:18 Deut 12:10; Jer 23:6; Ps 4:8
25:19 Lev 26:5; Ps 85:12; Ps 67:6

24:18 *whoever strikes down the life of an animal shall repay it* An animal could be paid for. A human life could not. People are not property, and no ransom could make up for a murder (Num 35:31).
24:20 *fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth* Often called the law of retaliation. Many think it cruel, but it was a limit on cruelty. Revenge in the ancient world grew and grew. This law said the punishment must fit the crime, no more, and the rich paid the same as the poor. It was for judges, not private revenge (Deut 19:18-21). Many teachers believe it was often settled by payment, since only a murderer's ransom is forbidden (Num 35:31); Scripture does not say so directly. Jesus told His followers not to turn it into a right to get even (Matt 5:38-39; Rom 12:17-19).
24:22 *One judgment shall be for you; as the sojourner, so the native it shall be* No special treatment for the native-born, and no harsher treatment for the foreigner. God's justice is fair to all.
24:23 *they stoned him with stones* Told plainly, without detail. It was a sad day in the camp. God's name is holy, and we should never use it carelessly, as a curse word or a joke. In Christ we have received not justice but mercy. Forgiven so much, we can turn the other cheek and leave our wrongs in God's hands.
25:1 *the LORD spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai* We are still at Sinai, where the covenant was given (26:46; 27:34). Israel did not yet have the land, and God was already planning how they would live in it. Even the soil was to keep a Sabbath (25:2).
25:4 *in the seventh year there shall be a Sabbath of Sabbath rest for the land* No planting, pruning or organized harvest. What grew on its own was food for everyone, servants, settlers and even animals (25:6-7). The land rested and recovered, the poor were fed, and rich and poor ate from the same fields for a year. Most of all, Israel learned to trust God to provide.
25:9 *on the Day of Atonement you shall cause a ram's horn to pass through in all your land* The jubilee began on the Day of Atonement (chapter 16). Freedom was announced on the day sins were atoned for. Atonement came first, then liberty.
25:10 *proclaim liberty in the land to all its inhabitants; it shall be a jubilee for you* The word jubilee comes from yobel, a ram's horn. Families who had lost their land got it back, and those who had sold themselves into service went home. Imagine a man who lost his family's land years ago through bad harvests or debt hearing that horn and knowing it was coming back. Scholars debate whether the jubilee was the forty-ninth or fiftieth year; the text says "the fiftieth year."
25:16 *it is a number of produce years he is selling to you* Land was not really sold forever. A buyer paid for the number of harvests until the next jubilee, more like a lease than a sale. A buyer could take advantage of a desperate seller, but fair dealing comes from the fear of God (25:17).

security on it. **20** And when you say, "What shall we eat in the seventh year? Look, we shall not sow, and we shall not gather our produce," **21** then I will command My blessing for you in the sixth year, and it shall make the produce for the three years. **22** And you shall sow in the eighth year, and you shall eat of the produce, old ***produce***, until the ninth year; until its produce comes in, you shall eat old ***produce***.

The Redemption of Land

23 "'And the land shall not be sold in perpetuity, for the land ***is*** Mine; for you ***are*** sojourners and settlers with Me. **24** And in all the land of your possession you shall give redemption for the land. **25** "'When your brother becomes poor and sells some of his possession, then his redeemer who ***is*** near to him shall come and redeem what his brother sold. **26** And a man, when he has no redeemer, and his hand attains and he finds according to the sufficiency of its redemption, **27** then he shall calculate the years of its sale, and repay the surplus to the man to whom he sold ***it***, and he shall return to his possession. **28** And if his hand has not found sufficiency to repay to him, then what he sold shall be in the hand of the one who bought it until the year of the jubilee; and it shall go out in the jubilee, and he shall return to his possession. **29** "'And a man, when he sells a dwelling house of a walled city, then its redemption shall be until the completion of the year of its sale; its redemption shall be ***for*** days. **30** And if it is not redeemed until a complete year is fulfilled for it, then the house which ***is*** in the city that has a wall shall stand in perpetuity for the one who bought it, throughout his generations; it shall not go out in the jubilee. **31** And the houses of the villages which have no wall around them shall be reckoned with the field of the land; redemption shall be for it, and in the jubilee it shall go out. **32** And the cities of the Levites, the houses of the cities of their possession, a redemption forever shall be for the Levites. **33** And what one of the Levites redeems, then the sale of the house and the city of his possession shall go out in the jubilee; for the houses of the cities of the Levites, it ***is*** their possession in the midst of the sons of Israel. **34** And the field of the pasture land of their cities shall not be sold, for it ***is*** a possession forever for them.

Help for the Poor Brother

35 "'And when your brother becomes poor, and his hand slips with you, then you shall strengthen him; ***as*** a sojourner and a settler, and he shall live with you. **36** Do not take from him interest and increase, and you shall fear your God, and your brother shall live with you. **37** Your silver you shall not give to him at interest, and at increase you shall not give your food. **38** I ***am*** the LORD your God, who brought you out from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim), to give you the land of Canaan (Kena'an), to be God to you. **39** "'And when your brother becomes poor with you and sells himself to you, you shall not work him ***with*** the work of a slave. **40** As a hired laborer, as a settler he shall be with you; until the year of the jubilee he shall work with you. **41** And he shall go out from you, he and his sons with him, and he shall return to his clan, and to the possession of his fathers he shall return. **42** For they ***are*** My slaves whom I brought out from the land of Egypt; they shall not be sold ***with*** the sale of a slave. **43** You shall not have dominion over him with harshness, and you shall fear your God.

25:20 Luke 12:29; Num 11:4,13; 2 Kgs 6:15-17
25:21 2 Cor 9:10; Gen 26:12; Gen 41:47
25:22 2 Kgs 19:29; Isa 37:30; Josh 5:11,12
25:23 1 Chr 29:15; Ps 39:12; 1 Pet 2:11
25:24 Lev 25:27,31,51-53; Rom 8:23; 1 Cor 1:30
25:25 Ruth 2:20; Jer 32:7,8; Ruth 3:2,9,12
25:26 Lev 5:7
25:28 Isa 35:9,10; Jer 32:15; 1 Cor 15:52-54
25:31 Ps 49:7,8
25:32 Josh 21:1-45; Num 35:2-8
25:33 Num 18:20-24; Deut 18:1,2
25:34 Lev 25:23; Acts 4:36,37
25:35 Deut 15:7,8; Ps 37:26; Ps 41:1
25:36 Exod 22:25; Deut 23:19,20; Ezek 18:8,13,17
25:38 Lev 11:45; Exod 20:2; Num 15:41
25:39 Exod 21:2; 1 Kgs 9:22; 2 Kgs 4:1
25:40 Exod 21:2,3
25:41 Exod 21:3; John 8:32; Rom 6:14
25:42 Lev 25:55; Rom 6:22; 1 Cor 7:21-23
25:43 Col 4:1; Lev 25:46,53; Exod 1:13,14

25:20 *What shall we eat in the seventh year?* The question every farmer would ask. God promised a sixth-year harvest big enough for three years (25:21), like the double manna before the Sabbath (Exod 16:22-30). Obeying God can look risky, but He says, Trust Me (Matt 6:33). Israel did not keep the Sabbath years, and in the exile the land lay empty "until the land had accepted its Sabbaths" (2 Chr 36:21; see 26:34-35).

25:23 *the land is Mine; for you are sojourners and settlers with Me* The foundation of the whole chapter. Israel lived on God's land as His guests and could not sell it forever. "To the LORD belongs the earth and its fullness" (Ps 24:1). We too are stewards, not owners, of houses, money, time and bodies, and like the patriarchs "strangers and sojourners on the earth" (Heb 11:13). Redemption (25:24) means buying back.

25:25 *his redeemer who is near to him shall come and redeem what his brother sold* The redeemer, go'el, was the closest male relative, with the right and duty to buy back family land, buy a relative out of slavery (25:48-49) and stand up for the family. Boaz did this for Naomi and Ruth (Ruth 4:10). Christ became our relative, taking on flesh and blood, to redeem us (Heb 2:14-15; Gal 4:4-5), paying with His own blood (1 Pet 1:18-19).

25:28 *it shall go out in the jubilee, and he shall return to his possession* With no redeemer, a man could buy back his land if he later had the money, paying for the years left. If he never could, it came back in the jubilee. No family would lose its land forever.

25:30 *it shall not go out in the jubilee* Houses in walled cities were not farmland, the family's share of God's land, so after one year the sale was final. Village houses were counted with the fields (25:31).

25:32 *a redemption forever shall be for the Levites* The Levites, the tribe that served at the tabernacle, received no tribal territory, only cities with pasture land (Num 35:1-8). God made sure they would never lose the little they had (25:34).

25:35 *when your brother becomes poor, and his hand slips with you, then you shall strengthen him* His hand slips means he cannot support himself. Israel was to help him get back on his feet.

25:37 *Your silver you shall not give to him at interest* Loans to a poor fellow Israelite were to help, not to make money off his trouble. The law did not forbid all business loans, and interest was allowed to foreigners (Deut 23:20). Christians differ on how this applies to lending today. But a poor brother is not a business opportunity. God had freed them when they were poor slaves (25:38).

25:39 *you shall not work him with the work of a slave* An Israelite who sold his labor to pay his debts was a hired worker, not property, and went home with his family in the jubilee (25:40-41). Deuteronomy 15:12-15 also sets a release in the seventh year. Teachers explain the two laws differently, but both forbid holding an Israelite in service forever.

25:42 *For they are My slaves whom I brought out from the land of Egypt* God had bought Israel out of slavery. No Israelite could own another the way Pharaoh had owned them, or rule him with harshness (25:43).

Foreign Slaves and Redemption

44 And your male slave and your female slave who shall be yours, from the nations that ***are*** around you, from them you may buy a male slave and a female slave. **45** And also from the sons of the settlers who sojourn with you, from them you may buy, and from their clan that ***is*** with you, which they have fathered in your land; and they shall be for you for a possession. **46** And you may take them as an inheritance for your sons after you, to possess ***as*** a possession; forever you may work them; but over your brothers, the sons of Israel, each man over his brother, you shall not have dominion over him with harshness. **47** "'And when the hand of a sojourner or a settler with you attains ***means***, and your brother with him becomes poor and sells himself to a sojourner, a settler with you, or to an offshoot of the clan of a sojourner, **48** after he has sold himself, redemption shall be for him; one of his brothers may redeem him, **49** or his uncle or the son of his uncle may redeem him, or any of the kin of his flesh from his clan may redeem him; or ***if*** his hand has attained, then he may redeem himself. **50** And he shall calculate with the one who bought him from the year he sold himself to him until the year of the jubilee; and the silver of his sale shall be according to the number of years; as the days of a hired laborer he shall be with him. **51** If ***there are*** still many in the years, according to them he shall repay his redemption from the silver of his purchase. **52** And if few remain in the years until the year of the jubilee, then he shall calculate for him; according to his years he shall repay his redemption. **53** As a hired laborer year by year he shall be with him; he shall not have dominion over him with harshness before your eyes. **54** And if he is not redeemed by these ***means***, then he shall go out in the year of the jubilee, he and his sons with him. **55** For to Me the sons of Israel ***are*** slaves; they ***are*** My slaves whom I brought out from the land of Egypt. I ***am*** the LORD your God.

LEVITICUS 26

Blessings for Obedience

1 'You shall not make for yourselves worthless idols, and a carved image and a sacred pillar you shall not set up for yourselves, and a figured stone you shall not put in your land to bow down to it; for I ***am*** the LORD your God. **2** My Sabbaths you shall keep, and My sanctuary you shall fear. I ***am*** the LORD. **3** If in My statutes you walk, and My commandments you keep, and you do them, **4** then I will give your rains in their time, and the land will give its produce, and the tree of the field will give its fruit. **5** And for you threshing will reach the grape harvest, and grape harvest will reach the sowing; and you will eat your bread to satisfaction, and you will dwell in security in your land. **6** And I will give peace in the land, and you will lie down, and ***there will be*** none terrifying ***you***; and I will cause harmful living things to cease from the land, and a sword will not pass through your land. **7** And you will pursue your enemies, and they will fall before you by the sword. **8** And five of you will pursue a hundred, and a hundred of you will pursue ten thousand; and your enemies will fall before you by the sword. **9** And I will turn to you, and I will make you fruitful, and I will multiply you, and I will establish My covenant with you. **10** And you will eat old ***produce***, grown old, and old ***produce*** you will bring out from before ***the*** new. **11** And I will put My tabernacle in your

25:44 Exod 12:44; Ps 2:8,9; Isa 14:1,2
25:45 Isa 56:3-6
25:46 Isa 14:2
25:47 Lev 25:26; 1 Sam 2:7,8; James 2:5
25:48 Neh 5:5,8; Lev 25:25,35; Gal 4:4,5
25:50 Luke 4:19; Isa 16:14; Isa 21:16
25:52 Luke 4:19
25:54 Luke 4:19; Exod 21:2,3; Lev 25:40,41
25:55 Lev 25:42; Exod 13:3; Exod 20:2
26:1 Lev 19:4; Exod 23:24; Exod 20:4,5,23
26:2 Lev 19:30
26:3 Deut 28:1-14; Deut 11:13-15; Lev 18:4,5
26:4 Ps 67:6; Deut 28:12; Job 5:10
26:5 Amos 9:13; Deut 11:15; Joel 2:19,26
26:6 John 14:27; Zeph 3:13; Ps 29:11
26:8 Josh 23:10; Deut 32:30; Num 14:9
26:9 Gen 17:6,7,20; Neh 9:23; Exod 2:25
26:10 Lev 25:22; Josh 5:11; 2 Kgs 19:29
26:11 Rev 21:3; Exod 25:8; Exod 29:45

25:44 *from them you may buy a male slave and a female slave* The hardest part of the chapter. This was not the slavery of the Atlantic trade, built on race and kidnapping. The Law made kidnapping a capital crime (Exod 21:16), and the New Testament names "enslavers" among the lawless (1 Tim 1:10). The Law limited it in ways unlike the nations: a master who killed his slave was punished (Exod 21:20), an injured slave went free (Exod 21:26-27), a runaway was not handed back (Deut 23:15-16), and slaves rested on the Sabbath and could join the Passover (Exod 12:44).

25:46 *forever you may work them* Many teachers believe this, like the allowance for divorce "in view of your hardness of heart" (Matt 19:8), regulated an evil found everywhere in a fallen world rather than showing God's design from creation. The gospel undermines slavery at its root: every person bears God's image (Gen 1:27), in Christ "there is not slave nor free" (Gal 3:28), and Onesimus was to be received as "a beloved brother" (Phlm 1:16). Many who worked to end slavery were Christians moved by these truths. Using these verses to defend cruelty or race-based slavery twists Scripture.

25:48 *after he has sold himself, redemption shall be for him* An Israelite who sold himself to a foreigner could be bought back by family or by himself, the price figured by the years left until the jubilee. A foreign master had to treat him fairly, "before your eyes" (25:53), with Israel watching.

25:55 *they are My slaves whom I brought out from the land of Egypt* Israel could not be owned by anyone else, because God had already bought them. In Nazareth Jesus read Isaiah 61, built on the jubilee, "to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke 4:19), and said, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled" (Luke 4:21). He stopped before "a day of vengeance" (Isa 61:2), which comes at His second coming. Many teachers see the full jubilee in His coming kingdom (Rom 8:21). Today is the year of His favor. "If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed" (John 8:36).

26:1 *a sacred pillar you shall not set up for yourselves* A sacred pillar was a standing stone used in pagan worship, and a figured stone was carved with images, the tools of Canaanite religion. Worshiping only the LORD, keeping His Sabbaths and honoring His house (26:2) sum up Israel's faithfulness. Idolatry would be the root of all that went wrong later in the chapter.

26:4 *I will give your rains in their time* In Canaan everything depended on rain: early rains in the fall, late rains in spring. On time, there was food. If not, famine. The harvests would be so big that threshing would run into the grape harvest and the grape harvest into sowing (26:5).

26:8 *five of you will pursue a hundred* Israel's victories would come from God, not from numbers, as with Gideon's three hundred (Judg 7) and Jonathan and his armor bearer (1 Sam 14).

26:9 *I will make you fruitful, and I will multiply you* The promise to Abraham (Gen 17:2-7). There would be so much food they would clear out last year's grain to make room for the new (26:10).

midst, and My soul will not abhor you. **12** And I will walk about in your midst, and I will be your God, and you, you will be My people. **13** I ***am*** the LORD your God, who brought you out from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim), from being slaves to them; and I broke the bars of your yoke and made you walk upright.

Curses for Disobedience

14 And if you do not listen to Me, and do not do all these commandments, **15** and if you reject My statutes, and if your soul abhors My judgments, so as not to do all My commandments, so that you break My covenant, **16** I also, I will do this to you: and I will appoint over you sudden terror, the consumption and the fever, causing ***the*** eyes to fail and making ***the*** soul pine away; and you will sow your seed in vain, and your enemies will eat it. **17** And I will set My face against you, and you will be struck before your enemies; and those who hate you will have dominion over you, and you will flee, and ***there is*** none pursuing you. **18** And if despite these ***things*** you do not listen to Me, then I will again discipline you sevenfold for your sins. **19** And I will break the pride of your strength, and I will make your heavens like iron and your land like bronze. **20** And your strength will be spent in vain, and your land will not give its produce, and the tree of the land will not give its fruit. **21** And if you walk with Me ***in*** hostility, and you are not willing to listen to Me, then I will add to you a blow sevenfold according to your sins. **22** And I will send among you the living things of the field, and they will make you childless, and they will cut off your livestock, and they will make you few; and your roads will be desolate. **23** And if by these ***things*** you are not disciplined by Me, and you walk with Me ***in*** hostility, **24** then I also will walk with you in hostility, and I also will strike you sevenfold for your sins. **25** And I will bring on you a sword avenging the vengeance of ***the*** covenant; and you will be gathered into your cities, and I will send pestilence in your midst, and you will be given into the hand of an enemy. **26** When I break for you the staff of bread, then ten women will bake your bread in one oven, and they will bring back your bread by weight, and you will eat and not be satisfied. **27** And if in ***spite of*** this you do not listen to Me, and you walk with Me in hostility, **28** then I will walk with you in ***the*** fury of hostility, and I also will discipline you sevenfold for your sins. **29** And you will eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters you will eat. **30** And I will destroy your high places, and I will cut down your incense altars, and I will put your corpses on the corpses of your idols, and My soul will abhor you. **31** And I will make your cities a waste, and I will devastate your sanctuaries, and I will not smell your soothing aroma. **32** And I, I will devastate the land, and your enemies who dwell in it will be appalled at it. **33** And you I will scatter among the nations, and I will draw out a sword after you; and your land will be a desolation, and your cities will be a waste. **34** Then the land will accept its Sabbaths all the days of its lying desolate, and you ***will be*** in the land of your enemies; then the land will rest and accept its Sabbaths. **35** All the days of its lying desolate it will rest, that which it did not rest in your Sabbaths when you dwelt on it. **36** And ***as for*** those who

26:12 2 Cor 6:16; Rev 21:7; Jer 30:22
26:13 Ezek 34:27; Lev 25:38,42,55; Exod 20:2
26:14 Acts 3:23; Deut 28:15-68; Lam 2:17
26:15 2 Kgs 17:15; Deut 31:16; Lev 26:43
26:16 Job 31:8; 1 Sam 2:33; Deut 28:21,22,35
26:17 Luke 21:22; Prov 28:1; Lev 17:10
26:18 Luke 21:22; Rev 22:18; Lev 26:21,24,28
26:19 Luke 21:22; Deut 28:23; Isa 25:11
26:20 Ps 127:1; Isa 49:4; Lev 26:4
26:22 Luke 21:22; Deut 32:24; Ezek 14:15,21
26:23 Luke 21:22; Jer 5:3; Jer 2:30
26:24 Luke 21:22; Rev 22:18; 2 Sam 22:27
26:25 Num 14:12; Ezek 5:17; Deut 32:25,41
26:26 Isa 3:1; Mic 6:14; Ps 105:16
26:27 Lev 26:21,24
26:28 Isa 59:18; Isa 63:3; Isa 66:15
26:29 Lam 4:10; Ezek 5:10; Deut 28:53-57
26:30 Isa 27:9; Ezek 6:3-6,13; 1 Kgs 13:2
26:31 Luke 21:22; Neh 2:3,17; 2 Kgs 25:4-10
26:32 Luke 21:22; Jer 9:11; Jer 25:11,18,38
26:33 Luke 21:24; Luke 21:22; Deut 4:27
26:34 2 Chr 36:21; Lev 25:2-4,10
26:35 Isa 24:5,6; Rom 8:22
26:36 Ezek 21:7,12,15; Isa 30:17; Gen 35:5

26:12 *I will walk about in your midst, and I will be your God, and you, you will be My people* The greatest blessing of all. Rain, harvests and peace were good gifts, but the best gift was God Himself, walking with them as with Adam in the garden (Gen 3:8). This is the goal of the whole Bible. Paul applies it to the church: "I will dwell in them and walk among them" (2 Cor 6:16). And at the end, "Look, the tabernacle of God is with men" (Rev 21:3).
26:13 *I broke the bars of your yoke and made you walk upright* A yoke was the wooden bar across an ox's neck. Slaves walked bent under their burdens, and God let them stand up straight. The blessings rest on what He had already done. He saved them first and called them to obey second.
26:15 *so that you break My covenant* Not listening, not doing, rejecting, abhorring. Sin begins with not listening and ends with hating what God says.
26:16 *sudden terror, the consumption and the fever* Diseases that waste the body. These curses were for Israel as a nation under the Sinai covenant. This chapter does not teach that every illness or hard time in a believer's life is punishment for sin (John 9:2-3), nor that every faithful Christian will be healthy and rich. These are the terms of God's national covenant with Israel in the land.
26:18 *I will again discipline you sevenfold for your sins* Discipline is the key word. These were the acts not of a God who wanted to destroy His people but of a Father trying to bring His children back. Sevenfold means full measure.
26:19 *I will make your heavens like iron and your land like bronze* Sky hard as iron, giving no rain, and ground hard as bronze, giving no crops. It happened in Elijah's day, three and a half years without rain (1 Kgs 17:1; James 5:17).
26:21 *if you walk with Me in hostility* A phrase repeated through the rest of the chapter: walking against God, opposing Him. If Israel walked against God, God would walk against them (26:24).
26:26 *When I break for you the staff of bread* Bread was the staff of life, what people leaned on to live. In a besieged city ten women would share one oven and bread would be rationed by weight.
26:29 *you will eat the flesh of your sons* The worst horror of a long siege. Scripture records it happening at Samaria and Jerusalem (2 Kgs 6:28-29; Lam 4:10). Sin, left to run its course, destroys everything good, even a parent's love for a child.
26:30 *I will destroy your high places* Hilltop shrines where idols were worshiped. Their bodies would lie on "the corpses of your idols," which could not save them. God would no longer smell their soothing aroma (26:31). Worship without obedience no longer pleases Him.
26:33 *you I will scatter among the nations* Exile, the worst curse, driven out of the land God gave. This was fulfilled in history: Samaria fell to Assyria in 722 B.C. (2 Kgs 17:6-7), and Jerusalem and the temple fell to Babylon in 586 B.C.
26:34 *Then the land will accept its Sabbaths* The land would get the rest Israel refused to give it (25:2-7). The exile lasted "until the land had accepted its Sabbaths" (2 Chr 36:21), to fulfill seventy years.
26:36 *the sound of a driven leaf will pursue them* A people who once chased a hundred with five men would run from a blowing leaf. Sin takes away courage and peace. The guilty flee when no one pursues (Prov 28:1).

remain among you, I will bring faintness into their heart in the lands of their enemies, and the sound of a driven leaf will pursue them, and they will flee ***as in*** the flight of a sword, and they will fall, and ***there is*** none pursuing. **37** And they will stumble, each man over his brother, as from before a sword, and ***there is*** none pursuing; and you will have no power to stand before your enemies. **38** And you will perish among the nations, and the land of your enemies will eat you. **39** And those who remain among you will rot away in their iniquity in the lands of your enemies; and also in the iniquities of their fathers with them they will rot away.

The LORD Remembers His Covenant

40 And they will confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their fathers, in their unfaithfulness with which they acted unfaithfully against Me, and also that they walked with Me in hostility, **41** I also will walk with them in hostility, and I will bring them into the land of their enemies; or ***if*** then their uncircumcised heart humbles itself, and then they accept their iniquity, **42** and I will remember My covenant ***with*** Jacob (Ya'aqov), and also My covenant ***with*** Isaac (Yitschaq), and also My covenant ***with*** Abraham (Avraham) I will remember; and the land I will remember. **43** And the land will be forsaken by them, and let it accept its Sabbaths while it is made desolate without them; and they, they will accept their iniquity, because, even because they rejected My judgments, and their soul abhorred My statutes. **44** And yet even ***with*** this, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not reject them, and I will not abhor them, to make an end of them, to break My covenant with them; for I ***am*** the LORD their God. **45** And I will remember for them the covenant of the former ones, whom I brought out from the land of Egypt before the eyes of the nations, to be their God. I ***am*** the LORD.'" **46** These ***are*** the statutes and the judgments and the laws which the LORD gave between Himself and the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) on Mount Sinai (Sinay) by the hand of Moses (Moshe).

LEVITICUS 27

Vows of Persons

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe), saying, **2** "Speak to the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), and you shall say to them, 'When a man makes a special vow, by your valuation of souls to the LORD, **3** then your valuation of the male from a son of twenty years and up to a son of sixty years shall be—your valuation shall be approximately 20 ounces (fifty shekels) of silver, by the shekel of the holy place. **4** And if she ***is*** a female, then your valuation shall be approximately 12 ounces (thirty shekels). **5** And if from a son of five years and up to a son of twenty years, then your valuation of the male shall be approximately 8 ounces (twenty shekels), and for the female approximately 4 ounces (ten shekels). **6** And if from a son of a month and up to a son of five years, then your valuation of the male shall be approximately 2 ounces (five shekels) of silver, and for the female your valuation ***shall be*** approximately 1 1/5 ounces (three shekels) of silver. **7** And if from a son of sixty years and upward, if a male, then your valuation shall be approximately 6 ounces (fifteen shekels), and for the female approximately 4 ounces (ten shekels). **8** And if he ***is too*** poor for your valuation, then he shall make him stand before the priest, and the priest shall value him; according to what the hand of the one who vows can reach, the priest shall value him.

26:37 Josh 7:12,13; Judg 2:14; Judg 7:22
26:38 Deut 28:48,68; Isa 27:13; Jer 42:17,18,22
26:39 Ezek 4:17; Ezek 33:10; Deut 28:65
26:40 Rom 11:28; 1 Kgs 8:33-36,47; Prov 28:13
26:41 Acts 7:51; Rom 11:28; Ezek 44:7
26:42 Luke 1:72; Exod 2:24; Exod 6:5
26:43 Lev 26:15; Lev 26:34,35; Lev 26:41
26:44 Rom 11:2; 2 Kgs 13:23; Neh 9:31
26:45 Luke 1:72; Lev 22:33; Lev 25:38
26:46 John 1:17; Lev 27:34; Deut 6:1
27:2 Matt 27:9; Num 6:2; Deut 23:21-23
27:3 Matt 27:9; Exod 30:13; Num 18:16
27:4 Matt 26:15; Matt 27:9; Zech 11:12,13
27:5 Matt 27:9
27:6 Num 3:40-43; Num 18:14-16
27:7 Ps 90:10
27:8 Lev 14:21,22; Lev 5:7; Lev 12:8

26:40 *they will confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their fathers* At the bottom comes hope. An uncircumcised heart (26:41) is one never truly given to God. If it humbled itself and accepted its guilt, God would remember. Daniel prayed this way near the end of the seventy years (Dan 9:5), and Nehemiah too (Neh 1:8-9). In 538 B.C. Cyrus of Persia let the Jews return home.

26:42 *My covenant with Abraham I will remember* The names run backward to the beginning. God's promise to Abraham came before Sinai and rested on His grace alone (Gen 15). Israel broke the covenant of Sinai, but God would not break His promise to Abraham.

26:44 *I will not reject them, and I will not abhor them, to make an end of them* Perhaps the most important words in the chapter. God disciplined Israel severely but never cast them off. "Did God reject His people? May it not be!" (Rom 11:1). Israel was scattered after Babylon and again after Rome destroyed Jerusalem in A.D. 70, but God's calling stands (Rom 11:29). I believe God still has a future for the nation of Israel. He will gather them, give them a new heart (Ezek 36:24-28), and "all Israel will be saved" (Rom 11:26). Others see these promises fulfilled in the return from Babylon and in the church.

26:46 *on Mount Sinai by the hand of Moses* This closes the main body of Leviticus, and chapter 27 is a kind of appendix. God disciplines those He loves (Heb 12:6, 10). But "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us" (Gal 3:13), and the blessing of 26:12 is ours in Him. If you have wandered, the way back is the same: confess, humble your heart and trust His promise (1 John 1:9).

27:2 *When a man makes a special vow, by your valuation of souls to the LORD* Souls here means persons. An Israelite might vow himself, a child or a servant to the LORD, as Hannah vowed Samuel (1 Sam 1:11). Only Levites could serve at the tabernacle (Num 3:5-10), so most people vowed paid a set value in silver to the sanctuary instead. Vows were voluntary (Deut 23:22), but once made had to be kept (Eccl 5:4).

27:4 *if she is a female, then your valuation shall be approximately 12 ounces* Does this mean God values men more than women? No. If these were worth before God, a man of sixty-one would be worth less than a boy of nineteen. The common explanation is that the values match the work a person could usually do in that economy, so they rise and fall with age, and the gap narrows in old age. Both man and woman bear "the image of God" (Gen 1:27), and every soul in Christ was bought not with silver or gold "but with the precious blood of Christ" (1 Pet 1:18-19).

27:4 *approximately 12 ounces* Thirty shekels, the price of a slave killed by an ox (Exod 21:32), and what Judas was paid: "they set for him thirty silver coins" (Matt 26:15). Zechariah foretold it with bitter irony, "the magnificent price at which I was priced by them" (Zech 11:13; Matt 27:9). The Son of God was valued by men at the price of a slave.

27:8 *if he is too poor for your valuation* A poor man was not shut out from vowing, nor crushed by a vow he could not pay. The priest set a price he could afford (see 5:7; 14:21).

Vows of Animals and Property

9 And if ***it is*** an animal of which they bring near an offering to the LORD, all that he gives of it to the LORD shall be holy. **10** He shall not replace it, and he shall not exchange it, a good for a bad or a bad for a good; and if he does indeed exchange animal for animal, then it and its substitute shall be holy. **11** And if ***it is*** any unclean animal of which they do not bring near an offering to the LORD, then he shall make the animal stand before the priest, **12** and the priest shall value it, between good and bad; according to your valuation, priest, so it shall be. **13** And if he does indeed redeem it, then he shall add its fifth to your valuation. **14** And when a man sanctifies his house ***as*** holy to the LORD, then the priest shall value it, between good and bad; as the priest values it, so it shall stand. **15** And if the one who sanctified ***it*** redeems his house, then he shall add the fifth of the silver of your valuation to it, and it shall be his. **16** And if a man sanctifies to the LORD some of the field of his possession, then your valuation shall be according to its seed: the seed of approximately 6 bushels (a homer) of barley at approximately 20 ounces (fifty shekels) of silver. **17** If he sanctifies his field from the year of the jubilee, according to your valuation it shall stand. **18** And if he sanctifies his field after the jubilee, then the priest shall calculate the silver for him according to the years that remain until the year of the jubilee, and it shall be deducted from your valuation. **19** And if the one who sanctified it does indeed redeem the field, then he shall add the fifth of the silver of your valuation to it, and it shall stand ***as*** his. **20** And if he does not redeem the field, and if he has sold the field to another man, it shall not be redeemed anymore. **21** And the field, when it goes out in the jubilee, shall be holy to the LORD, like the field of the devoted thing; it shall belong to the priest ***as*** his possession. **22** And if he sanctifies to the LORD a field of his purchase, which ***is*** not of the field of his possession, **23** then the priest shall calculate for him the amount of your valuation up to the year of the jubilee, and he shall give your valuation on that day ***as*** holy to the LORD. **24** In the year of the jubilee the field shall return to ***the one*** from whom he bought it, to ***the one*** to whom the possession of the land ***belongs***. **25** And all your valuation shall be by the shekel of the holy place; the shekel shall be approximately 2/5 ounce (twenty gerahs).

What Already Belongs to the LORD

26 Only a firstborn which is born as a firstling to the LORD among livestock, no man shall sanctify it; whether an ox or a sheep, it ***is*** the LORD's. **27** And if ***it is*** among the unclean livestock, then he shall ransom ***it*** by your valuation, and he shall add its fifth to it; and if it is not redeemed, then it shall be sold by your valuation. **28** Only, every devoted thing which a man devotes to the LORD from all that he has, from mankind and livestock and from the field of his possession, shall not be sold, and it shall not be redeemed; every devoted thing ***is*** a holy of holies to the LORD. **29** Every devoted ***one*** who is devoted from mankind shall not be ransomed; he shall surely be put to death. **30** And all the tithe of the land, of the seed of the land, of the fruit of the tree, ***is*** the LORD's; it ***is*** holy to the LORD. **31** And if a man does indeed redeem ***any*** of his tithe, let him add its fifth to it. **32** And all the tithe of the herd and the flock, all that passes under the rod, the tenth shall be holy to the LORD. **33** He shall not examine between good and bad, and he shall not exchange it; and if he does indeed exchange it, then it and its substitute shall be holy; it shall not be redeemed.'" **34** These ***are*** the commandments which the LORD commanded Moses for the sons of Israel on

27:10 Lev 27:15-33; James 1:8
27:11 Deut 23:18; Mal 1:14
27:13 Lev 22:14; Lev 27:10,15,19; Lev 5:16
27:14 Lev 27:21; Lev 25:29-31; Num 18:14
27:16 Acts 4:34-37; Acts 5:4; Isa 5:10
27:18 Lev 25:15,16,27,51,52
27:21 Ezek 44:29; Num 18:14; Lev 25:10,28,31
27:22 Lev 25:10,25
27:23 Lev 27:12,18
27:24 Lev 25:28; Lev 27:20
27:25 Exod 30:13; Num 3:47; Num 18:16
27:26 Exod 13:2,12,13; Exod 22:30; Num 18:17
27:28 Josh 6:17-19,26; Lev 27:21; Exod 22:20
27:29 Num 21:2,3; 1 Sam 15:18-23
27:30 Matt 23:23; Gen 28:22; Gen 14:20
27:32 Jer 33:13; Ezek 20:37; Mic 7:14
27:34 John 1:17; Gal 4:24; Gal 4:25

27:10 *He shall not replace it, and he shall not exchange it* In a crisis we promise God our best. When it passes, we look for a way to give less. If he tried to swap, he lost both animals. God says, keep your word.
27:13 *he shall add its fifth to your valuation* An unclean animal, such as a donkey or camel, could not be offered, so it was valued and sold for the sanctuary, or bought back with twenty percent added. The extra fifth kept anyone from treating a vow lightly. The same applied to a house (27:15).
27:16 *your valuation shall be according to its seed* A field's value was set by the seed needed to sow it, for the full time from jubilee to jubilee, and figured down for the years remaining (25:15-16).
27:21 *like the field of the devoted thing* A field dedicated, not redeemed, and sold to another could not come back. At the jubilee it became the priests'. A gift to God is serious, not something to play games with.
27:24 *In the year of the jubilee the field shall return to the one from whom he bought it* A bought field went back to its family at the jubilee. No vow could cancel the jubilee or take a family's land forever (25:23). One fair standard, the shekel of the holy place, was used for everyone (27:25).
27:26 *no man shall sanctify it* The firstborn animals already belonged to God (Exod 13:2, 12). You cannot give someone a gift that is already his.
27:28 *every devoted thing* A devoted thing, herem, was given over to God completely and permanently, never to be bought back, "a holy of holies to the LORD."
27:29 *he shall surely be put to death* This does not let an Israelite vow another person to death. Human sacrifice was forbidden as an abomination (18:21; 20:2; Deut 12:31). The common conservative reading is that the devoted person was placed under God's ban for his own guilt, by God's command or lawful judgment: "Whoever sacrifices to the gods, except to the LORD alone, shall be devoted to destruction" (Exod 22:20; Josh 6:17). No money could ransom him. The judgment had to stand.
27:30 *all the tithe of the land* A tithe is a tenth. Abraham gave a tenth to Melchizedek (Gen 14:20) and Jacob vowed one (Gen 28:22), before the Law. Under the Law it supported the Levites, who had no land (Num 18:21), and Malachi rebuked Israel for robbing God in it (Mal 3:8).
27:32 *all that passes under the rod* The shepherd counted animals as they passed under his staff, and every tenth was God's. He could not pick out the weak ones (27:33). Do Christians have to tithe? Believers differ. Some hold the tithe is still the standard, since it came before the Law. Others hold the New Testament calls for regular, generous, glad giving without a set percentage, for "God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Cor 9:7). Jesus warned tithers not to neglect "the justice and the mercy and the faith" (Matt 23:23).
27:34 *These are the commandments which the LORD commanded Moses* The book closes as it opened, with the LORD speaking to Moses (1:1). Be careful with promises to God (Matt 5:33-37). Ananias "lied to men but to God" (Acts 5:4) about a gift he did not have to give. Our lives already belong to God: "you were bought with a price" (1 Cor 6:20). Jesus paid it, not with silver but with His own blood. Valued by men at thirty pieces of silver, He gave Himself to buy us back.

Mount Sinai (Sinay).

NUMBERS

Introduction

Title

Numbers is the fourth of the five books of Moses, the Law or Torah, between Leviticus and Deuteronomy. The English name comes from the Greek and Latin Bibles, which named it for the two counts of the people in chapters 1 and 26. The Hebrew title is a word from the first verse, Bemidbar, "in the wilderness." Both names fit. The book counts God's people, and it follows them through the desert. It has census lists, but also some of the most human stories in the Bible: grumbling, rebellion, a talking donkey, and a God who keeps blessing a people who keep failing.

Author and Date

Moses. The book says that "Moses wrote down their goings out according to their journeys at the mouth of the LORD" (33:2), and over and over it says the LORD spoke to Moses. Jesus spoke of the Law as the writings of Moses (Luke 24:44; John 5:46-47). A few lines, such as the note on Moses' humility (12:3), may have been written by Moses under the Spirit's guidance or added by a later inspired hand such as Joshua. Many modern critical scholars believe Numbers was put together from several sources long after Moses. I take the book at its word, as Jesus and the apostles did. It was written near the end of Moses' life, about 1405 B.C., on the plains of Moab. That follows the date of about 1446 B.C. for the exodus (1 Kgs 6:1); some scholars place the exodus in the 1200s B.C.

Background and Setting

Numbers opens at Sinai on the first day of the second month of the second year after the exodus (1:1), about 1445 B.C., one month after the tabernacle was set up. It ends almost thirty-nine years later on the plains of Moab, across the Jordan from Jericho. Most of those years pass in silence between chapters 14 and 20. The route runs north from Sinai through Paran to Kadesh, then around Edom and Moab.

The book tells the story of two generations. The first was counted, organized around the tabernacle and led to the border of Canaan in a few months. At Kadesh they believed the bad report of ten spies and refused to go in (chapters 13 and 14), and God sentenced them to wander until that generation died. Only Joshua and Caleb, who trusted the LORD, would enter. Their children were counted again (chapter 26) and made ready to take the land. Numbers was written for that second generation, to tell them why their parents died and to prepare them to trust God.

The first census counts 603,550 fighting men (1:46) and the second 601,730 (26:51), pointing to a people of two million or more. I take the numbers as written. Some scholars read the Hebrew word for thousand, eleph, as a clan or military unit, which would make the numbers much smaller, but the totals add up as thousands, and God was able to keep that many alive in the desert, which is the point of the manna, the quail and the water from the rock.

Themes

The theme of Numbers is God's faithfulness to His promise in spite of His people's unbelief. Balaam, hired to curse Israel, had to say, "God is not a man, that He should lie, and a son of mankind, that He should relent. Has He said, and will He not do it?" (23:19).

Unbelief and grumbling are costly. The people complain about hardship, food and water, their leaders challenge Moses, and at Kadesh the whole nation refuses the land. God judges, sometimes severely. Yet He is "slow to anger and great in steadfast love, forgiving iniquity and transgression" (14:18). He feeds them with manna, leads them by the cloud, gives water from the rock and turns Balaam's curses into blessing. He disciplines His people but does not abandon them. Holiness matters too: God lives in the middle of the camp, so the camp is ordered around Him, guarded by priests and Levites, and kept clean. The book closes with promises about the land, its borders and its inheritance, all spoken before Israel owns one acre of it. Paul says these things "happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition" (1 Cor 10:11).

Christ in Numbers

Jesus said, "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up" (John 3:14), so that whoever believes in Him should have eternal life (21:8-9). He is the true bread from heaven, greater than the manna (John 6:31-35), and Paul says of the rock that gave Israel water, "the rock was the Christ" (1 Cor 10:4). Hebrews compares Moses, faithful as a servant in God's house, with Christ, faithful as a Son over it (Heb 3:5-6; compare Num 12:7). The ashes of the red heifer show "how much more" (Heb 9:14) the blood of Christ cleanses the conscience (chapter 19). Aaron's priesthood passed from man to man as each one died (20:28), but Jesus is "always living to intercede" (Heb 7:25). Hebrews 3 and 4 use Kadesh to warn us not to harden our hearts in unbelief. Many teachers, Jewish and Christian, see Balaam's "star" from Jacob (24:17) as the Messiah, the King who will rule, and the cities of refuge give a picture of the believer who has "fled for refuge" (Heb 6:18) to Christ.

Hard Passages

The test for a wife suspected of unfaithfulness (5:11-31) is explained as a protection for a woman wrongly accused, with God Himself as judge. The judgments on God's own people are severe: the plague after the quail (11:33-34), the man put to death for breaking the Sabbath (15:32-36), the earth opening under Korah (16:31-35), the serpents (21:6) and the plague at Peor (25:1-9). The notes explain each one in its setting, as God's direct judgment under the covenant, never a pattern for anyone today.

Moses' exclusion from the land (20:12) is explained from the text itself. Balaam's talking donkey (chapter 22) is treated as a real event, as Peter treats it (2 Pet 2:16). The laws on vows made by wives and daughters (chapter 30) are about household responsibility, not a woman's worth. The war against Midian (chapter 31), including the order about the women and children, is the hardest passage in the book. The notes say so

openly, explain it as God's judgment for Midian's deliberate plot at Peor, and say it is never permission to take a life in God's name today. Where good teachers disagree, as on the large numbers, the angel of the LORD, the star from Jacob, the tithe and the Sabbath, the notes give the main views.

Outline

I. Getting Ready at Sinai (1:1-10:10)
  A. The first census and the order of the camp (1:1-2:34)
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NUMBERS

NUMBERS 1

The First Census

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe) in the wilderness of Sinai (Sinay), in the tent of meeting, on ***day*** one of the second month, in the second year of their going out from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim), saying, **2** "Take the sum of all the congregation of the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), by their clans, by the house of their fathers, by the number of names, every male, by their heads, **3** from a son of twenty years and upward, everyone who goes out ***to*** war in Israel; you shall enroll them by their armies, you and Aaron (Aharon). **4** And with you there shall be a man, a man for each tribe, each man the head of the house of his fathers. **5** And these ***are*** the names of the men who shall stand with you: for Reuben (Reuven), Elizur (Elitsur) the son of Shedeur; **6** for Simeon (Shimon), Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai (Tsurishaday); **7** for Judah (Yehuda), Nahshon (Nachshon) the son of Amminadab (Aminadav); **8** for Issachar (Yisashkhar), Nethanel (Netanel) the son of Zuar (Tsu'ar); **9** for Zebulun (Zevulun), Eliab (Eli'av) the son of Helon (Chelon); **10** for the sons of Joseph (Yosef): for Ephraim (Efrayim), Elishama the son of Ammihud (Amihud); for Manasseh (Menashe), Gamaliel (Gamli'el) the son of Pedahzur (Pedahtsur); **11** for Benjamin (Binyamin), Abidan (Avidan) the son of Gideoni (Gidoni); **12** for Dan, Ahiezer (Achi'ezer) the son of Ammishaddai (Amishaday); **13** for Asher, Pagiel the son of Ochran (Okhran); **14** for Gad, Eliasaph (Elyasaf) the son of Deuel; **15** for Naphtali (Naftali), Ahira (Achira) the son of Enan." **16** These ***were*** the called ones of the congregation, the leaders of the tribes of their fathers; they ***were*** the heads of the thousands of Israel.

The Count by Tribes

17 And Moses and Aaron took these men who had been designated by names. **18** And all the congregation they assembled on ***day*** one of the second month, and they registered their descent by their clans, by the house of their fathers, by the number of names, from a son of twenty years and upward, by their heads. **19** Just as the LORD had commanded Moses, so he enrolled them in the wilderness of Sinai. **20** And the sons of Reuben, the firstborn of Israel, were—their generations, by their clans, by the house of their fathers, by the number of names, by their heads, every male from a son of twenty years and upward, everyone who goes out ***to*** war— **21** their enrolled ***men*** of the tribe of Reuben ***were*** forty-six thousand and five hundred. **22** Of the sons of Simeon—their generations, by their clans, by the house of their fathers, its enrolled ***men***, by the number of names, by their heads, every male from a son of twenty years and upward, everyone who goes out ***to*** war— **23** their enrolled ***men*** of the tribe of Simeon ***were*** fifty-nine thousand and three hundred. **24** Of the sons of Gad—their generations, by their clans, by the house of their fathers, by the number of names, from a son of twenty years and upward, everyone who goes out ***to*** war— **25** their enrolled ***men*** of the tribe of Gad ***were*** forty-five thousand and six hundred and fifty. **26** Of the sons of Judah—their generations, by their clans, by the house of their fathers, by the number of names, from a son of twenty years and upward, everyone who goes out ***to*** war— **27** their enrolled ***men*** of the tribe of Judah ***were*** seventy-four thousand and six hundred. **28** Of the sons of Issachar—their generations, by their clans, by the house of their fathers, by the number of names, from a son of twenty years and upward,

1:1 Num 10:11,12; Exod 19:1; Exod 25:22
1:2 Exod 30:12; Exod 38:26; Num 26:2-4,63,64
1:3 Exod 30:14; Num 14:29; Num 32:11
1:4 Num 1:16; Exod 18:25; Num 2:3-31
1:5 Rev 7:5; Num 7:30; Num 2:10
1:6 Num 7:36; Num 2:12
1:7 Luke 3:32; Matt 1:4; Num 2:3
1:8 Num 7:18; Num 2:5; Num 10:15
1:9 Num 7:24; Num 2:7; Num 10:16
1:10 Num 7:48; Num 7:54; Num 2:18
1:11 Num 7:60; Num 2:22; Num 10:24
1:12 Num 7:66; Num 2:25; Num 10:25
1:13 Num 7:72; Num 2:27; Num 10:26
1:14 Rev 7:5; Num 2:14; Num 7:42
1:15 Num 7:78; Num 2:29; Num 10:27
1:16 Num 7:2,10-83; Exod 18:21,25; Num 26:9
1:17 Num 1:5-15; John 10:3; Rev 7:4-17
1:18 Ezra 2:59; Heb 7:3,6; Neh 7:61
1:19 Num 1:2; Num 26:1,2; 2 Sam 24:1-10
1:20 Num 26:5-7; Num 2:10,11; Gen 29:32
1:21 Num 26:7; Num 2:10,11
1:22 Rev 7:7; Num 26:12-14; Num 2:12,13
1:23 Num 26:14; Num 2:13; Num 25:8,9,14
1:24 Num 26:15-18; Num 2:14,15; Gen 30:10,11
1:25 Num 26:18; Num 2:15
1:26 Num 26:19-22; Gen 29:35; 2 Sam 24:9
1:27 Num 26:22; 2 Sam 24:9; Num 2:3,4
1:28 Num 2:5,6; Num 23:23-25; Gen 30:18

1:1 *the LORD spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the tent of meeting* That phrase opens this book and runs all through it. Numbers is God's word to Israel through Moses. The tabernacle was set up on the first day of the first month (Exod 40:17), so this is one month later, after almost a year at Sinai. The tent of meeting is the tabernacle, the portable tent where God met with Moses and His presence rested over the ark.
1:3 *everyone who goes out to war in Israel* A count of fighting men, twenty and older. Women, children and Levites are not in it. God was getting His people ready to take the land He had promised.
1:4 *each man the head of the house of his fathers* The twelve leaders named here appear again at the camp (chapter 2), the altar gifts (chapter 7) and the march (chapter 10). Nahshon of Judah is in the family line of David and of Jesus (Ruth 4:20; Matt 1:4). Joseph's sons Ephraim and Manasseh count as two tribes, since Jacob adopted them (Gen 48:5), and Levi is left off, so there are still twelve. God works through leaders, and He chose them by name.
1:18 *they registered their descent by their clans* Each man showed his tribe and family, which mattered because the land would be divided by tribe and clan.
1:19 *Just as the LORD had commanded Moses, so he enrolled them* A phrase that comes again and again in chapters 1 to 10 (1:54; 2:34; 3:16, 51; 4:49). Before Israel's failures begin in chapter 11, we see a people doing what God said. Obedience is how the journey starts.
1:20 *by the number of names* The same words for every tribe. No tribe was left out, and every man counted. God knew His people by name. Judah is the largest tribe (1:27). Jacob had said the scepter would not turn aside from Judah (Gen 49:10), and Judah camps, marches and gives first (2:3; 7:12; 10:14). From Judah came David and Jesus, "the Lion who is of the tribe of Judah" (Rev 5:5).

everyone who goes out ***to*** war— **29** their enrolled ***men*** of the tribe of Issachar ***were*** fifty-four thousand and four hundred. **30** Of the sons of Zebulun—their generations, by their clans, by the house of their fathers, by the number of names, from a son of twenty years and upward, everyone who goes out ***to*** war— **31** their enrolled ***men*** of the tribe of Zebulun ***were*** fifty-seven thousand and four hundred. **32** Of the sons of Joseph, of the sons of Ephraim—their generations, by their clans, by the house of their fathers, by the number of names, from a son of twenty years and upward, everyone who goes out ***to*** war— **33** their enrolled ***men*** of the tribe of Ephraim ***were*** forty thousand and five hundred. **34** Of the sons of Manasseh—their generations, by their clans, by the house of their fathers, by the number of names, from a son of twenty years and upward, everyone who goes out ***to*** war— **35** their enrolled ***men*** of the tribe of Manasseh ***were*** thirty-two thousand and two hundred. **36** Of the sons of Benjamin—their generations, by their clans, by the house of their fathers, by the number of names, from a son of twenty years and upward, everyone who goes out ***to*** war— **37** their enrolled ***men*** of the tribe of Benjamin ***were*** thirty-five thousand and four hundred. **38** Of the sons of Dan—their generations, by their clans, by the house of their fathers, by the number of names, from a son of twenty years and upward, everyone who goes out ***to*** war— **39** their enrolled ***men*** of the tribe of Dan ***were*** sixty-two thousand and seven hundred. **40** Of the sons of Asher—their generations, by their clans, by the house of their fathers, by the number of names, from a son of twenty years and upward, everyone who goes out ***to*** war— **41** their enrolled ***men*** of the tribe of Asher ***were*** forty-one thousand and five hundred. **42** The sons of Naphtali—their generations, by their clans, by the house of their fathers, by the number of names, from a son of twenty years and upward, everyone who goes out ***to*** war— **43** their enrolled ***men*** of the tribe of Naphtali ***were*** fifty-three thousand and four hundred. **44** These ***are*** the enrolled ***men*** whom Moses and Aaron and the leaders of Israel enrolled, twelve men; each was one man for the house of his fathers. **45** And all the enrolled ***men*** of the sons of Israel were, by the house of their fathers, from a son of twenty years and upward, everyone who goes out ***to*** war in Israel— **46** and all the enrolled ***men*** were six hundred thousand and three thousand and five hundred and fifty.

The Levites Set Apart

47 And the Levites, by the tribe of their fathers, were not enrolled among them. **48** And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **49** "Only the tribe of Levi you shall not enroll, and their sum you shall not take among the sons of Israel. **50** And you, appoint the Levites over the tabernacle of the testimony, and over all its articles, and over all that belongs to it; they, they shall carry the tabernacle and all its articles, and they, they shall minister to it, and they shall camp all around the tabernacle. **51** And when the tabernacle sets out, the Levites shall take it down; and when the tabernacle camps, the Levites shall set it up; and the stranger who comes near shall be put to death. **52** And the sons of Israel shall camp, each man by his camp and each man by his standard, by their armies. **53** And the Levites shall camp all around the tabernacle of the testimony, and ***there*** shall not be wrath on the congregation of the sons of Israel; and the Levites shall keep the charge of the tabernacle of the testimony." **54** And the sons of Israel did according to all that the LORD had commanded Moses; so they did.

NUMBERS 2

The Order of the Camp

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe) and to Aaron (Aharon), saying, **2** "Each man by his standard, with the signs of the house of their fathers, the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) shall camp; at a distance, all around the tent of meeting, they shall

1:29 Num 26:25; Num 2:6
1:30 Num 26:26,27; Num 2:7,8; Gen 30:20
1:31 Num 26:27; Num 2:8
1:32 Num 26:35-37; Deut 33:17; Num 2:18,19
1:33 Num 26:37; Gen 48:5; Deut 33:17
1:34 Rev 7:6
1:35 Num 26:34; Num 2:21; Gen 48:19,20
1:36 Gen 49:27; Gen 35:16-18; Gen 44:20
1:37 Num 26:41; Num 2:23; Judg 20:44-46
1:38 Gen 46:23; Gen 30:5,6; Gen 49:16,17
1:39 Num 26:43; Num 2:26
1:40 Gen 30:12,13; Gen 46:27; Gen 49:20
1:41 Num 26:47; Num 2:28
1:42 Gen 30:7,8; Gen 46:24; Gen 49:21
1:43 Num 26:50; Num 2:30
1:44 Num 26:64; Num 1:2-16
1:46 Rev 7:4; Num 26:51; Exod 12:37
1:47 Num 2:33; Num 3:1-51; Num 26:57-62
1:49 Num 26:62; Num 2:33
1:50 Rev 15:5; Acts 7:44; Exod 38:21
1:51 Acts 7:44; Num 3:10,38; Num 18:22
1:52 Acts 7:44; Num 2:2,34; Num 10:1-36
1:53 Acts 7:44; Rev 15:5; Lev 10:6
1:54 Num 2:34; Exod 23:21,22; Exod 39:32,43
2:2 Rev 21:12; Num 1:50,53; 1 Cor 14:33,40

1:46 *six hundred thousand and three thousand and five hundred and fifty* 603,550 men of fighting age. When God called Abraham he had no children, and God promised descendants like the stars (Gen 15:5). About 645 years later, here is a nation. I take the number as written. It fits Exodus 12:37 and 38:26. Some scholars think the Hebrew word for thousand, eleph, can mean a clan or military unit, which would make the army much smaller. But these totals add up as thousands and hundreds, and Scripture shows a God who fed this many for forty years.
1:50 *appoint the Levites over the tabernacle of the testimony* Levi was the tribe of Moses and Aaron. The tabernacle of the testimony held the ark with the tablets of the Law, God's testimony to Israel. The Levites would carry it, take it down, set it up and camp around it.
1:51 *the stranger who comes near shall be put to death* Stranger here means anyone not a Levite, even an Israelite. A holy God living among a sinful people was a great gift and a great danger. The Levites camped around the tabernacle as a living wall, "and there shall not be wrath on the congregation" (1:53). Through the blood of Jesus we now may enter by a new and living way (Heb 10:19-20), not carelessly, but through our High Priest.
1:54 *so they did* The chapter ends where it began, with obedience.
2:2 *Each man by his standard, with the signs of the house of their fathers* A standard is a banner on a pole. In a camp of hundreds of thousands, each man needed to know where he belonged. Scripture does not say what the banners looked like. They camped "at a distance" around the tent, with the Levites between (1:53). God was near, in the middle, but holy. Everything in Israel's life was arranged around His presence (Exod 25:8).

camp. **3** And those who camp eastward, toward ***the*** sunrise, ***shall be*** the standard of the camp of Judah (Yehuda) by their armies; and the leader of the sons of Judah ***shall be*** Nahshon (Nachshon) the son of Amminadab (Aminadav), **4** and his army and their enrolled ***men are*** seventy-four thousand and six hundred. **5** And those who camp next to him ***shall be*** the tribe of Issachar (Yisashkhar); and the leader of the sons of Issachar ***shall be*** Nethanel (Netanel) the son of Zuar (Tsu'ar), **6** and his army and his enrolled ***men are*** fifty-four thousand and four hundred. **7** ***Then*** the tribe of Zebulun (Zevulun); and the leader of the sons of Zebulun ***shall be*** Eliab (Eli'av) the son of Helon (Chelon), **8** and his army and his enrolled ***men are*** fifty-seven thousand and four hundred. **9** All the enrolled ***men*** of the camp of Judah ***are*** one hundred thousand and eighty thousand and six thousand and four hundred, by their armies; they shall set out first. **10** The standard of the camp of Reuben (Reuven) ***shall be*** southward by their armies; and the leader of the sons of Reuben ***shall be*** Elizur (Elitsur) the son of Shedeur, **11** and his army and his enrolled ***men are*** forty-six thousand and five hundred. **12** And those who camp next to him ***shall be*** the tribe of Simeon (Shimon); and the leader of the sons of Simeon ***shall be*** Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai (Tsurishaday), **13** and his army and their enrolled ***men are*** fifty-nine thousand and three hundred. **14** And the tribe of Gad; and the leader of the sons of Gad ***shall be*** Eliasaph (Elyasaf) the son of Reuel, **15** and his army and their enrolled ***men are*** forty-five thousand and six hundred and fifty. **16** All the enrolled ***men*** of the camp of Reuben ***are*** one hundred thousand and fifty-one thousand and four hundred and fifty, by their armies; and they shall set out second.

The Tabernacle in the Middle

17 And the tent of meeting shall set out, the camp of the Levites in the midst of the camps; just as they camp, so they shall set out, each man in his place, by their standards. **18** The standard of the camp of Ephraim (Efrayim) by their armies ***shall be*** westward; and the leader of the sons of Ephraim ***shall be*** Elishama the son of Ammihud (Amihud), **19** and his army and their enrolled ***men are*** forty thousand and five hundred. **20** And next to him ***shall be*** the tribe of Manasseh (Menashe); and the leader of the sons of Manasseh ***shall be*** Gamaliel (Gamli'el) the son of Pedahzur (Pedahtsur), **21** and his army and their enrolled ***men are*** thirty-two thousand and two hundred. **22** And the tribe of Benjamin (Binyamin); and the leader of the sons of Benjamin ***shall be*** Abidan (Avidan) the son of Gideoni (Gidoni), **23** and his army and their enrolled ***men are*** thirty-five thousand and four hundred. **24** All the enrolled ***men*** of the camp of Ephraim ***are*** one hundred thousand and eight thousand and one hundred, by their armies; and they shall set out third. **25** The standard of the camp of Dan ***shall be*** northward by their armies; and the leader of the sons of Dan ***shall be*** Ahiezer (Achi'ezer) the son of Ammishaddai (Amishaday), **26** and his army and their enrolled ***men are*** sixty-two thousand and seven hundred. **27** And those who camp next to him ***shall be*** the tribe of Asher; and the leader of the sons of Asher ***shall be*** Pagiel the son of Ochran (Okhran), **28** and his army and their enrolled ***men are*** forty-one thousand and five hundred. **29** And the tribe of Naphtali (Naftali); and the leader of the sons of Naphtali ***shall be*** Ahira (Achira) the son of Enan, **30** and his army and their enrolled ***men are*** fifty-three thousand and four hundred. **31** All the enrolled ***men*** of the camp of Dan ***are*** one hundred thousand and fifty-seven thousand and six hundred; they shall set out last, by their standards." **32** These ***are*** the enrolled ***men*** of the sons of Israel by the house of their fathers; all the enrolled ***men*** of the camps by their armies ***were*** six hundred thousand and three thousand and five hundred and fifty. **33** And the Levites were not enrolled among the sons of Israel, just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

2:3 Luke 3:32; Matt 1:4; Luke 3:33
2:4 Num 1:27; Num 26:22
2:5 Num 1:8,28,29; Num 7:18,23; Num 10:15
2:6 Num 1:29; Num 26:25
2:7 Num 1:9,30,31; Num 7:24,29; Num 10:16
2:8 Num 1:31; Num 26:26,27
2:9 Num 10:14
2:10 Num 1:5; Gen 49:3,4; 1 Chr 5:1
2:11 Num 1:21; Num 26:7
2:12 Num 1:6; Num 7:36,41; Num 10:19
2:13 Num 1:23; Num 26:14
2:14 Num 1:14; Num 7:42,47; Num 10:20
2:15 Num 1:25; Num 26:18
2:16 Num 10:18; Num 2:9,24,31
2:17 Num 10:17,21; Num 2:1; Num 1:50-53
2:18 Num 10:22; Num 1:10; Num 1:32
2:19 Num 1:33; Num 26:37
2:20 Num 1:10; Num 7:54,59; Num 10:23
2:21 Num 1:35; Num 26:34
2:22 Num 1:11; Num 7:60,65; Num 10:24
2:23 Num 1:37; Num 26:41
2:24 Num 10:22; Num 2:9,16,31
2:25 Num 1:12; Num 7:66,71; Num 10:25
2:26 Num 1:39; Num 26:43
2:27 Num 1:13; Num 7:72,77
2:28 Num 1:41; Num 26:47
2:29 Num 1:15; Num 1:42,43; Num 26:48-50
2:30 Num 1:42,43; Num 26:50
2:31 Num 10:25; Num 2:9,16,24
2:32 Rev 21:12; Num 1:46; Exod 38:26
2:33 Num 1:47-49

2:3 *those who camp eastward, toward the sunrise, shall be the standard of the camp of Judah* The east was the side of the tabernacle's entrance (3:38). Judah camped there with Issachar and Zebulun, all sons of Leah, the largest camp, and they set out first (2:9). The tribe of the promised King (Gen 49:10) went before, a small picture of the King from Judah going before His people.
2:10 *The standard of the camp of Reuben shall be southward* Reuben was the firstborn but had lost his place by his sin against his father (Gen 35:22; 49:3-4). Even so, God gave his tribe an honored place. Sin has consequences, but God does not throw people away.
2:14 *Eliasaph the son of Reuel* Elsewhere his father is Deuel (1:14; 7:42). In Hebrew the letters for d and r look very much alike, and the same man is meant. The SLB follows the Hebrew in each place.
2:17 *the tent of meeting shall set out, the camp of the Levites in the midst of the camps* The middle verse of the chapter describes the middle of the camp. Two camps went before the tabernacle and two after it (see 10:17, 21). God was in the midst of His people when they rested and when they moved, as Jesus promised to be with us always (Matt 18:20; 28:20).
2:18 *The standard of the camp of Ephraim by their armies shall be westward* The sons of Rachel camped behind the tabernacle. Ephraim, the younger, leads instead of Manasseh, as Jacob blessed the younger above the older (Gen 48:17-20).
2:31 *they shall set out last* Dan's camp, the sons of the servant wives, was the rear guard (10:25). The last place is still a place of trust. Every tribe had a place around the same tabernacle, as God has set each member in the body as He willed (1 Cor 12:18).
2:32 *all the enrolled men of the camps by their armies* The four camps add up exactly to 603,550, the total of chapter 1.

34 And the sons of Israel did according to all that the LORD had commanded Moses; so they camped by their standards, and so they set out, each man by his clans, by the house of his fathers.

NUMBERS 3

The Sons of Aaron

1 And these ***are*** the generations of Aaron (Aharon) and Moses (Moshe) on the day the LORD spoke with Moses on Mount Sinai (Sinay). **2** And these ***are*** the names of the sons of Aaron: the firstborn Nadab (Nadav), and Abihu (Avihu), Eleazar (Elazar), and Ithamar (Itamar). **3** These ***are*** the names of the sons of Aaron, the anointed priests, whose hand he filled to serve as priests. **4** And Nadab and Abihu died before the LORD when they brought near strange fire before the LORD in the wilderness of Sinai, and they had no sons; and Eleazar and Ithamar served as priests in the presence of Aaron their father.

The Levites Given to Serve

5 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **6** "Bring near the tribe of Levi, and you shall make it stand before Aaron the priest, and they shall minister to him. **7** And they shall keep his charge and the charge of all the congregation before the tent of meeting, to serve the service of the tabernacle. **8** And they shall keep all the articles of the tent of meeting, and the charge of the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), to serve the service of the tabernacle. **9** And you shall give the Levites to Aaron and to his sons; given, given they ***are*** to him from the sons of Israel. **10** And Aaron and his sons you shall appoint, and they shall keep their priesthood; and the stranger who comes near shall be put to death." **11** And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **12** "And I, look, I have taken the Levites from among the sons of Israel in place of every firstborn, the one opening a womb, from the sons of Israel; and the Levites shall be Mine. **13** For every firstborn ***is*** Mine; on the day I struck every firstborn in the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim), I sanctified for Myself every firstborn in Israel, from man to livestock; they shall be Mine. I ***am*** the LORD."

The Levite Clans Counted

14 And the LORD spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, saying, **15** "Enroll the sons of Levi by the house of their fathers, by their clans; every male from a son of a month and upward you shall enroll them." **16** And Moses enrolled them at the mouth of the LORD, just as he had been commanded. **17** And these were the sons of Levi by their names: Gershon and Kohath (Qehat) and Merari. **18** And these ***are*** the names of the sons of Gershon by their clans: Libni (Livni) and Shimei (Shimi). **19** And the sons of Kohath by their clans: Amram and Izhar (Yitshar), Hebron (Chevron) and Uzziel (Uzi'el). **20** And the sons of Merari by their clans: Mahli (Machli) and Mushi. These are the clans of the Levites by the house of their fathers. **21** To Gershon ***belonged*** the clan of the Libnite and the clan of the Shimeite; these are the clans of the Gershonite. **22** Their enrolled ***men***, by the number of every male from a son of a month and upward, their enrolled ***men were*** seven thousand and five hundred. **23** The clans of the Gershonite shall camp behind the tabernacle, westward. **24** And the leader of the father's house of the Gershonite ***was*** Eliasaph (Elyasaf) the son of Lael. **25** And the charge of the sons of Gershon in the tent of meeting ***was*** the tabernacle and the tent, its covering, and the screen of the entrance of the tent of meeting, **26** and the hangings of the courtyard, and the screen of the entrance of the courtyard which ***is*** by the tabernacle and by the altar all around, and its cords, for all its service. **27** And to Kohath ***belonged*** the clan of the Amramite and the clan of the Izharite and the clan of the Hebronite and the clan of the Uzzielite; these are the clans of the Kohathite. **28** By the number of every male from a son of a month and upward, eight thousand and six hundred ***were*** keepers of the charge of the holy place. **29** The clans of the sons of Kohath shall camp on the side of the tabernacle,

2:34 Num 24:2,5,6; Num 1:54; Exod 39:42
3:1 Gen 2:4; Gen 5:1; Gen 10:1
3:2 Exod 6:23; Num 26:60; Exod 28:1
3:3 Heb 5:4; Exod 28:41; Lev 8:1-9
3:4 Lev 10:1,2; Num 26:61
3:6 Num 1:49-53; Num 2:17,33; Num 8:6-15,22-26
3:7 Heb 13:10; Num 1:50; Num 8:11,15,24-26
3:8 Heb 13:10; Num 4:15,28,33; Num 10:17,21
3:9 Num 8:19; Num 18:6,7; Eph 4:8,11
3:10 Num 1:51; Num 18:7; Rom 12:7
3:12 Num 3:41,45; Num 8:16,18; Num 18:6
3:13 Luke 2:23; Exod 13:2,12; Lev 27:26
3:15 Num 26:62; Num 3:22,28,34,39,40,43; Num 18:15,16
3:16 Num 3:39,51; Num 4:27,37,41,45,49; Gen 45:21
3:17 Gen 46:11; Exod 6:16-19; Num 26:57,58
3:18 1 Chr 6:17,20,21; Num 3:21; Exod 6:17-19
3:19 Exod 6:18,20; 1 Chr 6:18,38; Num 3:27
3:20 Exod 6:19; 1 Chr 6:19,29,44-47; Num 3:33
3:22 Num 4:38-40
3:23 Num 1:53; Num 2:17
3:25 Exod 25:9; Num 3:7; Num 4:24-28
3:26 Exod 35:18; Exod 27:9-16; Exod 38:9-16
3:27 1 Chr 26:23; Num 3:19; 1 Chr 23:12
3:28 Num 4:35,36; Num 3:7,31
3:29 Num 1:53; Num 3:23; Num 2:10

2:34 *so they camped by their standards, and so they set out* God is "not a God of disorder but of peace" (1 Cor 14:33). Order was not a cold rule. It was how a holy God made room for a huge family to live near Him in peace.
3:1 *these are the generations of Aaron and Moses* A priest was a man God appointed to stand between Him and the people, to offer sacrifices and teach His Law. Only Aaron and his sons could be priests.
3:4 *Nadab and Abihu died before the LORD when they brought near strange fire* Leviticus 10:1-2 tells the story. They had no sons, so their line ended. It sits in a family list as a warning every priest needed: God must be worshiped His way (Lev 10:3). He has given one way, through His Son (John 14:6).
3:6 *they shall minister to him* The Levites were not priests but helpers to the priests. They guarded, carried and did the heavy work of the tabernacle.
3:10 *the stranger who comes near shall be put to death* "Given, given" (3:9) is doubled for emphasis: the Levites were a gift to Aaron. Each person had a role, and no one was to take a role God had not given him. Chapter 16 shows what happens when someone tries.
3:12 *I have taken the Levites from among the sons of Israel in place of every firstborn* The heart of the chapter. On the Passover night God struck Egypt's firstborn but passed over the houses marked with the lamb's blood (Exod 12). Israel's firstborn lived because a lamb died, and from then on every firstborn belonged to God (Exod 13:2, 15). Now the Levites stand in for them. This is substitution. Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us (1 Cor 5:7), and we belong to God because Someone took our place (Heb 12:23).
3:15 *every male from a son of a month and upward you shall enroll them* The army count began at twenty. This one began at one month, because the Levites stood in for every firstborn, baby boys included. Levi's three sons, Gershon, Kohath and Merari, became clans (Exod 6:16-19).
3:25 *the charge of the sons of Gershon* The fabric parts: curtains, coverings, screens and hangings with their cords.

southward. **30** And the leader of the father's house of the clans of the Kohathite ***was*** Elizaphan (Elitsafan) the son of Uzziel. **31** And their charge ***was*** the ark and the table and the lampstand and the altars, and the articles of the holy place with which they minister, and the screen, and all its service. **32** And the leader of the leaders of the Levites ***was*** Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest, ***with*** the oversight of the keepers of the charge of the holy place. **33** To Merari ***belonged*** the clan of the Mahlite and the clan of the Mushite; these are the clans of Merari. **34** And their enrolled ***men***, by the number of every male from a son of a month and upward, ***were*** six thousand and two hundred. **35** And the leader of the father's house of the clans of Merari ***was*** Zuriel (Tsuri'el) the son of Abihail (Avichayil); they shall camp on the side of the tabernacle, northward. **36** And the oversight of the charge of the sons of Merari ***was*** the boards of the tabernacle and its bars and its pillars and its bases and all its articles and all its service, **37** and the pillars of the courtyard all around, and their bases and their pegs and their cords. **38** And those who camp before the tabernacle eastward, before the tent of meeting toward ***the*** sunrise, ***were*** Moses and Aaron and his sons, keeping the charge of the sanctuary for the charge of the sons of Israel; and the stranger who comes near shall be put to death. **39** All the enrolled of the Levites whom Moses and Aaron enrolled at the mouth of the LORD by their clans, every male from a son of a month and upward, ***were*** twenty-two thousand.

The Redemption of the Firstborn

40 And the LORD said to Moses, "Enroll every firstborn male of the sons of Israel from a son of a month and upward, and take the number of their names. **41** And you shall take the Levites for Me—I ***am*** the LORD—in place of every firstborn among the sons of Israel, and the livestock of the Levites in place of every firstborn among the livestock of the sons of Israel." **42** And Moses enrolled, just as the LORD had commanded him, every firstborn among the sons of Israel. **43** And every firstborn male by the number of names, from a son of a month and upward, by their enrolled ***men***, was twenty-two thousand, two hundred and seventy-three.

44 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **45** "Take the Levites in place of every firstborn among the sons of Israel, and the livestock of the Levites in place of their livestock; and the Levites shall be Mine. I ***am*** the LORD. **46** And ***for*** the ransom of the two hundred and seventy-three of the firstborn of the sons of Israel who are in excess beyond the Levites, **47** and you shall take approximately 2 ounces (five shekels) apiece for each head; by the shekel of the holy place you shall take ***it***; the shekel ***is*** approximately 2/5 ounce (twenty gerahs). **48** And you shall give the money to Aaron and to his sons, the ransom of those who are in excess among them." **49** And Moses took the money of the ransom from those who were in excess beyond the ransomed of the Levites. **50** From the firstborn of the sons of Israel he took the money, approximately 34 pounds (one thousand and three hundred and sixty-five ***shekels***), by the shekel of the holy place. **51** And Moses gave the money of the ransom to Aaron and to his sons at the mouth of the LORD, just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

NUMBERS 4

The Duties of the Kohathites

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe) and to Aaron (Aharon), saying, **2** "Take the sum of the sons of Kohath (Qehat) from among the sons of Levi, by their clans, by the house of their fathers, **3** from a son of thirty years and upward and to a son of fifty years, everyone who comes into the duty to do work in the tent of meeting. **4** This ***is*** the service of the sons of Kohath in the tent of meeting: the holy of holies. **5** And Aaron and his sons shall go in when the camp sets out, and they shall take down the veil of the screen, and

3:31 Num 4:4-16; Exod 25:10-40; Exod 31:1-35
3:32 Num 4:16,27; Num 20:25-28; 2 Kgs 25:18
3:33 Num 3:20; 1 Chr 6:19; 1 Chr 23:21
3:34 Num 1:21; Num 2:9; Num 2:11
3:35 Num 1:53; Num 2:25; Num 3:28,29
3:36 Num 4:29-33; Num 7:8; Exod 26:15-29,32,37
3:38 Num 1:53; Num 3:10; Num 2:3
3:39 Num 26:62; Num 4:47,48; Matt 7:14
3:40 Heb 12:23; Num 3:12,15,45; Exod 32:26-29
3:41 Num 3:12,45; Num 8:16; Num 18:15
3:45 Num 3:12,40,41
3:46 Exod 13:13; Num 18:15
3:47 Lev 27:6; Exod 30:13; Num 18:16
3:50 Num 3:46,47; Matt 20:28; 1 Tim 2:5,6
3:51 Num 3:48; Num 16:15; 1 Sam 12:3,4
4:2 Num 3:19,27
4:3 Luke 3:23; Num 8:24-26; Gen 41:46
4:4 Num 4:15,19,24,30; Num 3:30,31; Mark 13:34
4:5 Matt 27:51; Heb 9:3; Heb 10:20

3:31 *their charge was the ark and the table and the lampstand and the altars* The Kohathites had the most holy work. The ark of the covenant was the gold-covered chest holding the tablets of the Law, with the mercy seat and two cherubim on top, the place where God met His people. The closer the work was to God's presence, the more carefully it was guarded (3:32).
3:36 *the boards of the tabernacle and its bars and its pillars and its bases* The Merarites did the heavy lifting, the least glamorous job. But without boards and pegs there was no tabernacle. God counted their work as His service as much as the work around the ark.
3:38 *Moses and Aaron and his sons, keeping the charge of the sanctuary* The priests guarded the door on the east. Anyone who would approach God had to come the way God appointed.
3:39 *All the enrolled of the Levites* The total is 22,000, but the three clans add to 22,300. Some think the 300 were the Levites' own firstborn, who already belonged to God and could not stand in for anyone. Others think a copyist misread one letter in the Kohathite number (3:28). Scripture does not say, and it changes nothing the chapter teaches.
3:43 *every firstborn male by the number of names* 22,273 firstborn seems few for so large a nation. Many think this counted only sons born since the exodus, when God first claimed them (Exod 13:2). Others think only the firstborn still minors in their father's house. The text does not explain it, so I hold these loosely.
3:47 *you shall take approximately 2 ounces apiece for each head* Five shekels each. A shekel was a weight of silver, not a coin. A ransom is the price paid to set someone free. The 273 extra firstborn were covered by silver, about 34 pounds in all, so no firstborn was left unredeemed. We were redeemed not with silver or gold but "with the precious blood of Christ" (1 Pet 1:19). "You were bought with a price" (1 Cor 6:20).
4:3 *from a son of thirty years and upward and to a son of fifty years* A man's strongest years. Chapter 8:24 sets the start at twenty-five. Many think the Levites began at twenty-five as training and took on full carrying at thirty. Some think the rules applied to different kinds of work. When the carrying ended in David's day, the age was lowered to twenty (1 Chr 23:24-27).
4:4 *the holy of holies* The most holy things. The Kohathites are listed first, though Gershon was the oldest son, because their work was closest to God's presence.

they shall cover the ark of the testimony with it. **6** And they shall put on it a covering of dolphin skin, and they shall spread a cloth entirely of blue over ***it*** from above, and they shall put in its poles. **7** And over the table of the Presence they shall spread a cloth of blue, and they shall put on it the dishes and the pans and the bowls and the jugs of the drink offering; and the continual bread shall be on it. **8** And they shall spread over them a cloth of crimson scarlet, and they shall cover it with a covering of dolphin skin, and they shall put in its poles. **9** And they shall take a cloth of blue, and they shall cover the lampstand of the light and its lamps and its tongs and its fire pans and all its oil vessels with which they minister to it. **10** And they shall put it and all its articles into a covering of dolphin skin, and they shall put ***it*** on the carrying frame. **11** And over the altar of gold they shall spread a cloth of blue, and they shall cover it with a covering of dolphin skin, and they shall put in its poles. **12** And they shall take all the articles of ministry with which they minister in the holy place, and they shall put ***them*** into a cloth of blue, and they shall cover them with a covering of dolphin skin, and they shall put ***them*** on the carrying frame. **13** And they shall clear the ashes from the altar, and they shall spread over it a cloth of purple. **14** And they shall put on it all its articles with which they minister at it: the fire pans, the forks and the shovels and the bowls, all the articles of the altar; and they shall spread over it a covering of dolphin skin, and they shall put in its poles. **15** And Aaron and his sons shall finish covering the holy thing and all the articles of the holy thing when the camp sets out; and after that the sons of Kohath shall come to carry ***them***; and they shall not touch the holy thing, and die. These ***are*** the burden of the sons of Kohath in the tent of meeting. **16** And the oversight of Eleazar (Elazar) the son of Aaron the priest ***is*** the oil of the light and the incense of the spices and the continual grain offering and the oil of the anointing, the oversight of all the tabernacle and of all that ***is*** in it, in the holy place and in its articles." **17** And the LORD spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying, **18** "Do not cut off the tribe of the clans of the Kohathite from among the Levites. **19** And this do for them, and they shall live and not die when they draw near to the holy of holies: Aaron and his sons shall go in, and they shall appoint them, each man to his service and to his burden. **20** And they shall not go in to see the holy thing for an instant, and die."

The Gershonites and Merarites

21 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **22** "Take the sum of the sons of Gershon, them also, by the house of their fathers, by their clans. **23** From a son of thirty years and upward until a son of fifty years you shall enroll them, everyone who comes to perform duty, to serve the service in the tent of meeting. **24** This ***is*** the service of the clans of the Gershonite, for serving and for burden: **25** And they shall carry the curtains of the tabernacle and the tent of meeting, its covering and the covering of dolphin ***skin*** which ***is*** on it from above, and the screen of the entrance of the tent of meeting, **26** and the hangings of the courtyard, and the screen of the entrance of the gate of the courtyard which ***is*** by the tabernacle and by the altar all around, and their cords and all the articles of their service, and all that is to be done for them; and they shall serve. **27** At the mouth of Aaron and his sons shall be all the service of the sons of the Gershonite, in all their burden and in all their service; and you shall assign to them as a charge all their burden. **28** This ***is*** the service of the clans of the sons of the Gershonite in the tent of meeting; and their charge ***is*** in the hand of Ithamar (Itamar) the son of Aaron the priest. **29** The sons of Merari, by their clans, by the house of their fathers, you shall enroll them. **30** From a son of thirty years and upward and to a son of fifty years you shall enroll them, everyone who comes into the duty to serve the service of the tent of meeting. **31** And this ***is*** the charge of their burden for all their service in the tent of meeting: the boards of the tabernacle and its bars and its pillars and its bases, **32** and the pillars of the courtyard all around and their bases and their pegs and their cords, for all their articles and for all their service; and by names you shall assign the articles of the charge of their burden. **33** This ***is*** the service of the clans of the sons of Merari, for all their service in the tent of meeting, in the hand of Ithamar the son of Aaron

4:6 Exod 25:13-15; Exod 35:19; Exod 39:1,41
4:7 Lev 24:5-8; Exod 25:23-30; Exod 37:10-16
4:8 Num 4:6,7,9,11-13
4:9 Exod 25:31-39; Exod 37:17-24; Ps 119:105
4:10 Num 4:6,12
4:11 Exod 30:1-19; Exod 37:25-28; Exod 39:38
4:12 1 Chr 9:29; Num 4:7,9; Num 3:8
4:13 Num 4:6-9,11,12; Exod 39:1,41; Lev 6:12,13
4:14 Exod 38:1-7; 2 Chr 4:19
4:15 2 Sam 6:6,7; Num 7:9; Num 10:21
4:16 Exod 25:6; Lev 24:2; Exod 30:23-33
4:18 Num 16:32; Num 17:10; Num 18:5
4:20 Exod 19:21; 1 Sam 6:19; Num 4:15,19
4:22 Num 3:18,21,24
4:23 Num 4:3; Isa 63:1-4; Rom 7:14-24
4:24 Num 4:15,19,27,31,32,47,49
4:25 Num 3:25,26; Exod 26:14; Num 7:5-7
4:26 Exod 27:9; Exod 35:18
4:27 Luke 1:70; 1 Cor 11:2
4:28 Num 4:33; 1 Cor 12:5,6
4:29 Num 3:33-35
4:30 2 Tim 4:8; Num 4:3,23; Ps 110:1-7
4:31 Num 3:36,37; Num 7:8,9; Exod 26:15
4:32 Num 3:8; Num 7:1; Exod 25:9
4:33 Num 4:28; Josh 3:6; Isa 3:6

4:6 *a covering of dolphin skin* The SLB renders tachash as dolphin skin. Others say porpoise skin, goatskin or fine leather. Scripture says only that it made a tough outer covering. The priests wrapped each holy piece first, and only then did the Kohathites come to carry them.

4:15 *they shall not touch the holy thing, and die* These things pictured God's holiness. In David's day the ark rode on an ox cart, and when Uzzah took hold of it, God struck him (2 Sam 6:6-7). David learned that only the Levites should carry the ark (1 Chr 15:2). God's instructions were not fussy. They protected the people who served Him.

4:16 *the oversight of Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest* He carried personal responsibility for the most precious things. He would one day succeed his father as high priest (20:28).

4:18 *Do not cut off the tribe of the clans of the Kohathite* God's mercy inside His holiness. Their job was dangerous, so He made a way for them to serve safely, with the priests going in first (4:19-20). We have a High Priest who has gone before us, so we may come with boldness (Heb 4:16).

4:25 *they shall carry the curtains of the tabernacle* The Gershonites had two carts and four oxen for their load (7:7). The Kohathites had none, because they carried the holy things on their shoulders (7:9).

4:32 *by names you shall assign the articles of the charge of their burden* Each Merarite was told by name which pieces he carried. God does not hand out work vaguely. He knows each servant and gives each a real task (1 Cor 12:5).

the priest."

The Levites Counted for Service

34 And Moses and Aaron and the leaders of the congregation enrolled the sons of the Kohathite by their clans and by the house of their fathers, **35** from a son of thirty years and upward and to a son of fifty years, everyone who comes into the duty for service in the tent of meeting. **36** And their enrolled ***men*** by their clans were two thousand, seven hundred and fifty. **37** These ***were*** the enrolled of the clans of the Kohathite, everyone who serves in the tent of meeting, whom Moses and Aaron enrolled at the mouth of the LORD by the hand of Moses. **38** And the enrolled of the sons of Gershon, by their clans and by the house of their fathers, **39** from a son of thirty years and upward and to a son of fifty years, everyone who comes into the duty for service in the tent of meeting, **40** and their enrolled ***men***, by their clans, by the house of their fathers, were two thousand and six hundred and thirty. **41** These ***were*** the enrolled of the clans of the sons of Gershon, everyone who serves in the tent of meeting, whom Moses and Aaron enrolled at the mouth of the LORD. **42** And the enrolled of the clans of the sons of Merari, by their clans, by the house of their fathers, **43** from a son of thirty years and upward and to a son of fifty years, everyone who comes into the duty for service in the tent of meeting, **44** and their enrolled ***men*** by their clans were three thousand and two hundred. **45** These ***were*** the enrolled of the clans of the sons of Merari, whom Moses and Aaron enrolled at the mouth of the LORD by the hand of Moses. **46** All the enrolled whom Moses and Aaron and the leaders of Israel (Yisra'el) enrolled, the Levites, by their clans and by the house of their fathers, **47** from a son of thirty years and upward and to a son of fifty years, everyone who comes to serve the service of service and the service of burden in the tent of meeting, **48** and their enrolled ***men*** were eight thousand and five hundred and eighty. **49** At the mouth of the LORD he enrolled them by the hand of Moses, each man to his service and to his burden; and his enrolled ***ones were*** as the LORD had commanded Moses.

NUMBERS 5

A Clean Camp

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe), saying,
2 "Command the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), and let them send out from the camp everyone leprous and everyone with a discharge and everyone unclean by a corpse. **3** From male to female you shall send ***them*** out; to the outside of the camp you shall send them out, and they shall not make their camps unclean, in the midst of which I am dwelling." **4** And the sons of Israel did so, and they sent them out to the outside of the camp; just as the LORD had spoken to Moses, so the sons of Israel did.

Making Wrongs Right

5 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **6** "Speak to the sons of Israel: 'A man or a woman, when they do any of all the sins of mankind, acting unfaithfully ***in*** unfaithfulness against the LORD, and that soul is guilty, **7** then they shall confess their sin which they have done; and he shall repay his guilt in its principal, and let him add its fifth to it, and he shall give ***it*** to ***the one*** against whom he was guilty. **8** And if the man has no redeemer to repay the guilt to him, the guilt that is repaid ***shall be*** the LORD's, for the priest, besides the ram of the atonement with which he shall make atonement for him. **9** And every contribution of all the holy things of the sons of Israel which they bring near to the priest, it shall be his. **10** And each man's holy things shall be his; whatever a man gives to the priest, it shall be his.'"

The Test for Jealousy

11 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **12** "Speak to the sons of Israel, and you shall say to them: 'Any man, when his wife turns aside and acts unfaithfully ***in*** unfaithfulness against him, **13** and a man lies with her ***with*** a lying of seed, and it is hidden from the eyes of her husband, and she is concealed, and she has made herself unclean, and there is no

4:35 Num 4:3,23,30,39,43,47; Num 8:24-26; 1 Chr 23:3,24,26,27
4:40 Num 3:32
4:44 Num 3:34; Deut 33:25; 1 Cor 10:13
4:47 Num 4:3,23,30; 1 Chr 23:3,27; Num 4:15,24,37
4:48 Num 3:39; Matt 7:14; Matt 20:16
4:49 Num 4:15,24,31; Num 4:37,41,45; Num 1:54
5:2 Lev 13:46; Lev 21:1; Num 12:14
5:3 2 Cor 6:16; 2 Cor 6:17; Lev 26:11,12
5:6 Lev 5:1-4,17; Lev 6:2,3
5:7 Luke 19:8; Lev 5:5; Lev 26:40
5:8 Lev 6:6,7; Lev 7:7; Lev 25:25,26
5:9 1 Cor 9:11; 1 Cor 9:12; 1 Cor 9:13
5:10 1 Cor 9:13
5:12 Num 5:19,20; Prov 2:16,17
5:13 Lev 18:20; Lev 20:10; Prov 7:18,19

4:48 *eight thousand and five hundred and eighty* The Merarites were the smallest clan in chapter 3 but had the most working men here (4:44), and also the heaviest load. God supplied strength where the work needed it.
4:49 *each man to his service and to his burden* Every job mattered, from carrying the ark to carrying tent pegs. So in the body of Christ: whatever you do, do it from the heart, as to the Lord (Col 3:23).
5:2 *everyone leprous and everyone with a discharge and everyone unclean by a corpse* Leprous covers a range of skin diseases (Lev 13), and a discharge the conditions of Leviticus 15. "A corpse" translates the word usually rendered soul, which can mean a dead person. Unclean meant not fit for a time to come near God's tabernacle. Most uncleanness was not sin, but part of living in a fallen world of sickness and death.
5:3 *in the midst of which I am dwelling* The key. The rule was about God's presence, not about despising the sick, and the Law gave ways to be cleansed and return (Lev 14; Num 19). Jesus touched a leper, and instead of Jesus becoming unclean, the leper was made clean (Mark 1:41). The church is now God's temple (1 Cor 3:16), called to be clean by turning from sin.
5:6 *acting unfaithfully in unfaithfulness against the LORD* Wronging a neighbor by stealing, cheating or lying about property (Lev 6:1-7). God calls it unfaithfulness against Him. When we wrong another person, we sin against the God who made him.
5:7 *they shall confess their sin which they have done* Confess, repay in full, and add a fifth. Then came a ram for atonement, the covering of sin so the guilty is made right with God. Real repentance makes things right where we can, as Zacchaeus did (Luke 19:8), and as Jesus taught: first be reconciled to your brother (Matt 5:23-24). Forgiveness comes from Christ alone, but true faith repairs the wrong.
5:8 *if the man has no redeemer to repay the guilt to him* A redeemer, go'el, was the nearest relative, with the right to receive what was owed. If none remained, the payment went to the LORD for the priest. The debt did not disappear because the victim was gone.
5:10 *whatever a man gives to the priest, it shall be his* Once given, a gift was the priest's. God provided for those who served Him through the gifts of His people (1 Cor 9:13-14).

witness against her, and she was not caught, **14** and a spirit of jealousy passes over him, and he is jealous of his wife, and she has made herself unclean; or a spirit of jealousy passes over him, and he is jealous of his wife, and she has not made herself unclean, **15** then the man shall bring his wife to the priest, and he shall bring her offering for her, approximately 2 quarts (a tenth of the ephah) of barley flour; he shall not pour oil on it, and he shall not put frankincense on it, for it ***is*** a grain offering of jealousies, a grain offering of remembrance, bringing iniquity to remembrance. **16** And the priest shall bring her near, and he shall make her stand before the LORD. **17** And the priest shall take holy water in an earthenware vessel, and some of the dust which is on the floor of the tabernacle the priest shall take, and he shall put ***it*** into the water. **18** And the priest shall make the woman stand before the LORD, and he shall let loose the head of the woman, and he shall put on her palms the grain offering of remembrance—it ***is*** a grain offering of jealousies—and in the hand of the priest shall be the waters of bitterness that bring a curse. **19** And the priest shall make her swear, and he shall say to the woman, "If no man has lain with you, and if you have not turned aside ***to*** uncleanness under your husband, be free from these waters of bitterness that bring a curse. **20** And you, if you have turned aside under your husband, and if you have made yourself unclean, and a man besides your husband has put his lying in you—" **21** then the priest shall make the woman swear with the oath of the curse, and the priest shall say to the woman, "May the LORD make you a curse and an oath in the midst of your people, when the LORD makes your thigh fall and your belly swollen; **22** and these waters that bring a curse shall go into your inward parts to make ***your*** belly swell and ***your*** thigh fall." And the woman shall say, "Amen, amen." **23** And the priest shall write these curses in the scroll, and he shall wipe ***them*** off into the waters of bitterness. **24** And he shall make the woman drink the waters of bitterness that bring a curse, and the waters that bring a curse shall go into her for bitterness. **25** And the priest shall take from the hand of the woman the grain offering of jealousies, and he shall wave the grain offering before the LORD, and he shall bring it near to the altar. **26** And the priest shall take a handful from the grain offering, its memorial portion, and he shall make ***it*** smoke on the altar; and afterward he shall make the woman drink the waters. **27** And he shall make her drink the waters; and it shall be, if she has made herself unclean and has acted unfaithfully ***in*** unfaithfulness against her husband, then the waters that bring a curse shall go into her for bitterness, and her belly shall swell, and her thigh shall fall, and the woman shall become a curse in the midst of her people. **28** And if the woman has not made herself unclean, and she ***is*** clean, then she shall be free, and she shall be sown ***with*** seed. **29** This ***is*** the law of jealousies, when a wife turns aside under her husband and makes herself unclean, **30** or a man when a spirit of jealousy passes over him, and he is jealous of his wife; then he shall make the woman stand before the LORD, and the priest shall do to her all this law. **31** And the man shall be free from iniquity, and that woman shall bear her iniquity.'"

NUMBERS 6

The Nazirite Vow

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe), saying, **2** "Speak to the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), and you shall say to them: 'A man or a woman, when he makes ***it*** extraordinary to vow a vow of a Nazirite, to separate ***himself*** to the LORD, **3** from wine and strong drink he shall separate himself; vinegar of wine and vinegar of strong drink he shall not drink, and any juice of grapes he shall not drink, and grapes, fresh and dried, he

5:14 Prov 6:34; Song 8:6; Num 5:30
5:15 Ezek 29:16; Lev 5:11; 1 Kgs 17:18
5:16 Lev 1:3; Jer 17:10; Heb 13:4
5:17 Num 19:2-9; Exod 30:18; Job 2:12
5:18 Rev 10:9; Rev 10:10; Heb 13:4
5:19 Matt 26:63; Rom 7:2
5:21 Matt 26:74; Josh 6:26; 1 Sam 14:24
5:22 Matt 6:13; 1 Cor 14:16; Ps 109:18
5:23 Exod 17:14; Deut 31:19; 2 Chr 34:24
5:24 Zech 5:3,4; Mal 3:5
5:25 Lev 8:27; Num 5:15,18; Exod 29:24
5:26 Lev 2:2,9; Lev 5:12; Lev 6:15
5:27 Rom 7:3; Jer 29:18,22; Jer 42:18
5:28 Rom 7:3; Num 5:19; Mic 7:7-10
5:29 Rom 7:3; Num 5:12,15,19; Lev 7:11
5:31 Lev 20:10,17-20; Ps 37:6; Num 9:13
6:2 Luke 1:15; Acts 21:23; Acts 21:24
6:3 Luke 1:15; Acts 21:23; Lev 10:9

5:14 *he is jealous of his wife, and she has made herself unclean* The law of jealousy. It names both cases: a wife who sinned in secret, with no witness (5:13), or a husband jealous of a wife who is completely innocent. In that world a suspicious husband often held all the power, to divorce, beat or stir up others with no proof. "Who will stand before jealousy?" (Prov 27:4). God did not let him settle it himself. The case was taken out of his hands and put into God's.
5:15 *he shall not pour oil on it* About two quarts of barley flour, the grain of the poor, with no oil or frankincense, the signs of joy. It was a sober offering for a sad situation.
5:17 *holy water in an earthenware vessel, and some of the dust which is on the floor of the tabernacle* Nothing in the cup could harm anyone by itself. This was not a trial by poison. If anything happened, it would be because God acted. Loosened hair (5:18) was a sign of shame or mourning.
5:22 *to make your belly swell and your thigh fall* Teachers differ on what this meant. Many believe it described the loss of the ability to bear children. Scripture does not explain it further.
5:22 *Amen, amen* Amen means so be it. She put herself in God's hands. For an innocent woman, this was a way to be cleared in public by God Himself.
5:28 *then she shall be free, and she shall be sown with seed* An innocent wife went home cleared, free to bear children, with her husband's suspicion answered by God. Scripture never records a case of this test being used. But it made clear that a wife's guilt or innocence was God's to decide, not an angry man's. Some teachers read the law more as exposing hidden sin than as protecting the wife.
5:31 *the man shall be free from iniquity* A husband who brought the case honestly was not guilty for doing so. This law was for Israel under the Mosaic covenant and is not practiced today. Christ "redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us" (Gal 3:13). But God still honors marriage (Heb 13:4) and cares for the falsely accused. Husbands are to love their wives as Christ loved the church (Eph 5:25) and not be harsh (Col 3:19). Broken trust should be brought before the Lord honestly, with help.
6:2 *when he makes it extraordinary to vow a vow of a Nazirite* Nazirite comes from nazir, one separated or consecrated. The vow was open to men and women, voluntary and for a set time, a special act of devotion beyond what the Law required of everyone. "Extraordinary" is the Hebrew word often used for something wonderful, out of the ordinary.
6:3 *from wine and strong drink he shall separate himself* Wine was not sinful in itself. It was part of normal life and of Israel's offerings (15:5). But it stood for the comforts of settled life in the land. The Nazirite gave up a good thing to show his joy was in the LORD alone, down to "seeds even to skin" (6:4). God's people sometimes set aside good things for a season, as in fasting, to give Him full attention.

shall not eat. **4** All the days of his separation, from anything that is made from the vine of the wine, from seeds even to skin, he shall not eat. **5** All the days of the vow of his separation a razor shall not pass over his head; until the days are fulfilled which he separates ***himself*** to the LORD, he shall be holy, letting the locks of the hair of his head grow. **6** All the days of his separating ***himself*** to the LORD, he shall not go in to a dead soul. **7** For his father and for his mother, for his brother and for his sister, he shall not make himself unclean for them at their death, for the separation of his God ***is*** on his head. **8** All the days of his separation he ***is*** holy to the LORD. **9** And if a dead ***one*** dies beside him in an instant, suddenly, and he makes the head of his separation unclean, then he shall shave his head on the day of his cleansing; on the seventh day he shall shave it. **10** And on the eighth day he shall bring two turtledoves or two young of the dove to the priest, to the entrance of the tent of meeting. **11** And the priest shall offer one for a sin offering and one for a burnt offering, and he shall make atonement for him, because he sinned by the corpse; and he shall sanctify his head on that day. **12** And he shall separate ***himself*** to the LORD ***for*** the days of his separation, and he shall bring a male lamb, a son of its year, for a guilt offering; and the former days shall fall, for his separation became unclean.

When the Vow Is Complete

13 And this ***is*** the law of the Nazirite: on the day the days of his separation are fulfilled, he shall bring him to the entrance of the tent of meeting. **14** And he shall bring near his offering to the LORD: one male lamb, a son of its year, without blemish, for a burnt offering, and one ewe lamb, a daughter of its year, without blemish, for a sin offering, and one ram without blemish for peace offerings, **15** and a basket of unleavened bread, cakes of fine flour mixed with oil, and wafers of unleavened bread smeared with oil, and their grain offering and their drink offerings. **16** And the priest shall bring ***them*** near before the LORD, and he shall offer his sin offering and his burnt offering. **17** And the ram he shall offer ***as*** a sacrifice of peace offerings to the LORD, with the basket of unleavened bread; and the priest shall offer its grain offering and its drink offering. **18** And the Nazirite shall shave the head of his separation ***at*** the entrance of the tent of meeting, and he shall take the hair of the head of his separation, and he shall put ***it*** on the fire which ***is*** under the sacrifice of the peace offerings. **19** And the priest shall take the boiled arm from the ram, and one cake of unleavened bread from the basket, and one wafer of unleavened bread, and he shall put ***them*** on the palms of the Nazirite after he has shaved his separation. **20** And the priest shall wave them ***as*** a wave offering before the LORD; it ***is*** holy for the priest, with the breast of the wave offering and with the thigh of the contribution. And afterward the Nazirite may drink wine. **21** This ***is*** the law of the Nazirite who vows his offering to the LORD for his separation, besides what his hand attains; according to the mouth of his vow which he vows, so he shall do, according to the law of his separation.'"

The Priestly Blessing

22 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **23** "Speak to Aaron (Aharon) and to his sons, saying, 'Thus you shall bless the sons of Israel, saying to them: **24** "May the LORD bless you, and may He keep you; **25** may the LORD make His face shine

6:4 Luke 1:15; Acts 21:23
6:5 Acts 21:23; Acts 21:24; 1 Sam 1:11
6:6 Acts 21:23; Lev 19:28; Num 19:11-16
6:7 Acts 21:23; Num 9:6; Lev 21:1,2,10-12
6:8 2 Cor 6:17,18
6:9 Acts 21:23; Acts 21:24; Num 6:18
6:10 Lev 1:14; Lev 15:14,29; Lev 5:7-10
6:11 Lev 5:8-10; Lev 14:30,31
6:12 Lev 5:6; Lev 14:24; Ezek 18:24
6:13 Acts 21:26; Acts 21:24
6:14 1 Pet 1:19; Acts 21:26; Lev 3:6
6:15 Lev 2:4; Exod 29:2; Lev 8:2
6:18 Acts 21:24; Acts 18:18; Num 6:5,9
6:19 1 Sam 2:15; Lev 7:30; Lev 8:31
6:20 Eccl 9:7; Num 5:25; Exod 29:27,28
6:21 Num 5:29; Ezra 2:69; Gal 6:6
6:23 Deut 21:5; 1 Chr 23:13; Deut 10:8
6:24 Luke 1:21; 2 Pet 1:2; Ps 121:4-7
6:25 Luke 1:21; Ps 119:135; Ps 31:16

6:5 *a razor shall not pass over his head* Long hair was the public mark that this person belonged to God in a special way. Samson was a Nazirite from the womb (Judg 13:5), and Hannah made the same promise for Samuel (1 Sam 1:11).
6:7 *for the separation of his God is on his head* Not even for his parents could he come near a dead body. It was the rule for the high priest (Lev 21:11). For the time of the vow an ordinary Israelite was held to the holiness of the high priest. The long hair was a crown of devotion, and death was the sign of sin's curse.
6:9 *if a dead one dies beside him in an instant, suddenly* He had not sinned on purpose, but the vow was defiled. He shaved, brought a sin offering and a burnt offering, and began again, for "the former days shall fall" (6:12). Defilement is serious even when we do not mean it. But God gave a way to be cleansed and start again, as in Christ (1 John 1:9).
6:12 *a male lamb, a son of its year, for a guilt offering* A sin offering dealt with sin and uncleanness. A burnt offering was wholly burned, showing full surrender. A guilt offering was for a wrong that needed to be made right.
6:14 *he shall bring near his offering to the LORD* At the end of the vow came a full set of offerings, the peace offering being a fellowship meal with God. Even after a vow faithfully kept, he brought a sin offering. Even our best devotion needs God's forgiveness.
6:18 *he shall take the hair of the head of his separation* The hair that marked his vow was given to God on the fire under the peace offering. A wave offering (6:20) was lifted up and presented to God before going to the priest. Then he might drink wine again.
6:21 *according to the mouth of his vow which he vows, so he shall do* God takes our promises seriously (Eccl 5:5; Matt 5:37). John the Baptist lived under a Nazirite-like rule (Luke 1:15), and Paul took vows most see as Nazirite (Acts 18:18; 21:23-26). Jesus was a Nazarene, from Nazareth (Matt 2:23), not a Nazirite. He drank wine and touched the dead to raise them, yet He was "separated from sinners" (Heb 7:26) as no Nazirite ever was. Our whole lives belong to God (Rom 12:1).
6:23 *Thus you shall bless the sons of Israel* The priests also spoke God's blessing over His people. It was given word for word, so it was God's own blessing, not a priest's good wishes.
6:24 *May the LORD bless you, and may He keep you* To bless is to give good, to cause to flourish. To keep is to guard, like a shepherd watching his flock. "You" is singular in Hebrew: spoken over the nation, it reached each person.
6:25 *may the LORD make His face shine toward you* A face that shines on you is pleased and turned toward you with favor. To be gracious is to give kindness not earned. God has shone in our hearts the light of His glory "in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor 4:6).

toward you, and may He be gracious to you; **26** may the LORD lift up His face toward you, and may He set peace for you."' **27** And they shall put My name on the sons of Israel, and I, I will bless them."

NUMBERS 7

The Leaders' Gifts

1 And it was on the day Moses (Moshe) finished setting up the tabernacle, and he anointed it and sanctified it and all its articles, and the altar and all its articles; and he anointed them and sanctified them. **2** And the leaders of Israel (Yisra'el), the heads of the house of their fathers, brought near—they ***were*** the leaders of the tribes; they ***were*** those who stood over the enrolled— **3** and they brought their offering before the LORD: six covered carts and twelve oxen, a cart for two of the leaders and an ox for one; and they brought them near before the tabernacle. **4** And the LORD said to Moses, saying, **5** "Take ***them*** from them, and they shall be for serving the service of the tent of meeting; and you shall give them to the Levites, each man according to the mouth of his service." **6** And Moses took the carts and the oxen, and he gave them to the Levites. **7** Two of the carts and four of the oxen he gave to the sons of Gershon, according to the mouth of their service; **8** and four of the carts and eight of the oxen he gave to the sons of Merari, according to the mouth of their service, in the hand of Ithamar (Itamar) the son of Aaron (Aharon) the priest. **9** And to the sons of Kohath (Qehat) he did not give ***any***, for the service of the holy thing ***was*** on them; on the shoulder they carried ***it***.

Twelve Days of Offerings

10 And the leaders brought near the dedication of the altar on the day it was anointed; and the leaders brought near their offering before the altar. **11** And the LORD said to Moses, "One leader for the day, one leader for the day, they shall bring near their offering for the dedication of the altar." **12** And the one who brought near his offering on the first day was Nahshon (Nachshon) the son of Amminadab (Aminadav), of the tribe of Judah (Yehuda). **13** And his offering ***was*** one dish of silver, its weight approximately 3 1/4 pounds (one hundred and thirty ***shekels***), one bowl of silver, approximately 1 3/4 pounds (seventy shekels), by the shekel of the holy place, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; **14** one pan of gold, approximately 4 ounces (ten ***shekels***), full of incense; **15** one young bull, a son of the herd, one ram, one male lamb, a son of its year, for a burnt offering; **16** one male goat of the goats for a sin offering; **17** and for the sacrifice of the peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, five male lambs, sons of a year. This ***was*** the offering of Nahshon the son of Amminadab. **18** On the second day Nethanel (Netanel) the son of Zuar (Tsu'ar), the leader of Issachar (Yisashkhar), brought near. **19** He brought near his offering: one dish of silver, its weight approximately 3 1/4 pounds (one hundred and thirty ***shekels***), one bowl of silver, approximately 1 3/4 pounds (seventy shekels), by the shekel of the holy place, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; **20** one pan of gold, approximately 4 ounces (ten ***shekels***), full of incense; **21** one young bull, a son of the herd, one ram, one male lamb, a son of its year, for a burnt offering; **22** one male goat of the goats for a sin offering; **23** and for the sacrifice of the peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, five male lambs, sons of a year. This ***was*** the offering of Nethanel the son of Zuar. **24** On the third day, the leader of the sons of Zebulun (Zevulun), Eliab (Eli'av) the son of Helon (Chelon). **25** His offering ***was*** one dish of silver, its weight approximately 3 1/4 pounds (one hundred and thirty ***shekels***), one bowl of silver, approximately 1 3/4 pounds (seventy shekels), by the shekel of the holy place, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; **26** one pan of gold,

6:26 John 16:33; Rom 15:13; Luke 1:21
6:27 Acts 15:17; 2 Chr 7:14; Deut 28:10
7:1 Lev 8:10,11; Exod 40:17-19; Exod 30:23-30
7:2 Num 1:4-16; 2 Chr 35:8; Num 2:1-34
7:5 Exod 25:1-11; Exod 35:4-10; Ps 16:2,3
7:7 Num 3:25,26; Num 4:24-28
7:8 Num 3:36,37; Num 4:28-33
7:9 Num 3:31; Num 4:4-16; 2 Sam 6:6,13
7:10 Deut 20:5; 1 Kgs 8:63; 2 Chr 7:5,9
7:11 1 Cor 14:33,40; Col 2:5
7:12 Matt 1:4; Luke 3:32; Num 1:7
7:13 Exod 30:13; Exod 25:29; Exod 37:16
7:14 Num 4:7; Exod 37:16; 1 Kgs 7:50
7:15 1 Pet 1:19; Num 25:1-18; Num 28:1-29
7:16 Lev 4:23,25
7:17 Matt 1:4; Lev 3:1-17; 2 Cor 5:19-21
7:18 Num 1:8; Num 2:5
7:21 Gen 8:20; Rom 12:1; Eph 5:2
7:23 Lev 7:11-13; 1 Kgs 8:63; Prov 7:14
7:24 Num 1:9; Num 2:7

6:26 *may He set peace for you* To lift up one's face toward someone is to give full attention and approval. Peace, shalom, means wholeness, everything as it should be, which comes from being right with God (Rom 5:1). The LORD is named three times. Many Christians have seen a hint of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (2 Cor 13:14), though the text does not explain it.

6:27 *they shall put My name on the sons of Israel, and I, I will bless them* The priests spoke, but God did the blessing. To put His name on them marked them as His own. Jesus' last act on earth was to bless His disciples (Luke 24:50-51), and in the end His servants "will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads" (Rev 22:4).

7:1 *on the day Moses finished setting up the tabernacle* The first day of the first month of the second year (Exod 40:2, 17). Chapters 7 to 9 go back to that month, before the census of chapter 1. Moses arranged the book by subject, not always by date. To anoint the tabernacle with oil was to set it apart as holy.

7:3 *six covered carts and twelve oxen* A practical gift. A tabernacle had to be moved, and moving it took transport. The heavier the load, the more help God gave: two carts to the Gershonites, four to the Merarites (7:7-8).

7:9 *on the shoulder they carried it* The ark and the holy furniture were never to ride on a cart. David forgot this, and it cost Uzzah his life (2 Sam 6:3-7). God gives what we need for the work He assigns, and He sets limits on how holy things are handled.

7:11 *One leader for the day, one leader for the day* To dedicate something is to set it apart for God's use. Twelve leaders, twelve days. I believe the reason is honor: each tribe had its own day before the LORD, and no tribe's gift was lost in a crowd.

7:12 *Nahshon the son of Amminadab, of the tribe of Judah* Judah again first, as in the camp (2:3).

7:13 *his offering was one dish of silver* The gift repeated eleven more times: silver dish and bowl full of flour and oil, a gold pan of incense, and animals for every offering. It covered the whole range of worship: thanks, prayer rising like incense, full surrender, the dealing with sin, and the fellowship meal.

7:18 *On the second day Nethanel the son of Zuar, the leader of Issachar, brought near* The days follow the order of the camp. Every gift is the same, and every one is written out in full. It would have been simpler to say the others brought the same, but God did not want it said that way. Each gift is recorded as if it were the only one.

approximately 4 ounces (ten ***shekels***), full of incense; **27** one young bull, a son of the herd, one ram, one male lamb, a son of its year, for a burnt offering; **28** one male goat of the goats for a sin offering; **29** and for the sacrifice of the peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, five male lambs, sons of a year. This ***was*** the offering of Eliab the son of Helon. **30** On the fourth day, the leader of the sons of Reuben (Reuven), Elizur (Elitsur) the son of Shedeur. **31** His offering ***was*** one dish of silver, its weight approximately 3 1/4 pounds (one hundred and thirty ***shekels***), one bowl of silver, approximately 1 3/4 pounds (seventy shekels), by the shekel of the holy place, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; **32** one pan of gold, approximately 4 ounces (ten ***shekels***), full of incense; **33** one young bull, a son of the herd, one ram, one male lamb, a son of its year, for a burnt offering; **34** one male goat of the goats for a sin offering; **35** and for the sacrifice of the peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, five male lambs, sons of a year. This ***was*** the offering of Elizur the son of Shedeur. **36** On the fifth day, the leader of the sons of Simeon (Shimon), Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai (Tsurishaday). **37** His offering ***was*** one dish of silver, its weight approximately 3 1/4 pounds (one hundred and thirty ***shekels***), one bowl of silver, approximately 1 3/4 pounds (seventy shekels), by the shekel of the holy place, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; **38** one pan of gold, approximately 4 ounces (ten ***shekels***), full of incense; **39** one young bull, a son of the herd, one ram, one male lamb, a son of its year, for a burnt offering; **40** one male goat of the goats for a sin offering; **41** and for the sacrifice of the peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, five male lambs, sons of a year. This ***was*** the offering of Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai. **42** On the sixth day, the leader of the sons of Gad, Eliasaph (Elyasaf) the son of Deuel. **43** His offering ***was*** one dish of silver, its weight approximately 3 1/4 pounds (one hundred and thirty ***shekels***), one bowl of silver, approximately 1 3/4 pounds (seventy shekels), by the shekel of the holy place, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; **44** one pan of gold, approximately 4 ounces (ten ***shekels***), full of incense; **45** one young bull, a son of the herd, one ram, one male lamb, a son of its year, for a burnt offering; **46** one male goat of the goats for a sin offering; **47** and for the sacrifice of the peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, five male lambs, sons of a year. This ***was*** the offering of Eliasaph the son of Deuel. **48** On the seventh day, the leader of the sons of Ephraim (Efrayim), Elishama the son of Ammihud (Amihud). **49** His offering ***was*** one dish of silver, its weight approximately 3 1/4 pounds (one hundred and thirty ***shekels***), one bowl of silver, approximately 1 3/4 pounds (seventy shekels), by the shekel of the holy place, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; **50** one pan of gold, approximately 4 ounces (ten ***shekels***), full of incense; **51** one young bull, a son of the herd, one ram, one male lamb, a son of its year, for a burnt offering; **52** one male goat of the goats for a sin offering; **53** and for the sacrifice of the peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, five male lambs, sons of a year. This ***was*** the offering of Elishama the son of Ammihud. **54** On the eighth day, the leader of the sons of Manasseh (Menashe), Gamaliel (Gamli'el) the son of Pedahzur (Pedahtsur). **55** His offering ***was*** one dish of silver, its weight approximately 3 1/4 pounds (one hundred and thirty ***shekels***), one bowl of silver, approximately 1 3/4 pounds (seventy shekels), by the shekel of the holy place, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; **56** one pan of gold, approximately 4 ounces (ten ***shekels***), full of incense; **57** one young bull, a son of the herd, one ram, one male lamb, a son of its year, for a burnt offering; **58** one male goat of the goats for a sin offering; **59** and for the sacrifice of the peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, five male lambs, sons of a year. This ***was*** the offering of Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur. **60** On the ninth day, the leader of the sons of Benjamin (Binyamin), Abidan (Avidan) the son of Gideoni (Gidoni). **61** His offering ***was*** one dish of silver, its weight approximately 3 1/4 pounds (one hundred and thirty ***shekels***), one bowl of silver, approximately 1 3/4 pounds (seventy shekels), by the shekel of the holy place, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; **62** one pan of gold, approximately 4 ounces (ten ***shekels***), full of incense; **63** one young bull, a son of the herd, one ram, one male lamb, a son of its year, for a burnt offering; **64** one male goat of the goats for a sin offering; **65** and for the sacrifice of the peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, five male lambs, sons of a year. This ***was*** the offering of Abidan the son of Gideoni. **66** On the tenth day, the leader of the sons of Dan, Ahiezer (Achi'ezer) the son of Ammishaddai (Amishaday). **67** His offering ***was*** one dish of silver, its weight approximately 3 1/4 pounds (one hundred and thirty ***shekels***), one bowl of silver, approximately 1 3/4 pounds (seventy shekels), by the shekel of the holy place, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; **68** one pan of gold, approximately 4 ounces (ten ***shekels***), full of incense; **69** one young bull, a son of the herd, one ram, one male lamb, a son of its year, for a burnt offering; **70** one male goat of the goats for a sin offering; **71** and for the sacrifice of the peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, five male lambs, sons of a year. This ***was*** the offering of Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai. **72** On ***the*** eleventh day, the leader of the sons of Asher, Pagiel the son of Ochran (Okhran). **73** His offering ***was*** one dish of silver, its weight approximately 3 1/4 pounds (one hundred and thirty ***shekels***), one bowl of silver, approximately 1 3/4 pounds (seventy shekels), by the shekel of the holy place, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain

7:27 Ps 50:8-14; Ps 51:16; Isa 1:11
7:30 Num 1:5; Num 2:10
7:32 Ps 66:15; Mal 1:11; Luke 1:10
7:36 Num 1:6; Num 2:12
7:39 John 1:29; Acts 8:32; 1 Pet 1:19
7:42 Num 1:14; Num 2:14
7:43 Lev 2:5; Lev 14:10; Heb 1:9
7:45 Ps 66:15; Isa 53:4; 2 Cor 5:21
7:48 Num 1:10; Num 2:18
7:54 Num 1:10; Num 2:20
7:60 Num 1:11; Num 2:22
7:62 Ps 112:2; Isa 66:20; Dan 9:27
7:66 Num 1:12; Num 2:25
7:72 Num 1:13; Num 2:27

7:54 *On the eighth day, the leader of the sons of Manasseh* Manasseh, the smallest tribe in chapter 1 (1:35), brought the same gift as Judah, the largest. In worship every tribe stood equal before God.

offering; **74** one pan of gold, approximately 4 ounces (ten ***shekels***), full of incense; **75** one young bull, a son of the herd, one ram, one male lamb, a son of its year, for a burnt offering; **76** one male goat of the goats for a sin offering; **77** and for the sacrifice of the peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, five male lambs, sons of a year. This ***was*** the offering of Pagiel the son of Ochran. **78** On ***the*** twelfth day, the leader of the sons of Naphtali (Naftali), Ahira (Achira) the son of Enan. **79** His offering ***was*** one dish of silver, its weight approximately 3 1/4 pounds (one hundred and thirty ***shekels***), one bowl of silver, approximately 1 3/4 pounds (seventy shekels), by the shekel of the holy place, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; **80** one pan of gold, approximately 4 ounces (ten ***shekels***), full of incense; **81** one young bull, a son of the herd, one ram, one male lamb, a son of its year, for a burnt offering; **82** one male goat of the goats for a sin offering; **83** and for the sacrifice of the peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, five male lambs, sons of a year. This ***was*** the offering of Ahira the son of Enan.

The Totals and the Voice from the Mercy Seat

84 This ***was*** the dedication of the altar, on the day it was anointed, from the leaders of Israel: twelve dishes of silver, twelve bowls of silver, twelve pans of gold; **85** the one dish of silver approximately 3 1/4 pounds (one hundred and thirty ***shekels***), and the one bowl approximately 1 3/4 pounds (seventy ***shekels***); all the silver of the vessels approximately 60 pounds (two thousand and four hundred ***shekels***), by the shekel of the holy place; **86** twelve pans of gold full of incense, approximately 4 ounces (ten ***shekels***) apiece per pan, by the shekel of the holy place; all the gold of the pans approximately 3 pounds (one hundred and twenty ***shekels***); **87** all the cattle for the burnt offering, twelve young bulls, twelve rams, twelve male lambs, sons of a year, and their grain offering; and twelve male goats of the goats for a sin offering; **88** and all the cattle of the sacrifice of the peace offerings, twenty-four young bulls, sixty rams, sixty male goats, sixty male lambs, sons of a year. This ***was*** the dedication of the altar after it was anointed. **89** And when Moses went into the tent of meeting to speak with Him, then he heard the voice speaking to him from above the mercy seat which ***was*** on the ark of the testimony, from between the two cherubim; and He spoke to him.

NUMBERS 8

The Lampstand

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe), saying, **2** "Speak to Aaron (Aharon), and you shall say to him, 'When you raise the lamps, the seven lamps shall give light toward the front of the face of the lampstand.'" **3** And Aaron did so; toward the front of the face of the lampstand he raised its lamps, just as the LORD had commanded Moses. **4** And this ***was*** the work of the lampstand: hammered work of gold; to its base ***and*** to its blossom it ***was*** hammered work. Like the appearance which the LORD had shown Moses, so he made the lampstand.

The Cleansing of the Levites

5 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **6** "Take the Levites from among the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), and you shall purify them. **7** And thus you shall do to them to purify them: spatter on them water of sin offering, and they shall cause a razor to pass over all their flesh, and they shall wash their clothes, and they shall purify themselves. **8** And they shall take a young bull, a son of the herd, and its grain offering, fine flour mixed with oil; and a second young bull, a son of the herd, you shall take for a sin offering. **9** And you shall bring the Levites near before the tent of meeting, and you shall assemble all the congregation of the sons of Israel. **10** And you shall bring the Levites near before the LORD, and the sons of Israel shall lay their hands on the Levites. **11** And Aaron shall wave the Levites ***as*** a wave offering before the LORD from the sons of Israel, and they shall be ***for*** serving the service of the LORD. **12** And the Levites shall lay their

7:78 Num 1:15; Num 2:29
7:84 Num 7:10; 1 Chr 29:6-8; Ezra 2:68,69
7:85 1 Chr 22:14; 1 Chr 29:4,7; Ezra 8:25,26
7:88 Num 7:1,10,84
7:89 Heb 9:5; Ps 80:1; Num 12:8
8:2 Matt 5:15; Exod 25:37; Exod 37:18,19,23
8:4 Heb 8:5; Exod 25:31-39; Exod 25:18
8:6 Exod 19:15; 2 Cor 7:1; James 4:8
8:7 Lev 8:6; Lev 14:7; Isa 52:15
8:8 Lev 2:1; Exod 29:1,3; Lev 1:3
8:9 Exod 40:12; Lev 8:3; Exod 29:4-37
8:10 Acts 13:2; Acts 13:3; Lev 1:4
8:11 Lev 7:30; Num 6:20; Exod 29:24
8:12 Acts 13:2; Heb 10:6; Heb 10:8

7:78 *On the twelfth day, the leader of the sons of Naphtali* The last tribe's gift is described in every detail, like the first. God does not forget "the labor of love" (Heb 6:10) shown toward His name, and even a cup of cold water given in His name has its reward (Matt 10:42). Your gift does not vanish into a total.
7:84 *This was the dedication of the altar* The totals add up exactly. God records the gifts both ways, each one alone and all together. Each giver mattered, and so did the whole people giving as one (2 Cor 9:7).
7:89 *he heard the voice speaking to him from above the mercy seat* Like the quiet after a long service. The mercy seat was the gold lid of the ark, where blood was sprinkled on the Day of Atonement (Lev 16:14-15), and God had promised to speak from there (Exod 25:22). God speaks to sinful people from the place where sin is covered. Christ was set forth "as a propitiation through faith in His blood" (Rom 3:25), using the Greek word for the mercy seat. Jesus is where God meets us (Heb 1:1-2).
8:2 *the seven lamps shall give light toward the front of the face of the lampstand* The lampstand stood in the holy place, which had no windows. Aaron set the lamps so the light fell forward. A light is meant to shine on something, not just burn. Jesus said, "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12), and told His disciples, "You are the light of the world" (Matt 5:14). The churches are golden lampstands with Christ among them (Rev 1:12-13, 20).
8:4 *Like the appearance which the LORD had shown Moses, so he made the lampstand* Beaten from a single piece of gold (Exod 25:31). Moses did not design it. He copied what God showed him.
8:7 *spatter on them water of sin offering* Water for cleansing from sin and uncleanness. Then shaving the whole body and washing clothes. Every step pictured a fresh start. We cannot make ourselves clean enough to serve God, but He washes us "through the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit" (Titus 3:5).
8:10 *the sons of Israel shall lay their hands on the Levites* Laying on hands identified with someone and set him apart, most likely done by leaders for the whole people. It said: these men stand in for us, as the Levites took the place of the firstborn (chapter 3).
8:11 *Aaron shall wave the Levites as a wave offering* We do not know how this was done with thousands of men. Some think they were led back and forth before the altar, or presented with a symbolic motion. The point is clear: they were a living offering, presented to God by the people.
8:12 *the Levites shall lay their hands on the head of the young bulls* The people laid hands on the Levites, and the Levites on the bulls. Substitution runs through the whole ceremony.

hands on the head of the young bulls; and offer the one ***as*** a sin offering and the one ***as*** a burnt offering to the LORD, to make atonement for the Levites. **13** And you shall make the Levites stand before Aaron and before his sons, and you shall wave them ***as*** a wave offering to the LORD. **14** And you shall separate the Levites from among the sons of Israel, and the Levites shall be Mine. **15** And after that the Levites shall go in to serve the tent of meeting; and you shall purify them, and you shall wave them ***as*** a wave offering. **16** For they ***are*** given, given to Me from among the sons of Israel; in place of the opening of every womb, the firstborn of all from the sons of Israel, I have taken them for Myself. **17** For every firstborn among the sons of Israel ***is*** Mine, among man and among livestock; on the day I struck every firstborn in the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim) I sanctified them for Myself. **18** And I have taken the Levites in place of every firstborn among the sons of Israel. **19** And I have given the Levites ***as*** given ***ones*** to Aaron and to his sons from among the sons of Israel, to serve the service of the sons of Israel in the tent of meeting and to make atonement for the sons of Israel, and there shall not be a plague among the sons of Israel when the sons of Israel draw near to the holy place." **20** And Moses and Aaron and all the congregation of the sons of Israel did to the Levites according to all that the LORD had commanded Moses concerning the Levites; so the sons of Israel did to them. **21** And the Levites purified themselves from sin, and they washed their clothes; and Aaron waved them ***as*** a wave offering before the LORD, and Aaron made atonement for them to purify them. **22** And after that the Levites went in to serve their service in the tent of meeting before Aaron and before his sons; just as the LORD had commanded Moses concerning the Levites, so they did to them.

The Levites' Years of Service

23 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **24** "This ***is*** what ***is*** for the Levites: from a son of twenty-five years and upward he shall go in to perform duty in the service of the tent of meeting. **25** And from a son of fifty years he shall return from the duty of the service, and he shall not serve again. **26** And he shall minister with his brothers in the tent of meeting, to keep charge, and service he shall not serve. Thus you shall do to the Levites in their charges."

NUMBERS 9

The Second Passover

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe) in the wilderness of Sinai (Sinay), in the second year of their going out from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim), in the first month, saying, **2** "And let the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) observe the Passover at its appointed time. **3** On the fourteenth day in this month, between the two evenings, you shall observe it at its appointed time; according to all its statutes and according to all its judgments you shall observe it." **4** And Moses spoke to the sons of Israel to observe the Passover. **5** And they observed the Passover in the first ***month***, on the fourteenth day of the month, between the two evenings, in the wilderness of Sinai; according to all that the LORD had commanded Moses, so the sons of Israel did. **6** And there were men who were unclean by the corpse of a man, and they were not able to observe the Passover on that day; and they drew near before Moses and before Aaron (Aharon) on that day. **7** And those men said to him, "We ***are*** unclean by the corpse of a man. Why are we held back so as not to bring near the offering of the LORD at its appointed time among the sons of Israel?" **8** And Moses said to them, "Stand, and let me hear what the LORD will command concerning you." **9** And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **10** "Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'Any man, any man, if he is unclean by a corpse, or on a distant journey, of you or of your generations, then he shall

8:13 Acts 13:2; Num 8:11,21; Num 18:6
8:14 Num 3:45; Num 6:2; Deut 10:8
8:15 Num 8:11; Num 3:23-37; Num 4:3-32
8:16 Luke 2:23; Num 3:12,45
8:17 Luke 2:23; John 17:19; Exod 13:2,12-15
8:19 Num 1:53; Num 16:46; Num 3:6-9
8:21 Num 8:7; Num 8:11-13,15; Num 19:12,19
8:22 Num 8:15; 2 Chr 30:15-17,27; 2 Chr 31:2
8:24 Num 4:3,23; 1 Chr 23:3,24-27; 1 Chr 28:12,13
8:25 Num 4:23; 2 Tim 4:7
8:26 Num 1:53; Num 3:32; Num 18:4
9:1 Num 1:1; Exod 40:2
9:2 Mark 14:12; Luke 22:7; 1 Cor 5:7
9:3 Exod 12:6; 2 Chr 30:2,15; Heb 9:26
9:5 Heb 3:5; Josh 5:10; Num 8:20
9:6 John 18:28; John 11:55; Num 27:2,5
9:7 Num 9:2; Exod 12:27; Deut 16:2
9:8 Heb 3:5; Num 27:5; Ps 85:8
9:10 Num 9:6,7; Rom 15:8-19; Rom 16:25,26

8:14 *the Levites shall be Mine* Cleansed by water, given by the people and covered by blood. In Christ every believer is now "a holy priesthood" (1 Pet 2:5), presenting his body "as a living, holy sacrifice" (Rom 12:1).
8:16 *they are given, given to Me* God points back again to the night He struck Egypt's firstborn (8:17).
8:19 *to make atonement for the sons of Israel* By guarding the holy things and doing the work properly, the Levites kept the people from coming near carelessly and being struck by a plague.
8:22 *after that the Levites went in to serve their service* Cleansed, offered, atoned for, and then serving. We are not saved by serving. We serve because we have been cleansed and made His. Good works follow salvation. They never buy it.
8:24 *from a son of twenty-five years and upward* Chapter 4 said thirty. Many think twenty-five began a time of training, with the full work of carrying at thirty (see 4:3).
8:26 *he shall minister with his brothers in the tent of meeting, to keep charge* At fifty the heavy carrying ended (8:25), but an older Levite was not thrown away. He could still guard, help and teach. God does not waste His older servants. If you are older, your service is not over. If you are younger, learn from those who have walked with God a long time.
9:1 *in the second year of their going out from the land of Egypt, in the first month* Before the census of chapter 1. The Passover remembered the night God passed over the houses marked with the lamb's blood and struck Egypt's firstborn (Exod 12). This is the only Passover recorded in the forty wilderness years. The next is in Joshua 5:10. Christ is "our Passover" (1 Cor 5:7), the "Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).
9:6 *there were men who were unclean by the corpse of a man* Touching a dead body made a person unclean for seven days (19:11). Perhaps they had buried a family member. They had not sinned, but the Law kept them from the feast.
9:7 *Why are we held back* They were not looking for a way out of worship. They wanted in.
9:8 *Stand, and let me hear what the LORD will command concerning you* Moses did not guess. When a leader does not know the answer, he should say so and go to God.

observe a Passover to the LORD. **11** In the second month, on the fourteenth day, between the two evenings, they shall observe it; with unleavened bread and bitter herbs they shall eat it. **12** They shall not leave over ***any*** of it until morning, and a bone they shall not break in it; according to every statute of the Passover they shall observe it. **13** And the man who ***is*** clean and was not on a journey, and fails to observe the Passover, that soul shall be cut off from its peoples; for he did not bring near the offering of the LORD at its appointed time; that man shall bear his sin. **14** And if a sojourner sojourns with you and observes a Passover to the LORD, according to the statute of the Passover and according to its judgment, so he shall do; one statute shall be for you, and for the sojourner, and for the native of the land.'"

The Cloud over the Tabernacle

15 And on the day of setting up the tabernacle, the cloud covered the tabernacle of the tent of the testimony; and in the evening it would be over the tabernacle like the appearance of fire until morning. **16** So it would be continually: the cloud would cover it, and the appearance of fire ***by*** night. **17** And according to the taking up of the cloud from over the tent, after that the sons of Israel would set out; and in the place where the cloud would settle, there the sons of Israel would camp. **18** At the mouth of the LORD the sons of Israel would set out, and at the mouth of the LORD they would camp; all the days that the cloud would settle over the tabernacle they would camp. **19** And when the cloud lingered over the tabernacle many days, the sons of Israel kept the charge of the LORD, and they did not set out. **20** And there were ***times*** when the cloud would be a few days over the tabernacle; at the mouth of the LORD they would camp, and at the mouth of the LORD they would set out. **21** And there were ***times*** when the cloud would be from evening until morning, and the cloud was taken up in the morning, and they set out; or a day and a night, and the cloud was taken up, and they set out. **22** Or two days, or a month, or days, when the cloud lingered over the tabernacle to settle over it, the sons of Israel would camp and would not set out; and when it was taken up, they would set out. **23** At the mouth of the LORD they would camp, and at the mouth of the LORD they would set out; they kept the charge of the LORD at the mouth of the LORD by the hand of Moses.

NUMBERS 10

The Silver Trumpets

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe), saying, **2** "Make for yourself two trumpets of silver; ***of*** hammered work you shall make them; and they shall be for you for the calling of the congregation and for the journeying of the camps. **3** And they shall blow with them, and all the congregation shall gather to you at the entrance of the tent of meeting. **4** And if they blow with one, then the leaders, the heads of the thousands of Israel (Yisra'el), shall gather to you. **5** And you shall blow an alarm, and the camps that camp eastward shall set out. **6** And you shall blow a second alarm, and the camps that camp southward shall set out; an alarm they shall blow for their journeys. **7** And when assembling the assembly, you shall blow, and you shall not sound an alarm. **8** And the sons of Aaron (Aharon), the priests, shall blow with the trumpets; and they shall be for you for a statute forever throughout your generations. **9** And when you go ***to*** war in your land against the adversary who oppresses you, then you shall

9:11 2 Chr 30:2-15; Num 9:3; Exod 12:2-14,43-49
9:12 John 19:36; Exod 12:10; Exod 12:46
9:13 Gen 17:14; Exod 12:15; Num 5:31
9:14 Exod 12:48,49; Lev 24:22; Lev 19:10
9:15 Acts 7:44; Exod 13:21; Exod 40:34
9:16 Neh 9:12,19; Num 9:18-22; Exod 13:21,22
9:17 Exod 40:36-38; Num 10:11,33,34; John 10:3-5,9
9:18 1 Cor 10:1; Num 9:20; Num 10:13
9:19 Num 1:52,53; Num 3:8; Zech 3:7
9:21 Neh 9:12,19
9:22 Ps 32:8; Num 9:17; Num 1:54
9:23 Num 9:19; Gen 26:5; Josh 22:3
10:2 Isa 1:13; Ps 81:3; Joel 1:14
10:3 Jer 4:5; Joel 2:15,16
10:4 Num 7:2; Exod 18:21; Num 1:4-16
10:5 Num 2:3-9; Isa 58:1; Joel 2:1
10:6 Num 2:10-16
10:7 Joel 2:1; Num 10:3,4
10:8 Num 31:6; 1 Chr 15:24; Josh 6:4-16
10:9 Judg 2:18; 1 Sam 10:18; Gen 8:1

9:11 *In the second month, on the fourteenth day* A gracious provision, sometimes called the second Passover, for the unclean or those far away. Unleavened bread recalled the haste of leaving Egypt, and bitter herbs the bitterness of slavery. God does not shut out people who long for Him. He makes a way.

9:12 *a bone they shall not break in it* When Jesus died, the soldiers did not break His legs, "so that the Scripture might be fulfilled, A bone of His will not be broken" (John 19:36; Exod 12:46). He was the true Passover Lamb down to the smallest detail.

9:13 *that soul shall be cut off from its peoples* Removal from the community of God's people, perhaps death at God's hand; teachers differ on the exact meaning. The unclean men wanted to come and could not. This man could come and would not. To refuse the Passover said you did not need what God had done. Turning away from the Lamb God provided is still the most serious sin.

9:14 *one statute shall be for you, and for the sojourner* A sojourner was a foreigner living among Israel, who had first to be circumcised (Exod 12:48). Even in the Law God's door was open to outsiders on His terms. In Christ Gentiles are "fellow citizens of the saints" (Eph 2:19).

9:15 *the cloud covered the tabernacle* The moment of Exodus 40:34-38. For forty years, day and night, God's presence was visible over His dwelling (9:16). It led them, shaded them by day and lit the camp by night.

9:17 *according to the taking up of the cloud from over the tent* No map or schedule, only God's presence. When it moved, they moved. When it stopped, they stopped. "At the mouth of the LORD" means at His command.

9:22 *Or two days, or a month, or days* You might set up camp and wake to find the cloud lifting, or long to move on and wait a month in the heat. Moving when God moves is hard. Waiting when God waits can be harder.

9:23 *At the mouth of the LORD they would camp, and at the mouth of the LORD they would set out* The lesson is repeated because God wanted them to learn it. We have something better than a cloud: His Spirit in us and His written Word. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God" (Rom 8:14). He leads through Scripture, prayer, wise counsel and sometimes closed doors (Acts 16:6-7). Watch, wait, and go when He says go.

10:2 *Make for yourself two trumpets of silver* Long, straight metal trumpets, not rams' horns. In a camp of more than two million people, runners could not reach every tent. The trumpet carried the message to everyone at once (10:3).

10:7 *you shall not sound an alarm* One trumpet gathered the leaders, an alarm moved the camps in turn, and a plain blast gathered the assembly. The people had to learn the difference. A trumpet with an uncertain sound helps no one (1 Cor 14:8). We need to know God's Word so well that we know what He is calling us to do.

10:9 *you shall be remembered before the LORD your God* In war the trumpet was a cry to God for help. When Judah faced a larger army, the priests sounded the trumpets and God gave the victory (2 Chr 13:12-15).

sound an alarm with the trumpets, and you shall be remembered before the LORD your God, and you shall be saved from your enemies. **10** And on the day of your gladness, and at your appointed times, and at the beginnings of your months, then you shall blow with the trumpets over your burnt offerings and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings; and they shall be for you for a memorial before your God. I ***am*** the LORD your God."

Israel Leaves Sinai

11 And it was in the second year, in the second month, on the twentieth ***day*** in the month, the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle of the testimony. **12** And the sons of Israel set out by their journeys from the wilderness of Sinai (Sinay); and the cloud settled in the wilderness of Paran. **13** And they set out for the first ***time*** at the mouth of the LORD by the hand of Moses. **14** And the standard of the camp of the sons of Judah (Yehuda) set out first by their armies; and over its army ***was*** Nahshon (Nachshon) the son of Amminadab (Aminadav). **15** And over the army of the tribe of the sons of Issachar (Yisashkhar) ***was*** Nethanel (Netanel) the son of Zuar (Tsu'ar). **16** And over the army of the tribe of the sons of Zebulun (Zevulun) ***was*** Eliab (Eli'av) the son of Helon (Chelon). **17** And the tabernacle was taken down, and the sons of Gershon and the sons of Merari, the bearers of the tabernacle, set out. **18** And the standard of the camp of Reuben (Reuven) set out by their armies; and over its army ***was*** Elizur (Elitsur) the son of Shedeur. **19** And over the army of the tribe of the sons of Simeon (Shimon) ***was*** Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai (Tsurishaday). **20** And over the army of the tribe of the sons of Gad ***was*** Eliasaph (Elyasaf) the son of Deuel. **21** And the Kohathites, the bearers of the sanctuary, set out; and they set up the tabernacle until their coming. **22** And the standard of the camp of the sons of Ephraim (Efrayim) set out by their armies; and over its army ***was*** Elishama the son of Ammihud (Amihud). **23** And over the army of the tribe of the sons of Manasseh (Menashe) ***was*** Gamaliel (Gamli'el) the son of Pedahzur (Pedahtsur). **24** And over the army of the tribe of the sons of Benjamin (Binyamin) ***was*** Abidan (Avidan) the son of Gideoni (Gidoni). **25** And the standard of the camp of the sons of Dan set out, the rear guard of all the camps, by their armies; and over its army ***was*** Ahiezer (Achi'ezer) the son of Ammishaddai (Amishaday). **26** And over the army of the tribe of the sons of Asher ***was*** Pagiel the son of Ochran (Okhran). **27** And over the army of the tribe of the sons of Naphtali (Naftali) ***was*** Ahira (Achira) the son of Enan. **28** These ***are*** the journeys of the sons of Israel by their armies; and they set out.

Hobab and the Ark Going Before

29 And Moses said to Hobab (Chovav) the son of Reuel the Midianite, the father-in-law of Moses, "We ***are*** setting out to the place of which the LORD said, 'I will give it to you.' Come with us, and we will do good to you, for the LORD has spoken good concerning Israel." **30** And he said to him, "I will not go; but rather to my land and to my kindred I will go." **31** And he said, "Please do not leave us, for inasmuch as you know our camping in the wilderness, and you shall be for eyes for us. **32** And it shall be, if you go with us, and it shall be, that good which the LORD will do good with us, and we will do good to you." **33** And they set out from the mountain of the LORD a journey of three days; and the ark of the covenant of the LORD ***was*** setting out before them a journey of three days to seek out a resting place for them. **34** And the cloud of the LORD ***was*** over them by day when they set out from the

10:10 1 Thess 4:16; Ps 81:3; Num 29:1
10:11 Acts 7:44; Num 1:1; Num 9:1,5,11
10:12 Num 12:16; Gen 21:21; Num 1:1
10:13 Num 9:23
10:14 Matt 1:4; Num 2:3-9; Num 1:7
10:15 Num 1:8; Num 7:18
10:16 Num 1:9; Num 7:24
10:17 Heb 9:11; Num 1:51; Num 7:6-8
10:18 Rev 7:5; Num 2:10-16; Num 1:5
10:19 Num 1:6; Num 7:36
10:20 Rev 7:5; Num 1:14; Num 2:14
10:21 Num 10:17; Num 4:4-16; Num 7:9
10:22 Num 2:18-24; Num 1:10; Num 26:23-41
10:23 Num 1:10; Num 7:54
10:24 Num 1:11; Num 7:60
10:25 Josh 6:9; Num 1:12; Num 2:25,28-31
10:26 Num 1:13; Num 7:72
10:27 Num 1:15; Num 7:78
10:28 Num 2:34; Num 10:35,36; Num 24:4,5
10:29 Rev 22:17; Gen 12:7; Exod 2:18
10:30 Gen 12:1; Gen 31:30; Ruth 1:15-17
10:31 Job 29:15; Ps 32:8; 1 Cor 12:14-21
10:32 Judg 1:16; Judg 4:11; 1 John 1:3
10:33 Heb 4:4; Heb 4:5; Heb 4:7
10:34 Exod 13:21,22; Neh 9:12,19; Ps 105:39

10:10 *on the day of your gladness* In joy too, the trumpets called God's people to remember Him and called on Him to remember them. The Lord will come down "with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first" (1 Thess 4:16; 1 Cor 15:52). I believe that trumpet will call the church up to meet the Lord before the Tribulation. The silver trumpets that gathered Israel toward the promised land are a picture of the day God's trumpet gathers His people home.

10:11 *the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle of the testimony* After about eleven months at Sinai (Exod 19:1), God said it was time to go. The wilderness of Paran (10:12) is the large desert region between Sinai and Canaan.

10:12 *the sons of Israel set out by their journeys* The trip from Sinai to Kadesh took eleven days (Deut 1:2). Had Israel trusted God, they could have been in the land within weeks. Instead it took forty years. That is what the rest of the book is about.

10:17 *the bearers of the tabernacle, set out* The Gershonites and Merarites carried the frame and curtains ahead, so the tent stood ready when the Kohathites arrived with the holy things (10:21). Everything worked as God had planned in chapters 2 to 4.

10:25 *the rear guard of all the camps* The lists of chapters 1 and 2 come to life as a moving column: God's people on the march, His presence in the middle, the cloud overhead.

10:29 *Hobab the son of Reuel the Midianite, the father-in-law of Moses* Exodus calls Moses' father-in-law Reuel (Exod 2:18) and Jethro (Exod 3:1). Many think Hobab was Reuel's son, Moses' brother-in-law. Others note Judges 4:11 calls Hobab himself the father-in-law and think the word can mean any relative by marriage. "Come with us, and we will do good to you" is evangelism: share in what God has promised.

10:31 *you shall be for eyes for us* Did Moses lack faith in the cloud? I do not think so. God led by the cloud, but a man who knew where the water and grazing were could still help. Trusting God does not mean refusing wise human help. Judges 1:16 suggests Hobab's family came along and settled with Judah.

10:33 *to seek out a resting place for them* Sinai is "the mountain of the LORD." Chapter 2 placed the Levites in the middle, but here the ark goes ahead. Most think this was a special case on this first leg, or that its place shifted as needed. God went ahead to find His people a place to rest, as Jesus went to prepare a place for us (John 14:2-3).

camp. **35** And it was, when the ark set out, and Moses said, "Rise up, LORD, and let Your enemies be scattered, and let those who hate You flee from before You." **36** And when it rested, he said, "Return, LORD, ***to*** the ten thousands of the thousands of Israel."

NUMBERS 11

Fire at Taberah

1 And the people were like those who complain ***of*** evil in the ears of the LORD; and the LORD heard, and His anger burned, and the fire of the LORD burned among them and consumed in the outskirts of the camp. **2** And the people cried out to Moses (Moshe), and Moses prayed to the LORD, and the fire died down. **3** And he called the name of that place Taberah (Tavera), because the fire of the LORD had burned among them.

Craving for Meat

4 And the rabble that ***was*** in their midst craved a craving; and the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) also wept again, and they said, "Who will feed us meat? **5** We remember the fish which we ate in Egypt (Mitsrayim) for nothing, the cucumbers and the melons and the leeks and the onions and the garlic. **6** And now our soul ***is*** dried up; ***there is*** nothing at all except the manna before our eyes." **7** And the manna ***was*** like coriander seed, and its appearance ***was*** like the appearance of bdellium. **8** The people went about and gathered ***it***, and they ground ***it*** in the mill or pounded ***it*** in the mortar, and they boiled ***it*** in the pot and made it ***into*** cakes; and its taste was like the taste of cake of oil. **9** And when the dew came down on the camp ***at*** night, the manna came down on it.

Moses' Burden

10 And Moses heard the people weeping by their clans, each man at the entrance of his tent; and the anger of the LORD burned exceedingly, and in the eyes of Moses ***it was*** evil. **11** And Moses said to the LORD, "Why have You done evil to Your servant? And why have I not found favor in Your eyes, that ***You*** put the burden of all this people on me? **12** Did I conceive all this people? Or did I give birth to it, that You should say to me, 'Carry it in your bosom, just as the foster father carries the nursing child,' to the land which You swore to its fathers? **13** From where ***is there*** meat for me to give to all this people? For they weep to me, saying, 'Give us meat, and let us eat.' **14** I am not able, I alone, to carry all this people, for ***it is too*** heavy for me. **15** And if thus You are doing to me, kill me, please, outright, if I have found favor in Your eyes; and let me not look on my evil."

The Seventy Elders

16 And the LORD said to Moses, "Gather to Me seventy men from the elders of Israel, whom you know that they are the elders of the people and its officers; and you shall take them to the tent of meeting, and they shall station themselves there with you. **17** And I will come down, and I will speak with you there; and I will take away some of the Spirit which ***is*** on you, and I will put ***it*** on them; and they shall carry the burden of the people with you, and you shall not carry ***it***, you alone. **18** And to the people you shall say, 'Sanctify yourselves for tomorrow, and you shall eat meat; for you have wept in the ears of the LORD, saying, "Who will feed us meat? For ***it was*** good for us in Egypt." And the LORD will give you meat, and you shall eat. **19** You shall eat not one day, and not two days, and not five days, and not ten days, and not twenty

10:35 Ps 68:1,2; Ps 132:8; Isa 51:9
10:36 Deut 1:10; Ps 90:13-17; Gen 24:60
11:1 James 5:4; Lev 10:2; Num 20:2-5
11:2 Acts 8:24; Num 21:7; James 5:16
11:3 Deut 9:22
11:4 1 Cor 10:6; Exod 12:38; Ps 106:14
11:5 Acts 7:36; Acts 7:39; Exod 16:3
11:6 John 6:31; Num 21:5; 2 Sam 13:4
11:7 Rev 2:17; John 6:31; Gen 2:12
11:8 Exod 16:16-18; Exod 16:31; John 6:27,33-58
11:9 John 6:31; Exod 16:13,14; Deut 32:2
11:10 Num 14:1,2; Num 16:27; Num 21:5
11:11 Deut 1:12; Num 11:15; Exod 17:4
11:12 Exod 13:5; Isa 40:11; 1 Thess 2:7
11:13 Matt 15:33; Mark 8:4; Mark 9:23
11:14 Exod 18:18; Deut 1:9-12; Ps 89:19
11:15 1 Kgs 19:4; Jonah 4:3,8,9; Job 3:20-22
11:16 Luke 10:1; Exod 24:1,9; Deut 1:15
11:17 Jude 1:19; John 7:39; 1 Cor 2:12
11:18 Acts 7:39; Acts 7:36; Exod 19:10,15

10:35 *Rise up, LORD, and let Your enemies be scattered* Prayers for the road. Moving out, Moses asked God to go before them. Settling down, he asked God to stay among His people (10:36). David took up the first prayer in Psalm 68:1. When you start something, ask God to go before you. When you rest, ask Him to stay near (Rom 8:31).

11:1 *the people were like those who complain of evil in the ears of the LORD* We are not told what they complained about, perhaps the heat, the walking or the dust. It was not a cry for help but grumbling, and God heard it. The fire fell on the outskirts of the camp, a warning. Complaining against God's care is unbelief: it says God is not good and not enough. Paul uses this chapter to warn the church (1 Cor 10:10; Phil 2:14).

11:3 *he called the name of that place Taberah* Taberah means burning. When Moses prayed, the fire died down (11:2).

11:4 *the rabble that was in their midst craved a craving* The mixed crowd of non-Israelites who came out of Egypt with Israel (Exod 12:38). Their craving spread to the whole camp. Sin is contagious.

11:5 *We remember the fish which we ate in Egypt for nothing* For nothing? They were slaves! They remembered the food and forgot the whips and the murdered baby boys. Discontent always rewrites the past to look better than it was.

11:6 *there is nothing at all except the manna before our eyes* Nothing but a daily miracle of bread from heaven. They had grown so used to God's provision that it bored them.

11:8 *its taste was like the taste of cake of oil* Bdellium (11:7) was a pale, clear resin. Manna was good food, cooked many ways, free, and it never failed. The problem was their hearts. Jesus said, "I am the bread of life" (John 6:35). When we grow bored with Jesus and long for what the world offers, we do what Israel did.

11:11 *Why have You done evil to Your servant?* Moses pours out his heart, raw. He felt like a father carrying a crying baby he never asked for (11:12).

11:15 *kill me, please, outright* Moses was burned out, as Elijah later was (1 Kgs 19:4). God does not strike him for speaking this way. He listens and answers. It is far better to bring exhaustion and even anger honestly to God than to grumble against Him behind His back. If you are a pastor, leader or parent and feel like Moses, you are not alone, and you are not meant to carry it alone.

11:17 *they shall carry the burden of the people with you* The seventy were men already known and trusted. Leading God's people is spiritual work that needs the Spirit of God. In the Old Testament the Spirit came on certain people for certain tasks. God took nothing from Moses but shared the gift so the load could be shared (Acts 6:3; Gal 6:2).

days, **20** ***but*** until a month of days, until it comes out from your nose and it becomes loathsome to you, because you have rejected the LORD who ***is*** in your midst, and you have wept before Him, saying, "Why ***is*** this ***that*** we came out from Egypt?"'" **21** And Moses said, "Six hundred thousand on foot ***are*** the people in whose midst I ***am***; and You have said, 'I will give them meat, and they shall eat a month of days.' **22** Shall flock and herd be slaughtered for them, and it be enough for them? Or shall all the fish of the sea be gathered for them, and it be enough for them?" **23** And the LORD said to Moses, "Is the hand of the LORD short? Now you shall see whether My word will happen to you or not." **24** And Moses went out, and he spoke the words of the LORD to the people; and he gathered seventy men from the elders of the people, and he stationed them all around the tent. **25** And the LORD came down in the cloud, and He spoke to him; and He took away some of the Spirit which ***was*** on him, and He put ***it*** on the seventy men, the elders; and it was, when the Spirit rested on them, and they prophesied, and they did not ***do it*** again. **26** And two men had remained in the camp; the name of the one ***was*** Eldad, and the name of the second ***was*** Medad; and the Spirit rested on them, and they ***were*** among those written, but they had not gone out to the tent; and they prophesied in the camp. **27** And the young man ran, and he told Moses, and he said, "Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp." **28** And Joshua (Yehoshua) the son of Nun, the minister of Moses from his youth, answered, and he said, "My lord Moses, restrain them." **29** And Moses said to him, "Are you jealous for me? And who will grant ***that*** all the people of the LORD ***were*** prophets, that the LORD would put His Spirit on them!" **30** And Moses was gathered to the camp, he and the elders of Israel.

The Quail and the Plague

31 And a wind set out from the LORD, and it brought quails from the sea, and it let ***them*** fall on the camp, about a day's journey this way and about a day's journey that way, all around the camp, and approximately 3 feet (two cubits) above the face of the ground. **32** And the people rose up all that day and all the night and all the next day, and they gathered the quail; the one who gathered least gathered approximately 60 bushels (ten homers); and they spread ***them*** out for themselves, spreading ***them*** all around the camp. **33** The meat ***was*** still between their teeth, before it was chewed, and the anger of the LORD burned against the people, and the LORD struck the people with a very great plague. **34** And he called the name of that place Kibroth-hattaavah (Qivrot-Hata'ava), because there they buried the people who craved. **35** From Kibroth-hattaavah the people set out ***to*** Hazeroth (Chatserot), and they were at Hazeroth.

NUMBERS 12

Miriam and Aaron Speak Against Moses

1 And Miriam (Miryam) and Aaron (Aharon) spoke against Moses (Moshe) because of the Cushite woman whom he had taken; for he had taken a Cushite woman. **2** And they said, "Has the LORD indeed spoken only by Moses? Has He not also spoken by us?" And the LORD heard. **3** And the man Moses ***was*** very humble, more than any man who ***was*** on the face of the ground. **4** And the LORD said suddenly to Moses and to Aaron and to Miriam, "Come out, you three, to the tent of

11:20 Acts 13:41; Acts 7:36; Ps 106:15
11:21 Exod 12:37; Num 1:46; Exod 38:26
11:22 Matt 15:33; 2 Kgs 7:2; Mark 6:37
11:23 Isa 59:1; Isa 50:2; Ezek 12:25
11:24 Num 11:16,26
11:25 Luke 9:34; Acts 11:28; 2 Pet 1:21
11:26 Acts 2:4; Jer 36:5; Exod 3:11
11:28 Mark 9:38,39; Luke 9:49,50; John 3:26
11:29 Luke 2:25; 1 Cor 14:5; James 5:9
11:31 Exod 16:13; Ps 105:40; Exod 10:13,19
11:32 Ezek 45:11; Exod 16:36
11:33 1 Cor 10:6; Ps 78:30,31; Ps 106:14,15
11:34 1 Cor 10:6; Deut 9:22; Num 33:16
11:35 Num 33:17; Num 12:16; Deut 1:1
12:1 Matt 10:36; Matt 12:48; John 7:5
12:2 John 9:29; Num 11:1; Num 16:3
12:3 Matt 5:5; John 9:29; Eph 4:2
12:4 John 9:29; Ps 76:9; Num 16:16-21

11:20 *because you have rejected the LORD who is in your midst* Their craving for meat was really a rejection of God Himself. They regretted being saved. Sometimes the worst thing God can do is give us what we demand: "He gave them their request, and He sent leanness into their soul" (Ps 106:15).
11:23 *Is the hand of the LORD short?* Moses was doing math instead of trusting (11:21-22). This is one of the great questions of the Bible, and the answer is no (Isa 59:1). What need in your life seems too big for God?
11:25 *they prophesied, and they did not do it again* To prophesy here means they spoke under the Spirit's power, perhaps praising God or declaring His word. It was a sign, given once, that God had chosen and equipped them, and their work went on.
11:26 *they were among those written, but they had not gone out to the tent* Eldad and Medad were on the list of the seventy, and the Spirit rested on them in the camp.
11:29 *Are you jealous for me?* Joshua, loyal and protective, did not want anyone to rival Moses (11:28). Moses was not threatened. He wanted more of God's Spirit among God's people, not less (Mark 9:38-39). His wish came true in a new way at Pentecost, when God poured out His Spirit "on all flesh" (Acts 2:17; Joel 2:28). Every believer now has the Holy Spirit.
11:31 *it brought quails from the sea* The SLB says they were about three feet above the ground. Some think the birds lay piled that high. Others think they flew low, tired from the wind, easy to catch.
11:32 *the one who gathered least gathered approximately 60 bushels* Two days and a night without stopping. That is the picture of greed: grabbing far more than anyone could need.
11:34 *Kibroth-hattaavah* The name means graves of craving. God's anger came while the food was still in their mouths (11:33; Ps 78:30-31). Scripture does not say how many died. These things happened as examples, "so that we would not be desirers of evil things" (1 Cor 10:6). Wanting meat was not evil, but a craving that rejects God leads to death. The answer is contentment (Phil 4:11; 1 Tim 6:6).
12:1 *Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Cushite woman* Miriam is named first, and the Hebrew verb is feminine, so she likely led. She was a prophetess (Exod 15:20) and a leader God sent (Mic 6:4). Cush usually means the land south of Egypt. Some believe this was Zipporah, Moses' Midianite wife, since Habakkuk 3:7 puts Cushan beside Midian. Others believe Zipporah had died and Moses married again. Either way, the wife was an excuse. People often attack a leader's family when their real problem is the leader.
12:2 *Has He not also spoken by us?* The real issue was jealousy and pride. God had spoken through them, but He had given Moses a unique role. "And the LORD heard." Nothing we say about others is hidden from Him.
12:3 *the man Moses was very humble* This explains why Moses did not defend himself. Humility is a right view of yourself before God, not fighting for your own position. Some ask how Moses could write this of himself. He may have written it under the Spirit as a plain fact the story needed, or a later inspired writer such as Joshua may have added it, as with Deuteronomy 34. Humility is not weakness. Moses stood before Pharaoh, but he left his honor to God (Matt 11:29).
12:4 *Come out, you three, to the tent of meeting* God did not wait. He called a meeting, and they had to face Him.

meeting." And the three of them went out. **5** And the LORD came down in a pillar of cloud, and He stood ***at*** the entrance of the tent, and He called Aaron and Miriam; and the two of them went out. **6** And He said, "Hear, please, My words: If there is a prophet of the LORD among you, in the vision I make Myself known to him; in the dream I speak with him. **7** Not so My servant Moses; in all My house he ***is*** faithful. **8** Mouth to mouth I speak with him, and ***in*** appearance, and not in riddles; and the form of the LORD he beholds. And why were you not afraid to speak against My servant, against Moses?"

Miriam Struck and Healed

9 And the anger of the LORD burned against them, and He went. **10** And the cloud turned aside from over the tent, and look, Miriam ***was*** leprous like snow; and Aaron turned to Miriam, and look, ***she was*** leprous. **11** And Aaron said to Moses, "Please, my lord, do not, please, lay sin on us, in which we have acted foolishly and in which we have sinned. **12** Please let her not be like the dead, whose flesh is half eaten when he comes out from his mother's womb." **13** And Moses cried out to the LORD, saying, "God, please heal her, please." **14** And the LORD said to Moses, "And ***if*** her father had spat, spat in her face, would she not be put to shame seven days? Let her be shut up seven days outside the camp, and after ***that*** she shall be received." **15** And Miriam was shut up outside the camp seven days; and the people did not set out until Miriam was received. **16** And afterward the people set out from Hazeroth (Chatserot), and they camped in the wilderness of Paran.

NUMBERS 13

The Twelve Spies Sent

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe), saying, **2** "Send for yourself men, and let them spy out the land of Canaan (Kena'an), which I am giving to the sons of Israel (Yisra'el); one man, one man for the tribe of his fathers you shall send, every one a leader among them." **3** And Moses sent them from the wilderness of Paran at the mouth of the LORD; all of them ***were*** men, heads of the sons of Israel ***were*** they. **4** And these ***are*** their names: for the tribe of Reuben (Reuven), Shammua (Shamua) the son of Zaccur (Zakur); **5** for the tribe of Simeon (Shimon), Shaphat (Shafat) the son of Hori (Chori); **6** for the tribe of Judah (Yehuda), Caleb (Kalev) the son of Jephunneh (Yefune); **7** for the tribe of Issachar (Yisashkhar), Igal (Yigal) the son of Joseph (Yosef); **8** for the tribe of Ephraim (Efrayim), Hoshea the son of Nun; **9** for the tribe of Benjamin (Binyamin), Palti the son of Raphu (Rafu); **10** for the tribe of Zebulun (Zevulun), Gaddiel (Gadi'el) the son of Sodi; **11** for the tribe of Joseph, for the tribe of Manasseh (Menashe), Gaddi (Gadi) the son of Susi; **12** for the tribe of Dan, Ammiel (Ami'el) the son of Gemalli (Gemali); **13** for the tribe of Asher, Sethur (Setur) the son of Michael (Mikha'el); **14** for the tribe of Naphtali (Naftali), Nahbi (Nachbi) the son of Vophsi (Vofsi); **15** for the tribe of Gad, Geuel the son of Machi (Makhi). **16** These ***are*** the names of the men whom Moses sent to spy out the land. And Moses called Hoshea the son of Nun Joshua (Yehoshua).

Spying Out the Land

17 And Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and he said to them, "Go up this ***way*** into the Negeb (Negev), and

12:5 Num 11:25; Exod 34:5; Exod 40:38
12:6 Luke 1:22; Matt 2:19; Rev 11:10
12:7 Heb 3:5; Heb 3:2; Acts 3:22
12:8 Deut 34:10; Exod 33:11; 1 Cor 13:12
12:9 Num 11:1; Hos 5:15
12:10 Deut 24:9; 2 Kgs 5:27; Exod 33:7-10
12:11 2 Sam 19:19; 2 Sam 24:10; Prov 30:32
12:12 Ps 88:4,5; Eph 2:1-5; Col 2:13
12:13 Mark 1:40; Num 14:2,13-20; Num 16:41,46-50
12:14 Matt 26:67; Mark 14:65; Deut 25:9
12:15 Deut 24:8,9; Gen 9:21-23; Exod 20:12
12:16 Num 11:35; Num 33:18; Num 10:12
13:2 Deut 1:22-25; Num 32:8; Josh 2:1-24
13:3 Num 12:16; Num 32:8; Deut 1:19,23
13:4 Rev 7:5
13:6 Rev 7:5; Num 14:6,24,30,38; Num 13:30
13:8 Num 11:28; Exod 24:13; Num 27:18-22
13:15 Rev 7:5
13:16 Acts 7:45; Heb 4:8; Matt 1:23
13:17 Gen 12:9; Judg 1:9,19; Gen 13:1

12:7 *in all My house he is faithful* God's house means His people, His household. Hebrews says Moses was faithful "in all His house as a servant" (Heb 3:5), "but Christ as a Son over His house" (Heb 3:6). If it was serious to speak against Moses, how much more to reject Jesus?
12:8 *Mouth to mouth I speak with him* Other prophets received visions and dreams (12:6). With Moses God spoke directly and clearly, "face to face" (Exod 33:11; Deut 34:10). When you speak against the one God has chosen, you speak against God.
12:10 *Miriam was leprous like snow* Why Miriam and not Aaron? Most likely because she led the attack, and a stricken high priest could not serve. Scripture does not say. She wanted to be Moses' equal and was sent outside the camp. Pride goes before a fall (Prov 16:18), and Israel was told to remember this (Deut 24:9).
12:11 *Please, my lord* A moment ago Aaron claimed equal standing. Now he calls his younger brother "my lord" and confesses plainly: we acted foolishly, and we sinned. He could not fix it. Only God could.
12:13 *God, please heal her, please* One of the shortest and most beautiful prayers in the Bible. The man they attacked is the first to pray for her, with no grudge. Jesus taught us to pray for those who mistreat us (Matt 5:44) and prayed for those who crucified Him (Luke 23:34). He always lives to intercede for us (Heb 7:25).
12:14 *Let her be shut up seven days outside the camp* A father's spit in the face was public shame. How much more God's rebuke? She was healed but bore the shame for seven days, as the Law required (Lev 13:4-5). Forgiveness does not always remove every consequence. But "she shall be received."
12:15 *the people did not set out until Miriam was received* The whole nation waited. That is grace. When someone among us falls and repents, we wait for them and welcome them back.
12:16 *they camped in the wilderness of Paran* Near Kadesh, on the southern edge of Canaan. They are at the door of the promised land.
13:2 *which I am giving to the sons of Israel* God says first that He is giving them the land, promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Gen 15:18-21). The spies were not sent to see whether Israel could win, but to see what God was giving and plan the way in. Deuteronomy 1:22-23 adds that the request started with the people, which may hint their faith was already shaky. Each spy was a man of standing, so his report would carry weight.
13:6 *Caleb the son of Jephunneh* Most of these names appear nowhere else. Ten men had the chance to be heroes of faith, and history remembers them only for their unbelief. Two names stand out, Caleb and Hoshea (13:8). Levi has no spy, since it would have no land, and Joseph counts as two tribes.
13:16 *Moses called Hoshea the son of Nun Joshua* Hoshea means salvation. Joshua means the LORD is salvation, or the LORD saves. Moses put God's name into his assistant's name. The Greek form of Joshua is Jesus. The man who led Israel into the land bore the name of the One who leads us into eternal life (Matt 1:21).

you shall go up ***into*** the hill country. **18** And you shall see the land, what it ***is***, and the people who dwell on it, whether it ***is*** strong ***or*** feeble, whether it ***is*** few or many, **19** and what the land ***is*** in which it dwells, whether it ***is*** good or bad, and what the cities ***are*** in which it dwells, whether in camps or in fortresses, **20** and what the land ***is***, whether it ***is*** fat or lean, whether there is wood in it or not. And you shall show yourselves strong, and you shall take some of the fruit of the land." And the days ***were*** the days of the first ripe grapes. **21** And they went up, and they spied out the land from the wilderness of Zin (Tsin) to Rehob (Rechov), ***at*** Lebo Hamath (Chamat). **22** And they went up into the Negeb, and he came to Hebron (Chevron); and there ***were*** Ahiman (Achiman), Sheshai (Sheshay), and Talmai (Talmay), the descendants of Anak. And Hebron was built seven years before Zoan (Tso'an) of Egypt (Mitsrayim). **23** And they came to the wadi of Eshcol (Eshkol), and they cut down from there a branch and one cluster of grapes, and they carried it on the pole between two, and some of the pomegranates and some of the figs. **24** That place he called the wadi of Eshcol because of the cluster which the sons of Israel cut down from there. **25** And they returned from spying out the land at the end of forty days.

The Spies' Report

26 And they went, and they came to Moses and to Aaron (Aharon) and to all the congregation of the sons of Israel, to the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh (Qadesh); and they brought back word to them and to all the congregation, and they showed them the fruit of the land. **27** And they recounted to him, and they said, "We came into the land to which you sent us; and also it ***is*** flowing ***with*** milk and honey, and this ***is*** its fruit. **28** Nevertheless, the people who dwell in the land ***are*** strong, and the cities ***are*** fortified ***and*** very large; and also we saw the descendants of Anak there. **29** Amalek (Amaleq) ***is*** dwelling in the land of the Negeb; and the Hittite and the Jebusite and the Amorite ***are*** dwelling in the hill country; and the Canaanite ***is*** dwelling by the sea and along the side of the Jordan (Yarden)." **30** And Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and he said, "We shall surely go up, and we shall take possession of it, for we shall surely prevail over it." **31** And the men who had gone up with him said, "We are not able to go up against the people, for it ***is*** stronger than we." **32** And they brought out a bad report of the land which they had spied out to the sons of Israel, saying, "The land through which we passed to spy it out ***is*** a land that devours its inhabitants; and all the people whom we saw in its midst ***are*** men of ***great*** stature. **33** And there we saw the Nephilim, the sons of Anak, from the Nephilim; and we were in our own eyes like grasshoppers, and so we were in their eyes."

NUMBERS 14

The People Rebel

1 And all the congregation lifted up and gave forth their voice, and the people wept that night. **2** And all the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) grumbled against Moses (Moshe) and against Aaron (Aharon); and all the congregation said to them, "If only we had died in the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim), or in this wilderness, if only we had died! **3** And why ***is*** the LORD bring-

13:18 Exod 3:8; Ezek 34:14
13:20 Neh 9:25,35; Ezek 34:14; Num 13:30,31
13:21 Num 20:1; Num 33:36; Num 27:14
13:22 Ps 78:12,43; Isa 19:11; Josh 11:21,22
13:23 Num 32:9; Deut 1:24,25; Judg 16:4
13:25 Num 14:33,34; Exod 24:18; Exod 34:28
13:26 Num 32:8; Num 20:1,16; Num 33:36
13:27 Exod 3:8,17; Exod 13:5; Josh 5:6
13:28 Deut 1:28; Deut 9:1,2; Deut 2:10,11,21
13:29 Num 14:43; Num 24:20; Gen 14:7
13:30 Num 14:6-9,24; Josh 14:6-8; Ps 27:1,2
13:31 Deut 1:28; Josh 14:8; Num 32:9
13:32 Num 14:36,37; Amos 2:9; Deut 1:28
13:33 Deut 1:28; Deut 3:11; Deut 9:2
14:1 Num 11:1-4; Deut 1:45
14:2 1 Cor 10:10; Phil 2:14; Acts 7:36
14:3 Acts 7:36; Acts 7:39; Ps 78:40

13:18 *whether it is strong or feeble, whether it is few or many* The Negeb is the dry southern country, the hill country the central highlands. These were fair questions. Faith does not close its eyes to facts. The problem would not be what they saw but what they did with it.
13:20 *you shall take some of the fruit of the land* The first ripe grapes come about late July. Moses wanted the people to taste the promise before they took it.
13:22 *the descendants of Anak* A people known for great size. The spies went the whole length of the land, about 250 miles one way (13:21). At Hebron Abraham had lived and bought the cave where the patriarchs were buried (Gen 23:19; 49:31). They stood near their fathers' graves, where God made His promises, and were afraid. Zoan was a city in the Nile delta, so Hebron was old and settled. Caleb later took Hebron and drove out these same three (Josh 14:12-14; 15:14).
13:23 *one cluster of grapes, and they carried it on the pole between two* A wadi is a valley with water in the rainy season, and Eshcol means cluster. One bunch of grapes showed how rich the land was. God had not exaggerated. He never does.
13:25 *at the end of forty days* Remember the number. In chapter 14 God turns each day into a year in the wilderness (14:34).
13:27 *it is flowing with milk and honey, and this is its fruit* Good pasture for herds and plenty of flowers for bees. They reported to all the congregation at Kadesh, an oasis on the southern border (13:26). Everything God said about the land was true.
13:28 *Nevertheless* The word that turned everything. Every word of the report was true, and that is what made it dangerous. A report can be accurate in its facts and still be unbelief if it leaves God out. The ten said not one word about the LORD who promised the land.
13:30 *We shall surely go up, and we shall take possession of it* Caleb saw the same walls and giants. He did not deny them. He measured them against God. He later said he had "followed fully after the LORD my God" (Josh 14:8). Faith is not pretending problems are small. It is knowing God is bigger. Joshua stood with him (14:6).
13:31 *We are not able to go up against the people, for it is stronger than we* True in one sense. Israel was not strong enough. But that was never the point. The LORD was.
13:32 *a land that devours its inhabitants* Now they twisted the facts, and the land of milk and honey became a land that eats people. Fear makes the enemy bigger every time we tell the story.
13:33 *we were in our own eyes like grasshoppers, and so we were in their eyes* The Nephilim were the mighty men before the flood (Gen 6:4), whom the flood wiped out. The spies used the name to make the Anakim sound like monsters, though some teachers hold later giant clans bore the name too. First they saw themselves as grasshoppers, then assumed everyone did. In fact Canaan was terrified of Israel (Josh 2:9-11). Measure the problem against God: "If God is for us, who is against us?" (Rom 8:31).
14:1 *the people wept that night* Not repentance but despair. They believed the bad report over God's promise.
14:2 *If only we had died in the land of Egypt, or in this wilderness* Be careful what you wish for. God takes them at their word in verse 28.
14:3 *why is the LORD bringing us into this land to fall by the sword?* They blamed God directly, as if the God who crushed Egypt had brought them this far to be killed. Unbelief turns God's love into a trap in our minds.

ing us into this land to fall by the sword? Our wives and our little ones shall become plunder. ***Is it*** not good for us to return to Egypt?" **4** And they said, each man to his brother, "Let us appoint a head, and let us return to Egypt." **5** And Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the sons of Israel. **6** And Joshua (Yehoshua) the son of Nun and Caleb (Kalev) the son of Jephunneh (Yefune), of those who spied out the land, tore their clothes; **7** and they said to all the congregation of the sons of Israel, saying, "The land which we passed through to spy it out, the land ***is*** very, very good. **8** If the LORD delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us, a land which flows ***with*** milk and honey. **9** Only do not rebel against the LORD; and you, do not fear the people of the land, for they ***are*** our bread. Their shade has turned aside from over them, and the LORD ***is*** with us; do not fear them." **10** And all the congregation said to stone them with stones. And the glory of the LORD appeared at the tent of meeting to all the sons of Israel.

Moses Prays for the People

11 And the LORD said to Moses, "How long will this people spurn Me? And how long will they not believe in Me, with all the signs which I have done in their midst? **12** I will strike them with pestilence, and I will dispossess them; and I will make you into a nation greater and mightier than they." **13** And Moses said to the LORD, "And Egypt will hear ***it***, for You brought up this people by Your strength from their midst, **14** and they will say ***it*** to the inhabitants of this land. They have heard that You, LORD, ***are*** in the midst of this people, that eye to eye You, LORD, are seen, and Your cloud stands over them, and in a pillar of cloud You go before them by day and in a pillar of fire ***by*** night. **15** And ***if*** You put this people to death as one man, then the nations who have heard Your report will say, saying, **16** 'Because the LORD was not able to bring this people into the land which He swore to them, He has slaughtered them in the wilderness.' **17** And now, please let the strength of the Lord be great, just as You have spoken, saying, **18** 'The LORD ***is*** slow to anger and great in steadfast love, forgiving iniquity and transgression; but He will surely not clear ***the guilty***, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the sons, on the third and on the fourth ***generation***.' **19** Forgive, please, the iniquity of this people according to the greatness of Your steadfast love, and just as You have forgiven this people from Egypt and until now."

Forty Years in the Wilderness

20 And the LORD said, "I have forgiven according to your word. **21** But indeed, ***as*** I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD; **22** for all the men who have seen My glory and My signs which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have tested Me these ten times, and have not listened to My voice, **23** they shall not see the land which I swore to their fathers; and all who spurn Me shall not see it. **24** But My servant Caleb, because another spirit has been with him and he has fully followed after Me, I will bring him into the land into which he went, and his seed shall possess it. **25** And the Amalekite and the Canaanite ***are*** dwelling in the valley. Tomorrow turn, and set out for yourselves ***into*** the wilderness ***by*** the way of the Red Sea." **26** And the LORD spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying, **27** "How long ***shall I bear*** with this evil congregation who are grumbling against Me? The grumblings of the sons of Israel, which they are

14:4 Acts 7:39; Acts 7:36; Heb 3:16
14:5 Matt 26:39; Num 16:4,22,45; Gen 17:3
14:6 Num 13:6,8,30; Num 14:24,30,38; Gen 37:29,34
14:7 Num 13:27; Deut 1:25; Deut 6:10,11
14:8 Deut 10:15; Num 13:27; 2 Sam 22:20
14:9 Phil 1:27; Deut 7:18; Ps 74:14
14:10 Matt 23:37; Exod 17:4; Lev 9:23
14:11 Matt 17:17; Mark 9:19; John 10:38
14:12 Exod 32:10; Num 16:46-49; Num 25:9
14:13 Acts 7:36; Ps 106:23; Deut 32:27
14:14 1 John 5:16; Exod 15:14; Josh 2:9,10
14:15 1 John 5:16; Judg 6:16
14:16 1 John 5:16; Deut 9:28; Josh 7:9
14:17 Mic 3:8; Matt 9:6,8
14:18 Exod 34:6,7; Exod 20:5; Ps 145:8
14:19 Acts 7:36; Exod 34:9; Ps 78:38
14:20 Heb 3:11
14:21 Heb 3:11; Rom 14:11; Hab 2:14
14:22 Heb 3:9; Mark 9:19; Acts 7:36
14:23 Heb 3:8; Jude 1:5; Num 32:11
14:24 Mark 8:34; John 12:26; John 21:19
14:25 Acts 7:36; Heb 3:11; Num 13:29
14:26 Jude 1:5
14:27 Mark 9:19; 1 Cor 10:10; Matt 17:17

14:4 *Let us appoint a head, and let us return to Egypt* Rejecting Moses and the LORD, and walking back into slavery (Neh 9:17). Sin can look like a way back to comfort, but it always leads back to chains.
14:5 *Moses and Aaron fell on their faces* Not fear of the people, but grief and prayer before God. Joshua and Caleb tore their clothes in deep sorrow (14:6).
14:8 *If the LORD delights in us, then He will bring us into this land* Everything depended on the LORD, not on Israel's strength.
14:9 *they are our bread* We will eat them up like bread. "Their shade has turned aside": their protection was gone. Joshua and Caleb named the real sin. This was not caution but rebellion against God.
14:10 *all the congregation said to stone them with stones* They wanted to kill the only two men telling the truth. Just then the glory of the LORD appeared. God stepped in before a stone was thrown.
14:11 *how long will they not believe in Me, with all the signs which I have done in their midst?* God names the root: unbelief. They had seen the plagues, the Red Sea, the manna, water from the rock and the cloud overhead, and still did not believe.
14:12 *I will make you into a nation greater and mightier than they* The same offer as at the golden calf (Exod 32:10). Moses was of Abraham's line, so the promise would still stand through him. The offer tested Moses and showed his heart.
14:16 *Because the LORD was not able to bring this people into the land* Moses prayed for the people who had just tried to stone his friends. His first plea was God's name among the nations (14:13-16). Moses cared more about God's glory than his own greatness.
14:18 *The LORD is slow to anger and great in steadfast love* Moses quoted back what God said of Himself at Sinai (Exod 34:6-7). Steadfast love is hesed, God's loyal covenant love that does not quit. Moses held both halves: God forgives, and He does not pretend sin is nothing.
14:19 *Forgive, please, the iniquity of this people according to the greatness of Your steadfast love* Moses asked God to act like Himself. This is how to pray for others: pray God's promises back to Him, for His glory, on the basis of who He is. Jesus is the greater Intercessor (Heb 7:25).
14:21 *all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD* God's plan would not fail. That promise waits for its full answer when Christ reigns (Hab 2:14).
14:22 *have tested Me these ten times* Perhaps a count of their rebellions since Egypt, or a way of saying again and again. Forgiveness (14:20) did not cancel the consequences.
14:24 *because another spirit has been with him and he has fully followed after Me* Caleb had a different spirit, a heart that trusted and obeyed. Joshua is named with him in verse 30.
14:25 *Tomorrow turn, and set out for yourselves into the wilderness* They stood at the door of the promise and were sent back into the desert.

grumbling against Me, I have heard. **28** Say to them, '***As*** I live,' declares the LORD, 'surely just as you have spoken in My ears, so I will do to you. **29** In this wilderness your corpses shall fall, and all your enrolled ***men***, according to all your number, from a son of twenty years and upward, who have grumbled against Me. **30** You shall surely not come into the land ***concerning*** which I lifted up My hand to make you dwell in it, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun. **31** And your little ones, who you said would become plunder, I will bring them in, and they shall know the land which you have rejected. **32** But you, your corpses shall fall in this wilderness. **33** And your sons shall be shepherds in the wilderness forty years, and they shall bear your harlotries until your corpses are finished in the wilderness. **34** According to the number of the days which you spied out the land, forty days, a day for the year, a day for the year, you shall bear your iniquities forty years, and you shall know My opposition. **35** I, the LORD, have spoken; surely this I will do to all this evil congregation who are gathered together against Me; in this wilderness they shall come to an end, and there they shall die.'" **36** And the men whom Moses sent to spy out the land, and who returned and made all the congregation grumble against him by bringing out a bad report on the land, **37** and the men who brought out the evil report of the land died by the plague before the LORD. **38** And Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh lived, of those men who went to spy out the land.

Defeat at Hormah

39 And Moses spoke these words to all the sons of Israel, and the people mourned exceedingly. **40** And they rose early in the morning, and they went up to the top of the hill country, saying, "Look, we ***are here***, and we will go up to the place which the LORD said, for we have sinned." **41** And Moses said, "Why ***is*** this ***that*** you are transgressing the mouth of the LORD? And it shall not succeed. **42** Do not go up, for the LORD ***is*** not in your midst, that you may not be struck down before your enemies. **43** For the Amalekite and the Canaanite ***are*** there before you, and you shall fall by the sword; inasmuch as you have turned back from after the LORD, and the LORD will not be with you." **44** And they presumed to go up to the top of the hill country; and the ark of the covenant of the LORD and Moses did not depart from the midst of the camp. **45** And the Amalekite and the Canaanite who dwelt in that hill country came down, and they struck them, and they crushed them as far as Hormah (Chorma).

NUMBERS 15

Offerings in the Land

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe), saying, **2** "Speak to the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), and you shall say to them, 'When you come into the land of your dwellings, which I am giving to you, **3** and you make a fire offering to the LORD, a burnt offering or a sacrifice, to fulfill a vow, or in a freewill offering, or at your appointed times, to make a soothing aroma to the LORD from the herd or from the flock, **4** then the one who brings near his offering shall bring near to the LORD a grain offering, fine flour, approximately 2 quarts (a tenth ***of an ephah***), mixed with approximately 1 quart (the fourth of

14:28 Rom 14:11; 1 Cor 10:10; Heb 2:2
14:29 Heb 3:17; 1 Cor 10:5; Jude 1:5
14:30 1 Cor 10:5; 1 Cor 10:10; Heb 3:11
14:31 Mark 10:14; Jude 1:5; Ps 106:24
14:32 Jude 1:5; 1 Cor 10:5; Num 14:29
14:33 Acts 7:36; Acts 13:18; Heb 3:9
14:34 Acts 13:18; Jude 1:5; Num 13:25
14:35 Jude 1:5; Heb 3:11; Num 23:19
14:36 Num 13:31-33
14:37 1 Cor 10:10; Jude 1:5; Num 16:49
14:38 Num 26:65; Josh 14:6-10
14:39 Exod 33:4; Prov 19:3; Isa 26:16
14:40 Deut 1:41; Eccl 9:3; Matt 7:21-23
14:41 2 Chr 24:20; Num 14:25; Job 4:9
14:42 Deut 1:42; Josh 7:8,12; Ps 44:1,2-11
14:43 Num 14:25; Num 13:29; Lev 26:17
14:44 Deut 1:43; Num 15:30; Num 10:33
14:45 Num 21:3; Deut 1:44; Judg 1:17
15:2 Lev 23:10; Num 15:18; Lev 14:34
15:3 Exod 29:18,25,41; Gen 8:21; Lev 27:2
15:4 Exod 29:40; Lev 23:13; Lev 2:1

14:28 *surely just as you have spoken in My ears, so I will do to you* The sentence matched their own words (14:2).
14:29 *In this wilderness your corpses shall fall* The same men counted in chapter 1. The army organized for the conquest would be buried in the sand, as the second census shows (26:64-65). Is this too harsh? See what God did not do. He did not destroy them that day. He kept feeding them, kept the cloud over them, kept their clothes from wearing out (Deut 8:4), and kept His promise to their children.
14:31 *your little ones, who you said would become plunder, I will bring them in* The children they used as an excuse for unbelief were the very ones God would bless. His grace reached the next generation.
14:33 *they shall bear your harlotries* Harlotry pictures unfaithfulness to God. The children would suffer the effects of their parents' sin, though not its guilt (Ezek 18:20).
14:34 *a day for the year* The forty years include the time already spent, so about thirty-eight remained (Deut 2:14). "They were not able to enter in because of unbelief" (Heb 3:19). The good news was "not being mixed with faith" (Heb 4:2). This does not mean all who died in the wilderness were lost forever; Moses and Aaron also died outside the land. The judgment was the loss of the land. The warning is that hearing God's promise is not enough. We must trust Him (Heb 3:7-8).
14:37 *the men who brought out the evil report of the land died by the plague* They were judged first, because they led the rest astray. Leaders are held to a higher standard (James 3:1). Words spread fear or faith through a whole people.
14:38 *Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh lived* Twelve went in. Ten died at once. Two lived, the only adults of that generation who would enter Canaan.
14:40 *Look, we are here, and we will go up* It sounded like repentance, but God had just told them to turn back. Yesterday's obedience is not today's obedience. True repentance submits to what God says now, even when it hurts.
14:42 *Do not go up, for the LORD is not in your midst* The ark of the covenant, the place of God's presence, stayed in the camp (14:44).
14:44 *they presumed to go up* They went in their own strength, without God.
14:45 *they crushed them as far as Hormah* The same people who could have been defeated with God now defeated Israel without Him. Unbelief came in two forms: refusing to go when God said go, and going when He said do not go. Both are doing what we want instead of what God says.
15:2 *When you come into the land of your dwellings, which I am giving to you* After chapter 14, these words are a promise. God had not given up on His plan. The children would enter.
15:3 *a burnt offering or a sacrifice, to fulfill a vow, or in a freewill offering* A burnt offering was wholly burned as a gift to God. A sacrifice here is a peace offering, shared in a meal. A vow was a promise to God, a freewill offering a gift given simply because one wanted to, and the appointed times were the feasts. A soothing aroma is an offering God accepts with pleasure, as Christ gave Himself (Eph 5:2).
15:4 *a grain offering, fine flour* Flour, oil and wine, the foods of a settled farming people. In the desert they had no fields, olive groves or vineyards. God was telling them what life in the land would look like.

the hin) of oil; **5** and wine for the drink offering, approximately 1 quart (the fourth of the hin), you shall offer with the burnt offering or for the sacrifice, for the one lamb. **6** Or for the ram you shall offer a grain offering, fine flour, approximately 4 quarts (two tenths ***of an ephah***), mixed with oil, approximately 1 1/3 quarts (the third of the hin); **7** and wine for the drink offering, approximately 1 1/3 quarts (the third of the hin), you shall bring near, a soothing aroma to the LORD. **8** And when you offer a son of the herd ***as*** a burnt offering or a sacrifice, to fulfill a vow, or ***as*** peace offerings to the LORD, **9** then he shall bring near with the son of the herd a grain offering, fine flour, approximately 6 quarts (three tenths ***of an ephah***), mixed with oil, approximately 2 quarts (half of the hin); **10** and wine you shall bring near for the drink offering, approximately 2 quarts (half of the hin), a fire offering of a soothing aroma to the LORD. **11** Thus it shall be done for the one bull, or for the one ram, or for the one of the flock, among the lambs or among the goats. **12** According to the number which you offer, thus you shall do for the one, according to their number. **13** Every native shall do these ***things*** thus, to bring near a fire offering of a soothing aroma to the LORD. **14** And when a sojourner sojourns with you, or whoever ***is*** in your midst throughout your generations, and he offers a fire offering of a soothing aroma to the LORD, just as you do, so he shall do. **15** ***As for*** the assembly, one statute ***shall be*** for you and for the sojourner who sojourns, a statute forever throughout your generations; as you ***are***, ***so*** the sojourner shall be before the LORD. **16** One law and one judgment shall be for you and for the sojourner who sojourns with you.'" **17** And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

18 "Speak to the sons of Israel, and you shall say to them, 'When you come into the land into which I am bringing you, **19** and it shall be, when you eat of the bread of the land, you shall lift up a contribution to the LORD. **20** ***Of*** the first of your dough you shall lift up a cake ***as*** a contribution; like the contribution of the threshing floor, so you shall lift it up. **21** Of the first of your dough you shall give to the LORD a contribution throughout your generations.

Sins Without Knowing

22 And when you err, and do not do all these commandments which the LORD has spoken to Moses, **23** all that the LORD has commanded you by the hand of Moses, from the day that the LORD commanded and onward throughout your generations, **24** then it shall be, if it was done unintentionally, away from the eyes of the congregation, that all the congregation shall offer one young bull, a son of the herd, for a burnt offering, for a soothing aroma to the LORD, with its grain offering and its drink offering according to the ordinance, and one male goat of the goats for a sin offering. **25** And the priest shall make atonement for all the congregation of the sons of Israel, and it shall be forgiven them, for it ***was*** an error; and they have brought their offering, a fire offering to the LORD, and their sin offering before the LORD, for their error. **26** And it shall be forgiven to all the congregation of the sons of Israel and to the sojourner who sojourns in their midst, for to all the people ***it was*** in error. **27** And if one soul sins unintentionally, then it shall bring near a female goat, a daughter of its year, for a sin offering. **28** And the priest shall make atonement for the soul that goes astray, when it sins unintentionally, before the LORD, to make atonement for him; and it shall be forgiven him. **29** For the native among the sons of Israel and for the sojourner who sojourns in their midst, one law shall be for you, for the one who acts unintentionally.

The Sin with a Raised Hand

30 And the soul that acts with a raised hand, whether of the native or of the sojourner, he blasphemes the LORD; and that soul shall be cut off from the midst of its people. **31** For he has despised the word of the LORD, and he has broken His commandment; that soul shall surely be cut off; its iniquity

15:5 Phil 2:17; 2 Tim 4:6; Num 28:7,14
15:6 Num 15:4; Num 28:12-14
15:8 Lev 3:1; Lev 7:11-18
15:9 Num 28:12,14; Lev 6:14; Lev 14:10
15:10 Num 15:5; Num 6:15
15:15 Num 15:29; Num 9:14; Exod 12:49
15:17 Rom 11:16
15:18 Rom 11:16; Num 15:2; Deut 26:1-15
15:19 Rom 11:16; Josh 5:11,12
15:20 Rom 11:16; Lev 2:14; Exod 23:19
15:21 Num 18:26; Exod 29:28
15:22 Lev 4:2,13,14,22,27; Lev 5:13,15-17; Ps 19:12
15:24 Lev 4:23; Lev 4:13; Num 28:15
15:25 Lev 4:20,26; Rom 3:25; 1 John 2:2
15:27 Heb 5:2; Lev 4:27,28; Acts 3:17
15:28 Heb 5:2; Lev 4:35
15:29 Luke 12:48; Heb 5:2; Num 15:15
15:30 Ps 19:13; Deut 1:43; Heb 10:26,29
15:31 2 Sam 12:9; Prov 13:13; Ezek 18:20

15:11 *Thus it shall be done for the one bull, or for the one ram* The bigger the animal, the bigger the grain and wine offering. Worship involves the whole of life: herd, field and vineyard went up together. These shadows were fulfilled in Christ, who offered Himself once for all (Heb 10:1, 10). We still give our whole lives to God (Rom 12:1).

15:16 *One law and one judgment shall be for you and for the sojourner* The sojourner was a foreigner living among Israel. From the beginning God welcomed outsiders who wanted to worship Him, not as second-class worshipers. Rahab and Ruth joined God's people and the line of Jesus (Matt 1:5). In Christ Gentiles are fellow citizens with the saints (Eph 2:19; Gal 3:28).

15:20 *Of the first of your dough you shall lift up a cake as a contribution* A contribution was a gift set aside for God that went to the priests. Each new harvest, a family set aside a loaf for God first. It said God gave this bread and gets the first of it. Giving Him the first, not the leftovers, reminds us who provides (Matt 6:11; Rom 11:16).

15:22 *when you err* To sin without meaning to, through ignorance or a mistake.

15:24 *away from the eyes of the congregation* A sin the whole people did not even notice. A sin offering cleansed from sin and restored fellowship with God.

15:25 *it shall be forgiven them* Atonement means covering sin so a guilty people can be at peace with God. God knew His people would fail without realizing it, so He made a way back before they needed it. Even hidden faults need forgiveness (Ps 19:12), and the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin (1 John 1:7).

15:27 *if one soul sins unintentionally* A daughter of its year is a one-year-old female goat. These laws repeat Leviticus 4 for life in the land. An honest mistake was still sin, but there was a sure way to be forgiven (15:28).

15:30 *the soul that acts with a raised hand* A fist shaken at God: sin done on purpose, in open defiance. He "has despised the word of the LORD" (15:31). The Law had no sacrifice for that. Does this make every deliberate sin unforgivable? No. David sinned on purpose and was forgiven when he confessed (2 Sam 12:13; Ps 51). The point is a heart that despises God's word and refuses to turn. Hebrews 10:26-29 warns similarly about turning from Christ; teachers differ on how it relates. The way back is open to everyone who repents.

shall be on it.'" **32** And the sons of Israel were in the wilderness, and they found a man gathering sticks on the day of the Sabbath. **33** And those who found him gathering sticks brought him near to Moses and to Aaron (Aharon) and to all the congregation. **34** And they placed him in custody, for it had not been made clear what should be done to him. **35** And the LORD said to Moses, "The man shall surely be put to death; all the congregation shall stone him with stones outside the camp." **36** And all the congregation brought him outside the camp, and they stoned him with stones, and he died, just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

Tassels to Remember

37 And the LORD said to Moses, saying, **38** "Speak to the sons of Israel, and you shall say to them, 'And they shall make for themselves tassels on the corners of their clothes throughout their generations, and they shall put on the tassel of the corner a cord of blue. **39** And it shall be for you for a tassel, and you shall see it, and you shall remember all the commandments of the LORD, and you shall do them; and you shall not go about after your heart and after your eyes, after which you are acting as harlots, **40** so that you may remember and do all My commandments, and be holy to your God. **41** I ***am*** the LORD your God, who brought you out from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim) to be God to you. I ***am*** the LORD your God.'"

NUMBERS 16

Korah's Rebellion

1 And Korah (Qorach) the son of Izhar (Yitshar), the son of Kohath (Qehat), the son of Levi, took ***men***, and Dathan (Datan) and Abiram (Aviram), the sons of Eliab (Eli'av), and On the son of Peleth (Pelet), sons of Reuben (Reuven); **2** and they rose up before Moses (Moshe), and men from the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), two hundred and fifty, leaders of ***the*** congregation, called ones of ***the*** meeting, men of name. **3** And they assembled against Moses and against Aaron (Aharon), and they said to them, "Enough for you! For all the congregation, all of them ***are*** holy, and the LORD ***is*** in their midst. And why do you exalt yourselves over the assembly of the LORD?" **4** And Moses heard, and he fell on his face. **5** And he spoke to Korah and to all his company, saying, "***In the*** morning, and the LORD will make known who ***is*** His, and who ***is*** holy, and He will bring ***him*** near to Himself; and the one whom He chooses, He will bring near to Himself. **6** Do this: take censers for yourselves, Korah and all his company, **7** and put fire in them, and set incense on them before the LORD tomorrow; and it shall be ***that*** the man whom the LORD chooses, he ***is*** the holy ***one***. Enough for you, sons of Levi!" **8** And Moses said to Korah, "Listen, please, sons of Levi: **9** ***Is it too*** small ***a thing*** for you that the God of Israel has separated you from the congregation of Israel to bring you near to Himself, to serve the service of the tabernacle of the LORD, and to stand before

15:32 Matt 12:2; Exod 35:2,3; Exod 16:23,27,28
15:33 John 8:5; John 8:3-20
15:34 Lev 24:12
15:35 Exod 31:14,15; Acts 7:58; 1 Kgs 21:13
15:36 Heb 10:28; Josh 7:25
15:38 Matt 23:5; Matt 9:20; Luke 8:44
15:39 Matt 9:20; Matt 14:36; Matt 23:5
15:40 1 Pet 1:16; Lev 11:44,45; Rom 12:1
15:41 1 Pet 2:9; Lev 22:33; Lev 25:38

16:1 Jude 1:11; Num 27:3; Exod 6:18,21
16:2 Num 26:9; Gen 6:4; 1 Chr 5:24
16:3 Ps 106:16; Exod 19:6; Num 14:14
16:4 Num 14:5; Num 20:6; Num 16:45
16:5 2 Tim 2:19; 1 Pet 2:6; Jude 1:11
16:6 Jude 1:11; Lev 10:1; Num 16:35-40,46-48
16:7 Num 16:3,5; Eph 1:4; 2 Thess 2:13
16:8 Jude 1:11
16:9 Acts 13:2; Deut 10:8; Isa 7:13

15:32 *they found a man gathering sticks on the day of the Sabbath* The Sabbath was the seventh day, Israel's day of rest and a sign of God's covenant (Exod 31:13-17). No fire was to be kindled on it (Exod 35:3), and working on it was a capital crime (Exod 31:14-15).
15:34 *it had not been made clear what should be done to him* They knew it was wrong. They did not know how the penalty was to be carried out, so they waited for God.
15:35 *The man shall surely be put to death* Why so severe for gathering wood? The story follows the verses on the raised hand. The law was clear, the whole camp knew it, and he worked openly anyway, defying God at the start of Israel's covenant life, like Nadab and Abihu (Lev 10) and Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11). This was for Israel under the Law, by God's direct word, and gives no one the right to punish religious failures today. All of us deserve death (Rom 6:23), and Jesus took it for us "outside the camp" (Heb 13:13).
15:36 *just as the LORD had commanded Moses* Jesus is "Lord even of the Sabbath" (Matt 12:8), and Sabbaths "are a shadow of the things coming, but the body is of Christ" (Col 2:17). Christians differ on how the Sabbath applies now: some keep Saturday, many keep Sunday as the Lord's Day, others see Christ as our rest (Heb 4:9-10). All can learn that God's word is not to be treated lightly.
15:38 *they shall put on the tassel of the corner a cord of blue* A tassel was a fringe of twisted threads. Blue dye was costly, the color of royalty and of the tabernacle cloths.
15:39 *you shall see it, and you shall remember all the commandments of the LORD* A reminder worn every day. Heart and eyes had just led Israel astray at Kadesh, when the spies trusted their eyes over God's word. The tassels gave the eyes something better to look at. A sick woman touched the fringe of Jesus' garment (Matt 9:20), but He warned those who "enlarge the fringes of their garments" (Matt 23:5) to be seen. We still need reminders: Scripture, the Lord's Supper, fellowship.
15:41 *I am the LORD your God, who brought you out from the land of Egypt* Obedience grows out of remembering who God is and what He has done.
16:1 *Korah the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi* A Kohathite, of the clan that carried the holiest things (4:4-15), and cousin of Moses and Aaron (Exod 6:18-21). He had a high calling already. Dathan and Abiram were of Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, perhaps resenting that leadership had gone to Levi and Judah. On is never mentioned again.
16:2 *two hundred and fifty, leaders of the congregation* Not a fringe group, but respected men of name.
16:3 *all of them are holy, and the LORD is in their midst* It sounded godly. God had called all Israel a holy nation (Exod 19:6). But they used that truth to tear down the leaders God appointed. Moses had not exalted himself. God chose him, and he tried to refuse (Exod 4:13). Pride often dresses itself in talk about equality.
16:4 *he fell on his face* His first response was to go to God, not defend himself.
16:5 *the LORD will make known who is His* Moses put the matter in God's hands. Paul quotes it: "The Lord knew those who are His" (2 Tim 2:19). God knows who truly belongs to Him, even when false teachers look like leaders.
16:7 *put fire in them, and set incense on them before the LORD tomorrow* A censer was a small pan for hot coals. Burning incense was the work of the priests alone (Exod 30:7-8). Moses invited them to do what they wanted and let God answer. Every Israelite remembered Nadab and Abihu (Lev 10:1-2). Then he turned their own words back on them: "Enough for you."
16:9 *Is it too small a thing for you* The Levites were near to God, serving His house. Korah was not content with that honor.

the congregation to minister to them, **10** and He has brought you near, and all your brothers, the sons of Levi, with you? And you seek the priesthood also! **11** Therefore you and all your company ***are*** those gathered together against the LORD; and Aaron, what ***is*** he, that you grumble against him?" **12** And Moses sent to call Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab; and they said, "We will not come up. **13** ***Is it too*** small ***a thing*** that you have brought us up from a land flowing ***with*** milk and honey to put us to death in the wilderness, that you should also surely make yourself ruler over us? **14** Moreover, you have not brought us into a land flowing ***with*** milk and honey, and given us an inheritance of field and vineyard. Will you put out the eyes of those men? We will not come up!" **15** And Moses burned ***with anger*** exceedingly, and he said to the LORD, "Do not turn to their offering. Not one donkey have I taken from them, and I have not harmed one of them."

The Test of the Censers

16 And Moses said to Korah, "You and all your company, be before the LORD, you and they and Aaron, tomorrow. **17** And take each man his censer, and you shall put incense on them, and you shall bring near before the LORD each man his censer, two hundred and fifty censers; and you and Aaron, each man his censer." **18** And they took each man his censer, and they put fire on them, and they set incense on them, and they stood ***at*** the entrance of the tent of meeting, and Moses and Aaron. **19** And Korah assembled all the congregation against them to the entrance of the tent of meeting. And the glory of the LORD appeared to all the congregation. **20** And the LORD spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying, **21** "Separate yourselves from the midst of this congregation, and I will consume them in a moment." **22** And they fell on their faces, and they said, "O God, God of the spirits of all flesh, shall one man sin, and will You be angry with all the congregation?" **23** And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **24** "Speak to the congregation, saying, 'Withdraw from around the dwelling of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.'" **25** And Moses rose up and went to Dathan and Abiram, and the elders of Israel went after him. **26** And he spoke to the congregation, saying, "Turn away, please, from the tents of these wicked men, and do not touch anything that ***is*** theirs, lest you be swept away in all their sins." **27** And they withdrew from the dwelling of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, from all around; and Dathan and Abiram came out, standing ***at*** the entrance of their tents, and their wives and their sons and their little ones. **28** And Moses said, "By this you shall know that the LORD has sent me to do all these works, for ***it is*** not from my ***own*** heart. **29** If these die like the death of all mankind, and the visitation of all mankind is visited on them, the LORD has not sent me. **30** And if the LORD creates a creation, and the ground opens its mouth and swallows them and all that ***is*** theirs, and they go down alive to Sheol, then you shall know that these men have spurned the LORD."

The Earth Opens

31 And it happened, as he finished speaking all these words, that the ground which ***was*** under them split open; **32** and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them and their households, and every man who ***belonged*** to Korah, and all the property. **33** And they and all that ***was*** theirs went down alive to Sheol; and the earth covered them, and they perished from the midst of the assembly. **34** And all Israel who ***were*** around them fled at their voice, for they said, "Lest the earth swallow us!" **35** And fire came forth from the LORD and consumed the two hundred and fifty men bringing near the

16:10 Heb 7:5; Prov 13:10; Matt 20:21,22
16:11 Heb 7:5; Exod 16:7,8; Exod 17:2
16:12 Prov 29:9; Isa 3:5; 1 Pet 2:13,14
16:13 Num 11:5; Exod 16:3; Exod 2:14
16:14 Lev 20:24; Num 36:8-10; Exod 3:8,17
16:15 1 Cor 9:15; Gen 4:4,5; 2 Cor 7:2
16:16 Jude 1:11; 1 Sam 12:3,7; Num 16:6,7
16:17 1 Sam 12:7
16:19 Jude 1:11; Num 16:42; Num 14:10
16:21 2 Cor 6:17; Num 16:45; Exod 32:10
16:22 Num 27:16; Job 12:10; Eccl 12:7
16:24 Jude 1:11; Num 16:21
16:25 Num 11:16,17,25,30
16:26 2 Cor 6:17; Isa 52:11; Rev 18:4
16:27 Jude 1:11; 2 Kgs 9:30,31; Job 9:4
16:28 John 9:29; 1 John 5:16; Exod 3:12
16:29 1 John 5:16; 1 Kgs 22:28; Exod 20:5
16:30 1 John 5:16; Ps 55:15; Num 16:33
16:31 Heb 2:2; Num 27:3; Deut 11:6
16:32 Rev 12:16; Jude 1:11; Heb 2:2
16:33 Jude 1:11; Ps 9:15; Ps 55:23
16:34 Isa 33:3; Zech 14:5; Rev 6:15-17
16:35 Num 26:10; Lev 10:2; Ps 106:18

16:10 *And you seek the priesthood also!* He wanted the role God had given someone else.
16:11 *you and all your company are those gathered together against the LORD* When we fight the place God has given others, we fight God. Discontent with our own calling is a quiet danger in churches too. God placed each member as He wished (1 Cor 12:18), and no one needs to grab another's gift.
16:13 *you have brought us up from a land flowing with milk and honey* Shocking. They called Egypt, the land of slavery, the land of milk and honey, and blamed Moses for the wilderness their own unbelief caused. "Will you put out the eyes" (16:14) means, Do you think you can blind people to what you are doing?
16:15 *Not one donkey have I taken from them* Moses had not used his position to enrich himself (1 Sam 12:3). A leader with nothing to hide can stand before God with a clear conscience.
16:19 *Korah assembled all the congregation against them* The people who refused the land were ready to follow another rebellion. As at Kadesh (14:10), God showed Himself just as the crowd turned on His servants.
16:22 *God of the spirits of all flesh* The God who gives life and breath to every person knows each heart. Moses and Aaron asked Him to judge the leaders and spare those misled. God listened (16:24), as when Abraham appealed to the Judge of all the earth (Gen 18:25).
16:26 *Turn away, please, from the tents of these wicked men* There are times to get away from rebellion so we are not caught in it.
16:27 *Dathan and Abiram came out, standing at the entrance of their tents* They stood in defiance with their families around them, after the warning to move away.
16:30 *if the LORD creates a creation* Sheol is the Hebrew word for the place of the dead, the grave. Moses staked everything on God doing something no one had seen.
16:32 *every man who belonged to Korah* The scene is told plainly without dwelling on it. Why were families included? They stood with the rebels after being warned (16:27). And "the sons of Korah did not die" (26:11). They must have stepped away from their father's sin. Their descendants became temple singers and wrote eleven psalms (Ps 42; 44-49; 84-85; 87-88), one saying, "I have chosen to stand at the threshold in the house of my God rather than to dwell in the tents of wickedness" (Ps 84:10). Some think Korah himself died in the fire rather than in the earth (26:10).
16:35 *fire came forth from the LORD and consumed the two hundred and fifty men* Jude says false teachers "perished in the rebellion of Korah" (Jude 1:11). Rejecting God's appointed authority and grasping what He has not given leads to ruin.

incense.

The Bronze Covering for the Altar

36 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **37** "Speak to Eleazar (Elazar) the son of Aaron the priest, and let him take up the censers from between the burning, and scatter the fire far away, for they are holy— **38** the censers of these sinners against their own souls—and they shall make them into hammered plates ***as*** an overlay for the altar, for they brought them near before the LORD, and they are holy; and let them be for a sign to the sons of Israel." **39** And Eleazar the priest took the bronze censers which those who were burned had brought near, and they hammered them out ***as*** an overlay for the altar, **40** a memorial for the sons of Israel, so that a stranger who ***is*** not of the seed of Aaron may not come near to burn incense before the LORD, and may not be like Korah and like his company, just as the LORD had spoken to him by the hand of Moses.

The Plague Stopped

41 And all the congregation of the sons of Israel grumbled on the next day against Moses and against Aaron, saying, "You have put to death the people of the LORD." **42** And it happened, when the congregation assembled against Moses and against Aaron, that they turned toward the tent of meeting, and look, the cloud covered it, and the glory of the LORD appeared. **43** And Moses and Aaron came to the front of the tent of meeting. **44** And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **45** "Get yourselves up from the midst of this congregation, and I will consume them in a moment." And they fell on their faces. **46** And Moses said to Aaron, "Take the censer, and put fire on it from on the altar, and set incense ***on it***, and carry ***it*** quickly to the congregation, and make atonement for them; for the wrath has gone out from before the LORD; the plague has begun." **47** And Aaron took ***it*** just as Moses had spoken, and he ran into the midst of the assembly, and look, the plague had begun among the people; and he put on the incense and made atonement for the people. **48** And he stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was restrained. **49** And those who died by the plague were fourteen thousand and seven hundred, besides those who died on account of Korah. **50** And Aaron returned to Moses to the entrance of the tent of meeting, and the plague had been restrained.

NUMBERS 17

Aaron's Rod Buds

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe), saying, **2** "Speak to the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), and take from them a rod, a rod for each father's house, from all their leaders according to the house of their fathers, twelve rods. Each man's name you shall write on his rod. **3** And the name of Aaron (Aharon) you shall write on the rod of Levi; for one rod ***is*** for the head of the house of their fathers. **4** And you shall deposit them in the tent of meeting before the testimony, where I meet with you. **5** And it shall be ***that*** the man whom I choose, his rod will bud; and I will make the grumblings of the sons of Israel, which they are grumbling against you, subside from on Me." **6** And Moses spoke to the sons of Israel, and all their leaders gave him a rod for one leader, a rod for one leader, according to the house of their fathers, twelve rods; and the rod of Aaron ***was*** in the midst of their rods. **7** And Moses deposited the rods before the LORD in the tent of the testimony. **8** And it happened on the next day, and Moses went into the tent of the testimony, and look, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi had budded, and it had brought forth buds and blossomed blossoms and ripened almonds. **9** And Moses brought out all the rods from before the LORD to all the sons of Israel;

16:37 Num 16:7,18; Lev 27:28
16:38 Prov 20:2; Num 26:10; Ezek 14:8
16:40 Jude 1:11; Heb 5:4; Heb 7:13
16:41 Acts 21:28; 1 Cor 10:10; Num 14:2
16:42 Num 16:19; Num 20:6; Lev 9:23
16:45 Matt 26:39; 2 Cor 6:17; Num 16:21,24,26
16:46 1 Cor 10:10; Heb 5:4; Num 8:19
16:47 1 Cor 10:10; Heb 5:4; Rev 8:3
16:48 1 Cor 10:10; Num 16:18,35; Num 25:8-11
16:49 1 Cor 10:10; Num 25:9; Num 16:32-35
16:50 Num 16:43; 1 Chr 21:26-30
17:2 Num 1:5-16; Num 2:3-30; Num 10:14-27
17:3 Heb 5:4; Heb 7:5; Num 3:2,3
17:4 Exod 25:16-22; Exod 29:42,43; Exod 30:6,36
17:5 Num 16:5; Num 16:11; Num 17:8
17:6 Heb 5:4
17:7 Acts 7:44; Exod 38:21; Num 18:2
17:8 Heb 9:4; Acts 7:44; Heb 5:4

16:38 *hammered plates as an overlay for the altar* The censers had been brought before the LORD, so they were His. They covered the bronze altar of burnt offering. God turned the tools of rebellion into a warning for the next generation. King Uzziah forgot it and was struck with a skin disease (2 Chr 26:16-21).
16:41 *You have put to death the people of the LORD* You would think they had learned. They blamed Moses for what God had done and called the rebels "the people of the LORD."
16:46 *put fire on it from on the altar* The day before, 250 men offered incense God did not ask for and died. Now the priest God chose brought fire from God's altar and incense God commanded, and it saved lives.
16:47 *he ran into the midst of the assembly* Aaron was over eighty, and he ran into the plague for the people who had just accused him.
16:48 *he stood between the dead and the living* One of the great pictures of the Old Testament: God's high priest standing in the gap, death on one side and life on the other. Jesus did more than stand between. He took the judgment Himself. He is the "one mediator of God and men" (1 Tim 2:5), "able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through Him" (Heb 7:25).
16:49 *fourteen thousand and seven hundred* As with the other numbers in Numbers, I take the figure as written.
17:2 *a rod for each father's house* A rod was a walking staff, and a leader's staff marked his authority. Aaron's name stood for all Levi, Korah's clan included (17:3). The question was not only which tribe but which man.
17:4 *before the testimony, where I meet with you* The testimony means the tablets of the Law in the ark. The rods lay before God's presence, where no human hand could touch them in the night.
17:5 *I will make the grumblings of the sons of Israel* God wanted to end the grumbling. The last answers had been fire and plague. This time He chose a sign of life, a merciful clear answer so no more would die.
17:8 *the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi had budded* A dry stick, cut from any tree, went through every stage of growth in one night. Only God could do that. The almond is the first tree to bloom in that land, and its Hebrew name, shaqed, sounds like the word for watching (Jer 1:11-12). Almond blossoms were the pattern for the lampstand's cups (Exod 25:33-34), fitting the priest of the holy place.
17:9 *they saw, and they took each man his rod* Every leader saw his own rod still a dead stick. No argument was needed. God's authority is not taken. It is given (Heb 5:4).

and they saw, and they took each man his rod. **10** And the LORD said to Moses, "Put back the rod of Aaron before the testimony for keeping, for a sign to the sons of rebellion, and you shall make their grumblings subside from on Me, and they will not die." **11** And Moses did ***so***; just as the LORD had commanded him, so he did. **12** And the sons of Israel said to Moses, saying, "Look, we expire, we perish, all of us perish! **13** Everyone who comes near, who comes near to the tabernacle of the LORD, dies. Are we finished, to expire?"

NUMBERS 18

The Duties of Priests and Levites

1 And the LORD said to Aaron (Aharon), "You and your sons and the house of your father with you shall bear the iniquity of the sanctuary; and you and your sons with you shall bear the iniquity of your priesthood. **2** And also your brothers, the tribe of Levi, the tribe of your father, bring near with you, and let them be joined to you, and let them minister to you; and you and your sons with you ***shall be*** before the tent of the testimony. **3** And they shall keep your charge and the charge of all the tent; only to the articles of the holy place and to the altar they shall not draw near, and they shall not die, both they and you. **4** And they shall be joined to you, and they shall keep the charge of the tent of meeting, for all the service of the tent; and a stranger shall not draw near to you. **5** And you shall keep the charge of the holy place and the charge of the altar, and there shall not be wrath again on the sons of Israel (Yisra'el). **6** And I, look, I have taken your brothers the Levites from the midst of the sons of Israel; to you ***they are*** a gift, given to the LORD, to serve the service of the tent of meeting. **7** And you and your sons with you shall keep your priesthood for every matter of the altar and for within the veil, and you shall serve; ***as*** a service of gift I give your priesthood; and the stranger who comes near shall be put to death."

The Priests' Portion

8 And the LORD spoke to Aaron, "And I, look, I have given to you the charge of My contributions, of all the holy things of the sons of Israel; to you I have given them for an anointed portion, and to your sons, for a due forever. **9** This shall be yours from the holy of holies, from the fire: every offering of theirs, every grain offering of theirs and every sin offering of theirs and every guilt offering of theirs which they render to Me, ***is*** a holy of holies for you and for your sons. **10** In the holy of holies you shall eat it; every male shall eat it; it shall be holy to you. **11** And this ***is*** yours: the contribution of their gift, of all the wave offerings of the sons of Israel; to you I have given them, and to your sons and to your daughters with you, for a due forever; every clean ***person*** in your house shall eat it. **12** All the best of the fresh oil and all the best of the new wine and grain, the first of them which they give to the LORD, to you I have given them. **13** The first fruits of all that ***is*** in their land, which they bring to the LORD, shall be yours; every clean ***person*** in your house shall eat it. **14** Every devoted thing in Israel shall be yours. **15** Every ***one*** opening the womb, of all flesh, which they bring near to the LORD, of mankind and of livestock, shall be yours; only you shall surely redeem the firstborn of mankind, and the firstborn of

17:10 Heb 9:4; Heb 5:4; Num 16:38,40
17:12 Num 26:11; Ps 90:7; Prov 19:3
17:13 Num 1:51-53; Num 18:4-7; Gen 3:3
18:1 Heb 5:4; Exod 28:38; Num 17:3,7,13
18:2 Acts 7:44; Num 18:4; Gen 29:34
18:3 Num 4:15; Num 3:25,31,36; Num 4:19,20
18:4 Num 1:51; Num 3:10; 1 Sam 6:19
18:5 Exod 27:21; Lev 24:3; Num 16:46
18:6 Num 3:9; Num 3:12,45; Gen 6:17
18:7 Rom 15:15; Heb 9:3; Num 3:10
18:8 1 John 2:27; 1 Cor 9:13; Lev 6:16,18,20,26
18:9 1 Cor 9:13; Lev 4:22,27; Lev 6:25,26
18:10 1 Cor 9:13; Lev 7:6; Lev 6:16,26,29
18:11 1 Cor 9:13; Deut 18:3; Exod 29:27,28
18:12 1 Cor 9:13; Exod 23:19; Deut 18:4
18:13 1 Cor 9:13; Exod 22:29; Jer 24:2
18:14 1 Cor 9:13; Lev 27:28; Ezek 44:29
18:15 Luke 2:23; 1 Cor 9:13; Exod 34:20

17:10 *Put back the rod of Aaron before the testimony for keeping* It was kept with "the staff of Aaron which budded, and the tablets of the covenant" (Heb 9:4), reminders of God's care, His law and His chosen priest. The sign's goal was life: "they will not die." Many Christians see a picture of Christ, cut off and laid in the tomb, who rose on the third day, proving He is the High Priest God chose (Rom 1:4; Heb 7:16, 24-25). The New Testament does not draw this link, so I hold it as a picture. God's priest is the one who lives.
17:12 *we expire, we perish, all of us perish!* From arrogance to terror. A few days before, they said everyone was holy enough to come near.
17:13 *Everyone who comes near, who comes near to the tabernacle of the LORD, dies* Their fear was not foolish after the earth opened, fire fell and plague swept the camp. But they did not know how to come near God safely. Chapter 18 gives God's answer for Israel. For us the answer is Jesus, through whose blood we enter by "a new and living way" (Heb 10:20).
18:1 *You and your sons and the house of your father with you shall bear the iniquity of the sanctuary* This answers the people's cry in 17:13. The priests would stand between a holy God and a sinful people and carry the guilt of any wrong done at the sanctuary. Nearness to God was a privilege that came with heavy responsibility.
18:2 *let them be joined to you* The name Levi sounds like the Hebrew word for "joined" (Gen 29:34). The Levites were joined to Aaron to help him, not to rival him as Korah had tried to do.
18:5 *there shall not be wrath again on the sons of Israel* The guarding of the holy things had a loving purpose. If the priests and Levites kept their charge, no more plagues like chapter 16 would break out on the camp.
18:6 *to you they are a gift, given to the LORD* The Levites were God's gift to the priests, and the priesthood itself was God's gift to Aaron (18:7). Korah wanted ministry as a right to grab. God says it is always a gift to receive.
18:7 *as a service of gift I give your priesthood; and the stranger who comes near shall be put to death* No one could take this office for himself (Heb 5:4). In Christ every believer has been made a priest to God (1 Pet 2:9), also by grace and never by merit.
18:8 *I have given to you the charge of My contributions, of all the holy things of the sons of Israel* Verses 8 to 19 list what the priests received. God provided for those who served Him through the gifts His people brought to Him.
18:11 *to your sons and to your daughters with you, for a due forever; every clean person in your house shall eat it* The most holy portions were eaten only by the priests in a holy place (18:10), but the wave offerings fed the whole priestly family, daughters included, as long as they were ceremonially clean.
18:12 *All the best of the fresh oil and all the best of the new wine and grain, the first of them* The firstfruits were the best and the first, given before the rest was used. God's servants were fed from what God's people gave Him first (Prov 3:9).
18:14 *Every devoted thing in Israel shall be yours* A devoted thing was given over wholly to God and could not be bought back (Lev 27:28). When it was not something to be destroyed, it went to the priests.
18:15 *only you shall surely redeem the firstborn of mankind* Every firstborn belonged to God since the night He spared Israel's firstborn in Egypt (Exod 13:2, 13-15). Sons were bought back with silver, a reminder that each family's life was a gift of His mercy.

the unclean livestock you shall redeem. **16** And ***as for*** its redemption price, from a son of a month you shall redeem ***it***, by your valuation, approximately 2 ounces (five shekels) of silver, by the shekel of the holy place; it ***is*** approximately 2/5 ounce (twenty gerahs). **17** Only the firstborn of an ox or the firstborn of a sheep or the firstborn of a goat you shall not redeem; they ***are*** holy. Their blood you shall sprinkle on the altar, and their fat you shall make smoke ***as*** a fire offering for a soothing aroma to the LORD. **18** And their flesh shall be yours; like the breast of the wave offering and like the right thigh, it shall be yours. **19** All the contributions of the holy things which the sons of Israel offer up to the LORD I have given to you and to your sons and to your daughters with you, for a due forever; it ***is*** a covenant of salt forever before the LORD for you and for your seed with you."

The Tithe for the Levites

20 And the LORD said to Aaron, "In their land you shall not have an inheritance, and a portion shall not be yours in their midst; I ***am*** your portion and your inheritance in the midst of the sons of Israel. **21** And to the sons of Levi, look, I have given every tithe in Israel for an inheritance, in return for their service which they serve, the service of the tent of meeting. **22** And the sons of Israel shall not draw near again to the tent of meeting, to bear sin, to die. **23** And the Levite, he shall serve the service of the tent of meeting, and they shall bear their iniquity; ***it is*** a statute forever for your generations; and in the midst of the sons of Israel they shall not inherit an inheritance. **24** For the tithe of the sons of Israel, which they offer up to the LORD ***as*** a contribution, I have given to the Levites for an inheritance; therefore I have said to them, 'In the midst of the sons of Israel they shall not inherit an inheritance.'" **25** And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe), saying, **26** "And to the Levites you shall speak, and you shall say to them, 'When you take from the sons of Israel the tithe which I have given to you from them for your inheritance, and you shall offer up from it the contribution of the LORD, a tithe from the tithe. **27** And your contribution shall be reckoned to you like the grain from the threshing floor and like the fullness from the winepress. **28** Thus you also shall offer up the contribution of the LORD from all your tithes which you take from the sons of Israel; and you shall give from it the contribution of the LORD to Aaron the priest. **29** From all your gifts you shall offer up every contribution of the LORD, from all its best, its holy part from it.' **30** And you shall say to them, 'When you offer up its best from it, and it shall be reckoned to the Levites like the produce of a threshing floor and like the produce of a winepress. **31** And you shall eat it in every place, you and your household; for it ***is*** wages for you in return for your service in the tent of meeting. **32** And you shall not bear sin on account of it when you offer up its best from it; and the holy things of the sons of Israel you shall not profane, and you shall not die.'"

NUMBERS 19

The Red Heifer

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe) and to Aaron (Aharon), saying, **2** "This ***is*** the statute of the law which the LORD has commanded, saying, 'Speak to the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), and let them bring to you a red heifer, unblemished, in which ***there is*** no blemish, on which a yoke has not

18:16 1 Cor 9:13; Exod 30:13; Num 3:47
18:17 1 Cor 9:13; Deut 15:19-22; Exod 29:16
18:18 1 Cor 9:13; Exod 29:26-28; Lev 7:31-34
18:19 1 Cor 9:13; 2 Chr 13:5; Lev 2:13
18:20 1 Cor 9:13; Deut 10:9; Ezek 44:28
18:21 Heb 7:5; Deut 14:22-29; Neh 10:37-29
18:22 Heb 7:5; Lev 22:9; Num 18:7
18:23 Heb 7:5; Num 3:7
18:24 Heb 7:5; Mal 3:8-10
18:25 Heb 7:5
18:26 Heb 7:5; Neh 10:38
18:27 Heb 7:5; Num 18:30; Lev 6:19-23
18:28 Heb 7:5; Gen 14:18; Heb 6:20
18:30 Gen 43:11; Deut 6:5; Prov 3:9,10
18:31 1 Cor 9:12; 1 Cor 9:13; 1 Tim 5:18
18:32 Lev 19:8; Lev 22:2,15; Num 18:22
19:2 Heb 9:13; Deut 21:3; Lev 22:20-25

18:16 *from a son of a month you shall redeem it, by your valuation, approximately 2 ounces of silver* Five shekels, the same price paid for the firstborn when the Levites were first counted (3:47). Jesus Himself, Mary's firstborn, was brought to the temple under this law (Luke 2:22-23).
18:17 *Only the firstborn of an ox or the firstborn of a sheep or the firstborn of a goat you shall not redeem; they are holy* Clean firstborn animals could be offered on the altar, so they were sacrificed rather than bought back. Unclean animals, like the donkey, were redeemed (18:15).
18:19 *it is a covenant of salt forever before the LORD* Salt preserves and does not decay, and sharing salt sealed lasting agreements in the ancient world. God's promise to provide for the priests would not spoil. David's kingdom is also called "a covenant of salt" (2 Chr 13:5).
18:20 *I am your portion and your inheritance in the midst of the sons of Israel* The priests received no tribal land. Their inheritance was God Himself, and that was no loss. David sang the same of every believer: "The LORD is the portion of my share and my cup" (Ps 16:5).
18:21 *to the sons of Levi, look, I have given every tithe in Israel for an inheritance* The tenth Israel gave to God supported the Levites, who had no fields of their own. It was their wages "in return for their service." Paul applies the principle that those who serve should be supported (1 Cor 9:13-14).
18:23 *they shall bear their iniquity* The Levites stood guard at the tent and bore the responsibility if an outsider came near. They protected the people by guarding the holy things.
18:24 *For the tithe of the sons of Israel, which they offer up to the LORD as a contribution* The tithe was given to the LORD first and then passed to the Levites. Under the New Testament, giving is to be regular, in proportion to how God has prospered us, and cheerful (1 Cor 16:2; 2 Cor 9:7). Christians differ on whether the ten percent still binds believers today; all agree that generous giving honors God.
18:26 *you shall offer up from it the contribution of the LORD, a tithe from the tithe* Even the Levites tithed. No one in God's service is above giving, and the ones who receive God's people's gifts must also give from them.
18:27 *your contribution shall be reckoned to you like the grain from the threshing floor and like the fullness from the winepress* The Levites raised no crops, but God counted their tithe from wages as if they had brought in their own harvest. He accepts what we give from what He gives us.
18:29 *from all its best, its holy part from it* God asks for the best, not the leftovers. Malachi rebuked Israel for offering what was blind and sick (Mal 1:8).
18:31 *for it is wages for you in return for your service in the tent of meeting* Once the best was given to God, the rest was theirs to enjoy freely anywhere, with their families. Honest support for ministry is no shame.
18:32 *you shall not bear sin on account of it when you offer up its best from it* Giving God His part first freed them to use the rest with a clear conscience. The chapter closes as it began, with a way to come near God and live.
19:2 *let them bring to you a red heifer, unblemished, in which there is no blemish, on which a yoke has not come up* Jewish teachers have long called this one of the hardest laws to understand, but its point is clear. A young cow, without defect and never worked, was set apart for cleansing. Red may point to the color of blood, though Scripture does not explain it.

come up. **3** And you shall give it to Eleazar (Elazar) the priest, and he shall bring it out to the outside of the camp, and ***one*** shall slaughter it before him. **4** And Eleazar the priest shall take some of its blood with his finger, and he shall spatter some of its blood toward the front of the tent of meeting seven times. **5** And ***one*** shall burn the heifer before his eyes; its skin and its flesh and its blood, with its dung, he shall burn. **6** And the priest shall take cedar wood and hyssop and scarlet of the worm, and he shall throw ***them*** into the midst of the burning of the heifer. **7** And the priest shall wash his clothes, and he shall bathe his flesh in water, and afterward he shall come into the camp; and the priest shall be unclean until the evening. **8** And the one who burns it shall wash his clothes in water, and he shall bathe his flesh in water, and he shall be unclean until the evening. **9** And a clean man shall gather the ashes of the heifer, and he shall deposit ***them*** outside the camp in a clean place; and it shall be for the congregation of the sons of Israel for keeping, for water of impurity; it ***is*** a sin offering. **10** And the one who gathers the ashes of the heifer shall wash his clothes, and he shall be unclean until the evening; and it shall be for the sons of Israel and for the sojourner who sojourns in their midst for a statute forever.

Cleansing from Death

11 The one who touches the dead, of any soul of mankind, and he shall be unclean seven days. **12** He shall purify himself from sin with it on the third day, and on the seventh day he shall be clean; and if he does not purify himself from sin on the third day and on the seventh day, he shall not be clean. **13** Everyone who touches the dead, the soul of the man who dies, and does not purify himself from sin, has made the tabernacle of the LORD unclean; and that soul shall be cut off from Israel; because the water of impurity was not sprinkled on him, he shall be unclean; his uncleanness ***is*** still on him. **14** This ***is*** the law: when a man dies in a tent, everyone who comes into the tent and everyone who ***is*** in the tent shall be unclean seven days. **15** And every open vessel which has no cover of cord on it, it ***is*** unclean. **16** And everyone who touches, on the face of the field, one slain by a sword or a dead ***one*** or a bone of a man or a grave, shall be unclean seven days. **17** And they shall take for the unclean ***one*** some of the dust of the burning of the sin offering, and he shall put living water on it in a vessel. **18** And a clean man shall take hyssop, and he shall dip ***it*** in the water, and he shall spatter ***it*** on the tent and on all the vessels and on the souls who were there, and on the one who touched the bone or the slain or the dead or the grave. **19** And the clean ***one*** shall spatter on the unclean on the third day and on the seventh day; and he shall purify him from sin on the seventh day, and he shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and he shall be clean in the evening. **20** And a man who is unclean and does not purify himself from sin, and that soul shall be cut off from the midst of the assembly, for he has made the sanctuary of the LORD unclean; the water of impurity has not been

19:3 Heb 9:13; Lev 4:12,21; Num 5:2
19:4 Heb 9:13; Lev 4:6,17; Lev 16:14,19
19:5 Heb 9:13; Exod 29:14; Lev 4:11,12,21
19:6 Heb 9:19; Heb 9:13; Heb 9:20
19:7 Heb 9:13; Lev 11:25,40; Lev 14:8,9
19:8 Heb 9:13
19:9 Heb 9:13; Num 19:13,20,21; Num 19:18
19:10 Heb 9:13; Num 19:7,8,19; Num 15:15,16
19:11 2 Cor 6:17; Heb 9:13; Num 5:2
19:12 1 Cor 15:4; Heb 9:13; Num 31:19
19:13 Heb 9:13; Lev 15:31; Lev 22:3
19:14 Heb 9:13
19:15 Heb 9:13; Num 31:20; Lev 11:32
19:16 Matt 23:27; Luke 11:44; Heb 9:13
19:17 John 7:38; Heb 9:13; Gen 26:19
19:18 Heb 9:13; John 19:29; Heb 9:19
19:19 Rev 1:5; Heb 9:13; Num 19:12
19:20 Heb 9:13; Num 19:13; Gen 17:14

19:3 *he shall bring it out to the outside of the camp* Eleazar, not Aaron, handled it, because the high priest had to stay clean for his work. The heifer died outside the camp, the place of the unclean, just as Jesus "suffered outside the gate" (Heb 13:12).
19:4 *he shall spatter some of its blood toward the front of the tent of meeting seven times* Though killed outside, the sacrifice was offered toward God's presence. Seven speaks of completeness.
19:5 *its skin and its flesh and its blood, with its dung, he shall burn* This was unusual. Normally the blood went on the altar and the hide to the priest. Here everything was burned to make a large store of ash.
19:6 *cedar wood and hyssop and scarlet of the worm* Scarlet of the worm is thread dyed with a red dye from an insect. The same three things were used to cleanse a person healed of a skin disease (Lev 14:4-6). Cedar does not rot, hyssop was used for sprinkling at the Passover (Exod 12:22), and scarlet is the color of blood. All of them speak of cleansing and life.
19:7 *the priest shall be unclean until the evening* Here is the strange part. The ashes made the unclean clean, but handling them made the clean unclean. The heifer carried uncleanness away from the people, and those who dealt with it shared in it for a time. Sin and death are not cleaned up without a cost to someone.
19:9 *for water of impurity; it is a sin offering* Water of impurity means water to remove impurity. It is called a sin offering because it dealt with defilement and restored a person to fellowship with God.
19:10 *for the sojourner who sojourns in their midst for a statute forever* Outsiders living in Israel received the same cleansing. Jewish tradition says only a handful of red heifers were needed in all of Israel's history, because the ashes of one went a long way.
19:11 *The one who touches the dead, of any soul of mankind, and he shall be unclean seven days* Touching the dead was not sin. Burying the dead was a duty and a kindness. But death is the result of sin (Gen 2:17; Rom 5:12), and God is the living God. Everything connected with death was kept from His presence to teach that death does not belong with Him.
19:12 *He shall purify himself from sin with it on the third day, and on the seventh day he shall be clean* Two sprinklings, and then he was clean. God set a clear way back, and anyone could take it.
19:13 *has made the tabernacle of the LORD unclean; and that soul shall be cut off from Israel* To ignore God's cleansing was to carry defilement into God's house. "His uncleanness is still on him." God provided the way, and refusing it left a person in his uncleanness.
19:14 *when a man dies in a tent, everyone who comes into the tent and everyone who is in the tent shall be unclean seven days* In a camp where a whole generation was dying, families needed this cleansing again and again. The law was a daily reminder of the cost of unbelief at Kadesh and of God's mercy in making a way back.
19:16 *one slain by a sword or a dead one or a bone of a man or a grave* Death defiled wherever it was found, even in the open field. By Jesus' day tombs were whitewashed so travelers would not touch them by accident, and He used that picture of people clean outside but dead inside (Matt 23:27).
19:17 *he shall put living water on it in a vessel* Living water is running water, from a spring or a stream, mixed with the ashes.
19:18 *A clean man shall take hyssop, and he shall dip it in the water, and he shall spatter it on the tent* On the third and seventh days a clean person sprinkled the unclean one, his tent and his things. Cleansing came from outside himself, applied by another.
19:20 *that soul shall be cut off from the midst of the assembly, for he has made the sanctuary of the LORD unclean* The warning comes twice in the chapter (19:13). The cleansing was free, but it had to be received.

sprinkled on him; he ***is*** unclean. **21** And it shall be a statute forever for them; and the one who spatters the water of impurity shall wash his clothes, and the one who touches the water of impurity shall be unclean until the evening. **22** And all that the unclean ***one*** touches shall be unclean, and the soul who touches ***it*** shall be unclean until the evening.'"

NUMBERS 20

Water from the Rock

1 And the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), all the congregation, came ***to*** the wilderness of Zin (Tsin) in the first month, and the people stayed in Kadesh (Qadesh); and Miriam (Miryam) died there, and she was buried there. **2** And there was no water for the congregation; and they assembled against Moses (Moshe) and against Aaron (Aharon). **3** And the people quarreled with Moses, and they said, saying, "And if only we had died when our brothers died before the LORD! **4** And why have you brought the assembly of the LORD into this wilderness to die there, we and our livestock? **5** And why have you brought us up from Egypt (Mitsrayim) to bring us to this evil place? ***It is*** not a place of seed and fig and vine and pomegranate, and there is no water to drink." **6** And Moses and Aaron went from before the assembly to the entrance of the tent of meeting, and they fell on their faces; and the glory of the LORD appeared to them. **7** And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **8** "Take the rod, and assemble the congregation, you and Aaron your brother, and speak to the rock before their eyes, and it shall give its water; and you shall bring out water for them from the rock, and you shall give drink to the congregation and their livestock." **9** And Moses took the rod from before the LORD, just as He had commanded him. **10** And Moses and Aaron assembled the assembly before the face of the rock, and he said to them, "Listen, please, you rebels! From this rock shall we bring out water for you?" **11** And Moses raised his hand, and he struck the rock with his rod twice; and much water came out, and the congregation and their livestock drank. **12** And the LORD said to Moses and to Aaron, "Because you did not believe in Me, to treat Me as holy in the eyes of the sons of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given to them." **13** These ***are*** the waters of Meribah (Meriva), where the sons of Israel quarreled with the LORD, and He showed Himself holy among them.

Edom Refuses Passage

14 And Moses sent messengers from Kadesh to the king of Edom: "Thus says your brother Israel: 'You know all the hardship that has found us: **15** and our fathers went down to Egypt, and we dwelt in Egypt many days, and Egypt did evil

19:21 Heb 9:13; Lev 11:25,40; Lev 16:26-28
19:22 Hag 2:13; Lev 7:19; Lev 15:5
20:1 Num 13:21; Num 33:36; Exod 15:20
20:2 Exod 15:23,24; Exod 17:1-4; Num 11:1-6
20:3 Exod 17:2; Num 16:31-35,49; Num 11:1,33,34
20:4 Exod 17:3; Num 11:5; Exod 5:21
20:5 Acts 7:36; Num 16:14; Deut 8:15
20:6 Num 14:5; Num 16:4,22,45; Num 16:19,42
20:8 Acts 2:4; Exod 17:5,9; Isa 43:20
20:9 Num 17:10
20:10 Ps 106:32,33; Deut 9:24; Matt 5:22
20:11 1 Cor 10:4; Num 20:8; Exod 17:6
20:12 Matt 17:17; Luke 1:20; John 1:17
20:13 Ps 95:8; Exod 17:7; Deut 33:8
20:14 Judg 11:16,17; Deut 23:7; Gen 32:3,4
20:15 Acts 7:15; Acts 7:36; Gen 46:6

19:21 *the one who touches the water of impurity shall be unclean until the evening* Hebrews explains the meaning: if "the ashes of a heifer" (Heb 9:13) purified the flesh, "how much more will the blood of the Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself unblemished to God, purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Heb 9:13-14). The water had to be sprinkled again every time; Jesus offered Himself once for all (Heb 10:10).
19:22 *all that the unclean one touches shall be unclean* Uncleanness spread by touch. Jesus did what no Israelite dared: He touched the dead, taking a dead girl by the hand (Mark 5:41) and touching a widow's son's coffin (Luke 7:14). Instead of becoming unclean, He gave life. The water could not reach a guilty conscience. The blood of Christ can.
20:1 *came to the wilderness of Zin in the first month* The year is not given, but comparing 33:36-39 shows this is the fortieth year after the exodus, since Aaron dies later that year. The thirty-eight years of wandering are behind them.
20:1 *and Miriam died there, and she was buried there* One short line for the woman who watched over baby Moses at the Nile (Exod 2:4), led the women in song at the sea (Exod 15:20-21), and later spoke against Moses (chapter 12). She did not see the promised land.
20:2 *there was no water for the congregation; and they assembled against Moses and against Aaron* Their need was real; no water in the desert is serious. But instead of asking God, they attacked their leaders.
20:3 *if only we had died when our brothers died before the LORD* This was a new generation, but they sounded just like their parents (14:2). Most had been children in Egypt or were born in the desert. They learned grumbling from the generation before them.
20:6 *they fell on their faces; and the glory of the LORD appeared to them* Once again Moses and Aaron took the problem to God, and God answered with a plan, not a plague.
20:8 *Take the rod* Verse 9 says Moses took it "from before the LORD," so this may have been Aaron's rod that budded, kept before the testimony (17:10). Or it may have been Moses' own staff, "the staff of God" (Exod 4:20). Scripture does not say for certain.
20:8 *speak to the rock before their eyes, and it shall give its water* The command was clear. Forty years earlier at Rephidim God told Moses to strike a rock (Exod 17:6). This time God said speak.
20:10 *Listen, please, you rebels! From this rock shall we bring out water for you?* After forty years of carrying this people, Moses' temper broke. He spoke in anger, and he said "we," as though he and Aaron were the ones giving the water.
20:11 *he struck the rock with his rod twice; and much water came out* God still gave the water. His grace to the people did not depend on Moses getting it right. The psalm says "it went badly for Moses because of them" (Ps 106:32), for they rebelled against his spirit, and "he spoke rashly with his lips" (Ps 106:33). Other people's sin can provoke us to sin too.
20:12 *Because you did not believe in Me, to treat Me as holy in the eyes of the sons of Israel* It seems severe after forty faithful years. But God named the sin: unbelief, and failing to honor Him as holy before the whole nation. Moses showed them a harsh, angry God when God had promised water freely, and he took glory that belonged to God. "Everyone to whom much was given, much will be required from him" (Luke 12:48). Moses was not lost. He saw the land from Nebo (Deut 34:1-4) and later stood in it with Jesus at the transfiguration (Matt 17:3).
20:13 *These are the waters of Meribah, where the sons of Israel quarreled with the LORD, and He showed Himself holy among them* Meribah means quarreling. Paul says "the rock was the Christ" (1 Cor 10:4). Many Bible teachers see more: in Exodus 17 the rock was struck once, a picture of Christ struck once for our sins (Isa 53:5; Heb 9:28); here it needed only a word, for Christ need not be struck again. We come and ask, and He gives living water (John 7:37-38). The New Testament does not say that part directly, but it fits what it does say.
20:14 *Thus says your brother Israel* The Edomites came from Esau, Jacob's twin (Gen 36:1). The direct road to the land ran through Edom, south of the Dead Sea, so Moses asked politely, as one brother to another.

to us and to our fathers. **16** And we cried out to the LORD, and He heard our voice, and He sent a messenger and brought us out from Egypt; and look, we ***are*** in Kadesh, a city ***at*** the edge of your territory. **17** Please let us pass through your land. We will not pass through field and vineyard, and we will not drink water of a well; we will go ***by*** the way of the king; we will not turn aside ***to the*** right and ***to the*** left until we have passed through your territory.'" **18** And Edom said to him, "You shall not pass through me, lest I come out with the sword to meet you." **19** And the sons of Israel said to him, "We will go up by the highway; and if we drink your water, I and my livestock, and I will give its price. Only ***it is*** nothing; let me pass through on my feet." **20** And he said, "You shall not pass through." And Edom came out to meet him with a heavy people and with a strong hand. **21** And Edom refused to permit Israel to pass through its territory; and Israel turned aside from it.

The Death of Aaron

22 And they set out from Kadesh, and the sons of Israel, all the congregation, came ***to*** Hor the mountain. **23** And the LORD said to Moses and to Aaron at Hor the mountain, on the border of the land of Edom, saying, **24** "Aaron shall be gathered to his peoples, for he shall not go into the land which I have given to the sons of Israel, because you rebelled against My mouth at the waters of Meribah. **25** Take Aaron and Eleazar (Elazar) his son, and bring them up ***to*** Hor the mountain; **26** and strip Aaron of his garments, and you shall clothe Eleazar his son ***with*** them; and Aaron shall be gathered, and he shall die there." **27** And Moses did just as the LORD had commanded; and they went up to Hor the mountain before the eyes of all the congregation. **28** And Moses stripped Aaron of his garments, and he clothed Eleazar his son with them; and Aaron died there on the top of the mountain. And Moses and Eleazar came down from the mountain. **29** And all the congregation saw that Aaron had died, and they wept for Aaron thirty days, all the house of Israel.

NUMBERS 21

Victory at Hormah

1 And the Canaanite, the king of Arad, who dwelt ***in*** the Negeb (Negev), heard that Israel (Yisra'el) had come ***by*** the way of the Atharim (Atarim), and he fought against Israel, and he took captive from it ***some*** captives. **2** And Israel vowed a vow to the LORD, and said, "If You will indeed give this people into my hand, then I will devote their cities ***to destruction***." **3** And the LORD listened to the voice of Israel, and He gave up the Canaanite; and it devoted them and their cities ***to destruction***; and ***one*** called the name of the place Hormah (Chorma).

The Bronze Serpent

4 And they set out from Hor the mountain ***by*** the way of the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; and the soul of the people became short on the way. **5** And the people spoke against God and against Moses (Moshe), "Why have you brought us up from Egypt (Mitsrayim) to die in the wilderness? For ***there is*** no bread, and ***there is*** no water, and our

20:16 Acts 7:36; Exod 14:19; Exod 23:20
20:17 Num 21:1,22-24; Deut 2:1-4,27,29
20:19 Deut 2:6,28
20:20 Judg 11:17,20; Amos 1:11; Num 20:18
20:21 Judg 11:18,24; Deut 2:27,29; Deut 2:4-8
20:22 Num 20:1,14,16; Num 13:26; Num 33:36,37
20:24 Gen 25:8,17; Deut 32:50; Num 27:13
20:25 Num 33:38,39
20:26 Heb 7:11; Heb 7:23; Exod 29:29,30
20:28 Deut 10:6; Exod 29:29,30; Num 20:26
20:29 Deut 34:8; Gen 1:10; 2 Chr 35:24,25
21:1 Num 33:40; Judg 1:16; Josh 12:14
21:2 Gen 28:20; Judg 11:30; 1 Sam 1:11
21:3 Num 14:45; Deut 1:44; Ps 10:17
21:4 Judg 11:18; Exod 6:9; Num 33:41
21:5 1 Cor 10:9; Acts 7:39; Ps 78:19

20:16 *we cried out to the LORD, and He heard our voice, and He sent a messenger and brought us out from Egypt* Moses told Israel's story as a testimony of what God had done, not what Israel had done.
20:17 *we will go by the way of the king* The King's Highway was the main north and south road east of the Jordan and the Dead Sea. Israel promised to touch no field, vineyard or well, and even offered to pay for water (20:19).
20:18 *You shall not pass through me, lest I come out with the sword to meet you* Edom refused twice and came out in force (20:20). The bitterness between these brother nations ran for centuries; Obadiah's whole prophecy is about Edom's pride and cruelty to Judah.
20:21 *and Israel turned aside from it* God had told Israel not to fight Edom, because He had given Mount Seir to Esau (Deut 2:4-6). So Israel took the long way around without revenge. Obeying God sometimes means the longer road, and we leave room for God's wrath (Rom 12:19).
20:22 *came to Hor the mountain* Mount Hor stood on the border of Edom. Its exact location is uncertain.
20:24 *Aaron shall be gathered to his peoples* A way of speaking of death as joining those who had gone before, a hint that death is not the end. God gave the reason plainly: "you rebelled against My mouth at the waters of Meribah."
20:26 *strip Aaron of his garments, and you shall clothe Eleazar his son with them* Three men climbed the mountain before the whole congregation (20:27). Moses, who had stood with Aaron before Pharaoh, removed the high priest's robes and placed them on Aaron's son. The priesthood went on, but every high priest died and had to hand on the work.
20:28 *Aaron died there on the top of the mountain. And Moses and Eleazar came down from the mountain* Three went up, two came down. Aaron made the golden calf (Exod 32) and spoke against Moses (chapter 12), but he also ran into the plague with incense and stood between the dead and the living (16:48). God used a flawed man as His priest for forty years.
20:29 *they wept for Aaron thirty days, all the house of Israel* It was right to grieve; grief is not a lack of faith. Unlike Aaron, Jesus holds His priesthood permanently, "always living to intercede for them" (Heb 7:25). He will never need to hand His robes to anyone else.
21:1 *the king of Arad, who dwelt in the Negeb* Arad was a city in the south of Canaan. Its king struck first and took some Israelites captive.
21:2 *Israel vowed a vow to the LORD* Their parents went into battle on their own and were beaten (14:40-45). This generation turned to God first. To devote to destruction (herem in Hebrew) meant to give something wholly to God by destroying it, keeping nothing as plunder. It was a solemn act of judgment, not a raid for gain.
21:3 *one called the name of the place Hormah* Hormah sounds like the Hebrew word for devoted to destruction. The place of the parents' defeat (14:45) became the place of the children's first victory. God judged the Canaanites after long patience, for sins that included child sacrifice (Gen 15:16; Lev 18:21-25). It was His judgment on a specific people by His direct command, never a license for any nation to make war in God's name today.
21:4 *the soul of the people became short on the way* Edom's refusal forced a long, hot detour south toward the Gulf of Aqaba, and it felt like going backward. They lost patience, as we can when God's road seems to run the wrong way.
21:5 *our soul loathes the worthless bread* No bread? They had manna every morning. They meant they hated it, and they called the bread from heaven worthless. It was the same sin as Kibroth-hattaavah (11:4-6), forty years later.

soul loathes the worthless bread." **6** And the LORD sent the fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and many people from Israel died. **7** And the people came to Moses, and they said, "We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD and against you; pray to the LORD, and let Him remove the serpents from on us." And Moses prayed for the people. **8** And the LORD said to Moses, "Make for yourself a fiery ***serpent***, and set it on a standard; and it shall be ***that*** everyone who is bitten and sees it shall live." **9** And Moses made a serpent of bronze, and he set it on the standard; and it happened, if the serpent had bitten a man, and he looked to the serpent of bronze, and he lived.

The Journey to Moab

10 And the sons of Israel set out, and they camped in Oboth (Ovot). **11** And they set out from Oboth, and they camped at Iye-abarim (Iye-Ha'avarim), in the wilderness which ***is*** on the face of Moab (Mo'av), toward the rising of the sun. **12** From there they set out, and they camped in the wadi of Zered. **13** From there they set out, and they camped on the other side of Arnon, which ***is*** in the wilderness that goes out from the border of the Amorite; for Arnon ***is*** the border of Moab, between Moab and the Amorite. **14** Therefore it is said in the book of the wars of the LORD, "Waheb (Vahev) in Suphah (Sufa), and the wadis of Arnon, **15** and the slope of the wadis which extends to the dwelling of Ar, and leans to the border of Moab." **16** And from there to Beer; that ***is*** the well where the LORD said to Moses, "Gather the people, and let Me give them water." **17** Then Israel sang this song: "Spring up, O well! Sing to it! **18** A well the leaders dug, the nobles of the people dug it, with the scepter, with their staffs." And from the wilderness ***to*** Mattanah (Matana), **19** and from Mattanah ***to*** Nahaliel (Nachali'el), and from Nahaliel ***to*** Bamoth (Bamot), **20** and from Bamoth ***to*** the valley which ***is*** in the field of Moab, ***at*** the top of the Pisgah (Pisga), and it looks down over the face of the wasteland.

Sihon and Og Defeated

21 And Israel sent messengers to Sihon (Sichon) king of the Amorite, saying, **22** "Let me pass through your land; we will not turn aside into field and into vineyard; we will not drink water of a well; we will go by the way of the king until we have passed through your territory." **23** And Sihon did not permit Israel to pass through his territory; and Sihon gathered all his people, and he went out to meet Israel toward the wilderness, and he came to Jahaz (Yahats), and he fought against Israel. **24** And Israel struck him by the mouth of the sword, and it took possession of his land from Arnon to Jabbok (Yaboq), to the sons of Ammon (Amon); for the border of the sons of Ammon ***was*** strong. **25** And Israel took all these cities, and Israel dwelt in all the cities of the Amorite, in Heshbon (Cheshbon) and in all its daughters. **26** For Heshbon ***was*** the city of Sihon king of the Amorite, and he had fought against the former king of Moab, and he had taken all his land from his hand as far as Arnon. **27** Therefore those who speak proverbs say, "Come ***to*** Heshbon; let it be built, and let

21:6 1 Cor 10:9; Deut 8:15; Jer 8:17
21:7 Acts 8:24; Luke 24:27; John 3:14
21:8 John 3:14; Luke 24:27; Luke 24:44
21:9 Luke 24:27; John 3:15; John 5:46
21:10 Num 33:43-45
21:12 Deut 2:13,14
21:13 Num 22:36; Judg 11:18; Deut 2:24
21:14 Josh 10:13; 2 Sam 1:18
21:15 Num 21:28; Deut 2:9,18,29; Isa 15:1
21:16 John 4:10; John 7:37; Rev 21:6
21:17 James 5:13; Ps 105:2; Exod 15:1,2
21:18 2 Chr 17:7-9; Neh 3:1,5; 1 Tim 6:17,18
21:20 Num 23:28; Num 22:1; Num 26:63
21:21 Deut 2:26-28; Judg 11:19-21; Num 20:14-19
21:22 Num 20:17
21:23 Judg 11:20; Deut 2:30-32; Deut 29:7,8
21:24 Amos 2:9; Josh 24:8; Neh 9:22
21:25 Num 21:31; Num 32:33-42; Deut 2:12
21:27 Num 21:14; Isa 14:4; Hab 2:6

21:6 *the LORD sent the fiery serpents among the people* Likely called fiery because their bite burned. Deuteronomy 8:15 shows God had been guarding Israel from such dangers all along. Paul warns, "Nor let us put the Christ to the test, as some of them also tested Him, and were destroyed by the serpents" (1 Cor 10:9). The One they tested was the Son of God.
21:7 *We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD and against you* This time the people answered rightly. They named their sin and asked for prayer, and once more Moses prayed for those who had spoken against him.
21:8 *everyone who is bitten and sees it shall live* God did not remove the serpents at once; He gave a remedy. The cure was not medicine, sacrifice or ritual. It was a look. Anyone could do it, young or old, strong or dying. But it took faith in God's word, and the only one who died was the one who refused to look.
21:9 *if the serpent had bitten a man, and he looked to the serpent of bronze, and he lived* The very thing that was killing them was lifted up, made harmless, on a pole. Jesus said, "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up" (John 3:14), "so that everyone who believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:15). On the cross He was made sin for us (2 Cor 5:21). All of us have been bitten by sin; look to Him and live. Later Israel burned incense to this serpent until Hezekiah "crushed to pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made" (2 Kgs 18:4). Never worship the means instead of God.
21:13 *for Arnon is the border of Moab, between Moab and the Amorite* Israel moved north along the east side of the Dead Sea. Crossing the brook Zered (21:12) between Edom and Moab marked the end of the thirty-eight years of wandering (Deut 2:13-14). The Arnon is a deep canyon.
21:14 *the book of the wars of the LORD* An old book, now lost, that recorded Israel's battles in poems or songs. Moses used it as a source, as Joshua cites the book of Jashar (Josh 10:13). Inspiration does not mean writers never used records; it means God guided what they wrote.
21:16 *Gather the people, and let Me give them water* Beer means well. This time there was no complaining. God gave water before they asked.
21:17 *Spring up, O well! Sing to it!* The new generation went from grumbling about water to singing for it, a picture of a changed heart. The leaders dug with their staffs (21:18).
21:20 *at the top of the Pisgah* The range of hills overlooking the Jordan valley and the Dead Sea. From there Moses would later see the land (Deut 34:1).
21:21 *Israel sent messengers to Sihon king of the Amorite* The same polite request made to Edom, to pass on the King's Highway and touch nothing (21:22).
21:23 *Sihon did not permit Israel to pass through his territory* Sihon attacked first. Edom was a brother nation and was spared. The Amorites were among the nations whose land God promised to Abraham (Gen 15:16, 21), and God hardened Sihon's spirit to give his land to Israel (Deut 2:30).
21:24 *it took possession of his land from Arnon to Jabbok* The Jabbok flows west into the Jordan, about halfway between the Dead Sea and the Sea of Galilee.
21:25 *in Heshbon and in all its daughters* The daughters were the small towns around a main city.
21:26 *he had fought against the former king of Moab, and he had taken all his land from his hand as far as Arnon* This matters because Moab and Ammon later claimed the land. Jephthah answered that claim three hundred years later by pointing to these very events (Judg 11:15-26).
21:27 *Therefore those who speak proverbs say* A taunt song, a poem of victory. It recalls how Sihon's fire went out from Heshbon and consumed Ar of Moab (21:28).

the city of Sihon be established. **28** For fire went out from Heshbon, a flame from the town of Sihon; it consumed Ar of Moab, the lords of the high places of Arnon. **29** Woe to you, Moab! You have perished, O people of Chemosh! He has given his sons ***as*** fugitives, and his daughters into captivity, to the king of the Amorite, Sihon. **30** And we shot at them; Heshbon has perished as far as Dibon (Divon); and we have laid waste as far as Nophah (Nofach), which ***is*** as far as Medeba (Medva)." **31** And Israel dwelt in the land of the Amorite. **32** And Moses sent to spy out Jazer (Yazer), and they captured its daughters, and he dispossessed the Amorite who ***were*** there. **33** And they turned, and they went up ***by*** the way of the Bashan; and Og the king of the Bashan went out to meet them, he and all his people, for the battle ***at*** Edrei. **34** And the LORD said to Moses, "Do not fear him, for into your hand I have given him and all his people and his land; and you shall do to him just as you did to Sihon king of the Amorite, who was dwelling in Heshbon." **35** And they struck him and his sons and all his people, until ***one*** had left him no survivor; and they took possession of his land.

NUMBERS 22

Balak Sends for Balaam

1 And the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) set out, and they camped in the plains of Moab (Mo'av), across the Jordan (Yarden) ***from*** Jericho (Yericho). **2** And Balak (Balaq) the son of Zippor (Tsipor) saw all that Israel had done to the Amorite. **3** And Moab was very afraid because of the people, for it ***was*** numerous; and Moab felt dread because of the sons of Israel. **4** And Moab said to the elders of Midian (Midyan), "Now the assembly will lick up all that ***is*** around us, as the ox licks up the green growth of the field." And Balak the son of Zippor ***was*** king of Moab at that time. **5** And he sent messengers to Balaam (Bilam) the son of Beor, to Pethor (Petor), which ***is*** by the River, ***in*** the land of the sons of his people, to call him, saying, "Look, a people has come out from Egypt (Mitsrayim); look, it has covered the eye of the land, and it is dwelling opposite me. **6** And now, please come, curse this people for me, for it ***is*** mightier than I; perhaps I shall be able ***that*** we may strike it, and I may drive it out from the land; for I know that whom you bless is blessed, and whom you curse is cursed." **7** And the elders of Moab and the elders of Midian went, and divinations ***were*** in their hand; and they came to Balaam, and they spoke to him the words of Balak. **8** And he said to them, "Lodge here tonight, and I will bring back word to you just as the LORD speaks to me." And the princes of Moab stayed with Balaam. **9** And God came to Balaam, and He said, "Who ***are*** these men with you?" **10** And Balaam said to God, "Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, has sent to me: **11** 'Look, the people that has come out from Egypt, and it has covered the eye of the land; now come, curse it for me; perhaps I shall be able to fight against it, and I will drive it out.'" **12** And God said to Balaam, "You shall not go with them; you shall not curse the people, for it ***is*** blessed." **13** And Balaam rose in the morning, and he said to the princes of Balak, "Go to your land, for the LORD has refused to permit me to go

21:28 Num 21:15; Jer 48:45,46; Judg 9:20
21:29 Judg 11:24; 2 Kgs 23:13; 1 Kgs 11:7,33
21:30 Isa 15:2,9; Jer 48:18,22; Num 32:34
21:31 Num 32:33-42; Deut 3:16,17; Josh 12:1-6
21:32 Num 32:1,35; Jer 48:32; Isa 16:8,9
21:33 Josh 13:12; Deut 29:7; Deut 1:4
21:34 Num 14:9; Deut 3:2,11; Deut 20:3
21:35 Deut 3:3-17; Deut 29:7,8; Josh 12:4-6
22:1 Num 21:20; Num 33:48-50; Num 36:13
22:2 Judg 11:25; Num 21:3,20-35
22:3 Exod 15:15; Deut 2:25; Josh 2:10,11,24
22:4 Num 25:15-18; Num 31:8; Num 22:7
22:5 Jude 1:11; Rev 2:14; 2 Pet 2:15
22:6 Acts 16:16; Num 24:9; Num 23:7,8
22:7 2 Pet 2:15; Jude 1:11; 1 Sam 9:7,8
22:8 Jude 1:11; Num 22:19,20; Num 12:6
22:9 Jude 1:11; Gen 20:3; Num 22:20
22:10 Jude 1:11
22:12 Jude 1:11; Gen 12:2; Job 33:15-17
22:13 Jude 1:11; Deut 23:5

21:29 *Woe to you, Moab! You have perished, O people of Chemosh!* Chemosh, the god of Moab, could not save his people from Sihon. Sihon conquered Moab, and Israel conquered Sihon. Jeremiah quotes this song against Moab (Jer 48:45-46).
21:30 *Heshbon has perished as far as Dibon* The song ends with Israel's victory. The LORD gave His people what Chemosh could never give his.
21:33 *Og the king of the Bashan went out to meet them* Bashan was a rich high plateau east of the Sea of Galilee, famous for cattle and oaks. Og was the last of the Rephaim, a giant whose iron bed was about thirteen and a half feet long (Deut 3:11).
21:34 *Do not fear him, for into your hand I have given him* God spoke the very words their parents needed at Kadesh (14:9). This time Israel believed.
21:35 *they took possession of his land* Israel never forgot these two victories. They are sung in Psalms 135:10-12 and 136:17-22, and Rahab in Jericho had heard of them (Josh 2:10). The giants were real. So was God.
22:1 *they camped in the plains of Moab, across the Jordan from Jericho* Israel stays here for the rest of Numbers and all of Deuteronomy. The promised land is just across the river.
22:3 *Moab was very afraid because of the people, for it was numerous* Moab had no reason to fear. God had told Israel not to attack Moab, because He had given its land to Lot's descendants (Deut 2:9). Balak did not know that, or did not trust it.
22:4 *Moab said to the elders of Midian* The Midianites were a desert people descended from Abraham through Keturah (Gen 25:1-2), some living near Moab. The ox licking up a field is a farmer's picture of a herd eating everything bare.
22:5 *he sent messengers to Balaam the son of Beor, to Pethor, which is by the River* The River usually means the Euphrates. Pethor was in northern Mesopotamia (Deut 23:4), some four hundred miles away, weeks of travel each way. Balaam's fame reached far. An inscription found at Deir Alla in Jordan, from several centuries later, mentions a seer named Balaam son of Beor.
22:6 *for I know that whom you bless is blessed, and whom you curse is cursed* Balaam was a diviner who sought hidden knowledge through omens (Josh 13:22). He knew of the LORD and used His name, but he was not a prophet of Israel. God had already said, "I will bless those who bless you, and the one who disdains you I will curse" (Gen 12:3). Balak was about to learn whose word stands.
22:7 *divinations were in their hand* That is, the fee for divining. They came with money.
22:8 *Lodge here tonight, and I will bring back word to you just as the LORD speaks to me* Balaam knew he needed God's permission. But a man who truly feared God would have sent them home at once. He wanted to keep the door open.
22:9 *Who are these men with you?* God was not asking for information. Like His question to Adam (Gen 3:9), it was meant to make Balaam face what he was doing.
22:12 *You shall not go with them; you shall not curse the people, for it is blessed* Three things: do not go, do not curse, and the reason. Israel was blessed. God had already decided.
22:13 *the LORD has refused to permit me to go with you* He left out the reason, that Israel was blessed. He made it sound as if he wanted to go but was not allowed, and Balak took the answer as bargaining (22:14).

with you." **14** And the princes of Moab rose, and they went to Balak, and they said, "Balaam has refused to come with us."

Balaam Goes with the Princes

15 And Balak again sent princes, more numerous and more honored than these. **16** And they came to Balaam, and they said to him, "Thus says Balak the son of Zippor: 'Please do not be held back from coming to me; **17** for I will surely honor you greatly, and all that you say to me I will do; and please come, curse this people for me.'" **18** And Balaam answered, and he said to the servants of Balak, "If Balak gives me the fullness of his house ***of*** silver and gold, I am not able to pass beyond the mouth of the LORD my God, to do ***anything*** small or great. **19** And now, please stay here, you also, tonight, and let me know what more the LORD will speak with me." **20** And God came to Balaam ***at*** night, and He said to him, "If the men have come to call you, rise, go with them; and only the word which I speak to you, it you shall do."

Balaam's Donkey

21 And Balaam rose in the morning, and he saddled his donkey, and he went with the princes of Moab. **22** And the anger of God burned because he was going; and the angel of the LORD stationed himself in the way for an adversary to him. And he ***was*** riding on his donkey, and his two servants ***were*** with him. **23** And the donkey saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand; and the donkey turned aside from the way, and she went into the field; and Balaam struck the donkey to turn her ***to*** the way. **24** And the angel of the LORD stood in a narrow path of the vineyards, a wall on this ***side*** and a wall on this ***side***. **25** And the donkey saw the angel of the LORD, and she pressed herself against the wall, and she pressed the foot of Balaam against the wall; and he struck her again. **26** And the angel of the LORD went on further, and he stood in a narrow place where ***there was*** no way to turn aside ***to the*** right and ***to the*** left. **27** And the donkey saw the angel of the LORD, and she lay down under Balaam; and the anger of Balaam burned, and he struck the donkey with the staff. **28** And the LORD opened the mouth of the donkey, and she said to Balaam, "What have I done to you, that you have struck me these three times?" **29** And Balaam said to the donkey, "Because you have made a fool of me! If only there were a sword in my hand, for now I would have killed you." **30** And the donkey said to Balaam, "Am I not your donkey, on which you have ridden from your existence until this day? Have I indeed been accustomed to do thus to you?" And he said, "No." **31** And the LORD uncovered the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand; and he bowed, and he bowed down on his face. **32** And the angel of the LORD said to him, "Why have you struck your donkey these three times? Look, I have come out for an adversary, for ***your*** way is reckless before me. **33** And the donkey saw me, and she turned aside before me these three times. If she had not turned aside from before me, surely now I would have killed even you, and her I would have kept alive." **34** And Balaam said to the angel of the LORD, "I have sinned, for I did not know that you were standing in the way to meet me. And now, if ***it is*** evil in your eyes, I

22:14 Jude 1:11
22:15 Num 22:7,8; Acts 10:7,8
22:16 Jude 1:11
22:17 Num 24:11; Deut 16:9; Esth 5:11
22:18 2 Pet 2:15; Jude 1:11; Num 24:13
22:19 Num 22:7,8; 1 Tim 6:9,10; 2 Pet 2:3,15
22:20 2 Pet 2:15; Jude 1:11; Num 23:12,26
22:21 2 Pet 2:15; 2 Pet 2:16; Jude 1:11
22:22 2 Pet 2:16; Num 22:32; Exod 4:24
22:23 2 Pet 2:16; Jude 1:11; 2 Pet 2:15
22:24 2 Pet 2:16
22:25 2 Pet 2:16; Job 5:13-15; Isa 47:12
22:26 2 Pet 2:16; Isa 26:11; Hos 2:6
22:27 2 Pet 2:16; Prov 14:16; Prov 27:3,4
22:28 2 Pet 2:15-16; 2 Pet 2:16; Exod 4:11
22:29 2 Pet 2:16; Prov 12:10,16; Eccl 9:3
22:30 2 Pet 2:16; 1 Cor 1:27,28
22:31 2 Pet 2:16; Gen 21:19; Luke 24:16,31
22:32 2 Pet 2:16; Num 22:28; Deut 25:4
22:33 2 Pet 2:16; Num 14:37; Num 16:33-35
22:34 Job 34:31,32; 1 Sam 15:24,30; 2 Sam 12:13

22:17 *I will surely honor you greatly, and all that you say to me I will do* A blank check. Balak raised the offer, with more princes of higher rank (22:15).
22:18 *If Balak gives me the fullness of his house of silver and gold, I am not able to pass beyond the mouth of the LORD my God* The words sound noble, but the next verse shows his heart.
22:19 *let me know what more the LORD will speak with me* God had already spoken. Balaam asked again hoping God would change His mind. When we keep asking God about something He has made clear, it is usually because we want something else.
22:20 *rise, go with them; and only the word which I speak to you, it you shall do* God let Balaam go. Sometimes God lets us have what our hearts are set on, so that we learn. Peter names Balaam's real problem: he "loved the wage of unrighteousness" (2 Pet 2:15). Jude says false teachers "rushed into the error of Balaam for reward" (Jude 1:11).
22:22 *the anger of God burned because he was going* How could God be angry when He had said go? The answer is in Balaam's heart. He went wanting the reward and perhaps hoping to find a way to curse; the angel calls his way "reckless" (22:32). God's permission is not the same as God's approval. Some teachers also see the permission itself as a judgment on his persistence. Both fit.
22:22 *the angel of the LORD stationed himself in the way for an adversary to him* Adversary is satan in Hebrew, used here in its plain sense of one who opposes. The angel of the LORD is a messenger who often speaks as God Himself (Gen 16:13; Exod 3:2-6). Many Bible teachers believe he was the Son of God appearing before He was born in Bethlehem.
22:23 *the donkey saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand* The famous seer could not see what his donkey saw. Greed blinds.
22:24 *a narrow path of the vineyards, a wall on this side and a wall on this side* The donkey pressed against the wall and crushed Balaam's foot (22:25).
22:26 *he stood in a narrow place where there was no way to turn aside* An open field, a narrow lane, then no way out at all. When we head the wrong way, God often closes the road a little more each time.
22:28 *the LORD opened the mouth of the donkey* This really happened. The Bible presents it as history, and Peter treats it so: "a mute donkey, having spoken with a man's voice, restrained the madness of the prophet" (2 Pet 2:16). The God who made the donkey and gave man his voice can make a donkey speak. The question is not whether He could, but why He did.
22:29 *If only there were a sword in my hand, for now I would have killed you* So angry he did not seem surprised, Balaam argued with his donkey. He wanted a sword. The angel in front of him had one.
22:30 *Am I not your donkey, on which you have ridden from your existence until this day?* The donkey made more sense than the prophet.
22:31 *the LORD uncovered the eyes of Balaam* Only God can open blind eyes. Balaam bowed to the ground before the drawn sword.
22:32 *your way is reckless before me* The donkey had saved his life (22:33). The angel opposed him not because he traveled, but because of the heart behind the journey.
22:34 *I have sinned, for I did not know* A half confession. He blamed his ignorance, not his heart, and offered to go back only "if it is evil in your eyes."

will return for myself." **35** And the angel of the LORD said to Balaam, "Go with the men; and only the word which I speak to you, it you shall speak." And Balaam went with the princes of Balak.

Balaam Meets Balak

36 And Balak heard that Balaam had come, and he went out to meet him to the city of Moab which ***is*** on the border of Arnon, which ***is*** at the end of the territory. **37** And Balak said to Balaam, "Did I not surely send to you to call you? Why did you not come to me? Am I really not able to honor you?" **38** And Balaam said to Balak, "Look, I have come to you. Now, am I at all able to speak anything? The word which God puts in my mouth, it I shall speak." **39** And Balaam went with Balak, and they came to Kiriath-huzoth (Qiryat-Chutsot). **40** And Balak sacrificed cattle and sheep, and he sent ***some*** to Balaam and to the princes who ***were*** with him. **41** And it happened in the morning, and Balak took Balaam, and he brought him up ***to*** Bamoth-baal (Bamot Ba'al), and he saw from there the edge of the people.

NUMBERS 23

Balaam's First Oracle

1 And Balaam (Bilam) said to Balak (Balaq), "Build for me here seven altars, and prepare for me here seven bulls and seven rams." **2** And Balak did just as Balaam had spoken; and Balak and Balaam offered up a bull and a ram on ***each*** altar. **3** And Balaam said to Balak, "Station yourself beside your burnt offering, and let me go; perhaps the LORD will come to meet me; and the word of whatever He shows me, I will tell you." And he went ***to*** a bare height. **4** And God met Balaam, and he said to Him, "The seven altars I have arranged, and I have offered up a bull and a ram on ***each*** altar." **5** And the LORD put a word in the mouth of Balaam, and He said, "Return to Balak, and thus you shall speak." **6** And he returned to him, and look, he ***was*** standing beside his burnt offering, he and all the princes of Moab (Mo'av). **7** And he took up his oracle, and he said, "From Aram Balak has led me, the king of Moab from the mountains of the east: 'Come, curse Jacob (Ya'aqov) for me, and come, denounce Israel (Yisra'el)!' **8** How shall I curse ***whom*** God has not cursed? And how shall I denounce ***whom*** the LORD has not denounced? **9** For from the top of the rocks I see him, and from the hills I observe him. Look, a people ***that*** dwells alone, and among the nations it does not reckon itself. **10** Who has counted the dust of Jacob, and the number of the fourth part of Israel? Let my soul die the death of the upright, and let my end be like his!" **11** And Balak said to Balaam, "What have you done to me? To curse my enemies I took you, and look, you have surely blessed ***them***!" **12** And he answered, and he said, "Must I not take care to speak that which the LORD puts in my mouth?"

Balaam's Second Oracle

13 And Balak said to him, "Please come with me to another place from where you may see it; only its edge you shall see, and all of it you shall not see; and curse it for me from there." **14** And he took him ***to*** the field of Zophim, to the top of the Pisgah (Pisga), and he built seven altars, and he offered up a bull and a ram on ***each*** altar. **15** And he said to Balak, "Station yourself here beside your burnt offering, and

22:35 Num 22:20; Ps 81:12; Isa 37:26-29
22:36 Gen 14:17; Gen 18:2; Gen 46:29
22:37 Num 24:11; Num 22:16,17; Ps 75:6
22:38 Num 22:18; Num 23:16,26; Ps 33:10
22:40 Num 23:2,14,30; Gen 31:54; Prov 1:16
22:41 Num 23:13; Num 25:2,3; Deut 12:2
23:1 Jude 1:11; Num 23:29; Ezek 33:31
23:2 Num 23:14,30
23:3 Num 23:15; Num 24:1; Gen 8:20
23:4 John 16:2; Num 23:16; Num 22:9,20
23:5 Deut 18:18; Jer 1:9; Num 23:16
23:7 Num 22:5; Num 23:18; Num 24:3,15,23
23:8 Num 23:20,23; Isa 44:25; Isa 47:12,13
23:9 1 Pet 2:9; Exod 33:16; Deut 33:28
23:10 Gen 13:16; Ps 37:37; Ps 116:15
23:11 Num 24:10; Num 22:11,17; Num 23:7,8
23:12 Num 22:38; Num 23:20,26; Num 24:13
23:13 1 Kgs 20:23,28; Mic 6:5; Num 22:41
23:14 Num 23:1,2,29; Num 21:20; Deut 3:27
23:15 Num 23:3; Num 22:8

22:35 *only the word which I speak to you, it you shall speak* God would now use Balaam as a mouthpiece whether he liked it or not. God can speak truth through a greedy man as He spoke through a donkey. That does not make the man good. God's word does not depend on the messenger.
22:37 *Am I really not able to honor you?* Balak thought only in terms of money and honor.
22:38 *The word which God puts in my mouth, it I shall speak* That was the truth, and Balak did not want to hear it.
22:41 *he brought him up to Bamoth-baal, and he saw from there the edge of the people* Bamoth-baal means the high places of Baal, hilltop shrines of the Canaanite storm god. Balak thought he had hired a spiritual weapon. He did not understand that the LORD is not a tribal god who can be bought. Can anyone curse those God has blessed? The next two chapters answer: no.
23:1 *Build for me here seven altars, and prepare for me here seven bulls and seven rams* Seven spoke of completeness. Balaam followed the customs of pagan divination, trying to win a god's favor with a big offering.
23:3 *And he went to a bare height* Likely to look for omens, which 24:1 says was his habit.
23:5 *the LORD put a word in the mouth of Balaam* Balaam reminded God of the altars as if God owed him something (23:4). God ignored that and gave him words to speak. You cannot bribe God. Balak's fourteen animals bought him nothing.
23:7 *From Aram Balak has led me* Aram is the region of Syria and northern Mesopotamia. The first oracle begins by telling why Balaam came.
23:8 *How shall I curse whom God has not cursed?* This is the heart of the whole story. No one can curse those God has blessed.
23:9 *a people that dwells alone, and among the nations it does not reckon itself* Israel was set apart, chosen by God for Himself (Deut 7:6). That has held all through history. Scattered and persecuted, the Jewish people are still a people, because God keeps His word.
23:10 *Who has counted the dust of Jacob, and the number of the fourth part of Israel?* God promised Abraham descendants like the dust of the earth (Gen 13:16). Israel camped in four groups around the tabernacle (chapter 2), so even one quarter of the camp was beyond counting.
23:10 *Let my soul die the death of the upright, and let my end be like his!* Balaam wanted to die like the righteous but did not want to live like them. He died fighting Israel among the Midianites (31:8). Wishing for a good end is not the same as walking with God.
23:11 *To curse my enemies I took you, and look, you have surely blessed them!* When God decides to bless, no amount of money can buy a curse.
23:12 *Must I not take care to speak that which the LORD puts in my mouth?* Balaam had no choice.
23:13 *only its edge you shall see, and all of it you shall not see* Balak thought the view was the problem. Perhaps a smaller look at Israel would make them seem less blessed.
23:14 *to the field of Zophim, to the top of the Pisgah* Zophim means watchers, a lookout point. From Pisgah Moses would later see the promised land (Deut 34:1). Seven more altars and fourteen more animals.

I, I will meet ***Him*** there." **16** And the LORD met Balaam, and He put a word in his mouth, and He said, "Return to Balak, and thus you shall speak." **17** And he came to him, and look, he ***was*** standing beside his burnt offering, and the princes of Moab ***were*** with him. And Balak said to him, "What has the LORD spoken?" **18** And he took up his oracle, and he said, "Rise, Balak, and hear; give ear to me, son of Zippor (Tsipor)! **19** God ***is*** not a man, that He should lie, and a son of mankind, that He should relent. Has He said, and will He not do ***it***? And has He spoken, and will He not establish it? **20** Look, I have received ***a command*** to bless; and He has blessed, and I will not turn it back. **21** He has not looked on evil in Jacob, and He has not seen trouble in Israel; the LORD his God ***is*** with him, and the shout of a king ***is*** in him. **22** God ***is*** bringing them out from Egypt (Mitsrayim); like the horns of a wild ox ***are*** to him. **23** For ***there is*** no enchantment in Jacob, and no divination in Israel; at ***this*** time it shall be said of Jacob and of Israel, 'What God has done!' **24** Look, a people rises like a lioness, and like a lion it lifts itself up; it shall not lie down until it devours prey and drinks the blood of the slain."

To the Top of Peor

25 And Balak said to Balaam, "Neither curse it at all, nor bless it at all!" **26** And Balaam answered, and he said to Balak, "Did I not speak to you, saying, 'All that the LORD speaks, it I will do'?" **27** And Balak said to Balaam, "Please come; I will take you to another place; perhaps it will be right in the eyes of God, and you will curse it for me from there." **28** And Balak took Balaam ***to*** the top of the Peor, which looks down over the face of the wasteland. **29** And Balaam said to Balak, "Build for me here seven altars, and prepare for me here seven bulls and seven rams." **30** And Balak did just as Balaam had said, and he offered up a bull and a ram on ***each*** altar.

NUMBERS 24

Balaam's Third Oracle

1 And Balaam (Bilam) saw that it was good in the eyes of the LORD to bless Israel (Yisra'el), and he did not go, as time after time, to meet omens; and he set his face toward the wilderness. **2** And Balaam lifted up his eyes and saw Israel dwelling according to its tribes, and the Spirit of God came on him. **3** And he lifted up his oracle and said, "The utterance of Balaam son of Beor, and the utterance of the man whose eye ***is*** opened, **4** the utterance of one who hears the words of God, who sees the vision of the Almighty, falling down, and uncovered of eyes: **5** How good are your tents, O Jacob (Ya'aqov), your dwelling places, O Israel! **6** Like wadis they are stretched out, like gardens beside a river, like aloes ***that***

23:16 Num 23:5; Num 22:35; Num 24:1
23:17 Num 23:26; 1 Sam 3:17; Jer 37:17
23:18 Judg 3:20
23:19 Heb 6:18; Rom 11:29; 1 Sam 15:29
23:20 Num 22:12; Gen 22:17; Gen 12:2
23:21 Jer 50:20; Rom 4:7,8; Exod 29:45,46
23:22 Num 24:8; Deut 33:17; Ps 22:21
23:23 Num 22:6; Num 24:1; Luke 10:18,19
23:24 Gen 49:9; Gen 49:27; Num 24:8,9
23:25 Ps 2:1-3
23:26 Num 22:18,38; Num 23:12,13; Num 24:12,13
23:27 Num 23:19,20; Job 23:13; Prov 19:21
23:28 Num 21:20
23:29 Num 23:1,2
24:1 Rev 2:14; Num 23:23; Num 23:3,15
24:2 1 Sam 19:20,23; 2 Chr 15:1; 1 Sam 10:10
24:3 Num 23:7,18; Num 22:31
24:4 Rev 1:8; Num 12:6; Ezek 1:28
24:6 Ps 1:3; Ps 104:16; Gen 2:8-10

23:17 *What has the LORD spoken?* Even Balak knew by now whose word mattered.
23:19 *God is not a man, that He should lie, and a son of mankind, that He should relent* The key verse of Numbers. People lie and change their minds; Balak hoped God could be talked out of His plan. He cannot. Scripture does say God "relented concerning the evil" (Jonah 3:10) when Nineveh repented, but such warnings carried a condition, and showing mercy to the repentant is part of His unchanging character. What God never does is break His promise or change His purpose (Heb 6:17-18).
23:20 *I have received a command to bless; and He has blessed, and I will not turn it back* Balaam could not undo what God had done. If God has blessed you in Christ "with every spiritual blessing" (Eph 1:3), no one can reverse it. "For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable" (Rom 11:29).
23:21 *He has not looked on evil in Jacob, and He has not seen trouble in Israel* We have read eight chapters of Israel's sin, so this does not mean Israel was sinless. God found in His covenant people no cause to curse them, their sins dealt with by His sacrifices and mercy. So God sees believers in Christ: "There is therefore now no condemnation to those in Christ Jesus" (Rom 8:1). He disciplines His children, but He does not curse them.
23:21 *the shout of a king is in him* The cheer a people gives its king. The LORD Himself was Israel's King.
23:22 *like the horns of a wild ox are to him* The wild ox was one of the strongest animals known. God's strength was with Israel.
23:23 *there is no enchantment in Jacob, and no divination in Israel* Enchantment and divination were Balaam's trade, and they would not work against Israel. The words can also mean Israel did not use them, because God spoke to them directly. The nations would look at Israel and say, "What God has done!"
23:24 *a people rises like a lioness, and like a lion it lifts itself up* Moab feared Israel would lick up the land like an ox (22:4). Balaam called them a lion, the opposite of what Balak paid for.
23:25 *Neither curse it at all, nor bless it at all!* If you cannot curse them, Balak says, at least stop blessing them.
23:27 *perhaps it will be right in the eyes of God, and you will curse it for me from there* He still thought God could be moved by a better view.
23:28 *the top of the Peor* Peor had a shrine to Baal of Peor. Remember the name; in chapter 25 Israel will sin there.
23:29 *Build for me here seven altars* And Balak did it all again (23:30). Some people keep looking for a place where God will say what they want to hear, changing churches, teachers or verses until they find it. God's word does not change with the view.
24:1 *he did not go, as time after time, to meet omens* Omens were signs diviners sought in nature, such as the flight of birds or the shape of an animal's liver. Balaam gave it up. God's will was plain.
24:2 *Israel dwelling according to its tribes, and the Spirit of God came on him* Each tribe was in its place around the tabernacle (chapter 2). The Spirit came on a pagan diviner, but that does not mean Balaam was saved or godly. Saul prophesied by the Spirit (1 Sam 19:23-24), and Caiaphas prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation (John 11:49-52). A message from God is not the same as a changed heart (Matt 7:22-23).
24:4 *who sees the vision of the Almighty, falling down, and uncovered of eyes* The Almighty is Shaddai, the name by which God made Himself known to Abraham (Gen 17:1). Falling down may mean a trance, or falling on his face as he did before the angel.
24:5 *How good are your tents, O Jacob, your dwelling places, O Israel!* Jewish worshipers still say this verse when they enter the synagogue. Balaam saw a camp of tents in the desert and called it beautiful.
24:6 *like gardens beside a river, like aloes that the LORD has planted, like cedars beside waters* Every picture is of water and growth. A people who complained about water for forty years were described as a garden by a river. That is how God saw them. Psalm 1:3 uses the same picture for the righteous man.

the LORD has planted, like cedars beside waters. **7** Water will flow from his buckets, and his seed ***will be*** in many waters; and his king shall be higher than Agag, and his kingdom shall be exalted. **8** God ***is*** bringing him out from Egypt
(Mitsrayim); like the horns of a wild ox ***are*** to him; he will eat up nations, his adversaries, and their bones he will crush, and his arrows he will shatter. **9** He crouched, he lay down like a lion, and like a lioness; who will rouse him? Those who bless you ***are*** blessed, and those who curse you ***are*** cursed."

The Star out of Jacob

10 And the anger of Balak (Balaq) burned against Balaam, and he clapped his hands; and Balak said to Balaam, "To curse my enemies I called you, and look, you have surely blessed ***them*** these three times. **11** And now, flee for yourself to your place. I said, 'I will surely honor you,' and look, the LORD has withheld you from honor." **12** And Balaam said to Balak, "Did I not also speak to your messengers whom you sent to me, saying, **13** 'If Balak gives to me the fullness of his house ***of*** silver and gold, I will not be able to pass beyond the mouth of the LORD, to do good or bad from my ***own*** heart; what the LORD speaks, that I will speak'? **14** And now, look, I am going to my people. Come, I will advise you ***of*** what this people will do to your people at the end of the days." **15** And he lifted up his oracle and said, "The utterance of Balaam son of Beor, and the utterance of the man whose eye ***is*** opened, **16** the utterance of one who hears the words of God, and knows the knowledge of the Most High; he sees the vision of the Almighty, falling down, and uncovered of eyes: **17** I see him, and not now; I observe him, and not near. A star will march forth from Jacob, and a scepter will arise from Israel, and it will shatter the corners of Moab (Mo'av), and break down all the sons of Seth (Shet). **18** And Edom will be a possession, and Seir (Se'ir), his enemies, will be a possession; and Israel ***is*** doing valiantly. **19** And one from Jacob will have dominion, and he will destroy the survivor from ***the*** city."

Oracles on the Nations

20 And he saw Amalek (Amaleq), and he lifted up his oracle and said, "The first of the nations ***was*** Amalek, and his end ***is*** to destruction." **21** And he saw the Kenite, and he lifted up his oracle and said, "Enduring ***is*** your dwelling, and set in the rock ***is*** your nest. **22** Yet Kain (Qayin) shall be for burning. Until when will Assyria (Ashur) take you captive?" **23** And he lifted up his oracle and said, "Woe! Who will live when God sets it? **24** And ships ***will come*** from the side of Kittim, and

24:7 Rev 17:15; 2 Sam 5:12; 1 Chr 14:2
24:8 Matt 2:15; Num 23:22; Ps 45:5
24:9 Rev 4:7; Gen 49:9; Num 23:24
24:10 Ezek 21:14,17; Num 23:11; Job 27:23
24:11 Num 22:17,37; Matt 19:28-30; Acts 8:20
24:12 Num 22:18,38
24:14 Rev 2:14; Rev 2:10; Heb 1:2
24:15 Num 24:3,4; Num 23:7,18; Job 27:1
24:16 Num 24:4; 2 Sam 23:1,2; 1 Cor 8:1
24:17 Rev 22:16; 2 Pet 1:19; Matt 2:2
24:18 Amos 9:12; Gen 27:29,40; 2 Sam 8:14
24:19 Gen 49:10; Mic 5:2,4; Ps 2:1-12
24:20 Exod 17:14; Exod 17:8,16; Judg 6:3
24:21 Gen 15:19; Judg 1:16; Job 29:18
24:22 Gen 10:11; Ezra 4:2; Ps 83:8
24:23 Num 23:23; 2 Kgs 5:1; Mal 3:2
24:24 Matt 24:15; Rev 18:10; Gen 10:4

24:7 *his king shall be higher than Agag, and his kingdom shall be exalted* Israel had no king yet. Agag may have been a royal title among the Amalekites, as Pharaoh was in Egypt. About four hundred years later Saul defeated Amalek and its king Agag (1 Sam 15:8). God was already pointing toward Israel's kingdom.
24:8 *he will eat up nations, his adversaries, and their bones he will crush* The God who brought Israel out of Egypt would give them victory over their enemies.
24:9 *Those who bless you are blessed, and those who curse you are cursed* This echoes Jacob's blessing on Judah (Gen 49:9) and nearly repeats God's word to Abraham (Gen 12:3). Balak said Balaam's curse worked (22:6). God said His own word works. God has not cancelled His promises to Abraham's descendants (Rom 11:28-29), and nations that tried to destroy the Jewish people have found that out.
24:10 *he clapped his hands* A gesture of scorn. Three times Balak paid for a curse and got a blessing.
24:11 *the LORD has withheld you from honor* Balak blamed the LORD for keeping Balaam from his pay. He was right, though not in the way he meant.
24:13 *what the LORD speaks, that I will speak* Balaam reminds Balak of what he said from the start (22:18).
24:14 *what this people will do to your people at the end of the days* The end of the days points to the future, sometimes far future. Jacob used the phrase (Gen 49:1), and the prophets use it for the days of the Messiah (Isa 2:2).
24:16 *knows the knowledge of the Most High* The Most High is God over all nations, the name Melchizedek used (Gen 14:19).
24:17 *I see him, and not now; I observe him, and not near* Balaam looks at a person far in the future, not in his own day.
24:17 *A star will march forth from Jacob, and a scepter will arise from Israel* A star was a picture of a king, and a scepter the sign of a ruler (compare Gen 49:10). David was a first fulfillment: he defeated Moab and made Edom his servants (2 Sam 8:2, 14). Many teachers, Jewish and Christian, have read it of the Messiah; in A.D. 132 a rebel was called Bar Kokhba, son of the star, because people hoped he was the one. Many Christians link it with the star that led the wise men to the One "born King of the Jews" (Matt 2:2). Jesus calls Himself "the bright and morning star" (Rev 22:16). I believe this points to Jesus Christ, the Son of David.
24:17 *it will shatter the corners of Moab, and break down all the sons of Seth* Moab was Balak's own nation. The sons of Seth may mean Moab's neighbors, a tribe by that name, or, since Seth was Adam's son, all mankind. Christ came first as a humble servant to die for our sins. He will come again visibly at the end of the Tribulation to defeat His enemies and reign over the earth a thousand years (Rev 19:11-16; 20:4-6). Some teachers read this as fulfilled spiritually in Christ's reign now through the church. I believe Scripture points to a real reign on the earth, when God keeps His promises to Israel.
24:18 *Edom will be a possession, and Seir, his enemies, will be a possession* Seir was the mountain country of Edom. The nation that refused Israel passage (20:14-21) would be ruled by Israel's King. David conquered Edom (2 Sam 8:14), and the prophets say Edom will be judged again in the last days (Isa 63:1-6; Obad 1:15-21).
24:19 *one from Jacob will have dominion* One ruler from Jacob's line, whose rule nothing can stand against.
24:20 *The first of the nations was Amalek, and his end is to destruction* Amalek was the first nation to attack Israel after the exodus (Exod 17:8-16). Its end came under Saul, David and finally Hezekiah's day (1 Sam 15; 30; 1 Chr 4:43).
24:21 *set in the rock is your nest* The Kenites lived in the rocky heights, and Kenite sounds like the Hebrew word for nest. Yet they would not be safe forever.
24:22 *Until when will Assyria take you captive?* Assyria, the great northern empire, would carry many peoples away centuries later, including the northern tribes of Israel in 722 B.C.
24:23 *Who will live when God sets it?* That is, who can survive when God does these things?
24:24 *ships will come from the side of Kittim, and they will afflict Assyria, and they will afflict Eber* Kittim first meant Cyprus and then the western lands across the sea. Daniel 11:30 speaks of ships from there sent by a western power, which many identify as Rome. Eber, Abraham's ancestor, may stand for the peoples beyond the river. Every empire rises and falls. Only God's kingdom lasts forever (Dan 2:44).

they will afflict Assyria, and they will afflict Eber (Ever); and he also ***is*** to destruction." **25** And Balaam arose and went and returned to his place; and Balak also went on his way.

NUMBERS 25

Sin at Peor

1 And Israel (Yisra'el) dwelt in Shittim (Shitim), and the people began to commit harlotry with the daughters of Moab (Mo'av). **2** And they invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods. **3** And Israel joined itself to Baal-peor (Ba'al-Pe'or), and the anger of the LORD burned against Israel. **4** And the LORD said to Moses (Moshe), "Take all the heads of the people and impale them to the LORD before the sun, so that the burning of the anger of the LORD may turn back from Israel." **5** And Moses said to the judges of Israel, "Kill, each man, his men who have joined themselves to Baal-peor." **6** And look, a man from the sons of Israel came and brought near to his brothers the Midianite ***woman***, before the eyes of Moses and before the eyes of all the congregation of the sons of Israel, and they ***were*** weeping ***at*** the entrance of the tent of meeting. **7** And Phinehas (Pinchas) the son of Eleazar (Elazar), the son of Aaron (Aharon) the priest, saw ***it***, and he arose from the midst of the congregation and took a spear in his hand. **8** And he went after the man of Israel into the chamber, and he pierced both of them, the man of Israel and the woman, into her belly. And the plague was restrained from the sons of Israel. **9** And those who died by the plague were twenty-four thousand.

The Covenant with Phinehas

10 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **11** "Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, has turned back My rage from the sons of Israel, in his being zealous ***with*** My zeal in their midst, and I did not make an end of the sons of Israel in My zeal. **12** Therefore say, 'Look, I am giving to him My covenant of peace; **13** and it shall be for him and for his seed after him a covenant of priesthood forever, because he was zealous for his God and made atonement for the sons of Israel.'" **14** And the name of the man of Israel who was struck down, who was struck down with the Midianite ***woman***, ***was*** Zimri the son of Salu, a leader of a father's house of the Simeonites. **15** And the name of the woman who was struck down, the Midianite ***woman***, ***was*** Cozbi (Kozbi) the daughter of Zur (Tsur); he ***was*** head of the peoples of a father's house in Midian (Midyan). **16** And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

24:25 Num 31:8; Num 24:11; Josh 13:22
25:1 1 Cor 10:8; Rev 2:14; Rev 2:20
25:2 1 Cor 10:8; Rev 2:20; 1 Cor 10:20
25:3 Rom 11:4; 1 Cor 10:8; Rev 2:14
25:4 1 Cor 10:8; Deut 13:17; Deut 4:3
25:5 1 Cor 10:8; Exod 18:21,25,26; Exod 22:20
25:6 1 Cor 10:8; Joel 2:17; Num 22:4
25:7 1 Cor 10:8; Exod 6:25; Josh 22:30,31
25:8 1 Cor 10:8; Num 16:46-48; Num 25:5,11
25:9 1 Cor 10:8; Num 16:49,50; Num 25:4,5
25:11 Deut 32:16,21; Ps 78:58; 2 Cor 11:2
25:12 Mal 2:4,5; Num 13:29; Mal 3:1
25:13 Acts 22:3; Rev 1:6; 1 Chr 6:4-15,50-53
25:14 Num 25:4,5; 2 Chr 19:7; Num 1:23
25:15 Num 31:8; Josh 13:21

24:25 *Balaam arose and went and returned to his place* It sounds like the end, but it was not. Balaam could not curse Israel, so he advised Moab and Midian to lead them into sin (31:16). He "taught Balak to cast a stumbling block before the sons of Israel" (Rev 2:14), and he died among the Midianites (31:8).

25:1 *Israel dwelt in Shittim, and the people began to commit harlotry with the daughters of Moab* Shittim means acacia trees, the last camp before the Jordan crossing (Josh 2:1; 3:1). Israel was within sight of the promised land. Sin is often most dangerous right after a great blessing; Israel had just been blessed four times on the mountain above them and did not even know it.

25:2 *they invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods* The two sins went together. Sexual sin led to idol feasts, and idol feasts to worship of false gods. The Bible often links the two (Hos 4:13-14).

25:3 *Israel joined itself to Baal-peor* Baal of Peor was the Canaanite storm god as worshiped at Mount Peor. Joined means yoked. Israel, bound to the LORD in covenant, bound itself to another god, so the Bible calls it harlotry, unfaithfulness to the God who was like a husband to them. It came "by the word of Balaam" (31:16), who could not curse Israel and so led them to bring judgment on themselves (Rev 2:14). The enemy still cannot undo God's blessing, but he can tempt us into sin that brings discipline and pain.

25:4 *Take all the heads of the people and impale them to the LORD before the sun* The heads were leaders who had joined in the sin (25:5). Their bodies were displayed in daylight as a warning; such a body was under God's curse (Deut 21:22-23). Israel was about to enter a land full of Baal worship, the very sin that later ruined the northern kingdom. This was God's direct command under the covenant and is never permission to take a life in God's name today. Christ "redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us" (Gal 3:13), hung on a tree for us.

25:5 *Kill, each man, his men who have joined themselves to Baal-peor* Each judge answered for those under him. Leaders who led their people into idolatry were judged first.

25:6 *they were weeping at the entrance of the tent of meeting* The plague was raging and the people were weeping before God, when this man walked past them all with a Midianite woman into his tent. It was open, defiant sin, done "with a raised hand" (15:30) in front of God's house.

25:7 *Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw it* Phinehas was no vigilante. Moses had just ordered the judges to act (25:5). He was a priest, the high priest's son, acting openly at a moment of national crisis, and God approved (25:11). It is no pattern for anyone today. In the church the answer to sin is confession, discipline and restoration (Matt 18:15-17; Gal 6:1), never violence.

25:8 *And the plague was restrained from the sons of Israel* Judging the sin stopped the judgment on the nation.

25:9 *those who died by the plague were twenty-four thousand* Paul says "in one day twenty-three thousand fell" (1 Cor 10:8). The common explanation is that Paul counts one day, and Numbers gives the total, including those executed and those who died on other days. Others suggest both are round numbers. Either way, Paul's lesson is the same.

25:11 *in his being zealous with My zeal in their midst* Zeal is a burning concern for God's honor. Phinehas cared about what God cared about and could not stand by while God's name was dishonored before His house.

25:12 *Look, I am giving to him My covenant of peace* Peace is shalom: wholeness, well-being and being right with God.

25:13 *a covenant of priesthood forever, because he was zealous for his God and made atonement for the sons of Israel* His act turned away God's wrath by judging the sin. God kept the promise; apart from Eli's family, the high priests came from Phinehas, including Zadok (1 Chr 6:4-8) and Ezra (Ezra 7:1-5). "It was reckoned to him for righteousness" (Ps 106:31), the language of Abraham's faith (Gen 15:6). Jesus truly made atonement and brought peace, not by taking a life but by giving His own (Rom 5:1; Eph 2:14).

25:14 *Zimri the son of Salu, a leader of a father's house of the Simeonites* Both sinners came from leading families, which made the sin more public and more dangerous. Simeon fell from 59,300 men in the first count to 22,200 in the second (1:23; 26:14), and many think many of those who died here were from Simeon.

25:15 *Cozbi the daughter of Zur* Zur was one of the five kings of Midian killed later (31:8).

17 "Be hostile to the Midianites, and you shall strike them down; **18** for they ***are*** hostile to you with their deceptions with which they have deceived you in the matter of Peor, and in the matter of Cozbi, the daughter of a leader of Midian, their sister, who was struck down on the day of the plague on account of the matter of Peor."

NUMBERS 26

The Second Census

1 And it came about after the plague, and the LORD said to Moses (Moshe) and to Eleazar (Elazar) the son of Aaron (Aharon) the priest, saying, **2** "Take the sum of all the congregation of the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), from a son of twenty years and upward, by the house of their fathers, everyone who goes out ***to*** war in Israel." **3** And Moses and Eleazar the priest spoke with them in the plains of Moab (Mo'av) by the Jordan (Yarden) ***at*** Jericho (Yericho), saying, **4** "From a son of twenty years and upward," just as the LORD commanded Moses and the sons of Israel who came out from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim). **5** Reuben (Reuven), the firstborn of Israel; the sons of Reuben: Hanoch (Chanokh), the clan of the Hanochites; of Pallu (Palu), the clan of the Palluites; **6** of Hezron (Chetsron), the clan of the Hezronites; of Carmi (Karmi), the clan of the Carmites. **7** These ***are*** the clans of the Reubenites; and their enrolled ***men*** were forty-three thousand and seven hundred and thirty. **8** And the sons of Pallu: Eliab (Eli'av). **9** And the sons of Eliab: Nemuel and Dathan (Datan) and Abiram (Aviram). This ***is*** the Dathan and Abiram, the called ones of the congregation, who strove against Moses and against Aaron in the company of Korah (Qorach), when they strove against the LORD; **10** and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them and Korah, when the company died, when the fire consumed two hundred and fifty men; and they became a sign. **11** And the sons of Korah did not die. **12** The sons of Simeon (Shimon) by their clans: of Nemuel, the clan of the Nemuelites; of Jamin (Yamin), the clan of the Jaminites; of Jachin (Yakhin), the clan of the Jachinites; **13** of Zerah (Zerach), the clan of the Zerahites; of Shaul, the clan of the Shaulites. **14** These ***are*** the clans of the Simeonites: twenty-two thousand and two hundred. **15** The sons of Gad by their clans: of Zephon (Tsefon), the clan of the Zephonites; of Haggi (Chagi), the clan of the Haggites; of Shuni, the clan of the Shunites; **16** of Ozni, the clan of the Oznites; of Eri, the clan of the Erites; **17** of Arod, the clan of the Arodites; of Areli, the clan of the Arelites. **18** These ***are*** the clans of the sons of Gad by their enrolled ***men***: forty thousand and five hundred. **19** The sons of Judah (Yehuda): Er and Onan; and Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan (Kena'an). **20** And the sons of Judah by their clans were: of Shelah (Shela), the clan of the Shelanites; of Perez (Perets), the clan of the Perezites; of Zerah, the clan of the Zerahites. **21** And the sons of Perez were: of Hezron, the clan of the Hezronites; of Hamul (Chamul), the clan of the Hamulites. **22** These ***are*** the clans of Judah by their enrolled ***men***: seventy-six thousand and five hundred. **23** The sons of Issachar (Yisashkhar) by their clans: Tola, the clan of the Tolaites; of Puvah (Puva), the clan of the Punites; **24** of Jashub (Yashuv), the clan of the Jashubites; of Shimron, the clan of the Shimronites. **25** These ***are*** the clans of Issachar by their enrolled ***men***: sixty-four thousand and three hundred. **26** The sons of Zebulun (Zevulun) by their clans: of Sered, the clan of the Sardites; of Elon, the clan of the Elonites; of Jahleel (Yachle'el), the clan of the Jahleelites. **27** These ***are*** the clans of the Zebulunites by their enrolled ***men***: sixty thousand and five hundred. **28** The sons of Joseph (Yosef) by their clans: Manasseh (Menashe) and Ephraim (Efrayim). **29** The sons of Manasseh: of Machir (Makhir), the clan of the Machirites; and Machir fathered Gilead (Gilad); of Gilead, the clan of the Gileadites. **30** These ***are*** the sons of Gilead: Iezer, the clan of

25:17 Rev 18:6; Num 31:2
25:18 Rev 2:14; Num 31:15,16; Gen 26:10
26:1 Num 25:9
26:2 Exod 38:25,26; Num 1:2,3; Exod 30:12
26:3 Num 22:1; Num 33:48; Num 26:63
26:4 Num 1:1; 1 Chr 21:1
26:5 1 Chr 5:3; 1 Chr 5:1; Gen 46:8,9
26:7 Num 26:1,21; Num 2:11; Gen 46:9
26:9 Jude 1:11; Num 1:16; Num 16:1,2-35
26:10 Jude 1:11; Num 16:38; 2 Pet 2:6
26:11 Exod 6:24; Num 16:5; 1 Chr 6:22-28
26:12 1 Chr 4:24; Gen 46:10; Exod 6:15
26:13 Gen 46:10
26:14 Num 1:22,23; Num 2:12,13
26:15 Gen 46:16; Num 2:14
26:16 Gen 46:16
26:17 Gen 46:16
26:18 Num 1:24,25; Num 2:14,15
26:19 Gen 46:12; Gen 38:1-10; 1 Chr 2:3-8
26:20 Matt 1:3; Luke 3:33; Gen 46:12
26:21 Matt 1:3; Luke 3:33
26:22 Num 1:26,27; Num 2:3,4; Gen 49:8
26:23 Gen 46:13; 1 Chr 7:1; Num 2:5
26:24 Gen 46:13
26:25 Num 1:28,29; Num 2:5,6
26:26 Gen 46:14; Gen 30:19,20
26:27 Num 1:30,31; Num 2:7,8
26:28 Gen 46:20; Gen 41:51,52; Gen 48:5,13-20
26:29 Josh 17:1; Num 36:1; 1 Chr 7:14-19
26:30 Judg 6:11,24,34; Josh 17:2; Judg 8:2

25:17 *Be hostile to the Midianites, and you shall strike them down* Midian plotted to destroy Israel, not by war but by seduction, and God called it deception (25:18). The judgment comes in chapter 31. Paul says these things were written as examples for us: "let the one who thinks he stands watch, lest he fall" (1 Cor 10:12). If you are caught in such sin, confess it and turn; God will forgive and cleanse (1 John 1:9).
26:1 *it came about after the plague* The plague at Peor was the last judgment on the old generation. Now God starts over with a count, just as He started the book. Aaron had died (20:28), so Eleazar stands with Moses.
26:3 *in the plains of Moab by the Jordan at Jericho* The first count was taken in the wilderness of Sinai (1:1), an army leaving for the land. This one is an army on the doorstep of the land.
26:5 *Reuben, the firstborn of Israel* Each tribe is now listed by its clans, the family groups from Jacob's grandsons, most of them named among those who went down to Egypt (Gen 46). God kept the families intact through four hundred years in Egypt and forty in the desert. Reuben has 43,730, a little less than the 46,500 of the first count (1:21).
26:10 *and they became a sign* The sin of Dathan and Abiram is written into the family record so that no one would forget (26:9).
26:11 *And the sons of Korah did not die* A short line of grace. Korah's sons did not join the rebellion, and their descendants became temple singers; eleven psalms carry their name, among them Psalms 42, 46 and 84. A father's sin does not have to decide his children's future.
26:14 *These are the clans of the Simeonites: twenty-two thousand and two hundred* Simeon had 59,300 in the first count (1:23), the biggest drop of any tribe. Zimri was a Simeonite (25:14), and many think a large share of the plague's dead came from his tribe. Scripture does not say so, but the number stands out.
26:19 *Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan* A look back to Genesis 38. Judah's line went on through Perez to Boaz, David and at last Jesus Christ (Ruth 4:18-22; Matt 1:3). Judah is still the largest tribe, with 76,500 (26:22).

the Iezerites; of Helek (Cheleq), the clan of the Helekites; **31** and Asriel, the clan of the Asrielites; and Shechem (Shekhem), the clan of the Shechemites; **32** and Shemida, the clan of the Shemidaites; and Hepher (Chefer), the clan of the Hepherites. **33** And Zelophehad (Tselofchad) the son of
Hepher had no sons, but daughters; and the names of the daughters of Zelophehad ***were*** Mahlah (Machla) and Noah (No'a), Hoglah (Chogla), Milcah (Milka), and Tirzah (Tirtsa). **34** These ***are*** the clans of Manasseh; and their enrolled ***men were*** fifty-two thousand and seven hundred. **35** These ***are*** the sons of Ephraim by their clans: of Shuthelah (Shutelach), the clan of the Shuthelahites; of Becher (Bekher), the clan of the Bachrites; of Tahan (Tachan), the clan of the Tahanites. **36** And these ***are*** the sons of Shuthelah: of Eran, the clan of the Eranites. **37** These ***are*** the clans of the sons of Ephraim by their enrolled ***men***: thirty-two thousand and five hundred. These ***are*** the sons of Joseph by their clans. **38** The sons of Benjamin (Binyamin) by their clans: of Bela, the clan of the Belaites; of Ashbel, the clan of the Ashbelites; of Ahiram (Achiram), the clan of the Ahiramites; **39** of Shephupham (Shefufam), the clan of the Shuphamites; of Hupham
(Chufam), the clan of the Huphamites. **40** And the sons of Bela were Ard and Naaman: the clan of the Ardites; of Naaman, the clan of the Naamites. **41** These ***are*** the sons of Benjamin by their clans; and their enrolled ***men were*** forty-five thousand and six hundred. **42** These ***are*** the sons of Dan by their clans: of Shuham (Shucham), the clan of the
Shuhamites. These ***are*** the clans of Dan by their clans. **43** All the clans of the Shuhamites by their enrolled ***men***: sixty-four thousand and four hundred. **44** The sons of Asher by their clans: of Imnah (Yimna), the clan of the Imnites; of Ishvi (Yishvi), the clan of the Ishvites; of Beriah (Beri'a), the clan of the Beriites. **45** Of the sons of Beriah: of Heber (Chever), the clan of the Heberites; of Malchiel (Malki'el), the clan of the Malchielites. **46** And the name of the daughter of Asher ***was*** Serah (Serach). **47** These ***are*** the clans of the sons of Asher by their enrolled ***men***: fifty-three thousand and four hundred. **48** The sons of Naphtali (Naftali) by their clans: of Jahzeel (Yachtse'el), the clan of the Jahzeelites; of Guni, the clan of the Gunites; **49** of Jezer (Yetser), the clan of the Jezerites; of Shillem (Shilem), the clan of the Shillemites. **50** These ***are*** the clans of Naphtali by their clans; and their enrolled ***men were*** forty-five thousand and four hundred. **51** These ***are*** the enrolled ***men*** of the sons of Israel: six hundred thousand and a thousand, seven hundred and thirty.

The Land Divided by Lot

52 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **53** "To these the land shall be divided as an inheritance by the number of names. **54** To the many you shall make its inheritance great, and to the few you shall make its inheritance small; to each according to his enrolled ***men*** his inheritance shall be given. **55** Only by lot shall the land be divided; by the names of the tribes of their fathers they shall inherit. **56** According to the lot its inheritance shall be divided between the many and the few."

The Levites Counted

57 And these ***are*** the enrolled ***men*** of the Levites by their clans: of Gershon, the clan of the Gershonites; of Kohath (Qehat), the clan of the Kohathites; of Merari, the clan of the Merarites. **58** These ***are*** the clans of Levi: the clan of the Libnites, the clan of the Hebronites, the clan of the Mahlites, the clan of the Mushites, the clan of the Korahites. And Kohath fathered Amram. **59** And the name of the wife of Amram ***was*** Jochebed (Yokheved) the daughter of Levi, whom she bore to Levi in Egypt; and she bore to Amram Aaron and Moses and Miriam (Miryam) their sister. **60** And to Aaron were born Nadab (Nadav) and Abihu (Avihu), Eleazar and Ithamar (Itamar). **61** And Nadab and Abihu died when they brought near strange fire before the LORD. **62** And their enrolled ***men*** were twenty-three thousand, every male from a son of a month and upward; for they were not enrolled among the sons of Israel, because an inheritance was not given to them among the sons of Israel. **63** These ***are*** the enrolled ***men*** of

26:33 Num 27:1; Num 36:10-12
26:34 Num 1:34,35; Num 2:20,21
26:35 1 Chr 7:20,21
26:37 Num 1:32,33; Num 2:18,19
26:38 1 Chr 8:1; 1 Chr 7:6-12; Gen 46:2
26:39 Gen 46:21
26:40 1 Chr 8:3
26:41 Num 1:36,37; Num 2:22,23; Gen 46:21
26:42 Gen 46:23
26:43 Num 1:38,39; Num 2:25,26
26:44 Gen 46:17; 1 Chr 7:30
26:46 Gen 46:17
26:47 Num 1:40,41; Num 2:27,28
26:48 Gen 46:24; 1 Chr 7:13
26:49 1 Chr 7:13
26:50 Num 1:42,43; Num 2:29,30
26:51 Num 1:46; Num 2:32; Neh 9:23
26:53 Josh 11:23; Josh 14:1; Ps 105:44
26:54 Num 33:54; Num 32:3,5; Josh 17:14
26:55 Num 33:54; Num 34:13; Josh 11:23
26:56 Rom 11:7; 1 Cor 12:4
26:57 Gen 46:11; Exod 6:16-19; 1 Chr 6:1,16-30
26:58 Num 3:17-21; Num 16:1
26:59 Exod 6:20; Exod 2:1,2; Lev 18:12
26:60 Num 3:2,8
26:61 Num 3:4; Lev 10:1,2; 1 Chr 24:1,2
26:62 Num 1:49; Num 3:39; Num 35:2-8

26:33 *Zelophehad the son of Hepher had no sons, but daughters* Women are rarely named in a count of fighting men. These five are named because their story comes in the next chapter and the last. The census is about who will inherit the land. Manasseh grew from 32,200 to 52,700, the largest gain of any tribe (26:34).
26:46 *the name of the daughter of Asher was Serah* The same Serah listed among Jacob's family in Genesis 46:17.
26:51 *six hundred thousand and a thousand, seven hundred and thirty* 601,730, only 1,820 fewer than the first census (1:46). Forty years of desert and judgment, and the nation is almost exactly the same size. God disciplined the parents but did not let the people disappear. The promise to Abraham still stood.
26:53 *To these the land shall be divided as an inheritance by the number of names* Now we see why God counted. A larger tribe received a larger share (26:54).
26:55 *Only by lot shall the land be divided* In Israel the lot was not chance: "Into the lap the lot is thrown, and from the LORD is its every judgment" (Prov 16:33). Size set the amount, and the lot under God set the place (Josh 14 to 19). No tribe could say Moses played favorites. The land was God's gift.
26:59 *she bore to Amram Aaron and Moses and Miriam their sister* The Levite list narrows to the family God used to lead the nation out of Egypt.
26:61 *Nadab and Abihu died when they brought near strange fire before the LORD* A sober reminder that even in the priestly family, sin was remembered (Lev 10:1-2).
26:62 *an inheritance was not given to them* The Levites, 23,000 males from a month old, were counted apart because they did not go to war. Their inheritance was the LORD and the people's gifts (18:20-24).

Moses and Eleazar the priest, who enrolled the sons of Israel in the plains of Moab by the Jordan ***at*** Jericho. **64** And among these there was not a man of the enrolled ***men*** of Moses and Aaron the priest, who enrolled the sons of Israel in the wilderness of Sinai (Sinay). **65** For the LORD had said of them, "They shall surely die in the wilderness." And not a man was left of them, except Caleb (Kalev) the son of Jephunneh (Yefune) and Joshua (Yehoshua) the son of Nun.

NUMBERS 27

The Daughters of Zelophehad

1 And the daughters of Zelophehad (Tselofchad), the son of Hepher (Chefer), the son of Gilead (Gilad), the son of Machir (Makhir), the son of Manasseh (Menashe), of the clans of Manasseh the son of Joseph (Yosef), drew near; and these ***are*** the names of his daughters: Mahlah (Machla), Noah (No'a), and Hoglah (Chogla), and Milcah (Milka), and Tirzah (Tirtsa). **2** And they stood before Moses (Moshe) and before Eleazar (Elazar) the priest and before the leaders and all the congregation, ***at*** the entrance of the tent of meeting, saying, **3** "Our father died in the wilderness, and he was not among the company that gathered together against the LORD in the company of Korah (Qorach); for in his own sin he died, and he had no sons. **4** Why should the name of our father be withdrawn from among his clan because he has no son? Give to us a possession among the brothers of our father." **5** And Moses brought near their case before the LORD. **6** And the LORD said to Moses, saying, **7** "The daughters of Zelophehad are speaking right. You shall surely give to them a possession of an inheritance among the brothers of their father, and you shall make the inheritance of their father pass over to them. **8** And to the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) you shall speak, saying, 'If a man dies and he has no son, then you shall make his inheritance pass over to his daughter. **9** And if he has no daughter, then you shall give his inheritance to his brothers. **10** And if he has no brothers, then you shall give his inheritance to the brothers of his father. **11** And if his father has no brothers, then you shall give his inheritance to his relative who is near to him from his clan, and he shall possess it.' And it shall be for the sons of Israel a statute of judgment, just as the LORD commanded Moses."

Joshua Appointed to Lead

12 And the LORD said to Moses, "Go up into this mountain of the Abarim (Avarim), and see the land which I have given to the sons of Israel. **13** And you shall see it, and you shall be gathered to your peoples, you also, just as Aaron (Aharon) your brother was gathered; **14** because you rebelled against My mouth in the wilderness of Zin (Tsin), in the strife of the congregation, to sanctify Me at the waters before their eyes." They ***are*** the waters of Meribah (Meriva) of Kadesh (Qadesh), ***in*** the wilderness of Zin. **15** And Moses spoke to the LORD, saying, **16** "Let the LORD, the God of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the congregation, **17** who will go out before them and who will come in before them, and who will

26:64 Deut 2:14,15; Num 1:1-2; Deut 4:3,4
26:65 Ps 90:3-7; Num 14:23,24,28-30,35,38; Exod 12:37
27:1 Num 26:33; Gal 3:28; Num 36:1-12
27:2 Num 15:33,34; Exod 18:13,14,19-26; Deut 17:8-10
27:3 Num 26:64,65; Num 14:35; Ezek 18:4
27:4 Josh 17:4; Exod 32:11; Ps 109:13
27:5 Num 15:34; Exod 18:15-19; Exod 25:22
27:6 Ps 68:5,6; Gal 3:28
27:7 Num 36:1,2; Ps 68:5; Jer 49:11
27:11 Num 35:29; Ruth 4:3-6; Jer 32:8
27:12 Num 33:47,48; Deut 34:1-4; Deut 3:27
27:13 Num 31:2; Deut 10:6; Gen 25:8,17
27:14 Exod 17:7; Num 20:8-13; Deut 1:37
27:16 Num 16:22; Heb 12:9; Deut 31:14
27:17 Matt 9:36; Mark 6:34; Deut 31:2

26:64 *there was not a man of the enrolled men of Moses and Aaron the priest, who enrolled the sons of Israel in the wilderness of Sinai* The most important line in the chapter. Every man counted in chapter 1 was gone, as God had said (14:29).
26:65 *except Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun* The two who trusted God at Kadesh were still standing. God's word came true to the letter, in judgment and in promise. They could not enter "because of unbelief" (Heb 3:19), but God was faithful to the children, and He is faithful to us.
27:1 *the daughters of Zelophehad* Their family line is traced back to Manasseh son of Joseph, the line through which land would be counted.
27:2 *they stood before Moses and before Eleazar the priest and before the leaders and all the congregation, at the entrance of the tent of meeting* They came to the right place in the right way. This was not a quarrel but a case brought openly before the leaders and before God.
27:3 *he was not among the company that gathered together against the LORD in the company of Korah; for in his own sin he died* He died for his own sin as one of the generation judged at Kadesh, but he was not one of Korah's rebels, whose families were cut off. So his family had not lost its place.
27:4 *Why should the name of our father be withdrawn from among his clan because he has no son?* Land passed through sons and carried a man's name. Without a son, his share would be lost and his name forgotten. Notice their faith. Israel did not own one acre of Canaan yet, and these women asked for a share of land still held by the enemy.
27:5 *Moses brought near their case before the LORD* Moses did not know the answer and did not pretend to. When a hard question comes, take it to the Lord and to His Word before you answer.
27:7 *The daughters of Zelophehad are speaking right* In a world where women usually could not hold land, God Himself took the side of five unmarried women. He saw them and honored their request. He is the God who defends the fatherless (Ps 68:5).
27:8 *If a man dies and he has no son, then you shall make his inheritance pass over to his daughter* Their case became a law for everyone. Five women asked one question, and their faith helped every family in Israel after them. Chapter 36 adds one more piece.
27:11 *to his relative who is near to him from his clan* The order of heirs kept each family's land within its clan. The land was the LORD's, held in trust (Lev 25:23). This stands behind the kinsman-redeemer, the near relative who could buy back land or a family name (Ruth 4:1-10). In Christ every believer, male and female, is an heir: "you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal 3:28), with an inheritance "imperishable and undefiled and unfading" (1 Pet 1:4).
27:12 *Go up into this mountain of the Abarim, and see the land* The Abarim are the mountains east of the Dead Sea; Deuteronomy 34:1 names the peak as Nebo.
27:13 *you shall be gathered to your peoples, you also, just as Aaron your brother was gathered* To die and join those who went before. It speaks of something beyond the grave, not only a burial place, since Moses would be buried alone.
27:14 *because you rebelled against My mouth in the wilderness of Zin* The sin at Meribah (20:10-12). It is hard to read: forty faithful years, and one public sin kept him out. Leaders are held to a higher standard because their example shapes many (James 3:1). But God was not finished with Moses, who later stood in the land with Jesus at the transfiguration (Matt 17:3).
27:16 *Let the LORD, the God of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the congregation* Moses did not complain; he prayed for the people. The God who made every human spirit knows every heart and knows who is fit to lead.
27:17 *the congregation of the LORD shall not be like sheep which have no shepherd* A leader goes ahead of his people in war and in daily life. Jesus saw the crowds "like sheep not having a shepherd" (Matt 9:36), and He is the Good Shepherd who lays down His life for the sheep (John 10:11). Moses asked God for a shepherd, and in the end God gave His own Son.

lead them out and who will bring them in; and the congregation of the LORD shall not be like sheep which have no shepherd." **18** And the LORD said to Moses, "Take for yourself Joshua (Yehoshua) the son of Nun, a man in whom ***is the*** Spirit, and you shall lay your hand on him; **19** and you shall make him stand before Eleazar the priest and before all the congregation, and you shall commission him before their eyes. **20** And you shall put some of your majesty on him, so that all the congregation of the sons of Israel may hear. **21** And he shall stand before Eleazar the priest, and he shall inquire for him by the judgment of the Urim before the LORD. At his mouth they shall go out, and at his mouth they shall come in, he and all the sons of Israel with him, and all the congregation." **22** And Moses did just as the LORD commanded him; and he took Joshua and made him stand before Eleazar the priest and before all the congregation. **23** And he laid his hands on him and commissioned him, just as the LORD spoke by the hand of Moses.

NUMBERS 28

The Daily Offerings

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe), saying,
2 "Command the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), and you shall say to them, 'My offering, My food for My fire offerings, My soothing aroma, you shall take care to bring near to Me at its appointed time.' **3** And you shall say to them, 'This ***is*** the fire offering which you shall bring near to the LORD: lambs, sons of a year, without blemish, two for the day, a burnt offering continually. **4** The one lamb you shall offer in the morning, and the second lamb you shall offer between the two evenings; **5** and approximately 2 quarts (a tenth of the ephah) of fine flour for a grain offering, mixed with approximately 1 quart (a fourth of the hin) of beaten oil. **6** ***It is*** a continual burnt offering, which was made at Mount Sinai (Sinay) for a soothing aroma, a fire offering to the LORD. **7** And its drink offering ***shall be*** approximately 1 quart (a fourth of the hin) for the one lamb; in the holy place pour out a drink offering of strong drink to the LORD. **8** And the second lamb you shall offer between the two evenings; like the grain offering of the morning and like its drink offering you shall offer ***it***, a fire offering of a soothing aroma to the LORD.

Sabbath and New Moon

9 And on the day of the Sabbath, two lambs, sons of a year, without blemish, and approximately 4 quarts (two tenths ***of an ephah***) of fine flour, a grain offering mixed with oil, and its drink offering: **10** ***this is*** the burnt offering of the Sabbath on its Sabbath, besides the continual burnt offering and its drink offering. **11** And at the beginnings of your months you shall bring near a burnt offering to the LORD: two young bulls, sons of the herd, and one ram, seven lambs, sons of a year, without blemish; **12** and approximately 6 quarts (three tenths ***of an ephah***) of fine flour, a grain offering mixed with oil, for the one young bull; and approximately 4 quarts (two tenths ***of an ephah***) of fine flour, a grain offering mixed with oil, for the one ram; **13** and approximately 2 quarts (a tenth, a tenth ***of an ephah***) of fine flour, a grain offering mixed with oil, for the one lamb; a burnt offering, a soothing aroma, a fire offering to the LORD. **14** And their drink offerings shall be approximately 2 quarts (half of the hin) for the young bull, and approximately 1 1/3 quarts (the third of the hin) for the ram, and approximately 1 quart (the fourth of the hin) for the lamb, ***of*** wine. This ***is*** the burnt offering of a month in

27:18 Acts 6:6; Deut 34:9; Gen 41:38
27:19 Col 4:17; Deut 31:7; Luke 9:1-5
27:20 Josh 1:16-18; Num 11:17,28,29; 1 Sam 10:6,9
27:21 Josh 9:14; 1 Sam 28:6; Exod 28:30
27:23 Acts 13:3; Num 27:19; Deut 3:28
28:2 Lev 3:11; Gen 8:21; Lev 21:6,8
28:3 1 Pet 1:19; Lev 6:9; Exod 29:38,39
28:4 John 1:29; 1 Kgs 18:29,36; Ezra 9:4,5
28:5 Lev 2:1; Exod 16:36; Num 15:4,5
28:6 Amos 5:25; Lev 6:9; 2 Chr 2:4
28:7 John 1:29; Exod 29:42; Num 28:14,31
28:8 John 1:29
28:9 Matt 12:5; Exod 20:8-11; Ps 92:1-4
28:10 Ezek 46:4,5; Num 28:23; Num 29:6,11,16,19,22,25,31,34,38,39
28:11 Num 10:10; 1 Sam 20:5; 1 Chr 23:31
28:12 Num 15:4-12; Num 29:10; Ezek 46:5-7

27:18 *Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit* Joshua had fought Amalek (Exod 17:9-14), stayed near the tent (Exod 33:11), and stood for God at Kadesh (14:6-9). But the reason God gives is the Spirit (compare Deut 34:9). Some translations read it as Joshua's own spirit. Leadership among God's people starts with God's Spirit in a person.
27:20 *you shall put some of your majesty on him* Laying on hands publicly marked Joshua as the one chosen. Some of Moses' honor passed to him so the people would listen, but not all of it. Moses was unique (12:6-8; Deut 34:10).
27:21 *he shall inquire for him by the judgment of the Urim before the LORD* Moses spoke with God face to face; Joshua would seek God's answer through the high priest. The Urim was kept in the breastpiece (Exod 28:30), and Scripture does not tell us how it worked. Joshua would lead under God's direction, alongside the priest.
27:23 *he laid his hands on him and commissioned him* No jealousy and no delay. God's work does not depend on any one person, and a wise leader builds up the one who comes after him, as Paul did with Timothy (2 Tim 2:2). Joshua means the LORD saves, the Hebrew form of the name Jesus. Joshua led God's people into the land; Jesus leads His people into God's rest (Heb 4:8-9).
28:2 *My offering, My food for My fire offerings, My soothing aroma, you shall take care to bring near to Me at its appointed time* God did not need food (Ps 50:12-13). The words picture the offerings as a meal at God's table, a sign of fellowship. A soothing aroma means God was pleased to accept it. Chapters 28 and 29 set the rhythm of the new generation's life in the land around Him.
28:3 *two for the day, a burnt offering continually* A burnt offering was burned whole, given entirely to God. With each lamb came grain, oil and a drink offering of wine (28:5-7).
28:4 *The one lamb you shall offer in the morning, and the second lamb you shall offer between the two evenings* Between the two evenings means toward evening. The daily lambs never stopped for a feast; every other offering was "besides the continual burnt offering." Our walk with God is built on daily faithfulness, not only special days.
28:6 *It is a continual burnt offering, which was made at Mount Sinai* First commanded at Sinai (Exod 29:38-42). The daily lamb points to Jesus, "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). The priests offered the same sacrifices day after day, but Christ offered one sacrifice for sins for all time (Heb 10:11-12).
28:9 *on the day of the Sabbath, two lambs* Added to the daily offering, so the altar received double. The Sabbath was the sign of God's covenant with Israel (Exod 31:13). Believers today differ: some keep a Sabbath day, many set apart Sunday because Jesus rose on the first day, and others see the Sabbath fulfilled in our rest in Christ (Col 2:16-17; Heb 4:9-10). All agree God's people need regular rest and worship.
28:11 *at the beginnings of your months* Israel's months followed the moon, and trumpets were blown over these offerings (10:10). The pattern of two bulls, one ram, seven lambs and one goat repeats through most of the feasts.

its month, for the months of the year. **15** And one male goat of the goats for a sin offering to the LORD; besides the continual burnt offering it shall be offered, and its drink offering.

Passover and Weeks

16 And in the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, ***is*** a Passover to the LORD. **17** And on the fifteenth day of this month ***is*** a festival; seven days unleavened bread shall be eaten. **18** On the first day ***is*** a convocation of holiness; you shall not do any work of labor. **19** And you shall bring near a fire offering, a burnt offering to the LORD: two young bulls, sons of the herd, and one ram, and seven lambs, sons of a year; they shall be without blemish for you. **20** And their grain offering, fine flour mixed with oil: approximately 6 quarts (three tenths ***of an ephah***) for the young bull, and approximately 4 quarts (two tenths ***of an ephah***) for the ram you shall offer; **21** approximately 2 quarts (a tenth, a tenth ***of an ephah***) you shall offer for the one lamb, for the seven lambs; **22** and one male goat ***for*** a sin offering, to make atonement for you. **23** Besides the burnt offering of the morning, which ***is*** for the continual burnt offering, you shall offer these. **24** Like these you shall offer for the day, seven days, the food of a fire offering of a soothing aroma to the LORD; besides the continual burnt offering it shall be offered, and its drink offering. **25** And on the seventh day you shall have a convocation of holiness; you shall not do any work of labor. **26** And on the day of the firstfruits, when you bring near a new grain offering to the LORD at your Weeks, you shall have a convocation of holiness; you shall not do any work of labor. **27** And you shall bring near a burnt offering for a soothing aroma to the LORD: two young bulls, sons of the herd, one ram, seven lambs, sons of a year; **28** and their grain offering, fine flour mixed with oil: approximately 6 quarts (three tenths ***of an ephah***) for the one young bull, approximately 4 quarts (two tenths ***of an ephah***) for the one ram, **29** approximately 2 quarts (a tenth, a tenth ***of an ephah***) for the one lamb, for the seven lambs; **30** one male goat of the goats, to make atonement for you. **31** Besides the continual burnt offering and its grain offering, you shall offer ***them***; they shall be without blemish for you; and their drink offerings.

NUMBERS 29

Trumpets and the Day of Atonement

1 'And in the seventh month, on the first ***day*** of the month, you shall have a convocation of holiness; you shall not do any work of labor; it shall be a day of a loud blast for you. **2** And you shall offer a burnt offering for a soothing aroma to the LORD: one young bull, a son of the herd, one ram, seven lambs, sons of a year, without blemish; **3** and their grain offering, fine flour mixed with oil: approximately 6 quarts (three tenths ***of an ephah***) for the young bull, approximately 4 quarts (two tenths ***of an ephah***) for the ram, **4** and approximately 2 quarts (one tenth ***of an ephah***) for the one lamb, for the seven lambs; **5** and one male goat of the goats ***for*** a sin offering, to make atonement for you; **6** besides the burnt offering of the new moon and its grain offering, and the continual burnt offering and its grain offering, and their drink offerings, according to their ordinance, for a soothing aroma, a fire offering to the LORD. **7** And on the tenth ***day*** of this seventh month you shall have a convocation of holiness, and you shall afflict your souls; you shall not do any work. **8** And you shall bring near a burnt offering to the LORD, a soothing aroma: one young bull, a son of the herd, one ram, seven lambs, sons of a year; they shall be without blemish for you; **9** and their grain offering, fine flour mixed with oil: approximately 6 quarts (three tenths ***of an ephah***) for the young bull, approximately 4 quarts (two tenths ***of an ephah***) for the one ram, **10** approximately 2 quarts (a tenth, a tenth ***of an ephah***)

28:15 Num 28:3,10,11; Num 28:22; Num 15:24
28:16 Matt 26:2; Matt 26:17; Luke 22:7
28:17 Matt 26:17; Mark 14:12; Lev 23:6
28:18 Mark 14:12; Exod 12:16; Lev 23:7,8
28:19 1 Pet 1:19; Deut 15:21; Num 28:31
28:23 Num 28:3,10
28:25 Acts 2:1; Lev 23:8; Exod 12:16
28:26 Acts 2:1; Exod 23:16; Exod 34:22
28:27 Acts 2:1; Lev 23:18,19; Num 28:11,19
28:30 Num 28:15,22; Num 15:24; 2 Cor 5:21
28:31 Num 28:19; Mal 1:13,14
29:1 Lev 23:24,25; Num 10:1-10; Ezra 3:6
29:2 Num 29:8,36; Num 28:19,27; Heb 10:10-14
29:5 Num 28:15,22,30
29:6 Num 28:11-15; Num 28:3-8; Exod 29:38-42
29:7 Lev 16:29-31; Ps 35:13; Acts 27:9
29:8 Num 28:19; Num 29:2,13
29:9 Num 15:3-12

28:15 *one male goat of the goats for a sin offering to the LORD* The first sin offering in the list. Even in a month of ordinary days, Israel had sinned and needed atonement. Each new month began with a reminder that God's people live by His mercy.
28:16 *on the fourteenth day of the month, is a Passover to the LORD* Passover remembered the night of the lamb's blood on the doorposts (Exod 12). Each family killed its own lamb, so no public offering is listed. "For also our Passover was sacrificed for us: Christ" (1 Cor 5:7).
28:17 *seven days unleavened bread shall be eaten* Bread without yeast recalled the haste of leaving Egypt. Paul uses the picture: yeast stands for sin, and the redeemed keep the feast "with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" (1 Cor 5:8).
28:18 *On the first day is a convocation of holiness* A holy gathering when no regular work was done, on the first and seventh days (28:25).
28:22 *one male goat for a sin offering, to make atonement for you* Offered every one of the seven days, along with the bulls, ram and lambs.
28:26 *on the day of the firstfruits, when you bring near a new grain offering to the LORD at your Weeks* The Feast of Weeks came seven weeks after Passover (Lev 23:15-16) and celebrated the first of the wheat harvest. It was later called Pentecost, fiftieth. On that feast, fifty days after Jesus rose, God poured out the Spirit (Acts 2:1-4), and three thousand were saved, the first fruits of the gospel harvest.
28:31 *they shall be without blemish for you* God wanted the best; our worship should never be leftovers. Every spotless animal pointed to Christ, who "offered Himself unblemished to God" (Heb 9:14).
29:1 *it shall be a day of a loud blast for you* The seventh month came in early autumn. The day opened with trumpets or rams' horns (Lev 23:24), calling the nation to get ready for the holy days that followed. Many Bible teachers see the blast as a picture of the trumpet that will sound when the Lord comes for His church (1 Thess 4:16; 1 Cor 15:52). The New Testament does not tie those verses to this feast, so I offer it only as a picture.
29:6 *besides the burnt offering of the new moon and its grain offering, and the continual burnt offering* On this day the altar carried three sets of offerings at once: the daily, the monthly and the feast.
29:7 *on the tenth day of this seventh month you shall have a convocation of holiness, and you shall afflict your souls* The Day of Atonement, described in full in Leviticus 16. To afflict your souls means to humble yourself before God, usually by fasting. It was the most solemn day of the year, when the high priest entered the Most Holy Place with blood for the whole nation.

for the one lamb, for the seven lambs; **11** one male goat of the goats ***for*** a sin offering, besides the sin offering of atonement, and the continual burnt offering and its grain offering, and their drink offerings.

The Feast of Booths

12 And on the fifteenth day of the seventh month you shall have a convocation of holiness; you shall not do any work of labor, and you shall celebrate a festival to the LORD seven days. **13** And you shall bring near a burnt offering, a fire offering of a soothing aroma to the LORD: thirteen young bulls, sons of the herd, two rams, fourteen lambs, sons of a year; they shall be without blemish; **14** and their grain offering, fine flour mixed with oil: approximately 6 quarts (three tenths ***of an ephah***) for the one young bull, for the thirteen young bulls; approximately 4 quarts (two tenths ***of an ephah***) for the one ram, for the two rams; **15** and approximately 2 quarts (a tenth, a tenth ***of an ephah***) for the one lamb, for the fourteen lambs; **16** and one male goat of the goats ***for*** a sin offering, besides the continual burnt offering, its grain offering and its drink offering. **17** And on the second day: twelve young bulls, sons of the herd, two rams, fourteen lambs, sons of a year, without blemish; **18** and their grain offering and their drink offerings for the young bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, by their number, according to the ordinance; **19** and one male goat of the goats ***for*** a sin offering, besides the continual burnt offering and its grain offering and their drink offerings. **20** And on the third day: eleven young bulls, two rams, fourteen lambs, sons of a year, without blemish; **21** and their grain offering and their drink offerings for the young bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, by their number, according to the ordinance; **22** and one male goat ***for*** a sin offering, besides the continual burnt offering and its grain offering and its drink offering. **23** And on the fourth day: ten young bulls, two rams, fourteen lambs, sons of a year, without blemish; **24** their grain offering and their drink offerings for the young bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, by their number, according to the ordinance; **25** and one male goat of the goats ***for*** a sin offering, besides the continual burnt offering, its grain offering and its drink offering. **26** And on the fifth day: nine young bulls, two rams, fourteen lambs, sons of a year, without blemish; **27** and their grain offering and their drink offerings for the young bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, by their number, according to the ordinance; **28** and one male goat ***for*** a sin offering, besides the continual burnt offering and its grain offering and its drink offering. **29** And on the sixth day: eight young bulls, two rams, fourteen lambs, sons of a year, without blemish; **30** and their grain offering and their drink offerings for the young bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, by their number, according to the ordinance; **31** and one male goat ***for*** a sin offering, besides the continual burnt offering, its grain offering and its drink offerings. **32** And on the seventh day: seven young bulls, two rams, fourteen lambs, sons of a year, without blemish; **33** and their grain offering and their drink offerings for the young bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, by their number, according to their ordinance; **34** and one male goat ***for*** a sin offering, besides the continual burnt offering, its grain offering and its drink offering. **35** On the eighth day you shall have a solemn assembly; you shall not do any work of labor. **36** And you shall bring near a burnt offering, a fire offering of a soothing aroma to the LORD: one young bull, one ram, seven lambs, sons of a year, without blemish; **37** their grain offering and their drink offerings for the young bull, for the ram, and for the lambs, by their number, according to the ordinance; **38** and one male goat ***for*** a sin offering, besides the continual burnt offering and its grain offering and its drink offering. **39** These you shall offer to the LORD at your appointed times, apart from your vows and your freewill offerings, for your burnt offerings and for your grain offerings and for your drink offerings and for your peace offerings.'" **40** And Moses (Moshe) said to the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) according to all that the LORD had commanded Moses.

NUMBERS 30

The Law of Vows

1 And Moses (Moshe) spoke to the heads of the tribes of the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), saying, "This ***is*** the word which the

29:11 Lev 16:3,5,9; Isa 53:10; Dan 9:24-26
29:13 Num 28:11,19,27; Ezra 3:4; Num 29:2,8
29:17 Num 29:13,20-40; Ps 40:6; Ps 50:8,9
29:18 Num 28:7,14; Num 15:4-12; Num 29:3,4,6,9,10
29:19 Num 29:11,22,25; Amos 8:14
29:22 Ps 16:4; Joel 1:9,13; Joel 2:14
29:25 Num 29:11; John 8:31; Acts 13:43
29:35 Lev 23:36; John 7:37-39; Rev 7:9-17
29:39 Lev 23:2; 1 Chr 23:31; 2 Chr 31:3
29:40 Heb 3:2; Heb 3:5; Exod 40:16
30:1 Num 7:2; Num 1:4-16; Num 34:17-28

29:11 *besides the sin offering of atonement* Numbers lists only the public burnt offerings; the special sacrifices are in Leviticus 16. The high priest went in once a year with blood not his own. Christ, "through His own blood, entered once for all into the holy places, having obtained eternal redemption" (Heb 9:12). What the day did every year, Christ finished forever.
29:12 *you shall celebrate a festival to the LORD seven days* The Feast of Booths. The people lived in booths of branches to remember God's care when He brought them out of Egypt (Lev 23:42-43). It came at the end of harvest and was a time of great joy (Deut 16:13-15).
29:13 *thirteen young bulls, sons of the herd, two rams, fourteen lambs* Far more than any other day. Each following day the bulls drop by one, to seven on the seventh day (29:32), seventy bulls for the week along with fourteen rams and ninety-eight lambs. Scripture does not explain the number. Jewish teachers later linked the seventy bulls to the seventy nations of Genesis 10, but that is tradition, not the text. What the text shows is a feast of joy marked by lavish giving.
29:35 *On the eighth day you shall have a solemn assembly* One more holy day closed the feast season. On "the last day, the great day of the feast" (John 7:37), Jesus cried out, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink" (John 7:37), speaking of the Spirit (John 7:39). And in the kingdom to come the nations will go up to Jerusalem "to celebrate the Feast of Booths" (Zech 14:16), when Christ reigns.
29:39 *apart from your vows and your freewill offerings* Chapters 28 and 29 are the nation's required worship. On top came each person's own gifts. A year's public offerings came to more than a thousand lambs alone, yet none of it could take away sin (Heb 10:4). It covered sin and taught the people until the true Lamb came.
29:40 *Moses said to the sons of Israel according to all that the LORD had commanded Moses* Moses passed on every word. In the Hebrew Bible this verse begins chapter 30; the SLB follows the English numbering.
30:1 *Moses spoke to the heads of the tribes of the sons of Israel* The leaders would need this law to settle cases.

LORD has commanded: **2** If a man vows a vow to the LORD, or swears an oath to bind an obligation on his soul, he shall not profane his word; according to all that goes out from his mouth he shall do. **3** And if a woman vows a vow to the LORD and binds an obligation in the house of her father in her youth, **4** and her father hears her vow and her obligation which she has bound on her soul, and her father keeps silent toward her, then all her vows shall stand, and every obligation which she has bound on her soul shall stand. **5** And if her father forbids her on the day he hears, all her vows and her obligations which she has bound on her soul shall not stand; and the LORD will forgive her, because her father forbade her. **6** And if she surely belongs to a husband, and her vows ***are*** on her, or the rash utterance of her lips which she has bound on her soul, **7** and her husband hears, on the day he hears, and keeps silent toward her, then her vows shall stand, and her obligations which she has bound on her soul shall stand. **8** And if on the day her husband hears he forbids her, then he shall break her vow which ***is*** on her and the rash utterance of her lips which she has bound on her soul; and the LORD will forgive her. **9** And the vow of a widow and a divorced ***woman***, all that she has bound on her soul shall stand against her. **10** And if she vowed ***in*** the house of her husband, or bound an obligation on her soul with an oath, **11** and her husband hears and keeps silent toward her, does not forbid her, then all her vows shall stand, and every obligation which she has bound on her soul shall stand. **12** And if her husband surely breaks them on the day he hears, anything that goes out of her lips for her vows and for the obligation of her soul shall not stand; her husband has broken them, and the LORD will forgive her. **13** Every vow and every oath of obligation to afflict a soul, her husband may make it stand, and her husband may break it. **14** And if her husband surely keeps silent toward her from day to day, then he makes all her vows stand, or all her obligations which ***are*** on her; he has made them stand, because he kept silent toward her on the day he heard. **15** And if he surely breaks them after he has heard, then he shall bear her iniquity." **16** These ***are*** the statutes which the LORD commanded Moses between a man and his wife, between a father and his daughter in her youth ***in*** the house of her father.

NUMBERS 31

War Against Midian

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe), saying, **2** "Avenge the vengeance of the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) from the Midianites; afterward you will be gathered to your peoples." **3** And Moses spoke to the people, saying, "Be armed, men from among you, for the war, and let them be against Midian (Midyan), to give the vengeance of the LORD on Midian. **4** A thousand for the tribe, a thousand for the tribe, of all the tribes of Israel, you shall send to the war." **5** And ***there*** were selected from the thousands of Israel a thousand for the tribe, twelve thousand armed ***men*** of war. **6** And Moses sent them, a thousand for the tribe, to the war, them and Phine-

30:2 Matt 5:33; Acts 23:12; Job 22:27
30:5 Mark 7:11; Hos 6:6; Matt 15:4-6
30:6 Ps 56:12
30:8 Rom 7:2; Gen 3:16; 1 Cor 7:4
30:9 Luke 2:37; Rom 7:2; Lev 21:7
30:12 1 Cor 11:3; Num 30:5,8; Num 15:25,28
30:13 1 Cor 11:3,9; 1 Pet 3:1-6; Num 29:7
30:15 Lev 5:1; Num 30:5,8,12; Gal 3:28
30:16 Num 5:29,30; Lev 11:46,47; Lev 13:59
31:2 Rom 12:19; Num 27:13; Deut 32:35
31:3 Lev 26:25; Exod 17:9-13; Num 25:11,13
31:4 Lev 26:8; Judg 7:2; 1 Sam 14:6
31:6 Num 14:44; Num 10:8,9; Num 25:7-13

30:2 *he shall not profane his word; according to all that goes out from his mouth he shall do* A vow was a promise to do something for God; an oath to bind an obligation was a promise to hold back from something, such as fasting. No one had to vow, but once made, it had to be kept (Eccl 5:4-5). Jesus went further: "let your word be 'Yes, yes,' 'No, no'" (Matt 5:37). A believer's plain word should be as good as an oath.
30:3 *in the house of her father in her youth* An unmarried young woman still under her father's care.
30:4 *her father keeps silent toward her, then all her vows shall stand* Her vow was real, and God received it. Women in Israel made vows to God, as Hannah did (1 Sam 1:11).
30:5 *the LORD will forgive her, because her father forbade her* The father answered for the household. A rash vow could commit family property or bind a daughter in ways she did not foresee. If he stopped it, God would not hold it against her. The rule protected her.
30:6 *the rash utterance of her lips which she has bound on her soul* People sometimes promise God things in a moment of fear or excitement without thinking them through. Jephthah's rash vow ended in great sorrow (Judg 11:30-35). This law gave a way out before a rash vow did harm.
30:8 *if on the day her husband hears he forbids her* A new husband had the same choice as a father, and the same limit: the day he heard.
30:9 *the vow of a widow and a divorced woman, all that she has bound on her soul shall stand against her* A woman with no husband or father over her household answered to God for herself, just like a man. The law was about who was responsible for a household, not about a woman's worth or her standing before God.
30:11 *keeps silent toward her, does not forbid her, then all her vows shall stand* A wife's vow to give a field or a large gift affected the whole family. This kept the household from being pulled two ways and kept her from guilt for a vow her husband would not allow.
30:13 *Every vow and every oath of obligation to afflict a soul* To afflict a soul means self-denial, such as fasting.
30:14 *he has made them stand, because he kept silent toward her on the day he heard* His silence was his consent. He could not let her go on and then change his mind weeks later when it suited him.
30:15 *if he surely breaks them after he has heard, then he shall bear her iniquity* The guilt moved from her to him. The authority God gave the man came with accountability.
30:16 *between a man and his wife, between a father and his daughter in her youth* We are not under the Law of Moses as a covenant, but its heart still speaks. God hears our promises and expects us to keep them. Authority in the home is for protection, not control: husbands are to love their wives "even as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her" (Eph 5:25), and fathers are not to provoke their children (Eph 6:4). Anyone who uses this chapter to bully a wife or daughter has turned it upside down. Men and women stand equal before God as heirs (Gal 3:28; 1 Pet 3:7).
31:2 *Avenge the vengeance of the sons of Israel from the Midianites; afterward you will be gathered to your peoples* God had already told Israel to treat Midian as an enemy (25:17). Now He gave the order to act. This would be Moses' last work before he died.
31:3 *to give the vengeance of the LORD on Midian* Notice whose vengeance it is. This was not Israel settling a score but God's judgment on a people who set out to destroy His people by leading them into sin, at the cost of twenty-four thousand lives (25:9). Vengeance belongs to God (Deut 32:35; Rom 12:19), and here He chose to carry it out through Israel.
31:5 *a thousand for the tribe, twelve thousand armed men of war* Every tribe had a share. No tribe could say this was someone else's battle.
31:6 *the vessels of the holy place and the trumpets of the alarm were in his hand* Phinehas had stopped the plague at Peor (25:7-8). The silver trumpets were for war, so Israel would be remembered before the LORD (10:9). The priest and holy things showed this was a war under God's command, not a raid for plunder. Scripture does not say which holy vessels are meant.

has (Pinchas) the son of Eleazar (Elazar) the priest, to the war, and the vessels of the holy place and the trumpets of the alarm ***were*** in his hand. **7** And they waged war against Midian, just as the LORD had commanded Moses, and they killed every male. **8** And the kings of Midian they killed besides their slain: Evi and Rekem (Reqem) and Zur (Tsur) and Hur (Chur) and Reba (Reva), the five kings of Midian; and Balaam (Bilam) the son of Beor they killed with the sword. **9** And the sons of Israel took captive the women of Midian and their little ones; and all their beasts and all their livestock and all their wealth they plundered. **10** And all their cities in their dwelling places and all their encampments they burned with fire. **11** And they took all the plunder and all the booty, among man and among beast. **12** And they brought to Moses and to Eleazar the priest and to the congregation of the sons of Israel the captives and the booty and the plunder, to the camp, to the plains of Moab (Mo'av), which ***are*** by the Jordan (Yarden) ***at*** Jericho (Yericho).

The Captives and the Cleansing

13 And Moses and Eleazar the priest and all the leaders of the congregation went out to meet them, to the outside of the camp. **14** And Moses was angry with the officers of the army, the commanders of the thousands and the commanders of the hundreds, who were coming from the war of the battle. **15** And Moses said to them, "Have you let every female live? **16** Look, they themselves were ***the cause*** for the sons of Israel, by the word of Balaam, to commit unfaithfulness against the LORD in the matter of Peor, and the plague was among the congregation of the LORD. **17** And now, kill every male among the little ones, and every woman who has known a man by the lying of a male, kill. **18** And all the little ones among the women who have not known the lying of a male, keep alive for yourselves. **19** And you, encamp outside the camp seven days; everyone who has killed a soul and everyone who has touched the slain, purify yourselves on the third day and on the seventh day, you and your captives. **20** And every garment and every article of skin and every work of goats' ***hair*** and every article of wood, you shall purify." **21** And Eleazar the priest said to the men of the army who had gone to the battle, "This ***is*** the statute of the law which the LORD commanded Moses: **22** Only the gold and the silver, the bronze, the iron, the tin, and the lead, **23** every thing that goes into the fire, you shall make pass through the fire, and it will be clean; nevertheless it shall be purified with the water of impurity. And all that does not go into the fire, you shall make pass through the water. **24** And you shall wash your clothes on the seventh day, and you will be clean, and afterward you may come into the camp."

Dividing the Plunder

25 And the LORD said to Moses, saying, **26** "Take the sum of the booty of the captives, among man and among beast, you and Eleazar the priest and the heads of the fathers of the congregation. **27** And you shall divide the booty in half between those who handled the battle, who went out to the war, and all the congregation. **28** And you shall raise a tax for the LORD from the men of the battle who went out to the

31:7 Judg 21:11; 1 Kgs 11:15,16; 1 Sam 27:9
31:8 2 Pet 2:15; Jude 1:11; Rev 2:14
31:9 Num 31:15,16; Deut 20:14; 2 Chr 28:5,8-10
31:10 Rev 18:8; Josh 6:24; 1 Sam 30:1
31:11 Deut 20:14; Josh 8:2
31:12 Num 22:1
31:13 Gen 14:17; 1 Sam 15:12; 1 Sam 30:21
31:14 Num 12:3; Exod 32:19,22; Lev 10:16
31:15 1 Sam 15:3; Deut 2:34; Deut 20:13,16-18
31:16 2 Pet 2:15; Rev 2:14; Jude 1:11
31:17 Judg 21:11,12
31:18 Deut 21:10-14; Lev 25:44; Deut 20:14
31:19 Num 5:2; Num 19:11-22; 1 Chr 22:8
31:20 Num 19:14-16,22; Gen 35:2; Exod 19:10
31:21 Num 30:16
31:23 Num 19:9,17; 1 Cor 3:13; Isa 43:2
31:24 Lev 11:25; Num 19:19; Lev 14:9
31:27 Josh 22:8; 1 Sam 30:4,24,25; Ps 68:12
31:28 Num 18:26; Num 31:30,47; Gen 14:20

31:7 *they killed every male* That is, the fighting men of the Midianite groups allied with Moab. The whole Midianite people did not die out; they appear again as a strong nation in Judges 6.

31:8 *Evi and Rekem and Zur and Hur and Reba, the five kings of Midian; and Balaam the son of Beor they killed with the sword* Zur was Cozbi's father (25:15); Joshua 13:21 calls these chiefs allies of Sihon. Balaam blessed Israel with his mouth and then gave the counsel that led them into sin (31:16; Rev 2:14). He wished to "die the death of the upright" (23:10), but he died with the enemies of God. It is possible to say beautiful things about God and still love money more (2 Pet 2:15).

31:10 *all their encampments they burned with fire* The army brought the captives, livestock and goods to Moses and Eleazar on the plains of Moab (31:12).

31:14 *Moses was angry with the officers of the army* Moses went out of the camp to meet them, and what he saw angered him.

31:16 *they themselves were the cause for the sons of Israel, by the word of Balaam, to commit unfaithfulness against the LORD in the matter of Peor* These were the women sent to seduce Israel's men into idol worship. The danger that had just cost twenty-four thousand lives was now standing inside Israel's tents.

31:17 *kill every male among the little ones, and every woman who has known a man by the lying of a male, kill* This is troubling, and if it troubles you, that is not a lack of faith. The death of children is a terrible thing, and Scripture does not hide it. This was God's judgment by God's command for a specific sin, Midian's deliberate plot (25:18), like the flood and Sodom, where whole communities died under His hand. God alone gives and takes life (Deut 32:39). "Will not the Judge of all the earth do justice?" (Gen 18:25). I believe He does, even when I cannot see all His reasons. Why the boys, Scripture does not say; many think it was so this branch of Midian would not rise again to destroy Israel.

31:18 *keep alive for yourselves* These words do not permit abuse. The Law required that a captive woman be given a month to mourn, be taken as a true wife, and never be sold as a slave (Deut 21:10-14). Many would have been raised in Israelite homes, and some may have come to trust Israel's God. Scripture does not tell their stories.

31:19 *encamp outside the camp seven days* Even after a war God commanded, the soldiers needed the cleansing of chapter 19. This was a one-time command for Israel at a single moment, never a pattern; Israel's normal laws of war differed (Deut 20:10-14), and Jesus told Peter to put away his sword (Matt 26:52). "Our wrestling is not against blood and flesh" (Eph 6:12). The chapter shows how serious sin is; at the cross God's justice and mercy meet (Rom 3:25-26). I believe little children who die are safe with God; David said of his son, "I am going to him" (2 Sam 12:23).

31:23 *every thing that goes into the fire, you shall make pass through the fire, and it will be clean* Metal passed through fire and was washed with the water of impurity; everything else through water. Life is sacred. Even in a judgment God ordered, touching death left a mark to be dealt with before Him. War was never treated as a light thing.

31:27 *divide the booty in half between those who handled the battle, who went out to the war, and all the congregation* The soldiers took the risk, but the whole people shared the gain. David later made a similar rule for those who guarded the baggage (1 Sam 30:24-25).

31:28 *one soul out of five hundred* From the soldiers' half, one in five hundred went to Eleazar; from the people's half, one in fifty to the Levites (31:30). Those who served at the tabernacle had no land and depended on such gifts. Everyone gave back to God from what He had given.

war: one soul out of five hundred, from man and from the cattle and from the donkeys and from the flock. **29** From their half you shall take ***it***, and you shall give ***it*** to Eleazar the priest ***as*** the contribution of the LORD. **30** And from the half of the sons of Israel you shall take one taken out of the fifty, from man, from the cattle, from the donkeys, and from the flock, from all the beasts; and you shall give them to the Levites who keep the charge of the tabernacle of the LORD." **31** And Moses and Eleazar the priest did just as the LORD had commanded Moses. **32** And the booty, the remainder of the plunder which the people of the army had plundered, was: flock, six hundred thousand and seventy thousand and five thousand, **33** and cattle, seventy-two thousand, **34** and donkeys, sixty-one thousand, **35** and the souls of mankind, from the women who had not known the lying of a male, all the souls, thirty-two thousand. **36** And the half, the portion of those who had gone out in the war, was: the number of the flock, three hundred thousand and thirty thousand and seven thousand and five hundred; **37** and the tax for the LORD from the flock was six hundred and seventy-five. **38** And the cattle ***were*** thirty-six thousand, and their tax for the LORD ***was*** seventy-two. **39** And the donkeys ***were*** thirty thousand and five hundred, and their tax for the LORD ***was*** sixty-one. **40** And the souls of mankind ***were*** sixteen thousand, and their tax for the LORD ***was*** thirty-two souls. **41** And Moses gave the tax of the contribution of the LORD to Eleazar the priest, just as the LORD had commanded Moses. **42** And from the half of the sons of Israel, which Moses had divided off from the men who had waged war, **43** and the half of the congregation was: from the flock, three hundred thousand and thirty thousand, seven thousand and five hundred; **44** and cattle, thirty-six thousand; **45** and donkeys, thirty thousand and five hundred; **46** and souls of mankind, sixteen thousand. **47** And Moses took from the half of the sons of Israel the ***ones*** taken, one out of the fifty, from man and from beast, and he gave them to the Levites who keep the charge of the tabernacle of the LORD, just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

The Officers' Offering

48 And the officers who ***were*** over the thousands of the army, the commanders of the thousands and the commanders of the hundreds, drew near to Moses, **49** and they said to Moses, "Your servants have taken the sum of the men of the battle who ***were*** in our hand, and not a man is missing from us. **50** And we have brought near the offering of the LORD, each man what he found, articles of gold, armlet and bracelet, signet ring, earring, and ornament, to make atonement for our souls before the LORD." **51** And Moses and Eleazar the priest took the gold from them, every article of work. **52** And all the gold of the contribution which they raised for the LORD was approximately 420 pounds (sixteen thousand seven hundred and fifty shekels), from the commanders of the thousands and from the commanders of the hundreds. **53** The men of the army had taken plunder, each man for himself. **54** And Moses and Eleazar the priest took the gold from the commanders of the thousands and of the hundreds, and they brought it into the tent of meeting ***as*** a memorial for the sons of Israel before the LORD.

NUMBERS 32

Reuben and Gad Ask for Gilead

1 And much livestock belonged to the sons of Reuben (Reuven) and to the sons of Gad, very numerous; and they saw the land of Jazer (Yazer) and the land of Gilead (Gilad), and look, the place ***was*** a place of livestock. **2** And the sons of Gad and the sons of Reuben came and said to Moses (Moshe) and to Eleazar (Elazar) the priest and to the leaders of the congregation, saying, **3** "Ataroth (Atarot) and Dibon (Divon) and Jazer and Nimrah (Nimra) and Heshbon (Cheshbon) and Elealeh (Elale) and Sebam (Sevam) and Nebo (Nevo) and Beon, **4** the land which the LORD struck before the congregation of Israel (Yisra'el), it ***is*** a land of livestock, and your servants have livestock." **5** And they said, "If we have found favor in your eyes, let this land be given to your servants for a possession; do not make us pass over the Jordan (Yarden)." **6** And Moses said to the sons of Gad and to the sons of Reuben, "Shall your brothers go to the battle, and you, shall

31:29 Num 18:26; Exod 29:27; Deut 12:12,19
31:30 Num 3:7,8,25,31,36-39; Num 31:28; 1 Cor 9:13,14
31:41 Num 18:8,19; Num 31:29-31; Matt 10:10
31:47 Num 31:30; Num 18:21-24; Deut 12:17-19
31:49 1 Sam 30:18,19; Ps 72:14; John 18:9
31:50 Exod 30:12,15,16; Ps 107:15,21,22; Ps 116:12,17
31:51 Num 7:2-6
31:53 Deut 20:14
31:54 Exod 30:16; Num 16:40; Josh 4:7
32:1 Num 21:32; Num 32:3,35; Num 2:10-15
32:3 Josh 13:17; Isa 16:8,9; Num 32:1,34-38
32:4 Num 21:24,34; Deut 2:24-35
32:5 Gen 19:19; Ruth 2:10; 1 Sam 20:3
32:6 2 Sam 11:11; 1 Cor 13:5; Phil 2:4

31:32 *six hundred thousand and seventy thousand and five thousand* With 72,000 cattle, 61,000 donkeys and 32,000 girls (31:33-35). As elsewhere in Numbers, I take the numbers as written. They show how wealthy these herding and trading groups were and how complete the victory was.
31:47 *he gave them to the Levites who keep the charge of the tabernacle of the LORD* The persons given were not offered on the altar; human sacrifice was forbidden (Lev 18:21). They served at the tabernacle, as the Gibeonites later did (Josh 9:27).
31:49 *not a man is missing from us* Twelve thousand went to war, and every one came home. That was God's doing. The Good Shepherd says the same of His own: no one will snatch them out of His hand (John 10:28).
31:50 *to make atonement for our souls before the LORD* When Israel was counted, each man was to give a ransom for his life so no plague would come (Exod 30:12), and the officers had just counted their men. They may also have felt unworthy to live when so many died at Peor. Their gift was thanks and humility together.
31:54 *they brought it into the tent of meeting as a memorial for the sons of Israel before the LORD* About 420 pounds of gold (31:52) stood as a reminder that God gave the victory. The soldiers kept their plunder (31:53), but the leaders gave theirs to God. When God brings us through, the right answer is gratitude.
32:1 *they saw the land of Jazer and the land of Gilead, and look, the place was a place of livestock* Gilead was the high grassy country east of the Jordan, known for its pasture. Reuben and Gad had large herds, and they liked what they saw.
32:5 *let this land be given to your servants for a possession; do not make us pass over the Jordan* Was this wrong? Not in itself; God had given Israel this land when He defeated Sihon and Og. But it came right before the conquest and seemed to put their herds ahead of their brothers. Lot made a similar choice when he looked at the well-watered plain (Gen 13:10-11).
32:6 *Shall your brothers go to the battle, and you, shall you sit here?* Moses answered hard. He had buried a generation and knew what unbelief costs.

you sit here? **7** And why do you discourage the heart of the sons of Israel from passing over into the land which the LORD has given to them? **8** Thus your fathers did when I sent them from Kadesh-barnea (Qadesh-Barnea) to see the land. **9** And they went up to the wadi of Eshcol (Eshkol) and saw the land, and they discouraged the heart of the sons of Israel so as not to go into the land which the LORD had given to them. **10** And the anger of the LORD burned on that day, and He swore, saying, **11** 'The men who came up from Egypt (Mitsrayim), from a son of twenty years and upward, shall surely not see the land which I swore to Abraham (Avraham), to Isaac (Yitschaq), and to Jacob (Ya'aqov), because they have not fully followed after Me, **12** except Caleb (Kalev) the son of Jephunneh (Yefune) the Kenizzite and Joshua (Yehoshua) the son of Nun, because they have fully followed after the LORD.' **13** And the anger of the LORD burned against Israel, and He made them wander in the wilderness forty years, until all the generation that had done the evil in the eyes of the LORD was finished. **14** And look, you have risen up in place of your fathers, a brood of sinful men, to add still more to the burning of the anger of the LORD against Israel. **15** For if you turn back from after Him, then He will again leave it in the wilderness, and you will destroy all this people."

The Promise to Cross Over

16 And they drew near to him and said, "Folds of flock we will build for our livestock here, and cities for our little ones. **17** And we, we will arm ourselves, hurrying before the sons of Israel, until we have brought them to their place; and our little ones will dwell in the fortified cities because of the inhabitants of the land. **18** We will not return to our houses until the sons of Israel have inherited, each man his inheritance. **19** For we will not inherit with them on the other side of the Jordan and beyond, because our inheritance has come to us on the other side of the Jordan eastward." **20** And Moses said to them, "If you will do this thing, if you will arm yourselves before the LORD for the battle, **21** and every armed ***man*** of you passes over the Jordan before the LORD until He has dispossessed His enemies from before Him, **22** and the land is subdued before the LORD, then afterward you may return, and you will be guiltless toward the LORD and toward Israel, and this land will be yours for a possession before the LORD. **23** And if you do not do so, look, you have sinned against the LORD; and know your sin, that it will find you. **24** Build for yourselves cities for your little ones and folds for your flock, and what has gone out from your mouth you shall do." **25** And the sons of Gad and the sons of Reuben said to Moses, saying, "Your servants will do just as my lord commands. **26** Our little ones, our wives, our livestock, and all our beasts shall be there in the cities of the Gilead; **27** and your servants will pass over, every armed ***man*** of war, before the LORD to the battle, just as my lord says." **28** And Moses commanded concerning them Eleazar the priest and Joshua the son of Nun and the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the sons of Israel. **29** And Moses said to them, "If the sons of Gad and the sons of Reuben pass over the Jordan with you, every armed ***man*** for the battle before the LORD, and the land is subdued before you, then you shall give them the land of the Gilead for a possession. **30** And if they do not pass over armed with you, then they shall take possession among you in the land of Canaan (Kena'an)." **31** And the sons of Gad and the sons of Reuben answered, saying, "What the LORD has spoken to your servants, so we will do. **32** We, we will pass over armed before the LORD ***into*** the land of Canaan, and the possession of our inheritance ***will be*** with us on the other side of the Jordan."

The Land East of the Jordan

33 And Moses gave to them, to the sons of Gad and to the sons of Reuben and to half the tribe of Manasseh (Menashe)

32:7 Num 32:9; Num 21:4; Deut 1:28
32:8 Num 13:2-26; Num 14:2; Josh 14:6,7
32:9 Num 13:23-33; Deut 1:24-28; Num 14:1-10
32:10 Heb 3:8; Heb 3:9; Heb 3:10
32:11 John 12:26; Num 14:28,29; Num 26:2,64,65
32:12 Deut 1:36; Num 14:24,30; Josh 14:8,9
32:13 Num 14:33-35; Deut 2:14; Ps 78:33
32:14 Luke 11:48; Matt 23:32; Gen 5:3
32:15 2 Chr 15:2; Lev 26:14-18; Deut 28:15-68
32:16 Num 34:22; Gen 33:17
32:17 Josh 4:12,13; Num 32:29-32; Deut 3:18-20
32:18 Josh 22:4,5
32:19 Josh 13:8; Gen 13:10-12; Gen 14:12
32:20 Josh 4:12,13; Deut 3:18-20; Josh 1:13-15
32:22 Josh 22:9; Deut 3:20; Josh 22:4,9
32:23 Gen 44:16; Gen 4:7; Ps 140:11
32:24 Num 32:16,34-42
32:25 Josh 1:13,14
32:27 Josh 4:12; Num 32:17; 2 Cor 10:4,5
32:28 Josh 1:13
32:30 Josh 22:19
32:33 Mark 3:8; Josh 12:6; Deut 3:12-17

32:7 *why do you discourage the heart of the sons of Israel* One group's choices can weaken the faith of everyone around them. If two tribes held back, others might lose heart too.
32:8 *Thus your fathers did when I sent them from Kadesh-barnea to see the land* Moses retells Kadesh (chapters 13 and 14), when the spies discouraged the people and a whole generation died in the wilderness (32:9-13).
32:12 *because they have fully followed after the LORD* Caleb and Joshua are still the example. Whole-hearted following is what God honors.
32:14 *you have risen up in place of your fathers, a brood of sinful men* Moses feared the new generation was about to repeat the old one's sin, and that God would again leave the people in the wilderness (32:15).
32:16 *Folds of flock we will build for our livestock here, and cities for our little ones* The two tribes came back with a plan. It is good when we answer a fair rebuke with a humble, honest offer rather than anger.
32:17 *we, we will arm ourselves, hurrying before the sons of Israel* They would not only go along; they would go in front as the first troops into battle.
32:18 *We will not return to our houses until the sons of Israel have inherited, each man his inheritance* They would not take their rest until their brothers had theirs. Their heart was not in rebellion after all.
32:20 *if you will arm yourselves before the LORD for the battle* Notice how often Moses says "before the LORD." This was not just a deal between tribes but a promise made in God's sight.
32:22 *you will be guiltless toward the LORD and toward Israel* Keeping their word would clear them before both God and their brothers.
32:23 *know your sin, that it will find you* Often quoted about any hidden sin, and that is true; God sees everything, and sin comes to light. Here the point is that breaking a promise to God and His people is sin against the LORD, and it will catch up with you. "Whatever a man sows, this he will also reap" (Gal 6:7).
32:24 *what has gone out from your mouth you shall do* This sounds like chapter 30 (30:2). Keep your word.
32:28 *Moses commanded concerning them Eleazar the priest and Joshua the son of Nun* Moses would not live to see it, so he handed the agreement to the next leaders.
32:31 *What the LORD has spoken to your servants, so we will do* And they did. Joshua 1:12-18 shows them ready to cross, and Joshua 22:1-6 shows Joshua sending them home years later, praising them for keeping their promise.
32:33 *to half the tribe of Manasseh the son of Joseph* Half of Manasseh is named here for the first time. Their part was the north, in Gilead and Bashan, the old kingdoms of Sihon and Og.

the son of Joseph (Yosef), the kingdom of Sihon (Sichon) king of the Amorite and the kingdom of Og king of the Bashan, the land with its cities, with ***their*** territories, the cities of the land all around. **34** And the sons of Gad built Dibon and Ataroth and Aroer (Aro'er), **35** and Atroth-shophan (Atrot-Shofan) and Jazer and Jogbehah (Yogbeha), **36** and Beth-nimrah (Bet-Nimra) and Beth-haran (Bet-Haran), fortified cities, and folds of flock. **37** And the sons of Reuben built Heshbon and Elealeh and Kiriathaim (Qiryatayim), **38** and Nebo and Baal-meon (Ba'al-Meon), changed ***in*** name, and Sibmah (Sivma); and they called by names the names of the cities which they built. **39** And the sons of Machir (Makhir) the son of Manasseh went to Gilead and captured it, and dispossessed the Amorite who ***was*** in it. **40** And Moses gave the Gilead to Machir the son of Manasseh, and he dwelt in it. **41** And Jair (Ya'ir) the son of Manasseh went and captured their villages, and he called them Havvoth-jair (Chavvot-Ya'ir). **42** And Nobah (Novach) went and captured Kenath (Qenat) and its daughters, and he called it Nobah, by his own name.

NUMBERS 33

The Journeys from Egypt to Sinai

1 These ***are*** the journeys of the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), who went out from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim) by their armies, by the hand of Moses (Moshe) and Aaron (Aharon). **2** And Moses wrote down their goings out according to their journeys at the mouth of the LORD; and these ***are*** their journeys according to their goings out. **3** And they set out from Rameses (Ra'amses) in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the day after the Passover the sons of Israel went out with a raised hand before the eyes of all Egypt, **4** and Egypt were burying those whom the LORD had struck among them, every firstborn; and on their gods the LORD had executed judgments. **5** And the sons of Israel set out from Rameses and encamped at Succoth (Sukot). **6** And they set out from Succoth and encamped at Etham (Etam), which ***is*** on the edge of the wilderness. **7** And they set out from Etham and turned back to Pi-hahiroth (Pi-Hachirot), which ***is*** before Baal-zephon (Ba'al-Tsefon); and they encamped before Migdol. **8** And they set out from before Hahiroth and passed through the midst of the sea into the wilderness; and they went a journey of three days in the wilderness of Etham and encamped at Marah (Mara). **9** And they set out from Marah and came to Elim; and at Elim ***were*** twelve springs of water and seventy palm trees, and they encamped there. **10** And they set out from Elim and encamped by the Red Sea. **11** And they set out from the Red Sea and encamped in the wilderness of Sin. **12** And they set out from the wilderness of Sin and encamped at Dophkah (Dofqa). **13** And they set out from Dophkah and encamped at Alush. **14** And they set out from Alush and encamped at Rephidim (Refidim); and there was no water there for the people to drink. **15** And they set out from Rephidim and encamped in the wilderness of Sinai (Sinay).

From Sinai to the Plains of Moab

16 And they set out from the wilderness of Sinai and encamped at Kibroth-hattaavah (Qivrot-Hata'ava). **17** And they set out from Kibroth-hattaavah and encamped at Hazeroth (Chatserot). **18** And they set out from Hazeroth and encamped at Rithmah (Ritma). **19** And they set out from Rithmah and encamped at Rimmon-perez (Rimon-Parets). **20** And they set out from Rimmon-perez and encamped at Libnah (Livna). **21** And they set out from Libnah and encamped at Rissah (Risa). **22** And they set out from Rissah and encamped at Kehelathah (Qehelata). **23** And they set out from Kehelathah and encamped at Mount Shapher (Shefer). **24** And they set out from Mount Shapher and encamped at Haradah (Charada). **25** And they set out from Haradah and encamped at Makheloth (Maqhelot). **26** And they set out

32:34 Deut 2:36; Num 32:3; Num 21:20
32:35 Num 32:1,3
32:37 Num 32:3; Num 21:27; Isa 15:4
32:38 Isa 46:1; Num 32:3; Exod 23:13
32:39 Gen 50:23; Num 26:29; Josh 17:1
32:40 Josh 17:1; Deut 3:13-15; Josh 13:29-31
32:41 Deut 3:14; Judg 10:4; Josh 13:30
33:1 Ps 77:20; Mic 6:4; Exod 12:37,51
33:2 Num 9:17-23; Num 10:6,13; Deut 1:2
33:3 Exod 14:8; Exod 12:37; Exod 13:4
33:4 Exod 12:12; Isa 19:1; Exod 12:29,30
33:5 Exod 12:37
33:6 Exod 13:20
33:7 Exod 14:2,9
33:8 Exod 14:21,22-31; Exod 15:22-26
33:9 Exod 15:27
33:10 Exod 16:1; Exod 17:1
33:14 Exod 17:1-8; Exod 19:2
33:15 Exod 19:1,2; Exod 16:1
33:16 Num 10:11-13,33; Deut 1:6; Num 11:4,34
33:17 Num 11:35
33:18 Num 12:16
33:21 Deut 1:1

32:34 *the sons of Gad built Dibon and Ataroth and Aroer* Dibon is where the Moabite Stone was found, a well-known ancient inscription that mentions Israel and the tribe of Gad.
32:38 *and Nebo and Baal-meon, changed in name* Perhaps because the old names honored false gods; the text does not say.
32:41 *he called them Havvoth-jair* The tent villages of Jair. The east side tribes' choice worked for a time, but it put the Jordan between them and the rest of Israel. Joshua 22 shows how quickly that led to misunderstanding, and they were the first carried into exile by Assyria (1 Chr 5:25-26). Still, God honored their promise, and they kept it.
33:1 *These are the journeys of the sons of Israel, who went out from the land of Egypt by their armies* A travel record of forty years, from Egypt to the Jordan.
33:2 *Moses wrote down their goings out according to their journeys at the mouth of the LORD* Moses wrote this list because God told him to. It is one of the places in the Law where Scripture says plainly that Moses wrote.
33:3 *the sons of Israel went out with a raised hand before the eyes of all Egypt* Boldly, in the open, the day after the Passover.
33:4 *on their gods the LORD had executed judgments* While Egypt buried its firstborn, the plagues showed that Egypt's gods were nothing before the LORD (Exod 12:12).
33:8 *passed through the midst of the sea into the wilderness* The first stretch, Egypt to Sinai, follows Exodus 12 to 19. Moses does not retell the stories; he names the places and lets them speak. Anyone who heard Marah or Rephidim would remember what happened there.
33:9 *at Elim were twelve springs of water and seventy palm trees* After the bitter water of Marah, God led them to a place of rest (Exod 15:27).
33:14 *there was no water there for the people to drink* Rephidim, where God gave water from the rock (Exod 17:1-7). Dophkah and Alush, just before it (33:12-13), are not named in Exodus.
33:16 *encamped at Kibroth-hattaavah* The graves of craving, where the quail came and the plague struck (11:34). Hazeroth followed, where Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses (33:17; 12:1).

from Makheloth and encamped at Tahath (Tachat). **27** And they set out from Tahath and encamped at Terah (Terach). **28** And they set out from Terah and encamped at Mithkah (Mitqa). **29** And they set out from Mithkah and encamped at Hashmonah (Chashmona). **30** And they set out from Hashmonah and encamped at Moseroth (Moserot). **31** And they set out from Moseroth and encamped at Bene-jaakan (Bene-Ya'aqan). **32** And they set out from Bene-jaakan and encamped at Hor-haggidgad (Chor-Hagidgad). **33** And they set out from Hor-haggidgad and encamped at Jotbathah (Yotvata). **34** And they set out from Jotbathah and encamped at Abronah (Avrona). **35** And they set out from Abronah and encamped at Ezion-geber (Etsyon-Gever). **36** And they set out from Ezion-geber and encamped in the wilderness of Zin (Tsin), that ***is*** Kadesh (Qadesh). **37** And they set out from Kadesh and encamped at Hor the mountain, on the edge of the land of Edom. **38** And Aaron the priest went up to Hor the mountain at the mouth of the LORD, and he died there, in the fortieth year of the going out of the sons of Israel from the land of Egypt, in the fifth month, on the first ***day*** of the month. **39** And Aaron ***was*** a son of a hundred and twenty-three years when he died on Hor the mountain. **40** And the Canaanite, the king of Arad, who was dwelling in the Negeb (Negev) in the land of Canaan (Kena'an), heard of the coming of the sons of Israel. **41** And they set out from Hor the mountain and encamped at Zalmonah (Tsalmona). **42** And they set out from Zalmonah and encamped at Punon. **43** And they set out from Punon and encamped at Oboth (Ovot). **44** And they set out from Oboth and encamped at Iye-abarim (Iye-Ha'avarim), on the border of Moab (Mo'av). **45** And they set out from Iim (Iyim) and encamped at Dibon-gad (Divon-Gad). **46** And they set out from Dibon-gad and encamped at Almon-diblathaim (Almon-Divlatayma). **47** And they set out from Almon-diblathaim and encamped in the mountains of the Abarim (Avarim), before Nebo (Nevo). **48** And they set out from the mountains of the Abarim and encamped in the plains of Moab by the Jordan (Yarden) ***at*** Jericho (Yericho). **49** And they encamped by the Jordan from Beth-jeshimoth (Bet-Hayshimot) as far as Abel-shittim (Avel-Hashitim) in the plains of Moab.

Drive Out the Inhabitants

50 And the LORD spoke to Moses in the plains of Moab by the Jordan ***at*** Jericho, saying, **51** "Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, 'When you are passing over the Jordan into the land of Canaan, **52** then you shall dispossess all the inhabitants of the land from before you, and you shall destroy all their carved images, and all their images of molten metal you shall destroy, and all their high places you shall demolish. **53** And you shall take possession of the land and dwell in it, for to you I have given the land to possess it. **54** And you shall inherit the land by lot according to your clans; to the many you shall make his inheritance large, and to the few you shall make his inheritance small; wherever the lot comes out for him, there it shall be his; according to the tribes of your fathers you shall inherit. **55** And if you do not dispossess the inhabitants of the land from before you, then it shall be ***that*** those whom you leave of them ***will be*** as thorns in your eyes and as pricks in your sides, and they will show hostility to you in the land in which you are dwelling. **56** And it shall be ***that*** just as I intended to do to them, I will do to you.'"

NUMBERS 34

The Borders of the Land

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe), saying,

33:30 Deut 10:5
33:31 Deut 10:6; Gen 36:27; 1 Chr 1:43
33:32 Deut 10:7
33:33 Deut 10:7
33:35 Deut 2:8; 1 Kgs 9:26; 1 Kgs 22:48
33:36 Num 20:1; Num 27:14; Num 13:21
33:37 Num 21:4; Num 20:22,23
33:38 Deut 10:6; Deut 32:50; Num 20:24-28
33:40 Num 21:1-3,4-9
33:41 Num 21:4
33:43 Num 21:10
33:44 Num 21:11
33:46 Num 32:34; Isa 15:2; Jer 48:18
33:47 Deut 32:49; Num 21:20; Deut 34:1
33:48 Num 22:1
33:49 Josh 13:20; Ezek 25:9; Num 25:1-9
33:50 Num 33:48,49
33:51 Josh 3:17; Deut 9:1; Deut 7:1
33:52 Exod 23:24,31-33; Exod 34:12-17; Deut 7:2-5,25,26
33:53 Deut 32:8; Ps 24:1,2; Ps 115:16
33:54 Num 26:53-56; Josh 15:1-12; Josh 16:1-4
33:55 2 Cor 12:7; Judg 2:3; Ps 106:34-36
33:56 Luke 21:23; Deut 28:63; Lev 18:28

33:35 *encamped at Ezion-geber* Eighteen stops we know almost nothing about, Rithmah to Ezion-geber (33:18-35), most likely belong to the years of wandering after Kadesh; some arrange them differently. Ezion-geber was at the north end of the Gulf of Aqaba, where Solomon later built ships (1 Kgs 9:26). Hidden years are still years under God's care; their clothes did not wear out (Deut 8:4).
33:36 *encamped in the wilderness of Zin, that is Kadesh* Where the story picks up again in chapter 20.
33:38 *in the fortieth year of the going out of the sons of Israel from the land of Egypt, in the fifth month, on the first day of the month* The only place the Bible dates Aaron's death. He was 123 years old (33:39).
33:40 *the king of Arad* A reminder of the attack and victory of 21:1-3.
33:44 *encamped at Iye-abarim, on the border of Moab* The last stretch went around Edom and north toward the Jordan.
33:49 *from Beth-jeshimoth as far as Abel-shittim in the plains of Moab* Abel-shittim is the Shittim of 25:1. A journey that could have taken weeks took forty years. Unbelief made it long, but God brought them all the way. What He starts, He finishes (Phil 1:6).
33:52 *you shall destroy all their carved images* To dispossess means to drive out and take the place of. High places were hilltop shrines to false gods. Canaan's religions included the sins of Peor and worse, such as burning children (Deut 12:31). God had waited until their sin was full (Gen 15:16). This was His judgment through Israel, tied to that time and land.
33:53 *for to you I have given the land to possess it* The land was God's gift, and He had the right to give it.
33:54 *you shall inherit the land by lot according to your clans* As in 26:53-56: size set the amount, the lot set the place.
33:55 *those whom you leave of them will be as thorns in your eyes and as pricks in your sides* Sadly, that is just what happened. Israel did not finish driving them out (Judg 1:27-36), and their gods became a snare (Judg 2:1-3). For us the battle is not with people but with sin. What we tolerate in our hearts we will one day battle. "Put to death your members which are on the earth" (Col 3:5).
33:56 *just as I intended to do to them, I will do to you* In the end God removed Israel from the land in exile, as He warned (2 Kgs 17:7-18).

2 "Command the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) and say to them, 'When you are coming into the land, Canaan (Kena'an), this ***is*** the land which shall fall to you as an inheritance, the land of Canaan according to its borders. **3** And the south side shall be for you from the wilderness of Zin (Tsin) alongside Edom; and the south border shall be for you from the end of the Salt Sea eastward. **4** And the border shall turn for you on the south of the ascent of Akrabbim (Aqrabim), and it shall pass on to Zin; and its extremities shall be on the south of Kadesh-barnea (Qadesh-Barnea); and it shall go out to Hazar-addar (Chatsar-Adar), and it shall pass on to Azmon (Atsmon). **5** And the border shall turn from Azmon to the brook of Egypt (Mitsrayim), and its extremities shall be at the sea. **6** And ***as for*** the west border, the Great Sea shall be for you, and ***its*** border; this shall be the west border for you. **7** And this shall be the north border for you: from the Great Sea you shall mark out for yourselves ***a line to*** Hor the mountain. **8** From Hor the mountain you shall mark out ***a line*** to the entrance of Hamath (Chamat), and the extremities of the border shall be at Zedad (Tsedad). **9** And the border shall go out to Ziphron (Zifron), and its extremities shall be at Hazar-enan (Chatsar-Einan); this shall be the north border for you. **10** And you shall mark out for yourselves for the east border from Hazar-enan to Shepham (Shefam). **11** And the border shall go down from Shepham to the Riblah (Rivla), on the east of the Ain (Ayin); and the border shall go down and reach to the shoulder of the sea of Chinnereth (Kineret) eastward. **12** And the border shall go down to the Jordan (Yarden), and its extremities shall be at the Salt Sea. This shall be the land for you according to its borders all around.'" **13** And Moses commanded the sons of Israel, saying, "This ***is*** the land which you shall inherit by lot, which the LORD has commanded to give to the nine tribes and the half of the tribe. **14** For the tribe of the sons of the Reubenites by the house of their fathers and the tribe of the sons of the Gadites by the house of their fathers have taken ***it***, and the half of the tribe of Manasseh (Menashe) have taken their inheritance. **15** The two tribes and the half of the tribe have taken their inheritance on the other side of the Jordan ***at*** Jericho (Yericho), eastward, toward the sunrise."

The Men Who Divide the Land

16 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **17** "These ***are*** the names of the men who shall apportion the land to you for inheritance: Eleazar (Elazar) the priest and Joshua (Yehoshua) the son of Nun. **18** And one leader, one leader from ***each*** tribe, you shall take to apportion the land for inheritance. **19** And these ***are*** the names of the men: of the tribe of Judah (Yehuda), Caleb (Kalev) the son of Jephunneh (Yefune); **20** and of the tribe of the sons of Simeon (Shimon), Shemuel (Shemu'el) the son of Ammihud (Amihud); **21** of the tribe of Benjamin (Binyamin), Elidad the son of Chislon (Kislon); **22** and of the tribe of the sons of Dan, a leader, Bukki (Buqi) the son of Jogli (Yogli); **23** of the sons of Joseph (Yosef): of the tribe of the sons of Manasseh, a leader, Hanniel (Chani'el) the son of Ephod (Efod); **24** and of the tribe of the sons of Ephraim (Efrayim), a leader, Kemuel (Qemu'el) the son of Shiphtan (Shiftan); **25** and of the tribe of the sons of Zebulun (Zevulun), a leader, Elizaphan (Elitsafan) the son of Parnach (Parnakh); **26** and of the tribe of the sons of Issachar (Yisashkhar), a leader, Paltiel the son of Azzan (Azan); **27** and of the tribe of the sons of Asher, a leader, Ahihud (Achihud) the son of Shelomi; **28** and of the tribe of the sons of Naphtali (Naftali), a leader, Pedahel the son of

34:2 Gen 17:8; Ps 105:11; Deut 1:7,8
34:3 Gen 14:3; Ezek 47:13,19-23; Exod 23:31
34:4 Num 32:8; Josh 15:3; Judg 1:36
34:5 Josh 15:4,47; Gen 15:18; 1 Kgs 8:65
34:6 Josh 1:4; Josh 9:1; Josh 15:12,47
34:7 Num 33:37; Num 34:3,6,9,10
34:8 Num 13:21; 2 Kgs 14:25; Josh 13:5,6
34:9 Ezek 47:17
34:11 2 Kgs 23:33; Deut 3:17; Josh 11:2
34:12 Num 34:3; Gen 13:10; Gen 14:3
34:13 Num 34:1; Josh 14:1,2
34:14 Num 32:23,33; Deut 3:12-17; Josh 13:8-12
34:15 Num 32:32
34:17 Josh 14:1; Josh 19:51; Num 13:8,16
34:18 Num 1:4-16
34:19 Num 26:65; Num 13:30; Num 14:6,24,30,38

34:2 *this is the land which shall fall to you as an inheritance, the land of Canaan according to its borders* God speaks before the conquest has begun. He does not say it might be theirs if they manage to take it. The borders were drawn by the Owner, for the land promised to Abraham more than six hundred years before (Gen 15:18-21).
34:3 *from the end of the Salt Sea eastward* The Salt Sea is the Dead Sea. The south border ran west from there through the wilderness of Zin.
34:4 *the ascent of Akrabbim* The scorpions' pass. The border ran south of Kadesh-barnea; the place where the old generation refused to go in now marks the edge of the land their children will receive.
34:5 *the brook of Egypt* Usually taken to be the Wadi el-Arish in northern Sinai, not the Nile; a few take it as a branch of the Nile. A wadi is a valley that fills with water only in the rainy season.
34:6 *the Great Sea shall be for you* The Mediterranean. With the sea on the west, desert on the south and east, and mountains to the north, God placed His people at the crossroads of the ancient world, where the nations would pass through and see them.
34:7 *Hor the mountain* Not the Mount Hor where Aaron died in the south (33:37), but probably a peak in the Lebanon range. Scripture does not say which.
34:8 *to the entrance of Hamath* A pass leading toward the city of Hamath in Syria. Some of these northern towns are not known for sure today.
34:11 *the shoulder of the sea of Chinnereth* Chinnereth is the Sea of Galilee. From there the east border followed the Jordan down to the Salt Sea (34:12).
34:12 *This shall be the land for you according to its borders all around* Under David and Solomon Israel came close (1 Kgs 8:65), but never fully held these borders and later lost the land through sin. God's promise was an everlasting covenant (Gen 17:8). Some teachers believe it was fulfilled under Joshua (Josh 21:43-45) or Solomon (1 Kgs 4:21); others see it taken up into the new creation. I believe it still stands, and that Israel will possess the land in full when the Messiah reigns in His kingdom (Ezek 47:13-21; Rom 11:28-29).
34:13 *which the LORD has commanded to give to the nine tribes and the half of the tribe* The other two and a half tribes had their land east of the Jordan (34:15; chapter 32).
34:17 *Eleazar the priest and Joshua the son of Nun* The priest and the leader worked side by side, as in 27:21, with one leader from each tribe (34:18). God set the outer lines and the inner shares alike. "Lines have fallen to me in pleasant places" (Ps 16:6).
34:19 *of the tribe of Judah, Caleb the son of Jephunneh* Forty at Kadesh (Josh 14:7), he had said, "We shall surely go up" (13:30). Now close to eighty, he would hand out the land he had trusted God for, and at eighty-five he asked for Hebron, giants and all (Josh 14:6-14). Faith that waits is never wasted.
34:20 *Shemuel the son of Ammihud* A form of the name Samuel. Except for Caleb, all the leaders are new men; none from chapters 1, 7 and 13 remain. Reuben and Gad are missing because they had their land already.

Ammihud." **29** These ***are those*** whom the LORD commanded to apportion the inheritance to the sons of Israel in the land of Canaan.

NUMBERS 35

Cities for the Levites

1 And the LORD spoke to Moses (Moshe) in the plains of Moab (Mo'av) by the Jordan (Yarden) ***at*** Jericho (Yericho), saying, **2** "Command the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), and they shall give to the Levites from the inheritance of their possession cities to dwell in; and pasture land for the cities all around them you shall give to the Levites. **3** And the cities shall be theirs to dwell in, and their pasture lands shall be for their beasts and for their goods and for all their living things. **4** And the pasture lands of the cities which you shall give to the Levites ***shall be*** from the wall of the city and outward approximately 1,500 feet (a thousand cubits) all around. **5** And you shall measure from outside the city, the east side, approximately 3,000 feet (two thousand by the cubit), and the south side, approximately 3,000 feet (two thousand by the cubit), and the west side, approximately 3,000 feet (two thousand by the cubit), and the north side, approximately 3,000 feet (two thousand by the cubit), and the city ***shall be*** in the middle. This shall be theirs, the pasture lands of the cities. **6** And the cities which you shall give to the Levites ***shall be*** the six cities of refuge, which you shall give for the manslayer to flee there; and in addition to them you shall give forty-two cities. **7** All the cities which you shall give to the Levites ***shall be*** forty-eight cities, them and their pasture lands. **8** And the cities which you shall give ***shall be*** from the possession of the sons of Israel; from the many you shall increase, and from the few you shall decrease; each according to his inheritance which they inherit shall give some of his cities to the Levites."

Cities of Refuge

9 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **10** "Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, 'When you are passing over the Jordan into the land of Canaan (Kena'an), **11** then you shall select for yourselves cities; cities of refuge they shall be for you, and a manslayer who strikes a soul unintentionally may flee there. **12** And the cities shall be for you as a refuge from the avenger, and the manslayer shall not die until he stands before the congregation for judgment. **13** And the cities which you shall give, six cities of refuge, shall be for you. **14** The three cities you shall give on the other side of the Jordan, and the three cities you shall give in the land of Canaan; cities of refuge they shall be. **15** For the sons of Israel and for the sojourner and for the resident among them, these six cities shall be for a refuge, for anyone who strikes a soul unintentionally to flee there. **16** And if he struck him with an instrument of iron, and he died, he ***is*** a manslayer; the manslayer shall surely be put to death. **17** And if he struck him with a stone in the hand, by which he may die, and he died, he ***is*** a manslayer; the manslayer shall surely be put to death. **18** Or ***if*** he struck him with an instrument of wood in the hand, by which he may die, and he died, he ***is*** a manslayer; the manslayer shall surely be put to death. **19** The avenger of blood, he shall put the manslayer to death; when he meets him, he shall put him to death. **20** And if he pushed him in hatred, or threw ***something*** at him while lying in wait, and he died, **21** or in enmity struck him with his hand, and he died, the one who struck shall surely be put to

34:29 Num 34:18; Josh 19:51
35:1 Num 22:1; Num 26:63; Num 31:12
35:2 1 Cor 9:12; Josh 14:3,4; Ezek 48:8,22
35:3 Josh 21:11; 2 Chr 11:14; Ezek 45:2
35:6 Josh 21:3,13,21,27,32,36,38; Ps 9:9; Num 35:13,14
35:7 Josh 21:3-42; 1 Chr 6:54-81
35:8 Num 26:54; Num 33:54; Gen 49:7
35:10 Num 34:2; Lev 14:34; Lev 25:2
35:11 Heb 6:18; Exod 21:13; Josh 20:2
35:12 Heb 6:18; Deut 19:6; Josh 20:3-6,9
35:13 Heb 6:18
35:14 Heb 6:18; Deut 4:41-43; Deut 19:8-10
35:15 Heb 6:18; Num 15:16; Exod 12:49
35:16 Lev 24:17; Num 35:22-24; Deut 19:11-13
35:17 Exod 21:18
35:19 Deut 19:6,12; Josh 20:3,5; Num 35:12,21,24,27
35:20 Exod 21:14; Deut 19:11; 2 Sam 3:27

34:29 *These are those whom the LORD commanded to apportion the inheritance* God chose the borders, the method and the men. His promises are specific. Jesus said, "I go to prepare a place for you" (John 14:2). Our inheritance is real, and it is kept for us (1 Pet 1:4).

35:2 *they shall give to the Levites from the inheritance of their possession cities to dwell in* The Levites had no tribal land (18:20-24) and lived on the tithes, but they still needed homes and room for their animals.

35:4 *from the wall of the city and outward approximately 1,500 feet all around* Verse 5 then sets about 3,000 feet on each side. The two measures are hard to fit together, and teachers explain them in different ways. The simplest reading is that verse 4 gives the distance out from the wall and verse 5 the side of the outer square. Either way, the Levites had a set area no one could take.

35:7 *All the cities which you shall give to the Levites shall be forty-eight cities* Six cities of refuge and forty-two more, all listed in Joshua 21. Each tribe gave in proportion to its size (35:8).

35:8 *from the many you shall increase, and from the few you shall decrease* Jacob had said of Simeon and Levi, "I will scatter them in Israel" (Gen 49:7). God turned that judgment into blessing. The Levites, who taught God's Law (Deut 33:10), lived among every tribe, so no part of Israel was far from someone who could teach God's Word.

35:11 *a manslayer who strikes a soul unintentionally may flee there* A manslayer is anyone who killed another person, whether by intent or by accident.

35:12 *as a refuge from the avenger* The avenger is the go'el, the near relative, the same word used for a kinsman-redeemer. With no police force, he saw that a relative's blood was answered for. But anger can outrun the facts, and the refuge kept anyone from being killed before his case was heard.

35:14 *The three cities you shall give on the other side of the Jordan, and the three cities you shall give in the land of Canaan* Kedesh, Shechem and Hebron west of the Jordan; Bezer, Ramoth and Golan east of it (Josh 20:7-8). They were spread out so one was within reach from anywhere.

35:15 *For the sons of Israel and for the sojourner and for the resident among them* God's justice did not change with a person's family or nation.

35:16 *the manslayer shall surely be put to death* The weapon showed what he meant to do. Why so strict? "Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man his blood shall be shed; for in the image of God He made man" (Gen 9:6). This law did not treat life as cheap. It treated it as so precious that taking it on purpose cost the murderer his own.

35:20 *if he pushed him in hatred, or threw something at him while lying in wait* Intent mattered most. Hatred and lying in wait marked murder.

35:21 *The avenger of blood shall put the manslayer to death when he meets him* In Israel this came only after judgment by the congregation and on more than one witness (35:24, 30). It was never private revenge. Today God gives the sword of justice to governing authorities (Rom 13:4) and forbids us to take revenge ourselves (Rom 12:19). Christians differ on whether and when the death penalty should be used now. All agree murder is a terrible sin against God and a person made in His image.

death; he ***is*** a manslayer. The avenger of blood shall put the manslayer to death when he meets him. **22** And if he pushed him suddenly without enmity, or threw any instrument at him without lying in wait, **23** or with any stone by which he may die, without seeing ***him***, and made ***it*** fall on him, and he died, and he ***was*** not his enemy and not seeking his harm, **24** then the congregation shall judge between the one who struck and the avenger of blood according to these judgments. **25** And the congregation shall deliver the manslayer from the hand of the avenger of blood, and the congregation shall return him to his city of refuge, where he had fled; and he shall dwell in it until the death of the high priest, whom ***one*** anointed with the holy oil. **26** And if the manslayer ever goes out beyond the border of his city of refuge, where he has fled, **27** and the avenger of blood finds him outside the border of his city of refuge, and the avenger of blood kills the manslayer, ***there is*** no blood ***guilt*** for him. **28** For he shall dwell in his city of refuge until the death of the high priest; and after the death of the high priest the manslayer shall return to the land of his possession.

Witnesses and Blood

29 And these shall be for you a statute of judgment throughout your generations in all your dwelling places. **30** Anyone who strikes a soul, at the mouth of witnesses one shall kill the manslayer; and one witness shall not testify against a soul to ***cause him to*** die. **31** And you shall not take a ransom for the life of a manslayer who ***is*** guilty to die, for he shall surely be put to death. **32** And you shall not take a ransom for fleeing to his city of refuge, to return to dwell in the land until the death of the priest. **33** And you shall not pollute the land in which you ***are***; for the blood, it pollutes the land, and for the land atonement shall not be made for the blood which is shed in it, except by the blood of the one who shed it. **34** And you shall not make unclean the land in which you are dwelling, in the midst of which I dwell; for I, the LORD, dwell among the sons of Israel.'"

NUMBERS 36

The Inheritance of Zelophehad's Daughters

1 And the heads of the fathers of the clan of the sons of Gilead (Gilad), the son of Machir (Makhir), the son of Manasseh (Menashe), of the clans of the sons of Joseph (Yosef), drew near, and they spoke before Moses (Moshe) and before the leaders, the heads of the fathers of the sons of Israel (Yisra'el). **2** And they said, "The LORD commanded my lord to give the land as an inheritance by lot to the sons of Israel; and my lord was commanded by the LORD to give the inheritance of Zelophehad (Tselofchad) our brother to his daughters. **3** And ***if*** they become wives to one of the sons of the tribes of the sons of Israel, then their inheritance will be withdrawn from the inheritance of our fathers and will be added to the inheritance of the tribe to which they will belong; and from the lot of our inheritance it will be withdrawn. **4** And if the jubilee of the sons of Israel comes, then their inheritance will be added to the inheritance of the tribe to which they will belong; and from the inheritance of the tribe of our fathers their inheritance will be withdrawn." **5** And Moses commanded the sons of Israel at the mouth of the LORD, saying, "The tribe of the sons of Joseph is speaking

35:22 Num 35:11; Exod 21:13; Deut 19:5
35:24 Josh 20:6; Num 35:12
35:25 Heb 4:14; Heb 4:15; Heb 7:26
35:27 Exod 22:2; Deut 19:6,10
35:28 Heb 9:11; John 15:4-6; Acts 11:23
35:29 Num 27:1,11
35:30 Matt 18:16; 2 Cor 13:1; Heb 10:28
35:31 Gen 9:5,6; Exod 21:14; Deut 19:11-13
35:32 Acts 4:12; Gal 2:21; Gal 3:10-13,22
35:33 Luke 11:50; Matt 23:35; Luke 11:51
35:34 2 Cor 6:16; 2 Cor 6:17; Num 5:3
36:1 Num 27:1; Num 26:29-33; Josh 17:2,3
36:2 Num 33:54; Num 26:55,56; Num 27:1-7
36:4 Lev 25:10-18,23; Isa 61:2; Luke 4:18,19
36:5 Num 27:7; Deut 5:28

35:22 *if he pushed him suddenly without enmity, or threw any instrument at him without lying in wait* An accident, such as an axe head flying off its handle (Deut 19:5).
35:24 *the congregation shall judge between the one who struck and the avenger of blood* The case was heard openly. Neither grief nor rumor could decide it.
35:25 *he shall dwell in it until the death of the high priest* Why must an innocent man stay? Because a life had still been lost, and every human life matters to God. It also protected him from a relative who might not accept the verdict.
35:27 *the avenger of blood finds him outside the border of his city of refuge* Safety was inside the city, not outside it.
35:28 *after the death of the high priest the manslayer shall return to the land of his possession* Scripture does not explain why. Many see it as the end of an era, a kind of amnesty. I see a picture of Christ, and I say plainly it is a picture; the New Testament does not call these cities a type. But Hebrews speaks of "we who have fled for refuge" (Heb 6:18) and names Jesus our High Priest forever (Heb 6:20). We are guilty by our own sin, but in Him we are safe (Rom 8:1). Our High Priest's death has already happened, once for all, and He lives to intercede for us (Heb 7:25).
35:30 *one witness shall not testify against a soul to cause him to die* No one could be put to death on one person's word (Deut 17:6; 19:15). Jesus and Paul used the same rule in the church (Matt 18:16; 2 Cor 13:1).
35:31 *you shall not take a ransom for the life of a manslayer who is guilty to die* In many ancient nations a rich murderer could pay the family and go free. Not in Israel. Life could not be bought, and justice was the same for rich and poor (35:32).
35:33 *for the blood, it pollutes the land* Innocent blood left unanswered defiled the land itself, as Abel's blood cried out from the ground (Gen 4:10).
35:34 *for I, the LORD, dwell among the sons of Israel* The reason behind the whole chapter. Murder was an offense in the presence of God. The murderer's blood could cleanse the land of one crime, but Jesus' blood "speaks better things than that of Abel" (Heb 12:24). It does not cry for judgment; it speaks forgiveness.
36:1 *the heads of the fathers of the clan of the sons of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh* These were leading men of Zelophehad's own clan, coming before the leaders just as the daughters had done (27:2).
36:2 *to give the inheritance of Zelophehad our brother to his daughters* They did not question God's ruling. They saw a problem with it.
36:3 *their inheritance will be withdrawn from the inheritance of our fathers* A woman's land passed to her husband and children, so if the daughters married into another tribe, the land would go with them.
36:4 *if the jubilee of the sons of Israel comes* In the jubilee, every fiftieth year, sold land went back to its first family (Lev 25:10-13). Land passed on by marriage and inheritance was not sold, so it would not come back. It would be lost to Manasseh forever. The men were not trying to take anything from the sisters; they wanted to protect what God had given their tribe.
36:5 *The tribe of the sons of Joseph is speaking right* God said the same of the daughters (27:7). Both sides were right, and God's answer honored both.

right. **6** This ***is*** the word which the LORD has commanded concerning the daughters of Zelophehad, saying, 'To the one ***who is*** good in their eyes let them become wives; only to the clan of the tribe of their father shall they become wives.' **7** And the inheritance of the sons of Israel shall not go around from tribe to tribe; for the sons of Israel shall cling, each man to the inheritance of the tribe of his fathers. **8** And every daughter who possesses an inheritance from the tribes of the sons of Israel shall become wife to one of the clan of the tribe of her father, so that the sons of Israel may possess, each man, the inheritance of his fathers. **9** And an inheritance shall not go around from a tribe to another tribe; for the tribes of the sons of Israel shall cling, each man to his own inheritance." **10** Just as the LORD had commanded Moses, so the daughters of Zelophehad did. **11** And Mahlah (Machla), Tirzah (Tirtsa), and Hoglah (Chogla), and Milcah (Milka), and Noah (No'a), the daughters of Zelophehad, became wives to the sons of their uncles. **12** Of the clans of the sons of Manasseh the son of Joseph they became wives, and their inheritance was with the tribe of the clan of their father. **13** These ***are*** the commandments and the judgments which the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses to the sons of Israel in the plains of Moab (Mo'av) by the Jordan (Yarden) ***at*** Jericho (Yericho).

36:6 Num 36:12; Gen 24:3,57,58; 2 Cor 6:14
36:7 1 Kgs 21:3; Num 36:9
36:8 1 Chr 23:22
36:10 Exod 39:42,43; Lev 24:23; 2 Chr 30:12
36:11 Num 27:1
36:13 Lev 27:34; Lev 7:37,38; Lev 11:46

36:6 *To the one who is good in their eyes let them become wives* The daughters were free to choose their husbands; they were not handed off. The only limit was that the husband be from their father's tribe. This rule was for Israel's land and is not a rule for Christian marriage, but believers are to marry "only in the Lord" (1 Cor 7:39). Whom we marry affects the faith we pass on.

36:7 *the sons of Israel shall cling, each man to the inheritance of the tribe of his fathers* Each tribe's portion was a sign that God had kept His word. Naboth later refused to sell "the inheritance of my fathers" (1 Kgs 21:3). That was faithfulness, not stubbornness.

36:8 *every daughter who possesses an inheritance* The ruling for one family became a law for all.

36:10 *Just as the LORD had commanded Moses, so the daughters of Zelophehad did* In a book where so many complained and rebelled, these sisters asked for what God promised, accepted His limit gladly, and trusted Him with their marriages and their future.

36:11 *became wives to the sons of their uncles* They married cousins from their own clan. When the land was divided, they reminded Eleazar and Joshua of the LORD's command and received their land (Josh 17:3-6). Their faith held from the plains of Moab to the fields of Manasseh.

36:13 *These are the commandments and the judgments which the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses to the sons of Israel in the plains of Moab* The book's closing line sums up the laws given in Moab from chapter 22 on. Numbers began at Sinai counting the first generation; it ends with the second counted, organized and ready at the Jordan. The God who judged the parents kept His word to the children. "God is not a man, that He should lie" (23:19). He will bring all who trust in Jesus home to the inheritance He has prepared (1 Pet 1:3-5).

DEUTERONOMY

Introduction

Title

Deuteronomy is the fifth book of the Bible and the last of the five books of Moses, the Law or Torah. The name comes from a Greek word meaning second law. It is not a new law. It is the Law given a second time, explained and pressed home to the new generation before they crossed the Jordan. The Greek translators took the title from 17:18, which speaks of a "copy of this law." The Hebrew title comes from the first words, "These are the words," often shortened to Devarim, words. Deuteronomy is the book of remembering. Forty years after the exodus, Moses tells Israel what God has done, what God requires, and what will happen if they forget Him.

Author and Date

Moses. The book says, "Moses wrote this law" (31:9), and that he finished writing its words in a book (31:24). Jesus and the apostles quoted Deuteronomy as the words of Moses (Mark 10:3-5; Acts 3:22; Rom 10:19). The account of his death in chapter 34 was likely added by Joshua or another faithful writer soon after, and perhaps a few later notes, such as updated place names. Many modern scholars believe Deuteronomy was written centuries later and tie it to the book of the Law found in the temple in Josiah's day (2 Kgs 22). I take the book at its word. It was spoken in the fortieth year after the exodus, in the eleventh month (1:3), in the last weeks of Moses' life, about 1405 B.C.

Background and Setting

Numbers ends with Israel on the plains of Moab, east of the Jordan across from Jericho, and Deuteronomy never moves from there (1:1-5; 34:1). The generation that came out of Egypt has died in the wilderness because they would not trust God at Kadesh-barnea. Israel has just defeated Sihon and Og, the Amorite kings east of the Jordan. Their children are about to cross into the land promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and Moses will not go with them (3:23-27).

Most of the book is Moses preaching in the last weeks of his life. The book covers only a few weeks: Moses began on the first day of the eleventh month (1:3), Israel mourned him thirty days (34:8), and Joshua crossed the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month (Josh 4:19). But Moses looks back over forty years and ahead to life in the land, exile among the nations, and Israel's return to the LORD in the last days (4:25-31; 30:1-10).

The book is shaped like a covenant: what God has done (chapters 1 to 4), the commands (5 to 26), blessings and curses (27 and 28), heaven and earth as witnesses (30:19), and provision for the Law to be kept and read again (31). Many scholars have pointed out that this pattern is much like the treaties great kings of that time made with the peoples under them. The LORD is the great King, and Israel is His people. When you read a command here, remember who is hearing it: a nation God had already rescued. The Law was given to a people God had already saved. It was never the way to be saved.

Themes

The theme of Deuteronomy is love and loyalty to the LORD, the one God who chose Israel and redeemed them. "Hear, Israel: the LORD our God, the LORD is one. And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might" (6:4-5).

Remember and do not forget. Moses warns again and again against forgetting God in times of plenty and against the idols of Canaan (6:10-12; 8:11-18). Man does not live on bread alone (8:3). God chose Israel not because they were many or righteous but because He loved them (7:7-8; 9:4-6). What He asks is to fear Him, walk in His ways, love Him and serve Him with all the heart (10:12-13).

The laws for life in the land (chapters 12 to 26) show that love for God reaches into worship at the place He chooses, justice in the courts, care for the poor, the widow, the orphan and the sojourner, and honesty in daily business.

The book sets a clear choice before Israel: blessing and curse, life and death (chapters 28 and 30). "You shall choose life" (30:19). And it promises that even if Israel fails and is scattered, God will not forget His covenant with their fathers (4:31). He will gather them from the nations and circumcise their hearts (30:1-6). God is not finished with Israel.

Christ in Deuteronomy

When Satan tempted Jesus in the wilderness, Jesus answered him three times from Deuteronomy (8:3; 6:16; 6:13; Matt 4:1-11). Where Israel failed for forty years, Jesus stood firm for forty days. Asked for the greatest commandment, He answered with 6:5 (Matt 22:37-38). Moses promised that God would raise up a Prophet like him (18:15-18), and Peter preached that Jesus is that Prophet (Acts 3:22-26). The law that one who is hanged is "a curse of God" (21:23) is the verse Paul uses to show that Christ became a curse for us (Gal 3:13). Paul takes the words of 30:12-14 and applies them to "the word of faith" (Rom 10:8) about Christ. Deuteronomy shows what it means to love God with everything we are, and it shows that Israel could not do it. Only Christ has loved the Father that way, and through Him God gives a new heart to those who believe (30:6; Ezek 36:26).

Hard Passages

Some parts of Deuteronomy raise honest questions. The destruction of Sihon's and Og's cities (chapters 2 and 3), the command to devote the nations of Canaan to destruction (chapters 7 and 20), and the command to blot out Amalek (25:17-19) are explained as God's judgment on peoples whose sin had come to full measure, given for that time only and never a license for anyone to take a life in God's name today. The laws on the death penalty (chapters 13, 17, 21 and 22) were Israel's court law under the Mosaic covenant, not law for the church.

The laws about servants and captives (chapters 15, 21 and 23) and about women, marriage and divorce (chapters 21, 22, 24 and 25) are read as limits set in a hard and fallen world, as Jesus said of divorce (Matt 19:8), not as God's ideal. The notes speak plainly to victims of abuse and assault and urge that such

crimes be reported. The curses of chapter 28 describe the horrors of siege and exile, and they explain why God allowed Israel's scattering without ever excusing hatred of the Jewish people. Where good teachers disagree, as on the reading of 32:8 and 32:43, the land covenant, divorce and remarriage, and the meaning of several hard laws, the notes give the main views.

Outline

I. Moses' First Message: Remember What God Has Done (1:1-4:49)
  A. From Horeb to Kadesh-barnea (1:1-46)
  B. Past Edom, Moab and Ammon; Sihon and Og defeated (2:1-3:29)
  C. Obey the LORD and make no idols (4:1-49)
II. Moses' Second Message: The Heart of the Law (5:1-11:32)
  A. The Ten Commandments again (5:1-33)
  B. Hear, O Israel (6:1-25)
  C. A holy people chosen in love (7:1-26)
  D. Do not forget the LORD (8:1-20)
  E. Not because of your righteousness (9:1-10:11)
  F. What the LORD requires (10:12-11:32)
III. Moses' Second Message: Laws for Life in the Land (12:1-26:19)
  A. Worship at the place the LORD will choose (12:1-32)
  B. False prophets, clean food and the tithe (13:1-14:29)
  C. The year of release and the festivals (15:1-16:17)
  D. Judges, the king, priests and the Prophet like Moses (16:18-18:22)
  E. Cities of refuge, witnesses and laws for war (19:1-20:20)
  F. Laws on life, family and neighbor (21:1-25:19)
  G. Firstfruits, the tithe and the covenant declared (26:1-19)
IV. Blessings and Curses (27:1-28:68)
  A. The altar on Mount Ebal and the curses (27:1-26)
  B. Blessings and curses (28:1-68)
V. Moses' Third Message: The Covenant Renewed (29:1-30:20)
  A. The covenant in the land of Moab (29:1-29)
  B. Return, restoration and the call to choose life (30:1-20)
VI. The Last Days of Moses (31:1-34:12)
  A. Joshua appointed and the Law written (31:1-30)
  B. The Song of Moses (32:1-52)
  C. Moses blesses the tribes (33:1-29)
  D. The death of Moses (34:1-12)

DEUTERONOMY

DEUTERONOMY 1

Moses Speaks on the Plains of Moab

1 These ***are*** the words which Moses (Moshe) spoke to all Israel (Yisra'el) on the other side of the Jordan (Yarden), in the wilderness, in the Arabah (Arava) opposite Suph (Suf), between Paran and Tophel (Tofel) and Laban (Lavan) and Hazeroth (Chatserot) and Dizahab (Di-Zahav). **2** ***It is*** eleven days from Horeb (Chorev) ***by*** the way of the mountain of Seir (Se'ir) to Kadesh-barnea (Qadesh-Barnea). **3** And it was in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first of the month, Moses spoke to the sons of Israel according to all that the LORD had commanded him for them, **4** after he had struck Sihon (Sichon) king of the Amorite, who ***was*** dwelling in Heshbon (Cheshbon), and Og king of Bashan, who ***was*** dwelling in Ashtaroth (Ashtarot), in Edrei. **5** On the other side of the Jordan, in the land of Moab (Mo'av), Moses undertook ***to*** explain this law, saying, **6** "The LORD our God spoke to us at Horeb, saying, '***It is*** enough for you to remain at this mountain. **7** Turn and set out for yourselves, and go ***to*** the hill country of the Amorite and to all its neighbors in the Arabah, in the hill country and in the Shephelah and in the Negeb (Negev) and on the coast of the sea, the land of the Canaanite, and the Lebanon (Levanon), as far as the great river, the river Euphrates (Perat). **8** See, I have set the land before you; go in and take possession of the land which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham (Avraham), to Isaac (Yitschaq), and to Jacob (Ya'aqov), to give to them and to their seed after them.'

Leaders Appointed to Help Moses

9 And I said to you at that time, saying, 'I am not able by myself to bear you. **10** The LORD your God has multiplied you, and look, you ***are*** today like the stars of the heavens for multitude. **11** May the LORD, the God of your fathers, add to you a thousand times ***as many*** as you ***are***, and may He bless you just as He spoke to you! **12** How will I bear by myself your burden and your load and your strife? **13** Provide for yourselves men, wise and understanding and known, for your tribes, and I will appoint them as your heads.' **14** And you answered me and said, 'The thing which you have spoken to do ***is*** good.' **15** And I took the heads of your tribes, men wise and known, and I appointed them heads over you, leaders of thousands and leaders of hundreds and leaders of fifties and leaders of tens, and officers for your tribes. **16** And I commanded your judges at that time, saying, 'Hear between your brothers, and you shall judge ***with*** righteousness between a man and his brother and his sojourner. **17** You shall not show regard to faces in judgment; you shall hear the small as the great. You shall not be afraid of any man, for the judgment is God's. And the matter which is too hard for you, you shall bring near to me, and I will hear it.' **18** And I commanded you at that time all the things which you shall

1:1 1 Sam 25:1; Num 32:5,19,32; Num 34:15
1:2 Num 13:26; Num 32:8; Deut 1:44
1:3 Num 33:38; Num 20:1
1:4 Num 21:21-35; Neh 9:22; Deut 2:26-37
1:5 Deut 4:8; Deut 17:18,19; Deut 31:9
1:6 Exod 3:1; Num 10:11-13; Deut 5:2
1:7 Josh 10:40; Deut 11:24; Gen 15:16-21
1:8 Gen 12:7; Gen 17:7,8; Gen 26:3,4
1:9 Exod 18:18; Num 11:11-14,17
1:10 Deut 10:22; Deut 28:62; Gen 15:5
1:11 Gen 22:17; 2 Sam 24:3; Ps 115:14
1:12 Gal 6:2; Deut 1:9; Num 11:11-15
1:13 Exod 18:21; Num 11:16,17; Acts 1:21-23
1:15 Deut 16:18; Exod 18:25,26; Eph 4:11
1:16 Matt 21:33; John 7:24; Deut 16:18,19
1:17 1 Pet 1:17; John 7:51; Deut 16:19
1:18 Deut 4:5,40; Deut 12:28,32; Matt 28:20

1:1 *These are the words which Moses spoke to all Israel on the other side of the Jordan* East of the Jordan, in the Arabah, the low valley running from the Sea of Galilee through the Dead Sea. Some of the place names are hard to locate today, but the point is plain. Israel is at the edge of the land.
1:2 *It is eleven days from Horeb by the way of the mountain of Seir to Kadesh-barnea* A quiet rebuke. Horeb is another name for Mount Sinai, and Kadesh-barnea was an oasis on Canaan's southern border. An eleven-day trip took forty years. How many of our own wilderness years come from not trusting what God has said?
1:3 *in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first of the month* Moses dates his sermon near the end of his life. He spoke "according to all that the LORD had commanded him." This is not an old man's memories but God's Word through His prophet.
1:4 *after he had struck Sihon king of the Amorite* The recent victories east of the Jordan (Num 21:21-35) showed God had already begun giving them the land.
1:5 *Moses undertook to explain this law* That is what Deuteronomy is: the Law given at Sinai, explained and pressed home to a new generation. Moses told them why and pleaded with them to obey from the heart. Good teaching still does both.
1:6 *It is enough for you to remain at this mountain* Israel camped at Horeb about a year (Num 10:11-12), a holy year of hearing God's voice and building the tabernacle. But Sinai was a place to be prepared, not a place to settle.
1:8 *See, I have set the land before you; go in and take possession* The borders reach to the Euphrates (1:7), as promised to Abraham (Gen 15:18). The land was a gift, but they still had to walk in and take it. God often gives, and then calls us to trust Him enough to step forward.
1:9 *I am not able by myself to bear you* God's blessing made the job too big for one man (Exod 18). You cannot carry God's people alone, and God never asked you to.
1:10 *you are today like the stars of the heavens for multitude* Just as God promised Abraham (Gen 15:5).
1:11 *May the LORD, the God of your fathers, add to you a thousand times as many as you are* Moses does not complain about the blessing; he prays for more of it. But he is honest about the burden, the load and the strife (1:12). Leading God's people is heavy work.
1:13 *men, wise and understanding and known* Known means men with a proven name among their people. The early church followed the same pattern when it chose seven men "full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom" (Acts 6:3). God cares about the character of those who lead.
1:15 *leaders of thousands and leaders of hundreds and leaders of fifties and leaders of tens* Small matters were handled close to home, and only the hardest cases came up the line. God cares about order among His people.
1:16 *between a man and his brother and his sojourner* A sojourner was a foreigner living in Israel. He was to get the same justice as anyone born an Israelite.
1:17 *You shall not show regard to faces in judgment; you shall hear the small as the great* Do not favor the rich or ignore the poor (James 2:1-4). "You shall not be afraid of any man, for the judgment is God's." A judge sat in God's place and answered to Him, not the crowd. Do what is right, and leave the results with God.

do.

The Spies and the Refusal at Kadesh

19 And we set out from Horeb, and we walked ***through*** all that great and fearsome wilderness which you saw, ***on*** the way of the hill country of the Amorite, just as the LORD our God had commanded us; and we came to Kadesh-barnea. **20** And I said to you, 'You have come to the hill country of the Amorite, which the LORD our God is giving to us. **21** See, the LORD your God has set the land before you; go up, take possession, just as the LORD, the God of your fathers, has spoken to you. Do not be afraid, and do not be dismayed.' **22** And all of you drew near to me and said, 'Let us send men before us, and let them spy out the land for us and bring back word to us ***of*** the way on which we shall go up and the cities to which we shall come.' **23** And the thing was good in my eyes, and I took twelve men from you, one man for a tribe. **24** And they turned and went up into the hill country, and they came to the wadi of Eshcol (Eshkol), and they spied it out. **25** And they took in their hand some of the fruit of the land and brought ***it*** down to us, and they brought back word to us and said, 'The land which the LORD our God is giving to us ***is*** good.' **26** And you were not willing to go up, and you rebelled against the mouth of the LORD your God. **27** And you murmured in your tents and said, 'In the LORD's hatred of us He has brought us out of the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim), to give us into the hand of the Amorite, to destroy us. **28** Where are we going up? Our brothers have made our heart melt, saying, "The people ***is*** greater and taller than we; the cities ***are*** great and fortified to the heavens; and also we have seen the sons of the Anakim there."' **29** And I said to you, 'You shall not be terrified, and you shall not be afraid of them. **30** The LORD your God, who goes before you, He will fight for you, according to all that He did with you in Egypt before your eyes, **31** and in the wilderness, where you saw that the LORD your God carried you, just as a man carries his son, in all the way which you walked until you came to this place.' **32** And in this thing you ***were*** not believing in the LORD your God, **33** who went before you on the way to seek out for you a place for you to camp, in fire by night to show you the way in which you should go, and in the cloud by day.

The LORD's Sentence and the Defeat at Hormah

34 And the LORD heard the sound of your words, and He was angry, and He swore, saying, **35** 'Not one man among these men, this evil generation, shall see the good land which I swore to give to your fathers, **36** except Caleb (Kalev) the son of Jephunneh (Yefune); he shall see it, and to him I will give the land on which he has trodden, and to his sons, because he has followed fully after the LORD.' **37** Also with me the LORD was angry on account of you, saying, 'Also you shall not go in there. **38** Joshua (Yehoshua) the son of Nun, who stands before you, he shall go in there; strengthen him, for he will cause Israel to inherit it. **39** And your little ones, of whom you said, "They shall become plunder," and your sons, who today do not know good and evil, they shall go in there,

1:19 Deut 1:2; Deut 8:15; Jer 2:6
1:20 Deut 1:7,8
1:21 Josh 1:9; Ps 46:1,7,11; Heb 13:6
1:22 Num 13:1-20
1:23 Num 13:3-33
1:24 Num 13:21-27; Josh 2:1,2
1:26 Num 14:1-4; Acts 7:51; Ps 106:24,25
1:27 Deut 9:28; Num 14:3; Exod 16:3,8
1:28 Deut 9:1,2; Josh 14:8; Num 13:28-33
1:30 Exod 14:14,25; Neh 4:20; Josh 10:42
1:31 Acts 13:18; Isa 46:3,4; Isa 63:9
1:32 Ps 106:24; Jude 1:5; 2 Chr 20:20
1:33 Num 10:33; Ps 78:14; Num 9:15-22
1:34 Heb 3:10; Deut 2:14,15; Num 14:22-30
1:36 Num 14:24; Num 13:6,30; Num 26:65
1:37 Deut 4:21; Num 20:12; Deut 34:4
1:38 Deut 3:28; Num 14:30,38; Deut 31:7,8,14,23
1:39 Isa 7:15,16; Num 14:3,31; Jonah 4:11

1:19 *all that great and fearsome wilderness* Moses does not soften it. The Sinai desert was harsh, dry and dangerous, but God brought them through it.
1:21 *Do not be afraid, and do not be dismayed* Fear was the real enemy at Kadesh, not the Amorites. When God tells us to go, He also tells us not to be afraid, because He goes with us.
1:22 *Let us send men before us, and let them spy out the land for us* Numbers 13:1-2 says God told Moses to send the spies. Here we learn the idea started with the people and God allowed it. Both are true. There was nothing wrong with looking the land over.
1:24 *the wadi of Eshcol* A wadi is a stream bed that runs with water in the rainy season and is dry the rest of the year.
1:25 *The land which the LORD our God is giving to us is good* The report started out true. God had not lied. The problem was not the land; it was what came next.
1:26 *you were not willing to go up, and you rebelled against the mouth of the LORD your God* The heart of the story. They did not just hesitate. They rebelled.
1:27 *In the LORD's hatred of us He has brought us out of the land of Egypt* A terrible thing to say about the God who split the sea for them. Unbelief twists everything God has done into proof that He is against us.
1:28 *the cities are great and fortified to the heavens; and also we have seen the sons of the Anakim there* The Anakim were a race of very tall men. Everything they said about the enemy was true. What they forgot was how big their God was.
1:30 *The LORD your God, who goes before you, He will fight for you* They did not have to win this war on their own. God had already fought for them in Egypt before their eyes.
1:31 *the LORD your God carried you, just as a man carries his son* One of the tenderest pictures in the book: a father carrying a tired child down a long road. Israel was not led by a cold master but carried by a Father. If you belong to Christ, that is what He is to you.
1:32 *in this thing you were not believing in the LORD your God* The root of it all: not the giants, not the walls, but unbelief.
1:33 *in fire by night to show you the way in which you should go, and in the cloud by day* The pillar was right in front of them while they said God hated them. "They were not able to enter in because of unbelief" (Heb 3:19). We can see God's faithfulness every day and still refuse to trust Him.
1:34 *the LORD heard the sound of your words, and He was angry* God heard what they said in their tents. He hears what we grumble too.
1:35 *Not one man among these men, this evil generation, shall see the good land* The judgment matched the sin. They said they did not want to go in. God said, then you will not.
1:36 *because he has followed fully after the LORD* Caleb saw the same giants and walls but trusted God (Num 14:24), and forty-five years later he claimed his mountain (Josh 14:6-14). One man who follows God fully can stand apart from a whole generation that does not.
1:37 *Also with me the LORD was angry on account of you* At Meribah Moses struck the rock in anger and did not treat God as holy before the people (Num 20:7-13). The people's complaining provoked him, and Moses was still responsible for what he did (Ps 106:32-33). Both are true.
1:38 *Joshua the son of Nun, who stands before you, he shall go in there; strengthen him* Joshua had served at Moses' side for forty years. The old leader's last job was to build up the new one. Every generation of leaders should do the same.
1:39 *your little ones, of whom you said, "They shall become plunder,"* The parents used their children as an excuse not to obey. God turned it around. The very children they feared for would go in. Too young to "know good and evil," they were not punished for their parents' sin. The people listening to Moses were those children, now grown.

and to them I will give it, and they shall take possession of it. **40** And you, turn for yourselves and set out toward the wilderness ***by*** the way of the Red Sea.' **41** And you answered and said to me, 'We have sinned against the LORD; we will go up and we will fight, according to all that the LORD our God commanded us.' And you girded on, each man, his weapons of war, and you regarded ***it*** as easy to go up into the hill country. **42** And the LORD said to me, 'Say to them, "You shall not go up, and you shall not fight, for I ***am*** not in your midst, so that you will not be defeated before your enemies."' **43** And I spoke to you, and you did not listen, and you rebelled against the mouth of the LORD, and you acted presumptuously and went up into the hill country. **44** And the Amorite who ***was*** dwelling in that hill country came out to meet you, and they pursued you just as the bees do, and they crushed you in Seir as far as Hormah (Chorma). **45** And you returned and wept before the LORD, and the LORD did not listen to your voice, and He did not give ear to you. **46** And you remained in Kadesh (Qadesh) many days, according to the days that you remained.

DEUTERONOMY 2

Past Edom, Moab and Ammon

1 And we turned and set out into the wilderness ***by*** the way of the Red Sea, just as the LORD had spoken to me, and we went around the mountain of Seir (Se'ir) many days. **2** And the LORD said to me, saying, **3** '***It is*** enough for you to go around this hill country; turn for yourselves northward. **4** And command the people, saying, "You ***are*** passing through the territory of your brothers, the sons of Esau (Esav), who dwell in Seir, and they will be afraid of you; and you shall be very careful. **5** Do not contend with them, for I will not give to you ***any*** of their land, so much as a treading place for the sole of a foot, because I have given the mountain of Seir to Esau ***as*** a possession. **6** Food you shall buy from them with money, and you shall eat; and also water you shall purchase from them with money, and you shall drink. **7** For the LORD your God has blessed you in all the work of your hand; He has known your walking through this great wilderness. These forty years the LORD your God ***has been*** with you; you have not lacked a thing."' **8** And we passed on from our brothers, the sons of Esau, who dwell in Seir, from the way of the Arabah (Arava), from Elath (Elat) and from Ezion-geber (Etsyon-Gever). And we turned and passed on ***by*** the way of the wilderness of Moab (Mo'av). **9** And the LORD said to me, 'Do not harass Moab, and do not contend with them ***in*** battle, for I will not give to you ***any*** of his land ***as*** a possession, because I have given Ar to the sons of Lot ***as*** a possession. **10** The Emim formerly dwelt in it, a people great and numerous and tall like the Anakim. **11** They also are regarded ***as*** Rephaim, like the Anakim, and the Moabites call them Emim. **12** And in Seir the Horites dwelt formerly, and the sons of Esau dispossessed them, and they destroyed them from before them and dwelt in their place, just as Israel (Yisra'el) did to the land of his possession which the LORD gave to

1:40 Num 14:25
1:41 Num 14:39,40-45; Num 22:34; Prov 19:3
1:42 Num 14:41,42; Lev 26:17; Josh 7:8-13
1:43 Num 14:44; Isa 63:10; Acts 7:51
1:44 Ps 118:12; Num 14:45; Isa 7:18
1:45 Ps 78:34; Heb 12:17
1:46 Num 20:1,22; Num 14:25,34; Judg 11:16,17
2:1 Num 21:4; Deut 1:40; Num 14:25
2:3 Deut 1:6; Deut 2:7,14
2:4 Num 20:14-21; Deut 23:7; Exod 15:15
2:5 Gen 36:8; Josh 24:4; Acts 7:5
2:6 Deut 2:28,29; Num 20:19; Matt 7:12
2:7 Deut 8:2-4; Job 23:10; Deut 29:5
2:8 1 Kgs 9:26; Judg 11:18; 2 Kgs 14:22
2:9 Num 21:15,28; Gen 19:36,37; Num 22:4
2:10 Gen 14:5
2:11 Deut 1:28; Deut 9:2; Num 13:22,28,33
2:12 Deut 2:22; Gen 14:6; Gen 36:20-30

1:41 *We have sinned against the LORD; we will go up and we will fight* It sounds like repentance, but God had already said the door was shut, and now they decided to do it their own way.
1:43 *you acted presumptuously* Presumption is acting as if God must bless what we decide to do. Saying "We have sinned" is not the same as surrendering to God. Real repentance does what God says now, not what we wish we had done yesterday.
1:44 *they pursued you just as the bees do, and they crushed you* Anyone who has stirred up a hive knows the picture. They were driven back as far as Hormah.
1:45 *you returned and wept before the LORD, and the LORD did not listen to your voice* Their tears came too late to change the sentence. God did not stop loving Israel; He fed and led them thirty-eight more years. But that generation lost the land.
1:46 *you remained in Kadesh many days* These things "happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition" (1 Cor 10:11). When God says go, trust Him and go.
2:1 *we went around the mountain of Seir many days* Mount Seir is the mountain country south and east of the Dead Sea, where Edom lived.
Thirty-eight years are told in one sentence, years of waiting and dying. But they were not wasted years for God. He was raising up a new generation.
2:3 *It is enough for you to go around this hill country; turn for yourselves northward* As God said "it is enough" at Horeb (1:6), He now says the wandering is over. God decides when a season ends. When He says turn, it is time to move.
2:4 *your brothers, the sons of Esau* Esau was Jacob's twin (Gen 25:24-26), and his descendants were Edom (Gen 36:8). Israel would be stronger, but they were to remember they were family and be very careful.
2:5 *so much as a treading place for the sole of a foot* God had given Mount Seir to Esau. Numbers 20:14-21 says Edom refused passage on the main road from Kadesh; here Israel later passes along Edom's border, where some Edomites traded with them.
2:6 *Food you shall buy from them with money* Not even food and water were to be taken by force. God's people do not grab what belongs to others just because they can (Rom 12:18).
2:7 *These forty years the LORD your God has been with you; you have not lacked a thing* He "has known your walking," watching over every step. Their clothes did not wear out (8:4), and manna came every morning. Even in discipline God cared for them. "My God will fill every need of yours" (Phil 4:19). He may not give all we want, but He never fails to give what we need.
2:9 *I have given Ar to the sons of Lot as a possession* Moab and Ammon came from Lot (Gen 19:36-38). God rules all nations and gives each its land (Acts 17:26). Israel could take only what God gave. The conquest was not a general license for war but a limited command for one land at one time.
2:10 *The Emim formerly dwelt in it, a people great and numerous and tall like the Anakim* These very tall peoples were counted as Rephaim (2:11). Israel had feared the Anakim at Kadesh (1:28). If God gave Moab and Edom victory over giants like these (2:12), will He not do it for His own people? Past faithfulness builds present courage.
2:12 *just as Israel did to the land of his possession which the LORD gave to them* These history notes read like Moses' own asides; "just as Israel did" may look to the land east of the Jordan already taken, or a later scribe may have added a touch.

them. **13** Now arise and pass over for yourselves the wadi of Zered.' And we passed over the wadi of Zered. **14** And the days which we walked from Kadesh-barnea (Qadesh-Barnea) until we passed over the wadi of Zered ***were*** thirty-eight years, until all the generation, the men of war, was finished from the midst of the camp, just as the LORD had sworn to them. **15** And also the hand of the LORD was against them, to throw them into confusion from the midst of the camp until they were finished. **16** And it was, when all the men of war had finished dying from the midst of the people, **17** and the LORD spoke to me, saying, **18** 'You ***are*** passing over today the border of Moab, Ar, **19** and you will draw near opposite the sons of Ammon (Amon). Do not harass them, and do not contend with them, for I will not give to you ***any*** of the land of the sons of Ammon ***as*** a possession, because I have given it to the sons of Lot ***as*** a possession. **20** It also is regarded ***as*** a land of Rephaim; Rephaim dwelt in it formerly, and the
Ammonites call them Zamzummim (Zamzumim), **21** a people great and numerous and tall like the Anakim; and the LORD destroyed them from before them, and they dispossessed them and dwelt in their place, **22** just as He had done for the sons of Esau, who dwell in Seir, in that He destroyed the Horite from before them, and they dispossessed them and have dwelt in their place until this day. **23** And the Avvim (Avim), who dwelt in villages as far as Gaza (Aza), the Caphtorim, who came out from Caphtor (Kaftor), destroyed them and dwelt in their place.

Sihon King of Heshbon Defeated

24 Arise, set out, and pass over the wadi of Arnon. See, I have given into your hand Sihon (Sichon) the king of Heshbon (Cheshbon), the Amorite, and his land; begin, take possession, and contend with him ***in*** battle. **25** This day I will begin to put the dread of you and the fear of you on the face of the peoples under all the heavens, who will hear the report of you, and they will tremble and be in anguish because of you.' **26** And I sent messengers from the wilderness of Kedemoth (Qedemot) to Sihon the king of Heshbon ***with*** words of peace, saying, **27** 'Let me pass through your land; on the road, on the road I will go; I will not turn aside ***to the*** right or ***to the*** left. **28** Food you shall sell me for money, and I will eat; and water you shall give me for money, and I will drink; only let me pass through on my feet, **29** just as the sons of Esau, who dwell in Seir, and the Moabites, who dwell in Ar, did for me, until I pass over the Jordan (Yarden) into the land which the LORD our God is giving to us.' **30** And Sihon the king of Heshbon was not willing to let us pass through by him, for the LORD your God had hardened his spirit and made his heart obstinate, in order to give him into your hand, as ***at*** this day. **31** And the LORD said to me, 'See, I have begun to give over Sihon and his land before you; begin, take possession, to take possession of his land.' **32** And Sihon came out to meet us, he and all his people, for battle at Jahaz (Yahats). **33** And the LORD our God gave him over before us, and we struck him and his sons and all his people. **34** And we captured all his cities at that time, and we devoted to destruction every city of men, and the women and the little ones; we did not leave a

2:13 Num 21:12; Num 13:23
2:14 Deut 1:34,35; Num 26:64,65; Deut 1:2,19,46
2:15 Ps 106:26; Judg 2:15; 1 Sam 5:6,9,11
2:18 Num 21:15,23; Isa 15:1
2:19 Deut 2:5,9; Gen 19:36-38; Judg 11:13-27
2:20 Gen 14:5
2:21 Deut 2:10,11; Deut 1:28; Deut 3:11
2:22 Gen 36:8; Deut 2:12; Gen 14:6
2:23 Josh 13:3; Gen 10:14; Amos 9:7
2:24 Deut 2:36; Num 21:13-15; Judg 11:18-21
2:25 Deut 11:25; Exod 15:14-16; Deut 28:10
2:26 Josh 13:18; Josh 21:37; Deut 20:10,11
2:27 Judg 11:19; Deut 2:6; Num 21:21-23
2:28 Num 20:19
2:29 Deut 23:3,4; Num 20:18; Judg 11:17,18
2:30 Exod 4:21; Num 21:23; Exod 11:10
2:31 Deut 1:8; Deut 2:24
2:32 Num 21:23-30; Judg 11:20-23; Neh 9:22
2:33 Deut 7:2; Deut 3:2,3; Deut 20:16
2:34 Deut 7:2,26; 1 Sam 15:3,8,9; Deut 20:16-18

2:13 *And we passed over the wadi of Zered* The Zered marked the border between Edom and Moab. Obedience, plain and simple.
2:14 *thirty-eight years, until all the generation, the men of war, was finished from the midst of the camp* God keeps His word in judgment as surely as in blessing.
2:15 *also the hand of the LORD was against them* Their dying was not just old age. It was God's hand. Hebrews points to those "whose corpses fell in the wilderness" (Heb 3:17) to warn us not to harden our hearts.
2:16 *when all the men of war had finished dying from the midst of the people* God seems to have waited until the last of them was gone. Now the new generation would move.
2:19 *I have given it to the sons of Lot as a possession* God was faithful to Lot's family though Lot chose poorly and Moab and Ammon would often be Israel's enemies. He showed kindness to Lot for Abraham's sake.
2:21 *the LORD destroyed them from before them* Ammon too had conquered giants, the Zamzummim (2:20), and Moses says plainly it was the LORD who did it.
2:23 *the Caphtorim, who came out from Caphtor* Many scholars think Caphtor is Crete and these were early Philistines (Amos 9:7). God moves nations and sets their borders. No people is too great for Him, and that truth settles fear.
2:24 *pass over the wadi of Arnon. See, I have given into your hand Sihon* The Arnon was Moab's northern border. The Amorites were among the peoples whose land God promised Abraham, returning when "the iniquity of the Amorite" (Gen 15:16) was complete. God had waited four centuries.
2:25 *This day I will begin to put the dread of you and the fear of you on the face of the peoples* Rahab later told how news of Sihon and Og melted the hearts of Jericho (Josh 2:10-11).
2:26 *with words of peace* Israel offered peace first, asking no more than Edom and Moab had given (2:27-29). Sihon had every chance to let Israel pass.
2:30 *the LORD your God had hardened his spirit and made his heart obstinate* Sihon was not willing, and God hardened him, the same pattern as Pharaoh (Exod 8:15; 9:12). God did not make a good man evil. He gave a proud king over to the stubbornness already in him and used it for judgment. People are responsible for their choices, and God rules over all of them. Teachers stress these two truths differently.
2:31 *I have begun to give over Sihon and his land before you; begin, take possession* God has begun, and Israel must begin too. Victory was God's gift, and Israel still had to take hold of it.
2:32 *Sihon came out to meet us, he and all his people, for battle at Jahaz* Sihon attacked first (Num 21:23). Israel did not start this war.
2:33 *the LORD our God gave him over before us* The generation that feared the Amorites was gone, and their children beat them on the first try. The difference was not strength but trust in God.
2:34 *we devoted to destruction every city of men, and the women and the little ones* A hard verse. To devote to destruction (herem) means giving something wholly over to God, not kept for human use. It was God's judgment on peoples whose sin He had borne for four hundred years, including burning their children to their gods (12:31). Sihon was offered peace and chose war. It was a one-time command for one land and time, never a pattern, and no one may use it to excuse violence. God takes "no pleasure in the death of the wicked" (Ezek 33:11).

survivor. **35** Only the livestock we took as plunder for ourselves, and the spoil of the cities which we had captured. **36** From Aroer (Aro'er), which ***is*** on the edge of the wadi of Arnon, and the city which ***is*** in the wadi, even as far as Gilead (Gilad), there was not a town which was too high for us; the LORD our God gave over everything before us. **37** Only to the land of the sons of Ammon you did not draw near, all the side of the wadi of Jabbok (Yaboq), and the cities of the hill country, and all that the LORD our God had commanded.

DEUTERONOMY 3

Og King of Bashan Defeated

1 And we turned and went up ***by*** the way of Bashan, and Og the king of Bashan came out to meet us, he and all his people, for battle at Edrei. **2** And the LORD said to me, 'Do not fear him, for into your hand I have given him and all his people and his land, and you shall do to him just as you did to Sihon (Sichon) the king of the Amorite, who ***was*** dwelling in Heshbon (Cheshbon).' **3** And the LORD our God gave into our hand also Og the king of Bashan and all his people, and we struck him until not a survivor was left to him. **4** And we captured all his cities at that time; there was not a town which we did not take from them: sixty cities, all the region of Argob (Argov), the kingdom of Og in Bashan. **5** All these ***were*** cities fortified ***with*** a high wall, gates and bar, besides the cities of the open villages, very many. **6** And we devoted them to destruction, just as we had done to Sihon the king of Heshbon, devoting to destruction every city of men, the women and the little ones. **7** And all the livestock and the spoil of the cities we took as plunder for ourselves. **8** And we took at that time the land from the hand of the two kings of the Amorite who ***were*** on the other side of the Jordan (Yarden), from the wadi of Arnon to the mountain of Hermon (Chermon) **9** (the Sidonians call ***Mount*** Hermon Sirion (Siryon), and the Amorites call it Senir), **10** all the cities of the plain and all Gilead (Gilad) and all Bashan as far as Salecah (Salkha) and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan. **11** For only Og the king of Bashan remained of the remnant of the Rephaim. Look, his bed ***was*** a bed of iron; ***is*** it not in Rabbah of the sons of Ammon (Amon)? Approximately 13.5 feet (nine cubits) ***was*** its length, and approximately 6 feet (four cubits) its width, by the cubit of a man.

The Land East of the Jordan Divided

12 And this land we took possession of at that time; from Aroer (Aro'er), which ***is*** by the wadi of Arnon, and half the hill country of Gilead and its cities, I gave to the Reubenites and to the Gadites. **13** And the rest of Gilead and all Bashan, the kingdom of Og, I gave to the half-tribe of Manasseh (Menashe), all the region of Argob, with all Bashan; that is called the land of Rephaim. **14** Jair (Ya'ir) the son of Manasseh took all the region of Argob as far as the border of the Geshurites and the Maacathites, and he called them, Bashan, by his own name, Havvoth-jair (Chavvot-Ya'ir), until this day. **15** And to Machir (Makhir) I gave Gilead. **16** And to the Reubenites and to the Gadites I gave from Gilead even as far as the wadi of Arnon, the middle of the wadi and ***its*** border, and as far as the Jabbok (Yaboq), the wadi, the border of the sons of Ammon, **17** and the Arabah (Arava) and the Jordan and ***its*** border, from Chinnereth (Kineret) even as far as the sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, under the slopes of the Pisgah

2:35 Deut 20:14; Num 31:9-11; Josh 8:27
2:36 Josh 13:9; Deut 3:12; Deut 4:48
2:37 Deut 3:16; Gen 32:22; Num 21:24
3:1 Deut 1:4; Deut 29:7; Num 21:33-35
3:2 Acts 18:9; Num 21:23-25; Deut 3:11
3:3 Num 21:35; Deut 2:33,34; Josh 13:12,30
3:4 1 Kgs 4:13; Num 32:33-42; Josh 12:4
3:5 Deut 1:28; Num 13:28; Heb 11:30
3:6 Deut 2:34; Deut 2:24,34; Ps 135:10-12
3:7 Deut 2:35; Josh 8:27; Josh 11:11-14
3:8 Josh 12:2-6; Josh 13:9-12; Num 32:33-42
3:9 Ps 29:6; 1 Chr 5:23; Ps 133:3
3:10 Deut 4:49; Num 21:33; Josh 12:4,5
3:11 John 21:8; Gen 14:5; 2 Sam 12:26
3:12 Deut 2:36; Deut 4:48; Josh 12:2-6
3:13 Num 32:39-42; Josh 13:29-32; 1 Chr 5:23-26
3:14 Num 32:41; Josh 13:13; 2 Sam 3:3
3:15 Num 32:39,40; Gen 50:23; Num 26:29
3:16 Num 21:24; 2 Sam 24:5; Deut 2:37
3:17 Matt 4:18; Josh 12:3; Gen 14:3

2:35 *Only the livestock we took as plunder for ourselves* Here God allowed the livestock and spoil to be kept. The deaths of women and children trouble us, and they should. Scripture asks us to trust that the Judge of all the earth does justice (Gen 18:25). The same God who judged the Amorites sent His Son to bear judgment for sinners, so whoever turns to Him may live.
2:36 *there was not a town which was too high for us* Their fathers said the cities were "fortified to the heavens" (1:28). The cities had not gotten smaller; Israel's faith had gotten bigger.
2:37 *Only to the land of the sons of Ammon you did not draw near* Israel stopped where God said stop. Faith not only charges ahead when God says go; it also holds back when God says no.
3:1 *Og the king of Bashan came out to meet us* Bashan was the high, fertile land east of the Sea of Galilee, famous for its cattle and oaks (Ps 22:12; Isa 2:13). Like Sihon, Og came out to fight.
3:2 *Do not fear him, for into your hand I have given him* God spoke as if it were already done. When God has promised something, it is as good as finished. The first victory became the pattern for the second; what He did yesterday is the reason to trust Him today.
3:4 *sixty cities, all the region of Argob* Cities "fortified with a high wall, gates and bar" (3:5), exactly the kind the spies said Israel could never take (1:28).
3:6 *we devoted them to destruction, just as we had done to Sihon the king of Heshbon* The same hard word as 2:34. Og also attacked, and his people were Amorites whose sin God had long warned of (Gen 15:16). It was God's judgment in one place and time, never a pattern for later wars, and it gives no one permission to harm others in God's name.
3:8 *from the wadi of Arnon to the mountain of Hermon* The Arnon runs into the Dead Sea from the east; Hermon is the high, snowy mountain far to the north, which other peoples called Sirion and Senir (3:9).
3:11 *Look, his bed was a bed of iron* Og was the last of the Rephaim, the tall peoples, and his bed of about 13.5 by 6 feet was still on display in Rabbah of Ammon. Some read it as a stone coffin, but the text says bed of iron. The spies would have felt like grasshoppers (Num 13:33). The bigger the enemy, the clearer it is that the victory belongs to God.
3:12 *I gave to the Reubenites and to the Gadites* The southern part east of the Jordan. These tribes asked for it because it was good for their many livestock (Num 32).
3:13 *I gave to the half-tribe of Manasseh* The rest of Gilead and all Bashan went to half of Manasseh.
3:14 *Havvoth-jair* The villages of Jair. Machir, another clan of Manasseh, received Gilead (3:15).
3:17 *from Chinnereth even as far as the sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea* From the Sea of Galilee down to the Dead Sea. Why list all these places? Because the land was real. God's promises were fields, towns and rivers that real families received.

(Pisga) eastward. **18** And I commanded you at that time, saying, 'The LORD your God has given to you this land to take possession of it. Armed you shall pass over before your brothers, the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), all sons of valor. **19** Only your wives and your little ones and your livestock (I know that you have much livestock) shall remain in your cities which I have given to you, **20** until the LORD gives rest to your brothers as to you, and they also take possession of the land which the LORD your God is giving to them on the other side of the Jordan; and you shall return, each man to his possession which I have given to you.' **21** And I commanded Joshua (Yehoshua) at that time, saying, 'Your eyes ***are*** the ***ones*** seeing all that the LORD your God has done to these two kings; thus the LORD will do to all the kingdoms to which you are passing over. **22** You shall not fear them, for the LORD your God, He ***is*** the ***One*** fighting for you.'

Moses Sees the Land from Pisgah

23 And I sought favor from the LORD at that time, saying, **24** 'Lord GOD, You have begun to show Your servant Your greatness and Your strong hand; for who ***is*** a god in the heavens and on the earth who does according to Your works and according to Your mighty deeds? **25** Let me pass over, please, and let me see the good land which ***is*** on the other side of the Jordan, this good hill country and the Lebanon (Levanon).' **26** And the LORD was furious with me on account of you, and He did not listen to me; and the LORD said to me, '***It is*** enough for you; do not continue to speak to Me again about this matter. **27** Go up ***to*** the top of the Pisgah, and lift up your eyes westward and northward and southward and eastward, and see with your eyes, for you shall not pass over this Jordan. **28** And command Joshua, and strengthen him and make him courageous, for he shall pass over before this people, and he shall cause them to inherit the land which you will see.' **29** And we remained in the valley opposite Beth-peor (Bet-Pe'or).

DEUTERONOMY 4

Keep the LORD's Statutes

1 And now, Israel (Yisra'el), listen to the statutes and to the judgments which I am teaching you to do, so that you may live, and you shall go in and take possession of the land which the LORD, the God of your fathers, is giving to you. **2** You shall not add to the word which I am commanding you, and you shall not take away from it, so as to keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I am commanding you. **3** Your eyes ***are*** the ***ones*** seeing what the LORD did at Baal-peor (Ba'al-Pe'or), for every man who walked after Baal-peor, the LORD your God destroyed him from your midst. **4** And you who ***were*** clinging to the LORD your God ***are*** alive, all of you, today. **5** See, I have taught you statutes and judgments, just as the LORD my God commanded me, to do thus in the midst of the land to which you are going to take possession of it. **6** And you shall keep ***them*** and do ***them***, for that ***is*** your wisdom and your understanding in the eyes of the peoples who will hear all these statutes, and they will

3:18 Josh 4:12,13; Num 32:20-24; Josh 1:12-15
3:20 Josh 22:4,8
3:21 Num 27:18-23; Josh 10:25; 1 Sam 17:36,37
3:22 Deut 20:4; Exod 14:14; Deut 1:30
3:23 2 Cor 12:8,9
3:24 Deut 11:2; Exod 15:11; 2 Sam 7:22
3:25 Deut 4:21,22; Exod 3:8; Deut 11:11,12
3:26 Matt 20:22; Matt 26:39; Deut 1:37
3:27 Num 27:12; Deut 34:1-4; Gen 13:14,15
3:28 Acts 7:45; Heb 4:8; Deut 31:3,7,23
3:29 Deut 34:6; Num 25:3; Deut 4:3,46
4:1 Deut 8:1; Rom 10:5; Ezek 20:11,21
4:2 Rev 22:18-19; Mark 7:9; Deut 12:32
4:3 Rom 11:4; Heb 2:2; Num 25:1-9
4:4 Heb 2:2; Josh 23:8; Acts 11:23
4:5 Deut 4:1; Prov 22:19,20; Matt 28:20
4:6 Job 28:28; Prov 1:7; Ps 19:7

3:18 *Armed you shall pass over before your brothers, the sons of Israel, all sons of valor* They had their land, but their job was not finished (Num 32:6).
3:20 *until the LORD gives rest to your brothers as to you* You do not rest until your brothers have rest too. They kept their word, and Joshua sent them home only after the land was taken (Josh 22:1-4). In the church we do not stop caring once our own needs are met: "Bear one another's burdens" (Gal 6:2).
3:21 *Your eyes are the ones seeing all that the LORD your God has done to these two kings* Joshua had seen the fear at Kadesh and the fall of Sihon and Og. Moses told him to let what he had seen shape what he expected.
3:22 *the LORD your God, He is the One fighting for you* God would say the same after Moses died: "Be strong and be bold" (Josh 1:9). A leader's courage comes from knowing God fights for His people.
3:23 *I sought favor from the LORD at that time* Now Moses tells something personal. He prayed. He begged.
3:24 *Lord GOD, You have begun to show Your servant Your greatness and Your strong hand* Lord GOD is Adonai YHWH, Master and LORD. He begins with worship. After the sea, Sinai, Sihon and Og, Moses says it is only the beginning.
3:25 *Let me pass over, please, and let me see the good land* After forty years with a grumbling people, Moses longed to stand in the land. There is nothing wrong with asking God for what our hearts long for.
3:26 *It is enough for you; do not continue to speak to Me again about this matter* The people provoked him at Meribah, but his own sin kept him out (Num 20:12). God's no was final. Paul also prayed three times and heard, "My grace is sufficient for you" (2 Cor 12:9).
3:27 *Go up to the top of the Pisgah, and lift up your eyes* Even in His no, God was kind. Moses would see it all (34:1-4). And centuries later he did stand in the land, talking with Jesus on the mount of transfiguration (Matt 17:3). God's no was not the end of the story.
3:28 *command Joshua, and strengthen him and make him courageous* God gave Moses one more job. Faithful people do not quit when God says no; they pour themselves into those who will carry on the work. Moses spent his last days preaching, writing and preparing Joshua.
3:29 *we remained in the valley opposite Beth-peor* Near where Israel sinned with Baal of Peor (Num 25), and near where Moses would be buried (34:6). Here he stands, ready to preach the sermons of this book.
4:1 *listen to the statutes and to the judgments which I am teaching you to do, so that you may live* Statutes are fixed rules; judgments are rulings that apply the law to real cases. For Israel, obedience meant life in the land. It was not how they became God's people. They already were. It was how they would enjoy what God gave them.
4:2 *You shall not add to the word which I am commanding you, and you shall not take away from it* We cannot make God's Word say more than He said or cut out what we dislike. The same warning closes the Bible (Rev 22:18-19). The Pharisees added rules and Jesus rebuked them (Mark 7:8-9). Many today take away what is hard. Both are dangerous.
4:3 *Your eyes are the ones seeing what the LORD did at Baal-peor* Baal was the Canaanite god of storm and fertility. At Peor many Israelite men joined Moab's worship and its sexual sin, and twenty-four thousand died (Num 25:1-9).
4:4 *you who were clinging to the LORD your God are alive, all of you, today* To cling is to hold tight, like a man holding a rope. That is what faith looks like when temptation pulls hard.
4:6 *that is your wisdom and your understanding in the eyes of the peoples* God's Law was meant to be a witness to the nations. Jesus says, "You are the light of the world" (Matt 5:14). People should look at how Christians live and see the wisdom and nearness of our God.

say, 'Surely this great nation ***is*** a wise and understanding people.' **7** For what great nation ***is there*** which has a god near to it like the LORD our God in all our calling to Him? **8** And what great nation ***is there*** which has righteous statutes and judgments like all this law which I am setting before you today? **9** Only take heed to yourself, and guard your soul very carefully, lest you forget the things which your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life; and you shall make them known to your sons and to your sons' sons, **10** the day that you stood before the LORD your God at Horeb (Chorev), when the LORD said to me, 'Assemble the people to Me, and let Me make them hear My words, that they may learn to fear Me all the days that they ***are*** alive on the ground, and that they may teach their sons.' **11** And you drew near and stood under the mountain, and the mountain ***was*** burning with fire to the heart of the heavens: darkness, cloud, and thick darkness. **12** And the LORD spoke to you from the midst of the fire; the voice of words you ***were*** hearing, and a form you ***were*** not seeing, only a voice. **13** And He declared to you His covenant, which He commanded you to do, the ten words; and He wrote them on two tablets of stone. **14** And the LORD commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and judgments, for you to do them in the land to which you are passing over to take possession of it.

No Image of the LORD

15 And you shall guard your souls very carefully, for you did not see any form on the day the LORD spoke to you at Horeb from the midst of the fire, **16** lest you act corruptly and make for yourselves a carved image, the form of any figure, the likeness of male or female, **17** the likeness of any animal that ***is*** on the earth, the likeness of any winged bird that flies in the heavens, **18** the likeness of any moving thing on the ground, the likeness of any fish that ***is*** in the waters under the earth; **19** and lest you lift up your eyes toward the heavens, and you see the sun and the moon and the stars, all the host of the heavens, and you are drawn away and bow down to them and serve them, which the LORD your God has allotted to all the peoples under all the heavens. **20** And you the LORD has taken, and He brought you out from the iron furnace, from Egypt (Mitsrayim), to be a people of inheritance to Him, as ***at*** this day. **21** And the LORD was angry with me on account of your words, and He swore that I would not pass over the Jordan (Yarden), and that I would not go into the good land which the LORD your God is giving to you ***as*** an inheritance. **22** For I am dying in this land; I am not passing over the Jordan; and you are passing over, and you shall take possession of this good land. **23** Take heed to yourselves, lest you forget the covenant of the LORD your God which He made with you, and make for yourselves a carved image, the form of anything ***about*** which the LORD your God has commanded you. **24** For the LORD your God is a consuming fire; He ***is*** a jealous God.

Exile and Return Foretold

25 When you father sons and sons' sons, and you have grown old in the land, and you act corruptly and make a carved image, the form of anything, and you do the evil in the eyes of the LORD your God, to provoke Him to anger, **26** I call the heavens and the earth to witness against you today that you will surely perish quickly from the land to which you are passing over the Jordan to take possession of it; you shall not prolong ***your*** days on it, for you will surely be destroyed.

4:7 Eph 2:18; Ps 145:18; 2 Sam 7:23
4:8 Rom 2:18; Ps 147:19,20; Deut 10:12,13
4:9 Deut 6:7; Deut 11:19; Gen 18:19
4:10 Exod 19:9,16; Heb 12:18,19,25; Deut 5:2
4:11 Heb 12:18; Deut 5:23; Exod 19:16-18
4:12 Matt 3:3; Matt 3:17; Heb 12:19
4:13 Heb 9:20; Exod 34:28; Exod 24:12
4:14 Ezek 21:1-23; Ps 105:44,45
4:15 Josh 23:11; Isa 40:18; Deut 4:12
4:16 Rom 1:23; Exod 20:4,5; Exod 32:7
4:17 Rom 1:23
4:19 Acts 7:42; Heb 1:10; Deut 17:3
4:20 1 Pet 2:9; Acts 13:17; 1 Kgs 8:51
4:21 Deut 1:37; Num 20:12; Deut 3:26
4:22 Deut 3:25,27; Heb 12:6-10; 2 Pet 1:13-15
4:23 Heb 3:12; Luke 17:3; Deut 4:9,15,16
4:24 Heb 12:29; Deut 9:3; Exod 24:17
4:25 Deut 4:16; Deut 31:16-18; Judg 2:8-15
4:26 Mic 6:2; Deut 30:18,19; Deut 31:28

4:7 *what great nation is there which has a god near to it like the LORD our God in all our calling to Him?* Other nations had gods far away, silent or made of stone. Israel's God was near and heard them when they called.
4:8 *what great nation is there which has righteous statutes and judgments like all this law* Ancient law codes often favored the rich. God's Law protected the weak, the widow, the orphan and the foreigner.
4:9 *lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life* Forgetting is the great danger in Deuteronomy. We can know a story and still let it stop shaping our lives. The cure is to pass it on to children and grandchildren.
4:10 *that they may learn to fear Me all the days that they are alive* To fear God is to stand in awe of Him, taking Him so seriously that we want to please Him above all. It is the beginning of wisdom (Prov 9:10).
4:11 *the mountain was burning with fire to the heart of the heavens: darkness, cloud, and thick darkness* Some listening had been children at Sinai; all had heard it told.
4:12 *a form you were not seeing, only a voice* The key point for what follows. God spoke. He did not show a shape.
4:13 *He declared to you His covenant, which He commanded you to do, the ten words* A covenant is a solemn, binding agreement. The Ten Commandments were at the heart of God's covenant with Israel at Sinai. Deuteronomy is the teaching of the rest of the statutes for life in the land (4:14).
4:16 *lest you act corruptly and make for yourselves a carved image* Egypt had gods with the heads of birds and animals; Canaan had male and female idols. An image always shrinks God down. Mankind "changed the glory of the incorruptible God into a likeness of an image of corruptible man" (Rom 1:23). God is spirit (John 4:24), and the only true image of God is His Son, "the image of the invisible God" (Col 1:15).
4:19 *you see the sun and the moon and the stars, all the host of the heavens, and you are drawn away and bow down to them* The stars are creatures given to light all peoples (Gen 1:14-18), gifts, not gods. People still look to them through horoscopes and astrology. God's people look to the One who made them.
4:20 *He brought you out from the iron furnace, from Egypt, to be a people of inheritance to Him* Egypt was like a furnace for melting iron, a place of crushing suffering. God pulled them out to be His treasured possession.
4:21 *the LORD was angry with me on account of your words* Moses would not go in, but they would (4:22). He would not be there to remind them; they must remember on their own.
4:24 *the LORD your God is a consuming fire; He is a jealous God* Fire pictures God's holiness, burning up what is impure. Jealous is not petty envy but the holy love of a husband who will not share his wife's heart. "Our God is also a consuming fire" (Heb 12:29). His love is the very reason He will not share us with idols.
4:25 *When you father sons and sons' sons, and you have grown old in the land, and you act corruptly* Notice the word when, not if. Moses knew the human heart.
4:26 *I call the heavens and the earth to witness against you today* Heaven and earth are called as witnesses to the covenant, as in a court case.

27 And the LORD will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations to which the LORD will drive you. **28** And there you will serve gods, the work of the hands of man, wood and stone, which do not see and do not hear and do not eat and do not smell. **29** And from there you will seek the LORD your God, and you will find ***Him***, when you search for Him with all your heart and with all your soul. **30** When you are in distress, and all these things have come upon you, at the end of the days you will return to the LORD your God and listen to His voice. **31** For a compassionate God ***is*** the LORD your God; He will not let you go, and He will not destroy you, and He will not forget the covenant of your fathers which He swore to them.

The LORD Alone Is God

32 For ask, please, about the former days which were before you, from the day that God created mankind on the earth, and from ***one*** end of the heavens even to ***the other*** end of the heavens, whether ***anything*** has happened like this great thing, or whether ***anything*** like it has been heard. **33** Has a people heard the voice of God speaking from the midst of the fire, just as you yourself have heard, and lived? **34** Or has a god tried to come to take for himself a nation from the midst of a nation, by trials, by signs and by wonders and by war and by a strong hand and by an outstretched arm and by great terrors, according to all that the LORD your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes? **35** You were shown ***it***, to know that the LORD, He ***is*** God; there is no other besides Him. **36** From the heavens He made you hear His voice to discipline you, and on the earth He showed you His great fire, and you heard His words from the midst of the fire. **37** And because He loved your fathers, and He chose his seed after him, and He brought you out by His presence, by His great power, from Egypt, **38** to dispossess from before you nations greater and mightier than you, to bring you in, to give to you their land ***as*** an inheritance, as ***at*** this day, **39** and you shall know today, and you shall bring ***it*** back to your heart, that the LORD, He ***is*** God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath; there is no other. **40** And you shall keep His statutes and His commandments which I am commanding you today, that it may go well with you and with your sons after you, and that you may prolong ***your*** days on the ground which the LORD your God is giving to you, all the days."

Cities of Refuge East of the Jordan

41 Then Moses (Moshe) set apart three cities on the other side of the Jordan, toward the rising of the sun, **42** for a killer to flee there, who kills his neighbor without knowledge, and he ***was*** not hating him in time past; and he may flee to one of these cities and live: **43** Bezer (Betser) in the wilderness, in the land of the plain, for the Reubenites; and Ramoth (Ramot) in Gilead (Gilad), for the Gadites; and Golan in Bashan, for the Manassites.

The Law Set Before Israel

44 And this ***is*** the law which Moses set before the sons of Israel; **45** these ***are*** the testimonies and the statutes and the judgments which Moses spoke to the sons of Israel when they came out from Egypt, **46** on the other side of the Jordan, in the valley opposite Beth-peor (Bet-Pe'or), in the land of Sihon (Sichon) the king of the Amorite, who ***was*** dwelling in Heshbon (Cheshbon), whom Moses and the sons of Israel

4:27 Deut 28:62-64; Neh 1:3,8,9; Ezek 12:15
4:28 Deut 28:36,64; Jer 16:13; 1 Sam 26:19
4:29 2 Chr 15:4,15; Isa 55:6,7; Jer 29:12-14
4:30 Heb 1:2; Deut 31:29; Jer 23:20
4:31 Luke 1:72; Jonah 4:2; Lev 26:42,45
4:32 Job 8:8; Matt 24:31; Ps 44:1
4:33 Judg 6:22; Exod 24:11; Exod 33:20
4:34 Deut 26:8; Deut 7:19; Deut 5:15
4:35 Mark 12:32; 1 Sam 2:2; Isa 45:5,18,22
4:36 Exod 19:9,19; Deut 4:33; Neh 9:13
4:37 Acts 13:17; Acts 7:36; Deut 10:15
4:38 Deut 7:1; Deut 9:1-5; Deut 11:23
4:39 Mark 12:32; Deut 4:35; Josh 2:11
4:40 Lev 22:31; Deut 5:16; Deut 6:3,18
4:41 Num 35:6,14,15; Josh 20:2-9
4:42 Deut 19:1-10; Num 35:6,11,12,15-28; Heb 6:18
4:43 Josh 20:8; Josh 21:38; 1 Kgs 4:13
4:44 John 1:17; Deut 1:5; Deut 17:18,19
4:45 Deut 6:17,20; 1 Kgs 2:3; Ps 119:2,14,22,24,111
4:46 Deut 3:29; Num 32:19; Deut 1:4

4:27 *the LORD will scatter you among the peoples* Exactly what happened, to Israel under Assyria in 722 B.C. (2 Kgs 17:6-18) and to Judah under Babylon in 586 B.C. (2 Kgs 25), seven to eight hundred years after Moses spoke.
4:28 *wood and stone, which do not see and do not hear* The punishment fits the sin. If they wanted idols, they would get a land full of them, and those idols could not help them at all.
4:29 *you will find Him, when you search for Him with all your heart and with all your soul* Even in exile the door would be open. Jeremiah repeated this promise to the exiles in Babylon (Jer 29:13).
4:30 *at the end of the days you will return to the LORD your God* The phrase points far ahead. Israel returned from Babylon, but the prophets speak of a greater return, "at the end of the days" (Hos 3:5), after "a time of distress for Jacob" (Jer 30:7). I believe this points to the Tribulation, before Christ returns, when Israel as a nation will turn to the Lord and "all Israel will be saved" (Rom 11:26). Others read it as the return from exile or Jews coming to Christ in this age.
4:31 *He will not let you go, and He will not destroy you, and He will not forget the covenant of your fathers* God's covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob still stands. He has not cast off His people (Rom 11:1-2).
4:32 *from the day that God created mankind on the earth* Search all of history. Has anything like this ever happened?
4:33 *Has a people heard the voice of God speaking from the midst of the fire, just as you yourself have heard, and lived?* No other nation could say this.
4:34 *to take for himself a nation from the midst of a nation* God reached into the middle of the world's greatest power and pulled out a nation of slaves for Himself. What other God came down Himself, took on flesh, died for His enemies and rose again? There is none.
4:35 *the LORD, He is God; there is no other besides Him* The exodus was a lesson in who God is. All the others are nothing (1 Cor 8:4).
4:36 *From the heavens He made you hear His voice to discipline you* Discipline means training and correction, as a father trains a son. "Whom the Lord loves He disciplines" (Heb 12:6).
4:37 *because He loved your fathers, and He chose his seed after him* God did not choose Israel because they were great or good, but because He loved the patriarchs (7:7-8). In Hebrew, "By His presence" is by His face. God Himself went with them. We love Him because He first loved us (1 John 4:19).
4:39 *you shall bring it back to your heart* The heart of chapter 4: one God, ruling above and below, and no other. Knowing it in the head is not enough. Let it go deep and change how you live.
4:40 *that it may go well with you and with your sons after you* Obedience does not earn salvation for us, but God's ways are still the best way to live, and how we live shapes the generations after us.
4:41 *Moses set apart three cities on the other side of the Jordan* Cities of refuge for one who killed by accident, without hatred beforehand (Num 35:9-15). Perhaps Moses wanted to finish this himself while he still could.
4:43 *Bezer in the wilderness, in the land of the plain, for the Reubenites* With Ramoth for Gad and Golan for Manasseh. Three more came west of the Jordan (19:1-10; Josh 20). These cities show justice and mercy together, and we "who have fled for refuge" (Heb 6:18) find our refuge in Christ.
4:44 *this is the law which Moses set before the sons of Israel* A heading for Moses' second and longest sermon, beginning in chapter 5. Testimonies are God's solemn statements of His will (4:45).

struck when they came out from Egypt. **47** And they took possession of his land and the land of Og the king of Bashan, the two kings of the Amorite, who ***were*** on the other side of the Jordan, ***toward*** the rising of the sun, **48** from Aroer (Aro'er), which ***is*** on the edge of the wadi of Arnon, even as far as the mountain of Sion (Si'on), that ***is Mount*** Hermon (Chermon), **49** and all the Arabah (Arava) on the other side of the Jordan eastward, even as far as the sea of the Arabah, under the slopes of the Pisgah (Pisga).

DEUTERONOMY 5

The Covenant at Horeb

1 And Moses (Moshe) called to all Israel (Yisra'el), and he said to them, "Hear, Israel, the statutes and the judgments which I am speaking in your ears today, and you shall learn them and be careful to do them. **2** The LORD our God made a covenant with us at Horeb (Chorev). **3** Not with our fathers did the LORD make this covenant, but with us, we, these here today, all of us alive. **4** Face to face the LORD spoke with you at the mountain from the midst of the fire, **5** I ***was*** standing between the LORD and you at that time to declare to you the word of the LORD, for you were afraid because of the fire, and you did not go up on the mountain, saying,

The Ten Commandments

6 'I ***am*** the LORD your God, who brought you out from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim), from the house of slaves. **7** There shall not be to you other gods before My face. **8** You shall not make for yourself a carved image, any form that ***is*** in the heavens above, and that ***is*** on the earth beneath, and that ***is*** in the waters under the earth. **9** You shall not bow down to them, and you shall not be made to serve them; for I, the LORD your God, ***am*** a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of fathers on sons, and on the third ***generation*** and on the fourth ***generation*** of those who hate Me, **10** and doing steadfast love to thousands, of those who love Me and of those who keep My commandments. **11** You shall not take up the name of the LORD your God for emptiness, for the LORD will not hold guiltless ***the one*** who takes up His name for emptiness. **12** Keep the day of the Sabbath, to sanctify it, just as the LORD your God commanded you. **13** Six days you shall labor and do all your work, **14** and the seventh day ***is*** a Sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall not do any work, you and your son and your daughter and your slave and your female slave and your ox and your donkey and all your livestock and your sojourner who ***is*** within your gates, so that your slave and your female slave may rest like you. **15** And you shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out from there with a strong hand and with an outstretched arm; therefore the LORD your God has commanded you to observe the day of the Sabbath.

4:47 Deut 3:1-14; Deut 29:7,8; Num 21:33-35
4:48 Deut 3:9; Deut 2:36; Deut 3:12
4:49 Deut 3:17; Deut 34:1; Josh 13:20
5:1 John 1:17; Deut 1:1; Deut 29:2,10
5:2 Heb 8:8; Heb 8:9; Heb 8:10
5:3 Heb 8:9; Deut 29:10-15; Gen 17:7,21
5:4 Deut 4:33,36; Deut 34:10; Exod 33:11
5:5 Gal 3:19; Exod 19:16; Exod 20:18-21
5:6 Exod 20:2-17; Lev 26:1,2; Ps 81:5-10
5:7 Exod 20:3; Matt 4:10; John 5:23
5:8 Exod 20:4; Deut 4:15-19
5:9 John 15:24; Exod 34:7; Exod 34:14
5:10 Matt 7:21; John 14:15; John 14:21
5:11 Lev 19:12; Deut 6:13; Exod 20:7
5:12 Exod 20:8-11; Isa 58:13; Isa 56:6
5:13 Luke 13:14; Exod 23:12; Exod 35:2,3
5:14 Heb 4:4; Mark 2:27; 1 Cor 9:9
5:15 Deut 15:15; Deut 16:12; Deut 24:18-22

4:48 *even as far as the mountain of Sion, that is Mount Hermon* Moses taught the Law on land God had already given. The commands came after the gift. That is always God's order: grace first, then obedience.

5:1 *you shall learn them and be careful to do them* Four verbs: hear, learn, be careful, do. Hearing God's Word is where it starts, not where it ends. Be doers of the word and not hearers only (James 1:22).

5:3 *Not with our fathers did the LORD make this covenant, but with us* Many listening were children at Horeb or not yet born. Moses means not only with their fathers. The covenant bound this generation as surely as the last. Every generation must take God's Word as spoken to them, "all of us alive."

5:4 *Face to face the LORD spoke with you at the mountain from the midst of the fire* Directly and personally. The whole nation heard His voice speak the ten words (5:22).

5:5 *I was standing between the LORD and you at that time* Because they were afraid, Moses stood between them and God for everything else. He points ahead to the "one mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim 2:5). Moses could only stand between. Christ, both God and man, brings us all the way to God.

5:6 *I am the LORD your God, who brought you out from the land of Egypt, from the house of slaves* As in Exodus 20:2, God says who He is and what He has done before giving one command. He did not say, keep these and I will free you. He said, I have freed you; now live as My people. We do not keep God's commands to be saved. We keep them because we have been saved (Eph 2:8-10).

5:7 *There shall not be to you other gods before My face* The first commandment is the foundation of the rest. Since God is everywhere, there is no place another god is allowed. Canaan's gods promised rain, crops and children, and the temptation would be to add a few for good measure. Anything we love, trust or fear more than God takes His place; Paul calls covetousness idolatry (Col 3:5).

5:8 *You shall not make for yourself a carved image* The first commandment says whom to worship; the second says how. They saw no form at Horeb, only a voice (4:15-18).

5:9 *I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of fathers on sons* Holy jealousy, like a faithful husband's; idolatry is spiritual adultery. This does not mean God punishes innocent children for their parents' guilt; children are not put to death for their fathers (24:16). When children follow their parents in hating God, the effects of sin pass on and pile up.

5:10 *doing steadfast love to thousands, of those who love Me* Steadfast love is hesed, God's loyal covenant love. Judgment reaches three or four generations; His love reaches thousands, a thousand generations (7:9). God's mercy is far bigger than His anger.

5:11 *You shall not take up the name of the LORD your God for emptiness* To use His name in a false, empty or careless way: swearing falsely, cursing, promising in His name what we do not mean, or calling ourselves His people while living as if He does not matter. Jesus taught us to pray, "let Your name be sanctified" (Matt 6:9).

5:12 *Keep the day of the Sabbath, to sanctify it, just as the LORD your God commanded you* Sabbath means rest, or stopping. Exodus 20:8 says remember; here Moses says keep, reminding them of a command already given.

5:13 *Six days you shall labor and do all your work* Work is good, and God commands it. But the seventh day belonged to the LORD, and no one in the house was to work, down to the animals and the sojourner (5:14).

5:15 *you shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt* Exodus grounds the Sabbath in creation (Exod 20:11). Here Moses adds a second reason: so the servants may rest too. In Egypt they worked without rest; now free, they were not to treat anyone as Pharaoh treated them. Jesus said, "The Sabbath was made for the sake of man" (Mark 2:27). Paul calls it "a shadow of the things coming, but the body is of Christ" (Col 2:17). Believers differ: some apply it to Sunday, the Lord's day (Acts 20:7), some keep the seventh day, and many see it fulfilled in "a Sabbath rest for the people of God" (Heb 4:9) while still valuing a day of rest. Our rest should never come at the cost of someone else's.

16 Honor your father and your mother, just as the LORD your God has commanded you, so that your days may be prolonged, and so that it may go well with you on the ground which the LORD your God is giving to you. **17** You shall not murder. **18** And you shall not commit adultery. **19** And you shall not steal. **20** And you shall not answer against your neighbor ***as*** a witness of falsehood. **21** And you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, and you shall not desire your neighbor's house, his field, and his slave and his female slave, his ox and his donkey, and anything that ***belongs*** to your neighbor.'

The People Ask Moses to Stand Between

22 These words the LORD spoke to all your assembly at the mountain from the midst of the fire, the cloud, and the thick darkness, ***with*** a great voice, and He added no more; and He wrote them on two tablets of stone and gave them to me. **23** And it was, when you heard the voice from the midst of the darkness, while the mountain ***was*** burning with fire, that you drew near to me, all the heads of your tribes and your elders, **24** and you said, 'Look, the LORD our God has shown us His glory and His greatness, and His voice we have heard from the midst of the fire; this day we have seen that God speaks with man, and he lives. **25** And now, why should we die? For this great fire will consume us; if we continue to hear the voice of the LORD our God any more, then we will die. **26** For who ***is there*** of all flesh that has heard the voice of the living God speaking from the midst of the fire as we ***have***, and lived? **27** You draw near and hear all that the LORD our God will say; and you shall speak to us all that the LORD our God will speak to you, and we will listen and do ***it***.' **28** And the LORD heard the sound of your words when you spoke to me, and the LORD said to me, 'I have heard the sound of the words of this people which they have spoken to you; they have done well ***in*** all that they have spoken. **29** Oh that they had this heart in them, to fear Me and to keep all My commandments all the days, so that it might go well with them and with their sons forever! **30** Go, say to them, "Return to your tents." **31** And you, stand here with Me, and let Me speak to you all the commandment and the statutes and the judgments which you shall teach them, and they shall do ***them*** in the land which I am giving to them to take possession of it.' **32** And you shall be careful to do just as the LORD your God has commanded you; you shall not turn aside ***to the*** right or ***to the*** left. **33** In all the way which the LORD your God has commanded you, you shall walk, so that you may live, and it may be well with you, and you may prolong ***your*** days in the land which you shall take possession of.

5:16 Matt 15:4; Matt 19:19; Mark 7:10
5:17 Matt 5:21; Matt 19:18; Mark 10:19
5:18 Matt 5:27; Mark 10:19; Luke 18:20
5:19 Exod 20:15; Rom 13:9; Eph 4:28
5:20 Exod 20:16; Exod 23:1; Deut 19:16-21
5:21 Matt 19:18; Rom 13:9; Exod 20:17
5:22 Exod 24:12; Exod 31:18; Deut 5:4
5:23 Heb 12:18; Heb 12:19; Exod 20:18,19
5:24 John 2:11; Gal 3:19; Heb 12:18
5:25 Heb 12:19; Acts 10:33; Gal 3:19
5:26 2 Cor 6:16; Matt 16:16; Acts 10:33
5:27 Heb 12:19; Acts 10:33; Exod 20:19
5:28 Acts 10:33; Deut 18:17; Num 27:7
5:29 Rev 22:7; Isa 48:18; Ezek 33:31,32
5:31 Gal 3:19; Deut 5:1; Deut 4:1,5,45
5:32 Josh 1:7; Josh 23:6; Prov 4:27
5:33 Jer 7:23; Deut 4:40; Deut 10:12

5:16 *Honor your father and your mother* The commands turn from God to people, starting at home. To honor is to give weight to: obeying when young, respecting always, caring for parents when old (Mark 7:10-13; 1 Tim 5:4). Paul calls it "the first commandment with a promise" (Eph 6:2). Honor does not mean following parents into sin or staying under abuse.
5:17 *You shall not murder* Human life is sacred because each person bears God's image (Gen 9:6). The word ratsach means unlawful killing; the same Law allowed war and the death penalty for murder (19:11-13). Jesus went to the heart (Matt 5:21-22): "Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer" (1 John 3:15). By that measure, which of us is innocent?
5:18 *And you shall not commit adultery* From here each command begins with "and," tying them together. God made marriage, one man and one woman for life (Gen 2:24). Jesus said looking with lust is adultery "in his heart" (Matt 5:28). This calls all of us, married or single, to purity, and Christ forgives those who confess (1 John 1:9).
5:19 *And you shall not steal* God gives people the right to own things. Stealing includes cheating in business, holding back wages and not giving an honest day's work. "Let the one who steals no longer steal, but rather let him labor" (Eph 4:28). Grace turns a taker into a giver.
5:20 *you shall not answer against your neighbor as a witness of falsehood* First a court setting, where a false witness could cost a man his life (19:15-19). But it reaches lies, gossip and slander. Jesus Himself was condemned by false witnesses (Mark 14:56-57). "Speak truth each one with his neighbor" (Eph 4:25).
5:21 *you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, and you shall not desire your neighbor's house, his field* Deuteronomy puts the wife first, alone, then uses a second word, desire, and adds "his field" for a people about to receive farmland. This command is all in the heart, where only God can see. It showed Paul his sin: "I also had not known covetousness except that the law was saying, 'You shall not covet'" (Rom 7:7). The cure is contentment (Phil 4:11). If we have Christ, we have enough.
5:22 *with a great voice, and He added no more; and He wrote them on two tablets of stone* Only the ten were spoken by God's own voice to the whole nation. Many think the two tablets were two copies of all ten, one for each party, as in covenants of that day; others picture the commands divided between them. Written in stone, the Law was holy and good but outside them. God later promised to write it on the heart (Jer 31:33).
5:24 *this day we have seen that God speaks with man, and he lives* They were amazed to still be alive.
5:25 *why should we die? For this great fire will consume us* Their fear was right. Sinful people cannot stand before a holy God on their own. Hebrews contrasts that mountain with Mount Zion, where we come "to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant" (Heb 12:24).
5:27 *You draw near and hear all that the LORD our God will say* They asked for a mediator and promised, "we will listen and do it."
5:28 *they have done well in all that they have spoken* Asking for a mediator was the right response. Chapter 18 ties this request to the promise of the Prophet like Moses (18:16-18).
5:29 *Oh that they had this heart in them, to fear Me and to keep all My commandments all the days* One of the most moving verses in the book. Their words were good, but within weeks of first saying them they made the golden calf. The problem was never the Law; it was the heart. God would answer His own longing: He will circumcise their heart (30:6) and give "a new heart" (Ezek 36:26) and His Spirit (Ezek 36:27). He does that for everyone who trusts in Christ.
5:31 *stand here with Me, and let Me speak to you all the commandment and the statutes and the judgments which you shall teach them* Moses stayed and received the rest of the Law; forty years later he is teaching it. Its sacrifices, feasts and food laws were for Israel under that covenant and fulfilled in Christ (Heb 10:1-14). Its moral heart, love for God and neighbor, is still God's will for us (Rom 13:8-10).
5:32 *you shall not turn aside to the right or to the left* A straight road with a ditch on each side: adding rules God never gave, or ignoring the ones He did.
5:33 *In all the way which the LORD your God has commanded you, you shall walk, so that you may live* For the Christian, Jesus is "the way and the truth and the life" (John 14:6). Obedience does not earn our life with God. It is how that life is lived.

DEUTERONOMY 6

Hear, O Israel

1 And this ***is*** the commandment, the statutes and the judgments, which the LORD your God has commanded to teach you, to do in the land to which you are passing over to take possession of it, **2** so that you may fear the LORD your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments which I am commanding you, you and your son and your son's son, all the days of your life, and so that your days may be prolonged. **3** And you shall hear, Israel (Yisra'el), and be careful to do ***them***, that it may go well with you, and that you may multiply greatly, just as the LORD, the God of your fathers, has spoken to you, ***in*** a land flowing ***with*** milk and honey. **4** Hear, Israel: the LORD our God, the LORD ***is*** one. **5** And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. **6** And these words which I am commanding you today shall be on your heart. **7** And you shall repeat them to your sons, and you shall speak of them when you sit in your house and when you walk on the road and when you lie down and when you rise up. **8** And you shall bind them for a sign on your hand, and they shall be for frontlets between your eyes. **9** And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Do Not Forget the LORD in Plenty

10 And it shall be, when the LORD your God brings you into the land which He swore to your fathers, to Abraham (Avraham), to Isaac (Yitschaq), and to Jacob (Ya'aqov), to give to you, great and good cities which you did not build, **11** and houses full of every good thing which you did not fill, and hewn cisterns which you did not hew, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant, and you eat and are satisfied, **12** take heed to yourself, lest you forget the LORD who brought you out from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim), from the house of slaves. **13** The LORD your God you shall fear, and Him you shall serve, and by His name you shall swear. **14** You shall not walk after other gods, of the gods of the peoples who ***are*** around you, **15** for a jealous God ***is*** the LORD your God in your midst, lest the anger of the LORD your God burn against you, and He destroy you from the face of the ground.

6:1 Deut 4:1,5,14,45; Deut 12:1; Deut 5:31
6:2 1 Pet 1:17; Exod 20:20; Ps 128:1
6:3 Exod 3:8; Gen 15:5; Gen 22:17
6:4 Mark 12:29; 1 Cor 8:4; Mark 12:32
6:5 Matt 22:37; Mark 12:30; Mark 12:33
6:6 Col 3:16; Deut 11:18; Deut 32:46
6:7 Col 3:16; Eph 6:4; Deut 11:19
6:8 Matt 23:5; Deut 11:18; Exod 13:9,16
6:9 Deut 11:20; Isa 57:8; Exod 12:7
6:10 Josh 24:13; Ps 105:44; Neh 9:25
6:11 Deut 32:15; Matt 19:23,24; Deut 7:12-18
6:13 Matt 4:10; Luke 4:8; Deut 13:4
6:14 Jer 25:6; Deut 8:19; Deut 13:7
6:15 2 Cor 6:16; Deut 4:24; Exod 20:5

6:1 *this is the commandment, the statutes and the judgments* Commandment is singular. Moses is about to give the one great command that sums up the rest.
6:2 *you and your son and your son's son, all the days of your life* Three generations are in view. God wanted not one generation's obedience but a family line of faith.
6:3 *in a land flowing with milk and honey* A rich land, with pasture for herds and flowers for bees. God's commands were not meant to take away Israel's joy. They were the path to it.
6:4 *Hear, Israel: the LORD our God, the LORD is one* Hear (shema) means listen and obey. The LORD is YHWH, God's own name, a Person who made Himself known and bound Himself to Israel. "One" (echad) can mean the LORD is the only God, or that He alone is our God; both are true (4:35). Jesus quoted this as true (Mark 12:29) and said, "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30). Echad is also used of husband and wife becoming "one flesh" (Gen 2:24), so oneness can include persons; Jewish readers take it as strict unity. Christians believe in one God in three Persons, and Paul writes of "one God, the Father" (1 Cor 8:6) and "one Lord, Jesus Christ" (1 Cor 8:6). One day "the LORD will be one, and His name one" (Zech 14:9). Yet "Even the demons believe, and shudder" (James 2:19). Knowing is not enough, so verse 5 follows.
6:5 *you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might* God first asks not for rituals but love, flowing from His love for Israel (4:37; 7:8). The heart is the center of a person, mind and will as well as feelings; the soul is your very life; might means muchness, everything you have. "All" comes three times. If there is only one God, He deserves all of us. Jesus called this "the first and great commandment" (Matt 22:38), and "On these two commandments hang all the law and the Prophets" (Matt 22:40). Who has kept it for one day? Only Jesus, who kept it for us and died for every time we broke it, and then gives a new heart to love God (30:6; Rom 5:5). "If you love Me, keep My commandments" (John 14:15). Love comes first, and obedience flows from it.
6:6 *these words which I am commanding you today shall be on your heart* Before God's words go on doorposts or into children's ears, they must be on our own hearts. "In my heart I have treasured Your word, so that I will not sin against You" (Ps 119:11). A parent cannot pass on what is not in his own heart first.
6:7 *you shall repeat them to your sons* Repeat means to sharpen, going over again and again like strokes on a blade. Faith is passed on by repetition, all day long: at the table, on the road, at bedtime, in the morning. God put this on parents first. Fathers are to raise children "in the discipline and admonition of the Lord" (Eph 6:4), as Timothy learned from Lois and Eunice (2 Tim 1:5; 3:15). If God comes up only on Sunday, children learn He belongs only to Sunday.
6:8 *you shall bind them for a sign on your hand, and they shall be for frontlets between your eyes* The hand stands for what we do, the eyes for what we think and look at.
6:9 *you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates* The home and the town. In time Jewish people kept this outwardly with tefillin, small boxes on arm and forehead, and the mezuzah on the doorpost. Jesus warned those who "broaden their phylacteries" (Matt 23:5); the problem was not the box but the pride. Whether meant to be done outwardly or as a picture (compare Prov 3:3), God's Word should be everywhere in our lives.
6:11 *hewn cisterns which you did not hew, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant* A cistern was a pit cut in rock to store rain water, hard work in a dry land. They would receive it all as a gift.
6:12 *take heed to yourself, lest you forget the LORD* Hunger kept Israel close in the wilderness; fullness would tempt them to forget. "They were satisfied, and their heart was exalted; therefore they forgot Me" (Hos 13:6). It is easy to pray when desperate and harder to stay close when all is well. Remember what Christ saved you from.
6:13 *The LORD your God you shall fear, and Him you shall serve* When Satan offered Jesus the kingdoms of the world, He answered from this verse: "You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him alone you shall serve" (Matt 4:10). He refused the crown without the cross, and He used God's Word to do it. That is how we fight temptation too.
6:14 *You shall not walk after other gods, of the gods of the peoples who are around you* Canaan's gods would be next door, promising crops and fertility, with worship full of sexual sin.
6:15 *a jealous God is the LORD your God in your midst* Because God lived among them, turning to other gods would be like a wife bringing another man into her husband's house. His love and jealousy go together.

16 You shall not test the LORD your God, just as you tested ***Him*** at Massah (Masa). **17** You shall surely keep the commandments of the LORD your God, and His testimonies and His statutes which He has commanded you. **18** And you shall do the right and the good in the eyes of the LORD, so that it may go well with you, and you may go in and take possession of the good land which the LORD swore to your fathers, **19** to drive out all your enemies from before you, just as the LORD has spoken.

When Your Son Asks

20 When your son asks you in time to come, saying, 'What ***are*** the testimonies and the statutes and the judgments which the LORD our God has commanded you?' **21** then you shall say to your son, 'We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt, and the LORD brought us out from Egypt with a strong hand. **22** And the LORD gave signs and wonders, great and harmful, against Egypt, against Pharaoh, and against all his household, before our eyes. **23** And us He brought out from there, in order to bring us in, to give to us the land which He swore to our fathers. **24** And the LORD commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God, for our good all the days, to keep us alive, as ***at*** this day. **25** And it will be righteousness for us, if we are careful to do all this commandment before the LORD our God, just as He commanded us.'

DEUTERONOMY 7

A Holy People Chosen in Love

1 When the LORD your God brings you into the land to which you are going to take possession of it, and He clears away many nations from before you, the Hittite and the Girgashite and the Amorite and the Canaanite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite, seven nations more numerous and mightier than you, **2** and the LORD your God gives them over before you, and you strike them, you shall surely devote them to destruction; you shall not make a covenant with them, and you shall not show them favor. **3** And you shall not intermarry with them; your daughter you shall not give to his son, and his daughter you shall not take for your son, **4** for he will turn your son away from after Me, and they will serve other gods; and the anger of the LORD will burn against you, and He will destroy you quickly. **5** But thus you shall do to them: their altars you shall tear down, and their pillars you shall shatter, and their Asherim you shall cut down, and their carved images you shall burn with fire. **6** For a holy people ***are*** you to the LORD your God; you the LORD your God has chosen to be for Him a people of treasured possession out of all the peoples that ***are*** on the face of the ground. **7** Not because you were more numerous than all the peoples did the LORD set His love on you and choose you, for you

6:16 Matt 4:7; Luke 4:12; 1 Cor 10:9
6:17 Ps 119:4; Exod 15:26; 1 Cor 15:58
6:18 Eph 6:3; Deut 4:40; Deut 12:25,28
6:19 Exod 23:28-30; Num 33:52,53; Judg 2:1-3
6:20 Exod 13:14; Exod 12:26; Josh 4:6,7,21-24
6:21 Acts 7:36; Exod 20:2; Deut 5:6,15
6:22 Acts 7:36; Deut 4:34; Ps 135:9
6:23 Deut 6:10,18; Deut 1:8,35; Exod 13:5
6:24 Jer 32:39; Ps 41:2; Deut 4:1,4
6:25 Deut 24:13; Rom 10:3,5,6; Lev 18:5
7:1 Acts 13:19; Deut 4:38; Deut 31:3,20
7:2 Deut 23:14; Deut 20:16,17; Lev 27:28,29
7:3 Exod 34:15,16; 1 Kgs 11:2; Josh 23:12,13
7:4 Deut 6:15; Deut 32:16,17; Exod 20:5
7:5 Exod 23:24; Exod 34:13; Deut 12:2,3
7:6 1 Pet 2:9; Eph 1:4; Deut 14:2
7:7 Acts 13:17; Rom 11:6; Deut 10:22

6:16 *You shall not test the LORD your God, just as you tested Him at Massah* Massah means testing. There Israel asked, "Is the LORD in our midst or not?" (Exod 17:7). To test God is to demand He prove Himself on our terms. When Satan urged Jesus to jump from the temple, He answered, "You shall not test the Lord your God" (Matt 4:7). He simply trusted the Father.

6:18 *you shall do the right and the good in the eyes of the LORD* Not what seems right in our own eyes. In the judges' days "each man did what was right in his own eyes" (Judg 21:25), and it led to disaster.

6:20 *When your son asks you in time to come* Moses expects children to ask why. The answer is not, because I said so. It is a story.

6:21 *We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt, and the LORD brought us out from Egypt with a strong hand* Children need more than rules. The rules make sense only when they know the Rescuer, in the Bible and in our own lives.

6:23 *us He brought out from there, in order to bring us in* God brought them out so He could bring them in. The Christian story has the same shape: slaves to sin, brought out through Christ and brought into His family.

6:24 *for our good all the days, to keep us alive* A Father's instructions for a good life, not a burden. "His commandments are not burdensome" (1 John 5:3).

6:25 *it will be righteousness for us, if we are careful to do all this commandment* Israel was already redeemed when the Law was given, so this means right living within the covenant, not salvation by works. Abraham was declared righteous by faith long before (Gen 15:6; Rom 4:3). No one has done "all this commandment" perfectly (Rom 10:3-5). The only righteousness that stands before God is the one He gives through faith in Christ (Phil 3:9). Christ did it all for us, and then we obey out of love.

7:1 *He clears away many nations from before you* Seven nations, "more numerous and mightier" than Israel. Israel could not win on their own. God would clear them away.

7:2 *you shall surely devote them to destruction; you shall not make a covenant with them* The herem of 2:34. First, this was God's judgment, not Israel's hatred, after four centuries of patience (Gen 15:16), on a culture that burned its children to its gods (12:31) until "the land vomited out its inhabitants" (Lev 18:25). Second, it was not about race: Israel would perish the same way for the same sins (8:19-20; Lev 18:28), and Rahab the Canaanite was spared and is in Jesus' line (Josh 6:25; Matt 1:5). Third, it was limited to these seven nations in this land at this time (contrast 2:4-19; 20:10-15), never a general command and never a command for today.

7:3 *you shall not intermarry with them* The reason is faith, not blood: "he will turn your son away from after Me" (7:4). Ruth the Moabite married into Israel because she said, "your God my God" (Ruth 1:16).

7:4 *for he will turn your son away from after Me, and they will serve other gods* History proved Moses right; Solomon's "wives turned aside his heart after other gods" (1 Kgs 11:4). The New Testament says, "Do not become unequally yoked with unbelievers" (2 Cor 6:14). Who you marry will shape your walk with God more than almost anything else.

7:5 *their altars you shall tear down, and their pillars you shall shatter, and their Asherim you shall cut down* Pillars were standing stones for worship; Asherim were wooden poles for Asherah, a fertility goddess seen as Baal's partner. Nothing was to be kept as a museum piece. When God frees us from sin, we should not keep what pulled us into it lying around. The Ephesian believers burned their magic books (Acts 19:19).

7:6 *a people of treasured possession out of all the peoples* Holy means set apart, belonging to God. A treasured possession is a king's private treasure. Peter uses the same language: "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation" (1 Pet 2:9). The church has not replaced Israel, whose promises still stand (Rom 11:28-29); through Christ, Gentiles share in the blessing.

7:7 *Not because you were more numerous than all the peoples did the LORD set His love on you* One of the clearest statements of grace in the Old Testament. Not because they were big, and not because they were good (chapter 9).

were the fewest of all the peoples; **8** but because of the LORD's love for you, and because He kept the oath which He swore to your fathers, the LORD brought you out with a strong hand and ransomed you from the house of slaves, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt (Mitsrayim). **9** And you shall know that the LORD your God, He ***is*** God, the faithful God, who keeps the covenant and the steadfast love to those who love Him and to those who keep His commandments, to a thousand generations, **10** and who repays those who hate Him, to his face, to make him perish; He will not delay with him who hates Him; to his face He will repay him. **11** And you shall keep the commandment and the statutes and the judgments which I am commanding you today, to do them.

Blessings for Obedience

12 And it shall be, because you listen to these judgments and keep and do them, that the LORD your God will keep for you the covenant and the steadfast love which He swore to your fathers. **13** And He will love you and bless you and multiply you; and He will bless the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground, your grain and your new wine and your fresh oil, the offspring of your cattle and the young of your flock, on the ground which He swore to your fathers to give to you. **14** Blessed you shall be above all the peoples; there shall not be among you a barren male or a barren female, and among your livestock. **15** And the LORD will remove from you every sickness; and all the evil diseases of Egypt which you have known, He will not put them on you, and He will lay them on all who hate you. **16** And you shall consume all the peoples whom the LORD your God is giving over to you; your eye shall not pity them, and you shall not serve their gods, for that ***will be*** a snare to you.

Do Not Fear the Nations

17 If you say in your heart, 'These nations ***are*** more numerous than I; how can I dispossess them?' **18** you shall not be afraid of them; you shall surely remember what the LORD your God did to Pharaoh and to all Egypt, **19** the great trials which your eyes saw, and the signs and the wonders and the strong hand and the outstretched arm by which the LORD your God brought you out; thus the LORD your God will do to all the peoples of whom you ***are*** afraid. **20** And also the hornet the LORD your God will send among them, until those who are left and those who hide themselves from before you perish. **21** You shall not be terrified of them, for the LORD your God ***is*** in your midst, a great and awesome God. **22** And the LORD your God will clear away these nations from before you little ***by*** little; you will not be able to make an end of them quickly, lest the living things of the field increase against you. **23** And the LORD your God will give them over before you, and He will throw them into great confusion until they are destroyed. **24** And He will give their kings into your hand, and you shall make their name perish from under the heavens; no man shall take his stand before you until you have destroyed them. **25** The carved images of their gods you shall burn with fire; you shall not covet silver and gold on them and take ***it*** for yourself, lest you be ensnared by it, for it

7:8 Luke 1:72; Luke 1:73; Acts 13:17
7:9 James 1:12; Rom 8:28; 1 Cor 8:3
7:10 Isa 59:18; Nah 1:2; Deut 32:35,41
7:11 Deut 4:1; Deut 5:32; John 14:15
7:12 Luke 1:72; Luke 1:73; Deut 28:1
7:13 John 16:27; John 14:21; Deut 7:7
7:14 Ps 127:3; Deut 33:29; Ps 115:15
7:15 Exod 15:26; Deut 28:27,60; Exod 9:11
7:16 Exod 23:33; Judg 8:27; Deut 13:8
7:17 Num 33:53; Num 13:32; Deut 8:17
7:18 Ps 105:5,26-36; Deut 31:6; Deut 1:29
7:19 Acts 13:17; Deut 4:34; Deut 11:2-4
7:20 Josh 24:12; Exod 23:28-30
7:21 Josh 3:10; Deut 10:17; Neh 9:32
7:22 Exod 23:29,30; Josh 15:63
7:23 Deut 9:3; Deut 2:15; Deut 8:20
7:24 Josh 23:9; Deut 11:25; Josh 1:5
7:25 Rev 17:5; Exod 32:20; 1 Chr 14:12

7:8 *because of the LORD's love for you* Why did God love them? Because He loved them. There is no reason outside God Himself. To ransom is to pay a price to set someone free. He chose us "in Him before the foundation of the world" (Eph 1:4) and ransomed us with the precious blood of Christ (1 Pet 1:18-19). His love does not depend on what you bring Him.
7:9 *the faithful God, who keeps the covenant and the steadfast love to those who love Him* Hesed, His loyal covenant love, reaches "to a thousand generations," a way of saying it has no end (5:10).
7:10 *who repays those who hate Him, to his face* Personally and directly. "Look then at the kindness and severity of God" (Rom 11:22). A God with no justice would not be good; a God with no mercy would leave us without hope. At the cross we see both.
7:11 *you shall keep the commandment and the statutes and the judgments* Chosen in love, ransomed, then called to obey. Obedience is how love answers love, never how we earn it.
7:13 *He will love you and bless you and multiply you* Children, crops, herds and health (7:14-15) were covenant blessings for Israel in the land under the Mosaic covenant. They are not promises that every faithful Christian will be healthy and wealthy; many suffer, and the New Testament never says otherwise (2 Cor 12:7-10). But God is the source of every good gift.
7:16 *your eye shall not pity them, and you shall not serve their gods, for that will be a snare to you* A snare is a trap. Sparing the nations would lead to worshiping their gods, exactly what happened in the judges' days (Judg 2:1-3).
7:17 *These nations are more numerous than I; how can I dispossess them?* Moses knew they would be tempted to fear, as their parents were at Kadesh.
7:18 *you shall surely remember what the LORD your God did to Pharaoh and to all Egypt* Memory is a weapon against fear. If He could break Pharaoh, He can handle what is in front of us. It helps on hard days to remember, even write down, what God has done for you.
7:20 *the hornet the LORD your God will send among them* Also in Exodus 23:28 and Joshua 24:12. It may be real swarms or a picture of the panic God sent ahead of Israel. Either way, God would fight for them.
7:21 *the LORD your God is in your midst, a great and awesome God* The fear of God drives out every other fear.
7:22 *little by little; you will not be able to make an end of them quickly, lest the living things of the field increase against you* God's timing was wise and kind. The language includes driving out as well as destroying (Exod 23:28-30), and Canaanites remained afterward (Judg 1:28). Some teachers read the strong words of total destruction as the war speech of that day, with the goal of breaking their power; others take them strictly. Either way the command was real and severe. God also works in us little by little. Be patient with His work in you and in others.
7:24 *He will give their kings into your hand* Joshua lists thirty-one kings who fell (Josh 12). We do not celebrate anyone's death; God takes "no pleasure in the death of the wicked" (Ezek 33:11). Jesus said, "love your enemies" (Matt 5:44), and rebuked the call for fire on a village (Luke 9:54-55). Anyone who uses this chapter to justify violence today has badly misread it.
7:25 *you shall not covet silver and gold on them and take it for yourself, lest you be ensnared by it* Idols were often overlaid with precious metal, and it would be tempting to burn the wood and keep the gold. An abomination is something God finds disgusting.

is an abomination to the LORD your God. **26** And you shall not bring an abomination into your house, and become a thing devoted to destruction like it; you shall utterly detest it and utterly abhor it, for it ***is*** a thing devoted to destruction.

DEUTERONOMY 8

Man Does Not Live on Bread Alone

1 All the commandment which I am commanding you today you shall be careful to do, so that you may live and multiply, and go in and take possession of the land which the LORD swore to your fathers. **2** And you shall remember all the way which the LORD your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, in order to humble you, to test you, to know what ***was*** in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. **3** And He humbled you, and caused you to hunger, and caused you to eat the manna, which you had not known, and your fathers had not known, in order to make you know that man does not live on bread alone, but on everything that goes out of the mouth of the LORD man lives. **4** Your clothing did not wear out from on you, and your foot did not swell these forty years. **5** And you shall know with your heart that just as a man disciplines his son, the LORD your God is disciplining you. **6** And you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God, to walk in His ways and to fear Him. **7** For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of wadis of water, of springs and deeps going out in the valley and in the hill country, **8** a land of wheat and barley and vine and fig tree and pomegranate, a land of olive trees of oil and honey, **9** a land in which you will eat bread without scarcity, you will not lack anything in it, a land whose stones ***are*** iron, and from whose hills you will dig copper. **10** And you will eat and be satisfied, and you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land which He has given to you.

Remember Who Gives the Power

11 Take heed to yourself, lest you forget the LORD your God by not keeping His commandments and His judgments and His statutes which I am commanding you today, **12** lest you eat and are satisfied, and build good houses and dwell ***in them***, **13** and your herd and your flock multiply, and silver and gold multiply for you, and all that ***is*** yours multiplies, **14** and your heart is lifted up, and you forget the LORD your God, who brought you out from the land of Egypt
(Mitsrayim), from the house of slaves, **15** who led you in the great and fearsome wilderness, ***with*** fiery serpent and scorpion and thirsty ground where ***there was*** no water, who brought out water for you from the rock of flint, **16** who caused you to eat manna in the wilderness, which your

7:26 Deut 13:17; Lev 27:28,29; Isa 30:22
8:1 Deut 4:1; Deut 5:32,33; Ps 119:4-6
8:2 John 2:25; Luke 2:35; Heb 3:9
8:3 Matt 4:4; Luke 4:4; John 6:31
8:4 Matt 26:26; Heb 3:9; Deut 29:5
8:5 2 Sam 7:14; Prov 3:12; Rev 3:19
8:6 Deut 5:33; Exod 18:20; 1 Sam 12:24
8:7 Deut 6:10,11; Exod 3:8; Neh 9:24,25
8:8 Deut 32:14; 2 Sam 4:6; 1 Kgs 5:11
8:9 1 Chr 22:14; Deut 33:25; Josh 22:8
8:10 John 6:23; Luke 22:17; Ps 103:2
8:11 Ps 106:21; Prov 1:32; Prov 30:9
8:12 Prov 30:9; Deut 28:47; Deut 32:15
8:13 Gen 13:1-5; Job 1:3; Ps 39:6
8:14 Ps 106:21; Deut 8:11; Deut 17:20
8:15 1 Cor 10:4; Num 21:6; Num 20:11
8:16 Exod 16:15; Jer 24:5,6; Deut 8:3

7:26 *you shall not bring an abomination into your house, and become a thing devoted to destruction like it* Bring a cursed thing home and you share its curse, as Achan did at Jericho (Josh 7). What do I bring into my home, my phone, my mind, that God calls detestable? Holiness starts in our own house.

8:1 *All the commandment which I am commanding you today you shall be careful to do* Again the singular, the whole of God's will as one. Moses gives no new laws here, only reasons to keep the ones given. The best reasons come from remembering.

8:2 *you shall remember all the way which the LORD your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness* Remember is the key word of the chapter, with its opposite, forget. God led them that way to humble them, to test them, and "to know what was in your heart." He already knew; the test brought it into the open. "The testing of your faith produces endurance" (James 1:3). Your wilderness may be where God does His deepest work.

8:3 *He humbled you, and caused you to hunger, and caused you to eat the manna* God let them come to the end of themselves so they would learn where help comes from. Manna had to be gathered fresh each day, trusting God for tomorrow (Matt 6:11).

8:3 *man does not live on bread alone* Bread keeps the body alive, but we live by God's word, which even brought manna into being. After forty days in the wilderness Jesus answered Satan, "Man will not live by bread alone, but by every word coming out through the mouth of God" (Matt 4:4). Israel, God's son, was tested forty years and failed; Jesus, God's Son, was tested forty days and stood firm for us. He is "the bread of life" (John 6:35). Most of us would never skip meals for a week. Many go weeks without feeding on God's Word.

8:4 *Your clothing did not wear out from on you, and your foot did not swell these forty years* God's care reached the small, everyday details (Neh 9:21).

8:5 *just as a man disciplines his son, the LORD your God is disciplining you* Discipline is training and correction. The hunger and the long road were not signs God hated them, as their parents said (1:27), but that He was their Father. Discipline "yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it" (Heb 12:11). If God is training you, you are His child.

8:7 *a land of wadis of water, of springs and deeps* After forty years of dry ground, a land with water. You can almost hear Moses' longing for a land he would never enter.

8:8 *a land of wheat and barley and vine and fig tree and pomegranate, a land of olive trees of oil and honey* The seven riches of Canaan. God "provides us all things richly for enjoyment" (1 Tim 6:17). The danger is never in the gift but in forgetting the Giver.

8:9 *a land whose stones are iron, and from whose hills you will dig copper* No scarcity, and metal in the hills. A land lacking nothing.

8:10 *you will eat and be satisfied, and you shall bless the LORD your God* The cure for forgetting in one verse. Jewish grace after meals is based on it, and Christians give thanks at meals for the same reason. "In everything give thanks" (1 Thess 5:18). A grateful heart remembers; a thankless heart is already starting to forget.

8:11 *lest you forget the LORD your God by not keeping His commandments* Forgetting God is not mainly losing a memory. It is living as if He were not there.

8:12 *lest you eat and are satisfied, and build good houses and dwell in them* Moses paints success: houses, herds, silver and gold all multiply (8:13).

8:14 *your heart is lifted up, and you forget the LORD your God* When all goes well, pride grows and our sense of need shrinks. "Poverty and wealth do not give to me" (Prov 30:8), lest I deny Him. Most Western Christians live with more than any people in history. Is our prosperity drawing us closer or making us forget?

8:15 *fiery serpent and scorpion and thirsty ground where there was no water* Without God they would have died (Num 21:6-9). Water came from the hardest rock (Exod 17:6), and "the rock was the Christ" (1 Cor 10:4).

8:16 *to do you good at your latter end* The purpose of it all. God's hard lessons are for our good in the end. "To those who love God all things work together for good" (Rom 8:28).

fathers had not known, in order to humble you and in order to test you, to do you good at your latter end, **17** and you say in your heart, 'My strength and the might of my hand have made for me this wealth.' **18** And you shall remember the LORD your God, for He ***is*** the ***One*** giving you strength to make wealth, in order to establish His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as ***at*** this day. **19** And it shall be, if you indeed forget the LORD your God and walk after other gods and serve them and bow down to them, I testify against you today that you shall surely perish. **20** Like the nations which the LORD is making perish from before you, so you shall perish, because you would not listen to the voice of the LORD your God.

DEUTERONOMY 9

Not Because of Your Righteousness

1 Hear, Israel (Yisra'el): you are passing over the Jordan (Yarden) today, to go in to dispossess nations greater and mightier than you, cities great and fortified to the heavens, **2** a people great and tall, the sons of the Anakim, whom you yourself know, and ***of whom*** you yourself have heard, 'Who can stand before the sons of Anak?' **3** And you shall know today that the LORD your God, He ***is*** the ***One*** passing over before you ***as*** a consuming fire; He will destroy them, and He will subdue them before you; and you shall dispossess them and make them perish quickly, just as the LORD has spoken to you. **4** Do not say in your heart, when the LORD your God drives them out from before you, saying, 'For my righteousness the LORD has brought me in to take possession of this land,' and for the wickedness of these nations the LORD is dispossessing them from before you. **5** Not for your righteousness and for the uprightness of your heart are you going in to take possession of their land, but for the wickedness of these nations the LORD your God is dispossessing them from before you, and in order to establish the word which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham (Avraham), to Isaac (Yitschaq), and to Jacob (Ya'aqov). **6** And you shall know that not for your righteousness is the LORD your God giving you this good land to take possession of it, for you ***are*** a people stiff of neck.

The Golden Calf Remembered

7 Remember, do not forget, how you provoked the LORD your God to anger in the wilderness; from the day that you came out from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim) until you came to this place, you have been rebelling against the LORD. **8** And at Horeb (Chorev) you provoked the LORD to anger, and the LORD was angry with you, to destroy you. **9** When I went up to the mountain to receive the tablets of stone, the tablets of the covenant which the LORD had made with you, and I remained on the mountain forty days and forty nights; bread I did not eat, and water I did not drink. **10** And the LORD gave to me the two tablets of stone, written by the finger of God, and on them ***were*** according to all the words which the LORD had spoken with you on the mountain from the midst of the fire on the day of the assembly. **11** And it was at the end of forty days and forty nights ***that*** the LORD gave to me the two tablets of stone, the tablets of the covenant. **12** And the LORD said to me, 'Arise, go down quickly from here, for your people whom you brought out from Egypt have acted corruptly; they have turned aside

8:17 Deut 9:4; Hab 1:16; 1 Cor 4:7
8:18 Prov 10:22; Hos 2:8; Ps 127:1,2
8:19 Deut 4:26; Deut 28:58-68; Deut 29:25-28
8:20 Dan 9:11,12; 2 Chr 36:16,17
9:1 Deut 4:38; Deut 11:31; Deut 11:23
9:2 Deut 2:11,12,21; Deut 7:24; Exod 9:11
9:3 Rev 19:12; Josh 3:11,14; Deut 4:24
9:4 Deut 8:17; Deut 12:31; Deut 7:7,8
9:5 Acts 3:25; Luke 1:55; Acts 13:17
9:6 Acts 7:51; Deut 9:13; Deut 10:16
9:7 Acts 13:18; Deut 31:27; Exod 14:11
9:8 Exod 32:16; Ps 106:19-22
9:9 Matt 4:2; Gal 4:24; Exod 34:28
9:10 2 Cor 3:3; Luke 11:20; Heb 8:10
9:11 Heb 9:4; Heb 8:8; Heb 8:9
9:12 1 Cor 10:7; Exod 32:7,8; Judg 2:17

8:17 *My strength and the might of my hand have made for me this wealth* The voice of pride, looking at what we have and saying, I did this.
8:18 *He is the one giving you strength to make wealth, in order to establish His covenant* They would plow and build, but God gave the strength, land, rain and harvest. "What do you have which you did not receive?" (1 Cor 4:7). Wealth was given to show God keeps His promises, not to make Israel proud. "So is the one who treasures up for himself and is not rich toward God" (Luke 12:21).
8:19 *if you indeed forget the LORD your God and walk after other gods* Forgetting does not stop at ingratitude. When we forget the true God, we always find something else to worship.
8:20 *Like the nations which the LORD is making perish from before you, so you shall perish* Key for chapter 7. God judged the Canaanites for their sin, not their race, and would judge Israel the same way. He shows no partiality, and the warning came true in the exile. It always comes back to listening (6:4).
9:1 *Hear, Israel: you are passing over the Jordan today* The opening words of the Shema again (6:4). The crossing is close, and Moses does not pretend it will be easy.
9:2 *Who can stand before the sons of Anak?* A saying had grown up about these tall people, the very fear that stopped their fathers at Kadesh (1:28).
9:3 *He is the one passing over before you as a consuming fire* The real question was not who can stand before the Anakim, but who can stand before the LORD. God would go first; Israel would follow and take possession. When you face something too big, do not pretend it is small. Remember how big God is.
9:4 *For my righteousness the LORD has brought me in to take possession of this land* The danger after victory is thinking, God blessed me because I am good. Moses says no three times in three verses.
9:5 *for the wickedness of these nations the LORD your God is dispossessing them from before you* Two reasons, and Israel's goodness is not one of them: God was judging Canaan's sin (chapter 7), and He was keeping His oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
9:6 *for you are a people stiff of neck* A farming picture: an ox that will not bend its neck to the yoke cannot be led. This is the heart of the gospel. "There is not a righteous one, not even one" (Rom 3:10). He saved us "not by works which we did in righteousness, but according to His mercy" (Titus 3:5).
9:7 *Remember, do not forget, how you provoked the LORD your God to anger in the wilderness* Moses told them to remember God's goodness (8:2); now, their own sin. Remembering God's goodness keeps us thankful. Remembering our sin keeps us humble.
9:8 *at Horeb you provoked the LORD to anger* Of all places to rebel, the worst: where God spoke from the fire and made the covenant.
9:9 *forty days and forty nights; bread I did not eat, and water I did not drink* Possible only by God's sustaining power, with Moses in His presence the whole time.
9:10 *the two tablets of stone, written by the finger of God* God Himself wrote the Ten Commandments. On top of the mountain God writes His covenant with His own finger; at the bottom, the people are breaking it.
9:12 *your people whom you brought out from Egypt have acted corruptly* God calls them "your people," as if pulling back from them. And "quickly": forty days after promising "we will listen and do it" (5:27), they had a golden calf.

quickly from the way which I commanded them; they have made for themselves a cast image.' **13** And the LORD said to me, saying, 'I have seen this people, and look, it ***is*** a people stiff of neck. **14** Let Me alone, that I may destroy them and blot out their name from under the heavens, and I will make you into a nation mightier and greater than it.' **15** And I turned and went down from the mountain, and the mountain ***was*** burning with fire, and the two tablets of the covenant ***were*** on my two hands. **16** And I looked, and look, you had sinned against the LORD your God; you had made for yourselves a calf of cast metal; you had turned aside quickly from the way which the LORD had commanded you. **17** And I took hold of the two tablets and threw them from on my two hands, and I broke them before your eyes. **18** And I prostrated myself before the LORD as at the first, forty days and forty nights; bread I did not eat, and water I did not drink, because of all your sin which you had sinned by doing the evil in the eyes of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger. **19** For I was afraid of the anger and the rage with which the LORD was wrathful against you, to destroy you. And the LORD listened to me also at that time. **20** And with Aaron (Aharon) the LORD was very angry, to destroy him; and I prayed also for Aaron at that time. **21** And your sin which you had made, the calf, I took, and I burned it with fire, and I crushed it, grinding ***it*** well, until it was fine as dust; and I threw its dust into the wadi that came down from the mountain.

More Rebellions and Moses' Prayer

22 And at Taberah (Tavera) and at Massah (Masa) and at Kibroth-hattaavah (Qivrot-Hata'ava) you were provoking the LORD to anger. **23** And when the LORD sent you from Kadesh-barnea (Qadesh-Barnea), saying, 'Go up and take possession of the land which I have given to you,' and you rebelled against the mouth of the LORD your God, and you did not believe Him, and you did not listen to His voice. **24** You have been rebelling against the LORD from the day that I knew you. **25** And I prostrated myself before the LORD the forty days and the forty nights that I prostrated myself, for the LORD had said ***He would*** destroy you. **26** And I prayed to the LORD and said, 'Lord GOD, do not ruin Your people and Your inheritance, whom You ransomed by Your greatness, whom You brought out from Egypt by a strong hand. **27** Remember Your servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; do not turn to the stubbornness of this people, and to its wickedness, and to its sin, **28** lest the land from which You brought us out say, "Because the LORD was not able to bring them into the land of which He spoke to them, and because of His hatred of them, He brought them out to put them to death in the wilderness." **29** And they ***are*** Your people and Your inheritance, whom You brought out by Your great strength and by Your outstretched arm.'

DEUTERONOMY 10

New Tablets and the Ark

1 At that time the LORD said to me, 'Cut out for yourself two tablets of stone like the first ***ones***, and come up to Me on the mountain, and you shall make for yourself an ark of wood.

9:13 Acts 7:51; Deut 9:6; Deut 10:16
9:14 Acts 7:51; Deut 29:20; Exod 32:10-13
9:15 Exod 19:18; Deut 4:11; Deut 5:23
9:16 Exod 32:19; Acts 7:40,41
9:17 1 Cor 10:7; Gal 3:19
9:18 Matt 4:2; Mark 1:13; Mark 14:35
9:19 Heb 12:21; 1 Cor 10:7; 1 John 5:16
9:20 Exod 32:2-5,21,35; Heb 7:26-28
9:21 Exod 32:20; Isa 2:18-21; Isa 30:22
9:22 Exod 17:7; Num 11:1-5; Num 11:4,34
9:23 Ps 106:24,25; Isa 63:10; Ps 78:22
9:24 Deut 31:27; Deut 9:6,7; Acts 7:51
9:25 Gal 3:19; Deut 9:16,18
9:26 Gal 3:19; Exod 32:11-13; Jer 14:21
9:27 Gal 3:19; Exod 3:6,16; Exod 6:3-8
9:28 Gal 3:19
9:29 Gal 3:19; Deut 4:20; Neh 1:10
10:1 Heb 9:4; Exod 34:1,2,4; Deut 10:3

9:14 *Let Me alone, that I may destroy them* God offered to start over with Moses, as with Noah. It seems God was giving Moses room to intercede, testing whether he would stand in the gap. Exodus 32:14 says the LORD relented. Moses did not let Him alone. He prayed.
9:15 *the mountain was burning with fire, and the two tablets of the covenant were on my two hands* God's holy presence was still on the mountain when Moses saw the calf.
9:16 *you had made for yourselves a calf of cast metal* Aaron made it from their gold, and they said, "These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt" (Exod 32:4). They gave the credit for their rescue to a statue of a young bull.
9:17 *I broke them before your eyes* Not just temper. The people had shattered the covenant, and now the tablets lay shattered on the ground.
9:18 *I prostrated myself before the LORD as at the first, forty days and forty nights* Another forty days face down, with no food or water, because of their sin.
9:19 *the LORD listened to me also at that time* God heard Moses' prayer and spared the people.
9:20 *with Aaron the LORD was very angry, to destroy him; and I prayed also for Aaron* Exodus does not give this detail. The high priest to be lived only because Moses prayed. To intercede is to stand between and plead. Jesus is "always living to intercede for them" (Heb 7:25), and He did more than pray. He gave Himself.
9:21 *your sin which you had made, the calf* The idol was their sin made into an object. Moses burned it, ground it to dust and threw it in the stream, and the people drank it (Exod 32:20). An idol that can be ground to dust is no god at all, and sin must be dealt with completely.
9:22 *at Taberah and at Massah and at Kibroth-hattaavah* Fire after complaining (Num 11:1-3), testing over water (Exod 17:1-7), and the graves of craving (Num 11:31-34).
9:23 *you did not believe Him, and you did not listen to His voice* And the worst, Kadesh-barnea (chapter 1).
9:24 *You have been rebelling against the LORD from the day that I knew you* Blunt, so that when victories came they would remember it was all grace. Stephen said, "as your fathers did, you also do" (Acts 7:51). The human heart has not changed.
9:26 *do not ruin Your people and Your inheritance, whom You ransomed by Your greatness* One of the great prayers of the Bible. God had said "your people" (9:12); Moses gives them back: they are Yours, and You paid to redeem them.
9:27 *Remember Your servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; do not turn to the stubbornness of this people* Moses appeals to God's promise and never to the people's goodness. He did not excuse their sin.
9:28 *lest the land from which You brought us out say* He appeals to God's reputation among the nations.
9:29 *they are Your people and Your inheritance* We pray the same way, not on our own merits but on God's mercy, promises and glory, in the name of Jesus, "who also intercedes for us" (Rom 8:34).
10:1 *Cut out for yourself two tablets of stone like the first ones, and come up to Me on the mountain* After the calf, the broken tablets and forty days of Moses on his face, God says, Come up. Israel broke the covenant almost as soon as they made it, and God gave them a second set of tablets. This is grace.

2 And I will write on the tablets the words that were on the first tablets which you broke, and you shall put them in the ark.' **3** And I made an ark of acacia wood, and I cut out two tablets of stone like the first ***ones***, and I went up to the mountain, and the two tablets ***were*** in my hand. **4** And He wrote on the tablets according to the first writing the ten words which the LORD had spoken to you on the mountain from the midst of the fire on the day of the assembly; and the LORD gave them to me. **5** And I turned and came down from the mountain, and I put the tablets in the ark which I had made; and they are there, just as the LORD commanded me. **6** And the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) set out from Beeroth (Be'erot) Bene-jaakan (Bene-Ya'aqan) ***to*** Moserah (Mosera). There Aaron (Aharon) died, and he was buried there; and Eleazar (Elazar) his son served as priest in his place. **7** From there they set out to Gudgodah (Gudgoda), and from Gudgodah ***to*** Jotbathah (Yotvata), a land of wadis of water. **8** At that time the LORD set apart the tribe of Levi to carry the ark of the covenant of the LORD, to stand before the LORD to serve Him, and to bless in His name, to this day. **9** Therefore Levi has no portion and inheritance with his brothers; the LORD, He ***is*** his inheritance, just as the LORD your God spoke to him. **10** And I, I stood on the mountain as ***in*** the first days, forty days and forty nights; and the LORD listened to me also at that time; the LORD was not willing to ruin you. **11** And the LORD said to me, 'Arise, go on the journey before the people, that they may go in and take possession of the land which I swore to their fathers to give to them.'

What the LORD Requires

12 And now, Israel, what is the LORD your God asking from you but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways, and to love Him, and to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, **13** to keep the commandments of the LORD and His statutes which I am commanding you today, for your good? **14** Look, to the LORD your God ***belong*** the heavens and the heavens of the heavens, the earth and all that ***is*** in it. **15** Only on your fathers did the LORD set His affection, to love them, and He chose their seed after them, you, out of all the peoples, as ***at*** this day. **16** And you shall circumcise the foreskin of your heart, and your neck you shall not stiffen anymore. **17** For the LORD your God, He ***is*** the God of the gods and the Lord of the lords, the great God, the mighty and the awesome, who does not lift up faces

10:2 Heb 9:4; Deut 10:5; Exod 25:16-22
10:3 Heb 9:4; Exod 34:4; Exod 25:5,10
10:4 Deut 9:10; Exod 34:28; Deut 18:16
10:5 Heb 9:4; Exod 34:29; Exod 40:20
10:6 Num 33:38; Num 33:30-33; Num 20:23-28
10:8 Acts 13:2; Deut 18:5; Deut 21:5
10:9 Deut 18:1,2; Ezek 44:28; Num 18:20-24
10:10 Deut 9:18,25; Exod 34:28; Exod 33:17
10:11 Exod 32:34; Exod 33:1
10:12 Luke 10:27; Deut 6:5; Matt 22:37
10:13 Deut 6:24; Prov 9:12; Jer 32:39
10:14 1 Kgs 8:27; Neh 9:6; Ps 115:16
10:15 1 Pet 2:9; Deut 4:37; Deut 7:7,8
10:16 Rom 2:28; Acts 7:51; Rom 2:29
10:17 Rev 17:14; Rev 19:16; Josh 22:22

10:2 *I will write on the tablets the words that were on the first tablets which you broke* The words did not change. God did not lower His standard, but He gave a new beginning. "His compassions do not come to an end" (Lam 3:22).
10:3 *I made an ark of acacia wood* The ark of the covenant, the gold-covered chest with the mercy seat as its lid (Exod 25:10-22). Exodus 37:1 says Bezalel made it; Moses had it made as God commanded. Acacia was a hard desert wood that does not rot easily.
10:4 *He wrote on the tablets according to the first writing the ten words* This time Moses cut the stone, but God again did the writing.
10:5 *I put the tablets in the ark which I had made; and they are there* In Solomon's day "there was nothing in the ark except the two tablets" (1 Kgs 8:9). The Law that condemned Israel lay under the mercy seat, where atoning blood was sprinkled (Lev 16:14-15). God set forth Christ "as a propitiation through faith in His blood" (Rom 3:25), and the Greek word is the same used for the mercy seat (Heb 9:5).
10:6 *There Aaron died, and he was buried there; and Eleazar his son served as priest in his place* A travel note in the sermon. Aaron had sinned with the calf (9:20), yet God spared him at Moses' prayer, and the priesthood went on through his son. Numbers places his death at Mount Hor (Num 20:22-29) and lists the camps in another order (Num 33:30-38); many think Moserah was the district around Mount Hor and Israel passed some sites more than once.
10:8 *to carry the ark of the covenant of the LORD, to stand before the LORD to serve Him, and to bless in His name* When Israel sinned with the calf, the Levites stood on the LORD's side (Exod 32:26-29), and God set them apart. The priests, Aaron's line within Levi, offered sacrifices and spoke God's blessing (Num 6:24-26).
10:9 *the LORD, He is his inheritance* Levi received no territory, only towns among the tribes (Num 35:1-8), and lived on the people's gifts. But they had the LORD. Believers are now "a royal priesthood" (1 Pet 2:9). "The LORD is the portion of my share and my cup" (Ps 16:5). If you lost everything else, would He be enough?
10:10 *the LORD listened to me also at that time; the LORD was not willing to ruin you* Israel deserved destruction. God heard the one who prayed, renewed the covenant, kept the priesthood and sent them on. That is still the only way anyone comes to God: because of the One who stands between us and prays for us.
10:11 *Arise, go on the journey before the people* After mercy, God sends them forward toward the land.
10:12 *what is the LORD your God asking from you* After all the history, the simple question. Fear Him, walk in His ways, love Him, serve Him with all your heart and soul (6:5), and keep His commands. "What does the LORD require from you but to do justice, and to love steadfast love, and to walk humbly with your God?" (Mic 6:8). Simple enough for a child, deep enough that none of us has done it perfectly.
10:13 *for your good* God gives commands because He made us and knows how life works best. "My yoke is easy, and My burden is light" (Matt 11:30).
10:14 *to the LORD your God belong the heavens and the heavens of the heavens* The highest heavens and all the earth. God owns it all and needs nothing from us.
10:15 *Only on your fathers did the LORD set His affection, to love them* The God who owns the universe set His love on one small family, simply because He loved them (7:7-8). The God who made the galaxies knows your name and set His love on you in Christ.
10:16 *you shall circumcise the foreskin of your heart, and your neck you shall not stiffen anymore* Circumcision was the covenant sign given to Abraham (Gen 17:9-14), but God always wanted more. To circumcise the heart is to cut away its hardness and pride (Jer 4:4). "Circumcision is of the heart" (Rom 2:29), and in Christ believers are "circumcised with a circumcision made without hands" (Col 2:11). Here Israel is told to do it; in 30:6 God will do it. We turn from stubbornness, and only God can truly change the heart.
10:17 *the God of the gods and the Lord of the lords* The highest God, above every so-called god and ruler. Jesus bears the name "King of kings and Lord of lords" (Rev 19:16). He "does not lift up faces," showing no favoritism, and cannot be bribed. "God is not one who shows partiality" (Acts 10:34).

and does not take a bribe, **18** doing the judgment of ***the*** fatherless and ***the*** widow, and loving ***the*** sojourner, to give him bread and clothing. **19** And you shall love the sojourner, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim). **20** The LORD your God you shall fear; Him you shall serve, and to Him you shall cling, and by His name you shall swear. **21** He ***is*** your praise, and He ***is*** your God, who has done with you these great and awesome things which your eyes have seen. **22** With seventy souls your fathers went down to Egypt, and now the LORD your God has made you like the stars of the heavens for multitude.

DEUTERONOMY 11

Remember the LORD's Mighty Works

1 And you shall love the LORD your God, and keep His charge and His statutes and His judgments and His commandments all the days. **2** And you shall know today, for ***it is*** not your sons, who have not known and who have not seen the discipline of the LORD your God, His greatness, His mighty hand and His outstretched arm, **3** and His signs and His deeds which He did in the midst of Egypt (Mitsrayim) to Pharaoh the king of Egypt and to all his land, **4** and what He did to the army of Egypt, to its horses and to its chariots, how He made the water of the Red Sea flow over their faces when they pursued after you, and the LORD made them perish to this day, **5** and what He did to you in the wilderness until you came to this place, **6** and what He did to Dathan (Datan) and to Abiram (Aviram), the sons of Eliab (Eli'av), the son of Reuben (Reuven), how the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them and their households and their tents and all the living substance that ***was*** at their feet, in the midst of all Israel (Yisra'el). **7** For your eyes ***are*** the ***ones*** seeing all the great work of the LORD which He did.

A Land That Drinks Rain from Heaven

8 And you shall keep all the commandment which I am commanding you today, so that you may be strong, and go in and take possession of the land to which you are passing over to take possession of it, **9** and so that you may prolong ***your*** days on the ground which the LORD swore to your fathers to give to them and to their seed, a land flowing ***with*** milk and honey. **10** For the land to which you are going in to take possession of it, it ***is*** not like the land of Egypt from which you came out, where you sowed your seed and watered ***it*** with your foot, like a garden of vegetables. **11** And the land to which you are passing over to take possession of it ***is*** a land of mountains and valleys; by the rain of the heavens it drinks water, **12** a land which the LORD your God is caring for; continually the eyes of the LORD your God ***are*** on it, from the beginning of the year and to the end of ***the*** year. **13** And it shall be, if you surely listen to My commandments which I am commanding you today, to love the LORD your God and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul, **14** then I will give the rain of your land in its season, early rain and late rain, and you shall gather your grain and your new wine and your fresh oil. **15** And I will give grass in your field for your livestock, and you shall eat and be satisfied. **16** Take heed to yourselves, lest your heart be deceived, and you turn

10:18 Ps 146:9; Ps 68:5; Ps 103:6
10:19 Exod 22:21; Lev 19:33,34; Luke 6:35
10:20 Luke 4:8; Matt 4:10; Luke 8:38
10:21 Jer 17:14; Ps 106:21,22; Exod 15:2
10:22 Acts 7:15; Acts 13:17; Gen 46:27
11:1 Deut 6:5; Deut 10:12; Zech 3:7
11:2 Deut 5:24; Deut 8:19; Deut 29:10
11:3 Deut 7:19; Deut 4:34; Ps 78:12,13
11:4 Heb 11:29; Ps 106:11; Exod 14:23-31
11:5 Ps 77:20; Ps 78:14-72; Ps 105:39-41
11:6 Ps 106:17; Num 26:9,10; Num 27:3
11:7 Deut 5:3; Deut 7:19; Ps 106:2
11:8 Josh 1:6,7; Deut 31:23; Deut 8:10,11
11:9 Deut 4:40; Exod 3:8; Prov 10:27
11:10 Zech 14:18
11:11 Deut 8:7-9; Gen 27:28; Ps 65:12,13
11:12 1 Pet 3:12; 1 Kgs 9:3; Jer 24:6
11:13 Deut 6:17; Deut 4:29; Deut 10:12
11:14 James 5:7; Deut 28:12; Lev 26:4
11:15 Deut 6:11; Ps 104:14; Joel 2:19
11:16 Heb 3:12; Luke 21:34; Job 31:27

10:18 *doing the judgment of the fatherless and the widow, and loving the sojourner* The most powerful Being in the universe bends down to the weakest. Pure religion is "to visit orphans and widows in their tribulation" (James 1:27). To be like God, care about whom He cares about.
10:19 *you shall love the sojourner, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt* Not just tolerate, but love, "as yourself" (Lev 19:34). You know what it is like to be an outsider. Gentile believers were once "strangers to the covenants of the promise" (Eph 2:12). God took us in. How can we shut others out (Matt 25:35, 40)?
10:20 *to Him you shall cling* Holding tight, as in 4:4. Fear Him, serve Him, and make your promises in His name alone.
10:21 *He is your praise, and He is your God* Israel's glory was not their army or wealth but their God. Believers "boast in Christ Jesus" (Phil 3:3).
10:22 *With seventy souls your fathers went down to Egypt* Seventy people (Gen 46:27) became "like the stars of the heavens," as promised to Abraham (Gen 15:5). If God kept that promise, He will keep every other one.
11:1 *keep His charge and His statutes and His judgments and His commandments all the days* Love first, then obedience. A charge is a duty to guard, like a soldier's post. "All the days," not just holy days or easy ones. "If you keep My commandments, you will remain in My love" (John 15:10).
11:2 *it is not your sons, who have not known and who have not seen the discipline of the LORD your God* Many listening had seen the exodus and the wilderness as children. Seeing brings responsibility. Your children have not seen what God has shown you unless you tell them.
11:6 *what He did to Dathan and to Abiram, the sons of Eliab, the son of Reuben* They rebelled with Korah and the earth swallowed them (Num 16). Perhaps they are named because Reuben had just received its land east of the Jordan. Rebellion against God's appointed leaders is rebellion against God.
11:8 *so that you may be strong, and go in and take possession of the land* Their strength would come not from their army but from walking with God.
11:10 *where you sowed your seed and watered it with your foot, like a garden of vegetables* Egypt almost never had rain. Its fields were watered from the Nile by channels the farmer opened with his foot or by a water wheel worked with his feet. Water came from the river and hard work.
11:11 *by the rain of the heavens it drinks water* Canaan had no great river for its hills. They had to depend on rain, and that meant depending on God.
11:12 *continually the eyes of the LORD your God are on it, from the beginning of the year and to the end of the year* God would watch over this land like a farmer over his best field. Some places in life let us feel self-sufficient; others leave us looking up. The second kind keeps us close to Him: "having cast all your anxiety on Him, because He cares about you" (1 Pet 5:7).
11:13 *if you surely listen to My commandments* Moses suddenly speaks in God's own voice. This is God speaking through His prophet.
11:14 *early rain and late rain* The early rain in fall softened the ground for planting; the late rain in spring filled out the grain. James uses the picture for waiting on the Lord's return (James 5:7). These were covenant promises to Israel in the land, not a pledge that faithful Christians will never face drought; our blessings in Christ are first spiritual (Eph 1:3).
11:16 *lest your heart be deceived, and you turn aside and serve other gods* The Canaanites believed Baal sent storm and rain. In a land depending on rain, the pull to honor the local rain god would be strong.

aside and serve other gods and bow down to them, **17** and the anger of the LORD burn against you, and He shut up the heavens, and there be no rain, and the ground not yield its produce, and you perish quickly from on the good land which the LORD is giving to you.

Lay Up These Words in Your Heart

18 And you shall put these words of Mine on your heart and on your soul, and you shall bind them for a sign on your hand, and they shall be for frontlets between your eyes. **19** And you shall teach them to your sons, speaking of them when you sit in your house and when you walk on the road and when you lie down and when you rise up. **20** And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, **21** so that your days and the days of your sons may be multiplied on the ground which the LORD swore to your fathers to give to them, like the days of the heavens above the earth. **22** For if you surely keep all this commandment which I am commanding you to do it, to love the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways, and to cling to Him, **23** then the LORD will dispossess all these nations from before you, and you shall dispossess nations greater and mightier than you. **24** Every place on which the sole of your foot treads shall be yours; from the wilderness and the Lebanon (Levanon), from the river, the river Euphrates (Perat), and to the western sea shall be your territory. **25** No man shall take a stand before you; the dread of you and the fear of you the LORD your God will put on the face of all the land on which you tread, just as He spoke to you.

The Blessing and the Curse

26 See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse: **27** the blessing, when you listen to the commandments of the LORD your God which I am commanding you today, **28** and the curse, if you do not listen to the commandments of the LORD your God, and turn aside from the way which I am commanding you today, to walk after other gods which you have not known. **29** And it shall be, when the LORD your God brings you into the land to which you are going in to take possession of it, that you shall set the blessing on the mountain of Gerizim and the curse on the mountain of Ebal (Eval). **30** ***Are*** they not on the other side of the Jordan (Yarden), behind the way of the setting of the sun, in the land of the Canaanite who dwells in the Arabah (Arava), opposite Gilgal, beside the terebinths of Moreh (More)? **31** For you are passing over the Jordan to go in to take possession of the land which the LORD your God is giving to you, and you shall take possession of it and dwell in it. **32** And you shall be careful to do all the statutes and the judgments which I am setting before you today.

DEUTERONOMY 12

The Place the LORD Will Choose

1 These ***are*** the statutes and the judgments which you shall be careful to do in the land which the LORD, the God of your fathers, has given to you to take possession of it, all the days that you live on the ground. **2** You shall surely destroy all the places where the nations whom you are dispossessing served their gods, on the high mountains and on the hills and under

11:17 Deut 6:15; 1 Kgs 8:35; 2 Chr 6:26
11:18 Col 3:16; 2 Pet 1:12; 2 Pet 3:1,2
11:19 Col 3:16; Deut 6:7; Deut 4:9,10
11:20 Deut 6:9
11:21 Prov 3:2,16; Prov 4:10; Ps 72:5
11:22 Matt 22:37; Deut 6:17; Deut 10:20
11:23 Deut 4:38; Deut 9:1,5; Deut 7:1,2,22,23
11:24 Josh 14:9; Exod 23:31; Josh 1:3,4
11:25 Deut 7:24; Exod 23:27; Deut 2:25
11:26 Deut 30:1,15-20; Gal 3:10,13,14
11:27 Deut 28:1-14; Isa 1:19; John 14:21-23
11:28 Deut 28:15-68; Deut 29:19-28; Lev 26:14-32
11:29 Deut 27:12-26; Josh 8:30-35
11:30 Gen 12:6; Judg 7:1; Josh 5:9
11:31 Josh 1:11; Deut 9:1; Josh 3:13-17
11:32 Deut 12:32; Deut 5:32,33; Ps 119:6
12:1 1 Kgs 8:40; Job 7:1; Deut 4:1,2,5,45
12:2 2 Kgs 16:4; Deut 7:5,25,26; 2 Kgs 17:10,11

11:17 *He shut up the heavens, and there be no rain* Just what happened under Ahab. Elijah said, "there shall not be dew and rain these years, except according to my word" (1 Kgs 17:1), and God showed Baal could not send one drop (1 Kgs 18). We too can be deceived into trusting something else for what only God gives.
11:18 *you shall put these words of Mine on your heart and on your soul* Moses repeats 6:6-9 almost exactly. Chapter 6 opened this part of the sermon with these words, and chapter 11 closes it with them. Jewish prayer later joined 6:4-9 and 11:13-21 and said them daily.
11:21 *like the days of the heavens above the earth* As long as the sky stands over the earth. Faith passed on is blessing passed on.
11:22 *to love the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways, and to cling to Him* Love, walk, cling. That is the whole of it.
11:24 *Every place on which the sole of your foot treads shall be yours* Repeated to Joshua (Josh 1:3); Israel had to walk in to receive it. These are Abraham's borders (Gen 15:18), reached only under Solomon (1 Kgs 4:21). I believe God will give Israel the whole land when Christ reigns on the earth, because His promises to Abraham have never been canceled (Rom 11:29). Others see it fulfilled under Solomon or spiritually in Christ.
11:25 *the dread of you and the fear of you the LORD your God will put on the face of all the land* God's fear went ahead of them, as Rahab told the spies (Josh 2:9-11).
11:26 *See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse* Two roads, as simple as it can be. Chapters 27 and 28 spell them out, and 30:19 says "choose life."
11:28 *to walk after other gods which you have not known* Gods that had done nothing for them, unlike the LORD. Those who stand on keeping the law "are under a curse" (Gal 3:10), because no one keeps it all. "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us" (Gal 3:13). The choice now is whether we will trust Him, and then obey, not to earn the blessing but because we have received it.
11:29 *you shall set the blessing on the mountain of Gerizim and the curse on the mountain of Ebal* Two mountains facing each other in the middle of the land, with Shechem between them. Joshua did exactly this after Jericho and Ai (Josh 8:30-35), and chapter 27 gives the details.
11:30 *beside the terebinths of Moreh* A terebinth is a large spreading tree. Here Abraham first stopped in Canaan and God first promised him the land (Gen 12:6-7). Israel would proclaim the covenant where the promise began. This Gilgal is likely a site near Shechem, not the one by Jericho.
11:31 *you shall take possession of it and dwell in it* Not if, but you shall.
11:32 *you shall be careful to do all the statutes and the judgments* This closes the great call to love and obey that began in chapter 5. Next come the statutes one by one. The rules are not the starting point. Love for God is, and the commands that follow are ways to live it out in the land.
12:1 *These are the statutes and the judgments which you shall be careful to do in the land* After eleven chapters on why to obey, Moses now tells them what to obey. These laws were for life in Canaan under the covenant made at Horeb, so we ask three questions of each: what it meant for Israel then, how Christ fulfilled it, and what it teaches us now.
12:2 *on the high mountains and on the hills and under every luxuriant tree* The Canaanites believed their gods lived on high places and gave life through green trees and rain. A high place was a hilltop shrine, often with a stone pillar and an Asherah pole for the fertility goddess.

every luxuriant tree. **3** And you shall break down their altars, and you shall shatter their pillars, and their Asherim you shall burn with fire, and the carved images of their gods you shall cut down, and you shall destroy their name from that place. **4** You shall not do so to the LORD your God, **5** but to the place which the LORD your God will choose out of all your tribes to put His name there, for His dwelling, you shall seek, and you shall go there. **6** And you shall bring there your burnt offerings and your sacrifices, and your tithes and the contribution of your hand, and your vows and your freewill offerings, and the firstborn of your herd and of your flock. **7** And you shall eat there before the LORD your God, and you shall rejoice in every undertaking of your hand, you and your households, in which the LORD your God has blessed you. **8** You shall not do according to all that we are doing here today, every man all that ***is*** right in his own eyes, **9** for you have not yet come to the rest and to the inheritance which the LORD your God is giving to you. **10** And you shall pass over the Jordan (Yarden) and dwell in the land which the LORD your God is causing you to inherit, and He will give you rest from all your enemies all around, and you shall dwell ***in*** security. **11** And it shall be ***that*** the place which the LORD your God will choose to make His name dwell there, there you shall bring all that I am commanding you: your burnt offerings and your sacrifices, your tithes and the contribution of your hand, and all the choice of your vows which you vow to the LORD. **12** And you shall rejoice before the LORD your God, you and your sons and your daughters and your slaves and your female slaves, and the Levite who ***is*** in your gates, for he has no portion and inheritance with you. **13** Take heed to yourself, lest you offer up your burnt offerings in every place that you see; **14** but in the place which the LORD will choose in one of your tribes, there you shall offer up your burnt offerings, and there you shall do all that I am commanding you.

Eating Meat in Your Towns

15 Only, with all the desire of your soul you may slaughter and eat flesh according to the blessing of the LORD your God which He has given to you, in all your gates; the unclean and the clean may eat it, like the gazelle and like the deer. **16** Only the blood you shall not eat; on the earth you shall pour it out like water. **17** You are not able to eat in your gates the tithe of your grain and of your new wine and of your fresh oil, and the firstborn of your herd and of your flock, and any of your vows which you vow, and your freewill offerings, and the contribution of your hand; **18** but before the LORD your God you shall eat it, in the place which the LORD your God will choose, you and your son and your daughter and your slave and your female slave and the Levite who ***is*** in your gates; and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God in every undertaking of your hand. **19** Take heed to yourself, lest you forsake the Levite all your days on your ground. **20** When the LORD your God enlarges your territory, just as He spoke to you, and you say, 'Let me eat flesh,' because your soul desires to eat flesh, with all the desire of your soul you may eat flesh. **21** If the place which the LORD your God will choose to put His name there is too far from you, then you may slaughter from your herd and from your flock which the LORD has given to you, just as I have commanded you, and you may eat in your gates with all the desire of your soul. **22** Indeed, just as the gazelle and the deer are eaten, so you may eat it; the unclean and the clean

12:3 Num 33:52; Judg 2:2; Zech 13:2
12:4 Deut 12:30,31; Deut 16:21,22; Lev 20:23
12:5 Acts 7:48; Eph 2:22; Deut 12:11
12:6 Deut 15:19,20; Lev 17:3-9; Ezek 20:40
12:7 Deut 12:18; Lev 23:40; Deut 12:12,18
12:8 Judg 17:6; Judg 21:25; Prov 21:2
12:9 Deut 25:19; 1 Kgs 8:56; 1 Chr 23:25
12:10 Deut 11:31; Deut 3:27; Deut 4:22
12:11 Deut 12:5,14,18,21,26; Deut 15:20; Deut 17:8
12:12 Deut 12:7; Deut 26:12; Deut 10:9
12:13 Lev 17:2-5; Deut 12:6; 1 Kgs 12:28-32
12:14 Deut 12:5,11; Ps 5:7; Ps 9:11
12:15 Deut 14:5; Deut 14:26; Deut 15:22,23
12:16 Deut 15:23; Gen 9:4; Acts 15:29
12:17 Deut 12:6,11; Deut 14:22-29; Deut 26:12,14
12:18 Deut 12:7; Deut 14:23; Deut 12:11,12,19
12:19 Neh 10:34-39; 2 Chr 11:13,14; 2 Chr 31:4-21
12:20 Deut 19:8; Deut 11:24; Gen 28:14
12:21 Deut 12:5,11; Deut 14:23,24; Deut 16:6,11
12:22 Deut 12:15,16

12:3 *you shall destroy their name from that place* To name a god at a place was to claim it for that god. Sadly, even good kings did not take away the high places (1 Kgs 15:14), until Hezekiah and Josiah. What we leave standing in our lives tends to pull us back.
12:5 *to the place which the LORD your God will choose out of all your tribes to put His name there* Moses never names it. First it was Shiloh (Josh 18:1; Jer 7:12), later Jerusalem (1 Kgs 8:29). God is everywhere and the heavens cannot hold Him (1 Kgs 8:27), but He chose a place to meet His people on His terms.
12:7 *you shall eat there before the LORD your God, and you shall rejoice* Burnt offerings, peace offerings, tithes, gifts, vows and firstborn all came there (12:6). Worship in Deuteronomy is not gloomy. It is a family meal with God at the head of the table.
12:8 *every man all that is right in his own eyes* In the wilderness worship was not yet settled. The same words describe Israel falling apart in Judges (Judg 21:25). God gives His Word so we do not have to guess what pleases Him.
12:10 *He will give you rest from all your enemies all around, and you shall dwell in security* Joshua gave Israel rest in the land, but it pictured a better rest God gives in Christ (Heb 4:8-10).
12:12 *and the Levite who is in your gates, for he has no portion and inheritance with you* Everyone was invited, servants included. Levi had no land and lived on the offerings and the kindness of the tribes, and Deuteronomy keeps reminding Israel not to forget them.
12:13 *lest you offer up your burnt offerings in every place that you see* One place guarded against mixing the LORD's worship with Baal's, and it taught that God sets the terms for how sinners come to Him. There is one way to God (John 14:6). We no longer need a temple in Jerusalem; true worshipers "will worship the Father in spirit and truth" (John 4:23). But we still come His way, through His Son.
12:15 *with all the desire of your soul you may slaughter and eat flesh* In the wilderness animals seem to have been killed at the tabernacle (Lev 17:3-6). Spread through the land, they could eat meat at home "like the gazelle," an ordinary meal, not a sacrifice. God made room for daily life (12:20-22).
12:16 *Only the blood you shall not eat; on the earth you shall pour it out like water* A rule going back to Noah (Gen 9:4).
12:18 *before the LORD your God you shall eat it, in the place which the LORD your God will choose* The tithe, firstborn and vows were holy things, to be eaten at the sanctuary with the whole household.
12:19 *lest you forsake the Levite all your days on your ground* The second reminder in the chapter. It is easy to forget those who serve God when busy with our own fields. Those who teach the Word should be cared for by those they teach (Gal 6:6; 1 Tim 5:17-18).

alike may eat it. **23** Only be strong not to eat the blood, for the blood, it ***is*** the life, and you shall not eat the life with the flesh. **24** You shall not eat it; on the earth you shall pour it out like water. **25** You shall not eat it, so that it may go well with you and with your sons after you, when you do what ***is*** right in the eyes of the LORD. **26** Only your holy things which you have, and your vows, you shall take, and you shall go to the place which the LORD will choose. **27** And you shall offer your burnt offerings, the flesh and the blood, on the altar of the LORD your God; and the blood of your sacrifices shall be poured out on the altar of the LORD your God, and the flesh you may eat. **28** Keep and hear all these words which I am commanding you, so that it may go well with you and with your sons after you forever, when you do the good and the right in the eyes of the LORD your God.

Do Not Copy the Nations

29 When the LORD your God cuts off from before you the nations to which you are going to dispossess them, and you dispossess them and dwell in their land, **30** take heed to yourself, lest you be ensnared after them, after they have been destroyed from before you, and lest you inquire about their gods, saying, 'How did these nations serve their gods? And let me do so, I also.' **31** You shall not do so to the LORD your God, for every abomination of the LORD which He hates they have done for their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they burn with fire to their gods. **32** Every word which I am commanding you, it you shall be careful to do; you shall not add to it, and you shall not take away from it.

DEUTERONOMY 13

False Prophets and Dreamers

1 If a prophet or a dreamer of a dream arises in your midst, and he gives you a sign or a wonder, **2** and the sign and the wonder of which he spoke to you comes ***to pass***, saying, 'Let us walk after other gods,' which you have not known, 'and let us be made to serve them,' **3** you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or to that dreamer of the dream, for the LORD your God is testing you, to know whether you are loving the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. **4** After the LORD your God you shall walk, and Him you shall fear, and His commandments you shall keep, and to His voice you shall listen, and Him you shall serve, and to Him you shall cling. **5** And that prophet or that dreamer of the dream shall be put to death, for he has spoken rebellion against the LORD your God, who brought you out from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim) and ransomed you from the house of slaves, to thrust you from the way in which the LORD your God commanded you to walk. And you shall purge the evil from your midst.

When a Loved One Entices

6 If your brother, the son of your mother, or your son or your daughter or the wife of your bosom or your friend who ***is*** as your own soul, entices you in secret, saying, 'Let us go and serve other gods,' which you have not known, you and your fathers, **7** of the gods of the peoples who ***are*** around

12:23 Lev 17:11,14; Gen 9:4; Lev 3:16,17
12:24 Deut 12:16; Deut 15:23
12:25 Deut 4:40; Isa 3:10; Exod 15:26
12:26 Num 5:9,10; Num 18:19; Deut 12:6,11,18
12:27 Lev 17:11; Lev 1:5,9,13; Lev 4:30
12:28 Deut 24:8; Exod 34:11; Lev 19:37
12:29 Josh 23:4; Deut 19:1; Deut 9:3
12:30 Deut 7:16; Exod 23:31-33; Lev 18:3
12:31 Jer 32:35; Deut 12:4; Exod 23:2
12:32 Rev 22:18-19; Deut 4:2; Josh 1:7
13:1 Matt 24:24; Mark 13:22; 2 Pet 2:1
13:2 Matt 24:23; 2 Pet 2:1; 1 John 4:1
13:3 1 John 4:1; Matt 24:23; 2 Pet 2:1
13:4 1 Cor 6:17; 1 John 4:1; Deut 10:20
13:5 1 Cor 5:13; Deut 17:7; Deut 18:20
13:6 Luke 14:26; Deut 17:2,3; Deut 28:54
13:7 Luke 14:26

12:23 *be strong not to eat the blood, for the blood, it is the life* Nations around them drank blood, sometimes in pagan rites. Life belongs to God: "the life of the flesh is in the blood" (Lev 17:11), given on the altar for atonement. "Apart from shedding of blood there is no forgiveness" (Heb 9:22). The early church asked Gentiles to abstain from blood (Acts 15:29); believers differ on whether that still binds us, but all agree the blood of Jesus is precious most of all (1 Pet 1:19).
12:27 *the blood of your sacrifices shall be poured out on the altar of the LORD your God, and the flesh you may eat* The burnt offering went wholly on the altar; for other sacrifices the blood went on the altar and the family ate the meat.
12:28 *so that it may go well with you and with your sons after you forever* Moses keeps thinking of the children. Our faithfulness shapes the next generation more than we know.
12:30 *How did these nations serve their gods? And let me do so, I also* It sounds like harmless curiosity. Maybe their ways worked, and Israel could borrow a few for the LORD.
12:31 *even their sons and their daughters they burn with fire to their gods* An abomination is something God finds disgusting. Child sacrifice to Molech (Lev 18:21) was one reason God judged these nations, and Israel later did it in the valley of Hinnom (2 Kgs 16:3; Jer 7:31). Every age has ways of sacrificing children to what it worships. The church too is tempted to borrow the world's methods; does what we bring into worship honor God, or just copy the culture?
12:32 *you shall not add to it, and you shall not take away from it* As in 4:2 and Revelation 22:18-19. Adding puts our ideas on God's level; taking away says some of His words do not matter. The safe road is to receive all of it, as written.
13:1 *If a prophet or a dreamer of a dream arises in your midst* A prophet speaks for God; a dreamer claims messages in dreams. God did speak to prophets in dreams and visions (Num 12:6), so a dreamer could look very convincing.
13:2 *the sign and the wonder of which he spoke to you comes to pass, saying, 'Let us walk after other gods,'* A miracle does not prove a message is from God. Pharaoh's magicians copied some plagues (Exod 7:11, 22), and Jesus warned of false prophets who "will give great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect" (Matt 24:24). The test is not first what he can do, but what he says about God.
13:3 *the LORD your God is testing you, to know whether you are loving the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul* God tempts no one to sin (James 1:13), but He allows tests that show what is in our hearts. This was a test of love (6:5). Even "an angel out of heaven" (Gal 1:8) preaching another gospel is to be rejected.
13:4 *After the LORD your God you shall walk, and Him you shall fear* Six verbs, and in Hebrew the LORD comes first in each line. Cling is the word used of a man holding fast to his wife (Gen 2:24). The best protection against error is knowing and loving the true God so well that a counterfeit is easy to spot.
13:5 *that prophet or that dreamer of the dream shall be put to death, for he has spoken rebellion against the LORD your God* The first death penalty in the law code. Israel was ruled by God Himself, so leading them to other gods was like leading a revolt against the King, and those gods demanded the burning of children (12:31). "Purge the evil from your midst" comes again and again; evil was like a sickness that would spread through the nation.
13:6 *the wife of your bosom or your friend who is as your own soul, entices you in secret* The hardest case: the people closest to us, with no sign and no crowd, only the quiet pull of love.

you, those near to you or those far from you, from the end of the earth and to the end of the earth, **8** you shall not consent to him, and you shall not listen to him, and your eye shall not pity him, and you shall not spare ***him***, and you shall not cover over him. **9** But you shall surely kill him; your hand shall be on him first to put him to death, and the hand of all the people last. **10** And you shall stone him with stones, and he shall die, for he sought to thrust you away from the LORD your God, who brought you out from the land of Egypt, from the house of slaves. **11** And all Israel (Yisra'el) shall hear and fear, and they shall not again do like this evil thing in your midst.

A City That Turns to Idols

12 If you hear in one of your cities which the LORD your God is giving to you to dwell there, saying, **13** 'Men, sons of worthlessness, have gone out from your midst, and they have thrust away the inhabitants of their city, saying, "Let us go and serve other gods,"' which you have not known, **14** then you shall investigate and search out and inquire thoroughly; and look, ***it is*** truth, the thing ***is*** certain, this abomination has been done in your midst, **15** you shall surely strike the inhabitants of that city with the mouth of the sword, devoting it to destruction and all that ***is*** in it, and its livestock, with the mouth of the sword. **16** And all its plunder you shall gather into the midst of its open square, and you shall burn with fire the city and all its plunder, a whole offering to the LORD your God; and it shall be a heap forever; it shall not be built again. **17** And nothing of the devoted thing shall cling to your hand, so that the LORD may turn from the burning of His anger, and give you compassion, and have compassion on you, and multiply you, just as He swore to your fathers, **18** when you listen to the voice of the LORD your God, to keep all His commandments which I am commanding you today, to do what ***is*** right in the eyes of the LORD your God.

DEUTERONOMY 14

A Holy People

1 You ***are*** sons of the LORD your God; you shall not cut yourselves, and you shall not make baldness between your eyes for the dead. **2** For you ***are*** a holy people to the LORD your God, and the LORD has chosen you to be for Him a people of treasured possession out of all the peoples who ***are*** on the face of the ground.

Clean and Unclean Food

3 You shall not eat any abomination. **4** This ***is*** the animal which you may eat: ox, lamb of ***the*** sheep, and kid of ***the*** goats, **5** deer and gazelle and roe-deer and wild goat and ibex and antelope and mountain sheep. **6** And every animal that divides a hoof and cleaves a cleft of two hooves, bringing up cud, among the animals, it you may eat. **7** Nevertheless, these you shall not eat, of those that bring up the cud and of those that divide the cloven hoof: the camel and the hare and the rock badger, for they bring up cud, and a hoof they do not divide; they ***are*** unclean to you. **8** And the pig, for it

13:8 Prov 1:10; Deut 7:16; Deut 19:13
13:9 John 8:7; Deut 17:2-7; Matt 10:37
13:10 Josh 7:25; Deut 21:21; Lev 20:2,27
13:11 Deut 19:20; Deut 17:13; Prov 19:25
13:12 Josh 22:11-34; Judg 20:1,2-17
13:13 Deut 13:2,6; Judg 19:22; Judg 20:13
13:14 Deut 17:4; Deut 10:18; Num 35:30
13:15 Rev 17:16; Deut 7:2,16; Exod 22:20
13:16 Josh 8:28; Jer 49:2; Josh 6:24
13:17 Gen 26:4,24; Gen 28:14; Deut 7:26
13:18 Deut 12:25,28,32; Ps 119:6; Matt 6:33
14:1 Rom 9:26; Rom 9:8,26; Gal 3:26
14:2 1 Pet 2:9; Titus 2:14; Deut 7:6
14:3 Ezek 4:14; Lev 11:43; Lev 20:25
14:4 Lev 11:2-8; 1 Kgs 4:23
14:6 Ps 1:1,2; Prov 18:1; 2 Cor 6:17
14:7 2 Pet 2:18; Matt 7:22,23,26; 2 Tim 3:5
14:8 Lev 11:26,27; Isa 65:4; Isa 66:3,17

13:8 *you shall not consent to him, and you shall not listen to him* Nor hide it. Love for family could not outweigh loyalty to God. "The one who loves father or mother above Me is not worthy of Me" (Matt 10:37). We do not stop loving them, but God comes first.

13:9 *your hand shall be on him first to put him to death, and the hand of all the people last* The accuser had to act first, a guard against false charges from a distance. Two or three witnesses and careful inquiry were also required (17:4-6; 19:15).

13:11 *all Israel shall hear and fear* The penalty protected the whole nation. This law was for Israel under God's direct rule. The church is not a nation and does not carry the sword. Paul quotes the phrase, "you will remove the evil man from among yourselves" (1 Cor 5:13), meaning removal from fellowship with the goal of restoration (2 Cor 2:6-8). No Christian has any right to harm anyone because of what they believe (Matt 26:52). What has not changed is how seriously God takes leading people away from Him (Matt 18:6).

13:13 *Men, sons of worthlessness, have gone out from your midst* A Hebrew way of saying wicked, good-for-nothing men. The word, belial, later became a name for Satan (2 Cor 6:15).

13:14 *you shall investigate and search out and inquire thoroughly* Three verbs, all meaning look hard. Rumor was not enough; God's justice never acts on gossip. How quickly do we believe a bad report without checking it?

13:15 *devoting it to destruction and all that is in it* The same herem as on Canaan (7:2). The ban was never about race. God would judge an Israelite town by the same standard if it turned to the same gods. In the end He did so to the nation, sending it into exile and burning Jerusalem (2 Kgs 25:9). Scripture records no town judged under this law in exactly this form (compare Judg 20).

13:16 *a whole offering to the LORD your God; and it shall be a heap forever* Burned as an offering and never rebuilt.

13:17 *nothing of the devoted thing shall cling to your hand* No one was to profit from God's justice, as Achan did (Josh 7). The goal of judgment was mercy for the nation: God would turn from His anger and have compassion.

13:18 *when you listen to the voice of the LORD your God* The whole chapter comes back to listening: not to the prophet, not to the friend, but to the LORD. The Father said of His Son, "listen to Him" (Matt 17:5). In a world full of voices, that is still our safety.

14:1 *you shall not cut yourselves, and you shall not make baldness between your eyes for the dead* Israel was God's family, "My son, My firstborn" (Exod 4:22). Cutting the skin and shaving the head were pagan mourning rites, often tied to their gods (1 Kgs 18:28; Lev 19:28). God's children do not grieve "just as also the rest who have no hope" (1 Thess 4:13). Grief is real and right, but ours is different because we know the One who holds life and death.

14:3 *You shall not eat any abomination* The heading for the food laws. It did not mean the animal was evil, for God called every creature good (Gen 1:31). For Israel, under this covenant, it was not food.

14:6 *every animal that divides a hoof and cleaves a cleft of two hooves, bringing up cud* To bring up the cud is to chew food a second time, as cows and sheep do. An animal needed both marks, so the camel, hare and rock badger, which chew the cud or seem to, were out (14:7). Some of the animal names are hard to identify today.

14:8 *the pig, for it divides a hoof, and brings up no cud; it is unclean to you* Scripture does not give the full reason. Some point to health, others to the pig's use in pagan rites. The reason the text gives is "you are a holy people" (14:2). Every meal reminded Israel that they belonged to God.

divides a hoof, and ***brings up*** no cud; it ***is*** unclean to you. Of their flesh you shall not eat, and their carcass you shall not touch. **9** This you may eat of all that ***is*** in the water: all that has fin and scale you may eat. **10** And all that does not have fin and scale you shall not eat; it ***is*** unclean to you. **11** Every clean bird you may eat. **12** And these ***are those*** of which you shall not eat: the eagle and the bearded vulture and the osprey, **13** and the red kite and the hawk and the black kite according to its kind, **14** and every raven according to its kind, **15** and the ostrich and the screech owl and the gull and the falcon according to its kind, **16** the little owl and the great owl and the barn owl, **17** and the desert owl and the Egyptian vulture and the cormorant, **18** and the stork and the heron according to its kind, and the hoopoe and the bat. **19** And every swarming thing of the flying things ***is*** unclean to you; they shall not be eaten. **20** Every clean flying thing you may eat. **21** You shall not eat any carcass; to the sojourner who ***is*** in your gates you may give it, and he may eat it, or ***you may*** sell ***it*** to a foreigner; for you ***are*** a holy people to the LORD your God. You shall not boil a young goat in the milk of its mother.

The Tithe

22 You shall surely tithe all the produce of your seed which comes out of the field year by year. **23** And you shall eat before the LORD your God, in the place which He will choose to make His name dwell there, the tithe of your grain, your new wine, and your fresh oil, and the firstborn of your herd and of your flock, so that you may learn to fear the LORD your God all the days. **24** And if the way is too great for you, so that you are not able to carry it, because the place which the LORD your God will choose to put His name there is too far from you, when the LORD your God blesses you, **25** then you shall give ***it*** for money, and bind up the money in your hand, and go to the place which the LORD your God will choose. **26** And you shall give the money for all that your soul desires, for cattle and for sheep and for wine and for strong drink and for all that your soul asks of you; and you shall eat there before the LORD your God, and you shall rejoice, you and your household. **27** And the Levite who ***is*** in your gates, you shall not forsake him, for he has no portion and inheritance with you. **28** At the end of three years you shall bring out all the tithe of your produce in that year, and you shall deposit ***it*** in your gates. **29** And the Levite shall come, because he has no portion and inheritance with you, and the sojourner and the fatherless and the widow who ***are*** in your gates, and they shall eat and be satisfied, so that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hand which you do.

DEUTERONOMY 15

The Year of Release

1 At the end of seven years you shall make a release. **2** And this ***is*** the manner of the release: every owner of a loan of his hand shall release what he lends to his neighbor; he shall not press his neighbor and his brother, for ***one*** has proclaimed a release to the LORD. **3** The foreigner you may press, and what is yours with your brother, let your hand release.

14:9 Lev 11:9-12
14:12 Lev 11:13-19
14:15 Job 30:29
14:19 Lev 11:20-23; Phil 3:19
14:21 Exod 23:19; Exod 34:26; Lev 17:15
14:22 Deut 12:6,17; Neh 10:37; Num 18:21
14:23 Deut 12:5-7,17,18; Deut 15:19,20
14:24 Deut 12:21; Deut 12:5; Deut 11:24
14:26 Deut 12:7,12,18; Eccl 9:7; Ezra 7:15-17,22
14:27 Num 18:20; Deut 14:29; Deut 12:12,18,19
14:28 Deut 14:22; Amos 4:4; Deut 26:12-15
14:29 2 Cor 9:10; 1 Tim 5:3; Deut 14:27
15:1 Luke 4:18; Luke 4:19; Deut 31:10
15:2 Neh 5:7-11; Isa 58:3; Amos 8:4-6
15:3 Deut 23:20; Exod 22:25; Matt 17:25,26

14:9 *all that has fin and scale you may eat* Shellfish, eels and catfish were unclean. Holiness reached into the kitchen.
14:12 *the eagle and the bearded vulture and the osprey* Some bird names are uncertain. Most on the list are birds of prey or eaters of dead things, living on blood and death, which fits the blood law (12:23). The bat is counted with flying things, as the text does.
14:19 *every swarming thing of the flying things is unclean to you* Flying insects, though Leviticus 11:21-22 allows locusts and grasshoppers. God gave a clear guide; He does not leave His people guessing.
14:21 *You shall not eat any carcass; to the sojourner who is in your gates you may give it* An animal that died on its own still had its blood. The food laws were for Israel as God's holy people, not for the whole world. The young goat law (Exod 23:19) may oppose a pagan rite or teach tenderness; Scripture does not say. Jesus said, "Not what enters into the mouth defiles the man" (Matt 15:11), "cleansing all the foods" (Mark 7:19). Peter heard, "What God has cleansed, you must not call common" (Acts 10:15), a lesson that Gentiles were welcome in Christ. The food laws were "a shadow" (Col 2:17). Now "every creature of God is good" (1 Tim 4:4), and "whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all things to the glory of God" (1 Cor 10:31).
14:22 *You shall surely tithe all the produce of your seed which comes out of the field year by year* A tithe is a tenth. Every year a tenth of the harvest belonged to God.
14:23 *you shall eat before the LORD your God, in the place which He will choose* This tithe was eaten by the family in a feast at the sanctuary, "so that you may learn to fear the LORD." Giving the first and best teaches us to trust Him for the rest.
14:24 *if the way is too great for you, so that you are not able to carry it* They could sell the produce and buy food at the sanctuary (14:25). God made room for distance again.
14:26 *for wine and for strong drink and for all that your soul asks of you* Strong drink was fermented drink like beer. Scripture warns against drunkenness (Prov 20:1; Eph 5:18), and Christians differ on alcohol, but this shows the feast was a real celebration before the LORD, not a grim duty.
14:27 *the Levite who is in your gates, you shall not forsake him* The third reminder in three chapters. God's people were never to rejoice in a way that forgot those in need.
14:28 *At the end of three years you shall bring out all the tithe of your produce in that year* Every third year the tithe was stored in the towns. Jewish tradition counted several tithes (Num 18:21-24 and these); scholars differ on the count.
14:29 *the sojourner and the fatherless and the widow who are in your gates, and they shall eat and be satisfied* A welfare system built into worship; the poor did not have to beg. The New Testament does not command tithing as Israel did, and Christians debate it, but it calls us to give generously and with the needy in mind (Gal 2:10), for "God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Cor 9:7).
15:1 *At the end of seven years you shall make a release* Release means to let go. The seventh year was already a Sabbath for the land (Exod 23:10-11; Lev 25:1-7); Deuteronomy adds a release of debts.
15:2 *he shall not press his neighbor and his brother, for one has proclaimed a release to the LORD* Loans in Israel were not business loans but help for a neighbor after a bad harvest or sickness. Teachers differ on whether the debt was cancelled for good or only put on hold for that year when no crops were sown. Either way, it gave the poor a fresh start.
15:3 *The foreigner you may press* Not the poor sojourner living in Israel, but an outsider, usually a trader, who came for business. The release was a family law for God's people.

4 Nevertheless, there shall be no needy one among you, for the LORD will surely bless you in the land which the LORD your God is giving to you ***as*** an inheritance to take possession of it, **5** if only you surely listen to the voice of the LORD your God, to be careful to do all this commandment which I am commanding you today. **6** For the LORD your God has blessed you just as He spoke to you, and you shall lend to many nations, and you, you shall not borrow; and you shall rule over many nations, and over you they shall not rule.

Open Your Hand to the Poor

7 If there is among you a needy one, one of your brothers, in one of your gates in your land which the LORD your God is giving to you, you shall not harden your heart, and you shall not shut your hand from your needy brother. **8** But you shall surely open your hand to him, and you shall surely lend him sufficient for his lack which he lacks. **9** Take heed to yourself, lest there be a word ***of*** worthlessness in your heart, saying, 'The seventh year, the year of release, has drawn near,' and your eye be evil against your needy brother, and you do not give to him, and he call out against you to the LORD, and it be sin on you. **10** You shall surely give to him, and your heart shall not be grieved when you give to him, for on account of this thing the LORD your God will bless you in all your work and in every undertaking of your hand. **11** For the needy will not cease from the midst of the land; therefore I am commanding you, saying, 'You shall surely open your hand to your brother, to your poor, and to your needy in your land.'

Freeing a Hebrew Servant

12 If your brother, the Hebrew ***man*** or the Hebrew ***woman***, is sold to you, and he serves you six years, then in the seventh year you shall send him away free from you. **13** And when you send him away free from you, you shall not send him away empty. **14** You shall surely furnish him from your flock and from your threshing floor and from your winepress; ***from*** that with which the LORD your God has blessed you, you shall give to him. **15** And you shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim), and the LORD your God ransomed you; therefore I am commanding you this thing today. **16** And it shall be, if he says to you, 'I will not go out from you,' because he loves you and your household, because it is good for him with you, **17** then you shall take the awl and put ***it*** into his ear and into the door, and he shall be your slave forever. And also to your female slave you shall do so. **18** It shall not be hard in your eyes when you send him away free from you, for ***at*** double the hire of a hired worker he has served you six years; and the LORD your God will bless you in all that you do.

Firstborn Animals

19 Every firstborn that is born in your herd and in your flock, the male, you shall sanctify to the LORD your God; you shall not work with the firstborn of your ox, and you shall not shear the firstborn of your flock. **20** Before the LORD your God you shall eat it year by year in the place which the LORD will choose, you and your household. **21** And if there is

15:4 Deut 14:29; Deut 28:1-8,11; Prov 11:24,25
15:5 Deut 4:9; Deut 11:13-15; Deut 28:1-15
15:6 Deut 28:12,44; Prov 22:7; 1 Kgs 4:21,24
15:7 Matt 5:42; Deut 15:9; Prov 21:13
15:8 Matt 5:42
15:9 Matt 20:15; Mark 7:21; Matt 24:48
15:10 Deut 24:19; Prov 22:9; Matt 25:40
15:11 Matt 26:11; Mark 14:7; John 12:8
15:12 Jer 34:14; Lev 25:39-41; Exod 21:2-6
15:13 Gen 31:42; Exod 3:21; Lev 25:42-44
15:14 Neh 8:10; Ps 68:10; Prov 10:22
15:15 Deut 16:12; Deut 5:14,15; Exod 20:2
15:16 Exod 21:5,6; Ps 40:6,8
15:17 Lev 25:39-42; 1 Sam 1:22
15:18 Isa 16:14; Isa 21:16; Luke 17:7,8
15:19 Exod 13:2,12; Lev 27:26; Num 18:17
15:20 Deut 12:5-7,17
15:21 Deut 17:1; Mal 1:7,8; Lev 22:20,24

15:4 *there shall be no needy one among you, for the LORD will surely bless you in the land* God's goal, if Israel obeyed (15:5). When the Spirit came, "neither was anyone needy among them" (Acts 4:34), because believers shared.
15:6 *you shall lend to many nations, and you, you shall not borrow* Obedience would make Israel a lender, not a debtor.
15:7 *you shall not harden your heart, and you shall not shut your hand from your needy brother* When God's goal is not met, God speaks to our heart first, then our hand. A hard heart leads to a closed hand.
15:8 *you shall surely lend him sufficient for his lack which he lacks* Not a token, but enough. "Whoever has the goods of the world and sees his brother having need and shuts his compassion from him, how does the love of God abide in him?" (1 John 3:17).
15:9 *lest there be a word of worthlessness in your heart, saying, 'The seventh year, the year of release, has drawn near,'* God saw the trick coming: refusing to lend because the money would not come back. An evil eye is a stingy, grudging eye. The poor man can appeal to God, and God hears him.
15:10 *your heart shall not be grieved when you give to him* God cares how we give, not only what. Not "out of grief or out of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Cor 9:7). We cannot outgive God.
15:11 *the needy will not cease from the midst of the land* No clash with verse 4. Verse 4 tells what full obedience would bring; verse 11 is honest about a fallen world. Jesus quoted it: "you always have the poor with you" (Matt 26:11). Anyone who knew the verse heard the rest: so open your hand to them, every day.
15:12 *the Hebrew man or the Hebrew woman, is sold to you, and he serves you six years* Not the slavery of the American South, where people were kidnapped and owned for life because of race. A person usually sold himself to pay a debt (Lev 25:39) and worked it off for up to six years. Kidnapping to sell was a capital crime (Exod 21:16; 24:7). Women went free the same as men.
15:14 *You shall surely furnish him from your flock and from your threshing floor and from your winepress* Furnish pictures putting a necklace on someone, loading him with gifts. A freed servant was not to go out empty (15:13) but with what he needed to start again.
15:15 *you shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God ransomed you* God did not send Israel out empty (Exod 12:35-36). We treat others well not to earn God's favor but because we have received it. "Freely you received; freely give" (Matt 10:8).
15:16 *because he loves you and your household, because it is good for him with you* In a godly household this service could be good enough that a servant chose to stay.
15:17 *you shall take the awl and put it into his ear and into the door* The ear, how we hear and obey, was pierced at the door as a mark of belonging to that house for life (Exod 21:6). Paul called himself "a slave of Christ Jesus" (Rom 1:1), and many see here a picture of serving our Master because we love Him. Jesus took "the form of a slave" (Phil 2:7) for us.
15:18 *at double the hire of a hired worker he has served you six years* He worked for food and shelter, not wages, so the master had gained much. Letting him go was only fair, and God promises to bless.
15:19 *you shall not work with the firstborn of your ox, and you shall not shear the firstborn of your flock* The firstborn belonged to God, who spared Israel's firstborn in Egypt (Exod 13:2, 15). Christ is "the firstborn among many brothers" (Rom 8:29).
15:20 *Before the LORD your God you shall eat it year by year* A family feast at the sanctuary. Giving to God and joy before God go together.
15:21 *if there is a blemish in it, lame or blind, any evil blemish, you shall not sacrifice it* God was not to get leftovers (Mal 1:8). Christ was offered "as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pet 1:19). Give God your best, because He gave His best for us.

a blemish in it, lame or blind, any evil blemish, you shall not sacrifice it to the LORD your God. **22** In your gates you may eat it, the unclean and the clean alike, like the gazelle and like the deer. **23** Only its blood you shall not eat; on the earth you shall pour it out like water.

DEUTERONOMY 16

Passover

1 Keep the month of Abib (Aviv), and you shall observe a Passover to the LORD your God, for in the month of Abib the LORD your God brought you out from Egypt (Mitsrayim) by night. **2** And you shall sacrifice a Passover to the LORD your God, ***from the*** flock and ***the*** herd, in the place which the LORD will choose to make His name dwell there. **3** You shall not eat leavened ***bread*** with it; seven days you shall eat with it unleavened bread, bread of affliction, for in haste you came out from the land of Egypt, so that you may remember the day of your coming out from the land of Egypt all the days of your life. **4** And leaven shall not be seen with you in all your territory seven days; and none of the flesh which you sacrifice in the evening on the first day shall remain overnight until the morning. **5** You are not able to sacrifice the Passover in any one of your gates which the LORD your God is giving to you, **6** but at the place which the LORD your God will choose to make His name dwell there, ***there*** you shall sacrifice the Passover in the evening, at the going in of the sun, the appointed time of your coming out from Egypt. **7** And you shall cook ***it*** and eat ***it*** in the place which the LORD your God will choose; and you shall turn in the morning and go to your tents. **8** Six days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day ***there shall be*** a solemn assembly to the LORD your God; you shall not do work.

The Festival of Weeks

9 Seven weeks you shall count for yourself; from when the sickle begins in the standing grain you shall begin to count seven weeks. **10** And you shall observe the Festival of Weeks to the LORD your God ***with*** the measure of a freewill offering of your hand, which you shall give just as the LORD your God blesses you. **11** And you shall rejoice before the LORD your God, you and your son and your daughter and your slave and your female slave and the Levite who ***is*** in your gates, and the sojourner and the fatherless and the widow who ***are*** in your midst, in the place which the LORD your God will choose to make His name dwell there. **12** And you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and you shall keep and do these statutes.

The Festival of Booths

13 The Festival of Booths you shall observe for yourself seven days, when you gather in from your threshing floor and from your winepress. **14** And you shall rejoice in your festival, you and your son and your daughter and your slave and your female slave and the Levite and the sojourner and the fatherless and the widow who ***are*** in your gates. **15** Seven days you shall hold a festival to the LORD your God in the place which the LORD will choose, for the LORD your God will bless you in all your produce and in all the work of your hands, and you shall be altogether joyful. **16** Three times in the year all your males shall appear before the LORD your God in the place which He will choose: at the Festival of Unleavened Bread and at the Festival of Weeks and at the Festival of Booths; and he shall not appear before the LORD

15:22 Deut 12:15,21,22
15:23 Deut 12:16,23; Lev 7:26; 1 Sam 14:32
16:1 Matt 26:17; Mark 14:1; Mark 14:12
16:2 Matt 26:2; Matt 26:17; Mark 14:12
16:3 Matt 26:17; Mark 14:12; Exod 34:18
16:4 Matt 26:17; Mark 14:12; Exod 34:25
16:5 Mark 14:1; Luke 2:41; John 2:13
16:6 Mark 14:1; Luke 2:41; John 2:13
16:7 John 2:23; 2 Chr 35:13; Exod 12:8,9
16:8 Lev 23:36; Exod 12:15,16; Lev 23:6-8
16:9 Acts 2:1; Exod 23:16; Exod 34:22
16:10 1 Cor 16:2; Deut 16:16; Lev 5:7
16:11 Deut 12:7,12,18; Deut 16:14; Isa 64:5
16:12 Deut 15:15; Deut 16:15; Lam 3:19,20
16:13 John 7:2; Exod 23:16; Lev 23:34-36
16:14 Neh 8:9-12; Deut 12:12; Deut 26:11
16:15 Deut 7:13; Lev 23:36-42; Num 29:12-38
16:16 Prov 3:9,10; Hag 1:9; Matt 2:11

16:1 *Keep the month of Abib, and you shall observe a Passover to the LORD your God* Abib means fresh ears of grain, the first month, our March or April, later called Nisan (Esth 3:7). Passover remembered the night the LORD passed over the houses marked with blood (Exod 12), Israel's birth as a free people.
16:2 *from the flock and the herd, in the place which the LORD will choose* In Egypt the lamb was killed at home (Exod 12:3-7); in the land, at the sanctuary. The herd likely means the other offerings of the feast week along with the lamb (2 Chr 35:7-9).
16:3 *bread of affliction, for in haste you came out from the land of Egypt* Leaven is yeast. They left so quickly their bread had no time to rise (Exod 12:34, 39). The flat bread recalled slavery and sudden rescue. Leaven often pictures sin, and "our Passover was sacrificed for us: Christ" (1 Cor 5:7). At Passover Jesus gave a new meal: "do this for My remembrance" (Luke 22:19).
16:6 *in the evening, at the going in of the sun, the appointed time of your coming out from Egypt* The very hour of the first Passover. Jesus kept this law (Luke 2:41-42) and went up to Jerusalem to die at Passover, in the place God chose, at the time God appointed.
16:8 *on the seventh day there shall be a solemn assembly to the LORD your God* A holy gathering and a day of rest. Israel's year began with rest and remembering what God had done.
16:9 *Seven weeks you shall count for yourself* From the start of the barley harvest to the wheat harvest, fifty days (Lev 23:16), so Greek-speaking Jews called it Pentecost, fiftieth.
16:10 *with the measure of a freewill offering of your hand, which you shall give just as the LORD your God blesses you* No fixed amount; each gave in proportion to the harvest. Paul gives the same rule, "whatever he may be prospered" (1 Cor 16:2).
16:11 *the sojourner and the fatherless and the widow who are in your midst* Everyone was at the table. God's feasts had no outsiders. Fifty days after the resurrection, at this feast, the Spirit was poured out (Acts 2:1-4) and three thousand were saved, the first great gospel harvest, open to Jew and Gentile, slave and free.
16:12 *you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt* They had all been slaves once. No one in Israel had a right to look down on anyone else.
16:13 *The Festival of Booths you shall observe for yourself seven days* In the fall at the end of harvest. They lived in booths of branches to remember God's care in the wilderness (Lev 23:42-43).
16:15 *you shall be altogether joyful* The happiest week of Israel's year. At this feast Jesus cried, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink" (John 7:37). The Word "dwelt among us" (John 1:14), a word meaning to pitch a tent. In Christ's kingdom the nations will go up "to celebrate the Feast of Booths" (Zech 14:16). I believe this will be fulfilled when Christ reigns in His thousand-year kingdom.
16:16 *Three times in the year all your males shall appear before the LORD your God* The three pilgrimage feasts, with whole families welcome (16:11, 14). Many think the Psalms of Ascents (Ps 120 to 134) were sung on the way. Christians are not required to keep Israel's feasts, which were "a shadow" (Col 2:17), and no one should judge another over them.

empty, **17** ***each*** man according to the gift of his hand, according to the blessing of the LORD your God which He has given to you.

Judges and Justice

18 Judges and officers you shall appoint for yourself in all your gates which the LORD your God is giving to you, according to your tribes, and they shall judge the people ***with*** judgment of righteousness. **19** You shall not turn aside judgment; you shall not show regard to faces; and you shall not take a bribe, for the bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and twists the words of the righteous. **20** Righteousness, righteousness you shall pursue, so that you may live and take possession of the land which the LORD your God is giving to you. **21** You shall not plant for yourself an Asherah, any tree, beside the altar of the LORD your God which you shall make for yourself. **22** And you shall not set up for yourself a pillar, which the LORD your God hates.

DEUTERONOMY 17

Cases of Idolatry

1 You shall not sacrifice to the LORD your God an ox or a sheep in which there is a blemish, any evil thing, for it ***is*** an abomination of the LORD your God. **2** If there is found in your midst, in one of your gates which the LORD your God is giving to you, a man or a woman who does the evil in the eyes of the LORD your God by transgressing His covenant, **3** and he has gone and served other gods and bowed down to them, and to the sun or to the moon or to any of the host of the heavens, which I have not commanded, **4** and it is declared to you, and you hear ***of it***, and you shall investigate thoroughly; and look, ***it is*** truth, the thing ***is*** certain, this abomination has been done in Israel (Yisra'el), **5** then you shall bring out that man or that woman who has done this evil thing to your gates, the man or the woman, and you shall stone them with stones, and they shall die. **6** On the mouth of two witnesses or three witnesses the one who is to die shall be put to death; he shall not be put to death on the mouth of one witness. **7** The hand of the witnesses shall be on him first to put him to death, and the hand of all the people last. And you shall purge the evil from your midst.

The Higher Court

8 If a matter is too difficult for you for judgment, between blood and blood, between plea and plea, and between stroke and stroke, matters of disputes in your gates, then you shall arise and go up to the place which the LORD your God will choose. **9** And you shall come to the priests, the Levites, and to the judge who will be in those days, and you shall inquire, and they shall declare to you the word of the judgment. **10** And you shall do according to the word which they declare to you from that place which the LORD will choose, and you shall be careful to do according to all that they instruct you. **11** According to the law which they instruct you and according to the judgment which they say to you, you shall do; you shall not turn aside from the word which they declare to you, ***to the*** right or ***to the*** left. **12** And the man who acts with presumption so as not to listen to the priest who stands to serve the LORD your God there, or to the

16:17 Deut 16:10; Lev 27:8; 2 Cor 8:12
16:18 John 7:24; 1 Chr 23:4; Deut 1:15-17
16:19 Exod 23:2,6-8; Lev 19:15; Eccl 7:7
16:20 Deut 4:1; Deut 25:13-16; Mic 6:8
16:21 2 Kgs 17:16; 2 Chr 33:3; Exod 34:13
16:22 Lev 26:1; Exod 20:4; Deut 12:31
17:1 Deut 15:21; Mal 1:8,13,14; Deut 23:18
17:2 Heb 10:28; Deut 17:5; Deut 13:6-18
17:3 Acts 7:42; Heb 10:28; Deut 4:19
17:4 Heb 10:28; Deut 13:12-14; Deut 19:18
17:5 Heb 10:28; Lev 24:14,16; Josh 7:25
17:6 Heb 10:28; Matt 18:16; 2 Cor 13:1
17:7 1 Cor 5:13; Acts 7:58; Heb 10:28
17:8 Deut 12:5; Hag 2:11; Deut 1:17
17:9 John 1:19; Ezek 44:24; Jer 18:18
17:10 Matt 22:2,3
17:11 Josh 1:7; Mal 2:8,9; Rom 13:1-6
17:12 Deut 13:5,11; Num 15:30; Ezra 10:8

16:17 *each man according to the gift of his hand* We come to God with gratitude in our hands, not because He needs our gifts, but because we have been given so much.
16:18 *Judges and officers you shall appoint for yourself in all your gates* Every town had judges to hear cases and officers to carry out their decisions. The gate was where the elders sat (Ruth 4:1-2).
16:19 *the bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and twists the words of the righteous* Do not twist justice or favor anyone for who they are. A bribe blinds even the wise; no one is above its pull. Jerusalem's leaders came to where "every one of them loves a bribe" (Isa 1:23). God shows no partiality (Acts 10:34).
16:20 *Righteousness, righteousness you shall pursue* Doubled for strength. Chase it like something precious. A nation that twists justice rots from the inside. "Let justice roll like the waters" (Amos 5:24). Judges, bosses, parents and church leaders alike are called to be fair.
16:21 *You shall not plant for yourself an Asherah, any tree, beside the altar of the LORD your God* Not beside His altar as if she were His partner. A pillar was a standing stone of pagan worship (16:22). A nation that mixes its worship will soon twist its justice too. Manasseh even set Asherah's image in the temple (2 Kgs 21:7).
17:1 *You shall not sacrifice to the LORD your God an ox or a sheep in which there is a blemish* As with the firstborn (15:21), now for every sacrifice. A flawed offering quietly despised God. Israel would not give a sick animal to their governor, yet they gave it to God (Mal 1:8). What we give God shows what we think of Him.
17:3 *to the sun or to the moon or to any of the host of the heavens* Star worship was common, and Israel later fell into it (2 Kgs 21:3-5; 23:5). The law applied to "a man or a woman" alike (17:2).
17:4 *you shall investigate thoroughly; and look, it is truth, the thing is certain* No action without a careful trial.
17:5 *you shall stone them with stones, and they shall die* Hard to read, as in chapter 13. Idolatry was treason against the God who redeemed Israel and was their King, and Canaan's gods demanded even children (12:31). This was for Israel under God's direct rule, not a pattern for any government or church today. The church deals with sin by teaching, discipline and the hope of repentance (Matt 18:15-17; Gal 6:1), never by force.
17:6 *he shall not be put to death on the mouth of one witness* One person's word was never enough to take a life (19:15). Jesus and Paul used the same rule (Matt 18:16; 2 Cor 13:1; 1 Tim 5:19). Be slow to believe an accusation on one person's word. Jesus was condemned at a trial where the witnesses did not agree (Mark 14:55-59).
17:7 *The hand of the witnesses shall be on him first to put him to death* A witness who had to throw the first stone would think hard before lying.
17:8 *between blood and blood, between plea and plea, and between stroke and stroke* Kinds of killing, legal claims and injuries too hard for the town elders went to a high court at the sanctuary, as Moses had once judged the hard cases (1:17; Exod 18:26). Jehoshaphat later set up such a court (2 Chr 19:8-11).
17:11 *According to the law which they instruct you* The court's ruling was final because it came from God's Word. The priests could not invent new law. Jesus rejected traditions that went beyond and against the Law, not the Law itself (Matt 15:3-6).
17:12 *the man who acts with presumption so as not to listen to the priest* Not someone who disagreed or appealed, but one who proudly refused to submit at all. Without this, no ruling would stand, and disputes would end in blood feuds.

judge, that man shall die; and you shall purge the evil from Israel. **13** And all the people shall hear and fear, and they shall not act presumptuously again.

The King

14 When you come into the land which the LORD your God is giving to you, and you take possession of it and dwell in it, and you say, 'Let me set a king over me like all the nations that ***are*** around me,' **15** you shall surely set over yourself a king whom the LORD your God will choose; from the midst of your brothers you shall set a king over yourself; you are not able to put over yourself a foreign man who ***is*** not your brother. **16** Only he shall not multiply horses for himself, and he shall not cause the people to return to Egypt (Mitsrayim) in order to multiply horses, and the LORD has said to you, 'You shall not again return on this way anymore.' **17** And he shall not multiply wives for himself, and his heart shall not turn aside; and silver and gold he shall not multiply for himself greatly. **18** And it shall be, when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write for himself a copy of this law on a scroll, from before the priests, the Levites. **19** And it shall be with him, and he shall read in it all the days of his life, so that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them, **20** so that his heart may not be lifted up above his brothers, and so that he may not turn aside from the commandment, ***to the*** right or ***to the*** left, so that he may prolong ***his*** days over his kingdom, he and his sons, in the midst of Israel.

DEUTERONOMY 18

The Portion of the Priests and Levites

1 ***There*** shall not be for the priests, the Levites, all the tribe of Levi, a portion and an inheritance with Israel (Yisra'el); the fire offerings of the LORD and his inheritance they shall eat. **2** And an inheritance shall not be for him in the midst of his brothers; the LORD, He ***is*** his inheritance, just as He spoke to him. **3** And this shall be the due of the priests from the people, from those who sacrifice the sacrifice, whether ox or sheep: and he shall give to the priest the foreleg and the two cheeks and the stomach. **4** The first of your grain, your new wine, and your fresh oil, and the first of the fleece of your flock, you shall give to him. **5** For the LORD your God has chosen him out of all your tribes, to stand to minister in the name of the LORD, he and his sons, all the days. **6** And if the Levite comes from one of your gates out of all Israel, where he is sojourning, and he comes with all the desire of his soul to the place which the LORD will choose, **7** and he ministers in the name of the LORD his God like all his brothers the Levites who stand there before the LORD, **8** portion like portion they shall eat, besides his sales according to the fathers.

17:13 Deut 13:11; Deut 19:20; Num 15:30,31
17:14 Deut 7:1; Deut 12:9,10; Deut 18:9
17:15 Jer 30:21; 1 Sam 10:24; 1 Chr 22:10
17:16 1 Kgs 4:26; Ezek 17:15; Deut 28:68
17:17 Neh 13:26; Gen 2:24; 2 Sam 3:2-5
17:18 John 5:39; 2 Kgs 11:12; Deut 31:9,25,26
17:19 John 5:39; Josh 1:8; Ps 1:2
17:20 Deut 5:32; 1 Kgs 15:5; Deut 8:2,13,14
18:1 1 Cor 9:13; Deut 10:9; Deut 12:19
18:2 1 Cor 9:13; Gen 15:1; Ps 16:5
18:3 1 Cor 9:13; Lev 7:30-34; Deut 12:27
18:4 1 Cor 9:13; Exod 22:29; Exod 23:19
18:5 1 Cor 9:13; Deut 10:8; Num 3:10
18:6 Num 35:2,3; Deut 12:5; Ps 26:8
18:7 2 Chr 31:2-4
18:8 1 Cor 9:13; Neh 12:44,47; Luke 10:7

17:13 *all the people shall hear and fear, and they shall not act presumptuously again* Order depends on respect for lawful authority, "a servant of God to you for the good" (Rom 13:4), unless it commands what God forbids (Acts 5:29).
17:14 *Let me set a king over me like all the nations that are around me* Moses looks three centuries ahead. Israel said almost exactly this to Samuel, "appoint for us a king to judge us like all the nations" (1 Sam 8:5). Kings were part of God's plan (Gen 17:6; 49:10), but the motive in Samuel's day rejected the LORD as King (1 Sam 8:7). God wanted Israel different from the nations, not a copy of them.
17:15 *a king whom the LORD your God will choose* Not the strongest or the most popular, but God's choice (1 Sam 10:24; 16:12-13), and an Israelite who knew the LORD, not a foreigner bringing foreign gods.
17:16 *he shall not multiply horses for himself, and he shall not cause the people to return to Egypt* Horses meant chariots and military power. "These trust in chariotry and these in horses, and we, we will make mention of the name of the LORD our God" (Ps 20:7).
17:17 *he shall not multiply wives for himself, and his heart shall not turn aside; and silver and gold he shall not multiply for himself greatly* Kings married many wives to seal treaties, and the wives brought their gods. Solomon broke all three limits: horses from Egypt (1 Kgs 10:26-28), a thousand wives and concubines who turned his heart (1 Kgs 11:3-4), and silver "like the stones" (1 Kgs 10:27). The kingdom split after him. Knowing the right thing is not the same as doing it.
17:18 *he shall write for himself a copy of this law on a scroll* The new king's first job was not war or a palace but copying God's Law by hand. The Greek translators drew the name Deuteronomy, second law, from this phrase.
17:19 *he shall read in it all the days of his life, so that he may learn to fear the LORD his God* The most powerful man in Israel was to be the most humble student of God's Word. A leader who does not stay under God's Word will soon think he is above it.
17:20 *so that his heart may not be lifted up above his brothers* The king was still a brother under God's Law, not a god like Pharaoh. This points to Christ, David's Son (2 Sam 7:12-16; Luke 1:32-33). He rode a donkey, not a war horse (Matt 21:5), had nowhere to lay His head (Matt 8:20), washed His brothers' feet (John 13:5), "humbled Himself" (Phil 2:8) to the cross, and kept every word of the Law (Matt 5:17). He will return as King of kings and reign in righteousness.
18:1 *the fire offerings of the LORD and his inheritance they shall eat* Priests were Aaron's family serving at the altar; the Levites were the rest of the tribe, helping at the sanctuary and teaching the Law. Levi received towns but no territory (Josh 21), and lived on parts of the offerings.
18:2 *the LORD, He is his inheritance* God told Aaron, "I am your portion and your inheritance" (Num 18:20). The other tribes had fields. Levi had God, and that was no loss (Ps 16:5). If we have the LORD, we have the best inheritance there is.
18:3 *the foreleg and the two cheeks and the stomach* Leviticus gives the priest the breast and right thigh of peace offerings (Lev 7:31-34); these seem to be added parts, or from animals killed in another way. Scripture does not settle it.
18:4 *the first of the fleece of your flock* Firstfruits were the first and best of each harvest.
18:5 *the LORD your God has chosen him out of all your tribes, to stand to minister in the name of the LORD* Those who serve God's people should be supported by them. "Those who attend at the altar share with the altar" (1 Cor 9:13), and the Lord directed "those who proclaim the gospel to live from the gospel" (1 Cor 9:14).
18:6 *he comes with all the desire of his soul to the place which the LORD will choose* Levites lived all over Israel, and any who wished could serve at the sanctuary.
18:8 *portion like portion they shall eat* No one could push him out or treat him as second class; what he got from selling family property was his own besides. God's servants should not compete for position (Matt 20:26).

No Sorcery or Spirit Mediums

9 When you are coming into the land which the LORD your God is giving to you, you shall not learn to do according to the abominations of those nations. **10** ***There*** shall not be found among you one who makes his son and his daughter pass through the fire, one who divines divinations, a soothsayer, and an interpreter of omens, and a sorcerer, **11** and one who casts a spell, and one who asks a medium and a spiritist, and one who inquires of the dead. **12** For everyone who does these ***things is*** an abomination to the LORD, and because of these abominations the LORD your God is dispossessing them from before you. **13** You shall be blameless with the LORD your God. **14** For these nations which you are dispossessing listen to soothsayers and to diviners; and you, not so has the LORD your God permitted you.

The Prophet Like Moses

15 A prophet from your midst, from your brothers, like me, the LORD your God will raise up for you; to him you shall listen, **16** according to all that you asked of the LORD your God at Horeb (Chorev) on the day of the assembly, saying, 'Let me not again hear the voice of the LORD my God, and this great fire let me not see anymore, and I will not die.' **17** And the LORD said to me, 'They have done well ***in*** what they have spoken. **18** A prophet I will raise up for them from the midst of their brothers, like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. **19** And it shall be ***that*** the man who does not listen to My words which he speaks in My name, I Myself will require ***it*** of him. **20** Only, the prophet who acts presumptuously to speak a word in My name which I have not commanded him to speak, and who speaks in the name of other gods, then that prophet shall die. **21** And if you say in your heart, "How shall we know the word which the LORD has not spoken?" **22** when the prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, and the word does not happen and does not come, that ***is*** the word which the LORD has not spoken; with presumption the prophet has spoken it; you shall not be afraid of him.'

DEUTERONOMY 19

Cities of Refuge

1 When the LORD your God cuts off the nations whose land the LORD your God is giving to you, and you dispossess them

18:9 Deut 12:29-31; Lev 18:26,27,30
18:10 Acts 8:9; Lev 19:26,31; Deut 12:31
18:11 Acts 8:9; 1 Sam 28:11-14
18:12 Acts 8:9; Deut 9:4; Lev 18:24,27
18:13 Gen 6:9; Gen 17:1; Matt 5:48
18:14 Deut 18:10; Gen 20:6; Ps 147:19,20
18:15 Acts 3:22; Acts 7:37; John 1:21
18:16 John 1:21; John 6:14; Acts 3:22
18:17 Luke 24:44; John 1:21; John 6:14
18:18 John 6:14; Luke 24:44; John 5:46
18:19 Acts 3:23; Acts 3:22; Luke 24:44
18:20 John 10:35; Deut 13:1-5; Jer 23:13-15,31
18:21 1 John 4:2; 1 John 4:3; 1 John 4:1-3
18:22 Deut 18:20; Jer 28:1-14; Isa 41:22
19:1 Deut 12:29; Deut 6:10; Deut 7:1,2

18:9 *you shall not learn to do according to the abominations of those nations* These practices are learned, often slowly and out of curiosity. God says, do not even start.

18:10 *one who makes his son and his daughter pass through the fire, one who divines divinations, a soothsayer, and an interpreter of omens, and a sorcerer* Child sacrifice is listed first (12:31; Lev 18:21), tied to the occult as people offered children to get answers. Diviners read the future by lots or animal organs; soothsayers and interpreters of omens read signs in nature; sorcerers used magic and charms. The exact meanings are not all certain.

18:11 *one who asks a medium and a spiritist, and one who inquires of the dead* Saul went to the medium at En-dor to call up Samuel, and the next day he died (1 Sam 28:7-19). These are not harmless games; real spiritual powers stand behind them (Acts 16:16-18; 19:19; Gal 5:20). Today that includes horoscopes, tarot, Ouija boards, psychics and seances. If you have been involved, Christ can set you free. Confess it, turn from it, and get rid of anything connected to it.

18:12 *because of these abominations the LORD your God is dispossessing them from before you* Canaan's sin was not only idolatry but child sacrifice and the occult.

18:13 *You shall be blameless with the LORD your God* Whole, complete, wholehearted, as God told Abraham, "walk before Me, and be blameless" (Gen 17:1). Not sinless, but not divided, trusting God with one hand and a fortune-teller with the other.

18:14 *these nations which you are dispossessing listen to soothsayers and to diviners* The nations listened to soothsayers. Israel was to listen to God, which sets up the next verse.

18:15 *A prophet from your midst, from your brothers, like me, the LORD your God will raise up for you; to him you shall listen* Israel did not need diviners; God would speak through a prophet. He would be an Israelite, sent by God Himself, and "like me." That is a big claim, for no prophet arose like Moses, "whom the LORD knew face to face" (34:10), and God spoke to him "mouth to mouth" (Num 12:6-8). When He came, Israel was to hear and obey.

18:16 *Let me not again hear the voice of the LORD my God, and this great fire let me not see anymore, and I will not die* At Horeb the people asked for someone to stand between them and God (5:23-27).

18:17 *They have done well in what they have spoken* Sinful people cannot stand before God's full glory. They need a mediator, and God was promising more than Moses.

18:18 *I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him* No more and no less than God gave. Jesus said, "I did not speak from Myself, but the Father who sent Me, He gave Me a commandment, what I should say and what I should speak" (John 12:49), the very language of this verse.

18:19 *the man who does not listen to My words which he speaks in My name, I Myself will require it of him* To reject this Prophet was to reject God. God sent true prophets after Moses, and some see them as part of the meaning. But Israel kept waiting for "the prophet" (John 1:21), and the crowds said of Jesus, "This is truly the Prophet who is coming into the world" (John 6:14). Jesus said, "he wrote concerning Me" (John 5:46). Peter applied this verse to Jesus: "every soul which does not listen to that prophet will be utterly destroyed from among the people" (Acts 3:23), and Stephen did too (Acts 7:37). I believe the New Testament settles it: Jesus Christ is the Prophet like Moses. Like Moses He was spared as a baby from a killing king (Matt 2:13-16), came out of Egypt, fasted forty days, delivered His people, mediated a covenant (Luke 22:20) and interceded for sinners. But He is far greater: Moses was "faithful in all His house as a servant" (Heb 3:5), "but Christ as a Son over His house" (Heb 3:6). At the transfiguration the Father said, "listen to Him" (Matt 17:5). You cannot be neutral about Jesus.

18:20 *the prophet who acts presumptuously to speak a word in My name which I have not commanded him* Two false prophets: one speaks in the LORD's name what God did not say; the other speaks for other gods (13:1-5). Both were put to death under Israel's law. Claiming God's authority for your own words is still a terrible thing.

18:21 *How shall we know the word which the LORD has not spoken?* A fair question, and God gives a test.

18:22 *the word does not happen and does not come, that is the word which the LORD has not spoken* A true prophet is always right when he foretells, not mostly right. This works with 13:1-3: a sign does not prove a prophet who leads to other gods, and a prophet whose words fail is false. Both tests must be passed. "Test the spirits" (1 John 4:1). Many today set dates and make predictions that fail. Do not fear them or follow them. Jesus said, "The heaven and the earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away" (Matt 24:35).

and dwell in their cities and in their houses, **2** three cities you shall set apart for yourself in the midst of your land which the LORD your God is giving to you to take possession of it. **3** You shall prepare the way for yourself, and you shall divide into three ***parts*** the territory of your land which the LORD your God causes you to inherit, and it shall be for every killer to flee there. **4** And this ***is*** the case of the killer who flees there and lives: whoever strikes his neighbor without knowledge, and he ***was*** not hating him in time past, **5** and whoever goes with his neighbor into the forest to cut wood, and his hand is driven with the axe to cut down the tree, and the iron slips off from the wood and finds his neighbor, and he dies, he shall flee to one of these cities and live, **6** lest the avenger of the blood pursue after the killer while his heart is hot, and overtake him because the way is long, and strike him mortally, and for him ***there is*** no judgment of death, for he ***was*** not hating him in time past. **7** Therefore I am commanding you, saying, 'Three cities you shall set apart for yourself.' **8** And if the LORD your God enlarges your territory, just as He swore to your fathers, and gives to you all the land which He spoke to give to your fathers, **9** if you keep all this commandment to do it, which I am commanding you today, to love the LORD your God and to walk in His ways all the days, then you shall add for yourself three more cities to these three, **10** and innocent blood shall not be shed in the midst of your land which the LORD your God is giving to you ***as*** an inheritance, and blood be on you. **11** And if there is a man hating his neighbor, and he lies in wait for him and rises up against him and strikes him mortally, and he dies, and he flees to one of these cities, **12** then the elders of his city shall send and take him from there, and give him into the hand of the avenger of the blood, and he shall die. **13** Your eye shall not pity him, and you shall purge the blood of the innocent from Israel (Yisra'el), and it shall be well with you.

Boundaries and Witnesses

14 You shall not move back the boundary of your neighbor, which the former ***ones*** have set, in your inheritance which you shall inherit in the land which the LORD your God is giving to you to take possession of it. **15** One witness shall not stand up against a man for any iniquity and for any sin, in any sin which he sins; at the mouth of two witnesses or at the mouth of three witnesses a matter shall stand. **16** When a witness of violence stands up against a man to testify against him ***of*** rebellion, **17** then the two men who have the dispute shall stand before the LORD, before the priests and the judges who shall be in those days. **18** And the judges shall inquire thoroughly, and look, the witness ***is*** a witness of falsehood; he has testified falsehood against his brother, **19** then you shall do to him just as he planned to do to his brother, and you shall purge the evil from your midst. **20** And those who remain shall hear and fear, and they shall not again do anymore according to this evil thing in your

19:2 Exod 21:13; Heb 6:18; Deut 4:41-43
19:3 Isa 57:14; Isa 35:8; Isa 62:10
19:4 Num 35:15-24; Deut 4:42; Deut 19:6
19:5 2 Kgs 6:5-7; Num 35:25; Prov 27:12
19:6 Num 35:12; Josh 20:5; 2 Sam 14:7
19:8 Deut 12:20; Gen 15:18-21; Exod 23:31
19:9 Josh 20:7,8; Deut 11:22-25; Deut 12:32
19:10 Prov 6:17; Isa 59:7; Matt 27:4,5
19:11 Deut 27:24; Num 35:16-21,24; Gen 9:6
19:12 1 Kgs 2:5,6,28-34
19:13 1 Kgs 2:31; Deut 7:16; Deut 25:12
19:14 Deut 27:17; Prov 22:28; Hos 5:10
19:15 Matt 18:16; 2 Cor 13:1; 1 Tim 5:19
19:16 Matt 26:59; Ps 27:12; Exod 23:1-7
19:17 Matt 26:59; Deut 17:9; Deut 21:5
19:18 Matt 26:59; 1 Tim 5:19; Deut 13:14
19:19 Prov 19:5,9; Dan 6:24; Jer 14:15
19:20 1 Tim 5:20; Deut 21:21; Deut 13:11

19:2 *three cities you shall set apart for yourself in the midst of your land* Cities of refuge west of the Jordan: Kedesh in the north, Shechem in the middle and Hebron in the south (Josh 20:7).
19:3 *You shall prepare the way for yourself, and you shall divide into three parts the territory of your land* A refuge within reach from anywhere, with roads made ready. A man running for his life should not get lost or stuck. God made refuge easy to reach.
19:5 *the iron slips off from the wood and finds his neighbor, and he dies* An example everyone could picture: a tragedy, not a crime. The Law always distinguished murder from accidental killing (Exod 21:13). It asks not only what happened, but why.
19:6 *lest the avenger of the blood pursue after the killer while his heart is hot* The avenger was the nearest male relative, the go'el, the same word as kinsman-redeemer (Ruth 3:9). With no police, he saw a killing answered. But grief can act before the facts are known. The city gave time for anger to cool and truth to come out (Num 35:24-28).
19:9 *then you shall add for yourself three more cities to these three* If God gave them all the land promised Abraham (Gen 15:18). Scripture never records it, because Israel never fully held the land through full obedience. I believe God will still keep His promise in full when Christ reigns in His kingdom.
19:10 *innocent blood shall not be shed in the midst of your land* If an innocent man died because no refuge was near, his blood would be on the whole nation. God held Israel responsible to make justice possible for everyone.
19:11 *if there is a man hating his neighbor, and he lies in wait for him* Hatred and lying in wait mark murder, and the refuge was not for murderers.
19:12 *the elders of his city shall send and take him from there* His own town's elders, who knew him, judged the case. The refuge could not be used to escape justice.
19:13 *you shall purge the blood of the innocent from Israel* Murder is grave because every person bears God's image (Gen 9:6), and there was no ransom for a murderer (Num 35:31). Today the governing authority "does not bear the sword in vain" (Rom 13:4). Christians differ on how governments should use the death penalty, but all agree murder is a great evil. Hebrews speaks of "we who have fled for refuge" (Heb 6:18); the way to Christ is open (John 6:37), and in Him we are safe (Rom 8:1). The New Testament does not name the cities as a type.
19:14 *You shall not move back the boundary of your neighbor* Boundary stones marked each family's land, with no deeds on file. Moving one at night stole a family's future. "Do not displace an ancient boundary which your fathers made" (Prov 22:28). God sees the boundary stones no one else is watching, in business, taxes and every dealing.
19:15 *at the mouth of two witnesses or at the mouth of three witnesses a matter shall stand* Chapter 17 required this for a death penalty; now for every case. Jesus and Paul used it (Matt 18:16; 2 Cor 13:1; 1 Tim 5:19). It protects people from false charges, gossip and grudges.
19:16 *When a witness of violence stands up against a man* A malicious witness whose lie is meant to do harm.
19:17 *the two men who have the dispute shall stand before the LORD, before the priests and the judges* Israel's courts were God's courts, and every judge answered to Him. The judges had to dig (19:18).
19:19 *you shall do to him just as he planned to do to his brother* Whatever he tried to do to another fell on himself, a strong guard against lying in court. False witnesses whose testimony did not agree came against Jesus (Mark 14:56), and the innocent One was condemned in the place of the guilty.

midst. **21** And your eye shall not pity: life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.

DEUTERONOMY 20

Laws for War

1 When you go out to the battle against your enemies, and you see horse and chariot, a people more numerous than you, you shall not be afraid of them, for the LORD your God ***is*** with you, who brought you up from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim). **2** And it shall be, when you draw near to the battle, that the priest shall come near and speak to the people. **3** And he shall say to them, 'Hear, Israel (Yisra'el): you are approaching today to the battle against your enemies. Let your heart not be faint; do not be afraid, and do not be alarmed, and do not tremble before them, **4** for the LORD your God ***is*** the ***One*** who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.' **5** And the officers shall speak to the people, saying, 'Who ***is*** the man who has built a new house and has not dedicated it? Let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the battle and another man dedicate it. **6** And who ***is*** the man who has planted a vineyard and has not put it to use? Let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the battle and another man put it to use. **7** And who ***is*** the man who has betrothed a wife and has not taken her? Let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the battle and another man take her.' **8** And the officers shall speak further to the people, and they shall say, 'Who ***is*** the man ***who is*** fearful and faint of heart? Let him go and return to his house, and the heart of his brothers shall not melt like his heart.' **9** And it shall be, when the officers have finished speaking to the people, that they shall appoint commanders of armies at the head of the people.

Distant Cities and the Cities of Canaan

10 When you draw near to a city to fight against it, then you shall call to it for peace. **11** And it shall be, if it answers you ***with*** peace and opens to you, then it shall be ***that*** all the people who are found in it shall be forced labor for you, and they shall serve you. **12** And if it does not make peace with you, and it makes war with you, then you shall besiege it. **13** And the LORD your God shall give it into your hand, and you shall strike every male of it by the mouth of the sword. **14** Only the women and the little ones and the livestock and all that is in the city, all its spoil, you shall plunder for yourself; and you shall eat the spoil of your enemies which the LORD your God has given to you. **15** Thus you shall do to all the cities very far from you, which ***are*** not of the cities of these nations. **16** Only, of the cities of these peoples which the LORD your God is giving to you ***as*** an inheritance, you shall not keep alive any breath, **17** for you shall utterly devote them to destruction: the Hittite and the Amorite, the Canaanite and the Perizzite, the Hivite and the Jebusite, just as the LORD your God has commanded you, **18** so that they may not teach you to do according to all their abominations which they have done for their gods, and you sin against the

19:21 Matt 5:38; Exod 21:23-25; Lev 24:17-21
20:1 Ps 20:7; 2 Chr 32:7,8; Deut 31:6,8
20:2 Num 10:8,9; Num 31:6; Judg 20:27,28
20:3 Mark 16:6; Ps 27:1-3; Isa 35:3,4
20:4 Rom 8:37; Deut 1:30; Josh 23:10
20:5 Neh 12:27; Deut 1:15; Deut 16:18
20:6 Lev 19:23-25; Deut 28:1-30; Jer 31:5
20:7 Deut 24:5; Deut 28:30; Deut 22:23-25
20:8 Deut 1:28; Judg 7:3; Acts 15:37,38
20:10 2 Sam 20:18-22; Isa 57:19; Zech 9:10
20:11 Lev 25:42-46; Josh 9:22,23,27; Josh 11:19,20
20:13 Num 31:7-9,17,18; 1 Kgs 11:15,16; Ps 2:6-12
20:14 Josh 8:2; Josh 22:8; Num 31:9,12,18,35-54
20:16 Num 21:2,3,35; Deut 7:1-4,16; Num 33:52
20:17 Isa 34:5,6; Jer 48:10; Jer 50:35-40
20:18 Deut 12:30,31; Exod 23:33; Ps 106:34-40

19:21 *life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth* Often thought cruel, it actually limited punishment, when ancient revenge often went far beyond the harm. It was for judges in court, not private revenge, and in many cases payment seems to have taken the place of the injury (Exod 21:23-25). Jesus said, "not to resist the evil person" (Matt 5:39), speaking against personal revenge, not against courts. "Vengeance is Mine" (Rom 12:19).

20:1 *you see horse and chariot, a people more numerous than you, you shall not be afraid of them* Israel had no chariots; the Canaanites did, the tanks of the ancient world (Josh 17:16; Judg 4:3). The God who drowned Pharaoh's chariots (Exod 14:28) could handle Canaan's. "The battle belongs to the LORD" (1 Sam 17:47). When we face something bigger than we are, we remember who is with us.

20:2 *the priest shall come near and speak to the people* Before the officers spoke, the priest spoke. Israel's wars were to begin with God.

20:3 *Let your heart not be faint; do not be afraid, and do not be alarmed, and do not tremble before them* "Hear, Israel," as in the Shema (6:4), and then four ways of saying, do not fear.

20:4 *the LORD your God is the One who goes with you to fight for you* The conquest wars were called the wars of the LORD (Num 21:14; 1 Sam 18:17), not Israel's wars for gain but God's judgments carried out through Israel.

20:5 *Who is the man who has built a new house and has not dedicated it?* Three men went home: the new homeowner, the man whose vineyard had not yet borne (Lev 19:23-25), and the betrothed man (20:6-7), legally pledged to marry. A new husband was free from war a year (24:5). Even in a law about war, God cared about a home, a harvest and a marriage.

20:8 *Who is the man who is fearful and faint of heart? Let him go and return to his house* Fear spreads; one frightened soldier can panic a company. Gideon sent the fearful home, and God cut his army to three hundred so Israel would know the victory was the LORD's (Judg 7:2-7). God does not need big numbers but people who trust Him. Fear, like faith, spreads. What do we spread?

20:10 *When you draw near to a city to fight against it, then you shall call to it for peace* Israel had to offer terms first, for "the cities very far from you" outside Canaan (20:15).

20:11 *all the people who are found in it shall be forced labor for you* Hard, but far better than war; their lives were spared. This was how nations treated conquered peoples, and Israel was required to offer peace first.

20:13 *you shall strike every male of it by the mouth of the sword* If the city chose war. Many teachers take this as the fighting men of that city; others read all males. God's Law did not remove the harshness of ancient war, but it limited it: peace first, women and children spared (20:14), and captive women given rights (21:10-14).

20:15 *Thus you shall do to all the cities very far from you* The key line. These rules were for wars outside Canaan.

20:16 *of the cities of these peoples which the LORD your God is giving to you as an inheritance, you shall not keep alive any breath* The herem of 7:1-2. It was God's judgment after four hundred years of patience (Gen 15:16), on nations that burned their children (12:31) and practiced every occult evil (18:9-12). It was not about race (13:15; Josh 6:25), it was limited to one land and time, and it is never a command for anyone today.

20:18 *so that they may not teach you to do according to all their abominations* The goal was to remove a deadly evil so Israel would not learn it. Israel did not finish, and Canaan's gods led them astray (Judg 2:11-13; Ps 106:34-38). God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked (Ezek 33:11). We trust the Judge of all the earth (Gen 18:25), and see how serious sin is. The same God sent His Son to bear judgment for all who believe, and the church fights no war with swords (Eph 6:12).

LORD your God. **19** When you besiege a city many days, fighting against it to capture it, you shall not destroy its trees by swinging an axe against them, for from them you shall eat, and them you shall not cut down. For ***is*** the tree of the field a man, to go into the siege from before you? **20** Only a tree which you know that it ***is*** not a tree for food, it you shall destroy and cut down, and you shall build siegeworks against the city which is making war with you, until it falls.

DEUTERONOMY 21

The Unsolved Murder

1 If a slain ***one*** is found on the ground which the LORD your God is giving to you to take possession of it, lying in the field, ***and*** it is not known who struck him, **2** then your elders and your judges shall go out, and they shall measure to the cities which ***are*** around the slain ***one***. **3** And it shall be ***that*** the city ***that is*** near to the slain ***one***, the elders of that city shall take a heifer of the herd which has not been worked with, which has not pulled in a yoke. **4** And the elders of that city shall bring down the heifer to an ever-flowing wadi which is not worked and is not sown, and they shall break the neck of the heifer there in the wadi. **5** And the priests, the sons of Levi, shall draw near, for the LORD your God has chosen them to minister to Him and to bless in the name of the LORD, and by their mouth every dispute and every stroke shall be ***settled***. **6** And all the elders of that city who are near to the slain ***one*** shall wash their hands over the heifer whose neck was broken in the wadi. **7** And they shall answer and say, 'Our hands have not shed this blood, and our eyes have not seen ***it***. **8** Make atonement for Your people Israel (Yisra'el), whom You have ransomed, O LORD, and do not put innocent blood in the midst of Your people Israel.' And the blood shall be atoned for them. **9** And you, you shall purge the innocent blood from your midst, for you shall do what ***is*** right in the eyes of the LORD.

Captive Women, Sons and the Hanged Man

10 When you go out to the battle against your enemies, and the LORD your God gives them into your hand, and you take their captives captive, **11** and you see among the captives a woman beautiful of form, and you desire her, and you take ***her*** for yourself as a wife, **12** then you shall bring her into the midst of your house, and she shall shave her head and do her nails. **13** And she shall remove the clothing of her captivity from on her, and she shall dwell in your house and weep for her father and her mother a month of days; and after that you may go in to her and be her husband, and she shall be your wife. **14** And it shall be, if you do not delight in her, then you shall let her go according to her desire; and you shall certainly not sell her for silver; you shall not treat her as a slave, because you have humbled her. **15** If a man has two wives, the one loved and the one hated, and they bear sons to him, the loved ***one*** and the hated ***one***, and the firstborn son belongs to the hated ***one***, **16** then it shall be, on the day he causes his sons to inherit what he has, he shall not be able to make the son of the loved ***one*** firstborn in the face of the son of the hated ***one***, the firstborn. **17** But the firstborn, the son of the hated ***one***, he shall acknowledge by giving to him a double portion of all that is found with him, for he ***is*** the beginning of his strength; the right of the firstborn ***belongs*** to him. **18** If a man has a son stubborn and rebellious, who is not listening to the voice of his father and to the voice of his mother, and they discipline him, and he does not listen

20:19 Matt 21:19; Luke 13:9; Matt 3:10
20:20 Deut 1:28; 2 Chr 26:15; Eccl 9:14
21:1 Ps 5:6; Ps 9:12; Prov 28:17
21:2 Deut 16:18,19; Rom 13:3,4
21:3 Num 19:2; Jer 31:18; Matt 11:28-30
21:4 1 Pet 2:21-24; 1 Pet 3:18
21:5 1 Chr 23:13; Deut 10:8; Deut 18:5
21:6 Ps 26:6; Ps 73:13; Job 9:30
21:7 Matt 27:24; Matt 23:35; Num 5:19-28
21:8 Matt 23:35; Jonah 1:14; Num 35:33
21:9 Deut 19:12,13; Deut 13:18; 2 Kgs 10:30,31
21:10 Deut 20:10-16
21:11 Gen 6:2; Gen 12:14,15; Gen 29:18-20
21:12 1 Cor 11:6; Eph 4:22
21:13 Ps 45:10,11; Luke 14:26,27
21:14 Gen 34:2; Deut 22:19,24,29; Exod 21:7-11
21:15 Rom 9:13; 1 Sam 1:4,5; Gen 29:18,20,30,31,33
21:16 1 Chr 26:10; 1 Chr 5:2; 2 Chr 21:3
21:17 Luke 15:12; Heb 12:23; Gen 49:3
21:18 Exod 20:12; Lev 19:3; Prov 28:24

20:19 *you shall not destroy its trees by swinging an axe against them, for from them you shall eat* Ancient armies often cut down every tree around a city to ruin the land for years; the Assyrians boasted of it. "Is the tree of the field a man?" The tree was not the enemy.
20:20 *Only a tree which you know that it is not a tree for food, it you shall destroy* Even in war God cared about His creation and the future, for the land would have to feed people afterward. He gave the earth to people to care for (Gen 2:15), and we should not waste what He made.
21:1 *it is not known who struck him* A murder with no witness and no suspect still could not be ignored. Every life bears God's image, and blood shed in the land had to be dealt with even when no one could be punished. The nearest town was held responsible before God.
21:4 *they shall break the neck of the heifer there in the wadi* The heifer died in an untouched valley, in place of the unknown killer. The Law does not explain every detail of the rite, but its message is clear: innocent blood is serious, and it calls for an answer before God.
21:6 *shall wash their hands over the heifer* The elders declared before God that their town had no part in the crime. Pilate later washed his hands too and said, "I am innocent of the blood of this righteous One" (Matt 27:24), but his washing could not clear him.
21:8 *Make atonement for Your people Israel, whom You have ransomed, O LORD* The rite ends in a prayer, not a ceremony alone. Only God could cover the guilt. Christ's blood speaks better than any heifer's (Heb 12:24), for it truly takes guilt away.
21:10 *you take their captives captive* This law covers captives from distant cities in war (20:14). It did not invent the practice of taking captives; it put hard limits on how a soldier could treat a woman in his power.
21:13 *weep for her father and her mother a month of days* She was given a full month to grieve, and only then could she become his wife, with all a wife's rights (Exod 21:10). Her sorrow mattered to God.
21:14 *you shall certainly not sell her for silver* If the marriage ended she went free and could never be sold or treated as a slave. Like the divorce law (24:1-4), this was a concession to a hard world. Jesus said Moses permitted divorce "in view of your hardness of heart" (Matt 19:8), and from the beginning God's plan was one man and one wife for life (Gen 2:24).
21:15 *the one loved and the one hated* "Hated" here means loved less, as with Jacob, who loved Rachel more than Leah (Gen 29:30-31). Having two wives brought trouble in every family where the Bible shows it.
21:17 *giving to him a double portion of all that is found with him* A father could not pass over his firstborn just because he favored another wife. The firstborn's right was set by God, not by the father's feelings. Reuben lost it by his own sin (Gen 49:3-4; 1 Chr 5:1-2), not by favoritism. Parents today must not play favorites either.
21:18 *a son stubborn and rebellious* This is not a small child who disobeys but a grown son in settled, defiant rebellion who has been disciplined and still refuses to listen.

to them, **19** then his father and his mother shall seize him and bring him out to the elders of his city and to the gate of his place, **20** and they shall say to the elders of his city, 'This son of ours ***is*** stubborn and rebellious; he is not listening to our voice; ***he is*** a glutton and a drunkard.' **21** And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones, and he shall die; and you shall purge the evil from your midst, and all Israel shall hear and fear. **22** And if there is in a man a sin ***worthy*** of a judgment of death, and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, **23** his corpse shall not remain overnight on the tree, but you shall surely bury him on that day, for one who is hanged ***is*** a curse of God; and you shall not make unclean your ground which the LORD your God is giving to you ***as*** an inheritance.

DEUTERONOMY 22

Care for Your Neighbor

1 You shall not see the ox of your brother or his sheep straying, and hide yourself from them; you shall surely return them to your brother. **2** And if your brother ***is*** not near to you, and you do not know him, then you shall gather it into the midst of your house, and it shall be with you until your brother seeks it, and you shall return it to him. **3** And thus you shall do for his donkey, and thus you shall do for his garment, and thus you shall do for every lost thing of your brother which is lost from him and you find it; you shall not be able to hide yourself. **4** You shall not see the donkey of your brother or his ox fallen on the way, and hide yourself from them; you shall surely raise ***them*** up with him. **5** The article of a man shall not be on a woman, and a man shall not put on the garment of a woman, for everyone who does these ***things is*** an abomination to the LORD your God. **6** If a bird's nest happens ***to be*** before you on the way, in any tree or on the ground, ***with*** young ones or eggs, and the mother ***is*** sitting on the young ones or on the eggs, you shall not take the mother with the young. **7** You shall surely let the mother go, and the young you may take for yourself, so that it may go well with you, and you may prolong ***your*** days. **8** When you build a new house, then you shall make a parapet for your roof, and you shall not put blood on your house if the one who falls should fall from it. **9** You shall not sow your vineyard ***with*** two kinds, lest the full yield become holy, the seed which you sow and the produce of the vineyard. **10** You shall not plow with an ox and with a donkey together. **11** You shall not wear mixed material, wool and linen together. **12** Tassels you shall make for yourself on the four corners of your covering with which you cover ***yourself***.

Marriage and Purity

13 If a man takes a wife and goes in to her and hates her,

21:19 Deut 21:2; Deut 16:18; Deut 25:7
21:20 Prov 20:1; Prov 29:17; Prov 19:26
21:21 1 Tim 5:20; Deut 13:10,11; Lev 24:16
21:22 John 19:31; Acts 25:25; Acts 23:29
21:23 Gal 3:13; John 19:31; Phil 2:8
22:1 1 Cor 9:9; Exod 23:4; Deut 22:3,4
22:2 Matt 7:12; 1 Thess 4:6
22:4 Exod 23:4,5; Matt 5:44; Luke 10:29-37
22:5 1 Cor 11:4-15; Deut 18:12
22:6 Lev 22:28; Luke 12:6; Gen 8:17
22:7 Eph 6:3; Deut 4:40; Prov 22:4
22:8 Rom 14:13; Matt 24:17; 2 Sam 11:2
22:9 Lev 19:19; Matt 6:24; Matt 9:16
22:10 2 Cor 6:14
22:11 Lev 19:19
22:12 Matt 23:5; Num 15:38,39
22:13 Gen 29:21,23,31; Judg 15:1,2; Eph 5:28,29

21:20 *he is a glutton and a drunkard* Both parents had to agree, and the case went to the elders, not to the father alone. In a world where fathers often held power of life and death, this law put limits on that power. There is no record in Scripture of it ever being carried out. Compare the father of the prodigal, who ran to his returning son and "kissed him" (Luke 15:20).
21:21 *all Israel shall hear and fear* The penalty was severe because a son who scorned his parents scorned the fifth commandment and the order God set in the home (5:16).
21:22 *you hang him on a tree* The body of an executed man could be hung up after death as a public warning. Peter told the council that they killed Jesus by "having hanged Him on a tree" (Acts 5:30).
21:23 *for one who is hanged is a curse of God* The body had to be buried the same day, which is why the Jews asked that the bodies be taken down before the Sabbath (John 19:31). Paul applies this verse to the cross: "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us" (Gal 3:13). He bore our sins "in His body on the tree" (1 Pet 2:24), and so the cross that seemed a stumbling block became our salvation.
22:1 *and hide yourself from them* To hide yourself means to look the other way and pretend you did not see. God says you may not do that. A stray animal had to be returned, or kept and cared for until the owner came for it. Finders keepers was not God's rule, even for an enemy's ox (Exod 23:4).
22:3 *you shall not be able to hide yourself* This is love for neighbor in practical form. The Samaritan in Jesus' story did not look the other way (Luke 10:33-34). What do we walk past because it is not our problem?
22:4 *you shall surely raise them up with him* A loaded animal that fell could not get up alone. Notice "with him": you help your neighbor, working at his side. "Bear one another's burdens, and thus fulfill the law of Christ" (Gal 6:2).
22:5 *The article of a man shall not be on a woman* The word article is broad and can mean clothing, tools or weapons. God made us male and female (Gen 1:27), and He wanted that difference honored, not blurred. Some also think this guarded against pagan rites where men and women dressed as the other sex. Styles change from culture to culture, so this is not a rule about robes or pants. The principle is that men and women should not present themselves as the other sex, and we hold to God's design with conviction and with kindness toward people who struggle.
22:7 *You shall surely let the mother go* A traveler could take eggs or young birds for food, but it would be cruel to use a mother's love for her young to trap her. The promise attached is the one given for honoring parents (5:16). God cares about small things. "A righteous one knows the life of his animal" (Prov 12:10).
22:8 *you shall make a parapet for your roof* Roofs were flat and used like porches (Acts 10:9). A low wall kept people from falling. If someone fell because you did not build it, his blood was on your house. Loving my neighbor means thinking ahead about how my choices could hurt him. "Love does not work evil to the neighbor" (Rom 13:10).
22:9 *You shall not sow your vineyard with two kinds* Here and in the next two verses are laws about mixing (Lev 19:19). If the vineyard was mixed, its yield would "become holy," that is, forfeited to the sanctuary. Scripture does not explain each rule, but the main lesson seems to be holiness: Israel was to be a separate people, not mixed with the nations.
22:10 *You shall not plow with an ox and with a donkey together* The two differ in size and strength, so the yoke would be hard on both, and the ox was clean while the donkey was not. Paul seems to draw on this picture: "Do not become unequally yoked with unbelievers" (2 Cor 6:14).
22:11 *wool and linen together* Some note that the priests' garments did mix wool and linen (Exod 39:29), so mixed cloth may have been kept for holy use. Like the food laws, these rules were a shadow fulfilled in Christ (Col 2:16-17), but the lesson remains: God's people are set apart for Him.
22:12 *Tassels you shall make for yourself* The tassels with their blue cord were a reminder to keep the LORD's commands (Num 15:38-40). Jesus wore them, and a sick woman "touched the fringe of His garment" (Matt 9:20). But He warned against making them large to be seen by others (Matt 23:5).

14 and he lays charges of ***shameful*** deeds against her and brings out a bad name on her, and says, 'This woman I took, and I came near to her, and I did not find in her ***the evidence of*** virginity,' **15** then the father of the young woman and her mother shall take and bring out the ***evidence of*** virginity of the young woman to the elders of the city at the gate. **16** And the father of the young woman shall say to the elders, 'My daughter I gave to this man as a wife, and he hates her. **17** And look, he has laid charges of ***shameful*** deeds, saying, "I did not find in your daughter ***the evidence of*** virginity." And these ***are the evidence of*** my daughter's virginity.' And they shall spread out the garment before the elders of the city. **18** And the elders of that city shall take the man and discipline him, **19** and they shall fine him a hundred ***shekels of*** silver and give ***them*** to the father of the young woman, because he has brought out a bad name on a virgin of Israel (Yisra'el). And she shall be his wife; he shall not be able to send her away all his days. **20** And if this thing was truth, ***and the evidence of*** virginity was not found for the young woman, **21** then they shall bring out the young woman to the entrance of her father's house, and the men of her city shall stone her with stones, and she shall die, for she has done folly in Israel by acting as a prostitute ***in*** her father's house; and you shall purge the evil from your midst. **22** If a man is found lying with a woman married to a husband, then they shall die, even both of them, the man who lay with the woman, and the woman; and you shall purge the evil from Israel. **23** If there is a young woman, a virgin, betrothed to a man, and a man finds her in the city and lies with her, **24** then you shall bring them both out to the gate of that city and stone them with stones, and they shall die: the young woman because she did not cry out in the city, and the man because he has humbled the wife of his neighbor; and you shall purge the evil from your midst. **25** And if in the field the man finds the betrothed young woman, and the man takes hold of her and lies with her, then the man who lay with her shall die, him alone. **26** And to the young woman you shall not do anything; ***there is*** no sin ***worthy*** of death for the young woman, for just as a man rises up against his neighbor and kills him mortally, so ***is*** this matter. **27** For in the field he found her; the betrothed young woman cried out, and ***there was*** no one to save her. **28** If a man finds a young woman, a virgin who is not betrothed, and he seizes her and lies with her, and they are found, **29** then the man who lay with her shall give to the father of the young woman fifty ***shekels of*** silver, and she shall be his wife, because he has humbled her; he shall not be able to send her away all his days. **30** A man shall not take the wife of his father, and he shall not uncover the skirt of his father.

22:14 Deut 22:19; Exod 20:16; Exod 23:1
22:19 Matt 19:9; 1 Cor 7:11; Deut 22:29
22:21 Gen 34:7; Deut 13:5; Judg 20:6,10
22:22 John 8:5; Lev 20:10; Heb 13:4
22:23 Matt 1:19; Matt 1:18,19; Deut 20:7
22:24 Matt 1:19; Deut 21:14; Deut 22:21,22,24
22:25 2 Sam 13:14
22:26 Deut 21:22
22:27 1 Cor 13:7
22:28 Exod 22:16,17
22:29 Deut 22:19,24; Deut 21:14
22:30 1 Cor 5:1; Deut 27:20; Lev 18:8

22:14 *brings out a bad name on her* A husband turned against his bride and claimed she was not a virgin, perhaps to end the marriage and get back the bride-price. It was a cruel lie that could shame her for life or cost her life.
22:15 *the father of the young woman and her mother* She was not left alone to defend herself. Her family stood with her in a public court and brought the evidence, probably the cloth from the wedding night, which the bride's family kept.
22:19 *they shall fine him a hundred shekels of silver* If she was innocent, the slanderer was punished and fined heavily, likely twice the usual
bride-price (compare 22:29), and he could never divorce her. In that world a woman sent away after such a charge had little hope of a home, so this gave her security for life. God takes slander seriously. "You shall not answer against your neighbor as a witness of falsehood" (5:20).
22:21 *she has done folly in Israel* This is a hard law. She had been pledged as a virgin and deceived her husband and family, and "folly in Israel" marks a sin that disgraced the whole nation (Gen 34:7; Judg 20:6). Under the Mosaic covenant God's holiness was shown in the strongest terms. The New Testament still calls sexual sin sin (1 Cor 6:18), but the church is not Israel under the Law and does not punish sin with death. To a sinful woman Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you; go, and sin no more" (John 8:11). The earliest Greek manuscripts do not have that account, but many believe it is a true event.
22:22 *then they shall die, even both of them* Adultery broke the seventh commandment (5:18), and both were guilty, not the woman only as in some nations (Lev 20:10). Jesus went further: whoever looks with lust "has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matt 5:28). By that standard we all need a Savior. "Marriage is to be honorable among all, and the bed undefiled" (Heb 13:4), and the same Lord forgives and restores those who repent.
22:24 *the young woman because she did not cry out in the city* Betrothal was a binding pledge, so she was already called "the wife of his neighbor." In a town with houses close together a cry would be heard, so the law took her silence as consent.
22:26 *there is no sin worthy of death for the young woman* In the field this was rape, and the man alone died. Moses compares it to murder: a violent attack on a person. The victim is not guilty.
22:27 *the betrothed young woman cried out, and there was no one to save her* With no one there to hear, the court was to assume she cried out. She was to be believed. Victims of assault have often been blamed and shamed, but God's Law did not do that. If this has been done to you, it was not your fault, and "The LORD is near to the broken of heart" (Ps 34:18). Please tell someone you trust and get help, and such crimes must be reported to the authorities.
22:28 *he seizes her and lies with her* This is one of the hardest verses in the Law, and it should not be brushed aside. Scholars differ on "seizes," a different word from "takes hold of" in verse 25. Many think this parallels Exodus 22:16-17, a man who seduces an unbetrothed virgin; others believe force is meant.
22:29 *she shall be his wife, because he has humbled her* In Exodus 22:17 the father could refuse the marriage, and many teachers believe the same applied here. In that world a woman in her place had little hope of marriage or support, so the law put the cost on the man: a heavy price and no divorce ever. Even so, it is a limit in a fallen world (Matt 19:8), not God's ideal, and never a reason to force any woman to marry someone who harmed her. Today assault must be reported, and the victim protected, believed and cared for.
22:30 *A man shall not take the wife of his father* To "uncover the skirt" of his father is a modest way of saying he would dishonor his father's marriage bed (Lev 18:8). Reuben did this and lost his birthright (Gen 35:22; 49:3-4). Paul faced the same sin at Corinth, where "someone has the wife of his father" (1 Cor 5:1), and told the church to put the man out until he repented.

DEUTERONOMY 23

The Assembly of the LORD

1 One who is wounded by crushing, and one who is cut off ***in*** the male organ, shall not enter into the assembly of the LORD. **2** A bastard shall not enter into the assembly of the LORD; even a tenth generation of his shall not enter into the assembly of the LORD. **3** An Ammonite and a Moabite shall not enter into the assembly of the LORD; even a tenth generation of theirs shall not enter into the assembly of the LORD, forever, **4** because they did not meet you with bread and with water on the way when you came out from Egypt (Mitsrayim), and because he hired against you Balaam (Bilam) the son of Beor from Pethor (Petor) of Mesopotamia (Aram-Naharayim) to curse you. **5** And the LORD your God was not willing to listen to Balaam, and the LORD your God turned the curse into a blessing for you, because the LORD your God loved you. **6** You shall not seek their peace and their good all your days, forever. **7** You shall not abhor an Edomite, for he ***is*** your brother; you shall not abhor an Egyptian, for you were a sojourner in his land. **8** Sons who are born to them, a third generation of theirs, may enter into the assembly of the LORD.

A Clean Camp

9 When you go out ***as*** a camp against your enemies, then you shall keep yourself from every evil thing. **10** If there is among you a man who is not clean because of an occurrence of night, then he shall go out to the outside of the camp; he shall not come into the midst of the camp. **11** And it shall be, at the turning of evening, he shall wash with water, and as the sun sets, he may come into the midst of the camp. **12** And you shall have a place outside the camp, and you shall go out there, outside. **13** And you shall have a peg among your equipment, and it shall be, when you sit down outside, that you shall dig with it, and turn back and cover your excrement. **14** For the LORD your God walks about in the midst of your camp to deliver you and to give your enemies before you; and your camp shall be holy, and He shall not see among you the nakedness of a thing and turn away from after you.

Various Laws

15 You shall not hand over to his master a slave who has escaped to you from his master. **16** With you he shall dwell, in your midst, in the place which he chooses in one of your gates, in what ***is*** good to him; you shall not oppress him. **17** ***There*** shall not be a female cult prostitute among the daughters of Israel (Yisra'el), and ***there*** shall not be a male

23:1 Lev 21:17-21; Lev 22:22-24; Gal 3:28
23:2 Zech 9:6; Isa 57:3; John 8:41
23:3 Neh 13:1,2,23; Ruth 4:6,10-22; Neh 4:3,7
23:4 2 Pet 2:15; Acts 2:9; Jude 1:11
23:5 2 Pet 2:15; Deut 7:7,8; Rom 8:31
23:6 Ezra 9:12; 2 Sam 8:2; 2 Sam 12:31
23:7 Deut 10:19; Exod 22:21; Exod 23:9
23:8 Deut 23:1; Rom 3:29,30; Exod 20:5,6
23:9 Josh 6:18; Josh 7:11-13; Judg 20:26
23:10 Lev 15:16; Num 5:2,3; 1 Cor 5:11-13
23:11 Lev 14:9; Lev 15:5,11,13; Luke 11:38,39
23:13 Ezek 24:6-8
23:14 2 Cor 6:16; Lev 26:12; Gen 17:1
23:15 1 Sam 30:15; Obad 1:14; Phlm 10:19
23:16 Exod 22:21; Exod 23:9; Isa 16:3,4
23:17 Lev 19:29; 2 Kgs 23:7; 1 Kgs 14:24

23:1 *shall not enter into the assembly of the LORD* This refers to men who were castrated or mutilated, as some court servants and pagan priests were. To "enter into the assembly" does not seem to mean they could not live in Israel or trust the LORD. Most likely it meant full part in the gathered worship and public life of the nation. God used the body as a picture of wholeness, as with the priests (Lev 21:17-23). But that was not His last word. He promised faithful eunuchs "a name better than sons and than daughters" (Isa 56:5), and an Ethiopian eunuch was among the first from far outside Israel to believe (Acts 8:27-38). In Christ, what was shut out under the Law is welcomed by grace.

23:2 *A bastard shall not enter into the assembly of the LORD* The Hebrew word, mamzer, is uncertain. It does not seem to mean any child born outside marriage. Jewish tradition took it as a child of incest or adultery; some think of pagan temple prostitution. "A tenth generation" means never. This was not about personal guilt or salvation, for children are not punished for their fathers' sins (24:16). It put a strong wall around marriage in Israel's public worship. God used Jephthah, the son of a prostitute (Judg 11:1), and God is never limited by how a person came into the world.

23:4 *because they did not meet you with bread and with water* Moab and Ammon came from Lot (Gen 19:36-38), so they were relatives. Yet they refused simple kindness on the way, and Moab hired Balaam to curse Israel (Num 22-24), then drew Israel into sin at Peor (Num 25:1-3).

23:5 *the LORD your God turned the curse into a blessing for you, because the LORD your God loved you* Every time Balaam opened his mouth to curse, God made him bless. No one can curse those God has chosen to bless. "If God is for us, who is against us?" (Rom 8:31).

23:6 *You shall not seek their peace and their good all your days* Israel was to make no treaties with them, and Nehemiah acted on this law in his day (Neh 13:1-3). What about Ruth, the Moabite who became David's great-grandmother and an ancestor of Jesus (Matt 1:5)? Jewish tradition said the law applied to Moabite men, since it was the men who failed to meet Israel with bread. Others point out that Ruth left her gods and took refuge under the LORD's wings (Ruth 1:16; 2:12), so her faith made her an Israelite in heart. Either way, God's grace reaches those the Law kept at a distance when they come to Him in faith.

23:7 *You shall not abhor an Edomite, for he is your brother* Edom came from Esau, Jacob's twin, so they were family even though they refused Israel passage (Num 20:14-21). And Egypt, though it enslaved Israel, had first welcomed Jacob's family in the famine (Gen 47:5-6). God told Israel to remember the good, not only the bad. How much more should we, who have been forgiven so much, let go of old wrongs?

23:8 *a third generation of theirs, may enter into the assembly of the LORD* The door was open to them. So the laws of the assembly were not about race, since Moab and Edom were both related to Israel. The difference was in how they had treated God's people.

23:10 *not clean because of an occurrence of night* This refers modestly to a bodily discharge in sleep, which made a man ceremonially unclean until evening (Lev 15:16). Unclean did not mean sinful. It meant not fit for God's holy presence for a time. He washed and came back at sunset.

23:14 *the LORD your God walks about in the midst of your camp* A latrine outside the camp with waste buried was simple, healthy and wise, long before anyone understood germs. But God's main reason was His presence: the camp was to be holy because He walked in it. Today He lives in us. "Your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you" (1 Cor 6:19), and that should shape what we allow in our lives.

23:15 *You shall not hand over to his master a slave who has escaped to you* Other nations of that time required runaway slaves to be returned. Israel was to do the opposite. This seems to mean a slave fleeing a foreign master into Israel.

23:16 *in the place which he chooses* He could choose where to live, and no one was to oppress him. A nation of former slaves was to be a refuge for the oppressed. It is the same heart that sent Jesus "to proclaim release to captives" (Luke 4:18), and believers in later centuries who sheltered escaped slaves acted in the spirit of this verse.

23:17 *There shall not be a female cult prostitute* In Canaanite religion, sex at the shrine was thought to make the land fertile. Israel was to have none of it, though it crept in more than once (1 Kgs 14:24; 2 Kgs 23:7).

cult prostitute among the sons of Israel. **18** You shall not bring the wages of a prostitute and the price of a dog ***into*** the house of the LORD your God for any vow, for even both of them ***are*** an abomination to the LORD your God. **19** You shall not charge interest to your brother: interest of silver, interest of food, interest of any thing which bears interest. **20** To the foreigner you may charge interest, and to your brother you shall not charge interest, so that the LORD your God may bless you in every undertaking of your hand on the land to which you are going to take possession of it. **21** When you vow a vow to the LORD your God, you shall not delay to pay it, for the LORD your God will surely require it from you, and it shall be sin in you. **22** And if you refrain from vowing, it shall not be sin in you. **23** That which goes out of your lips you shall keep and do, just as you have vowed to the LORD your God, a freewill offering which you have spoken with your mouth. **24** When you go into the vineyard of your neighbor, then you may eat grapes according to your desire, your fill, and into your vessel you shall not put ***any***. **25** When you go into the standing grain of your neighbor, then you may pluck off ears with your hand, and a sickle you shall not wave over the standing grain of your neighbor.

DEUTERONOMY 24

Divorce and Remarriage

1 When a man takes a wife and marries her, and it shall be, if she does not find favor in his eyes because he has found in her the nakedness of a thing, and he writes for her a document of divorce and puts ***it*** in her hand and sends her away from his house, **2** and she goes out from his house and goes and becomes another man's, **3** and the latter man hates her and writes for her a document of divorce and puts ***it*** in her hand and sends her away from his house, or if the latter man dies who took her for himself as a wife, **4** her former husband who sent her away shall not be able to take her again to be his wife after she has been made unclean, for that ***is*** an abomination before the LORD; and you shall not cause the land to sin which the LORD your God is giving to you ***as*** an inheritance.

Pledges, Wages and the Poor

5 When a man takes a new wife, he shall not go out with the army, and nothing shall be imposed on him for any matter; he shall be free for his house one year, and he shall make his wife whom he has taken rejoice. **6** No one shall take a hand mill or an upper millstone in pledge, for he is taking a life in pledge. **7** If a man is found stealing a person of his brothers, of the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), and he treats him as a slave and sells him, then that thief shall die; and you shall purge the evil from your midst. **8** Take heed in the plague of leprosy, to be very careful and to do according to all that the

23:18 Matt 7:6; Phil 3:2; Rev 22:15
23:19 Exod 22:25; Lev 25:35-37; Ps 15:5
23:20 Deut 15:10; Deut 15:3; Deut 14:21
23:21 Eccl 5:4,5; Deut 23:18; Ps 66:13,14
23:23 Acts 23:12; Num 30:2; Judg 11:30,31,35
23:24 Rom 12:13; 1 Cor 10:26; Heb 13:5
23:25 Mark 2:23; Matt 12:1; Luke 6:1
24:1 Matt 5:31-32; Matt 19:7-9; Luke 16:18
24:2 Matt 5:32; Mark 10:11; Matt 5:31
24:3 Matt 5:31; Matt 19:7; Mark 10:4
24:4 Matt 1:19; Matt 5:31; Matt 19:7
24:5 Luke 14:20; 1 Cor 7:11; 1 Cor 7:12
24:6 Rev 18:22; Deut 20:19; Exod 22:26,27
24:7 Exod 21:16; 1 Tim 1:10; Ezek 27:13
24:8 Mark 1:44; John 1:19; Lev 13:1-14

23:18 *the wages of a prostitute and the price of a dog* The price of a dog most likely means the earnings of a male prostitute, using a word of contempt. God would not accept money gained by sin as an offering. Sexual sin was never to be mixed with worship.
23:19 *You shall not charge interest to your brother* Loans in Israel were mostly to help a poor neighbor (15:7-8; Exod 22:25), and interest would profit from his trouble. The foreigner here was an outsider doing business (15:3). Most believers understand this law as being about loans to the poor and to God's people, not all business. But the heart of it remains: never profit from someone's desperation. Jesus said, "lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great" (Luke 6:35).
23:21 *you shall not delay to pay it* A vow was a promise to God, often to give an offering if He answered a prayer (Gen 28:20-22; 1 Sam 1:11).
23:22 *if you refrain from vowing, it shall not be sin in you* No one had to vow, but a vow made must be kept. "Better is it that you do not vow than that you vow and do not pay" (Eccl 5:5). Jesus wants people whose plain word can be trusted (Matt 5:33-37). How often have we promised God something in a hard moment and forgotten it when the moment passed?
23:25 *you may pluck off ears with your hand* A hungry traveler could eat by hand from a neighbor's field or vineyard, but not fill a basket or swing a sickle. Jesus' disciples did this when they "began to pluck heads of grain and to eat" (Matt 12:1). The Pharisees did not call it stealing, since this law allowed it; they called it Sabbath work. The law protected the owner and fed the hungry. Generosity and honesty both matter.
24:1 *he has found in her the nakedness of a thing* Verses 1 to 3 are all "if." They describe what was already happening and do not tell a man to divorce. The command comes in verse 4. "The nakedness of a thing" means something shameful or indecent (23:14), but not adultery, which was punished by death (22:22). In Jesus' day the school of Shammai read it as some sexual indecency, and the school of Hillel as almost anything that displeased the husband.
24:1 *he writes for her a document of divorce* The written certificate protected the woman. It proved she was free and could remarry without being accused of adultery.
24:4 *her former husband who sent her away shall not be able to take her again to be his wife* Scripture does not give every reason, but this kept men from treating divorce lightly, kept the woman from being passed back and forth like property, and guarded the holiness of marriage. Jeremiah uses this law to show God's grace: no husband would take back such a wife, yet God calls faithless Israel, "and return to Me?" (Jer 3:1).
24:4 *that is an abomination before the LORD* Asked about divorce "for every cause" (Matt 19:3), Jesus went back to Genesis: "what God joined together, let man not separate" (Matt 19:6). Moses did not command divorce. He "permitted you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it has not been so" (Matt 19:8). This law was a limit on sin, not God's plan. Sincere teachers differ on applying this today. Some allow divorce for sexual immorality (Matt 19:9), many adding desertion by an unbeliever (1 Cor 7:15), with remarriage for the innocent spouse. Others allow no remarriage while the first spouse lives (Mark 10:11-12; 1 Cor 7:10-11). All agree God hates the breaking of marriage (Mal 2:16). There is forgiveness and healing in Christ, and a spouse in danger from abuse should get to safety and get help; that is not a sin.
24:5 *he shall make his wife whom he has taken rejoice* For one year after the wedding a husband was free from war and public duty. God protected the first year of marriage so the couple could build their home and their love, and the husband's job was to make his wife happy. Does your marriage get the time and care it needs?
24:6 *he is taking a life in pledge* A pledge was held until a loan was repaid. Without the upper millstone a family could not grind its daily bread. Lenders could not demand what a family needed to live.
24:7 *that thief shall die* Kidnapping a person to sell him was a capital crime (Exod 21:16), as Joseph's brothers had done to him (Gen 37:28). The Law did not allow slavery by capturing and selling people, and Paul lists "enslavers" among those the law condemns (1 Tim 1:10). Those who later used the Bible to defend the Atlantic slave trade were defending the very thing this verse punishes by death.

priests, the Levites, instruct you; just as I commanded them, you shall be careful to do. **9** Remember what the LORD your God did to Miriam (Miryam) on the way when you came out from Egypt (Mitsrayim). **10** When you lend your neighbor a loan of anything, you shall not go into his house to take his pledge. **11** You shall stand outside, and the man to whom you are lending shall bring out the pledge to you outside. **12** And if he ***is*** a poor man, you shall not lie down in his pledge. **13** You shall surely return the pledge to him as the sun sets, and he shall lie down in his garment and bless you; and it shall be righteousness for you before the LORD your God. **14** You shall not oppress a hired worker ***who is*** poor and needy, of your brothers or of your sojourner who ***is*** in your land within your gates. **15** On his day you shall give his wages, and the sun shall not set on it, for he ***is*** poor, and to it he is lifting up his soul, lest he cry against you to the LORD, and it be sin in you. **16** Fathers shall not be put to death for sons, and sons shall not be put to death for fathers; each man for his ***own*** sin they shall be put to death. **17** You shall not turn aside the judgment of a sojourner ***or*** a fatherless one, and you shall not take the clothing of a widow in pledge. **18** And you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and the LORD your God ransomed you from there; therefore I am commanding you to do this thing. **19** When you reap your harvest in your field, and you forget a sheaf in the field, you shall not return to take it; it shall be for the sojourner, for the fatherless one, and for the widow, so that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hands. **20** When you beat your olive tree, you shall not go over the boughs after you; it shall be for the sojourner, for the fatherless one, and for the widow. **21** When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, you shall not glean after you; it shall be for the sojourner, for the fatherless one, and for the widow. **22** And you shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt; therefore I am commanding you to do this thing.

DEUTERONOMY 25

Fair Justice

1 If there is a dispute between men, and they draw near to the judgment, and they judge them, then they shall justify the righteous and condemn the wicked. **2** And it shall be, if the wicked ***one is*** worthy of striking, then the judge shall make him lie down, and he shall be struck before him, as his wickedness deserves, by number. **3** Forty ***strokes*** he may strike him; he shall not add, lest he add to strike him beyond these ***with*** a great striking, and your brother be dishonored in your eyes. **4** You shall not muzzle an ox while it is threshing.

The Brother's Widow

5 When brothers dwell together, and one of them dies and has no son, the wife of the dead ***man*** shall not be ***married*** outside to a strange man; her husband's brother shall go in

24:9 Luke 17:32; Num 12:10-15; 1 Cor 10:6,11
24:10 Deut 15:8
24:12 Deut 24:17; Job 22:6; Job 24:3,9
24:13 Deut 6:25; Dan 4:27; Exod 22:26,27
24:14 1 Tim 5:18; James 5:4; Prov 14:31
24:15 James 5:4; Matt 20:8; 1 Tim 5:18
24:16 Ezek 18:20; 2 Chr 25:4; Jer 31:29,30
24:17 Deut 16:19; Deut 27:19; Exod 22:21,22
24:18 Deut 5:15; Deut 24:22; Deut 15:15
24:19 Lev 23:22; Lev 19:9,10; Deut 14:29
24:21 Deut 24:19; Lev 19:9,10
24:22 Deut 24:18; Deut 5:14,15; Deut 7:8
25:1 Acts 23:3; Deut 17:8,9; Prov 17:15
25:2 Acts 23:3; Luke 12:47,48; Matt 10:17
25:3 2 Cor 11:24; 2 Cor 11:25; Job 18:3
25:4 1 Cor 9:9; 1 Tim 5:18; Prov 12:10
25:5 Matt 22:24; Mark 12:19; Luke 20:28

24:9 *Remember what the LORD your God did to Miriam* Leprosy covered a range of skin diseases, and the priests judged each case (Lev 13-14). Miriam spoke against Moses and was struck with leprosy (Num 12:1-15), a warning that no one was above these laws. Jesus touched and healed lepers, then sent them to the priest as the Law said (Mark 1:40-44).
24:11 *You shall stand outside* A poor man's home was still his own. The lender could not walk in and pick what he wanted. Being in debt did not mean losing privacy or self-respect. How we treat people who owe us says a lot about our hearts.
24:13 *it shall be righteousness for you before the LORD your God* A poor man's cloak was also his blanket, so it had to be returned by sunset (Exod 22:27). Kindness to the poor is counted as right living before God. It is not how we are saved; it is how saved people live.
24:15 *the sun shall not set on it* A day laborer fed his family that night with that day's wage. Holding it back even until morning could mean hunger. James warns that "the cries of those who reaped have entered into the ears of the Lord of armies" (James 5:4). If you employ people, pay them what you owe, when you owe it.
24:16 *each man for his own sin they shall be put to death* In many nations a whole family could be punished for one member's crime. Israel's courts were not to do that, and King Amaziah obeyed this law (2 Kgs 14:5-6). "A son shall not bear the iniquity of the father" (Ezek 18:20). The words in 5:9 speak of sin's effects passing down in families who keep following it, not of courts punishing the innocent. The one great exception is God's own choice: Christ suffered "the righteous for the unrighteous" (1 Pet 3:18).
24:17 *You shall not turn aside the judgment of a sojourner or a fatherless one* The foreigner, the orphan and the widow had no one to stand up for them in court, so God stood up for them.
24:18 *you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt* Israel had once been the helpless ones, and God rescued them. Those who know they have been rescued by grace should be the most generous people on earth.
24:19 *you forget a sheaf in the field, you shall not return to take it* A forgotten bundle of grain belonged to the poor. This was not a handout; the poor worked to gather what was left, which gave them food and dignity (Lev 19:9-10). Ruth gleaned under this law in the field of Boaz (Ruth 2:2-3), and that kindness led to the line of David and in time to Jesus Christ.
24:20 *you shall not go over the boughs after you* Olives were knocked down with sticks once, and what remained was left. Do we leave room at the edges of our lives, our time, money and attention, for those in need, or do we grab every last bit for ourselves?
25:1 *they shall justify the righteous and condemn the wicked* That sounds obvious, but it is the heart of justice. Judges took no bribes and showed no favor (16:19). The innocent were cleared and the guilty found guilty.
25:3 *Forty strokes he may strike him; he shall not add* The judge had to be present and count, so punishment fit the crime and was not left to an angry crowd. The guilty man is still called "your brother." Later the Jews gave forty minus one so as never to go over, and Paul received that five times for Christ (2 Cor 11:24). Justice and mercy are not enemies; even the guilty must not be crushed or humiliated beyond what is right.
25:4 *You shall not muzzle an ox while it is threshing* The ox that worked the grain could eat from it (Prov 12:10). Paul drew a wider principle: "Is it for the oxen that God cares? Or does He say it entirely because of us?" (1 Cor 9:9-10). He does not deny God's care for oxen. If even an ox shares the harvest it helps bring in, how much more those who labor for souls (1 Tim 5:18). The plain meaning stands, and the principle reaches further: be fair to workers and support those who serve you in the Lord.
25:5 *her husband's brother shall go in to her and take her for himself as a wife* This is levirate marriage, from the Latin levir, a husband's brother. It was practiced before the Law, and Onan died for refusing it (Gen 38:8-10). "When brothers dwell together" suggests brothers living near each other on the family land. Like the other marriage laws, it was given to Israel under the Mosaic covenant, not as a command for Christians.

to her and take her for himself as a wife, and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her. **6** And it shall be ***that*** the firstborn whom she bears shall stand on the name of his dead brother, and his name shall not be wiped out from Israel (Yisra'el). **7** And if the man does not desire to take his brother's wife, then his brother's wife shall go up to the gate, to the elders, and say, 'My husband's brother refuses to raise up for his brother a name in Israel; he is not willing to perform the duty of a husband's brother to me.' **8** And the elders of his city shall call him and speak to him, and he shall stand and say, 'I do not desire to take her,' **9** then his brother's wife shall draw near to him before the eyes of the elders, and draw his sandal off his foot, and spit in his face; and she shall answer and say, 'Thus it shall be done to the man who does not build the house of his brother.' **10** And his name shall be called in Israel, 'The house of the ***one whose*** sandal ***was*** drawn off.' **11** When men struggle together, a man and his brother, and the wife of the one draws near to rescue her husband from the hand of the ***one*** striking him, and she stretches out her hand and takes hold of his private parts, **12** then you shall cut off her hand; your eye shall not pity.

Honest Weights

13 You shall not have in your bag a stone and a stone, a large and a small. **14** You shall not have in your house an ephah and an ephah, a large and a small. **15** A full and righteous stone you shall have, a full and righteous ephah you shall have, so that your days may be long on the ground which the LORD your God is giving to you. **16** For everyone who does these ***things***, everyone who does injustice, ***is*** an abomination to the LORD your God.

Remember Amalek

17 Remember what Amalek (Amaleq) did to you on the way when you came out from Egypt (Mitsrayim), **18** how he met you on the way and attacked among you in the rear all the stragglers behind you, and you ***were*** faint and weary; and he did not fear God. **19** And it shall be, when the LORD your God gives you rest from all your enemies around, in the land which the LORD your God is giving to you ***as*** an inheritance to take possession of it, ***that*** you shall wipe out the remembrance of Amalek from under the heavens; you shall not forget.

DEUTERONOMY 26

Firstfruits

1 And it shall be, when you come into the land which the LORD your God is giving to you ***as*** an inheritance, and you take possession of it and dwell in it, **2** that you shall take some of the first of all the fruit of the ground which you bring in from your land which the LORD your God is giving to you, and you shall put ***it*** in the basket and go to the place which the LORD your God will choose to cause His name to dwell there. **3** And you shall come to the priest who shall be in those days, and say to him, 'I declare today to the LORD your God that I have come into the land which the LORD swore to our fathers to give to us.' **4** And the priest shall take the basket from your hand and set it down before the altar of

25:6 Gen 28:8-10; Deut 9:14; Deut 29:20
25:7 Matt 22:24; Mark 12:19; Luke 20:28
25:8 Matt 22:24; Mark 12:19; Luke 20:28
25:9 John 1:27; Matt 22:24; Mark 12:19
25:10 Matt 22:24; Mark 12:19; Luke 20:28
25:11 Rom 3:8; 1 Tim 2:9
25:12 Deut 19:13,21
25:13 Prov 11:1; Lev 19:35,36; Prov 16:11
25:15 Exod 20:12; Deut 4:40; Deut 5:16,33
25:16 Prov 11:1; Deut 18:12; Deut 22:5
25:17 Exod 17:8-16; Num 24:20; Num 25:17,18
25:18 Ps 36:1; Rom 3:18; Neh 5:9,15
25:19 Exod 17:14,16; Josh 23:1; Deut 9:14
26:1 Deut 5:31; Deut 6:1-10; Deut 7:1
26:2 Exod 23:16,19; Deut 16:10; Exod 34:26
26:3 Luke 1:73; Deut 19:17; Heb 7:26
26:4 Matt 5:23,24; Matt 23:19; Heb 13:10-12

25:6 *his name shall not be wiped out from Israel* The first son counted as the dead man's son and inherited his share of the land, which God had given to each family (Num 27:1-11). The law also protected the widow, giving her a home, a husband and a future in the family.
25:9 *draw his sandal off his foot, and spit in his face* The sandal was a sign of a man's right to walk on and claim land, and taking it off showed he gave up both right and duty. He could refuse, but not quietly. The book of Ruth shows a related duty of the kinsman-redeemer, when a closer relative gave his sandal to Boaz (Ruth 4:7-8). Like Boaz, Jesus became our near Relative by becoming a man and paid the price to redeem us (Gal 4:4-5; 1 Pet 1:18-19).
25:10 *The house of the one whose sandal was drawn off* The Sadducees used this law to try to trap Jesus about a woman married to seven brothers. He answered that "in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage" (Matt 22:30).
25:12 *then you shall cut off her hand; your eye shall not pity* This is one of the strangest and hardest laws. The woman was not defending her life; she was helping in a fight by an act both shameful and able to leave the man unable to father children. That is why it sits beside the law of raising a name for a dead brother. It is the only penalty of its kind in the Law. Later Jewish teachers commonly read it as a money payment, and teachers today hold both views. It was Israel's court law, not a law for the church, and never a reason to harm anyone.
25:13 *a stone and a stone, a large and a small* A cheating merchant kept a heavy weight for buying and a light one for selling.
25:16 *everyone who does injustice, is an abomination to the LORD your God* God puts cheating in business in the same word He uses for idolatry. "Scales of deceit are an abomination of the LORD, and a perfect weight is His delight" (Prov 11:1; Amos 8:5). We set prices, fill out time sheets, report income and describe what we sell. God sees all of it. "Whatever you do, work from the soul, as to the Lord and not to men" (Col 3:23).
25:18 *attacked among you in the rear all the stragglers behind you* Exodus 17 tells of Amalek's attack at Rephidim; Moses now tells how. They did not face the fighting men. They picked off the weak, the old, the sick and the tired. "And he did not fear God."
25:19 *you shall wipe out the remembrance of Amalek from under the heavens* This was God's judgment, not private revenge, on a nation that preyed on the helpless and made war on God's people for generations (Exod 17:14; Judg 6:3). It waited "when the LORD your God gives you rest," and came due under Saul, who disobeyed (1 Sam 15:1-23). Haman "the Agagite" (Esth 3:1) likely came from Agag's line. It was for that people at that time and is never a license to hate any people today. Vengeance belongs to God (Rom 12:19), and Jesus, the Good Shepherd, carries the stragglers (Luke 15:4-5).
26:2 *you shall take some of the first of all the fruit of the ground* Israel had eaten manna for forty years and had no fields yet, but Moses looks ahead to the first harvest. Giving God the first, not the leftovers, says that all of it belongs to Him and that He comes first. "Honor the LORD from your wealth, and from the first of all your yield" (Prov 3:9). It was also faith, given before the farmer knew how big the rest would be.
26:3 *I have come into the land which the LORD swore to our fathers to give to us* Abraham, Isaac and Jacob never owned more than a burial plot. Now an ordinary farmer could stand at the altar with a basket and say, I am living in it. Every basket was proof that God keeps His word. The gift then supported the priests (18:4).

the LORD your God. **5** And you shall answer and say before the LORD your God, 'A wandering Aramean ***was*** my father, and he went down to Egypt (Mitsrayim) and sojourned there, few in number; and he became there a nation, great, mighty, and numerous. **6** And the Egyptians treated us badly and afflicted us, and put hard labor on us. **7** And we cried out to the LORD, the God of our fathers, and the LORD heard our voice and saw our affliction and our toil and our oppression. **8** And the LORD brought us out from Egypt with a strong hand and with an outstretched arm and with great terror and with signs and with wonders. **9** And He brought us to this place and gave to us this land, a land flowing ***with*** milk and honey. **10** And now, look, I have brought the first of the fruit of the ground which You have given to me, O LORD.' And you shall set it down before the LORD your God, and bow down before the LORD your God. **11** And you shall rejoice in all the good which the LORD your God has given to you and to your house, you and the Levite and the sojourner who ***is*** in your midst.

The Third-Year Tithe

12 When you have finished tithing all the tithe of your produce in the third year, the year of the tithe, and you have given ***it*** to the Levite, to the sojourner, to the fatherless one, and to the widow, and they have eaten within your gates and been satisfied, **13** then you shall say before the LORD your God, 'I have removed the holy ***portion*** from the house, and also I have given it to the Levite and to the sojourner, to the fatherless one, and to the widow, according to all Your commandment which You have commanded me; I have not transgressed ***any*** of Your commandments, and I have not forgotten ***them***. **14** I have not eaten of it in my mourning, and I have not removed ***any*** of it while unclean, and I have not given ***any*** of it for the dead; I have listened to the voice of the LORD my God; I have done according to all that You have commanded me. **15** Look down from the habitation of Your holiness, from the heavens, and bless Your people Israel (Yisra'el) and the ground which You have given to us, just as You swore to our fathers, a land flowing ***with*** milk and honey.'

The Covenant Declared

16 This day the LORD your God is commanding you to do these statutes and the judgments; and you shall be careful and do them with all your heart and with all your soul. **17** The LORD you have declared today to be your God, and to walk in His ways, and to keep His statutes and His commandments and His judgments, and to listen to His voice. **18** And the LORD has declared you today to be for Him a people of treasured possession, just as He spoke to you, and to keep all His commandments, **19** and to set you high above all the nations which He has made, for praise and for a name and for beauty, and for you to be a holy people to the LORD your God, just as He spoke."

DEUTERONOMY 27

The Altar on Mount Ebal

1 And Moses (Moshe) and the elders of Israel (Yisra'el) commanded the people, saying, "Keep all the commandment

26:5 Acts 7:15; Gen 43:1,2,12; Gen 46:27
26:6 Exod 1:11,14,16,22; Deut 4:20; Exod 5:9,19,23
26:7 Exod 2:23-25; Exod 6:5; Ps 50:15
26:8 Deut 4:34; Exod 12:37,41,51; Deut 5:15
26:9 Exod 3:8; Josh 23:14; 1 Sam 7:12
26:10 Deut 26:2; Deut 26:17; 1 Chr 29:14
26:11 Deut 12:7,12,18; Deut 16:11; Ps 63:3-5
26:12 Lev 27:30; Num 18:24; Deut 14:22-29
26:13 Deut 14:29; Deut 24:19-21; Job 31:16-20
26:14 Lev 7:20; Lev 21:1,11; Hos 9:4
26:15 Isa 63:15; Zech 2:13; 1 Kgs 8:27,43
26:16 Deut 4:1-6; Deut 6:1; Deut 11:1,8
26:17 Exod 24:7; Deut 5:2,3; Exod 15:2
26:18 Rom 16:26; 1 Pet 2:9; Deut 7:6
26:19 1 Pet 2:9; Deut 28:1; Deut 7:6
27:1 Deut 4:1-3; Deut 11:32; Deut 26:16

26:5 *A wandering Aramean was my father* Most teachers believe this is Jacob, who lived twenty years with "Laban the Aramean" (Gen 31:20; Hos 12:12) and went down to Egypt with about seventy people (Gen 46:27). Some think it also looks back to Abraham. Israel began not with kings and armies but with a homeless, wandering man (7:7-8). And the farmer says "my father." Israel's history was his own.
26:7 *the LORD heard our voice and saw our affliction* Now the farmer says "us," counting himself with the slaves in Egypt though he was born later. God's people share one story. This is what God does: He hears and He sees (Exod 3:7).
26:8 *with a strong hand and with an outstretched arm* This short confession is sometimes called Israel's creed. It is not a list of ideas but of things God did in history. The gospel is built the same way: Christ died, was buried and was raised (1 Cor 15:3-4). Our faith rests on what God has done, not on what we feel.
26:10 *which You have given to me, O LORD* The farmer had plowed and harvested, but he knew the land, the rain and the growth came from God. "Every good giving and every perfect gift is from above" (James 1:17). Giving was worship, and he bowed down.
26:11 *you and the Levite and the sojourner who is in your midst* The offering ended in a celebration that the landless shared. Thanksgiving always spills over into generosity. Christ "became the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep" (1 Cor 15:20): His resurrection is the first part of the harvest and guarantees the rest.
26:12 *in the third year, the year of the tithe* Every third year the tithe was stored in the local towns for the Levite and the poor (14:28-29). God's care for the needy was built into Israel's worship and not left to chance.
26:14 *I have not given any of it for the dead* The tithe was holy and could not be used in mourning or touched by uncleanness. "For the dead" may mean an offering to the dead, as in Canaanite religion, or food for a funeral meal. This is not a claim to be sinless but to honest obedience in one matter. Can you say before God, I did what You asked?
26:15 *Look down from the habitation of Your holiness, from the heavens* Having cared for the needy, he asks God to bless the whole nation. The high and holy God looks down and blesses His people. "Give, and it will be given to you" (Luke 6:38).
26:17 *The LORD you have declared today to be your God* The laws that began in chapter 12 end here with both sides of the covenant spoken. First Israel's side: to walk in His ways and listen to His voice, with all the heart and soul (6:5).
26:18 *a people of treasured possession* Then God's side. A treasured possession is a king's personal treasure, as God said at Sinai (Exod 19:5).
26:19 *to set you high above all the nations which He has made* Israel was meant to show the world what God is like. Peter uses like words for believers: "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His possession" (1 Pet 2:9). The church does not replace Israel, and God still has His promises for Israel (30:1-10). But through Christ believers from every nation are also made God's own people (Titus 2:14).
27:1 *Moses and the elders of Israel commanded the people* For the first time in the book the elders stand with Moses. He would soon be gone, and the leaders who stayed would have to carry on what he taught.

which I am commanding you today. **2** And it shall be, on the day when you pass over the Jordan (Yarden) to the land which the LORD your God is giving to you, that you shall set up for yourself large stones and plaster them with lime. **3** And you shall write on them all the words of this law when you pass over, so that you may go into the land which the LORD your God is giving to you, a land flowing ***with*** milk and honey, just as the LORD, the God of your fathers, spoke to you. **4** And it shall be, when you have passed over the Jordan, ***that*** you shall set up these stones, which I am commanding you today, on the mountain of Ebal (Eval), and you shall plaster them with lime. **5** And you shall build there an altar to the LORD your God, an altar of stones; you shall not wield iron on them. **6** ***With*** whole stones you shall build the altar of the LORD your God, and you shall offer up burnt offerings on it to the LORD your God. **7** And you shall sacrifice peace offerings and eat there, and rejoice before the LORD your God. **8** And you shall write on the stones all the words of this law, very plainly." **9** And Moses and the priests, the Levites, spoke to all Israel, saying, "Be silent and hear, Israel: this day you have become a people for the LORD your God. **10** And you shall listen to the voice of the LORD your God, and do His commandments and His statutes which I am commanding you today."

The Curses from Mount Ebal

11 And Moses commanded the people on that day, saying, **12** "These shall stand to bless the people on the mountain of Gerizim when you have passed over the Jordan: Simeon (Shimon) and Levi and Judah (Yehuda) and Issachar (Yisashkhar) and Joseph (Yosef) and Benjamin (Binyamin). **13** And these shall stand for the curse on the mountain of Ebal: Reuben (Reuven), Gad, and Asher, and Zebulun (Zevulun), Dan, and Naphtali (Naftali). **14** And the Levites shall answer and say to every man of Israel ***with*** a raised voice: **15** 'Cursed ***is*** the man who makes a carved image and a cast image, an abomination to the LORD, the work of the hands of a craftsman, and sets ***it*** up in secret.' And all the people shall answer and say, 'Amen.' **16** 'Cursed ***is*** he who dishonors his father and his mother.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen.' **17** 'Cursed ***is*** he who moves back the boundary of his neighbor.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen.' **18** 'Cursed ***is*** he who makes a blind ***man*** wander on the way.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen.' **19** 'Cursed ***is*** he who turns aside the judgment of a sojourner, a fatherless one, and a widow.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen.' **20** 'Cursed ***is*** he who lies with the wife of his father, for he has uncovered the skirt of his father.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen.' **21** 'Cursed ***is*** he who lies with any animal.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen.' **22** 'Cursed ***is*** he who lies with his sister, the daughter of his father or the daughter of his mother.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen.' **23** 'Cursed ***is*** he who lies with his mother-in-law.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen.'

27:2 Josh 4:1,5-24; Deut 6:1; Deut 9:1
27:3 Heb 8:9; Deut 26:9; Josh 8:32
27:4 Deut 11:29,30; Josh 8:30-33
27:5 Exod 20:25; Exod 24:4; Josh 8:30,31
27:6 Lev 1:1-17; Eph 5:2
27:7 Deut 12:7,12; Lev 3:1-17; Lev 7:11-17
27:8 Hab 2:2; John 16:25; 2 Cor 3:12
27:9 Deut 26:16-18; Rom 6:17,18,22; 1 Cor 6:9-11
27:10 Deut 11:1,7,8; Deut 10:12,13; Lev 19:2
27:12 Judg 9:7; Deut 11:26-29; Josh 8:33,34
27:13 Deut 27:4; Deut 11:29; Josh 8:33
27:14 Dan 9:11; Deut 33:9,10; Josh 8:33
27:15 1 Cor 14:16; Matt 6:13; Rom 9:5
27:16 Matt 6:13; Matt 15:6; Mark 7:10
27:17 Matt 6:13; Rom 9:5; 1 Cor 14:16
27:18 Matt 6:13; Rom 9:5; 1 Cor 14:16
27:19 Matt 6:13; Rom 9:5; 1 Cor 14:16
27:20 1 Cor 5:1; Matt 6:13; Rom 9:5
27:21 Matt 6:13; Rom 9:5; 1 Cor 14:16
27:22 Matt 6:13; Rom 9:5; 1 Cor 14:16
27:23 Matt 6:13; Rom 9:5; 1 Cor 14:16

27:2 *set up for yourself large stones and plaster them with lime* In the ancient world a stone was sometimes coated with white plaster and the words written on it. "All the words of this law" probably means Deuteronomy or its main commands. The first thing Israel was to do in the land was to set God's Word where everyone could see it. What words are at the center of your home?
27:4 *on the mountain of Ebal* Ebal and Gerizim face each other across a narrow valley in the middle of the land, with Shechem between them. There God first promised the land to Abraham, and Abraham built an altar (Gen 12:6-7).
27:5 *you shall not wield iron on them* The stones were to be whole and uncut, as at Sinai (Exod 20:25), perhaps so no one would carve images or show off human skill. The altar was God's work, not man's, and so is our salvation. We add nothing to it.
27:7 *you shall sacrifice peace offerings and eat there* Burnt offerings showed full dedication, and peace offerings fellowship. Notice the order: the Law on the stones, and beside it the altar. The Law shows God's holy standard and our sin; the altar, pointing to Christ, shows the way He made for sinners to come.
27:8 *very plainly* God's Word was meant to be clear, not hidden. Joshua did all of this, building an altar of whole stones on Ebal and writing a copy of the law there (Josh 8:30-32). Some archaeologists believe they have found its remains, though others disagree.
27:9 *this day you have become a people for the LORD your God* The new generation was taking the covenant as its own. First they became His people; then "you shall listen." God's people do not obey to become His people; they obey because they are. We are saved by grace and then "created in Christ Jesus for good works" (Eph 2:10).
27:12 *These shall stand to bless the people on the mountain of Gerizim* The tribes on Gerizim were all sons of Leah and Rachel; four on Ebal came from the servant women, with Reuben, who lost his place by sin (Gen 49:3-4), and Zebulun. Scripture does not give the reason, so we should not press it. It seems the priests and some Levites stood in the valley by the ark (Josh 8:33). Only the curses are listed here; the blessings come in chapter 28.
27:15 *and sets it up in secret* Amen means so be it. By saying it, each person agreed with God's judgment and placed himself under it. "In secret" is the key to all twelve curses: most of these sins could be hidden from the courts, but not from God. Idolatry comes first because it was the root of every other sin (5:7-9).
27:16 *Cursed is he who dishonors his father and his mother* This is the fifth commandment turned around (5:16). It can mean contempt, mockery or neglect of parents when they are old.
27:17 *Cursed is he who moves back the boundary of his neighbor* Moving a boundary stone at night quietly stole a neighbor's land (19:14).
27:19 *Cursed is he who turns aside the judgment of a sojourner, a fatherless one, and a widow* These sins hurt the weak and the trusting: aging parents, a sleeping neighbor, the blind (Lev 19:14), the foreigner, the orphan and the widow. God takes it personally. Jesus said, "you did it to one of these My brothers, the least ones, you did it to Me" (Matt 25:40).
27:20 *Cursed is he who lies with the wife of his father* This and the next three curses name the sins of Leviticus 18 and 20, practiced openly by the Canaanites (Lev 18:24-28) and easily hidden by shame and fear within a family. God guards marriage and family. If you have been harmed this way, it was not your fault; please tell someone you trust and get help. If you have done these things, there is forgiveness in Christ for those who repent, and you must also make it right, including facing the law (1 Cor 6:9-11).

24 'Cursed ***is*** he who strikes his neighbor in secret.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen.' **25** 'Cursed ***is*** he who takes a bribe to strike down a person of innocent blood.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen.' **26** 'Cursed ***is*** he who does not establish the words of this law by doing them.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen.'"

DEUTERONOMY 28

Blessings for Obedience

1 And it shall be, if you surely listen to the voice of the LORD your God, to be careful to do all His commandments which I am commanding you today, then the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth. **2** And all these blessings will come on you and overtake you, if you listen to the voice of the LORD your God. **3** Blessed ***shall*** you be in the city, and blessed ***shall*** you be in the field. **4** Blessed ***shall*** be the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground and the fruit of your livestock, the offspring of your cattle and the young of your flock. **5** Blessed ***shall*** be your basket and your kneading trough. **6** Blessed ***shall*** you be in your coming in, and blessed ***shall*** you be in your going out. **7** The LORD will give your enemies who rise up against you ***to be*** struck down before you; in one way they will come out against you, and in seven ways they will flee before you. **8** The LORD will command the blessing with you in your barns and in every undertaking of your hand, and He will bless you in the land which the LORD your God is giving to you. **9** The LORD will establish you for Himself as a holy people, just as He swore to you, if you keep the commandments of the LORD your God and walk in His ways. **10** And all the peoples of the earth will see that the name of the LORD is called on you, and they will be afraid of you. **11** And the LORD will make you abound in good, in the fruit of your womb and in the fruit of your livestock and in the fruit of your ground, on the ground which the LORD swore to your fathers to give to you. **12** The LORD will open for you His good storehouse, the heavens, to give the rain of your land in its time and to bless all the work of your hand; and you will lend to many nations, and you, you will not borrow. **13** And the LORD will make you the head and not the tail, and you will be only above, and you will not be beneath, if you listen to the commandments of the LORD your God which I am commanding you today, to be careful and to do ***them***, **14** and you do not turn aside from all the words which I am commanding you today, ***to the*** right or ***to the*** left, to walk after other gods to serve them.

Curses for Disobedience

15 And it shall be, if you do not listen to the voice of the LORD your God, to be careful to do all His commandments and His statutes which I am commanding you today, then all these curses will come on you and overtake you. **16** Cursed ***shall*** you be in the city, and cursed ***shall*** you be in the field. **17** Cursed ***shall*** be your basket and your kneading trough. **18** Cursed ***shall*** be the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground, the offspring of your cattle and the young of your flock. **19** Cursed ***shall*** you be in your coming in, and cursed ***shall*** you be in your going out. **20** The LORD will send on you the curse, the confusion, and the rebuke in every undertaking of your hand which you do, until you are

27:24 Matt 6:13; Rom 9:5; 1 Cor 14:16
27:25 Matt 6:13; Rom 9:5; 1 Cor 14:16
27:26 Gal 3:10; Rom 3:19; Matt 6:13
28:1 John 15:14; Exod 15:26; Lev 26:3-13
28:2 Zech 1:6; Deut 28:15,45; 1 Tim 4:8
28:3 Gen 39:5; Ps 107:36,37; Ps 144:12-15
28:4 Deut 7:13; Gen 49:25; Prov 10:22
28:6 Ps 121:8; Deut 31:2; Num 27:17
28:7 2 Sam 22:38-41; Deut 28:25; Lev 26:7,8
28:8 Deut 15:10; Lev 25:21; Ps 133:3
28:9 1 Pet 5:10; Titus 2:14; Heb 6:13
28:10 2 Chr 7:14; Num 6:27; Deut 11:25
28:11 Deut 30:9; Prov 10:22; Deut 28:4
28:12 Deut 14:29; Deut 15:6; Deut 11:14
28:13 Deut 28:1; Deut 4:6-9; Isa 9:14,15
28:14 Deut 5:32; Deut 11:16,26-28; Josh 23:6
28:15 Mal 2:2; Deut 28:2; Lam 2:17
28:16 Deut 28:3-14; Prov 3:33; Isa 24:6-12
28:17 Deut 28:5; Ps 69:22; Prov 1:32
28:18 Deut 28:4; Deut 5:9; Job 18:16-19
28:19 Deut 28:6; Judg 5:6,7; 2 Chr 15:5
28:20 Matt 25:41; Mal 2:2; Isa 66:15

27:24 *Cursed is he who strikes his neighbor in secret* Secret murder (19:11), or taking a bribe to see the innocent condemned, might escape every court on earth, but never God. "There is no creature hidden before Him" (Heb 4:13).
27:26 *Cursed is he who does not establish the words of this law by doing them* This last curse covers everything. Paul quotes it: "Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all the things written in the book of the law, to do them" (Gal 3:10). No one has kept it all (James 2:10), and the Law cannot save (Rom 3:20). But "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us" (Gal 3:13). The Amen on Ebal was the sentence on all of us. The Law said cursed; the altar said there is a sacrifice; the cross says it is finished.
28:1 *if you surely listen to the voice of the LORD your God* Notice the "if." This is how the Mosaic covenant worked. God swore to keep His covenant with Abraham Himself (Gen 15:17-18), but Israel's enjoyment of the land depended on keeping the covenant made at Sinai. They did not earn God's love; He had already chosen and redeemed them by grace (7:7-8). The blessings were a loving Father's reward for a faithful son, and the curses His discipline of a rebellious one (8:5).
28:2 *all these blessings will come on you and overtake you* The blessings would chase them down and catch them.
28:3 *Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the field* Town and country, family and farm, the harvest basket and the kneading trough, going out in the morning and coming home at night (28:6). God's blessing was meant to fill every part of an obedient Israelite's life.
28:7 *in one way they will come out against you, and in seven ways they will flee before you* The enemy would march in as one army and run away scattered in every direction.
28:9 *The LORD will establish you for Himself as a holy people* This is the greatest blessing. The point was not the barns but that Israel would be God's holy people.
28:10 *all the peoples of the earth will see that the name of the LORD is called on you* Israel's blessing was meant to be a witness. In Solomon's day the queen of Sheba saw it and praised the LORD (1 Kgs 10:1-9).
28:12 *His good storehouse, the heavens* Israel's land depended on rain, not a river like the Nile (11:10-12), and God kept the key to that storehouse.
28:13 *the head and not the tail* All of this came with a condition, and the great danger was idolatry (28:14). Can a Christian claim these promises and expect God to make him rich and healthy if he obeys? Some teachers say yes. I do not believe the Bible teaches that. These were national blessings for Israel in their land. In Christ we have something greater, "every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ" (Eph 1:3), and Jesus said plainly, "In the world you will have tribulation; but take courage, I have overcome the world" (John 16:33; 2 Tim 3:12).
28:15 *all these curses will come on you and overtake you* The same word "overtake" is used for the blessings. If Israel turned away, the curses would chase them down just as surely. Verses 16 to 19 turn verses 3 to 6 around line by line. Israel was not left to guess; Moses told them ahead of time in plain words.
28:20 *because of the evil of your deeds, by which you have forsaken Me* God speaks in the first person. The curses were not bad luck but the response of a God whose people had left Him.

destroyed and until you perish quickly, because of the evil of your deeds, by which you have forsaken Me. **21** The LORD will make the pestilence cling to you until He has consumed you from off the ground to which you are going in to take possession of it. **22** The LORD will strike you with consumption and with fever and with inflammation and with burning heat and with the sword and with blight and with mildew, and they will pursue you until you perish. **23** And your heavens which ***are*** over your head will be bronze, and the earth which ***is*** under you iron. **24** The LORD will make the rain of your land powder and dust; from the heavens it will come down on you until you are destroyed. **25** The LORD will give you ***to be*** struck down before your enemies; in one way you will go out against him, and in seven ways you will flee before him; and you will become a terror to all the kingdoms of the earth. **26** And your corpse will become food for every bird of the heavens and for the animals of the earth, and ***there will be*** no one frightening ***them*** away. **27** The LORD will strike you with the boils of Egypt (Mitsrayim) and with tumors and with the scab and with the itch, ***from*** which you will not be able to be healed. **28** The LORD will strike you with madness and with blindness and with bewilderment of heart. **29** And you will be groping at noon, just as the blind ***man*** gropes in the darkness, and you will not make your ways prosper; and you will be only oppressed and robbed all the days, and ***there will be*** no savior. **30** You will betroth a wife, and another man will lie with her; you will build a house, and you will not dwell in it; you will plant a vineyard, and you will not put it to use. **31** Your ox ***will*** be slaughtered before your eyes, and you will not eat of it; your donkey ***will*** be seized from before you, and it will not return to you; your flock ***will*** be given to your enemies, and ***there will be*** no savior for you. **32** Your sons and your daughters ***will*** be given to another people, and your eyes ***will be*** looking and failing for them all the day; and ***there will be*** no power in your hand. **33** The fruit of your ground and all your labor a people whom you have not known will eat, and you will be only oppressed and crushed all the days. **34** And you will be driven mad from the sight of your eyes which you will see. **35** The LORD will strike you with an evil boil on the knees and on the legs, ***from*** which you will not be able to be healed, from the sole of your foot to the crown of your head.

Exile Foretold

36 The LORD will bring you and your king whom you raise up over you to a nation which you have not known, you and your fathers; and you will serve there other gods, wood and stone. **37** And you will become a horror, a proverb, and a taunt among all the peoples to which the LORD will drive you. **38** You will take much seed out to the field, and you will gather little, for the locust will consume it. **39** You will plant vineyards and work ***them***, and wine you will not drink, and you will not gather ***it***, for the worm will eat it. **40** You will have olive trees in all your territory, and ***with*** oil you will not anoint yourself, for your olives will drop off. **41** You will father sons and daughters, and they will not be yours, for they will go into captivity. **42** All your trees and the fruit of your ground the whirring locust will take possession of. **43** The sojourner who ***is*** in your midst will go up above you higher ***and*** higher, and you, you will go down lower ***and*** lower. **44** He, he will lend to you, and you, you will not lend to him; he, he will become the head, and you, you will become the tail. **45** And all these curses will come on you and pursue you and overtake you until you are destroyed, because you did not listen to the voice of the LORD your God, to keep His commandments and His statutes which He commanded you. **46** And they will be on you for a sign and for a

28:21 Lev 26:25; Jer 24:10; Num 14:12
28:22 Lev 26:16; Amos 4:9; 1 Kgs 8:37
28:23 Lev 26:19; 1 Kgs 17:1; 1 Kgs 18:2
28:24 Deut 28:12; Gen 19:24; Job 18:15-21
28:25 Isa 30:17; Ezek 23:46; Deut 28:7
28:26 Jer 7:33; Jer 16:4; Jer 34:20
28:27 1 Sam 5:6,9,12; Deut 28:35; Exod 9:9,11
28:28 1 Sam 16:14; Ps 60:3; Isa 6:9,10
28:29 Isa 59:10; Job 5:14; Judg 3:14
28:30 Amos 5:11; Jer 8:10; Job 31:10
28:31 Judg 6:1; Job 1:14,15
28:32 2 Chr 29:9; Joel 3:6; Deut 28:18,41
28:33 Jer 5:17; Lev 26:16; Neh 9:36,37
28:34 Deut 28:28,68; Isa 33:14; Jer 25:15,16
28:35 Deut 28:27; Job 2:6,7; Isa 1:6
28:36 Deut 4:28; Jer 16:13; 2 Chr 36:6,17,20
28:37 1 Kgs 9:7,8; Jer 24:9; Jer 25:9
28:38 Mic 6:15; Hag 1:6; Joel 1:4
28:39 Joel 1:4-7; Joel 2:2-4; Jonah 4:7
28:40 Mic 6:15; Ps 23:5; Ps 104:15
28:41 Deut 28:32; Lam 1:5; 2 Kgs 24:14
28:42 Deut 28:38,39; Amos 7:1,2
28:43 Judg 2:3,11-15; Judg 4:2,3; Judg 10:7-10
28:44 Deut 28:12,13; Lam 1:5
28:45 Deut 28:5,15; Deut 29:20,21; Lev 26:28
28:46 Isa 8:18; Ezek 14:8; Deut 28:37,59

28:23 *your heavens which are over your head will be bronze, and the earth which is under you iron* The sky would be like a metal lid and the ground too hard to plow. Under Ahab, who served Baal the so-called storm god, Elijah announced a drought of more than three years (1 Kgs 17:1; James 5:17). God showed who held the key to the rain.

28:25 *you will become a terror to all the kingdoms of the earth* This turns verse 7 around. A terror means something that makes others shudder, words Jeremiah used for Judah (Jer 15:4).

28:26 *your corpse will become food for every bird of the heavens* To lie unburied was the worst shame in the ancient world, and Jeremiah warned it would happen in Judah (Jer 7:33).

28:27 *the boils of Egypt* God had struck Egypt with boils (Exod 9:9-11). If Israel turned to idols, they would suffer like Egypt.

28:29 *you will be groping at noon* They would stumble in broad daylight, not for lack of light but because they could not see it. That is what sin does: it blinds. And there would be "no savior," for they had rejected the one Savior they had.

28:30 *you will build a house, and you will not dwell in it* Verses 30 to 35 describe being conquered and ruled by an enemy. The very joys that earlier freed a man from battle (20:5-7) would be taken by others.

28:32 *your eyes will be looking and failing for them all the day* Parents would watch for children carried off and never see them again. We should not read these lines quickly. They describe real suffering, and it came more than once in the Assyrian and Babylonian invasions and later.

28:36 *The LORD will bring you and your king whom you raise up over you* Israel had no king yet, but Moses foresaw one (17:14) and saw him carried away. Assyria took the northern kingdom in 722 B.C. (2 Kgs 17:6). Jehoiachin went to Babylon in 597 B.C. (2 Kgs 24:15), and in 586 B.C. Zedekiah was blinded and bound "with bronze fetters" (2 Kgs 25:7). Israel had loved idols at home; in exile God gave them what they had chosen.

28:37 *a horror, a proverb, and a taunt* A proverb here means a saying people use about someone as an example of disaster.

28:38 *you will gather little, for the locust will consume it* Seed, vine, olive and children would all be lost (28:41).

28:44 *he, he will become the head, and you, you will become the tail* Verses 12 and 13 turned around. God's people were meant to be the head; if they turned from Him, the foreigners among them would rise over them.

wonder, and on your seed, forever. **47** Because you did not serve the LORD your God with joy and with goodness of heart, from the abundance of everything, **48** and you will serve your enemies whom the LORD will send against you, in hunger and in thirst and in nakedness and in lack of everything; and He will put a yoke of iron on your neck until He has destroyed you.

A Nation from Far Away

49 The LORD will raise up against you a nation from far away, from the end of the earth, just as the eagle swoops down, a nation whose language you will not understand, **50** a nation fierce of face, which will not show regard for an old ***man***, and will not show favor to a youth. **51** And it will eat the fruit of your livestock and the fruit of your ground until you are destroyed, ***a nation*** which will not leave for you grain, new wine, and fresh oil, the offspring of your cattle and the young of your flock, until it has made you perish. **52** And it will besiege you in all your gates until your high and fortified walls come down, in which you are trusting, in all your land; and it will besiege you in all your gates in all your land which the LORD your God has given to you. **53** And you will eat the fruit of your womb, the flesh of your sons and your daughters whom the LORD your God has given to you, in the siege and in the distress with which your enemy will distress you. **54** The man ***who is*** tender among you and very delicate, his eye will be evil toward his brother and toward the wife of his bosom and toward the rest of his sons whom he leaves, **55** so as not to give to one of them any of the flesh of his sons whom he eats, because nothing has been left to him, in the siege and in the distress with which your enemy will distress you in all your gates. **56** The tender ***woman*** among you and the delicate, who has not attempted to set the sole of her foot on the ground because of delicateness and because of tenderness, her eye will be evil toward the husband of her bosom and toward her son and toward her daughter, **57** and toward her afterbirth which comes out from between her feet, and toward her sons whom she bears; for she will eat them in lack of everything in secret, in the siege and in the distress with which your enemy will distress you in your gates.

Scattered Among the Nations

58 If you are not careful to do all the words of this law which are written in this book, to fear this glorious and awesome name, the LORD your God, **59** then the LORD will make your plagues extraordinary, and the plagues of your seed, great and lasting plagues, and evil and lasting sicknesses. **60** And He will bring back on you all the diseases of Egypt of which you were afraid, and they will cling to you. **61** Also every sickness and every plague which ***is*** not written in the book of this law, the LORD will bring them up on you until you are destroyed. **62** And you will be left few in number, whereas you were like the stars of the heavens for multitude, because you did not listen to the voice of the LORD your God. **63** And it shall be, just as the LORD rejoiced over you to do you good and to multiply you, so the LORD will rejoice over you to make you perish and to destroy you; and you will be torn away from off the ground to which you are going in to take possession of it. **64** And the LORD will scatter you among all the peoples, from the end of the earth to the end of the earth; and you will serve there other gods which you have not known, you and your fathers, wood and stone. **65** And among those nations you will not find rest, and ***there*** will be no resting place for the sole of your foot; and the LORD will give you there a trembling heart and failing of eyes and despair of soul. **66** And your life will be hanging before you,

28:47 Deut 12:7-12; Deut 16:11; Deut 32:13-15
28:48 Jer 28:13,14; 2 Chr 12:8; Neh 9:35-37
28:49 Luke 21:22; Lam 4:19; Hos 8:1
28:50 Luke 21:22; Luke 21:24; Isa 47:6
28:51 Luke 21:22; Deut 28:33; Isa 62:8
28:52 Luke 21:22; Luke 21:23; Luke 21:24
28:53 Luke 21:22; Lam 2:20; Lev 26:29
28:54 Luke 21:22; Deut 15:9; Deut 13:6
28:55 Luke 21:22; Jer 5:10; Jer 34:2
28:56 Luke 21:22; Isa 3:16; Lam 4:3-6
28:57 Luke 21:22; Gen 49:10; Isa 49:15
28:58 Luke 21:22; Isa 42:8; Deut 28:15
28:59 Luke 21:22; Deut 28:46; Deut 29:20-28
28:60 Luke 21:22; Deut 7:15; Exod 15:26
28:61 Luke 21:22
28:62 Luke 21:22; Rom 9:29; Heb 11:12
28:63 Luke 21:22; Jer 32:41; Prov 1:26
28:64 Luke 21:22; Lev 26:33; Deut 4:27,28
28:65 Lev 26:36; Lev 26:16; Amos 9:4,9,10
28:66 Rom 11:10; Lam 1:13; Heb 10:27

28:47 *Because you did not serve the LORD your God with joy and with goodness of heart, from the abundance of everything* This is the reason under all the others. The root problem was not only broken rules but no joy in serving God when He had given them everything. Ungratefulness in plenty leads to idolatry (8:11-14). Do we serve the Lord with joy for all He has given? A grumbling heart in a time of blessing is a dangerous place.

28:48 *He will put a yoke of iron on your neck* They would not serve God gladly in plenty, so they would serve their enemies in want.

28:49 *a nation from far away, from the end of the earth, just as the eagle swoops down* This fits Babylon, whose horsemen "fly like an eagle hurrying to devour" (Hab 1:8). It also fits Rome, which came from much farther, spoke a language the Jews did not know, carried the eagle as its standard and destroyed Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

28:52 *your high and fortified walls come down, in which you are trusting* Israel's walls would not save them. Only the LORD could, and they had turned from Him.

28:53 *you will eat the fruit of your womb* These are the hardest verses in the chapter. In the starving siege even the gentlest would turn cold toward their own family (28:56). This is not what God wants; it is a warning so dark that no one could say they were not told. It did happen, in the siege of Samaria (2 Kgs 6:24-29) and in the fall of Jerusalem (Lam 4:10), and ancient historians report it again in A.D. 70. Sin always takes us further than we meant to go. Read these words with grief, as Jeremiah did, not with curiosity.

28:58 *which are written in this book* Moses was writing these words down (31:9). Israel would have them in black and white.

28:62 *you were like the stars of the heavens for multitude* God's promise to Abraham had come true (Gen 15:5; 1:10). Now sin would undo it.

28:63 *so the LORD will rejoice over you to make you perish* This does not mean God enjoys suffering. "Do I indeed take pleasure in the death of the wicked, declares the Lord GOD?" (Ezek 18:23). It means He is fully committed to His word. He delights in justice as surely as in mercy.

28:64 *from the end of the earth to the end of the earth* This goes beyond Assyria and Babylon. After Rome destroyed Jerusalem in A.D. 70 and crushed another revolt about sixty years later, the Jewish people were spread over the whole world. Jesus foretold that they "will be led captive into all the nations" (Luke 21:24). Few peoples, if any, have been scattered so widely for so long and still kept their identity.

28:65 *there will be no resting place for the sole of your foot* Jewish history in exile is full of expulsions, persecution and murder, up to the Holocaust. These verses explain why God allowed the scattering; they never excuse the persecutors. God judged Assyria and Babylon for their cruelty (Isa 10:5-12). Hatred of the Jewish people is sin, and sadly it has often been done by people who called themselves Christians. Paul warned Gentile believers, "do not boast over the branches" (Rom 11:18).

and you will be in dread night and day, and you will not trust in your life. **67** In the morning you will say, "Oh that ***it were*** evening!" and in the evening you will say, "Oh that ***it were*** morning!" because of the dread of your heart which you will dread, and because of the sight of your eyes which you will see. **68** And the LORD will bring you back ***to*** Egypt in ships, by the way of which I said to you, "You will not see it again"; and there you will sell yourselves to your enemies as slaves and as female slaves, and ***there will be*** no buyer.

DEUTERONOMY 29

The Covenant in Moab

1 These ***are*** the words of the covenant which the LORD commanded Moses (Moshe) to make with the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) in the land of Moab (Mo'av), besides the covenant which He had made with them at Horeb (Chorev). **2** And Moses called to all Israel and said to them, "You, you have seen all that the LORD did before your eyes in the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim) to Pharaoh and to all his servants and to all his land, **3** the great trials which your eyes saw, the signs and those great wonders. **4** And the LORD has not given you a heart to know, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, until this day. **5** And I have led you forty years in the wilderness; your clothes have not worn out on you, and your sandal has not worn out on your foot. **6** Bread you have not eaten, and wine and strong drink you have not drunk, so that you may know that I ***am*** the LORD your God. **7** And you came to this place, and Sihon (Sichon) the king of Heshbon (Cheshbon) and Og the king of Bashan came out to meet us for battle, and we struck them. **8** And we took their land and gave it for an inheritance to the Reubenites and to the Gadites and to the half of the tribe of the Manassites. **9** And you shall keep the words of this covenant and do them, so that you may make all that you do prosper. **10** You are standing today, all of you, before the LORD your God: your heads, your tribes, your elders and your officers, every man of Israel, **11** your little ones, your wives, and your sojourner who ***is*** in the midst of your camp, from the cutter of your wood to the drawer of your water, **12** for you to pass into the covenant of the LORD your God and into His oath, which the LORD your God is making with you today, **13** in order to establish you today for Himself as a people, and that He may be God to you, just as He spoke to you, and just as He swore to your fathers, to Abraham (Avraham), to Isaac (Yitschaq), and to Jacob (Ya'aqov). **14** And not with you alone am I making this covenant and this oath, **15** but with him who is here, standing with us today before the LORD our God, and with him who is not here with us today.

A Root of Poison

16 For you, you know how we dwelt in the land of Egypt, and how we passed through the midst of the nations which you passed through. **17** And you saw their detestable things and their idols, wood and stone, silver and gold, which ***were*** with them. **18** Lest there be among you a man or a woman or a clan or a tribe whose heart is turning away today from the LORD our God, to go to serve the gods of those nations; lest

28:67 Rom 11:10; Deut 28:34; Job 7:3,4
28:68 Rom 11:10; Hos 9:3; Jer 43:7
29:1 Acts 3:25; Heb 8:9; Deut 5:2,3
29:2 Exod 19:4; Exod 8:12; Josh 24:5,6
29:3 Deut 4:32-35; Deut 7:18,19; Neh 9:9-11
29:4 Rom 11:8; Acts 28:26; Rom 11:7
29:5 Deut 8:4; Deut 1:3; Deut 8:2
29:6 Deut 8:3; Eph 5:18; Exod 16:12,35
29:7 Deut 2:24-37; Num 21:21-35; Num 32:33-42
29:8 Deut 3:12,13; Num 32:33
29:9 Deut 4:6; Josh 1:7; 1 Kgs 2:3
29:10 Rev 20:12; Deut 4:10; Deut 31:12,13
29:11 Exod 12:38,48,49; Deut 5:14; Num 11:4
29:12 Heb 8:9; 2 Chr 15:12-15; Deut 5:2,3
29:13 Gen 17:7; Exod 6:7; Deut 28:9
29:14 Heb 8:9; Heb 8:10; Jer 31:31-34
29:15 Acts 2:39; Deut 5:3; Jer 32:39
29:16 Deut 2:4,9,19,24; Deut 3:1,2
29:18 Heb 12:15; Deut 11:16,17; Deut 13:1-15

28:68 *the LORD will bring you back to Egypt in ships* This last curse is the exodus run backward. Ancient historians report that after A.D. 70 many thousands of Jewish captives were sold, many sent to Egypt. But this is not where the story ends. God had already said, "I will not reject them, and I will not abhor them" (Lev 26:44), and chapter 30 promises a regathering and a new heart. "All Israel will be saved" (Rom 11:26). Many dispensational teachers see the modern state of Israel (1948) as a step toward that promise, with the full return to the LORD and the Messiah still to come (Zech 12:10). The church has not taken Israel's place.

29:1 *besides the covenant which He had made with them at Horeb* In Hebrew Bibles this verse closes chapter 28. These words are a covenant made in Moab forty years after Horeb (Sinai). "Besides" shows a second ceremony renewing the covenant with the children of those who stood at Horeb, since most of their parents had died. Each generation had to take God's covenant as its own. Some teachers see a distinct land covenant in chapters 29 and 30.

29:4 *the LORD has not given you a heart to know, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, until this day* They had seen the plagues, the sea split and the manna fall, and still did not truly understand. Seeing miracles does not change a heart. This is not an excuse; people are responsible for hard hearts and yet cannot fix them alone, which is why God promises to circumcise their hearts (30:6). Paul uses this verse: "God gave them a spirit of stupor" (Rom 11:8), but he shows the hardening is not forever (Rom 11:25-26). Have you asked God, "Uncover my eyes" (Ps 119:18)?

29:5 *your clothes have not worn out on you* Now the LORD speaks in the first person. For forty years He kept their clothes and sandals (8:4).

29:6 *Bread you have not eaten* With no farms or vineyards, they lived on manna and water from the rock, learning to depend on God every day.

29:7 *Sihon the king of Heshbon and Og the king of Bashan came out to meet us for battle* The God who kept them in the wilderness was already giving them the land (2:26-3:17). Looking back, can you see how God has provided, even when you did not notice?

29:11 *from the cutter of your wood to the drawer of your water* Leaders and children, men and women, even the foreigners who did the lowest jobs all stood before the LORD together. God's covenant was not only for the important people.

29:12 *for you to pass into the covenant of the LORD your God* Covenants were sometimes made by walking between the pieces of a divided animal (Gen 15:9-17; Jer 34:18), and "pass into" may echo that.

29:13 *that He may be God to you* This is the heart of every covenant God made with Israel: I will be your God, and you will be My people. The Moab covenant rests on the promise God swore to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

29:15 *with him who is not here with us today* Moses bound the generations not yet born. That is why the prophets could hold Israel to this covenant centuries later. Our choices for God or against Him reach our children and grandchildren too.

29:17 *their idols, wood and stone, silver and gold* Israel had seen idols up close in Egypt, Edom, Moab and at Peor (Num 25) and knew how attractive they could be.

29:18 *a root bearing poison and wormwood* It starts with one man or one woman, then a clan, then a tribe. A root grows unseen, then sprouts and spreads. Hebrews warns "lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and through this many be defiled" (Heb 12:15). Sin is never only private.

there be among you a root bearing poison and wormwood;
19 and it shall be, when he hears the words of this oath, that he blesses himself in his heart, saying, 'I will have peace, for I walk in the stubbornness of my heart,' so as to sweep away the watered ***land*** with the thirsty. **20** The LORD will not be willing to forgive him, for then the anger of the LORD and His jealousy will smoke against that man, and every curse that is written in this book will lie down on him, and the LORD will wipe out his name from under the heavens. **21** And the LORD will separate him for evil out of all the tribes of Israel, according to all the curses of the covenant that is written in this book of the law.

The Nations Will Ask Why

22 And the later generation will say, your sons who rise up after you, and the foreigner who comes from a distant land, and they will see the plagues of that land and its sicknesses with which the LORD has made it sick: **23** sulfur and salt, a burning, all its land; it is not sown, and it does not make ***anything*** sprout, and no vegetation at all comes up in it, like the overthrow of Sodom (Sedom) and Gomorrah (Amora),
Admah (Adma) and Zeboiim (Tsevoyim), which the LORD overthrew in His anger and in His rage; **24** and all the nations will say, 'Why has the LORD done thus to this land? What ***is*** the heat of this great anger?' **25** And they will say, 'Because they forsook the covenant of the LORD, the God of their fathers, which He made with them when He brought them out from the land of Egypt, **26** and they went and served other gods and bowed down to them, gods whom they had not known and ***whom*** He had not allotted to them. **27** And the anger of the LORD burned against that land, to bring on it every curse that is written in this book. **28** And the LORD plucked them up from off their ground in anger and in rage and in great wrath, and He threw them into another land, as ***at*** this day.' **29** The hidden ***things belong*** to the LORD our God, and the revealed ***things belong*** to us and to our sons forever, to do all the words of this law.

DEUTERONOMY 30

Return and Restoration

1 And it shall be, when all these things come on you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you bring ***them*** back to your heart among all the nations to which the LORD your God has banished you, **2** and you return to the LORD your God and listen to His voice according to all that I am commanding you today, you and your sons, with all your heart and with all your soul, **3** then the LORD your God will turn back your captivity and have compassion on you, and He will return and gather you from all the peoples to which the LORD your God has scattered you. **4** If your banished ***one*** is at the end of the heavens, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there He will take you. **5** And the LORD your God will bring you into the land which your fathers took possession of, and you shall take possession of it; and He will do you good and multiply you more than your fathers. **6** And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your seed, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, for the sake of your life.

29:19 1 Thess 5:3; Num 15:30,39; Eph 4:17
29:20 Gal 3:10; Ps 74:1; Ps 79:5
29:21 Josh 7:1-26; Ezek 13:9; Mal 3:18
29:23 Luke 17:29; Rom 9:29; 2 Pet 2:6
29:24 Jer 22:8,9; 1 Kgs 9:8,9; 2 Chr 7:21,22
29:25 Heb 8:9; Isa 47:6; Jer 40:2,3
29:26 Judg 2:12,13; Judg 5:8; 2 Kgs 17:7-18
29:27 Deut 28:15-68; Dan 9:11-14; Deut 29:20,21
29:28 Luke 21:23; Luke 21:22; 2 Chr 7:20
29:29 Matt 13:35; Acts 1:7; Rom 11:33,34
30:1 Deut 30:15,19; 1 Kgs 8:47,48; Deut 11:26-28
30:2 Neh 1:9; Joel 2:12,13; Deut 4:28-31
30:3 Rom 11:26; Jer 29:14; Ps 147:2
30:4 Matt 24:31; Mark 13:27; Neh 1:9
30:6 Deut 10:16; Rom 2:28; Col 2:11

29:19 *I will have peace, for I walk in the stubbornness of my heart* He hears the warnings and tells himself he will be fine. "To sweep away the watered land with the thirsty" is uncertain; it most likely means his sin would ruin everyone around him, or that he thinks he can have it all.
29:20 *The LORD will not be willing to forgive him* God's jealousy is not petty envy but the right anger of a husband betrayed. He always forgives those who truly repent (30:1-3), but this man has heard and decided to keep going, so he has shut the door himself. Is there any place where you have heard God's warning and told yourself it will be fine?
29:23 *like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah* The land would be ruined like the cities of the plain (Gen 19:24-25).
29:24 *Why has the LORD done thus to this land?* Israel's ruin would be a lesson to the world, and the answer would be that they forsook the covenant and served other gods. When Babylon destroyed Jerusalem, these very questions were asked and answered (1 Kgs 9:8-9; Jer 22:8-9).
29:28 *as at this day* Moses is so sure of the coming exile that he speaks of it as already done. The Bible itself says Moses wrote these words (31:9, 24).
29:29 *The hidden things belong to the LORD our God, and the revealed things belong to us and to our sons forever* A wise and humble verse. Some things God has not told us, and we can trust Him with them. Other things He has made plain, and He revealed them "to do all the words of this law," not to satisfy our curiosity. I find that a great comfort. I do not have to understand everything, but I am responsible for what God has made plain. Most of us already know far more of His will than we are doing. Start there.
30:1 *when all these things come on you* "When," not "if." Moses knew Israel would know both the blessing and the curse, as he had said in 4:25-31. To "bring them back to your heart" means to think it over and come to your senses, as the prodigal did in the far country (Luke 15:17).
30:2 *you return to the LORD your God* The Hebrew word for return, shuv, is the main Old Testament word for repentance: to turn around and go back. The chapter uses it again and again. Israel returns to God, God turns back their captivity, and God returns to rejoice over them. Israel's return to the land would begin with a return to the LORD.
30:3 *He will return and gather you from all the peoples* In 538 B.C. Cyrus let a remnant return from Babylon (Ezra 1:1-4), a partial fulfillment. But that return was small and from one region, and after A.D. 70 Israel was scattered over the whole earth. The prophets speak of a greater return: "the scattered of Judah He will assemble from the four corners of the earth" (Isa 11:12; Ezek 36:24).
30:4 *If your banished one is at the end of the heavens, from there the LORD your God will gather you* No Jew could ever be scattered so far that God could not bring him home. I believe this promise will be fulfilled fully in the last days, when Israel turns to the Lord and Christ returns to set up His kingdom.
30:5 *He will do you good and multiply you more than your fathers* The regathered nation would be blessed beyond anything the fathers knew.
30:6 *the LORD your God will circumcise your heart* This is the heart of the chapter. A circumcised heart has the hardness cut away and belongs to God. In 10:16 Israel was told to do it, but they could not (29:4). Now God promises to do it Himself, so that they love Him with all their heart and soul (6:5). What the Law demanded, God will give. This is the new covenant promise: "on their heart I will write it" (Jer 31:33; Ezek 36:26-27).
30:6 *and the heart of your seed* Believers share in this now. Jesus' blood is the blood of the new covenant (Luke 22:20), and true circumcision "is of the heart, in spirit, not in letter" (Rom 2:29; Col 2:11). But that does not cancel God's promise to the nation. "All Israel will be saved" (Rom 11:26), when "they will look to Me, to Him whom they have pierced" (Zech 12:10). That is when this verse will be fulfilled for the nation.

7 And the LORD your God will put all these curses on your enemies and on those who hate you, who have pursued you. **8** And you, you will return and listen to the voice of the LORD, and do all His commandments which I am commanding you today. **9** And the LORD your God will make you abound in all the work of your hand, in the fruit of your womb and in the fruit of your livestock and in the fruit of your ground, for good; for the LORD will return to rejoice over you for good, just as He rejoiced over your fathers, **10** if you listen to the voice of the LORD your God, to keep His commandments and His statutes which are written in this book of the law, if you return to the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

The Word Is Near You

11 For this commandment which I am commanding you today, it is not too difficult for you, and it is not far away. **12** It ***is*** not in the heavens, to say, 'Who will go up for us to the heavens and take it for us, and make us hear it, so that we may do it?' **13** And it ***is*** not beyond the sea, to say, 'Who will pass over for us to the other side of the sea and take it for us, and make us hear it, so that we may do it?' **14** For the word ***is*** very near to you, in your mouth and in your heart, to do it.

Choose Life

15 See, I have set before you today life and good, and death and evil, **16** in that I am commanding you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments, and you shall live and multiply, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land to which you are going in to take possession of it. **17** And if your heart turns away, and you do not listen, and you are drawn away and bow down to other gods and serve them, **18** I declare to you today that you shall surely perish; you shall not prolong ***your*** days on the ground to which you are passing over the Jordan (Yarden) to go in to take possession of it. **19** I call the heavens and the earth to witness against you today: life and death I have set before you, the blessing and the curse; and you shall choose life, so that you may live, you and your seed, **20** to love the LORD your God, to listen to His voice, and to cling to Him; for He ***is*** your life and the length of your days, to dwell on the ground which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham (Avraham), to Isaac (Yitschaq), and to Jacob (Ya'aqov), to give to them."

DEUTERONOMY 31

Joshua to Lead Israel

1 And Moses (Moshe) went and spoke these words to all Israel (Yisra'el). **2** And he said to them, "I ***am*** a son of a hundred and twenty years today; I am no longer able to go out and to come in, and the LORD has said to me, 'You shall not pass over this Jordan (Yarden).' **3** The LORD your God, He is passing over before you; He will destroy these nations from before you, and you shall dispossess them. Joshua (Yehoshua), he is passing over before you, just as the LORD has spoken. **4** And the LORD will do to them just as He did to Sihon (Sichon) and to Og, the kings of the Amorites, and to their land, whom He destroyed. **5** And the LORD will give them up before you, and you shall do to them according to

30:7 Lam 4:21,22; Num 24:14; Ps 137:7-9
30:8 Deut 30:2; Prov 16:1; Isa 1:25,26
30:9 Jer 32:41; John 15:11; Deut 28:4,11-14
30:10 Acts 3:19; Deut 30:2,8; Isa 55:2,3
30:11 Rom 10:6; Isa 45:19; Ps 147:19,20
30:12 Rom 10:6-7; Prov 30:4; John 3:13
30:13 Acts 8:29; Acts 10:22,33; Acts 16:9
30:14 Rom 10:8; Acts 28:26; Acts 28:27
30:15 Deut 11:26; Deut 32:47; Gal 5:6
30:16 Matt 22:37; 1 John 5:3; Deut 30:6
30:17 Heb 3:12; Deut 29:18-28; 1 Sam 12:25
30:18 Deut 8:19,20; Deut 31:29; Josh 23:15,16
30:19 Deut 30:15; Deut 11:26; Prov 8:36
30:20 Acts 17:28; Rev 21:6; Col 3:4
31:2 Acts 7:23; Deut 34:7; Num 27:17
31:3 Acts 7:45; Heb 4:8; Deut 9:3
31:4 Deut 2:33; Deut 3:3-11,21; Deut 7:2,16
31:5 Deut 7:2,18; Deut 7:23-25; Deut 20:16,17

30:7 *the LORD your God will put all these curses on your enemies* The curses would turn on the nations that persecuted Israel, as God promised Abraham (Gen 12:3).
30:9 *the LORD will return to rejoice over you for good* In 28:63 the LORD would rejoice to destroy them. Now He returns to rejoice over them for good. "He will rejoice over you with joy" (Zeph 3:17). The call to return still stands (30:10), but God Himself gives the heart that returns. That is grace.
30:11 *it is not too difficult for you, and it is not far away* Israel could not keep the Law perfectly, so what does this mean? God's will was not hidden or out of reach (29:29). At its center was love for the LORD (30:16), given to a redeemed people with an altar for when they failed. "His commandments are not burdensome" (1 John 5:3).
30:12 *It is not in the heavens* No hero had to climb into heaven or cross the sea to fetch God's Word. God had already brought it to them.
30:14 *the word is very near to you, in your mouth and in your heart* It was in their mouth as they taught it (6:7), and it was to be in their heart, loved and lived. Paul applies this to the gospel: no one needs to "bring Christ down" (Rom 10:6) or "bring Christ up out of the dead" (Rom 10:7). "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (Rom 10:8): "if you confess with your mouth Lord Jesus, and believe in your heart that God raised Him out of the dead, you will be saved" (Rom 10:9). God came near and did the hard part, most fully in Christ.
30:15 *life and good, and death and evil* Moses brings it all down to one choice.
30:16 *to love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways* Love comes first in the way of life.
30:17 *if your heart turns away, and you do not listen* The way of death starts in the heart. Then the ears close. Then the feet follow. There is no third road, only the wide road and the narrow one (Matt 7:13-14).
30:19 *you shall choose life* Heaven and earth, which would outlast every person there, are called as witnesses. God does not only set the choice before them; He pleads with them and tells them which to make, for He does not want anyone to perish (2 Pet 3:9). Joshua made the same appeal: "choose for yourselves today whom you will serve" (Josh 24:15).
30:20 *for He is your life and the length of your days* Life is not only something God gives. He is our life. To cling is the word used of husband and wife (Gen 2:24). Jesus said, "I am the way and the truth and the life" (John 14:6), and "The one who has the Son has life" (1 John 5:12). The choice Moses set before Israel is the choice every person must make about Jesus Christ. Have you chosen life?
31:2 *I am no longer able to go out and to come in* To go out and come in means to lead, especially in war. Moses was not frail, for his eye had not dimmed (34:7). His time to lead was over, and the LORD had said he would not cross the Jordan (3:27).
31:3 *The LORD your God, He is passing over before you* Their real leader was the LORD. Moses would stay behind, but God would go ahead, with Joshua, whom He had already chosen (1:38; Num 27:18-23). What He did to Sihon and Og east of the Jordan He would do west of it.

all the commandment which I have commanded you. **6** Be strong and be courageous; do not be afraid and do not be terrified of them, for the LORD your God, He ***is*** the ***One*** who goes with you; He will not let you go, and He will not forsake you." **7** And Moses called to Joshua and said to him before the eyes of all Israel, "Be strong and be courageous, for you, you shall go with this people into the land which the LORD swore to their fathers to give to them, and you, you shall cause them to inherit it. **8** And the LORD, He ***is*** the ***One*** who goes before you; He, He will be with you; He will not let you go, and He will not forsake you; do not be afraid, and do not be dismayed."

The Law Written and Read

9 And Moses wrote this law and gave it to the priests, the sons of Levi, who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and to all the elders of Israel. **10** And Moses commanded them, saying, "At the end of seven years, at the appointed time of the year of release, at the Festival of Booths, **11** when all Israel comes to appear before the face of the LORD your God in the place which He will choose, you shall read this law before all Israel in their ears. **12** Assemble the people, the men and the women and the little ones, and your sojourner who ***is*** in your gates, so that they may hear and so that they may learn, and fear the LORD your God, and be careful to do all the words of this law; **13** and their sons, who have not known, will hear and learn to fear the LORD your God all the days which you ***are*** alive on the ground to which you are passing over the Jordan to take possession of it."

The LORD Foretells Israel's Rebellion

14 And the LORD said to Moses, "Look, your days have drawn near to die. Call Joshua, and present yourselves at the tent of meeting, so that I may commission him." And Moses and Joshua went and presented themselves at the tent of meeting. **15** And the LORD appeared at the tent in a pillar of cloud, and the pillar of cloud stood over the entrance of the tent. **16** And the LORD said to Moses, "Look, you are about to lie down with your fathers, and this people will rise up and prostitute itself after the foreign gods of the land into the midst of which it is going in, and it will forsake Me and break My covenant which I made with it. **17** And My anger will burn against it on that day, and I will forsake them and hide My face from them, and it will be for devouring, and many calamities and troubles will find it; and it will say on that day, 'Is it not because my God ***is*** not in my midst that these calamities have found me?' **18** And I, I will surely hide My face on that day because of all the evil which it has done, for it has turned to other gods. **19** And now write for yourselves this song, and teach it to the sons of Israel; put it in their mouth, so that this song may be for Me a witness against the sons of Israel. **20** For I will bring it into the land which I swore to its fathers, flowing ***with*** milk and honey, and it will eat and be satisfied and grow fat, and it will turn to other gods, and they will serve them and spurn Me and break My covenant. **21** And it shall be, when many calamities and troubles have found it, that this song will testify before it as a witness, for it will not be forgotten from the mouth of its seed; for I know its inclination which it is making today, before I have brought it into the land which I swore." **22** And

31:6 Heb 13:5; 1 Chr 28:20; Josh 10:25
31:7 John 1:17; Deut 3:28; Deut 1:38
31:8 Heb 13:5; Deut 31:6; Exod 33:14
31:9 Mark 10:4; Mark 12:19; Luke 20:28
31:10 Deut 15:1,2; Lev 23:34-43
31:11 Acts 13:15; 2 Kgs 23:2; Josh 8:34,35
31:12 Deut 4:10; Deut 6:6,7; Ezra 10:1
31:13 Deut 11:2; Deut 6:7; Ps 78:4-8
31:14 Num 27:13; Deut 34:5; Deut 31:23
31:15 Exod 33:9,10; Exod 40:38; Ps 99:7
31:16 John 11:11; Heb 8:9; Judg 2:12
31:17 Heb 8:9; 2 Chr 15:2; Ps 104:29
31:18 Heb 8:9; Deut 31:16,17
31:19 Matt 10:18; John 12:48; Deut 6:7
31:20 Neh 9:25,26; Deut 6:10-12; Exod 3:8,17
31:21 Hos 5:3; John 2:24,25; Gen 6:5
31:22 Deut 31:9,19

31:6 *He will not let you go, and He will not forsake you* Hebrews gives this promise to every believer: "I will certainly not leave you, nor will I ever forsake you" (Heb 13:5), and uses it to tell us to be content and not love money. If God is with us, we have what we need. "Look, I am with you all the days, until the consummation of the age" (Matt 28:20).
31:7 *Moses called to Joshua and said to him before the eyes of all Israel* It was done in public so the people would see Moses hand over the leadership. A smooth change of leaders is a gift to God's people. Joshua's name means the LORD is salvation, and Jesus is the Greek form of the same name.
31:8 *do not be afraid, and do not be dismayed* Moses gives Joshua the same promise he gave the people. Leaders need encouragement too, and God repeated this word to Joshua (Josh 1:5-9). Is there a pastor, parent or boss who needs that kind of encouragement from you today?
31:9 *Moses wrote this law* This is one of the clearest statements that Moses wrote the book (31:24). God's Word was not left to memory but written, so it could be kept, copied and read. The priests who carried the ark, the gold-covered chest holding the tablets, now also kept the written Law.
31:10 *at the appointed time of the year of release, at the Festival of Booths* Every seventh year, when debts were canceled (15:1-2), at the fall feast of shelters, the Law was to be read aloud to all Israel.
31:12 *so that they may hear and so that they may learn, and fear the LORD your God* Men, women, children and foreigners all heard. Hearing leads to learning, learning to the fear of God, and the fear of God to obedience.
31:13 *their sons, who have not known, will hear* Every generation must hear God's Word for itself. Ezra did this after the exile (Neh 8:1-3, 18), but under the kings the Law was so neglected that finding a copy in Josiah's day was a great discovery (2 Kgs 22:8-13). When God's Word is not read, it is soon forgotten.
31:15 *the LORD appeared at the tent in a pillar of cloud* The cloud that had led Israel through the wilderness marked God's presence. Moses had commissioned Joshua before the people; now God would commission him Himself.
31:16 *this people will rise up and prostitute itself after the foreign gods* To "lie down with your fathers" is a gentle way of saying to die. God often calls idolatry spiritual adultery. Imagine hearing at the end of forty years of work that the people would turn away anyway. God knows the future, but His knowing does not force anyone's hand. He told Moses so that Israel would know they had been warned and that He was not surprised or defeated by their sin.
31:17 *I will forsake them and hide My face from them* To hide His face means to withdraw His favor and protection. Notice the cause: they turned from God first. He hid His face because they had turned their backs (31:18).
31:19 *write for yourselves this song, and teach it to the sons of Israel* Why a song? People forget sermons, but they remember songs for life. God wanted these words in the mouths of parents and children. What songs are you putting in your children's mouths? The songs we sing shape what we believe.
31:20 *it will eat and be satisfied and grow fat, and it will turn to other gods* Here again is the danger of plenty (6:10-12; 8:11-14). Comfort leads to forgetting God.
31:21 *for it will not be forgotten from the mouth of its seed* When trouble came, Israel would be singing the very song that explained why. God knew their hearts before they crossed the Jordan, and still He loved them and gave them the land.

Moses wrote this song on that day and taught it to the sons of Israel. **23** And He commissioned Joshua the son of Nun and said, "Be strong and be courageous, for you, you shall bring the sons of Israel into the land which I swore to them, and I, I will be with you."

The Book Beside the Ark

24 And it was, when Moses had finished writing the words of this law in a book until their completion, **25** that Moses commanded the Levites, who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD, saying, **26** "Take this book of the law and put it by the side of the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, and it shall be there for a witness against you. **27** For I, I know your rebellion and your stiff neck. Look, while I ***am*** still alive with you today, you have been rebellious against the LORD; and how much more after my death! **28** Assemble to me all the elders of your tribes and your officers, and let me speak these words in their ears, and let me call the heavens and the earth to witness against them. **29** For I know that after my death you will surely act corruptly and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you, and the evil will meet you at the end of the days, because you will do the evil in the eyes of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger by the work of your hands." **30** And Moses spoke in the ears of all the assembly of Israel the words of this song until their completion:

DEUTERONOMY 32

The Song of Moses: The Rock

1 Give ear, O heavens, and let me speak; and let the earth hear the words of my mouth. **2** Let my teaching drop like the rain, let my speech distill like the dew, like showers on new grass, and like abundant rains on vegetation. **3** For the name of the LORD I will proclaim; ascribe greatness to our God! **4** The Rock, His work ***is*** perfect, for all His ways ***are*** justice; a God of faithfulness and without injustice, righteous and upright ***is*** He. **5** It has acted corruptly toward Him; ***they are*** not His sons, ***it is*** their blemish; a perverse and crooked generation. **6** Is it the LORD you repay thus, O foolish and unwise people? Is He not your Father, who acquired you? He made you and established you. **7** Remember the days of old; consider the years of generation and generation. Ask your father, and he will tell you; your elders, and they will say ***it*** to you. **8** When the Most High gave the nations ***their*** inheritance, when He separated the sons of man, He set the boundaries of the peoples according to the number of the sons of Israel (Yisra'el). **9** For the LORD's portion ***is*** His people; Jacob (Ya'aqov) ***is*** the measured portion of His inheritance. **10** He found him in a land of wilderness, and in the formlessness of a howling wasteland; He surrounded him, He cared for him, He guarded him like the pupil of His eye. **11** Like an eagle ***that*** stirs up its nest, hovers over its young, spreads out its

31:23 Acts 7:45; Deut 31:7,8,14; Josh 1:5-9
31:24 Deut 31:9; Deut 17:18
31:26 Rom 3:19; Deut 31:19; 1 Kgs 8:9
31:27 Acts 7:51; Deut 32:20; Deut 9:24
31:28 Deut 4:26; Deut 32:1; Deut 30:19
31:29 Heb 1:2; 2 Pet 3:3; 2 Pet 2:2
31:30 Heb 3:2; Heb 3:5; Rev 15:3
32:1 Deut 4:26; Isa 1:2; Deut 30:19
32:2 Ps 72:6; Isa 55:10,11; Job 29:22,23
32:3 Jer 10:6; Ps 105:1-5; Jer 23:6
32:4 1 Cor 10:4; Matt 16:18; Ps 92:15
32:5 Phil 2:15; John 8:41; Acts 2:40
32:6 Isa 63:16; Ps 74:2; 1 John 3:1
32:7 Ps 44:1; Ps 78:3,4; Ps 77:5
32:8 Acts 17:26; Acts 7:48; Num 24:16
32:9 1 Pet 2:9; Jer 10:16; Exod 19:5,6
32:10 Ps 17:8; Zech 2:8; Jer 2:6
32:11 Exod 19:4; Isa 31:5; Isa 40:31

31:23 *and I, I will be with you* Now the LORD Himself speaks to Joshua. Joshua's strength would not come from his own skill but from God's presence, and every task God gives His people comes with that same promise.
31:26 *put it by the side of the ark of the covenant* The tablets were inside the ark (10:5), and the book of the Law was placed beside it as a witness of what Israel had promised and what God had warned.
31:27 *I know your rebellion and your stiff neck* A stiff neck pictures an ox that will not bow to the yoke. Moses had seen it at the calf, at Kadesh, at Meribah and at Peor. We are no better. These things "happened to them as examples" (1 Cor 10:11). That is why we need not only God's Law but a Savior and a new heart.
31:29 *the evil will meet you at the end of the days* "The end of the days" points to the latter part of Israel's history and in the prophets often reaches to the last days before the Messiah's kingdom (4:30). Judges shows how quickly it began, when "another generation arose after them who did not know the LORD" (Judg 2:10).
32:1 *Give ear, O heavens, and let me speak; and let the earth hear* Moses now calls the witnesses he named in 31:28. The song is like a court case with all creation watching. Hebrew poetry does not rhyme; it uses parallelism, where one line says something and the next repeats it in other words, adds to it, or gives the opposite. "Give ear, O heavens" is matched by "let the earth hear."
32:2 *Let my teaching drop like the rain* In a dry land rain and dew were life. Moses prayed his words would soak into Israel's hearts and make them grow, as God's Word still does (Isa 55:10-11). And the song is first of all about God (32:3).
32:4 *The Rock, His work is perfect, for all His ways are justice* The Rock is one of the great names of God in this song (32:15, 18, 30, 31): solid, unchanging, a shelter you can build on. Before the song tells of sin and judgment, it settles this: whatever God does is right. Remember this verse in the hard parts. Paul says the rock in the wilderness "was the Christ" (1 Cor 10:4).
32:5 *a perverse and crooked generation* The Hebrew of this line is hard, but the point is plain: Israel acted so badly they did not look like God's children. Paul borrows the picture for the world in which believers shine, "a crooked and perverted generation" (Phil 2:15).
32:6 *Is He not your Father, who acquired you?* God made Israel a nation, bought them out of Egypt and set them in place. This is one of the first places God is plainly called Israel's Father. The sin of a child against a loving father is the saddest sin of all.
32:7 *Ask your father, and he will tell you* Faith is passed down. Ask the older ones what God has done.
32:8 *according to the number of the sons of Israel* God divided the nations after Babel (Gen 10-11) and "determined the times appointed beforehand and the boundaries of their dwelling" (Acts 17:26). Our Hebrew text, which the SLB follows, may mean God placed the nations with Israel in mind. Genesis 10 lists seventy nations, and seventy of Jacob's family went to Egypt (Gen 46:27), so some see a link. A Dead Sea Scroll and the old Greek read "sons of God," meaning God gave the nations to heavenly beings but kept Israel for Himself (compare Dan 10:13, 20). Teachers who love God's Word differ on which reading is original.
32:9 *the LORD's portion is His people* Either way, this is the point. Every nation had its land, but Israel was God's own treasure.
32:10 *the formlessness of a howling wasteland* The word is the same as in Genesis 1:2. God took a helpless people out of chaos and made them His, guarding them like the pupil of His eye, the most tender part we protect by instinct.
32:11 *Like an eagle that stirs up its nest* A mother eagle stirs the nest so her young will learn to fly, and when one falls she spreads her wings and catches it. "I carried you on the wings of eagles and brought you to Myself" (Exod 19:4). Sometimes God stirs up our nest, and it feels like falling, but He is always under us, ready to catch us.

wings, takes him, carries him on its pinion, **12** the LORD alone guided him, and ***there was*** no foreign god with Him. **13** He made him ride on the high places of the land, and he ate the produce of the field; and He made him suck honey from the crag and oil from the flint of the rock, **14** curds of the herd and milk of the flock, with the fat of lambs, and rams, sons of Bashan, and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of wheat; and the blood of the grape you drank, fermenting wine.

Jeshurun Grew Fat

15 And Jeshurun (Yeshurun) grew fat and kicked; you grew fat, you grew thick, you were gorged; and he abandoned God who made him, and treated with contempt the Rock of his salvation. **16** They made Him jealous with strange ***gods***; with abominations they provoked Him to anger. **17** They sacrificed to demons, not God, gods whom they had not known, new ***gods*** who came lately, whom your fathers had not dreaded. **18** The Rock who fathered you, you neglected, and you forgot God who gave birth to you. **19** And the LORD saw and spurned ***them***, because of the provocation of His sons and His daughters. **20** And He said, "Let Me hide My face from them; I will see what their end ***will be***; for they ***are*** a generation of perversities, sons in whom ***is*** no faithfulness. **21** They, they have made Me jealous with ***what is*** not a god; they have provoked Me to anger with their vanities; and I, I will make them jealous with ***those who are*** not a people; with a foolish nation I will provoke them to anger. **22** For a fire has been kindled in My anger, and it burns to the lowest Sheol, and it consumes the earth and its produce, and sets ablaze the foundations of the mountains. **23** I will heap calamities on them; My arrows I will use up on them. **24** ***They will be*** exhausted ***by*** famine, and devoured ***by*** plague and bitter destruction; and the tooth of beasts I will send on them, with the venom of crawling things of the dust. **25** Outside the sword will bereave, and from the inner rooms terror, both young man and virgin, the nursing child with the man of gray hair.

The LORD Will Vindicate His People

26 I said, 'I will cut them to pieces; let Me make the memory of them cease from among men,' **27** were it not ***that*** I feared the provocation of the enemy, lest their adversaries misconstrue, lest they say, 'Our hand is high, and the LORD has not done all this.' **28** For they ***are*** a nation devoid of counsels, and ***there is*** no understanding in them. **29** If only they were wise, they would comprehend this; they would understand their end! **30** How could one pursue a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight, unless their Rock had sold them, and the LORD had delivered them up? **31** For not like our Rock ***is*** their rock, and our enemies ***are*** judges. **32** For from the vine of Sodom (Sedom) ***is*** their vine, and from the fields of Gomorrah (Amora); their grapes ***are*** grapes of poison; bitter clusters ***are*** theirs. **33** The venom of serpents ***is*** their wine, and the cruel poison of cobras. **34** Is it not stored up with Me, sealed up in My storehouses? **35** To Me ***belong*** vengeance and recompense, for the time ***when*** their foot slips; for the day of their calamity ***is*** near, and the things prepared for them has-

32:12 Deut 1:31; Neh 9:12; Ps 27:11
32:13 Isa 58:14; Job 29:6; Ps 81:16
32:14 Matt 26:28; Gen 49:11; Ps 81:16
32:15 Luke 6:48; Deut 31:20; Hos 13:6
32:16 1 Cor 10:22; Deut 5:9; 1 Kgs 14:22
32:17 1 Cor 10:20; 1 Cor 10:19; Judg 5:8
32:18 Luke 6:48; Isa 17:10; Deut 32:4,15
32:19 Ps 106:40; Judg 2:14; Isa 1:2
32:20 Matt 17:17; Mark 9:19; Deut 32:5
32:21 Rom 10:19; Rom 11:11; 1 Cor 10:22
32:22 Lam 4:11; Jer 15:14; Num 16:35
32:23 Ezek 5:16; Ps 7:12,13; Lam 3:13
32:24 Lev 26:22; Ezek 5:17; Deut 28:53
32:25 Ezek 7:15; Lam 1:20; Lev 26:36,37
32:26 Deut 28:25,37,64; Lev 26:33,38; Isa 63:16
32:27 Ps 140:8; 1 Sam 12:22; Isa 37:28,29,35
32:28 Matt 13:15; Jer 4:22; Deut 32:6
32:29 Deut 5:29; Ps 81:13; Isa 47:7
32:30 Lev 26:8; Josh 23:10; Ps 44:12
32:31 Luke 6:48; Exod 14:25; 1 Sam 2:2
32:32 Matt 11:24; Deut 29:18; Isa 1:10
32:33 Rom 3:13; Ps 58:4; Job 20:14-16
32:34 Job 14:17; Hos 13:12; Jer 2:22
32:35 Rom 12:19; Heb 10:30; 2 Pet 2:3

32:13 *He made him suck honey from the crag and oil from the flint of the rock* Even the hard places of the land would give sweetness and richness.
32:14 *the fat of the kidneys of wheat* That is, the finest wheat. Curds, milk, lamb, the famous rams of Bashan and wine: God gave them more than they needed, the very best. Most of us must admit He has given us more than we need. What do we do with it?
32:15 *Jeshurun grew fat and kicked* Jeshurun, upright one, is a pet name for Israel. God gave a name of honor, and they acted like a well-fed ox kicking its owner. Plenty made them proud, and pride made them forget (6:10-12; 8:11-14).
32:17 *They sacrificed to demons, not God* The idol was only wood or stone, but behind idol worship stood demons. Paul says the Gentiles "sacrifice to demons and not to God" (1 Cor 10:20).
32:18 *you forgot God who gave birth to you* God is pictured both as the father and as the one who gave birth. He brought Israel into being, and they forgot Him.
32:20 *Let Me hide My face from them* Now God speaks. They are "sons in whom is no faithfulness."
32:21 *I will make them jealous with those who are not a people* Measure for measure: Israel gave its love to a no-god, so God would show favor to a no-people. Paul quotes this (Rom 10:19) and explains that salvation came to the Gentiles "to provoke them to jealousy" (Rom 11:11). God's purpose is not to throw Israel away but to stir them up, so that in the end Israel too will turn to the Messiah (Rom 11:25-26).
32:22 *it burns to the lowest Sheol* Sheol is the Hebrew word for the place of the dead, the grave or the world below. God's anger reaches from the heights to the depths.
32:24 *They will be exhausted by famine* Famine, plague, beasts and serpents: God's judgments pictured as arrows (32:23). These are the curses of chapter 28 put into song, so when they came Israel would know it had been warned.
32:27 *the LORD has not done all this* God could have wiped Israel out, but He would not let the enemy boast in its own strength. Moses had pleaded this at the calf (Exod 32:12; 9:28). Israel's survival rests finally on God's faithfulness to His own name, not on theirs. That is good news for us too.
32:30 *How could one pursue a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight* When Israel was faithful, one could chase a thousand (Josh 23:10). If an enemy ever did that to Israel, it was only because God had handed His people over. Some take "a nation devoid of counsels" (32:28) as Israel, but the context favors the enemy, who did not understand why they won.
32:31 *For not like our Rock is their rock* Even Israel's enemies had to admit their gods were nothing like the LORD.
32:32 *from the vine of Sodom is their vine* The enemy nations were as wicked as Sodom, and their sins were "sealed up" with God, waiting for the right time (32:34).
32:35 *To Me belong vengeance and recompense* Paul uses this to tell believers not to take revenge: "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay" (Rom 12:19). This is a great relief. We do not have to settle every score. God sees every wrong and will judge justly, and that frees us to love our enemies.

ten." **36** For the LORD will judge His people, and He will have compassion on His servants, when He sees that ***their*** hand is gone, and ***there is*** none, shut up or left free. **37** And He will say, "Where ***are*** their gods, the rock in which they took refuge, **38** who ate the fat of their sacrifices ***and*** drank the wine of their drink offering? Let them rise up and help you; let it be a shelter over you! **39** See now that I, I ***am*** He, and ***there is*** no god with Me; I, I put to death and I make alive; I have wounded and I, I heal; and ***there is*** no one who delivers from My hand. **40** For I lift up My hand to the heavens and say, '***As*** I live forever, **41** if I sharpen the lightning of My sword, and My hand takes hold on judgment, I will return vengeance to My adversaries, and I will repay those who hate Me. **42** I will make My arrows drunk with blood, and My sword will devour flesh, with the blood of the slain and the captive, from the head of the leaders of the enemy.'" **43** Shout for joy, O nations, His people, for He will avenge the blood of His servants, and He will return vengeance to His adversaries, and He will make atonement for His land, His people.

It Is Your Life

44 And Moses (Moshe) came and spoke all the words of this song in the ears of the people, he and Hoshea the son of Nun. **45** And Moses finished speaking all these words to all Israel. **46** And he said to them, "Set your heart on all the words which I am testifying against you today, which you shall command your sons to be careful to do, all the words of this law. **47** For it ***is*** not an empty word for you, for it ***is*** your life, and by this word you shall prolong ***your*** days on the ground to which you are passing over the Jordan (Yarden) to take possession of it."

Moses to Die on Nebo

48 And the LORD spoke to Moses on this same day, saying, **49** "Go up to this mountain of the Abarim (Avarim), the mountain of Nebo (Nevo), which ***is*** in the land of Moab (Mo'av), which ***is*** facing Jericho (Yericho), and see the land of Canaan (Kena'an), which I am giving to the sons of Israel for a possession. **50** And die on the mountain onto which you are going up, and be gathered to your peoples, just as Aaron (Aharon) your brother died on Hor the mountain and was gathered to his peoples, **51** because you acted unfaithfully against Me in the midst of the sons of Israel at the waters of Meribah (Meriva) of Kadesh (Qadesh), ***in*** the wilderness of Zin (Tsin), because you did not sanctify Me in the midst of the sons of Israel. **52** For at a distance you shall see the land, and there you shall not go in, into the land which I am giving to the sons of Israel."

DEUTERONOMY 33

Moses Blesses the Tribes

1 And this ***is*** the blessing with which Moses (Moshe), the man of God, blessed the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) before his death.

32:36 Heb 10:30; Ps 135:14; Judg 2:18
32:37 Judg 10:14; Jer 2:28; 2 Kgs 3:13
32:38 Lev 21:21; Ps 50:13; Ezek 16:18,19
32:39 John 8:24; Hos 6:1; John 5:21
32:40 Rev 10:5; Gen 14:22; Heb 6:17,18
32:41 Isa 66:16; Ps 7:12; Isa 27:1
32:42 Rev 16:6; Rev 18:20; Deut 32:23
32:43 Rom 15:10; Rev 6:10; Rev 5:9
32:44 Num 13:8,16; Deut 31:22,30
32:46 1 Chr 22:19; Ezek 40:4; Deut 11:18
32:47 John 5:39; Lev 18:5; Prov 4:22
32:48 Num 27:12,13
32:49 Deut 34:1; Num 33:47,48; Isa 33:17
32:50 Gen 25:8,17; Num 33:38; Gen 15:15
32:51 Num 27:14; 1 Pet 4:17; Deut 3:23-27
32:52 Deut 34:1-4; Deut 32:49; Num 27:12
33:1 2 Tim 3:17; Josh 14:6; Gen 27:4,27-29

32:36 *He will have compassion on His servants, when He sees that their hand is gone* Here the song turns. To judge His people means to vindicate them (Heb 10:30). When Israel has nothing left, God steps in with compassion. Then He mocks the idols they trusted: "Let them rise up and help you" (32:38). The idols are always silent.
32:39 *I, I am He, and there is no god with Me* One of the strongest statements in the Old Testament that there is only one God. He holds life and death; He wounds and He heals (1 Sam 2:6). "He has torn, and He will heal us" (Hos 6:1). When God disciplines His people it is so He can heal them. In Jesus we see this God in flesh, who holds "the keys of Hades and of Death" (Rev 1:18).
32:40 *As I live forever* Lifting the hand was how one swore an oath. God swears by His own life, since there is no one greater (Heb 6:13).
32:41 *I will return vengeance to My adversaries* The language is fierce, God's arrows and sword drunk with blood. We should not soften it too much. God is a warrior against evil and will judge those who hate Him. But vengeance belongs to God, not man, and He takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked (Ezek 18:23). He sent His Son to bear the judgment for all who turn to Him, and the returning Christ will judge the nations (Rev 19:11-15). The time to turn to Him is now.
32:43 *Shout for joy, O nations, His people* The Hebrew can mean praise His people, or rejoice with His people. Paul quotes it in the second sense: "Rejoice, Gentiles, with His people" (Rom 15:10). God always meant the Gentiles to share Israel's joy. Hebrews quotes "And let all the angels of God worship Him" (Heb 1:6), words found in the old Greek and a Dead Sea Scroll of this verse though not in our Hebrew text (compare Ps 97:7), and applies them to the Son.
32:43 *He will make atonement for His land, His people* The land defiled by sin will be cleansed and the people made right with God. That points to the day when Israel turns to the Messiah and is forgiven (Rom 11:26-27; Zech 13:1), and Christ reigns over the earth.
32:44 *he and Hoshea the son of Nun* Hoshea was Joshua's first name (Num 13:16). The old leader and the new stood together to teach the song.
32:47 *it is not an empty word for you, for it is your life* God's Word is not one more opinion. It is life. "The words which I speak to you are spirit and are life" (John 6:63). Do you treat it as your life, or as one more thing to fit in when there is time?
32:49 *the mountain of Nebo* Nebo is a peak of the Abarim range east of the Dead Sea, looking across the Jordan valley into the land.
32:50 *be gathered to your peoples* To join those who died before is a hint that death is not the end. Aaron had died the same way on Mount Hor (Num 20:28).
32:51 *because you did not sanctify Me* At Meribah Moses struck the rock twice in anger instead of speaking to it, and spoke as if he and Aaron brought out the water (Num 20:7-12). It seems a heavy price, but the greater the leader, the greater the responsibility (James 3:1). Many teachers note that the rock pictured Christ (1 Cor 10:4), struck once for us.
32:52 *at a distance you shall see the land* God was gracious even so and let Moses see it. Centuries later Moses did stand in the land, on the mountain where Jesus was transfigured, speaking "of His departure which He was about to fulfill in Jerusalem" (Luke 9:31).
33:1 *Moses, the man of God* This is the first time in the Bible anyone is called "the man of God," a title later used for Samuel, Elijah and Elisha, and by Paul for Timothy (1 Tim 6:11). It means one who belongs to God and speaks for Him. Moses had warned, rebuked and pleaded, but his last words were a blessing. What would you want your last words to the people you love to be?

2 And he said, "The LORD came from Sinai (Sinay), and dawned from Seir (Se'ir) on them; He shone forth from the mountain of Paran, and He came from ten thousands of holiness; from His right hand ***was*** a fire of law for them. **3** Indeed, He ***is*** loving the peoples; all His holy ones ***are*** in Your hand; and they, they were led at Your feet; ***each*** will receive of Your words. **4** Moses commanded us a law, a possession of the assembly of Jacob (Ya'aqov). **5** And he was king in Jeshurun (Yeshurun), when the heads of the people gathered themselves together, the tribes of Israel. **6** Let Reuben (Reuven) live, and let him not die, and let his men be a number." **7** And this ***is*** for Judah (Yehuda), and he said, "Hear, O LORD, the voice of Judah, and bring him to his people; his hands contended for him, and You will be a help against his adversaries." **8** And of Levi he said, "Your Thummim and Your Urim ***belong*** to the man, Your godly one, whom You tested at Massah (Masa), ***with*** whom You contended at the waters of Meribah (Meriva); **9** who said of his father and of his mother, 'I have not seen him'; and his brothers he did not recognize, and his sons he did not know; for they kept Your word, and Your covenant they guarded. **10** They shall teach Your judgments to Jacob, and Your law to Israel; they shall put incense in Your nostrils, and a whole offering on Your altar. **11** Bless, O LORD, his substance, and the work of his hands You will accept; shatter the loins of those who rise against him, and of those who hate him, so that they do not rise." **12** Of Benjamin (Binyamin) he said, "The beloved of the LORD, he dwells in security beside Him; He shields him all the day, and between His shoulders he dwells."

Joseph and the Northern Tribes

13 And of Joseph (Yosef) he said, "Blessed of the LORD ***be*** his land, from the choice things of the heavens, from the dew, and from the deep lying beneath, **14** and from the choice things of the produce of the sun, and from the choice things of the yield of the months, **15** and from the top of the ancient mountains, and from the choice things of the everlasting hills, **16** and from the choice things of the earth and its fullness, and the favor of Him who dwelt in the bush; let it come on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of the one consecrated among his brothers. **17** The firstborn of his ox, majesty ***is*** his, and the horns of a wild ox ***are*** his horns; with them he will gore peoples, together, the ends of the earth; and they ***are*** the ten thousands of Ephraim (Efrayim), and they ***are*** the thousands of Manasseh (Menashe)." **18** And of Zebulun (Zevulun) he said, "Rejoice, Zebulun, in your going out, and Issachar (Yisashkhar), in your tents. **19** They will call peoples ***to*** the mountain; there they will sacrifice sacrifices of righteousness; for they will suck the abundance of the seas, and the concealed things hidden in the sand."

33:2 Gal 3:19; Heb 2:2; 2 Cor 3:7
33:3 Acts 22:3; Rom 9:13; Luke 10:39
33:4 John 1:17; John 7:19; Deut 9:26-29
33:5 Deut 32:15; Gen 36:31; Exod 18:16,19
33:6 Gen 49:3,4,8; Num 32:31,32; Josh 22:1-9
33:7 Gen 49:8-12; Judg 1:1-7; Ps 78:68,70
33:8 Exod 28:30,36; Exod 17:7; Num 20:13
33:9 Mark 12:14; Exod 32:25-29; Lev 10:6
33:10 Mark 12:14; Lev 10:11; Ps 51:19
33:11 2 Sam 24:23; Ezek 20:40,41; Ezek 43:27
33:12 Deut 33:27-29; Josh 18:11-28; Judg 1:21
33:13 Gen 49:22-26; Gen 48:5,9,15-20; Deut 32:2
33:14 Deut 28:8; Lev 26:4; 2 Sam 23:4
33:15 Hab 3:6; Gen 49:26; James 5:7
33:16 Ps 24:1; Exod 3:2-4; Ps 50:12
33:17 Num 23:22; 1 Kgs 22:11; Ps 44:5
33:18 Gen 49:13-15; Josh 19:11; Judg 5:14
33:19 Isa 2:3; Ps 4:5; Isa 60:5,16

33:2 *He came from ten thousands of holiness* Sinai, Seir and Paran lie along the way from Sinai to the land, and the LORD rises over them like the sun at dawn. The holy ones are most likely angels, for the Law was "ordained through angels" (Gal 3:19; Acts 7:53; Heb 2:2), and it came out of the fire (5:22).

33:3 *Indeed, He is loving the peoples* The Law was not given in cold anger but by a God who loved His people and held them in His hand. They sat at His feet like students before a teacher, and the Law became their treasure (33:4).

33:5 *he was king in Jeshurun* Most teachers take the king to be the LORD, who became Israel's King when the tribes gathered at Sinai. Some think it means Moses, who led with a king's authority though he never took the title.

33:6 *Let Reuben live, and let him not die* Reuben lost the firstborn's rights by his sin (Gen 35:22; 49:3-4), and his tribe east of the Jordan was never large. Sometimes the best blessing after a great failure is that God lets us go on.

33:7 *Hear, O LORD, the voice of Judah* Judah would lead the tribes in battle (Judg 1:1-2). From Judah came David, and from David's line came Jesus, "the Lion who is of the tribe of Judah" (Rev 5:5). Simeon is not named. Jacob said Simeon would be scattered (Gen 49:5-7), and its towns lay inside Judah (Josh 19:1, 9), so it may have blended into Judah. Scripture does not say why.

33:8 *Your Thummim and Your Urim belong to the man, Your godly one* The high priest kept the Urim and Thummim in the breastplate over his heart, and God used them to give answers (Exod 28:30; Num 27:21). Scripture does not tell us what they looked like. Levi stood with Moses through the testing at Massah and Meribah (Exod 17:1-7).

33:9 *I have not seen him* This points to the golden calf, when the Levites rallied to Moses and carried out God's judgment even on relatives (Exod 32:26-29). They put loyalty to God above family. Jesus said whoever loves father or mother more than Him is not worthy of Him (Matt 10:37). We still love our families, but God comes first.

33:10 *They shall teach Your judgments to Jacob, and Your law to Israel* The priests were Israel's teachers: "the lips of a priest shall keep knowledge" (Mal 2:7). They also led worship at the altar. All this points to Jesus, our great High Priest who offered Himself once for all (Heb 7:26-27), and through Him every believer is part of "a royal priesthood" (1 Pet 2:9).

33:12 *between His shoulders he dwells* Benjamin was Jacob's dearly loved youngest (Gen 44:20), and the tribe is "the beloved of the LORD." The phrase may picture a father carrying his child on his back, or the hills of Benjamin near Jerusalem, where the temple would stand (Josh 18:16). Secure, shielded all day, carried close to God: in Christ that is the believer's life too.

33:13 *Blessed of the LORD be his land* Joseph's blessing is the longest, as with Jacob's (Gen 49:22-26). Ephraim and Manasseh held some of the richest land in Canaan, and Moses names every good thing that makes a land fruitful.

33:16 *the favor of Him who dwelt in the bush* The best blessing of all. This is the only place outside Exodus 3 that speaks of the burning bush. Moses never forgot the God who met him there. Joseph was set apart from his brothers, first by their hatred and then by God's plan to save them through him (Gen 50:20).

33:17 *the horns of a wild ox are his horns* The wild ox stood for strength. Ephraim, the younger, is named first with the larger number, as Jacob had blessed him above Manasseh (Gen 48:19-20).

33:19 *They will call peoples to the mountain* Zebulun and Issachar, Leah's last sons, lived in the north, later called Galilee. They would invite others to worship and grow rich from the sea, and the treasures "hidden in the sand" were perhaps glass or purple dye from the coast. Centuries later Jesus lived in Capernaum, and Matthew quotes Isaiah about the "Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali" (Matt 4:15), where "the people sitting in darkness saw a great light" (Matt 4:16). The Light of the world walked among them.

20 And of Gad he said, "Blessed ***is*** He who enlarges Gad; like a lion he dwells, and he tears the arm, also the crown of the head. **21** And he saw the first ***part*** for himself, for there the portion of a commander ***was*** reserved; and he came ***with*** the heads of the people; the righteousness of the LORD he executed, and His judgments with Israel." **22** And of Dan he said, "Dan ***is*** a lion's cub; he leaps forth from Bashan." **23** And of Naphtali (Naftali) he said, "Naphtali, satisfied ***with*** favor, and full of the blessing of the LORD, take possession of the sea and the south." **24** And of Asher he said, "Blessed more than sons ***is*** Asher; let him be the favored one of his brothers, and dipping his foot in oil. **25** Iron and bronze ***shall be*** your bolts, and as your days, ***so shall be*** your strength."

The Everlasting Arms

26 "***There is*** none like God, O Jeshurun, who rides the heavens to your help, and in His majesty the clouds. **27** The God of old ***is*** a dwelling place, and underneath ***are*** the everlasting arms; and He drove out the enemy from before you, and said, 'Destroy!' **28** And Israel dwells in security; alone ***is*** the spring of Jacob, in a land of grain and new wine; also his heavens drop dew. **29** How blessed ***are*** you, O Israel! Who ***is*** like you, a people saved by the LORD, the shield of your help, and who ***is*** the sword of your majesty? And your enemies will cringe before you, and you, you will tread on their high places."

DEUTERONOMY 34

The Death of Moses

1 And Moses (Moshe) went up from the plains of Moab (Mo'av) to the mountain of Nebo (Nevo), the top of the Pisgah (Pisga), which ***is*** facing Jericho (Yericho); and the LORD showed him all the land, Gilead (Gilad) as far as Dan, **2** and all Naphtali (Naftali), and the land of Ephraim (Efrayim) and Manasseh (Menashe), and all the land of Judah (Yehuda) as far as the western sea, **3** and the Negeb (Negev), and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of the palm trees, as far as Zoar (Tso'ar). **4** And the LORD said to him, "This ***is*** the land which I swore to Abraham (Avraham), to Isaac (Yitschaq), and to Jacob (Ya'aqov), saying, 'To your seed I will give it.' I have let you see ***it*** with your eyes, and there you shall not pass over." **5** And Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the mouth of the LORD. **6** And He buried him in the valley in the land of Moab opposite Beth-peor (Bet-Pe'or), and no man knows his burial place until this day. **7** And Moses ***was*** a son of a hundred and twenty years when he died; his eye had not grown dim, and his vigor had not fled. **8** And the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days;

33:20 Gen 9:26,27; Josh 13:8,10,24-28; 1 Chr 4:10
33:21 Josh 1:14; Num 32:1-6,16,17-42; Num 32:16,21
33:22 Josh 19:47; Judg 18:27; Gen 49:16,17
33:23 Matt 4:13; Gen 49:21; Josh 19:32-39
33:24 Gen 49:20; Job 29:6; Ps 115:15
33:25 2 Chr 16:9; Ps 138:3; Isa 41:10
33:26 Exod 15:11; Ps 104:3; Hab 3:8
33:27 Ps 18:2; Isa 25:4; Rom 16:20
33:28 Num 23:9; Jer 23:6; Gen 27:28
33:29 Ps 115:9-11; 2 Sam 7:23; Isa 45:17
34:1 Deut 32:49; Num 27:12; Josh 19:47
34:2 Deut 11:24; Exod 23:31; Num 34:6
34:3 Judg 1:16; Judg 3:13; 2 Chr 28:15
34:4 Gen 12:7; Gen 28:13; Deut 32:52
34:5 Heb 3:3; Rev 15:3; Matt 17:3
34:6 Jude 1:9; Matt 17:3; Mark 9:4
34:7 Acts 7:23; Acts 7:30; Deut 31:2
34:8 Gen 50:3,10; Num 20:29; 1 Sam 25:1

33:21 *the righteousness of the LORD he executed* Gad was known for fierce warriors (1 Chr 12:8) and was among the first to receive land (Num 32:1-5). But they kept their promise to fight beside their brothers until the whole land was won (Josh 22:1-4). When God has blessed us first, do we stay and help our brothers?

33:22 *Dan is a lion's cub; he leaps forth from Bashan* Dan could not take its land in the south, so part of the tribe moved north and seized Laish near Bashan (Judg 18:27-29). Sadly, they also set up an idol there (Judg 18:30-31).

33:23 *Naphtali, satisfied with favor, and full of the blessing of the LORD* Naphtali lived around the Sea of Galilee, pictured as full and satisfied, resting in God's favor.

33:24 *dipping his foot in oil* Asher means happy or blessed. Its coastland had so many olive trees that it was as if they walked in oil, a sign of wealth.

33:25 *as your days, so shall be your strength* The bolts on Asher's gates would be iron and bronze. And many believers have held this promise in hard times: God gives strength for each day as it comes. He does not give tomorrow's strength today, but when tomorrow comes it will be there. "My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is perfected in weakness" (2 Cor 12:9).

33:26 *who rides the heavens to your help* The Canaanites called Baal the rider on the clouds. Moses says it is Israel's God who rides the heavens, and He rides them to help His people.

33:27 *The God of old is a dwelling place, and underneath are the everlasting arms* One of the most comforting verses in the Bible. God Himself is our home: "Lord, You have been a dwelling place for us in generation and generation" (Ps 90:1). Underneath us when we fall, when we are weak, when we are dying, are the arms of the eternal God, and they never tire or let go. Moses was about to die, and he was falling into those arms.

33:29 *a people saved by the LORD* Israel's true glory was not armies or land but this: they were saved by the LORD, who was their shield and sword. It will be fully true in the kingdom to come, when the nation is saved and dwells safely under its Messiah (Jer 23:5-6; Rom 11:26). And every believer can say it now: I am saved by the LORD.

34:1 *the LORD showed him all the land* Pisgah seems to be the ridge or peak of Nebo. Moses had asked to cross over, and God had told him to go up and look (3:25-27). Now he obeyed and climbed alone. From Nebo on a clear day one sees far across the Jordan valley, but Dan and the western sea are a very long way off. God may have given Moses special sight that day. Either way, God showed him the whole inheritance.

34:4 *I have let you see it with your eyes* God had sworn this land to the fathers more than four hundred years before (Gen 12:7; 15:18). This is a tender moment. God did not only say no; He showed Moses every part of what he had spent forty years leading Israel toward. Moses died knowing the promise was about to be kept.

34:5 *Moses the servant of the LORD died there* Servant of the LORD is the highest title Scripture gives Moses, not king or general (Josh 24:29). God Himself said, "Moses My servant has died" (Josh 1:2). "According to the mouth of the LORD" means at His word: Moses died when God said it was time. Jewish teachers have pictured God taking his life gently, as with a kiss. That is a tradition, not what the words must mean, but it is a beautiful thought.

34:6 *no man knows his burial place until this day* God Himself buried Moses, as no other person in the Bible. Scripture does not say why the grave was hidden. Many suggest God did not want it made a shrine, as Israel later burned incense to the bronze serpent (2 Kgs 18:4). Jude tells of Michael "arguing about the body of Moses" (Jude 1:9). We are told no more, but Moses' body was in God's care.

34:7 *his eye had not grown dim, and his vigor had not fled* His life fell into three forties: Pharaoh's palace, Midian, and leading Israel (Acts 7:23, 30, 36). He did not die of weakness but because God's time had come, and because of Meribah (32:51).

34:8 *the sons of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days* The same mourning as for Aaron (Num 20:29). For all their grumbling, Israel loved Moses. Then the days were completed. There is a time to grieve and a time to go on, for God's work did not die with Moses. We grieve, but not "just as also the rest who have no hope" (1 Thess 4:13).

and the days of the weeping of the mourning for Moses were completed. **9** And Joshua (Yehoshua) the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him; and the sons of Israel listened to him and did just as the LORD had commanded Moses. **10** And there has not arisen again a prophet in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face, **11** for all the signs and the wonders which the LORD sent him to do in the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim), to Pharaoh and to all his servants and to all his land, **12** and for all the mighty hand and for all the great terror which Moses did before the eyes of all Israel.

34:9 Isa 11:2; Dan 6:3; Exod 31:3
34:10 Acts 3:22; Acts 7:37; Heb 3:5
34:11 Deut 4:34; Deut 7:19; Ps 78:43-58

34:9 *Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom* The laying on of hands passed on God's authority (Num 27:18-23), and God gave Joshua the wisdom for the task. Many leaders leave confusion behind. Moses left a trained successor, a written Law and a people ready to go. Are you preparing anyone to carry on what God has given you to do?
34:10 *there has not arisen again a prophet in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face* God spoke to Moses "mouth to mouth" (Num 12:8). These words were written some time later, and every generation that read them was reminded that the Prophet like Moses (18:15) had not yet come. Then Jesus came, "the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father" (John 1:18). Philip said, "We have found Him of whom Moses wrote in the law" (John 1:45), and Peter preached that Jesus is that Prophet (Acts 3:22-26). Moses was "faithful in all His house as a servant" (Heb 3:5), but Christ as a Son.
34:12 *before the eyes of all Israel* Moses could bring Israel to the edge of the land, but not in. That took Joshua, whose name is the Hebrew form of Jesus. The Law brings us to see our need, but only Jesus brings us into God's rest (Heb 4:8-10; Gal 3:24). Moses could hardly have written of his own burial and the mourning after it. Jewish tradition says Joshua wrote this account, and I believe that is most likely, though it could have been another faithful writer soon after. This does not weaken the truth that Moses wrote Deuteronomy (31:9, 24). A book can be one man's work and still have its last page added by the man who followed him.

JOSHUA

Introduction

Title

The book is named for its main person, Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' helper and the man God chose to lead Israel into the land. His name was first Hoshea, and Moses renamed him Joshua (Num 13:16). In Hebrew it is Yehoshua, which means the LORD saves. Joshua is the sixth book of the Bible and opens the historical books, which run from Joshua through Esther. In the Hebrew Bible it is the first of the Former Prophets, the books that tell Israel's history from God's point of view. It picks up the day after Deuteronomy ends, with Moses dead and Israel camped on the plains of Moab across the Jordan from Jericho.

Author and Date

The book does not name one author for the whole, but it says that "Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God" (24:26). Jewish tradition holds that Joshua wrote most of it, and that others, likely Eleazar the priest and his son Phinehas, added the account of Joshua's death and burial (24:29-33). Some lines read like an eyewitness. The writer speaks of the land the LORD swore "to give to us" (5:6), and he says Rahab "has dwelt in the midst of Israel to this day" (6:25). The Jebusites still held Jerusalem (15:63), which David took about 1000 B.C. Most of the book was likely written in Joshua's lifetime or soon after, in the late 1400s or early 1300s B.C. Many modern critical scholars believe it was put together centuries later as part of a longer history running from Deuteronomy through Kings. I take the book at its word. It presents itself as a record made close to the events, and the New Testament treats it as true history (Acts 7:45; Heb 11:30-31).

Background and Setting

Most conservative scholars date the exodus about 1446 B.C., based on 1 Kings 6:1, and the crossing of the Jordan forty years later, about 1406 B.C. Caleb's words in 14:7-10 show that the main wars took about seven years. Joshua died at 110 (24:29), probably some twenty years after that, so the book covers roughly twenty-five to thirty years. Some scholars place the exodus and conquest in the 1200s B.C. instead.

Joshua was born a slave in Egypt. He led Israel's army against Amalek (Exod 17:9), served as Moses' helper at the tent of meeting (Exod 33:11), and was one of the twelve spies. He and Caleb alone trusted that God would give them the land (Num 14:6-9). After the crossing, Israel's base camp was at Gilgal near Jericho. From there Joshua struck west into the central hill country (Jericho, Ai and the covenant at Mount Ebal), then south (the five kings, Lachish, Hebron, Debir), then north (Hazor and the kings of Galilee). The tabernacle later stood at Shiloh (18:1), and the book ends with a covenant meeting at Shechem.

Everything in Joshua rests on what came before: God's promise of the land to Abraham (Gen 12:7; 15:18-21), His word that He would wait until the sin of the Amorites was full (Gen 15:16), the failure of the first generation at Kadesh (Num 14), and the commands Moses gave about the land and its people (Deut 7; 20). In the SLB, "LORD" in capital letters stands for God's personal name, Yahweh, which He made known to Moses (Exod 3:14-15).

Themes

The theme of Joshua is God's faithfulness to His promise. For more than four hundred years His people had held on to His word to Abraham. In Joshua He keeps it, and near the end the writer says so plainly: "Not a word fell of every good word which the LORD had spoken to the house of Israel; everything came to pass" (21:45; compare 23:14).

Alongside that theme runs a second one. God gives the land, but Israel must take it by faith and obedience. The secret of Joshua's strength was the book of the law, kept in his mouth and his heart (1:8). When Israel trusted God, the walls fell. When one man hid sin in his tent, the army ran from a small town. Where the tribes compromised and put the Canaanites to work instead of driving them out (16:10; 17:13), they left thorns that would trouble them for centuries.

Rest is a key word: the end of wandering and war, a home under God's care (21:44). The book closes with a call every generation must answer for itself: "choose for yourselves today whom you will serve" (24:15).

Christ in Joshua

Joshua's own name is the first pointer. Its shorter form, Yeshua, is the name the angel gave to Mary's Son, Jesus, "for He Himself will save His people from their sins" (Matt 1:21). Joshua led God's people into the land Moses could not bring them into. Yet Hebrews says Joshua's rest was not the final one: "there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God" (Heb 4:9), a rest we enter by faith in Christ. Rahab, the Canaanite woman saved by faith, became the mother of Boaz and is named in the family line of Jesus (Matt 1:5). Many Bible teachers believe the commander of the army of the LORD, who met Joshua near Jericho and received his worship (5:13-15), was the Son of God Himself before He was born in Bethlehem. Many have also seen the scarlet cord in Rahab's window as a picture of the blood that saves, like the blood on the doorposts at Passover (Exod 12:13). The New Testament does not name that picture, so I hold it lightly.

Hard Passages

Rahab lied to protect the spies (2:4-6). Scripture records the lie but praises only her faith and her actions (Heb 11:31; James 2:25). Teachers disagree whether deceit to save a life is ever right, and the notes do not build a rule on it.

The cities of Canaan were devoted to destruction, men and women, young and old (6:21; 8:24-26; 10:28-40; 11:10-14). The Hebrew word is herem, something set apart wholly to the LORD. I believe Scripture presents it as God's judgment on nations whose sin He had waited on for more than four hundred years (Gen 15:16; Deut 9:4-5), commanded once, for that time and that land, by God Himself through Moses. It was never a pattern for any nation, church or person after that. Rahab and the Gibeonites show that mercy was open to those who turned. The notes deal with this at 6:21 and refer back to it.

Achan was stoned and burned with his household (7:24-26), and defeated kings were put to death and hanged on trees (8:29; 10:26). The notes give the main readings of Achan's family

fairly. The sun standing still (10:12-14) is taken as a real miracle, and the notes name the main explanations of how God did it. God's hardening of the Canaanites' hearts (11:20) is read in the light of Pharaoh's story and of forty years in which they heard and resisted.

Outline

I. Entering the Land (1:1-5:15)
- A. The LORD commissions Joshua (1:1-18)
- B. Rahab and the spies (2:1-24)
- C. Crossing the Jordan (3:1-4:24)
- D. Circumcision and Passover at Gilgal (5:1-12)
- E. The commander of the LORD's army (5:13-15)

II. Taking the Land (6:1-12:24)
- A. The fall of Jericho (6:1-27)
- B. Achan's sin and defeat at Ai (7:1-26)
- C. Ai taken and the law read at Mount Ebal (8:1-35)
- D. The Gibeonite deception (9:1-27)
- E. The southern campaign (10:1-43)
- F. The northern campaign (11:1-23)
- G. The kings Israel defeated (12:1-24)

III. Dividing the Land (13:1-21:45)
- A. Land still to be taken and the eastern tribes (13:1-33)
- B. Caleb receives Hebron (14:1-15)
- C. The inheritance of Judah (15:1-63)
- D. Ephraim and Manasseh (16:1-17:18)
- E. Shiloh and the seven remaining tribes (18:1-19:51)
- F. The cities of refuge (20:1-9)
- G. The cities of the Levites (21:1-42)
- H. Every promise kept (21:43-45)

IV. Holding the Land (22:1-24:33)
- A. The altar by the Jordan (22:1-34)
- B. Joshua's farewell to the leaders (23:1-16)
- C. The covenant renewed at Shechem (24:1-28)
- D. Three graves in the promised land (24:29-33)

JOSHUA

JOSHUA 1

The LORD Commissions Joshua

1 And it was after the death of Moses (Moshe), the servant of the LORD, and the LORD said to Joshua (Yehoshua) the son of Nun, the minister of Moses, saying, **2** "Moses My servant has died. And now, arise, pass over this Jordan (Yarden), you and all this people, into the land which I am about to give to them, to the sons of Israel (Yisra'el). **3** Every place on which the sole of your foot will tread, to you I have given it, just as I spoke to Moses. **4** From the wilderness and this Lebanon (Levanon) and to the great river, the river Euphrates (Perat), all the land of the Hittites, and to the Great Sea ***toward*** the going in of the sun, will be your territory. **5** No man will stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I was with Moses, I will be with you; I will not let you go, and I will not forsake you. **6** Be strong and be bold, for you, you will cause this people to inherit the land which I swore to their fathers to give to them. **7** Only be strong and be very bold, to take care to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you. Do not turn aside from it ***to the*** right or left, so that you may prosper in every ***place*** where you go. **8** This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, and you shall meditate on it by day and night, so that you may take care to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your ways successful, and then you will prosper. **9** Have I not commanded you? Be strong and be bold. Do not be terrified, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God ***is*** with you in every ***place*** where you go."

Joshua Prepares the People

10 And Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying, **11** "Pass through the midst of the camp and command the people, saying, 'Prepare provisions for yourselves, for within three days you are about to pass over this Jordan, to go in to take possession of the land which the LORD your God is about to give to you to take possession of it.'" **12** And to the Reubenites and to the Gadites and to the half of the tribe of Manasseh (Menashe) Joshua said, saying, **13** "Remember the word which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, saying, 'The LORD your God is giving you rest, and He will give you this land.' **14** Your wives, your little ones, and your livestock shall remain in the land which Moses gave to you beyond the Jordan; and you shall pass over arrayed for battle before your brothers, all the mighty men of valor, and you shall help them, **15** until the LORD gives rest to your brothers as ***He has*** to you, and they also take possession of the land

1:1 Acts 7:45; Deut 34:5; Deut 34:9
1:2 Heb 3:5; Heb 3:6; Isa 42:1
1:3 Deut 11:24; Josh 14:9; Titus 1:2
1:4 Exod 23:31; Gen 15:18-21; Num 34:2-18
1:5 Heb 13:5; Deut 31:6-8; Josh 1:9,17
1:6 1 Sam 4:9; 1 Kgs 2:2; 1 Chr 22:13
1:7 Heb 3:5; Josh 11:15; Deut 5:32
1:8 Ps 19:14; Col 3:16; Luke 11:28
1:9 Gen 28:15; Josh 1:6,7; Jer 1:7,8
1:11 Josh 3:2; Deut 9:1; Deut 11:31
1:13 Num 32:20-28; Josh 22:1-4; Deut 3:18
1:14 Exod 13:18; Deut 20:8; Rev 17:4
1:15 Heb 3:5; Num 32:17-22; Gal 5:13

1:1 *after the death of Moses, the servant of the LORD* The book picks up where Deuteronomy ends. Moses had died on Mount Nebo at 120 years old (Deut 34:5-7). "The servant of the LORD" is the highest title the Bible gives any person. Joshua was "the minister of Moses," his helper for forty years, from the battle with Amalek (Exod 17:9) to the tent of meeting (Exod 33:11). He learned to lead by serving first.
1:2 *Moses My servant has died. And now, arise* The great leader was gone, but God was not. The work did not die with Moses. God's servants come and go, and we grieve them, but the LORD Himself carries His work forward.
1:3 *Every place on which the sole of your foot will tread, to you I have given it* God speaks as if it is already done. The land was a gift, settled in heaven, but Israel still had to walk into it. That is how God's promises usually work in our lives too. He gives, and we step out in faith and take hold of what He has given.
1:4 *to the great river, the river Euphrates* These are the borders God promised Abraham (Gen 15:18): from the southern wilderness to Lebanon, and from the Euphrates to "the Great Sea," the Mediterranean. Israel held all of it only for a time, under David and Solomon (1 Kgs 4:21). I believe God has not forgotten this promise, and the prophets say He will yet bring Israel back to the land (Ezek 36:24-28; Rom 11:28-29).
1:5 *Just as I was with Moses, I will be with you* Joshua would face kings, walled cities, giants and chariots, and none would stand before him, not because Joshua was great but because God was with him. Moses had told him the same thing before all Israel (Deut 31:6-8). Hebrews 13:5 takes this promise and gives it to every believer. If you belong to Christ, you can stand on it today.
1:6 *Be strong and be bold* God says it three times in this chapter (1:6, 7, 9), and the people say it back to Joshua a fourth time (1:18). Joshua was stepping into the shoes of the greatest prophet Israel had known and was about to lead a nation into war. Fear was a real danger.
1:7 *to take care to do according to all the law* The courage God wanted most was not courage on the battlefield but courage to obey. It takes more courage to do exactly what God says, without turning "to the right or left," than to swing a sword. Many leaders have won battles and lost their way.
1:8 *you shall meditate on it by day and night* The book of the law is the written Law Moses had just finished (Deut 31:9, 24-26). To meditate in the Bible does not mean to empty your mind. The Hebrew word has the idea of muttering under your breath: reading God's Word, saying it to yourself and turning it over until it shapes the way you think (Ps 1:2).
1:8 *then you will make your ways successful, and then you will prosper* This is not a promise of money. It is a promise that a life built on obeying God's Word will reach the goal God has for it. Joshua was a general, but God did not give him a battle plan first. He gave him a Bible. That is still the order for us.
1:9 *Have I not commanded you?* Courage is a command. Fear is natural, but God does not leave us to be ruled by it, and the reason is the same as in verse 5: He is with us. Jesus left His disciples the same promise: "I am with you all the days, until the consummation of the age" (Matt 28:20).
1:11 *within three days you are about to pass over this Jordan* The officers kept order among the tribes and passed along instructions (Deut 1:15). The Jordan was at flood stage (3:15), with no bridge and no boat, yet Joshua set the date. Faith acts on God's word before the way is open. The land was God's gift and Israel's task at the same time.
1:13 *Remember the word which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you* Reuben, Gad and half of Manasseh had asked for the grazing land east of the Jordan, taken from Sihon and Og. Moses agreed on one condition: their fighting men must cross and fight with the other tribes until the land was taken (Num 32).
1:15 *until the LORD gives rest to your brothers as He has to you* Rest is a key word in Joshua: peace in the land, freedom from enemies, a settled home under God's care. These tribes already had their rest, but they could not enjoy it while their brothers were still fighting. When God has given us rest, we owe it to our brothers and sisters to help them in their battles.

which the LORD your God is about to give to them. And you shall return to the land of your possession and take possession of it, which Moses the servant of the LORD gave to you beyond the Jordan, ***toward*** the rising of the sun." **16** And they answered Joshua, saying, "All that you have commanded us we will do, and to every ***place*** where you send us we will go. **17** According to all that we listened to Moses, so we will listen to you. Only may the LORD your God be with you, just as He was with Moses. **18** Every man who rebels against your mouth and does not obey your words in all that you command him shall be put to death. Only be strong and be bold."

JOSHUA 2

Rahab Hides the Spies

1 And Joshua (Yehoshua) the son of Nun sent from Shittim (Shitim) two men ***as*** spies secretly, saying, "Go, see the land, and Jericho (Yericho)." And they went, and they came ***to*** the house of a woman, a prostitute, and her name ***was*** Rahab (Rachav), and they lay down there. **2** And it was told to the king of Jericho, saying, "Look, men have come here tonight from the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) to spy out the land." **3** And the king of Jericho sent to Rahab, saying, "Bring out the men who came to you, who came into your house, for they have come to spy out all the land." **4** And the woman took the two men and hid them. And she said, "Yes, the men came to me, and I did not know where they ***were*** from. **5** And the gate was ***about*** to shut at dark, and the men went out. I do not know where the men went. Pursue after them quickly, for you will overtake them." **6** And she had brought them up to the roof and had hidden them among the stalks of flax that were arranged by her on the roof. **7** And the men pursued after them ***on*** the road to the Jordan (Yarden), to the fords. And they shut the gate after the pursuers had gone out after them.

Rahab's Confession of Faith

8 And they had not yet lain down, and she went up to them on the roof. **9** And she said to the men, "I know that the LORD has given you the land, and that the dread of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land have melted away before you. **10** For we have heard how the LORD dried up the waters of the Red Sea before you when you came out from Egypt (Mitsrayim), and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who ***were*** beyond the Jordan, to Sihon (Sichon) and to Og, whom you devoted to destruction. **11** And we heard, and our heart melted, and there did not rise up any more spirit in any man because of you; for the LORD your God, He ***is*** God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath. **12** And now, please swear to me by the LORD, since I have done steadfast love with you, that you also will do steadfast love with the house of my father, and give me a sign of faithfulness, **13** and keep alive my father and my mother and my brothers and my sisters and all who ***belong*** to them, and deliver our souls from death." **14** And the men said to her, "Our soul ***is*** in place of yours to die, if you do not tell this business of ours. And it shall be, when the LORD

1:16 Num 32:25; Deut 5:27; Rom 13:1-5
1:17 Josh 1:5; 1 Sam 20:13; 1 Kgs 1:37
1:18 Josh 1:6,7,9; Deut 17:12; 1 Sam 11:12
2:1 Heb 11:31; James 2:25; Matt 1:5
2:2 Ps 127:1; Prov 21:30; Isa 43:13
2:3 Matt 1:5; Heb 11:31; Josh 10:23
2:4 James 2:25; 2 Sam 17:19,20; Exod 1:19
2:5 Josh 2:7; Neh 13:19; Isa 60:11
2:6 2 Sam 17:19; Josh 2:8; Exod 1:15-21
2:7 Judg 3:28; Judg 12:5; Josh 2:5
2:9 Rom 9:17; Heb 11:31; Exod 23:27
2:10 Rom 9:17; Heb 11:29; Heb 11:31
2:11 Heb 11:31; Josh 5:1; Josh 7:5
2:12 Josh 2:18; Josh 9:15,18-20; 1 Sam 20:14,15,17
2:14 Gen 24:49; Judg 1:24,25; Matt 5:7

1:17 *Only may the LORD your God be with you, just as He was with Moses* A generous promise, and a little awkward, since Israel had not always listened to Moses well. But the prayer is wise. They knew Joshua was only as good as God's presence with him. A wise follower prays for his leaders.
1:18 *shall be put to death. Only be strong and be bold* Israel was a nation at war under God's direct rule. Rebellion against the leader God appointed was rebellion against God, and in wartime it could destroy the whole army. Then the people said back to Joshua the very words God had said to him. God's encouragement often comes twice, once from His Word and once through His people.
2:1 *sent from Shittim two men as spies secretly* Shittim was Israel's camp on the plains of Moab, a few miles east of the Jordan. Forty years earlier Joshua had been one of twelve spies, and the report of the ten turned the nation back in fear (Num 13-14). This time he sent only two, and he kept it quiet. Jericho was the first city in Israel's path, a walled town guarding the way up into the hill country.
2:1 *a woman, a prostitute, and her name was Rahab* Some have tried to soften this and call her an innkeeper, but the Hebrew is the normal word for a prostitute, and the New Testament says the same (Heb 11:31; James 2:25). Strangers came and went at such a house without much notice. Scripture does not hide what Rahab was, which makes what God did with her all the more wonderful.
2:2 *the king of Jericho* Canaan was made up of many small city-kingdoms, each with its own king. When his order came, Rahab had to choose. Turning the men in would keep her safe with her own people. Hiding them could cost her life.
2:5 *I do not know where the men went* Scripture records Rahab's lie but never praises it. Hebrews 11:31 praises her faith, and James 2:25 praises her for receiving the messengers and sending them out another way. She was a new believer from a pagan city who did not yet know God's ways well. Teachers have long disagreed whether lying is ever right to save a life. God did not need her lie, and we should not build a rule on it. What He praised was her trust and her courage to side with His people.
2:6 *the stalks of flax* Flax was used to make linen, and its stalks were spread on flat roofs to dry in the sun. The king's men believed her and went off toward the fords, the shallow crossing places of the Jordan.
2:9 *I know that the LORD has given you the land* She did not hope or guess. She knew. The ten spies had said Israel looked like grasshoppers to the Canaanites (Num 13:33). In truth the Canaanites had been afraid of Israel the whole time.
2:10 *we have heard how the LORD dried up the waters of the Red Sea* News forty years old still traveled, along with the recent defeat of Sihon and Og east of the Jordan (Num 21:21-35). The whole city heard what Rahab heard, and all of them melted with fear. Only Rahab turned to the God who had done these things.
2:11 *He is God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath* This is almost word for word what Moses told Israel (Deut 4:39). A Canaanite woman raised among the worshipers of Baal, the storm god of Canaan, came to the same faith as Moses. That is the difference between fear and faith. Hearing the truth about God is not enough. We must turn to Him.
2:12 *please swear to me by the LORD, since I have done steadfast love with you* She used God's covenant name. "Steadfast love" is hesed, loyal love that keeps its promises. Rahab did not think only of herself. She wanted her whole family saved. When we come to know the LORD, we want the people we love to know Him too.
2:14 *Our soul is in place of yours to die* The spies put their own lives on the line for hers, promising "steadfast love and faithfulness" when the LORD gave them the land.

gives us the land, that we will do steadfast love and faithfulness with you."

The Scarlet Cord

15 And she let them down by the rope through the window, for her house ***was*** in the wall of the city wall, and she ***was*** dwelling in the city wall. **16** And she said to them, "Go to the hill country, lest the pursuers meet you; and hide yourselves there three days until the pursuers return, and afterward you may go on your way." **17** And the men said to her, "We ***will be*** free from this oath of yours which you have made us swear. **18** Look, we are about to come into the land. You shall bind this cord of scarlet thread in the window through which you let us down, and you shall gather to yourself into the house your father and your mother and your brothers and all the house of your father. **19** And it shall be ***that*** anyone who goes out from the doors of your house to the outside, his blood ***will be*** on his head, and we ***will be*** free; and anyone who is with you in the house, his blood ***will be*** on our head if a hand is on him. **20** And if you tell this business of ours, then we will be free from your oath which you have made us swear." **21** And she said, "According to your words, so ***let*** it ***be***." And she sent them away, and they went. And she bound the scarlet cord in the window. **22** And they went and came to the hill country, and they remained there three days until the pursuers returned. And the pursuers searched all along the way and did not find ***them***. **23** And the two men returned and came down from the hill country, and they passed over and came to Joshua the son of Nun, and they recounted to him all that had happened to them. **24** And they said to Joshua, "Surely the LORD has given all the land into our hand; and also all the inhabitants of the land have melted away before us."

JOSHUA 3

The Ark Goes Before Israel

1 And Joshua (Yehoshua) rose early in the morning, and they set out from Shittim (Shitim) and came to the Jordan (Yarden), he and all the sons of Israel (Yisra'el); and they stayed there before they passed over. **2** And it was at the end of three days, and the officers passed through the midst of the camp. **3** And they commanded the people, saying, "When you see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, and the priests, the Levites, carrying it, then you shall set out from your place and go after it. **4** Only there shall be a distance between you and it, approximately 3,000 feet (2,000 cubits) by measure. Do not draw near to it, so that you may know the way by which you shall go, for you have not passed ***this*** way before." **5** And Joshua said to the people,
"Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders in your midst." **6** And Joshua said to the priests, saying, "Lift up the ark of the covenant and pass over before the people." And they lifted up the ark of the covenant and went before the people. **7** And the LORD said to Joshua, "This day I will begin to make you great in the eyes of all Israel, so that they may know that just as I was with Moses (Moshe), I will be with you. **8** And you shall command the priests who carry the ark of the covenant, saying, 'When you come to the edge of the waters of the Jordan, you shall stand still in the Jordan.'" **9** And Joshua said to the sons of Israel, "Draw near

2:15 Acts 9:25; 2 Cor 11:33; James 2:25
2:16 Josh 2:22; 1 Sam 23:14,29; Ps 11:1
2:17 Josh 2:20; Gen 24:3-8; Exod 20:7
2:18 Heb 9:19; 2 Cor 11:33; Josh 6:23
2:19 Matt 24:17; Exod 12:13,23; Num 35:26-28
2:20 James 2:25; Prov 11:13
2:21 James 2:25; Josh 2:18; Matt 7:24
2:22 1 Sam 19:10-12; 2 Sam 17:20; Ps 32:6,7
2:24 Exod 23:31; Josh 1:8; Josh 21:44,45
3:1 Josh 2:1; Mark 1:35; Gen 22:3
3:2 Josh 1:10,11
3:3 Deut 31:9,25; Num 10:33; Josh 3:6,8,14-17
3:4 Exod 19:12; Exod 3:5; Ps 89:7
3:5 Josh 7:13; Lev 20:7; 1 Sam 16:5
3:6 Acts 7:45; Josh 3:3; Num 14:15
3:7 Acts 7:45; Josh 4:14; 1 Chr 29:25
3:8 Josh 3:3; Josh 3:17; 1 Chr 15:11,12
3:9 Deut 4:1; Deut 12:8

2:15 *her house was in the wall of the city wall* Some ancient cities had houses built into or between their double walls, so Rahab could let the men down outside the city. She sent them west to the hill country, full of caves and ravines, not east toward the Jordan where the soldiers were searching.
2:18 *this cord of scarlet thread in the window* The cord marked the house for rescue, and only those inside it were safe. Many Christians have seen a picture of the Passover blood on the doorposts (Exod 12:13). The New Testament does not draw this picture itself, so I hold it lightly. But the lesson is true either way. Our safety from judgment is found in one place, in Christ, whose blood was shed for us (1 Pet 1:18-19).
2:21 *she bound the scarlet cord in the window* She did not wait for the army to show up. She acted on the promise at once.
2:24 *Surely the LORD has given all the land into our hand* This report was the opposite of the one at Kadesh forty years before, and it used Rahab's own words. Joshua sent spies to scout a target, and God used the trip to save a Canaanite family and give Israel courage. God was at work in Jericho before the army ever got there.
2:24 *all the inhabitants of the land have melted away before us* Rahab's story does not end here. She was saved when Jericho fell (6:22-25), married Salmon of Judah, and became the mother of Boaz, the great-grandfather of David. From David's line came Jesus Christ (Matt 1:5-6, 16). There is no one too far gone for God's grace to reach.
3:1 *Joshua rose early in the morning* The first of several times Joshua rises early (6:12; 7:16; 8:10). He did not put off what God told him to do. For three days Israel camped on the bank looking at a river in flood. Sometimes God lets us look hard at the problem before He shows His answer, so that when He acts there is no doubt Who did it.
3:3 *the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God* The ark was a wooden chest covered with gold, about 45 inches long and 27 inches wide and high (Exod 25:10-22). It held the stone tablets of the Ten Commandments, and its lid, the mercy seat, was where God said He would meet His people. It stood for His presence and rule among them. In the wilderness the cloud had led Israel. Now the ark would lead.
3:4 *for you have not passed this way before* The distance, about half a mile, showed reverence for God's holiness, but the verse gives the main reason: with the ark far out in front, everyone in that huge crowd could see where to go. That is true of every new step in life: a new job, a marriage, a loss, old age. We have never been this way, but God has. Our part is to keep our eyes on Him and follow.
3:5 *Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders in your midst* To consecrate is to set yourself apart as holy for God. At Sinai it meant washing clothes and keeping away from anything unclean (Exod 19:10-15). First get ready, then God acts. The miracle was God's part. Israel's part was to be ready and obedient.
3:6 *pass over before the people* The priests went first. Leaders in God's work are often called to step into the deep water before anyone else does.
3:7 *This day I will begin to make you great in the eyes of all Israel* The people had followed Moses through the Red Sea. Now they would see the same God do the same kind of miracle through Joshua, keeping the promise of 1:5. Joshua did not have to make himself great. Authority God gives does not need to be grabbed.

here, and hear the words of the LORD your God." **10** And Joshua said, "By this you shall know that the living God ***is*** in your midst, and ***that*** He will surely dispossess from before you the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Hivites and the Perizzites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Jebusites. **11** Look, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth is about to pass over before you into the Jordan. **12** And now, take for yourselves twelve men from the tribes of Israel, one man for each tribe. **13** And it shall be, when the soles of the feet of the priests who carry the ark of the LORD, the Lord of all the earth, rest in the waters of the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan shall be cut off, the waters that are coming down from above, and they shall stand ***in*** one heap."

Israel Crosses the Jordan

14 And it was, when the people set out from their tents to pass over the Jordan, with the priests who carried the ark of the covenant before the people, **15** and as those who carried the ark came to the Jordan, and the feet of the priests who carried the ark were dipped in the edge of the waters (and the Jordan is full over all its banks all the days of harvest), **16** and the waters which were coming down from above stood ***still***; they rose up ***in*** one heap very far away from Adam, the city which ***is*** beside Zarethan (Tsartan); and those which were going down toward the sea of the Arabah (Arava), the Salt Sea, were completely cut off. And the people passed over opposite Jericho (Yericho). **17** And the priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan, and all Israel was passing over on dry ground, until all the nation had finished passing over the Jordan.

JOSHUA 4

Twelve Stones from the River

1 And it was, when all the nation had finished passing over the Jordan (Yarden), and the LORD said to Joshua (Yehoshua), saying, **2** "Take for yourselves twelve men from the people, one man from each tribe, **3** and command them, saying, 'Take up for yourselves from here, from the middle of the Jordan, from the place where the feet of the priests stood firm, twelve stones, and carry them over with you, and set them down in the lodging place where you will stay tonight.'" **4** And Joshua called the twelve men whom he had appointed from the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), one man from each tribe. **5** And Joshua said to them, "Pass over before the ark of the LORD your God into the middle of the Jordan, and take up for yourselves each man one stone on his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Israel, **6** so that this may be a sign in your midst. When your sons ask tomorrow, saying, 'What ***are*** these stones to you?' **7** then you shall say to them, 'Because the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it passed over into the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off.' And these stones shall be a memorial to the sons of Israel forever." **8** And the sons of Israel did so, just as Joshua had commanded, and they took up twelve stones from the middle of the Jordan, just as the LORD had spoken to Joshua, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Israel; and they carried them over with them to the lodging place and set them down there. **9** And Joshua set up twelve stones in the middle of the Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests who carried the ark of the covenant stood, and they

3:10 Matt 16:16; Heb 12:22; Deut 7:1
3:11 Zech 6:5; Josh 3:13; Ps 24:1
3:12 Josh 4:2,9
3:13 Exod 15:8; Ps 78:13; Josh 3:15,16
3:14 Heb 9:4; Acts 7:44,45; Josh 3:3,6
3:15 1 Chr 12:15; Josh 4:18; Jer 12:5
3:16 Josh 3:13; 1 Kgs 4:12; 1 Kgs 7:46
3:17 Exod 14:22,29; Josh 4:3; 2 Kgs 2:8

4:1 Josh 3:17; Deut 27:2
4:2 Josh 3:12; Num 1:4-15; Num 13:2
4:3 Josh 3:13; Josh 4:8,19,20; Josh 24:27
4:4 Josh 4:2; Mark 3:14-19
4:6 Exod 13:14; Josh 4:21; Josh 22:27
4:7 Exod 12:14; Num 16:40; Josh 3:13-16
4:8 Josh 4:2-5; Josh 1:16-18
4:9 Exod 24:12; Exod 28:21; 1 Kgs 18:31

3:10 *the living God is in your midst* The gods of Canaan were idols of wood and stone. Israel's God was alive. Stopping the river would be a pledge that He would just as surely drive out the seven nations listed here, the peoples of the lowlands and the hills.
3:11 *the Lord of all the earth* God was not a tribal god. Canaan was His to give, because the whole earth is His.
3:12 *twelve men from the tribes of Israel, one man for each tribe* Chapter 4 tells what they were for. Every tribe would have a part in remembering what God did.
3:13 *they shall stand in one heap* Joshua announced the miracle before it happened, so that no one could call it chance.
3:15 *the Jordan is full over all its banks all the days of harvest* This was the spring barley harvest, in March or April, when the snow on Mount Hermon melts and the river floods. Near Jericho the Jordan can often be waded, but in flood it is wide, deep and fast. God did not choose the easy season. He chose the hardest one.
3:15 *the feet of the priests who carried the ark were dipped in the edge of the waters* The water did not stop and then they stepped in. They stepped in, and then it stopped. Faith often works that way. We take the step God commands before we see the way open.
3:16 *they rose up in one heap very far away from Adam* Adam was a town upstream, likely about eighteen to twenty miles north. From there down to the Salt Sea, the Dead Sea, the riverbed ran dry. In later history land-slides near Adam have dammed the Jordan for hours. Even if God used something like that, the timing is the miracle: the river stopped when the priests' feet touched it and returned when they came out (4:18).
3:17 *stood firm on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan* The ark stood in the place of danger, between the people and the piled-up water, and it stayed until the last person was across. The ground was dry, just as at the Red Sea (Exod 14:22). God does not get some of His people through. He gets all of them through. Jesus said He would lose none of those the Father gave Him (John 6:39).
4:3 *from the place where the feet of the priests stood firm, twelve stones* These were not stones from the bank. They came from the very spot where God's power held back the river, stones that should have been underwater, and they went to Israel's first camp in the promised land.
4:6 *When your sons ask tomorrow, saying, 'What are these stones to you?'* God knew that people forget. Within a generation the miracle could become an old story, so He gave them something to see and touch. He expected the children to ask and the parents to answer. Faith in Israel was passed down at home (Deut 6:6-7, 20-25). Do the young people around you know your stories of God's faithfulness?
4:7 *these stones shall be a memorial to the sons of Israel forever* A memorial is something that makes us remember.
4:9 *Joshua set up twelve stones in the middle of the Jordan* The plain reading is that there were two sets of stones, one in the camp and one in the riverbed, which the water would cover once it returned. Some read the verse as Joshua setting up the same twelve. "To this day" tells us the writer wrote while the stones were still there.

have been there to this day. **10** And the priests who carried the ark ***were*** standing in the middle of the Jordan until every thing was finished which the LORD had commanded Joshua to speak to the people, according to all that Moses (Moshe) had commanded Joshua. And the people hurried and passed over. **11** And it was, when all the people had finished passing over, and the ark of the LORD passed over, and the priests, before the people. **12** And the sons of Reuben (Reuven) and the sons of Gad and the half of the tribe of Manasseh (Menashe) passed over arrayed for battle before the sons of Israel, just as Moses had spoken to them. **13** About forty thousand armed ***men*** of war passed over before the LORD for battle to the plains of Jericho (Yericho). **14** On that day the LORD made Joshua great in the eyes of all Israel, and they feared him just as they had feared Moses all the days of his life.

The Waters Return

15 And the LORD said to Joshua, saying, **16** "Command the priests who carry the ark of the testimony, that they come up from the Jordan." **17** And Joshua commanded the priests, saying, "Come up from the Jordan." **18** And it was, as the priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD came up from the middle of the Jordan, ***that*** the soles of the feet of the priests were drawn out to the dry ground, and the waters of the Jordan returned to their place and went as before over all its banks. **19** And the people came up from the Jordan on the tenth of the first month, and they encamped at Gilgal on the edge of the east of Jericho. **20** And these twelve stones which they had taken from the Jordan Joshua set up at Gilgal. **21** And he said to the sons of Israel, saying, "When your sons ask their fathers tomorrow, saying, 'What ***are*** these stones?' **22** then you shall make known to your sons, saying, 'Israel passed over this Jordan on dry ground.' **23** For the LORD your God dried up the waters of the Jordan before you until you had passed over, just as the LORD your God did to the Red Sea, which He dried up before us until we had passed over, **24** so that all the peoples of the earth may know the hand of the LORD, that it ***is*** mighty, so that you may fear the LORD your God all the days."

JOSHUA 5

Circumcision at Gilgal

1 And it was, when all the kings of the Amorites who ***were*** beyond the Jordan (Yarden) westward, and all the kings of the Canaanites who ***were*** by the sea, heard how the LORD had dried up the waters of the Jordan before the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) until they had passed over, and their heart melted, and there was no spirit in them any longer because of the sons of Israel. **2** At that time the LORD said to Joshua (Yehoshua), "Make for yourself knives of flint, and again circumcise the sons of Israel a second ***time***." **3** And Joshua made for himself knives of flint, and he circumcised the sons of Israel at the hill of the foreskins. **4** And this ***is*** the reason why Joshua circumcised ***them***: all the people who came out from Egypt (Mitsrayim), the males, all the men of war, had died in the wilderness on the way, when they came out from Egypt.

4:10 Josh 3:13,16,17; Isa 28:16; Num 27:21-23
4:11 Josh 3:8,17; Josh 4:18
4:12 Josh 1:14; Num 32:20-32
4:13 Eph 6:11; 2 Kgs 25:5; Jer 39:5
4:14 1 Cor 10:2; Josh 3:7; Josh 1:16-18
4:16 Rev 11:19; Josh 3:3-6; Exod 25:16-22
4:17 Gen 8:16-18; Dan 3:26; Acts 16:23,35-39
4:18 Josh 3:15; Josh 3:13,15; Exod 14:26-28
4:19 Josh 5:9; Mic 6:5; Exod 12:2,3
4:20 Josh 4:3,8
4:21 Josh 4:6; Ps 105:2-5; Ps 145:4-7
4:22 Josh 3:17; Exod 14:29; Exod 15:19
4:23 Exod 14:21; Isa 63:12-14; Neh 9:11
4:24 Ps 89:13; Exod 14:31; 1 Kgs 8:42,43
5:1 Rev 18:10; Num 13:29; Josh 2:9-11
5:2 Rom 2:29; Gen 17:10-14; Deut 10:16
5:3 Gen 17:23-27; Matt 16:24
5:4 Num 26:64,65; Deut 2:16; 1 Cor 10:5

4:10 *the priests who carried the ark were standing in the middle of the Jordan until every thing was finished* Think how long that took and how heavy the ark was. They did not move until God said so. The ark that went into the river first came out last (4:11). God's presence went ahead into the danger and stayed until every person was safe.
4:12 *passed over arrayed for battle before the sons of Israel, just as Moses had spoken to them* The eastern tribes kept their promise to Moses (Num 32:20-22) and to Joshua (1:16-18). They already had their land. They crossed anyway.
4:13 *About forty thousand armed men of war passed over before the LORD* "Before the LORD" reminds us this was the LORD's army, under His command. Numbers 26 gives these tribes more fighting men, so it seems some stayed behind to guard their families and towns east of the river.
4:14 *they feared him just as they had feared Moses* God did what He said in 3:7. To fear a leader here means to respect him deeply and take his word seriously. Joshua did not earn this with a speech. God gave it to him by working a miracle through him.
4:16 *the ark of the testimony* It held the tablets of the law, God's testimony or witness to His covenant (Exod 25:16).
4:18 *the waters of the Jordan returned to their place* The river stopped when the priests' feet touched the water and started again when their feet left the riverbed. God marked the beginning and end of the miracle so clearly that no one could explain it away.
4:19 *on the tenth of the first month* The first month was Abib, later called Nisan, in March or April. Forty years earlier, on the tenth day, Israel had chosen their Passover lambs in Egypt (Exod 12:3). In four days they would keep the first Passover in the land (5:10). Gilgal became Israel's base camp during the conquest.
4:23 *just as the LORD your God did to the Red Sea* Most of the people there had been children or not yet born at the Red Sea. Now they had their own Red Sea. God did for the children what He did for the parents. Every generation needs to see God work in its own day.
4:24 *so that all the peoples of the earth may know the hand of the LORD* The crossing was a message to the nations, and the kings of Canaan heard it (5:1). It was also meant to lead God's own people to fear Him "all the days," to reverence and trust for the rest of their lives.
5:1 *their heart melted, and there was no spirit in them any longer* The Amorites lived mainly in the hills and the Canaanites along the coast and lowlands, so together they stand for all the peoples of the land. This is just what Rahab told the spies (2:9-11). God had promised to send His terror ahead of Israel (Exod 23:27). The enemies were beaten in their hearts before a sword was lifted.
5:2 *Make for yourself knives of flint, and again circumcise the sons of Israel a second time* Circumcision was the sign of God's covenant with Abraham (Gen 17:9-14). A covenant is a solemn, binding agreement. "A second time" does not mean these men were circumcised twice. The nation as a whole was being brought back under the sign the first generation had carried. Flint knives may have been kept because the custom was old and sacred.
5:3 *he circumcised the sons of Israel* This left the whole army sore and unable to fight for days, right next to an enemy city (compare Gen 34:25). From a military view it was foolish. From God's view it was the most important thing they could do. They had to belong to Him before they could fight for Him.

5 For all the people who came out had been circumcised, and all the people who were born in the wilderness on the way, when they came out from Egypt, they had not circumcised. **6** For the sons of Israel had walked forty years in the wilderness until all the nation, the men of war who came out from Egypt, were finished, who had not listened to the voice of the LORD, to whom the LORD had sworn not to let them see the land which the LORD had sworn to their fathers to give to us, a land flowing ***with*** milk and honey. **7** And their sons, ***whom*** He raised up in their place, them Joshua circumcised; for they were uncircumcised, for they had not circumcised them on the way. **8** And it was, when all the nation had finished being circumcised, and they remained in their place in the camp until they revived. **9** And the LORD said to Joshua, "This day I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from on you." And he called the name of that place Gilgal to this day.

Passover in the Land

10 And the sons of Israel encamped at Gilgal, and they kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month in the evening on the plains of Jericho (Yericho). **11** And they ate from the produce of the land on the day after the Passover, unleavened bread and roasted ***grain***, on this very day. **12** And the manna ceased on the day after, when they ate from the produce of the land; and there was no longer manna for the sons of Israel, and they ate from the produce of the land of Canaan (Kena'an) in that year.

The Commander of the LORD's Army

13 And it was, when Joshua was at Jericho, and he lifted up his eyes and saw, and look, a man ***was*** standing in front of him, and his sword ***was*** drawn in his hand. And Joshua went to him and said to him, "***Are*** you for us or for our adversaries?" **14** And he said, "No, for I ***am*** the commander of the army of the LORD. Now I have come." And Joshua fell on his face to the ground and bowed down, and he said to him, "What ***is*** my lord saying to his servant?" **15** And the commander of the army of the LORD said to Joshua, "Take off your sandal from on your foot, for the place on which you ***are*** standing, it ***is*** holy." And Joshua did so.

JOSHUA 6

The March Around Jericho

1 And Jericho (Yericho) was shutting ***itself*** and was shut up because of the sons of Israel (Yisra'el); no one was going out, and no one was coming in. **2** And the LORD said to Joshua (Yehoshua), "See, I have given into your hand Jericho and its king, the mighty men of valor. **3** And you shall go around the city, all the men of war, circling the city one time. Thus you shall do six days. **4** And seven priests shall carry seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark. And on the seventh day you shall go around the city seven times, and the priests

5:5 Deut 12:8,9; Hos 6:6,7; Matt 12:7
5:6 Heb 3:9; Deut 2:7,14; Num 14:23
5:7 Num 14:31; Deut 1:39
5:8 Gen 34:25
5:9 Gen 34:14; Josh 4:19; Josh 24:14
5:10 Ezek 12:3,6,7-16; Num 9:1-5
5:11 Exod 12:18-20; Exod 13:6,7; Lev 23:6,14
5:12 John 6:31; Exod 16:35; Neh 9:20,21
5:13 Gen 18:2; Num 22:23; Dan 10:5
5:14 John 20:28; Rev 19:10; Rev 22:8
5:15 Acts 7:33; Exod 3:5; Acts 7:32,33
6:1 Luke 19:1; Josh 2:7; 2 Kgs 17:4
6:2 Luke 19:1; Deut 7:24; Josh 2:9,24
6:3 Heb 11:30; Josh 6:7,14; Num 14:9
6:4 Rev 1:4; Rev 5:1; Heb 11:30

5:5 *all the people who were born in the wilderness on the way, when they came out from Egypt, they had not circumcised* Scripture does not say exactly why. It may have been the hardship of the journey, or part of God's judgment on the generation that refused to enter the land.
5:7 *their sons, whom He raised up in their place, them Joshua circumcised* The first generation "had not listened to the voice of the LORD," so they died in the wilderness (Num 14:22-35). God did not give up on Israel. He raised up their children and brought them in. One generation's unbelief did not cancel God's promise. The circumcision God wants most is of the heart (Deut 30:6; Rom 2:28-29), and believers have it in Christ (Col 2:11). Before God uses us, He deals with the heart.
5:8 *until they revived* That is, until they healed. For those days they were helpless, and God protected them.
5:9 *This day I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from on you* A reproach is a shame or disgrace. It may have been the shame of slavery, or the mocking of the Egyptians, who said God brought Israel out only to kill them in the wilderness (Exod 32:12). Either way it was gone. Gilgal sounds like the Hebrew galal, to roll. Every time they named their camp, they remembered that God had rolled away their shame.
5:10 *they kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month* The Passover remembered the night God spared Israel's firstborn because of the lamb's blood on their doorposts (Exod 12). Only the circumcised could eat it (Exod 12:48), so the circumcision came first. As far as Scripture records, this was only the third Passover: in Egypt, at Sinai (Num 9:1-5), and now in the land. Christ is our Passover lamb (1 Cor 5:7).
5:12 *the manna ceased on the day after* For forty years God fed them bread from heaven (Exod 16:35). Now there was grain to plant and harvest. Both came from Him. We sometimes want God to keep providing the old way, but in a new season He provides in a new way. Jesus is the true bread from heaven (John 6:32-35).
5:13 *Are you for us or for our adversaries?* Joshua was perhaps out alone looking over the walled city he had to take. He did what a good soldier does: he walked straight up to an armed man and asked a fair question.
5:14 *No, for I am the commander of the army of the LORD* He had not come to join Israel's side. He had come to take command. The real question is never whether God is on our side, but whether we are on His.
5:14 *Joshua fell on his face to the ground and bowed down* The word for bowing down is the word for worship. Angels refuse worship in Scripture (Rev 19:10; 22:8-9), and this One accepted it. The commander of Israel's army became a servant waiting for orders.
5:15 *Take off your sandal from on your foot, for the place on which you are standing, it is holy* These are almost the words spoken to Moses at the burning bush (Exod 3:5). Many teachers believe this was the Son of God appearing before His birth in Bethlehem: He accepts worship, makes the ground holy, and the LORD speaks directly in 6:2. Others believe He was a great angel, perhaps Michael (Dan 10:13, 21). Scripture does not name Him. Either way, Joshua was not the commander-in-chief. The battle belongs to the Lord (Rev 19:11-16). Our job is to bow, listen and obey.
6:1 *Jericho was shutting itself and was shut up* The city was under siege before Israel did anything. Its people had heard about the Red Sea, Sihon and Og, and the Jordan, and they had locked themselves in.
6:2 *See, I have given into your hand Jericho* This seems to continue the meeting with the commander of the LORD's army (5:13-15). God did not say He would give it. He said He had given it. The victory was settled in heaven, and Israel had only to walk it out.
6:4 *seven trumpets of rams' horns* A ram's horn, the shofar, was blown to call people together, sound alarms and announce holy days. Seven is the number of completion in Scripture, going back to the days of creation. Seven priests, seven horns, seven days, seven times around: this was God's work, complete and perfect.

shall blow the trumpets. **5** And it shall be, when ***they*** make a long blast with the horn of the ram, when you hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout ***with*** a great shout; and the wall of the city shall fall in its place, and the people shall go up, each man straight before him." **6** And Joshua the son of Nun called the priests and said to them, "Lift up the ark of the covenant, and let seven priests carry seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the LORD." **7** And he said to the people, "Pass on, and go around the city, and let the armed man pass on before the ark of the LORD." **8** And it was, when Joshua had spoken to the people, and the seven priests carrying the seven trumpets of rams' horns before the LORD passed on and blew the trumpets; and the ark of the covenant of the LORD ***was*** going after them. **9** And the armed man ***was*** walking before the priests who blew the trumpets, and the rear guard ***was*** walking after the ark, walking and blowing the trumpets. **10** And Joshua commanded the people, saying, "You shall not shout, and you shall not let your voice be heard, and a word shall not go out from your mouth, until the day I say to you, 'Shout!' Then you shall shout." **11** And he caused the ark of the LORD to go around the city, circling ***it*** one time. And they came ***into*** the camp and stayed in the camp. **12** And Joshua rose early in the morning, and the priests lifted up the ark of the LORD. **13** And the seven priests carrying the seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the LORD ***were*** walking, walking on, and they blew the trumpets; and the armed man ***was*** walking before them, and the rear guard ***was*** walking after the ark of the LORD, walking and blowing the trumpets. **14** And they went around the city on the second day one time, and they returned ***to*** the camp. Thus they did six days.

The Walls Fall

15 And it was on the seventh day, and they rose early at the coming up of the dawn and went around the city according to this manner seven times. Only on that day they went around the city seven times. **16** And it was at the seventh time, the priests blew the trumpets, and Joshua said to the people, "Shout, for the LORD has given you the city! **17** And the city shall be a devoted thing, it and all that ***is*** in it, to the LORD. Only Rahab (Rachav) the prostitute shall live, she and all who ***are*** with her in the house, for she hid the messengers whom we sent. **18** And only you, keep yourselves from the devoted thing, lest you devote ***it*** to destruction and take from the devoted thing, and make the camp of Israel a devoted thing and trouble it. **19** And all the silver and gold and articles of bronze and iron, it ***is*** holy to the LORD; it shall go into the treasury of the LORD." **20** And the people shouted, and they blew the trumpets. And it was, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted ***with*** a great shout, and the wall fell in its place; and the people went up into the city, each man straight before him, and they captured the city. **21** And they devoted to destruction all that ***was*** in the city, from man and to woman,

6:5 Heb 11:30; 1 Sam 4:5; Josh 6:16,20
6:6 Heb 11:30; Josh 6:8,13; Josh 3:3,6
6:7 Heb 11:30; Josh 4:13; Josh 6:3
6:8 Heb 11:30; Josh 6:3,4; Num 32:20
6:9 Heb 11:30; Josh 6:13; Num 10:25
6:10 Luke 24:49; Heb 11:30; Isa 42:2
6:11 Heb 11:30
6:12 Heb 11:7; Heb 11:30; Josh 3:1
6:13 Heb 11:30; 1 Chr 15:26; Matt 24:13
6:14 Heb 11:30; Josh 6:3,11,15
6:15 2 Pet 1:19; Heb 11:30; Ps 119:147
6:16 Heb 11:30; Josh 6:5; Judg 7:20-22
6:17 Heb 11:31; James 2:25; Heb 11:30
6:18 Heb 11:30; Josh 7:1,11,12,15; Josh 7:11,12
6:19 Heb 11:30; 1 Chr 26:20,26,28; 2 Sam 8:11
6:20 Heb 11:30; Josh 6:5; 2 Cor 10:4,5
6:21 Rev 18:21; Josh 9:24,25; Josh 10:28,39

6:5 *the wall of the city shall fall in its place* No siege ramps, no battering rams, no ladders. Just obedience, a shout and God's power. God did it this way so no one could say Israel took Jericho by its own strength. He still chooses what the world thinks foolish and weak, so that no one can boast before Him (1 Cor 1:27-29).
6:8 *the ark of the covenant of the LORD was going after them* The ark was at the center of the march. This was not mainly a parade of soldiers but a procession of God's presence around the city.
6:10 *You shall not shout, and you shall not let your voice be heard* Scripture does not say why, but a silent army does not boast and does not complain. Forty years earlier Israel's complaining had kept them out of the land. This time they kept their mouths shut and let God speak.
6:14 *Thus they did six days* Day after day they walked around the city and nothing happened, with the people on the wall watching. It would have been easy to quit or grumble. Faith sometimes looks like doing the same faithful thing day after day when you cannot see any result yet. Hebrews 11:30 says the walls fell after they had been circled seven days. The faith was in the walking, not only in the shout.
6:16 *Shout, for the LORD has given you the city!* The shout was not a war cry to scare the enemy. It was a shout of faith in a victory God had already won.
6:17 *the city shall be a devoted thing, it and all that is in it, to the LORD* The Hebrew word is herem: something set apart wholly to the LORD so that no person may keep or use it (Lev 27:28-29). Most devoted things were destroyed. Some, like metal, went into God's treasury. Jericho was the firstfruits of the land, and like the first part of the harvest it belonged entirely to God.
6:17 *Only Rahab the prostitute shall live* In the middle of the order of judgment comes a word of mercy. God's judgment was never blind. The one who turned to Him in faith was spared.
6:18 *make the camp of Israel a devoted thing and trouble it* Anyone who took what belonged to God would bring the same judgment on himself and on Israel. Chapter 7 shows this was not an empty warning.
6:20 *the wall fell in its place* The Hebrew means it fell down flat, so each soldier walked straight in from where he stood. Archaeologists have long argued over the ruins at Jericho and their dates. Some find walls that collapsed and a city burned at about the right time. Others date it earlier. My faith rests not on a dig but on God's Word: "By faith the walls of Jericho fell" (Heb 11:30).
6:21 *they devoted to destruction all that was in the city* This is one of the hardest verses in the Bible, and it should trouble us. This was God's judgment after long patience. He waited centuries because "the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete" (Gen 15:16), and Canaan's sin had grown to idolatry, sexual sin and burning children to their gods (Lev 18:21-25; Deut 12:31). Israel got the land not for being good but because of the nations' wickedness (Deut 9:5). The Judge of all the earth does right (Gen 18:25).
6:21 *from man and to woman, from young man and to old man* God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked (Ezek 33:11), and the door was open: Rahab turned and was saved, and the Gibeonites were spared (Jos 9). It was not about race. An Israelite, Achan, fell under the same ban, and Israel was later exiled for the same sins (Lev 18:28). It was a one-time command for those nations in that land (Deut 20:10-18), never a pattern for anyone after. Jesus told Peter to put away his sword (Matt 26:52), and we are told to love our enemies (Matt 5:44).
6:21 *to ox and sheep and donkey, by the mouth of the sword* What about the children? Scripture does not give all God's reasons. He is just and good and judges with perfect knowledge. I believe little children who die are safe with God (2 Sam 12:23). Jericho is a picture of the final judgment (Acts 17:30-31). Every one of us deserves it, and like Rahab we are saved only by turning to the LORD and sheltering in the house He provides.

from young man and to old man, and to ox and sheep and donkey, by the mouth of the sword.

Rahab Is Spared

22 And to the two men who had spied out the land Joshua said, "Go into the house of the woman, the prostitute, and bring out from there the woman and all who ***belong*** to her, just as you swore to her." **23** And the young men who had spied went in and brought out Rahab and her father and her mother and her brothers and all who ***belonged*** to her; and all her families they brought out, and they set them outside the camp of Israel. **24** And they burned the city with fire, and all that ***was*** in it. Only the silver and the gold and the articles of bronze and of iron they put ***into*** the treasury of the house of the LORD. **25** And Rahab the prostitute and the house of her father and all who ***belonged*** to her Joshua kept alive; and she has dwelt in the midst of Israel to this day, for she hid the messengers whom Joshua had sent to spy out Jericho. **26** And Joshua made ***them*** swear at that time, saying, "Cursed ***is*** the man before the LORD who rises up and rebuilds this city, Jericho; with his firstborn he shall lay its foundation, and with his youngest he shall set up its gates." **27** And the LORD was with Joshua, and his fame was in all the land.

JOSHUA 7

Defeat at Ai

1 And the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) acted unfaithfully ***with*** unfaithfulness in the devoted thing; and Achan (Akhan) the son of Carmi (Karmi), the son of Zabdi (Zavdi), the son of Zerah (Zerach), of the tribe of Judah (Yehuda), took from the devoted thing, and the anger of the LORD burned against the sons of Israel. **2** And Joshua (Yehoshua) sent men from Jericho (Yericho) ***to*** Ai (Ay), which ***is*** beside Beth-aven (Bet-Aven), on the east of Bethel (Bet-El), and he said to them, saying, "Go up and spy out the land." And the men went up and spied out Ai. **3** And they returned to Joshua and said to him, "Do not let all the people go up; let about two thousand men or about three thousand men go up and strike Ai. Do not make all the people toil there, for they ***are*** few." **4** And about three thousand men from the people went up there, and they fled before the men of Ai. **5** And the men of Ai struck down of them about thirty-six men, and they pursued them before the gate as far as Shebarim (Shevarim), and they struck them down on the descent. And the heart of the people melted and became water. **6** And Joshua tore his clothes and fell on his face to the ground before the ark of the LORD until the evening, he and the elders of Israel; and they put dust on their head. **7** And Joshua said, "Alas, Lord GOD, why have You brought this people over the Jordan (Yarden) at all, to give us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us? And if only we had been willing and had remained beyond the Jordan! **8** Please, Lord, what shall I say, after Israel has turned ***its*** back before its enemies? **9** And the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land will hear, and they will surround us and cut off our name from the earth. And what will You do for Your great name?"

Sin in the Camp

10 And the LORD said to Joshua, "Get yourself up! Why ***is*** this, ***that*** you ***are*** falling on your face? **11** Israel has sinned, and also they have transgressed My covenant which I com-

6:22 Heb 11:31; James 2:25; Josh 6:17
6:23 Matt 1:5; Heb 11:31; James 2:25
6:24 Rev 17:16; Rev 18:8; Heb 11:31
6:25 Heb 11:31; Matt 1:5; James 2:25
6:26 Luke 19:1; 1 Kgs 16:34; Num 5:19-21
6:27 Josh 1:5,9; Josh 9:1,3,9; Gen 39:2,3,21
7:1 Josh 22:20; Josh 6:17,18; Josh 7:20,21
7:2 Josh 18:12; Hos 4:15; Josh 12:9
7:3 Prov 13:4; Prov 21:25; Luke 13:24
7:4 Lev 26:17; Deut 28:25; Deut 32:30
7:5 Josh 2:9,11; Lev 26:36; Deut 1:44
7:6 Gen 37:29,34; Num 14:6; 2 Sam 13:31
7:7 Luke 13:8; 2 Kgs 3:10; Exod 5:22,23
7:8 Ezra 9:10; Hab 2:1; Rom 3:5,6
7:9 Exod 32:12; Ps 83:4; Num 14:13
7:10 Exod 14:15; 1 Sam 15:22; 1 Sam 16:1
7:11 Matt 22:21; Josh 6:17-19; Acts 5:1,2,9

6:23 *brought out Rahab and her father and her mother and her brothers and all who belonged to her* Rahab's house was in the wall (2:15), yet it still stood with the scarlet cord in the window. Scripture does not say how. Not one person in that house was lost. They stayed outside the camp at first, since they were not yet part of the covenant people and would need to be made clean (compare Num 31:19).
6:25 *she has dwelt in the midst of Israel to this day* Rahab was still alive when this was written. Hebrews says she "did not perish with those who disobeyed" (Heb 11:31). The people of Jericho had the same chance she had. James 2:25 adds that her faith was proved by what she did. Real faith acts. God's judgment is real, but so is His mercy, and it reaches anyone who turns to Him.
6:26 *with his firstborn he shall lay its foundation, and with his youngest he shall set up its gates* The curse was on rebuilding Jericho as a fortified city. People did live near the site in between (18:21; 2 Sam 10:5). About five hundred years later, in Ahab's day, Hiel of Bethel rebuilt it and lost his firstborn and his youngest, as the LORD had spoken by Joshua (1 Kgs 16:34). God's Word does not expire.
6:27 *the LORD was with Joshua, and his fame was in all the land* This is what God promised in 1:5 and 3:7. The secret of Joshua's success was not his strategy. It was God's presence.
7:1 *the sons of Israel acted unfaithfully with unfaithfulness in the devoted thing* One man did it, but God counts it against the whole nation. Israel was one covenant people, and what one member did affected all. The reader knows trouble is coming. Israel does not.
7:1 *of the tribe of Judah* Judah was the leading tribe, the tribe of the future kings. Sin can come from anywhere, even from the most honored families.
7:2 *Ai, which is beside Beth-aven, on the east of Bethel* Ai lay up in the hill country some ten to fifteen miles west of Jericho. The name means the ruin or the heap.
7:3 *Do not make all the people toil there, for they are few* It sounds reasonable, but notice what is missing. No one asked the LORD. At Jericho God gave the plan. At Ai Israel made its own, based on how small the enemy looked. Success had made them confident in themselves.
7:5 *the heart of the people melted and became water* These are the words used of the Canaanites (2:11; 5:1). Now Israel was the one melting.
7:6 *Joshua tore his clothes and fell on his face* Torn clothes and dust on the head were signs of deep grief and mourning.
7:7 *why have You brought this people over the Jordan at all* Joshua's prayer is honest, and part of it sounds like the wilderness complaints (Num 14:2-3). He was a great man of faith, but he was also a man, and this defeat shook him.
7:9 *And what will You do for Your great name?* His prayer ends in the right place. If Israel were wiped out, the nations would say the God of Israel could not keep His promises. Moses prayed the same way (Exod 32:11-12). When we pray, it is right to care most about God's name and glory.
7:10 *Get yourself up! Why is this, that you are falling on your face?* There is a time for prayer and a time to get up and deal with sin. The problem was not that God had failed. Israel had sinned.
7:11 *they have stolen, and also they have deceived* Each "and also" adds weight. This was not a small slip. It was theft from God, covered with a lie.

manded them; and also they have taken from the devoted thing, and also they have stolen, and also they have deceived, and also they have put ***it*** among their own things. **12** And the sons of Israel are not able to stand before their enemies; they turn ***their*** back before their enemies, for they have become a devoted thing. I will not again be with you unless you destroy the devoted thing from your midst. **13** Arise, consecrate the people, and say, 'Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow, for thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: "A devoted thing ***is*** in your midst, O Israel. You will not be able to stand before your enemies until you remove the devoted thing from your midst." **14** And you shall be brought near in the morning by your tribes. And it shall be ***that*** the tribe which the LORD takes shall draw near by clans, and the clan which the LORD takes shall draw near by households, and the household which the LORD takes shall draw near by men. **15** And it shall be ***that*** the one who is taken with the devoted thing shall be burned with fire, he and all that ***belongs*** to him, because he has transgressed the covenant of the LORD, and because he has done a disgraceful folly in Israel.'"

Achan Is Taken

16 And Joshua rose early in the morning and brought Israel near by its tribes, and the tribe of Judah was taken. **17** And he brought near the clan of Judah, and he took the clan of the Zerahites; and he brought near the clan of the Zerahites by men, and Zabdi was taken. **18** And he brought near his household by men, and Achan the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, was taken. **19** And Joshua said to Achan, "My son, please give glory to the LORD, the God of Israel, and give praise to Him; and tell me, please, what you have done. Do not hide ***it*** from me." **20** And Achan answered Joshua and said, "Truly I have sinned against the LORD, the God of Israel, and thus and thus I have done. **21** And I saw among the spoil one good cloak of Shinar, and approximately 5 pounds (200 shekels) of silver, and one bar of gold, approximately 20 ounces (50 shekels) ***was*** its weight; and I desired them and took them. And look, they ***are*** hidden in the ground in the midst of my tent, and the silver ***is*** under it." **22** And Joshua sent messengers, and they ran to the tent; and look, ***it was*** hidden in his tent, and the silver ***was*** under it. **23** And they took them from the midst of the tent and brought them to Joshua and to all the sons of Israel, and they poured them out before the LORD. **24** And Joshua took Achan the son of Zerah, and the silver and the cloak and the bar of gold, and his sons and his daughters, and his ox and his donkey and his sheep, and his tent and all that ***belonged*** to him, and all Israel with him; and they brought them up ***to*** the valley of Achor (Akhor). **25** And Joshua said, "Why have you troubled us? The LORD will trouble you this day." And all Israel stoned him with stones, and they burned them with fire and stoned them with stones. **26** And they raised over him a great heap of stones ***that stands*** to this day. And the LORD turned from the burning of His anger. Therefore ***one*** called the name of that place the valley of Achor to this day.

JOSHUA 8

Ai Is Taken

1 And the LORD said to Joshua (Yehoshua), "Do not fear, and do not be dismayed. Take with you all the people of war, and arise, go up ***to*** Ai (Ay). See, I have given into your hand the

7:12 Num 14:45; Josh 6:18; Ps 5:4,5
7:13 Josh 3:5; Exod 19:10-15; Lam 3:40,41
7:14 Prov 16:33; Josh 7:17,18; 1 Sam 10:19-21
7:15 Gen 34:7; 1 Sam 14:38,39; Judg 20:6
7:16 Josh 3:1; Gen 22:3; Ps 119:60
7:17 Num 26:20; Gen 38:30; 1 Chr 2:4-7
7:18 Num 32:23; Acts 5:1-10; 1 Sam 14:42
7:19 John 9:24; Rev 16:9; Mark 1:5
7:20 Gen 42:21; Exod 10:16; Num 22:34
7:21 Ps 119:37; 1 John 2:15,16; Deut 7:25
7:24 Josh 15:7; Prov 15:27; 1 Tim 6:9,10
7:25 Acts 5:4; Josh 6:18; 1 Chr 2:7
7:26 Deut 13:17; Isa 65:10; Hos 2:15
8:1 Josh 1:9; Deut 1:21; Deut 7:18

7:12 *for they have become a devoted thing* By taking what was under the ban, Israel brought the ban on itself, as Joshua warned (6:18). The promise of God's presence (1:5) still stood, but God would not fight for a people who hid sin in the camp.
7:14 *the tribe which the LORD takes* Likely by casting lots, small stones or marked objects God used to give His answer (Prov 16:33). The Urim and Thummim, kept in the high priest's breastpiece (Exod 28:30), may also have been used. Scripture does not say exactly how. The process took a night and a morning. The guilty man could have come forward at any point. He did not.
7:18 *Achan the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, was taken* Picture all Israel watching as the circle grew smaller. Every step was another chance to confess. He waited until there was nowhere left to hide. "Know your sin, that it will find you" (Num 32:23). Hidden sin is never hidden from God.
7:19 *My son, please give glory to the LORD* Joshua's words are surprisingly gentle. To give glory to God here means to tell the truth and so admit that God is right in His judgment.
7:21 *I desired them and took them* Saw, desired, took, hid: the pattern of sin since Eden. Eve saw the fruit, desired it, took it and hid (Gen 3:6-8), and David did the same with Bathsheba (2 Sam 11). Desire leads to sin, and sin to death (James 1:14-15).
7:21 *one good cloak of Shinar* A costly robe from Babylonia, with silver and a bar of gold, all buried in the tent floor. He could not wear the cloak or spend the silver. He just had to have it. That is how greed works. It wants things it cannot even enjoy.
7:23 *they poured them out before the LORD* What was hidden in the dark was laid out in the light for all to see (Luke 12:2-3).
7:24 *his sons and his daughters* This is very hard to read, since the Law says sons are not to die for their fathers (Deut 24:16). Teachers answer in several ways. Many think the family knew, since the goods were buried in the family tent. Others say Achan became devoted with all that was his (6:18; 7:15). Others think the family came as witnesses and "them" in verse 25 means Achan with his goods and animals. We should not claim more than the text gives. God is just, and He knew every heart in that tent.
7:25 *Why have you troubled us? The LORD will trouble you this day* God dealt just as seriously with Ananias and Sapphira in the early church (Acts 5:1-11). This was a one-time judgment under God's direct command in holy war, not a model for churches or families now. We are to restore the one who falls with gentleness (Gal 6:1). Jesus took on Himself the judgment Achan, and we, deserved (2 Cor 5:21).
7:26 *the valley of Achor* Achor means trouble, and it sounds like Achan's name. He is called "the troubler of Israel" (1 Chr 2:7). But God later promised to make "the valley of Achor for a door of hope" (Hos 2:15). That is what He does with sin that is confessed and dealt with (1 John 1:9). The place of judgment becomes a place of new beginning.
8:1 *Do not fear, and do not be dismayed* The same words as 1:9. After the defeat and the judgment in the valley of Achor, Joshua needed to hear them again. God does not hold confessed sin over His people. Once it was dealt with, He came back with encouragement. Last time Israel sent a small force because Ai looked small. This time God said to bring everyone.

king of Ai and his people and his city and his land. **2** And you shall do to Ai and to its king just as you did to Jericho (Yericho) and to its king; only its spoil and its livestock you shall plunder for yourselves. Set for yourself an ambush against the city behind it." **3** And Joshua arose, and all the people of war, to go up ***to*** Ai; and Joshua chose thirty thousand men, mighty men of valor, and sent them out by night. **4** And he commanded them, saying, "See, you ***are*** lying in wait against the city behind the city. Do not go very far from the city, and all of you be ready. **5** And I and all the people who ***are*** with me will draw near to the city. And it shall be, when they come out to meet us as at the first, that we will flee before them. **6** And they will come out after us until we have drawn them away from the city, for they will say, 'They ***are*** fleeing before us as at the first.' And we will flee before them. **7** And you shall rise up from the ambush and take possession of the city, and the LORD your God will give it into your hand. **8** And it shall be, when you have seized the city, ***that*** you shall set the city on fire. According to the word of the LORD you shall do. See, I have commanded you." **9** And Joshua sent them out, and they went to the ambush and remained between Bethel (Bet-El) and Ai, on the west of Ai. And Joshua stayed that night among the people. **10** And Joshua rose early in the morning and mustered the people, and he went up, he and the elders of Israel (Yisra'el), before the people ***to*** Ai. **11** And all the people of war who ***were*** with him went up and drew near and came opposite the city, and they encamped on the north of Ai; and the valley ***was*** between him and Ai. **12** And he took about five thousand men and set them ***as*** an ambush between Bethel and Ai, on the west of the city. **13** And they set the people, all the camp which ***was*** on the north of the city, and its rear guard on the west of the city. And Joshua went that night into the middle of the valley. **14** And it was, when the king of Ai saw ***it***, and the men of the city hurried and rose early and went out to meet Israel for battle, he and all his people, at the appointed place before the Arabah (Arava). And he did not know that an ambush ***was*** against him behind the city. **15** And Joshua and all Israel let themselves be struck before them, and they fled by the way of the wilderness. **16** And all the people who ***were*** in Ai were called together to pursue after them; and they pursued after Joshua and were drawn away from the city. **17** And not a man was left in Ai and Bethel who did not go out after Israel. And they left the city open and pursued after Israel. **18** And the LORD said to Joshua, "Stretch out the javelin that ***is*** in your hand toward Ai, for I will give it into your hand." And Joshua stretched out the javelin that ***was*** in his hand toward the city. **19** And the ambush rose quickly from its place, and they ran as he stretched out his hand, and they came into the city and captured it; and they hurried and set the city on fire. **20** And the men of Ai turned behind them and saw, and look, the smoke of the city went up to the heavens, and there were no hands in them to flee this way or that way; and the people who were fleeing to the wilderness turned back against the pursuer. **21** And Joshua and all Israel saw that the ambush had captured the city and that the smoke of the city went up, and they turned back and struck the men of Ai. **22** And these came out from the city to meet them, and they were in the middle of Israel, these on this side and those on that side. And they struck them until he had not left to them a survivor or a fugitive. **23** And the king of Ai they seized alive, and they brought him near to Joshua. **24** And it was, when Israel had finished killing all the inhabitants of Ai in the field, in the wilderness where they had pursued them, and they had all fallen by the mouth of the sword until they were finished, and all Israel returned ***to*** Ai and struck it by the mouth of the sword. **25** And all who fell that day, from man and to woman, were twelve thousand, all the people of Ai. **26** And Joshua did not draw back his hand with which he had stretched out the javelin until he had devoted to destruction all the inhabitants of Ai. **27** Only the livestock

8:2 Deut 20:14; Josh 6:21; Prov 13:22
8:3 1 Thess 5:2; Matt 24:39,50; Matt 25:6
8:4 Acts 23:21; Judg 20:29,33,36; Josh 8:16
8:5 Josh 7:5; Judg 20:31-33; Matt 10:16
8:6 Exod 14:3; Exod 15:9; Judg 20:32
8:7 Josh 8:1; 2 Kgs 5:1; Prov 21:30,31
8:8 Josh 1:9,16; 2 Sam 13:28; Josh 8:28
8:9 Josh 8:12; Josh 7:2; Gen 12:8
8:10 Josh 3:1; Josh 6:12; Josh 7:16
8:12 Josh 8:2,3
8:13 Josh 8:8,12
8:14 1 Thess 5:2; Josh 8:5,16; Judg 20:34-36
8:15 Josh 18:12
8:16 Judg 20:31; Judg 20:36-39; Josh 8:5,6
8:17 Josh 8:3,24,25; Josh 11:20; Deut 2:30
8:18 Josh 8:7,26; Exod 8:5; Job 15:25
8:20 Rev 18:9; Gen 19:28; Isa 34:10
8:22 Deut 7:2; Josh 6:21; Josh 10:28
8:23 1 Sam 15:8; Josh 8:29; Josh 10:17
8:24 Josh 10:30-41; Josh 11:10-14; Num 21:24
8:26 Josh 8:18; Exod 17:11,12
8:27 Josh 8:2; Josh 11:4; Num 31:22,26

8:2 *only its spoil and its livestock you shall plunder for yourselves* Achan died for taking what God would have given him a few days later if he had waited. Sin often grabs early what God would have given in His time.
8:6 *They are fleeing before us as at the first* Israel's earlier defeat became part of God's plan. The men of Ai were confident because they had won once, and God used their pride against them.
8:8 *According to the word of the LORD you shall do* Joshua made sure everyone knew where the plan came from.
8:12 *about five thousand men* Verse 3 mentioned thirty thousand. Some think there were two groups, a larger force to cut off help from Bethel, about two miles away, and a smaller ambush close to Ai. Others think verse 12 tells us more exactly about the same ambush. Scripture does not settle it. The main point is clear: the trap was set.
8:14 *he did not know that an ambush was against him behind the city* The king hurried out with all his men to repeat his first victory.
8:17 *they left the city open and pursued after Israel* Even the men of Bethel had come out to help. Pride makes people careless. Sure they would win again, the men of Ai left their home unguarded.
8:18 *Stretch out the javelin that is in your hand toward Ai* A javelin is a short spear, and it became the signal for the ambush. Joshua had watched Moses hold up his staff while he fought Amalek (Exod 17:8-13). He had learned then that victory comes from God, not from the sword.
8:22 *they were in the middle of Israel, these on this side and those on that side* With their city burning behind them and nowhere to go, the men of Ai were trapped between the ambush and Joshua's army.
8:25 *all who fell that day, from man and to woman, were twelve thousand* This was the same ban that fell on Jericho (see the notes at 6:21): God's judgment on the nations of Canaan after more than four centuries of patience (Gen 15:16), commanded once, for those nations in that land, and never a pattern for anyone after. It is still hard to read, and it should be.
8:26 *Joshua did not draw back his hand* Like Moses with his hands lifted until sundown (Exod 17:12), Joshua held his place until God's command was fully done. Halfway obedience had been Israel's problem at Ai the first time.
8:27 *Only the livestock and the spoil of that city Israel plundered for themselves* What Achan stole, God now gave freely to all.

and the spoil of that city Israel plundered for themselves, according to the word of the LORD which He had commanded Joshua. **28** And Joshua burned Ai and made it a mound forever, a desolation, to this day. **29** And the king of Ai he hanged on the tree until the time of evening. And as the sun went down Joshua commanded, and they took down his corpse from the tree and threw it at the entrance of the gate of the city, and they raised over him a great heap of stones ***that remains*** to this day.

The Law Read at Mount Ebal

30 Then Joshua built an altar to the LORD, the God of Israel, on the mountain of Ebal (Eval), **31** just as Moses (Moshe) the servant of the LORD had commanded the sons of Israel, as it is written in the book of the law of Moses, an altar of whole stones on which no one had wielded iron; and they offered up on it burnt offerings to the LORD, and they sacrificed peace offerings. **32** And he wrote there on the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he had written before the sons of Israel. **33** And all Israel and its elders and officers and its judges ***were*** standing on this side and on that side of the ark, before the priests, the Levites, who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD, the sojourner as well as the native, half of them in front of the mountain of Gerizim and half of them in front of the mountain of Ebal, just as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded at the first, to bless the people of Israel. **34** And afterward he read aloud all the words of the law, the blessing and the curse, according to all that is written in the book of the law. **35** There was not a word of all that Moses had commanded which Joshua did not read aloud before all the assembly of Israel, and the women and the little ones and the sojourners who were going in their midst.

JOSHUA 9

The Gibeonites Deceive Israel

1 And it was, when all the kings who ***were*** beyond the Jordan (Yarden), in the hill country and in the Shephelah and in all the coast of the Great Sea in front of the Lebanon (Levanon), the Hittites and the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, heard ***of it***, **2** and they gathered themselves together as one to wage war with Joshua (Yehoshua) and with Israel (Yisra'el) ***with*** one mouth. **3** And the inhabitants of Gibeon (Givon) heard what Joshua had done to Jericho (Yericho) and to Ai (Ay), **4** and they also acted with cunning, and they went and made themselves envoys, and they took worn-out sacks for their donkeys, and wineskins worn out and split and tied up, **5** and worn-out and patched sandals on their feet, and worn-out garments on them; and all the bread of their provision was dry ***and*** had become crumbs. **6** And they went to Joshua at the camp at Gilgal and said to him and to the men of Israel, "We have come from a distant land; and now make a covenant with us." **7** And the men of Israel said to the Hivites, "Perhaps you ***are*** dwelling in our midst; and how shall we make a covenant with you?" **8** And they said to Joshua, "We ***are*** your servants." And Joshua said to them, "Who ***are*** you, and where do you come from?" **9** And they said to him, "From a very dis-

8:28 Deut 13:16; 2 Kgs 19:25; Isa 17:1
8:29 Rev 19:17; Rev 19:18; Deut 21:22,23
8:30 Gen 8:20; Gen 12:7,8
8:31 Heb 3:5; Exod 20:24,25; Deut 27:5,6
8:32 Deut 27:2,3,8
8:33 Heb 3:5; Deut 11:29; Deut 31:12
8:34 Neh 8:2,3; Deut 31:10-12; Neh 9:3
8:35 Deut 31:12; Neh 8:2; Jer 26:2
9:1 Num 34:6; Exod 3:17; Exod 23:23,31
9:2 Acts 4:26; Acts 4:27; 2 Chr 20:1-30
9:3 Josh 10:2; Josh 9:17; 2 Sam 21:1,2
9:4 Luke 16:8; Mark 2:22; Luke 5:37,38
9:5 Luke 15:22; Josh 9:13; Deut 29:5
9:6 Josh 5:10; 2 Kgs 20:14; Josh 10:43
9:7 Josh 11:19; Judg 2:2; Gen 10:17
9:8 Deut 20:11; 2 Kgs 10:5; Josh 9:11,23,25,27
9:9 Rom 9:17; Deut 20:15; Josh 9:24

8:28 *made it a mound forever* The Hebrew word is tel, still used for an ancient ruin hill built up of layers of old cities. The place called the ruin was left a ruin. Archaeologists debate which site was Joshua's Ai, since the site long linked with it seems empty at that time. The debate does not change what God's Word says happened.
8:29 *the king of Ai he hanged on the tree until the time of evening* The body was hung up as a public sign of God's judgment and taken down at sunset, as the Law required: "one who is hanged is a curse of God" (Deut 21:23). Paul quotes this law of the cross: Christ became "a curse for us" (Gal 3:13). The king of Ai hung on a tree for his own sin. Jesus hung on a tree for ours.
8:30 *Joshua built an altar to the LORD, the God of Israel, on the mountain of Ebal* Instead of marching on, Israel went about twenty miles north to Mount Ebal near Shechem, because Moses had commanded it (Deut 27:1-8). Shechem was where God first promised Abraham the land and Abraham built his first altar in Canaan (Gen 12:6-7). Some teachers think this ceremony came later and is placed here by theme.
8:31 *an altar of whole stones on which no one had wielded iron* God did not want human tools shaping His altar (Exod 20:25). The way to God was by His design, not ours. Burnt offerings were wholly burned to show complete dedication. Peace offerings were shared in a meal to celebrate fellowship with Him.
8:32 *he wrote there on the stones a copy of the law of Moses* Likely the laws of the covenant, perhaps the core of Deuteronomy, written on large plastered stones for all to read (Deut 27:2-3, 8). God's Word was to be the law of this land.
8:33 *half of them in front of the mountain of Gerizim and half of them in front of the mountain of Ebal* Moses had commanded this (Deut 11:29; 27:11-13). Six tribes stood on Gerizim for the blessings and six on Ebal for the curses, with the ark in the valley between, where sound carries well. "The sojourner as well as the native" stood together. Foreigners like Rahab's family heard God's Word too.
8:35 *There was not a word of all that Moses had commanded which Joshua did not read aloud* Joshua did not skip the hard parts. Every word went to every person, the children included. A chapter that began with sin and defeat ends with the whole nation hearing God's Word, just as God commanded in 1:8. Many churches today read very little Scripture aloud. We still need all of it, blessings and warnings, and we need to teach it to our children.
9:1 *in the hill country and in the Shephelah* The Shephelah is the low, rolling foothills between the central mountains and the coastal plain. "Beyond the Jordan" here means west of the river.
9:2 *they gathered themselves together as one to wage war* Old rivals put aside their quarrels to fight a common enemy. When God's people move forward, opposition often unites. But the next battle would start not with a sword but with a trick.
9:3 *the inhabitants of Gibeon* Gibeon was a strong city about six miles northwest of Jerusalem, a short march from Ai. They knew they were next.
9:4 *they also acted with cunning* "Also" may look back to Israel's own trick at Ai. Every detail of their costume said, We have come a long way. Satan often works the same way. He does not always attack openly. He "disguises himself as an angel of light" (2 Cor 11:14). The danger Israel could not see was greater than the danger of armies.
9:7 *how shall we make a covenant with you?* The men of Israel knew the law. God forbade any covenant with the peoples of the land (Exod 23:32; Deut 7:2) but allowed peace with cities far away (Deut 20:10-15). The whole question was where these men really came from. "Hivites" tells us who the Gibeonites were.

tant land your servants have come, because of the name of the LORD your God; for we have heard the report of Him and all that He did in Egypt (Mitsrayim), **10** and all that He did to the two kings of the Amorites who ***were*** beyond the Jordan, to Sihon (Sichon) king of Heshbon (Cheshbon), and to Og king of Bashan, who ***was*** in Ashtaroth (Ashtarot). **11** And our elders and all the inhabitants of our land said to us, saying, 'Take provisions in your hand for the journey, and go to meet them, and say to them, "We ***are*** your servants; and now make a covenant with us."' **12** This our bread we took warm ***as*** our provision from our houses on the day we came out to come to you; and now look, it is dry and has become crumbs. **13** And these wineskins which we filled ***were*** new, and look, they have split; and these garments of ours and our sandals have worn out from the very great length of the journey." **14** And the men took from their provisions, and they did not ask the mouth of the LORD. **15** And Joshua made peace with them and made a covenant with them to let them live; and the leaders of the congregation swore to them.

The Gibeonites Become Servants

16 And it was at the end of three days after they had made a covenant with them, and they heard that they ***were*** near to him, and ***that*** they ***were*** dwelling in his midst. **17** And the sons of Israel set out and came to their cities on the third day; and their cities ***were*** Gibeon and Chephirah (Kefira) and Beeroth (Be'erot) and Kiriath-jearim (Qiryat-Ye'arim).
18 And the sons of Israel did not strike them, because the leaders of the congregation had sworn to them by the LORD, the God of Israel. And all the congregation grumbled against the leaders. **19** And all the leaders said to all the congregation, "We have sworn to them by the LORD, the God of Israel, and now we are not able to touch them. **20** This we will do to them, and let them live, so that wrath will not be on us because of the oath which we swore to them." **21** And the leaders said to them, "Let them live." And they became cutters of wood and drawers of water for all the congregation, just as the leaders had spoken to them. **22** And Joshua called for them, and he spoke to them, saying, "Why did you deceive us, saying, 'We ***are*** very distant from you,' when you ***are*** dwelling in our midst? **23** And now you ***are*** cursed, and a slave shall not be cut off from you, both cutters of wood and drawers of water for the house of my God." **24** And they answered Joshua and said, "Because it was certainly told to your servants that the LORD your God had commanded Moses (Moshe) His servant to give you all the land and to destroy all the inhabitants of the land before you; and we feared greatly for our souls because of you, and we did this thing. **25** And now, look, we ***are*** in your hand. As ***it is*** good and as ***it is*** right in your eyes to do to us, do." **26** And he did so to them, and he delivered them from the hand of the sons of Israel, and they did not kill them. **27** And Joshua made them on that day cutters of wood and drawers of water for the congregation and for the altar of the LORD, to this day, in the place which He would choose.

JOSHUA 10

The Sun Stands Still

1 And it was, when Adoni-zedek (Adoni-Tsedeq) king of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) heard that Joshua (Yehoshua) had captured Ai (Ay) and had devoted it to destruction (as he had done to Jericho (Yericho) and to its king, so he had done to Ai and to its king), and that the inhabitants of Gibeon (Givon) had made peace with Israel (Yisra'el) and were in their

9:10 Num 21:24-35; Josh 12:4; Deut 1:4
9:11 Luke 9:3; Esth 8:17; Josh 9:8
9:12 Josh 9:4,5
9:14 Num 27:21; Judg 1:1; Exod 28:30
9:15 2 Sam 21:2; Josh 11:19; Josh 2:12-19
9:16 Prov 12:19
9:17 Josh 18:25-28; Ezra 2:25; 1 Sam 7:1
9:18 Ps 15:4; 2 Sam 21:7; Eccl 5:2,6
9:19 Eccl 8:2; Eccl 9:2; Jer 4:2
9:20 2 Sam 21:1-6; 2 Chr 36:13; Prov 20:25
9:21 Deut 29:11; Josh 9:23,27; 2 Chr 2:17,18
9:22 Josh 9:6,9,10; Gen 3:13,14; Gen 27:35,36,41-45
9:23 Josh 9:21,27; Gen 9:25,26; Lev 27:28,29
9:24 Exod 23:31-33; Deut 7:1,2,23,24; Deut 20:15-17
9:25 Gen 16:6; Judg 8:15; 2 Sam 24:14
10:1 Gen 14:18; Heb 7:1; Josh 6:21

9:10 *to Sihon king of Heshbon, and to Og king of Bashan* Notice what they left out. They said nothing of Jericho or Ai, news too recent for people from a far country to have heard. Their story was a mix of truth and lies. They really had heard of the LORD, and their fear of Him was real, even if their story was false.
9:14 *they did not ask the mouth of the LORD* This is the key verse of the chapter. They looked at the bread and judged by what they could see, though the high priest with the Urim and Thummim was right there in the camp (Num 27:21). Joshua and the leaders were not wicked men, but careless ones. We pray about the big crises and decide the simple things on our own. Proverbs 3:5-6 says to know Him in all our ways, and God gives wisdom generously to those who ask (James 1:5).
9:17 *their cities were Gibeon and Chephirah and Beeroth and Kiriath-jearim* All four towns were within a day's walk.
9:18 *all the congregation grumbled against the leaders* It was not the first time Israel grumbled, but this time they had a point. Their leaders had been fooled.
9:19 *We have sworn to them by the LORD, the God of Israel* An oath in the LORD's name was binding, even when made by mistake and gained by a lie. To break it would be to take God's name in vain. The godly man "swears to his own harm and does not change" (Ps 15:4). About four hundred years later, when Saul tried to wipe out the Gibeonites, God sent famine on Israel for it (2 Sam 21:1-2). God takes our promises seriously, because He keeps His own.
9:23 *cutters of wood and drawers of water for the house of my God* Their lie was not excused, and they would serve. But look where. They would chop wood for the altar fires and carry water for the washings at the tabernacle. The people who should have been destroyed were brought near to the worship of the true God. What was meant as a curse put them close to the place of blessing.
9:24 *we feared greatly for our souls because of you, and we did this thing* They believed what God had said, as Rahab did (2:9-11). Rahab told Israel the truth and risked her life. The Gibeonites came with a lie. Yet both believed the LORD's word would come true, and both found a way to live among His people.
9:25 *As it is good and as it is right in your eyes to do to us, do* They gave up completely. That is the right posture for anyone who comes to God. We do not bargain. We surrender and trust His mercy.
9:27 *in the place which He would choose* The place where the tabernacle and later the temple would stand. Gibeon became a city of the priests (21:17), the tabernacle stood there for a time (1 Kgs 3:4), and the sons of Gibeon came back after the exile (Neh 7:25). Ask the LORD before you decide. And God's mercy is wider than we think. Whoever comes to Him in Christ, He will never cast out (John 6:37).
10:1 *Adoni-zedek king of Jerusalem* This is the first time the Bible names Jerusalem this way. His name means lord of righteousness, close to Melchizedek, king of Salem, who blessed Abraham (Gen 14:18; Heb 7:1-2). But this king was no Melchizedek. He led the fight against God's people.

midst, **2** and they feared greatly, because Gibeon ***was*** a great city, like one of the royal cities, and because it ***was*** greater than Ai, and all its men ***were*** mighty men. **3** And Adoni-zedek king of Jerusalem sent to Hoham king of Hebron (Chevron), and to Piram king of Jarmuth (Yarmut), and to Japhia (Yafia) king of Lachish (Lakhish), and to Debir (Devir) king of Eglon, saying, **4** "Come up to me and help me, and let us strike Gibeon, for it has made peace with Joshua and with the sons of Israel." **5** And the five kings of the Amorites, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, the king of Eglon, gathered together and went up, they and all their armies, and they encamped against Gibeon and waged war against it. **6** And the men of Gibeon sent to Joshua at the camp at Gilgal, saying, "Do not let your hands drop from your servants. Come up to us quickly, and save us and help us, for all the kings of the Amorites who dwell in the hill country have gathered together against us." **7** And Joshua went up from Gilgal, he and all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valor. **8** And the LORD said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid of them, for I have given them into your hand. Not a man of them will stand before you." **9** And Joshua came to them suddenly; all the night he had gone up from Gilgal. **10** And the LORD threw them into confusion before Israel, and He struck them ***with*** a great striking at Gibeon, and He pursued them by the way of the ascent of Beth-horon (Bet-Choron), and He struck them as far as Azekah (Azeqa) and as far as Makkedah (Maqeda). **11** And it was, as they fled before Israel, they ***were*** on the descent of Beth-horon, and the LORD threw down on them great stones from the heavens as far as Azekah, and they died. More ***were*** those who died by the hailstones than those whom the sons of Israel killed with the sword. **12** Then Joshua spoke to the LORD on the day the LORD gave the Amorites before the sons of Israel, and he said in the eyes of Israel, "Sun, be still at Gibeon, and moon, in the valley of Aijalon (Ayalon)." **13** And the sun was still, and the moon stood, until the nation took vengeance on its enemies. Is it not written in the book of Jashar? And the sun stood in the middle of the heavens and did not hurry to go ***down*** about a whole day. **14** And there has been no day like that before it or after it, ***that*** the LORD listened to the voice of a man; for the LORD fought for Israel. **15** And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to the camp at Gilgal.

Five Kings in the Cave

16 And these five kings fled and hid themselves in the cave at Makkedah. **17** And it was told to Joshua, saying, "The five kings have been found hidden in the cave at Makkedah." **18** And Joshua said, "Roll great stones to the mouth of the cave, and appoint men over it to guard them. **19** And you, do not stay ***there***; pursue after your enemies and attack their rear. Do not allow them to go into their cities, for the LORD your God has given them into your hand." **20** And it was, when Joshua and the sons of Israel had finished striking them ***with*** a very great striking until they were finished, and the survivors who survived of them went into the fortified

10:2 Exod 15:14-16; Deut 11:25; Josh 2:9-13,24
10:3 2 Chr 11:9; Mic 1:13; Josh 10:1,5
10:4 Acts 21:28; Josh 9:15; Josh 10:1
10:5 Josh 9:1,2; Gen 15:16; Isa 8:9,10
10:6 Josh 5:10; Josh 9:6; 2 Kgs 4:24
10:7 Isa 8:12,14
10:8 Josh 11:6; Deut 3:2; Josh 1:5-9
10:9 1 Sam 11:9-11; Prov 22:29; Prov 24:11,12
10:10 Josh 16:3,5; Judg 4:15; Ps 18:14
10:11 Rev 11:19; Isa 28:2; Ps 18:12-14
10:12 Hab 3:11; Isa 38:8; Isa 60:20
10:13 Matt 24:29; 2 Sam 1:18; Isa 38:8
10:14 Josh 10:42; Deut 1:30; Isa 38:8
10:15 Josh 10:6,43
10:16 Rev 6:15; Ps 48:4-6; Ps 139:7-10
10:18 Josh 10:22; Judg 9:46-49; Job 21:30
10:19 Ps 18:37-41; Jer 48:10; Isa 9:14,15
10:20 Josh 8:24; Josh 10:10; 2 Chr 13:17

10:2 *Gibeon was a great city, like one of the royal cities* Gibeon was only about six miles from Jerusalem. If it joined Israel, Jerusalem lay open.
10:4 *let us strike Gibeon, for it has made peace with Joshua* They attacked not Israel but the city that changed sides, to make an example of it. When someone turns to the LORD, the old crowd is not always happy about it.
10:6 *Do not let your hands drop from your servants* Joshua had every human reason to say no, since the Gibeonites had lied to him. But a covenant is a covenant. Once they were under it, Israel fought for them as its own. We come to God with nothing to offer and often with mixed motives, but once we are His in Christ, He does not let His hands drop from us.
10:9 *all the night he had gone up from Gilgal* A march of about twenty miles, climbing some three thousand feet in the dark, to strike at dawn. God's promise in verse 8 did not make Joshua lazy. It made him bold.
10:10 *the LORD threw them into confusion before Israel* The same word is used for what God did to Egypt at the Red Sea (Exod 14:24). The ascent of Beth-horon was a steep pass leading west out of the hills toward the low-lands.
10:11 *the LORD threw down on them great stones from the heavens* Giant hail-stones fell on the fleeing enemy, not on Israel, and killed more than the sword did. The battle belonged to the LORD, and He made sure Israel knew it. God speaks of storing hail "for a day of battle and war" (Job 38:23).
10:12 *Sun, be still at Gibeon, and moon, in the valley of Aijalon* Joshua prayed first, then spoke to the sun and moon before all Israel. The sun over Gibeon to the east and the moon over Aijalon to the west may suggest early morning. He had a long day of battle ahead and an enemy that could escape into walled cities by nightfall.
10:13 *Is it not written in the book of Jashar?* A book of Israel's songs and poems about its heroes that has not survived. David's lament for Saul and Jonathan was also recorded there (2 Sam 1:18).
10:13 *did not hurry to go down about a whole day* I take this as a real miracle. The writer says it in plain words in verses 13 and 14. God made the sun and holds all things together (Col 1:17). Some believe He slowed or stopped the earth's turning. Others think He lengthened the light in that place. Some read "be still" as asking the sun to stop beating down, or see a sky omen or poetic language, but those views fit poorly with verses 13 and 14. Scripture tells what God did, not how. The story of scientists finding a missing day is not true, and we do not need it (compare 2 Kgs 20:9-11).
10:14 *the LORD listened to the voice of a man* The wonder is not only that the sun stood still, but that the Creator of the sun heard Joshua's prayer. This day was unique, so we should not expect God to stop the sun for us. But Elijah was a man like us, and God answered him (James 5:17). We can pray boldly, because the same God listens.
10:15 *Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to the camp at Gilgal* This repeats verse 43, though verse 21 still has Joshua at Makkedah. Some think it ends the quotation from Jashar. Others think the writer gives the end of the campaign early and then goes back to tell the rest.
10:18 *Roll great stones to the mouth of the cave* The kings could wait. The armies could not be allowed back into their walled cities. Joshua kept first things first.
10:20 *the survivors who survived of them went into the fortified cities* Some of the enemy did escape. That matters when we read later that Joshua "did not leave a survivor" in city after city.

cities, **21** and all the people returned to the camp, to Joshua at Makkedah, in peace. No one sharpened his tongue against the sons of Israel, against any man. **22** And Joshua said, "Open the mouth of the cave, and bring out to me these five kings from the cave." **23** And they did so, and they brought out to him these five kings from the cave: the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, the king of Eglon. **24** And it was, when they brought out these kings to Joshua, and Joshua called for every man of Israel, and he said to the commanders of the men of war who had gone with him, "Draw near, put your feet on the necks of these kings." And they drew near and put their feet on their necks. **25** And Joshua said to them, "Do not be afraid, and do not be dismayed. Be strong and be bold, for thus the LORD will do to all your enemies with whom you are fighting." **26** And afterward Joshua struck them and put them to death, and he hanged them on five trees; and they were hanging on the trees until the evening. **27** And it was at the time of the going down of the sun, Joshua commanded, and they took them down from the trees and threw them into the cave where they had hidden themselves, and they put great stones over the mouth of the cave, ***which remain*** to this very day.

The Southern Cities Taken

28 And Makkedah Joshua captured on that day, and he struck it by the mouth of the sword, and its king. He devoted them to destruction and every soul that ***was*** in it; he did not leave a survivor. And he did to the king of Makkedah just as he had done to the king of Jericho. **29** And Joshua passed on, and all Israel with him, from Makkedah ***to*** Libnah (Livna), and he fought against Libnah. **30** And the LORD gave it also, and its king, into the hand of Israel; and he struck it by the mouth of the sword, and every soul that ***was*** in it. He did not leave a survivor in it, and he did to its king just as he had done to the king of Jericho. **31** And Joshua passed on, and all Israel with him, from Libnah to Lachish, and he encamped against it and fought against it. **32** And the LORD gave Lachish into the hand of Israel, and he captured it on the second day, and he struck it by the mouth of the sword, and every soul that ***was*** in it, according to all that he had done to Libnah. **33** Then Horam king of Gezer came up to help Lachish; and Joshua struck him and his people until he had not left to him a survivor. **34** And Joshua passed on, and all Israel with him, from Lachish to Eglon; and they encamped against it and fought against it. **35** And they captured it on that day and struck it by the mouth of the sword; and every soul that ***was*** in it he devoted to destruction on that day, according to all that he had done to Lachish. **36** And Joshua went up, and all Israel with him, from Eglon to Hebron, and they fought against it. **37** And they captured it and struck it by the mouth of the sword, and its king and all its cities and every soul that ***was*** in it. He did not leave a survivor, according to all that he had done to Eglon; and he devoted it to destruction and every soul that ***was*** in it. **38** And Joshua turned back, and all Israel with him, to Debir, and he fought against it. **39** And he captured it and its king and all its cities, and they struck them by the mouth of the sword and devoted to destruction every soul that ***was*** in it. He did not leave a survivor. Just as he had done to Hebron, so he did to Debir and to its king, and just as he had done to Libnah and to its king. **40** And Joshua struck all the land, the hill country and the Negeb (Negev) and the Shephelah and the slopes, and all their kings. He did not leave a survivor, and he devoted to destruction everything that breathed, just as the LORD, the God of Israel, had commanded. **41** And Joshua struck them from Kadesh-barnea (Qadesh-Barnea) and as far as Gaza (Aza), and all the land of

10:21 Exod 11:7; Isa 54:17; Isa 57:4
10:22 1 Sam 15:32
10:23 Josh 10:1,3,5
10:24 Acts 2:35; Mal 4:3; Ps 110:1,5
10:25 Acts 2:35; Josh 1:9; Deut 31:6-8
10:26 Josh 8:29; Judg 8:21; 1 Sam 15:33
10:27 Josh 8:29; 2 Sam 18:17; Josh 4:9
10:28 Josh 6:21; Josh 15:41; Josh 10:32,35,37,39
10:29 Josh 21:13; Josh 15:42; Josh 12:15
10:31 Josh 10:3,5; Josh 12:11; Josh 15:39
10:33 Judg 1:29; Josh 16:3,10; Josh 12:12
10:34 Josh 10:3; Josh 12:12; Josh 15:39
10:35 Josh 10:37; Lev 26:44; Job 19:10
10:36 Judg 1:10; Josh 15:13,54; Josh 14:13,14
10:38 Josh 15:15,49; Josh 12:13; Josh 21:15
10:39 Josh 10:33,37,40; Josh 11:8; Deut 3:3
10:40 Deut 7:2-16; Josh 15:21-63; Josh 18:21-28
10:41 Acts 8:26; Josh 11:16; Josh 15:51

10:21 *No one sharpened his tongue against the sons of Israel* No one dared say a word against them. The land was silent with fear, and no Israelite losses are mentioned.
10:24 *put your feet on the necks of these kings* In the ancient world this was a public sign of total victory. It was a lesson in faith for the officers, with many battles still ahead. Scripture uses the same picture for Christ: "He must reign until He has put all the enemies under His feet" (1 Cor 15:25; Ps 110:1). In Him our victory is just as sure (Rom 16:20).
10:25 *Be strong and be bold* The words God spoke to Joshua in chapter 1, Joshua now passes on to his officers.
10:27 *threw them into the cave where they had hidden themselves* The kings were killed, then hung on trees as a sign of God's judgment, and taken down at sunset as the Law required (Deut 21:22-23). The cave they hid in became their grave. This was judgment for that time and that war under God's command (Deut 7:24). It gives no one today permission to treat enemies this way. We are to love our enemies and leave vengeance to God (Matt 5:44; Rom 12:19).
10:28 *Makkedah Joshua captured on that day* The rest of the chapter reads like a war report, short and repetitive, city after city. Notice who gives the victory each time: "the LORD gave it" (10:30, 32).
10:33 *Horam king of Gezer came up to help Lachish* Lachish was one of the strongest fortresses of the south. Gezer, farther north and west, was not taken at this time, and Canaanites kept living there a long while (16:10).
10:36 *from Eglon to Hebron* Hebron was where Abraham lived and was buried (Gen 23:19), and where the spies saw the sons of Anak forty years before (Num 13:22). The city that frightened the first generation fell to the second. Its king had died at Makkedah (10:23, 26), so this was probably a new king or the ruler left behind. Scripture does not explain.
10:39 *Just as he had done to Hebron, so he did to Debir* Later Caleb had to take Hebron again and Othniel took Debir (15:13-17; Judg 1:10-13). Canaanites who escaped came back into some cities after the army moved on. Joshua broke their power. The tribes still had to settle and hold the land.
10:40 *he devoted to destruction everything that breathed* The Negeb is the dry south country. This is the ban again (see 6:21), God's judgment on nations He had waited on since Abraham (Gen 15:16), commanded once for that land and never a pattern for anyone today. The chapter itself says some escaped (10:20), and Canaanites remain later (15:63). Many scholars read these phrases as the sweeping language of ancient war reports for the complete defeat of the cities that fought. Others take them strictly for the cities named, with later Canaanites as people who fled and returned.
10:41 *all the land of Goshen* A region in southern Canaan, not the Goshen in Egypt.

Goshen and as far as Gibeon. **42** And all these kings and their land Joshua captured at one time, for the LORD, the God of Israel, fought for Israel. **43** And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to the camp at Gilgal.

JOSHUA 11

The Northern Kings Defeated

1 And it was, when Jabin (Yavin) king of Hazor (Chatsor) heard, and he sent to Jobab (Yovav) king of Madon and to the king of Shimron and to the king of Akshaph (Akhshaf), **2** and to the kings who ***were*** on the north in the hill country, and in the Arabah (Arava) south of Chinneroth (Kinarot), and in the Shephelah, and in the heights of Dor on the west, **3** ***to*** the Canaanites on the east and on the west, and the Amorites and the Hittites and the Perizzites and the Jebusites in the hill country, and the Hivites under ***Mount*** Hermon (Chermon) in the land of Mizpah (Mitspa). **4** And they went out, they and all their armies with them, a people as numerous as the sand that ***is*** on the shore of the sea for multitude, and horses and chariots very many. **5** And all these kings met, and they came and encamped together at the waters of Merom to wage war with Israel (Yisra'el). **6** And the LORD said to Joshua (Yehoshua), "Do not be afraid because of them, for tomorrow about this time I ***am*** giving all of them slain before Israel. Their horses you shall hamstring, and their chariots you shall burn with fire." **7** And Joshua came, and all the people of war with him, against them at the waters of Merom suddenly, and they fell on them. **8** And the LORD gave them into the hand of Israel, and they struck them and pursued them as far as Great Sidon (Tsidon) and as far as Misrephoth-maim (Misrefot-Mayim) and as far as the valley of Mizpeh (Mitspe) eastward; and they struck them until he had not left to them a survivor. **9** And Joshua did to them just as the LORD had said to him: their horses he hamstrung, and their chariots he burned with fire. **10** And Joshua turned back at that time and captured Hazor, and its king he struck with the sword; for Hazor formerly, it ***was*** the head of all these kingdoms. **11** And they struck every soul that ***was*** in it by the mouth of the sword, devoting ***them*** to destruction; there was not left anything that breathed. And Hazor he burned with fire. **12** And all the cities of these kings and all their kings Joshua captured, and he struck them by the mouth of the sword; he devoted them to destruction, just as Moses (Moshe) the servant of the LORD had commanded. **13** Only, all the cities that were standing on their mounds, Israel did not burn them, except Hazor alone; Joshua burned ***it***. **14** And all the spoil of these cities and the livestock the sons of Israel plundered for themselves. Only, every man they struck by the mouth of the sword until they had destroyed them; they did not leave anything that breathed. **15** Just as the LORD had commanded Moses His servant, so Moses commanded Joshua, and so Joshua did. He did not set aside a thing from all that the LORD had commanded Moses.

Summary of the Conquest

16 And Joshua took all this land: the hill country and all the Negeb (Negev) and all the land of Goshen and the Shephelah and the Arabah and the hill country of Israel and its Shephelah, **17** from Mount Halak that goes up ***to*** Seir (Se'ir), and as far as Baal-gad in the valley of the Lebanon (Levanon) under Mount Hermon. And all their kings he captured, and he struck them and put them to death. **18** Many days Joshua

10:42 Josh 10:14; Exod 14:14,25; Deut 20:4
10:43 Josh 10:15; Josh 4:19; 1 Sam 11:14
11:1 Josh 11:10; Judg 4:2,17; Josh 12:19
11:2 Josh 12:3; Judg 1:27; Num 34:11
11:3 Judg 3:3; Josh 18:26; Gen 31:49
11:4 Heb 11:12; Judg 7:12; 1 Sam 13:5
11:5 Ps 3:1; Ps 118:10-12; Isa 8:9
11:6 Josh 10:8; 2 Sam 8:4; Josh 11:9
11:7 Josh 10:9; 1 Thess 5:2,3
11:8 Matt 15:21; Josh 13:6; Josh 19:28
11:9 Josh 11:6; Ezek 39:9,10
11:10 Josh 11:1; Judg 4:2
11:11 Josh 10:40
11:12 Deut 7:2; Deut 20:16,17; Josh 10:28,30,32,35,37,39,40
11:13 Jer 30:18
11:14 Josh 8:27; Num 31:9; Deut 6:10,11
11:15 Josh 1:7; Exod 34:11-13; Deut 7:2
11:16 Josh 10:41; Josh 12:8; Josh 11:21
11:17 Deut 7:24; Josh 11:3; Josh 13:5
11:18 Josh 11:23; Josh 14:7-10

10:42 *for the LORD, the God of Israel, fought for Israel* That is the key to the chapter (10:14). Joshua marched all night and fought all day, but the hail, the panic, the long day and every city taken had one source. "At one time" means in one campaign.
11:1 *Jabin king of Hazor* Hazor, in the far north above the Sea of Galilee, was the largest city in the land, "the head of all these kingdoms" (11:10), many times the size of Jericho. Jabin may have been a royal title, since another Jabin of Hazor oppressed Israel in Deborah's day (Judg 4:2).
11:2 *in the Arabah south of Chinneroth* The Arabah is the Jordan valley, and Chinneroth is the Sea of Galilee. The whole north rose up at once.
11:4 *horses and chariots very many* This was the biggest army Israel had faced. Chariots were the tanks of the ancient world, able to run down foot soldiers on open ground. Israel had none. But the size of the enemy never changes the size of God (1:5).
11:5 *the waters of Merom* A spring or stream in the hill country of Galilee, a few miles from Hazor, from which the allies could move onto the plains where chariots were strongest.
11:6 *Their horses you shall hamstring, and their chariots you shall burn with fire* To hamstring a horse is to cut the tendon at the back of its leg so it can no longer be used in war. Chariots would have been useful, but God knew that if Israel had them, they would trust in them (Deut 17:16). "These trust in chariotry and these in horses" (Ps 20:7). When we trust our money, skills or programs more than the Lord, it is time to burn the chariots.
11:7 *against them at the waters of Merom suddenly* As at Gibeon, Joshua struck by surprise, in the hills where chariots were useless, before they reached open ground.
11:9 *Joshua did to them just as the LORD had said to him* He obeyed to the letter, even when it meant destroying weapons that could have been useful.
11:11 *there was not left anything that breathed. And Hazor he burned with fire* Hazor, the head of the northern league, was put under the ban like Jericho. The same truths apply as at 6:21 and 10:40: God's judgment on nations He had waited on for centuries, a command given once for that land, never a pattern for today. Archaeologists have found a heavy layer of burning at Hazor, which some date to Joshua's time and others later.
11:13 *all the cities that were standing on their mounds, Israel did not burn them* The other cities were left for Israel to live in, "great and good cities which you did not build" (Deut 6:10).
11:15 *so Moses commanded Joshua, and so Joshua did* This is the summary of Joshua's life as a leader. God's Word passed from the LORD to Moses to Joshua, and Joshua obeyed it all. That is the kind of servant God uses: not perfect, but faithful.
11:17 *from Mount Halak that goes up to Seir, and as far as Baal-gad* From a mountain in the far south toward Edom to the valley under Mount Hermon in the far north, well over 150 miles end to end.
11:18 *Many days Joshua made war with all these kings* These chapters can sound as if it all took a few weeks. From Caleb's words (14:7-10), the main wars seem to have lasted about seven years.

made war with all these kings. **19** There was not a city that made peace with the sons of Israel except the Hivites, the inhabitants of Gibeon (Givon); everything they took in battle. **20** For it was from the LORD to strengthen their heart to meet the battle with Israel, in order to devote them to destruction, so that there would be no favor for them, but in order to destroy them, just as the LORD had commanded Moses. **21** And Joshua came at that time and cut off the Anakim from the hill country, from Hebron (Chevron), from Debir (Devir), from Anab (Anav), and from all the hill country of Judah (Yehuda), and from all the hill country of Israel; with their cities Joshua devoted them to destruction.
22 There were not left Anakim in the land of the sons of Israel; only in Gaza (Aza), in Gath (Gat), and in Ashdod did they remain. **23** And Joshua took all the land, according to all that the LORD had spoken to Moses, and Joshua gave it for an inheritance to Israel according to their divisions, by their tribes. And the land had rest from war.

JOSHUA 12

Kings Defeated East of the Jordan

1 And these ***are*** the kings of the land whom the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) struck, and they took possession of their land beyond the Jordan (Yarden) toward the rising of the sun, from the wadi of Arnon as far as the mountain of Hermon (Chermon), and all the Arabah (Arava) eastward: **2** Sihon (Sichon) king of the Amorites, who dwelt in Heshbon (Cheshbon), ruling from Aroer (Aro'er), which ***is*** on the edge of the wadi of Arnon, and the middle of the wadi, and half of the Gilead (Gilad), and as far as Jabbok (Yaboq) the wadi, the territory of the sons of Ammon (Amon); **3** and the Arabah as far as the sea of Chinneroth (Kinarot) eastward, and as far as the sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, eastward, the way of Beth-jeshimoth (Bet-Hayshimot), and from the south under the slopes of the Pisgah (Pisga); **4** and the territory of Og king of the Bashan, of the remnant of the Rephaim, who dwelt in Ashtaroth (Ashtarot) and in Edrei, **5** and ruling over the mountain of Hermon and over Salecah (Salkha) and over all the Bashan as far as the territory of the Geshurites and the Maacathites, and half of the Gilead, the territory of Sihon king of Heshbon. **6** Moses (Moshe) the servant of the LORD and the sons of Israel struck them; and Moses the servant of the LORD gave it ***as*** a possession to the Reubenites and to the Gadites and to the half of the tribe of Manasseh (Menashe).

Kings Defeated West of the Jordan

7 And these ***are*** the kings of the land whom Joshua (Yehoshua) and the sons of Israel struck beyond the Jordan westward, from Baal-gad in the valley of the Lebanon (Levanon) and as far as Mount Halak that goes up toward Seir (Se'ir); and Joshua gave it to the tribes of Israel ***as*** a possession according to their divisions, **8** in the hill country and in the Shephelah and in the Arabah and on the slopes and in the wilderness and in the Negeb (Negev), the Hittites, the Amorites, and the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites: **9** the king of Jericho (Yericho), one; the king of Ai (Ay), which ***is*** beside Bethel (Bet-El), one; **10** the king of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), one; the king of Hebron (Chevron), one; **11** the king of Jarmuth (Yarmut), one; the king of Lachish (Lakhish), one; **12** the king of Eglon, one; the king of Gezer, one; **13** the king of Debir (Devir), one; the king

11:19 Josh 9:3-27
11:20 Exod 4:21; Rom 9:18,22,23; Deut 20:16,17
11:21 Deut 9:2; Josh 15:13,14; Num 13:22,23
11:22 1 Sam 17:4; Josh 15:46; Judg 3:3
11:23 Heb 4:8; Num 26:52-55; Josh 14:1-19
12:1 Deut 3:8,9; Num 21:13,24; Josh 1:15
12:2 Gen 32:22; Num 21:23-30; Deut 2:24-37
12:3 John 6:1; Matt 15:29; Deut 3:17
12:4 Deut 1:4; Num 21:33-35; Josh 13:12
12:5 Deut 3:14; Josh 13:11; 1 Sam 27:8
12:6 Luke 22:39; Num 21:24-35; Josh 13:8-32
12:7 Josh 11:17; Josh 3:17; Josh 9:1
12:8 Josh 11:16; Josh 10:40; Josh 9:1
12:9 Josh 6:2-21; Josh 8:1,17,29-35
12:10 Josh 10:23; Josh 10:3,23,36,37
12:11 Josh 10:3-23
12:12 Josh 10:33; Josh 10:3,23; Josh 15:39
12:13 Josh 10:3,38; Josh 15:36

11:19 *except the Hivites, the inhabitants of Gibeon* Gibeon proved that peace was possible. No other city sought it.
11:20 *it was from the LORD to strengthen their heart to meet the battle with Israel* Of Pharaoh we read both that he hardened his own heart (Exod 8:15) and that God hardened it (Exod 9:12). God did not force tender, seeking hearts to rebel. The Canaanites had heard of the LORD for forty years (2:9-11). Rahab turned. The rest chose to fight. Hardening is God's judgment on those already set against Him, giving them over to their choice (Rom 1:24-28). "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts" (Heb 3:7-8).
11:21 *cut off the Anakim from the hill country* The giants who terrified the ten spies forty years before (Num 13:33) were driven out by the second generation.
11:22 *only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod did they remain* These coastal cities later became Philistine cities. About four hundred years later a giant came out of Gath to defy Israel, and David brought him down (1 Sam 17:4). The enemy left in the land came back to cause trouble.
11:23 *Joshua took all the land* Joshua broke the power of the kings and armies across the land, but areas remained to be settled (13:1-6). God said He would drive them out little by little (Exod 23:29-30). An inheritance is property passed down in a family. Israel did not buy or earn the land. It was given as sons receive from their father.
11:23 *the land had rest from war* The rest was real, but not final: "there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God" (Heb 4:9). The final rest is found in Christ: "Come to Me, all who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matt 11:28).
12:2 *Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt in Heshbon* The list begins east of the Jordan, with land taken before Moses died. Sihon's kingdom ran from the Arnon, flowing into the Dead Sea from the east, north to the Jabbok. He refused Israel peaceful passage and came out to fight, and God gave him into their hand (Num 21:21-31; Deut 2:26-36).
12:4 *Og king of the Bashan, of the remnant of the Rephaim* The Rephaim were a people of giants, like the Anakim. Og's iron bedstead was about thirteen and a half feet long (Deut 3:11). Bashan was the rich plateau east of the Sea of Galilee. Israel sang of these two kings for centuries, with the refrain, "for His steadfast love is forever" (Ps 136:19-22). These victories were proof of God's love.
12:6 *Moses the servant of the LORD and the sons of Israel struck them* Why list Moses' victories in a book about Joshua? The conquest was one work of God, begun under Moses and finished under Joshua. Every generation of God's people builds on what God did through those before them.
12:8 *in the hill country and in the Shephelah and in the Arabah* Every region and every people of the land is covered: hill country, foothills, Jordan valley, slopes, wilderness and the dry south.
12:9 *the king of Jericho, one; the king of Ai, which is beside Bethel, one* The first part of the list follows the story: Jericho and Ai, the five kings who died at Makkedah, Gezer, and the southern cities. The word "one" after every king counts each victory separately. None was lost. None was forgotten.

of Geder, one; **14** the king of Hormah (Chorma), one; the king of Arad, one; **15** the king of Libnah (Livna), one; the king of Adullam (Adulam), one; **16** the king of Makkedah (Maqeda), one; the king of Bethel, one; **17** the king of Tappuah (Tapuach), one; the king of Hepher (Chefer), one; **18** the king of Aphek (Afeq), one; the king of Lasharon, one; **19** the king of Madon, one; the king of Hazor (Chatsor), one; **20** the king of Shimron-meron, one; the king of Akshaph (Akhshaf), one; **21** the king of Taanach (Ta'anakh), one; the king of Megiddo (Megido), one; **22** the king of Kedesh (Qedesh), one; the king of Jokneam (Yoqne'am) of the Carmel (Karmel), one; **23** the king of Dor, of the height of Dor, one; the king of Goiim (Goyim) of Gilgal, one; **24** the king of Tirzah (Tirtsa), one. All ***the*** kings ***were*** thirty-one.

JOSHUA 13

Land Still to Be Taken

1 And Joshua (Yehoshua) was old, come into the days; and the LORD said to him, "You are old, come into the days, and very much ***of*** the land remains to take possession of it. **2** This ***is*** the land that remains: all the regions of the Philistines and all the Geshurites, **3** from the Shihor (Shichor), which ***is*** on the face of Egypt (Mitsrayim), and as far as the border of Ekron (Eqron) northward, it is reckoned to the Canaanites; the five rulers of the Philistines, the Gazites and the Ashdodites, the Ashkelonites, the Gittites, and the Ekronites; and the Avvim (Avim); **4** from the south, all the land of the Canaanites, and Mearah (Me'ara), which ***belongs*** to the Sidonians, as far as Aphek (Afeq), as far as the border of the Amorites; **5** and the land of the Gebalites, and all the Lebanon (Levanon) toward the rising of the sun, from Baal-gad under the mountain of Hermon (Chermon) as far as the entrance of Hamath (Chamat); **6** all the inhabitants of the hill country from the Lebanon as far as Misrephoth-maim (Misrefot-Mayim), all the Sidonians. I Myself will dispossess them from before the sons of Israel (Yisra'el). Only make it fall to Israel for an inheritance, just as I have commanded you. **7** And now, divide this land for an inheritance to the nine tribes and the half of the tribe of Manasseh (Menashe)."

The Inheritance East of the Jordan

8 With it the Reubenites and the Gadites have received their inheritance, which Moses (Moshe) gave to them beyond the Jordan (Yarden) eastward, just as Moses the servant of the LORD gave to them: **9** from Aroer (Aro'er), which ***is*** on the edge of the wadi of Arnon, and the city that ***is*** in the middle of the wadi, and all the plain ***of*** Medeba (Medva) as far as Dibon (Divon); **10** and all the cities of Sihon (Sichon) king of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon (Cheshbon), as far as the border of the sons of Ammon (Amon); **11** and the Gilead (Gilad), and the territory of the Geshurites and the Maacathites, and all the mountain of Hermon, and all the Bashan as far as Salecah (Salkha); **12** all the kingdom of Og in the Bashan, who reigned in Ashtaroth (Ashtarot) and in Edrei; he was left of the remnant of the Rephaim; and Moses struck them and dispossessed them. **13** And the sons of Israel did not dispossess the Geshurites and the Maacathites; and Geshur and Maacah (Ma'akha) have dwelt in the midst of

12:14 Num 21:1; Num 14:45; Num 21:3
12:15 Josh 10:29,30; 1 Sam 22:1
12:16 Josh 10:28; Josh 8:17; Judg 1:22
12:17 1 Kgs 4:10; Josh 15:34; Josh 19:13
12:18 Josh 19:30; 1 Sam 4:1; Isa 33:9
12:19 Josh 11:1; Judg 4:2
12:20 Josh 11:1; Josh 19:15; Josh 19:25
12:21 Josh 17:11; Judg 5:19; 1 Kgs 4:12
12:22 Josh 19:37; Josh 21:32; Josh 15:23
12:23 Josh 11:2; Josh 17:11; Gen 14:1,2
12:24 1 Kgs 16:23; 2 Kgs 15:14
13:1 Josh 14:10; Deut 31:3; Josh 23:1,2
13:2 Josh 13:11,13; Judg 3:1; Joel 3:4
13:3 Jer 2:18; Judg 3:3; Deut 2:23
13:4 Josh 19:30; 1 Sam 4:1; Judg 1:34-36
13:5 1 Kgs 5:18; Josh 12:7; Ps 83:7
13:6 Josh 11:8; Josh 23:13; Judg 2:21-23
13:7 Num 26:53-56; Num 33:54; Num 32:2-14
13:8 Mark 3:8; Josh 4:12; Josh 22:4
13:9 Mark 3:8; Josh 13:16; Num 21:30
13:10 Num 21:24-26
13:11 Josh 12:2-5; Deut 4:47,48; 1 Chr 2:23
13:12 Josh 12:4; Deut 3:10,11; Josh 14:3,4
13:13 Josh 13:11; Josh 23:12,13; Num 33:55

12:14 *the king of Hormah, one; the king of Arad, one* Some kings here are not described in Joshua. Arad was the Canaanite king who attacked Israel in the wilderness, and Hormah was where Israel defeated his people (Num 21:1-3).
12:21 *the king of Megiddo, one* Megiddo guarded the main pass through the hills and saw many battles in history. Its name lies behind Armageddon, where the armies of the world will gather at the end of this age (Rev 16:16), and where the Lord Jesus will return in power and defeat them (Rev 19:11-21).
12:23 *the king of Goiim of Gilgal, one* Goiim means nations. Tirzah, in the next verse, later became for a time the capital of the northern kingdom (1 Kgs 15:33).
12:24 *All the kings were thirty-one* Thirty-one victories, all from God's hand. Yet defeating a king did not always mean Israel lived in his city. Manasseh did not drive out Taanach, Dor or Megiddo (Judg 1:27), and Bethel had to be taken again (Judg 1:22-26). In Christ the victory over sin and Satan is already won (Col 2:15), but we still live it out day by day, leaving no corner of life where the enemy may stay.
13:1 *very much of the land remains to take possession of it* Joshua died at 110 (24:29), so he may have been close to ninety or a hundred here. He had broken the kings' power, but Israel did not yet live in all the land. God told His servant the truth, then told him what to do next. Our work for God may change as we age, but it does not end.
13:3 *the five rulers of the Philistines* In the five cities of Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath and Ekron. The Philistines would trouble Israel for centuries, through the days of Samson, Saul and David. The Gebalites (13:5) were the people of Byblos on the northern coast.
13:6 *I Myself will dispossess them from before the sons of Israel* The work did not depend on Joshua's strength but on God. Joshua was to divide even land the enemy still held, writing the tribes' names on it because God had promised it. God gives us promises before we see them fulfilled and asks us to live as though His word is settled. It is.
13:7 *divide this land for an inheritance* The land was not owned by king or nation. It was the LORD's (Lev 25:23), given to each tribe, clan and family and passed from father to son. That is why these lists matter. Each name was a home God gave a real family.
13:8 *the Reubenites and the Gadites have received their inheritance* The eastern tribes' land ran from Aroer on the Arnon in the south, through the plain of Medeba and Sihon's kingdom, up through Gilead and Bashan, the old kingdom of Og (Num 32).
13:13 *the sons of Israel did not dispossess the Geshurites and the Maacathites* The first of several notes like this (15:63; 16:10; 17:12-13). Later David married a daughter of Geshur's king, and her son Absalom fled there after murdering his brother (2 Sam 3:3; 13:37-38). What we leave in place often comes back to trouble us.

Israel until this day. **14** Only to the tribe of the Levites he did not give an inheritance; the fire offerings of the LORD, the God of Israel, that ***is*** its inheritance, just as He had spoken to it. **15** And Moses gave to the tribe of the sons of Reuben (Reuven) by their clans. **16** And the territory was theirs from Aroer, which ***is*** on the edge of the wadi of Arnon, and the city that ***is*** in the middle of the wadi, and all the plain by Medeba; **17** Heshbon and all its cities that ***are*** in the plain: Dibon and Bamoth-baal (Bamot-Ba'al) and Beth-baal-meon (Bet-Ba'al-Meon), **18** and Jahaz (Yahats) and Kedemoth (Qedemot) and Mephaath (Mefa'at), **19** and Kiriathaim (Qiryatayim) and Sibmah (Sivma) and Zereth-shahar (Tseret-Hashachar) on the mountain of the valley, **20** and Beth-peor (Bet-Pe'or) and the slopes of the Pisgah (Pisga) and Beth-jeshimoth (Bet-Hayshimot), **21** and all the cities of the plain, and all the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon, whom Moses struck, him and the leaders of Midian (Midyan), Evi and Rekem (Reqem) and Zur (Tsur) and Hur (Chur) and Reba (Reva), the princes of Sihon, dwelling in the land. **22** And Balaam (Bilam) the son of Beor, the diviner, the sons of Israel killed with the sword among their slain. **23** And the border of the sons of Reuben was the Jordan, and ***its*** border. This ***was*** the inheritance of the sons of Reuben by their clans, the cities and their villages. **24** And Moses gave to the tribe of Gad, to the sons of Gad, by their clans. **25** And the territory was theirs: Jazer (Yazer) and all the cities of the Gilead, and half of the land of the sons of Ammon, as far as Aroer, which ***is*** on the face of Rabbah (Raba); **26** and from Heshbon as far as Ramath-mizpeh (Ramat-Hamitspe) and Betonim, and from Mahanaim (Machanayim) as far as the territory of Debir (Lidvir); **27** and in the valley: Beth-haram (Bet-Haram) and Beth-nimrah (Bet-Nimra) and Succoth (Sukot) and Zaphon (Tsafon), the rest of the kingdom of Sihon king of Heshbon, the Jordan and ***its*** border, as far as the end of the sea of Chinnereth (Kineret), beyond the Jordan eastward. **28** This ***was*** the inheritance of the sons of Gad by their clans, the cities and their villages. **29** And Moses gave to the half of the tribe of Manasseh; and it was for the half of the tribe of the sons of Manasseh by their clans. **30** And their territory was from Mahanaim, all the Bashan, all the kingdom of Og king of the Bashan, and all the towns of Jair (Ya'ir) that ***are*** in the Bashan, sixty cities; **31** and half of the Gilead, and Ashtaroth and Edrei, the cities of the kingdom of Og in the Bashan, ***were*** for the sons of Machir (Makhir) the son of Manasseh, for half of the sons of Machir by their clans. **32** These ***are what*** Moses gave as an inheritance in the plains of Moab (Mo'av), beyond the Jordan ***at*** Jericho (Yericho), eastward. **33** And to the tribe of the Levites Moses did not give an inheritance; the LORD, the God of Israel, He ***is*** their inheritance, just as He had spoken to them.

JOSHUA 14

The Division by Lot

1 And these ***are what*** the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) inherited in the land of Canaan (Kena'an), which Eleazar (Elazar) the priest and Joshua (Yehoshua) the son of Nun and the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the sons of Israel gave them as an inheritance, **2** by the lot of their inheritance, just as the LORD had commanded by the hand of Moses (Moshe), for the nine tribes and the half of the tribe. **3** For Moses had given the inheritance of the two tribes and the half of the tribe beyond the Jordan (Yarden); and to the Levites he did not give an inheritance in their midst. **4** For the sons of Joseph (Yosef) were two tribes, Manasseh (Menashe) and Ephraim (Efrayim); and they did not give a portion to the Levites in the land, except cities to dwell in, and their pasturelands for

13:14 Josh 14:3,4; Num 18:20-24; Deut 10:9
13:16 Josh 13:9; Josh 12:2; Num 21:28-30
13:17 Num 21:19; Num 22:41; Num 32:38
13:18 Num 21:23; Josh 21:36,37; 1 Chr 6:78,79
13:19 Num 32:37,38
13:20 Deut 4:46; Josh 12:3; Num 25:3
13:21 Num 31:8; Deut 3:10; Num 21:24-35
13:22 2 Pet 2:15; Jude 1:11; Rev 2:14
13:24 Num 32:34-36
13:25 Num 32:35; Deut 3:11; 2 Sam 11:1
13:26 2 Sam 17:27; 2 Sam 2:8; Josh 20:8
13:27 Num 32:36; Gen 33:17; Num 34:11
13:30 Josh 13:26; Num 32:39-41; Deut 3:13-15
13:31 Josh 12:4; Num 32:39,40
13:33 Josh 18:7; Deut 10:9; Deut 18:1,2
14:1 Acts 13:19; Num 34:17-29
14:2 Num 33:54; Num 34:13; Num 26:55,56
14:3 Josh 13:14,32,33; Josh 13:8; Num 32:29-42
14:4 Gen 48:5; 1 Chr 5:1,2; Josh 21:2-42

13:14 *the fire offerings of the LORD, the God of Israel, that is its inheritance* The Levites were set apart to serve at the tabernacle, the tent where God met with Israel, and from them came the priests, Aaron's family. Instead of land they received their share of the offerings (Num 18:8-24). God Himself took care of them, and chapter 21 gives them towns throughout Israel.
13:20 *Beth-peor* Near where Israel sinned with the women of Moab at the Baal of Peor (Num 25), and near where Moses was buried (Deut 34:6).
13:22 *Balaam the son of Beor, the diviner* A diviner tries to learn hidden things or the future by signs and magic. Balaam was hired to curse Israel, but God turned the curse into blessing (Num 22-24). Then he taught Moab how to lead Israel into sin (Num 31:16; Rev 2:14) and died fighting God's people. He knew much about God and still loved money more. Knowing about God is not the same as following Him.
13:27 *as far as the end of the sea of Chinnereth* Chinnereth is the old name of the Sea of Galilee, perhaps from a word for harp, for its shape. Mahanaim (13:26) was where Jacob saw the angels of God, and Succoth where he built shelters for his cattle (Gen 32:1-2; 33:17). Gad lived on ground their father Jacob had walked.
13:30 *all the towns of Jair that are in the Bashan, sixty cities* Bashan was a high, rich plateau known for its oaks and strong cattle (Ps 22:12). It went to the family of Machir, son of Manasseh, a family of fighters (17:1).
13:33 *the LORD, the God of Israel, He is their inheritance* In verse 14 their inheritance was the offerings. Here it is the LORD Himself. Which would you rather have, a field or the God who owns all the fields? "The LORD is the portion of my share and my cup" (Ps 16:5). Believers are "a royal priesthood" (1 Pet 2:9) with an inheritance kept in heaven (1 Pet 1:4). We can hold this world's things loosely, because God Himself is ours.
14:1 *Eleazar the priest and Joshua the son of Nun and the heads of the fathers* Eleazar was Aaron's son and the high priest after him. The priest is named first, because this was God's work before it was anyone else's.
14:2 *by the lot of their inheritance* The lot let God decide, perhaps by drawing marked stones before the LORD. Scripture does not say exactly how, but it says Who was behind it: "Into the lap the lot is thrown, and from the LORD is its every judgment" (Prov 16:33). No tribe could say Joshua played favorites. God placed every family where He wanted it.
14:4 *the sons of Joseph were two tribes, Manasseh and Ephraim* So there were still twelve tribes with land though Levi had none (Gen 48:5). The Levites received towns and pasturelands instead.

their herds and for their property. **5** Just as the LORD had commanded Moses, so the sons of Israel did; and they divided the land.

Caleb Receives Hebron

6 And the sons of Judah (Yehuda) approached Joshua at Gilgal, and Caleb (Kalev) the son of Jephunneh (Yefune) the Kenizzite said to him, "You know the word that the LORD spoke to Moses the man of God concerning me and concerning you at Kadesh-barnea (Qadesh-Barnea). **7** A son of forty years ***was*** I when Moses the servant of the LORD sent me from Kadesh-barnea to spy out the land, and I brought him back word just as ***it was*** in my heart. **8** And my brothers who went up with me made the heart of the people melt, and I, I followed fully after the LORD my God. **9** And Moses swore on that day, saying, 'Surely the land on which your foot has trodden shall be to you for an inheritance and to your sons forever, because you have followed fully after the LORD my God.' **10** And now, look, the LORD has kept me alive, just as He spoke, these forty-five years from when the LORD spoke this word to Moses, when Israel walked in the wilderness; and now, look, I ***am*** this day a son of eighty-five years. **11** I ***am*** still this day strong, just as on the day Moses sent me; as my strength ***was*** then, so my strength ***is*** now, for battle and to go out and to come in. **12** And now, give to me this hill country of which the LORD spoke on that day; for you heard on that day that Anakim ***were*** there, and cities great ***and*** fortified. Perhaps the LORD ***will be*** with me, and I will dispossess them, just as the LORD spoke." **13** And Joshua blessed him, and he gave Hebron (Chevron) to Caleb the son of Jephunneh for an inheritance. **14** Therefore Hebron became Caleb's, the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite, for an inheritance until this day, because he followed fully after the LORD, the God of Israel. **15** And the name of Hebron formerly ***was*** Kiriath-arba (Qiryat-Arba); he ***was*** the great man among the Anakim. And the land had rest from war.

JOSHUA 15

The Borders of Judah

1 And the lot for the tribe of the sons of Judah (Yehuda) by their clans was to the border of Edom, the wilderness of Zin (Tsin) toward the south, at the end of the south. **2** And their south border was from the end of the Salt Sea, from the bay that faces toward the south. **3** And it goes out to the south of the ascent of Akrabbim (Aqrabim), and it passes on toward Zin, and it goes up on the south of Kadesh-barnea (Qadesh-Barnea), and it passes on ***to*** Hezron (Chetsron), and it goes up toward Addar (Adar), and it turns around toward

14:6 2 Tim 3:17; Num 13:6; Num 14:24,30
14:7 Heb 3:16; Num 13:6,16-20; Num 13:26-33
14:8 Num 14:24; Deut 1:36; Josh 14:14
14:9 Heb 3:16; Josh 1:3; Num 13:22
14:10 Heb 3:16; Josh 11:18; Num 14:33,34
14:11 Heb 3:16; Deut 34:7; Deut 31:2
14:12 Num 13:28,33; Rom 8:31; Phil 4:13
14:13 Josh 22:6; Judg 1:20; 1 Chr 6:55,56
14:14 Josh 14:8,9; 1 Cor 15:58
14:15 Josh 11:23; Gen 23:2; Josh 15:13
15:1 Josh 14:2; Num 26:55,56; Num 33:36,37
15:2 Josh 3:16; Gen 14:3; Num 34:3
15:3 Num 34:4; Judg 1:36; Gen 14:7

14:5 *Just as the LORD had commanded Moses, so the sons of Israel did* Worth stopping on. After forty years of grumbling in the wilderness, a new generation did what God said.

14:6 *Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite* The Kenizzites were a people of Canaan in Abraham's day (Gen 15:19). Many think Caleb's family came from them and joined Israel, counted as part of Judah. Others think Kenaz was simply a man of Judah (15:17). If the first is right, Caleb was another outsider, like Rahab, brought in by faith, who became one of Israel's greatest leaders.

14:6 *You know the word that the LORD spoke to Moses the man of God concerning me* Caleb did not come asking a favor. He came holding God's word. Kadesh-barnea was the oasis south of the land where the spies were sent out (Num 13-14). Joshua had been there.

14:7 *I brought him back word just as it was in my heart* All twelve spies saw the same land, fruit, walled cities and giants. Ten said Israel could not do it. Caleb said, "we shall surely prevail over it" (Num 13:30). The ten saw giants and felt like grasshoppers. Caleb saw the same giants and measured them against God.

14:8 *I, I followed fully after the LORD my God* The Hebrew pictures filling up the space behind someone, walking so close behind Him that there is no gap. It does not describe a man who never sinned, but one whose heart did not split between God and fear, comfort or the crowd. The phrase is used of Caleb three times here (14:8, 9, 14), and God said it of him first (Num 14:24). Caleb stood against the whole nation, and they wanted to stone him for it (Num 14:10).

14:9 *the land on which your foot has trodden shall be to you for an inheritance* Where had his foot trodden? The record says "he came to Hebron" (Num 13:22), where the sons of Anak lived. The place that broke the courage of the ten was the place Caleb was promised (Deut 1:36).

14:10 *the LORD has kept me alive, just as He spoke, these forty-five years* Caleb watched a whole generation die in the desert because of unbelief (Num 14:29-35). He had done nothing to deserve the wait, but he waited with the people, and he did not grow bitter. The numbers also help date the conquest. Forty at Kadesh, thirty-eight more years in the wilderness, so the wars in the land took about seven years.

14:11 *as my strength was then, so my strength is now* To go out and to come in means to lead in war and in daily life. At eighty-five Caleb was asking for the hardest assignment in the land. "Those who wait for the LORD will renew power" (Isa 40:31). Scripture does not promise everyone Caleb's body at eighty-five, but everyone can keep Caleb's heart.

14:12 *give to me this hill country* He could have asked for a quiet valley. He asked for the mountains where the Anakim lived (Num 13:28, 33), the very place that made Israel turn back, to prove to a new generation that God was able.

14:12 *Perhaps the LORD will be with me* Is that doubt? I don't believe so. He ends the sentence with God's promise, "just as the LORD spoke." The "perhaps" is humility. Caleb did not assume he was owed God's help. A man of faith is sure of God and not too sure of himself.

14:13 *Joshua blessed him* Forty-five years before, these two stood alone against the nation while the people picked up stones. Now one led Israel and the other received the reward God promised.

14:14 *because he followed fully after the LORD, the God of Israel* Hebron was not given because Caleb was the strongest or richest, but because he trusted and followed God. He did take it (15:14; Judg 1:20). Later it became a Levite city and a city of refuge, while Caleb kept its fields (21:11-13). Abraham had lived there, and the patriarchs were buried there (Gen 23:19).

14:15 *the name of Hebron formerly was Kiriath-arba* The city of Arba, the father of the Anakim (15:13). The city named for the greatest of the giants now belonged to a man of faith. God has promised every believer an inheritance "reserved in the heavens for you" (1 Pet 1:4), and keeps us until we receive it. Caleb waited forty-five years. The promise does not fail (John 14:2).

15:1 *the lot for the tribe of the sons of Judah by their clans* These verses walk Judah's borders like a surveyor. The south border ran from the tip of the Salt Sea past the scorpion pass (Akrabbim) and Kadesh-barnea to the wadi of Egypt. A wadi is a stream bed dry most of the year that runs after rain. The east border was the Dead Sea, the west the Mediterranean. Clear borders protected families, so no one could move a boundary stone and steal his neighbor's land (Deut 19:14). God cared about justice down to the property line.

Karka (Qarqa). **4** And it passes on toward Azmon (Atsmon), and it goes out ***at*** the wadi of Egypt (Mitsrayim), and the ends of the border are toward the sea. This shall be to you ***the*** south border. **5** And the east border ***is*** the Salt Sea as far as the end of the Jordan (Yarden). And the border on the north side ***is*** from the bay of the sea at the end of the Jordan. **6** And the border goes up ***to*** Beth-hoglah (Bet-Chogla), and it passes on north of Beth-arabah (Bet-Ha'arava), and the border goes up ***to*** the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben (Reuven). **7** And the border goes up toward Debir (Devir) from the valley of Achor (Akhor), and northward turning to Gilgal, which ***is*** opposite the ascent of Adummim (Adumim), which ***is*** on the south of the wadi; and the border passes on to the waters of En-shemesh, and its ends are at En-rogel. **8** And the border goes up ***by*** the valley of the son of Hinnom (Hinom) to the slope of the Jebusites on the south, it ***is*** Jerusalem (Yerushalayim); and the border goes up to the top of the mountain that ***is*** on the face of the valley of Hinnom westward, which ***is*** at the end of the valley of Rephaim (Refa'im) northward. **9** And the border bends from the top of the mountain to the spring of the waters of Nephtoah (Neftoach), and it goes out to the cities of the mountain of Ephron (Efron), and the border bends ***to*** Baalah (Ba'ala), it ***is*** Kiriath-jearim (Qiryat-Ye'arim). **10** And the border turns around from Baalah westward to the mountain of Seir (Se'ir), and it passes on to the slope of the mountain of Jearim (Ye'arim) on the north, it ***is*** Chesalon (Kesalon), and it goes down ***to*** Beth-shemesh (Bet-Shemesh), and it passes on ***to*** Timnah (Timna). **11** And the border goes out to the slope of Ekron (Eqron) northward, and the border bends toward Shikkeron (Shikron), and it passes on ***to*** the mountain of Baalah, and it goes out ***to*** Jabneel (Yavne'el), and the ends of the border are toward the sea. **12** And the west border ***is*** toward the Great Sea and ***its*** border. This ***is*** the border of the sons of Judah all around by their clans.

Caleb and Othniel

13 And to Caleb (Kalev) the son of Jephunneh (Yefune) he gave a portion in the midst of the sons of Judah, according to the mouth of the LORD to Joshua (Yehoshua): Kiriath-arba (Qiryat-Arba), the father of the Anak, it ***is*** Hebron (Chevron). **14** And Caleb dispossessed from there the three sons of the Anak: Sheshai (Sheshay) and Ahiman (Achiman) and Talmai (Talmay), those born of the Anak. **15** And he went up from there against the inhabitants of Debir; and the name of Debir formerly ***was*** Kiriath-sepher (Qiryat-Sefer). **16** And Caleb said, "Whoever strikes Kiriath-sepher and captures it, I will give to him Achsah (Akhsa) my daughter for a wife." **17** And Othniel (Otni'el) the son of Kenaz (Qenaz), the brother of Caleb, captured it; and he gave to him Achsah his daughter for a wife. **18** And it was, when she came, and she urged him to ask from her father a field; and she got down from on the donkey, and Caleb said to her, "What ***is it*** for you?" **19** And she said, "Give to me a blessing; for you have given me the land of the Negeb (Negev), and you shall give to me springs of water." And he gave to her upper springs and lower springs.

The Towns of Judah

20 This ***is*** the inheritance of the tribe of the sons of Judah by their clans. **21** And the cities at the end of the tribe of the sons of Judah toward the border of Edom in the Negeb were: Kabzeel (Qavtse'el) and Eder and Jagur (Yagur), **22** and Kinah (Qina) and Dimonah (Dimona) and Adadah (Adada), **23** and Kedesh (Qedesh) and Hazor (Chatsor) and Ithnan (Yitnan), **24** Ziph (Zif) and Telem and Bealoth (Be'alot), **25** and Hazor-hadattah (Chatsor-Chadatta) and Kerioth-hezron (Qeriyot-Chetsron), it ***is*** Hazor, **26** Amam and Shema and Moladah (Molada), **27** and Hazar-gaddah (Chatsar-Gada) and Heshmon (Cheshmon) and Beth-pelet (Bet-Palet), **28** and Hazar-shual (Chatsar-Shu'al) and Beersheba (Be'er-Sheva)

15:4 Num 34:5; Josh 13:3; Exod 23:31
15:5 Num 34:12
15:6 Josh 18:17; Josh 18:19,20
15:7 2 Sam 17:17; 1 Kgs 1:9; Josh 7:26
15:8 Josh 18:16; Josh 15:63; Josh 18:28
15:9 1 Chr 13:6; Josh 18:15; Judg 18:12
15:10 Judg 14:1,5; 1 Sam 6:12-21; Josh 15:57
15:11 Josh 15:45; Josh 19:43; 1 Sam 5:10
15:12 Josh 15:47; Num 34:6,7; Ezek 47:20
15:13 Josh 14:6-15; Num 13:30; Num 14:23,24
15:14 Judg 1:10,20; Josh 11:21; Josh 10:36,37
15:15 Josh 10:3,38; Judg 1:11-13
15:16 Judg 1:6,12,13
15:17 Judg 1:13; Judg 3:9,11; Josh 14:6
15:18 Gen 24:64; 1 Sam 25:23
15:19 Judg 1:14,15; Gen 33:11; Deut 33:7
15:20 Gen 49:8-12; Deut 33:7
15:21 Gen 35:21; Neh 11:25
15:23 Josh 12:22; Num 33:37; Deut 1:19
15:24 1 Sam 23:14,19,24; Ps 54:1; 1 Sam 15:4
15:26 1 Chr 4:28
15:27 Neh 11:26
15:28 Gen 26:33; 1 Chr 4:28; Josh 19:2

15:7 *the border goes up toward Debir from the valley of Achor* The north border, shared with Benjamin, ran through places Israel knew well, such as the valley where Achan was stoned (7:26) and En-rogel, a spring just outside Jerusalem.
15:8 *the valley of the son of Hinnom* The border ran along the valley just south of the city, so Jerusalem sat on the line between Judah and Benjamin. This valley later became a place where children were burned to idols (2 Kgs 23:10; Jer 7:31). Its name, Gehenna in the New Testament, became a word for hell (Matt 5:22).
15:14 *Sheshai and Ahiman and Talmai* The same three names the spies saw at Hebron forty-five years before (Num 13:22). The giants who frightened a nation were driven out by an old man who trusted God. Judges says both that Judah struck them and that Caleb drove them out (Judg 1:10, 20). Caleb led the men of his tribe.
15:15 *the name of Debir formerly was Kiriath-sepher* It means the city of the book or of the scribe. Joshua had taken Debir (10:38-39), but its people came back, as often happened.
15:16 *I will give to him Achsah my daughter for a wife* In that time a father arranged his daughter's marriage, and Caleb wanted a man of courage and faith for her, a man like himself.
15:17 *Othniel the son of Kenaz, the brother of Caleb* Judges 1:13 adds that he was younger. Some read this as Caleb's younger brother, others as his nephew, a son of Kenaz. Either way, Othniel became the first judge of Israel, the man God raised up to save His people (Judg 3:9-11). Caleb's choice proved good.
15:19 *Give to me a blessing* Achsah got down from her donkey, a sign of respect before a request. The Negeb is the dry south, and land without water could not grow much. She asked boldly because she trusted her father's goodness, and he gave more than she asked. Jesus tells us to ask our Father the same way (Matt 7:7-11). In Christ He gives us living water (John 4:14).
15:21 *toward the border of Edom in the Negeb* The towns are now listed by region. In the dry south were Beersheba, where Abraham called on the name of the LORD (Gen 21:31-33), and Ziklag, later given to David by a Philistine king (1 Sam 27:6).

and Biziothiah (Bizyotya), **29** Baalah and Iim (Iyim) and Ezem (Etsem), **30** and Eltolad and Chesil (Kesil) and Hormah (Chorma), **31** and Ziklag (Tsiqlag) and Madmannah (Madmana) and Sansannah (Sansana), **32** and Lebaoth (Levaot) and Shilhim (Shilchim) and Ain (Ayin) and Rimmon (Rimon); all the cities ***were*** twenty-nine, and their villages. **33** In the Shephelah: Eshtaol and Zorah (Tsor'a) and Ashnah (Ashna), **34** and Zanoah (Zanoach) and En-gannim (En-Ganim), Tappuah (Tapuach) and Enam, **35** Jarmuth (Yarmut) and Adullam (Adulam), Socoh (Sokho) and Azekah (Azeqa), **36** and Shaaraim (Sha'arayim) and Adithaim (Aditayim) and Gederah (Gedera) and Gederothaim (Gederotayim); fourteen cities and their villages. **37** Zenan (Tsenan) and Hadashah (Chadasha) and Migdal-gad, **38** and Dilean (Dilan) and Mizpeh (Mitspe) and Joktheel (Yoqte'el), **39** Lachish (Lakhish) and Bozkath (Botsqat) and Eglon, **40** and Cabbon (Kabon) and Lahmas (Lachmas) and Chitlish (Kitlish), **41** and Gederoth (Gederot), Beth-dagon (Bet-Dagon) and Naamah (Na'ama) and Makkedah (Maqeda); sixteen cities and their villages. **42** Libnah (Livna) and Ether (Eter) and Ashan, **43** and Iphtah (Yiftach) and Ashnah and Nezib (Netsiv), **44** and Keilah (Qe'ila) and Achzib (Akhziv) and Mareshah (Maresha); nine cities and their villages. **45** Ekron and its towns and its villages; **46** from Ekron and westward, all that ***is*** beside Ashdod, and their villages; **47** Ashdod, its towns and its villages; Gaza (Aza), its towns and its villages, as far as the wadi of Egypt, and the Great Sea and ***its*** border. **48** And in the hill country: Shamir and Jattir (Yatir) and Socoh, **49** and Dannah (Dana) and Kiriath-sannah (Qiryat-Sanna), it ***is*** Debir, **50** and Anab (Anav) and Eshtemoh and Anim, **51** and Goshen and Holon (Cholon) and Giloh (Gilo); eleven cities and their villages. **52** Arab (Arav) and Rumah (Ruma) and Eshan, **53** and Janum (Yanum) and Beth-tappuah (Bet-Tapuach) and Aphekah (Afeqa), **54** and Humtah (Chumta) and Kiriath-arba, it ***is*** Hebron, and Zior (Tsi'or); nine cities and their villages. **55** Maon, Carmel (Karmel) and Ziph and Juttah (Yuta), **56** and Jezreel (Yizre'el) and Jokdeam (Yoqde'am) and Zanoah, **57** Kain (Qayin), Gibeah (Giva) and Timnah; ten cities and their villages. **58** Halhul (Chalchul), Beth-zur (Bet-Tsur) and Gedor, **59** and Maarath (Ma'arat) and Beth-anoth (Bet-Anot) and Eltekon (Elteqon); six cities and their villages. **60** Kiriath-baal (Qiryat-Ba'al), it ***is*** Kiriath-jearim, and Rabbah (Raba); two cities and their villages. **61** In the wilderness: Beth-arabah, Middin (Midin) and Secacah (Sekhakha), **62** and Nibshan (Nivshan) and City of Salt (Ir-Hamelach) and Engedi; six cities and their villages. **63** And the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the sons of Judah were not able to dispossess them; and the Jebusites have dwelt with the sons of Judah in Jerusalem until this day.

JOSHUA 16

The Inheritance of Ephraim

1 And the lot for the sons of Joseph (Yosef) went out from the Jordan (Yarden) ***at*** Jericho (Yericho), to the waters of Jericho eastward, the wilderness going up from Jericho in the hill country ***to*** Bethel (Bet-El). **2** And it goes out from Bethel toward Luz, and it passes on to the territory of the Arkites ***at*** Ataroth (Atarot). **3** And it goes down westward to the territory of the Japhletites, as far as the territory of Beth-horon (Bet-Choron) the Lower, and as far as Gezer, and its ends are

15:29 Josh 15:9-11; Josh 19:3; 1 Chr 4:29
15:30 Josh 19:4; Num 14:45; Deut 1:44
15:31 1 Sam 27:6; 1 Sam 30:1; Josh 19:5
15:32 Num 34:11; Neh 11:29
15:33 Judg 13:25; Judg 16:31; Num 13:23
15:34 Josh 15:53; Josh 12:17
15:35 1 Sam 22:1; 1 Sam 17:1; Josh 10:3,23
15:36 1 Sam 17:52
15:38 2 Kgs 14:7; Gen 31:48,49; Judg 20:1
15:39 Josh 10:3,31,32; 2 Kgs 22:1; Josh 12:11
15:41 Josh 10:21,28; Josh 12:16
15:42 Josh 10:29; Josh 12:15; 2 Kgs 8:22
15:44 1 Sam 23:1-14; Gen 38:5; Mic 1:14
15:45 Josh 13:3; 1 Sam 5:10; 1 Sam 6:17
15:46 1 Sam 5:1,6; 2 Chr 26:6; Neh 13:23,24
15:47 Acts 8:26; Josh 15:4; Judg 16:1-21
15:48 Josh 21:14
15:49 Josh 15:15; Judg 1:11
15:51 Josh 10:41; Josh 11:16; 2 Sam 15:12
15:52 Isa 21:11
15:54 Josh 15:13; Josh 14:15; Gen 23:2
15:55 1 Sam 23:25; 1 Sam 25:2,7; Josh 15:24
15:57 Josh 15:10; Gen 38:12; Jer 14:1
15:58 1 Chr 4:39
15:60 Josh 18:14; 1 Sam 7:1
15:61 Josh 15:6; Josh 18:18
15:62 1 Sam 23:29; 2 Chr 20:2
15:63 Judg 1:8,21; 2 Sam 5:6-9; 1 Chr 11:4-8
16:1 Josh 8:15; Josh 18:12; Josh 15:61
16:2 Josh 18:13; Gen 28:19; Judg 1:22-26
16:3 Josh 18:13; 2 Chr 8:5; 1 Kgs 9:15-17

15:32 *all the cities were twenty-nine, and their villages* More than twenty-nine names appear. Some may be villages counted with a main town, some pairs naming one place, and some were later given to Simeon (19:1-9). Scripture does not explain the count.
15:33 *In the Shephelah: Eshtaol and Zorah* The low hills between the hill country and the coastal plain were good farmland and the border zone with the Philistines. Here were Samson's home (Judg 13:2, 25), the cave of Adullam where David hid (1 Sam 22:1), Socoh and Azekah, where David fought Goliath (1 Sam 17:1), and Keilah, which David rescued (1 Sam 23:1-5).
15:47 *Ashdod, its towns and its villages; Gaza* God gave Judah Philistine land it did not yet hold (13:2-3). Judah took some of these cities for a time but could not drive out the people of the plain (Judg 1:18-19). The gift was real. The taking was still to be done.
15:48 *in the hill country* The backbone of Judah, the high ridge south of Jerusalem. It included Hebron, Maon and Carmel, where Nabal and Abigail lived (1 Sam 25:2-3), Ziph, where David hid (1 Sam 23:14), and Kiriath-jearim (15:60), where the ark stayed twenty years (1 Sam 7:1-2).
15:59 *six cities and their villages* Bethlehem, though a town of Judah (Ruth 1:1), does not appear in this list in the Hebrew text. It was small, and its time had not yet come. From little Bethlehem would come the ruler of Israel (Mic 5:2), and Jesus was born there (Matt 2:1-6).
15:62 *City of Salt and Engedi* The wilderness falls away to the Dead Sea. Engedi is a spring in the desert where David spared Saul in a cave (1 Sam 24:1-7). God's history happens in real places to real people.
15:63 *the sons of Judah were not able to dispossess them* Judah took giants at Hebron but could not take the Jebusite fortress (Judg 1:8, 21). "Until this day" shows this was written before David, who captured Zion about 1000 B.C. and made Jerusalem his capital (2 Sam 5:6-9). The text does not say God failed. Elsewhere Israel's failure is tied to unbelief (Judg 2:1-3). Where faith was weak, the enemy stayed. Yet the city Judah could not take became "the town of the great King" (Ps 48:2).
16:1 *the lot for the sons of Joseph went out from the Jordan at Jericho* Joseph's sons received some of the best of the land, the wide central hill country with good rain, forests and valleys. Jacob called Joseph "a son of a fruitful one" (Gen 49:22), and Moses asked heaven's best gifts on his land (Deut 33:13-17). Here those blessings come true on the ground.

toward the sea. **4** And the sons of Joseph, Manasseh
(Menashe) and Ephraim (Efrayim), received their inheritance. **5** And the territory of the sons of Ephraim by their clans was ***this***: and the border of their inheritance eastward was Ataroth-addar (Atrot-Adar) as far as Beth-horon the Upper, **6** and the border goes out toward the sea, Michmethath (Mikhmetat) on the north; and the border turns around eastward ***to*** Taanath-shiloh (Ta'anat-Shilo), and it passes by it on the east ***to*** Janoah (Yanocha), **7** and it goes down from Janoah ***to*** Ataroth and toward Naarah (Na'ara), and it touches Jericho, and it goes out ***at*** the Jordan. **8** From Tappuah (Tapuach) the border goes westward ***to*** the wadi of Kanah (Qana), and its ends are toward the sea. This ***is*** the inheritance of the tribe of the sons of Ephraim by their clans, **9** and the cities set apart for the sons of Ephraim in the midst of the inheritance of the sons of Manasseh, all the cities and their villages. **10** And they did not dispossess the Canaanites who dwelt in Gezer; and the Canaanites have dwelt in the midst of Ephraim until this day, and they became forced labor, serving.

JOSHUA 17

The Inheritance of Manasseh

1 And the lot was for the tribe of Manasseh (Menashe), for he ***was*** the firstborn of Joseph (Yosef): for Machir (Makhir) the firstborn of Manasseh, the father of Gilead (Gilad), because he was a man of war, and the Gilead and the Bashan were his. **2** And it was for the sons of Manasseh who remained, by their clans: for the sons of Abiezer (Avi'ezer) and for the sons of Helek (Cheleq) and for the sons of Asriel and for the sons of Shechem (Shekhem) and for the sons of Hepher (Chefer) and for the sons of Shemida. These ***were*** the sons of Manasseh the son of Joseph, the males, by their clans. **3** And as for Zelophehad (Tselofchad) the son of Hepher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, there were no sons for him, except daughters; and these ***are*** the names of his daughters: Mahlah (Machla) and Noah (No'a), Hoglah (Chogla), Milcah (Milka) and Tirzah (Tirtsa). **4** And they drew near before Eleazar (Elazar) the priest and before Joshua (Yehoshua) the son of Nun and before the leaders, saying, "The LORD commanded Moses (Moshe) to give to us an inheritance in the midst of our brothers." And he gave to them, according to the mouth of the LORD, an inheritance in the midst of the brothers of their father. **5** And the portions of Manasseh fell, ten, apart from the land of the Gilead and the Bashan, which ***is*** beyond the Jordan (Yarden), **6** for the daughters of Manasseh inherited an inheritance in the midst of his sons; and the land of the Gilead belonged to the sons of Manasseh who remained. **7** And the territory of Manasseh was from Asher ***to*** Michmethath (Mikhmetat), which ***is*** on the face of Shechem; and the border goes to the right, to the inhabitants of En-tappuah (En-Tapuach). **8** The land of Tappuah (Tapuach) belonged to Manasseh; and Tappuah, at the border of Manasseh, ***belonged*** to the sons of Ephraim
(Efrayim). **9** And the border goes down ***to*** the wadi of Kanah (Qana), southward of the wadi. These cities ***belonged*** to Ephraim in the midst of the cities of Manasseh; and the border of Manasseh ***was*** on the north of the wadi, and its ends were toward the sea. **10** Southward ***belonged*** to
Ephraim, and northward to Manasseh, and the sea was its border; and they touch Asher on the north, and Issachar (Yisashkhar) on the east. **11** And Manasseh had in Issachar and in Asher Beth-shean (Bet-She'an) and its towns, and Ibleam (Yivle'am) and its towns, and the inhabitants of Dor and its towns, and the inhabitants of En-dor and its towns, and the inhabitants of Taanach (Ta'anakh) and its towns, and the inhabitants of Megiddo (Megido) and its towns, the three of the height. **12** And the sons of Manasseh were not able to take possession of these cities, and the Canaanites were

16:4 Josh 17:14
16:5 Josh 18:13; Josh 16:2
16:6 Josh 17:7; Josh 18:1
16:7 1 Chr 7:28; Josh 3:16; Josh 6:1,26
16:8 Josh 17:8; Josh 12:17; Josh 19:28
16:9 Josh 17:9
16:10 Judg 1:29; 1 Kgs 9:16,21; Deut 7:1,2
17:1 Gen 41:51; Num 26:29; Gen 46:20
17:2 Num 26:29-32; 1 Chr 7:18; Judg 6:11
17:3 Num 26:33; Num 27:1; Num 36:2-11
17:4 Josh 14:1; Num 34:17-29; Gal 3:28
17:5 Josh 17:2,3,14; Josh 13:29-31; Num 32:30-42
17:7 Josh 21:21; Josh 16:6-8; Josh 20:7
17:8 Josh 16:8; Josh 12:17; Josh 15:34,53
17:9 Josh 16:8; Josh 16:3,8; Josh 19:29
17:11 1 Chr 7:29; 2 Kgs 9:27; Josh 12:23
17:12 Exod 23:29-33; Judg 1:27,28; Josh 15:63

16:4 *Manasseh and Ephraim, received their inheritance* Manasseh was older, but Ephraim's land is described first. That fits Jacob crossing his hands to put his right hand on the younger boy (Gen 48:14-20). God often chooses the younger and weaker, so that His grace is plain (1 Cor 1:27).
16:8 *This is the inheritance of the tribe of the sons of Ephraim by their clans* Shiloh, where the tabernacle would soon stand (18:1), was in Ephraim. Joshua was from Ephraim (Num 13:8) and was buried there (24:30). Ephraim later led the northern kingdom, and the prophets used its name for the whole of it (Hos 11:8).
16:9 *the cities set apart for the sons of Ephraim in the midst of the inheritance of the sons of Manasseh* The brother tribes had towns inside each other's borders (17:8-9). They were meant to live as family.
16:10 *they did not dispossess the Canaanites who dwelt in Gezer* Gezer guarded the road from the coast to the hills. Ephraim put its people to work, which looked practical. But God commanded these nations driven out because they would teach Israel their gods (Deut 7:1-5). The leftovers became thorns in Israel's sides (Judg 2:1-3). Gezer stayed Canaanite until a Pharaoh took it and gave it to Solomon's wife (1 Kgs 9:16). Sin we keep around is never really our servant (Rom 6:16). We must put it to death by the Spirit (Rom 8:13).
17:1 *Machir the firstborn of Manasseh, the father of Gilead, because he was a man of war* Machir's family already held Gilead and Bashan east of the Jordan (13:29-31). The other clans now received land west of the river. Gideon would come from one of them, the clan of Abiezer (Judg 6:11, 15). God was laying out the homes of people He would use in later generations.
17:3 *Mahlah and Noah, Hoglah, Milcah and Tirzah* In a list of clans named for men, five women are named. Their father died in the wilderness with no son, and his share would have been lost. They asked Moses, and the LORD said, "The daughters of Zelophehad are speaking right" (Num 27:7), making a law for every family like theirs.
17:4 *The LORD commanded Moses to give to us an inheritance in the midst of our brothers* Like Caleb, they came holding God's word. God cared about women with no father or brother to speak for them, and He made sure His promise reached them. In Christ men and women alike are "heirs according to promise" (Gal 3:29).
17:11 *Beth-shean and its towns, and Ibleam and its towns* These fortress cities along the valley of Jezreel and the coast guarded the main roads. If Manasseh held them, Israel held the north.

determined to dwell in this land. **13** And it was, when the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) became strong, and they put the Canaanites to forced labor, and they did not utterly dispossess them.

Joseph Asks for More Land

14 And the sons of Joseph spoke with Joshua, saying, "Why have you given me ***as*** an inheritance one lot and one portion, and I ***am*** a numerous people, since thus far the LORD has blessed me?" **15** And Joshua said to them, "If you ***are*** a numerous people, go up for yourself to the forest, and you shall cut down for yourself there in the land of the Perizzites and the Rephaim, since the hill country of Ephraim is narrow for you." **16** And the sons of Joseph said, "The hill country will not be found ***enough*** for us, and chariots of iron ***are*** among all the Canaanites who dwell in the land of the valley, for those who ***are*** in Beth-shean and its towns and for those who ***are*** in the valley of Jezreel (Yizre'el)." **17** And Joshua said to the house of Joseph, to Ephraim and to Manasseh, saying, "You ***are*** a numerous people, and you have great strength; you shall not have one lot ***only***, **18** for the hill country shall be yours; for it ***is*** forest, and you shall cut it down, and its ends shall be yours; for you shall dispossess the Canaanites, though they have chariots of iron, though they ***are*** strong."

JOSHUA 18

The Tent at Shiloh

1 And all the congregation of the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) assembled ***at*** Shiloh (Shilo), and they caused the tent of meeting to dwell there; and the land was subdued before them. **2** And there remained among the sons of Israel seven tribes who had not divided their inheritance. **3** And Joshua (Yehoshua) said to the sons of Israel, "Until when ***are*** you slack to go to take possession of the land that the LORD, the God of your fathers, has given to you? **4** Provide for yourselves three men for ***each*** tribe, and I will send them, and they shall arise and walk about in the land and describe it in writing according to their inheritance, and they shall come to me. **5** And they shall divide it into seven portions. Judah (Yehuda) shall stand on its territory on the south, and the house of Joseph (Yosef) shall stand on their territory on the north. **6** And you, you shall describe the land in writing ***in*** seven portions, and you shall bring ***it*** to me here, and I will cast a lot for you here before the LORD our God. **7** For there is no portion for the Levites in your midst, for the priesthood of the LORD ***is*** their inheritance; and Gad and Reuben (Reuven) and the half of the tribe of Manasseh (Menashe) have received their inheritance beyond the Jordan (Yarden) eastward, which Moses (Moshe) the servant of the LORD gave to them." **8** And the men arose and went, and Joshua commanded those who went to describe the land in writing, saying, "Go and walk about in the land, and describe it in writing, and return to me; and here I will throw a lot for you before the LORD in Shiloh." **9** And the men went and passed through the land, and they described it in writing by cities in seven portions on a scroll, and they came to Joshua, to the camp ***at*** Shiloh. **10** And Joshua threw a lot for them in Shiloh before the LORD; and there Joshua divided the land to the sons of Israel according to their divisions.

The Inheritance of Benjamin

11 And the lot of the tribe of the sons of Benjamin

17:13 Josh 16:10; Judg 1:28; 2 Sam 3:1
17:14 Gen 48:22; Num 26:34-37; Gen 48:19
17:15 Gen 14:5; Luke 12:48; Gen 13:7
17:16 Judg 1:19; Judg 4:3; 1 Kgs 4:12
17:18 Josh 17:15; Josh 15:9; Josh 20:7
18:1 Josh 19:51; Josh 21:2; 1 Sam 1:3,24
18:3 Judg 18:9; Prov 2:2-6; Prov 10:4
18:4 Josh 3:12; Josh 4:2; Num 1:4
18:5 Josh 15:1-12; Josh 19:1-9; Josh 16:1-17
18:6 Josh 14:2; Josh 18:8,10; Num 26:54,55
18:7 Num 18:20,23; Deut 10:9; Deut 18:1,2
18:8 Gen 13:17; Josh 18:6,10; Josh 7:16-18
18:9 Acts 13:19
18:10 Josh 18:6,8; Prov 18:18; Ezek 47:22
18:11 Josh 15:1-8; Josh 16:1-10; Deut 10:1-22

17:13 *they put the Canaanites to forced labor, and they did not utterly dispossess them* The same compromise as at Gezer (16:10). When weak, they did not drive them out. When strong, they still did not. Generations later the Philistines hung Saul's body on the wall of Beth-shean (1 Sam 31:10). A city Manasseh left standing became the place of Israel's shame.
17:14 *Why have you given me as an inheritance one lot and one portion* Joshua's own tribe was among the complainers, and they may have expected special treatment.
17:15 *go up for yourself to the forest, and you shall cut down for yourself* Joshua did not give in or get angry. He turned their words back on them: if you are as big as you say, use your strength. Many of us complain that God has not given us enough, when He has given us more than we have worked to take hold of. Joshua did not play favorites, even with his own tribe.
17:16 *chariots of iron are among all the Canaanites* Chariots with iron fittings were the heavy weapons of the day, unbeatable for foot soldiers on the flat valley floor.
17:18 *for you shall dispossess the Canaanites, though they have chariots of iron* At the waters of Merom, chariots had not stopped the LORD (11:4-9). The real problem was not iron but faith. Caleb at eighty-five asked for the giants. Joseph's sons were a great people and feared chariots. The difference was not strength. It was trust in God.
18:1 *they caused the tent of meeting to dwell there* The tent of meeting is the tabernacle, the portable tent where God met His people and the ark was kept. Worship moved from Gilgal into the middle of the land, and the rest of the land was divided from the place where God dwelt. God first, then everything else. Shiloh, in Ephraim north of Bethel, stayed the place of worship through the judges. Hannah prayed there and Samuel heard God's call there (1 Sam 1:3; 3:1-10).
18:1 *Shiloh* Later, because of the sins of priests and people, the ark was taken and Shiloh ruined. Jeremiah used it as a warning to Jerusalem: "see what I did to it because of the evil of My people Israel" (Jer 7:12).
18:3 *Until when are you slack to go to take possession of the land* Slack means slow, careless, putting things off. The wars were over and camp life was easy. Perhaps they were content, or afraid of the work ahead. God has given us everything we need for life and godliness (2 Pet 1:3). Many believers live like those seven tribes, saved and safe in the camp, but slow to step into what God has given.
18:4 *describe it in writing according to their inheritance* Three men from each tribe were to walk the land and write it down city by city, one of the first land surveys we know of in Scripture.
18:6 *I will cast a lot for you here before the LORD our God* The survey was man's work. The choosing was God's. "Before the LORD" means this was no game of chance. It was done in God's presence, at His tent, trusting Him to give each tribe its place.
18:7 *the priesthood of the LORD is their inheritance* Levi's land was service at God's house (see 13:14, 33).
18:11 *between the sons of Judah and the sons of Joseph* Benjamin's land was a small strip running from the Jordan up into the hills. Its south border is Judah's north border traced the other way (15:5-9), so Jerusalem lay on the line. Moses said of Benjamin, "between His shoulders he dwells" (Deut 33:12), picturing Benjamin carried close to God. Many see that fulfilled in the temple, which stood on this border.

(Binyamin) came up by their clans, and the territory of their lot went out between the sons of Judah and the sons of Joseph. **12** And the border on the north side was theirs from the Jordan; and the border goes up to the slope of Jericho (Yericho) on the north, and it goes up in the hill country westward, and its ends are toward the wilderness of Beth-aven (Bet-Aven). **13** And the border passes on from there toward Luz, to the slope of Luz southward, it ***is*** Bethel (Bet-El); and the border goes down ***to*** Ataroth-addar (Atrot-Adar), on the mountain that ***is*** on the south of Beth-horon (Bet-Choron) the Lower. **14** And the border bends, and it turns around on the west side southward, from the mountain that ***is*** on the face of Beth-horon southward; and its ends are at Kiriath-baal (Qiryat-Ba'al), it ***is*** Kiriath-jearim (Qiryat-Ye'arim), a city of the sons of Judah. This ***is*** the west side. **15** And the south side ***is*** from the end of Kiriath-jearim, and the border goes out westward, and it goes out to the spring of the waters of Nephtoah (Neftoach). **16** And the border goes down to the end of the mountain that ***is*** on the face of the valley of the son of Hinnom (Hinom), which ***is*** in the valley of Rephaim (Refa'im) northward; and it goes down ***by*** the valley of Hinnom to the slope of the Jebusites southward, and it goes down ***to*** En-rogel. **17** And it bends from the north, and it goes out ***to*** En-shemesh, and it goes out to Geliloth (Gelilot), which ***is*** opposite the ascent of Adummim (Adumim), and it goes down ***to*** the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben. **18** And it passes on to the slope opposite the Arabah (Arava) northward, and it goes down toward the Arabah. **19** And the border passes on to the slope of Beth-hoglah (Bet-Chogla) northward, and the ends of the border are at the bay of the Salt Sea northward, at the end of the Jordan southward. This ***is*** the south border. **20** And the Jordan borders it on the east side. This ***is*** the inheritance of the sons of Benjamin by its borders all around, by their clans. **21** And the cities of the tribe of the sons of Benjamin by their clans were: Jericho and Beth-hoglah and Emek-keziz (Emeq-Qetsits), **22** and Beth-arabah (Bet-Ha'arava) and Zemaraim (Tsemarayim) and Bethel, **23** and Avvim (Avim) and Parah (Para) and Ophrah (Ofra), **24** and Chephar-haammonah (Kefar-Ha'amona) and Ophni (Ofni) and Geba (Geva); twelve cities and their villages. **25** Gibeon (Givon) and Ramah (Rama) and Beeroth (Be'erot), **26** and Mizpeh (Mitspe) and Chephirah (Kefira) and Mozah (Motsa), **27** and Rekem (Reqem) and Irpeel (Yirpe'el) and Taralah (Tarala), **28** and Zela (Tsela), Haeleph (Ha'elef), and the Jebusite ***city***, it ***is*** Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), Gibeah (Givat), Kiriath (Qiryat); fourteen cities and their villages. This ***is*** the inheritance of the sons of Benjamin by their clans.

JOSHUA 19

Simeon, Zebulun and Issachar

1 And the second lot came out for Simeon (Shimon), for the tribe of the sons of Simeon by their clans; and their inheritance was in the midst of the inheritance of the sons of Judah (Yehuda). **2** And they had in their inheritance Beersheba (Be'er-Sheva), and Sheba (Sheva), and Moladah (Molada), **3** and Hazar-shual (Chatsar-Shu'al), and Balah (Bala), and Ezem (Etsem), **4** and Eltolad, and Bethul (Betul), and Hormah (Chorma), **5** and Ziklag (Tsiqlag), and Beth-marcaboth (Bet-Markavot), and Hazar-susah (Chatsar-Susa), **6** and Beth-lebaoth (Bet-Levaot), and Sharuhen (Sharuchen): thirteen cities and their villages; **7** Ain (Ayin), Rimmon (Rimon), and Ether (Eter), and Ashan: four cities and their villages; **8** and all the villages which ***were*** around these cities as far as Baalath-beer (Ba'alat-Be'er), Ramah of the Negeb (Negev). This ***is*** the inheritance of the tribe of the sons of Simeon by their clans. **9** From the portion of the sons of Judah ***was*** the inheritance of the sons of Simeon, for the portion of the sons of Judah was too great for them; and the sons of Simeon received an inheritance in the midst of their inheritance. **10** And the third lot came up for the sons of Zebulun (Zevulun) by their clans; and the border of their inheritance was as far as Sarid. **11** And their border goes up westward, and ***to*** Maralah (Mar'ala), and it touches Dabbesheth (Dabeshet), and it touches the wadi which ***is*** in front of Jokneam (Yoqne'am). **12** And it turns back from Sarid eastward, ***toward*** the rising of the sun, to the border of Chis-

18:12 Josh 16:1; Josh 7:2; Josh 2:1
18:13 Gen 28:19; Josh 16:2; Judg 1:22-26
18:14 Josh 15:9,60; 1 Sam 7:1,2; 2 Sam 6:2
18:15 Josh 15:9
18:16 2 Kgs 23:10; Josh 15:7; Isa 30:33
18:17 Josh 15:6
18:18 Josh 15:6,61
18:19 Josh 15:2; Gen 14:3; Isa 11:15
18:21 Luke 10:30; Luke 19:1; Josh 18:12
18:22 Josh 18:18; Josh 15:6; Gen 10:18
18:23 1 Sam 13:17
18:24 Ezra 2:26; Josh 21:17; Neh 7:30
18:25 Josh 9:17; Josh 10:2; 1 Kgs 3:4,5
18:26 Judg 10:17; Josh 9:17; Ezra 2:25
18:28 2 Sam 21:14; Josh 15:8,63; Josh 18:16
19:1 Rev 7:7; Josh 19:9; Josh 18:6-11
19:2 1 Chr 4:28-30; Josh 15:28; Gen 21:31
19:3 Josh 15:28,29
19:4 Josh 15:30; Judg 1:17
19:5 Josh 15:31; 1 Sam 27:6; 1 Sam 30:1
19:6 Josh 15:32
19:7 Josh 15:42; Josh 15:32; Num 33:19,20
19:8 1 Chr 4:33; 1 Sam 30:27
19:9 2 Cor 8:14,15; Exod 16:18
19:10 Matt 4:13; Josh 18:6,11; Gen 49:13
19:11 Josh 12:22; 1 Kgs 4:12; 1 Chr 6:68
19:12 Josh 19:22; Judg 4:6,12; Ps 89:12

18:13 *toward Luz, to the slope of Luz southward, it is Bethel* Luz was Bethel's old name (Gen 28:19).

18:28 *the Jebusite city, it is Jerusalem, Gibeah* So much of the Bible happened in this small tribe: Jericho, Gibeon, Ramah the home of Samuel (1 Sam 7:17), Mizpah where Saul was chosen (1 Sam 10:17-24), Gibeah, Saul's home town (1 Sam 10:26). Israel's first king came from Benjamin, and so did the apostle Paul (Phil 3:5). God does not measure His people by their size.

19:1 *their inheritance was in the midst of the inheritance of the sons of Judah* Simeon's towns, such as Beersheba, Moladah, Hormah and Ziklag, were taken from Judah's list (15:26-32). Judah had more than it needed (19:9). There is also a deeper reason. Jacob said of Simeon and Levi, after their violence at Shechem, "I will scatter them in Israel" (Gen 49:7). Levi was scattered in honor, as priests in towns all over Israel. Simeon was absorbed into Judah. Even in judgment God gave Simeon a home among his brothers.

19:6 *thirteen cities and their villages* Fourteen names appear. Sheba may be another form of Beersheba, since 1 Chronicles 4:28 leaves it out. Small differences like this are common in old lists.

19:10 *the third lot came up for the sons of Zebulun* Zebulun's land lay in lower Galilee between Mount Carmel and Mount Tabor. Its Bethlehem (19:15) is a different town from Bethlehem of Judah.

loth-tabor (Kislot-Tavor), and it goes out to Daberath (Davrat), and it goes up ***to*** Japhia (Yafia). **13** And from there it passes on eastward, toward the sunrise, to Gath-hepher (Gat-Chefer), to Eth-kazin (Et-Qatsin), and it goes out ***to*** Rimmon, which is turned ***toward*** Neah (Ne'a). **14** And the border turns around it from the north of Hannathon (Chanaton), and its extremities are ***at*** the valley of Iphtahel (Yiftach-El), **15** and Kattath (Qatat), and Nahalal, and Shimron, and Idalah (Yidala), and Bethlehem (Bet-Lechem): twelve cities and their villages. **16** This ***is*** the inheritance of the sons of Zebulun by their clans, these cities and their villages. **17** For Issachar (Yisashkhar) the fourth lot came out, for the sons of Issachar by their clans. **18** And their border was to Jezreel (Yizre'el), and Chesulloth (Kesulot), and Shunem, **19** and Hapharaim (Chafarayim), and Shion, and Anaharath (Anacharat), **20** and Rabbith (Rabit), and Kishion (Qishyon), and Ebez (Evets), **21** and Remeth (Remet), and En-gannim (En-Ganim), and En-haddah (En-Chada), and Beth-pazzez (Bet-Patsets). **22** And the border touches Tabor (Tavor), and Shahazimah (Shachatsima), and Beth-shemesh (Bet-Shemesh); and the extremities of their border are ***at*** the Jordan (Yarden): sixteen cities and their villages. **23** This ***is*** the inheritance of the tribe of the sons of Issachar by their clans, the cities and their villages.

Asher, Naphtali and Dan

24 And the fifth lot came out for the tribe of the sons of Asher by their clans. **25** And their border was Helkath (Chelqat), and Hali (Chali), and Beten, and Akshaph (Akhshaf), **26** and Allammelech (Alamelekh), and Amad, and Mishal; and it touches Carmel (Karmel) westward, and Shihor-libnath (Shichor-Livnat). **27** And it turns back ***toward*** the rising of the sun ***to*** Beth-dagon (Bet-Dagon), and it touches Zebulun and the valley of Iphtahel northward, Beth-emek (Bet-Ha'emeq) and Neiel; and it goes out to Cabul (Kavul) on the left, **28** and Ebron (Evron), and Rehob (Rechov), and Hammon (Chamon), and Kanah (Qana), as far as great Sidon (Tsidon). **29** And the border turns back ***to*** Ramah (Rama), and as far as the fortified city of Tyre (Tsor); and the border turns back ***to*** Hosah (Chosa), and its extremities are at the sea, from the region to Achzib (Akhziv), **30** and Ummah (Uma), and Aphek (Afeq), and Rehob: twenty-two cities and their villages. **31** This ***is*** the inheritance of the tribe of the sons of Asher by their clans, these cities and their villages. **32** For the sons of Naphtali (Naftali) the sixth lot came out, for the sons of Naphtali by their clans. **33** And their border was from Heleph (Chelef), from ***the*** terebinth in Zaanannim (Tsa'ananim), and Adami-nekeb (Adami-Haneqev), and Jabneel (Yavne'el), as far as Lakkum (Laqum); and its extremities were ***at*** the Jordan. **34** And the border turns back westward ***to*** Aznoth-tabor (Aznot-Tavor), and it goes out from there to Hukkok (Chuqoq); and it touches Zebulun on the south, and Asher it touches on the west, and Judah ***at*** the Jordan ***toward*** the rising of the sun. **35** And the fortified cities ***are*** Ziddim (Tsidim), Zer (Tser), and Hammath (Chamat), Rakkath (Raqat), and Chinnereth (Kineret), **36** and Adamah (Adama), and Ramah, and Hazor (Chatsor), **37** and Kedesh (Qedesh), and Edrei, and En-hazor (En-Chatsor), **38** and Yiron, and Migdal-el, Horem (Chorem), and Beth-anath (Bet-Anat), and Beth-shemesh: nineteen cities and their villages. **39** This ***is*** the inheritance of the tribe of the sons of Naphtali by their clans, the cities and their villages. **40** For the tribe of the sons of Dan by their clans the seventh lot came out. **41** And the territory of their inheritance was Zorah (Tsor'a), and Eshtaol, and Ir-shemesh (Ir-Shamesh), **42** and Shaalabbin (Sha'alabbin), and Aijalon (Ayalon), and Ithlah (Yitla), **43** and Elon, and Timnah (Timna), and Ekron (Eqron), **44** and Eltekeh (Elteqe), and Gibbethon (Gibbeton), and Baalath (Ba'alat), **45** and Jehud (Yehud), and Bene-berak (Bene-Veraq), and Gath-rimmon (Gat-Rimon), **46** and Me-jarkon (Me-Hayarqon), and Rakkon (Raqon), with the ter-

19:13 2 Kgs 14:25
19:15 Matt 2:5; Josh 11:1; Josh 21:34,35
19:16 Matt 4:13
19:17 Rev 7:7
19:18 1 Sam 28:4; 2 Kgs 4:8,12; 1 Kgs 21:1,15,16
19:21 Josh 21:29
19:22 Judg 4:6; Josh 19:12; 1 Chr 6:77
19:24 Luke 2:36; Luke 2:26-38
19:25 2 Sam 2:16; Josh 11:1; Josh 12:20
19:26 1 Kgs 18:20,42; Song 7:5; Isa 33:9
19:27 1 Kgs 9:13; 1 Sam 5:2
19:28 Matt 15:21; Mark 3:8; Mark 7:24
19:29 Matt 15:21; Mark 3:8; Mark 7:24
19:30 Josh 12:18; Josh 13:4; 1 Sam 4:1
19:31 Gen 49:20; Deut 33:24,25
19:32 Matt 4:13
19:33 Matt 4:13; Judg 4:11
19:34 Matt 4:13; Deut 33:23; Josh 19:12,22
19:35 Josh 11:2; Gen 10:18; 1 Kgs 8:65
19:36 Josh 11:1,20; Josh 12:19
19:37 Josh 12:22; Josh 20:7
19:39 Matt 4:13
19:41 Josh 15:33; Judg 13:2,25; Judg 16:31
19:42 Judg 1:35; Josh 10:12; Josh 21:24
19:43 Gen 38:12; Judg 14:1,2; Josh 15:45
19:44 Josh 21:23; 1 Kgs 15:27; 1 Kgs 16:15
19:45 Josh 21:24
19:46 Acts 9:36; Acts 9:43; Acts 10:8

19:13 *Gath-hepher* The hometown of the prophet Jonah (2 Kgs 14:25). Isaiah said this region of Zebulun and Naphtali, "Galilee of the nations" (Isa 9:1), would see a great light, and Matthew says it was fulfilled when Jesus began preaching from Capernaum (Matt 4:12-17). Nazareth lay in this part of Galilee.
19:18 *Jezreel, and Chesulloth, and Shunem* Issachar received the rich valley of Jezreel, good farmland and the main road through the land, so it saw many battles. Jacob said Issachar would see that the land was pleasant (Gen 49:15). Shunem was later home to the woman whose son Elisha raised (2 Kgs 4:8-37), and Jezreel a royal city of Ahab (1 Kgs 21:1).
19:28 *as far as great Sidon* Asher's coastland ran from Mount Carmel north toward Sidon and Tyre, but Asher never fully held it (Judg 1:31-32). Tyre and Sidon stayed Phoenician trading powers that later sold cedar to Solomon and gave Ahab his wife Jezebel (1 Kgs 5:1-10; 16:31). What Asher did not take shaped Israel for centuries.
19:35 *Rakkath, and Chinnereth* Naphtali received upper Galilee and the west shore of the Sea of Galilee, with Hazor, which Joshua burned (11:10-11), and Kedesh, soon a city of refuge (20:7). Here Jesus did much of His ministry (Matt 4:13). The great light shone first in the land of these northern tribes.
19:41 *Zorah, and Eshtaol* Dan received a small piece west of Benjamin running down to the coast near Joppa. This is Samson's country (Judg 13:2, 25; 14:1).

ritory opposite Joppa (Yafo). **47** And the territory of the sons of Dan went out from them; and the sons of Dan went up and waged war with Leshem, and they captured it and struck it by the mouth of the sword, and they took possession of it and dwelt in it; and they called Leshem "Dan," according to the name of Dan their father. **48** This ***is*** the inheritance of the tribe of the sons of Dan by their clans, these cities and their villages.

Joshua's Inheritance

49 And they finished dividing the land for possession by its borders; and the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) gave an inheritance to Joshua (Yehoshua) the son of Nun in their midst.
50 According to the mouth of the LORD they gave him the city which he asked for, Timnath-serah (Timnat-Serach) in the hill country of Ephraim (Efrayim); and he built the city and dwelt in it. **51** These ***are*** the inheritances which Eleazar (Elazar) the priest, and Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the sons of Israel gave as a possession by lot at Shiloh (Shilo) before the LORD, ***at*** the entrance of the tent of meeting. And they finished apportioning the land.

JOSHUA 20

The Cities of Refuge

1 And the LORD spoke to Joshua (Yehoshua), saying, **2** "Speak to the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), saying, 'Give for yourselves the cities of refuge of which I spoke to you by the hand of Moses (Moshe), **3** for a manslayer who strikes a soul unintentionally, without knowledge, to flee there; and they shall become for you a refuge from the avenger of blood. **4** And he shall flee to one of these cities, and he shall stand ***at*** the entrance of the gate of the city, and he shall speak his words in the ears of the elders of that city; and they shall gather him into the city to themselves, and they shall give him a place, and he shall dwell with them. **5** And if the avenger of blood pursues after him, then they shall not deliver the manslayer into his hand, for without knowledge he struck his neighbor, and he ***was*** not hating him before. **6** And he shall dwell in that city until he stands before the congregation for judgment, until the death of the high priest who shall be in those days. Then the manslayer shall return, and he shall come to his city and to his house, to the city from which he fled.'" **7** And they consecrated Kedesh (Qedesh) in Galilee (Galil) in the hill country of Naphtali (Naftali), and Shechem (Shekhem) in the hill country of Ephraim (Efrayim), and Kiriath-arba (Qiryat-Arba), that ***is*** Hebron (Chevron), in the hill country of Judah (Yehuda). **8** And from the other side of the Jordan (Yarden) ***at*** Jericho (Yericho) eastward they gave Bezer (Betser) in the wilderness, in the plain, from the tribe of Reuben (Reuven), and Ramoth (Ramot) in Gilead (Gilad) from the tribe of Gad, and Golan in Bashan from the tribe of Manasseh (Menashe). **9** These were the cities of appointment for all the sons of Israel and for the sojourner

19:47 Judg 1:34,35; Judg 18:1-29; Judg 18:7,27,29
19:49 Ezek 45:7,8
19:50 Josh 24:30; Judg 2:9; 1 Chr 7:24
19:51 Heb 4:8; Josh 14:1; Josh 18:1,10
20:1 Josh 5:14; Josh 6:2; Josh 7:10
20:2 Num 35:6,11-14; Deut 4:41-43; Deut 19:2-13
20:4 Jer 38:7; Ruth 4:1,2; Job 5:4
20:5 Num 35:12,25
20:6 Num 35:12,24,25; Heb 9:26
20:7 Luke 1:39; Matt 4:15; Mark 3:7
20:8 Josh 21:36; 1 Chr 6:78; Josh 21:38
20:9 Num 35:15; Josh 20:4,6

19:47 *the territory of the sons of Dan went out from them* Dan's land slipped away from them, because the Amorites pushed them into the hills (Judg 1:34). So part of the tribe went north and took Leshem, called Laish in Judges 18, which tells the full story. It is not a proud story. They set up an idol and a false priesthood there (Judg 18:30-31), and later Jeroboam put a golden calf there (1 Kgs 12:28-30). The tribe that did not hold its inheritance went looking for an easier one and lost its way with God.
19:49 *the sons of Israel gave an inheritance to Joshua the son of Nun in their midst* The leader of the nation took his share last. He did not choose the best land first. That is the heart of a servant. Jesus "did not come to be served, but to serve" (Mark 10:45).
19:50 *Timnath-serah in the hill country of Ephraim* Like Caleb, Joshua had a promise from God (Num 14:30). He asked for a modest town in the hills of his own tribe, built it and lived there, and was buried there (24:30).
19:51 *And they finished apportioning the land* The division ends as it began (14:1), with the same leaders and the LORD at the center. God promised Abraham this land (Gen 12:7), and now every tribe had a name on it. Believers look forward to an inheritance "imperishable and undefiled and unfading" (1 Pet 1:4). God finished this one. He will finish that one too.
20:2 *Give for yourselves the cities of refuge of which I spoke to you by the hand of Moses* This is the only time in the land chapters that the LORD speaks directly. The law is in Numbers 35:9-34 and Deuteronomy 19:1-13, and Moses had already named the three cities east of the Jordan (Deut 4:41-43).
20:3 *for a manslayer who strikes a soul unintentionally, without knowledge* A manslayer is someone who caused another's death. Unintentionally means not planned and not done in hate, like an axe head flying off the handle in the forest (Deut 19:5).
20:3 *a refuge from the avenger of blood* The avenger was the nearest male relative of the dead. The Hebrew word is go'el, the same word as kinsman-redeemer, the relative who bought back family land or a family member (Lev 25:25; Ruth 3:9). In a land without police he saw that a killer paid for the life he took (Num 35:19). But anger does not wait to ask whether it was an accident. These cities stopped a family's grief from turning into another killing.
20:4 *he shall speak his words in the ears of the elders of that city* The gate was where the elders judged cases (Ruth 4:1-2). If his story was believable, the city did not just let him in. It took him in, gave him a place and made him one of its own.
20:5 *they shall not deliver the manslayer into his hand* This was no hiding place for murderers. One who killed on purpose, out of hatred, was handed over (Num 35:16-21; Deut 19:11-13). The city protected the innocent, not the guilty. God's mercy never cancels His justice.
20:6 *until the death of the high priest who shall be in those days* First came a trial before the congregation (Num 35:24-25). If the death was an accident, he lived in the city until the high priest died, and then could go home. Scripture does not fully explain why. A life had been lost, and the land was not to be left stained with blood (Num 35:33). The high priest's death seems to have closed the matter. Many see a picture of Christ, our High Priest, whose death sets us free. The New Testament does not say so in so many words, so I hold it as a picture.
20:7 *Kedesh in Galilee in the hill country of Naphtali* To consecrate is to set apart for God's purpose. West of the Jordan the cities lay north, middle and south, and east of it the same (20:8). Spread evenly through the land, no one was more than a day or so from safety, and Israel was told to prepare the roads (Deut 19:3). All six were Levite cities, so refuge was found among the people who served at God's house.
20:9 *for all the sons of Israel and for the sojourner who sojourns in their midst* A sojourner was a foreigner living in Israel. Any person could run there. Hebrews speaks of "we who have fled for refuge" (Heb 6:18). We stand in a worse danger than the manslayer, since "the wages of sin is death" (Rom 6:23). God's refuge is Jesus, and there is "no condemnation to those in Christ Jesus" (Rom 8:1). The cities protected only the innocent. Christ receives the guilty who come, because He took our guilt on Himself. The question is whether we have run to Him.

who sojourns in their midst, for anyone who strikes a soul unintentionally to flee there, and he shall not die by the hand of the avenger of blood until he stands before the congregation.

JOSHUA 21

The Cities of the Levites

1 And the heads of the fathers of the Levites drew near to Eleazar (Elazar) the priest, and to Joshua (Yehoshua) the son of Nun, and to the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the sons of Israel (Yisra'el). **2** And they spoke to them at Shiloh (Shilo) in the land of Canaan (Kena'an), saying, "The LORD commanded by the hand of Moses (Moshe) to give us cities to dwell in, and their pasture lands for our livestock." **3** And the sons of Israel gave to the Levites from their inheritance, according to the mouth of the LORD, these cities and their pasture lands. **4** And the lot came out for the clans of the Kohathites; and ***there*** were for the sons of Aaron (Aharon) the priest, of the Levites, from the tribe of Judah (Yehuda) and from the tribe of the Simeonites and from the tribe of Benjamin (Binyamin), by lot, thirteen cities. **5** And for the sons of Kohath (Qehat) who were left ***there were***, from the clans of the tribe of Ephraim (Efrayim) and from the tribe of Dan and from the half of the tribe of Manasseh (Menashe), by lot, ten cities. **6** And for the sons of Gershon ***there were***, from the clans of the tribe of Issachar (Yisashkhar) and from the tribe of Asher and from the tribe of Naphtali (Naftali) and from the half of the tribe of Manasseh in Bashan, by lot, thirteen cities. **7** For the sons of Merari by their clans ***there were***, from the tribe of Reuben (Reuven) and from the tribe of Gad and from the tribe of Zebulun (Zevulun), twelve cities. **8** And the sons of Israel gave to the Levites these cities and their pasture lands, just as the LORD had commanded by the hand of Moses, by lot. **9** And they gave from the tribe of the sons of Judah and from the tribe of the sons of Simeon (Shimon) these cities which ***one*** called by name; **10** and ***they*** were for the sons of Aaron, of the clans of the Kohathites, of the sons of Levi, for the first lot was theirs. **11** And they gave them Kiriath-arba (Qiryat-Arba), the father of the Anak, that ***is*** Hebron (Chevron), in the hill country of Judah, and its pasture lands around it. **12** And the field of the city and its villages they gave to Caleb (Kalev) the son of Jephunneh (Yefune) as his possession. **13** And to the sons of Aaron the priest they gave the city of refuge of the manslayer, Hebron and its pasture lands, and Libnah (Livna) and its pasture lands, **14** and Jattir (Yatir) and its pasture lands, and Eshtemoa and its pasture lands, **15** and Holon (Cholon) and its pasture lands, and Debir (Devir) and its pasture lands, **16** and Ain (Ayin) and its pasture lands, and Juttah (Yuta) and its pasture lands, Beth-shemesh (Bet-Shemesh) and its pasture lands: nine cities from these two tribes. **17** And from the tribe of Benjamin, Gibeon (Givon) and its pasture lands, Geba (Geva) and its pasture lands, **18** Anathoth (Anatot) and its pasture lands, and Almon and its pasture lands: four cities. **19** All the cities of the sons of Aaron, the priests, ***were*** thirteen cities and their pasture lands. **20** And for the clans of the sons of Kohath, the Levites who were left of the sons of Kohath, and the cities of their lot were from the tribe of Ephraim. **21** And they gave them the city of refuge of the manslayer, Shechem (Shekhem) and its pasture lands in the hill country of Ephraim, and Gezer and its pasture lands, **22** and Kibzaim (Qivtsayim) and its pasture lands, and
Beth-horon (Bet-Choron) and its pasture lands: four cities. **23** And from the tribe of Dan, Eltekeh (Elteqe) and its pasture lands, Gibbethon (Gibbeton) and its pasture lands, **24** Aijalon (Ayalon) and its pasture lands, Gath-rimmon (Gat-Rimon) and its pasture lands: four cities. **25** And from the half of the tribe of Manasseh, Taanach (Ta'anakh) and its pasture lands, and Gath-rimmon and its pasture lands: two cities. **26** All the cities, ten, and their pasture lands ***were*** for the clans of the sons of Kohath who were left. **27** And to the sons of Gershon, of the clans of the Levites, from the half of the tribe of Manasseh, the city of refuge of the manslayer, Golan in Bashan and its pasture lands, and Beeshterah (Be'eshtera) and its pasture lands: two cities. **28** And from the tribe of Issachar, Kishion (Qishyon) and its pasture lands, Daberath (Davrat)

21:1 Josh 14:1; Josh 19:51; Josh 17:4
21:2 Josh 18:1; Num 35:2-8; Ezek 48:9-18
21:3 Gen 49:7; Deut 33:8-10; 1 Chr 6:54-81
21:4 Josh 21:8-19; Josh 24:33; 1 Chr 6:54-60
21:5 Josh 21:20-26; Gen 46:11; Exod 6:16-25
21:6 Josh 21:27-33; Exod 6:16,17; Num 3:21,22
21:7 Josh 21:34-40; Exod 6:19; Num 3:20
21:8 Josh 21:3; Josh 18:6; Num 33:54
21:9 Josh 21:13-18; 1 Chr 6:65
21:10 Josh 21:4; Exod 6:18,20-26; Num 3:2-4,19,27
21:11 1 Chr 6:55; Luke 1:39; Josh 15:13,14,54
21:12 Josh 14:13-15; 1 Chr 6:55-57
21:13 Josh 15:42; Josh 15:54; Josh 20:7
21:14 Josh 15:48; Josh 15:50; 1 Sam 30:27,28
21:15 Josh 15:51; Josh 15:49; 1 Chr 6:58
21:16 1 Chr 6:59; Josh 15:55; Josh 15:10
21:17 Josh 9:3; Josh 18:24; 1 Chr 6:60
21:18 1 Kgs 2:26; Isa 10:30; Jer 1:1
21:20 1 Chr 6:66; Josh 21:5
21:21 Josh 20:7; Gen 33:19; Judg 9:1
21:22 Josh 16:3,5; Josh 18:13,14; 1 Chr 6:68
21:23 Josh 19:44,45
21:24 Josh 10:12; Josh 19:42; 1 Chr 6:69
21:25 Josh 17:11; Judg 5:19
21:27 1 Chr 6:71; Josh 20:8; Deut 1:4
21:28 Josh 19:12; 1 Chr 6:72,73

21:2 *The LORD commanded by the hand of Moses to give us cities to dwell in* Like Caleb (14:6) and Zelophehad's daughters (17:4), the Levites came holding God's word (Num 35:1-8). Pasture lands were the open fields around a town where animals could graze. Every tribe gave up some of its towns without argument.
21:4 *for the sons of Aaron the priest* The Levites were divided by Levi's three sons, Kohath, Gershon and Merari (Exod 6:16-19), and the priests, Aaron's family, came from Kohath. Their cities fell in Judah, Simeon and Benjamin, the area around Jerusalem where the temple would one day stand. No one in Joshua's day could have planned that. God placed the priests near the place He would choose for His name (Deut 12:5).
21:12 *the field of the city and its villages they gave to Caleb* Hebron became a priestly city and a city of refuge, while Caleb kept his inheritance around it. He shared the prize he had waited forty-five years for.
21:18 *Anathoth and its pasture lands* Anathoth was later the home of the priest Abiathar (1 Kgs 2:26) and of Jeremiah, "from the priests who were in Anathoth" (Jer 1:1). Beth-shemesh (21:16) was where the ark came back from the Philistines on a cart (1 Sam 6:12-15).
21:21 *Shechem and its pasture lands in the hill country of Ephraim* Where Abraham first built an altar in the land (Gen 12:6-7), and where Joshua would gather Israel to renew the covenant (24:1).
21:25 *Taanach and its pasture lands, and Gath-rimmon and its pasture lands* Gath-rimmon repeats the name from verse 24. The parallel list in 1 Chronicles 6:70 gives a different town for Manasseh, so a copyist likely repeated the name from the line above. The count of two still stands.

and its pasture lands, **29** Jarmuth (Yarmut) and its pasture lands, En-gannim (En-Ganim) and its pasture lands: four cities. **30** And from the tribe of Asher, Mishal and its pasture lands, Abdon (Avdon) and its pasture lands, **31** Helkath (Chelqat) and its pasture lands, and Rehob (Rechov) and its pasture lands: four cities. **32** And from the tribe of Naphtali, the city of refuge of the manslayer, Kedesh (Qedesh) in Galilee (Galil) and its pasture lands, and Hammoth-dor (Chamot-Dor) and its pasture lands, and Kartan (Qartan) and its pasture lands: three cities. **33** All the cities of the Gershonites by their clans ***were*** thirteen cities and their pasture lands. **34** And for the clans of the sons of Merari, the Levites who were left, from the tribe of Zebulun, Jokneam
(Yoqne'am) and its pasture lands, Kartah (Qarta) and its pasture lands, **35** Dimnah (Dimna) and its pasture lands, Nahalal and its pasture lands: four cities. **36** And from the tribe of Reuben, Bezer (Betser) and its pasture lands, and Jahaz (Yahats) and its pasture lands, **37** Kedemoth (Qedemot) and its pasture lands, and Mephaath (Mefa'at) and its pasture lands: four cities. **38** And from the tribe of Gad, the city of refuge of the manslayer, Ramoth (Ramot) in Gilead (Gilad) and its pasture lands, and Mahanaim (Machanayim) and its pasture lands, **39** Heshbon (Cheshbon) and its pasture lands, Jazer (Yazer) and its pasture lands: all the cities ***were*** four. **40** All the cities of the sons of Merari by their clans, who were left of the clans of the Levites, and their lot was twelve cities. **41** All the cities of the Levites in the midst of the possession of the sons of Israel ***were*** forty-eight cities and their pasture lands. **42** These cities were each city and its pasture lands around it; so ***it was*** for all these cities.

Every Good Word Came to Pass

43 And the LORD gave to Israel all the land which He had sworn to give to their fathers, and they took possession of it and dwelt in it. **44** And the LORD gave them rest all around, according to all that He had sworn to their fathers; and not a man of all their enemies stood before them; all their enemies the LORD gave into their hand. **45** Not a word fell of every good word which the LORD had spoken to the house of Israel; everything came ***to pass***.

JOSHUA 22

The Eastern Tribes Go Home

1 Then Joshua (Yehoshua) called the Reubenites and the Gadites and the half of the tribe of Manasseh (Menashe), **2** and he said to them, "You have kept all that Moses (Moshe) the servant of the LORD commanded you, and you have listened to my voice in all that I have commanded you. **3** You have not forsaken your brothers these many days until this day, and you have kept the charge of the commandment of the LORD your God. **4** And now the LORD your God has given rest to your brothers, just as He spoke to them. And now, turn and go for yourselves to your tents, to the land of your possession, which Moses the servant of the LORD gave you on the other side of the Jordan (Yarden). **5** Only take great care to do the commandment and the law which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you: to love the LORD your God, and to walk in all His ways, and to keep His commandments, and to cling to Him, and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul." **6** And Joshua blessed them and sent them away, and they went to their tents. **7** And to the half of the tribe of the Manassites Moses had given ***a possession*** in Bashan, and to its ***other*** half Joshua had given ***a possession*** with their brothers on the other side of the Jordan westward. And also when Joshua sent them away to their

21:29 Josh 10:3,23; Josh 12:11
21:30 Josh 19:25-28; 1 Chr 6:74,75
21:31 Judg 1:31; Judg 18:21; 1 Chr 6:75
21:32 Matt 4:15; Mark 3:7; Josh 20:7
21:34 1 Chr 6:77; Josh 21:7; Josh 12:22
21:36 Josh 20:8; Deut 4:43; 1 Chr 6:78,79
21:38 Gen 32:2; Josh 20:8; 1 Kgs 22:3
21:39 Josh 13:17,21; Num 21:26-30; Num 32:37
21:41 Gen 49:7; Num 35:1-8; Deut 33:10
21:43 Gen 13:15; Gen 28:4,13,14; Exod 23:27-31
21:44 Josh 11:23; Josh 1:15; Josh 22:4,9
21:45 Josh 23:14,15; 1 Kgs 8:56; Num 23:19
22:1 Num 32:18-33; Deut 29:7,8
22:2 Josh 1:12-18; Num 32:20-29; Deut 3:16-20
22:3 Phil 1:23-27
22:4 Josh 13:8,15-33; Josh 21:43,44; Deut 12:9
22:5 Matt 4:10; Matt 22:37; Luke 1:74
22:6 Luke 2:34; Josh 14:13; Gen 47:7,10
22:7 Josh 17:1-12; Josh 13:29-31

21:41 *forty-eight cities and their pasture lands* Six were cities of refuge. Jacob said Levi would be scattered in Israel (Gen 49:7). What began as judgment for Levi's violence became a calling after Levi stood with the LORD at the golden calf (Exod 32:26-29). The Levites taught God's law (Deut 33:10), so no tribe was far from someone who knew His Word. God still scatters His people, "a royal priesthood" (1 Pet 2:9), into every town to proclaim His excellencies.

21:43 *the LORD gave to Israel all the land which He had sworn to give to their fathers* This goes back to Abraham (Gen 15:18), Isaac and Jacob. For more than four hundred years the promise waited. Israel fought, but the gift was His. How can it say all the land when much remained (13:1)? God gave it all into Israel's hand and broke the Canaanites' power. The possessing was Israel's part (23:5, 12-13). The gift was complete. The taking was not.

21:43 *they took possession of it and dwelt in it* Israel held the full borders of Genesis 15:18 only for a time under David and Solomon (1 Kgs 4:21). I believe God will yet give Israel the whole land in the Messiah's kingdom, because "the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable" (Rom 11:29). Some teachers hold the promise was fully met here and under Solomon. What Joshua saw was a real fulfillment and a down payment on a greater one.

21:44 *the LORD gave them rest all around* Rest means the end of wandering and fighting, a home in peace to worship God, as Moses promised (Deut 12:9-10). Not a man stood before them, just as God said on the first day (1:5). Yet this was not the final rest (Heb 4:8-9). David was still calling people to enter God's rest (Ps 95:7-11). That rest is found in Christ (Matt 11:28).

21:45 *Not a word fell of every good word which the LORD had spoken* Not one promise dropped to the ground unkept: the land, the nation, the exodus, the manna, the Jordan, Jericho, Hebron for Caleb, His presence for Joshua. Joshua says it again (23:14), and so does Solomon (1 Kgs 8:56). "For as many as are the promises of God, in Him is the Yes" (2 Cor 1:20). When you doubt God's promises, count the words He has already kept in your life. The same God holds the ones still ahead.

22:3 *You have not forsaken your brothers these many days until this day* The eastern tribes had kept their promise (Num 32; 1:12-18) for about seven years, away from wives, children and homes. Joshua told them plainly what they had done well. Good leaders say thank you (Phil 1:3-5). A word of honest praise can carry a person a long way.

22:5 *to love the LORD your God, and to walk in all His ways* Love comes first, and obedience flows from it (Matt 22:37-38). The Jordan would separate these tribes from the tabernacle, and distance can cool a heart. To "cling to Him" is to hold on tight, the word used of a husband holding fast to his wife (Gen 2:24). Faith that lasts is not rules kept at arm's length. It is holding on to God Himself.

tents, and he blessed them, **8** and he said to them, saying, "With great riches return to your tents, and with very much livestock, with silver and with gold and with bronze and with iron and with very many garments. Divide the spoil of your enemies with your brothers." **9** And the sons of Reuben (Reuven) and the sons of Gad and the half of the tribe of the Manassites returned and went from the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), from Shiloh (Shilo), which ***is*** in the land of Canaan (Kena'an), to go to the land of Gilead (Gilad), to the land of their possession in which they had taken possession, according to the mouth of the LORD by the hand of Moses.

The Altar by the Jordan

10 And they came to the regions of the Jordan which ***are*** in the land of Canaan, and the sons of Reuben and the sons of Gad and the half of the tribe of the Manassites built there an altar by the Jordan, an altar great in appearance. **11** And the sons of Israel heard, saying, "Look, the sons of Reuben and the sons of Gad and the half of the tribe of the Manassites have built the altar opposite the land of Canaan, at the regions of the Jordan, on the side of the sons of Israel." **12** And the sons of Israel heard ***it***, and all the congregation of the sons of Israel assembled ***at*** Shiloh to go up against them to war. **13** And the sons of Israel sent to the sons of Reuben and to the sons of Gad and to the half of the tribe of Manasseh, to the land of Gilead, Phinehas (Pinchas) the son of Eleazar (Elazar) the priest, **14** and ten leaders with him, one leader, one leader for a father's house, for all the tribes of Israel; and each man ***was*** the head of the house of their fathers; they ***were*** for the thousands of Israel. **15** And they came to the sons of Reuben and to the sons of Gad and to the half of the tribe of Manasseh, to the land of Gilead, and they spoke with them, saying, **16** "Thus says all the congregation of the LORD: 'What ***is*** this unfaithfulness with which you have acted unfaithfully against the God of Israel, to turn back today from after the LORD, by your building for yourselves an altar, by your rebelling today against the LORD? **17** ***Is*** the iniquity of Peor little for us, from which we have not cleansed ourselves until this day, and the plague was among the congregation of the LORD, **18** and you, you are turning back today from after the LORD? And it shall be, you rebel today against the LORD, and tomorrow He will be angry with all the congregation of Israel. **19** And surely, if the land of your possession ***is*** unclean, pass over for yourselves into the land of the possession of the LORD, where the tabernacle of the LORD dwells, and take possession in our midst; and against the LORD do not rebel, and against us do not rebel, by your building for yourselves an altar besides the altar of the LORD our God. **20** Did not Achan (Akhan) the son of Zerah (Zerach) act unfaithfully ***with*** unfaithfulness in the devoted thing, and on all the congregation of Israel ***there*** was wrath? And he ***was*** one man; he did not perish ***alone*** in his iniquity.'" **21** And the sons of Reuben and the sons of Gad and the half of the tribe of the Manassites answered, and they spoke with the heads of the thousands of Israel, **22** "God, God, the LORD! God, God, the LORD! He knows, and Israel, let him know! If ***it was*** in rebellion, and if in unfaithfulness against the LORD, do not save us this day, **23** to build for ourselves an altar to turn back from after the LORD; and if to offer up on it burnt offering and grain offering, and if to make on it sacrifices of peace offerings, the LORD Himself shall require ***it***. **24** And if not from anxiety, from a matter, we have done this, saying, 'Tomorrow your sons will say to our sons, saying, "What ***is there*** to you and to the LORD, the God of Israel? **25** And the LORD has put a border between us and you, sons of Reuben and sons of Gad, the Jordan. You have no portion in the LORD." And your sons will make our sons cease from fearing the LORD.' **26** And we said, 'Let us now act for ourselves to build the altar, not for burnt offering and not for sacrifice, **27** but it ***is*** a witness between us and you and between our generations after us, to do the service of the LORD before Him with our burnt offerings and with our sacrifices and with our peace offerings, and your sons shall not say tomor-

22:8 Num 31:27; 1 Sam 30:24; Deut 8:9-14,17,18
22:9 Num 32:1,26,29,39,40; Josh 13:11,25,31; Deut 3:15,16
22:10 Josh 22:25-28; Josh 4:5-9; Josh 24:26,27
22:11 John 1:28; Deut 13:12-14; Lev 17:8,9
22:12 Deut 13:15; Judg 20:1-11; Acts 11:2,3
22:13 Num 25:7,11-13; Exod 6:25; Judg 20:28
22:14 Num 1:4; Exod 18:25
22:15 Josh 22:12; Matt 18:17; 1 Cor 1:10
22:17 Deut 4:3,4; Ps 106:28,29; Ezra 9:13,14
22:18 Num 16:22; Josh 22:16; Deut 7:4
22:19 Josh 18:1; Exod 15:17; Lev 18:25-28
22:20 Josh 7:1,5,18,24; 1 Cor 10:6; 2 Pet 2:6
22:21 Prov 15:1; Prov 16:1; Prov 18:13
22:22 Deut 10:17; 1 Kgs 8:39; Job 10:7
22:23 Deut 18:19; 1 Sam 20:16; Gen 9:4
22:24 Josh 4:6; Gen 18:19; Gen 30:33
22:25 Josh 22:27; 2 Sam 20:1; 1 Kgs 12:16
22:27 Josh 24:27; Gen 31:48,52; Deut 12:5,6,11,17,18,26,27

22:8 *Divide the spoil of your enemies with your brothers* The men who stayed home to guard the families shared in the spoil, as after the war with Midian (Num 31:27), and David later made it law (1 Sam 30:24-25). Those who serve behind the lines share in the reward.
22:10 *an altar great in appearance* Built on the west side before they crossed, big enough to be seen from far off.
22:12 *all the congregation of the sons of Israel assembled at Shiloh to go up against them to war* God's law allowed one place of sacrifice, where His tabernacle stood (Lev 17:8-9; Deut 12:5-14). Another altar could mean another worship, even idolatry, and Deuteronomy 13:12-15 told Israel to deal with any town that turned to other gods. Their zeal was right. Their facts were not yet in. What they did next kept the zeal from becoming a disaster.
22:13 *Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest* A good choice. At Peor he had stood up for the LORD's honor, and God praised his zeal and stopped a plague (Num 25:7-13).
22:17 *Is the iniquity of Peor little for us* At Peor Israel worshiped the Baal of Peor and twenty-four thousand died in the plague (Num 25:1-9). With Achan (22:20), the point was that sin in one part of God's people affects all of it.
22:19 *pass over for yourselves into the land of the possession of the LORD* A generous offer: if you feel cut off over there, come live with us, and we will share our land. They named the sin they feared, gave reasons from God's Word and history, and offered a way back at a cost to themselves. That is how to confront a brother (Matt 18:15).
22:22 *God, God, the LORD!* In Hebrew, three names of God: El, Elohim and Yahweh, the Mighty One, God, the LORD, said twice. It was the most solemn way they could call Him as witness. They appealed first to God, who sees the heart, and were willing to be judged by Him.
22:24 *What is there to you and to the LORD, the God of Israel?* They feared that one day the western tribes' children would look across the river and say, "You have no portion in the LORD" (22:25), and so make their sons stop fearing the LORD. Will our children know they belong to the LORD? Moses told Israel to teach God's words at home and on the road (Deut 6:7).

row to our sons, "You have no portion in the LORD."' **28** And we said, 'And it shall be, when they say ***so*** to us and to our generations tomorrow, and we shall say, "See the copy of the altar of the LORD which our fathers made, not for burnt offering and not for sacrifice, but it ***is*** a witness between us and you."' **29** Far be it from us to rebel against the LORD and to turn back today from after the LORD, by building an altar for burnt offering, for grain offering, and for sacrifice, besides the altar of the LORD our God which ***is*** before His tabernacle." **30** And Phinehas the priest and the leaders of the congregation and the heads of the thousands of Israel who ***were*** with him heard the words which the sons of Reuben and the sons of Gad and the sons of Manasseh spoke, and it was good in their eyes. **31** And Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest said to the sons of Reuben and to the sons of Gad and to the sons of Manasseh, "Today we know that the LORD ***is*** in our midst, because you have not acted unfaithfully ***with*** this unfaithfulness against the LORD. Then you have delivered the sons of Israel from the hand of the LORD." **32** And Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest and the leaders returned from the sons of Reuben and from the sons of Gad, from the land of Gilead to the land of Canaan, to the sons of Israel, and they brought back word to them. **33** And the word was good in the eyes of the sons of Israel, and the sons of Israel blessed God, and they did not say to go up against them to war, to destroy the land in which the sons of Reuben and the sons of Gad were dwelling. **34** And the sons of Reuben and the sons of Gad called the altar, "For it ***is*** a witness between us that the LORD ***is*** God."

JOSHUA 23

Joshua's Farewell

1 And it was, many days after the LORD had given rest to Israel (Yisra'el) from all their enemies all around, and Joshua (Yehoshua) was old, advanced in days, **2** and Joshua called for all Israel, for its elders and for its heads and for its judges and for its officers, and he said to them, "I am old; I am advanced in days. **3** And you have seen all that the LORD your God has done to all these nations before you, for the LORD your God, He ***is*** the One who fights for you. **4** See, I have made these nations that remain fall to you as an inheritance for your tribes, from the Jordan (Yarden), and all the nations which I have cut off, and the Great Sea ***at*** the going in of the sun. **5** And the LORD your God, He will push them out from before you, and He will dispossess them from before you, and you shall take possession of their land, just as the LORD your God spoke to you. **6** And you shall be very strong to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses (Moshe), so as not to turn aside from it ***to the*** right or ***to the*** left, **7** so as not to go among these nations, these that remain with you; and of the name of their gods you shall not make mention, and you shall not make ***others*** swear ***by it***, and you shall not serve them, and you shall not bow down to them. **8** But to the LORD your God you shall cling, just as you have done until this day. **9** And the LORD has dispossessed from before you great and mighty nations; and ***as for*** you, not a man has stood before you until this day. **10** One man of you chases a thousand, for the LORD your God, He ***is*** the One who fights for you, just as He spoke to you. **11** And you shall take great care for your souls, to love the

22:28 Heb 8:5; Exod 25:40; 2 Kgs 16:10
22:29 Josh 24:16; Deut 12:13,14; Gen 44:7,17
22:30 Josh 22:33; Gen 28:8; Judg 8:3
22:31 Lev 26:11,12; 2 Chr 15:2; Josh 3:10
22:32 Josh 22:12-14; Prov 25:13
22:33 1 Chr 29:20; Dan 2:19; Luke 2:28
22:34 Josh 22:27; Josh 24:27; 1 Kgs 18:39
23:1 Heb 4:8; Josh 13:1; Josh 21:44
23:2 Josh 24:1; Deut 31:28; 1 Chr 28:1
23:3 Exod 14:14; Josh 10:14,42; Deut 4:9
23:4 Josh 13:2,6,7; Josh 18:10
23:5 Josh 13:6; Exod 33:2; Exod 34:11
23:6 Deut 5:32; Deut 28:14; Eph 6:10-19
23:7 2 Cor 6:16; Exod 23:13; Ps 16:4
23:8 Deut 10:20; Josh 22:5; Deut 11:22
23:9 Acts 7:45; Deut 11:23; Josh 1:5,8,9
23:10 Lev 26:8; Deut 32:30; Deut 3:22
23:11 Josh 22:5; Deut 4:9; Deut 6:5-12

22:28 *See the copy of the altar of the LORD which our fathers made* A full-size copy that was never used for sacrifice, a witness that they worshiped the same God at the same altar. Some teachers ask whether building it without explaining first was wise. Others note Scripture never faults them. Either way, fear grows when no one explains, and it helps when someone asks.
22:31 *Today we know that the LORD is in our midst* Phinehas was not disappointed there would be no fight. He was glad. His zeal was for God's honor, not for a battle. He was ready to act against real sin and just as ready to listen. "Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger" (James 1:19). Many church splits and family fights could be avoided if someone first asked what the other meant.
22:34 *For it is a witness between us that the LORD is God* What could have been a civil war ended in worship. The altar's name pointed not to itself but to the LORD. God's people are still divided by many rivers. We are to keep "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph 4:3). What holds us together is the one altar, the cross of Christ, where we all find our portion in the LORD.
23:2 *I am old; I am advanced in days* We do not know how many years had passed. Joshua died at 110 (24:29). Like Moses in Deuteronomy, he gave his last words to the leaders who would follow him. Scripture records the last words of Jacob, Moses, David and Paul (Gen 49; 2 Tim 4:6-8). What would you want to say to the people you love if you had only a little time left?
23:3 *the LORD your God, He is the One who fights for you* Joshua started with what they had seen with their own eyes, and he did not point to himself. He was the general, but he gave God all the credit.
23:5 *He will push them out from before you* The work was not finished, but God was not finished either. He would keep fighting as long as they kept trusting.
23:6 *you shall be very strong to keep and to do all that is written* Almost the words God spoke to Joshua at the start (1:7-8), lived by for a lifetime and now passed on. Obeying God's Word takes strength because the pull to drift is strong.
23:7 *of the name of their gods you shall not make mention* He was not telling Israel to hate their neighbors, but not to mix in a way that drew them into their worship. Each step goes further: speak the names, swear by them, serve them, bow down. Idolatry rarely starts with bowing. It starts with getting comfortable.
23:8 *to the LORD your God you shall cling* The best defense against false gods is holding tight to the true one (22:5).
23:10 *One man of you chases a thousand* This echoes the Law (Lev 26:8; Deut 32:30). The numbers did not matter. God did.
23:11 *take great care for your souls, to love the LORD your God* This is the heart of it. Obedience without love becomes a burden, and love makes obedience a joy (1 John 5:3). Love for God must be guarded, or it cools.

LORD your God. **12** For if you surely turn back and cling to the remainder of these nations, these that remain with you, and intermarry with them, and go in among them and they among you, **13** you shall surely know that the LORD your God will not continue to dispossess these nations from before you; and they shall become for you a trap and a snare, and a scourge in your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from off this good ground which the LORD your God has given you. **14** And look, I ***am*** going today in the way of all the earth, and you know with all your heart and with all your soul that not one word has fallen of all the good words which the LORD your God spoke concerning you; all have come ***to pass*** for you; not one word of it has fallen. **15** And it shall be, just as every good word which the LORD your God spoke to you has come on you, so the LORD will bring on you every evil word, until He has destroyed you from off this good ground which the LORD your God has given you, **16** when you transgress the covenant of the LORD your God which He commanded you, and go and serve other gods and bow down to them; and the anger of the LORD will burn against you, and you will perish quickly from off the good land which He has given you."

JOSHUA 24

God's Story of Grace

1 And Joshua (Yehoshua) gathered all the tribes of Israel (Yisra'el) to Shechem (Shekhem), and he called for the elders of Israel and for its heads and for its judges and for its officers; and they presented themselves before God. **2** And Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: 'On the other side of the River (Nahar) your fathers dwelt from long ago, Terah (Terach) the father of Abraham (Avraham) and the father of Nahor (Nachor), and they served other gods. **3** And I took your father Abraham from the other side of the River, and I led him through all the land of Canaan (Kena'an), and I multiplied his seed, and I gave him Isaac (Yitschaq). **4** And I gave to Isaac Jacob (Ya'aqov) and Esau (Esav); and I gave to Esau the mountain of Seir (Se'ir) to take possession of it; and Jacob and his sons went down ***to*** Egypt (Mitsrayim). **5** And I sent Moses (Moshe) and Aaron (Aharon), and I struck Egypt, just as I did in its midst; and afterward I brought you out. **6** And I brought your fathers out from Egypt, and you came to the sea; and Egypt pursued after your fathers with chariotry and with horsemen ***to*** the Red Sea. **7** And they cried out to the LORD, and He put darkness between you and the Egyptians (Mitsrim), and He brought the sea over them, and it covered them; and your eyes saw what I did in Egypt. And you dwelt in the wilderness many days. **8** And I brought you to the land of the Amorites who dwelt on the other side of the Jordan (Yarden), and they fought with you; and I gave them into your hand, and you took possession of their land, and I destroyed them from before you. **9** And Balak (Balaq) the son of Zippor (Tsipor), the king of Moab (Mo'av), arose and fought against Israel; and he sent and called for Balaam (Bilam) the son of Beor to curse you. **10** And I was not willing to listen to Balaam; and he surely blessed you, and I delivered you from his hand. **11** And you passed over the Jordan and came to Jericho (Yericho); and the lords of Jericho fought against you, the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Girgashites, the Hivites and the Jebusites; and I

23:12 2 Cor 6:16; Deut 7:3; Ps 36:3
23:13 Luke 21:24; Deut 7:16; Exod 23:33
23:14 1 Kgs 2:2; Lev 26:3-13; Job 30:23
23:15 Heb 8:9; Deut 28:15-68; Lev 26:14-46
23:16 Heb 8:9; 2 Kgs 24:20
24:1 Acts 10:33; Josh 23:2; 1 Sam 10:19
24:2 Matt 1:2; Luke 3:34; Acts 7:2
24:3 Acts 7:2; Matt 1:2; Heb 11:8
24:4 Acts 7:15; Matt 1:2; Deut 2:5
24:5 Exod 3:10; Exod 7:1-12; Exod 4:12,13
24:6 Acts 7:36; Heb 11:29; Exod 12:37,51
24:7 Acts 13:17; Acts 13:18; Heb 3:9
24:8 Num 21:21-35; Josh 13:10; Deut 2:32-37
24:9 Jude 1:11; Rev 2:14; Judg 11:25
24:10 Jude 1:11; Num 22:11,12,18-20,35; Num 23:3-12,15-26
24:11 Josh 3:14-17; Josh 4:10-12,23; Ps 114:3,5

23:12 *cling to the remainder of these nations* You will cling to something, either to the LORD (23:8) or to the nations. There is no third choice.
23:12 *intermarry with them* Marriage to those who worshiped other gods would bring those gods into Israel's homes. This was not about race. Rahab and Ruth married into Israel after turning to the LORD (Ruth 1:16). It was about faith. Solomon's foreign wives turned his heart (1 Kgs 11:1-4). Believers are told, "Do not become unequally yoked with unbelievers" (2 Cor 6:14).
23:13 *a trap and a snare, and a scourge in your sides and thorns in your eyes* A trap, a whip, thorns in the eyes: the sin Israel tolerated would wound them. The next generation did just this, and God said these nations would be thorns in their sides (Judg 2:1-3).
23:14 *I am going today in the way of all the earth* He was about to die, the road every person walks. He did not ask them to take his word that God keeps His promises. He asked them to look at their own lives (21:45). They had seen the Jordan stop and Jericho fall, and they lived in houses they did not build. When we remember how faithful God has been, it is easier to trust Him for what lies ahead.
23:15 *so the LORD will bring on you every evil word* The evil word means the word of disaster, the curses of the Law (Lev 26:14-39; Deut 28:15-68). If God keeps His promises, He also keeps His warnings.
23:16 *you will perish quickly from off the good land* This came true when Assyria took the northern kingdom in 722 B.C. (2 Kgs 17:7-18) and Babylon took Judah in 586 B.C. Yet God promised to bring them back (Jer 29:10-14), and one day He will restore Israel fully (Rom 11:25-29). Grace is no license to sin: "Let the one who thinks he stands watch, lest he fall" (1 Cor 10:12). Remember, obey, cling, love.
24:1 *Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem* Shechem lay between Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim. Abraham built his first altar in Canaan there (Gen 12:6-7), Jacob buried his household's idols nearby (Gen 35:4), and Joshua read the Law there after Ai (8:30-35). It was the right place to renew the covenant. "Before God" tells us this was a worship meeting, held in His presence.
24:2 *your fathers dwelt from long ago, Terah the father of Abraham* The River is the Euphrates. Abraham's family lived in Ur and Haran (Gen 11:27-32), and they "served other gods." Israel did not begin with a good family that found God, but with an idol-worshiping family that God found. Scripture does not say what Abraham believed before God called him. It says God came to him first (Acts 7:2). He believed "on the One who justifies the ungodly" (Rom 4:5). Every believer has the same story. We were not seeking God. He sought us.
24:3 *I took your father Abraham from the other side of the River* Count the verbs: I took, I led, I multiplied, I gave. God did it all. Abraham's part was to believe and go (Heb 11:8). God was generous even to Esau, giving him Edom.
24:7 *your eyes saw what I did in Egypt* Some of the older people at Shechem had seen it as children (Exod 14:19-20). It was a memory, not a legend.
24:10 *I was not willing to listen to Balaam; and he surely blessed you* Balak hired Balaam to curse Israel (Num 22-24), and every time Balaam opened his mouth to curse, God turned it into blessing.

gave them into your hand. **12** And I sent the hornet before you, and it drove them out from before you, the two kings of the Amorites; not by your sword and not by your bow. **13** And I gave you a land on which you had not labored, and cities which you had not built, and you dwelt in them; vineyards and olive trees which you had not planted, you are eating.'

Choose Whom You Will Serve

14 And now, fear the LORD and serve Him in integrity and in truth; and remove the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. **15** And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves today whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that ***were*** on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are dwelling. And I and my house, we will serve the LORD." **16** And the people answered and said, "Far be it from us to forsake the LORD to serve other gods; **17** for the LORD our God, He ***is*** the One who brought us and our fathers up from the land of Egypt, from a house of slaves, and who did these great signs before our eyes, and kept us in all the way in which we went and among all the peoples through whose midst we passed. **18** And the LORD drove out from before us all the peoples, and the Amorites, the inhabitants of the land. We also, we will serve the LORD, for He ***is*** our God." **19** And Joshua said to the people, "You will not be able to serve the LORD, for He ***is*** a holy God; He ***is*** a jealous God; He will not forgive your transgression and your sins. **20** If you forsake the LORD and serve foreign gods, then He will turn and do you harm and make an end of you, after He has done good to you." **21** And the people said to Joshua, "No, but the LORD we will serve." **22** And Joshua said to the people, "You ***are*** witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen for yourselves the LORD, to serve Him." And they said, "Witnesses." **23** "And now, remove the foreign gods which ***are*** in your midst, and incline your heart to the LORD, the God of Israel." **24** And the people said to Joshua, "The LORD our God we will serve, and to His voice we will listen." **25** And Joshua made a covenant with the people on that day, and he set for them a statute and a judgment at Shechem. **26** And Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God; and he took a great stone and set it up there under the oak that ***was*** at the sanctuary of the LORD. **27** And Joshua said to all the people, "Look, this stone shall become a witness against us, for it has heard all the sayings of the LORD which He spoke with us; and it shall become a witness against you, lest you deny your God." **28** And Joshua sent the people away, each man to his inheritance.

Three Graves in the Land

29 And it was after these things, and Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, a son of a hundred and ten years. **30** And they buried him in the territory of his inheri-

24:12 Exod 23:28; Deut 7:20; Ps 44:3-6
24:13 Josh 11:13; Deut 6:10-12; Deut 8:7
24:14 John 4:23; Matt 4:10; John 4:24
24:15 1 Kgs 18:21; 2 Cor 6:16; Judg 6:10
24:16 2 Cor 6:16; 1 Sam 12:23; Rom 3:6
24:17 2 Cor 6:16; Josh 24:5-14; Exod 19:4
24:18 Acts 7:45; 2 Cor 6:16; Exod 10:2
24:19 Lev 19:2; Exod 20:5; Exod 23:21
24:20 Acts 7:42; 1 Chr 28:9; 2 Chr 15:2
24:21 Exod 19:8; Exod 20:19; Exod 24:3,7
24:22 Matt 23:31; Deut 26:17; Job 15:6
24:23 Josh 24:14; Gen 35:2-4; Exod 20:23
24:24 Deut 5:28,29
24:25 Exod 15:25; 2 Kgs 11:17; 2 Chr 23:16
24:26 Judg 9:6; Exod 24:4; Gen 35:4,8
24:27 Rev 3:8; Josh 22:27,28,34; Luke 19:40
24:28 Judg 2:6
24:29 Judg 2:8; Deut 34:5; Ps 115:17
24:30 Josh 19:50; Judg 2:9; 2 Sam 23:30

24:12 *I sent the hornet before you* God promised the hornet in Exodus 23:28. Some take it as real swarms driving the enemy out. Others take it as a picture of the panic God sent ahead of Israel (2:9-11; Exod 23:27). Either way, "not by your sword and not by your bow." Jacob once spoke of land taken "with my sword and with my bow" (Gen 48:22). God says it was not their sword at all.

24:13 *cities which you had not built* Moses warned them not to forget the LORD when this happened (Deut 6:10-12). Everything they had was a gift. So is our salvation: "For by grace you have been saved through faith" (Eph 2:8).

24:14 *fear the LORD and serve Him in integrity and in truth* Grace comes first, and service answers it. Joshua did not say serve God so He will save you, but He has saved you, so serve Him. To fear the LORD is to honor Him with awe. Integrity means a whole heart, and truth means sincerely. Some still kept idols, even from Egypt (Ezek 20:7-8). An idol is anything we trust, love or serve in God's place. "Little children, guard yourselves from idols" (1 John 5:21).

24:15 *choose for yourselves today whom you will serve* Joshua was not saying the choice did not matter. If you think serving the LORD is bad after all He has done, then pick another god, but be honest. And look at the choices: gods that left Terah in Haran, or Amorite gods that had just lost to the LORD. There is no real choice but the LORD (1 Kgs 18:21; Matt 6:24). Everyone serves something. And "today": tomorrow is not promised (Heb 3:7-8).

24:15 *And I and my house, we will serve the LORD* An old man with nothing left to prove said where he stood before he knew what the crowd would do. In that day the head of a family led its worship. He could not believe for his children, but he could lead them and set the example (Eph 6:4). This verse hangs on many walls. It is a decision made today and made again every day. Has your house made it? Have you?

24:18 *We also, we will serve the LORD, for He is our God* The right answer for the right reason: because of who He is and what He had done.

24:19 *You will not be able to serve the LORD, for He is a holy God* Joshua was not talking them out of it. He wanted them to count the cost. A holy God is pure and set apart from sin. A jealous God does not share His people with other gods (Exod 20:5), as a faithful husband does not share his wife. "He will not forgive" does not mean God never forgives. The Law was full of forgiveness through sacrifice. He will not overlook deliberate turning to idols. Some read the words as a spur to commitment, or as foreseeing Israel's failure.

24:20 *If you forsake the LORD and serve foreign gods* In their own strength they could not keep this promise, as Judges would show. We need a new heart, which God promised in the new covenant (Jer 31:31-34; Ezek 36:26-27). Through Christ we receive forgiveness and the Spirit, who makes us able to serve. "Apart from Me you are not able to do anything" (John 15:5).

24:23 *incline your heart to the LORD, the God of Israel* A promise to serve God means nothing if the idols stay. To incline the heart is to bend it toward Him, leaning your whole life in His direction.

24:26 *Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God* One place where the book says Joshua wrote at least part of it, adding this covenant to the Law Moses wrote (Deut 31:24-26). The oak may be the one where Jacob buried his family's idols (Gen 35:4).

24:27 *this stone shall become a witness against us* A stone cannot hear. Joshua was speaking vividly. It would stand long after they were gone, a silent reminder of their promise.

24:29 *Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died* At the start only Moses was called "the servant of the LORD" (1:1). Now Joshua has the same title, and there is none higher. He died at the age Joseph died (Gen 50:26). Jewish tradition holds that this closing account was added by another hand, likely Eleazar or Phinehas.

tance at Timnath-serah (Timnat-Serach), which ***is*** in the hill country of Ephraim (Efrayim), on the north of the mountain of Gaash. **31** And Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua and all the days of the elders who lengthened days after Joshua, and who knew all the work of the LORD which He had done for Israel. **32** And the bones of Joseph (Yosef), which the sons of Israel had brought up from Egypt, they buried at Shechem, in the portion of the field which Jacob had bought from the sons of Hamor (Chamor), the father of Shechem, for a hundred pieces of money; and they became an inheritance for the sons of Joseph. **33** And Eleazar (Elazar) the son of Aaron died, and they buried him at Gibeah (Giva) of Phinehas (Pinchas) his son, which had been given to him in the hill country of Ephraim.

24:31 Judg 2:7; Deut 11:2,7; Deut 31:13
24:32 Acts 7:16; John 4:5; Heb 11:22
24:33 Josh 14:1; Exod 6:23,25; Num 3:32

24:31 *all the days of the elders who lengthened days after Joshua* While those who had seen God's works lived, Israel stayed faithful. Then "another generation arose after them who did not know the LORD" (Judg 2:10). Faith must be passed on. We tell God's works to the next generation, "that they may set their confidence in God" (Ps 78:7).
24:32 *the bones of Joseph, which the sons of Israel had brought up from Egypt* Dying in Egypt, Joseph made Israel swear to carry his bones up (Gen 50:25). Moses took them out on the night of the exodus (Exod 13:19), through the sea, the wilderness and the Jordan. Hebrews counts this as faith (Heb 11:22). Joseph was sure God would keep His promise, though he would not see it. God kept it. The field was the one Jacob bought (Gen 33:19).
24:33 *Eleazar the son of Aaron died* He served beside Joshua in dividing the land (14:1), and Phinehas carried on after him (Judg 20:28). The book ends with three graves, all in the land God promised. Yet each man died. Joshua could give Israel the land but not eternal rest (Heb 4:8). That rest comes through a greater Joshua, Jesus, whose name means the LORD saves. Joshua's tomb is still closed. Jesus' tomb is empty.

JUDGES

Introduction

Title

The book is named for the leaders God raised up in it. The Hebrew title is Shophtim, which means judges. In this book a judge (Hebrew shophet) is not mainly a man in a robe in a courtroom. He or she was a leader God raised up to rescue His people from their enemies and then to lead them and settle their disputes. The book itself calls Othniel and Ehud "a savior" (3:9, 15). Judges is the seventh book of the Bible. It comes right after Joshua and right before Ruth, and it picks up the story just after Joshua's death. Judges has 21 chapters and 618 verses. Twelve judges are named: Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah (with Barak), Gideon, Tola, Jair, Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, Abdon and Samson. Abimelech, Gideon's son, made himself king, but God never raised him up.

Author and Date

The book does not name its writer. Jewish tradition names Samuel, the last of the judges and the prophet who anointed Saul and David. The book gives a few clues. The writer keeps saying there was "no king in Israel" (17:6; 21:25; compare 18:1; 19:1), so he wrote when Israel did have a king and could look back on the time before. He also says the Jebusites still lived in Jerusalem "until this day" (1:21), which points to a time before David captured the city (2 Sam 5:6-9). That fits Samuel well. Most likely the book was written early in the time of the kings, about 1050 to 1000 B.C., during the reign of Saul or the first years of David. Many modern scholars believe Judges was put together centuries later, during or after the exile, from older stories, as part of a longer history running from Deuteronomy to Kings. I take the book as an early, true record. Its clues point to the first days of the kings, and nothing in it requires a later date.

Background and Setting

After the conquest under Joshua, each tribe received its land and was responsible to drive out the Canaanites who were left. There was no capital city, no king and no standing army. The tabernacle, where the ark of the covenant was kept, stood at Shiloh (18:31; Josh 18:1). The tribes often acted alone, and sometimes fought each other (8:1-3; 12:1-6; chapter 20). Enemies came from every side: a king from Mesopotamia, Moab and Ammon from the east, the Canaanites of Hazor in the north, Midian and Amalek from the desert, and the Philistines on the coast.

The judges ruled from shortly after Joshua's death until Saul became king, about 1375 to 1050 B.C. This fits an exodus of about 1446 B.C. (1 Kgs 6:1) and the entry into Canaan about 1406 B.C. It also fits Jephthah's word that Israel had lived in those lands "three hundred years" (11:26). Scholars who hold a later exodus shorten the period. If you add up every number of years in Judges, the total comes to about 410 years, more than the time available. The best answer is that some judges overlapped. They were mostly local leaders, and the LORD gave Israel to the Philistines and to the Ammonites at the same time (10:7), so Jephthah fought in the east while Samson's Philistine years were under way in the west. The last five chapters do not come after Samson in time. They happened early in the period, when Phinehas, Aaron's grandson, still served as priest (20:28).

The first readers were Israel in the early days of the kingdom. They had asked for a king (1 Sam 8:5), and Judges showed them why Israel was in such trouble without one, and also that a king alone could not fix them. Their real problem was that they had left the LORD, who was supposed to be their King (8:23; 1 Sam 8:7).

Themes

Judges shows what happens when God's people forget Him and every person becomes his own authority. Joshua ends with the people promising to serve the LORD. Judges opens with tribes that did not finish driving out the Canaanites. They made peace with them, married them and worshiped their gods. A generation grew up "who did not know the LORD" (2:10).

The book runs in a cycle, laid out in 2:11-19 and repeated in story after story. Israel does "the evil in the eyes of the LORD" (3:7). The LORD gives them into the hand of an enemy. They cry out. The LORD raises up a judge who saves them, and the land has rest while the judge lives. Then the judge dies and the people go back to their sin. Each turn goes lower than the one before, until the last chapters show idolatry, a crime like Sodom's and civil war. The closing line sums it up: "each man did what was right in his own eyes" (21:25).

The other side is God's mercy. Again and again He heard His people when they had brought trouble on themselves, for "the LORD was moved to compassion by their groaning" (2:18). Judges shows that God keeps His word, both His warnings and His promises (2:1-3, 15), that sin always takes people further than they meant to go, and that Israel needed a righteous king who would lead them in the ways of the LORD.

Christ in Judges

Every judge in this book was a savior with a shelf life. Each one rescued Israel for a while, then died, and the people slid back. Several had deep flaws. The book leaves us longing for a better Deliverer and a righteous King. Hebrews names Gideon, Barak, Samson and Jephthah among those who acted by faith (Heb 11:32), so God used weak people who trusted Him, and He still does. But only Jesus Christ saves completely and never dies again. He is "able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through Him, always living to intercede for them" (Heb 7:25). The Spirit of the LORD came on the judges for their work (3:10; 6:34; 11:29; 14:6). God gave the Spirit to Christ without measure (John 3:34), and Christ gives His Spirit to everyone who believes. Many Bible teachers also see the angel of the LORD, who appears in chapters 2, 6 and 13 and speaks as the LORD Himself, as the Son of God appearing before He was born in Bethlehem. Others see a created angel who speaks for God. The need for a king, partly met in David, is fully met in David's Son, who will one day reign over Israel and the whole earth (Luke 1:32-33).

Hard Passages

Judges is full of violence, and much of it is recorded, not approved. Adoni-bezek's thumbs and toes (1:6), Ehud's killing of Eglon (3:21) and Jael's killing of Sisera (4:21) were acts of war against foreign oppressors. The notes give the readings fairly and do not make deceit a pattern for today (Matt 5:44; Rom 12:19).

Jephthah's vow (11:30-31, 39) was rash. Teachers read its end two ways, as a burnt offering or as lifelong dedicated service as a virgin. God forbids child sacrifice, and the notes give both readings without a verdict. Samson (chapters 13-16) was set apart and gifted by the Spirit, yet lived by his own desires. His sins with women and his acts of revenge are reported plainly and modestly. God worked His purpose against the Philistines through him and in spite of him (14:4). His death (16:30) is read as an act of war and judgment God answered, not suicide from despair, and the notes add a pastoral word.

Abimelech murdered his seventy brothers (9:5), and God repaid him (9:56-57). Dan's slaughter of peaceful Laish (18:27-28) had no word from God behind it. The abuse and death of the Levite's concubine (19:25-30) is named plainly as evil without detail, with a word for anyone who has suffered abuse. The war against Benjamin cost Israel forty thousand men after they asked the LORD (20:18-25), and the notes give the reasons teachers have offered. Israel's destruction of Benjamin's towns (20:48), the massacre at Jabesh-gilead and the seizing of the daughters of Shiloh (21:10-23) went far beyond justice and were never commanded by God. The large numbers in the book are taken as written, and the view that "thousand" can mean a clan or unit is named.

Outline

I. Israel Fails to Finish the Conquest (1:1-3:6)
  A. Judah and the tribes go up (1:1-36)
  B. The angel of the LORD at Bochim (2:1-5)
  C. The pattern of the judges (2:6-3:6)
II. The Judges God Raised Up (3:7-16:31)
  A. Othniel (3:7-11)
  B. Ehud (3:12-30)
  C. Shamgar (3:31)
  D. Deborah, Barak and Jael (4:1-5:31)
  E. Gideon (6:1-8:35)
  F. Abimelech, the bramble king (9:1-57)
  G. Tola and Jair (10:1-5)
  H. Jephthah (10:6-12:7)
  I. Ibzan, Elon and Abdon (12:8-15)
  J. Samson (13:1-16:31)
III. When There Was No King in Israel (17:1-21:25)
  A. Micah's idols and the Danites (17:1-18:31)
  B. The crime at Gibeah (19:1-30)
  C. War against Benjamin (20:1-48)
  D. Wives for Benjamin (21:1-25)

JUDGES

JUDGES 1

Judah and Simeon Go Up First

1 And it was after the death of Joshua (Yehoshua), and the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) inquired of the LORD, saying, "Who will go up for us against the Canaanites at the first, to fight against them?" **2** And the LORD said, "Judah (Yehuda) will go up. Look, I have given the land into his hand." **3** And Judah said to Simeon (Shimon) his brother, "Come up with me into my lot, and let us fight against the Canaanites; and I also will go with you into your lot." And Simeon went with him. **4** And Judah went up, and the LORD gave the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hand, and they struck them at Bezek (Bezeq), ten thousand men. **5** And they found Adoni-bezek (Adoni-Vezeq) at Bezek, and they fought against him, and they struck the Canaanites and the Perizzites. **6** And Adoni-bezek fled, and they pursued after him, and they seized him, and they cut off the thumbs of his hands and ***of*** his feet. **7** And Adoni-bezek said, "Seventy kings, the thumbs of their hands and ***of*** their feet cut off, were gathering up under my table. Just as I have done, so God has repaid me." And they brought him to Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), and he died there. **8** And the sons of Judah fought against Jerusalem, and they captured it, and they struck it by the mouth of ***the*** sword, and the city they set on fire. **9** And afterward the sons of Judah went down to fight against the Canaanites dwelling ***in*** the hill country and the Negeb (Negev) and the Shephelah. **10** And Judah went against the Canaanites who dwelt in Hebron (Chevron), and the name of Hebron formerly ***was*** Kiriath-arba (Qiryat-Arba); and they struck Sheshai (Sheshay) and Ahiman (Achiman) and Talmai (Talmay).

Othniel Takes Debir

11 And he went from there against the inhabitants of Debir (Devir), and the name of Debir formerly ***was*** Kiriath-sepher (Qiryat-Sefer). **12** And Caleb (Kalev) said, "He who strikes Kiriath-sepher and captures it, I will give to him Achsah (Akhsa) my daughter as a wife." **13** And Othniel (Otni'el) the son of Kenaz (Qenaz), the brother of Caleb, younger than he, captured it; and he gave to him Achsah his daughter as a wife. **14** And it was, when she came, and she urged him to ask from her father the field. And she got down from on the donkey, and Caleb said to her, "What ***is it*** for you?" **15** And she said to him, "Give me a blessing; for the land of the Negeb you have given me, and you shall give me springs of water." And Caleb gave her the upper springs and the lower springs. **16** And the sons of ***the*** Kenite, the father-in-law of Moses (Moshe), went up from the city of the palm trees with the sons of Judah ***to*** the wilderness of Judah, which ***is*** in the Negeb of Arad; and he went and dwelt with the people. **17** And Judah went with Simeon his brother, and they struck the Canaanites dwelling ***in*** Zephath (Tsefat), and they devoted it to destruction; and he called the name of the city Hormah (Chorma). **18** And Judah captured Gaza (Aza) and its territory, and Ashkelon (Ashqelon) and its territory, and

1:1 Num 27:21; Judg 20:18,28; Josh 24:29,30
1:2 Gen 49:8-10; Ps 78:68-70; Num 2:3
1:3 Rev 7:7; Judg 1:17; Gen 29:33
1:4 1 Sam 11:8; Exod 23:28,29; Deut 7:2
1:7 Rev 13:10; 1 Sam 15:33; Exod 21:23-25
1:8 Josh 15:63; Judg 1:21
1:9 Josh 10:36; Josh 11:21; Josh 15:13-20
1:10 Josh 14:15; Num 13:22,33; Judg 1:20
1:11 Josh 15:15; Josh 10:38,39
1:12 Josh 15:16,17; 1 Sam 17:25; 1 Sam 18:23
1:13 Judg 3:9
1:14 Josh 15:18,19
1:15 Gen 33:11; 1 Sam 25:18,27; 2 Cor 9:5
1:16 Num 10:29-32; Judg 4:11,17; 1 Sam 15:6
1:17 Num 21:3; 2 Chr 14:10; Num 14:45
1:18 Josh 11:22; Judg 3:3; Judg 16:1,2,21

1:1 *the sons of Israel inquired of the LORD* With Joshua dead, Israel had no single leader, so they did the right thing and asked God. The priest most likely asked through the Urim and Thummim, the sacred lots kept in the high priest's breastpiece (Num 27:21).
1:2 *Judah will go up. Look, I have given the land into his hand* Judah was the tribe of kingship, blessed with the scepter (Gen 49:10). God gave the promise before the battle began. He does not ask us to win His battles for Him. He asks us to believe Him and go.
1:3 *Come up with me into my lot* Simeon's land lay inside Judah's in the south (Josh 19:1, 9), so the two tribes fought side by side. The Perizzites (1:4) were one of the peoples of Canaan, probably living in open villages in the hills.
1:6 *they cut off the thumbs of his hands and of his feet* A man without thumbs cannot hold a sword or bow, and without big toes he cannot run or keep his balance. It ended his life as a warrior.
1:7 *Just as I have done, so God has repaid me* He had done the same to seventy kings and made them gather scraps under his table like dogs. A pagan king saw God's hand in it. What he sowed he reaped (Gal 6:7). Scripture records what Judah did but does not say God commanded it. The Law's rule that punishment fit the crime (Exod 21:23-25) was for judges in a court, not a license for revenge. God sees how the powerful treat the weak, and in His time He repays.
1:8 *the sons of Judah fought against Jerusalem, and they captured it* Yet verse 21 says the Jebusites stayed, and David took the city for good centuries later (2 Sam 5:6-9). Most likely Judah took and burned the lower city but did not hold it, and the Jebusites kept the strong hilltop.
1:10 *they struck Sheshai and Ahiman and Talmai* These sons of Anak frightened the ten spies forty years before (Num 13:22, 28). What the fathers feared, the sons defeated. This summarizes Joshua 15:13-19.
1:13 *Othniel the son of Kenaz, the brother of Caleb, younger than he* Caleb, one of the two faithful spies, was now old (Josh 14:10-12). Othniel matters. In chapter 3 he becomes the first judge.
1:15 *Give me a blessing* Land in the dry Negeb is not worth much without water, so Achsah asked for springs, and Caleb gave her more than she asked. In a chapter full of people settling for less, here is a woman who wanted all that God had given her family. We should ask our Father the same way (Matt 7:11; James 4:2).
1:16 *the sons of the Kenite, the father-in-law of Moses* Moses' father-in-law is called Hobab in 4:11 (compare Num 10:29-32). The Kenites came with Israel from the wilderness and settled with Judah near Arad. "The city of the palm trees" is Jericho (Deut 34:3). Not Israelites by birth, they joined God's people. Jael, in chapter 4, was one of them.
1:17 *they devoted it to destruction; and he called the name of the city Hormah* To devote to destruction translates the Hebrew herem: giving a city wholly to God in judgment, with nothing kept for the soldiers. God commanded this for Canaan's cities because of their long and deep wickedness (Gen 15:16; Deut 9:5). Hormah sounds like herem.
1:18 *Judah captured Gaza and its territory, and Ashkelon and its territory, and Ekron* Three of the five main Philistine cities. Judah did not keep them long. By Samson's day the Philistines held them again.

Ekron (Eqron) and its territory. **19** And the LORD was with Judah, and he dispossessed the hill country; but ***he could*** not dispossess the inhabitants of the valley, for they ***had*** chariots of iron. **20** And they gave Hebron to Caleb, just as Moses had spoken; and he dispossessed from there the three sons of Anak.

The Canaanites Left in the Land

21 And the Jebusites who dwelt ***in*** Jerusalem, the sons of Benjamin (Binyamin) did not dispossess; and the Jebusites have dwelt with the sons of Benjamin in Jerusalem until this day. **22** And the house of Joseph (Yosef) went up, they also, ***to*** Bethel (Bet-El), and the LORD ***was*** with them. **23** And the house of Joseph had ***men*** spy out at Bethel (and the name of the city formerly ***was*** Luz). **24** And the watchers saw a man coming out from the city, and they said to him, "Show us, please, the entrance of the city, and we will do steadfast love with you." **25** And he showed them the entrance of the city, and they struck the city by the mouth of ***the*** sword; and the man and all his family they let go. **26** And the man went ***to*** the land of the Hittites, and he built a city, and he called its name Luz; that ***is*** its name until this day. **27** And Manasseh (Menashe) did not dispossess Beth-shean (Bet-She'an) and its daughter ***towns***, and Taanach (Ta'anakh) and its daughter ***towns***, and the inhabitants of Dor and its daughter ***towns***, and the inhabitants of Ibleam (Yivle'am) and its daughter ***towns***, and the inhabitants of Megiddo (Megido) and its daughter ***towns***; and the Canaanites were determined to dwell in this land. **28** And it was, when Israel became strong, and put the Canaanites to forced labor, and did not utterly dispossess them. **29** And Ephraim (Efrayim) did not dispossess the Canaanites who dwelt in Gezer; and the Canaanites dwelt in his midst, in Gezer. **30** Zebulun (Zevulun) did not dispossess the inhabitants of Kitron (Qitron) and the inhabitants of Nahalol; and the Canaanites dwelt in his midst, and they became forced labor. **31** Asher did not dispossess the inhabitants of Acco (Ako) and the inhabitants of Sidon (Tsidon), and Ahlab (Achlav) and Achzib (Akhziv) and Helbah (Chelba) and Aphek (Afeq) and Rehob (Rechov). **32** And the Asherites dwelt in the midst of the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land, for they did not dispossess them. **33** Naphtali (Naftali) did not dispossess the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh (Bet-Shemesh) and the inhabitants of Beth-anath (Bet-Anat), and he dwelt in the midst of the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land; and the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh and Beth-anath became forced labor for them. **34** And the Amorites pressed the sons of Dan into the hill country, for they did not allow them to go down to the valley. **35** And the Amorites were determined to dwell in the mountain of Heres (Cheres), in Aijalon (Ayalon) and in Shaalbim (Sha'alvim); and the hand of the house of Joseph was heavy, and they became forced labor. **36** And the border of the Amorites ***was*** from the ascent of Akrabbim (Aqrabim), from the Sela and upward.

JUDGES 2

The Angel of the LORD at Bochim

1 And the angel of the LORD went up from Gilgal to Bochim (Bokhim), and he said, "I brought you up from Egypt (Mitsrayim), and I brought you into the land which I swore to your fathers; and I said, 'I will not break My covenant with you forever. **2** And you, you shall not cut a covenant with the inhabitants of this land; their altars you shall pull down.' And you have not listened to My voice. What ***is*** this ***that*** you

1:19 Judg 1:2; Judg 6:12,13; Gen 39:2,21
1:20 Judg 1:10; Josh 15:13,14; Num 14:24
1:21 Josh 15:63; Judg 19:10-12; Josh 18:11-28
1:22 Rev 7:8; Judg 1:19; Num 1:10,32
1:23 Gen 28:19; Gen 35:6; Gen 48:3
1:24 Josh 2:12-14; 1 Sam 30:15
1:25 Josh 6:22-25
1:26 2 Kgs 7:6; 2 Chr 1:17
1:27 Josh 17:11-13; 1 Sam 15:9; Ps 106:34,35
1:29 Josh 16:10; 1 Kgs 9:16
1:30 Josh 19:15
1:31 Matt 15:21; Josh 19:24-30
1:32 Ps 106:34,35
1:33 Josh 19:32-38; Judg 1:30,35; Ps 18:24
1:34 Josh 19:47; Judg 18:1
1:35 Josh 19:42; Judg 12:12; Josh 10:12
1:36 Num 34:4; Josh 15:2
2:1 Acts 7:30; Acts 7:31; Gen 17:7,8
2:2 Deut 7:2-4,16,25,26; 1 Pet 4:17; Exod 23:32,33

1:19 *the LORD was with Judah* That is the key fact. Chariots were the tanks of the ancient world. But Joshua had said Israel would drive out the valley people "though they have chariots of iron" (Josh 17:18), and in chapter 4 God defeats nine hundred iron chariots in a day. The problem was not God's power. It was Israel's faith.
1:20 *he dispossessed from there the three sons of Anak* Caleb received Hebron as Moses promised (Num 14:24). One old man who trusted God did what whole tribes did not.
1:21 *the sons of Benjamin did not dispossess* To dispossess means to drive a people out and take their land. We will hear this phrase again and again in the chapter. "Until this day" shows the book was written before David took the city.
1:24 *we will do steadfast love with you* Steadfast love is hesed, faithful, loyal love. It sounds like Rahab's story, but it ends differently. Rahab joined Israel and trusted its God (Josh 6:25). This man went off and built a copy of the old pagan city. He was saved from the sword but never turned to the LORD. It is possible to be near God's people and come away unchanged.
1:27 *the Canaanites were determined to dwell in this land* Beth-shean, Taanach and Megiddo guarded the main roads and the great Jezreel Valley. The Canaanites dug in, and Manasseh let them.
1:28 *put the Canaanites to forced labor, and did not utterly dispossess them* Not a lack of strength but a choice. Making money from the Canaanites looked better than obeying God, who had said, "you shall not make a covenant with them" (Deut 7:2). What Israel kept around to serve them would soon rule them.
1:32 *the Asherites dwelt in the midst of the Canaanites* Each line is a little worse. At first the Canaanites lived among Israel. Now Israel lived among the Canaanites, as if they were the guests. That is how compromise works. We let sin stay in a corner, then make a deal with it, and in the end we are living in its house.
1:34 *the Amorites pressed the sons of Dan into the hill country* Dan did not just fail to drive the enemy out. Dan was driven out, which is why the Danites go looking for land in the far north in chapter 18.
1:36 *the border of the Amorites* The chapter ends with the enemy still holding its ground. Judges begins with this list because everything that follows grows out of it. The idols, the wars and the moral collapse all started with partial obedience.
2:1 *the angel of the LORD went up from Gilgal to Bochim* Gilgal was Israel's first camp in the land, where they renewed the covenant (Josh 5:9-10). The angel speaks as the LORD Himself: "I brought you up from Egypt." No ordinary angel could say that. Many teachers believe the angel of the LORD was the Son of God, appearing before He was born in Bethlehem.
2:1 *I will not break My covenant with you forever* A covenant is a binding agreement, here one God Himself made and swore to keep. God had kept His side. Israel's side was plain: no covenant with the people of the land, and pull down their altars.

have done? **3** And also I have said, 'I will not drive them out from before you; and they shall become ***thorns in*** your sides, and their gods shall become a snare to you.'" **4** And it was, when the angel of the LORD spoke these words to all the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), and the people lifted up their voice and wept. **5** And they called the name of that place Bochim, and they sacrificed there to the LORD.

A Generation That Did Not Know the LORD

6 And Joshua (Yehoshua) sent the people away, and the sons of Israel went, each man to his inheritance, to take possession of the land. **7** And the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua and all the days of the elders who prolonged days after Joshua, who had seen all the great work of the LORD which He had done for Israel. **8** And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, a son of a hundred and ten years. **9** And they buried him in the territory of his inheritance, in Timnath-heres (Timnat-Cheres), in the hill country of Ephraim (Efrayim), on the north of the mountain of Gaash. **10** And also all that generation were gathered to their fathers; and another generation arose after them who did not know the LORD, and also the work which He had done for Israel. **11** And the sons of Israel did the evil in the eyes of the LORD, and they served the Baals. **12** And they forsook the LORD, the God of their fathers, who brought them out from the land of Egypt, and they went after other gods, from the gods of the peoples who ***were*** around them, and they bowed down to them; and they provoked the LORD to anger. **13** And they forsook the LORD, and they served the Baal and the Ashtaroth. **14** And the anger of the LORD burned against Israel, and He gave them into the hand of plunderers, and they plundered them; and He sold them into the hand of their enemies all around, and they were not able any longer to stand before their enemies. **15** In every ***place*** where they went out, the hand of the LORD was against them for evil, just as the LORD had spoken, and just as the LORD had sworn to them; and it was distressing to them exceedingly.

The LORD Raises Up Judges

16 And the LORD raised up judges, and they saved them from the hand of their plunderers. **17** And also to their judges they did not listen, for they prostituted themselves after other gods, and they bowed down to them; they turned aside quickly from the way in which their fathers had walked, listening to the commandments of the LORD; they did not do so. **18** And when the LORD raised up judges for them, and the LORD was with the judge, and He saved them from the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge; for the LORD was moved to compassion by their groaning because of those who oppressed them and those who crushed them. **19** And it was, when the judge died, they turned back and acted more corruptly than their fathers, by walking after other gods, to serve them and to bow down to them; they did not let fall ***any*** of their deeds or of their stubborn way. **20** And the anger of the LORD burned against Israel, and He said, "Because this nation has transgressed My covenant which I commanded their fathers, and they have not listened to My voice, **21** I also will not again dispossess anyone from before them of

2:3 Num 33:55; Josh 23:13; Judg 2:21
2:4 1 Sam 7:6; Ezra 10:1; Prov 17:10
2:5 Gen 35:8; Josh 7:26; Judg 6:24
2:6 Josh 24:28-31; Josh 22:6
2:7 Josh 24:31; 2 Kgs 12:2; 2 Chr 24:2,14-22
2:8 Josh 24:29,30
2:9 Josh 19:50; Josh 24:30
2:10 Acts 13:36; 1 Sam 2:12; Exod 5:2
2:11 Judg 4:1; Judg 6:1; Judg 3:7
2:12 Exod 20:5; Deut 13:5; Deut 29:18,25
2:13 Rom 11:4; Judg 10:6; Judg 3:7
2:14 Deut 32:30; Ps 106:40-42; 2 Kgs 17:20
2:15 Deut 28:15-68; Jer 18:8; Jer 21:10
2:16 Acts 13:20; 1 Sam 12:11; Neh 9:27
2:17 Judg 2:7; Deut 9:12,16; 1 Sam 8:5-8
2:18 Josh 1:5; Deut 32:36; Gen 6:6
2:19 Judg 4:1; Judg 8:33; Judg 2:7
2:20 Judg 2:14; Josh 23:16; Judg 3:8
2:21 Josh 23:13; Judg 2:3; Judg 3:3

2:3 *they shall become thorns in your sides, and their gods shall become a snare to you* God had warned of this very thing (Num 33:55; Josh 23:13). He was not changing the deal. He was keeping His word.
2:5 *they called the name of that place Bochim* Bochim means weepers. I believe the tears were real, but tears are not the same as turning, and the rest of the chapter shows nothing changed. Godly sorrow brings repentance, while worldly sorrow does not (2 Cor 7:10). We can feel sorry about the results of sin and still not let go of it. Real repentance changes what we do next.
2:7 *the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua* The writer goes back in time and repeats Joshua 24:28-31. Joshua died at 110 and was buried in his own land. Timnath-heres (2:9) is another form of the name Timnath-serah (Josh 19:50).
2:10 *another generation arose after them who did not know the LORD* One of the saddest verses in the Bible. These were the grandchildren of people who saw the sea part and Jericho fall. Faith is not passed down by blood. God told parents to teach His words at home and on the road (Deut 6:7), and somewhere the parents stopped. What our children know about God will not come from what we saw. It will come from what we tell them and show them.
2:11 *the sons of Israel did the evil in the eyes of the LORD* This phrase opens almost every new story in the book. Here the cycle begins: sin, oppression, crying out, a deliverer, then falling back again.
2:11 *they served the Baals* Baal means lord or master. He was the storm god of Canaan, worshiped as the giver of rain and crops, and "the Baals" are his many local forms. The Ashtaroth (2:13) were forms of Ashtoreth, a goddess of love, fertility and war, and their worship often included sexual rites. Israel's wanderers had become farmers, and the Canaanites said Baal made the fields grow. The pull was practical: worship what seems to work.
2:14 *He sold them into the hand of their enemies all around* God's anger is not a tantrum. It is His holy, steady response to evil, the anger of a faithful husband whose wife has gone after other men. The language is from the market. Israel sold themselves to other gods, so God let them be sold.
2:15 *just as the LORD had spoken, and just as the LORD had sworn to them* God warned them in the Law (Lev 26:17; Deut 28:25) and did exactly what He said. That is hard, but also a comfort. The God who keeps His warnings keeps His promises.
2:16 *the LORD raised up judges, and they saved them* The judges were not elected. God raised them up. A judge in this book was a deliverer first and a leader second.
2:17 *they prostituted themselves after other gods* The Bible often pictures idolatry as unfaithfulness in marriage, because God's covenant with Israel was like a marriage (Hos 2:19-20; James 4:4).
2:18 *the LORD was moved to compassion by their groaning* This is the heart of the book. What moved God was not their good deeds but their groaning. Their misery was their own fault, and God still had compassion on them.
2:19 *they turned back and acted more corruptly than their fathers* Each turn of the cycle went lower. That is often the pattern of our own hearts too. We cry out, God rescues us, and we drift back. Thank God that "where sin increased, grace abounded all the more" (Rom 5:20).

the nations which Joshua left, and he died, **22** in order to test Israel by them, whether they ***are*** keeping the way of the LORD, to walk in them, just as their fathers kept ***it***, or not." **23** And the LORD left these nations, not dispossessing them quickly; and He did not give them into the hand of Joshua.

JUDGES 3

Nations Left to Test Israel

1 And these ***are*** the nations which the LORD left, to test Israel (Yisra'el) by them, all who had not known all the wars of Canaan (Kena'an), **2** only so that the generations of the sons of Israel might know, to teach them war, only those who formerly had not known them: **3** the five lords of ***the*** Philistines, and all the Canaanites, and the Sidonians, and the Hivites dwelling ***on*** the mountain of the Lebanon (Levanon), from the mountain of Baal-hermon (Ba'al-Chermon) as far as the entrance of Hamath (Chamat). **4** And they were to test Israel by them, to know whether they would listen to the commandments of the LORD which He had commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses (Moshe). **5** And the sons of Israel dwelt in the midst of the Canaanites, the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites. **6** And they took their daughters for themselves as wives, and their ***own*** daughters they gave to their sons, and they served their gods.

Othniel

7 And the sons of Israel did the evil in the eyes of the LORD, and they forgot the LORD their God, and they served the Baals and the Asherahs. **8** And the anger of the LORD burned against Israel, and He sold them into the hand of Cushan-rishathaim (Kushan-Rishatayim) the king of Mesopotamia (Aram-Naharayim); and the sons of Israel served Cushan-rishathaim eight years. **9** And the sons of Israel cried out to the LORD, and the LORD raised up a savior for the sons of Israel, and he saved them: Othniel (Otni'el) the son of Kenaz (Qenaz), the brother of Caleb (Kalev), younger than he. **10** And the Spirit of the LORD was on him, and he judged Israel, and he went out to war; and the LORD gave Cushan-rishathaim the king of Aram into his hand, and his hand prevailed over Cushan-rishathaim. **11** And the land was at rest forty years. And Othniel the son of Kenaz died.

Ehud

12 And the sons of Israel again did the evil in the eyes of the LORD; and the LORD strengthened Eglon the king of Moab (Mo'av) against Israel, because they had done the evil in the eyes of the LORD. **13** And he gathered to himself the sons of Ammon (Amon) and Amalek (Amaleq), and he went and struck Israel, and they took possession of the city of the palm trees. **14** And the sons of Israel served Eglon the king of Moab eighteen years. **15** And the sons of Israel cried out to the LORD, and the LORD raised up for them a savior, Ehud the son of Gera, the Benjaminite, a man restricted ***in*** his right hand. And the sons of Israel sent tribute by his hand to Eglon the king of Moab. **16** And Ehud made for himself a sword, and it ***had*** two mouths, approximately a foot (a gomed) ***in*** its length; and he girded it under his garments on his right thigh. **17** And he brought the tribute near to Eglon the king of Moab. And Eglon ***was*** a very fat man. **18** And it was, when he had finished bringing the tribute near, and he sent away

2:22 Acts 18:25; Deut 8:2,16; Deut 13:3
3:1 Judg 2:21,22; Deut 7:22; Deut 8:2,16
3:2 Gen 2:17; Gen 3:5,7; 2 Chr 12:8
3:3 Josh 13:3; Josh 13:5; Judg 10:7
3:4 Judg 3:1; Judg 2:22; Exod 15:25
3:5 Ps 106:34-38; Gen 10:15-18; Exod 3:8,17
3:6 Exod 34:16; Deut 7:3,4; 1 Kgs 11:1-5
3:7 Exod 34:13; Judg 2:11-13; Judg 6:25
3:8 Acts 2:9; Judg 2:14,20; Hab 3:7
3:9 Judg 3:15; Judg 1:13; Judg 6:7
3:10 Acts 13:20; Judg 6:34; Judg 11:29
3:11 Judg 3:30; Judg 5:31; Judg 8:28
3:12 1 Sam 12:9; Judg 2:19; Hos 6:4
3:13 Judg 1:16; Deut 34:3; Judg 5:14
3:14 Lev 26:23-25; Deut 28:40,47,48
3:15 Judg 3:9; Ps 78:34; Judg 20:16
3:16 Rev 1:16; Rev 2:12; Ps 149:6
3:17 Judg 3:29; 1 Sam 2:29; Job 15:27

2:22 *in order to test Israel by them* God did not leave these nations because He could not defeat them. He left them as a test: would Israel trust and obey Him in the fight, or make peace with evil? God still lets hard things stay in our lives for a time, to show what is in our hearts and teach us to depend on Him.
2:23 *He did not give them into the hand of Joshua* Joshua took the land as a whole (Josh 11:23), but God planned that the last work of driving out the nations would be done little by little, as each tribe trusted Him (Exod 23:29-30).
3:1 *these are the nations which the LORD left, to test Israel by them* Two reasons are given: to teach war to a generation that had not fought in the conquest, and to see whether they would obey (3:4). God does not test us to find out what we will do. He already knows. He tests us so that what is in our hearts comes into the open, and so we learn to fight His way.
3:3 *the five lords of the Philistines* The rulers of the five Philistine cities on the coast: Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Gath and Ekron. With the peoples to the north as far as Lebanon, they ringed the land.
3:6 *they took their daughters for themselves as wives* The order is no accident. Living among them led to marrying them, and marrying them led to worshiping their gods, just as God warned (Deut 7:3-4). The issue was never race. Rahab and Ruth were foreigners welcomed when they trusted the LORD. The issue was faith (2 Cor 6:14).
3:7 *they forgot the LORD their God, and they served the Baals and the Asherahs* The first full turn of the cycle. The Asherahs were wooden poles or trees set up beside altars in honor of Asherah, a Canaanite mother goddess.
3:8 *Cushan-rishathaim the king of Mesopotamia* His name means something like Cushan of double wickedness, perhaps a nickname Israel gave him. Mesopotamia here is the land between the great rivers to the far northeast, the region Abraham had left long before.
3:9 *the LORD raised up a savior for the sons of Israel* The judges were saviors in a small way. Each one points toward the great Savior God would one day send. Othniel was of Judah, from Caleb's family, a family that had believed God (1:13).
3:10 *the Spirit of the LORD was on him* In the Old Testament the Spirit came on certain people to give them power for a task, often for a time. Since Pentecost the Holy Spirit lives in every believer and stays (John 14:17).
3:11 *the land was at rest forty years* Othniel is the clean pattern of a judge: raised by God, filled with the Spirit, victorious, and nothing told against him. After him the judges grow more and more flawed.
3:12 *the LORD strengthened Eglon the king of Moab against Israel* God used even a pagan king to discipline His people. Moab lay east of the Dead Sea. Eglon crossed the Jordan and took Jericho, "the city of the palm trees," and ruled eighteen years, more than twice as long as the first oppressor.
3:15 *a man restricted in his right hand* That is, left-handed. There is a quiet irony here. Benjamin means son of the right hand, and here is a son of the right hand who fights with his left. Benjamin seems to have had many left-handed fighters (20:16). Tribute was the yearly payment a conquered people made to the king who ruled them.
3:16 *he girded it under his garments on his right thigh* A right-handed man wears his sword on the left, so a guard would check there. No one checked Ehud's right. The writer's note that Eglon "was a very fat man" (3:17) matters to what follows.

the people who carried the tribute. **19** And he himself turned back from the carved images which ***were*** at Gilgal, and he said, "I ***have*** a secret word for you, O king." And he said, "Hush!" And all who stood by him went out from beside him. **20** And Ehud came to him; and he ***was*** sitting in the cool roof chamber which ***was*** his alone. And Ehud said, "I ***have*** a word of God for you." And he rose from on the throne. **21** And Ehud stretched out his left hand, and he took the sword from on his right thigh, and he thrust it into his belly. **22** And the handle also went in after the blade, and the fat closed over the blade, for he did not draw the sword out from his belly; and it went out at the opening. **23** And Ehud went out toward the porch, and he shut the doors of the roof chamber behind him, and he locked ***them***. **24** And he had gone out, and his servants came, and they looked, and look, the doors of the roof chamber ***were*** locked. And they said, "Surely he ***is*** covering his feet in the cool chamber." **25** And they waited until ***they were*** ashamed, and look, he ***was*** not opening the doors of the roof chamber. And they took the key and opened ***them***, and look, their lord ***was*** fallen to the ground, dead. **26** And Ehud escaped while they delayed, and he passed beyond the carved images, and he escaped to Seirah (Se'ira). **27** And it was, when he came, and he blew the ram's horn in the hill country of Ephraim (Efrayim); and the sons of Israel went down with him from the hill country, and he ***was*** before them. **28** And he said to them, "Pursue after me, for the LORD has given your enemies, Moab, into your hand." And they went down after him, and they captured the fords of the Jordan (Yarden) toward Moab, and they did not allow a man to cross over. **29** And they struck Moab at that time, about ten thousand men, every robust ***one*** and every man of valor; and not a man escaped. **30** And Moab was subdued on that day under the hand of Israel. And the land was at rest eighty years.

Shamgar

31 And after him was Shamgar the son of Anath (Anat), and he struck the Philistines, six hundred men, with the goad of the cattle; and he also saved Israel.

JUDGES 4

Deborah and Barak

1 And the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) again did the evil in the eyes of the LORD, and Ehud had died. **2** And the LORD sold them into the hand of Jabin (Yavin) the king of Canaan (Kena'an), who reigned in Hazor (Chatsor); and the commander of his army ***was*** Sisera (Sisra), and he ***was*** dwelling in Harosheth-hagoyim (Charoshet-haGoyim). **3** And the sons of Israel cried out to the LORD, for he ***had*** nine hundred chariots of iron, and he oppressed the sons of Israel with force twenty years. **4** And Deborah (Devora), a woman, a prophetess, the wife of Lappidoth (Lapidot), she ***was*** judging Israel at that time. **5** And she ***was*** dwelling under the palm tree of Deborah between Ramah (Rama) and Bethel (Bet-El) in the hill country of Ephraim (Efrayim); and the sons of Israel went up to her for judgment. **6** And she sent and called Barak (Baraq) the son of Abinoam (Avino'am) from
Kedesh-naphtali (Qedesh-Naftali), and she said to him, "Has not the LORD, the God of Israel, commanded, 'Go, and draw ***out*** at the mountain of Tabor (Tavor), and take with you ten thousand men from the sons of Naphtali and from the sons of

3:19 Josh 4:20; 2 Kgs 9:5,6; Acts 23:18,19
3:20 Amos 3:15; 2 Sam 12:1-15; 2 Sam 24:12
3:21 Num 25:7,8; 1 Sam 15:33; Job 20:25
3:24 1 Sam 24:3
3:27 Judg 6:34; 1 Sam 13:3; Judg 5:14
3:28 Judg 12:5; Judg 7:9,15; Josh 2:7
3:29 Judg 3:17; Deut 32:15; Job 15:27
3:30 Judg 3:11; Judg 5:31
3:31 Judg 5:6,8; 1 Sam 17:47,50; 1 Cor 1:17
4:1 Jer 5:3; Judg 2:11,19,20; Judg 3:7,12
4:2 Josh 11:1,10,11; Judg 4:13,16; 1 Sam 12:9
4:3 Judg 1:19; Judg 3:9,15; Ps 106:42
4:4 Luke 2:36; Exod 15:20; 2 Kgs 22:14
4:5 Heb 11:32; Gen 35:8; Josh 16:2
4:6 Heb 11:32; Acts 13:47; Judg 8:18

3:19 *the carved images which were at Gilgal* Probably stone idols or carved stones marking the border of Eglon's control. There Ehud turned back alone.
3:20 *I have a word of God for you* The words were exactly right, though Eglon did not understand them. God's message for this king was judgment.
3:21 *he thrust it into his belly* This is one of the hard passages of Judges. Israel was under a foreign king who invaded and ruled them by force for eighteen years. Ehud was no private man settling a grudge. The LORD raised him up as a savior, and this was an act of war against an oppressor, the first blow in a battle for freedom. The Bible records his trick but does not make deception a pattern for us. The sword now belongs to governing authorities (Rom 13:4), and believers leave vengeance to God (Rom 12:19).
3:24 *Surely he is covering his feet in the cool chamber* That is, relieving himself (compare 1 Sam 24:3). The servants waited, embarrassed, and every minute they stood outside gave Ehud more time to escape.
3:28 *the LORD has given your enemies, Moab, into your hand* Ehud blew the ram's horn, the shofar, to call Israel to war, and gave the credit where it belonged. They seized the fords of the Jordan, the shallow crossings, so the Moabites on the west side could not get home.
3:30 *the land was at rest eighty years* The longest rest in the book, two full generations of peace. God's mercy was greater than Israel's sin.
3:31 *Shamgar the son of Anath* Anath was a Canaanite war goddess, so Shamgar may have come from a family or town with a pagan background. An ox goad was a long wooden pole, often eight feet or so, with a metal point for driving oxen. He had no sword, no army and no famous family, only a farm tool. God is not limited by what we have in our hands. The Song of Deborah remembers his days as a time when the roads were too dangerous to travel (5:6).
4:1 *the sons of Israel again did the evil in the eyes of the LORD, and Ehud had died* As long as the judge lived, the people held on. When he died, they let go.
4:2 *Jabin the king of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor* Hazor was the greatest city in the north. Joshua had burned it and killed a king named Jabin there (Josh 11:1, 10-11). It had been rebuilt, and this Jabin was probably a later king of the same line. The name may have been a royal title, like Pharaoh.
4:3 *he oppressed the sons of Israel with force twenty years* Eight years, then eighteen, now twenty. Each oppression in Judges is longer than the last. Sin gets heavier the longer we carry it.
4:4 *Deborah, a woman, a prophetess* A prophetess was a woman through whom God spoke His word, like Miriam (Exod 15:20) and Huldah (2 Kgs 22:14). Deborah is the only judge in the book also called a prophet, and she is first seen settling disputes and giving God's word, not leading an army. Some see her leadership as unusual, a sign of how weak Israel's men had become. Others see it as showing God can call women to lead His people. Either way, the text treats her with respect.
4:6 *Has not the LORD, the God of Israel, commanded* Deborah did not give Barak her own idea. She gave him God's command. Mount Tabor is a tall, round hill at the northeast edge of the Jezreel Valley, a safe place for foot soldiers out of reach of chariots.

Zebulun (Zevulun). **7** And I will draw to you, to the wadi Kishon (Qishon), Sisera the commander of the army of Jabin, and his chariots and his multitude, and I will give him into your hand'?" **8** And Barak said to her, "If you will go with me, then I will go; and if you will not go with me, I will not go." **9** And she said, "I will surely go with you; nevertheless the honor will not be yours on the way on which you ***are*** going, for into the hand of a woman the LORD will sell Sisera." And Deborah arose and went with Barak to Kedesh. **10** And Barak summoned Zebulun and Naphtali to Kedesh, and ten thousand men went up at his feet; and Deborah went up with him. **11** And Heber (Chever) the Kenite had separated from the Kenites (Qayin), from the sons of Hobab (Chovav), the father-in-law of Moses (Moshe), and he had pitched his tent as far as ***the*** terebinth in Zaanannim (Tsa'ananim), which ***is*** near Kedesh. **12** And they told Sisera that Barak the son of Abinoam had gone up ***to*** the mountain of Tabor. **13** And Sisera summoned all his chariots, nine hundred chariots of iron, and all the people who ***were*** with him, from Harosheth-hagoyim to the wadi Kishon. **14** And Deborah said to Barak, "Arise, for this ***is*** the day on which the LORD has given Sisera into your hand. Has not the LORD gone out before you?" And Barak went down from the mountain of Tabor, and ten thousand men after him. **15** And the LORD threw Sisera and all the chariots and all the camp into confusion by the mouth of ***the*** sword before Barak; and Sisera got down from on the chariot, and he fled on his feet. **16** And Barak pursued after the chariots and after the camp as far as Harosheth-hagoyim; and all the camp of Sisera fell by the mouth of ***the*** sword; not even one was left.

Jael and Sisera

17 And Sisera fled on his feet to the tent of Jael (Ya'el) the wife of Heber the Kenite; for ***there was*** peace between Jabin the king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite. **18** And Jael went out to meet Sisera, and she said to him, "Turn aside, my lord, turn aside to me; do not be afraid." And he turned aside to her into the tent, and she covered him with the blanket. **19** And he said to her, "Please give me a little water to drink, for I am thirsty." And she opened the skin of milk, and she gave him a drink, and she covered him. **20** And he said to her, "Stand ***at*** the entrance of the tent, and it shall be, if a man comes and asks you and says, 'Is there a man here?' and you shall say, 'No.'" **21** And Jael the wife of Heber took the peg of the tent, and she put the hammer in her hand, and she went to him secretly, and she drove the peg into his temple, and it went down into the ground; and he ***was*** fast asleep, and he was weary, and he died. **22** And look, Barak ***was*** pursuing Sisera, and Jael went out to meet him, and she said to him, "Come, and I will show you the man whom you ***are*** seeking." And he came to her, and look, Sisera ***was*** fallen dead, and the peg ***was*** in his temple. **23** And God subdued on that day Jabin the king of Canaan before the sons of Israel. **24** And the hand of the sons of Israel went on, going and ***growing*** hard against Jabin the king of Canaan, until they had cut off Jabin the king of Canaan.

JUDGES 5

The Song of Deborah

1 And Deborah (Devora) and Barak (Baraq) the son of Abinoam (Avino'am) sang on that day, saying, **2** "When leaders took the lead in Israel (Yisra'el), when ***the*** people volun-

4:7 Judg 5:21; 1 Kgs 18:40; Exod 14:4
4:8 Exod 4:10-14; Matt 14:30,31
4:9 Judg 2:14; 1 Sam 2:30; 2 Chr 26:18
4:10 Judg 5:18; Judg 5:15; Judg 4:6
4:11 Judg 1:16; Num 10:29; Josh 19:33,37
4:12 Judg 4:6; Josh 19:12,34; Ps 89:12
4:13 Judg 4:2,3,7
4:14 Deut 9:3; 2 Sam 5:24; Isa 52:12
4:15 Heb 11:32; Josh 10:10; Ps 83:9,10
4:16 Lev 26:7,8; Josh 10:19,20; Josh 11:8
4:17 Job 12:19-21; Job 18:7-12; Job 40:11,12
4:18 2 Kgs 6:19
4:19 John 4:7; Judg 5:25,26; Gen 24:43
4:20 Josh 2:3-5; 2 Sam 17:20
4:21 Judg 3:21,31; Judg 5:26; Judg 15:15
4:22 2 Sam 17:3,10-15
4:23 Neh 9:24; 1 Chr 22:18; Ps 18:39,47
4:24 1 Sam 3:12
5:1 Exod 15:1,21; Num 21:17; 1 Sam 2:1
5:2 Judg 5:9; 2 Chr 17:16; Ps 110:3

4:7 *I will draw to you, to the wadi Kishon, Sisera* A wadi is a stream bed dry much of the year that can flood quickly after rain. God told Barak where the battle would be, who would come and how it would end.
4:8 *If you will go with me, then I will go* Some see weak faith: God had promised victory, and Barak wanted a person to lean on. Others see a man who wanted God's prophet beside him to hear God's word in the battle. There may be some of both. Hebrews 11:32 still names Barak among the people of faith.
4:9 *into the hand of a woman the LORD will sell Sisera* Most readers think at first Deborah means herself. She doesn't. The woman is someone we have not met yet.
4:11 *Heber the Kenite had separated from the Kenites* The Kenites were the family of Moses' father-in-law (1:16). Heber had moved north and was at peace with Jabin (4:17). His tent is where the story will end. God was setting the pieces in place before anyone knew it.
4:14 *Has not the LORD gone out before you?* Deborah gave the word, and Barak went down the mountain with his ten thousand behind him.
4:15 *the LORD threw Sisera and all the chariots and all the camp into confusion* The Song adds that the heavens poured rain and "The wadi Kishon swept them away" (5:4, 21). Chariots that were terrifying on dry ground were useless in mud and floodwater. What made Sisera strong became his trap.
4:17 *Sisera fled on his feet to the tent of Jael* He expected a safe place, since Heber's household was at peace with Jabin.
4:18 *Turn aside, my lord, turn aside to me; do not be afraid* In that culture a guest in your tent was under your protection. Sisera trusted that custom and the peace with Heber. But Jael had made her own choice about whose side she was on.
4:21 *Jael the wife of Heber took the peg of the tent* Tent pegs and hammers were the tools women of the tents used to pitch the family's tent. This is a hard passage, read more than one way. Some note that she deceived a guest and killed a sleeping man, and that the Bible records it without approving every part. Others note that Sisera commanded the army that crushed Israel for twenty years, that this was war, and that she sided with God's people when her husband's family sided with the oppressor. The Song calls her "blessed above women" (5:24). She is not a pattern for us. We are called to love our enemies (Matt 5:44).
4:22 *Come, and I will show you the man whom you are seeking* God's word came true (4:9). Barak's honor went to a woman, just as Deborah said.
4:23 *God subdued on that day Jabin the king of Canaan* The writer makes sure we know who won. It was not Deborah, Barak or Jael. It was God.
4:24 *going and growing hard against Jabin the king of Canaan* The victory at the Kishon was the turning point, but finishing the job took steady effort. God gives a great victory, then calls us to keep walking in it.
5:1 *Deborah and Barak the son of Abinoam sang on that day* They did not wait. When God has done something great, the first right response is praise. Many scholars count this song among the oldest poems in the Bible.
5:2 *when the people volunteered, bless the LORD!* God gave the victory through people who were willing. The leaders led, and the people came.

teered, bless the LORD! **3** Hear, O kings; give ear, O rulers! I, to the LORD, I, let me sing; I will sing praise to the LORD, the God of Israel. **4** O LORD, when You went out from Seir (Se'ir), when You marched from the field of Edom, ***the*** earth shook, also ***the*** heavens dropped, also ***the*** clouds dropped water. **5** ***The*** mountains flowed from before the LORD, this Sinai (Sinay), from before the LORD, the God of Israel. **6** In the days of Shamgar the son of Anath (Anat), in the days of Jael (Ya'el), ***the*** roads ceased, and walkers of paths walked ***on*** twisting roads. **7** ***The*** villagers ceased in Israel; they ceased, until I arose, Deborah, until I arose, a mother in Israel. **8** ***Israel*** chose new gods; then war ***was at the*** gates. Was a shield seen, and a spear, among forty thousand in Israel? **9** My heart ***is*** toward the commanders of Israel, those who volunteered among the people. Bless the LORD! **10** Riders on tawny female donkeys, you who sit on rich cloths, and walkers on the road, talk ***of it***! **11** From the sound of the archers between the watering places, there they shall recount the righteous acts of the LORD, the righteous acts ***toward*** His villagers in Israel. Then the people of the LORD went down to the gates.

The Tribes Who Came and Who Stayed

12 Awake, awake, Deborah! Awake, awake, speak a song! Arise, Barak, and lead away your captives, O son of Abinoam! **13** Then a survivor went down to the nobles, ***the*** people; the LORD went down for me against the mighty. **14** From Ephraim (Efrayim), their root ***was*** in Amalek (Amaleq); after you, Benjamin (Binyamin), among your peoples. From Machir (Makhir) came down commanders, and from Zebulun (Zevulun) those who draw with the staff of the scribe. **15** And my princes in Issachar (Yisashkhar) ***were*** with Deborah; and Issachar, so Barak; into the valley he was sent at his feet. Among the divisions of Reuben (Reuven) ***were*** great resolves of heart. **16** Why did you sit between the sheepfolds, to hear the pipings for the flocks? For the divisions of Reuben ***there were*** great searchings of heart. **17** Gilead (Gilad) settled beyond the Jordan (Yarden); and Dan, why did he sojourn ***by*** ships? Asher dwelt at the shore of the seas, and by his landing places he settled. **18** Zebulun ***was*** a people ***that*** scorned its life to the death, and Naphtali (Naftali), on the heights of the field. **19** Kings came, they fought; then the kings of Canaan (Kena'an) fought at Taanach (Ta'anakh) by the waters of Megiddo (Megido); gain of silver they did not take. **20** From heaven they fought; the stars from their highways fought with Sisera (Sisra). **21** The wadi Kishon (Qishon) swept them away, a wadi of ancient times, the wadi Kishon. You shall tread, O my soul, ***in*** strength! **22** Then the heels of ***the*** horse hammered from the galloping, the galloping of his mighty ones. **23** 'Curse Meroz,' says the angel of the LORD, 'curse bitterly its inhabitants, for they did not come to the help of the LORD, to the help of the LORD against the mighty.'

Most Blessed of Women Is Jael

24 She shall be blessed above women, Jael, the wife of Heber (Chever) the Kenite; above women in the tent she shall be

5:3 Ps 2:10-12; Ps 49:1,2; Ps 119:46
5:4 Deut 33:2; Ps 68:7,8; 2 Sam 22:8
5:5 Gal 4:25; Exod 19:18; Ps 97:5
5:6 Judg 3:31; Isa 33:8; Lev 26:22
5:7 2 Sam 20:19; Esth 9:19; Isa 49:23
5:8 Judg 2:12,17; Deut 32:16,17; Judg 4:3
5:9 Judg 5:2; 1 Chr 29:9; 2 Cor 8:3,4,12,17
5:10 Judg 12:14; Judg 10:4; Ps 105:2
5:11 1 Sam 12:7; Mic 6:5; Lam 5:4,9
5:12 Eph 5:14; Ps 57:8; Ps 68:18
5:13 Ps 49:14; Isa 41:15,16; Ezek 17:24
5:14 Judg 3:27; Judg 3:13; Num 32:39,40
5:15 1 Chr 12:32; Judg 4:6,14; Acts 20:13
5:16 Num 32:1-5,24; Phil 2:21; Phil 3:19
5:17 Josh 13:25,31; Josh 19:24-31
5:18 Judg 4:10; Judg 4:6,10,14; Esth 4:16
5:19 Rev 19:19; Rev 16:16; Judg 1:27
5:20 Josh 10:11; 1 Sam 7:10; Ps 77:17,18
5:21 Judg 4:7,13; Ps 44:5; 1 Kgs 18:40
5:22 Ps 20:7; Ps 33:17; Ps 147:10,11
5:23 Judg 21:9,10; 1 Sam 26:19; Jer 48:10
5:24 Luke 1:42; Judg 4:17; Gen 14:19

5:3 *Hear, O kings; give ear, O rulers!* The main mark of Hebrew poetry is parallelism: a line says something, and the next says it again in other words, adds to it, or sets it against its opposite. These two lines say the same thing twice. Deborah wants even foreign rulers to know who Israel's God is.
5:5 *The mountains flowed from before the LORD, this Sinai* Seir and Edom lie to the south, along the way Israel came from Sinai. Deborah remembers the quaking mountain where God gave the Law (Exod 19:18; Ps 68:8). The God who came down on the mountain had come down again by the river. The storm that turned the valley to mud was the LORD marching out for His people.
5:6 *the roads ceased, and walkers of paths walked on twisting roads* The main roads were too dangerous, so people took back paths, and families in the open villages could not live in peace.
5:7 *until I arose, a mother in Israel* Deborah does not call herself a queen or a general but a mother, someone who cared for the people and stood up for them.
5:8 *Israel chose new gods; then war was at the gates* This is the root of the trouble. Israel chose new gods, and war came to their gates. Hardly a shield or spear could be found among forty thousand men. Sin always leaves us weaker than it promised.
5:11 *there they shall recount the righteous acts of the LORD* The righteous acts of the LORD are His acts of saving and setting things right. With the roads safe again, rich and poor could talk at the wells, and what they talked about was God.
5:13 *the LORD went down for me against the mighty* Israel was the weaker side, but the LORD fought for them.
5:15 *Among the divisions of Reuben were great resolves of heart* The song calls the roll of the tribes. Ephraim, Benjamin, Machir (part of Manasseh), Zebulun and Issachar came.
5:16 *Why did you sit between the sheepfolds, to hear the pipings for the flocks?* Reuben thought hard about it and stayed home with the sheep. Gilead, Dan and Asher stayed put too. Good intentions that never move us are not faith. The one who knows to do good and does not do it, "to him it is sin" (James 4:17).
5:18 *Zebulun was a people that scorned its life to the death* High praise. Zebulun and Naphtali risked everything.
5:20 *From heaven they fought; the stars from their highways fought with Sisera* This is poetry. The stars did not come down. Heaven itself was on Israel's side, and God used the storm and rain against Sisera.
5:21 *The wadi Kishon swept them away* The dry stream bed became a flood, and the chariots sank. Deborah sings to herself, "You shall tread, O my soul, in strength!" God's strength became hers.
5:23 *they did not come to the help of the LORD* Meroz was a town, probably near the battle, that refused to help. The LORD does not need help, but He calls His people to stand with Him, and refusing is serious. Meroz is never heard of again. "The one who is not with Me is against Me" (Matt 12:30). There is no neutral ground in following Christ.
5:24 *She shall be blessed above women, Jael* The song praises Jael for siding with God's people. The repeated lines of verse 27 slow the moment down: the commander who terrified Israel for twenty years died at the feet of a woman in a tent, as Deborah said (4:9). It is a hard scene, and it shows God's justice on a cruel oppressor.

blessed. **25** Water he asked; milk she gave; in a bowl of nobles she brought near curds. **26** Her hand to the peg she stretched out, and her right hand to the hammer of workmen; and she hammered Sisera, she crushed his head, and she shattered and she pierced his temple. **27** Between her feet he bent down, he fell, he lay down; between her feet he bent down, he fell; where he bent down, there he fell, devastated. **28** Through the window she looked down, and the mother of Sisera wailed through the lattice, 'Why has his chariot delayed to come? Why have the hoofbeats of his chariots lingered?' **29** The wise ones of her princesses answer; even she returns her words to herself: **30** 'Are they not finding, dividing up plunder? A womb, two wombs for the head of a man; plunder of dyed cloths for Sisera, plunder of dyed cloths, embroidery, dyed cloth, double embroidery for the necks of plunder?' **31** So may all Your enemies perish, O LORD! And those who love Him ***be*** like the going out of the sun in its might." And the land was at rest forty years.

JUDGES 6

Midian Oppresses Israel

1 And the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) did the evil in the eyes of the LORD, and the LORD gave them into the hand of Midian (Midyan) seven years. **2** And the hand of Midian prevailed over Israel. Because of Midian the sons of Israel made for themselves the dens which ***are*** in the mountains, and the caves, and the strongholds. **3** And it would be, whenever Israel had sown, and Midian would come up, and Amalek (Amaleq), and the sons of ***the*** east, and they would come up against him. **4** And they encamped against them, and they destroyed the produce of the land until you come to Gaza (Aza); and they did not leave sustenance in Israel, or sheep, or ox, or donkey. **5** For they and their livestock would come up, and their tents, and they would come like the abundance of locusts for multitude; and to them and to their camels ***there was*** no number; and they came into the land to destroy it. **6** And Israel was brought very low because of Midian, and the sons of Israel cried out to the LORD. **7** And it was, when the sons of Israel cried out to the LORD on account of Midian, **8** and the LORD sent a man, a prophet, to the sons of Israel, and he said to them, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: 'I Myself brought you up from Egypt (Mitsrayim), and I brought you out from a house of slaves. **9** And I rescued you from the hand of Egypt and from the hand of all who oppressed you, and I drove them out from before you, and I gave you their land. **10** And I said to you, "I ***am*** the LORD your God; you shall not fear the gods of the Amorites in whose land you ***are*** dwelling." And you have not listened to My voice.'"

The LORD Calls Gideon

11 And the angel of the LORD came and sat under the oak which ***was*** in Ophrah (Ofra), which ***belonged*** to Joash (Yo'ash) the Abiezrite (Avi'ezrite); and Gideon (Gidon) his son ***was*** beating out wheat in the winepress, to hide ***it*** from before Midian. **12** And the angel of the LORD appeared to him, and he said to him, "The LORD ***is*** with you, O mighty man of valor." **13** And Gideon said to him, "Please, my lord, ***if*** the LORD is with us, then why has all this found us? And where ***are*** all His wonders which our fathers recounted to us, saying, 'Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt?' And now the LORD has abandoned us, and He has given us into the palm of Midian." **14** And the LORD turned to him and said, "Go in this strength of yours, and you shall save Israel from the palm of Midian. Have I not sent you?" **15** And he said to Him, "Please, Lord, with what shall I save Israel? Look, my clan ***is*** the weakest in Manasseh (Menashe), and I ***am*** the least in the house of

5:25 Judg 4:19-21
5:26 1 Sam 17:49-51; 2 Sam 20:22
5:27 Ps 52:7; Matt 7:2; James 2:13
5:28 2 Kgs 1:2; Song 2:9; Judg 4:15
5:30 Exod 15:9; Job 20:5; Gen 37:3
5:31 1 Cor 8:3; James 1:12; James 2:5
6:1 Gen 25:2; Hab 3:7; Judg 2:13,14,19,20
6:2 1 Sam 13:6; Heb 11:38; Lev 26:17
6:3 Judg 3:13; Judg 7:12; Judg 6:33
6:4 Lev 26:16; Mic 6:15; Deut 28:30,33,51
6:5 Judg 7:12; Judg 8:10; Song 1:5
6:6 Judg 3:9,15; Ps 106:43; Jer 5:17
6:8 Judg 2:1-3; Neh 9:9-12; Ps 136:10-16
6:9 Ps 44:2,3
6:10 Jer 10:2; Exod 20:2,3; 2 Kgs 17:33,35-39
6:11 Heb 11:32; Luke 2:9; Josh 17:2
6:12 Luke 1:28; Luke 1:11; Luke 2:9
6:13 Ps 44:1; Ps 89:49; 2 Chr 15:2
6:14 1 Sam 12:11; Heb 11:32,34; Judg 4:6
6:15 1 Cor 15:9; John 1:18; Exod 3:11

5:28 *the mother of Sisera wailed through the lattice* A quiet and painful picture. A mother waits for a son already dead.
5:30 *Are they not finding, dividing up plunder?* Her ladies imagine the plunder: a girl or two for each man and fine dyed cloth for Sisera. This shows what Sisera's army did to Israel's villages. Yet the song does not mock her. It lets us feel the cost of evil even for those on the oppressor's side. Sin brings sorrow to everyone it touches.
5:31 *those who love Him be like the going out of the sun in its might* God's enemies fall, and those who love Him rise like the sun at dawn, growing brighter and stronger. The land rested forty years. Will we keep loving Him when the trouble is gone?
6:1 *the LORD gave them into the hand of Midian seven years* The Midianites were desert peoples from east and south of the land, related to Israel through Abraham's wife Keturah (Gen 25:1-2), but long enemies (Num 31).
6:5 *they would come like the abundance of locusts for multitude* They came not to rule but to raid. Every time Israel planted, they swept in with tents, flocks and camels and ate everything as far as Gaza. The camel was a new weapon of war in this period, letting raiders travel far and fast. Israel was reduced to hiding in caves.
6:8 *the LORD sent a man, a prophet* Before a deliverer, God sent a sermon. The prophet reminded them what God had done and said, and named the problem: "you have not listened to My voice." Rescue without repentance would only lead to the next disaster. Before God lifts us out of trouble our sin has caused, He often makes us face what we have done.
6:11 *Gideon his son was beating out wheat in the winepress, to hide it from before Midian* Ophrah was the town of Gideon's clan, the Abiezrites of Manasseh. Wheat was normally threshed on an open, high floor where the wind could carry off the chaff. A winepress was a pit cut into rock. Gideon was threshing in a hole, hoping no one would see.
6:12 *The LORD is with you, O mighty man of valor* Gideon did not look like a mighty man. But God sees what He is going to make of us, not only what we are now.
6:13 *if the LORD is with us, then why has all this found us?* Honest questions. Gideon had heard the exodus stories but did not see that God in his own day. God did not scold him for asking. But Gideon had the answer wrong. God had not abandoned Israel. Israel had abandoned Him.
6:14 *Go in this strength of yours* The writer now calls the angel "the LORD" (6:14, 16, 23), which is why many see here the Son of God before His birth. Gideon's strength was not in himself but in the One sending him: "Have I not sent you?"
6:15 *my clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in the house of my father* Moses made the same kind of excuse (Exod 3:11; 4:10).

my father." **16** And the LORD said to him, "Surely I will be with you, and you shall strike Midian as one man." **17** And he said to Him, "If now I have found favor in Your eyes, then make for me a sign that You ***are*** speaking with me. **18** Please do not depart from here until I come to You, and bring out my offering, and set ***it*** before You." And He said, "I will remain until you return." **19** And Gideon went in and prepared a young goat of ***the*** goats, and approximately 3/5 bushel (an ephah) of flour ***as*** unleavened cakes; the meat he put in the basket, and the broth he put in the pot; and he brought ***them*** out to him under the oak, and he presented ***them***. **20** And the angel of God said to him, "Take the meat and the unleavened cakes, and set ***them*** on this rock, and pour out the broth." And he did so. **21** And the angel of the LORD stretched out the end of the staff that ***was*** in his hand, and he touched the meat and the unleavened cakes; and the fire went up from the rock, and it consumed the meat and the unleavened cakes. And the angel of the LORD went from his eyes. **22** And Gideon saw that he ***was*** the angel of the LORD; and Gideon said, "Alas, Lord GOD! For therefore I have seen the angel of the LORD face to face." **23** And the LORD said to him, "Peace ***be*** to you; do not be afraid; you shall not die." **24** And Gideon built an altar there to the LORD, and he called it "The LORD ***is*** Peace." Until this day it ***is*** still in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

Gideon Tears Down Baal's Altar

25 And it was on that night, and the LORD said to him, "Take the young bull of the ox which ***belongs*** to your father, and the second young bull, seven years ***old***, and tear down the altar of the Baal which ***belongs*** to your father, and the Asherah which ***is*** beside it you shall cut down. **26** And build an altar to the LORD your God on the top of this stronghold, in the arrangement, and take the second young bull, and offer up a burnt offering with the wood of the Asherah which you shall cut down." **27** And Gideon took ten men from his servants, and he did just as the LORD had spoken to him. And it was, since he feared the household of his father and the men of the city to do ***it*** by day, and he did ***it*** by night. **28** And the men of the city rose early in the morning, and look, the altar of the Baal was torn down, and the Asherah which ***was*** beside it was cut down, and the second young bull had been offered up on the altar ***that had been*** built. **29** And they said, each man to his neighbor, "Who has done this thing?" And they inquired and searched, and they said, "Gideon the son of Joash has done this thing." **30** And the men of the city said to Joash, "Bring out your son, and let him die, for he has torn down the altar of the Baal, and for he has cut down the Asherah which ***was*** beside it." **31** And Joash said to all who stood against him, "Will you yourselves contend for the Baal? Or will you yourselves save him? Whoever contends for him shall be put to death by the morning. If he ***is*** a god, let him contend for himself, because someone has torn down his altar." **32** And he called him on that day Jerubbaal (Yeruba'al), saying, "Let the Baal contend against him, because he has torn down his altar." **33** And all Midian and Amalek and the sons of ***the*** east gathered together, and they crossed over, and they encamped in the valley of Jezreel (Yizre'el). **34** And the Spirit of the LORD clothed Gideon, and he blew the ram's horn, and Abiezer (Avi'ezer) was called together after him. **35** And he sent messengers throughout all Manasseh, and it also was called together after him; and he sent messengers into Asher and into Zebulun (Zevulun) and into Naphtali (Naftali), and they came up to meet them.

The Sign of the Fleece

36 And Gideon said to God, "If You ***are*** saving Israel by my hand, just as You have spoken, **37** look, I ***am*** placing the fleece of wool on the threshing floor. If dew is on the fleece alone, and on all the ground ***there is*** dryness, and I will know

6:16 Exod 3:12; Josh 1:5; Judg 6:12
6:17 John 1:18; Exod 33:13,16; Ps 86:17
6:18 Judg 13:15; Gen 18:3,5; Gen 19:3
6:19 Gen 18:6-8; Judg 13:15-19; Lev 2:4
6:20 Judg 13:19; 1 Kgs 18:33,34
6:21 Lev 9:24; 1 Kgs 18:38; 2 Chr 7:1
6:22 Gen 32:30; Exod 33:20; Judg 13:21
6:23 John 14:27; John 20:19; John 20:26
6:24 Gen 22:14; Exod 17:15; Ezek 48:35
6:25 Exod 34:13; Judg 3:7; Deut 7:5
6:26 2 Sam 24:18; 1 Cor 14:33,40
6:27 Deut 4:1; Matt 16:24; John 2:5
6:30 Jer 26:11; Jer 50:38; John 16:2
6:31 Exod 23:2; Num 14:6; Eph 5:11
6:32 1 Sam 12:11; 2 Sam 11:21; Jer 11:13
6:33 Josh 17:16; Judg 6:3; Ps 3:1
6:34 Judg 3:10; Judg 3:27; 1 Chr 12:18
6:35 2 Chr 30:6-12
6:36 Judg 6:14,17-20; Exod 4:1-9; 2 Kgs 20:9
6:37 Deut 32:2; Ps 72:6; Hos 6:3,4

6:16 *Surely I will be with you* The answer to every excuse. God did not tell Gideon he was stronger than he thought. He told him Who would be with him. "God chose the weak things of the world, so that He might put the strong things to shame" (1 Cor 1:27).
6:19 *prepared a young goat of the goats, and approximately 3/5 bushel (an ephah) of flour* A large amount in a time of famine. Gideon wanted a sign that this was really God.
6:21 *the fire went up from the rock, and it consumed the meat and the unleavened cakes* Fire from God consuming an offering was a sign He had accepted it (Lev 9:24; 1 Kgs 18:38).
6:22 *Alas, Lord GOD! For therefore I have seen the angel of the LORD face to face* "Lord GOD" stands for Adonai Yahweh. Gideon was terrified, because God had said, "man shall not see Me and live" (Exod 33:20).
6:24 *The LORD is Peace* In Hebrew, Yahweh Shalom. Shalom is more than the absence of war. It means wholeness, well-being and being right with God. In a land full of war and fear, God's first word to Gideon was peace. It is still His first word to anyone who comes through Christ (Rom 5:1).
6:25 *tear down the altar of the Baal which belongs to your father* Gideon's first assignment was at home. A burnt offering was an animal wholly burned, given completely to God, and he was to burn it with the wood of the Asherah. Before he could lead Israel against Midian, he had to deal with the idols in his own family. Revival often starts at home.
6:27 *since he feared the household of his father and the men of the city to do it by day, and he did it by night* His obedience was real, even though it was fearful. God can use fearful obedience.
6:30 *Bring out your son, and let him die* How far Israel had fallen: an Israelite town wanted to kill a man for tearing down an idol.
6:31 *If he is a god, let him contend for himself* A wise answer. Perhaps Joash was ashamed, or his son's courage woke something in him. Either way, he stood up for his son.
6:32 *he called him on that day Jerubbaal* The name means let Baal contend, and it became a running joke against Baal. Gideon lived, and Baal did nothing.
6:34 *the Spirit of the LORD clothed Gideon* The Spirit put Gideon on like a garment. The frightened man in the winepress blew the ram's horn, and his own clan, who had wanted him dead, came after him first.
6:36 *If You are saving Israel by my hand, just as You have spoken* God had already told him plainly what to do and promised to be with him (6:14, 16). The fleece was not a way of finding God's will. Gideon already knew it. It was a request for proof, because his faith was weak.

that You will save Israel by my hand, just as You have spoken." **38** And it was so. And he rose early on the next day, and he squeezed the fleece, and he drained dew from the fleece, the fullness of the bowl, water. **39** And Gideon said to God, "Do not let Your anger burn against me, and let me speak only this time. Let me test, please, only this time with the fleece; please let there be dryness on the fleece alone, and on all the ground let there be dew." **40** And God did so on that night; and there was dryness on the fleece alone, and on all the ground there was dew.

JUDGES 7

The LORD Reduces Gideon's Army

1 And Jerubbaal (Yeruba'al), that ***is*** Gideon (Gidon), and all the people who ***were*** with him rose early, and they encamped beside En-harod (En-Charod); and the camp of Midian (Midyan) was north of him, by the hill of Moreh (More), in the valley. **2** And the LORD said to Gideon, "The people who ***are*** with you ***are*** too many for Me to give Midian into their hand, lest Israel (Yisra'el) glorify itself against Me, saying, 'My own hand has saved me.' **3** And now, please proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, 'Whoever ***is*** fearful and trembling, let him return and depart from the mountain of Gilead (Gilad).'" And twenty-two thousand of the people returned, and ten thousand remained. **4** And the LORD said to Gideon, "The people ***are*** still ***too*** many. Bring them down to the water, and I will refine them for you there. And it shall be, ***the one*** of whom I say to you, 'This one shall go with you,' he shall go with you; and everyone of whom I say to you, 'This one shall not go with you,' he shall not go." **5** And he brought the people down to the water; and the LORD said to Gideon, "Everyone who laps from the water with his tongue, just as the dog laps, you shall set him by himself; and everyone who bends down on his knees to drink." **6** And the number of those who lapped with their hand to their mouth was three hundred men; and all the rest of the people bent down on their knees to drink water. **7** And the LORD said to Gideon, "By the three hundred men who lapped I will save you, and I will give Midian into your hand; and let all the people go, each man to his place." **8** And the people took provisions in their hand, and their ram's horns; and all the men of Israel he sent away, each man to his tents, and he kept hold of the three hundred men; and the camp of Midian was below him in the valley.

The Dream of the Barley Loaf

9 And it was on that night, and the LORD said to him, "Arise, go down against the camp, for I have given it into your hand. **10** And if you ***are*** afraid to go down, go down, you and Purah (Pura) your young man, to the camp. **11** And you shall hear what they say, and afterward your hands will be strong, and you shall go down against the camp." And he went down, he and Purah his young man, to the edge of the armed men who ***were*** in the camp. **12** And Midian and Amalek (Amaleq) and all the sons of ***the*** east ***were*** lying in the valley like locusts for multitude; and to their camels ***there was*** no number, like the sand that ***is*** on the shore of the sea for multitude. **13** And Gideon came, and look, a man ***was*** recounting a dream to his neighbor, and he said, "Look, I dreamed a dream, and look, a round loaf of barley bread ***was*** tumbling into the camp of Midian, and it came to the tent, and it struck it, and it fell, and it turned it upside down, and the tent fell." **14** And his neighbor answered and said, "This ***is*** nothing except the sword of Gideon the son of Joash (Yo'ash), a man of Israel; God has given into his hand Midian and all the camp."

6:38 Isa 35:7
6:39 Gen 18:32; Ps 107:33-35; Isa 35:6,7
7:1 Judg 6:32; Gen 12:6; Gen 22:3
7:2 Deut 8:17; 1 Cor 1:27-29; 2 Cor 4:7
7:3 Luke 14:31; Deut 20:8; Matt 13:21
7:4 Ps 33:16; Gen 22:1; 1 Sam 16:7
7:7 1 Sam 14:6; Judg 7:18-22; Isa 41:14-16
7:8 Judg 3:27; Lev 23:24; Lev 25:9
7:9 Acts 18:9; Gen 46:2,3; Job 4:13
7:10 Judg 4:8,9; Exod 4:10-14
7:11 Judg 7:13-15; Gen 24:14; 1 Sam 14:8,12
7:12 Heb 11:12; Rev 20:8; Judg 8:10
7:13 Judg 3:15,31; Judg 4:9,21; Judg 6:15
7:14 Josh 2:9,24; Num 22:38; Num 23:5,20

6:39 *Do not let Your anger burn against me, and let me speak only this time* He knew he was pushing. Maybe he thought wool just naturally held dew, so he asked for the reverse.
6:40 *God did so on that night* God is very patient with weak faith. He met Gideon where he was. But I say gently that the fleece is not a pattern for finding God's will today. God had already spoken. We have the whole written Word, which makes us "fully equipped for every good work" (2 Tim 3:17), and the Spirit within us. When we need wisdom, we ask God in faith (James 1:5). When He has spoken, the faithful thing is to obey. Some teachers allow asking for confirming circumstances where Scripture is silent.
7:1 *they encamped beside En-harod* The spring of Harod lay at the foot of the hills on the south side of the Jezreel Valley. Harod sounds like the Hebrew word for trembling, which fits what comes next.
7:2 *lest Israel glorify itself against Me, saying, 'My own hand has saved me.'* Midian had about 135,000 men (8:10), and Gideon's 32,000 were outnumbered four to one. Why make it worse? God knew that with a large army Israel would give itself the credit. He wanted the victory to be so clearly His that no one could miss it.
7:3 *Whoever is fearful and trembling, let him return* The Law itself allowed this (Deut 20:8). More than two out of three went home. That says a lot about Israel, and perhaps about Gideon, who had his own fears.
7:4 *I will refine them for you there* To refine is to test metal and burn off what is not wanted.
7:6 *three hundred men* Many teachers say the lappers were more alert, watching for the enemy while they drank. That may be true, but the text does not say so. The point was not how good the three hundred were but how few.
7:7 *By the three hundred men who lapped I will save you* Notice Who saves. Three hundred against well over a hundred thousand is not a battle plan. It is a promise.
7:8 *the people took provisions in their hand, and their ram's horns* The three hundred kept the horns the others left behind. Now they had three hundred horns, which will matter later.
7:10 *if you are afraid to go down, go down, you and Purah your young man* God knew Gideon was afraid, and He did not shame him. He gave him a way to be strengthened. We do not read that Gideon said he was not afraid. He went. That tells us the truth.
7:13 *a round loaf of barley bread was tumbling into the camp of Midian* Barley bread was the food of poor farmers, and the tent stood for the desert people who lived in tents.
7:14 *This is nothing except the sword of Gideon the son of Joash* The enemy already knew Gideon's name and feared him. God had gone ahead of Gideon into the enemy's dreams.

The Sword of the LORD and of Gideon

15 And it was, when Gideon heard the recounting of the dream and its interpretation, and he bowed down; and he returned to the camp of Israel, and he said, "Arise, for the LORD has given into your hand the camp of Midian." **16** And he divided the three hundred men ***into*** three companies, and he put ram's horns in the hand of all of them, and empty jars, and torches inside the jars. **17** And he said to them, "You shall look at me, and so you shall do. And look, I ***am*** coming to the edge of the camp, and it shall be, just as I do, so you shall do. **18** And I will blow the ram's horn, I and all who ***are*** with me, and you also shall blow the ram's horns all around the whole camp, and you shall say, 'For the LORD and for Gideon!'" **19** And Gideon came, and a hundred men who ***were*** with him, to the edge of the camp ***at*** the beginning of the middle watch; they had just stationed the watchmen; and they blew the ram's horns, and they smashed the jars that ***were*** in their hand. **20** And the three companies blew the ram's horns, and they broke the jars, and they held in their left hand the torches, and in their right hand the ram's horns to blow; and they called out, "A sword for the LORD and for Gideon!" **21** And they stood, each man in his place, all around the camp; and all the camp ran, and they shouted, and they fled. **22** And they blew the three hundred ram's horns, and the LORD set the sword of each man against his neighbor, and against all the camp; and the camp fled as far as Beth-shittah (Bet-Hashita) toward Zererah (Tserera), as far as the border of Abel-meholah (Avel-Mechola), by Tabbath (Tabat). **23** And the men of Israel were summoned from Naphtali (Naftali) and from Asher and from all Manasseh (Menashe), and they pursued after Midian. **24** And Gideon sent messengers throughout all the hill country of Ephraim (Efrayim), saying, "Come down to meet Midian, and capture before them the waters as far as Beth-barah (Bet-Bara), and the Jordan (Yarden)." And all the men of Ephraim were summoned, and they captured the waters as far as Beth-barah, and the Jordan. **25** And they captured the two commanders of Midian, Oreb (Orev) and Zeeb (Ze'ev), and they killed Oreb at the rock of Oreb, and Zeeb they killed at the winepress of Zeeb; and they pursued Midian; and the head of Oreb and Zeeb they brought to Gideon from beyond the Jordan.

JUDGES 8

Gideon Answers Ephraim

1 And the men of Ephraim (Efrayim) said to him, "What ***is*** this thing ***that*** you have done to us, not to call us when you went to fight against Midian (Midyan)?" And they contended with him with force. **2** And he said to them, "What have I done now like you? Are not the gleanings of Ephraim better than the grape harvest of Abiezer (Avi'ezer)? **3** Into your hand God has given the commanders of Midian, Oreb (Orev) and Zeeb (Ze'ev); and what have I been able to do like you?" Then their spirit toward him relaxed, when he spoke this word.

Succoth and Penuel

4 And Gideon (Gidon) came to the Jordan (Yarden), crossing over, he and the three hundred men who ***were*** with him, exhausted and pursuing. **5** And he said to the men of Succoth (Sukot), "Please give loaves of bread to the people who ***are*** at my feet, for they ***are*** exhausted, and I ***am*** pursuing after Zebah (Zevach) and Zalmunna (Tsalmuna), the kings of Midian." **6** And the officials of Succoth said, "***Is*** the palm of Zebah and Zalmunna now in your hand, that we should give

7:15 Gen 40:8; Gen 41:11; Gen 24:26,27,48
7:16 2 Cor 4:7
7:17 Judg 9:48; Matt 16:24; 1 Cor 11:1
7:18 1 Sam 17:47; 2 Chr 20:15-17
7:19 Exod 14:24; Matt 25:6; 1 Thess 5:2
7:20 Num 10:1-10; Josh 6:4,16,20; Isa 27:13
7:21 Exod 14:13,14; 2 Chr 20:17; Isa 30:7,15
7:22 1 Kgs 4:12; 2 Chr 20:23; 1 Kgs 19:16
7:23 Judg 6:35; 1 Sam 14:21,22
7:24 John 1:28; Judg 3:27; Rom 15:30
7:25 Isa 10:26; Judg 8:3; Ps 83:11,12
8:1 2 Sam 19:41; Judg 12:1-6; Job 5:2
8:2 1 Cor 13:4-7; Gal 5:14,15; Phil 2:2,3
8:3 Prov 15:1; Judg 7:24,25; Ps 44:3
8:4 1 Sam 14:28,29,31,32; 1 Sam 30:10; 2 Cor 4:8,9,16
8:5 Gen 33:17; Ps 60:6; Gen 14:18
8:6 1 Kgs 20:11; Judg 5:23; Gen 25:13

7:15 *he bowed down* Before anything else, he worshiped, right at the edge of the enemy camp. The man who asked for signs now spoke with confidence. Hearing God's promise confirmed changed him. Faith comes from hearing (Rom 10:17).
7:16 *empty jars, and torches inside the jars* Strange weapons: a horn, a clay jar, a hidden torch, and no sword even mentioned. Paul wrote, "we have this treasure in earthen vessels" (2 Cor 4:7). He does not mention Gideon, but it makes a fitting picture. God's light shines out when our clay jars are broken and our weakness is plain.
7:17 *You shall look at me, and so you shall do* Gideon led by example.
7:19 *at the beginning of the middle watch* The night had three watches, so this was around ten at night, just after the new guards took their posts and the camp was settling into sleep.
7:20 *A sword for the LORD and for Gideon!* Only a few men in an army carried a horn, so to sleeping Midianites three hundred horns and torches on three sides sounded like a vast army.
7:21 *they stood, each man in his place, all around the camp* They did not charge. They held their ground, and the camp fled. The battle was won by people who stood where God put them and let Him fight.
7:22 *the LORD set the sword of each man against his neighbor* In the dark and panic the Midianites killed each other. Isaiah later looked back on "the day of Midian" (Isa 9:4) as a picture of God breaking the oppressor's rod, and promised a Child called "Mighty God" (Isa 9:6), Jesus Christ, who breaks the power of every oppressor for good.
7:24 *capture before them the waters as far as Beth-barah, and the Jordan* Gideon called back the men who had gone home and sent Ephraim to seize the river crossings and cut off the escape.
7:25 *Oreb and Zeeb* Their names mean raven and wolf, and Israel long remembered this day (Ps 83:11; Isa 10:26). It is fitting that Zeeb died at a winepress. Midian had driven Gideon into a winepress to hide. Now a Midianite prince died at one.
8:1 *What is this thing that you have done to us, not to call us* Ephraim was a large, proud tribe and felt left out. Gideon had called them only at the end (7:24).
8:2 *Are not the gleanings of Ephraim better than the grape harvest of Abiezer?* Gleanings are the few grapes left after the harvest. The little Ephraim did at the end, capturing the two commanders, was worth more than all his clan had done. "A soft answer turns away rage" (Prov 15:1). Gideon gave them honor and kept the peace. Jephthah will face the same complaint and handle it very differently (12:1-6).
8:4 *exhausted and pursuing* Worn out, but they kept going.
8:6 *Is the palm of Zebah and Zalmunna now in your hand* You have not caught the kings yet, so why should we risk Midian's revenge? Succoth was an Israelite town east of the Jordan, but it would not stand with God's people until sure who would win.

bread to your army?" **7** And Gideon said, "Therefore, when the LORD gives Zebah and Zalmunna into my hand, then I will thresh your flesh with the thorns of the wilderness and with the briers." **8** And he went up from there ***to*** Penuel (Penu'el), and he spoke to them in the same way; and the men of Penuel answered him just as the men of Succoth had answered. **9** And he said also to the men of Penuel, saying, "When I return in peace, I will tear down this tower." **10** And Zebah and Zalmunna ***were*** in Karkor (Qarqor), and their camps with them, about fifteen thousand, all who were left of all the camp of the sons of ***the*** east; and those who had fallen ***were*** a hundred and twenty thousand men who drew ***the*** sword. **11** And Gideon went up by the way of those who dwell in tents, east of Nobah (Novach) and Jogbehah (Yogbeha), and he struck the camp; and the camp was secure. **12** And Zebah and Zalmunna fled, and he pursued after them, and he captured the two kings of Midian, Zebah and Zalmunna; and all the camp he threw into terror. **13** And Gideon the son of Joash (Yo'ash) returned from the battle, from the ascent of Heres (Cheres). **14** And he captured a young man of the men of Succoth, and he questioned him; and he wrote down for him the officials of Succoth and its elders, seventy-seven men. **15** And he came to the men of Succoth, and he said, "Look, Zebah and Zalmunna, about whom you taunted me, saying, '***Is*** the palm of Zebah and Zalmunna now in your hand, that we should give bread to your men who ***are*** weary?'" **16** And he took the elders of the city, and thorns of the wilderness and briers, and with them he taught the men of Succoth. **17** And the tower of Penuel he tore down, and he killed the men of the city. **18** And he said to Zebah and to Zalmunna, "Where ***are*** the men whom you killed at Tabor (Tavor)?" And they said, "As you, so they; each one ***was*** like the appearance of the sons of the king." **19** And he said, "They ***were*** my brothers, the sons of my mother. ***As*** the LORD lives, if you had let them live, I would not kill you." **20** And he said to Jether (Yeter) his firstborn, "Arise, kill them." And the young man did not draw his sword, for he was afraid, for he ***was*** still a young man. **21** And Zebah and Zalmunna said, "Arise yourself and fall on us; for as the man ***is***, ***so is*** his strength." And Gideon arose and killed Zebah and Zalmunna, and he took the crescent ornaments that ***were*** on the necks of their camels.

Gideon's Ephod

22 And the men of Israel (Yisra'el) said to Gideon, "Rule over us, both you and your son and the son of your son, for you have saved us from the hand of Midian." **23** And Gideon said to them, "I will not rule over you, and my son shall not rule over you; the LORD shall rule over you." **24** And Gideon said to them, "Let me ask a request of you, and give me, each man, the ring of his plunder." For they ***had*** rings of gold, because they ***were*** Ishmaelites. **25** And they said, "We will surely give ***them***." And they spread out the cloak, and they threw there, each man, the ring of his plunder. **26** And the weight of the gold rings which he asked for was approximately 42 pounds (one thousand seven hundred ***shekels***) of gold, apart from the crescent ornaments and the pendants and the purple garments that ***were*** on the kings of Midian, and apart from the chains that ***were*** on the necks of their camels. **27** And Gideon made it into an ephod, and he set it in his city, in Ophrah (Ofra); and all Israel prostituted themselves after it there, and it became a snare to Gideon and to his household. **28** And Midian was subdued before the sons of Israel, and they did not again lift up their head. And the land was at rest forty years in the days of Gideon.

The Death of Gideon

29 And Jerubbaal (Yeruba'al) the son of Joash went, and he dwelt in his house. **30** And Gideon had seventy sons who

8:8 Gen 32:30,31; 1 Kgs 12:25
8:9 1 Kgs 22:27,28
8:10 Judg 7:12; Judg 20:2,15,17,25,35,46; 2 Kgs 3:26
8:11 Num 32:35,42; Judg 18:27; 1 Sam 15:32
8:12 Ps 83:11; Josh 10:16-18,22-25; Job 12:16-21
8:14 Judg 1:24,25; 1 Sam 30:11-15
8:15 Judg 8:6,7
8:16 Judg 8:7; Prov 10:13; Prov 19:29
8:17 Judg 8:9; 1 Kgs 12:25
8:18 Judg 4:6; Ps 89:12; Ps 12:2
8:20 Josh 10:24; 1 Sam 15:33; Ps 149:9
8:21 Isa 3:18; Judg 9:54; 1 Sam 31:3,5
8:22 Judg 9:8-15; 1 Sam 8:5; 1 Sam 12:12
8:23 1 Sam 10:19; 1 Sam 12:12; Judg 2:18
8:24 Gen 25:13; Gen 37:25,28; Gen 24:22,53
8:26 John 19:5; Esth 8:15; Jer 10:9
8:27 Judg 17:5; Judg 18:14,17; Ps 106:39
8:28 Judg 5:31; Judg 3:11,30; Ps 83:9-12
8:29 Judg 6:32; 1 Sam 12:11; Neh 5:14,15
8:30 Judg 9:2,5; Judg 10:4; Judg 12:9,14

8:7 *I will thresh your flesh with the thorns of the wilderness* Gideon's answer to Ephraim was gentle. His answer to Succoth and Penuel was fierce. Something is changing in him.
8:10 *those who had fallen were a hundred and twenty thousand men* Coming around by the desert road, Gideon struck the remaining fifteen thousand when they thought themselves safe. Three hundred tired men chased a much larger army far into the desert and won.
8:14 *he wrote down for him the officials of Succoth and its elders, seventy-seven men* Writing was known well enough that a young man could do it.
8:16 *with them he taught the men of Succoth* Succoth and Penuel had refused to help God's army in the middle of a war, which was treason in that day, and some teachers see this as just punishment. But the text never says the LORD told Gideon to do it. In chapter 7 everything was "for the LORD." Here the LORD is not mentioned at all. Gideon acts on his own, and his punishment of his own people goes very far. The frightened man has become a hard one.
8:19 *They were my brothers, the sons of my mother* This had become personal. Gideon told his boy to kill the kings, a way of shaming them, but the boy was afraid.
8:21 *Gideon arose and killed Zebah and Zalmunna* The kings deserved to die for their crimes, but the battle for Israel had turned into Gideon's blood feud. Even when God gives us victory, we must watch our hearts so we do not start fighting for ourselves. The crescent ornaments were royal decorations of the desert kings.
8:22 *for you have saved us from the hand of Midian* They wanted a king and a dynasty, and they gave the credit to the wrong one. God had cut the army to three hundred to keep this very thing from happening (7:2).
8:23 *the LORD shall rule over you* The right answer. The LORD was Israel's King. When Israel later asked Samuel for a king, God said, "they have rejected Me from reigning over them" (1 Sam 8:7). But the rest of the chapter shows Gideon lived more like a king than he admitted.
8:24 *because they were Ishmaelites* A broad name for the desert traders. Right after refusing the crown, Gideon asked for gold, about forty-two pounds of it, besides royal purple robes.
8:27 *Gideon made it into an ephod* An ephod was a vest worn by the high priest and linked with asking God for guidance (Exod 28:6-30). Gideon may have meant to honor God, but God had placed the priesthood at Shiloh, not Ophrah. The man who tore down Baal's altar set up a new object of false worship, as Aaron did with gold at Sinai (Exod 32:4). Good intentions do not make worship right.
8:28 *the land was at rest forty years in the days of Gideon* Still, God's mercy shows.

came out of his thigh, for he had many wives. **31** And his concubine who ***was*** in Shechem (Shekhem), she also bore him a son, and he set his name Abimelech (Avimelekh). **32** And Gideon the son of Joash died in a good old age, and he was buried in the tomb of Joash his father, in Ophrah of the Abiezrites. **33** And it was, as soon as Gideon had died, and the sons of Israel turned back, and they prostituted themselves after the Baals, and they set Baal-berith (Ba'al-Berit) for themselves as god. **34** And the sons of Israel did not remember the LORD their God, who had rescued them from the hand of all their enemies all around. **35** And they did not do steadfast love with the house of Jerubbaal, Gideon, according to all the good which he had done with Israel.

JUDGES 9

Abimelech Makes Himself King

1 And Abimelech (Avimelekh) the son of Jerubbaal
(Yeruba'al) went to Shechem (Shekhem), to the brothers of his mother, and he spoke to them and to all the clan of the house of the father of his mother, saying, **2** "Speak, please, in the ears of all the lords of Shechem: 'What ***is*** good for you, that seventy men, all the sons of Jerubbaal, rule over you, or that one man rule over you?' And you shall remember that I ***am*** your bone and your flesh." **3** And the brothers of his mother spoke concerning him in the ears of all the lords of Shechem all these words, and their heart turned aside after Abimelech, for they said, "He ***is*** our brother." **4** And they gave him seventy ***pieces*** of silver from the house of
Baal-berith (Ba'al-Berit), and with them Abimelech hired empty and reckless men, and they went after him. **5** And he went to the house of his father to Ophrah (Ofra), and he killed his brothers, the sons of Jerubbaal, seventy men, on one stone. And Jotham (Yotam) the youngest son of Jerubbaal was left, for he hid himself. **6** And all the lords of Shechem and all Beth-millo (Bet-Millo) gathered together, and they went and caused Abimelech to reign as king, by the terebinth of the pillar which ***was*** in Shechem.

Jotham's Parable

7 And they told Jotham, and he went and stood on the top of the mountain of Gerizim, and he lifted up his voice and called out, and he said to them, "Listen to me, lords of Shechem, so God may listen to you. **8** The trees went, going, to anoint a king over them. And they said to the olive tree, 'Reign over us!' **9** And the olive tree said to them, 'Shall I give up my fatness, by which they honor gods and men through me, and go to sway over the trees?' **10** And the trees said to the fig tree, 'You come, reign over us!' **11** And the fig tree said to them, 'Shall I give up my sweetness and my good fruit, and go to sway over the trees?' **12** And the trees said to the vine, 'You come, reign over us!' **13** And the vine said to them, 'Shall I give up my new wine, which makes gods and men glad, and go to sway over the trees?' **14** And all the trees said to the bramble, 'You come, reign over us!' **15** And the bramble said to the trees, 'If in truth you are anointing me as king over you, come, take refuge in my shade; and if not, let fire go out from the bramble and consume the cedars of Lebanon (Levanon).' **16** And now, if in truth and in integrity you have acted, and caused Abimelech to reign, and if you have done

8:31 Judg 9:1-5; Gen 16:15; Gen 22:24
8:32 Gen 25:8; Gen 15:15; Job 5:26
8:33 Judg 9:4,46; Judg 2:17; Judg 8:27
8:34 Ps 78:11,42; Ps 106:18,21; Eccl 12:1
8:35 Judg 9:5,16-19; Eccl 9:14,15
9:1 Judg 8:31; Gen 33:18; Gen 34:2
9:2 Judg 8:30; Gen 29:14; 2 Sam 19:13
9:3 Gen 29:15; Ps 10:3; Prov 1:11-14
9:4 Acts 17:5; Judg 8:33; Judg 11:3
9:5 2 Kgs 11:1,2; Judg 6:24; 2 Kgs 10:17
9:6 John 4:20; 2 Sam 5:9; 2 Kgs 12:20
9:7 James 2:5; Deut 11:29; Deut 27:12
9:8 2 Kgs 14:9; Judg 8:22,23; Ezek 17:3-10
9:9 Exod 29:2,7; Exod 35:14; Lev 2:1
9:11 Luke 13:6,7
9:13 Ps 104:15; Num 15:5,7,10; Prov 31:6
9:14 2 Kgs 14:9
9:15 Isa 30:2; Hos 14:7; Judg 9:20,49
9:16 Judg 8:35

8:31 *he set his name Abimelech* A concubine was a secondary wife of lower rank. Abimelech means my father is king. Gideon said he would not be king, but he named his son as if he were. The Law warned a king not to multiply wives or gold (Deut 17:17). Gideon did both.
8:32 *Gideon the son of Joash died in a good old age* God was kind to him to the end, but he left a household and a nation set up for trouble.
8:33 *they set Baal-berith for themselves as god* Baal-berith means lord of the covenant. They made a covenant with Baal in place of the covenant with the LORD.
8:35 *they did not do steadfast love with the house of Jerubbaal* Forgetting God leads to forgetting what we owe people too. This sets the stage for chapter 9. Hebrews 11:32 names Gideon among the people of faith, but his later years warn us. Victory can make us proud. The real test of faith is not only how we start, but how we finish.
9:1 *Abimelech the son of Jerubbaal went to Shechem* Shechem was an old city of the hill country where Abraham built an altar (Gen 12:6-7) and Joshua renewed the covenant (Josh 24). Now it would crown a murderer.
9:2 *that seventy men, all the sons of Jerubbaal, rule over you, or that one man rule over you?* Gideon's sons were not ruling anyone. Gideon had refused that (8:23). Abimelech invented a threat to make himself the answer, then played on family loyalty.
9:3 *He is our brother* They chose a leader because he was their own, not because he was good or because God had chosen him.
9:4 *empty and reckless men* Worthless men with nothing to lose, hired with silver from the temple of Baal-berith, the false god Israel turned to after Gideon died (8:33).
9:5 *he killed his brothers, the sons of Jerubbaal, seventy men, on one stone* Perhaps one by one on a single rock, like an execution. Seventy pieces of silver, seventy brothers: one piece of silver for each life. This is one of the hard passages of Judges. Scripture does not soften it or approve it. It tells us plainly so we will see later that God did not forget.
9:6 *by the terebinth of the pillar which was in Shechem* This may be the very tree and stone Joshua set up as a witness to the covenant (Josh 24:26). The place where Israel promised to serve the LORD became the place where they crowned a murderer. Beth-millo was probably the fortress of Shechem.
9:7 *he went and stood on the top of the mountain of Gerizim* Gerizim rises right above Shechem. It was the mountain of blessing (Deut 27:12; Josh 8:33). If you want God to hear you, Jotham said, you had better hear this.
9:8 *The trees went, going, to anoint a king over them* A parable is a short story with a point, and this one is a fable where trees speak. To anoint was to pour oil on someone's head to set him apart for an office.
9:9 *go to sway over the trees* The olive, fig and vine were all busy bearing fruit and blessing people. They had no wish to give that up to wave over the other trees. Gideon had refused to rule. The good and fruitful are often not the ones who grab for power.
9:15 *come, take refuge in my shade* The bramble is a low, thorny bush good for nothing but burning, and it has no shade worth the name. It is a bitter joke. Dry brambles catch fire easily, and a brush fire can burn even the cedars. Abimelech was the bramble, offering protection he could not keep and a threat he would carry out. People still follow such men because they are "our brother."

good with Jerubbaal and with his house, and if you have done to him according to the dealing of his hands, **17** in that my father fought for you, and threw his life out in front ***of him***, and delivered you from the hand of Midian (Midyan), **18** and you have risen up against the house of my father this day, and have killed his sons, seventy men, on one stone, and have caused Abimelech, the son of his female slave, to reign over the lords of Shechem, because he ***is*** your brother; **19** and if in truth and in integrity you have acted with Jerubbaal and with his house this day, rejoice in Abimelech, and let him also rejoice in you. **20** And if not, let fire go out from Abimelech and consume the lords of Shechem and
Beth-millo; and let fire go out from the lords of Shechem and from Beth-millo and consume Abimelech." **21** And Jotham fled and ran away, and he went to Beer (Be'er), and he dwelt there, away from the face of Abimelech his brother.

Shechem Turns Against Abimelech

22 And Abimelech was prince over Israel (Yisra'el) three years. **23** And God sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the lords of Shechem, and the lords of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech, **24** for the violence ***done to*** the seventy sons of Jerubbaal to come, and to set their blood on Abimelech their brother, who killed them, and on the lords of Shechem, who strengthened his hands to kill his brothers. **25** And the lords of Shechem set ambushers for him on the tops of the mountains, and they robbed everyone who passed by them on the road. And it was told to Abimelech. **26** And Gaal the son of Ebed (Eved) came, and his brothers, and they passed into Shechem; and the lords of Shechem trusted in him. **27** And they went out into the field and gathered the grapes of their vineyards and trod ***them***, and they made praises, and they went into the house of their god, and they ate and drank, and they cursed Abimelech. **28** And Gaal the son of Ebed said, "Who ***is*** Abimelech, and who ***is*** Shechem, that we should serve him? ***Is he*** not the son of Jerubbaal, and Zebul (Zevul) his officer? Serve the men of Hamor (Chamor) the father of Shechem! And why should we serve him, we? **29** And if only this people were in my hand! Then I would remove Abimelech." And he said to Abimelech, "Increase your army and come out!" **30** And Zebul the official of the city heard the words of Gaal the son of Ebed, and his anger burned. **31** And he sent messengers to Abimelech deceitfully, saying, "Look, Gaal the son of Ebed and his brothers are coming to Shechem, and look, they are shutting up the city against you. **32** And now, rise up by night, you and the people who ***are*** with you, and lie in wait in the field. **33** And it shall be in the morning, as the sun rises, you shall rise early and rush upon the city; and look, he and the people who ***are*** with him ***will be*** going out against you, and you shall do to him as your hand finds." **34** And Abimelech rose up, and all the people who ***were*** with him, by night, and they lay in wait against Shechem ***in*** four companies. **35** And Gaal the son of Ebed went out and stood at the entrance of the gate of the city; and Abimelech rose up, and the people who ***were*** with him, from the ambush. **36** And Gaal saw the people, and he said to Zebul, "Look, people are coming down from the tops of the mountains!" And Zebul said to him, "The shadow of the mountains you are seeing as men." **37** And Gaal spoke again and said, "Look, people are coming down from the center of the land, and one company is coming from the direction of the terebinth of soothsayers." **38** And Zebul said to him, "Where then ***is*** your mouth, that you said, 'Who ***is*** Abimelech, that we should serve him?' ***Is*** not this the people that you rejected? Go out, please, now, and fight against it." **39** And Gaal went out before the lords of Shechem and fought against Abimelech. **40** And Abimelech pursued him, and he fled from before him; and many fell slain, up to the entrance of the gate. **41** And Abimelech dwelt at Arumah (Aruma); and Zebul drove out Gaal and his brothers from dwelling in Shechem. **42** And it was on the next day, and the people went out into the field; and they told Abimelech. **43** And he took the people and divided them into three companies, and he lay in wait in the field. And he looked, and look, the people were going out from the city; and he rose up against them and struck them down. **44** And Abimelech and the companies that ***were*** with him rushed ***forward*** and stood at the entrance of the gate of the city, and the two companies rushed upon all who ***were*** in the field and struck them down.

9:17 Judg 7:1-25; Judg 8:4-10; Esth 4:16
9:18 Judg 9:5,6; Judg 8:35; Ps 109:4
9:19 Isa 8:6; Phil 3:3; James 4:16
9:20 Judg 9:15,23,56,57; Judg 7:22; 2 Chr 20:22,23
9:21 Num 21:16; Josh 19:8; 2 Sam 20:14
9:23 Isa 33:1; Isa 19:2,14; Judg 9:15,20
9:24 Matt 23:35; 1 Kgs 2:32; Esth 9:25
9:25 Josh 8:4,12,13; Prov 1:11,12
9:26 Gen 13:8; Gen 19:7
9:27 Judg 9:4; Isa 16:9,10; Isa 24:7-9
9:28 Gen 34:2,6; 1 Sam 25:10; 1 Kgs 12:16
9:29 2 Sam 15:4; 1 Kgs 20:11; Ps 10:3
9:32 Job 24:14-17; Ps 36:4; Prov 1:11-16
9:33 1 Sam 10:7; Eccl 9:10; Lev 25:26
9:36 Ezek 7:7; Mark 8:24
9:37 Deut 18:14
9:38 Judg 9:28,29; 2 Sam 2:26,27; 2 Kgs 14:8-14
9:40 1 Kgs 20:18-21,30
9:41 Judg 9:28,30
9:44 Judg 9:15,20; Gal 5:15

9:20 *let fire go out from Abimelech and consume the lords of Shechem* Jotham's warning was a curse and a prophecy. People who join together in evil end up destroying each other. The rest of the chapter shows it coming true word for word.
9:22 *Abimelech was prince over Israel three years* Not the usual word for king. He ruled Shechem and the area around it, and only for three years. God never raised him up. He raised himself up.
9:23 *God sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the lords of Shechem* God is never the author of sin (James 1:13), but He rules over all things, even evil spirits and evil men, and in judgment He sometimes lets evil turn on itself. Teachers differ whether this was an evil spirit being God allowed (compare 1 Sam 16:14; 1 Kgs 22:19-23) or a spirit of distrust in their hearts. The purpose is plain in the next verse.
9:24 *for the violence done to the seventy sons of Jerubbaal* God may seem slow, but He had not forgotten the seventy. Three years later He began to repay.
9:28 *Serve the men of Hamor the father of Shechem!* Hamor ruled Shechem in Jacob's day (Gen 34). Gaal, likely drunk at a pagan harvest feast, stirred up the old Canaanite pride of the city. The men who crowned Abimelech as "our brother" turned to another who claimed to be more truly one of them. Loyalty built on pride does not last.
9:31 *he sent messengers to Abimelech deceitfully* Zebul, Abimelech's officer, was playing a double game, living in the city while working for Abimelech.
9:36 *The shadow of the mountains you are seeing as men* Zebul was stalling while Abimelech's men drew closer. The terebinth of soothsayers (9:37) was a tree where fortune-tellers practiced.
9:38 *Where then is your mouth* You boasted. Now go out and fight. Gaal fought and lost, and the boaster was driven out.

45 And Abimelech fought against the city all that day, and he captured the city, and the people who ***were*** in it he killed; and he tore down the city and sowed it ***with*** salt.

The Fall of Abimelech

46 And all the lords of the tower of Shechem heard, and they went into the stronghold of the house of El-berith (El-Berit). **47** And it was told to Abimelech that all the lords of the tower of Shechem had gathered themselves together. **48** And Abimelech went up the mountain of Zalmon (Tsalmon), he and all the people who ***were*** with him; and Abimelech took the axes in his hand, and he cut off a branch of the trees, and lifted it up and put ***it*** on his shoulder; and he said to the people who ***were*** with him, "What you have seen I have done, hurry, do like me." **49** And all the people also cut off each one his branch, and they went after Abimelech, and they put ***them*** against the stronghold, and they set the stronghold on fire over them with fire; and all the men of the tower of Shechem also died, about a thousand, man and woman. **50** And Abimelech went to Thebez (Tevets), and he encamped against Thebez and captured it. **51** And a tower of strength was in the midst of the city, and all the men and the women, and all the lords of the city, fled there; and they shut ***the door*** behind them and went up on the roof of the tower. **52** And Abimelech came to the tower and fought against it, and he drew near to the entrance of the tower to burn it with fire. **53** And a certain woman threw an upper millstone on the head of Abimelech and crushed his skull. **54** And he called quickly to the young man, the bearer of his weapons, and said to him, "Draw your sword and put me to death, lest they say of me, 'A woman killed him.'" And his young man pierced him through, and he died. **55** And the men of Israel saw that Abimelech was dead, and they went each one to his place. **56** And God returned the evil of Abimelech which he had done to his father by killing his seventy brothers; **57** and all the evil of the men of Shechem God returned on their head; and the curse of Jotham the son of Jerubbaal came to them.

JUDGES 10

Tola and Jair

1 And after Abimelech (Avimelekh) there arose, to save Israel (Yisra'el), Tola the son of Puah (Pu'a), the son of Dodo, a man of Issachar (Yisashkhar); and he was dwelling in Shamir in the hill country of Ephraim (Efrayim). **2** And he judged Israel twenty-three years; and he died and was buried in Shamir. **3** And after him arose Jair (Ya'ir) the Gileadite, and he judged Israel twenty-two years. **4** And he had thirty sons who rode on thirty donkeys, and they had thirty cities; they call them Havvoth-jair (Chavvot-Ya'ir) to this day, which ***are*** in the land of Gilead (Gilad). **5** And Jair died and was buried in Kamon (Qamon).

Israel Repents

6 And the sons of Israel again did the evil in the eyes of the LORD, and they served the Baals and the Ashtaroth, and the gods of Syria (Aram), and the gods of Sidon (Tsidon), and the gods of Moab (Mo'av), and the gods of the sons of Ammon (Amon), and the gods of the Philistines; and they forsook the LORD and did not serve Him. **7** And the anger of the LORD burned against Israel, and He sold them into the hand of the Philistines and into the hand of the sons of Ammon. **8** And they shattered and crushed the sons of Israel in that year, eighteen years, all the sons of Israel who ***were*** beyond the Jordan (Yarden) in the land of the Amorites, which ***is*** in Gilead. **9** And the sons of Ammon crossed over the Jordan to

9:45 2 Kgs 3:25; Deut 29:23; 1 Kgs 12:25
9:46 Judg 8:33; Judg 9:4,27; 1 Kgs 8:26
9:48 Ps 68:14; Judg 7:17,18; Prov 1:11,12
9:49 Judg 9:15,20; Gal 5:15; James 3:16
9:52 Judg 9:48,49; 2 Kgs 14:10; 2 Kgs 15:16
9:53 2 Sam 11:21; Judg 9:15,20; 2 Sam 20:21
9:54 1 Sam 31:4,5
9:55 2 Sam 18:16; 2 Sam 20:21,22; 1 Kgs 22:35,36
9:56 Ps 94:23; Judg 9:24; Prov 5:22
9:57 Judg 9:20,45; Josh 6:26; 1 Kgs 16:34
10:1 Judg 2:16; Judg 3:9; Josh 15:48
10:3 Gen 31:48; Num 32:29
10:4 Num 32:41; Judg 5:10; Judg 12:14
10:6 Acts 21:3; 1 Kgs 11:5,7,33; 2 Kgs 23:13
10:7 Judg 2:14; Deut 29:20-28; Deut 31:16-18
10:8 Judg 10:5; Isa 30:13; 1 Thess 5:3
10:9 Judg 3:12,13; Judg 6:3-5; 2 Chr 14:9

9:45 *he tore down the city and sowed it with salt* Salt makes ground barren, a sign the city was cursed and should never be rebuilt. The first half of Jotham's curse came true: fire went out from Abimelech and consumed Shechem.
9:46 *the stronghold of the house of El-berith* Another name for the same false covenant god. They looked to Baal to protect them. He did not.
9:49 *they set the stronghold on fire over them with fire* About a thousand men and women died. The bramble kept its word. Fire went out from it and burned the cedars who trusted in its shade.
9:53 *a certain woman threw an upper millstone on the head of Abimelech* The top stone of a hand mill, used daily to grind grain, about the size of a small wheel. An unnamed woman with a kitchen tool ended the life of the man who killed seventy brothers on one stone. He died by a stone.
9:54 *lest they say of me, 'A woman killed him.'* His last concern was his pride. Israel remembered it anyway. Generations later Joab spoke of the woman at Thebez who threw a millstone on Abimelech (2 Sam 11:21). He could not escape the shame he feared.
9:56 *God returned the evil of Abimelech* For three years it looked as if he got away with murder. He did not. God is patient, but not blind. "Whatever a man sows, this he will also reap" (Gal 6:7). That warns anyone tempted to grab power or go along with evil, and comforts anyone who has been wronged. The One who judges sin also sent His Son to bear it for all who turn to Him (Rom 5:8-9).
10:1 *there arose, to save Israel, Tola the son of Puah* Abimelech raised himself up. Tola arose to save Israel. Judges who get only a few verses are often called the minor judges, not because they mattered less, but because the book says less about them. After Abimelech's chaos, twenty-three years of quiet, faithful leadership was a gift. Not every servant of God is called to be famous. Many are called to be faithful.
10:4 *he had thirty sons who rode on thirty donkeys* Riding a donkey was a mark of rank in that day. Havvoth-jair means the villages of Jair (compare Num 32:41). Jair is remembered for a large, prosperous family. It is a little sad that nothing is said about his faith.
10:6 *the gods of Syria, and the gods of Sidon, and the gods of Moab* Seven groups of gods. Israel worshiped everything except the one true God. Idolatry starts with one false god and ends with many, because no false god can satisfy. When people leave the true God, they do not believe in nothing. They believe in anything.
10:7 *He sold them into the hand of the Philistines and into the hand of the sons of Ammon* Two oppressions at once, from west and east. Jephthah fights the Ammonites in the east (Judg 11) and Samson the Philistines in the west (Judg 13-16). Many teachers believe these happened at about the same time, which helps explain how the years in Judges fit into the time available. Others place them one after the other.
10:8 *they shattered and crushed the sons of Israel in that year, eighteen years* The Ammonites lived east of the Jordan beyond Gilead. Then they crossed the river and attacked Judah, Benjamin and Ephraim too.

fight also against Judah (Yehuda) and against Benjamin (Binyamin) and against the house of Ephraim; and Israel was in great distress. **10** And the sons of Israel cried out to the LORD, saying, "We have sinned against You, for we have forsaken our God and have served the Baals." **11** And the LORD said to the sons of Israel, "***Did I*** not ***save you*** from Egypt (Mitsrayim), and from the Amorites, and from the sons of Ammon, and from the Philistines? **12** And the Sidonians and Amalek (Amaleq) and Maon oppressed you, and you cried out to Me, and I saved you from their hand. **13** And you have forsaken Me and served other gods; therefore I will not again save you. **14** Go and cry out to the gods whom you have chosen; let them save you in the time of your distress." **15** And the sons of Israel said to the LORD, "We have sinned. You do to us according to all that ***is*** good in Your eyes; only deliver us, please, this day." **16** And they removed the foreign gods from their midst and served the LORD; and His soul became impatient over the trouble of Israel. **17** And the sons of Ammon were called together, and they encamped in Gilead; and the sons of Israel gathered together, and they encamped at Mizpah (Mitspa). **18** And the people, the leaders of Gilead, said each man to his neighbor, "Who ***is*** the man who will begin to fight against the sons of Ammon? He shall be head over all the inhabitants of Gilead."

JUDGES 11

Jephthah the Outcast

1 And Jephthah (Yiftach) the Gileadite was a mighty man of valor, and he ***was*** the son of a woman, a prostitute; and Gilead (Gilad) fathered Jephthah. **2** And the wife of Gilead bore him sons; and the sons of the wife grew up, and they drove out Jephthah and said to him, "You shall not inherit in the house of our father, for you ***are*** the son of another woman." **3** And Jephthah fled from before his brothers and dwelt in the land of Tob (Tov); and empty men gathered themselves to Jephthah, and they went out with him. **4** And it was after a time, and the sons of Ammon (Amon) fought with Israel (Yisra'el). **5** And it was, when the sons of Ammon fought with Israel, the elders of Gilead went to fetch Jephthah from the land of Tob. **6** And they said to Jephthah, "Come, and you shall be commander for us, and let us fight against the sons of Ammon." **7** And Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, "Did you not hate me and drive me out from the house of my father? And why have you come to me now, when distress ***is*** yours?" **8** And the elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, "Therefore we have now returned to you, and you shall go with us and fight against the sons of Ammon, and you shall be head for us, for all the inhabitants of Gilead." **9** And Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, "If you are bringing me back to fight against the sons of Ammon, and the LORD gives them before me, I, I will be head for you." **10** And the elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, "The LORD shall be the One who hears between us, if we do not do so according to your word." **11** And Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead, and the people set him over them as head and as commander; and Jephthah spoke all his words before the LORD at Mizpah (Mitspa).

Jephthah's Message to Ammon

12 And Jephthah sent messengers to the king of the sons of Ammon, saying, "What ***is there*** to me and to you, that you have come to me to fight against my land?" **13** And the king of the sons of Ammon said to the messengers of Jephthah, "Because Israel took my land when it came up from Egypt (Mitsrayim), from the Arnon and to the Jabbok (Yaboq) and to the Jordan (Yarden); and now, restore them in peace."

10:10 1 Sam 12:10; Judg 3:9; Ps 106:43,44
10:11 Exod 14:30; Num 21:21-25,35; Judg 3:31
10:12 Judg 6:3; Judg 5:19-31; 2 Chr 26:6,7
10:13 Jer 2:13; Judg 2:12; Deut 32:15
10:14 Heb 8:9; Deut 32:26-28,37,38; 1 Kgs 18:27,28
10:15 1 Sam 3:18; 2 Sam 15:26; 2 Sam 12:13
10:16 Isa 63:9; Ps 106:44,45; 2 Chr 7:14
10:17 Judg 11:11,29; Gen 31:49
10:18 Judg 11:11; Judg 1:1; Judg 11:5-8
11:1 Heb 11:32; Judg 6:12; 2 Kgs 5:1
11:2 Gal 4:30; Heb 11:32; Gen 12:10
11:3 Acts 17:5; Heb 11:32; Judg 9:4
11:4 Heb 11:32
11:5 Heb 11:32; Judg 10:9,17,18; 1 Sam 10:27
11:6 Heb 11:32
11:7 Heb 11:32; Gen 26:27; Gen 37:27
11:8 Heb 11:32; Judg 10:18; Exod 8:8,28
11:9 Heb 11:32; Num 32:20-29
11:10 Heb 11:32; Jer 42:5; Gen 31:50
11:11 Heb 11:32; Judg 10:17; Judg 20:1
11:12 Matt 8:29; Heb 11:32; Deut 2:26
11:13 Gen 32:22; Num 21:24-26; Prov 19:5,9

10:10 *We have sinned against You* For the first time in the book Israel does more than cry out. They confess and name their sin.
10:13 *therefore I will not again save you* Was God finished with them? I don't believe so, because He did save them. He wanted them to see that their cry could not be one more turn of the cycle. He was testing whether their confession was real.
10:14 *Go and cry out to the gods whom you have chosen* A hard truth. The gods we choose cannot save us. In the day of trouble, every idol is silent.
10:15 *You do to us according to all that is good in Your eyes; only deliver us, please, this day* Real repentance. No arguing, no excuses. They put themselves in God's hands.
10:16 *His soul became impatient over the trouble of Israel* They acted: they put away the foreign gods and served the LORD. Repentance is turning around, not only saying sorry. And look at God's heart. He could not bear to watch His people suffer any longer. He takes sin seriously, but He delights in mercy (Mic 7:18). "His compassions do not come to an end" (Lam 3:22).
10:18 *Who is the man who will begin to fight against the sons of Ammon?* The right question, but they asked each other, not God, and offered a reward. In chapter 1 Israel asked the LORD who should go first. God would still raise up a deliverer, in a surprising way, through a man everyone had rejected.
11:1 *he was the son of a woman, a prostitute* Jephthah is called "a mighty man of valor," as Gideon was (6:12). He was not to blame for how he was born, but his brothers drove him out so he would not share the inheritance. He carried the wound of rejection, and it shows in what he says later. God does not reject people because of their family history. He often chooses the very ones others push away.
11:3 *empty men gathered themselves to Jephthah* Outcasts and drifters with nothing, and Jephthah became their leader in Tob, north and east of Gilead. It is a little like David later in the cave of Adullam (1 Sam 22:2).
11:7 *why have you come to me now, when distress is yours?* Some of these elders may have pushed him out, or stood by while his brothers did. Now they needed him, and they raised the offer to "head" over all Gilead.
11:9 *and the LORD gives them before me* Jephthah understood that victory would come from God.
11:11 *Jephthah spoke all his words before the LORD at Mizpah* He took his agreement to God. For a man raised on the edges, he knew the LORD's name and wanted Him as witness.
11:13 *Because Israel took my land when it came up from Egypt* A land claim three hundred years old, from the Arnon in the south to the Jabbok in the north. Before going to war, Jephthah tried words.

14 And Jephthah again sent messengers to the king of the sons of Ammon, **15** and he said to him, "Thus says Jephthah: 'Israel did not take the land of Moab (Mo'av) or the land of the sons of Ammon. **16** For when they came up from Egypt, Israel went in the wilderness to the Red Sea, and came to Kadesh (Qadesh). **17** And Israel sent messengers to the king of Edom, saying, "Let me pass, please, through your land." And the king of Edom did not listen. And also to the king of Moab it sent, and he was not willing. And Israel remained at Kadesh. **18** And it went in the wilderness and went around the land of Edom and the land of Moab, and came ***on*** the east ***side*** of the land of Moab; and they encamped beyond the Arnon, and they did not come within the border of Moab, for the Arnon ***was*** the border of Moab. **19** And Israel sent messengers to Sihon (Sichon) king of the Amorites, the king of Heshbon (Cheshbon), and Israel said to him, "Let us pass, please, through your land to my place." **20** And Sihon did not trust Israel to pass through his border; and Sihon gathered all his people, and they encamped at Jahaz (Yahats), and he fought with Israel. **21** And the LORD, the God of Israel, gave Sihon and all his people into the hand of Israel, and they struck them; and Israel possessed all the land of the Amorites, the inhabitants of that land. **22** And they possessed all the border of the Amorites, from the Arnon and to the Jabbok, and from the wilderness and to the Jordan. **23** And now the LORD, the God of Israel, has dispossessed the Amorites from before His people Israel; and will you possess it? **24** Will you not possess what Chemosh your god causes you to possess? And all that the LORD our God has dispossessed from before us, it we will possess. **25** And now, are you indeed better than Balak (Balaq) the son of Zippor (Tsipor), king of Moab? Did he ever strive with Israel, or did he ever fight against them? **26** While Israel dwelt in Heshbon and its daughter ***towns***, and in Aroer (Aro'er) and its daughter ***towns***, and in all the cities that ***are*** on the sides of the Arnon, three hundred years, why did you not deliver ***them*** at that time? **27** And I have not sinned against you, and you are doing evil with me by fighting against me. Let the LORD, the Judge, judge this day between the sons of Israel and the sons of Ammon.'" **28** And the king of the sons of Ammon did not listen to the words of Jephthah which he sent to him.

Jephthah's Vow

29 And the Spirit of the LORD was on Jephthah, and he passed through Gilead and Manasseh (Menashe), and he passed through Mizpeh (Mitspeh) of Gilead, and from Mizpeh of Gilead he passed on ***to*** the sons of Ammon. **30** And Jephthah vowed a vow to the LORD and said, "If You will indeed give the sons of Ammon into my hand, **31** then it shall be that whatever comes out, that comes out from the doors of my house to meet me when I return in peace from the sons of Ammon, it shall be the LORD's, and I will offer it up ***as*** a burnt offering." **32** And Jephthah passed on to the sons of Ammon to fight against them, and the LORD gave them into his hand. **33** And he struck them from Aroer until you come to Minnith (Minit), twenty cities, and to Abel-keramim (Avel-Keramim), a very great striking; and the sons of Ammon were humbled before the sons of Israel. **34** And Jephthah came to Mizpah, to his house; and look, his daughter was coming out to meet him with tambourines and with dances; and she ***was*** only an only one; he had of his own no son or daughter. **35** And it was, when he saw her, he tore his clothes and said, "Alas, my daughter! You have brought me very low, and you are among those who trouble me; and I have opened my mouth to the LORD, and I cannot turn back."

11:14 Ps 120:7; Rom 12:18; Heb 12:14
11:15 Deut 2:9,19; Num 21:13-15,27-30; 2 Chr 20:10
11:16 Num 14:25; Deut 1:40; Num 20:1
11:17 Num 20:14-21; Num 20:1,16; Deut 2:4-8,29
11:18 Deut 2:1-8; Num 22:36; Num 20:22
11:19 Num 21:21-35; Deut 2:26-34; Deut 3:1-17
11:20 Num 21:23; Deut 2:32; Neh 9:22
11:22 Deut 2:36
11:24 Num 21:29; 1 Kgs 11:7; Josh 3:10
11:25 Mic 6:5; Num 22:2-21; Deut 23:3,4
11:26 Deut 2:36; Num 21:25-30; Deut 2:24
11:27 2 Tim 4:8; Gen 18:25; Gen 16:5
11:28 2 Kgs 14:11; Prov 16:18
11:29 Judg 3:10; Judg 6:34; Num 11:25
11:30 Gen 28:20; 1 Sam 1:11; Num 30:2-16
11:31 Lev 27:2,3,28,29; 1 Sam 1:11,28; 1 Sam 2:18
11:32 Judg 1:4; Judg 2:18; Judg 3:10
11:33 Ezek 27:17; Deut 2:36
11:34 Luke 7:12; Exod 15:20; Jer 31:4,13
11:35 Gen 37:29,30,34,35; Gen 42:36-38; 2 Sam 13:30,31

11:15 *Israel did not take the land of Moab or the land of the sons of Ammon* Jephthah answers with history and gets it right (Num 20-21). Israel asked Edom and Moab for passage, honored their refusal, and went around. The outcast had learned the story of what God had done, and the truth was his defense.
11:21 *the LORD, the God of Israel, gave Sihon and all his people into the hand of Israel* Sihon refused passage and attacked (Num 21:21-25). The land the king wanted had belonged to the Amorites, not Ammon, and Israel took it in a war Sihon started.
11:24 *Will you not possess what Chemosh your god causes you to possess?* Chemosh was Moab's god. Ammon's main god was Milcom (1 Kgs 11:5). Jephthah may have named Chemosh because the land had once been Moabite, or because the two peoples shared gods. He was not saying Chemosh was real. He argued from the king's own beliefs.
11:26 *three hundred years* An important clue for dating. If Jephthah lived about 1100 B.C., three hundred years earlier brings us to about 1400 B.C., which fits Israel entering the land about 1406 B.C. Scholars who hold a later exodus read the number as a round figure.
11:27 *Let the LORD, the Judge, judge this day* The only place in the book where the word judge is used of God Himself. Israel's judges come and go. The LORD is the true Judge.
11:29 *the Spirit of the LORD was on Jephthah* Notice the order. The Spirit came on him before he made his vow. God was already with him. He did not need to bargain for God's help.
11:31 *whatever comes out, that comes out from the doors of my house to meet me* A vow was a solemn promise to God, often made in need, and the Law said it must be kept (Num 30:2; Deut 23:21-23). Animals often lived in the courtyard, so he may have expected one, but "comes out from the doors of my house to meet me" sounds like a person. This was a rash vow. Perhaps a man who had to bargain for everything thought he must bargain with God too, as the pagans did. God is not like that. We do not buy His help.
11:32 *the LORD gave them into his hand* The victory did not come because of the vow. God had already decided to save His people (10:16).
11:34 *his daughter was coming out to meet him with tambourines and with dances* Women came out with music to welcome victors home (Exod 15:20; 1 Sam 18:6). She was his only child.
11:35 *I have opened my mouth to the LORD, and I cannot turn back* He blamed her, but his own mouth had done it. And the Law made a way out. A person vowed to the LORD could be redeemed with silver (Lev 27:1-8), and God never wanted a vow that required what He had forbidden. Jephthah either did not know the Law or did not seek the priests' counsel. A rash vow led to a broken heart.

36 And she said to him, "My father, you have opened your mouth to the LORD; do to me according to what has gone out from your mouth, since the LORD has done vengeance for you on your enemies, on the sons of Ammon." **37** And she said to her father, "Let this thing be done for me: let me alone two months, and let me go, and I will go down on the mountains and weep over my virginity, I and my companions." **38** And he said, "Go." And he sent her away ***for*** two months; and she went, she and her companions, and she wept over her virginity on the mountains. **39** And it was at the end of two months, and she returned to her father, and he did to her his vow which he had vowed; and she had not known a man. And it became a statute in Israel: **40** from year to year the daughters of Israel go to commemorate the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite, four days in the year.

JUDGES 12

Ephraim and the Shibboleth

1 And the men of Ephraim (Efrayim) were called together, and they crossed over to Zaphon (Tsafon), and they said to Jephthah (Yiftach), "Why did you cross over to fight against the sons of Ammon (Amon), and did not call us to go with you? Your house we will burn over you with fire." **2** And Jephthah said to them, "I was a man of great strife, I and my people, with the sons of Ammon; and I summoned you, and you did not save me from their hand. **3** And I saw that you were not a savior, and I put my life in my palm and crossed over against the sons of Ammon, and the LORD gave them into my hand. And why have you come up against me this day to fight against me?" **4** And Jephthah gathered all the men of Gilead (Gilad) and fought with Ephraim; and the men of Gilead struck Ephraim, for they had said, "You ***are*** fugitives of Ephraim, Gilead, in the midst of Ephraim, in the midst of Manasseh (Menashe)." **5** And Gilead captured the fords of the Jordan (Yarden) toward Ephraim. And it was, when the fugitives of Ephraim said, "Let me cross over," and the men of Gilead said to him, "Are you an Ephraimite?" and he said, "No," **6** then they said to him, "Say, please, 'Shibboleth.'" And he said, "Sibboleth," and he did not take care to speak ***it*** right. And they seized him and slaughtered him at the fords of the Jordan. And there fell at that time of Ephraim forty-two thousand. **7** And Jephthah judged Israel (Yisra'el) six years; and Jephthah the Gileadite died and was buried in the cities of Gilead.

Ibzan, Elon and Abdon

8 And after him Ibzan (Ivtsan) of Bethlehem (Bet-Lechem) judged Israel. **9** And he had thirty sons, and thirty daughters he sent outside, and thirty daughters he brought in for his sons from outside. And he judged Israel seven years. **10** And Ibzan died and was buried in Bethlehem. **11** And after him Elon the Zebulunite judged Israel; and he judged Israel ten years. **12** And Elon the Zebulunite died and was buried in Aijalon (Ayalon) in the land of Zebulun (Zevulun). **13** And after him Abdon (Avdon) the son of Hillel (Hilel) the

11:36 2 Sam 18:19,31; Judg 16:28-30; 2 Sam 19:30
11:37 Luke 1:25; 1 Sam 1:6
11:39 1 Sam 1:11,22,24,28; 1 Sam 2:18
11:40 Judg 5:11; 1 Kgs 9:25
12:1 Judg 8:1; 2 Sam 19:41-43; Ps 109:4
12:2 Judg 11:12-33
12:3 1 Sam 19:5; 1 Sam 28:21; Job 13:14
12:4 1 Sam 25:10; Judg 11:10; Num 32:39,40
12:5 Judg 3:28; Josh 22:11; Judg 7:24
12:6 Matt 26:73; Mark 14:70; Ps 69:2,15
12:8 Matt 2:1; Gen 15:19; 1 Sam 16:1
12:9 Judg 12:14; Judg 10:4
12:12 Josh 19:42; 1 Chr 6:69; 1 Chr 8:13

11:36 *do to me according to what has gone out from your mouth* One of the most selfless answers in Scripture. She put her father's word to God and God's victory for Israel ahead of herself.
11:37 *weep over my virginity* To die unmarried and childless, with no one to carry on your name, was a great sorrow, and with her Jephthah's line would end. That grief belongs to both readings of the story.
11:39 *he did to her his vow which he had vowed; and she had not known a man* Faithful teachers read this two ways. Some take it as a burnt offering, the plain sense of the vow, as many ancient readers did. If so, it was a terrible sin. God called child sacrifice an abomination (Deut 12:31) that never came into His mind (Jer 7:31). The text reports it without approving it. Others read lifelong service at the tabernacle as an unmarried woman. The "and" of 11:31 can mean "or," she wept over her virginity, not her death, women served at the tabernacle (Exod 38:8), and Hebrews 11:32 names Jephthah among the faithful. I believe we should hold this with humility.
11:40 *to commemorate the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite, four days in the year* Both readings agree that the vow was rash and needless and brought grief on an innocent young woman. "Better is it that you do not vow than that you vow and do not pay" (Eccl 5:5). Let your yes be yes (Matt 5:37). She gave herself up because of a promise to God. God the Father did what He never asked of Jephthah. He "did not spare His own Son" (Rom 8:32). God does not need us to buy His favor. He paid the price Himself.
12:1 *Your house we will burn over you with fire* Ephraim was one of the largest, proudest tribes, with the tabernacle at Shiloh in its borders. They made the same complaint to Gideon (8:1), but now it is a death threat against the man God had just used to save Israel. Ephraim wanted the honor of victory without the risk of battle. Pride is quick to feel left out and slow to show up when the work is hard.
12:3 *I put my life in my palm* A Hebrew way of saying he took his life in his hands. Chapter 11 does not record Jephthah's call to Ephraim, but there is no reason to doubt him, and he gave God the credit. He was right on the facts, but being right is not the same as being wise. Gideon answered the same anger gently (8:2-3). The man who tried words before war with Ammon had no patience left for his own brothers.
12:4 *You are fugitives of Ephraim, Gilead* Ephraim mocked the Gileadites as runaways with no real tribe. Gilead was the land of half of Manasseh, and Manasseh and Ephraim were the two sons of Joseph. A family insult became a family war. The people God had just rescued from Ammon spilled one another's blood over pride and name-calling.
12:6 *Say, please, 'Shibboleth.'* A Hebrew word meaning an ear of grain or a flowing stream. Ephraimites seem to have spoken with an accent that could not make the sh sound, so one sound gave them away. Forty-two thousand died at the hands of other Israelites, taken as written, though some read the Hebrew word for thousand as a clan or unit. It is easy to draw lines between believers over small things like how a person talks or where they come from. Jesus prayed that those who believe in Him would be one (John 17:21).
12:7 *Jephthah judged Israel six years* A rejected son who trusted the LORD, appealed to God as Judge, received His Spirit and a great victory, and is named among the faithful (Heb 11:32). Yet his rash words cost him his only child and his harsh words cost Israel forty-two thousand lives. God uses flawed people who trust Him, but our sins still have consequences.
12:8 *Ibzan of Bethlehem judged Israel* Most believe this was Bethlehem of Judah, though there was also a Bethlehem in Zebulun (Josh 19:15).
12:9 *thirty daughters he sent outside, and thirty daughters he brought in for his sons from outside* He married his children outside his clan, building alliances as powerful men did. It shows wealth and influence, not leading the people back to God.
12:11 *Elon the Zebulunite judged Israel* Zebulun was in Galilee, where Jesus would later grow up and preach (Matt 4:13-16). Sometimes Scripture gives only a name and a number. God knew Elon, and his name is written in God's Word.

Pirathonite judged Israel. **14** And he had forty sons and thirty sons of sons, who rode on seventy donkeys. And he judged Israel eight years. **15** And Abdon the son of Hillel the Pirathonite died and was buried at Pirathon (Piraton) in the land of Ephraim, in the hill country of the Amalekites.

JUDGES 13

The Angel Announces Samson's Birth

1 And the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) again did the evil in the eyes of the LORD, and the LORD gave them into the hand of the Philistines forty years. **2** And there was a certain man from Zorah (Tsor'ah), of the clan of the Danites, and his name ***was*** Manoah (Manoach); and his wife ***was*** barren, and she had not borne. **3** And the angel of the LORD appeared to the woman and said to her, "Look, please, you ***are*** barren and have not borne; and you shall conceive and bear a son. **4** And now, take care, please, and do not drink wine and strong drink, and do not eat any unclean ***thing***. **5** For look, you ***are*** pregnant and ***will be*** bearing a son, and a razor shall not go up on his head, for the boy shall be a Nazirite of God from the womb; and he shall begin to save Israel from the hand of the Philistines." **6** And the woman came and said to her husband, saying, "A man of God came to me, and his appearance ***was*** like the appearance of the angel of God, very awesome; and I did not ask him where he ***was*** from, and his name he did not tell me. **7** And he said to me, 'Look, you ***are*** pregnant and ***will be*** bearing a son; and now, do not drink wine and strong drink, and do not eat any uncleanness, for the boy shall be a Nazirite of God from the womb until the day of his death.'"

8 And Manoah prayed to the LORD and said, "Please, Lord, let the man of God whom You sent come again, please, to us, and let him teach us what we shall do for the boy who is to be born." **9** And God listened to the voice of Manoah; and the angel of God came again to the woman, and she ***was*** sitting in the field, and Manoah her husband ***was*** not with her. **10** And the woman hurried and ran and told her husband, and she said to him, "Look, the man who came to me that day has appeared to me." **11** And Manoah arose and went after his wife, and he came to the man and said to him, "Are you the man who spoke to the woman?" And he said, "I ***am***." **12** And Manoah said, "Now let your words come ***to pass***. What shall be the manner of the boy, and his work?" **13** And the angel of the LORD said to Manoah, "Of all that I said to the woman let her take care. **14** Of anything that comes out from the vine of wine she shall not eat, and wine and strong drink let her not drink, and any uncleanness let her not eat; all that I commanded her she shall keep."

The Name That Is Wonderful

15 And Manoah said to the angel of the LORD, "Let us detain you, please, and let us prepare before you a kid of the goats." **16** And the angel of the LORD said to Manoah, "If you detain me, I will not eat of your food; and if you make a burnt offering, to the LORD you shall offer it up." For Manoah did not know that he ***was*** the angel of the LORD. **17** And Manoah said to the angel of the LORD, "What ***is*** your name, that when your word comes ***to pass***, we may honor you?" **18** And the angel of the LORD said to him, "Why ***is*** this ***that*** you ask for

12:14 Judg 5:10; Judg 10:4
12:15 Judg 5:14; 2 Sam 23:30; Judg 3:13,27
13:1 Judg 2:11; 1 Sam 12:9; Judg 3:7
13:2 Josh 19:41; Josh 15:33; Luke 1:7
13:3 Luke 1:13; Luke 1:11; Matt 1:20
13:4 Luke 1:15; Judg 13:14; Num 6:2,3
13:5 1 Sam 1:11; 1 Sam 7:13; 2 Sam 8:1
13:6 Matt 28:3; Judg 13:17,18; Deut 33:1
13:8 Job 34:32; Prov 3:5,6; Acts 9:6
13:9 Ps 65:2; Matt 7:7-11
13:10 John 1:41,42; John 4:28,29
13:12 Gen 18:19; Prov 4:4; Prov 22:6
13:14 Deut 12:32; Matt 28:20; John 2:5
13:15 Judg 6:18,19; Gen 18:3-5
13:16 Judg 13:23; Judg 6:26
13:18 Gen 32:29; Judg 13:6

12:14 *who rode on seventy donkeys* Riding donkeys was a sign of rank (5:10). Abdon was rich and important. The hill country of the Amalekites (12:15) may mean Amalekites once lived there (Exod 17:8-16).
12:15 *Abdon the son of Hillel the Pirathonite died* These three judges cover about twenty-five years with no enemy, battle or cry to the LORD mentioned. They read more like chieftains than deliverers. The book is moving toward something worse. In the next chapter Israel does evil again, and this time no cry for help is recorded (13:1).
13:1 *the LORD gave them into the hand of the Philistines forty years* The Philistines came by sea and settled on the southern coast in five cities. They knew how to work iron and troubled Israel all the way to David. Notice what is missing. Every earlier oppression ends with Israel crying out (3:9; 6:6; 10:10). Here there is no cry. Israel had grown used to its chains (15:11). Even so, God began to work. His mercy came before they asked.
13:2 *his wife was barren, and she had not borne* Zorah was on the border with Philistine land, in the low hills west of Jerusalem. Barrenness was a deep sorrow in Israel, but in the Bible it is often where God is about to do something great: Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, Hannah (1 Sam 1), Elizabeth (Luke 1). When God wants to show a child is His gift, He sometimes starts where there is no hope.
13:3 *the angel of the LORD appeared to the woman* The same messenger who met Hagar, Moses and Gideon (6:11-24). He speaks for God and as God, and Manoah later says they have seen God (13:22). Many teachers believe this was the Son of God before His birth. Others see a created angel speaking for God.
13:5 *the boy shall be a Nazirite of God from the womb* A Nazirite was set apart to God by a special vow (Num 6:1-21): no wine or anything from the vine, no touching the dead, and uncut hair. Usually the vow was for a set time. Samson's was for life, starting before birth, so his mother kept the rules too.
13:5 *he shall begin to save Israel from the hand of the Philistines* Notice "begin." Samson would not finish the job. The Philistines were still a threat under Samuel, Saul and David. God gives some people the work of starting what others will complete.
13:7 *until the day of his death* The angel said "from the womb." She added this, perhaps telling what she understood. But her words hang over the whole story. The way Samson died would be tied to that calling.
13:8 *let him teach us what we shall do for the boy who is to be born* A good father before his son was even born. He believed his wife and did not ask for a sign. He knew raising a child set apart to God was more than he knew how to do. Every parent can pray that prayer (James 1:5).
13:14 *all that I commanded her she shall keep* The angel gave nothing new. Sometimes we pray for more direction when what we need is to obey the direction God already gave.
13:16 *if you make a burnt offering, to the LORD you shall offer it up* A burnt offering was wholly burned on the altar, a way of giving yourself completely to God. Manoah still thought he spoke with a prophet. The visitor pointed the worship away from himself to the LORD.
13:18 *Why is this that you ask for my name? And it is wonderful* The word means beyond understanding, too great to grasp. Jacob received the same kind of answer (Gen 32:29). Many Christians hear an echo of Isaiah, where the Child is called "Wonder, Counselor, Mighty God" (Isa 9:6). The Hebrew words are closely related. The New Testament does not make this link, so I hold it loosely.

my name? And it ***is*** wonderful." **19** And Manoah took the kid of the goats and the grain offering, and offered ***it*** up on the rock to the LORD; and ***He was*** doing a wonder, and Manoah and his wife were looking on. **20** And it was, when the flame went up from on the altar toward the heavens, and the angel of the LORD went up in the flame of the altar, and Manoah and his wife were looking on; and they fell on their faces to the ground. **21** And the angel of the LORD did not again appear to Manoah and to his wife. Then Manoah knew that he ***was*** the angel of the LORD. **22** And Manoah said to his wife, "We shall surely die, for we have seen God." **23** And his wife said to him, "If the LORD had desired to kill us, He would not have accepted from our hand a burnt offering and a grain offering, and He would not have shown us all these ***things***, and at this time He would not have caused us to hear ***things*** like this." **24** And the woman bore a son and called his name Samson (Shimshon); and the boy grew up, and the LORD blessed him. **25** And the Spirit of the LORD began to stir him in Mahaneh-dan (Machane-Dan), between Zorah and Eshtaol.

JUDGES 14

Samson Wants a Philistine Wife

1 And Samson (Shimshon) went down to Timnah (Timna), and he saw a woman in Timnah, of the daughters of the Philistines. **2** And he went up and told his father and his mother, and he said, "A woman I have seen in Timnah, of the daughters of the Philistines; and now, take her for me as a wife." **3** And his father and his mother said to him, "***Is there*** no woman among the daughters of your brothers and among all my people, that you are going to take a wife from the uncircumcised Philistines?" And Samson said to his father, "Take her for me, for she is right in my eyes." **4** And his father and his mother did not know that it ***was*** from the LORD, for He was seeking an occasion against the Philistines. And at that time the Philistines were ruling over Israel (Yisra'el). **5** And Samson went down, and his father and his mother, to Timnah, and they came to the vineyards of Timnah; and look, a young lion of lions ***was*** roaring to meet him. **6** And the Spirit of the LORD rushed upon him, and he tore it apart as one tears apart a kid, and ***there was*** nothing in his hand; and he did not tell his father and his mother what he had done. **7** And he went down and spoke to the woman, and she was right in the eyes of Samson. **8** And he returned after some days to take her, and he turned aside to see the carcass of the lion; and look, a swarm of bees ***was*** in the body of the lion, and honey. **9** And he scraped it out into his palms and went on, going and eating; and he came to his father and to his mother and gave to them, and they ate; and he did not tell them that from the body of the lion he had scraped out the honey.

13:19 Judg 6:19,20; 1 Kgs 18:30-38; Judg 6:21
13:20 Lev 9:24; 1 Chr 21:16,26; Matt 17:6
13:21 Judg 6:22; Hos 12:4,5
13:22 Luke 9:34; Gen 32:30; Deut 5:26
13:23 John 14:23; Ps 25:14; Eccl 4:9,10
13:24 Heb 11:32; 1 Sam 3:19; Luke 1:80
13:25 Judg 3:10; Josh 15:33; Judg 6:34

14:1 Josh 15:10; Josh 19:43; Gen 38:12,13
14:2 Gen 34:4; Gen 21:21; Gen 24:2,3
14:3 Judg 15:18; Deut 7:2,3; 1 Sam 14:6
14:4 Josh 11:20; Judg 13:1; Judg 15:11
14:6 Judg 3:10; Judg 13:25; 1 Sam 11:6
14:8 Gen 29:21; Matt 1:20
14:9 1 Sam 14:25-30; Prov 25:15

13:19 *He was doing a wonder* A grain offering was flour or grain given to God. The word wonder ties back to the name. The One whose name is wonderful did something wonderful.
13:20 *the angel of the LORD went up in the flame of the altar* Only then did Manoah understand. The angel did not appear again. He had given his message, and now it was theirs to obey.
13:22 *We shall surely die, for we have seen God* No sinful person could see God's face and live (Exod 33:20). Gideon had the same fear (6:22-23).
13:23 *If the LORD had desired to kill us, He would not have accepted from our hand a burnt offering* Clear thinking and faith. God does not make promises to people He is about to destroy. When we fear God is against us, we can look at what He has already done. If He gave His Son for us, will He not give us all things (Rom 8:32)? His acceptance of the sacrifice is our assurance, and for us that sacrifice is Christ.
13:24 *called his name Samson* Probably related to the Hebrew word for the sun, perhaps sunny or little sun. Beth-shemesh, house of the sun, was nearby. Everything about his start was good: a miracle birth, praying parents, a calling and the LORD's blessing.
13:25 *the Spirit of the LORD began to stir him in Mahaneh-dan* Mahaneh-dan means the camp of Dan. "Stir" suggests pushing, like a bell struck to ring. A good beginning does not guarantee a faithful life. Samson had every advantage. His story asks what he would do with them, and that is the question for us too.
14:1 *Samson went down to Timnah* Timnah lay a few miles from Zorah in the valley toward the Philistine plain. The Bible often uses "went down" for more than a change of height. Samson's whole life is a series of goings down.
14:2 *take her for me as a wife* Parents arranged marriages then, but Samson did not ask. He told them, and the only reason he gave was that he had seen her.
14:3 *the uncircumcised Philistines* Uncircumcised meant outside God's covenant. The Law warned against marrying the peoples of the land, who would turn hearts to other gods (Deut 7:3-4). The Philistines were not on that list, but the danger was the same.
14:3 *Take her for me, for she is right in my eyes* Very close to the refrain that closes the book: "each man did what was right in his own eyes" (21:25). Samson was a picture in one man of what all Israel had become, set apart to God and living by his own eyes. It is no accident his story ends with those eyes taken from him (16:21).
14:4 *his father and his mother did not know that it was from the LORD* Did God approve Samson's choice? No. His motives were his own. But God is Lord even over our foolish choices. Israel had grown comfortable under Philistine rule, and God used Samson's desires to start a fight Israel would not start for itself. People plan evil, and God plans it for good (Gen 50:20). That never makes our sin good. It shows how great and patient He is.
14:5 *a young lion of lions was roaring to meet him* Samson seems to have been off the road alone, in a vineyard among the grapes a Nazirite was forbidden to eat. Scripture does not say why. It is a strange place for him to be.
14:6 *the Spirit of the LORD rushed upon him* The first time we see his strength, and the text is clear where it came from: not his muscles or his hair, but the Spirit of the LORD. He had no weapon at all. And he told no one, the first of Samson's secrets.
14:9 *he did not tell them that from the body of the lion he had scraped out the honey* Here Samson broke his vow. A Nazirite was not to go near anything dead (Num 6:6-7), and touching such a carcass made any Israelite unclean (Lev 11:27). Then he let his parents eat it unknowing. He goes where he should not, touches what he should not, and hides it. Sin rarely starts big. It starts with turning aside to look.

Samson's Riddle

10 And his father went down to the woman; and Samson made a feast there, for so the young men used to do. **11** And it was, when they saw him, they took thirty companions, and they were with him. **12** And Samson said to them, "Let me pose a riddle to you, please. If you will indeed tell it to me ***within*** the seven days of the feast, and find ***it*** out, then I will give you thirty linen garments and thirty changes of garments. **13** And if you are not able to tell ***it*** to me, then you shall give me thirty linen garments and thirty changes of garments." And they said to him, "Pose your riddle, that we may hear it." **14** And he said to them, "Out of the eater came out food, and out of the strong came out sweetness." And they were not able to tell the riddle ***in*** three days. **15** And it was on the seventh day, and they said to the wife of Samson, "Entice your husband, that he may tell us the riddle, lest we burn you and the house of your father with fire. Have you called us to impoverish us? ***Is it*** not ***so***?" **16** And the wife of Samson wept over him and said, "You only hate me, and you do not love me. The riddle you have posed to the sons of my people, and to me you have not told ***it***." And he said to her, "Look, to my father and to my mother I have not told ***it***, and to you shall I tell ***it***?" **17** And she wept over him the seven days that the feast was theirs; and it was on the seventh day, and he told her, for she pressed him; and she told the riddle to the sons of her people. **18** And the men of the city said to him on the seventh day, before the sun went down, "What ***is*** sweeter than honey? And what ***is*** stronger than a lion?" And he said to them, "If you had not plowed with my heifer, you would not have found out my riddle." **19** And the Spirit of the LORD rushed upon him, and he went down to Ashkelon (Ashqelon) and struck down thirty men of them, and he took their spoils and gave the changes to those who told the riddle. And his anger burned, and he went up ***to*** the house of his father. **20** And the wife of Samson became his companion's, who had been a friend to him.

JUDGES 15

Samson Takes Revenge

1 And it was after some days, in the days of the wheat harvest, and Samson (Shimshon) visited his wife with a kid of the goats, and he said, "Let me go in to my wife, into the chamber." And her father did not allow him to go in. **2** And her father said, "I surely thought that you surely hated her, and I gave her to your companion. ***Is*** not her younger sister better than she? Please let her be yours instead of her." **3** And Samson said to them, "This time I shall be blameless toward the Philistines, for I ***am*** doing harm with them." **4** And Samson went and captured three hundred foxes, and he took torches, and he turned ***them*** tail to tail and put one torch between two tails in the middle. **5** And he kindled fire in the torches and let ***them*** go into the standing grain of the Philistines; and he burned ***everything***, from the stacked sheaves and to the standing grain and to the olive vineyards. **6** And the Philistines said, "Who has done this?" And they said, "Samson, the son-in-law of the Timnite, because he took his wife and gave her to his companion." And the Philistines went up and burned her and her father with fire. **7** And Samson said to them, "If you do like this, then surely I

14:10 John 2:9; Gen 29:22; Esth 1:7-22
14:11 1 Sam 10:23; 1 Sam 16:6; Matt 9:15
14:12 1 Kgs 10:1; Ezek 17:2; Gen 45:22
14:14 Acts 8:31; 1 Kgs 17:6; James 1:2-4
14:15 Judg 16:5; Judg 15:6; Gen 3:1-6
14:16 Judg 16:15; Gen 2:24
14:17 Judg 16:6,13,16; Gen 3:6; Job 2:9
14:19 Judg 3:10; Judg 13:25; 1 Sam 11:6
14:20 Judg 15:2; John 3:29; Ps 55:12,13
15:1 Gen 38:17; Luke 15:29; Gen 6:4
15:2 Judg 14:20; Judg 14:16,20; Acts 26:9
15:3 Judg 14:15
15:4 Ps 63:10; Song 2:15; Lam 5:18
15:5 Exod 22:6; 2 Sam 14:30
15:6 Judg 14:15; Judg 12:1; Prov 22:8
15:7 Judg 14:4,19; Rom 12:19

14:10 *Samson made a feast there, for so the young men used to do* A wedding feast lasted seven days, and the Hebrew word for feast comes from the word for drinking. Scripture does not say Samson drank, but he put himself in the middle of it. Some teachers say he broke his vow here too, but that is an inference.
14:11 *they took thirty companions* Wedding guests or groomsmen, but it sounds as if they were also there to watch this strong Israelite.
14:12 *thirty linen garments and thirty changes of garments* A good set of clothes was valuable then. This was a bet for thirty men's wardrobes.
14:14 *Out of the eater came out food, and out of the strong came out sweetness* Not a fair riddle. It was built on Samson's secret.
14:15 *lest we burn you and the house of your father with fire* Her own people threatened to burn her family alive over a bet.
14:17 *he told her, for she pressed him* We should feel for this young woman, caught between a threatening people and a husband who kept secrets. But notice the pattern. Samson gave in to a woman's pressure here and will again with Delilah (16:15-17). A man who cannot say no to his own desires will have a hard time saying no to anyone else.
14:18 *If you had not plowed with my heifer* A heifer is a young cow. He meant, if you had not used my wife against me, a crude and bitter thing to say of his bride.
14:19 *he went down to Ashkelon and struck down thirty men of them* Ashkelon was a Philistine coastal city more than twenty miles away. Samson paid a bet by killing thirty men. God had raised him to fight the Philistines who oppressed Israel, and the Spirit gave the strength, but Samson's motives were anger and revenge. God used his strength for His purpose even while Samson used it for his pride. This is never God blessing revenge (Matt 5:44; Rom 12:19).
14:20 *the wife of Samson became his companion's* Her father gave her to the best man. The wedding that began with "she is right in my eyes" ended in death, anger and loss. Gifts are not the same as godliness. Samson had great power and little self-control, which is part of the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23). Power without self-control will always hurt people.
15:1 *Samson visited his wife with a kid of the goats* It was late spring. Samson seems to have thought he could walk away angry and come back as if nothing had happened.
15:2 *Is not her younger sister better than she?* Her father treated his daughters as if they could be traded. The scene shows how little these women were valued by the men around them, and the Bible tells it plainly without approving it.
15:3 *This time I shall be blameless toward the Philistines* That is, this time they started it. He took the insult as an excuse for revenge.
15:4 *Samson went and captured three hundred foxes* The word can also mean jackals, which run in packs and would be easier to catch in such numbers. Burning grain, sheaves and olive groves at harvest destroyed a year's food and income for a whole region.
15:6 *the Philistines went up and burned her and her father with fire* Just what the young men threatened at the wedding (14:15). She told the riddle to save her family from fire, and her own people burned her anyway. Sin promises protection and pays in ruin.
15:7 *then surely I will be avenged on you, and after that I will cease* One more time, then stop. That is what everyone in a cycle of revenge says. It never stops with one more.

will be avenged on you, and after ***that*** I will cease." **8** And he struck them leg on thigh, a great striking; and he went down and dwelt in the cleft of the rock of Etam.

The Jawbone of a Donkey

9 And the Philistines went up and encamped in Judah (Yehuda), and they spread themselves out at Lehi (Lechi). **10** And the men of Judah said, "Why have you come up against us?" And they said, "To bind Samson we have come up, to do to him as he did to us." **11** And three thousand men from Judah went down to the cleft of the rock of Etam, and they said to Samson, "Do you not know that the Philistines are ruling over us? And what ***is*** this you have done to us?" And he said to them, "As they did to me, so I have done to them." **12** And they said to him, "To bind you we have come down, to give you into the hand of the Philistines." And Samson said to them, "Swear to me, lest you yourselves fall upon me." **13** And they said to him, saying, "No, but we will surely bind you and give you into their hand, and we will surely not put you to death." And they bound him with two new ropes and brought him up from the rock. **14** He was coming to Lehi, and the Philistines shouted to meet him. And the Spirit of the LORD rushed upon him, and the ropes that ***were*** on his arms became like flax that they have burned with fire, and his bonds melted from off his hands. **15** And he found a fresh jawbone of a donkey, and he stretched out his hand and took it, and he struck down with it a thousand men. **16** And Samson said, "With the jawbone of the donkey, a heap, two heaps; with the jawbone of the donkey I have struck down a thousand men." **17** And it was, when he had finished speaking, he threw the jawbone from his hand, and he called that place Ramath-lehi (Ramat-Lechi). **18** And he was very thirsty, and he called out to the LORD and said, "You have given this great salvation by the hand of Your servant; and now shall I die with thirst and fall into the hand of the uncircumcised?" **19** And God split open the hollow that ***is*** at Lehi, and water came out from it, and he drank, and his spirit returned, and he revived. Therefore he called its name En-hakkore (En-Haqore), which ***is*** at Lehi to this day. **20** And he judged Israel (Yisra'el) in the days of the Philistines twenty years.

JUDGES 16

Samson at Gaza

1 And Samson (Shimshon) went to Gaza (Aza), and he saw there a woman, a prostitute, and he went in to her. **2** ***It was told*** to the Gazites, saying, "Samson has come here." And they surrounded ***him*** and lay in wait for him all the night at the gate of the city; and they kept silent all the night, saying, "Until the light of the morning; then we will kill him." **3** And Samson lay until the middle of the night; and he arose in the middle of the night and took hold of the doors of the gate of the city and the two doorposts, and he pulled them up with the bar, and he put ***them*** on his shoulders and carried them up to the top of the mountain that ***is*** in front of Hebron (Chevron).

Samson and Delilah

4 And it was after this, and he loved a woman in the valley of

15:8 Isa 25:10; Isa 63:3,6
15:9 Judg 15:17,19
15:11 Judg 13:1; Judg 14:4; Deut 28:13,47,48
15:12 Matt 27:2; Acts 7:25; Judg 8:21
15:14 Heb 11:34; Judg 3:10; Judg 14:6,19
15:15 Heb 11:34; Lev 26:8; Josh 23:10
15:18 John 19:28; Judg 8:4; Ps 22:14,15
15:19 Gen 45:27; Isa 44:3; 1 Sam 30:12
15:20 Judg 13:1,5; Judg 16:31
16:1 1 Cor 6:16; Josh 15:47; Gen 10:19
16:2 Acts 9:24; 1 Sam 23:26; Ps 118:10-12
16:3 Acts 9:24; Ps 107:16; Isa 63:1-5
16:4 1 Kgs 11:1; Neh 13:26; Prov 22:14

15:8 *he struck them leg on thigh, a great striking* A Hebrew saying, something like our beaten soundly. God had raised Samson to fight the oppressor, but everything here is personal: his wife, his anger, his revenge. He never led an army or called Israel together. He fought alone for his own reasons, and God used it anyway to wear down the enemy.

15:11 *Do you not know that the Philistines are ruling over us?* Three thousand men of Judah came not to fight the Philistines but to capture their own deliverer. They had accepted their slavery and wanted to be left alone under their masters. That is why no cry to the LORD is recorded in 13:1. Judah, the tribe that led the way in 1:2, had given up.

15:13 *we will surely bind you and give you into their hand* Many years later the leaders of the people bound Jesus and handed Him to Pilate (Matt 27:1-2). That is only a picture, and Samson was nothing like Jesus in character. But it shows how people can come to love their chains more than the One God sends to break them.

15:14 *the ropes that were on his arms became like flax that they have burned with fire* Flax was the plant used to make linen. Burnt flax falls apart at a touch.

15:15 *a fresh jawbone of a donkey* Still heavy and hard, not dry and brittle, and once again a Nazirite touched something dead. How could one man strike down a thousand? The text answers before we ask: the Spirit of the LORD rushed upon him (15:14). One would chase a thousand because the LORD fights for them (Josh 23:10).

15:16 *With the jawbone of the donkey, a heap, two heaps* In Hebrew the words for donkey and heap sound alike, a play on words. But notice whose name is missing. Samson says "I." He does not mention the LORD. Ramath-lehi (15:17) means the hill of the jawbone.

15:18 *You have given this great salvation by the hand of Your servant* The first time Samson prays, and at last he gives God the credit. The strongest man in Israel could not make himself a drink of water. Sometimes God lets us come to the end of ourselves so we remember who gave the victory.

15:19 *he called its name En-hakkore* The spring of the one who called. The name remembers his prayer, not his strength. God answered the first real prayer of a man who had done almost everything wrong. "This afflicted one called, and the LORD heard" (Ps 34:6). When we are spent and dry, we can still call on Him.

15:20 *he judged Israel in the days of the Philistines twenty years* Not twenty years of rest, as with earlier judges. Samson judged "in the days of the Philistines." Their rule did not end under him. He only began to save Israel (13:5). The line is repeated at 16:31, so this may summarize his whole time as judge before the story of his fall.

16:1 *he saw there a woman, a prostitute, and he went in to her* Gaza was the southernmost Philistine city, deep in enemy land. The writer does not dress this up. Samson's eyes led him again (14:1), this time into plain sexual sin. A Nazirite set apart to God walked into the enemy's capital to sleep with a prostitute.

16:3 *carried them up to the top of the mountain that is in front of Hebron* Hebron was about forty miles away and uphill. Whether he carried the gate all the way or to a hill facing Hebron, it was an amazing feat. Notice the text does not say the Spirit rushed on him. A man can go on using God's gifts long after he has stopped walking with God and think everything is fine.

16:4 *he loved a woman in the valley of Sorek, and her name was Delilah* The only time we are told Samson loved a woman. Sorek ran from the hills near Zorah toward the coast, on the border between the peoples. We are not told whether Delilah was a Philistine.

Sorek (Soreq), and her name ***was*** Delilah (Delila). **5** And the rulers of the Philistines went up to her and said to her, "Entice him, and see in what his great strength ***lies***, and by what we may prevail against him and bind him to humble him; and we will give you each man eleven hundred ***pieces*** of silver." **6** And Delilah said to Samson, "Tell me, please, in what your great strength ***lies***, and with what you may be bound to humble you." **7** And Samson said to her, "If they bind me with seven fresh cords that have not been dried, then I will become weak and be like one of mankind." **8** And the rulers of the Philistines brought up to her seven fresh cords that had not been dried, and she bound him with them. **9** And the ambush ***was*** sitting for her in the chamber. And she said to him, "The Philistines ***are*** upon you, Samson!" And he tore apart the cords as a thread of tow is torn apart when it smells fire. And his strength was not known. **10** And Delilah said to Samson, "Look, you have deceived me and spoken lies to me. Now tell me, please, with what you may be bound." **11** And he said to her, "If they indeed bind me with new ropes with which work has not been done, then I will become weak and be like one of mankind." **12** And Delilah took new ropes and bound him with them, and she said to him, "The Philistines ***are*** upon you, Samson!" And the ambush ***was*** sitting in the chamber. And he tore them apart from off his arms like a thread. **13** And Delilah said to Samson, "Until now you have deceived me and spoken lies to me. Tell me with what you may be bound." And he said to her, "If you weave the seven locks of my head with the web." **14** And she fastened ***it*** with the pin, and said to him, "The Philistines ***are*** upon you, Samson!" And he awoke from his sleep and pulled out the pin of the loom and the web. **15** And she said to him, "How can you say, 'I love you,' and your heart ***is*** not with me? These three times you have deceived me, and you have not told me in what your great strength ***lies***." **16** And it was, when she pressed him with her words all the days and urged him, his soul became impatient to the point of dying. **17** And he told her all his heart and said to her, "A razor has not come up on my head, for I ***am*** a Nazirite of God from the womb of my mother. If I am shaved, then my strength will depart from me, and I will become weak and be like all mankind." **18** And Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, and she sent and called the rulers of the Philistines, saying, "Come up this time, for he has told me all his heart." And the rulers of the Philistines came up to her, and they brought up the silver in their hand. **19** And she made him sleep on her knees, and she called for the man, and she shaved off the seven locks of his head; and she began to humble him, and his strength departed from on him. **20** And she said, "The Philistines ***are*** upon you, Samson!" And he awoke from his sleep and said, "I will go out as time after time, and shake myself free." And he did not know that the LORD had departed from on him. **21** And the Philistines seized him and gouged out his eyes, and they brought him down to Gaza and bound him with bronze fetters; and he was grinding in the house of the prisoners. **22** And the hair of his head began to grow again when it had been shaved.

The Death of Samson

23 And the rulers of the Philistines gathered together to sacrifice a great sacrifice to Dagon their god, and for rejoicing; and they said, "Our god has given Samson our enemy into our hand." **24** And the people saw him, and they praised their god, for they said, "Our god has given into our hand our enemy, and the one who laid waste our land, and who multiplied our slain." **25** And it was, when their heart was merry, and they said, "Call for Samson, that he may make sport for us." And they called for Samson from the house of the prisoners, and he made sport before them; and they made him

16:5 Matt 26:15; 1 Cor 6:18; Josh 13:3
16:6 Ps 12:2; Prov 6:26; Prov 7:21
16:7 Judg 16:10; 1 Sam 19:17; 1 Sam 21:2,3
16:8 Eccl 7:26
16:9 Ps 58:9
16:10 Judg 16:7,13,15-17; Prov 23:7,8; Prov 24:28
16:11 Prov 13:3,5; Prov 29:25; Eph 4:25
16:14 Ezra 9:13,14; Ps 106:43
16:15 Judg 14:16; Prov 2:16; Prov 5:3-14
16:16 Prov 7:21-23,26,27; Luke 11:8; Luke 18:5
16:17 Judg 13:5; Num 6:5; Mic 7:5
16:18 Matt 26:15; Judg 16:5; Ps 62:9
16:19 Prov 7:21-23,26,27; Prov 23:33,34; Eccl 7:26
16:20 Josh 7:12; 1 Sam 16:14; 1 Sam 18:12
16:21 John 18:12; Exod 11:5; Isa 47:2
16:22 Lev 26:44; Deut 32:36; Ps 106:44,45
16:23 1 Sam 5:2-5; Jer 2:11; Mic 4:5
16:24 Dan 5:4,23; Deut 32:27; Isa 37:20
16:25 Judg 9:27; Judg 19:6,9; 2 Sam 13:28

16:5 *we will give you each man eleven hundred pieces of silver* Five rulers at eleven hundred each made five thousand five hundred pieces of silver. Micah hired a priest for ten a year (17:10). Delilah was paid a fortune to betray the man who loved her.
16:9 *The Philistines are upon you, Samson!* She had just tried to hand him to his enemies, and he knew it. Why did he stay? Here is the blindness of sin. He seems to have thought it was a game he could always win. He played with the thing that would destroy him.
16:10 *you have deceived me and spoken lies to me* An odd complaint from someone who had just tried to sell him. Sin turns everything upside down.
16:13 *If you weave the seven locks of my head with the web* A loom is the frame used to weave cloth. First cords, then ropes, then his hair: each time he moved nearer the secret. Each time we play with temptation and get away, we feel a little safer and let it come a little closer.
16:15 *How can you say, 'I love you,' and your heart is not with me?* The same weapon his bride used at Timnah (14:16).
16:17 *he told her all his heart* Was his strength really in his hair? No. It came from the Spirit of the LORD. But his uncut hair was the one sign of his vow he still had left. He had already touched the dead. When he gave it away, he gave away the last outward mark that he belonged to God, trading his calling for a woman's approval.
16:19 *she made him sleep on her knees* The man who broke ropes and carried city gates went to sleep with his head in the lap of the woman selling him.
16:20 *he did not know that the LORD had departed from on him* One of the saddest sentences in the Bible. He had gotten away with it so many times that he did not notice God had gone. "Let the one who thinks he stands watch, lest he fall" (1 Cor 10:12). The Spirit lives in every believer and will not leave us (John 14:16-17; Eph 1:13-14), but we can grieve Him (Eph 4:30) and lose our usefulness, joy and witness by trifling with sin.
16:21 *the Philistines seized him and gouged out his eyes* The eyes that led him all his life (14:3) were taken. In Gaza, whose gate he had carried off, he ground grain at a mill, the work of slaves and animals. Sin promises freedom and pleasure, and it ends in blindness, chains and grinding.
16:22 *the hair of his head began to grow again* The Philistines did not notice, but the writer wants us to. It is a small sign of hope. God was not finished with Samson.
16:23 *Our god has given Samson our enemy into our hand* Dagon was a main god of the Philistines, probably a god of grain. The Philistines thought their god had beaten the LORD. One of the gravest results of sin in a believer's life is that it gives God's enemies reason to mock Him (2 Sam 12:14; Rom 2:24). God would not let that boast stand.

stand between the pillars. **26** And Samson said to the young man who was holding him by his hand, "Allow me, and let me feel the pillars on which the house is set, that I may lean on them." **27** And the house was full of the men and the women, and all the rulers of the Philistines ***were*** there; and on the roof ***were*** about three thousand, man and woman, who were looking on while Samson made sport. **28** And Samson called out to the LORD and said, "Lord GOD, remember me, please, and strengthen me, please, only this time, O God, that I may be avenged ***with*** one vengeance for my two eyes on the Philistines." **29** And Samson grasped the two middle pillars on which the house was set, and he braced himself on them, one with his right ***hand*** and one with his left. **30** And Samson said, "Let my soul die with the Philistines!" And he stretched out with strength, and the house fell on the rulers and on all the people who ***were*** in it. And the dead whom he put to death in his death were more than those whom he had put to death in his life. **31** And his brothers and all the house of his father came down, and they lifted him and brought ***him*** up and buried him between Zorah (Tsor'a) and Eshtaol in the tomb of Manoah (Manoach) his father. And he had judged Israel (Yisra'el) twenty years.

JUDGES 17

Micah's Idols

1 And there was a man from the hill country of Ephraim (Efrayim), and his name ***was*** Micah (Mikhayhu). **2** And he said to his mother, "The eleven hundred ***pieces*** of silver that were taken from you, and ***about which*** you uttered a curse, and also spoke ***it*** in my ears, look, the silver ***is*** with me; I took it." And his mother said, "Blessed ***be*** my son by the LORD." **3** And he returned the eleven hundred ***pieces*** of silver to his mother; and his mother said, "I wholly consecrate the silver to the LORD from my hand for my son, to make a carved image and a molten image; and now I will return it to you." **4** And he returned the silver to his mother, and his mother took two hundred ***pieces*** of silver and gave it to the silversmith, and he made it ***into*** a carved image and a molten image; and it was in the house of Micah. **5** And the man Micah (Mikha) had a house of God, and he made an ephod and teraphim, and he consecrated one of his sons, and he became his priest. **6** In those days ***there was*** no king in Israel (Yisra'el); each man did what ***was*** right in his own eyes.

Micah Hires a Levite

7 And there was a young man from Bethlehem (Bet-Lechem) of Judah (Yehuda), from the clan of Judah, and he ***was*** a Levite, and he ***was*** sojourning there. **8** And the man went from the city, from Bethlehem of Judah, to sojourn wherever he might find ***a place***; and he came ***to*** the hill country of Ephraim, to the house of Micah, making his way. **9** And Micah said to him, "Where do you come from?" And he said to him, "I ***am*** a Levite from Bethlehem of Judah, and I am

16:27 Deut 22:8; Josh 2:8; 2 Sam 11:2
16:28 Heb 11:32; Jer 15:15; Ps 74:18-23
16:30 Matt 16:25; Acts 20:24; Acts 21:13
16:31 Judg 15:20; Judg 13:2,25; John 19:39-42
17:1 Judg 10:1; Josh 15:9; Josh 17:14-18
17:2 Neh 13:25; Ruth 3:10; Judg 5:23
17:3 Exod 20:4,23; Lev 19:4; Judg 17:13
17:4 Isa 46:6,7; Jer 10:9,10
17:5 Judg 8:27; Judg 18:14; Gen 31:19,30
17:6 Judg 18:1; Judg 19:1; Deut 12:8
17:7 Matt 2:1; Matt 2:5; Matt 2:6
17:8 Judg 17:11; Neh 13:10,11

16:26 *let me feel the pillars on which the house is set* Archaeologists have found Philistine temples whose roofs rested on two central pillars set close together, which fits this story well.
16:28 *Lord GOD, remember me, please, and strengthen me, please, only this time* His second recorded prayer and his last. It is not perfect. He still speaks of his two eyes and his revenge. But he calls on the LORD and asks strength from God, not himself. He knows now that his strength was never his own. This is a humbled man.
16:30 *Let my soul die with the Philistines!* This was not suicide in the way we usually mean it. Samson was a judge God raised up, giving his life in battle to strike down the enemy's rulers and the temple of their false god, and God answered his prayer. If you have been having thoughts of ending your own life, please hear me: this story does not point you that way. God sees you and your life matters to Him (Ps 34:18). Talk to a pastor, a trusted friend, a doctor or a crisis line today.
16:30 *the dead whom he put to death in his death were more than those whom he had put to death in his life* Hebrews lists Samson among the faithful, those who "out of weakness were made strong" (Heb 11:34). God's grace reaches even a man who wasted almost everything. There is a far greater picture too. Samson won his greatest victory in his death, arms stretched between two pillars. Jesus won the greatest of all with His arms stretched on the cross. But Samson died for his own sins seeking revenge. Jesus died for others, praying for those who killed Him (Luke 23:34), to save His enemies (Rom 5:8, 10).
16:31 *buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the tomb of Manoah his father* His story ends where the Spirit first stirred him (13:25). Samson had more advantages than any judge in the book, and he never led Israel, never called the people back to God and never mastered himself. The gift is not the same as the walk. What matters in the end is not how strong we were, but whether we walked with God.
17:1 *there was a man from the hill country of Ephraim, and his name was Micah* The name means who is like the LORD, and the irony is sharp: this man is about to make an idol to stand for Him. He lived in the same hill country as the tabernacle at Shiloh (18:31), a short trip away. These last chapters likely took place early in the judges period (18:30; 20:28).
17:2 *Blessed be my son by the LORD* Micah seems more afraid of his mother's curse than sorry for the theft, and she did not call it sin. She tried to undo her curse with a blessing. Here is a family that uses the LORD's name like a charm, a word to get good luck and avoid bad.
17:3 *I wholly consecrate the silver to the LORD from my hand for my son, to make a carved image and a molten image* A carved image was cut from wood or stone and covered with metal. A molten image was cast from melted metal. She thought she was honoring the LORD, but the second commandment forbids it: "You shall not make for yourself a carved image" (Exod 20:4). And after "wholly" dedicating eleven hundred pieces, she gave the smith only two hundred. Even her devotion was half-hearted.
17:5 *the man Micah had a house of God, and he made an ephod and teraphim* An ephod was a priest's garment, often worn to seek guidance, like Gideon's snare (8:27). Teraphim were household idols believed to give protection and guidance (Gen 31:19). Only Aaron's descendants could be priests (Num 3:10), and Micah was from Ephraim. He made up his own shrine, idols and priesthood, a religion built to his taste, and called it worship of the LORD.
17:6 *In those days there was no king in Israel; each man did what was right in his own eyes* The key to the last five chapters, said four times (17:6; 18:1; 19:1; 21:25). It does not mean simply that Israel had no government. God was to be their King (8:23), and Moses warned against each man doing what was right in his own eyes (Deut 12:8). When people stop listening to God, they do not stop being religious. They make up a religion that suits them. Many still keep the parts of the Bible they like and leave the rest. The question is whether it is what God has said.
17:7 *he was a Levite, and he was sojourning there* Levites were set apart to serve at the tabernacle, given forty-eight towns (Josh 21) and supported by tithes. Bethlehem was not a Levite town. To sojourn is to live somewhere as a stranger without land. A wandering, job-hunting Levite is a sign that Israel had stopped supporting the worship of God. Note Bethlehem: the concubine of chapter 19 and Ruth's story come from there too.

going to sojourn wherever I may find ***a place***." **10** And Micah said to him, "Dwell with me, and be to me a father and a priest, and I will give you ten ***pieces*** of silver a year, and a set of garments, and your sustenance." And the Levite went ***in***. **11** And the Levite was willing to dwell with the man, and the young man became to him like one of his sons. **12** And Micah consecrated the Levite, and the young man became his priest, and he was in the house of Micah. **13** And Micah said, "Now I know that the LORD will do good to me, for the Levite has become my priest."

JUDGES 18

The Danites Search for Land

1 In those days ***there was*** no king in Israel (Yisra'el); and in those days the tribe of the Danites was seeking for itself an inheritance to dwell in, for it had not fallen to it until that day in the midst of the tribes of Israel as an inheritance. **2** And the sons of Dan sent from their clan five men from their whole number, men, sons of valor, from Zorah (Tsor'ah) and from Eshtaol, to spy out the land and to explore it; and they said to them, "Go, explore the land." And they came ***to*** the hill country of Ephraim (Efrayim), to the house of Micah (Mikha), and they spent the night there. **3** They ***were*** near the house of Micah, and they recognized the voice of the young man, the Levite; and they turned aside there and said to him, "Who brought you here? And what are you doing in this ***place***? And what ***is there*** for you here?" **4** And he said to them, "Like this and like this Micah has done for me, and he hired me, and I have become a priest for him." **5** And they said to him, "Inquire, please, of God, and let us know whether our way on which we are going will succeed." **6** And the priest said to them, "Go in peace; your way on which you go ***is*** before the LORD." **7** And the five men went and came to Laish (Layish), and they saw the people that ***was*** in its midst dwelling in security, according to the custom of the Sidonians, quiet and secure; and ***there was*** no one in the land putting ***them*** to shame ***in*** anything, possessing restraint; and they ***were*** far from the Sidonians, and they had no dealings with anyone. **8** And they came to their brothers ***at*** Zorah and Eshtaol; and their brothers said to them, "What ***about*** you?" **9** And they said, "Arise, and let us go up against them; for we have seen the land, and look, ***it is*** very good. And you ***are*** keeping silent? Do not be sluggish to go, to enter, to take possession of the land. **10** When you go, you will come to a people secure, and the land ***is*** broad on both sides; for God has given it into your hand, a place where there is no lack of any thing that ***is*** in the land." **11** And ***there*** set out from there, from the clan of the Danites, from Zorah and from Eshtaol, six hundred men girded ***with*** weapons of war. **12** And they went up and camped at Kiriath-jearim (Qiryat-Ye'arim) in Judah (Yehuda); therefore they called that place Mahaneh-dan (Machane-Dan) until this day; look, ***it is*** behind Kiriath-jearim. **13** And they passed on from there ***to*** the hill country of Ephraim, and they came to the house of Micah.

The Danites Steal Micah's Gods

14 And the five men who had gone to spy out the land ***of*** Laish answered and said to their brothers, "Do you know that there are in these houses an ephod and teraphim and a carved image and a molten image? And now, consider what you will do." **15** And they turned aside there and came to the house of the young man, the Levite, the house of Micah, and they asked him about ***his*** welfare. **16** And the six hundred men girded ***with*** their weapons of war, who ***were*** of the sons

17:10 Matt 26:15; Judg 18:19; Gen 45:8
17:12 Judg 18:30; Num 16:5,8-10; 1 Kgs 12:31
17:13 Prov 14:12; Isa 44:20; Isa 66:3,4
18:1 Judg 17:6; Judg 19:1; Judg 21:25
18:2 Josh 2:1; Judg 18:8,11; Num 13:17
18:3 Judg 12:6; Gen 27:22; Matt 26:73
18:4 Judg 17:10; Prov 28:21; Isa 56:11
18:5 1 Kgs 22:5; 2 Kgs 16:15; Isa 30:1
18:6 1 Kgs 22:6,12,15; Jer 23:21,22,32; Deut 11:12
18:7 Josh 19:47; Judg 18:27,28; Rev 18:7
18:8 Judg 18:2,11; Judg 13:2; Judg 16:31
18:9 Num 13:30; Josh 2:23,24; Josh 18:3
18:10 Judg 18:7,27; Deut 2:29; Deut 4:1
18:12 Judg 13:25; Josh 15:60; 1 Sam 7:1
18:13 Judg 18:2,3; Judg 17:1; Judg 19:1
18:14 Judg 17:5; 1 Sam 14:28; Judg 18:3,4
18:15 Gen 43:27; Gen 37:14; 1 Sam 17:22

17:10 *be to me a father and a priest, and I will give you ten pieces of silver a year* "Father" is a title of respect for a spiritual adviser (compare 2 Kgs 6:21). The Levite never asked whether this shrine pleased God or mentioned the idols. He asked about the pay. This is ministry for hire.
17:12 *Micah consecrated the Levite* An Ephraimite ordaining a Levite is upside down. Only God, through Aaron's line, could make priests, and this Levite was a descendant of Moses, not Aaron (18:30).
17:13 *Now I know that the LORD will do good to me, for the Levite has become my priest* The saddest line in the chapter. With an idol, an ephod, household gods and a real Levite, Micah was sure he had God on his side, though he broke God's commands at every step. Many still think the right church or ceremony must buy God's blessing. God looks at the heart and at obedience (1 Sam 15:22). In the next chapter Micah loses all of it in one afternoon.
18:1 *the tribe of the Danites was seeking for itself an inheritance to dwell in* Not quite true, and the writer knows it. Dan had been given land by lot (Josh 19:40-46), including Samson's towns of Zorah and Eshtaol. The Amorites pushed them into the hills (1:34). Dan had a land but had not taken it. Rather than trust God to fight for them where He put them, they went looking for an easier place.
18:2 *to spy out the land and to explore it* It sounds like the spies of Moses and Joshua (Num 13; Josh 2), but those went at God's command to the land He promised. These went to find something easier.
18:3 *Who brought you here? And what are you doing in this place? And what is there for you here?* Perhaps they knew him, or noticed his southern accent. These are good questions for anyone in ministry, and the Levite had no good answer. He was a hired hand.
18:6 *your way on which you go is before the LORD* It sounds spiritual but says very little. "Before the LORD" can mean God approves or only that God sees. He gave a blessing to fit whatever happened. False religion often tells people what they want to hear and uses God's name to make it sound holy.
18:7 *they saw the people that was in its midst dwelling in security* Laish lay near the springs at the foot of Mount Hermon, at the far north of the land, where one source of the Jordan flows out. The people lived like the Sidonians of the coast, wealthy, peaceful and alone, with no ally to help them. To the spies that made them an easy target.
18:10 *for God has given it into your hand* Words like Joshua and Caleb's (Num 14:7-9). But no one had asked God. They had asked a hired priest at an idol shrine. They used the language of faith to cover a plan to find the softest target.
18:12 *they called that place Mahaneh-dan until this day* The camp of Dan. Samson's story mentions a Mahaneh-dan near Zorah (13:25). The name may have been used for more than one Danite camp. Six hundred armed men traveled with their families and livestock, a whole clan on the move.
18:14 *consider what you will do* It was not a hard decision for them. They planned to take it.

of Dan, ***were*** standing ***at*** the entrance of the gate. **17** And the five men who had gone to spy out the land went up; they went in there, they took the carved image and the ephod and the teraphim and the molten image; and the priest ***was*** standing ***at*** the entrance of the gate, and the six hundred men girded ***with*** the weapons of war. **18** And these went into the house of Micah and took the carved image, the ephod, and the teraphim and the molten image. And the priest said to them, "What are you doing?" **19** And they said to him, "Keep quiet; put your hand over your mouth and come with us, and be to us a father and a priest. ***Is it*** better for you to be a priest to the house of one man, or for you to be a priest to a tribe and to a clan in Israel?" **20** And the heart of the priest was glad, and he took the ephod and the teraphim and the carved image, and he went into the midst of the people. **21** And they turned and went, and they put the little ones and the livestock and the valuables before them. **22** They had gone far from the house of Micah, and the men who ***were*** in the houses that ***were*** near the house of Micah were called together, and they overtook the sons of Dan. **23** And they called out to the sons of Dan; and they turned their faces and said to Micah, "What ***is the matter*** with you, that you have been called together?" **24** And he said, "My gods which I made you have taken, and the priest, and you have gone; and what more ***is there*** for me? And what ***is*** this ***that*** you say to me, 'What ***is the matter*** with you?'" **25** And the sons of Dan said to him, "Do not make your voice heard among us, lest men bitter of soul fall upon you, and you lose your life and the life of your household." **26** And the sons of Dan went on their way; and Micah saw that they ***were*** stronger than he, and he turned and went back to his house.

Dan Takes Laish

27 And they took what Micah had made, and the priest who had belonged to him, and they came upon Laish, upon a people quiet and secure, and they struck them by the mouth of ***the*** sword, and the city they burned with fire. **28** And ***there was*** no deliverer, for it ***was*** far from Sidon (Tsidon), and they had no dealings with anyone; and it ***was*** in the valley that ***belongs*** to Beth-rehob (Bet-Rechov). And they built the city and dwelt in it. **29** And they called the name of the city Dan, by the name of Dan their father, who was born to Israel; but Laish ***was*** the name of the city at first. **30** And the sons of Dan set up for themselves the carved image; and Jonathan (Yehonatan), the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh (Menashe), he and his sons were priests to the tribe of the Danites until the day of the exile of the land. **31** And they set up for themselves the carved image of Micah which he had made, all the days that the house of God was in Shiloh (Shilo).

JUDGES 19

The Levite and His Concubine

1 And it was in those days, and ***there was*** no king in Israel (Yisra'el), and there was a man, a Levite, sojourning in the remote parts of the hill country of Ephraim (Efrayim); and he took for himself a woman, a concubine, from Bethlehem (Bet-Lechem) of Judah (Yehuda). **2** And his concubine played the prostitute against him, and she went from him to the house of her father, to Bethlehem of Judah, and she was

18:17 Judg 18:2,14; Judg 17:4,5; Judg 6:31
18:19 Matt 26:15; Job 21:5; Job 29:9
18:20 Matt 26:15; Judg 17:10; Prov 30:15
18:23 Gen 21:17; 1 Sam 11:5; 2 Sam 14:5
18:24 Ps 115:8; Judg 17:13; Isa 44:18-20
18:25 1 Sam 30:6; 2 Sam 17:8; Job 3:5
18:27 Judg 18:7,10; Josh 19:47; Deut 33:22
18:28 2 Sam 10:6; Num 13:21; 2 Sam 14:6
18:29 Gen 14:14; Josh 19:47; 1 Kgs 15:20
18:30 Judg 13:1; 1 Sam 4:2,3,10,11; Ps 78:60-62
18:31 Acts 7:45; Josh 18:1; Judg 19:18
19:1 Matt 2:6; Judg 18:1; Judg 17:8
19:2 Lev 21:9; Deut 22:21; Ezek 16:28

18:17 *the priest was standing at the entrance of the gate* The man who was supposed to guard the shrine stood and watched it carried off.
18:19 *Is it better for you to be a priest to the house of one man, or for you to be a priest to a tribe* A better job offer.
18:20 *the heart of the priest was glad* He did not defend Micah, who took him in like a son, or ask what God wanted. He even carried the idols himself into the safety of the crowd. When ministry becomes a career instead of a calling, a man goes wherever the money is better. Shepherd God's flock "nor for shameful gain but eagerly" (1 Pet 5:2).
18:24 *My gods which I made you have taken* That is the whole problem with idols. A god you can make, someone else can steal. A god you must protect cannot protect you (Isa 44:14-17). Micah built his life on something he made, and when it was gone he had nothing left. In 17:13 he was sure the LORD would do him good.
18:27 *upon a people quiet and secure* The writer repeats the phrase on purpose. The people of Laish had done nothing to Dan.
18:28 *there was no deliverer* In a book full of deliverers, Laish had none. Some say Laish lay within the promised land, so Dan was within its rights. But the writer never says God sent them. He tells us twice that the people were quiet and secure and had no help. A tribe that would not fight for the land God gave it fell on a peaceful town far away because it was easy, with a stolen idol and a hired priest. This is not the conquest under Joshua.
18:29 *they called the name of the city Dan* Joshua 19:47 calls it Leshem. Dan became Israel's northernmost city, and "from Dan to Beersheba" (20:1) came to mean the whole land.
18:30 *Jonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh* At last we learn the Levite's name. Moses had a son named Gershom (Exod 2:22). In the Hebrew, Manasseh is written with one small letter lifted above the line, and without it the name reads Moses. Many scholars believe the original said Moses and scribes added the letter to spare Moses' name. The SLB prints Manasseh, following the Hebrew as it stands. If so, Moses' own descendant was running an idol shrine within a few generations. Godliness is not passed down by blood (2:10).
18:30 *until the day of the exile of the land* Some take this as the Assyrian conquest of the north, finished in 722 B.C. (2 Kgs 17:6), which would make the line a later note. Others take it as the capture of the ark and the fall of Shiloh (1 Sam 4), which fits the next verse and an early date. Later Jeroboam set a golden calf at Dan (1 Kgs 12:29).
18:31 *all the days that the house of God was in Shiloh* The true house of God, with the ark and priesthood, stood not far away the whole time. They chose the god they could carry over the God who had carried them. Dan is not named among the sealed tribes in Revelation 7:5-8. Scripture does not say why, and some connect it with this idolatry. We should not build too much on that.
19:1 *he took for himself a woman, a concubine, from Bethlehem of Judah* What follows is what life looked like when everyone did what was right in his own eyes. A concubine was a wife of lower rank, legally bound to her husband but without a first wife's full rights. The text calls him her husband (19:3). Both of the last two stories in Judges begin with a Levite and Bethlehem, and both go terribly wrong.
19:2 *his concubine played the prostitute against him* The Hebrew says she was unfaithful. The old Greek translation reads that she was angry with him, and many scholars think that fits better, since he went after her to win her back, not to accuse her. Either way, there was trouble in the marriage.

there ***some*** days, four months. **3** And her husband arose and went after her, to speak to her heart, to bring her back; and his young man ***was*** with him and a pair of donkeys. And she brought him ***into*** the house of her father; and the father of the young woman saw him, and he was glad to meet him. **4** And his father-in-law, the father of the young woman, took hold of him, and he stayed with him three days; and they ate and drank and spent the night there. **5** And it was on the fourth day, and they rose early in the morning, and he arose to go; and the father of the young woman said to his son-in-law, "Sustain your heart ***with*** a morsel of bread, and afterward you will go." **6** And they sat down, and the two of them ate together and drank; and the father of the young woman said to the man, "Be willing, please, and spend the night, and let your heart be glad." **7** And the man arose to go, and his father-in-law urged him, and he turned back and spent the night there. **8** And he rose early in the morning on the fifth day to go; and the father of the young woman said, "Sustain your heart, please." And they lingered until the day declined, and the two of them ate. **9** And the man arose to go, he and his concubine and his young man; and his
father-in-law, the father of the young woman, said to him, "Look, please, the day has sunk toward evening; spend the night, please. Look, the day is coming to an end; spend the night here, and let your heart be glad; and you will rise early tomorrow for your way, and you will go to your tent." **10** And the man was not willing to spend the night, and he arose and went and came to opposite Jebus (Yevus), that ***is*** Jerusalem (Yerushalayim); and with him ***were*** a pair of saddled donkeys, and his concubine ***was*** with him. **11** They ***were*** near Jebus, and the day had gone down greatly; and the young man said to his master, "Come, please, and let us turn aside to this city of the Jebusites and spend the night in it." **12** And his master said to him, "We will not turn aside to a foreign city, where they ***are*** not of the sons of Israel; and we will pass on to Gibeah (Giva)." **13** And he said to his young man, "Come, and let us draw near to one of the places, and we will spend the night in Gibeah or in Ramah (Rama)." **14** And they passed on and went, and the sun set on them beside Gibeah, which ***belongs*** to Benjamin (Binyamin). **15** And they turned aside there to go in to spend the night in Gibeah; and he went in and sat down in the open square of the city, and ***there was*** no one taking them into the house to spend the night.

Night in Gibeah

16 And look, an old man ***was*** coming from his work, from the field, in the evening; and the man ***was*** from the hill country of Ephraim, and he ***was*** sojourning in Gibeah; and the men of the place ***were*** Benjaminites. **17** And he lifted up his eyes and saw the man, the traveler, in the open square of the city; and the old man said, "Where are you going? And where do you come from?" **18** And he said to him, "We ***are*** passing from Bethlehem of Judah to the remote parts of the hill country of Ephraim; I ***am*** from there, and I went to Bethlehem of Judah; and ***to*** the house of the LORD I am going; and ***there is*** no one taking me into the house. **19** And there is both straw and fodder for our donkeys, and there is also bread and wine for me and for your maidservant and for the young man with your servants; there is no lack of any thing." **20** And the old man said, "Peace ***be*** to you; only, all your lack ***is*** upon me; only do not spend the night in the open square." **21** And he brought him into his house and gave fodder to the donkeys; and they washed their feet and ate and drank.

The Crime at Gibeah

22 They ***were*** making their hearts glad, and look, the men of the city, men, sons of worthlessness, surrounded the house, beating on the door; and they spoke to the man, the master of the house, the old man, saying, "Bring out the man who came into your house, so that we may know him." **23** And the man, the master of the house, went out to them and said to them, "No, my brothers, do not do evil, please; since this man has come into my house, do not do this disgraceful folly.

19:3 Gen 50:21; Gen 34:3; Judg 15:1
19:5 Judg 19:8; Gen 18:5; 1 Sam 14:27-29
19:6 Judg 19:9,21; Judg 16:25; Ruth 3:7
19:9 Luke 24:29; Prov 27:1; James 4:13,14
19:10 Josh 15:8,63; Judg 1:8; Josh 18:28
19:11 Judg 1:21; Gen 10:16; Josh 15:63
19:13 Josh 18:25,26,28; 1 Sam 10:26; Isa 10:29
19:15 Judg 19:18; Gen 18:2-8; Gen 19:2,3
19:16 Ps 104:23; Gen 3:19; Ps 128:2
19:17 Gen 16:8; Gen 32:17
19:18 Judg 18:31; Judg 20:18; Josh 18:1
19:20 Luke 10:5; John 14:27; Judg 6:23
19:21 Gen 43:24; Gen 18:4; Luke 7:44
19:22 Judg 20:5; Gen 19:4; Deut 13:13
19:23 Judg 20:6; Gen 34:7; 2 Sam 13:12

19:3 *to speak to her heart, to bring her back* A Hebrew way of saying to speak kindly, the phrase used when Boaz comforts Ruth (Ruth 2:13). At this point the Levite seems to be doing the right thing.
19:6 *the two of them ate together and drank* The warm hospitality here will stand out against what happens in Gibeah. But notice who is talking. The two men eat, drink and plan. The young woman says nothing. Her father and husband decide for her, and she never speaks a word in the whole chapter.
19:10 *opposite Jebus, that is Jerusalem* About six miles from Bethlehem, still held by the Jebusites until David took it (2 Sam 5:6-9).
19:12 *We will not turn aside to a foreign city, where they are not of the sons of Israel* Travel at night was dangerous, and he thought they would be safer among their own people. That is the terrible irony of this chapter. He feared the foreigners. The real danger was among God's people.
19:14 *Gibeah, which belongs to Benjamin* A few miles north of Jerusalem, later Saul's home town (1 Sam 10:26).
19:15 *there was no one taking them into the house to spend the night* Taking in a traveler was a basic duty. The Law told Israel to love the stranger, because they had been strangers in Egypt (Deut 10:19). Gibeah's cold welcome was the first sign something was badly wrong.
19:16 *he was sojourning in Gibeah; and the men of the place were Benjaminites* The only one in town who showed kindness was an outsider.
19:18 *to the house of the LORD I am going* He may have meant the tabernacle at Shiloh, which was on his way.
19:20 *only do not spend the night in the open square* The old man knew it was not safe.
19:22 *men, sons of worthlessness* A Hebrew phrase for wicked, lawless men. The word is belial, which later became a name for evil itself (2 Cor 6:15). "Know" here means to abuse sexually by force. These are almost the words of the men of Sodom (Gen 19:5). A town of Israel, in the land God gave His people, had become Sodom.
19:23 *do not do this disgraceful folly* A phrase used in Israel for a shameful act that broke the bonds of the community.

24 Look, my daughter, the virgin, and his concubine; let me bring them out, please, and humble them, and do to them what ***is*** good in your eyes; but to this man you shall not do this thing of disgraceful folly." **25** And the men were not willing to listen to him; and the man took hold of his concubine and brought ***her*** out to them outside; and they knew her and abused her all the night until the morning; and they let her go when the dawn came up. **26** And the woman came at the turning of the morning, and she fell ***at*** the entrance of the house of the man where her master ***was***, until the light. **27** And her master arose in the morning and opened the doors of the house and went out to go on his way; and look, the woman, his concubine, ***was*** fallen ***at*** the entrance of the house, and her hands ***were*** on the threshold. **28** And he said to her, "Get up, and let us go." And ***there was*** no one answering. And he took her on the donkey, and the man arose and went to his place. **29** And he came to his house and took the knife and took hold of his concubine and cut her in pieces, according to her bones, into twelve pieces; and he sent her into all the territory of Israel. **30** And it was ***that*** everyone who saw ***it*** said, "***A thing*** like this has not happened and has not been seen from the day the sons of Israel came up from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim) until this day. Set ***your hearts*** on it for yourselves, take counsel, and speak."

JUDGES 20

Israel Gathers at Mizpah

1 And all the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) went out, and the congregation was assembled as one man, from Dan to Beersheba (Be'er-Sheva), and the land of Gilead (Gilad), to the LORD at Mizpah (Mitspa). **2** And the chiefs of all the people, of all the tribes of Israel, presented themselves in the assembly of the people of God, four hundred thousand men on foot drawing ***the*** sword. **3** And the sons of Benjamin (Binyamin) heard that the sons of Israel had gone up to Mizpah. And the sons of Israel said, "Speak, how did this evil happen?" **4** And the man, the Levite, the husband of the woman who was murdered, answered and said, "To Gibeah (Giva), which ***belongs*** to Benjamin, I came, I and my concubine, to spend the night. **5** And the lords of Gibeah rose up against me and surrounded the house against me at night; me they intended to kill, and my concubine they humbled, and she died. **6** And I took hold of my concubine and cut her in pieces and sent her throughout all the country of the inheritance of Israel; for they have done lewdness and disgraceful folly in Israel. **7** Look, all of you, sons of Israel, give for yourselves a word and counsel here." **8** And all the people arose as one man, saying, "We will not go, any man to his tent, and we will not turn aside, any man to his house. **9** And now this ***is*** the thing which we will do to Gibeah: ***we will go up*** against it by lot. **10** And we will take ten men to the hundred from all the tribes of Israel, and a hundred to the thousand, and a thousand to the ten thousand, to take provisions for the people, so that they may do, when they come to Geba (Geva) of Benjamin, according to all the disgraceful folly which it has done in Israel." **11** And every man of Israel was gathered to the city, as one man, united. **12** And the tribes of Israel sent men through all the tribes of Benjamin, saying, "What ***is*** this evil that has hap-

19:24 Gen 19:8; Deut 21:14; Gen 34:2
19:25 Gen 4:1; Jer 5:7,8; Hos 7:4-7
19:26 Judg 19:3,27; Gen 18:12; 1 Pet 3:6
19:28 Judg 20:5; 1 Kgs 18:29
19:29 Judg 20:6,7; Rom 10:2; Deut 21:22,23
19:30 Judg 20:7; Prov 13:10; Prov 11:14
20:1 Judg 11:11; Judg 21:5; Josh 22:12
20:2 Judg 8:10; Judg 20:15,17; 2 Sam 24:9
20:3 Judg 19:22-27; Prov 22:3; Matt 5:25
20:4 Judg 19:15-28
20:5 Judg 19:22; Judg 19:25,26; Gen 19:4-8
20:6 Judg 19:29; Judg 19:23; Josh 7:15
20:7 Judg 19:30; Exod 19:5,6; Deut 4:6
20:8 Judg 20:1,11; Eccl 9:10; Judg 21:1,5
20:9 Josh 14:2; 1 Sam 14:41,42; 1 Chr 24:5
20:12 Deut 13:14; Deut 20:10; Josh 22:13-16

19:24 *Look, my daughter, the virgin, and his concubine* We must say it plainly: this offer was evil, as Lot's was (Gen 19:8). He saw the wrong in what the mob wanted for the man but not that it was just as wrong for the women. The text reports it without approving it. Scripture shows women made in God's image as fully as men (Gen 1:27) and fellow heirs of His grace (1 Pet 3:7).
19:25 *the man took hold of his concubine and brought her out to them outside* The man here is the Levite. In Sodom the angels pulled Lot inside (Gen 19:10-11). In Gibeah no one rescued her. Her own husband, who had come to speak to her heart, pushed her out the door to save himself. I will say no more than the Bible says. It was a terrible crime of violence against a helpless woman, through a whole night. It was evil.
19:27 *her hands were on the threshold* The writer now calls him "her master," not her husband. He was leaving, not looking for her. Her hands were reaching for the door that had been shut against her all night.
19:28 *Get up, and let us go* No grief, no tenderness. The writer does not tell us what to feel about this man. He shows him to us as he was, and that is condemnation enough.
19:29 *cut her in pieces, according to her bones, into twelve pieces* One for each tribe, a shocking summons that demanded the nation respond, as Saul later did with oxen (1 Sam 11:7). Even in this he did not honor her. He used her body to make his point after failing to protect her life.
19:30 *Set your hearts on it for yourselves, take counsel, and speak* Stop and think. Do not look away. Hosea later looked back on this as Israel's low point: "as in the days of Gibeah" (Hos 9:9). This is the end of the road that began in chapter 1. When a people loses the fear of God, the weakest suffer most. Israel needed a king, and more than a king, new hearts.
19:30 *A thing like this has not happened and has not been seen* If this chapter stirs memories of what someone did to you, hear this: it was evil, and it was not your fault. God saw this woman when no one else did and wrote her story into His Word. "The LORD is near to the broken of heart" (Ps 34:18). If you are in danger, get help today from someone you trust, your pastor, the police or an abuse hotline. God's people are called to protect the vulnerable and bring evil into the light (Eph 5:11).
20:1 *the congregation was assembled as one man, from Dan to Beersheba* From the far north to the far south, the whole nation stood together. Sadly, the first time Israel acted "as one man" in this book was not to drive out the Canaanites but to fight their own brothers. Mizpah, "watchtower," would later be a place of national gathering under Samuel (1 Sam 7:5).
20:2 *four hundred thousand men on foot drawing the sword* I take these numbers as written. Some scholars read the Hebrew word for "thousand" as a clan or military unit, which would give smaller totals. Either way, this was a huge army raised against one tribe.
20:5 *me they intended to kill, and my concubine they humbled, and she died* Notice what the Levite leaves out. He never says he pushed her out the door to save himself (19:25). He tells the story to make himself the victim. We are quick to see the sins of others and slow to see our own (Matt 7:3-5).
20:9 *we will go up against it by lot* Israel made its plan first and asked God afterward. The anger was right, since a great evil had been done, but they were sure of their course before they sought the LORD.

pened among you? **13** And now give up the men, the sons of worthlessness who ***are*** in Gibeah, and let us put them to death and purge evil from Israel." And the sons of Benjamin were not willing to listen to the voice of their brothers, the sons of Israel. **14** And the sons of Benjamin gathered from the cities to Gibeah to go out to battle with the sons of Israel. **15** And the sons of Benjamin were mustered on that day from the cities, twenty-six thousand men drawing ***the*** sword, besides the inhabitants of Gibeah, who were mustered, seven hundred chosen men. **16** From all this people ***there were*** seven hundred chosen men restricted ***in*** their right hand; every one of these ***was*** slinging with a stone at a hair, and he would not miss. **17** And the men of Israel were mustered, besides Benjamin, four hundred thousand men drawing ***the*** sword; every one of these ***was*** a man of war.

Two Defeats Before Benjamin

18 And they arose and went up ***to*** Bethel (Bet-El) and inquired of God, and the sons of Israel said, "Who shall go up for us first to the battle with the sons of Benjamin?" And the LORD said, "Judah (Yehuda) first." **19** And the sons of Israel arose in the morning and camped against Gibeah. **20** And the men of Israel went out to the battle with Benjamin, and the men of Israel set the battle in array against them at Gibeah. **21** And the sons of Benjamin went out from Gibeah and destroyed in Israel on that day twenty-two thousand men to the ground. **22** And the people, the men of Israel, strengthened themselves, and they again set the battle in array in the place where they had set ***it*** in array on the first day. **23** And the sons of Israel went up and wept before the LORD until the evening, and they inquired of the LORD, saying, "Shall I again draw near for battle with the sons of Benjamin my brother?" And the LORD said, "Go up against him." **24** And the sons of Israel drew near to the sons of Benjamin on the second day. **25** And Benjamin went out to meet them from Gibeah on the second day, and they destroyed among the sons of Israel again eighteen thousand men to the ground; all these ***were*** drawing ***the*** sword. **26** And all the sons of Israel and all the people went up and came ***to*** Bethel, and they wept and sat there before the LORD, and they fasted on that day until the evening, and they offered up burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD. **27** And the sons of Israel inquired of the LORD, and the ark of the covenant of God ***was*** there in those days, **28** and Phinehas (Pinchas) the son of Eleazar (Elazar), the son of Aaron (Aharon), ***was*** standing before it in those days, saying, "Shall I yet again go out for battle with the sons of Benjamin my brother, or shall I cease?" And the LORD said, "Go up, for tomorrow I will give him into your hand."

The Ambush at Gibeah

29 And Israel set ambushers against Gibeah all around. **30** And the sons of Israel went up against the sons of Benjamin on the third day, and they set ***themselves*** in array against Gibeah as at the other times. **31** And the sons of Benjamin went out to meet the people; they were drawn away from the city; and they began to strike down slain from among the people as at the other times, on the highways, of which one goes up ***to*** Bethel and one to Gibeah in the field, about thirty men in Israel. **32** And the sons of Benjamin said, "They ***are*** defeated before us as at the first." And the sons of Israel said, "Let us flee, and we will draw him away from the city to the highways." **33** And every man of Israel rose up from his place, and they set ***themselves*** in array at
Baal-tamar; and the ambush of Israel ***was*** bursting forth from its place, from the open area of Geba. **34** And there came from opposite Gibeah ten thousand chosen men from all Israel, and the battle was heavy; and they did not know that

20:13 Judg 19:22; Deut 13:13; 2 Sam 20:21,22
20:14 Num 20:20; Num 21:23; 2 Chr 13:13
20:15 Num 26:41; Judg 20:25,35,46,47
20:16 Judg 3:15; 1 Chr 12:2; 1 Sam 17:40,49,50
20:17 Judg 20:2; Num 1:46; Num 26:51
20:18 Judg 18:31; Judg 19:18; Josh 18:1
20:19 Josh 3:1; Josh 6:12; Josh 7:16
20:21 Gen 49:27; Hos 10:9; Deut 23:9
20:22 Judg 20:15,17; 1 Sam 30:6; 2 Sam 11:25
20:23 Judg 20:26,27; Ps 78:34-36; Hos 5:15
20:25 Judg 20:21; Gen 18:25; Job 9:12,13
20:26 Judg 20:18,23; Ezra 8:21; Ezra 9:4,5
20:27 Josh 18:1; Judg 20:18,23; 1 Sam 4:3,4
20:28 Josh 24:33; Deut 18:5; Judg 7:9
20:29 Josh 8:4; Judg 20:34; 2 Sam 5:23
20:31 Josh 8:14-16; Judg 19:13,14; Isa 10:29
20:32 Josh 8:15,16
20:33 Josh 8:18-22
20:34 Matt 24:39; Josh 8:14; Job 21:13

20:13 *give up the men, the sons of worthlessness who are in Gibeah* This was a fair offer. Hand over the guilty, and the rest of Benjamin would be spared. The Law said, "you shall purge the evil from your midst" (Deut 17:7). Benjamin chose to protect its own rather than do what was right, and so shared in the guilt.

20:16 *seven hundred chosen men restricted in their right hand* Left-handed men, like Ehud the Benjamite (3:15). The name Benjamin means son of the right hand, yet the tribe was known for left-handed fighters. Their skill with a sling was deadly. Years later a shepherd boy would win with one stone (1 Sam 17:49).

20:18 *went up to Bethel and inquired of God* The ark was at Bethel in those days (20:27). But notice the question. They asked who should go first, not whether they should go at all. The answer, "Judah first," echoes the start of the book (1:2).

20:21 *destroyed in Israel on that day twenty-two thousand men* A crushing loss on the first day, even though Israel had asked God and had the bigger army. Numbers and a good cause do not guarantee victory.

20:23 *wept before the LORD until the evening* Now they wept, and now they called Benjamin "my brother." Their question was humbler too: "Shall I again draw near?" Grief was beginning to soften them.

20:25 *they destroyed among the sons of Israel again eighteen thousand men* Why would God send them up only to lose forty thousand men in two days? Teachers have given several answers that fit together. God was disciplining all Israel, not only Benjamin, for the idolatry and sin that filled the land (chapters 17-18). Israel had gone in self-confident with its plan already made. And the losses humbled them until they truly sought Him (20:26-28).

20:26 *they fasted on that day until the evening, and they offered up burnt offerings and peace offerings* This time they came with fasting and sacrifice. The burnt offering was wholly given to God, a picture of full surrender. The peace offering spoke of fellowship restored with Him. Only now did they come in full humility.

20:28 *Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron* Phinehas was Aaron's grandson, the zealous priest of Num 25. His presence shows that these events took place early in the judges period, though they are placed at the end of the book. The LORD now gave a promise He had not given before: "tomorrow I will give him into your hand."

20:29 *Israel set ambushers against Gibeah all around* The same plan Joshua used at Ai (Josh 8:2). Israel pretended to retreat, drew Benjamin out, and the ambush took the city.

the calamity ***was*** touching them. **35** And the LORD defeated Benjamin before Israel, and the sons of Israel destroyed in Benjamin on that day twenty-five thousand and one hundred men; all these ***were*** drawing ***the*** sword. **36** And the sons of Benjamin saw that they were defeated. And the men of Israel gave place to Benjamin, for they trusted in the ambush which they had set against Gibeah. **37** And the ambush hurried and rushed against Gibeah; and the ambush moved forward and struck all the city by the mouth of ***the*** sword. **38** And the appointed signal of the men of Israel with the ambush was, "Make great their sending up of the rising of smoke from the city." **39** And the men of Israel turned in the battle, and Benjamin began to strike down slain among the men of Israel, about thirty men, for they said, "Surely he is utterly defeated before us, as ***in*** the first battle." **40** And the rising began to go up from the city, a pillar of smoke; and Benjamin turned behind him, and look, the whole of the city went up toward the heavens. **41** And the men of Israel turned, and the men of Benjamin were terrified, for they saw that the calamity had touched them. **42** And they turned before the men of Israel toward the way of the wilderness, and the battle overtook them; and those who ***were*** from the cities ***were*** destroying them in their midst. **43** They surrounded Benjamin, they pursued him; ***at his*** resting place they trod him down, as far as opposite Gibeah toward the rising of the sun. **44** And ***there*** fell of Benjamin eighteen thousand men; all these ***were*** men of valor. **45** And they turned and fled toward the wilderness, to the rock of Rimmon (Rimon); and they gleaned of them on the highways five thousand men, and they pursued closely after them as far as Gidom, and they struck down of them two thousand men. **46** And all who fell of Benjamin on that day were twenty-five thousand men drawing ***the*** sword; all these ***were*** men of valor. **47** And they turned and fled toward the wilderness, to the rock of Rimmon, six hundred men; and they dwelt at the rock of Rimmon four months. **48** And the men of Israel turned back against the sons of Benjamin and struck them by the mouth of ***the*** sword, from the city, entirely, to the beast, to all that was found; also all the cities that were found they set on fire.

JUDGES 21

Wives for Benjamin

1 And the men of Israel (Yisra'el) had sworn at Mizpah (Mitspa), saying, "No man of us shall give his daughter to Benjamin (Binyamin) as a wife." **2** And the people came ***to*** Bethel (Bet-El) and sat there until the evening before God, and they lifted up their voice and wept a great weeping. **3** And they said, "Why, O LORD, God of Israel, has this happened in Israel, that today one tribe should be missing from Israel?" **4** And it was on the next day, and the people rose early and built there an altar, and they offered up burnt offerings and peace offerings. **5** And the sons of Israel said, "Who ***is there*** who did not come up in the assembly from all the tribes of Israel to the LORD?" For the great oath had been concerning him who did not come up to the LORD at Mizpah, saying, "He shall surely be put to death." **6** And the sons of Israel had compassion for Benjamin their brother, and they said, "One tribe has been cut off from Israel today. **7** What shall we do for them, for those who remain, for wives? And we have sworn by the LORD not to give them ***any*** of our daughters as wives." **8** And they said, "Which one ***is there*** of the tribes of Israel that did not come up to the LORD at Mizpah?" And look, no man had come to the camp from Jabesh-gilead (Yavesh-Gilad), to the assembly. **9** And the people were mustered, and look, there was not a man there

20:35 Judg 20:15,44-46; Job 20:5
20:36 Josh 8:15-29
20:37 Josh 8:19; Exod 19:13; Josh 6:5
20:38 Gen 17:21; 2 Kgs 4:16
20:40 Josh 8:20; Gen 19:28; Song 3:6
20:41 Exod 15:9,10; Isa 13:8,9; Isa 33:14
20:42 Lam 1:3; Hos 9:9; Hos 10:9
20:43 Josh 8:20-22
20:45 Josh 15:32; 1 Chr 6:77; Zech 14:10
20:46 Judg 20:15,35
20:47 Judg 21:13; Ps 103:9,10; Isa 1:9
20:48 Deut 13:15-17; 2 Chr 25:13; 2 Chr 28:6-9
21:1 Judg 20:1,8,10; Eccl 5:2; Jer 4:2
21:2 Judg 20:18,23,26; Judg 21:12; Josh 18:1
21:3 Deut 29:24; Josh 7:7-9; Ps 74:1
21:4 Ps 78:34,35; Hos 5:15; Judg 6:26
21:5 Judg 5:23; Judg 21:1,18; Lev 27:28,29
21:6 Judg 21:15; Judg 11:35; Judg 20:23
21:7 Judg 21:1,18; 1 Sam 14:28,29,45
21:8 1 Sam 31:11-13; 1 Sam 11:1-3; 2 Sam 2:5,6

20:35 *the LORD defeated Benjamin before Israel* The ambush was the method, but the LORD gave the victory. The verse makes clear who decided the battle.
20:40 *a pillar of smoke* The signal rose from the burning city. When Benjamin turned and saw it, they knew they were trapped between two armies.
20:46 *twenty-five thousand men drawing the sword* The numbers fit together. Eighteen thousand fell in the main battle (20:44), five thousand on the highways and two thousand at Gidom (20:45). That is twenty-five thousand, a round figure for the 25,100 of 20:35.
20:47 *six hundred men* Only six hundred men of Benjamin survived, hiding at the rock of Rimmon for four months. One whole tribe of Israel was nearly wiped out.
20:48 *struck them by the mouth of the sword, from the city, entirely, to the beast* Here Israel went far beyond justice. They had asked for the guilty men (20:13), and God had promised victory (20:28), but He never told them to destroy every town, the women, the children and even the animals. Anger left unchecked runs past what God commands. "The anger of a man does not produce the righteousness of God" (James 1:20).
21:1 *No man of us shall give his daughter to Benjamin as a wife* This oath was sworn in the heat of anger before the war. Like Jephthah's vow (11:30-31), it was rash. Now, with most of Benjamin's women dead (20:48), it meant the tribe could not go on.
21:3 *Why, O LORD, God of Israel, has this happened in Israel* The answer was right in front of them. Gibeah did evil, Benjamin protected the guilty, and Israel's anger went far beyond justice. Yet they asked God why, as if He had done it. People often blame God for the results of their own choices.
21:4 *built there an altar, and they offered up burnt offerings and peace offerings* They offered sacrifices, but notice that in this whole chapter they never ask God what to do. They made every decision themselves.
21:5 *He shall surely be put to death* A second oath, not recorded in chapter 20 but made then. Israel would now use one oath to solve the problem of the other.
21:7 *we have sworn by the LORD not to give them any of our daughters as wives* Their grief was real, but they were trapped by their own words. The Law made a way for a rash oath to be confessed and atoned for (Lev 5:4-6). Some teachers add that an oath to do wrong should be broken, not kept. Instead Israel looked for a way to keep the letter of the oath while getting around its meaning.
21:8 *no man had come to the camp from Jabesh-gilead* Jabesh-gilead was a town east of the Jordan in Gilead, in the land of the half tribe of Manasseh.

of the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead. **10** And the congregation sent there twelve thousand men of the sons of valor, and they commanded them, saying, "Go, and you shall strike the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead by the mouth of ***the*** sword, and the women and the little ones. **11** And this ***is*** the thing which you shall do: every male and every woman who has known the lying of a male you shall devote to destruction." **12** And they found among the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead four hundred young women, virgins, who had not known a man by the lying of a male; and they brought them to the camp at Shiloh (Shilo), which ***is*** in the land of Canaan (Kena'an). **13** And all the congregation sent and spoke to the sons of Benjamin who ***were*** at the rock of Rimmon (Rimon), and they proclaimed peace to them. **14** And Benjamin returned at that time, and they gave them the women whom they had kept alive of the women of Jabesh-gilead; and they did not find ***enough*** for them so. **15** And the people had compassion for Benjamin, because the LORD had made a breach in the tribes of Israel.

The Daughters of Shiloh

16 And the elders of the congregation said, "What shall we do for those who remain, for wives, since the women have been destroyed from Benjamin?" **17** And they said, "A possession of escaped ones ***belongs*** to Benjamin, and a tribe shall not be wiped out from Israel. **18** And we, we are not able to give them wives of our daughters, for the sons of Israel have sworn, saying, 'Cursed ***be*** he who gives a wife to Benjamin.'" **19** And they said, "Look, ***there is*** the festival of the LORD in Shiloh from year to year, which ***is*** north of Bethel, east of the highway that goes up from Bethel to Shechem (Shekhem), and south of Lebonah (Levona)." **20** And they commanded the sons of Benjamin, saying, "Go, and you shall lie in wait in the vineyards. **21** And you shall see, and look, if the daughters of Shiloh come out to dance in the dances, then you shall come out from the vineyards and seize for yourselves each man his wife from the daughters of Shiloh, and you shall go ***to*** the land of Benjamin. **22** And it shall be, when their fathers or their brothers come to complain to us, that we will say to them, 'Be gracious to us ***concerning*** them, for we did not take each man his wife in the battle; for you yourselves did not give ***them*** to them; ***otherwise*** at this time you would be guilty.'" **23** And the sons of Benjamin did so, and they carried off wives according to their number from the dancers whom they seized; and they went and returned to their inheritance, and they built the cities and dwelt in them. **24** And the sons of Israel went away from there at that time, each man to his tribe and to his clan; and they went out from there, each man to his inheritance. **25** In those days ***there was*** no king in Israel; each man did what ***was*** right in his own eyes.

21:10 Judg 21:5; Judg 5:23; 1 Sam 11:7
21:11 Num 31:17,18; Deut 2:34
21:12 Josh 18:1; Judg 20:18,23; Ps 78:60
21:13 Judg 20:47; Deut 20:10; Josh 15:32
21:14 Judg 21:12; Judg 20:47; 1 Cor 7:2
21:15 Judg 21:6,17; 1 Chr 13:11; 1 Chr 15:13
21:17 Num 26:55; Num 36:7
21:18 Judg 21:1; Judg 11:35
21:19 Exod 23:14-16; Lev 23:2,4,6,10,34; Num 10:10
21:21 Judg 11:34; Exod 15:20; 1 Sam 18:6
21:22 Judg 21:1,7,18; Phlm 1:9-12; Judg 21:14
21:23 Judg 20:48
21:25 Judg 17:6; Judg 18:1; Judg 19:1

21:11 *every male and every woman who has known the lying of a male you shall devote to destruction* "Devote to destruction" is the word used for the ban on the Canaanites in Joshua. We must call this what it is. It was a massacre. A town of Israel was wiped out, children included, for missing the assembly, and its young women were taken by force to be wives to men they had never met. God did not command it. It was one more evil piled on the evils of the last three chapters.
21:12 *the camp at Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan* A chilling phrase. Shiloh was where the tabernacle stood, yet the writer reminds us it was in Canaan, as if to say Israel was now acting like the Canaanites it was meant to replace.
21:12 *four hundred young women, virgins* Jabesh-gilead appears again later. Saul of Gibeah in Benjamin rescued the town from Nahash (1 Sam 11:1-11), and its men risked their lives to bury Saul and his sons (1 Sam 31:11-13). Some think the bond went back to this chapter, since many Benjaminite families now had mothers from that town. Scripture does not say.
21:14 *they did not find enough for them so* Four hundred women for six hundred men. Two hundred men were still without wives.
21:15 *the LORD had made a breach in the tribes of Israel* A breach is a gap, like a broken place in a wall. The people speak as if the LORD had done it. He allowed it as a judgment, but the breach came through Israel's own sin and anger.
21:17 *a tribe shall not be wiped out from Israel* That much was right. The twelve tribes would remain. Benjamin would later give Israel its first king, Saul, and much later the apostle Paul (Rom 11:1; Phil 3:5).
21:19 *there is the festival of the LORD in Shiloh from year to year* The writer gives careful directions to Shiloh, north of Bethel, east of the road to Shechem, south of Lebonah, as if most people had forgotten where the house of God was. The feast may have been the Feast of Booths at the grape harvest, which would fit the vineyards. Scripture does not name it.
21:21 *seize for yourselves each man his wife from the daughters of Shiloh* This is kidnapping and forced marriage, and it was done at a feast of the LORD, at His house. It treats young women who came to worship as prizes to be grabbed.
21:22 *you yourselves did not give them to them; otherwise at this time you would be guilty* The worst kind of reasoning. It keeps the letter of the oath while trampling everything the oath was about.
21:23 *they built the cities and dwelt in them* On the surface the problem was solved. But think what it took: a civil war, tens of thousands dead, a town destroyed and six hundred young women taken from their families. The writer tells it flatly, without a word of praise. He wants us to see that this is what passed for a solution.
21:25 *In those days there was no king in Israel; each man did what was right in his own eyes* The book ends here, the fourth time we have heard this in five chapters (17:6; 18:1; 19:1). Every person in these chapters thought he was doing right. The writer points to a king, and Ruth ends with the name of the king God was preparing: David (Ruth 4:22). But Israel's kings would fail too. The deepest need was a righteous King who changes hearts. God promised Him to David (2 Sam 7:16), and He came: Jesus Christ, who will one day reign over Israel and the whole earth (Luke 1:32-33). Who is king in your life?

RUTH

Introduction

Title

The book is named for Ruth, a young widow from Moab who chose the LORD and His people. Only two books of the Bible are named for women, Ruth and Esther. In the Hebrew Bible, Ruth sits among the Writings, in a group of five short books read aloud at the yearly feasts. Ruth is read at the Feast of Weeks, the feast at the end of the grain harvest, because so much of the story happens during the barley and wheat harvests. Our English Bibles place it right after Judges, and it fits there well. It opens "in the days of the judging of the judges" (1:1) and closes with the name of David, whose story begins in 1 Samuel.

Author and Date

The book does not name its writer. Jewish tradition names Samuel. The family line at the end names David (4:17, 22) but not Solomon, so it was most likely written in David's time, about 1010 to 970 B.C., or shortly before. The writer explains the sandal custom as something done "formerly" in Israel (4:7), so he wrote some time after the events. Samuel fits these clues well, though he died before David took the throne (1 Sam 25:1), so others suggest a writer in David's court.

Background and Setting

The events took place in the days of the judges, most likely about 1100 B.C. Boaz was David's great-grandfather (4:21-22), and David was born about 1040 B.C. Scripture does not say which judge was ruling. The story moves from Bethlehem of Judah, a small farming town about six miles south of Jerusalem whose name means house of bread, to the land of Moab east of the Dead Sea, and back again. The Moabites came from Lot (Gen 19:36-37). They hired Balaam to curse Israel, led Israel into idolatry at Peor (Num 22-25), and their king Eglon ruled Israel for eighteen years (Judg 3:12-14). The Law said no Moabite should enter the assembly of the LORD (Deut 23:3). That is the background for a Moabite widow coming to Bethlehem.

Three parts of the Law of Moses stand behind the story. Gleaning: farmers left the edges of their fields and the dropped grain for the poor, the foreigner and the widow (Lev 19:9-10; Deut 24:19-22). Redemption of land: when an Israelite became poor and sold his land, his nearest relative was to buy it back (Lev 25:23-28). Marriage of a dead man's widow: a brother married the widow so that their first son would carry on the dead man's name (Deut 25:5-10). Boaz was not Mahlon's brother, but he acted in the spirit of these laws.

Themes

God is never seen doing a miracle in Ruth. No angel appears, no prophet speaks, no sea divides. Yet His hand is in every step: the end of the famine, the field Ruth happens to choose, the day Boaz happens to come by, the relative who happens to pass the city gate. The theme of the book is God's quiet, faithful care for His people, shown through people who are faithful to one another.

The key word is hesed, steadfast love, the loyal kindness that keeps its commitments and goes further than duty requires (1:8; 2:20; 3:10). Ruth shows hesed to Naomi, Boaz shows it to Ruth, and behind them both the LORD shows it to all of them. The second key word is go'el, redeemer, the close relative who buys back what was lost. The word and its related forms appear more than twenty times in four short chapters.

Ruth also shows that God welcomes anyone, even a foreigner from a hated nation, who comes to Him by faith and takes refuge under His wings (2:12). And it traces the family of David back to Bethlehem, showing that in the darkest days of the judges, God was already preparing Israel's king.

Christ in Ruth

Matthew names Ruth in the family line of Jesus: "Boaz fathered Obed by Ruth, and Obed fathered Jesse" (Matt 1:5). A widow from Moab became the great-grandmother of David and an ancestor of the Messiah. That is the gospel reaching the nations, as God promised Abraham (Gen 12:3). Boaz is also a picture of Christ our Redeemer. A redeemer had to be a close relative, able to pay the price and willing to do it. Jesus became our relative by taking on flesh (Heb 2:14-17), paid the price with His own blood (1 Pet 1:18-19), and did it willingly. Jesus was born in Bethlehem, the same town where Ruth gleaned (Luke 2:4).

Hard Passages

Was Elimelech wrong to take his family to Moab (1:1)? Scripture does not say directly. Many see the move as a step away from trusting God, while others note that Scripture never blames him. The notes name both views.

What happened at the threshing floor (3:4-14)? Some readers find something improper in Ruth lying at Boaz's feet at night. The text gives no hint of sin. It was a humble, private way to ask him to act as redeemer and marry her, and Boaz took care to guard her good name.

How could a Moabite enter Israel when Deuteronomy 23:3 kept Moabites out of the assembly? The notes at 4:12 give the main answers. Ruth had left Moab and its gods and taken refuge in the LORD (1:16), and God received her, as He received Rahab (Josh 6:25).

How does the sandal custom of 4:7-8 relate to Deuteronomy 25:7-10? The two may be related, but in Ruth there is no shame or spitting. It is a simple way of sealing a transfer of rights.

Outline

I. Emptiness in Moab and the Return (1:1-22)
  A. A family lost in Moab (1:1-5)
  B. Naomi turns home (1:6-14)
  C. Ruth's confession of faith (1:15-18)
  D. Bitter Naomi in Bethlehem (1:19-22)
II. Kindness in the Harvest Field (2:1-23)
  A. Ruth gleans in the field of Boaz (2:1-7)
  B. Boaz shows favor to a foreigner (2:8-16)
  C. Naomi learns of a redeemer (2:17-23)
III. A Request at the Threshing Floor (3:1-18)
  A. Naomi's plan (3:1-5)
  B. Ruth asks Boaz to redeem (3:6-13)
  C. Ruth waits (3:14-18)
IV. Redemption at the City Gate (4:1-22)

A. The nearer redeemer steps aside (4:1-8)
B. Boaz redeems and marries Ruth (4:9-12)
C. Naomi holds a son (4:13-17)
D. The line of David (4:18-22)

RUTH

RUTH 1

Naomi and Ruth Return to Bethlehem

1 And it was in the days of the judging of the judges, and there was a famine in the land; and a man went from Bethlehem (Bet-Lechem) of Judah (Yehuda) to sojourn in the country of Moab (Mo'av), he and his wife and his two sons. **2** And the name of the man ***was*** Elimelech (Elimelekh), and the name of his wife ***was*** Naomi (No'omi), and the name of his two sons ***was*** Mahlon (Machlon) and Chilion (Kilyon),
Ephrathites from Bethlehem of Judah. And they came ***to*** the country of Moab and were there. **3** And Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, died, and she was left, she and her two sons. **4** And they took for themselves Moabite wives; the name of the one ***was*** Orpah (Orpa), and the name of the second ***was*** Ruth (Rut). And they dwelt there about ten years. **5** And both of them, Mahlon and Chilion, also died, and the woman was left without her two children and without her husband. **6** And she arose, she and her daughters-in-law, and she returned from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the country of Moab that the LORD had visited His people to give them bread. **7** And she went out from the place where she had been, and her two daughters-in-law ***were*** with her; and they went on the way to return to the land of Judah. **8** And Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go, return each woman to the house of her mother. May the LORD do steadfast love with you, just as you have done with the dead and with me. **9** May the LORD give to you ***that*** you find rest, each woman ***in*** the house of her husband." And she kissed them, and they lifted up their voice and wept. **10** And they said to her, "Rather, with you we will return to your people." **11** And Naomi said, "Return, my daughters. Why will you go with me? ***Do*** I still have sons in my womb, and they will become husbands for you? **12** Return, my daughters, go; for I am too old to belong to a husband. If I said, 'There is hope for me,' even ***if*** I belonged to a husband tonight, and also bore sons, **13** would you therefore wait until they grew up? Would you therefore shut yourselves off so as not to belong to a husband? No, my daughters; for it is very bitter for me, more than ***for*** you, for the hand of the LORD has gone out against me." **14** And they lifted up their voice and wept again; and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, and Ruth clung to her.

Ruth Chooses Naomi's God

15 And she said, "Look, your sister-in-law has returned to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law." **16** And Ruth said, "Do not urge me to forsake you, to turn

1:1 Matt 2:5; Gen 12:10; Gen 26:1
1:2 Gen 35:19; 1 Sam 17:21; Mic 5:2
1:3 2 Kgs 4:1; Ps 34:19; Heb 12:6,10,11
1:4 Matt 1:5; Deut 7:3; Deut 23:3
1:5 Matt 22:25; Matt 22:27; Deut 32:39
1:6 Ps 132:15; Exod 4:31; Matt 6:11
1:7 2 Kgs 8:3; Ruth 1:10,14; Exod 18:27
1:8 2 Tim 1:16; 2 Tim 1:18; Ruth 1:5
1:9 Ruth 3:1; Gen 27:27; Gen 29:11
1:10 Ps 16:3; Ps 119:63; Zech 8:23
1:11 Rom 4:18; Gal 4:27; Deut 25:5
1:12 Rom 4:18; Gal 4:27; Gen 17:17
1:13 Rom 4:18; Gal 4:27; Job 19:21
1:14 Prov 17:17; Prov 18:24; Gen 31:28,55
1:15 Luke 24:28; Judg 11:24; Zeph 1:6
1:16 Luke 24:28; Matt 1:5; John 1:38

1:1 *in the days of the judging of the judges* Ruth happens in the same dark days as the book of Judges, when "each man did what was right in his own eyes" (Judg 21:25). That makes this story of faithful people stand out all the more.
1:1 *there was a famine in the land* In the Law, God warned that if Israel turned from Him, the land would not give its crops (Deut 28:15-18, 38). The famine may well have been part of that discipline. The family came from Bethlehem, which means house of bread, and there was no bread in the house of bread.
1:1 *to sojourn in the country of Moab* To sojourn is to live somewhere as a foreigner for a while. Moab lay east of the Dead Sea, about fifty miles from Bethlehem. Scripture does not judge the move directly. Many teachers see it as a step away from trusting God in His land, while others note that Scripture never blames him. Either way, the losses that follow make us ask where we turn when times are hard.
1:2 *Elimelech* His name means my God is King, a striking name in a time when Israel had no king and every man did as he pleased. Naomi means pleasant. Mahlon and Chilion may mean sickly and failing, though no one is sure.
1:2 *Ephrathites* Ephrathah was an old name for Bethlehem or for the clan that lived there (Gen 35:19; Mic 5:2).
1:4 *they took for themselves Moabite wives* The Law forbade marriage with the Canaanite peoples (Deut 7:3) and kept Moabites out of the assembly (Deut 23:3). These marriages were at least a risk to the family's faith. Ruth was Mahlon's wife (4:10).
1:5 *the woman was left without her two children and without her husband* Ten years of marriage and no children. In that world a widow with no sons had no one to provide for her and no one to carry on her husband's name. Naomi was alone, poor and a foreigner. The story does not hurry past her grief, and neither should we.
1:6 *the LORD had visited His people to give them bread* When God "visits" in the Bible, He comes to act for His people. This is one of only two places where the writer himself says what the LORD did. The other is 4:13. At the start God gave bread, and at the end He gave a son.
1:7 *to return to the land of Judah* The word "return" runs all through this chapter. In Hebrew it is the same word often used for turning back to God in repentance.
1:8 *May the LORD do steadfast love with you* "Steadfast love" is the Hebrew word hesed: loyal love, kindness that keeps its commitments and goes further than it has to. It is the word for God's covenant love (Exod 34:6), and it is the key word of this book (2:20; 3:10).
1:9 *rest* A settled, safe home with a husband to provide and protect. Naomi will later work to see this prayer answered (3:1).
1:11 *Do I still have sons in my womb* Naomi has in mind the custom of Deuteronomy 25:5-10, where a brother married his dead brother's widow to carry on his name. She had no sons left to give.
1:13 *the hand of the LORD has gone out against me* Naomi did not blame chance or the gods of Moab. She believed God was in control, but she believed He was against her. She would learn that the hand she thought was against her was working for her all along.
1:14 *Ruth clung to her* "Clung" is the same word used in Genesis 2:24, where a man clings to his wife. It is the word for a bond that holds. Orpah did what Naomi urged and what made sense. Ruth did more.
1:15 *to her people and to her gods* The god of Moab was Chemosh (Num 21:29). Going back to Moab meant going back to Moab's gods. The choice was about whom to worship, not only where to live.
1:16 *your people will be my people, and your God my God* This is Ruth's confession of faith. She was leaving her people, her land and her gods to belong to the LORD and to His people. Saving faith is more than agreeing with facts. It is turning from other gods and giving yourself to the true God, whatever it costs (Luke 14:26-33).

back from after you; for where you go, I will go, and where you lodge, I will lodge; your people ***will be*** my people, and your God my God. **17** Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. Thus may the LORD do to me, and thus may He add, for death ***alone*** will separate between me and you." **18** And she saw that she was determined to go with her, and she ceased speaking to her.

Naomi Comes Home Bitter

19 And the two of them went until they came ***to*** Bethlehem. And it was, when they came ***to*** Bethlehem, and all the city was stirred over them, and they said, "***Is*** this Naomi?" **20** And she said to them, "Do not call me Naomi; call me Mara, for the Almighty has made ***it*** very bitter for me. **21** I went full, and empty the LORD has brought me back. Why do you call me Naomi, and the LORD has testified against me, and the Almighty has done evil to me?" **22** And Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabite, her daughter-in-law, with her, who returned from the country of Moab; and they came ***to*** Bethlehem at the beginning of the harvest of barley.

RUTH 2

Ruth Gleans in the Field of Boaz

1 And Naomi (No'omi) ***had*** a relative of her husband, a man mighty of wealth, from the clan of Elimelech (Elimelekh); and his name ***was*** Boaz. **2** And Ruth (Rut) the Moabite said to Naomi, "Let me go, please, ***to*** the field, and let me glean among the ears of grain behind ***him*** in whose eyes I find favor." And she said to her, "Go, my daughter." **3** And she went and came and gleaned in the field behind the harvesters; and her chance happened ***upon*** the portion of the field of Boaz, who ***was*** from the clan of Elimelech. **4** And look, Boaz came from Bethlehem (Bet-Lechem), and he said to the harvesters, "The LORD ***be*** with you." And they said to him, "May the LORD bless you." **5** And Boaz said to his young man who was stationed over the harvesters, "Whose ***is*** this young woman?" **6** And the young man who was stationed over the harvesters answered and said, "She ***is*** a Moabite young woman who returned with Naomi from the country of Moab (Mo'av). **7** And she said, 'Let me glean, please, and I will gather among the sheaves behind the harvesters.' And she came and has stood since the morning and until now; this, her sitting ***in*** the house, ***has been*** little."

Boaz Shows Kindness to Ruth

8 And Boaz said to Ruth, "Have you not heard, my daughter? Do not go to glean in another field, and also you shall not pass on from this ***one***, and thus you shall cling to my young women. **9** Your eyes ***be*** on the field which they harvest, and you shall go behind them. Have I not commanded the young men not to touch you? And ***when*** you are thirsty, you shall go to the vessels and drink from what the young men draw." **10** And she fell on her face and bowed down to the ground, and she said to him, "Why have I found favor in your eyes, that you should take notice of me, and I ***am*** a foreigner?" **11** And Boaz answered and said to her, "It has surely been told to me, all that you have done with your mother-in-law after the death of your husband, and ***how*** you left your father and your mother and the land of your kindred, and came to a people whom you did not know yesterday ***or*** the day before. **12** May the LORD repay your work, and may your wages be

1:17 1 Sam 3:17; 1 Sam 25:22; 2 Sam 19:13
1:18 Acts 21:14; Acts 2:42; Eph 6:10
1:19 Matt 21:10; Matt 2:5; Luke 2:4
1:20 Rev 1:8; Rev 21:22; Job 6:4
1:21 Job 1:21; 1 Sam 2:7,8; Job 10:17
1:22 Matt 1:5; Ruth 2:23; 2 Sam 21:9
2:1 Matt 1:5; Luke 3:32; Ruth 4:21
2:2 Matt 1:5; Lev 23:22; Lev 19:9,16
2:3 Matt 1:5; 2 Thess 3:12; 1 Thess 4:11,12
2:4 2 Thess 3:16; Matt 1:5; Matt 2:5
2:5 Ruth 4:21; 1 Chr 2:11,12
2:6 Gen 15:2; Gen 24:2; Gen 39:4
2:7 Prov 15:33; Prov 18:23; Prov 13:4
2:8 1 Sam 3:6,16; 2 Kgs 5:13; Matt 9:2,22
2:9 1 John 5:18; Matt 10:42; Gen 20:6
2:10 1 Sam 25:23; 2 Sam 9:8; Rom 12:10
2:11 Ruth 1:11,14-22; Ps 37:5,6; Ps 45:10
2:12 Matt 23:37; 2 Tim 1:18; Luke 13:34

1:17 *Thus may the LORD do to me, and thus may He add* A solemn oath. A Moabite woman swore by Israel's God, using His covenant name. Boaz later says she came to take refuge under the LORD's wings (2:12). This was the day she did it.

1:20 *call me Mara* Naomi means pleasant. Mara means bitter. "The Almighty" translates Shaddai, a name for God that stresses His power (Gen 17:1).

1:21 *I went full, and empty the LORD has brought me back* Naomi's words are raw, and God does not condemn her for them. The Psalms are full of people pouring out their pain to God (Ps 13; 88). But she missed something. Ruth, who had promised never to leave her, was standing right beside her. She was not as empty as she thought.

1:21 *has done evil to me* "Evil" here means harm or trouble, not sin.

1:22 *Ruth the Moabite* The writer keeps calling Ruth "the Moabite." He never lets us forget she is a foreigner, which makes what God does with her all the more amazing.

1:22 *at the beginning of the harvest of barley* Barley was the first grain harvest, in the spring, about April. The chapter began with famine and ends with harvest. God was already turning Naomi's story around.

2:1 *a man mighty of wealth* The same Hebrew words describe a mighty warrior, as with Gideon (Judg 6:12). Boaz was a man of strength, standing and good character. Later he calls Ruth "a woman of worth" (3:11), using the same word. The name Boaz may mean in him is strength.

2:2 *let me glean* Gleaning was God's way of caring for the poor. Farmers were not to harvest the edges of their fields or go back for dropped grain. They left it "for the poor and for the sojourner" (Lev 19:9-10; 23:22; Deut 24:19). Ruth was both. She did not sit and wait for help. She took the first step.

2:3 *her chance happened upon the portion of the field of Boaz* The writer says it with a smile. To Ruth it was chance. To anyone who knows God, it was not chance at all. The fields were open strips side by side, marked by stones, and out of all of them she walked into the one owned by the man who could redeem her family. God guides our ordinary steps without our knowing it (Prov 16:9).

2:4 *The LORD be with you* Boaz greets his workers with the LORD's name, and they answer in kind. In the days of the judges, here was a field where God was honored in an ordinary workday greeting.

2:7 *she came and has stood since the morning and until now* Ruth's reputation came from her work and her loyalty, not from her family or her nation.

2:8 *my daughter* Boaz was likely older than Ruth (see 3:10).

2:9 *Have I not commanded the young men not to touch you* A foreign woman alone in a field in those lawless days could easily be harmed, as Naomi says in verse 22. Boaz protected her, and he let her drink from his workers' jars, turning the usual order around.

2:10 *Why have I found favor in your eyes* That is the right question to ask about grace, which is favor we have not earned. Ruth knew she had no claim on him. When we see how God has taken notice of us, sinners with no claim on Him, we should ask the same question in wonder.

2:12 *under whose wings you have come to take refuge* A mother bird spreads her wings over her young (Ps 91:4; Matt 23:37). Boaz did not know it yet, but God would answer this prayer through him. In 3:9 Ruth asks him to spread his "wing" over her, using the same word.

complete from the LORD, the God of Israel (Yisra'el), under whose wings you have come to take refuge." **13** And she said, "Let me find favor in your eyes, my lord, for you have comforted me, and for you have spoken to the heart of your maidservant, and I am not like one of your maidservants." **14** And Boaz said to her at the time of the meal, "Come near here, and you shall eat some of the bread and dip your morsel in the vinegar." And she sat beside the harvesters, and he held out roasted grain to her, and she ate and was satisfied and had ***some*** left over. **15** And she rose to glean, and Boaz commanded his young men, saying, "Also between the sheaves she shall glean, and you shall not humiliate her. **16** And also you shall surely pull out for her some of the bundles and leave ***them***, and she shall glean, and you shall not rebuke her."

Naomi Learns of a Redeemer

17 And she gleaned in the field until the evening, and she beat out what she had gleaned, and it was approximately 3/5 bushel (an ephah) of barley. **18** And she lifted ***it*** up and came ***into*** the city, and her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned; and she brought out and gave to her what she had left over from her fill. **19** And her mother-in-law said to her, "Where did you glean today, and where did you work? May the one who took notice of you be blessed." And she told her mother-in-law with whom she had worked, and she said, "The name of the man with whom I worked today ***is*** Boaz." **20** And Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, "Blessed ***is*** he by the LORD, who has not forsaken his steadfast love with the living and with the dead." And Naomi said to her, "The man ***is*** near to us; he ***is*** one of our redeemers." **21** And Ruth the Moabite said, "Also he said to me, 'You shall cling to the young men who ***are*** mine until they have completed all the harvest which ***is*** mine.'" **22** And Naomi said to Ruth her daughter-in-law, "***It is*** good, my daughter, that you go out with his young women, and ***that*** they do not fall upon you in another field." **23** And she clung to the young women of Boaz to glean until the completion of the harvest of the barley and the harvest of the wheat; and she dwelt with her mother-in-law.

RUTH 3

Naomi's Plan

1 And Naomi (No'omi) her mother-in-law said to her, "My daughter, shall I not seek for you a resting place, that it may go well for you? **2** And now, ***is*** not Boaz our relative, with whose young women you were? Look, he is winnowing the threshing floor of the barley tonight. **3** And you shall wash and anoint yourself, and put your garments on yourself, and go down ***to*** the threshing floor; do not make yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking. **4** And let it be, when he lies down, that you shall take note of the place where he lies down there; and you shall go in and uncover his feet and lie down; and he will tell you what you shall do." **5** And she said to her, "All that you say to me I will do."

Ruth at the Threshing Floor

6 And she went down ***to*** the threshing floor and did according to all that her mother-in-law had commanded her. **7** And Boaz ate and drank, and his heart was good, and he went to lie down at the end of the heap; and she came in secrecy and uncovered his feet and lay down. **8** And it was in the middle

2:13 1 Sam 1:18; Gen 33:8,10,15; Gen 43:14
2:14 Ruth 2:18; Luke 14:12-14; Deut 8:10
2:15 James 1:5
2:16 Rom 12:13; 1 John 3:17,18; Deut 24:19-21
2:17 Prov 31:27; Exod 16:36; Ezek 45:11,12
2:18 John 6:12; John 6:13; Ruth 2:14
2:19 Ruth 2:10; Ps 41:1; 2 Cor 9:13-15
2:20 2 Sam 2:5; Ruth 3:9; Prov 17:17
2:21 Ruth 2:7,8,22; Song 1:7,8
2:22 Prov 27:10; Song 1:8
2:23 Prov 6:6-8; Prov 13:1,20; 1 Cor 15:33
3:1 Ruth 1:9; 1 Cor 7:36; 1 Tim 5:8,14
3:2 Ruth 2:8,23; Ruth 2:20-23; Deut 25:5,6
3:3 2 Sam 14:2; Ps 104:15; Eccl 9:8
3:4 1 Thess 5:22
3:6 Prov 1:8; Exod 20:12; John 2:5
3:7 Judg 19:6,9,22; 2 Sam 13:28; Esth 1:10

2:13 *you have spoken to the heart of your maidservant* To speak to the heart means to speak kindly and tenderly (Gen 50:21; Isa 40:2).
2:14 *he held out roasted grain to her* The owner of the field served the foreign gleaner with his own hand. "She ate and was satisfied and had some left over," and she saved it for Naomi (2:18). The one who has every right to stay above us comes near and feeds us. Jesus is the bread of life, and He invites the hungry to come (John 6:35).
2:16 *you shall surely pull out for her some of the bundles* This is hesed in action. The Law said to leave the edges and the dropped grain. Boaz made sure there was extra, and he did it quietly so Ruth kept her dignity. Real kindness helps without making the other person feel small.
2:17 *approximately 3/5 bushel (an ephah) of barley* A very large amount for one day of gleaning, enough to feed two women for some time. Naomi knew at once that someone had helped her (2:19).
2:20 *who has not forsaken His steadfast love with the living and with the dead* Here Naomi's heart turns. In chapter 1 she said the LORD's hand was against her (1:13, 21). Now she praises His hesed. The sentence can point to Boaz or to the LORD, and both are true. The LORD was showing His love through Boaz.
2:20 *one of our redeemers* A redeemer (Hebrew go'el) was a close relative with the right and duty to stand up for family in trouble. He could buy back family land that had been sold (Lev 25:25), buy back a relative sold into slavery for debt (Lev 25:47-49), and keep a family's name and inheritance from being lost. Scripture calls God Israel's Redeemer (Isa 41:14), and Jesus came to "redeem those under law" (Gal 4:5). Boaz is a small picture of that great truth.
2:23 *the harvest of the barley and the harvest of the wheat* About seven weeks, from April into early June. The women had food, but no husband for Ruth, no heir for Elimelech and no hold on the land. Chapter 3 takes up those deeper needs.
3:1 *shall I not seek for you a resting place* Naomi had prayed for this "rest" in 1:9. Now she sees she can help answer her own prayer. The bitter woman of chapter 1 is thinking of Ruth's future, not her own pain. God was healing her heart.
3:2 *he is winnowing the threshing floor of the barley tonight* A threshing floor was a hard, flat surface, often on higher ground where the evening breeze could reach it. Workers tossed the beaten grain into the air, and the wind carried off the light chaff while the grain fell back. At harvest the owner often slept there to guard the grain.
3:3 *wash and anoint yourself, and put your garments on yourself* To anoint here is to put on perfumed oil. Some think she was to set aside the clothes of mourning, a sign she was ready to marry again.
3:4 *uncover his feet and lie down* Naomi was not telling Ruth to tempt Boaz or do anything immoral. Lying at a man's feet was the humble place of a servant. It let Ruth make a private, respectful request that he act as redeemer and marry her, and let Boaz say no without public shame if he chose.
3:7 *his heart was good* He was content after a hard day and a good harvest. The text does not say he was drunk (compare Judg 19:6).

of the night, and the man trembled and twisted himself, and look, a woman ***was*** lying ***at*** his feet. **9** And he said, "Who ***are*** you?" And she said, "I ***am*** Ruth (Rut) your maidservant, and spread your wing over your maidservant, for you ***are*** a redeemer." **10** And he said, "Blessed ***are*** you by the LORD, my daughter. You have made your latter steadfast love better than the former, in not going after the young men, whether poor or rich. **11** And now, my daughter, do not fear; all that you say I will do for you, for all the gate of my people knows that you ***are*** a woman of worth. **12** And now, for truly I ***am*** a redeemer, and also there is a redeemer near***er*** than I. **13** Lodge tonight, and it shall be in the morning, if he will redeem you, good, let him redeem; and if he is not willing to redeem you, then I will redeem you, I, ***as*** the LORD lives. Lie down until the morning."

Ruth Waits

14 And she lay ***at*** his feet until the morning, and she arose before a man could recognize his neighbor; and he said, "Let it not be known that the woman came ***to*** the threshing floor." **15** And he said, "Give the shawl which ***is*** on you and hold it." And she held it, and he measured six ***measures*** of barley and put ***it*** on her; and he came ***into*** the city. **16** And she came to her mother-in-law, and she said, "Who ***are*** you, my daughter?" And she told her all that the man had done for her. **17** And she said, "These six ***measures*** of barley he gave to me, for he said to me, 'Do not go empty to your mother-in-law.'" **18** And she said, "Sit, my daughter, until you know how the matter will fall, for the man will not rest unless he has finished the matter today."

RUTH 4

The Nearer Redeemer Steps Aside

1 And Boaz went up ***to*** the gate and sat down there; and look, the redeemer of whom Boaz had spoken was passing by. And he said, "Turn aside, sit here, so-and-so." And he turned aside and sat down. **2** And he took ten men from the elders of the city, and he said, "Sit here." And they sat down. **3** And he said to the redeemer, "The portion of the field which ***belonged*** to our brother, to Elimelech (Elimelekh), Naomi (No'omi), who returned from the country of Moab (Mo'av), has sold. **4** And I, I said ***that*** I would uncover your ear, saying, 'Acquire ***it*** before those sitting ***here*** and before the elders of my people. If you will redeem, redeem; and if he will not redeem, tell me, and let me know, for there is no one except you to redeem, and I ***am*** after you.'" And he said, "I will redeem." **5** And Boaz said, "On the day you acquire the field from the hand of Naomi, and from Ruth (Rut) the Moabite, the wife of the dead ***man***, you have acquired ***it***, to raise up the name of the dead ***man*** over his inheritance." **6** And the redeemer said, "I am not able to redeem ***it*** for myself, lest I ruin my own inheritance. You, redeem for yourself my redemption, for I am not able to redeem ***it***." **7** And this ***was*** formerly ***the practice*** in Israel (Yisra'el) concerning the redemption and concerning the exchange, to confirm every matter: a man drew off his sandal and gave ***it*** to his neighbor;

3:9 Ezek 16:8; Ruth 2:20; Luke 14:11
3:10 Ruth 1:8; Ruth 2:4,20; 1 Cor 13:4,5
3:11 Prov 12:4; Prov 31:10,29-31
3:12 Ruth 4:1; Matt 7:12; 1 Thess 4:6
3:13 Judg 8:19; Jer 4:2; Ruth 4:5
3:14 2 Cor 8:21; Rom 14:16; 1 Pet 2:12
3:15 Isa 32:8; Gal 6:10
3:18 Ps 37:3-5; Isa 28:16; Isa 30:7
4:1 Ruth 3:12; Deut 25:7; Deut 16:18
4:2 Prov 31:23; 1 Kgs 21:8; Exod 18:21,22
4:3 Ps 112:5; Prov 13:10
4:4 Jer 32:7-9,25; Lev 25:25-29; Rom 12:17
4:5 Matt 22:24; Luke 20:28; Mark 12:19
4:7 Deut 25:7-10

3:9 *spread your wing over your maidservant, for you are a redeemer* To spread the edge of a garment over a woman meant taking her as your wife under your protection. God used the same picture for His covenant with Israel (Ezek 16:8). "Wing" is the word Boaz used in 2:12. In effect Ruth said, You prayed I would find refuge under the LORD's wings. Be the answer to your own prayer. She was also thinking of Naomi, asking him to redeem Elimelech's land and name (4:5, 10).
3:10 *You have made your latter steadfast love better than the former* Her first act of hesed was staying with Naomi. This one was greater. Ruth was young and could have looked for a husband her own age. She put the family's name and Naomi's future first.
3:11 *all the gate of my people knows that you are a woman of worth* The gate was where the elders met to do business and judge cases, so "all the gate" means the whole town. "A woman of worth" is the phrase of Proverbs 31:10, and in many Hebrew Bibles Ruth comes right after Proverbs. A worthy man (2:1) and a worthy woman.
3:12 *there is a redeemer nearer than I* A closer relative had the first right and duty. Boaz would not go around him. He wanted it done in the open, by the Law.
3:13 *as the LORD lives* A solemn promise in the LORD's name. He kept her there until near dawn because sending a woman home alone through the dark fields would have been dangerous.
3:14 *Let it not be known that the woman came to the threshing floor* Nothing wrong had happened, but people could easily have assumed it. Boaz guarded her good name and his own. He is the opposite of the men at the end of Judges, who used women for their own ends.
3:15 *six measures of barley* We do not know exactly how much a measure was, but six of them was as much as she could carry.
3:17 *Do not go empty to your mother-in-law* Naomi had said, "empty the LORD has brought me back" (1:21). Now Boaz says, Do not go back empty. The barley was a message to Naomi: your emptiness is about to be filled.
3:18 *the man will not rest unless he has finished the matter today* Ruth had done her part, and now she had to wait, which is often the hardest part of faith. Our Redeemer does not leave His work half done either. Jesus said, "It has been finished" (John 19:30).
4:1 *Boaz went up to the gate and sat down there* The gate was the town square, courthouse and place of business in one. Everyone going out to the fields passed through it.
4:1 *so-and-so* The Hebrew means a certain someone. The man who would not redeem is left unnamed, and his name is forgotten. Boaz did redeem, and his name is in the line of Christ.
4:2 *ten men from the elders of the city* Ten elders made the deal public and official. Boaz did everything in the open, with witnesses.
4:3 *The portion of the field which belonged to our brother, to Elimelech* "Brother" means relative. Naomi needed to sell the family land, or the right to use it, and the Law said the nearest relative should buy it back so it stayed in the family (Lev 25:25).
4:5 *to raise up the name of the dead man over his inheritance* Now the deal changed. The redeemer would also take Ruth as his wife, and their first son would carry Mahlon's name and one day own the field. This is the idea behind Deuteronomy 25:5-6.
4:6 *I am not able to redeem it for myself, lest I ruin my own inheritance* He would pay for land that would pass to Ruth's son and take on another family to support. He may also not have wanted a Moabite wife among his heirs. Scripture does not say exactly. A redeemer had to be a near relative, able to pay and willing. This man was near and able, but not willing. Boaz was all three.
4:7 *a man drew off his sandal and gave it to his neighbor* The writer explains an old custom no longer common in his day. The sandal likely stood for the right to walk on and possess the land (Josh 1:3). This is not the shameful sandal ceremony of Deuteronomy 25:7-10. There is no spitting or shame here, only a simple way of sealing a transfer.

and this ***was*** the attestation in Israel. **8** And the redeemer said to Boaz, "Acquire ***it*** for yourself." And he drew off his sandal.

Boaz Redeems Ruth

9 And Boaz said to the elders and ***to*** all the people, "You ***are*** witnesses today that I have acquired all that ***belonged*** to Elimelech and all that ***belonged*** to Chilion (Kilyon) and Mahlon (Machlon) from the hand of Naomi. **10** And also Ruth the Moabite, the wife of Mahlon, I have acquired for myself for a wife, to raise up the name of the dead ***man*** over his inheritance, and the name of the dead ***man*** shall not be cut off from among his brothers and from the gate of his place. You ***are*** witnesses today." **11** And all the people who ***were*** at the gate, and the elders, said, "***We are*** witnesses. May the LORD make the woman who is coming into your house like Rachel and like Leah (Le'a), the two of whom built the house of Israel. And do worthily in Ephrathah (Efrata), and proclaim a name in Bethlehem (Bet-Lechem). **12** And may your house be like the house of Perez (Perets), whom Tamar bore to Judah (Yehuda), from the seed which the LORD will give to you from this young woman."

A Son for Naomi

13 And Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife, and he went in to her; and the LORD gave her conception, and she bore a son. **14** And the women said to Naomi, "Blessed ***be*** the LORD, who has not caused a redeemer to cease for you today; and may his name be proclaimed in Israel. **15** And he shall be for you a restorer of life and ***one*** to sustain your old age; for your daughter-in-law who loves you has borne him, she who is better to you than seven sons." **16** And Naomi took the child and placed him in her bosom, and she became a nurse to him. **17** And the neighbor women called him a name, saying, "A son has been born to Naomi." And they called his name Obed (Oved). He ***was*** the father of Jesse (Yishay), the father of David.

The Line of David

18 And these ***are*** the generations of Perez: Perez fathered Hezron (Chetsron), **19** and Hezron fathered Ram, and Ram fathered Amminadab (Aminadav), **20** and Amminadab fathered Nahshon (Nachshon), and Nahshon fathered Salmon (Salma), **21** and Salmon fathered Boaz, and Boaz fathered Obed, **22** and Obed fathered Jesse, and Jesse fathered David.

4:9 Gen 23:16-18; Jer 32:10-12
4:10 Deut 25:6; Eph 5:25; Gen 29:18,19,27
4:11 Matt 2:6; Matt 2:5; Luke 2:4
4:12 Matt 1:3; Luke 3:33; Gen 38:29
4:13 Gen 29:31; Gen 33:5; Ruth 3:11
4:14 Gal 4:27; Luke 1:58; Ps 34:1-3
4:15 Gal 4:27; 1 Sam 1:8; Gen 45:11
4:16 Luke 1:58; Gal 4:27
4:17 Luke 1:58; Luke 1:59; Luke 2:4
4:18 Matt 1:3; Luke 3:31-33; 1 Chr 2:4-8
4:19 Matt 1:4; Matt 1:3; 1 Chr 2:9,10
4:20 Matt 1:4; Num 1:7; Luke 3:32
4:21 Matt 1:5; Luke 3:32; 1 Chr 2:11
4:22 Matt 1:6; Luke 2:4; 1 Sam 16:1

4:9 *You are witnesses today* Boaz took on the whole burden of a ruined family: their land, their widow, their name and their future. He paid the price himself.
4:10 *Ruth the Moabite, the wife of Mahlon, I have acquired for myself for a wife* That is what redemption means: buying back what was lost, at a cost to the redeemer. Christ became our near relative by taking on flesh and blood so He could redeem us (Heb 2:14-17). Boaz paid with silver. Jesus paid with His own blood (1 Pet 1:18-19).
4:11 *like Rachel and like Leah* Jacob's wives, mothers with their servants of the twelve tribes. It was the highest blessing a bride in Israel could receive. Rachel was buried on the road to Bethlehem (Gen 35:19). Ephrathah is the old name for Bethlehem.
4:12 *the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah* Perez was born from another story of a widow denied a husband from her dead husband's family (Gen 38). His family became the leading clan of Judah, and Boaz belonged to it (4:18-21). Tamar, like Ruth, was probably not an Israelite.
4:12 *the house of Perez* What about Deuteronomy 23:3, which kept Moabites out of the assembly? The elders did not object. Some teachers note that the word there is masculine and was applied to men. Others say the law was about Moab as a hostile nation, not a woman who left Moab and its gods to take refuge in the LORD. God received Ruth as He received Rahab (Josh 6:25). Faith opened a door that birth had closed.
4:13 *the LORD gave her conception* Ruth had no children in about ten years with Mahlon (1:4-5). Now the LORD opened her womb. This is the second of the two places where the writer himself tells what the LORD did (see 1:6).
4:14 *who has not caused a redeemer to cease for you today* The redeemer here is the baby, who would carry on the family name, care for Naomi and keep the land in the family.
4:15 *a restorer of life* One who brings life back and makes the heart live again.
4:15 *better to you than seven sons* Seven sons was the picture of a complete family. Ruth's love was worth more than all of that. Naomi had not come home empty after all.
4:16 *Naomi took the child and placed him in her bosom* The last picture of Naomi in the book: she who lost a husband and two sons holds a grandson, and she helped raise him.
4:17 *They called his name Obed* Obed means servant. "He was the father of Jesse, the father of David." Suddenly the whole book opens up. God was preparing Israel's king all along, in the darkest days of the judges.
4:18 *These are the generations of Perez* Ten names from Perez to David. Bible family lines are not just lists. They show God keeping His promises from generation to generation.
4:20 *Nahshon* Leader of the tribe of Judah in the wilderness (Num 1:7; 2:3).
4:21 *Salmon fathered Boaz* Matthew says Salmon married Rahab of Jericho (Matt 1:5). Hebrew family lines sometimes skip generations, so Boaz was her son or a later descendant. A Canaanite woman and a Moabite woman were both in David's family. God's grace reached outsiders long before the gospel went to the nations.
4:22 *Jesse fathered David* Judges ended, "In those days there was no king in Israel" (Judg 21:25). Ruth ends with the name of the king. God promised David an everlasting throne (2 Sam 7:16), and Matthew carries this same line on to Jesus, naming Ruth (Matt 1:5-16). Jesus was born in Bethlehem (Luke 2:4; Mic 5:2). He is the true Redeemer, and one day the Son of David will return to reign on David's throne (Luke 1:32-33).

1 SAMUEL

Introduction

Title

The book is named for Samuel, the prophet who anointed Israel's first two kings. In the Hebrew Bible, 1 and 2 Samuel were one book, among the Former Prophets, the books that tell Israel's history from God's point of view. When the Old Testament was translated into Greek, the long book was split in two, and our Bibles still have it that way. 1 Samuel is the ninth book of the Bible, following Ruth and coming before 2 Samuel, in the historical books that run from Joshua through Esther. It has 31 chapters and 810 verses. It opens with a woman weeping in prayer at Shiloh and closes with a king dying in battle on a mountain.

Author and Date

The book does not name its author. Jewish tradition holds that Samuel wrote the early part. Samuel dies in 25:1, so others had to finish it. The acts of David were written "in the words of Samuel the seer, and in the words of Nathan the prophet, and in the words of Gad the seer" (1 Chr 29:29), and many conservative scholars believe the book was put together from the records of these three prophets. Many modern critical scholars believe it was formed much later from several older sources and edited in the time of the exile. I take the book at its word. It reads as a careful record kept by prophets who knew these men, and the New Testament treats it as true history (Acts 13:21-22; Matt 12:3-4).

The book was finished sometime after Saul's death, most likely after the kingdom divided about 930 B.C., since Ziklag has belonged "to the kings of Judah until this day" (27:6). Some conservatives date it a little earlier, in David's or Solomon's day. The events run from about 1105 to 1010 B.C. Most conservative scholars date the start of Saul's reign about 1050 B.C. Paul says Saul reigned forty years (Acts 13:21), so he died about 1010 B.C., when David became king over Judah. The exact years are debated, and the Hebrew text of 13:1 has a copying problem explained in the notes there.

Background and Setting

1 Samuel picks up where Judges leaves off. Judges ends with Israel falling apart, with no king and every man doing what was right in his own eyes (Judg 21:25). Ruth showed God quietly preparing the family of David in Bethlehem. 1 Samuel is the bridge from the judges to the kings, about one hundred years from Samuel's birth to Saul's death.

Most of the book takes place in the hill country between Shiloh in the north and Bethlehem and the wilderness of Judah in the south. The tabernacle stood at Shiloh. Samuel's home was Ramah, a few miles north of Jerusalem, and Saul's was Gibeah in Benjamin. Israel's great enemy was the Philistines, a sea people in five cities on the coastal plain: Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Gath and Ekron. They had iron weapons, and Israel mostly did not (13:19-22).

The book follows three men. Samuel was a Levite by descent (1 Chr 6:26-28, 33-34), born in answer to his mother's prayer and given to the LORD for life, the last judge, a prophet the whole nation knew (3:20) and a man of prayer remembered with Moses (Jer 15:1; Ps 99:6). Saul, from the small tribe of Benjamin, was tall and impressive and began humbly, but he would not obey, and God rejected him (13:13-14; 15:23). David, the youngest son of Jesse of Judah, was anointed in secret (16:13) and spent years serving and then running from Saul, refusing to harm the LORD's anointed. The first readers, Israel in the days of the kings, needed to know how the kingdom began, why Saul's house lost the throne and why David's house was God's choice.

Themes

The LORD rules over His people and looks at the heart. He raises up the humble and brings down the proud, as Hannah sings: "He brings low, also He exalts" (2:7). He honors those who honor Him (2:30). Saul looked like a king, but David was the one God chose, because "man sees according to the eyes, and the LORD sees according to the heart" (16:7).

Alongside that runs a second theme: obedience matters more than religious show. When Saul spared what God told him to destroy and called it a sacrifice, Samuel answered, "to listen is better than sacrifice" (15:22). The book is not only about whether Israel will have a king, but what kind of king, and whose choice he will be. God had promised kings (Gen 17:6; Deut 17:14-15). Saul is the king the people asked for. David is the king God chose.

The book also shows that God hears the prayers of the humble, from Hannah at Shiloh to David at Ziklag, who "strengthened himself in the LORD his God" (30:6). He holds leaders to a higher standard, and He keeps His promises even when His people fail. The battle belongs to the LORD (17:47).

Christ in 1 Samuel

Before Israel ever had a king, Hannah sang that the LORD "will give strength to His king and exalt the horn of His anointed" (2:10). Anointed is the Hebrew mashiach, which gives us Messiah, and in Greek Christos, Christ (John 1:41). The word was used before for the anointed priest (Lev 4:3), but here for the first time Scripture speaks of the LORD's anointed king, and the book keeps calling the king "the anointed of the LORD" (24:6; 26:9). Saul failed. David, the anointed shepherd from Bethlehem, became the man after God's own heart (13:14; Acts 13:22), and God later promised that his throne would last forever (2 Sam 7). The angel told Mary that God would give her Son "the throne of David His father" (Luke 1:32), and Mary's song echoes Hannah's again and again (Luke 1:46-55). The faithful priest promised in 2:35 was first Zadok, and Jesus is "a merciful and faithful high priest" (Heb 2:17). Samuel, prophet, judge and a man who offered sacrifice, gives a picture of the One who is Prophet, Priest and King, though the New Testament does not name that picture. Peter said all the prophets "from Samuel" on foretold the days of Christ (Acts 3:24).

Hard Passages

1 Samuel does not hide painful things. Eli's sons abused their office and took advantage of women who served at the tabernacle (2:22). Many men of Beth-shemesh died for looking into the

ark (6:19), which the notes explain from God's holiness, and the large number there has a copying question the notes name. God commanded Saul to devote Amalek to destruction, men, women and children (15:3). The notes do not soften it. They explain it as God's judgment after centuries of patience, a one-time command never to be used as a pattern, and they say plainly that I believe little children who die are safe with God (2 Sam 12:23). Samuel put Agag to death before the LORD (15:33).

Saul killed the priests of Nob and their town (22:18-19), which the notes call murder. David lied at Nob and in Gath, and his raids from Ziklag left no one alive (27:8-11). The notes give the readings fairly and point out that the text gives his motive as hiding his lie. Saul consulted a medium (chapter 28), and the notes give the main views of who appeared, while warning against mediums and seances. The book ends with Saul taking his own life (31:4-5). The notes state it plainly without praising it, and they add a word for those who have lost someone to suicide and for anyone struggling with such thoughts. Large numbers are taken as written, and the view that "thousand" can mean a clan or unit is named at 11:8.

Outline

I. Samuel, the Last Judge (1:1-7:17)
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  C. The LORD calls Samuel (3:1-21)
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  A. Israel asks for a king (8:1-22)
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  D. David at Nob, Gath and Adullam (21:1-22:23)
  E. Saul pursues David (23:1-24:22)
  F. David, Nabal and Abigail (25:1-44)
  G. David spares Saul again (26:1-25)
  H. David among the Philistines (27:1-30:31)
  I. The death of Saul and his sons (31:1-13)

1 SAMUEL

1 SAMUEL 1

Hannah's Sorrow

1 And there was a certain man from Ramathaim-zophim (Ramatayim-Tsofim), from the hill country of Ephraim (Efrayim), and his name ***was*** Elkanah (Elqana), the son of Jeroham (Yerocham), the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu (Tochu), the son of Zuph (Tsuf), an Ephrathite. **2** And he ***had*** two wives: the name of the one ***was*** Hannah (Chana), and the name of the second ***was*** Peninnah (Penina). And Peninnah had children, and Hannah ***had*** no children. **3** And that man went up from his city from year to year to bow down and to sacrifice to the LORD of armies at Shiloh (Shilo); and there the two sons of Eli, Hophni (Chofni) and Phinehas (Pinchas), ***were*** priests to the LORD. **4** And the day came, and Elkanah sacrificed, and he would give portions to Peninnah his wife and to all her sons and her daughters. **5** And to Hannah he would give one double portion, for he loved Hannah, and the LORD had closed her womb. **6** And her rival also provoked her ***with*** provocation, in order to make her fret, for the LORD had closed up her womb. **7** And so he did year by year; as often as she went up to the house of the LORD, so she provoked her, and she wept and did not eat. **8** And Elkanah her husband said to her, "Hannah, why do you weep? And why do you not eat? And why is your heart sad? Am I not better to you than ten sons?"

Hannah's Prayer and Vow

9 And Hannah arose after eating in Shiloh and after drinking. And Eli the priest ***was*** sitting on the seat by the doorpost of the temple of the LORD. **10** And she ***was*** bitter of soul, and she prayed to the LORD and wept bitterly. **11** And she vowed a vow and said, "LORD of armies, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant, and remember me and not forget Your maidservant, and give to Your maidservant a seed of men, then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life, and a razor shall not go up on his head." **12** And it was, as she prayed much before the LORD, and Eli ***was*** watching her mouth. **13** And Hannah, she ***was*** speaking in her heart; only her lips ***were*** quivering, and her voice was not heard; and Eli considered her a drunken ***woman***. **14** And Eli said to her, "How long will you be drunk? Put away your wine from you." **15** And Hannah answered and said, "No, my lord, I ***am*** a woman hard of spirit; and wine and strong drink I have not drunk, and I have poured out my soul before the LORD. **16** Do not set your maidservant before ***you as*** a daughter of worthlessness, for from the greatness of my complaint

1:1 1 Sam 1:19; 1 Chr 6:25-27,34; Matt 27:57
1:2 Gen 29:23-29; Judg 8:30; Matt 19:8
1:3 Exod 23:14,17; Luke 2:41; Deut 12:5-7,11-14
1:4 Deut 16:11; Lev 3:4; Lev 7:15
1:5 Gen 30:2; Gen 43:34; Gen 45:22
1:6 Lev 18:18; Job 6:14
1:7 1 Sam 2:19
1:8 John 20:13; John 20:15; Ruth 4:15
1:9 1 Sam 3:3,15; 2 Sam 7:2; Ps 5:7
1:10 Job 7:11; Job 10:1; Ruth 1:20
1:11 Judg 13:5; Gen 29:32; Num 6:5
1:12 Luke 11:8-10; Luke 18:1; Eph 6:18
1:13 Gen 24:42-45; Neh 2:4; Ps 25:1
1:14 Josh 22:12-20; Job 8:2; Ps 62:3
1:15 Ps 62:8; Ps 42:4; Lam 2:19
1:16 1 Sam 2:12; 1 Sam 10:27; 1 Sam 25:25

1:1 *a certain man from Ramathaim-zophim* Ramathaim is the longer name of Ramah, a town in the hill country north of Jerusalem and Samuel's home all his life. Calling Elkanah "an Ephrathite" most likely means he lived in Ephraim. 1 Chronicles 6 shows his family were Levites, from the line of Kohath. Some take Ephrathite as a clan name.
1:2 *he had two wives* The Bible records polygamy but never holds it up as God's plan. From the start God made one man and one woman (Gen 2:24), and nearly every home in Scripture with two wives is a home with trouble. In that world a woman without children often felt shame, as if God were against her.
1:3 *to sacrifice to the LORD of armies at Shiloh* This is the first time the Bible calls God "the LORD of armies," often rendered the LORD of hosts. He commands every army, the stars, the angels and the armies of Israel. Shiloh was where the tabernacle stood (Josh 18:1). The Law called every man to appear before the LORD at the feasts (Deut 16:16), and Elkanah kept going when many did not.
1:3 *the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were priests to the LORD* Remember these names. A priest came from Aaron's family, served at the altar and stood between God and the people. These two will come up again in chapter 2, and not for good reasons.
1:5 *to Hannah he would give one double portion, for he loved Hannah* Part of a peace offering was eaten by the family in a meal before the LORD. Elkanah wanted Hannah to know she mattered to him.
1:6 *for the LORD had closed up her womb* Twice we are told this (1:5). God was at work in Hannah's waiting. That can be hard to hear if you have waited for a child, but it does not mean He was punishing her. He had a plan she could not see yet, as He did with Sarah, Rebekah and Rachel.
1:7 *as often as she went up to the house of the LORD, so she provoked her* Peninnah used Hannah's pain, year after year, and it was worst at the house of the LORD of all places. Some of the deepest wounds come from those closest to us, and sometimes people get hurt worst at church. God saw it all.
1:8 *Am I not better to you than ten sons?* Elkanah meant well. He loved her and wanted to fix her sadness, but he did not really understand it. Sometimes we try to talk people out of grief when what they need is someone to sit with them in it. Hannah did not argue. She took her pain to the LORD.
1:9 *the temple of the LORD* By now the tabernacle at Shiloh had some lasting buildings around it, so it could be called a temple or house of the LORD (1:7).
1:10 *she was bitter of soul, and she prayed to the LORD and wept bitterly* Hannah did not hide her feelings from God or pretend things were fine. She brought her bitterness to Him. God can handle our honest prayers. The Psalms are full of them.
1:11 *a razor shall not go up on his head* Uncut hair was the mark of the Nazirite, a person set apart to God by a special vow (Num 6:1-8), as Samson had been from birth (Judg 13:5). Hannah calls herself "Your maidservant" three times. Was she bargaining? I don't think so. She asked for a son she would give right back. Her prayer had moved from wanting something for herself to wanting God honored.
1:13 *Eli considered her a drunken woman* People usually prayed out loud, so silent prayer was unusual. It says something about those days that a priest assumed a praying woman was drunk. Eli was quick to judge a hurting woman and slow to deal with his own house (2:22-25). We should be careful about jumping to conclusions about people who are hurting.
1:15 *I have poured out my soul before the LORD* A good picture of prayer, holding nothing back: "pour out your heart before Him" (Ps 62:8).
1:16 *a daughter of worthlessness* The same phrase, sons of worthlessness, will describe Eli's own sons (2:12). The woman Eli thought was worthless was the godliest person at Shiloh that day, and the men he let serve at the altar were the worthless ones.

and my provocation I have spoken until now." **17** And Eli answered and said, "Go in peace, and may the God of Israel (Yisra'el) grant your petition which you have asked from Him." **18** And she said, "Let your maidservant find favor in your eyes." And the woman went on her way and ate, and her face was no longer ***sad***.

Samuel Born and Given to the LORD

19 And they rose early in the morning and bowed down before the LORD, and they returned and came to their house at Ramah (Rama). And Elkanah knew Hannah his wife, and the LORD remembered her. **20** And it was at the turning of the days, and Hannah conceived and bore a son; and she called his name Samuel (Shemu'el), "For from the LORD I asked for him." **21** And the man Elkanah and all his household went up to sacrifice to the LORD the yearly sacrifice and his vow. **22** And Hannah did not go up, for she said to her husband, "Until the lad is weaned; and I will bring him, and he shall appear in the presence of the LORD and dwell there forever." **23** And Elkanah her husband said to her, "Do what ***is*** good in your eyes; remain until you have weaned him; only may the LORD establish His word." And the woman remained and nursed her son until she had weaned him. **24** And she brought him up with her when she had weaned him, with three bulls and approximately 3/5 bushel (one ephah) of flour and a skin of wine; and she brought him ***to*** the house of the LORD ***at*** Shiloh; and the lad ***was*** a lad. **25** And they slaughtered the bull and brought the lad to Eli. **26** And she said, "Please, my lord, ***as*** your soul lives, my lord, I ***am*** the woman who stood with you in this ***place*** to pray to the LORD. **27** For this lad I prayed, and the LORD has granted me my petition which I asked from Him. **28** And also I have lent him to the LORD; all the days that he is, he ***is*** asked for the LORD." And he bowed down there to the LORD.

1 SAMUEL 2

Hannah's Song

1 And Hannah (Chana) prayed and said, "My heart has rejoiced in the LORD; my horn has been exalted in the LORD; my mouth has opened wide over my enemies, for I have rejoiced in Your salvation. **2** There is none holy like the LORD, for there is none besides You, and there is no rock like our God. **3** Do not multiply speaking lofty, lofty ***things***; ***let not*** arrogance go out from your mouth; for the LORD ***is*** a God of knowledge, and by Him deeds are weighed. **4** The bow of the mighty ***is*** shattered, and those who stumble have girded on strength. **5** The satisfied have hired themselves out for bread, and the hungry have ceased; even the barren has borne seven, and she ***who is*** many ***in*** sons languishes. **6** The LORD kills and makes alive; He brings down ***to*** Sheol and brings up. **7** The LORD makes poor and makes rich; He brings

1:17 Mark 5:34; Luke 8:48; 1 Pet 5:7
1:18 Rom 15:13; Ruth 2:13; Eccl 9:7
1:19 Gen 30:22; Gen 4:1; 1 Sam 1:11
1:20 Heb 11:32; Gen 41:51,52; Exod 2:10,22
1:21 1 Sam 1:3; Gen 18:19; Josh 24:15
1:22 1 Sam 1:11,28; Luke 2:22,41,42; 1 Sam 2:11,18
1:23 Luke 11:27; 2 Sam 7:25; Num 30:7-11
1:24 Josh 18:1; Num 15:9,10; Deut 12:5,6,11
1:25 Luke 2:22; Luke 18:15,16
1:26 John 16:21; 2 Kgs 2:2,4,6; 2 Kgs 4:30
1:27 1 John 5:15; John 16:21; 1 Sam 1:11-13
1:28 Gen 24:26,48,52; 2 Tim 3:15
2:1 Luke 1:46; Rev 18:20; Luke 1:47
2:2 Luke 6:48; Exod 15:11; 2 Sam 22:32
2:3 Jude 1:15; Jude 1:16; Prov 8:13
2:4 Heb 11:34; Ps 37:15,17; Ps 46:9
2:5 Gal 4:27; Ps 113:9; Jer 15:9
2:6 Deut 32:39; 2 Kgs 5:7; Isa 26:19
2:7 Rom 9:17; Ps 75:7; Job 5:11

1:18 *the woman went on her way and ate, and her face was no longer sad* Nothing had changed yet. She was not pregnant and had no promise, only a priest's blessing. But she had left her burden with the LORD. Paul says the same to us: bring everything to God in prayer, and His peace will guard your heart (Phil 4:6-7). Peace often comes before the answer does.
1:19 *the LORD remembered her* To remember, in the Bible, does not mean God had forgotten. It means He acted on what was promised or asked (Gen 8:1; 30:22). Hannah had prayed, "remember me" (1:11). Now He did.
1:20 *she called his name Samuel* The meaning of the name is debated. It sounds like the Hebrew for heard of God or name of God, and Hannah ties it to her asking: "For from the LORD I asked for him." Every time she called him, she would remember that God hears prayer.
1:21 *the yearly sacrifice and his vow* It seems Elkanah had joined in Hannah's vow. A husband could cancel his wife's vow when he heard it (Num 30:6-8). He did not. He stood with her.
1:23 *only may the LORD establish His word* Children were often nursed until two or three years old. Elkanah let Hannah decide, and both of them wanted to see God's purpose for this child come true.
1:24 *three bulls* A large and costly gift. The Greek and a Dead Sea Scroll copy read a three-year-old bull, which fits "the bull" in 1:25. "The lad was a lad" means he was still very young.
1:25 *brought the lad to Eli* It is hard to picture a mother handing over the little boy she had wept for, to live at the tabernacle under an old priest with wicked sons. But Hannah did what she said she would do.
1:28 *I have lent him to the LORD* Asked and lent come from the same Hebrew root. She asked the LORD for him and gives him back as one asked for the LORD, for life. Did she lose by it? She sang for joy, and God gave her five more children (2:21). We never lose by giving God what He has given us. Our children, plans and dreams are safest in His hands.
2:1 *My heart has rejoiced in the LORD; my horn has been exalted in the LORD* Hannah's joy is in the LORD Himself, not only in His gift. A horn pictures strength, like a strong animal's horns. God had lifted her from shame to honor. Her song is Hebrew poetry, which rhymes thoughts, not sounds. One line says something and the next repeats, adds to it or gives the opposite. Watch for it as you read.
2:1 *I have rejoiced in Your salvation* For years Hannah kept quiet while Peninnah mocked her. Now she speaks, but she does not gloat over Peninnah by name. Salvation here means rescue, God stepping in to deliver.
2:2 *There is none holy like the LORD* Holy means set apart, wholly different from us, pure and without sin. The LORD is not just the best of the gods. There is "none besides You." A rock was a place of safety in that hill country, solid and unmoving. Moses called God the Rock (Deut 32:4). Hannah had been shaken for years, but her God had not moved.
2:3 *by Him deeds are weighed* God knows everything and weighs every act on His scales. He knows what was done to Hannah, and He knows what is done to us. We do not need to take revenge. We can leave it with the God who weighs deeds (Rom 12:19).
2:5 *even the barren has borne seven* Hannah would have six children in all (2:21), so seven, the number of completeness, pictures full blessing. The woman with many children is the one who now fades. God turns the world upside down.
2:6 *The LORD kills and makes alive; He brings down to Sheol and brings up* Sheol is the place of the dead, the grave. Life and death are in God's hand alone. A God who can bring up from Sheol can raise the dead, so this is one of the early places that hints at resurrection (compare Deut 32:39). Many read it only as rescue from near death.
2:7 *He brings low, also He exalts* Nothing happens to us outside His rule. That does not mean every hard thing is a punishment. It means no hard thing is out of His control.

low, also He exalts. **8** He raises up the poor from the dust; from the ash heap He lifts up the needy, to make ***them*** sit with nobles; and a throne of glory He makes them inherit. For the pillars of the earth ***are*** the LORD's, and He has set the world on them. **9** The feet of His godly ones He will guard, and the wicked shall be silenced in darkness; for not by strength shall a man prevail. **10** The LORD, those who contend against Him shall be shattered; against him in the heavens He will thunder. The LORD will judge the ends of the earth, and He will give strength to His king and exalt the horn of His anointed." **11** And Elkanah (Elqana) went to Ramah (Rama), to his house. And the lad was serving the LORD in the presence of Eli the priest.

The Sins of Eli's Sons

12 And the sons of Eli ***were*** sons of worthlessness; they did not know the LORD. **13** And the custom of the priests with the people ***was this***: ***when*** any man was sacrificing a sacrifice, the servant of the priest would come while the flesh was boiling, and the fork of three prongs ***was*** in his hand; **14** and he would thrust ***it*** into the pan or into the kettle or into the caldron or into the pot; all that the fork brought up the priest would take for himself. Thus they did to all Israel (Yisra'el) who came there, at Shiloh (Shilo). **15** Also before they made the fat smoke, the servant of the priest would come and say to the man who was sacrificing, "Give flesh to roast for the priest; and he will not take boiled flesh from you, but raw." **16** And the man would say to him, "Let them surely make the fat smoke first, and ***then*** take for yourself as your soul desires." And he would say, "No, but now you shall give ***it***; and if not, I will take ***it*** by force." **17** And the sin of the young men was very great in the presence of the LORD, for the men treated the offering of the LORD with contempt. **18** And Samuel (Shemu'el) was serving in the presence of the LORD, a lad girded ***with*** an ephod of linen. **19** And his mother would make him a little robe and bring it up to him from year to year, when she went up with her husband to sacrifice the yearly sacrifice. **20** And Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife and say, "May the LORD appoint for you seed from this woman in place of the petition which he asked for the LORD." And they would go to his place. **21** For the LORD visited Hannah, and she conceived and bore three sons and two daughters. And the lad Samuel grew up with the LORD. **22** And Eli was very old, and he heard all that his sons were doing to all Israel, and how they were lying with the women who served ***at*** the entrance of the tent of meeting. **23** And he said to them, "Why do you do according to these things which I am hearing, your evil things, from all these people? **24** No, my sons; for the report which I am hearing the people of the LORD spreading ***is*** not good. **25** If a man sins against a man, God will mediate for him; and if a man sins against the LORD,

2:8 Luke 1:48; Rom 9:17; Ps 113:7,8
2:9 Rom 3:19; Matt 22:13; Ps 91:11,12
2:10 Matt 25:31; Acts 4:27; Acts 10:38
2:11 1 Sam 2:18; 1 Sam 3:1,15; 1 Sam 1:28
2:12 John 16:3; Jer 2:8; 2 Cor 6:15
2:14 1 Sam 2:29; Exod 29:27,28; Lev 7:34
2:15 Lev 3:3-5,16; Rom 16:18; Phil 3:19
2:16 Lev 3:16; Lev 7:23-25; 1 Pet 5:2,3
2:17 Gen 6:11; Gen 10:9; Gen 13:13
2:18 Acts 3:24; Heb 11:32; 1 Sam 3:1
2:19 1 Sam 1:3,21; Exod 23:14
2:20 Luke 2:34; 1 Sam 1:27,28; Gen 14:19
2:21 Gen 21:1; 1 Sam 2:26; 1 Sam 3:19
2:22 Exod 38:8; 1 Sam 2:13-17; 1 Sam 8:1
2:23 1 Kgs 1:6; Acts 9:4; Acts 14:15
2:24 Rev 2:20; Acts 6:3; 2 Cor 6:8
2:25 1 John 5:16; 1 Sam 3:14; Num 15:30

2:8 *from the ash heap He lifts up the needy, to make them sit with nobles* The ash heap was the town dump, where beggars and outcasts sat. God lifts people from there to a seat among princes. He did it for David the shepherd boy, and He does it for every sinner saved by grace. We were in the dust, and He seated us with Christ (Eph 2:4-6).
2:9 *not by strength shall a man prevail* This sentence sums up 1 Samuel. Saul will be tall and strong, and Goliath a giant. Neither one wins. The ones who win trust the LORD. Zechariah says the same: not by might, nor by power, but by God's Spirit (Zech 4:6).
2:10 *He will give strength to His king and exalt the horn of His anointed* Israel had no king when Hannah sang this. Anointed is the Hebrew mashiach, one set apart by poured oil. It was used earlier of the anointed priest (Lev 4:3), but this is the first time Scripture speaks of the LORD's anointed king. From it come Messiah and, through the Greek, Christ (John 1:41).
2:10 *The LORD will judge the ends of the earth* Her song widens from her home to the whole world. In the near view it points to Israel's kings, and her son would anoint the first two. But it reaches to Jesus, the Son of David. The apostles applied Psalm 2 and "His Anointed" to Him (Acts 4:25-27). Mary's song echoes Hannah's: "my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior" (Luke 1:47), and He "has exalted the lowly" (Luke 1:52).
2:11 *the lad was serving the LORD in the presence of Eli the priest* Samuel was only a small boy, but he already had work to do. Children can serve God too. The chapter now sets Samuel side by side with Eli's sons, and the difference is sharp.
2:12 *the sons of Eli were sons of worthlessness; they did not know the LORD* They served at God's altar every day and did not know Him. It is possible to be busy with religious work and not know God at all. Jesus warned that some who did great things in His name would hear Him say He never knew them (Matt 7:22-23).
2:14 *all that the fork brought up the priest would take for himself* The Law gave the priest the breast and the right thigh of a peace offering (Lev 7:31-34). Eli's sons took what they wanted, not what God gave them.
2:15 *before they made the fat smoke* The fat belonged to the LORD and was to be burned first, the best part given to God (Lev 3:16). Eli's sons wanted their share before God got His. When a worshiper tried to do it right, they threatened force. The priests had become bullies.
2:17 *the men treated the offering of the LORD with contempt* The worst of their sin was not just greed. They despised what belonged to God. When leaders treat holy things as cheap, they teach the people to do the same.
2:18 *a lad girded with an ephod of linen* An ephod was a simple linen garment worn by those who served before the LORD. The high priest had a special one, but others wore plain ones (22:18; 2 Sam 6:14). In the middle of all this sin, little Samuel had his own.
2:19 *his mother would make him a little robe* Picture Hannah sewing it at home, a bit bigger each year as he grew. She had given him to the LORD, but she never stopped loving him or praying for him.
2:21 *she conceived and bore three sons and two daughters* God is no man's debtor. Hannah gave one son, and God gave her five more children. And Samuel "grew up with the LORD," not just near the tabernacle, but with Him.
2:22 *they were lying with the women who served at the entrance of the tent of meeting* Women served at the entrance in some way (Exod 38:8). Eli's sons used their office to take sexual advantage of them. That was immorality and an abuse of priestly power, and it looked like the pagan worship of Canaan. God's house was being turned into a place of shame.
2:25 *if a man sins against the LORD, who will intercede for him?* When we wrong another person, God can judge between us. But when the priests themselves sin against God, who is left to stand for them? Eli only spoke. As high priest and judge he had the authority to remove them from the altar and did not use it (3:13).
2:25 *for the LORD desired to put them to death* This does not mean God kept them from repenting when they wanted to. They had sinned long against light they knew, and there comes a point when God gives a person over to the hardness he has chosen (Rom 1:24, 28). Some teachers stress God's sovereign decree more here. God is patient, but not endlessly. Today is the day to listen (Heb 3:15).

who will intercede for him?" And they did not listen to the voice of their father, for the LORD desired to put them to death. **26** And the lad Samuel was going on and growing, and ***was*** good both with the LORD and also with men.

The Man of God Warns Eli

27 And a man of God came to Eli and said to him, "Thus says the LORD: 'Did I indeed reveal Myself to the house of your father when they were in Egypt (Mitsrayim), ***belonging*** to the house of Pharaoh? **28** And I chose him from all the tribes of Israel for Myself for a priest, to go up on My altar, to make incense smoke, to bear an ephod before Me; and I gave to the house of your father all the fire offerings of the sons of Israel. **29** Why do you kick at My sacrifice and at My offering which I commanded ***for My*** dwelling place, and honor your sons more than Me, by fattening yourselves from the choicest of every offering of Israel, of My people? **30** Therefore, declares the LORD, the God of Israel: I surely said, "Your house and the house of your father shall walk about before Me forever." And now, declares the LORD, far be it from Me! For those who honor Me I will honor, and those who despise Me shall be lightly esteemed. **31** Look, days are coming, and I will cut off your arm and the arm of the house of your father, so that there will not be an old man in your house. **32** And you will look ***on the*** distress of ***My*** dwelling place in all ***the good*** that He does to Israel; and there shall not be an old man in your house all the days. **33** And a man of yours whom I do not cut off from My altar ***shall be*** to make your eyes fail and to grieve your soul; and all the increase of your house shall die ***as*** men. **34** And this ***shall be*** the sign for you which shall come to your two sons, to Hophni (Chofni) and Phinehas (Pinchas): on one day the two of them shall die. **35** And I will raise up for Myself a faithful priest; according to what ***is*** in My heart and in My soul he shall do; and I will build for him a sure house, and he shall walk about before My anointed all the days. **36** And it shall be ***that*** everyone who is left in your house shall come to bow down to him for a piece of silver and a round loaf of bread, and shall say, "Attach me, please, to one of the priestly offices, to eat a morsel of bread."'"

1 SAMUEL 3

The LORD Calls Samuel

1 And the lad Samuel (Shemu'el) was serving the LORD before Eli. And the word of the LORD was rare in those days; there was no vision spread abroad. **2** And it was on that day, and Eli ***was*** lying in his place, and his eyes had begun ***to be*** dim; he was not able to see. **3** And the lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel ***was*** lying in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God ***was***. **4** And the LORD called to Samuel, and he said, "Here I ***am***." **5** And he ran to Eli and said, "Here I ***am***, for you called me." And he said, "I did not call; return, lie down." And he went and lay down. **6** And the LORD continued to call Samuel again. And Samuel rose and went to Eli and said, "Here I ***am***, for you called me." And he said, "I did not call, my son; return, lie down." **7** And Samuel did not yet know the LORD, and the word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him. **8** And the LORD continued to call Samuel a third ***time***. And he rose and went to Eli and said, "Here I ***am***, for you called me." And Eli understood that

2:26 Prov 3:3; Luke 1:80; Luke 2:40,52
2:27 Deut 33:1; Judg 13:6; 1 Kgs 13:1
2:28 Exod 28:1,4,6-30; Lev 8:7,8; Lev 2:3,10
2:29 Matt 10:37; Luke 14:26; 1 Sam 2:13-17
2:30 John 12:26; John 8:49; John 17:4
2:31 1 Sam 22:17-20; 1 Sam 4:2,11,17-20; 1 Sam 14:3
2:32 Zech 8:4; Ps 78:59-64; 1 Sam 4:4,11,22
2:33 Matt 2:16; 1 Kgs 2:26,27; 1 Sam 22:21-23
2:34 1 Kgs 13:3; 1 Sam 4:11,17; 1 Sam 3:12
2:35 1 Kgs 11:38; 2 Sam 7:11,27; 1 Sam 25:28
2:36 Rev 3:9; 1 Kgs 2:27; Ezek 44:10-12
3:1 Acts 3:24; Heb 11:32; Ps 74:9
3:2 1 Sam 4:15; Gen 27:1; 1 Sam 2:22
3:3 Heb 11:32; Exod 27:20,21; Lev 24:2-4
3:4 Heb 11:32; Gen 22:1; Exod 3:4
3:6 Heb 11:32; 1 Sam 4:16; Gen 43:29
3:7 Heb 11:32; Acts 19:2; Jer 9:24
3:8 Heb 11:32; Job 33:14,15; 1 Cor 13:11,12

2:26 *was good both with the LORD and also with men* Luke uses almost the same words of the boy Jesus (Luke 2:52). Both grew in favor in a dark time, while the religious leaders around them failed.
2:27 *a man of God came to Eli* A man of God was a prophet, someone God sent to speak His word. The LORD reminds Eli of all He had given Aaron's house. They lacked nothing.
2:29 *honor your sons more than Me, by fattening yourselves* God includes Eli in the sin. Eli ate from what his sons took, and he was heavy (4:18). Loving our children does not mean protecting them from the consequences of sin. Sometimes the most loving thing a father can do is say no and mean it.
2:30 *those who honor Me I will honor, and those who despise Me shall be lightly esteemed* God had promised Aaron's family a lasting priesthood (Exod 29:9). That would stand, but Eli's branch would lose its place. To honor God is to give Him the weight and first place He deserves. The rest of the book shows this at work in Samuel, Saul and David. What does honoring God look like for you this week?
2:34 *on one day the two of them shall die* This came true in 4:11. Later Saul's men killed the priests of Nob, Eli's descendants (22:18-20), and Solomon removed Abiathar, the last of Eli's line, "to fulfill the word of the LORD which He had spoken concerning the house of Eli in Shiloh" (1 Kgs 2:27).
2:35 *I will raise up for Myself a faithful priest* In the near view this was Zadok, high priest in Solomon's day after Abiathar was removed (1 Kgs 2:35). Some also see Samuel. Every human priest died, but the pattern finds its full answer in Jesus, "a merciful and faithful high priest" (Heb 2:17). He is both the faithful Priest and the Anointed King.
2:36 *to eat a morsel of bread* The men who grabbed the best meat would see their children beg for crumbs. Sin promises plenty and pays in poverty.
3:1 *the word of the LORD was rare in those days* When God's people, and especially their priests, despise what He has already said, He may stop speaking for a while (Amos 8:11-12). Silence from God can be a judgment. It can also be the quiet before He does something new, as in the silent years before John the Baptist. Samuel was still a boy. Some think about twelve, but Scripture does not say.
3:2 *his eyes had begun to be dim* Eli's failing eyes match his failing spiritual sight. He had not seen what God wanted done in his own house.
3:3 *the lamp of God had not yet gone out* The lampstand burned from evening until morning (Exod 27:20-21), so this was before dawn. The writer may hint at more. Israel's light was low but not out. God still had a light burning, a boy named Samuel.
3:3 *Samuel was lying in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was* The ark was the gold-covered chest that held the tablets of the law, with the mercy seat as its lid (Exod 25:22). It stood behind the veil, where only the high priest could enter (Lev 16:2). Samuel slept somewhere in the tabernacle area, near enough to tend the lamp and open the doors (3:15).
3:4 *Here I am* The same answer Abraham and Moses gave when God called (Gen 22:1; Exod 3:4). Three times Samuel got up in the night and ran to answer. He was ready to serve before he knew who was calling.
3:7 *Samuel did not yet know the LORD* Samuel served the LORD but had never yet heard God speak to him directly. He was faithful in the little he knew, and now God was about to show him more.

the LORD was calling the lad. **9** And Eli said to Samuel, "Go, lie down; and it shall be, if He calls to you, that you shall say, 'Speak, LORD, for Your servant is listening.'" And Samuel went and lay down in his place. **10** And the LORD came and stood and called as time after time, "Samuel, Samuel." And Samuel said, "Speak, for Your servant is listening."

The Word Against Eli's House

11 And the LORD said to Samuel, "Look, I am about to do a thing in Israel (Yisra'el) at which both ears of everyone who hears it shall tingle. **12** On that day I will carry out against Eli all that I have spoken against his house, beginning and ending. **13** And I declare to him that I am about to judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knew, that his sons were bringing a curse on themselves, and he did not rebuke them. **14** And therefore I have sworn to the house of Eli ***that*** the iniquity of the house of Eli shall not be atoned for by sacrifice and by offering forever." **15** And Samuel lay until the morning, and he opened the doors of the house of the LORD. And Samuel was afraid to tell the vision to Eli. **16** And Eli called Samuel and said, "Samuel, my son." And he said, "Here I ***am***." **17** And he said, "What ***is*** the word which He spoke to you? Please do not hide ***it*** from me. Thus may God do to you, and thus may He add, if you hide from me a word from all the word which He spoke to you." **18** And Samuel told him all the words and did not hide ***them*** from him. And he said, "He ***is*** the LORD; let Him do what ***is*** good in His eyes." **19** And Samuel grew up, and the LORD was with him and did not let any of all his words fall to the ground. **20** And all Israel, from Dan and to Beersheba (Be'er-Sheva), knew that Samuel ***was*** established as a prophet of the LORD. **21** And the LORD continued to appear at Shiloh (Shilo), for the LORD revealed Himself to Samuel at Shiloh by the word of the LORD.

1 SAMUEL 4

The Ark Is Captured

1 And the word of Samuel (Shemu'el) came to all Israel (Yisra'el). And Israel went out to meet the Philistines for battle, and they encamped by Ebenezer (Even-Ha'ezer), and the Philistines encamped at Aphek (Afeq). **2** And the Philistines arranged ***themselves*** to meet Israel, and the battle spread out, and Israel was defeated before the Philistines; and they struck down in the battle line in the field about four thousand men. **3** And the people came into the camp, and the elders of Israel said, "Why has the LORD defeated us today before the Philistines? Let us take to ourselves from Shiloh (Shilo) the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and let it come into our midst and save us from the hand of our enemies." **4** And the people sent ***to*** Shiloh, and they carried from there the ark of the covenant of the LORD of armies, who sits ***on*** the cherubim; and the two sons of Eli ***were*** there with the ark of the covenant of God, Hophni (Chofni) and Phinehas

3:9 Heb 11:32; Exod 20:19; Ps 85:8
3:10 Heb 11:32; 1 Sam 3:4-6,8
3:11 Heb 11:32; 2 Kgs 21:12; Jer 19:3
3:12 1 Sam 2:27-36; Num 23:19; Josh 23:15
3:13 1 Sam 2:12,17,22,23-26; 1 Kgs 1:6; Prov 19:18
3:14 Heb 10:5; Heb 10:8; Isa 22:14
3:15 Jer 1:6-8; 1 Sam 1:9; Mal 1:10
3:17 Ruth 1:17; 2 Sam 3:35; Ps 141:5
3:18 Job 2:10; Isa 39:8; Job 1:21
3:19 1 Sam 2:21; 1 Sam 9:6; Gen 39:2,21-23
3:20 Acts 3:24; Acts 13:20; Judg 20:1
3:21 Gen 12:7; 1 Sam 3:1,4; Gen 15:1
4:1 1 Sam 7:12; 1 Sam 5:1; 1 Sam 3:11
4:2 1 Sam 17:8,21; Josh 7:5-8,12; Ps 44:9,10
4:3 Heb 9:4; Deut 29:24; Ps 74:1,11
4:4 2 Sam 6:2; Ps 80:1; Ps 99:1

3:9 *Speak, LORD, for Your servant is listening* One of the most important prayers a believer can pray. It is not, listen, LORD, for Your servant is speaking, which is how many of our prayers sound. It is the prayer of someone ready to obey before he hears what God will ask. Eli had failed in much, but he still pointed a young person to God.

3:10 *the LORD came and stood and called as time after time* The LORD "came and stood," some kind of appearance, which 3:15 calls "the vision." He said the name twice, as with Abraham and Moses (Gen 22:11; Exod 3:4). He knew this boy by name, and He knows us by name too (John 10:3).

3:11 *both ears of everyone who hears it shall tingle* The news would be so shocking that ears would ring. It came when the ark was captured and Eli's sons died (chapter 4).

3:13 *he did not rebuke them* The Hebrew word means to restrain. Eli spoke to his sons (2:23-25) but did not stop them. A father who knows his children are destroying themselves and does nothing shares in the guilt.

3:14 *shall not be atoned for by sacrifice and by offering forever* To atone is to cover sin and make peace with God, usually by sacrifice. Eli's sons despised the very sacrifices God gave, so none was left to cover theirs. Hebrews gives a similar warning: "there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins" (Heb 10:26). The judgment is on the priestly line. The verse does not say whether Eli himself was saved.

3:15 *Samuel was afraid to tell the vision to Eli* Who would want to tell the old man who raised him that his family was under God's judgment? So he went about his morning chores.

3:18 *Samuel told him all the words and did not hide them from him* Samuel's first test as a prophet, and he passed it. A prophet says what God says, all of it, even when it hurts. Paul said, "I did not hold back from declaring to you all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:27).

3:18 *He is the LORD; let Him do what is good in His eyes* Some hear humble faith. Others hear a tired man giving up. I think there is some of both. Eli accepted God's judgment as right, but he still did not remove his sons. Accepting God's word is not the same as obeying it.

3:19 *did not let any of all his words fall to the ground* When Samuel spoke for God, it came true. None of his words fell wasted. That was the test of a true prophet (Deut 18:21-22).

3:20 *from Dan and to Beersheba* From the northernmost town to the southernmost, the whole nation knew it. Samuel was the first of a long line of prophets. Peter said all the prophets "from Samuel" on spoke of the days of Christ (Acts 3:24).

3:21 *the LORD revealed Himself to Samuel at Shiloh by the word of the LORD* The word that was rare (3:1) was rare no longer. God still reveals Himself through His Word. We have something Samuel did not: a complete Bible, and the Son Himself, God's final Word (Heb 1:1-2). The question is whether we are listening.

4:1 *Israel went out to meet the Philistines for battle* The Philistines were a sea people settled on the coastal plain in five main cities. They had pressed on Israel since Samson's day (Judg 13:1). Notice what is missing. There is no word that Israel asked the LORD whether to fight, and no word from Samuel about this battle.

4:3 *Why has the LORD defeated us today before the Philistines?* A good question, but they did not wait for an answer. They did not pray, fast or ask Samuel. "Let it come" and "save us." They were trusting in the box, not in the God of the box. The ark had gone before Israel at the Jordan and Jericho (Josh 3; 6), but then God had commanded it. Now they were trying to force His hand.

4:4 *who sits on the cherubim* Cherubim are mighty angels. Two golden cherubim stood on the lid of the ark with wings spread, and God was pictured as enthroned above them. It was His throne on earth, and the people treated it as a weapon. And the men God had sworn to judge, Hophni and Phinehas, were the ones carrying it.

(Pinchas). **5** And it was, when the ark of the covenant of the LORD came into the camp, and all Israel shouted a great shout, and the earth resounded. **6** And the Philistines heard the sound of the shout, and they said, "What ***is*** the sound of this great shout in the camp of the Hebrews?" And they knew that the ark of the LORD had come into the camp. **7** And the Philistines were afraid, for they said, "God has come into the camp." And they said, "Woe to us! For it has not been like this yesterday ***or*** the day before. **8** Woe to us! Who will deliver us from the hand of these mighty gods? These are the gods who struck Egypt (Mitsrayim) with every blow in the wilderness. **9** Strengthen yourselves and be men, Philistines, lest you serve the Hebrews as they have served you; and be men and fight." **10** And the Philistines fought, and Israel was defeated, and they fled, each man to his tents; and the blow was very great; and there fell of Israel thirty thousand foot soldiers. **11** And the ark of God was taken, and the two sons of Eli died, Hophni and Phinehas.

The Death of Eli

12 And a man of Benjamin (Binyamin) ran from the battle line and came ***to*** Shiloh on that day, and his garments ***were*** torn, and soil ***was*** on his head. **13** And he came, and look, Eli ***was*** sitting on the seat beside the road, watching, for his heart was trembling for the ark of God. And the man came to tell ***it*** in the city, and all the city cried out. **14** And Eli heard the sound of the outcry and said, "What ***is*** the sound of this uproar?" And the man hurried and came and told Eli. **15** And Eli ***was*** a son of ninety-eight years, and his eyes were set, and he was not able to see. **16** And the man said to Eli, "I ***am*** the one who came from the battle line, and I fled from the battle line today." And he said, "What was the matter, my son?" **17** And the one bringing the news answered and said, "Israel has fled before the Philistines, and also there has been a great slaughter among the people, and also your two sons have died, Hophni and Phinehas, and the ark of God has been taken." **18** And it was, when he mentioned the ark of God, and he fell from on the seat backward beside the gate, and his neck was broken and he died; for the man was old and heavy. And he had judged Israel forty years.

Ichabod

19 And his daughter-in-law, the wife of Phinehas, ***was*** pregnant, about to give birth. And she heard the report concerning the taking of the ark of God, and ***that*** her father-in-law and her husband had died; and she bowed down and gave birth, for her pangs turned upon her. **20** And about the time of her dying, those standing over her spoke, "Do not fear, for you have borne a son." And she did not answer, and she did not set her heart ***to it***. **21** And she called the lad Ichabod (I-Khavod), saying, "Glory has gone into exile from Israel," because of the taking of the ark of God and because of her father-in-law and her husband. **22** And she said, "Glory has gone into exile from Israel, for the ark of God has been taken."

1 SAMUEL 5

The Ark in the House of Dagon

1 And the Philistines took the ark of God, and they brought it from Ebenezer (Even-Ha'ezer) to Ashdod. **2** And the Philistines took the ark of God, and they brought it ***into*** the

4:5 Judg 15:14; Job 20:5; Jer 7:4
4:6 Phil 3:5; Exod 32:17,18
4:7 Exod 14:25; Exod 15:14-16; Deut 32:30
4:8 Acts 13:17; Rom 9:17; Exod 7:5
4:9 Judg 13:1; 1 Cor 16:13; 2 Sam 10:12
4:10 1 Sam 4:2; Deut 28:25; 2 Kgs 14:12
4:11 1 Sam 2:34; Ps 78:64; 1 Sam 2:32
4:12 Josh 7:6; 2 Sam 1:2; 2 Sam 15:32
4:13 1 Sam 1:9; Josh 7:9; Neh 1:3,4
4:15 1 Sam 3:2; Ps 90:10; Gen 27:1
4:16 2 Sam 1:4; 1 Sam 3:6; Josh 7:19
4:17 1 Sam 4:10,11; 1 Sam 3:11
4:18 1 Sam 4:21,22; 1 Pet 4:17,18; Ps 26:8
4:20 John 16:21; Gen 35:17,18; Ps 77:2
4:21 Ps 26:8; Jer 2:11; Ps 78:61,64
4:22 Ps 137:5,6; John 2:17
5:1 1 Sam 7:12; 1 Sam 4:1; 1 Sam 4:11,17,18,22
5:2 Judg 16:23; 1 Chr 10:10; Dan 5:2,23

4:5 *all Israel shouted a great shout, and the earth resounded* Compare the shout at Jericho (Josh 6:20). That shout was obedience. This one was noise. You can shout loud and still be far from God.
4:8 *These are the gods who struck Egypt with every blow in the wilderness* The Philistines spoke as people who believed in many gods, and they mixed up the history a little. But they knew Israel's God was powerful.
4:9 *be men and fight* Fear made them fight harder, and desperate armies are dangerous. The pagans had more courage that day than God's people had faith.
4:10 *there fell of Israel thirty thousand foot soldiers* The first defeat cost four thousand. Bringing the ark without God's blessing cost thirty thousand. I take the numbers as written (see the note at 11:8).
4:11 *the ark of God was taken, and the two sons of Eli died* In one day both sons died, as the man of God said (2:34). Why did God let His ark be captured? Israel had turned it into an idol, as if God must fight for them while they had the right object in camp, no matter how they lived. He is not a charm. A Bible on the shelf, a cross on the wall or a church membership cannot save us. Only the living God can.
4:12 *his garments were torn, and soil was on his head* Signs of grief and disaster. Before he said a word, anyone who saw him knew the news was bad. From Aphek to Shiloh is about twenty miles, and he ran it in a day.
4:13 *his heart was trembling for the ark of God* That says something good about Eli. With both sons in battle, his first fear was for the ark. He loved the things of God. His failure was not that he did not care. It was that he did not act.
4:17 *the ark of God has been taken* Four blows, each worse than the last: defeat, slaughter, his sons dead, and the ark taken.
4:18 *when he mentioned the ark of God, and he fell from on the seat backward* It was not the news about his sons that killed Eli but the news about the ark. Heavy in Hebrew is from the same root as glory, kabod. Eli was heavy, perhaps from the best of the offerings (2:29), and now the glory was gone from Israel. A long life of religious service can still end badly if sin at home is left alone.
4:18 *he had judged Israel forty years* Eli was both high priest and judge. A judge, before Israel had kings, was a leader God raised up to rescue and govern His people. His forty years ended in sorrow.
4:20 *Do not fear, for you have borne a son* In that day a son was the greatest news a mother could hear. But she did not answer. The shock had brought on labor, and she was dying.
4:21 *she called the lad Ichabod* Ichabod means where is the glory, or no glory. God's glory was His shining presence among His people (Exod 40:34-35). Her husband had been a wicked priest, yet she grieved most over the loss of God's presence. In a sad house, she understood what mattered most.
4:22 *for the ark of God has been taken* Did the glory leave for good? No. God would show it among the Philistines, and the ark would come home. But Shiloh never recovered (Ps 78:60-61; Jer 7:12). Centuries later John wrote of Jesus, "we beheld His glory" (John 1:14). The glory that left Shiloh came to dwell among us in God's Son.
5:2 *they brought it into the house of Dagon, and they set it beside Dagon* Dagon was a main god of the Philistines. Samson pulled down a temple of Dagon in Gaza (Judg 16:23-30). Victors often put a defeated nation's gods in their own temple, as if to say the LORD was now Dagon's prisoner. They had it backwards. Israel lost because of its sin, not because the LORD was weak.

house of Dagon, and they set it beside Dagon. **3** And the Ashdodites rose early on the next day, and look, Dagon ***was*** fallen on its face to the ground before the ark of the LORD. And they took Dagon and returned it to its place. **4** And they rose early in the morning on the next day, and look, Dagon ***was*** fallen on its face to the ground before the ark of the LORD, and the head of Dagon and the two palms of its hands ***were*** cut off at the threshold; only Dagon was left on it. **5** Therefore the priests of Dagon and all those who go into the house of Dagon do not tread on the threshold of Dagon in Ashdod until this day. **6** And the hand of the LORD was heavy on the Ashdodites, and He devastated them, and He struck them with tumors, Ashdod and its territories. **7** And the men of Ashdod saw that ***it was*** so, and they said, "The ark of the God of Israel (Yisra'el) shall not remain with us, for His hand is hard on us and on Dagon our god." **8** And they sent and gathered all the rulers of the Philistines to them, and they said, "What shall we do to the ark of the God of Israel?" And they said, "***To*** Gath (Gat) let the ark of the God of Israel go around." And they brought around the ark of the God of Israel. **9** And it was, after they had brought it around, and the hand of the LORD was against the city ***with*** a very great panic, and He struck the men of the city from young even to old, and tumors broke out on them. **10** And they sent the ark of God ***to*** Ekron (Eqron). And it was, when the ark of God came ***to*** Ekron, and the Ekronites cried out, saying, "They have brought around to me the ark of the God of Israel, to kill me and my people!" **11** And they sent and gathered all the rulers of the Philistines, and they said, "Send away the ark of the God of Israel, and let it return to its place, and it will not kill me and my people." For there was a panic of death in all the city; the hand of God was very heavy there. **12** And the men who did not die were struck with the tumors, and the cry for help of the city went up ***to*** the heavens.

1 SAMUEL 6

The Ark Sent Back

1 And the ark of the LORD was in the country of the Philistines seven months. **2** And the Philistines called for the priests and for the diviners, saying, "What shall we do to the ark of the LORD? Make known to us with what we shall send it to its place." **3** And they said, "If you ***are*** sending away the ark of the God of Israel (Yisra'el), do not send it away empty, for you shall surely send back to Him a guilt offering. Then you will be healed, and it will be known to you why His hand does not turn aside from you." **4** And they said, "What ***is*** the guilt offering which we shall send back to Him?" And they said, "***By*** the number of the rulers of the Philistines, five tumors of gold and five mice of gold, for one plague ***is*** to all of them and to your rulers. **5** And you shall make images of your tumors and images of your mice that are ruining the land, and you shall give glory to the God of Israel; perhaps He will lighten His hand from on you and from on your gods and from on your land. **6** And why will you make your heart heavy just as Egypt (Mitsrayim) and Pharaoh made their heart heavy? Was it not when He had made a mockery of

5:3 Isa 19:1; Isa 46:1,2; Exod 12:12
5:4 Mic 1:7; Jer 50:2; Isa 2:18,19
5:5 Zeph 1:9; Ps 115:4-7; Ps 135:15-18
5:6 Acts 13:11; Exod 9:3; Ps 32:4
5:7 1 Sam 4:8; Exod 8:8,28; Exod 9:28
5:8 Zech 12:3; 1 Sam 17:4; Amos 6:2
5:9 Acts 13:11; 1 Sam 5:6; 1 Sam 7:13
5:10 Josh 15:45; Judg 1:18; 2 Kgs 1:2
5:11 1 Sam 5:6,9; Isa 13:7-9; Jer 48:42-44
5:12 Exod 12:30; 1 Kgs 19:17; Amos 5:19
6:1 1 Sam 5:1,3,10,11; Ps 78:61
6:2 Gen 41:8; Exod 7:11; Dan 2:2
6:3 Exod 23:15; Deut 16:16; 1 Sam 6:9
6:4 Josh 13:3; Judg 3:3; 1 Sam 5:6,9
6:5 Rev 11:13; Rev 16:9; Josh 7:19
6:6 Exod 7:13; Exod 8:15; Exod 14:17,23

5:3 *Dagon was fallen on its face to the ground before the ark of the LORD* Face down is the position of a worshiper bowing before his master. And they had to pick their god up and set him on his feet. A god you have to carry is no god at all (Isa 46:1-7).
5:4 *the head of Dagon and the two palms of its hands were cut off at the threshold* The head pictures thinking and ruling, the hands power and action. Victors cut off the head and hands of the defeated. The LORD had beaten Dagon in his own house, with no one there to see it but God.
5:5 *do not tread on the threshold of Dagon in Ashdod until this day* Instead of turning from Dagon, they made a superstition out of his fall. People will often build a religious custom around a sign of God's judgment rather than repent. Zephaniah may point to the same custom many years later (Zeph 1:9).
5:6 *He struck them with tumors* The hand of the LORD pictures His power at work, judging not only Dagon but his worshipers. The word may mean swellings or boils. Many think of a plague spread by rats or mice, since mice come up in 6:4-5. Scripture does not name the disease, and we do not need its name to get the point.
5:7 *His hand is hard on us and on Dagon our god* They knew exactly who was behind it and named the God of Israel. But they wanted to get rid of His ark, not to turn to Him. It is possible to know God is real, to feel His hand, and still want Him to go away.
5:8 *all the rulers of the Philistines* Each of the five cities had its own ruler, and they decided together. Perhaps they thought the trouble was Ashdod's bad luck and a new place would be different.
5:9 *He struck the men of the city from young even to old* Gath was later Goliath's hometown (17:4). The city of the giant learned it could not stand against the LORD of armies.
5:10 *They have brought around to me the ark of the God of Israel, to kill me and my people!* Ekron was the Philistine city closest to Israel. The news had spread, and everyone knew what this ark did.
5:11 *the hand of God was very heavy there* For seven months (6:1) the God they thought they had captured went from city to city judging their idols and people. Israel had no army left to fight for the ark, and it did not matter. The LORD needs no one to defend Him. When it looks like God's cause is losing, He is not in danger. Our part is not to protect God, but to trust Him.
5:12 *the cry for help of the city went up to the heavens* They cried out to heaven, but not to the LORD in repentance. They only wanted the pain to stop. True repentance wants God, not just relief.
6:2 *the Philistines called for the priests and for the diviners* Diviners were pagan fortune-tellers who tried to read the will of the gods from signs. God's law forbade divination (Deut 18:10-12). These men did not know the LORD, but they knew enough to fear Him.
6:3 *you shall surely send back to Him a guilt offering* In Israel's law a guilt offering made amends for wrong done against God or another person (Lev 5:14-19). The Philistines did not know the law, but even pagans sensed they had wronged this God and owed Him something.
6:4 *five tumors of gold and five mice of gold* One for each Philistine ruler. People sometimes offered images of a disease to the god they believed sent it. It was a way of saying, we know these came from You.
6:5 *you shall give glory to the God of Israel* Even pagan priests saw that the God of Israel deserved glory. That is what the whole episode was about. God would get glory, through worship or through judgment.
6:6 *why will you make your heart heavy just as Egypt and Pharaoh made their heart heavy?* They remembered the exodus and warned against Pharaoh's mistake. Many people, then and now, know the stories of God's power and still do not bow to Him. Knowing the facts is not the same as faith.

them, and they sent them away, and they went? **7** And now, take and make one new cart, and two nursing cows on which a yoke has not come up; and harness the cows to the cart, and take their young back from after them to the house. **8** And take the ark of the LORD and put it on the cart; and the articles of gold which you are sending back to Him ***as*** a guilt offering, put in the box at its side; and send it away, and it shall go. **9** And see: if it goes up ***by*** the way of its own territory ***to*** Beth-shemesh (Bet-Shemesh), He has done to us this great harm; and if not, then we shall know that His hand did not touch us; it happened to us ***by*** chance." **10** And the men did so, and they took two nursing cows and harnessed them to the cart, and their young they shut up in the house. **11** And they put the ark of the LORD on the cart, and the box, and the mice of gold, and the images of their tumors. **12** And the cows went straight on the road, on the road of
Beth-shemesh; on one highway they went, going and lowing, and they did not turn aside ***to the*** right or left. And the rulers of the Philistines ***were*** going after them as far as the border of Beth-shemesh. **13** And Beth-shemesh ***was*** reaping the harvest of wheat in the valley, and they lifted up their eyes and saw the ark, and they rejoiced to see ***it***. **14** And the cart came into the field of Joshua (Yehoshua) the Beth-shemeshite and stopped there, and there ***was*** a great stone. And they split the wood of the cart, and the cows they offered up ***as*** a burnt offering to the LORD. **15** And the Levites brought down the ark of the LORD and the box that ***was*** with it, in which ***were*** the articles of gold, and they put ***them*** on the great stone. And the men of Beth-shemesh offered up burnt offerings and sacrificed sacrifices on that day to the LORD. **16** And the five rulers of the Philistines saw, and they returned ***to*** Ekron (Eqron) on that day. **17** And these ***are*** the tumors of gold which the Philistines sent back ***as*** a guilt offering to the LORD: for Ashdod one, for Gaza (Aza) one, for Ashkelon (Ashqelon) one, for Gath (Gat) one, for Ekron one. **18** And the mice of gold ***were by*** the number of all the cities of the Philistines belonging to the five rulers, from fortified city even to the village of the open-country dweller, and even to the great Abel (Avel) on which they set down the ark of the LORD, ***which is*** until this day in the field of Joshua the Beth-shemeshite.

The Holy God at Beth-shemesh

19 And He struck among the men of Beth-shemesh, because they had looked into the ark of the LORD; and He struck among the people seventy men, fifty thousand men. And the people mourned, because the LORD had struck among the people ***with*** a great blow. **20** And the men of Beth-shemesh said, "Who is able to stand before the LORD, this holy God? And to whom shall He go up from us?" **21** And they sent messengers to the inhabitants of Kiriath-jearim (Qiryat-Ye'arim), saying, "The Philistines have brought back the ark of the LORD; come down, bring it up to you."

1 SAMUEL 7

Israel Returns to the LORD

1 And the men of Kiriath-jearim (Qiryat-Ye'arim) came and

6:7 2 Sam 6:3; Num 19:2; 1 Chr 13:7
6:8 1 Sam 6:4,5
6:9 Josh 15:10; Josh 21:16; Amos 3:6
6:11 2 Sam 6:3; 1 Chr 13:7; 1 Chr 15:13-15
6:14 1 Sam 7:9-17; 1 Sam 11:5; 1 Sam 20:29
6:16 1 Sam 6:4,12; Josh 13:3; Judg 3:3
6:17 2 Sam 1:20; 1 Sam 5:1; 2 Chr 26:6
6:18 Josh 13:3; 1 Sam 6:16
6:19 Exod 19:21; 2 Sam 6:7; Lev 10:1-3
6:20 Rev 6:17; Mal 3:2; 1 Sam 5:8-12
6:21 1 Chr 13:5,6; Josh 18:14; Judg 18:12
7:1 1 Sam 6:21; Josh 18:14; 2 Sam 6:2

6:7 *two nursing cows on which a yoke has not come up* A test made as hard as possible. Untrained cows will not pull straight, and nursing cows will try to go back to their calves. If they went to Israel anyway, it would be God, plain and clear, not chance (6:9).
6:8 *put it on the cart* God's law said the ark was to be carried on poles on the shoulders of the Levites (Num 4:15; 7:9). God allowed the Philistines, who did not have His law, to move it this way. When David tried the same method years later, it ended in death (2 Sam 6:3-7). God's people are held to what He has told them.
6:12 *going and lowing, and they did not turn aside to the right or left* Picture it. The cows bawled for their calves the whole way, yet walked straight toward Israel. The God who parted the sea was guiding two cows down a country road. The Philistine rulers followed to see with their own eyes, and they got their answer.
6:13 *they rejoiced to see it* It was early summer, the wheat harvest. Seven months of grief were over.
6:14 *the cows they offered up as a burnt offering to the LORD* A burnt offering was wholly burned, given completely to God in worship and dedication (Lev 1). The cart and the cows that had carried the ark were given to Him.
6:15 *the Levites brought down the ark of the LORD* The Levites were the tribe set apart to carry the holy things. Beth-shemesh was a town given to the priests (Josh 21:13-16), so there were Levites who knew what to do. So far, so good.
6:16 *they returned to Ekron on that day* They had seen the proof. Scripture does not say they turned to the LORD.
6:18 *the great Abel* Abel means meadow or mourning. Many Bibles, following some Hebrew copies and the Greek, read "the great stone," since the Hebrew words for stone and Abel look alike, and that matches 6:14-15. Either way, the stone stood as a witness to what God had done.
6:19 *because they had looked into the ark of the LORD* The ark was the most holy object in Israel. Even the Levites who carried it were never to see it uncovered (Num 4:5, 15, 20). Beth-shemesh was a priestly town, so they knew or should have known. Whatever their reason, they treated the throne of the holy God as an object to poke into.
6:19 *He struck among the people seventy men, fifty thousand men* This is a hard verse. The chapter gives the reason in 6:20: He is "this holy God." Sinful people cannot stand in the full presence of perfect holiness, and God's careful rules were His way of letting them draw near without being destroyed. Those who know His will are held to a higher standard (Luke 12:47-48). We come boldly through Christ our High Priest (Heb 4:14-16), but boldness is not carelessness.
6:19 *fifty thousand men* The Hebrew sets the two numbers side by side without the usual connecting word, which is very unusual, and
Beth-shemesh was a small town. Many scholars think the large number came in by a copying error and the original was seventy. Some read fifty thousand and seventy, or a count of the whole region. I do not know which is right. Many men died, and the people mourned.
6:20 *Who is able to stand before the LORD, this holy God?* The right question, and the answer is no one, unless God makes a way. Psalm 24:3-4 answers: clean hands and a pure heart. Only Jesus fits that, and He gives His righteousness to all who trust Him (2 Cor 5:21).
6:20 *to whom shall He go up from us?* Their answer to God's holiness was to send Him elsewhere. They did not want to change. When Isaiah saw the holy God he cried, "Woe to me!" (Isa 6:5), and he was cleansed. We can run from God's holiness or bow before it.
6:21 *come down, bring it up to you* Kiriath-jearim was about ten miles away. The Philistines wanted the ark gone because of judgment, and now Israelites wanted it gone too.
7:1 *Eleazar his son they consecrated to keep the ark of the LORD* To consecrate means to set apart for God's service. They did not leave the ark lying about. They set a man apart to guard it.

brought up the ark of the LORD, and they brought it into the house of Abinadab (Avinadav) on the hill; and Eleazar (Elazar) his son they consecrated to keep the ark of the LORD. **2** And it was, from the day the ark dwelt in Kiriath-jearim, and the days increased, and they were twenty years; and all the house of Israel (Yisra'el) lamented after the LORD. **3** And Samuel (Shemu'el) said to all the house of Israel, saying, "If with all your heart you ***are*** returning to the LORD, remove the foreign gods from your midst, and the Ashtaroth, and direct your heart to the LORD, and serve Him alone; and He may deliver you from the hand of the Philistines." **4** And the sons of Israel removed the Baals and the Ashtaroth, and they served the LORD alone. **5** And Samuel said, "Gather all Israel to Mizpah (Mitspa), and I will pray for you to the LORD." **6** And they gathered together to Mizpah, and they drew water and poured ***it*** out before the LORD, and they fasted on that day, and they said there, "We have sinned against the LORD." And Samuel judged the sons of Israel at Mizpah.

The LORD Thunders at Mizpah

7 And the Philistines heard that the sons of Israel had gathered together to Mizpah, and the rulers of the Philistines went up against Israel. And the sons of Israel heard, and they were afraid of the Philistines. **8** And the sons of Israel said to Samuel, "Do not keep silent from us, from crying out to the LORD our God, and He may save us from the hand of the Philistines." **9** And Samuel took one suckling lamb and offered it up ***as*** a burnt offering, a whole offering, to the LORD; and Samuel cried out to the LORD for Israel, and the LORD answered him. **10** And Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, and the Philistines drew near for battle against Israel; and the LORD thundered with a great sound on that day against the Philistines and threw them into confusion, and they were defeated before Israel. **11** And the men of Israel went out from Mizpah and pursued the Philistines, and they struck them as far as below Beth-car (Bet-Kar). **12** And Samuel took one stone and set ***it*** between Mizpah and Shen, and he called its name Ebenezer (Even-Ha'ezer), and he said, "Until now the LORD has helped us." **13** And the Philistines were subdued, and they did not continue anymore to come into the territory of Israel; and the hand of the LORD was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel. **14** And the cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel returned to Israel, from Ekron (Eqron) even to Gath (Gat); and their territory Israel delivered from the hand of the Philistines. And there was peace between Israel and the Amorite.

Samuel Judges Israel

15 And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life. **16** And he went from year to year, and he went around Bethel (Bet-El) and Gilgal and Mizpah, and he judged Israel ***in*** all these

7:2 Judg 2:4; Jer 3:13,22-25; Jer 31:9
7:3 Luke 4:8; Matt 4:10; Deut 13:4
7:4 Judg 2:11,13; Judg 10:15,16; 1 Kgs 11:33
7:5 Judg 20:1; Neh 9:1; Joel 2:16
7:6 Judg 10:10; 1 Sam 1:15; 2 Sam 14:14
7:7 1 Sam 17:11; 1 Sam 13:6; Exod 14:10
7:8 Isa 37:4; 1 Sam 12:19-24; Isa 62:1,6,7
7:9 Ps 99:6; Jer 15:1; 1 Sam 7:17
7:10 1 Sam 2:10; Josh 10:10; Judg 5:20
7:12 Josh 4:9,20-24; Gen 35:14; Gen 31:45-52
7:13 Judg 13:1; 1 Sam 13:1-5; 1 Sam 14:6-16,20-23
7:14 Deut 7:2,16; Judg 4:17; Ps 106:34
7:15 Acts 13:20; 1 Sam 7:6; Judg 2:16
7:16 Judg 5:10; Judg 10:4; Judg 12:14

7:2 *they were twenty years* The ark never went back to Shiloh. It stayed at Kiriath-jearim until David brought it to Jerusalem (2 Sam 6:2-3). The twenty years seems to count to the gathering at Mizpah. Some count it differently.
7:2 *all the house of Israel lamented after the LORD* Twenty years of defeat had broken their pride, and they began to long for God. That longing was the first step back. Sometimes God lets us feel His absence so that we will start to miss Him.
7:3 *remove the foreign gods from your midst, and the Ashtaroth* Samuel's first recorded word to the nation goes straight to the problem. Baal was the storm god, believed to bring rain and crops. Ashtoreth, plural Ashtaroth, was a goddess of fertility and war. Israel had mixed their worship with the LORD's for generations (Judg 2:11-13).
7:3 *serve Him alone* Mourning is not enough. If you mean it, get rid of the idols. True repentance turns from sin and turns to God. The LORD will not share His people with other gods.
7:4 *they served the LORD alone* They did it. An idol is anything we trust, love or serve in God's place: money, comfort, approval, a relationship, a habit we will not give up. Revival starts when we put those things away.
7:5 *I will pray for you to the LORD* Mizpah was a town in Benjamin a few miles north of Jerusalem, where Israel had gathered before (Judg 20:1). Samuel's first act as leader was to pray. That is who he was all his life.
7:6 *they drew water and poured it out before the LORD* This is not a ritual from the law, and Scripture does not explain it. It seems to picture pouring out their hearts in sorrow, as Hannah "poured out" her soul (1:15; Lam 2:19). They fasted to humble themselves.
7:6 *We have sinned against the LORD* No excuses, no blaming the Philistines. They named their sin as sin against God. Then Samuel judged them, leading them, settling their cases and setting things right.
7:7 *the rulers of the Philistines went up against Israel* The Philistines thought Israel was gathering for war. It often happens this way. When God's people get serious about repentance, the enemy attacks.
7:8 *Do not keep silent from us, from crying out to the LORD our God* What a change from chapter 4. Then they ran for a box. Now they asked a praying man to keep praying.
7:9 *Samuel took one suckling lamb and offered it up as a burnt offering* Samuel was a Levite, not of Aaron's family, but as prophet and judge after Shiloh's fall he led Israel's worship. Some argue he served as a priest in a wider sense, others that priests helped him. He is remembered "among those who call on His name" (Ps 99:6).
7:10 *the LORD thundered with a great sound on that day against the Philistines* The enemy charged, and Samuel kept worshiping. Hannah had sung that the LORD would thunder against His enemies (2:10), and now He did. Repentance, then sacrifice and prayer, then victory. Israel was saved while a lamb was on the altar. We are saved through the Lamb of God (John 1:29).
7:11 *pursued the Philistines* Once God had won the battle, they did their part and chased the enemy.
7:12 *he called its name Ebenezer* Ebenezer means stone of help. Israel had camped at an Ebenezer and lost badly (4:1). The place of defeat was replaced with a place of help. "Until now the LORD has helped us" looks back to what God has done and ahead to what He will do. Where can you look back and say, "Until now the LORD has helped us"?
7:13 *the hand of the LORD was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel* The Philistines would fight again in Saul's day (chapter 13), but while Samuel led, God held them back.
7:14 *there was peace between Israel and the Amorite* Amorite here is a general name for the Canaanite peoples still in the land. When Israel was right with God, even old enemies made peace (Prov 16:7).
7:15 *Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life* Samuel was the last of the judges, and unlike most of them his work was not one battle and then quiet. He led all his life, even after Saul became king.
7:16 *he went around Bethel and Gilgal and Mizpah* A yearly circuit, like a circuit-riding preacher. He went to the people. Bethel and Gilgal had deep roots in Israel's history (Gen 28:19; Josh 4:19-20).

places. **17** And his return ***was*** to Ramah (Rama), for there ***was*** his house, and there he judged Israel; and he built there an altar to the LORD.

1 SAMUEL 8

Israel Asks for a King

1 And it was, when Samuel (Shemu'el) was old, and he made his sons judges for Israel (Yisra'el). **2** And the name of his firstborn son was Joel (Yo'el), and the name of his second Abijah (Aviya); ***they were*** judges in Beersheba (Be'er-Sheva). **3** And his sons did not walk in his ways, and they turned aside after unjust gain, and they took a bribe, and they turned justice aside. **4** And all the elders of Israel gathered together, and they came to Samuel at Ramah (Rama). **5** And they said to him, "Look, you have become old, and your sons have not walked in your ways. Now appoint for us a king to judge us like all the nations." **6** And the matter was evil in the eyes of Samuel when they said, "Give us a king to judge us." And Samuel prayed to the LORD. **7** And the LORD said to Samuel, "Listen to the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me from reigning over them. **8** According to all the deeds which they have done from the day I brought them up from Egypt (Mitsrayim) and until this day, and they have forsaken Me and served other gods, so they ***are*** doing also to you. **9** And now listen to their voice; only you shall surely warn them, and you shall tell them the practice of the king who will reign over them."

The Ways of the King

10 And Samuel said all the words of the LORD to the people who were asking from him a king. **11** And he said, "This will be the practice of the king who will reign over you: your sons he will take, and he will appoint ***them*** for himself in his chariot and among his horsemen, and they will run before his chariot; **12** and to appoint for himself commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties, and to plow his plowing, and to reap his harvest, and to make the equipment of his war and the equipment of his chariotry. **13** And your daughters he will take for perfumers and for cooks and for bakers. **14** And your fields and your vineyards and your olive groves, the good ***ones***, he will take, and he will give ***them*** to his servants. **15** And your seed and your vineyards he will tithe, and he will give ***it*** to his officials and to his servants. **16** And your male servants and your female servants and your young men, the good ***ones***, and your donkeys he will take, and he will use ***them*** for his work. **17** Your flock he will tithe, and you yourselves will become servants to him. **18** And you will cry out on that day because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves, and the LORD will not answer you on that day." **19** And the people refused to listen to the voice of Samuel, and they said, "No, but a king shall be over us,

7:17 1 Sam 1:1,19; 1 Sam 8:4; 1 Sam 19:18-23
8:1 Deut 16:18,19; 1 Tim 5:21; Judg 8:22,23
8:2 1 Chr 6:28,38
8:3 Deut 16:19; Ps 15:5; Exod 18:21
8:4 Exod 3:16; Exod 24:1; 2 Sam 5:3
8:5 Deut 17:14,15; Acts 13:21; 1 Sam 12:17
8:6 1 Sam 15:11; 1 Sam 12:17; Exod 32:21,32
8:7 Matt 10:40; Luke 10:16; John 15:20
8:8 Rom 10:21; Exod 14:11,12; Exod 16:3
8:9 Acts 13:21; 1 Sam 8:11-18; 1 Sam 10:25
8:10 Acts 13:21
8:11 Acts 13:21; 1 Sam 10:25; 1 Sam 14:52
8:12 1 Chr 27:1-22; 1 Kgs 4:7,22,23,27,28; 2 Chr 32:28,29
8:14 1 Kgs 21:7,19; Ezek 46:18; 1 Sam 22:7
8:15 Gen 37:36; Isa 39:7; Dan 1:3,7-10,18
8:18 Isa 1:15; Mic 3:4; Isa 8:21
8:19 Jer 44:16; Ps 81:11; Jer 7:13

7:17 *he built there an altar to the LORD* With Shiloh destroyed and the ark at Kiriath-jearim, Samuel made his home at Ramah a center of worship. He prayed for the people, called them from idols, led worship, judged fairly and kept going year after year. That steady faithfulness is rare, and it is what God uses most.
8:2 *they were judges in Beersheba* Joel and Abijah served at the far south of the land, while Samuel worked in the hill country.
8:3 *they took a bribe, and they turned justice aside* The Law forbade bribes, "for the bribe blinds the eyes of the wise" (Deut 16:19). Samuel watched Eli's sons ruin themselves, and now his own sons go wrong. Scripture does not charge him with Eli's sin, though some teachers fault him for appointing them. Godly parents do not always have godly children. Parents can teach, pray and set an example, but each person must choose to follow God.
8:5 *appoint for us a king to judge us like all the nations* Both of their reasons were true. The problem was the last words, "like all the nations." God had called Israel to be different, a holy nation, His own people (Exod 19:5-6). They saw kings, palaces and armies around them and wanted to be like everyone else.
8:6 *Samuel prayed to the LORD* Samuel was displeased. Maybe he felt pushed aside after a lifetime of service, or saw what they were really saying about God. He did not argue or lash out. He took it to God. When we feel hurt or rejected, prayer should come before our reply.
8:7 *they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me from reigning over them* The heart of the chapter. The LORD was Israel's King, as Gideon said: "the LORD shall rule over you" (Judg 8:23). They would rather trust a man they could see than the God they could not. Was a king wrong in itself? No. God promised kings (Gen 17:6; 49:10) and gave laws for one (Deut 17:14-20). The sin was in their reason and timing.
8:8 *so they are doing also to you* God comforted Samuel. Do not take it personally. They are doing to you what they have always done to Me. Faithful servants will sometimes be rejected. Jesus said that if the world hates us, it hated Him first (John 15:18).
8:9 *you shall tell them the practice of the king* Practice is the Hebrew mishpat, which can mean justice, custom or way of doing things. God would give them what they wanted, but not without telling them the cost. Sometimes God's hardest judgment is to give people what they insist on (Ps 106:15).
8:11 *your sons he will take* Notice how often "take" comes up. A king needs a standing army and a royal estate, and that means men taken from their families' farms.
8:13 *your daughters he will take for perfumers and for cooks and for bakers* The royal household would need many workers, and young women would be taken from home to serve in the palace.
8:14 *he will take, and he will give them to his servants* The king would reward his officials with other people's land, as Ahab and Jezebel later did with Naboth's vineyard (1 Kgs 21).
8:15 *your seed and your vineyards he will tithe* A tithe is a tenth. Israel already gave a tenth to the LORD for the Levites and the poor (Num 18:21; Deut 14:28-29). Now the king would take a tenth too.
8:17 *you yourselves will become servants to him* The end of the list. People God set free from slavery in Egypt would make themselves a king's servants. Solomon's heavy taxes and forced labor proved it (1 Kgs 12:4).
8:18 *the LORD will not answer you on that day* Note "whom you have chosen for yourselves." In Judges, every time Israel cried out God sent a deliverer. Now some consequences of their own choice He would not take away, even when they cried about them. It does not mean He would stop hearing them forever.
8:19 *No, but a king shall be over us* The warning made no difference. They had made up their minds.

20 and we also, we will be like all the nations, and our king will judge us, and he will go out before us, and he will fight our battles." **21** And Samuel heard all the words of the people, and he spoke them in the ears of the LORD. **22** And the LORD said to Samuel, "Listen to their voice, and make a king reign for them." And Samuel said to the men of Israel, "Go, each man to his city."

1 SAMUEL 9

Saul Seeks His Father's Donkeys

1 And there was a man from Benjamin (Binyamin), and his name ***was*** Kish (Qish), the son of Abiel (Avi'el), the son of Zeror (Tseror), the son of Becorath (Bekhorat), the son of Aphiah (Afiach), the son of a Benjaminite man, a mighty ***man*** of wealth. **2** And he had a son, and his name ***was*** Saul (Shaul), a young man and good, and there was not a man from the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) better than he; from his shoulder and upward ***he was*** taller than all the people. **3** And the she-donkeys of Kish, the father of Saul, were lost; and Kish said to Saul his son, "Take, please, one of the servants with you, and arise, go, seek the she-donkeys." **4** And he passed through the hill country of Ephraim (Efrayim), and he passed through the land of Shalishah (Shalisha), and they did not find ***them***; and they passed through the land of Shaalim, and ***they were*** not ***there***; and he passed through the land of the Benjaminite, and they did not find ***them***. **5** They came into the land of Zuph (Tsuf), and Saul said to his servant who ***was*** with him, "Come, and let us return, lest my father stop ***thinking*** about the she-donkeys and become anxious about us." **6** And he said to him, "Look, please, a man of God ***is*** in this city, and the man ***is*** honored; all that he speaks surely comes ***to pass***. Now let us go there; perhaps he will tell us our way on which we have gone." **7** And Saul said to his servant, "And look, we will go, and what shall we bring to the man? For the bread has gone from our bags, and there is no gift to bring to the man of God. What ***is*** with us?" **8** And the servant again answered Saul, and he said, "Look, there is found in my hand approximately 1/10 ounce (a fourth of a shekel) of silver, and I will give ***it*** to the man of God, and he will tell us our way." **9** Formerly in Israel, thus the man said when he went to inquire of God: "Come, and let us go to the seer"; for the prophet of today was formerly called the seer. **10** And Saul said to his servant, "Your word ***is*** good; come, let us go." And they went to the city where the man of God ***was***. **11** They were going up the ascent of the city, and they found young women going out to draw water, and they said to them, "Is the seer in this ***place***?" **12** And they answered them and said, "***He*** is; look, ***he is*** before you. Hurry now, for today he has come to the city, for ***there is*** a sacrifice today for the people at the high place. **13** As you come into the city, so you will find him, before he goes up to the high place to eat; for the people will not eat until he comes, for he will bless the sacrifice; afterward those who are invited will eat. And now go up, for about now you will find him." **14** And they went up ***to*** the city. They were coming into the midst of the city, and look, Samuel (Shemu'el) ***was*** coming out to meet them, to go up ***to*** the high place.

Samuel Meets Saul

15 And the LORD had uncovered the ear of Samuel one day

8:20 1 Pet 2:9; 1 Sam 8:5; Exod 33:16
8:21 Judg 11:11
8:22 1 Sam 8:7; Hos 13:11
9:1 Acts 13:21; 1 Sam 14:51; 1 Chr 9:36-39
9:2 Acts 13:21; 1 Sam 16:7; Gen 6:2
9:3 1 Sam 10:2; Judg 5:10; Judg 10:4
9:4 2 Kgs 4:42; Judg 17:1; Judg 19:1
9:5 Luke 12:22; 1 Sam 10:2; 1 Sam 1:1
9:6 Deut 33:1; 1 Kgs 13:1; 1 Sam 2:27
9:7 1 Kgs 14:3; 2 Kgs 8:8; 2 Kgs 4:42
9:9 2 Sam 24:11; 2 Kgs 17:13; 1 Chr 26:28
9:10 2 Kgs 5:13,14
9:11 Gen 24:11,18-20; Exod 2:16; Judg 5:11
9:12 Gen 31:54; 1 Sam 16:2; 1 Kgs 3:2-4
9:13 Mark 6:41; John 6:11,23; Matt 26:26
9:15 Acts 13:21; 1 Sam 15:1; 1 Sam 9:17

8:20 *he will fight our battles* But who had just fought their battles? The LORD thundered against the Philistines while Samuel prayed (7:10). We do the same whenever we trust what we can see more than the God we cannot. "These trust in chariotry and these in horses" (Ps 20:7), but God's people call on His name.
8:22 *Listen to their voice, and make a king reign for them* The third time God says, "Listen to their voice" (8:7, 9). He would even use the kingship for His plan. From the line of kings would come David, and from David, Jesus, the King of kings. God works through our wrong choices, but that does not make them right.
9:1 *there was a man from Benjamin, and his name was Kish* Kish was a man of standing. Benjamin was the smallest tribe, and it had nearly been wiped out in the civil war at the end of Judges (Judg 20-21). It is surprising that Israel's first king came from there.
9:2 *from his shoulder and upward he was taller than all the people* Good here means fine, handsome. Saul looked like a king. If the people wanted a king like the nations, he was exactly what they would have picked. Later God will tell Samuel not to look at appearance or height (16:7). Saul was the people's kind of king. David would be God's.
9:3 *the she-donkeys of Kish, the father of Saul, were lost* Donkeys were valuable, used for riding and carrying loads. It looks like a farmer's son on a wasted trip.
9:5 *They came into the land of Zuph* Samuel's area. Elkanah was a descendant of Zuph (1:1). Saul's lost donkeys were leading him straight to the prophet. Saul's concern for his father shows a thoughtful young man. God often works through what seems like bad luck or wasted time. He guides our steps even when we cannot see it (Prov 16:9).
9:6 *all that he speaks surely comes to pass* None of Samuel's words fell to the ground (3:19), and even a servant knew it. Interesting that the servant thought of the man of God and Saul did not. Saul seems not to have known Samuel, which may say how little he had paid attention to the things of God.
9:8 *a fourth of a shekel of silver* It was polite to bring a gift to a prophet when asking his help (1 Kgs 14:3). The bread was gone, and the servant offered what he had.
9:9 *the prophet of today was formerly called the seer* A seer is one to whom God shows things. By the time the book was finished people said prophet instead. This note shows the writer explaining an older story to later readers.
9:12 *there is a sacrifice today for the people at the high place* A high place was a hilltop place of worship with an altar. Later high places became centers of idolatry and were condemned (2 Kgs 23:8). But with Shiloh destroyed and no central sanctuary, God's people worshiped the LORD there until the temple was built (1 Kgs 3:2). Some teachers see even these as irregular.
9:14 *Samuel was coming out to meet them* Samuel would bless the meal before the guests ate. Saul and his servant came at just the right moment. The timing was God's.
9:15 *the LORD had uncovered the ear of Samuel* To uncover the ear means to reveal something privately. Samuel knew what Saul did not.

before Saul came, saying, **16** "About this time tomorrow I will send to you a man from the land of Benjamin, and you shall anoint him as leader over My people Israel, and he will save My people from the hand of the Philistines; for I have seen My people, for its cry has come to Me." **17** And Samuel saw Saul, and the LORD answered him, "Look, the man of whom I spoke to you! This ***one*** will restrain My people." **18** And Saul approached Samuel in the midst of the gate, and he said, "Tell me, please, where ***is*** the house of the seer?" **19** And Samuel answered Saul and said, "I ***am*** the seer. Go up before me ***to*** the high place, and you shall eat with me today, and I will send you away in the morning, and all that ***is*** in your heart I will tell you. **20** And as for the she-donkeys that were lost to you three days ***ago*** today, do not set your heart on them, for they have been found. And for whom ***is*** all the desire of Israel? ***Is it*** not for you and for all the house of your father?" **21** And Saul answered and said, "***Am*** I not a Benjaminite, from the smallest of the tribes of Israel? And my clan ***is*** the least of all the clans of the tribes of Benjamin. And why have you spoken to me according to this matter?" **22** And Samuel took Saul and his servant, and he brought them into the chamber, and he gave them a place at the head of those who were invited; and they ***were*** about thirty men. **23** And Samuel said to the cook, "Give the portion which I gave to you, of which I said to you, 'Put it with you.'" **24** And the cook lifted up the thigh and what ***was*** on it, and he set ***it*** before Saul. And he said, "Look, what remains ***is*** set before you. Eat, for to the appointed time ***it was*** kept for you, saying, 'I have invited the people.'" And Saul ate with Samuel on that day. **25** And they went down from the high place ***to*** the city, and he spoke with Saul on the roof. **26** And they rose early; and it was, when the dawn came up, and Samuel called to Saul on the roof, saying, "Arise, and I will send you away." And Saul arose, and the two of them, he and Samuel, went outside. **27** They were going down at the edge of the city, and Samuel said to Saul, "Say to the servant that he should pass on before us"; and he passed on; "and you, stand now, and I will cause you to hear the word of God."

1 SAMUEL 10

Saul Anointed

1 And Samuel (Shemu'el) took the flask of oil and poured ***it*** on his head, and he kissed him and said, "Is it not that the LORD has anointed you as leader over His inheritance? **2** When you go from me today, then you will find two men by the tomb of Rachel in the territory of Benjamin (Binyamin) at Zelzah (Tseltsach), and they will say to you, 'The she-donkeys which you went to seek have been found; and look, your father has abandoned the matter of the she-donkeys and is anxious about you, saying, "What shall I do for my son?"' **3** And you will pass on from there and beyond, and you will come to the terebinth of Tabor (Tavor), and three men going up to God ***at*** Bethel (Bet-El) will find you there, one carrying three young goats, and one carrying three round loaves of bread, and one carrying a skin of wine. **4** And they will ask you about ***your*** welfare, and they will give you two ***loaves of*** bread, and you shall take ***them*** from their hand. **5** After that you will come ***to*** Gibeah (Giva) of God, where the garrisons of the Philistines ***are***. And it will be, when you come there to the city, then you will meet a company of prophets coming down from the high place, and before them ***will be*** harp and tambourine and flute and lyre,

9:16 1 Sam 10:1; Exod 3:7-9; 1 Sam 15:1
9:17 Acts 13:21; 1 Sam 16:6-12; Hos 13:11
9:19 John 4:29; 1 Cor 14:25
9:20 1 Sam 8:5,19; 1 Sam 12:13,15; 1 Sam 4:20
9:21 Eph 3:8; 1 Sam 15:17; Judg 20:46-48
9:22 Gen 43:32; Luke 14:10
9:23 1 Sam 1:5; Gen 43:34
9:24 Lev 7:32,33; Ezek 24:4
9:25 Deut 22:8; Acts 10:9; 2 Sam 11:2
9:26 Gen 19:14; Gen 44:4; Josh 7:13
9:27 1 Sam 20:38,39; John 15:14,15; 1 Sam 15:16
10:1 Acts 13:21; 1 Sam 16:13; Ps 2:12
10:2 1 Sam 9:3-5; Gen 35:19; Josh 18:28
10:3 Gen 35:1,3,6,7; Gen 28:19,22; Josh 19:12,22
10:4 Luke 22:10; Judg 18:15
10:5 1 Sam 13:3; 1 Sam 19:20; 2 Kgs 3:15

9:16 *you shall anoint him as leader over My people Israel* Leader is not the word for king. It is nagid, a prince appointed by someone above him. Israel's king would rule under God, as His servant. And look at His grace. The people had rejected Him, yet He still calls them "My people" and still hears their cry. God's love does not depend on our getting everything right.
9:17 *This one will restrain My people* God pointed Saul out to Samuel. Saul was God's choice, given in answer to what the people asked for.
9:20 *for whom is all the desire of Israel?* Samuel answered Saul's problem before he could mention it, something only God could have told him. Then he turned to something much bigger. Israel's desire for a king was going to land on Saul. He came looking for donkeys and was offered a kingdom.
9:21 *Am I not a Benjaminite, from the smallest of the tribes of Israel?* That sounds like Gideon (Judg 6:15) and Moses (Exod 3:11). Samuel later reminds him, "were you not the head of the tribes of Israel?" (15:17). Saul began small in his own eyes. The sad thing is that he did not stay that way. Humility at the start is good. Humility kept through power is rare.
9:22 *at the head of those who were invited; and they were about thirty men* The guests were likely the town's leaders. Saul, the stranger, was given the place of honor.
9:24 *the cook lifted up the thigh and what was on it* The thigh was a choice portion, normally the priest's (Lev 7:32-34). Samuel had set it aside the day before. Without saying it yet, he was telling everyone at the table that this young man was special.
9:25 *he spoke with Saul on the roof* Flat roofs were used as living space, and guests often slept there in warm weather. Scripture does not tell us what they talked about.
9:27 *I will cause you to hear the word of God* Saul set out to find donkeys and was about to hear the word of God. God's plans are often much bigger than the errand we are on. Are you paying attention to what He might be doing in your ordinary days?
10:1 *the LORD has anointed you as leader over His inheritance* To anoint was to pour oil on someone to set him apart for God's task, as with the priests (Exod 29:7). Samuel poured the oil, but the LORD anointed. Israel was "His inheritance," so Saul was a steward over God's people, not owner of his own kingdom. Every leader in Christ's church must remember that the people are His (1 Pet 5:2-3). This anointing was private.
10:2 *two men by the tomb of Rachel in the territory of Benjamin* Rachel, the mother of Benjamin, was buried near Bethlehem (Gen 35:19-20). Saul the Benjaminite would get his first sign at the grave of his tribe's mother.
10:4 *they will give you two loaves of bread, and you shall take them from their hand* Bread carried up for worship at Bethel would be given to God's anointed. These small, specific signs were God's way of saying, I know every step of your road. You can trust what Samuel told you.
10:5 *Gibeah of God, where the garrisons of the Philistines are* Philistine soldiers were posted in Saul's home region. The king God was giving would have work to do. A company of prophets was a group gathered around God's worship who spoke His praises, often with music (1 Chr 25:1). Samuel seems to have led such groups (19:20).

and they ***will be*** prophesying. **6** And the Spirit of the LORD will rush on you, and you will prophesy with them, and you will be changed into another man. **7** And it will be, when these signs come to you, do for yourself what your hand finds, for God ***is*** with you. **8** And you shall go down before me ***to*** Gilgal; and look, I ***am*** coming down to you to offer up burnt offerings, to sacrifice sacrifices of peace offerings. Seven days you shall wait, until I come to you, and I will make known to you what you shall do."

Saul Among the Prophets

9 And it was, when he turned his shoulder to go from Samuel, and God changed for him another heart; and all these signs came on that day. **10** And they came there, to Gibeah; and look, a company of prophets ***came*** to meet him; and the Spirit of God rushed on him, and he prophesied in their midst. **11** And it was, all who knew him formerly, and they saw, and look, he ***was*** prophesying with prophets; and the people said each to his neighbor, "What ***is*** this ***that*** has happened to the son of Kish (Qish)? Is Saul (Shaul) also among the prophets?" **12** And a man from there answered and said, "And who ***is*** their father?" Therefore it became a proverb: "Is Saul also among the prophets?" **13** And he finished prophesying, and he came ***to*** the high place. **14** And the uncle of Saul said to him and to his servant, "Where did you go?" And he said, "To seek the she-donkeys; and we saw that ***they were*** not ***there***, and we came to Samuel." **15** And the uncle of Saul said, "Tell me, please, what Samuel said to you." **16** And Saul said to his uncle, "He surely told us that the she-donkeys had been found." And the matter of the kingship, of which Samuel had spoken, he did not tell him.

Saul Chosen at Mizpah

17 And Samuel called the people together to the LORD at Mizpah (Mitspa). **18** And he said to the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: 'I brought up Israel from Egypt (Mitsrayim), and I delivered you from the hand of Egypt and from the hand of all the kingdoms that were oppressing you.' **19** And you today have rejected your God, who Himself ***is*** a Savior to you from all your calamities and your distresses; and you have said to Him, 'Rather, a king you shall set over us.' And now present yourselves before the LORD by your tribes and by your thousands." **20** And Samuel brought near all the tribes of Israel, and the tribe of Benjamin was taken. **21** And he brought near the tribe of Benjamin by its clans, and the clan of the Matrites was taken; and Saul the son of Kish was taken. And they sought him, and he was not found. **22** And they inquired again of the LORD, "Has the man yet come here?" And the LORD said, "Look, he ***is*** hiding himself among the baggage." **23** And they ran and took him from there, and he presented himself in the midst of the people, and he was taller than all the people from his shoulder and upward. **24** And Samuel said to all the people, "Do you see him whom the LORD has chosen, for there is none like him among all the people?" And all the people shouted and said, "Let the king live!" **25** And Samuel spoke to the people the practice of the kingship, and he wrote ***it*** in the book and set ***it*** before the LORD. And Samuel sent away all the people, each man to his house. **26** And Saul also went to his house, to Gibeah; and there went with him the force,

10:6 1 Sam 10:10; 1 Sam 19:23,24; Num 11:25
10:7 John 6:14; Judg 6:12; Exod 4:8
10:8 1 Sam 11:14,15; 1 Sam 13:4,8-15; 1 Sam 15:33
10:9 1 Sam 10:6
10:10 1 Cor 14:32; 1 Sam 10:5; 1 Sam 19:20-24
10:11 John 9:8; Acts 9:21; Matt 13:55
10:12 John 6:45; Acts 9:19; Isa 54:13
10:14 1 Sam 9:3-10; 2 Kgs 5:25
10:16 1 Sam 9:27; Exod 4:18; Judg 14:6
10:17 Judg 20:1; 1 Sam 7:5,6
10:18 Judg 6:8,9; Judg 2:1; Neh 9:9-12,27,28
10:19 1 Sam 12:12,17-19; Num 17:2; Josh 7:14-26
10:20 1 Sam 14:41; Josh 7:16-18; Acts 1:24-26
10:21 Acts 13:21
10:22 Acts 13:21; Num 27:21; 1 Sam 23:2-4,11,12
10:23 1 Sam 9:2; 1 Sam 16:7; 1 Sam 17:4
10:24 2 Sam 21:6; 1 Kgs 1:25,21,39; Deut 17:15
10:25 Acts 13:21; 1 Sam 8:11-18; Deut 17:14-20
10:26 Acts 13:21; 1 Sam 11:4; 1 Sam 15:34

10:6 *the Spirit of the LORD will rush on you, and you will prophesy with them* In the Old Testament the Spirit came on certain people to equip them for a task, as with the judges (Judg 14:6). To prophesy here likely means speaking God's praise under the Spirit's power. God was giving Saul what he needed to lead.
10:7 *do for yourself what your hand finds, for God is with you* After the signs Saul was free to act as the situation called for, trusting that God was with him.
10:8 *Seven days you shall wait, until I come to you* Remember this verse. It will be Saul's first big test (13:8). He had freedom to act, but one thing he must not do: go ahead without God's word through His prophet. Some scholars see this as a standing order for a later crisis, since 11:14-15 also has a meeting at Gilgal.
10:9 *God changed for him another heart* Before the signs happened, God was already at work in him. Some read this as Saul being born again. Others read it as a new mind and courage for kingship, as the Spirit strengthened the judges, and point to the rest of his life and to 16:14. Good teachers hold both views. Scripture shows that a person can be gifted by God and have powerful experiences and still not obey. Gifts are not the same as faithfulness (Matt 7:22-23).
10:11 *Is Saul also among the prophets?* Nothing in Saul's life had suggested this. "Who is their father?" may ask who leads these prophets, or note that prophecy is not inherited, or be a jab at their humble origins. The saying became a proverb for someone showing up where no one expected him. It comes up again in 19:24.
10:16 *the matter of the kingship, of which Samuel had spoken, he did not tell him* Humility? Wisdom, waiting for God's timing? Fear? Saul often seems unsure of himself in these early chapters. There is a time to speak of what God has done and a time to wait.
10:17 *Samuel called the people together to the LORD at Mizpah* The place where Israel had repented and seen God's victory (chapter 7).
10:19 *you today have rejected your God, who Himself is a Savior to you* They had a Savior and wanted a king. God would give what they asked, but He put on record that they chose a man over the God who saved them. That warning hung over Saul's kingdom from the first day.
10:20 *the tribe of Benjamin was taken* This was done by lot, a way of letting God show His choice (Prov 16:33), as Joshua did to find Achan (Josh 7:16-18). God confirmed in public what He had shown Samuel in private.
10:22 *he is hiding himself among the baggage* Almost funny, but also sad. The tallest man in Israel was trying to hide behind the luggage. Humility? Fear? Probably both. He knew already that he had been chosen. A man who hides from his calling may struggle to carry it.
10:24 *there is none like him among all the people* Samuel did not say he was the best man spiritually. He was the most impressive man in Israel, the kind of king they had asked for. "Let the king live" is often rendered Long live the king.
10:25 *he wrote it in the book and set it before the LORD* The rules for the king were likely based on Deut 17:14-20: no multiplying horses, wives or riches, a copy of the law read all his life, no lifting himself above his brothers. Israel's king was under God's law, not above it, unlike the kings of the nations.
10:26 *whom God had touched in their heart* When God calls someone to lead, He often gives them people to stand with them.

whom God had touched in their heart. **27** And sons of worthlessness said, "How will this one save us?" And they despised him, and they did not bring him a gift. And he was like one keeping silent.

1 SAMUEL 11

Saul Rescues Jabesh-gilead

1 And Nahash (Nachash) the Ammonite went up and encamped against Jabesh-gilead (Yavesh-Gilad); and all the men of Jabesh said to Nahash, "Make a covenant with us, and we will serve you." **2** And Nahash the Ammonite said to them, "On this ***condition*** I will make ***a covenant*** with you: by gouging out every right eye of yours; and I will make it a reproach on all Israel (Yisra'el)." **3** And the elders of Jabesh said to him, "Let us alone seven days, and let us send messengers into all the territory of Israel; and if there is no one saving us, then we will come out to you." **4** And the messengers came ***to*** Gibeah (Giva) of Saul (Shaul), and they spoke the words in the ears of the people; and all the people lifted up their voice and wept. **5** And look, Saul ***was*** coming after the oxen from the field. And Saul said, "What ***is the matter*** with the people, that they are weeping?" And they recounted to him the words of the men of Jabesh. **6** And the Spirit of God rushed on Saul when he heard these words, and his anger burned exceedingly. **7** And he took a pair of oxen and cut it in pieces, and he sent ***them*** into all the territory of Israel by the hand of the messengers, saying, "Whoever is not coming out after Saul and after Samuel (Shemu'el), thus it shall be done to his oxen." And the dread of the LORD fell on the people, and they came out as one man. **8** And he mustered them at Bezek (Bezeq), and the sons of Israel were three hundred thousand, and the men of Judah (Yehuda) thirty thousand. **9** And they said to the messengers who had come, "Thus you shall say to the men of Jabesh-gilead: 'Tomorrow, by the heat of the sun, you shall have salvation.'" And the messengers came and told the men of Jabesh, and they were glad. **10** And the men of Jabesh said, "Tomorrow we will come out to you, and you may do to us according to all that ***is*** good in your eyes." **11** And it was on the next day, and Saul put the people ***in*** three companies, and they came into the midst of the camp in the morning watch, and they struck Ammon (Amon) until the heat of the day. And it was, those who remained, and they were scattered, and there were not left among them two together.

The Kingdom Renewed at Gilgal

12 And the people said to Samuel, "Who ***is*** the one who said, 'Shall Saul reign over us?' Give up the men, and we will put them to death." **13** And Saul said, "Not a man shall be put to death on this day, for today the LORD has worked salvation in Israel." **14** And Samuel said to the people, "Come, and let us go ***to*** Gilgal, and let us renew the kingship there." **15** And all the people went ***to*** Gilgal, and they made Saul king there

10:27 Deut 13:13; 1 Kgs 10:25; 2 Chr 17:5
11:1 1 Sam 12:12; Judg 21:8,10-25; 1 Kgs 20:34
11:2 1 Sam 17:26; Gen 34:14; 2 Kgs 18:31
11:4 1 Sam 10:26; Judg 2:4; 1 Sam 15:34
11:5 1 Kgs 19:19; 1 Sam 9:1; Ps 78:71
11:6 Mark 3:5; 1 Sam 10:10; 1 Sam 16:13
11:7 Judg 19:29; Judg 20:1; Judg 21:5-11
11:8 Judg 1:4,5; 2 Sam 24:9; 1 Sam 13:15
11:9 Ps 18:17
11:10 1 Sam 11:2,3
11:11 Judg 7:16; Gen 22:14; Ps 46:1
11:12 1 Sam 10:27; Luke 19:27; Ps 21:8
11:13 2 Sam 19:22; 1 Sam 19:5; Exod 14:13,30
11:14 1 Sam 10:8; 1 Sam 7:16; 1 Sam 10:24
11:15 Acts 13:21; 1 Sam 10:8; 1 Sam 10:17

10:27 *he was like one keeping silent* A gift was a sign of loyalty to a new king, and these troublemakers refused it. Saul did not answer or punish them. At this point that was wise. Not every insult needs a reply. It is a man's glory to overlook an offense (Prov 19:11).
11:1 *Nahash the Ammonite went up and encamped against Jabesh-gilead* The Ammonites descended from Lot (Gen 19:38) and lived east of the Jordan. Jabesh-gilead was an Israelite town in Gilead, across the river. Samuel later says this threat was one reason the people pushed for a king (12:12). The men of Jabesh did not fight. They were ready to become Nahash's subjects.
11:2 *by gouging out every right eye of yours; and I will make it a reproach on all Israel* A soldier without his right eye could not see past his shield well. But Nahash's main goal was shame. He wanted every Israelite to feel helpless. The enemy of God's people often aims at more than harm. He wants to disgrace them and make them feel God cannot help.
11:3 *Let us alone seven days* Surprising that Nahash agreed. He must have been sure no one would come.
11:4 *the messengers came to Gibeah of Saul* There was a family tie. After the war against Benjamin, four hundred young women from Jabesh-gilead became wives for Benjamin's men (Judg 21:12-14). Many in Benjamin had roots in Jabesh.
11:5 *Saul was coming after the oxen from the field* Israel had a king, and he was out plowing. Saul had not yet set up a court. He was still a farmer.
11:6 *the Spirit of God rushed on Saul when he heard these words, and his anger burned exceedingly* Not sinful temper, but righteous anger given by the Spirit at cruelty done to God's people. There is a right anger at injustice and evil that moves us to act (Eph 4:26).
11:7 *he took a pair of oxen and cut it in pieces* A vivid call to war. It echoes the Levite who sent the pieces of his concubine through Israel (Judg 19:29), which led to civil war against Benjamin. Now a man of Benjamin used a like sign to unite Israel against a real enemy. He named Samuel with himself, knowing the people trusted the old prophet.
11:7 *the dread of the LORD fell on the people, and they came out as one man* Israel had not stood together like this in a long time. When God moves, people who could not agree on anything come together.
11:8 *the sons of Israel were three hundred thousand, and the men of Judah thirty thousand* Judah is counted on its own, a hint of the later division between Judah and the northern tribes. I take these numbers as written. Some scholars think the Hebrew for thousand, eleph, can mean a clan or military unit, here and elsewhere (4:10; 13:5; 15:4). Either way, Israel came out in force.
11:9 *you shall have salvation* Salvation here means rescue.
11:10 *you may do to us according to all that is good in your eyes* A clever answer. They would come out, but not to surrender. Nahash thought he had won.
11:11 *Saul put the people in three companies* The morning watch was the last part of the night, just before dawn. Gideon also used three companies in a night attack (Judg 7:16). Saul's first battle as king was a complete victory. The town about to be shamed was saved.
11:13 *Not a man shall be put to death on this day, for today the LORD has worked salvation in Israel* One of Saul's finest moments. He refused revenge and gave the credit to the LORD. This is the Saul who could have been, humble, generous and quick to honor God. Later he will hunt a faithful man out of jealousy and kill the priests of Nob. Success can be more dangerous to the soul than failure.
11:14 *let us renew the kingship there* Saul had been chosen at Mizpah, but not everyone accepted him. Gilgal was where Israel camped after crossing the Jordan and kept the Passover (Josh 4:19-20; 5:9-10), a place of new beginnings.
11:15 *they sacrificed there sacrifices of peace offerings before the LORD* A peace offering was shared in a meal, a sign of fellowship with God and one another. It was a day of great joy, but Samuel knew the people still needed hard truths, and chapter 12 gives his farewell at this same gathering.

before the LORD in Gilgal, and they sacrificed there sacrifices of peace offerings before the LORD; and Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced there exceedingly.

1 SAMUEL 12

Samuel's Farewell

1 And Samuel (Shemu'el) said to all Israel (Yisra'el), "Look, I have listened to your voice in all that you have said to me, and I have made a king reign over you. **2** And now, look, the king ***is*** walking before you; and I, I am old and gray, and my sons, look, they ***are*** with you; and I, I have walked before you from my youth until this day. **3** Here I ***am***; testify against me before the LORD and before His anointed: whose ox have I taken, and whose donkey have I taken, and whom have I oppressed, whom have I crushed, and from whose hand have I taken a ransom, and hidden my eyes with it? And I will restore ***it*** to you." **4** And they said, "You have not oppressed us, and you have not crushed us, and you have not taken anything from the hand of anyone." **5** And he said to them, "The LORD ***is*** a witness against you, and His anointed ***is*** a witness this day, that you have not found anything in my hand." And they said, "***He is*** a witness." **6** And Samuel said to the people, "***It is*** the LORD who made Moses (Moshe) and Aaron (Aharon), and who brought up your fathers from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim). **7** And now, present yourselves, and let me enter into judgment with you before the LORD ***concerning*** all the righteous acts of the LORD which He did with you and with your fathers. **8** When Jacob (Ya'aqov) came ***to*** Egypt, and your fathers cried out to the LORD, and the LORD sent Moses and Aaron, and they brought out your fathers from Egypt, and they caused them to dwell in this place. **9** And they forgot the LORD their God, and He sold them into the hand of Sisera (Sisra), the commander of the army of Hazor (Chatsor), and into the hand of the Philistines, and into the hand of the king of Moab (Mo'av), and they fought against them. **10** And they cried out to the LORD and said, 'We have sinned, for we have forsaken the LORD and have served the Baals and the Ashtaroth; and now deliver us from the hand of our enemies, and we will serve You.' **11** And the LORD sent Jerubbaal (Yeruba'al) and Bedan and Jephthah (Yiftach) and Samuel, and He delivered you from the hand of your enemies all around, and you dwelt securely. **12** And you saw that Nahash (Nachash) the king of the sons of Ammon (Amon) came against you, and you said to me, 'No, but a king shall reign over us,' and the LORD your God ***was*** your king. **13** And now, look, the king whom you have chosen, whom you have asked for; and look, the LORD has set a king over you. **14** If you will fear the LORD and serve Him and listen to His voice, and not rebel against the mouth of the LORD, and both you and also the king who reigns over you will be after the LORD your God— **15** And if you will not listen to the voice of the LORD, and you rebel against the mouth of the LORD, then the hand of the LORD will be against you and against your fathers. **16** Even now, present yourselves and see this great thing which the LORD ***is*** doing before your eyes. **17** Is it not wheat harvest today? I will call to the LORD, and He will give thunder and rain; and know and see that your evil which you have done in the eyes of the LORD ***is*** great, in asking for yourselves a king." **18** And Samuel called to the LORD, and the LORD gave thunder and rain on that day; and all the

12:1 1 Sam 11:14,15; 1 Sam 8:5-8,19-22; 1 Sam 10:1,24
12:2 1 Sam 8:20; 1 Sam 8:1,5; Num 27:17
12:3 1 Sam 10:1; 1 Sam 24:6; Num 16:15
12:4 Ps 37:5,6; Dan 6:4; 3 John 1:12
12:5 Exod 22:4; Acts 23:9; Job 31:35-40
12:6 Heb 3:2; Mic 6:4; Exod 6:26
12:7 Isa 1:18; Isa 5:3,4; Ezek 18:25-30
12:8 Acts 7:15; Acts 7:35; Exod 4:14-16,27-31
12:9 Judg 4:2; Judg 10:7; Judg 13:1
12:10 Luke 1:74; Judg 10:10,15; Judg 2:13
12:11 Acts 13:20; Heb 11:32; Judg 6:14,32
12:12 Acts 13:21; Judg 8:23; 1 Sam 11:1,2
12:13 Acts 13:21; 1 Sam 10:24; Hos 13:11
12:14 John 8:31; Acts 13:21; Josh 24:14,20
12:15 Josh 24:20; Isa 1:20; Lev 26:14-30
12:16 Acts 13:21; Exod 14:13,31; 1 Sam 12:7
12:17 Acts 13:21; Prov 26:1; 1 Sam 7:9,10
12:18 Acts 13:21; Exod 14:31; Ezra 10:9

12:2 *my sons, look, they are with you* Perhaps a quiet admission that his sons had not been good judges, or a way of saying, hold them to account like anyone else. Then Samuel points to his own life. Everyone there had known him from the boy in the linen ephod to the gray-haired prophet.
12:3 *testify against me before the LORD and before His anointed* A ransom here is a bribe paid so a judge will look the other way. Samuel's sons took bribes (8:3). Samuel never had. These were exactly the things he warned a king would do: take, take, take (8:11-17). He led Israel for years and took nothing.
12:4 *you have not taken anything from the hand of anyone* Could you stand before those who know you best and ask that question? Paul could (Acts 20:33-34). A leader's greatest sermon is his life. Samuel's years spoke for him.
12:7 *let me enter into judgment with you before the LORD concerning all the righteous acts of the LORD* Samuel speaks like a lawyer laying out a case, and the evidence is God's righteous acts, the things He did to save them. He had given leaders before. He did not need a king to save them.
12:9 *they forgot the LORD their God* The beginning of every disaster in Judges. They did not stop believing God existed. They forgot Him and lived as if He did not matter. So He gave them over to Sisera (Judg 4), the Philistines and Moab, the enemies they had made room for.
12:10 *We have sinned, for we have forsaken the LORD* When they confessed and called out, God answered.
12:11 *the LORD sent Jerubbaal and Bedan and Jephthah and Samuel* Jerubbaal is Gideon (Judg 6:32), and Jephthah is in Judges 11. Bedan is not named in Judges. The Greek and Syriac read Barak (compare Heb 11:32), and others think Bedan was another name for one of the judges. Samuel even named himself, since God used him at Mizpah (7:10).
12:12 *the LORD your God was your king* The threat from Nahash was building before the people asked for a king. Instead of crying out to God as their fathers did, they asked for a man.
12:13 *the king whom you have chosen, whom you have asked for* The name Saul, Sha'ul, even sounds like the word asked. And yet "the LORD has set a king over you." Both are true. The people chose, and God gave. He was still in charge, even of their wrong request.
12:14 *If you will fear the LORD and serve Him and listen to His voice* The Hebrew sentence breaks off, as if Samuel left the good result unspoken. A king changed nothing about the covenant. The same rule held for king and people: obey and be blessed, rebel and be judged, the choice Moses set before Israel (Deut 30:15-20).
12:17 *Is it not wheat harvest today?* Wheat harvest came in May or June, the dry season. Rain then was almost unheard of and could ruin a harvest. The people had been rejoicing (11:15), and Samuel wanted them to see their sin before they got too comfortable.
12:18 *the LORD gave thunder and rain on that day* As in chapter 7, God thundered at Samuel's prayer. This time it was not against the Philistines but a warning to Israel.

people feared the LORD and Samuel exceedingly. **19** And all the people said to Samuel, "Pray for your servants to the LORD your God, and let us not die; for we have added to all our sins an evil, in asking for ourselves a king." **20** And Samuel said to the people, "Do not be afraid. You, you have done all this evil; only do not turn aside from after the LORD, and serve the LORD with all your heart. **21** And you shall not turn aside, for ***you would go*** after futility, which cannot profit and cannot deliver, for they ***are*** futility. **22** For the LORD will not abandon His people, for the sake of His great name, for the LORD has been pleased to make you a people for Himself. **23** Also as for me, far be it from me to sin against the LORD by ceasing to pray for you; and I will teach you the good and the upright way. **24** Only fear the LORD and serve Him in faithfulness with all your heart, for consider what great ***things*** He has done with you. **25** And if you surely do evil, both you and your king will be swept away."

1 SAMUEL 13

War With the Philistines

1 Saul (Shaul) ***was*** a year old when he became king, and two years he reigned over Israel (Yisra'el). **2** And Saul chose for himself three thousand from Israel; and two thousand were with Saul at Michmash (Mikhmas) and in the hill country of Bethel (Bet-El), and a thousand were with Jonathan (Yonatan) at Gibeah (Giva) of Benjamin (Binyamin). And the rest of the people he sent away, each man to his tents. **3** And Jonathan struck the garrison of the Philistines which ***was*** at Geba (Geva), and the Philistines heard. And Saul blew the trumpet in all the land, saying, "Let the Hebrews hear." **4** And all Israel heard, saying, "Saul has struck the garrison of the Philistines, and also Israel has made itself a stench to the Philistines." And the people were called together after Saul ***to*** Gilgal. **5** And the Philistines gathered to fight with Israel, thirty thousand chariots and six thousand horsemen, and people like the sand which ***is*** on the shore of the sea for multitude; and they came up and encamped at Michmash, east of Beth-aven (Bet-Aven). **6** And the men of Israel saw that ***it was*** distress for them, for the people were hard pressed; and the people hid themselves in caves and in thickets and in crags and in strongholds and in cisterns. **7** And Hebrews crossed the Jordan (Yarden) ***to*** the land of Gad and Gilead (Gilad). And Saul ***was*** still at Gilgal, and all the people trembled after him.

Saul's Unlawful Offering

8 And he waited seven days, to the appointed time which Samuel (Shemu'el) ***had set***, and Samuel did not come ***to*** Gil-

12:19 Acts 8:24; Acts 13:21; Exod 9:28
12:20 Deut 11:16; Exod 20:19,20; 1 Pet 3:16
12:21 Hab 2:18; Jer 16:19; Jer 10:15
12:22 1 Pet 2:9; Heb 13:5; 1 Kgs 6:13
12:23 Rom 1:9; Col 1:9; Acts 18:25
12:24 John 1:47; Mark 4:41; John 4:23
12:25 Acts 13:22; Josh 24:20; 1 Sam 31:1-5
13:1 Exod 12:5; Mic 6:6
13:2 1 Sam 10:26; 1 Sam 13:5,23; 1 Sam 8:11
13:3 1 Sam 10:5; Judg 3:27; Judg 6:34
13:4 Gen 34:30; Exod 5:21; Gen 46:34
13:5 Rom 9:27; Rev 20:8; Josh 11:4
13:6 Judg 6:2; Heb 11:38; Exod 14:10-12
13:7 Lev 26:17,36,37; Deut 28:25; Num 32:1-5,33-42
13:8 1 Sam 10:8

12:19 *Pray for your servants to the LORD your God* They called Him "your God," as if they did not dare call Him theirs. They named asking for a king as one more evil on top of their sins. That is true repentance: naming the sin and asking for mercy.
12:20 *Do not be afraid. You, you have done all this evil* Samuel did not pretend their sin was small, and he did not leave them in despair. The past could not be undone, but the future could still be faithful. You may be living with choices you cannot undo. God's word is still, do not be afraid, do not turn aside now, serve Him with all your heart from here on.
12:21 *you would go after futility, which cannot profit and cannot deliver* Futility is the word used in Gen 1:2 for the earth being formless. Idols are empty things. They promise much and give nothing.
12:22 *the LORD will not abandon His people, for the sake of His great name* The anchor of the chapter. Not because they deserved it, but for His name, since it pleased Him to choose them (Deut 7:7-8). I believe this still stands for Israel as a nation. Paul asks, "did God reject His people?" (Rom 11:1), and answers, "May it not be!" (Rom 11:1). God has a future for Israel (Rom 11:25-29). And He keeps every believer in Christ (John 10:28-29).
12:23 *far be it from me to sin against the LORD by ceasing to pray for you* Samuel had been pushed aside. He could have said, let your king pray for you. Instead he called prayerlessness a sin. If God has put people in our lives, we owe it to Him to pray for them, even when they have hurt us (Luke 6:28). He was retiring from judging, not from ministry.
12:24 *consider what great things He has done with you* Samuel's whole message in one verse. To fear the LORD is to hold Him in awe, so that we trust and obey Him above all. When we remember what God has done, serving Him is not a burden but a thank-you.
12:25 *both you and your king will be swept away* Centuries later it came true, when Judah and its king were carried to Babylon (2 Kgs 25). God's warnings are as sure as His promises.
13:1 *Saul was a year old when he became king, and two years he reigned over Israel* The SLB gives the Hebrew as it stands. This is the normal opening for a king's reign (2 Sam 5:4), but the numbers do not fit. Saul already had a grown son (13:2), and Paul says he reigned forty years (Acts 13:21). Most scholars believe a number was lost in early copying, since letters were often used for numbers. Some Greek copies leave the verse out, and a few say thirty. Bibles differ here for that reason.
13:1 *two years he reigned over Israel* It is honest to say a number was lost. That does not mean the Bible has failed. God inspired what the writers first wrote and has kept His Word with great care. Where copies differ it is usually a small detail like this, and no teaching depends on it. Saul was a grown man and reigned about forty years, from about 1050 to about 1010 B.C.
13:2 *a thousand were with Jonathan at Gibeah of Benjamin* Saul's standing army of three thousand. This is our first meeting with Jonathan, who will become one of the finest men in the book.
13:3 *Jonathan struck the garrison of the Philistines which was at Geba* A garrison was a military outpost the Philistines kept inside Israel's land (10:5). Jonathan's attack was bold and an act of war. Yet the people heard, "Saul has struck the garrison" (13:4). Saul took the credit, a small detail that hints at his heart.
13:4 *Israel has made itself a stench to the Philistines* Now the Philistines would strike back. The people gathered at Gilgal, where Samuel had told Saul to wait (10:8).
13:5 *thirty thousand chariots and six thousand horsemen* A huge number of chariots for a hill country battle. Some Greek and Syriac copies read three thousand. Either way, Israel was badly outmatched.
13:6 *the people hid themselves in caves and in thickets and in crags and in strongholds and in cisterns* Cisterns were pits dug to collect rainwater. Men were hiding in holes in the ground, and some crossed the Jordan and ran away altogether.
13:8 *he waited seven days, to the appointed time which Samuel had set* Saul did wait, most of the time. Every day more men slipped away. On the seventh day, with Samuel still not there, he made his choice.

gal; and the people scattered from him. **9** And Saul said, "Bring near to me the burnt offering and the peace offerings." And he offered up the burnt offering. **10** And it was, when he finished offering up the burnt offering, and look, Samuel came; and Saul went out to meet him, to bless him. **11** And Samuel said, "What have you done?" And Saul said, "Because I saw that the people were scattered from me, and you, you did not come at the appointed time of the days, and the Philistines ***were*** gathering ***at*** Michmash, **12** and I said, 'Now the Philistines will come down against me ***at*** Gilgal, and the face of the LORD I have not entreated'; and I forced myself, and I offered up the burnt offering." **13** And Samuel said to Saul, "You have acted foolishly; you have not kept the commandment of the LORD your God which He commanded you; for now the LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. **14** And now your kingdom will not endure. The LORD has sought for Himself a man according to His heart, and the LORD has commanded him ***to be*** leader over His people, because you have not kept what the LORD commanded you." **15** And Samuel arose and went up from Gilgal ***to*** Gibeah of Benjamin. And Saul mustered the people who were found with him, about six hundred men. **16** And Saul and Jonathan his son and the people who were found with them ***were*** staying in Geba of Benjamin, and the Philistines encamped at Michmash. **17** And the raiders came out from the camp of the Philistines ***in*** three companies: one company turned toward the way of Ophrah (Ofra), to the land of Shual; **18** and one company turned ***toward*** the way of Beth-horon (Bet-Choron); and one company turned ***toward*** the way of the border that looks down over the valley of Zeboim (Tsevo'im), toward the wilderness. **19** And no craftsman was found in all the land of Israel, for the Philistines said, "Lest the Hebrews make sword or spear." **20** And all Israel went down ***to*** the Philistines to sharpen each man his plowshare and his mattock and his axe and his plowshare. **21** And the charge was approximately 1/4 ounce (a pim) for the plowshares and for the mattocks and for the
three-pronged forks and for the axes, and to set the goads. **22** And it was on the day of battle, and neither sword nor spear was found in the hand of any of the people who ***were*** with Saul and with Jonathan; and ***one*** was found for Saul and for Jonathan his son. **23** And the outpost of the Philistines went out to the pass of Michmash.

1 SAMUEL 14

Jonathan's Bold Climb

1 And it was ***one*** day, and Jonathan (Yonatan) the son of Saul (Shaul) said to the servant who carried his armor, "Come, and let us cross over to the outpost of the Philistines which ***is*** on the other side over there." And to his father he did not tell ***it***. **2** And Saul ***was*** staying at the edge of Gibeah (Giva) under the pomegranate tree which ***is*** in Migron, and the people who ***were*** with him ***were*** about six hundred men. **3** And Ahijah (Achiya) the son of Ahitub (Achituv), the brother of Ichabod (I-Khavod), the son of Phinehas (Pinchas), the son of Eli, the priest of the LORD in Shiloh (Shilo), ***was*** carrying an ephod. And the people did not know that

13:9 1 Kgs 3:4; Deut 12:6; 1 Sam 13:12,13
13:10 1 Sam 15:13; Ruth 2:4; Ps 129:8
13:11 1 Sam 13:2,5,16,23; Gen 3:13; Gen 4:10
13:12 1 Kgs 12:26,27; 1 Sam 21:7; Ps 66:3
13:13 Acts 13:22; 2 Chr 16:9; 1 Sam 15:11,22,28
13:14 Acts 13:22; 1 Sam 15:28; 1 Sam 2:30
13:15 1 Sam 13:2,6,7; 1 Sam 14:2
13:17 Josh 18:23; 1 Sam 11:11; Josh 19:3
13:18 Neh 11:34; Josh 18:13,14; Josh 16:3,5
13:19 2 Kgs 24:14; Judg 5:8; Jer 24:1
13:22 Judg 5:8; 1 Sam 17:47,50; Zech 4:6
13:23 Isa 10:28; 1 Sam 14:4; 1 Sam 14:1,4,5
14:1 1 Sam 14:39-45; 1 Sam 13:2,22; 1 Sam 18:1-4
14:2 1 Sam 13:15,16; Isa 10:28,29
14:3 1 Sam 4:21; 1 Sam 2:28; 1 Sam 22:9-12,20

13:9 *he offered up the burnt offering* Samuel had said, "I am coming down to you to offer up burnt offerings" (10:8), and he would tell Saul what to do. Saul waited for neither. It might look religious, but he was taking a role God had not given him and refusing to wait for God's word. In Israel the king was under God's word, not over it.
13:10 *when he finished offering up the burnt offering, and look, Samuel came* If Saul had waited a little longer, it would have been fine. How often do we give up on God just before He shows up? And Saul went out to bless Samuel as if nothing were wrong.
13:11 *you, you did not come at the appointed time of the days* Three excuses: the army was leaving, Samuel was late, and the enemy was near. Each was true. None was a reason to disobey.
13:12 *I forced myself, and I offered up the burnt offering* Then the religious reason, and a claim that he acted against his will. He blamed Samuel and the people and never once said, I did wrong. This is how disobedience usually sounds. We say, I had no choice, others let me down, and besides, I was trying to do something good.
13:13 *You have acted foolishly* In the Bible a fool is not someone who lacks brains but someone who acts as if God's word does not matter. And a sad sentence follows: God had something good in store for Saul. If he had obeyed, his family could have ruled for generations.
13:14 *The LORD has sought for Himself a man according to His heart* This was David, not yet named. Paul quotes it: "I have found David the son of Jesse, a man according to My heart" (Acts 13:22). That is not a man without sin, but one whose heart is set on God. When David sinned, he repented. When Saul sinned, he made excuses. Too harsh for one offering? It was the king deciding God's word could be set aside when things got hard, and chapter 15 shows it was his pattern.
13:15 *about six hundred men* He began with three thousand, and before that led far more (11:8). Fear and disobedience had shrunk his army to a handful.
13:17 *the raiders came out from the camp of the Philistines in three companies* North, west and east, plundering the land, and Saul could do nothing to stop them.
13:19 *no craftsman was found in all the land of Israel* A smith, a man who worked metal. The Philistines had learned to work iron and kept the skill to themselves so Israel could not make weapons.
13:21 *the charge was approximately 1/4 ounce* Israelite farmers had to pay their enemies to sharpen their tools. The charge was a pim, which was about two-thirds of a shekel. Stone weights marked pim have been found by archaeologists, which helped scholars understand this rare word.
13:22 *neither sword nor spear was found in the hand of any of the people* Only Saul and Jonathan had real weapons. This was the fruit of years of sin, but it also set up what God was about to do. He would win through Jonathan and one armor-bearer, and later through a shepherd boy with a sling. God does not need our weapons. He needs our trust.
13:23 *the outpost of the Philistines went out to the pass of Michmash* The two armies faced each other across a deep gorge. The stage was set for Jonathan's bold climb.
14:1 *to his father he did not tell it* Jonathan did not wait for orders. We are not told why he kept quiet. Perhaps he knew Saul would say no.
14:2 *Saul was staying at the edge of Gibeah under the pomegranate tree* The army was small, the king was sitting still, and the Philistines were raiding the land.
14:3 *Ahijah the son of Ahitub, the brother of Ichabod* Saul's priest came from Eli's family, the house God had judged, which fits a king about to be rejected too. The ephod held the Urim and Thummim used to ask God's will (Exod 28:30).

Jonathan had gone. **4** And between the passes by which Jonathan sought to cross over to the outpost of the
Philistines ***there was*** a tooth of the crag on the one side and a tooth of the crag on the other side; and the name of the one ***was*** Bozez (Botsets), and the name of the other Seneh (Sene). **5** The one tooth ***was*** a pillar on the north in front of Michmash (Mikhmas), and the other on the south in front of Geba (Geva). **6** And Jonathan (Yehonatan) said to the servant who carried his armor, "Come, and let us cross over to the outpost of these uncircumcised; perhaps the LORD will act for us, for there is no restraint for the LORD to save by many or by few." **7** And his armor-bearer said to him, "Do all that ***is*** in your heart; turn aside for yourself. Look, I ***am*** with you according to your heart." **8** And Jonathan said, "Look, we ***are*** crossing over to the men, and we will reveal ourselves to them. **9** If they say thus to us, 'Be still until we reach you,' then we will stand in our place, and we will not go up to them. **10** And if they say thus, 'Come up to us,' then we will go up, for the LORD has given them into our hand; and this ***will be*** the sign for us." **11** And the two of them revealed themselves to the outpost of the Philistines; and the
Philistines said, "Look, Hebrews coming out from the holes where they have hidden themselves!" **12** And the men of the outpost answered Jonathan and his armor-bearer, and they said, "Come up to us, and we will make known to you a thing!" And Jonathan said to his armor-bearer, "Come up after me, for the LORD has given them into the hand of Israel (Yisra'el)." **13** And Jonathan went up on his hands and on his feet, and his armor-bearer after him; and they fell before Jonathan, and his armor-bearer ***was*** killing after him. **14** And the first slaughter which Jonathan and his armor-bearer struck was about twenty men, within about half a furrow of an acre of field. **15** And there was trembling in the camp, in the field, and among all the people; the outpost and the raiders, they also trembled; and the earth quaked, and it became a trembling of God.

The LORD Saves Israel

16 And the watchmen of Saul at Gibeah of Benjamin
(Binyamin) looked, and look, the multitude melted away, and it went here and ***there***. **17** And Saul said to the people who ***were*** with him, "Muster, please, and see who has gone from us." And they mustered, and look, Jonathan and his
armor-bearer ***were*** not ***there***. **18** And Saul said to Ahijah, "Bring near the ark of God," for the ark of God was on that day ***with*** the sons of Israel. **19** And it was, while Saul spoke to the priest, and the tumult which ***was*** in the camp of the Philistines went on, going on and growing greater; and Saul said to the priest, "Withdraw your hand." **20** And Saul and all the people who ***were*** with him were called together, and they came to the battle; and look, the sword of each man was against his neighbor, a very great panic. **21** And the Hebrews ***who*** were for the Philistines as formerly, who had gone up with them into the camp all around, they also ***turned*** to be with Israel who ***were*** with Saul and Jonathan. **22** And all the men of Israel who had hidden themselves in the hill country of Ephraim (Efrayim) heard that the Philistines had fled, and they also pursued closely after them in the battle. **23** And the LORD saved Israel on that day; and the battle passed beyond Beth-aven (Bet-Aven).

Saul's Rash Oath

24 And the men of Israel were hard pressed on that day, and

14:4 1 Sam 13:23
14:6 Matt 19:26; 1 Sam 17:26,36; 2 Chr 14:11
14:7 Ps 46:7; 1 Sam 10:7; 2 Sam 7:3
14:8 Judg 7:9-14
14:9 Gen 24:13,14; Judg 6:36-40
14:10 Gen 24:14; 1 Sam 10:7; Judg 7:11
14:11 1 Sam 13:6; 1 Sam 14:22; Judg 6:2
14:12 1 Sam 17:43,44; 2 Sam 5:24; 1 Sam 14:10
14:13 Ps 18:29; Heb 11:34; Lev 26:7,8
14:15 1 Sam 13:17,23; Gen 35:5; 2 Kgs 7:6,7
14:16 Ps 58:7; Ps 68:2; 1 Sam 14:20
14:18 1 Sam 4:3-5; Num 27:21; Judg 20:18,23,27,28
14:19 1 Sam 14:24; 1 Sam 13:11; Josh 9:14
14:20 Judg 7:22; 2 Chr 20:23; 1 Sam 14:16
14:21 1 Sam 29:4; Judg 7:23
14:22 1 Sam 13:6; 1 Sam 31:7
14:23 Exod 14:30; 1 Sam 13:5; Judg 2:18
14:24 Acts 23:12; 1 Sam 14:27-30; Lev 27:29

14:4 *the name of the one was Bozez, and the name of the other Seneh* A deep gorge with steep rocky cliffs on each side. Jonathan would have to climb down one and up the other in plain view. No army would try it. That was the point.
14:6 *the outpost of these uncircumcised* Circumcision was the sign of God's covenant with Abraham (Gen 17:10-11). Calling the Philistines uncircumcised meant they were outside it. Jonathan was thinking in terms of God's promises, not soldiers.
14:6 *there is no restraint for the LORD to save by many or by few* The heart of Jonathan's faith. He said "perhaps," because he did not claim to know God's plan. But he knew God's power. Gideon won with three hundred (Judg 7). Jonathan was humble about God's will and bold about God's ability. That is a good balance for us.
14:7 *Look, I am with you according to your heart* Every bold servant of God needs friends like that.
14:10 *this will be the sign for us* Jonathan was not testing God out of doubt but asking guidance in a risky step, as Gideon did with the fleece (Judg 6:36-40) and Abraham's servant at the well (Gen 24:12-14). God's complete Word is our main guide, but it is not wrong to ask Him to open or close a door when we are trying to serve Him.
14:11 *Hebrews coming out from the holes where they have hidden themselves!* A mocking joke. Many Israelites really had been hiding in holes (13:6). Two men climbing a cliff would be easy to kill.
14:12 *the LORD has given them into the hand of Israel* That was the sign. Notice "into the hand of Israel," not into my hand. Jonathan fought for God's people, not his own name.
14:13 *Jonathan went up on his hands and on his feet* A hard climb. At the top, about twenty men fell in a small area (14:14).
14:15 *the earth quaked, and it became a trembling of God* The Hebrew can mean a very great panic or a panic sent by God. Both are true. God shook the ground and their hearts. Two men started the fight. God finished it.
14:18 *Bring near the ark of God* The Hebrew says ark, though the ark was at Kiriath-jearim (7:2). The Greek reads ephod, which fits 14:3, since the ephod was how the priest asked God's will. Either way, Saul meant to ask God what to do.
14:19 *Withdraw your hand* Stop, never mind. As the noise grew, Saul did not wait for God's answer, the same impatience as in chapter 13. Asking God only when it is convenient is not really seeking Him at all.
14:20 *the sword of each man was against his neighbor* The Philistines were killing each other, as Gideon's enemies had (Judg 7:22).
14:22 *they also pursued closely after them in the battle* Israelites who had served with the Philistines changed sides, and the men hiding in the hills came out. It is amazing how brave people get once the battle is already won.
14:23 *the LORD saved Israel on that day* The summary. Not Saul, not even Jonathan. The LORD.
14:24 *Cursed is the man who eats food until the evening, and I will be avenged on my enemies* My enemies, not the LORD's. Saul made it about himself. Fasting can be a good way to seek God (7:6), but this was a command from a king who wanted every minute for revenge. A hungry army cannot fight well, and his men paid for it.

Saul put the people under oath, saying, "Cursed ***is*** the man who eats food until the evening, and I will be avenged on my enemies." And none of the people tasted food. **25** And all the land came into the forest, and there was honey on the face of the field. **26** And the people came into the forest, and look, a flow of honey; and there was no one reaching his hand to his mouth, for the people feared the oath. **27** And Jonathan had not heard when his father made the people swear, and he stretched out the end of the staff which ***was*** in his hand and dipped it in the honeycomb, and he brought his hand back to his mouth, and his eyes brightened. **28** And a man from the people answered and said, "Your father surely made the people swear, saying, 'Cursed ***is*** the man who eats food today.'" And the people were weary. **29** And Jonathan said, "My father has troubled the land. See, please, that my eyes have brightened, because I tasted a little of this honey. **30** How much more if the people had surely eaten today from the plunder of their enemies which they found! For now the slaughter among the Philistines has not been great." **31** And they struck the Philistines on that day from Michmash to Aijalon (Ayalon); and the people were exceedingly weary. **32** And the people rushed on the plunder, and they took sheep and oxen and calves, and they slaughtered ***them*** on the ground; and the people ate ***them*** with the blood. **33** And they told Saul, saying, "Look, the people ***are*** sinning against the LORD by eating with the blood." And he said, "You have acted treacherously; roll a great stone to me today." **34** And Saul said, "Disperse among the people, and say to them, 'Bring near to me each man his ox and each man his sheep, and slaughter ***them*** here and eat; and do not sin against the LORD by eating with the blood.'" And all the people brought near each man his ox in his hand that night, and they slaughtered ***them*** there. **35** And Saul built an altar to the LORD; it he began to build ***as*** an altar to the LORD. **36** And Saul said, "Let us go down after the Philistines ***by*** night and plunder among them until the light of the morning, and let us not leave a man among them." And they said, "Do all that ***is*** good in your eyes." And the priest said, "Let us draw near here to God." **37** And Saul inquired of God, "Shall I go down after the Philistines? Will You give them into the hand of Israel?" And He did not answer him on that day. **38** And Saul said, "Draw near here, all the chiefs of the people, and know and see in what this sin has happened today. **39** For ***as*** the LORD lives, who saves Israel, even if it is in Jonathan my son, he shall surely die." And there was no one answering him from all the people. **40** And he said to all Israel, "You, you will be on one side, and I and Jonathan my son will be on one side." And the people said to Saul, "Do what ***is*** good in your eyes." **41** And Saul said to the LORD, the God of Israel, "Give perfect ***lot***." And Jonathan and Saul were taken, and the people went out. **42** And Saul said, "Cast ***the lot*** between me and Jonathan my son." And Jonathan was taken. **43** And Saul said to Jonathan, "Tell me what you have done." And Jonathan told him and said, "I surely tasted with the end of the staff which ***was*** in my hand a little honey. Here I ***am***; I will die." **44** And Saul said, "Thus may God do, and thus may He add; for you shall surely die, Jonathan." **45** And the people said to Saul, "Shall Jonathan die, who has worked this great salvation in Israel? Far be it! ***As*** the LORD lives, not one hair of his head shall fall to the ground, for with God he has worked this day." And the people ransomed Jonathan, and he did not die. **46** And Saul went up from after the Philistines, and the Philistines went to their place.

Saul's Wars and Family

47 And Saul had taken the kingship over Israel, and he fought all around against all his enemies: against Moab (Mo'av), and against the sons of Ammon (Amon), and against

14:25 Matt 3:4; Matt 3:5; Deut 9:28
14:26 Eccl 9:2
14:27 Matt 3:4; 1 Sam 30:12; 1 Sam 14:29
14:28 1 Sam 14:24,43
14:29 1 Kgs 18:18
14:30 Eccl 9:18
14:31 Josh 10:12; Josh 19:42
14:32 1 Sam 15:19; Lev 3:17; Gen 9:4
14:33 Matt 7:5; Rom 2:1
14:35 1 Sam 7:9,17; Judg 21:4; Hos 8:14
14:36 James 4:8; Josh 10:9-14,19; Jer 6:5
14:37 1 Sam 28:6; 1 Sam 23:4,9-12; 1 Sam 30:7,8
14:38 1 Sam 10:19,20; Josh 7:14-26; Num 24:17
14:39 2 Sam 12:5; 1 Sam 14:24,44; 1 Sam 19:6
14:40 1 Sam 14:7,36; 2 Sam 15:15
14:41 Acts 1:24; Prov 16:33; 1 Sam 10:20,21
14:43 Josh 7:19; Jonah 1:7-10
14:44 Ruth 1:17; 1 Sam 14:39; 1 Sam 25:22
14:45 2 Sam 14:11; 1 Kgs 1:52; Luke 21:18
14:47 2 Sam 10:6; 1 Sam 13:1; 2 Kgs 14:27

14:26 *the people feared the oath* Food was right there, a flow of honey, and they could not touch it.
14:27 *his eyes brightened* Jonathan had not heard the oath. One taste, and his strength came back.
14:29 *My father has troubled the land* Troubled is the word used of Achan (Josh 7:25). Saul's oath meant to bring victory but weakened the army and cut the victory short (14:30). Was Jonathan wrong to say so? He spoke truth, though bluntly. Saying honestly that a leader's decision is foolish is not rebellion.
14:32 *the people ate them with the blood* God's law forbade it: "the life of the flesh is in the blood" (Lev 17:11), given "on the altar to make atonement for your souls" (Lev 17:11). Blood stood for life and pointed ahead to the blood of Christ (Heb 9:22). Saul's foolish command pushed the people into a real sin.
14:33 *roll a great stone to me today* So the animals could be slaughtered properly and the blood drained.
14:35 *Saul built an altar to the LORD* The first altar we hear of Saul building. Perhaps the writer quietly notes that it took a crisis for him to build one.
14:37 *He did not answer him on that day* Saul told the priest to stop asking before (14:19). Now that he wanted an answer, God gave none. At the end of his life he will ask and get no answer at all (28:6).
14:39 *even if it is in Jonathan my son, he shall surely die* Another rash oath. Saul did not know the sin, but he had already set the punishment. No one answered. They knew Jonathan had eaten.
14:42 *Jonathan was taken* Was Jonathan guilty? He broke an oath he never heard, an oath foolish in the first place. The real sins that day were Saul's rash command and the people's eating with the blood. The lot pointed at the broken oath, but God never said Jonathan must die. That was Saul's word, not God's.
14:43 *Here I am; I will die* Jonathan did not argue or make excuses. Compare how his father answered Samuel (13:11-12).
14:44 *you shall surely die, Jonathan* Saul was ready to kill his own son to keep his word and save face. Pride can make a man cruel even to those he loves.
14:45 *for with God he has worked this day* The people saw what Saul could not. God had been with Jonathan. To ransom means to buy someone free. We are not told whether a price or a substitute was given, or simply that they rescued him by their stand. The king was overruled by his own army. His authority was already slipping.
14:46 *the Philistines went to their place* Because of the oath and the night of confusion, the Philistines escaped. The victory was not as complete as it could have been.

Edom, and against the kings of Zobah (Tsova), and against the Philistines; and wherever he turned he condemned ***them***.
48 And he did valiantly, and he struck Amalek (Amaleq), and he delivered Israel from the hand of those who plundered it.
49 And the sons of Saul were Jonathan and Ishvi (Yishvi) and Malchi-shua (Malkishua); and the names of his two daughters: the name of the firstborn ***was*** Merab (Merav), and the name of the younger Michal (Mikhal). **50** And the name of the wife of Saul ***was*** Ahinoam (Achino'am), the daughter of Ahimaaz (Achima'ats). And the name of the commander of his army ***was*** Abner (Aviner), the son of Ner, the uncle of Saul. **51** And Kish (Qish) ***was*** the father of Saul, and Ner the father of Abner ***was*** the son of Abiel (Avi'el). **52** And the war was severe against the Philistines all the days of Saul; and Saul would see every mighty man and every son of strength, and he would gather him to himself.

1 SAMUEL 15

The Command Against Amalek

1 And Samuel (Shemu'el) said to Saul (Shaul), "The LORD sent me to anoint you as king over His people, over Israel (Yisra'el). And now, listen to the voice of the words of the LORD. **2** Thus says the LORD of armies: 'I have paid attention to what Amalek (Amaleq) did to Israel, what he set against him on the way, when he came up from Egypt (Mitsrayim). **3** Now go, and you shall strike Amalek, and you shall devote to destruction all that he has, and you shall not spare him; and you shall put to death from man to woman, from child to nursing infant, from ox to sheep, from camel to donkey.'" **4** And Saul summoned the people, and he mustered them at Telaim: two hundred thousand foot soldiers, and ten thousand men of Judah (Yehuda). **5** And Saul came to the city of Amalek, and he lay in wait in the wadi. **6** And Saul said to the Kenites, "Go, depart, go down from among the Amalekites, lest I destroy you with them; and you, you did steadfast love with all the sons of Israel when they came up from Egypt." And the Kenites departed from among Amalek. **7** And Saul struck Amalek from Havilah (Chavila) ***as*** you come ***to*** Shur, which ***is*** facing Egypt. **8** And he seized Agag the king of Amalek alive, and all the people he devoted to destruction by the mouth of the sword. **9** And Saul and the people spared Agag and the best of the sheep and the cattle and the second ***ones*** and the lambs and all that ***was*** good, and they were not willing to devote them to destruction; and all the property ***that was*** despised and worthless, it they devoted to destruction.

The LORD Rejects Saul

10 And the word of the LORD came to Samuel, saying, **11** "I regret that I have made Saul king, for he has turned back from after Me, and My words he has not carried out." And Samuel burned ***with anger***, and he cried out to the LORD all

14:48 1 Sam 15:3-7; Exod 17:14; Deut 25:19
14:49 1 Sam 31:2; 1 Chr 8:33; 1 Chr 9:39
14:50 2 Sam 2:8; 1 Sam 17:55; 2 Sam 3:27
14:51 1 Sam 9:1,21
14:52 1 Sam 8:1,11
15:1 John 10:35; Acts 13:21; 1 Sam 9:16
15:2 Num 24:20; Deut 25:17-19; Exod 17:8-16
15:3 Num 24:20; Deut 20:16-18; Josh 6:17-21
15:4 Josh 15:24; 1 Sam 11:8; 1 Sam 13:15
15:6 Judg 1:16; Num 10:29-32; 1 Sam 27:10
15:7 1 Sam 14:48; Gen 25:18; Gen 16:7
15:8 1 Sam 30:1; Num 24:7; Esth 3:1
15:9 1 Sam 15:3,15,19; Josh 7:21; 2 Sam 6:13
15:11 1 Sam 13:13; Gen 6:6; 2 Sam 24:16

14:48 *he did valiantly, and he struck Amalek* We should give Saul his due. He fought enemies on every side and did real good for Israel. His problem was not lack of ability. It was lack of obedience.
14:50 *Abner, the son of Ner, the uncle of Saul* Merab and Michal will matter in David's story, and Abner will play a big part after Saul's death (2 Sam 2-3).
14:52 *he would gather him to himself* Samuel had warned that a king would take Israel's sons (8:11). Saul did. One of the men he would soon gather was a young shepherd from Bethlehem.
15:1 *listen to the voice of the words of the LORD* The LORD made Saul king, so the LORD had the right to command him. Listen is the key word of this chapter. In Hebrew it is shama, to hear and to obey. Saul had failed to listen at Gilgal (13:13). Now he had another chance.
15:2 *I have paid attention to what Amalek did to Israel* The Amalekites were desert nomads south of Israel, descendants of Esau (Gen 36:12). When Israel came out of Egypt, Amalek attacked without cause (Exod 17:8-16). They struck "all the stragglers behind you, and you were faint and weary; and he did not fear God" (Deut 25:18), the old, the sick and the slow. They kept up the same cruelty for centuries (Judg 3:13; 6:3; chapter 30).
15:3 *you shall devote to destruction all that he has, and you shall not spare him* One of the hardest verses in Scripture, and if it troubles you, it should. To devote to destruction is herem, something given wholly to the LORD so no one may keep or profit from it (Lev 27:28-29), used for His judgment on Canaan (Josh 6:17). It was not a war for land or plunder. Nothing was to be kept. It was a sentence carried out by God's command.
15:3 *from child to nursing infant* This was God's judgment, not Saul's idea or Israel's revenge. He is "the Judge of all the earth" (Gen 18:25), who alone gives life and may take it, and He had waited some four hundred years. He takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked (Ezek 33:11), and He spared the Kenites (15:6). I do not know all His reasons regarding the children, and Scripture does not give them. I believe little children who die are safe with God (2 Sam 12:23).
15:3 *you shall put to death from man to woman* This was a one-time command, given directly by God through His prophet, for that people at that time. It is never a pattern for anyone after. When Peter drew his sword, Jesus told him to put it away (Matt 26:52). Our battle "is not against blood and flesh" (Eph 6:12), and we are to love our enemies (Matt 5:44). Anyone who uses this chapter to excuse violence against any people, the Jewish people or any other, is twisting God's Word.
15:4 *two hundred thousand foot soldiers, and ten thousand men of Judah* The numbers are taken as written (see the note at 11:8). This chapter also points to the final judgment, when Christ returns as Judge (Acts 17:30-31). The only reason anyone will stand that day is that Jesus took the judgment on Himself.
15:5 *the city of Amalek* The Amalekites were mostly nomads, so this may have been their main camp or settlement.
15:6 *you did steadfast love with all the sons of Israel* The Kenites were the family of Moses' father-in-law (Judg 1:16). Steadfast love is hesed, loyal kindness. Long ago they had been kind to Israel, and God remembered it. His judgment was precise. He made a way out for those on His people's side, as He spared Rahab (Josh 6:25).
15:9 *Saul and the people spared Agag and the best of the sheep* Saul obeyed where it was easy and cost nothing, and disobeyed where it cost him something. He kept a king as a trophy and the best animals as plunder. God said this was a judgment, and Saul turned it into a raid. Partial obedience is disobedience. Saul did most of what God said and probably felt good about it, but he chose which parts to keep.
15:11 *I regret that I have made Saul king* Yet God "will not lie and will not regret" (15:29). When Scripture says God regretted, it describes His real sorrow and a change in how He deals with Saul. He grieves over sin (Gen 6:6; Eph 4:30). But He never changes His mind as if surprised or mistaken (Num 23:19; Mal 3:6). Saul changed, so God's dealings changed. His character and plan did not.
15:11 *he cried out to the LORD all the night* Samuel was angry, perhaps at Saul, perhaps at the whole situation. But he took it to God and spent the night in prayer. He loved Saul, and this hurt.

the night. **12** And Samuel rose early to meet Saul in the morning; and it was told to Samuel, saying, "Saul came to Carmel (Karmel), and look, he ***was*** setting up for himself a monument, and he turned around and passed on and went down to Gilgal." **13** And Samuel came to Saul, and Saul said to him, "Blessed ***are*** you by the LORD! I have carried out the word of the LORD." **14** And Samuel said, "And what ***is*** this voice of the sheep in my ears, and the voice of the cattle which I am hearing?" **15** And Saul said, "From the Amalekites they brought them, because the people spared the best of the sheep and the cattle in order to sacrifice to the LORD your God; and the rest we devoted to destruction." **16** And Samuel said to Saul, "Stop, and let me tell you what the LORD spoke to me this night." And he said to him, "Speak." **17** And Samuel said, "Though you ***were*** small in your eyes, ***were*** you not the head of the tribes of Israel? And the LORD anointed you as king over Israel. **18** And the LORD sent you on a journey, and He said, 'Go, and you shall devote to destruction the sinners, Amalek, and you shall fight against him until they have consumed them.' **19** And why did you not listen to the voice of the LORD, and you rushed on the plunder, and you did the evil in the eyes of the LORD?" **20** And Saul said to Samuel, "***But*** I did listen to the voice of the LORD, and I went on the journey on which the LORD sent me, and I brought Agag the king of Amalek, and Amalek I devoted to destruction. **21** And the people took from the plunder sheep and cattle, the choicest of the devoted things, to sacrifice to the LORD your God in Gilgal." **22** And Samuel said, "Does the LORD have delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in listening to the voice of the LORD? Look, to listen ***is*** better than sacrifice, to pay attention than the fat of rams. **23** For rebellion ***is*** the sin of divination, and presumption ***is*** wickedness and teraphim. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, so He has rejected you from ***being*** king."

The Torn Robe

24 And Saul said to Samuel, "I have sinned, for I have transgressed the mouth of the LORD and your words, because I feared the people, and I listened to their voice. **25** And now, please forgive my sin, and return with me, and I will bow down to the LORD." **26** And Samuel said to Saul, "I will not return with you, for you have rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD has rejected you from being king over Israel." **27** And Samuel turned around to go, and he took hold of the edge of his robe, and it tore. **28** And Samuel said to him, "The LORD has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today, and He

15:12 Josh 15:55; 1 Sam 25:2; 2 Sam 18:18
15:13 Gen 14:19; Judg 17:2; Ruth 3:10
15:14 Ps 36:2; Ps 50:16-21; Jer 2:18,19,22,23,34-37
15:15 1 Sam 15:9,21; Gen 3:12,13; Exod 32:22,23
15:16 1 Sam 9:27; 1 Sam 12:7; 1 Kgs 22:16
15:17 1 Sam 9:21; 1 Sam 10:22; Judg 6:15
15:18 Rev 16:1; Gen 13:13; Gen 15:16
15:19 Prov 15:27; Jer 7:11; Hab 2:9-12
15:20 1 Sam 15:13; Job 33:9; Job 34:5
15:21 1 Sam 15:15; Exod 32:22,23; Gen 3:13
15:22 Hos 6:6; Matt 9:13; Mark 12:33
15:23 1 Sam 13:14; 1 Sam 12:14,15; Num 14:9
15:24 2 Sam 12:13; Isa 51:12,13; Prov 29:25
15:25 Exod 10:17
15:26 1 Sam 13:14; 1 Sam 16:1; Hos 4:6
15:28 1 Sam 28:17,18; 1 Kgs 11:30,31; 1 Sam 2:7,8

15:12 *he was setting up for himself a monument* This Carmel was a town in the south of Judah, not Mount Carmel. The man once small in his own eyes (9:21) was putting up a monument to himself.

15:13 *I have carried out the word of the LORD* Did he believe it? Maybe. People can fool themselves. Or maybe he hoped Samuel would not ask questions.

15:14 *what is this voice of the sheep in my ears* I can almost hear the sheep bleating in the background. Sin has a way of making noise. You can claim you obeyed, but the evidence is right there.

15:15 *the people spared the best of the sheep and the cattle in order to sacrifice to the LORD your God* When Saul won, it was I. When something went wrong, it was they, the people. Then a religious reason. And "your God," not my God or our God. Then "the rest we devoted to destruction," we again for the good part.

15:17 *Though you were small in your eyes, were you not the head of the tribes of Israel?* God lifted up a humble man. As head, Saul was responsible and could not hide behind the people. Samuel calls Amalek "the sinners" (15:18). This was judgment on a guilty people, not conquest.

15:19 *you rushed on the plunder* The same word used of the hungry army rushing on the plunder (14:32). They had done it again, and Saul led them in it.

15:20 *But I did listen to the voice of the LORD* Saul still did not admit it. He did not see that bringing Agag back was the very problem.

15:21 *the choicest of the devoted things, to sacrifice to the LORD your God* The devoted things already belonged to God and were set apart for destruction. You cannot give God, as a gift, what is already His and what He told you to destroy.

15:22 *to listen is better than sacrifice, to pay attention than the fat of rams* One of the key verses of the Bible. Samuel did not say sacrifices were bad. God commanded them, and they pointed to Christ. The question is what God delights in more. To listen, shama, is to hear in a way that leads to doing. The fat was the best part, burned as God's portion (Lev 3:16). Even the best of the best offering is worth less than a heart that hears and obeys.

15:22 *Does the LORD have delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices* A sacrifice without obedience tries to buy God off: I will give You something religious if You let me run my life. He wants us, not our things. The prophets said it again and again (Hos 6:6; Mic 6:8; Prov 21:3). After his own sin David said, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit" (Ps 51:17). Jesus quoted Hosea against the Pharisees (Matt 9:13; 12:7; 23:23).

15:22 *as in listening to the voice of the LORD* We offer no animal sacrifices, since Christ's one sacrifice did what they never could (Heb 10:4, 10). But we can attend church, give and serve, and still refuse God in the one area He keeps touching. We are saved by grace through faith, not by obeying (Eph 2:8-9). But true faith listens. "If you love Me, keep My commandments" (John 14:15). What sheep are bleating in the background of your life?

15:23 *rebellion is the sin of divination, and presumption is wickedness and teraphim* Divination tried to learn the future by occult means (Deut 18:10-12). Teraphim were household idols (Gen 31:19). Most read it as rebellion is like divination, and presumption like idolatry. Setting your will above God's word is that kind of sin. Stubbornness is idolatry of self. At the end Saul really will go to a medium (chapter 28).

15:23 *because you have rejected the word of the LORD, so He has rejected you from being king* The punishment matched the sin. In chapter 13 Saul's family lost the throne. Now Saul himself was rejected as God's king, though he would keep it in name for years.

15:24 *because I feared the people, and I listened to their voice* At last, "I have sinned," but even here an excuse. This is the root. Saul listened to the people's voice instead of the LORD's. He cared more what his soldiers thought than what God thought. The fear of man is a trap (Prov 29:25).

15:26 *I will not return with you* Saul wanted Samuel with him so the people would see that all was well. Samuel would not pretend. Compare David: "I have sinned against the LORD" (2 Sam 12:13). David's confession was about God. Saul's was about his position.

15:28 *He will give it to your neighbor, who is better than you* Saul grabbed Samuel's robe, and it tore, and Samuel turned it into a picture of God's word. The neighbor was David. Years later David cut off the edge of Saul's robe in a cave (24:4-5). The torn robe followed Saul all his life.

will give it to your neighbor, who ***is*** better than you. **29** And also the Eminence of Israel will not lie and will not regret, for He ***is*** not a man, that He should regret." **30** And he said, "I have sinned; now please honor me before the elders of my people and before Israel, and return with me, and I will bow down to the LORD your God." **31** And Samuel returned after Saul, and Saul bowed down to the LORD.

Agag Put to Death

32 And Samuel said, "Bring near to me Agag the king of Amalek." And Agag came to him in fetters. And Agag said, "Surely the bitterness of death has departed." **33** And Samuel said, "Just as your sword has made women childless, so your mother shall be childless among women." And Samuel hewed Agag to pieces before the LORD in Gilgal. **34** And Samuel went to Ramah (Rama), and Saul went up to his house ***at*** Gibeah (Giva) of Saul. **35** And Samuel did not again see Saul until the day of his death, for Samuel mourned over Saul; and the LORD regretted that He had made Saul king over Israel.

1 SAMUEL 16

Samuel Anoints David

1 And the LORD said to Samuel (Shemu'el), "How long ***are*** you mourning for Saul (Shaul), and I have rejected him from reigning over Israel (Yisra'el)? Fill your horn ***with*** oil and go; I will send you to Jesse (Yishay) the Bethlehemite, for I have seen among his sons a king for Myself." **2** And Samuel said, "How can I go? And Saul will hear, and he will kill me." And the LORD said, "A heifer of the cattle you shall take in your hand, and you shall say, 'To sacrifice to the LORD I have come.' **3** And you shall invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I, I will make known to you what you shall do; and you shall anoint for Me the ***one*** whom I say to you." **4** And Samuel did what the LORD spoke, and he came ***to*** Bethlehem
(Bet-Lechem). And the elders of the city trembled to meet him, and ***one*** said, "***Is*** your coming ***in*** peace?" **5** And he said, "***In*** peace. To sacrifice to the LORD I have come. Sanctify yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice." And he sanctified Jesse and his sons, and he invited them to the sacrifice. **6** And it was, when they came, and he saw Eliab (Eli'av), and he said, "Surely His anointed ***is*** before the LORD." **7** And the

15:29 Num 23:19; Ezek 24:14; Titus 1:2
15:30 John 5:44; John 12:43; Isa 29:13
15:32 Jer 48:44; 1 Thess 5:3; Rev 18:7
15:33 Judg 1:7; Gen 9:6; Matt 7:2
15:34 1 Sam 11:4
15:35 1 Sam 19:24; 1 Sam 15:11; 1 Sam 16:1
16:1 Rom 15:12; Acts 13:21; Matt 1:6
16:2 Luke 1:34; 1 Sam 9:12; 1 Sam 20:29
16:3 1 Sam 9:16; Exod 4:15; Acts 9:6
16:4 Luke 2:4; John 7:42; 1 Kgs 2:13
16:5 Exod 19:10,14,15; Josh 3:5; Lev 20:7,8
16:6 1 Sam 17:13,22; 1 Chr 2:13; Judg 8:18
16:7 Luke 16:15; John 7:24; Jer 17:10

15:29 *the Eminence of Israel will not lie and will not regret* A name for God, the Glory or Strength of Israel. This decision was final. Saul could not talk God out of it. As Balaam said, "God is not a man, that He should lie" (Num 23:19).
15:30 *now please honor me before the elders of my people* "I have sinned" and "honor me" in one breath. His real concern was how it looked.
15:31 *Samuel returned after Saul* Perhaps to keep order, since Saul was still king and a public split might throw Israel into chaos. Perhaps also because one more thing had to be done.
15:32 *Surely the bitterness of death has departed* Agag came in chains but seems to have thought the danger past. Saul had spared him, and he expected to live. Some translations read it as Agag going in fear or bitterness.
15:33 *Samuel hewed Agag to pieces before the LORD in Gilgal* Agag was not an innocent captive but a king whose sword had left mothers childless, and the sentence matched his crimes. "Before the LORD" marks it as judgment in God's presence, not personal revenge. The old prophet did what the king refused to do. It was a unique act and gives no one today the right to take vengeance (Rom 12:19; 13:1-4).
15:33 *Just as your sword has made women childless* Saul did not finish the job, and partial obedience has long consequences. Amalekites will raid David's town (chapter 30) and one will claim to have killed Saul (2 Sam 1). Centuries later "Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite" (Esth 3:1) tried to wipe out the Jewish people. Many believe he descended from Agag.
15:35 *Samuel did not again see Saul until the day of his death* Samuel never again went to Saul as God's messenger, though Saul will come where Samuel is (19:24). Samuel did not gloat. He grieved. Watching someone you love throw away God's best is one of the most painful things in life.
15:35 *the LORD regretted that He had made Saul king over Israel* The chapter ends with God's sorrow. He was not surprised, but He was grieved. Sin always grieves Him. Yet the next chapter opens with oil and Bethlehem. Saul's failure did not stop God's plan. It never does.
16:1 *How long are you mourning for Saul* Samuel's grief was real and right (15:35). But there comes a time to stop looking back at what God has closed and look at what He is doing. God did not scold Samuel for caring. He gave him a new job.
16:1 *I have seen among his sons a king for Myself* Saul was the king the people asked for (8:5). This would be the king God chose. Jesse was the grandson of Boaz and Ruth (Ruth 4:17, 21-22), of the tribe of Judah, and Jacob had said the scepter would not depart from Judah (Gen 49:10). God's plan was right on schedule.
16:2 *How can I go? And Saul will hear, and he will kill me* Anointing another king was treason in Saul's eyes. The prophet was afraid of the king, a sign of how far Saul had fallen.
16:2 *To sacrifice to the LORD I have come* Was God telling Samuel to lie? No. He really went to sacrifice and did. He simply did not tell everyone the whole of why he came. Telling the truth does not mean we owe every person every detail. Samuel was to keep God's private business private until the right time.
16:3 *I will make known to you what you shall do* Samuel did not go knowing the name. He went trusting that God would show him. That is often how God leads: one step at a time.
16:4 *the elders of the city trembled to meet him* Samuel was a judge as well as a prophet, and his coming might mean judgment. They may have heard about Agag (15:33).
16:5 *Sanctify yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice* To sanctify themselves was to make themselves ceremonially clean, washing and preparing to come before God (Exod 19:10). The family invitation let Samuel see each of Jesse's sons.
16:6 *Surely His anointed is before the LORD* Eliab was the oldest (17:13), tall and good-looking, the kind of man people follow. Even a great prophet could judge by the outside.
16:7 *Do not look at his appearance and at the height of his stature* Do you hear the echo? Saul was chosen partly because he was taller than anyone (9:2; 10:23). Israel had already had a king who looked the part. God was not going to repeat the lesson.
16:7 *man sees according to the eyes, and the LORD sees according to the heart* The key verse of the book. We see the outside: height, looks, confidence, success. We are easily impressed and easily fooled, so we should be slow to judge and slow to trust someone because he looks strong. In the Bible the heart is the center of the person: mind, will, desires, what he loves and trusts. "You alone know the heart" (1 Kgs 8:39). Nothing is hidden from Him (Heb 4:13).
16:7 *for it is not what man sees* God sought "a man according to His heart" (13:14), not sinless, but turned toward God, as the Psalms show (Ps 23; 51). That is good news: God does not pass people by for being small or overlooked. It is a warning: a good outside cannot hide a heart far from God (Matt 15:8). Jesus had "no form to Him and no splendor" (Isa 53:2). When God looks at your heart today, what does He see? David prayed, "Create for me a pure heart, God" (Ps 51:10).

LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance and at the height of his stature, for I have rejected him; for ***it is*** not what man sees, for man sees according to the eyes, and the LORD sees according to the heart." **8** And Jesse called Abinadab (Avinadav), and he made him pass before Samuel. And he said, "Also this ***one*** the LORD has not chosen." **9** And Jesse made Shammah (Shama) pass by. And he said, "Also this ***one*** the LORD has not chosen." **10** And Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel. And Samuel said to Jesse, "The LORD has not chosen these." **11** And Samuel said to Jesse, "Are the young men finished?" And he said, "The youngest still remains, and look, he is shepherding the flock." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him, for we will not turn around until he comes here." **12** And he sent and brought him. And he ***was*** ruddy, with beautiful eyes and good appearance. And the LORD said, "Arise, anoint him, for this ***is*** he." **13** And Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers. And the Spirit of the LORD rushed on David from that day and onward. And Samuel arose and went to Ramah (Rama).

David Serves Saul

14 And the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD terrified him. **15** And the servants of Saul said to him, "Look, please, an evil spirit of God is terrifying you. **16** Please let our lord speak ***to*** your servants ***who are*** before you; let them seek a man who knows ***how to*** play on the lyre; and it will be, when an evil spirit of God is on you, that he will play with his hand, and ***it will be*** good for you." **17** And Saul said to his servants, "Please see for me a man who does well at playing, and bring ***him*** to me." **18** And one of the young men answered, and he said, "Look, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite who knows ***how to*** play, and a mighty man of valor, and a man of war, and discerning in speech, and a man of ***fine*** form, and the LORD ***is*** with him." **19** And Saul sent messengers to Jesse, and he said, "Send to me David your son, who ***is*** with the flock." **20** And Jesse took a donkey ***with*** bread and a skin of wine and one kid of the goats, and he sent ***them*** by the hand of David his son to Saul. **21** And David came to Saul and stood before him; and he loved him exceedingly, and he became his armor-bearer. **22** And Saul sent to Jesse, saying, "Please let David stand before me, for he has found favor in my eyes." **23** And it was, when the spirit of God was on Saul, and David took the lyre and played with his hand; and Saul was refreshed, and ***it was*** good for him, and the evil spirit departed from him.

1 SAMUEL 17

Goliath Defies Israel

1 And the Philistines gathered their camps for battle, and they were gathered ***at*** Socoh (Sokho), which ***belongs*** to Judah (Yehuda), and they encamped between Socoh and Azekah

16:8 1 Sam 17:13; 1 Chr 2:13
16:9 1 Sam 17:13; 2 Sam 13:3; 1 Chr 2:13
16:10 1 Chr 2:13-15
16:11 Matt 1:6; Ps 78:70,71; 2 Sam 7:8
16:12 John 7:42; 1 Sam 17:42; 1 Sam 9:17
16:13 Heb 1:9; Matt 1:6; John 7:42
16:14 1 Sam 18:10; 1 Sam 18:12; 1 Sam 28:15
16:16 2 Kgs 3:15; 1 Sam 16:21,22; 1 Kgs 10:8
16:18 Matt 1:23; 1 Sam 3:19; 1 Sam 17:32-36
16:19 1 Sam 16:11; 1 Sam 17:15,33,34; Exod 3:1-10
16:20 1 Sam 10:27; Prov 18:16; 1 Sam 17:18
16:21 Gen 41:46; Prov 22:29; Deut 1:38
16:23 Matt 12:45; Luke 11:24; Luke 11:26
17:1 Josh 15:35; 1 Sam 13:5; 2 Chr 28:18

16:8 *Also this one the LORD has not chosen* Samuel was now listening to God instead of his own eyes. He learned the lesson of 16:7 quickly.
16:10 *Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel* Seven, a full number. Jesse may have thought he brought every son worth bringing. Here Jesse has eight sons (17:12), but 1 Chr 2:13-15 names seven, with David seventh. One may have died young without children. Scripture does not say.
16:11 *The youngest still remains, and look, he is shepherding the flock* Youngest can also mean smallest or least. Jesse did not think to call David in. He got the jobs nobody else wanted, and even his father overlooked him. Have you ever felt overlooked? God sees you.
16:12 *he was ruddy, with beautiful eyes and good appearance* Ruddy means reddish, probably skin or hair. David was good-looking, so 16:7 does not mean God chose a plain man. Looks were not the reason. God took David "from the pasture, from after the flock" (2 Sam 7:8; Ps 78:70-72). And Jesus, the Son of David, said, "I am the good shepherd" (John 10:11).
16:13 *anointed him in the midst of his brothers* Before his family, but not the nation. Years would pass before he reigned over Judah and then all Israel (2 Sam 2:4; 5:3). Meanwhile he would tend sheep, serve Saul, run for his life and learn to trust God in caves. This is the first time his name appears. David may mean beloved.
16:13 *the Spirit of the LORD rushed on David from that day and onward* The same word used of Samson (Judg 14:6) and Saul (10:6; 11:6). In the Old Testament the Spirit came on judges, prophets, craftsmen and kings to empower them for their work. Here, for the first time, we are told the Spirit stayed.
16:14 *the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul* The order matters. The Spirit came on David, then left Saul. In the Old Testament the Spirit could be withdrawn, which is why David prayed, "do not take the Spirit of Your holiness from me" (Ps 51:11). Since Pentecost the Spirit is with believers "forever" (John 14:16), and we are sealed "for the day of redemption" (Eph 4:30). A Christian can grieve the Spirit, but He does not leave.
16:14 *an evil spirit from the LORD terrified him* A hard phrase. Many believe this was a real evil spirit God allowed as judgment. Others take spirit as a deep, dark torment of mind. Both agree God rules even evil spirits, as with Job (Job 1:12). He tempts no one (James 1:13), but He can use evil to carry out judgment (Judg 9:23; 1 Kgs 22:19-23). When people refuse Him, "God also gave them up" (Rom 1:24). To turn from the LORD is not freedom. It leaves us open to something worse.
16:16 *a man who knows how to play on the lyre* A lyre was a small stringed instrument, held in the arms and plucked. Music has a real effect on the soul. Sadly, Saul looked for music to ease his trouble but never looked to God to deal with it. He wanted relief, not repentance.
16:18 *and the LORD is with him* David was a musician, a man of valor, wise with words and fine in form. He had already faced a lion and a bear (17:34-36). The last item matters most. People could see it. Can people see that about you? Not that you are perfect, but that the LORD is with you?
16:20 *Jesse took a donkey with bread and a skin of wine and one kid of the goats* A skin was a goatskin bag used as a container. It was polite to bring a gift to a king (10:27).
16:21 *he loved him exceedingly, and he became his armor-bearer* An armor-bearer carried the king's weapons and shield and stayed by his side in battle, a place of great trust. The irony: the rejected king brings the chosen king into his own house and does not know it. God was training David where he could see how a kingdom ran and how a king could fail.
16:23 *Saul was refreshed, and it was good for him, and the evil spirit departed from him* Many of David's songs are in the Psalms, and believers have found comfort in them for three thousand years. But the relief was for a time. The spirit came back (18:10). Music could soothe Saul but could not change him. Only a heart turned back to God could. David came as a blessing, and Saul will soon hate him for it.
17:1 *they encamped between Socoh and Azekah, in Ephes-dammim* The Philistines lived on the coastal plain in five main cities and had iron weapons and trained soldiers (13:19-22). These places are in the low hills west of Bethlehem. They were pushing inland toward the heart of Judah.

(Azeqa), in Ephes-dammim (Efes-Damim). **2** And Saul (Shaul) and the men of Israel (Yisra'el) were gathered, and they encamped in the valley of Elah, and they arranged battle to meet the Philistines. **3** And the Philistines ***were*** standing on the mountain on this ***side***, and Israel ***was*** standing on the mountain on that ***side***, and the valley ***was*** between them. **4** And the champion went out from the camps of the Philistines, his name ***was*** Goliath (Golyat), from Gath (Gat); his height ***was*** approximately 9 feet 9 inches (six cubits and a span). **5** And a helmet of bronze ***was*** on his head, and he ***was*** clothed ***with*** body armor of scales; and the weight of the body armor ***was*** approximately 125 pounds (five thousand shekels) of bronze. **6** And leg armor of bronze ***was*** on his feet, and a javelin of bronze ***was*** between his shoulders. **7** And the shaft of his spear ***was*** like a beam of weavers, and the blade of his spear ***was*** approximately 15 pounds (six hundred shekels) of iron; and the bearer of the shield ***was*** walking before him. **8** And he stood and called out to the battle lines of Israel, and he said to them, "Why do you come out to arrange battle? ***Am*** I not the Philistine, and you servants of Saul? Choose for yourselves a man, and let him come down to me. **9** If he is able to fight with me and strikes me, then we will become servants to you; and if I, I prevail against him and strike him, then you will become servants to us, and you will serve us." **10** And the Philistine said, "I, I defy the battle lines of Israel this day. Give me a man, and let us fight together." **11** And Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, and they were dismayed and were exceedingly afraid.

David Comes to the Camp

12 And David ***was*** the son of this Ephrathite man from Bethlehem (Bet-Lechem) ***of*** Judah, and his name ***was*** Jesse (Yishay), and he had eight sons; and the man in the days of Saul was old, advanced among men. **13** And the three oldest sons of Jesse had gone; they had gone after Saul to the battle. And the names of his three sons who had gone into the battle ***were*** Eliab (Eli'av) the firstborn, and his second Abinadab (Avinadav), and the third Shammah (Shama). **14** And David, he ***was*** the youngest, and the three oldest had gone after Saul. **15** And David was going and returning from Saul to shepherd the flock of his father ***at*** Bethlehem. **16** And the Philistine drew near, early and late, and he took his stand forty days. **17** And Jesse said to David his son, "Please take for your brothers approximately 3/5 bushel (an ephah) of this roasted grain and these ten ***loaves of*** bread, and bring ***them*** quickly to the camp to your brothers. **18** And these ten slices of cheese you shall bring to the commander of the thousand; and you shall pay attention to your brothers for ***their*** welfare, and their pledge you shall take. **19** And Saul and they and all the men of Israel ***are*** in the valley of Elah, fighting with the Philistines." **20** And David rose early in the morning, and he left the flock with a keeper, and he lifted ***it*** up and went, just as Jesse had commanded him. And he came to the encampment, and the army ***was*** going out to the battle line, and they shouted the war cry for the battle. **21** And Israel and the Philistines arranged battle line to meet battle line. **22** And David left the baggage from upon himself in the hand of the keeper of the baggage, and he ran to the battle line, and he came and asked his brothers about ***their*** welfare. **23** And he ***was*** speaking with them, and look, the champion ***was*** coming up, Goliath the Philistine ***was*** his name, from

17:2 1 Sam 21:9; 1 Sam 17:19
17:4 Josh 11:22; 1 Sam 17:23; 1 Sam 21:9,10
17:6 1 Kgs 10:16; 2 Chr 9:15
17:7 2 Sam 21:19; 1 Chr 11:23; 1 Chr 20:5
17:8 1 Sam 8:17; 1 Sam 17:26; 2 Sam 11:11
17:9 1 Sam 11:1
17:10 2 Sam 21:21; 1 Sam 17:25,26,36,45; Num 23:7,8
17:11 Deut 31:8; Josh 1:9; Ps 27:1
17:12 Matt 1:6; Matt 2:6; Luke 3:31
17:13 1 Chr 2:13; 1 Sam 17:28; 1 Sam 16:6-9
17:14 Heb 11:32; 1 Sam 16:11; Gen 25:23
17:15 Heb 11:32; 1 Sam 16:11,19-23
17:16 Matt 4:2; Luke 4:2
17:17 Heb 11:32; 1 Sam 25:18; Matt 7:11
17:18 Gen 37:14; 1 Sam 16:20; 2 Sam 17:29
17:20 1 Sam 26:5; Luke 19:43; 1 Sam 17:28
17:22 Gen 37:14; Judg 18:15; Matt 10:12,13

17:2 *they encamped in the valley of Elah* A broad valley about fifteen miles west of Bethlehem, with a dry streambed through the middle. Visitors can still see it today.
17:3 *the valley was between them* Two armies on two hills. Whoever went down first would have to fight uphill, so they waited.
17:4 *the champion went out from the camps of the Philistines, his name was Goliath, from Gath* Champion means the man between, who fights alone between two armies. Battles were sometimes settled by single combat. Gath was known for very large men, descendants of the Anakim (Josh 11:22), the giants who frightened Israel's spies (Num 13:33). The text does not say Goliath was one of them, though that is the common view.
17:4 *his height was approximately 9 feet 9 inches* The Hebrew reads six cubits and a span. A cubit was about 18 inches, a span about 9. Most Greek copies and a Dead Sea Scroll of Samuel read four cubits and a span, about six feet nine inches. Either way he was a giant and a trained warrior from his youth (17:33), towering over everyone in Israel, Saul included.
17:5 *he was clothed with body armor of scales* Overlapping bronze plates like fish scales, weighing about 125 pounds. Why describe the armor so long? So we will feel what Israel felt. Every piece said, you cannot beat me. By the eyes, that was true. Remember 16:7.
17:7 *the shaft of his spear was like a beam of weavers* As thick as the wooden beam of a loom, with an iron point of about 15 pounds. A shield-bearer walked before him.
17:8 *Am I not the Philistine, and you servants of Saul?* You call yourselves an army? You are just Saul's slaves. The whole war would ride on one fight.
17:10 *I, I defy the battle lines of Israel this day* To defy is to taunt and heap shame. Goliath was not only insulting soldiers. As David saw, he was insulting the God of Israel.
17:11 *they were dismayed and were exceedingly afraid* The saddest line in the chapter. Saul should have gone out. He was the king and taller than all the people (10:23). They asked for a king to fight their battles (8:20). Here was the battle, and the king was in his tent. When the Spirit left Saul (16:14), his courage left with it.
17:12 *this Ephrathite man from Bethlehem of Judah* Ephrathah was an old name for Bethlehem (Ruth 4:11; Mic 5:2). The story turns to David as if we were meeting him for the first time.
17:15 *David was going and returning from Saul to shepherd the flock of his father* This explains how he could be Saul's musician and armor-bearer (16:21-23) and still be home with the sheep. The anointed king was still doing his chores.
17:16 *he took his stand forty days* Morning and evening. Forty days in Scripture is often a time of testing (Exod 24:18; Matt 4:2). For forty days Israel's fear grew.
17:18 *their pledge you shall take* Soldiers often depended on their families for food. The pledge was a token showing the brothers were alive and well. Jesse was a worried father. David did not go looking for a fight but on an errand. Some of the greatest things God does begin on an ordinary day while we do what we were asked.
17:20 *he left the flock with a keeper* David did not leave the sheep without care. He was faithful in small things before he was trusted with big ones (Luke 16:10). He arrived to the daily war cry. The armies lined up, shouted and went back. It was all noise.

Gath, from the battle lines of the Philistines; and he spoke according to these words, and David heard. **24** And all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, then they fled from before him, and they were exceedingly afraid. **25** And the men of Israel said, "Have you seen this man who is coming up? For to defy Israel he is coming up. And it will be, the man who strikes him, the king will make him rich ***with*** great riches, and his daughter he will give to him, and the house of his father he will make free in Israel." **26** And David said to the men who were standing with him, saying, "What will be done for the man who strikes this Philistine and removes reproach from upon Israel? For who ***is*** this uncircumcised Philistine, that he has defied the battle lines of the living God?" **27** And the people said to him according to this word, saying, "Thus it will be done for the man who strikes him." **28** And Eliab his oldest brother heard when he spoke to the men, and the anger of Eliab burned against David, and he said, "Why ***is*** this ***that*** you have come down? And with whom have you left that little flock in the wilderness? I, I know your arrogance and the evil of your heart, for to see the battle you have come down." **29** And David said, "What have I done now? Was it not a word?" **30** And he turned from beside him toward another, and he said according to this word; and the people brought him back word according to the former word. **31** And the words which David spoke were heard, and they told ***them*** before Saul, and he took him. **32** And David said to Saul, "Let the heart of no man fall on account of him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine." **33** And Saul said to David, "You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him, for you ***are*** a youth, and he ***is*** a man of war from his youth." **34** And David said to Saul, "Your servant was shepherding for his father in the flock, and the lion would come, and the bear, and carry off a sheep from the herd, **35** and I would go out after it and strike it and deliver ***it*** from its mouth; and it rose up against me, and I took hold of its beard, and I struck it and killed it. **36** Both the lion and the bear your servant has struck; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, for he has defied the battle lines of the living God." **37** And David said, "The LORD who delivered me from the hand of the lion and from the hand of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine." And Saul said to David, "Go, and the LORD will be with you." **38** And Saul clothed David ***with*** his garments, and he put a helmet of bronze on his head, and he clothed him ***with*** body armor. **39** And David girded his sword over his garments, and he undertook to walk, for he had not tested ***them***. And David said to Saul, "I am not able to walk in these, for I have not tested ***them***." And David removed them from upon himself. **40** And he took his staff in his hand, and he chose for himself five smooth stones from the wadi, and he put them in the shepherds' bag which ***was*** his, and in the pouch, and his sling ***was*** in his hand; and he drew near to the Philistine.

David Kills Goliath

41 And the Philistine came, going and drawing near to David, and the man, the bearer of the shield, ***was*** before him. **42** And the Philistine looked and saw David, and he despised him, for he was a youth, and ruddy, with beautiful appearance. **43** And the Philistine said to David, "***Am*** I a dog, that you are coming to me with staffs?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. **44** And the Philistine said to David, "Come

17:24 1 Sam 13:6,7; 1 Sam 17:11; Lev 26:36
17:25 Rev 2:7; Rev 2:17; Matt 17:25
17:26 2 Cor 3:3; 1 Tim 3:15; Rev 7:2
17:28 Gen 37:4,8,11; Prov 18:19; Matt 10:36
17:29 Prov 15:1; Acts 11:2-4; 1 Cor 2:15
17:30 1 Sam 17:26,27
17:31 Prov 22:29
17:32 1 Sam 16:18; Deut 20:1-3; Num 14:9
17:33 Num 13:31; Deut 9:2; Ps 11:1
17:34 Luke 2:8; Heb 11:33
17:35 Luke 2:8; Heb 11:33; Rev 13:2
17:36 1 Tim 3:15; Heb 11:33; Rev 7:2
17:37 2 Tim 4:17,18; 1 Sam 20:13; 1 Chr 22:11,16
17:39 Hos 1:7; Zech 4:6; 2 Cor 10:4,5
17:40 Judg 20:16; Matt 10:10; Judg 3:31
17:42 1 Sam 16:12; 1 Sam 17:33; Ps 123:3,4
17:43 1 Sam 24:14; 2 Sam 3:8; 2 Sam 9:8
17:44 1 Kgs 20:10,11; Prov 18:12; Eccl 9:11,12

17:24 *they fled from before him, and they were exceedingly afraid* The whole army of God was running from one man.
17:25 *the house of his father he will make free in Israel* Free probably means free from taxes and service to the king. Saul offered money, a royal marriage and privileges, but did not go himself.
17:26 *who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he has defied the battle lines of the living God?* Uncircumcised meant outside God's covenant (Gen 17:10-11), with no promise and no claim on God's help. The Philistines' Dagon had fallen on his face before the ark (5:3-4). Israel's God was alive. Everyone else saw a giant. David saw a man mocking the living God. Fear looks at the size of the problem. Faith looks at the size of God.
17:28 *I, I know your arrogance and the evil of your heart* Unfair. David came because his father sent him. Eliab, the one Samuel thought would be king (16:6), may have been jealous since the anointing, or ashamed that his little brother asked the question every soldier should have. Those who criticize us most when we stand for God are sometimes those closest to us.
17:29 *What have I done now? Was it not a word?* I only asked a question. David turned away and would not let a family quarrel pull him from the real battle. Not every attack needs an answer.
17:32 *Let the heart of no man fall on account of him* David spoke courage into a king who had lost his own.
17:33 *you are a youth, and he is a man of war from his youth* A youth here is a young man, perhaps in his late teens. By human measure Saul was right. He was looking with the eyes again.
17:35 *I took hold of its beard, and I struck it and killed it* Lions and bears lived in the land, and a shepherd was expected to protect his flock at his own risk (Amos 3:12). David learned courage alone in the hills where no one watched. Private victories prepared him for the public one. God often trains us in hidden places for later work.
17:37 *The LORD who delivered me from the hand of the lion and from the hand of the bear, He will deliver me* The heart of David's faith. He did not say, I am strong enough. He said, God did it before, and He will do it again. When we remember what God has done, we can trust Him with what is in front of us. Saul said the right words, but still sent a boy to do a king's job.
17:39 *I am not able to walk in these, for I have not tested them* Saul gave his best, but armor for the tallest man in Israel would not fit a young man. This was not foolishness. David would fight with what God had already trained him to use.
17:40 *he chose for himself five smooth stones from the wadi* A wadi is a streambed dry most of the year. The sling was no toy but a weapon of war. Benjamin's slingers could hit a hair (Judg 20:16). Why five stones? Scripture does not say. Some point to Goliath's giant relatives (2 Sam 21:15-22). Others think David was simply ready if he missed. Either way, trusting God never means being careless.
17:42 *he despised him, for he was a youth, and ruddy, with beautiful appearance* Goliath judged by the eyes too. He saw a good-looking boy, not a warrior.
17:43 *the Philistine cursed David by his gods* Now the contest was in the open, the gods of the Philistines against the LORD. The threat to give David's flesh to the birds and beasts meant leaving him unburied, a great shame in that world.

to me, and let me give your flesh to the flying things of the heavens and to the living things of the field." **45** And David said to the Philistine, "You are coming to me with sword and with spear and with javelin, and I am coming to you in the name of the LORD of armies, the God of the battle lines of Israel, whom you have defied. **46** This day the LORD will hand you over into my hand, and I will strike you and remove your head from upon you, and I will give the corpses of the camp of the Philistines this day to the flying things of the heavens and to the living things of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God for Israel, **47** and that all this assembly may know that not by sword and by spear does the LORD save; for the battle ***belongs*** to the LORD, and He will give you into our hand." **48** And it was, when the Philistine arose and came and drew near to meet David, that David hurried and ran to the battle line to meet the Philistine. **49** And David sent his hand into the bag, and he took from there a stone and slung ***it***, and he struck the Philistine on his forehead; and the stone sank into his forehead, and he fell on his face to the earth. **50** And David was stronger than the Philistine with the sling and with the stone, and he struck the Philistine and killed him; and ***there was*** no sword in the hand of David. **51** And David ran and stood over the Philistine, and he took his sword and drew it out of its sheath and killed him, and he cut off his head with it. And the Philistines saw that their mighty ***man*** had died, and they fled. **52** And the men of Israel and Judah arose and shouted the war cry, and they pursued the Philistines until you come ***to*** a valley and to the gates of Ekron (Eqron). And the slain of the Philistines fell on the way of Shaaraim (Sha'arayim), and to Gath and to Ekron. **53** And the sons of Israel returned from hotly pursuing after the Philistines, and they plundered their camps. **54** And David took the head of the Philistine and brought it ***to*** Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), and his weapons he put in his tent.

Whose Son Is This?

55 And when Saul saw David going out to meet the Philistine, he said to Abner (Avner) the commander of the army, "Whose son ***is*** this youth, Abner?" And Abner said, "***As*** your soul lives, O king, I do not know." **56** And the king said, "You, ask whose son this young man ***is***." **57** And when David returned from striking the Philistine, and Abner took him and brought him before Saul, and the head of the Philistine ***was*** in his hand. **58** And Saul said to him, "Whose son ***are*** you, youth?" And David said, "The son of your servant Jesse the Bethlehemite."

1 SAMUEL 18

David and Jonathan

1 And it was, when he had finished speaking to Saul (Shaul), and the soul of Jonathan (Yehonatan) was bound with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. **2** And Saul took him on that day, and he did not permit him to

17:45 Heb 11:34; 2 Chr 32:8; 2 Sam 22:33-35
17:46 Rev 19:17; Josh 4:24; 1 Kgs 8:43
17:47 Hos 1:7; Zech 4:6; Ps 44:6,7
17:48 Ps 27:1; Prov 28:1
17:49 1 Kgs 22:34; 2 Kgs 9:24; 1 Cor 1:27,28
17:50 1 Sam 17:39; 1 Sam 13:22
17:51 Heb 11:34; 1 Sam 21:9; 2 Sam 23:21
17:52 Heb 11:34; 1 Sam 14:21,22; Judg 7:23
17:53 2 Kgs 7:7-16; Jer 4:20; Jer 30:16
17:54 1 Sam 21:9; Exod 16:33; Josh 4:7,8
17:55 1 Sam 16:21,22; 1 Sam 17:58
17:58 Matt 1:6; Luke 2:4; Luke 3:32
18:1 2 Sam 1:26; Gen 44:30; 1 Sam 20:17
18:2 1 Sam 17:15; 1 Sam 16:21-23

17:45 *I am coming to you in the name of the LORD of armies* To come in someone's name is to come by his authority and represent him. David came in the name of the God who commands all the armies of heaven and earth. Goliath had the better weapons. David had the better God.
17:46 *that all the earth may know that there is a God for Israel* David did not say, I hope. He said, the LORD will. God would show the nations who He is. And Israel too must learn "that not by sword and by spear does the LORD save" (17:47). They had been trusting weapons and size, and so had their king.
17:47 *for the battle belongs to the LORD* A prophet told Judah the same: "the battle is not yours, but God's" (2 Chr 20:15). We often tell this as, you can beat your giants. God does help us face what is too big for us. But for David the battle was about God's name. When we face a giant, the question is not only how can I win, but how will God be honored in this?
17:47 *He will give you into our hand* Israel could not fight for itself. One man went out in their place, and his victory became theirs. The New Testament does not draw this line, so I offer it only as a picture. Jesus, the Son of David, went out alone and through death made powerless the one who held the power of death (Heb 2:14-15). "We more than conquer through the One who loved us" (Rom 8:37).
17:48 *David hurried and ran to the battle line to meet the Philistine* Israel had run from Goliath for forty days. David ran toward him.
17:49 *the stone sank into his forehead, and he fell on his face to the earth* The one place his armor did not cover. Goliath fell on his face, as his god Dagon had before the ark (5:3).
17:50 *there was no sword in the hand of David* The writer wants us to see it. Just as David said, the LORD does not save by sword and spear. Another passage says Elhanan struck "Goliath the Gittite" (2 Sam 21:19), while Chronicles says he struck "Lahmi the brother of Goliath the Gittite" (1 Chr 20:5). Many see a small copying slip in 2 Samuel, and others a second giant of the same name.
17:51 *he took his sword and drew it out of its sheath and killed him* The weapon Goliath trusted was turned against him. The Philistines had promised to serve the winner (17:9), but they did not keep it. They ran.
17:52 *the men of Israel and Judah arose and shouted the war cry* The army that ran from Goliath chased the Philistines back to Gath and Ekron. One young man's faith stirred courage in thousands. One person's trust in God can wake up a whole church.
17:54 *David took the head of the Philistine and brought it to Jerusalem* Jerusalem was still held by the Jebusites until David took it (2 Sam 5:6-9). Most read this as telling ahead where the head ended up, once it was his city. Others think of the area Israel already held. Goliath's sword was later kept at Nob, and David received it back (21:9).
17:55 *Whose son is this youth, Abner?* David was already Saul's musician (16:19-22), so how could Saul not know him? Saul may have known David but wanted to know his family, now that he had promised to free the winner's house and give his daughter (17:25). His mind was troubled (16:14), and a court musician might not be known to the army commander. Chapter 16 may also tell events over time, not in strict order. Good teachers hold each answer.
17:58 *The son of your servant Jesse the Bethlehemite* David answered the question plainly. In the next chapter Saul takes him into his house for good.
18:1 *the soul of Jonathan was bound with the soul of David* Jonathan, who climbed to the Philistine outpost saying God could save "by many or by few" (14:6), found in David a man with the same faith. The phrase is used of Jacob's love for Benjamin (Gen 44:30), a deep, loyal love tying two lives together. This was not romantic love but the friendship of two men who shared faith and courage, sealed with a covenant.
18:2 *he did not permit him to return to the house of his father* David no longer went back and forth to Bethlehem (17:15). He now lived at Saul's court.

return ***to*** the house of his father. **3** And Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul. **4** And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe which ***was*** on him, and he gave it to David, and his garments, and even to his sword and to his bow and to his belt. **5** And David went out; in every ***place*** where Saul sent him, he was successful. And Saul appointed him over the men of war, and it was good in the eyes of all the people and also in the eyes of the servants of Saul.

Saul's Jealousy

6 And it was, when they came, when David returned from striking the Philistine, that the women came out from all the cities of Israel (Yisra'el) to sing, and the dances, to meet Saul the king, with tambourines, with joy, and with
three-stringed instruments. **7** And the women who were celebrating sang, and they said, "Saul has struck his thousands, and David his ten thousands." **8** And Saul burned ***with anger*** exceedingly, and this matter was evil in his eyes; and he said, "They have ascribed to David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed the thousands; and yet for him ***there is*** only the kingdom." **9** And Saul was eyeing David from that day and onward. **10** And it was, on the next day, that an evil spirit of God rushed on Saul, and he prophesied in the midst of the house; and David ***was*** playing with his hand, as day by day; and the spear ***was*** in the hand of Saul. **11** And Saul hurled the spear, and he said, "I will strike into David and into the wall." And David turned from before him two times. **12** And Saul was afraid of David, for the LORD was with him, and from Saul He had departed. **13** And Saul removed him from beside him and appointed him for himself commander of a thousand; and he went out and came in before the people. **14** And David was successful in all his ways, and the LORD ***was*** with him. **15** And Saul saw that he was exceedingly successful, and he was in dread of him. **16** And all Israel and Judah (Yehuda) loved David, for he was going out and coming in before them.

David Marries Michal

17 And Saul said to David, "Look, my older daughter Merab (Merav), her I will give to you as a wife; only be for me a son of valor, and fight the battles of the LORD." And Saul said, "Let my hand not be on him, and let the hand of the Philistines be on him." **18** And David said to Saul, "Who ***am*** I, and who ***are*** my relatives, the clan of my father in Israel, that I should be son-in-law to the king?" **19** And it was, at the time of giving Merab the daughter of Saul to David, that she was given to Adriel the Meholathite as a wife. **20** And Michal (Mikhal) the daughter of Saul loved David, and they told Saul, and the matter was right in his eyes. **21** And Saul said, "I will give her to him, that she may be a snare to him, and that the hand of the Philistines may be against him." And Saul said to David, "By a second ***time*** you will become my son-in-law today." **22** And Saul commanded his servants,

18:3 1 Sam 20:8-17,42; 1 Sam 23:18; 2 Sam 9:1-3
18:4 Gen 41:42; Esth 6:8,9; Isa 61:10
18:5 1 Sam 18:14,15,30; Gen 39:2,3,23; Ps 1:3
18:6 Exod 15:20; Judg 11:34; Ps 68:25
18:7 1 Sam 21:11; Exod 15:21; 1 Sam 29:5
18:8 1 Sam 15:28; Esth 3:5; Prov 13:10
18:9 Gen 4:5,6; Gen 31:2; Matt 20:15
18:10 1 Sam 19:9; 1 Kgs 18:29; Acts 16:16
18:11 1 Sam 20:33; Isa 54:17; 1 Sam 19:9,10
18:12 1 Sam 18:15,20,29; 1 Sam 28:15; 1 Sam 16:13,18
18:13 2 Sam 5:2; 1 Sam 8:12; 1 Sam 22:7
18:14 1 Sam 16:18; Gen 39:2,3,23; Josh 6:27
18:15 Ps 112:5; Dan 6:4,5; Col 4:5
18:16 1 Sam 18:5; Luke 19:48; Luke 20:19
18:17 1 Sam 17:25; 1 Sam 25:28; 1 Sam 18:21,25
18:18 1 Sam 18:23; 2 Sam 7:18; 1 Sam 9:21
18:19 2 Sam 21:8; Judg 7:22; Judg 14:20
18:21 1 Sam 18:17; Exod 10:7; Ps 7:14-16
18:22 Ps 36:1-3; Ps 55:21; 2 Sam 13:28,29

18:3 *Jonathan and David made a covenant* A covenant is a solemn, binding promise made before God. This one comes up again and again (20:8, 16-17, 42; 23:18), and David kept it long after Jonathan's death by caring for his son Mephibosheth (2 Sam 9:1, 7).
18:4 *Jonathan stripped himself of the robe which was on him, and he gave it to David* Swords were rare in Israel (13:22), so this was his most precious gear. And Jonathan was the next in line. In a sense he was handing over his own place, as he later says (23:17). He had every human reason to be jealous and instead gave David his robe. Real love is glad when God lifts someone else up, even above us.
18:5 *in every place where Saul sent him, he was successful* The word also carries the idea of acting wisely. David succeeded because he was wise, and wise because the LORD was with him (18:14). Everyone liked him, even Saul's officials. For now.
18:6 *the women came out from all the cities of Israel to sing* The custom was to greet a victorious army with song and dance (Exod 15:20; Judg 11:34).
18:7 *Saul has struck his thousands, and David his ten thousands* In Hebrew poetry thousands and ten thousands together often mean a great many (Ps 91:7). The women may not have meant an insult. It was a song of joy. But Saul heard a comparison, and he came out second.
18:8 *and yet for him there is only the kingdom* Saul remembered Samuel's word, that the kingdom would go to a neighbor better than he (15:28). Now he thought he knew who that neighbor was.
18:9 *Saul was eyeing David from that day and onward* That is how jealousy begins, with a look and a thought. "Who will stand before jealousy?" (Prov 27:4). Where jealousy is, "there is disorder and every evil thing" (James 3:16). It looks quieter than murder, but in Saul it led to attempted murder within a day. Is there someone whose success bothers you? Bring it to God before it takes root.
18:10 *he prophesied in the midst of the house* On the evil spirit, see 16:14. Prophesied here means raving, speaking wildly under a spirit's power, not giving God's message. And see the contrast. David had a lyre in his hand. Saul had a spear in his.
18:11 *David turned from before him two times* Saul meant to pin him to the wall. God protected David, and David did not strike back.
18:12 *Saul was afraid of David, for the LORD was with him, and from Saul He had departed* The real reason for his fear. Saul could see God's hand on David and knew it had left him. A man who will not repent of his own sin often comes to hate the one in whom he sees God at work.
18:13 *appointed him for himself commander of a thousand* Saul wanted David out of sight and perhaps hoped he would die in battle. It backfired. To go out and come in before the people means to lead them in war and daily life, and they watched him do it.
18:16 *all Israel and Judah loved David* Everything Saul did to push David down only lifted him up. When God is lifting someone up, no one can hold him down.
18:17 *let the hand of the Philistines be on him* Merab was part of the promised reward (17:25). But Saul wanted the Philistines to do his dirty work, and he used religious words, "the battles of the LORD," to cover a murderous plan.
18:18 *Who am I, and who are my relatives* Saul once said nearly the same to Samuel (9:21). David did not reach for the throne. He would wait for God to give it.
18:19 *she was given to Adriel the Meholathite as a wife* Saul broke his promise. We are not told why. His word could not be trusted.
18:20 *Michal the daughter of Saul loved David* Scripture rarely says in so many words that a woman loved a man, but it does here.
18:21 *that she may be a snare to him* A snare is a trap. Saul was willing to use his own daughter's love as bait.

"Speak to David in secret, saying, 'Look, the king delights in you, and all his servants love you; and now, become son-in-law to the king.'" **23** And the servants of Saul spoke these words in the ears of David. And David said, "***Is*** it a light ***thing*** in your eyes to become son-in-law to the king, and I ***am*** a poor man and lightly esteemed?" **24** And the servants of Saul told him, saying, "According to these words David spoke." **25** And Saul said, "Thus you shall say to David: 'The king has no delight in a bride-price, but in a hundred foreskins of Philistines, to be avenged on the enemies of the king.'" And Saul planned to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines. **26** And his servants told David these words, and the matter was right in the eyes of David to become son-in-law to the king. And the days were not completed. **27** And David arose and went, he and his men, and he struck among the Philistines two hundred men; and David brought their foreskins, and they gave them in full ***number*** to the king, to become son-in-law to the king. And Saul gave him Michal his daughter as a wife. **28** And Saul saw and knew that the LORD ***was*** with David, and Michal the daughter of Saul loved him. **29** And Saul was yet more afraid of David, and Saul was an enemy to David all the days. **30** And the commanders of the Philistines went out, and it was, as often as they went out, David was more successful than all the servants of Saul, and his name was exceedingly esteemed.

1 SAMUEL 19

Jonathan Speaks for David

1 And Saul (Shaul) spoke to Jonathan (Yonatan) his son and to all his servants, to kill David; and Jonathan (Yehonatan) the son of Saul delighted in David exceedingly. **2** And Jonathan told David, saying, "Saul my father is seeking to kill you; and now, please be on guard in the morning, and stay in the secret place and hide yourself. **3** And I, I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where you ***are***, and I, I will speak about you to my father; and I will see what ***happens***, and I will tell you." **4** And Jonathan spoke good about David to Saul his father, and he said to him, "Let the king not sin against his servant, against David, for he has not sinned against you, and for his deeds ***have been*** exceedingly good for you. **5** And he put his life in his palm and struck the Philistine, and the LORD made a great salvation for all Israel (Yisra'el); you saw and rejoiced. And why will you sin against innocent blood by killing David without cause?" **6** And Saul listened to the voice of Jonathan, and Saul swore, "***As*** the LORD lives, he shall not be put to death." **7** And Jonathan called David, and Jonathan told him all these words; and Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he was before him as yesterday ***and*** the day before.

Michal Saves David

8 And ***there*** was war again; and David went out and fought against the Philistines, and he struck them with a great blow, and they fled from before him. **9** And an evil spirit of the LORD was on Saul, and he ***was*** sitting in his house, and his spear ***was*** in his hand, and David ***was*** playing with ***his*** hand. **10** And Saul sought to strike with the spear into David and into the wall; and he slipped away from before Saul, and he struck the spear into the wall. And David fled and escaped

18:23 1 John 3:1; 1 Sam 9:21; Prov 14:20
18:25 Gen 34:12; 1 Sam 14:24; 1 Sam 18:17
18:27 2 Sam 3:14; Judg 14:19
18:28 1 Sam 24:20; 1 Sam 26:25; Gen 30:27
18:29 Eccl 4:4; 1 Sam 18:12,15; Ps 37:12-14
18:30 2 Sam 11:1; 1 Sam 18:5; Ps 119:99
19:2 Acts 9:24; 1 Sam 18:1-3; Ps 16:3
19:3 1 Sam 20:9,13
19:4 Jer 18:20; Gen 42:22; 1 Sam 20:32
19:5 John 15:25; Heb 2:3; 1 Sam 11:13
19:6 1 Sam 14:39; 1 Sam 28:10; Ps 15:4
19:7 1 Sam 16:21; 1 Sam 18:2,10,13; Gen 31:2
19:8 Ps 18:32-50; Ps 27:3
19:9 1 Sam 16:14; 1 Sam 18:10,11
19:10 Luke 11:24; Matt 12:44; Matt 12:45

18:23 *I am a poor man and lightly esteemed* A man gave a bride-price, a gift to the bride's father. A king's daughter would cost more than a shepherd's son could pay. David was not playing games. He was poor and knew it.
18:25 *a hundred foreskins of Philistines* A grim demand, proof that David had killed a hundred uncircumcised enemies (17:26). The writer tells us exactly why: "Saul planned to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines." He hoped David would die trying.
18:27 *he struck among the Philistines two hundred men* Before the time ran out, David brought twice what Saul asked. The writer does not dwell on the details, and neither will I. God protected David through every trap Saul set.
18:28 *Saul saw and knew that the LORD was with David* His son loved David, his daughter loved him, and God was with him. Saul could no longer deny it.
18:29 *Saul was an enemy to David all the days* The tragedy of Saul. He saw that God was with David, and instead of humbling himself, he set himself against God's chosen man. When we fight what God is doing, we are fighting God.
18:30 *his name was exceedingly esteemed* Two ways to respond when God blesses someone else. Jonathan gave a robe. Saul threw a spear. Jonathan gave up his claim to the throne for his friend. "Greater love than this no one has, that one lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). Jesus gave His life for us.
19:1 *Saul spoke to Jonathan his son and to all his servants, to kill David* Saul had tried to trap David quietly (18:17, 21, 25). Now he gave an open order, even to the son most likely to refuse.
19:2 *Saul my father is seeking to kill you* Jonathan was caught between father and friend, and he did right. He honored his father but would not obey him in this. When a parent or ruler commands what God forbids, we must obey God rather than men (Acts 5:29).
19:4 *Let the king not sin against his servant, against David* Jonathan named it for what it was, sin, and reminded Saul of the facts. David's deeds had been good for him.
19:5 *he put his life in his palm and struck the Philistine* To put your life in your palm is to risk it, holding it where it could easily be taken. Jonathan gave the credit to the LORD and reminded Saul that he had rejoiced that day. Shedding innocent blood was a grave sin (Deut 19:10; 27:25). That is how a peacemaker speaks, with courage and respect.
19:6 *As the LORD lives, he shall not be put to death* For a moment Saul's heart softened. But a promise made under pressure, without real repentance, rarely holds. Saul had made rash oaths before (14:24, 39, 44), and he broke this one within days.
19:8 *there was war again* David did what he always did. He served faithfully and won, and his success set off Saul's jealousy again.
19:9 *his spear was in his hand, and David was playing with his hand* Almost the same scene as 18:10-11. On the evil spirit, see 16:14.
19:10 *David fled and escaped that night* The spear stuck in the wall, so Saul threw it hard. This ended David's time at court. Until Saul dies, David is a man on the run, living in caves and deserts for years. But David never once threw the spear back.

that night. **11** And Saul sent messengers to the house of David to watch him and to kill him in the morning. And Michal (Mikhal) his wife told David, saying, "If you are not delivering your life this night, tomorrow you ***will be*** put to death." **12** And Michal let David down through the window, and he went and fled and escaped. **13** And Michal took the teraphim and put ***it*** on the bed, and the quilt of goats' ***hair*** she put ***at*** its head, and she covered ***it*** with the garment. **14** And Saul sent messengers to take David, and she said, "He ***is*** sick." **15** And Saul sent the messengers to see David, saying, "Bring him up on the bed to me, to kill him." **16** And the messengers came, and look, the teraphim ***was*** on the bed, and the quilt of goats' ***hair at*** its head. **17** And Saul said to Michal, "Why have you deceived me thus, and let my enemy go, and he has escaped?" And Michal said to Saul, "He said to me, 'Let me go; why should I kill you?'"

Saul Among the Prophets Again

18 And David fled and escaped, and he came to Samuel (Shemu'el) at Ramah (Rama), and he told him all that Saul had done to him. And he and Samuel went, and they dwelt in Naioth (Nayot). **19** And it was told to Saul, saying, "Look, David ***is*** in Naioth in Ramah." **20** And Saul sent messengers to take David; and he saw the company of the prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing, set over them; and the Spirit of God was on the messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied. **21** And they told Saul, and he sent other messengers, and they also prophesied. And Saul again sent messengers, a third ***group***, and they also prophesied. **22** And he also went to Ramah, and he came to the great cistern which ***is*** in Secu (Sekhu); and he asked and said, "Where ***are*** Samuel and David?" And ***one*** said, "Look, in Naioth in Ramah." **23** And he went there, to Naioth in Ramah; and the Spirit of God was on him also, and he went on, going and prophesying, until he came to Naioth in Ramah. **24** And he also stripped off his clothes, and he also prophesied before Samuel, and he fell down naked all that day and all the night. Therefore they say, "Is Saul also among the prophets?"

1 SAMUEL 20

The Covenant of David and Jonathan

1 And David fled from Naioth (Nayot) in Ramah (Rama), and he came and said before Jonathan (Yehonatan), "What have I done? What ***is*** my iniquity, and what ***is*** my sin before your father, that he is seeking my life?" **2** And he said to him, "Far be it! You shall not die. Look, my father does not do anything great or anything small without uncovering my ear; and why should my father hide this thing from me? It ***is*** not ***so***." **3** And David swore again, and he said, "Your father certainly knows that I have found favor in your eyes, and he has said, 'Let Jonathan not know this, lest he be grieved.' And yet, ***as*** the LORD lives and ***as*** your soul lives, surely about a step ***is*** between me and death." **4** And Jonathan said to David, "Whatever your soul says, I will do for you." **5** And David said to Jonathan, "Look, tomorrow ***is*** the new moon, and I, I should surely sit with the king to eat; and you shall let me go,

19:11 Acts 9:25; Ps 59:1; Judg 16:2
19:12 Acts 9:24; Acts 9:25; 2 Cor 11:33
19:13 Gen 31:19; Judg 18:14,17; Judg 17:5
19:14 Josh 2:5; 2 Sam 16:17-19; 2 Sam 17:20
19:15 1 Sam 19:6; Job 31:31; Ps 37:12
19:17 Matt 2:16; 2 Sam 2:22; 1 Sam 22:17
19:18 1 Sam 7:17; 1 Sam 15:34; 1 Sam 28:3
19:19 1 Cor 14:32; 1 Sam 22:9,10; 1 Sam 23:19
19:20 1 Cor 14:32; John 7:32,45; Joel 2:28
19:21 1 Cor 14:32; 2 Kgs 1:9-13; Prov 27:22
19:23 1 Cor 14:32; 1 Sam 10:10; 1 Sam 19:20
19:24 Acts 9:21; 1 Cor 14:32; Isa 20:2
20:1 1 Sam 19:19-24; 1 Sam 23:26-28; Ps 124:6-8
20:2 1 Sam 14:45; Gen 44:7; Josh 22:29
20:3 Deut 6:13; 1 Sam 25:26; 1 Sam 27:1
20:5 Num 10:10; Num 28:11; 1 Sam 19:2

19:11 *Saul sent messengers to the house of David to watch him and to kill him in the morning* The heading of Psalm 59 ties that psalm to this night. David cries, "Deliver me from my enemies, my God" (Ps 59:1), and sings that God is "a high refuge for me" (Ps 59:16). If you want to know what David felt, read Psalm 59.

19:12 *Michal let David down through the window* The house may have been built against the city wall, like Rahab's (Josh 2:15). Paul escaped Damascus the same way, in a basket through a window (2 Cor 11:32-33).

19:13 *Michal took the teraphim and put it on the bed* Teraphim were household idols (15:23), like those Rachel stole (Gen 31:19). With a goat-hair quilt for hair and a cloak over it, it looked like a man. Why was there an idol in David's house? Scripture does not say. It may have been Michal's. Old pagan habits lingered even in the king's family.

19:15 *Bring him up on the bed to me, to kill him* Sick or not, Saul wanted him dead.

19:17 *Let me go; why should I kill you?* Saul now calls David "my enemy." Michal lied to buy time and lied again to protect herself. David had said no such thing. The Bible records her lies but does not praise them. God did not need them to protect David. Her story does not end happily (25:44; 2 Sam 6:16, 23).

19:18 *he came to Samuel at Ramah, and he told him all that Saul had done to him* Where do you go when your life falls apart? David did not go to raise an army. He went to the old prophet who anointed him, to talk it through with someone who knew God.

19:18 *they dwelt in Naioth* A place in or near Ramah. The word may mean dwellings, and many think it was where Samuel's company of prophets lived together.

19:20 *the Spirit of God was on the messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied* To prophesy here is to speak or sing praise under the Spirit's power, as the company did (10:5-6). The men came to capture David, and God's Spirit captured them instead. Three groups, and the same each time. God did not need a sword to protect David.

19:23 *the Spirit of God was on him also* Saul would not learn. The king who came to kill was overcome before he arrived.

19:24 *he fell down naked all that day and all the night* Naked most likely means stripped of his outer royal robe, as the word sometimes means (Isa 20:2). The proud king lay helpless before Samuel without the robes of his office, while David got away.

19:24 *Is Saul also among the prophets?* The saying first came when the Spirit came on Saul for good (10:11-12). Now it came in shame, the Spirit stopping him in his tracks. Being overcome by the Spirit for a moment is not being changed by Him. In the next chapter Saul still seeks David's life. No experience, however powerful, replaces repentance and faith.

20:1 *What have I done? What is my iniquity* David had served Saul faithfully, fought his battles, played for him and married his daughter, and still Saul wanted him dead. Sometimes we suffer when we have done nothing wrong, and the hardest part is not knowing why.

20:2 *my father does not do anything great or anything small without uncovering my ear* Jonathan had heard his father swear that David would not die (19:6). He did not want to believe the worst. That is a good quality in a son, but here he was wrong.

20:3 *surely about a step is between me and death* A vivid picture. David felt one step from the grave.

20:4 *Whatever your soul says, I will do for you* Jonathan stopped arguing and trusted his friend. A real friend takes your fear seriously even when he does not fully understand it.

20:5 *tomorrow is the new moon* The new moon began each month, marked with special sacrifices and a feast (Num 10:10; 28:11). The king's household ate together, and David was expected.

and I will hide myself in the field until the third evening. **6** If your father misses me at all, then you shall say, 'David earnestly asked leave of me to run ***to*** Bethlehem
(Bet-Lechem) his city, for the yearly sacrifice ***is*** there for all the clan.' **7** If he says thus, 'Good,' ***there is*** peace for your servant; but if he certainly burns ***with anger***, know that the evil has been determined by him. **8** And you shall do steadfast love toward your servant, for into a covenant of the LORD you have brought your servant with you. And if there is iniquity in me, put me to death yourself; and to your father, why should you bring me?" **9** And Jonathan said, "Far be it from you! For if I certainly know that the evil has been determined by my father to come on you, would I not tell it to you?" **10** And David said to Jonathan, "Who will tell me, or what ***if*** your father answers you harshly?" **11** And Jonathan said to David, "Come, and let us go out ***to*** the field." And the two of them went out ***to*** the field. **12** And Jonathan said to David, "The LORD, the God of Israel (Yisra'el)! When I sound out my father about this time tomorrow, ***or*** the third ***day***, and look, ***there is*** good toward David, will I not then send to you and uncover your ear? **13** Thus may the LORD do to Jonathan, and thus may He add! If it pleases my father ***to bring*** the evil on you, then I will uncover your ear and send you away, and you shall go in peace. And may the LORD be with you, just as He has been with my father. **14** And ***will you*** not, while I am still alive, and ***will you*** not do with me the steadfast love of the LORD, that I may not die? **15** And you shall not cut off your steadfast love from my house forever, not even when the LORD cuts off the enemies of David, each one from the face of the ground." **16** And Jonathan made ***a covenant*** with the house of David, and the LORD shall require ***it*** from the hand of the enemies of David. **17** And Jonathan again made David swear by his love for him, for with the love of his own soul he loved him. **18** And Jonathan said to him, "Tomorrow ***is*** the new moon, and you will be missed, for your seat will be empty. **19** And ***on*** the third ***day*** you shall go down quickly, and you shall come to the place where you hid yourself on the day of the deed, and you shall stay beside the stone Ezel. **20** And I, I will shoot three arrows to its side, as though sending ***them*** for myself to a target. **21** And look, I will send the lad, ***saying***, 'Go, find the arrows.' If I say clearly to the lad, 'Look, the arrows ***are*** on this side of you, take it,' then come, for ***there is*** peace for you and ***there is*** nothing ***wrong***, ***as*** the LORD lives. **22** And if I say thus to the young man, 'Look, the arrows ***are*** beyond you,' go, for the LORD has sent you away. **23** And the matter which we have spoken, I and you, look, the LORD ***is*** between me and you forever."

Saul's Rage at the New Moon

24 And David hid himself in the field. And it was the new moon, and the king sat down at the food to eat. **25** And the king sat on his seat as time by time, on the seat by the wall; and Jonathan arose, and Abner (Avner) sat at the side of Saul (Shaul), and the place of David was empty. **26** And Saul did not speak anything on that day, for he said, "It ***is*** a chance ***event***; he ***is*** not clean; surely ***he is*** not clean." **27** And it was, on the day after the new moon, the second ***day***, and the place of David was empty. And Saul said to Jonathan his son, "Why has the son of Jesse (Yishay) not come, both yesterday and today, to the food?" **28** And Jonathan answered Saul, "David earnestly asked leave of me ***to go*** to Bethlehem. **29** And he said, 'Please let me go, for a sacrifice of the clan ***is*** ours in the city, and my brother, he has commanded me; and now, if I have found favor in your eyes, please let me get away and see my brothers.' Therefore he has not come to the table of the

20:6 John 7:42; Luke 2:4; 1 Sam 17:58
20:7 1 Sam 25:17; Esth 7:7; Deut 1:23
20:8 1 Sam 18:3; 1 Sam 23:18; 2 Sam 14:32
20:9 1 Sam 20:38,42; 1 Sam 19:2
20:10 1 Sam 20:30-34; 1 Sam 25:10,14,17; Gen 42:7,30
20:12 Josh 22:22; Job 31:4; Ps 17:3
20:13 2 Thess 3:16; Ruth 1:17; 1 Sam 17:37
20:14 2 Sam 9:3; Eph 5:1,2
20:15 2 Sam 21:7; 1 Sam 24:21; 2 Sam 9:1-7
20:16 1 Sam 25:22; 1 Sam 18:3; Gen 15:18
20:17 1 Sam 18:1,3; Deut 13:6; 2 Sam 1:26
20:19 1 Sam 19:2; 1 Sam 20:5
20:21 Jer 4:2; Jer 5:2; Jer 12:16
20:23 1 Sam 20:14,15; 1 Sam 20:42; Gen 31:50
20:24 Ps 50:16-21; Prov 4:17; Prov 15:17
20:25 Judg 16:20
20:26 Lev 15:5,16,17,19-21; Lev 11:24,27,31,40; Num 19:16
20:27 1 Sam 18:11; 1 Sam 19:9,10,15; 1 Sam 22:7-9,13,14
20:29 1 Sam 17:28

20:6 *the yearly sacrifice is there for all the clan* Was the excuse true? Scripture does not say whether David went to Bethlehem. Families did hold such sacrifices, but David may have been asking Jonathan to cover for him. The Bible records it without praising it. David was a man after God's heart but not a perfect man, and soon he will lie outright when afraid (21:2, 13).
20:8 *you shall do steadfast love toward your servant, for into a covenant of the LORD you have brought your servant* Steadfast love is hesed, loyal love that keeps its promises, one of the great words of the Old Testament for God's covenant love. The covenant (18:3) was made before God. If I have truly done wrong, David said, I would rather die by your hand.
20:11 *let us go out to the field* Where they could not be overheard. Friends who face danger together need a safe place to talk.
20:13 *may the LORD be with you, just as He has been with my father* A common oath form: may God punish me, and more, if I fail. Jonathan understood. The LORD had once been with Saul, and now He was with David. Jonathan knew David would be king and was at peace with it.
20:14 *do with me the steadfast love of the LORD, that I may not die* When a new family took the throne, the new king often killed the old king's sons (1 Kgs 15:29). Jonathan asked for God's own kind of faithful kindness.
20:15 *you shall not cut off your steadfast love from my house forever* Jonathan asked David to protect his children after he was gone. David kept it. As king he asked, "Is there still anyone who is left of the house of Saul" (2 Sam 9:1), and he seated lame Mephibosheth at his table. Mephibosheth earned nothing. He was welcomed because of a covenant made with someone else. That is how we come to God's table, through His covenant in Christ.
20:16 *Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David* The covenant now reached beyond the two men to their families.
20:20 *I will shoot three arrows to its side* Words plain enough for the boy to hear without suspicion, yet telling David everything. The stone Ezel was a landmark in the field.
20:22 *go, for the LORD has sent you away* Even if David must run, it would be under God's hand. Jonathan saw God in both outcomes.
20:23 *the LORD is between me and you forever* God was the witness of their covenant. A friendship with God at its center is the strongest kind there is.
20:25 *the place of David was empty* Saul sat by the wall, his back protected, with Abner beside him. The scene is full of tension.
20:26 *he is not clean; surely he is not clean* A man ceremonially unclean, as from touching a dead body, could not eat a sacred meal until he was clean, usually at evening (Lev 7:20-21; 15:16). Saul assumed something like that.
20:27 *Why has the son of Jesse not come* Not David, not my son-in-law, but "the son of Jesse," a put-down, as if to say, that nobody from Bethlehem.

king." **30** And the anger of Saul burned against Jonathan, and he said to him, "Son of a perverse ***woman*** of rebelliousness! Do I not know that you are choosing the son of Jesse to your own shame and to the shame of the nakedness of your mother? **31** For all the days that the son of Jesse lives on the earth, you and your kingdom will not be established. And now, send and take him to me, for he ***is*** a son of death." **32** And Jonathan answered Saul his father, and he said to him, "Why should he be put to death? What has he done?" **33** And Saul hurled the spear at him to strike him; and Jonathan knew that it had been determined by his father to kill David. **34** And Jonathan arose from the table in burning anger, and he did not eat food on the second day of the new moon, for he was grieved for David, because his father had put him to shame.

The Arrows and the Farewell

35 And it was in the morning, and Jonathan went out ***to*** the field at the appointed time ***with*** David, and a small lad ***was*** with him. **36** And he said to his lad, "Run, please find the arrows which I am shooting." The lad ran, and he shot the arrow to make ***it*** pass beyond him. **37** And the lad came to the place of the arrow which Jonathan had shot, and Jonathan called out after the lad, and he said, "***Is*** not the arrow beyond you?" **38** And Jonathan called out after the lad, "Quickly! Hurry! Do not stand ***still***!" And the lad of Jonathan gathered the arrows, and he came to his master. **39** And the lad did not know anything; only Jonathan and David knew the matter. **40** And Jonathan gave his weapons to the lad who ***was*** his, and he said to him, "Go, bring ***them*** to the city."

41 The lad went, and David arose from beside the south, and he fell on his face to the earth and bowed down three times. And they kissed, each his friend, and they wept, each with his friend, until David made ***his weeping*** great. **42** And Jonathan said to David, "Go in peace, since we have sworn, the two of us, in the name of the LORD, saying, 'The LORD will be between me and you, and between my seed and your seed, forever.'" And he arose and went; and Jonathan went ***into*** the city.

1 SAMUEL 21

David at Nob

1 And David came to Nob (Nov), to Ahimelech (Achimelekh) the priest; and Ahimelech trembled to meet David, and he said to him, "Why ***are*** you alone, and no man ***is*** with you?" **2** And David said to Ahimelech the priest, "The king commanded me a matter, and he said to me, 'Let no man know anything of the matter on which I am sending you and which I have commanded you.' And the young men I have directed to such and such a place. **3** And now, what is under your hand? Give five ***loaves of*** bread into my hand, or whatever is found." **4** And the priest answered David, and he said, "There is no common bread under my hand, but there is holy bread, if only the young men have kept themselves from a woman." **5** And David answered the priest, and he said to him, "Surely a woman has been withheld from us as yesterday ***and*** the day before, when I went out; and the vessels of the young men were holy, and it ***is*** a common journey; and how much more

20:30 Matt 1:6; Prov 21:24; James 1:19,20
20:31 Matt 1:6; Luke 3:32; 1 Sam 20:8
20:32 Matt 27:23; 1 Sam 19:5; Luke 23:22
20:34 Mark 3:5; Eccl 7:20; Eph 4:26
20:35 1 Sam 20:19; 2 Sam 20:5
20:36 1 Sam 20:20,21; 1 Sam 20:21,22
20:38 Ps 55:6-9; Prov 6:4,5; Matt 24:16-18
20:41 1 Sam 18:3; 1 Sam 25:23; Gen 43:28
20:42 1 Sam 1:17; 1 Sam 20:22; Num 6:26
21:1 Mark 2:26; Neh 11:32; Isa 10:32
21:2 1 Sam 19:17; 1 Sam 22:22; Gen 27:20,24
21:3 Matt 12:3; Mark 2:25; Luke 6:3
21:4 Matt 12:3-4; Mark 2:25-26; Luke 6:3-4
21:5 Mark 2:25; Luke 6:3; Acts 9:15

20:30 *Son of a perverse woman of rebelliousness!* A vulgar insult meant to wound, aimed at Jonathan and even his mother in front of everyone.
20:31 *you and your kingdom will not be established* What was really in Saul's heart. He feared for his dynasty. He knew David was God's chosen man but would not accept it. A son of death is a man marked to die. There was no more pretending.
20:32 *Why should he be put to death? What has he done?* The same question David asked (20:1). It is the right question. David had done nothing to deserve death.
20:33 *Saul hurled the spear at him to strike him* Saul tried to kill his own son. Jealousy left unchecked will attack anyone in its way, even those we love most.
20:34 *he was grieved for David, because his father had put him to shame* His anger was right, and look what it was about. Not the insult to himself or his lost throne. He grieved for his friend.
20:38 *Quickly! Hurry! Do not stand still!* Spoken to the boy, but meant for David too. There was no time to waste.
20:41 *they kissed, each his friend, and they wept, each with his friend* David bowed three times, honoring the king's son even now. Men greeted and parted with a kiss on the cheek, as many still do in the Middle East (Gen 33:4; Acts 20:37). They would meet only once more (23:16-18). There is no shame in a man weeping over a friend. Jesus wept at Lazarus's tomb (John 11:35).
20:42 *The LORD will be between me and you, and between my seed and your seed, forever* David went into years of exile, Jonathan back to his father. Jonathan stayed loyal to both and betrayed neither, and he died fighting beside his father (31:2). David's lament says his love was "more than the love of women" (2 Sam 1:26), meaning loyal, self-giving friendship rarer than anything he had known. Jesus calls us friends and laid down His life for us (John 15:13-15).
21:1 *David came to Nob, to Ahimelech the priest* After Shiloh was destroyed (Jer 7:12), the priests were at Nob, just north of Jerusalem, "the city of the priests" (22:19). The text does not say when they moved. Ahimelech was Eli's great-grandson, son of Ahitub (22:9), and probably the Ahijah of 14:3, since the names mean much the same. He trembled because the king's famous son-in-law came alone and unexpected. Something was wrong.
21:2 *The king commanded me a matter* This was a lie. Saul had sent David nowhere. He was trying to kill him. There may have been a few men with David (Mark 2:25), but there was no mission. The lie protected no one. It cost Ahimelech his life, and David admitted it (22:22). The Bible does not hide its heroes' sins. We should not copy his lie but learn from what it cost.
21:4 *There is no common bread under my hand, but there is holy bread* Common bread was ordinary bread anyone could eat. Every Sabbath twelve fresh loaves, one for each tribe, were set before the LORD in the holy place, and the old ones were eaten by the priests (Lev 24:5-9). It was a sign that God's people lived in His presence and He fed them.
21:5 *the vessels of the young men were holy* A man who had relations with his wife was ceremonially unclean until evening (Lev 15:18), and soldiers on a holy mission kept themselves apart (Deut 23:9-11; 2 Sam 11:11). Vessels means their bodies or gear were ceremonially clean.

today will it be holy in the vessel." **6** And the priest gave him holy ***bread***, for there was no bread there except the bread of the presence which was removed from before the LORD, to put hot bread ***in its place*** on the day it was taken away. **7** And there ***was*** a man of the servants of Saul (Shaul) on that day, detained before the LORD, and his name ***was*** Doeg the Edomite, the mighty ***one*** of the shepherds who ***belonged*** to Saul. **8** And David said to Ahimelech, "And is there not here under your hand a spear or a sword? For neither my sword nor my weapons have I taken in my hand, because the matter of the king was urgent." **9** And the priest said, "The sword of Goliath (Golyat) the Philistine, whom you struck in the valley of Elah, look, it ***is*** wrapped in the cloak behind the ephod. If you will take it for yourself, take ***it***, for there is no other except it here." And David said, "There is none like it; give it to me."

David at Gath

10 And David arose and fled on that day from before Saul, and he came to Achish (Akhish) the king of Gath (Gat). **11** And the servants of Achish said to him, "***Is*** this not David the king of the land? ***Is it*** not of this ***one that*** they sing in the dances, saying, 'Saul has struck his thousands, and David his ten thousands'?" **12** And David put these words in his heart, and he was exceedingly afraid of Achish the king of Gath. **13** And he changed his discernment in their eyes, and he acted like a madman in their hand, and he made marks on the doors of the gate, and he let his spittle run down on his beard. **14** And Achish said to his servants, "Look, you see a man acting like a madman. Why do you bring him to me? **15** Am I lacking madmen, that you have brought this ***one*** to act like a madman before me? Shall this ***one*** come into my house?"

1 SAMUEL 22

The Cave of Adullam

1 And David went from there and escaped to the cave of Adullam (Adulam); and his brothers and all the house of his father heard, and they went down to him there. **2** And every man in distress and every man who had a creditor and every man bitter of soul gathered to him, and he became commander over them; and there were with him about four hundred men. **3** And David went from there ***to*** Mizpeh (Mitspe) of Moab (Mo'av), and he said to the king of Moab, "Please let my father and my mother go out ***to be*** with you until I know what God will do for me." **4** And he led them before the king of Moab, and they dwelt with him all the days David was in the stronghold. **5** And Gad the prophet said to David, "Do not remain in the stronghold; go, and you shall come for yourself

21:6 Luke 6:3-4; Mark 2:25; Mark 2:26
21:7 Acts 21:26; 1 Sam 22:9; Ps 52:1
21:9 1 Sam 17:2,50; 1 Sam 31:10; Exod 28:6-14
21:10 1 Sam 27:1; 1 Kgs 19:3; Jer 26:21
21:11 John 9:8; 1 Sam 29:5; Ps 56:1
21:12 Luke 2:19; Ps 119:11; 1 Sam 21:10
21:13 Ps 34:1; Prov 29:25; Eccl 7:7
21:14 Eccl 7:7
22:1 Ps 57:1; Josh 12:15; Josh 15:35
22:2 1 Sam 30:6; 1 Sam 30:22-24; Ps 72:12-14
22:3 Judg 11:29; 1 Sam 14:47; Ruth 1:1-4
22:4 2 Sam 23:13,14; 1 Chr 12:16; 2 Sam 24:11

21:6 *the priest gave him holy bread* The loaves had just been replaced with hot bread, so it was a Sabbath (Lev 24:8). Was it right? Jesus pointed to David "when he had need and was hungry" (Mark 2:25) and said, "The Sabbath was made for the sake of man, not man for the sake of the Sabbath" (Mark 2:27). Meeting real need fits the heart of the law. "I desire mercy and not sacrifice" (Matt 12:7), the truth Samuel told Saul (15:22). Jesus pointed to David's need and the priest's mercy, not David's lie.
21:6 *the bread of the presence* Mark speaks of "Abiathar the high priest" (Mark 2:26), though Ahimelech was priest here. Abiathar was his son and was there (22:20). The Greek can mean in the passage about Abiathar (compare Mark 12:26). Abiathar was also the better-known high priest of that time, and the two names seem to be used for each other elsewhere (2 Sam 8:17; 1 Chr 24:6). Any of these is reasonable, and none means Jesus erred.
21:7 *his name was Doeg the Edomite, the mighty one of the shepherds who belonged to Saul* Detained before the LORD probably means kept at the tabernacle for a vow, purification or Sabbath rule. An Edomite descended from Esau. The writer drops this in like a warning bell. Someone was watching, and David saw him too (22:22).
21:8 *the matter of the king was urgent* Part of the same lie. David was unarmed.
21:9 *There is none like it; give it to me* Goliath's sword was kept behind the ephod, the high priest's garment with the Urim and Thummim (Exod 28:6, 30), as a memorial of what God had done. Every look at it would remind David of the giant. But the youth who said the LORD does not save by sword (17:47) now felt he needed one. Fear had crept in.
21:10 *he came to Achish the king of Gath* Goliath's hometown, and David carried the giant's sword. Perhaps he thought Saul would never look there, or that Saul's enemy would be welcome. Fear does not always think clearly.
21:11 *Is this not David the king of the land?* Perhaps a title for a famous leader, or word had spread that he would be king. They knew the song (18:7). To them David was the man who killed thousands of their people. He realized he had walked into a trap.
21:13 *he let his spittle run down on his beard* A man's beard was a sign of dignity, so drooling into it was deep shame. Some think people then also feared to harm a man who seemed mad. It worked. The man who faced Goliath in calm faith was drooling to save his life. He had taken his eyes off the LORD, and fear filled the space.
21:15 *Am I lacking madmen* Achish wanted no madman in his house and let David go. God did not leave him. Psalm 56 comes from this time: "In the day I fear, I will trust in You" (Ps 56:3). Psalm 34's heading names "Abimelech," likely a royal title for the Philistine king, and says, "from all my fears He rescued me" (Ps 34:4). "Taste and see that the LORD is good" (Ps 34:8) was written by a man just back from Gath. When fear wins, go back to the LORD, confess and trust Him again.
22:1 *David went from there and escaped to the cave of Adullam* Adullam was in the low hills of Judah, about halfway between Gath and Bethlehem, a region full of caves. Psalm 142 is headed "when he was in the cave" (Ps 142:0), and Psalm 57 also comes from a cave. His family was no longer safe either, and the brothers who once looked down on him (17:28) now came to him.
22:2 *every man in distress and every man who had a creditor and every man bitter of soul gathered to him* A creditor is someone you owe money. Men in trouble, in debt and bitter at life, not an impressive army. Yet God gave David a people to shepherd, and from them came his mighty men (2 Sam 23:8-39). God often builds His work from broken people (1 Cor 1:26-27). Jesus gathered tax collectors, fishermen and sinners and made them His own.
22:3 *until I know what God will do for me* Moab was east of the Dead Sea. David's great-grandmother Ruth was a Moabite (Ruth 4:13, 17), and Moab was Saul's enemy (14:47). David cared for his aging parents while running for his life. Honoring father and mother does not stop when life gets hard. He did not know the plan, but he knew God had one.
22:4 *all the days David was in the stronghold* The stronghold may have been the cave of Adullam or a fortress in Moab.
22:5 *Do not remain in the stronghold; go, and you shall come for yourself into the land of Judah* Our first meeting with Gad, who stayed with David all his life and helped record his reign (2 Sam 24:11; 1 Chr 29:29). David was to be king of Israel, not a refugee in Moab, so his place was among his people, though dangerous. God does not always lead us to the safest place. He leads us to the right place. David obeyed.

into the land of Judah (Yehuda)." And David went and came ***into*** the forest of Hereth (Cheret).

Saul Kills the Priests of Nob

6 And Saul (Shaul) heard that David and the men who ***were*** with him were known; and Saul ***was*** sitting in Gibeah (Giva) under the tamarisk at the high place, and his spear ***was*** in his hand, and all his servants ***were*** stationed by him. **7** And Saul said to his servants who were stationed by him, "Listen, please, Benjaminites! Will the son of Jesse (Yishay) also give to all of you fields and vineyards? Will he appoint all of you commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds, **8** that all of you have conspired against me, and there is no one uncovering my ear when my son makes ***a covenant*** with the son of Jesse, and there is none of you pained for me or uncovering my ear that my son has stirred up my servant against me as one lying in wait, as ***at*** this day?" **9** And Doeg the Edomite answered, and he ***was*** stationed over the servants of Saul, and he said, "I saw the son of Jesse coming to Nob (Nov), to Ahimelech (Achimelekh) the son of Ahitub (Achituv). **10** And he inquired of the LORD for him, and he gave him provisions, and the sword of Goliath (Golyat) the Philistine he gave to him." **11** And the king sent to summon Ahimelech the son of Ahitub the priest, and all the house of his father, the priests who ***were*** in Nob; and all of them came to the king. **12** And Saul said, "Listen, please, son of Ahitub." And he said, "Here I ***am***, my lord." **13** And Saul said to him, "Why have you conspired against me, you and the son of Jesse, in your giving him bread and a sword, and inquiring of God for him, to rise up against me as one lying in wait, as ***at*** this day?" **14** And Ahimelech answered the king, and he said, "And who among all your servants ***is*** like David, faithful, and son-in-law of the king, and turning aside to your bodyguard, and honored in your house? **15** Did I begin today to inquire of God for him? Far be it from me! Let the king not put anything against his servant, against all the house of my father, for your servant did not know anything of all this, small or great." **16** And the king said, "You shall surely die, Ahimelech, you and all the house of your father." **17** And the king said to the runners who were stationed by him, "Turn around and put to death the priests of the LORD, because their hand also ***is*** with David, and because they knew that he was fleeing and did not uncover my ear." And the servants of the king were not willing to stretch out their hand to fall on the priests of the LORD. **18** And the king said to Doeg, "You, turn around and fall on the priests." And Doeg the Edomite turned around, and he, he fell on the priests, and he killed on that day eighty-five men carrying a linen ephod. **19** And Nob, the city of the priests, he struck by the mouth of the sword, from man to woman, from child to nursing infant, and ox and donkey and sheep, by the mouth of the sword. **20** And one son of Ahimelech the son of Ahitub escaped, and his name ***was*** Abiathar (Evyatar), and he fled after David. **21** And Abiathar told David that Saul had killed the priests of the LORD. **22** And David said to Abiathar, "I knew on that day,

22:6 1 Sam 18:10; 1 Sam 19:9; 1 Sam 20:33
22:7 1 Kgs 12:16; 1 Sam 22:9,13; 1 Sam 18:14
22:8 Matt 1:6; 1 Sam 18:3; 1 Sam 20:2
22:9 Ps 52:1; Prov 19:5; Prov 29:12
22:10 Num 27:21; 1 Sam 23:2,4,12; 1 Sam 30:8
22:11 Rom 3:15
22:12 1 Sam 22:7,13; 2 Sam 9:6; Isa 65:1
22:13 1 Sam 22:8; Ps 119:69; Amos 7:10
22:14 1 Sam 19:4,5; 1 Sam 20:32; 1 Sam 24:11
22:15 1 Sam 25:36; Gen 20:5,6; 2 Sam 15:11
22:16 1 Sam 14:44; 1 Sam 20:31; 1 Kgs 18:4
22:17 Exod 1:17; 1 Sam 8:11; 2 Sam 15:1
22:18 2 Chr 24:21; Hos 5:11; Hos 7:3
22:19 1 Sam 15:3,9; 1 Sam 22:9,11; 1 Sam 21:1
22:20 Mark 2:26; 1 Sam 23:6; 1 Sam 30:7
22:21 Mark 2:26
22:22 Mark 2:26; 1 Sam 21:1-9; Ps 44:22

22:6 *Saul was sitting in Gibeah under the tamarisk at the high place, and his spear was in his hand* A tamarisk is a desert tree with feathery branches. David was gathering men in a cave. Saul sat under a tree, spear in hand, full of suspicion.

22:7 *Will the son of Jesse also give to all of you fields and vineyards?* Saul appealed to his own tribe. I am a Benjaminite and have rewarded you. Will a man of Judah do the same? Samuel warned that a king would take fields and give them to his servants (8:14), and Saul had.

22:8 *all of you have conspired against me* Saul accused everyone, even Jonathan. David was not lying in wait for Saul. He was hiding from him. A jealous, fearful heart sees enemies everywhere.

22:10 *he inquired of the LORD for him* Some of Doeg's report was true, the bread and the sword. Chapter 21 does not mention inquiring, though Ahimelech's answer suggests he had done it before (22:15). But Doeg left out that David lied and the priest thought he was on the king's business. True facts arranged to make an innocent man look guilty. Psalm 52 asks, "Why do you boast in evil, O mighty man?" (Ps 52:1).

22:12 *Listen, please, son of Ahitub* Saul did not even call him by name. The priests had come because they had nothing to fear. The trial was a show. Saul had already decided.

22:14 *who among all your servants is like David, faithful* An honest and brave answer. David was the king's son-in-law and captain of his guard. Why would a priest think him the king's enemy?

22:15 *your servant did not know anything of all this, small or great* Ahimelech had helped David before as the king's officer. He told the truth. He did not know.

22:16 *You shall surely die, Ahimelech, you and all the house of your father* Saul weighed nothing and listened to nothing. He sentenced a whole family of priests to death.

22:17 *the servants of the king were not willing to stretch out their hand to fall on the priests of the LORD* Saul knew whom they served and still gave the order. His own guards refused. They feared God more than the king. Some orders must not be obeyed, even from a king (Acts 5:29).

22:18 *he killed on that day eighty-five men carrying a linen ephod* So Saul turned to the foreign informer who had no fear of God. The linen ephod was the simple garment ordinary priests wore (2:18). These were men dressed for God's service, and they were murdered.

22:19 *from man to woman, from child to nursing infant, and ox and donkey and sheep* Terrible to read, and it should be. Almost the same words God used of Amalek (15:3). Saul spared the guilty nation God judged and now poured out his fury on God's innocent priests. A hardened heart becomes merciful where God calls for justice and cruel where He calls for mercy. This was not God's command. It was murder, and Saul and Doeg bear the guilt.

22:19 *Nob, the city of the priests* Why did God allow it? Scripture does not give all His reasons. God had warned Eli that his family would be cut off, so "there will not be an old man in your house" (2:31), and Ahimelech was Eli's great-grandson (1 Kgs 2:27). That does not mean the victims deserved it. God can work through wicked men's sins to fulfill His word without approving them, as at the cross (Acts 2:23). If you have suffered injustice, God sees, and every wrong will be made right (Rev 21:4).

22:20 *his name was Abiathar, and he fled after David* God spared one. Abiathar brought the ephod (23:6), so David now had a priest and a way to seek God's will, while Saul had murdered his own priests. Saul cut himself off from God's guidance with his own hand.

22:22 *I, I have caused the death of every soul of the house of your father* Some of the most honest words David ever spoke. He saw Doeg at Nob and drew Ahimelech in by a lie. When Saul was confronted, he blamed the people (15:15, 21). David owned it. That does not undo the harm, but it is the beginning of a right heart before God.

because Doeg the Edomite ***was*** there, that he would surely tell Saul. I, I have caused ***the death of*** every soul of the house of your father. **23** Stay with me; do not be afraid; for he who seeks my life seeks your life; for you ***are*** in safekeeping with me."

1 SAMUEL 23

David Rescues Keilah

1 And they told David, saying, "Look, ***the*** Philistines are fighting against Keilah (Qe'ila), and they are plundering the threshing floors." **2** And David inquired of the LORD, saying, "Shall I go, and shall I strike these Philistines?" And the LORD said to David, "Go, and you shall strike the Philistines, and you shall deliver Keilah." **3** And the men of David said to him, "Look, we here in Judah (Yehuda) are afraid; and how much more if we go ***to*** Keilah against the battle lines of ***the*** Philistines?" **4** And David once again inquired of the LORD, and the LORD answered him and said, "Arise, go down ***to*** Keilah, for I am giving ***the*** Philistines into your hand." **5** And David and his men went ***to*** Keilah, and he fought against the Philistines, and he drove away their livestock, and he struck them ***with*** a great blow; and David delivered the inhabitants of Keilah. **6** And it was, when Abiathar (Evyatar) the son of Ahimelech (Achimelekh) fled to David ***at*** Keilah, an ephod came down in his hand. **7** And it was told to Saul (Shaul) that David had come ***to*** Keilah. And Saul said, "God has given him over into my hand, for he has shut himself in by entering a city of doors and bar." **8** And Saul summoned all the people to battle, to go down ***to*** Keilah, to lay siege against David and against his men. **9** And David knew that Saul was plotting the evil against him, and he said to Abiathar the priest, "Bring the ephod near." **10** And David said, "O LORD, God of Israel (Yisra'el), Your servant has certainly heard that Saul is seeking to come to Keilah to destroy the city because of me. **11** Will the citizens of Keilah deliver me up into his hand? Will Saul come down just as Your servant has heard? O LORD, God of Israel, please tell Your servant." And the LORD said, "He will come down." **12** And David said, "Will the citizens of Keilah deliver me and my men up into the hand of Saul?" And the LORD said, "They will deliver ***you*** up." **13** And David and his men, about six hundred men, arose, and they went out from Keilah, and they went about wherever they went about. And to Saul it was told that David had escaped from Keilah, and he ceased to go out. **14** And David dwelt in the wilderness in the strongholds, and he dwelt in the hill country in the wilderness of Ziph (Zif). And Saul sought him all the days, and God did not give him into his hand.

Jonathan Strengthens David

15 And David saw that Saul had come out to seek his life; and David ***was*** in the wilderness of Ziph at Horesh (Choresh). **16** And Jonathan (Yehonatan) the son of Saul arose and went to David ***at*** Horesh, and he strengthened his hand in God. **17** And he said to him, "Do not be afraid, for the hand of Saul my father will not find you; and you, you will reign over Israel, and I, I will be second to you; and also Saul my father knows ***it is*** so." **18** And the two of them made a covenant

22:23 John 16:3; 1 Kgs 2:26; John 15:20
23:1 Josh 15:44; Neh 3:17,18; Lev 26:16
23:2 1 Sam 23:4,6,9-12; 2 Sam 5:19,23; 1 Sam 30:8
23:3 1 Sam 23:15,23,26; Ps 11:1; Jer 12:5
23:4 Judg 7:7; Josh 8:7; 1 Sam 28:6
23:6 Mark 2:26; 1 Sam 22:20; 1 Sam 14:3,18,36,37
23:7 1 Sam 24:4-6; 1 Sam 23:14; 1 Sam 26:8,9
23:9 Acts 9:24; Mark 2:26; 1 Sam 30:7
23:10 1 Sam 23:8; 1 Sam 22:19; Gen 18:24
23:11 Ps 50:15; Jer 33:3; Matt 7:7,8
23:12 Ps 31:8; 1 Sam 23:7; Ps 62:1
23:13 1 Sam 22:2; 1 Sam 25:13; 1 Sam 30:9,10
23:14 Ps 54:3,4; Josh 15:24,55; Ps 32:7
23:16 Isa 35:3,4; Heb 12:12,13; Eph 6:10
23:17 1 Sam 20:31; 1 Sam 24:20; Heb 13:6
23:18 1 Sam 18:3; 2 Sam 21:7; 2 Sam 9:1

22:23 *you are in safekeeping with me* David could not bring back Abiathar's family, but he could protect the one who was left, and Abiathar stayed with him all his life. Jesus says something like it to all who come to Him: "no one will snatch them out of My hand" (John 10:28).
23:1 *they are plundering the threshing floors* Keilah was a walled town in the low hills of Judah, south of Adullam. A threshing floor was a flat, hard surface where grain was beaten from its husks, so this meant stealing a town's food for the year. Where was King Saul? Busy chasing David. A leader consumed by jealousy neglects the people he is meant to serve.
23:2 *David inquired of the LORD* David did not rush in. He asked God first, the first of many times in these chapters. Saul often acted first and asked later, or not at all.
23:3 *we here in Judah are afraid* They were already outlaws hiding from Saul. Now they were to take on the Philistine army too?
23:4 *David once again inquired of the LORD* He did not scold his men or simply push ahead. He went back to God. It is not wrong to ask again to be sure of His will, as Gideon did (Judg 6:36-40). God was patient with David's men.
23:5 *David delivered the inhabitants of Keilah* The outlaw did the king's job.
23:6 *an ephod came down in his hand* The high priest's ephod held the Urim and Thummim, sacred lots that gave God's answer to a yes or no question (Exod 28:30; Num 27:21). Scripture does not describe how they worked. The irony: Saul killed the priests, and now the last priest and the ephod were with David. Later God would not answer Saul "by Urim" (28:6).
23:7 *God has given him over into my hand* A city of doors and bar is a walled town with gates. Saul talked as if God were on his side while hunting God's chosen man. It is dangerous to claim God's blessing on our sin. He would call out the army against David, though he had not come to save Keilah from the Philistines.
23:11 *Will the citizens of Keilah deliver me up into his hand?* After all David had done, they would hand him over to save their own skins. They had seen what Saul did to Nob. Perhaps they were afraid, but it was still ingratitude.
23:12 *They will deliver you up* Saul did not come, and Keilah did not betray David, because David left. Yet God knew what they would have done. His knowledge is perfect. He knows every path we could take and where each leads (Ps 139:1-4). That is why it is so wise to ask Him before we choose.
23:13 *about six hundred men* David's band had grown from four hundred (22:2). They kept moving.
23:14 *Saul sought him all the days, and God did not give him into his hand* The wilderness of Judah is dry, rugged land of cliffs and canyons sloping to the Dead Sea, and Ziph was south of Hebron. This sentence sums up these chapters. Saul had the army and spies. David had six hundred men and caves. When God has a plan for your life, no enemy can cut it short.
23:16 *he strengthened his hand in God* One of the most beautiful verses in the book. Jonathan risked his life and his father's anger to find his friend, and he did not only cheer David up. He pointed him back to the LORD. That is the best a friend can do in a hard time. Who does that for you, and for whom can you do it?
23:17 *you, you will reign over Israel, and I, I will be second to you* Jonathan knew God's plan and accepted it with joy. And Saul knew it too (20:31; 24:20). He was fighting what he knew to be God's will.
23:18 *the two of them made a covenant before the LORD* They renewed their covenant (18:3; 20:16-17). This was the last time they saw each other. Jonathan's hope of being second would not come true in this life (31:2). "The two are better than the one" (Eccl 4:9), for when one falls the other lifts him up.

before the LORD; and David remained at Horesh, and Jonathan went to his house.

The Ziphites Betray David

19 And ***the*** Ziphites went up to Saul to Gibeah (Giva), saying, "Is not David hiding himself with us in the strongholds at Horesh, on the hill of Hachilah (Chakhila), which ***is*** on the south of the Jeshimon (Yeshimon)? **20** And now, according to all the desire of your soul, O king, to come down, come down; and ours ***is*** to deliver him up into the hand of the king." **21** And Saul said, "Blessed ***are*** you by the LORD, for you have had compassion on me. **22** Go, please, make ***it*** certain still more, and know and see his place where his foot is, ***and*** who has seen him there; for one has said to me, 'He is very crafty.' **23** And see and know from all the hiding places where he hides himself, and return to me with ***what is*** certain, and I will go with you; and it shall be, if he is in the land, then I will search him out among all the thousands of Judah." **24** And they arose and went to Ziph before Saul. And David and his men ***were*** in the wilderness of Maon in the Arabah (Arava), on the south of the Jeshimon. **25** And Saul and his men went to seek ***him***; and they told David, and he went down ***to*** the rock and remained in the wilderness of Maon. And Saul heard, and he pursued after David ***in*** the wilderness of Maon. **26** And Saul went on this side of the mountain, and David and his men ***were*** on that side of the mountain. And David was hurrying to go away from before Saul, and Saul and his men were surrounding David and his men to seize them. **27** And a messenger came to Saul, saying, "Hurry and come, for ***the*** Philistines have made a raid on the land." **28** And Saul turned back from pursuing after David, and he went to meet ***the*** Philistines. Therefore they called that place Sela-hammahlekoth (Sela-Hammachleqot). **29** And David went up from there, and he dwelt in the strongholds of Engedi.

1 SAMUEL 24

David Spares Saul in the Cave

1 And it was, just when Saul (Shaul) returned from after the Philistines, that they told him, saying, "Look, David ***is*** in the wilderness of Engedi." **2** And Saul took three thousand chosen men from all Israel (Yisra'el), and he went to seek David and his men on the face of the Rocks of the Mountain Goats. **3** And he came to the folds of the sheep on the way, and a cave ***was*** there; and Saul went in to cover his feet. And David and his men ***were*** sitting in the innermost parts of the cave. **4** And the men of David said to him, "Look, the day of which the LORD said to you, 'Look, I am giving your enemy into your hand, and you shall do to him just as it is good in your eyes.'" And David arose, and he cut off the skirt of the robe which ***belonged*** to Saul in secret. **5** And it was afterward, and the heart of David struck him because he had cut off the skirt which ***belonged*** to Saul. **6** And he said to his men, "Far be it for me from the LORD that I should do this thing to my lord, to the anointed of the LORD, to stretch out my hand against him, for he ***is*** the anointed of the LORD." **7** And David rebuked his men with the words, and he did not permit them to rise up against Saul. And Saul arose from the cave, and he

23:19 1 Sam 26:1; Ps 54:1; 1 Sam 22:7,8
23:20 Deut 18:6; 2 Sam 3:21; Ps 112:10
23:21 1 Sam 22:8; Judg 17:2; Ps 10:3
23:22 Job 5:13
23:23 Mark 14:1,10,11; John 18:2,3; 2 Sam 17:11-13
23:24 1 Sam 25:2; Josh 15:55
23:25 1 Sam 23:28; Judg 15:8
23:26 Ps 17:9,11; 1 Sam 19:12; 1 Sam 20:38
23:27 2 Kgs 19:9; Gen 22:14; Deut 32:36
23:29 2 Chr 20:2; Josh 15:62; Song 1:14
24:1 1 Sam 23:28,29; 1 Sam 23:19; Prov 25:5
24:2 1 Sam 13:2; Ps 37:32; Ps 38:12
24:3 Judg 3:24; Ps 57:1; Ps 142:1
24:4 1 Sam 26:8-11; 2 Sam 4:8; Job 31:31
24:5 2 Sam 24:10; 1 John 3:20,21; 2 Sam 12:9
24:6 1 Sam 26:9-11; 2 Sam 1:14; 1 Kgs 21:3
24:7 Ps 7:4; Matt 5:44; Rom 12:17-21

23:19 *the Ziphites went up to Saul to Gibeah* Men of David's own tribe betrayed him. The Jeshimon was the barren wasteland of the Judean desert. Psalm 54 is headed "when the Ziphites came and said to Saul" (Ps 54:0), and David says, "Look, God is my helper" (Ps 54:4). When his own people betrayed him, he turned to God.
23:21 *Blessed are you by the LORD, for you have had compassion on me* A twisted thing to say. Saul called the LORD's blessing on men for helping him hunt an innocent man, and he pitied himself. Self-pity and jealousy often go together.
23:23 *I will search him out among all the thousands of Judah* Saul would hunt David clan by clan.
23:26 *Saul and his men were surrounding David and his men to seize them* Maon was south of Ziph. The chase came down to one mountain, Saul's men circling both ends to close the trap. It looked like the end.
23:27 *the Philistines have made a raid on the land* At the last moment God stepped in, using the Philistines, Israel's enemies, to pull Saul away. The people Saul failed to fight at Keilah now forced him to stop chasing David.
23:28 *they called that place Sela-hammahlekoth* Rock of Escape, and perhaps also rock of separation, where Saul and David were parted. God's timing is perfect, even when it seems late. Have you felt surrounded with no way out? He may not deliver you as early as you want, but He is never too late.
23:29 *he dwelt in the strongholds of Engedi* An oasis on the western shore of the Dead Sea, with a spring and waterfalls in the desert and cliffs full of caves. It is still there today.
24:1 *Look, David is in the wilderness of Engedi* As soon as Saul was done with the Philistines, he was back to hunting David.
24:2 *the Rocks of the Mountain Goats* Three thousand chosen men against six hundred. Wild goats, the ibex, still climb the cliffs around Engedi today. The name tells how steep the country was.
24:3 *Saul went in to cover his feet* Shepherds used cave mouths as sheepfolds with low stone walls. To cover the feet is a polite way of saying he went in to relieve himself (Judg 3:24). From the dark back of the cave, David's men could see Saul against the light, and he could see nothing. Of all the caves in that wilderness, Saul walked into this one. God arranged the moment as a test.
24:4 *Look, I am giving your enemy into your hand* The Bible records no word of God in those terms. Perhaps the men put their own spin on God's promise that David would be king, though some think there was an unrecorded word. It is easy to hear what we want and call it God's voice. An open door is not always God's will.
24:4 *he cut off the skirt of the robe which belonged to Saul in secret* The skirt is the hem or edge. Saul once tore Samuel's hem, and Samuel said the kingdom was torn from him (15:27-28). Now David held a piece of Saul's robe. The kingdom was passing to David, but he would not grab it. Many also note that a robe's hem could stand for a man's authority.
24:5 *the heart of David struck him* Only a piece of cloth, but an act against the king's honor, a small step toward the very thing he refused to do. A tender conscience does not wait for something big to feel guilty.
24:6 *to stretch out my hand against him, for he is the anointed of the LORD* The heart of the chapter. Saul was wicked and rejected, and David still called him "my lord." God put Saul on the throne, and only God had the right to remove him. David had God's promise of the throne but would not take it by murder, as pagan kings did. He waited for God's way and time.
24:7 *he did not permit them to rise up against Saul* It took real leadership to hold back six hundred angry men from killing the man hunting them. Saul never knew how close he had come.

went on the way. **8** And David arose afterward, and he went out from the cave, and he called out after Saul, saying, "My lord the king!" And Saul looked behind him, and David bowed low, face toward the ground, and he bowed down. **9** And David said to Saul, "Why do you listen to the words of men, saying, 'Look, David is seeking your harm'? **10** Look, this day your eyes have seen that the LORD gave you today into my hand in the cave; and one said to kill you, and ***my eye*** had pity on you; and I said, 'I will not stretch out my hand against my lord, for he ***is*** the anointed of the LORD.' **11** And my father, see, yes, see the skirt of your robe in my hand; for in my cutting off the skirt of your robe and not killing you, know and see that there is not evil or transgression in my hand, and I have not sinned against you; and you are lying in wait for my life to take it. **12** May the LORD judge between me and you, and the LORD will avenge me on you; and my hand shall not be against you. **13** Just as the proverb of the ancients says, 'From wicked ***ones*** comes forth wickedness'; and my hand shall not be against you. **14** After whom has the king of Israel come out? After whom are you pursuing? After a dead dog, after one flea! **15** And the LORD shall be judge, and He shall judge between me and you; and may He see, and may He plead my case, and may He vindicate me from your hand."

Saul Admits David Will Reign

16 And it was, when David finished speaking these words to Saul, that Saul said, "Is this your voice, my son David?" And Saul lifted up his voice, and he wept. **17** And he said to David, "You ***are*** more righteous than I, for you, you have dealt good to me, and I, I have dealt evil to you. **18** And you, you have told today that you have done good with me, that the LORD delivered me up into your hand, and you did not kill me. **19** And if a man finds his enemy, will he send him away on a good way? And may the LORD repay you good in return for this day, for that which you have done to me. **20** And now, look, I know that you will certainly reign, and the kingdom of Israel shall be established in your hand. **21** And now, swear to me by the LORD that you will not cut off my offspring after me, and that you will not destroy my name from the house of my father." **22** And David swore to Saul. And Saul went to his house, and David and his men went up to the stronghold.

1 SAMUEL 25

The Death of Samuel

1 And Samuel (Shemu'el) died, and all Israel (Yisra'el) gathered together, and they mourned for him, and they buried him at his house in Ramah (Rama). And David arose, and he went down to the wilderness of Paran.

Nabal Insults David

2 And a man ***was*** in Maon, and his business ***was*** in Carmel (Karmel); and the man ***was*** very great, and he had three thousand sheep and a thousand goats. And it was ***the time***

24:8 1 Sam 25:23,24; 1 Sam 26:17; 1 Sam 20:41
24:9 1 Sam 26:19; Lev 19:16; Ps 101:5
24:10 1 Sam 24:4; 1 Sam 26:8; Ps 105:15
24:11 1 Sam 26:20; 1 Sam 23:14,23; 2 Kgs 5:13
24:12 Gen 16:5; Judg 11:27; Ps 43:1
24:13 Matt 7:16-18; Matt 12:33,34; Matt 15:19
24:14 Mark 14:48; 1 Sam 26:20; 1 Sam 17:43
24:15 1 Sam 24:12; Ps 35:1; Ps 43:1
24:16 1 Sam 26:17; Job 6:25; Prov 15:1
24:17 Rom 12:21; 1 Sam 26:21; Matt 5:44
24:18 Rom 12:20; 1 Sam 26:23; 1 Sam 24:10
24:19 Rom 12:20; 1 Sam 23:21; 1 Sam 26:25
24:20 1 Sam 23:17; 1 Sam 20:30,31; 2 Sam 3:17,18
24:21 Gen 21:23; 2 Sam 21:6-8; 1 Sam 20:14-17
24:22 1 Sam 23:29; Prov 26:24,25; Matt 10:16,17
25:1 1 Sam 28:3; Num 20:29; Deut 34:8
25:2 1 Sam 23:24; Gen 38:13; Josh 15:55

24:8 *David bowed low, face toward the ground* A risky move with three thousand men nearby, but David wanted Saul to know the truth. He bowed before the man who wanted him dead. That is humility and respect for God's order.
24:9 *Why do you listen to the words of men* David gave Saul a way to save face by blaming advisers who had poisoned his mind, men like Doeg.
24:11 *my father, see, yes, see the skirt of your robe in my hand* Saul was his father-in-law, and David still honored him as a son. The cloth said it all: if I wanted you dead, you would be dead. And he spoke plainly. Saul, not David, was lying in wait.
24:12 *the LORD will avenge me on you; and my hand shall not be against you* David did not say Saul's wrongs did not matter. God would deal with them. That is the difference between giving up and giving it to God. "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay" (Rom 12:19). When Jesus suffered, "He did not threaten, but He kept handing Himself over to the One who judges justly" (1 Pet 2:23).
24:13 *From wicked ones comes forth wickedness* An old saying. If I were wicked, I would have killed you. Judge for yourself what is in my heart.
24:14 *After a dead dog, after one flea!* A dead dog was the lowest thing a man could call himself (2 Sam 9:8), and one flea is not worth chasing. Humble, and a gentle rebuke too.
24:15 *may He plead my case, and may He vindicate me from your hand* God would be both judge and defender. When someone wrongs you, God does not ask you to call evil good, only not to take revenge. And David did not stay where Saul could kill him. He ran. Refusing revenge does not mean staying where you will be hurt. If someone is in danger, it is right to get to safety and go to the proper authorities (Rom 13:1-4).
24:16 *Is this your voice, my son David?* Saul could hardly believe it. For a moment the old Saul was touched, and he wept.
24:17 *You are more righteous than I* True, and Saul said it. David did what almost no one does. He repaid evil with good. "Overcome the evil with the good" (Rom 12:21).
24:20 *I know that you will certainly reign* Saul said aloud what he had long known (20:31; 23:17).
24:21 *swear to me by the LORD that you will not cut off my offspring after me* The same thing Jonathan asked (20:14-15). Saul knew what new kings usually did to the old king's family. David kept this oath too (2 Sam 9; 21:7).
24:22 *David and his men went up to the stronghold* David did not go home with Saul. Saul had wept and promised before (19:6), and two chapters later he will hunt David again. David forgave Saul but did not trust him. We can forgive fully and still be careful not to put ourselves back in harm's way. When we are tempted to take what God promised by our own methods, or pay back those who hurt us, the answer is still, "the LORD shall be judge" (24:15).
25:1 *Samuel died, and all Israel gathered together, and they mourned for him* Samuel served the LORD from childhood (3:19-20), the last judge, a great prophet and a man of prayer who anointed both Saul and David. The man who said he would not sin "by ceasing to pray for you" (12:23) was gone. For David, who first ran to him (19:18), it was a heavy loss. But God was still with him.
25:1 *he went down to the wilderness of Paran* A large wilderness far to the south. Some Greek copies read Maon, which fits the rest of the chapter. Either way, David moved south.
25:2 *he was shearing his sheep in Carmel* The Carmel in southern Judah where Saul set up his monument (15:12). Sheep-shearing was a time of feasting, a shepherds' harvest festival, when people were expected to be generous (2 Sam 13:23-24).

when he was shearing his sheep in Carmel. **3** And the name of the man ***was*** Nabal (Naval), and the name of his wife ***was*** Abigail (Avigayil). And the woman ***was*** good of insight and beautiful of appearance; and the man ***was*** hard and evil of deeds, and he ***was*** a Calebite. **4** And David heard in the wilderness that Nabal was shearing his sheep. **5** And David sent ten young men, and David said to the young men, "Go up to Carmel, and go to Nabal, and ask him in my name about ***his*** welfare. **6** And you shall say thus: 'To life! And peace ***to*** you, and peace ***to*** your house, and peace ***to*** all that ***is*** yours. **7** And now I have heard that you have shearers. Now the shepherds who ***belong*** to you have been with us; we did not humiliate them, and nothing was missing to them all the days they were in Carmel. **8** Ask your young men, and they will tell you. And let the young men find favor in your eyes, for we have come on a good day. Please give whatever your hand finds to your servants and to your son, to David.'" **9** And the young men of David came, and they spoke to Nabal according to all these words in the name of David, and they waited. **10** And Nabal answered the servants of David, and he said, "Who ***is*** David, and who ***is*** the son of Jesse (Yishay)? Today the servants who break away, each from before his master, are many. **11** And shall I take my bread and my water and my slaughtered meat that I have slaughtered for my shearers, and give ***it*** to men whom I do not know where they ***are*** from?" **12** And the young men of David turned around to their way, and they returned, and they came, and they told him according to all these words. **13** And David said to his men, "Gird on each man his sword." And they girded on each man his sword, and David also girded on his sword. And about four hundred men went up after David, and two hundred remained with the baggage. **14** And one young man of the young men told Abigail, the wife of Nabal, saying, "Look, David sent messengers from the wilderness to bless our master, and he railed at them. **15** And the men ***were*** very good to us, and we were not humiliated, and we did not miss anything all the days we went about with them, when we were in the field. **16** A wall they were around us both night and day, all the days we were with them shepherding the flock. **17** And now, know and see what you will do, for the evil has been determined against our master and against all his household; and he ***is*** a son of worthlessness, past speaking to."

Abigail Turns David Back

18 And Abigail made haste, and she took two hundred ***loaves of*** bread and two jars of wine and five prepared sheep and approximately 35 quarts (five seahs) of roasted grain and a hundred clusters of raisins and two hundred cakes of figs, and she put ***them*** on the donkeys. **19** And she said to her servants, "Pass on before me; look, I ***am*** coming after you." And she did not tell her husband Nabal. **20** And it was, she ***was*** riding on the donkey and going down in the cover of the mountain, and look, David and his men ***were*** going down to meet her; and she met them. **21** And David had said, "Surely in vain I have guarded all that this ***man*** has in the wilderness, and nothing of all that ***belongs*** to him was missing; and he has returned to me evil in place of good. **22** Thus may God do to the enemies of David, and thus may He add, if I leave of all that ***belongs*** to him until the morning one who urinates against a wall." **23** And Abigail saw David, and she made haste, and she came down from the donkey, and she fell before the face of David on her face, and she bowed down ***to*** the ground. **24** And she fell at his feet, and she said, "On me,

25:3 Prov 14:1; Prov 31:26,30,31; 1 Sam 25:10,11,17
25:4 Gen 38:13; 2 Sam 13:23
25:5 1 Sam 17:22; Gen 43:23
25:6 1 Chr 12:18; Luke 10:5; 1 Tim 5:6
25:7 1 Sam 25:15,16,21; 1 Sam 22:2; Isa 11:6-9
25:8 Esth 9:19; Neh 8:10-12; Eccl 11:2
25:9 Gen 8:4; 2 Kgs 2:15; 2 Chr 14:7
25:10 Judg 9:28; 1 Sam 20:30; 1 Sam 22:7,8
25:11 John 9:29; John 9:30; Judg 8:6
25:12 2 Sam 24:13; Isa 36:21,22; Heb 13:17
25:13 Josh 9:14; Prov 14:29; Prov 16:32
25:14 Mark 15:29
25:15 1 Sam 25:7,21; Phil 2:15
25:16 Job 1:10; Exod 14:22; Jer 15:20
25:17 1 Sam 20:7,9,33; Deut 13:13; 2 Chr 25:16
25:18 2 Sam 16:1; 1 Sam 25:34; Num 16:46-48
25:19 Gen 32:16,20; Prov 31:11,12,27
25:20 2 Kgs 4:24
25:21 Rom 12:21; Prov 17:13; 1 Sam 25:13
25:22 1 Sam 3:17; 1 Sam 20:13,16; 1 Kgs 14:10
25:23 1 Sam 20:41; Josh 15:18; Judg 1:14
25:24 2 Sam 14:9; 2 Kgs 4:37; Esth 8:3

25:3 *the name of the man was Nabal, and the name of his wife was Abigail* Nabal means fool, not one who lacks brains but one who lives as if God does not matter. "A fool has said in his heart, There is no God" (Ps 14:1). Abigail had insight. Nabal was hard and evil. And he was a Calebite, a descendant of faithful Caleb (Num 14:24), with none of Caleb's faith.
25:7 *we did not humiliate them, and nothing was missing to them* In that wild country raiders and wild animals were a constant danger. David's men were a wall around Nabal's flocks and never took a sheep for themselves.
25:8 *to your servants and to your son, to David* David asked humbly on a feast day. He called himself Nabal's son, a term of respect, and left the amount to Nabal.
25:10 *Who is David, and who is the son of Jesse?* Everyone in Israel knew David. Nabal pretended not to, as an insult, and called him a runaway slave.
25:11 *shall I take my bread and my water and my slaughtered meat* My bread, my water, my meat, my shearers. Nabal saw everything as his and thanked God for none of it. Jesus told of a rich man like this, to whom God said, "Fool! This night they are demanding your soul from you" (Luke 12:20).
25:13 *Gird on each man his sword* David did not pray, inquire of the LORD as at Keilah (23:2, 4) or wait. In the cave he was calm, thinking of the LORD. Here he was angry, thinking of his honor. Saul had wronged him far more, but a small insult on a bad day can do more to us than a great wrong. "Be angry, and do not sin" (Eph 4:26). David was about to sin.
25:14 *he railed at them* To rail is to scream insults. One of Nabal's servants saw what was coming and went to the one person in the house with sense.
25:16 *A wall they were around us both night and day* The servant confirmed every word David said.
25:17 *he is a son of worthlessness, past speaking to* A wicked, useless man (2:12). No one could reason with Nabal, and even his servants knew it.
25:18 *Abigail made haste* She did not wait or argue. Bread, wine, five sheep, about 35 quarts of roasted grain, raisins and figs, enough to feed David's army well.
25:19 *she did not tell her husband Nabal* Was it wrong to act without him? Nabal was about to get his household killed and could not be reasoned with. Abigail acted to save lives, and Scripture praises her. Godly submission in marriage never means standing by while a husband leads his family into destruction.
25:21 *he has returned to me evil in place of good* David was still fuming as he came down the mountain.
25:22 *Thus may God do to the enemies of David, and thus may He add* A terrible oath. The Hebrew uses a coarse expression for every male. David meant to kill every man and boy in the household, servants included, for one man's insult.
25:24 *On me, me, my lord, be the iniquity* She humbled herself completely and took the blame, though she had done nothing wrong.

me, my lord, ***be*** the iniquity; and please let your maidservant speak in your ears, and hear the words of your maidservant. **25** Please let not my lord set his heart to this man of worthlessness, to Nabal; for as his name ***is***, so ***is*** he: Nabal ***is*** his name, and disgraceful folly ***is*** with him. And I, your maidservant, I did not see the young men of my lord whom you sent. **26** And now, my lord, ***as*** the LORD lives and ***as*** your soul lives, seeing that the LORD has restrained you from coming into bloodshed and ***from*** your hand saving you, now then let your enemies and those who seek evil against my lord be like Nabal. **27** And now, this blessing which your maidservant has brought to my lord, it shall be given to the young men who go about at the feet of my lord. **28** Please forgive the transgression of your maidservant; for the LORD will certainly make for my lord an enduring house, for my lord is fighting the battles of the LORD, and evil shall not be found in you throughout your days. **29** And a man has risen up to pursue you and to seek your life, and the life of my lord shall be bound up in the bundle of the living with the LORD your God; and the life of your enemies, He shall sling it out in the midst of the hollow of the sling. **30** And it shall be, when the LORD does for my lord according to all the good that He has spoken concerning you, and He appoints you ruler over Israel, **31** then this shall not be for you a staggering and a stumbling of heart for my lord, to pour out blood without cause and for my lord to save himself. And the LORD will do good to my lord, and you shall remember your maidservant." **32** And David said to Abigail, "Blessed ***be*** the LORD, the God of Israel, who has sent you this day to meet me. **33** And blessed ***be*** your discernment, and blessed ***be*** you, who have restrained me this day from coming into bloodshed and ***from*** my hand saving me. **34** And yet, ***as*** the LORD, the God of Israel, lives, who has restrained me from doing harm to you, unless you had made haste and come to meet me, surely there would not have been left to Nabal until the light of the morning one who urinates against a wall." **35** And David took from her hand what she had brought to him, and to her he said, "Go up in peace to your house. See, I have listened to your voice, and I have lifted up your face." **36** And Abigail came to Nabal, and look, he had a feast in his house like the feast of the king; and the heart of Nabal ***was*** good within him, and he ***was*** drunk to excess. And she did not tell him anything, small or great, until the light of the morning. **37** And it was in the morning, when the wine had gone out from Nabal, that his wife told him these things; and his heart died within him, and he became stone. **38** And it was about ten days ***later***, and the LORD struck Nabal, and he died. **39** And David heard that Nabal had died, and he said, "Blessed ***be*** the LORD, who has pleaded the case of my disgrace from the hand of Nabal, and He has restrained His servant from evil; and the evil of Nabal the LORD has turned back on his own head." And David sent, and he spoke concerning Abigail, to take her for himself as a wife. **40** And the servants of David came to Abigail to Carmel, and they spoke to her, saying, "David has sent us to you to take you for himself as a wife." **41** And she arose, and she bowed down, face toward the ground, and she said, "Look, your maidservant ***is*** a maid to wash the feet of the servants of my lord." **42** And Abigail made haste and arose, and she rode on the donkey, and her five maids who walked at her feet ***went with her***; and she went after the messengers of David, and she became his wife. **43** And David had taken Ahinoam (Achino'am) from Jezreel (Yizre'el), and the two of them also became his wives. **44** And Saul (Shaul) had given

25:25 1 Sam 25:17,26; 2 Sam 13:33; Isa 42:25
25:26 2 Sam 18:32; Gen 20:6; Ps 44:3
25:27 1 Sam 30:26; Gen 33:11; 2 Kgs 5:15
25:28 2 Sam 7:11,16,27; 1 Sam 18:17; 1 Kgs 9:5
25:29 Jer 10:18; 1 Sam 2:9; Deut 33:29
25:30 1 Sam 13:14; 1 Sam 15:28; 1 Sam 23:17
25:31 Gen 40:14; Prov 5:12,13; Rom 14:21
25:32 Luke 1:68; Gen 24:27; Exod 18:10
25:33 1 Sam 25:26,31; Ps 141:5; Prov 9:9
25:34 1 Sam 25:18; 1 Sam 11:11; Josh 10:6,9
25:35 Luke 8:48; 1 Sam 20:42; 2 Kgs 5:19
25:36 2 Sam 13:23; 2 Sam 13:28; Prov 20:1
25:37 1 Sam 25:22,34; Deut 28:28; Job 15:21,22
25:38 1 Sam 25:33; 1 Sam 6:9; Exod 12:29
25:39 1 Sam 25:26,34; 1 Sam 25:32; Prov 22:23
25:40 Gen 24:37,38,51
25:41 John 13:5; Ruth 2:10,13; 1 Tim 5:10
25:42 Gen 24:61-67; Ps 45:10,11
25:43 Josh 15:56; 1 Sam 27:3; 1 Sam 30:5
25:44 2 Sam 3:14,14; 1 Sam 18:20,27

25:25 *as his name is, so is he* Abigail did not defend her husband. She was honest. He is a fool, do not take a fool's words to heart. "A soft answer turns away rage" (Prov 15:1). She came with humility, a gift and the truth.
25:26 *the LORD has restrained you from coming into bloodshed* She spoke as if David had already decided not to do it, giving him a way back with honor. She said the LORD was holding him back, and she was right. God had sent her.
25:28 *the LORD will certainly make for my lord an enduring house* A lasting dynasty, words that look ahead to what God promised David (2 Sam 7:16). She spoke with prophetic insight, though Scripture does not call her a prophetess. You fight the LORD's battles, she reminded him, not your own.
25:29 *the life of my lord shall be bound up in the bundle of the living with the LORD your God* A bundle was a pouch for keeping precious things safe. God was keeping David's life like a treasure. And He would sling out David's enemies, a reminder of Goliath. David did not need to do it himself.
25:31 *to pour out blood without cause* Do you want to become king with innocent blood on your hands and on your conscience for life? Saul shed innocent blood at Nob. David did not want to become like Saul.
25:32 *Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who has sent you this day to meet me* One of the best things about David. The future king, with four hundred armed men behind him, listened to a woman kneeling in the road and said, you are right, and God sent you. When Samuel rebuked Saul, he made excuses. When Abigail rebuked David, he gave thanks. Do you welcome correction? "Blessed are the peacemakers" (Matt 5:9).
25:35 *I have lifted up your face* He accepted her request.
25:36 *he had a feast in his house like the feast of the king* Nabal threw a party fit for a king while the real king hid in caves, with no idea how close he came to death. Abigail wisely waited until he was sober.
25:37 *his heart died within him, and he became stone* Perhaps a stroke or heart attack brought on by the shock. He was paralyzed.
25:38 *the LORD struck Nabal, and he died* The writer wants us to see who did it. Not David. The LORD.
25:39 *the evil of Nabal the LORD has turned back on his own head* God defended David's honor and kept him from sinning. The lesson of chapter 24 again: "the LORD shall be judge" (24:15). By waiting, David saw God do it far better than he could.
25:41 *your maidservant is a maid to wash the feet of the servants of my lord* Full of humility. She was willing to do the lowest job in David's house.
25:43 *the two of them also became his wives* This Jezreel was a town in Judah (Josh 15:56). The Bible records David's many wives but does not approve. God's plan was one man and one woman (Gen 2:24; Matt 19:5), and the king "shall not multiply wives for himself" (Deut 17:17). It brought great sorrow later, as 2 Samuel shows.
25:44 *Saul had given Michal his daughter, the wife of David, to Palti* While David was away, one more way of cutting him off from the royal family.

Michal (Mikhal) his daughter, the wife of David, to Palti the son of Laish (Layish), who ***was*** from Gallim (Galim).

1 SAMUEL 26

David Spares Saul Again

1 And the Ziphites came to Saul (Shaul) to Gibeah (Giva), saying, "Is not David hiding himself on the hill of Hachilah (Chakhila), on the face of the Jeshimon (Yeshimon)?" **2** And Saul arose, and he went down to the wilderness of Ziph (Zif), and with him ***were*** three thousand men, the chosen of Israel (Yisra'el), to seek David in the wilderness of Ziph. **3** And Saul encamped on the hill of Hachilah, which ***is*** on the face of the Jeshimon, by the way. And David ***was*** dwelling in the wilderness, and he saw that Saul had come after him into the wilderness. **4** And David sent spies, and he knew that Saul had come for certain. **5** And David arose, and he went to the place where Saul had encamped. And David saw the place where Saul lay, and Abner (Avner) the son of Ner, the commander of his army; and Saul ***was*** lying in the encampment, and the people ***were*** encamped around him. **6** And David answered, and he said to Ahimelech (Achimelekh) the Hittite and to Abishai (Avishay) the son of Zeruiah (Tseruya), the brother of Joab (Yo'av), saying, "Who will go down with me to Saul into the camp?" And Abishai said, "I, I will go down with you." **7** And David and Abishai came to the people by night, and look, Saul ***was*** lying asleep in the encampment, and his spear ***was*** stuck in the ground at his head; and Abner and the people ***were*** lying around him. **8** And Abishai said to David, "God has delivered up your enemy into your hand today; and now, please let me strike him with the spear, even into the ground, one time, and I will not repeat ***it*** on him." **9** And David said to Abishai, "Do not destroy him; for who has stretched out his hand against the anointed of the LORD and been free from guilt?" **10** And David said, "***As*** the LORD lives, surely the LORD will strike him; or his day will come, and he will die; or he will go down into battle, and he will be swept away. **11** Far be it for me from the LORD to stretch out my hand against the anointed of the LORD. And now, please take the spear that ***is*** at his head and the jug of water, and let us go for ourselves." **12** And David took the spear and the jug of water from the head of Saul, and they went for themselves; and there was no one seeing, and there was no one knowing, and there was no one awaking, for all of them ***were*** sleeping, for a deep sleep of the LORD had fallen on them. **13** And David passed over to the other side, and he stood on the top of the hill from afar; great ***was*** the place between them. **14** And David called out to the people and to Abner the son of Ner, saying, "Will you not answer, Abner?" And Abner answered, and he said, "Who ***are*** you ***who*** have called out to the king?" **15** And David said to Abner, "***Are*** you not a man? And who ***is*** like you in Israel? And why did you not guard your lord the king? For one of the people came to destroy the king your lord. **16** This thing that you have done ***is*** not good. ***As*** the LORD lives, surely you ***are*** sons of death, who did not guard your lord, the anointed of the LORD. And now, see where the spear of the king ***is***, and the jug of water that ***was*** at his head." **17** And Saul recognized the voice of David, and he said, "Is this your voice, my son David?" And David said, "***It is*** my voice, my lord the king." **18** And he said, "Why ***is*** this, ***that*** my lord ***is*** pursuing after his servant? For what

26:1 1 Sam 23:19; Ps 54:1; Josh 15:24,55
26:2 1 Sam 24:2; 1 Sam 23:23-25; 1 Sam 24:17
26:3 1 Sam 26:1; 1 Sam 23:19
26:4 Josh 2:1; Matt 10:16
26:5 1 Sam 17:55; 1 Sam 14:50,51; 1 Sam 17:20
26:6 Judg 7:10,11; 2 Sam 2:18; Gen 10:15
26:7 1 Thess 5:2,3
26:8 1 Sam 24:4,18,19; 1 Sam 26:23; 1 Sam 23:14
26:9 2 Sam 1:14,16; 1 Sam 24:6,7; Ps 105:15
26:10 Rev 18:8; Gen 47:29; Deut 31:14
26:11 1 Sam 24:6,12; 2 Sam 1:14,16
26:12 Gen 2:21; Gen 15:12; Isa 29:10
26:13 1 Sam 24:8; Judg 9:7
26:16 1 Sam 20:31; 2 Sam 12:5; 2 Sam 19:28
26:17 1 Sam 24:8,16
26:18 1 Sam 24:9,11-14; Ps 7:3-5; Ps 35:7

26:1 *the Ziphites came to Saul to Gibeah* They had betrayed David before (23:19), and now they did it again.
26:2 *with him were three thousand men, the chosen of Israel* Not long before, Saul wept and said David would surely be king (24:16-20). His tears had not changed his heart. Real repentance turns around and goes a different way. Godly sorrow produces repentance, while worldly sorrow produces death (2 Cor 7:10).
26:4 *David sent spies, and he knew that Saul had come for certain* David did not panic or believe every rumor. He checked the facts.
26:5 *Saul was lying in the encampment, and the people were encamped around him* In an army camp the king slept in the middle, protected by wagons, baggage and soldiers. Saul was in the safest spot in the camp.
26:6 *Ahimelech the Hittite and to Abishai the son of Zeruiah, the brother of Joab* The Hittites were an old people of Canaan, and some, like Uriah later (2 Sam 11:3), served David. Zeruiah was David's sister (1 Chr 2:16), so Abishai and Joab were his nephews, fierce fighters who play a big part in 2 Samuel. Abishai was brave, and as we will see, quick to kill.
26:7 *his spear was stuck in the ground at his head* The sign of the king's authority and his weapon at hand, the same spear Saul had thrown at David (18:11; 19:10). Everyone was asleep.
26:8 *please let me strike him with the spear, even into the ground, one time* Almost exactly what David's men said in the cave (24:4). One blow, and David would not even have to do it himself. This was a greater temptation than the cave. He only had to say yes.
26:9 *who has stretched out his hand against the anointed of the LORD and been free from guilt?* Letting Abishai do it would be the same as doing it himself. The guilt would still be David's.
26:10 *surely the LORD will strike him; or his day will come, and he will die; or he will go down into battle* Three ways Saul's life might end, all in God's hands: struck like Nabal (25:38), old age, or battle. In the end he died in battle (31:3-6). Having just watched God deal with Nabal, David found it easier to trust God with Saul.
26:11 *take the spear that is at his head and the jug of water* Proof, like the robe in chapter 24. In the desert a water jug was life itself. David took the king's weapon and water and left the king alive.
26:12 *a deep sleep of the LORD had fallen on them* How could two men walk through three thousand soldiers unseen? God did it. The same word is used when God put Adam and Abram into a deep sleep (Gen 2:21; 15:12). Even with God opening the way, David did not take Saul's life. An opportunity from God is not a license to do what He has forbidden.
26:13 *he stood on the top of the hill from afar* This time David kept his distance. He had learned that Saul's moods could change quickly.
26:15 *why did you not guard your lord the king?* David mocked Abner. The great commander let someone walk right up to the king.
26:16 *surely you are sons of death, who did not guard your lord, the anointed of the LORD* Men who deserve to die, as a guard who let the king be killed would be. Saul had called David "a son of death" (20:31). David turned it around. Abner failed to protect the LORD's anointed, while David protected him.
26:18 *what evil is in my hand?* The same question David asked before (20:1; 24:11).

have I done, and what evil ***is*** in my hand? **19** And now, please let my lord the king hear the words of his servant: If the LORD has incited you against me, let Him smell an offering; but if the sons of mankind, cursed ***are*** they before the LORD, for they have driven me out today from having a share in the inheritance of the LORD, saying, 'Go, serve other gods.' **20** And now, let not my blood fall to the ground away from the presence of the LORD; for the king of Israel has come out to seek one flea, just as one pursues the partridge in the mountains." **21** And Saul said, "I have sinned. Return, my son David, for I will not do harm to you again, because my life was precious in your eyes this day. Look, I have acted foolishly, and I have erred very greatly." **22** And David answered, and he said, "Look, the spear of the king! And let one of the young men pass over and take it. **23** And the LORD will return to each man his righteousness and his faithfulness; for the LORD gave you today into ***my*** hand, and I was not willing to stretch out my hand against the anointed of the LORD. **24** And look, just as your life was great this day in my eyes, so may my life be great in the eyes of the LORD, and may He deliver me from all distress." **25** And Saul said to David, "Blessed ***are*** you, my son David; you will both certainly do ***much*** and certainly prevail." And David went on his way, and Saul returned to his place.

1 SAMUEL 27

David Among the Philistines

1 And David said to his heart, "Now I shall be swept away one day by the hand of Saul (Shaul). ***There is*** nothing good for me but that I should certainly escape to the land of ***the*** Philistines; and Saul will despair of me, of seeking me any more in all the territory of Israel (Yisra'el), and I will be delivered from his hand." **2** And David arose, and he passed over, he and six hundred men who ***were*** with him, to Achish (Akhish) the son of Maoch (Maokh), the king of Gath (Gat). **3** And David dwelt with Achish in Gath, he and his men, each man and his household, David and his two wives, Ahinoam (Achino'am) the Jezreelite ***woman*** and Abigail (Avigayil) the wife of Nabal (Naval), the Carmelite ***woman***. **4** And it was told to Saul that David had fled ***to*** Gath, and he did not again seek him any more. **5** And David said to Achish, "If, please, I have found favor in your eyes, let them give me a place in one of the cities of the field, and let me dwell there; and why should your servant dwell in the city of royalty with you?" **6** And Achish gave him Ziklag (Tsiqlag) on that day; therefore Ziklag has belonged to the kings of Judah (Yehuda) until this day. **7** And the number of the days that David dwelt in the region of ***the*** Philistines was a year and four months.

The Raids From Ziklag

8 And David and his men went up, and they made raids against the Geshurites and the Gizrites and the Amalekites; for they ***were*** inhabiting the land which ***was*** from of old, as you come toward Shur and to the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim).

26:19 2 Sam 16:11; 2 Sam 14:16; Gen 8:21
26:20 Matt 26:55; 1 Sam 24:14; 1 Sam 2:9
26:21 1 Sam 15:24,30; 1 Sam 24:17; Exod 9:27
26:23 1 Kgs 8:32; Neh 13:14; Ps 7:8,9
26:24 Ps 18:25; Matt 5:7; Matt 7:2
26:25 1 Sam 24:19; Num 24:9,10; Gen 32:28
27:1 1 Sam 16:1,13; 1 Sam 23:17; 1 Sam 25:30
27:2 1 Sam 25:13; 1 Sam 21:10; 1 Sam 30:8
27:3 1 Sam 25:3,18-35,42,43; 1 Sam 30:5
27:4 1 Sam 26:21
27:5 Gen 46:34; 2 Cor 6:17
27:6 Neh 11:28; 1 Sam 30:1,14; 1 Sam 19:5
27:7 1 Sam 29:3
27:8 Josh 13:2,13; 1 Sam 15:7,8; Josh 16:10

26:19 *If the LORD has incited you against me, let Him smell an offering* David weighed every possibility. If God was behind it for some sin of David's, he would offer a sacrifice and make peace. If men were stirring Saul up, God would judge them.
26:19 *they have driven me out today from having a share in the inheritance of the LORD* In those days each land was thought to belong to its own gods. To be driven to a foreign land was in effect to be told to serve other gods. David did not mean he would. He meant his enemies were cutting him off from God's people and worship.
26:20 *just as one pursues the partridge in the mountains* Do not make me die in a foreign land. A partridge runs along the ground rather than flying, and hunters chased it until it was exhausted. That is how David felt.
26:21 *I have acted foolishly, and I have erred very greatly* Some of the most honest words Saul ever spoke, and he was right. But Saul said "I have sinned" to Samuel too (15:24, 30), and his heart did not change. Saying the right words is not the same as turning to God. David did not return.
26:22 *Look, the spear of the king!* David would not walk into Saul's camp again. He sent the spear back by a servant.
26:24 *so may my life be great in the eyes of the LORD, and may He deliver me from all distress* David did not ask Saul to protect him or trust his promise. He asked the LORD. He had learned that the only one he could fully trust was God.
26:25 *David went on his way, and Saul returned to his place* Saul blessed David again and as good as said he would be king. They never met again. Saul would die on Gilboa and David be crowned in Hebron. Chapters 24 and 26 are two events with different details, cave and camp, robe and spear, alone and with Abishai. They show a pattern, not a moment. Faith that holds once is good. Faith that keeps holding is better. "Let us not lose heart in doing the good" (Gal 6:9).
27:1 *David said to his heart* Not to the LORD, Gad or Abiathar, but to himself. In chapter 23 he asked God at every step. Here there is no prayer at all. God had promised him the throne and just put an army to sleep (26:12), and still David said Saul would get him. Discouragement makes us forget what God has said and done. David was tired, and that is understandable. But it was not faith.
27:1 *I should certainly escape to the land of the Philistines* He had just told Saul that being driven from the LORD's inheritance was like being told to serve other gods (26:19). Now he went on his own. Have you been there, tired of waiting and ready to take the easy way out? God does not abandon us, but the easy way often brings its own troubles.
27:2 *he passed over, he and six hundred men who were with him, to Achish* Last time David came alone and had to feign madness (21:10-15). Now he came with six hundred fighting men as Saul's known enemy, and Achish saw a useful ally. With families, this was a whole community.
27:4 *he did not again seek him any more* In one sense the plan worked. Saul could not chase David into Philistine land. But David paid for that safety.
27:5 *why should your servant dwell in the city of royalty with you?* Humble words, but in Gath he would be watched all the time. In a town of his own he could act unseen.
27:6 *Ziklag has belonged to the kings of Judah until this day* Ziklag was in the Negeb, assigned long before to Simeon and Judah (Josh 15:31; 19:5) but taken by the Philistines. This line shows the book was finished after there were kings of Judah, after the kingdom divided.
27:8 *they made raids against the Geshurites and the Gizrites and the Amalekites* Desert peoples between southern Judah and Egypt. These Geshurites of the south are named among the land still to be taken (Josh 13:2), and God had long condemned Amalek (Exod 17:14; Deut 25:17-19; 15:2-3).

9 And David would strike the land, and he would not let a man or a woman live, and he would take sheep and cattle and donkeys and camels and clothing; and he returned, and he came to Achish. **10** And Achish said, "Against where did you raid today?" And David said, "Against the Negeb (Negev) of Judah, and against the Negeb of the Jerahmeelites, and against the Negeb of the Kenites." **11** And David did not let a man or a woman live to bring ***them to*** Gath, saying, "Lest they tell about us, saying, 'Thus David has done, and thus ***has been*** his practice all the days that he has dwelt in the region of ***the*** Philistines.'" **12** And Achish trusted in David, saying, "He has certainly made himself odious among his people, in Israel; and he shall be to me a perpetual servant."

1 SAMUEL 28

Achish Takes David to War

1 And it was in those days, and ***the*** Philistines gathered their armies for war, to fight against Israel (Yisra'el). And Achish (Akhish) said to David, "You will certainly know that you will go out with me in the camp, you and your men." **2** And David said to Achish, "Therefore you, you will know what your servant will do." And Achish said to David, "Therefore I will make you keeper of my head all the days."

Saul and the Medium at Endor

3 And Samuel (Shemu'el) had died, and all Israel had mourned for him, and they had buried him in Ramah (Rama), even in his own city. And Saul (Shaul) had removed the necromancers and the spiritists from the land. **4** And ***the*** Philistines gathered together, and they came, and they encamped at Shunem; and Saul gathered all Israel, and they encamped at Gilboa. **5** And Saul saw the camp of ***the*** Philistines, and he was afraid, and his heart trembled exceedingly. **6** And Saul inquired of the LORD, and the LORD did not answer him, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets. **7** And Saul said to his servants, "Seek for me a woman, a mistress of necromancy, and let me go to her, and let me consult her." And his servants said to him, "Look, a woman, a mistress of necromancy, ***is*** in En-dor." **8** And Saul disguised himself, and he put on other garments, and he went, he and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night. And he said, "Please divine for me by necromancy, and bring up for me ***the one*** whom I will name to you." **9** And the woman said to him, "Look, you, you know what Saul has done, that he has cut off the necromancers and the spiritist from the land. And why are you laying a snare for my life, to cause me to die?" **10** And Saul swore to her by the LORD, saying, "***As*** the LORD lives, punishment shall not befall you in this matter." **11** And the woman said, "Whom shall I bring up for you?" And he said, "Bring up Samuel for me." **12** And the woman saw Samuel, and she cried out with a loud voice; and the woman spoke to Saul, saying, "Why have

27:9 1 Sam 15:3; 1 Sam 15:7; Gen 16:7
27:10 Judg 1:16; 1 Chr 2:9,25; Judg 4:11
27:11 1 Sam 22:22; Prov 12:19; Prov 29:25
27:12 1 Sam 13:4; Gen 34:30
28:1 1 Sam 17:1; 1 Sam 29:1; 1 Sam 7:7
28:2 1 Sam 27:10; 2 Sam 16:16-19; Rom 12:9
28:3 Heb 11:32; 1 Sam 25:1; Lev 19:31
28:4 Josh 19:18; 1 Sam 31:1; 2 Kgs 4:8
28:5 Job 15:21; Job 18:11; Ps 48:5,6
28:6 1 Sam 14:37; Num 12:6; Num 27:21
28:7 Acts 16:16; Josh 17:11; Ps 83:10
28:8 1 Chr 10:13; Isa 8:19; 1 Kgs 22:30,34
28:9 2 Sam 18:13; 2 Kgs 5:7
28:10 1 Sam 14:39; 1 Sam 19:6; Gen 3:5
28:11 Heb 11:32
28:12 Heb 11:32; 1 Sam 28:3; 1 Kgs 14:5

27:9 *he would not let a man or a woman live* Hard to read. Some teachers see David carrying out judgment on peoples God had already condemned, doing what Saul failed to do and securing Judah's border. He never raided Judah and later shared the plunder with its towns (30:26-31). Others note the text never says God commanded these raids or that David asked Him. Good teachers hold each view.
27:10 *Against the Negeb of Judah* The Negeb is the dry south country. The Jerahmeelites were a clan of Judah (1 Chr 2:9), and the Kenites friends of Israel (15:6). David lied to make Achish think he raided his own people.
27:11 *Lest they tell about us* The text gives the reason no one was left alive: to keep the lie hidden from Achish. The chapter begins in fear, not faith (27:1), and the book does not praise this. It records it, as Scripture records the sins of Abraham, Jacob and David himself. God gave no command here as He did about Amalek (15:2-3), and no one may use these verses to excuse violence or deceit. Out of fear, one wrong step led to another: to stay safe he lied, and to hide the lie he shed blood.
27:12 *he shall be to me a perpetual servant* Odious means hated, like a bad smell. Achish was completely fooled. God's anointed king looked like a Philistine's servant for life. But God's promises do not rest on our faithfulness. "If we are faithless, He remains faithful" (2 Tim 2:13). God does not give up on His own.
28:1 *you will go out with me in the camp, you and your men* The moment David's choice had been leading toward. Achish expected him to fight against Israel.
28:2 *Therefore you, you will know what your servant will do* It sounded like a promise and promised nothing. Achish made him his bodyguard. David was trapped. If he fought Israel, he could never be their king. If he turned on the Philistines, his men's families were in Philistine land. The writer leaves him in suspense and turns to Saul.
28:3 *Saul had removed the necromancers and the spiritists from the land* A necromancer claimed to call up the dead and speak with them. A spiritist claimed special knowledge from the spirit world. God's law forbade both as "an abomination to the LORD" (Deut 18:12; Lev 19:31; 20:27). Saul had obeyed this law earlier, which makes what follows sadder. And Samuel was gone, so Saul had no prophet.
28:4 *they encamped at Gilboa* The battle had moved north to the valley of Jezreel, Shunem on the north side and the ridge of Gilboa on the south.
28:5 *he was afraid, and his heart trembled exceedingly* The man who once rescued Jabesh-gilead with fire in his heart (11:6) now trembled. He knew God was no longer with him.
28:6 *the LORD did not answer him, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets* The three ways God spoke then. Saul had rejected God's word (15:23), murdered the priests so the ephod was with David (22:20; 23:6), and refused to listen. Those who refuse God's call may one day call and not be answered (Prov 1:24-28). Chronicles says he "did not inquire of the LORD" (1 Chr 10:14). He went through the motions without repentance. He wanted an answer, not God.
28:7 *Seek for me a woman, a mistress of necromancy* When God was silent, Saul did not fall on his face in repentance. He looked for another voice. Endor was on the north side of the valley, so he had to slip past the enemy army.
28:8 *Saul disguised himself, and he put on other garments* He took off his royal robes. In a sense it pictures his whole life, always trying to look like something he was not. The king who banned mediums crept out at night to consult one.
28:10 *As the LORD lives, punishment shall not befall you in this matter* Saul swore by the LORD's name that he would not enforce the LORD's law. His religion had become empty words.
28:11 *Bring up Samuel for me* In life Saul would not listen to Samuel. Now he was desperate to hear him.
28:12 *the woman saw Samuel, and she cried out with a loud voice* Something happened she did not expect, and in that moment she knew her visitor. Gods is elohim, which can mean a mighty spirit being (28:13). Samuel's robe marked him all his life (2:19; 15:27).

you deceived me? And you ***are*** Saul!" **13** And the king said to her, "Do not be afraid; for what have you seen?" And the woman said to Saul, "I have seen gods coming up from the earth." **14** And he said to her, "What ***is*** his appearance?" And she said, "An old man is coming up, and he ***is*** wrapped ***in*** a robe." And Saul knew that it ***was*** Samuel, and he bowed low, face toward the ground, and he bowed down.

Samuel's Word to Saul

15 And Samuel said to Saul, "Why have you disturbed me, to bring me up?" And Saul said, "It is very distressing for me; and ***the*** Philistines are fighting against me, and God has turned aside from me, and He has not answered me any more, neither by the hand of the prophets nor by dreams; and I have called you to make known to me what I shall do." **16** And Samuel said, "And why do you ask me, and the LORD has turned aside from you, and He has become your enemy? **17** And the LORD has done for Himself just as He spoke by my hand; and the LORD has torn the kingdom from your hand, and He has given it to your neighbor, to David. **18** Because you did not listen to the voice of the LORD, and you did not execute the burning of His anger on Amalek (Amaleq), therefore the LORD has done this thing to you this day. **19** And the LORD will also give Israel with you into the hand of ***the*** Philistines; and tomorrow you and your sons ***will be*** with me. The LORD will also give the camp of Israel into the hand of ***the*** Philistines." **20** And Saul made haste, and he fell his full length to the ground, and he was exceedingly afraid because of the words of Samuel; also there was no strength in him, for he had not eaten food all the day and all the night. **21** And the woman came to Saul, and she saw that he was exceedingly terrified, and she said to him, "Look, your maidservant has listened to your voice, and I have put my life in my palm, and I have listened to your words that you spoke to me. **22** And now, please listen, you also, to the voice of your maidservant, and let me set before you a piece of bread, and eat, and let there be strength in you, for you will go on the way." **23** And he refused, and he said, "I will not eat." And his servants, and also the woman, urged him; and he listened to their voice, and he arose from the ground, and he sat on the bed. **24** And the woman had a calf of the stall in the house, and she made haste, and she slaughtered it; and she took flour, and she kneaded ***it***, and she baked it ***into*** unleavened bread. **25** And she brought ***it*** near before Saul and before his servants, and they ate; and they arose, and they went away on that night.

1 SAMUEL 29

The Philistines Send David Away

1 And ***the*** Philistines gathered all their armies to Aphek (Afeq), and Israel (Yisra'el) ***was*** encamping at the spring which ***is*** in Jezreel (Yizre'el). **2** And the rulers of ***the*** Philistines ***were*** passing along by hundreds and by thousands, and David and his men ***were*** passing along at the rear with Achish (Akhish). **3** And the commanders of ***the*** Philistines said, "What ***are*** these Hebrews?" And Achish said to the commanders of ***the*** Philistines, "Is not this David, the servant of Saul (Shaul) the king of Israel, who has been with me these days or these years? And I have not found anything

28:13 Exod 4:16; Exod 22:28; Ps 82:6,7
28:14 Heb 11:32; 1 Sam 15:27; 2 Kgs 2:8,13,14
28:15 Heb 11:32; 1 Sam 18:12; 1 Sam 28:6
28:16 Rev 18:20; Heb 11:32; Judg 5:31
28:17 Heb 11:32; 1 Sam 15:27-29; Prov 16:4
28:18 1 Kgs 20:42; 1 Sam 15:9,23-26; 1 Sam 13:9
28:19 1 Sam 12:25; 1 Sam 31:1-6; 1 Kgs 22:20,28
28:20 Heb 11:32; 1 Sam 28:5; 1 Sam 25:37
28:21 Judg 12:3; 1 Sam 19:5; Job 13:14
28:23 Acts 16:15; 1 Kgs 21:4; Prov 25:20
28:24 Luke 15:23; Gen 18:7,8
29:1 1 Sam 4:1; Josh 19:30; 1 Kgs 20:30
29:2 1 Sam 28:1,2; Josh 13:3; 1 Sam 29:6,7
29:3 1 Sam 27:7; Dan 6:5; 1 Sam 25:28

28:14 *Saul knew that it was Samuel* Was it really Samuel? Many conservative teachers say yes, sent by God: the text keeps calling him Samuel, the woman was terrified, and the prophecy came true the next day (31:6). God did something unique, as with Moses and Elijah on the mountain (Matt 17:3), not proving mediums have power. Others see an evil spirit posing as Samuel, since Satan "disguises himself as an angel of light" (2 Cor 11:14). Few think she was faking. I leave the first two open.
28:14 *he bowed low, face toward the ground* Whatever view we hold, this was sin. Saul died "also for asking of a medium" (1 Chr 10:13). God forbids trying to contact the dead (Deut 18:10-12; Isa 8:19), and there is a chasm the living cannot cross (Luke 16:26). If grief tempts you toward mediums, psychics or Ouija boards, do not open that door. Bring your grief to Jesus, who has "the keys of Hades and of Death" (Rev 1:18). Our hope for those who die in Christ is the resurrection (1 Thess 4:17).
28:15 *God has turned aside from me, and He has not answered me any more* Still no confession. Not, I have sinned and turned from God, but God has turned from me. Saul wanted advice, not repentance.
28:16 *the LORD has turned aside from you, and He has become your enemy* If God will not answer you, why would His prophet give a different word?
28:17 *He has given it to your neighbor, to David* The word spoken at Gilgal (15:28), now with the neighbor's name.
28:18 *you did not execute the burning of His anger on Amalek* It all went back to chapter 15. "To listen is better than sacrifice" (15:22). Saul's refusal to listen followed him to this night.
28:19 *tomorrow you and your sons will be with me* With me means in the realm of the dead, Sheol, the place of the departed. It does not say Saul's eternal state would be Samuel's. Scripture does not tell us about Saul's soul, and we should not say more than it does.
28:20 *he fell his full length to the ground* The tall king (9:2) lay stretched on a medium's floor, starving and terrified. Saul began with God's Spirit, God's prophet, a loyal son and a loving nation. He ended in the dark, in disguise, in a house God told him never to enter, hearing that it was over.
28:23 *he listened to their voice* Saul listened to his servants, the woman and the people. Everyone, it seems, but the LORD.
28:24 *the woman had a calf of the stall in the house* A stall-fed calf was kept for a special occasion, and unleavened bread was bread made quickly without yeast. She showed kindness to a broken man, and the Bible records it.
28:25 *they arose, and they went away on that night* Saul's last meal. He went out into the night and never came back. Of Judas the Gospel says, "and it was night" (John 13:30). If God seems silent to you, do not do what Saul did. His problem was never that God was unwilling to forgive. He never truly turned. "Return to Me" (Mal 3:7). "The one coming to Me I will certainly not cast out" (John 6:37).
29:1 *the Philistines gathered all their armies to Aphek* Aphek, on the coastal plain, where they gathered when they took the ark (4:1). This chapter comes before Shunem (28:4) in time. The writer told of Endor first and now steps back to show what happened to David.
29:2 *David and his men were passing along at the rear with Achish* The five rulers (6:16) reviewed their troops. Every step took David closer to battle against Saul, Jonathan and his own people. Scripture does not say what he planned. Perhaps he did not know himself.
29:3 *What are these Hebrews?* Hebrews was what foreigners often called Israelites. Achish defended David, with no idea that David had been raiding Israel's enemies, not Israel (27:10-12).

in him from the day he fell ***away*** until this day." **4** And the commanders of ***the*** Philistines were angry with him, and the commanders of ***the*** Philistines said to him, "Send the man back, and let him return to his place where you assigned him; and he shall not go down with us into the battle, and he shall not become an adversary to us in the battle. And with what could this one make himself acceptable to his lord? ***Is it*** not with the heads of those men? **5** Is not this David, of whom they sang in the dances, saying, 'Saul has struck down his thousands, and David his ten thousands'?" **6** And Achish called David, and he said to him, "***As*** the LORD lives, surely you ***are*** upright, and your going out and your coming in with me in the camp ***is*** good in my eyes; for I have not found evil in you from the day of your coming to me until this day. And in the eyes of the rulers you ***are*** not good. **7** And now, turn back, and go in peace, and you shall not do evil in the eyes of the rulers of ***the*** Philistines." **8** And David said to Achish, "But what have I done? And what have you found in your servant from the day that I was before you until this day, that I may not go and fight against the enemies of my lord the king?" **9** And Achish answered, and he said to David, "I know that you ***are*** good in my eyes like an angel of God; nevertheless the commanders of ***the*** Philistines have said, 'He shall not go up with us into the battle.' **10** And now, rise early in the morning, and the servants of your lord who have come with you; and you shall rise early in the morning, and it shall be light for you, and go." **11** And David rose early, he and his men, to go in the morning, to return to the land of ***the*** Philistines. And ***the*** Philistines went up ***to*** Jezreel.

1 SAMUEL 30

Ziklag Burned

1 And it was, when David and his men came ***to*** Ziklag (Tsiqlag) on the third day, and ***the*** Amalekites had made a raid against the Negeb (Negev) and against Ziklag, and they had struck Ziklag, and they had burned it with fire. **2** And they had taken captive the women who ***were*** in it, from small to great; they had not killed anyone, and they had driven ***them*** away, and they had gone on their way. **3** And David and his men came to the city, and look, ***it was*** burned with fire, and their wives and their sons and their daughters had been taken captive. **4** And David and the people who ***were*** with him lifted up their voice, and they wept until there was no strength in them to weep. **5** And the two wives of David had been taken captive, Ahinoam (Achino'am) the Jezreelite ***woman*** and Abigail (Avigayil) the wife of Nabal (Naval) the Carmelite. **6** And it was exceedingly distressing for David, for the people spoke of stoning him, for the soul of all the people was bitter, each man over his sons and over his daughters. And David strengthened himself in the LORD his God.

David Pursues the Amalekites

7 And David said to Abiathar (Evyatar) the priest, the son of Ahimelech (Achimelekh), "Please bring the ephod near to

29:4 1 Sam 14:21; 1 Chr 12:19; Luke 16:8
29:5 1 Sam 21:11; 1 Sam 18:6,7; Prov 27:14
29:6 2 Sam 3:25; 2 Kgs 19:27; 1 Sam 20:3
29:7 Num 22:34
29:8 1 Sam 12:3; 1 Sam 17:29; 1 Sam 20:8
29:9 Gal 4:14; 2 Sam 14:17,20; 2 Sam 19:27
29:10 1 Sam 30:1,2; Gen 22:14; Ps 37:23,24
29:11 1 Sam 29:1; Josh 19:18; 2 Sam 4:4

30:1 1 Sam 29:11; 1 Sam 15:7; 1 Sam 27:8-10
30:2 1 Sam 27:11; 1 Sam 30:19; Job 38:11
30:3 Ps 34:19; Heb 12:6; 1 Pet 1:6,7
30:4 Num 14:1,39; 1 Sam 4:13; 1 Sam 11:4
30:5 1 Sam 25:42,43; 2 Sam 2:2; 1 Sam 1:2
30:6 Matt 21:9; Ps 56:3,4,11; Ps 25:17
30:7 Mark 2:26; 1 Sam 22:20,21; 1 Sam 23:2-9

29:4 *Is it not with the heads of those men?* The commanders were not fooled. They expected David to turn in the battle and win back Saul's favor with Philistine heads, as Hebrews serving the Philistines had done at Michmash (14:21).
29:5 *Saul has struck down his thousands, and David his ten thousands* That song again (18:7; 21:11). It made Saul jealous, nearly got David killed in Gath, and now got him sent home.
29:6 *As the LORD lives, surely you are upright* Striking that a Philistine swore by the LORD, perhaps speaking in David's terms out of respect for his God. Achish liked and trusted David, but he was outvoted.
29:8 *that I may not go and fight against the enemies of my lord the king?* Achish heard "my lord the king" as himself. But David had called Saul "my lord the king" before (24:8; 26:17), so it may be another double-meaning answer like 28:2. Or he was simply keeping up his cover. Scripture does not tell us what was in his heart.
29:9 *you are good in my eyes like an angel of God* High praise from a Philistine.
29:11 *David rose early, he and his men, to go in the morning* The Philistines marched to the battle where Saul and Jonathan would die, and David went south. He had walked himself into a corner, and God got him out through the suspicion of Philistine commanders. Men of Manasseh also came over to him then (1 Chr 12:19-22). "To those who love God all things work together for good" (Rom 8:28). Our bad choices matter, but God is never trapped by them.
30:1 *they had struck Ziklag, and they had burned it with fire* Aphek to Ziklag was about fifty miles, a hard three-day march. While David marched with the Philistines, his town lay unguarded, and the Amalekites he had raided (27:8) paid him back. Saul had failed to finish what God said about Amalek (15:9). Partial obedience has long consequences.
30:2 *they had not killed anyone* The mercy of God. They likely meant to sell the captives as slaves. David had left no one alive in his raids (27:9, 11), yet the Amalekites left everyone alive. God was gracious to David in a way David had not been to others.
30:4 *they wept until there was no strength in them to weep* Picture coming home to smoking ruins and your family gone. Tough fighting men wept until nothing was left. There is no shame in weeping over loss. Grief is not a lack of faith.
30:6 *the people spoke of stoning him* Grief turned to anger, and anger looked for someone to blame. Men who had followed David since Adullam were ready to kill him. He had lost home and family, was an outlaw in Israel and unwelcome with the Philistines, and much of it came from his own choice.
30:6 *David strengthened himself in the LORD his God* One of the most important verses in 1 Samuel. Not the LORD in general, but his own God, who delivered him from the lion, the bear and Goliath. We are not told how. His psalms show him pouring out his heart (Ps 62:8), telling his soul to wait for God (Ps 42:5), remembering God's deeds and promises and trusting His character. Jonathan once strengthened him (23:16). Now there was no one, so David went to God himself.
30:6 *for the soul of all the people was bitter* This is the turning point of David's time in Philistia. Since 27:1 he had talked to himself instead of God. At the very bottom he turned back. Sometimes God lets us lose everything so we will find Him again. Is something leaving you without strength to weep? "Come to Me, all who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matt 11:28).
30:7 *Please bring the ephod near to me* Having strengthened himself in the LORD, David did what he had not done for a long time. The first time since 23:9-12 that we read of him inquiring of the LORD.

me." And Abiathar brought the ephod near to David. **8** And David inquired of the LORD, saying, "Shall I pursue after this marauding band? Shall I overtake it?" And He said to him, "Pursue, for you will certainly overtake ***them***, and you will certainly rescue ***them***." **9** And David went, he and the six hundred men who ***were*** with him, and they came to the wadi of Besor, and those who were left behind remained. **10** And David pursued, he and four hundred men; and two hundred men who were too exhausted to cross the wadi of Besor remained. **11** And they found an Egyptian man in the open country, and they took him to David; and they gave him bread, and he ate, and they gave him water to drink. **12** And they gave him a slice of fig cake and two clusters of raisins, and he ate, and his spirit returned to him; for he had not eaten bread and had not drunk water three days and three nights. **13** And David said to him, "To whom do you ***belong***, and where ***are*** you from?" And he said, "I ***am*** an Egyptian young man, a slave of an Amalekite man; and my master abandoned me, because I became sick three days ***ago***. **14** We, we made a raid ***on*** the Negeb of the Kerethites and on that which ***belongs*** to Judah (Yehuda) and on the Negeb of Caleb (Kalev); and Ziklag we burned with fire." **15** And David said to him, "Will you bring me down to this marauding band?" And he said, "Swear to me by God that you will not kill me and that you will not deliver me up into the hand of my master, and I will bring you down to this marauding band." **16** And he brought him down, and look, they ***were*** spread out over the face of all the land, eating and drinking and celebrating because of all the great plunder that they had taken from the land of ***the*** Philistines and from the land of Judah. **17** And David struck them from the twilight until the evening of their next day; and not a man of them escaped, except four hundred young men who rode on the camels, and they fled. **18** And David rescued all that Amalek (Amaleq) had taken, and David rescued his two wives. **19** And nothing was missing to them, from the small and to the great, and to sons and daughters, and from the booty and to all that they had taken for themselves; David brought back everything. **20** And David took all the sheep and the cattle; they drove ***them*** before that livestock, and they said, "This ***is*** the booty of David."

Equal Shares

21 And David came to the two hundred men who had been too exhausted to go after David, and whom they had left at the wadi of Besor; and they went out to meet David and to meet the people who ***were*** with him. And David approached the people, and he asked them about ***their*** welfare. **22** And every evil man and ***man of*** worthlessness from the men who had gone with David answered, and they said, "Because they did not go with me, we will not give them ***any*** of the booty that we have recovered, except to each man his wife and his children; and let them lead ***them*** away, and let them go." **23** And David said, "You shall not do so, my brothers, with what the LORD has given to us; and He has kept us, and He has given the marauding band that came against us into our hand. **24** And who will listen to you in this matter? For like the share of the one who went down into the battle and like the share of the one who remained with the baggage, together they shall share." **25** And it was from that day and onward, and he made it a statute and a judgment for Israel (Yisra'el) until this day. **26** And David came to Ziklag, and he sent some of the booty to the elders of Judah, to his friends, saying, "Look, for you ***is*** a blessing from the booty of the enemies of the LORD": **27** to those who ***were*** in Bethel (Bet-El), and to those who ***were*** in Ramoth (Ramot) of ***the*** Negeb, and

30:8 1 Sam 23:2,4,10-12; 2 Sam 5:19,23; 1 Sam 28:6,15,16
30:10 1 Sam 14:20,31; Judg 8:4,5
30:11 Deut 15:7-11; Deut 23:7; Prov 25:21
30:12 Judg 15:19; 1 Sam 14:27; Isa 40:29-31
30:13 Job 31:13-15; Prov 12:10; James 2:13
30:14 2 Sam 8:18; 1 Kgs 1:38,44; Ezek 25:16
30:15 1 Sam 29:6; Josh 2:12; Josh 9:15,19,20
30:16 Rev 11:10; Luke 21:35; Rev 11:13
30:17 1 Sam 11:11; Judg 4:16; 1 Kgs 20:29,30
30:19 1 Sam 30:8; Gen 14:14-16; Ps 34:9,10
30:20 1 Sam 30:26; Num 31:9-12; 2 Chr 20:25
30:21 Heb 13:1; Judg 8:15; 1 Pet 3:8
30:22 Deut 13:13; Matt 7:12; 1 Sam 22:2
30:23 Gen 19:7; Judg 19:23; Acts 7:2
30:24 Num 31:27; Josh 22:8; 1 Sam 25:13
30:25 1 Sam 16:13
30:26 1 Sam 25:27; 1 Chr 12:1-15; Ps 35:27
30:27 Josh 15:48; Josh 19:8; Gen 28:19

30:8 *Pursue, for you will certainly overtake them, and you will certainly rescue them* A marauding band is a raiding party. God did not scold David or say it was his own fault. He gave a promise. When we come back to God, He is ready to receive us and help.

30:10 *two hundred men who were too exhausted to cross the wadi of Besor remained* A wadi fills with water only in the rainy season. After three days' march, grief and an immediate pursuit, a third could not go on. David did not shame them. He left them to guard the supplies.

30:12 *his spirit returned to him* They fed him before they questioned him.

30:13 *my master abandoned me, because I became sick three days ago* The Amalekites threw people away when they were no longer useful, the cruelty God condemned (Deut 25:17-18). A sick slave left to die became the key to victory. Kindness to one man in need opened the door. God often places the answer to our prayers in the person we are tempted to ignore.

30:14 *the Negeb of the Kerethites* A people linked with the Philistines, perhaps from Crete. Later Kerethites served as David's royal bodyguard (2 Sam 8:18).

30:16 *eating and drinking and celebrating because of all the great plunder* They thought David was far away with the Philistine army, and they had plunder from Philistia and Judah. They were having a party.

30:17 *four hundred young men who rode on the camels* The battle lasted about a full day. The ones who escaped equaled David's whole fighting force, so the band was very large, and God gave his tired men the victory.

30:19 *David brought back everything* Every wife, every child, every possession. God did exactly what He promised (30:8). When He says He will rescue, He rescues.

30:20 *This is the booty of David* The men who wanted to stone David the day before were now praising him.

30:22 *every evil man and man of worthlessness from the men who had gone with David* They would give the two hundred their families back and nothing else.

30:23 *with what the LORD has given to us* The plunder was not theirs to keep. God kept them and gave the victory. It was a gift, not earned by the strong.

30:24 *together they shall share* Moses had divided plunder between those who fought and those who stayed (Num 31:27). In God's work everyone matters. Some serve on the front lines, some guard the baggage, and some are too worn out to do more than hold on. "Those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary" (1 Cor 12:22). Those who pray at home, teach the children and set up chairs share in the victory. Grace is shared, not earned.

30:25 *he made it a statute and a judgment for Israel until this day* David's ruling became law in Israel.

30:26 *a blessing from the booty of the enemies of the LORD* The Amalekites had raided Judah (30:14), so David was partly giving back what was taken. He wanted Judah to see he fought the LORD's battles.

to those who ***were*** in Jattir (Yatir), **28** and to those who ***were*** in Aroer (Aro'er), and to those who ***were*** in Siphmoth (Sifmot), and to those who ***were*** in Eshtemoa, **29** and to those who ***were*** in Racal (Rakhal), and to those who ***were*** in the cities of the Jerahmeelites, and to those who ***were*** in the cities of the Kenites, **30** and to those who ***were*** in Hormah (Chorma), and to those who ***were*** in Bor-ashan, and to those who ***were*** in Athach (Atakh), **31** and to those who ***were*** in Hebron (Chevron), and to all the places where David had gone about, he and his men.

1 SAMUEL 31

The Death of Saul and His Sons

1 And ***the*** Philistines ***were*** fighting against Israel (Yisra'el), and the men of Israel fled from before ***the*** Philistines, and they fell slain on the mountain of Gilboa. **2** And ***the***
Philistines pursued closely after Saul (Shaul) and after his sons, and ***the*** Philistines struck down Jonathan (Yehonatan) and Abinadab (Avinadav) and Malchi-shua (Malkishua), the sons of Saul. **3** And the battle was heavy against Saul, and the archers, men with the bow, found him, and he writhed exceedingly because of the archers. **4** And Saul said to the bearer of his armor, "Draw your sword and pierce me through with it, lest these uncircumcised come, and they pierce me through, and they deal wantonly with me." And the bearer of his armor was not willing, for he was exceedingly afraid. And Saul took the sword, and he fell on it. **5** And the bearer of his armor saw that Saul had died, and he also fell on his sword, and he died with him. **6** And Saul died, and his three sons, and the bearer of his armor, also all his men, on that day together. **7** And the men of Israel who ***were*** on the other side of the valley and who ***were*** on the other side of the Jordan (Yarden) saw that the men of Israel had fled and that Saul and his sons had died; and they abandoned the cities, and they fled, and ***the*** Philistines came, and they dwelt in them. **8** And it was on the next day, and ***the*** Philistines came to strip the slain, and they found Saul and his three sons fallen on the mountain of Gilboa. **9** And they cut off his head, and they stripped off his armor, and they sent into the land of ***the*** Philistines all around to bear the news ***to*** the house of their idols and ***to*** the people. **10** And they put his armor ***in*** the house of Ashtaroth, and his corpse they fastened on the wall of Beth-shean (Bet-She'an).

The Men of Jabesh-gilead

11 And the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead (Yavesh-Gilad) heard concerning him what ***the*** Philistines had done to Saul.

30:28 Josh 13:16; Josh 15:50; Josh 21:14
30:29 1 Sam 27:10; Judg 1:16; 1 Sam 23:19
30:30 Judg 1:17; Josh 19:4
30:31 2 Sam 2:1; Josh 14:13,14; 2 Sam 4:1
31:1 1 Chr 10:1-12; 1 Sam 28:4; 2 Sam 1:21
31:2 1 Chr 8:33; 1 Sam 14:22; 2 Sam 1:6
31:3 2 Sam 1:4; Amos 2:14; Gen 49:23
31:4 Judg 9:54; 1 Sam 14:6; 1 Chr 10:4
31:5 1 Chr 10:5
31:6 1 Sam 4:10,11; 1 Sam 11:15; 1 Sam 12:17,25
31:7 1 Sam 13:6; Lev 26:32,36; Deut 28:33
31:8 1 Chr 10:8; 2 Chr 20:25
31:9 2 Sam 1:20; Judg 16:23,24; 1 Sam 31:4
31:10 Judg 2:13; Josh 17:11; 1 Sam 21:9
31:11 1 Sam 11:1; 2 Sam 2:4

30:31 *to those who were in Hebron* This Bethel was a southern town, not the famous one. These towns had sheltered David and his men. Hebron comes last, and it would be the first place he reigned (2 Sam 2:1-4). He thanked his helpers and made friends among Judah's elders. The same week Saul lost everything in the north, David recovered all.
31:1 *they fell slain on the mountain of Gilboa* The writer goes straight to the result. Gilboa is a long ridge on the southeast side of the Jezreel valley. Philistine chariots moved freely on the plain, and Israel was driven up the slopes. The people asked for a king to go out before them (8:20), and their king had led them here.
31:2 *the Philistines struck down Jonathan and Abinadab and Malchi-shua, the sons of Saul* One of the saddest lines in the book. Jonathan, brave, humble and generous, knew David would be king, yet he fought beside his father to the end and betrayed neither. Why did God allow it? Scripture does not say. He shared in the judgment on his father's house. We leave this man of faith (14:6) with the Judge of all the earth, who does right (Gen 18:25). Another son, Ish-bosheth or Eshbaal (1 Chr 8:33), was not in the battle.
31:3 *he writhed exceedingly because of the archers* Saul was badly wounded and knew he could not escape.
31:4 *lest these uncircumcised come, and they pierce me through, and they deal wantonly with me* To deal wantonly is to abuse and mock. Saul knew what the Philistines did to Samson (Judg 16:21, 25). The armor-bearer would not do it, perhaps afraid to strike the LORD's anointed, as David refused to (24:6; 26:9).
31:4 *Saul took the sword, and he fell on it* Saul took his own life. The text records it plainly and does not praise it or call it noble. It was the last step of a long road away from God, not the reason for His judgment, spoken years before (1 Chr 10:13-14). Our lives belong to God. He gives life, and He alone has the right to take it (Deut 32:39; Job 1:21).
31:4 *the bearer of his armor was not willing* If you have lost someone to suicide, this chapter is not about your loved one. It is the story of one man who rejected God's word for years. It is not our place to say what Scripture does not. Salvation is by grace through faith in Christ (Eph 2:8-9), not by how a life ends. Pain and despair can overwhelm even a believer. God knows every heart. "The LORD is near to the broken of heart" (Ps 34:18).
31:5 *he also fell on his sword, and he died with him* If you are struggling with thoughts of ending your life, please do not keep it to yourself. Tell someone today: a pastor, a friend, a family member, a doctor or a crisis line. You are not a burden, and you are not alone. Saul had nowhere left to turn because he turned from God again and again. You do. "The one coming to Me I will certainly not cast out" (John 6:37).
31:6 *Saul died, and his three sons, and the bearer of his armor, also all his men, on that day together* All his men probably means his bodyguard and officers, since many fled (31:7) and Abner survived (2 Sam 2:8). Chronicles says "all his house" (1 Chr 10:6), meaning his house lost the throne that day, though Ish-bosheth lived on for a time.
31:6 *Saul died* In 2 Samuel an Amalekite claims he killed Saul at his request and brings David the crown (2 Sam 1:6-10). Most teachers think he lied, having found the body first, and hoped for a reward. Others think Saul's fall did not kill him at once. Either way, this chapter and 1 Chr 10:4-5 tell plainly how Saul died. And the irony: Saul lost his kingdom for sparing Amalek, and an Amalekite came to claim his death.
31:7 *they abandoned the cities, and they fled, and the Philistines came, and they dwelt in them* Israelites in the valley and even east of the Jordan fled, and the Philistines moved in. The reign of the king the people asked for ended with Israel worse off than when it began.
31:8 *the Philistines came to strip the slain* After a battle the winners went over the field to take weapons and valuables from the dead.
31:9 *to bear the news to the house of their idols and to the people* David once cut off Goliath's head and took his sword (17:51, 54). Now the Philistines did the same to Saul and gave the credit to their gods. When Israel was faithful, Dagon fell before the ark (5:3-4). Our sin gives the world reason to mock the name of God (Rom 2:24).
31:10 *they put his armor in the house of Ashtaroth* Ashtaroth is the plural of Ashtoreth, a Canaanite goddess of war and fertility (7:3-4; Judg 2:13). His head was fastened in Dagon's temple (1 Chr 10:10). Beth-shean was a strong city at the east end of the Jezreel valley. Saul took his life to avoid being mocked, and he was mocked anyway.
31:11 *the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead heard* At the start of his reign, full of the Spirit, Saul rescued Jabesh-gilead from the Ammonites (11:1-11). It was his finest hour, and they never forgot it.

12 And every man of strength arose, and they went all the night, and they took the corpse of Saul and the corpses of his sons from the wall of Beth-shean, and they went to Jabesh, and they burned them there. **13** And they took their bones, and they buried ***them*** under the tamarisk tree in Jabesh, and they fasted seven days.

31:12 2 Chr 16:14; Jer 34:5; Amos 6:10

31:13 2 Sam 21:12-14; Gen 50:10; Gen 35:8

31:12 *they went all the night, and they took the corpse of Saul and the corpses of his sons* A dangerous night march across the Jordan valley into enemy territory to honor the man who once saved them. Israel did not usually burn the dead. Perhaps the bodies were badly mistreated, or they wanted to keep them from the Philistines. Scripture does not say.
31:13 *they buried them under the tamarisk tree in Jabesh, and they fasted seven days* A seven-day fast was deep mourning (Gen 50:10). David later praised them (2 Sam 2:5) and moved the bones to Kish's tomb (2 Sam 21:12-14). A kindness Saul did years before was remembered. And so the book ends. The impressive king the people asked for lay dead, while God's shepherd king waited at Ziklag. Through David's line God would send the King who reigns forever (Luke 1:32-33).

2 SAMUEL

Introduction

Title

The book is named for Samuel, the prophet who anointed Israel's first two kings, though Samuel died before this part of the story begins (1 Sam 25:1). In the Hebrew Bible, 1 and 2 Samuel were one book, among the Former Prophets, the books that tell Israel's history from God's point of view. It was divided in two when it was translated into Greek, because it was too long for one scroll. 2 Samuel is the tenth book of the Bible, following 1 Samuel and coming before 1 Kings. It has 24 chapters and 695 verses. It begins with David weeping over Saul and Jonathan and ends with David buying a threshing floor in Jerusalem and building an altar to stop a plague.

Author and Date

The book does not name its author, and Samuel could not have written it. The acts of David were written "in the words of Samuel the seer, and in the words of Nathan the prophet, and in the words of Gad the seer" (1 Chr 29:29). Nathan and Gad were prophets who served David, and 2 Samuel was most likely put together from their records, with other sources such as the book of Jashar (1:18). Many modern critical scholars believe the book was edited much later, in the time of the exile, as part of a longer history running from Deuteronomy through Kings. I take the book at its word. It rests on the records of prophets who knew David, and its details read like the work of eyewitnesses.

It was probably written not long after David's death, likely in Solomon's time or soon after, about 970 to 930 B.C. It speaks of things that remained "until this day" (4:3; 6:8) and does not mention the division of the kingdom. Some scholars date it later. David reigned about 1010 to 970 B.C., seven years and six months in Hebron and thirty-three years in Jerusalem (5:4-5), which places the taking of Jerusalem about 1003 B.C.

Background and Setting

2 Samuel picks up the day after 1 Samuel ends. Saul has died on Mount Gilboa, and David is at Ziklag. Everything here rests on what came before: Israel's demand for a king like the nations (1 Sam 8), Saul's rejection (1 Sam 15), David's anointing (1 Sam 16), and his years running from Saul while refusing to harm the LORD's anointed (1 Sam 24; 1 Sam 26). It also reaches back to God's rules for Israel's king (Deut 17:14-20).

David first rules Judah from Hebron in the hill country, while Saul's son Ish-bosheth rules from Mahanaim east of the Jordan. From chapter 5 on, the center is Jerusalem, the city of David on Mount Zion. David's wars reach from the Philistine coast to Moab, Edom and Ammon, and north to the Aramean kingdoms of Damascus and Zobah.

David was the youngest son of Jesse of Bethlehem, a great-grandson of Ruth the Moabite (Ruth 4:17), a shepherd, musician and warrior, and the writer of many psalms. God called him a man after His own heart (Acts 13:22), not because he was sinless, but because he loved God and came back to Him in repentance. The first readers, Israel in the generations after David, needed to know why David's family sat on the throne, what God had promised it, and why even David's house suffered when the king sinned. The book does not always keep strict time order. Chapters 21 to 24 gather records from different parts of David's reign.

Themes

The theme of 2 Samuel is God's faithfulness to His chosen king. God keeps His word to make David king, gives him rest from his enemies, and promises him a house, a kingdom and a throne: "And your house and your kingdom will be established forever before you; your throne will be established forever" (7:16). David's hope rests on that promise, not on his own record: "He has made with me an everlasting covenant" (23:5).

Alongside that runs a second theme. Sin has consequences, even for a forgiven man. At the height of his power David falls into adultery and murder (chapter 11). When Nathan confronts him, he does not make excuses. He says, "I have sinned against the LORD" (12:13), and God forgives him. But the sword does not depart from his house (12:10). Tamar is wronged, Amnon is killed, Absalom rebels and dies, and the kingdom is torn by revolt. The book shows that God's grace is real and His discipline is real, and that we need both.

The book also teaches about waiting on God instead of grabbing what He has promised, about loyal love (hesed) kept when there is nothing to gain (9:1), about seeking the LORD in every new battle (5:19, 23), and about worship that costs something (24:24).

Christ in 2 Samuel

The clearest pointer to Christ is the covenant of chapter 7. God promised David a son whose throne would be established forever, and said, "I will be a father to him, and he will be a son to Me" (7:14). Hebrews applies those words to Jesus (Heb 1:5). The angel told Mary that God would give her Son "the throne of David His father," and that "of His kingdom there will be no end" (Luke 1:32-33). The New Testament opens by calling Jesus "son of David" (Matt 1:1), and Jesus calls Himself "the root and the offspring of David" (Rev 22:16).

I believe that Jesus, risen and now seated at the Father's right hand, will one day sit on the throne of David and reign over a restored Israel and the whole earth, as the prophets promised. The notes at chapter 7 give this reading and name the amillennial view fairly.

David is a picture of Christ in some ways, held lightly: the shepherd king from Bethlehem, chosen by God and rejected for a time, who crossed the Kidron and climbed the Mount of Olives in tears (15:23, 30), and who cried that he would have died in his son's place (18:33). But David is also a warning. Even the best king of Israel could not be the King we need. That King is Jesus, the Son of David who never sinned, who laid down His life for the sheep. The book ends at an altar on the hill where the temple would stand, with God's anger turned away by a sacrifice (24:25).

Hard Passages

2 Samuel has a great deal of violence: civil war, murder in the gate and in a bedroom (3:27; 4:5-12), and the harsh ways of ancient war with Moab (8:2) and Ammon (12:31). God strikes Uzzah dead for touching the ark (6:7). The notes explain it from God's plain law and His holiness, and point to the open way we have through Christ. David's adultery with Bathsheba and the killing of Uriah are told plainly, and the guilt is laid on David. Their baby dies (12:14-23), and the notes say that I believe little children who die are safe with God (12:23).

Amnon rapes his half-sister Tamar (chapter 13). The notes lay the guilt wholly on Amnon, say plainly that it was not her fault, and urge anyone who has been abused to tell someone safe and, where a crime was done, the authorities. Absalom takes his father's concubines (16:22), and Ahithophel takes his own life (17:23), which the notes tell soberly with a word for anyone struggling with such thoughts. Seven of Saul's descendants are put to death to end a famine (chapter 21). The notes explain the broken oath behind it, admit the tension with Deut 24:16, and say it is not a pattern for us. The LORD incites the census while Chronicles names Satan (24:1), and a plague follows (24:15). The notes give the common harmonization. Large numbers are taken as written, and differences with Chronicles are named honestly where they occur.

Outline

I. David King over Judah (1:1-4:12)
- A. David mourns Saul and Jonathan (1:1-27)
- B. David anointed at Hebron and war with Saul's house (2:1-3:5)
- C. Abner turns to David and is murdered (3:6-39)
- D. The murder of Ish-bosheth (4:1-12)

II. David King over All Israel (5:1-10:19)
- A. David anointed over Israel and Jerusalem taken (5:1-25)
- B. The ark brought up to Jerusalem (6:1-23)
- C. The LORD's covenant with David (7:1-29)
- D. David's victories and officials (8:1-18)
- E. Kindness to Mephibosheth (9:1-13)
- F. War with Ammon and Syria (10:1-19)

III. David's Sin and Repentance (11:1-12:31)
- A. David, Bathsheba and Uriah (11:1-27)
- B. Nathan confronts David (12:1-31)

IV. Trouble in David's House (13:1-20:26)
- A. Amnon, Tamar and Absalom's revenge (13:1-39)
- B. Absalom brought home (14:1-33)
- C. Absalom's conspiracy and David's flight (15:1-16:23)
- D. Hushai defeats Ahithophel's counsel (17:1-29)
- E. The death of Absalom (18:1-33)
- F. David returns to Jerusalem (19:1-43)
- G. The revolt of Sheba (20:1-26)

V. Closing Records of David's Reign (21:1-24:25)
- A. The Gibeonites avenged and the Philistine giants (21:1-22)
- B. David's song of deliverance (22:1-51)
- C. David's last words and his mighty men (23:1-39)
- D. The census and the threshing floor of Araunah (24:1-25)

2 SAMUEL

2 SAMUEL 1

The News of Saul's Death

1 And it was after the death of Saul (Shaul), and David had returned from striking Amalek (Amaleq), and David
remained in Ziklag (Tsiqlag) two days. **2** And it was on the third day, and look, a man ***was*** coming from the camp, from ***being*** with Saul, and his garments ***were*** torn and earth ***was*** on his head. And it was, when he came to David, and he fell to the ground and bowed down. **3** And David said to him, "From where are you coming?" And he said to him, "From the camp of Israel (Yisra'el) I have escaped." **4** And David said to him, "What was the matter? Tell me, please." And he said, "The people have fled from the battle, and also many of the people have fallen, and they have died; and also Saul and Jonathan (Yehonatan) his son have died." **5** And David said to the young man who ***was*** telling him, "How do you know that Saul and Jonathan his son have died?" **6** And the young man who ***was*** telling him said, "By chance I happened ***to be*** on the mountain of Gilboa, and look, Saul ***was*** leaning on his spear, and look, the chariotry and the masters of the horses had overtaken him. **7** And he turned behind him and saw me, and he called to me, and I said, 'Here I ***am***.' **8** And he said to me, 'Who ***are*** you?' And I said to him, 'I ***am*** an Amalekite.' **9** And he said to me, 'Stand over me, please, and kill me, for agony has seized me, for all my life ***is*** still in me.' **10** And I stood over him and killed him, for I knew that he would not live after he had fallen. And I took the crown which ***was*** on his head and the armlet which ***was*** on his arm, and I have brought them to my lord here." **11** And David took hold of his garments and tore them, and also all the men who ***were*** with him. **12** And they mourned and wept and fasted until the evening for Saul and for Jonathan his son, and for the people of the LORD and for the house of Israel, because they had fallen by the sword. **13** And David said to the young man who ***was*** telling him, "From where ***are*** you?" And he said, "I ***am*** the son of a man, a sojourner, an Amalekite." **14** And David said to him, "How were you not afraid to stretch out your hand to destroy the anointed of the LORD?" **15** And David called one of the young men and said, "Draw near; fall on him." And he struck him down, and he died. **16** And David said to him, "Your blood ***be*** on your head, for your mouth has testified against you, saying, 'I myself have killed the
anointed of the LORD.'"

The Song of the Bow

17 And David lamented this lamentation over Saul and over Jonathan his son. **18** And he said to teach the sons of Judah (Yehuda) "***The*** Bow"; look, ***it is*** written in the book of Jashar (Yashar): **19** "The beauty, O Israel, ***is*** slain on your high places! How the mighty have fallen! **20** Do not tell ***it*** in Gath

1:1 1 Sam 30:17-26; 1 Sam 27:6
1:2 Matt 12:40; Matt 16:21; 1 Sam 4:12,16
1:3 2 Kgs 5:25; Job 1:15-19
1:4 1 Sam 4:16; 1 Sam 31:1-6; 1 Chr 10:1-6
1:5 Prov 14:15; Prov 25:2
1:6 1 Sam 28:4; Ruth 2:3; 1 Sam 6:9
1:7 2 Sam 9:6; Judg 9:54; 1 Sam 22:12
1:8 1 Sam 15:3; 1 Sam 30:1,13,17; Gen 14:7
1:10 Judg 9:54; Judg 1:7; 1 Sam 22:18
1:11 2 Sam 3:31; 2 Sam 13:31; Gen 37:29,34
1:12 Ps 35:13,14; Prov 24:17; Jer 9:1
1:14 1 Sam 24:6; 1 Sam 26:9; 1 Sam 31:4
1:15 2 Sam 4:10-12; Judg 8:20; 1 Sam 22:17,18
1:16 Luke 19:22; Matt 27:25; Lev 20:9,11-13,16,27
1:17 2 Chr 35:25; 2 Sam 1:19; Gen 50:11
1:18 Josh 10:13; Gen 49:8; Deut 4:10
1:19 2 Sam 1:25,27; 2 Sam 1:23; Deut 4:7,8
1:20 Mic 1:10; 1 Sam 18:6; Exod 15:20,21

1:1 *after the death of Saul* In Hebrew, 1 and 2 Samuel were one book, and this picks up right where 1 Samuel 31 left off. While Saul was dying on Gilboa, David was far to the south recovering what the Amalekites took from Ziklag (1 Sam 30). The two events happened at about the same time.
1:2 *his garments were torn and earth was on his head* The signs of mourning and bad news. He bowed before David because he already knew who would be king next and wanted to be on the right side of him.
1:4 *also Saul and Jonathan his son have died* Three blows. Think how much this news held. Saul had tried to kill David again and again. Jonathan was his closest friend, bound to him by covenant (1 Sam 18:1-4; 20:16-17). In one sentence David lost his enemy and his best friend, and the road to the throne God promised him opened.
1:10 *I stood over him and killed him* Was he telling the truth? The inspired account says Saul fell on his own sword when his armor-bearer refused (1 Sam 31:3-5). Most teachers believe the Amalekite found the body, took the crown and armlet, and made up the rest to win David's favor. Some think Saul had not yet died and the man finished him. Either way, his own words condemned him.
1:10 *I took the crown which was on his head* The irony: Saul lost his kingdom for not carrying out the LORD's judgment on Amalek (1 Sam 15:18-23). Now an Amalekite claims to have killed him and carries off his crown.
1:12 *for the people of the LORD and for the house of Israel* Not what the Amalekite expected. David and his men tore their clothes and fasted, not only for Saul and Jonathan but for the whole nation, beaten and shamed. David did not see this as his lucky day. A man who loves God's people grieves when they suffer, even if the suffering clears the way for him.
1:13 *the son of a man, a sojourner, an Amalekite* A sojourner was a foreigner living in Israel. He knew Israel's ways, who the king was and what it meant that he was anointed.
1:14 *How were you not afraid to stretch out your hand to destroy the anointed of the LORD?* To be anointed was to have oil poured on your head as a sign that God chose you for a task. Twice David had Saul at his mercy and refused to touch him for this reason (1 Sam 24:6; 26:9-11). He believed the life of the LORD's anointed was in God's hands, not man's.
1:16 *your mouth has testified against you* You are responsible for your own death, and your own words are the evidence. Was David too harsh? He was about to be king. Rewarding a man for killing the king would tell the nation that murder was the way to get ahead. David made it plain from day one that he did not take the throne by murder.
1:18 *it is written in the book of Jashar* A lament is a song of grief, and David was a gifted poet (1 Sam 16:18). "The Bow" probably comes from Jonathan's bow (1:22), or it was a tune's name. Jashar means upright, an old book of songs about Israel's heroes also quoted in Joshua 10:13. We no longer have it. It was not Scripture, but the writer used it as a historian uses a good source.
1:19 *How the mighty have fallen!* The beauty or glory of Israel was its king and his son, fallen on the heights of Gilboa. This refrain runs through the whole song.
1:20 *Do not tell it in Gath* Gath and Ashkelon were Philistine cities. Their women would sing over Israel's dead as Israel's women once sang over David's victories (1 Sam 18:6-7). The uncircumcised were outside God's covenant with Abraham (Gen 17:10-11). David did not want God's enemies mocking God's people.

(Gat); do not bear the news in the streets of Ashkelon (Ashqelon), lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised exult. **21** O mountains of Gilboa, ***let there be*** no dew and no rain on you, nor fields of offerings! For there the shield of the mighty was defiled, the shield of Saul, not anointed with oil. **22** From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan did not turn back, and the sword of Saul did not return empty. **23** Saul and Jonathan, the beloved and the pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not separated; they were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions. **24** O daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, who clothed you ***in*** scarlet with luxuries, who put ornaments of gold on your clothing. **25** How the mighty have fallen in the midst of the battle! Jonathan ***is*** slain on your high places. **26** It is distressing to me for you, my brother Jonathan; you were very pleasant to me; your love to me was wonderful, more than the love of women. **27** How the mighty have fallen, and the weapons of war have perished!"

2 SAMUEL 2

David Anointed King over Judah

1 And it was after this, and David inquired of the LORD, saying, "Shall I go up into one of the cities of Judah (Yehuda)?" And the LORD said to him, "Go up." And David said, "Where shall I go up?" And He said, "To Hebron (Chevron)." **2** And David went up there, and also his two wives, Ahinoam (Achino'am) the Jezreelite and Abigail (Avigayil) the wife of Nabal (Naval) the Carmelite. **3** And his men who ***were*** with him David brought up, each man and his household, and they dwelt in the cities of Hebron. **4** And the men of Judah came, and they anointed David there as king over the house of Judah. And they told David, saying, "The men of Jabesh-gilead (Yavesh-Gilad) ***are those*** who buried Saul (Shaul)." **5** And David sent messengers to the men of Jabesh-gilead and said to them, "Blessed ***are*** you by the LORD, because you have done this steadfast love with your lord, with Saul, and have buried him. **6** And now, may the LORD do steadfast love and faithfulness with you; and I also will do this good with you, because you have done this thing. **7** And now, let your hands be strong, and be sons of valor; for your lord Saul has died, and also the house of Judah has anointed me as king over them."

Ish-bosheth King over Israel

8 And Abner (Avner) the son of Ner, commander of the army which ***belonged*** to Saul, had taken Ish-bosheth (Ish-Boshet) the son of Saul and brought him over ***to*** Mahanaim (Machanayim). **9** And he made him king over Gilead (Gilad) and over the Ashurites and over Jezreel (Yizre'el) and over Ephraim (Efrayim) and over Benjamin (Binyamin) and over

1:21 1 Sam 31:1; Isa 21:5; 1 Sam 10:1
1:22 1 Sam 18:4; Isa 34:6,7; 1 Sam 14:6-14
1:23 Jer 4:13; Judg 14:18; Deut 28:49
1:24 Judg 5:30; Ps 68:12; Prov 31:21
1:25 2 Sam 1:19,27; Lam 5:16; Judg 5:18
1:26 1 Sam 18:1-4; 1 Sam 19:2; 1 Sam 20:17,41
1:27 2 Sam 1:19,25; 2 Kgs 2:12; 2 Kgs 13:14
2:1 1 Sam 23:2,4,9-12; 1 Sam 30:31; 2 Sam 5:19,23
2:2 1 Sam 25:42,43; 1 Sam 30:5; Luke 22:28,29
2:3 1 Sam 27:2,3; 1 Sam 30:1,9,10; 1 Chr 12:1-7
2:4 Acts 13:22; 1 Sam 31:11-13; 2 Sam 5:3,5,17
2:5 1 Sam 23:21; Ruth 2:20; Ps 115:15
2:6 2 Sam 15:20; Ps 57:3; Prov 14:22
2:7 2 Sam 10:12; Gen 15:1; 1 Sam 4:9
2:8 1 Sam 14:50; Gen 32:2; 1 Sam 17:55
2:9 Num 32:1-42; Josh 13:8-11; Ps 108:8

1:21 *O mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew and no rain on you* Poetry, a way of saying the place should be mourned forever. Soldiers rubbed oil on leather shields to keep them in shape. Saul's shield lay in the dirt, uncared for, like the king who carried it.
1:22 *the bow of Jonathan did not turn back, and the sword of Saul did not return empty* Whatever Saul's failures, he and his son fought hard and did not die as cowards.
1:23 *in their death they were not separated* A gracious line. David says nothing of Saul's jealousy, rages or spear. He remembers what was good. Jonathan stayed loyal to his father while he loved David, and died at his side.
1:24 *O daughters of Israel, weep over Saul* Saul made Israel stronger and richer than under the judges, and David gave him credit. When someone who hurt us dies or falls, we choose how we speak of them. David chose honor. He did not pretend Saul was perfect, but he did not settle scores. Love "does not count the evil" (1 Cor 13:5).
1:26 *your love to me was wonderful, more than the love of women* Some today read something sexual into this. That reads our own ideas into the text. In David's world men spoke openly of deep love for a friend. Jonathan's love was wonderful because it was selfless. The heir to the throne gave David his robe and weapons and said, "I, I will be second to you" (1 Sam 23:17). It asked for nothing and gave up a kingdom.
1:27 *the weapons of war have perished* The weapons of war are the warriors themselves, now gone. Jonathan's love is a small picture of a greater one. "Greater love than this no one has, that one lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). Jonathan gave up a throne for his friend. Jesus left heaven's throne and gave His life for us.
2:1 *David inquired of the LORD* The throne was promised years before (1 Sam 16:13), and the door was open. Many men would have marched on Saul's capital. David asked God, likely through Abiathar and the ephod (1 Sam 23:9-12; 30:7-8).
2:1 *Where shall I go up?* David wanted direction, not only permission. Hebron was Judah's chief city, where Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were buried (Gen 23:19; 49:29-31). Before a big step, ask God not only whether, but where and how.
2:2 *his two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelite and Abigail* The king "shall not multiply wives for himself" (Deut 17:17), and God's plan was one man and one woman (Gen 2:24; Matt 19:4-6). Scripture records David's many marriages without approving them, and the rest of the book shows the trouble they brought.
2:3 *they dwelt in the cities of Hebron* The men who followed him through the hard years in the wilderness now settled with their households.
2:4 *they anointed David there as king over the house of Judah* David's second anointing. Samuel anointed him among his brothers (1 Sam 16:13), and a third, over all Israel, comes in chapter 5. God's promise came true one step at a time.
2:4 *The men of Jabesh-gilead are those who buried Saul* Saul rescued that town early in his reign (1 Sam 11), and its men walked all night to take down and bury his body (1 Sam 31:11-13).
2:5 *you have done this steadfast love with your lord, with Saul* Steadfast love is hesed, loyal love that keeps its commitments. David honored their loyalty to Saul and asked the LORD to repay it.
2:7 *the house of Judah has anointed me as king over them* Wisdom as well as kindness. Jabesh was east of the Jordan in the area loyal to Saul. David was telling them he did not see Saul's friends as his enemies, and gently inviting them to accept him.
2:8 *Abner the son of Ner, commander of the army* Saul's cousin (1 Sam 14:50). Mahanaim was east of the Jordan, safely away from the Philistines, who now held much of the land west of the river.
2:8 *Ish-bosheth the son of Saul* Ish-bosheth means man of shame. He is called Eshbaal, man of Baal, in 1 Chr 8:33. Baal also means lord or master, and some Israelites used it of the LORD early on. Many believe the writer changed baal to bosheth, shame, because later Israel could not bear to speak the false god's name. Mephibosheth (4:4) is likewise Merib-baal (1 Chr 8:34).

Israel (Yisra'el), all of it. **10** Ish-bosheth the son of Saul ***was*** forty years old when he became king over Israel, and he reigned two years. Only the house of Judah was after David. **11** And the number of the days which David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah was seven years and six months.

The Battle at the Pool of Gibeon

12 And Abner the son of Ner went out, and the servants of Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, from Mahanaim to Gibeon (Givon). **13** And Joab (Yo'av) the son of Zeruiah (Tseruya) and the servants of David went out, and they met them at the pool of Gibeon together. And they sat down, these at the pool on this ***side*** and these at the pool on that ***side***. **14** And Abner said to Joab, "Let the young men arise, please, and let them play before us." And Joab said, "Let them arise." **15** And they arose and passed over by number, twelve for Benjamin and for Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, and twelve from the servants of David. **16** And they took hold, each man of the head of his neighbor, and his sword ***was*** in the side of his neighbor, and they fell together. And one called that place
Helkath-hazzurim (Chelqat-Hatsurim), which ***is*** in Gibeon. **17** And the battle was very severe on that day, and Abner and the men of Israel were defeated before the servants of David. **18** And the three sons of Zeruiah were there: Joab and Abishai (Avishay) and Asahel. And Asahel ***was*** swift on his feet, like one of the gazelles which ***are*** in the field. **19** And Asahel pursued after Abner, and he did not turn aside to go to the right or to the left from after Abner. **20** And Abner turned behind him and said, "***Is*** this you, Asahel?" And he said, "***It is*** I." **21** And Abner said to him, "Turn yourself aside to your right or to your left, and seize for yourself one of the young men, and take for yourself his spoil." And Asahel was not willing to turn aside from after him. **22** And Abner again said to Asahel, "Turn yourself aside from after me. Why should I strike you to the ground? And how would I lift up my face to Joab your brother?" **23** And he refused to turn aside, and Abner struck him with the back end of the spear in the belly, and the spear came out from behind him; and he fell there and died in his place. And it was, everyone who came to the place where Asahel had fallen there and died, they stood still. **24** And Joab and Abishai pursued after Abner. And the sun set, and they came to the hill of Ammah (Ama), which ***is*** before Giah (Giach) on the way of the wilderness of Gibeon. **25** And the sons of Benjamin gathered together behind Abner and became one band, and they stood on the top of one hill. **26** And Abner called out to Joab and said, "Shall the sword devour forever? Do you not know that it will be bitter at the end? And how long will you not tell the people to turn back from after their brothers?" **27** And Joab said, "***As*** God lives, if you had not spoken, then surely from the morning the people would have gone up, each from after his brother." **28** And Joab blew the trumpet, and all the people stood still, and they no longer pursued after Israel, and they no longer continued to fight. **29** And Abner and his men went through the Arabah (Arava) all that night, and they crossed the Jordan (Yarden), and went through all the Bithron (Bitron), and came ***to*** Mahanaim. **30** And Joab
returned from after Abner, and he gathered all the people, and of the servants of David nineteen men and Asahel were missing. **31** And the servants of David had struck down of Benjamin, even of the men of Abner, three hundred and sixty men; they died. **32** And they lifted up Asahel and buried him in the tomb of his father, which ***was in*** Bethlehem
(Bet-Lechem). And Joab and his men went all the night, and it became light for them at Hebron.

2:11 1 Kgs 2:11; 2 Sam 5:4,5; 1 Chr 3:4
2:12 Josh 9:3; Josh 10:2,4,12; Josh 18:25
2:13 2 Sam 8:16; 1 Chr 2:16; Jer 41:12
2:14 2 Sam 2:17,26,27; Prov 10:23; Prov 17:14
2:17 2 Sam 3:1
2:18 1 Chr 12:8; Hab 3:19; Ps 18:33
2:19 2 Sam 2:21; Josh 1:7; Josh 23:6
2:21 Judg 14:19
2:22 2 Sam 3:27; 2 Kgs 14:10-12; Prov 29:1
2:23 2 Sam 3:27; 2 Sam 4:6; 2 Sam 20:10
2:26 Gal 5:15; Acts 7:26; Jer 46:10,14
2:27 Gal 5:15; 2 Sam 2:14; Prov 17:14
2:29 Song 2:17
2:31 2 Sam 3:1; 1 Kgs 20:11
2:32 1 Sam 17:58; 1 Chr 2:13-16; 2 Chr 16:14

2:10 *he reigned two years* Yet David reigned seven and a half years in Hebron (2:11). Perhaps Abner needed years to win back the north from the Philistines before Ish-bosheth's rule took hold, or there was a gap after his death. Scripture does not explain, and both fit. The real power was Abner.
2:13 *they met them at the pool of Gibeon together* Gibeon was a town in Benjamin about six miles northwest of Jerusalem. Joab was David's nephew, son of his sister Zeruiah (1 Chr 2:16), and became commander of his army. A large pool cut into the rock has been found at Gibeon, though it is not certain it is this one.
2:14 *Let the young men arise, please, and let them play before us* It sounds like a game, but it was a contest of champions to the death.
2:16 *they fell together* All twenty-four died. Helkath-hazzurim means field of sharp edges or field of blades. The contest settled nothing, and full battle broke out. This is civil war: brothers in the same covenant killing each other for sport, then for real.
2:18 *Asahel was swift on his feet, like one of the gazelles which are in the field* The youngest son of Zeruiah set his eyes on the biggest prize, Abner himself, and would not turn aside.
2:21 *seize for yourself one of the young men, and take for yourself his spoil* Go after someone your own size and take his armor as a trophy. Abner did not want to kill him.
2:22 *how would I lift up my face to Joab your brother?* Abner knew killing Asahel would start a blood feud with Joab.
2:23 *Abner struck him with the back end of the spear in the belly* The butt of a spear was often sharpened or capped with metal to stick in the ground, and the running man rushed onto it. Asahel was brave, but his courage outran his wisdom. Warned twice, he would not listen. Young zeal without listening can be deadly.
2:26 *Shall the sword devour forever?* A question that should have been asked before the first sword was drawn, though Abner started the fight. The key word is brothers. These were not Philistines. When believers turn on each other in a church or a family, nobody really wins.
2:27 *if you had not spoken* Hard to follow. Joab may mean there would have been no battle had Abner not proposed the contest that morning, or that the chase would have gone on till morning had Abner not called for peace. Either way, he blew the trumpet to stop.
2:29 *Abner and his men went through the Arabah all that night* The Arabah here is the deep Jordan valley.
2:31 *three hundred and sixty men* Against nineteen and Asahel. David's men won a clear victory.
2:32 *buried him in the tomb of his father, which was in Bethlehem* David's hometown and the family home of Zeruiah's sons. Asahel died in battle after fair warning, but Joab would treat it as murder. Chapter 3 shows what that grudge cost.

2 SAMUEL 3

David's Sons Born in Hebron

1 And the war was long between the house of Saul (Shaul) and the house of David. And David ***was*** going on and ***growing*** stronger, and the house of Saul ***was*** going on and ***growing*** weaker. **2** And sons were born to David in Hebron (Chevron). And his firstborn was Amnon, by Ahinoam (Achino'am) the Jezreelite; **3** and his second ***was*** Chileab (Kilav), by Abigail (Avigayil) the wife of Nabal (Naval) the Carmelite; and the third ***was*** Absalom (Avshalom) the son of Maacah (Ma'akha) the daughter of Talmai (Talmay) king of Geshur; **4** and the fourth ***was*** Adonijah (Adoniya) the son of Haggith (Chagit); and the fifth ***was*** Shephatiah (Shefatya) the son of Abital (Avital); **5** and the sixth ***was*** Ithream (Yitre'am), by Eglah (Egla) the wife of David. These were born to David in Hebron.

Abner Turns to David

6 And it was, while there was war between the house of Saul and the house of David, and Abner (Avner) was strengthening himself in the house of Saul. **7** And Saul ***had*** a concubine, and her name ***was*** Rizpah (Ritspa) the daughter of Aiah (Aya). And he said to Abner, "Why have you gone in to the concubine of my father?" **8** And Abner was very angry over the words of Ish-bosheth (Ish-Boshet), and he said, "***Am*** I a dog's head which ***belongs*** to Judah (Yehuda)? This day I do steadfast love with the house of Saul your father, to his brothers and to his friends, and I have not delivered you into the hand of David; and you charge against me the iniquity of the woman this day? **9** So may God do to Abner, and so may He add to him, for just as the LORD swore to David, so I will do for him: **10** to transfer the kingdom from the house of Saul, and to establish the throne of David over Israel (Yisra'el) and over Judah, from Dan even to Beersheba (Be'er-Sheva)." **11** And he was not able to answer Abner a word again, because he feared him. **12** And Abner sent messengers to David on his behalf, saying, "Whose ***is*** the land?" saying, "Make your covenant with me, and look, my hand ***will be*** with you to bring all Israel around to you." **13** And he said, "Good; I will make a covenant with you. Only one thing I ask of you, saying, 'You will not see my face unless you first bring Michal (Mikhal) the daughter of Saul when you come to see my face.'" **14** And David sent messengers to
Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, saying, "Give ***me*** my wife Michal, whom I betrothed to myself for a hundred foreskins of ***the*** Philistines." **15** And Ish-bosheth sent and took her from ***her*** husband, from Paltiel the son of Laish (Layish). **16** And her husband went with her, going and weeping behind her, as far as Bahurim (Bachurim). And Abner said to him, "Go, return." And he returned. **17** And the word of Abner was with the elders of Israel, saying, "Both yesterday and the day before you were seeking David as king over you. **18** And now act, for the LORD has spoken to David, saying, 'By the hand of David My servant ***I will*** save My people Israel from the hand of the Philistines and from the hand of all their enemies.'" **19** And Abner also spoke in the ears of Benjamin (Binyamin); and Abner also went to speak in the ears of David at Hebron all that was good in the eyes of Israel and in the eyes of all the house of Benjamin. **20** And Abner came to David ***at*** Hebron, and twenty men ***were*** with him. And David made a feast for

3:1 1 Kgs 14:30; 2 Sam 2:17; Gal 5:17
3:2 1 Chr 3:1-4; 2 Sam 13:1-29; Gen 49:3,4
3:3 1 Sam 27:8; 2 Sam 13:37,38; 1 Chr 3:1
3:4 1 Kgs 1:5-18; 1 Kgs 2:13-25
3:6 2 Sam 2:8,9; 2 Kgs 10:23; 2 Chr 25:8
3:7 2 Sam 21:8-11; 2 Sam 16:21,22; 2 Sam 12:8
3:8 Acts 9:4; 2 Sam 9:8; 2 Sam 16:9
3:9 1 Sam 15:28; 1 Kgs 19:2; 2 Sam 3:35
3:10 Judg 20:1; 2 Sam 17:11; 2 Sam 24:2
3:12 Matt 21:9; 2 Sam 19:6; Ps 62:9
3:13 Gen 43:3; Gen 44:23,26; 2 Sam 3:20-23
3:14 1 Sam 18:25,27; 2 Sam 2:10
3:15 1 Sam 25:44
3:16 2 Sam 16:5; 2 Sam 19:16; 2 Sam 17:18
3:18 1 Sam 15:28; 2 Sam 3:9; 1 Sam 13:14
3:19 1 Chr 12:29; 1 Sam 10:20,21; Ps 68:27
3:20 Gen 26:30; Gen 31:54; Esth 1:3

3:1 *David was going on and growing stronger, and the house of Saul was going on and growing weaker* Gibeon was only the beginning. God's promises do not always come true overnight. David was anointed as a young man and still had to wait and fight. If you are waiting on God, take heart. Slow is not the same as stopped.
3:2 *his firstborn was Amnon, by Ahinoam the Jezreelite* Six sons by six mothers. These names will come back. Amnon will sin terribly against his half-sister (chapter 13), and Adonijah will try to seize the throne (1 Kgs 1). Chileab is never mentioned again and may have died young. David's growing house was also a divided house, with many rivals and many claims to the throne.
3:3 *Absalom the son of Maacah the daughter of Talmai king of Geshur* Geshur was a small kingdom northeast of the Sea of Galilee, so this was likely a political marriage to secure a border. Absalom will murder Amnon and try to take his father's throne (chapters 13 to 18).
3:6 *Abner was strengthening himself in the house of Saul* He was the real power behind Ish-bosheth's throne.
3:7 *Why have you gone in to the concubine of my father?* A concubine was a wife of lower rank. Rizpah returns in chapter 21. Taking a dead king's woman was a claim to his throne, as with Absalom (16:21-22) and Adonijah's request for Abishag (1 Kgs 2:22). Scripture does not say if the charge was true, but Abner did not deny it.
3:8 *Am I a dog's head which belongs to Judah?* Do you treat me like a worthless dog, a traitor on David's side? Abner reminded Ish-bosheth that he alone had kept him on the throne.
3:9 *just as the LORD swore to David* Abner knew all along that the LORD had sworn the kingdom to David, and he had fought what he knew was God's will. Dan to Beersheba means the whole land. He changed sides not from repentance but from anger. God can use even a proud man's temper for His purposes.
3:11 *he was not able to answer Abner a word again, because he feared him* A king afraid of his own general is no king at all.
3:12 *Make your covenant with me* A covenant is a binding agreement sealed by oath. Abner offered to deliver the kingdom.
3:13 *unless you first bring Michal the daughter of Saul* Saul gave her to David for a hundred Philistine foreskins (1 Sam 18:25-27), then gave her to Paltiel when David fled (1 Sam 25:44). David's demand was partly a husband's claim and partly political. A daughter of Saul at his side would help the north accept him as Saul's rightful heir.
3:16 *her husband went with her, going and weeping behind her, as far as Bahurim* One of the saddest lines in the book. We are not told what Michal felt, only that Paltiel loved her. The Law forbade taking back a wife who had married another (Deut 24:1-4), though David might argue his marriage was never lawfully ended. Teachers judge it differently. Michal was a piece in a political game. When people use people, someone always pays.
3:17 *Both yesterday and the day before you were seeking David as king over you* Many in the north had wanted David for a long time. The elders were the leaders of the tribes.
3:18 *By the hand of David My servant I will save My people Israel* This exact promise is not recorded elsewhere, but it fits all God said about David (1 Sam 16:12-13; 25:28-30). Abner, who fought God's plan, now preached it. He also spoke to Benjamin, Saul's tribe, the hardest to win.
3:20 *David made a feast for Abner* A shared meal sealed friendship and peace.

Abner and for the men who ***were*** with him. **21** And Abner said to David, "Let me arise and go and gather all Israel to my lord the king, so that they may make a covenant with you, and you will reign over all that your soul desires." And David sent Abner away, and he went in peace.

Joab Murders Abner

22 And look, the servants of David and Joab (Yo'av) came from the raid, and they brought much plunder with them. And Abner ***was*** not with David in Hebron, for he had sent him away, and he had gone in peace. **23** And Joab and all the army which ***was*** with him came, and they told Joab, saying, "Abner the son of Ner came to the king, and he has sent him away, and he has gone in peace." **24** And Joab came to the king and said, "What have you done? Look, Abner came to you; why ***is*** this, ***that*** you have sent him away, and he has fully gone? **25** You know Abner the son of Ner, that he came to deceive you, and to know your going out and your coming in, and to know all that you ***are*** doing." **26** And Joab went out from David and sent messengers after Abner, and they brought him back from the cistern of Sirah (Sira). And David did not know. **27** And Abner returned ***to*** Hebron, and Joab turned him aside into the middle of the gate to speak with him quietly, and he struck him there ***in*** the belly, and he died, for the blood of Asahel his brother. **28** And David heard afterward, and he said, "I and my kingdom ***are*** innocent before the LORD forever of the blood of Abner the son of Ner. **29** Let it whirl on the head of Joab and on all the house of his father; and let there not be cut off from the house of Joab one who has a discharge, and one with a skin disease, and one who takes hold of the spindle, and one who falls by the sword, and one lacking bread." **30** And Joab and Abishai (Avishay) his brother killed Abner, because he had killed Asahel their brother at Gibeon (Givon) in the battle. **31** And David said to Joab and to all the people who ***were*** with him, "Tear your garments and gird yourselves ***with*** sackcloth and mourn before Abner." And King David ***was*** walking after the bier. **32** And they buried Abner in Hebron, and the king lifted up his voice and wept at the grave of Abner, and all the people wept. **33** And the king lamented over Abner and said, "Should Abner die like the death of a fool? **34** Your hands ***were*** not bound, and your feet were not brought near to bronze fetters; as one falls before sons of injustice, you have fallen." And all the people again wept over him. **35** And all the people came to make David eat bread while ***it was*** still day; and David swore, saying, "So may God do to me, and so may He add, if before the sun sets I taste bread or anything at all." **36** And all the people took notice, and it was good in their eyes, just as all that the king did was good in the eyes of all the people. **37** And all the people and all Israel knew on that day that it was not from the king to kill Abner the son of Ner. **38** And the king said to his servants, "Do you not know that a leader and a great ***man*** has fallen this day in Israel? **39** And I ***am*** weak this day, and anointed king; and these men, the sons of Zeruiah (Tseruya), ***are too*** hard for me. May the LORD repay the doer of the evil according to his evil."

2 SAMUEL 4

The Murder of Ish-bosheth

1 And the son of Saul (Shaul) heard that Abner (Avner) had died in Hebron (Chevron), and his hands dropped, and all Israel (Yisra'el) was terrified. **2** And two men, commanders of marauding bands, were ***with*** the son of Saul; the name of the one ***was*** Baanah (Ba'ana), and the name of the second ***was*** Rechab (Rekhav), the sons of Rimmon (Rimon) the Beerothite, of the sons of Benjamin (Binyamin); for Beeroth (Be'erot)

3:21 1 Kgs 11:37; 2 Sam 3:10,12; 2 Sam 2:9
3:24 2 Sam 3:8,39; 2 Sam 19:5-7; Num 23:11
3:25 Deut 28:6; Isa 37:28; 2 Sam 3:27
3:26 Prov 26:23-26; Prov 27:4-6
3:27 2 Sam 20:9,10; 1 Kgs 2:5,32; Deut 27:24
3:28 Gen 9:6; Exod 21:12; Num 35:33
3:29 Rev 16:6; 2 Sam 1:16; Judg 9:24,56,57
3:30 Prov 28:17; Acts 28:4; 2 Sam 2:19-23
3:31 2 Sam 1:2,11; Josh 7:6; Judg 11:35
3:32 Prov 24:17; Job 31:28; 2 Sam 1:12
3:33 2 Sam 13:12,13,28,29; Prov 18:7; Eccl 2:15,16
3:34 Judg 16:21; Ps 107:10,11; Job 24:14
3:35 2 Sam 12:17; 2 Sam 1:12; Ruth 1:17
3:36 2 Sam 15:6,13; Ps 62:9; Mark 7:37
3:38 2 Sam 3:12; 2 Sam 2:8; 1 Sam 14:50,51
3:39 2 Tim 4:14; Ps 101:8; 1 Kgs 2:5,6,33,34
4:1 Ezra 4:4; Isa 13:7; Jer 6:24
4:2 Josh 18:25; Josh 9:17; 2 Sam 3:22

3:21 *he went in peace* Said three times in a few verses (3:21-23). The writer wants us sure of it. David gave his word for Abner's safety.
3:25 *he came to deceive you* Joab called Abner a spy. Partly concern for David, perhaps, but Abner had killed his brother, and if he brought Israel to David, he might take Joab's place as commander. Revenge and ambition easily dress themselves up as loyalty.
3:26 *David did not know* Joab acted behind the king's back. Abner had no reason to suspect anything.
3:27 *he struck him there in the belly, and he died, for the blood of Asahel his brother* This was murder. Asahel died in battle after two warnings, and Abner was under the king's peace. Hebron was a city of refuge, where a slayer was safe until a fair trial (Josh 20:7; 21:13). The avenger of blood had rights (Num 35:19), but this was not murder to avenge. The Lord says, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay" (Rom 12:19). Some teachers weigh Joab's claim differently.
3:28 *I and my kingdom are innocent before the LORD forever of the blood of Abner* David publicly cleared himself of any part in it.
3:29 *one who takes hold of the spindle* A discharge and skin disease made a man unclean. The spindle was used for spinning thread, women's work, so it may mean a man too weak to fight. David asked God to bring Joab's guilt back on his own house.
3:30 *at Gibeon in the battle* The writer makes it plain. Abner killed Asahel in war, not in murder.
3:31 *King David was walking after the bier* Sackcloth was rough goat's-hair cloth worn in grief, and the bier was the frame on which the body was carried. David made Joab himself mourn.
3:34 *Your hands were not bound* Abner was not a prisoner fairly tried but a free man struck down by treachery. David refused to eat until sunset. His grief was public and real.
3:37 *it was not from the king to kill Abner the son of Ner* This mattered. If the north believed David lured Abner to Hebron to kill him, they would never trust him. God protected David's name, and the kingdom stayed on its path to unity.
3:39 *the sons of Zeruiah, are too hard for me* Joab was too powerful, useful and popular to punish, so David left him to God. Many think David was too soft, and Joab killed again (20:8-10). On his deathbed David told Solomon to deal with him (1 Kgs 2:5-6). Leaders who will not deal with sin in those close to them often pay for it later. Still, God did repay.
4:1 *his hands dropped, and all Israel was terrified* To have your hands drop is to lose all strength and courage. Ish-bosheth had been propped up by Abner, and the writer does not even use his name here. When a leader's power rests on another man instead of on God, it falls when that man falls.
4:2 *the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, of the sons of Benjamin* These raiding captains came from Saul's own tribe. Beeroth was one of the Gibeonite towns (Josh 9:17) counted to Benjamin. Ish-bosheth was betrayed from inside his own house.

also is reckoned to Benjamin. **3** And the Beerothites fled to Gittaim (Gitayim), and they have been sojourners there until this day. **4** And Jonathan (Yehonatan) the son of Saul ***had*** a son stricken in ***the*** feet. He was five years old when the report of Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel (Yizre'el), and his nurse lifted him up and fled. And it was, as she hurried to flee, and he fell and became lame. And his name ***was*** Mephi-bosheth (Mefivoshet). **5** And the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, Rechab and Baanah, went, and they came in the heat of the day to the house of Ish-bosheth (Ish-Boshet), and he ***was*** lying ***down for*** the noonday rest. **6** And they came there into the middle of the house, taking wheat, and they struck him in the belly; and Rechab and Baanah his brother escaped. **7** And they came into the house, and he ***was*** lying on his bed in his bedchamber; and they struck him and killed him and removed his head; and they took his head and went ***by*** the way of the Arabah (Arava) all the night. **8** And they brought the head of Ish-bosheth to David ***at*** Hebron, and they said to the king, "Look, the head of Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, your enemy, who sought your life; and the LORD has given to my lord the king vengeance this day on Saul and on his seed." **9** And David answered Rechab and Baanah his brother, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, and he said to them, "***As*** the LORD lives, who has ransomed my soul from all trouble, **10** when the one who told me, saying, 'Look, Saul has died,' and he was like a bearer of good news in his own eyes, I took hold of him and killed him in Ziklag (Tsiqlag), that ***was*** my giving to him ***for his*** good news. **11** How much more, when wicked men have killed a righteous man in his own house on his bed! And now, shall I not require his blood from your hand and remove you from the earth?" **12** And David commanded the young men, and they killed them and cut off their hands and their feet and hanged ***them*** by the pool in Hebron. And the head of Ish-bosheth they took, and they buried ***it*** in the tomb of Abner in Hebron.

2 SAMUEL 5

David King over All Israel

1 And all the tribes of Israel (Yisra'el) came to David ***at*** Hebron (Chevron), and they spoke, saying, "Look, we ***are*** your bone and your flesh. **2** Both yesterday and the day before, when Saul (Shaul) was king over us, you were the one who led out and brought in Israel. And the LORD said to you, 'You will shepherd My people Israel, and you will become ruler over Israel.'" **3** And all the elders of Israel came to the king ***at*** Hebron, and King David made a covenant with them at Hebron before the LORD; and they anointed David as king over Israel. **4** David ***was*** thirty years old when he became king; he reigned forty years. **5** In Hebron he reigned over Judah (Yehuda) seven years and six months, and in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) he reigned thirty-three years over all Israel and Judah.

4:3 Neh 11:33; 1 Sam 31:7
4:4 2 Sam 9:3; 1 Chr 8:34; 1 Chr 9:40
4:5 1 Thess 5:4; 2 Chr 24:25; 2 Chr 25:27
4:6 2 Sam 2:23; 2 Sam 3:27; 2 Sam 20:10
4:7 1 Sam 17:54; 1 Sam 31:9; 2 Kgs 10:6,7
4:8 1 Sam 25:29; 1 Sam 23:15; 1 Sam 18:11
4:9 1 Kgs 1:29; Gen 48:16; Ps 31:5-7
4:10 2 Sam 1:2-16
4:11 Ps 9:12; Gen 9:5,6; 1 Kgs 2:32
4:12 2 Sam 1:15; 2 Sam 3:32; Ps 55:23
5:1 1 Chr 11:1-3; 2 Sam 19:13; 1 Chr 12:23-40
5:2 Matt 2:6; 2 Sam 7:7; 1 Sam 18:13,16
5:3 Acts 13:22; 2 Sam 2:4; 2 Kgs 11:17
5:4 Luke 3:23; Acts 13:22; 1 Chr 26:31
5:5 Acts 13:22; 2 Sam 2:11; 1 Chr 3:4

4:3 *the Beerothites fled to Gittaim* Some think the first people of Beeroth fled when Saul attacked the Gibeonites (21:1-2), and men of Benjamin settled in their town. Scripture does not say for certain.
4:4 *his name was Mephibosheth* The writer pauses to show that with Ish-bosheth gone, the only male heir of Saul's line left was a lame child. No one in Saul's house could stand against David. It also sets up chapter 9. In a chapter full of treachery, God quietly plants a seed of mercy.
4:5 *he was lying down for the noonday rest* People rested in the hottest part of the day, so the house would be quiet. The killers were his own officers, and he was asleep in his own bed. This was a cowardly crime.
4:6 *taking wheat* They may have pretended to collect grain for their troops, which gave them a reason to be in the house.
4:7 *went by the way of the Arabah all the night* They traveled down the Jordan valley through the night to reach David. The writer tells it plainly and quickly. The point is the treachery, and what David will do about it.
4:8 *the LORD has given to my lord the king vengeance this day* They put God's name on their murder. People still do wrong and say God was behind it. God had promised David the throne, and He would give it in His way and time. He did not need assassins. They also twisted the facts, since it was Saul, not his son, who sought David's life.
4:9 *who has ransomed my soul from all trouble* To ransom is to set free by paying a price. David was saying, the LORD has always rescued me. I never needed men like you to save me, and I do not need you now.
4:10 *I took hold of him and killed him in Ziklag* If David punished the Amalekite who only claimed to have killed Saul, a king who had hunted him, how much more would he punish these men.
4:11 *wicked men have killed a righteous man in his own house on his bed* Righteous here means innocent of any crime that deserved death, not perfect. God had said since Noah that whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed (Gen 9:6), and no ransom could be taken for a murderer (Num 35:31). David acted as a king must when innocent blood is shed.
4:12 *cut off their hands and their feet and hanged them by the pool in Hebron* The hands that killed and the feet that ran with the head were put on public display as a warning. This is a record of justice in an ancient kingdom, not a pattern for us. God gives government the duty of punishing evil (Rom 13:4), but calls each of us to love our enemies and leave vengeance to Him.
4:12 *they buried it in the tomb of Abner in Hebron* David gave Saul's son an honorable burial. The way to God's blessing is never through sin. When the throne came in chapter 5, no one could say David had bloody hands in getting it. God does not need us to cut corners to keep His promises.
5:1 *we are your bone and your flesh* With Abner and Ish-bosheth gone, the north had no leader. They gave three reasons for making David king. First, family. They were one people, and the civil war had been a war between brothers.
5:2 *You will shepherd My people Israel* Second, his record, for David had led Israel's armies even under Saul. Third and most important, God's call. A shepherd leads, feeds and protects. God is the Shepherd of Israel (Ps 23:1), and Jesus is "the good shepherd" (John 10:11), who lays down His life for the sheep.
5:3 *King David made a covenant with them at Hebron before the LORD* The king promised to rule justly under God and the people promised to follow him. Israel's king was never meant to be above God's law (Deut 17:18-20). This was David's third anointing, after Bethlehem and Judah. God is never late, even when we think He is slow.
5:4 *David was thirty years old when he became king* Thirty was the age for full service (Num 4:3). Joseph was thirty before Pharaoh (Gen 41:46), and Jesus was about thirty when He began His ministry (Luke 3:23).
5:5 *in Jerusalem he reigned thirty-three years* Most conservative scholars date David's reign about 1010 to 970 B.C., which places the taking of Jerusalem about 1003 B.C. Some date these a few years differently. Jerusalem has been the center of the story of God's people ever since.

Jerusalem Taken

6 And the king and his men went ***to*** Jerusalem against the Jebusite, the inhabitant of the land; and he spoke to David, saying, "You will not come in here, but the blind and the lame will turn you away," saying, "David will not come in here." **7** And David captured the stronghold of Zion (Tsiyon); it ***is*** the city of David. **8** And David said on that day, "Whoever strikes a Jebusite, let him reach by the water shaft the lame and the blind, who are hated by the soul of David." Therefore they say, "***The*** blind and ***the*** lame will not come into the house." **9** And David dwelt in the stronghold and called it the city of David. And David built all around, from the Millo and inward. **10** And David went on, going on and becoming great, and the LORD God of armies ***was*** with him.

David's House and Family

11 And Hiram (Chiram) king of Tyre (Tsor) sent messengers to David, and cedar trees, and craftsmen of wood and craftsmen of wall stone; and they built a house for David. **12** And David knew that the LORD had established him as king over Israel, and that He had exalted his kingdom for the sake of His people Israel. **13** And David took more concubines and wives from Jerusalem after he came from Hebron, and more sons and daughters were born to David. **14** And these ***are*** the names of those born to him in Jerusalem: Shammua (Shamua) and Shobab (Shovav) and Nathan (Natan) and Solomon (Shelomo), **15** and Ibhar (Yivchar) and Elishua and Nepheg (Nefeg) and Japhia (Yafia), **16** and Elishama and Eliada (Elyada) and Eliphelet (Elifelet).

Victories over the Philistines

17 And the Philistines heard that they had anointed David as king over Israel, and all the Philistines went up to seek David; and David heard and went down to the stronghold. **18** And the Philistines came and were spread out in the valley of Rephaim (Refa'im). **19** And David inquired of the LORD, saying, "Shall I go up against the Philistines? Will You give them into my hand?" And the LORD said to David, "Go up, for I will certainly give the Philistines into your hand." **20** And David came to Baal-perazim (Ba'al-Peratsim), and David struck them down there, and he said, "The LORD has burst through my enemies before me, like a bursting out of waters." Therefore he called the name of that place Baal-perazim. **21** And they abandoned their idols there, and David and his men carried them off. **22** And the Philistines went up yet again and were spread out in the valley of Rephaim. **23** And David inquired of the LORD, and He said, "You shall not go up; go around behind them, and come at them from in front of ***the*** balsam trees. **24** And let it be, when you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees, then you shall act decisively, for then the LORD has gone out before you to

5:6 Judg 1:8; Josh 15:63; Josh 18:28
5:7 Rom 9:33; Heb 12:22; Rev 14:1
5:8 Josh 15:16,17; 1 Sam 17:25; 1 Chr 11:6-9
5:9 1 Kgs 9:15,24; 1 Kgs 11:27; 2 Chr 32:5
5:10 2 Sam 3:1; Job 17:9; Prov 4:18
5:11 1 Chr 14:1; 1 Kgs 5:1,2,8,9; 2 Sam 7:2
5:12 2 Sam 7:16; 1 Chr 14:2; 1 Kgs 10:9
5:13 1 Chr 3:9; Deut 17:17; Gen 25:5,6
5:14 Matt 1:6; Luke 3:31; 1 Chr 3:5-9
5:15 1 Chr 3:6; 1 Chr 14:5
5:16 1 Chr 14:7; 1 Chr 3:8
5:17 2 Sam 23:14; 1 Chr 11:16; 1 Chr 14:8,9
5:18 Josh 15:8; 2 Sam 23:13; Gen 14:5
5:19 2 Sam 2:1; 1 Sam 23:2,4; 1 Sam 30:7,8
5:20 Isa 28:21
5:21 Deut 7:5,25; 1 Sam 5:2-6; 1 Chr 14:11,12
5:22 1 Kgs 20:22; 1 Chr 14:13
5:23 Josh 8:2,7; 1 Chr 14:14; Matt 9:29,30
5:24 2 Kgs 7:6; Judg 4:14; Judg 7:15

5:6 *the blind and the lame will turn you away* Jerusalem sat on the border of Judah and Benjamin and belonged to neither, since Israel had never taken it (Josh 15:63; Judg 1:21). It was a fine capital for a united nation. With deep valleys on three sides, the Jebusites mocked that even their blind and lame could defend it.
5:7 *David captured the stronghold of Zion* Zion was the fortified hill. The name later grew to mean the temple mount, then all Jerusalem, and finally God's people and His heavenly city (Ps 2:6; Heb 12:22).
5:8 *let him reach by the water shaft* The city drew water from a spring outside the wall through a tunnel, and many believe David's men climbed it. Joab went up first and became commander (1 Chr 11:6). Which tunnel, if any, is still debated.
5:8 *the lame and the blind, who are hated by the soul of David* David turned the Jebusite taunt back on them. It was not a statement about disabled people, for in chapter 9 David welcomes lame Mephibosheth to his table. The proverb that grew from this day is not clear, and good teachers explain it differently.
5:9 *from the Millo and inward* The Millo was likely a filled-in terrace or set of supporting walls on the hillside that made room for more buildings. The word comes from a Hebrew root meaning to fill.
5:10 *the LORD God of armies was with him* This is the secret of David's rise. It was not his skill or army but God's presence. The LORD of armies, the LORD of hosts in older Bibles, commands all the armies of heaven and earth.
5:11 *Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and cedar trees* Tyre was a rich port north of Israel, in what is now Lebanon, famous for cedar. The nations now saw Israel as a real kingdom. Hiram reigned into Solomon's time (1 Kgs 5), so the writer may group this by subject rather than strict time order.
5:12 *for the sake of His people Israel* God did not make David king for David's sake. Any position God gives us, at work, at church or at home, is given so we can serve others, not ourselves.
5:13 *David took more concubines and wives from Jerusalem* Scripture tells us plainly without approving it. The Law warned the king not to multiply wives (Deut 17:17). This would bring jealousy, rivalry and sin into his family, and Solomon would follow the pattern to his ruin (1 Kgs 11:1-4).
5:14 *Nathan and Solomon* Through Solomon the royal line came to Joseph, the legal father of Jesus (Matt 1:6-16). Through Nathan came Mary's line, according to many Bible teachers who read Luke's genealogy that way (Luke 3:31). God was already preparing the family line of the Messiah.
5:17 *all the Philistines went up to seek David* As long as Israel was divided, the Philistines were content. A united Israel under David was a threat. David went down to a stronghold, likely one he knew from his wilderness years.
5:19 *David inquired of the LORD* The Philistines spread out in the valley of Rephaim, southwest of Jerusalem. David did what he did in his best moments. He did not assume that being king meant he no longer needed to ask.
5:20 *like a bursting out of waters* Picture a flood breaking through a dam. Baal-perazim means master of breakthroughs. David gave the credit to the LORD.
5:21 *they abandoned their idols there* The Philistine gods could not even save themselves. David had them burned (1 Chr 14:12), as the Law commanded (Deut 7:5). Years earlier the Philistines carried off the ark (1 Sam 4:11). Now Israel carried off their idols.
5:23 *You shall not go up; go around behind them* Same enemy, same valley, but a different plan. Many leaders would have repeated what worked last time. Yesterday's victory does not mean we stop asking God today.
5:24 *when you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees* The sound in the treetops was the LORD's army moving ahead of David. David's job was to wait for it, then move.

strike the camp of the Philistines." **25** And David did so, just as the LORD had commanded him, and he struck down the Philistines from Geba (Geva) until you come ***to*** Gezer.

2 SAMUEL 6

The Ark on a New Cart

1 And David again gathered every chosen ***man*** in Israel (Yisra'el), thirty thousand. **2** And David arose and went, and all the people who ***were*** with him, from Baalah (Ba'ala) of Judah (Yehuda), to bring up from there the ark of God, over which ***the*** name is called, the name of the LORD of armies, who sits ***on*** the cherubim. **3** And they made the ark of God ride on a new cart, and they carried it from the house of Abinadab (Avinadav), which ***was*** on the hill; and Uzzah (Uza) and Ahio (Achyo), the sons of Abinadab, ***were*** leading the new cart. **4** And they carried it from the house of Abinadab, which ***was*** on the hill, with the ark of God; and Ahio ***was*** walking before the ark. **5** And David and all the house of Israel ***were*** playing before the LORD with all ***kinds of instruments of*** fir wood, and with lyres and with harps and with tambourines and with rattles and with cymbals. **6** And they came to the threshing floor of Nacon (Nakhon), and Uzzah stretched out ***his hand*** to the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen had stumbled. **7** And the anger of the LORD burned against Uzzah, and God struck him down there for the error, and he died there beside the ark of God. **8** And David was angry because the LORD had broken out ***with*** a breaking out against Uzzah; and he called that place Perez-uzzah (Perets-Uza) until this day. **9** And David feared the LORD on that day, and he said, "How shall the ark of the LORD come to me?" **10** And David was not willing to turn aside the ark of the LORD to himself, to the city of David; and David turned it aside ***to*** the house of Obed-edom (Oved-Edom) the Gittite. **11** And the ark of the LORD remained ***in*** the house of Obed-edom the Gittite three months, and the LORD blessed Obed-edom and all his household.

The Ark Brought to the City of David

12 And it was told to King David, saying, "The LORD has blessed the household of Obed-edom and all that ***belongs*** to him, for the sake of the ark of God." And David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom ***to*** the city of David with rejoicing. **13** And it was, when the bearers of the ark of the LORD had stepped six steps, and he sacrificed an ox and a fatling. **14** And David ***was*** dancing with all ***his*** strength before the LORD, and David ***was*** girded ***with*** an ephod of linen. **15** And David and all the house of Israel ***were*** bringing up the ark of the LORD with shouting and with

5:25 1 Chr 14:16; Josh 16:10
6:1 Acts 7:45; 1 Chr 13:1-4; 2 Sam 5:1
6:2 Acts 7:45; 1 Sam 7:1; 1 Sam 4:4
6:3 1 Sam 6:7; Num 4:5-12; Num 7:9
6:4 1 Chr 13:7; 1 Sam 7:1,2
6:5 Acts 7:45; 1 Chr 13:8; Ps 150:3-5
6:6 1 Chr 13:9; Num 4:15,19,20
6:7 Acts 7:45; 1 Sam 6:19; Lev 10:1-3
6:8 Acts 7:45; 1 Chr 13:11,12; Jonah 4:1,9
6:9 Acts 7:45; Ps 119:120; Num 17:12,13
6:10 Acts 7:45; 1 Chr 26:4-8; 1 Chr 13:13,14
6:11 Acts 7:45; Gen 30:27; Gen 39:5,23
6:12 Acts 7:45; Matt 10:42; 1 Chr 15:1-3,25
6:13 Acts 7:45; Num 4:15; 1 Kgs 8:5
6:14 Acts 7:45; 1 Sam 2:18,28; Exod 15:20
6:15 Acts 7:45; Ps 132:18; 1 Chr 15:16,25,28

5:25 *from Geba until you come to Gezer* David did just as the LORD commanded, and the Philistines were driven back toward their own land. David did not lean on his experience. He leaned on the LORD.
6:1 *every chosen man in Israel, thirty thousand* This was a national event. David wanted the whole nation to share in bringing God's presence to the new capital.
6:2 *from Baalah of Judah* Baalah is another name for Kiriath-jearim (Josh 15:9; 1 Chr 13:6), about eight or nine miles west of Jerusalem. The ark had been there since the Philistines sent it back (1 Sam 6:21 to 7:2), and Saul showed little interest in it (1 Chr 13:3).
6:2 *who sits on the cherubim* The ark was a gold-covered chest about three and three quarter feet long, holding the tablets of the Ten Commandments. Its lid was the mercy seat, with two golden cherubim over it (Exod 25:10-22). It was the place of God's throne on earth, not a lucky charm.
6:3 *they made the ark of God ride on a new cart* A new cart sounds respectful, but it was not what God said. The ark was to be carried on poles on the shoulders of the Kohathite Levites (Exod 25:14; Num 7:9). The Philistines had used a new cart (1 Sam 6:7-8). David copied the Philistines instead of reading God's Word.
6:3 *Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab* These men had grown up with the ark in their house. Familiarity may have made them careless.
6:5 *playing before the LORD with all kinds of instruments* Their worship was loud, joyful and sincere. But sincere is not the same as obedient.
6:6 *Uzzah stretched out his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it* A threshing floor was a flat, hard area where grain was beaten out. The oxen stumbled, the cart lurched, and Uzzah reached out to keep the ark from falling.
6:7 *God struck him down there for the error* This is one of the hardest verses in the book. No one was to touch the holy things, or they would die (Num 4:15), and Israel had seen Beth-shemesh (1 Sam 6:19-20). The trip was wrong from the start. With Levites carrying it, there would have been no oxen to stumble (1 Chr 15:13).
6:7 *he died there beside the ark of God* Uzzah treated the ark as though it needed his protection. God was also teaching Israel at a new beginning, as with Nadab and Abihu (Lev 10:1-3) and Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11). Scripture does not tell us Uzzah's eternal state. We come near now through the blood of Jesus (Heb 10:19-22).
6:8 *David was angry* The same word for breaking out was used against the Philistines in 5:20. Now God broke out against His own people. David's anger is honest. It is not wrong to bring our confusion to God, but we must not stop there.
6:9 *How shall the ark of the LORD come to me?* David's anger turned to fear, and that was a good question. How can a holy God dwell among sinful people? The whole Bible answers it, and the final answer is the cross. David's fear led him back to God's Word.
6:10 *the house of Obed-edom the Gittite* A Gittite was usually a man from Gath, though some think he was a Levite from Gath-rimmon (Josh 21:24-25). Obed-edom is later listed among Levites serving at the ark (1 Chr 15:18, 24).
6:11 *the LORD blessed Obed-edom and all his household* The same ark that brought death to Uzzah brought blessing to Obed-edom. The difference was not in the ark but in how God's presence was received.
6:13 *the bearers of the ark of the LORD had stepped six steps* This time David did it God's way. He called the Levites and had them carry it on their shoulders with the poles (1 Chr 15:15). The sacrifice after six steps thanked God and sought His favor. David was taking no chances with God's holiness.
6:14 *David was dancing with all his strength before the LORD* The linen ephod was a simple garment worn by priests and those serving before the LORD (1 Sam 2:18). David had laid aside his royal robes. God's holiness did not kill David's joy. It shaped it. Reverence and joy belong together.

the sound of a trumpet. **16** And it was, ***as*** the ark of the LORD came ***into*** the city of David, and Michal (Mikhal) the daughter of Saul (Shaul) looked down through the window, and she saw King David leaping and dancing before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart. **17** And they brought in the ark of the LORD and set it in its place in the midst of the tent which David had pitched for it; and David offered up burnt offerings before the LORD, and peace offerings. **18** And David finished offering up the burnt offering and the peace offerings, and he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of armies. **19** And he distributed to all the people, to all the multitude of Israel, from man even to woman, to each one cake of bread and one date cake and one raisin cake. And all the people went, each to his house.

Michal Despises David

20 And David returned to bless his household. And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and she said, "How the king of Israel has honored himself this day, who has uncovered himself this day in the eyes of the maidservants of his servants, as one of the worthless ***men*** shamelessly uncovers himself!" **21** And David said to Michal, "***It was*** before the LORD, who chose me above your father and above all his household, to appoint me ruler over the people of the LORD, over Israel; and I will play before the LORD. **22** And I will demean myself still more than this, and I will be lowly in my own eyes; and with the maidservants of whom you have spoken, with them I will be honored." **23** And to Michal the daughter of Saul there was no child until the day of her death.

2 SAMUEL 7

David Wants to Build a House

1 And it was, when the king dwelt in his house, and the LORD had given him rest all around from all his enemies, **2** and the king said to Nathan (Natan) the prophet, "See now, I ***am*** dwelling in a house of cedar, and the ark of God ***is*** dwelling in the midst of the curtain." **3** And Nathan said to the king, "All that ***is*** in your heart, go, do, for the LORD ***is*** with you."

The LORD's Covenant with David

4 And it was in that night, and the word of the LORD came to Nathan, saying, **5** "Go, and say to My servant, to David, 'Thus says the LORD: Are you the one who will build for Me a house for My dwelling? **6** For I have not dwelt in a house from the day I brought up the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) from Egypt (Mitsrayim) even to this day, and I have been going about in a tent and in a tabernacle. **7** In all ***places*** where I have gone about among all the sons of Israel, did I speak a word with one of the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd My people Israel, saying, "Why have you not built for Me a house of cedar?"' **8** And now, thus you shall say to My servant, to David, 'Thus says the LORD of armies: I took you from the pasture, from after the flock, to be ruler over My people, over Israel. **9** And I have been with you wherever you went, and I have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the

6:16 Luke 6:23; Acts 7:45; 1 Chr 15:29
6:17 Acts 7:45; 1 Chr 15:1; 2 Chr 1:4
6:18 Acts 3:26; Acts 7:45; 1 Kgs 8:55
6:19 Neh 8:10; 1 Chr 16:3; 2 Chr 30:24
6:20 Acts 7:45; 2 Sam 6:16; 2 Sam 6:14,16
6:21 Acts 13:22; Acts 7:45; 1 Sam 13:14
6:22 Acts 7:45; 1 Pet 4:14; Isa 50:6
6:23 Matt 1:25; Acts 7:45; 1 Sam 1:6-8
7:1 Acts 7:46; 1 Chr 17:1-15; Dan 4:29,30
7:2 Acts 7:46; 2 Sam 5:11; 2 Sam 12:1
7:3 1 Kgs 8:17,18; 1 Chr 22:7; 1 Chr 28:2
7:4 Num 12:6; 1 Chr 17:3; Amos 3:7
7:5 John 10:35; 1 Kgs 5:3; 1 Kgs 8:16-19
7:6 Acts 7:44; 2 Cor 6:16; 1 Kgs 8:16
7:7 Matt 2:6; John 21:15; Acts 21:28
7:8 Acts 13:22; 2 Sam 6:21; 1 Sam 16:11,12
7:9 2 Sam 5:10; 1 Chr 17:8; Ps 18:37-42

6:16 *Michal the daughter of Saul looked down through the window* Not the wife of David, but the daughter of Saul. She saw things as her father did. Saul cared little for the ark and much for his own dignity. Michal looked down on David from the window and in her heart, watching from a distance instead of joining in.
6:17 *the tent which David had pitched for it* The tabernacle of Moses was at Gibeon at this time (1 Chr 16:39; 2 Chr 1:3-4). David made a new tent in Jerusalem until a temple could be built.
6:17 *burnt offerings before the LORD, and peace offerings* A burnt offering was burned whole as an act of full surrender. A peace offering was shared, part burned to God and the rest eaten by the worshipers in fellowship with Him (Lev 3; 7:11-15).
6:19 *from man even to woman* Every person went home with bread, a date cake and a raisin cake. This was a feast for the whole nation.
6:20 *who has uncovered himself this day in the eyes of the maidservants* The linen ephod was a short garment, and David may have shown more than royal robes would have. But Michal's real problem was not his clothing. It was that the king had made himself lowly.
6:21 *who chose me above your father and above all his household* David reminded her that God had chosen him over Saul. His dancing was before the LORD, not before people.
6:22 *I will be lowly in my own eyes* David cared more about God's honor than his own. When others worship with joy, are we like Michal at the window with a critical heart? Jesus humbled Himself far more, even to death on a cross (Phil 2:5-8). We should never be too proud to worship Him.
6:23 *there was no child until the day of her death* Scripture does not say whether this was God's judgment, David no longer living with her as his wife, or both. Either way, no child of Saul through Michal would sit on David's throne.
7:1 *the LORD had given him rest all around from all his enemies* This chapter likely comes after some of the wars in chapter 8, since the writer often groups by subject. God had promised that when He gave rest, He would choose a place for His name (Deut 12:10-11).
7:2 *the ark of God is dwelling in the midst of the curtain* Cedar was the finest wood. David lived in comfort while the ark sat in a tent, and that bothered him. His desire came from a good heart. He wanted God honored above himself. Nathan the prophet appears here for the first time.
7:3 *All that is in your heart, go, do* It sounded like good advice, but Nathan spoke before he had heard from God. Even good men can give their own opinion when they should wait on the LORD.
7:5 *Are you the one who will build for Me a house* God corrected His prophet before morning, and He still called David My servant. God was not angry. He honored David's desire, but He had a different plan.
7:6 *I have been going about in a tent and in a tabernacle* God moved with His people and never asked for a house. Heaven cannot contain Him, much less a house built by men (1 Kgs 8:27). Everything good comes from God to us, not from us to God. David was also a man of war, and the temple would be built by a man of peace (1 Chr 22:8).
7:8 *I took you from the pasture, from after the flock* David had been the youngest son, so overlooked that his own father did not bring him in when Samuel came (1 Sam 16:11). God took him from there.
7:9 *I will make for you a great name* This echoes God's promise to Abraham (Gen 12:2). The covenant with David builds on the covenant with Abraham. Three thousand years later, David's name is still known around the world.

great ones who ***are*** on the earth. **10** And I will appoint a place
for My people, for Israel, and I will plant it, and it will dwell
in its place and not be disturbed again; and the sons of injus-
tice will not again afflict it as at the first, **11** and from the day
that I appointed judges over My people Israel. And I will give
you rest from all your enemies. And the LORD declares to you
that the LORD will make a house for you. **12** When your days
are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, and I will
raise up your seed after you, who will come out from your
inward parts, and I will establish his kingdom. **13** He shall
build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of
his kingdom forever. **14** I will be a father to him, and he will
be a son to Me. When he commits iniquity, I will correct him
with a rod of men and with strokes of the sons of mankind;
15 and My steadfast love will not depart from him, as I
removed ***it*** from Saul (Shaul), whom I removed from before
you. **16** And your house and your kingdom will be estab-
lished forever before you; your throne will be established
forever.'" **17** According to all these words and according to
all this vision, so Nathan spoke to David.

David's Prayer

18 And King David went in and sat before the LORD, and he
said, "Who ***am*** I, O Lord GOD, and what ***is*** my house, that You
have brought me this far? **19** And this was yet small in Your
eyes, O Lord GOD, and You have also spoken concerning the
house of Your servant for a long time to come; and this ***is*** the
law of mankind, O Lord GOD. **20** And what more shall David
speak to You? And You, You know Your servant, O Lord GOD.
21 For the sake of Your word, and according to Your own
heart, You have done all this greatness, to make Your ser-
vant know ***it***. **22** Therefore You are great, O Lord GOD; for
there is none like You, and there is no God except You,
according to all that we have heard with our ears. **23** And
who ***is*** like Your people, like Israel, one nation on the earth,
whom God went to ransom for Himself as a people, and to
make for Himself a name, and to do for you the greatness and
awesome ***deeds*** for Your land, before Your people whom You
ransomed for Yourself from Egypt, ***from*** nations and their
gods? **24** And You established for Yourself Your people Israel
to be Yours as a people forever; and You, O LORD, have
become God to them. **25** And now, O LORD God, the word
which You have spoken concerning Your servant and con-
cerning his house, establish forever, and do just as You have

7:10 Jer 24:6; Amos 9:15; Ps 80:8
7:11 Acts 13:20; Acts 15:16; 1 Sam 12:9-11
7:12 Acts 2:30; Matt 22:42; Acts 13:23
7:13 Luke 1:32-33; Matt 1:1; Acts 15:16
7:14 2 Cor 6:18; Heb 1:5; Matt 3:17
7:15 Acts 2:30; Acts 13:22; Rom 1:3
7:16 Heb 1:8; Matt 1:1; Acts 2:30
7:17 1 Chr 17:15; Acts 20:20,27; 1 Cor 15:3
7:18 Ps 8:4; 1 Chr 17:16; 1 Sam 18:18
7:19 1 Chr 17:17; Isa 55:8,9; 2 Sam 7:11-16
7:20 John 21:17; John 21:15; 1 Sam 16:7
7:21 Num 23:19; Deut 9:5; Josh 23:14,15
7:22 Deut 3:24; Exod 15:11; 1 Chr 16:25
7:23 1 Pet 2:9; Titus 2:14; Deut 10:21
7:24 Deut 26:18; Gen 17:7; Ps 48:14
7:25 Gen 32:12; Ps 119:49; Jer 11:4,5

7:10 *I will appoint a place for My people, for Israel, and I will plant it* To plant a people is to settle them so they put down roots. Israel had peace under David and Solomon, but later came exile and the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. I believe this looks to the day Christ returns and Israel dwells safely under the Son of David (Amos 9:15; Ezek 37:24-25).
7:11 *the LORD will make a house for you* Here is the turning point. David wanted to build God a house. God says, I will build you a house. The Hebrew word bayit can mean a building, a household or a dynasty. God would build a house of kings for David.
7:12 *I will raise up your seed after you* Seed means offspring. Coming from your inward parts means from David's own body. This would be David's own son.
7:13 *I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever* The first fulfillment is Solomon, who built the temple (1 Kgs 8:20). But his kingdom split, the temple burned in 586 B.C., and Zedekiah was taken in chains (2 Kgs 25:7). The promise was bigger than Solomon. It reached to a Son of David who would reign forever (Isa 9:7; Jer 23:5).
7:14 *I will be a father to him, and he will be a son to Me* God would treat David's son with a father's love and discipline. Hebrews applies this directly to Jesus (Heb 1:5). In Solomon it was an adopted relationship. In Jesus it is true in the fullest sense, the eternal Son who became David's son by birth (Rom 1:3).
7:14 *When he commits iniquity, I will correct him* Jesus never sinned (Heb 4:15). This part belonged to Solomon and the kings, and the books of Kings are full of it. A prophecy can have a near and a far fulfillment. Some teachers add that Jesus bore the strokes for our sin (Isa 53:5), but the plain sense is about David's sons.
7:15 *My steadfast love will not depart from him, as I removed it from Saul* Here is the heart of the covenant. God took the kingdom from Saul's family but promised never to do that to David's. This covenant rests on God's promise, not the kings' faithfulness. Their sin could bring the rod but not cancel His word (Ps 89:34). Some teachers see conditional elements (1 Kgs 2:4).
7:16 *your throne will be established forever* God says forever three times in verses 13 to 16. Gabriel quoted this to Mary (Luke 1:32-33), and Peter said David foresaw the risen Christ on his throne (Acts 2:30-31). Jesus lives forever, so David's throne can be established forever. Its King cannot die again.
7:16 *your house and your kingdom will be established forever before you* I believe Jesus now sits on His Father's throne (Rev 3:21) and will sit on David's throne over a restored Israel when He returns, reigning a thousand years (Matt 25:31; Rev 20:4-6; Hos 3:5). Amillennial teachers see Christ reigning on David's throne now from heaven. They love the Lord too, but I believe the plain reading points to a future reign (Rom 11:29).
7:17 *so Nathan spoke to David* Nathan, who spoke too quickly the day before, now spoke exactly what God said. A good teacher is willing to admit he was wrong and then say exactly what God said.
7:18 *Who am I, O Lord GOD* David sat before the LORD, likely in the tent of the ark. Lord GOD stands for Adonai, Master, with God's name YHWH. David did not begin with what he deserved. He began amazed at grace.
7:19 *this is the law of mankind* This phrase is hard to translate. Some take it as, Is this the way You deal with men? This grace is beyond anything human. Others take it as a charter for all mankind, since the blessing of David's Son would reach the world. Either way, David knew he had been given something far bigger than himself.
7:20 *You, You know Your servant* David ran out of words. He did not need to explain himself. God already knew his heart, his weaknesses and his gratitude.
7:21 *For the sake of Your word, and according to Your own heart* God blessed David because of His promise and His own heart, not because David was great. Grace comes from who God is, not who we are. He saves us according to His own purpose and grace (2 Tim 1:9).
7:22 *there is none like You* David's thanks turned to praise. The more we see of God's grace, the greater He looks to us.
7:23 *whom God went to ransom for Himself as a people* God redeemed Israel from Egypt, driving out nations and their gods. David saw his own blessing as part of God's larger work with His people.
7:24 *to be Yours as a people forever* David believed God's choice of Israel was permanent, and so did Paul (Rom 11:1-2, 29). God's promise to David and His promise to Israel stand or fall together, and both stand.
7:25 *establish forever, and do just as You have spoken* Why ask God to do what He already promised? Because that is what faith does. Prayer takes hold of what God has promised and asks Him to do it. Our best prayers are built on God's word.

spoken. **26** And let Your name be great forever, saying, 'The LORD of armies ***is*** God over Israel'; and the house of Your servant David will be established before You. **27** For You, O LORD of armies, God of Israel, have uncovered the ear of Your servant, saying, 'I will build a house for you.' Therefore Your servant has found his heart to pray this prayer to You. **28** And now, O Lord GOD, You are God, and Your words are truth, and You have spoken this good to Your servant. **29** And now, be pleased, and bless the house of Your servant, to be forever before You; for You, O Lord GOD, have spoken, and with Your blessing the house of Your servant will be blessed forever."

2 SAMUEL 8

David's Victories

1 And it was after this, and David struck the Philistines and subdued them; and David took Metheg-ammah
(Meteg-HaAmma) from the hand of the Philistines. **2** And he struck Moab (Mo'av), and he measured them with the line, making them lie down on the ground; and he measured two lines to put to death, and one full line to keep alive. And Moab became servants to David, bearers of tribute. **3** And David struck Hadadezer the son of Rehob (Rechov), king of Zobah (Tsova), as he went to restore his hand at the river Euphrates (Perat). **4** And David captured from him one thousand seven hundred horsemen and twenty thousand men on foot; and David hamstrung all the chariotry, and he left of it one hundred chariots. **5** And Syria (Aram) ***of*** Damascus (Dameseq) came to help Hadadezer king of Zobah, and David struck down among Syria twenty-two thousand men. **6** And David put garrisons in Syria ***of*** Damascus, and Syria became servants to David, bearers of tribute. And the LORD saved David wherever he went. **7** And David took the shields of gold which were on the servants of Hadadezer and brought them ***to*** Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). **8** And from Betah (Betach) and from Berothai (Berotay), cities of Hadadezer, King David took very much bronze. **9** And Toi (To'i) king of Hamath (Chamat) heard that David had struck all the army of Hadadezer, **10** and Toi sent Joram (Yoram) his son to King David to ask him of ***his*** welfare and to bless him, because he had fought against Hadadezer and struck him; for Hadadezer was a man of wars ***with*** Toi. And in his hand were articles of silver and articles of gold and articles of bronze. **11** Also these King David consecrated to the LORD, with the silver and the gold which he had consecrated from all the nations which he had subdued: **12** from Syria and from Moab and from the sons of Ammon (Amon) and from the Philistines and from Amalek (Amaleq), and from the plunder of Hadadezer the son of Rehob, king of Zobah. **13** And David made a name ***for himself*** when he returned from striking Syria in the Valley of Salt (Gay-Melach), eighteen thousand. **14** And he put garrisons in Edom; in all Edom he put garrisons, and all Edom became servants to David. And the LORD saved David wherever he went.

7:26 Matt 6:9; Luke 1:69; 1 Chr 17:23,24
7:27 Ruth 4:4; 1 Sam 9:15; Ps 40:6
7:28 John 17:17; Num 23:19; Titus 1:2
7:29 Num 6:24-26; 2 Sam 22:51; 1 Chr 17:27
8:1 Heb 11:34; 1 Chr 18:1-17; 2 Sam 7:9
8:2 Heb 11:34; Num 24:17; Ps 60:8
8:3 Heb 11:34; Rev 9:14; 1 Sam 14:47
8:4 Josh 11:6,9; Deut 17:16; Ps 20:7
8:5 Heb 11:34; 1 Kgs 11:23-25; 1 Chr 18:5,6
8:6 Matt 4:24; Acts 21:3; Acts 22:6
8:7 Heb 11:34; 1 Kgs 10:16,17; 1 Kgs 14:26,27
8:8 1 Chr 18:8; 1 Chr 22:14,16; 1 Chr 29:7
8:9 1 Chr 18:9; Amos 6:2
8:10 1 Chr 18:10; Gen 43:27; Isa 39:1
8:11 1 Kgs 7:51; 1 Chr 18:11; 1 Chr 22:14-16
8:12 1 Chr 18:11; 2 Sam 10:11,14; 2 Sam 12:26-31
8:13 Heb 11:34; 2 Kgs 14:7; 2 Sam 7:9
8:14 Heb 11:34; Gen 27:29,37,40; Gen 25:23

7:26 *let Your name be great forever* The great name promised to David (7:9) mattered less to him than God's own name.
7:27 *Your servant has found his heart to pray this prayer to You* David would never have dared ask for a forever dynasty. God promised it first, so David found courage to pray for it. God's promises give us boldness to pray.
7:28 *Your words are truth* Everything rests on this. If God's words are truth, His promise is as good as done.
7:29 *the house of Your servant will be blessed forever* It has been, in the Son of David, Jesus Christ. Everyone who believes in Him shares the blessing. Paul preached the resurrection as God giving the sure things of David (Acts 13:34). The promise is sure because the King is alive.
8:1 *David took Metheg-ammah from the hand of the Philistines* After this is a general link, not a strict time marker. Metheg-ammah means bridle of the mother city. Since 1 Chr 18:1 says David took Gath and its towns, many believe he took control of Gath. The town Goliath came from now answered to David.
8:2 *he measured two lines to put to death, and one full line to keep alive* This is surprising, since Ruth was a Moabite and David once left his parents with Moab's king (1 Sam 22:3-4). Scripture does not say what changed. Killing two of every three captives was a harsh practice of war. The Bible records it without excusing or praising it, and it is not a pattern for us.
8:2 *Moab became servants to David, bearers of tribute* They paid a regular tax as a conquered people. This may fulfill Balaam's word that a scepter from Israel would strike Moab (Num 24:17).
8:3 *as he went to restore his hand at the river Euphrates* Zobah was a strong Aramean kingdom north of Damascus. Aram is roughly Syria today. The Hebrew could mean Hadadezer or David was setting up power there. God promised Abraham the land to the Euphrates (Gen 15:18), and under David Israel's influence reached toward it for the first time.
8:4 *one thousand seven hundred horsemen and twenty thousand men on foot* First Chronicles 18:4 gives a thousand chariots and seven thousand horsemen. The common explanation is a copying error, since Hebrew numbers were easy to confuse. The main events are the same.
8:4 *David hamstrung all the chariotry* Cutting the horses' leg tendons made them useless for war. The king was not to multiply horses (Deut 17:16). Israel was to trust the LORD, not chariots (Ps 20:7). Solomon later ignored this (1 Kgs 10:26-29).
8:6 *the LORD saved David wherever he went* The victories were God's, doing what He promised in 7:9. The writer says it twice in this chapter so we will not miss it.
8:8 *King David took very much bronze* Solomon later used this bronze for the great basin, the pillars and the temple articles (1 Chr 18:8). David could not build the temple, but he gathered what it would need.
8:10 *to ask him of his welfare and to bless him* Hamath lay farther north on the Orontes River, and Hadadezer had been Toi's constant enemy. Toi made a treaty of friendship with the new power. David's name was becoming great, just as God said.
8:11 *these King David consecrated to the LORD* To consecrate is to set apart for God. David did not fill his own treasury. When God gives us success, we should give Him the glory and give back from what He gave (1 Chr 29:14).
8:13 *when he returned from striking Syria in the Valley of Salt* The Valley of Salt was near the Dead Sea in Edom, so many copies read Edom. In Hebrew, Aram and Edom look very much alike. Chronicles credits Abishai (1 Chr 18:12) and Psalm 60's title Joab. All fit with David as king over the campaign and the others as commanders, counting different parts.
8:14 *all Edom became servants to David* Edom, the nation descended from Esau, now served Israel. This fulfilled God's word to Rebekah that the older would serve the younger (Gen 25:23).

David's Officials

15 And David reigned over all Israel (Yisra'el); and David was doing justice and righteousness for all his people. **16** And Joab (Yo'av) the son of Zeruiah (Tseruya) ***was*** over the army, and Jehoshaphat (Yehoshafat) the son of Ahilud (Achilud) ***was*** recorder, **17** and Zadok (Tsadoq) the son of Ahitub (Achituv) and Ahimelech (Achimelekh) the son of Abiathar (Evyatar) ***were*** priests, and Seraiah (Seraya) ***was*** scribe, **18** and Benaiah (Benayahu) the son of Jehoiada (Yehoyada), and the Kerethites and the Pelethites; and the sons of David were priests.

2 SAMUEL 9

Kindness to Mephibosheth

1 And David said, "Is there still anyone who is left of the house of Saul (Shaul), that I may do steadfast love with him for the sake of Jonathan (Yehonatan)?" **2** And the house of Saul ***had*** a servant, and his name ***was*** Ziba (Tsiva); and they called him to David. And the king said to him, "***Are*** you Ziba?" And he said, "Your servant." **3** And the king said, "***Is there*** not still anyone of the house of Saul, that I may do the steadfast love of God with him?" And Ziba said to the king, "***There is*** still a son of Jonathan, stricken in ***the*** feet." **4** And the king said to him, "Where ***is*** he?" And Ziba said to the king, "Look, he ***is in*** the house of Machir (Makhir) the son of Ammiel (Ami'el), in Lo-debar (Lo-Devar)." **5** And King David sent and took him from the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, from Lo-debar. **6** And Mephibosheth (Mefivoshet) the son of Jonathan the son of Saul came to David, and he fell on his face and bowed down. And David said,
"Mephibosheth." And he said, "Look, your servant." **7** And David said to him, "Do not be afraid, for I will certainly do steadfast love with you for the sake of Jonathan your father, and I will restore to you all the land of Saul your father; and you, you will eat bread at my table continually." **8** And he bowed down and said, "What ***is*** your servant, that you have turned to the dead dog who ***is*** like me?" **9** And the king called Ziba the servant of Saul and said to him, "All that belonged to Saul and to all his household I have given to the son of your master. **10** And you shall work the land for him, you and your sons and your servants, and you shall bring ***in***, and it will be bread for the son of your master, and he will eat it. And Mephibosheth the son of your master will eat bread continually at my table." And Ziba ***had*** fifteen sons and twenty servants. **11** And Ziba said to the king, "According to all that my lord the king commands his servant, so your servant will do." And Mephibosheth ***was*** eating at my table like one of the sons of the king. **12** And Mephibosheth ***had*** a young son, and his name ***was*** Mica (Mikha). And all who dwelt in the house of Ziba ***were*** servants to Mephibosheth. **13** And Mephibosheth ***was*** dwelling in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), for he ***was*** eating continually at the table of the king; and he ***was***

8:15 Heb 11:34; 2 Sam 3:12; 2 Sam 5:5
8:16 1 Kgs 4:3; 1 Chr 11:6; 2 Sam 19:13
8:17 Mark 2:26; 1 Chr 6:8,53; 1 Chr 18:16
8:18 1 Sam 30:14; 1 Chr 18:17; 2 Sam 15:18
9:1 1 Sam 20:14-17,42; 2 Sam 1:26; 1 Sam 18:1-4
9:2 2 Sam 16:1-4; 2 Sam 19:17,27-29; Gen 15:2,3
9:3 2 Sam 4:4; Deut 4:37; Deut 10:15
9:4 2 Sam 17:27-29
9:6 1 Chr 8:34; 1 Chr 9:40; 1 Sam 25:23
9:7 Luke 1:13; 2 Sam 9:1,3; 2 Sam 19:28,33
9:8 2 Sam 16:9; 1 Sam 24:14,15; Matt 15:26,27
9:9 2 Sam 16:4; 2 Sam 19:29; 1 Sam 9:1
9:10 2 Sam 9:7,11-13; 2 Sam 19:28; 2 Kgs 25:29
9:11 2 Sam 16:1-4; 2 Sam 19:26; 2 Sam 19:17
9:12 1 Chr 8:8,34-40; 1 Chr 9:40-44; Mic 7:5,6
9:13 2 Sam 9:7,10,11

8:15 *David was doing justice and righteousness for all his people* Justice gives each person what is right. Righteousness does what agrees with God's standard. David at his best is a small picture of the coming Branch who will do justice and righteousness in the land (Jer 23:5). Jesus will rule with a justice that never fails.
8:16 *Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was recorder* For all his faults, Joab stayed in command. The recorder kept official records and may have served as a royal spokesman.
8:17 *Ahimelech the son of Abiathar* Abiathar escaped Saul's massacre at Nob (1 Sam 22:20). This is likely his son, named for his grandfather, serving beside Zadok. Some think the names were reversed in copying. Zadok's family served as priests for centuries.
8:18 *the Kerethites and the Pelethites* These were foreign soldiers, likely from Crete and the Philistine coast, who served as David's bodyguard under Benaiah, later Solomon's commander.
8:18 *the sons of David were priests* Only Aaron's descendants could serve at the altar. First Chronicles 18:17 calls them first at the side of the king, chief officials. Many think the word kohen was used here for a royal officer, others for an honorary role. I do not believe they sacrificed at the altar. David did not try to do everything himself (Rom 12:4-8).
9:1 *that I may do steadfast love with him for the sake of Jonathan* Jonathan had made David promise not to cut off his steadfast love from his house forever (1 Sam 20:15). Years later, with no one to hold him to it, David remembered. Hesed keeps its promises when there is nothing to gain. And David went looking. Grace takes the first step.
9:3 *the steadfast love of God* David wanted to show the kind of love God shows, undeserved, generous and faithful. He had received it, and he wanted to pass it on.
9:3 *stricken in the feet* Ziba mentioned the lameness first, perhaps meaning he was no threat, or not worth the trouble. David did not ask about his condition. He asked where he was.
9:4 *in the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, in Lo-debar* Lo-debar was in Gilead, east of the Jordan near Mahanaim. The name may mean no pasture. Machir would later help David when he fled Absalom (17:27-29). Mephibosheth lived in hiding, far from court, in a borrowed house.
9:5 *King David sent and took him* New kings often wiped out the last king's family. Mephibosheth had every reason to think he was being brought to his death.
9:6 *he fell on his face and bowed down* For a man lame in both feet, even getting down would have been hard. David spoke his own name, not a title.
9:7 *Do not be afraid* Then came three gifts. Kindness, for Jonathan's sake and a covenant made before he could remember. An inheritance, the family lands at Gibeah. A place at the table, which meant protection, provision and a place in the household. He would never be hungry or have to hide again.
9:8 *the dead dog who is like me* Dogs were scavengers, unclean and despised. Mephibosheth had nothing to offer, and that is what makes grace grace. We too were lame and far from the King, yet God shows us kindness for the sake of His Son (Rom 5:8). The New Testament does not name this as a picture, so I hold the details lightly.
9:10 *Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants* Ziba's large household would farm the land for Mephibosheth's household. Keep an eye on Ziba. He returns in chapter 16 with a story, and in chapter 19 we must decide whether to believe him.
9:11 *like one of the sons of the king* The words my table slip into David's own voice, as if quoting him. Mephibosheth was not a guest or charity case but family. God does not make us servants only. He makes us sons and daughters (Gal 4:4-7).
9:12 *his name was Mica* Jonathan's line would go on for many generations (1 Chr 8:34-40). David's kindness reached his children after him.
9:13 *he was lame in both his feet* Grace did not change his feet. But at the king's table his lameness was hidden. We are still weak and still stumble, but we sit at the King's table because of His love. Jesus said, "the one coming to Me I will certainly not cast out" (John 6:37).

lame ***in*** both his feet.

2 SAMUEL 10

Hanun Insults David's Servants

1 And it was after this, and the king of the sons of Ammon (Amon) died, and Hanun (Chanun) his son reigned in his place. **2** And David said, "I will do steadfast love with Hanun the son of Nahash (Nachash), just as his father did steadfast love with me." And David sent to comfort him by the hand of his servants concerning his father. And the servants of David came ***into*** the land of the sons of Ammon. **3** And the leaders of the sons of Ammon said to Hanun their lord, "Is David honoring your father in your eyes because he has sent comforters to you? Has not David sent his servants to you in order to search out the city and to spy it out and to overthrow it?" **4** And Hanun took the servants of David and shaved off half of their beard and cut off their garments in the middle as far as their buttocks, and sent them away. **5** And they told David, and he sent to meet them, for the men were greatly humiliated. And the king said, "Remain at Jericho (Yericho) until your beard grows back, and return."

Joab Defeats Ammon and Syria

6 And the sons of Ammon saw that they had made themselves odious to David; and the sons of Ammon sent and hired Syria (Aram) ***of*** Beth-rehob (Bet-Rechov) and Syria ***of*** Zobah (Tsova), twenty thousand foot soldiers, and the king of Maacah (Ma'akha) ***with*** one thousand men, and the men of Tob (Tov), twelve thousand men. **7** And David heard, and he sent Joab (Yo'av) and all the army, the mighty men. **8** And the sons of Ammon went out and drew up ***for*** battle at the entrance of the gate; and Syria ***of*** Zobah and Rehob (Rechov) and the men of Tob and Maacah ***were*** by themselves in the field. **9** And Joab saw that the front of the battle was against him, in front and behind; and he chose from all the chosen ***men*** of Israel (Yisra'el), and he drew ***them*** up to meet Syria. **10** And the rest of the people he put into the hand of Abishai (Avishay) his brother, and he drew ***them*** up to meet the sons of Ammon. **11** And he said, "If Syria is stronger than I, then you shall be salvation for me; and if the sons of Ammon are stronger than you, then I will come to save you. **12** Be strong, and let us show ourselves strong for our people and for the cities of our God; and the LORD will do what ***is*** good in His eyes." **13** And Joab drew near, and the people who ***were*** with him, for battle against Syria, and they fled from before him. **14** And the sons of Ammon saw that Syria had fled, and they fled from before Abishai and went ***into*** the city. And Joab returned from against the sons of Ammon and came ***to*** Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). **15** And Syria saw that it was defeated before Israel, and they gathered themselves together. **16** And Hadadezer sent and brought out Syria that ***was*** beyond the River (Nahar); and they came ***to*** Helam (Chelam), and Shobach (Shovakh) the commander of the army of Hadadezer ***was*** before them. **17** And it was told to David, and he gathered all Israel and crossed the Jordan (Yarden) and came to Helam. And Syria drew up to meet David, and they fought with him. **18** And Syria fled from before Israel, and David killed of Syria seven hundred chariot ***crews*** and forty thousand horsemen; and he struck down Shobach the commander of its army, and he died there. **19** And all the kings, the servants of Hadadezer, saw that they were defeated before Israel, and they made peace with

10:1 Judg 10:7-9; Judg 11:12-28; 1 Sam 11:1-3
10:2 1 Sam 11:1; Deut 23:3-6; Neh 4:3-7
10:3 Gen 42:9,16; 1 Cor 13:5,7
10:4 Isa 20:4; Isa 15:2; Lev 19:27
10:5 Josh 6:24-26; 1 Kgs 16:34; 1 Chr 19:5
10:6 2 Sam 8:3,5,12; Gen 34:30; 1 Sam 27:12
10:7 2 Sam 23:8-39; 1 Chr 19:8-19
10:8 2 Sam 10:6; 1 Chr 19:7; Num 13:21
10:9 Josh 8:21,22; Judg 20:42,43
10:11 1 Chr 19:9-12; Neh 4:20; Luke 22:32
10:12 Deut 31:6; 1 Cor 16:13; 1 Sam 3:18
10:13 1 Kgs 20:13-21,28-30; 1 Chr 19:14,15; 2 Chr 13:5-16
10:15 Rev 19:19; Ps 2:1; Isa 8:9,10
10:16 1 Chr 19:16; 2 Sam 8:3-8; 1 Chr 18:3,5
10:17 1 Chr 19:17
10:18 1 Chr 19:18; 2 Sam 8:4; Ps 18:38
10:19 2 Sam 8:6; Gen 14:1-5; Josh 11:10

10:1 *the king of the sons of Ammon died* Ammon lay east of the Jordan with its capital at Rabbah, modern Amman. Hanun's father Nahash had threatened Jabesh-gilead early in Saul's reign (1 Sam 11:1-2). As Saul's enemy, he may have been friendly to David.
10:2 *just as his father did steadfast love with me* We are not told what kindness Nahash showed, perhaps help during David's years fleeing Saul. David remembered it and sent comfort, the kind of thing a good neighbor does when a family loses a father.
10:3 *in order to search out the city and to spy it out* David had just conquered Moab, Edom and Syria, so their suspicion is understandable. But it was wrong and cost them their kingdom. Rehoboam later lost most of his kingdom to bad advisers (1 Kgs 12:8-16). Be careful of voices that tell us to assume the worst about others.
10:4 *shaved off half of their beard* A man's beard was a sign of dignity and manhood, and cutting the robes left them exposed. Insulting a king's messengers was insulting the king. Jesus said the same of His messengers (Luke 10:16).
10:5 *Remain at Jericho until your beard grows back* Jericho was the first town after crossing the Jordan. David did not make them walk into Jerusalem in shame. A good leader protects the dignity of his people.
10:6 *they had made themselves odious to David* Odious means hateful, like a bad smell. Instead of apologizing they hired armies, paying a thousand talents of silver (1 Chr 19:6). Sin grows. Suspicion led to insult, and insult to spending a fortune to defend pride instead of making it right.
10:8 *by themselves in the field* The Ammonites held the city gate while the hired Syrians stood in the field. It was a trap, with Joab caught between them.
10:9 *the front of the battle was against him, in front and behind* Joab did what a good general does. He took the best men against the stronger Syrians and gave the rest to Abishai.
10:11 *then I will come to save you* Two brothers back to back, each ready to help the other.
10:12 *the LORD will do what is good in His eyes* This is one of Joab's finest moments. He called the men to do their part with courage and left the outcome to God. That is the right balance for us. We work hard, but we trust God with the result.
10:14 *Joab returned from against the sons of Ammon* The hired soldiers ran, and the Ammonites fled into the city. Joab did not besiege Rabbah yet, likely because the season for war was ending. That comes in the spring (11:1).
10:16 *Syria that was beyond the River* Hadadezer, already beaten in 8:3-8, brought troops from the Euphrates region to Helam, east of the Jordan.
10:18 *seven hundred chariot crews and forty thousand horsemen* First Chronicles 19:18 gives seven thousand charioteers and forty thousand foot soldiers. The likely explanation is a copying error in the numbers or a difference in counting.
10:19 *Syria was afraid to save the sons of Ammon again* God kept giving David rest from his enemies (7:11). But one war was unfinished. The greatest danger to David was not the armies of Syria. It was waiting on the roof of his own palace.

Israel and served them. And Syria was afraid to save the sons of Ammon again.

2 SAMUEL 11

David and Bathsheba

1 And it was at the return of the year, at the time of the going out of the kings, and David sent Joab (Yo'av) and his servants with him and all Israel (Yisra'el); and they destroyed the sons of Ammon (Amon) and besieged Rabbah (Raba). And David ***was*** staying in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). **2** And it was at the time of the evening, and David arose from on his bed and walked about on the roof of the house of the king; and he saw from on the roof a woman bathing, and the woman ***was*** very good of appearance. **3** And David sent and inquired about the woman, and he said, "***Is*** this not Bathsheba (Bat-Sheva), the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah (Uriya) the Hittite?" **4** And David sent messengers and took her, and she came to him, and he lay with her (and she ***was*** purifying herself from her uncleanness); and she returned to her house. **5** And the woman conceived; and she sent and told David and said, "I ***am*** pregnant."

David Tries to Cover His Sin

6 And David sent to Joab, "Send to me Uriah the Hittite." And Joab sent Uriah to David. **7** And Uriah came to him, and David asked about the welfare of Joab and about the welfare of the people and about the welfare of the battle. **8** And David said to Uriah, "Go down to your house and wash your feet." And Uriah went out from the house of the king, and a gift of the king went out after him. **9** And Uriah lay down ***at*** the entrance of the house of the king with all the servants of his lord, and he did not go down to his house. **10** And they told David, saying, "Uriah has not gone down to his house." And David said to Uriah, "***Are*** you not coming from a journey? Why have you not gone down to your house?" **11** And Uriah said to David, "The ark and Israel and Judah (Yehuda) are dwelling in booths, and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are encamping on the face of the field; and I, shall I go to my house to eat and to drink and to lie with my wife? ***As*** you live and ***as*** your soul lives, I will not do this thing!" **12** And David said to Uriah, "Stay here today also, and tomorrow I will send you away." And Uriah stayed in Jerusalem on that day and the next day. **13** And David called him, and he ate before him and drank, and he made him drunk; and he went out in the evening to lie down on his bed with the servants of his lord, and to his house he did not go down.

Uriah Killed

14 And it was in the morning, and David wrote a letter to Joab and sent ***it*** by the hand of Uriah. **15** And he wrote in the letter, saying, "Set Uriah toward the front of the face of the severe battle, and you shall turn back from after him, and he will be struck down and die." **16** And it was, when Joab was keeping watch on the city, and he put Uriah at the place where he knew that men of strength ***were*** there. **17** And the men of the city went out and fought with Joab, and ***some*** of the people fell, of the servants of David; and Uriah the Hittite also died. **18** And Joab sent and told David all the matters of the battle. **19** And he commanded the messenger, saying, "When you have finished speaking all the matters of the battle to the king, **20** and it will be, if the wrath of the king rises and he says to you, 'Why did you draw near to the city to fight? Did you not know that they would shoot from on

11:1 1 Chr 20:1; 1 Kgs 20:22,26; 2 Chr 36:10
11:2 Deut 22:8; Acts 10:9; Job 31:1
11:3 Matt 1:6; 2 Sam 23:39; 1 Chr 3:5
11:4 Lev 18:19; James 1:14,15; Ps 51:1
11:5 Deut 22:22; Prov 6:34
11:6 Prov 28:13; Gen 4:7; Gen 38:18-23
11:7 Gen 37:14; 1 Sam 17:22; Gen 29:6
11:8 Gen 18:4; Ps 44:21; Isa 29:15
11:9 Job 5:12-14; Prov 21:30
11:11 2 Sam 7:2,6; 2 Sam 20:6; 1 Sam 1:26
11:12 Jer 2:22,23,37
11:13 Hab 2:15; Gen 19:32-35; Exod 32:21
11:14 1 Kgs 21:8-10; Ps 19:13; Ps 52:2
11:15 2 Sam 12:9; 2 Sam 11:17; 1 Sam 18:17,21,25
11:16 2 Sam 11:21; 2 Sam 3:27; 2 Sam 20:9,10
11:17 2 Sam 12:9; Ps 51:14

11:1 *at the time of the going out of the kings* Spring, when the rains were over and the roads were dry. Kings led their armies out to war.

11:1 *David was staying in Jerusalem* The king belonged with his army, as in 10:17. Scripture does not say why he stayed. Idleness and comfort are often where temptation finds us. David faced lions, bears and Goliath without falling. He fell on a quiet evening at home.

11:2 *he saw from on the roof a woman bathing* Houses had flat roofs, and the palace stood high, looking into courtyards below. Seeing was not yet sin. David could have turned away. Instead he kept looking.

11:3 *the wife of Uriah the Hittite* That should have stopped him cold. Uriah was one of David's mighty men (23:39), and her father Eliam was too, likely the son of Ahithophel (23:34). A look, a longer look, a question, then action. Desire conceived gives birth to sin (Jas 1:14-15).

11:4 *David sent messengers and took her* The verbs are short. David sent, took, lay with her. The weight falls on the king. Teachers differ on whether Bathsheba was willing or could not refuse a king. The text never blames her, and Nathan's parable pictures her as a lamb taken. David abused the power God gave him to protect his people.

11:4 *she was purifying herself from her uncleanness* The Law required washing after her monthly time (Lev 15:19-28). Bathsheba was keeping the Law, and she could not already have been pregnant by her husband. The child was David's.

11:5 *I am pregnant* These are Bathsheba's only words in the chapter. David seemed to think it was over. It was not. Adultery was a capital crime under the Law (Lev 20:10). Instead of confessing, David chose to cover it up.

11:6 *Send to me Uriah the Hittite* A Hittite came from one of the old peoples of Canaan, but Uriah's name means the LORD is my light. He seems to have worshiped Israel's God.

11:8 *Go down to your house and wash your feet* The questions about the battle were pretense. To wash your feet meant to relax at home, and David meant more. He wanted the baby to seem to be Uriah's.

11:11 *shall I go to my house to eat and to drink and to lie with my wife?* The ark was in the field. Soldiers kept from their wives during a campaign (1 Sam 21:5). Uriah the foreigner kept the standard of holy war while the king of Israel had broken every one. Uriah was everything David should have been.

11:13 *he made him drunk* Even drunk, Uriah was more honorable than David sober. Sin is rarely content to stay small. A lie needs another lie, and a cover-up needs a bigger cover-up.

11:14 *sent it by the hand of Uriah* This is the coldest act in the chapter. Uriah carried his own death warrant, and David knew he was too loyal to open it.

11:15 *he will be struck down and die* This is the man who wrote Psalm 23. No one is beyond falling. "Let the one who thinks he stands watch, lest he fall" (1 Cor 10:12). Past faithfulness did not protect David. Only staying close to God day by day could have.

11:17 *some of the people fell, of the servants of David* Others died too. Sin spreads its damage further than we plan. And Joab now held David's secret, which may explain why David could never deal with him later.

the wall? **21** Who struck down Abimelech (Avimelekh) the son of Jerubbesheth (Yerubeshet)? Did not a woman throw an upper millstone on him from on the wall, and he died at Thebez (Tevets)? Why did you draw near to the wall?' then you shall say, 'Your servant Uriah the Hittite has also died.'" **22** And the messenger went, and he came and told David all that Joab had sent him ***for***. **23** And the messenger said to David, "Indeed the men prevailed over us and came out against us ***into*** the field, and we were upon them up to the entrance of the gate. **24** And the archers shot at your servants from on the wall, and ***some*** of the servants of the king died; and your servant Uriah the Hittite has also died." **25** And David said to the messenger, "Thus you shall say to Joab: 'Do not let this thing be evil in your eyes, for the sword devours like this and like that. Strengthen your battle against the city and overthrow it.' And encourage him." **26** And the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband had died, and she mourned over her husband. **27** And the mourning passed, and David sent and gathered her to his house, and she became his wife and bore him a son. And the thing that David had done was evil in the eyes of the LORD.

2 SAMUEL 12

Nathan's Parable

1 And the LORD sent Nathan (Natan) to David; and he came to him and said to him, "Two men were in one city, one rich and one poor. **2** The rich ***man*** had very many flocks and herds. **3** And the poor ***man*** had nothing at all except one little ewe lamb which he had bought; and he nourished it, and it grew up with him and with his sons together. From his morsel it would eat, and from his cup it would drink, and in his bosom it would lie, and it was like a daughter to him. **4** And a traveler came to the rich man, and he spared taking from his own flock and from his own herd to prepare ***a meal*** for the wayfarer who had come to him; and he took the ewe lamb of the poor man and prepared it for the man who had come to him." **5** And the anger of David burned greatly against the man, and he said to Nathan, "***As*** the LORD lives, surely the man who has done this ***is*** a son of death! **6** And the ewe lamb he shall repay fourfold, because he did this thing and because he had no pity." **7** And Nathan said to David, "You ***are*** the man! Thus says the LORD God of Israel (Yisra'el): 'I anointed you as king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul (Shaul). **8** And I gave you the house of your master and the wives of your master into your bosom, and I gave you the house of Israel and Judah (Yehuda); and if ***that were too*** little, I would add to you like these and like these. **9** Why have you despised the word of the LORD, to do the evil in My eyes? Uriah (Uriya) the Hittite you struck down with the sword, and his wife you took for yourself as a wife, and him you killed with the sword of the sons of Ammon (Amon). **10** And now the sword shall not depart from your house forever, because you despised Me and took the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.' **11** Thus says the LORD: 'Look, I am raising up evil against you from your own house, and I will take your wives before your eyes and give ***them*** to your neighbor, and he will lie with your wives before the eyes of this sun. **12** For you, you acted in secret; and I, I will do this thing before all Israel and before the sun.'"

11:21 Judg 6:32; Judg 7:1; 2 Sam 3:27,34
11:25 Josh 7:8,9; 1 Sam 6:9; Eccl 9:1-3,11,12
11:26 Matt 1:6; 2 Sam 3:31; 2 Sam 14:2
11:27 Matt 1:6; 2 Sam 12:9; Ps 51:4,5
12:1 Matt 21:40; Matt 21:41; Luke 16:31
12:2 2 Sam 12:8; 2 Sam 3:2-5; 2 Sam 5:13-16
12:3 2 Sam 11:3; Prov 5:18,19; Deut 13:6
12:4 Gen 18:2-7; James 1:14; 2 Sam 11:3,4
12:5 Luke 6:41,42; 1 Sam 26:16; Gen 38:24
12:6 Exod 22:1; Luke 19:8; Prov 6:31
12:7 1 Sam 16:13; 1 Sam 13:13; 1 Kgs 18:18
12:8 2 Sam 12:11; 1 Kgs 2:22; 2 Sam 2:4
12:9 1 Sam 15:19,23; Heb 10:28,29; 2 Sam 11:4,14-17
12:10 2 Sam 18:14,15,33; 2 Sam 13:28,29; 1 Kgs 2:23-25
12:11 Deut 28:30; 2 Sam 16:21,22; 2 Sam 13:1-14,28,29
12:12 Mark 12:12; 2 Sam 11:4,8,13,15; Eccl 12:14

11:21 *Did not a woman throw an upper millstone on him from on the wall* Going near the wall was a basic mistake, as Abimelech learned at Thebez (Judg 9:50-54). Joab knew one sentence about Uriah would calm the king. There is something chilling in how well the two men understood each other.
11:25 *Do not let this thing be evil in your eyes* That's war, people die, don't let it bother you. David, who wept over Saul and Abner, had no tears for Uriah. Sin had hardened his heart. Hold on to this phrase. The last verse answers it.
11:26 *the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband had died* Even now the text calls her Uriah's wife, as Matthew does (Matt 1:6).
11:27 *the thing that David had done was evil in the eyes of the LORD* Mourning usually lasted about seven days. To anyone watching, the king took in a soldier's widow and the secret seemed safe. But only the LORD's eyes count (Heb 4:13). Psalm 32 may describe David's silence that year (Ps 32:3). God shows us hidden sin not to crush us but so we will come back to Him.
12:1 *the LORD sent Nathan to David* God took the first step. David was not seeking God. God came seeking him, and that is grace. Confronting a king who had just killed a loyal soldier took courage, and it took wisdom. Nathan did not start with an accusation. He told a parable.
12:3 *it was like a daughter to him* The story fit exactly. David had many wives, Uriah had one, and David took her. The parable pictures Bathsheba as an innocent lamb, not as a partner in the theft.
12:5 *the man who has done this is a son of death* A son of death is a man who deserves to die. David the shepherd knew how a man could love a lamb. How easily we see sin in others and miss it in ourselves (Matt 7:3-5).
12:6 *the ewe lamb he shall repay fourfold* This was the Law's penalty (Exod 22:1). Many have noticed that four of David's sons died, the child, Amnon, Absalom and Adonijah (1 Kgs 2:24-25). Scripture does not call this the fulfillment, but it is a sobering pattern.
12:7 *You are the man!* Two words in Hebrew, and the trap closed. David had pronounced judgment on himself.
12:8 *if that were too little, I would add to you like these and like these* The wives of your master likely reflects the custom that a new king received the former king's household. God had been generous beyond measure and would have given more. David did not need to steal.
12:9 *Why have you despised the word of the LORD* To despise God's word is to treat it as if it does not matter. David had not swung the sword, but God said, you struck him down. Using the enemy's sword did not make David less guilty. God sees through every cover-up.
12:10 *the sword shall not depart from your house forever* David used the sword to kill Uriah, and now the sword would stay in his family. The rest of the book shows it in murder, rebellion and civil war among his sons. Notice, you despised Me. Sin against people is always sin against God.
12:11 *he will lie with your wives before the eyes of this sun* This came true when Absalom took his father's concubines on the palace roof, the same roof where David's sin began (16:22).
12:12 *you acted in secret* David's sin was secret, its consequences public. God does not cause anyone to sin, and Absalom was fully responsible. But God allowed the evil in David's house to work out as judgment. Whatever a man sows, this he will also reap (Gal 6:7).

David Confesses

13 And David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." And Nathan said to David, "The LORD also has taken away your sin; you shall not die. **14** Nevertheless, because by this thing you have utterly caused the enemies of the LORD to scorn, the son also who is born to you shall surely die."

The Child Dies

15 And Nathan went to his house. And the LORD struck the child that the wife of Uriah bore to David, and he became sick. **16** And David sought God for the boy; and David fasted a fast, and he would go in and spend the night and lie on the earth. **17** And the elders of his house stood beside him to raise him from the earth, and he was not willing, and he did not eat bread with them. **18** And it was on the seventh day, and the child died. And the servants of David were afraid to tell him that the child had died, for they said, "Look, while the child was alive we spoke to him, and he did not listen to our voice; and how shall we say to him, 'The child has died'? And he will do harm." **19** And David saw that his servants were whispering together, and David understood that the child had died. And David said to his servants, "Has the child died?" And they said, "He has died." **20** And David arose from the earth and washed and anointed himself and changed his garments, and he went ***into*** the house of the LORD and bowed down; and he went to his own house and asked, and they set bread before him, and he ate. **21** And his servants said to him, "What ***is*** this thing that you have done? For the sake of the child ***while he was*** alive you fasted and wept, and when the child died you arose and ate bread." **22** And he said, "While the child ***was*** still alive I fasted and wept, for I said, 'Who knows? And the LORD may be gracious to me, and the child may live.' **23** And now he has died; why ***is*** it ***that*** I ***am*** fasting? Am I able to bring him back again? I am going to him, and he will not return to me."

Solomon Born

24 And David comforted Bathsheba (Bat-Sheva) his wife, and he went in to her and lay with her; and she bore a son, and she called his name Solomon (Shelomo). And the LORD loved him, **25** and He sent by the hand of Nathan the prophet, and he called his name Jedidiah (Yedidya), for the sake of the LORD. **26** And Joab (Yo'av) fought against Rabbah (Raba) of the sons of Ammon and captured the royal city. **27** And Joab sent messengers to David and said, "I have fought against Rabbah; I have also captured the city of the waters. **28** And now gather the rest of the people and encamp against the city and capture it, lest I myself capture the city and my name be called over it." **29** And David gathered all the people and went to Rabbah and fought against it and captured it. **30** And he took the crown of their king from on his head, and its weight ***was*** approximately 75 pounds (a talent) of gold, and a precious stone, and it was on the head of David. And the spoil of the city he brought out, very much. **31** And the

12:13 Luke 15:21; Mark 12:12; 2 Sam 24:10
12:14 Mark 12:12; Isa 52:5; Rom 2:24
12:15 1 Sam 25:38; Deut 32:39; 1 Sam 26:10
12:16 2 Sam 13:31; Acts 9:9; 2 Sam 12:22
12:17 2 Sam 3:35; 1 Sam 28:23
12:18 Num 20:15
12:20 Job 1:20; Ruth 3:3; Job 2:10
12:21 1 Cor 2:15
12:22 Isa 38:1-3,5; Joel 1:14; Joel 2:14
12:23 Gen 37:35; Job 7:8-10; Job 30:23
12:24 Matt 1:6; 2 Sam 7:12; 1 Chr 3:5
12:25 Neh 13:26; 2 Sam 12:1-14; 2 Sam 7:4
12:26 1 Chr 20:1; 2 Sam 11:25
12:27 2 Sam 11:1; Deut 3:11; Ezek 21:20
12:28 John 7:18
12:30 1 Chr 20:2
12:31 1 Chr 20:3; 2 Sam 8:2; Ps 21:8,9

12:13 *I have sinned against the LORD* Two words in Hebrew, with no excuses, no blaming and no bargaining. Saul made excuses (1 Sam 15:20-21, 24). David confessed. That is why God called him a man after His own heart. His fuller confession is Psalm 51 (Ps 51:4, 17).
12:13 *The LORD also has taken away your sin; you shall not die* David deserved death twice over. God forgave him by grace through faith, looking ahead to the cross (Rom 4:7; Rom 3:25-26). No sin is so great that God will not forgive the one who truly confesses it (1 John 1:9).
12:14 *you have utterly caused the enemies of the LORD to scorn* Forgiveness and consequences are not the same. David's guilt was gone, but his public sin let God's enemies mock Him. The child was not guilty, and children are not to die for their fathers' sins (Deut 24:16). God, the giver of life, took a life back to Himself. Scripture does not give all His reasons.
12:15 *the child that the wife of Uriah bore to David* Again she is called the wife of Uriah. The child was the fruit of that sin.
12:16 *David sought God for the boy* Was David wrong to pray against what God had said? No. God has sometimes changed what He announced when people humbled themselves (Jonah 3:10; 2 Kgs 20:1-6). Prayer is never wasted, even when the answer is no. David loved this child.
12:18 *on the seventh day, and the child died* The servants feared David might do harm, perhaps to himself. If you have lost a child, or a baby before birth, these verses may be hard to read. God's Word does not hide this grief. God sees it.
12:20 *he went into the house of the LORD and bowed down* The first place David went was the house of God. Like Job (Job 1:20-21), he accepted from God's hand what he could not change. That is not the same as not grieving. It is grieving with trust.
12:22 *Who knows? And the LORD may be gracious to me* As long as there was hope, David prayed.
12:23 *I am going to him, and he will not return to me* Some say David meant only that he too would go to the grave. But his grief turned to peace, and most teachers believe he meant he would see his son again (Ps 23:6). I believe little children who die are safe with God. Jesus said of little children, "of such is the kingdom of God" (Mark 10:14). Believers differ on details, but David's words give real hope.
12:24 *David comforted Bathsheba his wife* This is the first time she is called his wife by name, and the first time we see David caring for her grief. She had lost a husband and a child.
12:24 *the LORD loved him* Grace upon grace. From a marriage that began in sin, God chose the son who would build the temple and stand in the Messiah's line (Matt 1:6). God did not approve how it began, but He did not hold it against the son or refuse to bless a repentant couple.
12:25 *he called his name Jedidiah* Jedidiah means beloved of the LORD. The prophet who brought the hard word now brought a gift. God was saying, I have not cast you off. He does not undo the past, but He can give a new beginning.
12:27 *I have also captured the city of the waters* This was likely the part guarding the water supply. Without water the city could not hold out long.
12:28 *lest I myself capture the city and my name be called over it* Joab wanted the king to have the honor. It was loyal, and perhaps also a pointed reminder that the king belonged with his army (11:1).
12:30 *he took the crown of their king from on his head* A talent of gold was very heavy, so some think it was held over David's head or worn only briefly. Some read their king as Milcom, the Ammonite god, whose name is close to the word for king.
12:31 *he set them to the saw and to the picks of iron and to the axes of iron* Most teachers today read this as forced labor, cutting, digging and making bricks. Some older translations read it as torture. Forced labor fits the words best. David was forgiven, but the sword was already waiting in his house.

people who ***were*** in it he brought out, and he set ***them*** to the saw and to the picks of iron and to the axes of iron, and he made them pass through the brick mold. And thus he did to all the cities of the sons of Ammon. And David and all the people returned ***to*** Jerusalem (Yerushalayim).

2 SAMUEL 13

Amnon and Tamar

1 And it was after this, and Absalom (Avshalom) the son of David had a beautiful sister, and her name ***was*** Tamar; and Amnon the son of David loved her. **2** And Amnon was in distress, ***so as*** to make himself sick because of Tamar his sister, for she ***was*** a virgin; and it was difficult in the eyes of Amnon to do anything to her. **3** And Amnon had a friend, and his name ***was*** Jonadab (Yonadav), the son of Shimeah (Shima), the brother of David; and Jonadab ***was*** a very shrewd man. **4** And he said to him, "Why ***are*** you so weak, son of the king, morning ***after*** morning? Will you not tell me?" And Amnon said to him, "Tamar, the sister of Absalom my brother, I love." **5** And Jonadab (Yehonadav) said to him, "Lie down on your bed and make yourself sick; and your father will come to see you, and you shall say to him, 'Please let Tamar my sister come and feed me bread, and let her make the food before my eyes, so that I may see ***it***, and I will eat from her hand.'" **6** And Amnon lay down and made himself sick; and the king came to see him, and Amnon said to the king, "Please let Tamar my sister come and make two cakes before my eyes, so that I may eat from her hand." **7** And David sent to Tamar, to the house, saying, "Please go to the house of Amnon your brother and make the food for him." **8** And Tamar went ***to*** the house of Amnon her brother, and he ***was*** lying down. And she took the dough and kneaded ***it*** and made cakes before his eyes and cooked the cakes. **9** And she took the pan and poured ***them*** out before him, and he refused to eat. And Amnon said, "Send every man out from me." And every man went out from him. **10** And Amnon said to Tamar, "Bring the food into the chamber, so that I may eat from your hand." And Tamar took the cakes that she had made and brought ***them*** to Amnon her brother, into the chamber. **11** And she brought ***them*** near to him to eat, and he took hold of her and said to her, "Come, lie with me, my sister." **12** And she said to him, "No, my brother, do not humble me, for it is not done so in Israel (Yisra'el); do not do this disgraceful folly. **13** And I, where shall I carry my reproach? And you, you will be like one of the fools in Israel. And now, please speak to the king, for he will not withhold me from you." **14** And he was not willing to listen to her voice; and he was stronger than she, and he humbled her and lay with her.

Tamar Cast Out

15 And Amnon hated her ***with*** very great hatred, for the hatred with which he hated her ***was*** greater than the love with which he had loved her. And Amnon said to her, "Get up, go!" **16** And she said to him, "No, because this great evil, to send me away, ***is greater*** than the other that you have done with me." And he was not willing to listen to her. **17** And he called his young man who attended him and said, "Please send this ***woman*** away from me, outside, and lock the door after her." **18** And on her ***was*** a full-length tunic, for thus the daughters of the king, the virgins, would dress ***in*** robes. And his attendant brought her outside and locked the door after her. **19** And Tamar took ashes on her head, and the full-length tunic which ***was*** on her she tore; and she put

13:1 2 Sam 3:2,3; 1 Chr 3:9; 1 Chr 3:2
13:2 1 Kgs 21:4; Song 5:8; 2 Cor 7:10
13:3 Luke 16:8; 1 Sam 16:9; Gen 38:1,20
13:4 Esth 5:13,14; Luke 12:32; Isa 3:9
13:5 2 Sam 16:21-23; Ps 50:18,19; Prov 19:27
13:6 Gen 18:6; Matt 13:33
13:9 Gen 45:1; Judg 3:19; John 3:20
13:11 Gen 39:11,12
13:12 Lev 20:17; Judg 19:23; Judg 20:6
13:13 Gen 19:8; Judg 19:24
13:14 2 Sam 12:11; Deut 22:25-27; Judg 20:5
13:15 Ezek 23:17
13:18 Gen 37:3,32; Judg 5:30; Ps 45:13,14
13:19 Josh 7:6; Jer 2:37; 2 Sam 1:2

13:1 *Amnon the son of David loved her* After this ties the chapter to what came before. David sinned with a woman and covered it with a killing. Now one son sins against a woman, and another answers with a killing. The sword has come home. Amnon was the firstborn (3:2), and Tamar was Absalom's full sister and Amnon's half-sister.
13:2 *so as to make himself sick because of Tamar his sister* What is called love here is desire. The king's unmarried daughters were guarded, and Amnon could not get near her. Real love seeks the good of the other person (1 Cor 13:4-5). Amnon thought only of himself.
13:3 *Jonadab was a very shrewd man* Jonadab was Amnon's cousin, son of David's brother. Shrewd means clever, and here it is cleverness put to evil use.
13:5 *Lie down on your bed and make yourself sick* Jonadab did not warn him. He gave him a plan. A true friend tells us the truth when we are going wrong. Bad associations corrupt good morals (1 Cor 15:33).
13:7 *Please go to the house of Amnon your brother* David came because he loved his son, and he did not see the trap. But the father who should have protected his daughter sent her there. David's own sin began when he sent for a woman (11:4).
13:9 *Send every man out from me* Tamar went in kindness and obedience. She had no reason to fear her own brother.
13:11 *Come, lie with me, my sister* He calls her my sister even as he grabs her. He knew exactly who she was.
13:12 *do not do this disgraceful folly* Tamar's answer is brave and wise. She called it what it was, a wicked and shameful act the Law forbade (Lev 18:9).
13:13 *you will be like one of the fools in Israel* A fool in the Bible lives as if God does not matter. Tamar thought of what it would do to them both, then tried to buy time by asking him to speak to the king. She was looking for any way out.
13:14 *he was stronger than she, and he humbled her and lay with her* Scripture is plain and brief. Amnon raped his sister. She said no, she pleaded, and he used his strength against her. The whole guilt is his, and the Law said the young woman is a victim (Deut 22:25-26). What happened to Tamar was not her fault. If this happened to you, it was not your fault. God looks with compassion, not blame.
13:15 *the hatred with which he hated her was greater than the love* This shows what his love had been all along. Lust that gets what it wants often turns to disgust. He could not stand to look at what he had done, so he could not stand to look at her.
13:16 *this great evil, to send me away, is greater than the other* A violated woman was left with no hope of marriage and no place in society. The Law bound such a man to provide for her (Exod 22:16; Deut 22:28-29), though teachers differ on how those laws applied to a half-sister. Amnon cast her out like garbage.
13:17 *send this woman away from me* He would not even say her name, and he locked the door as if she were the one who had done wrong.
13:18 *a full-length tunic* The robe marked her as a king's daughter who had not married.
13:19 *going and crying out* Ashes, a torn garment and a hand on the head were signs of deep grief and shame. Tamar did not hide what was done to her. She cried out in the open, telling the world a great wrong had been done and asking for justice. That took courage.

her hand on her head and went on, going and crying out.
20 And Absalom her brother said to her, "Has Amnon your brother been with you? And now, my sister, keep silent; he ***is*** your brother. Do not set your heart on this matter." And Tamar dwelt, desolate, ***in*** the house of Absalom her brother.
21 And King David heard all these things, and he burned ***with anger*** exceedingly. **22** And Absalom did not speak with Amnon ***anything*** from bad to good, for Absalom hated Amnon because of the matter that he had humbled Tamar his sister.

Absalom Kills Amnon

23 And it was after two full years, and Absalom had sheepshearers at Baal-hazor (Ba'al-Chatsor), which ***is*** beside Ephraim (Efrayim); and Absalom invited all the sons of the king. **24** And Absalom came to the king and said, "Look, please, your servant has sheepshearers; please let the king and his servants go with your servant." **25** And the king said to Absalom, "No, my son, please let us not all go, and we will not be heavy on you." And he urged him, and he was not willing to go, and he blessed him. **26** And Absalom said, "***If*** not, please let Amnon my brother go with us." And the king said to him, "Why should he go with you?" **27** And Absalom urged him, and he sent with him Amnon and all the sons of the king. **28** And Absalom commanded his servants, saying, "Please see: when the heart of Amnon is good with the wine, and I say to you, 'Strike down Amnon,' then you shall kill him. Do not be afraid; have I not commanded you? Be strong and become sons of strength." **29** And the servants of Absalom did to Amnon just as Absalom had commanded. And all the sons of the king arose, and they mounted, each man on his mule, and fled. **30** And it was, ***while*** they ***were*** on the way, and the report came to David, saying, "Absalom has struck down all the sons of the king, and not one of them is left." **31** And the king arose and tore his garments and lay on the earth, and all his servants ***were*** standing ***with*** torn garments. **32** And Jonadab the son of Shimeah, the brother of David, answered and said, "Let not my lord say ***that*** they have killed all the young men, the sons of the king, for Amnon alone has died; for by the mouth of Absalom it has been set since the day he humbled Tamar his sister. **33** And now, let not my lord the king set a word to his heart, saying, 'All the sons of the king have died,' for Amnon alone has died." **34** And Absalom fled. And the young man who was keeping watch lifted up his eyes and saw, and look, many people ***were*** coming from the way behind him, from the side of the mountain. **35** And Jonadab said to the king, "Look, the sons of the king have come; according to the word of your servant, so it has happened." **36** And it was, as he finished speaking, and look, the sons of the king came, and they lifted up their voice and wept; and also the king and all his servants wept a very great weeping. **37** And Absalom fled and went to Talmai (Talmay) the son of Ammihud (Amihud), the king of Geshur. And he mourned over his son all the days. **38** And Absalom fled and went ***to*** Geshur, and he was there three years. **39** And ***the soul of*** David the king longed to go out to Absalom, for he was comforted concerning Amnon, that he had died.

2 SAMUEL 14

The Woman of Tekoa

1 And Joab (Yo'av) the son of Zeruiah (Tseruya) knew that

13:20 Gal 4:27; Prov 26:24; Rom 12:19
13:21 Gen 34:7; 2 Sam 3:28,29; 2 Sam 12:5,10
13:22 Lev 19:17,18; Gen 31:24,29; Gen 24:50
13:23 John 11:54; Gen 38:12,13; 1 Sam 25:2,4,36
13:24 2 Sam 11:8-15; Ps 12:2; Ps 55:21
13:25 Gen 19:2,3; Judg 19:7-10; Luke 14:23
13:26 2 Sam 3:27; 2 Sam 11:13-15; 2 Sam 20:9
13:27 Prov 26:24-26
13:28 Judg 19:6,9,22; Ruth 3:7; 1 Sam 25:36-38
13:29 2 Sam 18:9; 1 Kgs 1:33; 1 Sam 22:18,19
13:31 2 Sam 12:16; 2 Sam 1:11; Gen 37:29,34
13:32 1 Sam 16:9; Gen 27:41; Ps 7:14
13:33 2 Sam 19:19
13:34 Gen 4:8-14; Prov 28:17; Amos 5:19
13:36 2 Sam 13:15; 2 Sam 12:21; 2 Sam 18:33
13:37 2 Sam 3:3; 1 Chr 3:2
13:38 2 Sam 14:23,32; 2 Sam 15:8; Deut 3:14
13:39 Gen 24:67; Gen 37:35; Gen 38:12
14:1 2 Sam 13:39; 2 Sam 2:18; 1 Chr 2:16

13:20 *my sister, keep silent; he is your brother* Taking her in was a kindness, but his words were not. Those who are abused are often told the same. Silence did not heal Tamar, and desolate means ruined, like a land laid waste. Tamar's cry was right. Tell someone safe, a pastor, a counselor, a trusted friend, and where a crime was done, the authorities. If you are in danger now, get to safety (Ps 34:18).
13:21 *he burned with anger exceedingly* David was angry, and he did nothing. He was king, judge and father, yet he did not punish Amnon or defend Tamar. Some ancient copies add that he would not grieve Amnon, his firstborn. Anger that never becomes right action does harm. If someone in your care is abused, anger is not enough. Act.
13:22 *Absalom did not speak with Amnon anything from bad to good* He said nothing to him at all. When those who should do justice do not, people often take it into their own hands.
13:23 *after two full years* Still nothing was done, and Absalom's hatred did not cool. Sheepshearing was a time of feasting, and Baal-hazor lay north of Jerusalem.
13:26 *Why should he go with you?* David seems to have sensed something was wrong, but he gave in. Once again David sent a child of his into danger.
13:28 *when the heart of Amnon is good with the wine* Absalom's plan mirrors Amnon's use of food and a pretended sickness. It also mirrors David, who made Uriah drunk (11:13) and had others kill him. David's sons were repeating their father's sins.
13:29 *did to Amnon just as Absalom had commanded* Was this justice for Tamar? No. It was murder. Absalom did not bring Amnon before the king or elders, and he removed the son ahead of him for the throne. Vengeance belongs to God (Rom 12:19). Revenge never heals the wound it claims to avenge.
13:30 *not one of them is left* News travels fast and gets worse as it goes.
13:32 *by the mouth of Absalom it has been set since the day he humbled Tamar* Jonadab knew. He gave Amnon the plan, watched Absalom plan murder for two years, and said nothing until it was done. He always knows the inside story and never does the right thing with it.
13:36 *the king and all his servants wept a very great weeping* This is the second son David has lost. Nathan's word was coming true (12:11). Sin's harvest is bitter, and it often falls on the people we love most.
13:37 *Talmai the son of Ammihud, the king of Geshur* Talmai was Absalom's grandfather (3:3). Geshur was a small kingdom northeast of the Sea of Galilee, outside David's reach. The one who mourned all the days is David, for Amnon.
13:39 *the soul of David the king longed to go out to Absalom* Some translations read that David's anger toward Absalom ceased. Either way his heart was pulled in two, and he did nothing. Love that will not discipline is not full love, and God disciplines those He loves (Heb 12:6). Sin left alone does not go away. It grows.
14:1 *the heart of the king was toward Absalom* Joab was hard and practical. He saw David torn and the kingdom unsettled with the likely heir in exile.

the heart of the king ***was*** toward Absalom (Avshalom). **2** And Joab sent to Tekoa (Teqoa) and took from there a wise woman, and he said to her, "Please act as a mourner, and please put on garments of mourning, and do not anoint yourself ***with*** oil, and you shall be like a woman who ***has been*** mourning over a dead ***person*** these many days. **3** And you shall go to the king and speak to him according to this word." And Joab put the words in her mouth. **4** And the Tekoite woman spoke to the king, and she fell on her face to the earth and bowed down and said, "Save, O king!" **5** And the king said to her, "What ***is the matter*** with you?" And she said, "Truly I ***am*** a widow woman, and my husband has died. **6** And your maidservant had two sons, and the two of them struggled together in the field, and ***there was*** no one to deliver between them; and the one struck the other and killed him. **7** And look, the whole clan has risen up against your maidservant, and they have said, 'Give up the one who struck his brother, so that we may put him to death for the life of his brother whom he killed, and let us destroy the heir also.' And they will extinguish my coal which is left, so as not to set for my husband a name and a remnant on the face of the ground." **8** And the king said to the woman, "Go to your house, and I, I will give command concerning you." **9** And the Tekoite woman said to the king, "On me, my lord the king, ***be*** the iniquity, and on the house of my father; and the king and his throne ***be*** innocent." **10** And the king said, "The one who speaks to you, you shall bring him to me, and he will not touch you again anymore." **11** And she said, "Please let the king remember the LORD your God, so that the avenger of blood will not multiply destroying, and they will not destroy my son." And he said, "***As*** the LORD lives, not one of the hairs of your son shall fall to the earth." **12** And the woman said, "Please let your maidservant speak a word to my lord the king." And he said, "Speak." **13** And the woman said, "And why have you planned like this against the people of God? And by the king's speaking this word ***he is*** like one guilty, in the king's not bringing back his banished ***one***. **14** For we shall surely die, and ***we are*** like water poured out on the earth, which cannot be gathered up; and God does not take away life, and He devises plans so that the banished ***one*** is not cast out from Him. **15** And now, that I have come to speak this word to the king my lord, ***it is*** because the people have made me afraid; and your maidservant said, 'Let me please speak to the king; perhaps the king will do the word of his maidservant. **16** For the king will hear, to deliver his maidservant from the hand of the man ***who seeks*** to destroy me and my son together from the inheritance of God.' **17** And your maidservant said, 'Please let the word of my lord the king be for rest; for like the angel of God, so ***is*** my lord the king, to hear the good and the bad.' And the LORD your God, may He be with you." **18** And the king answered and said to the woman, "Please do not hide from me anything that I am asking you." And the woman said, "Please let my lord the king speak." **19** And the king said, "***Is*** the hand of Joab with you in all this?" And the woman answered and said, "***As*** your soul lives, my lord the king, there is no going to the right or going to the left from all that my lord the king has spoken; for your servant Joab, he commanded me, and he put in the mouth of your maidservant all these words. **20** In order to change the face of the matter your servant Joab has done this thing; and my lord ***is*** wise, according to the wisdom of the angel of God, to know all that ***is*** in the land."

Absalom Brought Home

21 And the king said to Joab, "Look, please, I have done this thing; and go, bring back the young man Absalom." **22** And Joab fell on his face to the earth and bowed down and blessed the king; and Joab said, "Today your servant knows that I have found favor in your eyes, my lord the king, in that the king has done the word of your servant." **23** And Joab arose and went to Geshur and brought Absalom ***to*** Jerusalem

14:2 Luke 20:20; 2 Chr 11:6; Amos 1:1
14:3 2 Sam 14:19; Exod 4:15; Num 23:5
14:4 2 Sam 1:2; 1 Sam 25:23; 2 Kgs 6:26-28
14:5 2 Sam 12:1-3; Judg 9:8-15
14:6 Gen 4:8; Exod 2:13; Deut 22:26,27
14:7 Num 35:19; Gen 4:14; Deut 19:12
14:8 2 Sam 12:5,6; 2 Sam 16:4; Job 29:16
14:9 1 Sam 25:24; 1 Kgs 2:33; Matt 27:25
14:11 1 Sam 14:45; Num 35:19,27; Matt 10:30
14:12 1 Sam 25:24; Gen 18:27,32; Gen 44:18
14:13 2 Sam 12:7; 2 Sam 13:37,38; 1 Kgs 20:40-42
14:14 Matt 22:16; Num 35:15,25,28; Job 30:23
14:17 2 Sam 19:27; 1 Sam 29:9; 2 Sam 14:20
14:18 1 Sam 3:17,18; Jer 38:14,25
14:19 2 Sam 14:3; 1 Sam 1:26; 2 Sam 3:27,29,34
14:20 2 Sam 14:17; 2 Sam 19:27; 2 Sam 5:23
14:21 2 Sam 14:11; 1 Sam 14:39; Mark 6:26
14:22 2 Sam 19:39; Neh 11:2; Job 29:11
14:23 2 Sam 3:3; 2 Sam 13:37

14:2 *Joab sent to Tekoa and took from there a wise woman* Tekoa was about ten miles south of Jerusalem, later Amos's home (Amos 1:1). Joab gave her a costume and a script. Nathan told a story to bring David to the truth (12:1-7). Joab told one to bring David to the decision Joab wanted. Same method, very different purpose.
14:4 *Save, O king!* Kings heard cases from their people, and a widow had the right to come to the king for help.
14:7 *they will extinguish my coal which is left* The nearest relative was the avenger of blood (Num 35:19). But if this son died, the family line would end. The coal was the last live ember saved to start the fire in the morning. Her story was close enough to David's family that he should have seen it coming.
14:9 *the king and his throne be innocent* She offered to carry any guilt herself, pressing the king step by step toward a firm promise.
14:11 *not one of the hairs of your son shall fall to the earth* Now David was bound by his own oath. As with Nathan's parable, David passed judgment, and the judgment was turned on him.
14:13 *in the king's not bringing back his banished one* In pardoning her son, the king had condemned himself.
14:14 *we are like water poured out on the earth, which cannot be gathered up* Life is short. Once spilled, it cannot be gathered again. Do not waste the time you have with your son.
14:14 *He devises plans so that the banished one is not cast out from Him* One of the great sentences of the Old Testament, even from a hired speaker. God brought us home in Christ (Eph 2:13; 2 Cor 5:18-19). But He does it justly, with sin paid for at the cross. Her argument skipped justice. Absalom had not repented, and Amnon's murder was never answered.
14:16 *from the inheritance of God* She meant being cut off from their place among God's people.
14:17 *like the angel of God, so is my lord the king* She meant David was wise enough to sort right from wrong. Her speech mixed real truth, real flattery and real pressure.
14:19 *Is the hand of Joab with you in all this?* David was not fooled about who was behind it. He knew he had been played, but he also wanted to be. Joab gave him a reason to do what his heart already wanted.

(Yerushalayim). **24** And the king said, "He shall turn aside to his house, and my face he shall not see." And Absalom turned aside to his house, and the face of the king he did not see. **25** And like Absalom there was no man ***so*** handsome in all Israel (Yisra'el), to be praised greatly; from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him. **26** And when he shaved his head (and it was at the end of every year that he would shave ***it***, for it was heavy on him, and he would shave it), he would weigh the hair of his head, approximately 5 pounds (two hundred shekels) by the weight of the king. **27** And to Absalom were born three sons and one daughter, and her name ***was*** Tamar; she was a woman beautiful of appearance. **28** And Absalom dwelt in Jerusalem two full years, and the face of the king he did not see. **29** And Absalom sent to Joab to send him to the king, and he was not willing to come to him; and he sent again a second ***time***, and he was not willing to come. **30** And he said to his servants, "See, the plot of Joab ***is*** next to my hand, and he has barley there; go and set it ablaze with fire." And the servants of Absalom set the plot ablaze with fire. **31** And Joab arose and went to Absalom, to the house, and said to him, "Why have your servants set the plot that ***is*** mine ablaze with fire?" **32** And Absalom said to Joab, "Look, I sent to you, saying, 'Come here, and let me send you to the king to say, "Why have I come from Geshur? ***It would be*** good for me ***that*** I ***were*** still there."' And now let me see the face of the king; and if there is iniquity in me, then he shall put me to death." **33** And Joab went to the king and told him; and he called Absalom, and he came to the king and bowed down to him on his face to the earth before the king; and the king kissed Absalom.

2 SAMUEL 15

Absalom Steals Hearts

1 And it was after this, and Absalom (Avshalom) made for himself a chariot and horses, and fifty men running before him. **2** And Absalom would rise early and stand beside the way of the gate; and it was, every man who had a case to come to the king for judgment, Absalom called to him and said, "From which city ***are*** you?" And he said, "Your servant ***is*** from one of the tribes of Israel (Yisra'el)." **3** And Absalom said to him, "See, your matters ***are*** good and right, and ***there is*** no one listening to you from the king." **4** And Absalom said, "Who will make me a judge in the land, and to me every man who has a case and judgment would come, and I would justify him!" **5** And it was, when a man drew near to bow down to him, he would stretch out his hand and take hold of him and kiss him. **6** And Absalom did according to this manner to all Israel who came for judgment to the king; and Absalom stole the heart of the men of Israel.

Absalom's Conspiracy

7 And it was at the end of forty years, and Absalom said to the king, "Please let me go and pay my vow which I vowed to the LORD in Hebron (Chevron). **8** For your servant vowed a vow while I dwelt at Geshur in Syria (Aram), saying, 'If the LORD will indeed bring me back ***to*** Jerusalem (Yerushalayim),

14:24 Rev 22:4; 2 Sam 14:28; 2 Sam 3:13
14:25 Deut 28:35; Job 2:7; Isa 1:6
14:26 2 Sam 18:9; Isa 3:24; 1 Cor 11:14
14:27 2 Sam 18:18; 2 Sam 13:1; Job 18:16-19
14:29 Matt 22:3; Esth 1:12
14:30 Judg 15:4,5; 2 Sam 13:28,29; 1 Kgs 21:9-14
14:32 Prov 28:13; Exod 14:12; Exod 16:3
14:33 Gen 33:4; Luke 15:20; Gen 27:26
15:1 1 Kgs 1:5,33; 2 Sam 12:11; 1 Sam 8:11
15:2 Job 24:14; Prov 4:16; Matt 27:1
15:3 Num 16:3,13,14; Ps 12:2; Dan 11:21
15:4 Judg 9:1-5,29; Prov 25:6; Luke 14:8-11
15:5 2 Sam 14:33; Ps 10:9,10; Ps 55:21
15:6 Rom 16:18; Prov 11:9; 2 Pet 2:3
15:7 Matt 2:8; 2 Sam 13:38; 1 Sam 16:1,13
15:8 Matt 2:8; Gen 28:20,21; 2 Sam 13:37,38

14:24 *my face he shall not see* Absalom was home but not welcome, neither forgiven nor punished. I believe this was the worst of both choices, though some read it more kindly as a cautious first step. An open wound festers. Real reconciliation needs truth and repentance on one side and real forgiveness on the other (Luke 17:3-4).
14:25 *from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him* Israel was about to choose a king by looks again, as with Saul (1 Sam 9:2). Man sees the eyes, but the LORD sees the heart (1 Sam 16:7). Absalom was beautiful on the outside. His heart was another matter.
14:26 *he would weigh the hair of his head* About five pounds of hair, cut once a year. Remember that hair. It will matter in chapter 18.
14:27 *her name was Tamar* He named his daughter after his sister, which may tell us how much he loved her. In 18:18 he says he has no son, so it seems his sons died young. Scripture does not say how.
14:28 *the face of the king he did not see* Two years before the murder, three in Geshur, and now two more in the same city as his father without a word.
14:30 *go and set it ablaze with fire* Absalom gets what he wants by force. This is the man who waited two years to kill his brother.
14:32 *if there is iniquity in me, then he shall put me to death* Notice what he does not say. He never says he was wrong. He dares his father to judge him, knowing David will not.
14:33 *the king kissed Absalom* It looks like the father of the prodigal (Luke 15:20), but the prodigal came home confessing his sin (Luke 15:21). Absalom never did. A kiss without repentance did not reconcile them, and Absalom will soon use kisses to steal the people's hearts. God's forgiveness is free, but not cheap.
15:1 *fifty men running before him* Runners before a chariot were a sign of royalty. Samuel had warned that a king would make the people's sons run before his chariot (1 Sam 8:11). Absalom was acting like a king before he was one.
15:2 *stand beside the way of the gate* The city gate was where cases were heard and business was done. Absalom stopped every man coming to the king.
15:3 *your matters are good and right* He had not heard the other side. The first in his case seems right until his neighbor examines him (Prov 18:17). David may have grown distant after his sin and family troubles, but Absalom did not want to fix the problem. He wanted to use it.
15:4 *I would justify him!* He promised everybody what they wanted. Politicians have done this ever since.
15:5 *he would stretch out his hand and take hold of him and kiss him* The king's son refused to let people bow and treated them as equals. It looked humble. It was a strategy.
15:6 *Absalom stole the heart of the men of Israel* Stole is the right word. He took their hearts by flattery and deceit. Beware the leader who tells you only what you want to hear and runs down those in authority to take their place. The thief comes another way than the door (John 10:1).
15:7 *at the end of forty years* The SLB follows the Hebrew, which reads forty. Most teachers think it means four years after Absalom came back, as some ancient copies read, since David reigned forty years in all (5:4). Either way, the plot was long and patient.
15:8 *then I will serve the LORD* It was a religious cover for a political plot. Hebron was where David was first made king (2:4) and where Absalom was born (3:2-3), and some there may have resented the move to Jerusalem.

then I will serve the LORD.'" **9** And the king said to him, "Go in peace." And he arose and went to Hebron. **10** And Absalom sent spies through all the tribes of Israel, saying, "When you hear the sound of the ram's horn, then you shall say, 'Absalom has become king in Hebron.'" **11** And with Absalom went two hundred men from Jerusalem, invited, and going in their innocence, and they did not know anything. **12** And Absalom sent ***for*** Ahithophel (Achitofel) the Gilonite, the counselor of David, from his city, from Giloh (Gilo), while he was sacrificing the sacrifices. And the conspiracy was strong, and the people ***were*** going on and increasing with Absalom.

David Flees Jerusalem

13 And the one bringing the news came to David, saying, "The heart of the men of Israel is after Absalom." **14** And David said to all his servants who ***were*** with him in Jerusalem, "Arise, and let us flee, for there will be no escape for us from before Absalom. Hurry to go, lest he hurry and overtake us and thrust the evil upon us and strike the city with the mouth of the sword." **15** And the servants of the king said to the king, "According to all that my lord the king chooses, look, your servants!" **16** And the king went out, and all his household at his feet; and the king left ten women, concubines, to keep the house. **17** And the king went out, and all the people at his feet, and they stood ***at*** the farthest house. **18** And all his servants ***were*** passing on beside him, and all the Kerethites and all the Pelethites and all the Gittites, six hundred men who had come at his foot from Gath (Gat), ***were*** passing on before the king. **19** And the king said to Ittai (Itay) the Gittite, "Why will you also go with us? Return and dwell with the king, for you ***are*** a foreigner, and also you ***are*** an exile from your place. **20** Yesterday ***was*** your coming, and today shall I make you wander with us to go? And I am going wherever I am going. Return, and take back your brothers; steadfast love and truth ***be*** with you." **21** And Ittai answered the king and said, "***As*** the LORD lives and ***as*** my lord the king lives, surely in the place where my lord the king shall be, whether for death or for life, surely there your servant will be." **22** And David said to Ittai, "Go and pass on." And Ittai the Gittite passed on, and all his men and all the little ones who ***were*** with him. **23** And all the land ***was*** weeping ***with*** a great voice, and all the people ***were*** passing on; and the king ***was*** passing on in the wadi of Kidron (Qidron), and all the people ***were*** passing on, on the face of the way ***to*** the wilderness. **24** And look, Zadok (Tsadoq) also, and all the Levites with him, carrying the ark of the covenant of God; and they set down the ark of God, and Abiathar (Evyatar) went up, until all the people had finished passing out from the city. **25** And the king said to Zadok, "Take back the ark of God ***to*** the city. If I find favor in the eyes of the LORD, then He will bring me back and show me it and His habitation. **26** And if He says thus, 'I do not delight in you,' look, ***here*** I ***am***; let Him do to me as ***it*** is good in His eyes." **27** And the king said to Zadok the priest, "***Are*** you a seer? Return to the city in peace, and Ahimaaz (Achima'ats) your son and Jonathan (Yehonatan) the son of Abiathar, your two sons, with you. **28** See, I will be lingering in the plains of the wilderness until a word comes from you to tell me." **29** And Zadok and Abiathar took the ark of God back ***to*** Jerusalem, and they remained there.

15:9 Matt 2:8
15:10 Matt 2:8; 2 Sam 13:28; 2 Sam 14:30
15:11 Matt 2:8; 1 Sam 9:13; 1 Sam 22:15
15:12 2 Sam 15:31; Josh 15:51; Ps 41:9
15:13 Matt 21:9; Judg 9:3; 2 Sam 15:6
15:14 2 Sam 19:9; Ps 3:1; Ezek 46:18
15:15 Prov 18:24; Luke 22:28,29; John 6:66-69
15:16 2 Sam 16:21,22; 2 Sam 20:3; Ps 3:1
15:17 Ps 3:1; Ps 66:12; Eccl 10:7
15:18 2 Sam 8:18; 2 Sam 20:7,23; 1 Sam 30:14
15:19 2 Sam 18:2; Ruth 1:11-13
15:20 1 Sam 23:13; 2 Sam 2:6; Heb 11:37,38
15:21 Matt 8:19; Ruth 1:16,17; Prov 17:17
15:23 John 18:1; Matt 3:3; 2 Sam 16:2
15:24 Mark 2:26; 2 Sam 8:17; Num 4:15
15:25 2 Sam 12:10,11; 1 Sam 4:3-11; Jer 7:4
15:26 Matt 26:39; 1 Sam 3:18; 2 Sam 22:20
15:27 1 Sam 9:9; 2 Sam 17:17; 2 Sam 24:11
15:28 2 Sam 15:23; 2 Sam 16:2; 2 Sam 17:1,16
15:29 Mark 2:26

15:9 *Go in peace* Those were the last words David ever spoke to his son.
15:10 *When you hear the sound of the ram's horn* On one signal the news would spread through all the tribes at once.
15:11 *going in their innocence, and they did not know anything* The two hundred thought they were going to a religious feast. Their presence made it look as if leading men of Jerusalem backed Absalom.
15:12 *Ahithophel the Gilonite, the counselor of David* Ahithophel was the wisest man in the kingdom (16:23). He was very likely Bathsheba's grandfather, since her father Eliam (11:3) was his son (23:34). If so, he may have carried a grudge for years over Bathsheba and Uriah.
15:14 *Arise, and let us flee* David would leave the city rather than see it besieged and its people killed. I also see a broken man who knew this trouble came from his own sin (12:11). He would not cling to his throne. He would trust God with it.
15:16 *the king left ten women, concubines, to keep the house* A concubine was a wife of lower rank. This detail will matter in the next chapter.
15:17 *they stood at the farthest house* The king stopped at the last house on the edge of the city and watched his people pass by.
15:18 *six hundred men who had come at his foot from Gath* These Philistines had followed David since his years at Gath (1 Sam 27). Some of David's most loyal men were foreigners, while his own son and people turned against him.
15:20 *steadfast love and truth be with you* Ittai had only just come and owed David nothing. David released him with a blessing.
15:21 *whether for death or for life, surely there your servant will be* One of the great statements of loyalty in the Bible. A Philistine swore by the LORD, and he sounds like Ruth the Moabite (Ruth 1:16).
15:22 *all the little ones who were with him* Ittai brought his family into exile with the king. That is what it means to follow your king when it costs something (Matt 16:24).
15:23 *the king was passing on in the wadi of Kidron* A wadi runs only in the rainy season. The Kidron lies between Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives. About a thousand years later Jesus crossed it the night He was betrayed (John 18:1). David went for his own sins. Jesus went for ours.
15:24 *carrying the ark of the covenant of God* The priests brought the ark out so it could go with the king.
15:25 *Take back the ark of God to the city* David would not use the ark as a lucky charm, as Israel did in Eli's day and lost it (1 Sam 4:3-11). God cannot be carried around and used.
15:26 *let Him do to me as it is good in His eyes* This is the David we love. He does not demand that God restore him. He trusts God either way. Real faith does not use God to get what we want but surrenders to what He wants.
15:27 *Are you a seer?* This may mean, are you not a man who sees what is going on? Go back and keep watch.
15:28 *I will be lingering in the plains of the wilderness* David would wait near the fords of the Jordan for word. He trusted God and used good sense. Faith and planning are not enemies. Nehemiah prayed and set a guard (Neh 4:9).

David on the Mount of Olives

30 And David ***was*** going up by the ascent of the olive trees, going up and weeping, and his head ***was*** covered, and he ***was*** walking barefoot; and all the people who ***were*** with him covered each man his head, and they went up, going up and weeping. **31** And one told David, saying, "Ahithophel ***is*** among the conspirators with Absalom." And David said, "O LORD, please make the counsel of Ahithophel foolish." **32** And it was, David was coming to the top, where one would bow down to God, and look, Hushai (Chushay) the Arkite ***was*** to meet him, his tunic torn and soil on his head. **33** And David said to him, "If you pass on with me, then you will be a burden on me. **34** And if you return ***to*** the city and say to Absalom, 'I will be your servant, O king; I ***was*** the servant of your father from of old, and now I ***am*** your servant,' then you will frustrate for me the counsel of Ahithophel. **35** And ***are*** not Zadok and Abiathar the priests with you there? And it shall be, every word that you hear from the house of the king, you shall tell to Zadok and to Abiathar the priests. **36** Look, there with them ***are*** their two sons, Ahimaaz ***the son*** of Zadok and Jonathan ***the son*** of Abiathar; and you shall send to me by their hand every word that you hear." **37** And Hushai the friend of David came ***into*** the city, and Absalom was coming ***into*** Jerusalem.

2 SAMUEL 16

Ziba's Gift

1 And David passed on a little from the top, and look, Ziba (Tsiva) the servant of Mephibosheth (Mefivoshet) ***was*** to meet him, and a pair of saddled donkeys, and on them two hundred ***loaves of*** bread and one hundred clusters of raisins and one hundred ***cakes of*** summer fruit and a skin of wine. **2** And the king said to Ziba, "What ***are*** these to you?" And Ziba said, "The donkeys ***are*** for the household of the king to ride, and the bread and the summer fruit for the young men to eat, and the wine for the weary in the wilderness to drink." **3** And the king said, "And where ***is*** the son of your master?" And Ziba said to the king, "Look, he ***is*** staying in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), for he said, 'Today the house of Israel (Yisra'el) will restore to me the kingdom of my father.'" **4** And the king said to Ziba, "Look, all that ***belonged*** to Mephibosheth ***is*** yours." And Ziba said, "I bow down; may I find favor in your eyes, my lord the king."

Shimei Curses David

5 And King David came to Bahurim (Bachurim), and look, from there a man of the clan of the house of Saul (Shaul) ***was*** coming out, and his name ***was*** Shimei (Shimi) the son of Gera; he ***was*** coming out, coming out and cursing. **6** And he stoned David and all the servants of King David with stones; and all the people and all the mighty men ***were*** on his right and on his left. **7** And thus Shimei said when he cursed, "Get out, get out, man of blood and man of worthlessness! **8** The LORD has brought back on you all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose place you have reigned; and the LORD has given the kingdom into the hand of Absalom (Avshalom) your son; and look, you ***are*** in your evil, for you ***are*** a man of blood!" **9** And Abishai (Avishay) the son of Zeruiah (Tseruya) said to the king, "Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? Please let me cross over and take off his head." **10** And the king said, "What ***is there*** to me and to you, sons of Zeruiah? Thus he curses, for the LORD has said to him, 'Curse

15:30 Esth 6:12; 2 Sam 19:4; Jer 14:3,4
15:31 1 Cor 1:20; 2 Sam 17:14,23; 2 Sam 16:23
15:32 Josh 16:2; 2 Sam 1:2; 2 Sam 15:30
15:33 2 Sam 19:35
15:34 2 Sam 15:20; Josh 8:2; Matt 10:16
15:35 Mark 2:26; 2 Sam 17:15,16
15:36 2 Sam 17:17; 2 Sam 15:27; 2 Sam 18:19-33
15:37 1 Chr 27:33; 2 Sam 16:15; 2 Sam 16:16
16:1 1 Sam 25:18; 2 Sam 15:30,32; 2 Sam 9:2,9-12
16:2 Matt 21:5; John 12:15; 2 Sam 17:29
16:3 2 Sam 9:9,10; Ps 88:18; Mic 7:5
16:4 2 Sam 14:10,11; Exod 23:8; Deut 19:15
16:5 2 Sam 3:16; 1 Kgs 2:8,9,36-44,45,46; Exod 22:28
16:7 2 Sam 3:37; 2 Sam 11:15-17; 2 Sam 12:9
16:8 Rev 16:6; 2 Sam 1:16; Judg 9:24,56,57
16:9 2 Sam 9:8; Exod 22:28; 2 Sam 3:8
16:10 Rom 9:20; Matt 8:29; John 2:4

15:30 *going up and weeping, and his head was covered, and he was walking barefoot* A covered head and bare feet were signs of mourning and shame. Jesus wept over Jerusalem on this slope, prayed there, and rose to heaven from it (Acts 1:11-12). I believe His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives at His return after the Tribulation (Zech 14:4). David left in sorrow. Jesus will come as King.
15:31 *O LORD, please make the counsel of Ahithophel foolish* David did not panic. He prayed, and it was answered (17:14). Many see Ahithophel as a picture of Judas. Jesus applied Psalm 41:9 to Judas (John 13:18), and both men hanged themselves (17:23; Matt 27:5). Psalm 55:12-14 may also describe this betrayal.
15:32 *Hushai the Arkite was to meet him, his tunic torn and soil on his head* God's answer to that prayer was already walking toward David, in mourning for his king. Psalm 3, by its title, comes from this flight.
15:34 *then you will frustrate for me the counsel of Ahithophel* Hushai would pretend to switch sides. Scripture presents this as God's answer to David's prayer in a time of war (17:14), though teachers differ on how to judge deception in war (compare Josh 2). David prayed, and then he acted. Prayer is not an excuse to do nothing.
15:37 *Absalom was coming into Jerusalem* The two men entered the city at nearly the same time. The stage was set.
16:1 *Ziba the servant of Mephibosheth was to meet him* David had put Ziba over the land given back to Mephibosheth (9:9-10). It was a generous gift at the right moment.
16:2 *the wine for the weary in the wilderness to drink* It looked like loyalty. It may also have been an investment.
16:3 *Today the house of Israel will restore to me the kingdom of my father* That story does not make much sense. Why would Absalom, making himself king, hand the throne to Saul's lame grandson? In 19:26-27 Mephibosheth tells a very different story.
16:4 *all that belonged to Mephibosheth is yours* David was tired, hurt and ready to believe the worst. He made a major decision on one side of the story (Prov 18:17). Under stress we are tempted to judge quickly. That is when we most need to wait and hear the other side.
16:5 *Shimei the son of Gera* Bahurim was a village just east of the Mount of Olives on the road to the Jordan. Shimei threw stones even though David was surrounded by his mighty men.
16:7 *man of blood and man of worthlessness* A man of worthlessness was a scoundrel, a good-for-nothing.
16:8 *all the blood of the house of Saul* As for Saul's house, Shimei was wrong. David spared Saul (1 Sam 24; 1 Sam 26) and mourned Saul, Ish-bosheth and Abner. But David did have Uriah's blood on his hands. Sometimes a harsh critic is wrong in the details and still says something we need to hear.
16:9 *Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king?* A dead dog meant a worthless nobody. Abishai said what many were thinking.
16:10 *the LORD has said to him, Curse David* David did not mean God made Shimei sin. God tempts no one to evil (Jas 1:13). He meant God was sovereign over this moment and might use even these curses to humble him. David would rather take the curse from God's hand than strike back.

David'; and who shall say, 'Why have you done so?'" **11** And David said to Abishai and to all his servants, "Look, my son who came out from my inward parts is seeking my life; and how much more now the Benjaminite! Leave him alone and let him curse, for the LORD has spoken to him. **12** Perhaps the LORD will look on my eye, and the LORD will repay me good instead of his cursing this day." **13** And David and his men went on the way, and Shimei ***was*** going on the side of the mountain alongside him, going and cursing; and he stoned with stones alongside him and showered dust. **14** And the king and all the people who ***were*** with him came weary, and he refreshed himself there. **15** And Absalom and all the people, the men of Israel, came ***to*** Jerusalem, and Ahithophel (Achitofel) ***was*** with him. **16** And it was, when Hushai (Chushay) the Arkite, the friend of David, came to Absalom, and Hushai said to Absalom, "Let the king live! Let the king live!" **17** And Absalom said to Hushai, "***Is*** this your steadfast love with your friend? Why did you not go with your friend?" **18** And Hushai said to Absalom, "No, but whom the LORD and this people and all the men of Israel have chosen, his I will be, and with him I will remain. **19** And second, whom should I serve? ***Should it*** not ***be*** before his son? Just as I served before your father, so I will be before you." **20** And Absalom said to Ahithophel, "Give counsel for yourselves; what shall we do?" **21** And Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Go in to the concubines of your father, whom he left to keep the house; and all Israel will hear that you have made yourself odious to your father, and the hands of all who ***are*** with you will be strong." **22** And they pitched the tent for Absalom on the roof, and Absalom went in to the concubines of his father before the eyes of all Israel. **23** And the counsel of Ahithophel, which he counseled in those days, ***was*** as ***when*** a man inquires by the word of God; so ***was*** all the counsel of Ahithophel, both to David and to Absalom.

2 SAMUEL 17

Ahithophel's Counsel

1 And Ahithophel (Achitofel) said to Absalom (Avshalom), "Please let me choose twelve thousand men, and I will arise and pursue after David this night. **2** And I will come upon him while he ***is*** weary and slack of hands, and I will terrify him, and all the people who ***are*** with him will flee, and I will strike down the king alone. **3** And I will bring back all the people to you. Like the returning of the whole ***is*** the man whom you are seeking; all the people will be ***at*** peace." **4** And the word was right in the eyes of Absalom and in the eyes of all the elders of Israel (Yisra'el).

Hushai's Counsel

5 And Absalom said, "Please call Hushai (Chushay) the Arkite also, and let us hear what ***is*** in his mouth, he also." **6** And Hushai came to Absalom, and Absalom said to him, saying, "According to this word Ahithophel has spoken. Shall we do his word? If not, you speak." **7** And Hushai said to Absalom, "The counsel that Ahithophel has counseled is not good this time." **8** And Hushai said, "You, you know your father and his men, that they ***are*** mighty men, and they ***are*** bitter of soul, like a bear robbed of cubs in the field; and your father ***is*** a man of war, and he will not spend the night with the people.

16:11 2 Sam 12:11,12; 2 Sam 7:2; Gen 15:4
16:12 Deut 23:5; Rom 8:28; Exod 2:24,25
16:13 2 Sam 16:5,6; Acts 23:23
16:15 2 Sam 15:37
16:16 Matt 21:9; 1 Sam 10:24; 2 Kgs 11:12
16:17 2 Sam 19:25; Deut 32:6; 2 Sam 15:32-37
16:18 2 Sam 5:1-3; 1 Sam 16:13
16:19 2 Sam 15:34; 1 Sam 28:2; 1 Sam 29:8
16:20 Acts 4:27; Exod 1:10; Ps 2:2
16:21 2 Sam 15:16; 2 Sam 20:3; 2 Sam 2:7
16:22 2 Sam 12:11,12; 2 Sam 15:16; 2 Sam 20:3
16:23 2 Sam 15:12; 2 Sam 17:14,23; Num 27:21
17:1 Prov 4:16; Isa 59:7,8; Ps 3:3-5
17:2 Matt 26:31; 2 Sam 16:14; 1 Kgs 22:31
17:3 1 Thess 5:3; 2 Sam 3:21; Isa 48:22
17:4 1 Sam 18:20,21; 1 Sam 23:21; Esth 5:14
17:5 2 Sam 15:32-37; 2 Sam 16:16-19
17:7 Prov 31:8
17:8 Heb 11:34; Hos 13:8; 1 Sam 16:18

16:11 *Leave him alone and let him curse* David's own son wanted him dead. Why be shocked at a Benjaminite? Later David told Solomon to deal with Shimei (1 Kgs 2:8-9), though he kept his own oath not to kill him (19:23).
16:12 *Perhaps the LORD will look on my eye* This may mean look on my tears or my affliction. When attacked unfairly, David left it to God. Jesus did the same and far more, entrusting Himself to the One who judges justly (1 Pet 2:23).
16:13 *he stoned with stones alongside him and showered dust* It must have gone on for a long way.
16:14 *he refreshed himself there* They likely reached the place by the Jordan where David told the priests to send word (15:28). After a day of grief and insult, God gave them rest. Psalm 3 may come from this night (Ps 3:5).
16:16 *Let the king live! Let the king live!* Hushai, the friend of David, may have held an official title as the king's trusted adviser.
16:17 *Is this your steadfast love with your friend?* Absalom was suspicious. Hesed is the loyal, covenant love that keeps faith.
16:18 *whom the LORD and this people and all the men of Israel have chosen, his I will be* Absalom heard it as about himself, but Hushai never said his name. The one the LORD had chosen was David. It was a double-edged answer, and Absalom was proud enough to take it as praise.
16:21 *Go in to the concubines of your father* Taking the former king's wives was a public claim to his throne (3:7; 12:8). It made the break final. To make yourself odious is to become a stench, so hated there could never be peace, and his followers would know there was no going back.
16:22 *they pitched the tent for Absalom on the roof* The writer does not linger. It was wicked, broke God's Law (Lev 18:8), shamed his father and wronged ten women who had no say. It happened on the roof where David first looked at Bathsheba (11:2). Absalom is fully to blame, but God had warned what David did in secret would be repaid in the open (12:11).
16:23 *as when a man inquires by the word of God* People treated Ahithophel's advice as if God had spoken. Yet his first advice was a gross public sin. Wisdom without the fear of the LORD is dangerous (Prov 9:10). David prayed that God would turn this counsel to foolishness (15:31), and in the next chapter God does.
17:1 *I will arise and pursue after David this night* Ahithophel wanted to strike fast, before David could rest and regroup.
17:2 *I will strike down the king alone* It was a cold and smart plan. Kill one man, and the war is over, with no long civil war.
17:4 *the word was right in the eyes of Absalom and in the eyes of all the elders of Israel* Nobody blinked at a plan to kill Absalom's own father. Humanly speaking it would have worked. David was exhausted and had not yet crossed the Jordan. But David had prayed (15:31).
17:5 *let us hear what is in his mouth, he also* Why a second opinion? Perhaps pride, perhaps doubt. Verse 14 tells us who was really behind it.
17:7 *is not good this time* Hushai started carefully. He did not attack Ahithophel's wisdom in general, only suggested that this once the great counselor had missed something.
17:8 *like a bear robbed of cubs in the field* Nothing is more dangerous than a mother bear robbed of her cubs. Hushai played on Absalom's fears.

9 Look, now he has hidden himself in one of the pits or in one of the places; and it will be, when ***some*** fall among them at the first, then whoever hears will hear and say, 'There has been a slaughter among the people who ***are*** after Absalom.' **10** And he also, a son of strength whose heart ***is*** like the heart of the lion, will utterly melt; for all Israel knows that your father ***is*** a mighty man, and ***that*** those who ***are*** with him ***are*** sons of strength. **11** For I counsel: let all Israel be surely gathered to you, from Dan even to Beersheba (Be'er-Sheva), like the sand which ***is*** by the sea for multitude, and your face going into the battle. **12** And we will come against him in one of the places where he is found, and we will light on him as the dew falls on the ground; and there will not be left of him and of all the men who ***are*** with him even one. **13** And if he is gathered into a city, then all Israel will bring ropes to that city, and we will drag it to the wadi until not even a pebble is found there." **14** And Absalom and all the men of Israel said, "The counsel of Hushai the Arkite ***is*** better than the counsel of Ahithophel." And the LORD had commanded to frustrate the good counsel of Ahithophel, in order that the LORD might bring the evil upon Absalom.

The Messengers in the Well

15 And Hushai said to Zadok (Tsadoq) and to Abiathar (Evyatar) the priests, "Like this and like that Ahithophel counseled Absalom and the elders of Israel, and like this and like that I, I have counseled. **16** And now send quickly and tell David, saying, 'Do not spend the night tonight at the plains of the wilderness, and also be sure to pass over, lest the king and all the people who ***are*** with him be swallowed up.'" **17** And Jonathan (Yehonatan) and Ahimaaz (Achima'ats) ***were*** staying at En-rogel, and the maidservant would go and tell them, and they would go and tell King David; for they could not be seen coming into the city. **18** And a young man saw them and told Absalom; and the two of them went quickly and came to the house of a man in Bahurim (Bachurim), and he had a well in his courtyard, and they went down there. **19** And the woman took and spread the covering over the face of the well and spread crushed grain on it, and nothing was known. **20** And the servants of Absalom came to the woman, to the house, and said, "Where ***are*** Ahimaaz and Jonathan?" And the woman said to them, "They have passed over the brook of water." And they sought and did not find ***them***, and they returned ***to*** Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). **21** And it was after they had gone, and they came up from the well and went and told King David; and they said to David, "Arise and pass over the water quickly, for thus Ahithophel has counseled against you." **22** And David arose, and all the people who ***were*** with him, and they passed over the Jordan (Yarden); until the light of the morning, not even one was missing who had not passed over the Jordan. **23** And Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not done, and he saddled the donkey and arose and went to his house, to his city; and he gave command concerning his household, and he hanged himself and died; and he was buried in the tomb of his father.

Help at Mahanaim

24 And David had come to Mahanaim (Machanayim), and Absalom had passed over the Jordan, he and all the men of Israel with him. **25** And Absalom had set Amasa in place of Joab (Yo'av) over the army; and Amasa ***was*** the son of a man, and his name ***was*** Ithra (Yitra) the Israelite, who had gone in to Abigail (Avigal) the daughter of Nahash (Nachash), the sister of Zeruiah (Tseruya), the mother of Joab. **26** And Israel

17:9 1 Sam 22:1; 1 Sam 24:3; Josh 7:5
17:10 Josh 2:9-11; 2 Sam 1:23; 2 Sam 23:20
17:11 Heb 11:12; Gen 22:17; Judg 20:1
17:12 1 Sam 23:23; 1 Kgs 20:10; 2 Kgs 18:23
17:13 Matt 24:2
17:14 Matt 2:8; 2 Sam 15:34; 2 Sam 15:31
17:15 2 Sam 15:35
17:16 1 Cor 15:54; 2 Sam 15:28; 2 Cor 5:4
17:17 2 Sam 15:27,36; Josh 15:7; Josh 18:16
17:18 2 Sam 3:16; 2 Sam 16:5; 2 Sam 19:16
17:19 Josh 2:4-6,5-24; Exod 1:19
17:20 Exod 1:19; 2 Sam 15:34; 1 Sam 21:2
17:21 2 Sam 17:15,16
17:22 2 Sam 17:24; Prov 27:12; Matt 10:16
17:23 2 Sam 15:12; 2 Kgs 20:1; Matt 27:5
17:24 2 Sam 2:8; Gen 32:2; Josh 13:26
17:25 2 Sam 19:13; 1 Chr 2:13,16; 2 Sam 20:4,9-12
17:26 Num 32:1-42; Deut 3:15; Josh 17:1

17:9 *he has hidden himself in one of the pits* Absalom knew the stories of David hiding in caves from Saul. Hushai did not have to lie much. He used the truth about David's skill to make the right plan look dangerous.
17:10 *whose heart is like the heart of the lion, will utterly melt* If any of Absalom's men fell first, word of a slaughter would spread and even the bravest would lose heart.
17:11 *your face going into the battle* Dan was the far north and Beersheba the far south. Hushai appealed to Absalom's pride, picturing him at the head of a vast army. Absalom loved to be seen.
17:13 *we will drag it to the wadi until not even a pebble is found there* It was grand and boastful, and it bought David the one thing he needed most, time.
17:14 *the LORD had commanded to frustrate the good counsel of Ahithophel* The key verse of the chapter and the answer to David's prayer in 15:31. Good means it would have worked. No counsel stands against the LORD (Prov 21:30). God often works through ordinary choices, a proud man's vanity, a friend's quick words, a second opinion (Prov 19:21).
17:16 *be sure to pass over* Hushai did not trust Absalom to stick with his decision. Trusting God's sovereignty did not make him careless. Sovereignty and our responsibility work together.
17:17 *Jonathan and Ahimaaz were staying at En-rogel* En-rogel was a spring just south of the city. The priests' sons could not be seen going in and out, so a maidservant carried the message.
17:19 *spread crushed grain on it, and nothing was known* The well was likely a dry cistern, and the grain looked like grain set out to dry. This was in Bahurim, where Shimei had cursed David.
17:20 *They have passed over the brook of water* Like Rahab (Josh 2:4-6), an unnamed village woman risked her life for the LORD's anointed. Scripture does not judge her words, and teachers differ on deception to protect life in war. What it shows is her courage.
17:22 *not even one was missing who had not passed over the Jordan* They crossed in the dark, and God kept every one of them safe.
17:23 *he hanged himself and died* Ahithophel saw Absalom would lose and he would die a traitor. The wisest man in Israel set his house in order but not his soul. Like Judas (Matt 27:5), betrayal led to despair. If you are struggling with thoughts of ending your life, talk to someone today, a pastor, a friend, a doctor or a crisis line. God has not given up on you (Ps 34:18).
17:24 *David had come to Mahanaim* A fortified town in Gilead east of the Jordan, Ish-bosheth's old capital (2:8). It was a good place to gather an army.
17:25 *Abigail the daughter of Nahash, the sister of Zeruiah* Amasa was David's nephew and Joab's cousin. This was a family war through and through, with cousins leading both armies.

and Absalom encamped ***in*** the land of Gilead (Gilad). **27** And it was, when David came to Mahanaim, and Shobi (Shovi) the son of Nahash from Rabbah (Raba) of the sons of Ammon (Amon), and Machir (Makhir) the son of Ammiel (Ami'el) from Lo-debar (Lo-Devar), and Barzillai (Barzilay) the Gileadite from Rogelim (Roglim), **28** beds and basins and vessels of a potter, and wheat and barley and flour and roasted grain, and beans and lentils and roasted grain, **29** and honey and curds and sheep and cheese of the herd, they brought for David and for the people who ***were*** with him to eat; for they said, "The people ***are*** hungry and weary and thirsty in the wilderness."

2 SAMUEL 18

David Sends Out the Army

1 And David mustered the people who ***were*** with him, and he set over them commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds. **2** And David sent out the people, the third in the hand of Joab (Yo'av), and the third in the hand of Abishai (Avishay) the son of Zeruiah (Tseruya), the brother of Joab, and the third in the hand of Ittai (Itay) the Gittite. And the king said to the people, "I also will surely go out with you." **3** And the people said, "You shall not go out; for if we indeed flee, they will not set ***their*** heart on us; and if half of us die, they will not set ***their*** heart on us; for now ***you are*** like ten thousand of us. And now ***it is*** good that you be for us from the city to help." **4** And the king said to them, "What is good in your eyes I will do." And the king stood beside the gate, and all the people went out by hundreds and by thousands. **5** And the king commanded Joab and Abishai and Ittai, saying, "***Deal*** gently for my sake with the young man, with Absalom (Avshalom)." And all the people heard when the king commanded all the commanders concerning the matter of Absalom. **6** And the people went out into the field to meet Israel (Yisra'el), and the battle was in the forest of Ephraim (Efrayim). **7** And the people of Israel were defeated there before the servants of David, and the slaughter there was great on that day, twenty thousand. **8** And the battle there was spread out over the face of all the land, and the forest devoured more among the people than the sword devoured on that day.

The Death of Absalom

9 And Absalom happened ***to be*** before the servants of David. And Absalom ***was*** riding on the mule, and the mule went under the thick branches of the great oak, and his head caught fast in the oak, and he was put between the heavens and the earth, and the mule that ***was*** under him passed on. **10** And a certain man saw ***it*** and told Joab, and he said, "Look, I saw Absalom hanging in the oak." **11** And Joab said to the man who told him, "And look, you saw ***him***! And why did you not strike him down there to the earth? And ***it would have been*** on me to give you ten ***pieces of*** silver and one belt." **12** And the man said to Joab, "Even if I were weighing on my hands a thousand ***pieces of*** silver, I would not stretch out my hand against the son of the king; for in our ears the king commanded you and Abishai and Ittai, saying, 'Guard, whoever ***you are***, the young man, Absalom.' **13** Or ***if*** I had done falsehood against my life (and nothing is hidden from the king), then you yourself would have stood aloof." **14** And Joab said, "Not thus will I wait before you." And he took three spears in his hand and thrust them into the heart of Absalom, while he ***was*** still alive in the heart of the oak. **15** And ten young men, the bearers of the armor of Joab, surrounded ***him*** and struck Absalom and killed him. **16** And Joab blew the ram's horn, and the people returned from pursuing after Israel, for Joab restrained the people. **17** And they took

17:27 2 Sam 10:1,2; 2 Sam 9:4; 1 Kgs 2:7
17:28 2 Sam 16:1,2; 1 Sam 25:18; Isa 32:8
17:29 2 Sam 16:2,14; 1 Sam 17:18; Luke 8:3
18:1 Exod 17:9; Josh 8:10; 1 Sam 8:12
18:2 Judg 7:16,19; 2 Sam 15:19-22; Judg 9:43
18:3 2 Sam 21:17; 2 Sam 17:2; 1 Kgs 22:31
18:4 2 Sam 18:24; Isa 28:6; 2 Sam 18:1
18:5 2 Sam 16:11; 2 Sam 17:1-4,14; Deut 21:18-21
18:6 Josh 17:15,18; Judg 12:4-6
18:7 2 Sam 2:17; 2 Sam 15:6; 2 Sam 19:41-43
18:8 Exod 15:10; Josh 10:11; Judg 5:20,21
18:9 2 Sam 14:26; 2 Sam 18:14; 2 Sam 17:23
18:13 2 Sam 14:19,20; 2 Sam 1:15,16; 2 Sam 4:10-12
18:14 Matt 12:40; 2 Sam 18:5; Judg 4:21
18:16 2 Sam 2:28; 2 Sam 20:22; Num 10:2-10
18:17 Josh 7:26; Josh 8:29; Josh 10:27

17:27 *Shobi the son of Nahash from Rabbah of the sons of Ammon* Help came from three unexpected men. A son of Ammon's old king, Machir who had cared for Mephibosheth (9:4-5), so David's kindness was not forgotten, and the old and wealthy Barzillai (19:32).
17:29 *The people are hungry and weary and thirsty in the wilderness* The writer enjoys every item on the list. David left Jerusalem with nothing, and God met him in the wilderness. Psalm 23:5 was not written at this time, but David knew from experience that God arranges a table before us in front of our adversaries.
18:2 *the third in the hand of Ittai the Gittite* The foreigner who swore loyalty in the darkest hour (15:21) was now trusted with a third of the army.
18:3 *now you are like ten thousand of us* If David died, the cause was lost. In 11:1 David should have gone to war and stayed home. Now he wants to go, and his people wisely keep him back. David listened.
18:5 *Deal gently for my sake with the young man, with Absalom* Absalom led an army to kill his father, and David still called him the young man and asked for mercy before the whole army. A son can break his father's heart and still be loved. God is patient, not wishing any to perish (2 Pet 3:9).
18:6 *the battle was in the forest of Ephraim* This forest was east of the Jordan in Gilead, rough and wooded hill country.
18:8 *the forest devoured more among the people than the sword devoured* Ravines, woods, rocks and pits took more lives than the fighting. Hushai's huge army of untrained men was helpless in that ground against tested soldiers. The LORD was bringing disaster on Absalom, as 17:14 said.
18:9 *his head caught fast in the oak, and he was put between the heavens and the earth* The mule was the mount of the king's sons (13:29), and it walked out from under him. Many think his famous hair caught him (14:26), though the text says only his head. He hung between heaven and earth. Pride goes before a fall (Prov 16:18).
18:11 *ten pieces of silver and one belt* It was a fine reward for killing the king's son.
18:12 *I would not stretch out my hand against the son of the king* This soldier had integrity. He heard the king's command himself.
18:13 *then you yourself would have stood aloof* He saw through Joab, who would have left him to take the blame. This nameless man understood his king and his commander better than Joab expected.
18:14 *thrust them into the heart of Absalom* Absalom was guilty of murder, incest and rebellion and deserved death under the Law (Deut 21:18-21). Humanly, Joab may have saved the kingdom. But he disobeyed a direct order in front of the army, as he did his own way with Abner (3:27) and soon Amasa (20:10). David never forgot (1 Kgs 2:5-6).
18:16 *Joab restrained the people* With Absalom dead, the rebellion was over. There was no reason for more of Israel to die.
18:17 *they set up over him a very great heap of stones* A heap of stones over a body was a mark of shame for the cursed (Josh 7:26; 8:29). The handsomest man in Israel was buried in a hole in the woods.

Absalom and threw him in the forest into the great pit, and they set up over him a very great heap of stones. And all Israel fled, each man to his tents. **18** And Absalom in his life had taken and set up for himself the pillar which ***is*** in the valley of the king, for he said, "I have no son in order to cause my name to be remembered." And he called the pillar by his own name, and it is called "the Monument of Absalom" to this day.

The News Reaches David

19 And Ahimaaz (Achima'ats) the son of Zadok (Tsadoq) said, "Please let me run and bear news to the king that the LORD has vindicated him from the hand of his enemies." **20** And Joab said to him, "You ***are*** not a man of news this day; and you shall bear news on another day, and this day you shall not bear news, for since the son of the king has died." **21** And Joab said to the Cushite, "Go, tell the king what you have seen." And the Cushite bowed down to Joab and ran. **22** And Ahimaaz the son of Zadok again further said to Joab, "And whatever may be, please let me also run after the Cushite." And Joab said, "Why ***is*** it ***that*** you are running, my son, and you have no news that finds ***reward***?" **23** "And whatever may be, I will run." And he said to him, "Run." And Ahimaaz ran ***by*** the way of the plain and passed the Cushite. **24** And David ***was*** sitting between the two gates; and the watchman went to the roof of the gate, to the wall, and lifted up his eyes and saw, and look, a man running by himself. **25** And the watchman called out and told the king. And the king said, "If ***he is*** by himself, ***there is*** news in his mouth." And he came on, coming and drawing near. **26** And the watchman saw another man running, and the watchman called to the gatekeeper and said, "Look, a man running by himself!" And the king said, "This one also ***is*** bearing news." **27** And the watchman said, "I see the running of the first ***is*** like the running of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok." And the king said, "This ***is*** a good man, and he comes with good news." **28** And Ahimaaz called out and said to the king, "Peace!" And he bowed down to the king on his face to the earth and said, "Blessed ***be*** the LORD your God, who has delivered up the men who lifted up their hand against my lord the king." **29** And the king said, "***Is there*** peace for the young man, for Absalom?" And Ahimaaz said, "I saw the great tumult at the sending of the servant of the king, Joab, and your servant, and I do not know what ***it was***." **30** And the king said, "Turn aside, stand here." And he turned aside and stood. **31** And look, the Cushite came, and the Cushite said, "Let my lord the king receive news, for the LORD has vindicated you this day from the hand of all who rose up against you." **32** And the king said to the Cushite, "***Is there*** peace for the young man, for Absalom?" And the Cushite said, "Let the enemies of my lord the king, and all who have risen up against you for evil, be like the young man." **33** And the king was shaken, and he went up to the upper room of the gate and wept; and thus he said as he went, "My son Absalom! My son, my son Absalom! Would that I had died, I myself, in your place! Absalom, my son, my son!"

2 SAMUEL 19

Joab Rebukes David

1 And it was told to Joab (Yo'av), "Look, the king is weeping, and he has mourned over Absalom (Avshalom)." **2** And the deliverance on that day became mourning for all the people, for the people heard on that day, saying, "The king is grieved over his son." **3** And the people stole away on that day to enter the city, just as the people who are humiliated steal away when they flee in the battle. **4** And the king covered his face, and the king cried out ***with*** a loud voice, "My son Absalom! Absalom, my son, my son!" **5** And Joab came to the king ***into*** the house and said, "You have put to shame today the faces of all your servants who rescued your life today, and the life of your sons and your daughters, and the life of your

18:18 Acts 1:19; 1 Sam 15:12; Gen 14:17
18:19 2 Sam 15:36; 2 Sam 18:23,27-29; 2 Sam 17:17
18:20 2 Sam 17:16-21; 2 Sam 18:5,27,29,33
18:22 Rom 1:28; Eph 5:4
18:23 John 20:4
18:24 2 Sam 18:4; 1 Sam 4:13; 2 Kgs 9:17-20
18:27 Rom 10:15; Acts 11:24; 2 Kgs 9:20
18:28 2 Sam 14:4; Gen 14:20; 2 Sam 1:2
18:29 2 Sam 18:19,20,22
18:31 2 Sam 18:19,28; 2 Sam 22:48,49; Deut 32:35,36
18:32 Judg 5:31; Ps 68:1,2; Dan 4:19
18:33 2 Sam 19:4; 2 Sam 12:10-23; Ps 103:13
19:1 2 Sam 18:5,12,14,20,33; Prov 17:25
19:2 Prov 16:15; Prov 19:12
19:3 2 Sam 19:32; 2 Sam 17:24; Gen 31:27
19:4 2 Sam 15:30; 2 Sam 18:33
19:5 Neh 9:27; Ps 3:8; Ps 18:47,48

18:18 *it is called the Monument of Absalom to this day* His sons seem to have died young. He built himself a grand memorial and ended under a pile of rocks. That is the difference between the honor we give ourselves and the honor God gives (Prov 29:23).
18:19 *Please let me run and bear news to the king* Ahimaaz had hidden in the well (17:18-21). He was eager, loyal and fast.
18:20 *You are not a man of news this day* Joab knew how David would take the news and seems to have wanted to protect the young man. The Cushite came from the land south of Egypt.
18:23 *Ahimaaz ran by the way of the plain and passed the Cushite* The road through the Jordan valley was longer but easier.
18:24 *David was sitting between the two gates* The inner and outer gates of the walled entry. A crowd running meant a rout. A single runner meant a messenger.
18:27 *This is a good man, and he comes with good news* David was hoping. But he was not waiting for the battle report. He was waiting for news of his son.
18:29 *Is there peace for the young man, for Absalom?* Ahimaaz knew and lost his nerve. He could not bring himself to say it.
18:32 *be like the young man* The Cushite answered as gently as a soldier could. He did not say Absalom was dead. He did not have to.
18:33 *My son Absalom! My son, my son Absalom!* Shaken means trembling all through. Five times David says my son, and nothing about the throne. There is love thrown back in his face, guilt over Nathan's sword (12:10), regret over years he did not act, and a death before reconciliation. If you grieve a child who turned away, God did not rebuke David's tears. Jesus wept (John 11:35). Keep praying.
18:33 *Would that I had died, I myself, in your place!* David could only wish it, and it could not have changed Absalom's heart. But the cry points to the One who could. God sent His Son to die in the place of rebels (Rom 5:8). We were Absalom, and the Son of David died so rebels could come home.
19:2 *the deliverance on that day became mourning for all the people* The soldiers who risked their lives slipped back into the city as if they had lost.
19:4 *the king covered his face* David's grief was real and right. But he was not only a father. He was the king, and his men needed him.

wives, and the life of your concubines, **6** by loving those who hate you and by hating those who love you. For you have made known today that commanders and servants ***are*** nothing to you; for I know today that if Absalom ***were*** alive and all of us ***were*** dead today, then ***it would be*** right in your eyes. **7** And now, arise, go out and speak to the heart of your servants; for by the LORD I swear that ***if*** you are not going out, not a man will lodge with you this night. And this will be worse for you than all the evil that has come on you from your youth until now." **8** And the king arose and sat in the gate. And they told all the people, saying, "Look, the king is sitting in the gate." And all the people came before the king. And Israel (Yisra'el) had fled, each to his tents. **9** And all the people were quarreling in all the tribes of Israel, saying, "The king delivered us from the hand of our enemies, and he rescued us from the hand of ***the*** Philistines; and now he has fled from the land, away from Absalom. **10** And Absalom, whom we anointed over us, has died in the battle. And now, why are you keeping silent ***about*** bringing back the king?" **11** And King David sent to Zadok (Tsadoq) and to Abiathar (Evyatar) the priests, saying, "Speak to the elders of Judah (Yehuda), saying, 'Why will you be the last to bring back the king to his house? And the word of all Israel has come to the king, to his house. **12** You ***are*** my brothers; you ***are*** my bone and my flesh. And why will you be the last to bring back the king?' **13** And to Amasa you shall say, 'Are you not my bone and my flesh? Thus may God do to me, and thus may He add, if you will not be commander of the army before me all the days in place of Joab.'" **14** And he turned the heart of every man of Judah like one man. And they sent to the king, "Return, you and all your servants." **15** And the king returned and came to the Jordan (Yarden). And Judah came to Gilgal to go to meet the king, to bring the king over the Jordan.

Shimei Pardoned

16 And Shimei (Shimi) the son of Gera, the Benjaminite, who ***was*** from Bahurim (Bachurim), hurried and came down with the men of Judah to meet King David. **17** And a thousand men from Benjamin (Binyamin) ***were*** with him, and Ziba (Tsiva) the servant of the house of Saul (Shaul), and his fifteen sons and his twenty servants with him; and they rushed ***into*** the Jordan before the king. **18** And the ferry passed over to bring over the household of the king and to do what ***was*** good in his eyes. And Shimei the son of Gera fell before the king when he passed over at the Jordan. **19** And he said to the king, "Let not my lord reckon iniquity to me, and do not remember what your servant did perversely on the day when my lord the king went out from Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), for the king to set ***it*** to his heart. **20** For your servant knows that I have sinned. And look, I have come today, first of all the house of Joseph (Yosef), to come down to meet my lord the king." **21** And Abishai (Avishay) the son of Zeruiah (Tseruya) answered and said, "Shall not Shimei be put to death for this, because he cursed the anointed of the LORD?" **22** And David said, "What ***is there*** to me and to you, sons of Zeruiah, that you should become an adversary to me today? Shall anyone be put to death in Israel today? For do I not know that today I ***am*** king over Israel?" **23** And the king said to Shimei, "You shall not die." And the king swore to him.

Mephibosheth Meets the King

24 And Mephibosheth (Mefivoshet) the son of Saul came down to meet the king. And he had not tended his feet, and he had not tended his mustache, and his garments he had not washed, from the day the king went until the day when he came ***back*** in peace. **25** And it was, when he came ***to*** Jerusalem to meet the king, that the king said to him, "Why did you not go with me, Mephibosheth?" **26** And he said, "My lord the king, my servant deceived me; for your servant said, 'Let me saddle the donkey for myself, and let me ride on it and go with the king,' for your servant ***is*** lame. **27** And he has slandered your servant to my lord the king. And my lord the

19:6 Acts 23:5; 2 Sam 3:24,25; Job 34:18
19:7 Prov 14:28; Gen 34:3; Prov 19:15
19:8 2 Sam 18:4,24; 2 Sam 19:3; 2 Sam 18:6-8
19:9 2 Sam 15:14; Gen 3:12,13; Exod 32:24
19:10 2 Sam 15:12,13; Hos 8:4; 2 Sam 18:14
19:11 2 Sam 15:29,35,36; 1 Kgs 2:25,26,35; 2 Cor 5:20
19:12 2 Sam 5:1; Gen 2:23; Judg 9:2
19:13 2 Sam 17:25; Ruth 1:17; 1 Kgs 19:2
19:14 Judg 20:1; Ps 110:2,3; Acts 4:32
19:15 Josh 5:9; 1 Sam 11:14,15
19:16 1 Kgs 2:8,36-46; 2 Sam 16:5-13; Job 2:4
19:17 2 Sam 9:2,10; 2 Sam 16:1-4; 2 Sam 19:26,27
19:18 Ps 66:3; Ps 81:15; Rev 3:9
19:19 1 Sam 22:15; Eccl 10:4; Ps 32:2
19:20 Ps 78:34-37; Jer 22:23; Hos 5:15
19:21 Exod 22:28; 1 Sam 26:9; 1 Kgs 21:10,11
19:22 Matt 8:29; John 2:4; 2 Sam 16:10
19:23 1 Kgs 2:8,9,37,46; 1 Sam 28:10; 1 Sam 30:15
19:24 2 Sam 9:6; 2 Sam 16:3; 2 Sam 15:30
19:25 2 Sam 16:17
19:26 2 Sam 16:2,3; 2 Sam 4:4
19:27 2 Sam 14:17,20; 2 Sam 16:3; 1 Sam 29:9

19:6 *by loving those who hate you and by hating those who love you* Joab was harsh, and he had just killed Absalom against orders. But he was right. Leaders do not get to grieve only in private. Faithful wounds from a friend can be better than kisses (Prov 27:6), even when the friend is a hard man.
19:7 *not a man will lodge with you this night* The army would melt away, and David would lose the kingdom he had just won back.
19:8 *the king arose and sat in the gate* The gate was where the king was seen and business was done. David did what he had to do.
19:10 *why are you keeping silent about bringing back the king?* The tribes remembered David's victories. Their new king was dead, and no one was taking the lead.
19:12 *You are my brothers; you are my bone and my flesh* Judah had backed Absalom at Hebron and seemed slow, perhaps ashamed. David appealed to family ties.
19:13 *commander of the army before me all the days in place of Joab* David gave the top post to the rebel general, his nephew. It said there would be no revenge and won Judah over. It was likely also a demotion of Joab for killing Absalom, though Scripture does not give David's motives. It set up the bloodshed of chapter 20.
19:15 *Judah came to Gilgal* Gilgal lay near the river on the west side.
19:17 *they rushed into the Jordan before the king* Shimei brought a thousand men of Benjamin, and Ziba came with his sons and servants to help the household across.
19:20 *your servant knows that I have sinned* First of the house of Joseph means first of the northern tribes. Was Shimei sorry or afraid? Probably both. But he confessed plainly.
19:22 *that you should become an adversary to me today* Cursing a ruler was serious (Exod 22:28). The Hebrew for adversary is satan, one who opposes. Abishai stood in the way of mercy. The king's return was a day of amnesty, not executions.
19:23 *You shall not die* David kept that oath. Later he told Solomon to deal wisely with Shimei, and Solomon put him to death when he broke Solomon's terms (1 Kgs 2:8-9, 36-46). Teachers differ on whether that undercuts the mercy shown here.
19:24 *he had not tended his feet, and he had not tended his mustache* For all the weeks David was gone, Mephibosheth lived as a man in mourning.
19:26 *my servant deceived me* He had told Ziba to saddle a donkey, being lame, and Ziba left without him.

king ***is*** like the angel of God; so do what ***is*** good in your eyes. **28** For all the house of my father were nothing but men of death to my lord the king; and you set your servant among those who eat at your table. And what righteousness ***is there*** still for me, even to cry out still to the king?" **29** And the king said to him, "Why do you still speak your words? I have said, 'You and Ziba shall divide the field.'" **30** And Mephibosheth said to the king, "Let him take even the whole, after my lord the king has come in peace to his house."

Barzillai

31 And Barzillai (Barzilay) the Gileadite had come down from Rogelim (Roglim), and he passed over the Jordan with the king to send him off ***at*** the Jordan. **32** And Barzillai was very old, a son of eighty years; and he had supplied the king during his stay in Mahanaim (Machanayim), for he ***was*** a very great man. **33** And the king said to Barzillai, "You pass over with me, and I will supply you with me in Jerusalem." **34** And Barzillai said to the king, "How many ***are*** the days of the years of my life, that I should go up with the king ***to*** Jerusalem? **35** I ***am*** a son of eighty years today. Do I know between good and evil? Can your servant taste what I eat or what I drink? Can I still listen to the voice of male singers and female singers? And why should your servant still be a burden to my lord the king? **36** Your servant would pass over the Jordan with the king ***only*** a little ***way***; and why should the king reward me ***with*** this reward? **37** Let your servant return, please, that I may die in my ***own*** city, near the grave of my father and my mother. And look, your servant Chimham (Kimham); let him pass over with my lord the king, and do for him what ***is*** good in your eyes." **38** And the king said, "Chimham shall pass over with me, and I will do for him what ***is*** good in your eyes; and all that you choose ***to ask*** of me I will do for you." **39** And all the people passed over the Jordan, and the king passed over. And the king kissed Barzillai and blessed him, and he returned to his place. **40** And the king passed over to Gilgal, and Chimham passed over with him. And all the people of Judah brought the king over, and also half of the people of Israel. **41** And look, all the men of Israel were coming to the king, and they said to the king, "Why have our brothers, the men of Judah, stolen you away and brought the king and his household over the Jordan, and all the men of David with him?" **42** And all the men of Judah answered the men of Israel, "Because the king ***is*** near to me. And why ***is*** this, ***that*** it has burned you over this matter? Have we eaten at all from the king? Or has ***anything*** really been carried off for us?" **43** And the men of Israel answered the men of Judah and said, "I ***have*** ten shares in the king, and also in David I ***have more*** than you. And why did you treat me with contempt? And was not my word first for me to bring back my king?" And the word of the men of Judah was harder than the word of the men of Israel.

2 SAMUEL 20

The Revolt of Sheba

1 And there happened to be there a man of worthlessness, and his name ***was*** Sheba (Sheva) the son of Bichri (Bikhri), a Benjaminite. And he blew the trumpet and said, "***There is*** no portion for us in David, and no inheritance for us in the son of Jesse (Yishay). Each to his tents, O Israel (Yisra'el)!" **2** And every man of Israel went up from after David, after Sheba the son of Bichri. And the men of Judah (Yehuda) clung to their king, from the Jordan (Yarden) even to Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). **3** And David came to his house ***at*** Jerusalem. And the king took the ten women, concubines, whom he had left to keep the house, and he put them ***in*** a house of confinement and sustained them, and he did not go in to them. And they were shut up until the day of their death, ***in*** widowhood

19:28 Gen 32:10; 1 Sam 26:16; 2 Sam 9:7,8,10,13
19:29 Job 19:16,17; Prov 18:13; Acts 18:15
19:30 2 Sam 1:26; Acts 20:24; Phil 1:20
19:31 1 Kgs 2:7; Ezra 2:61; Neh 7:63
19:32 1 Sam 25:2; Gen 5:27; Gen 9:29
19:33 2 Sam 9:11; Matt 25:34-40; Luke 22:28-30
19:34 Job 14:14; Ps 39:5,6; 1 Cor 7:29
19:35 2 Sam 15:33; Ezra 2:65; Job 6:30
19:36 Luke 6:38
19:37 1 Kgs 2:7; Jer 41:17; 2 Sam 19:40
19:39 Luke 2:34; Gen 31:55; Ruth 1:14
19:40 2 Sam 19:11-15; Gen 49:10; Matt 21:9
19:41 Judg 8:1; Judg 12:1; John 7:5,6
19:42 2 Sam 19:12; 2 Sam 5:1; 1 Chr 2:3-17
19:43 2 Sam 5:1; Gal 5:20,26; 2 Sam 20:1,6
20:1 1 Kgs 12:16; Deut 13:13; 2 Sam 19:41-43
20:2 Ps 62:9; Ps 118:8-10; Prov 17:14
20:3 2 Sam 15:16; 2 Sam 16:21,22; Gen 40:3

19:28 *you set your servant among those who eat at your table* Saul's family deserved nothing, and David gave him a seat at his table (9:7-13). Many teachers believe Mephibosheth told the truth. Weeks of mourning are hard to fake, and Ziba's story made little sense (16:3). Others think he hedged his bets. The text does not settle it.
19:29 *You and Ziba shall divide the field* David seems not to have wanted to sort it out, perhaps unable to tell who lied, or unwilling to make an enemy on a day of peace. If Mephibosheth was truthful, it was not full justice.
19:30 *Let him take even the whole* He did not want land. He wanted the king. That is the heart God looks for. The gifts are good, but the Giver is better. Can you say to the Lord, You are enough, even if I lose everything else?
19:32 *he was a very great man* Very great means very wealthy. Barzillai fed the king at Mahanaim (17:27-29).
19:35 *Can I still listen to the voice of male singers and female singers?* His answer is honest and gentle. He was too old for court life, and feasts and music would be wasted on him.
19:37 *that I may die in my own city, near the grave of my father and my mother* There is wisdom in knowing your season of life. Chimham was most likely his son. A place near Bethlehem later bore Chimham's name (Jer 41:17), so it seems David gave him land there.
19:39 *the king kissed Barzillai and blessed him* Barzillai gave when David had nothing and asked nothing for himself. Even a cup of cold water given to one of His own will not lose its reward (Matt 10:42).
19:40 *also half of the people of Israel* Notice half. The north was not fully on board.
19:41 *stolen you away* The northern tribes felt left out of the welcome.
19:43 *I have ten shares in the king* Ten tribes against one, and they had spoken first (19:9-11). Both sides claimed to love the king and fought over pride. This rivalry would split the kingdom after Solomon (1 Kgs 12:16). We can claim to love the King while fighting over who matters most (Matt 5:9).
20:1 *There is no portion for us in David* Sheba was a scoundrel from Saul's tribe. To go to your tents meant to break up the assembly and go home. Calling David the son of Jesse was an insult, as if he were just a farmer's boy. These words would be shouted again when the kingdom split (1 Kgs 12:16).
20:2 *every man of Israel went up from after David* Hours before, they claimed ten shares in the king (19:43). Now they walked away. Hurt pride had turned into rebellion.
20:3 *they were shut up until the day of their death, in widowhood of life* These women had done nothing wrong. Left behind, taken against their will, then shut away for life. David provided for them, but in the customs of that day no good way out seemed possible. Sin hurts more people than the sinner intends. God saw these women, even if history forgot their names.

of life.

Joab Murders Amasa

4 And the king said to Amasa, "Summon to me the men of Judah ***within*** three days, and you, stand here." **5** And Amasa went to summon Judah, and he delayed beyond the appointed time which he had appointed him. **6** And David said to Abishai (Avishay), "Now Sheba the son of Bichri will be worse for us than Absalom (Avshalom). You, take the servants of your lord and pursue after him, lest he find for himself fortified cities and snatch ***himself away from*** our eye." **7** And the men of Joab (Yo'av) went out after him, and the Kerethites and the Pelethites and all the mighty men; and they went out from Jerusalem to pursue after Sheba the son of Bichri. **8** They ***were*** at the great stone which ***is*** in Gibeon (Givon), and Amasa came before them. And Joab ***was*** girded ***with*** his robe, his clothing, and over it a belt ***with*** a sword fastened on his loins in its sheath; and he went forward, and it fell ***out***. **9** And Joab said to Amasa, "***Are*** you ***at*** peace, my brother?" And the right hand of Joab took hold of the beard of Amasa to kiss him. **10** And Amasa did not take heed of the sword which ***was*** in the hand of Joab; and he struck him with it in the belly and poured out his bowels to the ground, and he did not repeat ***it*** to him, and he died. And Joab and Abishai his brother pursued after Sheba the son of Bichri. **11** And a man from the young men of Joab stood over him and said, "Whoever delights in Joab, and whoever ***is*** for David, ***let him go*** after Joab!" **12** And Amasa ***was*** wallowing in the blood in the middle of the highway. And the man saw that all the people stopped, and he brought Amasa around from the highway ***into*** the field and threw a garment over him, when he saw that everyone who came on him stopped. **13** When he had removed ***him*** from the highway, every man passed on after Joab to pursue after Sheba the son of Bichri.

The Wise Woman of Abel

14 And he passed through all the tribes of Israel toward Abel (Avel) and Beth-maacah (Bet-Ma'akha), and all the Berites; and they assembled and went in also after him. **15** And they came and besieged him in Abel-beth-maacah, and they poured out a siege mound against the city, and it stood by the rampart. And all the people who ***were*** with Joab were destroying, to make the wall fall. **16** And a wise woman called out from the city, "Listen! Listen! Say, please, to Joab, 'Draw near to here, and let me speak to you.'" **17** And he drew near to her. And the woman said, "***Are*** you Joab?" And he said, "I ***am***." And she said to him, "Listen to the words of your maidservant." And he said, "I am listening." **18** And she spoke, saying, "They surely used to speak in former ***times***, saying, 'They shall surely ask at Abel,' and so they finished. **19** I ***am one of*** the peaceable of the faithful of Israel. You are seeking to kill a city and a mother in Israel. Why will you swallow up the inheritance of the LORD?" **20** And Joab answered and said, "Far be it, far be it from me that I should swallow up or that I should destroy! **21** The matter ***is*** not so. For a man from the hill country of Ephraim (Efrayim), Sheba the son of Bichri ***is*** his name, has lifted up his hand against the king, against David. Give him ***up***, him alone, and let me go away from the city." And the woman said to Joab, "Look, his head will be thrown to you over the wall." **22** And the woman went to all the people in her wisdom, and they cut off the head of Sheba the son of Bichri and threw ***it*** to Joab. And he blew the trumpet, and they were scattered from the city, each to his tents. And Joab returned ***to*** Jerusalem to the king.

20:4 2 Sam 17:25; 2 Sam 19:13; 1 Chr 2:17
20:5 1 Sam 13:8; 2 Sam 19:13
20:6 2 Sam 21:17; 2 Sam 11:11; 1 Kgs 1:33
20:7 1 Kgs 1:38,44; 2 Sam 20:23; 2 Sam 15:18
20:8 2 Sam 2:13; 2 Sam 3:30; 2 Sam 20:4,5
20:9 Ps 55:21; Prov 26:24-26; Mic 7:2
20:10 2 Sam 2:23; 2 Sam 3:27; Judg 3:21
20:11 2 Sam 20:6,7,13,21; 2 Sam 20:4; 2 Kgs 9:32
20:12 2 Sam 17:25; Ps 9:16; Ps 55:23
20:13 Num 20:19; Judg 21:19; 1 Sam 6:12
20:14 2 Kgs 15:29; 1 Kgs 15:20; 2 Chr 16:4
20:15 2 Kgs 19:32; Jer 32:24; Jer 33:4
20:16 2 Sam 14:2; 1 Sam 25:3,32,33; Eccl 9:14-18
20:17 2 Sam 14:12; 1 Sam 25:24
20:18 Deut 20:10,11
20:19 1 Sam 26:19; 2 Sam 21:3; 2 Sam 17:16
20:20 2 Sam 23:17; Job 21:16; Job 22:18
20:21 2 Sam 20:1; Judg 2:9; Judg 7:24
20:22 Eccl 7:19; 2 Sam 20:1; 2 Sam 2:28

20:5 *he delayed beyond the appointed time* Scripture does not say why. Perhaps Judah did not trust Absalom's general, or he was not up to the job.
20:6 *Sheba the son of Bichri will be worse for us than Absalom* In a walled city, Sheba would be long and costly to root out. David turned to Abishai. He would not turn to Joab, but he could not keep Joab out.
20:8 *he went forward, and it fell out* Gibeon was a few miles north of Jerusalem. Joab seems to have arranged it so the sword slipped out and he could pick it up in his left hand without alarm.
20:9 *Are you at peace, my brother?* Taking the beard to kiss was a normal greeting between relatives. Amasa watched Joab's right hand and his smile.
20:10 *Amasa did not take heed of the sword which was in the hand of Joab* Cold murder, just as with Abner (3:27). Both men had been on the other side, David had welcomed both, and both deaths removed a rival. David named it at the end (1 Kgs 2:5). A greeting of peace with a hidden sword brings to mind Judas's kiss (Matt 26:49).
20:11 *Whoever delights in Joab, and whoever is for David* He tied loyalty to David with loyalty to Joab. Joab simply stepped back into command as if nothing had happened.
20:12 *threw a garment over him* Out of sight, out of mind. It is a grim picture of how easily people move on from an injustice once it is covered up. Joab got away with it, for now.
20:14 *toward Abel and Beth-maacah, and all the Berites* Abel lay in the far north near Dan, at the foot of Mount Hermon. Few followed Sheba that far. His revolt was shrinking.
20:15 *they poured out a siege mound against the city* A ramp of earth let attackers reach the top of the wall. A whole town was about to pay for one rebel.
20:16 *a wise woman called out from the city* Like the woman of Tekoa she is called wise. But this woman spoke for herself, and she spoke the truth.
20:18 *They shall surely ask at Abel* Abel was famous for wise counsel. People settled disputes by going there. You should have asked us before attacking us.
20:19 *You are seeking to kill a city and a mother in Israel* A mother city was a leading town with villages around it like children. The town was part of the inheritance God gave Israel.
20:20 *Far be it, far be it from me that I should swallow up* From the man who just murdered his cousin, it sounds strange. But Joab was practical and did not want a siege if he could avoid one.
20:22 *they cut off the head of Sheba the son of Bichri and threw it to Joab* The revolt that began with a trumpet ended with one. One wise woman saved a city by speaking up and seeking peace (Matt 5:9). One voice of wisdom at the right moment can stop much bloodshed.

23 And Joab ***was*** over all the army of Israel; and Benaiah (Benaya) the son of Jehoiada (Yehoyada) ***was*** over the Kerethites and over the Pelethites; **24** and Adoram ***was*** over the forced labor; and Jehoshaphat (Yehoshafat) the son of Ahilud (Achilud) ***was*** the recorder; **25** and Sheva ***was*** scribe; and Zadok (Tsadoq) and Abiathar (Evyatar) ***were*** priests; **26** and also Ira the Jairite was a priest to David.

2 SAMUEL 21

The Gibeonites Avenged

1 And there was a famine in the days of David three years, year after year. And David sought the face of the LORD. And the LORD said, "***It is*** because of Saul (Shaul) and because of ***his*** house of blood, because he put to death the Gibeonites." **2** And the king called the Gibeonites and said to them. And the Gibeonites ***were*** not of the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), but of the remnant of the Amorites; and the sons of Israel had sworn to them, and Saul had sought to strike them down in his zeal for the sons of Israel and Judah (Yehuda). **3** And David said to the Gibeonites, "What shall I do for you? And with what shall I make atonement? And bless the inheritance of the LORD." **4** And the Gibeonites said to him, "***It is*** not silver and gold ***that is*** for us with Saul and with his house, and ***it is*** not for us to put to death a man in Israel." And he said, "What you are saying, I will do for you." **5** And they said to the king, "The man who consumed us, and who planned against us ***that*** we should be destroyed from standing in all the territory of Israel, **6** let seven men from his sons be given to us, and we will impale them to the LORD at Gibeah (Giva) of Saul, the chosen of the LORD." And the king said, "I will give ***them***." **7** And the king had compassion on Mephibosheth (Mefivoshet) the son of Jonathan (Yehonatan) the son of Saul, because of the oath of the LORD which ***was*** between them, between David and Jonathan the son of Saul. **8** And the king took the two sons of Rizpah (Ritspa) the daughter of Aiah (Aya), whom she had borne to Saul, Armoni and Mephibosheth, and the five sons of Michal (Mikhal) the daughter of Saul, whom she had borne to Adriel the son of Barzillai (Barzilay) the Meholathite. **9** And he gave them into the hand of the Gibeonites, and they impaled them on the mountain before the LORD. And the seven of them fell together; and they were put to death in the days of harvest, in the first ***days***, at the beginning of the barley harvest.

Rizpah's Vigil

10 And Rizpah the daughter of Aiah took the sackcloth and spread it out for herself on the rock, from the beginning of harvest until water was poured out on them from the heavens. And she did not permit the birds of the heavens to rest on them by day, or the living things of the field by night. **11** And it was told to David what Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, the concubine of Saul, had done. **12** And David went and took the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son from the citizens of Jabesh-gilead (Yavesh-Gilad), who had stolen them from the open square of Beth-shean
(Bet-She'an), where the Philistines had hung them on the day the Philistines struck down Saul on Gilboa. **13** And he brought up from there the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son; and they gathered the bones of the impaled

20:23 2 Sam 8:16-18; 1 Chr 18:15-17
20:24 1 Kgs 12:18; 1 Kgs 4:3; 1 Kgs 4:6
20:25 Mark 2:26; 2 Sam 8:17; 1 Kgs 4:4
20:26 2 Sam 23:38; Exod 2:14,16; 1 Chr 11:40
21:1 Gen 12:10; Num 27:21; Gen 26:1
21:2 John 16:2; Josh 9:3-21; Gen 15:16
21:3 2 Sam 20:19; Exod 32:30; Lev 1:4
21:4 1 Pet 1:18; Ps 49:6-8
21:5 2 Sam 21:1; Esth 9:24,25; Matt 7:2
21:6 Acts 13:21; Num 25:4,5; 1 Sam 10:26
21:7 2 Sam 4:4; 1 Sam 18:3; 1 Sam 20:8,15,17,42
21:8 2 Sam 3:7; 1 Sam 18:19
21:9 Ruth 1:22; 2 Sam 21:6; 2 Sam 6:17,21
21:10 2 Sam 3:7; 2 Sam 21:8; 1 Kgs 21:27
21:11 2 Sam 2:4; Ruth 2:11,12
21:12 Josh 17:11; 1 Sam 31:10; 2 Sam 2:5-7

20:23 *Joab was over all the army of Israel* After the turmoil, the kingdom was set back in order. But Joab is at the top. He took back his post by murder, and David let it stand. Even a restored king lives with the results of his compromises.
20:24 *Adoram was over the forced labor* A new office over men drafted for the king's building projects.
20:26 *Ira the Jairite was a priest to David* Ira may have been a personal priest or a chief official, the same word used of David's sons in 8:18. Teachers differ.
21:1 *David sought the face of the LORD* One bad harvest can happen to anyone. Three in a row made David ask why. When trouble lingers, we should ask God whether He is telling us something. With Mephibosheth already at David's table, this was likely in the middle years of his reign.
21:1 *because he put to death the Gibeonites* This verse is the only record of Saul's crime. It had gone unpunished, and the blood cried out from the ground.
21:2 *the sons of Israel had sworn to them* The Gibeonites tricked Joshua into a treaty (Josh 9), yet Israel kept its oath for about four hundred years. Saul, perhaps thinking himself a patriot, broke an oath made in God's name. God takes our promises seriously, even old ones, even to outsiders. The godly man keeps his word to his own harm (Ps 15:4).
21:3 *with what shall I make atonement?* To make atonement is to cover a wrong and make peace, so it no longer stands between the two sides. Then they would pray for Israel instead of crying out against it.
21:4 *It is not silver and gold that is for us* Blood money was not allowed for murder (Num 35:31). As foreigners under Israel's protection, they had no right to take revenge on their own.
21:6 *we will impale them to the LORD at Gibeah of Saul, the chosen of the LORD* Gibeah was Saul's hometown. To impale here means to put to death and expose the bodies, a sign of dying under a curse. Seven was a number of completeness. The chosen of the LORD is a bitter phrase from them. Saul used that position to break the LORD's oath.
21:7 *because of the oath of the LORD which was between them* David had sworn never to cut off kindness from Jonathan's house (1 Sam 20:14-17, 42). The chapter turns on two oaths. Saul broke his people's oath and brought judgment. David kept his and spared a life.
21:8 *the five sons of Michal the daughter of Saul* Michal had no children (6:23), and her sister Merab married Adriel (1 Sam 18:19). Two Hebrew manuscripts and some ancient translations read Merab here. Others think Michal raised her sister's sons. Rizpah was Saul's concubine (3:7).
21:9 *at the beginning of the barley harvest* In the spring, about April.
21:10 *she did not permit the birds of the heavens to rest on them by day* Rizpah camped on the rock until the rains, perhaps months later, driving off vultures and jackals. She could not save her sons' lives, but she would not let their bodies be shamed. If you grieve a loss you could not stop, faithful love still matters, and God saw it, for He had it written down.
21:12 *who had stolen them from the open square of Beth-shean* The men of Jabesh had rescued the bodies from the Philistines (1 Sam 31:11-13). Rizpah's quiet vigil reached the king and moved him to act.

men. **14** And they buried the bones of Saul and Jonathan his son in the land of Benjamin (Binyamin), in Zela (Tsela), in the tomb of Kish (Qish) his father. And they did all that the king commanded. And God was entreated for the land after this.

The Philistine Giants

15 And the Philistines again had war with Israel. And David went down, and his servants with him, and they fought with the Philistines. And David was weary. **16** And Ishbi-benob (Yishbi-Venov), who ***was*** among the descendants of the Rapha, the weight of whose spear ***was*** approximately 7.5 pounds (three hundred ***shekels*** weight) of bronze, and he ***was*** girded ***with*** a new ***sword***, he spoke of striking down David. **17** And Abishai (Avishay) the son of Zeruiah (Tseruya) helped him, and he struck the Philistine and killed him. Then the men of David swore to him, saying, "You shall not go out again with us to the battle, and you shall not quench the lamp of Israel." **18** And it was after this, and the war was again at Gob (Gov) with the Philistines. Then Sibbecai (Sibkhay) the Hushathite struck down Saph (Saf), who ***was*** among the descendants of the Rapha. **19** And the war was again at Gob with the Philistines, and Elhanan (Elchanan) the son of Jaare-oregim (Ya'are-Orgim) the Bethlehemite struck down Goliath (Golyat) the Gittite; and the shaft of his spear ***was*** like a beam of weavers. **20** And there was again war at Gath (Gat). And there was a man of stature, and the fingers of his hands and the toes of his feet ***were*** six and six, twenty-four in number; and he also was born to the Rapha. **21** And he taunted Israel, and Jonathan the son of Shimeah (Shima), the brother of David, struck him down. **22** These four were born to the Rapha in Gath, and they fell by the hand of David and by the hand of his servants.

2 SAMUEL 22

David's Song of Deliverance

1 And David spoke to the LORD the words of this song on the day ***that*** the LORD delivered him from the hand of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul (Shaul). **2** And he said, "The LORD ***is*** my crag and my stronghold, and a rescuer for me; **3** the God of my rock, I take refuge in Him; my shield and the horn of my salvation, my high refuge and my place of escape; my savior, from violence You save me. **4** ***One*** to be praised, I call ***on*** the LORD, and from my enemies I am saved. **5** For the breakers of death surrounded me; the torrents of worthlessness overwhelmed me. **6** The cords of Sheol surrounded me; the snares of death confronted me. **7** In my distress I called ***on*** the LORD, and to my God I called; and He heard my voice from His temple, and my cry for help ***was*** in His ears. **8** And the earth shook back and forth and quaked; the foundations of the heavens trembled, and they shook back and forth, for it burned ***within*** Him. **9** Smoke went up in His nose, and fire from His mouth consumed; coals burned from Him. **10** And

21:14 Josh 18:28; 2 Sam 24:25; Josh 7:26
21:15 2 Sam 5:17,22; 1 Chr 20:4; Josh 14:10,11
21:16 Heb 11:34; 2 Sam 21:18,20; Gen 6:4
21:17 Heb 11:34; 1 Kgs 11:36; 2 Sam 18:3
21:18 1 Chr 11:29; 2 Sam 21:16,20; 1 Chr 20:4
21:19 1 Chr 20:5; 1 Chr 11:26; 1 Sam 17:4-11
21:20 2 Sam 21:16,18; 1 Chr 20:6
21:21 1 Sam 17:10,25,26,36; 1 Sam 16:9; 2 Kgs 19:13
21:22 1 Chr 20:8; Josh 14:12; Ps 60:12
22:1 Acts 12:11; Exod 15:1; Judg 5:1
22:2 Ps 31:3; Ps 71:3; Deut 32:4
22:3 Luke 1:71; Heb 2:13; Gen 15:1
22:4 Rom 10:13; Ps 18:3; Ps 116:2,4,13,17
22:5 Ps 69:14,15; 1 Thess 5:3; Ps 18:4
22:6 Ps 116:3; Job 36:8; Ps 18:5
22:7 Heb 5:7; Ps 116:4; Ps 120:1
22:8 Judg 5:4; Ps 97:4; Job 26:11
22:9 Heb 12:29; 2 Sam 22:16; Exod 15:7,8
22:10 1 Kgs 8:12; Ps 97:2; Ps 144:5

21:14 *God was entreated for the land after this* God heard prayer and answered, not right after the executions but after the burial. This was not pagan human sacrifice. God named a real crime, and blood polluted the land (Num 35:33). The courts' law of Deut 24:16 was not set aside lightly here. I do not think this is a pattern for our justice, and it is right to feel its weight.
21:14 *in the tomb of Kish his father* David gave Saul's family an honorable burial together. Broken promises have consequences far beyond the one who broke them. The hanged man was under God's curse (Deut 21:23). Saul's sons died under their father's sin, but Jesus, who had no sin, became a curse for us (Gal 3:13).
21:15 *David was weary* These four records likely come from earlier in his reign. The giant-killer was older now and worn out.
21:16 *among the descendants of the Rapha* The Rapha were very tall warriors, the Rephaim, who once lived in Canaan (Deut 2:10-11).
21:17 *you shall not quench the lamp of Israel* Abishai saved the king's life. A lamp pictures life and hope. God later promised David a lamp before Him in Jerusalem (1 Kgs 11:36), and that promise led to Jesus, the light of the world (John 8:12).
21:18 *Sibbecai the Hushathite struck down Saph* Sibbecai was one of David's mighty men (1 Chr 11:29).
21:19 *struck down Goliath the Gittite* Did not David kill Goliath? Chronicles says Elhanan struck down Lahmi the brother of Goliath (1 Chr 20:5). Most conservative teachers think Samuel was miscopied, since the Hebrew words look alike. Others think Goliath was a family name. Either way, David killed the Goliath of 1 Sam 17, and Elhanan killed a giant of the same family years later.
21:20 *the fingers of his hands and the toes of his feet were six and six* This rare condition still occurs. He taunted Israel just as Goliath had (1 Sam 17:10). Jonathan was David's nephew, brother of the crafty Jonadab.
21:22 *they fell by the hand of David and by the hand of his servants* David faced the first giant alone as a boy. Now his men faced these for him. A good leader raises up others who can fight. That is discipleship, courage passed to the next generation. If God is for us, who is against us (Rom 8:31)?
22:1 *David spoke to the LORD the words of this song* This song likely came from the years of rest after David became king (7:1) and is placed here as a look back over his life. It is nearly the same as Psalm 18. David spoke to the LORD. Before it was written in a book, it was prayer.
22:2 *The LORD is my crag and my stronghold* Hebrew poetry rhymes thoughts, not sounds. A line is said again in other words or set beside an opposite. A crag is a high cliff, a stronghold a mountain fortress. David hid in such places (1 Sam 22:1; 23:29), but he knew the rocks had not saved him. The LORD had.
22:3 *the horn of my salvation* A horn pictures strength, like a wild ox. It means the strong one who saves me. Zechariah used it of Jesus, a horn of salvation in the house of David (Luke 1:69). Hebrews puts David's kind of trust in the mouth of Christ (Heb 2:13).
22:4 *I call on the LORD, and from my enemies I am saved* That is the theme of the whole song.
22:5 *the breakers of death surrounded me* David pictures himself drowning with waves crashing over him. One thought said twice.
22:6 *The cords of Sheol surrounded me* Sheol is the grave, the place of the dead. Death was a hunter with ropes and traps. David knew it with Saul's spear, at Gath, and fleeing Absalom.
22:7 *He heard my voice from His temple* His temple here is His dwelling in heaven. The God who rules the universe heard one man's cry. He hears yours too.
22:8 *for it burned within Him* Then the song explodes. God answers like a thunderstorm, angry at those attacking His servant.
22:10 *He bowed the heavens and came down* He bent the sky down like a curtain and came.

He bowed ***the*** heavens and came down, and thick darkness ***was*** under His feet. **11** And He rode on a cherub and flew, and He was seen on the wings of ***the*** wind. **12** And He set darkness around Him ***as*** shelters, a gathering of waters, thick clouds of ***the*** skies. **13** From the brightness before Him coals of fire burned. **14** The LORD thundered from ***the*** heavens, and the Most High gave His voice. **15** And He sent arrows and scattered them; lightning, and He routed ***them***. **16** And the channels of ***the*** sea were seen; the foundations of ***the*** world were uncovered at the rebuke of the LORD, at the breath of the wind of His nose. **17** He sent from on high; He took me; He drew me out of many waters. **18** He delivered me from my strong enemy, from those who hate me, for they were stronger than I. **19** They confronted me in the day of my calamity, and the LORD was a support for me. **20** And He brought me out to the broad place; He freed me, for He delighted in me.

The LORD Rewards the Blameless

21 The LORD dealt with me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands He repaid me. **22** For I have kept the ways of the LORD, and I have not acted wickedly ***departing*** from my God. **23** For all His judgments ***were*** before me, and ***as for*** His statutes, I did not turn aside from them. **24** And I was blameless toward Him, and I kept myself from my iniquity. **25** And the LORD repaid me according to my righteousness, according to my cleanness before His eyes. **26** With the loyal You show Yourself loyal; with the blameless mighty man You show Yourself blameless; **27** with the one who purifies himself You show Yourself pure, and with the crooked You show Yourself shrewd. **28** And the afflicted people You save, and Your eyes ***are*** on the haughty, ***whom*** You bring low. **29** For You ***are*** my lamp, O LORD; and the LORD lights up my darkness. **30** For by You I run ***against*** a band; by my God I leap over a wall. **31** ***As for*** God, His way ***is*** blameless; the word of the LORD ***is*** refined; He ***is*** a shield to all who take refuge in Him.

God My Strength

32 For who ***is*** God except the LORD? And who ***is*** a rock except our God? **33** God ***is*** my refuge ***of*** strength, and He loosed my way ***to be*** blameless, **34** making my feet like the does, and on my high places He makes me stand, **35** training my hands for the battle, and my arms bend a bow of bronze. **36** And You have given me the shield of Your salvation, and Your answering makes me great. **37** You enlarge my step under me, and my ankles have not slipped. **38** I pursued my enemies and destroyed them, and I did not turn back until I had consumed them. **39** And I consumed them and shattered them, and they do not rise, and they fell under my feet. **40** And You girded me ***with*** strength for the battle; You make those who rise against me bow down under me. **41** And my enemies, You

22:11 Ps 104:3; Gen 3:24; Exod 25:19
22:12 2 Sam 22:10; Ps 97:2; Ps 18:11,12
22:14 Rev 11:19; 1 Sam 2:10; Job 37:2-5
22:15 Deut 32:23; Josh 10:10; Hab 3:11
22:16 Matt 8:26; Matt 8:27; Nah 1:4
22:17 Ps 144:7; Ps 18:16; Ps 32:6
22:18 2 Sam 22:1; Ps 3:7; Ps 56:9
22:19 1 Sam 19:11-17; 1 Sam 23:26,27; Ps 118:10-13
22:20 Ps 31:8; 2 Sam 15:26; Ps 118:5
22:21 1 Sam 26:23; Ps 24:4; 1 Kgs 8:32
22:22 Gen 18:19; Prov 8:32; Ps 128:1
22:23 Ps 119:6,86,128; Luke 1:6; John 15:14
22:24 John 1:47; Gen 6:9; Gen 17:1
22:25 2 Sam 22:21; Isa 3:10; Rom 2:7,8
22:26 Matt 5:7; James 2:13
22:27 Matt 5:8; Lev 26:23-28; Deut 28:58-61
22:28 Ps 72:12,13; Isa 5:15; Exod 3:7,8
22:29 Ps 27:1; Job 29:3; Ps 84:11
22:30 Ps 18:29; Ps 118:10-12; Rom 8:37
22:31 Deut 32:4; Matt 5:48; Prov 30:5
22:32 Luke 6:48; 1 Sam 2:2; Deut 32:31,39
22:33 Exod 15:2; Ps 18:32; Ps 27:1
22:34 Deut 32:13; Hab 3:19; 2 Sam 2:18
22:35 Ps 144:1; Ps 18:33,34; Ps 46:9
22:36 Eph 6:16; Gen 15:1; Ps 84:11
22:37 Prov 4:12; Ps 4:1; Ps 18:36
22:38 2 Sam 5:18-25; 2 Sam 8:1,2,13,14; 2 Sam 10:14
22:39 Ps 18:37; Ps 110:1,5,6; Ps 118:10-12
22:40 Ps 44:5; Col 1:11; 1 Sam 17:49-51
22:41 Exod 23:27; Josh 10:24; Gen 49:8

22:11 *He rode on a cherub and flew* A cherub is a mighty angel, like those on the ark (Exod 25:18-22), pictured as God's chariot.
22:16 *at the breath of the wind of His nose* This recalls the Red Sea, when the waters stood up at the blast of His nostrils (Exod 15:8). The language is poetry, using Sinai, the sea and the storm to show what it felt like when God stepped in. When God rescues His people, all heaven moves. Our prayers are never small to Him.
22:17 *He drew me out of many waters* The great God came down for one reason, to pull David out. It is the word used when Moses was drawn out of the Nile (Exod 2:10).
22:18 *they were stronger than I* David was honest. Saul had an army, David a few hundred outlaws. But God was stronger than all of them.
22:20 *He freed me, for He delighted in me* A broad place is open ground, room to breathe, the opposite of a narrow canyon. God saved David not because he was strong but because He delighted in him. That is grace.
22:21 *according to the cleanness of my hands He repaid me* How can the man of chapter 11 say this? The song likely came before that sin. David means that against Saul he was in the right. He refused to touch the LORD's anointed (1 Sam 24:6; 26:9-11). Some teachers read these lines as fully true only of the Messiah.
22:24 *I was blameless toward Him* Blameless means whole and sincere, with an undivided heart, not perfect. When falsely accused we can say our hands are clean in that matter. When we sin, we come back as David did in Psalm 51. Our final righteousness is by faith (Rom 4:3-8), the righteousness of Christ credited to us (2 Cor 5:21).
22:26 *With the loyal You show Yourself loyal* God meets people where they stand. To the faithful He shows Himself faithful.
22:27 *with the crooked You show Yourself shrewd* God does not become crooked. The crooked find their schemes turned back on them, as Ahithophel did (17:14).
22:28 *Your eyes are on the haughty, whom You bring low* God lifts the humble and humbles the proud. Mary sang the same while carrying the Son of David (Luke 1:52).
22:29 *You are my lamp, O LORD* David's men called him the lamp of Israel (21:17). He was Israel's light only because God was his light.
22:30 *by my God I leap over a wall* With God, David could charge a troop or scale a wall. It is the language of a warrior who has seen God give strength beyond his own.
22:31 *the word of the LORD is refined* Refined means tested by fire, like silver with impurity burned out. God's word has no flaw. And this shield is for anyone who runs to Him, not just kings.
22:32 *who is a rock except our God?* There is only one. The gods of the nations were nothing.
22:34 *making my feet like the does* Sure-footed as a mountain deer on the rocks.
22:35 *training my hands for the battle* David did not credit himself for his skill. Whatever gifts you have came from God. Use them for Him and give Him the credit.
22:36 *Your answering makes me great* This is God answering David's prayers. Psalm 18:35 in the SLB reads Your humility, and the Hebrew words are close. Both are true. God's greatness stooped down to lift David up.
22:38 *I pursued my enemies and destroyed them* This is a warrior king in a hard age. These nations attacked Israel again and again, and God appointed David to give Israel rest (7:1, 9-11).

have given me ***their*** neck; those who hate me, and I destroyed them. **42** They looked, and ***there was*** no savior; to the LORD, and He did not answer them. **43** And I ground them like the dust of the earth; like the mud of the streets I crushed them, I beat them flat. **44** And You rescued me from the strivings of my people; You kept me for head of ***the*** nations; a people ***whom*** I did not know serve me. **45** Sons of foreignness cringe before me; at the hearing of an ear they obey me. **46** Sons of foreignness wither, and they gird themselves ***and come*** from their strongholds. **47** The LORD lives, and blessed ***be*** my rock; and may the God of the rock of my salvation be exalted, **48** the God who gives vengeances for me and brings down peoples under me, **49** and brings me out from my enemies; and above those who rise against me You lift me up; from a man of violence You deliver me.
50 Therefore I will give thanks to You, O LORD, among the nations, and to Your name I will sing praise. **51** ***He is*** a tower of salvations ***for*** His king, and He does steadfast love to His anointed, to David and to his offspring forever."

2 SAMUEL 23

David's Last Words

1 And these ***are*** the last words of David: the declaration of David the son of Jesse (Yishay), and the declaration of the man ***who*** was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob (Ya'aqov), and the pleasant ***one*** of the songs of Israel (Yisra'el): **2** The Spirit of the LORD has spoken by me, and His speech ***is*** on my tongue. **3** The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spoke to me: One who rules over mankind ***is*** righteous, one who rules ***in*** the fear of God, **4** and ***he is*** like the light of morning ***when*** the sun rises, a morning ***with*** no clouds, from brightness, from rain, vegetation from the earth. **5** For ***is*** not my house so with God? For He has made with me an everlasting covenant, arranged in everything and preserved; for all my salvation and every desire, will He not make ***it*** grow? **6** And worthlessness, like thorns chased away ***are*** all of them, for they do not take ***them*** with a hand; **7** and the man ***who*** touches them arms himself ***with*** iron and the shaft of a spear, and with fire they will surely be burned at the dwelling.

David's Mighty Men

8 These ***are*** the names of the mighty men who ***belonged*** to David: Josheb-basshebeth (Yoshev-BaShevet) a Tachkemonite, chief of the officers; he ***was*** Adino the Eznite, against eight hundred slain at one time. **9** And after him ***was*** Eleazar (Elazar) the son of Dodo the son of an Ahohite, among the three mighty men with David when they taunted the Philistines ***who*** were gathered there for the battle, and the men of Israel went up. **10** He arose and struck down among the Philistines until his hand was weary and his hand clung to the sword. And the LORD worked a great deliverance on that day; and the people returned after him only to strip ***the***

22:42 Isa 1:15; 1 Sam 28:6; Prov 1:28
22:43 Mic 7:10; Isa 10:6; 2 Kgs 13:7
22:44 Acts 4:27; 2 Sam 8:1-14; Isa 55:5
22:45 Ps 66:3; Ps 81:15; Isa 56:3,6
22:46 Mic 7:17; Isa 64:6; James 1:11
22:47 Luke 6:48; Ps 89:26; Deut 32:39,40
22:48 Ps 144:2; Ps 94:1; 2 Sam 18:19,31
22:49 Ps 140:1; 2 Sam 5:12; 2 Sam 7:8,9
22:50 Rom 15:9; Ps 18:49; Ps 145:1,2
22:51 Luke 1:32; Ps 144:10; Ps 18:50
23:1 Luke 24:44; Luke 20:42; Col 3:16
23:2 2 Pet 1:21; Matt 22:43; Mark 12:36
23:3 Luke 6:48; 2 Sam 22:2,32; Deut 32:4,30,31
23:4 Judg 5:31; Ps 89:36; Prov 4:18
23:5 Isa 55:3; Isa 9:6,7; 2 Sam 7:14-16
23:6 2 Sam 20:1; Deut 13:13; 1 Sam 2:12
23:7 John 15:6; Heb 6:8; 2 Sam 22:8-10
23:8 1 Chr 27:2,32; 1 Chr 11:11,12
23:9 1 Chr 27:4; 1 Chr 11:12-14; Num 23:7,8
23:10 1 Sam 11:13; 1 Sam 19:5; Josh 10:10,42

22:42 *to the LORD, and He did not answer them* At the end even his enemies cried to the LORD, but too late and not from the heart.
22:43 *like the mud of the streets I crushed them* We should not soften this, nor use it to make war on people today. Our battle is spiritual (Eph 6:12), and we are called to love our enemies (Matt 5:44). One day the Son of David will come as warrior King to put down every enemy of God (Rev 19:11-16).
22:44 *You rescued me from the strivings of my people* His own people turned on him too, Saul's house, Absalom and Sheba. God kept him for head of the nations, as Moab, Edom, Ammon and Syria came under Israel (8:1-14).
22:46 *they gird themselves and come from their strongholds* Foreigners came trembling out to make peace. What David saw in part, Jesus will fulfill in full on the throne of David (Isa 9:7).
22:47 *The LORD lives, and blessed be my rock* The song ends where it began, with praise. The idols of the nations are dead. The LORD lives.
22:48 *the God who gives vengeances for me* David did not take his own revenge on Saul. He left it to God, who dealt with Saul in His own time.
22:50 *I will give thanks to You, O LORD, among the nations* Paul quotes this to show that God always meant the nations to praise Him through the Messiah (Rom 15:9). The Son of David leads the nations in praise of His Father.
22:51 *He does steadfast love to His anointed, to David and to his offspring forever* This looks back to the covenant of chapter 7. His anointed is mashiach, Messiah. That promise finds its full answer in Jesus, the root and the offspring of David (Rev 22:16). David ended his song looking forward to Him, and so should we.
23:1 *these are the last words of David* Not his very last words (1 Kgs 2:1-9), but his final formal testament. He is the son of Jesse, a humble shepherd, raised up on high by God, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and Israel's sweet singer. Declaration is the prophets' word for a message from God.
23:2 *The Spirit of the LORD has spoken by me* A clear claim of inspiration. Jesus said David spoke in the Spirit (Matt 22:43), and Peter called him a prophet (Acts 2:30). This is how all Scripture came to us (2 Tim 3:16).
23:3 *one who rules in the fear of God* God gave David a picture of the ideal king. He rules justly, knowing he answers to Someone higher.
23:4 *like the light of morning when the sun rises, a morning with no clouds* A just ruler is like dawn after a dark night and sunshine after rain that makes the grass spring up. This was the standard for every son of David, and most failed it. I believe it points to Jesus, the righteous Branch (Jer 23:5) and the sun of righteousness (Mal 4:2). Some read it only as the ideal king.
23:5 *He has made with me an everlasting covenant, arranged in everything and preserved* This is the covenant of chapter 7 (7:16). Every detail ordered by God and made secure. David's hope did not rest on his record, which had serious failures, but on God's promise, fulfilled in Jesus (Luke 1:33). Our security also rests on what God has promised, not on how well we have done.
23:6 *like thorns chased away are all of them* The wicked are like thorn bushes. No one picks them up with bare hands.
23:7 *with fire they will surely be burned at the dwelling* You handle thorns with tools and in the end burn them. Jesus said the same of the weeds at the end of the age (Matt 13:40-43). The King who is sunrise to His people is fire to His enemies.
23:8 *These are the names of the mighty men who belonged to David* Many had been with him since his outlaw days, and their names were remembered because they were faithful. First Chronicles 11:11 calls the first Jashobeam with three hundred slain. Names and numbers are easy to miscopy, the most likely explanation.
23:10 *his hand clung to the sword* When Israel pulled back, Eleazar gripped the sword so long and hard his hand cramped around it.

slain*. 11** And after him ***was Shammah (Shama) the son of Agee (Age) the Hararite. And the Philistines were gathered into a troop, and there was a portion of the field there full of lentils; and the people fled from before ***the*** Philistines. **12** And he took his stand in the middle of the portion and delivered it and struck down the Philistines. And the LORD worked a great deliverance.

Water from the Well of Bethlehem

13 And three of the thirty chiefs went down and came at harvest to David, to the cave of Adullam (Adulam); and a troop of Philistines ***was*** encamped in the valley of Rephaim (Refa'im). **14** And David ***was*** then in the stronghold, and a garrison of Philistines ***was*** then ***in*** Bethlehem (Bet-Lechem). **15** And David craved and said, "Who will give me water to drink from the well of Bethlehem, which ***is*** at the gate?" **16** And the three mighty men broke through the camp of ***the*** Philistines and drew water from the well of Bethlehem which ***was*** at the gate, and they carried ***it*** and brought ***it*** to David. And he was not willing to drink it, and he poured it out to the LORD. **17** And he said, "Far be it from me, O LORD, that I should do this! ***Is it*** the blood of the men who went with their lives?" And he was not willing to drink it. These ***things*** the three mighty men did. **18** And Abishai (Avishay) the brother of Joab (Yo'av) the son of Zeruiah (Tseruya), he ***was*** chief of the three. And he wielded his spear against three hundred slain, and he ***had*** a name among the three. **19** Was he ***not*** honored more than the three? And he became a commander to them; and to the three he did not come. **20** And Benaiah (Benayahu) the son of Jehoiada (Yehoyada) ***was*** the son of a man of strength, great of deeds, from Kabzeel (Qavtse'el). He struck down the two Ariel of Moab (Mo'av). And he went down and struck down the lion in the midst of the pit on the day of the snow. **21** And he struck down an Egyptian man, a man of appearance; and in the hand of the Egyptian ***was*** a spear. And he went down to him with the staff and seized the spear from the hand of the Egyptian and killed him with his ***own*** spear. **22** These ***things*** Benaiah the son of Jehoiada did, and he ***had*** a name among the three mighty men. **23** He was honored more than the thirty, and to the three he did not come. And David appointed him over his bodyguard.

The Thirty

24 Asahel the brother of Joab ***was*** among the thirty; Elhanan (Elchanan) the son of Dodo of Bethlehem; **25** Shammah the Harodite; Elika (Eliqa) the Harodite; **26** Helez (Chelets) the Paltite; Ira the son of Ikkesh (Iqesh) the Tekoite; **27** Abiezer (Avi'ezer) the Anathothite; Mebunnai (Mevunay) the Hushathite; **28** Zalmon (Tsalmon) the Ahohite; Maharai (Maharay) the Netophathite; **29** Heleb (Chelev) the son of Baanah (Ba'ana) the Netophathite; Ittai (Itay) the son of Ribai (Rivay) from Gibeah (Giva) of the sons of Benjamin (Binyamin); **30** Benaiah the Pirathonite; Hiddai (Hiday) from the wadis of Gaash; **31** Abi-albon (Avi-Alvon) the Arbathite; Azmaveth (Azmavet) the Barhumite; **32** Eliahba (Elyachba) the Shaalbonite; the sons of Jashen (Yashen); Jonathan (Yehonatan); **33** Shammah the Hararite; Ahiam (Achi'am) the son of Sharar the Hararite; **34** Eliphelet (Elifelet) the son of Ahasbai (Achasbay), the son of the Maacathite; Eliam the son of Ahithophel (Achitofel) the Gilonite; **35** Hezrai (Chetsray) the Carmelite; Paarai (Pa'aray) the Arbite; **36** Igal (Yigal) the son of Nathan (Natan) from Zobah (Tsova); Bani the Gadite; **37** Zelek (Tseleq) the Ammonite; Naharai (Nacharay) the Beerothite, the bearer of the armor of Joab the son of Zeruiah; **38** Ira the Ithrite; Gareb (Garev) the Ithrite; **39** Uriah (Uriya) the Hittite: all ***of them***, thirty-seven.

23:11 1 Chr 11:27; 1 Chr 11:13,14
23:12 2 Sam 23:10; Ps 3:8; Ps 44:2
23:13 1 Sam 22:1; 2 Sam 5:18,22; 1 Chr 11:15-19
23:14 1 Sam 22:1,4,5; 1 Sam 24:22; 1 Chr 12:16
23:15 John 4:14; Num 11:4,5; Ps 42:1,2
23:16 2 Sam 23:9; 1 Sam 19:5; Acts 20:24
23:17 Matt 26:28; Mark 14:24; Lev 17:10
23:18 2 Sam 10:10,14; 2 Sam 18:2; 1 Chr 11:20,21
23:19 2 Sam 23:9,13,16; 1 Chr 11:25; Matt 13:8,23
23:20 2 Sam 8:18; 2 Sam 20:23; Josh 15:21
23:21 1 Chr 11:23; 1 Sam 17:51; Col 2:15
23:23 1 Chr 27:6; 2 Sam 8:8; 2 Sam 20:23
23:24 2 Sam 2:18; 1 Chr 27:7; 1 Chr 11:26
23:25 1 Chr 11:27,28
23:26 2 Sam 14:2; 1 Chr 11:27; 1 Chr 27:9
23:27 1 Chr 11:28; 1 Chr 27:12; 1 Chr 11:19
23:28 1 Chr 27:13; 1 Chr 11:30
23:29 1 Chr 11:30; 1 Chr 27:15; 1 Chr 11:31
23:30 Judg 12:15; 1 Chr 27:14; Judg 2:9
23:31 1 Chr 11:32; 1 Chr 11:33
23:32 1 Chr 11:34
23:33 1 Chr 11:27; 1 Chr 11:35
23:34 2 Sam 11:3; 2 Sam 15:31; 2 Sam 17:23
23:35 1 Chr 11:37
23:36 1 Chr 11:38
23:37 1 Chr 11:39; 1 Chr 11:37
23:38 1 Chr 2:53; 2 Sam 20:26; 1 Chr 11:40
23:39 Matt 1:6; 2 Sam 11:3,6-27; 2 Sam 12:9

23:12 *he took his stand in the middle of the portion and delivered it* One man defended one field of lentils. Twice the writer says the LORD worked a great deliverance. The men fought, but God won. Sometimes our battle is for one small patch of ground, a marriage, a child, a conscience, a church. Stand your ground.
23:13 *to the cave of Adullam* A scene from the outlaw years. The Philistines even held Bethlehem, David's hometown.
23:15 *Who will give me water to drink from the well of Bethlehem* He was not giving an order. He was homesick, remembering the water of his boyhood.
23:16 *he poured it out to the LORD* The three risked their lives for a wish. A drink offering was poured out on the ground before the LORD.
23:17 *Is it the blood of the men who went with their lives?* The water cost too much to drink. David honored his men by not treating their sacrifice as ordinary, and gave the best he had to God. Paul spoke of being poured out as a drink offering (Phil 2:17). Some things are too costly to spend on ourselves.
23:18 *he was chief of the three* Abishai led a second group of three. He was fierce and often too quick to kill (16:9; 19:21), but he saved David's life (21:17).
23:20 *he went down and struck down the lion in the midst of the pit on the day of the snow* A trapped, angry lion on cold, slippery ground, and Benaiah went in after it. The two Ariel were champions of Moab.
23:21 *killed him with his own spear* Benaiah had only a staff against a giant with a spear.
23:23 *David appointed him over his bodyguard* Loyal and steady, Benaiah later became Solomon's commander in place of Joab (1 Kgs 2:35).
23:24 *Asahel the brother of Joab was among the thirty* Asahel died early in David's reign (2:23), so this list covers many years. Most of the thirty are only names to us, but God had them written down. Elhanan may be the one of 21:19.
23:34 *Eliam the son of Ahithophel the Gilonite* Probably Bathsheba's father (11:3), which would make Ahithophel her grandfather.
23:37 *Zelek the Ammonite* Foreigners too, like Igal from Zobah, were part of David's band through faith in Israel's God and loyalty to His king.
23:39 *Uriah the Hittite: all of them, thirty-seven* The writer saved Uriah for last. He stands in the roll of honor as a quiet reminder. God does not forget the faithful, and He does not hide the sins of His servants. The count likely includes the Three, Abishai, Benaiah and replacements. Joab is not here. The faithful are written in the Lamb's book of life (Rev 21:27).

2 SAMUEL 24

David's Census

1 And the anger of the LORD again burned against Israel (Yisra'el), and He incited David against them, saying, "Go, count Israel and Judah (Yehuda)." **2** And the king said to Joab (Yo'av), the commander of the army who ***was*** with him, "Go about, please, in all the tribes of Israel, from Dan even to Beersheba (Be'er-Sheva), and enroll the people, that I may know the number of the people." **3** And Joab said to the king, "And may the LORD your God add to the people a hundred times as many as they ***are***, while the eyes of my lord the king are seeing ***it***. And my lord the king, why does he delight in this thing?" **4** And the word of the king prevailed against Joab and against the commanders of the army. And Joab and the commanders of the army went out from before the king to enroll the people, Israel. **5** And they passed over the Jordan (Yarden) and encamped in Aroer (Aro'er), south of the city that ***is*** in the middle of the wadi of Gad, and toward Jazer (Yazer). **6** And they came to Gilead (Gilad) and to the land of Tahtim-hodshi (Tachtim-Chodshi), and they came to Dan Jaan (Ya'an) and around to Sidon (Tsidon). **7** And they came ***to*** the fortress of Tyre (Tsor) and all the cities of the Hivites and the Canaanites, and they went out to the Negeb (Negev) of Judah, ***to*** Beersheba. **8** And they went about in all the land, and they came ***to*** Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) at the end of nine months and twenty days. **9** And Joab gave the number of the muster of the people to the king. And Israel was eight hundred thousand men of strength who drew the sword, and the men of Judah ***were*** five hundred thousand men.

The Choice of Judgment

10 And the heart of David struck him after he had counted the people. And David said to the LORD, "I have sinned exceedingly in what I have done. And now, O LORD, please take away the iniquity of Your servant, for I have acted exceedingly foolishly." **11** And David arose in the morning, and the word of the LORD came to Gad the prophet, the seer of David, saying, **12** "Go, and you shall speak to David, 'Thus says the LORD: Three ***things*** I am laying on you; choose for yourself one of them, and I will do ***it*** to you.'" **13** And Gad came to David and told him and said to him, "Shall seven years of famine come to you in your land? Or three months of your fleeing before your opponents while he pursues you? Or that there be three days of pestilence in your land? Now know and see what word I shall bring back to Him who sent me." **14** And David said to Gad, "***There is*** distress to me exceedingly. Let us fall, please, into the hand of the LORD, for His compassions ***are*** many; and into the hand of man let me not fall."

The Plague

15 And the LORD gave pestilence in Israel from the morning until the appointed time. And seventy thousand men of the people died, from Dan even to Beersheba. **16** And the angel stretched out his hand ***toward*** Jerusalem to destroy it, and the LORD relented concerning the evil, and He said to the angel who was destroying among the people, "***It is*** enough! Now let your hand drop." And the angel of the LORD was by

24:1 1 Chr 27:23,24; 2 Sam 21:1-14; James 1:13,14
24:2 2 Sam 3:10; Judg 20:1; 2 Sam 20:23
24:3 Ps 115:14; 2 Sam 10:12; 1 Chr 21:3,4
24:4 1 Chr 21:4; Eccl 8:4; Exod 1:17
24:5 Deut 2:36; Josh 13:9,16; Num 32:1,3,35
24:6 Josh 19:28; Gen 31:21,47,48; Num 32:1,39
24:7 Josh 19:29; 2 Sam 24:2; Gen 21:31-33
24:9 1 Chr 21:5,6; 1 Chr 27:23,24
24:10 2 Sam 12:13; 1 Sam 13:13; 1 Sam 24:5
24:11 1 Sam 22:5; 1 Sam 9:9; 1 Chr 29:29
24:12 1 Chr 21:10,11; 2 Sam 12:9,10,14; Lev 26:41,43
24:13 Luke 4:25; John 1:22; 1 Chr 21:12
24:14 Ps 51:1; Ps 119:156; 1 Sam 13:6
24:15 1 Chr 21:14; Num 16:46-49; Num 25:9
24:16 Acts 12:23; Exod 12:23; Gen 6:6

24:1 *the anger of the LORD again burned against Israel* Again points back to the famine of chapter 21. We are not told what Israel had done, perhaps the rebellions of Absalom and Sheba. Scripture does not say, but the problem began with the nation's sin, not only David's.
24:1 *He incited David against them* Did God make David sin? Chronicles says Satan incited David (1 Chr 21:1). Both are true. Satan tempted, but only with God's permission (Job 1:12). God tempts no one (Jas 1:13), and David owned the sin (24:10). God is sovereign even over temptation and can use the devil's work for His purposes (Gen 50:20).
24:2 *that I may know the number of the people* Moses counted Israel at God's command (Num 1). The sin was the heart behind it, most likely pride and trust in his army's size (Ps 20:7). The Law also required a ransom when Israel was counted, lest a plague come (Exod 30:12). We are not told whether that was done.
24:3 *why does he delight in this thing?* Joab had blood on his hands, but here he had better sense than the king. When even your Joab tells you not to do something, stop and listen.
24:8 *at the end of nine months and twenty days* The officers traced a great circle around the land, from Aroer through Gilead to Dan, Sidon and Tyre, and south to Beersheba. All that time David had to reconsider, and he did not.
24:9 *Israel was eight hundred thousand men of strength* First Chronicles 21:5-6 gives other totals and says Joab left out Levi and Benjamin. They may have counted differently, or numbers were miscopied. Some read thousand as a military unit or clan. I take the numbers as written while being honest that the books differ.
24:10 *the heart of David struck him* His conscience hit him, as when he cut Saul's robe (1 Sam 24:5). He did not wait for a prophet. He blamed no one. Can you say those words to God as quickly and plainly?
24:11 *Gad the prophet, the seer of David* Gad had been with David since his outlaw days (1 Sam 22:5).
24:13 *Shall seven years of famine come to you in your land?* The SLB follows the Hebrew. Chronicles and the Greek read three years (1 Chr 21:12), fitting a three-three-three pattern, so a copying difference is most likely. Some count the three-year famine of chapter 21, the census year and three more.
24:14 *Let us fall, please, into the hand of the LORD, for His compassions are many* David chose wisely. Men can be cruel without limit. God, even when He disciplines, is full of compassion (Lam 3:22).
24:15 *seventy thousand men of the people died* We should not rush past this. David wanted to know how many men he had. Now he knew how many he lost. The people were not innocent bystanders (24:1), and a king's sins fall on his people. Scripture does not give all God's reasons, but sin is deadly serious and His judgment is real.
24:16 *It is enough! Now let your hand drop* The plague reached the capital's gates, and God cut it short. He turned from judgment in compassion. David had trusted that His compassions are many, and they were. Teachers differ on whether this angel is the Angel of the LORD seen elsewhere.
24:16 *the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite* A threshing floor was hard, flat ground, usually high where the wind could blow away chaff. Araunah was of Jerusalem's old people (5:6-9). Chronicles says the angel stood with sword drawn over Jerusalem (1 Chr 21:16).

the threshing floor of Araunah (Aravna) the Jebusite. **17** And David spoke to the LORD when he saw the angel who was striking down among the people, and he said, "Look, I have sinned, and I have done wrong; and these, the sheep, what have they done? Let Your hand be, please, on me and on the house of my father."

The Threshing Floor of Araunah

18 And Gad came to David on that day and said to him, "Go up, raise up an altar to the LORD on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite." **19** And David went up according to the word of Gad, just as the LORD had commanded. **20** And Araunah looked down and saw the king and his servants passing on toward him. And Araunah went out and bowed down to the king ***with*** his face to the ground. **21** And Araunah said, "Why has my lord the king come to his servant?" And David said, "To buy the threshing floor from you, to build an altar to the LORD, that the plague may be restrained from the people." **22** And Araunah said to David, "Let my lord the king take and offer up what ***is*** good in his eyes. See, the oxen for the burnt offering, and the threshing sledges and the equipment of the oxen for the wood. **23** The whole, O king, Araunah gives to the king." And Araunah said to the king, "May the LORD your God accept you." **24** And the king said to Araunah, "No, but I will surely buy ***it*** from you for a price, and I will not offer up to the LORD my God burnt offerings without cost." And David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for silver, approximately 1.25 pounds (fifty shekels). **25** And David built an altar to the LORD there and offered up burnt offerings and peace offerings. And the LORD was entreated for the land, and the plague was restrained from Israel.

24:17 Ps 74:1; 1 Chr 21:16,17; 2 Sam 24:10
24:18 2 Sam 24:11; 1 Chr 21:18-30
24:19 Gen 6:22; 1 Chr 21:19; 2 Chr 20:20
24:20 2 Sam 9:8; Gen 18:2; Ruth 2:10
24:21 2 Sam 24:3,18; Gen 23:8-16; 1 Chr 21:22
24:22 1 Kgs 19:21; 1 Sam 6:14; Gen 23:11
24:23 Ezek 20:40,41; Ps 45:16; Isa 32:8
24:24 1 Chr 21:24; Rom 12:17; Gen 23:13
24:25 2 Sam 21:14; Gen 8:20; Gen 22:9

24:17 *these, the sheep, what have they done?* David is a true shepherd again, offering himself in their place. He could not bear their punishment, having his own sin. But his cry points to the Good Shepherd who could (John 10:11). The LORD laid on Him the iniquity of us all (Isa 53:6).
24:18 *raise up an altar to the LORD on the threshing floor* The place where the judgment stopped would be the place of sacrifice.
24:22 *See, the oxen for the burnt offering* A burnt offering was wholly burned, given completely to God, a picture of surrender and atonement. The yokes and sledges would be wood for the fire. It was a generous offer.
24:24 *I will not offer up to the LORD my God burnt offerings without cost* Worship that costs nothing is worth little. We cannot buy God's favor, but real love gives what costs, like the widow's two coins (Mark 12:44) and our lives as living sacrifices (Rom 12:1). Most teachers say the silver bought the floor and oxen and the gold of 1 Chr 21:25 the whole site.
24:25 *the LORD was entreated for the land* A peace offering was shared in a meal, fellowship restored. God answered with fire (1 Chr 21:26). Solomon built the temple here on Mount Moriah (2 Chr 3:1), widely held to be where God provided a ram for Isaac (Gen 22:2, 14). Outside this city Jesus suffered for His people (Heb 13:12). The cross took away the sin of the world (John 1:29).

1 KINGS

Introduction

Title

The book is named for the kings whose reigns it records. In Hebrew, First and Second Kings were one book. The Greek translators divided it in two, and our Bibles follow that division. In the Hebrew Bible, Kings belongs to the Former Prophets, the books from Joshua through Kings that tell Israel's history from God's point of view. In our English Bibles it stands among the historical books, after 1 and 2 Samuel, and it picks up the story where 2 Samuel ends, with David old and his throne about to pass to his son.

Author and Date

The book does not name its writer. Jewish tradition holds that Jeremiah the prophet wrote Kings. Whoever wrote it was a prophet-historian who used older royal records and named them: "the book of the matters of Solomon" (11:41) and the records of the kings of Israel and of Judah (14:19, 29). Notes such as "to this day" (8:8; 9:21) show he was drawing on sources written while the temple still stood. The book as we have it was finished after the last event of 2 Kings, the release of King Jehoiachin in Babylon (2 Kgs 25:27-30), so about 560 to 540 B.C. Many modern critical scholars think Kings was put together over a long time as the last part of a larger history edited during or after the exile. I take the book as what it presents itself to be, a true and inspired record drawn from real sources.

Background and Setting

First Kings covers about 120 years, from the crowning of Solomon about 970 B.C. to the death of Ahab about 853 B.C. Solomon reigned about 970 to 930 B.C., and in his fourth year, about 966 B.C., he began the temple, which 6:1 says was the 480th year after the exodus. That is the main basis for dating the exodus about 1446 B.C. After Solomon died, the kingdom split about 930 B.C. into Israel, the ten northern tribes, and Judah in the south, ruled by David's line. From there the writer moves back and forth between the two kingdoms.

The reign lengths overlap in places, because some kings ruled alongside their fathers for a time and the two kingdoms did not always count a king's first year the same way. Scholars have worked out slightly different dates. These notes follow one standard set, the dates of Edwin Thiele, and give them with "about." Much of the book is told again in 2 Chronicles 1-18, which follows only the kings of Judah. Where the two give different numbers, the notes say so and give the common explanations.

The story moves between Jerusalem and the northern capitals of Shechem, Tirzah and finally Samaria, which Omri built (16:24). Other key places are Gibeon, where God appeared to Solomon; Tyre and Sidon to the north, Jezebel's homeland; Bethel and Dan, where Jeroboam set up golden calves; Mount Carmel; and Horeb, or Sinai, where Elijah fled.

Themes

Every king is measured by one standard: did he walk with the LORD as David his father did? Solomon put it into words at the dedication of the temple: "let your heart be complete with the LORD our God" (8:61). Then in his old age "his heart was not complete with the LORD his God" (11:4). Great gifts and a good start could not keep a heart that would not guard itself. The rest of the book shows king after king who failed the same test, and it shows that idolatry divides and destroys.

The book also shows that God keeps His word. He kept His promise to David with a son on his throne and a house for His name, and He kept His warnings by tearing the kingdom when Solomon turned to idols. Again and again a prophet speaks, and later the writer notes that it happened "according to the word of the LORD." God keeps a lamp burning for David in Jerusalem (11:36), and He never stops sending His word to call His people back. Through Elijah He answers by fire on Mount Carmel, and the people cry, "The LORD, He is the God" (18:39). The question Elijah asked is still ours: "How long will you be limping on the two crutches?" (18:21).

Christ in 1 Kings

First Kings opens with the question of who will sit on David's throne, and the whole Bible answers it in Jesus, the Son of David, to whom God gives "the throne of David His father" (Luke 1:32). Solomon's wisdom, peace and glory give a small picture of Christ's coming reign, and Jesus said of Himself, "something greater than Solomon is here" (Matt 12:42). The temple, where God put His name and His glory dwelt, points to Jesus, the Word who "became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14), who spoke of His own body as the temple (John 2:19-21). Solomon's question, "will God really dwell on the earth?" (8:27), is answered at Bethlehem. Elijah, the prophet of fire and repentance, points ahead to John the Baptist, who came "in the spirit and power of Elijah" (Luke 1:17) to prepare the way of the Lord.

Hard Passages

Solomon has Adonijah, Joab and Shimei put to death to secure his throne (2:13-46). The notes explain each in its setting, a king's judgment on renewed treason, the Law's word on a deliberate murderer at the altar (Exod 21:14), and a broken oath, without making any of it a pattern for us.

Solomon's wives turn his heart to idols, among them Molech, whose worship included burning children (11:7). The text does not say Solomon did this, and the notes do not say so either.

A prophet is killed by a lion for disobeying God's plain word after a lying prophet deceived him (13:18-25), and another prophet dies the same way in 20:35-36. The notes explain why God dealt so severely with His messengers, and that this was judgment on disobedience, not a statement that the man was lost.

Elijah has the prophets of Baal put to death at the Kishon (18:40). The notes explain it as the sentence of Israel's covenant law (Deut 13:1-5), and they say plainly that it is no pattern for the church, which fights with truth and prayer (John 18:36; Luke 9:54-55).

Jezebel has Naboth stoned on false witness so Ahab can take his vineyard (21:8-14), and a lying spirit goes out to deceive Ahab's prophets (22:19-23). The notes show that God does not lie (Titus 1:2) but gives those who love the lie over to it, and

that even then He told Ahab the truth.

Outline

I. The Reign of Solomon (1:1-11:43)
- A. Solomon made king (1:1-53)
- B. Solomon's throne secured (2:1-46)
- C. Solomon asks for wisdom (3:1-28)
- D. Solomon's officials, peace and wisdom (4:1-34)
- E. Preparing to build (5:1-18)
- F. The temple built (6:1-38)
- G. The palace and the temple furnishings (7:1-51)
- H. The ark and the prayer of dedication (8:1-66)
- I. The LORD's answer and Solomon's works (9:1-28)
- J. The queen of Sheba and Solomon's wealth (10:1-29)
- K. Solomon's heart turned and the kingdom torn (11:1-43)

II. The Kingdom Divides (12:1-16:34)
- A. The northern tribes rebel (12:1-24)
- B. Jeroboam's golden calves (12:25-33)
- C. The man of God from Judah (13:1-34)
- D. Ahijah's word against Jeroboam (14:1-20)
- E. Rehoboam, Abijam and Asa in Judah (14:21-15:24)
- F. Kings of Israel from Nadab to Omri (15:25-16:28)
- G. Ahab and Jezebel (16:29-34)

III. Elijah and Ahab (17:1-22:53)
- A. The drought and the widow of Zarephath (17:1-24)
- B. Fire on Mount Carmel (18:1-46)
- C. Elijah at Horeb and the call of Elisha (19:1-21)
- D. Ahab's wars with Ben-hadad (20:1-43)
- E. Naboth's vineyard (21:1-29)
- F. Micaiah and the death of Ahab (22:1-40)
- G. Jehoshaphat and Ahaziah (22:41-53)

1 KINGS

1 KINGS 1

David in His Old Age

1 And King David ***was*** old, advanced in days; and they covered him with garments, and he did not become warm. **2** And his servants said to him, "Let them seek for my lord the king a young woman, a virgin, and she shall stand before the king, and let her be an attendant to him; and she shall lie in your bosom, and my lord the king will become warm." **3** And they sought a beautiful young woman in all the territory of Israel (Yisra'el), and they found Abishag (Avishag) the Shunammite, and they brought her to the king. **4** And the young woman ***was*** exceedingly beautiful; and she became an attendant to the king and served him, and the king did not know her.

Adonijah Exalts Himself

5 And Adonijah (Adoniya) the son of Haggith (Chagit) ***was*** exalting himself, saying, "I will be king." And he made for himself chariotry and horsemen, and fifty men running before him. **6** And his father had never pained him in his days, saying, "Why have you done thus?" And also he ***was*** very good of appearance, and ***his mother*** bore him after Absalom (Avshalom). **7** And his words were with Joab (Yo'av) the son of Zeruiah (Tseruya) and with Abiathar (Evyatar) the priest, and they helped, following Adonijah. **8** And Zadok (Tsadoq) the priest, and Benaiah (Benayahu) the son of Jehoiada (Yehoyada), and Nathan (Natan) the prophet, and Shimei (Shimi), and Rei, and the mighty ***men*** who ***belonged*** to David were not with Adonijah. **9** And Adonijah sacrificed sheep and cattle and fatlings by the stone of Zoheleth (Zochelet), which ***is*** beside En-rogel; and he invited all his brothers, the sons of the king, and all the men of Judah (Yehuda), the servants of the king. **10** And Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah, and the mighty ***men***, and Solomon (Shelomo) his brother, he did not invite.

Nathan and Bathsheba Go to David

11 And Nathan said to Bathsheba (Bat-Sheva) the mother of Solomon, saying, "Have you not heard that Adonijah the son of Haggith has become king, and our lord David does not know ***it***? **12** And now come, let me please counsel you ***with*** counsel, and save your life and the life of your son Solomon. **13** Go and go in to King David, and you shall say to him, 'Did you not, my lord the king, swear to your maidservant, saying, "Surely Solomon your son shall reign after me, and he shall sit on my throne"? And why has Adonijah become king?' **14** Look, while you are still speaking there with the king, I also will come in after you and confirm your words." **15** And Bathsheba went in to the king, into the room; and the king ***was*** very old, and Abishag the Shunammite ***was*** serving the king. **16** And Bathsheba bowed low and bowed down to the king. And the king said, "What ***is it*** for you?" **17** And she said to him, "My lord, you swore by the LORD your God to your maidservant, 'Surely Solomon your son shall reign after me, and he shall sit on my throne.' **18** And now, look, Adonijah has become king; and now, my lord the king, you do not know ***it***. **19** And he has sacrificed oxen and fatlings and sheep in abundance, and he has invited all the sons of the king, and Abiathar the priest, and Joab the commander of the army; and Solomon your servant he has not invited. **20** And you,

1:1 Josh 23:1,2; 2 Sam 5:4; 1 Chr 23:1
1:2 Deut 10:8; 1 Sam 16:21,22; 2 Chr 29:11
1:3 Josh 19:18; 1 Sam 28:4; Esth 2:2,4
1:4 Matt 1:25
1:5 2 Sam 3:4; 2 Sam 15:1; 1 Chr 3:2
1:6 2 Sam 3:3,4; 1 Chr 3:2; 1 Sam 3:13
1:7 Mark 2:26; 2 Sam 20:25; 1 Kgs 2:22,26-35
1:8 1 Kgs 4:18; 2 Sam 20:25; 2 Sam 23:8-39
1:9 2 Sam 17:17; Prov 15:8; 2 Sam 13:23-27
1:10 1 Kgs 1:8,19; 2 Sam 12:1-15
1:11 Matt 1:6; 2 Sam 3:4; 2 Sam 7:12-17
1:12 Matt 1:6; Prov 11:14; Prov 20:18
1:13 Luke 1:32; Matt 1:6; 1 Kgs 1:17,24,30,35,48
1:14 1 Kgs 1:17-27; 2 Cor 13:1
1:16 Matt 20:21; 1 Kgs 1:23; 1 Sam 20:41
1:17 Matt 1:6; 1 Kgs 1:13,30; Gen 18:12
1:18 1 Kgs 1:5,24; 2 Sam 15:10; 1 Kgs 1:11,24,27
1:19 1 Kgs 1:7-10,25
1:20 2 Chr 20:12; Ps 25:15; Ps 123:2

1:1 *King David was old, advanced in days* David was about seventy (2 Sam 5:4). The young man who killed Goliath could no longer keep himself warm in bed. The book opens by showing how weak the king had become, and the next verses show who tried to take advantage of it.
1:3 *Abishag the Shunammite* She came from the town of Shunem. She was a nurse and attendant, and "the king did not know her" (1:4), so she was not a wife in the full sense. That detail matters in chapter 2, when Adonijah asks for her.
1:5 *Adonijah the son of Haggith was exalting himself* Adonijah was David's fourth son (2 Sam 3:4). With Amnon and Absalom dead, he was likely the oldest son still living. In most kingdoms that made him the heir, but in Israel the king was to be the one the LORD chose (Deut 17:15), and God had chosen Solomon (1 Chr 22:9-10; 28:5). His chariots and fifty runners copied Absalom (2 Sam 15:1).
1:6 *his father had never pained him in his days* David never corrected him. A child who is never told no grows up believing he should have whatever he wants. David's failure to discipline his sons cost him dearly with Amnon and Absalom, and it shows up again here.
1:7 *Joab the son of Zeruiah and with Abiathar the priest* Joab had led David's army for forty years and had a record of killing men when it suited him (2 Sam 3:27; 20:10). Abiathar had been with David since the days he fled from Saul (1 Sam 22:20-23). Long service did not keep them from choosing against God's plan.
1:8 *Zadok the priest, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and Nathan the prophet* The men closest to David's heart and to God's word, along with David's own bodyguard, were not with Adonijah. That tells us something.
1:9 *by the stone of Zoheleth, which is beside En-rogel* En-rogel was a spring just south of Jerusalem in the Kidron Valley. A sacrificial feast like this was a coronation in all but name.
1:10 *Solomon his brother, he did not invite* You do not leave your rival off the guest list by accident. Adonijah knew who would not support him, and he knew Solomon was the one David had promised to put on the throne. He was trying to get there first.
1:12 *save your life and the life of your son Solomon* When a new king took the throne in that world, rivals and their mothers were often killed. Some see Nathan's plan as palace politics. I see a prophet who knew God's will for the throne (2 Sam 12:24-25) and acted to protect it. Faith does not sit still when God's word is being pushed aside.
1:17 *you swore by the LORD your God to your maidservant* Scripture does not record the moment David swore this, but Bathsheba and Nathan both speak of it as a known fact, and 1 Chronicles 22:9-10 shows God had told David that Solomon would reign.

my lord the king, the eyes of all Israel ***are*** on you, to tell them who shall sit on the throne of my lord the king after him. **21** And it will be, when my lord the king lies down with his fathers, that I and my son Solomon will be sinners." **22** And look, while she ***was*** still speaking with the king, Nathan the prophet came in. **23** And they told the king, saying, "Look, Nathan the prophet." And he came before the king and bowed down to the king with his face to the earth. **24** And Nathan said, "My lord the king, have you said, 'Adonijah shall reign after me, and he shall sit on my throne'? **25** For he has gone down today and has sacrificed oxen and fatlings and sheep in abundance, and he has invited all the sons of the king and the commanders of the army and Abiathar the priest; and look, they are eating and drinking before him, and they have said, 'May King Adonijah live!' **26** And me, I your servant, and Zadok the priest, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and Solomon your servant, he has not invited. **27** Has this thing come about from my lord the king, and you have not made known to your servant who shall sit on the throne of my lord the king after him?"

David Makes Solomon King

28 And King David answered and said, "Call Bathsheba for me." And she came before the king and stood before the king. **29** And the king swore and said, "***As*** the LORD lives, who has ransomed my soul from every distress, **30** surely just as I swore to you by the LORD the God of Israel, saying, 'Surely Solomon your son shall reign after me, and he shall sit on my throne in my place,' surely so I will do this day." **31** And Bathsheba bowed low ***with her*** face ***to the*** earth and bowed down to the king, and she said, "May my lord King David live forever!" **32** And King David said, "Call Zadok the priest for me, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada." And they came before the king. **33** And the king said to them, "Take with you the servants of your lord, and make Solomon my son ride on the mule which ***is*** mine, and bring him down to Gihon (Gichon). **34** And Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet shall anoint him there as king over Israel, and you shall blow the ram's horn and say, 'May King Solomon live!' **35** And you shall come up after him, and he shall come and sit on my throne, and he shall reign in my place; and I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and over Judah." **36** And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada answered the king and said, "Amen! So may the LORD the God of my lord the king say. **37** Just as the LORD has been with my lord the king, so He will be with Solomon, and may He make his throne greater than the throne of my lord King David." **38** And Zadok the priest went down, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the Kerethites and the Pelethites, and they made Solomon ride on the mule of King David, and they brought him to Gihon. **39** And Zadok the priest took the horn of oil from the tent and anointed Solomon. And they blew the ram's horn, and all the people said, "May King Solomon live!" **40** And all the people went up after him, and the people ***were*** playing on flutes and rejoicing ***with*** great joy, and the earth was split by their sound.

Adonijah Flees to the Altar

41 And Adonijah and all ***those*** invited who ***were*** with him heard ***it***, and they had finished eating. And Joab heard the sound of the ram's horn, and he said, "Why ***is*** the sound of the city in an uproar?" **42** He ***was*** still speaking, and look, Jonathan (Yonatan) the son of Abiathar the priest came. And Adonijah said, "Come, for you ***are*** a man of worth, and you bring good news." **43** And Jonathan answered and said to Adonijah, "Indeed, our lord King David has made Solomon king. **44** And the king has sent with him Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada and the Kerethites and the Pelethites, and they have made him ride on the mule of the king. **45** And Zadok the priest and Nathan

1:21 1 Kgs 2:10; Deut 31:16; Gen 15:15
1:22 Gen 24:15; Job 1:16-18; Dan 9:20
1:23 1 Kgs 1:16; Rom 13:7; 1 Pet 2:17
1:24 1 Kgs 1:5,13,17; 1 Kgs 1:14,18
1:25 Luke 19:38; 1 Sam 10:24; 1 Kgs 1:9,19
1:26 1 Kgs 1:8,19; 2 Sam 7:2,12-17; 2 Sam 12:25
1:27 1 Kgs 1:24; 2 Kgs 4:27; John 15:15
1:28 Matt 1:6
1:29 2 Sam 4:9; 1 Kgs 2:24; 1 Kgs 17:1
1:30 Matt 1:6; 1 Kgs 1:13,17
1:31 Matt 1:6; Dan 2:4; Dan 3:9
1:32 1 Kgs 1:8,26,38
1:33 Matt 21:5; 2 Chr 32:30; 1 Kgs 1:38,45
1:34 1 Sam 10:1; 2 Sam 15:10; 1 Kgs 1:25
1:35 1 Kgs 1:13,17; 1 Kgs 2:12; 1 Kgs 2:15
1:36 Matt 6:13; Matt 28:20; 1 Cor 14:16
1:37 1 Sam 20:13; 1 Kgs 1:47; Josh 1:5,17
1:38 2 Sam 8:18; 1 Kgs 1:8,26; 1 Sam 30:14
1:39 Ps 89:20; 1 Chr 29:22; 1 Sam 10:24
1:40 Rev 11:18; Dan 3:5; 1 Sam 11:15
1:41 Matt 21:15; Job 20:5; Prov 14:13
1:42 2 Sam 15:36; 2 Sam 17:17; 2 Sam 18:27
1:45 1 Kgs 1:40; 1 Sam 4:5; Ezra 3:13

1:21 *I and my son Solomon will be sinners* If David did nothing, they would be treated as traitors and likely put to death. Bathsheba's words were respectful but honest, a good pattern for anyone who must speak hard truth to someone in authority.
1:27 *Has this thing come about from my lord the king* A question that left David no room. Either he had changed his mind without telling his closest servants, or someone was stealing the throne. Two witnesses told the same story, as the Law required (Deut 19:15).
1:29 *who has ransomed my soul from every distress* The old king woke up, and his oath begins with praise. Looking back over Saul's spears, the caves, the wars and Absalom's revolt, David saw the LORD's hand rescuing him every time.
1:30 *surely so I will do this day* Not tomorrow. Today.
1:31 *May my lord King David live forever* The usual blessing given to a king. David would not live forever, but the throne God promised him would (2 Sam 7:16), and it is held forever by David's greater Son, Jesus Christ (Luke 1:32-33).
1:33 *make Solomon my son ride on the mule which is mine* A public sign that the king himself had chosen him. Gihon was the spring on the east side of Jerusalem, within earshot of Adonijah's feast at En-rogel.
1:34 *anoint him there as king over Israel* Anointing, pouring oil on the head, set a person apart for God's service. The Hebrew word for the anointed one is mashiach, from which we get the word Messiah.
1:37 *may He make his throne greater than the throne of my lord King David* A good prayer for anyone who follows a godly leader. We should want the next generation to go further with God than we did.
1:38 *the Kerethites and the Pelethites* David's foreign bodyguard, loyal to the king himself.
1:39 *took the horn of oil from the tent* The tent David had set up for the ark on Mount Zion (2 Sam 6:17). The oil came from the place of God's presence.
1:40 *the earth was split by their sound* Adonijah had a feast for invited guests. Solomon had the people. Another King would ride into Jerusalem on a donkey's colt while the crowds shouted (Matt 21:5-9), and Solomon's ride is a small picture of that day.
1:41 *Why is the sound of the city in an uproar* Joab, an old soldier, knew the sound of a ram's horn.

the prophet have anointed him as king at Gihon, and they have gone up from there rejoicing, and the city was stirred. That ***is*** the sound which you have heard. **46** And also Solomon has sat on the throne of the kingship. **47** And also the servants of the king have come to bless our lord King David, saying, 'May God make the name of Solomon better than your name, and may He make his throne greater than your throne!' And the king bowed down on the bed. **48** And also thus the king has said: 'Blessed ***be*** the LORD the God of Israel, who has given today ***one*** sitting on my throne, and my eyes ***are*** seeing ***it***.'" **49** And all ***those*** invited who ***belonged*** to Adonijah trembled and rose up, and they went, each to his way. **50** And Adonijah was afraid because of Solomon, and he arose and went and took hold of the horns of the altar. **51** And it was told to Solomon, saying, "Look, Adonijah fears King Solomon, and look, he has taken hold of the horns of the altar, saying, 'Let King Solomon swear to me today that he will not put his servant to death with the sword.'" **52** And Solomon said, "If he will be a son of worth, not one of his hairs shall fall to the earth; and if evil is found in him, then he shall die." **53** And King Solomon sent, and they brought him down from the altar; and he came and bowed down to King Solomon. And Solomon said to him, "Go to your house."

1 KINGS 2

David's Charge to Solomon

1 And the days of David drew near to die, and he commanded Solomon (Shelomo) his son, saying, **2** "I ***am*** going in the way of all the earth. And you shall be strong and become a man. **3** And you shall keep the charge of the LORD your God, to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, His commandments, and His judgments, and His testimonies, according to what is written in the law of Moses (Moshe), so that you may act wisely in all that you do and in every ***place*** where you turn there, **4** so that the LORD may establish His word which He spoke concerning me, saying, 'If your sons guard their way, to walk before Me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul,' saying, 'there shall not be cut off to you a man from on the throne of Israel (Yisra'el).' **5** And also you yourself know what Joab (Yo'av) the son of Zeruiah (Tseruya) did to me, what he did to the two commanders of the armies of Israel, to Abner (Avner) the son of Ner and to Amasa the son of Jether (Yeter): and he killed them, and he put the blood of war in ***a time of*** peace, and he put the blood of war on his belt which ***was*** on his loins and on his sandals which ***were*** on his feet. **6** And you shall act according to your wisdom, and you shall not bring down his gray hair in peace ***to*** Sheol. **7** And to the sons of Barzillai (Barzilay) the Gileadite you shall show steadfast love, and they shall be among those eating ***at*** your table; for thus they drew near to me when I fled from before Absalom (Avshalom) your brother. **8** And look, with you ***is*** Shimei (Shimi) the son of Gera, the Benjaminite, from Bahurim (Bachurim); and he cursed me ***with*** a severe curse on the day I went ***to*** Mahanaim (Machanayim). And he came down to meet me ***at*** the Jordan (Yarden), and I swore to him by the LORD, saying, 'I will not put you to death with the sword.' **9** And now, do not hold him guiltless, for you ***are*** a wise man, and you will know what you shall do to him, and you shall bring down his gray hair with blood ***to*** Sheol." **10** And David lay down with his fathers and was buried in the city of David. **11** And the days which David reigned over Israel ***were*** forty years: in Hebron (Chevron) he reigned seven years, and in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) he reigned

1:46 1 Chr 29:23; 1 Kgs 1:13; Ps 132:11
1:47 Luke 19:38; 1 Kgs 1:37; Gen 47:31
1:48 Luke 1:68; Eph 1:3; 1 Pet 1:3
1:49 Prov 28:1; Isa 21:4,5; Dan 5:4-6
1:50 1 Kgs 2:28; Exod 21:14; Exod 38:2
1:52 1 Sam 14:45; 2 Sam 14:11; Acts 27:34
1:53 1 Kgs 1:16,31; 2 Sam 1:2; 1 Kgs 2:36
2:1 Gen 47:29; Deut 31:14; Deut 33:1
2:2 Josh 23:14; Josh 1:6,7; Job 16:22
2:3 Deut 29:9; 1 Chr 22:12,13; Deut 17:18-20
2:4 Matt 22:37; John 15:9; 2 Kgs 20:3
2:5 2 Sam 3:27; 2 Sam 20:10; 2 Sam 18:5,12,14
2:6 1 Kgs 2:9; Prov 20:26; 1 Kgs 2:28-34
2:7 2 Sam 9:7,10; 2 Sam 17:27-29; 2 Sam 19:31-40
2:8 2 Sam 16:5-8; 1 Kgs 2:36-46; 2 Sam 19:16-23
2:9 1 Kgs 2:6; Gen 42:38; Gen 44:31
2:10 Acts 2:29; Acts 13:36; 1 Kgs 3:1
2:11 2 Sam 5:4; 1 Chr 29:26,27

1:48 *who has given today one sitting on my throne, and my eyes are seeing it* David lived to see God keep the first part of His promise, and he gave the glory to the LORD.
1:49 *they went, each to his way* A crowd that gathers for a man's power scatters the moment the power is gone.
1:50 *took hold of the horns of the altar* The horns were the raised corners of the altar. Holding them was a cry for mercy and safety (Exod 21:13-14).
1:52 *If he will be a son of worth, not one of his hairs shall fall to the earth* This is mercy with a condition. Solomon did not punish Adonijah for the past. He gave him a future, if he would live as a loyal subject. Chapter 2 shows what Adonijah did with that mercy.
2:2 *I am going in the way of all the earth* David knew he was dying. Death is the road every person walks, kings included.
2:3 *according to what is written in the law of Moses* Real strength is keeping the charge of the LORD. David echoed what God told Joshua (Josh 1:7-8) and what Moses wrote for every king of Israel, who was to copy the Law and read it all his life (Deut 17:18-20).
2:4 *If your sons guard their way* God had promised David a house and a throne forever (2 Sam 7:12-16). That covenant would stand no matter what, and it is kept in Jesus. But each king's own enjoyment of the throne depended on obedience. God's promises do not depend on us, but our walk with Him affects how much of His blessing we enjoy.
2:5 *he put the blood of war in a time of peace* Joab murdered Abner (2 Sam 3:27) and Amasa (2 Sam 20:9-10), commanders David had made peace with. He also killed Absalom against David's order (2 Sam 18:5, 14) and had just backed Adonijah.
2:6 *you shall not bring down his gray hair in peace to Sheol* Sheol is the Hebrew word for the grave, the place of the dead. Under the Law a deliberate murderer was to die, and innocent blood left unpunished defiled the land (Num 35:31-33). David had said the sons of Zeruiah were too hard for him (2 Sam 3:39). Leaders who put off hard decisions often leave them to the next generation.
2:7 *to the sons of Barzillai the Gileadite you shall show steadfast love* In the middle of hard words comes kindness. Steadfast love is hesed, loyal covenant love that keeps its word. Barzillai fed David when he fled from Absalom (2 Sam 17:27-29; 19:31-39). David never forgot a kindness, and neither does God (Matt 10:42).
2:8 *Shimei the son of Gera, the Benjaminite* He cursed David and threw stones at him (2 Sam 16:5-13), then begged for mercy, and David swore not to kill him (2 Sam 19:18-23). David kept that oath. But cursing the king God anointed was a serious crime (Exod 22:28), and David left Solomon to deal with him wisely.
2:10 *was buried in the city of David* The old Jebusite stronghold of Zion that David captured (2 Sam 5:7). Peter preached at Pentecost that David's tomb was still there, and that David as a prophet spoke of the resurrection of Christ (Acts 2:29-31).
2:11 *forty years* About 1010 to 970 B.C. First Chronicles 29 tells of David's last days and Solomon's coronation from another angle.

thirty-three years. **12** And Solomon sat on the throne of David his father, and his reign was established exceedingly.

Adonijah's Request

13 And Adonijah (Adoniyahu) the son of Haggith (Chagit) came to Bathsheba (Bat-Sheva) the mother of Solomon. And she said, "***Is*** your coming ***in*** peace?" And he said, "Peace." **14** And he said, "I have a word for you." And she said, "Speak." **15** And he said, "You yourself know that the kingship was mine, and all Israel had set their faces on me to be king; and the kingship has turned around and has become my brother's, for it was his from the LORD. **16** And now I ***am*** asking one petition from you; do not turn back my face." And she said to him, "Speak." **17** And he said, "Please speak to Solomon the king, for he will not turn back your face, that he may give me Abishag (Avishag) the Shunammite as a wife." **18** And Bathsheba said, "Good. I will speak for you to the king." **19** And Bathsheba went to King Solomon to speak to him for Adonijah. And the king rose to meet her and bowed down to her, and he sat on his throne and placed a throne for the mother of the king, and she sat at his right ***hand***. **20** And she said, "I ***am*** asking one small petition from you; do not turn back my face." And the king said to her, "Ask, my mother, for I will not turn back your face." **21** And she said, "Let Abishag the Shunammite be given to Adonijah your brother as a wife." **22** And King Solomon answered and said to his mother, "And why ***are*** you asking Abishag the Shunammite for Adonijah? And ask for him the kingship, for he ***is*** my brother older than I, both for him and for Abiathar (Evyatar) the priest and for Joab the son of Zeruiah!" **23** And King Solomon swore by the LORD, saying, "So may God do to me, and so may He add, surely against his own life Adonijah has spoken this word! **24** And now, ***as*** the LORD lives, who has established me and seated me on the throne of David my father, and who has made for me a house just as He spoke, surely this day Adonijah shall be put to death." **25** And King Solomon sent by the hand of Benaiah (Benayahu) the son of Jehoiada (Yehoyada), and he fell on him, and he died.

Abiathar Removed and Joab Put to Death

26 And to Abiathar the priest the king said, "Go ***to*** Anathoth (Anatot), to your fields, for you ***are*** a man of death; and on this day I will not put you to death, because you carried the ark of the Lord GOD before David my father, and because you were afflicted in all in which my father was afflicted." **27** And Solomon drove out Abiathar from being priest to the LORD, to fulfill the word of the LORD which He had spoken concerning the house of Eli in Shiloh (Shilo). **28** And the report came to Joab, for Joab had turned aside after Adonijah, and after Absalom he had not turned aside; and Joab fled to the tent of the LORD and took hold of the horns of the altar. **29** And it was told to King Solomon that Joab had fled to the tent of the LORD, and look, ***he is*** beside the altar. And Solomon sent Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, saying, "Go, fall on him." **30** And Benaiah came to the tent of the LORD and said to him, "Thus says the king, 'Come out.'" And he said, "No, for here I will die." And Benaiah brought word back to the king, saying, "Thus Joab spoke, and thus he answered me." **31** And the king said to him, "Do just as he has spoken, and fall on him, and you shall bury him, and you shall remove the blood ***shed*** without cause, which Joab shed, from on me and from on the house of my father. **32** And the LORD will bring back his blood on his head, who fell on two men more righteous and better than he and killed them with the sword, and my father David did not know ***it***: Abner the son of Ner, the commander of the army of Israel, and Amasa the son of Jether, the commander of the army of Judah (Yehuda). **33** And their blood shall return on the head of Joab and on the head of his offspring forever; and for David and for his offspring and for his house and for his throne there shall be peace forever from

2:12 2 Chr 1:1; 1 Kgs 1:46; 1 Chr 29:23-25
2:13 Luke 10:5; 1 Kgs 1:5-10,50-53; 1 Sam 16:4,5
2:14 2 Sam 14:12; Luke 7:40
2:15 1 Kgs 1:5,25; 1 Chr 22:9,10; 1 Chr 28:5-7
2:16 Ps 132:10; Prov 30:7
2:17 1 Kgs 1:2-4; 2 Sam 3:7; 2 Sam 12:8
2:18 Prov 14:15
2:19 Matt 20:21; Ps 45:9; Exod 20:12
2:20 Matt 7:7; Matt 20:21; Matt 20:20,21
2:21 2 Sam 16:21,22
2:22 Matt 20:22; Mark 2:26; Mark 10:38
2:23 Ruth 1:17; 1 Kgs 20:10; 1 Sam 14:44
2:24 1 Chr 22:10; 1 Kgs 1:29; 1 Kgs 3:6,7
2:25 1 Kgs 2:31,34,46; Judg 8:20,21; 1 Sam 15:33
2:26 Mark 2:26; Josh 21:18; 1 Sam 22:20-23
2:27 Matt 26:56; John 12:38; John 19:36
2:28 1 Kgs 1:7; 1 Kgs 1:50; 2 Sam 18:2,14,15
2:29 1 Kgs 2:25,31,46; Exod 21:14; Ezek 9:6
2:31 Num 35:33; Deut 21:8,9; Exod 21:14
2:32 Judg 9:24,57; 2 Chr 21:13; Ps 7:16
2:33 Luke 1:32; 2 Kgs 5:27; Ps 101:8

2:15 *it was his from the LORD* Adonijah's claim that all Israel wanted him was not quite true. But he admitted the truth: God had given the throne to Solomon.
2:17 *that he may give me Abishag the Shunammite as a wife* It sounded small. But in that world, taking a king's wife or concubine was a public claim to his throne (2 Sam 16:21-22; 3:7). Abishag had cared for David in his bed, and to the people she belonged to his household. Bathsheba may not have seen it. Adonijah surely did.
2:19 *she sat at his right hand* The place of honor. In Judah the king's mother held a respected place in the court.
2:22 *And ask for him the kingship* Solomon saw it at once. This was not about love. It was the old conspiracy, with Abiathar and Joab, trying again by another door.
2:24 *surely this day Adonijah shall be put to death* This is hard to read. Treason was punished by death in Israel as in every nation around it. Adonijah had been given mercy with a clear warning (1:52) and used it to try again. Solomon judged as a king protecting the throne God gave him. It is not a pattern for us. Jesus teaches us to forgive and leave vengeance to God (Matt 5:44; Rom 12:19), and the sword belongs to rightful government (Rom 13:4).
2:26 *Go to Anathoth, to your fields, for you are a man of death* He deserved to die for backing Adonijah, but he was spared for carrying the ark and sharing David's hardships. Anathoth was a priests' town a few miles northeast of Jerusalem. Jeremiah would later come from a priestly family there (Jer 1:1).
2:27 *concerning the house of Eli in Shiloh* Abiathar was the last of Eli's line in the high priest's office. More than a century earlier God said He would cut off Eli's house because of his sons' sins (1 Sam 2:27-36; 3:11-14). God's word waited a long time, but it came true. From here on Zadok's line held the high priesthood.
2:28 *Joab fled to the tent of the LORD and took hold of the horns of the altar* The writer notes that Joab had followed Adonijah, though not Absalom.
2:29 *Go, fall on him* Was it wrong to kill a man at the altar? The Law protected one who killed by accident, but a man who killed with cunning was to be taken from God's altar to die (Exod 21:14). Joab had murdered Abner and Amasa on purpose, by trickery.
2:32 *two men more righteous and better than he* Joab was brave, able and loyal to David in many ways. But he did whatever he thought best, even murder, and he never repented. A man can serve the king for forty years and still never bow his heart to the King's God.

the LORD." **34** And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada went up and fell on him and put him to death; and he was buried in his house in the wilderness. **35** And the king put Benaiah the son of Jehoiada in his place over the army, and Zadok (Tsadoq) the priest the king put in the place of Abiathar.

Shimei's Oath and Death

36 And the king sent and called for Shimei and said to him, "Build for yourself a house in Jerusalem, and you shall dwell there, and you shall not go out from there here or there. **37** And it shall be, on the day you go out and cross the wadi of Kidron (Qidron), you shall surely know that you shall surely die; your blood shall be on your head." **38** And Shimei said to the king, "The word ***is*** good. Just as my lord the king has spoken, so your servant will do." And Shimei dwelt in Jerusalem many days. **39** And it came about at the end of three years, and two servants of Shimei fled to Achish (Akhish) the son of Maacah (Ma'akha), the king of Gath (Gat). And they told Shimei, saying, "Look, your servants ***are*** in Gath." **40** And Shimei arose and saddled his donkey and went to Gath, to Achish, to seek his servants; and Shimei went and brought his servants from Gath. **41** And it was told to Solomon that Shimei had gone from Jerusalem ***to*** Gath and had returned. **42** And the king sent and called for Shimei and said to him, "Did I not make you swear by the LORD and warn you, saying, 'On the day you go out and go here or there, you shall surely know that you shall surely die'? And you said to me, 'The word ***is*** good; I have heard.' **43** And why have you not kept the oath of the LORD and the command which I commanded you?" **44** And the king said to Shimei, "You yourself know all the evil that your heart knows, which you did to David my father; and the LORD will bring back your evil on your head. **45** And King Solomon ***shall be*** blessed, and the throne of David will be established before the LORD forever." **46** And the king commanded Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and he went out and fell on him, and he died. And the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon.

1 KINGS 3

Solomon Loves the LORD

1 And Solomon (Shelomo) became son-in-law to Pharaoh king of Egypt (Mitsrayim), and he took the daughter of Pharaoh and brought her to the city of David until he had finished building his house and the house of the LORD and the wall of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) all around. **2** Only, the people ***were*** sacrificing at the high places, for a house had not been built for the name of the LORD until those days. **3** And Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the statutes of David his father; only, at the high places he ***was*** sacrificing and making ***offerings*** smoke. **4** And the king went to Gibeon (Givon) to sacrifice there, for that ***was*** the great high place; Solomon offered up a thousand burnt offerings on that altar.

Solomon Asks for Wisdom

5 At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, "Ask what I shall give you." **6** And Solomon said, "You Yourself have shown great steadfast love to Your servant David my father, just as he walked before You in truth and in righteousness and in uprightness of heart with You; and You have kept for him this great steadfast love, and You have given him a son sitting on his throne, as ***it is*** this day. **7** And now, O LORD my God, You Yourself have made Your servant king in place of David my father, and I ***am*** a young lad; I do not know ***how*** to go out and to

2:34 1 Kgs 2:25,31,46; Josh 15:61; Matt 3:1
2:35 1 Kgs 2:27; 1 Chr 24:3; Job 34:24
2:36 1 Kgs 2:8,9; 2 Sam 16:5-9; Prov 20:8,26
2:37 John 18:1; 2 Sam 15:23; 2 Sam 1:16
2:38 1 Kgs 20:4; 2 Kgs 20:19
2:39 1 Sam 21:10; 1 Sam 27:2,3
2:40 Prov 15:27; Luke 12:15; 1 Tim 6:10
2:42 1 Kgs 2:36-38; Ps 15:4; Luke 19:22
2:43 2 Sam 21:2; Ezek 17:18,19; 2 Chr 30:12
2:44 2 Sam 16:5-13; Ps 7:16; Ezek 17:19
2:45 Prov 25:5; Ps 21:6; Ps 72:17
2:46 1 Kgs 2:12,45; 2 Chr 1:1; Prov 29:4
3:1 1 Kgs 9:24; 2 Sam 5:7; 2 Chr 18:1
3:2 Acts 7:49; 1 Kgs 22:43; Deut 12:2-5
3:3 Deut 6:5; Ps 31:23; 1 Cor 8:3
3:4 1 Chr 16:39; 1 Chr 21:29; 2 Chr 1:3,7-12
3:5 Matt 1:20; Matt 2:19; Matt 7:7
3:6 1 Kgs 9:4; 1 Kgs 1:48; 1 Kgs 2:4
3:7 1 Chr 29:1; Num 27:17; Jer 1:6

2:35 *Zadok the priest the king put in the place of Abiathar* The men who stood by God's choice of king now held the army and the priesthood. Ezekiel would later name "the sons of Zadok" (Ezek 44:15) as serving in the temple of the coming kingdom.
2:37 *cross the wadi of Kidron* The valley east of the city, on the road toward Shimei's old home in Bahurim. Solomon did not put him to death. He kept this Benjaminite of Saul's family where he could watch him, with a fair and clear condition, and Shimei swore by the LORD to keep it (2:42).
2:39 *at the end of three years* Gath was a Philistine city. Shimei went after his runaway servants and brought them back.
2:44 *You yourself know all the evil that your heart knows* Shimei broke his oath before the LORD, and that carelessness showed his old curse (2 Sam 16) had never been dealt with in his heart. Scripture does not say he meant to rebel. But he knew the terms. It is a sobering picture of how we treat God's warnings. We grow comfortable and start to think the line does not really matter.
2:46 *the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon* The chapter closes as it began in verse 12. The threats to the throne God chose were gone.
3:1 *Solomon became son-in-law to Pharaoh king of Egypt* Royal marriages sealed treaties, and for Egypt to give a daughter to a foreign king showed how strong Israel had become. The writer does not judge it here. But the Law warned the king not to multiply wives or turn back toward Egypt (Deut 17:16-17), and in chapter 11 "the daughter of Pharaoh" (11:1) heads the list of women who turned his heart. Small compromises at the start often become big ones later.
3:2 *the people were sacrificing at the high places* A high place was a hilltop or raised spot used for worship. The Canaanites worshiped their gods at such places, and God told Israel to tear them down and worship at the one place He would choose (Deut 12:2-5). With no temple yet, people worshiped the LORD at local high places.
3:3 *Solomon loved the LORD* A beautiful thing to say of anyone. Then comes one small word: "only." All through Kings the high places will be a stubborn problem, even under good kings.
3:4 *that was the great high place* The tabernacle Moses built and its bronze altar were at Gibeon (1 Chr 16:39; 2 Chr 1:3-6). A burnt offering was an animal wholly burned on the altar, a gift given entirely to God. A thousand of them showed a young king who wanted to begin by seeking the LORD.
3:5 *Ask what I shall give you* Not a blank check for greed. God was testing what was in Solomon's heart, and what we ask for shows what we value. Second Chronicles 1:7-12 tells the same event.
3:6 *You Yourself have shown great steadfast love to Your servant David my father* Solomon did not start with what he wanted. He started with what God had done. He saw his throne as the fruit of God's hesed, His faithful covenant love, to David.
3:7 *I am a young lad; I do not know how to go out and to come in* Solomon was likely about twenty, a grown man, but he knew he was not ready. To go out and come in means to lead people in daily life and in battle.

come in. **8** And Your servant ***is*** in the midst of Your people whom You have chosen, a numerous people which will not be numbered and will not be counted for multitude. **9** And give to Your servant a listening heart to judge Your people, to discern between good and evil; for who is able to judge this great people of Yours?" **10** And the thing was good in the eyes of the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing. **11** And God said to him, "Because you have asked this thing, and have not asked for yourself many days, and have not asked for yourself wealth, and have not asked ***for*** the life of your enemies, and have asked for yourself discernment to hear judgment, **12** look, I have done according to your words. Look, I have given you a wise and discerning heart, so that like you there has not been ***one*** before you, and after you ***one*** like you shall not arise. **13** And also what you have not asked I have given you, both wealth and honor, so that there has not been a man like you among the kings all your days. **14** And if you walk in My ways, keeping My statutes and My commandments, just as David your father walked, then I will lengthen your days." **15** And Solomon awoke, and look, ***it was*** a dream. And he came ***to*** Jerusalem and stood before the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and he offered up burnt offerings and made peace offerings, and he made a feast for all his servants.

A Wise Judgment

16 Then two women, prostitutes, came to the king and stood before him. **17** And the one woman said, "Please, my lord, I and this woman dwell in one house; and I gave birth with her in the house. **18** And it came about on the third day of my giving birth, and this woman also gave birth; and we ***were*** together; ***there was*** no stranger with us in the house, except the two of us in the house. **19** And the son of this woman died ***in the*** night, because she lay on him. **20** And she rose in the middle of the night and took my son from beside me, and your maidservant ***was*** sleeping, and she laid him in her bosom, and her dead son she laid in my bosom. **21** And I rose in the morning to nurse my son, and look, he had died. And I looked carefully at him in the morning, and look, it was not my son whom I had borne." **22** And the other woman said, "No, for my son ***is*** the living one, and your son ***is*** the dead one." And this ***one*** was saying, "No, for your son ***is*** the dead one, and my son ***is*** the living one." And they spoke before the king. **23** And the king said, "This ***one*** is saying, 'This ***is*** my son, the living one, and your son ***is*** the dead one'; and this ***one*** is saying, 'No, for your son ***is*** the dead one, and my son ***is*** the living one.'" **24** And the king said, "Take a sword for me." And they brought the sword before the king. **25** And the king said, "Cut the living child into two, and give the half to one and the half to ***the other*** one." **26** And the woman whose son ***was*** the living one said to the king, for her compassion grew warm over her son, and she said, "Please, my lord, give her the living child, and by no means kill him." And this ***one*** was saying, "He shall be neither mine nor yours; cut ***him***." **27** And the king answered and said, "Give her the living child, and by no means kill him; she ***is*** his mother." **28** And all Israel (Yisra'el) heard the judgment which the king had judged, and they were afraid before the king, for they saw that the wisdom of God ***was*** within him to do justice.

1 KINGS 4

Solomon's Officials

1 And King Solomon (Shelomo) was king over all Israel (Yisra'el). **2** And these ***were*** the officials who ***belonged*** to him: Azariah (Azaryahu) the son of Zadok (Tsadoq), the priest; **3** Elihoreph (Elichoref) and Ahijah (Achiya), the sons of Shisha, scribes; Jehoshaphat (Yehoshafat) the son of Ahilud

3:8 Gen 15:5; Gen 13:16; Gen 22:17
3:9 James 1:5; 2 Sam 14:17; Prov 2:3-9
3:10 Eph 5:17; Prov 15:8
3:11 Col 3:16; Rom 8:26; Ps 4:6
3:12 1 John 5:14; Matt 12:42; Col 3:16
3:13 Matt 6:33; Prov 3:16; Eph 3:20
3:14 Acts 13:22; Ps 91:16; Prov 3:2,16
3:15 Gen 41:7; Esth 1:3; Dan 5:1
3:16 Lev 19:29; Deut 23:17; Josh 2:1
3:17 Gen 43:20; Rom 13:7
3:20 Job 24:13-17; Ps 139:11; Matt 13:25
3:21 Gen 21:7; 1 Sam 1:23; Lam 4:3,4
3:25 Prov 25:8
3:26 Gen 43:30; Isa 49:15; Jer 31:20
3:28 1 Cor 1:24; Matt 12:42; Col 2:3
4:1 1 Kgs 11:13,35,36; 1 Kgs 12:19,20; 2 Sam 5:5
4:2 Exod 18:21; 2 Sam 8:15-18; 2 Sam 20:23-26
4:3 2 Sam 8:16; 1 Chr 18:6; 2 Sam 20:24

3:9 *give to Your servant a listening heart to judge Your people* In Hebrew the heart is the whole inner person: mind, will and feelings. A listening heart hears God and hears people, and so can judge rightly. Notice he calls them God's people, not his own. A good leader knows the people he leads belong to God.
3:10 *the thing was good in the eyes of the Lord* Here the SLB has "the Lord," meaning Master, rather than the name the LORD.
3:13 *what you have not asked I have given you, both wealth and honor* This is how God works: "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you" (Matt 6:33). It does not mean wealth always follows godliness. It means God gives freely to those who want Him first. If anyone lacks wisdom, let him ask God (James 1:5). Have you asked Him?
3:14 *then I will lengthen your days* Wisdom was a gift. A long life of blessing depended on walking in it. Sadly, Solomon would have the wisdom without always walking in it. He died at about sixty.
3:15 *stood before the ark of the covenant of the Lord* The ark was the gold-covered wooden chest that held the tablets of the Ten Commandments, the sign of God's presence. A covenant is the binding agreement God made with Israel at Sinai. A peace offering was a sacrifice shared as a meal, a picture of fellowship with God. When God blesses us, the right response is worship, and then sharing the joy.
3:16 *two women, prostitutes, came to the king* The lowest people in society could bring their case straight to the king. That says something good about Solomon's court.
3:18 *there was no stranger with us in the house* No witnesses. One woman was lying, and one was grieving a stolen child. How could anyone know which?
3:25 *Cut the living child into two* Solomon did not intend to kill the baby. He was testing the hearts of the women. He knew a real mother would rather lose her son than see him die. His wisdom went past the words to the heart.
3:26 *her compassion grew warm over her son* The Hebrew word for compassion is close to the word for womb, the deep love of a mother for her child. Love gave him away, and the child was saved. Jealousy would rather destroy than lose.
3:28 *they saw that the wisdom of God was within him to do justice* They were in awe, knowing they could not fool him. This is what Solomon asked for in verse 9. It points to a greater Judge. Jesus knows every heart (John 2:24-25), the Father has given all judgment to the Son (John 5:22), and Jesus said "something greater than Solomon is here" (Matt 12:42).
4:2 *Azariah the son of Zadok, the priest* Likely Zadok's grandson (1 Chr 6:8-10), since "son" in Hebrew can mean descendant. Some of David's officials carried on, like the recorder (2 Sam 8:16), and Benaiah now held Joab's old post.

(Achilud), the recorder; **4** and Benaiah (Benayahu) the son of Jehoiada (Yehoyada) ***was*** over the army; and Zadok and Abiathar (Evyatar) ***were*** priests; **5** and Azariah the son of Nathan (Natan) ***was*** over the deputies; and Zabud (Zavud) the son of Nathan ***was*** a priest, the friend of the king; **6** and Ahishar (Achishar) ***was*** over the house; and Adoniram the son of Abda (Avda) ***was*** over the forced labor. **7** And Solomon had twelve deputies over all Israel, and they provided for the king and his household; a month in the year it was on each one to provide. **8** And these ***are*** their names: Ben-hur (Ben-Chur), in the hill country of Ephraim (Efrayim);
9 Ben-deker (Ben-Deqer), in Makaz (Maqats) and in Shaalbim (Sha'alvim) and in Beth-shemesh (Bet-Shemesh) and Elon-beth-hanan (Elon-Bet-Chanan); **10** Ben-hesed (Ben-Chesed), in Arubboth (Arubot); to him ***belonged*** Socoh (Sokho) and all the land of Hepher (Chefer); **11** Ben-abinadab
(Ben-Avinadav), all the heights of Dor; Taphath (Tafat) the daughter of Solomon became his wife; **12** Baana (Ba'ana) the son of Ahilud, Taanach (Ta'anakh) and Megiddo (Megido) and all Beth-shean (Bet-She'an), which ***is*** beside Zarethan (Tsartan) below Jezreel (Yizre'el), from Beth-shean to
Abel-meholah (Avel-Mechola), as far as the other side of Jokmeam (Yoqme'am); **13** Ben-geber (Ben-Gever), in
Ramoth-gilead (Ramot-Gilad); to him ***belonged*** the villages of Jair (Ya'ir) the son of Manasseh (Menashe), which ***are*** in Gilead (Gilad); to him ***belonged*** the region of Argob (Argov), which ***is*** in Bashan, sixty great cities ***with*** walls and bars of bronze; **14** Ahinadab (Achinadav) the son of Iddo (Ido), ***at*** Mahanaim (Machanayim); **15** Ahimaaz (Achima'ats), in
Naphtali (Naftali); he also took Basemath (Basmat) the daughter of Solomon as a wife; **16** Baana the son of Hushai (Chushay), in Asher and Bealoth (Be'alot); **17** Jehoshaphat the son of Paruah (Paruach), in Issachar (Yisashkhar);
18 Shimei (Shimi) the son of Elah (Ela), in Benjamin
(Binyamin); **19** Geber (Gever) the son of Uri, in the land of Gilead, the land of Sihon (Sichon) the king of the Amorites and of Og the king of Bashan; and ***there was*** one deputy who ***was*** in the land.

Solomon's Peace and Plenty

20 Judah (Yehuda) and Israel ***were*** many, like the sand which ***is*** by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking and rejoicing. **21** And Solomon was ruling over all the kingdoms from the River ***to*** the land of the Philistines and to the border of Egypt (Mitsrayim); they ***were*** bringing tribute and serving Solomon all the days of his life. **22** And the food of Solomon for one day was approximately 180 bushels (thirty kors) of fine flour and approximately 360 bushels (sixty kors) of meal, **23** ten fat cattle, and twenty pasture cattle, and a hundred sheep, besides deer and gazelles and roebucks and fattened birds. **24** For he ***was*** ruling over all ***the region*** beyond the River, from Tiphsah (Tifsach) and to Gaza (Aza), over all the kings beyond the River; and he had peace from all his sides all around. **25** And Judah and Israel dwelt in security, each man under his vine and under his fig tree, from Dan and to Beer-sheba (Be'er-Sheva), all the days of Solomon. **26** And
Solomon had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariotry, and twelve thousand horsemen. **27** And those deputies provided for King Solomon and for all who came near to the table of King Solomon, each ***in*** his month; they let nothing be

4:4 Mark 2:26; 1 Kgs 2:35; 1 Kgs 2:26,27,35
4:5 2 Sam 15:37; 2 Sam 16:16; 1 Chr 27:33
4:6 1 Kgs 12:18; 2 Sam 20:24; 1 Kgs 9:15
4:7 1 Chr 27:1-15
4:8 Judg 17:1; Judg 19:1
4:9 Josh 19:42; 1 Sam 6:12,20
4:10 Josh 15:35; Josh 12:17; Josh 17:2
4:11 Josh 12:23; Josh 17:11; Judg 1:27
4:12 Josh 17:11; Judg 5:19; Josh 3:16
4:13 Num 32:41; Deut 3:4,8,13,14; 1 Kgs 22:3
4:14 Gen 32:2; 2 Sam 2:8; 2 Sam 17:24,27
4:15 Josh 19:32-39; 1 Kgs 4:11; 1 Sam 18:18
4:16 Josh 19:24-31
4:17 Josh 19:17-23
4:18 1 Kgs 1:8; Zech 12:13; Josh 18:20-28
4:19 Num 21:21-35; Deut 2:26-37; Josh 13:9-12
4:20 Heb 11:12; 1 Kgs 3:8; Gen 22:17
4:21 Gen 15:18; Josh 1:4; Ps 68:29
4:23 Neh 5:17,18
4:24 1 Chr 22:9; Gen 10:19; Judg 16:1
4:25 Mic 4:4; Zech 3:10; 2 Kgs 18:31
4:26 2 Chr 1:14; 2 Chr 9:25; 2 Sam 8:4

4:4 *Zadok and Abiathar were priests* Abiathar had been removed in chapter 2, so this list probably covers the whole reign, or Abiathar kept the title while Zadok held the office.
4:5 *the friend of the king* A trusted adviser. Two sons of Nathan served Solomon. Nathan's faithfulness in chapter 1 was remembered.
4:6 *Adoniram the son of Abda was over the forced labor* Men drafted to work on the king's projects. A name to remember: after Solomon's death the people stoned Adoniram, also called Adoram (12:18). Good government can slide into a heavy yoke.
4:7 *Solomon had twelve deputies over all Israel* Each district fed the court for one month a year. Some districts follow the old tribal borders and some do not. Two deputies married Solomon's daughters (4:11, 15). God knows the names of ordinary officials, and every one of them mattered to Him.
4:13 *sixty great cities with walls and bars of bronze* The strong cities Israel took from Og king of Bashan in Moses' day (Deut 3:4-5).
4:19 *there was one deputy who was in the land* Judah is not named among the twelve, and this line may refer to Judah under a separate officer. Some think Solomon spared his own tribe, which added to the bitterness of the northern tribes later (12:4). Others take it as one deputy over Gilead.
4:20 *like the sand which is by the sea in multitude* God promised Abraham his seed would be like the sand on the seashore (Gen 22:17). Here the writer shows that promise coming true, and the people were "eating and drinking and rejoicing."
4:21 *from the River to the land of the Philistines and to the border of Egypt* The River is the Euphrates. God promised Abraham the land from the river of Egypt to the Euphrates (Gen 15:18). Was this the final fulfillment? I do not believe so. These kingdoms paid tribute, and within a generation much was lost. The prophets still looked forward to Israel living safely in its land under the Son of David (Ezek 37:24-25; Amos 9:14-15). I believe that day is still coming, when Christ reigns on the earth for a thousand years (Rev 20:4-6).
4:22 *the food of Solomon for one day* Enough to feed several thousand people: the royal family, officials, servants, guards and guests. A big court is a heavy load on the people who supply it.
4:24 *he had peace from all his sides all around* Solomon's name comes from shalom, peace. David was a man of war, and Solomon a man of rest (1 Chr 22:9). Tiphsah was on the Euphrates and Gaza on the coast near Egypt.
4:25 *each man under his vine and under his fig tree, from Dan and to Beersheba* Dan was the far north and Beersheba the far south. To sit under your own vine and fig tree meant living in peace on your own land with no enemy to fear. Micah used the same words for the coming kingdom (Mic 4:4). Solomon's peace was a small taste of Christ's kingdom.
4:26 *forty thousand stalls of horses* Second Chronicles 9:25 has four thousand. Most conservative scholars think a copyist made an error in one number, and many take four thousand as original. Others think the passages count different things. Either way it carries a warning, for the king was not to multiply horses (Deut 17:16), and Solomon would buy them from Egypt (10:28). Some trust in chariots and horses, but we in the name of the LORD (Ps 20:7).

lacking. **28** And the barley and the straw for the horses and for the swift steeds they brought to the place where it would be, each according to his rule.

Solomon's Wisdom

29 And God gave Solomon wisdom and very great understanding, and breadth of heart like the sand which ***is*** on the shore of the sea. **30** And the wisdom of Solomon was greater than the wisdom of all the sons of the east and than all the wisdom of Egypt. **31** And he was wiser than all mankind, than Ethan (Etan) the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Calcol (Kalkol), and Darda, the sons of Mahol (Machol); and his name was in all the nations all around. **32** And he spoke three thousand proverbs, and his songs were a thousand and five. **33** And he spoke concerning the trees, from the cedar which ***is*** in Lebanon (Levanon) even to the hyssop which comes out in the wall; and he spoke concerning the animals and concerning the birds and concerning the moving things and concerning the fish. **34** And they came from all the peoples to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all the kings of the earth who had heard of his wisdom.

1 KINGS 5

Hiram and Solomon

1 And Hiram (Chiram) the king of Tyre (Tsor) sent his servants to Solomon (Shelomo), for he had heard that they had anointed him king in place of his father; for Hiram had been one who loved David all the days. **2** And Solomon sent to Hiram, saying, **3** "You yourself know David my father, that he was not able to build a house for the name of the LORD his God because of the war ***with*** which they surrounded him, until the LORD put them under the soles of my feet. **4** And now the LORD my God has given me rest all around; ***there is*** no adversary and no evil occurrence. **5** And look, I ***am*** intending to build a house for the name of the LORD my God, just as the LORD spoke to David my father, saying, 'Your son, whom I will set in your place on your throne, he shall build the house for My name.' **6** And now command, and let them cut for me cedars from Lebanon (Levanon); and my servants shall be with your servants, and the wages of your servants I will give you according to all that you say; for you yourself know that ***there is*** no one among us who knows ***how*** to cut timber like the Sidonians." **7** And it came about, when Hiram heard the words of Solomon, and he rejoiced exceedingly, and he said, "Blessed ***be*** the LORD this day, who has given to David a wise son over this great people." **8** And Hiram sent to Solomon, saying, "I have heard what you sent to me. I will do all your desire concerning timber of cedar and timber of cypress. **9** My servants will bring ***them*** down from Lebanon to the sea; and I will make them ***into*** rafts on the sea ***to go*** to the place which you will send to me, and I will break them up there, and you shall carry ***them*** away. And you shall do my desire by giving the food of my household." **10** And Hiram was giving to Solomon timber of cedar and timber of cypress, all his desire. **11** And Solomon gave to Hiram approximately 120,000 bushels (twenty thousand kors) of wheat, food for his household, and approximately 1,200 gallons (twenty kors) of beaten oil; thus Solomon would give to Hiram year by year.

4:28 Esth 8:10,14; Mic 1:13
4:29 Matt 12:42; 1 Kgs 3:12,28; 1 Kgs 4:20
4:30 Acts 7:22; Gen 25:6; Job 1:3
4:31 Matt 12:42; Luke 11:31; 1 Chr 15:19
4:32 Eccl 12:9; Prov 1:1-31; Matt 13:35
4:33 Num 24:6; 2 Kgs 19:23; Ps 92:12
4:34 Matt 12:42; 1 Kgs 10:1; 2 Chr 9:1,23
5:1 Acts 7:47; 2 Sam 5:11; 1 Chr 14:1
5:2 Acts 7:47; 2 Chr 2:3
5:3 1 Chr 28:3; 1 Chr 22:8; 2 Sam 7:5-11
5:4 1 Kgs 4:24; 1 Chr 22:9; Ps 72:7
5:5 1 Chr 17:12; 1 Chr 22:10; 1 Chr 28:6,10
5:6 2 Chr 2:8,10; 1 Kgs 6:9,10,16,20; Ps 29:5
5:7 Acts 7:47; 1 Kgs 10:9; 2 Chr 2:11,12
5:8 Acts 7:47; 1 Kgs 6:15,34; 2 Sam 6:5
5:9 Ezra 3:7; Ezek 27:17; Acts 12:20
5:10 Acts 7:47
5:11 Acts 7:47; Acts 12:20; 2 Chr 2:10

4:29 *breadth of heart like the sand which is on the shore of the sea* The people were as many as the sand, and Solomon's understanding was as wide. God had promised this in 3:12, and here He kept His word.

4:31 *Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman* The best-known wise men of Israel. Ethan and Heman may be the men named over Psalms 88 and 89. "The sons of the east" (4:30) were the peoples of Arabia and Mesopotamia known for wise sayings.

4:32 *he spoke three thousand proverbs, and his songs were a thousand and five* Only part of these are in our Bibles: many sayings in Proverbs (Prov 1:1; 10:1; 25:1), and Song of Songs and Psalms 72 and 127 carry his name. God did not choose to keep the rest in Scripture.

4:33 *from the cedar which is in Lebanon even to the hyssop which comes out in the wall* The tallest tree and the smallest plant. Solomon's wisdom was about all of life under God, including His creation. All truth is God's truth, and the world shows His wisdom.

4:34 *they came from all the peoples to hear the wisdom of Solomon* The queen of Sheba will be the most famous of these visitors (chapter 10). God's blessing on Israel was meant to draw the nations to Him.

5:1 *Hiram the king of Tyre* Tyre was a rich Phoenician port on the coast north of Israel, in what is now Lebanon. The Phoenicians were the great sailors and traders of the day, and the forests behind them grew the best cedar in the world.

5:1 *Hiram had been one who loved David all the days* Hiram had sent cedar and craftsmen for David's house (2 Sam 5:11). "Loved" here describes a loyal friendship between allies. Good relationships built by one generation can bless the next.

5:3 *because of the war with which they surrounded him* First Chronicles 22:8 adds that God told David he had shed much blood, so he would not build the house. Now there was rest, and the time had come.

5:5 *he shall build the house for My name* Solomon was not building a house to hold God, and he knew no building could (8:27). It was the place where God put His name, where His people would meet Him and call on Him. The promise of 2 Samuel 7:13 has a greater fulfillment: Jesus, the Son of David, is building a house of living stones (1 Pet 2:5; Eph 2:20-22), and His throne will have no end (Luke 1:32-33).

5:6 *there is no one among us who knows how to cut timber like the Sidonians* Cedar was strong, sweet smelling and resistant to rot, the finest building wood of the ancient world. The wisest man on earth knew he needed the skills of others. God's work is often done by people working together, each giving what they do best (1 Cor 12:4-7).

5:7 *Blessed be the LORD this day, who has given to David a wise son* A foreign king from a land that worshiped Baal praised the LORD by name. In that day kings often honored the gods of their allies, so we should not read too much into it. But the God of Israel was being spoken of among the nations.

5:9 *I will make them into rafts on the sea* The rafts came to Joppa, the port closest to Jerusalem (2 Chr 2:16), and the timber was hauled about thirty-five miles inland and uphill. Tyre had little farmland and Israel had grain and oil, so each kingdom had what the other needed.

5:11 *food for his household* Second Chronicles 2:10 gives a larger list for the woodcutters. The two may be different payments, one for Hiram's household and one for the workers, or a number may have been miscopied. Either way, Solomon paid well.

12 And the LORD gave wisdom to Solomon, just as He had spoken to him; and there was peace between Hiram and Solomon, and the two of them made a covenant.

The Forced Labor

13 And King Solomon raised forced labor from all Israel (Yisra'el); and the forced labor was thirty thousand men. **14** And he sent them to Lebanon, ten thousand a month in relays; a month they were in Lebanon, ***and*** two months at his home. And Adoniram ***was*** over the forced labor. **15** And Solomon had seventy thousand carriers of burdens and eighty thousand hewers in the hill country, **16** besides the commanders of the overseers of Solomon who ***were*** over the work, three thousand and three hundred, who ruled over the people who were doing the work. **17** And the king commanded, and they quarried great stones, costly stones, to lay the foundation of the house, hewn stones. **18** And the builders of Solomon and the builders of Hiram and the Gebalites cut ***them*** to shape, and they prepared the timber and the stones to build the house.

1 KINGS 6

Solomon Builds the Temple

1 And it came about in the four hundred and eightieth year of the going out of the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim), in the fourth year, in the month of Ziv, that ***is*** the second month, of the reigning of Solomon (Shelomo) over Israel, and he built the house for the LORD. **2** And the house which King Solomon built for the LORD: its length ***was*** approximately 90 feet (sixty cubits), and its breadth approximately 30 feet (twenty ***cubits***), and its height approximately 45 feet (thirty cubits). **3** And the porch in front of the temple of the house: its length ***was*** approximately 30 feet (twenty cubits), in front of the breadth of the house; its breadth ***was*** approximately 15 feet (ten cubits) in front of the house. **4** And he made for the house windows of closed frames. **5** And he built against the wall of the house an extension all around, against the walls of the house all around, of the temple and of the inner room; and he made side chambers all around. **6** The lowest extension ***was*** approximately 7.5 feet (five cubits) ***in*** its breadth, and the middle ***was*** approximately 9 feet (six cubits) ***in*** its breadth, and the third ***was*** approximately 10.5 feet (seven cubits) ***in*** its breadth; for he made ledges for the house all around on the outside, so as not to take hold in the walls of the house. **7** And the house, when it was built, was built ***of*** complete stone ***from the*** quarry; and hammers and the axe, any tool of iron, were not heard in the house when it was built. **8** The entrance of the middle side chamber ***was*** at the south side of the house; and by stairways they went up to the middle ***one***, and from the middle ***one*** to the third. **9** And he built the house and finished it; and he covered the house ***with*** beams and planks of cedar. **10** And he built the extension against all the house, approximately 7.5 feet (five cubits) ***was*** its height; and it took hold of the house with timber of cedar.

The LORD's Word to Solomon

11 And the word of the LORD came to Solomon, saying, **12** "***As for*** this house which you are building: if you walk in My statutes, and do My judgments, and keep all My commandments to walk in them, then I will establish My word

5:12 Matt 12:42; Acts 7:47; 1 Kgs 3:12
5:13 Acts 7:47; 1 Kgs 9:15; 1 Kgs 4:6
5:14 1 Chr 27:1-15; 1 Kgs 4:6; 1 Kgs 4:7-19
5:15 Acts 7:47; 1 Kgs 9:20-22; 2 Chr 2:17,18
5:16 Acts 7:47; 1 Kgs 9:23; 2 Chr 2:2
5:17 1 Kgs 6:7; 1 Chr 22:2; 1 Kgs 7:9
5:18 Acts 7:47; Josh 13:5; Ezek 27:9
6:1 Acts 7:47; John 2:20; 2 Chr 3:1,2
6:2 Rev 21:16; Rev 21:17; Ezek 40:1-41
6:3 Matt 4:5; 1 Chr 28:11; 2 Chr 3:3,4
6:4 Ezek 40:16; Ezek 41:26; Song 2:9
6:5 1 Kgs 6:16,19-21,31; 2 Chr 4:20; 2 Chr 5:7,9
6:7 Deut 27:5,6; 1 Kgs 5:17,18; Prov 24:27
6:8 Ezek 41:6,7
6:9 1 Kgs 6:14,38
6:12 1 Chr 22:10; 1 Kgs 2:3,4; 1 Kgs 3:14

5:12 *the two of them made a covenant* The writer wants us to see this smooth agreement as God keeping His promise of wisdom (3:12). A covenant is a binding agreement sworn before God, here a treaty of peace and trade.
5:13 *the forced labor was thirty thousand men* A labor draft, like a military draft. A man worked one month in three and spent two at home (5:14). That was fair at first, but after Solomon's death the northern tribes complained of a hard yoke (12:4). Even good work for God can be done in ways that grind people down.
5:16 *three thousand and three hundred* Second Chronicles 2:17-18 says the 150,000 workers were foreigners living in Israel and gives 3,600 overseers. Adding the chief officers of 9:23 (550) here and of 2 Chronicles 8:10 (250) there, both totals come to 3,850.
5:17 *great stones, costly stones, to lay the foundation of the house* Huge, carefully shaped limestone blocks. Most of a foundation is never seen once the building stands, but everything rests on it. The wise man builds his house on the rock by hearing Jesus' words and doing them (Matt 7:24-25). What are you building on?
5:18 *the Gebalites* From Gebal, the city the Greeks called Byblos, north of Sidon. Israelites and foreigners worked side by side on the house of the LORD.
6:1 *in the four hundred and eightieth year of the going out of the sons of Israel from the land of Egypt* Solomon's fourth year was about 966 B.C., so this count puts the exodus about 1446 B.C. Jephthah's three hundred years (Judg 11:26) and Paul's summary (Acts 13:17-22) fit this well. Many scholars date the exodus in the 1200s B.C. and read 480 as twelve round generations. I take the number as written, a plain count tied to a month and a year. Israel measured its history from the day God brought it out of slavery. For believers, the cross is our exodus (Luke 9:31, where Jesus' "departure" is the Greek word exodos).
6:1 *in the month of Ziv* The second month, in the spring, about April and May. Second Chronicles 3:1 adds that the temple stood on Mount Moriah, at the threshing floor of Ornan.
6:2 *its length was approximately 90 feet* Sixty by twenty by thirty cubits (a cubit is about 18 inches). It was twice the size of Moses' tabernacle, with the same plan (Exod 26). The people worshiped in the courts outside. The building itself was God's house, where only the priests went in.
6:5 *he made side chambers all around* Three stories of rooms on three sides, likely for supplies, tithes and treasures (7:51; Neh 13:4-5). Their beams rested on ledges, so nothing was cut into the walls of God's house itself (6:6).
6:7 *any tool of iron, were not heard in the house when it was built* Every stone was finished at the quarry and fitted in quiet. Part of the reason was reverence, and it may recall the altar of uncut stone (Exod 20:25). Many teachers see a picture here: God shapes His "living stones" (1 Pet 2:5) in this life, often through hard things, and one day the whole house will be put together in peace. The New Testament does not tie that picture to this verse, but it fits.
6:9 *he covered the house with beams and planks of cedar* God cared about the details of His house, and so did the writer. Careful, faithful work done for God's glory is a kind of worship (Col 3:23).
6:12 *if you walk in My statutes* God stopped the building report to remind Solomon what mattered. The temple did not guarantee God's blessing. Obedience did. Jeremiah later warned against trusting in the temple while living in sin (Jer 7:4-11), and it fell in 586 B.C.

with you, which I spoke to David your father. **13** And I will dwell in the midst of the sons of Israel, and I will not forsake My people Israel."

The Inside of the Temple

14 And Solomon built the house and finished it. **15** And he built the walls of the house on the inside with boards of cedar; from the floor of the house to the walls of the ceiling he overlaid ***them with*** wood on the inside; and he overlaid the floor of the house with boards of cypress. **16** And he built approximately 30 feet (twenty cubits) from the rear parts of the house with boards of cedar, from the floor to the walls; and he built ***them*** for it on the inside, for an inner room, for the holy of holies. **17** And the house was approximately 60 feet (forty cubits), that ***is***, the temple in front. **18** And the cedar on the house within ***was*** carved work of gourds and open flowers; all ***was*** cedar; no stone was seen. **19** And the inner room in the midst of the house within he prepared, to put there the ark of the covenant of the LORD. **20** And the inner room in front ***was*** approximately 30 feet (twenty cubits) ***in*** length, and approximately 30 feet (twenty cubits) ***in*** breadth, and approximately 30 feet (twenty cubits) its height; and he overlaid it ***with*** refined gold; and he overlaid an altar ***with*** cedar. **21** And Solomon overlaid the house within ***with*** refined gold, and he drew ***it*** across with chains of gold in front of the inner room, and he overlaid it ***with*** gold. **22** And all the house he overlaid ***with*** gold, until all the house was finished; and all the altar which ***belonged*** to the inner room he overlaid ***with*** gold.

The Cherubim and the Doors

23 And in the inner room he made two cherubim ***of*** olive wood; its height ***was*** approximately 15 feet (ten cubits). **24** And the one wing of the cherub ***was*** approximately 7.5 feet (five cubits), and the second wing of the cherub ***was*** approximately 7.5 feet (five cubits); from the ends of its wings and to the ends of its wings ***was*** approximately 15 feet (ten cubits). **25** And the second cherub ***was*** approximately 15 feet (ten cubits); one measure and one form ***belonged*** to the two cherubim. **26** The height of the one cherub ***was*** approximately 15 feet (ten cubits), and so ***was*** the second cherub. **27** And he put the cherubim in the midst of the inner house; and they spread out the wings of the cherubim, and the wing of the one touched the wall, and the wing of the second cherub ***was*** touching the second wall; and their wings in the middle of the house ***were*** touching wing to wing. **28** And he overlaid the cherubim ***with*** gold. **29** And all the walls of the house all around he carved ***with*** engraved carvings of cherubim and palm trees and open flowers, inside and outside. **30** And the floor of the house he overlaid ***with*** gold, inside and outside. **31** And ***for*** the entrance of the inner room he made doors of olive wood; the pillar ***and*** the doorposts ***were*** a fifth. **32** And the two doors ***were*** of olive wood; and he carved on them carvings of cherubim and palm trees and open flowers, and he overlaid ***them with*** gold; and he hammered out the gold on the cherubim and on the palm trees. **33** And so he made for the entrance of the temple doorposts of olive wood, from a fourth. **34** And two doors of cypress wood: two sides of the one door ***were*** turning, and two leaves of the second door ***were*** turning. **35** And he carved cherubim and palm trees and open flowers, and he overlaid ***them with*** gold made even on the carved work. **36** And he built the inner court ***with*** three rows of hewn stone and a row of beams of cedar. **37** In the fourth year the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid, in the month of Ziv. **38** And in the eleventh year, in the month of Bul, that ***is*** the eighth month, the house was finished in all its parts and according to all its

6:13 2 Cor 6:16; Exod 25:8; Deut 31:6,8
6:14 Acts 7:47; 1 Kgs 6:9,38
6:16 Heb 9:3; 1 Kgs 8:6; 2 Chr 3:8
6:19 Heb 9:4; 1 Kgs 6:5,16; 2 Chr 4:20
6:20 1 Kgs 6:2,3; 1 Kgs 6:22; 1 Kgs 7:48
6:21 Exod 26:29,32; Exod 36:34; 2 Chr 3:7-9
6:22 Exod 30:1,3,5,6; 1 Kgs 6:20; 2 Chr 3:7-14
6:23 Exod 37:7-9; Gen 3:24; Exod 25:18-22
6:27 Exod 25:20; Exod 37:9; 2 Chr 5:8
6:29 Exod 36:8; 2 Chr 3:14; 2 Chr 4:2-5
6:30 Isa 54:11,12; Isa 60:17; Rev 21:18-21
6:31 John 10:9; John 14:6; Eph 3:18
6:32 1 Kgs 6:18,29
6:34 Ezek 41:23-25; 1 Kgs 5:8
6:36 Exod 27:9-19; Exod 38:9-20; 2 Chr 4:9
6:37 1 Kgs 6:1; 2 Chr 3:2
6:38 John 2:20; Ezra 6:14,15; Zech 4:9

6:13 *I will dwell in the midst of the sons of Israel* The heart of the whole Bible: God living among His people. It began in the garden, continued in the tabernacle (Exod 25:8) and temple, came to its fullest when "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14), and will be complete when God dwells with His people forever (Rev 21:3).

6:16 *for an inner room, for the holy of holies* The back twenty cubits formed the most holy place. The front room, forty cubits long, was the holy place. The tabernacle had the same two rooms, divided by a veil (Exod 26:33).

6:18 *carved work of gourds and open flowers* Gourds and flowers suggest a garden, and many have seen a reminder of Eden, where God first walked with man. That is a picture the text does not explain, but it is worth thinking about.

6:20 *approximately 30 feet in length, and approximately 30 feet in breadth, and approximately 30 feet its height* A perfect cube. Scripture ends with another, the New Jerusalem (Rev 21:16). Only the high priest entered this cube, once a year. In the New Jerusalem the whole city is God's dwelling, and His people "will see His face" (Rev 22:4).

6:20 *he overlaid an altar with cedar* The altar of incense, which stood before the inner room (Exod 30:1-6). The whole house was covered with gold. Everything about the place said God is holy, glorious and worthy of the best.

6:23 *two cherubim of olive wood* Cherubim are a high order of angels who guard God's holiness and surround His throne. They guarded the way to the tree of life (Gen 3:24), and two small golden cherubim were on the ark's lid (Exod 25:18-20). These were about 15 feet tall.

6:27 *their wings in the middle of the house were touching wing to wing* Side by side, their wings filled the room wall to wall, and the ark would rest beneath them (8:6-7). It was a picture of God's throne, where He sits enthroned above the cherubim (Ps 80:1).

6:29 *cherubim and palm trees and open flowers* A garden guarded by heavenly beings. Eden was lost because of sin, and cherubim kept man out. In the temple the way back was opened only through the priest and the blood of sacrifice. In Christ the way is open to every believer (Heb 10:19-20).

6:31 *the pillar and the doorposts were a fifth* The Hebrew is not clear. It may mean a five-sided frame. The doorposts of 6:33, "from a fourth," were likely square. Second Chronicles 3:14 adds a veil before the inner room. When Jesus died, the veil of the later temple was torn from top to bottom (Mark 15:38). God Himself opened the way.

6:36 *the inner court* The courtyard around the temple, where the bronze altar stood. Jeremiah calls it "the upper court" (Jer 36:10). The rows of stone and cedar may have helped the walls stand up to earthquakes.

6:38 *he built it in seven years* Seven and a half, counted the way the Bible usually counts. The plans came from God through David (1 Chr 28:11-12, 19), and Solomon finished the work. God has given each of us good works to walk in (Eph 2:10). Will we finish the work He has given us?

plans. And he built it ***in*** seven years.

1 KINGS 7

Solomon's Palace

1 And his house Solomon (Shelomo) built ***in*** thirteen years, and he completed all his house. **2** And he built the House of the Forest of Lebanon (Levanon): its length ***was*** approximately 150 feet (a hundred cubits), and its breadth approximately 75 feet (fifty cubits), and its height approximately 45 feet (thirty cubits), on four rows of pillars of cedars, and beams of cedars ***were*** on the pillars. **3** And ***it was*** paneled with cedar from above, over the side chambers which ***were*** on the pillars, forty-five, fifteen ***to*** the row. **4** And ***there were*** window frames, three rows, and window ***was*** toward window, three times. **5** And all the openings and the doorposts ***were*** squared ***in*** frame, and ***the*** front of window ***was*** toward window, three times. **6** And the porch of the pillars he made: its length ***was*** approximately 75 feet (fifty cubits), and its breadth approximately 45 feet (thirty cubits); and a porch ***was*** in front of them, and pillars and a threshold ***were*** in front of them. **7** And the porch of the throne where he would judge, the porch of the judgment, he made; and ***it was*** paneled with cedar from the floor to the floor. **8** And his house where he would dwell, the other court, ***was*** inward from the porch; it was like this work. And he made a house for the daughter of Pharaoh, whom Solomon had taken, like this porch. **9** All these ***were*** costly stones, according to the measurements of hewn stone, sawn with the saw, from inside and from outside, and from the foundation to the copings, and from outside to the great court. **10** And ***it was*** founded ***with*** costly stones, large stones, stones of approximately 15 feet (ten cubits) and stones of approximately 12 feet (eight cubits). **11** And above ***were*** costly stones, according to the measurements of hewn stone, and cedar. **12** And the great court all around ***had*** three rows of hewn stone and a row of beams of cedars, and ***so*** for the inner court of the house of the LORD and for the porch of the house.

Hiram the Bronze Worker

13 And King Solomon sent and took Hiram (Chiram) from Tyre (Tsor). **14** He ***was*** the son of a widow woman from the tribe of Naphtali (Naftali), and his father ***was*** a Tyrian man, a worker in bronze; and he was filled ***with*** the wisdom and the understanding and the knowledge to do any work in bronze. And he came to King Solomon, and he did all his work. **15** And he fashioned the two pillars ***of*** bronze: the height of the one pillar ***was*** approximately 27 feet (eighteen cubits), and a line of approximately 18 feet (twelve cubits) would go around the second pillar. **16** And two capitals he made to put on the tops of the pillars, a casting of bronze: the height of the one capital ***was*** approximately 7.5 feet (five cubits), and the height of the second capital ***was*** approximately 7.5 feet (five cubits). **17** Networks, a work of network, festoons, a work of chains, ***were*** for the capitals which ***were*** on the top of the pillars: seven for the one capital, and seven for the second capital. **18** And he made the pillars, and two rows all around on the one network, to cover the capitals which ***were*** on the top of the pomegranates; and thus he did for the second capital. **19** And the capitals which ***were*** on the top of the pillars ***were*** lily work in the porch, approximately 6 feet (four cubits). **20** And the capitals ***were*** on the two pillars also above, close beside the bulge which ***was*** beside the network; and the pomegranates ***were*** two hundred, in rows all around on the second capital. **21** And he set up the pillars at the porch of the temple; and he set up the right pillar and called its name Jachin (Yakhin), and he set up the left pillar and called its name Boaz. **22** And on the top of the pillars ***was*** lily work. And the work of the pillars was complete.

7:1 1 Kgs 9:10; 2 Chr 8:1; Eccl 2:4,5
7:2 1 Kgs 10:17; 2 Chr 9:16; 1 Kgs 9:19
7:3 1 Kgs 6:5
7:4 1 Kgs 6:4; Isa 54:12; Ezek 40:16,22,25,29,33,36
7:7 Ps 122:5; Prov 20:8; 1 Kgs 6:3
7:8 1 Kgs 3:1; 2 Chr 8:11; 1 Kgs 9:24
7:9 1 Kgs 5:17
7:10 Isa 28:16; Isa 54:11; 1 Cor 3:10,11
7:11 Eph 2:20-22; 1 Pet 2:5
7:12 1 Kgs 6:36; John 10:23; Acts 3:11
7:13 Acts 7:47; 2 Chr 4:11; 1 Kgs 7:40
7:14 Acts 7:47; 2 Chr 2:14; 2 Chr 4:16
7:15 John 6:13; Jer 52:21-13; 1 Kgs 7:21
7:16 John 6:13; Exod 36:38; Exod 38:17,19,28
7:17 Exod 28:14,22,24,25; Exod 39:15-18; 2 Kgs 25:17
7:18 Exod 28:14,22,24,25; Exod 39:15-18; 2 Kgs 25:17
7:19 1 Kgs 7:22; 1 Kgs 6:18,32-35
7:20 2 Chr 3:16; 2 Chr 4:13; 2 Kgs 25:17
7:21 2 Chr 3:17; 1 Kgs 6:3; Gal 2:9

7:1 *his house Solomon built in thirteen years* The temple took seven (6:38). Some see a sign that Solomon's heart was already more on his own glory. Others note that the palace was a much larger group of buildings, that David had gathered the temple materials ahead of time (1 Chr 22:2-5), and that Solomon built the temple first. I think both observations are fair, and the writer may place these verses here to let us compare.

7:2 *the House of the Forest of Lebanon* A huge hall, larger than the temple, named for its rows of cedar pillars that looked like a forest. Solomon later stored gold shields there (10:17), so it may have served as an armory as well as a great hall.

7:7 *the porch of the throne where he would judge, the porch of the judgment* Where Solomon sat to hear cases like the one in chapter 3.

7:9 *All these were costly stones* Some stones were about 15 feet long, sawn and finished on every side. There is nothing wrong with a king having a palace, but the Law warned the king not to multiply silver and gold for himself (Deut 17:17). It is worth asking whether we spend more care on our own houses than on God's work.

7:14 *the son of a widow woman from the tribe of Naphtali* This Hiram was a craftsman, not King Hiram. Second Chronicles 2:13-14 calls him Huram-abi and says his mother was from Dan. She may have been born in one tribe and married into the other.

7:14 *he was filled with the wisdom and the understanding and the knowledge* The same words describe Bezalel, who made the tabernacle (Exod 31:3). God gives skill as surely as He gives spiritual gifts. A craftsman or artist who uses that skill for God is serving Him.

7:15 *the two pillars of bronze* Each about 27 feet tall and six feet thick, with capitals about 7.5 feet high decorated with networks, lilies and pomegranates. They did not hold up the roof. They stood free before the porch as a witness.

7:21 *called its name Jachin* Jachin means He will establish. Boaz likely means in Him is strength. Every worshiper passed between two pillars that said God will establish it, and in Him is strength. Jesus promises the one who overcomes, "I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God" (Rev 3:12).

The Sea and the Stands

23 And he made the sea, cast, approximately 15 feet (ten cubits) from its brim to its brim, round all around, and its height approximately 7.5 feet (five cubits), and a line of approximately 45 feet (thirty cubits) would go around it all around. **24** And gourds ***were*** under its brim all around, surrounding it, ten in approximately 18 inches (a cubit), encircling the sea all around; the gourds ***were*** two rows, cast in its casting. **25** It ***was*** standing on twelve oxen: three turning northward, and three turning westward, and three turning southward, and three turning eastward; and the sea ***was*** on them above, and all their hindquarters ***were*** inward. **26** And its thickness ***was*** approximately 3 inches (a handbreadth), and its brim ***was*** like the work of the brim of a cup, a blossom of lily; it would hold approximately 12,000 gallons (two thousand baths). **27** And he made the stands, ten, ***of*** bronze: the length of the one stand ***was*** approximately 6 feet (four cubits), and its breadth approximately 6 feet (four cubits), and its height approximately 4.5 feet (three cubits). **28** And this ***was*** the work of the stand: they ***had*** rims, and rims ***were*** between the crossbars. **29** And on the rims which ***were*** between the crossbars ***were*** lions, oxen, and cherubim; and on the crossbars ***there was*** a base above; and under the lions and the oxen ***were*** garlands, hanging work. **30** And four wheels of bronze ***belonged*** to the one stand, and axles of bronze; and its four feet ***had*** supports; under the laver ***were*** the supports, cast, ***with*** garlands at the side of each. **31** And its opening inside the capital and upward ***was*** approximately 18 inches (a cubit); and its opening ***was*** round, ***the*** work of a base, approximately 27 inches (a cubit and the half of a cubit); and also on its opening ***were*** carvings; and their rims ***were*** squared, not round. **32** And the four wheels ***were*** under the rims, and the hands of the wheels ***were*** on the stand; and the height of the one wheel ***was*** approximately 27 inches (a cubit and the half of a cubit). **33** And the work of the wheels ***was*** like the work of a chariot wheel: their hands and their rims and their spokes and their hubs, everything ***was*** cast. **34** And ***there were*** four supports at the four corners of the one stand; its supports ***were*** from the stand. **35** And at the top of the stand ***was*** approximately 9 inches (the half of the cubit) ***in*** height, round all around; and on the top of the stand its hands and its rims ***were*** from it. **36** And he engraved on the plates of its hands and on its rims cherubim, lions, and palm trees, according to the clear space of each, and garlands all around. **37** Like this he made the ten stands: one casting, one measurement, one shape for all of them. **38** And he made ten lavers of bronze; the one laver would hold approximately 240 gallons (forty baths); the one laver ***was*** approximately 6 feet (four cubits); one laver ***was*** on the one stand, for the ten stands. **39** And he put the stands, five on the side of the house on the right and five on the side of the house on its left; and the sea he put on the right side of the house, eastward, opposite ***the*** south.

The Temple Furnishings

40 And Hiram made the lavers and the shovels and the bowls. And Hiram finished doing all the work which he did for King Solomon ***for*** the house of the LORD: **41** pillars, two; and the bowls of the capitals which ***were*** on the top of the pillars, two; and the networks, two, to cover the two bowls of the capitals which ***were*** on the top of the pillars; **42** and the pomegranates, four hundred, for the two networks, two rows of pomegranates for the one network, to cover the two bowls of the capitals which ***were*** on the face of the pillars; **43** and the stands, ten, and the lavers, ten, on the stands; **44** and the one sea, and the twelve oxen under the sea; **45** and the pots and the shovels and the bowls, and all these utensils which Hiram made for King Solomon ***for*** the house of the LORD, ***were of*** polished bronze. **46** In the plain of the Jordan (Yarden) the king cast them, in the clay mold of the ground, between Succoth (Sukot) and Zarethan (Tsartan). **47** And Solomon left all the utensils ***unweighed***, because of ***their*** very, very ***great*** abundance; the weight of the bronze was not searched out. **48** And Solomon made all the utensils which ***were in*** the house of the LORD: the altar of the gold, and the

7:23 2 Kgs 25:13; 2 Chr 4:2; Jer 52:17,20
7:24 1 Kgs 6:18; 2 Chr 4:3; Exod 25:31-36
7:25 Jer 52:20; 2 Chr 4:4,5; Ezek 1:10
7:26 2 Chr 4:5; Jer 52:21; 1 Kgs 7:19
7:27 2 Chr 4:14; 2 Kgs 25:13,16; Jer 52:17,20
7:29 1 Kgs 7:25; 1 Kgs 6:27; Ezek 1:10
7:30 Ezek 1:15-21; Ezek 3:13; Ezek 10:10-13
7:33 Ezek 1:16,18
7:36 1 Kgs 7:29; 1 Kgs 6:29,32,35; Ezek 40:31,37
7:38 Exod 30:17-21,28; Exod 38:8; Exod 40:11,12
7:39 2 Chr 4:6,10
7:40 Acts 7:47; 1 Kgs 7:28; 2 Kgs 25:14,15
7:41 1 Kgs 7:15-22; 2 Chr 4:12; 1 Kgs 7:17,18
7:45 Acts 7:47; Exod 27:3; Exod 38:3
7:46 Josh 3:16; Gen 33:17; 2 Chr 4:17
7:47 Acts 7:47; 1 Chr 22:14,16; 2 Chr 4:18
7:48 Acts 7:47; Exod 37:10-16; 2 Chr 4:8

7:23 *he made the sea, cast* A huge round bronze basin about 15 feet across, for the priests to wash in (2 Chr 4:6). Those who served at God's altar had to be washed (Exod 30:18-21). Why is it ten across and thirty around? Likely the width was measured outside the rim and the circumference below the flared lip. These are builders' round numbers, not a math lesson.

7:25 *It was standing on twelve oxen* Three facing each way, perhaps for the twelve tribes camped around the tabernacle (Num 2). The water that made the priests clean is a picture of Christ, who cleanses His church "by the washing of water by the word" (Eph 5:26).

7:26 *it would hold approximately 12,000 gallons* Two thousand baths. Second Chronicles 4:5 says three thousand. It may have usually held two thousand and could hold three thousand filled to the brim, or a copyist changed a number.

7:27 *he made the stands, ten, of bronze* Rolling carts for water, each carrying a basin of about 240 gallons (7:38), used to rinse the parts of the burnt offerings (2 Chr 4:6). Every part of worship mattered to God, even the plumbing. "Let all things be done properly and in order" (1 Cor 14:40).

7:40 *the lavers and the shovels and the bowls* Tools to carry away ashes and catch the blood of sacrifices. The list that follows sums up all Hiram's bronze work.

7:46 *in the clay mold of the ground, between Succoth and Zarethan* The clay soil of the Jordan Valley was good for molds. Hiram dug them in the ground and poured the molten bronze in.

7:47 *the weight of the bronze was not searched out* David had taken a great amount of bronze in war, and Solomon used it for the sea, pillars and utensils (1 Chr 18:8). The spoils of David's battles became the tools of Solomon's worship.

7:48 *the table on which was the bread of the presence* Twelve loaves set before God each Sabbath, one for each tribe (Lev 24:5-9). "The altar of the gold" is the incense altar. These were "a copy and shadow of the heavenly things" (Heb 8:5). The incense is a picture of prayer (Ps 141:2), and Jesus lives forever to pray for us (Heb 7:25). The bread is a picture of Him who is "the bread of life" (John 6:35).

table on which ***was*** the bread of the presence, ***of*** gold; **49** and the lampstands, five on the right and five on the left, before the inner room, ***of*** pure gold; and the blossom and the lamps and the tongs, ***of*** gold; **50** and the basins and the snuffers and the bowls and the pans and the fire pans, ***of*** pure gold; and the sockets for the doors of the inner house, for the holy of holies, ***and*** for the doors of the house, for the temple, ***of*** gold. **51** And all the work which King Solomon did ***for*** the house of the LORD was complete. And Solomon brought in the holy things of David his father: the silver and the gold and the utensils he put in the treasuries of the house of the LORD.

1 KINGS 8

The Ark Brought into the Temple

1 Then Solomon (Shelomo) assembled the elders of Israel (Yisra'el) and all the heads of the tribes, the leaders of the fathers of the sons of Israel, to King Solomon ***in*** Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD from the city of David; it ***is*** Zion (Tsiyon). **2** And every man of Israel assembled to King Solomon in the month of Ethanim (Etanim) at the feast; it ***is*** the seventh month. **3** And all the elders of Israel came, and the priests lifted up the ark. **4** And they brought up the ark of the LORD and the tent of meeting and all the utensils of holiness which ***were*** in the tent; and the priests and the Levites brought them up. **5** And King Solomon and all the congregation of Israel who were gathered to him ***were*** with him before the ark, sacrificing sheep and cattle which could not be counted and could not be numbered for multitude. **6** And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the LORD to its place, to the inner room of the house, to the holy of holies, to under the wings of the cherubim. **7** For the cherubim ***were*** spreading out wings toward the place of the ark, and the cherubim covered over the ark and over its poles from above. **8** And the poles were long, and the heads of the poles were seen from the holy place on the front of the inner room, and they were not seen outside; and they have been there to this day. **9** There was nothing in the ark except the two tablets of the stones which Moses (Moshe) placed there at Horeb (Chorev), where the LORD made ***a covenant*** with the sons of Israel when they came out from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim). **10** And it was, when the priests came out from the holy place, and the cloud filled the house of the LORD, **11** and the priests were not able to stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD.

Solomon Blesses the Assembly

12 Then Solomon said, "The LORD has said ***that He would*** dwell in thick darkness. **13** I have surely built a house of loftiness for You, an established place for You to dwell ***in*** forever." **14** And the king turned his face around and blessed all the assembly of Israel, and all the assembly of Israel ***was*** standing. **15** And he said, "Blessed ***be*** the LORD, the God of Israel, who spoke with His mouth with David my father, and with His hand has fulfilled ***it***, saying, **16** 'Since the day that I brought out My people Israel from Egypt, I did not choose a city from all the tribes of Israel to build a house for My name to be there; and I chose David to be over My people Israel.' **17** And it was with the heart of David my father to build a

7:49 Matt 5:15; 2 Chr 4:7; Exod 25:31-40
7:50 Exod 25:29; Num 7:86; Lev 16:12
7:51 Acts 7:47; 2 Chr 5:1; Exod 40:33
8:1 1 Pet 2:6; 2 Chr 5:2-10; 2 Sam 6:12-17
8:2 Lev 23:34; 2 Chr 7:8-10; Num 29:12-40
8:3 Deut 31:9; Josh 3:6,14,15; Num 4:15
8:4 1 Kgs 3:4; 2 Chr 1:3; Exod 40:2-33
8:5 2 Sam 6:13; 1 Kgs 8:62,63; 1 Chr 16:1
8:6 Heb 9:3; 2 Sam 6:17; 1 Kgs 6:19
8:8 Exod 37:4,5; Exod 40:20; 2 Chr 5:9
8:9 Heb 9:4; Exod 25:21; Exod 40:20
8:11 Acts 7:55; 2 Cor 3:18; Luke 2:9
8:12 Ps 97:2; Lev 16:2; 2 Chr 6:1,2-11
8:13 Heb 8:7; Heb 8:8; Heb 8:10
8:14 2 Sam 6:18; 1 Kgs 8:55,56; Josh 22:6
8:15 Luke 1:68; Luke 1:70; Eph 1:3
8:16 1 Sam 16:1; Deut 12:11; 1 Chr 17:5,6
8:17 2 Sam 7:2,3; 1 Chr 17:1,2-15; 1 Chr 22:7

7:49 *the lampstands, five on the right and five on the left* The tabernacle had one lampstand, and the temple ten. Jesus said, "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12).
7:51 *Solomon brought in the holy things of David his father* David gathered. Solomon built. God used both. The work God gives one generation often prepares for the work of the next.
8:1 *to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD from the city of David* The city of David was the older, lower part of Jerusalem, and the temple stood on higher ground to the north. The ark went up only a short distance, but it was a great step.
8:2 *in the month of Ethanim at the feast; it is the seventh month* In the fall, about September and October. The feast was the Feast of Booths, or Tabernacles, when Israel lived in shelters for a week to remember God's care in the wilderness (Lev 23:33-43). The temple was finished in the eighth month (6:38), so most understand that Solomon waited about eleven months for the great fall feast, when all Israel would come.
8:3 *the priests lifted up the ark* This time they did it right. David had once moved the ark on a cart, and Uzzah died (2 Sam 6:6-7). The Law said it must be carried on poles by the Levites (Num 4:15; 1 Chr 15:13-15).
8:4 *the tent of meeting* The tabernacle Moses made, which had stood at Gibeon. Its time was over, and its holy things were stored in the temple.
8:5 *sacrificing sheep and cattle which could not be counted* David once offered a sacrifice every six steps when he brought the ark up (2 Sam 6:13). The people's joy and worship overflowed.
8:8 *they have been there to this day* This shows the writer was using a record written while the temple still stood.
8:9 *There was nothing in the ark except the two tablets of the stones* Horeb is another name for Mount Sinai. Hebrews 9:4 says the ark once held the jar of manna and Aaron's rod (Exod 16:33-34; Num 17:10). By Solomon's day, after the ark had been captured and moved many times, only the tablets were left. Both statements are true for their own time. At the center of Israel's worship was God's Word, with His throne resting over His law.
8:10 *the cloud filled the house of the LORD* The same cloud of glory that led Israel out of Egypt and filled the tabernacle (Exod 40:34-35). Later Jewish teachers called it the shekinah, from a word meaning to dwell. It was the visible sign of God's presence.
8:11 *the priests were not able to stand to minister because of the cloud* When God shows up in His glory, human work stops. Second Chronicles 7:1-3 adds that fire fell from heaven. Centuries later Ezekiel saw the glory leave the temple because of Judah's sin (Ezek 10:18-19; 11:23). Then it came in a way no one expected: "we beheld His glory" (John 1:14). Ezekiel also saw the glory return to a future temple (Ezek 43:1-5), which I believe points to Christ's reign on earth in the coming kingdom.
8:12 *He would dwell in thick darkness* At Sinai Moses went near "the thick darkness where God was" (Exod 20:21), and God promised to appear in the cloud over the mercy seat (Lev 16:2). The windowless inner room was dark, and now the dark cloud filled it. The God who lives in unapproachable light chose to live in a dark room in Jerusalem, among sinful people.
8:15 *who spoke with His mouth with David my father, and with His hand has fulfilled it* That is the theme of Solomon's whole speech. What God says, He does.
8:16 *I chose David to be over My people Israel* For centuries God had not chosen a city for His house, but He chose a man to lead His people (2 Sam 7:6-8). God chose a man first, and then a place.

house for the name of the LORD, the God of Israel. **18** And the LORD said to David my father, 'Because it was with your heart to build a house for My name, you did well that it was with your heart. **19** Only you shall not build the house, but your son who comes out from your loins, he shall build the house for My name.' **20** And the LORD has established His word which He spoke; and I have risen in place of David my father, and I sit on the throne of Israel, just as the LORD spoke, and I have built the house for the name of the LORD, the God of Israel. **21** And I have set there a place for the ark, where the covenant of the LORD ***is***, which He made with our fathers when He brought them out from the land of Egypt."

Solomon's Prayer of Dedication

22 And Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in front of all the assembly of Israel, and he spread out his palms ***toward*** the heavens. **23** And he said, "O LORD, God of Israel, there is no God like You in the heavens above and on the earth beneath, keeping the covenant and the steadfast love for Your servants who walk before You with all their heart; **24** who have kept for Your servant David my father what You spoke to him; and You spoke with Your mouth, and with Your hand You have fulfilled ***it***, as ***it is*** this day. **25** And now, O LORD, God of Israel, keep for Your servant David my father what You spoke to him, saying, 'A man shall not be cut off for you from before Me, sitting on the throne of Israel, if only your sons guard their way, to walk before Me just as you have walked before Me.' **26** And now, O God of Israel, let Your word be confirmed, please, which You spoke to Your servant David my father. **27** For will God really dwell on the earth? Look, the heavens and the heavens of the heavens cannot contain You; how much less this house which I have built! **28** And turn to the prayer of Your servant and to his supplication, O LORD my God, to listen to the cry and to the prayer which Your servant is praying before You today, **29** that Your eyes may be open toward this house night and day, toward the place of which You have said, 'My name shall be there,' to listen to the prayer which Your servant prays toward this place. **30** And listen to the supplication of Your servant and of Your people Israel, which they pray toward this place; and You, may You listen at the place of Your dwelling, at the heavens; and hear, and forgive.

Prayers toward This House

31 When a man sins against his neighbor, and he lays an oath on him to make him swear, and he comes ***and*** swears before Your altar in this house, **32** then may You hear ***in*** the heavens, and act, and judge Your servants, to condemn the wicked, to bring his way on his head, and to justify the righteous, to give to him according to his righteousness. **33** When Your people Israel are struck down before an enemy because they sin against You, and they turn back to You and praise Your name, and pray and make supplication to You in this house, **34** then may You hear ***in*** the heavens, and forgive the sin of Your people Israel, and bring them back to the ground which You gave to their fathers. **35** When the heavens are shut up and there is no rain, because they sin against You, and they pray toward this place and praise Your name and turn back from their sin, because You afflict them, **36** then may You hear ***in*** the heavens, and forgive the sin of Your servants and of Your people Israel, for You will teach them the good way in which they shall walk; and give rain on Your land which You have given to Your people for an inheritance. **37** Famine, if it is in the land, pestilence, if it is, blight, mildew, locust, grasshopper, if it is, if its enemy besieges it in

8:18 2 Chr 6:7-9; 2 Cor 8:12
8:19 2 Sam 7:5,12,13; 1 Chr 22:8-10; 1 Kgs 5:3-5
8:20 1 Chr 28:5,6; 1 Kgs 8:15; Neh 9:8
8:21 Heb 9:4; 1 Kgs 8:9; Deut 31:26
8:22 Ezra 9:5; 1 Kgs 8:54; Exod 9:29,33
8:23 Luke 1:72; 2 Sam 7:22; Deut 7:9
8:24 1 Kgs 8:15; 2 Sam 7:12,16; 2 Chr 6:14,15
8:25 Luke 1:69; Luke 1:70; 1 Kgs 2:4
8:26 1 Kgs 8:23; Exod 24:10; 1 Sam 1:17
8:27 Acts 7:48; Acts 7:49; Isa 66:1
8:28 2 Chr 6:19; Ps 141:2; Dan 9:17-19
8:29 Neh 1:6; Deut 12:11; 2 Chr 6:20,40
8:30 1 Kgs 8:34,36,39,43,49; Eccl 5:2; Ps 130:3,4
8:31 Exod 22:8-11; 2 Chr 6:22,23; Lev 5:1
8:32 Deut 25:1; Exod 34:7; Num 5:27
8:33 Lev 26:17,25; Deut 28:25,48; Lev 26:39-42
8:34 1 Kgs 8:30; Ezra 1:1-6; Ps 106:47
8:35 Luke 4:25; Rev 11:6; Rom 15:9
8:36 Ps 27:11; 1 Sam 12:23; Jer 6:16
8:37 Lev 26:16,25,26-46; Deut 28:21,22,25,38-42,52-61; 2 Chr 20:9

8:18 *you did well that it was with your heart* A great comfort. Sometimes God says no to something good we want to do for Him. It does not mean the desire was wrong. God sees the heart, and David gathered the materials and drew the plans for his son to finish.
8:22 *he spread out his palms toward the heavens* Second Chronicles 6:13 says he stood on a bronze platform and then knelt, and verse 54 says he was "kneeling on his knees." The king of Israel humbled himself before the King of kings in front of the whole nation.
8:23 *there is no God like You in the heavens above and on the earth beneath* Real prayer begins not with our needs but with who God is. He keeps covenant and hesed, His loyal covenant love, and the finished temple was the proof (8:24).
8:26 *let Your word be confirmed, please* Solomon prayed God's promise back to Him. When we pray what God has already said, we pray with confidence. The kings of David's line failed, and the throne was empty for centuries after 586 B.C., but God's word was kept in Jesus, whose kingdom "will be no end" (Luke 1:33).
8:27 *For will God really dwell on the earth* The key verse of the chapter. The most beautiful building in the world cannot hold Him, nor can the highest heaven. God is present everywhere at once (Ps 139:7-10; Jer 23:24), and He "does not dwell in temples made with hands" (Acts 17:24). The temple was not a box for God but a meeting place, a sign that the great God had come near in grace. Solomon's question has a final answer: yes. God the Son took on flesh and lived among us (John 1:14), and "in Him dwells all the fullness of the Deity bodily" (Col 2:9). We cannot put God in a box, and yet He wants to be near us.
8:30 *may You listen at the place of Your dwelling, at the heavens; and hear, and forgive* The people pray toward the temple, but God hears from heaven. The first thing Solomon asked was forgiveness, for that was the people's deepest need. Daniel in exile prayed toward Jerusalem (Dan 6:10). We pray through a Person, our High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary (Heb 4:14-16).
8:31 *When a man sins against his neighbor* The first of seven cases. When there was no proof, a man swore an oath at the altar (compare Exod 22:10-11). When human courts cannot know the truth, God does. Only He sees every heart.
8:33 *When Your people Israel are struck down before an enemy because they sin against You* The Law warned of this (Lev 26:17; Deut 28:25). Sin, defeat, turning back, prayer, forgiveness and restoration: that is the pattern of repentance all through the Bible. God's discipline is meant to bring His people home.
8:35 *When the heavens are shut up and there is no rain* Another warning of the Law (Deut 11:16-17). It will happen under Ahab, and Elijah will pray for rain (17:1; 18:41-45; James 5:17-18).
8:36 *You will teach them the good way in which they shall walk* Solomon asked God not only to forgive and send rain, but to teach. Real repentance is not just being sorry. It is learning to walk God's way.

the land of its gates, any plague, any sickness, **38** any prayer, any supplication which there is from any man, from all Your people Israel, who know each the plague of his own heart, and he spreads out his palms toward this house, **39** then may You hear ***in*** the heavens, the established place of Your dwelling, and forgive and act, and give to the man according to all his ways, whose heart You know (for You, You alone, know the heart of all the sons of mankind), **40** so that they may fear You all the days that they live on the face of the ground which You gave to our fathers. **41** And also to the foreigner who ***is*** not of Your people Israel, and he comes from a distant land for the sake of Your name **42** (for they shall hear ***of*** Your great name and Your mighty hand and Your outstretched arm), and he comes and prays toward this house, **43** may You hear ***in*** the heavens, the established place of Your dwelling, and do according to all that the foreigner calls to You ***for***, so that all the peoples of the earth may know Your name, to fear You like Your people Israel, and to know that Your name has been called on this house which I have built. **44** When Your people go out to battle against its enemy, by the way that You send them, and they pray to the LORD ***in*** the direction of the city which You have chosen and the house which I have built for Your name, **45** then hear ***in*** the heavens their prayer and their supplication, and do justice for them. **46** When they sin against You (for there is no man who does not sin), and You are angry with them and give them up before an enemy, and their captors carry them captive to the land of the enemy, distant or near, **47** and they bring ***it*** back to their heart in the land where they have been carried captive, and they turn and make supplication to You in the land of their captors, saying, 'We have sinned, and we have done perversely; we have acted wickedly,' **48** and they return to You with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their enemies who carried them captive, and they pray to You ***in*** the direction of their land which You gave to their fathers, the city which You have chosen, and the house which I have built for Your name, **49** then hear ***in*** the heavens, the established place of Your dwelling, their prayer and their supplication, and do justice for them; **50** and forgive Your people who have sinned against You, and all their transgressions which they have transgressed against You; and give them compassion before their captors, and they will have compassion on them **51** (for they ***are*** Your people and Your inheritance, whom You brought out from Egypt, from the midst of the furnace of iron), **52** that Your eyes may be open to the supplication of Your servant and to the supplication of Your people Israel, to listen to them in all their calling to You. **53** For You, You have separated them to Yourself for an inheritance from all the peoples of the earth, just as You spoke by the hand of Moses Your servant when You brought our fathers out from Egypt, O Lord GOD."

Solomon Blesses the People

54 And it was, when Solomon had finished praying to the LORD all this prayer and supplication, he rose from before the altar of the LORD, from kneeling on his knees, and his palms ***were*** spread out ***toward*** the heavens. **55** And he stood and blessed all the assembly of Israel ***with*** a great voice, saying, **56** "Blessed ***be*** the LORD, who has given rest to His people Israel according to all that He has spoken; not one word has fallen from all His good word which He spoke by the hand of Moses His servant. **57** May the LORD our God be with us just as He was with our fathers; may He not forsake us, and may He not abandon us, **58** to incline our heart to Him, to walk in all His ways and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments which He commanded our fathers. **59** And may these words of mine, with which I have made supplication before the LORD, be near to the LORD our God by day and night, to do justice for His servant and justice for His people Israel, the matter of a day in its

8:38 2 Chr 20:5-13; Ps 50:15; Ps 91:15
8:39 Rev 2:23; Rev 22:12; 1 Chr 28:9
8:40 Ps 130:4; Gen 22:12; Exod 20:20
8:41 1 Kgs 10:1,2; Ruth 1:16; Ruth 2:11
8:42 Mark 11:17; Rom 10:14; Deut 3:24
8:43 Mark 11:17; Luke 11:2; Rom 10:14
8:44 Mark 11:17; Deut 20:1-4; Deut 31:3-6
8:45 Mark 11:17; Gen 18:25; Ps 9:4
8:46 Eccl 7:20; Prov 20:9; 1 John 1:8-10
8:47 Ps 106:6; Ezra 9:6,7; Lev 26:40-45
8:48 Mark 11:17; Dan 6:10; Deut 4:29
8:49 1 Kgs 8:45; 2 Kgs 19:19; Zech 1:15,16
8:50 Ps 106:46; 2 Chr 30:9; Acts 7:10
8:51 Deut 4:20; Jer 11:4; Neh 1:10
8:52 1 Kgs 8:29; 2 Chr 6:40; Ps 86:5
8:53 1 Pet 2:9; 2 Cor 6:16; Exod 19:5,6
8:54 Luke 22:45; Luke 11:1; Ps 95:6
8:55 1 Kgs 8:14; 2 Sam 6:18; Num 6:23-26
8:56 Heb 4:4; Heb 4:7; Josh 23:14,15
8:57 Deut 31:6,8; Josh 1:5,9; Heb 13:5
8:58 Heb 13:21; Ps 119:36; Jer 31:33
8:59 Ps 102:1,2; Ps 141:2; John 17:9,20-24

8:38 *who know each the plague of his own heart* A striking phrase. The real plague is not outside us. It is the sin in our own hearts.
8:39 *for You, You alone, know the heart of all the sons of mankind* God answers knowing exactly who is praying and why. The goal was that they would fear Him all their days (8:40). Answered prayer is meant to lead us to reverence Him more.
8:41 *And also to the foreigner who is not of Your people Israel* One of the most beautiful parts of the prayer. From the start, God planned to bless all nations through Abraham's seed (Gen 12:3). The temple was never a private club. Isaiah called it a house of prayer for all the peoples, and Jesus quoted him (Isa 56:7; Mark 11:17). Through Jesus the door is open wide to every nation (Eph 2:11-13).
8:44 *by the way that You send them* The condition was a battle God sent them to fight. His people were to depend on Him, not on chariots and horses.
8:46 *for there is no man who does not sin* Solomon knew human nature (Rom 3:23). Moses had warned of exile if the nation kept sinning (Lev 26:33; Deut 28:64), and it came: Israel to Assyria in 722 B.C., Judah to Babylon, with Jerusalem falling in 586 B.C.
8:47 *We have sinned, and we have done perversely; we have acted wickedly* Daniel prayed almost these words in Babylon (Dan 9:5), and God moved Cyrus to let the Jews go home in 538 B.C. (Ezra 1:1-4). God heard, just as Solomon asked. No sin is so great that God will not hear the one who truly turns back to Him.
8:51 *from the midst of the furnace of iron* Egypt was like a furnace for smelting iron, hot, hard and cruel, and God brought them out of it.
8:53 *You have separated them to Yourself for an inheritance* Israel's hope rested on God's choice, not their goodness. That choice still stands, for "the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable" (Rom 11:29), and Paul speaks of a day when all Israel will be saved (Rom 11:26).
8:56 *not one word has fallen from all His good word* Joshua said nearly the same near the end of his life (Josh 21:45; 23:14). God had kept every promise.
8:58 *to incline our heart to Him* Solomon knew the people could not keep God's law in their own strength. They needed God to turn their hearts. The new covenant promises exactly this, a new heart and God's Spirit within (Ezek 36:26-27; Jer 31:33).
8:59 *the matter of a day in its day* Each day's needs as they come.

day, **60** so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the LORD, He ***is*** God; there is no other. **61** And let your heart be complete with the LORD our God, to walk in His statutes and to keep His commandments, as ***it is*** this day."

Sacrifices and the Feast

62 And the king and all Israel with him ***were*** sacrificing a sacrifice before the LORD. **63** And Solomon sacrificed the sacrifice of the peace offerings which he sacrificed to the LORD: twenty-two thousand cattle and a hundred and twenty thousand sheep. And the king and all the sons of Israel dedicated the house of the LORD. **64** On that day the king consecrated the middle of the court which ***was*** before the house of the LORD, for there he offered the burnt offering and the grain offering and the fat of the peace offerings; for the altar of bronze which ***was*** before the LORD ***was too*** small to contain the burnt offering and the grain offering and the fat of the peace offerings. **65** And Solomon held the feast at that time, and all Israel with him, a great assembly from Lebo-hamath (Levo-Chamat) to the Wadi of Egypt, before the LORD our God, seven days and seven days, fourteen days. **66** On the eighth day he sent the people away, and they blessed the king and went to their tents, joyful and good of heart over all the goodness which the LORD had done for David His servant and for Israel His people.

1 KINGS 9

The LORD Appears to Solomon Again

1 And it was, when Solomon (Shelomo) had finished building the house of the LORD and the house of the king and all the desire of Solomon which he delighted to do, **2** and the LORD appeared to Solomon a second ***time***, just as He had appeared to him at Gibeon (Givon). **3** And the LORD said to him, "I have heard your prayer and your supplication with which you have made supplication before Me; I have consecrated this house which you have built, to put My name there forever; and My eyes and My heart shall be there all the days. **4** And you, if you walk before Me just as David your father walked, in integrity of heart and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded you, ***and if*** you keep My statutes and My judgments, **5** then I will establish the throne of your kingdom over Israel (Yisra'el) forever, just as I spoke concerning David your father, saying, 'A man shall not be cut off for you from on the throne of Israel.' **6** If you surely turn back, you and your sons, from following Me, and do not keep My commandments, My statutes which I have set before you, and go and serve other gods and bow down to them, **7** then I will cut off Israel from on the face of the ground which I have given to them; and the house which I have consecrated for My name I will cast out from before My face; and Israel shall become a proverb and a taunt among all the peoples. **8** And this house shall be high; everyone who passes by it will be appalled and will hiss, and they will say, 'Why has the LORD done thus to this land and to this house?' **9** And they will say, 'Because they forsook the LORD their God, who brought out their fathers from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim), and they took hold of other gods and bowed down to them and served them; therefore the LORD has brought on them all this calamity.'"

8:60 Deut 4:35,39; Josh 4:24; 1 Kgs 18:39
8:61 1 Kgs 11:4; 2 Kgs 20:3; 1 Kgs 15:3,14
8:62 2 Sam 6:17-19; 2 Chr 7:4-7
8:63 Ezra 6:16,17; Neh 12:27; Lev 3:1-17
8:64 2 Chr 4:1; 2 Chr 7:7
8:65 Num 34:5,8; 1 Kgs 8:2; 2 Chr 7:8,9
8:66 2 Chr 7:10; 1 Kgs 8:1,47; Deut 12:7,12,18
9:1 1 Kgs 6:37,38; 2 Chr 7:11-22; Eccl 2:4
9:2 1 Kgs 3:5; 1 Kgs 11:9; 2 Chr 7:12
9:3 John 11:42; Acts 10:31; 1 John 5:14
9:4 1 Kgs 11:4,6,38; 1 Kgs 15:5; Gen 17:1
9:5 1 Kgs 2:4; 1 Kgs 6:12; 2 Sam 7:12,16
9:6 2 Sam 7:14-16; 1 Chr 28:9; 1 Sam 2:30
9:7 Jer 24:9; Ps 44:14; Deut 4:26
9:8 Jer 22:8,9,28; Deut 29:24-26; 2 Chr 7:21
9:9 Deut 29:25-28; Jer 2:10-13,19; 2 Chr 7:22

8:60 *so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the LORD, He is God; there is no other* Israel's blessing was meant to be a witness to the world.
8:61 *let your heart be complete with the LORD our God* An undivided heart, wholly devoted to God. Sadly, of Solomon it will be said that "his heart was not complete with the LORD his God" (11:4). He preached it well. He did not finish it well. Pray for each other that we will live what we say.
8:63 *twenty-two thousand cattle and a hundred and twenty thousand sheep* Huge numbers, but the feast lasted two weeks, all Israel was there, and peace offerings were mostly eaten by the worshipers, so this was a great national meal. I take the numbers as written. All those sacrifices could not take away sin. They covered it and pointed forward to the one "offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Heb 10:10).
8:64 *the altar of bronze which was before the LORD was too small* So Solomon consecrated the middle of the court and offered there too. A grain offering was flour or baked bread given in thanks. The fat of the peace offerings was burned as God's portion.
8:65 *seven days and seven days, fourteen days* The seven-day dedication, then the seven-day Feast of Booths. Lebo-hamath to the Wadi of Egypt means from the far north to the far south.
8:66 *On the eighth day he sent the people away* This seems to count the day after the second seven, as Chronicles does with its closing assembly (2 Chr 7:8-10). A nation gathered around God's house, His glory in their midst, forgiveness asked and promised, and everyone going home glad. It is a picture of heaven, people from every nation rejoicing before the Lamb (Rev 7:9-10).
9:2 *the LORD appeared to Solomon a second time* About twenty years into his reign (9:10). Few people in Scripture had such a privilege, and it made his later turning away all the worse (11:9).
9:3 *I have consecrated this house which you have built* To consecrate is to set apart as holy. Solomon built the house, but only God could make it holy. Solomon asked that God's eyes be open toward it (8:29), and God answered with more, "My eyes and My heart." Second Chronicles 7:14 records more of this answer: if His people humble themselves, pray, seek His face and turn, He will hear, forgive and heal their land.
9:4 *in integrity of heart and in uprightness* David was far from perfect. He sinned terribly with Bathsheba and Uriah. But when confronted he repented, and he never turned to idols. Integrity of heart means a heart that is whole toward God.
9:5 *I will establish the throne of your kingdom over Israel forever* The covenant with David would never fail (2 Sam 7). But whether Solomon and his sons enjoyed its blessings depended on their walk with God (2:4; 8:25).
9:7 *Israel shall become a proverb and a taunt among all the peoples* Moses warned of this (Deut 28:37). The temple would not protect a people who served other gods. It came true: Solomon turned to idols (11:4-8), the north fell to Assyria in 722 B.C., and in 586 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar's army burned the temple (2 Kgs 25:9).
9:9 *Because they forsook the LORD their God* Almost the words of Moses (Deut 29:24-26). God is not fooled by beautiful buildings. He wants hearts. Jesus wept over Jerusalem and foretold the fall of the temple of His day (Luke 19:41-44), which came in A.D. 70. But judgment was never God's last word. The same prophets promised a return and a restored people (Jer 29:10-14; Ezek 37:21-28; Rom 11:26-27).

Solomon's Other Works

10 And it was at the end of twenty years, in which Solomon had built the two houses, the house of the LORD and the house of the king, **11** Hiram (Chiram) the king of Tyre (Tsor) had supported Solomon with timbers of cedars and with timbers of cypresses and with gold, according to all his desire; then King Solomon gave to Hiram twenty cities in the land of the Galilee (Galil). **12** And Hiram came out from Tyre to see the cities which Solomon had given to him, and they were not right in his eyes. **13** And he said, "What ***are*** these cities which you have given to me, my brother?" And he called them the land of Cabul (Kavul) to this day. **14** And Hiram had sent to the king approximately 9,000 pounds (a hundred and twenty talents) of gold. **15** And this ***is*** the account of the forced labor which King Solomon raised to build the house of the LORD and his own house and the Millo and the wall of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), and Hazor (Chatsor) and Megiddo (Megido) and Gezer. **16** (Pharaoh the king of Egypt had gone up and captured Gezer and burned it with fire, and he had killed the Canaanites who dwelt in the city, and he had given it ***as*** a dowry to his daughter, the wife of Solomon.) **17** And Solomon built Gezer and Beth-horon (Bet-Choron) the
Lower, **18** and Baalath (Ba'alat) and Tadmor in the wilderness, in the land, **19** and all the cities of storage which Solomon had, and the cities of the chariotry and the cities of the horsemen, and the desire of Solomon which he desired to build in Jerusalem and in the Lebanon (Levanon) and in all the land of his dominion. **20** All the people who remained of the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, who ***were*** not of the sons of Israel, **21** their sons who were left after them in the land, whom the sons of Israel were not able to devote to destruction, Solomon raised them for forced labor, laboring, to this day. **22** And of the sons of Israel Solomon did not make a slave; for they ***were*** the men of war, and his servants, and his commanders, and his officers, and the commanders of his chariotry and of his horsemen. **23** These ***were*** the commanders of the overseers who ***were*** over the work of Solomon, five hundred and fifty, who ruled over the people who were doing the work. **24** Only the daughter of Pharaoh went up from the city of David to her house which he had built for her; then he built the Millo. **25** And Solomon offered up burnt offerings and peace offerings three times in the year on the altar which he had built to the LORD, and burning incense with it, which ***was*** before the LORD. And he completed the house.

Solomon's Fleet

26 And King Solomon made a fleet of ships at Ezion-geber (Etsyon-Gever), which ***is*** beside Eloth (Elot) on the shore of the Red Sea, in the land of Edom. **27** And Hiram sent in the fleet his servants, men of ships who knew the sea, with the servants of Solomon. **28** And they came to Ophir (Ofir) and took from there gold, approximately 31,500 pounds (four hundred and twenty talents), and brought ***it*** to King
Solomon.

9:10 1 Kgs 6:37,38; 1 Kgs 9:1; 2 Chr 8:1-18
9:11 Matt 4:15; 2 Chr 8:2; 1 Kgs 5:6-10
9:12 Num 22:34; Judg 14:3
9:13 Josh 19:27; 1 Kgs 5:1,2; Amos 1:9
9:14 1 Kgs 9:11,28; 1 Kgs 10:10,14,21
9:15 1 Kgs 5:13; 1 Kgs 9:24; 2 Sam 5:9
9:16 1 Kgs 3:1; 1 Kgs 9:24
9:17 Josh 16:3; Josh 21:22; Josh 19:44
9:18 Josh 19:44; 2 Chr 8:4
9:19 1 Kgs 9:1; 1 Kgs 4:26-28; Exod 1:11
9:20 2 Chr 8:7,8-18; Gen 15:19-21; Exod 23:23,28-33
9:21 Judg 1:21,27-35; Josh 15:63; Josh 17:12,16-18
9:22 Lev 25:39; 1 Kgs 4:1-27; 1 Sam 8:11,12
9:23 1 Kgs 5:16; 2 Chr 8:10; 2 Chr 2:18
9:24 1 Kgs 7:8; 2 Sam 5:9; 1 Kgs 11:27
9:25 Exod 23:14-17; Deut 16:16; 2 Chr 8:12,13
9:26 1 Kgs 22:48; Num 33:35; Deut 2:8
9:27 1 Kgs 5:6,9; 1 Kgs 22:49; 2 Chr 20:36,37
9:28 1 Chr 29:4; 2 Chr 8:18; 1 Kgs 10:11

9:11 *twenty cities in the land of the Galilee* Near the border of Tyre, in the inheritance of Asher. The Law said the land belonged to God and was not to be sold for good (Lev 25:23). Scripture does not comment, but it was a strange use of Israel's inheritance. Even the wisest man can make poor deals when his projects grow too big.
9:13 *the land of Cabul* The name sounds like a Hebrew phrase meaning as good as nothing. Hiram felt short-changed. Second Chronicles 8:2 says Solomon rebuilt cities Hiram had given him, so many think Hiram gave them back. Some think the towns were security for Hiram's gold (9:14), about 9,000 pounds.
9:15 *Hazor and Megiddo and Gezer* Hazor guarded the north, Megiddo the main pass through the Carmel ridge, and Gezer the road from the coast to Jerusalem. Archaeologists have found similar large gates at all three, and many date them to Solomon, though that is debated. The Millo was likely a terraced fill or fortification in Jerusalem.
9:16 *as a dowry to his daughter, the wife of Solomon* The city Israel never conquered (Josh 16:10) came to Israel as a wedding gift from Egypt.
9:19 *the cities of the chariotry and the cities of the horsemen* The kingdom was strong, organized and well defended.
9:21 *whom the sons of Israel were not able to devote to destruction* These Canaanites were left because Israel did not finish what God commanded in Joshua's day (Judg 1:27-36), and they were a constant temptation toward idolatry (Judg 2:3). Solomon made them permanent laborers. What we do not deal with fully, we often have to live with for a long time.
9:22 *of the sons of Israel Solomon did not make a slave* The Israelite draft of 5:13-14 was temporary, one month in three. The Canaanites were made laborers for life. Even so, the Israelite draft was heavy enough to be a complaint after Solomon died (12:4).
9:23 *five hundred and fifty* Second Chronicles 8:10 gives 250, perhaps counting only Israelite chiefs. As noted at 5:16, the totals of the two books come out the same.
9:24 *the daughter of Pharaoh went up from the city of David to her house* Solomon said she should not live where the ark had been, because those places were holy (2 Chr 8:11). He knew a wife who did not worship the LORD did not belong near holy things, and he married her anyway, and many after her. It is possible to know what is holy and still make room for what pulls you away from it.
9:25 *three times in the year* The three great feasts: Passover with Unleavened Bread, Weeks and Booths (Deut 16:16; 2 Chr 8:12-13). Solomon was still faithful in public worship. But a completed building is not a completed life. Would he finish well?
9:26 *Ezion-geber, which is beside Eloth on the shore of the Red Sea* At the north end of the Gulf of Aqaba, a door to trade with Arabia, Africa and perhaps India. Israel had never been a seafaring nation, so Hiram sent sailors who knew the sea.
9:28 *they came to Ophir* No one knows for sure where Ophir was: southern Arabia, east Africa or India. Its gold was famous (Job 28:16; Ps 45:9). Second Chronicles 8:18 says 450 talents, a copying difference or a difference in what was counted. Solomon had everything, but wealth is not the measure of a life. Faithfulness is (Mark 8:36).

1 KINGS 10

The Queen of Sheba

1 And the queen of Sheba (Sheva) ***was*** hearing the report of Solomon (Shelomo) concerning the name of the LORD, and she came to test him with riddles. **2** And she came to Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) with a very great retinue, camels carrying spices and very much gold and precious stones; and she came to Solomon and spoke to him all that was with her heart. **3** And Solomon told her all her matters; there was not a matter hidden from the king which he did not tell her. **4** And the queen of Sheba saw all the wisdom of Solomon, and the house which he had built, **5** and the food of his table, and the seating of his servants, and the standing of his ministers, and their clothing, and his cupbearers, and his burnt offering which he would offer up ***at*** the house of the LORD; and there was no more breath in her. **6** And she said to the king, "The word which I heard in my land about your words and about your wisdom was truth. **7** And I did not believe the words until I came and my eyes saw; and look, the half was not told to me; you have added wisdom and good to the report which I heard. **8** How blessed ***are*** your men! How blessed ***are*** these your servants who stand before you continually, who hear your wisdom! **9** May the LORD your God be blessed, who delighted in you to put you on the throne of Israel (Yisra'el); because the LORD loves Israel forever, and He has appointed you king, to do justice and righteousness." **10** And she gave to the king approximately 9,000 pounds (a hundred and twenty talents) of gold, and very many spices and precious stones; there never again came like that spice in abundance, which the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon. **11** And also the fleet of Hiram (Chiram), which carried gold from Ophir (Ofir), brought from Ophir very many almug timbers and precious stones. **12** And the king made the almug timbers ***into*** a support for the house of the LORD and for the house of the king, and lyres and harps for the singers; almug timbers have not come thus, and have not been seen, to this day. **13** And King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all her desire which she asked, besides what he had given her according to the hand of King Solomon. And she turned and went to her land, she and her servants.

Solomon's Wealth

14 And the weight of the gold which came to Solomon in one year was approximately 50,000 pounds (six hundred sixty-six talents) of gold, **15** apart from ***that*** from the men of the merchants, and the merchandise of the traders, and all the kings of Arabia (Arav), and the governors of the land. **16** And King Solomon made two hundred large shields ***of*** beaten gold; approximately 15 pounds (six hundred ***shekels***) of gold he put on the one large shield; **17** and three hundred shields ***of*** beaten gold; approximately 3.75 pounds (three minas) of gold he put on the one shield; and the king put them ***in*** the House of the Forest of Lebanon (Levanon). **18** And the king made a great throne of ivory, and he overlaid it ***with*** refined gold. **19** The throne ***had*** six steps, and the throne ***had*** a round top behind it, and arms ***were*** on this side and on this side at the place of the seat, and two lions ***were*** standing beside the arms. **20** And twelve lions ***were*** standing there on the six steps, on this side and on this side; it was not made

10:1 Matt 12:42; Luke 11:31; Luke 12:27
10:2 Matt 12:42; Luke 11:31; Luke 12:27
10:3 Matt 12:42; Luke 11:31; Luke 12:27
10:4 Matt 12:42; Luke 11:31; Matt 6:29
10:5 Matt 6:29; Matt 12:42; Luke 11:31
10:6 Matt 6:29; Matt 12:42; Luke 11:31
10:7 Matt 6:29; Matt 12:42; Luke 11:31
10:8 Luke 11:31; Matt 12:42; Prov 8:34
10:9 Matt 12:42; Luke 11:31; 1 Kgs 5:7
10:10 Matt 12:42; Luke 11:31; Luke 12:27
10:11 Matt 12:42; Luke 11:31; 1 Kgs 9:27,28
10:12 Rev 14:2; Matt 12:42; Luke 11:31
10:13 Matt 12:42; Luke 11:31; Luke 12:27
10:14 1 Kgs 9:28
10:15 Gal 4:25; 1 Chr 9:24; 2 Chr 9:13,14
10:16 1 Kgs 14:26-28; 2 Chr 12:9,10; 2 Chr 9:15,16
10:17 1 Kgs 7:2
10:18 1 Kgs 10:22; Ps 45:8; Rev 20:11
10:20 Gen 49:9; Num 23:24; Num 24:9

10:1 *the queen of Sheba* Sheba was a kingdom in southwest Arabia, in the area of modern Yemen, rich from the trade in spices and incense, more than a thousand miles from Jerusalem. Some think it also held lands across the Red Sea in Africa.
10:1 *concerning the name of the LORD* She heard not only of Solomon's fame but of his God. This is what Solomon prayed for (8:41-43). "Riddles" means hard questions, the puzzles wise people used to test each other.
10:2 *spoke to him all that was with her heart* She held nothing back, and every question got an answer. Do you bring God everything on your heart? A greater King invites us: "Come to Me, all who labor and are burdened" (Matt 11:28).
10:5 *his burnt offering which he would offer up at the house of the LORD* The Hebrew can also mean his stairway up to the temple.
10:5 *there was no more breath in her* Wisdom showed not only in his answers but in how he ordered his home, treated his workers and worshiped his God. People are watching our lives, not just listening to our words.
10:7 *the half was not told to me* The reality was greater than the report. Every believer who meets Christ face to face will say the same (1 Cor 2:9).
10:8 *How blessed are your men* She envied the servants who heard Solomon every day. How much more blessed are we, who can sit at the feet of Jesus every day in His Word?
10:9 *because the LORD loves Israel forever* A Gentile queen saw that Solomon's wisdom came from God, that God loved Israel, and that a king's purpose was "justice and righteousness." Whether she came to faith, Scripture does not say. But she praised the LORD by name.
10:10 *there never again came like that spice in abundance* Sheba was famous for frankincense and myrrh, gifts later brought to the child Jesus (Matt 2:11). Isaiah 60:6 pictures camels from Sheba bringing gold and frankincense to Jerusalem. I believe that looks forward to Christ's kingdom, when the nations bring their glory to Him (Rev 21:24).
10:11 *very many almug timbers and precious stones* No one is sure what almug wood was. Some think red sandalwood. It went into the temple and the palace and the singers' lyres and harps. Everything coming into Jerusalem was the finest of its kind.
10:13 *all her desire which she asked* She went home with more than she brought. No one ever comes to God and goes away poorer.
10:14 *approximately 50,000 pounds of gold* Six hundred sixty-six talents, about twenty-five tons a year. Revelation 13:18 also has 666, but Scripture does not connect the two, and I would not build anything on it. Moses warned the king not to multiply silver and gold (Deut 17:17), and Solomon was doing exactly that.
10:16 *two hundred large shields of beaten gold* Gold is too soft and heavy for battle. These were for royal parades. Five years after Solomon died, Shishak of Egypt took them all (14:25-28). Glory built on gold fades fast. God told Abraham, "I am a shield to you" (Gen 15:1).
10:18 *a great throne of ivory* The lion was the symbol of Judah (Gen 49:9-10), and the twelve lions may stand for the tribes. Jesus is "the Lion who is of the tribe of Judah" (Rev 5:5), and He will sit on the throne of His glory (Matt 25:31). Solomon's throne was a small picture of His.

thus for any kingdom. **21** And all the drinking vessels of King Solomon ***were*** gold, and all the vessels of the House of the Forest of Lebanon ***were*** pure gold; there was no silver; it was not reckoned in the days of Solomon as anything. **22** For the king ***had*** a fleet of Tarshish on the sea with the fleet of Hiram; once every three years the fleet of Tarshish would come, carrying gold and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks. **23** And King Solomon became greater than all the kings of the earth in riches and in wisdom. **24** And all the earth ***was*** seeking the face of Solomon, to hear his wisdom which God had put in his heart. **25** And they ***were*** bringing, each his gift: vessels of silver and vessels of gold, and garments, and weapons, and spices, horses, and mules, the matter of a year in a year. **26** And Solomon gathered chariotry and horsemen; and he had one thousand four hundred chariots and twelve thousand horsemen; and he stationed them in the cities of the chariotry and with the king in Jerusalem. **27** And the king made the silver in Jerusalem like the stones, and the cedars he made like the sycamores which ***are*** in the Shephelah, for abundance. **28** And the export of the horses which Solomon had ***was*** from Egypt (Mitsrayim) and from Kue; the traders of the king would take ***them*** from Kue at a price. **29** And a chariot came up and came out from Egypt for approximately 15 pounds (six hundred ***shekels***) of silver, and a horse for approximately 3.75 pounds (a hundred and fifty ***shekels***); and thus for all the kings of the Hittites and for the kings of Syria (Aram), by their hand they brought ***them*** out.

1 KINGS 11

Solomon's Wives Turn His Heart

1 And King Solomon (Shelomo) loved many foreign women, and the daughter of Pharaoh: Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, ***and*** Hittite ***women***, **2** from the nations of which the LORD had said to the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), "You shall not go in among them, and they shall not go in among you; surely they will turn aside your heart after their gods." To them Solomon clung in love. **3** And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines; and his wives turned aside his heart. **4** And it was at the time of the old age of Solomon, his wives turned aside his heart after other gods; and his heart was not complete with the LORD his God, like the heart of David his father. **5** And Solomon went after Ashtoreth the god of the Sidonians, and after Milcom the detestable thing of the Ammonites. **6** And Solomon did the evil in the eyes of the LORD, and he did not fully ***follow*** after the LORD like David his father. **7** Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the detestable thing of Moab (Mo'av), on the mountain which ***is*** east of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), and for Molech the detestable thing of the sons of Ammon (Amon). **8** And thus he did for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and sacrificed to their gods.

10:21 1 Kgs 10:17; 2 Chr 9:20-22; 1 Kgs 7:2
10:22 1 Kgs 22:48; Gen 10:4; 2 Chr 20:36,37
10:23 Eph 3:8; 1 Kgs 3:12,13; 1 Kgs 4:29-34
10:24 Matt 12:42; 1 Kgs 3:9,12,28; Prov 2:6
10:25 1 Kgs 10:10; Judg 3:15; 1 Sam 10:27
10:26 2 Chr 9:25; 1 Kgs 4:26; Deut 17:16
10:27 2 Chr 1:15-17; 2 Chr 9:27; Job 22:24,25
10:28 Deut 17:16; 2 Chr 9:28; 2 Chr 1:16,17
10:29 Josh 1:4; 2 Kgs 7:6; Hos 12:10

11:1 Deut 17:17; Neh 13:23-27; 1 Kgs 11:8
11:2 2 Cor 6:16; Exod 34:16; Deut 7:3,4
11:3 2 Sam 5:13-16; Judg 8:30,31; Judg 9:5
11:4 1 Kgs 9:4; 1 Kgs 8:61; 1 Kgs 11:42
11:5 Judg 2:13; 1 Kgs 11:7; 1 Kgs 11:33
11:6 Num 14:24; Josh 14:8,14
11:7 Num 21:29; Judg 11:24; Lev 26:30
11:8 1 Kgs 11:1; Ezek 16:22-29; Hos 4:11,12

10:21 *there was no silver; it was not reckoned in the days of Solomon as anything* It was not worth counting.
10:22 *a fleet of Tarshish* Large ocean-going ships built for long voyages, wherever they sailed. Some take it as a voyage to Tarshish in Spain. The last word may mean peacocks or baboons.
10:23 *King Solomon became greater than all the kings of the earth in riches and in wisdom* God kept His word of 3:12-13 to the letter.
10:24 *to hear his wisdom which God had put in his heart* The high point of Israel's history in the Old Testament. Many teachers see a preview of Christ's kingdom, when the nations come up to Jerusalem to be taught the ways of the LORD (Isa 2:2-4; Zech 14:16).
10:27 *the cedars he made like the sycamores which are in the Shephelah* The Shephelah was the low hill country west of Judah, full of common sycamore-figs. The most precious wood became as common as an ordinary tree.
10:28 *the export of the horses which Solomon had was from Egypt and from Kue* Kue was in Cilicia, in southern Turkey, famous for horses. Solomon was the middleman in the arms trade of the region. Set beside Deuteronomy 17:16-17: no multiplying horses, no going back to Egypt for them, no multiplying wives, silver and gold. Chapter 10 shows the gold, silver and horses. Chapter 11 shows the wives. Solomon's glory was God's gift, but he did not guard it by God's Word.
10:29 *for all the kings of the Hittites and for the kings of Syria* Jesus said Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like a lily (Matt 6:29). The queen came from the ends of the earth to hear Solomon, "and look, something greater than Solomon is here" (Matt 12:42). How much more should we listen to the Son of God, the wisdom of God Himself (1 Cor 1:24, 30)?
11:1 *King Solomon loved many foreign women* Many of these marriages sealed treaties, but the writer says he "loved" them. The issue was never race or nationality. Ruth was a Moabite, and she is in the line of David and of Jesus. The issue was faith: "surely they will turn aside your heart after their gods" (11:2; Deut 7:3-4). That is why believers are to marry "only in the Lord" (1 Cor 7:39; 2 Cor 6:14).
11:2 *to them Solomon clung in love* "Clung" is the word for a man holding fast to his wife (Gen 2:24) and for holding fast to the LORD (Deut 10:20). Solomon clung to the wrong things.
11:3 *seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines* A concubine was a secondary wife with fewer rights. The Law said the king must not multiply wives, lest his heart turn aside (Deut 17:17), and it happened just as God said. His plan for marriage was one man and one woman (Gen 2:24; Matt 19:4-6). Scripture records many wives but never holds them up as a model. Every time, it brought trouble.
11:4 *his heart was not complete with the LORD his God, like the heart of David his father* It was a slow drift in old age. These are the very words Solomon used to charge the people (8:61). David sinned terribly, but he never worshiped idols, and he repented with a broken heart (Ps 51). Wisdom is not the same as obedience. Solomon wrote, "guard your heart" (Prov 4:23), and did not guard his own. "Let the one who thinks he stands watch, lest he fall" (1 Cor 10:12).
11:5 *Ashtoreth the god of the Sidonians* A Canaanite goddess of fertility and war, worshiped with immoral rites. The writer calls these gods what God calls them, detestable things.
11:6 *Solomon did the evil in the eyes of the LORD* That phrase will be repeated about king after king through the rest of Kings. Solomon was the first.
11:7 *on the mountain which is east of Jerusalem* The Mount of Olives, facing the temple across the Kidron Valley. Molech's worship included burning children in the fire (Lev 18:21; 2 Kgs 23:10). The text does not say Solomon offered his children, and we should not say so. But he built shrines for detestable gods within sight of the house of the LORD, and they stood about three hundred years until Josiah tore them down (2 Kgs 23:13).
11:8 *thus he did for all his foreign wives* He wanted to keep everyone happy. A man who tries to please everyone ends up displeasing God.

The LORD Is Angry with Solomon

9 And the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned aside from the LORD, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice, **10** and had commanded him concerning this matter, not to walk after other gods; and he did not keep what the LORD had commanded. **11** And the LORD said to Solomon, "Because this has been with you, and you have not kept My covenant and My statutes which I commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom away from you and give it to your servant. **12** Only in your days I will not do it, for the sake of David your father; from the hand of your son I will tear it away. **13** Only I will not tear away all the kingdom; one tribe I will give to your son, for the sake of David My servant and for the sake of Jerusalem which I have chosen."

Solomon's Adversaries

14 And the LORD raised up an adversary to Solomon, Hadad the Edomite; he ***was*** of the seed of the king in Edom. **15** And it was, when David was with Edom, when Joab (Yo'av) the commander of the army went up to bury the slain, and he struck down every male in Edom **16** (for Joab and all Israel remained there six months, until he had cut off every male in Edom), **17** and Hadad (Adad) fled, he and Edomite men of the servants of his father with him, to go to Egypt (Mitsrayim); and Hadad ***was*** a small youth. **18** And they arose from Midian (Midyan) and came to Paran, and they took men with them from Paran and came to Egypt, to Pharaoh king of Egypt; and he gave him a house, and food he assigned to him, and land he gave to him. **19** And Hadad found favor in the eyes of Pharaoh exceedingly, and he gave him a wife, the sister of his own wife, the sister of Tahpenes (Tachpenes) the queen. **20** And the sister of Tahpenes bore to him Genubath (Genuvat) his son, and Tahpenes weaned him in the midst of the house of Pharaoh; and Genubath was ***in*** the house of Pharaoh among the sons of Pharaoh. **21** And Hadad heard in Egypt that David had lain down with his fathers, and that Joab the commander of the army had died; and Hadad said to Pharaoh, "Send me away, that I may go to my land." **22** And Pharaoh said to him, "But what ***are*** you lacking with me, that look, you ***are*** seeking to go to your land?" And he said, "No, but you shall surely send me away." **23** And God raised up to him an adversary, Rezon the son of Eliada (Elyada), who had fled from Hadadezer the king of Zobah (Tsova), his lord. **24** And he gathered men to himself and became commander of a raiding band, when David killed them; and they went to Damascus (Dameseq) and dwelt in it and reigned in Damascus. **25** And he was an adversary to Israel all the days of Solomon, along with the harm which Hadad ***did***; and he loathed Israel and reigned over Syria (Aram).

Jeroboam and the Torn Cloak

26 And Jeroboam (Yaravam) the son of Nebat (Nevat), an Ephrathite from the Zeredah (Tsereda), and the name of his mother ***was*** Zeruah (Tseru'a), a widow woman, a servant of Solomon, and he raised a hand against the king. **27** And this ***is*** the matter for which he raised a hand against the king: Solomon built the Millo; he closed up the breach of the city of David his father. **28** And the man Jeroboam ***was*** a mighty man of valor; and Solomon saw the young man, that he ***was*** doing work, and he appointed him over all the burden of the house of Joseph (Yosef). **29** And it was at that time, and Jeroboam went out from Jerusalem, and Ahijah (Achiya) the Shilonite, the prophet, found him on the road; and he ***was*** covering himself with a new cloak; and the two of them ***were*** alone in the field. **30** And Ahijah took hold of the new cloak which ***was*** on him, and tore it ***into*** twelve pieces. **31** And he said to Jeroboam, "Take for yourself ten pieces; for thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'Look, I am tearing the kingdom

11:9 1 Kgs 3:5; 1 Kgs 9:2; Exod 4:14
11:10 1 Kgs 6:12,13; 1 Kgs 9:4-7; 2 Chr 7:17-22
11:11 1 Kgs 11:31; 1 Kgs 12:15,16,20; Isa 29:13,14
11:12 1 Kgs 21:29; 2 Kgs 20:17,19; 2 Kgs 22:19,20
11:13 Luke 1:32; Luke 1:69; 1 Kgs 12:20
11:14 1 Kgs 12:15; 1 Sam 26:19; 2 Sam 24:1
11:15 2 Sam 8:14; 1 Chr 18:12,13; Deut 20:13
11:17 Matt 2:13; Matt 2:14; Exod 2:1-10
11:18 Num 10:12; Deut 1:1; Deut 33:2
11:19 Acts 7:10; Acts 7:21; Gen 39:4,21
11:20 Gen 21:7; 1 Sam 1:24
11:21 Matt 2:20; 1 Kgs 2:10,34; Exod 4:19
11:22 Jer 2:31; Luke 22:35; 2 Sam 18:22,23
11:23 1 Kgs 11:14; 2 Sam 8:3; 2 Sam 16:11
11:24 Acts 9:2; 1 Kgs 19:15; 1 Kgs 20:34
11:25 1 Kgs 5:4; 2 Chr 15:2; Gen 34:30
11:26 1 Kgs 12:2,20-24; 2 Chr 13:6; 1 Kgs 11:11,28
11:27 1 Kgs 9:15,24; 2 Sam 20:21; Prov 30:32
11:28 Prov 22:29; 1 Kgs 5:16; Deut 1:12
11:29 1 Kgs 12:15; 1 Kgs 14:2; 2 Chr 9:29
11:30 1 Sam 15:27,28; 1 Sam 24:4,5
11:31 1 Kgs 11:11,12

11:9 *who had appeared to him twice* At Gibeon (3:5) and after the temple was built (9:2), and both times God warned him. No one could say Solomon did not know better. The more light we are given, the greater our responsibility (Luke 12:48).

11:12 *for the sake of David your father* Even in judgment there was mercy. God's covenant with David held when David's son broke faith. That is how the gospel works. God forgives us "on account of His name" (1 John 2:12), for the sake of His Son, not because we deserve it.

11:13 *one tribe I will give to your son* Judah was left to David's house. Little Benjamin, on Jerusalem's border, went with Judah (12:21), but seems to be counted with Judah and Jerusalem rather than as a separate gift. So the cloak is torn into twelve, with ten for Jeroboam (11:30-32).

11:14 *the LORD raised up an adversary to Solomon, Hadad the Edomite* Adversary is the Hebrew word satan, here a human enemy. Solomon had told Hiram there was "no adversary" (5:4). Now God sent one.

11:15 *he struck down every male in Edom* When David defeated Edom (2 Sam 8:13-14), Joab struck the men of fighting age in the area he occupied. Scripture records it without praising it. God did not forget the boy who escaped, and He used him years later as a rod of discipline against David's son.

11:22 *But what are you lacking with me* Hadad had a comfortable life in Egypt but wanted his land back. Egypt sheltered both Hadad and later Jeroboam (11:40). Solomon married Pharaoh's daughter to secure Egypt as a friend, and Egypt became a refuge for his enemies. Alliances made apart from God often fail us when we need them.

11:24 *they went to Damascus* Rezon had served Hadadezer of Zobah, whom David defeated (2 Sam 8:3-8). Damascus became the capital of Aram, or Syria, a kingdom that troubled Israel for two hundred years. When God's people turn from Him, He sometimes lets trouble come to bring them back (Heb 12:6).

11:26 *Jeroboam the son of Nebat, an Ephrathite* Here meaning from the tribe of Ephraim. The third adversary came from inside.

11:28 *over all the burden of the house of Joseph* The house of Joseph is Ephraim and Manasseh, the heart of the northern tribes. Jeroboam ran their forced labor and saw how heavy Solomon's yoke had become, and the workers likely looked to him.

11:29 *Ahijah the Shilonite, the prophet* From Shiloh, where the tabernacle once stood.

11:30 *tore it into twelve pieces* Prophets sometimes acted out God's message. When Saul tore Samuel's robe, Samuel said the LORD had torn the kingdom from him (1 Sam 15:27-28). Now God tore Solomon's.

away from the hand of Solomon, and I will give to you the ten tribes. **32** And the one tribe shall be his, for the sake of My servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen from all the tribes of Israel, **33** because they have forsaken Me and have bowed down to Ashtoreth the god of the Sidonians, to Chemosh the god of Moab, and to Milcom the god of the sons of Ammon, and they have not walked in My ways, to do what ***is*** right in My eyes, and My statutes and My judgments, like David his father. **34** And I will not take all the kingdom from his hand; for I will make him a leader all the days of his life, for the sake of David My servant whom I chose, who kept My commandments and My statutes. **35** And I will take the kingship from the hand of his son and give it to you, the ten tribes. **36** And to his son I will give one tribe, so that there may be a lamp for David My servant all the days before Me in Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen for Myself to put My name there. **37** And you I will take, and you shall reign over all that your soul desires, and you shall be king over Israel. **38** And it shall be, if you listen to all that I command you, and walk in My ways, and do what ***is*** right in My eyes, keeping My statutes and My commandments, just as David My servant did, then I will be with you and build for you an enduring house, just as I built for David, and I will give Israel to you. **39** And I will afflict the seed of David on account of this, yet not all the days.'" **40** And Solomon sought to put Jeroboam to death; and Jeroboam arose and fled to Egypt, to Shishak (Shishaq) king of Egypt, and he was in Egypt until the death of Solomon.

The Death of Solomon

41 And the rest of the matters of Solomon, and all that he did, and his wisdom, ***are*** they not written in the book of the matters of Solomon? **42** And the days that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel ***were*** forty years. **43** And Solomon lay down with his fathers and was buried in the city of David his father; and Rehoboam (Rechavam) his son reigned in his place.

1 KINGS 12

Israel Rebels against Rehoboam

1 And Rehoboam (Rechavam) went to Shechem (Shekhem), for all Israel (Yisra'el) had come to Shechem to make him king. **2** And it was, when Jeroboam (Yaravam) the son of Nebat (Nevat) heard (and he ***was*** still in Egypt (Mitsrayim), where he had fled from before King Solomon (Shelomo), and Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt), **3** and they sent and called him; and Jeroboam and all the assembly of Israel came, and they spoke to Rehoboam, saying, **4** "Your father made our yoke hard; and you, now lighten some of the hard service of your father and of his heavy yoke which he put on us, and we will serve you." **5** And he said to them, "Go, yet three days, and return to me." And the people went. **6** And King Rehoboam consulted with the elders who had been standing before Solomon his father while he was alive, saying, "How do you counsel to bring back word ***to*** this people?" **7** And they spoke to him, saying, "If today you will be a servant to this people, and serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be servants to you all the days." **8** And he forsook the counsel of the elders which they had counseled him, and he consulted with the young men who had grown up with him, who stood before him. **9** And he said to

11:32 1 Kgs 12:20
11:33 1 Kgs 11:9; 1 Kgs 3:14; 1 Kgs 6:12,13
11:34 1 Kgs 11:12,13,31; Job 11:6; Ps 103:10
11:35 Exod 20:5,6; 1 Kgs 12:15-17,20; 2 Chr 10:15-17
11:36 Luke 1:69; Acts 15:16; Gal 4:25
11:37 2 Sam 3:21; 1 Kgs 11:26; Deut 14:26
11:38 2 Sam 7:11,16,26-29; Josh 1:5; Deut 31:8
11:39 Luke 1:32; Luke 2:4; Luke 2:11
11:40 2 Chr 12:2-9; 2 Chr 16:10; Prov 21:30
11:41 2 Chr 9:29-31
11:42 1 Kgs 2:11
11:43 Matt 1:7; 2 Kgs 21:18; 1 Kgs 2:10
12:1 Acts 7:16; Matt 1:7; 2 Chr 10:1-19
12:2 1 Kgs 11:26-31,40; 2 Chr 10:2,3
12:3 Matt 1:7
12:4 1 Sam 8:11-18; 1 Kgs 4:7,20,22,23,25; 1 Kgs 9:15,22,23
12:6 Matt 1:7; Job 12:12; Job 32:7
12:7 Prov 15:1; 2 Chr 10:6,7; Mark 10:43,44
12:8 2 Chr 10:8; 2 Chr 25:15,16; Prov 1:2-5,25,30
12:9 1 Kgs 22:6-8; 2 Sam 17:5,6; 2 Chr 10:9

11:33 *they have forsaken Me* "They" includes Solomon and the people who followed his example. A leader's sin rarely stays private.
11:36 *so that there may be a lamp for David My servant all the days before Me in Jerusalem* A lamp burning in a house was a sign the family still lived there. God promised David's line would never be snuffed out. It kept burning through good kings and bad, through exile and return, until the true Light came, Jesus, the Son of David (Matt 1:1; John 8:12).
11:38 *build for you an enduring house, just as I built for David* Jeroboam was given the same kind of promise David received, on condition of obedience. Chapter 12 shows what he did with it. He became the measure of an evil king for the rest of the book.
11:39 *yet not all the days* Full of hope. The division would not last forever. The prophets promised that Israel and Judah would be one nation again under one King, David's Son (Ezek 37:15-24). I believe that will be fulfilled when Christ reigns on the earth.
11:40 *Solomon sought to put Jeroboam to death* Saul tried to kill the man God chose to replace him, and now Solomon did the same. It never works to fight against God's word. Shishak is the first Pharaoh in the Bible named by his own name, known from Egyptian records as Shoshenq I. He invaded Judah five years after Solomon died (14:25-26).
11:41 *the book of the matters of Solomon* The writer used older royal records, since lost. Second Chronicles 9:29 names others: Nathan, Ahijah and Iddo the seer.
11:43 *Solomon lay down with his fathers* After forty years, about 970 to 930 B.C. Did he repent? Scripture does not say. Many believe he wrote Ecclesiastes late in life and came back to "fear God and keep His commandments" (Eccl 12:13). Others are less hopeful, and Nehemiah held him up as a warning (Neh 13:26). I leave it with God. What we know is that all his wisdom and privilege could not keep his heart. Only God's grace can (Phil 1:6).
12:1 *Rehoboam went to Shechem* An old and holy place in the north. Abraham built an altar there (Gen 12:6-7), and Joshua renewed the covenant there (Josh 24). Judah had already accepted Rehoboam. The northern tribes wanted to meet him on their own ground, as David had become king over the north by a covenant with its elders (2 Sam 5:3).
12:4 *Your father made our yoke hard* A yoke was the wooden beam laid on the necks of oxen. They meant the forced labor and taxes that paid for Solomon's building (4:7; 5:13-14). They were not asking to be free of a king, only for a lighter load. That was a fair request.
12:5 *Go, yet three days, and return to me* Taking time to think was wise. What he did with the three days was not.
12:7 *If today you will be a servant to this people* Serve them, and they will serve you. Jesus taught the same: whoever would be great must be a servant, for the Son of Man came to serve and give His life (Mark 10:42-45). Leadership in God's kingdom has always looked like a towel and a basin, not a whip (John 13:14-15).
12:8 *the young men who had grown up with him* Rehoboam was forty-one (14:21), so these were not boys. They were palace friends who had grown up in Solomon's wealth. He did not want counsel. He wanted agreement. "He who listens to counsel is wise" (Prov 12:15). Do we ever shop for advice until we find the answer we already wanted?

them, "What do you counsel, that we may bring back word ***to*** this people who have spoken to me, saying, 'Lighten some of the yoke which your father put on us'?" **10** And the young men who had grown up with him spoke to him, saying, "Thus you shall say to this people who spoke to you, saying, 'Your father made our yoke heavy, and you, lighten ***it*** from on us'; thus you shall speak to them: 'My little finger is thicker than the loins of my father. **11** And now, my father loaded on you a heavy yoke, and I, I will add to your yoke; my father disciplined you with whips, and I, I will discipline you with scorpions.'" **12** And Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam on the third day, just as the king had spoken, saying, "Return to me on the third day." **13** And the king answered the people harshly, and he forsook the counsel of the elders which they had counseled him; **14** and he spoke to them according to the counsel of the young men, saying, "My father made your yoke heavy, and I, I will add to your yoke; my father disciplined you with whips, and I, I will discipline you with scorpions." **15** And the king did not listen to the people, for it was a turn ***of events*** from the LORD, in order to establish His word which the LORD spoke by the hand of Ahijah (Achiya) the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat. **16** And all Israel saw that the king had not listened to them; and the people brought back word to the king, saying, "What portion ***is there*** for us in David? And ***there is*** no inheritance in the son of Jesse (Yishay). To your tents, O Israel! Now see to your own house, O David!" And Israel went to its tents. **17** And the sons of Israel who were dwelling in the cities of Judah (Yehuda), Rehoboam reigned over them. **18** And King Rehoboam sent Adoram, who ***was*** over the forced labor, and all Israel stoned him with stones, and he died. And King Rehoboam exerted himself to go up in the chariot to flee to Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). **19** And Israel has rebelled against the house of David to this day. **20** And it was, when all Israel heard that Jeroboam had returned, and they sent and called him to the congregation and made him king over all Israel; there was none following the house of David except the tribe of Judah alone.

Shemaiah Stops the War

21 And Rehoboam came to Jerusalem, and he assembled all the house of Judah and the tribe of Benjamin (Binyamin), a hundred and eighty thousand chosen ***men***, makers of war, to fight with the house of Israel, to bring back the kingship to Rehoboam the son of Solomon. **22** And the word of God came to Shemaiah (Shemaya) the man of God, saying, **23** "Say to Rehoboam the son of Solomon, the king of Judah, and to all the house of Judah and Benjamin, and the rest of the people, saying, **24** 'Thus says the LORD: "You shall not go up, and you shall not fight with your brothers the sons of Israel. Return, each man to his house, for this thing has come from Me."'" And they listened to the word of the LORD and turned back to go, according to the word of the LORD.

Jeroboam's Golden Calves

25 And Jeroboam built Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim (Efrayim) and dwelt in it; and he went out from there and built Penuel (Penu'el). **26** And Jeroboam said in his heart, "Now the kingdom will return to the house of David. **27** If this people goes up to make sacrifices in the house of the LORD in Jerusalem, then the heart of this people will return to their lord, to Rehoboam king of Judah, and they will kill me and return to Rehoboam king of Judah." **28** And

12:10 2 Sam 17:7-13; 2 Chr 10:10,11; Prov 10:14
12:11 Exod 1:13,14; Exod 5:5-9,18; 1 Sam 8:18
12:12 Matt 1:7; 1 Kgs 12:5; 2 Chr 10:12-14
12:13 James 3:17; 1 Kgs 20:6-11; Gen 42:7,30
12:14 1 Kgs 12:10,11; 2 Chr 22:4,5; Esth 1:16-21
12:15 John 19:23; 1 Kgs 12:24; Deut 2:30
12:16 Luke 3:32; Acts 15:16; 2 Sam 20:1
12:17 Matt 1:7; 1 Kgs 11:13,36; 2 Chr 10:17
12:18 Matt 1:7; 1 Kgs 4:6; 1 Kgs 5:14
12:19 2 Kgs 17:21; 1 Sam 10:19; 2 Chr 10:19
12:20 1 Kgs 11:13,32; 1 Sam 10:24; Hos 8:4
12:21 Matt 1:7; 2 Chr 11:1-3; 1 Chr 21:5
12:22 2 Chr 11:2; 2 Chr 12:5,7; 1 Kgs 13:1,4,5,11
12:23 Matt 1:7
12:24 1 Kgs 12:15; Num 14:42; 2 Chr 11:4
12:25 Judg 8:8,17; Gen 32:30,31; 1 Kgs 9:15,17,18
12:26 Ps 14:1; Mark 2:6-8; Luke 7:39
12:27 Deut 12:5-7,14; 1 Kgs 8:29,30,44; 1 Kgs 11:32
12:28 2 Kgs 10:29; 2 Kgs 17:16; Exod 32:4,8

12:11 *I will discipline you with scorpions* Likely a whip with sharp pieces of metal or bone tied in, one that stings and tears.
12:13 *the king answered the people harshly* One harsh speech cost him most of his kingdom.
12:15 *it was a turn of events from the LORD* God had said through Ahijah He would tear ten tribes away (11:29-39). Rehoboam made his own proud choice, and Scripture holds him responsible. Yet God was ruling over it to keep His word. Both are true at once. The king's heart is in the LORD's hand (Prov 21:1). God never makes anyone sin, but He is never caught off guard, and He works even foolish choices into His plan.
12:16 *To your tents, O Israel* Nearly the cry of Sheba son of Bichri in David's day (2 Sam 20:1). The old split between north and Judah had never healed, and Rehoboam's pride tore it open. From here on in Kings, Israel usually means the ten northern tribes, and Judah the southern kingdom of David's line.
12:18 *Adoram, who was over the forced labor* Of all the men he could send to make peace, he sent the man in charge of the very thing they were angry about (4:6).
12:19 *to this day* The writer was using a source written while the northern kingdom still stood. The split lasted until Assyria carried Israel away in 722 B.C. (2 Kgs 17).
12:20 *made him king over all Israel* Jeroboam reigned about 930 to 909 B.C. Benjamin went with Judah too (12:21), likely counted with Judah as the one tribe left for David's sake (11:13, 32).
12:21 *a hundred and eighty thousand chosen men* I take the number as written. Some scholars think the Hebrew word for thousand can mean a military unit or clan, which would make the army smaller.
12:22 *Shemaiah the man of God* A common title for a prophet in Kings, a man who speaks with God's authority.
12:24 *you shall not fight with your brothers the sons of Israel* Even divided, they were one family. Rehoboam listened, the best thing he did in this chapter. When God closes a door, the wise thing is to stop pushing on it. There would still be fighting (14:30), but a full civil war was stopped.
12:25 *Jeroboam built Shechem* To build here means to fortify and enlarge. Penuel was east of the Jordan, where Jacob wrestled with God (Gen 32:30-31). The capital later moved to Tirzah (14:17), and Omri built Samaria (16:24).
12:26 *Jeroboam said in his heart* Trouble starts inside. Every man was to go up to God's chosen place three times a year (Deut 16:16), and Jeroboam feared worship would pull hearts back to Judah. God had already promised him an enduring house if he obeyed (11:38). Fear of losing what God gave him led him to disobey the God who gave it. How often does fear make us grab for control instead of trusting God?
12:28 *Look, your gods, O Israel, which brought you up from the land of Egypt* Almost the words said of Aaron's golden calf (Exod 32:4, 8). Many teachers think Jeroboam meant the calves as a stand for the LORD, like the cherubim over the ark. But God forbade any image to worship Him by (Exod 20:4-5), and He counted it as idolatry (14:9). His reason sounded kind: it is too much for you. False worship often comes dressed as convenience.

the king took counsel and made two calves of gold, and he said to them, "***It is too*** much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Look, your gods, O Israel, which brought you up from the land of Egypt!" **29** And he set the one in Bethel (Bet-El), and the other he put in Dan. **30** And this thing became a sin; and the people went before the one as far as Dan. **31** And he made a house of high places, and he made priests from the ends of the people, who were not of the sons of Levi. **32** And Jeroboam made a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like the feast which ***was*** in Judah, and he offered up on the altar. So he did in Bethel, to sacrifice to the calves which he had made; and he stationed in Bethel the priests of the high places which he had made. **33** And he offered up on the altar which he had made in Bethel on the fifteenth day in the eighth month, in the month which he had devised from his own heart; and he made a feast for the sons of Israel, and he offered up on the altar to burn incense.

1 KINGS 13

The Man of God from Judah

1 And look, a man of God came from Judah (Yehuda) by the word of the LORD to Bethel (Bet-El), and Jeroboam (Yaravam) ***was*** standing at the altar to burn incense. **2** And he called out against the altar by the word of the LORD, and he said, "Altar, altar, thus says the LORD: 'Look, a son is about to be born to the house of David, Josiah (Yoshiyahu) ***is*** his name; and he will sacrifice on you the priests of the high places who burn incense on you, and bones of man they will burn on you.'" **3** And he gave a sign on that day, saying, "This ***is*** the sign which the LORD has spoken: look, the altar is about to be torn apart, and the ash which ***is*** on it will be poured out." **4** And it was, when the king heard the word of the man of God which he called out against the altar in Bethel, and Jeroboam stretched out his hand from ***beside*** the altar, saying, "Seize him!" And his hand which he had stretched out against him dried up, and he was not able to bring it back to himself. **5** And the altar was torn apart, and the ash was poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the LORD. **6** And the king answered and said to the man of God, "Entreat, please, the face of the LORD your God, and pray for me, and may my hand come back to me." And the man of God entreated the face of the LORD, and the hand of the king came back to him, and it was as at the first. **7** And the king spoke to the man of God, "Come with me to the house and refresh ***yourself***, and let me give you a gift." **8** And the man of God said to the king, "If you give me half of your house, I will not go in with you, and I will not eat bread, and I will not drink water in this place. **9** For thus He commanded me by the word of the LORD, saying, 'You shall not eat bread, and you shall not drink water, and you shall not return by the way which you went.'" **10** And he went by another way, and he did not return by the way by which he had come to Bethel.

The Old Prophet of Bethel

11 And a certain old prophet was dwelling in Bethel; and his son came and recounted to him every deed which the man of God had done that day in Bethel; the words which he had spoken to the king, and they recounted them to their father. **12** And their father spoke to them, "Which ***is*** the way ***that*** he went?" And his sons had seen the way which the man of God who came from Judah had gone. **13** And he said to his sons, "Saddle the donkey for me." And they saddled the donkey for

12:29 Gen 28:19; Gen 12:8; Gen 35:1
12:30 1 Kgs 13:34; 2 Kgs 17:21; 2 Kgs 10:31
12:31 2 Kgs 17:32; 2 Chr 13:9; 2 Chr 11:14,15
12:32 Matt 15:8; 1 Kgs 8:2,5; Amos 7:10-13
12:33 1 Kgs 13:1; Num 15:39; Ps 106:39
13:1 1 Thess 4:15; 2 Kgs 23:17; 1 Kgs 12:32,33
13:2 Matt 1:10; Deut 32:1; Isa 1:2
13:3 1 Cor 1:22; Exod 4:3-5,8,9; John 2:18
13:4 2 Chr 16:10; 2 Chr 18:25-27; 2 Chr 25:15,16
13:5 1 Kgs 13:3; 1 Kgs 22:28,35; Exod 9:18-25
13:6 Acts 8:24; Mark 3:5; Luke 6:10
13:7 2 Kgs 5:15; 1 Sam 9:7,8; Gen 18:5
13:8 Num 22:18; Num 24:13; Exod 5:3,6
13:9 John 15:14; 1 Thess 4:15; 1 Kgs 13:1,21,22
13:11 2 Pet 2:16; 2 Kgs 23:18; 1 Kgs 13:20,21
13:13 1 Kgs 13:27; Num 22:21; Judg 5:10

12:29 *the one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan* Bethel was near his southern border on the road to Jerusalem, where Jacob met God (Gen 28:19). Dan was in the far north.
12:30 *this thing became a sin* The sin the rest of Kings names again and again. Nearly every king of Israel walked "in the way of Jeroboam" (15:34), and not one ever tore these calves down.
12:31 *he made priests from the ends of the people, who were not of the sons of Levi* God gave the priesthood to Aaron's family in Levi (Num 3:5-10). The northern priests and Levites, and many faithful people, moved to Judah rather than serve at Jeroboam's altars (2 Chr 11:13-16). A high place was a hilltop shrine God told Israel to tear down (Deut 12:2-5).
12:32 *in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like the feast which was in Judah* The Feast of Booths was on the fifteenth of the seventh month (Lev 23:33-34). Jeroboam moved it a month. It looked like the real thing, but it was his own.
12:33 *in the month which he had devised from his own heart* The heart of false religion: not what God said, but what we devised. Anytime we shape worship around what is easy, popular or useful instead of what God has said, we walk his road. True worshipers worship "in spirit and truth" (John 4:23).
13:1 *a man of God came from Judah by the word of the LORD to Bethel* Scripture does not give his name. He came at the very moment Jeroboam stood at his altar, probably at the feast he had just invented (12:33).
13:2 *Josiah is his name* One of the most remarkable prophecies in the Bible, naming a king about three hundred years before his birth. About 622 B.C. Josiah burned bones on this altar "according to the word of the LORD" (2 Kgs 23:16), defiling it forever. Some critical scholars think the name was added later. I take it as written. God, who knows the end from the beginning (Isa 46:10), also named Cyrus ahead of time (Isa 44:28; 45:1).
13:3 *he gave a sign on that day* A visible proof given right then, so people could know the far-off prophecy came from God.
13:4 *his hand which he had stretched out against him dried up* The king's arm froze, pointing at the prophet, and the altar he made with his own hands broke in front of him (13:5). God showed all Israel that this new worship had no power.
13:6 *Entreat, please, the face of the LORD your God* "Your God," not mine. Jeroboam wanted the healing without the repentance. The man of God did not gloat. He prayed for the king who tried to seize him (Matt 5:44). God's kindness was meant to lead Jeroboam to repentance (Rom 2:4), but it did not (13:33).
13:7 *Come with me to the house and refresh yourself* If force could not silence the prophet, maybe friendship would win him. A meal and a gift would make it look as if prophet and king were at peace.
13:9 *You shall not eat bread, and you shall not drink water* To eat with someone was to share fellowship. God had no fellowship with Bethel's false worship. The prophet was to come, speak and leave, sharing nothing with that place, not even going back over its ground.
13:11 *a certain old prophet was dwelling in Bethel* A real prophet (13:20), but he lived at the center of false worship, and we never hear that he spoke against it. Perhaps he had grown comfortable, or quiet.

him, and he rode on it. **14** And he went after the man of God and found him sitting under the oak; and he said to him, "***Are*** you the man of God who came from Judah?" And he said, "I ***am***." **15** And he said to him, "Come with me to the house and eat bread." **16** And he said, "I am not able to return with you and to go in with you, and I will not eat bread, and I will not drink water with you in this place. **17** For a word ***came*** to me by the word of the LORD: 'You shall not eat bread, and you shall not drink water there; you shall not return to go by the way by which you went.'" **18** And he said to him, "I also ***am*** a prophet like you, and an angel spoke to me by the word of the LORD, saying, 'Bring him back with you to your house, and let him eat bread and let him drink water.'" He lied to him. **19** And he went back with him, and he ate bread in his house and drank water. **20** And it was, ***as*** they were sitting at the table, and the word of the LORD came to the prophet who had brought him back. **21** And he called out to the man of God who had come from Judah, saying, "Thus says the LORD: 'Because you have rebelled against the mouth of the LORD, and you have not kept the commandment which the LORD your God commanded you, **22** and you went back, and you ate bread and drank water in the place of which He said to you, "Do not eat bread, and do not drink water," your corpse shall not come to the grave of your fathers.'" **23** And it was, after he had eaten bread and after he had drunk, and he saddled the donkey for him, for the prophet whom he had brought back. **24** And he went, and a lion met him on the way and killed him; and his corpse was thrown down on the way, and the donkey ***was*** standing beside it, and the lion ***was*** standing beside the corpse. **25** And look, men ***were*** passing by, and they saw the corpse thrown down on the way, and the lion standing beside the corpse; and they came and spoke ***of it*** in the city in which the old prophet was dwelling. **26** And the prophet who had brought him back from the way heard, and he said, "He ***is*** the man of God who rebelled against the mouth of the LORD; and the LORD has given him to the lion, and it has mauled him and killed him, according to the word of the LORD which He spoke to him." **27** And he spoke to his sons, saying, "Saddle the donkey for me." And they saddled ***it***. **28** And he went and found his corpse thrown down on the way, and the donkey and the lion standing beside the corpse; the lion had not eaten the corpse, and it had not mauled the donkey. **29** And the prophet picked up the corpse of the man of God, and he laid him on the donkey and brought him back; and he came to the city of the old prophet to mourn and to bury him. **30** And he laid his corpse in his own grave, and they mourned over him, "Alas, my brother!" **31** And it was, after he had buried him, and he said to his sons, saying, "At my death you shall bury me in the grave in which the man of God ***is*** buried; beside his bones lay my bones. **32** For the word which he called out by the word of the LORD against the altar which ***is*** in Bethel, and against all the houses of the high places which ***are*** in the cities of Samaria (Shomron), shall surely come to pass."

Jeroboam Does Not Turn Back

33 After this thing Jeroboam did not turn back from his evil way, and he again made priests of the high places from the ends of the people; whoever desired, he filled his hand, and he became ***one of the*** priests of the high places. **34** And by this thing ***it*** became the sin of the house of Jeroboam, and to wipe ***it*** out and to destroy ***it*** from the face of the ground.

13:14 1 Kgs 19:4; John 4:6,34; 1 Cor 4:11,12
13:16 1 Kgs 13:8,9; Gen 3:1-3; Num 22:13,19
13:17 1 Thess 4:15; 1 Kgs 20:35; 1 Kgs 13:1
13:18 2 Pet 2:1; 1 Thess 4:15; 1 John 4:1
13:19 1 Kgs 13:9; Gen 3:6; Deut 13:1,3,5
13:20 Num 23:5,16; Num 24:4,16-24; Matt 7:22
13:21 1 Kgs 13:17; Gen 3:7; Esth 6:13
13:22 1 Kgs 13:30; 1 Kgs 14:13; 2 Chr 21:19,20
13:24 1 Kgs 20:36; 2 Kgs 2:24; Prov 22:13
13:26 Lev 10:3; 2 Sam 12:10,14; Ps 119:120
13:28 1 Kgs 17:4,6; Lev 10:2,5; Job 38:11
13:30 Jer 22:18; 1 Kgs 14:13; Acts 8:2
13:31 Num 23:10; Ps 26:9; Eccl 8:10
13:32 John 4:4; John 4:5; 1 Kgs 16:24
13:33 2 Chr 11:15; 2 Chr 13:9; 1 Kgs 12:31-33
13:34 1 Kgs 12:30; 1 Kgs 14:10; 2 Kgs 17:21

13:14 *found him sitting under the oak* That detail matters. The man of God was on his way but no longer hurrying out of the land.
13:16 *I am not able to return with you* He repeated God's command word for word. He knew exactly what God had said, which is what makes the next verses so serious.
13:18 *He lied to him* Scripture does not say why. Perhaps he wanted the honor of hosting the man of God, or wanted to show the stern word could be bent. He used an angel's authority to say what God had not said. The man of God took the easier word instead of holding to God's plain one. Paul says, "even if we, or an angel out of heaven" (Gal 1:8), preach another gospel, reject it. God does not contradict Himself. When a claimed word goes against what He has plainly said, we need not wonder which to follow (1 John 4:1).
13:21 *Because you have rebelled against the mouth of the LORD* The liar became the messenger of judgment. Being deceived did not excuse him, because he had God's plain word and set it aside. Not being buried with one's fathers was a sign of shame and judgment.
13:24 *a lion met him on the way and killed him* The hardest part of the story. A hungry lion does not stand guard beside a man and his donkey without eating either. It was a sign from God. Why so severe? This man was God's messenger, sent to announce judgment on Bethel for disobeying God's word, and his death made the message louder: God means what He says, even for His prophets. More is required of those given more (Luke 12:48; James 3:1). The liar must answer to God too (Gen 18:25). His death was judgment on his disobedience as a prophet, not a statement that he was lost. God may discipline His servants severely in this life and still welcome them home.
13:26 *He is the man of God who rebelled against the mouth of the LORD* He did not admit his own lie. Sin often finds it easy to name someone else's failure.
13:28 *the lion had not eaten the corpse, and it had not mauled the donkey* Said twice so we do not miss it. Judgment went exactly as far as God allowed, and not one step further.
13:30 *Alas, my brother* He lay in a stranger's tomb in Bethel, not in the grave of his fathers, as God said. The grief seems real. Perhaps the old prophet finally saw the weight of what he had done.
13:31 *beside his bones lay my bones* He now believed the message completely and wanted his bones spared. They were. Three hundred years later Josiah said, "Let him rest; let no man disturb his bones" (2 Kgs 23:18). God's word came true to the last detail.
13:32 *the cities of Samaria* The city of Samaria was not built until Omri (16:24). Either the old prophet spoke ahead of time by God's word, or the writer used the name his readers knew for the region.
13:33 *Jeroboam did not turn back from his evil way* He saw an altar split and his own hand wither and be healed, and still did not repent. To fill the hand was the Hebrew way of saying to ordain a priest. Anyone who wanted the job could have it.
13:34 *to wipe it out and to destroy it from the face of the ground* The calves did not save Jeroboam's dynasty. They destroyed it (14:10; 15:29). When God warns us, the right response is not to ask for the symptoms to go away, but to turn from our sin.

1 KINGS 14

Ahijah's Word against Jeroboam

1 At that time Abijah (Aviya) the son of Jeroboam (Yaravam) became sick. **2** And Jeroboam said to his wife, "Arise, please, and disguise yourself, and they will not know that you ***are*** the wife of Jeroboam, and go to Shiloh (Shilo). Look, Ahijah (Achiya) the prophet ***is*** there; he spoke concerning me to ***be*** king over this people. **3** And take in your hand ten ***loaves of*** bread and cakes and a jar of honey, and go to him; he will tell you what will happen to the lad." **4** And the wife of Jeroboam did so; and she arose and went to Shiloh and came ***to*** the house of Ahijah. And Ahijah (Achiyahu) was not able to see, for his eyes were fixed because of his old age. **5** And the LORD had said to Ahijah, "Look, the wife of Jeroboam is coming to seek a word from you concerning her son, for he ***is*** sick. Thus and thus you shall speak to her. And it will be, when she comes in, and she ***will be*** making herself unknown." **6** And it was, when Ahijah heard the sound of her feet coming in at the entrance, and he said, "Come in, wife of Jeroboam. Why ***is*** this ***that*** you ***are*** making yourself unknown? And I ***am*** sent to you ***with*** hard ***news***. **7** Go, say to Jeroboam, 'Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel (Yisra'el): "Because I raised you up from the midst of the people, and I made you leader over My people Israel, **8** and I tore the kingdom away from the house of David and gave it to you, and you have not been like My servant David, who kept My commandments and who walked after Me with all his heart, to do only what ***was*** right in My eyes, **9** and you have done evil, acting more than all who were before you, and you have gone and made for yourself other gods and molten images to provoke Me to anger, and Me you have cast behind your back, **10** therefore, look, I am about to bring calamity on the house of Jeroboam, and I will cut off from Jeroboam ***every*** one who urinates against a wall, shut up and set free in Israel; and I will sweep away after the house of Jeroboam, as one sweeps away dung until it is finished. **11** The one who dies of Jeroboam in the city the dogs will eat, and the one who dies in the field the birds of the heavens will eat; for the LORD has spoken."' **12** And you, arise, go to your house; when your feet come into the city, and the lad will die. **13** And all Israel will mourn for him and bury him; for this one alone of Jeroboam will come into a grave, because something good toward the LORD, the God of Israel, was found in him in the house of Jeroboam. **14** And the LORD will raise up for Himself a king over Israel, who will cut off the house of Jeroboam this day; and what? Even now! **15** And the LORD will strike Israel, as the reed sways in the water, and He will pluck up Israel from this good ground which He gave to their fathers, and He will scatter them beyond the River (Nahar), because they have made their Asherim, provoking the LORD to anger. **16** And He will give up Israel on account of the sins of Jeroboam which he sinned and which he caused Israel to sin." **17** And the wife of Jeroboam arose and went and came to Tirzah (Tirtsa); she was coming to the threshold of the house, and the lad died. **18** And they buried him, and all Israel mourned for him, according to the word of the LORD which He spoke by the hand of His servant Ahijah the prophet. **19** And the rest of the matters of Jeroboam, how he waged war and how he reigned, look, they ***are*** written in the book of the matters of

14:1 1 Kgs 13:33,34; 1 Kgs 14:12,13; Exod 20:5
14:2 1 Sam 28:8; 2 Sam 14:2; 2 Chr 18:29
14:3 1 Sam 9:7,8; 1 Kgs 13:7; 2 Kgs 4:42
14:4 Luke 20:20; 1 Kgs 11:29; 1 Sam 3:2
14:5 Luke 20:20; 2 Kgs 4:27; 2 Kgs 6:8-12
14:6 Mark 14:21; Luke 20:20; Acts 5:9
14:7 1 Kgs 16:2; 2 Sam 12:7,8; 1 Kgs 12:24
14:8 Acts 13:22; Acts 13:36; Mark 8:34
14:9 1 Kgs 12:28; 2 Chr 11:15; Neh 9:26
14:10 1 Kgs 21:21; Deut 32:36; 2 Kgs 14:26
14:11 Rev 19:17; Rev 19:18; 1 Kgs 16:4
14:12 1 Kgs 14:3,16,17; 2 Kgs 1:6,16; John 4:50-52
14:13 2 Chr 19:3; 2 Chr 12:12; Num 20:29
14:14 1 Kgs 15:27-29; Eccl 8:11; Ezek 7:2-7
14:15 Acts 7:43; Ps 52:5; Josh 23:15,16
14:16 1 Kgs 12:30; 1 Kgs 13:34; 1 Kgs 15:30,34
14:17 1 Kgs 15:21,33; Song 6:4; 1 Kgs 16:6,8,9,15,23
14:19 2 Chr 13:2-20; 1 Kgs 14:29; 1 Kgs 15:31

14:1 *Abijah the son of Jeroboam became sick* His name means my father is the LORD, a name that says more about God than Jeroboam's calves did.
14:2 *disguise yourself* He did not want his people to know he was asking a true prophet of the LORD for help instead of his own priests, and perhaps he hoped for a kinder word. When trouble came, he knew where God's true word could be found. His calves could not answer him. The plain gift of bread and honey (14:3) fit the disguise.
14:4 *his eyes were fixed because of his old age* Jeroboam tried to hide his wife from a man who could not see anyway. But the LORD sees everything.
14:6 *Why is this that you are making yourself unknown* No disguise works with God. "There is no creature hidden before Him" (Heb 4:13). Jeroboam could hide neither his true worship nor his wife from God.
14:7 *I raised you up from the midst of the people* God reminded him of grace first. A widow's son and labor boss (11:26-28), everything Jeroboam had, God gave him.
14:8 *You have not been like My servant David* David sinned badly, but he never turned to idols, and he always came back to God with a broken heart.
14:9 *Me you have cast behind your back* One of the saddest lines in Kings. Whatever Jeroboam meant by the calves (12:28), God calls them "other gods." He was not just ignored but thrown over the shoulder like something worthless. How do we treat the God who gave us everything?
14:10 *as one sweeps away dung until it is finished* God used strong words because this was strong sin. "Shut up and set free" seems to mean everyone, slave or free. Baasha wiped out the family (15:29).
14:11 *the dogs will eat* To lie unburied was the greatest shame in the ancient world. The same words will be spoken over Baasha's house (16:4) and Ahab's (21:24). The kings kept walking in Jeroboam's sin and kept reaping Jeroboam's end.
14:13 *because something good toward the LORD, the God of Israel, was found in him* In a family that turned from God, one boy had a heart toward the LORD. Scripture does not say what it was, but God saw and honored it. I believe his death was mercy: the righteous are taken away from the evil to come (Isa 57:1-2), and to be with God is far better (Phil 1:23). A child can love the Lord when his parents do not. If you are the only believer in your family, God sees you.
14:14 *the LORD will raise up for Himself a king over Israel* That was Baasha (15:27-29). The judgment was already on its way.
14:15 *He will scatter them beyond the River* The Euphrates. This came true about two hundred years later, when Assyria took Samaria in 722 B.C. (2 Kgs 17:6, 23). An Asherah was a wooden pole or carved image for the Canaanite fertility goddess Asherah. Asherim is the plural. A reed swaying in the water pictures a nation bending with every wind.
14:16 *which he caused Israel to sin* A leader's sin rarely stays with him. Jeroboam made a nation sin.
14:17 *came to Tirzah* Jeroboam's royal city, a few miles northeast of Shechem. The boy died at the very moment, just as God said. That gives confidence that God's word about the rest of the family and the nation would come true too.
14:19 *the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Israel* An official court record of Israel's kings, now lost. It is not our books of Chronicles.

the days of the kings of Israel. **20** And the days which Jeroboam reigned ***were*** twenty-two years; and he lay down with his fathers, and Nadab (Nadav) his son reigned in his place.

Rehoboam's Reign in Judah

21 And Rehoboam (Rechavam) the son of Solomon (Shelomo) reigned in Judah (Yehuda). Rehoboam ***was*** forty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), the city which the LORD had chosen from all the tribes of Israel to put His name there. And the name of his mother ***was*** Naamah (Na'ama) the Ammonite. **22** And Judah did the evil in the eyes of the LORD, and they provoked Him to jealousy more than all that their fathers had done, by their sins which they sinned. **23** And they also built for themselves high places and pillars and Asherim on every high hill and under every luxuriant tree. **24** And also ***there*** was a male cult prostitute in the land; they did according to all the abominations of the nations which the LORD had dispossessed before the sons of Israel. **25** And it was, in the fifth year of King Rehoboam, Shishak (Shishaq) king of Egypt (Mitsrayim) came up against Jerusalem. **26** And he took the treasures of the house of the LORD and the treasures of the house of the king; and he took everything; and he took all the shields of gold which Solomon had made. **27** And King Rehoboam made in their place shields of bronze, and he entrusted ***them*** to the hand of the commanders of the runners who guarded the entrance of the house of the king. **28** And it was, as often as the king went ***to*** the house of the LORD, the runners carried them and brought them back to the chamber of the runners. **29** And the rest of the matters of Rehoboam and all that he did, ***are*** they not written in the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Judah? **30** And war was between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all the days. **31** And Rehoboam lay down with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David; and the name of his mother ***was*** Naamah the Ammonite. And Abijam (Aviyam) his son reigned in his place.

1 KINGS 15

Abijam King of Judah

1 And in the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam (Yaravam) the son of Nebat (Nevat), Abijam (Aviyam) became king over Judah (Yehuda). **2** Three years he reigned in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim); and the name of his mother ***was*** Maacah (Ma'akha) the daughter of Absalom (Avishalom). **3** And he walked in all the sins of his father which he had done before him; and his heart was not complete with the LORD his God, like the heart of David his father. **4** But for the sake of David the LORD his God gave him a lamp in Jerusalem, by raising up his son after him and by establishing Jerusalem, **5** because David had done what ***was*** right in the eyes of the LORD, and had not turned aside from all that He had commanded him all the days of his life, except in the matter of Uriah (Uriya) the Hittite. **6** And war was between Rehoboam (Rechavam) and Jeroboam all the days of his life. **7** And the rest of the

14:20 1 Kgs 2:10; 1 Kgs 11:43; Job 14:12
14:21 2 Chr 12:13; 1 Kgs 11:36; 1 Kgs 14:31
14:22 2 Chr 12:1; Ps 78:58; 1 Cor 10:22
14:23 Deut 12:2; Isa 57:5; Ezek 16:24,25
14:24 Deut 23:17; 1 Kgs 15:12; 2 Kgs 23:7
14:25 1 Kgs 11:40; 2 Chr 12:2-4
14:26 1 Kgs 15:18; 2 Chr 9:15,16; 1 Kgs 7:51
14:27 1 Sam 8:11; 1 Sam 22:17; Lam 4:1,2
14:28 2 Chr 12:11
14:29 1 Kgs 14:19; 1 Kgs 11:41; 1 Kgs 15:23
14:30 1 Kgs 12:24; 1 Kgs 15:6,7; 2 Chr 12:15
14:31 Matt 1:7; 2 Chr 12:16; 1 Kgs 14:20
15:1 1 Kgs 14:31; 2 Chr 13:1,2-22
15:2 2 Chr 13:2; 1 Kgs 15:13; 2 Chr 11:20-22
15:3 Acts 13:22; 1 Kgs 11:4,33; Ps 119:80
15:4 Luke 1:69; Rev 22:16; 1 Kgs 11:36
15:5 Acts 13:22; Acts 13:36; Matt 1:6
15:6 1 Kgs 14:30
15:7 2 Chr 13:2,21,22; 1 Kgs 14:29; 2 Chr 13:3-20

14:20 *twenty-two years* About 930 to 909 B.C. The LORD struck him and he died (2 Chr 13:20). Nadab lasted two years (15:25-28).
14:21 *the city which the LORD had chosen from all the tribes of Israel to put His name there* Rehoboam reigned about 930 to 913 B.C. He had the temple, the priests and true worship in his capital, every advantage Jeroboam lacked.
14:21 *Naamah the Ammonite* Named twice in this chapter (14:31). She was one of Solomon's foreign wives, from the people who worshiped Milcom (11:1, 5). A mother's influence goes deep.
14:22 *they provoked Him to jealousy* God's jealousy is not petty envy. It is the holy love of a husband who will not share his wife with another (Exod 34:14).
14:23 *high places and pillars and Asherim* The pillars were standing stones set up in Canaanite worship, often as symbols of a god.
14:24 *there was a male cult prostitute in the land* Canaanite religion included sexual rites at its shrines, thought to bring fertility. God strictly forbade it (Deut 23:17), and He drove the nations out for these very sins (Lev 18:24-28). A building cannot keep a heart. Solomon built idol shrines beside the temple, and his son's generation followed.
14:25 *Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem* About 925 B.C. He is known as Shoshenq I, and a list on an Egyptian temple wall names towns he claimed in Judah and Israel. Second Chronicles 12:2-12 adds that it came because they forsook the LORD, and that when they humbled themselves God spared them from destruction.
14:26 *all the shields of gold which Solomon had made* A few decades after the queen of Sheba saw Solomon's glory, the gold was gone to Egypt (10:16-17).
14:27 *King Rehoboam made in their place shields of bronze* He kept up appearances. From far off, bronze shines a little like gold, but it is not gold. Churches and believers can lose God's glory and keep the procession going. God is not fooled by bronze. He calls us back to a heart truly given to Him (Rev 2:4-5).
14:30 *war was between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all the days* Shemaiah stopped a full war (12:24), but fighting went on along the border.
14:31 *Rehoboam lay down with his fathers* The Bible's gentle way of saying a king died. One king made new gods, and the other let the old idols in. Yet God kept His word in both kingdoms, His warnings to Jeroboam and His lamp for David.
15:1 *Abijam became king over Judah* About 913 to 910 B.C. Second Chronicles 13 calls him Abijah and tells of a battle where he spoke to Jeroboam's army about the LORD and won.
15:2 *Maacah the daughter of Absalom* In the Bible "daughter" can mean granddaughter. Second Chronicles 13:2 names her mother's father as Uriel of Gibeah, so many think she was Absalom's granddaughter through Tamar (2 Sam 14:27). Verse 10 calls her Asa's "mother," meaning his grandmother, who kept the title of queen mother.
15:3 *his heart was not complete with the LORD his God* The same words used of Solomon (11:4). A divided heart passed from father to son to grandson.
15:4 *for the sake of David the LORD his God gave him a lamp in Jerusalem* Abijam did not deserve it. God kept His promise (11:36) because He keeps His word.
15:5 *except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite* David's adultery with Bathsheba and murder of her husband (2 Sam 11). Scripture does not hide it. But David repented and God forgave him (2 Sam 12:13; Ps 51). Our standing with God rests not on our record but on His covenant and the One He has chosen. For us that is David's greater Son, Jesus.
15:7 *war was between Abijam and Jeroboam* Three short years and a life that left the lamp burning but did little to brighten it.

matters of Abijam and all that he did, ***are*** they not written in the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Judah? And war was between Abijam and Jeroboam. **8** And Abijam lay down with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David; and Asa his son reigned in his place.

Asa King of Judah

9 And in the twentieth year of Jeroboam king of Israel (Yisra'el), Asa king of Judah became king. **10** And forty-one years he reigned in Jerusalem; and the name of his mother ***was*** Maacah the daughter of Absalom. **11** And Asa did what ***was*** right in the eyes of the LORD, like David his father. **12** And he made the male cult prostitutes pass away from the land, and he removed all the idols which his fathers had made. **13** And also Maacah his mother, he removed her from ***being*** queen mother, because she had made a horrid image for the Asherah; and Asa cut down her horrid image and burned ***it*** in the wadi Kidron (Qidron). **14** And the high places were not removed; only the heart of Asa was complete with the LORD all his days. **15** And he brought the holy things of his father and the holy things of the house of the LORD: silver and gold and utensils. **16** And war was between Asa and Baasha (Basha) king of Israel all their days. **17** And Baasha king of Israel came up against Judah, and he built the Ramah (Rama), so as not to permit ***anyone*** going out or coming in to Asa king of Judah. **18** And Asa took all the silver and the gold which remained in the treasuries of the house of the LORD and the treasures of the house of the king, and he gave them into the hand of his servants; and King Asa sent them to Ben-hadad the son of Tabrimmon (Tavrimon), the son of Hezion (Chezyon), king of Syria (Aram), who dwelt in Damascus (Dameseq), saying, **19** "***There is*** a covenant between me and you, between my father and your father. Look, I have sent you a gift of silver and gold. Go, break your covenant with Baasha king of Israel, and let him go up from me." **20** And Ben-hadad listened to King Asa, and he sent the commanders of the armies which he had against the cities of Israel; and he struck Ijon (Iyon) and Dan and Abel-beth-maacah (Avel-Bet-Ma'akha) and all Chinneroth (Kinerot), with all the land of Naphtali (Naftali). **21** And it was, when Baasha heard, and he ceased from building the Ramah, and he stayed in Tirzah (Tirtsa). **22** And King Asa made a proclamation to all Judah, none ***was*** exempt; and they carried away the stones of the Ramah and its timber with which Baasha had built; and King Asa built with them Geba (Geva) of Benjamin (Binyamin) and the Mizpah (Mitspa). **23** And the rest of all the matters of Asa, and all his might, and all that he did, and the cities which he built, ***are*** they not written in the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Judah? Only in the time of his old age he was sick in his feet. **24** And Asa lay down with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father; and Jehoshaphat (Yehoshafat) his son reigned in his place.

Nadab and Baasha Kings of Israel

25 And Nadab (Nadav) the son of Jeroboam became king over Israel in the second year of Asa king of Judah, and he reigned over Israel two years. **26** And he did the evil in the eyes of the LORD, and he walked in the way of his father and in his sin with which he caused Israel to sin. **27** And Baasha the son of Ahijah (Achiya), of the house of Issachar (Yisashkhar), conspired against him; and Baasha struck him down at Gibbethon (Gibbeton), which ***belonged*** to the Philistines; and Nadab and all Israel ***were*** laying siege to Gibbethon. **28** And

15:8 Matt 1:7; Matt 1:8; 2 Chr 14:1
15:9 Matt 1:7
15:10 1 Kgs 15:2,13; 2 Chr 11:20,21; 2 Chr 13:2
15:11 Matt 1:7; 2 Chr 14:2,11; 1 Kgs 15:3
15:12 1 Pet 1:18; 1 Kgs 22:46; 1 Kgs 11:7,8
15:13 John 18:1; Matt 1:7; Exod 32:20
15:14 Matt 1:7; 1 Kgs 22:43; 1 Kgs 15:3
15:15 1 Kgs 7:51; 1 Chr 26:26-28; 2 Chr 14:13
15:16 Matt 1:7; 1 Kgs 15:6,7,32; 1 Kgs 14:30
15:17 Matt 1:7; 1 Kgs 12:27; 2 Chr 16:1-6
15:18 Matt 1:7; 1 Kgs 14:26; 2 Kgs 12:18
15:19 2 Chr 19:2; Isa 31:1; 2 Sam 21:2
15:20 Matt 1:7; 2 Kgs 15:29; Judg 18:29
15:21 1 Kgs 14:17; 1 Kgs 16:15-18; 2 Chr 16:5
15:22 Matt 1:7; Josh 21:17; Josh 18:24
15:23 Matt 1:7; 1 Kgs 15:7,8; 1 Kgs 14:29-31
15:24 Matt 1:8; 1 Kgs 22:41-43; 2 Chr 17:1-9
15:25 1 Kgs 14:12,20
15:26 1 Kgs 14:16; 1 Kgs 15:30,34; 1 Kgs 12:28-33
15:27 1 Kgs 14:14; Josh 19:44; Josh 21:23
15:28 Deut 32:35

15:10 *forty-one years* About 910 to 869 B.C. Asa saw seven kings of Israel come and go. In Israel kings rose and fell in a few years. In Judah, David's line held steady.
15:11 *Asa did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, like David his father* After two generations of drift, a king who turned back. He cleared out what Rehoboam allowed (14:24) and Abijam kept.
15:13 *he removed her from being queen mother* The queen mother had real power and honor. It is one thing to tear down a stranger's idol and another to confront your own family. Whoever loves father or mother more than Jesus is not worthy of Him (Matt 10:37). The Kidron is the valley just east of Jerusalem. Sometimes faithfulness costs us at home.
15:14 *the high places were not removed* Probably places where people worshiped the LORD in the wrong place and way, not outright idol shrines. They lingered until Hezekiah and Josiah (2 Kgs 18:4; 23:8). Yet God judged Asa's heart as wholly His. God does not demand that we be flawless before He calls our heart true.
15:15 *silver and gold and utensils* Asa restored the treasuries Shishak emptied (14:26), and soon gave them away again.
15:17 *he built the Ramah* Ramah was about five miles north of Jerusalem on the main road. Baasha was choking Judah's road north, probably to stop northerners moving south to worship in Jerusalem (2 Chr 15:9).
15:18 *Ben-hadad the son of Tabrimmon* King of Syria in Damascus. Asa paid him with the temple treasures to break his treaty with Israel.
15:19 *Go, break your covenant with Baasha king of Israel* It worked on the surface. But the seer Hanani rebuked Asa for relying on Syria and not on the LORD (2 Chr 16:7-9). Years before, Asa had trusted God against a huge army from Cush (2 Chr 14:9-12). A believer can trust God in one great crisis and reach for a worldly answer in the next. Asa used God's money to buy what God would have given for free. What do we reach for first when pressure comes?
15:20 *all Chinneroth, with all the land of Naphtali* Towns in the far north around the Sea of Galilee, then called Chinnereth. Dan, where one of Jeroboam's calves stood, was among them.
15:22 *Geba of Benjamin and the Mizpah* Asa used Baasha's own stones and timber to build two forts that pushed his border north. Jeremiah 41:9 mentions a cistern Asa dug at Mizpah.
15:23 *in the time of his old age he was sick in his feet* Second Chronicles 16:12 adds that he sought the physicians and not the LORD. Seeing a doctor is not wrong. Asa's fault was leaving God out of it. A man who once cried out to God against a huge army spent his last years not seeking Him.
15:25 *he reigned over Israel two years* About 909 to 908 B.C. Hebrew writers often counted part of a year as a year, so two years can begin in Asa's second year and end in his third (15:28).
15:27 *Baasha the son of Ahijah, of the house of Issachar, conspired against him* Not Ahijah the prophet. Gibbethon was a town on the western edge of the land.

Baasha killed him in the third year of Asa king of Judah, and he reigned in his place. **29** And it was, when he became king, he struck down all the house of Jeroboam; he did not leave to Jeroboam any that breathed, until he had destroyed it, according to the word of the LORD which He spoke by the hand of His servant Ahijah the Shilonite, **30** because of the sins of Jeroboam which he sinned and with which he caused Israel to sin, by his provocation with which he provoked the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger. **31** And the rest of the matters of Nadab and all that he did, ***are*** they not written in the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Israel? **32** And war was between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days. **33** In the third year of Asa king of Judah, Baasha the son of Ahijah became king over all Israel in Tirzah, twenty-four years. **34** And he did the evil in the eyes of the LORD, and he walked in the way of Jeroboam and in his sin with which he caused Israel to sin.

1 KINGS 16

Jehu's Word against Baasha

1 And the word of the LORD came to Jehu (Yehu) the son of Hanani (Chanani) against Baasha (Basha), saying, **2** "Because I raised you up from the dust and made you leader over My people Israel (Yisra'el), and you have walked in the way of Jeroboam (Yaravam) and have caused My people Israel to sin, to provoke Me to anger with their sins, **3** look, I am about to sweep away after Baasha and after his house, and I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat (Nevat). **4** The one who dies of Baasha in the city the dogs will eat, and the one of his who dies in the field the birds of the heavens will eat." **5** And the rest of the matters of Baasha, and what he did, and his might, ***are*** they not written in the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Israel? **6** And Baasha lay down with his fathers and was buried in Tirzah (Tirtsa); and Elah (Ela) his son reigned in his place. **7** And also by the hand of Jehu the son of Hanani the prophet the word of the LORD came against Baasha and against his house, because of all the evil which he had done in the eyes of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger with the work of his hands, in being like the house of Jeroboam, and because he struck it down.

Elah and Zimri

8 In the twenty-sixth year of Asa king of Judah (Yehuda), Elah the son of Baasha became king over Israel in Tirzah, two years. **9** And his servant Zimri, commander of half the chariotry, conspired against him; and he ***was*** in Tirzah, drinking ***himself*** drunk ***in*** the house of Arza (Artsa), who ***was*** over the household in Tirzah. **10** And Zimri came in and struck him down and killed him, in the twenty-seventh year of Asa king of Judah, and he reigned in his place. **11** And it was, when he became king, as soon as he sat on his throne, he struck down all the house of Baasha; he did not leave him ***one*** who urinates against a wall, either ***of*** his redeemers or ***of*** his friends. **12** And Zimri destroyed all the house of Baasha, according to the word of the LORD which He had spoken against Baasha by the hand of Jehu the prophet, **13** because of all the sins of Baasha and the sins of Elah his son, which they sinned and with which they caused Israel to sin, to provoke the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger with their vanities. **14** And the rest of the matters of Elah and all that he did, ***are*** they not written in the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Israel? **15** In the twenty-seventh year of Asa king of Judah, Zimri reigned seven days in Tirzah. And the people ***were*** encamped against Gibbethon (Gibbeton), which ***belonged*** to the Philistines. **16** And the people who were encamped heard, saying, "Zimri has conspired, and he has also struck

15:29 1 Kgs 14:9-16; 2 Kgs 9:7-10,36,37; 2 Kgs 10:10,11,31
15:30 1 Kgs 15:26; 1 Kgs 14:9-16; 1 Kgs 14:22
15:31 1 Kgs 14:19; 1 Kgs 16:5,14,20,27
15:33 1 Kgs 16:8
15:34 1 Kgs 15:26; 1 Kgs 12:28,29; 1 Kgs 14:16
16:1 2 Chr 19:2; 2 Chr 20:34; 1 Kgs 16:7
16:2 1 Kgs 14:7; 1 Kgs 15:34; 1 Sam 2:8,27,28
16:3 1 Kgs 14:10; 1 Kgs 16:11,12; 1 Kgs 15:29,30
16:4 1 Kgs 14:11
16:5 1 Kgs 14:19; 1 Kgs 15:31; 2 Chr 16:1-6
16:6 1 Kgs 14:17; 1 Kgs 15:21; 1 Kgs 14:20
16:7 Acts 2:23; Acts 4:27; Ps 115:4
16:9 Matt 24:49; Gen 24:2,10; Gen 39:4,9
16:10 2 Kgs 9:31
16:11 1 Kgs 15:29; 1 Sam 25:22,34; Judg 1:7
16:12 1 Kgs 16:1,7; 1 Kgs 14:18; 2 Kgs 14:25
16:13 Deut 32:21; 1 Kgs 15:30; 1 Sam 12:21
15:15 1 Kgs 15:27; Josh 19:44; 1 Kgs 16:8
16:16 1 Kgs 16:30; 2 Kgs 8:26; 2 Chr 22:2

15:29 *he did not leave to Jeroboam any that breathed* Ahijah's word (14:10-11) came true within about two years of Jeroboam's death. Jeroboam made the calves to protect his family's throne (12:26-27), and the calves cost his family the throne. Sin never delivers what it promises.
15:30 *because of the sins of Jeroboam* Baasha did what God foretold, but that did not make him godly. God used his ambition as a tool of judgment and later judged him too (16:7). Being used by God is not the same as walking with God.
15:34 *he walked in the way of Jeroboam* About 908 to 886 B.C. He destroyed Jeroboam's house for this very sin and then did the same thing himself. We can condemn someone's sin and fall into it (Rom 2:1).
16:1 *Jehu the son of Hanani* A prophet, not the later king Jehu. His father was the seer who rebuked Asa (2 Chr 16:7), and Jehu later rebuked Jehoshaphat (2 Chr 19:2).
16:2 *I raised you up from the dust* Baasha came from nothing, and God gave him the throne. God still calls them "My people." Even in their rebellion, they were His.
16:3 *I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat* The same words of dogs and birds spoken over Jeroboam's family (14:11). Baasha destroyed that house with his own sword and still did not learn.
16:7 *and because he struck it down* Why judge Baasha for doing what God foretold? God used him, but Baasha did it for his own ambition, then sat on the throne doing the very sins he punished. God judged his heart and motives. Hosea says the same of Jehu (Hos 1:4). Being an instrument of God's plan never excuses a wicked heart.
16:8 *Elah the son of Baasha became king over Israel* About 886 to 885 B.C.
16:9 *drinking himself drunk in the house of Arza* While his army besieged Gibbethon (16:15), the king was drunk at a party. A drunk king is a defenseless king. Wine is not for kings (Prov 31:4-5), and "do not be drunk with wine" (Eph 5:18). A man who loses control of himself cannot guard anything else.
16:11 *either of his redeemers or of his friends* A redeemer here is a close relative whose duty was to protect the family or avenge a death (Num 35:19). Zimri left no one to avenge Elah.
16:13 *with their vanities* Empty, worthless things, here the idols. The Hebrew word is hevel, breath or vapor, the word Ecclesiastes uses for life without God. Idols are nothing but air.
16:15 *Zimri reigned seven days in Tirzah* About 885 B.C., the shortest reign in Israel's history.
16:16 *all Israel made Omri, the commander of the army, king over Israel* Zimri was a chariot officer. Omri was the general, and the army followed its general.

down the king." And all Israel made Omri, the commander of the army, king over Israel on that day in the camp. **17** And Omri went up, and all Israel with him, from Gibbethon, and they laid siege to Tirzah. **18** And it was, when Zimri saw that the city was captured, and he went into the citadel of the house of the king, and he burned the house of the king over himself with fire, and he died, **19** because of his sins which he sinned, in doing the evil in the eyes of the LORD, in walking in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin which he did, to cause Israel to sin. **20** And the rest of the matters of Zimri, and his conspiracy which he conspired, ***are*** they not written in the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Israel?

Omri King of Israel

21 Then the people, Israel, were divided into halves: half of the people were after Tibni (Tivni) the son of Ginath (Ginat), to make him king, and half ***were*** after Omri. **22** And the people who ***were*** after Omri prevailed over the people who ***were*** after Tibni the son of Ginath; and Tibni died, and Omri became king. **23** In the thirty-first year of Asa king of Judah, Omri became king over Israel, twelve years; in Tirzah he reigned six years. **24** And he bought the hill Samaria (Shomron) from Shemer for approximately 150 pounds (two talents) of silver; and he built ***on*** the hill, and he called the name of the city which he built after the name of Shemer, the owner of the hill, Samaria. **25** And Omri did the evil in the eyes of the LORD, and he did more evil than all who ***were*** before him. **26** And he walked in all the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat and in his sin with which he caused Israel to sin, to provoke the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger with their vanities. **27** And the rest of the matters of Omri which he did, and his might which he did, ***are*** they not written in the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Israel? **28** And Omri lay down with his fathers and was buried in Samaria; and Ahab (Achav) his son reigned in his place.

Ahab and Jezebel

29 And Ahab the son of Omri became king over Israel in the thirty-eighth year of Asa king of Judah; and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty-two years. **30** And Ahab the son of Omri did the evil in the eyes of the LORD more than all who ***were*** before him. **31** And it was, was it a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat? And he took ***as*** a wife Jezebel (Izevel) the daughter of Ethbaal (Etba'al) king of the Sidonians, and he went and served the Baal and bowed down to him. **32** And he set up an altar for the Baal ***in*** the house of the Baal which he built in Samaria. **33** And Ahab made the Asherah; and Ahab did more to provoke the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him. **34** In his days Hiel (Chi'el) the Bethelite built Jericho (Yericho); with Abiram (Aviram) his firstborn he laid its foundation, and with Segub (Seguv) his youngest he set up its gates, according to the word of the LORD which He spoke by the hand of Joshua (Yehoshua) the son of Nun.

16:17 Judg 9:45,50,56,57; 2 Kgs 6:24,25; 2 Kgs 18:9-12
16:18 2 Sam 17:23; 1 Sam 31:4,5; Judg 9:54
16:19 1 Kgs 15:26,34; 1 Kgs 12:28; 1 Kgs 14:16
16:20 1 Kgs 16:5,14,27; 1 Kgs 14:19; 1 Kgs 15:31
16:21 1 Kgs 16:8,29; 1 Kgs 15:25,28; Prov 28:2
16:23 2 Chr 22:2; 1 Kgs 16:8,29
16:24 John 4:4; Acts 8:5; John 4:5
16:25 Mic 6:16; 1 Kgs 16:30,31,33; 1 Kgs 14:9
16:26 1 Kgs 16:13; 1 Kgs 16:2,7,19; 1 Kgs 12:26-33
16:27 1 Kgs 16:5,14,20; 1 Kgs 15:31
16:30 1 Kgs 16:25,31,33; 1 Kgs 14:9; 1 Kgs 21:25
16:31 Rev 2:20; Rom 11:4; Judg 18:7
16:32 2 Kgs 10:21,26,27
16:33 2 Kgs 13:6; Exod 34:13; 2 Kgs 21:3
16:34 Luke 19:1; Josh 6:26; Josh 23:14,15

16:18 *he burned the house of the king over himself with fire* He took his own life in the palace he had seized a week earlier.
16:19 *in walking in the way of Jeroboam* In seven days Zimri had already shown which way he would walk. It does not take long to show what is in a heart. His name became a byword (2 Kgs 9:31).
16:21 *the people, Israel, were divided into halves* A split within the split. Comparing verses 15 and 23, this civil war lasted about four or five years. Scripture does not say how Tibni died.
16:23 *in the thirty-first year of Asa king of Judah, Omri became king over Israel, twelve years* Likely when he became sole king. The twelve years count from his start in Asa's twenty-seventh year, about 885 to 874 B.C.
16:24 *he bought the hill Samaria from Shemer* For about 150 pounds of silver. Samaria sat on a high, steep hill on a main trade road, easy to defend. It stayed Israel's capital until 722 B.C., and in time the whole region took its name. The Moabite Stone speaks of Omri ruling Moab, and Assyrian records called Israel the house of Omri long after. But the Bible gives him a few verses. God does not measure a king by his buildings or his fame.
16:25 *he did more evil than all who were before him* Beyond the sins of Jeroboam, the writer does not say what. Micah 6:16 speaks of the statutes of Omri to Israel's shame. What will be said of our lives when the summary is written? Not how much we built, but whether we did right in the eyes of the LORD.
16:29 *twenty-two years* About 874 to 853 B.C. The rest of 1 Kings is mostly the story of his reign and of the prophet God sent to confront him.
16:30 *more than all who were before him* Each king went a step lower. Jeroboam made calves, Omri did more evil, and Ahab more still.
16:31 *Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians* Ethbaal ruled Tyre and Sidon, and his name means with Baal. The marriage was political, but it brought into Israel a strong-willed woman fully devoted to Baal who tried to wipe out the worship of the LORD (18:4). Her name became a byword for false teaching (Rev 2:20).
16:31 *served the Baal and bowed down to him* Baal was the chief god of the Canaanites and Phoenicians, a storm god believed to send rain and make the land fruitful. The word means lord or master. Jeroboam's calves corrupted the LORD's worship. Ahab brought in another god and built him a temple in the capital.
16:33 *Ahab made the Asherah* The wooden pole or image of the goddess thought to be Baal's partner. The question of the next chapters is who is God in Israel, and who sends the rain. God is about to answer, beginning with a drought.
16:34 *according to the word of the LORD which He spoke by the hand of Joshua the son of Nun* Joshua cursed anyone who would rebuild Jericho as a fortified city (Josh 6:26). The text does not say how Hiel's sons died. Some think by God's hand as the work went on, others that Hiel offered them as foundation sacrifices, a pagan practice of the time. Scripture does not say. In a land that forgot God's word, it still stood after five centuries.

1 KINGS 17

Elijah Announces a Drought

1 And Elijah (Eliyahu) the Tishbite, from the sojourners of Gilead (Gilad), said to Ahab (Achav), "***As*** the LORD, the God of Israel (Yisra'el), lives, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew and rain these years, except according to my word." **2** And the word of the LORD came to him, saying, **3** "Go from here and turn eastward, and hide yourself by the wadi Cherith (Kerit), which ***is*** east of the Jordan (Yarden). **4** And it shall be ***that*** you shall drink from the wadi, and I have commanded the ravens to provide for you there." **5** And he went and did according to the word of the LORD; and he went and dwelt by the wadi Cherith, which ***is*** east of the Jordan. **6** And the ravens ***were*** bringing him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and from the wadi he drank. **7** And it was, at the end of days, and the wadi dried up, because there had been no rain in the land.

The Widow of Zarephath

8 And the word of the LORD came to him, saying, **9** "Arise, go to Zarephath (Tsarfat), which ***belongs*** to Sidon (Tsidon), and dwell there. Look, I have commanded a widow woman there to provide for you." **10** And he arose and went to Zarephath, and he came to the entrance of the city; and look, there ***was*** a widow woman gathering sticks. And he called out to her and said, "Please get me a little water in the vessel, that I may drink." **11** And she went to get ***it***, and he called out to her and said, "Please get me a piece of bread in your hand." **12** And she said, "***As*** the LORD your God lives, I have no cake, except the fullness of a palm of flour in the jar and a little oil in the jug; and look, I am gathering two sticks, and I will go in and prepare it for myself and for my son, and we will eat it, and we will die." **13** And Elijah said to her, "Do not fear; go, do according to your word; only make me a small cake from it first, and bring ***it*** out to me; and for yourself and for your son you shall make ***some*** afterward. **14** For thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: 'The jar of flour shall not be used up, and the jug of oil shall not be lacking, until the day ***that*** the LORD gives rain on the face of the ground.'" **15** And she went and did according to the word of Elijah; and she ate, she and he and her household, ***many*** days. **16** The jar of flour was not used up, and the jug of oil was not lacking, according to the word of the LORD which He spoke by the hand of Elijah.

Elijah Raises the Widow's Son

17 And it was, after these things, the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, became sick; and his sickness was very severe, until there was no breath left in him. **18** And she said to Elijah, "What ***is there*** to me and to you, O man of God? You have come to me to bring my iniquity to remembrance and to put my son to death!" **19** And he said to her, "Give me your son." And he took him from her bosom and carried him up to

17:1 James 5:17; Luke 1:17; Luke 4:25
17:2 Acts 11:28; 1 Kgs 12:22; 1 Chr 17:3
17:3 Acts 11:28; 1 Kgs 22:25; Ps 31:20
17:4 1 Kgs 17:9; 1 Kgs 19:5-8; Ps 147:9
17:5 1 Kgs 19:9; Prov 3:5; Matt 16:24
17:6 Exod 16:35; Num 11:23; Judg 14:14
17:7 Isa 40:30,31; Isa 54:10
17:8 Acts 11:28; Heb 13:6; 1 Kgs 17:2
17:9 Luke 4:26; Matt 15:21; Matt 10:41
17:10 Matt 10:41; Luke 4:26; Acts 11:28
17:11 Matt 10:41; Luke 4:26; Acts 11:28
17:12 Matt 4:4; Matt 10:41; Luke 4:26
17:13 Matt 10:41; Luke 4:26; Exod 14:13
17:14 Matt 10:41; Luke 4:26; 2 Kgs 3:16
17:15 Matt 10:41; Luke 4:26; Gen 6:22
17:16 Luke 1:45; Luke 4:26; Matt 9:28-30
17:17 Gen 22:1,2; 2 Kgs 4:18-20; Zech 12:10
17:18 John 2:4; Mark 5:7; Luke 8:28
17:19 Acts 9:37; 2 Kgs 4:10,21,32

17:1 *Elijah the Tishbite, from the sojourners of Gilead* He simply appears, with no family line or call story. His name means my God is the LORD, a challenge to a king who had made Baal his god. Tishbe was in Gilead, the rough hill country east of the Jordan.
17:1 *As the LORD, the God of Israel, lives, before whom I stand* Baal was believed to die and come back each year with the seasons. The LORD lives. Elijah stood before God like a servant ready before his master, not before Ahab.
17:1 *there shall not be dew and rain these years, except according to my word* God warned that if Israel turned to other gods He would shut the heavens (Deut 11:16-17; 28:23-24). Baal was the storm god who supposedly sent rain, so God struck him at the very point of his claim. Elijah did not control the weather. He prayed God's warning back to Him (James 5:17), and "the prayer of a righteous man, being at work, prevails much" (James 5:16).
17:3 *hide yourself by the wadi Cherith* A wadi is a stream bed that runs in the rainy season and dries out in the dry season. Ahab would search every nation for him (18:10). The drought of rain came with a drought of the word.
17:4 *I have commanded the ravens to provide for you there* Ravens were unclean birds (Lev 11:15), known for taking food, not giving it. God commanded the most unlikely helpers. Notice "there." God's provision was at the place of His direction.
17:6 *bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening* The pattern of manna in the morning and quail in the evening (Exod 16:8, 12-13). God was teaching Elijah to live day by day on His supply (Matt 6:11).
17:7 *the wadi dried up, because there had been no rain in the land* The prophet who prayed for the drought felt it himself. God's servants are not always spared hardships that fall on everyone. When one supply dries up, God already has the next one ready. Sometimes He lets the brook dry up because He wants to move us.
17:9 *Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon* A coastal town between Tyre and Sidon, Jezebel's homeland and the heart of Baal worship. God hid Elijah in the enemy's own country.
17:9 *I have commanded a widow woman there to provide for you* A widow was usually among the poorest of the poor. God chose the weakest person in the land to feed His prophet (1 Cor 1:27).
17:12 *we will eat it, and we will die* A woman at the end of herself. She said "the LORD your God," knowing his God's name. Whether she yet trusted Him, we are not told, but verse 24 shows her faith grew.
17:13 *Do not fear* The word God speaks over and over to people at their weakest. Make me one first sounds hard until we hear the promise. Elijah was asking her to put God first and trust His word. "Seek first the kingdom of God" (Matt 6:33).
17:15 *she went and did according to the word of Elijah* A pagan widow in Baal's country obeyed the LORD's word, while Israel would not. God did not fill her pantry. He gave enough for one more day, and then another. He often provides for today, not next year, so that we keep trusting Him.
17:16 *the jar of flour was not used up* Jesus brought up this widow at Nazareth: many widows were in Israel, "and to none of them was Elijah sent" (Luke 4:26), except a Gentile widow. They tried to throw Him off a cliff (Luke 4:28-29). God's grace has always reached beyond Israel to anyone who will believe.
17:17 *there was no breath left in him* The boy died. The woman, Elijah and the whole story treat him as dead, and so do I.
17:18 *You have come to me to bring my iniquity to remembrance* Like many grieving people, she thought her son's death was God punishing a past sin. Jesus spoke against that kind of thinking (John 9:2-3). Not every sorrow is a punishment, and God was about to show her mercy.

the upper room where he was dwelling, and he laid him on his own bed. **20** And he called out to the LORD and said, "O LORD my God, have You also brought harm on the widow with whom I am sojourning, by putting her son to death?" **21** And he stretched himself over the lad three times, and he called out to the LORD and said, "O LORD my God, please let the soul of this lad return into his inward parts." **22** And the LORD listened to the voice of Elijah, and the soul of the lad returned into his inward parts, and he lived. **23** And Elijah took the lad and brought him down from the upper room into the house, and he gave him to his mother; and Elijah said, "See, your son ***is*** alive." **24** And the woman said to Elijah, "Now this I know, that you ***are*** a man of God, and the word of the LORD in your mouth ***is*** truth."

1 KINGS 18

Elijah and Obadiah

1 And it was ***after*** many days, and the word of the LORD came to Elijah (Eliyahu) in the third year, saying, "Go, present yourself to Ahab (Achav), and let Me give rain on the face of the ground." **2** And Elijah went to present himself to Ahab. And the famine ***was*** severe in Samaria (Shomron). **3** And Ahab summoned Obadiah (Ovadyahu), who ***was*** over the household. And Obadiah was fearing the LORD greatly; **4** and it was, when Jezebel (Izevel) cut off the prophets of the LORD, and Obadiah took a hundred prophets and hid them, fifty men in the cave, and provided them ***with*** bread and water. **5** And Ahab said to Obadiah, "Go through the land to all the springs of water and to all the wadis; perhaps we will find grass and keep horse and mule alive, and we will not cut off ***any*** of the livestock." **6** And they divided the land between them to pass through it; Ahab went by one way by himself, and Obadiah went by another way by himself. **7** And Obadiah was on the way, and look, Elijah ***came*** to meet him; and he recognized him, and he fell on his face and said, "***Is*** this you, my lord Elijah?" **8** And he said to him, "I ***am***. Go, say to your lord, 'Look, Elijah ***is here***.'" **9** And he said, "What have I sinned, that you are giving your servant into the hand of Ahab, to put me to death? **10** ***As*** the LORD your God lives, there is no nation or kingdom where my lord has not sent to seek you; and they said, '***He is*** not ***here***,' and he made the kingdom and the nation swear that it had not found you. **11** And now you are saying, 'Go, say to your lord, "Look, Elijah ***is here***."' **12** And it will be, I will go from you, and the Spirit of the LORD will carry you to where I do not know; and I will come to tell Ahab, and he will not find you, and he will kill me. And your servant has been fearing the LORD from my youth. **13** Has it not been told to my lord what I did when Jezebel killed the prophets of the LORD, and I hid a hundred men of the prophets of the LORD, fifty ***by*** fifty men in the cave, and I provided them ***with*** bread and water? **14** And now you are saying, 'Go, say to your lord, "Look, Elijah ***is here***"'; and he will kill me." **15** And Elijah said, "***As*** the LORD of armies lives, before whom I stand, surely today I will present myself to him." **16** And Obadiah went to meet Ahab and told him; and Ahab went to meet Elijah.

Elijah Meets Ahab

17 And it was, when Ahab saw Elijah, and Ahab said to him, "***Is*** this you, troubler of Israel (Yisra'el)?" **18** And he said, "I have not troubled Israel, but you and the house of your

17:20 1 Kgs 18:36,37; Exod 17:4; 1 Sam 7:8,9
17:21 Acts 20:10; Luke 7:14; 2 Kgs 4:33-35
17:22 Heb 11:35; Luke 4:26; Deut 32:39
17:23 Luke 7:15; Luke 4:26; 2 Kgs 4:36,37
17:24 1 John 2:21; Luke 4:26; Heb 11:35
18:1 Luke 4:25; James 5:17; 1 Kgs 17:1,7,15
18:2 Luke 4:25; Ps 27:1; Ps 51:4
18:3 Neh 7:2; Gen 24:2,10; Gen 39:4,5,9
18:4 Heb 11:38; Heb 11:37; 1 Kgs 18:13
18:5 Ps 104:14; Jer 14:5,6; Joel 1:18
18:6 Jer 14:3
18:7 2 Kgs 1:6-8; 1 Kgs 11:29; Matt 3:4
18:8 1 Kgs 18:3; Rom 13:7; 1 Pet 2:17,18
18:9 1 Kgs 18:12; 1 Kgs 17:18; Exod 5:21
18:10 1 Kgs 17:1,12; 1 Kgs 18:15; 1 Kgs 1:29
18:11 1 Kgs 18:8,14
18:12 Acts 8:39; Ezek 8:3; 2 Kgs 2:11,16
18:13 Rom 11:3; 1 Kgs 18:4; Matt 25:35
18:14 Matt 10:28
18:15 1 Kgs 17:1; 1 Kgs 18:10; Heb 6:16,17
18:17 1 Kgs 21:20; Josh 7:25; Acts 16:20
18:18 2 Chr 15:2; 1 Kgs 9:9; Ezek 3:8

17:20 *have You also brought harm on the widow* Elijah did not understand either, and he brought his confusion straight to God. Prayer can be that honest.
17:21 *he stretched himself over the lad three times* Scripture does not explain why. Elisha later does something similar (2 Kgs 4:34). The soul here is nephesh, the life or living self. Elijah asked God to give the boy his life back.
17:22 *the soul of the lad returned into his inward parts, and he lived* The first time in the Bible a dead person is brought back to life. Elisha (2 Kgs 4:32-37) and Jesus (Luke 7:11-15) would do the same, and by faith women "received their dead by resurrection" (Heb 11:35). These people later died again, but they pointed ahead to Jesus, who rose never to die again (Rom 6:9), and to the resurrection of all who are His (1 Cor 15:20-23).
17:23 *See, your son is alive* At Nain Jesus "gave him to his mother" (Luke 7:15), just as Elijah did here.
17:24 *the word of the LORD in your mouth is truth* The resurrection settled her faith. Baal was said to die each year and need bringing back. The LORD brought back her son. No rain, the ravens, the flour: God's word came true each time. "Your word is truth" (John 17:17). We can stake our lives on it, one day at a time.
18:1 *in the third year* Luke and James say the drought lasted three years and six months (Luke 4:25; James 5:17). "The third year" likely counts from Elijah's move to Zarephath, or from his word to Ahab after the normal dry months had begun. God chose to send the rain after His prophet confronted the king and the people turned back.
18:3 *Obadiah was fearing the LORD greatly* His name means servant of the LORD. Feeding a hundred hidden prophets in a famine, under the nose of the queen who wanted them dead, was costly and dangerous (18:4). He is a picture of a believer serving God faithfully in a hard place. God has His people in every kind of place, even in Ahab's house.
18:5 *perhaps we will find grass and keep horse and mule alive* His people were starving and God's prophets hunted, and the king was looking for grass for his horses.
18:8 *Go, say to your lord* Elijah gently reminded Obadiah whose servant he was in the palace. Elijah's Lord was the LORD.
18:12 *the Spirit of the LORD will carry you to where I do not know* Elijah had a way of disappearing, and Obadiah feared he would pay with his life. He was a real believer, brave in secret but afraid of being exposed. Many of us are like him. God did not scold his fear. He gave him a promise.
18:15 *As the LORD of armies lives, before whom I stand* Sometimes translated LORD of hosts, a title for God as commander of all the armies of heaven. Elijah stood before Him, so he did not fear Ahab.
18:17 *troubler of Israel* To Ahab, Elijah was the problem.
18:18 *I have not troubled Israel, but you and the house of your father* People blame the messenger for trouble that comes from their own sin. Ahab wanted rain without repentance. The man who tells the truth about sin is not the troubler. The sin is. "The Baals" means the many local forms of Baal worship.

father, in that you have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and you have walked after the Baals. **19** And now send, gather to me all Israel to the mountain of Carmel (Karmel), and the prophets of the Baal, four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the Asherah, four hundred, who eat at the table of Jezebel."

Fire on Mount Carmel

20 And Ahab sent among all the sons of Israel, and he gathered the prophets to the mountain of Carmel. **21** And Elijah drew near to all the people and said, "How long ***will*** you ***be*** limping on the two crutches? If the LORD ***is*** the God, walk after Him; and if the Baal, walk after him." And the people did not answer him a word. **22** And Elijah said to the people, "I, I alone am left a prophet of the LORD; and the prophets of the Baal ***are*** four hundred and fifty men. **23** And let them give us two young bulls, and let them choose for themselves the one young bull, and let them cut it in pieces and put ***it*** on the wood, and they shall not set fire; and I will prepare the other young bull and put ***it*** on the wood, and I will not set fire. **24** And you shall call on the name of your god, and I, I will call on the name of the LORD; and it shall be ***that*** the god who answers by fire, he ***is*** the God." And all the people answered and said, "The word ***is*** good." **25** And Elijah said to the prophets of the Baal, "Choose for yourselves the one young bull and prepare ***it*** first, for you ***are*** the many; and call on the name of your god, and do not set fire." **26** And they took the young bull which he gave them, and they prepared ***it***, and they called on the name of the Baal from the morning until noon, saying, "O Baal, answer us!" And there was no voice, and there was no one answering. And they limped around the altar which he had made. **27** And it was, at noon, and Elijah mocked them and said, "Call out with a great voice, for he ***is*** a god; for ***he is*** musing, and ***he has*** gone aside, and ***he is*** on a journey; perhaps he ***is*** sleeping, and let him awake." **28** And they called out with a great voice, and they cut themselves according to their custom with swords and with lances, until blood poured out over them. **29** And it was, when noon passed, and they prophesied until the offering up of the grain offering; and there was no voice, and there was no one answering, and there was no attention. **30** And Elijah said to all the people, "Draw near to me." And all the people drew near to him. And he repaired the altar of the LORD which had been torn down. **31** And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob (Ya'aqov), to whom the word of the LORD had come, saying, "Israel shall be your name." **32** And he built the stones ***into*** an altar in the name of the LORD; and he made a trench like a container of approximately 14 quarts (two seahs) of seed around the altar. **33** And he arranged the wood, and he cut the young bull in pieces, and he put ***it*** on the wood. And he said, "Fill four jars ***with*** water, and pour ***it*** on the burnt offering and on the wood." **34** And he said, "Do ***it*** a second time." And they did ***it*** a second time. And he said, "Do ***it*** a third time." And they did ***it*** a third time. **35** And the water went around the altar; and also he filled the trench ***with*** water. **36** And it was, at the offering up of the grain offering, and Elijah the prophet drew near and said, "O LORD, God of Abraham (Avraham), Isaac (Yitschaq), and Israel, today let it be known that You ***are*** God in Israel, and I ***am*** Your servant, and at Your word I have done all these things. **37** Answer me, O LORD, answer me, that this people may know that You, O LORD, ***are*** the God, and You have turned their heart back."

18:19 2 Pet 2:1; Rev 2:20; Josh 19:26
18:20 2 Pet 2:1; 1 Kgs 22:9
18:21 Luke 6:13; Mark 7:14; John 10:24
18:22 Rom 11:3; 2 Pet 2:1; 2 Pet 2:3
18:24 1 Kgs 18:38; 1 Chr 21:26; Lev 9:24
18:26 Matt 6:7; Jer 10:5; 1 Cor 8:4
18:27 Isa 41:23; Ps 44:23; Ps 78:65,66
18:28 Lev 19:28; Deut 14:1; Mark 5:5
18:29 1 Kgs 18:26; 1 Kgs 22:10,12; 1 Sam 18:10
18:30 Rom 11:3; 1 Kgs 19:10,14; 2 Chr 33:16
18:31 Rev 21:12; Rom 11:3; Gen 32:28
18:32 Col 3:17; Exod 20:24,25; Judg 6:26
18:33 Gen 22:9; Lev 1:6-8; Judg 6:20
18:34 2 Cor 4:2; 2 Cor 8:21
18:35 1 Kgs 18:32,38
18:36 Matt 22:32; Matt 17:3; Exod 3:6,15,16
18:37 James 5:17; Mal 4:5,6; 1 Kgs 18:24,29,36

18:19 *Gather to me all Israel to the mountain of Carmel* A mountain ridge running inland from near modern Haifa, close to Jezebel's homeland and a place where Baal was worshiped. Elijah met Baal on his own ground. The prophets of Asherah are not mentioned again. Perhaps they did not come.
18:21 *How long will you be limping on the two crutches* Hobbling between two supports, never standing firm on either. They had not given up the LORD. They added Baal, to be safe. Their silence said they knew the answer but did not want to commit. "No one is able to serve two masters" (Matt 6:24). God does not accept half a heart.
18:22 *I, I alone am left a prophet of the LORD* Obadiah's hundred were in hiding. Elijah was the only one standing in the open.
18:24 *the god who answers by fire, he is the God* Baal was supposed to be the god of storm and lightning. Surely he could send fire. The people would not answer Elijah's call to choose, but they were glad to watch a contest.
18:25 *for you are the many* Elijah gave them every advantage: first choice of bull, first turn and the most people.
18:26 *they limped around the altar which he had made* The same word as in verse 21, a kind of ritual dance around the altar. "There was no voice."
18:27 *Elijah mocked them* At noon, when a sun or storm god should be strongest. "Gone aside" may be a polite way of saying he went to relieve himself. Elijah exposed the foolishness of idolatry before the nation, as Isaiah did (Isa 44:15-17). His words were meant to show that Baal was nothing.
18:28 *they cut themselves according to their custom* The Law forbade this (Lev 19:28; Deut 14:1). False religion often demands that people hurt themselves to get a god's attention. The true God gave His own blood for us.
18:29 *there was no voice, and there was no one answering, and there was no attention* They raved until the time of the evening sacrifice, mid-afternoon. Three times the writer says it. Baal did not answer, because Baal was not there.
18:30 *he repaired the altar of the LORD which had been torn down* Israel had torn down the LORD's altars (19:10). Before God's fire falls, true worship must be restored.
18:31 *twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob* The kingdom was divided, but in God's eyes there were still twelve tribes, one people, all belonging to the LORD (Gen 35:10).
18:34 *Do it a second time* Twelve jars of water in a drought, perhaps from the sea nearby or a spring that had not dried. Elijah made it humanly impossible. God sometimes waits until every human way out is closed, so no one can doubt who did it.
18:36 *O LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel* After a day of shouting and dancing, a prayer you can say in less than a minute. He called on the God of the covenant and asked that the LORD be known as God, and all this as done at His word.
18:37 *You have turned their heart back* Elijah's deepest desire was not to win. It was for God's people to come back to God. That is the heart of every true servant of God.

38 And the fire of the LORD fell and consumed the burnt offering and the wood and the stones and the dust, and the water which ***was*** in the trench it licked up. **39** And all the people saw, and they fell on their faces and said, "The LORD, He ***is*** the God! The LORD, He ***is*** the God!" **40** And Elijah said to them, "Seize the prophets of the Baal; let not one of them escape." And they seized them; and Elijah brought them down to the wadi Kishon (Qishon) and slaughtered them there.

Elijah Prays for Rain

41 And Elijah said to Ahab, "Go up, eat and drink, for ***there is*** the sound of the roar of the rain." **42** And Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of the Carmel, and he crouched to the ground and put his face between his knees. **43** And he said to his servant, "Go up, please, look toward the sea." And he went up and looked, and he said, "***There is*** nothing." And he said, "Go back," seven times. **44** And it was, at the seventh ***time***, and he said, "Look, a small cloud like the palm of a man ***is*** coming up from the sea." And he said, "Go up, say to Ahab, 'Harness and go down, and the rain will not hold you back.'" **45** And it was, in a little while, and the heavens grew dark ***with*** clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode and went to Jezreel (Yizre'el). **46** And the hand of the LORD was on Elijah, and he girded up his loins and ran before Ahab until you come to Jezreel.

1 KINGS 19

Elijah Flees from Jezebel

1 And Ahab (Achav) told Jezebel (Izevel) all that Elijah (Eliyahu) had done, and all how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. **2** And Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, "Thus may the gods do, and thus may they add, for about this time tomorrow I will make your life like the life of one of them." **3** And he saw, and he arose and went for his life, and he came to Beersheba (Be'er-Sheva), which ***belongs*** to Judah (Yehuda), and he left his servant there. **4** And he himself went into the wilderness a day's journey, and he came and sat under a certain broom tree; and he asked for himself to die, and he said, "***It is*** enough now, O LORD; take my life, for I ***am*** not better than my fathers." **5** And he lay down and slept under a certain broom tree; and look, here ***was*** an angel touching him, and he said to him, "Arise, eat." **6** And he looked, and look, at his head ***was*** a cake ***baked on*** hot coals and a jug of water; and he ate and drank, and he lay down again. **7** And the angel of the LORD came back a second time and touched him and said, "Arise, eat, for the journey ***is too*** great for you." **8** And he arose and ate and drank, and he went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to the mountain of God, Horeb (Chorev).

18:38 Lev 9:24; Judg 6:21; 1 Chr 21:26
18:39 1 Kgs 18:21,24; Judg 13:20; 1 Chr 21:16
18:40 Matt 17:3; Deut 13:5; Deut 18:20
18:41 Eccl 9:7; Acts 27:34; 1 Kgs 18:1
18:42 Mark 14:35; James 5:18; James 5:17
18:43 James 5:18; Ps 5:3; Luke 18:1
18:44 James 5:18; Job 8:7; Zech 4:10
18:45 James 5:18; 1 Kgs 18:39,40; Num 25:8
18:46 1 Pet 1:13; Luke 1:66; 2 Kgs 3:15

19:1 Rev 2:20; 1 Kgs 18:40; 1 Kgs 16:31
19:2 Matt 2:8; Matt 5:12; Rev 2:20
19:3 Matt 26:71; Gen 21:31; Gen 12:12,13
19:4 Num 11:15; Jonah 4:3,8; Jer 20:14-18
19:5 Gen 28:11-15; Ps 34:7,10; Dan 8:19
19:6 Matt 4:11; 1 Kgs 17:6,9-15; Ps 37:3
19:7 Acts 12:7; Deut 33:25; Ps 103:13,14
19:8 Matt 4:2; Acts 7:30; Exod 34:28

18:38 *the fire of the LORD fell* The wood, the stones, the dirt and the water, nothing was left. God's fire had fallen when tabernacle worship began (Lev 9:24) and at the temple's dedication (2 Chr 7:1).
18:39 *The LORD, He is the God* At last they answered, saying what Elijah's name means. Do we need fire from heaven to believe? God has given greater proof by raising His Son from the dead (Acts 17:31). If the LORD is God, follow Him.
18:40 *Elijah brought them down to the wadi Kishon and slaughtered them there* A hard verse. Israel was a nation in covenant with God, and its Law said a prophet who led the people to other gods was to die (Deut 13:1-5; 17:2-5). These men served a queen who murdered the LORD's prophets (18:4, 13). It was a judgment under Israel's covenant, not private revenge. It is not a pattern for us. "My kingdom is not of this world" (John 18:36). Jesus rebuked James and John for wanting to call down fire (Luke 9:54-55). We fight false teaching with truth and prayer, and love those who oppose us (2 Cor 10:4; Matt 5:44). No one may use this verse to justify harming anyone over religion.
18:41 *there is the sound of the roar of the rain* Not a cloud in the sky, but Elijah heard it by faith in God's promise (18:1).
18:42 *put his face between his knees* Humble, earnest prayer. God had promised the rain, and Elijah still prayed seven times. God's promises do not make prayer unnecessary. They give us reason to pray with confidence (James 5:18).
18:44 *a small cloud like the palm of a man* To Elijah, that was enough. The drought ended, and God showed that He, not Baal, sends the rain.
18:46 *he girded up his loins and ran before Ahab* Tucking the long robe into the belt to run. God gave him strength to outrun the chariot about seventeen miles to Jezreel, like a herald before a king, as if to say the king could still return to the LORD. But the next chapter shows that even after a great victory, God's servants are still human.

19:1 *all how he had killed all the prophets with the sword* Not that the fire fell or that the people confessed the LORD. Only what Elijah had done and the deaths of her prophets.
19:2 *Thus may the gods do, and thus may they add* A curse-oath: may the gods punish me if I do not kill you. Some hearts do not soften even before fire from heaven. Why send a messenger and not soldiers? Perhaps she wanted to frighten him away and break the movement Carmel had started. If so, it worked.
19:3 *he arose and went for his life* The man who faced 450 prophets ran from one woman's threat, to Beersheba at the far southern edge of the land, out of Ahab's kingdom.
19:4 *he asked for himself to die* Great spiritual highs are often followed by deep lows. Elijah was worn out, alone, and felt like a failure because the queen was still on her throne. "Elijah was a man of like nature to us" (James 5:17). Feeling this low does not mean you have no faith. Elijah took his pain to God and said it honestly. If you feel this way, God has not left you. Tell someone you trust, and if you are thinking of ending your life, reach out for help today. A broom tree is a desert shrub that gives a little shade.
19:5 *Arise, eat* God did not give him a lecture. He let him sleep, and then He fed him with fresh bread warm from the coals.
19:7 *the angel of the LORD came back a second time* A special messenger who often speaks as the LORD Himself. Many teachers believe this was the Son of God appearing before His birth. God knew the journey was too much for Elijah. Sometimes the most spiritual thing you can do is eat a meal and sleep. "He remembers that we are dust" (Ps 103:14).
19:8 *forty days and forty nights to the mountain of God, Horeb* Horeb is Mount Sinai, where God gave the Law. Moses was there forty days and nights (Exod 24:18), and Jesus fasted forty days in the wilderness (Matt 4:2). Elijah went back to where it all began.

The LORD Speaks at Horeb

9 And he came there into the cave and spent the night there;
and look, the word of the LORD ***came*** to him, and He said to
him, "What ***is there*** for you here, Elijah?" **10** And he said, "I
have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of armies; for
the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) have forsaken Your covenant,
Your altars they have torn down, and Your prophets they
have killed with the sword; and I, I alone am left, and they
have sought my life, to take it." **11** And He said, "Go out and
stand on the mountain before the LORD." And look, the LORD
was passing by, and a great and strong wind ***was*** tearing the
mountains and breaking the rocks before the LORD; the
LORD ***was*** not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake;
the LORD ***was*** not in the earthquake. **12** And after the earth-
quake a fire; the LORD ***was*** not in the fire. And after the fire a
sound of a thin silence. **13** And it was, when Elijah heard, and
he wrapped his face in his cloak and went out and stood ***at***
the entrance of the cave. And look, a voice ***came*** to him, and
it said, "What ***is there*** for you here, Elijah?" **14** And he said, "I
have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of armies; for
the sons of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, Your altars
they have torn down, and Your prophets they have killed
with the sword; and I, I alone am left, and they have sought
my life, to take it." **15** And the LORD said to him, "Go, return
on your way to the wilderness of Damascus (Dameseq); and
you shall come and anoint Hazael (Chaza'el) as king over
Syria (Aram). **16** And Jehu (Yehu) the son of Nimshi you shall
anoint as king over Israel; and Elisha the son of Shaphat
(Shafat) from Abel-meholah (Avel-Mechola) you shall anoint
as prophet in your place. **17** And it shall be ***that*** the one who
escapes from the sword of Hazael, Jehu will put to death; and
the one who escapes from the sword of Jehu, Elisha will put
to death. **18** And I will leave in Israel seven thousand, all the
knees which have not bowed to the Baal, and every mouth
which has not kissed him."

The Call of Elisha

19 And he went from there and found Elisha the son of
Shaphat, and he ***was*** plowing, twelve pairs ***of oxen*** before
him, and he ***was*** with the twelfth. And Elijah passed over to
him and threw his cloak on him. **20** And he left the oxen and
ran after Elijah and said, "Please let me kiss my father and
my mother, and I will walk after you." And he said to him,
"Go, return, for what have I done to you?" **21** And he
returned from following him, and he took the pair of oxen
and sacrificed it, and with the equipment of the oxen he
cooked them, the flesh, and he gave ***it*** to the people, and they
ate. And he arose and walked after Elijah and served him.

1 KINGS 20

Ben-hadad Besieges Samaria

1 And Ben-hadad, the king of Syria (Aram), gathered all his
army, and thirty-two kings ***were*** with him, and horse and
chariotry; and he went up and laid siege against Samaria
(Shomron), and he fought against it. **2** And he sent messen-
gers to Ahab (Achav), the king of Israel (Yisra'el), into the
city, and he said to him, "Thus says Ben-hadad: **3** 'Your silver
and your gold, it ***is*** mine; and your wives and your sons, the
good ***ones***, they ***are*** mine.'" **4** And the king of Israel answered
and said, "According to your word, my lord the king: I ***am***

19:9 Exod 33:21,22; 1 Kgs 19:13; Jer 9:2
19:10 Rom 11:2-3; Matt 5:12; Luke 6:23
19:11 Rev 11:19; Matt 5:12; Acts 2:2
19:12 Acts 2:2; Matt 5:12; Job 4:16
19:13 Acts 7:32; Rom 11:3; 1 Kgs 19:9
19:14 Rom 11:3; Luke 6:23; Acts 7:52
19:15 Acts 9:2; Acts 9:3; Rom 11:3
19:16 Luke 4:27; 1 Kgs 19:19-21; 2 Kgs 9:1-3,6-14
19:17 2 Kgs 8:12; 2 Kgs 13:3,22; 2 Kgs 10:32
19:18 Rom 11:4; Rom 14:11; Hos 13:2
19:19 Luke 4:27; 2 Kgs 2:8,13,14; 1 Sam 28:14
19:20 Luke 9:61-62; Matt 4:20; Matt 4:22
19:21 Matt 4:20; 2 Sam 24:22; Luke 5:28,29
20:1 1 Kgs 15:18,20; 2 Kgs 8:7-10; 2 Chr 16:2-4
20:2 2 Kgs 19:9; Isa 36:2-22; Isa 37:9,10
20:3 Exod 15:9; Isa 10:13,14
20:4 Lev 26:36; Deut 28:48; Judg 15:11-13

19:9 *What is there for you here, Elijah* "The cave" may be the very cleft where God hid Moses as His glory passed (Exod 33:21-23). God asked, as He asked Adam, "Where are you?" (Gen 3:9), not because He did not know, but to help Elijah see his own heart.
19:10 *I, I alone am left* He had been zealous, and Israel had broken the covenant. But he was not alone (18:13). Discouragement often tells the truth about our pain and lies about our situation. It makes us feel more alone than we are.
19:11 *the LORD was not in the wind* God passed by as He passed by Moses here (Exod 34:5-6). Wind, earthquake and fire were signs of His power, as at Sinai (Exod 19:18) and on Carmel. But this time He was not in them.
19:12 *a sound of a thin silence* Often called the still small voice. The Hebrew suggests a soft whisper, a gentle stillness. I believe God was showing Elijah that His work is not always done in fire. The fire had not changed Jezebel's heart. God often works quietly, in hearts, over time, through His word, and He met His worn-out servant gently. "My sheep hear My voice" (John 10:27). Are we quiet enough to hear?
19:13 *he wrapped his face in his cloak* In awe, as Moses hid his face at the burning bush (Exod 3:6). Elijah gave the same answer word for word. God did not argue. He gave a new assignment and a new perspective.
19:15 *Go, return on your way* When we are discouraged, God often gives not a long explanation but the next step of obedience. To anoint meant to pour oil as a sign of God's choice for a task.
19:16 *Elisha the son of Shaphat from Abel-meholah you shall anoint as prophet in your place* Elijah himself anointed only Elisha (19:19). Elisha told Hazael he would be king (2 Kgs 8:7-15), and one of Elisha's young prophets anointed Jehu (2 Kgs 9:1-10). God's plan was bigger than one prophet.
19:17 *the one who escapes from the sword of Hazael, Jehu will put to death* Elijah thought Jezebel had won. God told him the end of her house was already planned.
19:18 *I will leave in Israel seven thousand* To kiss an idol was worship (Hos 13:2). God had a remnant, a faithful few kept by His grace. Paul points to this verse: "there has come to be a remnant according to the election of grace" (Rom 11:5). God has not given up on Israel, and one day "all Israel will be saved" (Rom 11:26). When you feel like the only one standing for the Lord, you are not.
19:19 *he was plowing, twelve pairs of oxen before him* A well-off farming family. Elisha was at an ordinary job when God called him, like Peter and Andrew fishing. The prophet's cloak was a sign of his office. Throwing it on Elisha said, you will take my place.
19:20 *Go, return, for what have I done to you* Elijah seems to mean: go say your goodbyes, but think about what I have done. The call is from God, and the choice to answer is yours.
19:21 *he took the pair of oxen and sacrificed it* He burned his plow and yoke for firewood and fed his people. There was no going back. "No one having put his hand on the plow and looking at the things behind is fit for the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:62). The man who would do great miracles began as a servant, and God answered Elijah's loneliness with a friend.
20:1 *thirty-two kings were with him* Likely rulers of small city-states and tribes under Damascus. This is probably Ben-hadad II, the son or grandson of the Ben-hadad Asa paid (15:18), though some think it is the same man.
20:4 *I am yours, and all that is mine* Ahab gave in completely. He may have taken it as a formal way of agreeing to become a servant and pay tribute.

yours, and all that ***is*** mine." **5** And the messengers returned and said, "Thus says Ben-hadad, saying, 'Indeed I sent to you, saying, "Your silver and your gold and your wives and your sons you will give to me." **6** But about this time tomorrow I will send my servants to you, and they will search your house and the houses of your servants; and it will be, every desirable thing of your eyes they will put in their hand, and they will take ***it***.'" **7** And the king of Israel called all the elders of the land, and he said, "Know, please, and see that this ***one*** is seeking evil; for he sent to me for my wives and for my sons and for my silver and for my gold, and I did not withhold ***them*** from him." **8** And all the elders and all the people said to him, "Do not listen, and do not consent." **9** And he said to the messengers of Ben-hadad, "Say to my lord the king, 'All that you sent to your servant ***for*** at the first I will do; and this thing I am not able to do.'" And the messengers went and brought him back word. **10** And Ben-hadad sent to him and said, "Thus may the gods do to me, and thus may they add, if the dust of Samaria will suffice for handfuls for all the people who ***are*** at my feet!" **11** And the king of Israel answered and said, "Speak: 'Let not ***one*** girding on boast like ***one*** loosening.'" **12** And it was, when he heard this word, and he ***was*** drinking, he and the kings, in the booths, and he said to his servants, "Set ***yourselves***!" And they set ***themselves*** against the city. **13** And look, a certain prophet drew near to Ahab the king of Israel and said, "Thus says the LORD: 'Have you seen all this great multitude? Look, I am about to give it into your hand today, and you will know that I ***am*** the LORD.'" **14** And Ahab said, "By whom?" And he said, "Thus says the LORD: 'By the young men of the officials of the provinces.'" And he said, "Who will begin the battle?" And he said, "You." **15** And he mustered the young men of the officials of the provinces, and they were two hundred and thirty-two; and after them he mustered all the people, all the sons of Israel, seven thousand. **16** And they went out at noon. And
Ben-hadad ***was*** drinking ***himself*** drunk in the booths, he and the kings, thirty-two kings helping him. **17** And the young men of the officials of the provinces went out at the first. And Ben-hadad sent, and they told him, saying, "Men have come out from Samaria." **18** And he said, "If they have come out for peace, seize them alive; and if they have come out for battle, alive seize them." **19** And these went out from the city, the young men of the officials of the provinces, and the army which ***was*** after them. **20** And they struck down each his man; and Syria fled, and Israel pursued them; and Ben-hadad the king of Syria escaped on a horse, and horsemen ***with him***. **21** And the king of Israel went out and struck down the horses and the chariotry, and he struck down among Syria a great slaughter.

The Battle at Aphek

22 And the prophet drew near to the king of Israel and said to him, "Go, strengthen yourself, and know and see what you will do; for at the return of the year the king of Syria ***is*** coming up against you." **23** And the servants of the king of Syria said to him, "Gods of mountains ***are*** their gods; therefore they were stronger than we. But let us fight with them on the plain; surely we will be stronger than they. **24** And do this thing: remove the kings, each from his place, and put governors in their place. **25** And you, you shall muster for yourself an army like the army that fell from you, and horse like the horse, and chariotry like the chariotry; and let us fight with them on the plain; surely we will be stronger than they." And he listened to their voice and did so. **26** And it was at the return of the year, and Ben-hadad mustered Syria and went up to Aphek (Afeq) for battle with Israel. **27** And the sons of Israel were mustered and were provisioned, and they went to meet them. And the sons of Israel encamped before them like two little flocks of goats, and Syria filled the land. **28** And the man of God drew near and said to the king of Israel, and he said, "Thus says the LORD: 'Because Syria has said, "The LORD ***is*** a god of mountains, and He ***is*** not a god of valleys," I will give all this great multitude into your hand, and you will know that I ***am*** the LORD.'" **29** And these

20:6 1 Sam 13:19-21; 2 Sam 24:14; 2 Kgs 18:31,32
20:7 2 Kgs 5:7; 1 Kgs 8:1; 1 Chr 13:1
20:10 1 Kgs 19:2; Exod 11:8; Acts 23:12
20:11 Matt 26:33; Prov 27:1; 1 Sam 14:6,12,13
20:12 1 Kgs 16:9; 1 Kgs 20:16; Prov 31:4,5
20:13 1 Kgs 20:28; Isa 7:1-9; Ezek 20:14,22
20:14 Gen 14:14-16; Judg 7:16-20; 1 Sam 17:50
20:15 Judg 7:7,16; 1 Sam 14:6; 2 Chr 14:11
20:16 1 Kgs 20:11,12; 1 Kgs 16:7; Prov 23:29-32
20:17 1 Kgs 20:14,15,19
20:18 2 Kgs 14:8-12; 1 Sam 2:3,4; 1 Sam 14:11,12
20:20 2 Sam 2:16; Eccl 9:11; Lev 26:8
20:21 Judg 3:28; Judg 7:23-25; 1 Sam 14:20-22
20:22 1 Kgs 20:13,38; 2 Sam 11:1; 1 Kgs 20:26
20:23 1 Kgs 14:23; 1 Kgs 20:28; 1 Sam 4:8
20:24 1 Kgs 20:1,16; 1 Kgs 22:31; Prov 21:30
20:25 Ps 10:3
20:26 2 Kgs 13:17; 1 Kgs 20:30; Josh 13:4
20:27 Judg 6:5; 1 Sam 13:5-8; Josh 1:11
20:28 1 Kgs 20:13,22; 1 Kgs 17:18; 1 Kgs 13:1
20:29 Josh 6:15; 1 Sam 17:16; Ps 10:16

20:6 *every desirable thing of your eyes they will put in their hand* Not just tribute, but open plunder. Bullies are rarely satisfied. Give in once, and they ask for more. Sin works the same way. It never stops at what it first asks.
20:10 *if the dust of Samaria will suffice for handfuls for all the people who are at my feet* His army was so big there would not be enough dust for each soldier to carry off a handful.
20:11 *Let not one girding on boast like one loosening* The man putting on his armor should not brag like the man taking it off after he has won. Do not count your victory before it happens.
20:13 *you will know that I am the LORD* Surprising grace to the worst king Israel had seen. God was showing His glory and giving Ahab another chance to know Him after Carmel and the rain. He is "not wishing any to perish, but all to come to repentance" (2 Pet 3:9).
20:14 *By the young men of the officials of the provinces* Young aides serving the district governors, not the main army. God chose a small, unlikely force so the victory would clearly be His.
20:15 *seven thousand* God had just told Elijah of seven thousand faithful (19:18). Whether these numbers are connected, Scripture does not say.
20:16 *Ben-hadad was drinking himself drunk in the booths* Booths were temporary shelters in the camp. Pride and drunkenness are a dangerous mix. He boasted of Samaria's dust and ended up running for his life (20:20).
20:22 *at the return of the year* Kings went to war in the spring, after the rains (2 Sam 11:1). God warned Ahab ahead of time.
20:23 *Gods of mountains are their gods* People thought each god ruled a certain area. On flat ground, where chariots were strong, they expected to win. Sound military advice, built on a false idea of God.
20:27 *like two little flocks of goats* Israel looked tiny and weak. Aphek was likely east of the Sea of Galilee, on open ground.
20:28 *He is not a god of valleys* The Syrians insulted God by making Him small, and He would show He was LORD of every place. "The earth is the LORD's, and its fullness" (1 Cor 10:26). There is no valley in our lives where God is not God.

encamped opposite these seven days. And it was on the seventh day, and the battle drew near; and the sons of Israel struck down Syria, one hundred thousand foot soldiers in one day. **30** And the rest fled to Aphek, into the city; and the wall fell on twenty-seven thousand men who remained. And Ben-hadad fled and went into the city, a room within a room. **31** And his servants said to him, "Look, please, we have heard that the kings of the house of Israel, that they ***are*** kings of steadfast love. Please let us put sackcloth on our loins and ropes on our heads, and let us go out to the king of Israel; perhaps he will keep your soul alive." **32** And they girded sackcloth on their loins and ropes on their heads, and they came to the king of Israel and said, "Your servant Ben-hadad says, 'Please let my soul live.'" And he said, "Is he still alive? He ***is*** my brother." **33** And the men were watching for an omen, and they hastened and caught ***it***, whether ***it was*** from him, and they said, "Your brother Ben-hadad!" And he said, "Go, take him." And Ben-hadad came out to him, and he brought him up on the chariot. **34** And he said to him, "The cities which my father took from your father I will return; and you will make streets for yourself in Damascus
(Dameseq), just as my father made in Samaria." "And I, with the covenant, will let you go." And he made a covenant with him and let him go.

A Prophet Condemns Ahab

35 And a certain man of the sons of the prophets said to his companion by the word of the LORD, "Strike me, please." And the man refused to strike him. **36** And he said to him, "Because you have not listened to the voice of the LORD, look, you are about to go from me, and the lion will strike you down." And he went from beside him, and the lion found him and struck him down. **37** And he found another man and said, "Strike me, please." And the man struck him, striking and wounding. **38** And the prophet went and stood for the king by the way, and he disguised himself with the bandage over his eyes. **39** And the king was passing by, and he cried out to the king and said, "Your servant went out into the midst of the battle; and look, a man turned aside and brought a man to me and said, 'Guard this man. If he is indeed missing, then your life will be in place of his life, or you will weigh out approximately 75 pounds (a talent) of silver.' **40** And your servant was doing ***things*** here and there, and he was not ***there***." And the king of Israel said to him, "So ***is*** your judgment; you yourself have decided ***it***." **41** And he hastened and removed the bandage from over his eyes, and the king of Israel recognized him, that he ***was one*** of the prophets. **42** And he said to him, "Thus says the LORD: 'Because you have let go from ***your*** hand the man devoted by Me to destruction, your life will be in place of his life, and your people in place of his people.'" **43** And the king of Israel went to his house sullen and furious, and he came to Samaria.

1 KINGS 21

Naboth's Vineyard

1 And it was after these things: a vineyard belonged to Naboth (Navot) the Jezreelite, which ***was*** in Jezreel (Yizre'el), beside the palace of Ahab (Achav), the king of Samaria (Shomron). **2** And Ahab spoke to Naboth, saying, "Give me your vineyard, and let it be mine for a garden of vegetables, for it ***is*** near beside my house; and I will give you in place of it a vineyard better than it. If ***it is*** good in your eyes, I will give you silver, the price of this ***one***." **3** And Naboth said to Ahab, "Far be it from me, from the LORD, that I should give

20:30 1 Kgs 22:25; 2 Chr 18:24; Ps 18:25
20:31 Gen 37:34; 2 Sam 3:31; 1 Kgs 20:23
20:32 1 Kgs 20:3-6; Job 12:17,18; Job 40:11,12
20:33 Acts 8:31; Prov 25:13; Luke 16:8
20:34 1 Kgs 15:20; 2 Chr 16:4; 1 Kgs 20:42
20:35 1 Thess 4:15; Jer 27:2,3; 1 Sam 10:12
20:36 1 Kgs 13:21-24,26; 1 Sam 15:22,23
20:37 1 Kgs 20:35; Exod 21:12
20:38 1 Kgs 14:2; 1 Kgs 22:30; 2 Sam 14:2
20:39 1 Pet 1:18; 2 Kgs 10:24; Judg 9:7-20
20:40 2 Sam 12:5-7; Job 15:6; Matt 21:41-43
20:41 1 Kgs 20:38; 2 Sam 13:19; Job 2:8
20:42 1 Kgs 22:31-37; 1 Kgs 20:34; 1 Sam 15:9-11
20:43 1 Kgs 21:4; 1 Kgs 22:8; Esth 5:13
21:1 2 Chr 28:22; 1 Kgs 18:45; Judg 6:33
21:2 1 Sam 8:14; Gen 3:6; Exod 20:17
21:3 Rom 3:4; Lev 25:23; Num 36:7

20:30 *the wall fell on twenty-seven thousand men* I take the numbers as written. Some scholars read the word for thousand here as a unit of soldiers. Either way, it was a crushing defeat from God's hand, with a wall falling as at Jericho. "A room within a room" means an inner chamber where Ben-hadad hid.
20:31 *the kings of the house of Israel, that they are kings of steadfast love* Hesed, loyal covenant kindness. Sackcloth and ropes on the head were signs of humble surrender.
20:32 *He is my brother* The word kings used for an equal treaty partner. The servants "were watching for an omen" (20:33) and seized on it.
20:34 *I, with the covenant, will let you go* Mercy can be good. But God gave this enemy into Ahab's hand twice, and Ahab made his own deal for trade and politics without asking God. Many think he wanted Ben-hadad as an ally against Assyria. Assyrian records say that in 853 B.C. Ahab joined Damascus at the battle of Qarqar against Shalmaneser III. Ahab trusted a treaty more than the God who had given him two victories.
20:35 *a certain man of the sons of the prophets* Groups of prophets who lived and learned together, often under a leader like Elijah or Elisha.
20:36 *Because you have not listened to the voice of the LORD* This echoes chapter 13. A man who knew he was hearing God's word set it aside, and a lion was the result. When God has spoken, our own ideas of what is kind or reasonable do not outrank His word. "To listen is better than sacrifice" (1 Sam 15:22). It sets up the word to Ahab, who also would not obey.
20:39 *your life will be in place of his life* Or a talent of silver, about seventy-five pounds, a huge sum. The same method Nathan used with David (2 Sam 12:1-7): let the king judge the story, then show him he is the man.
20:40 *your servant was doing things here and there* The prisoner got away while he was busy. Ahab judged at once, "you yourself have decided it."
20:42 *the man devoted by Me to destruction* This translates herem, something given over completely to God for judgment. Ahab let Ben-hadad go for a trade deal, as Saul spared Agag (1 Sam 15). His life would be required (chapter 22), and the Syrians he spared would bring terrible suffering on Israel (2 Kgs 6-10).
20:43 *sullen and furious* Angry, but not sorry. He resented God's word instead of repenting. The same words come in the next chapter, over a vineyard.
21:1 *beside the palace of Ahab* Ahab's capital was Samaria, but he also had a palace at Jezreel, in the fertile valley about twenty-five miles north.
21:2 *I will give you in place of it a vineyard better than it* It sounded like a fair offer: a better vineyard or a fair price.
21:3 *that I should give the inheritance of my fathers to you* Why refuse a good deal? God gave each family its share of the land, and it was to stay in the family (Lev 25:23; Num 36:7). Naboth was not stubborn. He was faithful, and he would rather keep God's law than please the king.

the inheritance of my fathers to you." **4** And Ahab came to his house sullen and furious on account of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him, and he said, "I will not give you the inheritance of my fathers." And he lay down on his bed, and he turned away his face, and he did not eat bread. **5** And Jezebel (Izevel) his wife came to him and spoke to him, "Why ***is*** this, ***that*** your spirit ***is*** sullen and you are not eating bread?" **6** And he spoke to her, "Because I spoke to Naboth the Jezreelite and said to him, 'Give me your vineyard for silver; or if you desire ***it***, I will give you a vineyard in place of it.' And he said, 'I will not give you my vineyard.'" **7** And Jezebel his wife said to him, "You, now, do you exercise kingship over Israel (Yisra'el)? Arise, eat bread, and let your heart be glad. I myself will give you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite." **8** And she wrote letters in the name of Ahab, and she sealed ***them*** with his seal, and she sent the letters to the elders and to the nobles who ***were*** in his city, who dwelt with Naboth. **9** And she wrote in the letters, saying, "Proclaim a fast, and seat Naboth at the head of the people. **10** And seat two men, sons of worthlessness, before him, and let them testify against him, saying, 'You have cursed God and the king.' And take him out and stone him, and let him die." **11** And the men of his city, the elders and the nobles who dwelt in his city, did just as Jezebel had sent to them, just as ***it was*** written in the letters which she had sent to them. **12** They proclaimed a fast and seated Naboth at the head of the people. **13** And the two men, sons of worthlessness, came and sat before him; and the men of worthlessness testified against him, against Naboth, before the people, saying, "Naboth has cursed God and the king." And they took him outside the city, and they stoned him with stones, and he died. **14** And they sent to Jezebel, saying, "Naboth has been stoned, and he has died." **15** And it was, when Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned and had died, and Jezebel said to Ahab, "Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give you for silver; for Naboth is not alive, for he has died." **16** And it was, when Ahab heard that Naboth had died, and Ahab arose to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it.

Elijah's Word against Ahab

17 And the word of the LORD came to Elijah (Eliyahu) the Tishbite, saying, **18** "Arise, go down to meet Ahab the king of Israel, who ***is*** in Samaria. Look, ***he is*** in the vineyard of Naboth, where he has gone down to take possession of it. **19** And you will speak to him, saying, 'Thus says the LORD: "Have you murdered, and also taken possession?"' And you will speak to him, saying, 'Thus says the LORD: "In the place where the dogs licked up the blood of Naboth, the dogs will lick up your blood, even yours."'" **20** And Ahab said to Elijah, "Have you found me, O my enemy?" And he said, "I have found ***you***, because you have sold yourself to do the evil in the eyes of the LORD. **21** Look, I am about to bring evil to you, and I will sweep away after you, and I will cut off from Ahab ***every*** one who urinates against a wall, and ***the one*** shut up and ***the one*** left free in Israel. **22** And I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam (Yaravam) the son of Nebat (Nevat), and like the house of Baasha (Basha) the son of Ahijah (Achiya), because of the provocation with which you have provoked ***Me*** to anger, and you have caused Israel to

21:4 1 Kgs 20:43; James 1:14; Job 5:2
21:5 1 Kgs 21:25; 1 Kgs 16:31; 1 Kgs 18:4
21:6 1 Kgs 21:2; Esth 5:9-14; Esth 6:12
21:7 Rev 2:20; 1 Sam 8:4; 2 Sam 13:4
21:8 Matt 26:59; Rev 2:20; 2 Sam 11:14,15
21:9 Matt 26:59; Gen 34:13-17; Isa 58:4
21:10 Matt 26:59; John 8:17; Rev 2:20
21:11 Matt 2:16; Matt 26:59; Rev 2:20
21:12 Matt 26:59; Rev 2:20; Isa 58:4
21:13 Rev 2:20; 2 Kgs 9:26; Exod 20:16
21:14 Rev 2:20; 2 Sam 11:14-24; Eccl 5:8
21:15 Rev 2:20; 1 Kgs 21:7; Prov 1:10-16
21:16 2 Sam 1:13-16; 2 Sam 4:9-12; 2 Sam 11:25-27
21:17 Ps 9:12; 2 Kgs 1:15,16; 2 Kgs 5:26
21:18 1 Kgs 13:32; 2 Chr 22:9
21:19 1 Kgs 22:38; 2 Sam 12:9; Gen 3:11
21:20 Mark 12:12; Luke 1:17; 1 Kgs 18:17
21:21 Mark 12:12; 1 Kgs 14:10; Exod 20:5,6
21:22 Mark 12:12; 1 Kgs 16:3,11; 1 Kgs 14:16

21:4 *Ahab came to his house sullen and furious* The very words of 20:43, now over a garden. The king with palaces and a house of ivory (22:39) lay on his bed and pouted because one farmer would not sell. That is what coveting does (Exod 20:17). It makes rich men feel poor. Jesus warned, "guard yourselves from covetousness" (Luke 12:15), and James says wanting what we lack leads even to murder (James 4:2).

21:7 *do you exercise kingship over Israel* In Sidon kings took what they wanted. Jezebel did not understand, or care, that in Israel even the king was under God's law (Deut 17:18-20). Ahab had told her the refusal but not Naboth's reason.

21:8 *she sealed them with his seal* The royal seal made an order official. Ahab let her use it, or at least did not stop her. The elders and nobles were Naboth's neighbors, the men who should have judged fairly at the gate.

21:10 *two men, sons of worthlessness* Wicked, lawless men. A fast was called when some great sin had come on a town, and seating Naboth at the front marked him as the cause. The Law required two witnesses for a death sentence (Deut 17:6), and cursing God was punished by stoning (Lev 24:16). She used God's own law as a weapon. Every outward form was kept, and justice was murdered. Evil is never more dangerous than when it wears religious clothes.

21:11 *did just as Jezebel had sent to them* Not one refused or warned Naboth. Their silence made them partners in murder.

21:13 *they took him outside the city, and they stoned him with stones, and he died* His sons were killed too, so no heir was left (2 Kgs 9:26). An innocent, faithful man was killed by the powerful through lying witnesses in God's name. It brings to mind Jesus, against whom at last "two false witnesses" (Matt 26:60) came, who suffered outside the city (Heb 13:12), and Stephen (Acts 7:58). Naboth was not Christ, but God saw every one of them. If you have suffered injustice from those with power over you, God sees, and He will set things right (Rom 12:19). If you know someone being hurt this way, do what the elders of Jezreel did not. Speak up and help them get help.

21:16 *Ahab arose to go down to the vineyard of Naboth* He did not ask how Naboth died. He did not want to know. He threw no stone, but he wanted the vineyard, let Jezebel use his seal and took the profit. God held him responsible.

21:18 *Arise, go down to meet Ahab the king of Israel* No one in Jezreel spoke up for Naboth. God did.

21:19 *Have you murdered, and also taken possession* Two sins, and God named both. The dogs that licked Naboth's blood would lick Ahab's. "Whatever a man sows, this he will also reap" (Gal 6:7).

21:20 *Have you found me, O my enemy* First the troubler of Israel (18:17), now his enemy. A man who hates God sees God's messengers as enemies.

21:20 *you have sold yourself to do the evil* To sell yourself is to give yourself over as a slave. Ahab sold himself to sin for a vegetable garden (Mark 8:36).

21:22 *like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha* Both dynasties had been wiped out, and now Ahab's would be. "Every one who urinates against a wall" (21:21) is the blunt Hebrew for every male, as in 14:10.

sin. **23** And also of Jezebel the LORD has spoken, saying, 'The dogs will devour Jezebel by the rampart of Jezreel.' **24** The one of Ahab who dies in the city the dogs will devour, and the one who dies in the field the birds of the heavens will devour." **25** Surely there was not ***one*** like Ahab, who sold himself to do the evil in the eyes of the LORD, whom Jezebel his wife incited. **26** And he acted very abominably, walking after the idols, according to all that the Amorites had done, whom the LORD dispossessed from before the sons of Israel. **27** And it was, when Ahab heard these words, and he tore his clothes and put sackcloth on his flesh, and he fasted, and he lay down in the sackcloth, and he went about softly. **28** And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, **29** "Have you seen that Ahab has humbled himself before Me? Because he has humbled himself before Me, I will not bring the evil in his days; in the days of his son I will bring the evil on his house."

1 KINGS 22

Ahab and Jehoshaphat Seek Counsel

1 And they remained three years; there was no war between Syria (Aram) and Israel (Yisra'el). **2** And it was in the third year, and Jehoshaphat (Yehoshafat) the king of Judah (Yehuda) went down to the king of Israel. **3** And the king of Israel said to his servants, "Do you know that Ramoth-gilead (Ramot-Gilad) ***belongs*** to us, and we are keeping still from taking it from the hand of the king of Syria?" **4** And he said to Jehoshaphat, "Will you go with me to battle ***at*** Ramoth-gilead?" And Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, "As I ***am***, so ***are*** you; as my people, so ***are*** your people; as my horses, so ***are*** your horses." **5** And Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, "Inquire, please, today ***for*** the word of the LORD." **6** And the king of Israel gathered the prophets, about four hundred men, and he said to them, "Shall I go against Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I refrain?" And they said, "Go up, and the Lord will give ***it*** into the hand of the king." **7** And Jehoshaphat said, "Is there not here a prophet of the LORD still, that we may inquire of him?" **8** And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "***There is*** still one man by whom to inquire of the LORD, and I, I hate him, for he does not prophesy good concerning me, but evil: Micaiah (Mikhayhu) the son of Imlah (Yimla)." And Jehoshaphat said, "Let not the king say so." **9** And the king of Israel called a certain officer and said, "Bring Micaiah the son of Imlah quickly." **10** And the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah ***were*** sitting, each on his throne, clothed ***in*** garments, at the threshing floor at the entrance of the gate of Samaria (Shomron); and all the prophets ***were*** prophesying before them. **11** And Zedekiah (Tsidqiya) the son of Chenaanah (Kena'ana) made for himself horns of iron, and he said, "Thus says the LORD: 'With these you will gore Syria until ***you*** destroy them.'" **12** And all the prophets ***were*** prophesying so, saying, "Go up to Ramoth-gilead and succeed, and the LORD will give ***it*** into the hand of the king."

Micaiah Prophesies against Ahab

13 And the messenger who had gone to call Micaiah spoke to him, saying, "Look, please, the words of the prophets ***are*** good to the king ***with*** one mouth. Please let your word be like

21:23 Rev 2:20; 2 Kgs 9:10,30-37; 1 Kgs 21:25
21:24 1 Kgs 14:11; 1 Kgs 16:4; Isa 14:19
21:25 Mark 6:17; Rev 2:20; 1 Kgs 21:20
21:26 Mark 12:12; Gen 15:16; Lev 18:25-30
21:27 Mark 12:12; 2 Kgs 6:30; Gen 37:34
21:29 2 Kgs 9:25,26,33-37; Jer 7:17; Luke 7:44
22:1 1 Kgs 20:34
22:2 Matt 12:40; Matt 1:8; 1 Kgs 15:24
22:3 Deut 4:43; 1 Kgs 4:13; Josh 20:8
22:4 Matt 1:8; 2 Kgs 3:7; 2 Chr 18:3
22:5 Matt 1:8; 2 Kgs 3:11; 2 Chr 18:4,5
22:6 1 Kgs 18:19; Jer 23:14-17; 2 Tim 4:3
22:7 Matt 1:8; 2 Kgs 3:11-13; 2 Chr 18:6,7
22:8 Matt 1:8; Amos 5:10; John 3:19-21
22:9 2 Kgs 9:32; 2 Chr 18:8; Isa 39:7
22:10 Matt 1:8; 1 Kgs 22:30; Esth 5:1
22:11 Acts 21:11; Zech 1:18-21; Jer 27:2
22:12 1 Kgs 22:6-15,32-36; 2 Chr 35:22
22:13 Luke 6:26; Ps 10:11; Ps 11:1

21:23 *The dogs will devour Jezebel by the rampart of Jezreel* The rampart was the city wall. More than ten years later it came true to the letter, and Jehu said so (2 Kgs 9:30-37).
21:25 *whom Jezebel his wife incited* She stirred him up, but he chose it. Her sin did not excuse his.
21:26 *according to all that the Amorites had done* Among the nations God drove out for their wickedness (Gen 15:16). Ahab brought their sins back into the land.
21:27 *he went about softly* Torn clothes and sackcloth, a rough cloth of goat's hair, were signs of grief and repentance. Was it real? In the next chapter he still hates God's prophet, and Scripture does not say he tore down Baal's temple or gave back the vineyard. I think his humbling was real but not deep or lasting.
21:29 *Because he has humbled himself before Me* Amazing grace. God noticed even the imperfect humbling of a very wicked man. Ahab's own judgment still came (22:38), but the fall of his house waited until Joram (2 Kgs 9:24-26), who did evil himself (2 Kgs 3:1-3). God delayed judgment. He did not punish an innocent man. "I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked man" (Ezek 33:11). No one is too far gone to humble himself before God. But do not stop where Ahab stopped. True repentance turns from sin to God and trusts the One who took the judgment for us (James 4:10).
22:1 *there was no war between Syria and Israel* Likely the years Ahab and Ben-hadad stood together against Assyria (20:34).
22:2 *Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went down to the king of Israel* The long war between the kingdoms had ended. Jehoshaphat allied himself by marriage to Ahab (2 Chr 18:1), and his son married Ahab's daughter Athaliah (2 Kgs 8:18, 26), a marriage that would bring terrible trouble to Judah.
22:3 *Ramoth-gilead belongs to us* An important fortified city east of the Jordan. Ben-hadad seems never to have given it back as promised (20:34). The king Ahab spared was his problem again.
22:4 *As I am, so are you* A generous answer, but a godly king tying himself to an ungodly one. The prophet Jehu later rebuked him: "will you love those who hate the LORD?" (2 Chr 19:2).
22:5 *Inquire, please, today for the word of the LORD* He should have asked before he promised, but at least he asked.
22:6 *about four hundred men* Not Baal's prophets, who died at the Kishon. These spoke in the LORD's name, probably attached to Jeroboam's shrines and the court. Four hundred voices agreeing with the king did not sound like God to Jehoshaphat.
22:8 *I, I hate him, for he does not prophesy good concerning me, but evil* An honest confession of a dishonest heart. Ahab hated Micaiah not for lying but for telling the truth. People "will heap up teachers for themselves" (2 Tim 4:3) who say what they want to hear.
22:10 *at the threshing floor at the entrance of the gate of Samaria* A wide, flat open space, good for a large gathering. The scene was set for a show, the two kings in their royal robes.
22:11 *horns of iron* Horns pictured strength, like a bull goring its enemy. Zedekiah used the LORD's name, had a dramatic sign and four hundred agreeing with him, and he was wrong. A message is not true because it is loud, popular or uses God's name.

the word of one of them, and speak good." **14** And Micaiah said, "***As*** the LORD lives, surely what the LORD says to me, that I will speak." **15** And he came to the king, and the king said to him, "Micaiah, shall we go against Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall we refrain?" And he said to him, "Go up and succeed, and the LORD will give ***it*** into the hand of the king." **16** And the king said to him, "Up to how many times will I make you swear that you will not speak to me ***anything*** but truth in the name of the LORD?" **17** And he said, "I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains like the flock which has no shepherd. And the LORD said, 'These have no masters; let them return each to his house in peace.'" **18** And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "Did I not say to you, 'He does not prophesy good concerning me, but evil'?" **19** And he said, "Therefore hear the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on His throne, and all the host of the heavens standing by Him, on His right and on His left. **20** And the LORD said, 'Who will entice Ahab (Achav), that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead?' And this ***one*** said thus, and this ***one*** was saying thus. **21** And the spirit came forth and stood before the LORD and said, 'I, I will entice him.' **22** And the LORD said to him, 'By what?' And he said, 'I will go out, and I will be a spirit of falsehood in the mouth of all his prophets.' And He said, 'You will entice, and also you will prevail. Go out and do so.' **23** And now, look, the LORD has put a spirit of falsehood in the mouth of all these your prophets; and the LORD has spoken evil concerning you." **24** And Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah drew near and struck Micaiah on the cheek and said, "Which ***way*** did the Spirit of the LORD pass from me to speak with you?" **25** And Micaiah said, "Look, you are about to see on that day, when you go into a room within a room to hide yourself." **26** And the king of Israel said, "Take Micaiah, and bring him back to Amon the official of the city and to Joash (Yo'ash) the son of the king, **27** and you will say, 'Thus says the king: "Put this ***one*** in the house of confinement, and feed him bread of oppression and water of oppression until I come in peace."'" **28** And Micaiah said, "If you indeed return in peace, the LORD has not spoken by me." And he said, "Hear, O peoples, all of them!"

The Death of Ahab

29 And the king of Israel went up, and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, to Ramoth-gilead. **30** And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "I will disguise myself and go into the battle; and you, put on your garments." And the king of Israel disguised himself and went into the battle. **31** And the king of Syria had commanded the commanders of the chariotry which ***belonged*** to him, thirty-two, saying, "Do not fight with small or with great, but with the king of Israel, him alone." **32** And it was, when the commanders of the chariotry saw Jehoshaphat, and they said, "Surely he ***is*** the king of Israel." And they turned aside against him to fight, and Jehoshaphat cried out. **33** And it was, when the commanders of the chariotry saw that he ***was*** not the king of Israel, and they turned back from after him. **34** And a man drew the bow in his innocence and struck the king of Israel between the joints and the body armor. And he said to his charioteer, "Turn your hand and take me out of the camp, for I am wounded."

22:14 Luke 6:26; Num 24:13; Num 22:38
22:15 1 Kgs 18:27; Judg 10:14; 2 Kgs 3:13
22:16 Acts 19:13; Josh 6:26; 1 Sam 14:24
22:17 Num 27:17; Matt 9:36; 1 Kgs 22:34-36
22:18 Matt 1:8; 1 Kgs 22:8; Prov 10:24
22:19 Matt 25:31; Acts 7:55; Mark 10:37
22:20 Job 12:16; Jer 4:10; Ezek 14:9
22:21 1 Kgs 22:23; Job 1:6,7; Job 2:1
22:22 1 John 4:6; Matt 8:32; Judg 9:23
22:23 Exod 4:21; Exod 10:20; Deut 2:30
22:24 Luke 6:26; Acts 23:2; Lam 3:30
22:25 Luke 6:26; 1 Kgs 20:30; Num 31:8
22:27 Luke 12:45; Rev 2:10; 2 Chr 16:10
22:28 Mark 7:14; Matt 15:10; Mic 1:2
22:29 Matt 1:8; 1 Kgs 22:2-9; 2 Chr 18:28
22:30 Matt 1:8; 2 Chr 35:22; Jer 23:24
22:31 1 Kgs 20:24; 2 Chr 18:30; 1 Kgs 20:33-42
22:32 Matt 1:8; Prov 13:20; Jonah 2:1,2
22:33 1 Kgs 22:31; Ps 76:10
22:34 2 Chr 35:23; 2 Sam 15:11; 1 Sam 17:49

22:14 *surely what the LORD says to me, that I will speak* A word every preacher and believer should remember. He would not shape the message to please anyone. "If I were still pleasing men, I would not be a slave of Christ" (Gal 1:10).

22:15 *Go up and succeed* Nearly the words of the four hundred, but his tone must have shown he was mocking them, for Ahab knew at once he did not mean it.

22:17 *like the flock which has no shepherd* A king is often called the shepherd of his people. Ahab would die, and the army would come home without him. Moses prayed against this (Num 27:17). Jesus had compassion on crowds "like sheep not having a shepherd" (Matt 9:36). Ahab led his sheep to ruin. The Good Shepherd gave His life for His (John 10:11).

22:19 *I saw the LORD sitting on His throne, and all the host of the heavens standing by Him* The host of heaven here means the angels. Isaiah (Isa 6:1-3) and Daniel (Dan 7:9-10) also saw the LORD enthroned among heavenly beings.

22:22 *I will be a spirit of falsehood in the mouth of all his prophets* A hard passage. God "cannot lie" (Titus 1:2) and tempts no one (James 1:13). Ahab had already chosen falsehood, and God gave him over to what he chose. Because people "did not receive the love of the truth" (2 Thess 2:10), God gives them up to the lie (Rom 1:24). God did not do the lying. He permitted a spirit and used it for His just sentence, as He permitted Satan to test Job (Job 1:6-12).

22:23 *the LORD has put a spirit of falsehood in the mouth of all these your prophets* God told Ahab exactly what was happening, exposed the lying prophets and warned him. Even in judgment God gave him one last chance, and he chose the lie. Many take the vision as a real look into heaven's throne room with an evil spirit permitted to deceive, some think Satan himself as in Job 1, and others see a picture in the form of a heavenly council. Either way, God rules over all, God does not lie, and those who refuse the truth are given over to the lie they love.

22:24 *struck Micaiah on the cheek* Micaiah did not strike back. Jesus too was struck at His trial (John 18:22-23). Faithful servants of God have often been treated this way.

22:25 *when you go into a room within a room to hide yourself* When defeat came, Zedekiah would hide like Ben-hadad (20:30) and know who had spoken the truth.

22:27 *bread of oppression and water of oppression* Prison and barely enough to stay alive.

22:28 *If you indeed return in peace, the LORD has not spoken by me* The test of the Law (Deut 18:21-22), and Micaiah staked his life on it. "Hear, O peoples" opens the book of Micah too (Mic 1:2). We never hear of Micaiah again, but his word came true.

22:30 *I will disguise myself and go into the battle* He partly believed Micaiah and tried to dodge God's word, while his ally rode in royal robes. Why Jehoshaphat went, Scripture does not say. It nearly cost him his life.

22:32 *Jehoshaphat cried out* And the LORD helped him (2 Chr 18:31). God protected the king of Judah even in the wrong place.

22:34 *a man drew the bow in his innocence* Shot at random, it found the one small gap in the armor of the one man God had marked. No disguise could hide Ahab from God. "From the LORD is its every judgment" (Prov 16:33). There is no such thing as chance when God has spoken.

35 And the battle increased on that day, and the king was made to stand in the chariot opposite Syria; and he died in the evening, and the blood of the wound flowed into the bottom of the chariot. **36** And the cry passed through the camp as the sun went ***down***, saying, "Each to his city, and each to his land!" **37** And the king died, and he came ***to*** Samaria, and they buried the king in Samaria. **38** And one washed the chariot at the pool of Samaria, and the dogs licked up his blood, and the prostitutes bathed, according to the word of the LORD which He had spoken. **39** And the rest of the matters of Ahab, and all that he did, and the house of ivory which he built, and all the cities which he built, ***are*** they not written in the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Israel? **40** And Ahab lay down with his fathers, and Ahaziah (Achazyahu) his son reigned in his place.

Jehoshaphat King of Judah

41 And Jehoshaphat the son of Asa became king over Judah in the fourth year of Ahab the king of Israel. **42** Jehoshaphat ***was*** a son of thirty-five years when he became king, and he reigned twenty-five years in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim); and the name of his mother ***was*** Azubah (Azuva) the daughter of Shilhi (Shilchi). **43** And he walked in all the way of Asa his father; he did not turn aside from it, doing what ***is*** right in the eyes of the LORD. Only the high places were not removed; the people ***were*** still sacrificing and making ***offerings*** smoke on the high places. **44** And Jehoshaphat made peace with the king of Israel. **45** And the rest of the matters of Jehoshaphat, and his might which he showed, and how he waged war, ***are*** they not written in the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Judah? **46** And the rest of the male cult prostitutes who remained in the days of Asa his father, he swept away from the land. **47** And there was no king in Edom; a deputy ***was*** king. **48** Jehoshaphat made ships of Tarshish to go to Ophir (Ofir) for gold, and it did not go, for the ships were broken at Ezion-geber (Etsyon-Gever). **49** Then Ahaziah the son of Ahab said to Jehoshaphat, "Let my servants go with your servants in the ships." And Jehoshaphat was not willing. **50** And Jehoshaphat lay down with his fathers, and he was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father; and Jehoram (Yehoram) his son reigned in his place.

Ahaziah King of Israel

51 Ahaziah the son of Ahab became king over Israel in Samaria in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, and he reigned over Israel two years. **52** And he did the evil in the eyes of the LORD, and he walked in the way of his father and in the way of his mother and in the way of Jeroboam (Yaravam) the son of Nebat (Nevat), who caused Israel to sin. **53** And he served the Baal and bowed down to it, and he provoked to anger the LORD, the God of Israel, according to all that his father had done.

22:35 1 Kgs 22:28; 1 Kgs 20:42
22:36 2 Kgs 14:12; 1 Kgs 22:17,31; 1 Kgs 12:16
22:38 1 Kgs 21:19; Josh 23:14,15; Isa 44:25,26
22:39 Amos 3:15; 1 Kgs 14:19; 1 Kgs 15:23,31
22:40 1 Kgs 2:10; 1 Kgs 11:21; 1 Kgs 14:31
22:41 Matt 1:8; 2 Chr 20:31; 1 Kgs 22:2
22:42 Matt 1:8; 2 Kgs 1:17; 2 Kgs 8:16
22:43 Matt 1:8; 1 Kgs 15:14; 2 Kgs 12:3
22:44 Matt 1:8; 1 Kgs 22:2; 2 Kgs 8:18
22:45 Matt 1:8; 1 Kgs 11:41; 1 Kgs 14:29
22:46 Matt 1:8; 1 Kgs 14:24; 1 Kgs 15:12
22:47 2 Sam 8:14; 2 Kgs 3:9; 2 Kgs 8:20
22:48 Matt 1:8; 1 Kgs 10:22; 1 Kgs 9:26
22:49 Matt 1:8
22:50 Matt 1:8; 2 Chr 21:1; 1 Kgs 22:40
22:51 1 Kgs 15:25; 2 Kgs 1:17
22:52 1 Kgs 15:26; 1 Kgs 21:25; 1 Kgs 16:30-33
22:53 Judg 2:1-11; 2 Kgs 1:2; 2 Kgs 3:2

22:35 *the king was made to stand in the chariot opposite Syria* Propped up so his troops would not lose heart. At sunset the sheep went home without a shepherd, as Micaiah said (22:36).
22:38 *the dogs licked up his blood* Utter shame, as Elijah said (21:19). It came in Samaria, and the full judgment on his house came later at Naboth's field in the days of his son (21:29; 2 Kgs 9:24-26).
22:39 *the house of ivory which he built* Archaeologists at Samaria have found many carved ivory pieces from this period. Assyrian records say he brought a large chariot force to Qarqar. But God's verdict was written long before: "there was not one like Ahab" (21:25).
22:42 *he reigned twenty-five years in Jerusalem* About 872 to 848 B.C., counting a few years ruling alongside his father Asa.
22:43 *doing what is right in the eyes of the LORD* One of Judah's good kings. He sent teachers through Judah with the Book of the Law, appointed judges to judge in the fear of the LORD, and trusted God in a great battle (2 Chr 17-20). But like his father, he did not remove the high places.
22:44 *Jehoshaphat made peace with the king of Israel* It ended about sixty years of conflict. But the peace came through the marriage alliance with Ahab's house, and Athaliah later tried to wipe out the royal line (2 Kgs 11:1).
22:47 *there was no king in Edom; a deputy was king* Edom, south of the Dead Sea, was under Judah's governor, giving access to Ezion-geber (9:26).
22:48 *the ships were broken at Ezion-geber* Trying to bring back Solomon's glory days. A prophet said the LORD broke them because he joined with Ahaziah (2 Chr 20:35-37). When Ahaziah asked again, Jehoshaphat refused. He had learned his lesson.
22:51 *he reigned over Israel two years* About 853 to 852 B.C.
22:52 *in the way of his father and in the way of his mother and in the way of Jeroboam* Three bad examples, and he followed all of them. The book that began with Solomon's glory ends with Baal worship in Samaria. But God was not silent. He kept His promise to David and kept sending His word, by Ahijah, Jehu, Elijah and Micaiah, to any who would listen.

2 KINGS

Introduction

Title

The book is named for the kings whose reigns it records. In Hebrew, First and Second Kings were one book. The Greek translation of the Old Testament divided it in two, and our Bibles follow that division, so 2 Kings picks up in the middle of the story, with Ahab dead and his son on the throne of Israel. In the Hebrew Bible it is the last of the Former Prophets, the books from Joshua through Kings that tell Israel's history from God's point of view. In our English Bibles it stands among the historical books.

Author and Date

The book does not name its writer. Jewish tradition holds that Jeremiah the prophet wrote Kings, and some of the closing chapters are very close to Jeremiah 52. Whoever wrote it was a prophet or a man who thought like the prophets, and he used older records, which he names: the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Israel (1:18) and the same book for the kings of Judah (8:23). The last event in the book is the release of King Jehoiachin in the first year of Evil-merodach king of Babylon, about 560 B.C. (25:27). The book says nothing of the return from exile under Cyrus in 538 B.C., so it was most likely finished during the exile, about 560 to 540 B.C. Many modern critical scholars see Kings as the last part of a longer history put together and edited during or after the exile by several hands. I take the book as it presents itself, a true record written by one inspired writer from reliable sources, and treated as history by Jesus and the apostles.

Background and Setting

Second Kings covers nearly three hundred years, from the death of Ahab about 853 B.C. to Jehoiachin's release about 560 B.C. It follows both kingdoms downhill. Israel in the north, with its capital at Samaria, never had a king who removed Jeroboam's golden calves, and it fell to Assyria in 722 B.C. Judah in the south, with Jerusalem and the temple, had some godly kings, Joash, Hezekiah and Josiah among them, but it too turned away. The great turning points are the fall of Samaria in 722 B.C., Sennacherib's attack on Jerusalem in 701 B.C., the first deportation to Babylon in 605 B.C., the exile of King Jehoiachin in 597 B.C., and the fall of Jerusalem and the burning of the temple in 586 B.C.

The book was written for the people of Judah in exile in Babylon and the generations after them. They had lost their land, their king and their temple, and they needed to know why. Around the two kingdoms were Syria, with its capital at Damascus, Moab and Edom, and the Philistines on the coast. Behind them rose first Assyria and then Babylon, while Egypt to the south was a constant temptation to trust in horses and chariots instead of the LORD.

The writer dates each king by the reign of the king in the other kingdom, and some of the numbers seem not to fit at first. Most of the differences come from co-regencies, when a son reigned alongside his father, and from the two kingdoms counting a king's first year in different ways. These notes follow the dates of Edwin Thiele and give them with "about." Several kings of the two kingdoms had the same names at nearly the same time, and the SLB usually calls the king of Israel Joram and the king of Judah Jehoram, though both forms are the same name. Much of this history is told again in 2 Chronicles from Judah's side. Where the two give different numbers, the notes say so honestly. Most such differences come from errors in copying numbers or from different ways of counting, and none touches any teaching of the faith.

Kings is as much about prophets as about kings. Elijah and Elisha fill the first half. Jonah is named in 14:25, Isaiah stands beside Hezekiah, and Huldah speaks to Josiah. Amos and Hosea preached in Israel during these years, and Isaiah, Micah, Zephaniah, Habakkuk and Jeremiah in Judah. Reading 2 Kings alongside them helps both make sense.

Themes

God is patient, but He judges unrepentant sin. He sent prophet after prophet to call His people back, and when Samaria falls the writer stops to explain why: "Turn back from your evil ways, and keep My commandments" (17:13). Israel and Judah went into exile not because the LORD was weak or His promises failed, but because His people broke His covenant and would not listen. Patience is not the same as approval, and in the end He did what He said He would do.

Every king is measured by one standard, whether he did right in the eyes of the LORD as David did. Alongside the judgment runs God's mercy to the faithful few: the widow's oil, the Shunammite's son, Naaman washed clean, the hills full of chariots of fire, and an army struck down in one night while Hezekiah prayed. God rules over the nations, and Assyria and Babylon were only tools in His hand.

And God keeps His promise to David. Again and again, when a king of Judah deserves to lose everything, the LORD spares Judah "for the sake of David His servant" (8:19). The book ends with David's descendant alive in Babylon, released from prison and given a seat at the king's table (25:27-30). It calls every reader to turn back to the LORD while there is time.

Christ in 2 Kings

Elijah, taken up at the start of the book, was promised again before the day of the LORD (Mal 4:5), and Jesus said John the Baptist came in that role (Matt 11:14; Luke 1:17). Elisha's miracles are a small picture of the ministry of Jesus. Jesus Himself pointed to Naaman as a sign that God's grace reaches outsiders (Luke 4:27). Elisha fed a hundred men with twenty barley loaves (4:42-44), and Jesus fed five thousand with five (John 6:9-13). Elisha raised a mother's son near Shunem, and Jesus raised a widow's son at Nain, just over the hill (Luke 7:11-17).

Above all, 2 Kings shows God keeping David's lamp burning. When Athaliah tried to wipe out the royal line, one baby was saved (11:2). When Jerusalem fell, King Jehoiachin was spared, and he is named in the family line of Jesus, where he is called Jeconiah (Matt 1:12). God's promise to give David a son whose throne would last forever (2 Sam 7:16) did not die in Babylon. It led to Jesus, the Son of David, of whose kingdom "there will be no end" (Luke 1:33). When He returns, He will sit on that throne

and reign from Jerusalem (Rev 19:11-16; 20:4-6).

Hard Passages

Fire falls on soldiers sent to arrest Elijah (1:9-12), and two bears maul young men from Bethel who mock Elisha (2:23-25). The notes explain both as God's judgment on open contempt for Him and His messenger, not a prophet's temper, and they say plainly that neither is a pattern for us (Luke 9:54-55; 6:28).

A king of Moab offers his son as a burnt offering on the wall (3:27), and later kings of Israel and Judah do the same (16:3; 17:17; 21:6). During the siege of Samaria a mother eats her child (6:24-31). The notes treat these as the horror the Law warned of when Israel broke the covenant (Deut 28:53-57), without dwelling on the details.

Jehu wipes out the house of Ahab, and God commends him, yet later says He will judge Jehu's house for the blood of Jezreel (10:30; Hos 1:4). The notes show that Jehu went beyond what God asked, for his own ends, and that God judges the heart. Athaliah kills her grandchildren to take the throne (11:1), an attack on God's promise to David that God overturned by saving one child.

Josiah sacrifices the priests of the high places of Samaria on their own altars (23:19-20). The notes explain it as the judgment foretold three centuries earlier (1 Kgs 13:2) under Israel's covenant law, and say it is no pattern for the church, which fights with truth, prayer and love (2 Cor 10:3-5). The LORD "was not willing to forgive" (24:4) speaks of the nation that never repented, not of anyone who turns to Him. The fall of Samaria and Jerusalem tells of war, exile and cruelty (17; 25), and the notes try to explain these chapters honestly and with care. If you lead a group, read those sections ahead of time and be ready to listen.

Outline

I. The Ministry of Elisha (1:1-8:29)
A. Ahaziah and the fire from heaven (1:1-18)
B. Elijah taken up and Elisha succeeds him (2:1-25)
C. The war against Moab (3:1-27)
D. The widow's oil and the Shunammite's son (4:1-44)
E. Naaman healed and Gehazi struck (5:1-27)
F. The axe head, the blinded army and the siege of Samaria (6:1-33)
G. The siege lifted (7:1-20)
H. The Shunammite's land, Hazael and the kings of Judah (8:1-29)
II. Israel and Judah to the Fall of Samaria (9:1-17:41)
A. Jehu anointed; the end of Joram and Jezebel (9:1-37)
B. Jehu destroys the house of Ahab and the worship of Baal (10:1-36)
C. Athaliah and the boy king Joash (11:1-21)
D. Joash repairs the temple (12:1-21)
E. Jehoahaz, Jehoash and the death of Elisha (13:1-25)
F. Amaziah of Judah and Jeroboam II of Israel (14:1-29)
G. Azariah, Jotham and the last kings of Israel (15:1-38)
H. Ahaz and the altar from Damascus (16:1-20)
I. The fall of Samaria and the exile of Israel (17:1-41)
III. Judah to the Fall of Jerusalem (18:1-25:30)
A. Hezekiah and the threat of Assyria (18:1-37)
B. The LORD delivers Jerusalem from Sennacherib (19:1-37)
C. Hezekiah's illness and the envoys from Babylon (20:1-21)
D. Manasseh and Amon (21:1-26)
E. Josiah and the book of the law (22:1-20)
F. Josiah's reforms and the last kings before the exile (23:1-37)
G. Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin and the first exile (24:1-20)
H. The fall of Jerusalem (25:1-30)

2 KINGS

2 KINGS 1

Ahaziah Seeks Baal-zebub

1 And Moab (Mo'av) rebelled against Israel (Yisra'el) after the death of Ahab (Achav). **2** And Ahaziah (Achazya) fell through the lattice in his upper room which ***was*** in Samaria (Shomron), and he became ill. And he sent messengers and said to them, "Go, inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron (Eqron), whether I will live from this sickness." **3** And the angel of the LORD spoke to Elijah (Eliya) the Tishbite, "Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and speak to them: 'Is ***it*** because there is no God in Israel ***that*** you are going to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron?' **4** And therefore thus says the LORD: 'The bed to which you have gone up, you will not come down from it, for you will surely die.'" And Elijah went. **5** And the messengers returned to him, and he said to them, "Why ***is*** this, ***that*** you have returned?" **6** And they said to him, "A man came up to meet us, and he said to us, 'Go, return to the king who sent you, and you will speak to him: "Thus says the LORD: 'Is ***it*** because there is no God in Israel ***that*** you are sending to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore the bed to which you have gone up, you will not come down from it, for you will surely die.'"'" **7** And he spoke to them, "What ***was*** the appearance of the man who came up to meet you and spoke these words to you?" **8** And they said to him, "A man, a possessor of hair, and a belt of leather girded on his loins." And he said, "That ***is*** Elijah the Tishbite."

Fire from Heaven

9 And he sent to him a commander of fifty and his fifty. And he went up to him, and look, he ***was*** sitting on the top of the hill. And he spoke to him, "Man of God, the king has spoken: 'Come down!'" **10** And Elijah answered and spoke to the commander of the fifty, "And if I ***am*** a man of God, let fire come down from the heavens and consume you and your fifty." And fire came down from the heavens and consumed him and his fifty. **11** And he returned and sent to him another commander of fifty and his fifty. And he answered and spoke to him, "Man of God, thus says the king: 'Come down quickly!'" **12** And Elijah answered and spoke to them, "If I ***am*** a man of God, let fire come down from the heavens and consume you and your fifty." And the fire of God came down from the heavens and consumed him and his fifty. **13** And he returned and sent a third commander of fifty and his fifty. And the third commander of fifty went up, and he came and bowed down on his knees before Elijah, and he pleaded for favor with him and spoke to him, "Man of God, please let my life and the life of these fifty servants of yours be precious in your eyes. **14** Look, fire has come down from the heavens and has consumed the two former commanders of fifties and their fifties; and now let my life be precious in your eyes." **15** And the angel of the LORD spoke to Elijah, "Go down with him; do not be afraid of him." And he arose and went down with him to the king. **16** And he spoke to him, "Thus says the LORD: 'Because you have sent messengers to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron, is ***it*** because there is no God in Israel to inquire of His word? Therefore the bed to which you have gone up, you will not come down from it, for you will

1:1 2 Sam 8:2; Num 24:7; 1 Chr 18:2
1:2 Matt 10:25; Mark 3:22; Luke 11:15
1:3 Acts 8:26; Acts 12:7; Acts 12:8
1:4 Luke 1:17; Gen 2:17; Gen 3:4
1:6 2 Pet 3:16; Isa 41:22,23; 1 Chr 10:13,14
1:7 2 Pet 3:16; Judg 8:18; 1 Sam 28:14
1:8 Matt 3:4; Mark 1:6; Luke 1:17
1:9 Matt 27:42; 2 Kgs 6:13,14; 1 Kgs 18:4,10
1:10 Luke 9:54; Rev 11:5; Rev 20:9
1:11 Luke 9:54; Num 16:41; 1 Sam 6:9
1:12 Luke 9:54; Rev 13:13; Rev 20:9
1:13 Rev 3:9; Luke 9:54; Rev 13:13
1:14 Luke 9:54; Rev 13:13; Rev 20:9
1:15 Isa 51:12; Jer 1:17; Ezek 2:6
1:16 Exod 4:22,23; 1 Kgs 14:6-13; 1 Kgs 21:18-24

1:1 *Moab rebelled against Israel after the death of Ahab* First and Second Kings were one book, and the story picks up where 1 Kings ended. Moab, east of the Dead Sea, had been under Israel since David (2 Sam 8:2) and paid heavy tribute (3:4). Israel's power was slipping. When a people turn from the LORD, things begin to come apart.
1:2 *fell through the lattice in his upper room* A lattice was a wooden screen over a window or on a roof, for shade and air.
1:2 *Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron* Ekron was one of the five Philistine cities. Baal-Zebub means lord of the flies, perhaps Israel's mocking change of a name like Baal-Zebul, Baal the prince. By New Testament times Beelzebul was a name for Satan (Matt 12:24-26). Ahaziah knew of Carmel (1 Kgs 18:39) and still went to a foreign idol.
1:3 *Is it because there is no God in Israel* A question that cuts to the heart. Ahaziah acted as if the God of Israel did not exist or did not matter. When trouble comes, where do we turn first? The living God is not hard to find, and He invites us to come (James 1:5).
1:8 *A man, a possessor of hair, and a belt of leather girded on his loins* A hairy man, or a man in a rough garment of hair, as prophets often wore (Zech 13:4). John the Baptist dressed the same way (Matt 3:4). Jesus said John was the Elijah to come (Matt 11:14), who came "in the spirit and power of Elijah" (Luke 1:17).
1:9 *a commander of fifty and his fifty* A captain with a company of fifty men. He called Elijah "Man of God" and then ordered him down, using a holy title with no respect for the God behind it.
1:10 *if I am a man of God, let fire come down from the heavens* The same sign God gave on Carmel, proving who was the true God and His true prophet.
1:12 *the fire of God came down from the heavens and consumed him and his fifty* A hard passage. Elijah had no power to call fire on his own. God answered, and the fire was His judgment, not the prophet's temper. A king who had turned to Baal sent armed men to seize God's spokesman, after years of warning. Yet this is no pattern for us. When James and John wanted to call down fire, Jesus rebuked them (Luke 9:54-55). Our calling is to carry the gospel, love our enemies and leave judgment to God (Rom 12:19).
1:13 *bowed down on his knees before Elijah* Two came in pride and died. One came humbly and lived. "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble" (James 4:6).
1:15 *Go down with him; do not be afraid of him* Elijah once ran from Jezebel (1 Kgs 19:3). Here he walks into her son's palace and gives the same word a third time. God had restored His servant, and He can do the same for us after our failures.

surely die.'" **17** And he died according to the word of the LORD which Elijah had spoken. And Joram (Yehoram) reigned in his place, in the second year of Jehoram (Yehoram) the son of Jehoshaphat (Yehoshafat) the king of Judah (Yehuda), for he had no son. **18** And the rest of the matters of Ahaziah which he did, ***are*** they not written in the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Israel?

2 KINGS 2

Elijah Taken Up to Heaven

1 And it was, when the LORD ***was about*** to take up Elijah (Eliyahu) by the whirlwind to the heavens, and Elijah and Elisha went from Gilgal. **2** And Elijah said to Elisha, "Remain here, please, for the LORD has sent me to Bethel (Bet-El)." And Elisha said, "***As*** the LORD lives, and ***as*** your soul lives, I will not leave you." And they went down ***to*** Bethel. **3** And the sons of the prophets who ***were in*** Bethel came out to Elisha and said to him, "Do you know that today the LORD is about to take your master from over your head?" And he said, "I also, I know; be silent." **4** And Elijah said to him, "Elisha, remain here, please, for the LORD has sent me ***to*** Jericho (Yericho)." And he said, "***As*** the LORD lives, and ***as*** your soul lives, I will not leave you." And they came ***to*** Jericho. **5** And the sons of the prophets who ***were*** in Jericho drew near to Elisha and said to him, "Do you know that today the LORD is about to take your master from over your head?" And he said, "I also, I know; be silent." **6** And Elijah said to him, "Remain here, please, for the LORD has sent me to the Jordan (Yarden)." And he said, "***As*** the LORD lives, and ***as*** your soul lives, I will not leave you." And the two of them went. **7** And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went and stood opposite, at a distance; and the two of them stood by the Jordan. **8** And Elijah took his cloak and rolled ***it*** up and struck the waters, and they were divided here and there; and the two of them passed over on the dry ground. **9** And it was, when they had passed over, and Elijah said to Elisha, "Ask what I shall do for you before I am taken from you." And Elisha said, "And please let ***there*** be a double portion of your spirit to me." **10** And he said, "You have asked a hard thing. If you see me taken from you, let it be so to you; and if not, it will not be." **11** And it was, they ***were*** walking, walking on, and speaking; and look, a chariot of fire and horses of fire, and they separated between the two of them; and Elijah went up in the whirlwind to the heavens.

Elisha Takes Up the Cloak

12 And Elisha ***was*** seeing, and he ***was*** crying out, "My father, my father, the chariotry of Israel (Yisra'el) and its horsemen!" And he did not see him again. And he took hold of his clothes and tore them into two pieces. **13** And he took up the cloak of Elijah which had fallen from him, and he went back and stood on the bank of the Jordan. **14** And he took the cloak of Elijah which had fallen from him and struck the waters, and he said, "Where ***is*** the LORD, the God of Elijah?" He also struck the waters, and they were divided here and there, and Elisha passed over. **15** And the sons of the prophets who ***were*** in Jericho saw him from opposite, and

1:17 2 Kgs 3:1; 2 Kgs 8:16,17; 1 Kgs 22:51
1:18 1 Kgs 14:19; 1 Kgs 22:39
2:1 Rev 11:12; Gen 5:24; Heb 11:5
2:2 Luke 9:51; 1 Sam 1:26; 2 Kgs 2:4,6
2:3 2 Kgs 4:1,38; 2 Kgs 9:1; 1 Kgs 20:35
2:4 Luke 19:1; 2 Kgs 2:2; Josh 6:26
2:5 Rev 11:12; 2 Kgs 2:3; Josh 1:1,2
2:7 Rev 11:12; 2 Kgs 2:17; 1 Kgs 18:4,13
2:8 2 Kgs 2:14; Exod 14:21,22; 1 Kgs 19:13,19
2:9 Num 11:17,25; Deut 21:17; 1 Tim 5:17
2:10 Mark 11:22-24; John 16:24; 2 Kgs 2:12
2:11 Rev 11:12; Matt 17:3; Mark 9:4
2:12 Rev 11:12; Acts 1:10; 2 Kgs 13:14
2:13 Matt 17:3; 1 Kgs 19:19; 1 Kgs 9:26
2:14 Matt 17:3; John 14:12; Ps 115:2
2:15 John 15:26; Num 11:25-29; Num 27:20

1:17 *Joram reigned in his place* Ahaziah reigned about two years, about 853 to 852 B.C., and had no son. These notes call the king of Israel Joram and the king of Judah Jehoram, as the SLB usually does, though both names are the same in Hebrew and mean the LORD is exalted. The two kingdoms had kings named Joram and Ahaziah at nearly the same time, related by marriage.
1:17 *in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah* Second Kings 3:1 says Jehoshaphat's eighteenth year. Both are true, because Jehoram ruled alongside his father for a few years. Shared reigns like this are called co-regencies.
1:18 *the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Israel* The northern royal record, now lost. The writer chose what to tell by asking one question: how did each king stand before the LORD?
2:1 *when the LORD was about to take up Elijah by the whirlwind to the heavens* The writer tells the ending first. God had planned it. A whirlwind is a violent storm wind, and God often showed Himself in storm (Job 38:1). Only Enoch had left the earth without dying before (Gen 5:24).
2:2 *I will not leave you* An oath. Scripture does not say why Elijah told him to stay, perhaps to spare him the parting or to test him. Three times Elisha could have stopped, and three times he kept going. It is easy to follow when the road is short. It takes a settled heart to follow all the way to the river (Ruth 1:16-17; Luke 9:62).
2:3 *the sons of the prophets* Groups of prophets who lived and learned together, with Elijah and later Elisha as leaders. Even at Bethel, the center of Jeroboam's calf worship (1 Kgs 12:28-29), God had a faithful group.
2:8 *Elijah took his cloak and rolled it up and struck the waters* The cloak was the prophet's outer robe and a sign of his office. Every Israelite would think of Moses at the Red Sea (Exod 14:21-22) and Joshua at this same river (Josh 3:15-17).
2:9 *let there be a double portion of your spirit to me* Not greed. The firstborn son received a double portion (Deut 21:17). Elisha asked to be Elijah's true heir so he could carry on the work, knowing he could not do it in his own strength.
2:10 *You have asked a hard thing* It was not Elijah's to give. Only God could give it. Elisha had to keep his eyes on his master to the end.
2:11 *Elijah went up in the whirlwind to the heavens* I take it as written. Elijah was taken up alive, body and all. He appeared later with Moses talking with Jesus (Matt 17:3). The chariot of fire was heaven's honor guard. Believers alive when Christ comes for His church will also be caught up without dying (1 Cor 15:51-52; 1 Thess 4:17), and Elijah's going up is a small picture of that day, though the New Testament does not name it as one. Jesus rose and went up Himself, and He "will come in the same manner" (Acts 1:11).
2:11 *a chariot of fire and horses of fire* Malachi said God would send Elijah before the day of the LORD (Mal 4:5). Jesus said John the Baptist came in that role (Matt 17:11-13). Many teachers also believe Elijah himself will come again before Christ's return, possibly as one of the two witnesses of Revelation 11.
2:12 *My father, my father, the chariotry of Israel and its horsemen* Elijah, a man of God, had been Israel's real defense, worth more than the king's army. King Jehoash would say the same over Elisha (13:14). Tearing clothes in two was a sign of grief.
2:14 *Where is the LORD, the God of Elijah* The question that matters. The power was never in the cloak. Elijah was gone, but the God of Elijah was not. When a faithful pastor, parent or teacher goes home, God's work does not die with them. He is still looking for people who will take it up.
2:15 *The spirit of Elijah has rested on Elisha* The prophets accepted him as their new leader.

they said, "The spirit of Elijah has rested on Elisha." And they came to meet him and bowed down to him to the ground. **16** And they said to him, "Look, please, there are with your servants fifty men, sons of valor. Please let them go and search for your master, lest the Spirit of the LORD has carried him off and cast him on one of the mountains or into one of the valleys." And he said, "You shall not send." **17** And they urged him until ***he was*** ashamed, and he said, "Send." And they sent fifty men, and they searched three days and did not find him. **18** And they returned to him, and he ***was*** remaining in Jericho; and he said to them, "Did I not say to you, 'Do not go'?"

The Water Healed and the Mockers of Bethel

19 And the men of the city said to Elisha, "Look, please, the location of the city ***is*** good, just as my lord sees; and the waters ***are*** bad, and the land ***is*** causing miscarriage." **20** And he said, "Bring me a new bowl, and put salt there." And they brought ***it*** to him. **21** And he went out to the outlet of the waters and threw salt there, and he said, "Thus says the LORD: 'I have healed these waters; there will not be from there again death and miscarriage.'" **22** And the waters were healed until this day, according to the word of Elisha which he spoke. **23** And he went up from there ***to*** Bethel; and he ***was*** going up on the way, and young lads came out from the city, and they mocked him and said to him, "Go up, bald ***one***! Go up, bald ***one***!" **24** And he turned behind him and saw them, and he cursed them in the name of the LORD. And two female bears came out from the forest and tore forty-two boys of them. **25** And he went from there to the mountain of Carmel (Karmel), and from there he returned ***to*** Samaria (Shomron).

2 KINGS 3

Joram and the Revolt of Moab

1 And Joram (Yehoram) the son of Ahab (Achav) became king over Israel (Yisra'el) in Samaria (Shomron) in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat (Yehoshafat) the king of Judah (Yehuda), and he reigned twelve years. **2** And he did the evil in the eyes of the LORD, only not like his father and like his mother; and he removed the sacred pillar of the Baal which his father had made. **3** Only he clung to the sins of Jeroboam (Yaravam) the son of Nebat (Nevat), with which he caused Israel to sin; he did not turn aside from it. **4** And Mesha the king of Moab (Mo'av) was a sheep breeder, and he would render to the king of Israel a hundred thousand lambs and a hundred thousand rams, ***with their*** wool. **5** And it was, when Ahab died, and the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel. **6** And King Joram went out on that day from Samaria, and he mustered all Israel. **7** And he went and sent to Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, saying, "The king of Moab has rebelled against me. Will you go with me against Moab for battle?" And he said, "I will go up. As I ***am***, so ***are*** you; as my people, so ***are*** your people; as my horses, so ***are*** your horses." **8** And he said, "Which ***is*** the way ***by which*** we will go up?" And he said, "The way of the wilderness of Edom."

Elisha's Word to the Three Kings

9 And the king of Israel and the king of Judah and the king of Edom went, and they went around, a journey of seven days; and there was no water for the camp and for the animals that ***were*** at their feet. **10** And the king of Israel said, "Alas! For the LORD has called these three kings to give them into the hand of Moab." **11** And Jehoshaphat said, "Is there not here a

2:16 Acts 8:39; 1 Kgs 18:12; Ezek 3:14
2:17 2 Sam 18:22,23; Luke 11:8; Rom 10:2
2:18 Luke 19:1
2:19 Num 12:11; 1 Kgs 18:7,13; 1 Tim 5:17
2:20 Judg 9:45; Ezek 47:11; Zeph 2:9
2:21 2 Kgs 4:41; 2 Kgs 6:6; Exod 15:25,26
2:23 2 Chr 36:16; Job 30:1,8-31; Job 19:18
2:24 2 Kgs 1:10-12; Gen 9:25; Deut 28:15-26
2:25 2 Kgs 4:25; 1 Kgs 18:19,42
3:1 Matt 1:8; 2 Kgs 1:17; 2 Kgs 8:16
3:2 2 Kgs 10:18,26-28; 2 Kgs 6:31,32; 2 Kgs 21:6,20
3:3 1 Kgs 14:16; 2 Kgs 10:20-31; 1 Kgs 15:26,34
3:4 2 Sam 8:2; Gen 13:2; Gen 26:13,14
3:5 2 Kgs 1:1; 2 Kgs 8:20; 2 Chr 21:8-10
3:6 1 Sam 11:8; 1 Sam 15:4; 2 Sam 24:1-25
3:7 1 Kgs 22:4,32,33; 2 Chr 18:3,29-32; 2 Chr 19:2
3:8 Num 21:4; Mal 1:2,3
3:9 1 Kgs 22:27; Exod 15:22; Exod 17:1
3:10 2 Kgs 6:33; Gen 4:13; Ps 78:34-36
3:11 Luke 22:27; 1 Kgs 22:7; 1 Kgs 19:21

2:16 *lest the Spirit of the LORD has carried him off* It had happened before (1 Kgs 18:12). Their three-day search found nothing and proved what had really happened.
2:19 *the waters are bad, and the land is causing miscarriage* Joshua had cursed the rebuilding of Jericho (Josh 6:26), and Hiel rebuilt it at the cost of his sons (1 Kgs 16:34).
2:21 *I have healed these waters* A little salt could never heal a spring. The LORD did, and Elisha said so. A spring at Jericho is still called Elisha's Spring. His first miracle was a healing, and his ministry would be full of help for ordinary people.
2:23 *young lads came out from the city, and they mocked him* One of the hardest passages in the Bible. The word na'ar is used of Joseph at seventeen (Gen 37:2), of David facing Goliath (1 Sam 17:33) and of grown servants. These were likely teens and young men, a mob from the city of the calf. "Go up" may mock Elijah's going up: go up like your master. They were mocking the LORD and His messenger.
2:24 *he cursed them in the name of the LORD* He handed the matter to God. The text says forty-two were mauled. It does not say how many died, and I will not add to it. The Law warned of wild animals if Israel kept rejecting God (Lev 26:21-22). This was judgment on a city's open contempt for God and a warning that Elisha spoke for the LORD (Gal 6:7). It is no pattern for us. "Bless those who curse you" (Luke 6:28), and Jesus prayed for those who mocked Him (Luke 23:34).
2:25 *to the mountain of Carmel* Where Elijah defeated the prophets of Baal. From there Elisha went to Samaria, and his ministry began in earnest.
3:1 *Joram the son of Ahab became king over Israel in Samaria* He reigned about 852 to 841 B.C.
3:2 *he removed the sacred pillar of the Baal which his father had made* A sacred pillar was a standing stone set up as an object of worship. "Only not like his father and like his mother" is faint praise.
3:3 *he clung to the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat* The golden calves at Bethel and Dan (1 Kgs 12:26-30). Every king of Israel kept them. Joram made a partial reform but never came back to the LORD with his whole heart. Partial obedience is still disobedience.
3:4 *Mesha the king of Moab was a sheep breeder* The tribute was crushing. Mesha's own account has been found, the Moabite Stone, a black stone found in Moab in the 1800s, where he boasts that Omri and his son oppressed Moab and that his god Chemosh freed him.
3:7 *As I am, so are you* Jehoshaphat made this mistake with Ahab and nearly died (1 Kgs 22:4, 32-33), and again with Ahaziah (2 Chr 20:35-37). A good king kept making alliances with wicked men (2 Cor 6:14).
3:8 *the way of the wilderness of Edom* Around the south end of the Dead Sea, to strike Moab where it was weaker.
3:10 *the LORD has called these three kings to give them into the hand of Moab* Joram blamed God for a plan God never gave.
3:11 *who poured water on the hands of Elijah* A way of saying he had been Elijah's servant. Kings usually summoned prophets. Here three kings went down to one. Need has a way of humbling us.

prophet of the LORD, that we may inquire of the LORD through him?" And one of the servants of the king of Israel answered and said, "Elisha the son of Shaphat (Shafat) ***is*** here, who poured water on the hands of Elijah (Eliyahu)." **12** And Jehoshaphat said, "The word of the LORD is with him." And the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom went down to him. **13** And Elisha said to the king of Israel, "What ***is there*** to me and to you? Go to the prophets of your father and to the prophets of your mother." And the king of Israel said to him, "No, for the LORD has called these three kings to give them into the hand of Moab." **14** And Elisha said, "***As*** the LORD of armies lives, before whom I stand, surely were it not that I lift up the face of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, I would not look at you, and I would not see you. **15** And now, bring me a musician." And it was, when the musician played, and the hand of the LORD was on him. **16** And he said, "Thus says the LORD: 'Make this wadi ditches, ditches.' **17** For thus says the LORD: 'You will not see wind, and you will not see rain, and that wadi will be filled ***with*** water, and you will drink, you and your livestock and your animals.' **18** And this is a light thing in the eyes of the LORD, and He will give Moab into your hand. **19** And you will strike every fortified city and every choice city, and every good tree you will fell, and all the springs of water you will stop up, and every good portion of land you will ruin with stones." **20** And it was in the morning, at the offering up of the grain offering, and look, water ***was*** coming from the direction of Edom, and the land was filled ***with*** the water.

Moab Defeated

21 And all Moab had heard that the kings had come up to fight against them; and they were called together, from everyone girding on a belt and upward, and they stood at the border. **22** And they rose early in the morning, and the sun shone on the water, and Moab saw the water opposite ***them*** red like blood. **23** And they said, "This ***is*** blood! The kings have surely fought one another, and they have struck each his neighbor. And now, to the plunder, Moab!" **24** And they came to the camp of Israel, and Israel rose up and struck Moab, and they fled before them; and they struck into it, even striking Moab. **25** And they tore down the cities, and on every good portion of land they threw each his stone and filled it, and every spring of water they stopped up, and every good tree they felled, until he left ***only*** its stones in Kir-hareseth (Qir-Chareset); and the slingers surrounded ***it*** and struck it. **26** And the king of Moab saw that the battle was too strong for him, and he took with him seven hundred men drawing the sword to break through to the king of Edom; and they were not able. **27** And he took his firstborn son who would reign in his place and offered him up ***as*** a burnt offering on the wall. And there was great wrath against Israel; and they departed from him and returned to the land.

2 KINGS 4

The Widow's Oil

1 And a certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets cried out to Elisha, saying, "Your servant my husband is dead, and you know that your servant was fearing the LORD; and the creditor has come to take my two children for himself as slaves." **2** And Elisha said to her, "What shall I do for you? Tell me, what do you have in the house?" And she said, "Your maidservant has nothing in the house except a

3:12 2 Kgs 2:14,15,21,24; 1 Sam 3:19-21; 2 Kgs 5:8,9,15
3:13 Matt 8:29; John 2:4; 1 Kgs 18:19
3:14 2 Kgs 5:16; 1 Kgs 17:1; 1 Kgs 18:15
3:15 Acts 11:21; 1 Sam 16:23; Ezek 1:3
3:16 2 Kgs 4:3; Num 2:18,16-18
3:17 Ps 107:35; 1 Kgs 18:36-39; Ps 84:6
3:18 Jer 32:17,27; Luke 1:37; 2 Kgs 20:10
3:19 2 Kgs 13:17; Num 24:17; Judg 6:16
3:20 Exod 29:39,40; 1 Kgs 18:36; Dan 9:21
3:21 1 Kgs 20:11; Eph 6:14
3:23 2 Kgs 6:18-20; 2 Kgs 7:6; Exod 15:9
3:24 Josh 8:20-22; Judg 20:40-46; 1 Thess 5:3,4
3:25 2 Kgs 3:19; Isa 16:7,11; Jer 48:31,36
3:26 2 Kgs 3:9; Amos 2:1
3:27 Mic 6:7; Deut 12:31; Judg 11:31,39
4:1 Acts 13:26; 2 Kgs 2:3,5; Lev 25:39,40,48
4:2 1 Kgs 17:12; 2 Kgs 2:9; 2 Kgs 6:26,27

3:13 *Go to the prophets of your father and to the prophets of your mother* You serve Baal and the calves, so ask them.
3:14 *were it not that I lift up the face of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah* The LORD of armies is the name of God as commander of heaven's armies. For one godly king, God helped the whole army. One faithful person can bring blessing to many.
3:15 *Bring me a musician* Music did not force God to speak. It seems to have quieted Elisha's heart after his anger so he could listen, as David's music calmed Saul (1 Sam 16:23; 1 Chr 25:1).
3:16 *Make this wadi ditches, ditches* A wadi is a dry stream bed. They had to dig for water they could not see. God often asks us to prepare for the blessing before it comes.
3:18 *this is a light thing in the eyes of the LORD* What looked impossible to the kings was nothing to God.
3:19 *every good tree you will fell* The Law forbade cutting fruit trees in a siege (Deut 20:19-20), but that law concerned cities Israel would live among in its own land. Here God gave a special word against a rebel nation outside the land.
3:20 *at the offering up of the grain offering* The morning offering at the temple, so early morning. Rain may have fallen far off in Edom's hills and flooded down the wadi. Either way, it came as God said.
3:22 *red like blood* The red soil and the low morning sun made the pools look like blood. Having seen no rain, Moab thought the kings had turned on each other. God used the water that saved Israel to fool Moab.
3:27 *offered him up as a burnt offering on the wall* In despair the king sacrificed his heir to Chemosh before both armies. The Law called this an abomination (Lev 18:21; Deut 12:31), and God later judged Israel for doing the same (17:17; 21:6). False gods always demand more and give nothing. The true God did not ask for our son. He gave His own Son (John 3:16; Rom 8:32).
3:27 *there was great wrath against Israel* The text does not say whose wrath. Some think Moab's fury, driven to frenzy. Some think Israel's own horror, so the allies broke off. Others think the LORD's displeasure with Israel. It does not mean Chemosh had any power (Isa 45:5). The kings won by God's word and still went home without what they came for. Partial faith gave partial results.
4:1 *your servant was fearing the LORD* The prophets were not all single men. To fear the LORD means to honor Him with reverence and trust and to obey Him.
4:1 *the creditor has come to take my two children for himself as slaves* Under the Law a debtor could sell himself or his family into service for a limited time, to be treated as a hired worker, not ruled harshly (Exod 21:2; Lev 25:39-43). Still, losing her sons would leave her with nothing. God commands His people to protect widows and orphans (Exod 22:22-24; James 1:27).
4:2 *what do you have in the house* Elisha started with what she had. God often does. Moses had a staff, and a boy had five loaves (John 6). God asks us to give Him what is in our hands.

jar of oil." **3** And he said, "Go, ask for yourself vessels from outside, from all your neighbors, empty vessels; do not get few. **4** And you shall go in and shut the door behind you and behind your sons, and you shall pour out into all these vessels, and the full ***one*** you shall set aside." **5** And she went from him and shut the door behind her and behind her sons; they ***were*** bringing ***vessels*** to her, and she ***was*** pouring out. **6** And it was, when the vessels were full, and she said to her son, "Bring me another vessel." And he said to her, "There is not another vessel." And the oil stopped. **7** And she came and told the man of God, and he said, "Go, sell the oil and pay your debt; and you and your sons will live on the remainder."

The Shunammite Woman

8 And it was the day, and Elisha passed over to Shunem; and there ***was*** a great woman there, and she urged him to eat bread. And it was, as often as he passed by, he would turn aside there to eat bread. **9** And she said to her husband, "Look, please, I know that he ***is*** a holy man of God who passes by us continually. **10** Please let us make a small walled upper room, and let us put for him there a bed and a table and a chair and a lampstand; and it will be, when he comes to us, he will turn aside there." **11** And it was the day, and he came there, and he turned aside to the upper room and lay down there. **12** And he said to Gehazi (Gechazi) his servant, "Call this Shunammite." And he called her, and she stood before him. **13** And he said to him, "Say, please, to her, 'Look, you have taken care for us ***with*** all this care. What ***is there*** to do for you? Is there ***something*** to speak for you to the king or to the commander of the army?'" And she said, "I am dwelling in the midst of my own people." **14** And he said, "And what ***is there*** to do for her?" And Gehazi said, "Truly, she has no son, and her husband is old." **15** And he said, "Call her." And he called her, and she stood in the doorway. **16** And he said, "At this appointed time, when the time revives, you ***will be*** embracing a son." And she said, "No, my lord, man of God, do not lie to your maidservant." **17** And the woman conceived and bore a son at this appointed time, when the time revived, which Elisha had spoken to her.

The Shunammite's Son Raised

18 And the child grew, and it was the day, and he went out to his father, to the reapers. **19** And he said to his father, "My head, my head!" And he said to the servant, "Carry him to his mother." **20** And he carried him and brought him to his mother, and he sat on her knees until noon, and he died. **21** And she went up and laid him on the bed of the man of God, and she shut ***the door*** behind him and went out. **22** And she called to her husband and said, "Send me, please, one of the servants and one of the donkeys, that I may run to the man of God and return." **23** And he said, "Why are you going to him today? ***It is*** not a new moon and not a Sabbath." And she said, "Peace." **24** And she saddled the donkey and said to her servant, "Drive and go; do not hold back for me in riding unless I say to you." **25** And she went and came to the man of God at the mountain of Carmel (Karmel). And it was, when the man of God saw her from opposite, and he said to Gehazi his servant, "Look, that Shunammite ***is there***. **26** Now, run, please, to meet her, and say to her, 'Is it peace with you? Is it peace with your husband? Is it peace with the child?'" And she said, "Peace." **27** And she came to the man of God at the mountain, and she took hold of his feet; and Gehazi drew near to push her away. And the man of God said, "Let her alone, for her soul is bitter within her, and the LORD has hidden ***it*** from me and has not told me." **28** And she said, "Did I ask for a son from my lord? Did I not say, 'Do not deceive me'?" **29** And he said to Gehazi, "Gird up your loins, and take my staff in your hand, and go. If you meet a man, do not bless him; and if a man blesses you, do not answer him. And you shall put my staff on the face of the lad." **30** And the

4:3 2 Kgs 3:16; John 2:7; 2 Kgs 13:18,19
4:4 Mark 8:5-9; 2 Kgs 4:32,33; 1 Kgs 17:19,20
4:5 Luke 1:45; 2 Kgs 5:11; 1 Kgs 17:15,16
4:6 Matt 14:20; 2 Kgs 4:43,44; Matt 9:29
4:7 2 Thess 3:7-12; Ps 37:21; Rom 12:17
4:8 Luke 24:29; Acts 16:15; Josh 19:18
4:9 Prov 31:10,11; 1 Thess 2:10; 1 Kgs 17:18,24
4:10 Rom 12:13; Matt 10:41,42; Matt 25:40
4:12 2 Kgs 8:4,5; 2 Kgs 4:29-31; 2 Kgs 5:20-27
4:13 2 Sam 19:13; Matt 10:40-42; Luke 9:3-5
4:14 Gen 15:2,3; Gen 17:17; Gen 18:10-14
4:16 Luke 1:20; 2 Kgs 4:28; Gen 18:10,14
4:17 Luke 1:24; Gen 21:1; 1 Sam 1:19,20
4:18 Ruth 2:4
4:19 Job 14:1,2; Jer 4:19
4:20 Luke 7:12; John 11:3,5,14; Isa 49:15
4:21 2 Kgs 4:10; 1 Kgs 17:19
4:22 2 Kgs 4:24,26; John 11:3; Acts 9:38
4:23 Num 10:10; Num 28:11; 1 Chr 23:31
4:24 Exod 4:20; 1 Kgs 13:13,23; 1 Sam 25:19
4:25 2 Kgs 2:25; 1 Kgs 18:19,42; Isa 35:2
4:26 Acts 15:36; Gen 29:6; Gen 37:14
4:27 Matt 28:9; Luke 7:38; Matt 15:23
4:28 Gen 30:1
4:29 1 Pet 1:13; 2 Kgs 2:14; 1 Kgs 18:46
4:30 2 Kgs 2:2,4; Exod 33:12-16; Ruth 1:16-18

4:3 *do not get few* The size of the miracle would depend on the size of her faith. How many jars would you have borrowed?
4:6 *the oil stopped* The oil did not run out. The jars did.
4:7 *you and your sons will live on the remainder* God paid her debt and provided for her future. He "is able to do above all things, far more abundantly than what we ask or think" (Eph 3:20). The miracle happened behind a shut door. God often does His deepest work in private.
4:8 *a great woman* A woman of wealth and standing in Shunem, in the valley of Jezreel.
4:10 *a bed and a table and a chair and a lampstand* Simple, but exactly what a traveling prophet needed. She gave without being asked and without expecting a return (Heb 13:2; Matt 10:41).
4:13 *I am dwelling in the midst of my own people* She was content and did not want favors from the powerful.
4:14 *she has no son, and her husband is old* A woman with no son had no one to care for her in old age and no heir for the land.
4:16 *do not lie to your maidservant* She had given up hoping, and hope hurt. God kept His word as He did for Sarah (Gen 18:10-14). Nothing is too hard for the LORD.
4:20 *he sat on her knees until noon, and he died* Perhaps sunstroke in the harvest heat. Every parent who has lost a child knows a little of what is in this verse.
4:21 *laid him on the bed of the man of God* No wailing, no neighbors. She put him in the prophet's room and went to find the prophet. That was faith.
4:23 *It is not a new moon and not a Sabbath* People seem to have visited prophets on holy days, the new moon at the start of each month and the Sabbath. "Peace" is shalom: it will be well. Carmel was some fifteen to twenty miles away.
4:27 *the LORD has hidden it from me* Even a great prophet did not know everything. God reveals what He chooses, when He chooses.
4:28 *Did I ask for a son from my lord* Honest grief, and God was not offended. Scripture is full of people who brought bitter questions to God, and He listened.
4:30 *I will not leave you* Elisha's own words to Elijah (2:2, 4, 6). She would not settle for the servant and the staff.

mother of the lad said, "***As*** the LORD lives, and ***as*** your soul lives, I will not leave you." And he arose and went after her. **31** And Gehazi passed on before them, and he put the staff on the face of the lad; and there was no sound, and there was no attention. And he went back to meet him, and he told him, saying, "The lad has not awakened." **32** And Elisha came into the house, and look, the lad ***was*** dead, laid on his bed. **33** And he went in and shut the door behind the two of them, and he prayed to the LORD. **34** And he went up and lay on the child, and he put his mouth on his mouth and his eyes on his eyes and his palms on his palms, and he crouched over him; and the flesh of the child became warm. **35** And he went back and walked in the house, once here and once there; and he went up and crouched over him. And the lad sneezed up to seven times, and the lad opened his eyes. **36** And he called Gehazi and said, "Call this Shunammite." And he called her, and she came to him. And he said, "Take up your son." **37** And she came and fell at his feet and bowed down to the ground; and she took up her son and went out.

Death in the Pot

38 And Elisha returned to Gilgal, and the famine ***was*** in the land; and the sons of the prophets ***were*** sitting before him. And he said to his servant, "Set on the large pot, and cook stew for the sons of the prophets." **39** And one went out to the field to gather herbs, and he found a vine of the field and gathered from it gourds of the field, the fullness of his garment; and he came and sliced ***them*** into the pot of stew, for they did not know ***them***. **40** And they poured ***it*** out for the men to eat. And it was, when they were eating from the stew, and they cried out and said, "Death ***is*** in the pot, man of God!" And they were not able to eat. **41** And he said, "Then bring flour." And he threw ***it*** into the pot, and he said, "Pour out for the people, that they may eat." And there was no bad thing in the pot.

A Hundred Men Fed

42 And a man came from Baal-shalishah (Ba'al-Shalisha), and he brought to the man of God bread of firstfruits, twenty loaves of barley, and fresh grain in his sack. And he said, "Give to the people, that they may eat." **43** And his attendant said, "What, shall I set this before a hundred men?" And he said, "Give to the people, that they may eat; for thus says the LORD: '***They*** will eat and leave over.'" **44** And he set ***it*** before them, and they ate and left over, according to the word of the LORD.

2 KINGS 5

Naaman the Leper

1 And Naaman, the commander of the army of the king of Syria (Aram), was a great man before his master and highly regarded, for by him the LORD had given salvation to Syria; and the man was a mighty man of valor, leprous. **2** And Syria had gone out ***in*** raiding bands, and they had taken captive from the land of Israel (Yisra'el) a young girl, and she was before the wife of Naaman. **3** And she said to her mistress, "Oh that my master ***were*** before the prophet who ***is*** in Samaria (Shomron)! Then he would recover him from his leprosy." **4** And he went in and told his master, saying, "Like this and like this the girl who ***is*** from the land of Israel spoke." **5** And the king of Syria said, "Go, go in, and let me send a letter to the king of Israel." And he went and took in his hand approximately 750 pounds (ten talents) of silver and approximately 150 pounds (six thousand ***shekels***) of gold and ten changes of garments. **6** And he brought the letter to the king of Israel, saying, "And now, when this letter comes to you, look, I have sent to you Naaman my servant, and you

4:31 John 11:11,43,44; 1 Sam 14:37; 1 Sam 28:6
4:32 Heb 11:35; 1 Kgs 17:17; Luke 8:52,53
4:33 Mark 5:40; Heb 11:35; Matt 6:6
4:34 Acts 20:10; Heb 11:35; 1 Kgs 17:21
4:35 Luke 7:14; Acts 9:40; Heb 11:35
4:36 Heb 11:35; 1 Kgs 17:23; Luke 7:15
4:37 2 Kgs 4:27; 2 Kgs 2:15; 1 Kgs 17:24
4:38 Luke 8:35; 2 Kgs 2:1; 2 Kgs 8:1
4:39 Isa 5:4; Jer 2:21; Matt 15:13
4:40 Exod 10:17; 2 Kgs 4:9; 2 Kgs 1:9,11,13
4:41 2 Kgs 2:21; Exod 15:25; 2 Kgs 5:10
4:42 John 6:13; Matt 15:32; 1 Sam 9:7
4:43 Matt 4:4; John 6:12; John 6:13
5:1 Luke 4:27; Num 12:10-12; 2 Kgs 4:8
5:2 Luke 4:27; 2 Kgs 6:23; 2 Kgs 13:20
5:3 Luke 4:27; Num 11:29; Acts 26:29
5:4 Luke 4:27; 2 Kgs 7:9-11; Mark 5:19
5:5 Luke 4:27; Judg 14:12; 2 Kgs 8:8,9
5:6 Luke 4:27

4:31 *there was no sound, and there was no attention* The staff had no power of its own.
4:33 *he prayed to the LORD* Elisha did what Elijah did at Zarephath (1 Kgs 17:19-22). He prayed first.
4:34 *the flesh of the child became warm* Scripture does not say why he lay on the boy. It was no medical method. Perhaps it showed complete identification with the child in prayer. The life came from God.
4:37 *she took up her son and went out* "Women received their dead by resurrection" (Heb 11:35). At Nain, very near Shunem, Jesus raised a widow's son (Luke 7:11-17). Elisha had to pray and work. Jesus simply said, "Young man, I say to you, arise" (Luke 7:14). He is the Lord of life Himself.
4:38 *the sons of the prophets were sitting before him* Gathered to learn from him, in a time of famine.
4:40 *Death is in the pot, man of God* The wild gourds were likely a poisonous wild melon.
4:41 *there was no bad thing in the pot* The flour did not cure the poison. God did, as with the salt at Jericho (2:21). God protected those who trusted Him even from their own mistakes.
4:42 *bread of firstfruits, twenty loaves of barley* The firstfruits belonged to the LORD and went to the priests (Num 18:13; Deut 18:4). With the true priests far off in Jerusalem and false priests at the calf shrines, this man brought his offering to God's prophet.
4:43 *What, shall I set this before a hundred men* Almost the question Andrew asked (John 6:9). Jesus fed thousands with five barley loaves, with twelve baskets left over (John 6:13). Elisha's miracle is a small picture of what the Son of God would do.
5:1 *by him the LORD had given salvation to Syria* Syria, also called Aram, was the kingdom north of Israel with its capital at Damascus. The LORD gave victory to Israel's enemy through Naaman. God rules over all nations (Dan 4:17), and Naaman did not know it yet.
5:1 *a mighty man of valor, leprous* The verse builds him up and ends with one word that changes everything. Leprosy in the Bible covers a range of serious skin diseases, and it made a person unclean and cut off (Lev 13:45-46). We all have something like Naaman's "but," sin we cannot cure (Rom 3:23).
5:3 *Oh that my master were before the prophet who is in Samaria* A nameless captive girl, torn from her family, cared enough about her enemy to speak of God's power. You never know how God may use a few words of faith spoken in a hard place (1 Pet 3:15).
5:5 *ten talents of silver* About 750 pounds of silver and 150 pounds of gold. Naaman thought healing could be bought, and he went to the palace, not the prophet.

shall recover him from his leprosy." **7** And it was, when the king of Israel read the letter, and he tore his clothes and said, "Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this ***man*** is sending to me to recover a man from his leprosy? For surely know, please, and see that he is seeking an occasion against me."

Naaman Washed in the Jordan

8 And it was, when Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes, and he sent to the king, saying, "Why have you torn your clothes? Let him come, please, to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel." **9** And Naaman came with his horses and with his chariot, and he stood at the entrance of the house of Elisha. **10** And Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, "Go and wash seven times in the Jordan (Yarden), and your flesh shall return to you, and be clean." **11** And Naaman was angry and went, and he said, "Look, I said to myself, 'He will surely come out to me, and stand and call on the name of the LORD his God, and wave his hand over the place, and recover the leprous ***one***.' **12** Are not Amana and Pharpar (Parpar), the rivers of Damascus (Dameseq), better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be clean?" And he turned and went in a rage. **13** And his servants drew near and spoke to him and said, "My father, ***if*** the prophet had spoken a great thing to you, would you not do ***it***? And how much more when he has said to you, 'Wash and be clean'?" **14** And he went down and dipped in the Jordan seven times, according to the word of the man of God; and his flesh returned like the flesh of a young lad, and he was clean. **15** And he went back to the man of God, he and all his camp, and he came and stood before him, and he said, "Look, please, I know that there is no God in all the earth except in Israel. And now, please accept a blessing from your servant." **16** And he said, "***As*** the LORD lives, before whom I stand, I will not accept ***it***." And he urged him to accept ***it***, and he refused. **17** And Naaman said, "And if not, please let there be given to your servant a load of a pair of mules ***of*** soil; for your servant will no longer offer burnt offering and sacrifice to other gods, but to the LORD. **18** In this matter may the LORD forgive your servant: when my master goes into the house of Rimmon to bow down there, and he is leaning on my hand, and I bow down ***in*** the house of Rimmon, when I bow down ***in*** the house of Rimmon, may the LORD forgive your servant in this matter."

Gehazi's Greed

19 And he said to him, "Go in peace." And he went from him some distance of land. **20** And Gehazi (Gechazi), the servant of Elisha the man of God, said, "Look, my master has spared Naaman this Aramean from accepting from his hand what he brought. ***As*** the LORD lives, surely I will run after him and accept something from him." **21** And Gehazi pursued after Naaman. And Naaman saw ***one*** running after him, and he got down from the chariot to meet him, and he said, "Is it peace?" **22** And he said, "Peace. My master has sent me, saying, 'Look, just now two young men from the hill country of Ephraim (Efrayim), of the sons of the prophets, have come to me. Please give them approximately 75 pounds (a talent) of silver and two changes of garments.'" **23** And Naaman said, "Be willing, take approximately 150 pounds (two talents)." And he urged him, and he bound approximately 150 pounds (two talents) of silver in two bags, and two changes of garments, and he gave ***them*** to two of his servants, and they carried ***them*** before him. **24** And he came to the Ophel (Ofel), and he took ***them*** from their hand and deposited ***them*** in the house; and he sent the men away, and they went. **25** And he went in and stood before his master. And Elisha said to him,

5:7 Luke 4:27; 1 Sam 2:6; Gen 30:2
5:8 Luke 4:27; 2 Sam 3:31; 2 Kgs 5:3,15
5:9 Luke 4:27; 2 Kgs 3:12; 2 Kgs 6:32
5:10 John 9:7; Luke 4:27; Lev 14:7,16,51
5:11 Matt 1:24; Luke 4:27; James 5:14
5:12 Luke 4:27; 2 Kgs 5:17; 2 Kgs 2:8,14
5:13 Mark 1:40; Luke 4:27; 1 Cor 9:11
5:14 Luke 4:27; Mark 1:40; Job 33:25
5:15 Luke 4:27; Dan 2:47; 1 Sam 25:27
5:16 Luke 4:27; 2 Kgs 3:14; 2 Kgs 5:20,26
5:17 Mark 1:40; Luke 4:27; 2 Kgs 5:12
5:18 Mark 1:40; 2 Kgs 7:2,17; 2 Kgs 17:35
5:19 Luke 8:48; Luke 4:27; 1 Sam 1:17
5:20 Luke 4:27; 2 Kgs 4:12,31,36; Exod 20:7
5:21 Acts 8:31; Luke 4:27; Luke 7:6,7
5:22 Luke 4:27; 2 Kgs 5:5; 1 Kgs 13:18
5:23 Luke 4:27; 1 Kgs 20:7; Luke 11:54
5:24 Luke 4:27; Josh 7:1,11,12,21; 1 Kgs 21:16
5:25 Matt 26:15; Matt 26:16; Luke 4:27

5:7 *Am I God, to kill and to make alive* The king, most likely Joram, thought Syria was picking a fight. He did not even think of Elisha. He had less faith than the captive girl.
5:8 *he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel* That was the point. God would show this general who the true God was.
5:10 *Go and wash seven times in the Jordan* Elisha did not come out. Naaman needed to learn that healing came not from a prophet's show but from God, received by simple faith and obedience.
5:11 *Naaman was angry* He wanted a ceremony fit for a great man.
5:12 *Are not Amana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better* The Damascus rivers ran clear and cold from the mountains, and the Jordan was muddy. Many stumble over the gospel the same way. It is too simple. They want to do something great or pay something. God's way is humbling: come as you are and trust Him.
5:13 *Wash and be clean* Once again nameless servants give wise advice. If Elisha had asked something hard, Naaman would have done it gladly.
5:14 *his flesh returned like the flesh of a young lad, and he was clean* Seven times, no less. He had to keep obeying. The power was not in the water but in God's word, received by faith, "not from works, so that no one may boast" (Eph 2:9). Unless we become like little children, we will not enter the kingdom (Matt 18:3).
5:15 *I know that there is no God in all the earth except in Israel* This time he stood before the prophet. The Syrian general now knew the LORD as the only true God.
5:16 *I will not accept it* Naaman must know that God's grace is free. "Freely you received, freely give" (Matt 10:8). Jesus pointed to Naaman at Nazareth (Luke 4:27), and they tried to throw Him off a cliff (Luke 4:28-29), because God's grace was reaching past proud insiders to humble outsiders. It still does.
5:17 *a load of a pair of mules of soil* People thought each god belonged to his own land. His understanding was young, but his heart was right: no more sacrifice to other gods, only to the LORD.
5:18 *the house of Rimmon* The temple of Syria's storm god. Naaman's duty was to give the king his arm as he bowed.
5:19 *Go in peace* Elisha did not approve of idol worship, and Naaman was not asking to worship Rimmon. He asked mercy for an outward duty he could not escape, and Elisha left him in God's hands to grow. Teachers have long discussed this verse, and it is wise not to build a rule on it. New believers need patience and grace as they learn.
5:20 *my master has spared Naaman this Aramean* Notice the contempt. To Gehazi, Naaman was still a foreigner and enemy, and he swore by the LORD to do something greedy.
5:22 *approximately 75 pounds of silver and two changes of garments* A talent of silver. Gehazi had seen every miracle and still his heart was set on money. Being close to God's work is not the same as having a heart for God. Judas walked with Jesus and stole from the money bag (John 12:6).

"From where ***have you come***, Gehazi?" And he said, "Your servant has not gone here or there." **26** And he said to him, "Did my heart not go ***with you*** when a man turned from on his chariot to meet you? Is it a time to accept the silver and to accept clothes and olive groves and vineyards and sheep and cattle and male servants and maidservants? **27** And the leprosy of Naaman shall cling to you and to your offspring forever." And he went out from before him leprous like snow.

2 KINGS 6

The Floating Axe Head

1 And the sons of the prophets said to Elisha, "Look, please, the place where we are dwelling before you is too narrow for us. **2** Please let us go to the Jordan (Yarden), and let us take from there each one beam, and let us make for ourselves a place there to dwell there." And he said, "Go." **3** And the one said, "Be willing, please, and go with your servants." And he said, "I, I will go." **4** And he went with them, and they came to the Jordan, and they cut down the trees. **5** And it was, the one ***was*** felling the beam, and the iron fell into the water; and he cried out and said, "Alas, my lord! And it was borrowed!" **6** And the man of God said, "Where did it fall?" And he showed him the place; and he cut off a stick and threw ***it*** there, and he made the iron float. **7** And he said, "Take ***it*** up for yourself." And he stretched out his hand and took it.

The Chariots of Fire

8 And the king of Syria (Aram) was fighting against Israel (Yisra'el); and he took counsel with his servants, saying, "At such and such a place ***will be*** my camp." **9** And the man of God sent to the king of Israel, saying, "Take care not to pass by this place, for Syria ***is*** going down there." **10** And the king of Israel sent to the place which the man of God had told him; and he warned him, and he was on guard there, not once and not twice. **11** And the heart of the king of Syria was enraged over this matter; and he called his servants and said to them, "Will you not tell me who of those who ***are*** ours ***is*** for the king of Israel?" **12** And one of his servants said, "No, my lord the king; for Elisha the prophet who ***is*** in Israel tells the king of Israel the words that you speak in the chamber of your bed." **13** And he said, "Go and see where he ***is***, that I may send and take him." And it was told to him, saying, "Look, ***he is*** in Dothan (Dotan)." **14** And he sent there horses and chariotry and a heavy army; and they came by night and surrounded the city. **15** And the attendant of the man of God rose early to arise, and he went out, and look, an army ***was*** surrounding the city, and horse and chariotry. And his servant said to him, "Alas, my lord! How shall we do?" **16** And he said, "Do not be afraid, for more ***are*** those who ***are*** with us than those who ***are*** with them." **17** And Elisha prayed and said, "LORD, please open his eyes, that he may see." And the LORD opened the eyes of the servant, and he saw; and look, the mountain ***was*** full of horses and chariotry of fire all around Elisha.

The Blinded Army

18 And they came down to him, and Elisha prayed to the LORD and said, "Please strike this nation with blindness." And He struck them with blindness according to the word of Elisha. **19** And Elisha said to them, "This ***is*** not the way, and this ***is*** not the city. Come after me, and let me lead you to the man whom you seek." And he led them to Samaria (Shomron). **20** And it was, when they came ***to*** Samaria, and Elisha said, "LORD, open the eyes of these ***men***, that they may see." And the LORD opened their eyes, and they saw; and look, ***they were*** in the midst of Samaria. **21** And the king of Israel said to Elisha when he saw them, "Shall I strike ***them***

5:26 1 Cor 9:11; Matt 24:48; Luke 4:27
5:27 Luke 4:27; Exod 4:6; Num 12:10
6:1 2 Kgs 2:3; 2 Kgs 4:38; 2 Kgs 4:1
6:2 John 21:3; Acts 18:3; Acts 20:34,35
6:3 2 Kgs 5:23; Judg 19:6; Job 6:28
6:4 Deut 19:5; Deut 29:11
6:5 Rev 18:10,16,19; Eccl 10:10; Isa 10:34
6:6 2 Kgs 2:21; Exod 15:25; 2 Kgs 4:41
6:7 2 Kgs 4:7,36; Luke 7:15; Acts 9:41
6:8 2 Kgs 6:24; 1 Kgs 20:1,34; 1 Kgs 22:31
6:9 2 Kgs 3:17-19; 1 Kgs 20:13,28; 2 Kgs 4:27
6:10 Matt 24:17; 2 Kgs 5:14; Exod 9:20,21
6:11 Matt 2:8; 1 Sam 28:21; Job 18:7-11
6:12 John 15:15; 2 Kgs 5:3,8,13-15; Amos 3:7
6:13 Matt 2:6; Matt 2:8; Gen 37:17
6:14 2 Kgs 1:9-13; 1 Sam 23:26; 1 Sam 24:2
6:15 Matt 8:26; 2 Kgs 3:11; 2 Kgs 5:20,27
6:16 Isa 41:10-14; Mark 16:6; Rom 8:31
6:17 Rev 19:11; 2 Kgs 2:11; Ps 68:17
6:18 John 12:40; Acts 13:11; Deut 28:28
6:19 Matt 16:24; Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23
6:20 2 Kgs 6:17; Luke 24:31; Judg 20:40-42
6:21 2 Kgs 5:13; 2 Kgs 8:9; 2 Kgs 2:12

5:26 *Did my heart not go with you* God had shown Elisha everything. Gehazi made it look as if God's grace had a price, undoing the very lesson Elisha taught.
5:27 *leprous like snow* The foreigner who humbled himself went home clean. The insider who served himself went out unclean. "Know your sin, that it will find you" (Num 32:23). We meet Gehazi again in 8:4-5.
6:1 *the place where we are dwelling before you is too narrow for us* The group was growing. Even in a dark time, God was raising up people who wanted to learn His word.
6:3 *I, I will go* Elisha was not too important to go on a work trip with his students. Good leaders stay close to the people they serve.
6:5 *Alas, my lord! And it was borrowed* Iron tools were costly, and a poor prophet might have had to work off the debt.
6:6 *he made the iron float* Iron does not float. God made it float. Why a miracle over an axe head? Because He cares about small things. Cast your anxiety on Him, "because He cares about you" (1 Pet 5:7). Nothing that worries you is too small to bring to God.
6:10 *not once and not twice* Many times. God knows every plan made against His people.
6:12 *the words that you speak in the chamber of your bed* Even in his bedroom, the king had no secrets from God.
6:13 *he is in Dothan* About ten miles north of Samaria. The king planned to capture a man who knew all his plans, and sent a heavy army for one prophet.
6:16 *more are those who are with us than those who are with them* The servant could count the enemy. He could not see anyone on their side.
6:17 *the mountain was full of horses and chariotry of fire all around Elisha* Elisha did not pray for the army to leave. He prayed for his servant to see what was already there. The danger we see is real, but it is never the whole picture. Angels are "ministering spirits" (Heb 1:14), and "greater is the One in you than the one in the world" (1 John 4:4). When you are afraid, ask God to open your eyes to what faith knows is true.
6:18 *Please strike this nation with blindness* The word may mean a confusion or dazzling, so that they could not recognize where they were.
6:19 *This is not the way, and this is not the city* True enough. He was the man, and he led them to him, only not where they expected. The hunters became the captives in Samaria.

down? Shall I strike ***them*** down, my father?" **22** And he said, "You shall not strike ***them*** down. Would you strike down those whom you have taken captive with your sword and with your bow? Set bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink and go to their master." **23** And he prepared for them a great feast, and they ate and drank; and he sent them away, and they went to their master. And the raiding bands of Syria did not again come into the land of Israel.

The Siege of Samaria

24 And it was after this, and Ben-hadad the king of Syria gathered all his camp, and he went up and besieged Samaria. **25** And there was a great famine in Samaria; and look, they ***were*** besieging it, until the head of a donkey was ***sold*** for approximately 2 pounds (eighty ***shekels***) of silver, and approximately 1/3 quart (a fourth of a kab) of doves' dung for approximately 2 ounces (five ***shekels***) of silver. **26** And the king of Israel was passing by on the wall, and a woman cried out to him, saying, "Save, my lord the king!" **27** And he said, "***If*** the LORD does not save you, from where shall I save you? From the threshing floor or from the winepress?" **28** And the king said to her, "What ***is the matter*** with you?" And she said, "This woman said to me, 'Give your son, that we may eat him today, and my son we will eat tomorrow.' **29** And we cooked my son and ate him. And I said to her on the next day, 'Give your son, that we may eat him'; and she has hidden her son." **30** And it was, when the king heard the words of the woman, and he tore his clothes; and he ***was*** passing by on the wall, and the people saw, and look, the sackcloth ***was*** on his flesh underneath. **31** And he said, "Thus may God do to me, and thus may He add, if the head of Elisha the son of Shaphat (Shafat) remains on him today!" **32** And Elisha ***was*** sitting in his house, and the elders ***were*** sitting with him. And ***the king*** sent a man from before him. Before the messenger came to him, he said to the elders, "Do you see that this son of a murderer has sent to remove my head? Look, when the messenger comes, shut the door and press him back with the door. Is not the sound of the feet of his master behind him?" **33** He ***was*** still speaking with them, and look, the messenger ***was*** coming down to him. And he said, "Look, this evil ***is*** from the LORD. Why should I wait for the LORD any longer?"

2 KINGS 7

Elisha Promises Plenty

1 And Elisha said, "Hear the word of the LORD. Thus says the LORD: 'About this time tomorrow approximately 7 quarts (a seah) of fine flour ***will be*** for a shekel, and approximately 14 quarts (two seahs) of barley for a shekel, in the gate of Samaria (Shomron).'" **2** And the officer who ***belonged*** to the king, on whose hand he leaned, answered the man of God and said, "Look, ***if*** the LORD ***were*** making windows in the heavens, could this thing be?" And he said, "Look, you will see ***it*** with your eyes, and from there you will not eat." **3** And four men were leprous ***at*** the entrance of the gate; and they said each to his neighbor, "Why are we sitting here until we die? **4** If we say, 'We will enter the city,' and the famine ***is*** in the city, and we will die there; and if we sit here, we will die. And now, come, and let us fall over to the camp of Syria (Aram). If they let us live, we will live; and if they put us to death, we will die." **5** And they arose in the twilight to go to the camp of Syria; and they came to the edge of the camp of Syria, and look, there was not a man there. **6** And the Lord had caused the camp of Syria to hear a sound of chariotry, a sound of horses, a sound of a great army; and they said each

6:22 Gen 48:22; Deut 20:11-16; 2 Chr 28:8-13
6:23 Luke 10:30; 2 Kgs 5:2; 2 Kgs 24:2
6:24 1 Kgs 20:1; Deut 28:52; 2 Kgs 17:5
6:25 2 Kgs 6:28,29; 2 Kgs 7:4; 2 Kgs 25:3
6:26 2 Sam 14:4; Isa 10:3; Luke 18:3
6:27 Ps 60:11; Ps 62:8; Ps 118:8,9
6:28 Judg 18:23; 2 Sam 14:5; Lam 4:10
6:29 1 Kgs 3:26; Isa 49:15; Isa 66:13
6:30 1 Kgs 21:27; 2 Kgs 5:7; 2 Kgs 19:1
6:31 Ruth 1:17; 1 Kgs 19:2; 1 Sam 3:17
6:32 Ezek 8:1; Ezek 14:1; Ezek 20:1
6:33 Isa 8:21; Gen 4:13; Exod 16:6-8
7:1 Rev 6:6; Matt 4:4; Josh 3:5
7:2 Matt 4:4; Luke 1:20; 2 Kgs 5:18
7:3 Num 5:2-4; Num 12:14; 2 Kgs 5:1
7:4 Jer 14:18; 1 Chr 12:19; Jer 37:13,14
7:5 1 Sam 30:17; Ezek 12:6,7,12; Lev 27:8,26
7:6 2 Sam 5:24; 1 Kgs 10:29; Job 15:21

6:22 *Set bread and water before them* Grace to enemies. Give your enemy bread (Prov 25:21; Rom 12:20), and love your enemies (Matt 5:44).
6:23 *the raiding bands of Syria did not again come into the land of Israel* Kindness did what swords could not. Those soldiers went home with a story about the God of Israel.
6:24 *Ben-hadad the king of Syria gathered all his camp* Some time later. A royal name in Damascus, likely the Ben-hadad who fought Ahab (1 Kgs 20). A siege cut a city off from food.
6:25 *the head of a donkey was sold for approximately 2 pounds (eighty shekels) of silver* About two pounds of silver for the worst part of an unclean animal (Lev 11:2-7). "Doves' dung" may have been used for fuel or eaten in desperation, or it may be a common name for a wild seed or bulb.
6:27 *From the threshing floor or from the winepress* There was no grain and no wine. The king had nothing to give.
6:29 *we cooked my son and ate him* A horror, and I will not linger on it. Moses warned this would happen in a siege of judgment if Israel turned away (Lev 26:29; Deut 28:53-57). It was the curse of the broken covenant coming true. The woman did not seek justice for her child, only her bargain. Sin does not only hurt us. It hardens us (Lam 4:10). Read this with care in a group. God never wanted this, and He sent prophet after prophet to call them back (17:13).
6:30 *the sackcloth was on his flesh underneath* Rough cloth worn in grief or repentance, worn in secret.
6:31 *if the head of Elisha the son of Shaphat remains on him today* He blamed the prophet. Sackcloth on the outside did not mean a changed heart. Real repentance turns to God, not on God's messenger.
6:32 *this son of a murderer* The king was Ahab's son, and Ahab murdered Naboth (1 Kgs 21).
6:33 *Why should I wait for the LORD any longer* He knew the siege was God's judgment, and instead of repenting he gave up on God. When you feel that way, hold on. Deliverance was one day away.
7:1 *about this time tomorrow* God's answer to the king's "why should I wait" (6:33). A seah was about seven quarts, and the gate was the city's marketplace. Overnight, famine prices would crash. God often delivers at the very moment His people have given up.
7:2 *if the LORD were making windows in the heavens, could this thing be* Windows in the heavens meant blessing pouring from the sky (Gen 7:11; Mal 3:10). The officer was the king's right-hand man. Unbelief has a cost. He would see the promise come true and not share in it (Heb 11:6).
7:3 *four men were leprous at the entrance of the gate* Lepers had to live outside the city (Lev 13:46). To "fall over" to Syria meant to surrender. It was not faith but desperation, and God used the most unwanted men in Samaria to find His deliverance first.
7:6 *the Lord had caused the camp of Syria to hear a sound of chariotry* The Hittites here were kingdoms to the north, in what is now Syria and Turkey. God did not need Israel's army or even real chariots. A sound was enough. In chapter 6 He opened eyes, and here He opened ears.

to his brother, "Look, the king of Israel (Yisra'el) has hired against us the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Egypt (Mitsrayim) to come against us." **7** And they arose and fled in the twilight, and they abandoned their tents and their horses and their donkeys, the camp just as it ***was***, and they fled for their life. **8** And these lepers came to the edge of the camp, and they went into one tent and ate and drank, and they carried off from there silver and gold and clothes, and went and hid ***them***; and they returned and went into another tent and carried off from there, and went and hid ***them***. **9** And they said each to his neighbor, "We are not doing right. This day ***is*** a day of good news, and we are keeping silent. If we wait until the light of the morning, iniquity will find us. And now, come, and let us go and tell the house of the king." **10** And they came and called to the gatekeeper of the city, and they told them, saying, "We came to the camp of Syria, and look, there was not a man there, or the sound of mankind, but the horses tied and the donkeys tied, and the tents just as they ***were***." **11** And he called the gatekeepers, and they told ***it*** to the house of the king within.

The Siege Lifted

12 And the king arose in the night and said to his servants, "Let me tell you, please, what Syria has done to us. They know that we ***are*** hungry, and they have gone out from the camp to hide in the field, saying, 'When they come out from the city, we will seize them alive, and we will go into the city.'" **13** And one of his servants answered and said, "Please let ***some*** take five of the remaining horses that are left in it; look, they ***are*** like all the multitude of Israel that are left in it; look, they ***are*** like all the multitude of Israel that have come to an end; and let us send and see." **14** And they took two chariots ***with*** horses, and the king sent ***them*** after the camp of Syria, saying, "Go and see." **15** And they went after them to the Jordan (Yarden), and look, all the way ***was*** full of clothes and equipment which Syria had thrown away in their haste. And the messengers returned and told the king. **16** And the people went out and plundered the camp of Syria. And ***there*** was approximately 7 quarts (a seah) of fine flour for a shekel and approximately 14 quarts (two seahs) of barley for a shekel, according to the word of the LORD. **17** And the king had appointed the officer on whose hand he leaned over the gate; and the people trampled him in the gate, and he died, just as the man of God had spoken, who spoke when the king came down to him. **18** And it was, as the man of God had spoken to the king, saying, "Approximately 14 quarts (two seahs) of barley for a shekel, and approximately 7 quarts (a seah) of fine flour for a shekel, will be about this time tomorrow in the gate of Samaria," **19** and the officer had answered the man of God and said, "And look, ***if*** the LORD ***were*** making windows in the heavens, could ***it*** be according to this word?" And he said, "Look, you will see ***it*** with your eyes, and from there you will not eat." **20** And it happened to him so; and the people trampled him in the gate, and he died.

2 KINGS 8

The Shunammite's Land Restored

1 And Elisha spoke to the woman whose son he had restored to life, saying, "Arise and go, you and your household, and sojourn wherever you can sojourn; for the LORD has called for the famine, and it will also come to the land seven years." **2** And the woman arose and did according to the word of the man of God; and she went, she and her household, and sojourned in the land of the Philistines seven years. **3** And it was at the end of seven years, and the woman returned from the land of the Philistines; and she went out to cry out to the king for her house and for her field. **4** And the king ***was*** speaking to Gehazi (Gechazi), the servant of the man of God, saying, "Please recount to me all the great things that Elisha has done." **5** And it was, he ***was*** recounting to the king how he had restored the dead to life, and look, the woman whose son he had restored to life ***was*** crying out to the king for her house and for her field. And Gehazi said, "My lord the king, this ***is*** the woman, and this ***is*** her son whom Elisha restored to life." **6** And the king asked the woman, and she recounted

7:7 Ps 48:4-6; Prov 28:1; Job 18:11
7:8 Josh 7:21; 2 Kgs 5:24; Jer 41:8
7:9 Phil 2:4; James 2:8; 2 Kgs 7:3
7:10 2 Sam 18:26; Ps 127:1; Mark 13:34,35
7:13 2 Kgs 5:13; 2 Kgs 7:4; 2 Kgs 6:33
7:15 Esth 1:7; Isa 22:24; Job 2:4
7:16 2 Kgs 7:1; 1 Sam 17:53; 2 Chr 14:12-15
7:17 2 Kgs 9:33; Judg 20:43; Isa 25:10
7:18 2 Kgs 7:1,2; 2 Kgs 6:32; Gen 18:14
7:19 Luke 1:20
7:20 Num 20:12; 2 Chr 20:20; Job 20:23
8:1 Acts 11:28; Ps 105:16; Hag 1:11
8:2 Acts 11:28; 1 Tim 5:8; Judg 3:3
8:3 2 Kgs 8:6; 2 Kgs 4:13; 2 Kgs 6:26
8:4 2 Kgs 5:20-27; 2 Kgs 7:3,10; Matt 2:8
8:5 Acts 8:27; 2 Kgs 4:35; Ruth 2:3
8:6 Prov 16:7; 2 Kgs 9:32; Gen 37:36

7:7 *they arose and fled in the twilight* At about the same hour the lepers set out.
7:8 *ate and drank, and they carried off from there silver and gold and clothes* They had been starving and suddenly had more than they could carry.
7:9 *This day is a day of good news, and we are keeping silent* One of the clearest pictures in the Bible of what those who know Christ should do. We were outsiders with nothing, and God gave us everything. The gospel is not ours to hide (Rom 1:14-16). Who around you is starving and does not know there is bread just outside the gate?
7:12 *They know that we are hungry* He thought it a trick, a reasonable military worry. But he did not connect it with Elisha's word. He was still the man who had given up waiting on the LORD.
7:15 *all the way was full of clothes and equipment which Syria had thrown away in their haste* The trail ran to the Jordan, about twenty-five miles east. There was no trap. They threw away whatever slowed them down.
7:16 *according to the word of the LORD* Not close to it. Exactly what God said.
7:17 *the people trampled him in the gate, and he died* The writer repeats the whole exchange so we cannot miss it (7:18-20). God's word came true twice in one day, in blessing and in judgment. Scoffers will mock the promise of Christ's coming (2 Pet 3:3-4), but the Lord will do just what He said.
8:1 *the LORD has called for the famine* The Shunammite of chapter 4. The writer arranges the Elisha stories by subject more than by date, so this may come before chapters 5 to 7. Famine was a covenant warning (Deut 28:23-24), but God warned this faithful woman ahead of time. He knows those who are His (2 Tim 2:19).
8:3 *to cry out to the king for her house and for her field* Someone had taken them while she was gone, maybe a neighbor or the crown.
8:5 *this is the woman, and this is her son whom Elisha restored to life* Not luck. God arranged the timing to the minute, and she got back her land and seven years of its harvest (8:6). How Gehazi, now a leper (5:27), was talking with the king, Scripture does not say. Perhaps this came before chapter 5. God works through the right person at the right time (Rom 8:28).

it to him. And the king assigned to her a certain official, saying, "Restore all that ***was*** hers, and all the produce of the field from the day that she left the land until now."

Hazael Murders Ben-hadad

7 And Elisha came ***to*** Damascus (Dameseq), and Ben-hadad the king of Syria (Aram) ***was*** sick; and it was told to him, saying, "The man of God has come here." **8** And the king said to Hazael (Chazahel), "Take a gift in your hand, and go to meet the man of God, and inquire of the LORD through him, saying, 'Will I live through this sickness?'" **9** And Hazael went to meet him, and he took a gift in his hand, even every good thing of Damascus, the load of forty camels; and he came and stood before him and said, "Your son Ben-hadad the king of Syria has sent me to you, saying, 'Will I live through this sickness?'" **10** And Elisha said to him, "Go, say to him, 'You will surely live'; and the LORD has shown me that he will surely die." **11** And he fixed his face and set ***it*** until ***he was*** ashamed; and the man of God wept. **12** And Hazael said, "Why ***is*** my lord weeping?" And he said, "Because I know the evil that you will do to the sons of Israel (Yisra'el): their fortresses you will send into fire, and their young men you will kill with the sword, and their infants you will dash in pieces, and their pregnant women you will rip open." **13** And Hazael said, "But what ***is*** your servant, the dog, that he should do this great thing?" And Elisha said, "The LORD has shown me you ***as*** king over Syria." **14** And he went from Elisha and came to his master, and he said to him, "What did Elisha say to you?" And he said, "He said to me, 'You will surely live.'" **15** And it was on the next day, and he took the coverlet and dipped ***it*** in water and spread ***it*** over his face, and he died. And Hazael reigned in his place.

Jehoram King of Judah

16 And in the fifth year of Joram (Yoram) the son of Ahab (Achav) the king of Israel, and Jehoshaphat (Yehoshafat) ***was*** king of Judah (Yehuda), Jehoram (Yehoram) the son of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah became king. **17** He was a son of thirty-two years when he became king, and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). **18** And he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, just as the house of Ahab did, for the daughter of Ahab became his wife; and he did the evil in the eyes of the LORD. **19** And the LORD was not willing to destroy Judah, for the sake of David His servant, just as He had said to him to give him a lamp for his sons all the days. **20** In his days Edom rebelled from under the hand of Judah, and they made a king over themselves. **21** And Joram passed over to Zair (Tsa'ir), and all the chariotry with him. And it was, he arose by night and struck Edom, which was surrounding him, and the commanders of the chariotry; and the people fled to their tents. **22** And Edom rebelled from under the hand of Judah until this day. Then Libnah (Livna) rebelled at that time. **23** And the rest of the matters of Joram and all that he did, ***are*** they not written in the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Judah? **24** And Joram lay down with his fathers, and he was buried with his fathers in the city of David; and Ahaziah (Achazyahu) his son reigned in his place.

Ahaziah King of Judah

25 In the twelfth year of Joram the son of Ahab the king of Israel, Ahaziah the son of Jehoram the king of Judah became king. **26** Ahaziah ***was*** a son of twenty-two years when he became king, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem; and the name of his mother ***was*** Athaliah (Atalyahu) the daughter of

8:7 1 Kgs 11:24; 2 Kgs 6:24; 1 Kgs 20:1,34
8:8 1 Kgs 19:15; 2 Kgs 1:2,6; 1 Sam 9:7
8:9 1 Kgs 19:15; 2 Kgs 5:5; 2 Kgs 6:21
8:10 1 Kgs 22:15; 2 Kgs 8:13; Gen 41:39
8:11 Luke 19:41; Gen 45:2; Ps 119:136
8:12 Hos 13:16; Nah 3:10; 2 Kgs 12:17
8:13 1 Sam 17:43; 1 Kgs 19:15; 2 Sam 9:8
8:14 2 Kgs 8:10; 2 Kgs 5:25; Matt 26:16
8:15 2 Kgs 8:13; 1 Sam 16:12,13; 1 Sam 24:4-7,13
8:16 Matt 1:8; 2 Kgs 1:17; 1 Kgs 22:50
8:18 2 Kgs 8:26; 2 Kgs 3:2,3; 1 Kgs 22:52,53
8:19 Luke 1:32; 1 Kgs 11:36; 2 Sam 7:12,13,15
8:20 1 Kgs 22:47; 2 Kgs 3:9,27; 2 Kgs 8:22
8:22 2 Kgs 19:8; Josh 21:13; 2 Chr 21:10
8:23 2 Kgs 15:6,36; 1 Kgs 11:41; 1 Kgs 14:29
8:24 2 Chr 21:1,17; 2 Chr 25:23; 1 Kgs 2:10
8:25 2 Kgs 9:29; 2 Kgs 8:16,17; 2 Chr 21:20
8:26 2 Kgs 9:21-27; 2 Chr 22:5-8; 2 Kgs 11:1,13-16

8:7 *The man of God has come here* Ben-hadad once sent an army to seize Elisha (6:13-14). Now he wanted to hear from Israel's God. Hard times change how people see God's servants.
8:8 *Hazael* God told Elijah at Horeb to anoint Hazael king over Syria (1 Kgs 19:15). Elijah never did it in person, and now his successor finishes the task.
8:10 *You will surely live; and the LORD has shown me that he will surely die* The sickness would not kill him, but he would still die by another cause. Elisha told Hazael the truth on both counts.
8:11 *the man of God wept* He stared until Hazael felt the prophet saw right into him.
8:12 *Because I know the evil that you will do to the sons of Israel* The cruelties of war in that age would fall on Israel (10:32-33; 13:3, 7). Elisha wept because he loved his people. God's prophets did not deliver judgment with dry eyes. Jesus wept over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41-44).
8:13 *But what is your servant, the dog* Humble surprise or false modesty? God did not make Hazael do evil. He knew Hazael's heart and would use this cruel man as a rod to discipline Israel (Isa 10:5).
8:15 *he took the coverlet and dipped it in water and spread it over his face, and he died* A coverlet was a thick cloth. Most teachers believe Hazael smothered the king. Some think the cloth was to cool a fever. His half-truth in verse 14 points to murder. Hazael ruled from about 842 B.C. and was a constant scourge to Israel.
8:16 *Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah became king* He began as co-regent with his father, from about 853 B.C., and reigned alone about 848 to 841 B.C. (2 Chr 21).
8:18 *the daughter of Ahab became his wife* Athaliah, daughter of Ahab and probably Jezebel. Jehoshaphat sealed his peace with Ahab by this marriage (2 Chr 18:1), and the good father's alliance became the son's ruin. Jehoram killed all his brothers (2 Chr 21:4). Marriage shapes a family for generations (Deut 7:3-4; 2 Cor 6:14).
8:19 *to give him a lamp for his sons all the days* A light that keeps burning, a living descendant on David's throne (2 Sam 7:16). No matter how bad a king of Judah was, God would not let David's line go out. That promise leads straight to Jesus, whose kingdom will have no end (Luke 1:32-33).
8:20 *Edom rebelled from under the hand of Judah* Edom had been under Judah since David (2 Sam 8:14). Isaac told Esau that one day he would break his brother's yoke (Gen 27:40), and so it happened.
8:22 *then Libnah rebelled at that time* A town on Judah's western border. Chronicles gives the reason: he had forsaken the LORD (2 Chr 21:10). "Joram" in verse 21 is the short form of Jehoram of Judah.
8:24 *Joram lay down with his fathers* He died of a terrible disease, and no one was sorry (2 Chr 21:18-20).
8:26 *Ahaziah was a son of twenty-two years when he became king* About 841 B.C. Second Chronicles 22:2 has forty-two in the Hebrew, which cannot be right since his father died at forty (8:17). Most think a copyist erred, and many English Bibles read twenty-two in both places.
8:26 *Athaliah the daughter of Omri the king of Israel* Omri was Ahab's father, so daughter here means granddaughter. She counseled her son to do evil (2 Chr 22:3). Jezebel's influence had reached into Jerusalem.

Omri the king of Israel. **27** And he walked in the way of the house of Ahab, and he did the evil in the eyes of the LORD like the house of Ahab, for he ***was*** a son-in-law of the house of Ahab. **28** And he went with Joram the son of Ahab to the battle against Hazael the king of Syria at Ramoth-gilead (Ramot-Gilad); and the Arameans wounded Joram. **29** And Joram the king returned to be healed in Jezreel (Yizre'el) from the wounds which the Arameans had inflicted on him at Ramah (Rama), when he fought against Hazael the king of Syria. And Ahaziah the son of Jehoram the king of Judah went down to see Joram the son of Ahab in Jezreel, for he ***was*** sick.

2 KINGS 9

Jehu Anointed King of Israel

1 And Elisha the prophet called one of the sons of the prophets and said to him, "Gird up your loins, and take this flask of oil in your hand, and go ***to*** Ramoth-gilead
(Ramot-Gilad). **2** And you shall go in there, and look there for Jehu (Yehu) the son of Jehoshaphat (Yehoshafat) the son of Nimshi; and you shall go in and make him rise from the midst of his brothers, and bring him into a chamber within a chamber. **3** And you shall take the flask of oil and pour ***it*** on his head and say, 'Thus says the LORD: "I have anointed you as king over Israel (Yisra'el)."' And you shall open the door and flee, and you shall not wait." **4** And the young man, the young man the prophet, went ***to*** Ramoth-gilead. **5** And he came, and look, the commanders of the army ***were*** sitting. And he said, "I have a word for you, commander." And Jehu said, "For which of all of us?" And he said, "For you, commander." **6** And he arose and went into the house, and he poured the oil on his head and said to him, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: 'I have anointed you as king over the people of the LORD, over Israel. **7** And you shall strike the house of Ahab (Achav) your master, and I will avenge the blood of My servants the prophets and the blood of all the servants of the LORD from the hand of Jezebel (Izevel). **8** And the whole house of Ahab shall perish, and I will cut off from Ahab ***every*** one who urinates against a wall, and ***the one*** shut up and ***the one*** left free in Israel. **9** And I will make the house of Ahab like the house of Jeroboam (Yaravam) the son of Nebat (Nevat), and like the house of Baasha (Basha) the son of Ahijah (Achiya). **10** And the dogs shall devour Jezebel in the territory of Jezreel (Yizre'el), and there will be no one burying ***her***.'" And he opened the door and fled. **11** And Jehu went out to the servants of his master, and ***one*** said to him, "Is it peace? Why did this madman come to you?" And he said to them, "You know the man and his talk." **12** And they said, "A lie! Tell us, please." And he said, "Like this and like this he spoke to me, saying, 'Thus says the LORD: "I have anointed you as king over Israel."'" **13** And they hurried, and they took each his garment and put ***it*** under him on the bare steps; and they blew the trumpet and said, "Jehu is king!"

Jehu Kills Joram and Ahaziah

14 And Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat the son of Nimshi conspired against Joram (Yoram). And Joram had been keeping guard at Ramoth-gilead, he and all Israel, because of Hazael (Chaza'el) the king of Syria (Aram); **15** and Joram (Yehoram) the king had returned to be healed in Jezreel from the wounds which the Arameans had inflicted on him when he fought against Hazael the king of Syria. And Jehu said, "If it is your will, let no escapee go out from the city to go to tell ***it*** in Jezreel." **16** And Jehu rode and went to Jezreel, for Joram ***was*** lying there; and Ahaziah (Achazya) the king of Judah
(Yehuda) had come down to see Joram. **17** And the watchman ***was*** standing on the tower in Jezreel, and he saw the company of Jehu as he came, and he said, "I see a company." And Joram said, "Take a horseman and send ***him*** to meet them, and let him say, 'Is it peace?'" **18** And the rider of the horse went to meet him and said, "Thus says the king: 'Is it peace?'" And Jehu said, "What ***is there*** to you and to peace? Turn around behind me." And the watchman reported, saying, "The messenger came to them, and he has not
returned." **19** And he sent a second rider of a horse, and he came to them and said, "Thus says the king: 'Peace?'" And Jehu said, "What ***is there*** to you and to peace? Turn around behind me." **20** And the watchman reported, saying, "He came to them, and he has not returned; and the driving ***is***

8:27 2 Kgs 8:18; 2 Chr 22:3,4; Eccl 7:26
8:28 2 Chr 22:5; 2 Kgs 3:7; 2 Kgs 9:15
8:29 2 Kgs 9:15; 1 Kgs 22:34; 2 Kgs 9:16
9:1 1 Pet 1:13; 1 Sam 10:1; 2 Kgs 4:29
9:2 2 Kgs 9:14; 2 Kgs 9:5,11; 1 Kgs 19:16,17
9:3 1 Kgs 19:16; Exod 29:7; Lev 8:12
9:5 Judg 3:19
9:6 2 Kgs 9:3; 1 Kgs 19:16; 2 Chr 22:7
9:7 Matt 23:35; Rev 18:20; Rev 2:20
9:8 1 Sam 25:22; Deut 32:36; 2 Kgs 14:26
9:9 1 Kgs 15:29; 1 Kgs 21:22; 1 Kgs 14:10,11
9:10 2 Kgs 9:35,36; 1 Kgs 21:23; Jer 22:19
9:11 John 10:20; Jer 29:26; Hos 9:7
9:13 Matt 21:7; Mark 11:7; Matt 21:8
9:14 2 Kgs 8:28; 1 Kgs 22:3; 2 Kgs 9:31
9:15 2 Kgs 8:29; 2 Chr 22:6; 1 Sam 27:9-11
9:16 2 Kgs 8:28,29; 2 Chr 22:6,7
9:17 1 Sam 16:4; 2 Sam 13:34; 2 Sam 18:24
9:18 Isa 48:22; Isa 59:8; Jer 16:5
9:20 Hab 1:6; Hab 3:12; 2 Kgs 10:16

8:29 *Joram the king returned to be healed in Jezreel* Ramoth-gilead was where Ahab died (1 Kgs 22). It looks like a family visit, but God was bringing both kings of Ahab's house to the same place at the same time.
9:1 *take this flask of oil in your hand* Anointing with oil set a person apart for a task from God, especially a king (1 Sam 10:1; 16:13).
9:3 *open the door and flee* Dangerous work. Anointing a new king while the old one lived was treason in the eyes of the court. Jehu's father Jehoshaphat was not the king of Judah.
9:6 *over the people of the LORD, over Israel* Even in their sin, Israel belonged to Him.
9:7 *I will avenge the blood of My servants the prophets* Jezebel killed the LORD's prophets (1 Kgs 18:4, 13) and with Ahab murdered Naboth and his sons (1 Kgs 21; 9:26). That blood cried out to God, and He had not forgotten.
9:8 *the whole house of Ahab shall perish* Like the houses of Jeroboam and Baasha (1 Kgs 15:29; 16:11-12). Ahab's house was warned again and again and even given more time when he humbled himself (1 Kgs 21:27-29). God is patient, but His patience is not endless (Rom 12:19).
9:11 *Why did this madman come to you* The soldiers seem to have thought little of prophets.
9:13 *they took each his garment and put it under him* A sign of honor for a king, much like the crowds before Jesus (Matt 21:8). Joram had lost his army's loyalty.
9:15 *Joram the king had returned to be healed in Jezreel* About forty miles away. Jehu let no one slip out to warn him.
9:20 *he drives with madness* Jehu was known for driving his chariot like a wild man. Even at a distance, they knew him by how he came.

like the driving of Jehu the son of Nimshi, for he drives with madness." **21** And Joram said, "Harness." And ***one*** harnessed his chariot. And Joram the king of Israel and Ahaziah the king of Judah went out, each in his chariot, and they went out to meet Jehu; and they found him in the portion of land of Naboth (Navot) the Jezreelite. **22** And it was, when Joram saw Jehu, and he said, "Is it peace, Jehu?" And he said, "What peace, while the prostitutions of Jezebel your mother and her sorceries ***are*** many?" **23** And Joram turned his hands and fled, and he said to Ahaziah, "Treachery, Ahaziah!" **24** And Jehu filled his hand with the bow, and he struck Joram between his arms, and the arrow went out from his heart, and he sank down in his chariot. **25** And he said to Bidkar (Bidqar) his officer, "Pick ***him*** up, throw him into the portion of the field of Naboth the Jezreelite; for remember, I and you were riding in pairs behind Ahab his father, and the LORD lifted up this oracle against him: **26** 'Surely I saw yesterday the blood of Naboth and the blood of his sons,' declares the LORD, 'and I will repay you in this portion of land,' declares the LORD. And now, pick ***him*** up, throw him into the portion of land, according to the word of the LORD." **27** And Ahaziah the king of Judah saw, and he fled ***by*** the way of Beth-haggan (Bet-Hagan). And Jehu pursued after him and said, "Him also, strike him down in the chariot," at the ascent of Gur, which ***is*** by Ibleam (Yivle'am). And he fled ***to*** Megiddo (Megido) and died there. **28** And his servants made him ride to Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), and they buried him in his grave with his fathers in the city of David. **29** And in the eleventh year of Joram the son of Ahab, Ahaziah had become king over Judah.

The Death of Jezebel

30 And Jehu came ***to*** Jezreel, and Jezebel heard; and she put eye paint on her eyes and adorned her head, and she looked down through the window. **31** And Jehu came in at the gate, and she said, "Is it peace, Zimri, murderer of his master?" **32** And he lifted up his face to the window and said, "Who ***is*** with me? Who?" And two ***or*** three officials looked down at him. **33** And he said, "Let her fall." And they let her fall, and ***some*** of her blood spattered on the wall and on the horses, and he trampled her. **34** And he went in and ate and drank, and he said, "Attend, please, to this cursed ***woman*** and bury her, for she ***is*** a king's daughter." **35** And they went to bury her, and they did not find ***anything*** of her except the skull and the feet and the palms of the hands. **36** And they returned and told him, and he said, "It ***is*** the word of the LORD which He spoke by the hand of His servant Elijah (Eliyahu) the Tishbite, saying, 'In the territory of Jezreel the dogs shall devour the flesh of Jezebel; **37** and the corpse of Jezebel shall be like dung on the face of the field in the territory of Jezreel, so that they will not say, "This ***is*** Jezebel."'"

2 KINGS 10

The Sons of Ahab Killed

1 And Ahab (Achav) had seventy sons in Samaria (Shomron). And Jehu (Yehu) wrote letters and sent ***them to*** Samaria, to the officials of Jezreel (Yizre'el), the elders, and to the guardians of Ahab, saying, **2** "And now, when this letter comes to you, and the sons of your master ***are*** with you, and the chariotry and the horses ***are*** with you, and a fortified city and the weaponry, **3** then you shall select the good and the upright of the sons of your master and set ***him*** on the throne of his father, and fight for the house of your master." **4** And they were very, very afraid, and they said, "Look, the two kings did not stand before him; and how shall we stand, we?" **5** And the one who ***was*** over the house, and the one who ***was*** over the city, and the elders and the guardians sent to Jehu, saying, "We ***are*** your servants, and all that you say to us we

9:21 2 Chr 22:7; 1 Kgs 21:1-7,15,18,19; 1 Kgs 20:14
9:22 Rev 2:20; Rev 17:5; 1 Kgs 16:30-33
9:23 2 Kgs 11:14; 2 Chr 23:13
9:24 1 Kgs 22:34; Job 20:23-25; Ps 50:22
9:25 1 Kgs 21:19,24-29; Isa 13:1; Jer 23:33-38
9:26 Deut 24:16; 2 Chr 24:25; 2 Chr 25:4
9:27 Judg 1:27; Josh 17:11; 2 Kgs 8:29
9:28 2 Chr 35:24; 2 Kgs 12:21; 2 Kgs 14:19,20
9:29 2 Chr 21:18,19; 2 Kgs 8:16,24; 2 Chr 22:1,2
9:30 Rev 2:20; Jer 4:30; Ezek 23:40
9:31 1 Kgs 16:9-20
9:32 Exod 32:26; 1 Chr 12:18; 2 Chr 11:12
9:33 1 Kgs 21:11; 2 Kgs 9:26; 2 Kgs 7:20
9:34 1 Kgs 16:31; 1 Kgs 21:25; 1 Kgs 18:41
9:35 Rev 2:20; Job 31:3; Eccl 6:3
9:36 Rev 2:20; 1 Kgs 21:23; 2 Kgs 14:25
9:37 Rev 2:20; Jer 8:2; Ps 83:10
10:1 Judg 8:30; 1 Kgs 13:32; 1 Kgs 16:28
10:2 2 Kgs 5:6
10:3 Deut 17:14,15; 1 Sam 10:24; 1 Sam 11:15
10:4 2 Kgs 9:24,27; Isa 27:4; Jer 49:19
10:5 Josh 9:11,24,25; 1 Kgs 20:4,32; 2 Kgs 18:14

9:21 *in the portion of land of Naboth the Jezreelite* Of all places to meet. Where Ahab's sin was committed, his son's judgment fell.
9:22 *What peace, while the prostitutions of Jezebel your mother and her sorceries are many* In the Bible prostitution often means idolatry, unfaithfulness to the LORD like adultery in a marriage (Hos 2:2-5). Sorceries are witchcraft. There can be no real peace where sin is welcomed and unrepented.
9:26 *Surely I saw yesterday the blood of Naboth and the blood of his sons* This tells us what 1 Kings 21 did not. Naboth's sons were killed too, so no heir could claim the vineyard. No injustice is hidden from God. If you have been wronged and no one on earth has made it right, God has seen, and He will repay (Heb 10:30).
9:27 *at the ascent of Gur, which is by Ibleam* South of Jezreel. Second Chronicles 22:7-9 says his downfall was from God and that he hid in Samaria and was found. Many put the accounts together: wounded near Ibleam, he reached Megiddo and the region of Samaria, hid, and was found and killed.
9:29 *in the eleventh year of Joram the son of Ahab* Verse 8:25 says the twelfth, likely two ways of counting a king's first partial year.
9:30 *she put eye paint on her eyes and adorned her head* She did not run or repent. She dressed as a queen to meet death on her own terms.
9:31 *Is it peace, Zimri, murderer of his master* Zimri killed King Elah and lasted seven days (1 Kgs 16:9-18). She was mocking Jehu: you will not last either.
9:33 *Let her fall* Two or three palace servants, likely men who had served and perhaps suffered under her. The writer does not tell this for shock but to show God's word came true.
9:34 *he went in and ate and drank* Jehu was cold about it. She was a king's daughter, of Ethbaal of Sidon (1 Kgs 16:31).
9:36 *It is the word of the LORD which He spoke by the hand of His servant Elijah the Tishbite* Spoken more than ten years before (1 Kgs 21:23). Elijah was in heaven, but his word had not died. God's warnings are as sure as His promises, and pride goes before destruction (Prov 16:18).
9:37 *This is Jezebel* No tomb and no marker. Her name lived on only as a warning. Jesus uses it for a false teacher in Thyatira who was given time to repent and refused (Rev 2:20). God is still patient, and judgment still comes. Today is the day to turn to Him.
10:1 *Ahab had seventy sons in Samaria* Sons here likely means sons and grandsons, the male line of the royal house, raised by guardians among the leading men. Any one could become a rallying point against Jehu. His letter was a threat forcing them to choose sides.
10:5 *We are your servants* Their loyalty to Ahab's house was about power, not principle. When the power shifted, so did they.

will do. We will not make anyone king; do what ***is*** good in your eyes." **6** And he wrote to them a second letter, saying, "If you ***are*** mine, and you are listening to my voice, take the heads of the men, the sons of your master, and come to me about this time tomorrow ***to*** Jezreel." And the sons of the king, seventy men, ***were*** with the great men of the city, who were bringing them up. **7** And it was, when the letter came to them, and they took the sons of the king and slaughtered seventy men, and they put their heads in baskets and sent ***them*** to him ***to*** Jezreel. **8** And the messenger came and told him, saying, "They have brought the heads of the sons of the king." And he said, "Put them ***in*** two heaps at the entrance of the gate until the morning." **9** And it was in the morning, and he went out and stood, and he said to all the people, "You ***are*** righteous. Look, I conspired against my master and killed him; but who struck down all these? **10** Know then that nothing of the word of the LORD, which the LORD spoke concerning the house of Ahab, will fall to the ground; and the LORD has done what He spoke by the hand of His servant Elijah (Eliyahu)." **11** And Jehu struck down all who remained of the house of Ahab in Jezreel, and all his great men and his acquaintances and his priests, until he had not left him a survivor. **12** And he arose and came and went ***to*** Samaria. He ***was at*** Beth-eked (Bet-Eqed) of the shepherds on the way, **13** and Jehu found the brothers of Ahaziah (Achazyahu) the king of Judah (Yehuda), and he said, "Who ***are*** you?" And they said, "We ***are*** the brothers of Ahaziah, and we have come down to greet the sons of the king and the sons of the queen mother." **14** And he said, "Seize them alive." And they seized them alive and slaughtered them at the pit of Beth-eked, forty-two men; and he did not leave a man of them. **15** And he went from there, and he found Jonadab (Yehonadav) the son of Rechab (Rekhav) ***coming*** to meet him; and he blessed him and said to him, "Is your heart right, as my heart ***is*** with your heart?" And Jonadab said, "It is." "And ***if*** it is, give your hand." And he gave his hand, and he took him up to himself into the chariot. **16** And he said, "Come with me, and see my zeal for the LORD." And they made him ride in his chariot. **17** And he came ***to*** Samaria, and he struck down all who remained of Ahab in Samaria, until he had destroyed him, according to the word of the LORD which He had spoken to Elijah.

Jehu Destroys the Worship of Baal

18 And Jehu gathered all the people and said to them, "Ahab served the Baal a little; Jehu will serve him much. **19** And now, call to me all the prophets of the Baal, all who serve him and all his priests; let not a man be missing, for I have a great sacrifice for the Baal. Anyone who is missing shall not live." And Jehu acted with cunning, in order to destroy those who serve the Baal. **20** And Jehu said, "Sanctify a solemn assembly for the Baal." And they proclaimed ***it***. **21** And Jehu sent through all Israel (Yisra'el), and all who serve the Baal came, and there was not a man left who did not come. And they went into the house of the Baal, and the house of the Baal was filled from end to end. **22** And he said to the one who ***was*** over the wardrobe, "Bring out clothing for all who serve the Baal." And he brought out the clothing for them. **23** And Jehu went, and Jonadab the son of Rechab, ***into*** the house of the Baal; and he said to those who serve the Baal, "Search and see, lest there be here with you ***any*** of the servants of the LORD, but only those who serve the Baal by themselves." **24** And they went in to offer sacrifices and burnt offerings. And Jehu had stationed for himself eighty men outside, and he had said, "The man who escapes from the men whom I am bringing into your hands, his life ***shall be*** in place of his life." **25** And it was, when he had finished offering the burnt offering, and Jehu said to the runners and to the officers, "Go in, strike them down; let not a man come out." And they struck them down by the mouth of the sword, and the runners and the officers threw ***them*** out; and they went to the city of the house of the Baal. **26** And they brought out the sacred pillars of the house of the Baal and burned it. **27** And they pulled down the sacred pillar of the

10:6 2 Kgs 9:32; Matt 12:30; Luke 9:50
10:7 1 Kgs 21:21; 2 Kgs 11:1; 2 Kgs 10:9
10:8 2 Sam 11:18-21; 1 Kgs 21:14; Mark 6:28
10:9 2 Kgs 9:14-24; 1 Sam 12:3; Isa 5:3
10:10 2 Kgs 9:7-10; 1 Kgs 21:19,21-24,29; 1 Sam 3:19
10:11 Job 18:19; Ps 125:5; Prov 13:20
10:13 2 Kgs 8:24,29; 2 Chr 21:17; 2 Kgs 9:21-27
10:14 2 Kgs 10:6,10,11; 1 Kgs 20:18; 2 Kgs 8:18
10:15 John 21:17; 1 Chr 2:55; Ezra 10:19
10:16 Luke 9:54; Acts 8:31; Phil 3:6
10:17 2 Kgs 9:8; 2 Chr 22:8; Ps 109:8,9
10:18 1 Kgs 16:31,32; 2 Kgs 3:2; 1 Kgs 18:19,22,40
10:19 Rom 11:4; 1 Kgs 22:6; 2 Kgs 3:13
10:20 Rom 11:4; Joel 1:14; 1 Kgs 18:19,20
10:21 1 Kgs 16:32; Joel 3:2,11-14; Rev 16:16
10:22 Matt 22:11; Matt 22:12; Exod 28:2
10:23 Matt 13:30,41; Matt 25:32,33
10:24 1 Kgs 20:30-42
10:25 Exod 32:27; Deut 13:6-11; Ezek 9:5-7
10:26 1 Kgs 14:23; 2 Kgs 19:18; 2 Sam 5:21
10:27 Ezra 6:11; Dan 2:5; Dan 3:29

10:7 *they took the sons of the king and slaughtered seventy men* I do not want to read past how dark this is. Seventy men died for the family they were born into, killed by those meant to protect them. The heaps at the gate (10:8) were the way of ancient warfare, a public sign the old dynasty was finished.
10:9 *but who struck down all these* Clever. He admitted killing Joram but spread the blame, so the people were now part of it.
10:10 *nothing of the word of the LORD, which the LORD spoke concerning the house of Ahab, will fall to the ground* To fall to the ground means to fail. Elijah's word was coming to pass (1 Kgs 21:21-24).
10:11 *all his great men and his acquaintances and his priests* God named Ahab's house. Jehu went further, to officials, friends and priests. Many teachers see here his zeal running past God's command into ambition.
10:13 *the brothers of Ahaziah the king of Judah* Relatives, for Chronicles calls them sons of Ahaziah's brothers (2 Chr 22:8). They were of David's line, though related to Ahab through Athaliah, and God's word did not name them. Many see this too as going beyond God's command, and with so many royal men dead, Athaliah could seize Judah's throne (11:1).
10:15 *Jonadab the son of Rechab* Leader of the Rechabites, who lived in tents, drank no wine and were known for faithfulness to the LORD and their father's rules for generations (Jer 35:6-10).
10:16 *see my zeal for the LORD* Zeal is burning eagerness. Jehu wanted a godly man's name to give his revolution a holy face. Real zeal for God does not need to be seen (Matt 6:1).
10:19 *Jehu acted with cunning* Scripture records his trick. It does not praise his lie. God's people are to speak the truth (Eph 4:25).
10:21 *the house of the Baal* The temple Ahab built in Samaria (1 Kgs 16:32).
10:23 *servants of the LORD* No one who belonged to the LORD would be caught in what came next.
10:27 *they made it into latrines until this day* The most shameful thing they could do to it.

Baal, and they pulled down the house of the Baal, and they made it into latrines until this day.

The Reign of Jehu

28 And Jehu destroyed the Baal from Israel. **29** Only the sins of Jeroboam (Yaravam) the son of Nebat (Nevat), with which he caused Israel to sin, Jehu did not turn aside from after them: the calves of gold that ***were in*** Bethel (Bet-El) and that ***were*** in Dan. **30** And the LORD said to Jehu, "Because you have done well in doing what ***is*** right in My eyes, ***and*** according to all that ***was*** in My heart you have done to the house of Ahab, sons of the fourth ***generation*** shall sit for you on the throne of Israel." **31** And Jehu did not take care to walk in the law of the LORD, the God of Israel, with all his heart; he did not turn aside from the sins of Jeroboam, with which he caused Israel to sin. **32** In those days the LORD began to cut off in Israel; and Hazael (Chaza'el) struck them in all the territory of Israel, **33** from the Jordan (Yarden) toward the rising of the sun, all the land of Gilead (Gilad), the Gadites and the Reubenites and the Manassites, from Aroer (Aro'er), which ***is*** by the wadi Arnon, even Gilead and Bashan. **34** And the rest of the matters of Jehu, and all that he did, and all his might, ***are*** they not written in the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Israel? **35** And Jehu lay down with his fathers, and they buried him in Samaria; and Jehoahaz (Yeho'achaz) his son reigned in his place. **36** And the days that Jehu reigned over Israel ***were*** twenty-eight years in Samaria.

2 KINGS 11

Athaliah and the Hidden King

1 And Athaliah (Atalya), the mother of Ahaziah (Achazyahu), saw that her son was dead, and she arose and destroyed all the offspring of the kingdom. **2** And Jehosheba (Yehosheva), the daughter of King Joram (Yoram), the sister of Ahaziah, took Joash (Yo'ash) the son of Ahaziah and stole him from among the sons of the king who were being put to death, him and his nurse, in the chamber of the beds; and they hid him from before Athaliah, and he was not put to death. **3** And he was with her ***in*** the house of the LORD, hiding himself six years, and Athaliah ***was*** reigning over the land.

Joash Crowned

4 And in the seventh year Jehoiada (Yehoyada) sent and took the commanders of the hundreds of the Carites and of the runners, and he brought them to himself ***into*** the house of the LORD; and he made a covenant with them and put them under oath in the house of the LORD, and he showed them the son of the king. **5** And he commanded them, saying, "This ***is*** the thing that you shall do: the third of you who come in ***on*** the Sabbath and keep the watch of the house of the king, **6** and the third ***shall be*** at the Gate of Sur, and the third at the gate behind the runners; and you shall keep the watch of the house by turns. **7** And the two divisions among you, all who go out ***on*** the Sabbath, they shall keep the watch of the house of the LORD for the king. **8** And you shall surround the king all around, each man and his weapons in his hand; and the one who comes into the ranks shall be put to death. And be with the king when he goes out and when he comes in." **9** And the commanders of the hundreds did according to all that Jehoiada the priest commanded; and they took each man his men, those who came in ***on*** the Sabbath with those who went out ***on*** the Sabbath, and they came to Jehoiada the

10:29 1 Kgs 12:28-30; 1 Kgs 13:33,34; 1 Kgs 14:16
10:30 2 Kgs 10:35; 2 Kgs 13:1,10; 2 Kgs 14:23
10:31 Prov 4:23; 2 Kgs 10:29; Heb 2:1
10:32 2 Kgs 8:12; 1 Kgs 19:17; 2 Kgs 13:22
10:33 Amos 1:3,4; Num 32:33-42; Deut 3:12-17
10:34 2 Kgs 12:19; 2 Kgs 13:8; 1 Kgs 11:41
10:35 2 Sam 7:12; 1 Kgs 1:21; 1 Kgs 2:10
11:1 2 Chr 22:10; 2 Kgs 8:26; 2 Chr 24:7
11:2 2 Chr 22:11; 2 Kgs 8:16; 2 Kgs 8:19
11:3 2 Chr 22:12; Ps 12:8; Mal 3:15
11:4 2 Kgs 11:9; 2 Kgs 11:17; 2 Chr 15:12
11:5 1 Chr 9:25; 1 Chr 23:3-6,32; 1 Chr 24:3-6
11:6 1 Chr 26:13-19; 2 Chr 23:4,5
11:7 Luke 1:23; 2 Kgs 11:5; 2 Chr 23:6
11:8 2 Kgs 11:15; Exod 21:14; 1 Kgs 2:28-31
11:9 2 Chr 23:8; 2 Kgs 11:4; 1 Chr 26:26

10:28 *Jehu destroyed the Baal from Israel* The Law said those who led Israel to other gods must die (Deut 13:6-11; 17:2-5), as Elijah did at the Kishon (1 Kgs 18:40). Israel was a nation under God's direct rule, and idolatry was treason against her King. We do not live under that covenant as a nation. Christ's people fight with the word and prayer, not the sword (2 Cor 10:3-5; Eph 6:12). But God still takes false worship seriously.
10:29 *the calves of gold that were in Bethel and that were in Dan* He tore down Baal but kept Jeroboam's calves, probably for Jeroboam's reason, to keep the people from Jerusalem. His religion served his throne. It is possible to fight hard against one sin while holding on to the one that keeps us comfortable and in control.
10:30 *sons of the fourth generation shall sit for you on the throne of Israel* God commended Jehu's judgment on Ahab's house and on Baal. Jehoahaz, Jehoash, Jeroboam II and Zechariah all reigned (15:12).
10:31 *Jehu did not take care to walk in the law of the LORD* He did the job but never gave God his heart. Later God said, "I will visit the bloodshed of Jezreel on the house of Jehu" (Hos 1:4). How could He commend and then judge? Jehu went beyond God's command, his motives were set on his own power, and God judges the heart (1 Sam 16:7), and his house kept the calves. A good result does not make every means good. Zechariah, the fourth, was murdered after six months (15:8-12), and Jehu's house ended in blood.
10:32 *the LORD began to cut off in Israel* Hazael took all the land east of the Jordan, as Elisha foresaw with tears (8:12), the lands Moses gave the two and a half tribes (Num 32). God used a foreign king to discipline His people.
10:36 *twenty-eight years* About 841 to 814 B.C. The Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III shows Jehu, or his envoy, bowing before the king of Assyria with tribute. The man who drove like a madman still bowed before a greater earthly power. Only a heart that bows to the LORD is truly free.
11:1 *she arose and destroyed all the offspring of the kingdom* Instead of grieving, she grabbed for power and killed her own grandchildren. God had promised David's throne would last forever (2 Sam 7:16), and the Messiah would come from his line. This was an attack on God's promise itself. From the start the enemy has tried to destroy the seed of the woman (Gen 3:15), through Pharaoh and later Herod (Matt 2:16). Every time, God kept one child safe.
11:2 *Jehosheba, the daughter of King Joram, the sister of Ahaziah* Joram here is Jehoram of Judah. She was the baby's aunt, likely Athaliah's stepdaughter, and the wife of Jehoiada the priest (2 Chr 22:11). She risked her life. We never know how much may hang on one quiet act of courage for God.
11:3 *in the house of the LORD, hiding himself six years* Athaliah worshiped Baal and had no interest in the LORD's temple. The safest place for God's king was God's house.
11:4 *the Carites and of the runners* The Carites were likely foreign soldiers of the royal guard, and the runners the king's bodyguard. Imagine those hardened soldiers seeing a seven-year-old and learning David's line was alive.
11:7 *the two divisions among you, all who go out on the Sabbath* Jehoiada kept both the incoming and outgoing Sabbath guards at the temple, doubling his force without raising suspicion. He waited six years and then planned carefully. Faith and wisdom go together.

priest. **10** And the priest gave to the commanders of the hundreds the spear and the shields that ***had belonged*** to King David, which ***were*** in the house of the LORD. **11** And the runners stood, each man and his weapons in his hand, from the south side of the house to the north side of the house, to the altar and to the house, by the king all around. **12** And he brought out the son of the king and put on him the crown and the testimony; and they made him king and anointed him, and they clapped ***their*** hands and said, "Let the king live!"

The Death of Athaliah

13 And Athaliah heard the sound of the runners, the people, and she came to the people ***at*** the house of the LORD. **14** And she looked, and look, the king ***was*** standing by the pillar according to the custom, and the commanders and the trumpets ***were*** with the king, and all the people of the land ***were*** rejoicing and blowing on trumpets. And Athaliah tore her clothes and called out, "Conspiracy! Conspiracy!" **15** And Jehoiada the priest commanded the commanders of the hundreds, the appointed ***officers*** of the army, and said to them, "Bring her out between the ranks, and the one who comes after her, put ***him*** to death with the sword." For the priest had said, "Let her not be put to death ***in*** the house of the LORD." **16** And they laid hands on her, and she went ***by*** the way of the entrance of the horses ***to*** the house of the king, and she was put to death there. **17** And Jehoiada made the covenant between the LORD and the king and the people, to become a people for the LORD, and between the king and the people. **18** And all the people of the land went ***to*** the house of the Baal and tore it down; its altars and its images they broke in pieces thoroughly, and Mattan (Matan) the priest of the Baal they killed before the altars. And the priest appointed overseers over the house of the LORD. **19** And he took the commanders of the hundreds and the Carites and the runners and all the people of the land, and they brought the king down from the house of the LORD and came ***by*** the way of the gate of the runners ***to*** the house of the king; and he sat on the throne of the kings. **20** And all the people of the land rejoiced, and the city was quiet; and Athaliah they had put to death with the sword ***at*** the house of the king. **21** Jehoash (Yeho'ash) ***was*** a son of seven years when he became king.

2 KINGS 12

Joash King of Judah

1 In the seventh year of Jehu (Yehu) Jehoash (Yeho'ash) became king, and he reigned forty years in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). And the name of his mother ***was*** Zibiah (Tsivya) from Beersheba (Be'er-Sheva). **2** And Jehoash did the right in the eyes of the LORD all his days in which Jehoiada (Yehoyada) the priest instructed him. **3** Only the high places were not removed; the people ***were*** still sacrificing and burning incense on the high places.

Joash Repairs the Temple

4 And Jehoash said to the priests, "All the money of the holy things that is brought ***into*** the house of the LORD, the money ***of one who*** passes over, the money of each man ***for*** the souls of his valuation, all the money that comes up on the heart of a man to bring ***into*** the house of the LORD, **5** let the priests take ***it*** for themselves, each man from his acquaintance; and they shall repair the breach of the house wherever a breach is found there." **6** And it was, in the twenty-third year of

11:10 2 Sam 8:7; 1 Sam 21:9; 1 Chr 26:26,27
11:11 Matt 23:35; Luke 11:51; 2 Kgs 11:8,10
11:12 Exod 25:16; 1 Sam 10:24; 2 Sam 1:10
11:13 2 Chr 23:12-15
11:14 2 Kgs 23:3; 2 Chr 34:31; 2 Kgs 9:23
11:15 2 Kgs 11:4,9,10; 2 Chr 23:9,14; Ezek 21:14
11:16 Gen 9:6; 2 Chr 23:15; Judg 1:7
11:17 2 Sam 5:3; Josh 24:25; 2 Chr 34:31
11:18 Deut 12:3; 2 Kgs 10:26; 2 Kgs 18:4
11:19 2 Chr 23:5,19; 1 Kgs 1:13; 1 Chr 29:23
11:20 Prov 11:10; Prov 29:2; 2 Kgs 11:14
11:21 2 Chr 24:1-14; 2 Kgs 11:4; 2 Kgs 22:1
12:1 2 Kgs 9:27; 2 Kgs 11:1,3,4,21; 2 Chr 24:1-14
12:2 2 Kgs 14:3; 2 Chr 24:2,17-22; 2 Chr 25:2
12:3 2 Kgs 14:4; 2 Kgs 18:4; 1 Kgs 15:14
12:4 2 Kgs 22:4; Exod 35:5,22,29; 1 Chr 29:3-9,17
12:5 Isa 58:12; 2 Chr 24:5; 2 Kgs 12:12
12:6 1 Sam 2:29,30; 2 Chr 29:34; Isa 56:10-12

11:10 *the spear and the shields that had belonged to King David* David's own weapons guarding David's heir, a sign this was the true king.
11:12 *put on him the crown and the testimony* Most likely a copy of God's law or covenant. Every king was to have his own copy and read it all his life (Deut 17:18-20), ruling under God's word.
11:14 *the king was standing by the pillar according to the custom* His place on official occasions. "The people of the land" means the common people of Judah.
11:14 *Conspiracy! Conspiracy* Rich coming from her. She took the throne by murdering children. The wicked often accuse others of what they have done.
11:15 *Let her not be put to death in the house of the LORD* Jehoiada would not defile the temple with her blood.
11:16 *she was put to death there* She reigned about 841 to 835 B.C., the only ruler of Judah not of David's line. Her end was like her mother's.
11:17 *to become a people for the LORD* A covenant is a binding agreement. The king and people promised the LORD to be His people, and then king and people made promises to each other. Real change in a nation, church or family begins when people return to God.
11:18 *Mattan the priest of the Baal they killed before the altars* Athaliah brought Baal to Jerusalem as her mother did to Samaria. The Law said those who led God's people to other gods must die (Deut 13:6-10).
11:20 *the city was quiet* When God's rightful King takes His throne, there is joy and rest, a small picture of the day Jesus will sit on David's throne and reign in righteousness (Isa 9:6-7; Luke 1:32-33).
11:21 *Jehoash was a son of seven years when he became king* Jehoash and Joash are long and short forms of one name, the LORD has given. In the Hebrew Bible this is 12:1. Matthew's list skips Ahaziah, Joash and Amaziah (Matt 1:8), perhaps for their tie to Ahab's house or to keep his groups of fourteen (Matt 1:17). Either way, Joash's rescue kept the line alive, and Jesus came from it.
12:1 *he reigned forty years in Jerusalem* About 835 to 796 B.C. Kings usually names the mother of each king of Judah, because the queen mother had real influence, as Athaliah showed. Beersheba was in the far south of Judah.
12:2 *all his days in which Jehoiada the priest instructed him* High praise with a quiet warning built in. He did right as long as Jehoiada taught him.
12:3 *only the high places were not removed* Hilltop places of worship, some for idols and some for the LORD outside the place He chose (Deut 12:5-14). Even good kings left them until Hezekiah and Josiah. Joash's reform was real but not complete.
12:4 *all the money of the holy things* Census money (Exod 30:12-16), money paid in place of a person vowed to God (Lev 27:1-8), and freewill gifts. Athaliah's sons had broken into the temple and used its holy things for the Baals (2 Chr 24:7). The boy who grew up in the temple loved God's house.
12:6 *the priests had not repaired the breach of the house* A breach is a crack or damage. Joash was about thirty. Scripture does not say why the work stalled. Even godly leaders need accountability. Good intentions do not fix walls, and there is no shame in setting up a better system.

King Jehoash, the priests had not repaired the breach of the house. **7** And King Jehoash called for Jehoiada the priest and for the priests, and he said to them, "Why are you not repairing the breach of the house? And now, do not take money from your acquaintances, for you shall give it for the breach of the house." **8** And the priests agreed not to take money from the people and not to repair the breach of the house. **9** And Jehoiada the priest took one chest and bored a hole in its lid, and he put it beside the altar, on the right side as a man comes ***into*** the house of the LORD; and the priests who kept the threshold put there all the money that was brought ***into*** the house of the LORD. **10** And it was, when they saw that the money in the chest ***was*** much, and the scribe of the king and the high priest came up, and they tied up and counted the money that was found ***in*** the house of the LORD. **11** And they gave the money that was weighed out into the hands of the doers of the work who were appointed ***over*** the house of the LORD; and they paid it out to the craftsmen of wood and to the builders who were working ***on*** the house of the LORD, **12** and to the masons and to the cutters of stone, and to buy timber and hewn stones to repair the breach of the house of the LORD, and for all that went out on the house to repair ***it***. **13** Only, there were not made ***for*** the house of the LORD basins of silver, snuffers, bowls, trumpets, any article of gold and article of silver, from the money that was brought ***into*** the house of the LORD; **14** for they gave it to the doers of the work, and they repaired the house of the LORD with it. **15** And they did not settle accounts with the men into whose hand they gave the money to give to the doers of the work, for they ***were*** working in faithfulness. **16** The money of guilt offering and the money of sin offerings was not brought ***into*** the house of the LORD; it belonged to the priests.

Hazael Threatens Jerusalem

17 Then Hazael (Chaza'el) the king of Syria (Aram) went up and fought against Gath (Gat) and captured it; and Hazael set his face to go up against Jerusalem. **18** And Jehoash the king of Judah (Yehuda) took all the holy things that Jehoshaphat (Yehoshafat) and Jehoram (Yehoram) and Ahaziah (Achazyahu), his fathers, the kings of Judah, had consecrated, and his own holy things, and all the gold that was found in the treasuries of the house of the LORD and of the house of the king, and he sent ***them*** to Hazael the king of Syria; and he went up from against Jerusalem. **19** And the rest of the matters of Joash (Yo'ash) and all that he did, ***are*** they not written in the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Judah? **20** And his servants arose and conspired a conspiracy, and they struck down Joash ***at*** Beth-millo (Bet-Millo), which goes down ***to*** Silla (Sila). **21** And Jozabad (Yozavad) the son of Shimeath (Shimat) and Jehozabad (Yehozavad) the son of Shomer, his servants, struck him down, and he died; and they buried him with his fathers in the city of David, and Amaziah (Amatsya) his son reigned in his place.

2 KINGS 13

Jehoahaz King of Israel

1 In the twenty-third year of Joash (Yo'ash) the son of Ahaziah (Achazyahu), the king of Judah (Yehuda), Jehoahaz (Yeho'achaz) the son of Jehu (Yehu) became king over Israel (Yisra'el) in Samaria (Shomron), seventeen years. **2** And he did the evil in the eyes of the LORD, and he walked after the sins of Jeroboam (Yaravam) the son of Nebat (Nevat), ***with*** which he caused Israel to sin; he did not turn aside from it. **3** And the anger of the LORD burned against Israel, and He gave them into the hand of Hazael (Chaza'el) the king of Syria (Aram) and into the hand of Ben-hadad the son of Hazael, all the days. **4** And Jehoahaz entreated the face of the LORD, and the LORD listened to him, for He saw the oppres-

12:7 2 Chr 24:5,6-14; 2 Kgs 12:2; 2 Kgs 11:4
12:9 Mark 12:41; Jer 35:4; Ps 84:10
12:10 2 Sam 8:17; 2 Kgs 19:2; 2 Kgs 22:3,12
12:11 2 Kgs 22:5,6; 2 Chr 24:11,12; 2 Chr 34:9-11
12:12 1 Kgs 5:17,18; Ezra 3:7; Ezra 5:8
12:13 2 Chr 24:14; 1 Kgs 7:48-50; Num 7:13,14
12:15 2 Kgs 22:7; 2 Chr 34:12; Neh 7:2
12:16 Lev 7:7; Lev 5:15-18; Num 5:8-10
12:17 Luke 9:51; Luke 9:53; 2 Chr 24:23,24
12:18 1 Kgs 15:18; 2 Kgs 18:15,16; 2 Chr 16:2
12:19 2 Kgs 8:23; 1 Kgs 11:41; 1 Kgs 14:19,29
12:20 2 Kgs 14:5; Judg 9:6; 2 Sam 5:9
12:21 2 Chr 24:26; 2 Chr 24:27
13:1 2 Kgs 8:26; 2 Kgs 11:4,21; 2 Kgs 10:35
13:2 1 Kgs 12:26-33; 1 Kgs 14:16; 2 Kgs 13:11
13:3 Judg 2:14; 1 Kgs 19:17; 2 Kgs 13:24,25
13:4 2 Kgs 14:26; Exod 3:7; Ps 78:34

12:9 *Jehoiada the priest took one chest and bored a hole in its lid* Simple and visible. The king's scribe and the high priest counted together, which protected everyone. Silver was weighed, since coins were not yet in use. The people gave gladly (2 Chr 24:10-11). Paul handled gifts with the same care (2 Cor 8:20-21), and churches should too.
12:13 *basins of silver, snuffers, bowls, trumpets* Every bit went first to the building. Leftover money later made new articles (2 Chr 24:14). First the walls, then the furnishings.
12:15 *they were working in faithfulness* The supervisors were so honest no one needed to check their books. Trust is built by faithfulness over time.
12:16 *The money of guilt offering and the money of sin offerings* Still the priests' as the Law allowed (Lev 5:16; 7:7). The guilt offering was for wrongs that needed payment as well as forgiveness. The sin offering was for sins done without meaning to.
12:18 *Jehoash the king of Judah took all the holy things* Gath was a Philistine city near Judah's western border. With Jehoiada gone, Joash reached for gold instead of God, and the temple he restored was stripped to buy off an enemy (2 Chr 24:23-24).
12:20 *his servants arose and conspired a conspiracy* Beth-millo was a raised area or fortification in Jerusalem. Chronicles explains: after Jehoiada died, Joash turned to idols and had Jehoiada's son Zechariah stoned in the temple court (2 Chr 24:17-25). Many teachers believe this is the Zechariah Jesus named (Luke 11:51). Joash's faith was real while he had someone to lean on, but seems never to have been his own. Every one of us needs a faith rooted in the LORD Himself (2 Tim 3:14-15). The people who teach us will not always be there. God will.
13:1 *Jehoahaz the son of Jehu became king over Israel in Samaria, seventeen years* About 814 to 798 B.C., the first of the four generations promised to Jehu (10:30).
13:2 *he walked after the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat* The verdict we will hear over and over for Israel's kings. Every king kept the calves at Bethel and Dan (1 Kgs 12:26-30).
13:3 *the anger of the LORD burned against Israel* God used a cruel foreign king as a rod, as He warned (Lev 26:17), and as Elisha wept to foresee (8:12).
13:4 *Jehoahaz entreated the face of the LORD, and the LORD listened to him* An evil king prayed, and God listened, "for He saw the oppression of Israel." His mercy was moved by His people's suffering.

sion of Israel, that the king of Syria oppressed them. **5** And the LORD gave Israel a savior, and they went out from under the hand of Syria; and the sons of Israel dwelt in their tents as yesterday ***and*** the day before. **6** Nevertheless they did not turn aside from the sins of the house of Jeroboam, ***with*** which he caused Israel to sin; in it he walked. And also the Asherah remained standing in Samaria. **7** For he had not left to Jehoahaz a people except fifty horsemen and ten chariots and ten thousand foot soldiers, for the king of Syria had destroyed them and made them like the dust for trampling. **8** And the rest of the matters of Jehoahaz and all that he did, and his might, ***are*** they not written in the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Israel? **9** And Jehoahaz lay down with his fathers, and they buried him in Samaria; and Joash his son reigned in his place.

Jehoash King of Israel

10 In the thirty-seventh year of Joash the king of Judah, Jehoash (Yeho'ash) the son of Jehoahaz became king over Israel in Samaria, sixteen years. **11** And he did the evil in the eyes of the LORD; he did not turn aside from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, ***with*** which he caused Israel to sin; in it he walked. **12** And the rest of the matters of Joash and all that he did, and his might, how he fought with Amaziah (Amatsya) the king of Judah, ***are*** they not written in the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Israel? **13** And Joash lay down with his fathers, and Jeroboam sat on his throne; and Joash was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel.

The Death of Elisha

14 And Elisha had become sick with his sickness of which he would die. And Joash the king of Israel went down to him and wept over his face, and he said, "My father, my father, the chariotry of Israel and its horsemen!" **15** And Elisha said to him, "Take a bow and arrows." And he took to himself a bow and arrows. **16** And he said to the king of Israel, "Make your hand ride on the bow." And he made his hand ride ***on it***, and Elisha put his hands on the hands of the king. **17** And he said, "Open the window eastward." And he opened ***it***. And Elisha said, "Shoot." And he shot. And he said, "An arrow of salvation of the LORD, and an arrow of salvation against Syria; and you will strike Syria in Aphek (Afeq) until making an end ***of them***." **18** And he said, "Take the arrows." And he took ***them***. And he said to the king of Israel, "Strike toward the ground." And he struck three times and stopped. **19** And the man of God was angry with him and said, "***You should have*** struck five or six times; then you would have struck Syria until making an end ***of them***. And now three times you will strike Syria." **20** And Elisha died, and they buried him. And the bands of Moab (Mo'av) would come into the land ***at the*** coming of a year. **21** And it was, they ***were*** burying a man, and look, they saw the band, and they threw the man into the grave of Elisha; and the man went and touched the bones of Elisha, and he lived and rose up on his feet. **22** And Hazael the king of Syria had oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz. **23** And the LORD was gracious to them and had compassion on them and turned to them because of His covenant with Abraham (Avraham), Isaac (Yitschaq), and Jacob (Ya'aqov); and He was not willing to destroy them, and He did not throw them from His face until now. **24** And Hazael the king of Syria died, and Ben-hadad his son reigned in his

13:5 2 Kgs 13:25; 2 Kgs 14:25,27; Neh 9:27
13:6 1 Kgs 16:33; 2 Kgs 13:2; 2 Kgs 10:29
13:7 Amos 1:3; 2 Kgs 10:32; 1 Sam 13:6,7,15,19-23
13:8 2 Kgs 10:34,35; 1 Kgs 11:4; 1 Kgs 14:19,20,29,31
13:9 2 Kgs 13:13; 2 Kgs 10:35; 1 Kgs 14:13
13:11 2 Kgs 13:2,6; 2 Kgs 3:3; 2 Kgs 10:29
13:12 2 Kgs 13:14-25; 2 Kgs 14:8-16; 2 Chr 25:17-24
13:13 2 Sam 7:12; 1 Kgs 1:21; 1 Kgs 2:10
13:14 2 Kgs 2:12; 2 Kgs 20:1; Gen 48:1
13:16 2 Kgs 4:34; Gen 49:24; Ps 144:1
13:17 1 Kgs 20:26; 2 Kgs 5:10-14; John 2:5-8
13:18 Isa 20:2-4; Ezek 4:1-10; Ezek 5:1-4
13:19 2 Kgs 13:25; 2 Kgs 1:9-15; 2 Kgs 4:16,40
13:20 2 Kgs 24:2; 2 Chr 24:16; Acts 8:2
13:21 Rev 11:11; 2 Kgs 4:35; Isa 26:19
13:22 2 Kgs 8:12; 2 Kgs 13:3-7; Ps 106:40-42
13:23 Luke 1:55; Luke 1:73; 2 Kgs 14:27
13:24 Ps 125:3; Luke 18:7

13:5 *the LORD gave Israel a savior* Scripture does not name him. Some think Jehoash (13:25), others Jeroboam II (14:25-27), and many point to the king of Assyria, who attacked Damascus about this time. "In their tents as yesterday and the day before" means living at home in peace again.
13:6 *the Asherah remained standing in Samaria* A wooden pole or image for the Canaanite goddess Asherah, set up by Ahab (1 Kgs 16:33) and left even by Jehu. God rescued them, and they went right back. How often do we pray hard in trouble and forget God when it passes?
13:7 *fifty horsemen and ten chariots and ten thousand foot soldiers* Solomon had fourteen hundred chariots (1 Kgs 10:26). Israel was "like the dust for trampling."
13:9 *Joash his son reigned in his place* Joash and Jehoash are two forms of one name. This is Jehoash of Israel, not Joash of Judah, though they reigned at the same time.
13:10 *sixteen years* About 798 to 782 B.C. The writer sums up a king, then goes back to tell the stories that matter most. His son is the one we call Jeroboam II (13:13).
13:14 *Elisha had become sick with his sickness of which he would die* After more than fifty years of service. Elijah went up in a whirlwind, and Elisha died of illness. God chooses how each servant finishes, and both endings honored Him.
13:14 *My father, my father, the chariotry of Israel and its horsemen* Elisha's own words over Elijah (2:12). The king knew the old prophet was Israel's real strength, and he still kept Jeroboam's calves.
13:16 *Elisha put his hands on the hands of the king* The power behind the shot would be God's.
13:17 *An arrow of salvation of the LORD, and an arrow of salvation against Syria* East was toward Gilead, the land Hazael took (10:32-33). Salvation here means victory in battle. Aphek was where Ahab once won (1 Kgs 20:26-30).
13:18 *he struck three times and stopped* Having just heard that the arrows meant victory, he went through the motions half-heartedly.
13:19 *You should have struck five or six times* The king's small faith set a limit on what he received. God is not stingy, but He often gives in answer to faith and eagerness (James 4:2). Do we pray and serve with our whole heart, or strike the ground three times and stop?
13:20 *the bands of Moab would come into the land at the coming of a year* Raiding bands each spring, the season for war.
13:21 *he lived and rose up on his feet* Elisha asked a double portion (2:9), and Scripture records about twice as many miracles for him. The power was never in Elisha but in God, and His word through Elisha still lived. This is the only such event in Scripture, and no one made a shrine of the grave. The Bible never tells us to seek help from the remains of the dead. The God who did this would raise His own Son, "the resurrection and the life" (John 11:25).
13:23 *because of His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob* One of the most tender verses in Kings. Israel did not deserve mercy, but God kept His word (Gen 15:18; 17:7-8). "Until now" shows the writer knew of Samaria's fall (17:23). God's patience is long but not endless (2 Pet 3:9). His covenant still stands, and He has a future for Israel (Rom 11:25-29).

place. **25** And Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz returned and took the cities from the hand of Ben-hadad the son of Hazael, which he had taken from the hand of Jehoahaz his father in the battle. Three times Joash struck him, and he restored the cities of Israel.

2 KINGS 14

Amaziah King of Judah

1 In the second year of Joash (Yo'ash) the son of Joahaz (Yo'achaz), the king of Israel (Yisra'el), Amaziah (Amatsyahu) the son of Joash, the king of Judah (Yehuda), became king. **2** He was a son of twenty-five years when he became king, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem
(Yerushalayim). And the name of his mother ***was*** Jehoaddan (Yeho'adan) from Jerusalem. **3** And he did the right in the eyes of the LORD, only not like David his father; according to all that Joash his father had done, he did. **4** Only the high places were not removed; the people ***were*** still sacrificing and burning incense on the high places. **5** And it was, as soon as the kingdom was firm in his hand, and he struck down his servants who had struck down the king his father. **6** And the sons of those who struck ***him*** down he did not put to death, according to what is written in the book of the law of Moses (Moshe), which the LORD commanded, saying, "Fathers shall not be put to death for sons, and sons shall not be put to death for fathers; but each man shall be put to death for his sin." **7** He struck down Edom in the Valley of Salt, ten thousand, and seized Sela in the battle, and he called its name Joktheel (Yoqte'el) to this day.

Amaziah and Jehoash at War

8 Then Amaziah sent messengers to Jehoash (Yeho'ash) the son of Jehoahaz (Yeho'achaz) the son of Jehu (Yehu), the king of Israel, saying, "Come, let us look one another ***in the*** face." **9** And Jehoash the king of Israel sent to Amaziah the king of Judah, saying, "The thornbush that ***was*** in Lebanon
(Levanon) sent to the cedar that ***was*** in Lebanon, saying, 'Give your daughter to my son for a wife.' And the living thing of the field that ***was*** in Lebanon passed by and trampled the thornbush. **10** You have certainly struck down Edom, and your heart has lifted you up. Be honored, and stay at your house; and why should you engage in strife to ***your*** harm, and fall, you and Judah with you?" **11** And Amaziah did not listen. And Jehoash the king of Israel went up, and they looked one another ***in the*** face, he and Amaziah the king of Judah, at Beth-shemesh (Bet-Shemesh), which ***belongs*** to Judah. **12** And Judah was defeated before Israel, and they fled, each man to his tents. **13** And Amaziah the king of Judah, the son of Jehoash the son of Ahaziah (Achazyahu), Jehoash the king of Israel seized at Beth-shemesh; and he came ***to*** Jerusalem and made a breach in the wall of Jerusalem, at the Gate of Ephraim (Efrayim) as far as the Gate of the Corner, approximately 600 feet (four hundred cubits). **14** And he took all the gold and the silver and all the articles that were found ***in*** the house of the LORD and in the treasuries of the house of the king, and the hostages, and he returned to Samaria (Shomron). **15** And the rest of the matters of Jehoash which he did, and his might, and how he fought with Amaziah the king of Judah, ***are*** they not written in the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Israel? **16** And Jehoash lay down with his fathers and was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel; and Jeroboam (Yaravam) his son reigned in his place.

The Death of Amaziah

17 And Amaziah the son of Joash, the king of Judah, lived after the death of Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz, the king of Israel, fifteen years. **18** And the rest of the matters of Amaziah, ***are*** they not written in the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Judah? **19** And they conspired a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem, and he fled to Lachish (Lakhish); and they sent after him to Lachish and put him to

13:25 2 Kgs 13:18,19
14:1 2 Kgs 13:10; 2 Chr 25:1-4; 2 Kgs 14:15
14:3 2 Kgs 12:2; 1 Kgs 11:4; 1 Kgs 15:3
14:4 2 Kgs 12:3; 2 Kgs 15:4,35
14:5 Gen 9:6; Exod 21:12-14; Num 35:33
14:6 Ezek 18:4,20; Deut 24:16
14:7 2 Sam 8:13; 1 Chr 18:12; Josh 15:38
14:8 2 Chr 25:17-24; 2 Kgs 14:11; 2 Sam 2:14-17
14:10 Deut 8:14; 2 Chr 26:16; 2 Chr 32:25
14:11 Josh 19:38; 2 Chr 25:16,20; Josh 21:16
14:12 2 Sam 18:17; 1 Sam 4:10; 1 Kgs 22:36
14:13 Neh 8:16; Neh 12:39; Jer 31:38
14:14 1 Kgs 7:51; 1 Kgs 14:26; 2 Kgs 24:13
14:15 2 Kgs 10:34,35; 2 Kgs 13:12; 1 Kgs 14:19,20
14:16 2 Sam 7:12; 1 Kgs 1:21; 2 Kgs 13:9
14:17 2 Chr 25:25-28; 2 Kgs 14:1,2,23; 2 Kgs 13:10
14:18 2 Kgs 13:8,12; 1 Kgs 11:41; 1 Kgs 14:29
14:19 Josh 10:31; 2 Kgs 12:20,21; 2 Kgs 15:10,14,25,30

13:25 *three times Joash struck him* Just as Elisha said, not five or six. God kept His promise, and the king's half-hearted faith kept the victory partial.
14:1 *Amaziah the son of Joash, the king of Judah, became king* About 796 to 767 B.C. Joahaz is a short form of Jehoahaz.
14:3 *only not like David his father* David is the measuring line for every king of Judah. Amaziah did right "only not with a complete heart" (2 Chr 25:2), and later he even worshiped the gods of Edom (2 Chr 25:14).
14:6 *the sons of those who struck him down he did not put to death* Ancient kings often wiped out a traitor's family. Amaziah held back because God's Word said so (Deut 24:16). Each person answers to God for his own sin (Ezek 18:20). God's Word should set the limits on what we do, even when our anger says otherwise.
14:7 *he struck down Edom in the Valley of Salt, ten thousand* Edom broke away under Jehoram (8:20-22). The Valley of Salt was likely south of the Dead Sea. Sela means rock, a fortress many think was at or near later Petra.
14:8 *Come, let us look one another in the face* A challenge to battle. Israelite soldiers Amaziah hired and sent home had raided Judah's towns (2 Chr 25:10, 13).
14:9 *The thornbush that was in Lebanon sent to the cedar that was in Lebanon* Jehoash's insulting fable. Judah was the thornbush, Israel the cedar.
14:10 *your heart has lifted you up* Good advice from a bad man. Pride had grown after one victory. "Before breaking is pride" (Prov 16:18).
14:11 *Beth-shemesh* A town in Judah west of Jerusalem.
14:13 *at the gate of Ephraim as far as the gate of the corner* About 600 feet of the north wall, the side facing Israel. A broken wall left the city open and humbled.
14:14 *and the hostages* Taken to make sure Judah behaved. Amaziah's father stripped the temple for Hazael (12:18), and now the son lost it to Israel through pride. Chronicles says it came from God, because he sought Edom's gods (2 Chr 25:20).
14:15 *the rest of the matters of Jehoash* A second formal close of his reign (13:12-13), placed here now that his war with Amaziah has been told.
14:19 *they conspired a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem, and he fled to Lachish* Lachish was a strong fortress southwest of Jerusalem. Chronicles links the plot to his turning from the LORD (2 Chr 25:27). Two kings in a row, father and son, were murdered by their own people. Half-hearted faith protected neither.

death there. **20** And they carried him on the horses, and he was buried in Jerusalem with his fathers in the city of David. **21** And all the people of Judah took Azariah (Azaryah), and he ***was*** a son of sixteen years, and they made him king in place of his father Amaziah. **22** He built Elath (Elat) and restored it to Judah after the king lay down with his fathers.

Jeroboam II King of Israel

23 In the fifteenth year of Amaziah the son of Joash, the king of Judah, Jeroboam the son of Joash, the king of Israel, became king in Samaria, forty-one years. **24** And he did the evil in the eyes of the LORD; he did not turn aside from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat (Nevat), ***with*** which he caused Israel to sin. **25** He restored the border of Israel from Lebo-hamath (Levo-Chamat) to the sea of the Arabah,
according to the word of the LORD, the God of Israel, which He spoke by the hand of His servant Jonah (Yona) the son of Amittai (Amitay), the prophet who ***was*** from Gath-hepher (Gat-Hachefer). **26** For the LORD saw the affliction of Israel, ***that it was*** very bitter; and ***there was*** none shut up and none left, and ***there was*** no helper for Israel. **27** And the LORD had not spoken to wipe out the name of Israel from under the heavens; and He saved them by the hand of Jeroboam the son of Joash. **28** And the rest of the matters of Jeroboam and all that he did, and his might, how he fought and how he restored Damascus (Dameseq) and Hamath (Chamat) to Judah in Israel, ***are*** they not written in the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Israel? **29** And Jeroboam lay down with his fathers, with the kings of Israel; and Zechariah (Zekharya) his son reigned in his place.

2 KINGS 15

Azariah King of Judah

1 In the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam (Yaravam) the king of Israel (Yisra'el), Azariah (Azaryah) the son of
Amaziah (Amatsya), the king of Judah (Yehuda), became king. **2** He was a son of sixteen years when he became king, and he reigned fifty-two years in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). And the name of his mother ***was*** Jecoliah (Yekhalyahu) from Jerusalem. **3** And he did the right in the eyes of the LORD, according to all that Amaziah his father had done. **4** Only the high places were not removed; the people ***were*** still sacrificing and burning incense on the high places. **5** And the LORD struck the king, and he was leprous until the day of his death, and he dwelt in the house of separateness. And Jotham (Yotam) the son of the king ***was*** over the house, judging the people of the land. **6** And the rest of the matters of Azariah (Azaryahu) and all that he did, ***are*** they not written in the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Judah? **7** And Azariah lay down with his fathers, and they buried him with his fathers in the city of David; and Jotham his son reigned in his place.

Zechariah and Shallum

8 In the thirty-eighth year of Azariah the king of Judah, Zechariah (Zekharyahu) the son of Jeroboam became king over Israel in Samaria (Shomron), six months. **9** And he did the evil in the eyes of the LORD, as his fathers had done; he did not turn aside from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat (Nevat), ***with*** which he caused Israel to sin. **10** And Shallum (Shalum) the son of Jabesh (Yavesh) conspired against him

14:20 2 Kgs 9:28; 2 Kgs 8:24; 2 Kgs 12:21
14:21 2 Kgs 15:13; Matt 1:8,9; 2 Kgs 21:24
14:22 2 Kgs 16:6; 1 Kgs 9:26; Deut 2:8
14:23 2 Kgs 14:27; Hos 1:1; Amos 1:1
14:24 2 Kgs 21:6; Gen 38:7; Deut 9:18
14:25 Matt 12:39; Matt 16:4; Matt 12:40
14:26 2 Kgs 13:4; Deut 32:36; Exod 3:7,9
14:27 Rom 11:2; 2 Kgs 13:23; 2 Kgs 13:5
14:28 1 Kgs 11:24; 2 Sam 8:6; 1 Chr 18:5,6
14:29 2 Kgs 15:8

15:1 2 Kgs 15:13,30-38; 2 Kgs 14:21; 2 Chr 26:1,3,4
15:3 2 Kgs 12:2,3; 2 Kgs 14:3,4; 2 Chr 26:4
15:4 2 Kgs 15:35; 2 Kgs 14:4; 2 Kgs 18:4
15:5 Lev 13:46; Num 12:14; 2 Sam 3:29
15:6 2 Kgs 14:18; 2 Chr 26:5-15
15:7 Matt 1:9; 2 Chr 26:23; Isa 6:1
15:8 2 Kgs 14:16,17,21; 2 Kgs 14:29; 2 Kgs 15:1
15:9 2 Kgs 10:29,31; 2 Kgs 13:2,11; 2 Kgs 14:24
15:10 2 Kgs 15:14,25,30; 2 Kgs 9:24,31; 1 Kgs 15:28

14:21 *Azariah, and he was a son of sixteen years* Also called Uzziah (15:13, 32). Many believe he began reigning alongside his father, perhaps after Amaziah's capture, about 792 B.C., which explains how their dates overlap.
14:22 *he built Elath and restored it to Judah* A port on the Gulf of Aqaba, Judah's gateway to sea trade.
14:23 *Jeroboam the son of Joash, the king of Israel, became king in Samaria, forty-one years* We call him Jeroboam II. His years count from about 793 B.C., when he shared his father's throne, to 753 B.C.
14:25 *he restored the border of Israel from Lebo-hamath to the sea of the Arabah* From the entrance to Hamath in the far north to the Dead Sea, close to Solomon's borders (1 Kgs 8:65). Syria was weak and Assyria busy elsewhere.
14:25 *Jonah the son of Amittai, the prophet who was from Gath-hepher* The same Jonah God sent to Nineveh (Jonah 1:1). Gath-hepher was in Galilee, a few miles from Nazareth. Jesus spoke of Jonah's three days in the fish as a sign of His own death and resurrection (Matt 12:40).
14:26 *none shut up and none left, and there was no helper for Israel* No one at all, slave or free, was spared. God's compassion moved before Israel repented.
14:27 *He saved them by the hand of Jeroboam the son of Joash* Grace and one more chance. Israel used its new wealth for luxury and injustice. Amos and Hosea preached in these days (Amos 1:1; Hos 1:1), against those on beds of ivory while the poor were crushed (Amos 6:4), and Amos said Jeroboam's house would fall by the sword (Amos 7:9). Good times are not proof that God approves. Sometimes they are His patience giving room to repent (Rom 2:4).
14:28 *he restored Damascus and Hamath to Judah in Israel* The wording is hard, and teachers read it in a few ways. It may mean he brought these areas, once part of David and Solomon's kingdom, back under Israel's control. Zechariah would be the last of Jehu's four generations (10:30).
15:2 *he reigned fifty-two years in Jerusalem* About 792 to 740 B.C., counting years shared with his father and later his son.
15:3 *he did the right in the eyes of the LORD* Chronicles calls him Uzziah and tells much more: towers, wells, a love of farming, a strong army, and "in the days that he sought the LORD, God made him prosper" (2 Chr 26:5). Judah grew stronger than at any time since Solomon.
15:5 *the LORD struck the king, and he was leprous until the day of his death* A leper was unclean, unfit to come near God's house or live among the people (Lev 13:45-46). Kings gives the fact, and Chronicles the reason: in pride he went into the temple to burn incense, a work God gave only to priests (2 Chr 26:16-21). It was his father's sin, pride after success. Isaiah saw the Lord "in the year of the death of King Uzziah" (Isa 6:1). The king who pushed into God's presence was dead, and Isaiah saw the true King on His throne.
15:5 *in the house of separateness* A house set apart. Jotham ran the palace and judged the people.
15:8 *Zechariah the son of Jeroboam became king over Israel in Samaria, six months* In 753 B.C.
15:10 *struck him down before the people* Killed in public.

and struck him down before the people and put him to death, and he reigned in his place. **11** And the rest of the matters of Zechariah, look, they ***are*** written in the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Israel. **12** That ***was*** the word of the LORD which He spoke to Jehu (Yehu), saying, "Sons of the fourth ***generation*** shall sit for you on the throne of Israel." And it was so.

Menahem King of Israel

13 Shallum the son of Jabesh became king in the thirty-ninth year of Uzziah (Uziya) the king of Judah, and he reigned a month of days in Samaria. **14** And Menahem (Menachem) the son of Gadi went up from Tirzah (Tirtsa) and came ***to*** Samaria, and he struck down Shallum the son of Jabesh in Samaria and put him to death, and he reigned in his place. **15** And the rest of the matters of Shallum, and his conspiracy which he conspired, look, they ***are*** written in the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Israel. **16** Then Menahem struck Tiphsah (Tifsach) and all who ***were*** in it and its territories from Tirzah, for it did not open; and he struck ***it***; all its pregnant women he ripped open. **17** In the thirty-ninth year of Azariah the king of Judah, Menahem the son of Gadi became king over Israel, ten years in Samaria. **18** And he did the evil in the eyes of the LORD; he did not turn aside from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, ***with*** which he caused Israel to sin, all his days. **19** Pul the king of Assyria (Ashur) came against the land; and Menahem gave to Pul approximately 75,000 pounds (a thousand talents) of silver, for his hands to be with him, to strengthen the kingdom in his hand. **20** And Menahem exacted the silver from Israel, from all the mighty men of wealth, to give to the king of Assyria, approximately 20 ounces (fifty shekels) of silver for each man. And the king of Assyria returned and did not remain there in the land. **21** And the rest of the matters of Menahem and all that he did, ***are*** they not written in the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Israel? **22** And Menahem lay down with his fathers, and Pekahiah (Peqachya) his son reigned in his place.

Pekahiah and Pekah

23 In the fiftieth year of Azariah the king of Judah, Pekahiah the son of Menahem became king over Israel in Samaria, two years. **24** And he did the evil in the eyes of the LORD; he did not turn aside from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, ***with*** which he caused Israel to sin. **25** And Pekah (Peqach) the son of Remaliah (Remalyahu), his officer, conspired against him and struck him down in Samaria, in the citadel of the house of the king, with Argob (Argov) and with Arieh (Arye); and with him ***were*** fifty men of the sons of the Gileadites. And he put him to death and reigned in his place. **26** And the rest of the matters of Pekahiah and all that he did, look, they ***are*** written in the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Israel. **27** In the fifty-second year of Azariah the king of Judah, Pekah the son of Remaliah became king over Israel in Samaria, twenty years. **28** And he did the evil in the eyes of the LORD; he did not turn aside from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, ***with*** which he caused Israel to sin. **29** In the days of Pekah the king of Israel, Tiglath-pileser (Tiglat-Pileser) the king of Assyria came and took Ijon (Iyon) and Abel-beth-maacah (Avel-Bet-Ma'akha) and Janoah (Yanoach) and Kedesh (Qedesh) and Hazor (Chatsor) and Gilead (Gilad) and Galilee (Galil), all the land of Naphtali (Naftali); and he carried them into exile to Assyria. **30** And Hoshea the son of Elah (Ela) conspired a conspiracy against Pekah the son of Remaliah, and struck him down and put him to death, and he reigned in his place in the twentieth year of Jotham the son of Uzziah. **31** And the rest of the matters of Pekah and all that he did, look, they ***are*** written in the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Israel.

Jotham King of Judah

32 In the second year of Pekah the son of Remaliah, the king of Israel, Jotham the son of Uzziah, the king of Judah, became

15:11 2 Kgs 14:28
15:12 John 10:35; 2 Kgs 10:30; 2 Kgs 13:1,10,13
15:13 Matt 1:8; Matt 1:9; 1 Kgs 16:15
15:14 1 Kgs 14:17; 1 Kgs 15:21,33; 1 Kgs 16:8,9,15,17
15:15 2 Kgs 15:11; 1 Kgs 14:19,29; 1 Kgs 22:39
15:16 2 Kgs 8:12; 1 Kgs 4:24; Amos 1:13
15:19 2 Kgs 14:5; 1 Chr 5:25,26; Isa 9:1
15:20 2 Kgs 23:35; Ruth 2:1; 2 Sam 19:32
15:23 2 Kgs 21:19; 1 Kgs 15:25; 1 Kgs 16:8
15:24 2 Kgs 15:9,18
15:25 2 Chr 28:6; 2 Kgs 15:27; 2 Kgs 9:5
15:27 Isa 7:1,4,9; 2 Kgs 15:2,8,13,23; 2 Kgs 15:25,37
15:28 2 Kgs 15:9,18; 2 Kgs 13:2,6; 2 Kgs 21:2
15:29 Matt 4:15; 2 Kgs 16:7; 1 Kgs 15:20
15:30 2 Kgs 17:1; 2 Kgs 15:10,25; Hos 10:3,7,15
15:32 Matt 1:9; 2 Kgs 15:7; 1 Chr 3:12

15:12 *That was the word of the LORD which He spoke to Jehu* Jehoahaz, Jehoash, Jeroboam II and Zechariah. God's promise came true exactly (10:30), and so did His warning about the bloodshed of Jezreel (Hos 1:4). The house of Jehu began in blood and ended in blood.
15:13 *he reigned a month of days in Samaria* In 752 B.C. Tirzah was the old capital before Samaria. The man who seized the throne by murder lost it the same way (Matt 26:52).
15:16 *Then Menahem struck Tiphsah* I will not dwell on the cruelty. The Bible records it so we know how far Israel had fallen. An Israelite king did to his own people what Elisha wept to think Hazael would do (8:12), the crime Amos condemned in Ammon (Amos 1:13). When a nation turns from God, it soon turns on the weak. God sees, and He judges such cruelty.
15:17 *ten years in Samaria* About 752 to 742 B.C.
15:19 *Pul the king of Assyria came against the land* Another name for Tiglath-pileser III, who built Assyria into a great empire (1 Chr 5:26 uses both names). Menahem paid about 75,000 pounds of silver to keep his shaky throne.
15:20 *all the mighty men of wealth* Fifty shekels each, about 20 ounces, which some figure means about sixty thousand men taxed. A turning point: Israel now paid tribute to Assyria. Hosea called Ephraim, another name for Israel, a silly dove calling to Egypt and going to Assyria (Hos 7:11). Israel looked everywhere for help except to the LORD.
15:23 *Pekahiah the son of Menahem became king over Israel in Samaria, two years* About 742 to 740 B.C.
15:25 *Pekah the son of Remaliah, his officer, conspired against him* The citadel was the strongest part of the palace. The Hebrew can be read that Argob and Arieh died with the king or helped kill him.
15:27 *twenty years* Hard to fit if counted from here, since Israel fell less than twenty years later. Many believe Pekah had set himself up as a rival king in Gilead about 752 B.C., when Menahem took Samaria, and his years count from then.
15:29 *he carried them into exile to Assyria* About 733 to 732 B.C. Exile means being carried from your homeland as captives, which Assyria did to break conquered peoples. This was Israel's first great exile. Isaiah spoke of this land, Zebulun and Naphtali humbled first, but "Galilee of the nations" (Isa 9:1) would see a great light. That light came when Jesus began His ministry in Galilee (Matt 4:13-16).
15:30 *Hoshea the son of Elah conspired a conspiracy against Pekah* Hoshea became Israel's last king. Four of the last six kings of Israel were murdered by the men who replaced them. "The twentieth year of Jotham" likely counts on from the start of his reign while Ahaz held most of the power.

king. **33** He was a son of twenty-five years when he became king, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. And the name of his mother ***was*** Jerusha (Yerusha) the daughter of Zadok (Tsadoq). **34** And he did the right in the eyes of the LORD; according to all that Uzziah his father had done, he did. **35** Only the high places were not removed; the people ***were*** still sacrificing and burning incense on the high places. He built the upper gate of the house of the LORD. **36** And the rest of the matters of Jotham which he did, ***are*** they not written in the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Judah? **37** In those days the LORD began to send against Judah Rezin (Retsin) the king of Syria (Aram) and Pekah the son of Remaliah. **38** And Jotham lay down with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father; and Ahaz (Achaz) his son reigned in his place.

2 KINGS 16

Ahaz King of Judah

1 In the seventeenth year of Pekah (Peqach) the son of Remaliah (Remalyahu), Ahaz (Achaz) the son of Jotham (Yotam), the king of Judah (Yehuda), became king. **2** Ahaz ***was*** a son of twenty years when he became king, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim); and he did not do the right in the eyes of the LORD his God like David his father. **3** And he walked in the way of the kings of Israel (Yisra'el), and he even made his son pass through the fire, according to the abominations of the nations whom the LORD had dispossessed from before the sons of Israel. **4** And he sacrificed and burned incense on the high places and on the hills and under every luxuriant tree. **5** Then Rezin (Retsin) the king of Syria (Aram) and Pekah the son of Remaliah, the king of Israel, came up ***to*** Jerusalem for battle; and they besieged Ahaz, and they were not able to fight. **6** At that time Rezin the king of Syria restored Elath (Elat) to Syria, and he cleared out the Judeans from Eloth (Elot); and the Edomites came ***to*** Elath and dwelt there to this day. **7** And Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglath-pileser (Tiglat-Pileser) the king of Assyria (Ashur), saying, "I ***am*** your servant and your son. Come up and save me from the hand of the king of Syria and from the hand of the king of Israel, who are rising up against me." **8** And Ahaz took the silver and the gold that was found ***in*** the house of the LORD and in the treasuries of the house of the king, and he sent ***it*** to the king of Assyria ***as*** a bribe. **9** And the king of Assyria listened to him, and the king of Assyria went up to Damascus (Dameseq) and seized it, and he carried it into exile to Kir (Qir), and Rezin he put to death.

The Altar from Damascus

10 And King Ahaz went to meet Tiglath-pileser the king of Assyria ***at*** Damascus, and he saw the altar that ***was*** in Damascus; and King Ahaz sent to Uriah (Uriya) the priest the likeness of the altar and its pattern, according to all its workmanship. **11** And Uriah the priest built the altar according to all that King Ahaz had sent from Damascus; so Uriah the priest did, until King Ahaz came from Damascus. **12** And the king came from Damascus, and the king saw the altar; and the king drew near to the altar and offered up on it. **13** And

15:33 2 Chr 27:1
15:34 Matt 1:9; 2 Chr 26:4,5; 2 Kgs 15:3,4
15:35 2 Kgs 15:4; 2 Kgs 18:4; 2 Chr 32:12
15:36 Matt 1:9; 2 Kgs 15:6,7; 2 Chr 27:4-9
15:37 2 Kgs 16:5; Isa 7:1,8; Isa 38:1-22
15:38 Matt 1:9; 2 Sam 7:12; 1 Kgs 1:2
16:1 Matt 1:9; Isa 1:1; 2 Kgs 15:27-30,32,33
16:2 Matt 1:9; 2 Kgs 14:3; 2 Kgs 15:3,34
16:3 Deut 12:31; Lev 18:21; 2 Kgs 21:2,11
16:4 Deut 12:2; 1 Kgs 14:23; Isa 57:5-7
16:5 Matt 1:9; 2 Kgs 15:37; 2 Chr 28:5-15
16:6 2 Kgs 14:22; 2 Chr 26:2; Deut 2:8
16:7 Matt 1:9; 2 Kgs 15:29; 1 Chr 5:26
16:8 Matt 1:9; 2 Kgs 12:17,18; 2 Kgs 16:17,18
16:9 Isa 22:6; Amos 9:7; Amos 1:3-5
16:10 Matt 1:9; Deut 12:30; 2 Chr 28:23-25
16:11 Matt 1:9; 1 Kgs 21:11-13; 2 Chr 26:17,18
16:12 2 Chr 26:16-19; 1 Kgs 13:1; 2 Chr 28:23,25
16:13 Lev 1:1-3

15:33 *he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem* Counted from about 750 B.C., when he took charge for his leprous father, to about 732 B.C. His mother may have come from a priestly family.
15:34 *he did the right in the eyes of the LORD* He did not go into the temple as his father had, and "he had set his ways before the LORD his God" (2 Chr 27:6). He learned from his father's mistake.
15:37 *the LORD began to send against Judah Rezin the king of Syria and Pekah the son of Remaliah* Notice who sends them. Syria and Israel were allying against Assyria and turned on Judah when she would not join. With Ahaz, Judah would take a long step down.
16:2 *he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem* Counted from about 735 B.C., when he began sharing power with Jotham, to about 715 B.C.
16:2 *he did not do the right in the eyes of the LORD his God like David his father* Uzziah and Jotham, for all their faults, did right. Ahaz did not. The LORD was still "his God" by covenant, whether Ahaz honored Him or not.
16:3 *he even made his son pass through the fire* Most take it as child sacrifice. Ahaz "burned his sons in the fire" (2 Chr 28:3) in the valley of the son of Hinnom, just south of Jerusalem. A few think it could mean a dedication rite, but Chronicles and the prophets make plain that real children died (Jer 7:31; Ezek 16:20-21). God forbade it in the strongest words and drove out the Canaanites for it (Lev 18:21; Deut 12:31; 18:10). False gods take the very lives they promise to protect. The LORD did not demand our children. He gave His own Son (Rom 8:32). Read this with care in a group. The same sin returns in 17:17 and 21:6.
16:4 *under every luxuriant tree* Green and leafy. Canaanites worshiped on hilltops and under green trees, thought to be full of life and fertility. Ahaz did not just leave the high places. He worshiped at them himself.
16:5 *they were not able to fight* They could not take the city. Syria and Israel wanted to replace Ahaz with a king of their own (Isa 7:6). Many in Judah were killed or captured before the prophet Oded had the captives sent home (2 Chr 28:5-15).
16:6 *Rezin the king of Syria restored Elath to Syria* The port Azariah rebuilt (14:22).
16:7 *I am your servant and your son* The words of a vassal, a lesser king who gives up his freedom. God sent Isaiah to tell Ahaz not to fear these burned-out sticks and to trust Him: "If you do not believe, surely you will not be established" (Isa 7:9). Ahaz refused God's sign, and God gave it anyway: "the virgin is pregnant and bearing a son" (Isa 7:14), fulfilled when Jesus was born of the virgin Mary (Matt 1:22-23). Immanuel means God with us.
16:8 *sent it to the king of Assyria as a bribe* The writer calls it what it was.
16:9 *he carried it into exile to Kir* About 732 B.C. The plan worked for a time, but Judah now belonged to Assyria, which "distressed him" (2 Chr 28:20) and would come for Judah too (18:13; Isa 8:7-8). When we turn from God to the world for help, the world always sends a bill.
16:10 *the likeness of the altar and its pattern* Scripture does not say whether it was Assyrian or Syrian. God gave Moses the pattern for His altar (Exod 27:1-8).
16:11 *Uriah the priest built the altar* Isaiah names him a reliable witness (Isa 8:2), but here he went along without a word, unlike the eighty priests who stood up to Uzziah (2 Chr 26:17-18). A priest's job was to guard God's altar, not copy one from a pagan city.
16:13 *he burned his burnt offering and his grain offering* A burnt offering was wholly burned in worship and surrender, a grain offering was flour or bread given in thanks, a drink offering was wine poured out, and a peace offering was a fellowship meal. All the right forms on the wrong altar.

he burned his burnt offering and his grain offering, and he poured out his drink offering, and he sprinkled the blood of the peace offerings that ***were*** his on the altar. **14** And the bronze altar that ***was*** before the LORD, he brought near from the front of the house, from between the altar and the house of the LORD, and he put it on the side of the altar northward. **15** And King Ahaz commanded Uriah the priest, saying, "On the great altar burn the burnt offering of the morning and the grain offering of the evening, and the burnt offering of the king and his grain offering, and the burnt offering of all the people of the land and their grain offering and their drink offerings; and all the blood of a burnt offering and all the blood of a sacrifice you shall sprinkle on it. And the bronze altar shall be for me to inquire ***by***." **16** And Uriah the priest did according to all that King Ahaz commanded. **17** And King Ahaz cut off the rims of the stands and removed the laver from on them; and the sea he took down from on the bronze oxen that ***were*** under it, and he put it on a pavement of stones. **18** And the covered way of the Sabbath that they had built in the house, and the outer entrance of the king, he turned ***from*** the house of the LORD because of the king of Assyria. **19** And the rest of the matters of Ahaz which he did, ***are*** they not written in the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Judah? **20** And Ahaz lay down with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David; and Hezekiah (Chizqiyahu) his son reigned in his place.

2 KINGS 17

Hoshea and the Fall of Samaria

1 In the twelfth year of Ahaz (Achaz) the king of Judah (Yehuda), Hoshea the son of Elah (Ela) became king in Samaria (Shomron) over Israel (Yisra'el), nine years. **2** And he did the evil in the eyes of the LORD, only not like the kings of Israel who were before him. **3** Against him Shalmaneser the king of Assyria (Ashur) came up; and Hoshea became a servant to him and rendered him tribute. **4** And the king of Assyria found conspiracy in Hoshea, for he had sent messengers to So the king of Egypt (Mitsrayim), and he had not brought up tribute to the king of Assyria as year by year; and the king of Assyria shut him up and bound him ***in*** a house of prison. **5** And the king of Assyria came up into all the land, and he went up ***to*** Samaria and besieged it three years. **6** In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria captured Samaria and carried Israel into exile to Assyria, and he made them dwell in Halah (Chalach) and on the Habor (Chavor), the river of Gozan, and ***in*** the cities of Media (Maday).

Why Israel Was Exiled

7 And it was so, because the sons of Israel had sinned against the LORD their God, who brought them up from the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh the king of Egypt, and they feared other gods, **8** and they walked in the statutes of the nations whom the LORD dispossessed from before the sons of Israel, and of the kings of Israel, which they made. **9** And the sons of Israel did secretly things that ***were*** not right against the LORD their God, and they built for themselves high places in all their cities, from a tower of watchmen to a city of fortification. **10** And they set up for themselves pillars and Asherim on every high hill and under every

16:14 Matt 23:35; 2 Chr 4:1; Exod 40:6,29
16:15 Matt 1:9; Exod 29:39-41; 1 Kgs 8:64
16:16 Matt 1:9; 2 Kgs 16:11; Acts 4:19
16:17 Matt 1:9; 2 Chr 28:24; 2 Chr 29:19
16:18 2 Kgs 11:5; 1 Kgs 10:5; Ezek 46:2
16:19 Matt 1:9; 2 Kgs 15:6,7,36,38; 2 Kgs 20:20,21
16:20 Matt 1:9; Isa 1:1; 2 Kgs 21:18,26
17:2 2 Kgs 3:2; 2 Kgs 10:31; 2 Kgs 13:2,11
17:3 Hos 10:14; 2 Kgs 18:9; 2 Kgs 15:19,29
17:4 2 Kgs 24:1,20; Ezek 17:13-19; 2 Kgs 18:21
17:5 2 Kgs 18:9; 2 Kgs 25:1-3; Jer 52:4,5
17:6 Hos 13:16; 1 Chr 5:26; 2 Kgs 18:10,11
17:7 Josh 23:16; Neh 9:26; Exod 20:2
17:8 2 Kgs 16:3,10; Lev 18:3,27-30; Deut 18:9
17:9 2 Kgs 18:8; Deut 13:6; Deut 27:15
17:10 1 Kgs 14:23; 2 Kgs 16:4; Exod 34:13

16:14 *the bronze altar that was before the LORD* Solomon's altar, pushed aside for the king's new one. Many hearts do the same. We may not throw God out. We move Him to the side and put something we like better in the center.
16:15 *the bronze altar shall be for me to inquire by* Likely kept for seeking omens, or set aside for later. Either way, the one place God promised to meet His people through sacrifice was set aside. Uriah obeyed the king rather than God (16:16).
16:17 *the sea he took down from on the bronze oxen* The great basin for the priests' washing (1 Kgs 7:23-39). The bronze probably went as tribute.
16:18 *because of the king of Assyria* Scripture does not explain these changes. Ahaz finally shut the temple doors and made altars on every corner of Jerusalem (2 Chr 28:24). Rearranging God's house to please a man is always dangerous, in a temple or a church.
16:20 *Hezekiah his son reigned in his place* A wonder of grace. The worst king so far had a son who would be one of the best. A child does not have to follow his father's sins. Hezekiah reopened the temple doors his father shut (2 Chr 29:3).
17:1 *Hoshea the son of Elah became king in Samaria over Israel, nine years* About 732 to 722 B.C. He killed Pekah to take the throne (15:30).
17:2 *only not like the kings of Israel who were before him* Scripture does not say how. The kingdom fell under one of its less wicked kings. Judgment had been building for two centuries, and Hoshea was the king when the bill came due.
17:3 *Shalmaneser the king of Assyria* Shalmaneser V. Tribute was a yearly payment from a weaker king to a stronger one, the price of being left alone.
17:4 *So the king of Egypt* Scholars are not sure which Egyptian ruler he was. Egypt was weak and divided, and no help came (Hos 7:11). Israel's last king vanishes from the story in chains.
17:6 *in the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria captured Samaria* In 722 B.C., after a three-year siege of the strong hill city (1 Kgs 16:24). Shalmaneser V began it and died about the time it ended. Sargon II later claimed the victory and carried out the deportation (Isa 20:1). The exiles were scattered to the Habor river region, in what is now northern Syria and Iraq, and to Media, in northwest Iran. Moses warned exactly this (Deut 28:64), as did Amos and Hosea (Amos 5:27; Hos 9:3). God's warnings are not empty.
17:7 *because the sons of Israel had sinned against the LORD their God* The writer's sermon begins. The first answer is about the relationship. God rescued them from Egypt, and "they feared other gods," meaning worshiped them. Sin among God's people starts with forgetting what He has done for us.
17:8 *and of the kings of Israel, which they made* The Canaanite customs God drove out, and Jeroboam's man-made religion. Man-made religion took the place of God's Word.
17:9 *from a tower of watchmen to a city of fortification* "Secretly" can mean covering things over. Idolatry was everywhere, from the smallest lookout post to the largest walled city.
17:10 *pillars and Asherim on every high hill and under every luxuriant tree* Pillars were standing stones of Canaanite worship, and Asherim were wooden poles or images of the goddess Asherah. The Canaanites lost the land for these sins, and now Israel lost it for the same ones.

luxuriant tree. **11** And they burned incense there on all the high places, like the nations whom the LORD carried into exile from before them; and they did evil things to provoke the LORD to anger. **12** And they served the idols, of which the LORD had said to them, "You shall not do this thing." **13** And the LORD warned Israel and Judah by the hand of all the prophets ***and*** every seer, saying, "Turn back from your evil ways, and keep My commandments, My statutes, according to all the law that I commanded your fathers and that I sent to you by the hand of My servants the prophets." **14** And they did not listen, and they hardened their neck like the neck of their fathers, who did not believe in the LORD their God. **15** And they rejected His statutes and His covenant that He made with their fathers, and His testimonies with which He warned them; and they walked after vanity and became vain, and after the nations that ***were*** around them, concerning whom the LORD had commanded them not to do like them. **16** And they forsook all the commandments of the LORD their God, and they made for themselves a molten image, two calves; and they made an Asherah, and they bowed down to all the host of the heavens, and they served the Baal. **17** And they made their sons and their daughters pass through the fire, and they divined divinations and practiced omens, and they sold themselves to do the evil in the eyes of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger. **18** And the LORD was very angry with Israel, and He removed them from His face; none was left but the tribe of Judah alone. **19** Also Judah did not keep the commandments of the LORD their God, and they walked in the statutes of Israel which they had made. **20** And the LORD rejected all the offspring of Israel, and He afflicted them and gave them into the hand of plunderers, until He had thrown them from before Him. **21** For He tore Israel from the house of David, and they made Jeroboam (Yaravam) the son of Nebat (Nevat) king; and Jeroboam drove Israel away from after the LORD and caused them to sin a great sin. **22** And the sons of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam that he did; they did not turn aside from it, **23** until the LORD removed Israel from His face, as He had spoken by the hand of all His servants the prophets. And Israel went into exile from its ground to Assyria to this day.

The Peoples Settled in Samaria

24 And the king of Assyria brought ***people*** from Babylon (Bavel) and from Cuth (Kuta) and from Avva (Ava) and from Hamath (Chamat) and Sepharvaim (Sefarvayim), and he made ***them*** dwell in the cities of Samaria in place of the sons of Israel; and they possessed Samaria and dwelt in its cities. **25** And it was, at the beginning of their dwelling there, they did not fear the LORD; and the LORD sent the lions among them, and they were killing among them. **26** And they spoke to the king of Assyria, saying, "The nations that you carried into exile and made dwell in the cities of Samaria do not know the custom of the God of the land; and He has sent the lions among them, and look, they are killing them, because they do not know the custom of the God of the land." **27** And the king of Assyria commanded, saying, "Take there one of the priests whom you carried into exile from there, and let them go and dwell there, and let him teach them the custom of the God of the land." **28** And one of the priests whom they had carried into exile from Samaria came and dwelt in Bethel

17:11 1 Kgs 13:1; 2 Chr 28:25; Jer 44:17
17:12 Exod 20:3-5; Exod 34:14; Lev 26:1
17:13 1 Sam 9:9; Jer 18:11; Jer 35:15
17:14 Acts 7:51; Deut 31:27; 2 Chr 36:13
17:15 Heb 8:9; Deut 12:30,31; Deut 32:21,31
17:16 Acts 7:42; Heb 8:9; 1 Kgs 12:28
17:17 2 Kgs 21:6; 2 Kgs 16:3; Deut 18:10-12
17:18 1 Kgs 11:13,32,36; Deut 32:21-26; 1 Kgs 12:20
17:19 1 Kgs 14:22,23; 2 Kgs 16:3; 2 Chr 21:11,13
17:20 Rom 11:2; Jer 6:30; 2 Kgs 13:3,7
17:21 1 Kgs 11:11,31; 1 Kgs 14:16; 1 Kgs 14:8
17:22 2 Kgs 3:3; 2 Kgs 10:29,31; 2 Kgs 13:2,6,11
17:23 2 Kgs 17:6; 2 Kgs 17:13; 2 Kgs 17:18,20
17:24 Luke 9:52; 2 Kgs 17:30; 2 Kgs 19:13
17:25 2 Kgs 17:28,32,34,41; Josh 22:25; Jer 10:7
17:26 1 Sam 8:9; 1 Sam 10:25; Amos 8:14
17:27 Heb 8:11; Judg 17:13; 1 Kgs 12:31
17:28 1 Kgs 12:29-32; Isa 29:13; Matt 15:14

17:12 *You shall not do this thing* They knew. God told them plainly in the first two commandments (Exod 20:3-5).
17:13 *Turn back from your evil ways* The key verse of the whole book. A seer is an older name for a prophet (1 Sam 9:9). Elijah, Elisha, Micaiah, Jonah, Amos, Hosea and many unnamed: God warned for two hundred years before He judged.
17:14 *they hardened their neck like the neck of their fathers, who did not believe in the LORD their God* An ox that will not bend to the yoke (Exod 32:9). Unbelief always comes before disobedience (Heb 3:19).
17:15 *they walked after vanity and became vain* Vanity is emptiness, something with no weight. We become like what we worship (Ps 115:8). If we chase emptiness, we become empty. The covenant at Sinai was like a marriage, and they walked out on it.
17:16 *all the host of the heavens* The sun, moon and stars, worshiped as gods.
17:17 *they divined divinations and practiced omens* Divination tries to learn the future or the gods' will through signs, and omens were read from things like birds or the insides of animals. God forbade all of it (Deut 18:10-12). "Sold themselves" means gave themselves over like slaves (1 Kgs 21:25; Rom 6:16).
17:18 *He removed them from His face* God's anger is not a man's temper but His settled, holy opposition to evil. To be removed from His face is to be sent from His presence and land. Judah here includes Benjamin and others who had moved south.
17:19 *also Judah did not keep the commandments of the LORD their God* Judah watched Israel fall and walked the same road. Its turn came in 586 B.C.
17:20 *until He had thrown them from before Him* It did not happen at once. For years God let enemies afflict them, hoping they would turn. Was God finished with Israel? No. The same prophets foretold a day when God would gather all Israel as one nation under one King (Ezek 37:15-28; Hos 3:4-5), and "all Israel will be saved" (Rom 11:26).
17:21 *Jeroboam drove Israel away from after the LORD and caused them to sin a great sin* God split the kingdom after Solomon's sin (1 Kgs 11:11, 31). One man's choice to protect his throne (1 Kgs 12:26-28) set the course for nineteen kings and two hundred years. Not one king, not even Jehu, removed the calves.
17:23 *as He had spoken by the hand of all His servants the prophets* Ahijah warned Jeroboam's wife of this (1 Kgs 14:15-16). God is patient, but His patience has a purpose. He waits so we will turn (1 Cor 10:11). The same God who judges sin judged our sin at the cross, and the way back is still open.
17:24 *the king of Assyria brought people from Babylon and from Cuth* Assyria moved conquered peoples across the empire so none would stay home long enough to rebel. More came later (Ezra 4:2, 10). Samaria here is the whole region.
17:25 *the LORD sent the lions among them* The emptied land filled with wild animals, as the Law warned (Lev 26:22; Exod 23:29). But the writer says the LORD sent them. The land still belonged to Him.
17:26 *the custom of the God of the land* They thought every land had its own god, and they saw the LORD as just another local god.
17:28 *he was teaching them how they should fear the LORD* He settled at Bethel, home of Jeroboam's calf, likely a priest of the north's mixed religion. He taught them to add the LORD to their gods, with no sign he taught that the LORD is the only God.

(Bet-El), and he was teaching them how they should fear the LORD. **29** And they were making, nation ***by*** nation, its own gods, and they put ***them*** in the house of the high places that the Samaritans had made, nation ***by*** nation in their cities in which they ***were*** dwelling. **30** And the men of Babylon made Succoth-benoth, and the men of Cuth made Nergal, and the men of Hamath made Ashima, **31** and the Avvites (Avim) made Nibhaz and Tartak; and the Sepharvites ***were*** burning their sons in the fire to Adrammelech and Anammelech, the gods of Sepharvaim. **32** And they were fearing the LORD, and they appointed for themselves from among all of them priests of high places, and they were making ***offerings*** for them in the house of the high places. **33** The LORD they were fearing, and their own gods they were serving, according to the custom of the nations from which they had carried them into exile. **34** To this day they are doing according to the former customs; they are not fearing the LORD, and they are not doing according to their statutes and according to their judgment and according to the law and according to the commandment which the LORD commanded the sons of Jacob (Ya'aqov), whose name He made Israel. **35** And the LORD made a covenant with them and commanded them, saying, "You shall not fear other gods, and you shall not bow down to them, and you shall not serve them, and you shall not sacrifice to them; **36** but the LORD, who brought you up from the land of Egypt with great power and with an outstretched arm, Him you shall fear, and to Him you shall bow down, and to Him you shall sacrifice. **37** And the statutes and the judgments and the law and the commandment which He wrote for you, you shall be careful to do all the days; and you shall not fear other gods. **38** And the covenant that I made with you, you shall not forget; and you shall not fear other gods. **39** But the LORD your God you shall fear, and He will deliver you from the hand of all your enemies." **40** And they did not listen, but according to their former custom they ***were*** doing. **41** And these nations were fearing the LORD, and their idols they were serving; also their sons and the sons of their sons, as their fathers did, they are doing to this day.

2 KINGS 18

Hezekiah King of Judah

1 And it was, in the third year of Hoshea the son of Elah (Ela), the king of Israel (Yisra'el), Hezekiah (Chizqiya) the son of Ahaz (Achaz), the king of Judah (Yehuda), became king. **2** He was a son of twenty-five years when he became king, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). And the name of his mother ***was*** Abi (Avi) the daughter of Zechariah (Zekharya). **3** And he did the right in the eyes of the LORD, according to all that David his father had done. **4** He removed the high places and broke the pillars and cut down the Asherah, and he crushed to pieces the bronze serpent that Moses (Moshe) had made, for until those days the sons of Israel were burning incense to it; and he called it Nehushtan. **5** In the LORD, the God of Israel, he trusted; and after him there was none like him among all the kings of Judah, and ***among*** those who were before him. **6** And he clung to the LORD; he did not turn aside from after Him, and he kept His commandments which the LORD had commanded Moses. **7** And the LORD was with him; in all where he

17:29 Matt 10:5; Luke 9:52; John 4:9
17:31 2 Kgs 17:24; 2 Kgs 17:17; Ezra 4:9
17:32 1 Kgs 12:31; 2 Kgs 17:29; 1 Kgs 13:33
17:33 2 Kgs 17:41; 1 Kgs 18:21; Matt 6:24
17:34 Gen 32:28; Gen 35:10; 2 Kgs 17:25,27,28,33
17:35 Heb 8:8; Heb 8:9; Heb 8:10
17:36 Matt 10:28; John 4:9; Exod 6:6
17:37 Lev 19:37; Deut 4:44,45; Deut 5:31-33
17:38 Deut 4:23; Deut 6:12; Deut 8:14-18
17:39 Luke 1:71; 2 Kgs 17:36; 1 Sam 12:24
17:40 Jer 13:23; 2 Kgs 17:8,12,34; Deut 4:28
17:41 Zeph 1:5; Matt 6:24; 2 Kgs 17:32,33
18:1 Matt 1:9; Matt 1:10; 2 Kgs 18:9
18:2 2 Chr 29:1
18:3 2 Kgs 20:3; Exod 15:26; Deut 6:18
18:4 John 3:14; 2 Chr 31:1; Num 21:8,9
18:5 2 Kgs 19:10; 2 Kgs 23:25; 2 Chr 32:7,8
18:6 Deut 10:20; Josh 23:8; John 14:15,21
18:7 1 Sam 18:14; 2 Kgs 16:7; Gen 39:2,3

17:29 *the Samaritans* The first time the word appears in the Bible, here meaning the people of the region of Samaria who built those shrines.
17:31 *the Sepharvites were burning their sons in the fire* Little is known of some of these gods. The settlers brought the very sin that helped bring Israel's exile.
17:33 *The LORD they were fearing, and their own gods they were serving* Mixing the worship of the true God with other religions. It may look tolerant. God calls it unfaithfulness. "No one is able to serve two masters" (Matt 6:24). It is a danger for us when we try to add Jesus to a life still run by money, pleasure or other spiritual ideas.
17:36 *Him you shall fear* Four times in five verses: you shall not fear other gods. With the command came a promise of deliverance (17:39). The LORD does not share His people, because He alone is God, and anything else we worship will fail us.
17:41 *their idols they were serving* The origin of the Samaritans of the New Testament. They opposed the returned Jews (Ezra 4:1-5; Neh 4:1-2), later built a temple on Mount Gerizim, and accepted only the books of Moses. "Jews do not associate with Samaritans" (John 4:9). Jesus told the Samaritan woman, "You worship what you do not know" (John 4:22). Yet her town confessed, "this is truly the Savior of the world" (John 4:42). Jesus made a Samaritan the hero of a parable (Luke 10:30-37), and Philip preached Christ in Samaria (Acts 8:5-8). The God who judged Samaria's sin did not stop loving its people.
18:1 *Hezekiah the son of Ahaz, the king of Judah, became king* About 715 to 686 B.C. One of the hardest dates in Kings. If his fourteenth year was 701 B.C. (18:13), he reigned alone from about 715, but Hoshea's third year was about 729 B.C. Many think he shared the throne with Ahaz from about 729 and some numbers count from that start. Scripture does not give enough to be certain, and none of it changes what the text teaches.
18:3 *according to all that David his father had done* The highest praise for a king of Judah, given this fully only to Asa (1 Kgs 15:11), Hezekiah and Josiah (22:2). The son of the worst king became one of the best.
18:4 *he removed the high places* The first king of Judah to do it, even those used for the LORD, so all worship went to the place God chose (Deut 12:5).
18:4 *he crushed to pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made* More than seven hundred years old (Num 21:8-9). They turned God's means of healing into an idol. Nehushtan sounds like the Hebrew for bronze and serpent: just a piece of bronze. Jesus said it pictured Himself: "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up" (John 3:14). Good things God has used, a building, a tradition, a Bible on a shelf, can become idols if we worship them in place of the God they point to.
18:5 *in the LORD, the God of Israel, he trusted* Trust ties chapters 18 and 19 together (18:19). In trust Hezekiah was unmatched. Josiah is unmatched in turning to the LORD by the law (23:25). Each was outstanding in his own way.
18:6 *he clung to the LORD* The word for a husband holding fast to his wife (Gen 2:24).
18:7 *he rebelled against the king of Assyria and did not serve him* His father made Judah Assyria's servant (16:7), and Hezekiah broke that tie. He also opened and cleansed the temple and held a great Passover, inviting even the northern tribes (2 Chr 29:3; 30:1-27).

went out, he prospered. And he rebelled against the king of Assyria (Ashur) and did not serve him. **8** He struck down the Philistines as far as Gaza (Aza) and its territories, from a tower of watchmen to a city of fortification. **9** And it was, in the fourth year of King Hezekiah (Chizqiyahu), that ***was*** the seventh year of Hoshea the son of Elah, the king of Israel, Shalmaneser the king of Assyria came up against Samaria (Shomron) and besieged it. **10** And they captured it at the end of three years; in the sixth year of Hezekiah, that ***was*** the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Israel, Samaria was captured. **11** And the king of Assyria carried Israel into exile to Assyria, and he led them into Halah (Chalach) and on the Habor (Chavor), the river of Gozan, and ***into*** the cities of Media (Maday), **12** because they had not listened to the voice of the LORD their God, and they had transgressed His covenant, all that Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded; and they did not listen, and they did not do ***it***.

Sennacherib Invades Judah

13 And in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib (Sancheriv) the king of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and seized them. **14** And Hezekiah the king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria, to Lachish (Lakhish), saying, "I have sinned; turn back from me. That which you put on me I will bear." And the king of Assyria imposed on Hezekiah the king of Judah approximately 22,500 pounds (three hundred talents) of silver and approximately 2,250 pounds (thirty talents) of gold. **15** And Hezekiah gave all the silver that was found ***in*** the house of the LORD and in the treasuries of the house of the king. **16** At that time Hezekiah cut off the doors of the temple of the LORD and the doorposts which Hezekiah the king of Judah had overlaid, and he gave them to the king of Assyria.

The Rabshakeh's Taunts

17 And the king of Assyria sent the Tartan and the Rab-saris and the Rabshakeh from Lachish to King Hezekiah with a heavy army ***to*** Jerusalem. And they went up and came ***to*** Jerusalem; and they went up and came and stood by the conduit of the upper pool, which ***is*** on the highway of the field of the launderer. **18** And they called to the king; and ***there*** went out to them Eliakim (Elyaqim) the son of Hilkiah (Chilqiyahu), who ***was*** over the house, and Shebna (Shevna) the scribe, and Joah (Yo'ach) the son of Asaph (Asaf), the recorder. **19** And the Rabshakeh said to them, "Say, please, to Hezekiah, 'Thus says the great king, the king of Assyria: What ***is*** this trust in which you trust? **20** You have said, only a word of lips, "Counsel and strength ***are*** for the war." Now on whom do you rely, that you have rebelled against me? **21** Now look, you rely for yourself on the staff of this crushed reed, on Egypt (Mitsrayim), on which a man will lean, and it will go into his palm and pierce it. So ***is*** Pharaoh the king of Egypt to all who rely on him. **22** And if you say to me, "We trust in the LORD our God," is it not He whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah has removed, and he has said to Judah and to Jerusalem, "Before this altar you shall bow down in Jerusalem"? **23** And now, make a wager, please, with my master the king of Assyria, and I will give you two thousand horses, if you are able to put riders on them for yourself. **24** And how will you turn back the face of one governor of the least of the servants of my master, and you rely for yourself on Egypt for chariotry and for horsemen? **25** Now, have I come up without the LORD against this place to destroy it? The LORD said to me, "Go up against this land and destroy it."'" **26** And Eliakim the son of Hilkiah and Shebna and Joah said to the Rabshakeh, "Speak, please, to your servants ***in*** Aramaic, for we understand; and do not speak with us ***in*** Judean in the ears of the people who ***are*** on the wall." **27** And the Rabshakeh said to them, "To your master and to

18:8 Isa 14:29; 2 Kgs 17:9; 2 Chr 28:18
18:9 Matt 1:9; Hos 10:14; 2 Kgs 18:1
18:10 Matt 1:9; Hos 13:16; Amos 3:11-15
18:11 1 Chr 5:26; 2 Kgs 17:6; Isa 37:12
18:12 Heb 3:5; 2 Kgs 17:7-23; Deut 8:20
18:13 Matt 1:9; Isa 36:1-22; 2 Chr 32:1-23
18:14 Matt 1:9; 2 Kgs 18:7; 1 Kgs 20:4
18:15 Matt 1:9; 2 Kgs 16:8; 2 Kgs 12:18
18:16 Matt 1:9; 1 Kgs 6:31-35; 2 Chr 29:3
18:17 Matt 1:9; Isa 20:1; 2 Kgs 20:20
18:18 2 Kgs 19:2; Isa 36:3,22; Isa 37:2
18:19 Matt 1:9; Isa 36:4; 2 Chr 32:10
18:20 Prov 21:30,31
18:21 Luke 14:31; Ezek 29:6,7; Isa 30:2,7
18:22 Luke 14:31; 2 Chr 31:1; Dan 3:15
18:23 1 Sam 17:42,44; 1 Kgs 20:10,18; Neh 4:2-5
18:24 Isa 10:8; Dan 2:37,38; Dan 4:22,37
18:25 2 Kgs 19:6,22-37; 1 Kgs 13:18; 2 Chr 35:21
18:26 Ezra 4:7; Dan 2:4; Isa 36:11,12
18:27 2 Kgs 6:25; Deut 28:53-57; Ps 73:8

18:10 *in the sixth year of Hezekiah* The writer retells Samaria's fall from Judah's side to set the scene. The empire that swallowed Israel was next door, and Judah had just rebelled.

18:12 *because they had not listened to the voice of the LORD their God* Israel fell for not listening. Would Judah listen and trust?

18:13 *in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib the king of Assyria came up* In 701 B.C. On a clay prism Sennacherib boasted that he took many walled towns and shut Hezekiah up in Jerusalem like a bird in a cage, and received heavy tribute. He never claims to have taken Jerusalem, and he says nothing of how the campaign ended for his army (19:35). He had the siege of Lachish carved on his palace walls at Nineveh.

18:14 *I have sinned; turn back from me* A moment of fear. He emptied the treasuries and stripped the gold from the temple doors (18:16), about 22,500 pounds of silver and 2,250 pounds of gold. The gold did not buy peace. Compromise with sin does not make it go away. It only makes it hungrier.

18:17 *the Tartan and the Rab-saris and the Rabshakeh* Titles, not names: the commander in chief, a chief court officer, and a high official, perhaps chief cupbearer, who did the talking.

18:17 *by the conduit of the upper pool* The very spot where Isaiah told Ahaz to trust the LORD (Isa 7:3). Ahaz called Assyria in, and now Assyria stood there demanding the city. God sometimes brings us back to the place of our failures to give us a second chance to trust Him.

18:19 *What is this trust in which you trust* A master class in fear, attacking every place Judah might lean.

18:21 *the staff of this crushed reed, on Egypt* A cracked reed breaks and stabs the hand that leans on it. On this point he was right, as Isaiah said (Isa 30:1-3; 31:1).

18:22 *whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah has removed* Clever and twisted. He made Hezekiah's faithfulness look like an insult to God, for a pagan could not imagine a god who wanted fewer altars. Satan still takes our obedience and tries to make us doubt it.

18:23 *I will give you two thousand horses* Pure mockery: Judah could not even find two thousand riders.

18:25 *have I come up without the LORD against this place to destroy it* A half-truth. Assyria was "the rod of My anger" (Isa 10:5), but God would punish its arrogance (Isa 10:12). The best answer to the enemy's half-truths is the whole truth of God's Word.

18:26 *Speak, please, to your servants in Aramaic* The language of diplomacy, known to educated officials. "Judean" is Hebrew, the language of the common people. He refused, aiming to turn the people against their king.

you has my master sent me to speak these words? ***Is it*** not to the men who sit on the wall, to eat their excrement and to drink the water of their feet with you?" **28** And the Rabshakeh stood and called out with a great voice ***in*** Judean, and he spoke and said, "Hear the word of the great king, the king of Assyria. **29** Thus says the king: 'Do not let Hezekiah deceive you, for he will not be able to deliver you from his hand. **30** And do not let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD, saying, "The LORD will certainly deliver us, and this city will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria." **31** Do not listen to Hezekiah, for thus says the king of Assyria: "Make a blessing with me and come out to me, and eat each man ***from*** his vine and each man ***from*** his fig tree, and drink each man the waters of his cistern, **32** until I come and take you to a land like your land, a land of grain and new wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of olive trees of oil and honey; and live, and you will not die." And do not listen to Hezekiah, for he misleads you, saying, "The LORD will deliver us." **33** Have the gods of the nations really delivered, each one his land, from the hand of the king of Assyria? **34** Where ***are*** the gods of Hamath (Chamat) and Arpad? Where ***are*** the gods of Sepharvaim (Sefarvayim), Hena, and Ivvah (Ivva), that they have delivered Samaria from my hand? **35** Who among all the gods of the lands ***are those*** who have delivered their land from my hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem from my hand?'" **36** And the people kept silent and did not answer him a word, for it ***was*** the command of the king, saying, "Do not answer him." **37** And Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who ***was*** over the house, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder, came to Hezekiah ***with*** clothes torn, and they told him the words of the Rabshakeh.

2 KINGS 19

Hezekiah Seeks Isaiah

1 And it was, when King Hezekiah (Chizqiyahu) heard, and he tore his clothes and covered himself with sackcloth, and he went ***into*** the house of the LORD. **2** And he sent Eliakim (Elyaqim), who ***was*** over the house, and Shebna (Shevna) the scribe, and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah (Yeshayahu) the prophet, the son of Amoz (Amots). **3** And they said to him, "Thus says Hezekiah: 'A day of distress and rebuke and contempt ***is*** this day, for children have come to ***the*** birth opening, and ***there is*** no strength to give birth. **4** Perhaps the LORD your God will hear all the words of the Rabshakeh, whom his master the king of Assyria (Ashur) has sent to taunt the living God, and will rebuke ***him*** for the words which the LORD your God has heard. And you shall lift up a prayer for the remnant that is found.'" **5** And the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah. **6** And Isaiah said to them, "Thus you shall say to your master: 'Thus says the LORD: "Do not be afraid of the words which you have heard, ***with*** which the young men of the king of Assyria have blasphemed Me. **7** Look, I ***am*** about to put a spirit in him, and he will hear a report and return to his land; and I will make him fall by the sword in his land."'"

Sennacherib's Letter

8 And the Rabshakeh returned and found the king of Assyria fighting against Libnah (Livna), for he had heard that he had departed from Lachish (Lakhish). **9** And he heard concerning Tirhakah (Tirhaqa) the king of Cush (Kush), saying, "Look, he has come out to fight with you." And he again sent messengers to Hezekiah, saying, **10** "Thus you shall say to Hezekiah the king of Judah (Yehuda), saying, 'Do not let your God, in whom you ***are*** trusting, deceive you, saying, "Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria." **11** Look, you have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all the lands, devoting them to destruction; and will you be delivered? **12** Did the gods of the nations deliver them, whom my fathers destroyed: Gozan and Haran (Charan) and Rezeph (Retsef) and the sons of Eden who ***were*** in Telassar (Telasar)? **13** Where ***is*** the king of Hamath (Chamat), and the king of Arpad, and the king of the city of Sepharvaim (Sefarvayim), Hena, and Ivvah (Ivva)?'"

18:28 2 Chr 32:18; Isa 36:13-18; 2 Kgs 18:19
18:29 Ps 73:8,9; 2 Chr 32:11,15; Dan 3:15-17
18:30 2 Kgs 19:10,22; Ps 4:2; Ps 11:1
18:31 1 Kgs 4:20,25; Gen 32:20; Gen 33:11
18:32 Deut 8:7-9; Exod 3:8; Deut 11:12
18:33 Isa 10:10; 2 Kgs 19:12,13,17,18; 2 Chr 32:14-17,19
18:34 Num 13:21; 2 Sam 8:9; Jer 49:23
18:35 Dan 3:15; 2 Kgs 19:17; Exod 5:2
18:36 Ps 38:13,14; Ps 39:1; Prov 9:7
18:37 2 Kgs 5:7; 2 Kgs 22:11,19; Gen 37:29,34
19:1 2 Kgs 18:37; 1 Kgs 21:27,29; Isa 37:1-7
19:2 Matt 4:14; Luke 3:4; Isa 1:1
19:3 2 Kgs 18:29; Ps 39:11; Ps 123:3,4
19:4 Rom 9:27; Heb 12:22; Rev 7:2
19:6 2 Kgs 18:17,35; Isa 37:6,7-38; 2 Kgs 6:16
19:7 2 Kgs 7:6; 2 Kgs 19:35-37; Job 4:9
19:8 2 Kgs 18:14; Josh 10:29; 2 Kgs 8:22
19:9 1 Sam 23:27; Isa 37:9; 2 Kgs 18:17
19:10 2 Kgs 18:5,29,30; 2 Chr 32:15-19; Isa 37:10-14
19:11 2 Kgs 19:17,18; 2 Kgs 17:5-11; 2 Chr 32:13,14
19:12 Acts 7:4; 2 Kgs 17:6; Gen 11:31
19:13 2 Kgs 18:34; 2 Kgs 17:24; Num 13:21

18:29 *Thus says the king* Mocking the prophets' "Thus says the LORD."
18:32 *until I come and take you to a land like your land* Surrender meant exile, made to sound pleasant. Temptation promises a good life and hides the chains (Matt 4:8-9). The world's offers always come with a hidden price.
18:35 *that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem from my hand* His great mistake was putting the LORD with the idols of the nations. Samaria fell because the LORD gave it up for its sin (17:18), not because Assyria was stronger than God.
18:36 *the people kept silent and did not answer him a word* There is no point arguing with someone trying to frighten you. Some battles are won by silence and prayer. Torn clothes (18:37) showed grief and distress.
19:1 *he tore his clothes and covered himself with sackcloth* Rough cloth worn in grief and repentance. Then he went straight into the house of the LORD.
19:2 *Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz* His first appearance in Kings, after nearly forty years of preaching in Jerusalem since King Uzziah died (Isa 6:1).
19:3 *children have come to the birth opening, and there is no strength to give birth* A mother in labor too weak to deliver. Judah had reached the crisis with no strength left.
19:4 *to taunt the living God* Hezekiah saw the real issue. It was an insult to the living God, and the LORD would answer for His own name. A remnant is what is left after disaster. With the rest of Judah taken, only Jerusalem remained. When we are weakest, go to God and ask others to pray.
19:6 *Do not be afraid of the words which you have heard* Loud, but only words. "Young men" can mean servants or boys. To God they were errand boys.
19:7 *I will make him fall by the sword in his land* God would change the king's mind, send him home and bring him down there. All three happened (19:9, 36-37).
19:9 *Tirhakah the king of Cush* Cush was the land south of Egypt, and its kings ruled Egypt then. The report God promised had begun.
19:10 *Do not let your God, in whom you are trusting, deceive you* A step beyond the Rabshakeh. Now God Himself was called a liar.

Hezekiah's Prayer

14 And Hezekiah took the letters from the hand of the messengers and read them; and he went up ***to*** the house of the LORD, and Hezekiah spread it out before the LORD. **15** And Hezekiah prayed before the LORD and said, "O LORD, the God of Israel (Yisra'el), who sits ***on*** the cherubim, You ***are*** He, the God, You alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; You made the heavens and the earth. **16** Incline, O LORD, Your ear and hear; open, O LORD, Your eyes and see; and hear the words of Sennacherib (Sancheriv), ***with*** which he has sent him to taunt the living God. **17** Truly, O LORD, the kings of Assyria have laid waste the nations and their land, **18** and they have put their gods into the fire, for they ***were*** not gods, but the work of the hands of man, wood and stone; and they have destroyed them. **19** And now, O LORD our God, save us, please, from his hand, so that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You, O LORD, ***are*** God, You alone."

Isaiah's Answer

20 And Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: 'What you have prayed to Me concerning Sennacherib the king of Assyria I have heard.' **21** This ***is*** the word which the LORD has spoken concerning him: 'She has despised you, she has mocked you, the virgin daughter of Zion (Tsiyon); behind you she has shaken ***her*** head, the daughter of Jerusalem. **22** Whom have you taunted and blasphemed? And against whom have you raised a voice, and lifted up your eyes on high? Against the Holy One of Israel! **23** By the hand of your messengers you have taunted the Lord, and you have said, "With the abundance of my chariots I have gone up ***to*** the height of ***the*** mountains, ***to*** the remotest parts of Lebanon (Levanon); and I will cut down the tallness of its cedars, the choice of its cypresses; and I will enter the lodging place of its farthest end, the forest of its fruitful land. **24** I have dug and drunk foreign waters, and I will dry up with the sole of my feet all the streams of Egypt (Matsor)." **25** Have you not heard? From long ago I did it, from days of antiquity I formed it; now I have brought it about, and you are to make fortified cities crash ***into*** ruined heaps. **26** And their inhabitants ***were*** short of hand; they were dismayed and they were ashamed; they were the vegetation of the field and the greenery of grass, the grass of the roofs, and blight before standing grain. **27** And your sitting down and your going out and your coming in I know, and your raging against Me. **28** Because your raging against Me and your arrogance has come up into My ears, I will put My hook in your nose and My bridle in your lips, and I will turn you back by the way by which you came. **29** And this ***will be*** the sign for you: eating this year aftergrowth, and in the second year self-seeded growth, and in the third year sow and reap, and plant vineyards and eat their fruit. **30** And the escaped remnant of the house of Judah that remains will again ***take*** root downward and make fruit upward. **31** For from Jerusalem a remnant will go out, and an escaped remnant from Mount Zion. The zeal of the LORD of armies will do this. **32** Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the king of Assyria: He will not come into this city, and he will not shoot an arrow there, and he will not come before it ***with*** a shield, and he will not pour out a siege mound against it. **33** By the way by which he came, by it he will return, and into this city he will not come, declares the LORD. **34** And I will defend this city to save it, for My own sake and for the sake of David My servant.'"

19:14 Isa 37:14; 1 Kgs 8:28-30; Ezra 9:5
19:15 Exod 25:22; 2 Kgs 5:15; 1 Kgs 18:39
19:16 Ps 31:2; Isa 37:17; 2 Chr 6:40
19:17 Matt 14:33; Acts 4:27; Job 9:2
19:18 Acts 17:29; Isa 44:9-20; Jer 10:3-9,14-16
19:19 1 Kgs 8:43; Ps 83:18; Exod 9:15,16
19:20 John 11:42; 2 Kgs 20:5; 2 Sam 15:31
19:21 Matt 27:39; Lam 2:13; Jer 14:17
19:22 Isa 5:24; Ps 71:22; Isa 30:11,12,15
19:23 2 Kgs 18:17; Ps 20:7; 2 Chr 32:17
19:24 Exod 15:9; 2 Sam 17:13; 1 Kgs 20:10
19:25 Isa 45:7; Isa 37:26,27; Ps 33:11
19:26 1 Pet 1:24; Num 11:23; Num 14:9
19:27 Ps 139:1-11; Jer 23:23,24; Deut 28:6,19
19:28 John 15:18; John 15:23; John 15:24
19:29 2 Kgs 20:8,9; Luke 2:12; Exod 3:12
19:30 2 Chr 32:22,23; 2 Kgs 19:4; Isa 1:9
19:31 John 2:17; Rom 9:27; Rom 11:5
19:32 Isa 8:7-10; 2 Sam 20:15; Isa 10:24,25,28-32
19:33 2 Kgs 19:28,36
19:34 2 Kgs 20:6; Isa 31:5; 1 Kgs 11:12,13

19:14 *Hezekiah spread it out before the LORD* He did not argue or panic. He laid the letter open before God.
19:15 *who sits on the cherubim* The golden angel figures on the lid of the ark, where God's presence rested (Exod 25:22). Before asking anything, Hezekiah reminded himself who God is. Sennacherib ruled many nations. The LORD made the heavens.
19:18 *for they were not gods, but the work of the hands of man, wood and stone* He was honest. Assyria had destroyed nations, and of course their gods could not save. They were not real.
19:19 *so that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You, O LORD, are God, You alone* Above all he wanted God's name known, as Jesus taught us to pray first, "let Your name be sanctified" (Matt 6:9). When trouble comes in writing, a diagnosis, a bill, a legal letter, spread it before the LORD, remember who He is, tell Him the facts, and ask Him to act for His glory.
19:21 *the virgin daughter of Zion* Zion is the hill of Jerusalem, and the daughter of Zion is the city pictured as a young woman, shaking her head at the fleeing king.
19:22 *the Holy One of Israel* Isaiah's favorite name for God. To blaspheme is to speak with contempt against God.
19:25 *From long ago I did it* The heart of God's answer. Sennacherib thought he conquered by his own strength. God planned it, and Assyria was only the axe in His hand (Isa 10:15).
19:27 *your sitting down and your going out and your coming in I know* Nothing about him was hidden.
19:28 *I will put My hook in your nose* Assyria led captives with hooks or rings through the nose or lips. God would lead its king home like an animal.
19:29 *in the third year sow and reap* With the fields ruined, they would eat what grew on its own for two years, and then life would return to normal.
19:30 *will again take root downward and make fruit upward* Judah was a stump, but the roots were alive.
19:31 *the zeal of the LORD of armies will do this* The same promise Isaiah gave of the Child on David's throne (Isa 9:7). God's burning love for His people and His name guarantees both the rescue and the kingdom of His Son.
19:32 *he will not pour out a siege mound against it* A ramp of earth against the wall, as at Lachish. At Jerusalem there would be no siege at all, not even one arrow.
19:34 *for My own sake and for the sake of David My servant* God's faithfulness to David (2 Sam 7:16) keeps Judah alive again and again in Kings.

The Angel of the LORD Strikes Assyria

35 And it was in that night, and the angel of the LORD went out and struck down in the camp of Assyria one hundred and eighty-five thousand; and they rose early in the morning, and look, all of them ***were*** dead corpses. **36** And Sennacherib the king of Assyria departed and went and returned, and he dwelt in Nineveh (Ninve). **37** And it was, he ***was*** bowing down ***in*** the house of Nisroch his god, and Adrammelech (Adrammelekh) and Sharezer (Sharetser) his sons struck him down with the sword; and they escaped ***to*** the land of Ararat. And Esarhaddon (Esar-Chadon) his son reigned in his place.

2 KINGS 20

Hezekiah's Illness and Recovery

1 In those days Hezekiah (Chizqiyahu) became sick to ***the point of*** dying. And Isaiah (Yeshayahu) the son of Amoz (Amots), the prophet, came to him and said to him, "Thus says the LORD: 'Command your house, for you ***are*** dying, and you will not live.'" **2** And he turned his face to the wall and prayed to the LORD, saying, **3** "Please, O LORD, remember, please, how I have walked before You in faithfulness and with a complete heart, and I have done what ***is*** good in Your eyes." And Hezekiah wept ***with*** a great weeping. **4** And it was, Isaiah had not ***yet*** gone out ***of*** the middle court, and the word of the LORD came to him, saying, **5** "Return, and you shall say to Hezekiah the ruler of My people, 'Thus says the LORD, the God of David your father: "I have heard your prayer; I have seen your tears. Look, I ***am*** healing you. On the third day you will go up ***to*** the house of the LORD. **6** And I will add to your days fifteen years, and from the hand of the king of Assyria (Ashur) I will deliver you and this city; and I will defend this city for My own sake and for the sake of David My servant."'" **7** And Isaiah said, "Take a cake of figs." And they took ***it*** and put ***it*** on the boil, and he lived. **8** And Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "What ***will be*** the sign that the LORD will heal me, and ***that*** I will go up on the third day ***to*** the house of the LORD?" **9** And Isaiah said, "This ***will be*** the sign for you from the LORD, that the LORD will do the thing which He has spoken: the shadow has gone ***forward*** ten steps; or shall it return ten steps?" **10** And Hezekiah said, "It is easy for the shadow to stretch out ten steps; no, but let the shadow return backward ten steps." **11** And Isaiah the prophet called to the LORD, and He brought the shadow back on the steps by which it had gone down on the steps of Ahaz (Achaz), backward ten steps.

The Envoys from Babylon

12 At that time Merodach-baladan (Berodakh-Baladan) the son of Baladan, the king of Babylon (Bavel), sent letters and a gift to Hezekiah, for he had heard that Hezekiah had been sick. **13** And Hezekiah listened to them, and he showed them all the house of his treasure, the silver and the gold and the spices and the good oil, and the house of his weapons, and all that was found in his storehouses. There was not a thing which Hezekiah did not show them in his house and in all his

19:35 Acts 12:23; 1 Thess 5:2; Exod 12:29
19:36 Jonah 1:2; 2 Kgs 19:7,28,33; Gen 10:11,12
19:37 Gen 8:4; Ezra 4:2; 2 Kgs 19:7
20:1 2 Sam 17:23; 2 Chr 32:24-26; Isa 38:1-20
20:2 Ps 50:15; 1 Kgs 8:30; Isa 38:2,3
20:3 Neh 5:19; Neh 13:14,22,31; 2 Kgs 18:3-6
20:4 2 Kgs 22:14; 1 Kgs 7:8
20:5 Matt 22:32; Ps 39:12; 2 Kgs 19:20
20:6 2 Kgs 19:34; Ps 116:15; Acts 27:24
20:7 Isa 38:21; 2 Kgs 2:20-22; 2 Kgs 4:41
20:8 2 Kgs 20:5; 2 Kgs 19:29; Judg 6:17,37-40
20:9 Isa 38:7,8; Matt 16:1-4; Mark 8:11,12
20:10 2 Kgs 2:10; 2 Kgs 3:18; Isa 49:6
20:11 Josh 10:12-14; Isa 38:8; Exod 14:15
20:12 Isa 39:1-8; 2 Chr 32:31; Gen 10:10
20:13 Isa 39:2; 1 Kgs 10:2,10,15,25; 2 Chr 32:25,26

19:35 *the angel of the LORD went out and struck down in the camp of Assyria one hundred and eighty-five thousand* Scripture does not say how. Some suggest a plague, and God can use natural means, but the text says the angel did it in one night. I take it as written, number and all, though some read "thousand" as a military unit. In some places the angel of the LORD speaks as the LORD Himself (Gen 22:11-12; Exod 3:2-6), and many believe those were the Son of God before His birth. Here he is God's messenger of judgment, as in Egypt (Exod 12:23) and David's day (2 Sam 24:16). Hezekiah did not fight. He prayed, and God fought for him (Ps 20:7). Sennacherib's prism says nothing about this night.
19:37 *Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons struck him down with the sword* Assyrian records also tell of this murder, about 681 B.C., some twenty years later. It came true as God said (19:7), in the house of the god who could not save him. Hezekiah went into the house of his God and was saved. Sennacherib went into the house of his god and was killed.
20:1 *in those days Hezekiah became sick to the point of dying* The promise of verse 6 suggests this came before or during Sennacherib's attack, about 701 B.C. The writer tells it after chapter 19 to keep that story together. To "command your house" means to give final instructions and put your affairs in order.
20:2 *he turned his face to the wall and prayed to the LORD* Away from everyone, alone with God.
20:3 *how I have walked before You in faithfulness and with a complete heart* Not a claim to be sinless or to earn healing, but a plea for God to remember a faithful life. He was only about thirty-nine. Before Christ rose, believers did not see the life to come as clearly as we do (2 Tim 1:10), and he may have had no son yet for the throne.
20:4 *Isaiah had not yet gone out of the middle court* God answered before the prophet left the palace grounds. Sometimes His answers come slowly, sometimes in minutes.
20:5 *I have heard your prayer; I have seen your tears* God remembered His promise as "the God of David your father." Not one tear is lost (Ps 56:8).
20:6 *I will add to your days fifteen years* Did prayer change God's mind? His first word was true: from a human view the sickness was fatal. His second showed what He planned to do in answer to prayer. Scripture teaches that God is sovereign and that prayer truly matters (James 5:16). Teachers explain how these fit in different ways, but every one of them would tell you to pray.
20:7 *Take a cake of figs* Pressed figs were used as a poultice, laid warm on a sore to draw out infection. A boil is an infected sore. God is the healer whether by miracle or medicine. There is no conflict between praying and seeing a doctor (1 Tim 5:23; Col 4:14).
20:8 *What will be the sign* Not unbelief. God had given signs before (19:29), unlike Ahaz, who refused one (Isa 7:10-12).
20:9 *ten steps* The "steps of Ahaz" were likely a stairway that told the time by the moving shadow, like a sundial.
20:11 *He brought the shadow back* Scripture does not say how, and I will not guess. The God who stood the sun still for Joshua (Josh 10:12-14) can do what He pleases with a shadow. Babylon's envoys asked about this sign (2 Chr 32:31).
20:12 *Merodach-baladan the son of Baladan, the king of Babylon* Babylon was not yet a great empire but under Assyria's thumb, and he fought for years to break free. A king healed by a miracle and standing up to Assyria was a good ally. The get-well gift had a political purpose.
20:13 *There was not a thing which Hezekiah did not show them* After his healing "his heart was haughty" (2 Chr 32:25), and God left him "to test him" (2 Chr 32:31). He showed off his wealth and weapons instead of the God who healed him, and he courted a foreign power, the thing Isaiah warned against.

dominion. **14** And Isaiah the prophet came to King Hezekiah and said to him, "What did these men say? And from where do they come to you?" And Hezekiah said, "From a distant land they have come, from Babylon." **15** And he said, "What did they see in your house?" And Hezekiah said, "All that ***is*** in my house they saw; there was not a thing which I did not show them in my storehouses." **16** And Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Hear the word of the LORD: **17** 'Look, days ***are*** coming, and all that ***is*** in your house, and what your fathers have stored up until this day, will be carried to Babylon; not a thing will be left, says the LORD. **18** And some of your sons who will come out from you, whom you will father, they will take away; and they will be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.'" **19** And Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "Good ***is*** the word of the LORD which you have spoken." And he said, "***Is it*** not ***so***, if peace and security will be in my days?" **20** And the rest of the matters of Hezekiah, and all his might, and how he made the pool and the conduit and brought the waters into the city, ***are*** they not written in the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Judah (Yehuda)? **21** And Hezekiah lay down with his fathers, and Manasseh (Menashe) his son reigned in his place.

2 KINGS 21

Manasseh King of Judah

1 Manasseh (Menashe) ***was*** a son of twelve years when he became king, and he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). And the name of his mother ***was*** Hephzibah (Cheftsi-Vah). **2** And he did the evil in the eyes of the LORD, according to the abominations of the nations whom the LORD had dispossessed from before the sons of Israel (Yisra'el). **3** And he again built the high places which Hezekiah (Chizqiyahu) his father had destroyed, and he raised up altars for the Baal and made an Asherah, just as Ahab (Achav) the king of Israel had done, and he bowed down to all the host of the heavens and served them. **4** And he built altars in the house of the LORD, of which the LORD had said, "In Jerusalem I will put My name." **5** And he built altars for all the host of the heavens in the two courts of the house of the LORD. **6** And he made his son pass through the fire, and he practiced soothsaying and practiced omens, and dealt with a medium and spiritists. He multiplied doing the evil in the eyes of the LORD, to provoke ***Him*** to anger. **7** And he put the carved image of the Asherah that he had made in the house of which the LORD had said to David and to Solomon (Shelomo) his son, "In this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen from all the tribes of Israel, I will put My name forever. **8** And I will not again make the foot of Israel wander from the ground which I gave to their fathers, only if they take care to do according to all that I have commanded them, and according to all the law which My servant Moses (Moshe) commanded them." **9** And they did not listen, and Manasseh led them astray to do the evil more than the nations whom the LORD had destroyed from before the sons of Israel.

20:14 Isa 39:3-8; 2 Kgs 5:25,26; 2 Sam 12:7-15
20:15 2 Kgs 20:13; Josh 7:19; Job 31:33
20:16 2 Kgs 7:1; 1 Kgs 22:19; Isa 1:10
20:17 2 Kgs 24:13; 2 Chr 36:10,18; Jer 27:21,22
20:18 2 Chr 33:11; 2 Kgs 24:12; 2 Kgs 25:6
20:19 1 Sam 3:18; Lev 10:3; Job 1:21
20:20 Neh 3:16; 2 Chr 32:4,30,32; Isa 22:9-11
20:21 Matt 1:10; 2 Chr 32:33; 2 Kgs 21:18
21:1 Matt 1:10; Isa 62:4; 2 Kgs 20:21
21:2 Matt 1:10; 2 Kgs 21:7,16; 2 Kgs 16:2-4
21:3 Matt 1:10; Acts 7:42; 2 Kgs 18:4,22
21:4 Matt 1:10; 2 Cor 6:16; 2 Sam 7:13
21:5 Matt 1:10; 2 Cor 6:16; 1 Kgs 7:12
21:6 Matt 1:10; 2 Kgs 17:17; Lev 18:21
21:7 1 Kgs 8:29,44; 1 Kgs 9:3,7; 2 Kgs 23:6
21:8 2 Sam 7:10; 2 Kgs 18:11; 1 Chr 17:9
21:9 Matt 1:10; Prov 29:12; 2 Chr 36:16

20:14 *from a distant land they have come, from Babylon* You can almost hear the pride.
20:17 *what your fathers have stored up until this day, will be carried to Babylon* What he showed off would belong to those he showed it to. When Isaiah spoke, Assyria was the great power and Babylon its subject. Only God could have known Babylon would carry Judah away (24:13; 25:13-17).
20:18 *they will be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon* Sons means descendants. A eunuch was a court servant, many made unable to have children, and the word came to mean court officials. About a hundred years later Daniel and his friends of Judah's royal offspring were taken to serve Nebuchadnezzar (Dan 1:3-7).
20:19 *Is it not so, if peace and security will be in my days* Some hear self-centered relief. Others hear humble acceptance and thanks for delay, as with Josiah (22:20). He did humble himself, and the wrath did not come in his days (2 Chr 32:26). Perhaps both are true. He did not weep for the generations to come as he had wept for himself. Do we care about the generations after us, or only peace in our own days?
20:20 *how he made the pool and the conduit and brought the waters into the city* He sent the Gihon spring's water to the west side of the city of David (2 Chr 32:30), so an attacker would find none. The tunnel can still be walked, about a third of a mile through solid rock to the pool of Siloam, and an old inscription inside tells how two teams cut from opposite ends and met. At Siloam Jesus sent a man born blind to wash and see (John 9:7).
20:21 *Manasseh his son reigned in his place* The king who trusted the LORD like no other had a son who would lead Judah into the worst evil it had known.
21:1 *he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem* The longest reign of any king of either kingdom, about 697 to 642 B.C., counting about ten years alongside his father. Hephzibah means my delight is in her. Godly parents cannot choose for their children. Each generation must choose the LORD for itself.
21:2 *according to the abominations of the nations* An abomination is something God hates. The writer compares Manasseh to the Canaanites God removed for their sins.
21:3 *just as Ahab the king of Israel had done* Ahab was the byword for wickedness in the north, and now Judah had its own Ahab. He undid his father's reforms one by one. The worship of the sun, moon and stars was strong in Assyria and Babylon in his day.
21:4 *he built altars in the house of the LORD* He brought idolatry into God's own house, filling the courts with altars to the stars (21:5).
21:6 *he made his son pass through the fire* Child sacrifice, as with Ahaz (16:3), in the valley of the son of Hinnom (2 Chr 33:6). The valley's name, Gehinnom, became Gehenna, the word Jesus used for hell (Mark 9:43).
21:6 *dealt with a medium and spiritists* Soothsaying and omens try to read the future through signs. A medium claims to speak with the dead, and a spiritist seeks knowledge from spirits. God forbade every one (Deut 18:10-12). They are not harmless games, then or now. If you have been involved in anything like this, confess it, turn from it and trust Christ, who has power over every dark thing (Col 2:15).
21:7 *the carved image of the Asherah that he had made in the house* In the temple itself, where God promised to put His name forever.
21:8 *only if they take care to do according to all that I have commanded them* God's promise had a condition, and Manasseh trampled it.
21:9 *to do the evil more than the nations whom the LORD had destroyed* God's own people became worse than the Canaanites. And "they did not listen." A wicked leader can lead a nation astray, but the people chose to go.

The LORD's Word against Judah

10 And the LORD spoke by the hand of His servants the prophets, saying, **11** "Because Manasseh the king of Judah (Yehuda) has done these abominations, he has done evil more than all that the Amorites did who ***were*** before him, and he has also made Judah sin with his idols, **12** therefore thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: 'Look, I ***am*** bringing calamity on Jerusalem and Judah, so that everyone who hears of it, his two ears will tingle. **13** And I will stretch over Jerusalem the measuring line of Samaria (Shomron) and the level of the house of Ahab, and I will wipe Jerusalem as one wipes the bowl: he wipes ***it*** and turns ***it*** over on its face. **14** And I will abandon the remnant of My inheritance and give them into the hand of their enemies, and they will be for spoil and for plunder to all their enemies, **15** because they have done the evil in My eyes and have been provoking Me to anger from the day that their fathers came out from Egypt (Mitsrayim) and until this day.'" **16** And also Manasseh shed very much innocent blood, until he had filled Jerusalem from end to end, apart from his sin with which he made Judah sin, to do the evil in the eyes of the LORD. **17** And the rest of the matters of Manasseh, and all that he did, and his sin which he sinned, ***are*** they not written in the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Judah? **18** And Manasseh lay down with his fathers and was buried in the garden of his house, in the garden of Uzza (Uza); and Amon his son reigned in his place.

Amon King of Judah

19 Amon ***was*** a son of twenty-two years when he became king, and he reigned two years in Jerusalem. And the name of his mother ***was*** Meshullemeth (Meshulemet) the daughter of Haruz (Charuts) from Jotbah (Yotva). **20** And he did the evil in the eyes of the LORD, just as Manasseh his father had done. **21** And he walked in all the way in which his father had walked, and he served the idols which his father had served and bowed down to them. **22** And he forsook the LORD, the God of his fathers, and he did not walk in the way of the LORD. **23** And the servants of Amon conspired against him and killed the king in his house. **24** And the people of the land struck down all who had conspired against King Amon, and the people of the land made Josiah (Yoshiyahu) his son king in his place. **25** And the rest of the matters of Amon which he did, ***are*** they not written in the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Judah? **26** And someone buried him in his tomb in the garden of Uzza; and Josiah his son reigned in his place.

2 KINGS 22

Josiah King of Judah

1 Josiah (Yoshiyahu) ***was*** a son of eight years when he became king, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). And the name of his mother ***was*** Jedidah (Yedida) the daughter of Adaiah (Adaya) from Bozkath (Botsqat). **2** And he did the right in the eyes of the LORD, and he walked in all the way of David his father, and he did not turn aside ***to the*** right or left. **3** And it was, in the eighteenth year of King Josiah, the king sent Shaphan (Shafan) the son of Azaliah (Atsalyahu), the son of Meshullam (Meshulam), the scribe, ***to*** the house of the LORD, saying, **4** "Go up to Hilkiah (Chilqiyahu) the high priest, that he may total the

21:10 Matt 23:34; 2 Chr 33:10; 2 Chr 36:15
21:11 Matt 1:10; 2 Kgs 24:3,4; 1 Kgs 21:26
21:12 Jer 19:3; 1 Sam 3:11; 2 Kgs 22:16
21:13 Isa 34:11; Lam 2:8; Amos 7:7,8
21:14 Jer 23:33; Ps 89:38-45; 2 Kgs 19:4,30,31
21:15 Deut 9:21; Deut 31:27,29; Judg 2:11-13
21:16 Matt 23:30; Matt 1:10; 2 Kgs 24:3,4
21:17 Matt 1:10; 2 Kgs 20:20,21; 2 Chr 33:1-20
21:18 Matt 1:10; 2 Chr 33:20; 2 Chr 21:20
21:19 Matt 1:10; 2 Chr 33:21-23; 1 Chr 3:14
21:20 Matt 1:10; 2 Kgs 21:2-7; Num 32:14
21:22 2 Kgs 22:17; 1 Kgs 11:33; 1 Chr 28:9
21:23 Matt 1:10; 2 Kgs 12:20; 2 Kgs 14:19
21:24 Matt 1:10; 2 Kgs 14:5; 2 Kgs 11:17
21:25 Matt 1:10; 2 Kgs 21:17; 2 Kgs 20:20
21:26 Matt 1:10; 1 Kgs 13:5
22:1 Matt 1:10; Josh 15:39; 1 Kgs 13:2
22:2 Deut 5:32; Josh 1:7; 2 Kgs 16:2
22:3 Matt 1:10; 2 Chr 34:3-8,9-33
22:4 2 Kgs 12:4,8-11; 1 Chr 6:13; 1 Chr 9:11

21:10 *by the hand of His servants the prophets* Unnamed. God did not stay silent even in the darkest years.
21:11 *more than all that the Amorites did* God told Abraham He would wait until the Amorites' sin was complete (Gen 15:16). Now Judah's was.
21:12 *his two ears will tingle* News so shocking that ears would ring, the words God used in Eli's day (1 Sam 3:11).
21:13 *the measuring line of Samaria and the level of the house of Ahab* Builder's tools. God would measure Jerusalem by the same standard He used for Samaria, with the same result (Amos 7:7-9). He has no softer standard for His favorite city. Wiping a bowl and turning it over pictures a finished dish. Jerusalem would be emptied.
21:15 *from the day that their fathers came out from Egypt and until this day* Manasseh's sin was the last straw on a load piling up for centuries.
21:16 *until he had filled Jerusalem from end to end* From one end to the other. The victims were likely the faithful who opposed his idolatry and the poor with no defender. An old Jewish tradition says Isaiah was sawn in two under Manasseh, and many think Hebrews 11:37 has him in mind, but Scripture does not say how Isaiah died. When Judah fell, the LORD "was not willing to forgive" this innocent blood (24:4; Gen 4:10).
21:17 *his sin which he sinned* Chronicles tells the rest: Assyria took him to Babylon in chains, and "he humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers" (2 Chr 33:12). God heard and brought him back, "and Manasseh knew that the LORD, He is God" (2 Chr 33:13), and he removed the idols. Both books are true. God forgave Manasseh the man, and the damage to the nation remained, and judgment still came (23:26). If God could forgive Manasseh, He can forgive anyone (1 Tim 1:15-16). But forgiveness does not always undo the harm our sin has done to others.
21:18 *in the garden of Uzza* Not in the tombs of David's line.
21:19 *he reigned two years in Jerusalem* About 642 to 640 B.C.
21:20 *just as Manasseh his father had done* He followed the idolater, not the repentant man, and "multiplied guilt" (2 Chr 33:23). Our children learn from how we live for decades, not only from how we end.
21:24 *the people of the land made Josiah his son king in his place* Likely the leading landowners and citizens, who stood for David's line. Three hundred years earlier, a man of God named Josiah as the king who would tear down Bethel's altar (1 Kgs 13:2). Now that boy, eight years old, sat on the throne.
22:1 *he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem* About 640 to 609 B.C. An eight-year-old king needs advisers, and Scripture does not name them. Someone taught that boy well.
22:2 *he did not turn aside to the right or left* The language of Moses (Deut 5:32; 17:20). Josiah is one of only a few kings compared to David with no "only" attached. At sixteen "he began to seek the God of David his father" (2 Chr 34:3). Jeremiah and Zephaniah began preaching in his reign (Jer 1:2; Zeph 1:1).
22:3 *in the eighteenth year of King Josiah* About 622 B.C., when he was twenty-six. The scribe was the king's secretary, a high officer of state.
22:4 *the keepers of the threshold* Priests who guarded the temple doors and received the gifts. After Manasseh, the temple was badly run down.

money that is brought ***into*** the house of the LORD, which the keepers of the threshold have gathered from the people. **5** And let them put it into the hand of the doers of the work who are appointed ***over*** the house of the LORD; and let them give it to the doers of the work who ***are*** in the house of the LORD, to repair the breach of the house: **6** to the craftsmen and to the builders and to the masons, and to buy timber and hewn stones to repair the house. **7** Only, the money that is given into their hand shall not be accounted with them, for they ***are*** working in faithfulness."

The Book of the Law Found

8 And Hilkiah the high priest said to Shaphan the scribe, "The book of the law I have found in the house of the LORD." And Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it. **9** And Shaphan the scribe came to the king and brought back word to the king, and he said, "Your servants have poured out the money that was found in the house, and they have put it into the hand of the doers of the work who are appointed ***over*** the house of the LORD." **10** And Shaphan the scribe told the king, saying, "A book Hilkiah the priest has given to me." And Shaphan read it before the king. **11** And it was, when the king heard the words of the book of the law, and he tore his clothes. **12** And the king commanded Hilkiah the priest, and Ahikam (Achiqam) the son of Shaphan, and Achbor (Akhbor) the son of Micaiah (Mikhaya), and Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah (Asaya) the servant of the king, saying, **13** "Go, inquire of the LORD for me and for the people and for all Judah (Yehuda) concerning the words of this book that has been found; for great ***is*** the wrath of the LORD that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not listened to the words of this book, to do according to all that is written concerning us."

Huldah's Word

14 And Hilkiah the priest and Ahikam and Achbor and Shaphan and Asaiah went to Huldah (Chulda) the prophetess, the wife of Shallum (Shalum) the son of Tikvah (Tiqva), the son of Harhas (Charchas), keeper of the garments; and she ***was*** dwelling in Jerusalem in the Second ***Quarter***; and they spoke to her. **15** And she said to them, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel (Yisra'el): 'Say to the man who sent you to me, **16** "Thus says the LORD: Look, I ***am*** bringing calamity to this place and on its inhabitants, all the words of the book which the king of Judah has read, **17** because they have forsaken Me and burned incense to other gods, so as to provoke Me to anger with all the work of their hands; and My wrath will be kindled against this place, and it will not be quenched."' **18** And to the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the LORD, thus you shall say to him: 'Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: "***As for*** the words which you have heard, **19** because your heart was tender, and you humbled yourself before the LORD when you heard what I spoke against this place and against its inhabitants, that they would become a horror and a curse, and you tore your clothes and wept before Me, I also have heard, declares the LORD. **20** Therefore look, I will gather you to your fathers, and you will be gathered to your graves in peace, and your eyes will not look on all the calamity which I ***am*** bringing on this place."'" And they brought back word to the king.

2 KINGS 23

Josiah Renews the Covenant

1 And the king sent, and they gathered to him all the elders of Judah (Yehuda) and Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). **2** And the king went up ***to*** the house of the LORD, and every man of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with him, and the priests and the prophets and all the people, from small to great; and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant that had been found in the house of the LORD.

22:5 2 Kgs 12:11-14; 2 Kgs 12:5; 2 Chr 24:7,12,13,27
22:7 2 Kgs 12:15; 1 Cor 4:2; 2 Chr 24:14
22:8 Deut 31:24-26; 2 Chr 34:14,15-28
22:9 2 Kgs 22:3,12; 2 Kgs 25:22; Jer 26:24
22:10 Deut 31:9-13; 2 Chr 34:18; Neh 8:1-7,14,15,18
22:11 2 Kgs 22:19; 2 Chr 34:19; Jer 36:24
22:12 2 Kgs 19:2,3; 2 Chr 34:19-21; Isa 37:1-4
22:13 Deut 29:23-28; Deut 31:17,18; 2 Kgs 3:11
22:14 Luke 2:36; Luke 1:45; 2 Chr 34:22
22:15 2 Kgs 1:6,16; Jer 23:28
22:16 Dan 9:11-14; 2 Kgs 20:17; 2 Kgs 21:12,13
22:17 1 Thess 2:16; Exod 32:34; Deut 29:24-28
22:18 2 Chr 34:26-28; Isa 3:10; Mal 3:16,17
22:19 Gal 3:13; Ps 51:17; 1 Kgs 21:29
22:20 1 Chr 17:11; Ps 37:37; Isa 57:1,2
23:1 Deut 31:28; 2 Sam 6:1; 2 Chr 29:20
23:2 Rev 20:12; Acts 26:22; 2 Kgs 22:8

22:7 *for they are working in faithfulness* Almost the words used in Joash's day (12:15). Honest work done for God is noticed and trusted.
22:8 *The book of the law I have found in the house of the LORD* Most believe it was Deuteronomy, or the whole Law including it. Josiah's reforms match Deuteronomy closely: one place of worship, no high places or mediums, Passover in Jerusalem, the covenant curses. Moses commanded the book be kept by the ark (Deut 31:26) and copied by each king (Deut 17:18-19). In Manasseh's years it may have been hidden by faithful priests or buried in neglect. Many critical scholars think Deuteronomy was written about this time and "found." I do not accept that. The text says found, not written, and all treated it as the old law their fathers failed to keep (22:13). Jesus quoted Deuteronomy as God's Word against Satan (Matt 4:4, 7, 10).
22:10 *Shaphan read it before the king* The most important news is often mentioned last.
22:11 *he tore his clothes* He was not just moved. He was broken. He knew Judah had done everything God warned against.
22:13 *for me and for the people and for all Judah* He included himself. That is real conviction of sin. God's Word does not just inform us. It reads us (Heb 4:12). He did not hide the book or explain it away.
22:14 *Huldah the prophetess* A woman who spoke God's message. The wardrobe may be the priests' garments or the king's. The Second Quarter was a newer part of the city. With Jeremiah and Zephaniah preaching, the king's men went to her, so she must have been known and trusted. God used women to speak His word in many ages (Exod 15:20; Judg 4:4; Luke 2:36).
22:15 *Say to the man who sent you to me* To God the king was simply "the man." In judgment God speaks to kings and commoners alike.
22:17 *it will not be quenched* Josiah's reforms would be real and good but would not turn back judgment. The people's repentance did not go deep (Jer 3:10).
22:19 *because your heart was tender* Soft before God, easily moved by His Word, quick to grieve over sin, the opposite of the hard neck (17:14). "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble" (James 4:6).
22:20 *you will be gathered to your graves in peace* He died in battle (23:29), so in peace here means before the calamity came. He was spared seeing the city besieged, the temple burned and his sons dragged away. Sometimes God's mercy is to take His faithful servants home before the storm.
23:2 *he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant* The king himself read it to everyone, from the least to the greatest. Moses had commanded that the law be read to all the people so they could hear and learn to fear the LORD (Deut 31:10-13). Revival in the Bible almost always begins with God's Word read and heard again (Neh 8:1-8).

3 And the king stood by the pillar and made the covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD and to keep His commandments and His testimonies and His statutes with all ***the*** heart and with all ***the*** soul, to establish the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people stood in the covenant.

Josiah's Reforms

4 And the king commanded Hilkiah (Chilqiyahu) the high priest and the priests of the second rank and the keepers of the threshold to bring out from the temple of the LORD all the articles that were made for the Baal and for the Asherah and for all the host of the heavens; and he burned them outside Jerusalem in the fields of Kidron (Qidron), and he carried their dust ***to*** Bethel (Bet-El). **5** And he did away with the idol priests whom the kings of Judah had appointed, and ***who*** burned incense on the high places in the cities of Judah and the surroundings of Jerusalem, and those who burned
incense to the Baal, to the sun and to the moon and to the constellations and to all the host of the heavens. **6** And he brought out the Asherah from the house of the LORD, outside Jerusalem, to the wadi Kidron, and he burned it at the wadi Kidron and crushed ***it*** to dust, and he threw its dust on the grave of the sons of the people. **7** And he tore down the houses of the male cult prostitutes that ***were*** in the house of the LORD, where the women ***were*** weaving houses for the Asherah. **8** And he brought all the priests from the cities of Judah, and he defiled the high places where the priests had burned incense, from Geba (Geva) to Beersheba
(Be'er-Sheva); and he tore down the high places of the gates that ***were at*** the entrance of the Gate of Joshua (Yehoshua) the governor of the city, which ***were*** on a man's left at the gate of the city. **9** Only, the priests of the high places did not go up to the altar of the LORD in Jerusalem, but they ate unleavened bread in the midst of their brothers. **10** And he defiled Topheth (Tofet), which ***is*** in the valley of the son of Hinnom (Hinom), so that a man would not make his son and his daughter pass through the fire to Molech. **11** And he did away with the horses that the kings of Judah had given to the sun, from the entrance of the house of the LORD by the chamber of Nathan-melech (Netan-Melekh) the eunuch,
which ***was*** in the precincts; and the chariots of the sun he burned with fire. **12** And the altars that ***were*** on the roof of the upper room of Ahaz (Achaz), which the kings of Judah had made, and the altars which Manasseh (Menashe) had made in the two courts of the house of the LORD, the king tore down; and he ran from there and threw their dust into the wadi Kidron. **13** And the high places that ***were*** on the face of Jerusalem, which ***were*** on the south of the Mount of Destruction, which Solomon (Shelomo) the king of Israel (Yisra'el) had built for Ashtoreth the detestable thing of the Sidonians, and for Chemosh the detestable thing of Moab (Mo'av), and for Milcom the abomination of the sons of Ammon (Amon), the king defiled. **14** And he broke the pillars and cut down the Asherim, and he filled their place ***with*** bones of man.

The Altar at Bethel

15 And also the altar that ***was*** at Bethel, the high place which Jeroboam (Yaravam) the son of Nebat (Nevat), who made Israel sin, had made, also that altar and the high place he tore down; and he burned the high place, he crushed ***it*** to dust, and he burned ***the*** Asherah. **16** And Josiah (Yoshiyahu) turned and saw the graves that ***were*** there on the mountain;

23:3 Matt 22:36; Heb 8:8; Matt 22:37
23:4 Matt 26:3; John 18:1; 2 Kgs 21:3,7
23:5 2 Cor 6:16; Hos 10:5; 2 Kgs 21:3,4
23:6 John 18:1; 2 Cor 6:16; 2 Chr 34:4
23:7 1 Kgs 15:12; Ezek 16:16; 1 Kgs 14:24
23:8 1 Kgs 15:22; Josh 21:17; 1 Chr 6:60
23:9 Ezek 44:10-14; Mal 2:8,9; 1 Sam 2:36
23:10 Isa 30:33; Jer 7:31,32; Jer 19:6,11-13
23:11 Ezek 8:16; 2 Kgs 23:5; 2 Chr 14:5
23:12 Matt 1:10; John 18:1; Jer 19:13
23:13 1 Kgs 11:7; 1 Kgs 11:5,33; Num 21:29
23:14 Exod 23:24; Deut 7:5,25,26; 2 Kgs 23:16
23:15 1 Kgs 14:16; 2 Kgs 10:31; 1 Kgs 12:28-33
23:16 John 10:35; Matt 1:10; 1 Kgs 13:1,2,32

23:3 *the king stood by the pillar and made the covenant before the LORD* Likely one of the two great bronze pillars at the temple entrance, where Joash stood when he was crowned (11:14). "With all the heart and with all the soul" is the language of the greatest commandment (Deut 6:5; Matt 22:37-38).
23:3 *all the people stood in the covenant* They agreed to it. Whether their hearts truly changed is another matter. Jeremiah said Judah did not return to God "with all her heart, but rather with falsehood" (Jer 3:10).
23:4 *he carried their dust to Bethel* Bethel was where Jeroboam's false worship began. Josiah sent the ashes of Judah's idols back to the place where Israel's idolatry started.
23:5 *he did away with the idol priests whom the kings of Judah had appointed* Priests of false gods who burned incense at the high places, to Baal, and to the sun, moon and stars.
23:6 *he threw its dust on the grave of the sons of the people* The common burial ground, an unclean place. The Asherah that Manasseh set up in God's house (21:7) ended as dust on the graves of common people.
23:7 *he tore down the houses of the male cult prostitutes that were in the house of the LORD* Pagan worship often included sexual rituals, and here they went on inside the temple area, though God had forbidden it (Deut 23:17). The worship of false gods always ends up degrading people, body and soul.
23:8 *from Geba to Beersheba* Geba was on Judah's northern edge and Beersheba on its southern edge, so this covered the whole kingdom. To defile a high place made it unclean and unfit for worship, so it could never be used again.
23:9 *they ate unleavened bread in the midst of their brothers* These seem to have been Levites who had sacrificed at the high places, perhaps even to the LORD, but in the wrong place. They could share the priests' food but no longer serve at the altar. It was both mercy and discipline.
23:10 *he defiled Topheth, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom* The place where children were sacrificed to Molech, the god of the Ammonites. Jeremiah preached against this very place (Jer 7:31-32).
23:11 *the chariots of the sun* Sun worship pictured the sun god riding across the sky in a chariot. These horses and chariots stood at the very entrance to the temple.
23:12 *the altars that were on the roof* People worshiped the stars on the rooftops (Jer 19:13; Zeph 1:5). Manasseh had removed his altars after his repentance (2 Chr 33:15), so it seems they were rebuilt under Amon, or never fully destroyed.
23:13 *which were on the south of the Mount of Destruction* Part of the Mount of Olives. Solomon built these high places for Ashtoreth, Chemosh and Milcom more than three hundred years earlier (1 Kgs 11:5-7), and they had stood ever since. A sin we tolerate can outlive us by generations.
23:14 *he filled their place with bones of man* Human bones made a place unclean (Num 19:16). No one would worship there again.
23:15 *the altar that was at Bethel* Bethel had been part of the northern kingdom. With Assyria now weak, Josiah could reach into the old territory of Israel.
23:16 *according to the word of the LORD which the man of God proclaimed* About three hundred years earlier, on the very day Jeroboam stood at this altar, a man of God from Judah named Josiah and said human bones would be burned on it (1 Kgs 13:2). Now it happened exactly as spoken. God's Word does not fail, even across centuries.

and he sent and took the bones from the graves and burned ***them*** on the altar and defiled it, according to the word of the LORD which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these things. **17** And he said, "What ***is*** this monument that I ***am*** seeing?" And the men of the city said to him, "The grave of the man of God who came from Judah and proclaimed these things which you have done against the altar of Bethel." **18** And he said, "Let him rest; let no man disturb his bones." And they spared his bones, with the bones of the prophet who came from Samaria (Shomron). **19** And also all the houses of the high places that ***were*** in the cities of Samaria, which the kings of Israel had made to provoke ***Him*** to anger, Josiah removed; and he did to them according to all the deeds that he had done at Bethel. **20** And he sacrificed all the priests of the high places who ***were*** there on the altars, and he burned bones of man on them; and he returned ***to*** Jerusalem.

Josiah Keeps the Passover

21 And the king commanded all the people, saying, "Keep a Passover to the LORD your God, as ***it is*** written in this book of the covenant." **22** For ***one*** had not been kept like this Passover since the days of the judges who judged Israel, and all the days of the kings of Israel and the kings of Judah. **23** But in the eighteenth year of King Josiah this Passover was kept to the LORD in Jerusalem. **24** And also the mediums and the spiritists and the teraphim and the idols and all the detestable things that were seen in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, Josiah purged, so as to establish the words of the law that were written in the book that Hilkiah the priest had found ***in*** the house of the LORD. **25** And like him there was no king before him who turned back to the LORD with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses (Moshe); and after him ***one*** like him did not arise.

The Death of Josiah

26 Only, the LORD did not turn back from the burning of His great anger, with which His anger burned against Judah, because of all the provocations with which Manasseh had provoked Him. **27** And the LORD said, "Also Judah I will remove from My face, as I removed Israel; and I will reject this city which I chose, Jerusalem, and the house of which I said, 'My name shall be there.'" **28** And the rest of the matters of Josiah and all that he did, ***are*** they not written in the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Judah? **29** In his days Pharaoh Neco (Nekho) the king of Egypt (Mitsrayim) went up to the king of Assyria (Ashur), to the river Euphrates (Perat); and King Josiah went to meet him, and he killed him at Megiddo (Megido) when he saw him. **30** And his servants carried him dead ***in a chariot*** from Megiddo, and brought him ***to*** Jerusalem and buried him in his tomb. And the people of the land took Jehoahaz (Yeho'achaz) the son of Josiah and anointed him and made him king in place of his father.

23:17 1 Kgs 13:1,30,31
23:18 1 Kgs 13:1-22,31
23:19 Matt 1:10; 2 Chr 34:6,7; 2 Kgs 17:9
23:20 2 Kgs 11:18; 2 Kgs 10:25; Exod 22:20
23:21 Deut 16:1-8; 2 Chr 35:1-19; Exod 12:3-20
23:22 Acts 13:20; 2 Chr 30:1-3,13-20; 2 Chr 35:3-17
23:23 Matt 1:10
23:24 Rom 3:20; Matt 1:10; Lev 19:31
23:25 John 1:17; John 7:19; 2 Kgs 18:5
23:26 Matt 1:10; 2 Kgs 21:11-13; 2 Kgs 22:16,17
23:27 2 Kgs 18:11; 2 Kgs 21:13; 2 Kgs 17:18,20
23:28 Matt 1:10; 2 Kgs 20:20
23:29 Matt 1:10; Jer 46:2; 2 Chr 35:20-24
23:30 Matt 1:10; 2 Kgs 9:28; 2 Chr 36:1,2-4

23:18 *Let him rest; let no man disturb his bones* The bones of the old prophet from Samaria buried with him were spared too (1 Kgs 13:31-32). The man who spoke God's word was honored by the king who fulfilled it.
23:20 *he sacrificed all the priests of the high places who were there on the altars* Hard to read. These were not Judah's priests, whom Josiah spared (23:9), but priests of the mixed worship of Samaria (17:29-33). The Law required death for anyone who led God's people to other gods (Deut 13:1-10; 17:2-7), and this was the judgment foretold three centuries earlier (1 Kgs 13:2).
23:20 *he burned bones of man on them* This was a king acting under the Mosaic covenant, when Israel was a nation under God's direct rule. It is not a pattern for us. Jesus rebuked His disciples for wanting fire on a Samaritan village (Luke 9:54-55), and we fight false teaching with the truth, prayer and love, not the sword (2 Cor 10:3-5). Yet it shows how seriously God takes leading people into false worship (Matt 18:6).
23:21 *Keep a Passover to the LORD your God, as it is written in this book of the covenant* The feast remembering the night the blood of a lamb turned away the destroyer (Exod 12), to be kept at the one place God chose (Deut 16:1-8).
23:22 *since the days of the judges who judged Israel* Hezekiah had kept a great Passover too (2 Chr 30). This one was likely kept more fully according to the book, by the whole nation in the one place (2 Chr 35:1-19).
23:23 *in the eighteenth year of King Josiah* All of this reform happened in a single year, the year the book was found.
23:23 *this Passover was kept to the LORD in Jerusalem* Josiah's Passover looked back to the exodus. Ours looks back to the cross: "For also our Passover was sacrificed for us: Christ" (1 Cor 5:7).
23:24 *the teraphim* Household idols, small images used for luck or fortune-telling (Gen 31:19). The book drove everything he did.
23:25 *with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his might* Josiah kept Deuteronomy 6:5 more fully than any king. Hezekiah was unmatched in trust (18:5); Josiah was unmatched in turning to the LORD according to His law.
23:26 *the LORD did not turn back from the burning of His great anger* A hard verse. Josiah's reform was the work of a king, and the people's hearts had not truly changed. As soon as he died, his sons went right back to evil (23:32, 37).
23:26 *because of all the provocations with which Manasseh had provoked Him* Josiah's faithfulness was not wasted. His reform gave a generation the chance to hear God's Word, and Jeremiah, Daniel and Ezekiel grew up in those years. Judgment on a nation does not cancel God's grace to individuals who turn to Him.
23:27 *I will reject this city which I chose, Jerusalem* The house where God said His name would be was rejected too. The judgment that fell on Samaria would fall on Jerusalem.
23:29 *Pharaoh Neco the king of Egypt went up to the king of Assyria* This was 609 B.C. Nineveh had fallen to the Babylonians and Medes in 612 B.C., as Nahum foretold, and Neco marched north to help what was left of Assyria against Babylon.
23:29 *he killed him at Megiddo when he saw him* Neco said God had told him to hurry, but Josiah disguised himself and fought, and "he did not listen to the words of Neco from the mouth of God" (2 Chr 35:22). Scripture does not say why. Whatever the reason, he did not ask the LORD first, and it cost him his life at thirty-nine.
23:30 *his servants carried him dead in a chariot from Megiddo* All Judah mourned, and Jeremiah wrote laments (2 Chr 35:24-25). Zechariah later spoke of the mourning in the plain of Megiddo as a picture of the day Israel will mourn for Him whom they pierced (Zech 12:10-11). That day is still ahead, when the Lord Jesus returns and Israel looks on Him and believes.

Jehoahaz and Jehoiakim

31 Jehoahaz ***was*** a son of twenty-three years when he became king, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. And the name of his mother ***was*** Hamutal (Chamutal) the daughter of Jeremiah (Yirmeyahu) from Libnah (Livna). **32** And he did the evil in the eyes of the LORD, according to all that his fathers had done. **33** And Pharaoh Neco imprisoned him at Riblah (Rivla) in the land of Hamath (Chamat), from reigning in Jerusalem; and he put a fine on the land, approximately 7,500 pounds (one hundred talents) of silver and approximately 75 pounds (a talent) of gold. **34** And Pharaoh Neco made Eliakim (Elyaqim) the son of Josiah king in place of Josiah his father, and he changed his name ***to*** Jehoiakim (Yehoyaqim). And Jehoahaz he took, and he came ***to*** Egypt and died there. **35** And the silver and the gold Jehoiakim gave to Pharaoh; only he assessed the land to give the silver at the command of Pharaoh. From each man according to his assessment he exacted the silver and the gold from the people of the land, to give to Pharaoh Neco. **36** Jehoiakim ***was*** a son of twenty-five years when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And the name of his mother ***was*** Zebudah (Zevuda) the daughter of Pedaiah (Pedaya) from Rumah (Ruma). **37** And he did the evil in the eyes of the LORD, according to all that his fathers had done.

2 KINGS 24

Jehoiakim Rebels

1 In his days Nebuchadnezzar (Nevukhadnetsar) the king of Babylon (Bavel) came up, and Jehoiakim (Yehoyaqim) became a servant to him three years; and he turned and rebelled against him. **2** And the LORD sent against him the raiding bands of ***the*** Chaldeans (Kasdim) and the raiding bands of Syria (Aram) and the raiding bands of Moab (Mo'av) and the raiding bands of the sons of Ammon (Amon); and He sent them against Judah (Yehuda) to destroy it, according to the word of the LORD which He had spoken by the hand of His servants the prophets. **3** Surely at the command of the LORD it came about in Judah, to remove ***them*** from His face, for the sins of Manasseh (Menashe), according to all that he had done, **4** and also ***for*** the innocent blood that he had shed; and he filled Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) ***with*** innocent blood, and the LORD was not willing to forgive. **5** And the rest of the matters of Jehoiakim and all that he did, ***are*** they not written in the book of the matters of the days of the kings of Judah? **6** And Jehoiakim lay down with his fathers, and Jehoiachin (Yehoyakhin) his son reigned in his place. **7** And the king of Egypt (Mitsrayim) did not again come out from his land any more, for the king of Babylon had taken, from the wadi of Egypt to the river Euphrates (Perat), all that had belonged to the king of Egypt.

Jehoiachin and the First Exile

8 Jehoiachin ***was*** a son of eighteen years when he became king, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. And the name of his mother ***was*** Nehushta (Nechushta) the daughter of Elnathan (Elnatan) from Jerusalem. **9** And he did the evil in the eyes of the LORD, according to all that his father had done. **10** At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar the

23:31 1 Chr 3:15; Jer 22:11; 2 Kgs 24:18
23:32 2 Kgs 21:2-7,21,22
23:33 2 Kgs 25:6; 1 Kgs 8:65; Jer 39:5,6
23:34 Matt 1:11; Ezek 19:3,4; 1 Chr 3:15
23:35 2 Kgs 15:19,20
23:36 2 Chr 36:5; 1 Chr 3:15; Jer 1:3
23:37 Jer 22:13-17; Jer 26:20-23; Jer 36:23-26,31
24:1 Matt 1:11; Jer 25:1,9; Dan 1:1
24:2 Jer 35:11; 2 Kgs 23:27; 2 Kgs 6:23
24:3 Matt 1:10; 2 Kgs 18:25; Gen 50:20
24:4 Luke 11:50; 2 Kgs 21:16; Num 35:33
24:5 2 Chr 36:8; Jer 22:13-17; Jer 26:1-36
24:6 Jer 22:18,19; 2 Chr 36:6,8; Jer 36:30
24:7 Matt 1:11; Jer 37:5-7; Jer 46:2
24:8 1 Chr 3:16; 2 Chr 36:9; Jer 24:1
24:10 Matt 1:11; Dan 1:1,2; 2 Kgs 25:2

23:31 *he reigned three months in Jerusalem* That was 609 B.C. Jeremiah calls him Shallum (Jer 22:11). His mother's father Jeremiah of Libnah was not the prophet.
23:32 *he did the evil in the eyes of the LORD* In three months he showed which way he would go. Josiah's reforms had not reached his own son's heart.
23:33 *Pharaoh Neco imprisoned him at Riblah in the land of Hamath* Riblah in Syria was Neco's headquarters. Judah now belonged to Egypt. The fine was about 7,500 pounds of silver and 75 pounds of gold.
23:34 *he changed his name to Jehoiakim* Changing a man's name showed that Neco was his master. Jehoahaz died in Egypt, as Jeremiah said: "He will not return there again" (Jer 22:11).
23:35 *he assessed the land* The king who should have protected his people made them pay for his throne.
23:36 *he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem* About 609 to 598 B.C.
23:37 *according to all that his fathers had done* He built a fine palace with unpaid labor while the poor suffered, and God reminded him that his father "judged the cause of the poor and needy" (Jer 22:16). He later cut up Jeremiah's scroll and burned it (Jer 36:23). His father tore his clothes at God's Word. The son burned it.
24:1 *Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon came up* About 605 B.C. That year Nebuchadnezzar defeated Neco at Carchemish (Jer 46:2). In this campaign some temple vessels and young men of the royal family, Daniel among them, were taken to Babylon (Dan 1:1-6). That was the first deportation.
24:1 *he turned and rebelled against him* Jeremiah warned him again and again to submit to Babylon, because God had given the nations into Nebuchadnezzar's hand for a time (Jer 25:8-11; 27:6-8). Jehoiakim would not listen.
24:2 *the LORD sent against him the raiding bands of the Chaldeans* The Chaldeans were the people of southern Babylonia, and the name came to mean the Babylonians in general. Notice who sent them. Babylon's army was carrying out God's judgment, spoken by His prophets.
24:4 *the LORD was not willing to forgive* God forgave Manasseh himself when he repented (2 Chr 33:12-13). This speaks of the nation, which never repented of the innocent blood and went on in it (Jer 7:6; 22:3, 17). It does not mean God refuses anyone who turns to Him. In these same years He promised to restore all who sought Him with all their heart (Jer 29:12-14).
24:4 *he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood* Judgment delayed is not judgment cancelled. God had waited through Hezekiah's faith and Josiah's reform. But today is still the day of salvation for anyone who turns to Christ (2 Cor 6:2).
24:6 *Jehoiakim lay down with his fathers* About 598 B.C. Jeremiah said he would have "the burial of a donkey" (Jer 22:19), and Chronicles says Nebuchadnezzar bound him in bronze fetters (2 Chr 36:6). Scripture does not say exactly how these fit together. The king who burned God's Word came to a shameful end.
24:7 *the king of Egypt did not again come out from his land any more* The wadi of Egypt was a dry riverbed on Judah's southwest border. Egypt, the power Judah kept looking to for help, could no longer help anyone. No rescue would come.
24:8 *Jehoiachin was a son of eighteen years when he became king* About 598 to 597 B.C. Jeremiah calls him Coniah and Jeconiah (Jer 22:24; 24:1). Elnathan was likely the official of Jeremiah 26:22 and 36:12, 25. Chronicles says eight years (2 Chr 36:9), most likely a copying error, since he had wives when he went to Babylon (24:15).

king of Babylon went up ***to*** Jerusalem, and the city came under siege. **11** And Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon came against the city, and his servants ***were*** besieging it. **12** And Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he and his mother and his servants and his officials and his eunuchs; and the king of Babylon took him in the eighth year of his reign. **13** And he brought out from there all the treasures of the house of the LORD and the treasures of the house of the king, and he cut in pieces all the articles of gold which Solomon (Shelomo) the king of Israel (Yisra'el) had made in the temple of the LORD, just as the LORD had spoken. **14** And he carried into exile all Jerusalem and all the officials and all the mighty men of valor, ten thousand exiles, and every craftsman and smith; none was left except the poor of the people of the land. **15** And he carried Jehoiachin into exile to Babylon; and the mother of the king and the wives of the king and his eunuchs and the leaders of the land he led ***as*** exiles from Jerusalem to Babylon. **16** And all the men of valor, seven thousand, and the craftsmen and the smiths, one thousand, all ***were*** mighty men, makers of war, the king of Babylon brought them ***as*** exiles to Babylon. **17** And the king of Babylon made Mattaniah (Matanya) his uncle king in his place, and he changed his name ***to*** Zedekiah (Tsidqiyahu).

Zedekiah King of Judah

18 Zedekiah ***was*** a son of twenty-one years when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And the name of his mother ***was*** Hamutal (Chamutal) the daughter of Jeremiah (Yirmeyahu) from Libnah (Livna). **19** And he did the evil in the eyes of the LORD, according to all that Jehoiakim had done. **20** For because of the anger of the LORD it came about in Jerusalem and in Judah, until He threw them out from His face. And Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

2 KINGS 25

The Fall of Jerusalem

1 And it was in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, on the tenth of the month, Nebuchadnezzar (Nevukhadnetsar) the king of Babylon (Bavel) came, he and all his army, against Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), and he encamped against it, and they built a siege wall against it all around. **2** And the city came under siege until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah (Tsidqiyahu). **3** On the ninth of the month, and the famine was severe in the city, and there was no bread for the people of the land. **4** And the city was broken into, and all the men of war ***fled*** by night ***by*** the way of the gate between the two walls, which ***was*** by the garden of the king, and the Chaldeans (Kasdim) ***were*** against the city all around; and he went ***by*** the way of the Arabah (Arava). **5** And the army of ***the*** Chaldeans pursued after the king and overtook him in the plains of Jericho (Yericho); and all his army was scattered from him. **6** And they seized the king and brought him up to the king of Babylon ***at*** Riblah (Rivla), and

24:11 Matt 1:11
24:12 Matt 1:11; Jer 24:1; Jer 52:28,31
24:13 2 Kgs 20:17; Isa 39:6; Jer 20:5
24:14 Jer 52:28; 2 Kgs 25:12; Ezek 1:1,2
24:15 Matt 1:11; 2 Chr 36:10; Esth 2:6
24:16 Matt 1:11; Jer 52:28; Jer 29:2
24:17 Matt 1:11; Jer 37:1; 2 Kgs 23:34
24:18 2 Kgs 23:31; Jer 52:1-11; 2 Chr 36:11
24:19 2 Kgs 23:37; 2 Chr 36:12; Jer 24:8
24:20 Matt 1:11; 2 Chr 36:13; 2 Kgs 22:17
25:1 Jer 52:4,5-11; 2 Chr 36:17-21; Jer 39:1-10
25:3 Jer 52:6; Lev 26:26; Deut 28:52,53
25:4 Ezek 33:21; Jer 5:10; Jer 39:2,3
25:5 Isa 30:16; Jer 24:8; Jer 39:5
25:6 2 Kgs 23:33; Jer 34:21,22; 2 Chr 33:11

24:12 *Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon* He surrendered. It may have been the wisest thing he ever did, sparing the city and temple for eleven more years. Jeremiah told the kings that surrender to Babylon was God's way of mercy (Jer 38:17).
24:12 *in the eighth year of his reign* That was 597 B.C. Babylonian records also tell of Nebuchadnezzar taking Jerusalem that year and appointing a new king.
24:13 *just as the LORD had spoken* The word Isaiah gave Hezekiah a hundred years earlier (20:17). Some of these vessels appear at Belshazzar's feast (Dan 5:2-3), and Cyrus gave them back when the exiles returned (Ezra 1:7-11).
24:14 *every craftsman and smith* Smiths were metalworkers who could make weapons. Babylon took everyone who could lead a revolt or arm one.
24:15 *he carried Jehoiachin into exile to Babylon* Among the exiles was a young priest named Ezekiel, who dated his prophecies by "the exile of King Jehoiachin" (Ezek 1:2). God sent a prophet into exile with His people. He did not abandon them there.
24:15 *the leaders of the land* God called these exiles good figs and promised to bring them back and "give them a heart to know Me" (Jer 24:7). Those left in Jerusalem thought the exiles were rejected. God said the opposite. What looks like the worst thing can be where God begins to make us new.
24:16 *seven thousand* These numbers seem to overlap with the ten thousand of verse 14, which may be a round total. Jeremiah 52:28 gives 3,023, which may count only certain men or a different group. The writers counted in different ways.
24:17 *he changed his name to Zedekiah* Mattaniah was Josiah's son, Jehoiachin's uncle; Chronicles calls him brother (2 Chr 36:10), which may mean relative. Zedekiah means the LORD is righteous, a name he would not live up to. Nebuchadnezzar put him under oath (Ezek 17:13).
24:18 *he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem* About 597 to 586 B.C. His mother was Hamutal, so he was the full brother of Jehoahaz (23:31).
24:19 *according to all that Jehoiakim had done* "He did not humble himself before Jeremiah the prophet" (2 Chr 36:12). He often asked Jeremiah for a word from God but was too afraid of his officials to obey it (Jer 37:17; 38:5, 14-28).
24:20 *Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon* He broke his oath and sent to Egypt for help (Ezek 17:15), bringing Nebuchadnezzar back to Jerusalem for the last time.
25:1 *in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, on the tenth of the month* The winter of 588 B.C. The day was remembered for generations. Ezekiel in Babylon was told to write down its name (Ezek 24:1-2), and after the exile the Jews kept fasts on the anniversaries of these dark days (Zech 8:19).
25:1 *they built a siege wall against it all around* A ring of earthworks and towers that sealed the city in. The siege lasted about a year and a half.
25:3 *the famine was severe in the city* The fourth month (Jer 52:6), in the summer of 586 B.C. Lamentations tells of children begging for bread with no one to give it (Lam 4:4). It was everything Moses warned of if Israel broke the covenant (Deut 28:52-53). God grieved over the suffering, even as He allowed it.
25:4 *the city was broken into* Zedekiah and the men of war slipped out by night through a gate likely near the southeast corner of the city, toward the Arabah, the Jordan valley.
25:5 *overtook him in the plains of Jericho* He got about fifteen miles, and the men who fled with him left him.
25:6 *they spoke judgment with him* At Riblah in Syria, Nebuchadnezzar's headquarters. He was put on trial for breaking his oath.

they spoke judgment with him. **7** And the sons of Zedekiah they slaughtered before his eyes, and the eyes of Zedekiah he blinded; and he bound him with bronze fetters and brought him ***to*** Babylon.

The Temple Burned

8 And in the fifth month, on the seventh of the month, that ***was*** the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, Nebuzaradan (Nevuzaradan) the chief of the bodyguards, the servant of the king of Babylon, came ***to***
Jerusalem. **9** And he burned the house of the LORD and the house of the king and all the houses of Jerusalem; and every house of a great ***one*** he burned with fire. **10** And the walls of Jerusalem all around, all the army of ***the*** Chaldeans who ***were with*** the chief of the bodyguards broke down. **11** And the rest of the people who remained in the city, and the deserters who had deserted to the king of Babylon, and the rest of the multitude, Nebuzaradan the chief of the bodyguards carried into exile. **12** And some of the poor of the land the chief of the bodyguards left as vinedressers and as plowmen.

The Temple Treasures Taken

13 And the pillars of bronze that ***were in*** the house of the LORD, and the stands, and the sea of bronze that ***was*** in the house of the LORD, the Chaldeans broke in pieces, and they carried their bronze ***to*** Babylon. **14** And the pots and the shovels and the snuffers and the dishes and all the articles of bronze with which they ministered, they took. **15** And the firepans and the bowls, what ***was*** gold, gold, and what ***was*** silver, silver, the chief of the bodyguards took. **16** The two pillars, the one sea, and the stands which Solomon (Shelomo) had made for the house of the LORD, there was no weight for the bronze of all these articles. **17** Approximately 27 feet (eighteen cubits) ***was*** the height of the one pillar, and a capital of bronze ***was*** on it; and the height of the capital ***was*** approximately 4.5 feet (three cubits), and a network and pomegranates ***were*** on the capital all around, all of bronze; and like these ***were*** to the second pillar, with the network.

The Leaders Put to Death

18 And the chief of the bodyguards took Seraiah (Seraya) the head priest and Zephaniah (Tsefanyahu) ***the*** second priest and the three keepers of the threshold. **19** And from the city he took one eunuch who ***was*** overseer over the men of war, and five men of those who saw the face of the king who were found in the city, and the scribe, the commander of the army, who mustered the people of the land, and sixty men of the people of the land who were found in the city. **20** And Nebuzaradan the chief of the bodyguards took them and brought them to the king of Babylon ***at*** Riblah. **21** And the king of Babylon struck them down and put them to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath (Chamat). And Judah (Yehuda) went into exile from its ground.

Gedaliah Governor of Judah

22 And ***as for*** the people who remained in the land of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had left, he appointed over them Gedaliah (Gedalyahu) the son of
Ahikam (Achiqam), the son of Shaphan (Shafan). **23** And all the commanders of the armies heard, they and the men, that the king of Babylon had appointed Gedaliah, and they came to Gedaliah ***at*** Mizpah (Mitspa): Ishmael (Yishma'el) the son of Nethaniah (Netanya), and Johanan (Yochanan) the son of Kareah (Qareach), and Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth
(Tanchumet) the Netophathite, and Jaazaniah (Ya'azanyahu)

25:7 Jer 39:6,7; Jer 32:4,5; Gen 21:16
25:8 Jer 52:12-14; Zech 8:19; 2 Kgs 25:27
25:9 Ps 74:3-7; Amos 2:5; 1 Kgs 9:8
25:10 Neh 1:3; Jer 5:10; Jer 39:8
25:11 Matt 1:11; Jer 15:1,2; Jer 39:9
25:12 2 Kgs 24:14; Jer 40:7; Jer 39:10
25:13 2 Chr 36:18; 1 Kgs 7:15,27; 2 Kgs 20:17
25:14 Exod 27:3; 1 Kgs 7:47-50; Exod 38:3
25:15 Dan 5:2,3; Exod 37:23; Num 7:13,14
25:16 1 Kgs 7:47
25:17 1 Kgs 7:15,16; Jer 52:21-23
25:18 1 Chr 6:14; Ezra 7:1; Jer 21:1
25:19 Esth 1:14
25:20 Jer 52:26,27; Lam 4:16
25:21 2 Kgs 23:27; 2 Kgs 17:20; Lev 26:33-35
25:22 Jer 39:14; 2 Kgs 22:12; Jer 40:5,6-12
25:23 Jer 40:7-9,11,12

25:7 *the sons of Zedekiah they slaughtered before his eyes* One of the saddest verses in the Bible. The last thing Zedekiah saw was the death of his sons.
25:7 *brought him to Babylon* Jeremiah told him surrender would spare his life and the city (Jer 38:17-18). Ezekiel said, "he shall not see it, and he shall die there" (Ezek 12:13). He arrived in Babylon blind. Zedekiah asked for God's word many times but never obeyed it. Knowing what God says is not enough (James 1:22).
25:8 *in the fifth month, on the seventh of the month* August of 586 B.C., about a month after the wall was broken. Jeremiah 52:12 gives the tenth. He may have arrived on the seventh and set the fire on the tenth, or one number may have changed in copying.
25:9 *he burned the house of the LORD* Solomon's temple, where God had put His name, had stood nearly four hundred years. The writer does not describe the flames. He simply says it.
25:9 *all the houses of Jerusalem* The people trusted the building instead of the God who lived there, saying "The temple of the LORD" while they lived in sin (Jer 7:4). God would rather have no temple than one that hid His people's sin. Jesus warned of the temple of His day too (Matt 24:1-2), and it was destroyed in A.D. 70.
25:10 *the walls of Jerusalem all around* A city without walls was helpless. They lay in ruins until Nehemiah rebuilt them about 445 B.C.
25:11 *the deserters who had deserted to the king of Babylon* Even those who had gone over to Babylon were taken.
25:12 *some of the poor of the land* The rich who oppressed the poor were taken away, and the poor were given vineyards and fields (Jer 39:10). There is a quiet justice in that. God sees the poor (Ps 9:18).
25:16 *there was no weight for the bronze of all these articles* Like reading the inventory of a burned house. Solomon named the pillars Jachin and Boaz, names that speak of God establishing and of strength (1 Kgs 7:21). Ahaz cut up the stands (16:17) and Hezekiah stripped the doors (18:16). What Judah's kings began to strip away, Babylon finished.
25:17 *a network and pomegranates were on the capital all around* The writer describes the pillars one last time, as they were first made (1 Kgs 7:15-22). The symbols of God's strength and stability were broken and carried off by a pagan king.
25:18 *Seraiah the head priest* The grandson of Hilkiah, who found the book of the law, and an ancestor of Ezra (1 Chr 6:13-15; Ezra 7:1).
25:21 *the king of Babylon struck them down and put them to death at Riblah* These were the leaders who had urged Zedekiah to rebel.
25:21 *Judah went into exile from its ground* The sentence the whole book has been building toward, just like Israel (17:23). The covenant curse came true (Deut 28:63). Jeremiah said the exile would last seventy years (Jer 25:11; 29:10).
25:22 *Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan* A godly family. Shaphan read the book of the law to Josiah (22:10), and Ahikam protected Jeremiah (Jer 26:24). Gedaliah governed from Mizpah, a few miles north of the ruined city.

the son of the Maacathite, they and their men. **24** And Gedaliah swore to them and to their men, and he said to them, "Do not be afraid of the servants of the Chaldeans. Dwell in the land and serve the king of Babylon, and it will go well for you." **25** And it was in the seventh month, Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, of the seed of the kingship, came, and ten men with him, and they struck down Gedaliah, and he died, and the Jews and the Chaldeans who were with him at Mizpah. **26** And all the people arose, from small to great, and the commanders of the armies, and they went ***to*** Egypt (Mitsrayim), for they were afraid of the Chaldeans.

Jehoiachin Released

27 And it was in the thirty-seventh year of the exile of Jehoiachin (Yehoyakhin) the king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the twenty-seventh of the month, Evil-merodach (Evil-Merodakh) the king of Babylon, in the year he became king, lifted up the head of Jehoiachin the king of Judah from the house of prison. **28** And he spoke good things with him, and he set his throne above the throne of the kings who ***were*** with him in Babylon. **29** And he changed the clothes of his prison, and he ate bread continually before him all the days of his life. **30** And his allowance, a continual allowance, was given to him from the king, the portion of a day in its day, all the days of his life.

25:24 2 Sam 14:11; 2 Sam 19:23; Jer 40:9,10
25:25 Zech 7:5; Zech 8:19; Jer 40:15,16
25:26 Jer 43:4-7; Jer 41:16-18; Jer 42:14-22
25:27 Matt 1:12; Jer 52:31-34; Gen 40:13,20
25:28 Dan 2:37; Dan 5:18,19; Jer 27:6-11
25:29 2 Sam 9:7; 2 Kgs 24:12; Gen 41:14,42
25:30 Neh 11:23; Neh 12:47; Dan 1:5

25:24 *Dwell in the land and serve the king of Babylon, and it will go well for you* The same counsel Jeremiah gave (Jer 27:12; 40:9). Jeremiah himself stayed with Gedaliah (Jer 40:6). For a short time it looked as though the poor of Judah might live in peace.
25:25 *of the seed of the kingship* Ishmael was of the royal family. He may have resented a ruler not of David's line, or been sent by the king of the Ammonites (Jer 40:14). Gedaliah had been warned and would not believe it (Jer 40:13-16).
25:26 *they went to Egypt, for they were afraid of the Chaldeans* Jeremiah told them God would protect them in the land, but they would die in Egypt (Jer 42:9-17). They went anyway and took Jeremiah (Jer 43:4-7). God had brought His people out of Egypt with a mighty hand. Now the last of them went back against His word, as Moses warned (Deut 28:68).
25:27 *lifted up the head of Jehoiachin the king of Judah from the house of prison* About 560 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar's son released him, perhaps as goodwill at the start of his reign. Jeremiah 52:31 gives the twenty-fifth day. To lift up the head means to raise to honor, as with Joseph's fellow prisoner (Gen 40:13, 20-21).
25:28 *he set his throne above the throne of the kings who were with him in Babylon* The book ends with a light: a son of David alive, out of prison and honored. Jerusalem was in ruins and the temple ashes, but the line was not cut off. God kept David's lamp burning (1 Kgs 11:36), even in Babylon.
25:29 *he changed the clothes of his prison* Jeremiah said no descendant of Jehoiachin would prosper on David's throne (Jer 22:30). Matthew lists him in Jesus' legal line through Joseph (Matt 1:11-12), but Jesus was born of the virgin Mary, whose line runs to David through Nathan (Luke 3:31). Many teachers see this as how God kept both words. Of Jesus' kingdom "there will be no end" (Luke 1:33).
25:30 *his allowance, a continual allowance, was given to him from the king* A small picture of what God does for us. We were prisoners of sin. In Christ, God lifts up our heads, takes away our prison clothes, clothes us in His righteousness (Isa 61:10), and seats us at His table forever.

1 CHRONICLES

Introduction

Title

In the Hebrew Bible, 1 and 2 Chronicles were one book, and it stood last of all, at the very end of the Old Testament. Its Hebrew title means the words of the days, which we might put as the events of the times. The Greek translators split it in two and called it by a name meaning the things left out, because it gives details that Samuel and Kings do not. Our title goes back to Jerome, who called it a chronicle of the whole of sacred history. That Hebrew order may explain Jesus' words about the blood of the righteous "from the blood of Abel the righteous to the blood of Zechariah" (Matt 23:35). Abel's death is in Genesis and Zechariah's in 2 Chronicles 24:20-22, so many Bible teachers believe Jesus was speaking of the whole Old Testament, from the first book to the last.

Author and Date

The book does not name its writer. Jewish tradition holds that Ezra the priest and scribe wrote Chronicles, and there are good reasons for it. The last verses of 2 Chronicles are nearly the same as the first verses of Ezra (2 Chr 36:22-23; Ezra 1:1-3), as though one book picks up where the other leaves off, and both share a deep interest in the temple, the priests and Levites, the law of Moses and family records. Many scholars today speak only of the Chronicler, an unnamed writer or group of writers, and some place the book later, in the 300s B.C. I take the Jewish tradition as the most likely answer, while saying plainly that Scripture does not name him.

The book was written after the return from exile. The family of David in 3:17-24 runs several generations past Zerubbabel, who led the first return in 538 B.C., and the gifts for the temple are valued in darics, a Persian coin (29:7). It was most likely written about 450 to 430 B.C., in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah. The writer used older records, which he names: "the book of the kings of Israel and Judah" (9:1) and the words of Samuel the seer, Nathan the prophet and Gad the seer (29:29). Much of chapters 10 to 21 follows 2 Samuel closely, and he also had family records, temple records and lists of officers. The Holy Spirit guided him in what he chose and how he told it.

Background and Setting

First Chronicles was written for the Jews who had come back to Judah from exile in Babylon, and for their children.
Jerusalem and its temple had fallen in 586 B.C. In 538 B.C. Cyrus king of Persia let them go home, and they rebuilt the temple by 516 B.C. But they were a small and poor community in a little province of the Persian empire, with no king of their own.

The book covers more ground than any other. Its family lists run from Adam to the people who came back from Babylon (chapters 1 to 9). Its story covers one reign, David's, from the death of Saul about 1010 B.C. to David's death about 970 B.C. He reigned seven and a half years in Hebron and thirty-three in Jerusalem (3:4; 29:27). Second Chronicles goes on with Solomon and the kings of Judah to the exile and Cyrus' decree.

The first readers already had Samuel and Kings, which explained why Israel went into exile. Chronicles asks a different question: now that we are back, what is God still doing with us? So it keeps its eyes on the line of David, the temple where God put His name, and the worship of God by priests, Levites and singers. That is why it leaves out much of David's family trouble, like Bathsheba and Absalom's revolt, and spends whole chapters on the ark and the Levites. The writer is not hiding David's sins. His readers knew them, and he tells David's sinful census in full (chapter 21).

In several places Chronicles gives a different number from Samuel or Kings for the same event, such as three hundred slain in 11:11 and eight hundred in 2 Samuel 23:8. The notes take the numbers as written in each place and hold that the original writings were without error. Numbers were the easiest thing to miscopy over centuries of hand copying, sometimes the two books count different groups, and some scholars read the Hebrew word for thousand as a clan or military unit in some lists. The notes point these out where they come up rather than hide them. Dates follow the standard conservative reckoning and are given with "about."

Themes

God's promises to His people still stand, above all His covenant with David. A covenant is a binding agreement, a promise sealed with an oath. In chapter 17 God promises David a son whose throne will last forever: "I will set him in My house and in My kingdom forever, and his throne shall be established forever" (17:14). The kingdom is God's, and the son of David sits "on the throne of the LORD" (29:23). The family lists tied the returned people to Abraham and David and to their land, and showed them that God had not forgotten any of the tribes.

The worship of God belongs at the center of the life of His people. Half the book is about the ark, the temple, the priests, the Levites, the singers and the gatekeepers. David's great desire was to build a house for God, and he spent his last years getting everything ready for it, down to the weight of every lamp. The refrain of the book is the Levites' song: "Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; for His steadfast love is forever" (16:34).

The key word is seek. Saul died for his unfaithfulness, and "he did not inquire of the LORD" (10:14). David sought God, first by bringing back the ark, then by learning to seek Him "according to the ordinance" (15:13). The lesson of Uzzah is that God is holy and must be approached His way. David's charge to Solomon and the leaders sums up the book: "set your heart and your soul to seek the LORD your God" (22:19). The book also shows a king after God's heart who sinned, confessed it plainly, and found mercy at an altar (21:8, 26-27), and it teaches that everything we give God was His first (29:14).

Christ in 1 Chronicles

The family lines of 1 Chronicles trace the very line the New Testament follows to Jesus. Matthew opens with "The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, son of David, son of Abraham" (Matt 1:1), and Luke traces Jesus back to Adam (Luke 3:23-38), just as Chronicles begins with Adam. Both pass through Judah, Perez, Boaz, Jesse and David, and Matthew goes on through Solomon, the kings, Jeconiah, Shealtiel and Zerubbabel (Matt

1:6-13).

The covenant of chapter 17 is fulfilled in Jesus. The angel told Mary that God would give her Son "the throne of David His father" (Luke 1:32), and "of His kingdom there will be no end" (Luke 1:33). Hebrews applies God's words about David's son to Christ: "I will be to Him a Father, and He will be to Me a Son" (Heb 1:5). I believe that promise will be fully seen when Jesus returns and reigns on David's throne over a restored Israel and the whole earth (Rev 20:4-6).

The temple David prepared for was built on the threshing floor of Ornan, where the angel's sword was put away when a sacrifice was offered (21:18-30; 2 Chr 3:1), on Mount Moriah, where God provided a ram in place of Isaac (Gen 22:13-14). It is a picture of the place where God meets sinners on the ground of a sacrifice, which Christ gave once for all (Heb 10:10-12). David's prayer for the sheep, "let Your hand be on me" (21:17), points to the Good Shepherd who lays down His life for the sheep (John 10:11).

Hard Passages

Saul falls on his own sword at Gilboa (10:4). The notes say plainly that the Bible records this without praising it, that God alone judges the heart, and they urge anyone struggling with thoughts of ending their life to reach out for help today. The writer's own verdict is about Saul's unfaithfulness over many years (10:13-14), and the notes add that this does not mean every hard or early death is a punishment.

God strikes Uzzah dead for touching the ark (13:9-10). The notes explain it from the Law itself (Num 4:15): the whole plan copied the Philistines instead of obeying God, and God was teaching Israel that He is holy. In Christ we now draw near by His blood (Heb 10:19).

Satan incites David to count Israel (21:1), while 2 Samuel 24:1 says the LORD incited him. The notes show how both are true without making God the author of sin (James 1:13), and they deal honestly with the seventy thousand who died in the plague (21:14). Elhanan kills the brother of Goliath (20:5), which helps explain 2 Samuel 21:19, and the notes read 20:3 as forced labor, following the parallel in 2 Samuel 12:31.

David warns Solomon that if he forsakes God, "He will reject you forever" (28:9). The notes take the warning seriously while holding that those truly born again are kept by God (John 10:28-29). The number differences between Chronicles and Samuel are pointed out where they come up and explained honestly. Long name lists fill chapters 1 to 9, and the notes give one short note to each group, drawing out the stories tucked inside them, like the prayer of Jabez (4:9-10).

Outline

I. The Family Lines of God's People (1:1-9:44)
  A. From Adam to the sons of Abraham (1:1-54)
  B. The sons of Israel and the line of Judah (2:1-55)
  C. The family of David (3:1-24)
  D. More clans of Judah and the tribe of Simeon (4:1-43)
  E. The tribes east of the Jordan (5:1-26)
  F. The tribe of Levi (6:1-81)
  G. The northern tribes (7:1-40)
  H. The tribe of Benjamin and the family of Saul (8:1-40)
  I. Those who returned to Jerusalem (9:1-44)
II. David Becomes King (10:1-12:40)
  A. The death of Saul (10:1-14)
  B. David made king and his mighty men (11:1-47)
  C. The men who came to David (12:1-40)
III. The Ark Comes to Jerusalem (13:1-16:43)
  A. The ark and the death of Uzzah (13:1-14)
  B. David's house and his victories over the Philistines (14:1-17)
  C. The ark brought to Jerusalem (15:1-29)
  D. David's psalm of thanks (16:1-43)
IV. God's Covenant and David's Wars (17:1-20:8)
  A. God's covenant with David (17:1-27)
  B. David's victories (18:1-17)
  C. War with Ammon and Syria (19:1-19)
  D. Rabbah taken and the giants defeated (20:1-8)
V. David Prepares for the Temple (21:1-29:30)
  A. David's census and the threshing floor of Ornan (21:1-30)
  B. David prepares for the temple (22:1-19)
  C. The Levites and their work (23:1-32)
  D. The divisions of the priests (24:1-31)
  E. The temple singers (25:1-31)
  F. Gatekeepers, treasurers and officials (26:1-32)
  G. Israel's army and leaders (27:1-34)
  H. David's charge to Solomon and the temple plans (28:1-21)
  I. The gifts for the temple and the death of David (29:1-30)

1 CHRONICLES

1 CHRONICLES 1

From Adam to Abraham

1 Adam, Seth (Shet), Enosh, **2** Kenan (Qenan), Mahalalel, Jared (Yered), **3** Enoch (Chanokh), Methuselah (Metushelach), Lamech (Lemekh), **4** Noah (Noach), Shem, Ham (Cham), and Japheth (Yefet). **5** The sons of Japheth ***were*** Gomer and Magog and Madai (Maday) and Javan (Yavan) and Tubal (Tuval) and Meshech (Meshekh) and Tiras. **6** And the sons of Gomer ***were*** Ashkenaz and Riphath (Difat) and Togarmah (Togarma). **7** And the sons of Javan ***were*** Elishah (Elisha) and Tarshish, Kittim and Dodanim (Rodanim). **8** The sons of Ham ***were*** Cush (Kush) and Mizraim (Mitsrayim), Put and Canaan (Kena'an). **9** And the sons of Cush ***were*** Seba (Seva) and Havilah (Chavila) and Sabtah (Savta) and Raamah (Rama) and Sabteca (Savtekha). And the sons of Raamah ***were*** Sheba (Sheva) and Dedan. **10** And Cush fathered Nimrod; he began to be a mighty ***man*** on the earth. **11** And Mizraim fathered ***the*** Ludim and ***the*** Anamim and ***the*** Lehabim (Lehavim) and ***the*** Naphtuhim (Naftuchim) **12** and ***the*** Pathrusim (Patrusim) and ***the*** Casluhim (Kasluchim), from where ***the*** Philistines came out, and ***the*** Caphtorim. **13** And Canaan fathered Sidon (Tsidon) his firstborn, and Heth (Chet), **14** and the Jebusite and the Amorite and the Girgashite, **15** and the Hivite and the Arkite and the Sinite, **16** and the Arvadite and the Zemarite and the Hamathite. **17** The sons of Shem ***were*** Elam and Asshur (Ashur) and Arpachshad (Arpakhshad) and Lud and Aram and Uz (Uts) and Hul (Chul) and Gether (Geter) and Meshech. **18** And Arpachshad fathered Shelah (Shelach), and Shelah fathered Eber (Ever). **19** And to Eber were born two sons; the name of the one ***was*** Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided; and the name of his brother ***was*** Joktan (Yoqtan). **20** And Joktan fathered Almodad and Sheleph (Shelef) and Hazarmaveth (Chatsarmavet) and Jerah (Yerach) **21** and Hadoram and Uzal and Diklah (Diqla) **22** and Obal (Eval) and Abimael (Avima'el) and Sheba **23** and Ophir (Ofir) and Havilah and Jobab (Yovav); all these ***were*** the sons of Joktan. **24** Shem, Arpachshad, Shelah, **25** Eber, Peleg, Reu, **26** Serug, Nahor (Nachor), Terah (Terach), **27** Abram (Avram), he ***is*** Abraham (Avraham).

The Sons of Abraham

28 The sons of Abraham ***were*** Isaac (Yitschaq) and Ishmael (Yishma'el). **29** These ***are*** their generations: the firstborn of Ishmael, Nebaioth (Nevayot); and Kedar (Qedar) and Adbeel and Mibsam (Mivsam), **30** Mishma and Dumah (Duma), Massa (Masa), Hadad (Chadad) and Tema, **31** Jetur (Yetur), Naphish (Nafish), and Kedemah (Qedma). These, they ***are*** the sons of Ishmael. **32** And the sons of Keturah (Qetura), the concubine of Abraham: she bore Zimran and Jokshan (Yoqshan) and Medan and Midian (Midyan) and Ishbak (Yishbaq) and Shuah (Shuach). And the sons of Jokshan ***were*** Sheba and Dedan. **33** And the sons of Midian ***were*** Ephah (Efa) and Epher (Efer) and Hanoch (Chanokh) and Abida (Avida) and Eldaah (Elda'a). All these ***were*** the sons of Keturah. **34** And Abraham fathered Isaac. The sons of Isaac ***were*** Esau (Esav) and Israel

1:1 Luke 3:38; Jude 1:14; Gen 4:25,26
1:2 Luke 3:37; Gen 5:12-14; Gen 5:15-17
1:3 Jude 1:14; Luke 3:36; Heb 11:5
1:4 Matt 24:37; Luke 3:36; Luke 17:26
1:5 Gen 10:1-5; Ezek 27:13; Ezek 38:2,3,6
1:6 Gen 10:3
1:7 Ps 72:10; Isa 66:19; Num 24:24
1:8 Gen 10:6,7
1:10 Gen 10:8-12; Mic 5:6
1:11 Gen 10:13,14
1:12 Deut 2:23; Jer 47:4; Amos 9:7
1:13 Gen 9:22,25,26; Gen 10:15-19; Gen 23:3,5,20
1:14 Gen 15:21; Josh 3:10; Exod 33:2
1:15 Exod 3:8,17; Exod 13:5; 1 Kgs 9:20
1:16 Num 34:8; 1 Kgs 8:65
1:17 Luke 3:36; Gen 10:22-32; Gen 11:10
1:18 Gen 10:24; Gen 11:12-15
1:19 Gen 10:21,25; Gen 11:16,17; Num 24:24
1:20 Gen 10:26,27
1:22 Gen 10:28
1:23 Gen 10:29; 1 Kgs 9:28; 1 Kgs 10:11
1:24 Gen 11:10-26; Luke 3:35
1:25 Luke 3:35
1:26 Luke 3:34; Luke 3:35
1:27 Luke 3:34; Gen 11:27-32; Gen 17:5
1:28 Matt 1:2; Luke 3:34; Gen 17:19-21
1:29 Gen 25:12-16; Gen 28:9; Isa 60:7
1:30 Isa 21:11; Gen 25:15
1:32 Gen 25:1-4; Gen 37:28; Exod 2:15,16
1:33 Isa 60:6
1:34 Matt 1:2; Luke 3:34; Acts 7:8

1:1 *Adam, Seth, Enosh* Ten generations from the first man to Noah, the line of Genesis 5, with no ages and no stories. The writer could assume his readers knew the stories behind each name.
1:1 *Adam* He starts with Adam, not Abraham or Jacob. Israel's story is part of the story of the whole human race. Luke traces Jesus' line back to "Adam, the son of God" (Luke 3:38). The Savior of Israel is also the Savior of the world.
1:4 *Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth* Through Noah's three sons all the nations came.
1:5 *The sons of Japheth* This section follows Genesis 10, the Table of Nations. From Japheth came peoples who spread north and west, such as Javan, the Greeks.
1:8 *The sons of Ham* Cush, Mizraim (Egypt), Put and Canaan. Among the Canaanite peoples are those Israel would later meet in the land: the Jebusite, the Amorite, the Hivite and others.
1:10 *he began to be a mighty man on the earth* Nimrod, from the line of Ham.
1:17 *The sons of Shem* Elam, Asshur (Assyria), Aram and others. Why list the nations at all? Because God never forgot them. He chose Israel for the sake of the nations, and all the families of the earth would be blessed in Abraham (Gen 12:3).
1:19 *in his days the earth was divided* Many Bible teachers connect this with the scattering of the nations at Babel (Gen 11:1-9). Scripture does not explain it further, so I will not build on it.
1:24 *Shem, Arpachshad, Shelah* Now the writer narrows the focus to the line of Genesis 11:10-26.
1:27 *Abram, he is Abraham* The name everything has been building to. God changed Abram's name to Abraham, father of a multitude (Gen 17:5). Ten generations from Adam to Noah, ten from Shem to Abraham, and out of all the nations God called one man. The small, weak returned exiles came from the man God chose and promised to bless.
1:28 *The sons of Abraham were Isaac and Ishmael* The writer's pattern all through these chapters: side branches first and briefly, then back to the main line. The side branches are not forgotten. God blessed Ishmael too (Gen 17:20). But the promise ran through Isaac and Jacob.
1:34 *The sons of Isaac were Esau and Israel* Jacob is called by his God-given name, Israel (Gen 32:28), the name of the whole nation.

(Yisra'el).

The Sons of Esau and the Kings of Edom

35 The sons of Esau ***were*** Eliphaz (Elifaz), Reuel, and Jeush (Yeush) and Jalam (Yalam) and Korah (Qorach). **36** The sons of Eliphaz ***were*** Teman and Omar, Zephi (Tsefi) and Gatam, Kenaz (Qenaz) and Timna and Amalek (Amaleq). **37** The sons of Reuel ***were*** Nahath (Nachat), Zerah (Zerach), Shammah (Shama), and Mizzah (Miza). **38** And the sons of Seir (Se'ir) ***were*** Lotan and Shobal (Shoval) and Zibeon (Tsivon) and Anah (Ana) and Dishon and Ezer (Etser) and Dishan. **39** And the sons of Lotan ***were*** Hori (Chori) and Hemam (Homam); and the sister of Lotan ***was*** Timna. **40** The sons of Shobal ***were*** Alvan (Alyan) and Manahath (Manachat) and Ebal (Eval), Shephi (Shefi) and Onam. And the sons of Zibeon ***were*** Aiah (Aya) and Anah. **41** The sons of Anah ***were*** Dishon. And the sons of Dishon ***were*** Hemdan (Chamran) and Eshban and Ithran (Yitran) and Cheran (Keran). **42** The sons of Ezer ***were*** Bilhan and Zaavan, Akan (Ya'aqan). The sons of Dishan (Dishon) ***were*** Uz and Aran. **43** And these ***are*** the kings who reigned in the land of Edom before a king reigned over the sons of Israel: Bela the son of Beor; and the name of his city ***was*** Dinhabah (Dinhava). **44** And Bela died, and Jobab the son of Zerah from Bozrah (Botsra) reigned in his place. **45** And Jobab died, and Husham (Chusham) from the land of the Temanites reigned in his place. **46** And Husham died, and Hadad the son of Bedad, who struck Midian in the field of Moab (Mo'av), reigned in his place; and the name of his city ***was*** Avith (Avit). **47** And Hadad died, and Samlah (Samla) from Masrekah (Masreqa) reigned in his place. **48** And Samlah died, and Shaul from Rehoboth (Rechovot) of the River (Nahar) reigned in his place. **49** And Shaul died, and Baal-hanan (Ba'al-Chanan) the son of Achbor (Akhbor)
reigned in his place. **50** And Baal-hanan died, and Hadad reigned in his place; and the name of his city ***was*** Pai (Pa'i), and the name of his wife ***was*** Mehetabel (Mehetav'el), the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Mezahab (Me-Zahav). **51** And Hadad died. And the chiefs of Edom were: chief Timna, chief Alvah (Alva), chief Jetheth (Yetet), **52** chief Oholibamah (Oholivama), chief Elah (Ela), chief Pinon,
53 chief Kenaz, chief Teman, chief Mibzar (Mivtsar), **54** chief Magdiel, chief Iram. These ***are*** the chiefs of Edom.

1 CHRONICLES 2

The Sons of Israel

1 These ***are*** the sons of Israel (Yisra'el): Reuben (Reuven), Simeon (Shimon), Levi, and Judah (Yehuda), Issachar
(Yisashkhar), and Zebulun (Zevulun), **2** Dan, Joseph (Yosef), and Benjamin (Binyamin), Naphtali (Naftali), Gad, and Asher.

The Line of Judah

3 The sons of Judah ***were*** Er and Onan and Shelah (Shela); three were born to him from the daughter of Shua, the Canaanite ***woman***. And Er, the firstborn of Judah, was evil in the eyes of the LORD, and He put him to death. **4** And Tamar his daughter-in-law bore to him Perez (Perets) and Zerah (Zerach). All the sons of Judah ***were*** five. **5** The sons of Perez ***were*** Hezron (Chetsron) and Hamul (Chamul). **6** And the sons of Zerah ***were*** Zimri and Ethan (Etan) and Heman and Calcol (Kalkol) and Dara; all of them ***were*** five. **7** And the sons of Carmi (Karmi) ***were*** Achan (Akhar), the troubler of Israel, who acted unfaithfully in the devoted thing. **8** And the sons of Ethan ***were*** Azariah (Azarya). **9** And the sons of Hezron who were born to him: Jerahmeel (Yerachme'el) and Ram and Chelubai (Keluvay). **10** And Ram fathered Amminadab (Aminadav), and Amminadab fathered Nahshon (Nachshon), the leader of the sons of Judah; **11** and Nahshon fathered Salmon (Salma), and Salmon fathered Boaz; **12** and Boaz fathered Obed (Oved), and Obed fathered Jesse (Yishay); **13** and Jesse fathered his firstborn Eliab (Eli'av), and Abinadab (Avinadav) the second, and Shimea (Shima) the third, **14** Nethanel (Netanel) the fourth, Raddai (Raday) the fifth,

1:35 Gen 36:4,5,9,10
1:36 1 Chr 1:53; Gen 36:11-15; Jer 49:7,20
1:38 Gen 36:20,29,30; Gen 36:21
1:39 Deut 2:12,22; Gen 36:22
1:40 Gen 36:23; Gen 36:24
1:41 Gen 36:25; Gen 36:26
1:42 Gen 36:27; Lam 4:21; Gen 36:28
1:43 Gen 36:31-39; Gen 49:10; Num 24:17-19
1:44 Isa 34:6; Isa 63:1; Jer 49:13
1:48 Gen 36:37
1:50 Gen 36:39
1:51 Gen 36:40
1:54 Gen 36:41-43
2:1 Rev 7:5; Rev 7:7; Rev 7:8
2:3 Gen 38:2-10; Gen 46:12; Num 26:19
2:4 Matt 1:3; Luke 3:33; Gen 38:13-30
2:5 Matt 1:3; Luke 3:33; Gen 46:12
2:6 1 Kgs 4:31; Josh 7:1,17,18
2:7 Josh 6:18; Josh 7:1-5; Deut 7:26
2:9 Matt 1:3; Luke 3:33; Ruth 4:19
2:10 Matt 1:4; Luke 3:32; Luke 3:33
2:11 Matt 1:4; Luke 3:32; Matt 1:5
2:12 Matt 1:5; Luke 3:32; Acts 13:22
2:13 Luke 3:32; 1 Sam 17:13,28; 1 Sam 16:6-13

1:35 *The sons of Esau* Esau, also called Edom, from Genesis 36. Edom was Israel's brother nation and often its bitter enemy. In the writer's own day the Edomites had moved into the south of Judah. Yet God kept their record too.
1:36 *Amalek* Father of a people who would fight Israel for centuries.
1:38 *the sons of Seir* The people who lived in that land before Esau's family took it over.
1:43 *the kings who reigned in the land of Edom before a king reigned over the sons of Israel* Edom had kings first, but Israel's King would last. The kings of Edom each died, one after another (1:44-51). God's promise to David's house, which this book is building toward, would not die.
2:1 *These are the sons of Israel* The returned exiles were mostly from Judah, Benjamin and Levi, but the writer begins with all twelve. In his mind God's people were still one people, all of Israel. The prophets say God will one day gather all the tribes again (Ezek 37:15-22).
2:3 *Er, the firstborn of Judah, was evil in the eyes of the LORD, and He put him to death* Scripture does not say what Er's evil was, and I will not guess. It tells us the LORD is the Judge of all, and His judgment was just.
2:4 *Tamar his daughter-in-law* The whole sad story is in Genesis 38. The writer is honest. The line of David, and of the Messiah, came through sinners and broken families. Matthew names Tamar too (Matt 1:3). God did not choose this family because it was good. He chose it in grace.
2:7 *Achan, the troubler of Israel, who acted unfaithfully in the devoted thing* Achan kept what God had devoted to Him at Jericho, and it brought defeat on all Israel (Josh 7). Unfaithfully is a key word in Chronicles. It comes back when Saul dies (10:13) and when the nation goes into exile (9:1).
2:10 *the leader of the sons of Judah* Nahshon led his tribe in the wilderness (Num 2:3).
2:12 *Boaz fathered Obed, and Obed fathered Jesse* The same line that ends the book of Ruth (Ruth 4:18-22). Boaz married Ruth the Moabite, and Matthew names her too (Matt 1:5).

15 Ozem (Otsem) the sixth, David the seventh; **16** and their sisters ***were*** Zeruiah (Tseruya) and Abigail (Avigayil). And the sons of Zeruiah ***were*** Abishai (Avishay) and Joab (Yo'av) and Asahel, three. **17** And Abigail bore Amasa; and the father of Amasa ***was*** Jether (Yeter) the Ishmaelite.

The Family of Caleb

18 And Caleb (Kalev) the son of Hezron fathered ***children*** with Azubah (Azuva), a wife, and with Jerioth (Yeriot); and these ***were*** her sons: Jesher (Yesher) and Shobab (Shovav) and Ardon. **19** And Azubah died, and Caleb took for himself Ephrath (Efrat), and she bore to him Hur (Chur). **20** And Hur fathered Uri, and Uri fathered Bezalel (Betsalel). **21** And afterward Hezron went in to the daughter of Machir (Makhir) the father of Gilead (Gilad), and he took her, and he ***was*** a son of sixty years; and she bore to him Segub (Seguv). **22** And Segub fathered Jair (Ya'ir), and to him belonged twenty and three cities in the land of Gilead. **23** And Geshur and Syria (Aram) took Havvoth-jair (Chavvot-Ya'ir) from them, Kenath (Qenat) and its villages, sixty cities. All these ***were*** the sons of Machir the father of Gilead. **24** And after the death of Hezron in Caleb-ephrathah (Kalev-Efrata), and the wife of Hezron ***was*** Abijah (Aviya), and she bore to him Ashhur (Ashchur) the father of Tekoa (Teqoa).

The Family of Jerahmeel

25 And the sons of Jerahmeel the firstborn of Hezron were: the firstborn Ram, and Bunah (Buna) and Oren and Ozem, Ahijah (Achiya). **26** And Jerahmeel had another wife, and her name ***was*** Atarah (Atara); she ***was*** the mother of Onam. **27** And the sons of Ram the firstborn of Jerahmeel were Maaz (Ma'ats) and Jamin (Yamin) and Eker (Eqer). **28** And the sons of Onam were Shammai (Shamay) and Jada (Yada). And the sons of Shammai ***were*** Nadab (Nadav) and Abishur (Avishur). **29** And the name of the wife of Abishur ***was*** Abihail (Avichayil), and she bore to him Ahban (Achvan) and Molid. **30** And the sons of Nadab ***were*** Seled and Appaim (Apayim); and Seled died without sons. **31** And the sons of Appaim ***were*** Ishi (Yishi). And the sons of Ishi ***were*** Sheshan. And the sons of Sheshan ***were*** Ahlai (Achlay). **32** And the sons of Jada the brother of Shammai ***were*** Jether and Jonathan (Yonatan); and Jether died without sons. **33** And the sons of Jonathan ***were*** Peleth (Pelet) and Zaza. These were the sons of Jerahmeel. **34** And Sheshan had no sons, but daughters; and Sheshan ***had*** a slave, an Egyptian, and his name ***was*** Jarha (Yarcha). **35** And Sheshan gave his daughter to Jarha his slave for a wife, and she bore to him Attai (Atay). **36** And Attai fathered Nathan (Natan), and Nathan fathered Zabad (Zavad); **37** and Zabad fathered Ephlal (Eflal), and Ephlal fathered Obed; **38** and Obed fathered Jehu (Yehu), and Jehu fathered Azariah; **39** and Azariah fathered Helez (Chelets), and Helez fathered Eleasah (Elasa); **40** and Eleasah fathered Sismai (Sismay), and Sismai fathered Shallum (Shalum); **41** and Shallum fathered Jekamiah (Yeqamya), and Jekamiah fathered Elishama.

More Clans of Caleb

42 And the sons of Caleb the brother of Jerahmeel ***were*** Mesha his firstborn; he ***was*** the father of Ziph (Zif); and the sons of Mareshah (Maresha) the father of Hebron (Chevron). **43** And the sons of Hebron ***were*** Korah (Qorach) and Tappuah (Tapuach) and Rekem (Reqem) and Shema. **44** And Shema fathered Raham (Racham) the father of Jorkeam (Yorqe'am); and Rekem fathered Shammai. **45** And the son of Shammai ***was*** Maon, and Maon ***was*** the father of Beth-zur (Bet-Tsur). **46** And Ephah (Efa) the concubine of Caleb bore Haran (Charan) and Moza (Motsa) and Gazez; and Haran fathered Gazez. **47** And the sons of Jahdai (Yahday) ***were*** Regem and Jotham (Yotam) and Geshan and Pelet and Ephah and Shaaph (Sha'af). **48** The concubine of Caleb, Maacah (Ma'akha), bore Sheber (Shever) and Tirhanah (Tirchana). **49** And she bore Shaaph the father of Madmannah (Madmana), Sheva the father of Machbenah (Makhbena) and the father of Gibea (Giva); and the daughter of Caleb ***was*** Achsah (Akhsa). **50** These were the sons of Caleb the son of Hur, the firstborn of Ephrathah: Shobal (Shoval) the father of Kiriath-jearim (Qiryat-Ye'arim), **51** Salma the father of Bethlehem (Bet-Lechem), Hareph (Charef) the father of Beth-gader (Bet-Gader). **52** And Shobal the father of Kiriath-jearim had sons: Haroeh (Ro'e), half of the Menuhoth. **53** And the clans of Kiriath-jearim ***were*** the Ithrite and the Puthite and the Shumathite and the Mishraite; from these came out the Zorathite and the Eshtaolite. **54** The sons of Salma ***were*** Beth-

2:15 Matt 1:6; 1 Sam 16:10,11; 1 Sam 17:12-14
2:16 1 Sam 26:6; 2 Sam 2:18-23; 2 Sam 3:39
2:17 2 Sam 17:25; 2 Sam 19:13; 2 Sam 20:4-12
2:19 1 Chr 2:24,50; 1 Chr 4:4; Mic 5:2
2:20 Exod 31:2; Exod 36:1,2; Exod 37:1
2:21 Num 27:1; Gen 50:23; Num 26:29
2:22 Num 32:41; Deut 3:14; Josh 13:30
2:23 Josh 13:13; 2 Sam 13:38
2:24 1 Chr 4:5; 1 Chr 2:9,18,19; 1 Sam 30:14
2:31 1 Chr 2:34,35
2:36 1 Chr 11:41
2:42 1 Chr 2:18,19,24; Gen 49:3; Exod 4:22,23
2:45 Josh 15:58; 2 Chr 11:7
2:46 1 Chr 2:18,19,48
2:48 1 Chr 2:46; Gen 25:5,6
2:49 Josh 15:31; 1 Chr 2:42; Isa 10:31
2:50 1 Chr 2:19,20; 1 Chr 2:53; 1 Chr 13:5,6
2:51 Matt 2:1; Matt 2:6; John 7:42
2:52 1 Chr 4:2
2:53 2 Sam 23:38; Josh 15:33; Judg 13:2,25
2:54 Ezra 2:22; Neh 7:26; Neh 12:28

2:15 *David the seventh* First Samuel 16:10-11 makes eight sons. Most Bible teachers believe one son died young or without children and is not counted. Either way, David was the youngest, the one no one expected God to choose. From Judah through Perez to David, Matthew and Luke give the same names on the way to Jesus (Matt 1:3-6; Luke 3:31-33).
2:16 *their sisters were Zeruiah and Abigail* Their sons Joab, Abishai, Asahel and Amasa would be David's army commanders. A real family, with nephews who served him, and sometimes troubled him.
2:20 *Bezalel* The craftsman God filled with His Spirit to build the tabernacle (Exod 31:1-5). A book so focused on worship names the man who built Israel's first house of worship.
2:21 *Hezron went in to the daughter of Machir* Their descendant Jair held twenty-three cities in Gilead. The families of Israel were tied together by marriage across tribes.
2:25 *the sons of Jerahmeel the firstborn of Hezron* Most of these names are known only from here.
2:35 *Sheshan gave his daughter to Jarha his slave for a wife* An Egyptian slave became part of a family of Judah, and his descendants were counted among God's people for thirteen generations (2:36-41). Israel itself had been slaves in Egypt. Grace has always reached past the borders we draw.
2:51 *Salma the father of Bethlehem* In these lists, father of a town often means its founder or leader. These were towns of the hill country of Judah where many returned exiles lived. Bethlehem was David's hometown and would be the birthplace of Jesus (Mic 5:2; Matt 2:6).

lehem and ***the*** Netophathite, Atroth-beth-joab
(Atrot-Bet-Yo'av), and the half of the Manahathite, the
Zorite. **55** And the clans of scribes, the inhabitants of Jabez
(Yabets), ***were*** Tirathites (Tiratim), Shimeathites, Sucathites.
They ***are*** the Kenites who came from Hammath (Chamat), the
father of the house of Rechab (Rekhav).

1 CHRONICLES 3

The Sons of David

1 And these were the sons of David who were born to him in
Hebron (Chevron): the firstborn, Amnon, by Ahinoam
(Achino'am) the Jezreelite ***woman***; second, Daniel (Daniyel),
by Abigail (Avigayil) the Carmelite ***woman***; **2** the third, Absa-
lom (Avshalom) the son of Maacah (Ma'akha) the daughter of
Talmai (Talmay) the king of Geshur; the fourth, Adonijah
(Adoniya) the son of Haggith (Chagit); **3** the fifth, Shephatiah
(Shefatya), by Abital (Avital); the sixth, Ithream (Yitre'am),
by Eglah (Egla) his wife. **4** Six were born to him in Hebron;
and he reigned there seven years and six months, and thirty
and three years he reigned in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim).
5 And these were born to him in Jerusalem: Shimea (Shima)
and Shobab (Shovav) and Nathan (Natan) and Solomon
(Shelomo), four, by Bath-shua (Bat-Shua) the daughter of
Ammiel (Ami'el); **6** and Ibhar (Yivchar) and Elishama and
Eliphelet (Elifelet) **7** and Nogah and Nepheg (Nefeg) and
Japhia (Yafia) **8** and Elishama and Eliada (Elyada) and
Eliphelet, nine. **9** All ***were*** the sons of David, besides the sons
of concubines; and Tamar ***was*** their sister.

The Kings of Judah

10 And the son of Solomon ***was*** Rehoboam (Rechavam);
Abijah (Aviya) his son, Asa his son, Jehoshaphat (Yehoshafat)
his son, **11** Joram (Yoram) his son, Ahaziah (Achazyahu) his
son, Joash (Yo'ash) his son, **12** Amaziah (Amatsyahu) his son,
Azariah (Azaryah) his son, Jotham (Yotam) his son, **13** Ahaz
(Achaz) his son, Hezekiah (Chizqiyahu) his son, Manasseh
(Menashe) his son, **14** Amon his son, Josiah (Yoshiyahu) his
son. **15** And the sons of Josiah ***were*** the firstborn Johanan
(Yochanan), the second Jehoiakim (Yehoyaqim), the third
Zedekiah (Tsidqiyahu), the fourth Shallum (Shalum). **16** And
the sons of Jehoiakim ***were*** Jeconiah (Yekhonya) his son,
Zedekiah (Tsidqiya) his son.

The Royal Line after the Exile

17 And the sons of Jeconiah the prisoner ***were*** Shealtiel
(She'alti'el) his son, **18** and Malchiram (Malkiram) and Peda-
iah (Pedaya) and Shenazzar (Shenatsar), Jekamiah
(Yeqamya), Hoshama, and Nedabiah (Nedavya). **19** And the
sons of Pedaiah ***were*** Zerubbabel (Zerubavel) and Shimei
(Shimi). And the son of Zerubbabel: Meshullam (Meshulam)
and Hananiah (Chananya), and Shelomith (Shelomit) their
sister, **20** and Hashubah (Chashuva) and Ohel and Berechiah
(Berekhya) and Hasadiah (Chasadya), Jushab-hesed
(Yushav-Chesed), five. **21** And the son of Hananiah: Pelatiah
(Pelatya) and Jeshaiah (Yeshaya); the sons of Rephaiah
(Refaya), the sons of Arnan, the sons of Obadiah (Ovadya),
the sons of Shecaniah (Shekhanya). **22** And the sons of Sheca-
niah ***were*** Shemaiah (Shemaya); and the sons of Shemaiah
were Hattush (Chatush) and Igal (Yigal) and Bariah (Bariach)
and Neariah (Ne'arya) and Shaphat (Shafat), six. **23** And the
son of Neariah: Elioenai (Elyo'enay) and Hizkiah (Chizqiya)
and Azrikam (Azriqam), three. **24** And the sons of Elioenai
were Hodaviah (Hodavyahu) and Eliashib (Elyashiv) and Pela-
iah (Pelaya) and Akkub (Aquv) and Johanan and Delaiah
(Delaya) and Anani, seven.

2:55 Judg 1:16; 2 Kgs 10:15; Judg 4:11
3:1 2 Sam 3:2-5; Josh 15:56; 2 Sam 13:1,29
3:2 2 Sam 13:1,20-28,38; 2 Sam 18:14,18,33; 2 Sam 19:4-10
3:3 2 Sam 3:5
3:4 2 Sam 2:11; 2 Sam 5:4,5; 1 Kgs 2:11
3:5 Luke 3:31; Matt 1:6; 2 Sam 11:3
3:6 1 Chr 14:5; 2 Sam 5:15; 1 Sam 14:5
3:7 2 Sam 5:15,16
3:8 1 Chr 14:7; 2 Sam 5:14-16
3:9 2 Sam 5:13; 2 Sam 13:1-20
3:10 Matt 1:7; Matt 1:8; 1 Kgs 11:43
3:11 2 Kgs 8:24; 2 Chr 21:1; 2 Chr 21:17
3:12 Matt 1:9; 2 Kgs 14:1; 2 Chr 25:1
3:13 Matt 1:10; 2 Kgs 16:1; 2 Kgs 18:1
3:14 Matt 1:11; 2 Kgs 23:30; 2 Kgs 21:19
3:15 Matt 1:11; Matt 1:10
3:16 2 Kgs 24:6,8; Matt 1:11; Jer 22:24,28
3:17 Matt 1:12; Matt 1:11; Ezra 3:2,8
3:19 Matt 1:12; Ezra 2:2; Ezra 3:2
3:21 Neh 10:22
3:22 Ezra 8:2

2:55 *the house of Rechab* The Kenites were the people of Moses'
father-in-law, who joined Israel (Judg 1:16), and the Rechabites were later praised for their faithfulness (Jer 35). Once again, people from outside Israel were found among God's people.

3:1 *the sons of David who were born to him in Hebron* Six sons from six mothers. Daniel is called Chileab in 2 Samuel 3:3. Amnon, Absalom and Adonijah bring back painful memories (2 Sam 13-18; 1 Kgs 1). Many wives did not bring David peace but rivalry and grief, as God had warned (Deut 17:17).

3:4 *seven years and six months* His reign in Hebron, then thirty-three years in Jerusalem.

3:5 *Bath-shua the daughter of Ammiel* Another form of Bathsheba (2 Sam 11:3; 12:24). Matthew traces Jesus' line through Solomon (Matt 1:6-16) and Luke through Nathan (Luke 3:31). Many teachers believe Matthew gives Joseph's line, Jesus' legal right to the throne, and Luke gives Mary's, His blood descent. God took a marriage that began in sin and, after David's repentance, used it in His plan of salvation.

3:10 *the son of Solomon was Rehoboam* The kings of Judah, father to son. Athaliah, who seized the throne for six years (2 Kgs 11), is left out. She was not of David's line.

3:13 *Hezekiah his son, Manasseh his son* For nearly four hundred years, about 970 to 586 B.C., a son of David sat on the throne in Jerusalem, through good kings and bad. God's promise did not depend on how well David's sons behaved. It depended on Him.

3:15 *the sons of Josiah* Three of them reigned: Shallum (Jehoahaz), Jehoiakim and Zedekiah. Jehoiakim's son Jeconiah reigned three months before Babylon took him (2 Kgs 24:8-15).

3:17 *the sons of Jeconiah the prisoner* Carried off in 597 B.C., he spent thirty-seven years in prison (2 Kgs 25:27-30). Jeremiah said none of his offspring would prosper on David's throne (Jer 22:30), yet his line went on, and Matthew names Jeconiah, Shealtiel and Zerubbabel (Matt 1:12). God kept the family alive in exile.

3:19 *the sons of Pedaiah were Zerubbabel* Ezra and Haggai call him the son of Shealtiel (Ezra 3:2; Hag 1:1). Perhaps Pedaiah raised up a son in his brother's name (Deut 25:5-6), or son means grandson in one list. Scripture does not say. Zerubbabel led the first return and rebuilt the temple, and God called him His signet ring (Hag 2:23).

3:24 *seven* These were men the first readers may have known. The royal family lived among them, without a crown but not without a promise. About five hundred years after Zerubbabel, from this family, Jesus was born.

1 CHRONICLES 4

More Clans of Judah

1 The sons of Judah (Yehuda) ***were*** Perez (Perets), Hezron (Chetsron), and Carmi (Karmi) and Hur (Chur) and Shobal (Shoval). **2** And Reaiah (Re'aya) the son of Shobal fathered Jahath (Yachat), and Jahath fathered Ahumai (Achumay) and Lahad. These ***were*** the clans of the Zorathite. **3** And these ***were of*** the father of Etam: Jezreel (Yizre'el) and Ishma (Yishma) and Idbash (Yidbash); and the name of their sister ***was*** Hazzelelponi (Hatselelponi); **4** and Penuel (Penu'el) ***was*** the father of Gedor, and Ezer the father of Hushah (Chusha). These ***were*** the sons of Hur, the firstborn of Ephrathah (Efrata), the father of Bethlehem (Bet-Lechem). **5** And
Ashhur (Ashchur) the father of Tekoa (Teqoa) had two wives, Helah (Chela) and Naarah (Na'ara). **6** And Naarah bore to him Ahuzzam (Achuzam) and Hepher (Chefer) and Temeni and Haahashtari. These ***were*** the sons of Naarah. **7** And the sons of Helah ***were*** Zereth (Tseret) and Zohar (Tsochar) and Ethnan (Etnan). **8** And Koz (Qots) fathered Anub (Anuv) and Zobebah (Tsoveva), and the clans of Aharhel (Acharchel) the son of Harum.

The Prayer of Jabez

9 And Jabez (Yabets) was honored more than his brothers; and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, "Because I gave birth in pain." **10** And Jabez called to the God of Israel (Yisra'el), saying, "If You will indeed bless me, and increase my border, and Your hand will be with me, and You will keep ***me*** from harm so as not to pain me—" And God brought what he had asked.

Clans of Craftsmen

11 And Chelub (Keluv) the brother of Shuhah (Shucha) fathered Mehir (Mechir); he ***was*** the father of Eshton. **12** And Eshton fathered Beth-rapha (Bet-Rafa) and Paseah (Paseach) and Tehinnah (Techina) the father of Ir-nahash (Ir-Nachash). These ***were*** the men of Recah (Rekha). **13** And the sons of Kenaz (Qenaz) ***were*** Othniel (Otni'el) and Seraiah (Seraya); and the sons of Othniel ***were*** Hathath (Chatat). **14** And Meonothai (Meonotay) fathered Ophrah (Ofra); and Seraiah fathered Joab (Yo'av) the father of Ge-harashim
(Ge-Charashim), for they were craftsmen. **15** And the sons of Caleb (Kalev) the son of Jephunneh (Yefune) ***were*** Iru, Elah (Ela), and Naam; and the sons of Elah, and Kenaz. **16** And the sons of Jehallelel (Yehalelel) ***were*** Ziph (Zif) and Ziphah (Zifa), Tiria (Tirya) and Asarel. **17** And the son of Ezrah (Ezra): Jether (Yeter) and Mered and Epher (Efer) and Jalon (Yalon). And she conceived Miriam (Miryam) and Shammai (Shamay) and Ishbah (Yishbach) the father of Eshtemoa. **18** And his wife, the Judahite, bore Jered (Yered) the father of Gedor, and Heber (Chever) the father of Soco (Sokho), and Jekuthiel (Yequti'el) the father of Zanoah (Zanoach). And these ***are*** the sons of Bithiah (Bitya) the daughter of Pharaoh, whom Mered took. **19** And the sons of the wife of Hodiah (Hodiya), the sister of Naham (Nacham), ***were*** the father of Keilah (Qe'ila) the Garmite, and Eshtemoa the Maacathite. **20** And the sons of Shimon ***were*** Amnon and Rinnah (Rina), Ben-hanan (Ben-Chanan) and Tilon. And the sons of Ishi (Yishi) ***were*** Zoheth (Zochet) and Ben-zoheth (Ben-Zochet). **21** The sons of Shelah (Shela) the son of Judah ***were*** Er the father of Lecah (Lekha), and Laadah (Lada) the father of Mareshah (Maresha), and the clans of the house of the work of the fine linen, of the house of Ashbea; **22** and Jokim (Yoqim), and the men of Cozeba (Kozeva), and Joash (Yo'ash) and Saraph (Saraf), who ruled over Moab (Mo'av), and Jashubi-lehem (Yashuvi-Lachem). And the words ***are*** ancient. **23** They ***were*** the potters and the inhabitants of Netaim and Gederah (Gedera); with the king in his work they dwelt there.

The Tribe of Simeon

24 The sons of Simeon (Shimon) ***were*** Nemuel and Jamin (Yamin), Jarib (Yariv), Zerah (Zerach), Shaul; **25** Shallum (Shalum) his son, Mibsam (Mivsam) his son, Mishma his son. **26** And the sons of Mishma ***were*** Hammuel (Chamu'el) his son, Zaccur (Zakur) his son, Shimei (Shimi) his son. **27** And

4:1 Matt 1:3; Luke 3:33; Gen 46:12
4:2 1 Chr 2:52; Josh 15:33; Judg 13:25
4:3 Judg 15:11; 2 Chr 11:6
4:4 1 Chr 4:18,39; Josh 15:36; 1 Chr 2:19,50
4:5 1 Chr 2:24
4:9 Acts 17:11; Gen 34:19; Isa 43:4
4:10 John 17:15; Rom 10:13; Matt 7:7-11
4:13 Josh 15:17; Judg 1:13; Judg 3:9-11
4:14 2 Kgs 24:14; Neh 11:35
4:15 Num 13:6,30; Num 14:6-10,24,30; Josh 14:6-14
4:17 1 Chr 4:19; 1 Chr 6:57; Josh 15:50
4:18 1 Chr 4:4,39; 1 Chr 2:42; Josh 15:58
4:19 Josh 15:44; 1 Sam 23:1-13
4:21 Gen 38:5; 1 Chr 2:3; Gen 46:12
4:23 1 Chr 4:14; Ps 81:6
4:24 Gen 46:10; Exod 6:15; Num 26:12-14
4:27 Num 2:4,13; Num 26:14,22

4:4 *the firstborn of Ephrathah, the father of Bethlehem* We do not know most of these people beyond their names. But God knew them, and their names were kept. The writer shows the returned people that their towns and clans had roots going back centuries.
4:9 *Jabez was honored more than his brothers* Then the list stops. In Hebrew the name Jabez sounds like the word for pain, a reminder of his hard beginning every time someone called him. Jabez did not let his pain define him. He took it to God.
4:10 *Jabez called to the God of Israel* The God of the covenant, not some other god. He asked honestly for blessing, for room for his family in the land, for God's hand and for protection, and many teachers understand the harm as harm from evil as well as hardship. The prayer is unfinished in the Hebrew, as if he simply left it with God (Phil 4:6; Matt 7:7-11).
4:10 *God brought what he had asked* That is all we are told. The text does not tell us to repeat his words as a formula for a larger life. We can ask wrongly (James 4:3), God hears what we ask "according to His will" (1 John 5:14), and sometimes He gives grace instead (2 Cor 12:7-9). The blessing is in God, not in the words.
4:14 *for they were craftsmen* Ge-harashim means the valley of craftsmen. Some clans were named for their trades.
4:15 *Caleb the son of Jephunneh* The faithful spy who followed the LORD fully (Num 14:24).
4:18 *Bithiah the daughter of Pharaoh* An Egyptian princess became part of a family of Judah. Her name means daughter of the LORD, perhaps a name she took when she joined His people.
4:22 *the words are ancient* The writer's records were old, passed down for many generations.
4:23 *with the king in his work they dwelt there* Potters who did skilled work for the king. God's people are potters and weavers, builders and farmers, not only kings and priests. Whatever we do, we work at it from the heart, as for the Lord (Col 3:23).
4:27 *all their clan did not multiply as much as the sons of Judah* Jacob said Simeon would be scattered in Israel (Gen 49:5-7) because of Shechem (Gen 34). Simeon received towns within Judah's land (Josh 19:1-9) and in time blended into Judah.

Shimei ***had*** sixteen sons and six daughters; and his brothers ***had*** not many sons, and all their clan did not multiply as much as the sons of Judah. **28** And they dwelt in Beersheba (Be'er-Sheva) and Moladah (Molada) and Hazar-shual (Chatsar-Shu'al) **29** and in Bilhah (Bilha) and in Ezem (Etsem) and in Tolad **30** and in Bethuel (Betu'el) and in Hormah (Chorma) and in Ziklag (Tsiqlag) **31** and in Beth-marcaboth (Bet-Markavot) and in Hazar-susim (Chatsar-Susim) and in Beth-biri (Bet-Biri) and in Shaaraim (Sha'arayim). These ***were*** their cities until David reigned. **32** And their villages ***were*** Etam and Ain (Ayin), Rimmon (Rimon) and Tochen (Tokhen) and Ashan, five cities, **33** and all their villages that ***were*** around these cities as far as Baal. These ***were*** their dwelling places, and their genealogical enrollment ***belonged*** to them: **34** and Meshobab (Meshovav) and Jamlech (Yamlekh) and Joshah (Yosha) the son of Amaziah (Amatsya), **35** and Joel (Yo'el) and Jehu (Yehu) the son of Joshibiah (Yoshivya), the son of Seraiah, the son of Asiel, **36** and Elioenai (Elyo'enay) and Jaakobah (Ya'aqova) and Jeshohaiah (Yeshochaya) and Asaiah (Asaya) and Adiel and Jesimiel (Yeshimi'el) and Benaiah (Benaya), **37** and Ziza the son of Shiphi (Shifi), the son of Allon (Alon), the son of Jedaiah (Yedaya), the son of Shimri, the son of Shemaiah (Shemaya). **38** These who came by names ***were*** leaders in their clans; and the house of their fathers spread out abundantly. **39** And they went to the entrance of Gedor, as far as the east of the valley, to seek pasture for their flock. **40** And they found pasture, rich and good, and the land ***was*** wide on both sides, and quiet and at ease; for those dwelling there before ***were*** from Ham (Cham). **41** And these who were written by names came in the days of Hezekiah (Chizqiyahu) the king of Judah, and they struck their tents and the Meunites (Meunim) who were found there, and they devoted them to destruction until this day, and they dwelt in their place, for pasture for their flock ***was*** there. **42** And from them, from the sons of Simeon, five hundred men went to the mountain of Seir (Se'ir); and Pelatiah (Pelatya) and Neariah (Ne'arya) and Rephaiah (Refaya) and Uzziel (Uzi'el), the sons of Ishi, ***were*** at their head. **43** And they struck the remnant of the escaped ***ones*** of Amalek (Amaleq), and they have dwelt there until this day.

1 CHRONICLES 5

The Tribe of Reuben

1 And the sons of Reuben (Reuven) the firstborn of Israel (Yisra'el)—for he ***was*** the firstborn, and when he profaned the beds of his father his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph (Yosef) the son of Israel, and not to be enrolled in the genealogy according to the birthright; **2** for Judah (Yehuda) prevailed among his brothers, and from him ***came*** a leader, and the birthright ***belonged*** to Joseph— **3** the sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel ***were*** Hanoch (Chanokh) and Pallu (Palu), Hezron (Chetsron) and Carmi (Karmi). **4** The sons of Joel (Yo'el) ***were*** Shemaiah (Shemaya) his son, Gog his son, Shimei (Shimi) his son, **5** Micah (Mikha) his son, Reaiah (Re'aya) his son, Baal his son, **6** Beerah (Be'era) his son, whom Tiglath-pileser (Tilegat-Pilne'eser) the king of Assyria (Ashur) carried into exile; he ***was*** a leader of the Reubenites. **7** And his brothers, by his clans, in the enrollment of their generations, ***were***: the chief, Jeiel (Ye'i'el), and Zechariah (Zekharyahu), **8** and Bela the son of Azaz, the son of Shema, the son of Joel; he ***was*** dwelling in Aroer (Aro'er), and as far as Nebo (Nevo) and Baal-meon (Ba'al-Meon). **9** And to the east he dwelt as far as the entrance of the wilderness from the river Euphrates (Perat), for their livestock had multiplied in the land of Gilead (Gilad). **10** And in the days of Saul (Shaul) they made war with the Hagrites, and they fell by their hand; and they dwelt in their tents over all the face of the east of Gilead.

The Tribe of Gad

11 And the sons of Gad dwelt opposite them in the land of Bashan as far as Salecah (Salkha): **12** Joel ***was*** the chief, and Shapham (Shafam) the second, and Janai (Ya'anay) and Shaphat (Shafat) in Bashan. **13** And their brothers of the house of their fathers ***were*** Michael (Mikha'el) and Meshullam (Meshulam) and Sheba (Sheva) and Jorai (Yoray) and Jacan (Yakan) and Zia and Eber (Ever), seven. **14** These ***were*** the sons of Abihail (Avichayil) the son of Huri (Churi), the son of Jaroah (Yaroach), the son of Gilead, the son of Michael, the son of Jeshishai (Yeshishay), the son of Jahdo (Yachdo), the son of Buz; **15** Ahi (Achi) the son of Abdiel (Avdi'el), the

4:28 Josh 19:2,3,9; Josh 15:28,29
4:29 Josh 19:3; Josh 19:4
4:30 Josh 19:4; 1 Chr 12:1; Josh 15:31
4:31 Josh 19:5,6
4:32 Josh 19:7
4:33 Josh 19:8
4:38 1 Chr 5:24; Gen 6:4
4:39 1 Chr 4:4,18; Josh 15:58; Josh 12:13
4:40 Judg 18:7-10; Gen 9:22-29; Gen 10:6
4:41 2 Kgs 18:8-12; Isa 14:28-32; Judg 10:12
4:42 Gen 36:8,9; Deut 1:2
4:43 1 Sam 30:17; 1 Sam 15:7,8; 2 Sam 8:12
5:1 Gen 29:32; Gen 35:22; Gen 48:15-22
5:2 Matt 2:6; Mic 5:2; Gen 49:8-10
5:3 Gen 46:9; Exod 6:14; Num 26:5-9
5:4 Rev 20:8
5:6 1 Chr 5:26; 2 Kgs 15:29; 2 Kgs 16:7
5:8 Num 32:34; 1 Chr 5:4; Num 32:38
5:9 Josh 22:8,9
5:10 Gen 21:9; Gen 25:12; Ps 83:6
5:11 Josh 13:11,24-28; Num 32:34-36; Deut 3:10-17

4:31 *These were their cities until David reigned* Ziklag was where David lived while hiding from Saul (1 Sam 27:6).
4:40 *they found pasture, rich and good* In the days of Hezekiah, about 715 to 686 B.C., Simeonites moved out to find more land and settled in place of the Meunites.
4:43 *they struck the remnant of the escaped ones of Amalek* God had said He would blot out Amalek's memory (Exod 17:14; Deut 25:17-19), and Saul failed to finish it (1 Sam 15). Centuries later a small group of Simeonites did. God's word does not fail, even when it takes a long time.
5:1 *when he profaned the beds of his father his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph* Reuben slept with his father's concubine (Gen 35:22), and Jacob took the birthright (Gen 49:3-4), the double share and the right to lead. Ephraim and Manasseh each became a tribe, so Joseph received the double share (Gen 48:5).
5:2 *Judah prevailed among his brothers, and from him came a leader* The double portion went to Joseph, but the leadership to Judah (Gen 49:10). That leader was David, and in the end the Lion of the tribe of Judah, Jesus Christ (Rev 5:5).
5:6 *Tiglath-pileser the king of Assyria carried into exile* He ruled about 745 to 727 B.C. and took many from the northern and eastern tribes about 733 B.C. (2 Kgs 15:29).
5:10 *the Hagrites* A desert people. Reuben was a tribe of herdsmen living on the edge of the wilderness.

son of Guni, ***was*** chief of the house of their fathers. **16** And they dwelt in Gilead, in Bashan, and in its villages, and in all the pasture lands of Sharon, as far as their limits. **17** All of them were enrolled in the genealogy in the days of Jotham (Yotam) the king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam (Yaravam) the king of Israel.

Victory over the Hagrites

18 The sons of Reuben and ***the*** Gadites and the half of the tribe of Manasseh (Menashe), from the sons of strength, men carrying shield and sword, and bending the bow, and trained in war, ***were*** forty and four thousand and seven hundred and sixty, going out ***to*** war. **19** And they made war with the Hagrites and Jetur (Yetur) and Naphish (Nafish) and Nodab (Nodav). **20** And they were helped against them, and the Hagrites were given into their hand, and all who ***were*** with them; for they cried out to God in the battle, and He was entreated by them, because they trusted in Him. **21** And they took captive their livestock: their camels, fifty thousand; and flock, two hundred and fifty thousand; and donkeys, two thousand; and souls of man, a hundred thousand. **22** For many slain fell, for the battle ***was*** from God. And they dwelt in their place until the exile.

The Half Tribe of Manasseh

23 And the sons of the half of the tribe of Manasseh dwelt in the land; from Bashan to Baal-hermon (Ba'al-Chermon) and Senir and the mountain of Hermon (Chermon), they multiplied. **24** And these ***were*** the chiefs of the house of their fathers: even Epher (Efer) and Ishi (Yishi) and Eliel and Azriel and Jeremiah (Yirmeya) and Hodaviah (Hodavya) and Jahdiel (Yachdi'el), men mighty of strength, men of names, chiefs of the house of their fathers. **25** And they acted unfaithfully against the God of their fathers, and they played the prostitute after the gods of the peoples of the land, whom God had destroyed from before them. **26** And the God of Israel stirred up the spirit of Pul the king of Assyria and the spirit of Tiglath-pileser the king of Assyria, and he carried them into exile, the Reubenites and the Gadites and the half of the tribe of Manasseh, and he brought them to Halah (Chalach) and Habor (Chavor) and Hara and the river of Gozan, until this day.

1 CHRONICLES 6

The High Priests

1 The sons of Levi: Gershon, Kohath (Qehat), and Merari. **2** And the sons of Kohath: Amram, Izhar (Yitshar), and Hebron (Chevron), and Uzziel (Uzi'el). **3** And the sons of Amram: Aaron (Aharon), and Moses (Moshe), and Miriam (Miryam). And the sons of Aaron: Nadab (Nadav), and Abihu (Avihu), Eleazar (Elazar), and Ithamar (Itamar). **4** Eleazar fathered Phinehas (Pinchas); Phinehas fathered Abishua (Avishua); **5** and Abishua fathered Bukki (Buqi), and Bukki fathered Uzzi (Uzi); **6** and Uzzi fathered Zerahiah (Zerachya), and Zerahiah fathered Meraioth (Merayot); **7** Meraioth fathered Amariah (Amarya), and Amariah fathered Ahitub (Achituv); **8** and Ahitub fathered Zadok (Tsadoq), and Zadok fathered Ahimaaz (Achima'ats); **9** and Ahimaaz fathered Azariah (Azarya), and Azariah fathered Johanan (Yochanan); **10** and Johanan fathered Azariah—he ***is the one*** who served as priest in the house which Solomon (Shelomo) built in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). **11** And Azariah fathered Amariah, and Amariah fathered Ahitub; **12** and Ahitub fathered Zadok, and Zadok fathered Shallum (Shalum); **13** and Shallum fathered Hilkiah (Chilqiya), and Hilkiah fathered Azariah; **14** and Azariah fathered Seraiah (Seraya), and Seraiah fathered Jehozadak (Yehotsadaq); **15** and Jehozadak went ***away*** when the LORD sent Judah (Yehuda) and Jerusalem into exile by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar (Nevukhadnetsar).

The Clans of Levi

16 The sons of Levi: Gershom, Kohath, and Merari. **17** And these ***are*** the names of the sons of Gershom: Libni (Livni) and

5:16 Acts 9:35; 1 Chr 27:29; Song 2:1
5:17 2 Kgs 14:16,23,28; 2 Kgs 15:5,32; 2 Chr 27:1
5:18 Josh 4:12,13
5:19 1 Chr 1:31; Gen 25:15
5:20 2 Chr 18:31; Ps 22:4,5; Ps 9:10
5:21 Num 31:35; Rev 18:13
5:22 2 Chr 32:8; 2 Kgs 15:29; 2 Kgs 17:6
5:23 Deut 3:8,9; Song 4:8; Josh 13:29-31
5:24 1 Chr 4:38
5:25 Judg 2:17; Judg 8:33; 2 Kgs 17:7-18
5:26 2 Kgs 15:19; 2 Kgs 17:6; 2 Kgs 15:29
6:1 Gen 46:11; Exod 6:16; 1 Chr 23:6
6:2 Exod 6:18,21-24; 1 Chr 23:12
6:3 Lev 10:1,12,16; Exod 6:20; Exod 15:20
6:4 1 Chr 6:50; Exod 6:25; Ezra 7:1-5
6:8 2 Sam 8:17; 2 Sam 15:27,36; 2 Sam 15:35
6:10 1 Kgs 6:1-7; 2 Chr 3:4; 2 Chr 26:17-20
6:11 Ezra 7:3
6:12 Neh 11:11; 1 Chr 9:11
6:13 2 Kgs 22:12-14; 2 Chr 35:8; 2 Chr 34:14-20
6:14 2 Kgs 25:18; Neh 11:11; Ezra 7:1
6:15 2 Kgs 25:18,21; Hag 1:1,12,14; Hag 2:2
6:16 Exod 6:16; 1 Chr 6:1
6:17 1 Chr 23:7; Num 3:18,21; Exod 6:17

5:17 *in the days of Jotham the king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the king of Israel* About 793 to 732 B.C., so these records were written down before Assyria came. The writer used real records kept for centuries.
5:20 *they cried out to God in the battle, and He was entreated by them, because they trusted in Him* To be entreated means God listened to their plea and answered. They were trained soldiers, but the writer credits their faith, not their skill. Do you pray only after everything else has failed, or cry out to Him in the middle of the fight?
5:22 *the battle was from God* They lived in that land until the exile.
5:24 *men mighty of strength, men of names* They had size, strength and famous leaders.
5:25 *they played the prostitute after the gods of the peoples of the land* The Bible often calls idol worship spiritual adultery, because God's people belonged to Him as a wife to her husband. They went after the very gods of the peoples God had destroyed before them.
5:26 *the God of Israel stirred up the spirit of Pul the king of Assyria* Pul was another name for Tiglath-pileser (2 Kgs 15:19). God used a pagan king to carry out His judgment. In verse 20 these tribes trusted God and won. In verse 25 they were unfaithful and lost everything. Strength and success are no protection if our hearts turn from God.
6:1 *The sons of Levi: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari* Levi's tribe was set apart to serve God at the tabernacle and later the temple (Num 3:5-13). Every priest was a Levite, but only Levites of Aaron's family were priests, who alone offered sacrifices at the altar and went into the holy place.
6:3 *Aaron, and Moses, and Miriam* Nadab and Abihu are named, though they died for offering strange fire (Lev 10:1-2). The high priests run through Eleazar and Phinehas, who was zealous for God (Num 25:10-13), to Zadok in David's day, and on to Hilkiah, who found the book of the law (2 Kgs 22:8).
6:15 *Jehozadak went away when the LORD sent Judah and Jerusalem into exile by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar* Notice who sent them: the LORD, not Nebuchadnezzar. Jehozadak's son Jeshua was the high priest who came back with Zerubbabel (Ezra 3:2). The line of priests, like the line of kings, survived the exile.

Shimei (Shimi). **18** And the sons of Kohath: Amram and Izhar and Hebron and Uzziel. **19** The sons of Merari: Mahli (Machli) and Mushi. And these ***are*** the clans of the Levite according to their fathers. **20** Of Gershom: Libni his son, Jahath (Yachat) his son, Zimmah (Zima) his son, **21** Joah (Yo'ach) his son, Iddo (Ido) his son, Zerah (Zerach) his son, Jeatherai (Ye'atray) his son. **22** The sons of Kohath: Amminadab (Aminadav) his son, Korah (Qorach) his son, Assir (Asir) his son, **23** Elkanah (Elqana) his son, and Ebiasaph (Evyasaf) his son, and Assir his son, **24** Tahath (Tachat) his son, Uriel his son, Uzziah (Uziya) his son, and Shaul his son. **25** And the sons of Elkanah: Amasai (Amasay) and Ahimoth (Achimot). **26** ***As for*** Elkanah—the sons of Elkanah: Zophai (Tsofay) his son, and Nahath (Nachat) his son, **27** Eliab (Eli'av) his son, Jeroham (Yerocham) his son, Elkanah his son. **28** And the sons of Samuel (Shemu'el): the firstborn, and ***the*** second, Abijah (Aviya). **29** The sons of Merari: Mahli, Libni his son, Shimei his son, Uzzah (Uza) his son, **30** Shimea (Shima) his son, Haggiah (Chagiya) his son, Asaiah (Asaya) his son.

The Temple Singers

31 And these ***are those*** whom David appointed over the direction of song ***in*** the house of the LORD, from the resting of the ark. **32** And they were serving before the tabernacle of the tent of meeting with song, until Solomon built the house of the LORD in Jerusalem; and they stood according to their custom over their service. **33** And these ***are*** those who stood, and their sons. From the sons of the Kohathite: Heman the singer, the son of Joel (Yo'el), the son of Samuel, **34** the son of Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Eliel, the son of Toah (Toach), **35** the son of Zuph (Tsuf), the son of Elkanah, the son of Mahath (Machat), the son of Amasai, **36** the son of Elkanah, the son of Joel, the son of Azariah, the son of Zephaniah (Tsefanya), **37** the son of Tahath, the son of Assir, the son of Ebiasaph, the son of Korah, **38** the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, the son of Israel (Yisra'el). **39** And his brother Asaph (Asaf), who stood at his right: Asaph the son of Berechiah (Berekhyahu), the son of Shimea, **40** the son of Michael (Mikha'el), the son of Baaseiah (Ba'aseya), the son of Malchijah (Malkiya), **41** the son of Ethni (Etni), the son of Zerah, the son of Adaiah (Adaya), **42** the son of Ethan (Etan), the son of Zimmah, the son of Shimei, **43** the son of Jahath, the son of Gershom, the son of Levi. **44** And the sons of Merari their brothers ***were*** on the left: Ethan the son of Kishi (Qishi), the son of Abdi (Avdi), the son of Malluch (Malukh), **45** the son of Hashabiah (Chashavya), the son of Amaziah (Amatsya), the son of Hilkiah, **46** the son of Amzi (Amtsi), the son of Bani, the son of Shemer, **47** the son of Mahli, the son of Mushi, the son of Merari, the son of Levi. **48** And their brothers the Levites ***were*** given for all the service of the tabernacle of the house of God.

The Work of Aaron's Sons

49 And Aaron and his sons ***were*** making ***offerings*** smoke on the altar of the burnt offering and on the altar of the incense, for all the work of the holy of holies, and to make atonement for Israel, according to all that Moses the servant of God had commanded. **50** And these ***are*** the sons of Aaron: Eleazar his son, Phinehas his son, Abishua his son, **51** Bukki his son, Uzzi his son, Zerahiah his son, **52** Meraioth his son, Amariah his son, Ahitub his son, **53** Zadok his son, Ahimaaz his son.

The Cities of the Levites

54 And these ***are*** their dwelling places according to their encampments within their territory: to the sons of Aaron, to the clan of the Kohathite, for the lot was theirs; **55** and they gave to them Hebron in the land of Judah and its pasture lands around it. **56** And the field of the city and its villages they gave to Caleb (Kalev) the son of Jephunneh (Yefune). **57** And to the sons of Aaron they gave the cities of refuge: Hebron, and Libnah (Livna) and its pasture lands, and Jattir (Yatir), and Eshtemoa and its pasture lands, **58** and Hilez (Chilez) and its pasture lands, Debir (Devir) and its pasture lands, **59** and Ashan and its pasture lands, and Beth-shemesh (Bet-Shemesh) and its pasture lands. **60** And from the tribe of Benjamin (Binyamin): Geba (Geva) and its pasture lands, and Alemeth (Alemet) and its pasture lands, and Anathoth

6:18 1 Chr 23:12; 1 Chr 6:2,3
6:19 1 Chr 23:21; 1 Chr 24:26; Exod 6:19
6:22 1 Chr 6:2,18; Exod 6:21,24
6:25 1 Chr 6:35,36; Exod 6:24
6:26 1 Sam 1:1; 1 Chr 6:35
6:27 1 Sam 1:1
6:28 1 Chr 6:33; 1 Sam 8:2
6:29 1 Chr 6:19; Num 3:33
6:31 2 Sam 6:17; 1 Chr 15:16-22,27; 1 Chr 25:1-31
6:32 1 Chr 16:4-6,37-42; Ps 68:24,25; 1 Chr 6:10
6:33 1 Chr 6:28; 1 Chr 15:17,19; 1 Chr 16:41,42
6:37 Exod 6:21-24; Num 16:1-35; Num 26:10,11
6:38 Num 3:19; 1 Chr 16:1
6:39 2 Chr 5:12; 2 Chr 29:13,30; Ezra 2:41
6:43 1 Chr 6:1,16,17,20; 1 Chr 23:6; Gen 46:11
6:44 1 Chr 25:1,3,6; Ps 89:1; 1 Chr 15:17
6:47 1 Chr 23:21,28; Exod 6:19; Num 3:20,33-36
6:48 1 Chr 23:2; 1 Chr 25:1-26; Num 3:1-4
6:49 Heb 7:11; Heb 7:13; Heb 7:14
6:50 1 Chr 6:3-9; 1 Chr 24:1; Exod 6:23
6:53 2 Sam 8:17; 1 Chr 6:8; 1 Chr 12:28
6:54 Gen 25:16; Num 35:1-8; Josh 21:3-8
6:55 Josh 14:13; Josh 15:13; Josh 21:11-13
6:57 Josh 21:13,14; Josh 15:48; Num 35:13-15
6:58 Josh 10:3,38; Josh 15:51; Josh 21:15
6:59 Josh 21:16; Josh 15:42; 1 Chr 4:32
6:60 Jer 1:1; 1 Chr 8:6; Josh 18:24

6:22 *Korah his son* The man who rebelled against Moses (Num 16). Yet his sons did not die with him (Num 26:11), and their descendants became singers and gatekeepers. Several psalms carry the title of the sons of Korah (Ps 42; 44-49; 84). God can redeem a family's story.
6:28 *the sons of Samuel* Samuel the prophet came from Kohath. Calling his father an Ephrathite (1 Sam 1:1) means he lived in the hill country of Ephraim, not that he was of that tribe. As a Levite, Samuel could serve at the tabernacle from boyhood (1 Sam 2:18).
6:31 *from the resting of the ark* When David brought the ark to Jerusalem (chapters 15-16), he set Levites to lead singing before it until Solomon built the temple.
6:33 *Heman the singer* From Kohath, the grandson of Samuel. Asaph from Gershom stood at his right (6:39) and Ethan from Merari at his left (6:44). Psalms 50 and 73-83 carry Asaph's name, Psalm 88 Heman's and Psalm 89 Ethan's.
6:39 *his brother Asaph* Why trace the singers so carefully? Because worship mattered, and the men who led it had to be the ones God called. These men gave us part of our Bible. When we sing God's praise, we join a choir David organized three thousand years ago.
6:49 *to make atonement for Israel* The burnt offering was burned whole on the altar, and the holy of holies was the inner room where the ark stood. Atonement means covering sin and bringing people back to God through a sacrifice. Those sacrifices could never take away sins for good, but Jesus offered Himself once for all (Heb 10:11-14).
6:57 *Hebron* The priests received thirteen cities in Judah and Benjamin, among them Anathoth, later the hometown of Jeremiah, a priest (Jer 1:1).

(Anatot) and its pasture lands. All their cities ***were*** thirteen cities by their clans. **61** And to the sons of Kohath who were left from the clan of the tribe, from the half of the tribe, the half of Manasseh (Menashe), by the lot, ***were*** ten cities. **62** And to the sons of Gershom by their clans, from the tribe of Issachar (Yisashkhar), and from the tribe of Asher, and from the tribe of Naphtali (Naftali), and from the tribe of Manasseh in Bashan, ***were*** thirteen cities. **63** To the sons of Merari by their clans, from the tribe of Reuben (Reuven), and from the tribe of Gad, and from the tribe of Zebulun (Zevulun), by the lot, ***were*** twelve cities. **64** And the sons of Israel gave to the Levites the cities and their pasture lands. **65** And they gave by the lot, from the tribe of the sons of Judah, and from the tribe of the sons of Simeon (Shimon), and from the tribe of the sons of Benjamin, these cities which they called by names. **66** And ***some*** of the clans of the sons of Kohath—the cities of their territory were from the tribe of Ephraim (Efrayim). **67** And they gave to them the cities of refuge: Shechem (Shekhem) and its pasture lands in the hill country of Ephraim, and Gezer and its pasture lands, **68** and Jokmeam (Yoqme'am) and its pasture lands, and Beth-horon (Bet-Choron) and its pasture lands, **69** and Aijalon (Ayalon) and its pasture lands, and Gath-rimmon (Gat-Rimon) and its pasture lands; **70** and from the half of the tribe of Manasseh: Aner and its pasture lands, and Bileam (Bilam) and its pasture lands, for the clan of the sons of Kohath who were left. **71** To the sons of Gershom, from the clan of the half of the tribe of Manasseh: Golan in Bashan and its pasture lands, and Ashtaroth (Ashtarot) and its pasture lands; **72** and from the tribe of Issachar: Kedesh (Qedesh) and its pasture lands, Daberath (Davrat) and its pasture lands, **73** and Ramoth (Ramot) and its pasture lands, and Anem and its pasture lands; **74** and from the tribe of Asher: Mashal and its pasture lands, and Abdon (Avdon) and its pasture lands, **75** and Hukok (Chuqoq) and its pasture lands, and Rehob (Rechov) and its pasture lands; **76** and from the tribe of Naphtali: Kedesh in Galilee (Galil) and its pasture lands, and Hammon (Chamon) and its pasture lands, and Kiriathaim (Qiryatayim) and its pasture lands. **77** To the sons of Merari who were left, from the tribe of Zebulun: Rimmono (Rimono) and its pasture lands, Tabor (Tavor) and its pasture lands; **78** and from beyond the Jordan (Yarden) ***at*** Jericho (Yericho), on the east of the Jordan, from the tribe of Reuben: Bezer (Betser) in the wilderness and its pasture lands, and Jahaz (Yahats) and its pasture lands, **79** and Kedemoth (Qedemot) and its pasture lands, and Mephaath (Mefa'at) and its pasture lands; **80** and from the tribe of Gad: Ramoth in Gilead (Gilad) and its pasture lands, and Mahanaim (Machanayim) and its pasture lands, **81** and Heshbon (Cheshbon) and its pasture lands, and Jazer (Yazer) and its pasture lands.

1 CHRONICLES 7

Issachar and Benjamin

1 And of the sons of Issachar (Yisashkhar): Tola and Puah (Pu'a), Jashub (Yashuv) and Shimron, four. **2** And the sons of Tola: Uzzi (Uzi) and Rephaiah (Refaya) and Jeriel (Yeri'el) and Jahmai (Yachmay) and Ibsam (Yivsam) and Shemuel (Shemu'el), heads of the house of their fathers, of Tola, mighty ***men*** of valor according to their generations; their number in the days of David ***was*** twenty-two thousand and six hundred. **3** And the sons of Uzzi: Izrahiah (Yizrachya). And the sons of Izrahiah: Michael (Mikha'el) and Obadiah (Ovadya) and Joel (Yo'el), Isshiah (Yishiya), five; all of them heads. **4** And with them, according to their generations, according to the house of their fathers, ***were*** troops of the army for war, thirty-six thousand, for they had many wives and sons. **5** And their brothers among all the clans of Issachar, mighty ***men*** of valor, ***were*** eighty-seven thousand, their enrollment by genealogy for all. **6** Benjamin (Binyamin): Bela and Becher (Bekher) and Jediael (Yedi'a'el), three. **7** And the sons of Bela: Ezbon (Etsbon) and Uzzi and Uzziel (Uzi'el) and Jerimoth (Yeremot) and Iri, five, heads of ***the*** house of fathers, mighty ***men*** of valor; and their enrollment by genealogy ***was*** twenty-two thousand and thirty-four. **8** And the sons of Becher: Zemirah (Zemira) and Joash (Yo'ash) and Eliezer and Elioenai (Elyo'enay) and Omri and Jeremoth (Yeremot) and Abijah (Aviya) and Anathoth (Anatot) and Alemeth (Alemet). All these ***were*** the sons of Becher. **9** And their enrollment by genealogy according to their generations, heads of the house of their fathers, mighty ***men*** of valor, ***was*** twenty thousand and two hundred. **10** And the sons of Jediael: Bilhan. And the sons of Bilhan: Jeush (Yeush) and Benjamin and Ehud and Chenaanah (Kena'ana)

6:61 1 Chr 6:1,2,18,33; 1 Chr 6:66; Josh 21:4,5,20-26
6:62 1 Chr 6:71-76; Exod 2:22; Josh 21:27-33
6:63 Josh 21:7,34-40; 1 Chr 6:77-81; Gen 46:11
6:64 Josh 21:41,42; Num 35:2-5
6:67 Josh 21:21; Gen 33:18; Gen 35:4
6:68 Josh 21:22; Josh 10:11; Josh 16:5
6:69 Josh 10:12; Josh 21:24
6:70 Josh 21:25; Josh 17:11
6:71 Josh 21:27; Josh 20:8; Josh 9:10
6:72 Josh 19:37; Josh 21:32; Judg 4:9
6:74 Josh 19:26; Josh 21:30
6:75 Josh 21:31
6:76 Josh 21:32; Josh 12:22; Josh 19:37
6:77 Josh 21:34,35
6:78 Josh 20:8; Deut 4:41-43; Josh 21:36
6:80 Gen 32:2; 2 Kgs 9:1; 1 Chr 6:73
6:81 Josh 21:39; Num 21:25; Num 32:37
7:1 Gen 46:13; Num 26:23,24
7:2 2 Sam 24:1-9; 1 Chr 21:1-5; 1 Chr 27:1,23,24
7:4 1 Chr 12:32
7:6 Gen 46:21; 1 Chr 8:1-12; Num 26:38-41
7:7 1 Chr 21:1-5; 2 Chr 17:17,18
7:10 Judg 3:15-30

6:67 *Shechem* The Levite towns from the other tribes, the same list as Joshua 21. A city of refuge was where someone who killed a person by accident could flee and be safe until his case was judged (Num 35:9-15). Six of them were Levite towns.
6:81 *Heshbon and its pasture lands* God scattered His servants among all His people to teach the law (Deut 33:10; 2 Chr 17:8-9) and remind every tribe that Israel belonged to Him. The LORD was their inheritance (Num 18:20). Believers today are "a royal priesthood" (1 Pet 2:9), scattered so others can see and hear about God.
7:2 *their number in the days of David was twenty-two thousand and six hundred* Issachar was a large tribe in the fertile valley of Jezreel. These numbers likely come from David's census (21:1-6; 27:23-24), real army records.
7:6 *Benjamin: Bela and Becher and Jediael, three* These names do not match the other lists exactly (Gen 46:21; Num 26:38-41; 8:1-5). Family lists can name sons, grandsons or clans, and use different names for the same person. Benjamin gets a longer list in chapter 8, as Saul's tribe and the tribe that stood with Judah.

and Zethan (Zetan) and Tarshish and Ahishahar
(Achishachar). **11** All these ***were*** the sons of Jediael, according to the heads of the fathers, mighty ***men*** of valor, seventeen thousand and two hundred, going out ***in*** the army for the battle. **12** And Shuppim (Shupim) and Huppim (Chupim) ***were*** the sons of Ir; Hushim (Chushim), the sons of Aher (Acher).

Naphtali and Manasseh

13 The sons of Naphtali (Naftali): Jahziel (Yachtsi'el) and Guni and Jezer (Yetser) and Shallum (Shalum), the sons of Bilhah (Bilha). **14** The sons of Manasseh (Menashe): Asriel, whom his concubine the Aramean bore; she bore Machir (Makhir) the father of Gilead (Gilad). **15** And Machir took a wife for Huppim and for Shuppim, and the name of his sister ***was*** Maacah (Ma'akha); and the name of the second ***was*** Zelophehad (Tselofchad); and Zelophehad had daughters. **16** And Maacah the wife of Machir bore a son, and she called his name Peresh; and the name of his brother ***was*** Sheresh (Sharesh); and his sons ***were*** Ulam and Rakem (Reqem). **17** And the sons of Ulam: Bedan. These ***were*** the sons of Gilead the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh. **18** And his sister Hammolecheth (Hamolekhet) bore Ishhod and Abiezer (Avi'ezer) and Mahlah (Machla). **19** And the sons of Shemida were Ahian (Achyan) and Shechem (Shekhem) and Likhi (Liqchi) and Aniam.

The Tribe of Ephraim

20 And the sons of Ephraim (Efrayim): Shuthelah
(Shutelach), and Bered his son, and Tahath (Tachat) his son, and Eleadah (Elada) his son, and Tahath his son, **21** and Zabad (Zavad) his son, and Shuthelah his son, and Ezer and Elead (Elad). And the men of Gath (Gat) who were born in the land killed them, because they went down to take their livestock. **22** And Ephraim their father mourned many days, and his brothers came to comfort him. **23** And he went in to his wife, and she conceived and bore a son, and he called his name Beriah (Beri'a), because it was in calamity in his house. **24** And his daughter ***was*** Sheerah (She'era), and she built Beth-horon (Bet-Choron) the lower and the upper, and Uzzen-sheerah (Uzen-She'era). **25** And Rephah (Refach) ***was*** his son, and Resheph (Reshef), and Telah (Telach) his son, and Tahan (Tachan) his son, **26** Ladan his son, Ammihud (Amihud) his son, Elishama his son, **27** Nun his son, Joshua (Yehoshua) his son. **28** And their possession and their
dwelling places ***were*** Bethel (Bet-El) and its towns, and to the east Naaran, and to the west Gezer and its towns, and Shechem and its towns, as far as Ayyah (Ayya) and its towns; **29** and alongside the sons of Manasseh: Beth-shean
(Bet-She'an) and its towns, Taanach (Ta'anakh) and its towns, Megiddo (Megido) and its towns, Dor and its towns. In these dwelt the sons of Joseph (Yosef) the son of Israel (Yisra'el).

The Tribe of Asher

30 The sons of Asher: Imnah (Yimna) and Ishvah (Yishva) and Ishvi (Yishvi) and Beriah, and Serah (Serach) their sister. **31** And the sons of Beriah: Heber (Chever) and Malchiel (Malki'el); he ***was*** the father of Birzaith (Birzayit). **32** And Heber fathered Japhlet (Yaflet) and Shomer and Hotham (Chotam), and Shua their sister. **33** And the sons of Japhlet: Pasach (Pasakh) and Bimhal and Ashvath (Ashvat). These ***were*** the sons of Japhlet. **34** And the sons of Shemer: Ahi (Achi) and Rohgah (Rohga), and Hubbah (Chubba) and Aram. **35** And the son of Helem his brother: Zophah (Tsofach) and Imna (Yimna) and Shelesh and Amal. **36** The sons of Zophah: Suah (Suach) and Harnepher (Charnefer) and Shual and Beri and Imrah (Yimra), **37** Bezer (Betser) and Hod and Shamma (Shama) and Shilshah (Shilsha) and Ithran (Yitran) and Beera (Be'era). **38** And the sons of Jether (Yeter): Jephunneh
(Yefune) and Pispa and Ara. **39** And the sons of Ulla (Ula): Arah (Arach) and Hanniel (Chani'el) and Rizia (Ritsya). **40** All these ***were*** the sons of Asher, heads of the house of the fathers, chosen, mighty ***men*** of valor, heads of the leaders. And their enrollment by genealogy in the army for the battle—their number ***was*** twenty-six thousand men.

1 CHRONICLES 8

The Tribe of Benjamin

1 And Benjamin (Binyamin) fathered Bela his firstborn, Ashbel the second, and Aharah (Achrach) the third, **2** Nohah (Nocha) the fourth, and Rapha (Rafa) the fifth. **3** And Bela had sons: Addar (Adar) and Gera and Abihud (Avihud), **4** and Abishua (Avishua) and Naaman and Ahoah (Achoach), **5** and

7:11 2 Chr 17:13-19
7:12 1 Chr 7:15; Gen 46:21; Num 26:38
7:13 Num 26:48; Gen 46:24; Gen 30:3-8
7:14 1 Chr 2:21-23; Gen 50:23; Num 26:29-34
7:15 Num 26:33; Num 36:1-12; Num 27:1-11
7:17 1 Sam 12:11
7:18 Num 26:30; Judg 6:11,24,34; Judg 8:2
7:20 Num 26:35,36
7:22 Gen 37:34; Job 2:11
7:24 Josh 16:3,5; 2 Chr 8:5; 1 Kgs 9:17
7:27 Acts 7:45; Heb 4:8; Num 13:8,16
7:28 Gen 28:19; Josh 16:2; Judg 1:22
7:29 Judg 1:22-29; Josh 17:7-11; 1 Sam 31:10
7:30 Gen 46:17; Num 26:44-46
7:40 1 Chr 21:1-5; 2 Sam 24:1-9
8:1 Gen 46:21; 1 Chr 7:6-12; Num 26:38
8:3 Gen 46:21; Num 26:40
8:5 1 Chr 7:12; Judg 3:15; Num 26:39

7:13 *The sons of Naphtali* One verse for a whole tribe. Naphtali lived in Galilee, the land Isaiah promised would see a great light (Isa 9:1-2), and the light came when Jesus began His ministry there (Matt 4:13-16). The tribe with the shortest list saw the Light of the world first.
7:15 *Zelophehad had daughters* He had no sons, and his five daughters asked Moses for their father's inheritance. God said they were right (Num 27:1-7).
7:18 *Abiezer* The clan of Gideon (Judg 6:11). The lists remember women as well as men, by name.
7:22 *Ephraim their father mourned many days, and his brothers came to comfort him* Even in a family list, God records a father's grief. Our sorrow is not hidden from Him (Ps 56:8). He named a later son Beriah, because calamity had come to his house.
7:24 *built Beth-horon the lower and the upper* Sheerah, Ephraim's daughter, a woman who built cities.
7:27 *Joshua his son* He led Israel into the land God promised. His name means the LORD saves, and in its shorter Hebrew form it is the same name as Jesus.
7:40 *All these were the sons of Asher* When Jesus was presented at the temple, Anna, "of the tribe of Asher" (Luke 2:36), gave thanks and spoke of Him. Centuries after Assyria scattered the north, a daughter of Asher was there to welcome the Messiah. The tribes were scattered, but not lost to God.
8:1 *Benjamin fathered Bela his firstborn* Ehud in 8:6 may be the left-handed judge who saved Israel from Moab (Judg 3:15), though the name was common.

Gera and Shephuphan (Shefufan) and Huram (Churam).
6 And these ***are*** the sons of Ehud (Echud)—these are the heads of fathers of the inhabitants of Geba (Geva), and they carried them into exile to Manahath (Manachat)— **7** and Naaman and Ahijah (Achiya) and Gera—he carried them into exile—and he fathered Uzza (Uza) and Ahihud (Achichud).
8 And Shaharaim (Shacharayim) fathered ***sons*** in the country of Moab (Mo'av) after he had sent them away; Hushim (Chushim) and Baara ***were*** his wives. **9** And he fathered from Hodesh (Chodesh) his wife: Jobab (Yovav) and Zibia (Tsivya) and Mesha and Malcam (Malkam), **10** and Jeuz (Yeuts) and Sachia (Sakhya) and Mirmah (Mirma). These ***were*** his sons, heads of fathers. **11** And from Hushim he fathered Abitub (Avituv) and Elpaal. **12** And the sons of Elpaal: Eber (Ever) and Misham and Shemed (Shamed)—he built Ono and Lod and its towns— **13** and Beriah (Beri'a) and Shema—they ***were*** the heads of the fathers of the inhabitants of Aijalon (Ayalon); they put to flight the inhabitants of Gath (Gat)— **14** and Ahio (Achyo), Shashak (Shashaq), and Jeremoth (Yeremot), **15** and Zebadiah (Zevadya) and Arad and Eder, **16** and Michael (Mikha'el) and Ishpah (Yishpa) and Joha (Yocha), the sons of Beriah. **17** And Zebadiah and Meshullam (Meshulam) and Hizki (Chizqi) and Heber (Chever), **18** and Ishmerai (Yishmeray) and Izliah (Yizli'a) and Jobab, the sons of Elpaal. **19** And Jakim (Yaqim) and Zichri (Zikhri) and Zabdi (Zavdi), **20** and Elienai (Eli'enay) and Zillethai (Tsiletay) and Eliel, **21** and Adaiah (Adaya) and Beraiah (Beraya) and Shimrath (Shimrat), the sons of Shimei (Shimi). **22** And Ishpan (Yishpan) and Eber and Eliel, **23** and Abdon (Avdon) and Zichri and Hanan (Chanan), **24** and Hananiah (Chananya) and Elam and Anthothijah (Antotiya), **25** and Iphdeiah (Yifdeya) and Penuel (Penu'el), the sons of Shashak. **26** And Shamsherai (Shamsheray) and Shehariah (Shecharya) and Athaliah (Atalya), **27** and Jaareshiah (Ya'areshya) and Elijah (Eliya) and Zichri, the sons of Jeroham (Yerocham). **28** These ***were*** heads of fathers according to their generations, heads; these dwelt in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim).

The Family of Saul

29 And in Gibeon (Givon) dwelt the father of Gibeon, and the name of his wife ***was*** Maacah (Ma'akha); **30** and his son, the firstborn, Abdon, and Zur (Tsur) and Kish (Qish) and Baal and Nadab (Nadav), **31** and Gedor and Ahio and Zecher (Zekher). **32** And Mikloth (Miqlot) fathered Shimeah (Shima). And they also dwelt opposite their brothers in Jerusalem, with their brothers. **33** And Ner fathered Kish, and Kish fathered Saul (Shaul), and Saul fathered Jonathan (Yehonatan) and Malchi-shua (Malkishua) and Abinadab (Avinadav) and Esh-baal. **34** And the son of Jonathan ***was*** Merib-baal (Meriv-Ba'al); and Merib-baal fathered Micah (Mikha).
35 And the sons of Micah: Pithon (Piton) and Melech (Melekh) and Tarea (Ta'area) and Ahaz (Achaz). **36** And Ahaz fathered Jehoaddah (Yeho'ada), and Jehoaddah fathered Alemeth (Alemet) and Azmaveth (Azmavet) and Zimri; and Zimri fathered Moza (Motsa). **37** And Moza fathered Binea (Bina); Raphah (Rafa) his son, Eleasah (Elasa) his son, Azel (Atsel) his son. **38** And Azel had six sons, and these ***are*** their names: Azrikam (Azriqam), Bocheru (Bokhru), and Ishmael (Yishma'el) and Sheariah (She'arya) and Obadiah (Ovadya) and Hanan. All these ***were*** the sons of Azel. **39** And the sons of Eshek (Esheq) his brother: Ulam his firstborn, Jeush (Yeush) the second, and Eliphelet (Elifelet) the third. **40** And the sons of Ulam were men mighty of valor, bending the bow, and having many sons and sons' sons, one hundred and fifty. All these ***were*** of the sons of Benjamin.

1 CHRONICLES 9

Those Who Returned to Jerusalem

1 And all Israel (Yisra'el) were enrolled by genealogy; and look, they ***are*** written in the book of the kings of Israel. And Judah (Yehuda) was carried into exile to Babylon (Bavel) for their unfaithfulness. **2** And the first inhabitants who ***were*** in their possession in their cities ***were*** Israel, the priests, the Levites, and the temple servants. **3** And in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) dwelt some of the sons of Judah, and some of the sons of Benjamin (Binyamin), and some of the sons of

8:6 Judg 3:20-30; 1 Chr 7:10; Judg 4:1
8:8 Ruth 1:1; Gen 25:6
8:12 Ezra 2:33; Neh 6:2; Neh 7:37
8:13 1 Chr 2:49,50,52; 1 Chr 4:4; Josh 19:42
8:28 Josh 15:63; Josh 18:28; Judg 1:21
8:29 1 Chr 9:35,36
8:30 1 Chr 9:36,37
8:31 1 Chr 9:37
8:32 1 Chr 9:38
8:33 Acts 13:21; 1 Sam 9:1; 1 Sam 31:2
8:34 2 Sam 9:12; 2 Sam 4:4; 2 Sam 9:6,10
8:35 1 Chr 9:41
8:36 1 Chr 9:42
8:37 1 Chr 9:43
8:40 1 Chr 12:2; 2 Chr 14:8; Ps 127:3-5
9:1 Matt 1:11; Matt 1:12; Ezra 2:59,62,63
9:2 Neh 7:73; Ezra 2:70; Ezra 2:43,58
9:3 Neh 11:1,4-9; 2 Chr 11:16; 2 Chr 30:11

8:8 *in the country of Moab* A reminder of Ruth's family, who also went to Moab (Ruth 1:1).
8:12 *he built Ono and Lod and its towns* Lod is the town later called Lydda, where Peter healed Aeneas (Acts 9:32-35).
8:28 *these dwelt in Jerusalem* The families who lived in or near the capital. A man of Benjamin standing in the ruins could find his own family's name, know his people had been there, and know God had brought them back.
8:33 *Kish fathered Saul* Eshbaal is the son called Ish-bosheth in 2 Samuel 2:8. In Saul's day baal, meaning lord or master, could still be used of the LORD. Later, when Baal became the name of a hated false god, scribes in Samuel replaced it with bosheth, shame. Chronicles kept the older form.
8:34 *Merib-baal* Called Mephibosheth in 2 Samuel 4:4 and 9:6, the crippled son of Jonathan whom David brought to his own table (2 Sam 9).
8:40 *having many sons and sons' sons, one hundred and fifty* Saul's dynasty ended at Gilboa, but David's kindness kept Saul's line alive, and it grew to a large family of fighting men. God judged Saul but did not wipe out his family. The apostle Paul was also a Benjamite named Saul (Phil 3:5; Acts 13:9, 21).
9:1 *they are written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah* The writer tells us where his lists came from: official records.
9:1 *for their unfaithfulness* The reason for the exile in one plain line. Not because Babylon was strong or God weak. To be unfaithful is to break faith, to betray a trust. Judah worshiped idols and ignored His prophets (2 Chr 36:14-16).
9:2 *the temple servants* Helpers who did the heavy work of the temple, perhaps descended from the Gibeonites (Josh 9:27) and others (Ezra 8:20). These were the first to resettle after the exile. God's judgment was real, but it was not the end.
9:3 *some of the sons of Ephraim and Manasseh* Some from the north had joined Judah over the years (2 Chr 11:16; 30:11), and their descendants came back too. The returned people were not only Judah. They were Israel.

Ephraim (Efrayim) and Manasseh (Menashe): **4** Uthai (Utay) the son of Ammihud (Amihud), the son of Omri, the son of Imri, the son of Bani, of the sons of Perez (Perets) the son of Judah. **5** And of the Shilonite: Asaiah (Asaya) the firstborn, and his sons. **6** And of the sons of Zerah (Zerach): Jeuel (Yeu'el), and their brothers, six hundred and ninety. **7** And of the sons of Benjamin: Sallu (Salu) the son of Meshullam (Meshulam), the son of Hodaviah (Hodavya), the son of Hassenuah (Hasenu'a), **8** and Ibneiah (Yivneya) the son of Jeroham (Yerocham), and Elah (Ela) the son of Uzzi (Uzi), the son of Michri (Mikhri), and Meshullam the son of Shephatiah (Shefatya), the son of Reuel, the son of Ibnijah (Yivniya); **9** and their brothers according to their generations, nine hundred and fifty-six. All these men ***were*** heads of fathers according to the house of their fathers.

The Priests and Levites

10 And of the priests: Jedaiah (Yedaya) and Jehoiarib (Yehoyariv) and Jachin (Yakhin), **11** and Azariah (Azarya) the son of Hilkiah (Chilqiya), the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok (Tsadoq), the son of Meraioth (Merayot), the son of Ahitub (Achituv), the leader of the house of God; **12** and Adaiah (Adaya) the son of Jeroham, the son of Pashhur (Pashchur), the son of Malchijah (Malkiya), and Maasai (Ma'asay) the son of Adiel, the son of Jahzerah (Yachzera), the son of Meshullam, the son of Meshillemith (Meshilemit), the son of Immer (Imer); **13** and their brothers, heads of the house of their fathers, one thousand and seven hundred and sixty, mighty ***men*** of valor ***for*** the work of the service of the house of God. **14** And of the Levites: Shemaiah (Shemaya) the son of Hasshub (Chashuv), the son of Azrikam (Azriqam), the son of Hashabiah (Chashavya), of the sons of Merari; **15** and Bakbakkar (Baqbaqar), Heresh (Cheresh), and Galal, and Mattaniah (Matanya) the son of Mica (Mikha), the son of Zichri (Zikhri), the son of Asaph (Asaf); **16** and Obadiah (Ovadya) the son of Shemaiah, the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun (Yedutun); and Berechiah (Berekhya) the son of Asa, the son of Elkanah (Elqana), who dwelt in the villages of the Netophathite.

The Gatekeepers

17 And the gatekeepers: Shallum (Shalum) and Akkub (Aquv) and Talmon and Ahiman (Achiman) and their brother Shallum ***was*** the chief. **18** And until now, in the gate of the king eastward, they ***are*** the gatekeepers for the camps of the sons of Levi. **19** And Shallum the son of Kore (Qore), the son of Ebiasaph (Evyasaf), the son of Korah (Qorach), and his brothers of the house of his father, the Korahites, ***were*** over the work of the service, keepers of the thresholds of the tent; and their fathers ***were*** over the camp of the LORD, keepers of the entrance. **20** And Phinehas (Pinchas) the son of Eleazar (Elazar) was leader over them formerly; the LORD ***was*** with him. **21** Zechariah (Zekharya) the son of Meshelemiah (Meshelemya) ***was*** gatekeeper of the entrance of the tent of meeting. **22** All of them who were chosen to be gatekeepers at the thresholds ***were*** two hundred and twelve. They ***were*** in their villages, their enrollment by genealogy. David and Samuel (Shemu'el) the seer appointed them in their faithfulness. **23** And they and their sons ***were*** over the gates of the house of the LORD, of the house of the tent, for guard duties. **24** On four sides were the gatekeepers: east, west, north, and south. **25** And their brothers in their villages ***were*** to come for the seven days, from time to time, with these. **26** For in faithfulness ***were*** they, the four mighty ones of the gatekeepers; they ***were*** the Levites. And they were over the chambers and over the treasuries of the house of God. **27** And they spent the night around the house of God, for the guard duty ***was*** on them; and they ***were*** over the key, and ***opened*** morning by morning.

Other Levite Duties

28 And some of them ***were*** over the articles of the service, for by number they brought them in, and by number they took them out. **29** And some of them ***were*** appointed over the articles, and over all the articles of the holy place, and over the fine flour and the wine and the oil and the frankincense and the spices. **30** And some of the sons of the priests ***were*** mixers of the mixture of the spices. **31** And Mattithiah (Matitya), of the Levites—he ***was*** the firstborn of Shallum the Korahite—***was*** in faithfulness over the work of the flat cakes.

9:4 Luke 3:33; 1 Chr 2:5; Gen 46:12
9:5 Num 26:20; Neh 11:5
9:6 Matt 1:3; 1 Chr 2:4,6; Gen 38:30
9:7 Neh 8:4; Neh 10:20; Neh 11:7
9:10 Neh 11:10-24; Neh 12:19
9:11 Neh 11:11; 1 Chr 6:8-15; Neh 10:2
9:12 Neh 11:12,13; 1 Chr 24:14; Ezra 2:37
9:13 1 Chr 26:6,30,32; Neh 11:14
9:14 Neh 11:15; Neh 10:11; Neh 12:24
9:15 Neh 11:17,22; 1 Chr 12:25; 1 Chr 25:2
9:16 Neh 11:17; 1 Chr 12:25; 1 Chr 25:1,3,6
9:17 1 Chr 23:5; 1 Chr 26:1-32; Neh 11:19
9:18 Ezek 46:1,2; 1 Kgs 10:5; 2 Kgs 11:19
9:19 1 Chr 6:22,23; Num 26:9-11; Ps 42:1
9:20 Num 3:32; Num 4:16,28,33; Num 31:6
9:21 1 Chr 26:14
9:22 1 Sam 9:9; 1 Chr 9:16,25; Neh 11:25-30,36
9:23 1 Chr 23:32; 2 Chr 23:19; Neh 12:45
9:24 1 Chr 26:14-18
9:25 Luke 1:23; 2 Kgs 11:5,7; 2 Chr 23:8
9:26 John 8:20; 1 Chr 26:20-27; 2 Chr 31:5-12
9:27 Rom 12:7; 1 Sam 3:15; Mal 1:10
9:28 1 Chr 26:22-26; Num 23:25-27; Ezra 8:25-30
9:29 Exod 27:20; Exod 30:23-38
9:30 Exod 37:29; Exod 30:25,33,35-38
9:31 1 Chr 9:22,26; 1 Chr 9:17,19; Lev 2:5,7

9:13 *mighty men of valor for the work of the service of the house of God* The same words used for soldiers in chapter 7, but their battle was the daily work of God's house. Serving God faithfully in the ordinary tasks of worship takes strength and courage too.
9:16 *in the villages of the Netophathite* Near Bethlehem. Jeduthun was another name for Ethan the singer (6:44; 15:17; 16:41), so the singers' families from David's day were still serving after the exile.
9:19 *keepers of the entrance* The writer looks back to the wilderness, when the Korahites guarded the tent and Phinehas was over them, and the LORD was with him (9:20).
9:22 *David and Samuel the seer appointed them in their faithfulness* Every night someone stood guard and every morning someone opened the doors. No one wrote psalms about the man with the key, but the writer says they served in faithfulness. A son of Korah would rather stand at the threshold of God's house than dwell in the tents of wickedness (Ps 84:10). God sees the doorkeepers.
9:27 *over the key, and opened morning by morning* They spent the night around the house of God.
9:28 *by number they brought them in, and by number they took them out* Every cup and bowl was counted.

32 And some of the sons of the Kohathite, some of their brothers, ***were*** over the bread of the arrangement, to prepare ***it*** Sabbath by Sabbath. **33** And these ***were*** the singers, heads of fathers of the Levites, in the chambers, exempt, for by day and night ***it was*** on them in the work. **34** These ***were*** the heads of the fathers of the Levites according to their generations, heads; these dwelt in Jerusalem.

Saul's Family Again

35 And in Gibeon (Givon) dwelt the father of Gibeon, Jeiel (Ye'i'el), and the name of his wife ***was*** Maacah (Ma'akha); **36** and his son, the firstborn, Abdon (Avdon), and Zur (Tsur) and Kish (Qish) and Baal and Ner and Nadab (Nadav), **37** and Gedor and Ahio (Achyo) and Zechariah and Mikloth (Miqlot). **38** And Mikloth fathered Shimeam (Shimam). And they also dwelt opposite their brothers in Jerusalem, with their brothers. **39** And Ner fathered Kish, and Kish fathered Saul (Shaul), and Saul fathered Jonathan (Yehonatan) and Malchi-shua (Malkishua) and Abinadab (Avinadav) and Eshbaal. **40** And the son of Jonathan ***was*** Merib-baal (Meriv-Ba'al); and
Merib-baal (Meri-Va'al) fathered Micah (Mikha). **41** And the sons of Micah: Pithon (Piton) and Melech (Melekh) and Tahrea (Tachre'a). **42** And Ahaz (Achaz) fathered Jarah
(Yara), and Jarah fathered Alemeth (Alemet) and Azmaveth (Azmavet) and Zimri; and Zimri fathered Moza (Motsa); **43** and Moza fathered Binea (Bina); and Rephaiah (Refaya) his son, Eleasah (Elasa) his son, Azel (Atsel) his son. **44** And Azel had six sons, and these ***are*** their names: Azrikam, Bocheru (Bokhru), and Ishmael (Yishma'el) and Sheariah (She'arya) and Obadiah and Hanan (Chanan). These ***were*** the sons of Azel.

1 CHRONICLES 10

The Death of Saul

1 And the Philistines fought against Israel (Yisra'el), and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and they fell slain on the mountain of Gilboa. **2** And the Philistines pursued closely after Saul (Shaul) and after his sons, and the Philistines struck down Jonathan (Yonatan) and Abinadab (Avinadav) and Malchi-shua (Malkishua), the sons of Saul. **3** And the battle was heavy on Saul, and the archers with the bow found him, and he was in anguish because of the archers. **4** And Saul said to the bearer of his weapons, "Draw your sword and pierce me through with it, lest these uncircumcised come and deal wantonly with me." And the bearer of his weapons was not willing, for he was very afraid. And Saul took the sword and fell on it. **5** And the bearer of his weapons saw that Saul had died, and he also fell on the sword and died. **6** And Saul died, and his three sons, and all his house; together they died. **7** And every man of Israel who ***was*** in the valley saw that they had fled, and that Saul and his sons had died; and they abandoned their cities and fled, and the Philistines came and dwelt in them. **8** And it came about on the next day ***that*** the Philistines came to strip the slain, and they found Saul and his sons fallen on the mountain of Gilboa. **9** And they stripped him, and took his head and his weapons, and sent into the land of the Philistines all around, to bring the news to their idols and to the people. **10** And they put his weapons ***in*** the house of their gods, and his skull they fastened ***in*** the house of Dagon. **11** And all Jabesh-gilead (Yavesh-Gilad) heard all that the Philistines had done to Saul, **12** and every man of valor arose, and they took the corpse of Saul and the corpses of his sons, and brought them to Jabesh, and they buried their bones under the oak in Jabesh, and fasted seven days.

9:32 Lev 24:5-8; 1 Chr 6:33-48; Exod 25:30
9:33 1 Chr 6:31-33; 1 Chr 25:1-31; 1 Chr 15:16-22
9:34 1 Chr 9:13; Neh 11:1-15
9:35 1 Chr 8:29-40; 1 Chr 2:23,24,45,50-52
9:36 1 Chr 9:39; 1 Chr 8:33
9:37 1 Chr 8:31
9:38 1 Chr 8:32
9:39 1 Sam 13:22; 1 Chr 8:33; 1 Chr 10:2
9:40 1 Chr 8:34-36
9:41 1 Chr 8:35
9:42 1 Chr 8:36
9:43 1 Chr 8:37

10:1 1 Sam 31:1,2-13; 1 Chr 10:8; 1 Sam 28:1
10:2 1 Chr 8:33; 1 Chr 9:39; 1 Sam 14:6,39,40
10:3 1 Sam 31:3-6; 2 Sam 1:4-10; Amos 2:14
10:4 1 Sam 31:4; Judg 9:54; Judg 15:18
10:6 1 Sam 4:10,11,18; 1 Sam 12:25; Eccl 9:1,2
10:7 Lev 26:31,36; Deut 28:33,43; Judg 6:2
10:8 1 Sam 31:8; 2 Kgs 3:23; 2 Chr 20:25
10:9 1 Chr 10:4; 1 Sam 31:9,10; 2 Sam 1:20
10:10 1 Sam 31:10; 1 Sam 5:2-7
10:11 1 Sam 11:1-11; 1 Sam 31:11-13; 2 Sam 2:4-7
10:12 Gen 35:8; 2 Sam 21:12-14; Gen 50:10

9:32 *the bread of the arrangement* The twelve loaves set before the LORD in the holy place, Sabbath by Sabbath (Lev 24:5-9). The Sabbath was the seventh day, the day of rest God gave Israel.
9:33 *by day and night it was on them in the work* Worship went on around the clock. Every task, from counting cups to baking bread, was part of worship. Whatever we do, we do all to the glory of God (1 Cor 10:31).
9:35 *the father of Gibeon* Saul's family is repeated from 8:29-38 with small differences in spelling. The lists are finished and the story is about to begin with Saul's last battle. Here his family is the doorway into the history of the kings.
10:1 *they fell slain on the mountain of Gilboa* The Philistines were a sea people on the southern coast, Israel's great enemy in the days of Saul and David. Gilboa is a ridge on the edge of the Jezreel Valley. The writer tells Saul's story only by its end. Sometimes the way a life ends tells us what it was really built on.
10:2 *the Philistines struck down Jonathan* David's dearest friend died fighting beside his father.
10:4 *Saul took the sword and fell on it* A hard verse, and some may know the pain of losing someone this way. The Bible records what Saul did. It does not praise it. It shows a man at the end of a long road of turning from God, alone, afraid and without hope. Scripture does not answer every question about those who take their own lives. God is merciful, and He alone judges the heart. If you are struggling with thoughts of ending your life, please talk to someone today, a pastor, a friend, a doctor or a crisis line. There is help and hope in Christ.
10:5 *he also fell on the sword and died* Most Bible teachers believe the Amalekite of 2 Samuel 1, who claimed to have killed Saul, was lying to win David's favor.
10:6 *all his house; together they died* Eshbaal lived on and reigned two years (2 Sam 2:8-10), so this means Saul's household in the battle and the end of his house as a ruling family. One king's unfaithfulness brought ruin on a whole people (10:7).
10:10 *his skull they fastened in the house of Dagon* Dagon was the chief Philistine god. Years before, Dagon had fallen on his face before the ark (1 Sam 5:1-5). Now the Philistines thought Dagon had won.
10:12 *they buried their bones under the oak in Jabesh* Saul had rescued Jabesh-gilead early in his reign (1 Sam 11), and they never forgot it. David blessed them for it (2 Sam 2:5-6). We can be honest about a fallen leader's sins and still remember any good he did.

Why Saul Died

13 And Saul died for his unfaithfulness in which he was unfaithful against the LORD, concerning the word of the LORD which he did not keep, and also for asking of a medium, to inquire ***of it***, **14** and he did not inquire of the LORD; and He put him to death, and turned the kingdom over to David the son of Jesse (Yishay).

1 CHRONICLES 11

David Anointed King over Israel

1 And all Israel (Yisra'el) gathered together to David at Hebron (Chevron), saying, "Look, we ***are*** your bone and your flesh. **2** Even yesterday, even the day before, even when Saul (Shaul) was king, you ***were*** the one who led out and the one who brought in Israel; and the LORD your God said to you, 'You shall shepherd My people Israel, and you shall be leader over My people Israel.'" **3** And all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, and David made a covenant with them at Hebron before the LORD; and they anointed David as king over Israel, according to the word of the LORD by the hand of Samuel (Shemu'el).

David Takes Jerusalem

4 And David and all Israel went to Jerusalem
(Yerushalayim)—it ***is*** Jebus (Yevus)—and there ***were*** the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land. **5** And the inhabitants of Jebus said to David, "You shall not come in here." And David captured the stronghold of Zion (Tsiyon); it ***is*** the city of David. **6** And David said, "Whoever strikes down a Jebusite first shall become chief and commander." And Joab (Yo'av) the son of Zeruiah (Tseruya) went up first, and he became chief. **7** And David dwelt in the fortress; therefore they called it the city of David. **8** And he built the city all around, from the Millo and to the surrounding ***area***; and Joab restored the rest of the city. **9** And David went on, going and becoming great, and the LORD of armies ***was*** with him.

David's Mighty Men

10 And these ***were*** the chiefs of the mighty men who ***belonged*** to David, who strengthened themselves with him in his kingdom, with all Israel, to make him king, according to the word of the LORD concerning Israel. **11** And this ***is*** the number of the mighty men who ***belonged*** to David:
Jashobeam (Yashov'am) the son of Hachmoni (Chakhmoni), the chief of the officers; he wielded his spear against three hundred slain at one time. **12** And after him ***was*** Eleazar (Elazar) the son of Dodo the Ahohite; he ***was*** among the three mighty men. **13** He was with David at Pas-dammim
(Pas-Damim), and the Philistines were gathered there for battle; and there was a portion of the field full of barley, and the people fled from before the Philistines. **14** And they took their stand in the midst of the portion and delivered it, and struck down the Philistines; and the LORD saved ***with*** a great deliverance.

Water from the Well of Bethlehem

15 And three of the thirty chiefs went down to the rock to David, to the cave of Adullam (Adulam), while the camp of the Philistines ***was*** encamped in the valley of Rephaim (Refa'im). **16** And David ***was*** then in the stronghold, and the garrison of the Philistines ***was*** then at Bethlehem
(Bet-Lechem). **17** And David craved, and said, "Who will give

10:13 Acts 13:22; Lev 19:31; Lev 20:6
10:14 1 Sam 15:28; 1 Sam 13:14; Judg 10:11-16
11:1 1 Chr 12:23-40; 2 Sam 5:1-16; Num 13:22
11:2 Matt 2:6; 2 Sam 5:2; 2 Sam 7:7
11:3 1 Sam 16:1,12,13; 2 Sam 5:3; 2 Sam 2:4
11:4 Judg 1:21; Josh 15:63; Gen 10:16
11:5 Rom 9:33; Heb 12:22; Rev 14:1
11:6 2 Sam 8:16; Josh 15:16,17; 1 Sam 17:25
11:7 Ps 2:6; 1 Chr 11:5; 2 Sam 5:7
11:8 Judg 9:6,20; 1 Kgs 9:15; 1 Kgs 11:27
11:9 2 Sam 3:1; 2 Sam 5:10; Job 17:9
11:10 2 Sam 23:8; 1 Chr 12:38; 2 Sam 3:17,18,21
11:11 2 Sam 23:8; 1 Chr 27:2
11:12 1 Chr 27:4; 2 Sam 23:9; 1 Chr 8:4
11:13 1 Sam 17:1
11:14 1 Sam 14:23; 1 Sam 19:5; 2 Sam 23:10
11:15 1 Chr 14:9; Isa 17:5; 2 Sam 23:13-39
11:16 1 Sam 10:5; 1 Sam 13:4,23; 1 Sam 22:1
11:17 Num 11:4,5; 2 Sam 23:15,16; Ps 143:6

10:13 *Saul died for his unfaithfulness in which he was unfaithful against the LORD* The word used of Achan (2:7), the eastern tribes (5:25) and Judah (9:1): breaking faith with God. Saul offered a sacrifice he had no right to offer (1 Sam 13:8-14) and disobeyed about Amalek (1 Sam 15). To obey is better than sacrifice (1 Sam 15:22).
10:13 *for asking of a medium, to inquire of it* A medium claimed to speak with the dead, which God's law forbade (Lev 19:31; Deut 18:10-12). Saul had driven them out, yet the night before the battle he went to one at Endor (1 Sam 28).
10:14 *he did not inquire of the LORD* First Samuel 28:6 says Saul asked and the LORD did not answer. I believe the writer means Saul never truly sought God. He asked once, in a panic, and when he heard nothing he went to a medium. To seek God in Chronicles means to turn to Him with your whole heart and keep at it.
10:14 *He put him to death, and turned the kingdom over to David the son of Jesse* The writer says the LORD did it, a verdict on Saul's whole reign that only God could give. It does not mean every hard or early death is a punishment. Seeking the LORD is the big question in Chronicles. Where do you go when you are afraid and God seems silent?
11:1 *all Israel gathered together to David at Hebron* Chronicles skips the seven and a half years David ruled only Judah and the war with Ish-bosheth (2 Sam 2-4). The writer wants us to see that all Israel came together.
11:2 *You shall shepherd My people Israel* David was family, he had already led their armies, and most of all God had spoken. A king was not to use the people but to care for, feed, protect and lead them. The Son of David would say, "I am the good shepherd" (John 10:11).
11:3 *they anointed David as king over Israel, according to the word of the LORD by the hand of Samuel* To anoint is to pour oil on someone's head to set him apart for God's service. Samuel had anointed David privately years before (1 Sam 16:13). God's word came true, in God's time.
11:4 *David and all Israel went to Jerusalem* Still held by the Jebusites, whom Israel had never driven out (Josh 15:63). The city sat on a high ridge and was hard to attack.
11:6 *Joab the son of Zeruiah went up first* Second Samuel 5:8 suggests the attack went up through the water shaft. Joab would be David's commander for most of his reign, a hard and sometimes ruthless man.
11:8 *the Millo* Probably a set of stone terraces.
11:9 *the LORD of armies was with him* The title means God commands the armies of heaven and earth. David grew great, but not by his own strength. God set His King on Zion (Ps 2:6), and I believe Jesus will one day reign there as the Son of David.
11:11 *he wielded his spear against three hundred slain at one time* Second Samuel 23:8 gives eight hundred and another name. Most likely a copying slip in one book, since numbers were easy to miscopy, or the two count different fights.
11:14 *the LORD saved with a great deliverance* Everyone else ran, a few stood firm, and the LORD gets the credit.
11:17 *Who will give me water to drink from the well of Bethlehem* Probably a sigh more than an order, a homesick longing for the water he drank as a boy.

me water to drink from the well of Bethlehem, which ***is*** at the gate?" **18** And the three broke through the camp of the Philistines and drew water from the well of Bethlehem, which ***was*** at the gate, and they carried ***it*** and brought ***it*** to David; and David was not willing to drink it, and he poured it out to the LORD. **19** And he said, "Far be it from me, from my God, to do this! Shall I drink the blood of these men with their lives? For with their lives they brought it." And he was not willing to drink it. These ***things*** the three mighty men did.

Abishai and Benaiah

20 And Abishai (Avishay) the brother of Joab, he was chief of the three; and he wielded his spear against three hundred slain, and he had a name among the three. **21** More than the three, by two, he was honored, and he became a commander for them; but to the three he did not come. **22** Benaiah (Benaya) the son of Jehoiada (Yehoyada) ***was*** the son of a valiant man, great of deeds, from Kabzeel (Qavtse'el); he struck down the two Ariel of Moab (Mo'av); and he went down and struck down the lion in the midst of the pit on the day of the snow. **23** And he struck down the Egyptian man, a man of stature, approximately 7.5 feet (five cubits) ***tall***; and in the hand of the Egyptian ***was*** a spear like a weavers' beam; and he went down to him with a staff, and he snatched the spear from the hand of the Egyptian and killed him with his own spear. **24** These ***things*** Benaiah the son of Jehoiada did, and he had a name among the three mighty men. **25** Look, he was honored more than the thirty, but to the three he did not come. And David appointed him over his bodyguard.

The Mighty Men of the Forces

26 And the mighty men of the forces ***were***: Asahel the brother of Joab, Elhanan (Elchanan) the son of Dodo from Bethlehem, **27** Shammoth (Shamot) the Harorite, Helez (Chelets) the Pelonite, **28** Ira the son of Ikkesh (Iqesh) the Tekoite, Abiezer (Avi'ezer) the Anathothite, **29** Sibbecai (Sibkhay) the Hushathite, Ilai (Ilay) the Ahohite, **30** Maharai (Maharay) the Netophathite, Heled (Cheled) the son of Baanah (Ba'ana) the Netophathite, **31** Ittai (Itay) the son of Ribai (Rivay) from Gibeah of the sons of Benjamin (Binyamin), Benaiah the Pirathonite, **32** Hurai (Churay) from the wadis of Gaash, Abiel (Avi'el) the Arbathite, **33** Azmaveth (Azmavet) the Baharumite, Eliahba (Elyachba) the Shaalbonite, **34** the sons of Hashem the Gizonite, Jonathan (Yonatan) the son of Shagee (Shage) the Hararite, **35** Ahiam (Achi'am) the son of Sachar (Sakhar) the Hararite, Eliphal (Elifal) the son of Ur, **36** Hepher (Chefer) the Mecherathite, Ahijah (Achiya) the Pelonite, **37** Hezro (Chetsro) the Carmelite, Naarai (Na'aray) the son of Ezbai (Ezbay), **38** Joel (Yo'el) the brother of Nathan (Natan), Mibhar (Mivchar) the son of Hagri, **39** Zelek (Tseleq) the Ammonite, Naharai (Nacharay) the Beerothite, the bearer of the weapons of Joab the son of Zeruiah, **40** Ira the Ithrite, Gareb (Garev) the Ithrite, **41** Uriah (Uriya) the Hittite, Zabad (Zavad) the son of Ahlai (Achlay), **42** Adina the son of Shiza the Reubenite, a chief of the Reubenites, and thirty with him, **43** Hanan (Chanan) the son of Maacah (Ma'akha), and Joshaphat (Yoshafat) the Mithnite, **44** Uzzia (Uziya) the Ashterathite, Shama and Jeiel (Ye'i'el) the sons of Hotham (Chotam) the Aroerite, **45** Jediael (Yedi'a'el) the son of Shimri, and Joha (Yocha) his brother, the Tizite, **46** Eliel the Mahavite, and Jeribai (Yerivay) and Joshaviah (Yoshavya) the sons of Elnaam, and Ithmah (Yitma) the Moabite, **47** Eliel and Obed (Oved) and Jaasiel (Ya'asi'el) the Mezobaite (Metsovaya).

1 CHRONICLES 12

The Men Who Came to David at Ziklag

1 And these ***are*** the ones who came to David at Ziklag (Tsiqlag) while he was still kept back from before Saul (Shaul) the son of Kish (Qish); and they ***were*** among the mighty men, helpers in the battle, **2** equipped with the bow, using the right ***hand*** and using the left with stones and with arrows on the bow; of the brothers of Saul, from Benjamin (Binyamin). **3** The chief ***was*** Ahiezer (Achi'ezer), and Joash (Yo'ash), the sons of Shemaah (Shema'a) the Gibeathite; and

11:18 1 Sam 19:5; Song 8:6; Acts 20:24
11:19 Mark 14:24; 2 Sam 23:17; 1 Kgs 21:3
11:20 1 Sam 26:6; 1 Chr 2:16; 2 Sam 2:18
11:21 Matt 13:8; 1 Cor 15:41
11:22 2 Sam 8:18; Josh 15:21; 1 Chr 27:5,6
11:23 Deut 3:11; 1 Sam 17:4; 1 Chr 20:5
11:25 2 Sam 20:23
11:26 1 Chr 27:7; 2 Sam 2:18-23; 2 Sam 3:30
11:27 1 Chr 27:8; 2 Sam 25:25; 2 Sam 23:26
11:28 1 Chr 27:12; 1 Chr 27:9; 2 Sam 23:27
11:29 1 Chr 27:11; 2 Sam 23:27,28
11:30 1 Chr 27:13; 1 Chr 27:15; 2 Sam 23:29
11:31 2 Sam 23:29
11:32 2 Sam 23:30; 2 Sam 23:31
11:34 2 Sam 23:32,33
11:35 2 Sam 23:33; 2 Sam 23:34
11:37 2 Sam 23:35
11:38 2 Sam 23:36
11:40 2 Sam 20:26
11:41 Matt 1:6; 2 Sam 11:6-27; 2 Sam 23:39
12:1 1 Sam 27:2,6; 2 Sam 1:1; 2 Sam 4:10
12:2 Judg 3:15; Judg 20:16; 1 Sam 17:49
12:3 1 Chr 11:28; 1 Sam 11:4; 2 Sam 21:6

11:18 *David was not willing to drink it, and he poured it out to the LORD* The water had cost his men's lives at risk, too precious to drink, so he gave it to God. Pouring out a drink offering was worship (Gen 35:14). When we think of what Jesus gave for us, His own blood, what can we do but pour out our lives to Him?
11:21 *to the three he did not come* There were ranks even among heroes.
11:22 *he went down and struck down the lion in the midst of the pit on the day of the snow* A snowy day, bad footing, and every advantage with the lion. Some of God's servants are called to do hard things in hard places. Benaiah later became Solomon's commander (1 Kgs 2:35).
11:23 *a spear like a weavers' beam* Benaiah went at him with only a staff and killed him with his own spear.
11:39 *Zelek the Ammonite* Some of David's mighty men came from outside Israel. Chronicles adds sixteen names after Uriah (11:41-47), many from east of the Jordan.
11:41 *Uriah the Hittite* Chronicles does not tell the story of Bathsheba, but it does not erase Uriah. He was a loyal soldier whom David wronged terribly (2 Sam 11). Great leaders are still sinners, and God remembers the faithful who were wronged.
11:47 *Eliel and Obed and Jaasiel the Mezobaite* A king does not reign alone. Jesus said there is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends (John 15:13), and He did exactly that for us.
12:1 *these are the ones who came to David at Ziklag* Ziklag was the Philistine town where David lived while Saul hunted him (1 Sam 27:6). He was an outlaw with no throne and no promise of safety. Yet men came to him.
12:2 *using the right hand and using the left* Left-handed fighters were a Benjamite specialty (Judg 20:16). These were Saul's own kin, turning their backs on relatives to follow the man God had chosen. Whoever loves father or mother more than Jesus is not worthy of Him (Matt 10:37).

Jeziel (Yezi'el) and Pelet, the sons of Azmaveth (Azmavet); and Beracah (Berakha), and Jehu (Yehu) the Anathothite;
4 and Ishmaiah (Yishmaya) the Gibeonite, a mighty man among the thirty and over the thirty; and Jeremiah (Yirmeya), and Jahaziel (Yachazi'el), and Johanan (Yehochanan), and Jozabad (Yozavad) the Gederathite;
5 Eluzai (Eluzay), and Jerimoth (Yerimot), and Bealiah (Ba'alya), and Shemariah (Shemaryahu), and Shephatiah (Shefatyahu) the Haruphite; **6** Elkanah (Elqana), and Isshiah (Yishiyahu), and Azarel, and Joezer (Yo'ezer), and Jashobeam (Yashov'am), the Korahites; **7** and Joelah (Yo'ela) and Zebadiah (Zevadya), the sons of Jeroham (Yerocham) from Gedor.
8 And from the Gadites there separated themselves to David at the stronghold toward the wilderness mighty men of valor, men of war for battle, arraying shield and spear; and their faces ***were*** the faces of a lion, and ***they were*** like gazelles on the mountains in making haste: **9** Ezer the chief, Obadiah (Ovadya) the second, Eliab (Eli'av) the third, **10** Mishmannah (Mishmana) the fourth, Jeremiah the fifth, **11** Attai (Atay) the sixth, Eliel the seventh, **12** Johanan the eighth, Elzabad (Elzavad) the ninth, **13** Jeremiah (Yirmeyahu) the tenth, Machbannai (Makhbanay) the eleventh. **14** These ***were*** of the sons of Gad, chiefs of the army; the least ***was*** one for a hundred, and the greatest for a thousand. **15** These ***are*** the ones who crossed over the Jordan (Yarden) in the first month, and it ***was*** overflowing over all its banks; and they put to flight all ***those in*** the valleys, to the east and to the west.

Amasai and the Men of Benjamin and Judah

16 And ***some*** of the sons of Benjamin and Judah (Yehuda) came to the stronghold to David. **17** And David went out before them, and he answered and said to them, "If you have come to me for peace, to help me, I shall have a heart toward you for unity; but if to betray me to my foes, while ***there is*** no violence in my hands, may the God of our fathers see and rebuke ***it***." **18** And ***the*** Spirit clothed Amasai (Amasay), the chief of the officers: "***We are*** yours, David, and with you, son of Jesse (Yishay)! Peace, peace to you, and peace to your helper; for your God has helped you." And David received them and made them chiefs of the band. **19** And ***some*** from Manasseh (Menashe) fell away to David when he came with the Philistines against Saul for battle; but they did not help them, for by counsel the lords of the Philistines sent him away, saying, "At ***the cost of*** our heads he will fall away to his master Saul." **20** When he went to Ziklag, there fell away to him from Manasseh: Adnah (Adnach), and Jozabad, and Jediael (Yedi'a'el), and Michael (Mikha'el), and Jozabad, and Elihu, and Zillethai (Tsiletay), chiefs of the thousands who ***belonged*** to Manasseh. **21** And they helped David against the band, for they ***were*** all mighty men of valor, and they were commanders in the army. **22** For at ***that*** time, day by day, they came to David to help him, until ***there was*** a great camp, like the camp of God.

The Army That Made David King

23 And these ***are*** the numbers of the heads of those armed for war ***who*** came to David at Hebron (Chevron) to turn the kingdom of Saul to him, according to the mouth of the LORD.
24 The sons of Judah bearing shield and spear ***were*** six thousand eight hundred, armed for war. **25** Of the sons of Simeon (Shimon), mighty men of valor for war, seven thousand one hundred. **26** Of the sons of the Levites, four thousand six hundred. **27** And Jehoiada (Yehoyada) ***was*** the leader of ***the house of*** Aaron (Aharon), and with him ***were*** three thousand seven hundred; **28** and Zadok (Tsadoq), a young man, mighty of valor, and the house of his father, twenty-two commanders. **29** And of the sons of Benjamin, the brothers of Saul, three thousand; and until now the greater part of them ***were*** keeping the charge of the house of Saul. **30** And of the sons of Ephraim (Efrayim), twenty thousand eight hundred, mighty men of valor, men of names in the house of their fathers. **31** And of the half-tribe of Manasseh, eighteen thousand, who were designated by names to come to make David king. **32** And of the sons of Issachar (Yisashkhar), knowing understanding of the times, to know what Israel (Yisra'el) should do: their chiefs ***were*** two hundred, and all their brothers ***were*** at their command. **33** Of Zebulun (Zevulun), those going out to war, arraying battle with all weapons of battle, fifty

12:4 Josh 9:3,17-23; Josh 15:36; 1 Chr 11:15
12:7 Josh 15:58; 1 Chr 4:18,39
12:8 2 Sam 2:18; 2 Sam 17:10; 1 Chr 12:16
12:14 Lev 26:8; Deut 32:30
12:15 Josh 3:15; Josh 4:18; Jer 12:5
12:17 Acts 5:30; Acts 22:14; 1 Sam 16:4
12:18 Eph 6:23; Judg 6:34; 2 Sam 17:25
12:19 1 Sam 29:2-4
12:20 1 Sam 29:11; Exod 18:21; Deut 1:15
12:21 1 Sam 30:1-17; 1 Chr 5:24; 1 Chr 11:10,21,22
12:22 Gen 32:2; Josh 5:14; 2 Sam 2:2-4
12:23 2 Sam 2:3,4; 1 Chr 11:10; 1 Sam 16:1,3,12,13
12:27 1 Chr 9:20; 2 Kgs 11:4,9; 2 Kgs 25:18
12:28 1 Chr 6:8,53; 2 Sam 8:17; 1 Kgs 1:8
12:29 2 Sam 2:8,9; 1 Chr 12:2; Gen 31:23
12:30 Gen 6:4
12:31 Josh 17:1-18
12:32 Esth 1:13; Gen 49:14; Isa 22:12-14
12:33 Ps 12:2; John 1:47

12:8 *their faces were the faces of a lion, and they were like gazelles on the mountains in making haste* Brave as lions, swift as gazelles.
12:14 *the least was one for a hundred, and the greatest for a thousand* The least was a match for a hundred men, or they became commanders over a hundred and a thousand.
12:15 *it was overflowing over all its banks* They crossed a flooded river in spring to join David. Nothing would keep them from him.
12:17 *may the God of our fathers see and rebuke it* David had been betrayed before (1 Sam 23:19). He went out to meet them carefully and left the judgment with God.
12:18 *the Spirit clothed Amasai* The Spirit came on him like a garment. Complete loyalty, peace, and the confession that God was with David. This is how we come to the Son of David, not with conditions but telling Him we are His, and He receives all who come (John 6:37).
12:19 *the lords of the Philistines sent him away* They feared he would turn on them in the fight (1 Sam 29). On the way back, chiefs of Manasseh joined him and helped against the raiders who burned Ziklag (12:21; 1 Sam 30).
12:22 *until there was a great camp, like the camp of God* A few hundred outlaws in a cave grew day by day. God builds His work that way. The church began with a handful, and day by day the Lord added to their number (Acts 2:47).
12:23 *according to the mouth of the LORD* Every tribe is counted, about 340,000 men in all. I take the numbers as written. Some scholars think the word for thousand may mean a military unit. Either way, the whole nation came.
12:28 *Zadok, a young man, mighty of valor* The young Zadok, later David's priest, came with twenty-two commanders.
12:32 *knowing understanding of the times, to know what Israel should do* They could read the moment and see it was time to follow David. The church needs people who know God's Word and can see what it means for our times.
12:33 *not a heart and a heart* Without a divided heart. They were all in.

thousand, and to help with not a heart and a heart. **34** And of Naphtali (Naftali), a thousand commanders, and with them, with shield and spear, thirty-seven thousand. **35** And of the Danites, arraying battle, twenty-eight thousand six hundred. **36** And of Asher, those going out to war, to array battle, forty thousand. **37** And from beyond the Jordan, of the Reubenites and the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh, with all weapons of war ***for*** battle, one hundred twenty thousand. **38** All these, men of battle, helpers of the battle line, came with a whole heart to Hebron to make David king over all Israel; and also all the rest of Israel ***were of*** one heart to make David king. **39** And they were there with David three days, eating and drinking, for their brothers had prepared for them. **40** And also those near to them, as far as Issachar and Zebulun and Naphtali, were bringing bread on donkeys and on camels and on mules and on oxen, food of flour, fig cakes and raisin clusters, and wine and oil, and oxen and sheep in abundance; for ***there was*** joy in Israel.

1 CHRONICLES 13

The Ark Brought from Kiriath-jearim

1 And David consulted with the commanders of the thousands and of the hundreds, with every leader. **2** And David said to all the assembly of Israel (Yisra'el), "If ***it seems*** good to you, and ***if it is*** from the LORD our God, let us spread out, let us send to our brothers who remain in all the lands of Israel, and with them the priests and the Levites in the cities of their pasture lands, that they may gather to us; **3** and let us bring back the ark of our God to us, for we did not seek it in the days of Saul (Shaul)." **4** And all the assembly said to do so, for the thing was right in the eyes of all the people. **5** And David assembled all Israel, from Shihor (Shichor) of Egypt (Mitsrayim) even to the entrance of Hamath (Chamat), to bring the ark of God from Kiriath-jearim (Qiryat-Ye'arim). **6** And David and all Israel went up to Baalah (Ba'ala), to Kiriath-jearim, which ***belongs*** to Judah (Yehuda), to bring up from there the ark of God, the LORD, who sits ***on*** the cherubim, where ***the*** name is called. **7** And they made the ark of God ride on a new cart from the house of Abinadab (Avinadav), and Uzzah (Uza) and Ahio (Achyo) ***were*** leading the cart. **8** And David and all Israel ***were*** celebrating before God with all ***their*** strength, and with songs and with lyres and with harps and with tambourines and with cymbals and with trumpets.

The Death of Uzzah

9 And they came to the threshing floor of Chidon (Kidon), and Uzzah stretched out his hand to take hold of the ark, for the oxen stumbled. **10** And the anger of the LORD burned against Uzzah, and He struck him down because he had stretched out his hand on the ark; and he died there before God. **11** And David was angry because the LORD had broken out ***with*** a breaking out against Uzzah; and he called that place Perez-uzza (Perets-Uza) until this day. **12** And David feared God on that day, saying, "How shall I bring the ark of God to me?" **13** And David did not remove the ark to himself to the city of David, and he turned it aside to the house of Obed-edom (Oved-Edom) the Gittite. **14** And the ark of God remained with the household of Obed-edom in his house

12:36 1 Chr 12:33; Joel 2:7
12:37 1 Chr 5:1-10; Deut 3:12-16; Josh 13:7-32
12:38 1 Kgs 8:61; 1 Kgs 11:4; 2 Kgs 20:3
12:39 Gen 26:30; Gen 31:54; 2 Sam 6:19
12:40 1 Sam 25:18; 2 Sam 16:1; 2 Sam 17:27-29
13:1 1 Chr 12:14,20,32; 2 Sam 6:1; 2 Kgs 23:1
13:2 Acts 13:36; 1 Sam 31:1; 1 Kgs 12:7
13:3 1 Sam 7:1,2; Ps 132:6; 1 Sam 14:18,36
13:4 1 Sam 18:20; 2 Sam 3:36; 2 Chr 30:4
13:5 1 Sam 6:21; 2 Sam 6:1; 1 Kgs 8:65
13:6 Josh 15:9,60; Exod 25:22; 2 Kgs 19:15
13:7 Num 4:15; 1 Chr 15:2,13; 1 Sam 6:7
13:8 1 Chr 15:10-24; 1 Sam 10:5; 2 Sam 6:5-23
13:9 2 Sam 6:6
13:10 1 Chr 15:13,15; Num 4:15; Josh 6:6
13:11 2 Sam 6:7,9; Jonah 4:4,9; Gen 32:32
13:12 Num 17:12,13; 1 Sam 5:10,11; 1 Sam 6:20
13:13 1 Chr 15:18; 1 Chr 26:4,8; 1 Chr 16:5
13:14 Gen 30:27; Gen 39:5; Prov 3:9,10

12:38 *came with a whole heart to Hebron to make David king over all Israel* After years of division and war, Israel was one.
12:40 *for there was joy in Israel* A picture of the kingdom to come. When God's King reigns and His people come with a whole heart, there is feasting and joy (Matt 8:11). The returned exiles had no king, and this gave them something to hope for.
13:1 *David consulted with the commanders of the thousands and of the hundreds* David did not act alone. Chronicles puts this before the events of chapter 14, which Samuel tells first. The writer often arranges by theme to show David's heart for God's presence at the very start of his reign.
13:3 *we did not seek it in the days of Saul* Saul died because he did not seek the LORD (10:14). David's first act as king over all Israel is to seek God by bringing back the ark, the sign of His presence.
13:4 *the thing was right in the eyes of all the people* Right in their eyes. The trouble came because they did not ask whether the way was right in God's eyes.
13:6 *who sits on the cherubim* The golden cherubim on the ark marked it as the earthly throne of the invisible King. It had stayed at Kiriath-jearim many years, perhaps seventy or more, since the Philistines sent it back (1 Sam 4; 6:7-12; 7:1-2).
13:7 *they made the ark of God ride on a new cart* It must have seemed a fine idea. A new cart was clean and honorable, and it had worked for the Philistines.
13:8 *celebrating before God with all their strength* The joy was real and their hearts sincere. But God had not told them to carry the ark on a cart.
13:9 *Uzzah stretched out his hand to take hold of the ark, for the oxen stumbled* A threshing floor was a flat, hard place where grain was beaten. The cart jolted and Uzzah reached out to keep the ark from falling.
13:10 *He struck him down because he had stretched out his hand on the ark* Hard to read. God had said the Kohathites were to carry the ark on their shoulders with poles (Exod 25:12-15; Num 7:9), and "shall not touch the holy thing, and die" (Num 4:15). Uzzah's family had kept the ark for years and should have known. The whole plan copied the Philistines instead of obeying God.
13:10 *he died there before God* The ark was the throne of the holy God, not an object needing human help. The ground was not unclean; sinful hands were. This was about God's holiness, as with Nadab and Abihu (Lev 10:1-3) and Beth-shemesh (1 Sam 6:19). In Christ we have "confidence for the entrance into the holy places by the blood of Jesus" (Heb 10:19).
13:11 *David was angry because the LORD had broken out with a breaking out against Uzzah* Perez-uzza means the breaking out against Uzzah. David's great day of worship ended at a grave. Have you ever been angry with God when things went wrong while you were trying to serve Him? The Bible does not hide it.
13:12 *How shall I bring the ark of God to me* His anger turned to fear, and that was the right question, though he did not yet have the answer.
13:13 *Obed-edom the Gittite* A Levite (15:18, 21; 26:4), probably from the Levite town of Gath-rimmon.
13:14 *the LORD blessed the household of Obed-edom* The same ark that brought death to Uzzah brought blessing to Obed-edom. God's holiness is a danger to those who handle Him carelessly and a blessing to those who honor Him.

three months; and the LORD blessed the household of Obed-edom and all that ***belonged*** to him.

1 CHRONICLES 14

David's House and Family

1 And Hiram (Churam) the king of Tyre (Tsor) sent messengers to David, and cedar trees, and craftsmen of wall and craftsmen of wood, to build a house for him. **2** And David knew that the LORD had established him as king over Israel (Yisra'el), that his kingdom was highly exalted for the sake of His people Israel. **3** And David took more wives in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), and David fathered more sons and daughters. **4** And these ***are*** the names of the children who were his in Jerusalem: Shammua (Shamua) and Shobab (Shovav), Nathan (Natan) and Solomon (Shelomo), **5** and Ibhar (Yivchar) and Elishua and Elpelet (Elpalet), **6** and Nogah and Nepheg (Nefeg) and Japhia (Yafia), **7** and Elishama and Beeliada (Be'elyada) and Eliphelet (Elifelet).

Victories over the Philistines

8 And the Philistines heard that David had been anointed as king over all Israel, and all the Philistines went up to seek David; and David heard, and he went out before them. **9** And the Philistines had come and made a raid in the valley of Rephaim (Refa'im). **10** And David inquired of God, saying, "Shall I go up against the Philistines? And will You give them into my hand?" And the LORD said to him, "Go up, and I will give them into your hand." **11** And they went up to Baal-perazim (Ba'al-Peratsim), and David struck them down there; and David said, "God has broken out against my enemies by my hand like the breaking out of waters." Therefore they called the name of that place Baal-perazim. **12** And they abandoned their gods there; and David spoke, and they were burned with fire. **13** And the Philistines yet again made a raid in the valley. **14** And David inquired of God again, and God said to him, "You shall not go up after them; turn around from them, and you shall come to them from in front of the balsam trees. **15** And let it be, when you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees, then you shall go out to battle, for God has gone out before you to strike down the camp of the Philistines." **16** And David did just as God had commanded him, and they struck down the camp of the Philistines from Gibeon (Givon) even to Gezer. **17** And the name of David went out into all the lands, and the LORD put the dread of him on all the nations.

1 CHRONICLES 15

Preparing to Bring Up the Ark

1 And he made houses for himself in the city of David, and he prepared a place for the ark of God and pitched a tent for it. **2** Then David said, "No ***one is*** to carry the ark of God except the Levites, for the LORD chose them to carry the ark of the LORD and to minister to Him forever." **3** And David assembled all Israel (Yisra'el) to Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) to bring up the ark of the LORD to its place, which he had prepared for it. **4** And David gathered the sons of Aaron (Aharon) and the Levites: **5** of the sons of Kohath (Qehat), Uriel the chief, and his brothers, one hundred twenty; **6** of the sons of Merari, Asaiah (Asaya) the chief, and his brothers, two hundred twenty; **7** of the sons of Gershom, Joel (Yo'el) the chief, and

14:1 2 Sam 5:11,12-16; 2 Chr 2:3,8-10; Ezra 3:7
14:2 Num 24:7; 1 Chr 17:17; 2 Sam 7:16
14:3 1 Chr 3:1-4; Deut 17:17; 2 Sam 5:13
14:4 Matt 1:6; Luke 3:31; 1 Chr 3:5-9
14:5 1 Chr 3:6; 2 Sam 5:15
14:7 1 Chr 3:8
14:8 1 Sam 21:11; 2 Sam 5:17-25; 1 Chr 11:3
14:9 1 Chr 11:15; 2 Sam 5:18; 2 Sam 23:13
14:10 Prov 3:6; 1 Chr 14:14; 1 Chr 13:3
14:11 Isa 28:21; 2 Sam 5:20; Ps 18:13-15
14:12 Exod 32:20; Exod 12:12; Deut 7:5,25
14:13 1 Chr 14:9; 2 Sam 5:22-25; 1 Kgs 20:22
14:14 1 Chr 14:10; Ps 27:4; Josh 8:2-7
14:15 Lev 26:36; 2 Kgs 7:6; 2 Kgs 19:7
14:16 Gen 6:22; Exod 39:42,43; John 2:5
14:17 Deut 2:25; Exod 15:14-16; Josh 6:27
15:1 Acts 7:45; 1 Chr 16:1; 1 Chr 15:3
15:2 Acts 7:45; Deut 10:8; Deut 31:9
15:3 Acts 7:45; 1 Chr 13:5; 1 Kgs 8:1
15:4 Acts 7:45; 1 Chr 6:16-20,49,50; 1 Chr 12:26-28
15:5 1 Chr 6:22-24
15:6 1 Chr 6:29,30
15:7 1 Chr 15:11; 1 Chr 23:8

14:1 *Hiram the king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and cedar trees* Tyre was a wealthy trading city on the coast north of Israel, in what is now Lebanon, and its cedar was the finest building wood in the ancient world. Hiram later helped Solomon build the temple (2 Chr 2:3-16).
14:2 *for the sake of His people Israel* It was the LORD who made David king, and He did it for His people. God gives authority for the good of those under it. The greatest must be the servant of all (Mark 10:43-45).
14:3 *David took more wives in Jerusalem* The Bible records David's many wives but does not approve of them (Deut 17:17). God's design from the beginning was one man and one woman (Gen 2:24; Matt 19:4-6). David's marriages brought jealousy, rivalry and violence, and Solomon's wives turned his heart (1 Kgs 11:1-4). God does not approve of our sins, but He is not stopped by them.
14:4 *Nathan and Solomon* The two sons through whom Matthew and Luke trace the line to Jesus.
14:8 *the Philistines heard that David had been anointed as king over all Israel* While he ruled only Judah they may have seen him as no threat, since he had once lived among them. They raided the valley of Rephaim, just southwest of Jerusalem.
14:10 *David inquired of God* He did not assume. He asked.
14:11 *God has broken out against my enemies by my hand like the breaking out of waters* Baal-perazim means lord of breaking out. God had broken out against Uzzah (13:11). The same God who broke out in judgment on careless worship broke out in power for an obedient king.
14:12 *they were burned with fire* Second Samuel 5:21 says they carried the idols away. Chronicles adds that they were burned, as the law commanded (Deut 7:5, 25). The Philistines once carried off the ark. Now their gods were left on the battlefield and burned.
14:14 *David inquired of God again* Same enemy, same valley, and he could have assumed the same answer. He did not.
14:15 *When you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees* A sign that God's own army was moving ahead of him. Yesterday's guidance is not a formula for today. Keep seeking God every time, do exactly what He says, and wait for Him to go before you.
14:17 *the LORD put the dread of him on all the nations* David's fame grew, but the LORD did it.
15:1 *he prepared a place for the ark of God and pitched a tent for it* He built his own house but did not forget God's house.
15:2 *No one is to carry the ark of God except the Levites* David had gone back to the law. He asked his question from 13:12 and found the answer in God's Word (Num 4:15; Deut 10:8). He did not give up on bringing God's presence to the center. He gave up on doing it his own way.
15:5 *the sons of Kohath* Six Levite families, 862 men. Elizaphan, Hebron and Uzziel were branches of Kohath (Exod 6:18-22), so four of six groups came from the family God appointed to carry the holy things (Num 4:4-15). This time no one was going to guess.

his brothers, one hundred thirty; **8** of the sons of Elizaphan (Elitsafan), Shemaiah (Shemaya) the chief, and his brothers, two hundred; **9** of the sons of Hebron (Chevron), Eliel the chief, and his brothers, eighty; **10** of the sons of Uzziel (Uzi'el), Amminadab (Aminadav) the chief, and his brothers, one hundred twelve. **11** And David called for Zadok (Tsadoq) and for Abiathar (Evyatar) the priests, and for the Levites, for Uriel, Asaiah, and Joel, Shemaiah, and Eliel, and Amminadab, **12** and he said to them, "You ***are*** the heads of the fathers of the Levites; consecrate yourselves, you and your brothers, and bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel to ***the place that*** I have prepared for it. **13** For because at the first ***time*** you ***were*** not ***there***, the LORD our God broke out against us, for we did not seek Him according to the ordinance." **14** And the priests and the Levites consecrated themselves to bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel. **15** And the sons of the Levites carried the ark of God, just as Moses (Moshe) had commanded according to the word of the LORD, on their shoulder with the poles on them.

The Levite Singers Appointed

16 And David said to the commanders of the Levites to appoint their brothers the singers with instruments of song, harps and lyres and cymbals, sounding aloud, to raise a sound of joy. **17** And the Levites appointed Heman the son of Joel, and of his brothers, Asaph (Asaf) the son of Berechiah (Berekhyahu); and of the sons of Merari their brothers, Ethan (Etan) the son of Kushaiah (Qushayahu); **18** and with them their brothers of the second ***rank***: Zechariah (Zekharyahu), Ben, and Jaaziel (Ya'azi'el), and Shemiramoth (Shemiramot), and Jehiel (Yechi'el), and Unni (Uni), Eliab (Eli'av), and Benaiah (Benayahu), and Maaseiah (Ma'aseyahu), and Mattithiah (Matityahu), and Eliphelehu (Elifelehu), and Mikneiah (Miqneyahu), and Obed-edom (Oved-Edom), and Jeiel (Ye'i'el), the gatekeepers. **19** And the singers, Heman, Asaph, and Ethan, ***were*** to sound aloud with cymbals of bronze; **20** and Zechariah, and Aziel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Unni, and Eliab, and Maaseiah, and Benaiah, with harps on Alamoth; **21** and Mattithiah, and Eliphelehu, and Mikneiah, and Obed-edom, and Jeiel, and Azaziah (Azazyahu), with lyres on the Sheminith, to lead. **22** And Chenaniah (Kenanyahu), the commander of the Levites in the lifting up, ***was*** instructing in the lifting up, for he ***was*** skilled. **23** And Berechiah and Elkanah (Elqana) ***were*** gatekeepers for the ark. **24** And Shebaniah (Shevanyahu), and Joshaphat (Yoshafat), and Nethanel (Netanel), and Amasai (Amasay), and Zechariah, and Benaiah, and Eliezer, the priests, ***were*** blowing on the trumpets before the ark of God; and Obed-edom and Jehiah (Yechiya) ***were*** gatekeepers for the ark.

The Ark Brought into the City of David

25 And it was David and the elders of Israel and the commanders of the thousands who went to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD from the house of Obed-edom with joy. **26** And it was, when God helped the Levites who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD, that they sacrificed seven bulls and seven rams. **27** And David ***was*** wrapped in a robe of fine linen, and all the Levites who were carrying the ark, and the singers, and Chenaniah the commander of the lifting up ***of*** the singers; and on David ***was*** an ephod of linen. **28** And all Israel ***was*** bringing up the ark of the covenant of the LORD with shouting, and with the sound of the ram's horn, and with trumpets, and with cymbals, sounding aloud with harps and lyres. **29** And it was, ***as*** the ark of the covenant of the LORD came to the city of David, that Michal (Mikhal) the daughter of Saul (Shaul) looked down through the window and saw King David skipping and celebrating; and she despised him in her heart.

15:8 Exod 6:22
15:9 Exod 6:18; 1 Chr 6:2; 1 Chr 23:12,19
15:10 1 Chr 6:18; 1 Chr 23:12; Exod 6:18,22
15:11 Acts 7:45; 1 Chr 12:28; 1 Sam 22:20-23
15:12 Acts 7:45; Acts 13:36; 2 Chr 35:6
15:13 Heb 12:5; 1 John 1:10; 2 Sam 6:3
15:14 Lev 10:3; 2 Chr 29:15,34; Joel 2:16,17
15:15 Num 7:9; Exod 25:12,12-15; Exod 37:3-5
15:16 Acts 7:45; Acts 13:36; 1 Chr 13:8
15:17 1 Chr 6:33; 1 Chr 6:39; 1 Chr 6:44
15:18 1 Chr 26:4,8,15; 1 Chr 25:2-6,9-31; 1 Chr 16:5,6
15:19 1 Chr 15:16; 1 Chr 13:8; 1 Chr 16:5,42
15:20 Ps 46:1
15:21 1 Chr 15:18; 1 Chr 16:5; 1 Chr 25:6,7
15:22 1 Chr 15:16,27; 1 Chr 25:7,8
15:23 1 Chr 9:21-23; 2 Kgs 22:4; 2 Kgs 25:18
15:24 1 Chr 16:6; Num 10:8; 2 Chr 5:12,13
15:25 Acts 13:36; 2 Sam 6:12,13-23; 1 Kgs 8:1
15:26 Job 42:8; 1 Chr 29:14; 1 Sam 7:12
15:27 Acts 13:36; 2 Sam 6:14; 1 Sam 2:18
15:28 Acts 13:36; 1 Chr 13:8; 1 Chr 15:16
15:29 Heb 9:4; Acts 13:36; 2 Sam 6:16

15:12 *consecrate yourselves, you and your brothers* To set yourself apart as holy for God's service, with washing, keeping from anything unclean, and preparing the heart (Exod 19:10-15).
15:13 *we did not seek Him according to the ordinance* An ordinance is a rule God has set. David said "we" and did not blame Uzzah alone. It is possible to be very excited about God and still ignore what He has said. True worshipers worship "in spirit and truth" (John 4:23). Spirit without truth was the problem in chapter 13.
15:15 *just as Moses had commanded according to the word of the LORD, on their shoulder with the poles on them* That phrase is the difference between chapter 13 and chapter 15.
15:16 *to raise a sound of joy* Obedience did not mean the joy had to go. It meant the joy would be led by those God appointed.
15:20 *on Alamoth* Alamoth and Sheminith (15:21) are musical terms whose exact meanings are lost. Many think Alamoth means a high pitch and Sheminith a lower one, perhaps an octave. Both appear in psalm titles (Ps 46; 6; 12).
15:22 *for he was skilled* Lifting up may mean leading the music or directing the carrying of the ark. God values skill offered to Him.
15:24 *gatekeepers for the ark* Obed-edom, in whose house the ark had stayed, now served as a gatekeeper and musician. He had seen God's blessing up close and wanted to stay near His presence.
15:26 *when God helped the Levites who carried the ark* When they did it His way, He helped them. Second Samuel 6:13 tells of a sacrifice after six steps. The two may describe offerings at the start and along the way.
15:27 *an ephod of linen* A linen garment like a vest or apron worn by priests. The king set aside his royal robes to worship with the worshipers.
15:29 *Michal the daughter of Saul looked down through the window* Called the daughter of Saul, not the wife of David. She shared her father's attitude toward the ark (13:3). The same event can fill one heart with joy and another with scorn. Have you held back in worship for fear of what others think? Michal stayed at the window. David was in the procession.

1 CHRONICLES 16

The Ark in Its Tent

1 And they brought the ark of God and set it in the midst of the tent which David had pitched for it; and they brought near burnt offerings and peace offerings before God. **2** And David finished offering up the burnt offering and the peace offerings, and he blessed the people in the name of the LORD. **3** And he distributed to every man of Israel (Yisra'el), both man and woman, to each a loaf of bread and a date cake and a raisin cake. **4** And he appointed some of the Levites before the ark of the LORD ***as*** ministers, both to make remembrance and to give thanks and to praise the LORD God of Israel: **5** Asaph (Asaf) the chief, and second to him Zechariah (Zekharya), Jeiel (Ye'i'el), and Shemiramoth (Shemiramot), and Jehiel (Yechi'el), and Mattithiah (Matitya), and Eliab (Eli'av), and Benaiah (Benayahu), and Obed-edom
(Oved-Edom), and Jeiel, with instruments of harps and with lyres; and Asaph ***was*** sounding aloud with the cymbals; **6** and Benaiah and Jahaziel (Yachazi'el) the priests ***were*** with trumpets continually before the ark of the covenant of God.

David's Psalm of Thanks

7 On that day, then David first appointed to give thanks to the LORD by the hand of Asaph and his brothers: **8** "Give thanks to the LORD; call on His name; make known His deeds among the peoples. **9** Sing to Him; sing praises to Him; speak of all His wonders. **10** Glory in the name of His holiness; let the heart of those who seek the LORD rejoice. **11** Seek the LORD and His strength; seek His face continually.
12 Remember His wonders which He has done, His portents, and the judgments of His mouth, **13** O seed of Israel His servant, sons of Jacob (Ya'aqov), His chosen ones! **14** He ***is*** the LORD our God; His judgments ***are*** in all the earth.
15 Remember His covenant forever, the word ***which*** He commanded for a thousand generations, **16** which He made with Abraham (Avraham), and His oath to Isaac (Yitschaq); **17** and He confirmed it to Jacob for a statute, to Israel ***as*** an everlasting covenant, **18** saying, 'To you I will give the land of Canaan (Kena'an), the portion of your inheritance,' **19** when you were men of number, as few, and sojourners in it. **20** And they went about from nation to nation, and from a kingdom to another people. **21** He did not permit any man to oppress them, and He rebuked kings on their account: **22** 'Do not touch My anointed ones, and to My prophets do no harm.' **23** Sing to the LORD, all the earth; bear the good news of His salvation from day to day. **24** Recount His glory among the nations, His wonders among all the peoples. **25** For great ***is*** the LORD, and to be praised exceedingly; and He ***is*** to be feared above all gods. **26** For all the gods of the peoples ***are*** worthless idols, and the LORD made the heavens.
27 Splendor and majesty ***are*** before Him; strength and joy ***are*** in His place. **28** Ascribe to the LORD, O families of peoples, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. **29** Ascribe to the LORD the glory of His name; lift up an offering and come before Him; bow down to the LORD in the adornment of holi-

16:1 1 Chr 15:1,12; 2 Sam 6:17-19; 2 Chr 1:4
16:2 Lev 1:3; Gen 14:19; Gen 20:7
16:3 2 Chr 30:24; 2 Chr 35:7,8; Neh 8:10
16:4 Acts 13:2; 1 Chr 15:16; 1 Chr 23:2-6
16:5 1 Chr 6:39; 1 Chr 15:16-24; 1 Chr 25:1-6
16:6 Num 10:8; 2 Chr 5:12,13; 2 Chr 13:12
16:7 2 Sam 22:1; 2 Sam 23:1,2; 2 Chr 29:30
16:8 Ps 105:1-15; Isa 12:4; 2 Kgs 19:19
16:9 Eph 5:19; Col 3:16; James 5:13
16:10 Ps 34:2; Isa 45:25; Jer 9:23,24
16:11 Ps 27:8,9; Ps 67:1; Zeph 2:2,3
16:12 Ps 103:2; 1 Chr 16:8,9; Ps 111:4
16:13 Gen 17:7; Gen 28:13,14; Gen 35:10-12
16:14 Exod 15:2; Ps 63:1; Ps 95:7
16:15 Ps 25:10; Ps 44:17; Ps 105:8
16:16 Luke 1:72; Acts 3:25; Heb 6:13
16:17 Acts 3:25; Ps 78:10; Gen 17:7,8
16:18 Gen 13:15; Gen 12:7; Gen 17:8
16:19 Gen 34:30; Acts 7:5; Heb 11:13
16:20 Gen 12:10; Gen 20:1; Gen 46:3,6
16:21 Gen 12:17; Gen 20:3; Exod 7:15-18
16:22 Gen 20:7; 1 Kgs 19:16; Ps 105:15
16:23 Ps 96:1-13; 1 Chr 16:9; Exod 15:21
16:24 2 Kgs 19:19; Ps 22:27; Isa 12:2-6
16:25 Ps 89:7; Ps 144:3-6; Ps 66:3-5
16:26 Lev 19:4; Ps 102:25; Isa 42:5
16:27 Ps 43:2-4; Ps 8:1; Ps 16:11
16:28 Ps 29:1,2; Ps 68:34; Ps 66:1,2
16:29 Ps 29:2; Ps 110:3; Ps 89:5-8

16:1 *burnt offerings and peace offerings before God* A burnt offering was burned whole, a gift wholly given to God (Lev 1). A peace offering was a fellowship meal, part burned for God and the rest eaten before Him (Lev 3; 7:11-15). The people gave themselves to God, then ate together before Him.
16:3 *both man and woman* The king fed the people, and no one went home empty. When God's people gather to worship, they should go home blessed and cared for, not only taught.
16:4 *to make remembrance and to give thanks and to praise the LORD God of Israel* Three verbs that describe worship: remembering what God has done, thanking Him for it, and praising Him for who He is.
16:7 *David first appointed to give thanks to the LORD by the hand of Asaph and his brothers* The beginning of the ministry of song that went on through the temple's days and that the returned exiles were restoring (Ezra 3:10-11).
16:8 *Give thanks to the LORD; call on His name* These verses match Psalm 105:1-7. Hebrew poetry rhymes thoughts, not sounds. One line says something and the next repeats, adds to or contrasts it. We call this parallelism (16:11).
16:10 *let the heart of those who seek the LORD rejoice* Saul did not seek the LORD (10:14). David had learned to seek Him according to the ordinance (15:13), and now calls all Israel to seek His face continually (16:11).
16:12 *Remember His wonders which He has done* God's people are called to remember. Forgetting is the first step toward unfaithfulness. He is Israel's God, but His judgments are in all the earth (16:14).
16:15 *Remember His covenant forever* Psalm 105:8 says God has remembered it. Chronicles calls the people to remember it too.
16:18 *To you I will give the land of Canaan* God promised the land to Abraham and his descendants and called it everlasting (Gen 12:7; 15:18; 17:8). I believe God still means it and will keep it with the nation of Israel (Rom 11:28-29). The returned exiles were back in that very land, few, as the patriarchs had been (16:19).
16:21 *He rebuked kings on their account* As with Pharaoh and Abimelech (Gen 12:17; 20:3).
16:22 *Do not touch My anointed ones* Sometimes used to say no one may question a church leader. In context, the anointed ones are the patriarchs, and God is warning the kings of the nations. Leaders should be honored, but still tested by God's Word (Acts 17:11; 1 John 4:1).
16:23 *bear the good news of His salvation from day to day* This part matches Psalm 96. Israel was always meant to tell the nations about the true God, and Jesus sent His followers to do the same (Matt 28:19). Every time we share the good news, we sing David's song.
16:26 *all the gods of the peoples are worthless idols, and the LORD made the heavens* The Philistines had just left their gods to be burned (14:12). Idols are made. The LORD is the Maker.
16:28 *ascribe to the LORD glory and strength* We cannot add to God's glory. To give Him glory means to recognize it and say it aloud.

ness. **30** Tremble before Him, all the earth; also the world is established; it shall not be shaken. **31** Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; and let them say among the nations, 'The LORD reigns.' **32** Let the sea thunder, and its fullness; let the field exult, and all that ***is*** in it. **33** Then the trees of the forest shall shout for joy before the LORD, for He comes to judge the earth. **34** Give thanks to the LORD, for ***He is*** good; for His steadfast love ***is*** forever. **35** And say, 'Save us, O God of our salvation, and gather us and deliver us from the nations, to give thanks to the name of Your holiness, to glory in Your praise.' **36** Blessed ***be*** the LORD God of Israel from everlasting and to everlasting." And all the people said, "Amen," and praised the LORD.

Worship in Jerusalem and Gibeon

37 And he left there, before the ark of the covenant of the LORD, Asaph and his brothers, to minister before the ark continually, according to the matter of each day on its day; **38** and Obed-edom and their brothers, sixty-eight; and
Obed-edom the son of Jeduthun (Yedutun) and Hosah (Chosa) ***were*** for gatekeepers; **39** and Zadok (Tsadoq) the priest and his brothers the priests before the tabernacle of the LORD at the high place which ***was*** at Gibeon (Givon), **40** to offer up burnt offerings to the LORD on the altar of the burnt offering continually, morning and evening, and according to all that is written in the law of the LORD which He commanded Israel; **41** and with them Heman and Jeduthun and the rest of those chosen, who were designated by names, to give thanks to the LORD, for His steadfast love ***is*** forever; **42** and with them, Heman and Jeduthun, ***were*** trumpets and cymbals for those sounding aloud, and the instruments of the song of God; and the sons of Jeduthun ***were*** for the gate. **43** And all the people went, each to his house; and David turned to bless his house.

1 CHRONICLES 17

David Desires to Build a House

1 And it was, when David dwelt in his house, that David said to Nathan (Natan) the prophet, "Look, I am dwelling in a house of cedars, and the ark of the covenant of the LORD ***is*** under curtains." **2** And Nathan said to David, "All that ***is*** in your heart, do, for God ***is*** with you."

God's Covenant with David

3 And it was, in that night, that the word of God came to Nathan, saying, **4** "Go, and you shall say to David My servant, 'Thus says the LORD, "You shall not build Me the house to dwell in. **5** For I have not dwelt in a house since the day that I brought up Israel (Yisra'el) until this day, and I have been from tent to tent and from tabernacle ***to tabernacle***.
6 Wherever I have walked about in all Israel, did I speak a word with one of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd My people, saying, 'Why have you not built Me a house of cedars?'"' **7** And now, thus you shall say to My servant David, 'Thus says the LORD of armies, "I took you from the pasture, from following the flock, to be leader over My people Israel. **8** And I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a name like the name of the great ones who ***are*** on the earth. **9** And I will appoint a place for My people Israel, and I will plant it, and it shall dwell in its place and shall not be disturbed again; and the sons of injus-

16:30 Col 1:17; Heb 1:3; 1 Chr 16:23,25
16:31 Ps 97:1; Ps 96:10; Ps 99:1
16:32 Ps 93:4; Ps 98:7; Ps 148:9,10
16:33 Rev 11:18; Ps 96:12,13; Ps 98:9
16:34 2 Chr 5:13; Jer 33:11; 2 Chr 7:3
16:35 1 Pet 2:9; Ps 106:47,48; Ps 14:7
16:36 1 Cor 14:16; Eph 1:3; 1 Pet 1:3
16:37 2 Chr 8:14; Ezra 3:4; 1 Chr 16:4-6
16:38 1 Chr 13:14; 1 Chr 26:4-8; 1 Chr 25:3
16:39 1 Kgs 3:4; 1 Chr 12:28; 1 Chr 21:29
16:40 Acts 13:2; Num 28:3-8; Exod 29:38-42
16:41 Acts 13:2; 2 Chr 5:13; 1 Chr 25:1-6
16:42 2 Chr 29:25-28; Ps 150:3-6; 1 Chr 25:6
16:43 2 Sam 6:19,20; 1 Kgs 8:66; Gen 18:19
17:1 1 Chr 17:5; 1 Chr 15:1; 2 Sam 7:1,2-17
17:2 1 Chr 22:7; 1 Chr 28:2; Josh 9:14
17:3 Num 12:6; 2 Kgs 20:1-5; Isa 30:21
17:4 1 Chr 28:2,3; Isa 55:8,9; Rom 11:33,34
17:5 Acts 7:44; Acts 7:45; Acts 7:49
17:6 Matt 2:6; Acts 13:20; 2 Cor 6:16
17:7 Matt 2:6; 2 Sam 6:21; Exod 3:1-10
17:8 1 Chr 17:2; Gen 28:15; 1 Sam 18:14,28
17:9 Jer 31:3-12; Ezek 34:13; Ps 44:2

16:33 *for He comes to judge the earth* Creation rejoices because His judgment will set right everything wrong. The earth groans under sin (Rom 8:19-22). I believe this looks ahead to Christ's visible return to judge and reign (Rev 19:11-16; 20:4-6).
16:34 *Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; for His steadfast love is forever* The refrain of Chronicles (Ps 106:1), sung at the temple's dedication (2 Chr 5:13; 7:3), in battle (2 Chr 20:21), and at the new temple's foundation (Ezra 3:11). Steadfast love is hesed, God's loyal covenant love that never lets go.
16:35 *gather us and deliver us from the nations* Perhaps some Israelites still lived among foreign peoples, or David looked ahead to scattering (Deut 30:1-5). For the first readers it was exactly their prayer. The prophets say God will one day gather all Israel to their land (Ezek 36:24; Jer 23:3-8).
16:36 *all the people said, Amen* Amen means so be it, it is true. The song ended with the whole people agreeing with God.
16:39 *the tabernacle of the LORD at the high place which was at Gibeon* Moses' tent and the bronze altar were a few miles northwest of Jerusalem. Many high places held idols, but this one held the true tabernacle. For a time there were two centers: the ark with its songs, and the altar with its sacrifices. They came together in Solomon's temple (2 Chr 5:2-7).
16:43 *David turned to bless his house* After blessing the nation, David went home to bless his family. A leader's first congregation is his own household.
17:1 *the ark of the covenant of the LORD is under curtains* David lived in comfort and the ark sat in a tent. His desire came from a good heart. He wanted God honored above himself.
17:2 *All that is in your heart, do, for God is with you* Nathan spoke before he had heard from God. Even good men can give their own opinion when they should wait on the LORD.
17:4 *You shall not build Me the house to dwell in* God corrected His prophet that night and called David "My servant." He was not angry, and He honored David's desire, but He had a different plan. David gives another reason in 22:8: he had shed much blood.
17:6 *Why have you not built Me a house of cedars* God never asked for a house. The heavens cannot contain Him (1 Kgs 8:27). Everything good comes from God to us, not from us to God.
17:7 *I took you from the pasture, from following the flock* So overlooked his father did not call him in for Samuel (1 Sam 16:11).
17:8 *I will make for you a name like the name of the great ones who are on the earth* An echo of God's promise to Abraham (Gen 12:2). The covenant with David builds on the covenant with Abraham. Three thousand years later, David's name is known around the world.
17:9 *it shall dwell in its place and shall not be disturbed again* Partly fulfilled under David and Solomon, but Israel was later carried off. It still looks ahead. God will plant Israel and they will never be plucked up again (Amos 9:15), when Christ returns and Israel dwells safely under the Son of David (Ezek 37:24-25).

tice shall not again wear it out as at the first, **10** and from the days that I commanded judges over My people Israel. And I will subdue all your enemies. And I have declared to you that the LORD will build a house for you. **11** And it shall be, when your days are fulfilled to go with your fathers, that I will raise up your seed after you, who shall be from your sons; and I will establish his kingdom. **12** He shall build Me a house, and I will establish his throne forever. **13** I will be to him a father, and he shall be to Me a son; and My steadfast love I will not remove from him, as I removed ***it*** from him who was before you. **14** And I will set him in My house and in My kingdom forever, and his throne shall be established forever."'" **15** According to all these words and according to all this vision, so Nathan spoke to David.

David's Prayer

16 And King David went in and sat before the LORD, and he said, "Who ***am*** I, O LORD God, and what ***is*** my house, that You have brought me this far? **17** And this was small in Your eyes, O God; and You have spoken concerning the house of Your servant for ***a time*** far off, and You have regarded me according to the order of the man of the ascent, O LORD God. **18** What more can David add to You for the glory of Your servant? And You know Your servant. **19** O LORD, for the sake of Your servant and according to Your heart You have done all this greatness, to make known all the great things. **20** O LORD, ***there is*** none like You, and ***there is*** no God except You, according to all that we have heard with our ears. **21** And who ***is*** like Your people Israel, one nation on the earth, whom God went to ransom for Himself ***as*** a people, to make for You a name ***by*** great and awesome ***deeds***, by driving out nations from before Your people whom You ransomed from Egypt (Mitsrayim)? **22** And You made Your people Israel Your own people forever; and You, O LORD, became their God. **23** And now, O LORD, the word which You have spoken concerning Your servant and concerning his house, let it be confirmed forever, and do as You have spoken. **24** And let it be confirmed, and let Your name be great forever, saying, 'The LORD of armies ***is*** the God of Israel, God to Israel'; and the house of David Your servant ***is*** established before You. **25** For You, O my God, have uncovered the ear of Your servant, to build a house for him; therefore Your servant has found ***courage*** to pray before You. **26** And now, O LORD, You are God, and You have spoken this good thing concerning Your servant. **27** And now You have been pleased to bless the house of Your servant, to be forever before You; for You, O LORD, have blessed, and ***it is*** blessed forever."

17:10 Judg 2:14-18; 2 Sam 7:11; Judg 3:8
17:11 Ps 132:11; 1 Chr 29:15,28; Acts 13:36
17:12 John 2:19; John 2:20; 1 Kgs 5:5
17:13 2 Cor 6:18; Heb 1:5; Isa 55:3
17:14 Heb 3:6; Ps 2:6; Ps 72:17
17:15 2 Sam 7:17; Jer 23:28; Acts 20:27
17:16 2 Sam 7:18; Gen 32:10; 2 Kgs 19:14
17:17 1 Chr 17:7,8; 2 Sam 7:19; 2 Sam 12:8
17:18 John 21:17; 1 Sam 2:30; 2 Sam 7:20-24
17:19 Isa 37:35; Isa 42:1; Isa 49:3,5,6
17:20 Exod 15:11; Isa 44:6; Exod 18:11
17:21 Titus 2:14; Ezek 20:9,10; Deut 4:7,32-34
17:22 1 Pet 2:9; Rom 11:2; Exod 19:5,6
17:23 Ps 119:49; Jer 11:5; Luke 1:38
17:24 Matt 6:9; Heb 8:10; 2 Chr 6:33
17:25 1 Sam 9:15; Ps 10:17; Ezek 36:37
17:26 Exod 34:6,7; Titus 1:2; Heb 6:18
17:27 Gen 27:33; Ps 72:17; Rom 11:29

17:10 *the LORD will build a house for you* The turning point. The Hebrew bayit can mean a building, a household or a dynasty. David would not build a house of cedar for God. God would build a house of kings for David.
17:11 *I will raise up your seed after you* Seed means offspring, one of David's own sons.
17:12 *I will establish his throne forever* First Solomon, who built the temple (22:9-10; 2 Chr 6:10). But Solomon's kingdom split, his temple burned, and when Chronicles was written no son of David had reigned for well over a hundred years. The promise was bigger than Solomon. It reached to a Son of David who would reign forever.
17:13 *I will be to him a father, and he shall be to Me a son* God took the kingdom from Saul but promised never to do that to David's family. Kings could be disciplined, but the line would never be cast off. Hebrews applies this to Jesus (Heb 1:5), the eternal Son of God who became David's son by birth (Rom 1:3). Chronicles leaves out 2 Samuel 7:14's line on correction, keeping its eyes on the promise.
17:14 *I will set him in My house and in My kingdom forever* The key verse of the book. Second Samuel 7:16 says your house and your kingdom. Chronicles says My house and My kingdom. Solomon sat "on the throne of the LORD" (29:23). The throne of David is the LORD's throne on earth.
17:15 *so Nathan spoke to David* Nathan, who spoke too quickly the night before, now spoke exactly what God said. Gabriel used the words of this covenant for Mary's Son: "of His kingdom there will be no end" (Luke 1:33). Peter said God raised Jesus "to sit upon his throne" (Acts 2:30). Its King cannot die again.
17:15 *According to all these words and according to all this vision* I believe the throne of David is a real throne over a real Israel in Jerusalem, and Jesus will sit on it when He returns (Matt 25:31) and reigns a thousand years (Rev 20:4-6). "For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable" (Rom 11:29). Amillennial teachers, who see Christ reigning on it now from heaven, take the promise seriously too.
17:16 *Who am I, O LORD God, and what is my house* He likely went into the tent of the ark and sat in humble worship. His first words were not about what he deserved. He was amazed at grace.
17:17 *according to the order of the man of the ascent* A hard phrase. Some think David meant God treated him as a man of high rank. Others take it as God showing him the line of generations to come. Either way, he had been given something far bigger than himself.
17:18 *You know Your servant* David ran out of words. God already knew his heart, his weakness and his gratitude.
17:19 *according to Your heart You have done all this greatness* Grace comes from who God is, not from who we are. God saves us by His own purpose and grace, not by our works (2 Tim 1:9).
17:21 *whom God went to ransom for Himself as a people* To ransom is to pay the price to set someone free. David saw his blessing as part of God's larger work with His people.
17:22 *You made Your people Israel Your own people forever* David believed God's choice of Israel was permanent. So did Paul (Rom 11:1-2). For the small community back from Babylon, they were still God's own people.
17:23 *do as You have spoken* Prayer is not talking God into something. It is taking hold of what He has promised and asking Him to do it.
17:24 *let Your name be great forever* God's name mattered more to David than the great name God promised him (17:8).
17:25 *Your servant has found courage to pray before You* To uncover the ear is to tell someone a secret plainly. David would never have dared ask for a dynasty forever. God promised first. His promises give us boldness to pray.
17:27 *You, O LORD, have blessed, and it is blessed forever* In 2 Samuel 7:29 David asks God to bless his house. Here he rests in the fact that God has. That blessing is kept in Jesus Christ, son of David (Matt 1:1). The promise is sure because the King is alive.

1 CHRONICLES 18

David's Victories

1 And it was after this that David struck down the Philistines and subdued them, and he took Gath (Gat) and its daughter ***towns*** from the hand of the Philistines. **2** And he struck down Moab (Mo'av), and Moab became servants to David, bearers of tribute. **3** And David struck down Hadadezer king of Zobah (Tsova) toward Hamath (Chamat), as he went to set up his hand at the river Euphrates (Perat). **4** And David captured from him a thousand chariots and seven thousand horsemen and twenty thousand men on foot; and David hamstrung all the chariotry, and he left of it one hundred chariots. **5** And Syria (Aram) of Damascus (Dameseq) came to help Hadadezer king of Zobah, and David struck down in Syria twenty-two thousand men. **6** And David put ***garrisons*** in Syria of Damascus, and Syria became servants to David, bearers of tribute. And the LORD saved David wherever he went. **7** And David took the shields of gold which were on the servants of Hadadezer and brought them to Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). **8** And from Tibhath (Tivchat) and from Cun (Kun), cities of Hadadezer, David took very much bronze; with it Solomon (Shelomo) made the bronze sea and the pillars and the articles of bronze. **9** And Tou (To'u) king of Hamath heard that David had struck down all the army of Hadadezer king of Zobah, **10** and he sent Hadoram his son to King David to ask him of ***his*** welfare and to bless him, because he had fought against Hadadezer and struck him down; for Hadadezer was a man of wars ***with*** Tou; and ***with him were*** all ***kinds of*** articles of gold and silver and bronze. **11** Also these King David consecrated to the LORD, with the silver and the gold which he had carried off from all the nations: from Edom and from Moab and from the sons of Ammon (Amon) and from the Philistines and from Amalek (Amaleq). **12** And Abishai (Avishay) the son of Zeruiah (Tseruya) struck down Edom in the Valley of Salt (Gay-Melach), eighteen thousand. **13** And he put garrisons in Edom, and all Edom became servants to David. And the LORD saved David wherever he went.

David's Officials

14 And David reigned over all Israel (Yisra'el), and he was doing justice and righteousness for all his people. **15** And Joab (Yo'av) the son of Zeruiah ***was*** over the army, and Jehoshaphat (Yehoshafat) the son of Ahilud (Achilud) ***was*** recorder; **16** and Zadok (Tsadoq) the son of Ahitub (Achituv) and Abimelech (Avimelekh) the son of Abiathar (Evyatar) ***were*** priests; and Shavsha ***was*** scribe; **17** and Benaiah (Benayahu) the son of Jehoiada (Yehoyada) ***was*** over the Kerethites and the Pelethites; and the sons of David ***were*** the first at the side of the king.

1 CHRONICLES 19

Hanun Shames David's Servants

1 And it was after this that Nahash (Nachash) the king of the sons of Ammon (Amon) died, and his son reigned in his place. **2** And David said, "I will do steadfast love with Hanun (Chanun) the son of Nahash, for his father did steadfast love with me." And David sent messengers to comfort him concerning his father. And the servants of David came into the

18:1 2 Sam 8:1,2-18; 1 Sam 5:8; 1 Sam 27:4
18:2 Num 24:17; Judg 3:29,30; 2 Sam 8:2
18:3 2 Sam 8:3; Ps 60:1; 1 Sam 14:47
18:4 2 Sam 8:4; Deut 17:16; Josh 11:6,9
18:5 2 Sam 8:5,6; 1 Kgs 11:23,24; Isa 8:9,10
18:6 1 Chr 18:2; Ps 18:43,44; 1 Chr 17:8
18:7 1 Kgs 10:16,17; 1 Kgs 14:26-28; 2 Chr 9:15,16
18:8 2 Sam 8:8; 1 Chr 22:14; 1 Kgs 7:15-47
18:9 2 Sam 8:9
18:10 2 Sam 8:10; 2 Chr 9:1,23,24; Isa 39:1
18:11 1 Chr 22:14; 1 Chr 26:20,26,27; 1 Chr 29:14
18:12 1 Sam 26:6,8; 1 Chr 2:16; 1 Chr 11:20
18:13 1 Chr 18:6; 1 Sam 10:5; 1 Sam 13:3
18:14 Acts 13:36; 1 Chr 12:38; 2 Sam 8:15
18:15 1 Chr 11:6; 2 Sam 8:16; 1 Kgs 4:3
18:16 Mark 2:26; 2 Sam 8:17; 2 Sam 20:25
18:17 2 Sam 8:18; 2 Sam 15:18; 2 Sam 20:7,23
19:1 1 Sam 11:1,2; 1 Sam 12:12; 2 Sam 10:1-3
19:2 1 Sam 30:26; 2 Sam 9:1,7; 2 Kgs 4:13

18:1 *it was after this that David struck down the Philistines and subdued them* After this ties the wars to the promise. God had just said He would subdue David's enemies (17:10), and now He does. Gath was one of the five chief Philistine cities, Goliath's hometown.
18:2 *bearers of tribute* Tribute was a yearly payment a weaker nation made to a stronger one. The writer keeps his eyes on the result: the nations around Israel came under David, as God said.
18:3 *as he went to set up his hand at the river Euphrates* Zobah was an Aramean kingdom north of Damascus. To set up his hand means to establish his rule. God had promised Abraham the land as far as the Euphrates (Gen 15:18).
18:4 *David hamstrung all the chariotry* Second Samuel 8:4 gives seventeen hundred horsemen, most likely a copying difference. God told kings not to multiply horses (Deut 17:16). David would not trust in chariots (Ps 20:7).
18:6 *the LORD saved David wherever he went* The key line. David was a skilled soldier, but the victories were the LORD's. A garrison was a post of soldiers stationed to hold a territory.
18:8 *with it Solomon made the bronze sea and the pillars and the articles of bronze* Chronicles adds this. The bronze sea was the huge basin where the priests washed (2 Chr 4:2-6), and the pillars stood at the temple's front (2 Chr 3:15-17). David could not build the temple, but every victory gathered materials for it. Nothing done for the Lord is wasted, even what we do not live to see finished.
18:10 *to ask him of his welfare and to bless him* Tou of Hamath, north of Zobah, wanted peace with the new power in the region.
18:11 *Also these King David consecrated to the LORD* He did not keep the treasure of his victories but later gave it toward the temple (26:26-27; 29:2-5). "What do you have which you did not receive?" (1 Cor 4:7).
18:12 *Abishai the son of Zeruiah struck down Edom in the Valley of Salt* Second Samuel 8:13 credits David, and Psalm 60's title Joab with twelve thousand. David was king, and Joab and Abishai his commanders in the field. The numbers may count different parts of the battle.
18:14 *he was doing justice and righteousness for all his people* Justice gives each what is due, and righteousness lives by God's standard. God would raise up for David a righteous Branch to do justice and righteousness in the land (Jer 23:5). What David did in part, Jesus will do perfectly when He reigns.
18:16 *Shavsha was scribe* The royal secretary. The recorder kept the records and announced decisions. Samuel's Ahimelech and Seraiah (2 Sam 8:17) show names spelled more than one way or changed in copying.
18:17 *the sons of David were the first at the side of the king* Second Samuel 8:18 calls them priests. Chronicles explains they were chief officials, not altar priests, which only Aaron's sons could be. The Kerethites and Pelethites were David's foreign guard. A kingdom needs order, and Chronicles will show the same care in worship.
19:1 *Nahash the king of the sons of Ammon died* Ammon lay east of the Jordan around Rabbah, where Amman, Jordan's capital, stands today.
19:2 *I will do steadfast love with Hanun the son of Nahash* Loyal kindness kept up over time. We are not told what Nahash did for David, perhaps in the years he ran from Saul, Nahash's enemy (1 Sam 11).

land of the sons of Ammon to Hanun to comfort him. **3** And the commanders of the sons of Ammon said to Hanun, "Is David honoring your father in your eyes, because he has sent comforters to you? Is it not in order to search and to overthrow and to spy out the land ***that*** his servants have come to you?" **4** And Hanun took the servants of David and shaved them, and he cut off their garments in the middle, as far as the buttocks, and sent them away. **5** And ***some*** went and told David about the men, and he sent to meet them, for the men were greatly humiliated. And the king said, "Remain at Jericho (Yericho) until your beard grows, and ***then*** you shall return."

War with Ammon and Syria

6 And the sons of Ammon saw that they had made themselves odious with David, and Hanun and the sons of Ammon sent approximately 75,000 pounds (a thousand talents) of silver to hire for themselves chariotry and horsemen from Mesopotamia (Aram-Naharayim) and from Aram-maacah (Aram-Ma'akha) and from Zobah (Tsova). **7** And they hired for themselves thirty-two thousand chariots, and the king of Maacah and his people; and they came and encamped before Medeba (Medva). And the sons of Ammon were gathered from their cities and came for battle. **8** And David heard, and he sent Joab (Yo'av) and all the army of the mighty men. **9** And the sons of Ammon went out and arrayed battle ***at*** the entrance of the city, and the kings who had come ***were*** by themselves in the field. **10** And Joab saw that the face of the battle was against him, front and back; and he chose from all the chosen ***men*** in Israel (Yisra'el) and arrayed ***them*** to meet Syria (Aram). **11** And the rest of the people he put in the hand of Abishai (Avishay) his brother, and they arrayed ***themselves*** to meet the sons of Ammon. **12** And he said, "If Syria is too strong for me, then you shall be to me for deliverance; and if the sons of Ammon are too strong for you, then I will save you. **13** Be strong, and let us show ourselves strong for our people and for the cities of our God; and the LORD shall do what ***is*** good in His eyes." **14** And Joab and the people who ***were*** with him drew near before Syria for battle, and they fled from before him. **15** And the sons of Ammon saw that Syria had fled, and they also fled from before Abishai his brother and went into the city. And Joab came to Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). **16** And Syria saw that they had been defeated before Israel, and they sent messengers and brought out Syria which ***was*** beyond the River, and Shophach (Shofakh) the commander of the army of Hadadezer ***was*** before them. **17** And it was told to David, and he gathered all Israel and crossed over the Jordan (Yarden), and he came to them and arrayed ***battle*** against them. And David arrayed battle to meet Syria, and they fought with him. **18** And Syria fled from before Israel, and David killed of Syria seven thousand charioteers and forty thousand men on foot, and he put to death Shophach the commander of the army. **19** And the servants of Hadadezer saw that they had been defeated before Israel, and they made peace with David and served him. And Syria was not willing to save the sons of Ammon anymore.

1 CHRONICLES 20

Rabbah Taken

1 And it was, at the time of the return of the year, at the time of the going out of the kings, and Joab (Yo'av) led out the force of the army, and he destroyed the land of the sons of Ammon (Amon), and he came and besieged Rabbah (Raba); and David ***was*** remaining in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). And Joab struck Rabbah and overthrew it. **2** And David took the crown of their king from on his head, and he found it ***to be*** the weight of approximately 75 pounds (a talent) of gold, and in it ***was*** a precious stone; and it was on the head of David.

19:3 1 Sam 29:4,9; 1 Kgs 12:8-11; 1 Cor 13:5-7
19:4 Ps 35:12; Ps 109:4,5; Lev 19:27
19:5 Matt 18:31; Josh 6:24-26; 1 Kgs 16:34
19:6 Acts 2:9; Gen 34:30; 2 Sam 10:6
19:7 Num 21:30; Josh 13:9; 1 Chr 18:4
19:8 1 Chr 11:6,10-47; 2 Sam 23:8-39
19:9 1 Sam 17:2; 2 Sam 18:4; 2 Chr 13:3
19:10 2 Sam 10:9-14; Josh 8:22; Judg 20:42,43
19:11 1 Chr 18:12; 1 Chr 11:20
19:12 Neh 4:20; Eccl 4:9-12; Gal 6:2
19:13 Deut 31:6,7; Josh 1:7; Josh 10:25
19:14 1 Kgs 20:13,19-21,28-30; 2 Chr 13:5-16; Jer 46:15,16
19:15 Lev 26:7; Rom 8:31
19:16 2 Sam 10:16; Ps 2:1; Isa 8:9
19:17 1 Chr 19:9; Isa 22:6,7
19:18 2 Sam 10:18; 1 Chr 19:13,14; Ps 18:32
19:19 Gen 14:4,5; Josh 9:9-11; 2 Sam 10:19
20:1 2 Sam 11:1; Deut 3:11; Amos 1:14
20:2 1 Chr 18:11; 2 Sam 8:11,12

19:3 *Is David honoring your father in your eyes* Suspicious people often read evil into kindness. Hanun listened to bad counsel, and it cost his nation dearly.
19:4 *he cut off their garments in the middle* A beard was a mark of manhood and dignity (2 Sam 10:4), and to cut it off was a deep insult, to the men and to David who sent them.
19:5 *Remain at Jericho until your beard grows* He did not make them walk into Jerusalem in shame. A good leader protects the honor of those who serve under him.
19:6 *a thousand talents of silver* About thirty-seven tons, to hire chariots and horsemen. Samuel counts the hired men differently (2 Sam 10:6). Ammon bought an army far bigger than its own.
19:10 *the face of the battle was against him, front and back* Trapped between two armies, Joab split his forces with his brother Abishai, and each would help the other.
19:13 *the LORD shall do what is good in His eyes* Joab was not always godly, but here he spoke what every believer needs. Do your part with all your strength and leave the outcome to God. That is not fatalism. Can you face your hardest battles that way?
19:15 *they also fled from before Abishai his brother* Men fighting for pay do not fight like men fighting for their home. But the war was not finished.
19:16 *beyond the River* Beyond the Euphrates. This time David himself led all Israel across the Jordan.
19:18 *seven thousand charioteers and forty thousand men on foot* Second Samuel 10:18 gives seven hundred charioteers and forty thousand horsemen. Again most likely copying, or different parts of the army counted.
19:19 *Syria was not willing to save the sons of Ammon anymore* What began with Hanun's suspicion ended with his allies gone. "Before breaking is pride" (Prov 16:18).
20:1 *at the time of the going out of the kings* Spring, after the winter rains, when roads were dry and there was food in the fields. A siege surrounds a city and cuts it off until it falls.
20:1 *David was remaining in Jerusalem* Where 2 Samuel 11 begins the story of Bathsheba. Chronicles moves past it, not to hide David's sin, since its readers had Samuel and the next chapter tells the census in full, but to keep its eyes on God's purpose for David's house and the temple.
20:2 *in it was a precious stone* So heavy a crown was likely worn only briefly, or it was the crown of the idol Milcom, since the Hebrew for their king and Milcom are very close.

And the plunder of the city he brought out, very much. **3** And the people who ***were*** in it he brought out, and he sawed ***them*** with the saw and with sharp instruments of iron and with saws. And thus David did to all the cities of the sons of Ammon. And David and all the people returned ***to*** Jerusalem.

The Giants Defeated

4 And it was after this, and a battle arose at Gezer with ***the*** Philistines. Then Sibbecai (Sibkhay) the Hushathite struck down Sippai (Sipay), ***one*** of those born of the Rephaim, and they were subdued. **5** And there was again a battle with ***the*** Philistines, and Elhanan (Elchanan) the son of Jair (Ya'ir) struck down Lahmi (Lachmi) the brother of Goliath (Golyat) the Gittite, and the wood of his spear ***was*** like a beam of weavers. **6** And there was again a battle at Gath (Gat), and there was a man of stature, and his digits ***were*** six and six, twenty-four; and he also was born to the Rapha. **7** And he taunted Israel (Yisra'el), and Jonathan (Yehonatan) the son of Shimea (Shima), the brother of David, struck him down. **8** These were born to the Rapha in Gath, and they fell by the hand of David and by the hand of his servants.

1 CHRONICLES 21

David's Census

1 And Satan stood up against Israel (Yisra'el), and he incited David to count Israel. **2** And David said to Joab (Yo'av) and to the leaders of the people, "Go, count Israel from Beersheba (Be'er-Sheva) and to Dan, and bring ***it*** to me, so that I may know their number." **3** And Joab said, "May the LORD add to His people a hundred times as ***many as*** they ***are***! Are they not, my lord the king, all of them my lord's for servants? Why does my lord seek this? Why should it become guilt for Israel?" **4** And the word of the king prevailed over Joab, and Joab went out and went about in all Israel, and he came ***to*** Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). **5** And Joab gave the number of the muster of the people to David. And all Israel was a thousand thousands and a hundred thousand men drawing a sword, and Judah (Yehuda) ***was*** four hundred seventy thousand men drawing a sword. **6** And Levi and Benjamin (Binyamin) he did not enroll in their midst, for the word of the king was abhorrent to Joab. **7** And it was evil in the eyes of God concerning this matter, and He struck Israel. **8** And David said to God, "I have sinned exceedingly in that I have done this thing. And now, please cause the iniquity of Your servant to pass away, for I have acted exceedingly foolishly."

The Plague

9 And the LORD spoke to Gad, the seer of David, saying, **10** "Go, and you shall speak to David, saying, 'Thus says the LORD: Three ***things*** I am holding out over you; choose for yourself one of them, and I will do ***it*** to you.'" **11** And Gad came to David and said to him, "Thus says the LORD: 'Take for yourself **12** either three years ***of*** famine, or three months ***of*** being swept away before your adversaries, with the sword of your enemies overtaking ***you***, or three days ***of*** the sword of the LORD, and pestilence in the land, and the angel of the LORD destroying in all the territory of Israel.' And now, con-

20:3 1 Chr 19:2-5; Ps 21:8,9; Exod 1:14
20:4 2 Sam 21:18-22; 2 Sam 21:15; Josh 12:12
20:5 2 Sam 21:19; 1 Sam 17:4; 1 Sam 21:9
20:6 2 Sam 21:20
20:7 1 Chr 2:13; 1 Sam 16:9; 1 Sam 17:10,26,36
20:8 Josh 14:12; Eccl 9:11; Jer 9:23
21:1 Luke 22:31; Acts 5:3; Matt 4:10
21:2 1 Chr 27:23,24; 2 Sam 24:2-4; Judg 20:1
21:3 1 Chr 19:13; Ps 115:14; Prov 14:28
21:4 Eccl 8:4; Exod 1:17; Dan 3:18
21:5 2 Sam 24:9; 1 Chr 27:23
21:6 Num 1:47-49; 2 Sam 3:27; 2 Sam 11:15-21
21:7 2 Sam 11:27; 1 Kgs 15:5; 1 Chr 21:14
21:8 2 Sam 12:13; 2 Sam 24:10; Ps 25:11
21:9 1 Sam 9:9; 1 Chr 29:29; 2 Sam 24:11
21:10 Josh 24:15; Prov 1:29-31; Num 20:12
21:11 Prov 19:20
21:12 Luke 4:25; Acts 12:23; 2 Sam 21:1

20:3 *the people who were in it he brought out* The Hebrew here can be read as sawed, but 2 Samuel 12:31 differs by a single letter and means he set them to work with saws, iron tools and the brick mold. I take it as forced labor, as many teachers do. Scripture records the harsh world of ancient war without holding it up as a pattern.
20:4 *one of those born of the Rephaim* A people of great size in Canaan long before Israel (Deut 2:10-11, 20-21; 3:11), some living on among the Philistines. Sibbecai was one of David's mighty men (11:29; 27:11).
20:5 *Elhanan the son of Jair struck down Lahmi the brother of Goliath the Gittite* Second Samuel 21:19 says Elhanan struck down Goliath. Many believe Chronicles keeps the original reading and letters were confused in copying Samuel, or there was more than one Goliath. Chronicles agrees with 1 Samuel 17: David killed Goliath. The spear like a weaver's beam matches Goliath's (1 Sam 17:7).
20:6 *his digits were six and six, twenty-four* A rare condition that still occurs. He taunted Israel as Goliath had. Jonathan was David's nephew.
20:8 *they fell by the hand of David and by the hand of his servants* David faced the first giant alone. Now his men faced these. A good leader raises up others, and David's faith became theirs. God gave rest as He promised (17:8, 10). What giants taunt you? "If God is for us, who is against us?" (Rom 8:31).
21:1 *Satan stood up against Israel, and he incited David to count Israel* Satan means adversary, the one who accused Job (Job 1:6-12) and tempted Jesus (Matt 4:1-11). Second Samuel 24:1 says the LORD, already angry with Israel, incited David. Both are true. Satan tempted, but only with God's permission (Job 1:12), and God used it to judge Israel's sin. God tempts no one (James 1:13), and David owned the sin as his (21:8, 17).
21:1 *he incited David* The enemy often attacks right after great victories, when we feel strong. The devil prowls around looking for someone to devour (1 Pet 5:8).
21:2 *so that I may know their number* God had commanded censuses before (Num 1; 26). The problem was David's heart, wanting to measure his strength instead of trusting the LORD who gave every victory. Some teachers think the ransom of Exodus 30:12 was neglected too.
21:3 *Why should it become guilt for Israel* When a man like Joab tells you you are doing wrong, you should listen. David overruled him.
21:5 *a thousand thousands and a hundred thousand men drawing a sword* Second Samuel 24:9 gives 800,000 and 500,000. The books may count different groups, Chronicles may include the standing army of chapter 27, numbers were easy to miscopy, or thousand may mean a unit. I take them as written and do not claim to know exactly how they fit.
21:6 *Levi and Benjamin he did not enroll in their midst* Levi was never counted for war (Num 1:47-49). Benjamin perhaps because the tabernacle was at Gibeon, or the plague came first. Joab began to count but did not finish (27:24).
21:8 *I have sinned exceedingly in that I have done this thing* Iniquity is sin, the crooked thing done. David did not blame Satan, Joab or the pressures of being king. That is why he was a man after God's heart (Acts 13:22): when he sinned, he came back and confessed it. Can you say those words to God as plainly?
21:9 *Gad, the seer of David* A seer is a prophet who sees what God shows him. Gad had been with David since his days in hiding (1 Sam 22:5). Forgiveness does not always remove the consequences of sin.
21:12 *either three years of famine* Pestilence is a deadly spreading disease, a plague. Second Samuel 24:13 says seven years. Three fits the pattern of three years, months and days, and the Greek of 2 Samuel also reads three, so most think seven came in through copying.

sider what word I shall bring back to Him who sent me." **13** And David said to Gad, "***It is*** great distress to me. Please let me fall into the hand of the LORD, for His compassions ***are*** very great; and into the hand of man let me not fall." **14** And the LORD put a pestilence on Israel, and there fell of Israel seventy thousand men. **15** And God sent an angel to Jerusalem to destroy it; and as ***he was*** destroying, the LORD saw and relented concerning the calamity, and He said to the angel who was destroying, "Enough! Now let your hand drop." And the angel of the LORD ***was*** standing by the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. **16** And David lifted up his eyes and saw the angel of the LORD standing between the earth and the heavens, and his sword drawn in his hand, stretched out over Jerusalem. And David fell, and the elders, covered in sackcloth, on their faces. **17** And David said to God, "***Was it*** not I ***who*** said to count the people? And I am he who has sinned and has surely done evil; and these, the sheep, what have they done? O LORD my God, please let Your hand be on me and on the house of my father, and not on Your people for a plague."

The Threshing Floor of Ornan

18 And the angel of the LORD said to Gad to say to David that David should go up to set up an altar to the LORD on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. **19** And David went up by the word of Gad, which he had spoken in the name of the LORD. **20** And Ornan turned and saw the angel, and his four sons with him ***were*** hiding themselves. And Ornan ***was*** threshing wheat. **21** And David came to Ornan, and Ornan looked and saw David, and he went out from the threshing floor and bowed down to David ***with his*** face to the ground. **22** And David said to Ornan, "Give me the place of the threshing floor, so that I may build on it an altar to the LORD. For ***the*** full price give it to me, so that the plague may be restrained from upon the people." **23** And Ornan said to David, "Take ***it*** for yourself, and let my lord the king do what ***is*** good in his eyes. See, I give the oxen for burnt offerings, and the threshing sledges for wood, and the wheat for the grain offering; I give everything." **24** And King David said to Ornan, "No, for I will certainly buy ***it*** for ***the*** full price; for I will not take what ***is*** yours for the LORD, and offer up a burnt offering for nothing." **25** And David gave to Ornan for the place approximately 15 pounds (six hundred shekels) of gold by weight. **26** And David built there an altar to the LORD, and he offered up burnt offerings and peace offerings, and he called to the LORD, and He answered him with fire from the heavens on the altar of the burnt offering. **27** And the LORD spoke to the angel, and he returned his sword to its sheath. **28** At that time, when David saw that the LORD had answered him on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite, and he sacrificed there. **29** And the tabernacle of the LORD, which Moses (Moshe) had made in the wilderness, and the altar of the burnt offering ***were*** at that time in the high place at Gibeon (Givon). **30** And David was not able to go before it to seek God, for he was terrified because of the sword of the angel of the LORD.

1 CHRONICLES 22

David Prepares for the Temple

1 And David said, "This is the house of the LORD God, and

21:13 James 5:11; Ps 130:7; 2 Kgs 6:15
21:14 Num 16:46-49; 2 Sam 24:15; Exod 12:30
21:15 Matt 23:37; Acts 12:23; Gen 6:6
21:16 Matt 26:39; Acts 12:23; 1 Kgs 21:27
21:17 1 Chr 21:8; 2 Sam 24:17; Ps 51:4
21:18 Acts 8:26; Acts 12:23; 2 Chr 3:1
21:19 2 Kgs 5:10-14; John 2:5; Acts 9:6
21:20 Judg 6:11
21:21 1 Sam 25:23; 2 Sam 24:18-20
21:22 1 Kgs 21:2; 2 Sam 24:21; Num 16:48
21:23 Gen 23:4-6; 2 Sam 24:22,23; Jer 32:8
21:24 Gen 14:23; Gen 23:13; Deut 16:16,17
21:25 2 Sam 24:24,25
21:26 Lev 9:24; Judg 6:21; Exod 20:24,25
21:27 John 18:11; 1 Chr 21:15,16; 2 Sam 24:16
21:29 1 Chr 16:39; 2 Chr 1:3,13; Exod 40:1-38
21:30 1 Chr 21:16; 1 Chr 13:12; Deut 10:12
22:1 Acts 13:36; 2 Chr 3:1; 1 Chr 21:18-28

21:13 *let me fall into the hand of the LORD, for His compassions are very great* Even in judgment God is more merciful than men. When we have sinned, the safest place to run is to God.
21:14 *there fell of Israel seventy thousand men* David wanted to know the size of his army, and now it was seventy thousand smaller. Hard to read. God's anger had already burned against Israel (2 Sam 24:1). A leader's sin always affects those he leads. Scripture never says God was unjust. The Judge of all the earth does right (Gen 18:25).
21:15 *the LORD saw and relented concerning the calamity* To relent is to turn from bringing the full judgment. God did not change His character. He showed it. Ornan is called Araunah in Samuel, another form of the name. A threshing floor was usually on a hilltop where the wind blew away the straw.
21:16 *his sword drawn in his hand, stretched out over Jerusalem* Chronicles gives this terrible picture that Samuel does not. Sackcloth was rough goat-hair cloth worn for grief and repentance.
21:17 *these, the sheep, what have they done* David asks that the blow fall on him. He could not take the people's punishment, being a sinner himself, but his prayer points to the Good Shepherd who lays down His life for the sheep (John 10:11). What David asked for, Jesus did.
21:18 *to set up an altar to the LORD on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite* God Himself chose the place where judgment would end. This time David obeyed right away.
21:24 *I will not take what is yours for the LORD, and offer up a burnt offering for nothing* Worship that costs us nothing is worth little. We cannot buy God's favor, but real love gives what costs. What does your worship cost you?
21:25 *approximately 15 pounds* Second Samuel 24:24 says fifty shekels of silver. Most teachers understand the silver paid for the threshing floor and oxen, and the gold for the whole hilltop where the temple would stand.
21:26 *He answered him with fire from the heavens on the altar of the burnt offering* Fire showed God accepted the sacrifice, as at the tabernacle (Lev 9:24), the temple (2 Chr 7:1) and Carmel (1 Kgs 18:38). A peace offering was shared in a meal, a sign of fellowship restored.
21:27 *he returned his sword to its sheath* Judgment ended because a sacrifice was offered on God's altar, in God's place, in God's way. The gospel in picture form. The sword was put away not because the sin was small, but because a sacrifice was made.
21:29 *the altar of the burnt offering were at that time in the high place at Gibeon* David could not go there, terrified of the angel's sword (21:30). God had shown him a new place.
21:30 *he was terrified because of the sword of the angel of the LORD* This is Mount Moriah (2 Chr 3:1), where God provided a ram in place of Isaac (Gen 22:2, 13-14). Just outside that city, about a thousand years after David, Jesus "suffered outside the gate" (Heb 13:12). David's altar stopped one plague. The cross took away the sin of the world (John 1:29).
22:1 *This is the house of the LORD God* Moses said God would choose a place to put His name (Deut 12:5), and Israel had waited more than four hundred years. The temple stood where God's judgment was turned away by a sacrifice.

this ***is*** the altar for burnt offering for Israel (Yisra'el)." **2** And David said to gather the sojourners who ***were*** in the land of Israel, and he appointed stonecutters to cut hewn stones to build the house of God. **3** And iron in abundance for the nails for the doors of the gates and for the clamps David prepared, and bronze in abundance without weight, **4** and cedar timbers without number, for the Sidonians and the Tyrians had brought cedar timbers in abundance to David. **5** And David said, "Solomon (Shelomo) my son ***is*** a youth and tender, and the house to build for the LORD ***is*** to be made exceedingly great, for a name and for beauty to all the lands. Please let me prepare for it." And David prepared in abundance before his death.

David's Charge to Solomon

6 And he called for Solomon his son and commanded him to build a house for the LORD, the God of Israel. **7** And David said to Solomon, "My son, as for me, it was in my heart to build a house for the name of the LORD my God. **8** And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 'You have shed blood in abundance, and you have made great wars. You shall not build a house for My name, for you have shed much blood on the earth before Me. **9** Look, a son ***is*** to be born to you; he will be a man of rest, and I will give him rest from all his enemies all around; for Solomon will be his name, and peace and quietness I will give to Israel in his days. **10** He will build a house for My name, and he will be to Me a son, and I ***will be*** to him a father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel forever.' **11** Now, my son, may the LORD be with you, and you will prosper, and you will build the house of the LORD your God, as He spoke concerning you. **12** Only may the LORD give you insight and understanding, and may He give you charge over Israel, and to keep the law of the LORD your God. **13** Then you will prosper, if you take care to do the statutes and the judgments which the LORD commanded Moses (Moshe) concerning Israel. Be strong and be courageous; do not fear, and do not be dismayed. **14** And look, in my affliction I have prepared for the house of the LORD approximately 7.5 million pounds (one hundred thousand talents) of gold, and approximately 75 million pounds (a thousand thousands of talents) of silver; and for the bronze and for the iron there is no weight, for it is in abundance; and timbers and stones I have prepared, and to them you will add. **15** And with you in abundance ***are*** doers of work: stonecutters and craftsmen of stone and wood, and every skillful ***one*** in every work. **16** Of the gold, of the silver, and of the bronze and of the iron there is no number. Arise and act, and may the LORD be with you."

David's Charge to the Leaders

17 And David commanded all the officials of Israel to help Solomon his son: **18** "***Is*** not the LORD your God with you? And He has given you rest all around, for He has given into my hand the inhabitants of the land, and the land has been subdued before the LORD and before His people. **19** Now set your heart and your soul to seek the LORD your God; and arise and build the sanctuary of the LORD God, to bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD and the holy articles of God into the house that will be built for the name of the LORD."

1 CHRONICLES 23

The Levites Counted

1 And David was old and satisfied ***with*** days, and he made Solomon (Shelomo) his son king over Israel (Yisra'el). **2** And he gathered all the leaders of Israel and the priests and the Levites. **3** And the Levites were counted from the age of thirty years and upward; and their number by their heads, of men, was thirty-eight thousand. **4** Of these, to oversee the work of the house of the LORD ***were*** twenty-four thousand,

22:2 Acts 13:36; 1 Kgs 9:20,21; 2 Chr 2:17
22:3 Acts 13:36; 1 Chr 22:14; 1 Chr 29:2,7
22:4 Acts 13:36; 1 Kgs 5:6-10; 2 Sam 5:11
22:5 Acts 13:36; 1 Chr 29:1; 1 Kgs 3:7
22:6 Num 27:18,19,23; Deut 31:14,23; Matt 28:18-20
22:7 Acts 13:36; Ps 132:5; Deut 12:5,11,21
22:8 John 10:35; 1 Chr 28:3; 1 Kgs 5:3
22:9 1 Kgs 4:20,25; 1 Kgs 5:4; 2 Sam 12:24,25
22:10 Heb 1:5; 2 Sam 7:13; 1 Chr 17:12,13
22:11 Matt 1:23; 1 Chr 22:16; 1 Chr 28:20
22:12 2 Tim 2:7; 1 Kgs 3:9-12; 2 Chr 1:10
22:13 James 2:8; 1 Chr 28:7; Josh 1:6-9,18
22:14 1 Chr 22:3; 2 Cor 8:2; 1 Chr 29:4-7
22:15 Exod 28:6; Exod 31:3-5; Exod 35:32,35
22:16 1 Chr 22:11; 1 Chr 22:3,14; Josh 1:2,5,9
22:17 Acts 13:36; 1 Chr 28:21; 1 Chr 29:6
22:18 1 Chr 22:9; 1 Chr 23:25; 2 Sam 7:1
22:19 Acts 22:16; 1 Chr 28:9; Deut 4:29
23:1 1 Chr 29:28; 1 Chr 28:5; 1 Kgs 1:33-39
23:2 1 Chr 13:1; 1 Chr 28:1; Josh 23:2
23:3 Num 4:2,3,23,30,35,43,47; Num 4:48
23:4 2 Chr 19:8; Deut 16:18; 1 Chr 23:28-32

22:2 *the sojourners who were in the land of Israel* Foreigners living among Israel. Solomon later used them as laborers for the temple (2 Chr 2:17-18).
22:5 *Solomon my son is a youth and tender* Young and untried. The house had to be magnificent to show the nations what kind of God Israel served. Told no by God, David did not sulk. He found the part he could do and gave it everything.
22:8 *you have shed much blood on the earth before Me* Chronicles tells this here for the first time. David's wars were not sinful in themselves; God sent him and gave the victory (18:6, 13). But the temple was a house of rest and peace, to be built by a man of peace.
22:9 *Solomon will be his name* Shelomoh sounds like shalom, peace. God named him before he was born.
22:10 *I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel forever* The words of chapter 17, applied to Solomon by name. The greater fulfillment is the Prince of Peace, of whose kingdom and peace there will be no end (Isa 9:6-7).
22:12 *may the LORD give you insight and understanding* Solomon later asked for exactly this, and God gave it (2 Chr 1:10-12). A father's prayer for his son was answered.
22:13 *Be strong and be courageous* The words spoken to Joshua when he took up Moses' work (Deut 31:7-8; Josh 1:9). God's work passes from one generation to the next, and the next needs courage. Each king's own blessing depended on walking with God.
22:14 *in my affliction I have prepared for the house of the LORD* Through hard labor or in spite of troubles. I take the huge amounts as written, while some think they are round royal terms or changed in copying. David gave on a scale no one had seen.
22:16 *Arise and act, and may the LORD be with you* There comes a time when planning is done and it is time to work.
22:19 *set your heart and your soul to seek the LORD your God* First seek, then build. Saul did not seek the LORD (10:13-14). A sanctuary is a holy place set apart for God. The returned exiles had been called to arise and build (Ezra 1:3; Hag 1:8), and the church is God's temple today (1 Cor 3:16-17; Eph 2:21-22).
23:1 *David was old and satisfied with days* He had lived a full life. First Kings 1 tells of Adonijah's attempt and Solomon's quick anointing. Chronicles gives only the result and tells of a public anointing in 29:22.
23:3 *the Levites were counted from the age of thirty years and upward* This census was not a sin. David counted men for God's service by God's pattern (Num 4), not to measure his own strength as in chapter 21.

and officials and judges six thousand, **5** and four thousand gatekeepers, and four thousand praising the LORD with the instruments which I made for praising. **6** And David divided them ***into*** divisions by the sons of Levi: Gershon, Kohath (Qehat), and Merari.

The Families of the Levites

7 Of the Gershonites: Ladan and Shimei (Shimi). **8** The sons of Ladan: the chief Jehiel (Yechi'el), and Zetham (Zetam), and Joel (Yo'el), three. **9** The sons of Shimei: Shelomith (Shelomit) and Haziel (Chazi'el) and Haran, three. These ***were*** the heads of the fathers of Ladan. **10** And the sons of Shimei: Jahath (Yachat), Zina, and Jeush (Yeush), and Beriah (Beri'a). These ***were*** the sons of Shimei, four. **11** And Jahath was the chief, and Zizah the second; and Jeush and Beriah did not have many sons, and they became a father's house for one enrollment. **12** The sons of Kohath: Amram, Izhar (Yitshar), Hebron (Chevron), and Uzziel (Uzi'el), four. **13** The sons of Amram: Aaron (Aharon) and Moses (Moshe). And Aaron was separated to sanctify him ***as*** a holy of holies, he and his sons forever, to burn incense before the LORD, to minister to Him, and to bless in His name forever. **14** And Moses the man of God: his sons were named among the tribe of the Levites. **15** The sons of Moses: Gershom and Eliezer. **16** The sons of Gershom: Shebuel (Shevu'el) the chief. **17** And the sons of Eliezer were Rehabiah (Rechavya) the chief. And Eliezer had no other sons, and the sons of Rehabiah were exceedingly many. **18** The sons of Izhar: Shelomith (Shelomit) the chief. **19** The sons of Hebron: Jeriah (Yeriyahu) the chief, Amariah (Amarya) the second, Jahaziel (Yachazi'el) the third, and Jekameam (Yeqamam) the fourth. **20** The sons of Uzziel: Micah (Mikha) the chief, and Isshiah (Yishiya) the second. **21** The sons of Merari: Mahli (Machli) and Mushi. The sons of Mahli: Eleazar (Elazar) and Kish (Qish). **22** And Eleazar died, and he had no sons, but only daughters; and the sons of Kish, their brothers, took them. **23** The sons of Mushi: Mahli, and Eder, and Jeremoth (Yeremot), three.

The Work of the Levites

24 These ***were*** the sons of Levi by the house of their fathers, the heads of the fathers, by their enrollments, by the number of names, by their heads, doing the work for the service of the house of the LORD, from the age of twenty years and upward. **25** For David said, "The LORD, the God of Israel, has given rest to His people, and He dwells in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) forever. **26** And also the Levites ***are*** not to carry the tabernacle and all its articles for its service." **27** For by the last words of David they ***were*** the number of the sons of Levi from the age of twenty years and upward. **28** For their office ***was*** at the side of the sons of Aaron for the service of the house of the LORD, over the courts and over the chambers and over the purification of every holy thing, and the work of the service of the house of God, **29** and for the bread of the arrangement, and for the fine flour for a grain offering, and for the wafers of unleavened bread, and for the griddle, and for the mixed ***dough***, and for every capacity and measure; **30** and to stand morning by morning to give thanks and to praise the LORD, and so at evening; **31** and for every offering up of burnt offerings to the LORD for the Sabbaths, for the new moons, and for the appointed feasts, by number, according to the ordinance concerning them, continually before the LORD. **32** And they kept the charge of the tent of meeting and the charge of the holy place and the charge of the sons of Aaron their brothers, for the service of the house of the LORD.

23:5 2 Chr 29:25,26; Amos 6:5; 1 Chr 9:17-27
23:6 2 Chr 8:14; 1 Chr 6:1,16; 2 Chr 29:25
23:7 1 Chr 26:21; 1 Chr 6:17-20; 1 Chr 15:7
23:8 1 Chr 6:33,34; 1 Chr 15:7,11,17; 1 Chr 15:18,20,21
23:12 Exod 6:18; 1 Chr 6:2; Num 3:27
23:13 Heb 5:4; Acts 13:2; Exod 6:20
23:14 Deut 33:1; Ps 90:1; 1 Chr 26:23-25
23:15 Exod 2:22; Exod 18:3,4; Exod 4:20
23:16 1 Chr 26:24; 1 Chr 24:20; 1 Chr 25:20
23:17 1 Chr 26:25
23:18 1 Chr 24:22; 1 Chr 26:26
23:19 1 Chr 24:23; 1 Chr 23:12; 1 Chr 15:9
23:21 Exod 6:19; 1 Chr 23:6; 1 Chr 6:20,30
23:22 1 Chr 24:28; Num 36:6-8
23:23 1 Chr 24:30
23:24 Num 10:17,21; 1 Chr 23:3,27; Num 4:3
23:25 2 Cor 6:16; 1 Chr 22:18; 2 Sam 7:1,11
23:26 Num 4:5,49; Num 7:9
23:27 1 Chr 23:3,24; 2 Sam 23:1; Ps 72:20
23:28 1 Chr 18:17; Neh 11:24; 1 Chr 23:4
23:29 Lev 19:35,36; Exod 25:30; Lev 24:5-9
23:30 Rev 14:3; 1 Chr 9:33; 1 Chr 6:31-33
23:31 Col 2:16; Isa 1:13,14; Lev 23:24,39
23:32 Num 1:53; Num 3:6-9,38; 1 Chr 9:27

23:5 *the instruments which I made for praising* David himself made instruments for worship (Amos 6:5).
23:11 *they became a father's house for one enrollment* A father's house was a family group under one head. Small families were joined so each group had enough men. God's work was arranged so no one was overloaded and no family left out.
23:13 *Aaron was separated to sanctify him as a holy of holies* Aaron's family alone were priests, to burn incense, minister and bless the people in God's name (Num 6:22-27).
23:14 *Moses the man of God: his sons were named among the tribe of the Levites* The greatest prophet did not pass on a priesthood to his sons. God's calling is not handed out by fame. Rehabiah's sons were exceedingly many (23:17). God can grow a large family from a single line.
23:22 *the sons of Kish, their brothers, took them* This Eleazar was a Levite, not Aaron's son. His daughters married their cousins, keeping the family's name and place, as the Law allowed (Num 36:6-9).
23:24 *from the age of twenty years and upward* Verse 3 said thirty. In the wilderness the carrying went to men thirty and older (Num 4:3; 8:24). With the ark at rest and much more work at a great temple, the age was lowered by David's last words (23:27). David applied God's practical commands wisely to a new situation.
23:28 *their office was at the side of the sons of Aaron* The priests' helpers, keeping the courts, side rooms and holy things ceremonially clean, fit for God's service.
23:29 *the bread of the arrangement* Set in rows on the golden table each Sabbath (Lev 24:5-9).
23:30 *morning by morning to give thanks and to praise the LORD, and so at evening* Before any sacrifice, someone was giving thanks. Believers offer "a sacrifice of praise to God continually" (Heb 13:15).
23:31 *for the new moons, and for the appointed feasts* The new moon marked each month, and the appointed feasts were the yearly festivals like Passover.
23:32 *the charge of the holy place* A charge is a duty given to someone's care. Cleaning, baking, measuring and keeping watch were all for the house of the LORD. No job in God's house is small (1 Cor 12:22; Col 3:23).

1 CHRONICLES 24

The Divisions of the Priests

1 And to the sons of Aaron (Aharon), their divisions: The sons of Aaron: Nadab (Nadav) and Abihu (Avihu), Eleazar (Elazar) and Ithamar (Itamar). **2** And Nadab and Abihu died before their father, and they had no sons; and Eleazar and Ithamar served as priests. **3** And David divided them, and Zadok (Tsadoq) of the sons of Eleazar and Ahimelech (Achimelekh) of the sons of Ithamar, according to their appointment in their service. **4** And the sons of Eleazar were found more numerous in heads of men than the sons of Ithamar, and they divided them: for the sons of Eleazar, sixteen heads of fathers' houses; and for the sons of Ithamar, eight of their fathers' houses. **5** And they divided them by lots, these with these, for there were officials of holiness and officials of God from the sons of Eleazar and among the sons of Ithamar. **6** And Shemaiah (Shemaya) the son of Nethanel (Netanel) the scribe, of the Levites, recorded them before the king and the officials and Zadok the priest and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar (Evyatar) and the heads of the fathers of the priests and of the Levites: one father's house taken for Eleazar, and taken, taken for Ithamar. **7** And the first lot went out to Jehoiarib (Yehoyariv), to Jedaiah (Yedaya) the second, **8** to Harim (Charim) the third, to Seorim the fourth, **9** to Malchijah (Malkiya) the fifth, to Mijamin (Miyamin) the sixth, **10** to Hakkoz (Haqots) the seventh, to Abijah (Aviya) the eighth, **11** to Jeshua (Yeshua) the ninth, to Shecaniah (Shekhanyahu) the tenth, **12** to Eliashib (Elyashiv) ***the*** eleventh, to Jakim (Yaqim) ***the*** twelfth, **13** to Huppah (Chupa) ***the*** thirteenth, to Jeshebeab (Yeshevav) ***the*** fourteenth, **14** to Bilgah (Bilga) ***the*** fifteenth, to Immer (Imer) ***the*** sixteenth, **15** to Hezir (Chezir) ***the*** seventeenth, to Happizzez (Pitsets) ***the*** eighteenth, **16** to Pethahiah (Petachya) ***the*** nineteenth, to Jehezkel (Yechezqel) the twentieth, **17** to Jachin (Yakhin) ***the*** twenty-first, to Gamul ***the*** twenty-second, **18** to Delaiah (Delayahu) ***the*** twenty-third, to Maaziah (Ma'azyahu) ***the*** twenty-fourth. **19** These ***were*** their appointments for their service, to go into the house of the LORD according to their ordinance by the hand of Aaron their father, as the LORD, the God of Israel (Yisra'el), had commanded him.

The Rest of the Levites

20 And of the sons of Levi who remained: of the sons of Amram, Shubael (Shuva'el); of the sons of Shubael, Jehdeiah (Yechdeyahu). **21** Of Rehabiah (Rechavyahu): of the sons of Rehabiah, the chief Isshiah (Yishiya). **22** Of the Izharites: Shelomoth (Shelomot); of the sons of Shelomoth, Jahath (Yachat). **23** And the sons ***of Hebron***: Jeriah (Yeriyahu) ***the first***, Amariah (Amaryahu) the second, Jahaziel (Yachazi'el) the third, Jekameam (Yeqamam) the fourth. **24** The sons of Uzziel (Uzi'el): Micah (Mikha); of the sons of Micah, Shamir. **25** The brother of Micah: Isshiah; of the sons of Isshiah, Zechariah (Zekharyahu). **26** The sons of Merari: Mahli (Machli) and Mushi; the sons of Jaaziah (Ya'aziyahu): Beno. **27** The sons of Merari, of Jaaziah: Beno, and Shoham, and Zaccur (Zakur), and Ibri (Ivri). **28** Of Mahli: Eleazar, and he had no sons. **29** Of Kish (Qish): the sons of Kish, Jerahmeel (Yerachme'el). **30** And the sons of Mushi: Mahli, and Eder, and Jerimoth (Yerimot). These ***were*** the sons of the Levites by the house of their fathers. **31** And they also cast lots corresponding to their brothers the sons of Aaron before David the king and Zadok and Ahimelech and the heads of the fathers of the priests and of the Levites; fathers, the chief corresponding to his younger brother.

1 CHRONICLES 25

The Temple Singers

1 And David and the commanders of the army separated for service the sons of Asaph (Asaf) and Heman and Jeduthun (Yedutun), who prophesied with lyres, with harps, and with

24:1 Exod 6:23; 1 Chr 23:6; Num 3:2
24:2 Lev 10:2; Num 3:4; Num 26:61
24:3 2 Sam 8:17; 1 Chr 24:6,31; 1 Chr 6:4-8,50-53
24:4 1 Chr 15:6-12; Num 25:11-13; 1 Chr 23:24
24:5 Josh 18:10; Prov 16:33; Jonah 1:7
24:6 1 Kgs 4:3; 2 Chr 34:13; Ezra 7:6
24:7 Ezra 2:36; 1 Chr 9:10; Neh 12:19
24:8 Ezra 2:39; Ezra 10:21; Neh 7:35
24:9 Neh 12:17
24:10 Luke 1:5; Neh 12:4,17
24:11 Ezra 2:36; Neh 7:39; Neh 12:10
24:12 Neh 12:10
24:14 Ezra 2:37; Ezra 10:20; Neh 7:40
24:19 Heb 7:11; Luke 1:5; 1 Chr 9:25
24:20 1 Chr 26:24; 1 Chr 6:18; 1 Chr 23:12-14
24:21 1 Chr 23:17; 1 Chr 26:25
24:22 1 Chr 23:18; Exod 6:21; Num 3:19,27
24:23 1 Chr 23:19; 1 Chr 26:31
24:24 1 Chr 23:20
24:25 1 Chr 23:20; 1 Chr 15:18,20
24:27 1 Chr 6:19; 1 Chr 23:21; Exod 6:19
24:28 1 Chr 23:22
24:30 1 Chr 23:23; 1 Chr 6:47
24:31 1 Chr 24:5,6; 1 Chr 25:8; 1 Chr 26:13
25:1 1 Chr 6:33,39,44; 2 Kgs 3:15; 1 Sam 10:5

24:1 *to the sons of Aaron, their divisions* A division was a group that took its turn serving.
24:2 *Nadab and Abihu died before their father, and they had no sons* They offered fire God had not commanded and died (Lev 10:1-2), the same lesson as Uzzah (chapter 13). The writer only explains why the priesthood came through Eleazar and Ithamar.
24:5 *they divided them by lots* Casting lots let God decide. "From the LORD is its every judgment" (Prov 16:33). No family could claim the best place or accuse anyone of favoritism.
24:6 *Shemaiah the son of Nethanel the scribe* Everything was done in the open, with witnesses and recorded. A good pattern for any church or ministry.
24:7 *the first lot went out to Jehoiarib* Each division served a week at a time, about twice a year, and all together at the great feasts (Luke 1:8-9). Jedaiah, Harim and Immer came back from Babylon (Ezra 2:36-39). Jehoiarib was the family of the Maccabees, who freed Judea from Greek rule about 165 B.C., as the Jewish history 1 Maccabees 2:1 says.
24:10 *to Abijah the eighth* The division of Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist (Luke 1:5).
24:19 *as the LORD, the God of Israel, had commanded him* David organized the priesthood God commanded. Jesus is now our High Priest forever (Heb 7:17), offered once for all (Heb 10:10-12), and all believers are a royal priesthood (1 Pet 2:9). The lesson of order remains.
24:31 *the chief corresponding to his younger brother* The head of a family and his youngest brother were treated the same. In the church there is no first class and coach (James 2:1-4).
25:1 *who prophesied with lyres, with harps, and with cymbals* The army commanders helped because David wanted the whole kingdom behind worship. To prophesy is to speak for God. These musicians declared God's truth and praised Him, and some of their songs became Scripture (Ps 50; 73-83; 88; 39; 62; 77).

cymbals. And the number of them, men of work for their service, was: **2** Of the sons of Asaph: Zaccur (Zakur), and Joseph (Yosef), and Nethaniah (Netanya), and Asharelah (Asarela), the sons of Asaph, under the hand of Asaph, who prophesied under the hands of the king. **3** Of Jeduthun: the sons of Jeduthun: Gedaliah (Gedalyahu), and Zeri (Tseri), and Jeshaiah (Yeshayahu), Hashabiah (Chashavyahu), and Mattithiah (Matityahu), six, under the hands of their father Jeduthun with the lyre, who prophesied in giving thanks and praising the LORD. **4** Of Heman: the sons of Heman: Bukkiah (Buqiyahu), Mattaniah (Matanyahu), Uzziel (Uzi'el), Shebuel (Shevu'el), and Jerimoth (Yerimot), Hananiah (Chananya), Hanani (Chanani), Eliathah (Eli'ata), Giddalti (Gidalti), and Romamti-ezer, Joshbekashah (Yoshbeqasha), Mallothi (Maloti), Hothir (Hotir), Mahazioth (Machazi'ot). **5** All these ***were*** sons of Heman, the seer of the king, by the words of God, to lift up a horn. And God gave to Heman fourteen sons and three daughters. **6** All these ***were*** under the hands of their father for the song ***in*** the house of the LORD, with cymbals, harps, and lyres, for the service of the house of God, under the hands of the king, Asaph and Jeduthun and Heman. **7** And their number with their brothers, trained in song to the LORD, all the skilled, was two hundred eighty-eight.

The Lots for the Singers

8 And they cast lots ***for*** charge correspondingly, the small as the great, the skilled with the pupil. **9** And the first lot went out for Asaph, to Joseph; Gedaliah the second, he and his brothers and his sons, twelve; **10** the third, Zaccur, his sons and his brothers, twelve; **11** the fourth, to the Izri, his sons and his brothers, twelve; **12** the fifth, Nethaniah, his sons and his brothers, twelve; **13** the sixth, Bukkiah, his sons and his brothers, twelve; **14** the seventh, Jesharelah (Yesarela), his sons and his brothers, twelve; **15** the eighth, Jeshaiah, his sons and his brothers, twelve; **16** the ninth, Mattaniah, his sons and his brothers, twelve; **17** the tenth, Shimei (Shimi), his sons and his brothers, twelve; **18** ***the*** eleventh, Azarel, his sons and his brothers, twelve; **19** the twelfth, to Hashabiah, his sons and his brothers, twelve; **20** for ***the*** thirteenth, Shubael (Shuva'el), his sons and his brothers, twelve; **21** for ***the*** fourteenth, Mattithiah, his sons and his brothers, twelve; **22** for ***the*** fifteenth, to Jerimoth, his sons and his brothers, twelve; **23** for ***the*** sixteenth, to Hananiah, his sons and his brothers, twelve; **24** for ***the*** seventeenth, to Joshbekashah, his sons and his brothers, twelve; **25** for ***the*** eighteenth, to Hanani, his sons and his brothers, twelve; **26** for ***the*** nineteenth, to Mallothi, his sons and his brothers, twelve; **27** for ***the*** twentieth, to Eliathah, his sons and his brothers, twelve; **28** for ***the*** twenty-first, to Hothir, his sons and his brothers, twelve; **29** for ***the*** twenty-second, to Giddalti, his sons and his brothers, twelve; **30** for ***the*** twenty-third, to Mahazioth, his sons and his brothers, twelve; **31** for ***the*** twenty-fourth, to Romamti-ezer, his sons and his brothers, twelve.

1 CHRONICLES 26

The Gatekeepers

1 For the divisions of the gatekeepers: of the Korahites, Meshelemiah (Meshelemyahu) the son of Kore (Qore), of the sons of Asaph (Asaf). **2** And Meshelemiah had sons: Zechariah (Zekharyahu) the firstborn, Jediael (Yedi'a'el) the second, Zebadiah (Zevadyahu) the third, Jathniel (Yatni'el) the fourth, **3** Elam the fifth, Jehohanan (Yehochanan) the sixth, Eliehoenai (Elyeho'enay) the seventh. **4** And Obed-edom (Oved-Edom) had sons: Shemaiah (Shemaya) the firstborn, Jehozabad (Yehozavad) the second, Joah (Yo'ach) the third, and Sachar (Sakhar) the fourth, and Nethanel (Netanel) the fifth, **5** Ammiel (Ami'el) the sixth, Issachar (Yisashkhar) the seventh, Peullethai (Pe'uletay) the eighth; for God had blessed him. **6** And to Shemaiah his son sons were born, the rulers of the house of their father, for they ***were*** mighty men of valor. **7** The sons of Shemaiah: Othni (Otni), and Rephael (Refa'el), and Obed (Oved), Elzabad (Elzavad), his brothers, sons of valor, Elihu and Semachiah (Semakhyahu). **8** All these ***were*** of the sons of Obed-edom, they and their sons and their brothers, each a man of valor with the strength for the service, sixty-two belonging to Obed-edom. **9** And Meshelemiah had sons and brothers, sons of valor, eighteen. **10** And Hosah (Chosa), of the sons of Merari, had sons: Shimri the chief (for

25:2 1 Chr 25:6; 1 Chr 6:39; 1 Chr 15:17
25:3 1 Chr 16:41,42; 1 Chr 9:16; 2 Chr 29:14
25:4 1 Chr 6:33; 1 Chr 15:17,19; 1 Chr 16:41,42
25:5 1 Chr 21:9; 1 Sam 9:9; 1 Chr 28:5
25:6 Col 3:16; 1 Chr 25:1-3; 1 Chr 15:22
25:7 Col 3:16
25:8 1 Chr 26:13,16; 1 Chr 24:5; Lev 16:8
26:1 1 Chr 9:17-27; 1 Chr 15:18,23,24; 2 Chr 23:19
26:4 1 Chr 15:18,21,24; 1 Chr 16:5,38
26:5 Ps 128:1; 1 Chr 13:14
26:6 1 Chr 26:8; 1 Chr 12:28; Judg 6:12
26:8 Matt 25:15; 1 Cor 12:4-11; 2 Cor 3:6
26:9 1 Chr 26:1,14
26:10 1 Chr 16:38; 1 Chr 5:1,2

25:2 *under the hand of Asaph* Each was trained by the one above him, and the fathers under the king.
25:5 *the seer of the king* A horn is a picture of strength, so to lift up a horn means God honored Heman's family. Fourteen sons and three daughters were counted a gift from God.
25:6 *under the hands of their father for the song in the house of the LORD* Heman's daughters are included. Women sang in Israel's worship (Ezra 2:65).
25:7 *trained in song to the LORD, all the skilled* Twenty-four groups of twelve, the trained leaders of the four thousand (23:5). Play skillfully (Ps 33:3). God deserves our best, not our leftovers.
25:8 *the small as the great, the skilled with the pupil* The famous musician and the young student were in the same draw and served together so the young could learn. Pass on what you have learned to faithful men who will teach others (2 Tim 2:2).
25:9 *the first lot went out for Asaph, to Joseph* The lots mix the families without favor. Spelling differences like Izri for Zeri (25:11) show names often had more than one form.
25:31 *his sons and his brothers, twelve* Repeated after every lot. Every week a trained choir of fathers, sons and brothers stood to praise. The sons of Asaph praised at the new temple's foundation (Ezra 3:10). Sing to the Lord with the heart (Eph 5:19). Is your home a place where God is praised?
26:1 *For the divisions of the gatekeepers* Gatekeepers kept the unclean from the holy place, watched the storerooms and treasures, and opened the gates each morning (9:22-27). It was a position of trust. Of the sons of Asaph most likely means Ebiasaph, a Korahite (9:19), not Asaph the singer.
26:5 *for God had blessed him* Obed-edom, who kept the ark when others were afraid (13:13-14). Years later the blessing looked like a large family of mighty men, sixty-two in all (26:8). God honored his family for generations.
26:10 *for he was not firstborn, and his father made him chief* Perhaps the firstborn had died or was not fit to lead. Scripture does not say. Leadership went to the one able to carry it.

he was not firstborn, and his father made him chief), **11** Hilkiah (Chilqiyahu) the second, Tebaliah (Tevalyahu) the third, Zechariah the fourth. All the sons and brothers of Hosah ***were*** thirteen. **12** To these ***belonged*** the divisions of the gatekeepers, to the heads of the men, charges corresponding to their brothers, to minister in the house of the LORD. **13** And they cast lots, the small as the great, by the house of their fathers, for gate and gate. **14** And the lot fell eastward to Shelemiah (Shelemyahu). And ***for*** Zechariah his son, a counselor with insight, they cast lots, and his lot came out northward. **15** To Obed-edom southward, and to his sons the house of the storehouses. **16** To Shuppim (Shupim) and to Hosah westward, by the Gate of Shallecheth (Shalekhet), on the highway that goes up, watch corresponding to watch. **17** To the east the Levites ***were*** six; to the north, four for the day; to the south, four for the day; and for the storehouses, two ***and*** two. **18** For the Parbar to the west: four for the highway, two for the Parbar. **19** These ***were*** the divisions of the gatekeepers of the sons of the Korahites and of the sons of Merari.

The Treasurers

20 And the Levites: Ahijah (Achiya) ***was*** over the treasuries of the house of God and over the treasuries of the holy things. **21** The sons of Ladan, the sons of the Gershonite belonging to Ladan, the heads of the fathers belonging to Ladan the Gershonite: Jehieli (Yechi'eli). **22** The sons of Jehieli: Zetham (Zetam) and Joel (Yo'el) his brother, ***were*** over the treasuries of the house of the LORD. **23** Of the Amramites, of the Izharites, of the Hebronites, of the Uzzielites: **24** And Shebuel (Shevu'el) the son of Gershom, the son of Moses (Moshe), ***was*** leader over the treasuries. **25** And his brothers belonging to Eliezer: Rehabiah (Rechavyahu) his son, and Jeshaiah (Yeshayahu) his son, and Joram (Yoram) his son, and Zichri (Zikhri) his son, and Shelomith (Shelomit) his son. **26** That Shelomoth (Shelomot) and his brothers ***were*** over all the treasuries of the holy things which David the king and the heads of the fathers, for the commanders of the thousands and the hundreds and the commanders of the army, had consecrated. **27** From the wars and from the plunder they consecrated ***some*** to strengthen the house of the LORD. **28** And all that Samuel (Shemu'el) the seer and Saul (Shaul) the son of Kish (Qish) and Abner (Avner) the son of Ner and Joab (Yo'av) the son of Zeruiah (Tseruya) had consecrated, everyone who consecrated ***anything***, ***was*** under the hand of Shelomith and his brothers.

Officials and Judges

29 Of the Izharites, Chenaniah (Kenanyahu) and his sons ***were*** for the outside work over Israel (Yisra'el), as officials and as judges. **30** Of the Hebronites, Hashabiah (Chashavyahu) and his brothers, sons of valor, one thousand seven hundred, ***were*** over the oversight of Israel beyond the Jordan (Yarden) westward, for all the work of the LORD and for the service of the king. **31** Of the Hebronites, Jerijah (Yeriya) ***was*** the chief, of the Hebronites according to his generations, by fathers. In the fortieth year of the reign of David they were searched out, and there were found among them mighty men of valor at Jazer (Yazer) of Gilead (Gilad). **32** And his brothers, sons of valor, ***were*** two thousand seven hundred, heads of the fathers. And David the king appointed them over the Reubenites and the Gadites and the half of the tribe of the Manassites, for every matter of God and matter of the king.

1 CHRONICLES 27

The Army Divisions

1 And the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) according to their number, the heads of the fathers and the commanders of the thousands and the hundreds, and their officials who served the king in every matter of the divisions that came in and went out month by month for all the months of the year: the one

26:12 1 Chr 25:8
26:13 1 Chr 25:8; 1 Chr 24:31
26:16 1 Chr 26:10,11; 1 Kgs 10:5; 2 Chr 9:4
26:17 1 Chr 9:24; 2 Chr 8:14
26:19 Num 16:11
26:20 1 Chr 26:22; 1 Chr 9:26-30; 1 Chr 22:3,4,14-16
26:21 1 Chr 23:7; 1 Chr 6:17
26:22 1 Chr 23:8; 1 Chr 29:8; 1 Chr 26:20
26:23 1 Chr 23:12; Num 3:19,27
26:24 1 Chr 24:20; 1 Chr 23:15,16
26:25 1 Chr 23:17; 1 Chr 23:15; Exod 18:4
26:26 1 Chr 18:11; 1 Chr 22:14; 1 Chr 29:2-9
26:27 Josh 6:19; 2 Kgs 12:14; Neh 10:32-34
26:28 1 Sam 9:9; 1 Sam 14:47-51; 1 Sam 17:55
26:29 Neh 11:16; 1 Chr 23:4; 1 Chr 26:23
26:30 1 Chr 23:12,19
26:31 1 Chr 23:19; Josh 21:39; 1 Chr 29:27
26:32 2 Chr 19:11; 1 Chr 15:12; 1 Chr 23:24
27:1 1 Chr 13:1; Exod 18:25; Deut 1:15

26:13 *the small as the great* Like the priests and singers, they cast lots, and no family could claim the best post by rank.
26:14 *the lot fell eastward to Shelemiah* The east gate was the main entrance facing the rising sun. Shelemiah is another form of Meshelemiah. His son Zechariah, a counselor with insight, drew the north.
26:18 *For the Parbar to the west* Scripture does not explain the word. It seems to have been a court or open building on the west side of the temple area. In all, twenty-four men stood guard each day.
26:19 *These were the divisions of the gatekeepers* "I have chosen to stand at the threshold in the house of my God rather than to dwell in the tents of wickedness" (Ps 84:10). Do you see your place of service that way, however humble?
26:20 *the treasuries of the holy things* The treasury of the house held gifts and supplies for daily work. The treasuries of the holy things held what had been dedicated to God.
26:24 *Shebuel the son of Gershom, the son of Moses* A descendant of Moses as leader over the treasuries.
26:27 *From the wars and from the plunder they consecrated some to strengthen the house of the LORD* As David did in 18:7-11. Samuel, Saul, Abner and Joab had dedicated gifts too (26:28). For decades Israel's leaders set aside treasure for God. Those who handle it must be faithful, "not only before the Lord but also before men" (2 Cor 8:21).
26:29 *for the outside work over Israel* Officials and judges. The Levites taught the law and helped judge disputes across the land (Deut 17:8-9; 2 Chr 19:8-11).
26:31 *In the fortieth year of the reign of David* His last year. A search of the records found more able men at Jazer in Gilead.
26:32 *for every matter of God and matter of the king* The work of the LORD and the service of the king went together. Faith reached into courts, towns and daily life. We serve God at work, in our neighborhoods and at home, as much as on Sunday.
27:1 *came in and went out month by month* Twelve divisions of 24,000, a standing army of 288,000 with one on duty at a time. A man served a month a year and spent the rest on his land. The nation was always defended, and no family was drained.

division ***was*** twenty-four thousand. **2** Over the first division for the first month ***was*** Jashobeam (Yashov'am) the son of Zabdiel (Zavdi'el); and in his division ***were*** twenty-four thousand. **3** ***He was*** of the sons of Perez (Perets), the chief of all the commanders of the armies for the first month. **4** And over the division of the second month ***was*** Dodai (Doday) the Ahohite, and his division, and Mikloth (Miqlot) the leader; and in his division ***were*** twenty-four thousand. **5** The third commander of the army for the third month ***was*** Benaiah (Benayahu) the son of Jehoiada (Yehoyada) the priest, chief; and in his division ***were*** twenty-four thousand. **6** This Benaiah ***was*** the mighty man of the thirty and over the thirty; and ***in*** his division ***was*** Ammizabad (Amizavad) his son. **7** The fourth for the fourth month ***was*** Asahel the brother of Joab (Yo'av), and Zebadiah (Zevadya) his son after him; and in his division ***were*** twenty-four thousand. **8** The fifth for the fifth month ***was*** the commander Shamhuth (Shamhut) the
Izrahite; and in his division ***were*** twenty-four thousand. **9** The sixth for the sixth month ***was*** Ira the son of Ikkesh (Iqesh) the Tekoite; and in his division ***were*** twenty-four thousand. **10** The seventh for the seventh month ***was*** Helez (Chelets) the Pelonite, of the sons of Ephraim (Efrayim); and in his division ***were*** twenty-four thousand. **11** The eighth for the eighth month ***was*** Sibbecai (Sibkhay) the Hushathite, of the Zerahites; and in his division ***were*** twenty-four thousand. **12** The ninth for the ninth month ***was*** Abiezer (Avi'ezer) the Anathothite, of the Benjaminites; and in his division ***were*** twenty-four thousand. **13** The tenth for the tenth month ***was*** Maharai (Maharay) the Netophathite, of the Zerahites; and in his division ***were*** twenty-four thousand. **14** ***The*** eleventh for the eleventh month ***was*** Benaiah (Benaya) the Pirathonite, of the sons of Ephraim; and in his division ***were*** twenty-four thousand. **15** The twelfth for the twelfth month ***was*** Heldai (Chelday) the Netophathite, of Othniel (Otni'el); and in his division ***were*** twenty-four thousand.

The Leaders of the Tribes

16 And over the tribes of Israel: for the Reubenites, Eliezer the son of Zichri (Zikhri) ***was*** leader; for the Simeonites, Shephatiah (Shefatyahu) the son of Maacah (Ma'akha); **17** for Levi, Hashabiah (Chashavya) the son of Kemuel (Qemu'el); for Aaron (Aharon), Zadok (Tsadoq); **18** for Judah (Yehuda), Elihu, of the brothers of David; for Issachar (Yisashkhar), Omri the son of Michael (Mikha'el); **19** for Zebulun (Zevulun), Ishmaiah (Yishmayahu) the son of Obadiah (Ovadyahu); for Naphtali (Naftali), Jerimoth (Yerimot) the son of Azriel; **20** for the sons of Ephraim, Hoshea the son of Azaziah (Azazyahu); for the half of the tribe of Manasseh (Menashe), Joel (Yo'el) the son of Pedaiah (Pedayahu); **21** for the half of the Manassites toward Gilead (Gilad), Iddo (Yido) the son of Zechariah (Zekharyahu); for Benjamin (Binyamin), Jaasiel (Ya'asi'el) the son of Abner (Avner); **22** for Dan, Azarel the son of Jeroham (Yerocham). These ***were*** the commanders of the tribes of Israel. **23** And David did not take their number from the age of twenty years and below, for the LORD had said ***He would*** multiply Israel like the stars of the heavens. **24** Joab the son of Zeruiah (Tseruya) began to count, and he did not finish; and there was wrath because of this on Israel, and the number did not go up into the account of the chronicles of King David.

The King's Stewards and Counselors

25 And over the treasuries of the king ***was*** Azmaveth
(Azmavet) the son of Adiel; and over the treasuries in the field, in the cities, and in the villages, and in the towers ***was*** Jonathan (Yehonatan) the son of Uzziah (Uziyahu). **26** And over the doers of the work of the field for the labor of the ground ***was*** Ezri the son of Chelub (Keluv). **27** And over the vineyards ***was*** Shimei (Shimi) the Ramathite; and over what ***was*** in the vineyards for the treasuries of the wine ***was*** Zabdi (Zavdi) the Shiphmite. **28** And over the olive trees and the sycamore trees that ***were*** in the Shephelah ***was*** Baal-hanan (Ba'al-Chanan) the Gederite; and over the treasuries of the oil ***was*** Joash (Yo'ash). **29** And over the cattle that grazed in the Sharon ***was*** Shitrai (Shirtay) the Sharonite; and over the cattle in the valleys ***was*** Shaphat (Shafat) the son of Adlai (Adlay). **30** And over the camels ***was*** Obil (Ovil) the Ishmaelite; and over the female donkeys ***was*** Jehdeiah

27:2 1 Chr 11:11; 2 Sam 23:8
27:3 Num 26:20; Gen 38:29; Gen 49:8-10
27:4 2 Sam 23:9; 1 Chr 11:12
27:5 1 Chr 18:17; 1 Kgs 4:4; 1 Kgs 4:5
27:6 2 Sam 23:20-23; 1 Chr 11:22-25; 2 Sam 22:20-23
27:7 1 Chr 11:26; 2 Sam 23:24; 2 Sam 2:18-23
27:8 1 Chr 11:27; 2 Sam 23:25; 1 Chr 26:29
27:9 1 Chr 11:28; 2 Sam 23:26
27:10 1 Chr 11:27; 2 Sam 23:26
27:11 2 Sam 21:18; 1 Chr 11:29; Num 26:20
27:12 1 Chr 11:28; 2 Sam 23:27
27:13 1 Chr 11:30; 2 Sam 23:28
27:14 1 Chr 11:31; 2 Sam 23:30
27:15 2 Sam 23:29; 1 Chr 4:13; Judg 3:9
27:17 1 Chr 26:30; 1 Chr 12:27,28; 1 Chr 24:4,31
27:18 1 Sam 16:6; 1 Sam 17:13,29
27:21 1 Kgs 4:14; 1 Sam 14:50,51; 2 Sam 3:27,37
27:23 Gen 15:5; Heb 11:12; Num 1:18
27:24 1 Chr 21:1-17; 2 Sam 24:1-15
27:25 2 Kgs 18:15; 2 Chr 16:2; Gen 41:48
27:28 1 Kgs 4:7; 1 Kgs 20:27
27:29 1 Chr 5:16; Isa 65:10
27:30 Job 1:3; Gen 47:6

27:2 *Jashobeam the son of Zabdiel* Almost all the commanders appear among the mighty men of 11:10-47. Men who proved faithful in hard days were given charge over others.
27:7 *Asahel the brother of Joab, and Zebadiah his son after him* Asahel was killed by Abner early in David's reign (2 Sam 2:18-23). The divisions may have been set up early with his son taking his place, or kept his name in his honor. Scripture does not say. Some read thousand in such lists as a military unit.
27:17 *for Aaron, Zadok* The civil heads of each tribe. Aaron and both halves of Manasseh are listed, and Gad and Asher are not. Scripture does not say why. The writer may have kept the number at twelve.
27:18 *Elihu, of the brothers of David* Probably Eliab, David's oldest brother (1 Sam 16:6), or another brother.
27:21 *Jaasiel the son of Abner* Abner had been Saul's commander and David's enemy for a time. Now his son served in David's kingdom. Grace had healed old wounds.
27:23 *the LORD had said He would multiply Israel like the stars of the heavens* As promised to Abraham (Gen 15:5; 22:17). To count every one would be like doubting the promise.
27:24 *Joab the son of Zeruiah began to count, and he did not finish* The count was never entered in the official records. Even in this orderly kingdom, the king had once sinned by counting, and the nation paid for it.
27:28 *in the Shephelah* The low hills between the coast and the mountains. The Sharon was the coastal plain (27:29).
27:30 *Obil the Ishmaelite* From a desert people who knew camels well, and Jaziz the Hagrite kept the flocks (27:31). David put men where their skills fit, whatever their background. Faithful management of ordinary things is part of serving God (Luke 16:10).

(Yechdeyahu) the Meronothite. **31** And over the flock ***was*** Jaziz (Yaziz) the Hagrite. All these ***were*** the officials of the property which ***belonged*** to King David. **32** And Jonathan the uncle of David ***was*** a counselor, an understanding man, and he ***was*** a scribe; and Jehiel (Yechi'el) the son of Hachmoni (Chakhmoni) ***was*** with the sons of the king. **33** And
Ahithophel (Achitofel) ***was*** counselor to the king; and Hushai (Chushay) the Archite ***was*** the friend of the king. **34** And after Ahithophel ***was*** Jehoiada the son of Benaiah, and Abiathar (Evyatar); and ***the*** commander of ***the*** army for the king ***was*** Joab.

1 CHRONICLES 28

David's Charge to Israel and Solomon

1 And David assembled all the officials of Israel (Yisra'el), the officials of the tribes and the commanders of the divisions who served the king, and the commanders of the thousands and the commanders of the hundreds, and the officials of all the property and livestock of the king and of his sons, with the court officials and the mighty men, and every mighty man of valor, to Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). **2** And David the king rose to his feet and said, "Listen to me, my brothers and my people. As for me, ***it was*** in my heart to build a house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the LORD and for the footstool of the feet of our God, and I prepared to build. **3** And God said to me, 'You shall not build a house for My name, for you ***are*** a man of wars, and you have shed blood.' **4** And the LORD, the God of Israel, chose me out of all the house of my father to be king over Israel forever. For He chose Judah (Yehuda) as leader, and in the house of Judah the house of my father, and among the sons of my father He took pleasure in me to make ***me*** king over all Israel. **5** And from all my sons, for the LORD has given me many sons, He has chosen Solomon (Shelomo) my son to sit on the throne of the kingdom of the LORD over Israel. **6** And He said to me, 'Solomon your son, he will build My house and My courts, for I have chosen him for Myself as a son, and I will be to him a father. **7** And I will establish his kingdom forever, if he is strong to do My commandments and My judgments, as ***at*** this day.' **8** And now, in the eyes of all Israel, the assembly of the LORD, and in the ears of our God, keep and seek all the commandments of the LORD your God, so that you may possess the good land and give ***it*** as an inheritance to your sons after you forever. **9** And you, Solomon my son, know the God of your father and serve Him with a whole heart and with a willing soul, for the LORD searches all hearts and understands every inclination of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; and if you forsake Him, He will reject you forever. **10** See now, for the LORD has chosen you to build a house for the sanctuary. Be strong and act."

The Pattern of the Temple

11 And David gave to Solomon his son the pattern of the porch and its houses and its treasure rooms and its upper rooms and its inner chambers and the house of the mercy seat, **12** and the pattern of all that was in the spirit with him, for the courts of the house of the LORD and for all the chambers all around, for the treasuries of the house of God and for the treasuries of the holy things, **13** and for the divisions of the priests and the Levites, and for all the work of the service of the house of the LORD, and for all the articles of the service of the house of the LORD; **14** for the gold, by the weight of the gold, for all articles of service and service; for all the

27:32 2 Sam 13:3; 2 Sam 21:21; 1 Chr 11:11
27:33 2 Sam 15:12; 2 Sam 15:32,37; 2 Sam 16:23
27:34 1 Kgs 1:7; 1 Chr 11:6
28:1 1 Chr 23:2; 1 Chr 11:10-47; Josh 23:2
28:2 Acts 7:49; Ps 99:5; Isa 66:1
28:3 1 Chr 22:8; 1 Chr 17:4; 1 Kgs 5:3
28:4 Acts 13:22; 1 Chr 5:2; 1 Sam 16:1
28:5 Matt 1:6; Acts 13:22; 1 Chr 3:1-9
28:6 Heb 3:6; Heb 1:5; 2 Sam 7:13,14
28:7 1 Chr 22:13; Ps 89:28-37; Ps 132:12
28:8 Acts 17:11; Deut 4:1; Deut 4:6
28:9 Jer 29:13; 1 Kgs 8:61; John 4:24
28:10 1 Chr 28:6; 1 Chr 22:16-19; 1 Tim 4:16
28:11 Heb 8:5; Heb 9:5; 1 Chr 28:19
28:12 Heb 8:5; 1 Chr 26:20,26-28; Exod 31:2
28:13 1 Chr 24:1-19; 1 Chr 25:1-31; 1 Chr 9:29

27:33 *Hushai the Archite was the friend of the king* Ahithophel was the wisest counselor in Israel, but he joined Absalom's revolt and, when his advice was rejected, took his own life (2 Sam 15:12; 17:23). Hushai stayed true (2 Sam 15:32-37). Choose friends both wise and faithful. "At every time the friend loves" (Prov 17:17). Jesus calls His disciples friends (John 15:15).
27:34 *the commander of the army for the king was Joab* After Ahithophel came Jehoiada and Abiathar. His place was filled by others. The list ends with Joab still at his post.
28:1 *David assembled all the officials of Israel* The people listed in chapters 23 to 27. A good handover is done in public, so everyone knows who the new leader is and what he has been asked to do.
28:2 *David the king rose to his feet* First Kings 1 shows him weak and bedridden near the end. This moment mattered too much to give sitting down.
28:2 *the footstool of the feet of our God* God's throne is in heaven, and the ark under the cherubim was where His feet rested on earth, so to speak (Ps 132:7; Isa 66:1). A house of rest was a permanent home after centuries of moving.
28:3 *you are a man of wars, and you have shed blood* David told the whole nation the no God had given him. It takes humility to say publicly that God gave the honor of your dream to someone else.
28:4 *the LORD, the God of Israel, chose me out of all the house of my father* God chose Judah, then Jesse's house, then David. He was king by God's choice, not his own effort.
28:5 *to sit on the throne of the kingdom of the LORD over Israel* It is God's kingdom, and the king sits on it as His servant (17:14; 29:23).
28:7 *if he is strong to do My commandments and My judgments* The lasting line rested on God alone (17:11-14), and He kept it all the way to Jesus. But each king's blessing in his own day depended on obedience. Solomon turned in his old age, and the kingdom was torn after his death (1 Kgs 11:9-13). God kept the line. Solomon lost much of the blessing.
28:8 *in the ears of our God, keep and seek all the commandments of the LORD your God* God was listening as witness. Possessing the land was tied to obedience (Deut 4:1, 40), a sharp reminder to readers who had lost the land and come back.
28:9 *know the God of your father and serve Him with a whole heart and with a willing soul* To know God is more than knowing about Him. David wanted Solomon to know his father's God, not only inherit his throne.
28:9 *if you forsake Him, He will reject you forever* God is not hiding from anyone who truly seeks Him (Jer 29:13). I believe those truly born again are kept by God (John 10:28-29), but this warning is to be taken seriously, not argued away. It was spoken to a king under the old covenant about his reign, and it came true when Solomon's heart turned (1 Kgs 11:4). Each of us must seek the Lord for ourselves.
28:10 *Be strong and act* God's choice came with a job.
28:11 *the house of the mercy seat* The mercy seat was the gold lid of the ark, where atoning blood was sprinkled on the Day of Atonement (Lev 16:14-15). A pattern is a plan or model.
28:13 *the divisions of the priests and the Levites* The organization of chapters 23 to 26 was part of the plan. Building and worship went together.

articles of the silver by weight, for all articles of service and service; **15** and the weight of the lampstands of gold and their lamps of gold, by the weight of lampstand and lampstand and its lamps; and of the lampstands of silver by weight, of a lampstand and its lamps, according to the service of lampstand and lampstand; **16** and the gold by weight for the tables of the row, for table and table, and silver for the tables of silver; **17** and the forks and the sprinkling bowls and the jugs ***of*** pure gold; and for the bowls of gold by weight for bowl and bowl, and for the bowls of silver by weight for bowl and bowl; **18** and for the altar of incense refined gold by weight; and for the pattern of the chariot, the cherubim ***of*** gold, for spreading out and covering over the ark of the covenant of the LORD. **19** All ***this was*** in writing from the hand of the LORD on me; He made ***me*** understand all the works of the pattern. **20** And David said to Solomon his son, "Be strong and be courageous, and act; do not fear, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD God, my God, ***is*** with you. He will not let you go, and He will not forsake you, until all the work of the service of the house of the LORD is finished. **21** And look, the divisions of the priests and the Levites ***are*** for all the service of the house of God; and with you in all the work ***is*** every willing one with wisdom for every service; and the officials and all the people ***are*** at all your words."

1 CHRONICLES 29

The Gifts for the Temple

1 And David the king said to all the assembly, "Solomon (Shelomo) my son, ***the*** one whom God has chosen, ***is*** a youth and tender, and the work ***is*** great; for the palace ***is*** not for man, but for the LORD God. **2** And with all my power I have prepared for the house of my God the gold for the ***things of*** gold, and the silver for the ***things of*** silver, and the bronze for the ***things of*** bronze, the iron for the ***things of*** iron, and the wood for the ***things of*** wood, onyx stones and settings, stones of antimony and of variegated color, and every precious stone, and alabaster stones in abundance. **3** And moreover, in my delight in the house of my God, I have a treasure of gold and silver; I have given ***it*** for the house of my God, over and above all ***that*** I have prepared for the holy house: **4** approximately 225,000 pounds (three thousand talents) of gold, from the gold of Ophir (Ofir), and approximately 525,000 pounds (seven thousand talents) of refined silver, to overlay the walls of the houses; **5** the gold for the ***things of*** gold, and the silver for the ***things of*** silver, and for every work by the hand of craftsmen. And who ***is*** offering willingly to fill his hand today for the LORD?" **6** And the leaders of the fathers and the leaders of the tribes of Israel (Yisra'el), and the leaders of the thousands and of the hundreds, and the leaders of the work of the king offered willingly. **7** And they gave for the service of the house of God: gold, approximately 375,000 pounds (five thousand talents) and ten thousand darics; and silver, approximately 750,000 pounds (ten thousand talents); and bronze, approximately 1.35 million pounds (ten thousand and eight thousand talents); and iron, approximately 7.5 million pounds (one hundred thousand talents). **8** And the one with whom stones were found, they gave ***them*** to the treasury of the house of the LORD by the hand of Jehiel (Yechi'el) the Gershonite. **9** And the people rejoiced because of their offering willingly, for with a whole heart they offered willingly to the LORD; and also David the king rejoiced ***with*** great joy.

David's Prayer of Praise

10 And David blessed the LORD before the eyes of all the assembly, and David said, "Blessed ***are*** You, O LORD, the God of Israel our father, from everlasting and to everlasting. **11** To You, O LORD, ***is*** the greatness and the might and the splendor and the preeminence and the majesty, for all ***that is***

28:15 Exod 25:31-39; 1 Kgs 7:19; 2 Chr 4:7
28:16 Exod 25:23-30; 1 Kgs 7:48; 2 Chr 4:8,19
28:17 1 Sam 2:13,14; 2 Chr 4:20-22; Num 7:13,14
28:18 Exod 25:18-22; Exod 30:1-10; 1 Kgs 7:48
28:19 1 Chr 28:11,12; Exod 25:40; Exod 26:30
28:20 1 Chr 22:13; Heb 13:5; 1 Chr 28:10
28:21 1 Chr 24:1-26; Exod 31:3; Exod 35:25,26,35
29:1 1 Chr 22:5; 1 Kgs 3:7; 2 Chr 13:7
29:2 1 Chr 22:3-5,14-16; Eccl 9:10; Col 3:23
29:3 Ps 26:8; Ps 27:4; Ps 84:1,10
29:4 1 Kgs 9:28; Job 28:16
29:5 Exod 25:2-9; Exod 35:5-9; Num 7:2,3,10-14,15-89
29:6 1 Chr 27:1-15; Isa 60:3-10; 1 Chr 27:25-34
29:7 Matt 18:24
29:8 1 Chr 26:21,22
29:9 2 Cor 8:3,12; 2 Cor 9:7,8; 1 Kgs 8:61
29:10 Eph 1:3; 1 Pet 1:3; Luke 1:68
29:11 Heb 1:3; Rev 4:10; Matt 6:13

28:18 *the pattern of the chariot, the cherubim of gold* The cherubim over the ark were pictured as God's chariot throne (Ezek 1; 10; 2 Chr 3:10-13). Every lamp and bowl had a set weight. What is given to God should be given carefully and fully.
28:19 *All this was in writing from the hand of the LORD on me* God gave David the pattern as He gave Moses the tabernacle's (Exod 25:9, 40). Scripture does not say exactly how. The earthly sanctuary was "a copy and shadow of the heavenly things" (Heb 8:5), and Christ entered heaven itself with His own blood (Heb 9:11-12, 24). The temple was a picture. Jesus is the reality.
28:20 *He will not let you go, and He will not forsake you* The words God spoke to Joshua (Josh 1:5-9). David pointed Solomon from his own strength to God's presence. Hebrews gives the promise to every believer: "I will certainly not leave you, nor will I ever forsake you" (Heb 13:5).
28:21 *every willing one with wisdom for every service* God gives His people both His presence and helpers for the work. What feels too big? Be strong and act.
29:1 *the palace is not for man, but for the LORD God* The word is used here for the temple, the house of the true King. David repeats 22:5: Solomon was young, and the work great.
29:3 *In my delight in the house of my God* His own personal fortune, over and above the kingdom's treasury. Ophir was famous for fine gold (29:4). David gave not out of duty but delight.
29:5 *who is offering willingly to fill his hand today for the LORD* To fill the hand was used of ordaining priests (Exod 28:41). He gave first, then asked. A leader cannot ask others to give what he will not give himself.
29:7 *ten thousand darics* A Persian gold coin that did not exist in David's day. The writer gives the value in his readers' coin, a sign Chronicles was written after the exile, under Persian rule.
29:9 *with a whole heart they offered willingly to the LORD* The joy came from the giving. "God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Cor 9:7). Joy in giving is one of the surest signs your heart belongs to the Lord.
29:10 *from everlasting and to everlasting* To bless the LORD is to praise Him and speak well of Him. Israel our father means Jacob (Gen 32:28). Before the first gift God was, and after the temple is gone He will be. Every good prayer starts with God.
29:11 *To You, O LORD, is the greatness and the might and the splendor and the preeminence and the majesty* David piled up words because no one word was enough. The most powerful king Israel ever had said the kingdom is not mine but Yours. The SLB ends the Lord's Prayer, "For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory into the ages" (Matt 6:13).

in the heavens and on the earth; to You, O LORD, ***is*** the kingdom, and the One lifting Himself up over all as head. **12** And the riches and the glory ***are*** from before You, and You ***are*** ruling over all; and in Your hand ***are*** power and might, and in Your hand ***it is*** to make great and to strengthen all. **13** And now, our God, we ***are*** giving thanks to You and praising the name of Your splendor. **14** And indeed, who ***am*** I, and who ***are*** my people, that we should retain strength to offer willingly like this? For everything ***is*** from You, and from Your hand we have given to You. **15** For we ***are*** sojourners before You, and resident aliens, like all our fathers; like the shadow ***are*** our days on the earth, and there is no hope. **16** O LORD our God, all this abundance that we have prepared to build for You a house for the name of Your holiness, it ***is*** from Your hand, and everything ***is*** Yours. **17** And I know, my God, that You ***are*** testing ***the*** heart, and You take pleasure in uprightness. I, in the uprightness of my heart, have offered willingly all these ***things***; and now Your people who are found here I have seen with joy offering willingly to You. **18** O LORD, the God of Abraham (Avraham), Isaac (Yitschaq), and Israel, our fathers, keep this forever for the inclination of the thoughts of the heart of Your people, and prepare their heart toward You. **19** And to Solomon my son give a whole heart to keep Your commandments, Your testimonies, and Your statutes, and to do everything, and to build the palace which I have prepared."

Solomon Made King

20 And David said to all the assembly, "Bless, please, the LORD your God." And all the assembly blessed the LORD, the God of their fathers, and they bowed low and bowed down to the LORD and to the king. **21** And they sacrificed sacrifices to the LORD and offered up burnt offerings to the LORD on the day after that day: a thousand bulls, a thousand rams, a thousand lambs, and their drink offerings, and sacrifices in abundance for all Israel. **22** And they ate and drank before the LORD on that day with great joy. And they made Solomon the son of David king a second time, and they anointed ***him*** for the LORD as ruler, and Zadok (Tsadoq) as priest. **23** And Solomon sat on the throne of the LORD as king in place of David his father, and he prospered; and all Israel listened to him. **24** And all the leaders and the mighty men, and also all the sons of King David, gave a hand under Solomon the king. **25** And the LORD made Solomon exceedingly great in the eyes of all Israel, and He put on him ***the*** majesty of kingship which had not been on any king before him over Israel.

The Death of David

26 And David the son of Jesse (Yishay) reigned over all Israel. **27** And the days which he reigned over Israel ***were*** forty years: in Hebron (Chevron) he reigned seven years, and in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) he reigned thirty and three ***years***. **28** And he died in a good old age, satisfied ***with*** days, riches, and honor; and Solomon his son reigned in his place. **29** And the matters of David the king, the first and the last, look, they ***are*** written in the words of Samuel (Shemu'el) the seer, and in the words of Nathan (Natan) the prophet, and in the words of Gad the seer, **30** with all his kingship and his might,

29:12 Deut 8:18; 1 Sam 2:7,8; Job 42:10
29:13 2 Cor 8:16; Ps 105:1; Ps 106:1
29:14 James 1:17; Gen 32:10; 2 Sam 7:18
29:15 Job 14:2; Ps 39:12; Ps 102:11
29:16 1 Chr 29:14; 2 Chr 31:10; Ps 24:1
29:17 John 21:17; Acts 7:23; 1 Chr 28:9
29:18 Matt 22:32; Acts 3:13; Acts 7:23
29:19 Acts 7:23; Ps 72:1; 1 Chr 28:9
29:20 Luke 1:68; Exod 4:31; 1 Chr 16:36
29:21 2 Chr 7:4-9; Ezra 6:17; Lev 23:13
29:22 1 Chr 23:1; 1 Kgs 2:35; Exod 24:11
29:23 1 Chr 28:5; 1 Chr 17:11,12; Ps 132:11
29:24 1 Chr 22:17; 1 Chr 28:21; 1 Chr 2:3-9
29:25 2 Chr 1:1; 1 Kgs 3:13; 2 Chr 1:12
29:26 1 Chr 18:14; Ps 78:71,72
29:27 2 Sam 5:4,5; 1 Kgs 2:11; 1 Chr 3:4
29:28 Gen 15:15; Job 5:26; Acts 13:36
29:29 Heb 11:32; 1 Sam 9:9; 2 Sam 7:2-4
29:30 Dan 4:23,25; 2 Kgs 10:34; 2 Kgs 14:28

29:12 *the riches and the glory are from before You* David had been made great, but he knew who made him so. What we have, we have been given.
29:13 *we are giving thanks to You and praising the name of Your splendor* Praise is about who God is. Thanks is about what He has done.
29:14 *everything is from You, and from Your hand we have given to You* After all the gold was given, David felt small, as in 17:16. We never give God anything not His first. "What do you have which you did not receive?" (1 Cor 4:7). That takes away pride, and fear too.
29:15 *we are sojourners before You, and resident aliens, like all our fathers* Living in a land not one's own, as the patriarchs did (Gen 23:4). Life is "a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes" (James 4:14). The saints of old confessed they were strangers on the earth (Heb 11:13; 1 Pet 2:11).
29:15 *there is no hope* No hope of staying, no lasting place on earth. The word can mean something that abides. David was not saying there is no hope in God. What we keep slips away. What we give to God lasts.
29:17 *You are testing the heart, and You take pleasure in uprightness* God does not weigh the gold. He weighs the heart. Uprightness is a heart with nothing crooked in it. Jesus praised the widow who gave two small coins (Mark 12:41-44).
29:18 *prepare their heart toward You* The inclination of the thoughts means the way the heart leans. Hearts drift, and we cannot keep them turned toward God by our own strength (1 Thess 3:13).
29:19 *to Solomon my son give a whole heart* Commandments, testimonies and statutes are three words for God's Word. David's last prayer for his son was for an undivided heart, not riches. Solomon's later turning shows a father's prayers do not take away a son's own choices, but God answered much of it. Parents, keep praying for your children's hearts.
29:21 *a thousand bulls, a thousand rams, a thousand lambs* A drink offering was wine poured out with a sacrifice. Many were peace offerings, shared in a feast with great joy (29:22).
29:22 *they made Solomon the son of David king a second time* The first was the hurried anointing during Adonijah's attempt (1 Kgs 1:32-40; 23:1). The word Messiah means anointed one. Every anointed king of David's line pointed ahead to Jesus the Christ.
29:23 *Solomon sat on the throne of the LORD as king* As in 17:14 and 28:5, David's throne was God's throne on earth.
29:24 *gave a hand under Solomon the king* A pledge of loyalty. Even the brothers who might have competed swore allegiance.
29:25 *the LORD made Solomon exceedingly great in the eyes of all Israel* God kept His word to David. Another Son of David will sit on that throne, and every knee will bow (Phil 2:10-11; Luke 1:32-33). Christ's majesty will be greater, and it will have no end.
29:27 *the days which he reigned over Israel were forty years* Seven in Hebron and thirty-three in Jerusalem, about 1010 to 970 B.C. Son of Jesse reminds us he began as the youngest son of a shepherd family in Bethlehem (29:26).
29:28 *he died in a good old age, satisfied with days, riches, and honor* He "served the purpose of God in his own generation" (Acts 13:36). A good epitaph for any believer.
29:29 *in the words of Samuel the seer, and in the words of Nathan the prophet, and in the words of Gad the seer* The older prophetic records, much of which we have in Samuel. The book ends where it has been heading: David's line secure, his son on the throne of the LORD, the house ready, and the promise passed on to Jesus Christ, the Son of David, who lives forever.

and the times that passed over him and over Israel and over
all the kingdoms of the lands.

2 CHRONICLES

Introduction

Title

The book takes its English name from Jerome, who called it a chronicle of the whole sacred history. In the Hebrew Bible, 1 and 2 Chronicles were one book, and it stands last of all, among the Writings, so the Hebrew Bible closes with Cyrus' words, "let him go up" (36:23). The Greek translators split it in two and called it the things left out, because it adds much that Samuel and Kings do not tell. Our English Bibles place it among the historical books, after 2 Kings.

Author and Date

The book does not name its writer. Jewish tradition holds that Ezra the priest and scribe wrote Chronicles. The last two verses of 2 Chronicles are the same as the first verses of Ezra (36:22-23; Ezra 1:1-3), and the two books share the same love for the temple, the priests and Levites, and the Law of Moses. Many modern scholars speak of an unnamed writer they call the Chronicler and date the book later, about 400 to 300 B.C. I take the traditional view as likely, and the notes call the writer the Chronicler either way. It was most likely written about 450 to 430 B.C., in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, though some date it to about 400 B.C. The family line of David in 1 Chronicles 3 runs several generations past Zerubbabel, which fits a date in the 400s B.C. The Chronicler names many of his sources, the book of the kings of Judah and Israel and the writings of prophets such as Nathan, Iddo, Jehu and Isaiah (9:29; 20:34; 32:32), and he clearly knew Samuel and Kings.

Background and Setting

2 Chronicles covers more than four hundred years, from the start of Solomon's reign about 970 B.C. to the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C., and then jumps ahead to the decree of Cyrus in 538 B.C. Solomon began the temple about 966 B.C., and the kingdom divided about 930 B.C. Unlike Kings, the book follows only Judah and the line of David. The northern kingdom appears only when it touches Judah. Almost everything happens in Judah and Jerusalem, centered on the temple on Mount Moriah.

The first readers were Jews who had come home from exile in Babylon. They had a rebuilt temple but no king, and they lived under Persia. Chronicles told them who they were, reminded them that God's covenant with David still stood, and showed them the way forward: seek the LORD and worship Him as He commanded. That is why the book says so much about the temple, the priests and Levites, the music of worship and the prayers of the kings, and why it leaves out much of the northern kingdom and some sins of David and Solomon its readers already knew from Kings.

The reign dates in the notes follow one standard set, the dates worked out by Edwin Thiele, and are given with "about," because some kings ruled alongside their fathers for a time. Where Kings and Chronicles give different numbers, the notes say so and give the common explanations, such as a copying error in a number or a difference in what was counted. Some army numbers are very large. I take them as written, and mention that some scholars read the Hebrew word for "thousand" as a military unit or clan.

Themes

The theme of 2 Chronicles is that God hears and restores those who seek Him. Every king is measured by whether he sought the LORD or forsook Him. God put it into words in His answer to Solomon: if "My people, over whom My name is called, humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their evil ways," then He will hear, forgive and heal (7:14). The prophet Azariah said it plainly to Asa: "The LORD is with you while you are with Him" (15:2).

The rest of the book shows that promise at work. Rehoboam humbles himself and is spared (12:6-7). Asa leans on the LORD against a vast army (14:11). Jehoshaphat's people fast and pray and learn that "the battle is not yours, but God's" (20:15). Hezekiah opens the temple doors and God heals the people (30:18-20). Even Manasseh, the worst king of all, humbles himself in chains in Babylon and is brought home (33:12-13). Hanani said it best: "the LORD, His eyes are roving in all the earth to show Himself strong with those whose heart is complete toward Him" (16:9).

The book is also honest about how kings finish. Asa, Joash, Amaziah and Uzziah start well and end badly, and the question of the whole book is whether a heart will humble itself. Its loudest message is hope. No king and no people are so far gone that God will not hear them when they turn back to Him.

Christ in 2 Chronicles

2 Chronicles is built on God's promise to David that his son would build God's house and that God would establish his throne forever (1 Chr 17:11-14). The kings of David's line sat on the throne until 586 B.C., and then the throne was empty. But the promise was not broken. The angel told Mary that God would give her Son "the throne of David His father" (Luke 1:32). The temple, where God put His name and His glory dwelt, points to Jesus, who spoke of His body as the temple (John 2:19-21) and in whom "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). Solomon asked, "will God really dwell with mankind on the earth?" (6:18), and Bethlehem is God's answer. Jesus said that in Him "something greater than Solomon is here" (Matt 12:42). The sacrifices that opened the way to God point to His one sacrifice (Heb 10:10-12), and Uzziah's sin shows why only God's appointed King-Priest can join the two offices (Ps 110:4; Heb 7:1-3). The book's last word, that God's people may go up to build His house, looks ahead to the Son of David who will one day reign in Jerusalem over all the earth.

Hard Passages

Does 7:14 promise revival to modern nations? The notes read it first as God's promise to Israel in the land under the covenant of Moses, then apply its principle to believers today (James 4:6-10; 1 John 1:9), without making it a contract with any modern country.

The covenant of 15:13 called for death for those who would not seek the LORD. It came from the Law given to Israel as a nation under God's direct rule (Deut 13:6-10). It is not a pattern for the church or any government. Faith that is forced is not faith.

Did God send a lying spirit to Ahab (18:18-22)? God cannot lie. Ahab had already chosen the lie, and God gave him over to it, while warning him plainly through Micaiah. The notes give the main ways teachers read the vision.

Several passages tell of great cruelty: Jehoram's murder of his brothers (21:4), Athaliah's attempt to destroy the royal line (22:10), the stoning of Zechariah (24:20-22), the Edomite captives thrown from the cliff (25:12), child sacrifice under Ahaz and Manasseh (28:3; 33:6), and the slaughter when Jerusalem fell (36:17). The notes speak of them plainly and briefly, as Scripture does, without approving what Scripture only records.

Chronicles and Kings sometimes give different numbers, such as Ahaziah's age (22:2) and Jehoiachin's (36:9). The notes give the common explanations, most often a copying error in a number. Elijah's letter (21:12) and the seventy years (36:21) are also explained in the notes.

Outline

I. The Reign of Solomon (1:1-9:31)
- A. Solomon asks for wisdom (1:1-17)
- B. The temple prepared and built (2:1-4:22)
- C. The ark and the glory come (5:1-14)
- D. Solomon's prayer of dedication (6:1-42)
- E. Fire from heaven and the LORD's answer (7:1-22)
- F. Solomon's works, wisdom and death (8:1-9:31)

II. The Kingdom Divides and Judah's Early Kings (10:1-20:37)
- A. The kingdom divides (10:1-19)
- B. Rehoboam (11:1-12:16)
- C. Abijah (13:1-22)
- D. Asa (14:1-16:14)
- E. Jehoshaphat (17:1-20:37)

III. Judah's Decline from Jehoram to Ahaz (21:1-28:27)
- A. Jehoram and Ahaziah (21:1-22:9)
- B. Athaliah and Joash (22:10-24:27)
- C. Amaziah (25:1-28)
- D. Uzziah (26:1-23)
- E. Jotham (27:1-9)
- F. Ahaz (28:1-27)

IV. Hezekiah to the Exile and the Decree of Cyrus (29:1-36:23)
- A. Hezekiah's reform and Passover (29:1-31:21)
- B. Sennacherib's invasion and Hezekiah's last years (32:1-33)
- C. Manasseh and Amon (33:1-25)
- D. Josiah (34:1-35:27)
- E. The last kings and the fall of Jerusalem (36:1-21)
- F. The decree of Cyrus (36:22-23)

2 CHRONICLES

2 CHRONICLES 1

Solomon Seeks the LORD at Gibeon

1 And Solomon (Shelomo) the son of David strengthened himself over his kingdom, and the LORD his God ***was*** with him and made him exceedingly great. **2** And Solomon spoke to all Israel (Yisra'el), to the commanders of the thousands and of the hundreds, and to the judges, and to every leader of all Israel, the heads of the fathers. **3** And Solomon and all the assembly with him went to the high place which ***was*** at Gibeon (Givon), for there was the tent of meeting of God, which Moses (Moshe) the servant of the LORD had made in the wilderness. **4** But the ark of God David had brought up from Kiriath-jearim (Qiryat-Ye'arim) to ***the place that*** David had prepared for it, for he had pitched a tent for it in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). **5** And the altar of bronze which Bezalel (Betsalel) the son of Uri, the son of Hur (Chur), had made, he had put before the tabernacle of the LORD; and Solomon and the assembly sought it. **6** And Solomon went up there to the altar of bronze before the LORD, which ***was*** at the tent of meeting, and he offered up on it a thousand burnt offerings.

Solomon Asks for Wisdom

7 In that night God appeared to Solomon and said to him, "Ask what I shall give to you." **8** And Solomon said to God, "You Yourself have done great steadfast love with David my father, and You have made me king in place of him. **9** Now, O LORD God, let Your word with David my father be confirmed, for You Yourself have made me king over a people numerous like the dust of the earth. **10** Now give me wisdom and knowledge, and let me go out before this people and let me come in; for who will judge this great people of Yours?" **11** And God said to Solomon, "Because this was with your heart, and you have not asked for riches, wealth, and honor, and the life of those who hate you, and also many days you have not asked for, and you have asked for yourself wisdom and knowledge that you may judge My people over whom I have made you king, **12** the wisdom and the knowledge ***are*** given to you; and riches and wealth and honor I will give to you, which has not been so for the kings who ***were*** before you, and after you it will not be so." **13** And Solomon came from the high place which ***was*** at Gibeon to Jerusalem, from before the tent of meeting, and he reigned over Israel.

Solomon's Wealth

14 And Solomon gathered chariotry and horsemen, and he had one thousand four hundred chariots and twelve thousand horsemen, and he placed them in the cities of the chariotry and with the king in Jerusalem. **15** And the king made the silver and the gold in Jerusalem like the stones, and the cedars he made like the sycamores which ***are*** in the Shephelah, for abundance. **16** And the export of the horses which

1:1 1 Chr 29:25; 1 Kgs 2:12,46; Gen 21:22
1:2 1 Chr 28:1; 1 Chr 27:1; 2 Chr 29:20
1:3 1 Chr 16:39; 1 Chr 21:29; 1 Kgs 3:4-15
1:4 2 Sam 6:2,17; 1 Chr 15:1,25-28; 1 Chr 16:1
1:5 Exod 31:2; Exod 38:1-7; Exod 27:1-8
1:6 1 Kgs 3:4; 1 Kgs 8:63; 1 Chr 29:21
1:7 Matt 7:7; 1 Kgs 3:5-15; Prov 3:5,6
1:8 1 Chr 28:5; 2 Sam 7:8,9; 2 Sam 12:7,8
1:9 2 Sam 7:12-16,25-29; Gen 13:16; Ps 89:35-37
1:10 Num 27:17; 1 Kgs 3:9; Prov 2:2-6
1:11 Prov 23:7; 1 Sam 16:7; 1 Kgs 3:11-13
1:12 2 Chr 9:22; 1 Chr 29:25; Matt 6:33
1:13 1 Kgs 4:24,25
1:14 1 Kgs 4:26; 2 Chr 9:25; Deut 17:16
1:15 2 Chr 9:27; 2 Chr 1:12; 1 Kgs 10:27-29
1:16 2 Chr 9:28; 1 Kgs 10:28,29

1:1 *the LORD his God was with him and made him exceedingly great* Solomon's greatness came from God. The Chronicler wrote for Jews home from exile in Babylon with no king and little power. He wanted them to know that real strength does not come from armies or gold. It comes from the LORD being with His people. That is still true for us.
1:3 *the high place which was at Gibeon* A high place was a hilltop place of worship. Later in this book high places are usually bad, places of idols or of worship God had not approved. Gibeon was different, because the tabernacle Moses made in the wilderness still stood there, with Bezalel's bronze altar (Exod 38:1-2).
1:4 *he had pitched a tent for it in Jerusalem* The ark of the covenant, the gold-covered chest that held the tablets of the Law, was no longer with the old tent. David had brought it to Jerusalem (1 Chr 15-16). For a time Israel's worship was split between two places.
1:5 *Solomon and the assembly sought it* "Sought" is one of the great words of Chronicles. To seek God is to turn to Him, depend on Him and worship Him. The new king began his reign on his knees, with "a thousand burnt offerings," animals wholly burned on the altar as a sign of complete devotion. What would it look like for us to begin each new season the same way?
1:7 *Ask what I shall give to you* God put no limit on the offer. 1 Kings 3:5 tells us it came in a dream. I believe it was a test of Solomon's heart. What we ask for when we can ask for anything shows what we really love.
1:8 *You Yourself have done great steadfast love with David my father* Solomon's answer starts with God, not with himself. Steadfast love is the Hebrew word hesed, God's loyal covenant love that keeps its promises. Solomon saw his own throne as proof of God's faithfulness to David.
1:9 *a people numerous like the dust of the earth* An echo of God's promise to Abraham (Gen 13:16). Solomon prayed God's word back to Him and admitted the job was too big for him.
1:10 *who will judge this great people of Yours* To "go out" and "come in" before the people is a Hebrew way of saying to lead them in daily life and in war. Notice "Yours." Solomon knew Israel was God's people, not his. Every leader, pastor and parent needs to remember that the people we lead belong to God.
1:12 *riches and wealth and honor I will give to you* Solomon asked for wisdom to serve others, and God added what he did not ask. Jesus taught the same: "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you" (Matt 6:33). God gives wisdom to anyone who asks in faith (James 1:5). You do not have to be a king to ask.
1:13 *he reigned over Israel* The reign grew out of that night at Gibeon. Solomon received wisdom from God first, and then he ruled. Both Kings and Chronicles show that his later life did not match this good start.
1:15 *made the silver and the gold in Jerusalem like the stones* God kept His word right away. Cedar, a costly wood, was as common as the sycamore figs of the Shephelah, the low hills west of Judah. The same report appears in 9:25-28 and 1 Kings 10:26-29.
1:16 *the export of the horses which Solomon had was from Egypt and from Kue* Kue was an area in what is now southern Turkey. A careful reader of the Law feels a warning here. Moses said the king must not multiply horses, send the people back to Egypt for them, or multiply silver and gold (Deut 17:16-17). The gifts were good. The danger was letting the gifts take the place of the Giver, and that danger is ours too.

Solomon had ***was*** from Egypt (Mitsrayim) and from Kue (Qeve); the traders of the king would take ***them*** from Kue at a price. **17** And they brought up and brought out from Egypt a chariot for approximately 15 pounds (six hundred ***shekels***) of silver, and a horse for approximately 3.75 pounds (a hundred and fifty ***shekels***); and thus for all the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Syria (Aram), by their hand they brought ***them*** out.

2 CHRONICLES 2

Solomon Prepares to Build the Temple

1 And Solomon (Shelomo) said to build a house for the name of the LORD and a house for his kingship. **2** And Solomon counted seventy thousand men, burden bearers, and eighty thousand men, stonecutters in the hill country, and overseers over them, three thousand six hundred. **3** And Solomon sent to Hiram (Churam) the king of Tyre (Tsor), saying, "Just as you dealt with David my father, and you sent him cedars to build for him a house to dwell in, **4** look, I am about to build a house for the name of the LORD my God, to consecrate ***it*** to Him, to burn before Him incense of fragrant spices, and the continual row, and burnt offerings for the morning and for the evening, for the Sabbaths and for the new moons and for the appointed times of the LORD our God; this ***is*** on Israel (Yisra'el) forever. **5** And the house which I am about to build ***will be*** great, for our God ***is*** great above all the gods. **6** And who will retain strength to build Him a house, for the heavens and the heavens of the heavens do not contain Him? And who ***am*** I that I should build Him a house, except to burn ***incense*** before Him? **7** And now send me a skillful man to work in gold and in silver and in bronze and in iron and in purple and crimson and blue, and who knows ***how*** to engrave engravings, with the skillful men who ***are*** with me in Judah (Yehuda) and in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), whom David my father prepared. **8** And send me timber of cedars, cypresses, and algums from Lebanon (Levanon), for I know that your servants know ***how*** to cut the timber of Lebanon; and look, my servants ***will be*** with your servants, **9** and to prepare for me timber in abundance, for the house which I am about to build ***will be*** great and wonderful. **10** And look, to the woodcutters, to those who cut the timber, I give to your servants crushed wheat, approximately 120,000 bushels (twenty thousand kors), and barley, approximately 120,000 bushels (twenty thousand kors), and wine, approximately 120,000 gallons (twenty thousand baths), and oil, approximately 120,000 gallons (twenty thousand baths)."

Hiram's Answer

11 And Hiram the king of Tyre said in a writing, and he sent ***it*** to Solomon: "Because the LORD loves His people, He has given you ***as*** king over them." **12** And Hiram said, "Blessed ***be*** the LORD, the God of Israel, who made the heavens and the earth, who has given to David the king a wise son, knowing insight and understanding, who will build a house for the LORD and a house for his kingship. **13** And now I have sent a skillful man, knowing understanding, Huram-abi (Churam-Avi), **14** the son of a woman from the daughters of Dan, and his father ***was*** a Tyrian man, knowing ***how*** to work in gold and in silver, in bronze, in iron, in stones and in wood, in purple, in blue, and in fine linen and in crimson, and to engrave every engraving and to devise every design which will be given to him, with your skillful men and the skillful men of my lord David your father. **15** And now the wheat and the barley, the oil and the wine, which my lord has said, let him send to his servants. **16** And we will cut timber from Lebanon according to all your need, and we will bring it to you ***as*** rafts on ***the*** sea ***to*** Joppa (Yafo); and you will

1:17 2 Kgs 10:29
2:1 Acts 7:47; 1 Kgs 5:5; Deut 12:5,11
2:2 Acts 7:47; 2 Chr 2:18; 1 Kgs 5:15,16
2:3 Acts 7:47; 1 Chr 14:1; 2 Sam 5:11
2:4 Acts 7:47; Exod 30:7; Exod 25:30
2:5 1 Chr 16:25; Exod 15:11; Ps 135:5
2:6 Acts 7:49; 2 Chr 6:18; 1 Kgs 8:27
2:7 Exod 31:3-5; 1 Chr 22:15,16; 1 Kgs 7:14
2:8 Rev 18:12; 1 Kgs 5:6; 1 Kgs 10:11
2:9 2 Chr 2:5; 2 Chr 7:21; 1 Kgs 9:8
2:10 1 Kgs 5:11; Luke 10:7; Rom 13:7,8
2:11 2 Chr 9:8; 1 Kgs 10:9; Deut 7:7,8
2:12 Luke 1:68; 1 Pet 1:3; Ps 33:6
2:13 2 Chr 4:16
2:14 2 Chr 2:7; 1 Kgs 7:13,14; Exod 31:3,4
2:15 2 Chr 2:10; 1 Kgs 5:11
2:16 Acts 9:36; Acts 10:32; Josh 19:46

2:1 *a house for the name of the LORD and a house for his kingship* The temple came first, and Chronicles says very little about the palace. In the Bible a name stands for the person himself. God would put His name there, making Himself known and meeting His people there (Deut 12:5).
2:2 *seventy thousand men, burden bearers* Verses 17-18 tell us these workers were foreigners living in the land. This was a huge project, and Solomon planned it carefully. Good work for God still takes planning.
2:3 *Hiram the king of Tyre* Tyre was the great Phoenician seaport north of Israel. Hiram had sent cedars for David's palace (1 Chr 14:1).
2:4 *the continual row* The bread of the presence, kept on a gold table before God. With incense, daily burnt offerings, Sabbaths, new moons and feasts, worship was Israel's calling: "this is on Israel forever."
2:6 *the heavens and the heavens of the heavens do not contain Him* Solomon wanted the building to fit the God it was for, but he knew no building could. He says it again at the dedication (6:18). The richest king on earth still asked, "who am I?" God does not need our buildings or our work (Acts 17:24-25). He lets us serve Him because He is gracious.
2:10 *to the woodcutters, to those who cut the timber* Solomon paid generously and honestly. 1 Kings 5:11 describes a yearly payment for Hiram's household, which seems to be a different payment from this one for the workers. Christians who work for the Lord should be the most honest people in any deal.
2:11 *Because the LORD loves His people, He has given you as king over them* Striking words from a Gentile king, who also blessed the God "who made the heavens and the earth." We don't know whether Hiram truly turned to the LORD or was being a polite trading partner. But what he said was true. A good king is a gift of God's love for His people.
2:14 *the son of a woman from the daughters of Dan* 1 Kings 7:13-14 says his mother was a widow of the tribe of Naphtali. She may have been of Dan by birth and lived in Naphtali's land, or been widowed in Naphtali and later married a man of Tyre. Scripture does not say which. Huram-abi recalls Bezalel and Oholiab, the tabernacle craftsmen (Exod 31:1-6). God values skilled hands.
2:16 *as rafts on the sea to Joppa* Joppa was the seaport about 35 miles west of Jerusalem. After the exile, cedar came the same way for the second temple (Ezra 3:7). The Chronicler's first readers were doing the work their fathers had done.

take it up ***to*** Jerusalem." **17** And Solomon counted all the men, the sojourners who ***were*** in the land of Israel, after the census with which David his father had counted them; and they were found ***to be*** one hundred fifty thousand and three thousand six hundred. **18** And he made of them seventy thousand burden bearers and eighty thousand stonecutters in the hill country, and three thousand six hundred overseers to make the people work.

2 CHRONICLES 3

Solomon Builds the Temple

1 And Solomon (Shelomo) began to build the house of the LORD in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) on the mountain of Moriah (Moriya), where He had appeared to David his father, which he had prepared in the place of David, on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. **2** And he began to build in the second month, on the second ***day***, in the fourth year of his reign. **3** And these ***are what*** Solomon founded to build the house of God: the length, ***in*** cubits by the former measurement, ***was*** approximately 90 feet (sixty cubits), and the breadth approximately 30 feet (twenty cubits). **4** And the porch which ***was*** on the front, ***its*** length on the front of the breadth of the house ***was*** approximately 30 feet (twenty cubits), and the height approximately 180 feet (a hundred and twenty ***cubits***); and he overlaid it within ***with*** pure gold. **5** And the great house he covered ***with*** timber of cypresses, and he covered it ***with*** good gold, and he put up on it palm trees and chains. **6** And he overlaid the house ***with*** precious stone for splendor; and the gold ***was*** gold of Parvaim (Parvayim). **7** And he covered the house, the beams, the thresholds, and its walls and its doors, ***with*** gold; and he engraved cherubim on the walls.

The Holy of Holies

8 And he made the house of the holy of holies: its length, on the front of the breadth of the house, ***was*** approximately 30 feet (twenty cubits), and its breadth approximately 30 feet (twenty cubits); and he covered it ***with*** good gold, to approximately 45,000 pounds (six hundred talents). **9** And the weight for the nails ***was*** approximately 20 ounces (fifty shekels) of gold; and the upper rooms he covered ***with*** gold. **10** And he made in the house of the holy of holies two cherubim, a work of castings, and they overlaid them ***with*** gold. **11** And the wings of the cherubim, their length ***was*** approximately 30 feet (twenty cubits): the wing of the one, approximately 7.5 feet (five cubits), ***was*** touching the wall of the house, and the other wing, approximately 7.5 feet (five cubits), ***was*** touching the wing of the other cherub. **12** And the wing of the one cherub, approximately 7.5 feet (five cubits), ***was*** touching the wall of the house, and the other wing, approximately 7.5 feet (five cubits), ***was*** clinging to the wing of the other cherub. **13** The wings of these cherubim ***were*** spreading out approximately 30 feet (twenty cubits); and they ***were*** standing on their feet, and their faces ***were*** toward the house. **14** And he made the veil ***of*** blue and purple and crimson and fine linen, and he put up cherubim on it.

The Two Pillars

15 And he made before the house two pillars, approximately 52.5 feet (thirty and five cubits) ***in*** length, and the capital which ***was*** on its top approximately 7.5 feet (five cubits). **16** And he made chains in the inner room and put ***them*** on

2:17 1 Chr 22:2; 2 Chr 2:2; 2 Chr 8:7,8
3:1 1 Chr 21:18; Gen 22:2,14; 1 Kgs 6:1-14
3:2 1 Kgs 6:1
3:3 1 Kgs 6:2,3; 1 Chr 28:11-19
3:4 John 10:23; Acts 3:11; Acts 5:12
3:5 1 Kgs 6:15-17,21,22
3:6 1 Chr 29:2,8; Isa 54:11,12; Rev 21:18-21
3:7 1 Kgs 6:20-22,30; Exod 26:29; Ezek 7:20
3:8 Heb 9:3; Exod 26:33; 1 Kgs 6:19,20
3:10 1 Kgs 6:23-28
3:13 Exod 25:20
3:14 Heb 9:3; Matt 27:51; Heb 10:20
3:15 1 Kgs 7:15-24; Jer 52:20-23
3:16 1 Kgs 7:20; 1 Kgs 6:21

2:17 *the sojourners who were in the land of Israel* A sojourner was a foreigner living among Israel, many of them from the Canaanite peoples left in the land (8:7-8). Chronicles gives 3,600 overseers here and 250 chiefs in 8:10. Kings gives 3,300 and 550 (1 Kgs 5:16; 9:23). Both total 3,850, counting the ranks differently. A temple built by many nations for the one true God is a small picture of the house of living stones God is building now (Eph 2:19-22; 1 Pet 2:5).

3:1 *on the mountain of Moriah* The only place outside Genesis where Moriah is named. There God sent Abraham to offer Isaac and provided a ram in his place (Gen 22:2, 13), and many believe it was the same ridge. Here too David offered sacrifice on Ornan's threshing floor and the plague stopped (1 Chr 21; Ornan is Araunah in 2 Sam 24). The temple stood on ground marked twice by God's mercy through sacrifice. Nearly a thousand years later, just outside that city, God gave His own Son (Rom 8:32).

3:2 *in the fourth year of his reign* The second month is about April and May. By the dates this study follows, about 966 B.C., the 480th year after the exodus (1 Kgs 6:1).

3:3 *in cubits by the former measurement* A cubit was elbow to fingertip, about 18 inches. "Former" points to the older, longer cubit, a sign the writer lived in a later age. The house was about twice the size of the tabernacle. It was not a hall for crowds, who gathered in the courts. It was God's dwelling, where only the priests went in.

3:4 *the height approximately 180 feet* A hundred and twenty cubits would make a tall tower over a building only thirty cubits high (1 Kgs 6:2). Some old Greek and Syriac copies read twenty, and many think a copyist's error crept in. Others think the porch really was a tower. I take the text as we have it and admit the question is open.

3:7 *he engraved cherubim on the walls* Cherubim are a high order of angels who guard God's holiness and surround His throne (Gen 3:24; Ezek 10). "Gold of Parvaim" (3:6) probably names a place known for fine gold. All this beauty was for the King of kings, a picture on earth of God's glory in heaven (Heb 8:5).

3:8 *the house of the holy of holies* The inner room was a perfect cube, twenty cubits each way (1 Kgs 6:20). Only the high priest entered, once a year on the Day of Atonement, with blood (Lev 16). The New Jerusalem is a cube too (Rev 21:16), and many see the whole eternal city as God's holy of holies, where His people "will see His face" (Rev 22:4).

3:10 *two cherubim, a work of castings* Each stood ten cubits tall (1 Kgs 6:23), and their wings reached wall to wall over the ark, which had its own small cherubim on the mercy seat (Exod 25:18-22). God is the One enthroned above the cherubim (1 Chr 13:6). The holy of holies was His throne room on earth.

3:14 *he made the veil* A heavy curtain between the holy place and the holy of holies, a constant message that sinful people cannot simply walk into a holy God's presence. Kings also speaks of olive wood doors (1 Kgs 6:31-32), so the temple seems to have had both. When Jesus died, the veil of the temple of His day was torn from top to bottom (Matt 27:51), and now we enter by His blood, through His flesh (Heb 10:19-20). What the veil kept closed, Christ opened.

3:15 *two pillars, approximately 52.5 feet in length* Thirty-five cubits here, eighteen for each pillar in 1 Kings 7:15 and Jeremiah 52:21. A common explanation is that Chronicles gives the two together, while Kings gives each one. Others think a number was miscopied. Either way they were huge hollow bronze columns.

the top of the pillars; and he made a hundred pomegranates and put ***them*** on the chains. **17** And he set up the pillars on the front of the temple, one on the right and one on the left; and he called the name of the right ***one*** Jachin (Yakhin), and the name of the left ***one*** Boaz.

2 CHRONICLES 4

The Altar, the Sea and the Lavers

1 And he made an altar of bronze: its length ***was*** approximately 30 feet (twenty cubits), and its breadth approximately 30 feet (twenty cubits), and its height approximately 15 feet (ten cubits). **2** And he made the sea, cast, approximately 15 feet (ten by the cubit) from its brim to its brim, round all around, and its height approximately 7.5 feet (five by the cubit); and a line of approximately 45 feet (thirty by the cubit) would go around it all around. **3** And the likeness of oxen ***was*** under it, all around, all around, surrounding it, ten in approximately 18 inches (a cubit), encircling the sea all around; the oxen ***were*** two rows, cast in its casting. **4** It ***was*** standing on twelve oxen: three turning northward, and three turning westward, and three turning southward, and three turning eastward; and the sea ***was*** on them above, and all their hindquarters ***were*** inward. **5** And its thickness ***was*** approximately 3 inches (a handbreadth), and its brim ***was*** like the work of the brim of a cup, a blossom of lily; holding, it would contain approximately 18,000 gallons (three thousand baths). **6** And he made ten lavers, and he put five on the right and five on the left, to wash in them; the work of the burnt offering they would rinse in them; and the sea ***was*** for the priests to wash in. **7** And he made the lampstands of gold, ten, according to their ordinance, and he put ***them*** in the temple, five on the right and five on the left. **8** And he made ten tables and placed ***them*** in the temple, five on the right and five on the left; and he made a hundred bowls of gold. **9** And he made the court of the priests and the great enclosure, and doors for the enclosure, and their doors he overlaid ***with*** bronze. **10** And the sea he put on the right side, eastward, opposite ***the*** south.

Huram-abi's Bronze Work

11 And Hiram (Churam) made the pots and the shovels and the bowls. And Hiram finished doing the work which he did for King Solomon (Shelomo) on the house of God: **12** two pillars, and the bowls and the capitals on the top of the two pillars, and the two networks to cover the two bowls of the capitals which ***were*** on the top of the pillars; **13** and the four hundred pomegranates for the two networks, two rows of pomegranates for the one network, to cover the two bowls of the capitals which ***were*** on the face of the pillars. **14** And the stands he made, and the lavers he made on the stands; **15** the one sea, and the twelve oxen under it; **16** and the pots and the shovels and the forks and all their utensils Huram-abi (Churam-Avi) made for King Solomon for the house of the LORD, ***of*** polished bronze. **17** In the plain of the Jordan (Yarden) the king cast them, in the thickness of the ground, between Succoth (Sukot) and Zeredah (Tsereda). **18** And Solomon made all these utensils in abundance, exceedingly, for the weight of the bronze was not searched out.

The Gold Furnishings

19 And Solomon made all the utensils which ***were for*** the house of God, and the altar of the gold, and the tables, and on them the bread of the presence; **20** and the lampstands and their lamps, to burn them according to the ordinance before

3:17 1 Kgs 7:21
4:1 Ezek 43:13-17; 2 Chr 1:5; Exod 27:1-8
4:2 Exod 30:18-21; 1 Kgs 7:23; Zech 13:1
4:3 1 Kgs 7:24-26; Ezek 1:10; Ezek 10:14
4:4 Matt 16:18; Eph 2:20; Rev 21:14
4:5 1 Kgs 7:26
4:6 Rev 1:6; 1 Kgs 7:38,40; Exod 30:18-21
4:7 Matt 5:15; 1 Kgs 7:49; Exod 25:31-40
4:8 1 Kgs 7:48; Exod 25:23-30; Exod 37:10-16
4:9 1 Kgs 6:36; 1 Kgs 7:12
4:10 1 Kgs 7:39
4:11 1 Kgs 7:40,45
4:12 1 Kgs 7:41; 2 Chr 3:15-17
4:13 1 Kgs 7:20,42; Exod 28:33,34; Song 4:13
4:14 1 Kgs 7:27-43
4:16 2 Chr 2:13; 2 Chr 4:11; 1 Chr 28:17
4:17 1 Kgs 7:46
4:18 1 Kgs 7:47; 1 Chr 22:3,14; Jer 52:20
4:19 2 Chr 36:10,18; 1 Kgs 7:48-50; 2 Kgs 24:13
4:20 2 Chr 4:7; Exod 25:31-37; Exod 27:20,21

3:17 *Jachin, and the name of the left one Boaz* Jachin means He establishes, and Boaz most take to mean in Him is strength. Every worshiper passed between two bronze sermons, which also echoed God's promise to establish David's son (1 Chr 17:11-12). Our lives, families and churches stand only because God establishes them (Ps 127:1).
4:1 *he made an altar of bronze* About 30 feet square and 15 feet high, far larger than the tabernacle altar (Exod 27:1). The altar of burnt offering was the first thing a worshiper met, and its message was plain: without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness (Heb 9:22). The cross is the first place any sinner must come today.
4:2 *he made the sea, cast* A giant round bronze basin about 15 feet across. Some say a line of thirty cubits around a circle ten cubits across is a mistake in math. The width was probably taken across the flared rim and the line measured lower down. The text gives round numbers and is not in error.
4:3 *the likeness of oxen* 1 Kings 7:24 says gourds. The two Hebrew words look much alike, and many think a copyist confused them, or that the knobs combined both shapes. The twelve oxen beneath (4:4) may have stood for the twelve tribes.
4:5 *it would contain approximately 18,000 gallons* Three thousand baths here and two thousand in 1 Kings 7:26. A common explanation is normal load versus full capacity filled to the brim. Others think a number was miscopied.
4:6 *the sea was for the priests to wash in* Under the Law the priests washed before serving, or they would die (Exod 30:17-21). Those who come near a holy God must be cleansed. Today Christ cleanses us through "the washing of regeneration" (Titus 3:5) and forgives and cleanses when we confess (1 John 1:9).
4:7 *the lampstands of gold, ten* The tabernacle had one lampstand and one table (Exod 25:23-40), and Solomon multiplied them. The holy place had little daylight. Jesus said, "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12) and "I am the bread of life" (John 6:35). Scripture does not tie these pieces to Him directly, but the pictures fit His own words.
4:9 *the court of the priests and the great enclosure* The inner court held the priests and the altar, and the great court held the people. Each step inward was closer to God and more restricted. In Christ the way into God's presence is open to every believer (Heb 10:19-22).
4:17 *In the plain of the Jordan the king cast them* The thick clay of the Jordan valley was good for molds for huge castings.
4:18 *the weight of the bronze was not searched out* Much of it came from David's victories over Hadadezer (1 Chr 18:8). What David won in battle, Solomon used for worship. Work done for God in one generation often bears fruit in the next.
4:19 *the altar of the gold* The altar of incense before the veil (Exod 30:1-10). Its rising smoke pictured the prayers of God's people (Ps 141:2; Rev 8:3-4).

the inner room, ***of*** refined gold; **21** and the blossom and the lamps and the tongs ***of*** gold; it ***was*** the perfection of gold; **22** and the snuffers and the bowls and the pans and the fire pans ***of*** refined gold; and the entrance of the house, its inner doors to the holy of holies, and the doors of the house, of the temple, ***of*** gold.

2 CHRONICLES 5

The Ark Brought into the Temple

1 And all the work which Solomon (Shelomo) did for the house of the LORD was complete. And Solomon brought in the holy things of David his father, and the silver and the gold and all the utensils he put in the treasuries of the house of God. **2** Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel (Yisra'el) and all the heads of the tribes, the leaders of the fathers of the sons of Israel, to Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD from the city of David; it ***is*** Zion (Tsiyon). **3** And every man of Israel assembled to the king at the feast; it ***was*** the seventh month. **4** And all the elders of Israel came, and the Levites lifted up the ark. **5** And they brought up the ark and the tent of meeting and all the utensils of holiness which ***were*** in the tent; the priests, the Levites, brought them up. **6** And King Solomon and all the congregation of Israel who were gathered to him before the ark ***were*** sacrificing sheep and cattle which could not be counted and could not be numbered for multitude. **7** And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the LORD to its place, to the inner room of the house, to the holy of holies, to under the wings of the cherubim. **8** And the cherubim were spreading out wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubim covered over the ark and over its poles from above. **9** And the poles were long, and the heads of the poles were seen from the ark on the front of the inner room, and they were not seen outside; and it has been there to this day. **10** There was nothing in the ark except the two tablets which Moses (Moshe) put ***there*** at Horeb (Chorev), where the LORD made ***a covenant*** with the sons of Israel when they came out from Egypt (Mitsrayim).

The Glory Fills the House

11 And it was, when the priests came out from the holy place (for all the priests who were found had consecrated themselves; there was no keeping to divisions), **12** and the Levites, the singers, all of them, Asaph (Asaf), Heman, Jeduthun (Yedutun), and their sons and their brothers, clothed ***in*** fine linen, with cymbals and with harps and lyres, ***were*** standing east of the altar, and with them a hundred and twenty priests blowing on trumpets; **13** and it was, as one, for the trumpeters and for the singers to make one voice heard, to praise and to give thanks to the LORD; and as ***they*** lifted up a voice with trumpets and with cymbals and with instruments of song, and in praising the LORD, "For ***He is*** good, for His steadfast love ***is*** forever," and the house was filled ***with*** a cloud, the house of the LORD, **14** and the priests were not able to stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled the house of God.

4:21 2 Chr 4:5; Exod 25:31-40; Exod 37:20
4:22 Exod 37:23; 1 Kgs 7:50; 2 Kgs 12:13
5:1 1 Kgs 7:51; 1 Chr 22:14; 1 Chr 26:26-28
5:2 2 Sam 6:12; 2 Chr 1:4; 1 Kgs 8:1-11
5:3 1 Kgs 8:2; 2 Chr 7:8-10; Lev 23:34-36
5:4 Josh 3:6; 1 Kgs 8:3; Num 4:15
5:5 2 Chr 1:3; 1 Kgs 8:4,6
5:6 2 Sam 6:13; 1 Kgs 8:5; 1 Chr 16:1,2
5:7 Heb 9:4; Exod 37:6-9; 1 Kgs 6:23-28
5:8 Exod 25:12-15; Exod 37:3-5; Num 4:6
5:9 1 Kgs 8:8,9
5:10 Heb 9:4; Heb 8:7; Heb 8:8
5:11 2 Chr 29:5,15,34; 2 Chr 30:15,17-20; Exod 19:10,14,15
5:12 1 Chr 15:24; 2 Chr 29:25; 1 Chr 23:5,30
5:13 2 Chr 7:3; Ezra 3:11; Jer 33:11
5:14 Rev 15:8; Exod 40:35; 2 Chr 7:2

4:21 *it was the perfection of gold* Bronze outside, pure gold within. The farther in, the more precious the materials. When the second temple was founded, old men who remembered this one wept (Ezra 3:12), yet God promised the latter house greater glory (Hag 2:9). Many see that fulfilled when Jesus walked in it. God's glory is not in gold but in His presence.
5:1 *brought in the holy things of David his father* The building took seven years (1 Kgs 6:38). David had set apart silver, gold and utensils from his victories (1 Chr 18:11; 26:26). He never saw the temple, but his gifts were there and his songs would be sung in it. Many of us will labor for things we will not live to see finished. God keeps every gift given in faith.
5:2 *from the city of David; it is Zion* The city of David, also called Zion, was the older southern part of Jerusalem. The temple stood just north on higher ground, so the ark went "up." Its lid, the mercy seat, was where God said He would meet with Israel (Exod 25:22).
5:3 *it was the seventh month* The Feast of Booths, also called Tabernacles, in the fall, when Israel lived in shelters for a week to remember God's care in the wilderness (Lev 23:33-43).
5:4 *the Levites lifted up the ark* The Levites were the tribe set apart to serve at the sanctuary, and the priests were Aaron's family within it. This time the ark was carried God's way, on shoulders and not on a cart. David had learned that lesson when Uzzah died (1 Chr 13:9-10; 15:13-15).
5:6 *which could not be counted and could not be numbered for multitude* The tabernacle from Gibeon was retired and its holy things stored in the temple (5:5). All along the way joy overflowed in worship.
5:9 *it has been there to this day* The Chronicler was copying an older record written while the temple stood. By his day Solomon's temple had been burned and the ark was gone.
5:10 *There was nothing in the ark except the two tablets* Horeb is Mount Sinai. Hebrews 9:4 says the ark once held the jar of manna and Aaron's rod as well (Exod 16:33-34; Num 17:10). By Solomon's time only the tablets were left, and Scripture does not say what became of the others. At the center of Israel's worship lay God's Word. His presence and His Word always go together.
5:11 *there was no keeping to divisions* David had divided the priests into twenty-four groups that took turns (1 Chr 24). On this day every priest served. The Levite singers of 5:12 were David's music ministry (1 Chr 25), the same worship the returned exiles were rebuilding (Ezra 3:10-11).
5:13 *For He is good, for His steadfast love is forever* Hundreds of voices sounded as one, singing words that run through Chronicles and the Psalms (Ps 136:1). Steadfast love is hesed, God's loyal covenant love.
5:13 *the house was filled with a cloud* The cloud of the LORD's glory, the same cloud that filled the tabernacle when Moses finished it (Exod 40:34-35). God was not summoned by music, as if worship could control Him. But He was pleased to come as His people honored Him with one voice.
5:14 *the priests were not able to stand to minister* When God shows up, human work stops. Real worship is not about how well we perform. It is about God being present. Today the Holy Spirit lives in every believer and in the church as God's temple (1 Cor 3:16; 6:19). Do we come to worship expecting to meet Him, or only expecting a program?

2 CHRONICLES 6

Solomon Blesses the Assembly

1 Then Solomon (Shelomo) said, "The LORD has said ***that He would*** dwell in the thick darkness. **2** And I, I have built a house of loftiness for You, and an established place for Your dwelling forever." **3** And the king turned his face around and blessed all the assembly of Israel (Yisra'el), and all the assembly of Israel ***was*** standing. **4** And he said, "Blessed ***be*** the LORD, the God of Israel, who spoke with His mouth with David my father, and with His hands has fulfilled ***it***, saying, **5** 'Since the day that I brought out My people from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim), I have not chosen a city from all the tribes of Israel to build a house for My name to be there, and I have not chosen a man to be ruler over My people Israel. **6** And I have chosen Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) for My name to be there, and I have chosen David to be over My people Israel.' **7** And it was with the heart of David my father to build a house for the name of the LORD, the God of Israel. **8** And the LORD said to David my father, 'Because it was with your heart to build a house for My name, you did well that it was with your heart. **9** Only you shall not build the house, but your son who comes out from your loins, he shall build the house for My name.' **10** And the LORD has established His word which He spoke; and I have risen in place of David my father, and I sit on the throne of Israel, just as the LORD spoke, and I have built the house for the name of the LORD, the God of Israel. **11** And I have put there the ark, where the covenant of the LORD ***is***, which He made with the sons of Israel."

Solomon's Prayer of Dedication

12 And he stood before the altar of the LORD in front of all the assembly of Israel, and he spread out his palms. **13** For Solomon had made a platform of bronze and had put it in the midst of the enclosure; its length ***was*** approximately 7.5 feet (five cubits), and its breadth approximately 7.5 feet (five cubits), and its height approximately 4.5 feet (three cubits); and he stood on it, and he knelt on his knees in front of all the assembly of Israel, and he spread out his palms toward the heavens. **14** And he said, "O LORD, the God of Israel, there is no God like You in the heavens and on the earth, keeping the covenant and the steadfast love for Your servants who walk before You with all their heart; **15** who have kept for Your servant David my father what You spoke to him; and You spoke with Your mouth, and with Your hand You have fulfilled ***it***, as ***it is*** this day. **16** And now, O LORD, the God of Israel, keep for Your servant David my father what You spoke to him, saying, 'A man shall not be cut off for you from before Me, sitting on the throne of Israel, if only your sons guard their way, to walk in My law just as you have walked before Me.' **17** And now, O LORD, the God of Israel, let Your word be confirmed which You spoke to Your servant, to David. **18** For will God really dwell with mankind on the earth? Look, the heavens and the heavens of the heavens do not contain You; how much less this house which I have built! **19** And turn to the prayer of Your servant and to his supplication, O LORD my God, to listen to the cry and to the prayer which Your servant is praying before You, **20** for Your eyes to be open toward this house day and night, toward the place where You have said to put Your name there, to listen to the prayer which Your servant prays toward this place. **21** And listen to the supplications of Your servant and of Your people Israel, which they pray toward this place; and You, may You hear from the place of Your dwelling, from the heavens; and hear, and forgive.

Seven Requests

22 If a man sins against his neighbor, and he lays an oath on

6:1 Exod 20:21; 1 Kgs 8:12-21; Heb 12:18
6:2 2 Chr 2:4-6; 2 Sam 7:13; 1 Kgs 8:13
6:3 1 Kgs 8:14; 2 Chr 29:29; Num 6:23-27
6:4 Luke 1:68; Eph 1:3; Luke 1:69
6:5 2 Sam 7:6,7; 1 Kgs 8:16; Exod 20:24
6:6 John 4:20; 2 Chr 12:13; 1 Chr 28:4
6:7 1 Kgs 5:3; 1 Chr 17:1; 2 Sam 7:2,3
6:8 1 Kgs 8:18-21; Mark 14:8; 2 Cor 8:12
6:9 2 Sam 7:12,13; 1 Chr 17:4,11,12
6:10 2 Chr 1:1; 1 Kgs 2:12; 1 Kgs 3:6,7
6:11 Heb 9:4; 2 Chr 5:7,10; Exod 40:20
6:12 Exod 9:33; Job 11:13; Ps 63:4
6:13 Neh 8:4; 1 Kgs 8:54; Ps 95:6
6:14 Luke 1:72; Exod 15:11; Deut 7:9
6:15 1 Chr 22:9,10; 2 Sam 7:12; 1 Kgs 8:24
6:16 2 Chr 7:18; 1 Kgs 2:4; Ps 132:12
6:17 2 Chr 6:4,14; Exod 24:10; Isa 41:17
6:18 Acts 7:49; Isa 66:1; 2 Chr 2:6
6:19 1 Kgs 8:28; Ps 74:20; Ps 130:2
6:20 Ps 34:15; 2 Chr 16:9; 1 Kgs 8:29,30
6:21 Isa 43:25; Mic 7:18; Dan 9:19
6:22 Exod 22:11; 1 Kgs 8:31,32; Lev 5:1

6:1 *He would dwell in the thick darkness* God came to Sinai in a thick cloud (Exod 19:9; 20:21), and now the cloud filled the windowless holy of holies. The darkness is not evil. It speaks of God's holiness and mystery. No sinful person can look on Him and live (Exod 33:20).
6:4 *who spoke with His mouth with David my father, and with His hands has fulfilled it* God's mouth promised, and God's hands did it.
6:6 *I have chosen Jerusalem for My name to be there, and I have chosen David* Chronicles stresses both choices. The returned exiles needed to know the exile had not canceled God's choice of Jerusalem and of David's line.
6:8 *you did well that it was with your heart* God sometimes says no to good desires. That does not mean the desire was wrong. David's longing was honored, and his son fulfilled it.
6:13 *he knelt on his knees in front of all the assembly of Israel* Only Chronicles tells of the bronze platform. The greatest king in the world climbed up where everyone could see him, and then knelt. He raised himself up so everyone could see him bow. A leader's highest place is on his knees before God.
6:14 *there is no God like You in the heavens and on the earth* Real prayer starts with God, not with our list. A covenant is a binding agreement in which God commits Himself to promises, and His hesed, His loyal love, is how He keeps them.
6:16 *to walk in My law* 1 Kings 8:25 says "walk before Me." Chronicles shows what walking before God means: living by His Word. Each king's blessing depended on obedience, but the everlasting throne finally rests on Jesus, to whom God gives "the throne of David His father" (Luke 1:32).
6:17 *let Your word be confirmed* Solomon prayed God's promise back to Him. When we pray what God has already said, we pray with confidence.
6:18 *For will God really dwell with mankind on the earth* Chronicles adds "with mankind." God is everywhere present (Ps 139:7-10) and needed no house. The temple was a gift of grace, where the infinite God chose to meet His people. The final answer to Solomon's question is yes: "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14), and one day God's tabernacle will be with men forever (Rev 21:3).
6:21 *hear, and forgive* The people would pray toward the temple, but God would hear from heaven. The first thing Solomon asked was forgiveness. That is still our deepest need. We do not pray toward a building now. We pray through a Person, Jesus our High Priest (Heb 4:14-16).
6:22 *before Your altar in this house* The first of seven cases: a dispute human judges could not settle, settled by an oath before God (compare Exod 22:10-11). When human courts cannot see the truth, God can.

him to make him swear, and he comes ***and*** swears before Your altar in this house, **23** and You, may You hear from the heavens, and act, and judge Your servants, to repay the wicked, to put his way on his head, and to justify the righteous, to give to him according to his righteousness. **24** And if Your people Israel are struck down before an enemy because they sin against You, and they turn back and praise Your name, and pray and make supplication before You in this house, **25** and You, may You hear from the heavens, and forgive the sin of Your people Israel, and bring them back to the ground which You gave to them and to their fathers. **26** When the heavens are shut up and there is no rain because they sin against You, and they pray toward this place and praise Your name, ***and*** from their sin they turn back because You afflict them, **27** and You, may You hear ***in*** the heavens, and forgive the sin of Your servants and of Your people Israel, for You teach them the good way in which they shall walk; and give rain on Your land which You have given to Your people for an inheritance. **28** Famine, if it is in the land, pestilence, if it is, blight and mildew, locust and grasshopper, if it is, if its enemies besiege it in the land of its gates, any plague and any sickness, **29** any prayer, any supplication which there is from any man and from all Your people Israel, who know each his own plague and his own pain, and he spreads out his palms toward this house, **30** and You, may You hear from the heavens, the established place of Your dwelling, and forgive, and give to the man according to all his ways, whose heart You know (for You, You alone, know the heart of the sons of mankind), **31** so that they may fear You, to walk in Your ways all the days that they live on the face of the ground which You gave to our fathers. **32** And also to the foreigner who himself ***is*** not of Your people Israel, and he comes from a distant land for the sake of Your great name and Your mighty hand and Your outstretched arm, and they come and pray toward this house, **33** and You, may You hear from the heavens, from the established place of Your dwelling, and do according to all that the foreigner calls to You ***for***, so that all the peoples of the earth may know Your name, and to fear You like Your people Israel, and to know that Your name has been called on this house which I have built. **34** When Your people go out to battle against its enemies by the way that You send them, and they pray to You ***in*** the direction of this city which You have chosen and the house which I have built for Your name, **35** and may You hear from the heavens their prayer and their supplication, and do justice for them. **36** When they sin against You (for there is no man who does not sin), and You are angry with them and give them up before an enemy, and their captors carry them captive to a land distant or near, **37** and they bring ***it*** back to their heart in the land where they have been carried captive, and they turn back and make supplication to You in the land of their captivity, saying, 'We have sinned, we have done perversely, and we have acted wickedly,' **38** and they turn back to You with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their captivity where they have carried them captive, and they pray ***in*** the direction of their land which You gave to their fathers, and the city which You have chosen, and toward the house which I have built for Your name, **39** and may You hear from the heavens, from the established place of Your dwelling, their prayer and their supplications, and do justice for them, and forgive Your people who have sinned against You.

Arise, O LORD, to Your Resting Place

40 Now, my God, let Your eyes be open, please, and Your ears attentive to the prayer of this place. **41** And now arise, O LORD God, to Your resting place, You and the ark of Your strength. May Your priests, O LORD God, be clothed ***with*** salvation, and may Your godly ones rejoice in the good. **42** O LORD God, do not turn away the face of Your anointed;

6:23 Jer 51:56; Rom 2:9; Prov 17:15
6:24 Lev 26:17,37; Deut 28:25,48; Josh 7:8
6:25 Ezra 1:1-6; Ps 106:40-47; Jer 33:6-13
6:26 Luke 4:25; Rev 11:6; Lev 26:19
6:27 Ps 94:12; 1 Kgs 8:35,36; Ps 25:4,5,8,12
6:28 2 Chr 20:5-13; Lev 26:16,25,26; Deut 28:21-61
6:29 Ps 33:12,13; Ps 50:15; Ps 91:15
6:30 Rev 2:23; 1 Chr 28:9; Ps 18:20-26
6:31 Exod 20:20; 1 Sam 12:24; Job 28:28
6:32 Matt 12:42; Isa 56:3-7; John 12:20
6:33 1 Sam 17:46; 2 Kgs 19:19; Ps 22:27
6:34 2 Chr 20:4; Deut 20:1-4; Josh 1:2-5
6:35 Dan 9:17-19; Isa 37:21-36; Ps 9:3,4
6:36 Eccl 7:20; James 3:2; 1 John 1:8-10
6:37 Lev 26:40-45; Deut 4:29,30; Deut 30:1-3
6:38 Deut 30:2-6; Jer 29:12-14; Hos 14:1-4
6:39 2 Chr 6:35; Zech 1:15,16; Ps 25:18
6:40 2 Chr 7:15; Ps 17:1; Ps 7:3
6:41 1 Chr 28:2; Neh 9:25; Ps 132:8-10,16
6:42 Acts 13:34; Isa 55:3; Ps 132:1

6:25 *bring them back to the ground which You gave to them and to their fathers* Defeat in battle was a warned result of unfaithfulness (Deut 28:25). The pattern runs through this prayer: sin, discipline, turning back, prayer, forgiveness, restoration. God's discipline is meant to bring His people home.
6:27 *teach them the good way in which they shall walk* Drought in a land that lived on rain was life or death (Deut 11:16-17). Real repentance includes learning. It is not only feeling sorry. It is being taught by God to walk a new way.
6:30 *You, You alone, know the heart of the sons of mankind* God answers knowing exactly who is praying and why. The goal was that they would fear Him and walk in His ways (6:31). Answered prayer should lead us to honor Him more, not to forget Him once the trouble is past.
6:32 *to the foreigner who himself is not of Your people Israel* One of the most beautiful verses in the Old Testament. God's plan was always to bless all the families of the earth through Abraham (Gen 12:3). The temple was never a private club. Isaiah called it a house of prayer for all peoples, and Jesus quoted him when He cleansed the temple (Isa 56:7; Mark 11:17). Through Jesus the door is open to every nation (Eph 2:11-13).
6:34 *by the way that You send them* That is the condition: a battle God sent them to fight, not one they chose for their own glory. God's people were to depend on Him, not on horses and chariots (Ps 20:7).
6:36 *for there is no man who does not sin* Solomon knew human nature (Rom 3:23). The captivity Moses warned of (Lev 26:33; Deut 28:64) is the hardest case, and it came true when Jerusalem fell in 586 B.C.
6:37 *We have sinned, we have done perversely, and we have acted wickedly* In exile Daniel prayed almost these words (Dan 9:5), and God moved Cyrus to let the Jews go home in 538 B.C. (36:22-23). The Chronicler's first readers were living proof that God heard this prayer. No sin is so great that God will not hear the one who truly turns back to Him.
6:41 *arise, O LORD God, to Your resting place* Chronicles closes the prayer with words from Psalm 132:8-10, a psalm about David bringing the ark to Zion. After centuries of moving, the ark had a resting place, and Solomon invited God to take His throne there.
6:42 *do not turn away the face of Your anointed* "Anointed" is mashiach in Hebrew, our word Messiah. Here it is Solomon. His last plea rested not on his goodness but on God's steadfast love to David. Isaiah speaks of David's sure mercies (Isa 55:3), and Paul shows them fulfilled in the risen Jesus (Acts 13:34). Every prayer for mercy finally rests on God's promise to David's greater Son.

remember the steadfast loves of David Your servant."

2 CHRONICLES 7

Fire from Heaven

1 And as Solomon (Shelomo) finished praying, then the fire
came down from the heavens, and it consumed the burnt
offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the LORD filled
the house. **2** And the priests were not able to go into the
house of the LORD, for the glory of the LORD had filled the
house of the LORD. **3** And all the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) ***were***
seeing as the fire came down and the glory of the LORD ***was***
on the house, and they knelt ***with*** faces to the ground on the
pavement, and they bowed down, and ***they*** gave thanks to
the LORD: "For ***He is*** good, for His steadfast love ***is*** forever."
4 And the king and all the people ***were*** sacrificing sacrifice
before the LORD. **5** And King Solomon sacrificed the sacrifice
of the cattle, twenty-two thousand, and sheep, a hundred
and twenty thousand; and the king and all the people dedicated the house of God. **6** And the priests ***were*** standing at
their duties, and the Levites with the instruments of the song
of the LORD which David the king had made to give thanks to
the LORD, "For His steadfast love ***is*** forever," when David
praised by their hand; and the priests ***were*** blowing trumpets
before them, and all Israel ***were*** standing. **7** And Solomon
consecrated the middle of the court which ***was*** before the
house of the LORD, for there he offered the burnt offerings
and the fat of the peace offerings; for the altar of bronze
which Solomon had made was not able to contain the burnt
offering and the grain offering and the fat. **8** And Solomon
held the feast at that time seven days, and all Israel with him,
a very great assembly, from Lebo-hamath (Levo-Chamat) to
the Wadi of Egypt (Mitsrayim). **9** And on the eighth day they
held a solemn assembly, for they had held the dedication of
the altar seven days, and the feast seven days. **10** And on the
twenty-third day of the seventh month he sent the people
away to their tents, joyful and good of heart over the good
which the LORD had done for David and for Solomon and for
Israel His people.

The LORD Answers Solomon

11 And Solomon finished the house of the LORD and the
house of the king; and all that came on the heart of Solomon
to do in the house of the LORD and in his own house, he made
successful. **12** And the LORD appeared to Solomon in the
night, and He said to him, "I have heard your prayer, and I
have chosen this place for Myself for a house of sacrifice.
13 If I shut up the heavens and there is no rain, and if I command the locust to devour the land, and if I send pestilence
among My people, **14** and My people, over whom My name is
called, humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and
turn from their evil ways, then I Myself will hear from the
heavens, and I will forgive their sin, and I will heal their land.
15 Now My eyes will be open, and My ears attentive, to the

7:1 1 Kgs 18:24,38; 1 Chr 21:26; Lev 9:23
7:2 2 Chr 5:14; Exod 24:17; Isa 6:5
7:3 2 Chr 5:13; 2 Chr 20:21; Exod 4:31
7:5 John 10:22; 2 Chr 1:6; 2 Chr 5:6
7:6 2 Chr 5:12; 1 Chr 15:16-21; 2 Chr 7:3
7:7 2 Chr 36:14; Num 16:37,38; 1 Kgs 8:64
7:8 Gen 15:18; 1 Kgs 8:65; Lev 23:34-43
7:9 Lev 23:36; Deut 16:8; Neh 8:18
7:10 1 Kgs 8:66; 2 Chr 29:36; 2 Chr 30:26
7:11 1 Kgs 9:1-9; 2 Chr 2:1; Eccl 2:4,10,11
7:12 Acts 10:31; 1 Kgs 9:2; 2 Chr 1:7
7:13 Rev 11:6; 2 Chr 6:26-28; Deut 11:17
7:14 James 4:9,10; 2 Chr 6:37-39; Isa 55:6,7
7:15 2 Chr 6:40; 2 Chr 6:20,40; Deut 11:12

7:1 *the fire came down from the heavens* Kings does not mention the fire. Chronicles does, because it shows God accepted the temple and its sacrifices. Fire from God fell on the first tabernacle offerings (Lev 9:24), on David's altar at this very place (1 Chr 21:26), and later on Elijah's altar (1 Kgs 18:38).
7:3 *they knelt with faces to the ground on the pavement* The people did not clap or cheer. They fell on their faces and gave thanks. Real worship begins with seeing who God is, and it ends in humble thanks for His goodness and steadfast love.
7:5 *twenty-two thousand, and sheep, a hundred and twenty thousand* Mostly peace offerings, sacrifices shared between God, the priests and the worshipers in a joyful fellowship meal (Lev 3; 7:11-15). With all Israel present for two weeks, this was a national feast. I take the numbers as written, as 1 Kings 8:63 gives them too.
7:7 *the altar of bronze which Solomon had made was not able to contain* So Solomon consecrated the middle of the courtyard for the overflow. Worship that day was bigger than the altar.
7:8 *from Lebo-hamath to the Wadi of Egypt* From the far north of the land to the far south. Seven days for the altar's dedication were followed by the Feast of Booths, with a solemn assembly on the eighth day (7:9; Lev 23:36).
7:10 *joyful and good of heart over the good which the LORD had done* They celebrated the LORD's goodness, not Solomon's building skill. When God's people truly meet Him, they leave glad.
7:11 *he made successful* A favorite word of the Chronicler. Again and again those who seek God prosper (26:5; 31:21). It does not mean easy riches. It means the work God gives you comes to its intended end. The two houses took twenty years (1 Kgs 9:10).
7:12 *a house of sacrifice* God answered by fire and now in words. The temple was a house of prayer (6:21), but sinners could come near only on the ground of a sacrifice God accepted. That points straight to Christ, whose one sacrifice opens the way for every prayer (Heb 10:12, 19-22).
7:13 *If I shut up the heavens and there is no rain* God says "I." These were not random disasters. Under the Sinai covenant He promised rain for obedience and warned of drought, locusts and disease for turning away (Lev 26; Deut 28). The trouble was discipline, and its purpose was to bring His people back. Verses 13-15 are found only in Chronicles.
7:14 *My people, over whom My name is called* First, what it meant then. This is Israel, God's covenant nation, in the land He gave them, with the temple where He put His name. Verse 14 is the key to the whole book: every time a king or the people humbled themselves and sought the LORD, He heard, and every time they turned away, trouble came. The Chronicler wanted the small, kingless community home from exile to know God's door was still open.
7:14 *humble themselves, and pray and seek My face and turn from their evil ways* Four things God asks. To humble oneself is to come down from pride (12:6-7; 32:26; 33:12-13). To seek His face is to want God Himself, not only His help. Turning from evil is repentance, and prayer without it is not what God asks.
7:14 *I will forgive their sin, and I will heal their land* He will hear, He will forgive the real problem, and He will heal the land, ending drought, locusts and plague. This is not a promise that any modern nation will prosper if enough Christians pray. I believe it stands for Israel's future (Deut 30:1-10; Rom 11:25-29). But the principle applies to us: God opposes the proud and gives grace to the humble (James 4:6-10), and He forgives and cleanses all who confess (1 John 1:9). Is there pride I need to lay down? Am I seeking His face, or only His hand?
7:15 *My eyes will be open, and My ears attentive, to the prayer of this place* God answers Solomon's words from 6:40 almost word for word. Solomon asked, and God said yes.

prayer of this place. **16** And now I have chosen and I have consecrated this house, for My name to be there forever; and My eyes and My heart will be there all the days. **17** And you, if you walk before Me just as David your father walked, and to do according to all that I have commanded you, and you keep My statutes and My judgments, **18** then I will establish the throne of your kingdom, just as I made ***a covenant*** with David your father, saying, 'There shall not be cut off for you a man ruling over Israel.'

A Warning Against Forsaking the LORD

19 And if you, you turn away and forsake My statutes and My commandments which I have set before you, and go and serve other gods and bow down to them, **20** then I will pluck them up from upon My ground which I have given to them; and this house which I have consecrated for My name I will throw away from before My face, and I will make it a proverb and a taunt among all the peoples. **21** And ***as for*** this house, which was exalted, everyone who passes by it will be appalled, and he will say, 'Why has the LORD done thus to this land and to this house?' **22** And they will say, 'Because they forsook the LORD, the God of their fathers, who brought them out from the land of Egypt, and they took hold of other gods, and they bowed down to them and served them; therefore He has brought on them all this calamity.'"

2 CHRONICLES 8

Solomon's Building and Labor

1 And it was at the end of twenty years, in which Solomon (Shelomo) built the house of the LORD and his own house, **2** and the cities which Hiram (Churam) had given to Solomon, Solomon built them, and he made the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) dwell there. **3** And Solomon went ***to*** Hamath-zobah (Chamat-Tsova), and he prevailed over it. **4** And he built Tadmor in the wilderness, and all the cities of storage which he built in Hamath (Chamat). **5** And he built Beth-horon (Bet-Choron) the Upper and Beth-horon the Lower, cities of fortification, ***with*** walls, double doors, and bars, **6** and Baalath (Ba'alat), and all the cities of storage which belonged to Solomon, and all the cities of the chariotry, and the cities of the horsemen, and all the desire of Solomon which he desired to build in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) and in the Lebanon (Levanon) and in all the land of his dominion. **7** All the people who remained of the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, who ***were*** not of Israel, **8** of their sons who remained after them in the land, whom the sons of Israel had not destroyed, Solomon brought them up for forced labor to this day. **9** And of the sons of Israel, whom Solomon did not make into slaves for his work, for they ***were*** men of war, and commanders of his officers, and commanders of his chariotry and of his horsemen, **10** and these ***were*** the commanders of the overseers who ***were*** King Solomon's, two hundred and fifty, who ruled over the people. **11** And the daughter of Pharaoh Solomon brought up from the city of David to the house which he had built for her; for he said, "A wife of mine shall not dwell in the house of David king of Israel, for they ***are*** holiness, to which the ark of the LORD has come."

Solomon Orders the Worship

12 Then Solomon offered up burnt offerings to the LORD on the altar of the LORD which he had built before the porch,

7:16 John 4:20; Deut 12:21; Deut 16:11
7:17 John 14:21; Deut 28:1-14; 1 Kgs 2:3
7:18 2 Chr 6:16; 2 Sam 7:13-16; Ps 89:28-40
7:19 Lev 26:14,33-46; Deut 28:15,36,37-68; 1 Sam 12:25
7:20 Deut 28:37; 2 Kgs 17:20; Jer 45:4
7:21 Jer 22:8,9,28; 1 Kgs 9:8; 2 Chr 29:8
7:22 Judg 2:12,13; Jer 1:16; Lam 2:16,17
8:1 1 Kgs 9:10
8:2 1 Kgs 9:11-18
8:3 Num 13:21; Num 34:8; 2 Sam 8:3
8:4 1 Kgs 9:17-19
8:5 1 Chr 7:24; Josh 16:3,5
8:6 Josh 19:44; 1 Kgs 9:18; 2 Chr 8:4
8:7 1 Kgs 9:20-22; Deut 7:1; Gen 15:19-21
8:8 Josh 16:10; Judg 1:21-36; Ps 106:34
8:9 Exod 19:5,6; Lev 25:39-46; Gal 4:26,31
8:10 2 Chr 2:18; 1 Kgs 5:16; 1 Kgs 9:23
8:11 1 Kgs 3:1; 1 Kgs 7:8; 1 Kgs 9:24
8:12 John 10:23; 2 Chr 4:1; 1 Chr 28:17

7:16 *My eyes and My heart will be there all the days* God was not only watching from heaven. His heart was there. "Forever" did not fail when this temple burned in 586 B.C. The second temple stood on the same mount, Jesus called it His Father's house (John 2:16), and the prophets speak of a temple in Jerusalem in the coming kingdom (Ezek 40-48; Isa 2:2-3). God's choice of Jerusalem has not been canceled.
7:18 *There shall not be cut off for you a man ruling over Israel* Kings has "on the throne of Israel" (1 Kgs 9:5). The Chronicler's wording is close to Micah 5:2, the promise of the Ruler from Bethlehem. The covenant with David pointed beyond Solomon to One whose rule never ends.
7:19 *if you, you turn away and forsake My statutes* The Hebrew "you" changes from one person to many. God spoke to Solomon and the whole nation after him.
7:20 *a proverb and a taunt among all the peoples* Privilege does not protect people who turn their backs on God. Jeremiah warned Judah not to trust in "the temple of the LORD" while living in sin (Jer 7:4).
7:22 *Because they forsook the LORD, the God of their fathers* The first readers had seen the ruins (chapter 36). They had also seen verse 14 come true, because God brought them home. God's warnings and promises are both sure. Which one we meet depends on whether we turn to Him or away from Him.
8:2 *the cities which Hiram had given to Solomon* 1 Kings 9:11-13 says Solomon gave Hiram twenty cities in Galilee, and Hiram was not pleased. A common way to fit the two is that Hiram gave them back and Solomon rebuilt them. Scripture does not say so outright, but both accounts can be true.
8:4 *Tadmor in the wilderness* An oasis city on the desert trade route northeast of Damascus, later known as Palmyra. The battle at Hamath-zobah (8:3) is the only one Chronicles records for Solomon. His kingdom reached the bounds God promised Abraham (Gen 15:18; 1 Kgs 4:21).
8:5 *Beth-horon the Upper and Beth-horon the Lower* The two Beth-horons guarded a main road up from the coast to Jerusalem.
8:8 *of their sons who remained after them in the land* Israel had failed to drive out these peoples as God commanded (Judg 1:21-36). Forced labor of conquered peoples was common then and fit what the Law allowed (Deut 20:11). Israel's own people still felt Solomon's heavy yoke (10:4; 1 Kgs 5:13-14), and that burden would split the kingdom.
8:11 *A wife of mine shall not dwell in the house of David king of Israel* Solomon married Pharaoh's daughter in a treaty with Egypt (1 Kgs 3:1). He knew a wife who did not worship the LORD did not belong where the ark had been. Yet his many foreign wives later turned his heart (1 Kgs 11:1-8), and Nehemiah used him as a warning (Neh 13:26). A wise man can see a danger and still walk toward it. Do we?

13 and by the duty of day by day, to offer up according to the commandment of Moses (Moshe), for the Sabbaths and for the new moons and for the appointed times, three times in the year: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and at the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of Booths. **14** And he appointed, according to the ordinance of David his father, the divisions of the priests over their service, and the Levites over their duties, to praise and to minister before the priests for the duty of a day in its day, and the gatekeepers by their divisions for gate and gate; for thus ***was*** the commandment of David the man of God. **15** And they did not turn aside ***from*** the commandment of the king concerning the priests and the Levites in any matter, and concerning the treasuries. **16** And all the work of Solomon was prepared, until the day of the foundation of the house of the LORD and until its finishing. The house of the LORD ***was*** complete.

Ships to Ophir

17 Then Solomon went to Ezion-geber (Etsyon-Gever) and to Eloth (Elot) on the shore of the sea in the land of Edom. **18** And Hiram sent to him, by the hand of his servants, ships and servants who knew the sea; and they came with the servants of Solomon to Ophir (Ofir), and they took from there approximately 33,750 pounds (four hundred and fifty talents) of gold, and they brought ***it*** to King Solomon.

2 CHRONICLES 9

The Queen of Sheba Visits Solomon

1 And the queen of Sheba (Sheva) heard the report of Solomon (Shelomo), and she came to test Solomon with riddles in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), with a very great retinue, and camels carrying spices and gold in abundance and precious stones; and she came to Solomon, and she spoke with him all that was with her heart. **2** And Solomon told her all her words, and not a word was hidden from Solomon which he did not tell her. **3** And the queen of Sheba saw the wisdom of Solomon, and the house which he had built, **4** and the food of his table, and the seating of his servants, and the standing of his ministers and their clothing, and his cupbearers and their clothing, and his upper room ***by*** which he would go up ***to*** the house of the LORD; and there was no more breath in her. **5** And she said to the king, "The word which I heard in my land about your words and about your wisdom ***was*** truth. **6** And I did not believe their words until I came and my eyes saw; and look, the half of the greatness of your wisdom was not told to me; you have added to the report which I heard. **7** How blessed ***are*** your men, and how blessed ***are*** these your servants who stand before you continually and hear your wisdom! **8** May the LORD your God be blessed, who has delighted in you to put you on His throne as king for the LORD your God! In the love of your God for Israel (Yisra'el), to make it stand forever, He has appointed you king over them, to do justice and righteousness." **9** And she gave to the king approximately 9,000 pounds (a hundred and twenty talents) of gold, and spices in very great abundance, and precious stones; and there had not been ***any*** like that spice which the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon. **10** And also the servants of Hiram (Churam) and the servants of Solomon, who brought gold from Ophir (Ofir), brought algum wood and precious stones. **11** And the king made the algum wood ***into*** stairways for the house of the LORD and for the house of the king, and lyres and harps for the singers; and none like them had been seen before in the land of Judah (Yehuda). **12** And King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all her desire which she asked, besides what she had brought to the king. And she turned and went to her land, she and her servants.

8:13 Deut 16:16; Exod 29:38-42; Ezek 46:3-15
8:14 Acts 13:22; Acts 13:36; 1 Chr 9:17
8:15 2 Chr 30:12; Exod 39:42,43; 1 Kgs 7:51
8:16 1 Kgs 5:18; 1 Kgs 6:7
8:17 2 Kgs 14:22; Deut 2:8; 2 Chr 20:36
8:18 2 Chr 9:10,13; 1 Kgs 9:27,28; 1 Kgs 10:22
9:1 Matt 12:42; Luke 11:31; Luke 12:27
9:2 Matt 12:42; Luke 12:27; Prov 13:20
9:3 Matt 12:42; Luke 12:27; 2 Chr 3:1-4
9:4 Matt 12:42; 1 Kgs 4:22,23; Prov 9:5
9:5 Matt 12:42; 1 Kgs 10:6
9:6 Matt 12:42; John 20:25-29; 1 Kgs 10:7
9:7 Matt 12:42; Deut 33:9; 1 Kgs 10:8
9:8 Matt 12:42; 2 Chr 2:11; Deut 7:8
9:9 Matt 12:42; Luke 12:27; 2 Chr 9:24
9:10 Matt 12:42; Luke 12:27; 2 Chr 8:18
9:11 Matt 12:42; 1 Kgs 10:12; 1 Chr 23:5
9:12 Matt 12:42; Luke 12:27; 1 Kgs 10:13

8:13 *the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and at the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of Booths* The three feasts when every man came to the sanctuary (Deut 16:16). All three point forward: Christ our Passover was sacrificed (1 Cor 5:7), the Spirit came at Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4), and many see Booths as a picture of God dwelling with His people in the coming kingdom (Zech 14:16).
8:14 *thus was the commandment of David the man of God* The returned exiles were rebuilding the same worship (Ezra 3:1-6; 6:18). Worship done God's way, by His Word, is the heart of a healthy nation.
8:16 *The house of the LORD was complete* A simple, satisfied line: the work God gave was finished. Jesus said to His Father, "I finished the work which You have given Me" (John 17:4). Will we be able to say the same?
8:18 *to Ophir* No one knows for sure where Ophir was: southern Arabia, East Africa and India are all suggested. Ezion-geber and Eloth (8:17) lay at the tip of the Gulf of Aqaba. 1 Kings 9:28 gives 420 talents instead of 450, a copying difference or a different way of counting. God was keeping His promise to make Solomon rich (1:12).
9:1 *the queen of Sheba heard the report of Solomon* Sheba was probably in southwest Arabia, in what is now Yemen, about 1,200 miles away. Some connect it with Ethiopia. The riddles were hard questions wise people used to test one another. She heard of his fame "concerning the name of the LORD" (1 Kgs 10:1). She wanted to know if the wisdom was real and where it came from.
9:4 *there was no more breath in her* The Hebrew of "his upper room" can also be read as the burnt offerings he offered at the temple. Either way, she saw how he went to worship. What left her breathless was not only gold. It was order, wisdom and worship, a kingdom running well under a king who served God.
9:6 *the half of the greatness of your wisdom was not told to me* She had not believed until her eyes saw. Jesus said the queen of the south would rise in the judgment, because she came to hear Solomon's wisdom, "and look, something greater than Solomon is here" (Matt 12:42). Jesus is the wisdom of God in Person (1 Cor 1:24, 30). How far are we willing to go to hear Him?
9:8 *to put you on His throne as king for the LORD your God* Kings says "the throne of Israel" (1 Kgs 10:9). Chronicles says "His throne." The king of David's line ruled on God's behalf, and his job was "to do justice and righteousness," what is right and fair for the people.
9:12 *all her desire which she asked, besides what she had brought to the king* Solomon outgave her. Later legends say they had a child, but the Bible says nothing of that, and we should not add to it. Those who come seeking true wisdom are never sent away empty (James 1:5).

Solomon's Splendor

13 And the weight of the gold which came to Solomon in one year was approximately 50,000 pounds (six hundred and sixty-six talents) of gold, **14** apart from ***what*** the men of the merchants and the traders ***were*** bringing; and all the kings of Arabia (Arav) and the governors of the land ***were*** bringing gold and silver to Solomon. **15** And King Solomon made two hundred large shields ***of*** beaten gold; approximately 15 pounds (six hundred ***shekels***) of beaten gold he put on the one large shield; **16** and three hundred shields ***of*** beaten gold; approximately 7.5 pounds (three hundred ***shekels***) of gold he put on the one shield; and the king put them in the House of the Forest of Lebanon (Levanon). **17** And the king made a great throne of ivory, and he overlaid it ***with*** pure gold. **18** And six steps ***belonged*** to the throne, and a footstool in gold, attached to the throne, and arms ***were*** on this side and on this side of the place of the seat, and two lions ***were*** standing beside the arms. **19** And twelve lions ***were*** standing there on the six steps, on this side and on this side; it had not been made thus for any kingdom. **20** And all the drinking vessels of King Solomon ***were*** gold, and all the vessels of the House of the Forest of Lebanon ***were*** refined gold; silver was not esteemed in the days of Solomon as anything. **21** For the king's ships ***were*** going ***to*** Tarshish with the servants of Hiram; once in three years the ships of Tarshish would come, carrying gold and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks. **22** And King Solomon became greater than all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom. **23** And all the kings of the earth ***were*** seeking the face of Solomon, to hear his wisdom which God had put in his heart. **24** And they ***were*** bringing, each his gift: articles of silver and articles of gold, and garments, weaponry, and spices, horses, and mules, the matter of a year in a year. **25** And Solomon had four thousand stalls of horses and chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen; and he placed them in the cities of the chariotry and with the king in Jerusalem. **26** And he was ruling over all the kings from the River even to the land of the Philistines and to the border of Egypt (Mitsrayim). **27** And the king made the silver in Jerusalem like the stones, and the cedars he made like the sycamores which ***are*** in the Shephelah, for abundance. **28** And ***they were*** bringing out horses from Egypt for Solomon, and from all the lands.

The Death of Solomon

29 And the rest of the matters of Solomon, the first and the last, are they not written in the words of Nathan (Natan) the prophet, and in the prophecy of Ahijah (Achiya) the Shilonite, and in the visions of Iddo (Yedo) the seer concerning Jeroboam (Yaravam) the son of Nebat (Nevat)? **30** And Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel forty years. **31** And Solomon lay down with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David his father; and Rehoboam (Rechavam) his son reigned in his place.

2 CHRONICLES 10

The Kingdom Divides

1 And Rehoboam (Rechavam) went to Shechem (Shekhem), for all Israel (Yisra'el) had come to Shechem to make him king. **2** And it was, when Jeroboam (Yaravam) the son of Nebat (Nevat) heard, and he ***was*** in Egypt (Mitsrayim), where he had fled from before Solomon (Shelomo) the king, that Jeroboam returned from Egypt. **3** And they sent and called

9:13 1 Kgs 10:14,15; Ps 68:29; Ps 72:10,15
9:15 2 Chr 12:9,10; 1 Kgs 10:16,17
9:16 1 Kgs 7:2
9:17 1 Kgs 10:18-20; Ps 45:8; Rev 20:11
9:18 Gen 49:9,10; Num 23:24; Num 24:9
9:19 Matt 19:28; Rev 21:12
9:20 Matt 6:29; 1 Kgs 10:21; Esth 1:7
9:21 1 Kgs 10:22; 1 Kgs 22:48; Job 39:13
9:22 Matt 12:42; Matt 6:29; 2 Chr 1:12
9:23 1 Kgs 4:34; 2 Chr 9:6,7; Isa 11:2,10
9:24 2 Chr 9:9; 1 Sam 10:27; 1 Kgs 9:14
9:25 1 Kgs 4:26; 2 Chr 1:14; 1 Kgs 10:26
9:26 1 Kgs 4:21,24; Gen 15:18; Exod 23:31
9:27 2 Chr 1:15-17; 2 Chr 9:20; 1 Kgs 10:27-29
9:28 2 Chr 1:16; 2 Chr 9:25; 1 Kgs 10:28
9:29 1 Chr 29:29; 1 Kgs 11:41-43; 1 Kgs 11:29
9:30 1 Kgs 11:42,43
9:31 Matt 1:7; Acts 13:36; 1 Kgs 2:10
10:1 Matt 1:7; 1 Kgs 12:1; 1 Chr 3:10
10:2 1 Kgs 11:26,28,40; 1 Kgs 12:2
10:3 1 Kgs 12:3

9:13 *the weight of the gold which came to Solomon in one year* Six hundred sixty-six talents. Some connect the number with Revelation 13:18. Scripture does not make that link, and I don't think we should build anything on it. The point is the enormous wealth God had given, as He promised.

9:16 *the House of the Forest of Lebanon* A great hall of the palace built with cedar pillars (1 Kgs 7:2). The gold shields were for show, not battle. Chapter 12 tells what happened to them.

9:18 *six steps belonged to the throne* The lions on the throne recall Judah, the lion tribe, and Jacob's promise that the scepter would not depart from Judah (Gen 49:9-10). Jesus is "the Lion who is of the tribe of Judah" (Rev 5:5). The greatest throne of David's line points to the throne of David's greatest Son.

9:21 *the king's ships were going to Tarshish* "Ships of Tarshish" was a phrase for large ocean-going trading ships. Tarshish itself was often placed far west, perhaps in Spain, though these sailed from the Red Sea port (8:17). Scholars are not sure of the route.

9:23 *all the kings of the earth were seeking the face of Solomon* Note the careful words: the wisdom was what "God had put in his heart." Nations streaming to Jerusalem with gifts is a small picture of what the prophets said will happen when the Messiah reigns (Isa 60:3-6; Ps 72). I believe that will be fulfilled when Christ reigns on earth in His kingdom.

9:25 *four thousand stalls of horses and chariots* 1 Kings 4:26 gives forty thousand. Most scholars think a copyist's error in Kings, since 1,400 chariots (1:14; 1 Kgs 10:26) fits four thousand stalls much better. I take the four thousand as right.

9:26 *from the River even to the land of the Philistines* The River is the Euphrates, the bound of the land promised to Abraham (Gen 15:18). Verses 25-28 repeat 1:14-17, a frame around Solomon's reign: God promised, and God gave. But Deuteronomy 17:16-17 still stands in the background, and that is where Solomon's story went next.

9:29 *in the visions of Iddo the seer* A seer is another word for a prophet, one to whom God showed things. The Chronicler used prophetic records, many now lost to us.

9:30 *Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel forty years* About 970 to 930 B.C. Chronicles leaves out his foreign wives and idols (1 Kgs 11), not to hide them. Its readers knew Kings, and the mention of Ahijah points right at it (9:29). The Chronicler holds up Solomon at his best as a model and lets the split show the cost of what came later. Solomon was a son of David, but not the Son of David.

10:1 *Rehoboam went to Shechem* An old city in the hill country of Ephraim, about 30 miles north of Jerusalem, where Abraham built an altar and Joshua renewed the covenant (Gen 12:6-7; Josh 24). The northern tribes wanted their own agreement with the new king, as with David at Hebron (2 Sam 5:1-3). The kingdom's unity was already fragile.

10:2 *Jeroboam the son of Nebat* Chronicles assumes we know his story: Solomon put him over forced labor, the prophet Ahijah tore a cloak into twelve pieces and gave him ten, and Solomon tried to kill him (1 Kgs 11:26-40).

him, and Jeroboam and all Israel came, and they spoke to Rehoboam, saying, **4** "Your father made our yoke hard; and now, lighten some of the hard labor of your father and some of his heavy yoke which he put on us, and we will serve you." **5** And he said to them, "Yet three days, and return to me." And the people went. **6** And King Rehoboam consulted with the elders who had been standing before Solomon his father while he was alive, saying, "How do you counsel to bring back word to this people?" **7** And they spoke to him, saying, "If you will be good to this people, and are pleased with them, and speak good words to them, then they will be servants to you all the days." **8** And he forsook the counsel of the elders which they had counseled him, and he consulted with the young men who had grown up with him, who stood before him. **9** And he said to them, "What do you counsel, and we may bring back word to this people who have spoken to me, saying, 'Lighten some of the yoke which your father put on us'?" **10** And the young men who had grown up with him spoke with him, saying, "Thus you shall say to the people who spoke to you, saying, 'Your father made our yoke heavy, and you, lighten ***it*** from on us'; thus you shall say to them, 'My little finger is thicker than the loins of my father. **11** And now, my father loaded on you a heavy yoke, and I, I will add to your yoke; my father disciplined you with whips, and I with scorpions.'" **12** And Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam on the third day, just as the king had spoken, saying, "Return to me on the third day." **13** And the king answered them harshly; and King Rehoboam forsook the counsel of the elders. **14** And he spoke to them according to the counsel of the young men, saying, "I will make your yoke heavy, and I, I will add to it; my father disciplined you with whips, and I with scorpions." **15** And the king did not listen to the people, for it was a turn ***of events*** from God, so that the LORD might establish His word which He had spoken by the hand of Ahijah (Achiyahu) the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat. **16** And all Israel, for the king had not listened to them, and the people brought back ***word*** to the king, saying, "What portion ***is there*** for us in David? And ***there is*** no inheritance in the son of Jesse (Yishay). Each man to your tents, O Israel! Now see your own house, O David!" And all Israel went to its tents. **17** And the sons of Israel who were dwelling in the cities of Judah (Yehuda), Rehoboam reigned over them. **18** And King Rehoboam sent Hadoram, who ***was*** over the forced labor, and the sons of Israel stoned him ***with*** stones, and he died. And King Rehoboam exerted himself to go up into the chariot to flee ***to*** Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). **19** And Israel rebelled against the house of David to this day.

2 CHRONICLES 11

Rehoboam Strengthens Judah

1 And Rehoboam (Rechavam) came ***to*** Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), and he assembled the house of Judah (Yehuda) and Benjamin (Binyamin), a hundred and eighty thousand chosen ***men***, makers of war, to fight with Israel (Yisra'el), to bring back the kingdom to Rehoboam. **2** And the word of the LORD came to Shemaiah (Shemayahu) the man of God, saying, **3** "Say to Rehoboam the son of Solomon (Shelomo), king of Judah, and to all Israel in Judah and Benjamin, saying, **4** 'Thus says the LORD: You shall not go up, and you shall not fight with your brothers. Return, each man to his house, for this thing has come about from Me.'" And

10:4 1 Sam 8:11-18; 1 Kgs 12:4; Isa 47:6
10:5 1 Kgs 12:5; Prov 3:28
10:6 Job 32:7; Job 12:12,13; Prov 12:15
10:7 Prov 15:1; 1 Kgs 12:7; Gen 49:21
10:8 2 Sam 17:14; 2 Chr 25:15,16; Prov 1:25
10:9 2 Chr 10:6; 2 Sam 17:5,6; 1 Kgs 22:6-8
10:10 2 Sam 17:7-13; Prov 21:30; Isa 19:11-13
10:11 Exod 1:13,14; Exod 5:5-9,18; 1 Sam 8:18
10:12 2 Chr 10:5; 1 Kgs 12:12-15
10:13 Gen 42:7,30; Exod 10:28; 1 Sam 25:10,11
10:14 2 Chr 22:4,5; Prov 12:5; Dan 6:7
10:15 John 19:24; John 12:38; John 19:36
10:16 Luke 1:32; Rev 22:16; 2 Sam 20:1
10:17 2 Chr 11:1; 1 Kgs 11:36; 1 Kgs 12:17
10:18 1 Kgs 5:14; 1 Kgs 4:6; 2 Chr 24:21
10:19 2 Chr 10:16; 2 Chr 13:5-7; 1 Kgs 12:19,20
11:1 1 Kgs 12:21; Ps 33:10,16; Prov 21:30,31
11:2 John 10:35; 2 Chr 12:5,7,15; 1 Kgs 12:22-24
11:3 Phil 3:5; John 10:35; Rev 7:8
11:4 1 Cor 6:5; 2 Chr 10:15; Gen 50:20

10:4 *Your father made our yoke hard* A yoke was the wooden bar on the necks of oxen. Solomon's projects, taxes and forced labor had worn the people down. It was a fair request with a fair offer: "we will serve you."
10:7 *If you will be good to this people* Kings says "be a servant" (1 Kgs 12:7). Both say the same thing. A leader who serves and speaks kindly will be followed. Jesus taught that whoever would be great must be a servant (Mark 10:42-45). The oldest leadership lesson in the book, and still the hardest.
10:8 *the young men who had grown up with him* Rehoboam was forty-one (12:13), so these were palace friends raised in Solomon's wealth, not teenagers. Perhaps they told him what he wanted to hear. His father wrote, listen to counsel (Prov 12:15; 15:22). Do you seek advice from people who will tell you the truth, or only from people who agree with you?
10:11 *I with scorpions* Probably a whip with sharp, stinging barbs. "My little finger is thicker than the loins of my father" (10:10) meant, I am tougher than Solomon ever was.
10:13 *the king answered them harshly* In one sentence he lost most of his kingdom. His father wrote that a gentle answer turns away wrath and a harsh word stirs up anger (Prov 15:1). Harsh words have broken more families, churches and friendships than we can count.
10:15 *it was a turn of events from God* Rehoboam was responsible for his foolish choice and paid for it. Yet God was ruling over it, bringing the judgment He had announced for Solomon's idolatry (1 Kgs 11:11-13, 29-39). God does not make anyone sin, but He works even through sinful choices. The cross is the greatest example (Acts 2:23). No foolish leader is outside God's rule.
10:16 *What portion is there for us in David* The cry of Sheba's rebellion against David (2 Sam 20:1). "Son of Jesse" put David down as a farmer's son. The kingdom God had built under David was torn in two.
10:18 *Hadoram, who was over the forced labor* Of all men to send, he chose the one tied to their burden. He is Adoram in 1 Kings 12:18, perhaps Adoniram (1 Kgs 4:6).
10:19 *Israel rebelled against the house of David to this day* The north rejected the line God chose, yet God did not abandon the north, and faithful people still came to Jerusalem (11:16; 15:9; 30:11). Ezekiel joined two sticks into one and God promised one King, David's Son, over them all (Ezek 37:15-25). I believe that will happen when Jesus reigns over a reunited Israel in His coming kingdom.
11:1 *a hundred and eighty thousand chosen men* Benjamin, the small tribe between Judah and the north, stayed with Judah. Rehoboam's first instinct was to take back by force what his harsh words had lost. I take the large numbers of Chronicles as written. Some scholars think the Hebrew word for "thousand" can mean a military unit or clan, but the text does not tell us that.
11:4 *You shall not go up, and you shall not fight with your brothers* Shemaiah was a man of God, another name for a prophet. "Your brothers": the northern tribes were still family. The split was God's discipline. That an army turned back at one prophet's word is the best thing we read of Rehoboam. When God says no, the wise thing is to obey, even when we think we could win.

they listened to the words of the LORD, and they turned back from going against Jeroboam (Yaravam). **5** And Rehoboam dwelt in Jerusalem, and he built cities for fortification in Judah. **6** And he built Bethlehem (Bet-Lechem) and Etam and Tekoa (Teqoa), **7** and Beth-zur (Bet-Tsur) and Soco (Sokho) and Adullam (Adulam), **8** and Gath (Gat) and Mareshah (Maresha) and Ziph (Zif), **9** and Adoraim (Adorayim) and Lachish (Lakhish) and Azekah (Azeqa), **10** and Zorah (Tsor'ah) and Aijalon (Ayalon) and Hebron (Chevron), which ***are*** in Judah and in Benjamin, cities of fortresses. **11** And he strengthened the fortresses, and he put in them commanders, and supplies of food and oil and wine. **12** And in every city and city ***were*** large shields and spears, and he strengthened them very greatly. And Judah and Benjamin belonged to him.

Priests and Levites Come to Judah

13 And the priests and the Levites who ***were*** in all Israel took their stand with him from all their territory. **14** For the Levites forsook their pasture lands and their property, and they went to Judah and to Jerusalem; for Jeroboam and his sons had rejected them from serving as priests to the LORD. **15** And he appointed for himself priests for the high places, and for the goats, and for the calves which he had made. **16** And after them, from all the tribes of Israel, those who set their heart to seek the LORD, the God of Israel, came ***to*** Jerusalem to sacrifice to the LORD, the God of their fathers. **17** And they strengthened the kingdom of Judah, and they made Rehoboam the son of Solomon strong for three years; for they walked in the way of David and Solomon for three years.

Rehoboam's Family

18 And Rehoboam took for himself a wife, Mahalath (Machalat) the daughter of Jerimoth (Yerimot) the son of David, Abihail (Avichayil) the daughter of Eliab (Eli'av) the son of Jesse (Yishay). **19** And she bore to him sons: Jeush (Yeush) and Shemariah (Shemarya) and Zaham. **20** And after her he took Maacah (Ma'akha) the daughter of Absalom (Avshalom); and she bore to him Abijah (Aviyah) and Attai (Atay) and Ziza and Shelomith (Shelomit). **21** And Rehoboam loved Maacah the daughter of Absalom more than all his wives and his concubines; for he had taken eighteen wives and sixty concubines; and he fathered twenty-eight sons and sixty daughters. **22** And Rehoboam appointed Abijah the son of Maacah as the head, as leader among his brothers, for ***he meant*** to make him king. **23** And he acted wisely, and he distributed some of all his sons to all the lands of Judah and Benjamin, to all the cities of the fortresses; and he gave to them the food in abundance; and he asked ***for*** a multitude of wives.

2 CHRONICLES 12

Shishak Invades Judah

1 And it was, when the kingdom of Rehoboam (Rechavam) was established, and as he became strong, he forsook the law of the LORD, and all Israel (Yisra'el) with him. **2** And it was in the fifth year of King Rehoboam ***that*** Shishak (Shishaq) king of Egypt (Mitsrayim) came up against Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), for they had acted unfaithfully against the LORD, **3** with one thousand two hundred chariots and with sixty thousand horsemen; and ***there was*** no number to the people who came with him from Egypt: Libyans, Sukkites,

11:5 2 Chr 8:2-6; 2 Chr 14:6,7; 2 Chr 16:6
11:6 Matt 2:5; Matt 2:6; Gen 35:19
11:7 Josh 15:35; Josh 15:58; Josh 12:15
11:8 1 Chr 18:1; Josh 15:44; Josh 15:24
11:9 2 Chr 32:9; Josh 10:5,11; Josh 15:35,39
11:10 Josh 15:33; Josh 19:41,42; Gen 23:2
11:11 Isa 22:10,11; 2 Chr 11:23; 2 Chr 17:19
11:12 2 Chr 26:14,15; 2 Chr 32:5; 2 Sam 13:19,22
11:14 2 Chr 13:9; Num 35:2-5; 1 Kgs 12:28-33
11:15 1 Kgs 12:28; Deut 32:17; 1 Tim 4:1
11:16 2 Chr 15:9; 2 Chr 30:11,18,19; Josh 22:19
11:17 2 Chr 12:1; 2 Chr 1:1-12; 2 Chr 7:17-19
11:18 1 Sam 16:6; 1 Sam 17:13,28; 1 Chr 27:18
11:20 Matt 1:7; 2 Chr 13:2; 2 Chr 12:16
11:21 Deut 17:17; 2 Sam 3:2-5; 2 Chr 11:23
11:22 Deut 21:15-17; 1 Chr 5:1,2; 1 Chr 29:1
11:23 Luke 16:8; 2 Chr 10:8-15; 2 Chr 21:3
12:1 Matt 1:7; 2 Chr 11:17; 2 Chr 12:13
12:2 1 Kgs 11:40; 1 Kgs 14:24-26; 2 Chr 7:19,20
12:3 Acts 2:10; 2 Chr 16:8; Nah 3:9

11:5 *he built cities for fortification in Judah* The fifteen cities ringed Judah's heartland on the south and west, guarding the roads from Egypt and the Philistine coast. Few were on the northern border. Building defenses is not wrong, but chapter 12 shows walls are no substitute for faithfulness (Ps 127:1).
11:14 *Jeroboam and his sons had rejected them from serving as priests to the LORD* Only Chronicles tells this. Jeroboam feared that worship in Jerusalem would turn hearts back to David's house, so he made the calves at Bethel and Dan (1 Kgs 12:26-33). The Levites "forsook their pasture lands," the towns God gave them in every tribe (Num 35:1-8). Believers still give up homes and family for Christ, and He promises far more in return (Mark 10:29-30).
11:15 *for the goats, and for the calves which he had made* The goats were probably idols in the form of goat-demons, which the Law forbade (Lev 17:7). Jeroboam's priests did not have to be Levites.
11:16 *those who set their heart to seek the LORD* One of the key verses of Chronicles. The kingdom was split by politics, but God's true people were defined by a heart set on seeking Him.
11:17 *for they walked in the way of David and Solomon for three years* Faithful worshipers, not fortified cities, were Judah's real strength. "Three years" warns us it did not last.
11:20 *Maacah the daughter of Absalom* "Daughter" may mean granddaughter, as often in Hebrew. 13:2 calls Abijah's mother "Micaiah the daughter of Uriel," and many think Maacah was Absalom's granddaughter through Tamar, who married Uriel (2 Sam 14:27).
11:21 *eighteen wives and sixty concubines* A concubine was a secondary wife with fewer rights. God's design from the beginning was one man and one woman (Gen 2:24; Matt 19:4-6), and the Law warned kings not to multiply wives (Deut 17:17). The Bible records such marriages honestly but never presents them as good.
11:23 *he acted wisely* He spread his sons out to the fortress cities so they would not fight over the throne, as David's sons had (2 Sam 13-18; 1 Kgs 1-2). Worldly wisdom can keep peace for a while, but it is not the same as seeking God.
12:1 *as he became strong, he forsook the law of the LORD* One of the oldest dangers in the Bible. When weak, we cry out to God. When strong, we forget Him (Deut 8:10-14). "All Israel" here is the faithful people of Judah and Benjamin. The people followed their king. Parents, pastors and bosses set direction too, for good or evil.
12:2 *Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem* About 925 B.C. To act unfaithfully is a strong word in Chronicles, to break faith with God like a spouse who betrays the marriage. Shishak is known from Egyptian history as Shoshenq I. On a temple wall at Karnak he listed towns he conquered in this campaign, including many in Judah and Israel.

and Cushites. **4** And he captured the cities of the fortresses which ***belonged*** to Judah (Yehuda), and he came to Jerusalem. **5** And Shemaiah (Shemaya) the prophet came to Rehoboam and the commanders of Judah, who had gathered to Jerusalem because of Shishak, and he said to them, "Thus says the LORD: You, you have forsaken Me, and also I, I have forsaken you into the hand of Shishak." **6** And the commanders of Israel and the king humbled themselves, and they said, "The LORD ***is*** righteous." **7** And when the LORD saw that they had humbled themselves, the word of the LORD came to Shemaiah, saying, "They have humbled themselves; I will not destroy them, and I will give to them a little, for deliverance, and My wrath shall not pour out on Jerusalem by the hand of Shishak. **8** But they will become servants to him, so that they may know My service and the service of the kingdoms of the lands." **9** And Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, and he took the treasures of the house of the LORD and the treasures of the house of the king; everything he took. And he took the shields of gold which Solomon (Shelomo) had made. **10** And King Rehoboam made in their place shields of bronze, and he entrusted ***them*** to the hand of the commanders of the runners who guarded the entrance of the house of the king. **11** And it was, as often as the king came ***to*** the house of the LORD, the runners came and carried them, and they brought them back to the guardroom of the runners. **12** And when he humbled himself, the anger of the LORD turned back from him, and not to destroy to completion; and also in Judah there were good things.

Rehoboam's Reign Summed Up

13 And King Rehoboam strengthened himself in Jerusalem, and he reigned; for Rehoboam ***was*** forty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city which the LORD had chosen to put His name there out of all the tribes of Israel. And the name of his mother ***was*** Naamah (Na'ama) the Ammonite. **14** And he did the evil, for he did not prepare his heart to seek the LORD. **15** And the matters of Rehoboam, the first and the last, are they not written in the words of Shemaiah the prophet and Iddo (Ido) the seer, for genealogical enrollment? And the wars of Rehoboam and Jeroboam (Yaravam) ***were*** all the days. **16** And Rehoboam lay down with his fathers, and he was buried in the city of David; and Abijah (Aviyah) his son reigned in his place.

2 CHRONICLES 13

Abijah Speaks on Mount Zemaraim

1 In the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam (Yaravam), then Abijah (Aviyah) became king over Judah (Yehuda). **2** Three years he reigned in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim); and the name of his mother ***was*** Micaiah (Mikhayahu) the daughter of Uriel from Gibeah (Giva). And there was war between Abijah and Jeroboam. **3** And Abijah joined the battle with an army of mighty men of war, four hundred thousand chosen men; and Jeroboam drew up battle with him with eight hundred thousand chosen men, mighty men of strength. **4** And Abijah stood up on Mount Zemaraim (Tsemarayim), which ***is*** in the hill country of Ephraim (Efrayim), and he said, "Listen to me, Jeroboam and all Israel (Yisra'el)! **5** Is it not for you to know that the LORD, the God of Israel, gave ***the*** kingdom over Israel to David forever, to him and to his sons, a covenant of salt? **6** And Jeroboam the son of Nebat (Nevat), the servant of Solomon (Shelomo) the son of David, rose up and rebelled

12:4 2 Chr 11:5-12; Isa 36:1; Jer 5:10
12:5 2 Chr 11:2; 2 Chr 15:2; 1 Kgs 12:22
12:6 Exod 9:27; Dan 9:14; 2 Chr 32:26
12:7 Judg 10:15,16; 1 Kgs 21:28,29; Jer 3:13
12:8 Isa 26:13; Deut 28:47; Neh 9:36
12:9 2 Chr 9:15,16; 1 Kgs 10:16,17; 1 Kgs 14:25,26
12:10 1 Kgs 14:27; Lam 4:1; 2 Sam 8:18
12:12 2 Chr 19:3; 2 Chr 12:6,7; 1 Kgs 14:13
12:13 1 Kgs 14:21; 2 Chr 6:6; Deut 12:5,11
12:14 2 Chr 19:3; 2 Chr 11:16; 2 Chr 30:19
12:15 2 Chr 9:29; 2 Chr 12:5; 1 Kgs 12:22
12:16 Matt 1:7; Acts 13:36; 1 Kgs 14:29-31
13:1 2 Chr 12:16; 1 Kgs 15:1-8
13:2 2 Chr 11:20; 1 Kgs 15:6,7; 1 Kgs 15:2
13:3 1 Sam 17:1-3; 2 Chr 11:1; 2 Chr 14:8
13:4 Josh 18:22; Gen 10:18; 2 Chr 15:2
13:5 Luke 1:32; Lev 2:13; Num 18:19
13:6 1 Kgs 11:26; 1 Kgs 12:20,27; 2 Chr 10:19

12:4 *he captured the cities of the fortresses which belonged to Judah* All the fortified cities of chapter 11 fell. Walls did not save a people who had forsaken God.
12:5 *You, you have forsaken Me, and also I, I have forsaken you* Azariah states the principle in 15:2. God does not leave the faithful. When His people turn their backs, He lets them feel life without His protection so they will come back. His discipline is an act of love (Heb 12:5-11).
12:6 *The LORD is righteous* The first time in Chronicles a king humbles himself, 7:14 in action. They did not blame Shishak, bad luck or each other. They said God was right and they were wrong. That is what real confession sounds like.
12:8 *so that they may know My service and the service of the kingdoms of the lands* You wanted to be free of My law. Now see what it is to serve a pagan king. Serving God is freedom, and serving sin is slavery. Jesus' yoke is easy (Matt 11:29-30). Forgiveness is full, but consequences may remain for a time so we learn. They are not God's rejection.
12:10 *King Rehoboam made in their place shields of bronze* Solomon's gold shields (9:15-16) were gone five years after his death. From a distance the bronze shone and the parade looked the same. How often do we keep the outward forms of faith while the real gold of loving God is lost? God looks at the heart (1 Sam 16:7).
12:12 *also in Judah there were good things* God's anger turns away from the humble. Even in judgment He left faithful people and true worship. God never leaves His people with nothing.
12:13 *the name of his mother was Naamah the Ammonite* Scripture names her three times (12:13; 1 Kgs 14:21, 31). The Ammonites worshiped Milcom, also called Molech. The Bible seems to hint that her influence shaped her son. He reigned about 930 to 913 B.C.
12:14 *he did not prepare his heart to seek the LORD* The key to Rehoboam's life. He obeyed once and humbled himself once, but never set his heart on God. He reacted to God in trouble and forgot Him when things were quiet. Is your heart set, or does it only turn to God in a crisis?
12:15 *the wars of Rehoboam and Jeroboam were all the days* God forbade full war (11:4), but border fighting never stopped. A family split by sin seldom finds peace quickly. Prophets like Shemaiah and Iddo kept the records, as Samuel, Nathan and Gad did for David (1 Chr 29:29).
13:1 *In the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam* The only time Chronicles dates a king of Judah by a king of Israel, perhaps because the whole chapter is their clash. Abijah reigned about 913 to 910 B.C.
13:2 *Micaiah the daughter of Uriel from Gibeah* Elsewhere she is Maacah the daughter of Absalom (11:20; 1 Kgs 15:2). Many think she was Absalom's granddaughter through Tamar and Uriel, and Micaiah may be another form of the name.
13:3 *eight hundred thousand chosen men* Judah was outnumbered two to one. I take the numbers as written (see 11:1). By human reckoning Judah should have lost.
13:5 *a covenant of salt* Salt does not spoil, and it was used to seal agreements. A covenant of salt is lasting and unbreakable (Num 18:19). The throne belonged to David's line by God's choice.

against his lord. **7** And empty men, sons of worthlessness, gathered to him, and they made themselves strong against Rehoboam (Rechavam) the son of Solomon; and Rehoboam was a youth and tender of heart, and he did not strengthen himself before them. **8** And now you, you are speaking of strengthening yourselves before the kingdom of the LORD in the hand of the sons of David; and you ***are*** a great multitude, and with you ***are*** calves of gold which Jeroboam made for you for gods. **9** Have you not driven out the priests of the LORD, the sons of Aaron (Aharon), and the Levites, and made for yourselves priests like the peoples of the lands? Everyone who comes to fill his hand with a bull, a son of cattle, and seven rams, and he becomes a priest to no-gods. **10** And we, the LORD ***is*** our God, and we have not forsaken Him; and priests ministering to the LORD ***are*** the sons of Aaron, and the Levites ***are*** in the work, **11** and ***they are*** burning to the LORD burnt offerings morning by morning and evening by evening, and incense of spices; and the row of bread ***is*** on the pure table, and the lampstand of gold and its lamps to burn evening by evening; for we are keeping the charge of the LORD our God, and you, you have forsaken Him. **12** And look, with us at the head ***is*** God, and His priests, and the trumpets of the shout to raise a shout against you. Sons of Israel, do not fight with the LORD, the God of your fathers, for you will not succeed."

Judah Leans on the LORD

13 And Jeroboam had caused the ambush to go around to come from behind them; and they were in front of Judah, and the ambush ***was*** behind them. **14** And Judah turned, and look, the battle ***was*** for them in front and behind; and they cried out to the LORD, and the priests ***were*** blowing on trumpets. **15** And the men of Judah shouted; and it was, when the men of Judah shouted, that God struck Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah and Judah. **16** And the sons of Israel fled from before Judah, and God gave them into their hand. **17** And Abijah and his people struck among them a great striking, and there fell slain of Israel five hundred thousand chosen men. **18** And the sons of Israel were humbled at that time, and the sons of Judah were strong, for they leaned on the LORD, the God of their fathers. **19** And Abijah pursued after Jeroboam, and he captured cities from him: Bethel (Bet-El) and its villages, and Jeshanah (Yeshana) and its villages, and Ephrain (Efrayin) and its villages. **20** And Jeroboam did not retain strength again in the days of Abijah; and the LORD struck him, and he died. **21** And Abijah strengthened himself, and he took for himself fourteen wives, and he fathered twenty-two sons and sixteen daughters. **22** And the rest of the matters of Abijah, and his ways and his words, ***are*** written in the record of the prophet Iddo (Ido).

2 CHRONICLES 14

Asa Seeks the LORD

1 And Abijah (Aviyah) lay down with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David; and Asa his son reigned in his place. In his days the land was quiet ten years. **2** And Asa did the good and the right in the eyes of the LORD his God. **3** And

13:7 Matt 1:7; Judg 9:4; 2 Chr 12:13
13:8 1 Kgs 12:28; 2 Chr 11:15; 2 Chr 9:8
13:9 2 Chr 11:14,15; Jer 2:11; 1 Kgs 12:31-33
13:10 2 Chr 11:16,17; Exod 19:5,6; Zech 13:9
13:11 2 Chr 2:4; Lev 24:2-4; Exod 29:38
13:12 Num 10:8,9; Acts 5:39; Zech 10:5
13:13 Josh 8:4; 2 Chr 20:22; Prov 21:30
13:14 2 Chr 14:11; Exod 14:10; Josh 8:20
13:15 2 Chr 14:12; 2 Chr 20:21; Josh 6:16,20
13:16 Gen 14:20; Deut 2:36; Deut 3:3
13:17 2 Chr 13:3,12; 2 Chr 28:6; Isa 10:16-19
13:18 1 Chr 5:20; 2 Chr 16:8,9; 2 Chr 20:20
13:19 2 Chr 15:8; Josh 15:9; Josh 10:19,39
13:20 Acts 12:23; 1 Sam 25:38; 1 Kgs 14:20
13:21 2 Sam 5:12,13; 2 Chr 11:21; Judg 8:30,31
13:22 2 Chr 9:29; 2 Chr 12:15
14:1 Matt 1:7; Matt 1:8; 2 Chr 9:31
14:2 Matt 1:7; 2 Chr 31:20; 1 Kgs 15:11,14
14:3 Deut 7:5; Exod 34:13; 1 Kgs 15:12-14

13:7 *a youth and tender of heart* Rehoboam was forty-one (12:13), so this means inexperienced and soft. Abijah does not mention his father's harsh words, which started the trouble. He gives Judah's side. But his main point is true: God had chosen David's house.

13:8 *the kingdom of the LORD in the hand of the sons of David* The kingdom was God's, and David's sons held it for Him. To fight it was to fight God. "Calves of gold" and an army make a poor pair. Numbers mean nothing if your gods are idols.

13:9 *a priest to no-gods* Anyone with a bull and seven rams could buy his way into Jeroboam's priesthood. A god you can make is no god at all. Anything we make or buy and then trust in place of the living God is a no-god that cannot save.

13:11 *we are keeping the charge of the LORD our God* Abijah lists the true priests, the daily offerings, the incense, the bread and the lampstand. 1 Kings 15:3 says he walked in his father's sins, so his life did not match all his words. But that day he stood for the truth, and God honored Judah's trust. God's blessing came not because Abijah was perfect, but because Judah leaned on God in that hour.

13:12 *the trumpets of the shout* The Law said priests were to blow trumpets in battle so God would remember His people and save them (Num 10:9).

13:14 *they cried out to the LORD* Surrounded front and back, they did not panic and run. They prayed. When you are surrounded, the only direction left to look is up.

13:15 *God struck Jeroboam and all Israel* Like Jericho (Josh 6:20), the victory came from God. Five hundred thousand fell in a civil war between brothers (13:17). We should not cheer it. The Chronicler records it to show how serious it is to fight against God and His covenant.

13:18 *for they leaned on the LORD* To lean on the LORD is to put your full weight on Him. The word returns in Asa's life, for good and for bad (14:11; 16:7-8). Trust in the LORD with all your heart (Prov 3:5). What are you leaning on today?

13:19 *Bethel and its villages* Bethel, only about 12 miles north of Jerusalem, held one of Jeroboam's golden calves (1 Kgs 12:29). Taking it struck at his false worship.

13:20 *the LORD struck him, and he died* Jeroboam outlived Abijah by a year or two (1 Kgs 14:20; 15:9), so this sums up the rest of his life. The man who made Israel sin met the God he had rejected.

13:22 *the record of the prophet Iddo* The Hebrew word is midrash, a study or written account. Abijah reigned only three years, and his one great day was the day he leaned on God. What will people remember about your life?

14:1 *in his days the land was quiet ten years* "Lay down with his fathers" is a gentle way of saying he died. Asa reigned about 910 to 869 B.C. Verse 6 says why there was peace: "the LORD had given rest to him." Peace came from God to a king who sought Him.

14:2 *the good and the right in the eyes of the LORD his God* The highest praise a king of Judah could receive. The standard was God's eyes, not the people's or his own.

14:3 *he cut down the Asherim* High places were hilltop shrines for idols or for worship God had forbidden. Pillars were standing stones for false gods. An Asherah was a wooden pole or image of the Canaanite fertility goddess, whose worship was tied to immoral practices. God had commanded all of these destroyed (Deut 7:5; 12:2-3).

he removed the altars of foreignness and the high places, and he broke the pillars, and he cut down the Asherim. **4** And he told Judah (Yehuda) to seek the LORD, the God of their fathers, and to do the law and the commandment. **5** And he removed from all the cities of Judah the high places and the incense altars; and the kingdom was quiet before him. **6** And he built cities of fortification in Judah, for the land was quiet, and ***there was*** no war with him in these years, for the LORD had given rest to him. **7** And he said to Judah, "Let us build these cities, and let us surround ***them with*** wall and towers, double doors and bars; the land ***is*** still before us, for we have sought the LORD our God; we have sought ***Him***, and He has given rest to us all around." And they built and prospered. **8** And Asa had an army bearing large shield and spear: from Judah three hundred thousand, and from Benjamin (Binyamin), bearers of shield and benders of bow, two hundred and eighty thousand; all these ***were*** mighty men of strength.

Asa Defeats Zerah the Cushite

9 And Zerah (Zerach) the Cushite came out against them with an army of a thousand thousands, and three hundred chariots; and he came as far as Mareshah (Maresha). **10** And Asa went out before him, and they drew up battle in the Valley of Zephathah (Tsefata) at Mareshah. **11** And Asa called to the LORD his God, and he said, "LORD, ***there is*** none with You to help between the great and ***the one with*** no strength. Help us, O LORD our God, for we lean on You, and in Your name we have come against this multitude. O LORD, You ***are*** our God; let not man retain ***strength*** against You." **12** And the LORD struck the Cushites before Asa and before Judah, and the Cushites fled. **13** And Asa and the people who ***were*** with him pursued them as far as Gerar; and of the Cushites ***men*** fell until there was no recovery for them, for they were broken before the LORD and before His camp. And they carried away very much booty. **14** And they struck all the cities around Gerar, for the dread of the LORD was on them; and they plundered all the cities, for there was much plunder in them. **15** And also the tents of livestock they struck, and they took captive sheep in abundance and camels; and they returned ***to*** Jerusalem (Yerushalayim).

2 CHRONICLES 15

Azariah's Message

1 And Azariah (Azaryahu) the son of Oded, the Spirit of God came on him. **2** And he went out before Asa, and he said to him, "Listen to me, Asa and all Judah (Yehuda) and Benjamin (Binyamin): the LORD ***is*** with you while you are with Him; and if you seek Him, He will be found by you; and if you forsake Him, He will forsake you. **3** And many days ***have been*** for Israel (Yisra'el) without the God of truth, and without a teaching priest, and without law. **4** And in its distress it turned back to the LORD, the God of Israel, and they sought Him, and He was found by them. **5** And in those times ***there was*** no peace for the one going out and for the one coming in, for great disturbances ***were*** on all the inhabitants of the lands. **6** And they were crushed, nation by nation and city by

14:4 2 Chr 29:21,27,30; 2 Chr 30:12; 2 Chr 33:16
14:5 2 Chr 34:4
14:6 2 Chr 15:15; 1 Chr 22:9; Job 34:29
14:7 2 Chr 32:5; Acts 9:31; John 9:4
14:8 Matt 1:7; 2 Chr 13:3; 2 Chr 11:1
14:9 2 Chr 16:8; 2 Chr 12:2,3; Josh 15:44
14:10 Matt 1:7; Josh 19:4; Judg 1:17
14:11 Matt 1:7; 2 Chr 13:14; 2 Cor 12:9,10
14:12 Matt 1:7; 2 Chr 13:15; 2 Chr 20:22
14:13 Matt 1:7; Gen 20:1; Gen 26:1
14:14 2 Chr 17:10; Gen 35:5; 2 Chr 20:29
14:15 1 Chr 4:41; Num 31:9,30-47; 1 Sam 30:20
15:1 2 Chr 20:14; 2 Chr 24:20; Num 24:2
15:2 Rom 11:1; 2 Chr 24:20; James 4:8
15:3 Lev 10:11; 1 Kgs 12:28-33; Hos 3:4
15:4 Rom 10:20; 2 Chr 15:15; Isa 55:6
15:5 Luke 21:25; Judg 5:6; 1 Sam 13:6
15:6 Luke 21:23; Luke 21:24; 2 Chr 12:15

14:4 *he told Judah to seek the LORD* Removing idols is only half of a revival. The other half is turning to God and His Word. An empty heart soon fills with new idols (Matt 12:43-45). 15:17 says the high places were not removed from Israel, which may mean shrines to the LORD, the northern areas or later rebuilding. Asa's heart was right, even if his reform was not complete.

14:7 *we have sought Him, and He has given rest to us all around* Asa used peace to build, and he said "sought" twice so the people would know where peace came from. Quiet seasons are for building: knowledge of God's Word, habits of prayer, ties with other believers. When the storm comes, it is too late to lay a foundation.

14:8 *mighty men of strength* Asa trained and equipped his army. As we will see, he did not trust in it.

14:9 *Zerah the Cushite* Cush was the region south of Egypt, ancient Nubia, in what is now Sudan. Zerah may have been a commander serving Egypt or a chieftain of Cushites near Gerar. History does not tell us. "A thousand thousands" may be a literal count or a way of saying a vast army. Mareshah was one of Rehoboam's fortresses (11:8).

14:11 *there is none with You to help between the great and the one with no strength* One of the finest prayers in Chronicles, three sentences long. It makes no difference to God whether the one He helps is strong or weak (1 Sam 14:6).

14:11 *for we lean on You, and in Your name we have come against this multitude* Asa leaned on God, not on 580,000 soldiers, and made the battle about God's honor. Begin with who God is, admit your weakness, lean your full weight on Him, and ask Him to act for His name's sake. He does not always give victory the way we expect, but He always hears and does what brings Him glory and His people good (Rom 8:28).

14:13 *they were broken before the LORD and before His camp* Judah's army was God's camp. "The battle belongs to the LORD" (1 Sam 17:47). Gerar lay in the south toward the Philistine coast.

14:15 *they returned to Jerusalem* A great victory from God. But victories can be dangerous too. Chapter 15 shows God sending a prophet right away to tell Asa how to keep walking with Him, and chapter 16 shows what happened when Asa forgot this day.

15:1 *the Spirit of God came on him* In the Old Testament the Spirit came on certain people for certain tasks. Azariah appears once, gives God's word and disappears. God does not need famous people to speak through.

15:2 *The LORD is with you while you are with Him* One of the key verses of the book, and every king in Chronicles is measured by it. God sent this word to an army coming home from victory, when we are most likely to drift. Azariah spoke to the nation under the covenant of Moses. For a believer in Christ, salvation does not come and go with our faithfulness (John 10:28; Heb 13:5). But when we turn our backs, we lose the sense of His nearness and He disciplines us to bring us back (Heb 12:6). "Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you" (James 4:8).

15:3 *without the God of truth, and without a teaching priest, and without law* This sounds like the days of the judges (Judg 21:25), and some think he also looked ahead, as Hosea 3:4 uses similar words. A people without God's Word taught to them drifts into chaos. That is why faithful Bible teaching matters in every church and home.

15:4 *they sought Him, and He was found by them* The pattern of Judges: sin, trouble, crying out, deliverance. God has always been found by those who seek Him, even after long turning away. It is never too late to turn back.

city, for God troubled them with every distress. **7** And you, be strong, and let not your hands drop, for there is a reward for your work."

Asa's Covenant and Reform

8 And when Asa heard these words and the prophecy of Oded the prophet, he strengthened himself, and he took away the detestable things from all the land of Judah and Benjamin and from the cities which he had captured from the hill country of Ephraim (Efrayim); and he renewed the altar of the LORD which ***was*** before the porch of the LORD. **9** And he gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and those sojourning with them from Ephraim and Manasseh (Menashe) and from Simeon (Shimon); for they had deserted to him from Israel in abundance when they saw that the LORD his God ***was*** with him. **10** And they gathered together ***at*** Jerusalem
(Yerushalayim) in the third month of the fifteenth year of the reign of Asa. **11** And they sacrificed to the LORD on that day, from the booty ***which*** they had brought, seven hundred cattle and seven thousand sheep. **12** And they entered into the covenant to seek the LORD, the God of their fathers, with all their heart and with all their soul; **13** and everyone who would not seek the LORD, the God of Israel, should be put to death, from small to great, from man to woman. **14** And they swore to the LORD with a loud voice, and with a shout, and with trumpets, and with rams' horns. **15** And all Judah rejoiced over the oath, for with all their heart they had sworn, and with all their will they had sought Him, and He was found by them; and the LORD gave them rest all around. **16** And also Maacah (Ma'akha), the mother of Asa the king, he removed her from ***being*** queen mother, who had made a horrid image for Asherah; and Asa cut down her horrid image, and crushed ***it***, and burned ***it*** in the Wadi of Kidron (Qidron). **17** And the high places were not removed from Israel; only the heart of Asa was complete all his days. **18** And he brought the holy things of his father and his own holy things ***into*** the house of God: silver and gold and utensils. **19** And there was no war until the thirty-fifth year of the reign of Asa.

2 CHRONICLES 16

Asa Leans on Syria

1 In the thirty-sixth year of the reign of Asa, Baasha (Basha) king of Israel (Yisra'el) came up against Judah (Yehuda), and he built Ramah (Rama), so as not to allow anyone going out or coming in to Asa king of Judah. **2** And Asa brought out silver and gold from the treasuries of the house of the LORD and of the house of the king, and he sent ***it*** to Ben-hadad king of Syria (Aram), who dwelt in Damascus (Dameseq), saying, **3** "***There is*** a covenant between me and you, and between my father and your father. Look, I have sent to you silver and gold. Go, break your covenant with Baasha king of Israel, so that he may go up from on me." **4** And Ben-hadad listened to King Asa, and he sent the commanders of the armies which ***were*** his against the cities of Israel; and they struck Ijon (Iyon) and Dan and Abel-maim (Avel-Mayim), and all the storage places of the cities of Naphtali (Naftali). **5** And it was, when Baasha heard, that he ceased from building Ramah,

15:7 Matt 5:12; Josh 1:7,9; 1 Chr 28:20
15:8 Acts 28:15; 2 Chr 13:19; 2 Chr 8:12
15:9 2 Chr 11:16; 2 Chr 30:1-11,25; 1 Kgs 12:19
15:10 Esth 8:9
15:11 2 Chr 14:13-15; Num 31:28,29,50; 1 Sam 15:15,21
15:12 Acts 24:14; 2 Chr 23:16; 2 Chr 29:10
15:13 Acts 26:22; Rev 20:12; Exod 22:20
15:14 Neh 5:13; Neh 10:29; Ps 81:1-4
15:15 2 Cor 1:12; 2 Chr 23:16-21; 2 Chr 29:10,36
15:16 Mark 3:34; John 18:1; 1 Kgs 15:13-24
15:17 2 Chr 14:3-5; Deut 12:13,14; 1 Kgs 3:2-4
15:18 1 Kgs 7:51; 1 Kgs 15:14,15; 1 Chr 26:20-26
15:19 2 Chr 16:1; 1 Kgs 15:16,17,31,33
16:1 1 Kgs 15:16-22; 2 Chr 11:13-17; 2 Chr 15:5,9
16:2 2 Chr 28:21; 2 Kgs 12:18; 2 Kgs 16:8
16:3 2 Chr 18:3; 2 Chr 19:2; Judg 2:2
16:4 1 Tim 6:10; 2 Pet 2:15; 1 Kgs 15:20

15:7 *let not your hands drop, for there is a reward for your work* Hands dropping is a picture of giving up halfway. Asa had begun a reform and needed courage to finish it. Our labor in the Lord is not in vain (1 Cor 15:58), and we will reap if we do not give up (Gal 6:9). God sees faithful work when no one else does.

15:8 *the prophecy of Oded the prophet* The prophecy is called both Azariah's and his father Oded's, perhaps because the son spoke in his father's name or a word was lost in copying. Asa removed the idols, "the detestable things," and repaired Solomon's altar, making true worship possible again.

15:9 *when they saw that the LORD his God was with him* Northerners kept coming south (11:16), drawn not by Asa's army or wealth but by evidence that God was with him. That is still how people are drawn to the Lord.

15:10 *in the third month of the fifteenth year* About 895 B.C., the time of the Feast of Weeks. They offered from the plunder of the victory over Zerah (15:11). What God gave in battle, they gave back in worship.

15:12 *with all their heart and with all their soul* A covenant renewal, echoing the great command of Deuteronomy 6:5, which Jesus called the first and greatest (Matt 22:37-38).

15:13 *should be put to death, from small to great* This came from the Law, which commanded death for those in Israel who served or led others to other gods (Deut 13:6-10; 17:2-7). Israel was a nation under God's direct rule, and idolatry was treason against its King. We do not know whether or how often it was carried out. It is not a pattern for the church or any government today. Jesus told Peter to put away his sword (Matt 26:52) and said His kingdom is not of this world (John 18:36). Faith that is forced is not faith at all.

15:15 *all Judah rejoiced over the oath* The people were glad, not grim. Giving ourselves fully to God is a joy. God kept Azariah's word exactly: "He was found by them."

15:16 *Maacah, the mother of Asa the king* She was his grandmother (11:20-22). "Mother" can mean an ancestor, and the queen mother was an official title of honor and influence. Her "horrid image" was a thing to shudder at. It takes courage to confront your own family. Faithfulness to God must sometimes come before family loyalty (Matt 10:37), though always with love and respect.

15:17 *only the heart of Asa was complete all his days* Some high places remained, but God looked at his heart, undivided toward Him (1 Kgs 15:14). Since chapter 16 shows Asa failing, this most likely means he never turned to idols. His later sin was a failure of trust.

15:19 *there was no war until the thirty-fifth year* 1 Kings 16:8 has Baasha dead in Asa's twenty-sixth year. A common explanation counts these years from the division of the kingdom, about Asa's fifteenth and sixteenth years. Others think a copyist changed fifteen and sixteen to thirty-five and thirty-six. The war "all their days" (1 Kgs 15:16) was probably border fighting.

16:1 *he built Ramah* Ramah was only about five miles north of Jerusalem on the main road. A fort there choked Jerusalem's northern door and stopped northerners coming south to worship (15:9).

16:3 *Go, break your covenant with Baasha king of Israel* Syria (Aram in Hebrew) lay northeast of Israel. Asa paid a pagan king with treasures he had dedicated to God (15:18) to break his word. Against a million men he had prayed, "we lean on You" (14:11). Against a smaller threat he did not pray at all. We often trust God with the big crises and try to fix the smaller ones ourselves.

and he caused his work to cease. **6** And Asa the king took all Judah, and they carried away the stones of Ramah and its timber, which Baasha had built; and he built with them Geba (Geva) and Mizpah (Mitspa).

Hanani Rebukes Asa

7 And at that time Hanani (Chanani) the seer came to Asa king of Judah, and he said to him, "Because you leaned on the king of Syria and did not lean on the LORD your God, therefore the army of the king of Syria has escaped from your hand. **8** Were not the Cushites and the Libyans an army for multitude, for chariotry and for horsemen, in very great abundance? And because you leaned on the LORD, He gave them into your hand. **9** For the LORD, His eyes are roving in all the earth to show Himself strong with ***those*** whose heart ***is*** complete toward Him. You have acted foolishly in this, for from now on there are wars with you." **10** And Asa was angry with the seer, and he put him ***in*** the house of the stocks, for ***he was*** in a rage with him over this. And Asa crushed some of the people at that time.

Asa's Last Years

11 And look, the matters of Asa, the first and the last, look, they ***are*** written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel. **12** And Asa became sick in the thirty-ninth year of his reign in his feet, until his sickness ***went*** upward; and also in his sickness he did not seek the LORD, but ***sought*** among the physicians. **13** And Asa lay down with his fathers, and he died in the forty-first year of his reign. **14** And they buried him in his graves which he had dug for himself in the city of David, and they laid him in the bed which he had filled ***with*** spices and kinds blended as an ointment of ***skilled*** work; and they burned for him a great burning, exceedingly.

2 CHRONICLES 17

Jehoshaphat Seeks the LORD

1 And Jehoshaphat (Yehoshafat) his son reigned in his place, and he strengthened himself against Israel (Yisra'el). **2** And he put an army in all the fortified cities of Judah (Yehuda), and he put garrisons in the land of Judah and in the cities of Ephraim (Efrayim) which Asa his father had captured. **3** And the LORD was with Jehoshaphat, for he walked in the former ways of David his father, and he did not seek the Baals, **4** for he sought the God of his father, and he walked in His commandments, and not according to the deeds of Israel. **5** And the LORD established the kingdom in his hand, and all Judah gave tribute to Jehoshaphat; and he had riches and honor in abundance. **6** And his heart was high in the ways of the LORD; and again he removed the high places and the Asherim from Judah.

Teachers Sent Through Judah

7 And in the third year of his reign he sent for his officials, for Ben-hail (Ben-Chayil), and for Obadiah (Ovadya), and for Zechariah (Zekharya), and for Nethanel (Netanel), and for Micaiah (Mikhayahu), to teach in the cities of Judah. **8** And with them ***were*** the Levites: Shemaiah (Shemayahu), and Nethaniah (Netanyahu), and Zebadiah (Zevadyahu), and Asahel, and Shemiramoth (Shemiramot), and Jehonathan (Yehonatan), and Adonijah (Adoniyahu), and Tobijah (Toviyahu), and Tobadonijah (Tov-Adoniya), the Levites; and

16:6 1 Kgs 15:22; Josh 18:24-26; 2 Chr 21:17
16:7 1 Kgs 16:1; 2 Chr 19:2; Isa 31:1
16:8 Heb 11:34; 2 Chr 12:3; 2 Chr 14:9-12
16:9 Heb 4:13; Zech 4:10; Prov 15:3
16:10 2 Chr 18:26; 2 Chr 25:16; 2 Chr 26:19
16:11 2 Chr 9:29; 2 Chr 12:15; 2 Chr 20:34
16:12 Matt 9:12; Jer 17:5; 2 Chr 28:22
16:13 1 Kgs 15:24
16:14 Gen 50:2; 2 Chr 21:19; Jer 34:5

17:1 Matt 1:8; 1 Kgs 15:24; 2 Chr 32:5
17:2 Matt 1:8; 2 Chr 15:8; 2 Chr 11:11,12
17:3 Matt 1:8; 2 Chr 15:2,9; Exod 3:12
17:4 1 Kgs 12:28,30,33; Luke 1:6; 1 Thess 2:12
17:5 Matt 1:8; 2 Chr 18:1; Ps 127:1
17:6 Acts 13:10; 2 Chr 15:17; 2 Chr 20:33
17:7 2 Chr 35:3; 2 Chr 15:3; Deut 4:5
17:8 Matt 1:8; Ezra 7:1-6; Mal 2:7

16:6 *he built with them Geba and Mizpah* By every human measure it worked. But a plan that works is not always a plan that pleases God.
16:7 *Because you leaned on the king of Syria* Hanani was a seer, a prophet, and father of the prophet Jehu (19:2). Asa thought he had won, but God says he lost. Had he trusted God, Syria too would have been defeated, and Syria troubled Israel and Judah for the next century and a half.
16:8 *because you leaned on the LORD, He gave them into your hand* Asa had already proved God was enough, and he forgot. Past faith is no guarantee of present faith. We must keep leaning on God every day.
16:9 *His eyes are roving in all the earth to show Himself strong* The heart of the chapter, and one of the most encouraging verses in the Old Testament. God is not looking for reasons to punish. He is looking for people to strengthen, not the strongest or richest, but those "whose heart is complete toward Him." His power is made perfect in weakness (2 Cor 12:9-10). Is your heart complete toward Him today, or divided between God and your own plans?
16:9 *from now on there are wars with you* Asa had bought peace, but it was not God's peace.
16:10 *he put him in the house of the stocks* A wooden frame that held a prisoner in a painful position. The first time in Chronicles a king of Judah persecuted a prophet, and not the last (24:20-21; Jer 20:2). Pride makes us hate those who tell us the truth (Prov 12:1). Our response to correction from God's Word shows the condition of our heart.
16:12 *he did not seek the LORD, but sought among the physicians* The Bible does not condemn medicine. Luke was "the beloved physician" (Col 4:14), and Isaiah prescribed figs for Hezekiah (Isa 38:21). The problem was that Asa went only to doctors and not to God. Some think those physicians also used pagan practices. When sick, we should pray first and use the means God provides, trusting Him through them.
16:14 *they burned for him a great burning* Not cremation, but a great fire of spices in his honor (Jer 34:5). Asa tore down idols and trusted God against a million men, but he finished poorly. Starting well is wonderful. Finishing well is better (2 Tim 4:7). Pray that God will keep your heart complete toward Him to the end.
17:1 *he strengthened himself against Israel* Jehoshaphat reigned about 872 to 848 B.C., counting a few years ruling beside his sick father. A garrison (17:2) was a post of soldiers stationed to hold a place. He began by protecting what God had given.
17:3 *the former ways of David his father* David's early years were his best, before Bathsheba. Some copies leave out David and mean Asa's good early years. Either way, he followed the best in those before him.
17:3 *he did not seek the Baals* Baal was the chief Canaanite god, believed to give rain, storms and fertile fields, and "the Baals" are his many local forms. Ahab and Jezebel were spreading his worship in the north (1 Kgs 16:31-33). Jehoshaphat sought God, and Azariah's promise came true (15:2).
17:6 *his heart was high in the ways of the LORD* A good kind of high heart. Elsewhere it means pride (26:16; 32:25). Here it means courage and joy, bold zeal for God's ways. He removed high places again. Reform is never finished once and for all, and some still remained (20:33).
17:7 *to teach in the cities of Judah* Officials, Levites and priests went out together. Teaching the Law was a main job of the priests and Levites (Lev 10:11; Deut 33:10), and Israel's dark days came when they were "without a teaching priest" (15:3). Jehoshaphat fixed that.

with them Elishama and Jehoram (Yehoram), the priests. **9** And they taught in Judah, and with them ***was*** the book of the law of the LORD; and they went around in all the cities of Judah, and they taught among the people.

Jehoshaphat Grows Strong

10 And the dread of the LORD was on all the kingdoms of the lands which ***were*** around Judah, and they did not make war with Jehoshaphat. **11** And some of the Philistines ***were*** bringing to Jehoshaphat tribute, and silver ***as*** a load; also the Arabs ***were*** bringing to him flocks: seven thousand seven hundred rams and seven thousand seven hundred male goats. **12** And Jehoshaphat was going on and becoming great, to the uppermost; and he built in Judah fortresses and cities of storage. **13** And he had much work in the cities of Judah; and men of war, mighty men of strength, ***were*** in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). **14** And these ***were*** their musterings by the house of their fathers: of Judah, commanders of thousands: Adnah (Adna) the commander, and with him three hundred thousand mighty men of strength; **15** and at his hand Jehohanan (Yehochanan) the commander, and with him two hundred and eighty thousand; **16** and at his hand Amasiah (Amasya) the son of Zichri (Zikhri), who volunteered himself to the LORD, and with him two hundred thousand mighty men of strength. **17** And from Benjamin (Binyamin): a
mighty man of strength, Eliada (Elyada), and with him two hundred thousand armed with bow and shield; **18** and at his hand Jehozabad (Yehozavad), and with him a hundred and eighty thousand equipped for war. **19** These ***were*** those serving the king, besides those whom the king put in the cities of fortification in all Judah.

2 CHRONICLES 18

Jehoshaphat Allies with Ahab

1 And Jehoshaphat (Yehoshafat) had riches and honor in abundance; and he allied himself by marriage to Ahab (Achav). **2** And at the end of ***some*** years he went down to Ahab, to Samaria (Shomron); and Ahab slaughtered for him and for the people who ***were*** with him sheep and cattle in abundance; and he lured him to go up against Ramoth-gilead (Ramot-Gilad). **3** And Ahab king of Israel (Yisra'el) said to Jehoshaphat king of Judah (Yehuda), "Will you go with me ***to*** Ramoth-gilead?" And he said to him, "As I ***am***, so ***are*** you, and as your people, so ***are*** my people; and ***we will be*** with you in the battle." **4** And Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, "Inquire, please, today ***for*** the word of the LORD." **5** And the king of Israel gathered the prophets, four hundred men, and he said to them, "Shall we go against Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I refrain?" And they said, "Go up, and God will give ***it*** into the hand of the king." **6** And Jehoshaphat said, "Is there not here still a prophet of the LORD, that we may inquire of him?" **7** And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "***There is*** still one man by whom to inquire of the LORD; and I, I hate him, for he is not prophesying good concerning me, but all his days evil: he ***is*** Micaiah (Mikhayhu) the son of Imlah (Yimla)." And Jehoshaphat said, "Let not the king say so." **8** And the king of Israel called a certain official, and he said, "Bring Micaiah the son of Imlah quickly." **9** And the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah ***were*** sitting, each on his throne, clothed ***in*** garments, and ***they were*** sitting at the threshing floor at the entrance of the gate of Samaria; and all the prophets ***were*** prophesying before them. **10** And Zedekiah (Tsidqiyahu) the son of Chenaanah
(Kena'ana) made for himself horns of iron, and he said, "Thus says the LORD: 'With these you will gore Syria (Aram) until ***you*** destroy them.'" **11** And all the prophets ***were*** prophesying thus, saying, "Go up ***to*** Ramoth-gilead and succeed, and the LORD will give ***it*** into the hand of the king."

17:9 Acts 13:15; Acts 28:23; Luke 4:18
17:10 Matt 1:8; 2 Chr 14:14; Gen 35:5
17:11 Matt 1:8; Acts 2:11; 2 Chr 26:8
17:12 Matt 1:8; 2 Chr 18:1; 1 Chr 29:25
17:13 2 Chr 26:10-15; 1 Chr 27:25-31
17:14 Gen 12:2; Gen 13:16; Gen 15:5
17:16 Judg 5:2,9; 1 Chr 29:9,14,17; Ps 110:3
17:17 2 Chr 14:8; 2 Sam 1:21,22
17:19 2 Chr 17:2,12; 2 Chr 11:12,23
18:1 2 Chr 17:5,12; 2 Chr 21:6; 2 Chr 19:2
18:2 1 Kgs 17:7; Neh 13:6; 2 Chr 19:2
18:3 1 Kgs 22:4; 2 Kgs 3:7; Ps 139:21
18:4 2 Chr 34:26; 1 Sam 23:2; 2 Sam 2:1
18:5 1 Kgs 18:19; 2 Kgs 3:13; 2 Tim 4:3
18:6 1 Kgs 22:7-9; 2 Kgs 3:11-13
18:7 Luke 6:22; 1 Kgs 18:4; 1 Kgs 19:10
18:8 1 Sam 8:15; 1 Chr 28:1; Isa 39:7
18:9 1 Kgs 22:10-12; Isa 14:9; Ezek 26:16
18:10 Jer 27:2; Jer 28:10-14; Zech 1:18-21
18:11 Jude 1:16; 2 Chr 18:5,12,33,34; Prov 24:24,25

17:9 *the book of the law of the LORD* They did not teach their own ideas, most likely the five books of Moses. You cannot keep idols out unless you fill minds with God's truth (2 Tim 4:2; Matt 28:19-20). A church or family not taught the Bible will drift, however sincere. You do not need to be a priest to teach your children or lead a small group through Scripture.
17:10 *they did not make war with Jehoshaphat* He sent out teachers, not soldiers, and the result was peace. When God's people take His Word seriously, God Himself becomes their defense. Philistines and desert Arab tribes brought tribute, honor like Solomon's (9:23-24).
17:12 *Jehoshaphat was going on and becoming great* Seeking God and being prepared are not opposites. Nehemiah's workers prayed and set a guard (Neh 4:9). Faith is not laziness.
17:14 *by the house of their fathers* By family groups. The total comes to 1,160,000 besides the fortress troops. I take the numbers as written (see 11:1). God blessed Jehoshaphat with strength as he sought Him.
17:16 *who volunteered himself to the LORD* Nothing else is known of Amasiah. Among more than a million soldiers, one man is remembered for a willing heart. God notices those who present themselves to Him (Rom 12:1).
18:1 *he allied himself by marriage to Ahab* He did not need Ahab. God had given him everything. His son Jehoram married Ahab's daughter Athaliah (21:6; 22:2), and that marriage nearly wiped out David's line (22:10). It may have looked wise. It was a disaster. The closest partnerships of our lives, especially marriage, shape us and our children for generations (2 Cor 6:14).
18:2 *he lured him to go up against Ramoth-gilead* Ramoth-gilead was a city east of the Jordan that Syria had taken. The same word lured returns when a lying spirit lures Ahab (18:20) and when God lures the enemy away (18:31). The tempter became the tempted.
18:3 *As I am, so are you* Jehoshaphat made himself one with Ahab before asking God anything. How often do we commit ourselves first and ask God's blessing afterward?
18:6 *Is there not here still a prophet of the LORD* Four hundred court prophets told the king what he wanted to hear, and Jehoshaphat sensed something was wrong.
18:7 *I, I hate him, for he is not prophesying good concerning me* Ahab hated Micaiah because he told the truth. Many still reject God's Word for the same reason (2 Tim 4:3-4).
18:10 *horns of iron* Zedekiah's prop pictured goring the enemy. Four hundred voices in the LORD's name were all wrong. Truth is not decided by a vote.

Micaiah Prophesies

12 And the messenger who had gone to call Micaiah spoke to him, saying, "Look, the words of the prophets ***are*** good concerning the king ***with*** one mouth; and let your word, please, be like one of them, and speak good." **13** And Micaiah said, "***As*** the LORD lives, surely what my God says, that I will speak." **14** And he came to the king, and the king said to him, "Micaiah (Mikha), shall we go against Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I refrain?" And he said, "Go up and succeed, and they will be given into your hand." **15** And the king said to him, "Up to how many times will I make you swear that you will not speak to me ***anything*** but truth in the name of the LORD?" **16** And he said, "I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains like the flock which has no shepherd. And the LORD said, 'These have no masters; let them return each to his house in peace.'" **17** And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "Did I not say to you ***that*** he will not prophesy good concerning me, but evil?" **18** And he said, "Therefore hear the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on His throne, and all the host of the heavens standing on His right and on His left. **19** And the LORD said, 'Who will entice Ahab king of Israel, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead?' And ***one*** said, this ***one*** saying thus, and this ***one*** saying thus. **20** And the spirit came out and stood before the LORD, and said, 'I, I will entice him.' And the LORD said to him, 'By what?' **21** And he said, 'I will go out and become a spirit of falsehood in the mouth of all his prophets.' And He said, 'You will entice, and also you will prevail. Go out and do so.' **22** And now, look, the LORD has put a spirit of falsehood in the mouth of these your prophets; and the LORD has spoken evil concerning you." **23** And Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah drew near and struck Micaiah on the cheek, and he said, "Which way ***is*** this ***that*** the Spirit of the LORD passed from me to speak with you?" **24** And Micaiah said, "Look, you will see on that day when you go into a room within a room to hide yourself." **25** And the king of Israel said, "Take Micaiah and bring him back to Amon the official of the city and to Joash (Yo'ash) the son of the king, **26** and you will say, 'Thus says the king: Put this ***one*** in the house of confinement, and feed him bread of oppression and water of oppression until I return in peace.'" **27** And Micaiah said, "If you indeed return in peace, the LORD has not spoken by me." And he said, "Hear, O peoples, all of them!"

The Death of Ahab

28 And the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah went up against Ramoth-gilead. **29** And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "I will disguise myself and go into the battle; and you, put on your garments." And the king of Israel disguised himself, and they went into the battle. **30** And the king of Syria had commanded the commanders of the chariotry which ***belonged*** to him, saying, "Do not fight with the small ***or*** with the great, but with the king of Israel, him alone." **31** And it was, when the commanders of the chariotry saw Jehoshaphat, and they said, "He ***is*** the king of Israel," and they turned against him to fight; and Jehoshaphat cried out, and the LORD helped him, and God lured them away from him. **32** And it was, when the commanders of the chariotry saw that he was not the king of Israel, that they turned back from after him. **33** And a man drew on the bow in his innocence, and he struck the king of Israel between the joints and the body armor; and he said to the charioteer, "Turn your hand and take me out of the camp, for I am wounded." **34** And the battle increased on that day; and the king of Israel was holding ***himself*** upright in the chariot opposite Syria until the evening; and he died at the time of the setting of the sun.

18:12 Job 22:13; Ps 10:11; Isa 30:10
18:13 Num 22:18-20,35; Num 24:13; Num 23:12,26
18:14 1 Kgs 18:27; 1 Kgs 22:15; Eccl 11:1
18:15 Acts 19:13; 1 Sam 14:24; 1 Kgs 22:16
18:16 Matt 9:36; 1 Kgs 22:17,34-36; Ezek 34:5,6,8
18:17 2 Chr 18:7; 1 Kgs 22:18; Prov 29:1
18:18 Acts 7:55; Dan 7:9; Isa 6:1-5
18:19 1 Kgs 22:20; Job 12:16; Isa 6:9,10
18:20 Job 1:6; Job 2:1; 2 Cor 11:3,13-15
18:21 John 8:44; Gen 3:4,5; 1 Kgs 22:21,22
18:22 Matt 26:24; Mark 14:21; Isa 19:14
18:23 Luke 6:29; Jer 20:2; Mark 14:65
18:24 Isa 26:11; Jer 28:16,17; Jer 29:21,22,32
18:25 2 Chr 18:8; Jer 37:15-21; Jer 38:6,7
18:26 2 Chr 16:10; 2 Chr 18:15; 1 Kgs 22:26-28
18:27 Matt 15:10; Mark 7:14; Num 16:29
18:28 1 Kgs 22:29-33
18:29 1 Sam 28:8; 1 Kgs 14:2-6; 1 Kgs 20:38
18:30 1 Kgs 20:33,34,42; 2 Chr 15:13; Gen 19:11
18:31 2 Chr 13:14; 2 Chr 14:11; Exod 14:10
18:32 1 Kgs 22:33
18:33 1 Kgs 22:34; 2 Sam 15:11; 2 Chr 35:23
18:34 2 Chr 18:16,19,27; Num 32:23; Prov 13:21

18:13 *As the LORD lives, surely what my God says, that I will speak* A sentence every preacher and every believer should make his own.
18:16 *like the flock which has no shepherd* Micaiah's first answer must have been mocking (18:14). The shepherd was the king. Ahab would die and his army go home leaderless. Jesus saw the crowds the same way (Mark 6:34).
18:18 *all the host of the heavens standing on His right and on His left* The host of heaven here is the angels, gathered around the LORD's throne.
18:21 *a spirit of falsehood in the mouth of all his prophets* A hard passage. God cannot lie (Titus 1:2; Heb 6:18) and tempts no one (James 1:13). Ahab had already chosen the lie, and God gave him over to what he loved, as with those who refuse the love of the truth (2 Thess 2:10-11). A spirit offered to deceive, and God permitted and used it, as He allowed Satan to test Job (Job 1:6-12). Many take this as a real look into the throne room, some think the spirit was Satan, and others take it as a vision in the form of a heavenly council. All agree God rules over all and does not lie (1 Kgs 22:19-23).
18:22 *the LORD has spoken evil concerning you* God told Ahab exactly what was happening. He exposed the false prophets and warned of disaster in the same breath. Even in judgment He gave a last chance.
18:23 *struck Micaiah on the cheek* Faithful people often suffer for telling the truth. Jesus was struck before the high priest (John 18:22-23), and the persecuted for righteousness are blessed (Matt 5:10-12).
18:27 *If you indeed return in peace, the LORD has not spoken by me* Micaiah staked everything on God's word and called all the peoples to witness who was right.
18:28 *went up against Ramoth-gilead* Jehoshaphat heard God's word plainly and went anyway. That is the saddest line in his story.
18:31 *Jehoshaphat cried out, and the LORD helped him* Kings says only that he cried out (1 Kgs 22:32). Chronicles adds that the LORD helped and lured the enemy away. God is merciful to His own even when they walk into trouble by their own foolishness. That does not make it right (19:2). Have you ever cried to God from a mess you made yourself, and found Him there?
18:33 *a man drew on the bow in his innocence* At random, aiming at no one. A disguise could fool the Syrians but not God. Ahab died at sunset, about 853 B.C. The four hundred were wrong, and the one prophet was right. No disguise, alliance or crowd of flattering voices can stand against God's word.

2 CHRONICLES 19

Jehu Rebukes Jehoshaphat

1 And Jehoshaphat (Yehoshafat) the king of Judah (Yehuda) returned to his house in peace, to Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). **2** And Jehu (Yehu) the son of Hanani (Chanani) the seer went out to face him, and he said to King Jehoshaphat, "Should ***you*** help the wicked, and will you love those who hate the LORD? And because of this, wrath ***is*** on you from before the LORD. **3** But good things have been found with you, for you have removed the Asherahs from the land, and you have set your heart to seek God."

Jehoshaphat Appoints Judges

4 And Jehoshaphat dwelt in Jerusalem. And he again went out among the people from Beersheba (Be'er-Sheva) to the hill country of Ephraim (Efrayim), and he turned them back to the LORD, the God of their fathers. **5** And he appointed judges in the land, in all the fortified cities of Judah, city by city. **6** And he said to the judges, "Consider what you are doing, for you do not judge for man, but for the LORD, and ***He is*** with you in the matter of judgment. **7** And now, let the dread of the LORD be on you. Take care and act, for there is no injustice with the LORD our God, and ***no*** lifting up of faces, and ***no*** taking of a bribe." **8** And also in Jerusalem
Jehoshaphat appointed some of the Levites and the priests and some of the heads of the fathers of Israel (Yisra'el), for the judgment of the LORD and for disputes. And they returned ***to*** Jerusalem. **9** And he commanded them, saying, "Thus you shall do in the fear of the LORD, in faithfulness and with a complete heart. **10** And every dispute that comes to you from your brothers who dwell in their cities, between blood and blood, between law and commandment, statutes and judgments, you shall warn them, so that they will not be guilty before the LORD and wrath ***not*** be on you and on your brothers. Thus you shall do, and you will not be guilty. **11** And look, Amariah (Amaryahu) the head priest ***is*** over you in every matter of the LORD, and Zebadiah (Zevadyahu) the son of Ishmael (Yishma'el), the leader of the house of Judah, in every matter of the king, and the Levites ***are*** officials before you. Be strong and act, and may the LORD be with the good."

2 CHRONICLES 20

Enemies Come Against Judah

1 And it was after this ***that*** the sons of Moab (Mo'av) and the sons of Ammon (Amon), and with them some of the
Ammonites, came against Jehoshaphat (Yehoshafat) for battle. **2** And ***some*** came and told Jehoshaphat, saying, "A great multitude is coming against you from beyond the sea, from Syria (Aram); and look, they ***are*** in Hazazon-tamar
(Chatsatson-Tamar), that ***is*** Engedi." **3** And Jehoshaphat was afraid, and he set his face to seek the LORD, and he proclaimed a fast over all Judah (Yehuda). **4** And Judah gathered together to seek ***help*** from the LORD; also from all the cities of Judah they came to seek the LORD.

Jehoshaphat's Prayer

5 And Jehoshaphat stood in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), in the house of the LORD, before the new courtyard. **6** And he said, "O LORD, God of our fathers, are You not He, God in the heavens? And You are

19:1 2 Chr 18:31,32
19:2 2 Chr 20:34; 1 Kgs 16:1,7,12; 2 Chr 16:7
19:3 2 Chr 12:12; 1 Kgs 14:13; Ezra 7:10
19:4 2 Chr 15:8-13; 1 Sam 7:15-17; Gen 21:33
19:5 Deut 16:18-20; 2 Chr 19:8; Rom 13:1-5
19:6 Luke 18:2; Deut 1:17; Josh 22:5
19:7 1 Pet 1:17; Luke 17:3; Luke 18:2
19:8 2 Chr 17:8; Deut 17:8-13; 1 Chr 23:4
19:9 2 Sam 23:3; 2 Chr 19:7; Deut 1:16,17
19:10 Deut 17:8-13; Ezek 3:18-21; Ezek 33:6
19:11 2 Chr 19:8; 1 Chr 26:30; 1 Chr 6:11
20:1 2 Chr 32:1; Ps 83:5-8; Isa 8:9,10
20:2 Gen 14:7; 1 Sam 23:29; Gen 14:3
20:3 2 Chr 19:3; 1 Sam 7:6; Jer 36:9
20:4 Ps 34:5,6; Ps 50:15; Ps 60:10-12
20:5 2 Chr 6:12,13; 2 Chr 34:31; 2 Kgs 19:15-19
20:6 1 Chr 29:11,12; Deut 4:39; Matt 6:9

19:1 *returned to his house in peace* Micaiah said Ahab would not return in peace (18:27), and he did not. Jehoshaphat did, only because he cried out and the LORD helped him (18:31). That is mercy, not a reward.
19:2 *Should you help the wicked, and will you love those who hate the LORD* Jehu's father Hanani had rebuked Asa and been jailed for it (16:7-10). Now the son does the same hard job. The wrath came in the invasion of chapter 20 and later in the ruin Ahab's daughter brought on Jehoshaphat's family (chapters 21-22).
19:3 *But good things have been found with you* An Asherah was a wooden pole or image for the Canaanite goddess, often beside a Baal altar. God does not ignore our sin, and He does not forget our faithfulness. Have you thought one failure cancelled everything God saw in you? The God who names the sin also names the good (Heb 12:6).
19:4 *he turned them back to the LORD, the God of their fathers* Unlike Asa, Jehoshaphat accepted the rebuke. From Beersheba in the south to the hill country of Ephraim in the north, he went himself this time (compare 17:7-9). The best answer to a rebuke is not an excuse but a changed life.
19:6 *you do not judge for man, but for the LORD* The Law commanded judges in every town (Deut 16:18-20), and Jehoshaphat's name means the LORD judges. A judge stood in God's place. Most of us make judgments as parents, employers and church leaders. Every one is made before the LORD.
19:7 *there is no injustice with the LORD our God* No "lifting up of faces," showing favor to someone because of who he is, and no bribe (Deut 10:17; 16:19). A judge was to be like the God he served. Do we treat rich and poor the same? James warns the church against partiality (James 2:1-9).
19:8 *some of the Levites and the priests and some of the heads of the fathers of Israel* A higher court in Jerusalem, like the one Moses described for hard cases (Deut 17:8-12). Levites served at God's house, priests were Aaron's descendants, and the heads of the fathers led the family clans.
19:10 *between blood and blood* Cases of killing, whether murder or accident (Num 35). Their job was also to "warn them," to teach people what God requires so they would not sin again. A good judge also teaches.
19:11 *Be strong and act, and may the LORD be with the good* Religious matters went to the priest, civil matters to the king's man. Doing justice takes courage. This picture points to the perfect Judge, the Son of David who judges with righteousness for the poor (Isa 11:3-4), to whom the Father has given all judgment (John 5:22).
20:1 *some of the Ammonites* Moab and Ammon came from Lot (Gen 19:36-38). The Hebrew names Ammonites twice. The old Greek reads Meunites, a desert people near Edom (compare 26:7), which fits verse 10's "mountain of Seir," Edom's hill country.
20:2 *from beyond the sea* The Dead Sea. They had come around its south end and reached Engedi, an oasis on the western shore about twenty-five miles from Jerusalem. A surprise attack, already close.
20:3 *Jehoshaphat was afraid, and he set his face to seek the LORD* The Bible does not hide the king's fear. Fear is not a sin. What matters is what we do with it, and he turned it into prayer. A fast is going without food for a time to give oneself to prayer, a sign of humbling oneself. This is 7:14 lived out.
20:6 *are You not He, God in the heavens* His prayer begins not with the problem but with God. Before he names the enemy, he reminds himself how big God is.

ruling over all the kingdoms of the nations, and in Your hand ***are*** power and might, and there is no one ***able*** to take a stand against You. **7** Are You not our God, ***who*** dispossessed the inhabitants of this land from before Your people Israel (Yisra'el), and You gave it to the seed of Abraham (Avraham) Your friend forever? **8** And they have dwelt in it, and they have built for You in it a sanctuary for Your name, saying, **9** 'If calamity comes on us, sword, judgment, and pestilence, and famine, we will stand before this house and before You, for Your name ***is*** in this house, and we will cry out to You from our distress, and You will hear and save.' **10** And now, look, the sons of Ammon and Moab and the mountain of Seir (Se'ir), whom You did not allow Israel to go into when they came from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim), for they turned aside from them and did not destroy them, **11** and look, they are repaying us by coming to drive us out from Your possession which You caused us to possess. **12** O our God, will You not judge them? For there is no strength in us before this great multitude that is coming against us, and we, we do not know what we should do; but our eyes ***are*** on You." **13** And all Judah ***was*** standing before the LORD, also their little ones, their wives, and their sons.

The Battle Is Not Yours

14 And Jahaziel (Yachazi'el) the son of Zechariah (Zekharyahu), the son of Benaiah (Benaya), the son of Jeiel (Ye'i'el), the son of Mattaniah (Matanya) the Levite, of the sons of Asaph (Asaf): the Spirit of the LORD was on him in the midst of the assembly. **15** And he said, "Pay attention, all Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem and King Jehoshaphat! Thus says the LORD to you: 'You, do not be afraid, and do not be dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle ***is*** not yours, but God's. **16** Tomorrow go down against them. Look, they are coming up by the ascent of Ziz (Tsits), and you will find them at the end of the wadi, in front of the wilderness of Jeruel (Yeru'el). **17** ***It is*** not for you to fight in this ***battle***. Take your stand, stand, and see the salvation of the LORD with you, O Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid, and do not be dismayed. Tomorrow go out before them, and the LORD ***will be*** with you.'" **18** And Jehoshaphat bowed ***with his*** face to the earth, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell before the LORD, to bow down to the LORD. **19** And the Levites, of the sons of the Kohathites and of the sons of the Korahites, rose up to praise the LORD, the God of Israel, with a great voice, upward.

Victory Through Praise

20 And they rose early in the morning, and they went out to the wilderness of Tekoa (Teqoa); and as they went out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, "Hear me, O Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem: Believe in the LORD your God, and you will be established; believe in His prophets, and succeed." **21** And he consulted with the people, and he appointed those who sang to the LORD and those who praised ***Him*** in the

20:7 James 2:23; Acts 13:26; 2 Cor 11:22
20:8 2 Chr 2:4; 2 Chr 6:10
20:9 2 Chr 6:28-30; 2 Chr 6:20; 1 Kgs 8:33,37
20:10 Num 20:17-21; Deut 2:4,5,9,19; Judg 11:15-18
20:11 Ps 83:3-12; Gen 44:4; Ps 7:4
20:12 Ps 25:15; Ps 121:1,2; Ps 123:1,2
20:13 Deut 29:10; Ezra 10:1; Jonah 3:5
20:14 2 Chr 15:1; 2 Chr 24:20; Isa 58:9
20:15 2 Chr 32:7,8; 1 Sam 17:47; Deut 20:1,4
20:17 Exod 14:13,14,25; 2 Chr 15:2; Matt 28:20
20:18 Exod 4:31; 2 Chr 7:3; Gen 24:26
20:19 1 Chr 15:16-22; 1 Chr 16:5,42; 1 Chr 23:5
20:20 Luke 16:31; Isa 7:9; John 11:40
20:21 1 Chr 16:34,41; 2 Chr 5:13; Ps 107:1

20:7 *to the seed of Abraham Your friend forever* Abraham is called God's friend again in Isaiah 41:8 and James 2:23. The land was a covenant gift.
20:9 *we will cry out to You from our distress, and You will hear and save* He holds God to Solomon's prayer at the temple (6:28-30). He is not bargaining. He is praying God's own words back to Him, a good way for us to pray.
20:11 *from Your possession which You caused us to possess* These were nations God told Israel not to attack (Deut 2:4-9, 19). The attack was on what belongs to God.
20:12 *O our God, will You not judge them* Having appointed judges for Judah, he brings the case to the highest Judge. He does not ask God to bless his battle plan. He asks God to decide.
20:12 *there is no strength in us before this great multitude* He had a large army (17:14-19), but he tells the truth. We want to bring God a plan to sign. His power is shown most clearly when we stop pretending we are strong: "My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is perfected in weakness" (2 Cor 12:9).
20:12 *we, we do not know what we should do; but our eyes are on You* There is no shame in telling God you don't know what to do. The shame is in charging ahead without Him, as he did at Ramoth-gilead (18:3). Not knowing what to do does not leave us helpless when we know where to look (Ps 121:1-2; Heb 12:2). Facing a diagnosis, a broken relationship or a child who has walked away? You can pray this prayer just as it stands.
20:13 *also their little ones, their wives, and their sons* Thousands of families standing quietly before God, waiting. Sometimes the right thing after praying is to stand still and wait for God to speak.
20:14 *the Spirit of the LORD was on him in the midst of the assembly* Jahaziel was a Levite singer of the sons of Asaph (1 Chr 25:1-2), not a king or famous prophet. His five-generation line shows he was a real, known man whose word could be tested. God can speak through anyone He chooses.
20:15 *do not be afraid, and do not be dismayed* God does not scold them for fear. He speaks to it directly. To be dismayed is to be shattered by fear.
20:15 *for the battle is not yours, but God's* The heart of the chapter. David told Goliath the same (1 Sam 17:47). It does not mean God's people do nothing. It means the outcome rests with God. What battles are you fighting as though everything depended on you? "If God is for us, who is against us?" (Rom 8:31).
20:16 *they are coming up by the ascent of Ziz* A pass climbing from the Dead Sea toward Tekoa. God told them where the enemy would be. They still had to rise early and march. Trusting God and obeying God always go together.
20:17 *stand, and see the salvation of the LORD with you* An echo of Moses at the Red Sea (Exod 14:13). To take your stand is to hold your position and not run. Salvation here is rescue from danger. God repeats "do not be afraid" because frightened people need comfort more than once, and He ends with His presence (Matt 28:20).
20:17 *the LORD will be with you* Our battles are often with sin, sorrow and temptation, not flesh and blood (Eph 6:12). The greatest battle, against sin and death, Jesus has already won at the cross without our help (Col 2:15). We stand and see the salvation of the LORD.
20:18 *Jehoshaphat bowed with his face to the earth* Before one enemy fell, they worshiped on the strength of God's word alone. That is faith: thanking Him for a promise as though it were done.
20:19 *the sons of the Korahites* The sons of Korah wrote several psalms (Ps 42-49). Their praise rang out loud and high, their first answer to God's promise.
20:20 *Believe in the LORD your God, and you will be established* In Hebrew believe and established come from the same root, aman, which gives us amen. Trust in God makes you firm. Isaiah said it to Ahaz the other way around (Isa 7:9). Tekoa lay in the rough country south of Bethlehem, later home of Amos (Amos 1:1).
20:21 *Give thanks to the LORD, for His steadfast love is forever* The choir went before the army. "The splendor of holiness" may mean holy clothing or the beauty of God's holiness. The song of hesed, God's loyal love that does not quit, was sung when the ark came to Jerusalem (1 Chr 16:34) and at the temple's dedication (7:3). They sang it before the battle. Praise is a weapon of faith, not only a response to victory.

splendor of holiness as they went out before the armed ***men***, and ***they were*** saying, "Give thanks to the LORD, for His steadfast love ***is*** forever." **22** And at the time ***when*** they began with a ringing cry and praise, the LORD set ambushers against the sons of Ammon, Moab, and the mountain of Seir who were coming against Judah, and they were struck down. **23** And the sons of Ammon and Moab rose up against the inhabitants of the mountain of Seir to devote ***them*** to destruction and to destroy ***them***; and when they had finished with the inhabitants of Seir, they helped, each man against his neighbor, to destruction. **24** And Judah came to the watchtower of the wilderness, and they turned toward the multitude, and look, they ***were*** corpses fallen to the earth, and there was no escapee. **25** And Jehoshaphat and his people came to plunder their spoil, and they found among them in abundance both goods and corpses and precious articles, and they stripped ***them*** for themselves until there was no carrying ***more***. And they were three days plundering the spoil, for it was much. **26** And on the fourth day they assembled at the Valley of Beracah (Berakha), for there they blessed the LORD. Therefore they have called the name of that place "the Valley of Beracah" until this day. **27** And every man of Judah and Jerusalem returned, and
Jehoshaphat at their head, to return to Jerusalem with joy, for the LORD had made them rejoice over their enemies. **28** And they came ***to*** Jerusalem with harps and with lyres and with trumpets, to the house of the LORD. **29** And the dread of God was on all the kingdoms of the lands when they heard that the LORD had fought against the enemies of Israel. **30** And the kingdom of Jehoshaphat was quiet, and his God gave him rest all around.

The End of Jehoshaphat's Reign

31 And Jehoshaphat reigned over Judah. ***He was*** a son of thirty-five years when he became king, and he reigned twenty-five years in Jerusalem. And the name of his mother ***was*** Azubah (Azuva) the daughter of Shilhi (Shilchi). **32** And he walked in the way of his father Asa, and he did not turn aside from it, doing what ***was*** right in the eyes of the LORD. **33** Only, the high places were not removed, and the people still had not set their heart to the God of their fathers. **34** And the rest of the matters of Jehoshaphat, the first and the last, look, they are written in the words of Jehu (Yehu) the son of Hanani (Chanani), which was recorded in the book of the kings of Israel. **35** And after this Jehoshaphat king of Judah allied himself with Ahaziah (Achazya) king of Israel; he acted wickedly in doing ***so***. **36** And he allied himself with him to make ships to go ***to*** Tarshish, and they made ships in Ezion-geber (Etsyon-Gever). **37** And Eliezer the son of
Dodavahu of Mareshah (Maresha) prophesied against
Jehoshaphat, saying, "Because you have allied yourself with Ahaziah, the LORD has broken down your works." And the ships were broken, and they were not able to go to Tarshish.

2 CHRONICLES 21

Jehoram Reigns in Judah

1 And Jehoshaphat (Yehoshafat) lay down with his fathers, and he was buried with his fathers in the city of David, and Jehoram (Yehoram) his son reigned in his place. **2** And he had brothers, the sons of Jehoshaphat: Azariah (Azarya) and Jehiel (Yechi'el) and Zechariah (Zekharyahu) and Azariah (Azaryahu) and Michael (Mikha'el) and Shephatiah
(Shefatyahu); all these ***were*** the sons of Jehoshaphat king of Israel (Yisra'el). **3** And their father gave them many gifts of silver and of gold and of precious things, with fortified cities in Judah (Yehuda); and the kingdom he gave to Jehoram, for

20:22 Judg 7:22; 1 Sam 14:16,20; 2 Kgs 6:17
20:23 Gen 14:6; Gen 36:8,9; Deut 2:5
20:24 Exod 14:30; 1 Chr 5:22; Ps 110:6
20:25 Exod 12:35,36; 1 Sam 30:19,20; 2 Kgs 7:9-16
20:26 Acts 1:19; Ps 103:1,2; Ps 107:21,22
20:27 Rev 18:20; Neh 12:43; 2 Sam 6:14,15
20:28 Rev 14:2; 2 Sam 6:5; 1 Chr 13:8
20:29 2 Chr 17:10; Gen 35:5; Exod 23:27
20:30 2 Chr 14:6,7; 2 Chr 15:15; Josh 23:1
20:31 1 Kgs 22:41-44
20:32 2 Chr 17:3-6; 2 Chr 14:2-5,11-13; 1 Kgs 15:11
20:33 2 Chr 17:6; 2 Chr 19:3; 2 Chr 12:14
20:34 2 Chr 19:2; 1 Kgs 16:1,7; 2 Chr 12:15
20:35 1 Kgs 22:48,49; 2 Kgs 1:2-16
20:36 1 Kgs 10:22; 1 Kgs 9:26
20:37 Prov 13:20; 2 Chr 19:2; 2 Chr 9:21
21:1 Matt 1:8; Acts 13:36; 1 Kgs 22:50
21:2 2 Chr 12:6; 2 Chr 23:2; 2 Chr 24:5,16
21:3 2 Chr 11:23; Gen 25:6; Deut 21:15-17

20:22 *the LORD set ambushers* The moment the singing began, God acted. Scripture does not say who the ambushers were, angels or enemies stirred against each other. The enemy destroyed itself (20:23), as in Gideon's day (Judg 7:22; 1 Sam 14:20).
20:25 *they were three days plundering the spoil* They went out expecting a fight and came home carrying more than they could hold. God often gives far more than we ask or think (Eph 3:20).
20:26 *there they blessed the LORD* Beracah means blessing. The story began with a fast and ends with a praise meeting. It is good to mark the places where God rescued us, so we and our children remember.
20:27 *the LORD had made them rejoice over their enemies* The story that began with prayer at the temple ends with thanks at the temple. We remember to pray when trouble comes. Do we come back to thank Him when He answers?
20:29 *the LORD had fought against the enemies of Israel* The nations feared Judah's God, not Judah's army. The rest that followed is a small picture of the rest God gives in Christ (Matt 11:28; Heb 4:9-10).
20:33 *the people still had not set their heart* Some high places were for false gods, and some for worship of the LORD in places He had not chosen (Deut 12:13-14). A king can tear down shrines, but he cannot change hearts.
20:35 *he acted wickedly in doing so* Ahaziah followed Ahab's ways (1 Kgs 22:51-53). Jehoshaphat had been rebuked for this very thing (19:2) and did it again.
20:37 *the LORD has broken down your works* Ezion-geber was a port on the Gulf of Aqaba, and "Tarshish" a far land and a name for large trading ships. Afterward Jehoshaphat refused Ahaziah's offer (1 Kgs 22:48-49), so it seems he learned. The man who prayed so beautifully kept repeating one mistake. Great spiritual moments do not make us immune to old weaknesses (1 Cor 10:12).
21:1 *Jehoshaphat lay down with his fathers* Jehoram had shared the throne with his father for some years. On the dates this study follows, he reigned about 853 to 841 B.C., alone from about 848.
21:2 *Jehoshaphat king of Israel* The Chronicler saw Judah as the true Israel, God's people under David's line.
21:3 *the kingdom he gave to Jehoram, for he was the firstborn* Rehoboam did the same with his sons (11:23), a wise plan for family peace. Jehoshaphat could not know how his eldest would repay it.

he ***was*** the firstborn. **4** And Jehoram rose up over the kingdom of his father, and he strengthened himself, and he killed all his brothers with the sword, and also some of the leaders of Israel. **5** Jehoram ***was*** a son of thirty-two years when he became king, and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). **6** And he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, just as the house of Ahab (Achav) did, for the daughter of Ahab was his wife; and he did the evil in the eyes of the LORD. **7** And the LORD was not willing to destroy the house of David, because of the covenant that He had made with David, and since He had said to give a lamp to him and to his sons all the days.

Edom and Libnah Revolt

8 In his days Edom rebelled from under the hand of Judah, and they made a king reign over them. **9** And Jehoram crossed over with his commanders, and all the chariots with him. And it was ***that*** he rose up by night, and he struck down Edom which was surrounding him, and the commanders of the chariots. **10** And Edom has rebelled from under the hand of Judah until this day. Then Libnah (Livna) rebelled at that time from under his hand, because he had forsaken the LORD, the God of his fathers. **11** Also he made high places in the mountains of Judah, and he caused the inhabitants of Jerusalem to prostitute themselves, and he drove Judah astray.

Elijah's Letter

12 And a writing came to him from Elijah (Eliyahu) the prophet, saying, "Thus says the LORD, the God of David your father: 'Because you have not walked in the ways of
Jehoshaphat your father and in the ways of Asa king of Judah, **13** and you have walked in the way of the kings of Israel, and you have caused Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to prostitute themselves, like the prostituting of the house of Ahab, and also you have killed your brothers, the house of your father, who ***were*** better than you, **14** look, the LORD is striking a great plague among your people and among your sons and among your wives and among all your property; **15** and you ***will be*** in many sicknesses, in sickness of your bowels, until your bowels come out because of the sickness, days upon days.'"

Jehoram's Judgment

16 And the LORD stirred up against Jehoram the spirit of the Philistines and the Arabs who ***were*** beside the Cushites. **17** And they came up against Judah, and they broke into it, and they took captive all the property that was found belonging to the house of the king, and also his sons and his wives; and no son was left to him except Jehoahaz
(Yeho'achaz), the youngest of his sons. **18** And after all this the LORD struck him in his bowels with a sickness for which there was no healing. **19** And it was, from days to days, and about the time of the going out of the end of two years, his bowels came out with his sickness, and he died in severe sicknesses. And his people did not make a burning for him like the burning of his fathers. **20** He was a son of thirty-two ***years*** when he became king, and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. And he went without ***anyone's*** longing, and they buried him in the city of David, and not in the graves of the kings.

2 CHRONICLES 22

Ahaziah Reigns in Judah

1 And the inhabitants of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) made

21:4 Judg 9:5,56,57; 2 Chr 21:17; Gen 4:8
21:6 2 Chr 18:1; 2 Kgs 8:18; 1 Kgs 16:25-33
21:7 Luke 1:69; 2 Sam 7:12-17; 1 Kgs 11:13,36
21:8 Gen 27:40; 2 Kgs 8:20-22; 1 Kgs 22:47
21:10 Josh 21:13; 2 Kgs 19:8; 2 Chr 13:10
21:11 Lev 20:5; 1 Kgs 11:7; Lev 17:7
21:12 2 Chr 17:3,4; 2 Chr 14:2-5; 2 Kgs 2:1
21:13 2 Chr 21:4; 2 Chr 21:11; 1 Kgs 16:25,30-33
21:14 Lev 26:21; Hos 5:11; Mic 6:16
21:15 2 Chr 21:18,19; Num 5:27; Deut 28:61
21:16 2 Chr 17:11; 2 Chr 33:11; 1 Sam 26:19
21:17 2 Chr 22:1; 2 Chr 22:6; Job 5:3,4
21:18 Acts 12:23; 2 Chr 21:15; 2 Kgs 9:29
21:19 2 Chr 16:14; Jer 34:5
21:20 Jer 22:18,28; 2 Chr 23:21; Prov 10:7
22:1 2 Chr 21:16,17; 2 Kgs 8:24-29; 2 Chr 23:3

21:4 *he killed all his brothers with the sword* The text does not say why. Most likely he feared them or the leaders, perhaps faithful men who disliked Athaliah's influence. Verse 13 says they were "better than you," and their goodness may have made them a threat. It is Cain's sin (Gen 4:8; 1 John 3:12). Power without God becomes cruel. If you have been hurt by your own family, God sees and is near the brokenhearted (Ps 34:18).
21:6 *the daughter of Ahab was his wife* Athaliah (22:2). Jehoshaphat's alliance (18:1) bore its bitter fruit. One marriage brought Baal worship into David's palace.
21:7 *to give a lamp to him and to his sons all the days* A ray of light in a dark chapter. A lamp is a picture of a flame not put out, a family that still has an heir (1 Chr 17:11-14). God's promise did not depend on Jehoram. It depended on God, and it is fulfilled in Jesus, who reigns forever (Luke 1:32-33). "If we are faithless, He remains faithful" (2 Tim 2:13).
21:8 *Edom rebelled from under the hand of Judah* Edom, south and east of the Dead Sea, had been under Judah since David. Libnah (21:10) was a town on the western side near the Philistines (2 Kgs 8:20-22). The Chronicler gives the reason: "because he had forsaken the LORD." When a leader forsakes God, what he held together slips from his hands.
21:11 *he caused the inhabitants of Jerusalem to prostitute themselves* God often calls idolatry prostitution, because Israel was bound to Him like a wife to a husband. Jehoram pushed his people into sin. Leaders carry heavy responsibility (Matt 18:6).
21:12 *a writing came to him from Elijah the prophet* The only mention of Elijah in Chronicles. Since 2 Kings 2 tells of his being taken up, teachers explain it two ways. Some think Elijah was still alive early in Jehoram's reign, since Kings is not always in strict order. Others think he wrote before he was taken up, knowing by God what Jehoram would do, and it was delivered later. Either way, it was God's word.
21:14 *the LORD is striking a great plague among your people* He destroyed his father's house, and his own would be struck. "Whatever a man sows, this he will also reap" (Gal 6:7). The house of Ahab could not escape God's word by moving its influence south.
21:16 *the Arabs who were beside the Cushites* These Cushites seem to be people in Arabia near the Red Sea. God used raiders as His instrument of judgment, as He later used Assyria and Babylon.
21:17 *no son was left to him except Jehoahaz* Another form of the name Ahaziah (22:1). The man who murdered his brothers lost all his sons but one. Even here God left a lamp (21:7).
21:19 *his people did not make a burning for him* Not cremation, but the fire of spices for an honored king (16:14). No one did it for Jehoram. God's word through Elijah came true exactly.
21:20 *he went without anyone's longing* One of the saddest epitaphs in the Bible. No one missed him, and he was not buried with the kings. Compare Jehoiada, buried among the kings "for he had done good in Israel" (24:16). A life spent for self ends empty. A life spent for God and others leaves something behind.
22:1 *made Ahaziah his youngest son king in his place* The one son left, the lamp God promised to keep burning (21:7). He reigned in 841 B.C.

Ahaziah (Achazyahu) his youngest son king in his place, for the raiding band that came with the Arabs to the camp had killed all the elder ***sons***. And Ahaziah the son of Jehoram (Yehoram) king of Judah (Yehuda) reigned. **2** Ahaziah ***was*** a son of forty-two years when he became king, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. And the name of his mother ***was*** Athaliah (Atalyahu) the daughter of Omri. **3** He also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab (Achav), for his mother was his counselor to act wickedly. **4** And he did the evil in the eyes of the LORD like the house of Ahab, for they were counselors to him after the death of his father, for his destruction. **5** Also he walked in their counsel, and he went with Joram (Yehoram) the son of Ahab king of Israel (Yisra'el) to the war against Hazael (Chaza'el) king of Syria (Aram) at Ramoth-gilead (Ramot-Gilad); and the Arameans wounded Joram (Yoram). **6** And he returned to get himself healed in Jezreel (Yizre'el) because of the wounds with which they had wounded him at Ramah (Rama), when he fought with Hazael king of Syria. And Azariah (Azaryahu) the son of Jehoram king of Judah went down to see Joram the son of Ahab in Jezreel, for he ***was*** sick. **7** And the downfall of Ahaziah was from God, by coming to Joram. And when he came, he went out with Joram to Jehu (Yehu) the son of Nimshi, whom the LORD had anointed to cut off the house of Ahab. **8** And it was, when Jehu was executing judgment with the house of Ahab, that he found the officials of Judah and the sons of the brothers of Ahaziah, ministering to Ahaziah, and he killed them. **9** And he sought Ahaziah, and they captured him, and he ***was*** hiding himself in Samaria (Shomron); and they brought him to Jehu, and they put him to death, and they buried him, for they said, "He ***is*** the son of Jehoshaphat (Yehoshafat), who sought the LORD with all his heart." And there was no one in the house of Ahaziah to retain strength for the kingdom.

Athaliah Seizes the Throne

10 And Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, and she arose and destroyed all the seed of the kingdom of the house of Judah. **11** And Jehoshabeath (Yehoshavat) the daughter of the king took Joash (Yo'ash) the son of Ahaziah, and she stole him from the midst of the sons of the king who were being put to death, and she put him and his nurse in the chamber of the beds. And Jehoshabeath the daughter of King Jehoram, the wife of Jehoiada (Yehoyada) the priest (for she was the sister of Ahaziah), hid him from before Athaliah, and she did not put him to death. **12** And he was with them in the house of God, hiding himself six years, and Athaliah ***was*** reigning over the land.

2 CHRONICLES 23

Jehoiada's Covenant

1 And in the seventh year Jehoiada (Yehoyada) strengthened himself, and he took the commanders of the hundreds, Azariah (Azaryahu) the son of Jeroham (Yerocham), and Ishmael (Yishma'el) the son of Jehohanan (Yehochanan), and Azariah the son of Obed (Oved), and Maaseiah (Ma'aseyahu) the son of Adaiah (Adayahu), and Elishaphat (Elishafat) the son of Zichri (Zikhri), with him into the covenant. **2** And they went around in Judah (Yehuda), and they gathered the

22:2 2 Kgs 8:26; 2 Chr 21:6; 1 Kgs 16:28
22:3 Gen 6:4,5; Deut 7:3,4; Deut 13:6-10
22:4 Prov 13:20; 2 Chr 24:17,18; Prov 1:10
22:5 Ps 1:1; Mic 6:16; 2 Kgs 8:28,29-9
22:6 2 Kgs 9:15; 2 Chr 22:1,7; 2 Chr 21:17
22:7 2 Chr 10:15; 2 Kgs 9:21; Mal 4:3
22:8 2 Kgs 10:10-14
22:9 1 Kgs 13:21; 1 Kgs 14:13; 2 Chr 17:3,4
22:10 2 Chr 22:2-4; 2 Kgs 11:1
22:11 2 Kgs 11:2; Ezek 40:45,46; 2 Chr 23:1
22:12 Ps 27:5; Ps 12:8; Ps 73:14,18,19
23:1 2 Kgs 11:4-16; 2 Chr 15:12; 1 Sam 18:3
23:2 2 Chr 11:13-17; Ps 112:5; Matt 10:16

22:2 *a son of forty-two years* 2 Kings 8:26 says twenty-two. Forty-two cannot be right as it stands, since his father died at forty (21:20). Most believe a number was miscopied, since some Hebrew letter-numbers look alike, and some Greek and Syriac copies read twenty or twenty-two. I take twenty-two as his true age. A copying slip like this does not touch any teaching of the faith.
22:2 *Athaliah the daughter of Omri* Omri was Ahab's father, so "daughter" means female descendant. She was Ahab's daughter (21:6).
22:3 *his mother was his counselor to act wickedly* A mother has great influence, for good or evil. Timothy had a godly mother and grandmother (2 Tim 1:5). Ahaziah had Athaliah.
22:4 *counselors to him after the death of his father, for his destruction* Bad counsel may sound friendly, but it leads to ruin. The blessed man does not walk in the counsel of the wicked (Ps 1:1). Whose advice do we listen to?
22:5 *to the war against Hazael king of Syria at Ramoth-gilead* The city where Ahab died (18:34), and Jehoshaphat's old mistake again. Hazael had seized the throne of Syria (2 Kgs 8:15).
22:6 *Azariah the son of Jehoram king of Judah* Most Hebrew copies have Azariah, but some Hebrew copies and the old Greek and Syriac read Ahaziah, and the story makes clear it is the same king. It may be a copying slip or another name he went by. A family visit cost him his life.
22:7 *the downfall of Ahaziah was from God* Not bad luck. Ahaziah went to Jezreel just as God's judgment fell on Ahab's house. Jehu was anointed to bring that judgment (2 Kgs 9:1-10), as Elijah foretold (1 Kgs 21:21-24). When we join ourselves to those under judgment, we share in what falls on them.
22:9 *he was hiding himself in Samaria* Kings says he was wounded near Ibleam and died at Megiddo (2 Kgs 9:27-28). He may have hidden in the region of Samaria, been found, wounded as he fled, and died at Megiddo. Each writer tells it briefly from his own angle.
22:9 *He is the son of Jehoshaphat, who sought the LORD with all his heart* "Son" means grandson. Ahaziah got a decent burial only because of his godly grandfather. A faithful life can bless a family long after it ends.
22:10 *she arose and destroyed all the seed of the kingdom of the house of Judah* One of the darkest moments in the Old Testament, told in one plain sentence. Athaliah, daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, set out to kill every heir, her own grandchildren, so she could rule. Had every son of David died, God's promise of the Messiah, the anointed King and Savior, would have failed. Behind her stood the old enemy of the promised Seed (Gen 3:15), and many see the same attack in Herod's killing at Bethlehem (Matt 2:16). Satan cannot defeat God's plan. God saw what Athaliah did and did not let her have the last word.
22:11 *Jehoshabeath the daughter of the king took Joash* The baby's aunt, called Jehosheba in 2 Kings 11:2, and wife of Jehoiada the priest. One woman's courage saved the line of David. Like Jochebed (Exod 2:2-3) and Rahab (Josh 2), she did the right thing at great cost when no one else would.
22:12 *in the house of God, hiding himself six years* Athaliah reigned about 841 to 835 B.C., the only queen to rule Judah in her own right and the only ruler not of David's line. It looked as if David's house was finished, but in the house of God the promise was alive. When it seems evil has won, God may be quietly keeping His promise where no one can see.
23:1 *in the seventh year Jehoiada strengthened himself* For six years he protected the hidden prince. Now he took courage and acted. The commanders are named because they were real men who risked their lives for David's line. There is a time to wait and a time to act (Eccl 3:1). Godly courage prays, waits and plans, and then it moves.

Levites from all the cities of Judah, and the heads of the fathers of Israel (Yisra'el), and they came to Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). **3** And all the assembly made a covenant in the house of God with the king. And he said to them, "Look, the son of the king shall reign, just as the LORD spoke concerning the sons of David. **4** This ***is*** the thing that you shall do: the third of you who come in ***on*** the Sabbath, of the priests and of the Levites, ***shall be*** gatekeepers of the thresholds; **5** and the third ***shall be*** at the house of the king, and the third at the Gate of the Foundation; and all the people ***shall be*** in the courts of the house of the LORD. **6** And let no one come ***into*** the house of the LORD except the priests and those of the Levites who minister; they shall come in, for they ***are*** holy; and all the people shall keep the charge of the LORD. **7** And the Levites shall surround the king all around, each man ***with*** his weapons in his hand; and whoever comes into the house shall be put to death. And be with the king when he comes in and when he goes out." **8** And the Levites and all Judah did according to all that Jehoiada the priest had commanded, and they took each man his men who were coming in ***on*** the Sabbath, with those going out ***on*** the Sabbath, for Jehoiada the priest had not dismissed the divisions. **9** And Jehoiada the priest gave to the commanders of the hundreds the spears and the shields and the small shields which ***had belonged*** to King David, which ***were in*** the house of God. **10** And he stationed all the people, each man ***with*** his weapon in his hand, from the right side of the house to the left side of the house, by the altar and by the house, around the king. **11** And they brought out the son of the king, and they put on him the crown and the testimony, and they made him king; and Jehoiada and his sons anointed him, and they said, "Let the king live!"

Athaliah Put to Death

12 And Athaliah (Atalyahu) heard the sound of the people running and praising the king, and she came to the people ***at*** the house of the LORD. **13** And she looked, and look, the king ***was*** standing by his pillar at the entrance, and the officials and the trumpets ***were*** beside the king, and all the people of the land ***were*** rejoicing and blowing on trumpets, and the singers with the instruments of song ***were*** leading in praise. And Athaliah tore her clothes, and she said, "Conspiracy! Conspiracy!" **14** And Jehoiada the priest brought out the commanders of the hundreds, those appointed over the army, and he said to them, "Bring her out from between the ranks, and whoever goes after her shall be put to death with the sword." For the priest had said, "You shall not put her to death ***in*** the house of the LORD." **15** And they put hands on her, and she went to the entrance of the Gate of the Horses of the house of the king, and they put her to death there.

Jehoiada Restores Worship

16 And Jehoiada made a covenant between himself and all the people and the king, to be a people of the LORD. **17** And all the people went ***to*** the house of the Baal, and they tore it down, and its altars and its images they broke, and Mattan (Matan) the priest of the Baal they killed before the altars. **18** And Jehoiada put the oversight of the house of the LORD in the hand of the priests the Levites, whom David had divided over the house of the LORD, to offer up the burnt offerings of the LORD as ***it is*** written in the law of Moses (Moshe), with joy and with song, by the hands of David. **19** And he stationed the gatekeepers at the gates of the house of the LORD, and no one unclean in any matter would come in. **20** And he took the commanders of the hundreds and the nobles and those ruling over the people and all the people of

23:3 2 Chr 6:16; 2 Chr 21:7; 2 Sam 7:12,16
23:4 1 Chr 23:3-6; 1 Chr 24:3-6; Luke 1:8,9
23:5 Acts 3:2; 2 Kgs 11:5,6; Ezek 44:2,3
23:6 1 Chr 23:28-32; 2 Kgs 11:6,7
23:7 2 Kgs 11:8,9; Exod 19:12,13; Exod 21:14
23:8 2 Kgs 11:9; 1 Chr 24:1-26
23:9 1 Sam 21:9; 2 Sam 8:7
23:10 2 Kgs 11:11; 2 Chr 6:12; Exod 40:6
23:11 1 Sam 10:24; Exod 25:16; 2 Chr 22:11
23:12 2 Kgs 11:13-16; 2 Kgs 9:32-37
23:13 Ps 14:5; 2 Chr 34:31; 2 Kgs 23:3
23:14 Exod 21:14; 2 Kgs 10:25; 2 Kgs 11:8,15
23:15 Neh 3:28; 2 Chr 22:10; Judg 1:7
23:16 2 Chr 29:10; 2 Kgs 11:17; Neh 9:38
23:17 1 Kgs 18:40; 2 Chr 34:4,7; 2 Kgs 10:25-28
23:18 1 Chr 23:1-24; Num 28:1-31; 2 Chr 29:25
23:19 1 Chr 26:1-32; 1 Chr 9:23,24
23:20 2 Kgs 11:9,10,19

23:3 *Look, the son of the king shall reign, just as the LORD spoke concerning the sons of David* Not a palace plot by a few men but the faithful of the nation gathered. Jehoiada was not acting from ambition. He was acting on God's promise.
23:4 *who come in on the Sabbath* The Sabbath was the seventh day of rest and worship, when the temple shifts changed, so twice the usual men could be present without drawing attention.
23:6 *let no one come into the house of the LORD except the priests* Even in a crisis Jehoiada would not break God's law about who could enter. Kings tells of the royal guards' part (2 Kgs 11:4-8), and Chronicles stresses that the Levites stood closest to the king and the temple stayed holy.
23:9 *which had belonged to King David* David's own weapons guarded David's son.
23:11 *they put on him the crown and the testimony* The testimony was most likely a copy of God's law, or part of it. Moses commanded every king to have one and read it all his life (Deut 17:18-20). A king needs authority and the law that tells him how to use it.
23:11 *Let the king live* Anointing with oil marked him as set apart by God. The word Messiah comes from this Hebrew word. A boy hidden in God's house came out to take David's throne, a small picture of the greater Son of David, before whom every knee will bow (Phil 2:9-11).
23:13 *Conspiracy! Conspiracy* She who seized the throne by murder now cried treason. The real conspiracy had been hers six years before. The king stood "by his pillar," the place where kings stood on public occasions.
23:14 *You shall not put her to death in the house of the LORD* Even now Jehoiada would not shed blood in God's house. Her death was justice under Israel's law for a murderer and usurper (Gen 9:6; Num 35:31). I do not take it as a pattern for anyone today. Scripture tells it in a sentence, without delight, and so should we.
23:16 *to be a people of the LORD* The heart of the event. Putting the right king on the throne was not enough. Real renewal always comes back to God's people giving themselves to Him again.
23:17 *the house of the Baal* Baal was the Canaanite storm and fertility god Ahab and Jezebel promoted, and Athaliah's people had robbed the LORD's house for him (24:7). Under the Law, one who led Israel to other gods was to die (Deut 13:6-10). That was Israel's national law, not a pattern for the church, whose weapons are not of the flesh (2 Cor 10:4).
23:18 *as it is written in the law of Moses, with joy and with song* A burnt offering was wholly burned as a gift to God, a picture of full surrender and of atonement, the covering of sin so a sinner can be made right with God. Jehoiada did not invent new worship. He restored what God gave through Moses and David (1 Chr 23-26).
23:19 *no one unclean in any matter would come in* To be unclean was to be in a state, by contact with death, disease or other things, that kept a person from God's house until cleansed.

the land, and he brought the king down from the house of the LORD; and they came through the midst of the upper gate ***to*** the house of the king, and they seated the king on the throne of the kingdom. **21** And all the people of the land rejoiced, and the city was quiet; and Athaliah they had put to death with the sword.

2 CHRONICLES 24

Joash Repairs the Temple

1 Joash (Yo'ash) ***was*** a son of seven years when he became king, and he reigned forty years in Jerusalem
(Yerushalayim). And the name of his mother ***was*** Zibiah (Tsivya) from Beersheba (Be'er-Sheva). **2** And Joash did what ***was*** right in the eyes of the LORD all the days of Jehoiada (Yehoyada) the priest. **3** And Jehoiada took for him two wives, and he fathered sons and daughters. **4** And it was after this ***that*** it was in the heart of Joash to renew the house of the LORD. **5** And he gathered the priests and the Levites, and he said to them, "Go out to the cities of Judah (Yehuda), and gather money from all Israel (Yisra'el) to strengthen the house of your God, as is enough year by year; and you, you shall hurry in the matter." And the Levites did not hurry. **6** And the king called for Jehoiada the head, and he said to him, "Why have you not required of the Levites to bring from Judah and from Jerusalem the levy of Moses (Moshe) the servant of the LORD and of the assembly of Israel, for the tent of the testimony? **7** For Athaliah (Atalyahu), the wicked ***woman***, her sons had broken into the house of God, and also all the holy things of the house of the LORD they had used for the Baals." **8** And the king spoke, and they made one chest, and they put it at the gate of the house of the LORD, outside. **9** And they gave a proclamation in Judah and in Jerusalem to bring to the LORD the levy of Moses the servant of God ***laid*** on Israel in the wilderness. **10** And all the officials and all the people rejoiced, and they brought ***it*** and threw ***it*** into the chest until ***it was*** finished. **11** And it was, at the time ***when*** one brought the chest to the oversight of the king by the hand of the Levites, and when they saw that the money was much, then the scribe of the king and the officer of the head priest came, and they emptied the chest, and they took it and returned it to its place. Thus they did day by day, and they gathered money in abundance. **12** And the king and Jehoiada gave it to the doer of the work of the service of the house of the LORD, and they were hiring stonecutters and craftsmen to renew the house of the LORD, and also craftsmen of iron and bronze to strengthen the house of the LORD. **13** And the doers of the work worked, and the restoration went up for the work by their hand, and they set up the house of God according to its measurement, and they strengthened it. **14** And when they had finished, they brought the rest of the money before the king and Jehoiada, and he made it ***into*** articles for the house of the LORD, articles of service and of offering up, and pans, and articles of gold and silver. And they were offering up burnt offerings in the house of the LORD continually all the days of Jehoiada.

Jehoiada Dies and Joash Turns Away

15 And Jehoiada grew old and was satisfied ***with*** days, and he died; ***he was*** a son of a hundred and thirty years at his death. **16** And they buried him in the city of David with the kings, for he had done good in Israel, and toward God and His house. **17** And after the death of Jehoiada the officials of Judah came, and they bowed down to the king; then the king listened to them. **18** And they forsook the house of the LORD, the God of their fathers, and they served the Asherim and the idols; and wrath came on Judah and Jerusalem for this guilt of theirs. **19** And He sent prophets among them to bring them back to the LORD, and they testified against them, and they did not give ear.

23:21 2 Kgs 11:20; Ps 58:10,11; Prov 11:10
24:1 2 Kgs 11:21; 1 Chr 3:11; 2 Kgs 12:1
24:2 2 Chr 25:2; 2 Chr 26:4,5; 2 Kgs 12:2
24:3 Matt 19:8; 2 Chr 24:15; Gen 21:21
24:5 2 Chr 29:3; 2 Chr 34:8,9; 2 Kgs 12:4,5
24:6 Acts 7:44; Rev 15:3; Exod 30:12-16
24:7 Rev 2:20; 2 Chr 21:17; 2 Chr 28:22-24
24:8 2 Kgs 12:8,9; Mark 12:41
24:9 Matt 17:25; 2 Chr 24:6; Matt 17:24-27
24:10 1 Chr 29:9; Isa 64:5; Acts 2:45-47
24:11 2 Kgs 12:10-12; 1 Cor 16:2
24:12 2 Chr 34:9-11; 1 Kgs 5:15
24:13 Neh 4:7; 1 Chr 22:5; Hag 2:3
24:14 2 Kgs 12:13,14; 1 Kgs 7:50; Prov 27:22
24:15 Gen 15:15; Gen 25:8; 1 Chr 23:1
24:16 Acts 2:29; 1 Sam 2:30; 1 Kgs 2:10
24:17 Deut 31:27; Acts 20:29,30; 2 Pet 1:15
24:18 2 Chr 24:4; 2 Chr 19:2; Josh 22:20
24:19 Matt 13:15; Luke 11:47; Luke 11:51

23:21 *all the people of the land rejoiced, and the city was quiet* Six years of fear were over. When God's rightful King takes His throne there is joy and peace. That will be true far more when Jesus reigns from Jerusalem over all the earth (Isa 9:6-7; Rev 20:4-6).
24:2 *all the days of Jehoiada the priest* A warning sign from the start. Joash's goodness lasted as long as Jehoiada lived (2 Kgs 12:2). He reigned about 835 to 796 B.C.
24:3 *Jehoiada took for him two wives* The royal family had almost been wiped out (22:10). Now David's line would grow again, with Jehoiada acting as a father.
24:5 *the Levites did not hurry* Scripture does not say why. Perhaps they doubted the plan or were used to the money going to their own needs.
24:6 *the levy of Moses the servant of the LORD* The tax Moses set for the tabernacle, half a shekel for each man counted (Exod 30:12-16). The tabernacle, "the tent of the testimony," was where God met Israel before the temple.
24:7 *Athaliah, the wicked woman* Her followers had looted God's house to furnish Baal's. The young king was undoing the damage.
24:10 *all the officials and all the people rejoiced* When people saw the money going straight to the work, they gave with joy (2 Cor 9:7). The system was open and honest: two men from two offices emptied the chest together (24:11). Paul took the same care with gifts (2 Cor 8:20-21).
24:13 *according to its measurement* They restored the temple to its first design, and the leftover money made new vessels (24:14). Again: "all the days of Jehoiada."
24:16 *for he had done good in Israel, and toward God and His house* A priest given a king's burial, unlike Jehoram (21:20) and Joash himself (24:25). He lived 130 years. God honors those who honor Him (1 Sam 2:30). What a thing to have said of you.
24:17 *then the king listened to them* It seems they flattered him and he liked it. With his mentor gone, Joash listened to new voices.
24:18 *they served the Asherim and the idols* The king who repaired God's house led the way out of it. His faith seems to have been borrowed, leaning on Jehoiada rather than rooted in the LORD. Growing up in a parent's or pastor's faith is a good gift, but each of us must know God for ourselves. Is your faith your own?
24:19 *He sent prophets among them to bring them back to the LORD* God warned again and again before judgment. He is patient, not wishing any to perish (2 Pet 3:9).

Zechariah Is Stoned

20 And the Spirit of God clothed Zechariah (Zekharya) the son of Jehoiada the priest, and he stood above the people, and he said to them, "Thus says God: 'Why are you transgressing the commandments of the LORD? And you will not prosper. For you have forsaken the LORD, and He has forsaken you.'" **21** And they conspired against him, and they stoned him ***with*** stones at the command of the king in the courtyard of the house of the LORD. **22** And Joash the king did not remember the steadfast love which Jehoiada his father had done with him, and he killed his son. And when he was dying he said, "May the LORD see and require ***it***!"

Joash Is Judged

23 And it was at the turn of the year ***that*** the army of Syria (Aram) came up against him, and they came to Judah and Jerusalem, and they destroyed all the officials of the people from among the people, and all their spoil they sent to the king of Damascus (Dameseq). **24** For with few men the army of Syria came, and the LORD gave into their hand a very great army, because they had forsaken the LORD, the God of their fathers. And with Joash they executed judgments. **25** And when they went from him (for they left him in great sicknesses), his servants conspired against him for the blood of the sons of Jehoiada the priest, and they killed him on his bed, and he died. And they buried him in the city of David, and they did not bury him in the graves of the kings. **26** And these ***are*** those who conspired against him: Zabad (Zavad) the son of Shimeath (Shimat) the Ammonite ***woman***, and Jehozabad (Yehozavad) the son of Shimrith (Shimrit) the Moabite ***woman***. **27** And ***as for*** his sons, ***and how*** great the oracle against him became, and the founding of the house of God, look, they are written in the commentary of the book of the kings. And Amaziah (Amatsyahu) his son reigned in his place.

2 CHRONICLES 25

Amaziah Reigns in Judah

1 Amaziah (Amatsyahu) became king ***as*** a son of twenty-five years, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). And the name of his mother ***was*** Jehoaddan (Yeho'adan) from Jerusalem. **2** And he did what ***was*** right in the eyes of the LORD, only not with a complete heart. **3** And it was, when the kingdom was strong on him, ***that*** he killed his servants who had struck down the king his father. **4** And their sons he did not put to death, for ***he did*** according to what is written in the law, in the book of Moses (Moshe), which the LORD commanded, saying, "Fathers shall not die for sons, and sons shall not die for fathers; but each man shall die for his own sin."

Amaziah Defeats Edom

5 And Amaziah gathered Judah (Yehuda), and he appointed them by the house of fathers, as commanders of the thousands and as commanders of the hundreds, for all Judah and Benjamin (Binyamin). And he counted them from a son of twenty years and upward, and he found them ***to be*** three hundred thousand chosen ***men***, going out to war, handling spear and large shield. **6** And he hired from Israel (Yisra'el) a hundred thousand mighty men of valor for approximately 7,500 pounds (a hundred talents) of silver. **7** And a man of God came to him, saying, "O king, do not let the army of Israel go with you, for the LORD ***is*** not with Israel, ***with*** all

24:20 Matt 23:35; Luke 11:51; Matt 5:12
24:21 Matt 21:35; Heb 11:37; Matt 23:37
24:22 Luke 11:51; Matt 23:35; Matt 23:37
24:23 2 Kgs 12:17,18; 1 Kgs 20:22,26; Deut 32:35
24:24 Lev 26:8,37; Isa 30:17; Lev 26:25
24:25 Rev 16:6; 2 Chr 24:21,22; 2 Chr 28:27
24:26 2 Kgs 12:21
24:27 2 Kgs 12:18; 2 Chr 9:29; 2 Chr 16:11
25:1 2 Kgs 14:1-3
25:2 2 Chr 25:14; 2 Chr 24:2; James 4:8
25:3 2 Kgs 14:5-22; 2 Chr 24:25,26; Gen 9:5,6
25:4 Deut 24:16; 2 Kgs 14:5,6; Jer 31:29,30
25:5 Num 1:3; 2 Chr 17:14-18; 2 Chr 11:1
25:7 2 Tim 3:17; 2 Chr 19:2; 2 Sam 12:1

24:20 *the Spirit of God clothed Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest* The Spirit came on him like a garment. His words echo Azariah's to Asa (15:2). It was not a new message but the covenant God always set before His people.

24:21 *they stoned him with stones at the command of the king* One of the saddest verses in the book. The temple Joash repaired became the place he had a prophet killed. Jesus spoke of "the blood of Zechariah, who perished between the altar and the house" (Luke 11:51). Since Chronicles ends the Hebrew Bible, Jesus meant from the first murder to the last on Scripture's pages. Matthew says "son of Berekiah" (Matt 23:35), and many think this is the same man, Berekiah being an ancestor or second family name, or a wording that also brings to mind the later prophet (Zech 1:1). The place points clearly to this murder.

24:22 *Joash the king did not remember the steadfast love* Hesed, loyal kindness. Jehoiada saved and raised him, and Joash killed his son.

24:22 *May the LORD see and require it* Not a personal curse but a prayer for God the Judge to do right, like Abel's blood crying from the ground (Gen 4:10). Stephen prayed, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them" (Acts 7:60). In Christ we are shown more still, praying for those who harm us (Matt 5:44). Both leave judgment with God. Jesus' blood "speaks better things than that of Abel" (Heb 12:24). If you have been betrayed for doing right, God sees.

24:23 *at the turn of the year* In spring, when kings went to war. The Syrians destroyed the very officials who led Joash astray, and Joash paid them off with temple treasures (2 Kgs 12:17-18).

24:24 *with few men the army of Syria came* When Asa and Jehoshaphat trusted God, small armies beat huge ones (14:9-12; 20:12, 22). Now it was reversed, because God was not with them. Zechariah's prayer was answered.

24:25 *for the blood of the sons of Jehoiada the priest* "Sons" may mean Zechariah alone in the plural, or others were killed too. The priest was buried with the kings, and the king was not. Joash began well and ended badly. How we finish shows whether our faith was our own (2 Tim 4:7).

25:1 *he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem* About 796 to 767 B.C. on the dates this study follows.

25:2 *only not with a complete heart* A complete heart is whole and undivided. Amaziah did many right things, but part of him held back (2 Kgs 14:3). No one can serve two masters (Matt 6:24), and a double-minded man is unstable (James 1:8). A divided heart can do right for a while, but sooner or later it will turn.

25:4 *each man shall die for his own sin* Kings often wiped out a traitor's whole family. Amaziah followed Deuteronomy 24:16 instead (Ezek 18:20). He let God's Word limit his anger.

25:6 *a hundred thousand mighty men of valor* Judah had been weakened, and its army was far smaller than Jehoshaphat's. A talent of silver was about 75 pounds, so he paid nearly four tons. I take the army numbers as written (see 11:1).

25:7 *the LORD is not with Israel* The north worshiped Jeroboam's calves. To join them was to lean on an army God was not with, as Jehoshaphat learned (19:2; 20:37). "There is strength in God to help and to make stumble" (25:8). Victory depends on God, not numbers.

the sons of Ephraim (Efrayim). **8** But ***if*** you go, act, be strong for the battle, God will make you stumble before the enemy; for there is strength in God to help and to make stumble." **9** And Amaziah said to the man of God, "And what ***is there*** to do about the approximately 7,500 pounds (the hundred talents) which I have given to the troop of Israel?" And the man of God said, "The LORD has ***the means*** to give you much more than this." **10** And Amaziah separated them, the troop which had come to him from Ephraim, to go to their place. And their anger burned exceedingly against Judah, and they returned to their place in the heat of anger. **11** And Amaziah strengthened himself, and he led out his people, and he went ***to*** the Valley of Salt (Gay-Melach), and he struck down the sons of Seir (Se'ir), ten thousand. **12** And ten thousand alive the sons of Judah took captive, and they brought them to the top of the cliff, and they threw them from the top of the cliff, and all of them were split open. **13** And the sons of the troop whom Amaziah had sent back from going with him to the battle made a raid on the cities of Judah, from Samaria (Shomron) as far as Beth-horon (Bet-Choron), and they struck down of them three thousand, and they plundered much plunder.

Amaziah Bows to Edom's Gods

14 And it was after Amaziah came from striking down the Edomites ***that*** he brought the gods of the sons of Seir, and he set them up for himself as gods, and before them he bowed down, and to them he burned incense. **15** And the anger of the LORD burned against Amaziah, and He sent to him a prophet, and he said to him, "Why have you sought the gods of the people, who did not deliver their ***own*** people from your hand?" **16** And it was, as he was speaking to him, ***that*** he said to him, "Have we made you a counselor to the king? Stop! Why should they strike you down?" And the prophet stopped, and he said, "I know that God has counseled to destroy you, because you have done this and have not listened to my counsel."

Joash of Israel Defeats Amaziah

17 And Amaziah king of Judah took counsel, and he sent to Joash (Yo'ash) the son of Jehoahaz (Yeho'achaz) the son of Jehu (Yehu) king of Israel, saying, "Come, let us look one another in the face." **18** And Joash king of Israel sent to Amaziah king of Judah, saying, "The thornbush that ***was*** in the Lebanon (Levanon) sent to the cedar that ***was*** in the Lebanon, saying, 'Give your daughter to my son as a wife.' And the living thing of the field that ***was*** in the Lebanon passed by, and it trampled the thornbush. **19** You have said, 'Look, you have struck down Edom,' and your heart has lifted you up to glorify ***yourself***. Now stay in your house. Why should you stir up calamity, and fall, you and Judah with you?" **20** And Amaziah did not listen, for it ***was*** from God, in order to give them into ***the*** hand ***of their enemies***, because they had sought the gods of Edom. **21** And Joash king of Israel went up, and they looked one another in the face, he and Amaziah king of Judah, at Beth-shemesh (Bet-Shemesh), which ***belongs*** to Judah. **22** And Judah was struck down before Israel, and they fled, each man to his tents. **23** And Amaziah king of Judah, the son of Joash, the son of Jehoahaz, Joash king of Israel captured at Beth-shemesh, and he brought him ***to*** Jerusalem, and he broke down the wall of Jerusalem from the Gate of Ephraim to the Gate of the Corner, approximately 600 feet (four hundred cubits). **24** And ***he took*** all the gold and the silver and all the articles that were found in the house of God with Obed-edom (Oved-Edom), and the treasures of the house of the king, and the hostages, and he returned ***to*** Samaria. **25** And Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah lived after the death of Joash the son of Jehoahaz king of Israel fifteen years. **26** And the rest of the matters of Amaziah, the first and the last, look, are they not written

25:8 2 Chr 20:6; 2 Chr 14:11; Phil 4:19
25:10 1 Kgs 12:24; 2 Sam 19:43; Prov 29:22
25:11 2 Kgs 14:7; 2 Sam 8:13; Ps 60:1
25:12 Luke 4:29; 2 Sam 12:31; 1 Chr 20:3
25:13 1 Kgs 16:24,29; 2 Chr 8:5; 1 Kgs 9:17
25:14 2 Chr 28:23; Isa 44:19; Exod 20:3-5
25:15 Ps 96:5; 2 Chr 25:11,12; 2 Chr 25:7
25:16 Rev 11:10; 2 Chr 16:10; 2 Chr 18:25
25:17 2 Kgs 14:8-14; 2 Chr 25:13; 2 Sam 2:14
25:18 Judg 9:8-15; 1 Kgs 4:33; Ps 80:13
25:19 2 Chr 26:16; 2 Chr 32:25; Deut 8:14
25:20 Acts 28:27; 2 Chr 22:7; 1 Kgs 12:15
25:21 Josh 21:16; 1 Sam 6:9,19,20
25:22 2 Chr 28:5,6; 1 Sam 4:10; 1 Kgs 22:36
25:23 2 Chr 21:17; Neh 8:16; 2 Chr 22:1
25:24 2 Chr 12:9; 2 Kgs 14:14
25:25 2 Kgs 14:17-22
25:26 2 Chr 20:34; 2 Kgs 14:15

25:9 *The LORD has the means to give you much more than this* God is never in debt to anyone. What we give up to obey Him, He can repay many times over (Mark 10:29-30). Have you held back from obeying God because of what it would cost? Amaziah obeyed, and the hired men went home angry at losing their plunder.
25:11 *went to the Valley of Salt* South of the Dead Sea, where David had defeated Edom (1 Chr 18:12). God gave a great victory.
25:12 *they threw them from the top of the cliff* A brutal act of war. The text does not say God commanded it and does not praise it. Some think the cliff was at Sela, Edom's rock city (2 Kgs 14:7). Victory from God was followed by cruelty from man, then idolatry. God judged cruelty in every nation, His own included (Amos 1:11; 2:4-6). Success can make us hard, and we must guard against cruelty to the helpless.
25:13 *from Samaria as far as Beth-horon* Obedience does not always mean everything goes smoothly. But the first mistake was hiring them at all.
25:14 *he set them up for himself as gods* It makes no sense, and that is the point. Edom's gods had just failed Edom. Some think it was a custom to honor a defeated land's gods. Sin rarely makes sense (Isa 44:14-20).
25:15 *who did not deliver their own people from your hand* God warned before He struck.
25:16 *God has counseled to destroy you* A play on counsel. Amaziah refused the prophet's counsel, so he would receive God's, which was judgment. Refusing God's correction does not escape it. It chooses a harder way to learn.
25:17 *let us look one another in the face* A call to battle, perhaps over the raid of verse 13, made after taking counsel with men, not God.
25:18 *The thornbush that was in the Lebanon* Amaziah was the thornbush that thought itself the cedar's equal. A king who did not follow the LORD gave him better advice than he gave himself. "Before breaking is pride" (Prov 16:18).
25:20 *for it was from God* God let Amaziah's pride carry him to the judgment he chose, as the prophet said (25:16). Amaziah still made his own choice.
25:23 *he broke down the wall of Jerusalem* About six hundred feet, leaving the city open toward Israel. Obed-edom's family kept the storehouses (25:24; 1 Chr 26:15). The man who bowed to Edom's gods saw God's house robbed.

in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel? **27** And from the time that Amaziah turned aside from after the LORD, they conspired a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem, and he fled to Lachish (Lakhish); and they sent after him to Lachish, and they put him to death there. **28** And they carried him on the horses, and they buried him with his fathers in the city of Judah.

2 CHRONICLES 26

Uzziah Seeks God and Prospers

1 And all the people of Judah (Yehuda) took Uzziah (Uziyahu), and he ***was*** a son of sixteen years, and they made him king in place of his father Amaziah (Amatsyahu). **2** He built Eloth (Elot) and restored it to Judah after the king lay down with his fathers. **3** Uzziah ***was*** a son of sixteen years when he became king, and he reigned fifty-two years in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). And the name of his mother ***was*** Jecoliah (Yekhalya) from Jerusalem. **4** And he did what ***was*** right in the eyes of the LORD, according to all that Amaziah his father had done. **5** And he was seeking God in the days of Zechariah (Zekharyahu), who had understanding in the seeing of God; and in the days ***that*** he sought the LORD, God made him prosper. **6** And he went out and fought against the Philistines, and he broke down the wall of Gath (Gat) and the wall of Jabneh (Yavne) and the wall of Ashdod; and he built cities in ***the region of*** Ashdod and among the Philistines. **7** And God helped him against the Philistines and against the Arabs who were dwelling in Gurbaal, and the Meunites (Meunim). **8** And the Ammonites gave tribute to Uzziah, and his name went as far as the entrance of Egypt (Mitsrayim), for he displayed strength to the highest ***degree***.

Uzziah's Works and Army

9 And Uzziah built towers in Jerusalem at the Gate of the Corner and at the Gate of the Valley and at the Angle, and he strengthened them. **10** And he built towers in the wilderness, and he hewed many cisterns, for he had much livestock, both in the Shephelah and in the plain, ***and*** farmers and vinedressers in the mountains and in the fruitful fields, for he was a lover of the ground. **11** And Uzziah had a force doing battle, going out ***to*** war by troops, by the number of their muster by the hand of Jeiel (Ye'i'el) the scribe and Maaseiah (Ma'aseyahu) the officer, under the hand of Hananiah (Chananyahu), one of the officials of the king. **12** The whole number of the heads of the fathers, of the mighty men of valor, ***was*** two thousand six hundred. **13** And under their hand ***was*** a force of war, three hundred and seven thousand five hundred, doing battle with strength of valor, to help the king against the enemy. **14** And Uzziah prepared for them, for all the army, shields and spears and helmets and coats of armor and bows, and stones for slinging. **15** And he made in Jerusalem devices, the invention of an inventor, to be on the towers and on the corners, to shoot with arrows and with great stones. And his name went out far, for he was marvelously helped until he was strong.

Uzziah's Pride and Leprosy

16 And when he was strong, his heart was lifted up until ***he*** acted corruptly, and he acted unfaithfully against the LORD his God, and he went into the temple of the LORD to burn incense on the altar of incense. **17** And Azariah (Azaryahu) the priest went in after him, and with him eighty priests of the LORD, sons of valor. **18** And they stood against Uzziah the king, and they said to him, "***It is*** not for you, Uzziah, to burn incense to the LORD, but for the priests, the sons of Aaron (Aharon), who are consecrated to burn incense. Go out from the sanctuary, for you have acted unfaithfully, and ***it will*** not

25:27 2 Chr 15:2; 2 Chr 24:25; 2 Kgs 14:19
25:28 2 Kgs 14:20
26:1 Matt 1:8; Matt 1:9; 2 Chr 22:1
26:2 2 Chr 8:17; 2 Kgs 14:22; 2 Kgs 16:6
26:3 Matt 1:8; 2 Kgs 15:2,3; Isa 1:1
26:4 2 Chr 25:2
26:5 2 Chr 24:2; Dan 1:17; 2 Chr 15:2
26:6 Isa 14:29; 2 Chr 21:16; 2 Sam 8:1
26:7 Acts 2:11; 2 Chr 21:16; 2 Chr 14:11
26:8 Matt 1:8; Gen 19:38; 2 Sam 8:2
26:9 Matt 1:8; Neh 3:13,19,32; 2 Chr 25:23
26:10 Gen 26:18-21; 2 Kgs 3:4; 1 Chr 27:26-31
26:11 Matt 1:8; 2 Kgs 5:2
26:13 2 Chr 11:1; 2 Chr 13:3; 2 Chr 14:8
26:14 Matt 1:8; Judg 20:16; 1 Sam 17:49
26:15 2 Chr 2:7,14; Exod 31:4; Matt 4:24
26:16 Luke 1:9; 2 Chr 25:19; 2 Chr 32:25
26:17 1 Chr 6:10; 1 Chr 12:28; 1 Chr 26:6
26:18 Matt 14:4; Heb 5:4; Matt 1:8

25:27 *from the time that Amaziah turned aside from after the LORD* The Chronicler ties the plot to the day he turned from God. Lachish was a fortress southwest of Jerusalem. He obeyed God when it cost money and refused Him when it cost pride. Which is harder for you to give up?
26:1 *they made him king in place of his father Amaziah* Kings calls him Azariah, the LORD has helped. Uzziah means the LORD is my strength. Both fit his story (26:15). He reigned about 792 to 740 B.C., counting years with his father and later his son.
26:2 *he built Eloth and restored it to Judah* Eloth, or Elath, was a port on the Gulf of Aqaba, reopening trade to the south.
26:5 *in the days of Zechariah, who had understanding in the seeing of God* Not the priest of chapter 24 or the later prophet, but a teacher who guided the young king, as Jehoiada did Joash. Godly mentors matter.
26:5 *in the days that he sought the LORD, God made him prosper* The key sentence of the first half. His success came from God and lasted as long as he sought God (Matt 6:33).
26:8 *his name went as far as the entrance of Egypt* Tribute was regular payment as a sign of being under his rule. Judah reached a strength it had not known since Solomon.
26:10 *for he was a lover of the ground* Cisterns were pits cut in rock to store rainwater. A king who loved working the land and caring for animals. God gave Adam work in the garden (Gen 2:15). Honest work with the land is a gift from God.
26:14 *stones for slinging* Soldiers often brought their own weapons. Uzziah equipped them all, and his war machines (26:15) defended the walls. He was clever and practical.
26:15 *he was marvelously helped until he was strong* Read it again. The danger was not in being weak but in becoming strong. As long as Uzziah knew he needed help, God helped him.
26:16 *when he was strong, his heart was lifted up* The turning point. Moses warned that prosperity lifts the heart and forgets the LORD (Deut 8:11-14). Success is a harder test than trouble. In trouble we cry out to God. In success we think we don't need Him.
26:16 *to burn incense on the altar of incense* Incense, burned morning and evening, pictured prayer rising to God (Exod 30:7-8; Ps 141:2), and only Aaron's sons could offer it (Num 16:40; 18:7). Perhaps he copied pagan kings who served as priests. Scripture says only that his heart was lifted up. Pride wants to be the exception to God's rules.
26:18 *It is not for you, Uzziah, to burn incense to the LORD* Eighty brave priests could have paid with their lives. To be consecrated is to be set apart for God's service. They spoke respectfully, plainly, and gave him a way out. Sometimes loving someone means standing in his way when he is about to do wrong.

be for glory to you from the LORD God." **19** And Uzziah was enraged, and in his hand ***was*** a censer to burn incense; and while he was enraged with the priests, the leprosy rose up on his forehead before the priests in the house of the LORD, beside the altar of incense. **20** And Azariah the head priest and all the priests turned to him, and look, he ***was*** leprous on his forehead; and they hurried him from there, and also he himself hurried to go out, for the LORD had struck him. **21** And Uzziah the king was leprous until the day of his death, and he dwelt ***in*** the house of separateness, leprous, for he was cut off from the house of the LORD. And Jotham (Yotam) his son ***was*** over the house of the king, judging the people of the land. **22** And the rest of the matters of Uzziah, the first and the last, Isaiah (Yeshayahu) the son of Amoz (Amots) the prophet has written. **23** And Uzziah lay down with his fathers, and they buried him with his fathers in the field of the burial ground which ***belonged*** to the kings, for they said, "He ***is*** leprous." And Jotham his son reigned in his place.

2 CHRONICLES 27

Jotham Reigns in Judah

1 Jotham (Yotam) ***was*** a son of twenty-five years when he became king, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). And the name of his mother ***was*** Jerusha (Yerusha) the daughter of Zadok (Tsadoq). **2** And he did what ***was*** right in the eyes of the LORD, according to all that Uzziah (Uziyahu) his father had done; only he did not go into the temple of the LORD. And the people were still acting corruptly. **3** He built the upper gate of the house of the LORD, and on the wall of the Ophel (Ofel) he built much. **4** And cities he built in the hill country of Judah (Yehuda), and in the forests he built fortresses and towers. **5** And he fought with the king of the sons of Ammon (Amon), and he prevailed over them. And the sons of Ammon gave him in that year approximately 7,500 pounds (a hundred talents) of silver, and approximately 60,000 bushels (ten thousand kors) of wheat, and of barley ten thousand. This the sons of Ammon brought back to him also in the second year and the third. **6** And Jotham strengthened himself, for he had set his ways before the LORD his God. **7** And the rest of the matters of Jotham, and all his wars and his ways, look, they are written in the book of the kings of Israel (Yisra'el) and Judah. **8** He was a son of twenty-five years when he became king, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. **9** And Jotham lay down with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David, and Ahaz (Achaz) his son reigned in his place.

2 CHRONICLES 28

Ahaz Reigns in Judah

1 Ahaz (Achaz) ***was*** a son of twenty years when he became king, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). And he did not do what ***was*** right in the eyes of the LORD, like David his father. **2** And he walked in the

26:19 Matt 1:8; Rev 8:3; Num 12:10
26:20 Esth 6:12; Lev 14:34; Deut 28:22,35
26:21 Matt 1:8; Matt 1:9; Lev 13:46
26:22 Matt 1:8; Isa 1:1; Isa 6:1
26:23 Matt 1:8; Acts 13:36; 2 Chr 21:20
27:1 Matt 1:9; 1 Chr 3:12; 2 Kgs 15:32,33-38
27:2 Matt 1:9; 2 Chr 26:4; 2 Kgs 15:34
27:3 2 Chr 33:14; Neh 3:26,27; 2 Chr 23:20
27:4 2 Chr 11:5-10; 2 Chr 14:7; 2 Chr 26:9,10
27:5 2 Chr 20:1; Judg 11:4-33; 2 Sam 10:1-14
27:6 Matt 1:9; 2 Chr 26:5; 2 Chr 19:3
27:7 Matt 1:9; 2 Chr 20:34; 2 Chr 26:22,23
27:9 Matt 1:9; 2 Kgs 15:38
28:1 Matt 1:9; 1 Chr 3:13; Isa 1:1
28:2 Exod 34:17; Judg 2:11,13; 2 Chr 21:6

26:19 *the leprosy rose up on his forehead* A censer was a pan for carrying coals and incense. Leprosy in the Bible is tsara'at, a term for several serious skin diseases, and it made a person unclean and kept him apart (Lev 13:45-46). It broke out on his forehead, in front of everyone, while he was still angry. God judged Miriam and Korah the same way (Num 12:10; 16). He takes His holiness seriously.
26:20 *also he himself hurried to go out, for the LORD had struck him* He refused to leave when the priests asked. Now he could not get out fast enough. Pride brought him in to exalt himself, and he left humbled.
26:21 *he dwelt in the house of separateness* The man who pushed into the holy place could never enter the temple again. He wanted more access to God than God allowed and ended with less. "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble" (James 4:6). If success has come to you, remember where the help came from.
26:21 *he was cut off from the house of the LORD* God kept king and priest apart in Israel, but promised a King who would be "a priest on his throne" (Zech 6:13). Jesus is that King-Priest after Melchizedek (Ps 110:4; Heb 7:1-3). What Uzziah grabbed in pride, God gave His Son by appointment (Heb 5:4). Through Him we draw near with confidence (Heb 4:14-16), not by pushing in, but through His blood.
26:22 *Isaiah the son of Amoz the prophet has written* Isaiah began in Uzziah's day (Isa 1:1) and saw the LORD on His throne "in the year of the death of King Uzziah" (Isa 6:1), about 740 B.C. When the king who grabbed at holiness died, Isaiah saw the true King and heard "Holy, holy, holy" (Isa 6:3).
26:23 *for they said, He is leprous* Buried near the kings but not with them. Even in death his pride marked him.
27:1 *Jerusha the daughter of Zadok* Jotham had ruled for his leprous father (26:21) and reigned about 750 to 732 B.C., counting shared years. Zadok was a common priestly name, and many think she came from a priestly family, though Scripture does not say.
27:2 *only he did not go into the temple of the LORD* He followed his father's good example and avoided his bad one. Every one of us inherits both good and bad from our families. By God's grace we can keep the good and let the bad stop with us.
27:2 *the people were still acting corruptly* The high places remained (2 Kgs 15:35), and Isaiah and Micah describe the rich oppressing the poor and empty ritual (Isa 1:10-17; Mic 2:1-2). A good leader is a blessing, but he cannot make others love God. Each heart must turn for itself.
27:3 *on the wall of the Ophel he built much* The Ophel was the hill south of the temple mount, between the temple and the old city of David. Not every generation is called to something new. Sometimes faithfulness is carrying on good work others started.
27:5 *he fought with the king of the sons of Ammon* They had paid tribute to Uzziah (26:8), perhaps stopping when he fell ill. A hundred talents is about 7,500 pounds of silver. The tribute seems to have ended after three years, perhaps with the rising threat of Syria and Israel (2 Kgs 15:37).
27:6 *for he had set his ways before the LORD his God* The heart of the chapter: living as if always before God's eyes, because we are. His father became strong and then proud. Jotham became strong because he walked before God (Prov 3:5-6). What would it look like to set your work, money, words and home before the LORD this week?
27:9 *Ahaz his son reigned in his place* Jotham is one of the few kings of Judah of whom nothing bad is said. A godly father does not guarantee a godly son.
28:1 *he did not do what was right in the eyes of the LORD, like David his father* The Chronicler measures each king by David, and Ahaz failed. He reigned about 735 to 715 B.C., counting shared years.
28:2 *molten images he made for the Baals* Idols made by pouring melted metal into a mold, for the many local forms of Baal.

ways of the kings of Israel (Yisra'el), and also molten images he made for the Baals. **3** And he burned incense in the valley of the son of Hinnom (Hinom), and he burned his sons in the fire, according to the abominations of the nations whom the LORD dispossessed from before the sons of Israel. **4** And he sacrificed and burned incense at the high places and on the hills and under every luxuriant tree.

Defeat by Syria and Israel

5 And the LORD his God gave him into the hand of the king of Syria (Aram), and they struck him, and they took captive from him a great ***number of*** captives, and they brought ***them to*** Damascus (Dameseq). And also into the hand of the king of Israel he was given, and he struck him ***with*** a great blow. **6** And Pekah (Peqach) the son of Remaliah (Remalyahu) killed in Judah (Yehuda) a hundred and twenty thousand in one day, all ***of them*** sons of valor, because they had forsaken the LORD, the God of their fathers. **7** And Zichri (Zikhri), a mighty man of Ephraim (Efrayim), killed Maaseiah (Ma'aseyahu) the son of the king, and Azrikam (Azriqam) the leader of the house, and Elkanah (Elqana) the second to the king. **8** And the sons of Israel took captive of their brothers two hundred thousand, women, sons, and daughters; and also much spoil they plundered from them, and they brought the spoil to Samaria (Shomron).

Oded the Prophet

9 And there was there a prophet of the LORD; his name ***was*** Oded. And he went out before the army that was coming to Samaria, and he said to them, "Look, because of the wrath of the LORD, the God of your fathers, against Judah, He gave them into your hand, and you have killed among them in a rage ***that*** has reached to the heavens. **10** And now the sons of Judah and Jerusalem you are saying ***you will*** subjugate as male slaves and female slaves for yourselves. Are there not, indeed, with you, you yourselves, guilts against the LORD your God? **11** And now hear me, and send back the captives whom you have taken captive from your brothers, for the burning of the anger of the LORD ***is*** on you." **12** And men of the heads of the sons of Ephraim rose up, Azariah (Azaryahu) the son of Johanan (Yehochanan), Berechiah (Berekhyahu) the son of Meshillemoth (Meshilemot), and Jehizkiah (Yechizqiyahu) the son of Shallum (Shalum), and Amasa the son of Hadlai (Chadlay), against those who were coming from the war, **13** and they said to them, "You shall not bring the captives here; for ***to bring*** guilt against the LORD on us, you are saying ***you will*** add to our sins and to our guilt. For great ***is*** the guilt that ***belongs*** to us, and burning of anger ***is*** on Israel." **14** And the armed ***men*** left the captives and the plunder before the commanders and all the assembly. **15** And the men who had been designated by names rose up, and they took hold of the captives, and all their naked ones they clothed from the spoil; and they clothed them, and put sandals on them, and fed them, and gave them drink, and anointed them, and led them on donkeys, every one who was stumbling; and they brought them ***to*** Jericho (Yericho), the city of the palm trees, beside their brothers. And they returned ***to*** Samaria.

Ahaz Turns to Assyria

16 At that time King Ahaz sent to the kings of Assyria (Ashur) to help him. **17** And again the Edomites had come, and they had struck in Judah, and they had taken captives. **18** And the Philistines had made a raid on the cities of the Shephelah and the Negeb (Negev) of Judah, and they had captured Beth-shemesh (Bet-Shemesh) and Aijalon (Ayalon) and the Gederoth (Gederot), and Soco (Sokho) and its towns, and Timnah (Timna) and its towns, and Gimzo and its towns; and they dwelt there. **19** For the LORD had humbled Judah because of Ahaz king of Israel, for he had cast off restraint in Judah, and he had acted with unfaithfulness against the

28:3 2 Chr 33:6; Lev 18:21; 2 Chr 33:2
28:4 Lev 26:30; Deut 12:2,3; 2 Kgs 16:4
28:5 Isa 7:1,6; 2 Chr 24:24; 2 Kgs 16:5,6
28:6 2 Kgs 15:27,37; Isa 9:21; Isa 7:4,5,9
28:7 Gen 41:43; Gen 43:12,15; Esth 10:3
28:8 Acts 13:26; 2 Chr 11:4; Deut 28:25,41
28:9 Isa 47:6; Ezra 9:6; Rev 18:5
28:10 Lev 25:39-46; Jer 25:29; Matt 7:2-4
28:11 James 2:13; Isa 58:6; Jer 34:14,15
28:12 1 Chr 28:1; Jer 26:6
28:13 Num 32:14; Josh 22:17,18; Matt 23:32,35
28:15 2 Kgs 6:22; Prov 25:21,22; Deut 34:3
28:16 Matt 1:9; 2 Kgs 16:5-7; Isa 7:1-9,17
28:17 Obad 1:10,13,14; 2 Chr 25:11,12; Lev 26:18
28:18 Ezek 16:27,57; Josh 15:10; 1 Sam 6:9
28:19 Matt 1:9; 2 Chr 21:2; Deut 28:43

28:3 *he burned his sons in the fire* One of the hardest verses in the book. The valley of the son of Hinnom ran along Jerusalem's south side, where children were offered to gods such as Molech. God forbade it in the strongest words (Lev 18:21; Deut 12:31) and said it "did not come up on My heart" (Jer 7:31). Kings says "pass through the fire" (2 Kgs 16:3), and most take both as child sacrifice. False gods always demand more and give nothing back. The valley's name, Gehenna in Greek, became Jesus' word for hell (Mark 9:43).

28:3 *according to the abominations of the nations* Ahaz gave his sons to buy a false god's help. The true God gave His own Son for us because He loves us (Rom 8:32). If this verse stirs pain over a lost child or harm done to children, bring it to the Lord who took children in His arms (Mark 10:14-16).

28:5 *the LORD his God gave him into the hand of the king of Syria* Rezin of Damascus and Pekah of Israel joined, probably to force Judah into an alliance against Assyria (2 Kgs 16:5; Isa 7:1-6). Judah's defeat came because they had forsaken God (28:6). I take the number as written.

28:8 *of their brothers two hundred thousand* Israel and Judah were one family from Jacob, and one part was carrying the other off as slaves.

28:9 *in a rage that has reached to the heavens* Oded says their victory came from God's discipline of Judah, not their own goodness. God can use a nation to judge another and still hold it guilty for cruelty (Isa 10:5-12).

28:10 *are there not, indeed, with you, you yourselves, guilts against the LORD your God* Israel worshiped calves and Baal and had no right to act superior. Jesus warned of the speck and the log (Matt 7:3-5).

28:12 *men of the heads of the sons of Ephraim* We know nothing else of these four men. It took courage to stand before a victorious army and say, Not this. God remembers people like that.

28:15 *all their naked ones they clothed from the spoil* One of the most beautiful verses in the book. To anoint was to put soothing oil on wounds and dry skin. Clothed, fed, carried on donkeys to Jericho, it sounds much like the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-37), though the New Testament does not tie them together. In a chapter of cruelty, mercy came from the unlikeliest place (Rom 12:20). Who is the enemy God may be asking you to show mercy to?

28:16 *King Ahaz sent to the kings of Assyria to help him* Isaiah begged Ahaz to trust the LORD and offered a sign, and Ahaz refused (Isa 7:3-12). God gave the sign anyway: "Look, the virgin is pregnant and bearing a son, and she will call his name Immanuel" (Isa 7:14), fulfilled in Jesus' birth (Matt 1:22-23). The king who would not ask for a sign was given the greatest sign of all.

28:19 *for he had cast off restraint in Judah* He let the people run wild, throwing off God's law. Ahaz is called "king of Israel," perhaps because he acted like Israel's kings or because Israel often means all God's people.

LORD. **20** And Tiglath-pileser (Tilegat-Pilne'eser) king of Assyria came against him, and he distressed him, and he did not strengthen him. **21** For Ahaz had taken a portion of the house of the LORD and of the house of the king and of the officials, and he gave ***it*** to the king of Assyria; and ***it was*** not for help to him.

Ahaz Shuts the Temple

22 And in the time ***that he*** was distressing him, he increased to act unfaithfully against the LORD, that same King Ahaz. **23** And he sacrificed to the gods of Damascus which had struck him, and he said, "Because the gods of the kings of Syria are helping them, to them I will sacrifice, and they will help me." And they became for him ***a cause*** to make him stumble, and to all Israel. **24** And Ahaz gathered the articles of the house of God, and he cut up the articles of the house of God, and he shut the doors of the house of the LORD, and he made for himself altars in every corner in Jerusalem. **25** And in every city of Judah, city by city, he made high places to burn incense to other gods, and he provoked the LORD, the God of his fathers. **26** And the rest of his matters and all his ways, the first and the last, look, they are written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel. **27** And Ahaz lay down with his fathers, and they buried him in the city, in Jerusalem, for they did not bring him into the graves of the kings of Israel. And Hezekiah (Chizqiyahu) his son reigned in his place.

2 CHRONICLES 29

Hezekiah Opens the Temple

1 Hezekiah (Chizqiyahu) became king ***as*** a son of twenty-five years, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). And the name of his mother ***was*** Abijah (Aviya) the daughter of Zechariah (Zekharyahu). **2** And he did what ***was*** right in the eyes of the LORD, according to all that David his father had done. **3** He, in the first year of his reign, in the first month, opened the doors of the house of the LORD, and he strengthened them. **4** And he brought in the priests and the Levites, and he gathered them to the open square of the east. **5** And he said to them, "Hear me, O Levites! Now consecrate yourselves, and consecrate the house of the LORD, the God of your fathers, and bring out the impurity from the holy place. **6** For our fathers acted unfaithfully, and they did the evil in the eyes of the LORD our God, and they forsook Him, and they turned their faces away from the tabernacle of the LORD, and they gave ***Him their*** back. **7** Also they shut the doors of the porch, and they put out the lamps, and incense they did not burn, and burnt offering they did not offer up in the holy place to the God of Israel (Yisra'el). **8** And the wrath of the LORD came on Judah (Yehuda) and Jerusalem, and He has made them into a terror, into a horror, and into a hissing, just as you are seeing with your eyes. **9** And look, our fathers have fallen by the sword, and our sons and our daughters and our wives ***are*** in captivity because of this. **10** Now ***it is*** in my heart to make a covenant with the LORD, the God of Israel, that the burning of His anger may turn back from us. **11** My sons, do not now be negligent, for the LORD has chosen you to stand before Him, to minister to Him, and to be His ministers and burners of incense."

The Levites Cleanse the Temple

12 And the Levites arose: Mahath (Machat) the son of Amasai (Amasay) and Joel (Yo'el) the son of Azariah (Azaryahu), of the sons of the Kohathites; and of the sons of Merari, Kish (Qish) the son of Abdi (Avdi) and Azariah the son of Jehallelel (Yehalelel); and of the Gershonites, Joah (Yo'ach) the son of Zimmah (Zima) and Eden the son of Joah; **13** and of the sons of Elizaphan (Elitsafan), Shimri and Jeiel (Ye'i'el); and of the sons of Asaph (Asaf), Zechariah and Mattaniah (Matanyahu);

28:20 2 Kgs 15:29; 1 Chr 5:26; 2 Kgs 16:7-10
28:21 Matt 1:9; 2 Chr 12:9; 2 Kgs 18:15,16
28:22 Matt 1:9; Isa 1:5; 2 Chr 33:12
28:23 2 Chr 25:14; 2 Kgs 16:12,13; Hab 1:11
28:24 Matt 1:9; 2 Kgs 16:17,18; 2 Chr 33:3-5
28:25 2 Chr 28:3
28:26 2 Kgs 16:19,20; 2 Chr 20:34; 2 Chr 27:7-9
28:27 Matt 1:9; 2 Chr 21:20; 2 Chr 26:23
29:1 Matt 1:9; Matt 1:10; 2 Kgs 18:1-3
29:3 2 Chr 28:24; 2 Chr 29:7; 2 Chr 34:3
29:4 2 Chr 32:6; Neh 3:29; Jer 19:2
29:5 2 Chr 35:6; 1 Chr 15:12; Exod 19:10,15
29:6 Ezek 8:16; Jer 2:27; 2 Chr 28:2-4,23-25
29:7 2 Chr 28:24; 2 Chr 29:3; Lev 24:2-8
29:8 Jer 25:9,18; 2 Chr 24:18; Deut 28:25
29:9 2 Chr 28:5-8,17; Lev 26:17; Lam 5:7
29:10 2 Chr 23:16; 2 Chr 6:7,8; 2 Chr 15:12,13
29:11 Gal 6:7,8; Num 3:6-9; Num 8:6-14
29:12 Exod 6:16-25; Num 4:2-20; 1 Chr 6:16-18
29:13 1 Chr 6:39; 1 Chr 15:8; Lev 10:4

28:20 *he distressed him, and he did not strengthen him* Tiglath-pileser struck Damascus (2 Kgs 16:9), but Assyria became Judah's master, not its helper, and Judah a vassal paying tribute. The help we buy from the world often ends up owning us (Jer 17:5).
28:22 *that same King Ahaz* The writer points his finger. Trouble drove Manasseh to his knees (33:12) and Ahaz deeper into sin. The difference is the heart.
28:23 *they became for him a cause to make him stumble* The gods of Syria had not helped Syria. Damascus fell to Assyria (2 Kgs 16:9). False gods do not lift us up. They bring us down.
28:24 *he shut the doors of the house of the LORD* For the first time a king of David's line closed God's house, and the lamps and offerings stopped (29:7). Kings tells of his Damascus altar (2 Kgs 16:10-16). Chronicles goes further: God's house locked and an idol on every corner. The next king's first act will be to open those doors (29:3).
28:27 *they did not bring him into the graves of the kings of Israel* Like Jehoram and Joash, he was denied a place with the kings. After one of the worst kings comes one of the best. Hezekiah grew up in the house of a man who burned his sons and shut the temple. No family history is too dark for God to break.
29:2 *according to all that David his father had done* The highest praise the Chronicler gives, with no "only" after it. Kings says no king of Judah trusted the LORD as he did (2 Kgs 18:5). He reigned about 715 to 686 B.C. He grew up in a home of idols, with brothers sacrificed in the fire. Our background shapes us, but it does not have to decide who we become.
29:3 *in the first year of his reign, in the first month, opened the doors of the house of the LORD* His father had shut them (28:24). Before the palace, the army or the treasury, Hezekiah put God's worship first. What comes first in our lives shows what matters most (Matt 6:33).
29:5 *consecrate yourselves, and consecrate the house of the LORD* To consecrate is to set apart as holy for God. They had to make themselves ready first, then the house. Those who serve God must first be right with Him.
29:6 *our fathers acted unfaithfully* He said "our fathers," not "my father," and did not single out Ahaz. But he did not pretend either. He tied Judah's suffering to their sin (29:8-9; 28:5-8, 17). Seeing the true cause of our troubles is the first step toward healing.
29:11 *My sons, do not now be negligent* The king spoke tenderly and reminded them God had chosen them. Every believer belongs to "a royal priesthood" (1 Pet 2:9). Are we careless with that calling or eager to serve?
29:12 *the Levites arose* Two men from each Levite family and from each musicians' family. God knows the names of those who serve Him, and no family held back.

14 and of the sons of Heman, Jehiel (Yechi'el) and Shimei (Shimi); and of the sons of Jeduthun (Yedutun), Shemaiah (Shemaya) and Uzziel (Uzi'el). **15** And they gathered their brothers, and they consecrated themselves, and they came according to the command of the king, by the words of the LORD, to cleanse the house of the LORD. **16** And the priests went into the inside of the house of the LORD to cleanse ***it***, and they brought out all the uncleanness that they found in the temple of the LORD to the courtyard of the house of the LORD; and the Levites received ***it*** to bring ***it*** out to the Wadi of Kidron (Qidron), outside. **17** And they began on the first ***day*** of the first month to consecrate, and on the eighth day of the month they came to the porch of the LORD; and they consecrated the house of the LORD in eight days, and on the sixteenth day of the first month they finished. **18** And they went in to Hezekiah the king, and they said, "We have cleansed all the house of the LORD, the altar of the burnt offering and all its utensils, and the table of the arrangement and all its utensils. **19** And all the utensils which King Ahaz (Achaz) cast off in his reign, in his unfaithfulness, we have prepared and consecrated; and look, they ***are*** before the altar of the LORD."

Atonement and Worship Restored

20 And Hezekiah the king rose early, and he gathered the officials of the city, and he went up ***to*** the house of the LORD. **21** And they brought seven bulls and seven rams and seven lambs and seven male goats for a sin offering for the kingdom and for the sanctuary and for Judah. And he said to the sons of Aaron (Aharon), the priests, to offer ***them*** up on the altar of the LORD. **22** And they slaughtered the cattle, and the priests received the blood, and they sprinkled ***it*** on the altar; and they slaughtered the rams, and they sprinkled the blood on the altar; and they slaughtered the lambs, and they sprinkled the blood on the altar. **23** And they brought near the goats of the sin offering before the king and the assembly, and they laid their hands on them. **24** And the priests slaughtered them, and they made a sin offering with their blood on the altar, to make atonement for all Israel; for the king had said ***that*** the burnt offering and the sin offering ***were*** for all Israel. **25** And he stationed the Levites ***in*** the house of the LORD with cymbals, with harps, and with lyres, according to the command of David and of Gad the seer of the king and of Nathan (Natan) the prophet; for the commandment ***was*** by the hand of the LORD, by the hand of His prophets. **26** And the Levites stood with the instruments of David, and the priests with the trumpets. **27** And Hezekiah said to offer up the burnt offering on the altar. And at the time ***when*** the burnt offering began, the song of the LORD began, and the trumpets, and by the hands of the instruments of David king of Israel. **28** And all the assembly ***was*** bowing down, and the singers ***were*** singing, and the trumpets ***were*** sounding; all ***of this continued*** until the burnt offering was finished. **29** And when they finished offering up, the king and all who were found with him knelt, and they bowed down. **30** And Hezekiah the king and the officials said to the Levites to praise the LORD with the words of David and of Asaph the seer. And they praised to ***the point of*** joy, and they bowed low, and they bowed down.

The People Bring Offerings

31 And Hezekiah answered and said, "Now you have filled your hand for the LORD. Draw near, and bring sacrifices and thank offerings to the house of the LORD." And the assembly brought sacrifices and thank offerings, and every willing ***one of*** heart ***brought*** burnt offerings. **32** And the number of the burnt offerings which the assembly brought was seventy cattle, a hundred rams, two hundred lambs; all these ***were*** for a burnt offering to the LORD. **33** And the holy offerings ***were*** six hundred cattle and three thousand sheep. **34** Only the

29:14 1 Chr 6:33; 1 Chr 15:19; 1 Chr 25:1,3,6
29:15 2 Chr 30:12; 1 Chr 23:28
29:16 Matt 21:12; John 18:1; 2 Chr 15:16
29:17 2 Chr 29:7; 2 Chr 3:4; 1 Kgs 6:3
29:18 Matt 1:9; 2 Chr 4:1,7; 2 Chr 13:11
29:19 Matt 1:9; Heb 9:21; 2 Chr 28:24
29:20 Matt 1:9; Gen 22:3; Exod 24:4
29:21 Heb 9:21; Lev 4:3-14; Num 23:1,14,29
29:22 Heb 9:21; Lev 1:5; Lev 4:7,18,34
29:23 Lev 4:15,24; Lev 1:4
29:24 Lev 6:30; Lev 8:15; Ezek 45:15,17
29:25 2 Chr 8:14; 1 Chr 23:5; 2 Sam 24:11
29:26 1 Chr 23:5; 1 Chr 15:24; Amos 6:5
29:27 Matt 1:9; 2 Chr 23:18; 2 Chr 7:3
29:28 Ps 68:24-26; Rev 5:8-14; Ps 89:15
29:29 2 Chr 20:18; 1 Chr 29:20; Ps 72:11
29:30 Matt 1:9; 2 Sam 23:1,2; 1 Chr 16:7-36
29:31 Matt 1:9; 2 Chr 13:9; Lev 1:1-3
29:32 1 Kgs 3:4; 1 Kgs 8:63; 1 Chr 29:21
29:34 2 Chr 35:11; 2 Chr 30:3; 2 Chr 29:5

29:15 *according to the command of the king, by the words of the LORD* Hezekiah's command was simply to do what God's Word said.
29:16 *to the Wadi of Kidron* The valley east of Jerusalem. A wadi is a stream bed that runs only in the rainy season. Asa and Josiah burned idols there too (15:16; 2 Kgs 23:4-6). Sixteen days of hard, dirty work. Is there a habit, a relationship or something you watch that needs to be carried out to the Kidron (2 Cor 7:1)? Jesus too cleansed the temple (Matt 21:12-13).
29:19 *all the utensils which King Ahaz cast off in his reign* What Ahaz threw away, they restored. God can take what has been neglected and broken and make it fit for His use again. "The table of the arrangement" (29:18) held the bread set before the LORD.
29:21 *seven bulls and seven rams and seven lambs and seven male goats* Seven speaks of completeness. A sin offering was a sacrifice so the guilty could be forgiven and made clean (Lev 4), here for the kingdom, the temple and the people.
29:23 *they laid their hands on them* Laying hands on the animal showed the people's sin placed on the sacrifice that died in their place (Lev 4:15; 16:21).
29:24 *to make atonement for all Israel* Atonement is the covering of sin so sinners can be made right with God. "All Israel" included the north, which had fallen to Assyria in 722 B.C. These offerings were pictures. The blood of bulls and goats could not take sin away (Heb 10:4). Jesus is "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). Our sins were laid on Him (Isa 53:6), once for all (Heb 10:10).
29:25 *the commandment was by the hand of the LORD, by the hand of His prophets* David organized the temple music (1 Chr 25), but it was not merely David's idea. Gad and Nathan carried God's command.
29:27 *at the time when the burnt offering began, the song of the LORD began* Sacrifice and song together. Worship begins with atonement. Because sin has been dealt with, God's people can sing. We sing because of the cross.
29:30 *with the words of David and of Asaph the seer* They sang the Psalms, God's own words, back to Him. The worship was joyful and humble at once. They bowed even as they rejoiced.
29:31 *every willing one of heart brought burnt offerings* "Filled your hand" was used of ordaining priests. Here it means they had given themselves fully to God again. A thank offering was a peace offering for giving thanks, shared in a meal. No one was forced.
29:34 *the Levites were more upright of heart to consecrate themselves than the priests* Some who should have been ready were not, and others stepped up. A high position does not mean the most faithful heart.

priests were too few, and they were not able to skin all the burnt offerings; and their brothers the Levites strengthened them until the work was finished and until the priests had consecrated themselves, for the Levites ***were*** more upright of heart to consecrate themselves than the priests. **35** And also burnt offerings ***were*** in abundance, with the fat of the peace offerings and with the drink offerings for the burnt offering. And the service of the house of the LORD was established. **36** And Hezekiah and all the people rejoiced over what God had prepared for the people, for the thing had come about suddenly.

2 CHRONICLES 30

Hezekiah Invites All Israel

1 And Hezekiah (Chizqiyahu) sent to all Israel (Yisra'el) and Judah (Yehuda), and also letters he wrote to Ephraim (Efrayim) and Manasseh (Menashe), to come to the house of the LORD in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) to keep a Passover to the LORD, the God of Israel. **2** And the king and his officials and all the assembly in Jerusalem took counsel to keep the Passover in the second month, **3** for they had not been able to keep it at that time, for the priests had not consecrated themselves sufficiently, and the people had not been gathered to Jerusalem. **4** And the thing was right in the eyes of the king and in the eyes of all the assembly. **5** And they established a word, to make a proclamation pass through all Israel, from Beersheba (Be'er-Sheva) and to Dan, to come to keep a Passover to the LORD, the God of Israel, in Jerusalem; for they had not kept ***it*** in multitude as ***it is*** written. **6** And the runners went with the letters from the hand of the king and his officials into all Israel and Judah, and according to the command of the king, saying, "Sons of Israel, return to the LORD, the God of Abraham (Avraham), Isaac (Yitschaq), and Israel, that He may return to the escaped remnant that is left to you from the hand of the kings of Assyria (Ashur). **7** And do not be like your fathers and like your brothers, who acted unfaithfully against the LORD, the God of their fathers, and He made them a horror, as you are seeing. **8** Now do not harden your neck like your fathers. Give a hand to the LORD, and come to His sanctuary, which He has consecrated forever, and serve the LORD your God, that the burning of His anger may turn back from you. **9** For in your returning to the LORD, your brothers and your sons ***will find*** compassion before their captors, and ***will*** return to this land; for gracious and compassionate ***is*** the LORD your God, and He will not turn aside ***His*** face from you if you return to Him." **10** And the runners were passing from city to city in the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, and as far as Zebulun (Zevulun); and they were laughing at them and mocking them. **11** Only, men from Asher and Manasseh and from Zebulun humbled themselves and came to Jerusalem. **12** Also on Judah was the hand of God, to give them one heart to do the command of the king and the officials by the word of the LORD.

The Passover Kept

13 And many people were gathered ***at*** Jerusalem to keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread in the second month, an assembly very ***great*** in multitude. **14** And they arose and removed the altars that ***were*** in Jerusalem, and all the incense altars they removed, and they threw ***them*** into the Wadi of Kidron (Qidron). **15** And they slaughtered the Passover on the fourteenth of the second month. And the priests and the Levites were ashamed, and they consecrated themselves, and they brought burnt offerings ***to*** the house of the LORD. **16** And they stood at their place according to their ordinance, according to the law of Moses (Moshe) the man of God; the priests ***were*** sprinkling the blood ***received*** from the hand of

29:35 Num 15:5-10; Exod 29:13; Lev 3:15,16
29:36 1 Chr 29:9,17; Ezra 6:22; 1 Thess 3:8,9
30:1 1 Cor 5:7; 2 Chr 11:13,16; 2 Chr 30:10,11
30:2 Num 9:10,11; 1 Chr 13:1-3; Prov 11:14
30:3 2 Chr 29:34; Exod 12:6,18
30:4 1 Chr 13:4
30:5 Judg 20:1; Ezra 6:8-12; Esth 3:12-15
30:6 Esth 8:14; Jer 51:31; Job 9:25
30:7 2 Chr 29:8; Ezek 20:13-18; Zech 1:3,4
30:8 Matt 4:10; Acts 7:51; Heb 3:8
30:9 Ps 106:46; Mic 7:18; 1 Kgs 8:50
30:10 Luke 8:53; 2 Chr 36:16; 2 Chr 30:6
30:11 2 Chr 30:18,21; 2 Chr 11:16; Acts 17:34
30:12 Acts 7:23; Phil 2:13; Jer 32:39
30:13 Ps 84:7
30:14 John 18:1; 2 Chr 28:24; 2 Chr 15:16
30:15 2 Chr 29:34; Ezek 16:61-63; Ezek 43:10,11
30:16 Deut 33:1; 2 Chr 35:10,15; 2 Kgs 11:14

29:36 *for the thing had come about suddenly* Hezekiah opened the doors, but God prepared the hearts. Revival is always God's work. If you have been praying for change in your heart, family or church, do not lose hope. God can do in days what we could not do in years.
30:1 *letters he wrote to Ephraim and Manasseh* The leading northern tribes had worshiped at Jeroboam's shrines since about 930 B.C. (1 Kgs 12:26-33). Hezekiah invited them home. The Passover remembered the night the LORD passed over houses marked by a lamb's blood (Exod 12). "Our Passover was sacrificed for us: Christ" (1 Cor 5:7).
30:2 *to keep the Passover in the second month* The temple was not cleansed until the sixteenth of the first month (29:17). The Law already allowed a second-month Passover for the unclean or far away (Num 9:9-11). Hezekiah did not ignore God's Word. He used its provision.
30:5 *from Beersheba and to Dan* From the far south to the far north. The nation had not kept Passover together as one people in a very long time.
30:6 *return to the LORD, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel* A remnant is the part of a people left after a disaster, here after Assyria's deportations (2 Kgs 17:6). "Return" runs through the letter. Return to the LORD, and He will return to you. That is the heart of repentance.
30:8 *do not harden your neck like your fathers* A hard neck is a stubborn ox refusing the yoke. To "give a hand to the LORD" is to yield to Him, putting your hand in His.
30:9 *gracious and compassionate is the LORD your God* The words God used when He showed Moses His glory (Exod 34:6). He does not turn His face from those who come back. The father ran to his returning son "while he was still far distant" (Luke 15:20). Are you far from Him? He will not turn His face from you if you return.
30:10 *they were laughing at them and mocking them* Even after Assyria crushed them, many would not humble themselves. The gospel invitation still meets laughter (Matt 22:1-5).
30:11 *men from Asher and Manasseh and from Zebulun humbled themselves* Not many, but some. Pride laughs at God's invitation. Humility accepts it.
30:12 *to give them one heart* Judah's unity was God's work. When His people come together to obey His Word, it is His gift.
30:14 *removed the altars that were in Jerusalem* The altars Ahaz built on every corner (28:24). The Feast of Unleavened Bread followed Passover for seven days, without yeast, remembering the haste of the exodus and picturing a life cleansed of sin (Exod 12:15-20; 1 Cor 5:8). They cleared away the false before they celebrated.
30:15 *the priests and the Levites were ashamed* Seeing ordinary people's zeal, the slow priests were embarrassed and consecrated themselves (29:34). Sometimes the faith of new believers wakes the rest of us up.

the Levites. **17** For many ***were*** in the assembly who had not consecrated themselves, and the Levites ***were*** over the slaughter of the Passover ***offerings*** for everyone ***who was*** not clean, to consecrate ***them*** to the LORD. **18** For a multitude of the people, many from Ephraim and Manasseh, Issachar (Yisashkhar), and Zebulun, had not purified themselves, for they ate the Passover not as ***it is*** written. For Hezekiah had prayed for them, saying, "May the good LORD make atonement for **19** everyone ***who*** has prepared his heart to seek God, the LORD, the God of his fathers, though not according to the purification of the holy place." **20** And the LORD listened to Hezekiah and healed the people.

Fourteen Days of Joy

21 And the sons of Israel who were found in Jerusalem kept the Feast of Unleavened Bread seven days with great joy, and the Levites and the priests ***were*** praising the LORD day by day with instruments of strength to the LORD. **22** And Hezekiah spoke to the heart of all the Levites who showed good insight toward the LORD. And they ate the appointed feast ***for*** the seven days, sacrificing sacrifices of peace offerings and giving thanks to the LORD, the God of their fathers. **23** And all the assembly took counsel to keep another seven days, and they kept seven days ***with*** joy. **24** For Hezekiah the king of Judah contributed to the assembly a thousand bulls and seven thousand sheep, and the officials contributed to the assembly a thousand bulls and ten thousand sheep; and priests consecrated themselves in multitude. **25** And all the assembly of Judah rejoiced, and the priests and the Levites, and all the assembly that came from Israel, and the sojourners who came from the land of Israel and who dwelt in Judah. **26** And there was great joy in Jerusalem, for since the days of Solomon (Shelomo) the son of David, the king of Israel, ***there was*** not ***anything*** like this in Jerusalem. **27** And the priests, the Levites, arose and blessed the people, and their voice was heard, and their prayer came to the dwelling of His holiness, to the heavens.

2 CHRONICLES 31

The Idols Removed

1 And when all this was finished, all Israel (Yisra'el) who were found ***there*** went out to the cities of Judah (Yehuda), and they broke the pillars, and they cut down the Asherim, and they tore down the high places and the altars from all Judah and Benjamin (Binyamin), and in Ephraim (Efrayim) and Manasseh (Menashe), until ***they had*** finished. And all the sons of Israel returned, each to his possession, to their cities.

Offerings for the Priests and Levites

2 And Hezekiah (Chizqiyahu) appointed the divisions of the priests and the Levites according to their divisions, each according to his service, the priests and the Levites, for burnt offering and for peace offerings, to minister and to give thanks and to praise in the gates of the camps of the LORD. **3** And the portion of the king from his property ***was*** for the burnt offerings: for the burnt offerings of the morning and the evening, and the burnt offerings for the Sabbaths and for the new moons and for the appointed times, as ***it is*** written in the law of the LORD. **4** And he told the people, the inhabitants of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), to give the portion of the priests and the Levites, so that they might be strong in

30:17 John 11:55; 2 Chr 29:34; 2 Chr 35:3-6
30:18 John 11:55; Num 9:10-14; Num 19:20
30:19 2 Chr 19:3; 2 Chr 20:33; 1 Sam 7:3
30:20 Exod 15:26; Ps 103:3; James 5:15,16
30:21 Luke 22:1; Luke 22:7; Exod 12:15
30:22 2 Chr 32:6; Neh 9:3; Ezra 10:11
30:23 1 Kgs 8:65; 2 Chr 7:9
30:24 2 Chr 29:34; 2 Chr 35:7,8; 1 Chr 29:3-9
30:25 2 Chr 30:11,18; Exod 12:43-49; 1 Chr 16:10,11
30:26 2 Chr 7:9,10
30:27 Deut 26:15; Ps 68:5; Num 6:23-26
31:1 2 Kgs 18:4; 2 Chr 32:12; 2 Chr 30:1-27
31:2 2 Chr 5:11; 2 Chr 8:14; 2 Chr 23:8
31:3 Col 2:16; Ezek 45:17; 2 Chr 30:24
31:4 1 Cor 9:9; Mal 2:7; Num 18:8-21,26-28

30:17 *the Levites were over the slaughter of the Passover offerings* Normally each household head killed the lamb. The Levites did it for the unclean so the sacrifice would be acceptable.
30:18 *they ate the Passover not as it is written* Northerners raised far from the temple did not know the rules for being ceremonially clean, and Hezekiah prayed rather than send them away.
30:18 *May the good LORD make atonement for* He did not say the rules did not matter. He asked God, who is good, to look at hearts "prepared his heart to seek God" (30:19) and cover what they lacked.
30:20 *the LORD listened to Hezekiah and healed the people* Healed may mean spared from sickness as judgment (Lev 15:31) or restored spiritually. This is 7:14 at work. "The LORD sees according to the heart" (1 Sam 16:7), and "I desire mercy, and not sacrifice" (Matt 9:13). None of us comes perfectly clean. Jesus our High Priest intercedes for us (Heb 7:25) and makes us clean by His blood (1 John 1:7).
30:22 *Hezekiah spoke to the heart of all the Levites* To speak to the heart is to encourage, to speak kindly. A good leader thanks those who serve. Peace offerings were shared in a meal, a sign of fellowship with God and one another.
30:23 *to keep another seven days* One week was not enough. When God's people taste real joy in His presence, they don't want it to end. The leaders paid for the extra week themselves (30:24). Generosity spreads.
30:25 *the sojourners who came from the land of Israel* The feast was open to all who would come, a small picture of the gospel feast for every nation (Rev 7:9).
30:26 *since the days of Solomon the son of David* More than two hundred years with nothing like it. North and south worshiping together was a taste of the day God will make His people one again (Ezek 37:21-22).
30:27 *their prayer came to the dwelling of His holiness, to the heavens* Likely Aaron's blessing (Num 6:24-26). The answer to Solomon's prayer that God would hear from heaven (6:21). Prayer from a humble heart reaches God's throne (Heb 4:16).
31:1 *they broke the pillars, and they cut down the Asherim* The people themselves did it, even in the north. Kings adds that Hezekiah broke Moses' bronze serpent, because people burned incense to it (2 Kgs 18:4). Even a good thing from God's past can become an idol. Meeting God leads to a clean break with idols (1 Thess 1:9). What has taken His place in your heart?
31:2 *Hezekiah appointed the divisions of the priests and the Levites* He restored David's order (1 Chr 23-24), so worship would go on week after week. Revival needs structure to last.
31:3 *the portion of the king from his property was for the burnt offerings* The regular offerings of the Law (Num 28-29). New moons began each month, and the appointed times were the yearly feasts. A leader cannot ask others to give if he does not give himself.
31:4 *so that they might be strong in the law of the LORD* Levi had no land, so God's people supported them with tithes (Num 18:21-24). When giving stopped, Levites left to farm (Neh 13:10). Those who study, teach and serve need support, a principle Paul applies to gospel ministers (1 Cor 9:13-14; Gal 6:6).

the law of the LORD. **5** And as the word spread, the sons of Israel multiplied the first of grain, new wine, and fresh oil, and honey, and all the produce of the field; and the tithe of everything they brought in abundance. **6** And the sons of Israel and Judah who dwelt in the cities of Judah, they also brought a tithe of herd and flock, and a tithe of holy things that were consecrated to the LORD their God, and they made heaps ***upon*** heaps. **7** In the third month they began to found the heaps, and in the seventh month they finished. **8** And Hezekiah and the officials came, and they saw the heaps, and they blessed the LORD and His people Israel. **9** And Hezekiah inquired of the priests and the Levites concerning the heaps. **10** And Azariah (Azaryahu) the priest, the head, of the house of Zadok (Tsadoq), spoke to him, and he said, "Since ***they*** began to bring the contribution ***into*** the house of the LORD, we have eaten and been satisfied and have had left over, even in abundance, for the LORD has blessed His people; and what is left ***is*** this great store."

Faithful Stewards

11 And Hezekiah said to prepare chambers in the house of the LORD, and they prepared ***them***. **12** And they brought the contribution and the tithe and the holy things in faithfulness. And over them ***was*** Conaniah (Konanyahu) the Levite ***as*** leader, and Shimei (Shimi) his brother ***was*** second. **13** And Jehiel (Yechi'el) and Azaziah (Azazyahu) and Nahath (Nachat) and Asahel and Jerimoth (Yeremot) and Jozabad (Yozavad) and Eliel and Ismachiah (Yismakhyahu) and Mahath (Machat) and Benaiah (Benayahu) ***were*** overseers at the hand of Conaniah and Shimei his brother, by the appointment of Hezekiah the king and Azariah the leader of the house of God. **14** And Kore (Qore) the son of Imnah (Yimna) the Levite, the gatekeeper toward the east, ***was*** over the freewill offerings of God, to distribute the contribution of the LORD and the most holy things. **15** And at his hand ***were*** Eden and Miniamin (Minyamin) and Jeshua (Yeshua) and Shemaiah (Shemayahu), Amariah (Amaryahu) and Shecaniah (Shekhanyahu), in the cities of the priests, in faithfulness, to distribute to their brothers by divisions, the great as the small, **16** besides their genealogical enrollment of males from a son of three years and upward: to everyone who came to the house of the LORD for the matter of a day in its day, for their service by their duties according to their divisions; **17** and the genealogical enrollment of the priests by the house of their fathers, and the Levites from a son of twenty years and upward, by their duties, by their divisions; **18** and ***they were*** to be enrolled with all their little ones, their wives and their sons and their daughters, for all the assembly; for in their faithfulness they consecrated themselves ***in*** holiness. **19** And for the sons of Aaron (Aharon), the priests, in the fields of the pasture land of their cities, in every city and city ***there were*** men who had been designated by names to distribute portions to every male among the priests and to everyone enrolled by genealogy among the Levites.

Hezekiah Prospers

20 And Hezekiah did like this in all Judah, and he did what ***was*** good and what ***was*** right and what ***was*** true before the LORD his God. **21** And in every work that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law and in the commandment, to seek his God, with all his heart he did ***it***, and he prospered.

2 CHRONICLES 32

Sennacherib Invades Judah

1 After these things and this faithfulness, Sennacherib (Sancheriv) the king of Assyria (Ashur) came, and he came into Judah (Yehuda), and he encamped against the fortified cities, and he said to break them open for himself. **2** And Hezekiah (Chizqiyahu) saw that Sennacherib had come and ***that*** his face ***was*** for war against Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), **3** and he took counsel with his officials and his mighty men to stop up the waters of the springs that ***were*** outside the

31:5 Neh 13:12,31; Num 18:12; 2 Chr 24:10,11
31:6 Lev 27:30; Deut 14:28; 2 Chr 11:16,17
31:7 Lev 23:16-24
31:8 Judg 5:9; 1 Kgs 8:14,15; 1 Chr 29:10-20
31:10 Mal 3:10; 1 Chr 6:8,14; 2 Chr 26:17
31:11 Neh 10:38,39; Neh 13:5,12,13
31:12 2 Kgs 12:15; 1 Chr 26:20-26
31:13 2 Chr 31:4,11; 2 Chr 30:12; 2 Chr 31:10
31:14 1 Chr 26:12,14,17; Lev 22:18; Lev 23:38
31:15 Josh 21:9-19; 2 Chr 31:13; 1 Chr 6:54-60
31:16 Lev 21:22,23
31:17 1 Chr 23:24,27; Num 3:15,20; Num 4:38,42,46
31:18 2 Chr 31:15; 1 Chr 9:22; Isa 5:16
31:19 2 Chr 31:12-15; Lev 25:34; Num 35:2-5
31:20 2 Kgs 20:3; 2 Kgs 22:2; Acts 24:16
31:21 Ps 1:2,3; Deut 6:5; Deut 10:12
32:1 2 Kgs 18:13-37; 2 Chr 20:1,2; Isa 36:1-22
32:2 Luke 9:51; Luke 9:53; 2 Kgs 12:17
32:3 2 Chr 30:2; 2 Kgs 18:20; Prov 15:22

31:5 *the tithe of everything they brought in abundance* Firstfruits, the first of the harvest, confessed that it all came from God (Exod 23:19). The tithe was a tenth (Lev 27:30). From the wheat harvest in the third month to the fruit harvest in the seventh (31:7), the gifts kept coming. When God gets our hearts, He gets our wallets too (2 Cor 9:7).
31:10 *for the LORD has blessed His people* The priest gave God the credit. They gave, and God supplied more than enough (Mal 3:10; Luke 6:38). God is no man's debtor.
31:12 *they brought the contribution and the tithe and the holy things in faithfulness* Named men, accountable to king and high priest, managed the gifts. "Faithfulness" recurs (31:15, 18). Faithful giving deserves faithful management, and churches should handle gifts with the same care and openness.
31:15 *to distribute to their brothers by divisions, the great as the small* Freewill offerings (31:14) were gifts beyond what was required. Many priests lived in their towns (Josh 21), and the gifts reached those on duty and the families at home, children included. The goal was fairness, as in the early church (2 Cor 8:13-15). God cares for those who serve Him and their families, and so should we.
31:20 *what was good and what was right and what was true before the LORD his God* Good, right and true: what a description of a life.
31:21 *with all his heart he did it, and he prospered* The secret of Hezekiah's life: what he did was for God's house, how he did it was by God's Word, why he did it was to seek God, and he did it wholeheartedly, unlike Amaziah (25:2). Prospering here does not mean every hard worker gets rich. God blessed his work. Seeking God with all our heart, we find Him (Jer 29:13; Col 3:23).
32:1 *After these things and this faithfulness, Sennacherib the king of Assyria came* Hezekiah had done everything right, and then the greatest army in the world came. Faithful people face hard trials (John 16:33). The question is whom we will trust. This was 701 B.C. (2 Kgs 18:13). Sennacherib's own records boast of taking Judah's walled towns and shutting Hezekiah up in Jerusalem, but do not claim he took the city.

city; and they helped him. **4** And many people were gathered, and they stopped up all the springs and the wadi that flowed through the midst of the land, saying, "Why should the kings of Assyria come and find much water?" **5** And he strengthened himself, and he built all the wall that was broken down, and he raised *it* up on the towers, and outside another wall; and he strengthened the Millo *in* the city of David, and he made weapons in abundance, and shields. **6** And he set commanders of wars over the people, and he gathered them to himself at the open place of the gate of the city, and he spoke to their heart, saying, **7** "Be strong and be courageous; do not be afraid and do not be dismayed because of the king of Assyria and before all the multitude that *is* with him, for with us *is* a greater *one* than with him. **8** With him *is* an arm of flesh, and with us *is* the LORD our God to help us and to fight our battles." And the people leaned on the words of Hezekiah the king of Judah.

Sennacherib Mocks the LORD

9 After this Sennacherib the king of Assyria sent his servants to Jerusalem (and he *was* at Lachish (Lakhish), and all his dominion with him) to Hezekiah the king of Judah and to all Judah who *were* in Jerusalem, saying, **10** "Thus says Sennacherib the king of Assyria: 'On what are you trusting, that you remain under siege in Jerusalem? **11** Is not Hezekiah misleading you, to give you *over* to die by hunger and by thirst, saying, "The LORD our God will deliver us from the hand of the king of Assyria"? **12** Has not Hezekiah himself removed His high places and His altars, and said to Judah and to Jerusalem, saying, "Before one altar you shall bow down, and on it you shall burn incense"? **13** Do you not know what I and my fathers have done to all the peoples of the lands? Were the gods of the nations of the lands at all able to deliver their land from my hand? **14** Who *was there* among all the gods of these nations which my fathers devoted to destruction that was able to deliver his people from my hand, that your God should be able to deliver you from my hand? **15** And now, do not let Hezekiah deceive you, and do not let him mislead you like this, and do not believe him; for no god of any nation and kingdom has been able to deliver his people from my hand and from the hand of my fathers. How much less will your gods deliver you from my hand!'" **16** And his servants spoke still more against the LORD God and against Hezekiah His servant. **17** And he wrote letters to taunt the LORD, the God of Israel (Yisra'el), and to speak against Him, saying, "Like the gods of the nations of the lands, who have not delivered their people from my hand, so the God of Hezekiah will not deliver His people from my hand." **18** And they called out with a great voice *in* Judean to the people of Jerusalem who *were* on the wall, to make them afraid and to terrify them, so that they might capture the city. **19** And they spoke concerning the God of Jerusalem as concerning the gods of the peoples of the earth, the work of the hands of mankind.

The LORD Saves Jerusalem

20 And Hezekiah the king and Isaiah (Yeshayahu) the son of Amoz (Amots), the prophet, prayed because of this, and they cried out *to* the heavens. **21** And the LORD sent an angel, and he cut off every mighty man of valor and leader and commander in the camp of the king of Assyria. And he returned with shame of face to his land, and he came *into* the house of his god, and some of those who came out of his own body, there they made him fall by the sword. **22** And the LORD saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib the king of Assyria and from the hand of all, and He guided them on every side. **23** And many *were* bringing an offering to the LORD to Jerusalem, and choice

32:4 2 Chr 32:30; 2 Chr 30:14; 2 Chr 32:1
32:5 2 Chr 25:23; 1 Kgs 9:24; Isa 22:9,10
32:6 2 Chr 30:22; Isa 40:2; 2 Chr 17:14-19
32:7 1 John 4:4; 2 Kgs 6:16; 2 Chr 20:15
32:8 1 John 4:4; Jer 17:5; 2 Chr 13:12
32:9 2 Kgs 18:17; Josh 10:31; Isa 36:2
32:10 2 Kgs 18:19; Isa 36:4
32:11 2 Kgs 18:27; Isa 36:12,18; 2 Chr 32:15
32:12 2 Chr 31:1; 2 Kgs 18:4,22; Isa 36:7
32:13 2 Kgs 18:33-35; 2 Kgs 15:29; 2 Kgs 17:5,6
32:14 Isa 10:11,12; Exod 14:3; Exod 15:9-11
32:15 Exod 5:2; Dan 3:15; Isa 36:18
32:16 Job 15:25,26; Ps 73:9; John 15:21
32:17 Isa 37:14; 2 Kgs 19:12; 2 Kgs 19:9,14
32:18 2 Kgs 18:26-28; Isa 36:13; 1 Sam 17:10,26
32:19 Heb 12:22; 2 Kgs 19:18; Isa 2:8
32:20 John 12:38; Heb 11:34; 2 Kgs 19:14-19
32:21 Rev 19:17; Heb 11:34; Rev 19:18
32:22 Heb 11:34; Ps 18:48-50; Ps 37:39,40
32:23 2 Chr 17:5,11; 2 Chr 1:1; 2 Sam 8:10,11

32:4 *Why should the kings of Assyria come and find much water* Jerusalem's main spring, the Gihon, lay outside the walls. Faith and wise planning are not enemies. Nehemiah's people "prayed to our God, and we stationed a guard" (Neh 4:9).
32:5 *he strengthened the Millo in the city of David* A terraced structure supporting buildings on the hill. Archaeologists have found a thick wall from this time that many connect with Hezekiah.
32:6 *he spoke to their heart* A good leader prepares not only walls but people's hearts.
32:7 *for with us is a greater one than with him* Echoes of Moses and Joshua (Deut 31:6-8; Josh 1:9) and of Elisha: "more are those who are with us than those who are with them" (2 Kgs 6:16). "Greater is the One in you than the one in the world" (1 John 4:4).
32:8 *with him is an arm of flesh* Human strength looks powerful but is weak and temporary. The people "leaned on the words of Hezekiah." Our faith can strengthen others when we speak God's truth to frightened people.
32:9 *he was at Lachish* A strong city southwest of Jerusalem. Pictures of its siege were carved on Sennacherib's palace walls in Nineveh and have been found.
32:12 *Has not Hezekiah himself removed His high places and His altars* They twisted his reform into an insult to God, not knowing God wanted worship at His one chosen altar (Deut 12:13-14). The enemy often makes obedience look like foolishness.
32:15 *How much less will your gods deliver you from my hand* Sennacherib put the LORD on the level of idols. He was about to learn the difference.
32:18 *in Judean* The common people's language, so those on the wall would fear. Hezekiah's officials had begged for Aramaic, the diplomats' language (2 Kgs 18:26-28). Fear was their weapon.
32:19 *the work of the hands of mankind* They spoke of the Creator as if He were made by human hands. Mocking God does not hurt Him. It shows they do not know Him.
32:20 *Hezekiah the king and Isaiah the son of Amoz, the prophet, prayed* The turning point. They did not shout back from the wall. Hezekiah spread the letter before the LORD (2 Kgs 19:14-19; Isa 37:14-20). Take the threat, the diagnosis, the bill, and spread it before the Lord (Ps 50:15).
32:21 *the LORD sent an angel* Kings and Isaiah say 185,000 fell in one night (2 Kgs 19:35; Isa 37:36). Some suggest a plague, but Scripture says the LORD sent His angel, and I take it as written. Sennacherib's sons killed him in his god's house about twenty years later, in 681 B.C. (2 Kgs 19:37). The king who said no god could deliver found his own god could not deliver him.
32:23 *he was lifted up in the eyes of all the nations from then on* When God acts, His name is lifted up among the nations.

gifts to Hezekiah the king of Judah; and he was lifted up in the eyes of all the nations from then on.

Hezekiah's Illness and Pride

24 In those days Hezekiah was sick to ***the point of*** dying, and he prayed to the LORD; and He spoke to him, and He gave him a sign. **25** And Hezekiah did not repay according to the benefit ***done*** to him, for his heart was haughty; and there was wrath on him and on Judah and Jerusalem. **26** And Hezekiah humbled himself for the haughtiness of his heart, he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the wrath of the LORD did not come on them in the days of Hezekiah.

Hezekiah's Riches and Death

27 And Hezekiah had very great riches and honor; and he made for himself treasuries for silver and for gold and for precious stones and for spices and for shields and for all ***kinds of*** desirable articles, **28** and storehouses for the produce of grain and new wine and fresh oil, and stalls for each and every ***kind of*** livestock, and flocks for the stalls. **29** And cities he made for himself, and livestock of flock and herd in abundance, for God had given him very much property. **30** And he, Hezekiah, stopped up the upper outlet of the waters of Gihon (Gichon) and directed them down to the west of the city of David. And Hezekiah prospered in all his work. **31** And so in ***the matter of*** the envoys of the officials of Babylon (Bavel), who sent to him to inquire ***about*** the sign that had happened in the land, God left him, to test him, to know all ***that was*** in his heart. **32** And the rest of the matters of Hezekiah, and his ***deeds of*** steadfast love, look, they ***are*** written in the vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, the prophet, in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel. **33** And Hezekiah lay down with his fathers, and they buried him in the ascent of the graves of the sons of David; and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem did him honor at his death. And Manasseh (Menashe) his son reigned in his place.

2 CHRONICLES 33

Manasseh's Evil Reign

1 Manasseh (Menashe) ***was*** a son of twelve years when he became king, and he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). **2** And he did the evil in the eyes of the LORD, according to the abominations of the nations whom the LORD dispossessed from before the sons of Israel (Yisra'el). **3** And he again built the high places which Hezekiah (Chizqiyahu) his father had torn down, and he raised up altars for the Baals, and he made Asherahs, and he bowed down to all the host of the heavens and served them. **4** And he built altars in the house of the LORD, of which the LORD had said, "In Jerusalem My name shall be forever." **5** And he built altars for all the host of the heavens in the two courts of the house of the LORD. **6** And he made his sons pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom (Hinom), and he practiced soothsaying and practiced omens and practiced sorcery, and dealt with a medium and a spiritist. He multiplied doing the evil in the eyes of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger. **7** And he put the carved image of the idol which he had made in the house of God, of which God had said to David and to Solomon (Shelomo) his son, "In this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen from all the tribes of Israel, I will put My name forever. **8** And I will not again remove the foot of Israel from the ground which I appointed for your

32:24 2 Kgs 20:1-3; Isa 38:1-3; 2 Kgs 20:4-11
32:25 2 Chr 26:16; 2 Chr 24:18; 2 Chr 32:31
32:26 Jer 26:18,19; 2 Chr 33:12,19,23; 2 Chr 34:27
32:27 2 Chr 1:12; 2 Chr 9:27; 2 Chr 17:5
32:28 2 Chr 26:10; 1 Kgs 4:26; 2 Sam 7:8
32:29 1 Chr 29:12; 2 Chr 26:10; Gen 13:2-6
32:30 1 Kgs 1:33,38,45; 2 Chr 32:4; Isa 22:9-11
32:31 Deut 8:2,16; Gen 22:1; Isa 39:1,2-8
32:32 Isa 36:1-39; 2 Kgs 18:1-20; 2 Chr 31:20,21
32:33 Matt 1:10; Prov 10:7; 1 Kgs 1:21
33:1 Matt 1:10; 2 Kgs 21:1-18; 1 Chr 3:13
33:2 2 Chr 28:3; Deut 18:9,14; 2 Chr 36:14
33:3 Acts 7:42; Matt 1:10; 2 Chr 31:1
33:4 2 Chr 7:16; 2 Chr 6:6; 2 Chr 33:15
33:5 2 Chr 4:9; Jer 32:34,35; Ezek 8:7-18
33:6 2 Chr 28:3; 2 Kgs 21:6; Lev 18:21
33:7 2 Chr 33:4; 2 Kgs 21:7,8; 2 Kgs 23:6
33:8 Gal 3:11; 2 Sam 7:10; 1 Chr 17:9

32:24 *Hezekiah was sick to the point of dying* Told in full in 2 Kings 20:1-11 and Isaiah 38: God added fifteen years and moved the shadow back on the steps.
32:25 *for his heart was haughty* After healing came pride, seen in showing Babylon's envoys his treasures (2 Kgs 20:12-19). Even the best of us can fall into pride after a great blessing, as Uzziah did (26:16). Answered prayer should make us more humble.
32:26 *Hezekiah humbled himself for the haughtiness of his heart* Uzziah raged when corrected, and Hezekiah humbled himself. The judgment was delayed, though it came later. Humility does not always erase consequences, but God gives grace to the humble (James 4:6).
32:29 *for God had given him very much property* The Chronicler is careful to say where the riches came from.
32:30 *he, Hezekiah, stopped up the upper outlet of the waters of Gihon* His workers cut a tunnel through solid rock, about a third of a mile, bringing the spring inside the walls (2 Kgs 20:20). It still exists and visitors walk through it. An old inscription inside tells how two crews dug from opposite ends and met.
32:31 *God left him, to test him, to know all that was in his heart* Babylon was then a smaller power seeking allies against Assyria (2 Kgs 20:12). Only Chronicles gives this reason. God did not stop loving him. He stepped back so Hezekiah could see his own heart (Deut 8:2). God already knew. Hezekiah failed, and Babylon later carried it all away (2 Kgs 20:16-18; 36:18).
32:32 *his deeds of steadfast love* Hesed, loyal love.
32:33 *did him honor at his death* Unlike Jehoram, whom no one missed (21:20). He died about 686 B.C. The best of fathers was followed by the worst of sons, but even Manasseh's story is not without hope.
33:1 *he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem* About 697 to 642 B.C., counting about ten years with his father. The longest reign in Judah, and much of it spent doing evil.
33:2 *according to the abominations of the nations* An abomination is something God finds detestable. God drove out the Canaanites for these very practices (Deut 18:9-12).
33:3 *he bowed down to all the host of the heavens* The sun, moon and stars worshiped as gods, common in Assyria and Babylon and forbidden by Moses (Deut 4:19). Everything Hezekiah did, Manasseh undid. Scripture does not say why. Perhaps resentful officials gathered around the young king, or he wanted to please Assyria. A godly father cannot pass his faith on by inheritance. Each generation must choose.
33:4 *he built altars in the house of the LORD* Idolatry in God's own house, the place where He said His name would be forever.
33:6 *dealt with a medium and a spiritist* Like Ahaz (28:3), he offered his sons in the fire. Soothsaying and omens tried to read the future from signs, sorcery used spells, a medium claimed to speak with the dead, and a spiritist claimed knowledge from spirits. God forbids them all (Lev 19:26, 31; Deut 18:10-12). They seek power or guidance apart from God and open the door to the demonic. They are not harmless games. The answer is not fear but Christ, who disarmed the powers at the cross (Col 2:15). Kings adds that he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood (2 Kgs 21:16).
33:7 *the carved image of the idol which he had made* An image of Asherah (2 Kgs 21:7), set in the house where God put His name.

fathers, only if they take care to do all that I have commanded them, according to all the law and the statutes and the judgments by the hand of Moses (Moshe)." **9** And Manasseh led Judah (Yehuda) and the inhabitants of Jerusalem astray to do evil more than the nations whom the LORD had destroyed from before the sons of Israel.

Manasseh Humbles Himself

10 And the LORD spoke to Manasseh and to his people, and they did not pay attention. **11** And the LORD brought on them the commanders of the army that ***belonged*** to the king of Assyria (Ashur), and they captured Manasseh with the hooks, and they bound him with the bronze fetters, and they brought him to Babylon (Bavel). **12** And when he was in distress, he entreated the face of the LORD his God, and he humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers. **13** And he prayed to Him, and He was entreated by him, and He heard his supplication, and He brought him back to Jerusalem to his kingdom. And Manasseh knew that the LORD, He ***is*** God.

Manasseh's Reform

14 And after this he built an outer wall for the city of David, west of Gihon (Gichon), in the wadi, and as far as the entrance at the Fish Gate, and he went around the Ophel (Ofel) and made it very high; and he put commanders of the army in all the fortified cities in Judah. **15** And he removed the gods of foreignness and the idol from the house of the LORD, and all the altars which he had built on the mountain of the house of the LORD and in Jerusalem, and he threw ***them*** outside the city. **16** And he built the altar of the LORD, and he sacrificed on it sacrifices of peace offerings and thanksgiving, and he said to Judah to serve the LORD, the God of Israel. **17** But still the people ***were*** sacrificing at the high places, only to the LORD their God. **18** And the rest of the matters of Manasseh, and his prayer to his God, and the words of the seers who spoke to him in the name of the LORD, the God of Israel, look, they ***are*** in the matters of the kings of Israel. **19** And his prayer, and ***how He*** was entreated by him, and all his sin and his unfaithfulness, and the places in which he built high places and set up the Asherim and the carved images before he humbled himself, look, they ***are*** written in the words of Hozai (Chozay). **20** And Manasseh lay down with his fathers, and they buried him ***in*** his house; and Amon his son reigned in his place.

Amon Reigns in Judah

21 Amon ***was*** a son of twenty-two years when he became king, and he reigned two years in Jerusalem. **22** And he did the evil in the eyes of the LORD, just as Manasseh his father had done; and to all the carved images which Manasseh his father had made Amon sacrificed, and he served them. **23** And he did not humble himself before the LORD, as Manasseh his father had humbled himself; for he, Amon, multiplied guilt. **24** And his servants conspired against him, and they killed him in his house. **25** And the people of the land struck down all who had conspired against King Amon, and the people of the land made Josiah (Yoshiyahu) his son king in his place.

33:9 Matt 1:10; 1 Kgs 14:16; 1 Kgs 15:26
33:10 Matt 1:10; 2 Chr 36:15,16; Neh 9:29,30
33:11 Matt 1:10; Deut 28:36; Job 36:8
33:12 2 Chr 32:26; 2 Chr 28:22; Lev 26:39-42
33:13 John 4:10; Matt 1:10; 1 Tim 1:16
33:14 1 Kgs 1:33,45; Neh 3:3; 2 Chr 27:3
33:15 2 Chr 33:3-7; 2 Kgs 21:7; Isa 2:17-21
33:16 2 Chr 29:18; 1 Kgs 18:30; Lev 3:1-17
33:17 2 Chr 32:12; 2 Chr 15:17; 1 Kgs 22:43
33:18 Matt 1:10; Isa 30:10; Amos 7:12
33:19 Prov 15:8; Acts 9:11; 1 John 1:9
33:20 Matt 1:10; 2 Chr 32:33; 2 Kgs 21:18
33:21 Matt 1:10; 2 Chr 33:1; Luke 12:19,20
33:22 Matt 1:10; 2 Chr 33:1-10; 2 Kgs 21:1-11,20
33:23 Matt 1:10; 2 Chr 33:1,12,19; Jer 8:12
33:24 2 Chr 24:25,26; 2 Chr 25:27,28; 2 Sam 4:5-12
33:25 Matt 1:10; Gen 9:5,6; Num 35:31,33

33:9 *to do evil more than the nations whom the LORD had destroyed* God's own people became worse than the Canaanites. If anyone seemed beyond hope, it was Manasseh.

33:10 *the LORD spoke to Manasseh and to his people, and they did not pay attention* Even to the worst king God sent prophets (2 Kgs 21:10-15). He would rather His people turn and live (Ezek 33:11). Hearing and ignoring is the most dangerous place to be. "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts" (Heb 3:15).

33:11 *they captured Manasseh with the hooks* Assyrian kings boasted of leading captive kings with hooks like animals, or it may mean caught like a fish. Assyria then ruled Babylon. Many think it was about 650 to 648 B.C., when Babylon revolted, but the text does not give the year. It was mercy in a hard form. Sometimes the kindest thing God can do is let us hit bottom (Luke 15:17).

33:12 *when he was in distress, he entreated the face of the LORD his God* One of the most hopeful verses in the Old Testament. Distress hardened Ahaz (28:22) and softened Manasseh. To entreat the face is to plead for favor. He did not turn to Assyria's gods or the stars.

33:12 *he humbled himself greatly* No excuses, no bargaining. Exactly what 7:14 calls for. Have you wondered if you have gone too far for God to take you back? Think of Manasseh. "A broken and crushed heart, God, You will not despise" (Ps 51:17).

33:13 *He was entreated by him, and He heard his supplication, and He brought him back* A supplication is a humble, earnest request. Every phrase is grace, God's kindness to the undeserving (Rom 5:20). If God would hear Manasseh, He will hear anyone. Paul called himself the foremost of sinners, a pattern of Christ's patience (1 Tim 1:15-16). Forgiveness did not undo all the damage (2 Kgs 23:26; 24:3-4), but it restored the sinner to God.

33:13 *Manasseh knew that the LORD, He is God* After fifty years of false gods he knew the true one. Kings does not tell this story. I believe the Chronicler included it because his readers had also gone to Babylon in chains for their sin and been brought home. Manasseh's story was theirs, and it is ours. "The one coming to Me I will certainly not cast out" (John 6:37). You are not beyond His reach.

33:14 *he built an outer wall for the city of David* A restored life often shows itself in rebuilding what was broken.

33:15 *he removed the gods of foreignness and the idol from the house of the LORD* The idol he set up himself, he removed himself, and he used his authority to call Judah back (33:16). True repentance shows itself in changed actions (Luke 3:8).

33:17 *only to the LORD their God* They worshiped in the wrong places. It was easier to lead the people into sin than out of it. Our sin affects others, and sometimes they do not follow us back when we repent.

33:19 *the words of Hozai* Hozai may be a prophet's name, or the word may mean the seers. His prayer is mentioned twice. Grace does not pretend sin did not happen, but God's record of Manasseh ends with his prayer. He was buried in his palace garden (2 Kgs 21:18).

33:23 *he did not humble himself before the LORD, as Manasseh his father had humbled himself* Amon reigned about 642 to 640 B.C. He copied his father's sin but not his repentance. Our children watch the whole of our lives. If you have repented, live the new life so plainly they see the change, and pray for them.

33:25 *the people of the land struck down all who had conspired against King Amon* The ordinary landowners of Judah, loyal to David's line. From Manasseh's grandson God raised one of Judah's most faithful kings.

2 CHRONICLES 34

Josiah Seeks God and Cleanses the Land

1 Josiah (Yoshiyahu) ***was*** a son of eight years when he became king, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). **2** And he did what ***was*** right in the eyes of the LORD, and he walked in the ways of David his father, and he did not turn aside ***to the*** right or ***to the*** left. **3** And in the eighth year of his reign, and he ***was*** still a youth, he began to seek the God of David his father; and in the twelfth year he began to cleanse Judah (Yehuda) and Jerusalem from the high places and the Asherim and the carved images and the molten images. **4** And they tore down the altars of the Baals before him, and the incense altars that ***were*** high above them he cut down; and the Asherim and the carved images and the molten images he broke in pieces and pulverized ***them***, and he scattered ***them*** on the face of the graves of those who had sacrificed to them. **5** And the bones of priests he burned on their altars, and he cleansed Judah and Jerusalem. **6** And in the cities of Manasseh (Menashe) and Ephraim (Efrayim) and Simeon (Shimon), and as far as Naphtali (Naftali), with their swords all around, **7** and he tore down the altars and the Asherim, and the carved images he crushed, to pulverize ***them***, and all the incense altars he cut down in all the land of Israel (Yisra'el); and he returned to Jerusalem.

The Book of the Law Found

8 And in the eighteenth year of his reign, to cleanse the land and the house, he sent Shaphan (Shafan) the son of Azaliah (Atsalyahu), and Maaseiah (Ma'aseyahu) the official of the city, and Joah (Yo'ach) the son of Joahaz (Yo'achaz), the recorder, to repair the house of the LORD his God. **9** And they came to Hilkiah (Chilqiyahu) the high priest, and they gave the money that was brought ***into*** the house of God, which the Levites, the keepers of the threshold, had gathered from the hand of Manasseh and Ephraim and from all the remnant of Israel and from all Judah and Benjamin (Binyamin); and they returned ***to*** Jerusalem. **10** And they gave ***it*** into the hand of the doers of the work who were appointed in the house of the LORD; and they gave it to the doers of the work who were working in the house of the LORD, to mend and to repair the house. **11** And they gave ***it*** to the craftsmen and to the builders, to buy hewn stones and timbers for the couplings, and to make beams for the houses which the kings of Judah had ruined. **12** And the men ***were*** working in faithfulness in the work; and over them ***were*** appointed Jahath (Yachat) and Obadiah (Ovadyahu), the Levites, of the sons of Merari, and Zechariah (Zekharya) and Meshullam (Meshulam), of the sons of the Kohathites, to oversee; and the Levites, everyone skilled in instruments of song, **13** and ***were*** over the burden bearers, and ***were*** overseeing every doer of work for each and every service; and of the Levites ***were*** scribes and officers and gatekeepers. **14** And when they brought out the money that was brought ***into*** the house of the LORD, Hilkiah the priest found the book of the law of the LORD ***given*** by the hand of Moses (Moshe). **15** And Hilkiah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe, "The book of the law I have found in the house of the LORD." And Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan. **16** And Shaphan brought the book to the king, and he further brought back word to the king, saying, "All that was given into the hand of your servants they are doing. **17** And they have poured out the money that was found in the house of the LORD, and they have put it into the hand of those appointed and into the hand of the doers of the work." **18** And Shaphan the scribe told the king, saying, "A book Hilkiah the priest has given to me." And Shaphan read in it before the king. **19** And it was, when the king heard the words of the law, and he tore his clothes. **20** And the king

34:1 Matt 1:10; Matt 1:11; Jer 1:2
34:2 2 Chr 29:2; 2 Chr 14:2; 2 Chr 17:3
34:3 2 Chr 15:2; Prov 8:17; 2 Chr 33:17,22
34:4 Exod 32:20; Lev 26:30; 2 Kgs 23:4,5,11
34:5 1 Kgs 13:2; 2 Kgs 23:16; Jer 8:1,2
34:6 Matt 1:10; 2 Chr 30:1,10,11; 2 Chr 31:1
34:7 2 Chr 31:1; Deut 9:21; 2 Chr 34:1
34:8 2 Sam 8:16; Jer 1:2,3; 2 Kgs 22:3,12,14
34:9 Matt 1:10; 2 Chr 30:10,18; 2 Chr 34:14,15,18,20,22
34:10 2 Kgs 12:11,12,14; 2 Kgs 22:5,6; Ezra 3:7
34:11 2 Chr 33:4-7,22
34:12 2 Kgs 12:15; 1 Chr 23:5; 2 Chr 31:12
34:13 Neh 4:10; 2 Chr 2:10,18; 2 Chr 8:10
34:14 Luke 2:39; 2 Kgs 22:8-20; Deut 31:24-26
34:16 2 Kgs 22:9,10; Jer 36:20,21
34:18 Deut 17:19; Josh 1:8; Ps 119:46,97-99
34:19 Rom 3:20; Gal 3:10; Gal 3:11
34:20 2 Kgs 22:12; 2 Kgs 25:22; Jer 26:24

34:1 *he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem* About 640 to 609 B.C. Kings says no king turned to the LORD as Josiah did (2 Kgs 23:25). His grandfather and father were wicked. God's grace is not limited by our family tree.
34:2 *he did not turn aside to the right or to the left* He kept to the straight path God set (Deut 5:32).
34:3 *he began to seek the God of David his father* At sixteen, about 632 B.C. We are not told what moved him. It is never too early to seek God (Eccl 12:1). The cleansing began at twenty, about 628 B.C. Seeking came first and cleansing followed. Jeremiah began in Josiah's thirteenth year (Jer 1:2), and Zephaniah also preached then (Zeph 1:1).
34:4 *scattered them on the face of the graves of those who had sacrificed to them* Graves were unclean, and the idols' dust was scattered there in shame.
34:5 *the bones of priests he burned on their altars* Burning human bones made an altar unclean forever. About three hundred years earlier a man of God named Josiah as the one who would do this at Bethel (1 Kgs 13:2; 2 Kgs 23:15-16). God's Word always comes true, even if it takes three hundred years.
34:6 *in the cities of Manasseh and Ephraim and Simeon, and as far as Naphtali* The old northern lands were under a weakening Assyria. Like Hezekiah, Josiah's heart was for all Israel.
34:8 *in the eighteenth year of his reign* About 622 B.C. The temple had been neglected under Manasseh and Amon. Even northerners gave (34:9).
34:12 *the men were working in faithfulness in the work* Levites oversaw and served as scribes, officers and gatekeepers. Kings says no accounting was asked, "for they are working in faithfulness" (2 Kgs 22:7).
34:14 *the book of the law of the LORD given by the hand of Moses* Many think it was Deuteronomy, since the reform and the curses that frightened Josiah match it. Others think it was the whole Law of Moses. After about fifty-seven years of idolatry it had been neglected, perhaps hidden or lost. Some modern scholars think it was written then and presented as old. I do not accept that. The text says it was given by Moses.
34:15 *The book of the law I have found in the house of the LORD* It is possible to have a temple, priests and worship, and still lose God's Word. A church can be busy and have lost the Bible. Many homes have a Bible lost on a shelf. Where is yours?
34:18 *A book Hilkiah the priest has given to me* Shaphan mentioned it after the business report, as an afterthought. He was about to learn how important it was.
34:19 *when the king heard the words of the law, and he tore his clothes* Tearing clothes showed deep grief. He saw how far they had fallen and what the law warned (Deut 28-29). God's Word shows us ourselves (Heb 4:12). His son Jehoiakim cut up and burned Jeremiah's scroll, and no one tore his garments (Jer 36:23-24). Same Word, different hearts. How do you respond when it shows you your sin?

commanded Hilkiah, and Ahikam (Achiqam) the son of Shaphan, and Abdon (Avdon) the son of Micah (Mikha), and Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah (Asaya) the servant of the king, saying, **21** "Go, inquire of the LORD for me and for those who are left in Israel and in Judah concerning the words of the book that has been found; for great ***is*** the wrath of the LORD that has been poured out on us, because our fathers have not kept the word of the LORD, to do according to all that is written in this book."

Huldah's Word

22 And Hilkiah and ***those*** whom the king ***had sent*** went to Huldah (Chulda) the prophetess, the wife of Shallum (Shalum) the son of Tokhath (Toqhat), the son of Hasrah (Chasra), keeper of the garments; and she ***was*** dwelling in Jerusalem in the Second ***Quarter***; and they spoke to her like this. **23** And she said to them, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: 'Say to the man who sent you to me, **24** "Thus says the LORD: Look, I ***am*** bringing calamity on this place and on its inhabitants, all the curses that are written in the book which they have read before the king of Judah, **25** because they have forsaken Me and burned incense to other gods, so as to provoke Me to anger with all the works of their hands; and My wrath will be poured out on this place, and it will not be quenched."' **26** And to the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the LORD, thus you shall say to him: 'Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: "***As for*** the words which you have heard, **27** because your heart was tender, and you humbled yourself before God when you heard His words against this place and against its inhabitants, and you humbled yourself before Me, and you tore your clothes and wept before Me, I also have heard, declares the LORD. **28** Look, I will gather you to your fathers, and you will be gathered to your graves in peace, and your eyes will not look on all the calamity which I ***am*** bringing on this place and on its inhabitants."'" And they brought back word to the king.

Josiah Renews the Covenant

29 And the king sent and gathered all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. **30** And the king went up ***to*** the house of the LORD, and every man of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the priests and the Levites and all the people, from great even to small; and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant that had been found ***in*** the house of the LORD. **31** And the king stood in his place, and he made the covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD and to keep His commandments and His testimonies and His statutes with all his heart and with all his soul, to do the words of the covenant that are written in this book. **32** And he made everyone who was found in Jerusalem and Benjamin stand ***to it***. And the inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the covenant of God, the God of their fathers. **33** And Josiah removed all the abominations from all the lands that ***belonged*** to the sons of Israel, and he made everyone who was found in Israel serve, to serve the LORD their God. All his days they did not turn aside from after the LORD, the God of their fathers.

2 CHRONICLES 35

Josiah Keeps the Passover

1 And Josiah (Yoshiyahu) kept a Passover to the LORD in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), and they slaughtered the Passover on the fourteenth of the first month. **2** And he set the priests at their duties, and he strengthened them for the service of the house of the LORD. **3** And he said to the Levites who taught all Israel (Yisra'el), who ***were*** holy to the LORD, "Put the ark of holiness in the house which Solomon (Shelomo) the son of David, the king of Israel, built. ***There is*** no burden on the shoulder for you. Now serve the LORD your God and His people Israel. **4** And prepare ***yourselves*** by the house of your fathers, according to your divisions, by the

34:21 Rom 1:18; Jer 21:2; Ezek 14:1-11
34:22 Luke 2:36; Luke 1:45; Exod 15:20
34:23 2 Kgs 22:15-20; Jer 21:3-7; Jer 37:7-10
34:24 2 Chr 36:14-20; Josh 23:16; 2 Kgs 21:12
34:25 Rev 9:20; Jer 7:20; 2 Chr 12:2
34:26 2 Chr 34:21,23
34:27 Luke 4:18; 2 Chr 32:26; 2 Chr 32:12,13
34:28 2 Chr 35:24; 2 Kgs 22:20; Isa 57:1,2
34:29 2 Kgs 23:1-3; 1 Sam 12:23; 1 Chr 29:2-9
34:30 2 Kgs 23:2,21; 2 Chr 15:12,13; 2 Chr 18:30
34:31 Luke 10:27; Heb 8:7; Heb 8:8
34:32 2 Chr 14:4; 2 Chr 30:12; 2 Chr 33:16
34:33 Matt 1:10; 2 Chr 34:3-7; 2 Kgs 23:4-20
35:1 Matt 1:10; 2 Kgs 23:21-23; 2 Chr 30:1-27
35:2 2 Chr 31:2; 2 Chr 23:8,18; Num 18:5-7
35:3 Deut 33:10; 1 Chr 23:26; 2 Chr 17:8,9
35:4 2 Chr 8:14; 1 Chr 23:1-26; 1 Chr 9:10-34

34:21 *for me and for those who are left in Israel and in Judah* He wanted to know what God would do, and he included himself and the whole people. He did not point the finger.

34:22 *Huldah the prophetess* Her husband kept the wardrobe, and she lived in the Second Quarter, a newer part of the city. Jeremiah and Zephaniah were active, but perhaps she was near and well known. God spoke through Miriam, Deborah and Anna too (Exod 15:20; Judg 4:4; Luke 2:36-38).

34:24 *all the curses that are written in the book* Even Josiah's reform would not turn away the judgment. Manasseh's sins went deep (2 Kgs 23:26), and Judah returned "with falsehood" (Jer 3:10). Outward reform is not the same as inward repentance.

34:27 *because your heart was tender* Soft and easily moved by God's Word, the opposite of a hard heart. He humbled himself, tore his clothes and wept, and God heard. "The LORD is near to the broken of heart" (Ps 34:18).

34:28 *you will be gathered to your graves in peace* He was killed in battle (35:23-24), so this does not mean a peaceful death. He would be buried before the city fell and die at peace with God.

34:30 *he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant* He was promised peace and could have done nothing more. Instead the king himself read God's Word to great and small, as Moses commanded (Deut 31:10-13).

34:31 *with all his heart and with all his soul* The great command (Deut 6:5; Matt 22:37-38). Hearing is not enough. "Be doers of the word and not hearers only" (James 1:22).

34:33 *all his days they did not turn aside* Like "all the days of Jehoiada" (24:2), it is also a warning. After Josiah died, the nation went back fast (36:5-14). One godly leader can hold back a flood for a time, but each heart must choose God for itself.

35:1 *they slaughtered the Passover on the fourteenth of the first month* Hezekiah had to use the second month (30:2-3). Josiah kept the right day (Exod 12:6; Lev 23:5), in his eighteenth year, about 622 B.C., right after the covenant. Having heard God's Word, they obeyed it.

35:3 *Put the ark of holiness in the house* The ark held the tablets of the Law, with the mercy seat on top. Scripture does not say why it had been moved, whether by Manasseh or Amon, by priests protecting it, or during repairs. The Levites once carried the ark on their shoulders (Num 4:15; 1 Chr 15:15), but now "There is no burden on the shoulder for you." Freed from carrying, they were to "serve the LORD your God and His people Israel." That is what all ministry is.

writing of David the king of Israel and by the writing of Solomon his son. **5** And stand in the holy place according to the divisions of the house of the fathers of your brothers, the sons of the people, and a division of a father's house for the Levites. **6** And slaughter the Passover, and consecrate yourselves, and prepare for your brothers, to do according to the word of the LORD by the hand of Moses (Moshe)." **7** And Josiah contributed to the sons of the people flocks of lambs and young goats, all ***of them*** for the Passover ***offerings***, for everyone who was found, to the number of thirty thousand, and three thousand cattle; these ***were*** from the property of the king. **8** And his officials contributed for a freewill offering to the people, to the priests and to the Levites. Hilkiah (Chilqiya) and Zechariah (Zekharyahu) and Jehiel (Yechi'el), the leaders of the house of God, gave to the priests for the Passover ***offerings*** two thousand six hundred, and three hundred cattle. **9** And Conaniah (Konanyahu) and Shemaiah (Shemayahu) and Nethanel (Netanel), his brothers, and Hashabiah (Chashavyahu) and Jeiel (Ye'i'el) and Jozabad (Yozavad), the officials of the Levites, contributed to the Levites for the Passover ***offerings*** five thousand, and five hundred cattle. **10** And the service was prepared, and the priests stood at their place, and the Levites by their divisions, according to the command of the king. **11** And they slaughtered the Passover, and the priests sprinkled ***the blood*** from their hand, and the Levites ***were*** skinning ***them***. **12** And they removed the burnt offering, to give them to the divisions of the house of the fathers of the sons of the people, to bring near to the LORD, as ***it is*** written in the book of Moses; and so with the cattle. **13** And they cooked the Passover in the fire according to the ordinance, and the holy things they cooked in the pots and in the cauldrons and in the pans, and they brought ***them*** quickly to all the sons of the people. **14** And afterward they prepared for themselves and for the priests, for the priests, the sons of Aaron (Aharon), ***were busy*** offering up the burnt offering and the fat ***portions*** until night; and the Levites prepared for themselves and for the priests, the sons of Aaron. **15** And the singers, the sons of Asaph (Asaf), ***were*** at their post according to the command of David and Asaph and Heman and Jeduthun (Yedutun) the seer of the king; and the gatekeepers ***were*** at each and every gate. ***It was*** not for them to turn aside from their service, for their brothers the Levites prepared for them. **16** And all the service of the LORD was prepared on that day, to keep the Passover and to offer up burnt offerings on the altar of the LORD, according to the command of King Josiah. **17** And the sons of Israel who were found kept the Passover at that time, and the Feast of Unleavened Bread seven days. **18** And a Passover like it had not been kept in Israel since the days of Samuel (Shemu'el) the prophet; and all the kings of Israel had not kept ***one*** like the Passover which Josiah kept, and the priests and the Levites and all Judah (Yehuda) and Israel who were found, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. **19** In the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah this Passover was kept.

Josiah Dies at Megiddo

20 After all this, when Josiah had prepared the house, Neco (Nekho) the king of Egypt (Mitsrayim) came up to fight at Carchemish (Karkemish) on the Euphrates (Perat); and Josiah went out to meet him. **21** And he sent messengers to him, saying, "What ***is there*** to me and to you, king of Judah? Not against you, you, ***do I come*** this day, but against the house of my war; and God has said to hurry me. Cease for yourself from God, who ***is*** with me, and let Him not destroy you." **22** And Josiah did not turn his face away from him, for he disguised himself to fight against him; and he did not listen to the words of Neco from the mouth of God, and he came to fight in the valley of Megiddo (Megido). **23** And the archers shot at King Josiah, and the king said to his servants, "Take me away, for I have been wounded greatly." **24** And his ser-

35:5 Ps 134:1; Ps 135:2
35:6 2 Chr 29:5,15,34; 2 Chr 30:15-17; Exod 12:6,21,22
35:7 Matt 1:10; 1 Kgs 8:63; 2 Chr 30:24
35:8 John 18:28; 2 Chr 29:31-33; 1 Chr 29:6-9,17
35:9 John 18:28; Isa 1:10-15; Jer 3:10
35:10 2 Chr 30:16; Ezra 6:18; 2 Chr 35:4,5
35:11 Heb 9:21; Matt 26:19; John 18:28
35:12 Lev 3:3,5,9-11,14-16
35:13 John 18:28; Exod 12:8,9; 1 Sam 2:13-15
35:14 Acts 6:2-4
35:15 1 Chr 25:1-7; 1 Chr 9:17-19; 2 Chr 29:25,26
35:16 Matt 1:10
35:17 1 Cor 5:7; John 18:28; Exod 12:15-20
35:18 Matt 1:10; John 18:28; 2 Chr 30:5
35:19 Matt 1:10
35:20 Matt 1:10; 2 Kgs 23:29,30; Isa 10:9
35:21 Matt 8:29; John 2:4; 2 Kgs 18:25
35:22 Matt 1:10; Judg 5:19; 2 Chr 18:29
35:23 Matt 1:10; 1 Kgs 22:34; 2 Chr 18:33
35:24 Matt 1:10; Zech 12:11; Gen 41:43

35:6 *to do according to the word of the LORD by the hand of Moses* Every part was rooted in God's Word: Moses for the sacrifice, David and Solomon for the order of service (35:4).
35:7 *these were from the property of the king* He paid from his own wealth so no one, even the poor, was left out, and the officials followed (35:8-9), more than Hezekiah gave (30:24). Generous leaders make generous people (2 Cor 8:1-5).
35:13 *they cooked the Passover in the fire according to the ordinance* Roasted, as the Law said (Exod 12:8-9). The other offerings were boiled and served quickly to all.
35:15 *for their brothers the Levites prepared for them* Some slaughtered, some sprinkled, some cooked, some sang, some guarded gates. No one did everything, and everyone did something, each serving so others could serve. That is the church (1 Cor 12:12-27; Eph 4:16).
35:18 *since the days of Samuel the prophet* Not even David, Solomon or Hezekiah kept one just like it. Hezekiah's had great joy but was late and many ate unclean (30:18). Within forty years the temple would be ashes. God gave one more great Passover before the end. It pointed to Jesus at the Last Supper (Luke 22:14-20). "Our Passover was sacrificed for us: Christ" (1 Cor 5:7).
35:20 *Neco the king of Egypt came up to fight at Carchemish on the Euphrates* In 609 B.C. Carchemish lay in what is now northern Syria. Nineveh had fallen to Babylon in 612 B.C., as Nahum foretold, and Neco marched to help what was left of Assyria (2 Kgs 23:29). Scripture does not say why Josiah went out. Perhaps he feared Egypt or wanted Assyria gone for good.
35:21 *Cease for yourself from God, who is with me* A pagan king claimed to speak for God, and verse 22 says he truly did. God spoke through Balaam (Num 22-24) and moved Cyrus (36:22). God can use anyone to speak His word.
35:22 *he disguised himself to fight against him* The king so tender toward God's Word (34:27) did not recognize it from an unexpected mouth, and there is no mention of inquiring of the LORD (34:21). The disguise echoes Ahab (18:29). Megiddo guarded the main pass on the great road north, and its name is the root of Armageddon (Rev 16:16). Even the godly make serious mistakes. Ask God first, especially when a decision looks right to you.
35:24 *he died, and he was buried in the graves of his fathers* Kings says he died at Megiddo (2 Kgs 23:29-30). He was mortally wounded there and died on the way or soon after reaching Jerusalem. He was thirty-nine. Huldah's word came true (34:28).

vants took him away from the chariot, and they made him ride in the second chariot that ***belonged*** to him, and they brought him to Jerusalem; and he died, and he was buried in the graves of his fathers. And all Judah and Jerusalem ***were*** mourning over Josiah. **25** And Jeremiah (Yirmeyahu) lamented over Josiah, and all the male singers and the female singers have spoken in their lamentations over Josiah to this day; and they made them a statute for Israel, and look, they ***are*** written in the lamentations. **26** And the rest of the matters of Josiah, and his ***deeds of*** steadfast love according to what is written in the law of the LORD, **27** and his matters, the first and the last, look, they ***are*** written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah.

2 CHRONICLES 36

The Last Kings of Judah

1 And the people of the land took Jehoahaz (Yeho'achaz) the son of Josiah (Yoshiyahu), and they made him king in place of his father in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). **2** Jehoahaz (Yo'achaz) ***was*** a son of twenty-three years when he became king, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. **3** And the king of Egypt (Mitsrayim) removed him in Jerusalem, and he fined the land approximately 7,500 pounds (a hundred talents) of silver and approximately 75 pounds (a talent) of gold. **4** And the king of Egypt made Eliakim (Elyaqim) his brother king over Judah (Yehuda) and Jerusalem, and he changed his name ***to*** Jehoiakim (Yehoyaqim). And Jehoahaz his brother Neco (Nekho) took, and he brought him to Egypt. **5** Jehoiakim ***was*** a son of twenty-five years when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem; and he did the evil in the eyes of the LORD his God. **6** Against him Nebuchadnezzar (Nevukhadnetsar) the king of Babylon (Bavel) came up, and he bound him with the bronze fetters to take him to Babylon. **7** And some of the articles of the house of the LORD Nebuchadnezzar brought to Babylon, and he put them in his temple in Babylon. **8** And the rest of the matters of Jehoiakim, and his abominations which he did, and what was found against him, look, they ***are*** written in the book of the kings of Israel (Yisra'el) and Judah. And Jehoiachin (Yehoyakhin) his son reigned in his place. **9** Jehoiachin ***was*** a son of eight years when he became king, and he reigned three months and ten days in Jerusalem; and he did the evil in the eyes of the LORD. **10** And at the turn of the year King Nebuchadnezzar sent and brought him to Babylon with the desirable articles of the house of the LORD, and he made Zedekiah (Tsidqiyahu) his brother king over Judah and Jerusalem.

Zedekiah and the Fall of Jerusalem

11 Zedekiah ***was*** a son of twenty-one years when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. **12** And he did the evil in the eyes of the LORD his God; he did not humble himself before Jeremiah (Yirmeyahu) the prophet ***speaking*** from the mouth of the LORD. **13** And also against King Nebuchadnezzar he rebelled, who had made him swear by God; and he stiffened his neck and hardened his heart from returning to the LORD, the God of Israel. **14** Also all the officials of the priests and the people multiplied committing unfaithfulness, according to all the abominations of the nations, and they made unclean the house of the LORD which

35:25 Matt 1:10; Jer 22:10; Lam 4:20
35:26 Matt 1:10; 2 Chr 31:20; 2 Chr 32:32
35:27 2 Chr 20:34; 2 Chr 24:27; 2 Chr 25:26
36:1 Matt 1:11; Jer 22:11; 2 Chr 26:1
36:3 2 Kgs 23:33
36:4 Jer 22:10-12; 2 Kgs 23:34,35; 1 Chr 3:15
36:5 2 Kgs 23:36,37; Jer 22:13-19; Jer 26:21-23
36:6 Matt 1:11; 2 Kgs 24:1,2,5,6,13-20; Ezek 19:5-9
36:7 Matt 1:11; 2 Kgs 24:13; Ezra 1:7-11
36:8 2 Kgs 24:5,6; 1 Chr 3:16,17; Jer 22:24,28
36:9 2 Kgs 24:8,9
36:10 Matt 1:11; Jer 37:1; 2 Chr 36:7
36:11 2 Kgs 24:18-20; Jer 52:1-3
36:12 Jer 37:2-21; Jer 38:14-28; 2 Chr 32:26
36:13 Heb 3:8; 2 Kgs 24:20; Jer 52:2,3
36:14 2 Kgs 16:10-16; Ezra 9:7; Jer 5:5

35:25 *Jeremiah lamented over Josiah* Jeremiah said Josiah did justice and judged the cause of the poor, and that this is to know God (Jer 22:15-16). These laments are lost, not our book of Lamentations. Zechariah foresaw mourning "like the mourning of Hadad-rimmon in the plain of Megiddo" (Zech 12:11), when Israel looks on Him whom they pierced (Zech 12:10). I believe that day is still future, when Jesus returns and Israel turns to her Messiah.
35:26 *according to what is written in the law of the LORD* The measure of Josiah's life. He found God's Word and lived by it. Seek God with all your heart, love His Word, and never stop asking what He wants.
36:2 *he reigned three months in Jerusalem* In 609 B.C. Neco fined the land heavily, and Jehoahaz died in Egypt (2 Kgs 23:34; Jer 22:10-12).
36:4 *he changed his name to Jehoiakim* Changing a man's name showed mastery over him. David's line was now a puppet of foreign powers.
36:5 *he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem* About 609 to 598 B.C. Jeremiah shows his palace built by forced labor (Jer 22:13-17), his killing of the prophet Uriah (Jer 26:20-23), and his burning of the scroll (Jer 36:23).
36:6 *Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon came up* Babylon beat Egypt at Carchemish in 605 B.C. (Jer 46:2) and carried off temple vessels and royal youths, Daniel among them (Dan 1:1-6), the first deportation. Scripture does not say Jehoiakim reached Babylon. He may have been bound and released. Kings says he rebelled and died in Jerusalem (2 Kgs 24:1, 6).
36:7 *he put them in his temple in Babylon* The first of three times this chapter tells of temple treasures going to Babylon (36:7, 10, 18), as Isaiah warned (2 Kgs 20:17). These vessels were used at Belshazzar's feast (Dan 5:2-3).
36:9 *Jehoiachin was a son of eight years* Kings says eighteen (2 Kgs 24:8). Most think eight is a copying error, since he had wives (2 Kgs 24:15) and was judged for evil. Some suggest he was co-ruler at eight. It does not change the story.
36:10 *brought him to Babylon with the desirable articles of the house of the LORD* The second deportation, 597 B.C., with ten thousand leaders and craftsmen (2 Kgs 24:14), Ezekiel among them (Ezek 1:1-3). Jeremiah said none of his seed would prosper on David's throne (Jer 22:30). He is in Jesus' line through Joseph, His legal father (Matt 1:11-12), and Luke traces Jesus through Nathan, which many believe is Mary's line (Luke 3:23-31). God kept both the curse and the promise.
36:10 *Zedekiah his brother* Actually his uncle, a son of Josiah (2 Kgs 24:17). "Brother" can mean any close male relative.
36:12 *he did not humble himself before Jeremiah the prophet* The question of the whole book: will you humble yourself? Rehoboam, Hezekiah, Manasseh and Josiah did (12:6-7; 32:26; 33:12; 34:27). Zedekiah would not. He asked Jeremiah in secret but feared his officials too much to obey (Jer 37:17; 38:14-23). He reigned about 597 to 586 B.C.
36:13 *who had made him swear by God* He broke an oath in God's name (Ezek 17:13-19). A stiff neck is an ox that will not bow to the yoke.
36:14 *they made unclean the house of the LORD* Not only the king. Ezekiel saw idols on the walls, elders burning incense, and men bowing to the sun with their backs to the temple (Ezek 8). The house God filled with glory (7:1-3) was defiled by its keepers.

He had consecrated in Jerusalem. **15** And the LORD, the God of their fathers, sent to them by the hand of His messengers, rising early and sending, for He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place. **16** And they were mocking the messengers of God, and despising His words, and scoffing at His prophets, until the wrath of the LORD went up against His people, until ***there was*** no healing.

Jerusalem Burned

17 And He brought up against them the king of the Chaldeans (Kasdim), and he killed their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and he did not have compassion on young man and virgin, old man and aged; all ***of them*** He gave into his hand. **18** And all the articles of the house of God, the great and the small, and the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king and of his officials, all ***of it*** he brought to Babylon. **19** And they burned the house of God, and they tore down the wall of Jerusalem, and all its palaces they burned with fire, and all its desirable articles, to destroy ***them***. **20** And he carried into exile those left from the sword to Babylon, and they became servants to him and to his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia (Paras), **21** to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had accepted its Sabbaths. All the days of its desolation it kept Sabbath, to fulfill seventy years.

The Decree of Cyrus

22 And in the first year of Cyrus (Koresh) the king of Persia, to complete the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus the king of Persia, and he made a proclamation pass through all his kingdom, and also in writing, saying, **23** "Thus says Cyrus the king of Persia: 'All the kingdoms of the earth the LORD, the God of the heavens, has given to me, and He has charged me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which ***is*** in Judah. Who ***is*** among you of all His people? The LORD his God ***be*** with him, and let him go up.'"

36:15 Matt 23:30; Matt 23:34; Matt 23:37
36:16 Acts 7:52; Matt 23:37; Luke 6:23
36:17 Ps 74:20; Ezra 9:7; 2 Chr 33:11
36:18 2 Chr 36:7,10; 2 Kgs 25:13-17; Jer 27:18-22
36:19 Ps 79:1,7; 2 Kgs 25:9; Ps 74:4-8
36:20 Matt 1:11; Jer 27:7; Deut 28:47,48
36:21 Jer 29:10; Dan 9:2; Lev 26:34,35,43
36:22 Jer 25:12,14; Ezra 1:1-3; Jer 29:10
36:23 Ps 75:5-7; Dan 2:21,37; Dan 4:35

36:15 *rising early and sending, for He had compassion on His people* The heart of God at the end. Up at dawn for something urgent, year after year (Jer 7:13, 25; 25:3-4). He did not want to destroy them. He wanted them to turn.
36:16 *until there was no healing* God's love does not run out, but people can refuse it to the end. They rejected every cure. Jesus told of servants sent and killed, and last the beloved son (Mark 12:1-9), and wept over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41-44). "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts" (Heb 3:15).
36:17 *he did not have compassion on young man and virgin, old man and aged* One of the saddest verses in the Bible. The Chaldeans ruled Babylon and broke in after a long siege in 586 B.C., killing even in the temple courts. God had compassion (36:15). Babylon had none. Refuse God's mercy, and we are left to a world that has none. Babylon was God's instrument, as He warned for centuries (Deut 28:49-52; Jer 25:8-11), and He took no pleasure in it (Ezek 33:11). Yet Lamentations hopes: "His compassions do not come to an end" (Lam 3:22). The God who judged sin also wept in His Son, and will wipe every tear away (Rev 21:4).
36:19 *they burned the house of God* Solomon's temple stood from about 966 to 586 B.C. Everything Hezekiah showed Babylon's envoys went to Babylon (36:18). Ezekiel saw the glory leave before it fell (Ezek 10:18-19; 11:22-23). God does not stay in a house where He is not wanted.
36:20 *until the reign of the kingdom of Persia* Exile is being forced to live away from one's homeland. "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat" (Ps 137:1). But even here there is hope: "until." The exile had an end date.
36:21 *to fulfill seventy years* Jeremiah named seventy years (Jer 25:11; 29:10), and Daniel prayed when he read it (Dan 9:2). The land was to rest every seventh year (Lev 25:1-7), and God warned it would "accept its Sabbaths" (Lev 26:34) in desolation. What they would not give, God gave. Some count seventy missed Sabbath years over 490 years, but Scripture does not, and I would not press it. Counted from 605 to about 538-536 B.C., or from 586 to 516 B.C., God's word came true to the year (Isa 40:8).
36:22 *the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus the king of Persia* Babylon fell to Persia in 539 B.C. (Dan 5:30-31), and the decree came in 538 B.C. A clay cylinder from Cyrus' reign, found in the 1800s, shows his policy of letting peoples go home and restore their temples. The Bible gives the deeper reason. Isaiah named Cyrus over a hundred fifty years earlier (Isa 44:28; 45:1). "Streams of water is the heart of a king in the hand of the LORD" (Prov 21:1).
36:23 *the LORD, the God of the heavens* Whether Cyrus truly believed or was honoring each people's god, Scripture does not say. But he spoke the truth. The LORD gave his kingdom and charged him to build.
36:23 *let him go up* The last words of Chronicles, and in the Hebrew Bible the last words of the Old Testament. After sin, judgment, burning and exile, the last word is an invitation. Ezra 1:1-3 picks up the same words. Yet no son of David sat on the throne, and the glory did not fill the new temple (Hag 2:3). They waited for the Son of David who reigns forever (Luke 1:32-33), who builds God's true house (Matt 16:18; John 2:19-21).
36:23 *Who is among you of all His people* I believe God's promises to Israel are not finished. The prophets speak of a greater return, when Israel turns to her Messiah and the Son of David reigns in Jerusalem (Jer 23:5-8; Rom 11:25-29; Rev 20:4-6). Some read these as fulfilled in the return or in the church, but God's gifts and calling to Israel are without regret (Rom 11:29). No matter how far we have fallen, God calls us home. Will you go up?

EZRA

Introduction

Title

The book is named for Ezra, the priest and scribe who leads the story from chapter 7 on. In the Hebrew Bible, Ezra and Nehemiah were counted as one book, and Nehemiah carries the same story on. Ezra picks up exactly where Chronicles stops. The last two verses of 2 Chronicles and the first verses of Ezra tell of the same decree of Cyrus, almost word for word (2 Chr 36:22-23; Ezra 1:1-3).

Author and Date

The book has no title line naming its writer, but from 7:27 to 9:15 Ezra speaks in the first person, and Jewish tradition names Ezra as the writer of this book, Nehemiah and Chronicles. Ezra was a priest of Aaron's line and a scribe skilled in the Law of Moses (7:1-10). He used official records: the list of those who returned (chapter 2), copies of royal letters and decrees (chapters 4-7) and family lists (chapters 8 and 10). Some modern scholars think a later editor put Ezra and Nehemiah together from these sources a century or more later. I take the traditional view that Ezra wrote it, because it fits the first-person sections and the close knowledge of Persian letters and offices the book shows. It was most likely written soon after the last events, about 450 to 440 B.C.

Background and Setting

The Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem and the temple in 586 B.C. Babylon fell to Cyrus king of Persia in 539 B.C., and in 538 B.C. he let the Jews go home. The book covers about eighty years. Chapters 1-6 run from the decree to the finished temple in 516 B.C. Chapters 7-10 begin in the seventh year of Artaxerxes, about 458 B.C. Between chapters 6 and 7 is a gap of nearly sixty years, when the events of Esther took place, and 4:6-23 jumps ahead to show the opposition under later kings.

The Persian kings in order: Cyrus the Great (559-530 B.C.) gave the decree of Ezra 1; Cambyses (530-522 B.C.) is not named; Darius I (522-486 B.C.) let the temple be finished (chapters 5-6); Ahasuerus, also known as Xerxes (486-465 B.C.), is the king of Esther and of 4:6; Artaxerxes I (464-424 B.C.) sent Ezra and Nehemiah. Judah was a small district in the province called "beyond the River" (4:10), west of the Euphrates. Around it lived peoples settled there while the Jews were away, including the people of Samaria (2 Kgs 17:24-41). Most Jews stayed in Babylon and Persia, as Jeremiah had told them to build homes there (Jer 29:4-7). Only a small number chose the hard road home.

Words to know: the exile is the time Judah lived as captives in Babylon, from 605 B.C. (Dan 1:1) to the return. The sons of the exile are those who came back. A remnant is the small part of a people God keeps after disaster (9:8, 15). A scribe was trained to copy, read and explain the Law. Levites served at the temple, and the priests were the Levites descended from Aaron who offered sacrifices. From 4:8 to 6:18 and in 7:12-26 the book is written in Aramaic, the language of the Persian government.

Themes

Ezra is a book about going home and starting over with God. Its theme is God's faithfulness in bringing His people back, and the people's need to be faithful in return. God kept His word through Jeremiah and Isaiah and moved the hearts of kings to do it (1:1; 6:22; 7:27). The first group, about 50,000 people under Zerubbabel and Jeshua, rebuilt the altar, laid the temple foundation, faced years of opposition and finished the temple. The second came with Ezra, who found the people drifting back toward the sins that sent their fathers into exile.

The key verse is Ezra's own purpose: "Ezra had set his heart to seek the law of the LORD and to do it, and to teach statute and judgment in Israel" (7:10). Another phrase runs all through the book: "the good hand of his God on him" (7:9; 7:6, 28; 8:18, 22, 31). Worship is restored as it is written in the Law, God's Word is put back at the center of the people's lives, and the book shows honestly how quickly a forgiven people can drift and how they come back through confession and repentance.

Christ in Ezra

The New Testament does not quote Ezra, but the book is part of the road that leads to Jesus. God promised the Messiah would come from David's line, and Zerubbabel, who led the first return, was a grandson of King Jehoiachin and is named in the family line of Jesus (Matt 1:12; Luke 3:27). God promised that the Lord would come to His temple (Mal 3:1), and Haggai, who preached during the building, said the glory of this house would be greater than the first (Hag 2:9). That second temple, later enlarged by Herod, is where Jesus was presented as a baby, taught as a boy and cleansed as a man. Jesus spoke of His own body as the true temple (John 2:19-21). The daily sacrifices on the rebuilt altar looked ahead to His one sacrifice (Heb 10:10-12), and Ezra, priest and teacher of the Law, is a small picture of the One who taught God's Word with authority and is our great High Priest (Heb 4:14).

Hard Passages

Why did Zerubbabel refuse help from the people of the land (4:1-3)? They worshiped the LORD alongside other gods (2 Kgs 17:33). Letting mixed worship help build the temple would let it into God's house.

Ezra 4:6-23 is not in time order. It gathers examples of opposition under Xerxes and Artaxerxes before returning to Darius in verse 24.

Who was Sheshbazzar (1:8; 5:14-16)? Some think he and Zerubbabel were the same man, and others think he was an older leader who gave way to Zerubbabel. Scripture does not settle it. The numbers in chapter 2 do not add to the stated total, and the notes give the common explanations.

The mixed marriages of chapters 9-10 are the hardest passage in the book. The reason was not race but idolatry, as the welcome given to Rahab, Ruth and all who sought the LORD shows (6:21). The sending away of wives and children was a special case for Israel under the Law, at a moment when the tiny community could have been swallowed by other gods, and the notes do not soften the grief of it. The New Testament tells

believers not to marry unbelievers, but tells a believer already married to an unbeliever not to send the spouse away (1 Cor 7:12-14). Ezra 10 must never be used as a reason for a Christian to leave a husband or wife.

Outline

I. The First Return and the Temple Rebuilt (1:1-6:22)
  A. The decree of Cyrus (1:1-11)
  B. The list of those who returned (2:1-70)
  C. The altar and the temple foundation (3:1-13)
  D. Opposition stops the work (4:1-24)
  E. The prophets stir up the builders (5:1-17)
  F. Darius' decree and the temple finished (6:1-22)
II. Ezra's Return and Reforms (7:1-10:44)
  A. Ezra comes to Jerusalem (7:1-28)
  B. The journey under God's good hand (8:1-36)
  C. Ezra's prayer of confession (9:1-15)
  D. The people put away foreign wives (10:1-44)

EZRA

EZRA 1

The Decree of Cyrus

1 And in year one of Cyrus (Koresh) king of Persia (Paras), to fulfill the word of the LORD from the mouth of Jeremiah (Yirmeya), the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, and he caused a proclamation to pass through all his kingdom, and also in writing, saying, **2** "Thus says Cyrus king of Persia: All the kingdoms of the earth the LORD, the God of the heavens, has given to me, and He has appointed me to build for Him a house in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), which ***is*** in Judah (Yehuda). **3** Who ***is*** among you of all His people? May his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which ***is*** in Judah, and let him build the house of the LORD, the God of Israel (Yisra'el); He ***is*** the God who ***is*** in Jerusalem. **4** And every one who remains, from all the places where he ***is*** sojourning, let the men of his place support him with silver and with gold and with property and with livestock, with the freewill offering for the house of God which ***is*** in Jerusalem."

The People Prepare to Go Up

5 And the heads of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin (Binyamin) arose, and the priests and the Levites, everyone whose spirit God had stirred up, to go up to build the house of the LORD which ***is*** in Jerusalem. **6** And all those around them strengthened their hands with vessels of silver, with gold, with property, and with livestock, and with precious things, besides all ***that was*** offered willingly.

Cyrus Returns the Temple Vessels

7 And King Cyrus brought out the vessels of the house of the LORD which Nebuchadnezzar (Nevukhadnetsar) had brought out from Jerusalem and had put in the house of his gods. **8** And Cyrus king of Persia brought them out by the hand of Mithredath (Mitredat) the treasurer, and he counted them out to Sheshbazzar (Sheshbatsar) the prince of Judah. **9** And this ***was*** their number: thirty basins of gold, one thousand basins of silver, twenty-nine knives, **10** thirty bowls of gold, four hundred and ten bowls of silver of a second ***kind***, ***and*** one thousand other vessels. **11** All the vessels of gold and of silver ***were*** five thousand and four hundred. Sheshbazzar brought up everything with the bringing up of the exiles from Babylon (Bavel) to Jerusalem.

EZRA 2

The Families Who Returned

1 And these ***are*** the sons of the province who came up from the captivity of the exile, whom Nebuchadnezzar (Nevukhadnetsar) king of Babylon (Bavel) had taken into exile to Babylon, and they returned to Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) and Judah (Yehuda), each to his city, **2** who came with Zerubbabel (Zerubavel), Jeshua (Yeshua), Nehemiah (Nechemya), Seraiah (Seraya), Reelaiah (Re'elaya), Mordecai (Mordekhay), Bilshan, Mispar, Bigvai (Bigvay), Rehum (Rechum), ***and*** Baanah (Ba'ana). The number of the

1:1 Matt 1:22; Matt 3:3; John 1:23
1:2 Isa 44:26-28; 1 Kgs 8:27; 2 Chr 2:12
1:3 Dan 6:26; Josh 1:9; 1 Chr 28:20
1:4 Ezra 7:16-18; Acts 24:17; 3 John 1:6-8
1:5 Ezra 1:1; Phil 2:13; 2 Chr 36:22
1:6 Ezra 7:15,16; Ezra 8:25-28,33; Ezra 1:4
1:7 Ezra 5:14; Ezra 6:5; 2 Kgs 24:13
1:8 Ezra 5:14,16; Ezra 1:11; Hag 1:1,14
1:9 Num 7:13,19-89; 1 Kgs 7:50; 2 Chr 4:8,11,21,22
1:11 Matt 1:11; Matt 1:12; Rom 9:23
2:1 Neh 7:6-73; 2 Kgs 24:14-16; 2 Kgs 25:11
2:2 Matt 1:12; Matt 1:13; Neh 7:7

1:1 *in year one of Cyrus king of Persia* His first year as ruler of Babylon, after his army took the city in 539 B.C., so the decree came in 538 B.C. Daniel was still alive to see it (Dan 1:21; 6:28).
1:1 *to fulfill the word of the LORD from the mouth of Jeremiah* Jeremiah said Babylon would rule seventy years and then the LORD would bring His people back (Jer 25:11-12; 29:10). Counted from the first deportation in 605 B.C. to the return about 538 or 536 B.C., or from the burned temple in 586 B.C. to the finished temple in 516 B.C., God kept His word to the year.
1:1 *the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia* The king made the decision, but God moved his heart (Prov 21:1). Isaiah named Cyrus about 150 years before he was born (Isa 44:28; 45:1, 13). God does not just know the future. He shapes it.
1:2 *He has appointed me to build for Him a house in Jerusalem* Cyrus probably did not believe in the LORD as Daniel did. He honored the gods of the peoples he conquered and sent them home to rebuild their temples, as a clay barrel from his reign, the Cyrus Cylinder, tells. That makes the point stronger. God used a pagan king's own policy to keep His promise, though Cyrus did not know Him (Isa 45:4-5).
1:4 *with the freewill offering for the house of God* No one was forced to go or to give. It must have recalled the exodus, when Egypt sent Israel out with silver and gold (Exod 12:35-36). God was bringing His people out of captivity a second time.
1:5 *everyone whose spirit God had stirred up* The God who stirred Cyrus stirred His people too. Judah and Benjamin had been the southern kingdom, though others came too (1 Chr 9:3). Most Jews stayed. Many were born in Babylon and had never seen Jerusalem, about 900 miles away. God calls and also gives the desire to answer (Phil 2:13). If you feel a pull to follow God into something hard, that pull may be His hand on your heart.
1:6 *all those around them strengthened their hands* Not everyone is called to go, but everyone can help those who do.
1:7 *which Nebuchadnezzar had brought out from Jerusalem* Taken as trophies to show his gods had won (2 Kgs 25:13-15; Dan 1:2), and used at Belshazzar's feast (Dan 5:2-4). Now they were going home.
1:8 *Sheshbazzar the prince of Judah* Prince here means a leader. Ezra 5:14-16 says he was governor and laid the foundation, while chapter 3 credits Zerubbabel and Jeshua. Some think they were the same man, Sheshbazzar being a court name. Others think he was an older leader, perhaps Zerubbabel's uncle Shenazzar (1 Chr 3:18), who gave way to Zerubbabel. Scripture does not settle it.
1:11 *five thousand and four hundred* The items in verses 9-10 add to 2,499. Most likely those verses list only the main items and the total counts everything. Others suggest a copying error. Every piece was counted and handed over. The worship of the new temple was the same as Solomon's, and nothing that belongs to God is ever lost to Him.
2:1 *the sons of the province* The province is Judah, now a small district of the Persian Empire. Most were the children and grandchildren of those taken.
2:2 *who came with Zerubbabel, Jeshua* Zerubbabel was of David's line (1 Chr 3:17-19) and governor (Hag 1:1). Jeshua, or Joshua, was high priest (Zech 3:1). Throne and altar together. This Nehemiah and Mordecai are not the later famous men. Nehemiah 7:7 has a twelfth name, and many think the twelve leaders stood for the twelve tribes. God remembers every one by name.

men of the people of Israel (Yisra'el): **3** the sons of Parosh, two thousand one hundred seventy-two; **4** the sons of Shephatiah (Shefatya), three hundred seventy-two; **5** the sons of Arah (Arach), seven hundred seventy-five; **6** the sons of Pahath-moab (Pachat-Mo'av), of the sons of Jeshua, Joab (Yo'av), two thousand eight hundred twelve; **7** the sons of Elam, one thousand two hundred fifty-four; **8** the sons of Zattu (Zatu), nine hundred forty-five; **9** the sons of Zaccai (Zakay), seven hundred sixty; **10** the sons of Bani, six hundred forty-two; **11** the sons of Bebai (Bevay), six hundred twenty-three; **12** the sons of Azgad, one thousand two hundred twenty-two; **13** the sons of Adonikam (Adoniqam), six hundred sixty-six; **14** the sons of Bigvai, two thousand fifty-six; **15** the sons of Adin, four hundred fifty-four; **16** the sons of Ater, of Hezekiah (Yechizqiya), ninety-eight; **17** the sons of Bezai (Betsay), three hundred twenty-three; **18** the sons of Jorah (Yora), one hundred twelve; **19** the sons of Hashum (Chashum), two hundred twenty-three; **20** the sons of Gibbar (Gibar), ninety-five; **21** the sons of Bethlehem (Bet-Lechem), one hundred twenty-three; **22** the men of Netophah (Netofa), fifty-six; **23** the men of Anathoth (Anatot), one hundred twenty-eight; **24** the sons of Azmaveth (Azmavet), forty-two; **25** the sons of Kiriath-arim (Qiryat-Arim), Chephirah (Kefira), and Beeroth (Be'erot), seven hundred forty-three; **26** the sons of Ramah (Rama) and Geba (Geva), six hundred twenty-one; **27** the men of Michmash (Mikhmas), one hundred twenty-two; **28** the men of Bethel (Bet-El) and Ai (Ay), two hundred twenty-three; **29** the sons of Nebo (Nevo), fifty-two; **30** the sons of Magbish, one hundred fifty-six; **31** the sons of the other Elam, one thousand two hundred fifty-four; **32** the sons of Harim (Charim), three hundred twenty; **33** the sons of Lod, Hadid (Chadid), and Ono, seven hundred twenty-five; **34** the sons of Jericho (Yericho), three hundred forty-five; **35** the sons of Senaah (Sena'a), three thousand six hundred thirty.

Priests, Levites and Temple Servants

36 The priests: the sons of Jedaiah (Yedaya), of the house of Jeshua, nine hundred seventy-three; **37** the sons of Immer (Imer), one thousand fifty-two; **38** the sons of Pashhur (Pashchur), one thousand two hundred forty-seven; **39** the sons of Harim, one thousand seventeen. **40** The Levites: the sons of Jeshua and Kadmiel (Qadmi'el), of the sons of Hodaviah (Hodavya), seventy-four. **41** The singers: the sons of Asaph (Asaf), one hundred twenty-eight. **42** The sons of the gatekeepers: the sons of Shallum (Shalum), the sons of Ater, the sons of Talmon, the sons of Akkub (Aquv), the sons of Hatita (Chatita), the sons of Shobai (Shovay), all ***of them*** one hundred thirty-nine. **43** The temple servants: the sons of Ziha (Tsicha), the sons of Hasupha (Chasufa), the sons of Tabbaoth (Tabaot), **44** the sons of Keros (Qeros), the sons of Siaha (Si'aha), the sons of Padon, **45** the sons of Lebanah (Levana), the sons of Hagabah (Chagava), the sons of Akkub, **46** the sons of Hagab (Chagav), the sons of Shalmai (Shalmay), the sons of Hanan (Chanan), **47** the sons of Giddel (Gidel), the sons of Gahar (Gachar), the sons of Reaiah (Re'aya), **48** the sons of Rezin (Retsin), the sons of Nekoda (Neqoda), the sons of Gazzam (Gazam), **49** the sons of Uzza (Uza), the sons of Paseah (Paseach), the sons of Besai (Besay), **50** the sons of Asnah (Asna), the sons of Meunim, the sons of Nephusim (Nefusim), **51** the sons of Bakbuk (Baqbuq), the sons of Hakupha (Chaqufa), the sons of Harhur (Charchur), **52** the sons of Bazluth (Batslut), the sons of Mehida (Mechida), the sons of Harsha (Charsha), **53** the sons of

2:3 Ezra 8:3; Ezra 10:25; Neh 7:8
2:4 Ezra 8:8; Neh 7:9
2:5 Neh 7:10; Neh 6:18
2:6 Neh 7:11; Ezra 8:4; Ezra 10:30
2:7 Ezra 2:31; Ezra 8:7; Ezra 10:26
2:8 Neh 7:13; Ezra 10:27
2:9 Neh 7:14
2:10 Ezra 10:34; Neh 7:15
2:11 Ezra 8:11; Ezra 10:28; Neh 7:16
2:12 Neh 7:17; Ezra 8:12
2:13 Ezra 8:13; Neh 7:18
2:14 Ezra 8:14; Neh 7:19
2:15 Neh 7:20; Ezra 8:6
2:16 Neh 7:21
2:17 Neh 7:23
2:18 Neh 7:24
2:19 Neh 7:22; Ezra 10:33
2:20 Neh 7:25
2:21 1 Chr 2:50-52
2:22 2 Sam 23:28; 1 Chr 2:54; Neh 7:26
2:23 Josh 21:18; Neh 7:27; Isa 10:30
2:24 Neh 7:28
2:25 Josh 9:17; Neh 7:29
2:26 Josh 18:24,25; Neh 7:30
2:27 1 Sam 13:5,23; Isa 10:28; Neh 7:31
2:28 Gen 12:8; Josh 7:2; Josh 8:9,17
2:29 Num 32:3; Deut 32:49; Neh 7:33
2:31 Ezra 2:7; Neh 7:34
2:32 Ezra 10:31; Neh 7:35
2:33 1 Chr 8:12; Neh 6:2; Neh 7:37
2:34 1 Kgs 16:34; Neh 7:36
2:35 Neh 7:38
2:36 1 Chr 9:10; 1 Chr 24:7; Ezra 3:9
2:37 1 Chr 24:14; Ezra 10:20; Neh 7:40
2:38 1 Chr 9:12; Ezra 10:22; Neh 7:41
2:39 1 Chr 24:8; Ezra 10:21; Neh 7:42
2:40 Ezra 3:9; Neh 7:43
2:41 1 Chr 6:39; 1 Chr 15:17; 1 Chr 25:1,2
2:42 1 Chr 26:1-19; Neh 7:45
2:43 1 Chr 9:2; Ezra 2:58; Neh 7:46-56
2:44 Neh 7:47
2:45 Neh 7:48
2:49 Neh 7:51
2:50 Neh 7:52
2:52 Neh 7:54
2:53 Neh 7:55

2:3 *the sons of Parosh* Verses 3-20 list families named after a forefather, and verses 21-35 list towns, most within a day's walk of Jerusalem. Family and town mattered for claims to land. Some names return with Ezra (ch 8) and in the covenant of Nehemiah 10.
2:23 *the men of Anathoth, one hundred twenty-eight* Jeremiah's hometown, where he bought a field before Jerusalem fell as a sign God would bring His people back (Jer 32:6-15). Now they came home, just as he said. Bethlehem (2:21) was the town of Ruth and David, and Bethel and Ai (2:28) recall Abraham and Joshua.
2:36 *the priests* Over 4,000 from four families, about one in ten of the company. The priests cared deeply about the temple.
2:40 *the Levites* Only 74. The Levites helped the priests, taught and cared for the temple. We are not told why so few came, and Ezra later had the same trouble (8:15).
2:41 *the sons of Asaph* Asaph was a chief musician under David (1 Chr 25:1), and twelve psalms bear his name. The worship was to be done as God set it up through David. They were restoring the LORD's worship, not starting a new religion.
2:43 *the temple servants* The Hebrew word Nethinim means those given. They did basic temple work. "The servants of Solomon" (2:55) may descend from foreigners Solomon put to work. Some names look foreign, so people from other nations had joined God's people and served at His house.

Barkos (Barqos), the sons of Sisera (Sisra), the sons of Temah (Tamach), **54** the sons of Neziah (Netsiach), the sons of Hatipha (Chatifa). **55** The sons of the servants of Solomon (Shelomo): the sons of Sotai (Sotay), the sons of Hassophereth (Hasoferet), the sons of Peruda, **56** the sons of Jaalah (Ya'ala), the sons of Darkon (Darqon), the sons of Giddel, **57** the sons of Shephatiah, the sons of Hattil (Chatil), the sons of Pochereth-hazzebaim (Pokheret-Hatsvayim), the sons of Ami. **58** All the temple servants and the sons of the servants of Solomon ***were*** three hundred ninety-two.

Those Who Could Not Prove Their Line

59 And these ***are*** those who came up from Tel-melah (Tel-Melach), Tel-harsha (Tel-Charsha), Cherub (Keruv), Addan (Adan), ***and*** Immer, and they were not able to declare the house of their fathers and their seed, whether they ***were*** from Israel: **60** the sons of Delaiah (Delaya), the sons of Tobiah (Toviya), the sons of Nekoda, six hundred fifty-two. **61** And of the sons of the priests: the sons of Habaiah (Chovaya), the sons of Hakkoz (Haqots), the sons of Barzillai (Barzilay), who had taken a wife from the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite and was called by their name. **62** These sought their record ***among*** those enrolled by genealogy, and they were not found, and they were defiled ***and removed*** from the priesthood. **63** And the governor said to them that they should not eat from the most holy things until a priest stood up for Urim and for Thummim.

The Whole Assembly

64 All the assembly together ***was*** forty-two thousand three hundred sixty, **65** besides their male servants and their female servants; these ***were*** seven thousand three hundred thirty-seven; and to them ***belonged*** two hundred male singers and female singers. **66** Their horses ***were*** seven hundred thirty-six; their mules, two hundred forty-five; **67** their camels, four hundred thirty-five; donkeys, six thousand seven hundred twenty. **68** And some of the heads of the fathers, when they came to the house of the LORD which ***is*** in Jerusalem, offered willingly for the house of God, to erect it on its site. **69** According to their ability they gave to the treasury of the work: gold, sixty-one thousand drachmas, and silver, approximately 6,250 pounds (five thousand minas), and one hundred tunics of priests. **70** And the priests and the Levites and some of the people and the singers and the gatekeepers and the temple servants dwelt in their cities, and all Israel in their cities.

EZRA 3

The Altar Rebuilt

1 And the seventh month arrived, and the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) ***were*** in the cities; and the people gathered as one man to Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). **2** And Jeshua (Yeshua) the son of Jozadak (Yotsadaq) arose, and his brothers the priests, and Zerubbabel (Zerubavel) the son of Shealtiel (She'alti'el) and his brothers, and they built the altar of the God of Israel, to offer up burnt offerings on it, as ***it is*** written in the law of Moses (Moshe), the man of God. **3** And they established the altar on its bases, for terror ***was*** on them from the peoples of the lands; and they offered up burnt offerings on it to the LORD, burnt offerings for the morning and for the evening.

2:55 1 Kgs 9:21; Neh 7:57
2:56 Neh 7:58
2:57 Neh 7:59
2:58 1 Chr 9:2; 1 Kgs 9:21; Ezra 7:7
2:59 Neh 7:61
2:60 Neh 7:62
2:61 2 Sam 17:27; 1 Kgs 2:7; Neh 7:63,64
2:62 Num 3:10; Lev 21:21-23; Num 18:7
2:63 Exod 28:30; Lev 2:3,10; Num 27:21
2:64 Ezra 9:8; Neh 7:66-69; Isa 10:20-22
2:65 2 Sam 19:35; Isa 14:1,2; Exod 15:20,21
2:68 1 Chr 22:1; Exod 35:5-19,29; Exod 36:3
2:69 Ezra 8:25-34; 1 Kgs 7:51; 1 Chr 22:14
2:70 Neh 7:73; Ezra 6:16,17; 1 Chr 11:2
3:1 Lev 23:24,27-44; Exod 23:14-17; Lev 16:29
3:2 Luke 3:27; Matt 1:12; Matt 1:13
3:3 Num 28:2-8; 2 Chr 4:1; Ezra 4:11-16

2:59 *they were not able to declare the house of their fathers* They could not prove their line, but they still came and counted among the people.
2:61 *Barzillai the Gileadite* The old man who helped David when he fled from Absalom (2 Sam 17:27-29; 19:31-39). A priestly family had taken his name by marriage.
2:62 *they were defiled and removed from the priesthood* Only Aaron's descendants could serve (Num 3:10; 16:40). Having just come through an exile caused by careless worship, they would not be careless again.
2:63 *until a priest stood up for Urim and for Thummim* The governor was most likely Zerubbabel or Sheshbazzar. The most holy things were sacrifice portions only priests could eat. The Urim and Thummim were kept by the high priest to learn God's will (Exod 28:30; Num 27:21), and they seem to have been lost. The matter was left with God. We need not prove our family line to come to God. Every believer is part of "a holy priesthood" (1 Pet 2:5).
2:64 *forty-two thousand three hundred sixty* The listed numbers add to a little under 30,000, and Nehemiah 7 has the same total with its own sum a little over 31,000. The total likely includes those not in the family lists, such as other tribes, those who could not trace their line, or perhaps women. Small differences most likely come from copying numbers, or one list made at the start and one at the end. With servants and singers it was close to 50,000 people. Most walked, and the donkeys carried the goods and little ones.
2:68 *the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem* It lay in ruins, but to them the place still belonged to God.
2:69 *according to their ability they gave* God does not ask us to give what we do not have (2 Cor 8:12).
2:70 *all Israel in their cities* A few thousand from Judah and Benjamin stood for the whole people of God. A remnant had come home.
3:1 *the seventh month arrived* Tishri, September and October, the holiest month: trumpets on the first, the Day of Atonement on the tenth, and the Feast of Booths from the fifteenth (Lev 23:23-36). Most likely 538 or 537 B.C. "As one man" means one mind and purpose. That unity is where every work of God begins (Acts 2:1, 46).
3:2 *they built the altar of the God of Israel* The priest and the governor led together. The altar came first, before the temple, because it was where sin was dealt with and God met His people. They could worship without walls but not without sacrifice. A right relationship with God comes first, and they built "as it is written," going back to the Book.
3:3 *for terror was on them from the peoples of the lands* They built on the old foundations, the place God chose (Deut 12:5; 2 Chr 3:1). They were afraid and built anyway. Some read it that they built because they were afraid, turning to God. Either way, fear did not stop them.
3:3 *burnt offerings for the morning and for the evening* A burnt offering was a whole animal given to God, a sign of full dedication and a covering for sin (Lev 1:3-9), one lamb morning and evening (Exod 29:38-42). After about fifty years the smoke rose again. They had to be repeated, because "it is impossible for the blood of bulls and of goats to take away sins" (Heb 10:4). Jesus offered Himself once for all (Heb 10:10-12).

4 And they kept the Feast of Booths as ***it is*** written, and ***offered*** the burnt offering day by day by number, according to the ordinance, the matter of each day in its day, **5** and after this the continual burnt offering, and for the new moons, and for all the consecrated appointed times of the LORD, and for everyone who offered willingly a freewill offering to the LORD. **6** From day one of the seventh month they began to offer up burnt offerings to the LORD, and the temple of the LORD was not ***yet*** founded.

The Temple Foundation Laid

7 And they gave money to the masons and to the craftsmen, and food and drink and oil to the Sidonians and to the Tyrians, to bring cedar wood from Lebanon (Levanon) to the sea of Joppa (Yafo), according to the permission of Cyrus (Koresh) king of Persia (Paras) for them. **8** And in the second year of their coming to the house of God at Jerusalem, in the second month, Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of Jozadak and the rest of their brothers, the priests and the Levites, and all those who had come from the captivity to Jerusalem, began; and they appointed the Levites from a son of twenty years and upward to oversee the work of the house of the LORD. **9** And Jeshua stood, his sons and his brothers, Kadmiel (Qadmi'el) and his sons, the sons of Judah (Yehuda), as one, to oversee the doers of the work in the house of God, the sons of Henadad (Chenadad), their sons and their brothers, the Levites.

Shouts of Joy and Weeping

10 And the builders founded the temple of the LORD, and they appointed the priests, clothed ***in their vestments***, with trumpets, and the Levites, the sons of Asaph (Asaf), with cymbals, to praise the LORD by the hands of David king of Israel. **11** And they sang responsively with praising and with giving thanks to the LORD: "For ***He is*** good, for His steadfast love ***is*** forever toward Israel." And all the people shouted a great shout, praising the LORD because the house of the LORD was founded. **12** And many of the priests and the Levites and the heads of the fathers, the old men who had seen the first house, at the founding of this house before their eyes, ***were*** weeping with a great voice; and many ***were*** with a shout, with gladness, to lift up a voice, **13** and the people ***were*** not distinguishing the sound of the shout of gladness from the sound of the weeping of the people, for the people ***were*** shouting a great shout, and the sound was heard to a distance.

EZRA 4

Enemies Offer Help

1 And the opponents of Judah (Yehuda) and Benjamin (Binyamin) heard that the sons of the exile were building a temple for the LORD, the God of Israel (Yisra'el), **2** and they approached Zerubbabel (Zerubavel) and the heads of the fathers, and they said to them, "Let us build with you, for like you we seek your God, and we have been sacrificing to Him since the days of Esarhaddon (Esar-Chadon) king of Assyria (Ashur), who brought us up here." **3** And Zerubbabel and Jeshua (Yeshua) and the rest of the heads of the fathers of Israel said to them, "***It is*** not for you and for us to build a house for our God; but we ourselves together will build for the LORD, the God of Israel, as the king, Cyrus (Koresh) king of Persia (Paras), commanded us."

Opposition Stops the Work

4 And it was ***that*** the people of the land were weakening the hands of the people of Judah and terrifying them in building,

3:4 John 7:2; Exod 23:16; Neh 8:14-17
3:5 Exod 29:38-42; Num 28:3-10,11,19,27; Num 29:2,8,13
3:7 Acts 9:36; Acts 12:20; Acts 10:5
3:8 1 Chr 23:24-32; Num 4:3
3:9 Ezra 2:40; Neh 7:43
3:10 Zech 4:10; Exod 28:40-42; 1 Sam 22:18
3:11 1 Chr 16:34,41; Neh 12:24,40; 2 Chr 7:3
3:12 Hag 2:3; Job 8:7; Isa 41:14
3:13 Judg 2:5; Neh 12:43; Ps 5:11
4:1 Ezra 1:11; Ezra 7:9; 1 Kgs 5:4,5
4:2 Matt 2:8; Luke 9:52; John 4:9
4:3 Neh 2:20; John 4:22,23; Acts 8:21
4:4 Ezra 3:3; Neh 6:9; Isa 35:3,4

3:4 *they kept the Feast of Booths as it is written* Seven days in shelters of branches to remember God's care in the wilderness (Lev 23:39-43). For people fresh from a long journey, many still in rough shelters, it meant a great deal. The offerings for each day followed Numbers 29:12-38.
3:6 *the temple of the LORD was not yet founded* New moons were the first day of each month. The worship was running before the building was started. God wants our hearts before He wants our buildings.
3:7 *to bring cedar wood from Lebanon to the sea of Joppa* Just as Solomon did (1 Kgs 5:6-11; 2 Chr 2:16). Joppa was the port nearest Jerusalem, about 35 miles away. The work had the king's permission, and they used it.
3:8 *in the second year of their coming* The spring of 536 B.C., in the second month, the month Solomon began the first temple (1 Kgs 6:1). The Levites served from twenty (1 Chr 23:24-27), and with so few (2:40) they needed every one. "As one" again: it took everyone together.
3:10 *by the hands of David king of Israel* According to the order David set for worship (1 Chr 16:4-6; 25:1). They did things as God gave them, not inventing something new.
3:11 *For He is good, for His steadfast love is forever toward Israel* The song of Israel's worship, sung when the ark came (1 Chr 16:34) and at the first temple's dedication (2 Chr 5:13; 7:3), and filling Psalm 136. Hesed is God's loyal love that does not quit. They had sinned and been exiled, and still His love was forever. Here was the proof, a new foundation on the old site.
3:12 *the old men who had seen the first house* Solomon's temple burned about fifty years before, and men in their sixties and seventies remembered it. They could see this one would be smaller and plainer (Hag 2:3). Some may have wept for joy too. The young, who had never seen the old, shouted.
3:13 *the people were not distinguishing the sound of the shout of gladness* The old were not wrong to weep, nor the young to shout. But God asked, "who has despised the day of small things?" (Zech 4:10), and promised this house greater glory (Hag 2:9), which came true when Jesus walked into it. In a season of small things, God may be laying a foundation you cannot see yet.
4:1 *the opponents of Judah and Benjamin* Ezra tells us who they are before they speak: adversaries.
4:2 *like you we seek your God* Esarhaddon ruled Assyria 681 to 669 B.C. After Samaria fell in 722 B.C., Assyria moved other peoples in. They learned to worship the LORD but kept serving their own gods (2 Kgs 17:24-41). Their descendants became the Samaritans of Jesus' day. "Like you" was only half true, and "your God" shows He was not truly theirs.
4:3 *It is not for you and for us to build a house for our God* To let mixed worship help build the temple would let it into God's house, the very sin that sent Israel into exile. Not every offer of help is help (2 Cor 6:14). We still love our neighbors and share the gospel, but the church cannot water down the truth to make room for other gods.
4:4 *weakening the hands of the people of Judah* To weaken someone's hands is to discourage him until he loses the will to work. First the enemy tries to join you and water you down. When that fails, he tries to scare you and wear you out.

5 and hiring counselors against them to frustrate their purpose all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, and until the reign of Darius (Daryavesh) king of Persia.

Letters to the Kings of Persia

6 And in the reign of Ahasuerus (Achashverosh), at the beginning of his reign, they wrote an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). **7** And in the days of Artaxerxes (Artachshasta), Bishlam, Mithredath (Mitredat), Tabeel (Tav'el), and the rest of his colleagues wrote to Artaxerxes king of Persia; and the writing of the letter ***was*** written ***in*** Aramaic and translated ***into*** Aramaic. **8** Rehum (Rechum) the commander and Shimshai (Shimshay) the scribe wrote one letter concerning Jerusalem to Artaxerxes (Artachshaste) the king, as follows: **9** then Rehum the commander and Shimshai the scribe and the rest of their associates, the Dinaites and the officials, the Tarpelites, the Sipparites, the Erechites, the Babylonians, the Susanchites, the Dehavites, the Elamites, **10** and the rest of the nations whom the great and honorable Osnappar (Asnapar) took into exile and settled in the city of Samaria (Shamrayin), and the rest of the region beyond the River. And now, **11** this ***is*** the copy of the letter which they sent to him, to Artaxerxes the king: "Your servants, the men of the region beyond the River. And now, **12** let it be known to the king that the Jews who came up from beside you to us have come to Jerusalem; they are building the rebellious and evil city, and they have finished the walls, and they are repairing the foundations. **13** Now let it be known to the king that if this city is built and the walls are finished, they will not give tribute, tax, and toll, and it will injure the revenue of kings. **14** Now because we eat the salt of the palace, and it is not proper for us to see the dishonor of the king, concerning this we have sent and made known to the king, **15** that he may search in the book of the records of your fathers; and you will find in the book of the records and know that this city ***is*** a rebellious city, and injuring kings and provinces, and ***that*** they have been making revolt in its midst from the days of antiquity; on this ***account*** this city was laid waste. **16** We are making known to the king that if this city is built and the walls are finished, because of this there will be no possession for you in the region beyond the River."

Artaxerxes Halts the Building

17 The king sent the word to Rehum the commander and Shimshai the scribe and the rest of their associates who were dwelling in Samaria and the rest of the region beyond the River: "Peace. And now, **18** the letter which you sent to us has been read clearly before me. **19** And a decree was made by me, and they searched and found that this city from the days of antiquity has been rising up against kings, and rebellion and revolt have been made in it. **20** And strong kings have been over Jerusalem, and having mastery over all the region beyond the River, and tribute, tax, and toll were being paid to them. **21** Now make a decree to make these men cease, and this city will not be built until the decree is made by me. **22** And be cautious ***of*** doing negligence concerning this. Why should the damage grow great to the injury of kings?" **23** Then, from ***when*** the copy of the letter of King Artaxerxes was read before Rehum and Shimshai the scribe and their associates, they went in haste to Jerusalem to the Jews and made them cease by force and power. **24** Then the work of the house of God which ***is*** in Jerusalem ceased, and it was ceasing until year two of the reign of Darius king of Persia.

4:5 Ps 2:1,2; Nah 1:11; Acts 24:1-27
4:6 Matt 27:37; Acts 25:7; Acts 24:5-9,13
4:7 2 Kgs 18:26; Dan 2:4; Isa 36:11
4:8 2 Sam 8:17; 2 Sam 20:25; 2 Kgs 18:18
4:9 Acts 2:9; Ezra 5:6; Ezra 6:6
4:10 Ezra 7:12; Ezra 4:1; 2 Kgs 17:24-41
4:12 Luke 13:34; Acts 24:5; Mark 12:14
4:13 Matt 17:25; Mark 12:14; Luke 20:22
4:14 John 19:14; Ezek 33:31; John 12:5,6
4:15 Ezra 4:12; Neh 2:19; Neh 6:6
4:16 Ezra 4:20; 2 Sam 8:3; 1 Kgs 4:24
4:17 Luke 10:5; Ezra 4:7,9; Ezra 5:7
4:19 2 Kgs 18:7; Ezra 4:15; Ezra 5:17
4:20 1 Kgs 4:21,24; Gen 15:18; 1 Chr 18:3
4:22 Ezra 4:13; Esth 3:8,9; Esth 7:3,4
4:23 John 4:9; Ezra 4:8,9,17; Prov 4:16
4:24 Hag 1:15; Neh 6:3,9; Job 20:5

4:5 *until the reign of Darius king of Persia* Cyrus died in 530 B.C. and Darius I came to the throne in 522 B.C. From about 536 to 520 B.C. the work stood still, and weeds grew over the foundation.
4:6 *in the reign of Ahasuerus* The Hebrew form of Xerxes, 486 to 465 B.C., the king of Esther, thirty years after the temple was finished. In verses 6-23 Ezra gathers examples of the same opposition under later kings, then returns to Darius in verse 24. A teacher stopping to say, this was not the only time.
4:7 *written in Aramaic* Aramaic was the common language of the Persian government, and from 4:8 to 6:18 Ezra writes in Aramaic, copying the letters as they were. Artaxerxes I ruled 464 to 424 B.C. and later sent Ezra and Nehemiah.
4:10 *the great and honorable Osnappar* Most likely Ashurbanipal, the last great king of Assyria. "Beyond the River" was the Persian province west of the Euphrates.
4:12 *they are building the rebellious and evil city* This is about the city walls, not the temple, perhaps begun by those who came with Ezra in 458 B.C.
4:14 *because we eat the salt of the palace* A way of saying, we are your loyal, paid servants. The letter worked on money, loyalty, history and fear. Jerusalem had rebelled before (2 Kgs 18:7; 24:1, 20), but a grain of truth was twisted into a lie about the present. The father of lies loves a little truth as a mask (John 8:44).
4:20 *strong kings have been over Jerusalem* An honest look back to David and Solomon, whose kingdom reached far.
4:21 *until the decree is made by me* Artaxerxes left the door open. About twenty years later this same king gave that order to his cupbearer, Nehemiah (Neh 2:1-8). God was setting up the answer while the enemies thought they had won.
4:23 *made them cease by force and power* Many think this is why Nehemiah was so crushed to hear the wall was broken and the gates burned (Neh 1:3). It was fresh news.
4:24 *until year two of the reign of Darius king of Persia* Back to the temple and the time of verse 5. The second year of Darius was 520 B.C. Have you started something for God with joy, only to see opposition and the cares of life bring it to a halt? The next chapter shows what God did. He sent two prophets.

EZRA 5

The Prophets Stir Up the Builders

1 And Haggai (Chagay) the prophet and Zechariah (Zekharya) the son of Iddo (Ido), the prophets, prophesied to the Jews who ***were*** in Judah (Yehud) and in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), in the name of the God of Israel (Yisra'el), ***who was*** over them. **2** Then Zerubbabel (Zerubavel) the son of Shealtiel (She'alti'el) and Jeshua (Yeshua) the son of Jozadak
(Yotsadaq) arose and began to build the house of God which ***is*** in Jerusalem; and with them ***were*** the prophets of God, supporting them.

Tattenai Questions the Work

3 At that time Tattenai (Tatnay), governor of the region beyond the River, and Shethar-bozenai (Shetar-Boznay) and their associates came to them, and they were saying to them as follows: "Who made a decree for you to build this house and to finish this structure?" **4** Then we said to them as follows: "What are the names of the men who are building this building?" **5** And the eye of their God was on the elders of the Jews, and they did not make them cease until the report should go to Darius (Daryavesh), and then they would send back a letter concerning this.

Tattenai's Letter to Darius

6 The copy of the letter which Tattenai, governor of the region beyond the River, and Shethar-bozenai and his associates, the officials who ***were*** in the region beyond the River, sent to Darius the king. **7** They sent the word to him, and thus it was written in it: "To Darius the king, all peace. **8** Let it be known to the king that we went to the province of Judah, to the house of the great God, and it is being built ***with*** huge stones, and timber is being set in the walls, and this work is being done diligently and is prospering in their hand. **9** Then we asked those elders; we said to them as follows: 'Who made a decree for you to build this house and to finish this structure?' **10** And also we asked them their names, to make known to you, that we might write the name of the men who ***are*** at their heads. **11** And thus they sent back word to us, saying, 'We are the servants of the God of the heavens and the earth, and we are building the house which was built many years before this, and a great king of Israel built it and finished it. **12** But because our fathers enraged the God of the heavens, He gave them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar (Nevukhadnetsar) king of Babylon (Bavel), the Chaldean, and he destroyed this house and took the people into exile to Babylon. **13** However, in year one of Cyrus (Koresh) the king of Babylon, Cyrus the king made a decree to build this house of God. **14** And also the vessels of the house of God, of gold and of silver, which Nebuchadnezzar had brought out from the temple which ***was*** in Jerusalem and carried to the temple of Babylon, Cyrus the king brought them out from the temple of Babylon, and they were given to ***one*** whose name ***was*** Sheshbazzar (Sheshbatsar), whom he had made governor. **15** And he said to him, "Take these vessels; go, deposit them in the temple which ***is*** in Jerusalem, and let the house of God be built on its place." **16** Then this Sheshbazzar came ***and*** laid the foundations of the house of God which ***is*** in Jerusalem; and from then until now it is being built, and it is not finished.' **17** And now, if ***it is*** good to the king, let ***it*** be searched in the house of the treasures of the king, there in Babylon, whether it is ***so*** that a decree was made by Cyrus the king to build this house of God in Jerusalem; and let the king send to us his will concerning this."

EZRA 6

The Decree of Cyrus Found

1 Then Darius (Daryavesh) the king made a decree, and they

5:1 Hag 1:1-15; Zech 4:6-10; Zech 1:1-21
5:2 Matt 1:12; Ezra 3:2; Ezra 6:14
5:3 Ezra 6:6,13; Ezra 5:9; Ezra 1:3
5:5 Ezra 7:6,28; Ps 33:18; Ezra 8:22
5:6 Ezra 4:9; Ezra 4:11,23; Ezra 6:6
5:7 John 14:27; Ezra 4:17; Dan 3:9
5:8 Ezra 2:1; Neh 7:6; Neh 11:3
5:9 Ezra 5:3,4
5:11 Josh 24:15; Ps 119:46; Dan 3:26
5:12 2 Chr 36:16,17; 2 Kgs 24:2,10-17; 2 Kgs 21:12-15
5:13 Ezra 1:1-8; Ezra 6:3-5; Isa 44:28
5:14 Ezra 6:5; Ezra 5:16; Ezra 1:7-10
5:15 Ezra 1:2; Ezra 3:3; Ezra 6:3
5:16 Ezra 6:15; Ezra 3:8,10; Ezra 5:2
5:17 Ezra 4:15,19; Ezra 6:1,2; Prov 25:2
6:1 Rev 5:1; Ezra 5:17; Ezra 4:15,19

5:1 *Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo, the prophets* A prophet spoke God's word to His people, and both men have books in our Bible. Haggai began in August of 520 B.C. (Hag 1:1), Zechariah two months later (Zech 1:1). Haggai asked if it was time to live in paneled houses while God's house lay desolate (Hag 1:4-11). Zechariah gave hope: "Not by strength and not by power, but by My Spirit" (Zech 4:6).

5:1 *in the name of the God of Israel, who was over them* The people had been looking at the Persian king and their enemies. The prophets reminded them who was really over them.

5:2 *with them were the prophets of God, supporting them* They did not wait for a new decree or for the opposition to leave. The prophets stayed and stood with the builders, perhaps even working with their hands. A good pastor walks with people while they obey. The work stopped when they listened to fear (4:4) and started when they listened to God's Word.

5:3 *Tattenai, governor of the region beyond the River* The Persian governor of the whole province west of the Euphrates, far above the local enemies of chapter 4. A Persian-period record names a governor Tattenai under Darius. His question was fair. He wanted to know if the work was legal.

5:4 *Then we said to them as follows* The Aramaic reads "we said." The old Greek reads "they said," which fits verse 10. Either way, the leaders' names were taken.

5:5 *the eye of their God was on the elders of the Jews* The key verse. God's eye on someone means He watches to care and protect (Ps 33:18; 34:15). The governor could have stopped the work while he checked, and he did not. They worked for months not knowing the answer. Faith often means doing what God said before the answer comes, trusting that His eye is on us.

5:8 *the house of the great God* A Persian governor, not a believer, could see something real was happening and that the work was "prospering."

5:11 *We are the servants of the God of the heavens and the earth* They began not with their rights or papers but with whom they belonged to. They were restoring what Solomon built, not starting something new.

5:12 *because our fathers enraged the God of the heavens* They did not blame Babylon's strength. Their own sin was the reason, and God had done it, with Nebuchadnezzar as His tool. God's people should not hide their failures. We own them and give God glory for His mercy.

5:16 *from then until now it is being built, and it is not finished* The work had stopped for about sixteen years (4:24), but in Persian law the project was authorized, begun and unfinished. They told the truth, and the law was on their side.

5:17 *let it be searched in the house of the treasures of the king* Their whole case rested on a scroll filed away eighteen years before. The builders could not know if it still existed. God knew exactly where it was.

searched in the house of the books, where the treasures were deposited, there in Babylon (Bavel). **2** And there was found in Ecbatana (Achmeta), in the citadel which ***is*** in the province of Media (Maday), one scroll, and thus it was written in it: "A memorandum: **3** In year one of Cyrus (Koresh) the king, Cyrus the king made a decree: ***As for*** the house of God in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), let the house be built, a place where they sacrifice sacrifices, and let its foundations be retained; its height approximately 90 feet (sixty cubits), its width approximately 90 feet (sixty cubits); **4** three rows of huge stones and a row of new timber; and let the expense be given from the house of the king. **5** And also the vessels of the house of God, of gold and of silver, which Nebuchadnezzar (Nevukhadnetsar) brought out from the temple which ***was*** in Jerusalem and carried to Babylon, let them send back, and let ***each*** go to the temple which ***is*** in Jerusalem, to its place; and you shall deposit ***them*** in the house of God."

Darius Orders the Work to Continue

6 "Now, Tattenai (Tatnay), governor of the region beyond the River, Shethar-bozenai (Shetar-Boznay), and their associates, the officials who ***are*** in the region beyond the River, be far from there. **7** Leave the work of this house of God alone; let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews build this house of God on its place. **8** And a decree is made by me regarding what you shall do with these elders of the Jews for the building of this house of God: that from the property of the king, which ***is*** the tribute of the region beyond the River, the expense be given diligently to these men, so as not to make ***them*** cease. **9** And whatever ***is*** needed, both young bulls and rams and lambs for burnt offerings to the God of the heavens, wheat, salt, wine, and oil, according to the word of the priests who ***are*** in Jerusalem, let it be given to them day by day, that ***there be*** no negligence, **10** so that they may be offering soothing offerings to the God of the heavens and praying for the life of the king and of his sons. **11** And a decree is made by me that every man who violates this word, let a beam be pulled from his house, and ***being*** lifted up, let him be impaled on it; and let his house be made a refuse heap on ***account of*** this. **12** And may the God who has caused His name to dwell there overthrow every king and people who stretches out his hand to violate ***it***, to destroy this house of God which ***is*** in Jerusalem. I, Darius, have made a decree; let it be done diligently."

The Temple Finished and Dedicated

13 Then Tattenai, governor of the region beyond the River, Shethar-bozenai, and their associates, according to what Darius the king had sent, thus they did diligently. **14** And the elders of the Jews were building and prospering through the prophesying of Haggai (Chagay) the prophet and Zechariah (Zekharya) the son of Iddo (Ido); and they built and finished according to the decree of the God of Israel (Yisra'el), and according to the decree of Cyrus and Darius and Artaxerxes (Artachshaste) king of Persia (Paras). **15** And this house was completed by day three of the month of Adar, which was year six of the reign of Darius the king. **16** And the sons of Israel, the priests and the Levites and the rest of the sons of the exile, celebrated the dedication of this house of God with joy. **17** And they offered for the dedication of this house of God one hundred bulls, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs, and twelve male goats as a sin offering for all Israel, according to the number of the tribes of Israel. **18** And they appointed the priests in their divisions and the Levites in their classes over the service of God which ***is*** in Jerusalem, according to the writing of the book of Moses (Moshe).

6:3 Ezra 5:13-15; 2 Chr 36:22,23; Deut 12:5,6,11-14
6:4 1 Kgs 6:36; Ezra 7:20-23; Ps 68:29
6:5 Ezra 5:14; Dan 5:2; Jer 27:16,18-22
6:6 Ezra 5:3; Ezra 5:6; Gen 32:28
6:7 Acts 5:38
6:8 Ezra 6:4; Ezra 7:15-22; Ezra 4:16,20
6:9 Lev 1:3-5,10; Lev 9:2; Ps 50:9-13
6:10 Acts 8:24; Ezra 7:23; Jer 29:7
6:11 Dan 2:5; Dan 3:29; Ezra 7:26
6:12 Rev 19:16; Rev 19:18; 1 Kgs 9:3
6:13 Ezra 4:9,23; Ezra 5:6; Esth 6:11
6:14 Ezra 7:1; Ezra 4:24; Ezra 5:13
6:15 Esth 3:7,13; Esth 8:12; Esth 9:1,15,17,19,21
6:16 1 Kgs 8:63; 2 Chr 7:5,9; 1 Chr 9:2
6:17 Rev 7:4; Ezra 8:35; Num 7:2-89
6:18 Num 3:6; 2 Chr 35:4,5; 1 Chr 23:1-26

6:2 *there was found in Ecbatana* Not in Babylon but in Ecbatana, a royal summer city in the cool mountains of Media, in what is now western Iran. Cyrus is thought to have spent the summer of his first year there. One scroll in one archive, found at just the right time. Nothing is too small for His hand.
6:3 *let the house be built, a place where they sacrifice sacrifices* A memorandum, the record kept for officials, with building details and money, while chapter 1 gives what was proclaimed to the Jews. Both came from the same decree. A cubit is about 18 inches.
6:4 *let the expense be given from the house of the king* Perhaps a part the Jews had not even known. Cyrus had promised to pay.
6:7 *Leave the work of this house of God alone* The governor came to check, and the result was a royal order protecting them. What the enemy meant for harm, God used for good (Gen 50:20).
6:8 *which is the tribute of the region beyond the River* Taxes from the very region where the enemies lived paid for the temple. "The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine" (Hag 2:8).
6:10 *praying for the life of the king and of his sons* "Soothing offerings" are offerings pleasing to God. Darius was not a convert. He wanted every god's favor. But it was right to pray for him (Jer 29:7; 1 Tim 2:1-2). Do you pray for those who govern you, even when they do not share your faith?
6:11 *let a beam be pulled from his house* A common Persian punishment, harsh as it sounds. Ezra records it as the king's decree, not God's law. It shows how firmly Darius meant to protect the work.
6:12 *the God who has caused His name to dwell there* Words straight from Deuteronomy 12:11, most likely because Jewish advisers helped write the decree, as was common at the Persian court.
6:14 *through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet* Again the credit goes to the Word of God. "The decree of the God of Israel" comes first, and the kings only gave what God had decided. Artaxerxes, some sixty years later, is named for his gifts to the temple (7:15-24, 27).
6:15 *year six of the reign of Darius the king* Adar is February to March, and this was 516 B.C. (some date the day to early 515). Enlarged by Herod, this temple stood until the Romans destroyed it in A.D. 70. It is the temple Jesus taught in, "a house of prayer" (Matt 21:13). Seventy years after 586 B.C., God's timing was exact.
6:17 *twelve male goats as a sin offering for all Israel* Tiny beside Solomon's offerings (1 Kgs 8:63), but God measures the heart. A sin offering was for forgiveness. Few had come from Judah and Benjamin, yet they offered for all twelve tribes, believing God still had a plan for the whole nation. He has not forgotten it: "all Israel will be saved" (Rom 11:26).
6:18 *according to the writing of the book of Moses* The priestly divisions David set up (1 Chr 23-24). Again the worship was done by the Book.

The Passover Kept

19 And the sons of the exile kept the Passover on the fourteenth ***day*** of the first month. **20** For the priests and the Levites had purified themselves as one; all of them ***were*** pure; and they slaughtered the Passover for all the sons of the exile and for their brothers the priests and for themselves. **21** And the sons of Israel who had returned from the exile ate ***it***, and everyone who had separated himself to them from the uncleanness of the nations of the land to seek the LORD, the God of Israel. **22** And they kept the Feast of Unleavened Bread seven days with gladness, for the LORD had made them rejoice and had turned the heart of the king of Assyria (Ashur) toward them, to strengthen their hands in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel.

EZRA 7

Ezra Comes to Jerusalem

1 And after these things, in the reign of Artaxerxes (Artachshasta) king of Persia (Paras), Ezra the son of Seraiah (Seraya), the son of Azariah (Azarya), the son of Hilkiah (Chilqiya), **2** the son of Shallum (Shalum), the son of Zadok (Tsadoq), the son of Ahitub (Achituv), **3** the son of Amariah (Amarya), the son of Azariah, the son of Meraioth (Merayot), **4** the son of Zerahiah (Zerachya), the son of Uzzi (Uzi), the son of Bukki (Buqi), **5** the son of Abishua (Avishua), the son of Phinehas (Pinchas), the son of Eleazar (Elazar), the son of Aaron (Aharon) the chief priest, **6** this Ezra went up from Babylon (Bavel), and he ***was*** a scribe skilled in the law of Moses (Moshe), which the LORD, the God of Israel (Yisra'el), had given; and the king gave him all his request, according to the hand of the LORD his God on him. **7** And ***some*** of the sons of Israel and of the priests and the Levites and the singers and the gatekeepers and the temple servants went up to Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) in year seven of Artaxerxes the king. **8** And he came ***to*** Jerusalem in the fifth month; it ***was*** the seventh year of the king. **9** For on ***day*** one of the first month, that ***was*** the beginning of the going up from Babylon, and on ***day*** one of the fifth month he came to Jerusalem, according to the good hand of his God on him. **10** For Ezra had set his heart to seek the law of the LORD and to do ***it***, and to teach statute and judgment in Israel.

The Letter of Artaxerxes

11 And this ***is*** the copy of the letter which King Artaxerxes gave to Ezra the priest, the scribe, a scribe of the words of the commandments of the LORD and of His statutes for Israel: **12** "Artaxerxes (Artachshaste), king of the kings, to Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of the heavens, perfect. And now, **13** a decree is made by me that everyone in my kingdom from the people of Israel and its priests and the Levites who volunteers to go to Jerusalem with you may go. **14** Because ***you are*** sent from before the king and his seven counselors to inquire concerning Judah (Yehud) and Jerusalem by the law of your God which ***is*** in your hand, **15** and to carry silver and gold which the king and his counselors have freely offered to the God of Israel, whose dwelling ***is*** in Jerusalem, **16** and all the silver and gold which you find in all the province of Babylon, with the freewill offering of the people and the priests, freely offering for the house of their God which ***is*** in Jerusalem, **17** accordingly, with this silver you shall diligently buy bulls, rams, lambs, and their grain offerings and their drink offerings, and you shall offer them on the altar of the house of your God which ***is*** in Jerusalem. **18** And whatever seems good to you and to your brothers to do with the rest of the silver and the gold, you shall do according to the will of your God. **19** And the

6:19 Exod 12:6-36; Josh 5:10; 2 Chr 30:1-35
6:20 2 Chr 35:11; 2 Chr 29:34; 2 Chr 30:15-17
6:21 Ezra 9:11; Ezek 36:25; Num 9:6,7,10-14
6:22 Matt 26:17; Ezra 7:27; Prov 21:1
7:1 Neh 2:1; 1 Chr 6:4-14; Ezra 7:12,21
7:2 2 Sam 8:17; 1 Kgs 2:35
7:5 Heb 5:4; Exod 6:25; Num 25:7-13
7:6 Ezra 7:11,12,21; Ezra 7:9,28; Ezra 8:18,22,31
7:7 Ezra 8:1-14; Ezra 2:40,41; 1 Chr 6:31-48
7:9 Ezra 7:6; Neh 2:8,18
7:10 Matt 5:19; Ezra 7:25; Deut 33:10
7:11 Mark 7:9; Ezra 4:11; Ezra 5:6
7:12 Ezek 26:7; Dan 2:37,47; 1 Kgs 4:24
7:13 Ezra 6:1; Ezra 5:13; 2 Chr 30:5
7:14 Esth 1:14; Ezra 7:25,26; Deut 17:18,19
7:15 2 Chr 6:2,6; Ps 135:21; Ezra 6:12
7:16 1 Chr 29:6,9,17; Ezra 1:4,6; Ezra 8:25-28
7:17 Deut 12:5-11; Num 15:4-13; Ezra 6:9,10
7:18 Eph 5:17; 2 Kgs 12:15; 2 Kgs 22:7
7:19 Ezra 8:27-30,33,34; 2 Chr 32:19; Jer 3:17

6:19 *the sons of the exile kept the Passover* Here Ezra returns to Hebrew. The Passover remembered the lamb's blood on the doorposts (Exod 12). Hezekiah's was delayed for unclean priests (2 Chr 30:3). This time everyone was ready.
6:21 *everyone who had separated himself to them from the uncleanness of the nations of the land* Those not born Jews were welcome if they turned from idols to seek the LORD. The door was not shut by birth. It was opened by faith. That matters for chapters 9-10.
6:22 *had turned the heart of the king of Assyria toward them* Darius ruled the lands of the old Assyrian Empire that first scattered Israel. God had turned the tables. "Our Passover was sacrificed for us: Christ" (1 Cor 5:7), and the true Lamb would one day walk into this temple.
7:1 *after these things, in the reign of Artaxerxes king of Persia* A gap of almost sixty years, from 516 to about 458 B.C. In that gap Xerxes ruled and the events of Esther took place. Artaxerxes I was Xerxes' son.
7:1 *Ezra the son of Seraiah* Seraiah was high priest when Jerusalem fell (2 Kgs 25:18-21), so "son" means descendant. The line skips generations, as Hebrew lines often do (compare 1 Chr 6:3-15). Ezra was a true priest of Aaron's line with the right to teach and serve.
7:6 *a scribe skilled in the law of Moses* Not merely a copyist but a student and teacher of God's Word who could explain and apply it. Skilled means quick and expert.
7:6 *according to the hand of the LORD his God on him* A phrase that recurs through Ezra and Nehemiah (7:9, 28; 8:18, 22, 31; Neh 2:8, 18). The king said yes because God's hand was on Ezra, and Ezra knew it.
7:8 *in the fifth month* In 458 B.C. The journey took four months, about 900 miles up the Euphrates and around through Syria, with families and animals, about seven or eight miles a day on average.
7:10 *For Ezra had set his heart to seek the law of the LORD and to do it, and to teach* The key verse of the book. "For" explains why God's hand was on him. First seek, study and search. Then do, living it himself. Then teach. Ezra did not teach what he had not first studied and lived. To set the heart is a decision, made again every day (James 1:22). Have you set your heart to study God's Word, do it and share it?
7:12 *Artaxerxes, king of the kings* A common Persian title for a ruler over lesser kings. The true King of kings is the Lord Jesus (Rev 19:16). "Perfect" is most likely short for a greeting of perfect peace. Verses 12-26 are copied in Aramaic.
7:14 *by the law of your God which is in your hand* God's Law was Ezra's measuring line for how things stood in Judah. No one was forced to go (7:13).
7:17 *their grain offerings and their drink offerings* Grain offerings were flour, oil and incense, and drink offerings were wine poured at the altar (Num 15:1-10). The king trusted Ezra to know "the will of your God" for the rest (7:18).

vessels which are given to you for the service of the house of your God, deliver in full before the God of Jerusalem. **20** And the rest of the needs of the house of your God which it falls to you to give, you shall give from the house of the treasures of the king. **21** And by me, I, Artaxerxes the king, a decree is made to all the treasurers who ***are*** in the region beyond the River, that all that Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of the heavens, asks of you, let it be done diligently, **22** up to approximately 7,500 pounds (one hundred talents) of silver, and up to approximately 600 bushels (one hundred kors) of wheat, and up to approximately 600 gallons (one hundred baths) of wine, and up to approximately 600 gallons (one hundred baths) of oil, and salt without limit. **23** All that ***is*** by the decree of the God of the heavens, let it be done exactly for the house of the God of the heavens, for why should there be wrath against the kingdom of the king and his sons? **24** And to you we are making known that ***as for*** all the priests and the Levites, the singers, the gatekeepers, the temple servants, and the servants of this house of God, it is not authorized to impose tribute, tax, or toll on them. **25** And you, Ezra, according to the wisdom of your God which ***is*** in your hand, appoint magistrates and judges who may be judging all the people who ***are*** in the region beyond the River, all who know the laws of your God; and him who does not know, you shall teach. **26** And anyone who will not be doing the law of your God and the law of the king, let judgment be done diligently on him, whether for death, or for banishment, or for confiscation of property, or for imprisonment."

Ezra Blesses the LORD

27 Blessed ***be*** the LORD, the God of our fathers, who has put ***such a thing*** as this in the heart of the king, to beautify the house of the LORD which ***is*** in Jerusalem, **28** and has
extended steadfast love to me before the king and his counselors and to all the mighty officials of the king. And I strengthened myself according to the hand of the LORD my God on me, and I gathered heads from Israel to go up with me.

EZRA 8

Those Who Returned with Ezra

1 And these ***are*** the heads of their fathers, and their
genealogical enrollment, who went up with me in the reign of Artaxerxes (Artachshasta) the king from Babylon (Bavel): **2** of the sons of Phinehas (Pinchas), Gershom; of the sons of Ithamar (Itamar), Daniel (Daniyel); of the sons of David, Hattush (Chatush); **3** of the sons of Shecaniah (Shekhanya), of the sons of Parosh, Zechariah (Zekharya), and with him one hundred fifty males enrolled by genealogy; **4** of the sons of Pahath-moab (Pachat-Mo'av), Eliehoenai (Elyeho'enay) the son of Zerahiah (Zerachya), and with him two hundred males; **5** of the sons of Shecaniah, the son of Jahaziel (Yachazi'el), and with him three hundred males; **6** and of the sons of Adin, Ebed (Eved) the son of Jonathan (Yonatan), and with him fifty males; **7** and of the sons of Elam, Jeshaiah (Yeshaya) the son of Athaliah (Atalya), and with him seventy males; **8** and of the sons of Shephatiah (Shefatya), Zebadiah (Zevadya) the son of Michael (Mikha'el), and with him eighty males; **9** of the sons of Joab (Yo'av), Obadiah (Ovadya) the son of Jehiel (Yechi'el), and with him two hundred eighteen males; **10** and of the sons of Shelomith (Shelomit), the son of Josiphiah (Yosifya), and with him one hundred sixty males; **11** and of the sons of Bebai (Bevay), Zechariah the son of Bebai, and with him twenty-eight males; **12** and of the sons of Azgad, Johanan (Yochanan) the son of Hakkatan
(Haqatan), and with him one hundred ten males; **13** and of the sons of Adonikam (Adoniqam), the last ones, and these ***are*** their names: Eliphelet (Elifelet), Jeiel (Ye'i'el), and Shemaiah (Shemaya), and with them sixty males; **14** and of the sons of Bigvai (Bigvay), Uthai (Utay) and Zaccur (Zakur), and with him seventy males.

Levites Found for the House of God

15 And I gathered them to the river that goes to Ahava, and we encamped there three days; and I considered the people and the priests, and I did not find there ***any*** of the sons of

7:20 Ezra 6:4,8-18
7:21 Ezra 7:6,10,11; Ezra 4:16,20; Ezra 6:6
7:22 Luke 16:6; Luke 16:7; Ezek 45:14
7:23 Ezra 7:13,18; Ps 119:4; Ezra 6:10-12
7:24 Ezra 7:7; Ezra 2:36-55
7:25 Heb 8:11; 2 Pet 3:15; Deut 16:18
7:26 Ezra 6:11; Dan 3:28,29; Dan 6:26
7:27 2 Cor 8:16; Heb 8:10; Rev 17:17
7:28 Ezra 9:9; Ezra 5:5; Gen 32:28
8:1 Ezra 7:7,13; Ezra 1:5; 1 Chr 9:34
8:2 1 Chr 6:3,4-15; 1 Chr 24:1-6; 1 Chr 3:1,22
8:3 Ezra 2:3; Neh 7:8; Neh 10:14
8:4 Ezra 2:6; Neh 7:11; Neh 10:14
8:6 Ezra 2:15; Neh 7:20; Neh 10:16
8:7 Ezra 2:7,31; Neh 7:12,34
8:8 Ezra 2:4; Neh 7:9; Neh 11:4
8:9 Ezra 2:6; Neh 7:11
8:11 Ezra 10:28; Ezra 2:11; Neh 7:16
8:12 Ezra 2:12; Neh 7:17
8:13 Ezra 2:13; Neh 7:18
8:14 Ezra 2:14; Neh 7:19; Neh 10:12
8:15 Ezra 8:21,31; Ezra 7:7,24; Ps 137:1

7:23 *why should there be wrath against the kingdom of the king and his sons* He did not want the God of heaven angry. Egypt had rebelled around this time, and he may have wanted every god on his side. His reasons were not pure, but God used them.
7:24 *it is not authorized to impose tribute* Temple workers were freed from tax to give their time to God's house, something Persian kings sometimes did for temples they favored.
7:25 *him who does not know, you shall teach* Ezra was to set up judges who knew God's Law for the Jews of the whole province.
7:26 *whether for death or for banishment* Persian law gave the force of the state to the Law of Moses for the Jewish community, the right of a king of that time. It is not a model for the church today, which has no sword. Our tools are the Word, prayer and love (2 Cor 10:3-5).
7:27 *who has put such a thing as this in the heart of the king* Ezra now speaks in Hebrew and the first person. He praised the LORD who moved the king, the same God who stirred Cyrus (1:1).
7:28 *I strengthened myself according to the hand of the LORD my God on me* He saw God's hesed in the favor he received, and he acted, gathering leaders. God's favor is not a reason to relax. It is a reason to get to work.
8:2 *of the sons of David, Hattush* A descendant of David through Zerubbabel (1 Chr 3:19-22). The royal line was still alive among God's people.
8:3 *the sons of Parosh* Most of these families had sent members with Zerubbabel eighty years before (2:3-15). About 1,500 men, likely five or six thousand people with families. Adonikam's "last ones" (8:13) may mean the rest of that clan was now home. God takes note of those who follow Him, even when they come late.
8:15 *I did not find there any of the sons of Levi* Ahava was a canal or place near Babylon. Not one Levite had signed up. Their work was often humble, carrying, cleaning and guarding, and Babylon was comfortable. It is often easier to find people who want to lead than people willing to serve.

Levi. **16** And I sent for Eliezer, for Ariel, for Shemaiah, and for Elnathan (Elnatan), and for Jarib (Yariv), and for
Elnathan, and for Nathan (Natan), and for Zechariah, and for Meshullam (Meshulam), heads, and for Joiarib (Yoyariv) and for Elnathan, teachers. **17** And I commanded them ***to go*** to Iddo (Ido) the head at the place Casiphia (Kasifya), and I put words in their mouth to speak to Iddo ***and*** his brother, the temple servants at the place Casiphia, to bring to us ministers for the house of our God. **18** And they brought to us, according to the good hand of our God on us, a man of insight from the sons of Mahli (Machli) the son of Levi the son of Israel (Yisra'el), and Sherebiah (Sherevya) and his sons and his brothers, eighteen; **19** and Hashabiah (Chashavya), and with him Jeshaiah of the sons of Merari, his brothers and their sons, twenty; **20** and of the temple servants, whom David and the leaders had given for the service of the Levites, two hundred twenty temple servants; all of them were designated by names.

Fasting and Prayer at Ahava

21 And I proclaimed a fast there at the river Ahava, to humble ourselves before our God, to seek from Him a straight way for us and for our little ones and for all our property. **22** For I was ashamed to ask from the king a force and horsemen to help us against an enemy on the way, because we had said to the king, saying, "The hand of our God ***is*** on all who seek Him for good, and His strength and His anger ***are*** against all who forsake Him." **23** And we fasted and sought from our God concerning this, and He was entreated by us.

The Gifts Entrusted to the Priests

24 And I set apart twelve of the leaders of the priests, Sherebiah, Hashabiah, and with them ten of their brothers. **25** And I weighed out to them the silver and the gold and the vessels, the contribution for the house of our God, which the king and his counselors and his leaders and all Israel who were present had offered. **26** And I weighed out into their hand approximately 49,000 pounds (six hundred fifty talents) of silver, and vessels of silver of approximately 7,500 pounds (one hundred talents), ***and*** gold, approximately 7,500 pounds (one hundred talents), **27** and twenty bowls of gold of a thousand darics, and two vessels of fine gleaming bronze, precious as gold. **28** And I said to them, "You ***are*** holy to the LORD, and the vessels ***are*** holy, and the silver and the gold ***are*** a freewill offering to the LORD, the God of your fathers. **29** Watch and keep ***them*** until you weigh ***them*** out before the leaders of the priests and the Levites and the leaders of the fathers of Israel in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), ***in*** the chambers of the house of the LORD." **30** And the priests and the Levites received the weight of the silver and the gold and the vessels, to bring ***them*** to Jerusalem to the house of our God.

Safe Arrival in Jerusalem

31 And we set out from the river Ahava on the twelfth ***day*** of the first month to go ***to*** Jerusalem; and the hand of our God was on us, and He delivered us from the hand of an enemy and an ambusher on the way. **32** And we came ***to*** Jerusalem, and we remained there three days. **33** And on the fourth day the silver and the gold and the vessels were weighed out in the house of our God into the hand of Meremoth (Meremot) the son of Uriah (Uriya) the priest, and with him ***was*** Eleazar (Elazar) the son of Phinehas, and with them ***were*** Jozabad (Yozavad) the son of Jeshua (Yeshua) and Noadiah (No'adya) the son of Binnui (Binuy), the Levites, **34** by number ***and*** by weight for everything; and all the weight was written down at that time. **35** Those who had come from the captivity, the sons of the exile, brought near burnt offerings to the God of Israel: twelve bulls for all Israel, ninety-six rams, seventy-seven lambs, twelve male goats ***for*** a sin offering; all ***was*** a burnt offering to the LORD. **36** And they gave the

8:16 Ezra 8:13; Ezra 10:21; Ezra 10:39
8:17 Ezra 2:43,58; Exod 4:15; Deut 18:18
8:18 Ezra 7:28; Ezra 8:22; Neh 2:8
8:19 1 Chr 6:1,16,19; Neh 3:17; Neh 10:11
8:20 Ezra 2:43; Ezra 7:7; 1 Chr 9:2
8:21 Mark 10:13; 2 Chr 20:3; 1 Sam 7:6
8:22 2 Chr 15:2; Ezra 7:6,9,28; 1 Pet 3:12
8:23 Jer 29:12,13; 1 Chr 5:20; Neh 9:1
8:24 Ezra 8:18,19
8:25 Ezra 8:33; Ezra 1:8; 2 Cor 8:20,21
8:27 Lam 4:2
8:28 Lev 22:2,3; Lev 21:6-8; Deut 33:8
8:29 Ezra 8:33,34; 1 Chr 26:20-26; Mark 13:34,35
8:30 Ezra 8:22; 1 Chr 29:2,3; Ps 122:9
8:31 Ezra 8:15,21; Ezra 7:9,28; Isa 41:10-14
8:32 Neh 2:11; Ezra 7:8,9
8:33 Neh 3:4; Ezra 8:26,30; 1 Chr 28:14-18
8:35 Ezra 6:17; Lev 1:1-7; 2 Chr 29:31,32
8:36 Ezra 7:21-24; Ezra 4:7-23; Ezra 5:6-17

8:17 *Iddo the head at the place Casiphia* A settlement where many Levites and temple servants seem to have lived. Ezra "put words in their mouth," telling them what to say.
8:18 *according to the good hand of our God on us* Likely Sherebiah, who later helped explain the Law (Neh 8:7). About forty Levites and 220 temple servants came (8:20). Ezra asked, sent, and God provided. Pray the Lord of the harvest to send workers (Matt 9:38).
8:21 *to seek from Him a straight way for us and for our little ones* To fast is to go without food for a time to give oneself to prayer, humbling ourselves and showing we need God more than food (Joel 2:12; Matt 6:16-18). A straight way is a safe journey.
8:22 *I was ashamed to ask from the king a force and horsemen* They carried a fortune through bandit country. Having told the king that God's hand is on all who seek Him, Ezra had to live by it. Nehemiah, also godly, accepted an escort (Neh 2:9). Both trusted God. The question is not whether we use means, but whether our trust is in God.
8:23 *He was entreated by us* He listened and answered. Ezra wrote this after the journey and knew how it turned out.
8:26 *approximately 49,000 pounds* Over 30 tons of precious metal in all, a fortune.
8:28 *You are holy to the LORD, and the vessels are holy* Men and treasure were both set apart for God. Ezra weighed it all before the trip so it could be weighed again after. He trusted these men and still kept careful records, as Paul did (2 Cor 8:20-21). A church that keeps clear records protects its people and its witness.
8:31 *He delivered us from the hand of an enemy and an ambusher on the way* They left on the twelfth day, after fasting, recruiting and weighing. Enemies may have lain in wait and been kept from striking. Either way, God answered the prayer at Ahava.
8:34 *all the weight was written down at that time* Meremoth (8:33) later repaired two sections of the wall (Neh 3:4, 21). Nothing was missing. Whoever is faithful in very little is faithful also in much (Luke 16:10).
8:35 *twelve bulls for all Israel* Twelve bulls, twelve goats, ninety-six rams (eight times twelve). They worshiped as all Israel, believing God still had a purpose for the whole nation (6:17). Their first act was not settling into houses but sacrifice and thanks.
8:36 *they supported the people and the house of God* Satraps were the highest Persian officials over large regions. Officials like those who once stopped the work were now required to help it.

decrees of the king to the satraps of the king and the governors beyond the River (Nahar), and they supported the people and the house of God.

EZRA 9

The People Have Not Separated Themselves

1 And when these ***things*** were finished, the leaders approached me, saying, "The people Israel (Yisra'el) and the priests and the Levites have not separated themselves from the peoples of the lands, according to their abominations, of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites. **2** For they have taken some of their daughters for themselves and for their sons, and the holy seed has mixed itself with the peoples of the lands; and the hand of the leaders and the officials has been first in this unfaithfulness." **3** And when I heard this matter, I tore my garment and my robe, and I pulled out ***some*** of the hair of my head and my beard, and I sat appalled. **4** And to me gathered everyone trembling at the words of the God of Israel because of the unfaithfulness of the exiles, and I ***was*** sitting appalled until the grain offering of the evening.

Ezra's Prayer of Confession

5 And at the grain offering of the evening I arose from my humiliation, and in the tearing of my garment and my robe, I bowed down on my knees, and I spread out my palms to the LORD my God. **6** And I said, "O my God, I am ashamed and disgraced to lift up, O my God, my face to You, for our iniquities have increased above ***our*** head, and our guilt has grown great to the heavens. **7** From the days of our fathers we ***have been*** in great guilt until this day; and for our iniquities we have been given, we, our kings, our priests, into the hand of the kings of the lands, with the sword, with captivity, and with plunder, and with shame of face, as ***it is*** this day. **8** And now, for a little moment favor has come from the LORD our God, to leave us an escaped remnant and to give us a tent peg in His holy place, that our God may light up our eyes and give us a little reviving in our servitude. **9** For we ***are*** slaves; and in our servitude our God has not forsaken us, and He has extended steadfast love to us before the kings of Persia (Paras), to give us a reviving, to raise up the house of our God and to set up its ruins, and to give us a wall in Judah (Yehuda) and in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). **10** And now, what shall we say, O our God, after this? For we have forsaken Your commandments, **11** which You commanded by the hand of Your servants the prophets, saying, 'The land which you are entering to possess ***is*** a land of impurity, by the impurity of the peoples of the lands, by their abominations, with which they have filled it from end to end with their uncleanness. **12** And now, do not give your daughters to their sons, and do not take their daughters for your sons, and you shall not seek their peace and their good forever, so that you may be strong and eat the good things of the land and cause your sons to inherit ***it*** forever.' **13** And after all that has come on us for our evil deeds and for our great guilt, for You, O our God, have held back ***punishment*** below our iniquity, and have given us an escaped remnant like this, **14** shall we again break Your commandments and intermarry with the peoples of these abominations? Will You not be angry with us until ***You*** have made an end, so that ***there is***

9:1 2 Cor 6:18; Neh 9:2; Exod 33:16
9:2 Exod 34:16; Neh 13:23,24; Ezra 10:18-44
9:3 Neh 1:4; Josh 7:6; 2 Kgs 18:37
9:4 Ezra 10:3; Isa 66:2; Exod 29:39
9:5 Exod 9:29,33; 1 Kgs 8:22,38,54; 2 Chr 6:13
9:6 2 Chr 28:9; Rev 18:5; Ps 38:4
9:7 Matt 23:30; Acts 7:51; Acts 7:52
9:8 Rom 11:5; Ps 13:3; Eccl 12:11
9:9 Neh 9:36,37; Ps 106:45,46; Ps 136:23,24
9:10 Gen 44:16; Josh 7:8; Lam 3:22
9:11 Lev 18:24-30; Ezra 6:21; Ezra 9:1
9:12 Prov 13:22; Deut 7:3; Deut 23:6
9:13 Ps 103:10; Neh 9:32; Ezek 24:13,14
9:14 Rom 6:1; Rom 9:27; Deut 9:8,14

9:1 *have not separated themselves from the peoples of the lands, according to their abominations* Some four and a half months after Ezra arrived (7:9; 10:9). Most of these peoples are named in the Law's warnings (Deut 7:1; 23:3; Exod 34:11-16). An abomination is something God hates, a word used again and again for idol worship and its practices, including child sacrifice (Deut 12:31; 18:9-12). The problem was not their skin or blood. It was their gods.
9:2 *the holy seed has mixed itself with the peoples of the lands* The holy seed is the people God set apart (Isa 6:13), to keep His Word, to bring the Messiah and to be a light to the nations. God forbade these marriages because "he will turn your son away from after Me" (Deut 7:4), as with Solomon (1 Kgs 11:4). It was about faith, not race. Rahab and Ruth married into Israel and are in Jesus' line (Matt 1:5), and God rebuked those who spoke against Moses' Cushite wife (Num 12:1-10).
9:2 *the hand of the leaders and the officials has been first in this unfaithfulness* When leaders fall, many follow.
9:3 *I tore my garment and my robe* Tearing clothes showed grief and horror (Gen 37:34; Josh 7:6), and pulling out hair deep shame. Appalled means stunned into silence. This was the very sin that brought the exile, like a man healed of a disease going right back to the habit that made him sick.
9:4 *everyone trembling at the words of the God of Israel* Not everyone had compromised. God looks to the one who is humble and trembles at His word (Isa 66:2). The evening grain offering was about three in the afternoon.
9:5 *I bowed down on my knees, and I spread out my palms to the LORD my God* He rose at the hour of sacrifice and prayer (Dan 9:21; Acts 3:1), in the posture of humble pleading, as Solomon prayed (1 Kgs 8:54).
9:6 *for our iniquities have increased above our head* Ezra had not married a foreign wife, but he did not stand apart and point. He said "our." True intercession takes its place among the guilty, as Daniel and Nehemiah did (Dan 9:5-11; Neh 1:6-7). He pictured sin like a flood rising over their heads to the sky.
9:7 *as it is this day* The exile was God's judgment, as He warned (Lev 26:33; Deut 28:36), and they were still under foreign kings.
9:8 *to give us a tent peg in His holy place* A remnant is the small part God kept after disaster. A tent peg holds a tent firm, a small but secure hold in Jerusalem. To light up the eyes is to give new life and hope. It was "a little moment," "a little reviving," small and fragile, which made the sin all the worse.
9:9 *in our servitude our God has not forsaken us* They were still under Persia, but God had moved its kings to help. "A wall" here is most likely a picture of God's protection, since the city wall was not yet rebuilt (Neh 1:3).
9:11 *by the hand of Your servants the prophets* He gathers phrases from the Law (Lev 18:24-30; Deut 7:1-3; 23:6). Moses was the first and greatest prophet (Deut 18:15).
9:12 *so that you may be strong and eat the good things of the land* God's commands are not meant to rob us. They protect what He has given us.
9:13 *You, O our God, have held back punishment below our iniquity* The exile, terrible as it was, was less than they deserved. After such mercy, how could they sin again? Grace is never a license to sin. It is the reason to stop (Rom 6:1-2).

no remnant or escaped remnant? **15** O LORD, the God of Israel, You ***are*** righteous, for we are left an escaped remnant, as ***it is*** this day. Look, we ***are*** before You in our guilt, for ***there is*** no standing before You because of this."

EZRA 10

The People Confess Their Sin

1 And as Ezra was praying and as he was confessing, weeping and prostrating himself before the house of God, a very great assembly from Israel (Yisra'el), men and women and children, gathered to him; for the people wept ***with*** much weeping. **2** And Shecaniah (Shekhanya) the son of Jehiel (Yechi'el), of the sons of Elam, answered and said to Ezra, "We have acted unfaithfully against our God, and we have married foreign women from the peoples of the land; and now there is hope for Israel concerning this. **3** And now let us make a covenant to our God to send out all the wives and those born from them, according to the counsel of the Lord and of those who tremble at the commandment of our God; and let it be done according to the law. **4** Arise, for the matter ***is*** on you, and we ***are*** with you. Be strong and act." **5** And Ezra arose and made the leaders of the priests, the Levites, and all Israel swear to do according to this word. And they swore. **6** And Ezra arose from before the house of God and went to the chamber of Jehohanan (Yehochanan) the son of Eliashib (Elyashiv); and he went there. He did not eat bread and he did not drink water, for he was mourning over the unfaithfulness of the exiles. **7** And they caused a proclamation to pass through Judah (Yehuda) and Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) to all the sons of the exile, to be gathered ***to*** Jerusalem, **8** and ***that*** everyone who would not come within the three days, according to the counsel of the leaders and the elders, all his property would be devoted, and he himself would be separated from the assembly of the exiles.

The Assembly at Jerusalem

9 And all the men of Judah and Benjamin (Binyamin) were gathered ***to*** Jerusalem within the three days; it ***was*** the ninth month, on the twentieth ***day*** of the month. And all the people sat in the open place of the house of God, trembling because of the matter and because of the rains. **10** And Ezra the priest arose and said to them, "You have acted unfaithfully, and you have married foreign women, to add to the guilt of Israel. **11** And now give confession to the LORD, the God of your fathers, and do His will; and separate yourselves from the peoples of the land and from the foreign women." **12** And all the assembly answered and said ***with*** a great voice, "So ***it is***; according to your word ***it is*** on us to do. **13** But the people ***are*** many, and the time ***is one of*** rains, and ***there is*** no strength to stand outside; and the work ***is*** not for one day, and not for two, for we have greatly transgressed in this matter. **14** Let our leaders, please, stand for all the assembly; and let everyone who ***is*** in our cities who has married foreign women come at appointed times, and with them the elders of each city and its judges, until the turning back of the burning of the anger of our God from us, concerning this matter." **15** Only Jonathan (Yonatan) the son of Asahel and Jahzeiah (Yachzeya) the son of Tikvah (Tiqva) stood against this, and Meshullam (Meshulam) and Shabbethai (Shabtay) the Levite supported them.

The Cases Examined

16 And the sons of the exile did so. And Ezra the priest ***and*** men, heads of the fathers, according to the house of their fathers, and all of them by names, separated themselves; and they sat down on day one of the tenth month to investigate the matter. **17** And they finished with all, the men who had married foreign women, by day one of the first month.

9:15 Ps 130:3; Neh 9:33,34; Dan 9:7-11,14
10:1 Ps 119:136; 2 Chr 20:9; 1 John 1:8-10
10:2 Neh 13:27; Ezra 10:26; Neh 3:29
10:3 Deut 7:2,3; Ezra 9:4; Deut 29:12
10:4 1 Chr 28:10,21; Isa 35:3,4; Heb 12:12,13
10:5 Neh 5:12; Neh 13:25; Prov 1:5
10:6 Deut 9:18; Neh 3:1,20; Neh 13:5
10:7 Ezra 1:1; 2 Chr 30:5
10:8 John 16:2; Ezra 7:26; Judg 21:5
10:9 Ezra 7:8,9; Esth 2:16; 1 Sam 12:17,18
10:10 Ezra 9:6; Num 32:14; Josh 22:17,18
10:11 Josh 7:19; Prov 28:13; Rom 12:2
10:12 Ezra 10:3,4; Neh 13:23; Ps 78:37,57
10:13 Ezra 10:18-44; Matt 7:13,14
10:14 2 Chr 29:10; 2 Chr 30:8; Num 25:4
10:15 Neh 11:16; Neh 3:6; Neh 10:20
10:16 Deut 13:14; Job 29:16; John 7:51

9:15 *there is no standing before You because of this* Ezra asked for nothing, promised nothing and gave no plan. He laid the guilt before God and left it there. Sometimes true repentance starts with no excuse at all. We know the One who took the guilt away, and the promise for all who confess: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous" (1 John 1:9).
10:1 *for the people wept with much weeping* Ezra gave no sermon or order. He prayed and wept, and God moved the people. Repentance spread from one broken heart to many.
10:2 *now there is hope for Israel concerning this* A Jehiel of Elam is among the guilty (10:26), likely Shecaniah's father or relative. He spoke as one of the guilty. Ezra's prayer ended without hope. Shecaniah said there was hope, if they would turn.
10:3 *according to the counsel of the Lord* A covenant is a solemn agreement before God. "The Lord" here likely means my lord, a title for Ezra. The word can be read either way.
10:4 *Arise, for the matter is on you, and we are with you* He urged Ezra to lead and promised the people would follow. The leaders who led into sin (9:2) now had to lead out (10:5).
10:6 *he did not eat bread and he did not drink water* A complete fast, as Moses after the golden calf (Deut 9:18). Ezra did not treat this as a small matter for a few rules. He grieved before God.
10:8 *all his property would be devoted* Taken and given to the temple, under the authority Artaxerxes gave Ezra (7:26). Judah was small enough to reach Jerusalem in three days.
10:9 *trembling because of the matter and because of the rains* Kislev, November to December, the rainy season. They shook with fear before God and shivered in the cold rain.
10:11 *give confession to the LORD, the God of your fathers, and do His will* First confession, then obedience. We agree with God about our sin, and then we turn from it.
10:14 *with them the elders of each city and its judges* A careful process town by town. Local elders knew the families and could judge each case fairly, not all at once in a crowd.
10:15 *only Jonathan the son of Asahel and Jahzeiah the son of Tikvah stood against this* Most read this as four men opposing the plan. Others read it as these men being put in charge, or opposing only the delay. Scripture does not give their reasons.
10:17 *they finished with all, the men who had married foreign women* Three months, from late December to late March, a slow look at each family. Scripture does not give their rules. Since the problem was idolatry, they very likely asked whether each wife had turned to the LORD, and those who had were welcome (6:21). Many think that is one reason the list is so short.

Those Who Had Married Foreign Women

18 And from the sons of the priests ***some*** were found who had married foreign women: from the sons of Jeshua (Yeshua) the son of Jozadak (Yotsadaq) and his brothers, Maaseiah (Ma'aseya) and Eliezer and Jarib (Yariv) and Gedaliah (Gedalya). **19** And they gave their hand to send out their wives; and, being guilty, ***they offered*** a ram of the flock for their guilt. **20** And from the sons of Immer (Imer): Hanani (Chanani) and Zebadiah (Zevadya). **21** And from the sons of Harim (Charim): Maaseiah and Elijah (Eliya) and Shemaiah (Shemaya) and Jehiel and Uzziah (Uziya). **22** And from the sons of Pashhur (Pashchur): Elioenai (Elyo'enay), Maaseiah, Ishmael (Yishma'el), Nethanel (Netanel), Jozabad (Yozavad), and Elasah (Elasa). **23** And from the Levites: Jozabad and Shimei (Shimi) and Kelaiah (Qelaya)—he ***is*** Kelita (Qelita)—Pethahiah (Petachya), Judah, and Eliezer. **24** And from the singers: Eliashib. And from the gatekeepers: Shallum (Shalum) and Telem and Uri. **25** And from Israel: from the sons of Parosh, Ramiah (Ramya) and Izziah (Yiziya) and Malchijah (Malkiya) and Mijamin (Miyamin) and Eleazar (Elazar) and Malchijah and Benaiah (Benaya). **26** And from the sons of Elam: Mattaniah (Matanya), Zechariah (Zekharya), and Jehiel and Abdi (Avdi) and Jeremoth (Yeremot) and Elijah. **27** And from the sons of Zattu (Zatu): Elioenai, Eliashib, Mattaniah, and Jeremoth and Zabad (Zavad) and Aziza. **28** And from the sons of Bebai (Bevay): Jehohanan, Hananiah (Chananya), Zabbai (Zabay), Athlai (Atlay). **29** And from the sons of Bani: Meshullam, Malluch (Malukh), and Adaiah (Adaya), Jashub (Yashuv), and Sheal and Ramoth (Ramot). **30** And from the sons of Pahath-moab (Pachat-Mo'av): Adna and Chelal (Kelal), Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattaniah, Bezalel (Betsalel), and Binnui (Binuy) and Manasseh (Menashe). **31** And the sons of Harim: Eliezer, Isshijah (Yishiya), Malchijah, Shemaiah, Shimeon (Shimon), **32** Benjamin, Malluch, Shemariah (Shemarya). **33** From the sons of Hashum (Chashum): Mattenai (Matnay), Mattattah (Matata), Zabad, Eliphelet (Elifelet), Jeremai (Yeremay), Manasseh, Shimei. **34** From the sons of Bani: Maadai (Ma'aday), Amram, and Uel, **35** Benaiah, Bedeiah (Bedya), Cheluhi (Keluhu), **36** Vaniah (Vanya), Meremoth (Meremot), Eliashib, **37** Mattaniah, Mattenai, and Jaasu (Ya'asay), **38** and Bani and Binnui, Shimei, **39** and Shelemiah (Shelemya) and Nathan (Natan) and Adaiah, **40** Machnadebai (Makhnadvay), Shashai (Shashay), Sharai (Sharay), **41** Azarel and Shelemiah (Shelemyahu), Shemariah, **42** Shallum, Amariah (Amarya), Joseph (Yosef). **43** From the sons of Nebo (Nevo): Jeiel (Ye'i'el), Mattithiah (Matitya), Zabad, Zebina (Zevina), Jaddai (Yaday), and Joel (Yo'el), Benaiah. **44** All these had taken foreign women, and there were among them wives, and they had set ***forth*** children.

10:18 Ezra 2:2; Ezra 3:2; Ezra 5:2
10:19 2 Kgs 10:15; 1 Chr 29:24; 2 Chr 30:8
10:20 Ezra 2:37; 1 Chr 24:14; Neh 7:40
10:21 1 Chr 24:8; Ezra 2:39; Neh 7:42
10:22 1 Chr 9:12; Ezra 2:38; Neh 7:41
10:23 Ezra 8:33; Neh 11:16; Neh 10:10
10:25 Ezra 2:3; Neh 7:8
10:26 Ezra 10:2; Ezra 2:7,31; Ezra 8:7
10:27 Ezra 2:8; Neh 7:13
10:28 Ezra 2:11; Ezra 8:11; Neh 7:16
10:29 Ezra 2:10; Neh 7:15; Neh 10:4
10:30 Ezra 2:6; Ezra 8:4; Neh 7:11
10:31 Neh 3:11; Ezra 2:32; Neh 7:35
10:33 Ezra 2:19; Neh 7:22
10:43 Ezra 2:29; Neh 7:33
10:44 Prov 2:16; Prov 5:3,20

10:18 *from the sons of Jeshua the son of Jozadak* Even the family of the high priest who led the first return. The list starts at the top.
10:19 *they offered a ram of the flock for their guilt* To give the hand was a firm promise. The ram was a guilt offering, required when someone was unfaithful toward what belonged to the LORD (Lev 5:14-19; 6:1-7).
10:25 *from Israel: from the sons of Parosh* About 110 men are named in all, few in a community of perhaps thirty or forty thousand, but at every level. Many families are those of chapter 2.
10:44 *there were among them wives, and they had set forth children* The book ends with broken families, not a celebration. We must not soften it. These were real women and children. Many think the men were expected to provide for them, as the Law required a certificate so a sent-away wife could remarry (Deut 24:1-2), and the children likely went with their mothers. But we are not told. The reason was not race but idolatry, which threatened to swallow a tiny community and the line of the Messiah. Judah had "married the daughter of a foreign god" (Mal 2:11), yet in the same chapter God hates sending away a wife (Mal 2:14-16).
10:44 *All these had taken foreign women* This was a special case under the Law given to Israel, not a pattern for all time. Christians are not to marry unbelievers (1 Cor 7:39; 2 Cor 6:14). But to a believer already married to an unbeliever, Paul says do not send the spouse away, for the home is sanctified (1 Cor 7:12-14), and a husband may be won by his wife's life (1 Pet 3:1-2). No Christian should ever use Ezra 10 as a reason to leave a husband or wife. If you came from a home that broke apart, God sees the women and children in this list who are not named, and He sees you.

NEHEMIAH

Introduction

Title

The book is named for Nehemiah the son of Hacaliah, whose words open it (1:1). In the Hebrew Bible, Ezra and Nehemiah were counted as one book, and Nehemiah picks up the story about thirteen years after Ezra arrived in Jerusalem. It is the last of the history books of the Old Testament in time order. After Nehemiah, the Old Testament story falls silent for about four hundred years, until John the Baptist and Jesus.

Author and Date

Nehemiah wrote most of the book himself. Most of chapters 1-7 and 12:31-13:31 are in the first person, often called Nehemiah's memoirs. Other parts, such as the lists in chapters 7, 10, 11 and 12 and the account of Ezra's reading in chapters 8-9, use official records and speak of Nehemiah in the third person. Jewish tradition held that Ezra put the combined book together, with Nehemiah's memoirs as a main source, and many modern scholars think a later editor joined the sources. I take Nehemiah's own words at face value: he wrote his record, and it was joined with the other records into the book we have. It was most likely written soon after the last events, about 430 B.C. or shortly after.

Background and Setting

Nehemiah was a Jew born in exile and "cupbearer to the king" (1:11) of Persia. A cupbearer served the king his wine and tasted it first. He stood close to the king every day and often became one of his most trusted advisers. Nehemiah heard the news from Jerusalem in the month of Kislev (November to December) in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes, and the king sent him as governor in Nisan (March to April), 445 B.C. (1:1; 2:1). He served twelve years, to 433 B.C. (5:14; 13:6), went back to the king for a time, and returned for a second term about 430 B.C. or a little later (13:6-7). The prophet Malachi most likely preached in these same years and names many of the same sins.

Jerusalem was still a small, poor, half-empty city about ninety years after the first return. The temple had stood for about seventy years, but the walls lay in ruins and the gates had been burned. A city without walls was open to any attacker and a disgrace before its neighbors. Around Judah were hostile leaders: Sanballat, the governor of Samaria to the north; Tobiah, an Ammonite official to the east; and Geshem, an Arab leader to the south.

Themes

The theme of Nehemiah is rebuilding God's city and God's people by prayer, hard work and the Word of God. Nehemiah prays and works, and never treats them as opposites. There are more than a dozen short prayers in the book. After months of prayer, God opened the door with the king (1:11; 2:4). Nehemiah inspected the walls by night, rallied the people and organized the work section by section. In spite of mockery, threats, plots and injustice among the Jews themselves, he told the people, "Remember the great and awesome Lord" (4:14), and the wall was finished in fifty-two days. Even the enemies knew "this work had been done from our God" (6:16).

But walls alone do not make a people of God. In the second half, Ezra reads the Law, the people weep and then rejoice, keep the Feast of Booths, confess their sins in a long prayer, and sign a written covenant. The key verse comes at the reading of the Law: "Do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your stronghold" (8:10). The book closes with an honest warning: Nehemiah comes back after a time away to find the same sins all over again, and his last prayer is "Remember me, my God, for good" (13:31).

Christ in Nehemiah

The New Testament does not quote Nehemiah directly, but the book points to Jesus in at least two ways. First, the king's permission to rebuild Jerusalem in Artaxerxes' twentieth year (2:1-8) is one of the decrees Bible teachers see as the starting point of Daniel's seventy weeks, counted "from the going forth of the word to restore and to build Jerusalem until an anointed one, a prince" (Dan 9:25). Second, Nehemiah is a picture of Christ. He left comfort and honor in the king's palace, came to a broken city, wept over it, gave up his own rights for the people (5:14-18), and refused to come down from the great work he was given (6:3). Jesus left far greater glory, wept over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41), emptied Himself (Phil 2:7) and finished the work the Father gave Him (John 17:4). The New Testament does not name Nehemiah as a type of Christ, so I hold this as a picture, but it is a fitting one.

The book's ending also points forward. Nehemiah's reforms could not change the human heart. The people needed the new covenant God promised (Jer 31:33) and the Lord who would come to His temple (Mal 3:1-3).

Hard Passages

Which decree starts Daniel's seventy weeks (2:1-8)? Some count from Nehemiah 2 in 445 B.C., and others from Ezra 7 in about 458 B.C. Both arrive at the time of Christ, and I believe the seventieth week is still future, after the rapture of the church.

Nehemiah's prayer against his enemies (4:4-5) hands vengeance to God rather than taking it (Rom 12:19). Our first prayer for enemies is the one Jesus taught (Matt 5:44).

The list in chapter 7 differs in places from Ezra 2, most likely from the copying of numbers or lists made at different times.

In 13:25 Nehemiah cursed, struck and pulled the hair of men who had married foreign wives. He acted as governor with legal authority. Scripture records it without praise or blame, and it is no pattern for church discipline (Gal 6:1; 1 Tim 3:3). As in Ezra, the issue with these marriages was faith, not race.

Outline

I. Rebuilding the Wall (1:1-7:73)
- A. Nehemiah's burden and prayer (1:1-11)
- B. The king sends Nehemiah (2:1-20)
- C. The builders of the wall (3:1-32)
- D. Building with a sword in hand (4:1-23)
- E. Justice for the poor (5:1-19)
- F. The wall finished despite plots (6:1-19)

G. Guarding the city and the record of the returned (7:1-73)
II. Renewing the People (8:1-10:39)
A. Ezra reads the Law (8:1-18)
B. The great prayer of confession (9:1-38)
C. The people sign the covenant (10:1-39)
III. Settling the City and the Last Reforms (11:1-13:31)
A. Filling Jerusalem with people (11:1-36)
B. Priests, Levites, and the wall dedicated (12:1-47)
C. Nehemiah's last reforms (13:1-31)

NEHEMIAH

NEHEMIAH 1

News from Jerusalem

1 The words of Nehemiah (Nechemya) the son of Hacaliah (Chakhalya). And it was in the month of Kislev, ***in the*** twentieth year, and I was in Susa (Shushan) the citadel, **2** and Hanani (Chanani), one of my brothers, came, he and men from Judah (Yehuda); and I asked them about the Jews, the escaped remnant who were left from the captivity, and about Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). **3** And they said to me, "The ones left who were left from the captivity there in the province ***are*** in great evil and in reproach; and the wall of Jerusalem ***is*** broken down, and its gates have been burned with fire."

Nehemiah's Prayer

4 And it was, when I heard these words, I sat down and wept and mourned ***for*** days; and I was fasting and praying before the God of the heavens. **5** And I said, "Please, LORD, God of the heavens, the great and awesome God, who keeps the covenant and steadfast love for those who love Him and for those who keep His commandments, **6** let Your ear be attentive, please, and Your eyes open, to listen to the prayer of Your servant which I am praying before You today, by day and night, for the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) Your servants, and confessing the sins of the sons of Israel which we have sinned against You. And I and the house of my father have sinned. **7** We have surely acted corruptly against You, and we have not kept the commandments and the statutes and the judgments which You commanded Moses (Moshe) Your servant. **8** Remember, please, the word which You commanded Moses Your servant, saying, 'You will act unfaithfully; I will scatter you among the peoples. **9** And you will return to Me and keep My commandments and do them; if your banished ones are at the end of the heavens, from there I will gather them, and I will bring them to the place which I have chosen to cause My name to dwell there.' **10** And they ***are*** Your servants and Your people, whom You ransomed by Your great strength and by Your mighty hand. **11** Please, Lord, let Your ear be attentive, please, to the prayer of Your servant and to the prayer of Your servants who delight to fear Your name; and give success, please, to Your servant today, and give him compassion before this man." And I was cupbearer to the king.

NEHEMIAH 2

The King Sends Nehemiah

1 And it was in the month of Nisan, ***in the*** twentieth year of Artaxerxes (Artachshasta) the king, ***that*** wine ***was*** before him, and I took up the wine and gave ***it*** to the king. And I had

1:1 Neh 10:1; Zech 7:1; Esth 1:2
1:2 Neh 7:2; Ps 122:6-9; Ps 137:5,6
1:3 Neh 2:17; 2 Kgs 25:10; Neh 7:6
1:4 Neh 2:4; Ezra 10:1; Ps 137:1
1:5 James 1:12; Neh 4:14; Deut 7:21
1:6 Luke 2:37; 2 Chr 29:6; 2 Chr 6:40
1:7 Ps 106:6; Neh 9:29-35; Dan 9:5,6
1:8 Deut 4:25-27; Deut 28:64; Lev 26:33-46
1:9 Deut 4:29-31; Deut 30:2-5; Deut 12:5,21
1:10 Deut 9:29; Exod 32:11; Isa 63:16-19
1:11 Neh 1:6; Neh 2:1; Ps 86:6
2:1 Ezra 7:1,7; Neh 1:1; Neh 1:11

1:1 *the words of Nehemiah the son of Hacaliah* The book opens like a prophet's, but Nehemiah was a government servant. His name means the LORD comforts, fitting for a man God used to comfort Jerusalem. Kislev is the ninth month, November to December, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes (2:1), about 446 going into 445 B.C.
1:1 *I was in Susa the citadel* A royal city where Persian kings spent the winter, where Esther had been queen about thirty years before (Esth 1:2). The citadel was the fortified palace area, the center of the most powerful empire on earth.
1:2 *I asked them about the Jews* He had a comfortable palace job and did not have to care. But his heart was with God's people. Do we ask about the needs of God's people, or would we rather not know?
1:3 *the wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been burned with fire* "Evil" here means distress, and "reproach" means disgrace. Nebuchadnezzar broke the walls in 586 B.C. (2 Kgs 25:10), but Nehemiah would have known that. His shock suggests fresh news, and many connect it with the forced stop of Ezra 4:23 under this same king.
1:4 *I sat down and wept and mourned for days* He wept, mourned, fasted and prayed, from Kislev to Nisan (2:1), about four months, before he did anything else. Godly action begins with a broken heart over what breaks God's heart, carried to God in prayer. Jesus also wept over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41). "The God of the heavens" was a common way for Jews in Persia to speak of the LORD, who rules over all (Ezra 1:2).
1:5 *who keeps the covenant and steadfast love for those who love Him* He began with who God is, not with what he wanted, echoing Moses and Daniel (Deut 7:9; Dan 9:4). A covenant is a binding agreement, and God's hesed never quits. A great God is able. A covenant-keeping God is faithful.
1:6 *I and the house of my father have sinned* Like Ezra (Ezra 9:6), he did not stand apart. He said "we" and named his own family. "Day and night" shows months of praying.
1:7 *the commandments and the statutes and the judgments* Commandments are what God told them to do, statutes fixed rules, and judgments rulings on how to apply them, the whole Law. No excuses. Israel broke it and was scattered.
1:8 *Remember, please, the word which You commanded Moses Your servant* Not reminding God of something He forgot, but taking hold of what He said. God kept the warning of scattering (Lev 26:33; Deut 28:64), so He will surely keep the promise of gathering (Deut 30:1-5; 12:5).
1:9 *from there I will gather them* Find what God has promised, and ask Him to do it. The return from Babylon was a partial fulfillment. The prophets speak of God gathering Israel from all nations and giving a new heart (Ezek 36:24-28; Jer 31:10). I believe the full gathering is still ahead, when Christ returns and sets up His kingdom (Rom 11:25-27).
1:10 *whom You ransomed by Your great strength and by Your mighty hand* To ransom is to set free by price or power, exodus words (Deut 9:29). These broken people still belonged to God. We were redeemed "with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pet 1:18-19). When we feel weak and ashamed, we can tell God we are His.
1:11 *give him compassion before this man* Others were praying too. To the world Artaxerxes was king of kings. Before the God of heaven he was "this man," his heart in God's hand.
1:11 *I was cupbearer to the king* He served and tasted the king's wine to guard against poison. He had to be completely trusted, was near the king daily, and often became an adviser. God placed him there years before he knew why. Where has God placed you?
2:1 *in the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king* March to April, 445 B.C., four months after Kislev. Servants were expected to look cheerful, and a sad face could suggest displeasure or a plot. For four months he hid his grief. Scripture does not say why this day. God's timing is perfect.

not been sad before him. **2** And the king said to me, "Why ***is*** your face sad, and you are not sick? This ***is*** nothing but sadness of heart." And I was very greatly afraid. **3** And I said to the king, "Let the king live forever! Why should my face not be sad, when the city, the house of the tombs of my fathers, ***is*** desolate, and its gates have been consumed by fire?" **4** And the king said to me, "For what are you requesting?" And I prayed to the God of the heavens. **5** And I said to the king, "If ***it is*** good to the king, and if your servant is good before you, that you would send me to Judah (Yehuda), to the city of the tombs of my fathers, and I will build it." **6** And the king said to me, and the queen was sitting beside him, "Until when will your journey be, and when will you return?" And it was good before the king, and he sent me; and I gave him a time. **7** And I said to the king, "If ***it is*** good to the king, let them give me letters to the governors beyond the River (Nahar), that they may let me pass through until I come to Judah, **8** and a letter to Asaph (Asaf) the keeper of the forest which ***belongs*** to the king, that he may give me wood to make beams ***for*** the gates of the citadel which ***belongs*** to the house, and for the wall of the city, and for the house which I will enter." And the king gave ***them*** to me, according to the good hand of my God on me.

Opposition Begins

9 And I came to the governors beyond the River and gave them the letters of the king. And the king had sent with me commanders of the army and horsemen. **10** And Sanballat (Sanvalat) the Horonite and Tobiah (Toviya) the servant, the Ammonite, heard ***it***, and it was displeasing to them, a great displeasure, that a man had come to seek good for the sons of Israel (Yisra'el).

Nehemiah Inspects the Walls by Night

11 And I came to Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), and I was there three days. **12** And I arose ***at*** night, I and a few men with me; and I had not told anyone what my God was putting into my heart to do for Jerusalem; and ***there was*** no animal with me except the animal on which I was riding. **13** And I went out by the Valley Gate ***by*** night, and toward the face of Dragon Well (En-Hatanin) and to the Dung Gate; and I was examining the walls of Jerusalem, which were broken down, and its gates had been consumed by fire. **14** And I passed on to the Spring Gate and to the King's Pool, and ***there was*** no place for the animal under me to pass through. **15** And I was going up in the ravine ***by*** night, and I was examining the wall; and I turned back and entered by the Valley Gate, and returned. **16** And the officials did not know where I had gone and what I was doing; and to the Jews and to the priests and to the nobles and to the officials and to the rest who did the work, until then I had not told ***it***.

Let Us Rise Up and Build

17 And I said to them, "You see the evil which we ***are*** in, that Jerusalem ***is*** desolate and its gates have been burned with fire. Come, and let us build the wall of Jerusalem, and we will no longer be a reproach." **18** And I told them of the hand of my God, that it ***was*** good on me, and also the words of the king which he had spoken to me. And they said, "Let us arise and build." And they strengthened their hands for the good.

2:2 Prov 15:13; Gen 40:7
2:3 Neh 1:3; 1 Kgs 1:31; Dan 2:4
2:4 Neh 1:4,11; Prov 3:6; 1 Kgs 3:5
2:5 Ezra 5:17; Esth 1:19; Esth 5:8
2:6 Neh 13:6; Neh 5:14; Neh 2:4
2:7 Ezra 7:21; Neh 2:9; Ezra 6:6
2:8 Neh 7:2; Ezra 7:6,9,27,28; Ezra 5:5
2:9 Ezra 8:22
2:10 Neh 2:19; Neh 4:1-3,7; Neh 6:1
2:11 Ezra 8:32
2:12 Judg 6:27; Judg 9:32; Eccl 3:7
2:13 Neh 1:3; 2 Chr 26:9; Neh 2:3,17
2:14 Neh 3:15; 2 Kgs 20:20; 2 Kgs 18:17
2:15 2 Sam 15:23; Jer 31:38-40; John 18:1
2:17 Neh 1:3; Ezek 5:14; Ps 44:13
2:18 2 Sam 2:7; 1 Chr 11:10; 2 Chr 32:5

2:2 *I was very greatly afraid* A king could put a servant to death for less, and Nehemiah was about to ask the king to undo his own order (Ezra 4:21). Courage is not the absence of fear. It is doing right while afraid.
2:3 *the house of the tombs of my fathers* He did not yet name Jerusalem. Every Persian honored his ancestors' graves, and the king could understand that. Nehemiah spoke wisely.
2:4 *I prayed to the God of the heavens* Between the king's question and his answer, a silent prayer of a few words, backed by four months of praying day and night. We can pray anywhere, in a meeting, a hard talk or a crisis (1 Thess 5:17). His quick prayer worked because he already lived close to God.
2:5 *that you would send me to Judah* Humble and clear. He asked to go himself, not just for money.
2:6 *the queen was sitting beside him* A small detail from a real scene. The king's question about his return shows he had already said yes. Nehemiah stayed twelve years (5:14), so he asked for a long time or the king extended it.
2:8 *according to the good hand of my God on me* He knew exactly what timber he needed. Prayer and planning are not enemies. He prayed as if all depended on God and planned to be ready for God's answer, then credited God (Ezra 7:6, 9).
2:8 *for the wall of the city* Daniel's seventy sevens count "from the going forth of the word to restore and to build Jerusalem" (Dan 9:25) to the Anointed One, 483 years, and then He is "cut off" (Dan 9:26). This word in 445 B.C. is the first to speak plainly of the city and walls. Many teachers start here and count 360-day prophetic years (Dan 7:25; Rev 12:6) to about A.D. 32 or 33, Jesus' entry and death. Others start with Ezra's decree in 458 or 457 B.C. and count regular years to about A.D. 26 or 27. Either way it brings us to Jesus. I believe the seventieth seven is the Tribulation still ahead, after Christ takes His church (1 Thess 4:16-17).
2:9 *the king had sent with me commanders of the army and horsemen* Ezra refused an escort (Ezra 8:22), and Nehemiah, as royal governor, received what the king sent. Both trusted God. His provision can come either way.
2:10 *Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite* Sanballat governed Samaria (4:2) and probably came from Beth-horon. Tobiah was an Ammonite official, "servant" being a title. What upset them was that someone came "to seek good for the sons of Israel." Some are angered by the good of God's people. Expect it.
2:12 *I had not told anyone what my God was putting into my heart* He rested three days after about 900 miles, then looked for himself before speaking, with enemies watching and some in Jerusalem in contact with them (6:17-19). Wise leaders do not announce a plan before they know the facts. The plan was God's.
2:13 *I went out by the Valley Gate by night* The Valley Gate faced the Hinnom Valley on the west. The Dung Gate at the south end was where rubbish went out.
2:14 *there was no place for the animal under me to pass through* Rubble had tumbled down the steep Kidron slope so badly his mount could not pass. Before we fix what is broken, it helps to look honestly at how bad it is.
2:16 *the officials did not know where I had gone* Every group is named, because every group would soon be needed.
2:17 *let us build the wall of Jerusalem, and we will no longer be a reproach* He said "we," not "you." The deepest reason was not safety but the honor of God's name. A broken city told the nations Israel's God could not care for His own.
2:18 *I told them of the hand of my God, that it was good on me* God was behind it and the king had approved. One person with a God-given vision, who shares how God has worked, can stir a whole church to action.

19 And Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arab heard ***it***, and they mocked us and despised us, and said, "What ***is*** this thing which you are doing? Are you rebelling against the king?" **20** And I brought back word to them and said to them, "The God of the heavens, He will give us success; and we His servants will arise and build. And to you ***there is*** no portion, and ***no*** right, and ***no*** memorial in Jerusalem."

NEHEMIAH 3

The Builders of the Wall

1 And Eliashib (Elyashiv) the high priest arose, and his brothers the priests, and they built the Sheep Gate; they consecrated it and set up its doors; and as far as the Tower of the Hundred (Me'a) they consecrated it, as far as the Tower of Hananel (Chananel). **2** And beside him the men of Jericho (Yericho) built. And beside him Zaccur (Zakur) the son of Imri built. **3** And the Fish Gate the sons of Hassenaah (Hasena'a) built; they laid its beams and set up its doors, its bolts and its bars. **4** And beside them Meremoth (Meremot) the son of Uriah (Uriya), the son of Hakkoz (Haqots), repaired. And beside them Meshullam (Meshulam) the son of Berechiah (Berekhya), the son of Meshezabel (Meshezav'el), repaired. And beside them Zadok (Tsadoq) the son of Baana (Ba'ana) repaired. **5** And beside them the Tekoites repaired; and their nobles did not bring their neck into the service of their lords. **6** And the Old Gate Joiada (Yoyada) the son of Paseah (Paseach) and Meshullam the son of Besodeiah (Besodya) repaired; they laid its beams and set up its doors and its bolts and its bars. **7** And beside them Melatiah (Melatya) the Gibeonite and Jadon (Yadon) the Meronothite, the men of Gibeon (Givon) and of Mizpah (Mitspa), repaired for the seat of the governor beyond the River (Nahar). **8** Beside him Uzziel (Uzi'el) the son of Harhaiah (Charchaya), goldsmiths, repaired. And beside him Hananiah (Chananya), a son of the perfumers, repaired. And they restored Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) as far as the Broad Wall. **9** And beside them Rephaiah (Refaya) the son of Hur (Chur), the leader of half the district of Jerusalem, repaired. **10** And beside them Jedaiah (Yedaya) the son of Harumaph (Charumaf) repaired, and opposite his house. And beside him Hattush (Chatush) the son of Hashabneiah (Chashavneya) repaired. **11** Malchijah (Malkiya) the son of Harim (Charim) and Hasshub (Chashuv) the son of Pahath-moab (Pachat-Mo'av) repaired a second section, and the Tower of the Ovens. **12** And beside him Shallum (Shalum) the son of Hallohesh (Halochesh), the leader of half the district of Jerusalem, repaired, he and his daughters. **13** The Valley Gate Hanun (Chanun) and the inhabitants of Zanoah (Zanoach) repaired; they built it and set up its doors, its bolts and its bars, and approximately 1,500 feet (a thousand cubits) of the wall, as far as the Dung Gate. **14** And the Dung Gate Malchijah the son of Rechab (Rekhav), the leader of the district of Beth-haccherem (Bet-Hakerem), repaired; he built it and set up its doors, its bolts and its bars.

The Work on the South and East

15 And the Spring Gate Shallun (Shalun) the son of Col-hozeh (Kol-Choze), the leader of the district of Mizpah, repaired; he built it and covered it and set up its doors, its bolts and its bars, and the wall of the Pool of Shelah (Shelach) by the king's garden, and as far as the steps that go down from the city of David. **16** After him Nehemiah (Nechemya) the son of Azbuk (Azbuq), the leader of half the district of Beth-zur (Bet-Tsur), repaired as far as opposite the tombs of David, and as far as the pool that was made, and as far as the house of the mighty men. **17** After him the Levites repaired: Rehum

2:19 Neh 6:6; Neh 6:1,2; Ps 44:13,14
2:20 Ezra 4:3; Neh 2:4; Acts 8:21
3:1 John 5:2; Neh 12:39; Jer 31:38
3:2 Neh 7:36; Ezra 2:34; Neh 10:12
3:3 Neh 12:39; 2 Chr 33:14; Zeph 1:10
3:4 Ezra 8:33; Neh 3:21; Neh 10:15
3:5 2 Sam 14:2; Neh 3:27; Amos 1:1
3:6 Neh 12:39
3:7 2 Sam 21:2; Josh 9:3-27; Neh 3:19
3:8 Neh 12:38; Neh 3:31,32; Isa 46:6
3:9 Neh 3:12,17
3:10 Neh 3:23,28-30; Neh 10:4
3:11 Neh 12:38; Ezra 2:6; Neh 10:5
3:12 Neh 3:9,14-18; Exod 35:25; Acts 21:8,9
3:13 Neh 2:13; Josh 15:34,56; Neh 11:30
3:14 Jer 6:1; Neh 2:13; Neh 3:9,12,15-18
3:15 Neh 12:37; John 9:7; Neh 2:14
3:16 Acts 2:29; 2 Kgs 20:20; Neh 3:9,12,14
3:17 Josh 15:44; 1 Chr 23:4; 1 Sam 23:1,2-13

2:19 *Geshem the Arab* An Arab leader to the south and east. Mockery is often the first weapon against God's work, then the old charge of rebellion (Ezra 4:12-16). This time Nehemiah had the king's letters.
2:20 *The God of the heavens, He will give us success; and we His servants will arise and build* He pointed to God, not the king's letters. God gives success, and His servants build. Faith and work together. Drawing a clear line, as Zerubbabel did (Ezra 4:3), the enemies had "no portion, and no right, and no memorial in Jerusalem."
3:1 *Eliashib the high priest arose, and his brothers the priests, and they built the Sheep Gate* The Sheep Gate was in the north wall near the temple, where sacrificial sheep came in. The work began with worship. The towers guarded the north, the city's weakest side. Sadly, Eliashib later gave Tobiah a temple room (13:4-7). Starting well does not guarantee finishing well.
3:2 *beside him* The phrase runs through the whole chapter. No one built alone.
3:3 *the Fish Gate* Likely where fish from Galilee and the coast came in to market. A gate was the hardest part, with beams, doors, bolts and bars.
3:5 *their nobles did not bring their neck into the service of their lords* Tekoa, Amos' hometown, was about ten miles south. Its working men did a second section too (3:27), but its nobles refused the yoke, thinking the work beneath them. "Their lords" may mean Nehemiah and the leaders, or the Lord Himself. God records both the faithful and the unwilling.
3:8 *Hananiah, a son of the perfumers* Goldsmiths and perfume makers, men of fine, delicate work, now hauled stones. The Broad Wall was a thick part of the old wall on the northwest.
3:10 *opposite his house* He fixed the wall in front of his own home.
3:12 *he and his daughters* The only place in the list where women are named as builders. God's work is not only for men.
3:13 *approximately 1,500 feet (a thousand cubits) of the wall* Nehemiah rode out the Valley Gate on his night inspection (2:13). Zanoah was about thirteen miles west. Perhaps the wall was less damaged there, or the crew was large.
3:14 *the Dung Gate Malchijah the son of Rechab, the leader of the district of Beth-haccherem, repaired* Where the city's trash went out, the least honored job, and a district ruler took it. In God's work no job is too low for a leader.
3:15 *the Pool of Shelah by the king's garden* The Spring Gate stood near the Gihon spring. This pool is most likely Siloam. The City of David was the oldest part of Jerusalem, the hill David took from the Jebusites (2 Sam 5:7).
3:16 *as far as opposite the tombs of David* A different Nehemiah. The governor had spoken to the king of "the tombs of my fathers" (2:3), and here the builders reached them.

(Rechum) the son of Bani. Beside him Hashabiah
(Chashavya), the leader of half the district of Keilah (Qe'ila),
repaired for his district. **18** After him their brothers
repaired: Bavvai (Bavay) the son of Henadad (Chenadad), the
leader of half the district of Keilah. **19** And beside him Ezer
the son of Jeshua (Yeshua), the leader of Mizpah, repaired a
second section, from opposite the ascent of the armory ***at*** the
angle. **20** After him Baruch (Barukh) the son of Zaccai
(Zakay) zealously repaired a second section, from the angle
as far as the entrance of the house of Eliashib the high priest.
21 After him Meremoth the son of Uriah, the son of Hakkoz,
repaired a second section, from the entrance of the house of
Eliashib and as far as the end of the house of Eliashib. **22** And
after him the priests, the men of the plain, repaired. **23** After
him Benjamin (Binyamin) and Hasshub repaired opposite
their house. After him Azariah (Azarya) the son of Maaseiah
(Ma'aseya), the son of Ananiah (Ananya), repaired beside his
house. **24** After him Binnui (Binuy) the son of Henadad
repaired a second section, from the house of Azariah as far as
the angle and as far as the corner. **25** Palal the son of Uzai
(Uzay) ***repaired*** opposite the angle and the tower that
projects from the upper house of the king, which ***belongs*** to
the court of the guard. After him Pedaiah (Pedaya) the son of
Parosh ***repaired***. **26** And the temple servants were dwelling
on the Ophel (Ofel), as far as opposite the Water Gate toward
the east and the projecting tower. **27** After him the Tekoites
repaired a second section, from opposite the great projecting
tower and as far as the wall of the Ophel. **28** Above the Horse
Gate the priests repaired, each opposite his house. **29** After
him Zadok the son of Immer (Imer) repaired opposite his
house. And after him Shemaiah (Shemaya) the son of Shecaniah (Shekhanya), the keeper of the East Gate, repaired.
30 After him Hananiah the son of Shelemiah (Shelemya) and
Hanun the sixth son of Zalaph (Tsalaf) repaired a second section. After him Meshullam the son of Berechiah repaired
opposite his chamber. **31** After him Malchijah, a son of the
goldsmiths, repaired as far as the house of the temple servants and of the traders, opposite the Muster Gate, and as far
as the upper room of the corner. **32** And between the upper
room of the corner and the Sheep Gate the goldsmiths and
the traders repaired.

NEHEMIAH 4

Mockery and Threats

1 And it was, when Sanballat (Sanvalat) heard that we were
building the wall, ***that*** he burned ***with anger*** and was greatly
vexed, and he mocked the Jews. **2** And he spoke before his
brothers and the army of Samaria (Shomron), and said,
"What are the feeble Jews doing? Will they restore ***it*** for
themselves? Will they sacrifice? Will they finish in a day?
Will they revive the stones from the heaps of rubble, when
they ***are*** burned?" **3** And Tobiah (Toviya) the Ammonite ***was***
beside him, and he said, "Even what they are building—if a
fox goes up ***on it***, it will break down their wall of stones."
4 Hear, O our God, for we have become contempt; and return
their reproach on their ***own*** head, and give them for plunder
in a land of captivity. **5** And do not cover over their iniquity,
and let their sin not be wiped out from before You; for they
have provoked ***You*** to anger in front of the builders. **6** And
we built the wall, and all the wall was joined together up to
its half; and ***there*** was a heart in the people to work.

3:19 2 Chr 26:9; Neh 10:9; Neh 12:8
3:20 Neh 3:1,21; Eccl 9:10; Rom 12:11
3:21 Neh 7:63; Ezra 2:61
3:22 Neh 12:28; Neh 6:2
3:23 Neh 3:10,29,30; Neh 10:2; Neh 8:4,7
3:24 Neh 10:9; Neh 3:11,19,27
3:25 Jer 32:2; Jer 37:21; Neh 12:39
3:26 Neh 11:21; Neh 8:1,3; Neh 12:37
3:28 2 Chr 23:15; 2 Kgs 11:16; Jer 31:40
3:29 Neh 7:40; Ezra 2:37; Ezra 10:2
3:31 Neh 3:8,32
3:32 John 5:2; Neh 3:1; Neh 12:39
4:1 Matt 27:29; John 4:9; Neh 2:10,19
4:2 John 4:9; Ezra 4:9,10; Neh 4:10
4:3 Neh 2:10,19; Neh 6:1; 1 Kgs 20:10,18
4:4 Ps 123:3,4; Ps 79:12; 1 Sam 17:26
4:5 Ps 109:14; Jer 18:23; Ps 69:27
4:6 Neh 6:15; 1 Chr 29:3,14,17,18; 2 Chr 29:36

3:20 *Baruch the son of Zaccai zealously repaired a second section* The only builder described this way, with burning eagerness. Each did his part, but God noticed the one who threw himself into it.
3:21 *Meremoth the son of Uriah* His second section (3:4). Some did more than their share.
3:23 *Benjamin and Hasshub repaired opposite their house* A man fixing the wall before his own home would do it well, since his family's safety depended on it. Where is your section of wall? Often God wants us to start in front of our own house, with our family and neighbors.
3:25 *the court of the guard* Where Jeremiah was held (Jer 32:2). The Ophel (3:26) was the hill between the City of David and the temple, and the Water Gate's open square is where Ezra later read the Law (8:1).
3:28 *above the Horse Gate the priests repaired* The Horse Gate was on the east side near the temple, and the East Gate faced the Mount of Olives (3:29).
3:30 *opposite his chamber* Perhaps a single room, not even a whole house. Even a man with one room did his part.
3:31 *opposite the Muster Gate* Also called the Inspection Gate, perhaps where people or troops were gathered and counted.
3:32 *between the upper room of the corner and the Sheep Gate* The circle is complete, back where the priests began. God's work is done by ordinary people each doing a part. No one built the whole wall, and everyone built some of it, like one body with many parts (1 Cor 12:12-27; Eph 2:21). God remembers every name. Our labor in the Lord is not in vain (1 Cor 15:58).
4:1 *he burned with anger and was greatly vexed, and he mocked the Jews* When people cannot stop God's work, they often try to laugh it down.
4:2 *What are the feeble Jews doing* A public show before the army of Samaria, a threat dressed as a joke. Five mocking questions, some with a sting of truth. They were weak and the stones were fire-damaged. That is why mockery hurts. It takes a real weakness and makes it look hopeless.
4:3 *if a fox goes up on it, it will break down their wall of stones* A fox weighs a few pounds. How do you answer mockery? Look at the next verse.
4:4 *return their reproach on their own head* Nehemiah turned to God, not Sanballat. Prayers calling for God's justice on enemies are called imprecations, found in psalms too (Ps 35; 69; 109). He did not take revenge himself but handed it to God (Rom 12:19). He saw them as enemies of God's name, and he asked for justice, that their plan of captivity fall on them.
4:5 *for they have provoked You to anger in front of the builders* Jesus gave a further word: love your enemies and pray for them (Matt 5:44), and on the cross, "Father, forgive them" (Luke 23:34). Our first prayer for opponents is that God would save them, as He saved Paul. We may still ask God to stop evil and bring justice where people refuse to turn (Rev 6:10). Nehemiah shows an honest heart bringing hurt and anger to God instead of taking matters into its own hands.
4:6 *there was a heart in the people to work* The whole circuit was joined, though only to half its height. The secret of every great work of God is not big budgets or big talent, but willing hearts (Col 3:23).

Building with a Sword in Hand

7 And it was, when Sanballat and Tobiah and the Arabs and the Ammonites and the Ashdodites heard that the repair of the walls of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) had gone up, that the breaches had begun to be closed, ***that*** they burned ***with anger*** very ***much***. **8** And they all conspired together to come ***and*** fight against Jerusalem and to cause confusion for it. **9** And we prayed to our God, and we stationed a guard against them by day and night because of them. **10** And Judah (Yehuda) said, "The strength of the burden bearer has faltered, and the rubble ***is*** much, and we will not be able to build the wall." **11** And our adversaries said, "They will not know and they will not see until we come into their midst and kill them, and put an end to the work." **12** And it was, when the Jews who were dwelling beside them came, ***that*** they said to us ten times, "From all the places where you turn, ***they are*** against us." **13** And I stationed ***men*** in the lowest parts of the place behind the wall, in the open places; and I stationed the people by families with their swords, their spears and their bows. **14** And I saw, and I arose and said to the nobles and to the officials and to the rest of the people, "Do not be afraid of them. Remember the great and awesome Lord, and fight for your brothers, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your houses."

Half Worked and Half Stood Guard

15 And it was, when our enemies heard that it was known to us, and God had frustrated their counsel, ***that*** we all returned to the wall, each to his work. **16** And it was, from that day, half of my young men were doing the work, and half of them were holding both the spears, the shields, and the bows, and the body armor; and the leaders ***were*** behind all the house of Judah, **17** who were building the wall. And those carrying the burden were loading ***it***, with one of his hands doing the work, and one holding the weapon. **18** And the builders, each ***had*** his sword girded on his hips, and ***they were*** building. And the one who blew on the ram's horn ***was*** beside me. **19** And I said to the nobles and to the officials and to the rest of the people, "The work ***is*** much and wide, and we ***are*** separated on the wall, far each from his brother. **20** In the place where you hear the sound of the ram's horn, there you shall gather to us. Our God will fight for us." **21** And we were doing the work, and half of them were holding the spears from the going up of the dawn until the coming out of the stars. **22** Also at that time I said to the people, "Let each ***man*** with his young man spend the night in the midst of Jerusalem, and they will be for us a guard ***by*** night and work ***by*** day." **23** And neither I nor my brothers nor my young men nor the men of the guard who ***were*** behind me, none of us were taking off our clothes; each ***had*** his weapon ***at*** the water.

NEHEMIAH 5

The Outcry of the Poor

1 And there was a great outcry of the people and their wives against their brothers the Jews. **2** And there were ***those*** who were saying, "Our sons and our daughters, we ***are*** many; and let us get grain, that we may eat and live." **3** And there were ***those*** who were saying, "Our fields and our vineyards and our houses we are pledging, and let us get grain in the famine." **4** And there were ***those*** who were saying, "We have borrowed money for the tribute of the king ***on*** our fields and our vine-

4:7 Neh 4:1; Neh 2:10,19; Amos 1:13
4:8 Acts 23:12; Ps 83:3-11; Ps 2:1-3
4:9 Acts 4:26; Acts 4:27; 1 Pet 5:8
4:10 Num 13:31; Num 32:9; Ps 11:1,2
4:11 Acts 23:12; Judg 20:29-48; 2 Sam 17:2
4:12 Gen 31:7,41; Num 14:22; Job 19:3
4:13 Neh 4:17,18; Gen 32:13-20; 2 Chr 32:2-8
4:14 Num 14:9; 2 Sam 10:12; Isa 41:10-14
4:15 2 Sam 17:14; Rom 12:11; Job 5:12,13
4:16 Neh 4:23; Neh 5:15,16; Ps 101:6
4:17 Dan 9:25; 1 Cor 9:12; 1 Cor 16:9,13
4:18 Num 10:9; 2 Chr 13:12-17
4:20 Exod 14:14,25; Deut 1:30; Deut 20:4
4:21 1 Cor 15:10,58; Gal 6:9; Col 1:29
4:22 Neh 11:1,2
4:23 Neh 5:16; Neh 7:2; Judg 9:48
5:1 Isa 5:7; Exod 3:7; Exod 22:25-27
5:2 Ps 127:3-5; Ps 128:2-4; Mal 2:2
5:3 Gen 47:15-25; Lev 25:35-39; Deut 15:7
5:4 Ezra 4:13,20; Neh 9:37; Deut 28:47,48

4:7 *the Arabs and the Ammonites and the Ashdodites* Samaria north, Ammon east, Arabs south, and Ashdod, the old Philistine city, west. Jerusalem was surrounded, and mockery turned to a plan to attack.
4:9 *we prayed to our God, and we stationed a guard against them by day and night* One of the best verses in the book. Prayer and a guard, not one or the other. Some think real trust needs no practical steps, and others take steps and forget to pray. Faith is not laziness.
4:10 *the strength of the burden bearer has faltered* In Hebrew it sounds like a sad little song the workers may have repeated. Halfway is often where people quit. The excitement of the start is gone, and the end is not in sight.
4:12 *they said to us ten times* Over and over. Some read it as a warning the enemy was coming from every side, others as relatives begging the workers to come home. Tiredness, threats and fearful talk among God's own people all stop God's work, and the third is often the worst.
4:13 *by families with their swords, their spears and their bows* He guarded the low, weak spots and put families together. A man fights harder when his wife and children are behind him.
4:14 *Remember the great and awesome Lord* The answer to fear. Fear grows when we look at the enemy and shrinks when we look at God (1:5). Then: fight for your families. When tired and afraid, remember who God is and who we stand for.
4:15 *God had frustrated their counsel* The attack depended on surprise and fell apart once known. The guards were posted, but God gets the credit. They went straight back to the wall.
4:17 *with one of his hands doing the work, and one holding the weapon* Half built, half stood guard (4:16). A trowel in one hand and a sword in the other has become a picture of the Christian life. We build up, and we stand guard, taking "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Eph 6:17).
4:18 *the one who blew on the ram's horn was beside me* The ram's horn, the shofar, sounded alarms and called people together.
4:20 *Our God will fight for us* The wall was over two miles around and workers were spread thin. Wherever the horn sounded, all would run. "The LORD will fight for you" (Exod 14:14). The church is spread out too, each on our own section. We need to come running when a brother or sister is under attack.
4:22 *they will be for us a guard by night and work by day* No one went home at night, saving travel and guarding the city. They worked from dawn until the stars came out (4:21).
4:23 *none of us were taking off our clothes* "Each had his weapon at the water" is hard Hebrew, likely meaning he kept his weapon even when going for water. Nehemiah asked nothing of the people he would not do himself. That is leadership.
5:1 *a great outcry of the people and their wives against their brothers the Jews* Not against Sanballat, but against "their brothers." The wives joined in, so the trouble had reached the home.
5:3 *let us get grain in the famine* The men were on the wall and not in their fields, and a famine came on top of it. Some pledged land for food, and others borrowed to pay the king's heavy taxes (5:4).

yards. **5** And now, our flesh ***is*** like the flesh of our brothers, our sons like their sons; and look, we are bringing our sons and our daughters into bondage to be slaves, and some of our daughters have been brought into bondage, and ***it is*** not in the power of our hands; and our fields and our vineyards ***belong*** to others."

Nehemiah Rebukes the Nobles

6 And I burned ***with anger*** very ***much*** when I heard their outcry and these words. **7** And my heart took counsel within me, and I contended with the nobles and with the officials, and I said to them, "You are exacting interest, each from his brother." And I set a great assembly against them. **8** And I said to them, "We, according to what ***was*** in us, have bought back our brothers the Jews who had sold themselves to the nations; and will you also sell your brothers, and they be sold to us?" And they were silent and did not find a word. **9** And I said, "The thing which you are doing ***is*** not good. Should you not walk in the fear of our God because of the reproach of the nations, our enemies? **10** And also I, my brothers, and my young men are lending them money and grain. Let us abandon, please, this interest. **11** Return to them, please, this very day, their fields, their vineyards, their olive groves, and their houses, and the hundredth ***part*** of the money and the grain, the new wine and the fresh oil, which you are lending to them." **12** And they said, "We will return ***it***, and from them we will not require ***anything***; so we will do, as you are saying." And I called the priests and made them swear to do according to this word. **13** Also I shook out my bosom and said, "So may God shake out every man who does not carry out this word, from his house and from his labor; and so may he be shaken out and empty." And all the assembly said, "Amen," and they praised the LORD. And the people did according to this word.

Nehemiah's Own Example

14 Also from the day that he appointed me to be their governor in the land of Judah (Yehuda), from the twentieth year and until the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes (Artachshasta) the king, twelve years, I and my brothers did not eat the bread of the governor. **15** And the former governors who ***were*** before me laid heavy ***burdens*** on the people and took from them for bread and wine, besides approximately 1 pound (forty shekels) of silver; also their young men domineered over the people. And I did not do so because of the fear of God. **16** And also I held fast to the work of this wall, and we did not buy a field; and all my young men ***were*** gathered there for the work. **17** And the Jews and the officials, a hundred and fifty men, and those who came to us from the nations which ***were*** around us, ***were*** at my table. **18** And what was made for one day ***was*** one ox ***and*** six choice sheep, and birds were made for me; and once in ten days all ***kinds of*** wine in abundance. And with this I did not seek the bread of the governor, because the service was heavy on this people. **19** Remember for me, O my God, for good, all that I have done for this people.

NEHEMIAH 6

Plots Against Nehemiah

1 And it was, when it was heard by Sanballat (Sanvalat) and Tobiah (Toviya) and by Geshem the Arab and by the rest of our enemies that I had built the wall and ***that*** no breach was left in it—although until that time I had not set up doors in

5:5 2 Kgs 4:1; Lev 25:39-43; Gen 37:27
5:6 Mark 3:5; Exod 11:8; Neh 13:8,25
5:7 Exod 22:25; Lev 25:36; Deut 23:19,20
5:8 Acts 11:29; Lev 25:47-49; Matt 25:15,29
5:9 Eph 5:21; Lev 25:36; 2 Sam 12:14
5:10 Exod 22:25-27; Mic 2:1; Luke 3:13,14
5:11 Isa 58:6; Lev 6:4,5; 1 Sam 12:3
5:12 Ezra 10:5; 2 Chr 28:14,15; Ezra 10:12
5:13 Rev 19:4; Acts 18:6; Matt 10:14
5:14 2 Thess 3:8; 1 Cor 9:10; 1 Cor 9:12
5:15 Eph 5:21; Neh 5:9; Matt 5:47
5:16 Luke 8:15; Rom 2:7; 1 Cor 15:58
5:17 1 Kgs 18:19; 2 Sam 9:7,13; Isa 32:8
5:18 1 Kgs 4:22,23; Neh 5:14,15; Ps 37:21,26
5:19 Neh 13:14,22,31; Gen 40:14; Ps 25:6,7
6:1 Neh 2:10,19; Neh 4:1,7; Neh 3:1,3,6

5:5 *our flesh is like the flesh of our brothers* Our children are as precious as theirs. Under the Law an Israelite could sell himself or his children into service for debt, but only for a limited time, treated as a hired worker and freed in the seventh year or jubilee (Exod 21:2-11; Lev 25:39-43). It was very different from the race-based slavery of later history, and it was never meant to let the rich grow richer from their brothers' misery.
5:6 *I burned with anger very much* A right anger at injustice by God's people against God's people. Jesus was angry at hard hearts (Mark 3:5). "Be angry, and do not sin" (Eph 4:26).
5:7 *my heart took counsel within me* He thought it through before he spoke. Godly anger is under control. The Law forbade charging interest to a poor Israelite (Exod 22:25; Lev 25:35-37), and he brought it into the open before a great assembly.
5:8 *will you also sell your brothers* Nehemiah and others were buying Jews back from foreigners while the nobles sold their own people. They had no answer.
5:9 *because of the reproach of the nations, our enemies* The enemies were watching. How God's people treat one another is a witness to the world, good or bad (John 13:35).
5:10 *let us abandon, please, this interest* Nehemiah admitted he had been lending too and included himself in the call to change.
5:11 *the hundredth part of the money* The interest, most likely one percent a month. Give it all back "this very day." Not next month. Today.
5:13 *I shook out my bosom* The fold of the robe used like a pocket. As he emptied it, God would empty the house of anyone who broke the oath. "Amen" means so be it. They praised God and then did it. Real repentance is changed behavior, not just words.
5:14 *I and my brothers did not eat the bread of the governor* The food allowance paid through taxes, twelve years, from 445 to about 433 B.C. He had every right to it and did not take it.
5:15 *I did not do so because of the fear of God* Former governors took food, wine and silver, and their servants pushed people around. The fear of God is not terror but deep respect that shapes how we live, knowing we answer to Him.
5:16 *we did not buy a field* A governor in hard times could have bought up poor families' land cheaply. Nehemiah refused and put his own servants to work on the wall.
5:18 *because the service was heavy on this people* He fed 150 leaders and visitors daily at his own cost. A godly leader does not use his people. He serves them (Mark 10:42-45). Paul gave up his right to pay (1 Cor 9:12-18), and our Lord, though rich, became poor for us (2 Cor 8:9).
5:19 *Remember for me, O my God, for good* The first of several such short prayers (13:14, 22, 31). Not pride. He had given up his rights unpaid, and he asked God, not people, to notice, trusting that God sees what is done in secret (Matt 6:4; Heb 6:10).
6:1 *I had not set up doors in the gates* When the work is nearly finished, the enemy often tries hardest. Mockery and threats had failed, so now they went after the leader.

the gates— **2** ***that*** Sanballat and Geshem sent to me, saying, "Come, and let us meet together in Hakkephirim (Kefirim) in the plain of Ono." And they were planning to do evil to me. **3** And I sent messengers to them, saying, "I am doing a great work, and I am not able to come down. Why should the work cease while I let it drop and come down to you?" **4** And they sent to me according to this word four times, and I answered them according to this word. **5** And Sanballat sent his young man to me according to this word a fifth time, and an open letter ***was*** in his hand. **6** In it ***was*** written, "Among the nations it has been heard, and Geshem (Gashmu) is saying, ***that*** you and the Jews are planning to rebel; therefore you are building the wall; and you are to become their king, according to these words. **7** And also you have appointed prophets to proclaim concerning you in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), saying, 'A king ***is*** in Judah (Yehuda)!' And now it will be heard by the king according to these words. And now come, and let us take counsel together." **8** And I sent to him, saying, "It has not happened according to these words which you are saying, for from your ***own*** heart you are inventing them." **9** For all of them were making us afraid, saying, "Their hands will drop from the work, and it will not be done." And now, strengthen my hands.

The Hired Prophet

10 And I went ***to*** the house of Shemaiah (Shemaya) the son of Delaiah (Delaya), the son of Mehetabel (Mehetav'el), and he ***was*** shut in. And he said, "Let us meet at the house of God, within the temple, and let us close the doors of the temple; for they are coming to kill you, and ***by*** night they are coming to kill you." **11** And I said, "Should a man like me flee? And who ***is there*** like me who would go into the temple and live? I will not go in." **12** And I recognized, and look, God had not sent him; for he had spoken the prophecy against me, and Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him. **13** For this ***reason*** he ***was*** hired, so that I would be afraid and act so and sin, and it would become for them a bad name, so that they might reproach me. **14** Remember, O my God, Tobiah and Sanballat according to these works of his, and also Noadiah (No'adya) the prophetess and the rest of the prophets who were making me afraid.

The Wall Finished

15 And the wall was completed on the twenty-fifth ***day*** of Elul, in fifty-two days. **16** And it was, when all our enemies heard, ***that*** all the nations which ***were*** around us were afraid, and they fell greatly in their own eyes; and they knew that this work had been done from our God. **17** Also in those days the nobles of Judah were multiplying their letters going to Tobiah, and those of Tobiah were coming to them. **18** For many in Judah ***were*** masters of an oath to him, for he ***was*** a son-in-law of Shecaniah (Shekhanya) the son of Arah (Arach); and Jehohanan (Yehochanan) his son had taken the daughter of Meshullam (Meshulam) the son of Berechiah (Berekhya). **19** Also they were speaking of his good deeds before me, and they were bringing out my words to him. Tobiah sent letters to make me afraid.

6:2 1 Chr 8:12; Ps 37:12; 2 Sam 3:27
6:3 John 9:4; 1 Tim 4:15,16; Prov 14:15
6:4 Judg 16:6,10,15-20; Prov 7:21; Luke 18:5
6:5 2 Kgs 18:26-28; 2 Cor 2:11; 2 Cor 11:13-15
6:6 Acts 24:5; Neh 2:19; Jer 9:3-6
6:7 Neh 6:12,13; 2 Sam 15:10-12; 1 Kgs 1:7,18,25,34
6:8 Acts 25:7; Job 13:4; Ps 52:2
6:9 Ps 138:3; Phil 4:13; Neh 6:14
6:10 Luke 13:31; Jer 36:5; Neh 6:12
6:11 Luke 13:31; Prov 28:1; Ps 11:1,2
6:12 Ezek 13:22; 1 Cor 2:15; 1 Cor 12:10
6:13 Matt 26:59; Prov 29:5; James 4:17
6:14 Neh 13:29; 2 Tim 4:14,15; Neh 5:19
6:15 Neh 4:1,2; Ezra 6:15; Ps 1:3
6:16 Ps 126:2; Neh 2:10; Neh 4:1,7
6:17 Neh 3:5; Neh 5:7; Neh 13:28
6:18 Ezra 2:5; Neh 7:10; Neh 3:4,30
6:19 Prov 28:4; John 7:7; John 15:19

6:2 *in the plain of Ono* About twenty-five miles northwest, near the edge of Judah's territory and close to Samaria's. Friendly talks on neutral ground, but away from his people he could be kidnapped or killed.
6:3 *I am doing a great work, and I am not able to come down* He did not accuse or argue. He had something more important to do and would not let the enemy set his schedule. Four times asked, four times the same answer. Many distractions are not evil in themselves, but if they pull us off the work God gave us, the right answer may simply be: I cannot come down.
6:5 *an open letter was in his hand* Letters were normally rolled and sealed. An open one could be read by anyone on the way, meant to spread a rumor.
6:6 *Geshem is saying* A charge of rebellion, the kind that stopped the work before (Ezra 4:12-16), and blackmail to force a meeting. The source was vague, and the one named was an enemy himself. People are saying it, we are told. Which people? Usually the one telling you.
6:8 *from your own heart you are inventing them* He denied it flatly and named it a lie. He did not go to defend himself or panic.
6:9 *And now, strengthen my hands* The goal was fear, that their hands would drop. He asked God to make them strong. When falsely accused, tell the truth plainly, refuse to be pulled off course, and ask God for strength (1 Pet 3:16).
6:10 *let us close the doors of the temple* We are not told why Shemaiah was shut in, perhaps to make his message seem urgent. It sounded like a friend's warning.
6:11 *Should a man like me flee* The leader could not run and hide. And Nehemiah was not a priest. An outsider who came near was to be put to death (Num 18:7), and Uzziah was struck for entering (2 Chr 26:16-21). He would not save his life by sinning. Fear can push us to do what God forbids, even when it sounds spiritual.
6:12 *God had not sent him* A true word from God will never tell us to disobey God's Word. That is how we test every voice that claims to speak for Him (Deut 13:1-5; 1 John 4:1).
6:13 *so that I would be afraid and act so and sin* The aim was to ruin his name. The enemy's goal is often not to kill us but to get us to sin, so we lose our witness. Guard your name, not out of pride, but for the sake of God's work.
6:14 *Noadiah the prophetess and the rest of the prophets* Again he gave his enemies to God (4:4-5). False prophets were always a danger in Israel (Jer 23:16-17), and they still are (Matt 7:15; 2 Pet 2:1).
6:15 *the wall was completed on the twenty-fifth day of Elul, in fifty-two days* Elul is August to September, in 445 B.C. A wall in ruins for 140 years, rebuilt in under two months by a weak, poor people under constant threat. The next verse tells how.
6:16 *they knew that this work had been done from our God* The real victory was a testimony. Those who mocked the "feeble Jews" (4:2) lost their confidence and knew God had done it. When God's people do God's work God's way, the world can see God in it (Matt 5:16).
6:18 *many in Judah were masters of an oath to him* Bound by oath, likely business deals or alliances. Tobiah, whose name means the LORD is good, had married into a leading family, and his son married the daughter of Meshullam, a wall builder (3:4). Marriage ties with those who opposed God pulled His people into divided loyalties, the danger Ezra faced.
6:19 *they were bringing out my words to him* Spies and go-betweens. Later Tobiah was even given a temple room (13:4-9). Finishing a work for God does not end the battle. Keep watching, especially for compromise from inside.

NEHEMIAH 7

Guarding the City

1 And it was, when the wall had been built and I had set up the doors, and the gatekeepers and the singers and the Levites had been appointed, **2** and I gave charge to Hanani (Chanani) my brother and Hananiah (Chananya) the commander of the citadel over Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), for he ***was*** like a man of faithfulness and feared God more than many. **3** And I said to them, "The gates of Jerusalem shall not be opened until the sun is hot; and while they are standing ***guard***, let them shut the doors, and bolt ***them***. And appoint guards of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, each at his guard post and each in front of his house." **4** And the city ***was*** wide on both hands and large, and the people ***were*** few in its midst, and there were no houses built.

The Record of Those Who Returned

5 And my God put ***it*** into my heart, and I gathered the nobles and the officials and the people to be enrolled by genealogy. And I found the book of the genealogy of those who came up at the first, and I found written in it: **6** These ***are*** the sons of the province who came up from the captivity of the exile, whom Nebuchadnezzar (Nevukhadnetsar) the king of Babylon (Bavel) had taken into exile, and they returned to Jerusalem and to Judah (Yehuda), each to his city, **7** who came with Zerubbabel (Zerubavel), Jeshua (Yeshua), Nehemiah (Nechemya), Azariah (Azarya), Raamiah (Ra'amya), Nahamani (Nachamani), Mordecai (Mordekhay), Bilshan, Mispereth (Misperet), Bigvai (Bigvay), Nehum (Nechum), Baanah (Ba'ana). The number of the men of the people of Israel (Yisra'el): **8** the sons of Parosh, two thousand one hundred seventy-two; **9** the sons of Shephatiah (Shefatya), three hundred seventy-two; **10** the sons of Arah (Arach), six hundred fifty-two; **11** the sons of Pahath-moab (Pachat-Mo'av), of the sons of Jeshua and Joab (Yo'av), two thousand eight hundred eighteen; **12** the sons of Elam, one thousand two hundred fifty-four; **13** the sons of Zattu (Zatu), eight hundred forty-five; **14** the sons of Zaccai (Zakay), seven hundred sixty; **15** the sons of Binnui (Binuy), six hundred forty-eight; **16** the sons of Bebai (Bevay), six hundred twenty-eight; **17** the sons of Azgad, two thousand three hundred twenty-two; **18** the sons of Adonikam (Adoniqam), six hundred sixty-seven; **19** the sons of Bigvai, two thousand sixty-seven; **20** the sons of Adin, six hundred fifty-five; **21** the sons of Ater, of Hezekiah (Chizqiya), ninety-eight; **22** the sons of Hashum (Chashum), three hundred twenty-eight; **23** the sons of Bezai (Betsay), three hundred twenty-four; **24** the sons of Hariph (Charif), one hundred twelve; **25** the sons of Gibeon (Givon), ninety-five; **26** the men of Bethlehem (Bet-Lechem) and Netophah (Netofa), one hundred eighty-eight; **27** the men of Anathoth (Anatot), one hundred twenty-eight; **28** the men of Beth-azmaveth (Bet-Azmavet), forty-two; **29** the men of Kiriath-jearim (Qiryat-Ye'arim), Chephirah (Kefira), and Beeroth (Be'erot), seven hundred forty-three; **30** the men of Ramah (Rama) and Geba (Geva), six hundred twenty-one; **31** the men of Michmash (Mikhmas), one hundred twenty-two; **32** the men of Bethel (Bet-El) and Ai (Ay), one hundred twenty-three; **33** the men of ***the*** other Nebo (Nevo), fifty-two; **34** the sons of ***the*** other Elam, one thousand two hundred fifty-four; **35** the sons of Harim (Charim), three hundred twenty; **36** the sons of Jericho (Yericho), three hundred forty-five; **37** the sons of Lod, Hadid (Chadid), and Ono, seven hundred twenty-one; **38** the sons of Senaah (Sena'a), three thousand nine hundred thirty.

7:1 Neh 6:1; Neh 6:15; 2 Chr 31:2
7:2 Neh 1:2; Neh 2:8; Neh 10:23
7:3 Neh 13:19; Ps 127:1; Matt 10:16
7:4 Isa 58:12; Hag 1:4-6; Matt 6:33
7:5 Neh 5:19; Neh 6:14; Ezra 7:27
7:6 Ezra 2:1-70; Ezra 5:8; Ezra 6:2
7:7 Matt 1:12; Matt 1:13; Ezra 2:2
7:8 Neh 10:14; Ezra 2:3; Ezra 8:3
7:9 Ezra 2:4; Ezra 8:8
7:10 Ezra 2:5; Neh 6:18
7:11 Ezra 2:6; Neh 10:14; Neh 8:4
7:12 Ezra 2:7; Ezra 8:7; Ezra 10:26
7:13 Ezra 2:8
7:14 Ezra 2:9
7:15 Ezra 2:10
7:16 Ezra 2:11
7:17 Ezra 2:12
7:18 Ezra 2:13
7:19 Ezra 2:14
7:20 Ezra 2:15
7:21 Ezra 2:16
7:22 Ezra 2:19
7:23 Ezra 2:17
7:24 Ezra 2:18
7:25 Ezra 2:20
7:26 Ezra 2:21,22
7:27 Ezra 2:23; Isa 10:30; Jer 1:1
7:28 Ezra 2:24
7:29 Josh 18:25; Ezra 2:25; Josh 9:17
7:30 Josh 18:24,25; Ezra 2:26
7:31 1 Sam 13:5,23; Ezra 2:27; Isa 10:28
7:32 Ezra 2:28; Josh 8:9,17
7:33 Ezra 2:29
7:34 Neh 7:12; Ezra 2:31
7:35 Ezra 2:32; Ezra 10:31
7:36 Ezra 2:34
7:37 1 Chr 8:12; Neh 6:2; Neh 11:34,35
7:38 Ezra 2:35

7:1 *the gatekeepers and the singers and the Levites had been appointed* Temple gatekeepers, and even singers and Levites, seem to have helped watch a city with so few people.
7:2 *he was like a man of faithfulness and feared God more than many* Hanani brought the news of 1:2. Nehemiah chose leaders not for family name or skill alone, but for faithfulness and the fear of God. That is still the first thing to look for in a leader (1 Tim 3:1-7; Acts 6:3).
7:3 *not be opened until the sun is hot* Gates shut until well into the morning, when all were awake. Each family guarded before its own house, as they had built (3:10, 23, 28). The enemies had not gone away (6:17-19). A finished wall still had to be watched.
7:4 *the people were few in its midst, and there were no houses built* A city needs people, not just stones. Chapter 11 solves this.
7:5 *my God put it into my heart* God guides through ordinary thoughts and plans as well as miracles (2:12). A genealogy is a family record. Nehemiah needed to know the true families before moving people into the city, and he found the list of the first return in 538 B.C., the record of Ezra 2.
7:7 *who came with Zerubbabel, Jeshua* Twelve names here, eleven in Ezra 2:2, with Nahamani added. Many think they stood for the twelve tribes. This Nehemiah and Mordecai lived a hundred years earlier.
7:8 *the sons of Parosh* Families (7:8-25) and towns (7:26-38), the towns of Judah and Benjamin. Some numbers differ from Ezra 2: Arah has 775 there and 652 here (7:10), Senaah 3,630 and 3,930 (7:38). Numbers were easy to miscopy, and one list may come from signing up in Babylon and the other from arrival. Scripture is honest enough to give both records side by side.

Priests, Levites and Temple Servants

39 The priests: the sons of Jedaiah (Yedaya), of the house of Jeshua, nine hundred seventy-three; **40** the sons of Immer (Imer), one thousand fifty-two; **41** the sons of Pashhur (Pashchur), one thousand two hundred forty-seven; **42** the sons of Harim, one thousand seventeen. **43** The Levites: the sons of Jeshua, of Kadmiel (Qadmi'el), of the sons of Hodevah (Hodeva), seventy-four. **44** The singers: the sons of Asaph (Asaf), one hundred forty-eight. **45** The gatekeepers: the sons of Shallum (Shalum), the sons of Ater, the sons of Talmon, the sons of Akkub (Aquv), the sons of Hatita (Chatita), the sons of Shobai (Shovay), one hundred thirty-eight. **46** The temple servants: the sons of Ziha (Tsicha), the sons of Hasupha (Chasufa), the sons of Tabbaoth (Tabaot), **47** the sons of Keros (Qeros), the sons of Sia (Si'a), the sons of Padon, **48** the sons of Lebanah (Levana), the sons of Hagabah (Chagava), the sons of Shalmai (Shalmay), **49** the sons of Hanan (Chanan), the sons of Giddel (Gidel), the sons of Gahar (Gachar), **50** the sons of Reaiah (Re'aya), the sons of Rezin (Retsin), the sons of Nekoda (Neqoda), **51** the sons of Gazzam (Gazam), the sons of Uzza (Uza), the sons of Paseah (Paseach), **52** the sons of Besai (Besay), the sons of Meunim, the sons of Nephishesim (Nefishesim), **53** the sons of Bakbuk (Baqbuq), the sons of Hakupha (Chaqufa), the sons of Harhur (Charchur), **54** the sons of Bazlith (Batslit), the sons of Mehida (Mechida), the sons of Harsha (Charsha), **55** the sons of Barkos (Barqos), the sons of Sisera (Sisra), the sons of Temah (Tamach), **56** the sons of Neziah (Netsiach), the sons of Hatipha (Chatifa). **57** The sons of the servants of Solomon (Shelomo): the sons of Sotai (Sotay), the sons of Sophereth (Soferet), the sons of Perida, **58** the sons of Jaala (Ya'ala), the sons of Darkon (Darqon), the sons of Giddel, **59** the sons of Shephatiah, the sons of Hattil (Chatil), the sons of Pochereth-hazzebaim (Pokheret-Hatsvayim), the sons of Amon. **60** All the temple servants and the sons of the servants of Solomon ***were*** three hundred ninety-two. **61** And these ***are*** those who came up from Tel-melah (Tel-Melach), Tel-harsha (Tel-Charsha), Cherub (Keruv), Addon (Adon), and Immer, and they were not able to declare the house of their fathers and their seed, whether they ***were*** from Israel: **62** the sons of Delaiah (Delaya), the sons of Tobiah (Toviya), the sons of Nekoda, six hundred forty-two. **63** And from the priests: the sons of Habaiah (Chovaya), the sons of Hakkoz (Haqots), the sons of Barzillai (Barzilay), who had taken a wife from the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite and was called by their name. **64** These sought their record ***among*** those enrolled by genealogy, and it was not found, and they were defiled ***and removed*** from the priesthood. **65** And the governor said to them that they should not eat from the most holy things until the priest stood up for Urim and Thummim.

The Whole Assembly and Their Gifts

66 All the assembly together ***was*** forty-two thousand three hundred sixty, **67** besides their male servants and their female servants; these ***were*** seven thousand three hundred thirty-seven. And to them ***belonged*** two hundred forty-five male singers and female singers. **68** Their horses ***were*** seven hundred thirty-six; their mules, two hundred forty-five; **69** camels, four hundred thirty-five; donkeys, six thousand seven hundred twenty. **70** And some of the heads of the fathers gave for the work. The governor gave to the treasury: gold, one thousand drachmas; fifty bowls; five hundred thirty tunics of priests. **71** And some of the heads of the fathers gave to the treasury of the work: gold, twenty thousand drachmas, and silver, approximately 2,750 pounds (two thousand two hundred minas). **72** And what the rest of the people gave ***was*** gold, twenty thousand drachmas, and silver, approximately 2,500 pounds (two thousand minas), and sixty-seven tunics of priests. **73** And the priests and the Levites and the gatekeepers and the singers and some of the people and the temple servants and all Israel dwelt in their cities. And the seventh month arrived, and the sons of Israel ***were*** in their cities.

7:39 1 Chr 24:7-19; Ezra 2:36
7:40 1 Chr 24:14; Ezra 2:37
7:41 1 Chr 9:12; 1 Chr 24:9; Ezra 2:38
7:42 1 Chr 24:8; Ezra 2:39; Ezra 10:31
7:43 Ezra 2:40; Neh 3:9
7:44 1 Chr 25:2; Ezra 2:41
7:45 1 Chr 26:1-32; Ezra 2:42
7:46 Lev 27:2-8; Josh 9:23-27; 1 Chr 9:2
7:47 Ezra 2:44
7:48 Ezra 2:45,46; Ezra 2:46
7:51 Ezra 2:49
7:52 Ezra 2:50
7:54 Ezra 2:52
7:55 Ezra 2:53
7:57 Ezra 2:55; Neh 11:3
7:58 Ezra 2:56
7:59 Ezra 2:57
7:60 Ezra 2:58
7:61 Ezra 2:59
7:62 Ezra 2:60
7:63 Ezra 2:61-63; 2 Sam 17:27; 2 Sam 19:31-33
7:64 Matt 22:11-13; Neh 7:5; 1 Chr 9:1
7:65 Neh 8:9; Neh 10:1; Exod 28:30
7:66 Ezra 2:64
7:67 Isa 45:1,2; Jer 27:7; Ezra 2:65
7:68 Ezra 2:66,67
7:70 Neh 8:9; Ezra 2:68-70; Num 7:2-86
7:71 Job 34:19; Luke 21:1-4; 2 Cor 8:12
7:73 Ezra 2:70; Ezra 3:1

7:39 *the priests* Over four thousand, while the Levites were again only seventy-four (7:43). The people living in Judah were these families' descendants, and the list was their family tree. God's work passes from one generation to the next. Zerubbabel built the temple, Ezra taught the Law, Nehemiah built the wall. One plants, another waters, but God gives the growth (1 Cor 3:6).
7:61 *they were not able to declare the house of their fathers* As in Ezra 2:59-63, some priests were kept from serving until God's will was learned by Urim and Thummim (7:65; Exod 28:30). Knowing who belonged and could serve mattered for the covenant (ch 10) and the cleansing of the priesthood (ch 13).
7:66 *forty-two thousand three hundred sixty* The same total as Ezra 2:64, with 245 singers here and 200 in Ezra 2:65. The family numbers add to less than the total, most likely because it included people not listed by family.
7:70 *some of the heads of the fathers gave for the work* More detail than Ezra 2:68-69. The governor, the leaders and the ordinary people all gave. A drachma was a Persian gold coin, the daric, about a quarter ounce. A mina was about a pound and a quarter of silver.
7:73 *the seventh month arrived, and the sons of Israel were in their cities* The words that open Ezra 3:1. Almost a hundred years later another seventh month came, and God's people gathered again, this time to hear His Word.

NEHEMIAH 8

Ezra Reads the Law

1 And all the people gathered as one man to the open square which ***was*** before the Water Gate. And they said to Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses (Moshe), which the LORD had commanded Israel (Yisra'el). **2** And Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly, from man to woman, and everyone who understood to hear, on the first day of the seventh month. **3** And he read in it before the open square which ***was*** before the Water Gate, from the light until the middle of the day, in front of the men and the women and those who understood; and the ears of all the people ***were*** to the book of the law. **4** And Ezra the scribe stood on a tower of wood which they had made for the purpose. And beside him stood Mattithiah (Matitya) and Shema and Anaiah (Anaya) and Uriah (Uriya) and Hilkiah (Chilqiya) and Maaseiah (Ma'aseya), on his right; and on his left, Pedaiah (Pedaya) and Mishael and Malchijah (Malkiya) and Hashum (Chashum) and Hashbaddanah (Chashbadana), Zechariah (Zekharya), Meshullam (Meshulam). **5** And Ezra opened the book before the eyes of all the people, for he was above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up. **6** And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God. And all the people answered, "Amen, Amen," with the lifting up of their hands; and they bowed low and bowed down to the LORD ***with their*** faces to the ground. **7** And Jeshua (Yeshua) and Bani and Sherebiah (Sherevya), Jamin (Yamin), Akkub (Aquv), Shabbethai (Shabtay), Hodiah (Hodiya), Maaseiah, Kelita (Qelita), Azariah (Azarya), Jozabad (Yozavad), Hanan (Chanan), Pelaiah (Pelaya), and the Levites were causing the people to understand the law, and the people ***were*** in their place. **8** And they read in the book, in the law of God, making ***it*** clear and giving the sense, and they understood the reading.

The Joy of the LORD

9 And Nehemiah (Nechemya)—he ***was*** the governor—and Ezra the priest, the scribe, and the Levites who were causing the people to understand, said to all the people, "This day is holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn and do not weep." For all the people were weeping when they heard the words of the law. **10** And he said to them, "Go, eat fat things and drink sweet things, and send portions to him for whom nothing is prepared, for this day ***is*** holy to our Lord. And do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your stronghold." **11** And the Levites were quieting all the people, saying, "Hush, for this day ***is*** holy, and do not be grieved." **12** And all the people went to eat and to drink and to send portions and to make great joy, for they had understood the words which they had made known to them.

The Feast of Booths

13 And on the second day the heads of the fathers of all the

8:1 Matt 23:2; Acts 15:21; Ezra 7:6,11
8:2 Lev 23:24; Num 29:1; Deut 17:18
8:3 Luke 19:48; Acts 13:15; Acts 13:27
8:4 Neh 10:25; Neh 11:5; Neh 10:3
8:5 Judg 3:20; 1 Kgs 8:14; Luke 4:16,17
8:6 Matt 6:13; 1 Cor 14:16; Rev 19:4
8:7 Neh 9:4; Neh 3:23; Ezra 10:22
8:8 Acts 8:30; Acts 28:23; Hab 2:2
8:9 Neh 7:65,70; Neh 8:2; Deut 12:7,12
8:10 Prov 17:22; John 6:12; John 17:13
8:11 Num 13:30
8:12 Neh 8:7,8; Ps 126:1-3; Job 23:12
8:13 Luke 19:47; Acts 4:1; Luke 19:48

8:1 *all the people gathered as one man* Not a meeting Nehemiah called. The wall was done, and they wanted God's Word. The Water Gate's open square was a place where men, women and children could all come, not the temple courts.
8:1 *they said to Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses* Ezra's first appearance in Nehemiah, about thirteen years after he came (Ezra 7:10). The people asked him to teach. The book was the five books of Moses, or at least the Law in them, carrying God's own authority.
8:2 *from man to woman, and everyone who understood to hear* God's Word is for every man, woman and child who can take it in, as Moses commanded (Deut 31:10-13). The first day of the seventh month was the Feast of Trumpets (Lev 23:23-25). Tishri, September to October, held Trumpets, the Day of Atonement and the Feast of Booths.
8:3 *from the light until the middle of the day* About six hours, and "the ears of all the people were to the book." Not just present, listening. How long can we listen before our minds wander?
8:4 *on a tower of wood which they had made for the purpose* A raised wooden platform, the first pulpit we read of in the Bible. The men beside him, most likely leaders or priests, showed the whole leadership stood behind the reading.
8:5 *when he opened it, all the people stood up* The book was a scroll. They stood out of respect, as many churches still stand for the reading of Scripture.
8:6 *Amen, Amen, with the lifting up of their hands* Ezra praised God before reading. The Word is God speaking, and the right response is worship. Amen means it is true, so be it, and twice means with the whole heart. Lifted hands were a sign of prayer and praise (Ps 134:2; 1 Tim 2:8). They stood, lifted hands, and fell on their faces.
8:7 *causing the people to understand the law* The Levites were set apart to serve and teach (Deut 33:10; 2 Chr 17:7-9). They likely moved among the crowd in smaller groups. The people stayed in their place, waiting to be taught.
8:8 *making it clear and giving the sense, and they understood the reading* One of the clearest pictures of good Bible teaching. First the text itself, read aloud. Then made clear, which many think included putting the Hebrew into Aramaic for people raised in Babylon (13:24). Then giving the sense, explaining what it meant and why it mattered. That is exegesis, drawing out what the text says, not reading ideas into it. Every pastor, teacher and parent has this job, and every listener too (Mark 4:9).
8:9 *all the people were weeping when they heard the words of the law* The Law showed them their sin and the curses that had fallen in exile (Rom 3:20; 7:7). The governor and the priest stood side by side, one building the wall and one building God's Word into hearts.
8:9 *This day is holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn and do not weep* Their tears were not wrong. But the Feast of Trumpets was a day set aside for joy (Num 29:1). There is a time to weep over sin, and it comes later this month (9:1-3).
8:10 *send portions to him for whom nothing is prepared* Fat things are rich food, and sweet things sweet drinks. Joy in God always turns outward. No one, not even the poor of chapter 5, was left out (Deut 16:11, 14).
8:10 *the joy of the LORD is your stronghold* The key verse of the book. It can mean the joy the LORD gives, or our joy in Him. Either way it is rooted in God, not circumstances. They had just built a wall for safety, but their real fortress was joy in the God who forgives and restores. Sorrow over sin leads to repentance (2 Cor 7:10), but we are not meant to stay there (John 15:11; Phil 4:4). Circumstances change. He does not.
8:11 *Hush, for this day is holy* Good teaching shows people their sin and then points them to God's grace.
8:12 *for they had understood the words which they had made known to them* Their joy came from understanding, not from feeling good. True joy grows out of truth.
8:13 *to gain insight into the words of the law* On the second day the heads of families came back to learn so they could teach their households. That is how God's Word spreads (Deut 6:6-7).

people, the priests and the Levites, were gathered to Ezra the scribe, and to gain insight into the words of the law. **14** And they found written in the law which the LORD had commanded by the hand of Moses that the sons of Israel should dwell in booths at the festival in the seventh month, **15** and that they should proclaim and cause a proclamation to pass through all their cities and in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), saying, "Go out ***to*** the hill country, and bring leaves of olive and leaves of oil tree and leaves of myrtle and leaves of palm trees and leaves of leafy trees, to make booths, as ***it is*** written." **16** And the people went out and brought ***them***, and they made booths for themselves, each on his roof, and in their courtyards, and in the courtyards of the house of God, and in the open square of the Water Gate, and in the open square of the Gate of Ephraim (Efrayim). **17** And all the assembly who had returned from the captivity made booths and dwelt in the booths, for the sons of Israel had not done so from the days of Joshua (Yeshua) the son of Nun until that day. And there was very great joy. **18** And he read in the book of the law of God day by day, from the first day until the last day. And they kept the festival seven days, and on the eighth day ***there was*** a solemn assembly, according to the ordinance.

NEHEMIAH 9

The People Confess Their Sins

1 And on the twenty-fourth day of this month the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) were gathered with fasting and in sackcloth, and earth ***was*** on them. **2** And the seed of Israel separated themselves from all foreigners, and they stood and confessed their sins and the iniquities of their fathers. **3** And they stood up in their place and read in the book of the law of the LORD their God a fourth of the day, and ***for*** a fourth they were confessing and bowing down to the LORD their God. **4** And on the ascent of the Levites stood Jeshua (Yeshua) and Bani, Kadmiel (Qadmi'el), Shebaniah (Shevanya), Bunni (Buni), Sherebiah (Sherevya), Bani, Chenani (Kenani); and they cried out with a loud voice to the LORD their God. **5** And the Levites, Jeshua and Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabneiah (Chashavneya), Sherebiah, Hodiah (Hodiya), Shebaniah, Pethahiah (Petachya), said, "Arise, bless the LORD your God from everlasting to everlasting. And let them bless the name of Your glory, and exalted above all blessing and praise.

The Great Prayer: God's Faithfulness

6 You are the LORD, You alone. You made the heavens, the heavens of the heavens, and all their host, the earth and all that ***is*** on it, the seas and all that ***is*** in them; and You are keeping all of them alive, and the host of the heavens are bowing down to You. **7** You are the LORD God, who chose Abram (Avram) and brought him out from Ur of the Chaldeans (Kasdim), and made his name Abraham (Avraham). **8** And You found his heart faithful before You, and made the covenant with him to give the land of the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Amorite, and the Perizzite, and the Jebusite, and the Girgashite, to give ***it*** to his seed. And You have fulfilled Your words, for You ***are*** righteous. **9** And You saw the affliction of our fathers in Egypt (Mitsrayim), and You heard their outcry at the Red Sea. **10** And You gave signs and wonders against Pharaoh and against all his servants and against all the people of his land, for You knew that they had acted presumptuously against them. And You

8:14 Lev 23:34,40-43; Deut 16:13-15; Zech 14:16-19
8:15 Lev 23:4; Deut 16:16; Lev 23:40
8:16 2 Kgs 14:13; Neh 3:26; Neh 12:37
8:17 Heb 4:8; 2 Chr 8:13; 2 Chr 7:8-10
8:18 Lev 23:36; Num 29:35; Deut 31:10-13
9:1 Neh 8:2; Josh 7:6; 1 Sam 4:12
9:2 Neh 13:3,30; Ezra 10:11; Hos 5:7
9:3 Neh 8:3; Neh 8:4,7,8
9:4 John 11:43; Acts 7:60; Neh 8:7
9:5 Ezra 3:11; Ps 103:1,2; Ps 117:1,2
9:6 Heb 1:3; Acts 4:24; Gen 1:1
9:7 Acts 7:2; Acts 7:3; Acts 7:4
9:8 Luke 1:72; Acts 13:22; Luke 1:73
9:9 Acts 7:34; Acts 13:17; Exod 2:25
9:10 Acts 7:36; Rom 9:17; Acts 13:17

8:14 *the sons of Israel should dwell in booths at the festival in the seventh month* The Feast of Booths, or Tabernacles, seven days in branch shelters to remember God's care in the wilderness and give thanks for harvest (Lev 23:33-43; Deut 16:13-15).
8:15 *to make booths, as it is written* They read it, and then they did it (James 1:22).
8:16 *each on his roof, and in their courtyards* Flat roofs, courtyards, temple courts and open squares filled with shelters. The whole city became a camp.
8:17 *from the days of Joshua the son of Nun until that day* The feast had been kept before (1 Kgs 8:2, 65; Ezra 3:4). The point seems to be it had never been kept like this, by the whole people with such joy and careful obedience. Those who wept at the Law now rejoiced in obeying it. Obedience is the road to joy.
8:18 *he read in the book of the law of God day by day* As Moses commanded for the Feast of Booths (Deut 31:10-11). The eighth day was a solemn assembly of rest (Lev 23:36). On "the last day, the great day of the feast" (John 7:37) Jesus called the thirsty to come to Him, and the nations will keep this feast before the King (Zech 14:16). I believe that points to Christ's thousand-year reign, when its joy will be full.
9:1 *with fasting and in sackcloth, and earth was on them* Two days after the feast (8:18) the mood changed. Sackcloth was rough goat-hair cloth worn in grief, and earth on the head a sign of mourning (Josh 7:6; Job 2:12). In chapter 8, joy. In chapter 9, confession. Both are right responses to the Word, each in its time.
9:2 *the seed of Israel separated themselves from all foreigners* Israel gathered to confess Israel's history. Foreigners who turned to the LORD were welcome among God's people (Ezra 6:21). This was about who would stand that day to confess the nation's sin and sign its covenant. They owned their own sins and their fathers', without blaming them.
9:3 *a fourth of the day* About three hours of reading, then three of confession and worship. They read first, and God's Word showed them what to confess.
9:5 *from everlasting to everlasting* God always was and always will be, and He is "exalted above all blessing and praise." We can never praise Him too much. The prayer begins with praise, which keeps confession from turning into despair.
9:6 *You are the LORD, You alone* The heart of Israel's faith (Deut 6:4). The heavens of the heavens are the highest heavens, and their host the stars and angels. God keeps everything alive every moment, as Christ upholds all things (Col 1:17; Heb 1:3). If the angels bow, how much more should we?
9:7 *who chose Abram and brought him out from Ur of the Chaldeans* God chose Abram in a city of idols (Josh 24:2) and renamed him father of a multitude (Gen 17:5).
9:8 *You have fulfilled Your words, for You are righteous* Abraham believed and it was counted to him as righteousness (Gen 15:6), and God swore the land (Gen 15:18-21). The theme of the whole prayer: God keeps His promises, and those praying stood in that land as proof.
9:10 *for You knew that they had acted presumptuously against them* To act presumptuously is to act with pride as if no one can hold you to account. Pharaoh thought he was a god. The plagues showed him otherwise (Exod 7-12).

made for Yourself a name, as ***it is*** this day. **11** And the sea
You split before them, and they passed through the midst of
the sea on the dry ground; and their pursuers You threw into
the depths, like a stone into mighty waters. **12** And with a
pillar of cloud You led them by day, and with a pillar of fire
by night, to light up for them the way in which they should
walk. **13** And on Mount Sinai (Sinay) You came down, and
spoke with them from heaven, and gave them upright judg-
ments and laws of truth, good statutes and commandments.
14 And the Sabbath of Your holiness You made known to
them, and commandments and statutes and a law You com-
manded them by the hand of Moses (Moshe) Your servant.
15 And bread from heaven You gave them for their hunger,
and water from a rock You brought forth for them for their
thirst. And You said to them to go in to possess the land
which You had raised Your hand to give them.

Israel's Rebellion and God's Mercy

16 And they and our fathers acted presumptuously and stiff-
ened their neck and did not listen to Your commandments.
17 And they refused to listen, and they did not remember
Your wonders which You had done with them; and they stiff-
ened their neck and appointed a head to return to their slav-
ery in their rebellion. And You ***are*** a God of forgiveness, gra-
cious and compassionate, slow to anger and great in stead-
fast love, and You did not abandon them. **18** Even when they
had made for themselves a calf of molten metal and had said,
'This ***is*** your god who brought you up from Egypt,' and had
done great blasphemies, **19** and You in Your great compas-
sion did not abandon them in the wilderness. The pillar of
the cloud did not depart from over them by day, to lead them
in the way, and the pillar of the fire by night, to light up for
them, even the way in which they should walk. **20** And Your
good Spirit You gave to instruct them, and Your manna You
did not withhold from their mouth, and water You gave
them for their thirst. **21** And forty years You sustained them
in the wilderness; they did not lack; their clothes did not
wear out, and their feet did not swell. **22** And You gave them
kingdoms and peoples, and You apportioned them to a cor-
ner. And they possessed the land of Sihon (Sichon), and the
land of the king of Heshbon (Cheshbon), and the land of Og
the king of Bashan. **23** And their sons You multiplied like the
stars of the heavens, and You brought them into the land
which You had said to their fathers to go in to possess.
24 And the sons went in and possessed the land, and You
subdued before them the inhabitants of the land, the
Canaanites, and gave them into their hand, and their kings
and the peoples of the land, to do with them according to
their will. **25** And they captured fortified cities and fat
ground, and they possessed houses full of every good thing,
hewn cisterns, vineyards and olive trees and trees for food in
abundance. And they ate and were satisfied and grew fat and
luxuriated in Your great goodness. **26** And they were disobe-
dient and rebelled against You and threw Your law behind
their back, and they killed Your prophets, who had warned
them to bring them back to You; and they did great blas-
phemies. **27** And You gave them into the hand of their adver-
saries, and they distressed them. And in the time of their dis-
tress they cried out to You, and You heard from heaven; and
according to Your great compassion You gave them saviors,
and they saved them from the hand of their adversaries.
28 And when they had rest, they returned to do evil before
You; and You abandoned them into the hand of their ene-
mies, and they had dominion over them. And they returned
and cried out to You, and You heard from heaven, and You
rescued them according to Your compassion many times.

9:11 Heb 11:29; Rev 18:21; Acts 13:17
9:12 Exod 13:21,22; Neh 9:19; Exod 14:19,20
9:13 Acts 7:38; Heb 12:22; Heb 12:23
9:14 John 1:17; Mark 2:27; Acts 7:35
9:15 John 6:31; John 6:32; John 6:33
9:16 Acts 7:51; Neh 9:10,29; Deut 31:27
9:17 Ps 78:11,42,43; Ps 86:5,15; Num 14:3,4,11,41
9:18 Acts 7:36; Exod 32:4-8,31,32; Ps 106:19-23
9:19 Acts 13:18; Neh 9:27; Neh 9:12
9:20 John 6:31; John 7:38; Acts 13:18
9:21 Acts 13:18; Deut 2:7; Deut 8:4
9:22 Num 21:21-35; Josh 10:11; Ps 78:65
9:23 Gen 15:5; Gen 22:17; 1 Chr 27:23
9:24 Acts 7:45; Josh 21:43,45; Josh 18:1
9:25 Deut 32:15; Deut 3:5; Neh 9:35
9:26 Acts 7:52; Matt 23:34; Matt 5:12
9:27 Deut 31:16-18; Judg 2:14,15; Judg 3:8-30
9:28 Judg 3:11,12,30; Judg 4:1; Judg 5:31

9:11 *like a stone into mighty waters* Echoing the Song of Moses (Exod 15:5, 10). The exodus is the Old Testament's great picture of salvation (1 Cor 5:7).
9:12 *with a pillar of cloud You led them by day* God did not save His people and leave them to find their own way (Exod 13:21-22).
9:13 *upright judgments and laws of truth, good statutes and commandments* The Law was a gift, not a burden to crush them. It is "holy and righteous and good" (Rom 7:12). The trouble was never with the Law but with those who did not keep it.
9:14 *the Sabbath of Your holiness You made known to them* Given at Sinai as a sign of the covenant with Israel (Exod 20:8-11; 31:13-17), named here because they were about to promise to keep it (10:31).
9:15 *bread from heaven You gave them for their hunger* Jesus is the true bread from heaven (John 6:32-35), and the rock was Christ (1 Cor 10:4). Raising the hand was the sign of an oath. In verses 6-15 every verb belongs to God: made, chose, saw, heard, split, led, spoke, gave. That is grace.
9:16 *they and our fathers acted presumptuously* The word used of Pharaoh (9:10) is now used of Israel. A stiff neck is an ox that will not turn.
9:17 *appointed a head to return to their slavery* From Numbers 14:4. They forgot God's wonders in weeks and would rather be slaves than trust Him.
9:17 *a God of forgiveness, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and great in steadfast love* God's own words to Moses (Exod 34:6-7), repeated through the Old Testament (Ps 103:8; Joel 2:13; Jonah 4:2). Gracious gives what we do not deserve, compassionate feels for those who suffer, slow to anger is patient, and hesed never quits.
9:18 *a calf of molten metal* The worst sin of the wilderness, at the foot of the mountain of the Law (Exod 32). They credited their salvation to an idol they made.
9:20 *Your good Spirit You gave to instruct them* God's Spirit was at work even then (Num 11:17, 25).
9:21 *their clothes did not wear out, and their feet did not swell* For forty years God cared for a rebellious people down to their clothes and feet (Deut 8:4). That is how far His patience goes.
9:22 *the land of Sihon* Sihon and Og were the first kings defeated, east of the Jordan (Num 21:21-35).
9:24 *You subdued before them the inhabitants of the land* Israel fought, but God gave the victory.
9:25 *luxuriated in Your great goodness* Houses they did not build and wells they did not dig (Deut 6:10-11). Moses warned not to forget the LORD when full (Deut 8:10-14). Plenty is often more dangerous to faith than hardship.
9:26 *threw Your law behind their back* To treat it as worthless and refuse to look at it. They killed the prophets, as Jesus said of Jerusalem (Matt 23:37).
9:27 *You gave them saviors* The judges, like Gideon and Barak. Verses 27-28 trace the cycle of Judges: sin, judgment, crying out, rescue, rest, and sin again. But God's mercy outlasted their rebellion "many times."

29 And You warned them, to bring them back to Your law; and they acted presumptuously and did not listen to Your commandments, and they sinned against Your judgments, which a man shall do, and he shall live by them; and they gave a stubborn shoulder, and stiffened their neck, and did not listen. **30** And You extended ***Your patience*** toward them many years, and warned them by Your Spirit by the hand of Your prophets, and they did not give ear. And You gave them into the hand of the peoples of the lands. **31** And in Your great compassion You did not make a complete end of them and did not abandon them, for You ***are*** a gracious and compassionate God.

Now, Our God

32 And now, our God, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God, who keeps the covenant and the steadfast love, let not all the hardship which has found us be little before You, ***that is,*** to our kings, to our leaders, and to our priests, and to our prophets, and to our fathers, and to all Your people, from the days of the kings of Assyria (Ashur) until this day. **33** And You ***are*** righteous concerning all that has come upon us, for You have done faithfulness, and we have acted wickedly. **34** And our kings, our leaders, our priests, and our fathers did not do Your law, and did not pay attention to Your commandments and to Your testimonies with which You warned them. **35** And they, in their kingdom and in Your great goodness which You had given them, and in the broad and fat land which You had set before them, did not serve You and did not turn back from their evil deeds. **36** Look, we ***are*** slaves this day; and the land which You gave to our fathers to eat its fruit and its good things, look, we ***are*** slaves on it. **37** And its produce is increasing for the kings whom You have set over us in our sins; and they are ruling over our bodies and over our livestock according to their will, and we ***are*** in great distress." **38** And in all this we are making a firm agreement and writing ***it***; and on the sealed ***document are*** our leaders, our Levites, ***and*** our priests.

NEHEMIAH 10

Those Who Sealed the Covenant

1 And on the sealed ***documents were***: Nehemiah (Nechemya) the governor, the son of Hacaliah (Chakhalya), and Zedekiah (Tsidqiya), **2** Seraiah (Seraya), Azariah (Azarya), Jeremiah (Yirmeya), **3** Pashhur (Pashchur), Amariah (Amarya), Malchijah (Malkiya), **4** Hattush (Chatush), Shebaniah (Shevanya), Malluch (Malukh), **5** Harim (Charim), Meremoth (Meremot), Obadiah (Ovadya), **6** Daniel (Daniyel), Ginnethon (Gineton), Baruch (Barukh), **7** Meshullam (Meshulam), Abijah (Aviya), Mijamin (Miyamin), **8** Maaziah (Ma'azya), Bilgai (Bilgay), Shemaiah (Shemaya); these ***were*** the priests. **9** And the Levites: even Jeshua (Yeshua) the son of Azaniah (Azanya), Binnui (Binuy) of the sons of Henadad (Chenadad), Kadmiel (Qadmi'el); **10** and their brothers: Shebaniah, Hodiah (Hodiya), Kelita (Qelita), Pelaiah (Pelaya), Hanan (Chanan), **11** Mica (Mikha), Rehob (Rechov), Hashabiah (Chashavya), **12** Zaccur (Zakur), Sherebiah (Sherevya), Shebaniah, **13** Hodiah, Bani, Beninu. **14** The heads of the people: Parosh, Pahath-moab (Pachat-Mo'av), Elam, Zattu (Zatu), Bani, **15** Bunni (Buni), Azgad, Bebai (Bevay), **16** Adonijah (Adoniya), Bigvai (Bigvay), Adin, **17** Ater, Hezekiah (Chizqiya), Azzur (Azur), **18** Hodiah, Hashum (Chashum), Bezai (Betsay), **19** Hariph (Charif), Anathoth (Anatot), Nebai

9:29 Gal 3:12; Neh 9:26; Neh 9:10,16
9:30 Acts 7:51; Acts 28:25; Mark 12:36
9:31 Jer 4:27; Neh 9:17; Jer 5:10,18
9:32 Neh 1:5; 2 Kgs 17:3; Deut 7:21
9:33 Gen 18:25; Jer 12:1; Ps 106:6
9:34 Jer 29:19; Neh 9:30; 2 Kgs 17:15
9:35 Deut 28:47; Jer 5:19; Rom 3:4,5
9:36 Deut 28:48; Ezra 9:9; 2 Chr 12:8
9:37 Deut 28:33,39,51; Ezra 4:13; Ezra 6:8
9:38 Neh 10:1; Neh 10:29; 2 Kgs 23:3
10:1 Neh 9:38; Neh 8:9; Neh 1:1
10:2 Neh 3:23; Neh 11:11; Neh 12:1,33,34
10:3 Neh 11:12; Neh 12:2,13; Neh 3:11
10:4 Neh 3:10; Neh 12:14; Neh 12:2
10:5 Neh 3:11; Neh 3:4,21; Neh 12:3
10:6 Neh 12:4; Neh 3:20
10:7 Neh 3:6; Neh 8:4; Neh 11:11
10:8 Neh 12:5; Neh 3:29; Ezra 10:21
10:9 Neh 7:43; Neh 8:7; Neh 9:4
10:10 Neh 8:7; Neh 9:4,5; Ezra 10:23
10:11 Neh 11:15,22; Neh 12:24; Ezra 8:19,24
10:12 Neh 8:7; Neh 9:4; Neh 12:8
10:14 Neh 7:8,11-13; Neh 7:15; Neh 3:11
10:15 Neh 7:16,17; Ezra 2:11,12; Ezra 8:11,12
10:16 Neh 7:19-21; Ezra 2:14-16; Ezra 8:14
10:18 Neh 7:22-73; Ezra 2:17-70

9:29 *which a man shall do, and he shall live by them* From Leviticus 18:5. Paul quotes it to show the Law by itself demands perfect doing, which no one can give, so righteousness must come by faith (Gal 3:11-12; Rom 10:5). A stubborn shoulder pulls from the yoke.
9:30 *You extended Your patience toward them many years* From about 930 B.C. to the falls of Samaria in 722 and Jerusalem in 586 B.C. The prophets spoke by God's Spirit (2 Pet 1:21).
9:31 *You did not make a complete end of them* Even the exile was not the end. Those praying were the remnant God kept.
9:32 *let not all the hardship which has found us be little before You* Almost Nehemiah's words in 1:5 (Deut 10:17). About three hundred years of trouble since Assyria. God is never bored by our troubles.
9:33 *You are righteous concerning all that has come upon us* The turning point of true confession: God was right in everything and we were wrong, as Ezra and Daniel prayed (Ezra 9:15; Dan 9:7, 14). Have you blamed God for hard times that came from your own choices? Honest confession leaves God's goodness standing.
9:36 *we are slaves this day* Home in the Promised Land but not owning it, with the harvest going to Persia in taxes (5:4). They saw even the kings as part of God's judgment and were not bitter.
9:37 *we are in great distress* The prayer ends with an honest statement, not a demand for freedom. Home, but not yet free. The prophets speak of a day when the Son of David reigns and Israel is no longer under foreign rule (Jer 23:5-6; Ezek 37:24-25). I believe that will come when Jesus returns and sets up His kingdom on the earth.
9:38 *we are making a firm agreement and writing it* In the Hebrew Bible this is 10:1. Confession led to written commitment. The prayer shows God's faithfulness through all history and people turning away again and again, and it leaves us waiting for the new covenant with God's Law on the heart (Jer 31:31-34), which came through Jesus' blood (Luke 22:20; Heb 8:6-13). God will keep it fully with Israel as a nation (Rom 11:26-27), and every believer shares in it through faith in Christ.
10:1 *Nehemiah the governor, the son of Hacaliah* A leader who asks others to commit must be the first to commit himself.
10:2 *Seraiah, Azariah, Jeremiah* Many of the priests' names are family houses going back to the first return (12:1-7). This Jeremiah, Daniel (10:6) and Baruch are not the famous men.
10:9 *the Levites* Several had helped explain the Law and lead the prayer (8:7; 9:4-5). The heads of the people (10:14-27) include families of the first return and the wall builders.
10:14 *the heads of the people* A covenant with God is personal. Each man put his own name to it. Faith is never just a crowd going along. This renewed the covenant God already made at Sinai.

(Nevay), **20** Magpiash, Meshullam, Hezir (Chezir),
21 Meshezabel (Meshezav'el), Zadok (Tsadoq), Jaddua
(Yadua), **22** Pelatiah (Pelatya), Hanan, Anaiah (Anaya),
23 Hoshea, Hananiah (Chananya), Hasshub (Chashuv),
24 Hallohesh (Halochesh), Pilha (Pilcha), Shobek (Shoveq),
25 Rehum (Rechum), Hashabnah (Chashavna), Maaseiah
(Ma'aseya), **26** and Ahiah (Achiya), Hanan, Anan, **27** Malluch,
Harim, Baanah (Ba'ana).

The Promises of the Covenant

28 And the rest of the people, the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, the temple servants, and everyone who has separated himself from the peoples of the lands to the law of God, their wives, their sons, and their daughters, everyone who knows ***and*** understands, **29** are holding fast to their brothers, their nobles, and are entering into a curse and into an oath to walk in the law of God, which was given by the hand of Moses (Moshe) the servant of God, and to keep and to do all the commandments of the LORD our Lord, and His judgments and His statutes; **30** and that we will not give our daughters to the peoples of the land, and their daughters we will not take for our sons; **31** and the peoples of the land who bring the wares and any grain on the Sabbath day to sell, we will not take from them on the Sabbath and on a holy day; and we will leave the seventh year and the debt of every hand.

Not Neglecting the House of God

32 And we lay commandments on ourselves, to put on ourselves approximately 1/8 ounce (a third of the shekel) in the year for the service of the house of our God: **33** for the bread of the arrangement, and the continual grain offering, and for the continual burnt offering, ***of*** the Sabbaths, ***of*** the new moons, for the appointed feasts, and for the holy things, and for the sin offerings to make atonement for Israel (Yisra'el), and ***for*** all the work of the house of our God. **34** And we cast the lots concerning the offering of the wood, the priests, the Levites, and the people, to bring ***it*** to the house of our God, by the house of our fathers, at appointed times year by year, to burn ***it*** on the altar of the LORD our God, as ***it is*** written in the law; **35** and to bring the firstfruits of our ground and the firstfruits of all the fruit of every tree year by year to the house of the LORD; **36** and the firstborn of our sons and of our livestock, as ***it is*** written in the law, and the firstborn of our herds and of our flocks, to bring to the house of our God, to the priests who minister in the house of our God; **37** and the first of our dough, and our contributions, and the fruit of every tree, new wine and fresh oil, we will bring to the priests, to the storerooms of the house of our God, and the tithe of our ground to the Levites; and they, the Levites, ***are*** those who collect the tithes in all the cities of our labor. **38** And the priest, the son of Aaron (Aharon), shall be with the Levites when the Levites collect tithes; and the Levites shall bring up the tenth of the tithe to the house of our God, to the storerooms of the house of the treasury. **39** For to the storerooms the sons of Israel and the sons of Levi shall bring the contribution of the grain, the new wine, and the fresh oil; and there ***are*** the utensils of the sanctuary, and the priests who minister, and the gatekeepers, and the singers. And we will not neglect the house of our God.

10:25 Neh 3:17-32
10:28 2 Cor 6:16; Neh 9:2; Neh 7:72,73
10:29 John 1:17; John 7:19; Ps 119:106
10:30 Exod 34:16; Deut 7:3; Ezra 9:1-3,12-14
10:31 Neh 13:15-22; Exod 23:10,11; Exod 20:10
10:32 Exod 30:11-16; Gen 28:22; Prov 3:9
10:33 Col 2:16; 2 Chr 2:4; Lev 24:5
10:34 Heb 10:6; Neh 13:31; Isa 40:16
10:35 Exod 23:19; Deut 26:2; Exod 34:26
10:36 1 Cor 9:9; Exod 13:2,12-15; Lev 27:26,27
10:37 Lev 23:17; Num 18:21,24-32; Deut 18:4
10:38 Neh 13:12,13; Num 18:26-28; 1 Chr 9:26
10:39 2 Chr 31:12; Deut 12:6-11,17; Deut 14:23-27

10:28 *everyone who has separated himself from the peoples of the lands to the law of God* Not about race, but people who left the ways of the nations for God's Law, some perhaps born outside Israel (Ezra 6:21). Women and children old enough to understand were part of the covenant.
10:29 *are entering into a curse and into an oath* May God punish me if I break this. They promised all the commandments, then named where they had failed.
10:30 *we will not give our daughters to the peoples of the land* The sin Ezra faced about fourteen years before. The issue was faith, not race (Deut 7:3-4). By chapter 13 it was broken again (13:23-27). It is easy to sign a promise and harder to keep it. A Christian should marry only another believer (1 Cor 7:39; 2 Cor 6:14).
10:31 *we will leave the seventh year and the debt of every hand* Buying on the Sabbath was work (Exod 20:8-11), and this too was broken (13:15-22). The seventh year let the land rest and canceled debts (Exod 23:10-11; Deut 15:1-2), which meant trusting God for a year without a crop and protected the poor of chapter 5. These were Israel's laws under Moses. Believers differ on how the Sabbath applies now (Col 2:16-17), but the heart still speaks: trust God enough to rest, and show mercy to those in debt.
10:32 *approximately 1/8 ounce (a third of the shekel)* Half a shekel at the census (Exod 30:13), a third here, perhaps because they were poor. By Jesus' day it was half again (Matt 17:24).
10:33 *the sin offerings to make atonement for Israel* The bread of the arrangement was the twelve loaves set out each Sabbath (Lev 24:5-9), and the continual offerings came morning and evening (Num 28:3-8). Atonement covers sin so the guilty can be made right with God. Those sacrifices had to be made again and again. Jesus offered Himself once for all (Heb 10:4, 10-12).
10:34 *we cast the lots concerning the offering of the wood* The altar fire burned continually (Lev 6:12-13), and someone had to haul wood. Worship needs practical work. Setting up chairs, cleaning the building and fixing the roof are service to God as much as preaching.
10:35 *the firstfruits of our ground* The first and best of the harvest (Exod 23:19; Deut 26:1-11), given before anything else as trust that God would provide the rest.
10:36 *the firstborn of our sons and of our livestock* Every firstborn belonged to God since He spared Israel's firstborn in Egypt (Exod 13:2, 11-15), and firstborn sons were bought back (Num 18:15-16).
10:37 *the tithe of our ground to the Levites* A tithe is a tenth, for the landless Levites (Num 18:21-24). First fruits, firstborn, first dough. God asked to be first, not given leftovers.
10:38 *the Levites shall bring up the tenth of the tithe* A priest went along to keep it honest, and the Levites tithed too (Num 18:26-28). No one was above giving. Remember the storerooms. In chapter 13 one is emptied and given to Tobiah.
10:39 *we will not neglect the house of our God* The heart of the covenant. In Haggai's day they built fine houses and left God's house in ruins (Hag 1:4-9). Today God's house is His people, His temple by the Spirit (1 Cor 3:16; Eph 2:21-22). We are still called to give, serve, support those who teach (Gal 6:6) and not neglect meeting together (Heb 10:25). Do you give God the first, or the leftovers, of your money, time and strength?

NEHEMIAH 11

Filling Jerusalem

1 And the leaders of the people dwelt in Jerusalem
(Yerushalayim); and the rest of the people cast lots to bring
one from the ten to dwell in Jerusalem, the holy city, and
nine parts in the cities. **2** And the people blessed all the men
who volunteered to dwell in Jerusalem. **3** And these ***are*** the
heads of the province who dwelt in Jerusalem; and in the
cities of Judah (Yehuda) they dwelt, each on his property in
their cities: Israel (Yisra'el), the priests and the Levites and
the temple servants and the sons of the servants of Solomon
(Shelomo). **4** And in Jerusalem dwelt some of the sons of
Judah and some of the sons of Benjamin (Binyamin). Of the
sons of Judah: Athaiah (Ataya) the son of Uzziah (Uziya), the
son of Zechariah (Zekharya), the son of Amariah (Amarya),
the son of Shephatiah (Shefatya), the son of Mahalalel, of the
sons of Perez (Perets); **5** and Maaseiah (Ma'aseya) the son of
Baruch (Barukh), the son of Col-hozeh (Kol-Choze), the son of
Hazaiah (Chazaya), the son of Adaiah (Adaya), the son of
Joiarib (Yoyariv), the son of Zechariah, the son of the
Shilonite. **6** All the sons of Perez who dwelt in Jerusalem ***were***
four hundred sixty-eight men of valor. **7** And these ***are*** the
sons of Benjamin: Sallu (Salu) the son of Meshullam
(Meshulam), the son of Joed (Yo'ed), the son of Pedaiah
(Pedaya), the son of Kolaiah (Qolaya), the son of Maaseiah,
the son of Ithiel (Iti'el), the son of Jeshaiah (Yeshaya); **8** and
after him Gabbai (Gabay), Sallai (Salay), nine hundred
twenty-eight. **9** And Joel (Yo'el) the son of Zichri (Zikhri) ***was***
overseer over them, and Judah the son of Hassenuah
(Hasenu'a) ***was*** second over the city.

Priests and Levites in the City

10 Of the priests: Jedaiah (Yedaya) the son of Joiarib, Jachin
(Yakhin), **11** Seraiah (Seraya) the son of Hilkiah (Chilqiya),
the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok (Tsadoq), the son of
Meraioth (Merayot), the son of Ahitub (Achituv), the leader
of the house of God, **12** and their brothers who did the work
of the house, eight hundred twenty-two; and Adaiah the son
of Jeroham (Yerocham), the son of Pelaliah (Pelalya), the son
of Amzi (Amtsi), the son of Zechariah, the son of Pashhur
(Pashchur), the son of Malchijah (Malkiya), **13** and his broth-
ers, heads of fathers, two hundred forty-two; and Amashsai
(Amashsay) the son of Azarel, the son of Ahzai (Achzay), the
son of Meshillemoth (Meshilemot), the son of Immer (Imer),
14 and their brothers, mighty men of valor, one hundred
twenty-eight; and the overseer over them ***was*** Zabdiel
(Zavdi'el) the son of Haggedolim. **15** And of the Levites: She-
maiah (Shemaya) the son of Hasshub (Chashuv), the son of
Azrikam (Azriqam), the son of Hashabiah (Chashavya), the
son of Bunni (Buni); **16** and Shabbethai (Shabtay) and Joz-
abad (Yozavad), of the heads of the Levites, ***were*** over the
outside work of the house of God; **17** and Mattaniah
(Matanya) the son of Mica (Mikha), the son of Zabdi (Zavdi),
the son of Asaph (Asaf), the leader of the beginning, would
give thanks in prayer; and Bakbukiah (Baqbuqya), the second
among his brothers; and Abda (Avda) the son of Shammua
(Shamua), the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun (Yedutun).
18 All the Levites in the holy city ***were*** two hundred
eighty-four. **19** And the gatekeepers, Akkub (Aquv), Talmon,
and their brothers, who kept watch at the gates, ***were*** one
hundred seventy-two. **20** And the rest of Israel, the priests,
the Levites, ***were*** in all the cities of Judah, each on his inheri-
tance. **21** And the temple servants were dwelling on the
Ophel (Ofel); and Ziha (Tsicha) and Gishpa ***were*** over the
temple servants. **22** And the overseer of the Levites in
Jerusalem ***was*** Uzzi (Uzi) the son of Bani, the son of
Hashabiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Mica, of the sons
of Asaph, the singers, before the work of the house of God.

11:1 Matt 4:5; Matt 27:53; Neh 11:18
11:2 Judg 5:9; Deut 24:13; Job 29:13
11:3 Ezra 2:43,55; Ezra 2:1; Neh 7:73
11:4 Matt 1:3; Luke 3:33; Gen 38:29
11:5 Neh 3:15; Gen 38:5; Num 26:20
11:7 1 Chr 9:7-9
11:9 1 Chr 9:7
11:10 Neh 7:39; Neh 12:19; 1 Chr 9:10
11:11 1 Chr 6:7-14; 1 Chr 9:11; Ezra 7:1-5
11:12 1 Chr 9:12,13
11:15 1 Chr 9:14,19
11:16 Neh 8:7; 1 Chr 26:20; Acts 6:2,3
11:17 1 Chr 9:15; Neh 10:12; Neh 12:8,31
11:18 Matt 24:15; Matt 4:5; Neh 11:1
11:19 Neh 7:45; Neh 12:25; 1 Chr 9:17-22
11:21 Neh 3:26,31; 2 Chr 27:3
11:22 Neh 12:42; Neh 11:9,14; Acts 20:28

11:1 *cast lots to bring one from the ten to dwell in Jerusalem, the holy city* The walls were up, but a city needs people, and Jerusalem was mostly empty (7:4). So the leaders moved in and lots chose one family in ten. The lot was an accepted way to leave a choice with the Lord (Prov 16:33). Note the name "the holy city." Jerusalem was still the city God had chosen, ruins and all.

11:2 *the people blessed all the men who volunteered to dwell in Jerusalem* Some went by lot and some went willingly, and the people honored the volunteers. Living in Jerusalem meant leaving farms and family land for a city under threat from its neighbors. God's work still needs people who will go where they are needed, not only where it is comfortable.

11:3 *these are the heads of the province who dwelt in Jerusalem* The list that follows names who settled in the city (11:4-24) and then the towns of Judah and Benjamin (11:25-36). Compare 1 Chr 9, a similar list. God keeps track of names. He knows who served and where.

11:4 *of the sons of Perez* Perez was the son of Judah through Tamar (Gen 38:29), the line of Boaz and David (Ruth 4:18-22). Judah's royal line was back in the royal city, and from that line the Messiah would come.

11:6 *four hundred sixty-eight men of valor* "Men of valor" fits a city still in danger. Settling Jerusalem was not retirement. These men were its defenders as well as its residents.

11:9 *Joel the son of Zichri was overseer over them* Each group had its own officers. Order and leadership run all through Ezra and Nehemiah, and that is one reason the work held together.

11:11 *Seraiah the son of Hilkiah* His line runs back to Zadok, the high priest of Solomon's day (1 Kgs 2:35). "The leader of the house of God" may mean he was the chief officer of the temple under the high priest.

11:12 *their brothers who did the work of the house, eight hundred twenty-two* The priests in Jerusalem came to about 1,190 in all (11:12-14). Many hands did the daily work of the house, most of them never named beyond a number. God sees that work too.

11:17 *would give thanks in prayer* Mattaniah, from Asaph's line, led the thanksgiving. Praise had a leader and a place in the order of the city, just as David had arranged it (12:24).

11:19 *the gatekeepers, Akkub, Talmon, and their brothers* One hundred seventy-two men guarded the gates. After the long fight to hang those doors (6:1; 7:1), someone had to keep them.

11:21 *the temple servants were dwelling on the Ophel* The Ophel was the hill just south of the temple, close to their work (3:26).

23 For the commandment of the king ***was*** on them, and a firm agreement ***was*** on the singers, the matter of a day in its day. **24** And Pethahiah (Petachya) the son of Meshezabel (Meshezav'el), of the sons of Zerah (Zerach) the son of Judah, ***was*** at the hand of the king for every matter of the people.

The Villages of Judah and Benjamin

25 And as to the villages with their fields, some of the sons of Judah dwelt in Kiriath-arba (Qiryat-Arba) and its daughter ***towns***, and in Dibon (Divon) and its daughter ***towns***, and in Jekabzeel (Yeqavtse'el) and its villages, **26** and in Jeshua (Yeshua), and in Moladah (Molada), and in Beth-pelet (Bet-Palet), **27** and in Hazar-shual (Chatsar-Shu'al), and in Beersheba (Be'er-Sheva) and its daughter ***towns***, **28** and in Ziklag (Tsiqlag), and in Meconah (Mekhona) and in its daughter ***towns***, **29** and in En-rimmon (En-Rimon), and in Zorah (Tsor'a), and in Jarmuth (Yarmut), **30** Zanoah (Zanoach), Adullam (Adulam), and their villages, Lachish (Lakhish) and its fields, Azekah (Azeqa) and its daughter ***towns***. And they encamped from Beersheba to the valley of Hinnom (Hinom). **31** And the sons of Benjamin ***dwelt*** from Geba (Geva): Michmash (Mikhmas) and Aija (Ayya) and Bethel (Bet-El) and its daughter ***towns***, **32** Anathoth (Anatot), Nob (Nov), Ananiah (Ananya), **33** Hazor (Chatsor), Ramah (Rama), Gittaim (Gitayim), **34** Hadid (Chadid), Zeboim (Tsevo'im), Neballat (Nevalat), **35** Lod and Ono, the valley of the craftsmen. **36** And some of the Levites, the divisions of Judah, ***belonged*** to Benjamin.

NEHEMIAH 12

Priests and Levites Who Returned

1 And these ***are*** the priests and the Levites who came up with Zerubbabel (Zerubavel) the son of Shealtiel (She'alti'el), and Jeshua (Yeshua): Seraiah (Seraya), Jeremiah (Yirmeya), Ezra, **2** Amariah (Amarya), Malluch (Malukh), Hattush (Chatush), **3** Shecaniah (Shekhanya), Rehum (Rechum), Meremoth (Meremot), **4** Iddo (Ido), Ginnethoi (Ginetoy), Abijah (Aviya), **5** Mijamin (Miyamin), Maadiah (Ma'adya), Bilgah (Bilga), **6** Shemaiah (Shemaya), and Joiarib (Yoyariv), Jedaiah (Yedaya), **7** Sallu (Salu), Amok (Amoq), Hilkiah (Chilqiya), Jedaiah. These ***were*** the heads of the priests and their brothers in the days of Jeshua. **8** And the Levites: Jeshua, Binnui (Binuy), Kadmiel (Qadmi'el), Sherebiah (Sherevya), Judah (Yehuda), Mattaniah (Matanya); he and his brothers ***were*** over the songs of thanksgiving. **9** And Bakbukiah (Baqbuqya) and Unni (Uni), their brothers, ***were*** opposite them for charges.

The High Priests and Priestly Houses

10 And Jeshua fathered Joiakim (Yoyaqim), and Joiakim fathered Eliashib (Elyashiv), and Eliashib ***fathered*** Joiada (Yoyada), **11** and Joiada fathered Jonathan (Yonatan), and Jonathan fathered Jaddua (Yadua). **12** And in the days of Joiakim there were priests, heads of the fathers: of Seraiah, Meraiah (Meraya); of Jeremiah, Hananiah (Chananya); **13** of Ezra, Meshullam (Meshulam); of Amariah, Jehohanan (Yehochanan); **14** of Melicu (Melikhu), Jonathan; of Shebaniah (Shevanya), Joseph (Yosef); **15** of Harim (Charim), Adna; of Meraioth (Merayot), Helkai (Chelqay); **16** of Iddo, Zechariah (Zekharya); of Ginnethon, Meshullam; **17** of Abijah, Zichri (Zikhri); of Miniamin (Minyamin); of Moadiah (Mo'adya), Piltai (Piltay); **18** of Bilgah, Shammua (Shamua); of Shemaiah, Jehonathan (Yehonatan); **19** and of Joiarib, Mattenai (Matnay); of Jedaiah, Uzzi (Uzi); **20** of Sallai (Salay), Kallai (Qalay); of Amok, Eber (Ever); **21** of Hilkiah, Hashabiah (Chashavya); of Jedaiah, Nethanel (Netanel).

11:23 Ezra 6:8,9; 1 Chr 9:33; Ezra 7:20-24
11:24 Matt 1:3; Gen 38:30; 1 Chr 18:17
11:25 Josh 14:15; Josh 15:21; Josh 15:22
11:26 Josh 15:26; Josh 19:2; Josh 15:27
11:27 Josh 15:28; Josh 19:3; Gen 21:31
11:28 1 Sam 27:6; Josh 15:31
11:29 Josh 15:32; Josh 19:41; Judg 13:25
11:30 Josh 10:3; Josh 15:8; Neh 3:13
11:31 Neh 7:30; Josh 18:24; 1 Sam 13:11,23
11:32 Josh 21:18; Isa 10:30; 1 Sam 21:1
11:33 Matt 2:18; 2 Sam 4:3; Josh 18:25
11:34 1 Sam 13:18
11:35 1 Chr 8:12; Neh 7:37; 1 Chr 4:14
11:36 Josh 21:1-45; 1 Chr 6:54-81; Gen 49:7
12:1 Matt 1:12; Matt 1:13; Ezra 2:1,2
12:4 Luke 1:5
12:6 Neh 11:10; 1 Chr 9:10
12:7 1 Chr 24:18; Neh 12:1; Ezra 3:2
12:8 Neh 11:17,22; Neh 12:24; Neh 7:48
12:9 Ps 134:1-3
12:10 Neh 12:26; 1 Chr 6:3-15; Neh 3:1
12:12 Neh 12:22; 1 Chr 9:33,34; 1 Chr 15:12
12:17 Luke 1:5

11:23 *the commandment of the king was on them* Most take the king here to be the Persian king, who provided for the singers, as Artaxerxes had freed temple workers from taxes (Ezra 7:24). Some take it as David's command (12:24). "The matter of a day in its day" means a daily portion for daily service.

11:24 *was at the hand of the king for every matter of the people* Pethahiah seems to have served as the people's agent at the Persian court, or before the king's officials. Even under foreign rule God gave His people a voice.

11:25 *Kiriath-arba and its daughter towns* Kiriath-arba is Hebron (Josh 14:15), where Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were buried. "Daughter towns" are villages around a larger town.

11:30 *from Beersheba to the valley of Hinnom* The towns of 11:25-30 include Beersheba, Ziklag, Adullam, Lachish and Azekah, names from the days of Abraham, David and the kings. The people were back in the old land, from the southern edge at Beersheba up to the valley of Hinnom beside Jerusalem. It was a small remnant, but God was restoring them.

11:31 *Michmash and Aija and Bethel* Benjamin's towns (11:31-35) include Bethel, where God met Jacob (Gen 28:19), Anathoth, Jeremiah's hometown (Jer 1:1), Nob, the town of priests (1 Sam 21:1), and Ramah, Samuel's home. Many had been laid waste. Now they were lived in again.

12:1 *the priests and the Levites who came up with Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua* The list looks back about ninety years to the first return (Ezra 2). Remember where you came from and who went before you. Those who rejoiced at the wall stood on the work of those who laid the foundation.

12:8 *he and his brothers were over the songs of thanksgiving* Verses 8 and 9 picture two groups standing "opposite" each other, which suggests singing back and forth, as at the temple foundation (Ezra 3:11).

12:10 *Jeshua fathered Joiakim* The high priests from Jeshua to Jaddua, about six generations. Eliashib is the high priest of Nehemiah's day (3:1; 13:4, 28). High priests came and went because they died. Our High Priest "because He abides forever, holds the priesthood permanently" (Heb 7:24).

12:12 *in the days of Joiakim there were priests, heads of the fathers* The heads of the priestly houses one generation later (12:12-21), matched to the names in 12:1-7. Each family carried on its duty from father to son.

12:16 *of Iddo, Zechariah* Most likely the prophet Zechariah, who is called a descendant of Iddo (Zech 1:1; Ezra 5:1). If so, the prophet who foretold the King coming "lowly and riding on a donkey" (Zech 9:9; Matt 21:5) was also a priest serving at the altar.

The Levites and Singers

22 The Levites in the days of Eliashib, Joiada, and Johanan (Yochanan) and Jaddua ***were*** recorded ***as*** heads of fathers, and the priests, in the reign of Darius (Daryavesh) the Persian. **23** The sons of Levi, the heads of the fathers, ***were*** recorded in the book of the chronicles, and until the days of Johanan the son of Eliashib. **24** And the heads of the Levites ***were*** Hashabiah, Sherebiah, and Jeshua the son of Kadmiel, and their brothers opposite them, to praise ***and*** to give thanks according to the commandment of David the man of God, watch corresponding to watch. **25** Mattaniah and Bakbukiah, Obadiah (Ovadya), Meshullam, Talmon, Akkub (Aquv) ***were*** gatekeepers keeping watch at the storerooms of the gates. **26** These ***were*** in the days of Joiakim the son of Jeshua, the son of Jozadak (Yotsadaq), and in the days of Nehemiah (Nechemya) the governor and Ezra the priest, the scribe.

The Wall Dedicated

27 And at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) they sought the Levites from all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem to make a dedication and joy, and with thanksgivings and with song, cymbals, harps, and with lyres. **28** And the sons of the singers were gathered, even from the district around Jerusalem and from the villages of the Netophathite, **29** and from Beth-gilgal (Bet-Hagilgal), and from the fields of Geba (Geva) and Azmaveth (Azmavet); for the singers had built villages for themselves around Jerusalem. **30** And the priests and the Levites purified themselves, and they purified the people and the gates and the wall.

Two Choirs on the Wall

31 And I brought up the leaders of Judah onto the wall, and I appointed two large thanksgiving ***choirs*** and processions. ***One went*** to the right on the wall to the Dung Gate. **32** And after them went Hoshaiah (Hosha'aya) and half of the leaders of Judah, **33** and Azariah (Azarya), Ezra, and Meshullam, **34** Judah and Benjamin (Binyamin) and Shemaiah and Jeremiah, **35** and some of the sons of the priests with trumpets: Zechariah the son of Jonathan, the son of Shemaiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Micaiah (Mikhaya), the son of Zaccur (Zakur), the son of Asaph (Asaf), **36** and his brothers, Shemaiah and Azarel, Milalai (Milalay), Gilalai (Gilalay), Maai (Ma'ay), Nethanel, and Judah, Hanani (Chanani), with the instruments of song of David the man of God; and Ezra the scribe ***was*** before them. **37** And by the Spring Gate, and straight before them, they went up on the steps of the city of David, at the ascent of the wall, above the house of David, and to the Water Gate eastward. **38** And the second thanksgiving ***choir was*** going opposite, and I ***was*** behind it, and half of the people, on the wall, above the Tower of the Ovens, and to the Broad Wall, **39** and above the Gate of Ephraim (Efrayim), and by the Old Gate, and by the Fish Gate, and the Tower of Hananel (Chananel), and the Tower of the Hundred (Me'a), and to the Sheep Gate; and they stopped at the Gate of the Guard. **40** And the two thanksgiving ***choirs*** stood in the house of God, and I and half of the officials with me, **41** and the priests, Eliakim (Elyaqim), Maaseiah (Ma'aseya), Miniamin, Micaiah, Elioenai (Elyo'enay), Zechariah, Hananiah, with trumpets, **42** and Maaseiah and Shemaiah and Eleazar (Elazar) and Uzzi and Jehohanan and Malchijah (Malkiya) and Elam and Ezer. And the singers made ***themselves*** heard, and Jezrahiah (Yizrachya) ***was*** the overseer. **43** And they sacrificed great sacrifices on that day and rejoiced, for God had made them rejoice ***with*** great joy; and also the women and the children rejoiced, and the joy of Jerusalem was heard from afar.

Portions for the Priests and Levites

44 And on that day men were appointed over the rooms for the treasuries, for the contributions, for the first ***fruits***, and

12:22 Neh 12:10,11; Neh 12:12,13
12:23 1 Chr 9:14-44
12:24 2 Tim 3:17; 1 Chr 25:1-26; Neh 12:8
12:25 Neh 12:8,9; Neh 11:17-19; 1 Chr 9:14-17
12:26 Neh 8:9; Ezra 7:6,11
12:27 1 Chr 15:16,28; 2 Chr 5:13; 2 Chr 29:30
12:28 1 Chr 9:16; 1 Chr 2:54; Neh 6:2
12:29 Deut 11:30; Josh 5:9; Josh 10:43
12:30 Exod 19:10,15; Job 1:5; Gen 35:2
12:31 Neh 2:13; Neh 12:38,40; 1 Chr 13:1
12:33 Neh 10:2-7
12:35 Num 10:2-10; Josh 6:4; 2 Chr 5:12
12:36 Neh 12:24; 1 Chr 23:5; 2 Chr 8:14
12:37 Neh 2:14; Neh 3:26; Neh 8:1,3,16
12:38 Neh 3:11; Neh 3:8
12:39 John 5:2; Neh 3:1; Neh 8:16
12:40 Neh 12:31,32; Ps 42:4; Ps 47:6-9
12:42 Ps 81:1; Ps 95:1; Ps 98:4-9
12:43 Matt 21:15; Ps 92:4; Num 10:10
12:44 Neh 10:37-39; 2 Chr 13:11,12; 2 Chr 31:11-13

12:22 *in the reign of Darius the Persian* Since Jaddua is named, this is probably Darius II (423-404 B.C.), which shows the records were kept up after Nehemiah's main work. Some say it is Darius III, the king Alexander defeated, but that seems too late.
12:24 *according to the commandment of David the man of God, watch corresponding to watch* David had set the order of praise (1 Chr 25), and they followed it after five hundred years. "Watch corresponding to watch" means one group answering the other in turn.
12:27 *at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem* The wall was finished in fifty-two days (6:15), and now it was given to God with thanksgiving, song and instruments. What God helps us finish should be given back to Him with praise.
12:30 *the priests and the Levites purified themselves, and they purified the people and the gates and the wall* The leaders cleansed themselves first, then the people, and even the stones. Before something is dedicated to God, it must be made clean. Our cleansing comes another way: "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7).
12:31 *I appointed two large thanksgiving choirs and processions* Two choirs walked on top of the wall in opposite directions and met at the temple. Tobiah had mocked that a fox would break this wall down (4:3). Now crowds marched on it singing.
12:36 *Ezra the scribe was before them* Ezra led the first choir and Nehemiah followed the second (12:38). The scribe and the governor stood together. Word and work, teaching and building, belong together.
12:40 *the two thanksgiving choirs stood in the house of God* Both processions ended at the temple. The wall was for the sake of the house of God, and the celebration closed there.
12:43 *God had made them rejoice with great joy* Notice who made them glad: God. Men, women and children all rejoiced, and "the joy of Jerusalem was heard from afar." At the temple foundation the joy was mixed with weeping (Ezra 3:12-13). Here it rang out. Joy in what God has done is meant to be heard by others.
12:44 *men were appointed over the rooms for the treasuries* They put the giving of 10:35-39 into practice. "The joy of Judah was over the priests" because they were glad for those who served them. Yet keep chapter 13 in mind. Joy on the day of dedication did not guarantee faithfulness later. Feelings fade. Faithfulness has to be kept.

for the tithes, to gather into them, according to the fields of the cities, the portions of the law for the priests and for the Levites; for the joy of Judah ***was*** over the priests and over the Levites who were standing ***in service***. **45** And they kept the charge of their God and the charge of the purification, and the singers and the gatekeepers, according to the commandment of David ***and*** Solomon (Shelomo) his son. **46** For in the days of David and Asaph of old ***there were*** heads of the singers, and song of praise and of giving thanks to God. **47** And all Israel (Yisra'el) in the days of Zerubbabel and in the days of Nehemiah were giving the portions of the singers and the gatekeepers, the matter of a day in its day; and they were consecrating ***portions*** for the Levites, and the Levites were consecrating ***portions*** for the sons of Aaron (Aharon).

NEHEMIAH 13

Separation from the Mixed Multitude

1 On that day it was read in the book of Moses (Moshe) in the ears of the people, and it was found written in it that an Ammonite and a Moabite shall not come into the assembly of God forever, **2** because they did not meet the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) with bread and with water, and he hired Balaam (Bilam) against them to curse them; and our God turned the curse into a blessing. **3** And it came about, when they heard the law, that they separated all ***the*** mixed multitude from Israel.

Tobiah Thrown Out

4 And before this, Eliashib (Elyashiv) the priest, appointed over the storeroom of the house of our God, ***was*** near ***of kin*** to Tobiah (Toviya), **5** and he made for him a great storeroom, and there formerly they were putting the grain offering, the frankincense, and the utensils, and the tithe of the grain, the new wine, and the fresh oil, the commandment of the Levites and the singers and the gatekeepers, and the contribution of the priests. **6** And in all this I was not in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), for in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes (Artachshasta) king of Babylon (Bavel) I had gone to the king; and at the end of days I asked leave from the king. **7** And I came to Jerusalem, and I understood the evil which Eliashib had done for Tobiah, in making for him a storeroom in the courts of the house of God. **8** And it was very displeasing to me, and I threw all the utensils of the house of Tobiah outside, out of the storeroom. **9** And I spoke, and they purified the storerooms; and I brought back there the utensils of the house of God, the grain offering and the frankincense.

The Levites Restored

10 And I came to know that the portions of the Levites had not been given, and they had fled, each man to his field, the Levites and the singers who did the work. **11** And I contended with the officials and said, "Why has the house of God been forsaken?" And I gathered them and stationed them at their post. **12** And all Judah (Yehuda) brought the tithe of the grain and the new wine and the fresh oil to the treasuries. **13** And I appointed as treasurers over the treasuries Shelemiah (Shelemya) the priest and Zadok (Tsadoq) the scribe and Pedaiah (Pedaya) of the Levites, and at their hand ***was*** Hanan (Chanan) son of Zaccur (Zakur), son of Mattaniah

12:45 1 Chr 25:1-26; 1 Chr 23:28; 2 Chr 23:6
12:46 2 Chr 29:30; 1 Chr 25:1-31; Ps 73:1
12:47 Neh 12:1,12,26; Neh 10:35-39; Neh 13:10-12
13:1 Luke 10:26; Acts 13:15; Acts 15:21
13:2 Deut 23:5; Matt 25:40; Num 22:3-6
13:3 Rom 3:20; Neh 9:2; Exod 12:38
13:4 Neh 12:44; Neh 13:28; Neh 6:17,18
13:5 Neh 10:38; Neh 12:44; 2 Chr 34:11
13:6 Neh 5:14; Exod 32:1; 2 Chr 24:17,18
13:7 Ezra 9:1; 1 Cor 1:11; Neh 13:1,5
13:8 Ezra 9:3,4; Ezra 10:1; Ps 69:9
13:9 2 Chr 29:5,15-19; Neh 12:45
13:10 Neh 10:37; Mal 3:8; Neh 12:47
13:11 Neh 10:39; Neh 13:17,25; Neh 5:6-13
13:12 Neh 10:37-39; Neh 12:44; Mal 3:10
13:13 Neh 7:2; Neh 12:44; Acts 6:3

12:47 *all Israel in the days of Zerubbabel and in the days of Nehemiah were giving* Giving went in steps. The people gave to the Levites, and the Levites gave to the priests, the sons of Aaron. Everyone gave, and everyone was cared for.

13:1 *an Ammonite and a Moabite shall not come into the assembly of God forever* "On that day" probably means at that time, some years after the dedication. The law read is Deut 23:3-5. "The assembly" most likely meant full membership in Israel's worship and public life. It never kept a Moabite from coming to the LORD in faith. Ruth the Moabite became David's great-grandmother (Ruth 4:13-17) and is in the line of Jesus (Matt 1:5). The difference was faith.

13:2 *our God turned the curse into a blessing* Ammon and Moab refused Israel food and water, and Balak of Moab hired Balaam to curse them (Num 22 to 24). Every time Balaam opened his mouth to curse, God made him bless.

13:3 *they separated all the mixed multitude from Israel* Most likely those of foreign descent who had not truly joined themselves to the LORD. Those who held to the gods of Ammon and Moab were kept out. Those who came like Ruth, saying "your God my God" (Ruth 1:16), were welcomed.

13:4 *Eliashib the priest, appointed over the storeroom of the house of our God, was near of kin to Tobiah* Likely the high priest himself (3:1; 12:10), though some think another priest of the same name. Tobiah was the Ammonite official who had mocked and fought the wall from the start (2:10; 4:3; 6:17-19). He was related to Eliashib by marriage or by blood.

13:5 *he made for him a great storeroom* This room held the very gifts the people had promised in 10:37-39. It was emptied, and Tobiah moved in. An Ammonite enemy of God's work was given a room in the courts of God's house by the priest in charge of it. It is hard to picture a worse example of compromise.

13:6 *in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon I had gone to the king* That was 433 B.C., after Nehemiah's twelve years as governor (5:14). He went back as he had promised (2:6). Artaxerxes ruled Babylon as part of his empire. Nehemiah was away for some time, most think a few years, and returned about 430 B.C. or a little later.

13:8 *I threw all the utensils of the house of Tobiah outside* Nehemiah did not call a meeting. He threw Tobiah's things out himself, much as Jesus drove the money changers from the temple (John 2:13-17). Sin that is tolerated does not stay in the yard. It moves into the house. Compromise usually starts small, a friendship, a family tie, a favor. Is anything in your life given a room where it does not belong?

13:9 *they purified the storerooms* The room had been defiled, so it was cleansed and returned to its proper use. It is not enough to throw sin out. The room has to be given back to God.

13:10 *the portions of the Levites had not been given, and they had fled, each man to his field* The people had stopped tithing (10:37). The Levites and singers had no land of their own, so they went back to farming to feed their families, and temple worship fell apart.

13:11 *Why has the house of God been forsaken* Almost the covenant words in reverse. They had promised, "we will not neglect the house of our God" (10:39). Nehemiah held the leaders responsible and put the Levites back at their posts.

13:12 *all Judah brought the tithe of the grain and the new wine and the fresh oil to the treasuries* Once someone led, the people followed. Malachi most likely preached in these same years, asking "Will a man rob God?" (Mal 3:8) and calling the people to bring the whole tithe into the storehouse (Mal 3:10). Nehemiah and Malachi fought the same sin.

13:13 *for they were considered faithful* A priest, a scribe, a Levite and an assistant were put over the giving. Money in God's work belongs in the hands of honest men, with more than one set of eyes on it.

(Matanya); for they were considered faithful, and on them ***it was*** to distribute to their brothers. **14** Remember me, my God, concerning this, and do not wipe out my ***deeds of*** steadfast love which I have done in the house of my God and in its duties.

The Sabbath Kept Holy

15 In those days I saw in Judah ***men*** treading winepresses on the Sabbath, and bringing in heaps of grain and loading ***them*** on donkeys, and also wine, grapes, and figs, and every load, and bringing ***them into*** Jerusalem on the Sabbath day; and I warned ***them*** on the day they sold provisions. **16** And the Tyrians ***who*** lived in it were bringing fish and every ***kind of*** merchandise and selling ***it*** on the Sabbath to the sons of Judah, and in Jerusalem. **17** And I contended with the nobles of Judah and said to them, "What ***is*** this evil thing which you are doing, and profaning the Sabbath day? **18** Did not your fathers do thus, and our God brought all this evil on us and on this city? And you are adding burning anger on Israel by profaning the Sabbath." **19** And it came about, when the gates of Jerusalem grew dark before the Sabbath, that I spoke, and the doors were shut; and I said that they should not open them until after the Sabbath; and I stationed some of my young men at the gates, ***so that*** no load should come in on the Sabbath day. **20** And the traders and the sellers of every merchandise spent the night outside Jerusalem once and twice. **21** And I warned them and said to them, "Why are you spending the night in front of the wall? If you do ***it*** again, I will stretch out a hand against you." From that time they did not come on the Sabbath. **22** And I said to the Levites that they should be purifying themselves and coming ***and*** guarding the gates, to sanctify the Sabbath day. Also ***for*** this remember me, my God, and have pity on me according to the greatness of Your steadfast love.

Marriage to Foreign Wives

23 Also in those days I saw the Jews ***who*** had married Ashdodite, Ammonite, ***and*** Moabite wives. **24** And of their sons, half ***were*** speaking Ashdodite, and they did not know ***how*** to speak Judean, but according to the language of ***this*** people and ***that*** people. **25** And I contended with them and cursed them, and I struck some men of them and pulled out their hair, and made them swear by God, "You shall not give your daughters to their sons, and you shall not take ***any*** of their daughters for your sons and for yourselves. **26** Did not Solomon (Shelomo) king of Israel sin on account of these ***things***? And among the many nations there was no king like him, and he was loved by his God, and God made him king over all Israel; even him the foreign wives caused to sin. **27** And shall it be heard of you, to do all this great evil, to act

13:14 Neh 13:22,31; Neh 5:19; Ps 122:6-9
13:15 John 5:10; Neh 10:31; Exod 34:21
13:16 John 5:10; Exod 23:12; Deut 5:14
13:17 Matt 12:5; John 5:10; Neh 13:11,25
13:18 John 5:10; Jer 17:21-23,27; Ezra 9:13-15
13:19 John 5:10; Lev 23:22; Exod 31:14-17
13:21 John 5:10; Ezra 7:26; Rom 13:3,4
13:22 Neh 12:30; Neh 13:14,31; Neh 7:64,65
13:23 Neh 10:30; Ezra 10:10,44; 2 Cor 6:14
13:24 Zeph 3:9
13:25 Neh 10:29,30; Ezra 10:5; Neh 13:11,17
13:26 1 Kgs 3:13; 2 Chr 1:12; 2 Sam 12:24,25
13:27 Ezra 10:2; 1 Sam 30:24

13:14 *Remember me, my God, concerning this* Nehemiah was not trying to earn God's favor. He asked God not to let his faithful work be wiped out, even if the people forgot it. God does not forget: "For God is not unjust, to forget your work" (Heb 6:10).

13:15 *men treading winepresses on the Sabbath* Farmers working and loads coming into the city on the Sabbath broke the promise of 10:31. God set the Sabbath apart as holy, a sign of His covenant with Israel (Exod 31:13-17).

13:16 *the Tyrians who lived in it* Merchants from Tyre, the trading city on the coast, had set up in Jerusalem and were selling on the Sabbath. The world's market had moved inside the walls.

13:17 *profaning the Sabbath day* To profane is to treat something holy as common. The nobles were treating God's holy day like any other market day.

13:18 *Did not your fathers do thus, and our God brought all this evil on us and on this city* Jeremiah had warned that if loads kept coming through Jerusalem's gates on the Sabbath, God would set fire to its gates (Jer 17:21-27). He did. They were walking back into the very sin that sent their fathers into exile.

13:19 *when the gates of Jerusalem grew dark before the Sabbath* The Jewish day began at sunset, so the Sabbath began Friday evening. Nehemiah shut the gates as the shadows fell and set his own servants to guard them. The walls he built now served to guard holiness as well as the city.

13:21 *From that time they did not come on the Sabbath* The traders camped outside the wall once or twice, hoping for business. One firm warning was enough.

13:22 *have pity on me according to the greatness of Your steadfast love* The Levites took over the gates for the long run. And Nehemiah asks for pity. He did not think his zeal made him perfect. The Sabbath was given to Israel under the Law, and Christians differ on how it applies now. Some keep the seventh day, many keep the Lord's Day, others see it fulfilled in our rest in Christ (Heb 4:9-10; Col 2:16-17). But God made us to rest and worship, and Jesus said, "The Sabbath was made for the sake of man, not man for the sake of the Sabbath" (Mark 2:27).

13:23 *the Jews who had married Ashdodite, Ammonite, and Moabite wives* Ashdod was a Philistine city; Ammon and Moab lay east of the Jordan. These were the peoples whose gods had pulled Israel away before. It was nearly thirty years since Ezra dealt with this (Ezra 9 to 10), and only a few since the covenant against it (10:30).

13:24 *they did not know how to speak Judean* Judean is Hebrew. The Law, the psalms and the prayers were in Hebrew, so a child who could not understand it could not understand the Law when it was read, as in chapter 8. In one generation these families were losing their ability to hear God's Word. A home divided in faith often raises children who do not know the language of faith, because no one teaches it at home (Deut 6:6-7).

13:25 *I contended with them and cursed them, and I struck some men of them and pulled out their hair* A hard verse. "Cursed them" most likely means he called down the covenant curses they had sworn to (10:29). Pulling out hair was a mark of shame (2 Sam 10:4; Isa 50:6). Ezra pulled out his own hair (Ezra 9:3); Nehemiah pulled out theirs. Nehemiah acted as governor with legal authority, more like a magistrate than a pastor. Scripture records it without praise or blame. I believe we should not hold it up as a model, and it is no pattern for the church. Church discipline is to be done gently, step by step, to restore (Matt 18:15-17; Gal 6:1), and an overseer must not be a striker (1 Tim 3:3). Learn his seriousness about sin, not his method. Note too that the oath was about future marriages. Unlike Ezra 10, he is not said to have sent wives away.

13:26 *even him the foreign wives caused to sin* Solomon was the wisest king who ever lived, loved by God (2 Sam 12:24-25). Yet his wives turned his heart to other gods, and he built high places for Chemosh of Moab and Molech of Ammon (1 Kgs 11:1-8), the very peoples these men had married into. If it could pull Solomon down, it could pull anyone down.

13:27 *to act unfaithfully against our God by marrying foreign wives* As in Ezra, the issue was faith, not race. Malachi said the same in these years: Judah married "the daughter of a foreign god" (Mal 2:11). A believer should marry only another believer (1 Cor 7:39; 2 Cor 6:14), but a believer already married to an unbeliever must not leave (1 Cor 7:12-14) and may win that spouse by a godly life (1 Pet 3:1-2). Think hard before you marry. That choice shapes your faith and your children's faith for a lifetime.

unfaithfully against our God by marrying foreign wives?"

The Priesthood Cleansed

28 And ***one*** of the sons of Joiada (Yoyada) son of Eliashib the high priest ***was*** son-in-law to Sanballat (Sanvalat) the Horonite; and I drove him away from me. **29** Remember them, my God, concerning the defilements of the priesthood and the covenant of the priesthood and of the Levites. **30** And I purified them from everything foreign, and I appointed duties for the priests and for the Levites, each man in his work, **31** and for the offering of the wood at appointed times, and for the firstfruits. Remember me, my God, for good.

13:28 Neh 2:19; Neh 12:10,22; Neh 3:1
13:29 Neh 6:14; Ps 59:5-13; 2 Tim 4:14
13:30 Neh 10:30; Neh 12:1-26; 1 Chr 23:1-26
13:31 Luke 23:42; Neh 10:34; Neh 13:14,22

13:28 *one of the sons of Joiada son of Eliashib the high priest was son-in-law to Sanballat the Horonite* The worst case of all. A grandson of the high priest, who might one day be high priest himself, married the daughter of the chief enemy of the wall (2:10, 19; 6:1-14). The high priest had to marry within Israel (Lev 21:13-15). Nehemiah drove him out of Jerusalem.

13:29 *Remember them, my God, concerning the defilements of the priesthood* This time "remember" is not for good. The priests were to guard the covenant and teach the people (Mal 2:4-8). Instead the high priest's own family had joined the enemy.

13:30 *I purified them from everything foreign* Nehemiah cleaned house and set each man to his work again, down to the practical matters of wood for the altar and first fruits (10:34-35).

13:31 *Remember me, my God, for good* The last words of the book, and the last of Old Testament history in time order. No victory parade, just a tired man asking God to remember him. The walls were strong and the reforms were good, but they could not change the human heart. The people broke their covenant within a few years. That is why the Old Testament closes looking forward, to a new covenant written on the heart (Jer 31:33) and the Lord coming to His temple to purify the sons of Levi (Mal 3:1-3). About four hundred years later Jesus came, cleansed the temple, kept the Law, died for sins no reformer could remove, and rose again. Where Nehemiah could only ask to be remembered, Jesus told a dying thief, "Today you will be with Me in Paradise" (Luke 23:43).

ESTHER

Introduction

Title

The book is named for Esther, the young Jewish woman who became queen of Persia. Her Hebrew name was Hadassah, meaning myrtle; Esther is a Persian name, likely meaning star (2:7). It is the last of the history books in our English Bibles, but its events come before Nehemiah's. They happen between Ezra 6 and Ezra 7, in the reign of Ahasuerus, better known by his Greek name, Xerxes.

Author and Date

The book does not name its writer. He was a Jew who knew the Persian court well, its customs, officials, palace and names in close detail, which fits someone who lived in Persia not long after the events. Some Jewish tradition named the men of the Great Assembly, the leaders after the exile, and others have suggested Mordecai, since he wrote down these events (9:20, 32). It was written sometime after Ahasuerus' reign ended in 465 B.C., since 10:2 speaks of it as finished and recorded, most likely in the later fifth century B.C., perhaps about 460 to 400 B.C. Some modern scholars date it much later and treat it as a story rather than history. I take it as history, as the book presents itself, with real kings, real records and real dates.

Background and Setting

Ezra and Nehemiah tell of the Jews who went home. Esther tells of the Jews who stayed in Persia, scattered across the empire from India to Cush. The events run from about 483 to 473 B.C. The feast of chapter 1 is in the king's third year, 483 B.C. Esther became queen in his seventh year, about 479 B.C. (2:16). Haman cast the lot in the twelfth year, 474 B.C. (3:7), and the day of the decree fell almost a year later. The temple in Jerusalem had been finished for about thirty years.

Ahasuerus was Xerxes I, son of Darius I, who reigned from 486 to 465 B.C. Between chapters 1 and 2 he led a huge army against Greece and was defeated at sea at Salamis in 480 B.C. Greek historians remember him as proud, quick-tempered and given to great displays of wealth, which fits the king we meet here. The story is set in Susa, a royal city in what is now southwest Iran, where Nehemiah later served (Neh 1:1). The empire had 127 provinces, and a law written in the king's name and sealed with his ring could not be undone (1:19; 8:8).

The Agagite means a descendant of Agag, king of the Amalekites in Saul's day (1 Sam 15), Israel's oldest enemy (Exod 17:8-16). The Greek translation of Esther, made later, adds about a hundred verses with prayers and many mentions of God. These are not part of the Hebrew text and are not Scripture. These notes follow the Hebrew book.

Themes

The most famous thing about Esther is what it does not say. God's name does not appear in it, and there is no mention of prayer, the temple, the Law or a prophet. Scripture does not tell us why. Some think the writer left it out on purpose to show God working behind the scenes, and others point to the noisy feast it was read at or the style of Persian court records. Whatever the reason, the book teaches by its silence. God does not have to be seen to be at work.

The theme is God's hidden care for His people, His providence: His wise and powerful control over all things, working through ordinary events and people to keep His promises (Gen 50:20; Rom 8:28). A queen falls from favor at just the right time. An orphan is chosen out of the whole empire. Mordecai overhears a plot. The king cannot sleep on the very night Haman comes to ask for Mordecai's death. Haman is hanged on the tree he built. The day of destruction becomes the day of victory, and "it was turned about" (9:1). The key verse is Mordecai's word to Esther: "who knows whether for a time like this you have attained to royalty?" (4:14). Esther's answer shows the courage God's people need: "as I perish, I perish" (4:16). The book also shows that pride goes before a fall, and it explains the feast of Purim, named for the pur, the lot Haman cast (3:7; 9:24-26).

Christ in Esther

The New Testament does not quote Esther, but the book matters for the coming of Christ. God had promised that the Savior would come from Abraham's family, from Judah and from David's line (Gen 12:3; 49:10; 2 Sam 7:12-16). Haman's decree reached "all the provinces" (3:13), Judah and Jerusalem included. Had it succeeded, there would have been no people from whom the Messiah could come. By saving the Jews, God kept His promise alive.

Esther is also a small picture of Christ. She risked her life to go before the king for a people under a sentence of death. Jesus did far more. He gave His life, and now He is "always living to intercede for them" (Heb 7:25). Mordecai, raised from sackcloth to the king's right hand, seeking good for his people (10:3), pictures the exalted Christ who will reign as King of kings. The New Testament does not name either as a type of Christ, so I hold these as pictures only.

Hard Passages

How was Esther brought to the palace (2:8)? The text says she "was taken." Some think she should have resisted, like Daniel (Dan 1:8); others note she had no real choice, or see her as a victim of the king's power. The text does not blame or praise her, and neither should we.

Why would Mordecai not bow to Haman (3:2)? Some think bowing to a Persian official was a kind of worship; others think no Jew would bow to an Amalekite. Both may be true.

The Jews' fighting in chapter 9 was self-defense against armed attackers under Haman's decree, still in force, and the second decree (8:11; 9:2). Three times we are told they took no plunder (9:10, 15, 16). Esther's request for a second day in Susa and for the hanging of the bodies of Haman's sons (9:13) is hard, and the text gives her reasons no more than it judges her. None of this is a pattern for believers, who are called to love their enemies and leave vengeance to God (Matt 5:44; Rom 12:19).

Outline

I. Esther Becomes Queen (1:1-2:23)
  A. Queen Vashti refuses the king (1:1-22)
  B. Esther becomes queen (2:1-18)

C. Mordecai uncovers a plot (2:19-23)
II. Haman's Plot (3:1-5:14)
A. Haman's plot against the Jews (3:1-15)
B. For a time like this (4:1-17)
C. Esther goes in to the king (5:1-14)
III. The Tables Turned (6:1-10:3)
A. The king honors Mordecai (6:1-14)
B. Haman is hanged (7:1-10)
C. A new decree for the Jews (8:1-17)
D. The Jews defend themselves and Purim begins (9:1-32)
E. The greatness of Mordecai (10:1-3)

ESTHER

ESTHER 1

The King's Great Feast

1 And it was in the days of Ahasuerus (Achashverosh); he ***is the*** Ahasuerus who reigned from India (Hodu) and as far as Cush (Kush), a hundred and twenty-seven provinces; **2** in those days, when King Ahasuerus sat on the throne of his kingdom which ***was*** in Susa (Shushan) the citadel, **3** in the third year of his reign he made a feast for all his officials and his servants, the army of Persia (Paras) and Media (Maday), the nobles and the officials of the provinces ***being*** before him, **4** when he showed the riches of the glory of his kingdom and the honor of the splendor of his greatness many days, a hundred and eighty days. **5** And when these days were completed, the king made for all the people who were found in Susa the citadel, from great to small, a feast ***of*** seven days in the court of the garden of the palace of the king. **6** ***Hangings of*** white cloth, cotton, and violet ***were*** fastened with cords of fine linen and purple on rods of silver and pillars of marble; couches of gold and silver ***were*** on a pavement of porphyry and marble and mother-of-pearl and colored stone. **7** And ***they*** gave drink in vessels of gold, and vessels differing from vessels, and royal wine ***was*** abundant, according to the hand of the king. **8** And the drinking ***was*** according to the law; no one compelled, for so the king had appointed for every chief officer of his house, to do according to the pleasure of each and every man. **9** Also Vashti the queen made a feast of women ***in*** the royal house which ***belonged*** to King Ahasuerus.

Queen Vashti Refuses the King

10 On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was good with wine, he said to Mehuman, Biztha (Bizeta), Harbona (Charvona), Bigtha (Bigta) and Abagtha (Avagta), Zethar (Zetar) and Carcas (Karkas), the seven eunuchs who served before the face of King Ahasuerus, **11** to bring Vashti the queen before the king with a royal crown, to show the peoples and the officials her beauty, for she ***was*** good of appearance. **12** And Queen Vashti refused to come at the word of the king which ***was*** by the hand of the eunuchs; and the king was very angry, and his rage burned in him.

The Decree Against Vashti

13 And the king said to the wise men who knew the times (for so ***was*** the manner of the king before all who knew law and judgment, **14** and those near him ***were*** Carshena (Karshena), Shethar (Shetar), Admatha (Admata), Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, Memucan (Memukhan), the seven officials of Persia and Media who saw the face of the king, who sat first in the kingdom), **15** "According to law, what ***is one*** to do with Queen Vashti, because she has not done the command of King Ahasuerus by the hand of the eunuchs?" **16** And Memucan said before the king and the officials, "Not against the king alone has Vashti the queen done wrong, but against all the officials and against all the peoples who ***are*** in all the

1:1 Esth 8:9; Dan 9:1; Ezra 4:6
1:2 Neh 1:1; 1 Kgs 1:46; Dan 8:2
1:3 Esth 2:18; 1 Kgs 3:15; Mark 6:21
1:4 Matt 4:8; Eph 1:18; Col 1:27
1:5 2 Chr 7:8,9; 2 Chr 30:21-25
1:6 Ezek 23:41; Amos 6:4; Esth 8:15
1:7 1 Kgs 10:21; 2 Chr 9:20; Dan 5:2-4
1:8 Jer 35:8; Jer 51:7; Hab 2:15,16
1:9 Esth 5:4,8
1:10 Judg 16:25; Esth 7:9; 2 Sam 13:28
1:11 Mark 6:21,22; Prov 16:9; Prov 23:29-33
1:12 Prov 19:12; Gen 3:16; Eph 5:22,24
1:13 Jer 10:7; 1 Chr 12:32; Dan 2:2,12,27
1:14 2 Kgs 25:19; Ezra 7:14; Matt 18:10
1:15 Esth 6:6
1:16 Acts 18:14; Acts 25:10; 1 Cor 6:7,8

1:1 *he is the Ahasuerus who reigned from India and as far as Cush, a hundred and twenty-seven provinces* Ahasuerus is the Hebrew form of the name the Greeks wrote as Xerxes. He was Xerxes I, king of Persia from 486 to 465 B.C. His empire reached from India in the east to Cush, the land south of Egypt in what is now Sudan. It was the greatest empire the world had yet seen.
1:2 *Susa the citadel* Susa was a royal city where the kings spent the winter. The citadel was the fortified palace on the hill. Nehemiah would serve in this same palace about forty years later (Neh 1:1). The book opens with the world's greatest king on the world's greatest throne, but the real King is the One who is never named.
1:3 *in the third year of his reign he made a feast* That was 483 B.C. Many historians think this gathering was part of the planning for Xerxes' invasion of Greece a few years later. If so, the king was showing his commanders the riches that stood behind his war.
1:4 *a hundred and eighty days* Six months of showing off. This king wanted the whole world to see how great he was. The God of the Bible needs no such display, and His Son "emptied Himself" (Phil 2:7) and took the form of a slave.
1:6 *Hangings of white cloth, cotton, and violet* The writer lingers over the luxury: linen and purple, silver rods, marble pillars, couches of gold and silver. He wants us to feel how rich and powerful this king was. Everything seems to be in his hands. The rest of the book shows that he is moved by his anger, his wine, his advisers and his sleepless nights. God is in control.
1:8 *the drinking was according to the law; no one compelled* At some Persian feasts guests had to drink whenever the king drank. Here each man drank as much or as little as he liked.
1:9 *Vashti the queen made a feast of women* Men and women often feasted separately at the Persian court. Greek historians name Xerxes' queen Amestris, and some think Vashti was another name for her, or a different wife. Scripture tells us no more.
1:10 *when the heart of the king was good with wine* After a week of drinking, the king was drunk. Eunuchs were palace officials who served the king and his household.
1:11 *to show the peoples and the officials her beauty* He wanted to put his wife on display before a room full of drinking men, one more thing to show off like his gold cups. Later Jewish teachers thought she was to appear wearing only her crown, but the text does not say that. What it says is enough.
1:12 *Queen Vashti refused to come at the word of the king* We are not told why. Perhaps she would not be shamed before drunken men, perhaps it was pride. The writer does not judge her. But it was a public insult before the whole court, and the man who ruled 127 provinces could not rule his own temper. Better is "he who rules over his spirit than he who captures a city" (Prov 16:32).
1:13 *the wise men who knew the times* His advisers knew law and custom and perhaps read the stars for lucky times. The seven "who saw the face of the king" (1:14) were the inner circle who could enter his presence. He wanted his hurt pride to look like a legal matter.
1:16 *Not against the king alone has Vashti the queen done wrong* Memucan turned one woman's refusal into a danger to the whole empire. He was worried about his own household as much as the king's. The officials' wives had been at Vashti's feast, and they would talk.

provinces of King Ahasuerus. **17** For the matter of the queen will go out to all the women, to make their husbands despicable in their eyes, when they say, 'King Ahasuerus said to bring Vashti the queen before him, and she did not come.' **18** And this day the noble ladies of Persia and Media who have heard of the matter of the queen will say ***so*** to all the officials of the king, and ***there will be*** plenty of contempt and anger. **19** If ***it is*** good to the king, let a royal word go out from before him, and let it be written among the laws of Persia and Media, and it will not pass away, that Vashti shall not come before King Ahasuerus; and let the king give her royalty to her companion who ***is*** better than she. **20** And the decree of the king which he will make will be heard in all his kingdom, for it is great, and all the women will give honor to their husbands, from great to small." **21** And the word was good in the eyes of the king and the officials, and the king did according to the word of Memucan. **22** And he sent letters to all the provinces of the king, to each and every province according to its script, and to each and every people according to its language, for every man to be ruling in his own house and speaking according to the language of his people.

ESTHER 2

The Search for a New Queen

1 After these things, when the rage of King Ahasuerus (Achashverosh) had subsided, he remembered Vashti and what she had done and what had been decreed against her. **2** And the young men of the king who served him said, "Let them seek for the king young women, virgins, good of appearance. **3** And let the king appoint overseers in all the provinces of his kingdom, and let them gather every young woman, a virgin good of appearance, to Susa (Shushan) the citadel, to the house of the women, into the hand of Hegai (Hege) the eunuch of the king, the keeper of the women; and let their cosmetics be given. **4** And the young woman who is good in the eyes of the king shall reign in place of Vashti." And the word was good in the eyes of the king, and he did so.

Mordecai and Esther

5 A Jewish man was in Susa the citadel, and his name ***was*** Mordecai (Mordekhay) son of Jair (Ya'ir), son of Shimei (Shimi), son of Kish (Qish), a Benjaminite, **6** who had been taken into exile from Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) with the exiles who had been taken into exile with Jeconiah (Yekhonya) king of Judah (Yehuda), whom Nebuchadnezzar (Nevukhadnetsar) king of Babylon (Bavel) had taken into exile. **7** And he was bringing up Hadassah (Hadasa), that ***is*** Esther (Ester), the daughter of his uncle, for she had no father or mother; and the young woman ***was*** beautiful of form and good of appearance; and at the death of her father and her mother Mordecai took her for himself as a daughter. **8** And it came about, when the word of the king and his law were heard, and when many young women were gathered to Susa the citadel into the hand of Hegai, that Esther was taken to the house of the king, into the hand of Hegai the keeper of the women. **9** And the young woman was good in his eyes, and she obtained kindness before him; and he hastened her cosmetics and her portions, to give ***them*** to her, and the

1:17 2 Sam 6:16; Eph 5:33
1:18 1 Cor 14:34; Judg 5:29; 1 Kgs 11:3
1:19 1 Cor 14:34; Esth 8:8; Esth 3:9
1:20 1 Cor 14:34; Col 3:18; Eph 5:33
1:21 Esth 2:4; Gen 41:37; Esth 1:19
1:22 Esth 3:12; Esth 8:9; Eph 5:22-24
2:1 Dan 6:14-18; Esth 1:12-21
2:2 1 Kgs 1:2; Esth 1:10,14; Esth 6:14
2:3 Esth 1:1,2; Esth 2:12-14; Isa 3:18-23
2:4 Matt 20:16; Matt 22:14; Esth 1:21
2:5 1 Sam 9:1; Esth 2:3; Esth 1:2
2:6 2 Kgs 24:6,14,15; Jer 24:1; 2 Chr 36:9,10,20
2:7 2 Cor 6:18; Esth 2:15; Eph 6:4
2:9 Esth 2:3,12; Gen 39:21; Dan 1:9

1:19 *it will not pass away* Once a Persian law was written and sealed, even the king could not undo it (Dan 6:8, 15). This becomes crucial later, when Haman's decree cannot be undone and a second decree must be written (8:8). And "her companion who is better than she" opened the door for Esther, though Memucan never knew it.
1:20 *all the women will give honor to their husbands* Honor cannot be forced by decree. It is earned by love and character. The Bible's picture is very different: husbands are to love their wives "even as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her" (Eph 5:25), and give them honor (1 Pet 3:7).
1:22 *he sent letters to all the provinces of the king* Persia had a fast royal courier system. A huge decision made in a drunken rage, on the advice of a man worried about his own wife, went out to every family in the empire. It may have made the king look more foolish, not less. Where is God in this chapter? Not named, but at work. A drunken king and a foolish law opened the door for a Jewish woman to become queen, years before Haman's plot. God is often working long before we know we need Him.
2:1 *he remembered Vashti and what she had done and what had been decreed against her* About four years had passed (2:16), and in between Xerxes had invaded Greece and lost. Perhaps he missed her or regretted his decree. But a Persian law could not be undone. The king was trapped by his own law, a theme that returns far more seriously later.
2:3 *let them gather every young woman, a virgin good of appearance* The house of the women was the king's harem. These young women were not asked, nor their families. Most would spend one night with the king and live the rest of their lives as concubines, wives of lower rank, never to marry anyone else. The Bible does not present this as good. It tells us what happened.
2:5 *A Jewish man was in Susa the citadel* Mordecai was of the tribe of Benjamin. Kish was the name of King Saul's father (1 Sam 9:1), and Shimei was a man of Saul's family who cursed David (2 Sam 16:5). These may be Mordecai's grandfather and great-grandfather, or famous forefathers of Saul's clan. Either way, Mordecai is tied to Saul, and that matters when we meet Haman the Agagite (3:1).
2:6 *who had been taken into exile from Jerusalem* Jeconiah, also called Jehoiachin, was taken to Babylon in 597 B.C. (2 Kgs 24:10-16), more than a hundred years earlier. So the one taken was most likely Kish, and Mordecai was born in exile. His family had stayed in Persia when others went home.
2:7 *he was bringing up Hadassah, that is Esther, the daughter of his uncle* Esther was an orphan and Mordecai's cousin, much younger, raised as his daughter. Hadassah is Hebrew for myrtle, a fragrant shrub. Esther is Persian, likely meaning star. Like Daniel (Dan 1:7), she lived in two worlds. The Bible honors those who care for orphans (Ps 68:5; James 1:27). Mordecai could not know the girl he raised would one day save their people.
2:8 *Esther was taken to the house of the king* The verb is passive. She was taken. A Jewish orphan in a foreign empire had no power to refuse the king's officials. Teachers read her differently. Some think she should have resisted, like Daniel (Dan 1:8). Others note that refusing likely meant death. Others see her as a victim of the king's power. The text does not blame her, and neither should we. God can bring good out of what others do to us without approving it: "you planned evil against me; God planned it for good" (Gen 50:20).
2:9 *she obtained kindness before him* The word for kindness is hesed, often used for God's steadfast love. God is not named, but this is the same favor He gave Joseph in prison (Gen 39:21) and Daniel before the chief of the eunuchs (Dan 1:9).

seven chosen young women, to give ***them*** to her from the house of the king; and he moved her and her young women to the best ***place*** of the house of the women. **10** Esther had not told her people or her kindred, for Mordecai had commanded her that she should not tell. **11** And each and every day Mordecai was walking back and forth in front of the court of the house of the women, to know the welfare of Esther and what would be done with her.

Esther Becomes Queen

12 And when the turn of each and every young woman arrived to go in to King Ahasuerus, at the end of her having twelve months according to the law of the women (for so the days of their beauty treatments were completed: six months with oil of myrrh, and six months with spices and with the cosmetics of the women), **13** then in this ***way*** the young woman went in to the king: all that she said was given to her to go with her from the house of the women to the house of the king. **14** In the evening she went, and in the morning she returned to the second house of the women, into the hand of Shaashgaz the eunuch of the king, the keeper of the concubines. She did not go in to the king again unless the king delighted in her and she was called by name. **15** And when the turn of Esther the daughter of Abihail (Avichayil), the uncle of Mordecai, who had taken her for himself as a daughter, arrived to go in to the king, she did not request anything except what Hegai the eunuch of the king, the keeper of the women, said. And Esther was obtaining favor in the eyes of all who saw her. **16** And Esther was taken to King Ahasuerus, into his royal house, in the tenth month, that ***is*** the month of Tebeth (Tevet), in the seventh year of his reign. **17** And the king loved Esther more than all the women, and she obtained favor and kindness before him more than all the virgins; and he set a royal crown on her head and made her queen in place of Vashti. **18** And the king made a great feast for all his officials and his servants, the feast of Esther; and he made a release for the provinces, and he gave gifts according to the hand of the king.

Mordecai Uncovers a Plot

19 And when virgins were gathered a second ***time***, and Mordecai was sitting at the gate of the king, **20** Esther was not telling her kindred or her people, just as Mordecai had commanded her; and Esther was doing the command of Mordecai, just as when she was in guardianship with him. **21** In those days, and Mordecai was sitting at the gate of the king, Bigthan (Bigtan) and Teresh, two of the eunuchs of the king, of the guards of the threshold, became angry and sought to stretch out a hand against King Ahasuerus. **22** And the matter became known to Mordecai, and he told ***it*** to Esther the queen; and Esther spoke to the king in the name of Mordecai. **23** And the matter was investigated and found ***so***, and the two of them were hanged on a tree; and it was written in the book of the matters of the days before the king.

2:10 Matt 10:16; Esth 3:8; Esth 4:13,14
2:11 Acts 15:36; 1 Sam 17:18; Esth 2:13,14
2:12 1 Thess 4:4,5; Prov 7:17; Song 3:6
2:14 Esth 4:11; Gen 34:19; Deut 21:14
2:15 Song 6:9; Song 8:10; Acts 7:10
2:16 Esth 8:9; Esth 2:1,3; Ezra 7:8
2:17 Ps 113:7,8; Esth 4:14; 1 Sam 2:8
2:18 Luke 14:8; Eph 4:8; Esth 1:3-5
2:19 Esth 2:21; Esth 2:3,4; Esth 5:13
2:20 Eph 6:1-3
2:21 Esth 6:2; 2 Sam 4:5,6; 2 Sam 16:11
2:22 Esth 6:1,2; Eccl 10:20; Acts 23:12-22
2:23 Gen 40:19,22; Esth 5:14; Esth 7:10

2:10 *Esther had not told her people or her kindred* We are not told why Mordecai ordered it. Perhaps he feared she would be looked down on, or sensed danger. It proved wise, because when Haman's plot came no one knew the queen was a Jew. Keeping quiet about her family was not the same as denying her God, and the time came when she spoke openly at great risk (7:3-4).
2:11 *each and every day Mordecai was walking back and forth* Every single day. He could not go in, but he would not stop caring. That is a father's love.
2:12 *at the end of her having twelve months according to the law of the women* A full year of preparation with myrrh, a costly perfumed oil, and spices.
2:14 *She did not go in to the king again unless the king delighted in her and she was called by name* The writer says it plainly and without detail, and so will I. After one night each woman lived in the second house as a concubine, often for life, unless the king remembered her. Many were never called again. It was a lonely life.
2:15 *she did not request anything except what Hegai the eunuch of the king, the keeper of the women, said* Each woman could take whatever she wanted, but Esther did not grab for jewels and robes. She trusted Hegai, who knew the king. That is humility and wisdom, listening to counsel (Prov 12:15). And she won favor with everyone who saw her, by her character, not only her looks.
2:16 *in the tenth month, that is the month of Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign* Tebeth is December to January, about 479 B.C. Again the passive: she "was taken."
2:17 *he set a royal crown on her head and made her queen in place of Vashti* Out of all the young women of the empire, the king chose a Jewish orphan. The text does not say God did it, but the rest of the book makes plain she was there for a reason. "Streams of water is the heart of a king in the hand of the LORD; to all that He desires He turns it" (Prov 21:1).
2:18 *the feast of Esther* Chapter 1 began with a feast and ended with a queen removed. Chapter 2 ends with a queen crowned and a feast in her honor. The "release for the provinces" was most likely a break from taxes or a holiday.
2:19 *Mordecai was sitting at the gate of the king* The gate was where officials did business and judges heard cases (Ruth 4:1; Dan 2:49). Mordecai likely held some post there, perhaps after Esther became queen.
2:20 *Esther was doing the command of Mordecai, just as when she was in guardianship with him* Even as queen, she listened to the man who raised her. Power did not make her proud. She honored her father's counsel (Exod 20:12; Prov 1:8).
2:21 *of the guards of the threshold* These men guarded the doors of the king's private rooms. They were trusted with his life, which made them the most dangerous of traitors. Xerxes was in fact killed in a palace plot about fourteen years later, in 465 B.C.
2:22 *Esther spoke to the king in the name of Mordecai* We are not told how Mordecai learned of it. He was in the right place at the right time, and Esther gave him the credit.
2:23 *the two of them were hanged on a tree; and it was written in the book of the matters of the days before the king* Hanging on a tree in Persia most likely meant impaling on a stake, or hanging the body up after death as a public warning. Mordecai saved the king's life, it was written down, and he got no reward. Wait for chapter 6. Sometimes God lets a good deed sit unnoticed for years because He plans to use it at just the right moment. He does not forget.

ESTHER 3

Haman's Rage Against Mordecai

1 After these things King Ahasuerus (Achashverosh) made Haman son of Hammedatha (Hamedata) the Agagite great, and he exalted him and set his seat above all the officials who ***were*** with him. **2** And all the servants of the king who ***were*** at the gate of the king were kneeling and bowing down to Haman, for so the king had commanded concerning him. And Mordecai (Mordekhay) did not kneel and did not bow down. **3** And the servants of the king who ***were*** at the gate of the king said to Mordecai, "Why are you transgressing the commandment of the king?" **4** And it came about, when they spoke to him each and every day and he did not listen to them, that they told Haman, to see whether the words of Mordecai would stand; for he had told them that he ***was*** a Jew. **5** And Haman saw that Mordecai was not kneeling and bowing down to him, and Haman was filled ***with*** rage. **6** And he disdained in his eyes to stretch out a hand against Mordecai alone, for they had told him the people of Mordecai; and Haman sought to annihilate all the Jews who ***were*** in all the kingdom of Ahasuerus, the people of Mordecai.

Haman's Plot to Destroy the Jews

7 In the first month, that ***is*** the month of Nisan, in the twelfth year of King Ahasuerus, ***one*** cast Pur, that ***is*** the lot, before Haman from day to day and from month to month, ***to the*** twelfth ***month***, that ***is*** the month of Adar. **8** And Haman said to King Ahasuerus, "There is one people scattered and separated among the peoples in all the provinces of your kingdom, and their laws ***are*** different from every people, and the laws of the king they are not doing; and for the king it is not fitting to let them remain. **9** If ***it is*** good to the king, let it be written to destroy them; and I will weigh out approximately 750,000 pounds (ten thousand talents) of silver into the hands of those who do the work, to bring ***it*** into the treasuries of the king." **10** And the king removed his signet ring from his hand and gave it to Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the adversary of the Jews. **11** And the king said to Haman, "The silver ***is*** given to you, and the people, to do with it as ***is*** good in your eyes." **12** And the scribes of the king were summoned in the first month, on the thirteenth day of it, and it was written according to all that Haman commanded to the satraps of the king and to the governors who ***were*** over each and every province, and to the officials of each and every people, to each and every province according to its script and each and every people according to its language. In the name of King Ahasuerus it was written, and it was sealed with the signet ring of the king. **13** And letters were sent by the hand of the runners to all the provinces of the king, to annihilate, to kill, and to destroy all the Jews, from young to old, little ones and women, on one day, on the thirteenth of the twelfth month, that ***is*** the month of Adar, and to plunder their spoil. **14** A copy of the writing, to be

3:1 Num 24:7; Gen 41:40,55; Dan 6:2
3:2 Esth 2:19,21; Gen 41:43; Phil 2:10
3:3 Matt 15:2; Matt 15:3; Exod 1:17
3:4 Gen 39:10; Dan 3:8,9; Dan 6:13
3:5 Esth 5:9; Dan 3:19; Esth 3:2
3:6 Ps 83:4; Rev 12:12
3:7 Matt 27:35; Ezra 6:15; Esth 9:24-26
3:8 Acts 16:20,21; Ezra 4:12-15; Lev 26:33
3:9 Matt 18:24; Gen 23:16
3:10 Esth 8:2,8; Gen 41:42; Esth 7:6
3:11 Ps 73:7; Jer 26:14; Jer 40:4
3:12 1 Kgs 21:8; Esth 1:22; Esth 9:27
3:13 2 Chr 30:6; Esth 9:10; Esth 8:10,14
3:14 Esth 8:13,14

3:1 *Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite* Four or five years after Esther became queen (2:16; 3:7), the king promoted not Mordecai, who had saved his life, but Haman. "The Agagite" is the key. Agag was king of the Amalekites, Israel's oldest enemy, who attacked the weak and weary in the wilderness (Exod 17:8-16; Deut 25:17-19). Saul spared Agag against God's command, and God rejected Saul as king (1 Sam 15:1-23). Now a descendant of Agag stands against a descendant of Kish (2:5). The old war has come back.

3:2 *Mordecai did not kneel and did not bow down* The Bible does not forbid all bowing. Abraham bowed to the Hittites (Gen 23:7), and David to Saul (1 Sam 24:8). The only clue is that "he was a Jew" (3:4). Some think bowing to a Persian official was a kind of worship a Jew could give only to God, as with Daniel's friends (Dan 3:12-18). Others think no son of Israel would bow to an Amalekite. Both may be true. Either way, it was a matter of conscience tied to his faith.

3:4 *when they spoke to him each and every day and he did not listen to them* Every day the pressure came, and every day he stood firm. Faith often looks like that. Not one great moment, but daily faithfulness when no one else stands with you.

3:5 *Haman was filled with rage* Haman had all the honor the empire could give, and one man's refusal drove him to fury. Pride is never satisfied. One person who will not give it what it wants is enough to spoil everything else (5:13).

3:6 *Haman sought to annihilate all the Jews who were in all the kingdom of Ahasuerus* Killing one man was beneath him. He wanted them all. This is the first recorded plan to wipe out every Jew everywhere, and sadly not the last. Behind it the Bible shows an enemy who has always hated the people through whom God would bring the Savior (Rev 12:1-6, 13-17). But God had promised Abraham, "the one who disdains you I will curse" (Gen 12:3).

3:7 *one cast Pur, that is the lot, before Haman* Nisan is March to April. The twelfth year was 474 B.C. Persians used marked stones or clay pieces to find a lucky day. The lot fell on Adar, February to March, eleven months away. Haman trusted his gods or fate, but "from the LORD is its every judgment" (Prov 16:33). The lot Haman trusted gave the Jews eleven months to be saved. The feast of Purim takes its name from it (9:24-26).

3:8 *There is one people scattered and separated among the peoples* Haman never named them, and the king never asked. He mixed truth with lies. They were scattered, and their laws were different because they followed God's Law. But it was a lie that they did not keep the king's laws. One man had refused to bow, and Haman made it a whole people in rebellion. Jesus warned that the world would hate His followers because they do not belong to it (John 15:18-19).

3:9 *approximately 750,000 pounds of silver* Ten thousand talents, about 375 tons of silver, a huge fortune, perhaps two-thirds of the empire's yearly income. Haman may have planned to take it from the goods of the murdered Jews (3:13). He was buying a people's death.

3:10 *the adversary of the Jews* The signet ring carried the king's seal and full authority. With it Haman could write any law he wished. "The adversary of the Jews" becomes his title for the rest of the book. The name Satan carries the same idea; it means the adversary.

3:11 *The silver is given to you, and the people* Either the king refused the money or this was a polite way of saying yes (compare Gen 23:11-16). He asked no questions and wanted no proof. He signed away a whole people without a second thought. A leader who does not care enough to ask can do great evil.

3:12 *in the first month, on the thirteenth day of it* The decree was written the day before the Passover, the fourteenth of Nisan (Exod 12:6). As the Jews of the empire began to remember how God saved them from death in Egypt, the order for their death was going out. Once sealed, it could not be undone (1:19; 8:8).

3:13 *to annihilate, to kill, and to destroy all the Jews, from young to old, little ones and women, on one day* Three words pile up. Not one was to be left. The killers could plunder their goods too, which made murder a reward for anyone who joined in.

given ***as*** law in each and every province, ***was*** disclosed to all the peoples, to be ready for this day. **15** The runners went out, hurried by the word of the king, and the law was given in Susa (Shushan) the citadel. And the king and Haman sat down to drink, and the city of Susa was in confusion.

ESTHER 4

Mourning Among the Jews

1 And Mordecai (Mordekhay) knew all that had been done, and Mordecai tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and ashes, and he went out into the midst of the city and cried a loud and bitter cry. **2** And he went as far as before the gate of the king, for ***one is*** not to go into the gate of the king in clothing of sackcloth. **3** And in each and every province, ***in*** the place where the word of the king and his law were reaching, ***there was*** great mourning among the Jews, and fasting and weeping and wailing; sackcloth and ashes were spread ***as a bed*** for many. **4** And the young women of Esther (Ester) and her eunuchs came and told her, and the queen was greatly distressed; and she sent garments to clothe Mordecai and to remove his sackcloth from him, and he did not accept ***them***. **5** And Esther summoned Hathach (Hatakh), ***one*** of the eunuchs of the king whom he had stationed before her, and she commanded him concerning Mordecai, to know what this ***was*** and why this ***was***. **6** And Hathach went out to Mordecai, to the open square of the city which ***was*** before the gate of the king. **7** And Mordecai told him all that had happened to him, and the exact amount of the silver which Haman had said to weigh out to the treasuries of the king for the Jews, to destroy them. **8** And the copy of the writing of the law which had been given in Susa (Shushan) to annihilate them he gave to him, to show Esther and to tell her, and to command her to go in to the king to implore his favor and to make request before him for her people. **9** And Hathach came and told Esther the words of Mordecai.

For a Time Like This

10 And Esther spoke to Hathach and commanded him ***to say*** to Mordecai, **11** "All the servants of the king and the people of the provinces of the king know that every man or woman who goes to the king into the inner court, who is not summoned, his law ***is*** one: to put ***him*** to death, apart from ***one*** to whom the king extends the golden scepter, and he will live. And I have not been summoned to go in to the king these thirty days." **12** And they told Mordecai the words of Esther. **13** And Mordecai said to bring back to Esther, "Do not imagine in your soul to escape ***in*** the house of the king more than all the Jews. **14** For if you indeed keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, and you and the house of your father will perish. And who knows whether for a time like this you have attained to royalty?" **15** And Esther said to bring back to Mordecai,

3:15 Esth 8:15; Prov 1:16; Prov 4:16
4:1 2 Sam 1:11; 2 Sam 13:19; Ezek 27:30
4:3 Matt 22:13; Isa 22:4,12; Isa 58:5
4:4 Acts 8:27; Ps 77:2; Esth 1:12
4:5 1 Cor 12:26; Heb 4:15; Esth 1:10,12
4:6 Esth 4:3; Esth 7:2; Esth 9:12
4:7 Esth 3:2-15
4:8 Prov 16:14,15; Esth 3:14,15; Esth 2:20
4:11 Esth 5:1; Dan 2:9; Esth 8:4
4:13 Prov 24:10-12; John 12:25; Matt 16:24,25
4:14 1 Sam 12:22; Isa 54:17; Gen 45:4-8

3:15 *the king and Haman sat down to drink, and the city of Susa was in confusion* One of the coldest lines in the Bible. They ordered the death of a whole people and relaxed over wine, while even the ordinary people of the capital were shocked. Who would be next? God is not named, and the darkness is deep. But He had already put Esther on the throne, already had Mordecai's deed written in the king's book, and already made the lot fall eleven months away. The enemy made his plans. God made His first.

4:1 *Mordecai tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and ashes* Mordecai knew the decree, and likely knew it was because of him. Torn clothes, sackcloth and ashes were signs of deep grief and humbling before God (Gen 37:34; Jonah 3:6; Dan 9:3). He did not grieve quietly. He wanted everyone to know that something terrible had been done.

4:2 *one is not to go into the gate of the king in clothing of sackcloth* No grief was allowed to spoil the palace of pleasure and power. Mordecai stood as close as he could come.

4:3 *there was great mourning among the Jews, and fasting and weeping and wailing* As the runners arrived, the Jews everywhere learned they had less than a year to live. Fasting in the Bible almost always goes with prayer (Ezra 8:21-23; Neh 1:4; Joel 2:12-13). The book does not say they prayed, but every Jewish reader knew who they were crying out to.

4:4 *she sent garments to clothe Mordecai* Inside the palace, Esther did not yet know about the decree. Perhaps she wanted Mordecai able to enter the gate, or only to comfort him. New clothes would not fix the problem, so he refused them, and she sent to learn the real cause.

4:7 *the exact amount of the silver which Haman had said to weigh out* Mordecai knew the whole story, even the price. The Jews had been sold with a price on their heads. Hathach, trusted by both, carried every message in this chapter.

4:8 *to make request before him for her people* Mordecai gave her the written proof. And for the first time we read "her people." She had kept them secret on his orders (2:10, 20). Now the time for secrets was over. Pleading for her people meant telling the king she was one of them.

4:11 *who is not summoned, his law is one: to put him to death* Not an excuse but the law. Persian kings guarded themselves for safety and majesty, and two doorkeepers had recently tried to kill this one (2:21). Worse, he had not called for her in thirty days. If Vashti was put away for saying no, what of a queen who came uninvited? Her fear was real. Courage is not the absence of fear. It is doing right while afraid.

4:13 *Do not imagine in your soul to escape in the house of the king more than all the Jews* Blunt words. The decree said all the Jews, and Esther was one. Sooner or later someone would find out, and Haman would gladly see the queen fall. Her crown would not protect her, and silence would not save her.

4:14 *relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place* The key verse. Not to act was also a choice. Mordecai was sure the Jews would be saved, with or without Esther, and the only ground for that with a sealed decree of death was God's promises: to Abraham (Gen 12:2-3), to David (2 Sam 7:16), and through the prophets that He would never make a full end of His people (Jer 30:11; 31:35-37). Many Bible teachers believe "another place" is the nearest the book comes to naming God, since later Jewish writing used "the Place" for God. Either way, help would come because God would see to it. God does not need any one of us, but when He calls and we refuse, we are the ones who lose.

4:14 *who knows whether for a time like this you have attained to royalty* Why had an orphan of exiles become queen? A queen put away at just the right time, a Jewish girl chosen, her people kept secret, her crown five years before the plot. This is providence, God's wise and loving control over all things, working through ordinary events and people. Mordecai says "who knows." He had no word from a prophet. He looked at where God had put her and asked her to consider why. That is often how God guides us. God is at work even when silent (Rom 8:28). Where has He placed you? And silence is sometimes sin: rescue those being taken away to death (Prov 24:11-12).

16 "Go, gather all the Jews who are found in Susa, and fast for me, and do not eat and do not drink three days, night and day. Also I and my young women will fast likewise; and so I will go in to the king, which ***is*** not according to the law; and as I perish, I perish." **17** And Mordecai passed on and did according to all that Esther had commanded him.

ESTHER 5

Esther Goes In to the King

1 And it came about on the third day, that Esther (Ester) put on royalty and stood in the inner court of the house of the king, in front of the house of the king; and the king was sitting on his royal throne in the royal house, in front of the entrance of the house. **2** And it came about, when the king saw Esther the queen standing in the court, ***that*** she obtained favor in his eyes; and the king extended to Esther the golden scepter which ***was*** in his hand, and Esther drew near and touched the top of the scepter. **3** And the king said to her, "What ***is it*** to you, Queen Esther? And what ***is*** your request? Up to half of the kingdom, and it shall be given to you." **4** And Esther said, "If ***it is*** good to the king, let the king and Haman come today to the feast which I have made for him." **5** And the king said, "Bring Haman quickly, to do the word of Esther." And the king and Haman came to the feast which Esther had made. **6** And the king said to Esther at the feast of wine, "What ***is*** your petition? And it shall be given to you. And what ***is*** your request? Up to half of the kingdom, and it shall be done." **7** And Esther answered and said, "My petition and my request ***is***: **8** if I have found favor in the eyes of the king, and if ***it is*** good to the king to grant my petition and to do my request, let the king and Haman come to the feast which I will make for them, and tomorrow I will do according to the word of the king."

Haman Builds a Tree for Mordecai

9 And Haman went out on that day joyful and good of heart; and when Haman saw Mordecai (Mordekhay) at the gate of the king, and he did not stand up and did not tremble before him, Haman was filled ***with*** rage against Mordecai. **10** And Haman restrained himself and went to his house, and he sent and brought his friends and Zeresh his wife. **11** And Haman recounted to them the glory of his riches and the multitude of his sons, and all that ***with which*** the king had made him great, and how he had exalted him above the officials and the servants of the king. **12** And Haman said, "Also Queen Esther let no one come with the king to the feast which she had prepared except me; and also tomorrow I am invited by her with the king. **13** And all this is not sufficient for me every time that I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the gate of the king."

4:16 Matt 12:40; Joel 2:12-17; Acts 20:24
5:1 Esth 4:16; Esth 6:4; Esth 4:11
5:2 Esth 4:11; Esth 8:4; Prov 21:1
5:3 Mark 6:23; Matt 20:21; Esth 7:2
5:4 Esth 5:8; Prov 29:11; Esth 3:15
5:5 Esth 6:14
5:6 Esth 7:2; Esth 9:12; Esth 5:3
5:8 Esth 6:1-13; Prov 16:9
5:9 Matt 2:16; Esth 3:5; Job 20:5
5:10 Esth 6:13; Eccl 7:9; Gen 43:30,31
5:11 Esth 9:7-10,12,13; Esth 3:1; Luke 12:19,20
5:12 Prov 27:1; Ps 37:35,36; Job 8:12,13
5:13 Phil 4:11,12; 1 Kgs 21:4-6; Job 15:20

4:16 *fast for me, and do not eat and do not drink three days, night and day* Esther answered not with a plan but with a call to fast, which means prayer. She knew she could not do this in her own strength. It was a total fast for a desperate time, and she and her maids would keep it too. She would not ask of others what she would not do herself.

4:16 *as I perish, I perish* The frightened young woman of verse 11 became the brave queen of verse 16. This is not giving up. It is settling it: do right and leave the outcome with God. Daniel's friends said much the same before the furnace (Dan 3:17-18). Faith is not certainty about how things will turn out, but trust enough to obey. Esther risked her life to go before the king for a people under sentence of death. Jesus gave His. He prayed, "not My will, but Yours be done" (Luke 22:42), went to the cross, and is "always living to intercede for them" (Heb 7:25).

4:17 *did according to all that Esther had commanded him* At the start of the chapter Mordecai gave the commands (4:8). At the end Esther gives them and Mordecai obeys. The orphan girl had become the queen who would lead her people.

5:1 *on the third day, that Esther put on royalty and stood in the inner court of the house of the king* She did not go in sackcloth but as his queen. Picture the king on his throne, looking out through the entrance, and Esther in full view, uninvited. Every guard knew the law (4:11). One word, and she would die.

5:2 *the king extended to Esther the golden scepter which was in his hand* Once more she "obtained favor" (2:9, 15, 17). Three days of fasting had gone up before God, and the king's heart was moved (Prov 21:1). Touching the scepter accepted his mercy. Esther had to risk death to come before an earthly king, but we are told, "Let us therefore come with boldness to the throne of grace" (Heb 4:16). Because of Jesus the scepter is already held out.

5:3 *Up to half of the kingdom, and it shall be given to you* A royal way of saying, I will be very generous (compare Mark 6:23). He knew she would not risk her life for a small thing.

5:4 *let the king and Haman come today to the feast which I have made for him* She asked only for a dinner. A public request in the throne room might shame the king, who had signed the decree himself. At a private feast he would be relaxed, and Haman would be there to be named face to face. And the feast was already prepared. Her fast came with planning, not instead of it. Nehemiah prayed and then planned (Neh 2:4-8). Prayer does not mean we stop thinking.

5:6 *at the feast of wine* The part of the banquet after the meal, when wine was served.

5:8 *tomorrow I will do according to the word of the king* Why wait again? We are not told. Perhaps she lost her nerve, sensed the time was not right, or wanted the king's curiosity to grow. The delay was exactly what God needed. Between the two banquets a sleepless night and a book of records would change everything. Had she spoken that night, Mordecai might have hanged by morning. Waiting can be part of God's plan.

5:9 *he did not stand up and did not tremble before him* Haman went out on top of the world. Mordecai was back at the gate, knowing what Haman intended, and still did not tremble. He feared God more than Haman (Matt 10:28). In one moment Haman went from joy to rage. Joy built on pride is easily broken.

5:11 *Haman recounted to them the glory of his riches and the multitude of his sons* He had ten sons (9:10). His wife and friends already knew it all, but he loved to hear himself say it. He had no idea the queen's banquet was a trap, or that the queen was one of the people he had sentenced to death.

5:13 *all this is not sufficient for me* One of the most revealing verses in the Bible about the human heart. Riches, sons, the highest office, the king's favor, the queen's invitation, and all of it worth nothing because one man would not bow. Pride and envy make every blessing taste like nothing. Whoever loves money is never satisfied with it (Eccl 5:10), and the same is true of honor. Paul learned to be content in every circumstance (Phil 4:11-13). Contentment is trusting God with what we have.

14 And Zeresh his wife and all his friends said to him, "Let them make a tree approximately 75 feet (fifty cubits) high, and in the morning speak to the king, and let them hang Mordecai on it; and go with the king to the feast joyful." And the word was good before Haman, and he made the tree.

ESTHER 6

The King's Sleepless Night

1 On that night the sleep of the king fled, and he said to bring the book of the records, the matters of the days; and they were read before the king. **2** And it was found written that Mordecai (Mordekhay) had told about Bigthana (Bigtana) and Teresh, two of the eunuchs of the king, of the guards of the threshold, who had sought to stretch out a hand against King Ahasuerus (Achashverosh). **3** And the king said, "What honor and greatness has been done for Mordecai concerning this?" And the young men of the king who served him said, "Nothing has been done with him." **4** And the king said, "Who ***is*** in the court?" And Haman had come into the outer court of the house of the king to say to the king to hang Mordecai on the tree which he had prepared for him. **5** And the servants of the king said to him, "Look, Haman ***is*** standing in the court." And the king said, "Let him come in."

Haman Honors Mordecai

6 And Haman came in, and the king said to him, "What ***is one*** to do for the man whom the king delights to honor?" And Haman said in his heart, "Whom would the king delight to do honor more than me?" **7** And Haman said to the king, "***For*** the man whom the king delights to honor, **8** let them bring royal clothing which the king has worn, and a horse which the king has ridden, and on whose head a royal crown has been put; **9** and let the clothing and the horse be given into the hand of a man of the officials of the king, the nobles; and let them clothe the man whom the king delights to honor, and make him ride on the horse in the open square of the city, and proclaim before him, 'Thus it shall be done for the man whom the king delights to honor.'" **10** And the king said to Haman, "Hurry, take the clothing and the horse, just as you have said, and do so for Mordecai the Jew who sits at the gate of the king. Do not let a word fall from all that you have said." **11** And Haman took the clothing and the horse, and he clothed Mordecai and made him ride in the open square of the city, and he proclaimed before him, "Thus it shall be done for the man whom the king delights to honor." **12** And Mordecai returned to the gate of the king; and Haman hurried to his house, mourning and ***with*** head covered. **13** And Haman recounted to Zeresh his wife and to all his friends all that had happened to him. And his wise men and Zeresh his wife said to him, "If Mordecai, before whom you have begun to fall, ***is*** of the seed of the Jews, you will not prevail against him, but you will surely fall before him." **14** They ***were*** still speaking with him, and the eunuchs of the king arrived, and they hurried to bring Haman to the feast which Esther (Ester) had prepared.

5:14 Esth 6:4; 1 Kgs 21:7,25; Esth 7:9
6:1 Dan 2:1; Dan 6:18; 1 Sam 23:26,27
6:2 Esth 2:21
6:3 Eccl 9:15; Gen 40:23; Judg 1:12,13
6:4 Esth 5:14; Esth 4:11; Esth 5:1
6:6 Matt 3:17; Prov 16:18; Prov 18:12
6:7 Esth 6:9,11
6:8 1 Kgs 1:33; 1 Sam 18:4; Luke 15:22
6:9 Gen 41:43; 1 Kgs 1:33,34; Zech 9:9
6:10 Dan 4:37; Luke 14:11; Rev 18:7
6:11 Luke 1:52; Ezra 6:13; Isa 60:14
6:12 2 Sam 15:30; Jer 14:3,4; 1 Kgs 21:4
6:13 Prov 28:18; Esth 5:10-14; Gen 41:8
6:14 Esth 5:8,14; Deut 32:35,36

5:14 *Let them make a tree approximately 75 feet high* Fifty cubits, as tall as a seven-story building. The tree was a tall stake, for impaling or displaying the body where all the city could see. No one in his house told him to stop. They fed his anger. "He who walks with wise ones will become wise, and he who associates with fools will be harmed" (Prov 13:20). Haman built it that night. But the king could not sleep. Haman had his plans. God had His.

6:1 *On that night the sleep of the king fled* Of all nights, this one: between the two banquets, the night Haman built his tree. Perhaps he wondered what Esther wanted, or had too much wine. The writer wants us to see it was no accident. The One who "will not slumber and He will not sleep" (Ps 121:4) kept the king of Persia awake. He asked for the royal records, perhaps hoping they would put him to sleep.

6:2 *it was found written that Mordecai had told about Bigthana and Teresh* Out of all the records of an empire, this page, written about five years earlier (2:21-23), was the one read. Bigthana is the same man as Bigthan in 2:21.

6:3 *Nothing has been done with him* A Persian king was expected to reward those who served him, and failing to reward a man who saved his life was an embarrassment. Had Mordecai been rewarded back then, there would be nothing to remember tonight. God let the deed go unrewarded for five years so it could be rewarded on the one night it mattered most. God's delays are not His denials.

6:4 *Haman had come into the outer court of the house of the king to say to the king to hang Mordecai* He was so eager he came in the night or very early morning, waiting to ask for Mordecai's death at the very moment the king wanted someone to honor Mordecai. In a book where God is never named, the "coincidences" pile up until no honest reader can call them chance.

6:6 *Whom would the king delight to do honor more than me* The king named no one, and Haman never got to mention Mordecai. Pride could not imagine the king wanting to honor anyone else.

6:8 *royal clothing which the king has worn, and a horse which the king has ridden* Haman already had money. He wanted to be seen as almost a king, the king's own robe and the king's own horse with a royal crest, and a great noble walking before him calling out his praise. The dream of a proud man.

6:10 *do so for Mordecai the Jew who sits at the gate of the king* Imagine Haman's face. The king even called him a Jew, not knowing Haman's decree was against Mordecai's people. And Haman himself must lead the horse, every word of it. "Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted" (Luke 14:11).

6:11 *he clothed Mordecai and made him ride in the open square of the city* The man who would not bow to Haman was led through the city by Haman. The man in sackcloth in that same square days earlier (4:1) wore the king's robe. The man meant for the tree rode the king's horse. The writer does not tell us what Mordecai felt. He lets the scene speak.

6:12 *Mordecai returned to the gate of the king; and Haman hurried to his house, mourning and with head covered* After the parade, Mordecai went back to work. The decree still stood, and he went back to his duty. Covering the head was a sign of grief and shame (2 Sam 15:30; Jer 14:3-4). Haman came to ask for Mordecai's death and went home having honored him.

6:13 *If Mordecai, before whom you have begun to fall, is of the seed of the Jews, you will not prevail against him* The same people who told him to build the tree now told him he was finished. Even pagans sensed this people was protected by a power greater than Persia. Perhaps they knew the history of Pharaoh and Babylon. God had promised to curse those who cursed Abraham's seed (Gen 12:3). "Before breaking is pride" (Prov 16:18).

6:14 *they hurried to bring Haman to the feast which Esther had prepared* No time to think or recover. A sleepless night, a page of a record book, a good deed forgotten five years, a proud man walking in at exactly the wrong moment. Not one miracle and not one mention of God, yet every piece fell into place. That is providence. Often God is in the quiet details, arranging them for the good of His people (Rom 8:28).

ESTHER 7

Esther Names Her Enemy

1 And the king and Haman went to drink with Esther (Ester) the queen. **2** And the king said to Esther also on the second day at the feast of wine, "What ***is*** your petition, Queen Esther? And it shall be given to you. And what ***is*** your request? Up to half of the kingdom, and it shall be done." **3** And Queen Esther answered and said, "If I have found favor in your eyes, O king, and if ***it is*** good to the king, let my life be given to me at my petition, and my people at my request. **4** For we have been sold, I and my people, to annihilate, to kill, and to destroy. And if we had been sold as male slaves and female slaves, I would have kept silent, for the distress ***would*** not ***be*** equal to the injury of the king." **5** And King Ahasuerus (Achashverosh) said, and he said to Esther the queen, "Who ***is*** he, this ***one***, and where ***is*** he, this ***one***, who has filled his heart to do so?" **6** And Esther said, "A man, an adversary and an enemy: this evil Haman!" And Haman was terrified before the king and the queen.

Haman Hanged on His Own Tree

7 And the king rose in his rage from the feast of wine ***and went*** into the garden of the palace; and Haman remained to make request for his life from Esther the queen, for he saw that evil had been determined against him by the king. **8** And the king returned from the garden of the palace to the house of the feast of wine, and Haman was falling on the couch on which Esther ***was***. And the king said, "Also to violate the queen with me in the house?" The word went out from the mouth of the king, and they covered the face of Haman. **9** And Harbona (Charvona), one of the eunuchs, said before the king, "Also look, the tree which Haman made for Mordecai (Mordekhay), who spoke good concerning the king, is standing at the house of Haman, approximately 75 feet (fifty cubits) high." And the king said, "Hang him on it." **10** And they hanged Haman on the tree which he had prepared for Mordecai; and the rage of the king subsided.

ESTHER 8

Mordecai Receives the King's Ring

1 On that day King Ahasuerus (Achashverosh) gave to Esther (Ester) the queen the house of Haman, the adversary of the Jews; and Mordecai (Mordekhay) came before the king, for Esther had told what he ***was*** to her. **2** And the king removed his signet ring which he had taken away from Haman and gave it to Mordecai; and Esther set Mordecai over the house of Haman.

Esther Pleads for Her People

3 And Esther again spoke before the king, and she fell before his feet and wept and implored his favor to take away the evil of Haman the Agagite and his plan which he had planned against the Jews. **4** And the king extended to Esther the

7:1 Esth 5:8; Esth 3:15
7:2 Esth 5:6; John 16:24
7:3 Esth 7:7; 1 Kgs 20:31; 2 Kgs 1:13
7:4 Esth 3:9; Deut 28:68; Esth 3:13
7:5 Gen 27:33; Job 9:24; Acts 5:3
7:6 Ps 139:19-22; 2 Thess 2:8; Job 18:5-12
7:7 Rev 3:9; Esth 1:12; Prov 19:12
7:8 Esth 1:6; Esth 6:12; Isa 49:23
7:9 Ps 7:15,16; Prov 11:5,6; Esth 5:14
7:10 1 Cor 3:19; Gal 3:13; Judg 15:7
8:1 Esth 2:7,15; Job 27:16,17; Ps 39:6
8:2 Esth 3:10; Gen 41:42; Dan 2:48
8:3 1 Sam 25:24; 2 Kgs 4:27; Isa 38:2
8:4 Esth 4:11; Esth 5:2

7:2 *What is your petition, Queen Esther* Haman came still shaken from leading Mordecai through the square (6:11-14). For the third time the king asked and promised up to half the kingdom (5:3, 6). Esther had waited, and now the time had come.
7:3 *let my life be given to me at my petition, and my people at my request* She began not with Haman or the decree but with herself. Who would threaten the queen? Then "my people." In one sentence she told the secret she had kept for five years (2:10, 20). She stood with her people, whatever it cost.
7:4 *we have been sold, I and my people, to annihilate, to kill, and to destroy* The very words of Haman's decree (3:13). "Sold" may point to the silver Haman offered (3:9; 4:7). The last clause is hard in Hebrew, but the plain sense is this: slavery she would not trouble the king with, but this is death, and it will cost the king too. She showed respect and did not accuse him, though he had sealed the decree. She let him see the evil himself.
7:5 *Who is he, this one, and where is he, this one* The words come out in a rush, as if he is too angry to speak smoothly. Perhaps he never knew which people Haman meant. He had never asked (3:8-11).
7:6 *A man, an adversary and an enemy: this evil Haman* The moment the whole book has built toward. The queen pointed across the table at the most powerful man in the empire and named him, using the writer's own word for him (3:10). The man who made a whole people tremble now trembled himself.
7:7 *the king rose in his rage from the feast of wine and went into the garden of the palace* Perhaps to cool down or think. To punish Haman was to admit his own foolishness, and the decree could not be undone. Haman knew the king and turned to the queen, the very Jew he had sentenced. The man who refused mercy to a whole people now begged mercy from one of them.
7:8 *Haman was falling on the couch on which Esther was* People reclined on couches at meals. Haman threw himself down at the queen's couch, and in the Persian court no man but the king might come that close to her. The king believed, or chose to take it, that Haman was attacking her. Covering the face marked a condemned man. That morning Haman came to ask for Mordecai's death. By evening his own face was covered.
7:9 *the tree which Haman made for Mordecai, who spoke good concerning the king* Harbona was one of the seven sent for Vashti (1:10). Perhaps the whole palace knew what Haman had planned. He reminded the king the tree was built for the man who saved his life.
7:10 *they hanged Haman on the tree which he had prepared for Mordecai* The trap caught its maker: "he has fallen into the pit that he made" (Ps 7:15; Prov 26:27). We should not cheer any man's death in a bloodthirsty way, but this was justice. Haman planned the murder of every Jewish man, woman and child, and the king sentenced him under Persian law. He reaped what he sowed (Gal 6:7). Yet the decree still stood. Removing the enemy did not remove the sentence of death. Another tree stands at the center of the Bible: "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree" (Gal 3:13). Haman died on a tree for his own sin. Jesus died on one for ours, justice and mercy at once (2 Cor 5:21; 1 Pet 2:24).
8:1 *King Ahasuerus gave to Esther the queen the house of Haman* In Persia the property of an executed criminal went to the king, and he gave it to Esther. The man who wanted to plunder the Jews (3:13) had his own house handed to a Jew. And the king learned for the first time that the man who saved his life had raised his queen.
8:2 *the king removed his signet ring which he had taken away from Haman and gave it to Mordecai* The ring that sealed the decree of death was now in the hand of the man it was meant to kill. Mordecai held Haman's office and his estate. "The wealth of a sinner is stored up for the righteous" (Prov 13:22).
8:3 *she fell before his feet and wept and implored his favor* Esther and Mordecai were safe, but her people were not. On the thirteenth of Adar anyone could still kill a Jew and the law would back them. So she went again, not standing in royal robes but weeping at his feet, perhaps uninvited again, since the scepter was held out once more (8:4). Her love did not stop when she was safe. Paul felt the same for Israel (Rom 9:1-3).

golden scepter, and Esther arose and stood before the king. **5** And she said, "If ***it is*** good to the king, and if I have found favor before him, and the matter is proper before the king, and I ***am*** good in his eyes, let it be written to revoke the letters, the plan of Haman son of Hammedatha (Hamedata) the Agagite, which he wrote to destroy the Jews who ***are*** in all the provinces of the king. **6** For how can I ***bear it*** and look on the evil which will find my people? And how can I ***bear it*** and look on the destruction of my kindred?" **7** And King Ahasuerus said to Esther the queen and to Mordecai the Jew, "Look, the house of Haman I have given to Esther, and him they have hanged on the tree, because he stretched out his hand against the Jews. **8** And you, write concerning the Jews as ***is*** good in your eyes, in the name of the king, and seal ***it*** with the signet ring of the king; for a writing which is written in the name of the king and sealed with the signet ring of the king, there is no revoking."

The Second Decree

9 And the scribes of the king were summoned at that time, in the third month, that ***is*** the month of Sivan, on the twenty-third ***day*** of it; and it was written according to all that Mordecai commanded, to the Jews and to the satraps and the governors and the officials of the provinces which ***are*** from India (Hodu) and as far as Cush (Kush), a hundred and twenty-seven provinces, to each and every province according to its script and each and every people according to its language, and to the Jews according to their script and according to their language. **10** And he wrote in the name of King Ahasuerus and sealed ***it*** with the signet ring of the king, and he sent letters by the hand of the runners on horses, riders of the royal steeds, sons of the mares, **11** that the king had granted to the Jews who ***were*** in each and every city to assemble and to make a stand for their life, to annihilate and to kill and to destroy every army of ***any*** people and province that attacks them, little ones and women, and to plunder their spoil, **12** on one day in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, on the thirteenth of the twelfth month, that ***is*** the month of Adar. **13** A copy of the writing, to be given ***as*** law in each and every province, ***was*** disclosed to all the peoples, and for the Jews to be ready for this day to avenge themselves on their enemies. **14** The runners, riders of the royal steeds, went out hastened and hurried at the word of the king; and the law was given in Susa (Shushan) the citadel.

Light and Gladness for the Jews

15 And Mordecai went out from before the king in royal clothing of violet and white cloth, and a great crown of gold, and a robe of fine linen and purple; and the city of Susa shouted for joy and rejoiced. **16** To the Jews ***there*** was light and gladness and joy and honor. **17** And in each and every province and in each and every city, ***in*** the place where the word of the king and his law were reaching, ***there was*** gladness and joy among the Jews, a feast and a good day. And many of the peoples of the land were becoming Jews, for the dread of the Jews had fallen on them.

8:5 Esth 7:3; Esth 3:12,13; Exod 33:13,16
8:6 Esth 7:4; Rom 9:2,3; Rom 10:1
8:7 Gal 3:13; Esth 7:10; Prov 13:22
8:8 Esth 3:12; Esth 1:19; Dan 6:8,12-15
8:9 Esth 1:22; Esth 1:1,22; Esth 3:12
8:10 1 Kgs 21:8; Eccl 8:4; Dan 4:1
8:11 Esth 3:13; Esth 9:2-16; Ps 37:14,15
8:12 Esth 9:1; Esth 3:13-15; Exod 15:9,10
8:13 Judg 16:28; Ps 37:14,15; Ps 68:23
8:14 Esth 3:15; 1 Sam 21:8; Eccl 9:10
8:15 Luke 16:19; Gen 41:42; Esth 3:15
8:16 Ps 97:11; Esth 4:1-3,16; Ps 30:5-11
8:17 Acts 2:10; Rev 3:9; 1 Sam 25:8

8:5 *the plan of Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite* Four polite phrases before the request, and the blame placed on "the plan of Haman," not on the king's own decree, though the king had sealed it. She let the king save face.
8:6 *how can I bear it and look on the evil which will find my people* Her people's suffering was her own. She could not stand by and watch.
8:8 *there is no revoking* Even the king could not undo his sealed law (1:19; Dan 6:8, 15). Haman's decree would stand, but a new one could answer it. Here is a picture. God's law says the soul who sins will die (Ezek 18:4; Rom 6:23), and that just sentence cannot simply be set aside. But in Christ God gave a second word: whoever believes will not perish (John 3:16). The first law was not erased. It was answered by a greater one: "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and of death" (Rom 8:2).
8:9 *in the third month, that is the month of Sivan, on the twenty-third day of it* Sivan is May to June, seventy days after the first decree (3:12), with about eight and a half months left before the day of slaughter. Time enough to reach every province. And this time it was also written "to the Jews according to their script." Haman's decree went to everyone but them.
8:10 *riders of the royal steeds* Persia was famous for its royal road and relay riders, who could carry a message across the empire in days. The fastest horses carried the good news.
8:11 *to assemble and to make a stand for their life* The heart of the decree. It did not tell the Jews to attack. It let them gather and defend themselves against "every army of any people and province that attacks them," turning Haman's three words (3:13) back on those who would use them. "Little ones and women" is hard. Some read it as matching Haman's decree word for word, as a law had to answer a law in the same terms. Others read it as describing whom the attackers threatened, the Jews' own families. Either way, chapter 9 shows what the Jews did. They fought their attackers and three times did not touch the plunder (9:10, 15, 16), though this allowed it.
8:13 *for the Jews to be ready for this day to avenge themselves on their enemies* To see justice done against attackers. Because the decree was public, every enemy knew an attack would be met with force, and that alone would stop many from joining in. The first runners "hurried" (3:15). Now the good news raced to overtake the bad.
8:15 *Mordecai went out from before the king in royal clothing of violet and white cloth* Persia's royal colors (1:6). The crown was most likely a large gold turban, the sign of high office. Sackcloth in chapter 4, the king's horse for a day in chapter 6, and now royal robes for good. When Haman's decree went out, Susa "was in confusion" (3:15). Now it rejoiced: "When righteous ones increase, the people rejoice" (Prov 29:2).
8:16 *To the Jews there was light and gladness and joy and honor* Light is life and hope after darkness: weeping for a night, joy in the morning (Ps 30:5). Where the first decree brought mourning and fasting (4:3), the second brought feasting. God turned their mourning into dancing (Ps 30:11).
8:17 *many of the peoples of the land were becoming Jews* Some may have done it only to save their own skins. But many likely saw that the God of the Jews was real and had saved His people from certain death, and turned to Him, as God always wanted the nations to do (Isa 49:6; 56:6-7), as Ruth did (Ruth 1:16). When people see what God has done in His people, many want to know Him too.

ESTHER 9

The Jews Defend Themselves

1 And in the twelfth month, that ***is*** the month of Adar, on the thirteenth day in it, when the word of the king and his law drew near to be done, on the day when the enemies of the Jews had hoped to domineer over them, and it was turned about, so that the Jews themselves domineered over those who hated them, **2** the Jews assembled in their cities in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus (Achashverosh) to stretch out a hand on those seeking their harm; and no one stood before them, for the dread of them had fallen on all the peoples. **3** And all the officials of the provinces and the satraps and the governors and the doers of the work which ***belonged*** to the king ***were*** supporting the Jews, for the dread of Mordecai (Mordekhay) had fallen on them. **4** For Mordecai ***was*** great in the house of the king, and the report of him ***was*** going through all the provinces; for the man Mordecai ***was*** going on and becoming great. **5** And the Jews struck down all their enemies ***with*** a striking of ***the*** sword and slaughter and destruction, and they did to those who hated them according to their pleasure. **6** And in Susa (Shushan) the citadel the Jews killed and destroyed five hundred men, **7** and Parshandatha (Parshandata) and Dalphon (Dalfon) and Aspatha (Aspata) **8** and Poratha (Porata) and Adalia (Adalya) and Aridatha (Aridata) **9** and Parmashta and Arisai (Arisay) and Aridai (Ariday) and Vaizatha (Vayzata), **10** the ten sons of Haman, the son of Hammedatha (Hamedata), the adversary of the Jews, they killed; and on the plunder they did not stretch out their hand.

The Second Day in Susa

11 On that day the number of those killed in Susa the citadel came before the king. **12** And the king said to Esther (Ester) the queen, "In Susa the citadel the Jews have killed and destroyed five hundred men and the ten sons of Haman; in the rest of the provinces of the king what have they done? And what ***is*** your petition? And it shall be given to you. And what ***is*** your request further? And it shall be done." **13** And Esther said, "If ***it is*** good to the king, let it be given also tomorrow to the Jews who ***are*** in Susa to do according to the law of today; and let them hang the ten sons of Haman on the tree." **14** And the king said ***for it*** to be done so; and a law was given in Susa, and the ten sons of Haman they hanged. **15** And the Jews who ***were*** in Susa assembled also on the fourteenth day of the month of Adar, and they killed in Susa three hundred men; and on the plunder they did not stretch out their hand. **16** And the rest of the Jews who ***were*** in the provinces of the king assembled and stood for their life, and had rest from their enemies, and killed among those who hated them seventy-five thousand; and on the plunder they did not stretch out their hand.

9:1 Acts 12:11; Esth 8:12; Esth 3:7,13
9:2 Esth 8:17; Esth 8:11; Ps 71:13,24
9:3 Ezra 8:36; Esth 3:12; Esth 8:9
9:4 Matt 4:24; 2 Sam 3:1; 1 Chr 11:9
9:5 Ps 18:34-40,47,48; Ps 20:7,8; Ps 149:6-9
9:6 Esth 3:15
9:10 Esth 5:11; Esth 8:11; Gen 14:23
9:12 Esth 5:6; Esth 7:2
9:13 Gal 3:13; Esth 8:11; Deut 21:23
9:14 Gal 3:13
9:15 Esth 8:11; Esth 9:10,16; Esth 9:2,13
9:16 Esth 8:11; Lev 26:7,8

9:1 *it was turned about, so that the Jews themselves domineered over those who hated them* The whole book in one phrase. The word means overturned, flipped upside down. The day of death became the day of deliverance. Haman's tree held Haman, his ring sealed Mordecai's decree, his house went to Esther, and his day of slaughter became the defeat of his followers. The verb does not say who turned it, but by now we know: "God planned it for good" (Gen 50:20).

9:2 *to stretch out a hand on those seeking their harm* Notice whom they fought. Not their neighbors in general, but those who came to kill them, as the second decree allowed (8:11). Haman's decree was still law, and many would use it. Many others were afraid, because the tide had turned.

9:3 *the dread of Mordecai had fallen on them* The officials knew where power now lay and supported the Jews. Mordecai was rising, just as Haman's wife had said Haman would fall before him (6:13).

9:5 *they did to those who hated them according to their pleasure* A hard verse, and the Bible does not soften it. These were armed men who had nearly a year to prepare to kill Jewish men, women and children and take their goods. "According to their pleasure" most likely means the Jews could do as they wished with their attackers, with no one able to stop them. It is about power, not cruelty, the reverse of Haman's "as is good in your eyes" (3:11). It was self-defense, under the law of the land, and they took no plunder. We should not read it with glee. Many died, and war is always a grief.

9:6 *five hundred men* The text speaks only of men here, the fighting men who attacked them.

9:10 *the ten sons of Haman* Haman's sons were most likely leading the attack, carrying on their father's hatred. In the Hebrew Bible their ten names (9:7-9) are written in a column, a way of marking a list of fallen enemies.

9:10 *on the plunder they did not stretch out their hand* The first of three times (9:15, 16), though the decree allowed it (8:11). They were not fighting for gain. Saul had fought Amalek and taken the plunder, and God rejected him (1 Sam 15:9, 19). Mordecai, of Saul's family, fought the Agagite's house and left the plunder. What Saul did wrong, they did right. This is not a pattern for believers today. We are to love our enemies (Matt 5:44) and not avenge ourselves (Rom 12:19). But a people's right to defend their lives against those who come to kill them is a different matter, and that is what the text describes.

9:12 *in the rest of the provinces of the king what have they done* The king seemed almost impressed. For the fourth time he offered Esther whatever she asked.

9:13 *let it be given also tomorrow to the Jews who are in Susa to do according to the law of today* The hardest verse in the chapter. Scripture gives no reasons, and we should not put words in her mouth. But the request was only for Susa, where Haman's household and supporters were strongest, and the law of the day allowed only defense against attackers. Three hundred more men came against them the next day (9:15), so the danger was real. Some think she went too far and wanted revenge; others think she was wise and protective. The text does not judge her. I believe we should be humble here, but not hold it up as an example, because the New Testament calls us higher (Rom 12:17-21).

9:13 *let them hang the ten sons of Haman on the tree* They were already dead (9:10). Hanging the bodies was a public display to show the threat was fully ended and to warn others (compare 1 Sam 31:10). The house that planned to wipe out every Jew was finished.

9:16 *stood for their life, and had rest from their enemies* The language of defense. The goal was not slaughter but rest. Seventy-five thousand across 127 provinces shows how many had been ready to kill the Jews when the law allowed it. Haman's hatred had spread far. And the third time, they took no plunder.

The Feast of Purim

17 ***This was*** on the thirteenth day of the month of Adar; and they rested on the fourteenth ***day*** of it, and made it a day of feasting and joy. **18** And the Jews who ***were*** in Susa assembled on the thirteenth ***day*** of it and on the fourteenth ***day*** of it, and they rested on the fifteenth ***day*** of it, and made it a day of feasting and joy. **19** Therefore the Jews, the villagers, who dwell in the cities of the open regions, ***are*** keeping the fourteenth day of the month of Adar ***as*** joy and feasting and a good day, and ***as a day of*** sending portions each to his neighbor. **20** And Mordecai wrote these words, and he sent letters to all the Jews who ***were*** in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, the near and the far, **21** to establish on them to be keeping the fourteenth day of the month of Adar and the fifteenth day of it, in each and every year, **22** as the days on which the Jews had rest from their enemies, and the month which was turned for them from sorrow into joy and from mourning into a good day; to make them days of feasting and joy and of sending portions each to his neighbor and gifts to the needy. **23** And the Jews accepted what they had begun to do and what Mordecai had written to them, **24** because Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the adversary of all the Jews, had planned against the Jews to destroy them, and had cast Pur, that ***is*** the lot, to throw them into confusion and to destroy them; **25** and when she came before the king, he said with the letter, "Let his evil plan which he planned against the Jews return on his own head, and let them hang him and his sons on the tree." **26** Therefore they called these days Purim, after the name of the Pur. Therefore, because of all the words of this letter, and what they had seen concerning this, and what had come to them, **27** the Jews established and accepted on themselves and on their offspring and on all who joined themselves to them, and it shall not pass away, to be keeping these two days according to their writing and according to their appointed time, in each and every year; **28** and these days ***are*** remembered and kept in each and every generation, each and every clan, each and every province, and each and every city; and these days of Purim shall not pass away from among the Jews, and their remembrance shall not cease from their offspring.

Esther Confirms Purim

29 And Esther the queen, the daughter of Abihail (Avichayil), and Mordecai the Jew wrote ***with*** all authority, to establish this second letter of Purim. **30** And he sent letters to all the Jews, to the hundred and twenty-seven provinces of the kingdom of Ahasuerus, words of peace and truth, **31** to establish these days of Purim at their appointed times, just as Mordecai the Jew and Esther the queen had established on them, and just as they had established on themselves and on their offspring, the matters of the fasts and their cry. **32** And the command of Esther established these matters of Purim, and ***it was*** written in the book.

ESTHER 10

The Greatness of Mordecai

1 And King Ahasuerus (Achashverosh) put forced labor on the land and the coastlands of the sea. **2** And all the work of

9:17 Esth 9:1,18,21; Esth 3:12; Esth 8:9
9:18 Esth 9:1,11,13,15
9:19 Rev 11:10; Esth 9:22; Esth 8:17
9:20 Rev 11:10; Exod 17:14; Deut 31:19-22
9:21 Rev 11:10
9:22 Rev 11:10; Ps 30:11; Esth 9:19
9:24 Esth 3:5-13; Esth 9:10; Esth 3:7
9:25 Ps 7:16; Esth 9:13,14; Esth 7:5-10
9:26 Num 16:40; Ezek 39:11
9:27 Zech 2:11; Esth 8:17; Isa 56:3,6
9:28 Exod 12:17; Ps 78:5-7; Ps 103:2
9:29 Esth 9:20; Esth 8:10; Esth 3:15
9:30 Esth 1:1; Esth 8:9; Isa 39:8
9:31 Esth 4:3,16; Jonah 3:2-9
10:1 Isa 24:15; Ps 72:10; Esth 1:1
10:2 Esth 8:15; Esth 9:4; Esth 2:23

9:17 *made it a day of feasting and joy* The feast was not on the day of fighting but on the day of rest. They did not celebrate the killing. They celebrated being alive and safe.
9:19 *the Jews, the villagers, who dwell in the cities of the open regions* Villages fought one day and feasted on the fourteenth; Susa fought two and feasted on the fifteenth. To this day Jews in Jerusalem and some old walled cities keep Purim on the fifteenth, called Shushan Purim. "Sending portions" echoes Neh 8:10. Joy in God's deliverance turns outward in generosity.
9:20 *Mordecai wrote these words* Now second only to the king, Mordecai used his power to make sure Jews everywhere remembered what God had done.
9:22 *from sorrow into joy and from mourning into a good day* The story of the whole book, and of the whole Bible. "You have turned my mourning into dancing" (Ps 30:11). Jesus told His disciples, "your grief will become joy" (John 16:20). And "gifts to the needy" gave even the poor a share. A people rescued from death were to remember by giving.
9:25 *Let his evil plan which he planned against the Jews return on his own head* The writer sums up the story. When Esther went in, Haman's plan came back on him. The evil a man plans for others falls on his own head (Ps 7:16).
9:26 *they called these days Purim, after the name of the Pur* Purim is the plural of pur, the lot. The thing Haman used to plan their destruction became the name of their celebration. Every year the name reminds them that God, not chance, decides how the lot falls (Prov 16:33).
9:27 *on all who joined themselves to them* Those from other peoples who turned to the God of Israel (8:17) were included. The feast was about belonging to God's people, not race.
9:28 *these days of Purim shall not pass away from among the Jews* And they have not. For about twenty-five hundred years Jews have kept Purim, reading Esther aloud, many making noise at Haman's name. Purim is not commanded in the Law of Moses. It was set by Mordecai and Esther and accepted by the people, which shows God's people may rightly set aside days to remember what He has done. Many think the feast of John 5:1 may have been Purim, but Scripture does not say.
9:31 *the matters of the fasts and their cry* Remembering Purim meant remembering the fasting and crying out of chapter 4. Joy came after tears. Jews still keep the Fast of Esther the day before Purim. The letters were "words of peace and truth" (9:30), good news and an honest account.
9:32 *the command of Esther established these matters of Purim, and it was written in the book* The orphan girl taken into the palace gave a command her people have kept for centuries. God kept His people, and with them the line of the Messiah. And they were told never to forget. Jesus gave us a meal of remembrance and said, "do this for My remembrance" (Luke 22:19). Purim remembers a day God saved His people from death. The Lord's Supper remembers a far greater deliverance, through the death of His Son.
10:1 *King Ahasuerus put forced labor on the land and the coastlands of the sea* Likely a tax or tribute paid in work or goods. The coastlands were the islands and shores of the Mediterranean. The world went on as before. The Jews were still subjects in a foreign empire. God had saved His people, but had not yet ended their exile or set up His kingdom. Many Bible teachers also think it shows an orderly empire under Mordecai's leadership.
10:2 *are they not written in the book of the words of the days of the kings of Media and Persia* Like the endings in Kings (1 Kgs 14:19), this tells us it is real history, written in the official records. A Jew born in exile, who once refused to bow and wore sackcloth, was now in the history of the greatest empire on earth.

his power and his might, and the full account of the greatness of Mordecai (Mordekhay), whom the king made great, ***are*** they not written in the book of the words of the days of the kings of Media (Maday) and Persia (Paras)? **3** For Mordecai the Jew ***was*** second to King Ahasuerus, and great among the Jews, and accepted by the multitude of his brothers, seeking good for his people and speaking peace to all his offspring.

10:3 Neh 2:10; 2 Chr 28:7; Rom 14:18

10:3 *seeking good for his people and speaking peace to all his offspring* The book's last words picture the leader God wants. Second to the king, like Joseph (Gen 41:40-43) and Daniel (Dan 6:3). Accepted by his own people, not envied. Using power for others, not himself: "whoever desires to become great among you will be your servant" (Mark 10:43). Speaking shalom, wholeness and well-being, to his children after him. Haman sought evil and ended on a tree. Mordecai sought good and ended at the king's side.

10:3 *Mordecai the Jew was second to King Ahasuerus* Mordecai is a small picture of a greater Son of Israel. Jesus was humbled to the cross, and God "highly exalted Him" (Phil 2:9). He sits at the Father's right hand, speaks peace to His people (John 14:27), and one day will reign as King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev 19:16). Then God's people will be safe forever under their own King. Esther never names God, yet He is on every page. If God seems silent in your life, He is still at work. Keep doing right and keep waiting.

JOB

Introduction

Title

The book is named for its main character, Job, a godly man of the land of Uz (1:1). In our English Bibles it is the first of the poetic and wisdom books, which run from Job through the Song of Songs. In the Hebrew Bible it belongs to the third section, the Writings. Proverbs teaches how life usually works under God. Ecclesiastes and Job look at what happens when life does not seem to work that way.

Author and Date

The book does not name its author. Jewish tradition gives it to Moses. Others have suggested Job himself, Elihu, Solomon, or an unknown wise man of Israel. Whoever wrote it knew the speeches in great detail, and knew what happened in heaven in chapters 1 and 2, which no man could know unless God revealed it. I believe the writer was a man of deep faith, guided by the Holy Spirit to record these events and speeches truly.

The time of writing is unknown, and good Bible teachers disagree. Some place it in the time of the patriarchs, soon after the events. Some follow the tradition that Moses wrote it, perhaps during his years in Midian, about 1500 B.C. Others place it in the days of Solomon, about 950 B.C., when Israel's wisdom writing flourished. Many modern critical scholars date it during or after the exile, between about 600 and 400 B.C. The book does not settle the question. What matters most is that it is a true record of real events.

Background and Setting

The events most likely took place in the time of the patriarchs, about 2000 B.C. Job offers sacrifices himself as head of his family, with no priest (1:5), as Abraham and Jacob did. His wealth is counted in flocks, herds and servants. He lives another 140 years after his trials (42:16), a lifespan like the patriarchs'. The book never mentions Israel, the exodus or the Law, and raiders from Sheba and the Chaldeans still roam as tribes (1:15, 17).

Job lived in Uz, east of Israel (1:1, 3). Scripture links Uz with Edom (Lam 4:21), though some place it farther north and east toward Aram. The friends come from nearby peoples, many related to Abraham's family. Eliphaz is from Teman, a clan of Edom named for a grandson of Esau (Gen 36:11). Bildad is a Shuhite, perhaps from Shuah, a son of Abraham by Keturah (Gen 25:2). Zophar is a Naamathite, from a place we cannot identify for sure. Elihu is a Buzite, perhaps from Buz, a nephew of Abraham (Gen 22:21).

Some have taught that Job is a parable. I do not believe that. The book begins like a history, naming Job, his land and his friends. God names Job alongside Noah and Daniel, two real men (Ezek 14:14, 20), and James points to "the endurance of Job" (James 5:11) as a true example.

The opening and closing chapters are plain history. From 3:1 to 42:6 the book is poetry. Hebrew poetry rhymes thoughts rather than sounds: one line says something and the next says it again in other words, adds to it, or gives its opposite. Every word in Job is a true record of what was said, but not everything that was said is true. The friends apply true ideas wrongly, and the LORD says they did not speak what was right about Him (42:7). Job says things in his pain that go too far, and he takes them back (40:4-5; 42:3-6). These notes name each speaker and say where a speaker goes wrong.

In the SLB, "LORD" in capital letters stands for God's personal name, Yahweh. In Job that name is used mostly in the opening and closing chapters and when the LORD speaks from the storm. In the speeches, Job and his friends mostly call Him God (El or Eloah) and the Almighty (Shaddai).

Themes

The theme of Job is that God is sovereign, that He is good, and that He can be trusted even when we do not understand what He is doing. Without knowing it, Job became the center of a contest in heaven when Satan claimed that Job served God only for what he got. God allowed Satan to take his wealth, his ten children and his health. Job's answer on the worst day of his life is the heart of the book: "The LORD has given, and the LORD has taken; let the name of the LORD be blessed" (1:21).

The book asks why the righteous suffer. The three friends hold one idea above all: God always blesses the righteous and punishes the wicked in this life, so great suffering must mean great sin. That idea is partly true, but it is not the whole truth, and they were wrong to use it against Job (42:7). Jesus faced the same idea when His disciples asked about the man born blind (John 9:3). Job holds on to his innocence but goes too far in questioning God. When God finally speaks, He does not explain the reason. He shows Job His power and wisdom in creation, and Job learns to trust Him. The book takes us from knowing about God to knowing Him: "By the hearing of the ear I had heard of You, and now my eye has seen You" (42:5).

Job also teaches that suffering is not always punishment for sin, warns us against easy answers when others hurt, and shows that God hears honest cries and answers in His own time. The friends did best when they sat with Job in silence (2:13). Key verses: 1:21; 13:15; 19:25-26; 38:4; 42:5-6.

Christ in Job

Job is not a book of prophecy, but again and again Job reaches for something only Christ would bring. In 9:33 he cries that there is no one to stand between him and God and lay a hand on them both. The New Testament answers, "there is one God, and one mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim 2:5). In 16:19 Job says his witness is in heaven, and Christ is our Advocate with the Father (1 John 2:1), who always lives to intercede for us (Heb 7:25). In 19:25 Job says, "I know that my Redeemer lives" (19:25), and that in his flesh he will see God. Christ is that living Redeemer, raised from the dead as the first-fruits of those who belong to Him (1 Cor 15:20).

Job himself, a righteous man who suffered though he had not sinned as his friends claimed, mocked by those around him, and then praying for the very friends who wronged him (42:8-10), gives us a picture of the only truly innocent Sufferer, who prayed for those who wronged Him. And Satan, the accuser of chapters 1 and 2, is "the accuser of our brothers" (Rev 12:10), who will one day be thrown down for good.

Hard Passages

Who are the sons of God, and who is Satan (1:6)? I take the sons of God as angels and Satan as the personal devil, the accuser, who can do nothing without God's permission (1:12; 2:6). Some take the Hebrew as a title, the accuser, rather than a name. Either way, God sets the limits.

Why did God allow Job's suffering and the death of his children? The book does not give Job the reason, and we should not claim to know more than it says. We see that Satan's charge was false and that Job's faith was real. I believe little children who die are safe with God.

Job's wish that he had never been born and his longing for death (3; 6:8-9; 7:15-16; 10:18) are honest cries of pain, recorded, not commanded. God did not answer them with condemnation but with His presence. If you or someone you know feels that way, please reach out to a pastor, a doctor or a crisis line right away.

Job 19:25-27 is hard Hebrew. I believe Job looks to a living Redeemer and to seeing God in his flesh, which points to Christ and the resurrection. Others think he hoped only to be vindicated before his death, or to see God after death without his body.

Teachers disagree about Elihu (32-37). Some see him as a young man who speaks truly and prepares the way for the LORD, since God does not rebuke him. Others see him as one more proud speaker whom God passes over. The notes give both views.

Behemoth and Leviathan (40:15-41:34) have been taken as the hippopotamus and the crocodile, as large creatures now gone, or as poetic pictures of chaos and pride. Whatever they were, they are God's creatures, not His rivals.

Outline

I. Job Tested in Heaven and on Earth (1:1-2:13)
  A. Job's integrity and his first test (1:1-22)
  B. Job's second test and his three friends (2:1-13)
II. Job's Lament (3:1-26)
III. The First Round of Speeches (4:1-14:22)
  A. Eliphaz and Job's answer (4:1-7:21)
  B. Bildad and Job's answer (8:1-10:22)
  C. Zophar and Job's answer (11:1-14:22)
IV. The Second Round of Speeches (15:1-21:34)
  A. Eliphaz and Job's answer (15:1-17:16)
  B. Bildad and Job's answer (18:1-19:29)
  C. Zophar and Job's answer (20:1-21:34)
V. The Third Round of Speeches (22:1-27:23)
  A. Eliphaz and Job's answer (22:1-24:25)
  B. Bildad and Job's answer (25:1-26:14)
  C. Job holds fast to his integrity (27:1-23)
VI. The Poem on Wisdom and Job's Final Defense (28:1-31:40)
  A. Where can wisdom be found? (28:1-28)
  B. Job's former days (29:1-25)
  C. Job's present humiliation (30:1-31)
  D. Job's final oath of innocence (31:1-40)
VII. Elihu Speaks (32:1-37:24)
  A. Elihu begins to speak (32:1-33:33)
  B. Elihu defends God's justice (34:1-35:16)
  C. Elihu exalts God's greatness (36:1-37:24)
VIII. The LORD Speaks From the Storm (38:1-41:34)
  A. The LORD's first speech (38:1-40:2)
  B. Job's reply (40:3-5)
  C. The LORD's second speech: Behemoth and Leviathan (40:6-41:34)
IX. Job Restored (42:1-17)
  A. Job repents (42:1-6)
  B. The LORD rebukes the friends (42:7-9)
  C. Job restored (42:10-17)

JOB

JOB 1

Job's Integrity and Blessing

1 ***There*** was a man in the land of Uz (Uts); Job (Iyov) ***was*** his name; and that man was blameless and upright, and fearing God and turning aside from evil. **2** And seven sons and three daughters were born to him. **3** And his livestock was seven thousand sheep and three thousand camels and five hundred pairs of oxen and five hundred female donkeys, and very many servants; and that man was greater than all the sons of the east. **4** And his sons went and made a feast ***in*** the house of each one on his day, and they sent and invited their three sisters to eat and to drink with them. **5** And it was, when the days of the feast had gone around, that Job sent and sanctified them, and he rose early in the morning and offered up burnt offerings ***according to*** the number of them all; for Job said, "Perhaps my sons have sinned and cursed God in their heart." Thus Job did all the days.

Satan Accuses Job

6 And it was the day ***when*** the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came in their midst. **7** And the LORD said to Satan, "From where are you coming?" And Satan answered the LORD and said, "From roving about on the earth and from walking about on it." **8** And the LORD said to Satan, "Have you set your heart on My servant Job? For ***there is*** none like him on the earth, a man blameless and upright, fearing God and turning aside from evil." **9** And Satan answered the LORD and said, "Has Job feared God for nothing? **10** Have You not Yourself put a hedge around him and around his house and around all that ***is*** his, all around? The work of his hands You have blessed, and his livestock has spread out in the land. **11** But now, stretch out Your hand, please, and touch all that ***is*** his; if he does not curse You to Your face!" **12** And the LORD said to Satan, "Look, all that ***is*** his ***is*** in your hand; only against him do not stretch out your hand." And Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.

Job Loses Everything

13 And it was the day ***when*** his sons and his daughters ***were*** eating and drinking wine in the house of their brother, the firstborn, **14** and a messenger came to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the female donkeys grazing beside them, **15** and Sheba (Sheva) fell ***on them*** and took them, and they struck the youths by the mouth of the sword; and I have escaped, only I alone, to tell you." **16** This ***one was*** still speak-

1:1 James 5:11; Ezek 14:14,20; Luke 2:25
1:2 James 5:11; Ps 127:3-5; Job 13:13
1:3 Job 42:12; Gen 12:16; Judg 6:3
1:4 Heb 13:1; Ps 133:1
1:5 Acts 21:26; Gen 8:20; Job 42:8
1:6 Rev 12:9; Matt 4:10; Mark 4:15
1:7 Rev 12:9; Mark 4:15; Luke 11:24
1:8 Mark 4:15; Luke 22:31; Luke 23:40
1:9 Mark 4:15; Luke 22:31; Rev 12:9
1:10 Matt 4:6; Luke 22:31; Ps 34:7
1:11 Luke 22:31; Job 2:5; Job 19:21
1:12 2 Cor 12:7; Luke 22:31; Matt 4:10
1:13 Job 1:4; Prov 27:1; Eccl 9:12
1:14 1 Sam 4:17; 2 Sam 15:13; Jer 51:31
1:15 Gen 10:7,28; Gen 25:3; Ps 72:10
1:16 Gen 19:24; Lev 9:24; 1 Kgs 18:38

1:1 *There was a man in the land of Uz; Job was his name* Uz was east of Israel, probably near Edom (Lam 4:21). Job was a real man in a real place (Ezek 14:14; James 5:11). "Blameless" means whole, a man of integrity, not sinless; he speaks of "the iniquities of my youth" (13:26). He was upright with people, feared God, and turned from evil on purpose. The whole book rests on this verse. Whatever the friends say, God's own record says Job was not suffering for hidden sin.
1:3 *That man was greater than all the sons of the east* Seven sons and three daughters spoke of a full, blessed family. His wealth was counted in flocks and servants, like a patriarch such as Abraham (Gen 13:2). The sons of the east were the peoples east of the Jordan and in the deserts beyond. Keep his greatness in mind. When it is all taken, we will see how far he fell.
1:4 *each one on his day* Perhaps their birthdays (compare 3:1). The brothers invited their sisters. This was a close family that enjoyed being together.
1:5 *Perhaps my sons have sinned and cursed God in their heart* There was no priesthood yet, so Job served as priest for his family, as Noah, Abraham and Jacob did (Gen 8:20; 35:7). A burnt offering was wholly burned on the altar, for worship and to atone, to cover sin so the sinner could be at peace with God. Job cared about their hearts, not only outward sin. "Thus Job did all the days." A father who prays for his children's hearts again and again is doing what Job did.
1:6 *the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD* The scene moves to heaven. In Job the sons of God are angels, who shouted for joy when God laid the earth's foundations, before any human being existed (38:7). They come to report to their King, like officials before a throne.
1:6 *Satan also came in their midst* The Hebrew is ha-satan, the adversary or the accuser, with "the" in front like a title. Some scholars read it as an angel of God's court acting as prosecutor, not yet the devil. I believe this is the same being the rest of the Bible calls Satan and the devil, who prowls "as a roaring lion" (1 Pet 5:8) and is "the accuser of our brothers" (Rev 12:10). He too must present himself. Satan is not God's equal. He answers to Him.
1:7 *From where are you coming* God did not need the answer. He asked so Satan would give account. "Roving about on the earth" pictures a restless one, always looking.
1:8 *Have you set your heart on My servant Job* It is the LORD who brings Job up and calls him "My servant," the highest honor. Before the trials, God knew how Job would stand. He was not gambling. And notice, the trials come not because Job was bad, but because he was good. That is the very thing the friends will not accept.
1:9 *Has Job feared God for nothing* The question at the heart of the book. Satan says Job is good only because it pays. He also admits he could not get through God's hedge. His charge is against both Job and God: Job's faith is fake, and God is not worth loving for Himself, only for His gifts. Will anyone love God when there is nothing in it for him? Do I love God, or what He gives me?
1:12 *only against him do not stretch out your hand* God gives permission and sets the limit. Satan can do nothing without God allowing it and cannot go one step past His line. Jesus told Peter, "Satan has asked for you, to sift you like wheat" (Luke 22:31), and then said He had prayed for him (Luke 22:32). Why God allowed it Scripture does not fully tell us, but He had a purpose and was never out of control.
1:15 *I have escaped, only I alone, to tell you* Sheba means Sabean raiders from Arabia. "The mouth of the sword" is its edge. Every messenger ends with the same words, and the pattern is meant to hit hard.
1:16 *The fire of God fell from the heavens* Probably lightning. The servant called it the fire of God, and Job will wonder the same. It looked like God Himself was against him, but we know from 1:12 that Satan acted, by God's permission. The Chaldeans of 1:17 were then raiders from the north and east, long before they ruled Babylon. Raiders from south and north, fire from heaven: it came from every side.

ing, and this ***one*** came and said, "The fire of God fell from the heavens and burned among the sheep and among the youths and consumed them; and I have escaped, only I alone, to tell you." **17** This ***one was*** still speaking, and this ***one*** came and said, "The Chaldeans (Kasdim) formed three bands and made a raid on the camels and took them, and they struck the youths by the mouth of the sword; and I have escaped, only I alone, to tell you." **18** Yet this ***one was*** speaking, and this ***one*** came and said, "Your sons and your daughters ***were*** eating and drinking wine in the house of their brother, the firstborn, **19** and look, a great wind came from across the wilderness and touched the four corners of the house, and it fell on the youths, and they died; and I have escaped, only I alone, to tell you."

Job Worships

20 And Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head, and he fell to the earth and bowed down. **21** And he said, "Naked I came out from the womb of my mother, and naked I shall return there. The LORD has given, and the LORD has taken; let the name of the LORD be blessed." **22** In all this Job did not sin, and he did not ascribe unseemliness to God.

JOB 2

Satan's Second Accusation

1 And it was the day ***when*** the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came in their midst to present himself before the LORD. **2** And the LORD said to Satan, "From where are you coming?" And Satan answered the LORD and said, "From roving about on the earth and from walking about on it." **3** And the LORD said to Satan, "Have you set your heart on My servant Job (Iyov)? For ***there is*** none like him on the earth, a man blameless and upright, fearing God and turning aside from evil. And he ***is*** still holding fast to his integrity, and you incited Me against him to swallow him up for nothing." **4** And Satan answered the LORD and said, "Skin for skin! And all that ***belongs*** to the man he will give for his life. **5** But stretch out Your hand, please, and touch his bone and his flesh; if he does not curse You to Your face!" **6** And the LORD said to Satan, "Look, he ***is*** in your hand; only guard his life."

Job Struck With Sores

7 And Satan went out from the presence of the LORD, and he struck Job with bad boils from the sole of his foot and to his crown. **8** And he took for himself a potsherd to scrape himself with it, and he ***was*** sitting in the midst of the ashes. **9** And his wife said to him, "***Are*** you still holding fast to your integrity? Curse God and die." **10** And he said to her, "As one of the foolish women speaks, you speak. Shall we also accept the good from God, and not accept the evil?" In all this Job did not sin with his lips.

1:17 Gen 11:28; Hab 1:6; Isa 23:13
1:18 Job 1:4,13; Job 6:2,3; Job 16:14
1:19 Matt 7:27; Mark 4:37; Jer 4:11,12
1:20 Matt 26:39; 1 Pet 5:6; Gen 37:29,34
1:21 1 Tim 6:7; Eph 5:20; Eccl 5:15
1:22 Job 2:10; James 1:4,12; 1 Pet 1:7
2:1 Matt 4:10; Rev 12:9; Rev 20:2
2:2 Luke 11:24; Rev 12:9; Rev 20:2
2:3 Luke 22:31; 2 Cor 2:11; Job 1:1,8
2:4 Luke 22:31; Esth 7:3,4; Isa 2:20,21
2:5 Job 1:11; Job 1:5,11; Job 19:20,21
2:6 Luke 22:31; Rev 2:10; Rev 20:7
2:7 2 Cor 12:7; Isa 1:6; Deut 28:27,35
2:8 Job 42:6; Ezek 27:30; Jonah 3:6
2:9 Job 2:3; Job 2:5; Gen 3:6,12
2:10 James 5:11; James 5:10; Ps 39:1

1:19 *a great wind came from across the wilderness and touched the four corners of the house* All ten children died at once. I will not pretend this is easy to read. Job lost ten children in a moment and everything he owned besides. The Bible does not make it small. It tells it plainly, and then shows how one man brought that grief to God. If your grief is heavy, do not carry it alone. Talk to a pastor or a trusted friend.

1:20 *Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head* Signs of deep mourning. Job did not pretend he was fine, and faith does not mean we do not weep; Jesus wept at Lazarus' tomb (John 11:35). "Bowed down" is the word for worship. On the worst day of his life, Job's first move was toward God, not away from Him.

1:21 *The LORD has given, and the LORD has taken; let the name of the LORD be blessed* He came with nothing and will leave with nothing. Everything between was a gift. Job knew nothing of Satan and blamed no raiders or wind. He saw God's hand behind it all and still blessed His name. Satan said he would curse God to His face (1:11). Instead he blessed Him. These words do not take the pain away, but they say God is still God, and still good, even here.

1:22 *In all this Job did not sin, and he did not ascribe unseemliness to God* He did not charge God with wrong. Satan's first charge failed. Job feared God for nothing, because God Himself was worth fearing. Job will cry out and ask hard questions later, but this verse stands over the whole book: "You have heard of the endurance of Job" (James 5:11).

2:1 *Satan also came in their midst to present himself before the LORD* The heavenly scene repeats 1:6-8 almost word for word. Satan's first attack has failed, and he must again give account.

2:3 *you incited Me against him to swallow him up for nothing* Job was "still holding fast to his integrity," whole and the same inside and out. "For nothing" is the word Satan used in 1:9. Satan said Job's faith had no cause but his blessings. God turns it around: Job's suffering had no cause in Job. This is the key the friends never have. It was not punishment. "You incited Me" does not mean Satan controls God. God allowed the test for His own purpose, and He takes the full weight of it on Himself.

2:4 *Skin for skin* Like a trader's saying: a man will give up anything to save his own skin. Satan claims that at bottom every man loves himself more than God. He is the accuser, always looking for one more way to prove God's people false.

2:6 *Look, he is in your hand; only guard his life* Again God draws the line. Satan may touch Job's body but not take his life. God is faithful and does not let us be tested beyond what we can bear (1 Cor 10:13).

2:7 *he struck Job with bad boils from the sole of his foot and to his crown* Scripture does not name the disease. Later verses add hardened, oozing skin covered with worms (7:5), sleeplessness (7:4), blackened skin and burning bones (30:30), gnawing pain at night (30:17), and wasting to the bone (19:20). It was painful and it lasted.

2:8 *he was sitting in the midst of the ashes* He scraped his sores with a piece of broken pottery. The ash heap outside town was where waste was burned and where outcasts and the sick sat. The greatest man in the east sat on the garbage heap. If you live with long sickness or constant pain, you know how it wears down body and spirit. God has not forgotten anyone who suffers this way.

2:9 *Curse God and die* She uses God's own words, "holding fast to your integrity," but where God praised it, she tells him to let it go. We should be careful how we judge her. She had lost all ten children too and watched her husband rot in the ashes. Some read her more harshly, some more kindly, as wanting his suffering to end. Even so, her counsel was wrong, and it was exactly what Satan wanted.

2:10 *Shall we also accept the good from God, and not accept the evil* Job did not call her a fool. He said she spoke like one. In the Bible a fool lives as if God does not matter (Ps 14:1). "Evil" here means trouble or disaster, not moral wrong. God does no evil, but He allows hard things, and He is still God when He does. "Job did not sin with his lips." Satan's second attack failed.

Job's Three Friends Come

11 And the three friends of Job heard of all this evil that had
come on him, and they came, each one from his own place,
Eliphaz (Elifaz) the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and
Zophar (Tsofar) the Naamathite; and they met together by
appointment to come to show sympathy to him and to com-
fort him. **12** And they lifted up their eyes from a distance and
did not recognize him, and they lifted up their voice and
wept; and they tore each one his robe and sprinkled dust on
their heads toward the heavens. **13** And they sat with him on
the earth seven days and seven nights, and ***there was*** none
speaking a word to him, for they saw that the pain was very
great.

JOB 3

Job Curses the Day of His Birth

1 After this Job (Iyov) opened his mouth and cursed his day.
2 And Job answered and said, **3** "Let the day perish on which
I was born, and the night ***which*** said, 'A man has been con-
ceived.' **4** That day, let it be darkness; let not God above seek
it, and let not daylight shine on it. **5** Let darkness and deep
darkness redeem it; let a cloud settle on it; let the black-
nesses of day terrify it. **6** That night, let gloom take it; let it
not rejoice among the days of the year; into the number of
the months let it not come. **7** Look, that night, let it be bar-
ren; let no cry of joy come into it. **8** Let the cursers of day
curse it, those ready to rouse Leviathan. **9** Let the stars of its
twilight grow dark; let it wait for light, and ***let there be*** none,
and let it not look on the eyelids of the dawn, **10** for it did not
shut the doors of my womb, and hide trouble from my eyes.

Why Did I Not Die at Birth?

11 Why did I not die from the womb, come forth from the
belly and expire? **12** Why did knees receive me, and why
breasts, that I should suck? **13** For now I would have lain
down and been quiet; I would have slept; then ***there*** would be
rest for me, **14** with kings and counselors of ***the*** earth, who
built ruins for themselves, **15** or with princes ***who had*** gold,
who filled their houses ***with*** silver. **16** Or like a hidden mis-
carriage I would not exist, like infants ***who*** have not seen
light. **17** There the wicked cease ***from*** turmoil, and there the
weary of strength rest. **18** Together the prisoners are at ease;
they do not hear the voice of the taskmaster. **19** The small
and the great ***are*** there, the same, and the slave ***is*** free from
his master.

Why Is Light Given to the Miserable?

20 Why does He give light to the sufferer, and life to the
bitter of soul, **21** who long for death, and it is not, and dig for
it more than for hidden treasures, **22** who are glad to ***the***

2:11 Rom 12:15; Jer 49:7; Gen 25:2
2:12 Rev 18:19; Lam 2:10; Ezek 27:30
2:13 Gen 50:10; Neh 1:4; Ezra 9:3
3:1 Jer 20:14,15; Ps 39:2,3; Ps 106:33
3:2 Judg 18:14
3:3 Job 10:18,19; Jer 20:14,15; Jer 15:10
3:4 Exod 10:22,23; Joel 2:2; Amos 5:18
3:5 Job 10:21,22; Ps 23:4; Job 28:3
3:7 Isa 13:20-22; Isa 24:8; Jer 7:34
3:8 Job 41:1,10; 2 Chr 35:25; Jer 9:17,18
3:9 Job 41:18; Job 30:26; Jer 8:15
3:10 Job 10:18,19; Gen 20:18; Gen 29:31
3:11 Ps 58:8; Jer 15:10; Hos 9:14
3:12 Gen 30:3; Isa 66:12; Gen 50:23
3:13 Eccl 6:3-5; Eccl 9:10
3:14 Job 15:28; Isa 14:10-16; Job 30:23
3:15 Job 22:25; Job 27:16; Num 22:18
3:16 Ps 58:8; 1 Cor 15:8
3:17 Rev 14:13; Job 14:13; Ps 55:5-8
3:18 Job 39:7; Exod 5:6-8,15-19; Judg 4:3
3:19 Job 30:23; Ps 49:2,6-10; Eccl 8:8
3:20 Job 7:15,16; Jer 20:18; 1 Sam 1:10
3:21 Rev 9:6; Prov 2:4; Num 11:15

2:11 *Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite* Teman was in Edom (Gen 36:11). Shuah may be linked to a son of Abraham and Keturah (Gen 25:2). Naamah is unknown. They were likely wise men and leaders, and they came "to show sympathy to him and to comfort him." Their motive was good. Remember how they started when they go wrong. Good friends with good intentions can still say very harmful things.
2:12 *they lifted up their eyes from a distance and did not recognize him* Sickness and grief had changed him past knowing. They wept, tore their robes and threw dust toward the heavens, all signs of mourning.
2:13 *there was none speaking a word to him, for they saw that the pain was very great* Seven days was the usual mourning for the dead (Gen 50:10). They mourned as if he had died. This silence was the best comfort they ever gave. We often feel we must explain or fix someone's pain, but usually what they need most is for us to be there: "weep with those who weep" (Rom 12:15). Their trouble started when they opened their mouths.
3:1 *Job opened his mouth and cursed his day* His birthday. Notice what he did not do. Satan said he would curse God (1:11; 2:5), and his wife urged it (2:9). Job cursed the day, not the God who made it.
3:2 *Job answered and said* He answered the silence and the whole terrible week. From here to 42:6 the book is poetry. Hebrew poetry rhymes ideas, not sounds. One line says something and the next repeats it, builds on it, or sets it against its opposite. This is parallelism. In 3:3, day and night, birth and conception, say one thing twice, and the repeating makes it stronger.
3:3 *Let the day perish on which I was born* Job wishes he had never begun, going back even to the night he was conceived.
3:4 *That day, let it be darkness* At creation God said, "Let there be light" (Gen 1:3). Job speaks as if he wants that word reversed for one day of his life, and wishes God would forget it ever happened.
3:5 *Let darkness and deep darkness redeem it* To redeem is to buy back or claim. Let darkness take that day as its own. Clouds and eclipse-like blackness should terrify it. Job piles up every word for darkness he can find. That is how deep his despair was.
3:7 *Let it be barren; let no cry of joy come into it* The birth of a son was usually a time of shouting for joy. Job wishes that joy had never been heard.
3:8 *Let the cursers of day curse it, those ready to rouse Leviathan* Leviathan is the great sea creature God describes in chapter 41 as one He made and controls. Many Bible teachers explain that some ancient curse-makers spoke of stirring up a sea monster to swallow the sun or moon in an eclipse. Job does not believe in their power. He uses a picture his hearers knew: if anyone can curse a day, let them curse that one.
3:11 *Why did I not die from the womb* The first "why" of many. Every care that kept him alive as a baby now seems like cruelty. Asking why is not cursing God. Jesus cried on the cross, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" (Matt 27:46; Ps 22:1). God can handle our honest questions.
3:13 *I would have slept; then there would be rest for me* Rest is what Job wanted most, in body and mind. In the grave he would lie with kings and princes whose cities became ruins and whose gold did not save them. Death levels everyone.
3:17 *There the wicked cease from turmoil, and there the weary of strength rest* Prisoners at ease, small and great the same, the slave free. In his pain the grave looks like the one place of peace. Job's view of death here is limited. Later he reaches for more (14:14; 19:25-27), and Christ "abolished death and brought life and incorruptibility to light through the gospel" (2 Tim 1:10). There is a judgment and a resurrection for all (John 5:28-29; Heb 9:27). Job is not teaching on the afterlife. He is telling us how tired he is.
3:20 *Why does he give light to the sufferer, and life to the bitter of soul* His question widens. Job means God, without naming Him. Why keep alive those who long for death and dig for it more than for treasure?

point of rejoicing; they exult when they find the grave, **23** to a man whose way is hidden, and whom God has hedged around? **24** For my sighing comes before my bread, and my roarings pour out like the waters. **25** For I dreaded a dread, and it has come to me; and what I feared comes to me. **26** I am not at ease, and I am not quiet, and I am not at rest, and turmoil has come."

JOB 4

Eliphaz's First Speech

1 And Eliphaz (Elifaz) the Temanite answered and said, **2** "Should one attempt a word to you, will you be weary? And to hold back words, who is able? **3** Look, you have instructed many, and you have strengthened slack hands. **4** Your words have raised up the stumbling, and you have made firm bending knees. **5** For now it comes to you, and you are weary; it touches you, and you are dismayed. **6** ***Is*** not your fear your confidence, your hope, and the integrity of your ways? **7** Remember, please: who ***that was*** innocent has perished? And where were the upright cut off? **8** Just as I have seen, the plowers of wickedness and the sowers of trouble reap it. **9** From the breath of God they perish, and from the wind of His anger they come to an end. **10** The roaring of a lion and the voice of a fierce lion, and the teeth of young lions are broken. **11** A strong lion ***is*** perishing for lack of prey, and the young of the lioness are scattered.

A Spirit Passes Before Eliphaz

12 And to me a word was brought secretly, and my ear received a whisper of it. **13** In disquieting thoughts from visions of the night, when deep sleep falls on men, **14** dread met me, and trembling, and it made the multitude of my bones dread. **15** And a spirit passed over my face; the hair of my flesh bristled. **16** It stood still, and I did not recognize its appearance; a form ***was*** before my eyes; silence, and a voice I heard: **17** 'Shall a mortal be righteous before God? Shall a man be pure before his Maker? **18** Look, in His servants He does not trust, and against His angels He charges error; **19** how much more those who dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation ***is*** in the dust; they crush them before a moth. **20** From morning to evening they are crushed to pieces; without anyone regarding ***it***, they perish forever. **21** Has not their tent cord been pulled up within them? They die, and

3:23 Job 19:8; Lam 3:7,9; Isa 40:27
3:24 Ps 102:9; Ps 80:5; Ps 38:8
3:25 Job 1:5; Job 31:23
3:26 Job 27:9; Ps 143:11
4:1 Job 2:11; Job 15:1; Job 22:1
4:2 Job 32:18-20; Acts 4:20; 2 Cor 2:4-6
4:3 Isa 35:3; Gen 18:19; Prov 10:21
4:4 Heb 12:12; Ps 145:14; Prov 12:18
4:5 Job 19:21; Job 3:25,26; Prov 24:10
4:6 Prov 3:26; Job 1:1,9,10; 2 Kgs 20:3
4:7 Ps 37:25; 2 Pet 2:9; Job 9:22,23
4:8 Prov 22:8; Gal 6:7,8; Hos 8:7
4:9 Job 15:30; Isa 30:33; Isa 11:4
4:10 Ps 58:6; Job 29:17; Ps 3:7
4:11 Ps 34:10; Job 38:39; Gen 49:9
4:12 Ps 62:11; 1 Cor 13:12
4:13 Job 33:14-16; Gen 2:21; Gen 15:12
4:14 Hab 3:16; Job 7:14; Ps 119:120
4:15 Ps 104:4; Matt 14:26; Luke 24:37-39
4:16 1 Kgs 19:12
4:17 Job 9:2; Job 25:4; Ps 143:2
4:18 Jude 1:6; Job 25:5,6; 2 Pet 2:4
4:19 Job 10:9; Gen 2:7; Job 33:6
4:20 Job 20:7; 2 Chr 15:6; Isa 38:12,13
4:21 Job 36:12; Luke 16:22,23; Ps 39:5,11

3:23 *whom God has hedged around* A painful echo. Satan said God had hedged Job in with protection (1:10). Now Job feels hedged in, trapped. The God who once protected him seems to be closing him in. Job did not know what we know from chapters 1 and 2.

3:25 *I dreaded a dread, and it has come to me* Perhaps he had always feared losing it all, or each new fear came true as soon as he felt it. Either way, his worst nightmare was real. His sighing came before his bread, and his cries poured out like water (3:24).

3:26 *I am not at ease, and I am not quiet, and I am not at rest, and turmoil has come* Four lines with no hope at the end. God does not answer in this chapter, but He put these words in His Book. If you have wished you were never born, or thought the grave would be a relief, Job felt it too, and so did Jeremiah (Jer 20:14-18) and Elijah (1 Kgs 19:4). It does not mean you have no faith or that God has left you. God stayed with Job and in the end spoke to him. Please do not carry this alone. Talk to a pastor, a doctor or a crisis line today. Jesus said, "Come to Me, all who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matt 11:28).

4:1 *Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said* Eliphaz speaks first, likely as the oldest (15:10). Teman in Edom was known for its wise men (Jer 49:7). From here to chapter 31 Job and his friends take turns. Remember as you read that the friends never saw what happened in heaven in chapters 1 and 2.

4:2 *to hold back words, who is able* He begins politely, knowing Job is in no state for a lecture, but Job's lament in chapter 3 has troubled him and he cannot keep quiet.

4:5 *now it comes to you, and you are weary* Job had strengthened many (4:3-4; 29:12-16). This sounds kind but stings: you could give advice but cannot take it. There is some truth in it. But a man who has lost ten children does not need to be told he is not handling it well.

4:6 *Is not your fear your confidence* Trust your godly life, he says. It sounds comforting, but it sets up his next point. If Job's goodness should protect him, why is this happening?

4:7 *who that was innocent has perished* The heart of Eliphaz's view: the innocent never suffer like this, and people reap what they sow (4:8). In part that is true (Gal 6:7). But he has made a general truth into an iron rule: great suffering means great sin. Abel was innocent and murdered, and above all Jesus was innocent and crucified. Jesus rejected this idea plainly (John 9:2-3; Luke 13:4-5). God Himself said Job's suffering had no cause in Job (2:3), and the LORD will say the friends did not speak what was right (42:7). If you have been told your sickness or loss proves hidden sin, the Bible does not teach that. Sometimes suffering comes from sin. Often it does not, and only God knows the reasons.

4:11 *the young of the lioness are scattered* God breaks the teeth of wicked "lions" and scatters their young. Job's children had just been scattered by death. Eliphaz may not have meant it cruelly, but the picture fits too closely. He is hinting that Job's losses are the kind that come to the wicked.

4:12 *To me a word was brought secretly* Eliphaz claims a special revelation in a night vision, with dread, trembling, and a spirit passing before his face (4:13-16). It gives his words weight. But he does not say the spirit came from God, and God never confirms it. Its message does not sound like the God who speaks so warmly of "My servant Job" (1:8). Bible teachers differ. Some think it a true word misused, some only a dream, some a deceiving spirit. A frightening experience does not make a message true. Test every message by God's Word (1 John 4:1).

4:17 *Shall a mortal be righteous before God* True as far as it goes. No human is perfect before God (Rom 3:23), and some angels did fall (2 Pet 2:4). But Job never claimed to be sinless. He said he had not done anything to deserve this. Eliphaz answers a claim Job did not make, and he leaves out that God loves His servants and calls them blameless by His grace (1:8).

4:19 *those who dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust* Our bodies are made from dust (Gen 2:7), crushed as easily as a moth.

4:21 *Has not their tent cord been pulled up within them* Life is a tent that collapses when the cord is pulled. Paul uses a like picture (2 Cor 5:1). "They die, and not with wisdom" hints that Job should get wisdom before it is too late. Life is short, but this is cold comfort to a man who has just buried ten children. Eliphaz says much about God's greatness and man's weakness and very little about God's mercy to the sufferer. That is the problem with his whole speech.

not with wisdom.'

JOB 5

Man Is Born for Trouble

1 Call, please; is there ***one*** answering you? And to which of
the holy ones will you turn? **2** For vexation kills the fool, and
jealousy puts the simple to death. **3** I myself have seen a fool
taking root, and suddenly I cursed his abode. **4** His sons are
far from safety, and they are crushed in the gate, and ***there is***
no deliverer; **5** whose harvest the hungry eats, and even
from among thorns he takes it, and the snare pants for their
wealth. **6** For hardship does not come forth from the dust,
and trouble does not spring up from the ground. **7** For man is
born to trouble, and the sons of flame rise high to fly.

Eliphaz Urges Job to Seek God

8 But as for me, I would seek God, and to God I would set my
cause, **9** who does great ***things***, and ***there is*** no searching
them out, wonders until ***there is*** no number; **10** who gives
rain on the face of the earth and sends waters on the face of
the open places, **11** to set the lowly on high, and those who
mourn are lifted high ***in*** safety; **12** who frustrates the plans
of the crafty, and their hands do not accomplish success;
13 who catches the wise in their craftiness, and the counsel
of the twisted is hastened. **14** By day they meet darkness, and
like the night they grope at noon. **15** And He saves from the
sword, from their mouth, and from the hand of the strong,
the needy. **16** And there is hope for the poor, and injustice
shuts its mouth.

Happy Is the Man God Corrects

17 Look, how blessed ***is*** the mortal whom God reproves; and
do not reject the discipline of the Almighty. **18** For He causes
pain, and He binds up; He shatters, and His hands heal. **19** In
six distresses He will deliver you, and in seven evil will not
touch you. **20** In famine He will ransom you from death, and
in battle from the hands of the sword. **21** In the whip of the
tongue you will be hidden, and you will not be afraid of
destruction when it comes. **22** At destruction and at hunger
you will laugh, and of the living things of the earth do not be
afraid. **23** For your covenant ***will be*** with the stones of the
field, and the living things of the field will be at peace with
you. **24** And you will know that your tent ***is*** peace, and you
will inspect your abode and not miss ***anything***. **25** And you
will know that your offspring ***will be*** many, and your descendants like the plants of the earth. **26** You will come in full
vigor to the grave, as a heap of sheaves goes up in its season.
27 Look, this we have searched out; so it ***is***. Hear it, and you,
know ***it*** for yourself."

5:1 Job 15:15; Job 15:8-10,15; Isa 41:1,21-23
5:2 Job 18:4; Jonah 4:9; Ps 14:1
5:3 Ps 37:35,36; Job 27:8; Ps 73:3-9,18-20
5:4 Ps 127:5; Ps 119:155; Job 4:10,11
5:5 Deut 28:33,51; Judg 6:3-6; Isa 62:8
5:6 Job 34:29; Deut 32:27; 1 Sam 6:9
5:7 Job 14:1; Gen 3:17-19; 1 Cor 10:13
5:8 Ps 50:15; Ps 37:5; 1 Pet 4:19
5:9 Job 9:10; Ps 40:5; Ps 72:18
5:10 Ps 147:8; Jer 5:24; Jer 14:22
5:11 1 Sam 2:7,8; Luke 1:52,53; Ps 91:14
5:12 1 Cor 1:19; Neh 4:15; Isa 8:10
5:13 1 Cor 3:19; Ps 9:15,16; Luke 1:51
5:14 Job 12:25; Deut 28:29; Isa 59:10
5:15 Ps 35:10; Ps 10:14,17; Ps 72:4,12,13
5:16 Ps 107:42; 1 Sam 2:8,9; Ps 63:11
5:17 James 5:11; Ps 94:12; Heb 12:5-11
5:18 Deut 32:39; 1 Sam 2:6; Isa 30:26
5:19 Acts 12:11; Ps 34:19; Prov 24:16
5:20 Heb 11:34; Ps 33:19; Gen 45:7
5:21 Ps 31:20; James 3:5-8; Prov 12:18
5:22 Ezek 34:25; Isa 35:9; Isa 65:25
5:23 Ps 91:12,13; Hos 2:18; Rom 8:38,39
5:24 Job 18:6,15,21; Ps 91:10; Ps 121:7,8
5:25 Ps 112:2; Ps 72:16; Job 42:13-16
5:26 Gen 15:15; Prov 9:11; Prov 10:27
5:27 Ps 111:2; Job 8:8-10; Job 12:2

5:1 *to which of the holy ones will you turn* The holy ones are angels (15:15). No one in heaven will take your side if you keep complaining, Eliphaz says. Job will soon long for just such a one to stand between him and God (9:33; 16:19).
5:2 *vexation kills the fool* Vexation is angry frustration; the simple are easily led astray. Anger can eat a person alive, but Job's lament was grief, not foolishness.
5:4 *His sons are far from safety, and they are crushed in the gate* The gate was where elders judged cases. Feel how this lands on Job. His children were crushed when the house fell (1:19), and raiders took his goods (5:5). Eliphaz describes what happened to Job and calls it the fate of a fool. This is what happens when we fit someone's suffering into our theory instead of listening.
5:7 *man is born to trouble, and the sons of flame rise high to fly* The sons of flame are sparks. Since the fall, trouble is part of every life (Gen 3:17-19). But Eliphaz means trouble always has a cause in what a man does (5:6), so Job's must have a cause in Job. That is where he goes wrong.
5:8 *I would seek God, and to God I would set my cause* Good advice in itself, and Job will do it more boldly than Eliphaz expects.
5:11 *to set the lowly on high, and those who mourn are lifted high in safety* God's wonders cannot be counted (5:9), words Job himself will echo (9:10). He does lift the humble and comfort mourners: "Blessed are those who mourn" (Matt 5:4).
5:13 *who catches the wise in their craftiness* Paul quotes this as Scripture (1 Cor 3:19). That shows how to read the friends. They often spoke true things about God. Their error was in applying them to Job, who was not one of the crafty.
5:16 *there is hope for the poor, and injustice shuts its mouth* God rescues the needy from sword and slander (5:15). Job himself had been such a rescuer (29:12-17). The irony is that Job, now poor and needy, was being crushed by his own friends' words.
5:17 *how blessed is the mortal whom God reproves* True and comforting. God disciplines those He loves as a father does (Prov 3:11-12; Heb 12:5-11). The Almighty translates Shaddai, a name common in Job that speaks of His power over all things. But Eliphaz assumes Job's suffering is discipline for sin. Discipline is real, but not every trial is discipline. Some test faith, as Job's did, or show God's glory (John 9:3).
5:18 *He causes pain, and He binds up* God can wound and heal (Hos 6:1).
5:19 *In six distresses He will deliver you, and in seven evil will not touch you* Six, then seven, is a Hebrew way of saying in every trouble, and more. These words have comforted many, but promising safety from famine and raiders after the raiders had taken everything sounds hollow. It is a future that depends on Job confessing a sin he did not commit.
5:25 *your offspring will be many* A painful line. His children were dead, and Eliphaz does not seem to notice. In the end God did give Job more children and a full old age (42:13-17), not because he confessed hidden sin, but after God spoke and Job prayed for these very friends.
5:27 *this we have searched out; so it is* That confidence is the problem. Eliphaz has a neat system that he thinks explains everything, but he does not know what we know from chapters 1 and 2. We can know much true theology and still be wrong about why someone suffers. Humility says, I do not know why this happened to you, but I know God is good, and I am here with you.

JOB 6

Job Answers Eliphaz

1 And Job (Iyov) answered and said, **2** "If only my vexation
were surely weighed, and they would lift up my calamity in
the balances together! **3** For now it would be heavier than
the sand of the seas; therefore my words have been rash.
4 For the arrows of the Almighty ***are*** with me, whose poison
my spirit ***is*** drinking; the terrors of God are arranged against
me. **5** Does a wild donkey bray over grass, or does an ox low
over its fodder? **6** Is tasteless ***food*** eaten without salt? Or is
there taste in the slime of purslane? **7** My soul refuses to
touch ***them***; they ***are*** like the sickness of my bread. **8** Who
will grant ***that*** my petition come, and ***that*** God give my hope,
9 and ***that*** God be willing and crush me, loosen His hand and
cut me off! **10** And may it still be my comfort, and may I leap
for joy in anguish; He does not spare; for I have not hidden
the words of the Holy One. **11** What ***is*** my strength, that I
should wait? And what ***is*** my end, that I should prolong my
life? **12** ***Is*** my strength the strength of stones, or ***is*** my flesh
bronze? **13** Is it ***that*** my help is not in me, and ***that*** success
has been driven from me?

Friends Like a Dry Stream

14 To the despairing ***is due*** steadfast love from his friend,
and the fear of the Almighty he forsakes. **15** My brothers
have acted treacherously like a wadi, like the channel of
wadis ***that*** pass away, **16** which are dark because of the ice;
over them the snow hides itself. **17** At the time they are
scorched, they are silenced; in its heat they are extinguished
from their place. **18** The paths of their way twist; they go up
into the wasteland and perish. **19** The caravans of Tema
looked; the travelers of Sheba (Sheva) waited eagerly for
them. **20** They were ashamed because he had trusted; they
came to it and were disappointed. **21** For now you have
become ***like*** it; you see a terror and are afraid. **22** Is it that I
have said, 'Give to me,' and, 'From your wealth offer a bribe
for me,' **23** and, 'Rescue me from the hand of an adversary,'
and, 'From the hand of the ruthless ransom me'? **24** Teach
me, and I myself will keep silent; and in what I have erred,
make me understand. **25** How painful are words of upright-
ness! And what does reproving from you reprove? **26** Do you
plan to reprove words, and the sayings of one who despairs
are for the wind? **27** Even over a fatherless one you would
cast ***lots***, and you would bargain over your friend. **28** And
now be willing, turn to me; and to your faces, if I will lie!
29 Turn back, please; let it not be injustice; and turn back,

6:1 Job 4:1
6:2 Job 4:5; Job 23:2
6:3 Prov 27:3; Matt 11:28; Job 37:19,20
6:4 Ps 38:2; Job 30:15; Job 16:12-14
6:5 Ps 104:14; Ps 42:1; Jer 14:6
6:6 Lev 2:13; Col 4:6; Job 6:25
6:7 1 Kgs 17:12; 1 Kgs 22:27; Ps 102:9
6:8 Job 6:11-13; Job 17:14-16; Ps 119:81
6:9 1 Kgs 19:4; Job 7:15,16; Jonah 4:3,8
6:10 Rev 3:7; Job 23:12; Lev 19:2
6:11 Job 17:1,14-16; Ps 39:5; Ps 102:23
6:12 Job 40:18; Job 41:24
6:13 Job 19:28; 2 Cor 1:12; Gal 6:4
6:14 Prov 17:17; Job 4:3,4; Job 16:5
6:15 Ps 38:11; Jer 15:18; Ps 41:9
6:17 1 Kgs 17:1
6:19 Gen 25:15; Isa 21:14; Jer 25:23
6:20 Jer 14:3,4; Jer 17:13; Rom 5:5
6:21 Ps 38:11; Job 6:15; Job 13:4
6:22 Job 42:11; 1 Sam 12:3; Acts 20:33
6:23 Job 5:20; Lev 25:48; Neh 5:8
6:24 James 3:2; Job 32:11,15,16; Job 33:1,31-33
6:25 Job 4:4; Prov 12:18; Prov 16:21-24
6:26 Job 8:2; Job 2:10; Job 3:3-26
6:27 Job 22:9; Job 24:3,9; James 1:27
6:28 Job 11:3; Job 13:4
6:29 Job 17:10; Mal 3:18; Job 27:4-6

6:2 *If only my vexation were surely weighed* Job answers Eliphaz through chapter 7. He picks up Eliphaz's word, vexation (5:2). Weigh my grief, he says, and it is heavier than the sand of the seas.
6:3 *Therefore my words have been rash* He admits his words in chapter 3 were wild and asks them to see where they came from. When someone in deep pain says rash things, weigh the pain before you judge the words.
6:4 *the arrows of the Almighty are with me* Job feels God has shot him with poisoned arrows and lined up terrors like an army. In one sense he is right; nothing happened without God's permission (1:12; 2:6). But he knows nothing of Satan's part or God's purpose, so God feels like his enemy. Many believers have felt this. The feeling is real even when it is not the whole truth. God was still calling him "My servant" (2:3).
6:5 *Does a wild donkey bray over grass* An animal with food does not complain. Job is not crying out for nothing.
6:6 *is there taste in the slime of purslane* Purslane is a plant with slimy juice, like egg white. He may mean Eliphaz's words were tasteless to him, or that his whole life had lost its flavor.
6:9 *that God be willing and crush me* Job's "hope" is that God would end his life. He does not take his own life or speak of it. He leaves it in God's hands, and God does not grant the prayer, because He had a better answer coming. Moses (Num 11:15) and Elijah (1 Kgs 19:4) prayed this way, and God was gentle with them. If you have prayed this, please do not carry it alone. Talk to a pastor, a doctor or a crisis line today.
6:10 *I have not hidden the words of the Holy One* Even wanting to die, Job has one comfort: he has not denied God's words. The Holy One speaks of God's perfect purity. He holds on to his faith.
6:12 *Is my strength the strength of stones, or is my flesh bronze* He has no strength to wait for the bright future Eliphaz promised (5:19-26). Eliphaz told him to lean on his integrity (4:6), but he has nothing left inside (6:13). That is an honest place to be, where God often meets us: His power is made perfect in weakness (2 Cor 12:9).
6:14 *To the despairing is due steadfast love from his friend* Steadfast love is hesed, loyal, faithful kindness. The next line may mean a friend who withholds kindness forsakes the fear of God, or that a despairing man needs kindness even if he is near losing his faith. Either way, he needed love and did not get it.
6:15 *My brothers have acted treacherously like a wadi* A wadi is a desert streambed that runs full when the snow melts and dries up in the summer heat. When you need water most, there is none. His friends came full of sympathy and dried up when he needed them.
6:19 *The caravans of Tema looked; the travelers of Sheba waited eagerly for them* Arabian trading caravans turned off the road for water and found dry riverbeds.
6:21 *you see a terror and are afraid* Perhaps they feared that if it could happen to Job, it could happen to them. It was easier to believe Job had sinned than that a righteous man could suffer like this.
6:22 *Is it that I have said, Give to me* He had asked for no bribe or ransom, only friendship (6:22-23). We often stay away from hurting people because we cannot fix anything. Usually they are not asking us to fix it. They need us loyal and kind.
6:24 *Teach me, and I myself will keep silent* A humble request. Show me my error and I will listen. But they had only hinted and named no sin. They picked apart the words of a desperate man (6:26) and treated him like an orphan to be bargained over (6:27). They were thinking about their theory, not about him.

my righteousness ***is*** still in it. **30** Is there injustice on my tongue? Or does my palate not discern calamities?

JOB 7

Man's Hard Service on Earth

1 Is ***there*** not hard service for man on earth, and like the days of a hired laborer ***are*** his days? **2** Like a slave ***who*** longs for shade, and like a hired laborer ***who*** waits for his wages, **3** so I have been made to inherit for myself months of worthlessness, and nights of trouble they have appointed to me. **4** If I lie down, then I say, 'When will I arise?' And the evening stretches on, and I am filled ***with*** tossings until the twilight. **5** My flesh is clothed ***with*** worms and clods of dust; my skin has hardened and oozes. **6** My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and they have come to an end with no hope. **7** Remember that my life ***is*** a breath; my eye will not return to see good. **8** The eye of the one who sees me will not observe me; Your eyes ***will be*** on me, and I ***will be*** no more. **9** A cloud vanishes and goes; so the one who goes down ***to*** Sheol will not come up. **10** He will not return again to his house, and his place will not recognize him again.

Job Cries Out to God

11 I also will not restrain my mouth; I will speak in the distress of my spirit; I will complain in the bitterness of my soul. **12** Am I the sea, or the sea monster, that You set a guard over me? **13** When I say, 'My couch will comfort me; my bed will bear ***a share*** in my complaint,' **14** and You dismay me with dreams, and from visions You terrify me, **15** and my soul chooses strangling, death rather than my bones. **16** I reject ***it***; I will not live forever. Cease from me, for my days ***are*** a vapor. **17** What ***is*** man, that You make him great, and that You set Your heart on him, **18** and You visit him every morning, every moment You test him? **19** How long will You not look away from me, ***and*** not let me alone until I swallow my spittle? **20** I have sinned; what do I do to You, O watcher of mankind? Why have You set me as a target for Yourself, and I have become a burden to myself? **21** And why do You not forgive my transgression and take away my iniquity? For now I will lie down in the dust, and You will seek me, and I ***will be*** no more."

JOB 8

Bildad's First Speech

1 And Bildad the Shuhite answered and said, **2** "How long will you say these ***things***, and the words of your mouth ***be*** a

6:30 Job 12:11; Job 33:8-12; Job 42:3-6
7:1 Matt 20:15; Job 14:5,13,14; Ps 39:4
7:2 Lev 19:13; Jer 6:4; Deut 24:15
7:3 Ps 6:6; Job 29:2; Ps 39:5
7:4 Deut 28:67; Job 7:13,14; Job 17:12
7:5 Job 17:14; Isa 14:11; Job 2:7,8
7:6 Job 9:25; Job 17:15; Job 17:11
7:7 Ps 78:39; James 4:14; Job 10:9
7:8 Job 20:9; Ps 37:36; Job 13:27
7:9 2 Sam 12:23; Job 10:21; Job 14:10-14
7:10 Job 8:18; Job 20:9; Ps 103:16
7:11 Ps 40:9; Job 10:1; 1 Sam 1:10
7:12 Job 7:17; Job 38:6-11; Lam 3:7
7:13 Ps 6:6; Job 7:3,4; Job 9:27,28
7:14 Dan 2:1; Gen 40:5-7; Gen 41:8
7:15 2 Sam 17:23; Matt 27:5
7:16 Job 10:1; 1 Kgs 19:4; Job 6:9
7:17 Heb 2:6; Ps 8:4; Ps 144:3
7:18 1 Pet 1:7; Exod 20:5; Exod 32:34
7:19 Job 9:18; Ps 6:3; Ps 13:1-3
7:20 Ps 36:6; Lam 3:12; Job 9:29-31
7:21 Job 10:14; Dan 12:2; Job 13:23,24
8:1 Job 2:11
8:2 Job 15:2; 1 Kgs 19:11; Job 11:2,3

6:30 *does my palate not discern calamities* The palate is taste. Look me in the eye, Job says (6:28). He can still tell right from wrong and knows the difference between suffering for sin and what is happening to him. His answer is not perfect, and he admits rash words. But he is right about the main thing: he is not being punished for hidden sin, and his friends have failed him.
7:1 *Is there not hard service for man on earth* Hard service is a soldier's term of duty or forced labor. A slave longs for shade and a hired man for his pay (7:2), but Job has nothing to look forward to.
7:3 *months of worthlessness* Job's suffering had already gone on for months, not a few bad days.
7:4 *I am filled with tossings until the twilight* Anyone who has lain awake all night in pain knows how long those hours are. His sores were infested and his skin cracked and wept (7:5). I mention it not to dwell on it, but so we understand how much he carried in body as well as heart.
7:6 *My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle* The shuttle flies across the loom. The Hebrew word for hope can also mean thread. The thread runs out and the weaving stops, and Job's life seems to run out with it.
7:7 *Remember that my life is a breath* Now Job speaks to God directly. Life is short as a breath on a cold morning, and he does not expect to be happy again.
7:9 *the one who goes down to Sheol will not come up* Sheol is the grave or place of the dead, where both good and bad went in Old Testament speech. The dead do not come back to their old lives and homes (7:10). But Job does not yet see the full truth. He will ask, "If a man dies, will he live again?" (14:14) and say he will see God in his flesh (19:26). And Jesus, risen, said all in the tombs will hear His voice and come out (John 5:28-29).
7:11 *I will complain in the bitterness of my soul* Job will say strong things, but notice where he takes his complaint: to God. Many psalms do the same (Ps 13; 88). An honest complaint brought to God is a kind of prayer. Better to pour out bitterness to God than hide it and drift away from Him.
7:12 *Am I the sea, or the sea monster, that You set a guard over me* The sea pictured chaos that God sets limits on (38:8-11). Why treat me like a great threat? I am just a man.
7:14 *You dismay me with dreams* Not even sleep gave relief. Perhaps he thinks of Eliphaz's vision too (4:12-16). Whatever their source, the nightmares took his last refuge.
7:16 *Cease from me, for my days are a vapor* Job would rather die than live in a body of bones (7:15). He does not say he will end his life. He asks God to let him go. If you have felt this, you are not alone, and God is not angry with you for feeling it. Please talk to a pastor, a doctor or a crisis line today.
7:17 *What is man, that You make him great, and that You set Your heart on him* An echo of Psalm 8:4, where David marvels that God cares for man. Job turns it into a complaint. God's attention feels like a stern guard inspecting him every moment, not even letting him swallow (7:19). The irony is that God had set His heart on him. The attention Job felt as pressure was the care of a God who would not let him go. Hebrews 2:6-9 shows the full answer to Psalm 8 in Jesus.
7:20 *I have sinned; what do I do to You, O watcher of mankind* Job does not claim to be sinless. He means: even if I have sinned, how does it hurt You? Why make me Your target (6:4)?
7:21 *why do You not forgive my transgression and take away my iniquity* His most searching question. If he has sinned, why not simply forgive? He pictures God coming to look for him and finding him already dead. The gospel answers this. God forgives not by ignoring sin but by laying it on His Son, "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). Job's suffering was not punishment, but his longing to be set right with God is every human heart's longing, fully met in Christ.
8:2 *How long will you say these things, and the words of your mouth be a mighty wind* Bildad, the second friend, may come from a people descended from Shuah, Abraham's son by Keturah (Gen 25:2). He has no gentle opening. Job said a despairing man's words are "for the wind" (6:26), and Bildad treats them that way.

mighty wind? **3** Does God pervert justice, or does the
Almighty pervert righteousness? **4** If your sons sinned
against Him, and He sent them away into the hand of their
transgression, **5** if you will seek God earnestly, and to the
Almighty you will plead for favor, **6** if you ***are*** pure and
upright, surely now He will rouse Himself over you and
restore the habitation of your righteousness. **7** And your
beginning will be a small thing, and your latter end will grow
exceedingly great. **8** For ask, please, of a former generation,
and give attention to the searching of their fathers. **9** For we
are of yesterday and do not know, for our days on earth ***are*** a
shadow. **10** Will they not instruct you ***and*** say to you, and
bring forth words from their heart?

The Hope of the Godless Perishes

11 Will papyrus grow tall without a marsh? Will reeds grow
without water? **12** While it ***is*** still in its greenness, ***and*** not
plucked off, and before any grass it withers. **13** So ***are*** the
paths of all who forget God, and the hope of the godless will
perish, **14** whose confidence is cut off, and the house of a
spider ***is*** his trust. **15** He leans on his house, and it does not
stand; he takes hold of it, and it does not endure. **16** He ***is*** a
fresh ***plant*** before the sun, and over his garden his shoots go
out. **17** Over a heap his roots are interwoven; between stones
he looks. **18** If one swallows him from his place, then it will
deny him, 'I have not seen you.' **19** Look, this ***is*** the joy of his
way, and from the dust others will spring up. **20** Look, God
will not reject a blameless ***man***, and He will not take hold of
the hand of evildoers, **21** until He fills your mouth ***with***
laughter, and your lips ***with*** a shout of joy. **22** Those who
hate you will be clothed ***with*** shame, and the tent of the
wicked will be no more."

JOB 9

How Can a Man Be Right With God?

1 And Job (Iyov) answered and said, **2** "Truly I know that ***it is***
so; and how can man be righteous with God? **3** If one desires
to contend with Him, he will not answer Him one ***time*** out of
a thousand. **4** ***He is*** wise of heart and mighty of strength; who
has hardened ***himself*** toward Him and remained unharmed?
5 the One who removes mountains, and they do not know,
who overturns them in His anger; **6** the One who shakes the
earth from its place, and its pillars tremble; **7** the One who
speaks to the sun, and it does not rise, and around the stars
He sets a seal; **8** who stretches out the heavens by Himself,

8:3 Rev 16:7; Rev 15:3; Rom 3:5
8:4 Job 1:5,18,19; Job 5:4; Job 18:16-19
8:5 Job 11:13; Matt 7:7,8; Heb 3:7,8
8:6 Mark 4:38; 1 John 3:19-22; Job 1:8
8:7 Job 42:12,13; Prov 4:18; Zech 4:10
8:8 Deut 4:32; Deut 32:7; Job 12:12
8:9 1 Chr 29:15; Ps 144:4; Job 7:6
8:10 Job 12:7,8; Job 32:7; Deut 6:7
8:11 Exod 2:3; Isa 19:5-7
8:12 Jer 17:6; Ps 129:6,7; Matt 13:20
8:13 Ps 9:17; Job 11:20; Job 13:16
8:14 Isa 59:5,6
8:15 Job 27:18; Matt 7:24-27; Luke 6:47-49
8:16 Job 21:7-15; Ps 37:35,36; Ps 73:3-12
8:17 Job 18:16; Job 29:19; Isa 5:24
8:18 Job 7:10; Job 20:9; Ps 37:10,36
8:19 Matt 13:20; Job 20:5; 1 Sam 2:8
8:20 Heb 8:9; Job 4:7; Job 9:22
8:21 Ps 126:2,6; Gen 21:6; Luke 6:21
8:22 Ps 35:26; Ps 109:29; Ps 132:18
9:1 Job 4:17; Job 14:3,4; Job 25:4
9:3 Job 10:2; Job 40:2; Job 9:20,32,33
9:4 Eph 3:20; Jude 1:24; Heb 3:8
9:5 Job 28:9; Ps 46:2; Ps 68:8
9:6 Rev 20:11; Hag 2:6,21; Heb 12:26
9:7 Luke 21:25; Luke 21:26; Isa 13:10
9:8 Matt 14:25; Mark 6:48; Ps 104:2,3

8:3 *Does God pervert justice, or does the Almighty pervert righteousness* To pervert is to twist. No, God never does (Deut 32:4; Gen 18:25). But Bildad jumps to say that whatever happens to a person must be what he deserves right now. That leaves no room for God's unseen purposes, for testing, for grace, or for a judgment still to come. Job will struggle with this too, but Bildad's simple answer is not right either.

8:4 *If your sons sinned against Him* A terrible thing to say to a grieving father. Job prayed and sacrificed for his children (1:5), and their deaths came from Satan's attack, allowed for reasons that had nothing to do with their sin (1:12, 18-19). If you have been told someone you lost died because of their sin or yours, no one can know that, and it is often simply false (Luke 13:1-5). Leave the judgment to God, who knows all things and is full of mercy.

8:6 *if you are pure and upright* There is a hidden condition here. Bildad does not think Job is pure, though God had already said he was "blameless and upright" (1:1, 8). Seek God, he says, and He will restore your home (8:5-6).

8:7 *your beginning will be a small thing, and your latter end will grow exceedingly great* A striking verse, because it came true: "the LORD blessed the latter part of Job more than his beginning" (42:12). But not as Bildad thought. Job did not earn it by confessing a sin. God blessed him by grace, after He spoke and after Job prayed for these friends (42:10).

8:8 *ask, please, of a former generation* Bildad rests on tradition. Our lives are a shadow, so listen to the fathers (8:9-10). There is value in that (Prov 1:8; Jer 6:16), but tradition is not God's Word. It can be right in general and wrong in a particular case. Jesus warned against setting aside God's commands for human tradition (Mark 7:8-9).

8:11 *Will papyrus grow tall without a marsh* Papyrus and reeds need water. Take it away and they wither while still green. So, he says, the godless flourish briefly and fall suddenly (8:13), and he hints that Job is one of them. It is true of the godless (Ps 1). But Job's roots were in God, as God Himself had said.

8:14 *the house of a spider is his trust* A web looks strong but holds no weight. Anything we trust in place of God, money, health, our goodness, our family, is a spider's web. But Job's house did not fall because he trusted a web. Satan pulled it down, and God allowed it for a purpose Bildad could not see.

8:18 *if one swallows him from his place, then it will deny him* A thriving plant is pulled up, and the garden acts as if it never knew it. These words would sting. The greatest man in the east was now forgotten in the ash heap. All Bildad's pictures say the same thing: Job's ruin proves he was godless.

8:20 *God will not reject a blameless man, and He will not take hold of the hand of evildoers* To take the hand means to help. Bildad ends hopefully, promising laughter (8:21), and God did restore Job. But his logic runs backward: Job suffers, so he must not be blameless. God said Job was blameless, and Job suffered anyway. The book asks us to hold both: God is perfectly just, and righteous people sometimes suffer for reasons only God knows.

9:2 *how can man be righteous with God* Job answers Bildad through chapter 10. Eliphaz asked nearly this (4:17), meaning no man is pure. Job means: how can a man win his case before God? He pictures a courtroom where God could ask a thousand questions and he could not answer one (9:3). The New Testament answers it. We are justified, declared righteous, by faith in Christ as a free gift of grace (Rom 3:24-26; 5:1).

9:5 *the One who removes mountains, and they do not know* God moves mountains, shakes the earth's pillars, and seals up the stars (9:5-7). Job is not doubting God's power. He knows God better than his friends think. The trouble is that he sees that power turned against him.

9:8 *treads on the high places of the sea* To tread on the sea means God rules it. Many have thought of Jesus walking on the Sea of Galilee (Mark 6:48-50). Only God walks on the sea.

and treads on the high places of the sea; **9** who makes ***the*** Bear, Orion, and ***the*** Pleiades, and the chambers of the south; **10** who does great ***things*** until ***there is*** no searching, and wonders until ***there is*** no number. **11** Look, He passes by me, and I do not see ***Him***; and He passes on, and I do not perceive Him. **12** Look, He snatches away; who can turn Him back? Who will say to Him, 'What are You doing?' **13** God will not turn back His anger; under Him the helpers of Rahab (Rahav) bowed down. **14** How much less I, ***that*** I should answer Him, ***that*** I should choose my words with Him, **15** I who, though I am righteous, will not answer; to my Judge I will plead for favor. **16** If I called and He answered me, I would not believe that He was giving ear to my voice, **17** He who crushes me with a storm and multiplies my wounds without cause. **18** He does not allow me to bring back my breath, for He fills me ***with*** bitter things. **19** If ***it is a matter*** of power, look, ***He is*** mighty! And if of justice, who will summon me? **20** Though I am righteous, my mouth will declare me guilty; I ***am*** blameless, and it declares me perverse. **21** I ***am*** blameless; I do not know my soul; I reject my life. **22** It ***is*** one ***thing***; therefore I say, 'The blameless and the wicked He brings to an end.' **23** If a scourge kills suddenly, He mocks at the despair of the innocent. **24** The earth has been given into the hand of a wicked ***man***; he covers the faces of its judges. If not, then who ***is*** it?

No Mediator Between Us

25 And my days are swifter than a runner; they flee, they do not see good. **26** They pass on with ships of reed, like an eagle ***that*** swoops on food. **27** If I say, 'I will forget my complaint, I will leave off my ***sad*** face and be cheerful,' **28** I dread all my pains; I know that You will not acquit me. **29** I will be guilty; why then should I labor ***in*** vain? **30** If I wash myself in snow water and cleanse my hands with lye, **31** then You will plunge me into the pit, and my clothes will abhor me. **32** For ***He is*** not a man like me, ***that*** I should answer Him, ***that*** we should come together in judgment. **33** There is no arbiter between us, ***who*** might lay his hand on the two of us. **34** Let Him remove His rod from on me, and let His dread not terrify me. **35** ***Then*** I will speak and not fear Him; for I ***am*** not so with myself.

JOB 10

Job Pleads With His Maker

1 My soul loathes my life; I will let loose my complaint upon myself; I will speak in the bitterness of my soul. **2** I will say to

9:9 Amos 5:8; Job 38:31,32-41; Gen 1:16
9:10 Job 5:9; Ps 71:15; Ps 72:18
9:11 Job 23:8,9; Job 35:14; 1 Tim 6:16
9:12 Rom 9:19; Job 11:10; Isa 45:9
9:13 Job 26:12; Isa 30:7; James 4:6,7
9:14 Job 4:19; Job 25:6; 1 Kgs 8:27
9:15 Job 10:15; Job 8:5; 1 Cor 4:4
9:16 Ps 18:6; Ps 66:18-20; Ps 116:1,2
9:17 John 15:25; Job 16:14; Job 2:3
9:18 Job 7:19; Lam 3:15,19; Ps 39:13
9:19 Job 9:4; 1 Cor 1:25; Job 9:32,33
9:20 Job 15:5,6; Job 34:35; Job 9:2
9:21 Ps 139:23,24; Prov 28:26; Jer 17:9,10
9:22 Eccl 9:1-3; Ezek 21:3,4; Luke 13:2-4
9:23 Job 1:13-19; Job 2:7; Job 4:7
9:24 Job 24:25; Job 12:6-10; Job 21:7-15
9:25 Job 7:6,7; Ps 90:9,10; James 4:14
9:26 Hab 1:8; Job 39:27-30; 2 Sam 1:23
9:27 Job 7:13; Ps 77:2,3; Jer 8:18
9:28 Ps 119:120; Job 21:6; Ps 88:15,16
9:29 Job 9:22; Job 10:7,14-17; Job 21:16,17,27
9:30 James 4:8; Jer 2:22; 1 John 1:8
9:31 Job 9:20; Job 15:6; Isa 59:6
9:32 Rom 9:20; Eccl 6:10; Num 23:19
9:33 1 Sam 2:25; Job 9:19; Ps 106:23
9:34 Ps 39:10; Job 13:11,20-22; Job 33:7
10:1 Job 7:11; 1 Kgs 19:4; Job 9:21
10:2 Ps 143:2; Ps 6:1-4; Ps 25:7

9:9 *the Bear, Orion, and the Pleiades* Star groups in the night sky: the Bear in the north, Orion the hunter, the small cluster of the Pleiades. The chambers of the south may be the southern stars. God names them again in 38:31-32. Job's words in 9:10 nearly match Eliphaz's in 5:9. They agree that God's works are beyond counting.
9:12 *Who will say to Him, What are You doing* God took away Job's children and goods, and no one could stop Him or demand an explanation. He passes by unseen (9:11).
9:13 *the helpers of Rahab bowed down* Not the woman of Jericho. In Hebrew poetry Rahab is a great sea monster, a picture of proud chaos, and sometimes a name for Egypt (Ps 89:10; Isa 51:9). Even the proudest powers bow to God. How could Job stand before Him?
9:15 *to my Judge I will plead for favor* The tension of the book. Job believes he is in the right, not sinless, but undeserving of this. Yet he knows he could never win against God, only beg for mercy. His pain has even shaken his confidence that God listens (9:16).
9:17 *multiplies my wounds without cause* Job knows nothing of Satan, but he is right. "Without cause" is the same Hebrew word God used, "for nothing" (2:3). He cannot win by strength, and who would summon God to court (9:19)? Even if right, his own mouth would trip him up (9:20). He feels trapped.
9:22 *The blameless and the wicked He brings to an end* Here Job goes too far. He is right that the wicked often seem to win and the good sometimes die with the bad, which his friends would not admit. But he is wrong to say God does not care or mocks the innocent (9:23-24). God was proud of Job (1:8; 2:3). Later God says Job darkened counsel "by words without knowledge" (38:2), and Job takes his words back (42:3-6). These are a true record of what a man says in agony, not true teaching about God, who is "very compassionate and merciful" (James 5:11).
9:26 *They pass on with ships of reed* Light papyrus boats that skimmed along the Nile. His days rush past like a runner (9:25) and a swooping eagle.
9:28 *I know that You will not acquit me* To acquit is to declare not guilty. He tried putting on a brave face (9:27), but he feels God has already decided against him. Why labor in vain (9:29)? This is the voice of hopelessness.
9:30 *If I wash myself in snow water and cleanse my hands with lye* Lye was a strong soap of plant ashes. Scrub as he might, God would plunge him into a pit until his own clothes would not touch him (9:31). Job stumbles on a deep truth: no one can wash away his own sin. David asked God to do it (Ps 51:7), and God does it through the blood of Christ (1 John 1:7).
9:32 *He is not a man like me, that I should answer Him* The core of Job's problem. If God were a man, they could go to court as equals. But there is an endless gap between them.
9:33 *There is no arbiter between us, who might lay his hand on the two of us* An arbiter is a go-between who judges and brings two sides together, perhaps laying a hand on each as a sign of authority over both. Job says there is no such one. But God had one in mind: "one mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim 2:5). Job said, "He is not a man like me." In Jesus, God became a man like us, so He can lay His hand on both. He knows God because He is God, and knows us because He was tempted in every way, yet without sin (Heb 4:15). He gave Himself to make peace (Heb 9:15).
9:34 *Let Him remove His rod from on me* Job asks that God stop striking him and that His terror not overwhelm him, so he could speak freely (9:35; 13:21). In Christ we have that. We come to God's throne with confidence, not terror (Heb 4:16), not because God is less holy, but because our Mediator has made peace.
10:1 *My soul loathes my life* Job will not hold back (7:11). He wants a fair trial.
10:2 *Make known to me on what grounds You contend with me* A man accused in court has the right to know the charge. Job feels punished without ever being told why. We know what he could not: there was no charge. The test came because he was righteous, not guilty (1:8; 2:3).

God, 'Do not declare me guilty; make known to me on what ***grounds*** You contend with me. **3** Is it good for You that You oppress, that You reject the toil of Your hands, and on the counsel of the wicked You shine forth? **4** Do You have eyes of flesh? Or do You see as man sees? **5** Are Your days like the days of man, or Your years like the days of a man, **6** that You seek for my iniquity and search for my sin, **7** in spite of Your knowledge that I am not guilty, and ***there is*** no deliverer from Your hand? **8** Your hands shaped me and made me, together all around; and You have swallowed me!
9 Remember, please, that like the clay You made me; and will You turn me back to dust? **10** Did You not pour me out like the milk, and curdle me like the cheese? **11** ***With*** skin and flesh You clothed me, and with bones and sinews You wove me together. **12** Life and steadfast love You have done with me, and Your care has kept my spirit. **13** And these ***things*** You hid in Your heart; I know that this ***was*** with You. **14** If I sinned, then You would watch me, and from my iniquity You would not acquit me. **15** If I am guilty, woe to me! And ***if*** I am righteous, I will not lift up my head, full of shame; and see my affliction! **16** And ***if*** it rises up, like the lion You hunt me, and You again show Yourself wonderful against me. **17** You renew Your witnesses before me, and You increase Your vexation with me; changes and an army ***are*** with me.

Why Did You Bring Me Out of the Womb?

18 And why did You bring me out from the womb? I would have expired, and no eye would have seen me. **19** I would have been as though I had not been; from the womb to the grave I would have been carried. **20** Are not my days few? And cease, and set ***Yourself*** away from me, so that I may be cheerful a little, **21** before I go, and I will not return, to the land of darkness and deep darkness, **22** a land of gloom like thick darkness, of deep darkness and no order, and it shines like thick darkness.'"

JOB 11

Zophar's First Speech

1 And Zophar (Tsofar) the Naamathite answered and said, **2** "Should a multitude of words not be answered? And should a man of lips be righteous? **3** Should your empty boasts silence men? And you mock, and ***there is*** no one who puts ***you*** to shame? **4** And you have said, 'My teaching ***is*** pure, and I am clean in Your eyes.' **5** But oh that God would speak, and open His lips with you, **6** and tell you the secrets of wisdom! For sound wisdom ***is*** double. And know that God causes some

10:3 Job 14:15; Ps 138:8; Isa 64:8
10:4 1 Sam 16:7; Job 9:32; Luke 16:15
10:5 2 Pet 3:8; Ps 90:2-4; Ps 102:12,24-27
10:6 Job 10:14-17; Ps 10:15; Ps 44:21
10:7 Deut 32:39; Job 23:10; Job 31:6,14,35
10:8 Ps 119:73; Isa 43:7; Job 10:3
10:9 Gen 2:7; Gen 3:19; Isa 64:8
10:10 Ps 139:14-16
10:11 2 Cor 5:2,3; Job 40:17,18; Ezek 37:4-8
10:12 Gen 19:19; Matt 6:25; Acts 17:25,28
10:13 Job 23:13; Job 23:9; Eccl 8:6,7
10:14 Job 7:21; Ps 130:3; Job 13:26,27
10:15 Isa 3:11; Job 10:7; Ps 25:18
10:16 Isa 38:13; Lam 3:10; Hos 13:7,8
10:17 Job 16:8; Ruth 1:21; Ps 55:19
10:18 Jer 20:14-18; Job 3:10,11; Jer 15:10
10:19 Ps 58:8
10:20 Job 14:1; Ps 39:13; Job 7:6,7,16
10:21 2 Sam 12:23; Job 3:5; Ps 23:4
10:22 Job 3:5; Job 34:22; Job 38:17
11:1 Job 2:11; Job 20:1
11:2 Job 18:2; Prov 10:19; Job 16:3
11:3 Job 17:2; Job 13:4; Job 15:2,3
11:4 Job 10:7; Job 6:10; 1 Pet 3:15
11:5 Job 38:1,2; Job 23:3-7; Job 31:35
11:6 Ezra 9:13; Job 15:8,11; Job 28:28

10:3 *Is it good for You that You oppress* Three bold questions. Does God enjoy crushing people, throw away what His hands made, smile on the wicked? They show how confused Job is, but also what he still believes: that God is good and should not favor the wicked. His complaint only makes sense because he knows God is just. He is shocked because this does not fit the God he knows.
10:4 *Do You have eyes of flesh* People see only the outside and hurry to judge. God looks on the heart (1 Sam 16:7) and has no lack of time. So why hunt for Job's sin "in spite of Your knowledge that I am not guilty" (10:7)? Job is wrong that God was hunting his sin, but right that God saw his heart perfectly.
10:8 *Your hands shaped me and made me* The hands that formed him now seem to destroy him. That is what hurts most, pain from the One who made him. God formed Adam from dust (Gen 2:7) and shapes us like a potter (Isa 64:8). Will He crush His own pottery (10:9)?
10:11 *With skin and flesh You clothed me, and with bones and sinews You wove me together* A picture of a child taking shape in the womb like milk thickening into cheese (10:10). David says, "You wove me together in the womb of my mother" (Ps 139:13). Every person, from the very beginning in the womb, is the careful work of God's hands.
10:12 *Life and steadfast love You have done with me* In the middle of his complaint, Job remembers God's hesed and His care all his days. That memory is what makes the present pain so confusing.
10:13 *these things You hid in Your heart* Job thinks God planned all along to make him, care for him, then crush him. He was right that God had a hidden purpose, but wrong about what it was: to show the truth of his faith and in the end to bless him.
10:15 *If I am guilty, woe to me! And if I am righteous, I will not lift up my head* Either way Job loses. Guilty, he is doomed; innocent, he is still covered with shame and misery. "See my affliction!"
10:16 *like the lion You hunt me* Each new pain feels like another witness against him and fresh troops sent into battle (10:17). That is what long suffering feels like. But feelings are not always facts. Job felt hunted. In truth God was holding Satan on a leash and watching over His servant.
10:18 *why did You bring me out from the womb* The question of chapter 3, now asked of God directly. We should not hurry past these words or argue someone out of feeling this way. But this very chapter shows the contrast. A life God shaped with such care and steadfast love (10:8-12) was not a mistake. Job's life still had a purpose. If you have wished you were never born, please talk to a pastor, a doctor or a crisis line today.
10:21 *to the land of darkness and deep darkness* Job asks God to let him alone a little before he goes (10:20), and piles up words for darkness as in chapter 3. Even the light there is darkness (10:22). This is the view of a man in deep pain without the full light of the gospel. Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life" (John 11:25). For the believer death is the doorway to being with Christ, and Job will begin to glimpse that hope.
11:1 *Zophar the Naamathite answered and said* The third friend, likely the youngest. He speaks last in each round and not at all in the third.
11:2 *should a man of lips be righteous* A man of lips is all talk. Zophar hears Job's pain and calls it mockery that needs shaming (11:3). That is hard to do to a suffering man. Be "swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger" (James 1:19). Zophar was the opposite.
11:4 *I am clean in Your eyes* Job had said he was innocent (9:21; 10:7). Zophar takes it as a claim to be sinless, which Job never made.
11:5 *oh that God would speak, and open His lips with you* In the end God does speak (38:1), but He rebukes the friends for speaking wrongly about Him (42:7). Be careful what you wish for when you are sure you are right.
11:6 *God causes some of your iniquity to be forgotten for you* God's wisdom has two sides, seen and hidden. Then the cruelest thing yet: you are getting off easy; you deserve worse. In one sense none of us gets what our sins deserve; that is God's mercy (Ps 103:10). But Zophar is not offering mercy. He is using a true doctrine as a club.

of your iniquity to be forgotten for you. **7** Will you find the searching of God? Or will you find ***out*** to the limit of the Almighty? **8** ***It is*** the heights of the heavens; what can you do? Deeper than Sheol; what can you know? **9** Its measure ***is*** longer than the earth, and broader than the sea. **10** If He passes on, and shuts up, and summons an assembly, then who can turn Him back? **11** For He knows men of worthlessness, and He sees wickedness, and will He not give attention ***to it***? **12** And a hollow man will get understanding, and a colt of a wild donkey will be born a man.

Zophar Calls Job to Repent

13 If you direct your heart, and spread out your palms toward Him, **14** if wickedness ***is*** in your hand, put it far away, and do not let injustice dwell in your tents. **15** For then you will lift up your face without blemish, and you will be firmly established and will not fear. **16** For you will forget ***your*** trouble; like waters ***that*** have passed away you will remember ***it***. **17** And ***your*** lifespan will rise more than noon; ***its*** gloom will become like the morning. **18** And you will be secure, for there is hope; and you will search ***around***, ***and*** you will lie down in security. **19** And you will lie down, and ***there will be*** no one who makes ***you*** afraid; and many will entreat your face. **20** And the eyes of the wicked will fail, and escape will be lost from them, and their hope ***will be*** the breathing out of life."

JOB 12

Job Answers Zophar

1 And Job (Iyov) answered and said, **2** "Truly you ***are*** the people, and with you wisdom will die. **3** I also have a heart like you; I ***am*** not falling below you. And with whom ***are there*** not ***things*** like these? **4** A laughingstock to his friend I am, one who called to God and He answered him; a laughingstock ***is*** the righteous, blameless ***man***. **5** ***There is*** contempt for disaster in the thought of one at ease, a blow for those slipping of foot. **6** The tents of destroyers are at peace, and securities ***belong*** to those who provoke God, to ***him*** who has brought God into his hand. **7** And yet ask, please, the animals, and they will teach you, and the birds of the heavens, and they will tell you; **8** or talk to the earth, and it will teach you, and the fish of the sea will recount to you. **9** Who does not know among all these that the hand of the LORD has done this, **10** in whose hand ***is*** the life of every living thing, and the breath of all the flesh of man? **11** Does not the ear test words, and the palate taste food for itself? **12** With aged ***men is*** wisdom, and ***with*** length of days understanding.

God's Wisdom and Power

13 With Him ***are*** wisdom and might; to Him ***belong*** counsel

11:7 Rom 11:33; Eccl 3:11; Job 5:9
11:8 Job 22:12; Job 35:5; Isa 55:9
11:9 Job 28:24,25; Ps 65:5-8; Ps 139:9,10
11:10 Job 12:14; Rev 3:7; Job 5:18
11:11 Heb 4:13; Ps 94:11; Jer 17:9,10
11:12 Ps 73:22; Eccl 3:18; Job 39:5-8
11:13 Ps 88:9; 1 Sam 7:3; Ps 78:8
11:14 James 4:8; Job 22:23; Job 4:7
11:15 Job 22:26; Job 10:15; Gen 4:5,6
11:16 Isa 65:16; Eccl 5:20; Gen 41:51
11:17 Ps 37:6; Isa 58:8-10; Job 42:11-17
11:18 Ps 3:5; Ps 4:8; Prov 3:24-26
11:19 Ps 45:12; Job 42:8,9; Gen 26:26-31
11:20 Deut 28:65; Job 31:16; Lev 26:16
12:1 Job 6:24,25; Job 8:8-10; Job 11:2,6,12
12:3 Job 13:2-5; Prov 26:4; 2 Cor 11:5,21-23
12:4 Job 21:3; Job 30:1; Ps 91:15
12:5 Deut 32:35; Ps 17:5; Ps 94:18
12:6 Job 9:24; Job 21:7-15; Ps 73:11,12
12:7 Job 21:29,30; Prov 6:6; Isa 1:3
12:9 Acts 19:35; Job 12:3; Job 22:18
12:10 Num 16:22; Job 27:3; Job 34:14,15
12:11 Job 34:3; 1 Cor 10:15; Phil 1:10
12:12 Job 32:7; Job 15:10; Job 8:8
12:13 Job 9:4; Job 36:5; Prov 8:14

11:7 *Will you find the searching of God* True and wonderful words. God's wisdom is higher than heaven and deeper than Sheol (11:8-9). Paul says, "How unsearchable are His judgments and untraceable His ways!" (Rom 11:33; Isa 55:8-9). God will show Job this in chapters 38 to 41. But the irony is plain. Zophar says no one can search out God's wisdom, then speaks as if he knows exactly why Job suffers.
11:10 *then who can turn Him back* Answering Job's own words (9:12). Zophar agrees and tells Job to accept it. God sees all sin, even hidden (11:11; Heb 4:13), and Zophar means Job's hidden sin.
11:12 *a colt of a wild donkey will be born a man* Probably a saying of the time: a fool gets wisdom when a wild donkey gives birth to a man, that is, never. It is an insult dressed up as a proverb.
11:13 *If you direct your heart, and spread out your palms toward Him* Spread palms are the posture of prayer. For someone living in sin this is the right call (11:13-14). But it was the wrong word for Job. You cannot repent of a sin you did not commit. Had Job confessed a sin only to get his blessings back, he would have proved Satan right, that he served God only for what he got.
11:15 *then you will lift up your face without blemish* Job said he could not lift his head (10:15). Zophar says he will, if he gets right with God.
11:18 *you will be secure, for there is hope* Job said his days ended "with no hope" (7:6). Zophar offers hope on his own terms: trouble forgotten like passing waters (11:16) and many seeking his favor again (11:19; 29:7-11). God did restore Job and people came again (42:11), but by grace after God spoke, not as a reward for what Zophar wanted confessed.
11:20 *the eyes of the wicked will fail* Each friend ends the same way: a promise if Job turns and a threat if he does not (5:17-27; 8:20-22). Their speeches are well made and many lines are true. But they have one blind spot. They cannot imagine a righteous man suffering for reasons known only to God, and so all their true words add up to a false message.
12:2 *Truly you are the people, and with you wisdom will die* Job answers Zophar through chapter 14, closing the first round. This is sarcasm. Zophar called him a hollow man (11:12), and Job throws it back. In Hebrew the heart is the center of thinking too (12:3). Job has a mind, and they have told him nothing new.
12:4 *A laughingstock is the righteous, blameless man* A man of prayer, whom God called blameless (1:1), had become a joke.
12:5 *There is contempt for disaster in the thought of one at ease* The comfortable look down on the troubled and push those already slipping. When life goes well, it is easy to think strugglers brought it on themselves. Have compassion instead.
12:6 *The tents of destroyers are at peace* Robbers live untroubled. If the wicked always suffer and the good always prosper, how do the friends explain that?
12:7 *ask, please, the animals, and they will teach you* Even the animals, birds, earth and fish know what the friends are trying to teach (12:7-8).
12:9 *the hand of the LORD has done this* The only time in the speeches from chapter 3 to 37 that God is called by His personal name, the LORD. All creation knows He made it and rules it (Rom 1:20). Every breath is in His hand (12:10). Job has never denied God's power. That is why he is so troubled. If God holds everything, God allowed what happened to him.
12:11 *Does not the ear test words* As the tongue tests food, the ear tests words, and Job finds theirs lacking. Elihu repeats the saying (34:3).
12:12 *With aged men is wisdom* Perhaps a saying the friends lean on (8:8-10; 15:10). Yes, the old are supposed to be wise, but the next verse gives the real answer.
12:13 *With Him are wisdom and might* Wisdom finally belongs to God, not old men or tradition (Dan 2:20). When He tears down, no one rebuilds; drought and flood are both His (12:14-15).

and understanding. **14** Look, He tears down, and it will not be rebuilt; He shuts ***the door*** on a man, and it will not be opened. **15** Look, He holds back the waters, and they dry up; and He lets them loose, and they overturn the earth. **16** With Him ***are*** strength and sound wisdom; to Him ***belong*** the one who goes astray and the one who leads astray. **17** He leads away counselors barefoot, and judges He makes foolish. **18** He loosens the bonds of kings, and He binds a loincloth on their loins. **19** He leads away priests barefoot, and those long established He overturns. **20** He removes the lip of trusted ones, and takes away the discernment of elders. **21** He pours contempt on nobles, and loosens the belt of the strong. **22** He reveals deep ***things*** out of darkness, and He brings out deep darkness to the light. **23** He makes the nations great, and He destroys them; He spreads out the nations, and He leads them ***away***. **24** He removes the heart of the heads of the people of the earth, and He makes them wander in a wasteland ***with*** no way. **25** They grope ***in*** darkness and not light, and He makes them wander like the drunkard.

JOB 13

Job Would Argue His Case With God

1 Look, my eye has seen all ***this***; my ear has heard, and it has understood it. **2** As your knowledge ***is***, I also know; I ***am*** not falling below you. **3** But I will speak to the Almighty, and I desire to argue ***my case*** with God. **4** But you ***are*** smearers of falsehood; physicians of worthlessness ***are*** all of you. **5** Oh that you would be completely silent, and it would be wisdom for you! **6** Hear, please, my argument, and pay attention to the contentions of my lips. **7** Will you speak injustice for God, and for Him will you speak deceit? **8** Will you show Him partiality? Or will you contend for God? **9** Will it be good when He searches you out? Or as one deceives a man, will you deceive Him? **10** He will surely rebuke you if in secret you show partiality. **11** Will not His majesty terrify you, and His dread fall on you? **12** Your memorials ***are*** proverbs of ashes; your defenses ***are*** defenses of clay.

Though He Slay Me

13 Be silent from me, and let me speak, I ***myself***, and let whatever ***may come*** pass over me. **14** Why should I take my flesh in my teeth, and put my life in my palm? **15** Look, He will kill me; I will hope in Him. Nevertheless I will argue my ways to His face. **16** This also ***will be*** salvation for me, for a godless ***man*** will not come before Him. **17** Listen carefully to my speech, and ***let*** my declaration ***be*** in your ears. **18** Look, please, I have arranged ***my*** case; I know that I am righteous.

12:14 Rev 3:7; Isa 22:22; Job 11:10
12:15 1 Kgs 17:1; Job 12:10; 1 Kgs 8:35,36
12:16 Ezek 14:9; Job 12:13; Matt 6:13
12:17 1 Cor 1:20; Isa 29:14; 2 Sam 15:31
12:18 Rev 19:16; Dan 2:21; 2 Chr 33:11-14
12:19 Josh 10:24,42; 1 Sam 17:45,46; Isa 37:36-38
12:20 Job 32:9; Job 17:4; Prov 10:21
12:21 Ps 107:40; Exod 8:2; Exod 16:24
12:22 1 Cor 2:10; Dan 2:22; 1 Cor 4:5
12:23 Isa 9:3; Isa 26:15; Ps 107:38
12:24 Job 12:20; Job 17:4; Isa 6:9,10
12:25 Job 5:14; Ps 107:27; Isa 19:14
13:1 Job 5:9-16; Job 12:9-25; Job 42:3-6
13:2 Job 12:3; Job 15:8,9; Job 34:35
13:3 Isa 41:21; Job 13:22; Job 31:35
13:4 Ps 119:69; Job 16:2; Jer 8:22
13:5 Prov 17:28; Job 13:13; Eccl 5:3
13:6 Job 21:2,3; Job 33:1-3; Job 34:2
13:7 Job 36:4; Job 4:7; Job 11:2-4
13:8 Prov 24:23; Job 32:21; Job 34:19
13:9 Mark 15:19; Jer 17:10; Gal 6:7,8
13:10 James 2:9; Job 42:7,8; Ps 50:21,22
13:11 Ps 119:120; Jer 5:22; Jer 10:10
13:12 Job 18:17; Exod 17:14; Ps 34:16
13:13 Job 13:5; Job 7:11; Job 10:1
13:14 Judg 12:3; Eccl 4:5; 1 Sam 19:5
13:15 Rom 8:38; Prov 14:32; Job 27:5
13:16 Phil 1:19; Exod 15:2; Ps 27:1
13:17 Job 13:6; Job 33:1
13:18 Job 23:4; Job 9:2,3,20; Job 16:21

12:16 *to Him belong the one who goes astray and the one who leads astray* God does not cause anyone to sin. But no one, not even the worst deceiver, is outside His rule, and He will judge it all.
12:17 *He leads away counselors barefoot* Captives were led barefoot and stripped. Counselors, judges, kings, priests, elders and nobles all fall when God wills (12:17-21). To loosen a strong man's belt is to make him weak. The LORD brings low and lifts up (1 Sam 2:7). Job had been a great man brought down. Was it because he was wicked? God's ways with the great are beyond our neat explanations.
12:22 *He reveals deep things out of darkness* Nothing is hidden from God, and one day He will bring every secret into the open (1 Cor 4:5).
12:23 *He makes the nations great, and He destroys them* History is not random. God sets the times and boundaries of nations (Acts 17:26) and can make leaders wander lost like drunkards (12:24-25). Job knows God's sovereignty as well as his friends do. His complaint is that it does not fit their simple rule. God's ways are greater and deeper than that.
13:2 *As your knowledge is, I also know* Job already knows all they have said about God's power (12:3). They are not wiser. They have chosen a wrong explanation.
13:3 *I will speak to the Almighty, and I desire to argue my case with God* A turning point. Tired of talking to his friends, Job wants to go straight to God. That is the right direction, even when his tone is not. Better to bring our case to God than keep arguing with people who do not understand.
13:4 *you are smearers of falsehood* They plaster lies over the truth, like plaster over a crack, and came as doctors with useless medicine.
13:5 *Oh that you would be completely silent, and it would be wisdom for you* Even a silent fool is counted wise (Prov 17:28). Their best work was the seven silent days (2:13).
13:7 *Will you speak injustice for God, and for Him will you speak deceit* Job puts his friends on trial. They were so sure God must be punishing Job that they bent the facts to fit, acting as God's lawyers whatever the truth (13:8). A strong warning to anyone who teaches or defends the faith. God does not need us to lie for Him or invent answers we do not have. You can fool a man, not God (13:9). God confirms it: the friends did not speak what was right about Him (42:7). Their defense of God displeased God.
13:12 *Your memorials are proverbs of ashes; your defenses are defenses of clay* Job sits in ashes (2:8) and says their proverbs are no more solid than the ash heap, their arguments clay walls that crumble. God will rebuke them, and He did (13:10; 42:7-8).
13:14 *Why should I take my flesh in my teeth, and put my life in my palm* Sayings for risking one's life. Job knows speaking boldly to God could cost him his life, and he will do it anyway (13:13).
13:15 *Look, He will kill me; I will hope in Him* One of the great statements of faith in the Bible. Job thinks God may kill him, but he will go on hoping in Him. The Hebrew can be read two ways, and some translations take it darkly, as if he has no hope. The SLB follows the reading that he will hope in God, which fits the next line: "I will argue my ways to His face." Faith and honest wrestling are not enemies.
13:16 *a godless man will not come before Him* A godless man would not dare come before God. Job's longing to meet Him is evidence of his faith, and he believes that meeting will be his salvation.
13:18 *I have arranged my case; I know that I am righteous* Prepared like a lawyer. Not that he never sinned (7:21; 13:26), but that he has done nothing to deserve this. If anyone could prove him guilty, he would fall silent and die (13:19).

19 Who ***is*** he ***that*** will contend with me? For now I would be silent and expire.

Job Pleads for a Hearing

20 Only two ***things*** do not do to me; then I will not hide myself from before You. **21** Put Your hand far from on me, and let Your dread not terrify me. **22** And call, and I will answer; or let me speak, and respond to me. **23** How many iniquities and sins ***are*** mine? Make known to me my transgression and my sin. **24** Why do You hide Your face and consider me Your enemy? **25** Will You terrify a driven leaf? And will You pursue dry chaff? **26** For You write bitter things against me, and You make me inherit the iniquities of my youth. **27** And You put my feet in the stocks, and You watch all my paths; on the roots of my feet You engrave ***a mark***. **28** And he wears out like rottenness, like a garment ***that*** a moth eats.

JOB 14

Man Born of Woman

1 Man born of a woman ***is*** short of days and full of turmoil. **2** Like a flower he comes forth, and he withers; and he flees like the shadow, and he does not remain. **3** Do You indeed open Your eyes on this ***one***, and bring me into judgment with You? **4** Who can bring a clean ***thing*** out of an unclean? Not one. **5** If his days ***are*** determined, the number of his months ***is*** with You; You have appointed his limits, and he will not pass ***beyond***. **6** Look away from him, that he may cease, until he takes pleasure in his day like a hired laborer.

If a Man Dies, Will He Live Again?

7 For there is hope for a tree: if it is cut down, it will sprout again, and its young shoots will not cease. **8** Though its root grows old in the ground, and its stump dies in the dust, **9** from the scent of water it will bud and make shoots like a plant. **10** And a man dies, and he is laid low; and man expires, and where ***is*** he? **11** Waters disappear from ***the*** sea, and a river is drained and dries up. **12** And a man lies down and will not arise; until the heavens are no more they will not awake, and they will not be roused from their sleep. **13** Oh that You would hide me in Sheol, that You would conceal me until Your anger turns back, that You would set a limit for me and remember me! **14** If a man dies, will he live ***again***? All the days of my hard service I will wait, until my change comes. **15** You will call, and I will answer You; You will long for the work of Your hands. **16** For now You count my steps;

13:19 Isa 50:7,8; Job 19:5; Job 33:5-7,32
13:20 Job 9:34,35; Gen 3:8-10; Ps 139:12
13:21 Job 33:7; Job 10:20; Job 22:15-17
13:22 Job 9:32; Job 38:3; Job 40:4,5
13:23 Job 22:5; Ps 44:20,21; Job 36:8,9
13:24 Job 19:11; Ps 13:1; Lam 2:5
13:25 Job 14:3; 1 Sam 24:14; Isa 17:13
13:26 Ps 25:7; Job 3:20; Ruth 1:20
13:27 Acts 16:24; Job 33:11; 2 Chr 16:10-12
13:28 Job 4:19; Ps 39:11; Job 30:17-19,29,30
14:1 Job 5:7; Job 25:4; Job 15:14
14:2 Job 8:9; 1 Pet 1:24; Isa 40:6-8
14:3 Ps 144:3; Ps 143:2; Job 7:17,18
14:4 John 3:6; Job 15:14; Ps 51:5
14:5 Ps 39:4; Job 21:21; Acts 17:26
14:6 Ps 39:13; Job 7:1,2; Job 7:16,19
14:7 Job 19:10; Isa 27:6; Job 14:14
14:8 Isa 26:19; John 12:24; 1 Cor 15:36
14:9 Ezek 17:3-10,22-24; Ezek 19:10; Rom 11:17-24
14:10 Job 14:12; Job 7:7-10; Job 3:11
14:11 Job 6:15-18; Jer 15:18
14:12 Acts 3:21; Eph 5:14; Job 10:21,22
14:13 Isa 26:20,21; Job 3:17-19; Isa 57:1,2
14:14 Job 7:1; Job 13:15; Job 19:25,26
14:15 1 John 2:28; Job 13:22; Job 10:3,8
14:16 Job 10:6,14; Job 31:4; Job 34:21

13:21 *Put Your hand far from on me* Two requests: stop the suffering long enough to think, and do not overwhelm me with Your terror (9:34). Then speak and I will answer, or let me speak and respond (13:22). Job wants a conversation. God does speak in the end (38:1), though not as Job expected.

13:23 *Make known to me my transgression and my sin* A fair and humble request, and a good prayer for any of us (Ps 139:23-24).

13:24 *Why do You hide Your face and consider me Your enemy* This hurts most, not the pain but the sense that God has turned His face away. God's face shining means His favor (Num 6:25). The word for enemy, oyeb, sounds very much like Job's name, Iyyob. Job may be asking whether God has turned Job into His foe. Why chase a driven leaf or dry chaff (13:25)?

13:26 *You make me inherit the iniquities of my youth* Job admits sins of his youth and feels God is writing them up against him. God does not bring up forgiven sins to punish us. He removes them as far as the east is from the west (Ps 103:12). We know from chapters 1 and 2 this was not the reason.

13:27 *You put my feet in the stocks* Stocks held a prisoner's feet. A mark on the soles may mean tracking a prisoner. Job feels under constant watch, and man wears out like a moth-eaten garment (13:28), which leads into chapter 14.

14:1 *Man born of a woman is short of days and full of turmoil* Job now speaks for all of us. Every person shares the same lot.

14:2 *Like a flower he comes forth, and he withers* A flower lasts days and a shadow moves on. Scripture often uses these pictures (Ps 103:15-16; James 1:10-11; 1 Pet 1:24). Life is beautiful, and life is brief.

14:4 *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one* Job admits that since the fall everyone born of a woman inherits a sinful nature (Ps 51:5; Rom 5:12), and no one can make himself clean. He is not claiming to be sinless. The answer is God alone. Jesus was born of a woman yet without sin, conceived by the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35), and through Him God makes the unclean clean (1 John 1:7).

14:5 *You have appointed his limits, and he will not pass beyond* God has set the length of every life (Ps 139:16; Matt 6:27). So Job asks Him to look away and let him rest like a laborer at the end of his shift (14:6; 7:19; 10:20).

14:7 *there is hope for a tree* A stump can send up new shoots at the scent of water (14:8-9). A tree has hope. Does a man? The sprouting stump later pictures the Messiah, the shoot from the stump of Jesse (Isa 11:1), and in a far greater way Jesus was cut down in death and rose again.

14:12 *until the heavens are no more they will not awake, and they will not be roused from their sleep* Unlike the tree, man does not sprout again. To Job "until the heavens are no more" probably meant never. But the heavens will one day pass away (Ps 102:25-26; 2 Pet 3:10; Rev 21:1). And "sleep" is the New Testament picture for believers who have died, because they will wake (John 11:11; 1 Thess 4:13-14). Without fully knowing it, Job used words that point to the resurrection.

14:13 *that You would set a limit for me and remember me* Hope breaks through. What if God hid him safely in Sheol like a treasure until the hard time passed? When God remembers, He acts, as He remembered Noah (Gen 8:1).

14:14 *If a man dies, will he live again* One of the great questions of the Bible, asked by everyone who has stood beside a grave, and asked here by a man staring at death. Hard service is a soldier's duty again (7:1), and "my change" is the relief when a new guard takes over. Job will wait, even in death, for God to relieve him. The New Testament answers yes. The dead in Christ will be raised incorruptible, "and we will be changed" (1 Cor 15:52; 15:20).

14:15 *You will call, and I will answer You; You will long for the work of Your hands* Job pictures God calling him out of the grave because He longs for what His hands have made. Job had said God was destroying His handiwork (10:3, 8). Now he believes God would not leave it in the grave forever. All in the tombs will hear His voice (John 5:28-29). God will call, and we will answer.

You do not keep watch over my sin. **17** My transgression ***is*** sealed up in a bag, and You smear over my iniquity. **18** And yet a falling mountain crumbles away, and a rock moves from its place; **19** waters wear away stones; its overflowings wash away the dust of the earth; and You destroy the hope of man. **20** You overpower him forever, and he goes; changing his face, You send him away. **21** His sons are honored, and he does not know ***it***; and they become insignificant, and he does not perceive ***it*** of them. **22** Only his flesh on him is in pain, and his soul on him mourns."

JOB 15

Eliphaz's Second Speech

1 And Eliphaz (Elifaz) the Temanite answered and said, **2** "Will a wise ***man*** answer ***with*** knowledge of wind, and fill his belly ***with*** the east wind, **3** arguing with a word ***that*** is of no use, and with words by which he does no good? **4** Indeed, you do away with fear, and you diminish meditation before God. **5** For your iniquity teaches your mouth, and you choose the tongue of the crafty. **6** Your mouth declares you guilty, and not I; and your lips testify against you. **7** Were you born the first man? And were you brought forth before the hills? **8** Have you listened in the council of God, and do you restrict wisdom to yourself? **9** What do you know, and we do not know? ***What*** do you understand, and it ***is*** not with us? **10** Both the gray-haired and the aged ***are*** among us, greater than your father in days. **11** ***Are*** the consolations of God too little for you, and a word ***spoken*** gently with you? **12** Why does your heart carry you away, and why do your eyes flash, **13** that you turn your spirit against God and bring out words from your mouth? **14** What ***is*** man, that he should be pure, and that one born of a woman should be righteous? **15** Look, He does not trust in His holy ones, and the heavens are not pure in His eyes; **16** how much less one who is abhorrent and corrupt, a man who drinks injustice like water!

The Fate of the Wicked

17 I will tell you; listen to me; and what I have seen, let me recount, **18** what wise ***men*** have told, and have not hidden, from their fathers, **19** to whom alone the land was given, and no stranger passed among them. **20** All the days of a wicked ***man*** he is writhing in pain, and the number of years ***that*** have been stored up for the ruthless. **21** A sound of dreads ***is*** in his ears; in peace the destroyer will come on him. **22** He does not believe ***that he will*** return from darkness, and he ***is*** watched for the sword. **23** He wanders for bread, ***saying***, 'Where ***is it***?' He knows that a day of darkness is ready at his

14:17 Deut 32:34; Hos 13:12; Job 21:19
14:18 Job 18:4; Jer 4:24; Ps 102:25,26
14:19 Gen 6:17; Gen 7:21-23; Job 19:10
14:20 Eccl 8:8; Job 14:14; Job 2:12
14:21 Eccl 9:5; Isa 63:16; 1 Sam 4:20
14:22 Job 19:20,22,26; Job 33:19-21; Prov 14:32
15:1 Job 2:11; Job 4:1; Job 22:1
15:2 Job 6:26; Job 8:2; Hos 12:1
15:3 Job 13:4,5; Job 16:2,3; Job 26:1-3
15:4 Job 4:5,6; Job 6:14; Ps 36:1-3
15:5 Job 9:22-24; Job 12:6; Mark 7:21,22
15:6 Luke 19:22; Job 9:20; Matt 12:37
15:7 Ps 90:2; Job 38:4-41; Prov 8:22-25
15:8 Rom 11:34; Jer 23:18; Job 11:6
15:9 Job 13:2; Job 26:3,4; 2 Cor 10:7
15:10 Job 32:6,7; Job 8:8-10; Job 12:20
15:11 Job 5:8-26; Job 11:13-19; 2 Cor 1:3-5
15:12 Acts 5:4; Eccl 11:9; Mark 7:21,22
15:13 Job 15:25-27; Job 9:4; Rom 8:7,8
15:14 Matt 11:11; Acts 4:27; Heb 2:6
15:15 Job 25:5; Job 4:18; Isa 6:2-5
15:16 Job 34:7; Prov 19:28; Titus 3:3
15:17 Job 5:27; Job 13:5,6; Job 33:1
15:18 Job 8:8; Job 15:10; Ps 71:18
15:19 Joel 3:17; Gen 10:25,32; Deut 32:8
15:20 Rom 8:22; Eccl 9:3; Ps 90:3,4,12
15:21 1 Thess 5:3; Job 18:11; Lev 26:36
15:22 Job 6:11; Job 9:16; 2 Kgs 6:33
15:23 Ps 59:15; Ps 109:10; Job 30:3,4

14:17 *My transgression is sealed up in a bag, and You smear over my iniquity* Verses 16-17 can be read as continuing the hopeful picture, with sins sealed away and covered as God forgives, or as Job's present complaint that God counts every step. In the hopeful reading, God casts our sins into the depths of the sea (Mic 7:19). When He forgives, He does not keep our sins on display.

14:19 *You destroy the hope of man* As water wears down stone, suffering wears away hope. That is how grief often works: a glimmer of hope, then the pain rushes back. Job is not a man with it all figured out, but a man holding on through the waves.

14:21 *His sons are honored, and he does not know it* The dead do not see what happens to their children. For Job, whose children had died, these words carry special sadness.

14:22 *Only his flesh on him is in pain, and his soul on him mourns* The first round ends in pain and mourning. But we know what Job did not fully know. Jesus has gone through death and come out the other side: "because I live, you also will live" (John 14:19). In chapter 19 Job himself will rise to a clearer hope.

15:2 *fill his belly with the east wind* The second round begins in the same order. The east wind off the desert was hot and harmful. Hot air, says Eliphaz. Bildad called Job's words wind (8:2), and Job will say the same of theirs (16:3). Each side thought the other full of empty talk.

15:4 *you do away with fear, and you diminish meditation before God* Eliphaz feared Job's complaints would destroy others' fear of God and devotion. He thought he was defending God's honor. Some believers feel this way when someone brings hard questions about suffering. But God did not condemn Job's honesty, and in the end said the friends had not spoken rightly (42:7).

15:6 *Your mouth declares you guilty, and not I* Job had said his own mouth would condemn him (9:20). Eliphaz turns it around: yes, your words condemn you.

15:7 *Were you born the first man* Sarcasm. Does Job think he is Adam, older than the hills?

15:8 *Have you listened in the council of God* An irony Eliphaz cannot see. The book began in God's council (1:6; 2:1). Job was not there, nor was Eliphaz. Only the reader knows what happened there. Had Eliphaz known, he would never have said what he said.

15:10 *Both the gray-haired and the aged are among us* Perhaps Eliphaz is older than Job's father, or means the elders of tradition. Age deserves respect (Lev 19:32), but age alone does not make anyone right.

15:11 *Are the consolations of God too little for you* Eliphaz sincerely thought his words were God's comfort. But telling a righteous sufferer he must have sinned is not God's comfort. The "God of all comfort" (2 Cor 1:3) comforts us so we can comfort others (2 Cor 1:4). True comfort comes alongside the sufferer. It does not stand over him. He reads Job's flashing eyes as rebellion (15:12-13), not the anguish of a man still holding to God.

15:16 *a man who drinks injustice like water* Back to his vision (4:17-19). All are sinners (Rom 3:23), and Job said much the same (14:4). But notice how Eliphaz has sharpened his words. In chapter 4 man was frail clay. Now he is "abhorrent and corrupt," and he means Job. He has moved from saying everyone is weak to saying Job is wicked.

15:18 *what wise men have told, and have not hidden, from their fathers* Wise men of a pure time, before foreign ideas mixed in (15:19). Learning from those before us is good, but it is still human wisdom, to be tested by what God has said. Eliphaz's tradition had a blind spot he could not see.

15:21 *in peace the destroyer will come on him* Pain, dread, a destroyer in a time of peace, darkness, wandering for bread (15:20-24). Eliphaz never says Job's name, but the picture is meant for him. Sin often brings fear and misery; "no peace, says the LORD, for the wicked" (Isa 48:22). But not everyone in misery is wicked.

hand. **24** Distress and anguish terrify him; it overpowers him like a king ready for the battle. **25** For he has stretched out his hand against God, and against the Almighty he makes himself mighty. **26** He runs against Him with a ***stiff*** neck, with the thick bosses of his shields. **27** For he has covered his face with his fat, and made fat on ***his*** loins. **28** And he has dwelt in desolate cities, ***in*** houses ***where*** they will not dwell, which are destined for heaps. **29** He will not be rich, and his wealth will not endure, and their gain will not stretch out on the land. **30** He will not depart from darkness; a flame will dry up his young shoots, and he will depart by the breath of his mouth. **31** Let him not trust in worthlessness; he has been led astray; for worthlessness will be his recompense.
32 Before his day it will be completed, and his palm branch will not grow luxuriant. **33** He will shake off his unripe grapes like the vine, and he will shed his blossom like the olive tree. **34** For the company of the godless ***is*** barren, and fire consumes the tents of bribery. **35** Conceiving trouble and giving birth to wickedness, and their belly prepares deceit."

JOB 16

Miserable Comforters

1 And Job (Iyov) answered and said, **2** "I have heard many ***things*** like these; comforters of trouble ***are*** all of you. **3** ***Is there*** an end to words of wind? Or what provokes you that you answer? **4** I also could speak like you, if your soul were in place of my soul; I could join ***together*** words against you, and shake my head at you. **5** I could strengthen you with my mouth, and the condolence of my lips would restrain ***your pain***. **6** If I speak, my pain is not restrained; and ***if*** I cease, what goes from me? **7** Surely now He has made me weary; You have devastated all my company. **8** And You have seized me; it has become a witness; and my leanness has risen up against me; it testifies to my face. **9** His anger has torn ***me***, and He has assailed me; He has gnashed at me with His teeth; my adversary sharpens His eyes against me. **10** They have opened wide their mouth against me; in scorn they have struck my cheeks; together they mass themselves against me. **11** God delivers me up to an unjust one, and casts me into the hands of the wicked. **12** I was at ease, and He broke me apart; and He took hold of my neck and shattered me; and He set me up as His target. **13** His archers surround me; He splits open my kidneys, and He does not have compassion; He pours out my gall on the ground. **14** He breaks through me, breach upon breach; He runs on me like a warrior. **15** I have sewn sackcloth over my skin, and I have thrust my horn into the dust. **16** My face is reddened from weeping, and on my eyelids ***is*** deep darkness, **17** although ***there is*** no violence in my hands, and my prayer ***is*** pure.

15:24 Job 6:2-4; Ps 119:143; Prov 1:27
15:25 Lev 26:23; Ps 73:9,11; Isa 27:4
15:26 2 Chr 28:22; 2 Chr 32:13-17; Job 16:12
15:27 Ps 17:10; Ps 73:7; Isa 6:10
15:28 Job 3:14; Job 18:15; Isa 5:8-10
15:29 Job 27:16,17; Job 20:22-28; Job 22:15-20
15:30 Rev 19:15; Job 4:9; Job 15:22
15:31 Isa 59:4; Job 12:16; Isa 44:20
15:32 Eccl 7:17; Job 22:16; Ps 55:23
15:33 Isa 33:9; Rev 6:13; Deut 28:39,40
15:34 Job 8:13; Job 20:1; Job 27:8
15:35 Ps 7:14; Hos 10:13; Isa 59:4,5
16:2 Job 13:4; Job 6:6,25; Job 11:2,3
16:3 Matt 22:46; Rom 9:20; Job 6:26
16:4 Ps 22:7; Ps 109:25; Lam 2:15
16:5 Job 4:3,4; Job 6:14; Job 29:25
16:6 Job 10:1; Ps 88:15-18; Ps 77:1-9
16:7 Job 7:3,16; Job 1:15-19; Job 3:17
16:8 Job 10:17; Ruth 1:21; Eph 5:27
16:9 Acts 7:54; Ps 35:16; Lam 2:16
16:10 Acts 4:27; Ps 22:13,16,17; Ps 35:15
16:11 John 19:16; Ps 31:8; Ps 27:12
16:12 Lam 3:4; Lam 3:11; Job 1:2,3
16:13 Job 6:4; Job 20:25; Lam 2:11
16:14 Lam 3:3-5; Judg 15:8; Ps 42:7
16:15 Ps 7:5; 1 Kgs 21:27; Isa 22:12
16:16 Ps 6:6,7; Ps 31:9; Ps 32:3
16:17 Job 11:14; Job 15:20,34; Job 21:27,28

15:26 *He runs against Him with a stiff neck, with the thick bosses of his shields* Bosses were the metal knobs on a shield, a soldier charging at God head down. The wicked man is fat and comfortable like the rich fool (Luke 12:16-21). Eliphaz hints Job had been proud and defiant. The opposite was true. Job feared God (1:1) and prayed for his children (1:5). His bold words came after his suffering, not before.
15:30 *a flame will dry up his young shoots* The young shoots are his children. Job's flocks were burned by fire (1:16) and his children had died. Again the picture fits Job too closely.
15:33 *He will shake off his unripe grapes like the vine* Grapes dropped unripe and blossoms shed never bear fruit. The wicked conceive trouble and give birth to wickedness (15:35; Ps 7:14). God will judge the wicked (Rom 2:5-8). But Eliphaz insists judgment always comes in this life, quickly and visibly, and that anyone who suffers so must be wicked. That was not true of Job and is not true of many godly people today. Do not quietly decide, as Eliphaz did, that someone's suffering is the fate of the wicked.
16:2 *comforters of trouble are all of you* Job answers Eliphaz through chapter 17. They came to comfort (2:11), but their comfort only made his trouble worse, and Eliphaz's "wind" (15:2) comes back at him (16:3).
16:5 *I could strengthen you with my mouth, and the condolence of my lips would restrain your pain* Job could shake his head at them in scorn if they traded places (16:4; Ps 22:7). But he says he would use his words to strengthen them and ease their pain, as he used to do (4:3-4). That is what a true friend does.
16:6 *If I speak, my pain is not restrained; and if I cease, what goes from me* No relief either way.
16:8 *my leanness has risen up against me; it testifies to my face* His wasted body is like a witness in court. People look at him and conclude he must be guilty, as his friends had.
16:9 *My adversary sharpens his eyes against me* Job pictures God as a beast tearing its prey, the strongest words yet. He means God, as he feels it. But the reader knows there really was an adversary, Satan, whose name means the adversary, who struck Job by God's permission (1:12; 2:7). God was not tearing Job. He was holding Satan's leash.
16:10 *in scorn they have struck my cheeks* Striking the cheek was a deep insult, and he feels handed over to the wicked (16:11). These words sound like Psalm 22 and like Jesus' sufferings. Men struck Him on the face (Matt 26:67), and He was handed over to lawless men (Acts 2:23). Job's sufferings picture those of the only truly innocent man.
16:12 *He set me up as His target* Grabbed by the neck and shattered, then tied up for archers. The kidneys were the seat of the deepest feelings (16:13), and he is a wall breached again and again (16:14). Hard words, and the Bible does not hide them. Sometimes suffering feels like an attack from God Himself. If you have felt that, Job shows you can tell God so. He would rather hear your honest anguish than your silence.
16:15 *I have sewn sackcloth over my skin, and I have thrust my horn into the dust* Sackcloth was rough goat hair, sewn on as if never to come off. The horn pictured strength and dignity, now in the dust. His face is red from weeping (16:16).
16:17 *there is no violence in my hands, and my prayer is pure* The heart of his complaint. He has wronged no one, and his prayers are sincere. God said the same (1:8; 2:3).

Job's Witness in Heaven

18 O earth, do not cover my blood, and let ***there*** be no place for my outcry. **19** Even now, look, my witness ***is*** in the heavens, and the one who testifies for me ***is*** in the high places. **20** My companions ***are*** scoffing at me; my eye drips ***tears*** to God, **21** and let him argue for a man with God, and a son of man for his companion. **22** For years ***that can be*** numbered will come, and I will go a path ***from which*** I will not return.

JOB 17

Job's Hope Fades

1 My spirit has been destroyed; my days have been extinguished; graves ***are*** for me. **2** Surely mockeries ***are*** with me, and on their provoking my eye lodges. **3** Set ***it***, please; be surety for me with Yourself. Who ***is*** he ***who*** will strike ***hands*** with my hand? **4** For You have hidden their heart from understanding; therefore You will not exalt ***them***. **5** For a portion he informs on friends, and the eyes of his sons will fail. **6** And He has set me up for a byword of peoples, and I am a spitting in ***the*** face. **7** And my eye has grown dim from grief, and my members ***are*** like the shadow, all of them. **8** Upright ***ones*** are appalled at this, and the innocent rouses himself against the godless. **9** And the righteous holds to his way, and the clean of hands will increase strength. **10** But all of them, you may return, and come, please, and I will not find among you a wise ***man***. **11** My days have passed; my plans have been torn apart, the desires of my heart. **12** Night into day they make; light ***is*** near before darkness. **13** If I hope for Sheol ***as*** my home, in the darkness I have spread out my bed, **14** to the pit I have called out, 'You ***are*** my father'; 'My mother and my sister' to the maggot, **15** and where then ***is*** my hope? And my hope, who will observe it? **16** To the bars of Sheol will they go down? Or together on the dust will we descend?"

JOB 18

Bildad's Second Speech

1 And Bildad the Shuhite answered and said, **2** "Until when will you set snares for words? Consider, and afterward we will speak. **3** Why are we regarded like the cattle, considered

16:18 Isa 26:21; Ezek 24:7; Gen 4:11
16:19 Rom 1:9; 1 Sam 12:5; Rom 9:1
16:20 Job 16:4; Job 12:4,5; Job 17:2
16:21 Job 31:35; Job 9:34,35; Job 13:3,22
16:22 Job 14:10; Job 14:5,14; Job 7:9,10
17:1 Ps 88:3-5; Isa 38:10-14; Job 19:17
17:2 Matt 27:40; 1 Sam 1:6,7; Job 12:4
17:3 Prov 11:15; Prov 20:16; Heb 7:22
17:4 2 Sam 15:31; 2 Sam 17:14; 2 Chr 25:16
17:5 Job 32:21,22; Ps 12:2,3; Prov 20:19
17:6 Job 30:9; Ps 44:14; 1 Kgs 9:7
17:7 Job 16:16; Ps 6:7; Ps 31:9,10
17:8 Ps 73:12-15; Eccl 5:8; Hab 1:13
17:9 Prov 4:18; 1 John 2:19; Ps 84:7,11
17:10 Job 6:29; Job 42:7; Mal 3:18
17:11 Job 7:6; Job 9:25,26; Isa 38:10
17:12 Job 7:3,4,13,14; Job 24:14-16; Deut 28:67
17:13 Job 14:14; Ps 27:14; Lam 3:25,26
17:14 Ps 16:10; Job 21:32,33; Ps 49:9
17:15 Job 13:15; Job 19:10; Job 4:6
17:16 Job 3:17-19; Jonah 2:6; Job 18:13,14
18:1 Job 2:11; Job 8:1; Job 25:1
18:2 Job 8:2; Job 11:2; Job 13:5,6
18:3 Ps 73:22; Job 17:4,10; Job 12:7,8

16:18 *O earth, do not cover my blood* Innocent blood cries out from the ground (Gen 4:10). Job speaks as if murdered and asks that his cry find no resting place but keep rising until he is vindicated, even after he dies.
16:19 *Even now, look, my witness is in the heavens* A burst of faith from the ash heap, mocked by friends and feeling attacked by God. Even now someone in heaven knows the truth and will testify for him. Some teachers think Job means God Himself, appealed to against God as Job feels Him. Others think a heavenly advocate. Many Christians have seen a longing only Jesus fully answers.
16:21 *let him argue for a man with God, and a son of man for his companion* I believe this points to Jesus Christ. In 9:33 Job longed for an arbiter; here he is sure of a witness. "We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous One" (1 John 2:1), who intercedes for us at God's right hand (Rom 8:34). Job means a human being by "son of man," but Jesus took that title for Himself (Mark 10:45; Dan 7:13-14). Satan stood in heaven as accuser (Rev 12:10). In Christ the accuser is silenced, and the Advocate speaks for us.
16:22 *I will go a path from which I will not return* Job expects to die soon, so he needs his witness now. His hope is not yet the full hope of resurrection, but it is growing, and in chapter 19 it will rise higher.
17:1 *My spirit has been destroyed; my days have been extinguished; graves are for me* Three short lines, each heavier. His days are snuffed out like a lamp, and mockers surround him day and night (17:2).
17:3 *be surety for me with Yourself* To be surety is to put up a pledge, like co-signing a loan or paying bail. Striking hands sealed it (Prov 6:1; 11:15). No friend would, so Job asks God to guarantee his case before God. He reaches for a God who is both Judge and guarantee, like his witness in heaven (16:19). God did just that: "Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant" (Heb 7:22), putting up His own life as our pledge.
17:4 *therefore You will not exalt them* God had not given the friends understanding, so He would not let them win, and He did not (42:7-8). Verse 5 seems to be a proverb about betraying friends for a share, with the children paying for it.
17:6 *He has set me up for a byword of peoples, and I am a spitting in the face* A byword is a name people use as an example of disaster. Spitting in the face was the deepest insult. Jesus too was spit upon and mocked, though He had done nothing wrong (Matt 26:67; Isa 50:6).
17:7 *my members are like the shadow, all of them* Long grief wears down the body as well as the heart.
17:9 *the righteous holds to his way, and the clean of hands will increase strength* A striking verse in the middle of the darkness. Job may be speaking of himself. He will not let go. Suffering can make the righteous stronger, not weaker; those who wait for the LORD renew their strength (Isa 40:31). The upright would be on his side (17:8), but he finds no wise man among his friends (17:10).
17:11 *my plans have been torn apart, the desires of my heart* Anyone who has lost a child, a spouse, a career or health knows what it is to have the plans of the heart torn up.
17:12 *Night into day they make* The friends say the darkness is really light, that dawn will come soon if he repents (11:17). But it is still night for him.
17:14 *My mother and my sister* Job has lost his family, and now the grave and the worms seem his new family. Death feels closer than any living relative.
17:15 *where then is my hope* You keep telling me to hope, he says. Where is it? Will it go down with me behind the bars of Sheol (17:16)? A hard place to end, but in two chapters he will say, "I know that my Redeemer lives" (19:25). Hope does not travel in a straight line. "The hope does not put us to shame, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts" (Rom 5:5), an anchor that holds us (Heb 6:19). If your hope seems to be going into the dust, please talk to a pastor, a doctor or a crisis line today.
18:2 *Until when will you set snares for words* Bildad's second speech. He thinks Job is hunting words to win. "Consider, and afterward we will speak" is good advice (James 1:19), but he does not follow it.
18:3 *Why are we regarded like the cattle* Job said the animals could teach them (12:7) and that there was no wise man among them (17:10). Bildad's pride is hurt.

stupid in your eyes? **4** One tearing his soul in his anger, for your sake shall the earth be forsaken, and shall a rock move from its place?

The Light of the Wicked Goes Out

5 Also the light of the wicked will be extinguished, and the flame of his fire will not shine. **6** The light has grown dark in his tent, and his lamp above him will be extinguished. **7** The steps of his vigor will be restricted, and his own counsel will throw him down. **8** For he has been sent into a net by his feet, and on a network he walks about. **9** A trap will take hold on ***his*** heel; a snare will take hold on him. **10** His rope ***is*** hidden in the ground, and his trap on ***the*** path. **11** All around, terrors have terrified him, and they have scattered him at his feet. **12** Let his vigor be hungry, and disaster ***is*** prepared for his stumbling. **13** It will consume the parts of his skin; the firstborn of death will consume his parts. **14** He will be torn away from his tent, his trust, and it will make him march to the king of terrors. **15** It will dwell in his tent, from ***what is*** not his; sulfur will be scattered over his estate. **16** From beneath his roots will dry up, and from above his branches will wither. **17** His memory has perished from the earth, and ***there is*** no name for him on the face of ***the*** street. **18** They will thrust him from light into darkness, and from the world they will chase him away. **19** No offspring ***is*** his, and no progeny among his people, and ***there is*** no survivor in his sojourning places. **20** At his day those behind are appalled, and those before have taken hold of shuddering. **21** Surely these ***are*** the dwelling places of an unjust ***one***, and this ***is*** the place of ***one who*** has not known God."

JOB 19

Job Forsaken by All

1 And Job (Iyov) answered and said, **2** "Until when will you torment my soul and crush me with words? **3** These ten times you have insulted me; you are not ashamed ***that*** you wrong me. **4** And even ***if*** truly I have erred, my error lodges with me. **5** If truly you will magnify yourselves against me, and argue against me my disgrace, **6** know then that God has wronged me, and has closed His net around over me. **7** Look, I cry out, 'Violence!' and I am not answered; I cry for help, and ***there is*** no justice. **8** He has walled up my way, and I will not pass; and on my paths He sets darkness. **9** He has stripped my glory from on me, and He has removed the

18:4 Job 16:9; Job 14:18; Job 13:14
18:5 Prov 13:9; Prov 20:20; Prov 24:20
18:6 Rev 18:23; Job 21:17; Ps 18:28
18:7 Prov 4:12; Ps 18:36; Job 20:22
18:8 Job 22:10; Ps 9:15; Ps 35:8
18:9 Isa 8:14,15; Job 1:15,17; Job 5:5
18:10 Rom 11:9; Ps 11:6; Ezek 12:13
18:11 Job 15:21; Jer 6:25; Job 20:25
18:12 Job 15:23,24; 1 Sam 2:5,36; Ps 34:10
18:13 Isa 14:30; Job 17:16; Jonah 2:6
18:14 Job 8:14; Job 11:20; Ps 112:10
18:15 Ps 11:6; Deut 29:23; Isa 34:9,10
18:16 Hos 9:16; Isa 5:24; Amos 2:9
18:17 Ps 34:16; Prov 10:7; Ps 109:13
18:18 Job 10:22; Job 20:8; Job 3:20
18:19 Jer 22:30; Isa 14:21,22; Job 1:19
18:20 Ps 37:13; Ezek 21:25; Deut 29:23,24
18:21 Jer 9:3; Judg 2:10; Jer 10:25
19:2 Rev 6:10; Job 8:2; Job 18:2
19:3 Gen 31:7; Neh 4:12; Dan 1:20
19:4 Prov 9:12; Job 11:3-6; 2 Sam 24:17
19:5 Ps 35:26; Ps 38:16; Ps 55:12
19:6 Job 18:8-10; Job 7:20; Job 16:11-14
19:7 Hab 1:2,3; Lam 3:8; Job 10:3,15-17
19:8 Job 3:23; Lam 3:7,9; Hos 2:6
19:9 Ps 89:44; Job 29:7-14,20,21; Job 30:1

18:4 *One tearing his soul in his anger* Job said God tore him (16:9). No, says Bildad, you tear yourself. Should the earth be forsaken for your sake? The moral order where the wicked always suffer is as fixed as the rocks, he means. God's moral order is fixed, but Bildad's idea of it was too small. It had no room for the scene in heaven.
18:6 *The light has grown dark in his tent, and his lamp above him will be extinguished* A burning lamp meant a family alive and well (Prov 13:9; 24:20). Job's house had gone dark, his children dead. Bildad is describing Job's home.
18:7 *his own counsel will throw him down* The plans of the wicked often bring their own fall (Ps 7:15-16).
18:9 *A trap will take hold on his heel* Net, network, trap, snare, rope, trap: six words in three verses (18:8-10). Sin is a trap, and those who walk in it are often caught. But Bildad means Job walked into his suffering through sin. He had not. He was caught in something far beyond his own doing.
18:13 *the firstborn of death will consume his parts* The firstborn was the strongest son, so this is the deadliest disease, death's strongest child, eating away the skin. Bildad describes Job's sickness exactly (2:7; 7:5). This is cruel.
18:14 *it will make him march to the king of terrors* Death pictured as a dark ruler, with the wicked marched before him like a captive. For the believer death is no king of terrors. Through His death Jesus rendered powerless the one who holds the power of death and set free those enslaved by its fear (Heb 2:14-15).
18:15 *sulfur will be scattered over his estate* A sign of total destruction, as with Sodom (Gen 19:24; Deut 29:23). Fire had fallen on Job's flocks (1:16). Roots dry and branches wither (18:16): his line before him and his children after.
18:17 *His memory has perished from the earth* To be forgotten was one of the worst fates. How wrong Bildad was. Thousands of years later, believers still speak of "the endurance of Job" (James 5:11). God kept his name alive.
18:19 *No offspring is his, and no progeny among his people* The cruelest line, aimed at a man whose ten children had died (8:4). If you have lost a child, do not hear Bildad's words as God's verdict on you. The LORD said the friends had not spoken rightly (42:7). Job's children died in Satan's attack, for a purpose that had nothing to do with their father's sin, and God gave Job children again (42:13). If your grief is heavy, talk to a pastor or a trusted friend.
18:21 *this is the place of one who has not known God* Bildad's whole view: if this happens to you, you are unjust and do not know God. The opposite was true. There was none like Job on earth (1:8). God does judge sin, and sin leads to death (Rom 6:23). But Bildad used those warnings to condemn an innocent man and left no room for mercy or hope. A teaching about judgment with no mercy in it does not reflect the God of the Bible.
19:2 *Until when will you torment my soul and crush me with words* Bildad began with "Until when" (18:2), and Job throws it back. Words can crush as surely as blows: "Death and life are in the hand of the tongue" (Prov 18:21).
19:3 *These ten times you have insulted me* Ten times means again and again. They should be ashamed, and they are not.
19:4 *my error lodges with me* Not a confession. Even if he had erred, it would be his business and God's, not theirs. They have no right to make themselves his judges.
19:6 *God has wronged me, and has closed His net around over me* Bildad pictured the wicked walking into nets (18:8-10). No, says Job, God threw His net over me. Here his words go too far. God had not wronged him (34:12; 42:3-6). But Job is right about what Bildad would not accept: this came from beyond him, not from his own doing.
19:7 *I cry out, Violence! and I am not answered* Like a man robbed in the street shouting for help. He appealed to God's court, and it is silent. His road is walled up and darkened (19:8).
19:9 *He has removed the crown of my head* His glory was his honor among his people, where he had been like a king (29:25). Now he sits on the ash heap.

crown of my head. **10** He tears me down all around, and I am gone; and He has uprooted my hope like the tree. **11** And He has kindled His anger against me, and He has counted me for Himself as His foes. **12** Together His troops come, and they have built up their way against me, and they have encamped all around my tent. **13** My brothers He has put far from me, and those who know me surely have become strangers to me. **14** My near ***ones*** have ceased, and my familiar ***ones*** have forgotten me. **15** The sojourners of my house and my female servants count me as a stranger; a foreigner I have become in their eyes. **16** I call to my servant, and he does not answer; with my mouth I implore him. **17** My breath is loathsome to my wife, and I am repulsive to the sons of my womb. **18** Even young boys reject me; I rise, and they speak against me. **19** All the men of my council abhor me, and ***those*** whom I love have turned against me. **20** My bone clings to my skin and to my flesh, and I have escaped with the skin of my teeth. **21** Show me favor, show me favor, you my friends, for the hand of God has touched me. **22** Why do you pursue me like God, and are not satisfied from my flesh?

I Know That My Redeemer Lives

23 Oh that my words would then be written! Oh that they would be inscribed in the scroll, **24** with a stylus of iron and lead, forever in the rock they would be engraved! **25** And I, I know ***that*** my Redeemer lives, and last He will stand on ***the*** dust. **26** And after my skin has been struck off, this, and from my flesh I will see God, **27** whom I, I will see for myself, and my eyes will see, and not a stranger. My kidneys have failed within my bosom. **28** If you say, 'How will we pursue him?' and the root of the matter has been found in me, **29** be afraid for yourselves before the sword, for wrath ***brings*** the punishments of the sword, so that you may know ***there is*** a judgment."

JOB 20

Zophar's Second Speech

1 And Zophar (Tsofar) the Naamathite answered and said, **2** "Therefore my disquieting thoughts make me respond, and

19:10 Job 24:20; Ps 37:35,36; Job 1:13-19
19:11 Job 13:24; Job 16:9; Job 33:10
19:12 Job 30:12; Job 16:11; Isa 10:5,6
19:13 Ps 88:8,18; Ps 69:8,20; Ps 31:11
19:14 Ps 38:11; Prov 18:24; Mic 7:5,6
19:15 Job 31:31,32; Ps 123:3
19:16 Job 1:15,16,17,19
19:17 Job 2:9,10; Job 17:1
19:18 2 Kgs 2:23; Job 30:1,12; Isa 3:5
19:19 Ps 41:9; Ps 55:12-14,20; Luke 22:48
19:20 Lam 4:8; Job 33:19-22; Job 30:30
19:21 Job 1:11; Ps 38:2; Job 6:14
19:22 Ps 69:26; Job 10:16; Job 16:13,14
19:23 Isa 30:8; Job 31:35; Isa 8:1
19:24 Jer 17:1; Exod 28:11,12,21; Exod 32:16
19:25 Ps 19:14; Isa 54:5; Isa 59:20,21
19:26 Ps 17:15; 1 John 3:2; 1 Cor 13:12
19:27 Num 24:17; Isa 26:19
19:28 Job 19:22; Ps 69:26; 1 Kgs 14:13
19:29 Job 13:7-11; Rom 13:1-4; Ps 58:10,11
20:1 Job 2:11; Job 11:1; Job 42:9
20:2 Job 4:2; Job 13:19; Job 32:13-20

19:10 *He has uprooted my hope like the tree* In 14:7 there was hope for a tree whose stump could sprout. Now he feels his hope pulled up by the roots. He pictures an army laying siege to one sick man's tent (19:12).
19:13 *My brothers He has put far from me* Brothers, acquaintances, close relatives, guests and servants all keep away (19:13-16). Job, the master, has to beg his own servant. This loneliness is one of the hardest parts of suffering. People pull away from the sick, grieving or disgraced, because they do not know what to say, are afraid, or decide the person deserves it. Jesus knew it too: His disciples left Him and fled (Mark 14:50).
19:17 *My breath is loathsome to my wife* Even his wife kept her distance. "The sons of my womb" is hard since his children had died. It may mean his brothers, sons of the same mother's womb, or the children of his household.
19:18 *Even young boys reject me* The young always stood when an elder like Job rose (29:8). Now little boys mock him. His closest friends abhor him (19:19).
19:20 *I have escaped with the skin of my teeth* Wasted to skin and bones. The phrase has become an English saying for barely escaping. Job is just barely alive.
19:21 *Show me favor, show me favor, you my friends, for the hand of God has touched me* A heartbreaking plea. He has argued and complained. Now he simply begs for pity, twice. God's hand has struck him, so do not strike him too. "Not satisfied from my flesh" (19:22) was a saying for slander, devouring a man with words. People in pain need mercy from their friends, not a lecture or a theory.
19:24 *With a stylus of iron and lead, forever in the rock they would be engraved* Kings carved records into rock with iron chisels and filled the letters with lead. Job wants his testimony to outlast him. God granted it far beyond his asking. His words are in the Word of God, read for thousands of years, and the words he most wanted to last come next.
19:25 *I know that my Redeemer lives* Abandoned by family, tormented by friends, wasting away, feeling God as his enemy, Job says, "And I, I know," not I hope. The Redeemer is the go'el, the nearest kinsman bound to stand up for family in trouble. He bought back sold land (Lev 25:25), freed a relative sold as a slave (Lev 25:47-49), saw justice done for the murdered (Num 35:19), and might marry a widow to carry on a name, as Boaz did (Ruth 3 to 4). Job has no one left, but he has a living Go'el who will take up his cause. God Himself is called the Redeemer of His people (Isa 41:14; 59:20). Some teachers think Job means a heavenly figure distinct from God, others only that God will clear his name in this life.
19:25 *last He will stand on the dust* A go'el had to be of the same flesh and blood. How could God be Job's kinsman? God the Son shared our flesh and blood (Heb 2:14) and paid the price "with the precious blood of Christ" (1 Pet 1:18-19). I believe this points to Jesus, both God and our Brother. He lives: "I was dead, and look, I am living to the ages of the ages" (Rev 1:18). "Last" can mean at the end, or be a title as in "I am first and I am last" (Isa 44:6). Either way, the Redeemer has the final word, standing on the earth, perhaps over Job's grave. He will come again, and His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives (Zech 14:4; Acts 1:11).
19:26 *from my flesh I will see God* After his skin is destroyed, after death has done its work, Job will see God. The Hebrew is hard, and good teachers differ. Many believe he speaks of the resurrection of the body, and I believe this points to that hope. Some think he means seeing God after death apart from the body, and others vindication before he dies. But "my eyes will see" fits bodily seeing best. Jesus rose with flesh and bones (Luke 24:39), and the body "is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption" (1 Cor 15:42).
19:27 *my eyes will see, and not a stranger* Job himself, not another, will see Him, and God will no longer seem a stranger or enemy. "We will see Him just as He is" (1 John 3:2). Job saw that day from afar by faith (Heb 11:13), and in a smaller way saw God before he died (42:5). The kidneys were the seat of the deepest feelings. His heart faints with longing, the longing of every believer who has buried a loved one in Christ. If you are grieving, hold on to these words. Your Redeemer lives.
19:29 *so that you may know there is a judgment* The friends kept looking for the root of the trouble in Job (19:28). He turns it around. Fear judgment yourselves for falsely accusing me. He was right. God's anger burned against them, and only Job's prayer spared them (42:7-8). God sees all and will set every wrong right (Acts 17:31).
20:2 *because of my agitation within me* Zophar's second and last speech. He will not speak in the third round.

because of my agitation within me. **3** I hear the correction of my insult, and a spirit from my understanding answers me. **4** Do you know this from of old, since mankind was set on ***the*** earth, **5** that the shout of joy of the wicked ***is*** short, and the gladness of the godless ***is*** for a moment? **6** Though his loftiness goes up to the heavens, and his head reaches to the cloud, **7** like his own dung he will perish forever; those who saw him will say, 'Where ***is*** he?' **8** Like a dream he will fly away, and they will not find him; and he will be chased away like a vision of the night. **9** The eye caught sight of him, and it will not ***do so*** again, and his place will no longer see him. **10** His sons will seek the favor of the poor, and his own hands will give back his wealth. **11** His bones were full of his youthful vigor, and it will lie down with him on the dust.

Evil Sweet in the Mouth

12 Though evil is sweet in his mouth, ***and*** he hides it under his tongue, **13** ***and*** he spares it and does not let it go, and holds it back in the midst of his palate, **14** his food in his inward parts is changed; ***it is*** the venom of cobras within him. **15** He has swallowed wealth, and he vomits it up; God drives it out from his belly. **16** He will suck the poison of cobras; the tongue of a viper will kill him. **17** Let him not look on streams, rivers, torrents of honey and curds. **18** He gives back ***his*** gain, and he will not swallow ***it***; according to the wealth of his trading, and he will not rejoice. **19** For he has crushed ***and*** neglected the poor; he has seized a house, and he will not build it. **20** For he has not known quiet in his belly; with his desired ***things*** he will not deliver ***himself***. **21** ***There is*** no survivor of his devouring; therefore his prosperity will not endure. **22** In the fullness of his sufficiency it will be distress to him; every hand of a sufferer will come on him. **23** Let it be, to fill his belly, He will send on him the burning of His anger, and He will rain ***it*** on him in his bowels. **24** He will flee from a weapon of iron; a bow of bronze will pass through him. **25** He draws ***it*** out, and it comes out from ***his*** back, and lightning from his gallbladder; terrors come on him. **26** All darkness ***is*** hidden for his treasured ***things***; a fire ***that*** has not been fanned will consume him; it will be evil ***for*** a survivor in his tent. **27** The heavens will reveal his iniquity, and ***the*** earth will rise up against him. **28** The produce of his house will depart, flowing away in the day of His anger. **29** This ***is*** the portion of a wicked man from God, and the inheritance of his decree from God."

JOB 21

Job Answers: The Wicked Often Prosper

1 And Job (Iyov) answered and said, **2** "Listen, listen to my speech, and let this be your consolations. **3** Bear with me, and I, I will speak, and after I have spoken, you may mock.

20:3 Job 19:29; Job 27:11; Job 33:3
20:4 Job 8:8,9; Job 15:10; Job 32:7
20:5 Ps 37:35,36; Job 5:3; Job 15:29-34
20:6 Isa 14:13,14; Obad 1:3,4; Gen 11:4
20:7 1 Kgs 14:10; 2 Kgs 9:37; Ps 83:10
20:8 Rev 18:21; Ps 73:20; Ps 90:5
20:9 Job 7:8,10; Job 8:18; Ps 37:10,36
20:10 Job 20:18; Prov 28:3; Ps 109:10
20:11 Job 21:26; Job 13:26; Ps 25:7
20:12 Job 15:16; Ps 10:7; Gen 3:6
20:13 Matt 5:29,30; Mark 9:43-49; Rom 8:13
20:14 Rom 3:13; 2 Sam 11:2-5; 2 Sam 12:10,11
20:15 Prov 23:8; Matt 27:3,4
20:16 Rom 3:13; Isa 30:6; Matt 3:7
20:17 Deut 32:13,14; Num 14:23; 2 Kgs 7:2
20:18 James 4:8; Job 20:10,15; Job 20:5
20:19 Job 35:9; Prov 14:31; Job 21:27,28
20:20 Eccl 5:13,14; Isa 57:20,21
20:21 Job 18:19; Jer 17:11; Luke 16:24,25
20:22 Job 15:29; Job 18:7; Ps 39:5
20:23 Ps 78:30,31; Num 11:33; Mal 2:2
20:24 Isa 24:18; Amos 5:19; 2 Sam 22:35
20:25 Job 16:13; Job 18:11; Deut 32:41
20:26 Ps 21:9; Job 18:5,6; Isa 8:22
20:27 Job 16:18; Isa 26:21; Ps 44:20,21
20:28 Job 20:10,18-22; Job 5:5; Job 27:14-19
20:29 Luke 12:46; Job 27:13; Job 31:2,3
21:2 Job 13:3,4; Job 18:2; Job 33:1,31-33
21:3 Job 16:10,20; Job 17:2; Job 13:13

20:3 *I hear the correction of my insult* He feels insulted by Job's warning (19:29). Notice what he does not mention: "I know that my Redeemer lives" (19:25). He is so busy defending himself and his theory that he misses the heart of what Job said. We can be so busy arguing that we never hear the faith in another's words.
20:5 *the shout of joy of the wicked is short* True. Moses refused "the temporary enjoyment of sin" (Heb 11:25), and Psalms 37 and 73 teach that the wicked prosper only a while.
20:7 *like his own dung he will perish forever* Though his pride reaches the clouds like Babel (Gen 11:4), he ends like waste on the dung heap. A crude picture, meant to be, and Job sat on the ash heap where the town's waste was burned. It was not chosen by accident.
20:8 *Like a dream he will fly away* Success that vanishes like a dream at morning. Job had said almost these words of himself (7:8, 10), and Zophar turns them into a description of the wicked.
20:10 *His sons will seek the favor of the poor* His children will beg from the poor he oppressed, and he will give back what he stole.
20:12 *Though evil is sweet in his mouth, and he hides it under his tongue* One of the truest pictures of sin in the Bible. He savors it like candy and will not let it go (20:13), but in his stomach it turns to cobra venom (20:14). Sin is sweet at first. That is why it tempts. Then it turns deadly: "the sin, having been brought to completion, brings forth death" (James 1:15; Prov 20:17). A good warning for all of us. It just did not fit Job.
20:15 *He has swallowed wealth, and he vomits it up* Ill-gotten gain does not stay down.
20:17 *torrents of honey and curds* Signs of rich plenty, like "a land flowing with milk and honey" (Exod 3:8). The wicked man will lose it all.
20:19 *he has crushed and neglected the poor; he has seized a house* God cares deeply about this sin. The prophets thunder against those who take houses and fields from the poor (Isa 5:8; Mic 2:2), and James warns rich men who cheat their workers (James 5:1-6). But Job was not this man. He rescued the poor and was eyes to the blind (29:12-16). Eliphaz will accuse him of these very sins (22:6-9), and Job will deny them under oath (31:13-22).
20:20 *he has not known quiet in his belly* His greed was never satisfied, and the things he craved cannot save him.
20:23 *He will send on him the burning of His anger* He wanted to fill his belly with wealth. God fills it with His anger, rained down like fire on Sodom (Gen 19:24), and on Job's flocks (1:16). He escapes one weapon only to be pierced by another (20:24-25).
20:26 *A fire that has not been fanned will consume him* A fire no human lit, a fire from God.
20:27 *The heavens will reveal his iniquity, and the earth will rise up against him* Job called on earth and heaven to witness for him (16:18-19). Zophar turns it around: they will testify against the wicked.
20:29 *This is the portion of a wicked man from God* There will be a day of God's anger (Rom 2:5), and Zophar is not wrong about that. But his last word is judgment with no mercy, no hope, and no recognition of Job's faith. He never once heard what Job was saying. We can know true things about God's judgment and still fail completely to love the person in front of us.
21:2 *Listen, listen to my speech, and let this be your consolations* Job answers Zophar, ending the second round. Eliphaz offered the "consolations of God" (15:11). Job says the best comfort you could give is to listen. Really listen. Then mock if you want (21:3), he adds with bitter humor.

4 As for me, ***is*** my complaint to man? And if ***so***, why should my spirit not be short? **5** Turn to me and be appalled, and put ***your*** hand over ***your*** mouth. **6** And if I remember, and I am dismayed, and shuddering takes hold of my flesh. **7** Why do the wicked live, grow old, also become mighty ***in*** strength? **8** Their offspring ***is*** established before them, with them, and their descendants before their eyes. **9** Their houses ***are*** peace, without fear, and the rod of God ***is*** not on them. **10** His bull breeds and does not fail; his cow calves and does not miscarry. **11** They send forth their young boys like the flock, and their children leap about. **12** They lift ***their voices*** with tambourine and lyre, and rejoice at the sound of a flute. **13** They complete their days in the good, and in a moment they go down ***to*** Sheol. **14** And they say to God, 'Depart from us, and the knowledge of Your ways we do not desire. **15** What ***is*** the Almighty, that we should serve Him? And what will we gain if we entreat Him?' **16** Look, their prosperity ***is*** not in their hand; the counsel of the wicked is far from me.

How Often Is the Lamp of the Wicked Put Out?

17 How often is the lamp of the wicked extinguished, and their calamity comes on them? ***How often*** does He apportion pains in His anger? **18** ***How often*** are they like straw before a wind, and like chaff ***that*** a storm-wind has stolen away? **19** God stores up his wickedness for his sons. Let Him repay to him, and he will know. **20** Let his eyes see his ruin, and let him drink from the rage of the Almighty. **21** For what ***is*** his pleasure in his household after him, and the number of his months has been cut off? **22** Will ***anyone*** teach God knowledge? And He judges the exalted ***ones***. **23** This ***one*** will die in his very completeness, all of him at ease and quiet. **24** His pails are full ***of*** milk, and the marrow of his bones is watered. **25** And this ***one*** will die with a bitter soul, and he has not eaten of the good. **26** Together they will lie down on ***the*** dust, and the maggot will cover over them.

Job Rejects the Friends' Answers

27 Look, I know your thoughts, and the schemes ***by which*** you do violence against me. **28** For you say, 'Where ***is*** the house of the noble ***man***? And where ***is*** the tent of the dwelling places of the wicked?' **29** Have you not asked those who pass by the road? And their signs do you not recognize, **30** that the evil ***man*** is spared for a day of calamity? For a day of furies they are brought forth. **31** Who will declare his way to his face? And what he has done, who will repay to him? **32** And he, to the graves he will be borne, and over ***the*** tomb he will keep watch. **33** The clods of the valley will be sweet to him, and after him every man will draw along, and before

21:4 Job 7:11-21; Job 10:1,2; 1 Sam 1:16
21:5 Job 29:9; Job 40:4; Judg 18:19
21:6 Ps 77:3; Ps 88:15; Ps 119:120
21:7 Job 12:6; Ps 73:3-12; Jer 12:1-3
21:8 Job 5:3,4; Job 18:19; Job 20:10,28
21:9 Job 9:34; Ps 73:5; Job 15:21
21:10 Exod 23:26; Deut 7:13,14; Deut 28:11
21:11 Ps 107:41; Ps 127:3-5
21:12 Gen 4:21; Isa 5:12; Amos 6:4-6
21:13 Job 36:11; Ps 73:4; Matt 24:38,39
21:14 Job 22:17; Ps 10:4,11; Luke 8:28,37
21:15 Mark 5:17; Luke 8:37; Exod 5:2
21:16 Job 22:18; Ps 1:1; Job 1:21
21:17 Job 18:5,6,18; Prov 13:9; Prov 20:20
21:18 Ps 1:4; Job 13:25; Ps 35:5
21:19 2 Cor 5:21; Exod 20:5; Job 22:24
21:20 Rev 19:15; Isa 51:17; Rev 14:10
21:21 Job 14:5; Job 14:21; Eccl 2:18,19
21:22 Rom 11:34; Isa 40:13,14; 1 Cor 2:16
21:23 Job 20:22,23; Ps 49:17; Ps 73:4,5
21:24 Prov 3:8; Job 15:27; Ps 17:10
21:25 Job 7:11; Job 3:20; Job 9:18
21:26 Eccl 9:2; Isa 14:11; Job 20:11
21:27 Job 4:8-11; Job 5:3-5; Job 8:3-6
21:28 Job 20:7; Ps 37:36; Ps 52:5,6
21:29 Ps 129:8
21:30 Prov 16:4; Job 20:28; Nah 1:2
21:31 Deut 7:10; Gal 2:11; 2 Sam 12:7-12
21:32 Luke 16:22; Ps 49:14; Ezek 32:21-32
21:33 Job 30:23; Heb 9:27; Job 3:17,18

21:5 *put your hand over your mouth* A sign of shock or awe. Look at me and be stunned silent. In the end Job will put his hand over his own mouth before God (40:4). His complaint is with God, not man (21:4), and it makes him shudder (21:6).

21:7 *Why do the wicked live, grow old, also become mighty in strength* Job's great question. Zophar said their joy is short (20:5). Job sees wicked men live long and grow in power. God's people have always asked this (Jer 12:1; Ps 73:3).

21:8 *Their offspring is established before them* Bildad said the wicked have no children left (18:19). Job says many have children and grandchildren all around them. You can hear the pain from a man whose own children were dead. Eliphaz said the wicked live in fear (15:21), but many live in peace untouched by God's rod (21:9).

21:13 *They complete their days in the good, and in a moment they go down to Sheol* Herds that never miscarry, children dancing to tambourine and flute (21:10-12), then a quick, peaceful death, while Job died slowly in agony. Anyone who has lived long has seen people mock God and seem to have an easy life and death. Job is honest about it. His friends were not.

21:15 *What is the Almighty, that we should serve Him* They openly reject God (21:14) because there is nothing in it for them. That is Satan's charge in reverse. Satan said Job served God for profit (1:9). These men refuse because they see no profit. Both think of God only in terms of gain. Job served Him when there was nothing in it for him.

21:16 *the counsel of the wicked is far from me* Their prosperity is in God's hand, not theirs, and Job wants nothing of their thinking. His faith is not for sale. Eliphaz repeats these words (22:18).

21:17 *How often is the lamp of the wicked extinguished* Bildad said it goes out (18:5-6). How often? The wicked are chaff before the wind (Ps 1:4), and Job believes it in the end (21:18). But how often do we see it in this life? Not as often as the friends claim.

21:19 *God stores up his wickedness for his sons* The friends hinted that if the wicked man escapes, his children pay (5:4; 18:19). Job says that is not enough. Let the man himself feel it (21:20). Once dead, what does he care (21:21)? God's Law later taught that children are not put to death for their fathers' sins (Deut 24:16; Ezek 18:20).

21:22 *Will anyone teach God knowledge* Job is not trying to teach God how to run the world. But we should not pretend to understand His ways better than we do.

21:26 *Together they will lie down on the dust, and the maggot will cover over them* One dies at ease and well fed (21:23-24), another bitter and poor (21:25), and both lie in the same dirt. You cannot tell from how a man lived or died whether he was righteous (Eccl 9:2-3). The friends' rule does not hold.

21:28 *Where is the house of the noble man* Job knows they are aiming at him (21:27). The rich man's house is gone, so he was wicked, they say. They meant Job's house.

21:30 *the evil man is spared for a day of calamity* Ask any traveler (21:29). The wicked are often spared when disaster strikes. It can also be read that they are kept for a day of calamity still to come. Either way, the friends' theory does not fit what people see.

21:32 *to the graves he will be borne, and over the tomb he will keep watch* No one dares confront him (21:31). He is buried with honor and crowds follow his funeral (21:33). If this life were all, wickedness would seem to pay. But "it is appointed to men to die once, and after this judgment" (Heb 9:27). Asaph struggled until he went into God's sanctuary and saw their end (Ps 73:17). Abraham told the rich man, "now he is comforted, and you are in anguish" (Luke 16:25). God's justice is sure, not always quick, and His patience gives time to repent (2 Pet 3:9).

him ***there is*** no number. **34** And how will you comfort me ***with*** vanity? And ***in*** your answers unfaithfulness remains."

JOB 22

Eliphaz's Third Speech

1 And Eliphaz (Elifaz) the Temanite answered and said, **2** "Will a man be of use to God? For a wise ***man*** will be of use to himself. **3** ***Is it*** a pleasure to the Almighty that you are righteous, or profit that you make your ways blameless? **4** Is it from your fear ***of Him*** that He reproves you, ***that*** He enters with you into judgment? **5** ***Is*** not your evil great, and ***is there*** no end to your iniquities? **6** For you take pledges from your brothers without cause, and you strip off the garments of the naked. **7** You have not given water to the weary to drink, and from the hungry you have withheld bread. **8** And the man of arm, the land ***is*** his, and the honored ***one*** dwells in it. **9** You have sent widows away empty, and the arms of the fatherless have been crushed. **10** Therefore snares ***are*** all around you, and sudden dread terrifies you, **11** or darkness, ***so that*** you do not see, and an abundance of water covers you. **12** ***Is*** not God ***in*** the height of ***the*** heavens? And look at the top of the stars, that they are high! **13** And you say, 'What does God know? Through thick darkness will He judge? **14** Clouds ***are*** a hiding place for Him, and He does not see; and He walks about on the circle of ***the*** heavens.' **15** Will you keep the path of old, which men of wickedness have trodden, **16** who were snatched away, and ***it was*** not ***their*** time; a river was poured out ***on*** their foundation, **17** who were saying to God, 'Depart from us!' and what will the Almighty do to them? **18** And He filled their houses ***with*** good; and the counsel of the wicked is far from me. **19** The righteous see ***it*** and rejoice, and the innocent mocks at them, **20** 'Surely our adversary has been destroyed, and fire has consumed their abundance.'

Make Peace With God

21 Be reconciled, please, with Him, and be at peace; by them good will come to you. **22** Accept, please, instruction from His mouth, and put His words in your heart. **23** If you return to the Almighty, you will be built up; ***if*** you remove injustice from your tent, **24** and put gold on the dust, and Ophir (Ofir)

21:34 Job 16:2; Job 13:4; Job 32:3
22:2 Luke 17:10; Job 35:6-8; Ps 16:2
22:3 1 Chr 29:17; Ps 147:10,11; Prov 11:1,20
22:4 Job 14:3; Ps 143:2; Ps 39:11
22:5 Job 4:7-11; Job 11:14; Job 15:5,6,31-34
22:6 Exod 22:26; Job 24:3,9; Deut 24:10-18
22:7 Rom 12:20; Job 31:17; Isa 58:7,10
22:8 Job 29:7-17; Job 31:34; 1 Kgs 21:11-15
22:9 Job 24:3,21; Isa 10:2; Ezek 22:7
22:10 Job 18:8-10; Job 6:4; Job 13:21
22:11 Ps 69:1,2; Lam 3:54; Jonah 2:3
22:12 Eccl 5:2; Ps 115:3,16; Isa 57:15
22:13 Ps 10:11; Ezek 8:12; Ps 59:7
22:14 Job 34:22; Ps 33:14; Ps 97:2
22:15 Gen 6:5,11-13; Luke 17:26,27
22:16 Job 15:32; Matt 24:37-39; Gen 7:11,17-24
22:17 Ps 4:6; Job 21:10,14,15; Isa 30:11
22:18 Job 21:16; Job 12:6; 1 Sam 2:7
22:19 Ps 58:10; Ps 107:42; Ps 52:6
22:20 Job 1:16; 2 Pet 2:6,7; Job 4:7
22:21 Matt 5:25; 1 Chr 28:9; Phil 4:7
22:22 Job 23:12; Deut 4:1,2; Deut 6:6-9
22:23 Zech 1:3; Job 11:13,14; Job 8:5,6
22:24 1 Kgs 9:28; Isa 13:12; 1 Kgs 10:21

21:34 *how will you comfort me with vanity* Vanity is emptiness, breath. Their answers were unfaithful to the truth and to him. The lesson of the second round: God is just, but His justice works on a larger scale than one lifetime. Force every suffering into a neat formula and you become an unfaithful comforter. Hold to God's justice in the long run, as Job did, and you can be honest about injustice now and still trust Him.
22:1 *Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said* The third round begins and will be short. Bildad gives only a few lines (chapter 25), and Zophar does not speak at all. The friends have only one idea, and Job has answered it.
22:3 *Is it a pleasure to the Almighty that you are righteous* True in part. God does not need us and is not made richer when we do right (35:7; Acts 17:25). But Eliphaz uses it coldly: your goodness makes no difference to God. The book shows the opposite. God spoke of Job with joy (1:8). He does not need our righteousness, but He delights in it.
22:4 *Is it from your fear of Him that He reproves you* No one is punished for being godly, Eliphaz says, so it must be your sin. In a real sense, Job suffered precisely because he feared God. God pointed to his faith, and Satan attacked it.
22:5 *Is not your evil great, and is there no end to your iniquities* Now he says outright what he only hinted before.
22:6 *you take pledges from your brothers without cause, and you strip off the garments of the naked* A poor man's pledge was often his cloak, to be returned by night because it was his blanket (Exod 22:26-27). Eliphaz accuses Job of cruelty to the poor, the thirsty, widows and orphans (22:6-9). Where did he get these charges? Nowhere. He worked backward from Job's suffering and invented crimes to fit. A false theory begins by explaining a man's pain and ends by inventing his sins. The charges were false (1:1, 8). Job rescued the poor, made the widow's heart sing and was a father to the needy (29:12-16; 31:16-22).
22:9 *You have sent widows away empty* Widows and orphans had no defender, so turning them away crushed the weakest. Have you been accused of something you did not do by someone whose mind was made up? Jesus was: "many were bearing false testimony against Him" (Mark 14:56). God knows the truth. And if you are tempted to accuse because the facts would fit your theory, stop. A matter must be established by witnesses (Deut 19:15), not guesses.
22:10 *snares are all around you, and sudden dread terrifies you* Bildad's pictures of the wicked (18:7-11), applied to Job. The logic is a circle: Job suffers, so he is wicked; he is wicked, so he suffers. There is no room for anything God might be doing that Eliphaz cannot see.
22:13 *What does God know? Through thick darkness will He judge* Eliphaz puts words in Job's mouth. Job said the opposite. His complaint was that God watched him all too closely (7:19-20; 10:4-6). His struggle was not whether God sees but why the God who sees all was silent. It is easy to answer what we think someone meant instead of what he said. The circle of the heavens (22:14) is the dome of the sky as seen from earth (Isa 40:22).
22:16 *a river was poured out on their foundation* Wicked men of old snatched away before their time. Many teachers think Eliphaz means Noah's flood (Gen 6 to 7).
22:18 *the counsel of the wicked is far from me* Job said this to separate himself from the wicked (21:16). Eliphaz says it to separate himself from Job, a sharp, cold echo, after turning Job's description of the wicked (21:14-15) back on him (22:17).
22:19 *The righteous see it and rejoice* Scripture does speak of the righteous rejoicing at God's judgment (Ps 58:10; Rev 18:20). But fire had burned Job's flocks (1:16; 22:20), and Eliphaz says the righteous should rejoice over his ruin. That is cruel. "When your enemy falls, do not rejoice" (Prov 24:17), and Job never rejoiced at an enemy's ruin (31:29).
22:21 *Be reconciled, please, with Him, and be at peace* Good advice for anyone, and to store God's words in our hearts (22:22; Ps 119:11). But aimed wrongly. Had Job confessed the sins just listed, he would have confessed to lies and proved Satan right by repenting to get his blessings back. His integrity would not let him (27:5-6).
22:23 *If you return to the Almighty, you will be built up* Return is shub, the common Old Testament word for repentance. Eliphaz still assumes injustice in Job's tent.
22:24 *Ophir gold among the rock of the wadis* Ophir was famous for fine gold (1 Kgs 9:28). Throw your gold away like gravel in a dry streambed, he says, still thinking Job's sin was greed.

gold among the rock of the wadis, **25** then the Almighty will be your gold, and silver of heaps for you. **26** For then you will take delight in the Almighty, and you will lift up your face to God. **27** You will pray to Him, and He will hear you, and you will pay your vows. **28** And you will decree a matter, and it will be established for you, and on your ways light will shine. **29** When they bring ***you*** low, and you say, '***There is*** lifting up!' then He will save the lowly of eyes. **30** He will deliver ***one who is*** not innocent, and he will be delivered by the cleanness of your hands."

JOB 23

Job Longs to Find God

1 And Job (Iyov) answered and said, **2** "Even today my complaint ***is*** rebellion; my hand is heavy on my groaning. **3** Oh that I knew, and I would find Him; I would come to His place! **4** Let me set in order a case before Him, and let me fill my mouth ***with*** arguments. **5** I want to know the words ***with which*** He would answer me, and understand what He would say to me. **6** Would He contend with me in the greatness of power? No, surely He would pay ***attention*** to me. **7** There an upright ***man*** would be reasoning with Him, and I would deliver ***myself*** forever from my Judge. **8** Look, I go forward, and He is not ***there***; and backward, and I do not perceive Him; **9** ***to the*** left when He works, and I do not view ***Him***; He turns ***to the*** right, and I do not see ***Him***. **10** For He knows the way with me; He has tested me; like the gold I will come forth. **11** My foot has held to His step; His way I have kept, and I have not turned aside. **12** The commandment of His lips, and I have not departed ***from it***; more than my portion I have treasured up the words of His mouth. **13** And He ***is*** in one ***mind***, and who will turn Him back? And ***what*** His soul has desired, and He has done. **14** For He completes my portion, and many like these ***are*** with Him. **15** Therefore I am terrified before Him; I consider, and I am in dread of Him. **16** And God has made my heart faint, and the Almighty has terrified me. **17** For I have not been destroyed before darkness, and

22:25 Isa 33:6; James 2:5; Gen 15:1
22:26 Rom 7:22; Isa 58:14; Job 27:10
22:27 1 John 5:14; 1 John 5:15; Isa 58:9
22:28 Matt 21:22; Ps 20:4; John 8:12
22:29 1 Pet 5:5; James 4:6; Luke 1:52
22:30 Gen 18:26-32; James 5:15,16; Isa 58:12
23:2 Job 10:1; Job 6:2; Lam 3:19,20
23:3 Heb 7:25; Job 13:3; Job 16:21
23:4 Job 13:18; Job 37:19; Ps 43:1
23:5 Job 10:2; Job 13:22,23; Job 42:2-6
23:6 Job 13:21; Job 9:19,33,34; Isa 27:4,8
23:7 Rom 3:20; Isa 1:18; Jer 3:5
23:8 Job 9:11; Ps 10:1; 1 Tim 6:16
23:9 Ps 89:46; Isa 8:17
23:10 1 Pet 1:7; Ps 139:1-3; Ps 66:10
23:11 Ps 44:18; Ps 125:5; Job 17:9
23:12 Acts 17:11; Jer 15:16; John 6:66-69
23:13 Eph 1:9; Eph 1:10; Ps 115:3
23:14 Eph 1:9; 1 Thess 3:3; Job 7:3
23:15 Ps 119:120; Job 23:3; Job 10:15
23:16 Ps 22:14; Job 27:2; Isa 6:5
23:17 Job 19:8; Job 6:9; 2 Kgs 22:20

22:25 *the Almighty will be your gold* A beautiful line, and true. God is a better treasure than gold (Ps 73:25; Matt 6:19-21). The irony is that Job had already proved it. He lost all his gold in a day and still blessed the LORD's name (1:21).
22:27 *You will pray to Him, and He will hear you* Prayer heard, a clean conscience and light on the path (22:26-28) are real blessings for those who walk with God. But Eliphaz made it a bargain. Faith that turns to God only to get the blessings back is the faith Satan said Job had (1:9-11). True faith seeks God Himself.
22:29 *then He will save the lowly of eyes* The lowly of eyes are the humble, who do not look down on others. God gives grace to the humble (James 4:6).
22:30 *He will deliver one who is not innocent, and he will be delivered by the cleanness of your hands* Eliphaz had no idea how true this would be, or for whom. The LORD's anger burned against him, and He said, "Job My servant shall pray for you" (42:8). Eliphaz was the one not innocent, and he was spared by the prayer of the man he falsely accused. A picture of greater things: we are not innocent, and we are delivered by the cleanness of our Advocate, "Jesus Christ the Righteous One" (1 John 2:1).
23:2 *Even today my complaint is rebellion; my hand is heavy on my groaning* Job answers Eliphaz through chapter 24. After all the speeches nothing has changed. The word for rebellion can also mean bitterness. Job may be pressing down on his groans and still they come, or some read it as God's hand heavy on him. Either way, his pain is deeper than his words.
23:3 *Oh that I knew, and I would find Him; I would come to His place* The cry of Job's heart. He does not want an argument with his friends. He wants God. He would lay out his case like a man before a judge (23:4).
23:5 *I want to know the words with which He would answer me* Job wants to listen as well as speak. The friends talked about God; Job wanted to hear from God. In long trouble, prayer can feel like speaking into an empty room. It is not a sin to long for God to answer. "So my soul pants for You, God" (Ps 42:1). The longing itself is a kind of prayer.
23:6 *Would He contend with me in the greatness of power? No, surely He would pay attention to me* Earlier Job feared being overwhelmed (9:32-35; 13:21). Now he believes God would listen and he would be cleared (23:7). He was right that God is fair and hears an upright man. He was wrong to think he could argue as an equal. When God spoke, Job put his hand over his mouth (40:4).
23:8 *I go forward, and He is not there; and backward, and I do not perceive Him* Forward was east, backward west, left north, right south (23:8-9). Job has looked everywhere. David said there is nowhere to escape God's presence (Ps 139). Both are true. God is everywhere, but there are seasons when we cannot feel Him or see what He is doing. "Truly You are a God who hides Himself" (Isa 45:15).
23:10 *He knows the way with me* The turning point. I cannot find Him, but He knows exactly where I am. When we cannot see God, He still sees us. "The LORD knows the way of the righteous" (Ps 1:6). Hagar called Him "a God of seeing" (Gen 16:13). The Father numbers the hairs of our heads (Matt 10:29-30). We do not have to understand our road for it to be known.
23:10 *He has tested me; like the gold I will come forth* Tested means examined, as a refiner tries metal. Job sees what his friends never did: this is a test, not a sentence. The refiner melts gold, skims off the dross, and what is left is pure. The fire does not destroy gold. It proves it. Job does not say he will come out rich or healthy, but proved and pure. Our faith is "much more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire" (1 Pet 1:7). The LORD sits as a refiner (Mal 3:3), close to the fire, leaving the metal no longer than it needs. Not every trial ends in this life, but those who belong to Him still come forth as gold (2 Cor 4:17). Job did, and God called him "My servant" four times (42:7-8).
23:12 *more than my portion I have treasured up the words of His mouth* His portion is his daily food. Living long before the Law of Moses, Job stored up every word he knew from God like treasure (23:11-12). This is not a claim to be sinless (9:2; 14:4) but an answer to false charges. "Man will not live by bread alone" (Matt 4:4; Jer 15:16). Most of us would never skip food for a week. How many skip God's Word for a week without noticing?
23:13 *He is in one mind, and who will turn Him back* God is unchanging and does what He wills. He works "all things according to the counsel of His will" (Eph 1:11), and He will finish what He planned for Job (23:14). A comfort to believers, but to Job in that moment it was frightening.
23:15 *Therefore I am terrified before Him* Right after one of the strongest statements of faith in the book, Job admits he is terrified. Faith does not always remove fear. He trusts God and fears Him at the same time.
23:17 *I have not been destroyed before darkness* Hard Hebrew. It may mean darkness is not what terrifies him most, God is, or that he is still crying out though gloom covers his face. He has not gone silent or walked away. In the dark he still says, "He knows the way with me." That is faith, even when it trembles.

from my face gloom covers.

JOB 24

Why Does God Delay Judgment?

1 Why are times not stored up by the Almighty, and those who know Him do not see His days? **2** They move back boundaries; they seize flocks and pasture ***them***. **3** They drive away the donkey of the fatherless; they take the ox of the widow as a pledge. **4** They thrust the needy aside from the path; the poor of the earth are made to hide together. **5** Look, ***as*** wild donkeys in the wilderness they go forth to their work, seeking for prey; the desert plain ***is*** food for him, for the children. **6** In the field they harvest his fodder, and they glean the vineyard of the wicked. **7** They spend the night naked, without clothing, and ***there is*** no covering in the cold. **8** They are wet from the rain of the mountains, and for lack of shelter they embrace the rock. **9** They tear away the fatherless from the breast, and on the poor they take pledges. **10** They go about naked, without clothing, and hungry they carry a sheaf. **11** Between their rows they press out oil; they tread winepresses, and they thirst. **12** From the city men groan, and the soul of the wounded cries for help, and God does not charge ***it as*** folly.

Those Who Rebel Against the Light

13 They are among those who rebel against ***the*** light; they do not recognize its ways, and they do not dwell in its paths. **14** At the light the murderer rises; he kills the poor and the needy, and in the night he is like the thief. **15** And the eye of the adulterer watches for twilight, saying, 'No eye will observe me,' and he puts a covering ***on his*** face. **16** In the darkness he digs into houses; by day they seal themselves up; they do not know light. **17** For morning ***is*** deep darkness to them together, for he is acquainted with the terrors of deep darkness. **18** He ***is*** swift on the face of the waters; their portion is cursed in the land; he does not turn ***by*** the way of vineyards. **19** Drought and also heat snatch away the waters of snow; Sheol ***those who*** have sinned. **20** The womb forgets him; the maggot sucks sweetly on him; he is no longer remembered, and injustice is broken like the tree. **21** He feeds on the barren ***woman who*** does not give birth, and he does not do good to the widow. **22** And He draws along the mighty by His power; He rises, and ***one*** does not trust in life. **23** He gives security to him, and he leans ***on it***; and His eyes ***are*** on their ways. **24** They are exalted a little ***while***, and he is not; and they are brought low; like everyone they are gathered up, and like the head of grain they wither. **25** And if not then, who will prove me a liar and make my speech into

24:1 Luke 21:23; Acts 1:7; Eccl 3:17
24:2 Deut 19:14; Deut 27:17; Prov 23:10
24:3 Deut 24:6,10-13,17-21; Job 22:6-9; Job 31:16,17
24:4 Job 24:14; Amos 2:7; Job 31:16
24:5 Job 39:5-7; Jer 2:24; Hos 8:9
24:6 Deut 28:33,51; Judg 6:3-6; Mic 6:15
24:7 Exod 22:26,27; Job 22:6; Deut 24:11-13
24:8 Lam 4:5; Song 5:2; Heb 11:38
24:9 2 Kgs 4:1; Neh 5:5
24:10 Amos 2:7,8; Deut 24:19; Amos 5:11,12
24:11 James 5:4; Deut 25:4; Jer 22:13
24:12 Eccl 4:1; Exod 1:13,14; Exod 2:23,24
24:13 John 3:19,20; Luke 12:47,48; John 9:39-41
24:14 1 Thess 5:2; Rom 13:12; 2 Sam 11:14-17
24:15 Luke 12:3; Rom 13:12; Ps 10:11
24:16 Rom 13:12; John 3:20; Exod 22:2,3
24:17 Rom 13:12; Job 3:5; Ps 73:18,19
24:18 Ps 58:7; Ps 73:18-20; Isa 23:10
24:19 Ps 49:14; Job 6:15-17; Job 21:23,32-34
24:20 Prov 10:7; Dan 4:14; Job 18:16,17
24:21 Job 29:13; 1 Sam 1:6,7; Job 24:3
24:22 Dan 6:4-9; Esth 3:8-10; John 19:12-16
24:23 Prov 15:3; Rev 2:23; Ps 73:3-12
24:24 Ps 37:10,35,36; Job 20:5; Ps 73:19
24:25 Job 9:24; Job 11:2,3; Job 15:2

24:1 *Why are times not stored up by the Almighty, and those who know Him do not see His days* Times and days are set days of judgment. Why does God not fix days of reckoning, so those who love Him can see Him put things right? Job asks about God's timing, not His justice. God's patience gives time to repent (2 Pet 3:9), and He has set a day (Eccl 3:17), when Christ will judge the world (Acts 17:31).
24:2 *They move back boundaries; they seize flocks and pasture them* Boundary stones marked land, and moving one quietly stole a neighbor's field. The Law later forbade it (Deut 19:14).
24:3 *They drive away the donkey of the fatherless; they take the ox of the widow as a pledge* The orphan's one donkey and the widow's one ox. These are the very sins Eliphaz falsely charged to Job (22:6-9). Job agrees they are wicked. His point is that those who really do them often go unpunished, while the poor hide (24:4).
24:5 *as wild donkeys in the wilderness they go forth to their work* The poor scrape food from the wasteland for their children and glean the rich man's vineyard (24:6).
24:8 *for lack of shelter they embrace the rock* No clothes against the cold (24:7), no home, huddled against the rocks in the mountain rain. This is the man who was "a father to the needy" (29:16). God's Word sees the homeless man shivering by the rock.
24:9 *They tear away the fatherless from the breast* Probably to sell the child as a slave for a debt.
24:10 *hungry they carry a sheaf* The poor carry grain and go hungry, tread winepresses and thirst (24:11), surrounded by food and drink that is not theirs.
24:12 *God does not charge it as folly* The hardest line in the chapter. The dying groan and the wounded cry out, and God does not seem to step in. Job does not soften it, and neither should we. But God does hear: of the mistreated widow and orphan He said, "I will surely hear his cry" (Exod 22:23), and the cries of cheated workers "have entered into the ears of the Lord of armies" (James 5:4). He does not always act when we want, but He has not stopped listening, and He will judge.
24:13 *those who rebel against the light* People who hate the light because it exposes them: the murderer before dawn, the thief at night (24:14).
24:15 *the eye of the adulterer watches for twilight, saying, No eye will observe me* He hides his face at dusk (Prov 7:9). Thieves dig through mud-brick walls at night and hide by day (24:16), and morning is what they dread (24:17). "Men loved the darkness rather than the Light; for their works were evil" (John 3:19). Sin loves to hide, but no creature is hidden from God (Heb 4:13).
24:18 *He is swift on the face of the waters; their portion is cursed in the land* Verses 18-24 sound like the friends: the wicked are quickly cut off, snatched away by Sheol as heat dries up snow (24:19), forgotten even by the womb (24:20). How do we read them? Some believe Job quotes his friends, since Hebrew had no quotation marks. Some think the verses were displaced from a friend's speech. Others, taking the text as Job's own words, say he believes God will judge the wicked in the end, only not as quickly as the friends claim. Read as it stands, that fits best.
24:23 *He gives security to him, and he leans on it; and His eyes are on their ways* God may let the wicked feel safe for a time, but His patience is not blindness. Asaph learned it: "Surely You set them on slippery places" (Ps 73:18).
24:24 *They are exalted a little while, and he is not* The key to how Job sees the wicked. They are not always cut off early. They often rise high, but only a little while, and then they are cut like heads of grain. God's slow judgment is mercy giving time to turn: "the kindness of God leads you to repentance" (Rom 2:4).
24:25 *who will prove me a liar* Prove me wrong, Job says. No one could, because everyone has seen it. Bildad's six verses in the next chapter do not touch what Job said. Sometimes the most faithful thing a believer can do is tell the truth about what he sees, bring it to God, and refuse easy answers.

nothing?"

JOB 25

Bildad's Third Speech

1 And Bildad the Shuhite answered and said, **2** "Dominion and dread ***are*** with Him; He makes peace in His heights. **3** Is there a number to His troops? And on whom does His light not rise? **4** And how can man be righteous with God? And how can one born of a woman be pure? **5** Look, even to the moon, and it does not shine, and the stars are not pure in His eyes; **6** how much less man, a maggot, and a son of man, a worm!"

JOB 26

Job Answers: The Greatness of God

1 And Job (Iyov) answered and said, **2** "How you have helped ***him who has*** no power! ***How*** you have saved the arm ***that has*** no strength! **3** How you have counseled ***him who has*** no wisdom, and made known sound wisdom in abundance! **4** With whom have you declared words? And whose breath has gone out from you? **5** The shades are made to tremble beneath the waters, and those who dwell in them. **6** Sheol ***is*** naked before Him, and ***there is*** no covering for Abaddon. **7** He stretches out the north over formlessness; He hangs the earth on nothing. **8** He binds up waters in His clouds, and the cloud is not split open under them. **9** He encloses the face of the throne; He spreads His cloud over it. **10** He has drawn a circle, a limit, on the face of the waters, to the end of light with darkness. **11** The pillars of ***the*** heavens tremble, and they are astonished at His rebuke. **12** By His power He stirred up the sea, and by His understanding He shattered Rahab (Rahav). **13** By His breath the heavens ***are*** clearness; His hand pierced

25:2 Col 1:20; Eph 1:20; 2 Cor 5:21
25:3 James 1:17; Matt 5:45; Ps 103:20,21
25:4 Rom 3:10; Job 4:17-19; Job 9:2
25:5 Isa 60:19,20; Isa 24:23; 2 Cor 3:10
25:6 Heb 2:6; Ps 22:6; Isa 41:14
26:2 Job 12:2; 1 Kgs 18:27; Job 4:3,4
26:3 Job 6:13; Job 12:3; Job 13:5
26:4 1 Kgs 22:23,24; Job 20:3; Job 32:18
26:5 Gen 6:4; Job 41:1-34; Ps 104:25,26
26:6 Heb 4:13; Ps 139:8,11; Prov 15:11
26:7 Job 9:8; Gen 1:1,2; Ps 104:2-5
26:8 Prov 30:4; Jer 10:13; Isa 5:6
26:9 Ps 97:2; Exod 20:21; Exod 33:20-23
26:10 Job 38:8-11; Prov 8:29; Ps 33:7
26:11 1 Sam 2:8; Ps 18:7; Hag 2:21
26:12 Isa 51:15; Jer 31:35; Ps 89:9,10
26:13 Rev 12:9; Isa 27:1; Gen 1:2

25:1 *Bildad the Shuhite answered and said* His third speech, and very short. Zophar, who should come next, never speaks. Scripture does not say why. Most likely the friends had nothing left. Their one idea, that suffering always comes from sin, had been answered every time. Some teachers think parts of chapters 26 and 27 were first spoken by Bildad or Zophar and the order was mixed up long ago, but no ancient copy has a different order. I take the text as it stands. The silence of Zophar is part of the story: the friends' case has run dry.

25:2 *Dominion and dread are with Him; He makes peace in His heights* God rules all, and in heaven all is order under His command. Some think Bildad means God putting down rebellion in the heavens.

25:3 *Is there a number to His troops? And on whom does His light not rise* God's armies of angels and stars cannot be counted (Isa 40:26), and His sun rises on the evil and the good (Matt 5:45). True and beautiful, but Job had said it more fully (9:4-10; 12:13-25). Bildad tells Job what he already knows.

25:4 *how can man be righteous with God* The question asked again and again (4:17; 9:2; 15:14). True and important. All have sinned (Rom 3:23), and Job never claimed to be sinless, only innocent of their charges. Bildad gives no answer and only makes man feel small. The gospel answers it: "being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom 3:24). God has made a way, through the Redeemer Job longed for (19:25). Job, like Abraham, was right with God by faith, offering sacrifices for sin (1:5).

25:5 *the stars are not pure in His eyes* Beside God's glory even the moon seems dark (4:18; 15:15).

25:6 *How much less man, a maggot, and a son of man, a worm* True in one sense; David said, "I am a worm and not a man" (Ps 22:6). When God calls His people "worm of Jacob" (Isa 41:14), He adds at once that He will help them. Bildad stops at the worm, and says it to a man with worms in his sores (7:5) who had called the maggot his mother (17:14). That is one more blow, not comfort. True humility before God's greatness (Isa 6:5; 42:6) always leads to grace, not despair. Never stop at telling hurting people they are small. Go on to say that God is near and helps the small.

26:2 *How you have helped him who has no power* Job answers Bildad, a reply that runs through chapter 31 with new starts at 27:1 and 29:1. This is bitter irony. Bildad had not helped at all, and his six verses gave Job only what he knew (26:3).

26:4 *whose breath has gone out from you* Whose spirit speaks through you, God's or your own? Eliphaz claimed a spirit spoke to him (4:15-16). A fair question for anyone who claims to speak for God. Is it God's Word, or our opinion with His name on it?

26:5 *The shades are made to tremble beneath the waters* Job goes deeper than Bildad, beginning with the depths. The shades are the spirits of the dead, pictured below the earth and seas. Even they tremble before God.

26:6 *Sheol is naked before Him, and there is no covering for Abaddon* Abaddon means destruction, another name for the place of the dead (Prov 15:11; Rev 9:11). Job had longed for death and wondered what lay beyond (3:13-19; 14:13-14). Here he says the world of the dead is not outside God's rule. Death does not take us out of God's sight. For the believer it takes us into His presence (2 Cor 5:8).

26:7 *He hangs the earth on nothing* Formlessness is tohu, the same word as in "the earth was formlessness and emptiness" (Gen 1:2). The north may be the northern sky or the far north. Many ancient peoples thought the earth rested on pillars or a great animal. Job says it hangs on nothing. We should not make Job a modern scientist, since he speaks in poetry of God's power. But his words fit what we now know. And we know who holds it: "in Him all things hold together" (Col 1:17; Heb 1:3).

26:8 *He binds up waters in His clouds, and the cloud is not split open under them* A cloud holds tons of water and floats without bursting. Job sees God's hand in it, like water wrapped in a skin bottle.

26:9 *He encloses the face of the throne* God hides His throne behind clouds. We cannot see Him, but He is there. The Hebrew words for throne and full moon are very close, and many versions read it as God veiling the full moon. Either way, God controls what we see in the sky.

26:10 *He has drawn a circle, a limit, on the face of the waters* From the shore the horizon looks like a circle where sea meets sky and light meets darkness. God set the sea its limit (Prov 8:29), as He will tell Job from the storm (38:8-11).

26:12 *by His understanding He shattered Rahab* The pillars of heaven are probably the great mountains, shaking at His rebuke (26:11). The sea often stands for chaos. Rahab is a name for a proud power of the sea, and also for Egypt (Ps 87:4; 89:10).

26:13 *His hand pierced the fleeing serpent* Isaiah uses the same words: "Leviathan the fleeing serpent" (Isa 27:1), whom the LORD will slay. The nations told myths of gods fighting sea monsters, and some scholars think the Bible borrowed them. I do not believe the Bible teaches those myths. It uses pictures people knew to say the true God has no rivals. Sea, storm and every proud power, in nature, among nations or in the spiritual world, are under His hand. He does not struggle to win. Many teachers also see Satan, "the ancient serpent" (Rev 12:9), whom God will finally crush.

the fleeing serpent. **14** Look, these ***are*** the ends of His ways, and what a whisper of a word we hear of Him! And the thunder of His mighty deeds, who will understand?"

JOB 27

Job Holds Fast to His Integrity

1 And Job (Iyov) again took up his discourse and said, **2** "***As*** God lives, ***who*** has taken away my right, and the Almighty, ***who*** has made my soul bitter, **3** for all the while my breath ***is*** in me, and the spirit of God ***is*** in my nostrils, **4** my lips will not speak injustice, and my tongue will not utter deceit. **5** Far be it from me that I should declare you right; until I expire I will not put away my integrity from me. **6** I have held fast to my righteousness, and I will not let it go; my heart will not reproach ***me*** for any of my days. **7** Let my enemy be like the wicked, and the one who rises up against me like the unjust. **8** For what ***is*** the hope of the godless when He cuts ***him*** off, when God takes away his life? **9** Will God hear his cry when distress comes on him? **10** Or will he take delight in the Almighty? Will he call on God at all times? **11** I will instruct you in the hand of God; what ***is*** with the Almighty I will not hide. **12** Look, you, all of you, have seen ***it***; and why ***is*** this, ***that*** you become vain ***with*** vanity?

The Portion of the Wicked

13 This ***is*** the portion of a wicked man with God, and the inheritance of ruthless ***men***, ***which*** they receive from the Almighty. **14** If his sons multiply, ***it is*** for the sword, and his descendants will not be satisfied ***with*** bread. **15** His survivors will be buried by death, and his widows will not weep. **16** Though he heaps up silver like the dust, and prepares clothing like the clay, **17** he may prepare ***it***, and the righteous will wear ***it***, and the innocent will divide the silver. **18** He has built his house like the moth, and like a booth ***that*** a watchman has made. **19** He lies down rich, and he will not be gathered; he opens his eyes, and he is not. **20** Terrors overtake him like the waters; at night a storm-wind steals him away. **21** An east wind lifts him up, and he goes, and it whirls him away from his place. **22** And it throws ***itself*** at him and does not spare; from its hand he surely flees. **23** ***One*** claps their hands at him, and hisses at him from his place.

26:14 Job 11:7-9; Ps 139:6; Ps 145:3
27:1 Num 23:7; Num 24:3,15; Ps 49:4
27:2 Acts 8:33; Job 34:5; Num 14:21
27:3 Gen 2:7; Isa 2:22; Acts 17:25
27:4 Job 13:7; Job 34:6; John 8:55
27:5 Job 2:9; Job 13:15; Job 32:3
27:6 Job 2:3; Acts 24:16; Ps 18:20-23
27:7 1 Sam 25:26; 2 Sam 18:32; Dan 4:19
27:8 Matt 16:26; Job 11:20; Luke 12:20,21
27:9 Prov 1:28; Isa 1:15; Jer 14:12
27:10 Job 22:26,27; Ps 37:4; Ps 43:4
27:11 Job 6:10; Job 4:3,4; Isa 8:11
27:12 Job 21:28-30; Eccl 8:14; Eccl 9:1-3
27:13 Job 20:19-29; Job 31:3; Ps 11:6
27:14 Luke 23:29; Job 21:11,12; Deut 28:32,41
27:15 Ps 78:64; 1 Kgs 14:10,11; 1 Kgs 16:3,4
27:16 Zech 9:3; Job 22:24; 1 Kgs 10:27
27:17 Prov 13:22; Eccl 2:26; Prov 28:8
27:18 Job 8:14,15; Isa 1:8; Isa 51:8
27:19 Jer 8:2; Job 24:24; Job 21:23-26,30
27:20 Job 15:21; Job 18:11; Job 22:16
27:21 Jer 18:17; Hos 13:15; Exod 9:23-25
27:22 Exod 9:14; Deut 32:23; Josh 10:11
27:23 Lam 2:15; Zeph 2:15; Esth 9:22-25

26:14 *these are the ends of His ways, and what a whisper of a word we hear of Him* One of the great verses in Job. All that wonder is only the edges, the hem of His garment, a whisper. Who could understand His thunder? Bildad thought he could sum God up in six verses. No one can. We often make God a slightly bigger version of ourselves (Rom 11:33). Yet this God speaks. Job will hear Him from the storm, and God has spoken to us most clearly "in a Son" (Heb 1:2).
27:1 *Job again took up his discourse* Discourse is mashal, a proverb or formal speech. Zophar's turn has passed in silence, so Job makes a solemn statement. The same phrase opens his final defense (29:1).
27:2 *As God lives, who has taken away my right* The strongest form of oath. Job swears by the very God he feels has wronged him and made him bitter. He has not turned to any other god or given up on the living God. His breath is God's gift (27:3; Gen 2:7).
27:4 *My lips will not speak injustice, and my tongue will not utter deceit* The lie the friends wanted was a confession of sins he had not committed. Some think the humble thing is to admit to anything to keep the peace. False confession is not humility. It is lying. Job would rather suffer than lie.
27:5 *until I expire I will not put away my integrity from me* Integrity is the key word of the book. God said Job held fast to it (2:3); his wife said let it go (2:9). Now Job says it himself. Satan said his faith would break. It bent and cried out, but did not break.
27:6 *my heart will not reproach me for any of my days* Not a claim to be sinless (1:5; 14:4), but a clear conscience about their charges. A good conscience does not stop accusers but lets us stand firm (1 Pet 3:16). Yet there was a danger in it. Elihu was angry that Job "justified himself more than God" (32:2), and the LORD will ask, "Will you condemn Me so that you may be justified?" (40:8). Job was right not to confess false sins, but in defending himself he came close to accusing God. That is where he will repent (42:6).
27:7 *Let my enemy be like the wicked* Let my false accusers be treated as wicked. A false accuser deserved the punishment of the crime he charged (Deut 19:16-19).
27:8 *what is the hope of the godless when He cuts him off* The godless are hypocrites with no hope in death (8:13).
27:10 *Will he call on God at all times* The godless man prays only in trouble and takes no delight in God (27:9-10). Job has cried out to God the whole book, even angrily, talking to God and not about Him behind His back. His constant prayer is evidence he is not godless. Satan said he would curse God. He never stopped calling on Him.
27:12 *why is this, that you become vain with vanity* Now Job will teach them (27:11). You have all seen God's ways, so why fill your speeches with empty breath?
27:13 *This is the portion of a wicked man with God* Close to Zophar's words (20:29). As in chapter 24, teachers read 27:13-23 differently. Some think it is Zophar's missing third speech, misplaced long ago. Others think Job repeats the friends' view to show he knows it. Taking the text as it stands, these are Job's own words. He never said the wicked escape God, only that they often prosper long. The difference between Job and his friends was never whether God judges the wicked. It was whether every sufferer is wicked.
27:15 *His survivors will be buried by death* Plague was often called death. His children fall to sword and hunger (27:14), and his widows do not weep.
27:17 *the righteous will wear it, and the innocent will divide the silver* Wealth piled up like dust goes to others: "the wealth of a sinner is stored up for the righteous" (Prov 13:22).
27:18 *He has built his house like the moth, and like a booth that a watchman has made* A cocoon is fragile, and a watchman's booth was a rough shelter of branches left to fall apart after harvest.
27:19 *He lies down rich, and he will not be gathered* He goes to bed rich and wakes to find it gone, or he himself is gone, with no honored burial. "Fool! This night they are demanding your soul from you" (Luke 12:20). Wealth without God does not last the night.
27:21 *An east wind lifts him up, and he goes* Terror like a flash flood (27:20), the hot desert wind sweeping him from his place.
27:23 *One claps their hands at him, and hisses at him from his place* Signs of scorn (Lam 2:15). A great wind had struck the house where Job's children died (1:19). He knew what a storm could do, yet he does not say it proves he was wicked. The wicked will face God's storm in the end, and Job is not wicked. Both are true, and the friends could only hold one. The only shelter from that storm is Christ, who took God's judgment on Himself for all who trust Him (Rom 5:9).

JOB 28

Treasures Mined From the Earth

1 For there is a mine for the silver, and a place for the gold ***which*** they refine. **2** Iron is taken from ***the*** dust, and stone is poured out ***as*** copper. **3** He puts an end to the darkness, and to every outermost limit he is searching out the stone of gloom and deep darkness. **4** He breaks open a shaft away from ***where*** the sojourner ***is***; the ones forgotten by ***the*** foot, they hang down, away from mortals they swing. **5** The earth, from it comes forth bread, and under it is turned over like fire. **6** Its stones ***are*** a place of sapphire, and dusts of gold ***belong*** to it. **7** A path ***which*** the bird of prey does not know, and the eye of the falcon has not caught sight of it. **8** The sons of pride have not trodden it; the fierce lion has not passed over it. **9** He stretches out his hand on the flint; he overturns mountains from ***the*** root. **10** He splits open channels in the rocks, and his eye sees every precious thing. **11** He binds up rivers from weeping, and the hidden thing he brings out to light.

Where Can Wisdom Be Found?

12 And the wisdom, from where will it be found? And where ***is*** this, the place of understanding? **13** A mortal does not know its value, and it is not found in the land of the living. **14** The deep says, 'It ***is*** not in me,' and the sea says, 'It ***is*** not with me.' **15** Fine gold will not be given in its place, and silver will not be weighed out ***as*** its price. **16** It will not be valued with the gold of Ophir (Ofir), with precious onyx and sapphire. **17** Gold and glass will not compare with it, and its exchange ***is not*** a vessel of pure gold. **18** Corals and crystal will not be mentioned, and the price of wisdom ***is*** above pearls. **19** The topaz of Cush (Kush) will not compare with it; it will not be valued with pure gold. **20** And the wisdom, from where does it come? And where ***is*** this, the place of understanding? **21** And it has been concealed from the eyes of every living ***thing***, and from the birds of the heavens it has been hidden. **22** Abaddon and death say, 'With our ears we have heard a report of it.'

God Knows the Way to Wisdom

23 God understands its way, and He knows its place. **24** For He looks to the ends of the earth; He sees under all the heavens, **25** to make a weight for the wind, and He has measured out the waters by measure. **26** When He made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunders, **27** then He saw it and recounted it; He established it, and also He searched it out. **28** And He said to mankind, 'Look, the fear of the Lord, that ***is*** wisdom, and to turn aside from evil ***is***

28:1 Gen 2:11,12; Gen 23:15; Gen 24:22
28:2 Deut 8:9; Gen 4:22; Num 31:22
28:3 Eccl 1:13; Prov 2:4; Hab 2:13
28:5 Gen 1:11,12,29; Ps 104:14,15; Isa 28:25-29
28:6 Job 28:16; Exod 24:10; Song 5:14
28:7 Job 28:21-23; Job 11:6; Job 38:19,24
28:9 Nah 1:4-6
28:10 Prov 14:23; Prov 24:4; Hab 3:9
28:11 Job 26:8; Isa 37:25; Isa 44:27
28:12 1 Cor 1:20; Job 28:20,28; James 1:5,17
28:13 Job 28:15-19; Ps 19:10; Ps 119:72
28:14 Rom 11:33,34
28:15 Prov 16:16; Prov 3:13-15; Prov 8:10,17,19
28:16 Ps 45:9; Isa 13:12; 1 Chr 29:4
28:17 Ezek 1:22; Rev 4:6; Rev 21:11
28:18 Prov 3:15; Ezek 27:16; Prov 31:10
28:19 Exod 28:17; Exod 39:10; Ezek 28:13
28:20 Job 28:12; James 1:5,17; Prov 2:6
28:21 1 Cor 2:9; Ps 49:3,4; Matt 11:25
28:22 Job 28:14; Ps 83:10-12
28:23 Luke 10:21; Ps 19:7; Ps 147:5
28:24 Prov 15:3; Zech 4:10; 2 Chr 16:9
28:25 Ps 135:7; Isa 40:12
28:26 Job 38:25; Job 37:3; Job 36:26,32
28:27 Ps 19:1; Prov 8:22-29
28:28 Acts 9:31; Eph 5:17; Prov 1:7

28:1 *there is a mine for the silver, and a place for the gold which they refine* Who speaks? Nothing marks a new speaker, so it reads naturally as Job continuing from 27:1. But its tone is so different that many teachers see a poem from the book's author, stepping back to sum up the debate. Either way, its message is clear. It begins with mining.

28:2 *Iron is taken from the dust, and stone is poured out as copper* Copper ore was melted until the metal poured out. Sinai and the Arabah had copper mines worked long before Moses.

28:3 *He puts an end to the darkness* The miner carries his lamp into the earth to the farthest limits of the dark. Shafts far from travelers, men let down on ropes, swinging in the dark (28:4). People will go to great lengths and great danger for something valuable.

28:5 *The earth, from it comes forth bread, and under it is turned over like fire* Farmers grow bread on top, and below miners turn the earth over, perhaps with fire to crack the rock. The sapphire of 28:6 may be lapis lazuli, often flecked with gold.

28:7 *A path which the bird of prey does not know, and the eye of the falcon has not caught sight of it* The sharpest eyes in creation have never seen those tunnels, and no lion has walked them (28:8). Man goes where no animal can.

28:11 *the hidden thing he brings out to light* He tunnels through flint, brings down mountains, dams underground streams, and brings hidden treasure to light (28:9-11). Man is amazing. Men have walked on the moon, split the atom and mapped the body. But the next verse asks what all our skill cannot answer.

28:12 *the wisdom, from where will it be found* The question of the chapter and the whole book. Wisdom in the Bible is more than facts. It is the skill of living rightly, seeing life as God sees it. Job and his friends have argued about it for twenty-four chapters, each sure he had it. Man does not know its worth, and neither the deep nor the sea holds it (28:13-14).

28:15 *silver will not be weighed out as its price* There were no coins; silver was weighed on scales. Gold of Ophir, onyx, sapphire, costly glass, coral, pearls, topaz of Cush (28:16-19): none compares (Prov 8:11; 16:16). Job had been one of the richest men in the east and lost it all. He never lost what matters most, because wisdom was never something gold could buy.

28:20 *the wisdom, from where does it come* The refrain returns (28:12). No living thing sees it, and death has only heard a rumor (28:21-22). Wisdom is not found by dying either.

28:23 *God understands its way, and He knows its place* The answer. Only God knows where wisdom is, for He sees under all the heavens (28:24). The miner sees every precious thing in his tunnel (28:10); God sees every corner of the universe. If we are to have wisdom it must come from Him: "let him ask from God, who gives to all generously" (James 1:5).

28:26 *When He made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunders* God weighed the wind and measured the waters (28:25). The world runs by His decrees.

28:27 *Then He saw it and recounted it; He established it* Wisdom was with God at creation, built into how He made the world (Prov 8:27-31). It is fully revealed in Christ, "the wisdom of God" (1 Cor 1:24), in whom "all the treasures of wisdom and of knowledge are hidden" (Col 2:3). What no miner could dig up or rich man buy has come to us in a Person.

28:28 *the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to turn aside from evil is understanding* The climax of the chapter and a key verse of the book. Man cannot search out all of God's wisdom, but God has told us what wisdom is for us (Deut 29:29). Lord here is Adonai, Master, its only use for God in Job. The fear of the Lord is not cringing terror but reverent awe that honors, trusts and obeys Him (Prov 1:7; Ps 111:10; Eccl 12:13), and it shows in turning from evil (Prov 3:7). These are the very words used of Job (1:1, 8; 2:3). By God's own definition, Job was wise. The friends thought wisdom meant an explanation for everything, and they were wrong. Job had no explanation, and God called him wise. Wisdom is not having all the answers. It is fearing God when you do not have them.

understanding.'"

JOB 29

Job Remembers His Former Days

1 And Job (Iyov) again took up his discourse and said, **2** "Who will make me like the months of long ago, like the days ***when*** God watched over me, **3** when He made His lamp shine over my head, ***and*** by His light I walked ***through*** darkness; **4** just as I was in the days of my prime, when the intimate counsel of God ***was*** over my tent; **5** when the Almighty ***was*** still with me, ***and*** my lads ***were*** around me; **6** when my steps were bathed in curds, and the rock beside me poured out streams of oil;

Honored at the City Gate

7 when I went out ***to*** the gate by the town, ***and*** in the public square I prepared my seat! **8** The young men saw me and hid themselves, and the aged rose ***and*** stood. **9** Princes held back words, and they laid a hand on their mouth. **10** The voice of nobles was hidden, and their tongue stuck to their palate. **11** For an ear heard, and it called me blessed; and an eye saw, and it bore witness to me, **12** that I rescued the afflicted who cried for help, and the fatherless and ***him who had*** no helper. **13** The blessing of one about to perish came on me, and I made the heart of a widow sing for joy. **14** I put on righteousness, and it clothed me; my justice ***was*** like a robe and a turban. **15** I was eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame ***was*** I. **16** I ***was*** a father to the needy, and the case ***of one whom*** I did not know, I investigated it. **17** And I broke the jaws of the unrighteous, and from his teeth I threw out the prey.

Job's Former Hopes

18 And I said, 'With my nest I will expire, and like the sand I will multiply days. **19** My root ***is*** opened to ***the*** waters, and ***the*** dew will lodge on my branches. **20** My glory ***is*** new with me, and my bow in my hand will be renewed.' **21** To me they listened, and they waited, and they were silent for my counsel. **22** After my word they did not speak again, and my speech dropped on them. **23** And they waited for me like the rain, and they opened their mouth wide for ***the*** spring rain. **24** I laughed to them, ***when*** they did not believe, and the light of my face they did not cast down. **25** I chose their way, and I sat ***as*** chief, and I dwelt like a king among the troops, as ***one who*** comforts mourners.

JOB 30

Job Mocked by the Lowest of Men

1 And now they have laughed at me, those younger than I in days, whose fathers I rejected to put with the dogs of my flock. **2** Also the strength of their hands, why ***is it*** to me? On

29:1 Job 27:1
29:2 Job 1:1-5; Job 1:10; Ps 37:28
29:3 Ps 18:28; Job 18:6; John 8:12
29:4 Ps 25:14; Prov 3:32; Job 1:10
29:5 Ps 128:3; Ps 127:3-5; Deut 33:27-29
29:6 Ps 81:16; Job 20:17; Gen 49:11
29:7 Deut 16:18; Ruth 4:1,2,11; Zech 8:16
29:8 Lev 19:32; Prov 16:31; Titus 3:1
29:9 Job 21:5; Prov 10:19; James 1:19
29:10 Ps 137:6; Ezek 3:26
29:11 Luke 11:27; Luke 4:22; Job 31:20
29:12 Ps 72:12; Prov 21:13; Exod 22:22-24
29:13 2 Tim 1:16-18; Job 31:19; Isa 27:13
29:14 Ps 132:9; Isa 59:17; Isa 61:10
29:15 Num 10:31; Matt 11:5; 1 Cor 12:12-31
29:16 Prov 29:7; Job 31:18; Esth 2:7
29:17 Ps 3:7; Prov 30:14; Ps 58:8
29:18 Ps 30:6,7; Job 5:26; Job 42:16,17
29:19 Ps 1:3; Jer 17:8; Job 18:16
29:20 Gen 49:24; Isa 40:31; Gen 45:13
29:21 Job 29:9,10; Job 32:11,12
29:22 Deut 32:2; Isa 52:15; Matt 22:46
29:23 Zech 10:1; Ps 72:6; Hos 6:3
29:24 Ps 126:1; Ps 4:6; Ps 89:15
29:25 Gen 41:40; Judg 11:8; Gen 14:14-17
30:1 Job 19:13-19; Job 29:8-10; 2 Kgs 2:23

29:2 *like the days when God watched over me* Job's closing statement begins (29:1). His first longing is not for wealth but for God's nearness, the hedge Satan spoke of (1:10). Now he feels it is gone.
29:3 *When He made His lamp shine over my head, and by His light I walked through darkness* God's favor lit his way through the dark. "The LORD my God illumines my darkness" (Ps 18:28).
29:4 *when the intimate counsel of God was over my tent* God's close friendship, the word of Ps 25:14. Job felt God was a friend in his home.
29:5 *my lads were around me* His children. One of the most painful lines in the book. Anyone who has lost a child or spouse knows how sharp such a memory can be. Curds and streams of oil picture rich blessing (29:6). It is not a sin to remember with longing (Ps 42:4), though we should not get stuck asking why the former days were better (Eccl 7:10). Job will move forward, but only after God meets him.
29:7 *When I went out to the gate by the town* The elders judged at the city gate (Ruth 4:1-2). Young men stepped back, old men stood, princes fell silent (29:8-10). Now little boys mock him (19:18). Job is not boasting. He shows how far he has fallen.
29:12 *I rescued the afflicted who cried for help, and the fatherless and him who had no helper* Here is why people blessed him (29:11). He did not take from the poor, as Eliphaz claimed (22:6-9). He rescued them.
29:13 *I made the heart of a widow sing for joy* Eliphaz said he sent widows away empty (22:9). Job made them sing. "Religion pure and undefiled" (James 1:27) is to visit orphans and widows in their trouble.
29:14 *I put on righteousness, and it clothed me* He wore righteousness like clothing, and his justice was the robe and turban of a judge, his badge of office.
29:15 *I was eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame was I* Whatever someone lacked, Job tried to supply.
29:16 *the case of one whom I did not know, I investigated it* A father to the needy, and careful about strangers who could do nothing for him.
29:17 *I broke the jaws of the unrighteous, and from his teeth I threw out the prey* Real love for the weak sometimes means confronting the strong. Jesus did this perfectly, anointed to preach good news to the poor and free the oppressed (Luke 4:18), and what we do for the least of His brothers we do for Him (Matt 25:40).
29:18 *With my nest I will expire, and like the sand I will multiply days* He expected to die at home, with family, after days as many as the sand. Some versions read phoenix, a legendary bird, since the Hebrew word can mean that, but the SLB reads sand, which fits the many verses using sand for number.
29:19 *My root is opened to the waters* Like the righteous man of Psalm 1:3. Job had come to assume the good would last, perhaps thinking, like his friends, that righteousness always brings a peaceful old age. His suffering shattered it. Hope is not in riches but "in the living God" (1 Tim 6:17).
29:23 *they opened their mouth wide for the spring rain* People longed for Job's counsel as farmers long for spring rain. His friends would not listen to him at all.
29:25 *as one who comforts mourners* When people lost heart he smiled on them (29:24), and he led like a king among troops. Job had been the comforter. Now he is the mourner, and no one comforts him. His greatness was not his money but his compassion. God "comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those in every affliction" (2 Cor 1:4). If God has comforted you, you have something to give.
30:1 *And now they have laughed at me, those younger than I in days* "And now" turns from chapter 29. Young men once stepped aside for him (29:8). Job's words about their fathers sound harsh, but he is not looking down on the poor, whom he cared for (29:12-16). These were men known to be worthless and untrustworthy. The point is how far he has fallen.

them vigor has perished. **3** In poverty and in hunger ***they are*** barren, the ones who gnaw the dry region, the yesterday of ruin and desolation, **4** the ones who pluck mallow among ***the*** bushes, and the root of broom plants ***is*** their food. **5** From ***the*** community they are driven away; they shout over them as ***over*** the thief, **6** to dwell on the slope of wadis, ***in*** holes of ***the*** ground and ***in*** rocks. **7** Between bushes they bray; under nettles they are joined together. **8** Sons of a fool, also sons without a name, they have been scourged from the land. **9** And now I have become their taunt song, and I have become a byword to them. **10** They abhor me; they are distant from me, and from my face they have not withheld spittle. **11** For He has loosened my cord and afflicted me, and they have sent away the halter from before me. **12** On ***my*** right a brood arises; they have sent away my feet, and they have piled up against me the paths of their disaster. **13** They have torn down my pathway; they promote my destruction; ***there is*** no helper for them. **14** Like a wide breach they come; under the devastation they have rolled themselves ***in***. **15** Sudden terrors have been turned on me; it pursues my dignity like the wind, and my salvation has passed away like a cloud.

Job's Present Pain

16 And now my soul pours itself out on me; days of affliction seize me. **17** Night has pierced my bones from on me, and my gnawing ***pains*** do not lie down. **18** By ***the*** greatness of strength my clothing disguises itself; like the mouth of my tunic it girds me. **19** He has thrown me into the mud, and I have become like dust and ashes. **20** I cry for help to You, and You do not answer me; I have stood, and You consider me. **21** You have changed Yourself into ***one*** cruel to me; with the might of Your hand You are hostile to me. **22** You lift me up to the wind; You make me ride, and You dissolve me ***and my*** sound wisdom. **23** For I know ***that*** You will bring me back ***to*** death, and ***to*** the house of appointed meeting for every living ***thing***. **24** Surely against a heap of ruins one does not stretch out a hand, if in his disaster ***there is*** a cry for help to them. **25** Did I not weep for ***the one who was*** hard of day? Was my soul ***not*** grieved for the needy? **26** For I waited for good, and evil came; and I waited for light, and darkness came. **27** My inward parts have been made to boil, and they have not been still; days of affliction have confronted me.

28 Darkened I have gone about, without ***the*** sun; I have stood up in the assembly; I cry for help. **29** I have become a brother to jackals, and a companion to daughters of the ostrich. **30** My skin has become black from on me, and my bone has burned from heat. **31** And my lyre has become mourning,

30:3 Job 24:5; Job 24:13-16; Heb 11:38
30:4 2 Kgs 4:38,39; Amos 7:14; Luke 15:16
30:5 Dan 4:25,32,33; Gen 4:12-14; Ps 109:10
30:6 Judg 6:2; 1 Sam 22:1,2; Isa 2:19
30:7 Job 6:5; Job 11:12; Gen 16:12
30:8 2 Kgs 8:18,27; 2 Chr 22:3; Ps 49:10-13
30:9 Job 17:6; Lam 3:14,63; Ps 35:15,16
30:10 Isa 50:6; Matt 26:67; Ps 88:8
30:11 Job 12:18,21; 2 Sam 16:5-8; Ps 35:21
30:12 Job 19:12; Job 19:18; Isa 3:5
30:13 Ps 69:26; Zech 1:15
30:14 Job 22:16; Ps 18:4; Ps 69:14,15
30:15 Hos 13:3; Job 6:4; Isa 44:22
30:16 Ps 22:14; Ps 42:4; Isa 53:12
30:17 Job 33:19-21; Isa 38:13; Ps 6:2-6
30:18 Job 2:7; Job 7:5; Job 19:20
30:19 Job 9:31; Job 42:6; Gen 18:27
30:20 Job 19:7; Job 27:9; Ps 22:2
30:21 Job 10:14-17; Job 16:9-14; Job 7:20,21
30:22 Job 21:18; Ps 1:4; Isa 17:13
30:23 Gen 3:19; Eccl 12:5-7; Job 14:5
30:24 Judg 5:31; Ps 35:25; Matt 27:39-44
30:25 Ps 35:13,14; Rom 12:15; Jer 13:17
30:26 Jer 8:15; Job 3:25,26; Jer 14:19
30:27 Lam 2:11; Ps 22:4; Jer 4:19
30:28 Ps 42:9; Ps 43:2; Ps 38:6
30:29 Mic 1:8; Ps 102:6; Job 17:14
30:30 Ps 102:3; Lam 4:8; Ps 119:83
30:31 James 4:9; Lam 5:15; Ps 137:1-4

30:4 *the root of broom plants is their food* Mallow is a salty desert plant and broom root is bitter, food only for the most desperate. They were driven out of town like thieves, lived in holes in dry streambeds, and brayed among the bushes like wild donkeys (30:2-8). Even the outcasts of the outcasts now look down on Job.

30:9 *now I have become their taunt song* They make mocking songs about him, keep away, and spit in his face (30:10), one of the worst insults in that culture.

30:11 *He has loosened my cord and afflicted me* Perhaps the cord of his tent or the string of his bow. Because God has brought him low, these men have thrown off all restraint, like a horse with no bridle. Think of Jesus, "despised and rejected by men" (Isa 53:3), who did not hide His face from spitting (Isa 50:6; Matt 27:30). The difference is that Jesus endured it willingly, for us.

30:12 *On my right a brood arises* The right hand was the place of an accuser in court. The rabble is pictured as an army tripping his feet, building siege ramps, and pouring in through a broken wall (30:12-14).

30:15 *my salvation has passed away like a cloud* Terror has turned on him, his honor blown away by the wind, his safety vanished like a cloud.

30:17 *Night has pierced my bones from on me, and my gnawing pains do not lie down* At night the pain gets worse. Anyone who lives with chronic pain knows how long the nights can be. Verse 18 is hard; his clothes may no longer fit his changed body, or may cling to his sores like a tight collar.

30:19 *I have become like dust and ashes* A phrase for something worthless. Job sits in ashes (2:8) and feels he has become ashes. Abraham used the words to humble himself (Gen 18:27), and Job will use them when he repents (42:6).

30:20 *I cry for help to You, and You do not answer me* Now he speaks straight to God. He cries and stands to pray, and God only looks at him.

30:21 *You have changed Yourself into one cruel to me* One of the hardest things Job says, and he is wrong. God is never cruel. "He has not afflicted from His heart" (Lam 3:33). God limited Satan's attack and was proud of Job the whole time, and Job will admit he spoke of what he did not understand (42:3). But he said it to God, not about Him to others. That is still prayer, and God did not strike him for it. He was patient and answered.

30:23 *the house of appointed meeting for every living thing* Death, where every living thing is gathered at last. The psalms hold prayers like this (Ps 22:1; 88:18), and Jesus prayed Psalm 22 from the cross (Matt 27:46). If all you can pray is a complaint, pray it to God. He can handle your honesty and will not leave you there. If you or someone you love is longing for death, please talk to a pastor, a doctor or a crisis line today. Job's friends failed him. Do not let that happen to the people God has put near you.

30:25 *Did I not weep for the one who was hard of day* Verse 24 is hard. It may mean no one strikes a ruined man who cries for help, so why does God keep striking? Job wept for others in hard times (Rom 12:15). Now no one weeps with him.

30:26 *I waited for good, and evil came; and I waited for light, and darkness came* The heart of Job's struggle. His experience did not match what he thought he knew of God. Many of us have prayed and waited and seen the opposite come. Job's honesty gives us permission to say so to God.

30:29 *I have become a brother to jackals, and a companion to daughters of the ostrich* Jackals howl at night and ostriches cry mournfully, lonely sounds in empty places. His skin is black and peeling and his body burns with fever (30:30).

30:31 *my lyre has become mourning, and my flute the sound of those who weep* Music once meant feasting in his home (1:4). Now it plays only funeral songs. The lament ends with no bright turn. Sometimes life is like that for a while. But God will speak, and Job's mourning will be turned to joy (42:10-17). The LORD gives "oil of joy instead of mourning" (Isa 61:3).

and my flute the sound of those who weep.

JOB 31

Job's Oath of Innocence

1 I have made a covenant for my eyes; and how would I look attentively at a virgin? **2** And what ***is*** the portion of God from above, and the inheritance of the Almighty from the heights? **3** ***Is*** not calamity for the unrighteous, and misfortune for the workers of evil? **4** Does He not see my ways, and count all my steps? **5** If I have walked with falsehood, and my foot has hurried to deceit, **6** let Him weigh me in balances of righteousness, and let God know my integrity. **7** If my step has turned aside from the way, and my heart has gone after my eyes, and a blemish has stuck to my hands, **8** let me sow, and let another eat, and let my produce be rooted up. **9** If my heart has been enticed by a woman, and I have lain in wait at the doorway of my neighbor, **10** let my wife grind for another, and let others bow down over her. **11** For that ***is*** wickedness, and that ***is*** an iniquity ***for*** judges. **12** For that ***is*** a fire ***which*** devours as far as Abaddon, and it would root up all my produce.

Justice for Servants and the Poor

13 If I rejected the case of my male servant and my female servant in their complaint with me, **14** and what will I do when God arises? And when He visits, what will I answer Him? **15** Did not He who made me in the belly make him? And did not One fashion us in the womb? **16** If I withheld ***anything*** from the desire of the poor, and caused the eyes of the widow to fail, **17** and ate my morsel alone, and the fatherless did not eat from it **18** (for from my youth he grew up with me as ***with*** a father, and from my mother's womb I guided her); **19** if I saw one perishing for lack of clothing, and no covering for the needy, **20** if his loins did not bless me, and ***if*** he did not warm himself from the fleece of my lambs; **21** if I brandished my hand against the fatherless, because I saw my help in the gate, **22** let my shoulder fall from its shoulder blade, and let my arm be broken from its shaft. **23** For calamity from God ***was*** a dread to me, and because of His majesty I could not ***do so***.

No Trust in Gold, No Hidden Sin

24 If I have made gold my confidence, and to pure gold I have said, 'My security,' **25** if I rejoiced because my wealth ***was*** great, and because my hand had found much, **26** if I saw the light when it shone, and the moon going ***in*** splendor, **27** and my heart was enticed in secret, and my hand kissed my mouth, **28** that also ***would be*** an iniquity for judgment, for I would have denied God above. **29** If I rejoiced in the disaster

31:1 Matt 5:28,29; James 1:14,15; Ps 119:37
31:2 Job 20:29; Job 27:13; Heb 13:4
31:3 Job 21:30; Ps 55:23; Ps 73:18
31:4 Job 14:16; Job 34:21; 2 Chr 16:9
31:5 Ps 7:3-5; Ps 4:2; Ps 12:2
31:6 John 21:17; Ps 7:8,9; Ps 17:2,3
31:7 Num 15:39; Eccl 11:9; Matt 5:29
31:8 Lev 26:16; Mic 6:15; Job 24:6
31:9 Eccl 7:26; Judg 16:5; 1 Kgs 11:4
31:10 Jer 8:10; Isa 47:2; 2 Sam 12:11
31:11 Lev 20:10; Job 31:28; Deut 22:22-24
31:12 Prov 6:27; Prov 3:33; Jer 5:7-9
31:13 Exod 21:20,21,26,27; Lev 25:43,46; Deut 15:12-15
31:14 Eph 6:9; Job 9:32; Job 10:2
31:15 Prov 14:31; Job 34:19; Prov 22:2
31:16 Job 22:7-9; Deut 15:7-10; Ps 112:9
31:17 Deut 15:11,14; Neh 8:10; Luke 11:41
31:19 Job 22:6; 2 Chr 28:15; Isa 58:7
31:20 Deut 24:13; Job 29:11
31:21 Job 22:9; Job 29:12; Job 6:27
31:22 Job 31:10,40; Josh 22:22,23; Ps 7:4,5
31:23 Job 13:11; Ps 119:120; Job 20:23
31:24 Ps 52:7; Gen 31:1; Deut 8:12-14
31:25 Esth 5:11; Prov 23:5; Jer 9:23
31:26 Ezek 8:16; Deut 4:19; Deut 17:3
31:27 Deut 11:16; Deut 13:6; Isa 44:20
31:28 Job 31:11; Deut 17:2-7,9; Job 9:15
31:29 Prov 17:5; Prov 24:17,18; Ps 35:13,14,25,26

31:1 *I have made a covenant for my eyes; and how would I look attentively at a virgin* Job's oath of innocence begins. A covenant is a binding promise. Long before Jesus said that looking with lust is adultery of the heart (Matt 5:28), Job knew sin starts in the eyes and heart, and he decided ahead of time. In a world where temptation is a click away, we need a covenant for our eyes as much as he did.
31:4 *Does He not see my ways, and count all my steps* He guarded his eyes because God judges sin (31:2-3) and sees everything. The truth that frightened him in suffering (7:19-20) had kept him pure in good days.
31:6 *let Him weigh me in balances of righteousness* The first "if" of the oath. Job is so sure of his honesty he asks to be weighed on God's scales.
31:7 *my heart has gone after my eyes* Feet off the road, heart following the eyes, dirt on the hands. John warns of "the lust of the eyes" (1 John 2:16). If guilty, let another eat his harvest (31:8).
31:9 *If my heart has been enticed by a woman, and I have lain in wait at the doorway of my neighbor* Adultery, waiting at a neighbor's door for the husband to leave.
31:10 *Let my wife grind for another* Grinding grain was a servant's work. A very strong curse: if he dishonored another man's marriage, let his own be dishonored.
31:12 *that is a fire which devours as far as Abaddon* Adultery is a crime for judges (31:11) and a fire that burns all the way to the grave (Prov 6:27-32). Every pastor has seen what it does to a family. It burns far more than one marriage.
31:13 *If I rejected the case of my male servant and my female servant* Servants had few rights, and a master could ignore their complaints. Job listened, knowing he must answer to God (31:14).
31:15 *Did not He who made me in the belly make him* One of the most important verses in the chapter. Master and servant were made by the same God in the womb, equal in worth. An amazing thing to say when servants were treated as property. Masters are to be fair, "knowing that you also have a Master in the heavens" (Col 4:1). Every person bears God's image (Gen 1:27). How we treat those under us shows what we believe about God.
31:16 *caused the eyes of the widow to fail* Eliphaz said he sent widows away empty (22:9). Job never let a widow's eyes grow dim waiting for help, and never ate while orphans went hungry (31:17). From his youth he raised orphans like a father and guided widows (31:18). It was the pattern of his whole life.
31:20 *if he did not warm himself from the fleece of my lambs* Eliphaz said Job stripped the naked (22:6). Job clothed them with wool from his own flocks (31:19-20).
31:21 *because I saw my help in the gate* He had powerful friends at the town court and could have wronged an orphan safely. He never did. If he had, let his arm be torn off (31:22).
31:23 *because of His majesty I could not do so* He feared God. That is wisdom as 28:28 defines it, and Job lived it.
31:24 *If I have made gold my confidence* He was very rich but did not trust or gloat in it (31:25). We know it, because he lost it all in a day and blessed the LORD (1:21). "You are not able to serve God and wealth" (Matt 6:24). The test is not how much we have but where our heart rests.
31:27 *my hand kissed my mouth* Many worshiped the sun and moon by kissing their hand toward the sky (31:26). Job never did, even in secret (Deut 4:19). It would have denied God above (31:28).
31:29 *If I rejoiced in the disaster of one who hated me* Eliphaz said the righteous rejoice at the wicked's fall (22:19). Job was more gracious. He never cursed his enemy's life (31:30), living long before Jesus' word, "love your enemies, bless those cursing you" (Matt 5:44).

of one who hated me, and roused myself when evil found him **30** (and I have not permitted my palate to sin by asking for his life with a curse); **31** if the men of my tent have not said, 'Who will give one ***who*** has not been satisfied from his meat?' **32** The sojourner did not lodge in the street; I opened my doors to the road. **33** If I have covered my transgressions like Adam, by hiding my iniquity in my bosom, **34** because I feared the great multitude, and the contempt of clans dismayed me, and I kept silent ***and*** did not go out ***of the*** door—

Job Signs His Defense

35 Who will grant me one listening to me! Look, my mark; let the Almighty answer me! And the document ***that*** the man of my case has written, **36** surely I would carry it on my shoulder; I would bind it on ***as*** crowns for myself. **37** I would tell Him the number of my steps; like a noble I would approach Him. **38** If my land has cried out against me, and its furrows have wept together, **39** if I have eaten its strength without money, and have caused the life of its owners to breathe out, **40** instead of wheat let thorns come forth, and instead of barley foul weeds." The words of Job (Iyov) are finished.

JOB 32

Elihu's Anger

1 And these three men ceased from answering Job (Iyov), for he ***was*** righteous in his own eyes. **2** And the anger of Elihu the son of Barachel (Barakhel) the Buzite, from the clan of Ram, burned; against Job his anger burned because he justified himself more than God. **3** And against his three friends his anger burned, because they had not found an answer, and they had condemned Job. **4** And Elihu had waited for Job with words, for they ***were*** older than he in days. **5** And Elihu saw that there was no answer in the mouth of the three men, and his anger burned.

Elihu Begins to Speak

6 And Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite answered and said, "I ***am*** young in days, and you ***are*** aged; therefore I was timid, and I was afraid to tell you my knowledge. **7** I said, 'Let days speak, and let abundance of years make wisdom known.' **8** Surely it ***is*** the spirit in a mortal, and the breath of the Almighty, ***that*** gives them understanding. **9** ***It is*** not the many ***who*** are wise, nor the old ***who*** understand justice. **10** Therefore I say, 'Listen to me; I will tell my knowledge, even I.' **11** Look, I waited for your words; I gave ear to your understandings, while you searched out words. **12** And I paid attention to you, and look, there was no one rebuking Job, answering his words, from among you. **13** Lest you say, 'We have found wisdom; let God drive him away, not man.' **14** And he has not arranged words against me, and with your

31:30 Rom 12:14; 1 Pet 3:9; Exod 23:4,5
31:31 1 Sam 24:4,10; 1 Sam 26:8; 2 Sam 16:9,10
31:32 Gen 19:2,3; Heb 13:2; Matt 25:35,40,44,45
31:33 Prov 28:13; Hos 6:7; Gen 3:7,8,12
31:34 Exod 23:2; Prov 29:25; Jer 38:4,5,16,19
31:35 Job 13:21,22; Job 23:3-7; Job 13:3
31:36 Isa 22:22; Exod 28:12; Job 29:14
31:37 Eph 3:12; 1 John 3:19; Job 9:3
31:38 Job 20:27; Hab 2:11; James 5:4
31:39 Gen 4:12; 1 Kgs 21:13-16,19; Prov 1:19
31:40 Gen 3:17,18; Isa 7:23; Zeph 2:9
32:1 Job 33:9; Job 6:29; Job 10:2,7
32:2 Gen 22:21; Job 35:2; Job 40:8
32:3 Job 8:6; Job 22:5-30; Job 32:1
32:4 Job 32:11,12; Prov 18:13
32:5 Job 32:2; Exod 32:19
32:6 Job 15:10; 1 Tim 5:1; 1 Pet 5:5
32:7 Job 12:12; Prov 16:31; Job 8:8-10
32:8 Prov 2:6; Job 38:36; Eccl 2:26
32:9 Matt 11:25; Job 12:20; Jer 5:5
32:10 1 Cor 7:25,40
32:11 Job 32:4; Job 29:21,23; Job 5:27
32:12 Job 32:3; 1 Tim 1:7
32:13 Jer 9:23; Gen 14:23; Judg 7:2

31:32 *The sojourner did not lodge in the street; I opened my doors to the road* No one left his table hungry (31:31), and no traveler slept in the street. "Do not forget hospitality" (Heb 13:2), as Abraham showed (Gen 18).
31:33 *If I have covered my transgressions like Adam* Adam hid from God and blamed Eve (Gen 3:8-12). Adam can also mean man, so some read it as men do. Job never claimed to be sinless. He claimed he never covered up his sin. "He who covers his transgressions will not prosper" (Prov 28:13). A godly person is not one who never sins but one who does not hide it from God, and Job did not hide for fear of what people would think (31:34).
31:35 *Look, my mark; let the Almighty answer me* My mark is taw, the last Hebrew letter, shaped like an X in the old script and used to sign a document. Here is my signature; I rest my case. He wishes his accuser would write down the charges. He was never told what they were.
31:37 *like a noble I would approach Him* He would wear the charges like a crown (31:36) and come to God standing tall. Here Job goes too far. He was innocent of his friends' charges, but no one approaches the holy God like a noble on his own record. When God answers, Job will say, "I am insignificant" (40:4). Paul said, "I am conscious of nothing against myself, yet I am not justified by this" (1 Cor 4:4). We come to God with confidence only through Christ's righteousness (Heb 4:16; 2 Cor 5:21).
31:40 *The words of Job are finished* If he took land unjustly or crops without paying, as Ahab did Naboth (1 Kgs 21), let thorns grow, the curse of Gen 3:17-18 (31:38-40). The last line is the writer's: Job has rested his case. Then Elihu, and at last God. Job's oath shows what a righteous life looks like, reaching to eyes, heart, servants, strangers, money, secret worship and enemies. Few of us could swear it. That should humble us and drive us to Christ, who alone lived it perfectly and forgives our failures (1 John 1:9).
32:1 *these three men ceased from answering Job, for he was righteous in his own eyes* The debate is over. The friends could not prove their charges, and Job would not confess. That does not make them right; God said Job was blameless (1:8). But it points to something real. In defending his innocence, Job had begun to put his own righteousness at the center and to speak as if God owed him an answer. Elihu takes this up.
32:2 *Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite, from the clan of Ram* The only speaker whose family line is named. Elihu means He is my God; Barachel, God blesses. Buz was a nephew of Abraham (Gen 22:21). His first complaint was fair: Job "justified himself more than God," more concerned to be proved right than to see God proved right. God says something like it (40:8).
32:3 *because they had not found an answer, and they had condemned Job* His second complaint is against the friends. They condemned Job but never answered him. Anger or burning comes four times in verses 2-5. Whether his anger serves him well is part of the question about him.
32:4 *Elihu had waited for Job with words, for they were older than he in days* The young were expected to let their elders speak first. When the older men had nothing left, he could not stay silent (32:5).
32:6 *I am young in days, and you are aged* He begins politely, admitting he is young. He had thought age would speak wisdom (32:7), and Scripture honors the old (Lev 19:32).
32:8 *it is the spirit in a mortal, and the breath of the Almighty, that gives them understanding* True. Wisdom comes from God, not age alone. Daniel was young when God gave him wisdom beyond Babylon's wise men (Dan 1:17-20). "Let no one despise your youth" (1 Tim 4:12). Being old or in the majority does not guarantee being right (32:9). The friends were older and three against one, and they were wrong.
32:12 *there was no one rebuking Job, answering his words, from among you* He listened carefully (32:11). They attacked Job but never answered him. He warns them not to say only God can deal with Job now (32:13) and promises not to use their arguments (32:14). Whether he keeps that promise is a question teachers ask.

words I will not respond to him. **15** They are dismayed; they have not answered again; words have moved away from them. **16** And shall I wait, because they do not speak, because they have stood ***still***, they have not answered again? **17** I will answer, even I, my part; I will tell my knowledge, even I. **18** For I am full of words; the spirit of my belly has constrained me. **19** Look, my belly ***is*** like wine ***that*** is not opened; like new wineskins it will be split open. **20** Let me speak, and let it be relieved for me; let me open my lips and answer. **21** Let me not, please, show partiality to any man, and to man I will not use flattery. **22** For I do not know ***how*** to use flattery; in a little ***while*** my Maker would carry me away.

JOB 33

Elihu Speaks to Job

1 And however, please hear my speech, Job (Iyov), and give ear to all my words. **2** Look, please, I have opened my mouth; my tongue has spoken in my palate. **3** My words ***are*** the uprightness of my heart, and the knowledge of my lips they speak purely. **4** The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life. **5** If you are able, respond to me; arrange ***your words*** before me; take your stand. **6** Look, I ***am*** like you toward God; from clay I also was nipped off. **7** Look, dread of me will not terrify you, and my pressure will not be heavy on you. **8** Surely you have spoken in my ears, and I heard the sound of words: **9** 'I ***am*** pure, without transgression; I ***am*** innocent, and I have no iniquity. **10** Look, He finds occasions against me; He considers me as an enemy to Him. **11** He puts my feet in the stocks; He watches all my paths.' **12** Look, ***in*** this you are not right; I will answer you, for God is greater than a mortal. **13** Why have you contended against Him, that He does not answer all his words?

God Speaks to Man

14 For God speaks once, and twice, ***yet*** one does not perceive it, **15** in a dream, a vision of the night, when deep sleep falls on men, in slumbers on the bed. **16** Then He uncovers the ear of men, and He seals their discipline, **17** to turn man aside ***from his*** deed, and He covers pride from a man. **18** He keeps back his soul from the pit, and his life from passing away by the weapon.

A Mediator and a Ransom

19 And he is rebuked with pain on his bed, and the multitude

32:15 Matt 22:46; Job 6:24,25; Job 29:22
32:16 Matt 22:46; Job 13:5; Prov 17:28
32:17 Job 32:10; Job 33:12; Job 35:3,4
32:18 John 7:38; Ps 39:3; Jer 20:9
32:19 Matt 9:17
32:20 Job 13:13,19; Job 20:2; Job 21:3
32:21 Lev 19:15; Job 13:8; Job 34:19
32:22 Job 17:5; Ps 12:2,3; Prov 29:5
33:1 Job 13:6; Job 34:2; Ps 49:1-3
33:2 Job 3:1; Ps 78:2; Matt 5:2
33:3 Job 27:4; Prov 20:15; Prov 8:7,8
33:4 1 Cor 15:45; Gen 2:7; Job 32:8
33:5 Job 33:32,33; Job 32:1,12; Job 23:4,5
33:6 Job 4:19; Job 9:32-35; Job 13:3
33:7 Job 13:21; Job 9:34; Ps 88:16
33:8 Deut 13:14; Jer 29:23
33:9 Job 10:7; Job 16:17; Job 11:4
33:10 Job 13:24; Job 19:11; Job 9:30,31
33:11 Acts 16:24; Job 13:27; Job 31:4
33:12 Rom 9:19; Rom 9:20; 1 John 3:20
33:13 John 21:23; Rom 9:20; Job 40:2
33:14 1 Thess 2:18; Ps 62:11; Job 40:5
33:15 Job 4:13; Num 12:6; Gen 20:3
33:16 Job 36:10,15; Ps 40:6; Isa 50:5
33:17 Job 17:11; Gen 20:6; Isa 23:9
33:18 Acts 16:27-33; Rom 2:4; 2 Pet 3:9,15
33:19 Job 30:17; Job 5:17,18; Deut 8:5

32:17 *I will answer, even I, my part* Notice how often Elihu says "I." Some hear self-importance, others a young man working up courage. The friends stand dismayed and silent (32:15-16).

32:19 *like new wineskins it will be split open* Fermenting wine in a sealed skin builds pressure until it bursts. Jeremiah felt God's word "like a burning fire shut up in my bones" (Jer 20:9). Is Elihu's pressure like that, from God, or a young man's eagerness to have his say? The text does not tell us.

32:22 *in a little while my Maker would carry me away* Elihu promises no partiality or flattery (32:21), knowing he must answer to God. Anyone who teaches God's Word should feel that (James 3:1). Teachers read Elihu two ways. Many see a helpful forerunner who prepares Job for God. God does not rebuke him in 42:7, he does not repeat the friends' main charge, he teaches that God uses suffering to warn and keep a man from pride (33:14-30; 36:8-15), and his storm leads into the LORD's speech (38:1). Others see a fourth mistaken friend who talks much about himself, at times echoes their charges (34:7, 37), and may be meant by "Who is this who darkens counsel" (38:2), though most take that as aimed at Job. I believe the fairest reading is to keep what agrees with the rest of Scripture and set aside what does not. God neither commends nor condemns him.

33:1 *please hear my speech, Job* Elihu speaks to Job by name, which the three friends never did in their speeches. A small thing, but it shows he means to speak to Job as a person.

33:4 *The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life* Elihu is a creature too, like Adam given "the breath of life" (Gen 2:7). Whatever understanding he has comes from God (32:8).

33:6 *from clay I also was nipped off* A potter pinches off clay to make a pot. Elihu and Job came from the same clay, equals before God.

33:7 *dread of me will not terrify you* Job wanted an arbiter whose terror would not frighten him (9:34; 13:21). I am only a man, Elihu says. Answer me freely (33:5).

33:9 *I am pure, without transgression* Elihu sums up Job fairly (9:21; 10:7; 16:17). God counts me His enemy and puts my feet in the stocks (33:10-11; 13:24, 27; 19:11). Unlike Eliphaz, who put words in Job's mouth (22:13), Elihu repeats what Job really said.

33:12 *in this you are not right; I will answer you, for God is greater than a mortal* Elihu's first answer. Job was wrong to speak as if God were his enemy and owed him an explanation. The friends said Job suffered for past sin. Elihu says Job is wrong in how he speaks about God now. That is a different and fairer charge, and God will say something similar (38:2; 40:2, 8).

33:14 *God speaks once, and twice, yet one does not perceive it* Job complained God would not answer (19:7; 30:20; 33:13). God is not silent, says Elihu. He speaks in His own ways.

33:15 *In a dream, a vision of the night, when deep sleep falls on men* God did speak in dreams in those days, to Abimelech (Gen 20:3), Jacob (Gen 28:12) and Joseph (Gen 37:5). Eliphaz claimed such a vision too (4:13).

33:17 *To turn man aside from his deed, and He covers pride from a man* God seals His warning on a man like a seal on a document (33:16), to turn him from wrong and keep pride out of his life.

33:18 *He keeps back his soul from the pit* The pit is the grave, and the weapon a spear or arrow. God's warnings are acts of mercy. He speaks to save. Today He speaks fully in His Son and His written Word (Heb 1:1-2; 2 Tim 3:16-17), with the same purpose.

33:19 *he is rebuked with pain on his bed* The second way God speaks: through pain. He cannot eat, his bones stick out, he draws near death (33:20-22). This is a picture of Job (7:5; 19:20; 30:17). God may be speaking through it, not to punish past crime but to teach and save from pride. That can be true: "whom the Lord loves He disciplines" (Heb 12:6; Ps 119:71; 2 Cor 12:7). Discipline here is training, as a coach makes an athlete strong. But Elihu does not know about chapters 1 and 2. Job's suffering was mainly a test of whether he would trust God for nothing. Still, Elihu is closer than the friends, and God did use it to bring Job to deeper humility (42:5-6).

of his bones ***is*** constant. **20** And his life loathes bread, and his soul the food of desire. **21** His flesh wastes away from sight, and his bones, ***which*** were not seen, are laid bare. **22** And his soul draws near to the pit, and his life to those who bring death. **23** If there is over him an angel, a mediator, one of a thousand, to tell man his uprightness, **24** then He is gracious to him and says, 'Deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom.' **25** His flesh has become fresher than ***in*** childhood; he returns to the days of his youth. **26** He prays to God, and He accepts him, and he sees His face with a shout of joy, and He restores to mortal man his righteousness. **27** He looks on men and says, 'I have sinned and perverted ***what was*** upright, and it was not repaid to me.' **28** He has ransomed his soul from passing into the pit, and his life will look on the light. **29** Look, God does all these ***things*** two times, three ***times*** with a man, **30** to bring back his soul from the pit, to be lighted with the light of life. **31** Pay attention, Job; listen to me; keep quiet, and I will speak. **32** If there are words, respond to me; speak, for I desire to justify you. **33** If not, you listen to me; keep quiet, and I will teach you wisdom."

JOB 34

Elihu Defends God's Justice

1 And Elihu answered and said, **2** "Hear my words, you wise ***men***, and give ear to me, you who know. **3** For the ear tests words, and the palate tastes to eat. **4** Let us choose justice for ourselves; let us know among ourselves what ***is*** good. **5** For Job (Iyov) has said, 'I am righteous, and God has taken away my right. **6** Concerning my right, should I lie? My arrow ***is*** incurable without transgression.' **7** Who ***is*** a man like Job, ***who*** drinks mockery like water, **8** and travels in company with workers of evil, and walks with men of wickedness? **9** For he has said, 'It does not profit a man when he delights himself with God.' **10** Therefore, men of heart, listen to me: far be it from God ***to do*** wickedness, and ***from*** the Almighty ***to do*** unrighteousness. **11** For the work of a man He repays to him, and according to the way of a man He causes him to find ***it***. **12** Truly also, God does not act wickedly, and the Almighty does not pervert justice. **13** Who appointed the earth to Him? And who set the whole world ***in place***? **14** If He sets His heart on him, ***and*** gathers to Himself his spirit and his breath,

33:20 Ps 107:17,18; Gen 3:6; Jer 3:19
33:21 Job 19:20; Prov 5:11; Job 7:5
33:22 2 Sam 24:16; Job 7:7; Job 17:1,13-16
33:23 Mal 3:1; Eccl 7:28; Judg 2:1
33:24 Job 33:18; Ps 49:7,8; Job 22:21
33:25 2 Kgs 5:14; Ps 103:5; Job 42:16
33:26 Ps 50:15; Isa 30:19; Ps 30:5
33:27 Rom 6:21; 2 Sam 12:13; Ps 14:2
33:28 John 11:9; Job 3:9,16,20; Job 33:18,24
33:29 Eph 1:11; Phil 2:13; 1 Cor 12:6
33:30 John 8:12; Ps 56:13; Isa 38:17
33:31 Job 13:6; Job 18:2; Job 21:2
33:32 Job 15:4,5; Job 21:27; Job 22:5-9
33:33 Ps 34:11; Prov 4:1,2; Prov 5:1,2
34:2 1 Cor 14:20; Prov 1:5; 1 Cor 10:15
34:3 Job 12:11; 1 Cor 2:15; Job 6:30
34:4 1 Thess 5:21; Job 34:36; Judg 19:30
34:5 Acts 8:33; Job 33:9; Job 27:2
34:6 Job 6:4; Job 27:4-6; Job 16:13
34:7 Job 15:16; Prov 1:22; Deut 29:19
34:8 Ps 1:1; Ps 26:4; Ps 50:18
34:9 Job 35:3; Job 9:22,23,30,31; Mal 3:14
34:10 Rom 3:5; Deut 32:4; Rom 9:14
34:11 1 Pet 1:17; Ps 62:12; Matt 16:27
34:12 Job 8:3; Ps 11:7; Ps 145:17
34:13 Rom 11:35; Rom 11:36; 1 Chr 29:11
34:14 Acts 17:25; Ps 104:29; Job 7:17

33:22 *his life to those who bring death* Perhaps angels of death, or simply the forces of death.
33:23 *If there is over him an angel, a mediator, one of a thousand, to tell man his uprightness* One of the most hopeful verses in the book. The angel is a messenger, a mediator who stands between God and man, a rare one in a thousand, to show the man what is right. Job longed for just this: an arbiter (9:33), a witness in heaven (16:19), a living Redeemer (19:25).
33:24 *Deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom* A ransom is a price paid to set someone free, sometimes to save a life (Exod 21:30; 30:12). Elihu does not say what it is, and we should not say more than the text. Some teachers think he means an interceding angel, some the man's repentance, some a general picture of God's provision. But Christians cannot help seeing Christ, the one "mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim 2:5), "who gave Himself as a ransom for all" (1 Tim 2:6; Mark 10:45). I believe God let these words point ahead to the Mediator who did not merely find a ransom but became it. A picture, not a quoted prophecy, but a beautiful one.
33:25 *His flesh has become fresher than in childhood* The sick man is healed, like Naaman, whose flesh became like a little child's (2 Kgs 5:14).
33:26 *he sees His face with a shout of joy* He prays, God receives him, and he knows God's favor again.
33:27 *I have sinned and perverted what was upright, and it was not repaid to me* The testimony of every forgiven sinner: "He has not done to us according to our sins" (Ps 103:10). God ransomed his soul, and he will see the light (33:28), as Job did see God (42:5).
33:30 *to be lighted with the light of life* God works two or three times with a man (33:29), always to bring him back from the pit. "The one following Me will certainly not walk in the darkness, but will have the light of life" (John 8:12). Job saw his suffering only as hostility. Elihu says it may be mercy. Not the whole answer, but a true and hopeful part of it.
33:32 *speak, for I desire to justify you* Elihu wants Job cleared, not condemned. Job does not answer. Whether because Elihu was right or because Job saw no point, we are not told.
34:2 *Hear my words, you wise men* Elihu's second speech, to a wider group, perhaps the three friends or others listening.
34:3 *the ear tests words, and the palate tastes to eat* Job's own saying (12:11). Let us decide together what is good (34:4). God's people are to test what they hear (1 Thess 5:21).
34:5 *I am righteous, and God has taken away my right* A fair quote (13:18; 27:2), with his incurable arrow wound (34:6; 6:4). And that is the problem. Job stood for his innocence so strongly that he ended up accusing God. If Job is right, God must be wrong. Elihu will not accept that.
34:7 *Who is a man like Job, who drinks mockery like water* Harsh. Job had mocked his friends at times (12:2; 26:2-3), but he was also the one mocked.
34:8 *travels in company with workers of evil* Here Elihu goes too far. He means Job's words put him in the camp of the wicked, very close to the friends' charge, and it was not true of Job's life.
34:9 *It does not profit a man when he delights himself with God* Job never said it in those words. He described how things look (9:22) and how the wicked talk (21:15), but he never stopped delighting in God or praying. Elihu treats Job's description as Job's belief, which is not quite fair.
34:10 *far be it from God to do wickedness* "Men of heart" are men of understanding. Elihu's main point, and absolutely true. God never does wrong.
34:11 *the work of a man He repays to him* True in the end, at the final judgment (Rom 2:6; Rev 20:12). The friends' mistake was to say it always happens at once in this life. Elihu does not say when.
34:12 *the Almighty does not pervert justice* "Will not the Judge of all the earth do justice?" (Gen 18:25; Deut 32:4). Hold on to this when life makes no sense. If something looks unjust, it is because we do not see all of it. "Is there unrighteousness with God? May it not be!" (Rom 9:14).
34:14 *If He sets His heart on him, and gathers to Himself his spirit and his breath* No one put God in charge; He made the world (34:13). If He took back His breath, all flesh would return to dust (34:15; Ps 104:29). Every breath is a gift. A God who keeps giving breath to people who rebel against Him is not an unjust God.

15 all flesh would expire together, and mankind would return to dust.

God Rules With Justice

16 And if ***you have*** understanding, hear this; give ear to the sound of my words. **17** Will even one who hates justice govern? And will you condemn the righteous, mighty ***One***? **18** Is ***it fitting*** to say to a king, 'Worthless one,' ***and*** to nobles, 'Wicked'? **19** ***How much less to Him*** who does not show partiality to princes, and does not regard the rich before the poor, for all of them ***are*** the work of His hands. **20** ***In*** a moment they die, and ***at*** the middle of the night a people are shaken and pass away, and they remove the mighty, not by a hand. **21** For His eyes ***are*** on the ways of a man, and He sees all his steps. **22** There is no darkness, and there is no deep darkness, for the workers of evil to hide themselves there. **23** For He does not set ***it*** again on a man to go to God in judgment. **24** He breaks the mighty without inquiry, and He sets others in their place. **25** Therefore He knows their deeds, and He overturns ***them in the*** night, and they are crushed. **26** As wicked ***men*** He strikes them in the place of those who see, **27** because they turned aside from after Him, and they did not consider any of His ways, **28** so as to cause the outcry of the poor to come to Him; and He hears the outcry of the afflicted. **29** And ***when*** He keeps quiet, who will condemn? And ***when*** He hides ***His*** face, who will see Him? And ***He is*** over a nation and over a man alike, **30** from the reigning of a godless man, from ***being*** snares of a people.

Elihu Rebukes Job

31 For has anyone said to God, 'I have borne ***punishment***; I will not act corruptly. **32** Apart from ***what*** I see, You teach me; if I have done unrighteousness, I will not do ***it*** again'? **33** Should He repay it from with you, because you have rejected ***it***? For you must choose, and not I; and what you know, speak. **34** Men of heart will say to me, and a wise man who listens to me, **35** 'Job speaks without knowledge, and his words ***are*** without insight.' **36** Oh that Job were tested to the end, because of ***his*** answers among men of evil! **37** For he adds transgression to his sin; he claps ***his hands*** among us, and he multiplies his words to God."

JOB 35

What Man's Righteousness Means to God

1 And Elihu answered and said, **2** "Do you consider this to be justice? You have said, 'My righteousness ***is*** more than God's.' **3** For you say, 'What will it profit you? What will I gain ***more*** than from my sin?' **4** I will respond to you ***with*** words, and your friends with you. **5** Look at the heavens and see, and observe the clouds; they are higher than you. **6** If you have sinned, what do you do against Him? And ***if*** your

34:15 Gen 3:19; Eccl 12:7; Isa 57:16
34:16 Job 12:3; Job 13:2-6
34:17 2 Sam 23:3; Job 40:8; Gen 18:25
34:18 Exod 22:28; Prov 17:26; Rom 13:7
34:19 Acts 10:34; 1 Pet 1:17; Luke 20:21
34:20 Matt 25:6; Ps 73:19; Isa 30:13
34:21 Job 31:4; Prov 15:3; Prov 5:21
34:22 Amos 9:2,3; Ps 139:11,12; Prov 10:29
34:23 Ps 119:137; Dan 9:7-9; Job 34:10-12
34:24 Ps 2:9; Dan 2:21,34,35,44,45; Ps 113:7,8
34:25 1 Thess 5:2; Job 34:20; Ps 33:15
34:26 Exod 14:30; Deut 13:9-11; Deut 21:21
34:27 1 Sam 15:11; Ps 28:5; Isa 5:12
34:28 1 John 5:14; James 5:4; Job 35:9
34:29 Rom 8:32; Isa 26:3; Job 29:1-3
34:30 Job 34:21; 1 Kgs 12:28-30; 2 Kgs 21:9
34:31 Job 33:27; Mic 7:9; Job 40:3-5
34:32 Ps 19:12; Prov 28:13; Job 10:2
34:33 Ps 135:6; Job 9:12; Job 18:4
34:34 Job 34:2,4,10,16; 1 Cor 10:15
34:35 Job 35:16; Job 38:2; Job 13:2
34:36 James 5:11; Job 23:16; Ps 17:3
34:37 Job 27:23; 1 Sam 15:23; Isa 1:19,20
35:2 Matt 12:36,37; Luke 19:22; Job 9:17
35:3 Job 34:9; Job 9:21,22; Job 10:15
35:4 Job 34:8; Prov 13:20
35:5 Job 22:12; Isa 55:9; Nah 1:3
35:6 Prov 8:36; Jer 7:19; Prov 9:12

34:17 *Will even one who hates justice govern* One who hates justice could not rule the world without it falling apart. So how can Job condemn Him?
34:19 *does not regard the rich before the poor, for all of them are the work of His hands* No one would call a king worthless to his face (34:18), yet God shows no partiality (Acts 10:34), as Job himself said of his servant (31:15). He can bring down the mighty at midnight without a human hand (34:20), as with Egypt's firstborn (Exod 12:29) and Sennacherib's army (2 Kgs 19:35).
34:21 *His eyes are on the ways of a man, and He sees all his steps* "In every place are the eyes of the LORD" (Prov 15:3). The dark of chapter 24 hides no one from Him (34:22).
34:23 *He does not set it again on a man to go to God in judgment* Job wanted a court date (23:3-7). God needs no hearing to learn the facts. He knows, and He breaks the mighty without inquiry (34:24). "He removes kings and sets up kings" (Dan 2:21).
34:28 *He hears the outcry of the afflicted* The wicked oppressed the poor, and their cry reached God. Job said God did not seem to act on it (24:12). Elihu says He hears.
34:29 *when He keeps quiet, who will condemn* An important answer to Job's great complaint. If God chooses silence or hides His face, who has the right to condemn Him? His silence is His own right and does not mean He is unjust.
34:32 *Apart from what I see, You teach me* Verses 31-32 are hard, but Elihu seems to give Job words to say: I have suffered; teach me what I cannot see; if I have done wrong, I will not do it again. It confesses no crimes he did not commit. It is a prayer any of us can pray (Ps 139:23). You must choose, Job, he adds (34:33).
34:35 *Job speaks without knowledge, and his words are without insight* On this point Elihu is right. God will say, "Who is this who darkens counsel by words without knowledge?" (38:2), and Job will admit it (42:3).
34:36 *Oh that Job were tested to the end* Here Elihu becomes harsh, wishing the testing would go on to the end for a man who has lost everything. He does not know the test was ordered in heaven or that God was proud of Job. Here many readers hear a fourth friend.
34:37 *he adds transgression to his sin* Clapping the hands was scorn (27:23). There is truth in it; Job had said too much. But Elihu says it without mercy. The LORD will correct Job differently, showing him His glory and then restoring him. Defend God's justice with all your heart, but do not forget His kindness. Truth spoken without love becomes a club (Eph 4:15).
35:2 *You have said, My righteousness is more than God's* Elihu's third speech. Job never said these words, but Elihu sees where they lead. If Job is innocent and God took away his right (27:2), then Job claims to be more just than God. The LORD will ask, "Will you condemn Me so that you may be justified?" (40:8).
35:3 *What will I gain more than from my sin* Job said things close to this (9:22; 30:26), but never turned from righteousness. He only struggled to understand why it had not protected him. Many believers have felt it: "Surely in vain I have kept my heart pure" (Ps 73:13), until he went into God's sanctuary. The feeling is real, but following God is never in vain.
35:5 *Look at the heavens and see* The clouds are far above Job, and God higher still.

transgressions are many, what do you do to Him? **7** If you are righteous, what do you give to Him? Or what does He receive from your hand? **8** Your wickedness ***is*** for a man like yourself, and your righteousness for a son of man. **9** Because of the multitude of oppressions they cry out; they cry for help because of the arm of the great. **10** And no one says, 'Where ***is*** God my Maker, who gives songs in the night, **11** who teaches us more than the animals of the earth, and makes us wiser than the birds of the heavens?' **12** There they cry out, and He does not answer, because of the pride of evil ***men***. **13** Surely God does not hear emptiness, and the Almighty does not observe it. **14** How much less when you say ***that*** you do not observe Him, ***that*** the case ***is*** before Him, and you must wait for Him! **15** And now, because His anger has not punished, and He does not greatly know folly, **16** and Job (Iyov) opens his mouth ***with*** vapor; he multiplies words without knowledge."

JOB 36

God Is Mighty and Just

1 And Elihu added and said, **2** "Wait for me a little, and I will show you, for ***there are*** still words for God. **3** I will carry my knowledge from afar, and to my Maker I will ascribe righteousness. **4** For truly my words ***are*** not falsehood; one complete in knowledge ***is*** with you. **5** Look, God ***is*** mighty, and He does not reject; ***He is*** mighty ***in*** strength of heart. **6** He does not keep the wicked alive, and He gives the justice of the afflicted. **7** He does not withdraw His eyes from the righteous, and with kings on the throne, and He has seated them forever, and they are exalted. **8** And if they ***are*** bound in fetters, they are caught in cords of affliction, **9** and He tells them their work and their transgressions, that they were behaving proudly. **10** And He uncovers their ear to discipline, and He says that they shall turn back from wickedness. **11** If they hear and serve ***Him***, they will finish their days in good, and their years in pleasant things. **12** And if they do not hear, they will pass away by the weapon, and they will expire without knowledge. **13** And the godless of heart lay up anger; they do not cry for help when He has bound them. **14** Their soul dies in youth, and their life among the cult prostitutes. **15** He rescues the afflicted by his affliction, and

35:7 Rom 11:35; Job 22:2,3; Prov 9:12
35:8 Josh 7:1-5; Josh 22:20; Eccl 9:18
35:9 Exod 2:23; Job 34:28; Job 24:12
35:10 Ps 42:8; Ps 149:5; Acts 16:25
35:11 Ps 94:12; Job 32:8; Gen 1:26
35:12 John 9:31; Prov 1:28; Ps 123:3,4
35:13 Isa 1:15; Jer 11:11; James 4:3
35:14 Job 9:11; Job 23:3,8-10; Job 9:19
35:15 Luke 1:20; Ps 89:32; Job 9:14
35:16 Job 38:2; Job 3:1; Job 33:2,8-12
36:2 Job 21:3; 2 Cor 5:20; Job 33:31-33
36:3 James 1:5,17; James 3:17; Deut 32:4
36:4 Job 37:16; 1 Cor 14:20; 2 Tim 3:16,17
36:5 Ps 22:24; Ps 138:6; Job 37:23
36:6 Prov 22:22,23; Ps 140:12; Job 21:7-9,30
36:7 Ps 33:18; Ps 34:15; Ps 113:7,8
36:8 Ps 107:10; Prov 5:22; Job 13:27
36:9 1 Cor 11:32; 1 Tim 1:15; Job 10:2
36:10 Job 36:15; Job 33:16-23; Isa 50:5
36:11 Jer 7:23; Deut 4:30; Jer 26:13
36:12 Job 4:21; Isa 3:11; Deut 18:15-22
36:13 Matt 22:13; Rom 2:5; Job 36:8
36:14 Deut 23:17; Job 15:32; Job 22:16
36:15 Job 36:10; 2 Chr 12:8

35:7 *If you are righteous, what do you give to Him* God is so high that our sin does not harm Him nor our righteousness enrich Him (35:6; 22:2-3). "Who has first given to Him?" (Rom 11:35). Job cannot demand a reward as if earned: "We are unworthy slaves" (Luke 17:10). But this is only part of the truth. God does not need our righteousness, but He delights in it and grieves over sin (Gen 6:6). Elihu's God above the clouds needs the God of chapter 1, who said, "Have you set your heart on My servant Job?" (1:8).
35:8 *Your wickedness is for a man like yourself* Our sin hurts others, and our goodness helps them.
35:10 *Where is God my Maker, who gives songs in the night* Many cry out under oppression because they hurt (35:9), but do not seek their Maker. A cry for relief is not the same as a prayer that seeks God. "Who gives songs in the night" is one of the loveliest phrases in Job. "In the night His song is with me" (Ps 42:8). Paul and Silas, beaten and in stocks, were singing hymns at midnight (Acts 16:25). Many believers find God's presence sweetest in their darkest hours: a hymn in a hospital room, a verse at a graveside.
35:11 *who teaches us more than the animals of the earth* Even animals cry out in pain. Man was made to know God.
35:12 *There they cry out, and He does not answer, because of the pride of evil men* They want God to fix their problem but do not want God. He does not hear empty prayers (35:13; Isa 59:2; James 4:3). True, but Elihu seems to hint Job's prayers were empty, and that was unfair. They were full of pain and some bitterness, but they sought God Himself (23:3), and God did answer. Not every unanswered prayer is a sign of pride.
35:14 *the case is before Him, and you must wait for Him* Elihu means: how much less will God answer you, talking as if God were on trial. Yet his words carry hidden comfort. That is exactly right. Job's case was before God, and the right thing was to wait. "Wait for the LORD; be strong" (Ps 27:14). Job waited, and God came.
35:16 *he multiplies words without knowledge* Verse 15 is hard and runs into 16. Elihu seems to say Job took God's patience for weakness. Vapor is emptiness. Again Elihu says what God will say (38:2), and Job will admit it (42:3). But God will correct him differently. Elihu called Job's words empty. God will show Job His glory, and Job will fall silent on his own.
36:3 *to my Maker I will ascribe righteousness* Elihu's last speech runs through 37:24. His goal is to show God is righteous, a good goal for every believer.
36:4 *one complete in knowledge is with you* Bold. Some hear pride; others think he means only that his words are sincere and well thought out. The same phrase is used of God (37:16). Only God is truly complete in knowledge. We know in part (1 Cor 13:12).
36:5 *God is mighty, and He does not reject* Great men often despise small people. God, greatest of all, despises no one. "The one coming to Me I will certainly not cast out" (John 6:37).
36:7 *He does not withdraw His eyes from the righteous* He lifts them to sit with kings (1 Sam 2:8). Job felt God's eyes were on him only to find fault (7:17-20). Elihu says they are on the righteous for their good, as they were on Job in chapter 1.
36:8 *if they are bound in fetters, they are caught in cords of affliction* What if the righteous end up in chains? God uses it to show them their sins, especially pride (36:9). Many of us have found that hard times show what is really in our hearts.
36:10 *He uncovers their ear to discipline* As in 33:16. If they hear, they finish their days in good (36:11), and in a way this came true for Job (42:10-17). If not, they die without learning (36:12). Elihu's main teaching goes a step beyond the friends. Punishment looks back at what you did; discipline looks ahead to what you will become, "so that we may share His holiness" (Heb 12:10). Still, he assumes Job has pride God is correcting, not knowing the test in heaven. Truer than the friends, but not the whole answer.
36:13 *the godless of heart lay up anger* They store up anger against God instead of crying to Him, and die young among the cult prostitutes of pagan temples (36:14), a picture of a wasted life. Job did cry out, again and again. His complaints were prayers. By Elihu's own standard, Job was not godless.
36:15 *He rescues the afflicted by his affliction* The key verse of the chapter. God rescues not only from affliction but by it, opening ears through trouble. "It was good for me that I was afflicted" (Ps 119:71). We would never choose suffering, but God can use it to rescue us from worse things: pride, self-reliance and a shallow faith.

He uncovers their ear by oppression. **16** And also He has lured you from the mouth of distress ***to*** a broad place, ***where there is*** no constraint under it; and the quietness of your table was full of fatness. **17** And you are full of the judgment of the wicked; judgment and justice take hold ***of you***. **18** For ***beware of*** rage, lest it entice you into mockery; and let not the greatness of the ransom turn you aside. **19** Will your riches set ***things*** in order, ***so that you are*** not in distress, and all the efforts of strength? **20** Do not long for the night, for peoples to go up in their place. **21** Take heed; do not turn to wickedness, for this you have chosen rather than affliction.

God's Greatness in the Rain

22 Look, God is exalted in His power; who ***is*** a teacher like Him? **23** Who has appointed His way for Him? And who has said, 'You have done unrighteousness'? **24** Remember that you should magnify His work, of which men have sung. **25** All mankind has looked on it; man gazes from afar. **26** Look, God ***is*** great, and we do not know ***Him***; the number of His years—and ***there is*** no searching ***it out***. **27** For He draws up drops of water; they distill rain into its mist, **28** which the skies pour down; they drip on mankind abundantly. **29** Also, can anyone understand the spreadings of ***the*** thick cloud, the crashings of His pavilion? **30** Look, He spreads His light over it, and He covers the roots of the sea. **31** For by them He judges peoples; He gives food in abundance. **32** Over ***His*** palms He covers ***the*** light, and He commands it against the one it strikes. **33** Its roar tells about Him; the livestock also, concerning what comes up.

JOB 37

God's Voice in the Storm

1 Also at this my heart trembles, and it leaps from its place. **2** Listen, listen to the raging of His voice, and the rumbling ***that*** goes out from His mouth. **3** Under all the heavens He lets it loose, and His light to the corners of the earth. **4** After it a voice roars; He thunders with the voice of His majesty, and He does not hold them back when His voice is heard. **5** God thunders with His voice wondrously, doing great things, and we do not know ***them***. **6** For to the snow He says, 'Fall ***on the*** earth,' and ***to*** the shower of rain, and the shower of the rains of His strength. **7** He puts a seal on the hand of every man, for all the men of His work to know ***it***. **8** And the animal goes into a lair, and it dwells in its dens. **9** From the chamber comes the storm wind, and from the scattering winds, cold. **10** From the breath of God He gives ice, and the breadth of the waters ***is*** in constraint. **11** Also with moisture He burdens the thick cloud; He scatters the cloud of His light. **12** And it is turning round about by His guidance, for them to do all that He commands them over the face of the world, on

36:16 Ps 23:5; Ps 18:19; Ps 118:5
36:17 Job 16:5; Job 34:8,36; Rom 1:32
36:18 Job 33:24; Rom 1:18; Eph 5:6
36:19 Prov 11:4; Prov 11:21; Prov 10:2
36:20 Luke 12:20; Job 3:20,21; Job 6:9
36:21 Ps 66:18; Heb 11:25; 1 Pet 3:17
36:22 1 Sam 2:7,8; Luke 1:52; Rom 13:1
36:23 1 Cor 2:16; Job 8:3; Isa 40:13,14
36:24 Ps 34:3; Ps 72:18; Luke 1:46
36:26 Ps 90:2; Job 37:5; Ps 145:3
36:27 Job 38:25-28,34; Job 5:9; Gen 2:5,6
36:28 Prov 3:20; Job 37:11-13; Gen 7:11,12
36:29 Job 37:16; Job 37:2-5; Job 38:9,37
36:30 Job 38:25,34,35; Luke 17:24; Job 38:8-11
36:31 Acts 14:17; Job 37:13; Ps 136:25
36:32 Job 26:9; Exod 10:21-23; Ps 18:11
36:33 Job 37:2; Job 36:29; 2 Sam 22:14
37:1 Job 4:14; Job 21:6; Job 38:1
37:2 Job 37:5; Job 36:29,33; Job 38:1
37:3 Rev 11:19; John 12:29; Job 38:13
37:4 John 12:29; Ps 29:3-9; Ps 68:33
37:5 John 12:29; Job 5:9; Job 26:14
37:6 Job 38:22; Job 36:27; Ps 147:16-18
37:7 Ps 109:27; Ps 111:2; Job 5:12
37:8 Ps 104:22
37:9 Job 9:9; Isa 21:1; Ps 104:3
37:10 Job 38:29,30; Ps 78:47; Ps 147:16-18
37:11 Job 36:27,28; Isa 18:4; Matt 17:5
37:12 Ps 148:8; Ps 65:9,10; Ps 104:24

36:16 *He has lured you from the mouth of distress to a broad place* Elihu holds out hope. God wants to draw Job from the narrow place into freedom and a full table. "He brought me out into a broad place" (Ps 18:19). But Job is caught up arguing about justice (36:17).
36:18 *let not the greatness of the ransom turn you aside* Do not let anger lead to mocking God. Ransom is the word of 33:24. It may mean the great price Job pays in suffering, or a bribe he thinks could buy his way out. Riches and strength cannot save him (36:19). Only God can.
36:20 *Do not long for the night* Job had longed for death again and again (3:20-22; 6:8-9; 7:15). Good counsel. God has a purpose for his life still, and Job did not die in the ashes. God met him there. If death seems better than life to you now, God has not finished with you. Please talk to a pastor, a doctor or a crisis line today.
36:21 *do not turn to wickedness, for this you have chosen rather than affliction* Do not turn to sin as an escape from suffering.
36:22 *who is a teacher like Him* Elihu turns to praise. No one teaches like God, no one appoints His way or may accuse Him (36:23), the line Job had come close to crossing.
36:24 *magnify His work, of which men have sung* Instead of arguing, praise. All have seen His works from afar (36:25; Rom 1:20).
36:26 *God is great, and we do not know Him* He is eternal, with no beginning or end. His years cannot be counted.
36:27 *He draws up drops of water* The water cycle: drops drawn up into mist and cloud, then poured down as rain (36:28). Every shower is God's work. He "did not leave Himself without witness, doing good, giving us rains from heaven" (Acts 14:17).
36:29 *the crashings of His pavilion* A pavilion is a tent. The storm clouds are God's tent and the thunder its noise.
36:31 *by them He judges peoples; He gives food in abundance* The same storms can flood in judgment or water crops for food. God holds the lightning in His hands and aims it (36:32), and even the cattle sense the storm (36:33). It seems a real storm is rising as Elihu speaks, and out of it the LORD will speak (38:1).
37:1 *at this my heart trembles, and it leaps from its place* It seems a real storm has come up while Elihu speaks.
37:2 *Listen, listen to the raging of His voice* Thunder is like God's voice: "the God of glory thunders" (Ps 29:3). At Sinai there were thunders and lightnings, and all the people trembled (Exod 19:16). Lightning flashes to the corners of the earth, then the roar (37:3-4).
37:5 *God thunders with His voice wondrously, doing great things, and we do not know them* Elihu's theme, which God takes up in chapters 38 to 41. We do not understand even the weather. How can we expect to understand all God does?
37:6 *to the snow He says, Fall on the earth* God commands snow and rain, and they obey.
37:7 *He puts a seal on the hand of every man, for all the men of His work to know it* Heavy snow and rain stop work in the fields. God seals up their hands so people will stop and know He is God. A snowstorm that shuts down a city reminds us we are not in control. Even the animals take shelter (37:8).
37:10 *From the breath of God He gives ice* The storm wind comes from its chamber (37:9). God will ask Job about the storehouses of snow (38:22). When God breathes, wide waters lock in ice.
37:12 *it is turning round about by His guidance* The clouds swirl where He directs and do what He commands. The weather is not random.

the earth. **13** Whether for a rod, or for His land, or for steadfast love, He causes it to arrive.

Consider the Wonders of God

14 Give ear to this, Job (Iyov); stand still and consider the wonders of God. **15** Do you know when God lays ***His charge*** on them, and makes the light of His cloud shine forth? **16** Do you know about the balancings of the thick cloud, the wondrous works of the One complete in knowledge, **17** you whose garments ***are*** hot when the earth is still from the south? **18** Will you, with Him, spread out the skies, strong like a cast mirror? **19** Make known to us what we shall say to Him; we cannot set ***our words*** in order because of darkness. **20** Will it be recounted to Him that I would speak? Or has a man said that he would be swallowed up? **21** And now they do not see the light; it ***is*** bright in the skies, and ***the*** wind has passed by and has cleansed them. **22** From the north gold comes; on God ***is*** awesome majesty. **23** The Almighty—we have not found Him; ***He is*** great in power, and justice and abundance of righteousness He does not violate.

24 Therefore men fear Him; He does not regard any of the wise of heart."

JOB 38

The LORD Answers Job From the Storm

1 And the LORD answered Job (Iyov) from the storm, and He said, **2** "Who ***is*** this ***who*** darkens counsel by words without knowledge? **3** Gird up your loins now like a man, and I will ask you, and you make ***it*** known to Me.

The Foundations of the Earth

4 Where were you when I founded the earth? Tell ***Me***, if you know understanding. **5** Who set its measurements, if you know? Or who stretched a measuring line on it? **6** On what were its bases sunk? Or who laid its cornerstone, **7** when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? **8** And ***who*** shut in the sea with doors, when it burst

37:13 1 Kgs 18:45; 1 Sam 12:18,19; Job 38:26,27
37:14 Ps 111:2; Exod 14:13; Ps 46:10
37:15 Job 28:24-27; Job 34:13; Job 38:4-41
37:16 Job 36:4; Job 26:8; Job 36:29
37:17 Acts 27:13; Job 6:17; Job 38:31
37:18 Isa 44:24; Ps 104:2; Exod 38:8
37:19 1 John 3:2; Job 12:3; Job 13:3,6
37:20 Ps 139:4; Matt 12:36,37; Job 6:3
37:21 Job 26:9; Job 36:32; Job 38:25
37:22 Heb 1:3; Heb 8:1; Ps 104:1
37:23 Luke 10:22; 1 Tim 6:16; Job 9:4,19
37:24 Matt 10:28; Luke 12:5; 1 Cor 1:26
38:1 Job 37:1,2,9,14; Exod 19:16-19; Deut 4:11,12
38:2 Rom 9:20; Job 35:16; Job 42:3
38:3 1 Pet 1:13; Rom 9:20; Job 40:7
38:4 Ps 104:5; Prov 30:4; Heb 1:2,10
38:5 Isa 40:12,22; Job 11:9; Job 28:25
38:6 Job 26:7; Ps 104:5; Ps 93:1
38:7 Job 1:6; Job 2:1; Rev 2:28
38:8 Gen 1:9; Jer 5:22; Prov 8:29

37:13 *Whether for a rod, or for His land, or for steadfast love, He causes it to arrive* A key verse. God sends storms for different purposes: a rod to correct, simply to water His land, or out of hesed, His loyal covenant love. The friends thought every hardship was a rod. The same storm can serve different ends, and so can our trials. We cannot always tell which is which, but we can trust the God who sends them.

37:14 *stand still and consider the wonders of God* When life is hard we run in circles around our problems. Sometimes the best thing is to stop, look up, and see how great God is. Our problems do not shrink, but they look different beside Him.

37:16 *the wondrous works of the One complete in knowledge* Clouds hold vast water yet float balanced in the air. Who knows how? Elihu called himself "complete in knowledge" (36:4). Here he gives the title where it belongs. These are the kinds of questions God will ask in chapter 38.

37:17 *You whose garments are hot when the earth is still from the south* When the desert south wind blows, the air is heavy and clothes feel hot. You cannot even keep cool. How can you understand God's ways?

37:18 *strong like a cast mirror* Mirrors were polished bronze. The cloudless summer sky looks like a great shining bronze mirror. Did Job help God spread it out? This is poetry describing how the sky looks to us.

37:19 *we cannot set our words in order because of darkness* Job wanted to set his case in order before God (23:4). No one can, Elihu says, because we are in the dark compared to Him.

37:20 *has a man said that he would be swallowed up* To demand a hearing with God is like asking to be destroyed. Job said he would approach God like a noble (31:37). Elihu warns that is far too bold.

37:22 *From the north gold comes; on God is awesome majesty* Gold may be golden splendor as the storm clears, or gold from the north. Men cannot look at the sun in a clear sky (37:21). How could they look at God, who dwells "in unapproachable light" (1 Tim 6:16)? Yet God will come to Job, and Job will say, "now my eye has seen You" (42:5).

37:23 *He is great in power, and justice and abundance of righteousness He does not violate* We cannot find the Almighty or bring Him to court. But He never violates justice. These two truths together answer Job's struggle. God is far beyond us, so we cannot understand all He does. God is perfectly just, so we can trust Him when we do not understand. Job held the first and nearly let go of the second.

37:24 *Therefore men fear Him; He does not regard any of the wise of heart* God is not impressed by those wise in their own eyes. Elihu ends where chapter 28 ended (28:28). He has said true things: God speaks through dreams and pain, disciplines to save, gives songs in the night, rescues the afflicted by their affliction. He was also harsh and too sure of himself. But his last words point Job right: see God's majesty and fear Him. Then the storm becomes the place where God speaks (38:1). Elihu said "we have not found Him." God was about to find Job.

38:1 *the LORD answered Job from the storm* For the first time since the opening chapters, the narrator uses God's covenant name, the LORD. The God who speaks is the One who called Job "My servant." He answers Job, not the friends or Elihu. Job had said, "let the Almighty answer me!" (31:35), and now He does. God often speaks from storm, fire and cloud (Exod 19:16-19; 1 Kgs 19:11-12; Ezek 1:4). A great wind had killed Job's children (1:19). Now out of a storm the LORD speaks to him in mercy.

38:2 *Who is this who darkens counsel by words without knowledge* Counsel is God's wise plan. Job's words that God was cruel (30:21), had wronged him (19:6) and was his enemy (19:11) darkened it, because he did not know chapters 1 and 2. Some think this is aimed at Elihu, but verse 3 speaks to Job, and Job repeats it of himself (42:3). Notice God does not call Job wicked or accuse him of the friends' charges. He says Job spoke without knowledge. A much smaller charge, and true.

38:3 *Gird up your loins now like a man* Tuck the long robe into the belt to work or fight: brace yourself. Job wanted to question God (13:22; 23:4-5). God turns it around. This is not cruel. God treats Job as a man worth talking to. He does not strike him down. He engages him.

38:4 *Where were you when I founded the earth* The first of God's great questions. No man was there. Only God knows how it was done, measuring it out like a builder with his line (38:5).

38:6 *who laid its cornerstone* The first stone set the lines for the rest. The One who laid the world's cornerstone laid the cornerstone of our salvation. All things were made through the Son (John 1:3; Col 1:16), and Christ is the cornerstone laid in Zion: "the one who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame" (1 Pet 2:6).

38:7 *When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy* The sons of God are the angels of 1:6 and 2:1, present at creation. The morning stars may be angels too, or the stars pictured as joining the song. Creation was a celebration. Job's world had become mourning (30:31), and God takes him back to the beginning, when the universe rang with joy.

38:8 *who shut in the sea with doors, when it burst forth and came out from the womb* The sea pictured chaos and danger. God pictures its birth like a baby, wrapped in clouds as swaddling bands (38:9). The mighty sea is like a newborn in His hands.

forth ***and*** came out from the womb, **9** when I made ***the*** cloud its clothing, and thick darkness its swaddling band, **10** and I broke My boundary on it, and set a bar and doors, **11** and I said, 'As far as here you shall come, and you shall not add; and here ***one*** shall set ***a limit*** against the pride of your waves'? **12** Have you, since your days ***began***, commanded ***the*** morning? Have you made the dawn know its place, **13** to take hold of the corners of the earth, and the wicked be shaken out of it? **14** It is changed like the clay of a seal, and they stand out like clothing. **15** And from the wicked their light is withheld, and the uplifted arm is broken. **16** Have you gone to the springs of the sea, and have you walked about in the recesses of the deep? **17** Have the gates of death been revealed to you, and have you seen the gates of deep darkness? **18** Have you understood the broad spaces of the earth? Tell ***Me***, if you know all of it. **19** Where ***is*** this, the way ***where*** light dwells? And darkness, where ***is*** this, its place, **20** that you should take it to its territory, and that you should discern the paths of its house? **21** You know, for then you were born, and the number of your days ***is*** many!

Snow, Rain and the Stars

22 Have you gone into the storehouses of the snow, and have you seen the storehouses of the hail, **23** which I have kept back for a time of distress, for a day of battle and war? **24** Where ***is*** this, the way ***where*** light is divided, ***where*** the east wind scatters over the earth? **25** Who has divided a channel for the flood, and a way for the thunderbolt of the thunders, **26** to bring rain on a land ***where there is*** no man, a wilderness ***where there is*** no man in it, **27** to satisfy devastation and desolation, and to make the going forth of vegetation sprout? **28** Does the rain have a father? Or who has fathered the drops of dew? **29** From whose womb did the ice come forth? And the frost of the heavens, who has given birth to it? **30** Like stone the waters hide themselves, and the face of the deep is seized. **31** Can you bind the bonds of the Pleiades, or loosen the cords of Orion? **32** Can you lead out Mazzaroth in its season, and guide the Bear with her young ones? **33** Do you know the statutes of the heavens? Can you set its rule over the earth? **34** Can you lift up your voice to the thick cloud, so that an abundance of water covers you? **35** Can you send out lightnings, so that they go and say to you, 'Here we ***are***'? **36** Who has put wisdom in the inner parts? Or who has given understanding to the mind? **37** Who can count the skies by wisdom? And the waterskins of the heavens, who can make ***them*** lie down, **38** when the dust flows into a mass, and the clods stick together?

The Lion and the Raven

39 Can you hunt prey for the lion, or fill the appetite of the young lions, **40** when they crouch in the dens, ***and*** remain in

38:9 Gen 1:2
38:10 Ps 104:9; Job 26:10; Jer 5:22
38:11 Ps 89:9; Ps 65:6,7; Ps 93:3,4
38:12 2 Pet 1:19; Ps 74:16; Gen 1:5
38:13 Job 37:3; Ps 19:4-6; Ps 139:9-12
38:14 Ps 104:2,6
38:15 Ps 10:15; Job 18:5,18; Ps 37:17
38:16 Ps 77:19; Prov 8:24; Jer 51:36
38:17 Matt 4:16; Matt 16:18; Ps 9:13
38:18 Ps 74:17; Ps 89:11,12; Isa 40:28
38:19 Job 38:12,13; Gen 1:3,4,14-18; Deut 4:19
38:20 Gen 10:19; Gen 23:17
38:21 Job 15:7; Job 38:4,12
38:22 Rev 11:19; Job 37:6; Ps 135:7
38:23 Rev 11:19; Josh 10:11; Isa 30:30
38:24 Job 38:12,13; Jonah 4:8; Matt 24:27
38:25 Job 28:26; Job 36:27,28; Job 37:3-6
38:26 Ps 107:35; Ps 104:10-14; Ps 147:8,9
38:28 Jer 14:22; Job 38:8; Job 5:9,10
38:29 Ps 147:16,17; Job 37:10; Job 38:8
38:30 Job 37:10
38:31 Job 9:9; Amos 5:8
38:32 2 Kgs 23:5; Job 9:9
38:33 Jer 31:35,36; Gen 1:16; Gen 8:22
38:34 1 Sam 12:18; Amos 5:8; Zech 10:1
38:35 Exod 9:23-25,29; Lev 10:2; Num 11:1
38:36 Job 32:8; Ps 51:6; Eccl 2:26
38:37 Gen 15:5; Ps 147:4; Gen 8:1
38:39 Ps 104:21; Job 4:10,11; Ps 145:15,16
38:40 Gen 49:9; Num 23:24; Num 24:9

38:11 *As far as here you shall come, and you shall not add* God set the sea its bar and doors (Jer 5:22). Job's suffering had felt like a flood with no limits. But God set limits on Satan too: "only against him do not stretch out your hand" (1:12), "only guard his life" (2:6). The forces that seemed to overwhelm Job were on God's leash. When Jesus stilled the storm, the disciples asked, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?" (Mark 4:41). Only the LORD rules the sea.
38:12 *Have you, since your days began, commanded the morning* Every morning God commands the dawn, and it comes.
38:13 *To take hold of the corners of the earth, and the wicked be shaken out of it* Dawn grabs the earth's edges like a blanket and shakes out the wicked who love the dark (24:13-17). The landscape takes shape like clay under a seal (38:14), and the night that was the wicked's "light" is taken away (38:15). God answers part of chapter 24. Every morning He limits the wicked. Job does not see all God does to hold back evil.
38:16 *Have you gone to the springs of the sea* No one in Job's day had, and even today most of the deep sea has never been seen by human eyes. God knows every part.
38:17 *Have the gates of death been revealed to you* Job spoke often of death (3:13-19; 10:21-22) as though he knew what lay beyond. Only God knows. The risen Jesus said, "I have the keys of Hades and of Death" (Rev 1:18).
38:21 *You know, for then you were born, and the number of your days is many* Do you know where light lives, or could you lead darkness home (38:19-20)? Gentle irony, not mockery meant to wound, the kind a father uses with a son who thinks he knows more than he does. Job is a creature of a few years. God is eternal.
38:23 *which I have kept back for a time of distress, for a day of battle and war* Snow and hail stored up ready for God's use (38:22). He sent hail on Egypt (Exod 9:23-26) and on Israel's enemies (Josh 10:11), and great hail falls in the last judgments (Rev 16:21).
38:26 *to bring rain on a land where there is no man* God waters empty desert so grass can grow where no human will see it (38:27). The world is not only about us. God cares for the wild places for their own sake. Job, like most of us, had seen the world mainly in terms of how it treated him. If God cares for grass in an empty wilderness, will He not care for Job?
38:28 *Does the rain have a father* God is the Father of rain, dew, ice and frost (38:28-29). For people in a warm land, water turned hard as stone was a wonder (38:30).
38:31 *Can you bind the bonds of the Pleiades, or loosen the cords of Orion* Job had named them himself (9:9). The LORD made them (Amos 5:8).
38:32 *Can you lead out Mazzaroth in its season, and guide the Bear with her young ones* Mazzaroth may be the zodiac constellations or a particular star group; the Bear is probably the Big Dipper. God "counts the number of the stars" (Ps 147:4).
38:33 *Do you know the statutes of the heavens* Seasons, tides and stars follow His laws. That does not mean the stars control our lives. Scripture forbids reading the stars for the future (Deut 18:10-12; Isa 47:13-14).
38:35 *Can you send out lightnings, so that they go and say to you, Here we are* Can you call lightning like a servant reporting for duty? God can, and He can shout rain from the clouds (38:34).
38:36 *Who has put wisdom in the inner parts* Even Job's mind is God's gift. The words are uncertain, and some versions read birds that sense coming weather. Either way, all wisdom comes from God. Who tips the waterskins of the heavens onto cracked ground (38:37-38)? Only God.
38:39 *Can you hunt prey for the lion* God turns to the animals, through chapter 39. He feeds the fiercest hunters (38:40).

the thicket for lying in wait? **41** Who prepares for the raven
its food, when its young ones cry for help to God, ***and*** wander
about without food?

JOB 39

The Wild Goats and the Wild Donkey

1 Do you know the time of the bearing of the mountain goats
of the rock? Do you watch the giving birth of the does? **2** Can
you count the months ***that*** they fulfill, and do you know the
time of their bearing? **3** They kneel down; they bring forth
their young; they send away their labor pains. **4** Their young
become strong; they grow in the open field; they go forth
and do not return to them. **5** Who let the wild donkey go
free? And the fetters of the wild ass, who loosened ***them***,
6 whose home I appointed the desert plain, and its dwelling
places the salt land? **7** It laughs at the tumult of the town; it
does not hear the shoutings of the driver. **8** It explores the
mountains ***as*** its pasture, and it searches after every green
thing. **9** Is the wild ox willing to serve you? Or will it spend
the night at your feeding trough? **10** Can you bind the wild
ox in the furrow ***with*** its rope? Or will it harrow the valleys
behind you? **11** Will you trust in it because its strength ***is***
great, and will you leave your toil to it? **12** Will you believe in
it, that it will bring back your seed, and gather ***it to*** your
threshing floor?

The Ostrich

13 The wing of the ostriches flaps joyously; ***but is it*** the
pinion of the stork, and ***its*** plumage? **14** For she abandons
her eggs to the earth, and on the dust she keeps ***them*** warm,
15 and she has forgotten that a foot may crush them, and the
animal of the field may trample them. **16** She treats her
young roughly, as ***if they were*** not hers; her labor ***is*** in vain,
without dread, **17** because God has made her forget wisdom,
and He has not given her a share in understanding. **18** At the
time she lifts herself on high, she laughs at the horse and at
its rider.

The War Horse

19 Do you give the horse strength? Do you clothe its neck
with a mane? **20** Do you make it leap like the locust? The
majesty of its snorting ***is*** terror. **21** They paw in the valley,
and it rejoices in strength; it goes out to meet the weapons.
22 It laughs at dread, and it is not dismayed; and it does not
turn back from before the sword. **23** On it the quiver rattles,
the flame of the spear and the javelin. **24** With shaking and
turmoil it swallows the ground, and it does not stand firm at
the sound of the horn. **25** As often as the horn ***sounds***, it says,
'Aha!' And from afar it smells the battle, the thunder of the
commanders, and the battle cry.

The Hawk and the Eagle

26 Is it by your understanding ***that*** the hawk soars, ***that*** it

38:41 Ps 147:9; Matt 6:26; Luke 12:24
39:1 1 Sam 24:2; Ps 104:18; Ps 29:9
39:2 Jer 2:24
39:5 Job 6:5; Job 11:12; Job 24:5
39:6 Ps 107:34; Deut 29:23; Jer 17:6
39:7 Job 3:18; Job 39:18; Isa 31:4
39:8 Job 40:15,20-22; Gen 1:29,30; Ps 104:27,28
39:9 Num 23:22; Deut 33:17; Ps 92:10
39:10 Job 39:5,7; Job 1:14; Job 41:5
39:11 Ps 20:7; Ps 33:16,17; Ps 147:10
39:12 Neh 13:15; Amos 2:13; Prov 3:16
39:13 Jer 8:7; Zech 5:9; 1 Kgs 10:22
39:16 Lam 4:3; Deut 28:56,57; 1 Kgs 3:26,27
39:17 Job 35:11; Job 17:4; Deut 2:30
39:18 Job 39:7,22; Job 5:22; Job 41:29
39:19 Ps 147:10; Exod 15:1; Ps 93:1
39:20 Jer 8:16; Job 41:20,21
39:21 Jer 8:6; Judg 5:22; 1 Sam 17:4-10,42
39:22 Job 39:16,18; Job 41:33
39:23 Job 41:26-29
39:24 Job 37:20; Hab 1:8,9; Job 9:16
39:25 Ps 70:3; Ezek 26:2; Ezek 36:2
39:26 Lev 16:11; Deut 14:15; Song 2:12

38:41 *when its young ones cry for help to God* The raven was unclean (Lev 11:15), a scavenger no one valued, yet God hears its young. Job felt God did not hear his cries (19:7; 30:20). "Consider the ravens" (Luke 12:24), Jesus said, for "God feeds them. How much more valuable are you than the birds!" (Luke 12:24). God did not answer Job's question "Why?" He answered a deeper one: "Who?" Who rules sea, morning, snow, stars, lion and raven? If He rules all that with wisdom and care, Job can trust Him without knowing why. So can we. "He who indeed did not spare His own Son, but handed Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?" (Rom 8:32).
39:1 *Do you know the time of the bearing of the mountain goats of the rock* The ibex lived high on cliffs, and no one had seen them give birth. God knows how long they carry their young (39:2) and attends every birth where no human eye sees (39:3-4). Job's children were gone, and he had cursed his own birth (3:3). Here God shows He is present at the birth of a goat on a cliff. Not one sparrow falls apart from the Father (Matt 10:29). If He watches the birth of a wild goat, He watched over Job's children, in their births and their deaths.
39:5 *Who let the wild donkey go free* A fast, tough desert animal no one could tame, given the salt land for its home (39:6).
39:7 *It laughs at the tumult of the town* The tame donkey carries loads while its driver shouts. The wild donkey roams free and finds its own food (39:8). God made some creatures to serve man and others to be free. Not everything in God's world exists for our use, a humbling thought for people who measure everything by how it serves them.
39:9 *Is the wild ox willing to serve you* A huge, powerful animal, larger than any tame ox and now extinct. No one could tie it to a plow or trust it with a harvest (39:10-12). There are powers in God's world man cannot tame. Only God rules them.
39:13 *The wing of the ostriches flaps joyously* She flaps proudly but cannot fly like the stork, known for caring for its young.
39:14 *she abandons her eggs to the earth* To ancient watchers she seemed to leave her eggs in the sand where a foot might crush them, and to treat her young roughly (39:15-16), a picture of cruelty in Lam 4:3. This is poetry describing how she looked, not a lesson in zoology.
39:17 *God has made her forget wisdom* God says He made her this way, and her kind goes on.
39:18 *she laughs at the horse and at its rider* For all her foolishness, she can outrun a horse. It is almost funny. God's world is full of things that do not make sense to us, yet they work because He made them. If God has His reasons for the ostrich, He has them for what He allows in Job's life, even when they look foolish or careless from the ash heap.
39:19 *Do you give the horse strength* The war horse, one of the most magnificent animals of the ancient world, leaping like a locust, snorting terror (39:20).
39:22 *It laughs at dread, and it is not dismayed* It paws the valley and charges toward the weapons (39:21), unafraid of the sword.
39:25 *As often as the horn sounds, it says, Aha* Quivers rattle and spears flash (39:23). It swallows the ground and cannot stand still at the trumpet (39:24), smelling the battle from afar. Its courage is God's gift. Yet "the horse is a deception for salvation" (Ps 33:17), and "the victory belongs to the LORD" (Prov 21:31).
39:26 *Is it by your understanding that the hawk soars, that it spreads its wings toward the south* Some hawks migrate south as seasons change. God put that knowledge in them.

spreads its wings toward the south? **27** Or is it at your mouth ***that*** the eagle mounts up, and that it sets its nest on high? **28** It dwells ***on*** the rock and spends the night on the tooth of the rock and the stronghold. **29** From there it spies out food; its eyes look from afar. **30** And its young ones suck up blood; and where the slain ***are***, there it ***is***."

JOB 40

Job Has No Answer

1 And the LORD answered Job (Iyov), and He said, **2** "Will a faultfinder contend with the Almighty? Let the one who rebukes God answer it." **3** And Job answered the LORD, and he said, **4** "Look, I am insignificant; what shall I reply to You? I have put my hand on my mouth. **5** Once I have spoken, and I will not answer; and twice, and I will not add ***more***."

The LORD's Second Speech

6 And the LORD answered Job from the storm, and He said, **7** "Gird up your loins now like a man; I will ask you, and you make ***it*** known to Me. **8** Will you even annul My justice? Will you condemn Me so that you may be justified? **9** And do you have an arm like God? And can you thunder with a voice like His? **10** Adorn yourself now ***with*** majesty and dignity, and clothe yourself ***with*** splendor and honor. **11** Scatter the outbursts of your anger, and see every proud one, and bring him low. **12** See every proud one ***and*** humble him, and tread down the wicked in their place. **13** Hide them in the dust together; bind their faces in the hidden place. **14** And I also will praise you, for your right hand can save you.

Behemoth

15 Look now, Behemoth, which I made with you; it eats grass like the ox. **16** Look now, its strength ***is*** in its loins, and its power in the muscles of its belly. **17** It sways its tail like a cedar; the sinews of its thighs are intertwined. **18** Its bones ***are*** tubes of bronze; its limbs ***are*** like a rod of iron. **19** It ***is*** the first of the ways of God; the One who made it, let Him bring near His sword. **20** For the mountains bring it produce, and every animal of the field plays there. **21** Under the lotus plants it lies, in the hiding place of ***the*** reed and ***the*** swamp. **22** The lotus plants cover it ***as*** its shade; the poplars of the

39:27 Jer 49:16; Obad 1:4; Exod 19:4
39:28 1 Sam 14:4
39:29 Job 9:26
39:30 Matt 24:28; Luke 17:37; Ezek 39:17-19
40:1 Job 38:1; Job 40:6
40:2 Rom 9:20; Job 33:13; Job 9:3
40:4 Job 29:9; Job 21:5; Job 42:6
40:5 Job 33:14; Ps 62:11; Job 34:31,32
40:6 Job 38:1; Ps 50:3,4; Heb 12:18-20
40:7 1 Pet 1:13; Job 38:3; Job 42:4
40:8 Rom 3:4; Gal 3:17; Rom 9:20
40:9 Job 37:4,5; Job 9:4; Job 23:6
40:10 Ps 93:1; Isa 59:17; Ps 149:4
40:11 James 4:6; Dan 4:37; Isa 2:11,12,17
40:12 James 4:6; Mal 4:3; Ps 60:12
40:13 Isa 2:10; Job 14:13; Ps 49:14
40:14 Ps 44:3,6; Isa 40:29; Rom 5:6
40:15 Gen 1:24-26; Job 40:20; Job 39:8
40:17 Job 41:23
40:18 Job 7:12; Isa 48:4
40:19 Job 26:13; Ps 104:24; Ps 7:12
40:20 Ps 104:14,26; Job 40:15; Ps 147:8,9
40:21 Isa 19:6,7; Isa 35:7
40:22 Lev 23:40; Isa 15:7; Ezek 17:5

39:27 *is it at your mouth that the eagle mounts up* The eagle nests on the highest crag, a tooth of rock no enemy can reach (39:28), and spots prey from far away (39:29).
39:30 *where the slain are, there it is* The eagle or vulture feeds its young on flesh. Jesus used a like saying (Matt 24:28). God does not hide death from Job. Creation now is under the curse (Rom 8:20-22), but even there God provides, and nothing is outside His rule. Goat, deer, wild donkey, wild ox, ostrich, horse, hawk and eagle: God knows and cares for every creature (Ps 104:24); Job can neither control nor understand most of them; and in showing His world, God shows Himself. He did not answer Job's question, but He answered Job's need. Job needed to see God, and now he is beginning to.
40:2 *Will a faultfinder contend with the Almighty* A faultfinder is a critic. Job wanted to argue God in court (13:3; 23:4). Here I am, answer Me. Not a trap but an invitation. Yet after seeing God's glory, Job no longer wants to argue.
40:4 *Look, I am insignificant; what shall I reply to You? I have put my hand on my mouth* Insignificant means small, of little weight. Job said he would approach God like a noble (31:37). Now he feels very small, as anyone does who truly meets God (Isa 6:5; Rev 1:17). He had told his friends to put their hands over their mouths (21:5), and princes had done it before him (29:9). Now he does it before God.
40:5 *Once I have spoken, and I will not answer* He has said enough. He does not yet say he was wrong; that comes in chapter 42. Silence is sometimes the first step of repentance. "Let go, and know that I am God" (Ps 46:10).
40:7 *Gird up your loins now like a man* The words of 38:3. God speaks again from the storm (40:6). Job's silence is a start, but God wants to take him further.
40:8 *Will you condemn Me so that you may be justified* The heart of the second speech and the real issue between God and Job. Job was right that he was innocent, but in insisting on it he came to say God was unjust (19:6; 27:2; 30:21). For Job to be right, God had to be wrong. He did not need to choose. Both were true. There was a third thing he could not see: the test in heaven and God's purpose in it. When we suffer without understanding, we are tempted to think either that we must be guilty or that God must be unfair. Often the answer is that there is something we cannot see, and God is still good. "Let God be true, and every man a liar" (Rom 3:4).
40:9 *do you have an arm like God? And can you thunder with a voice like His* If you would judge God, do you have His power?
40:10 *Adorn yourself now with majesty and dignity* Gentle irony: put on God's royal robes and try being God for a while.
40:12 *See every proud one and humble him, and tread down the wicked in their place* Job complained God does not punish the wicked (21:7-33; 24:1-25). All right, you do it. Humble every proud person and bury them all (40:11-13). Judging all the wicked justly, at the right time and in the right way, is beyond any man. Job could not even begin.
40:14 *your right hand can save you* No one can save himself by his own right hand. That is why we need a Savior: "His own arm brought salvation to Him" (Isa 59:16). God will judge the wicked through His Son (Acts 17:31; Rev 20:11-15), and He saves those who humble themselves: "Be humbled before the Lord, and He will exalt you" (James 4:10).
40:15 *Look now, Behemoth, which I made with you; it eats grass like the ox* Behemoth is the plural of beast, the beast of beasts. God made it just as He made Job. Teachers identify it differently. Many say the hippopotamus, which eats grass, lives among reeds and lotus, and is unmoved by floods. Others say the elephant. Some believe it was an extinct creature such as one of the great long-necked plant-eating dinosaurs, since a hippo's or elephant's tail is not "like a cedar." Others take it as a poetic picture of the greatest power on land, as Leviathan is of the sea. What is certain: God made it. It is His creature, not a god or a monster of pagan myth. If Job stands in awe of a creature, how much more of its Creator?
40:17 *It sways its tail like a cedar* Strength in its loins and belly (40:16), a stiff tail, knotted thighs, bones like bronze tubes and iron rods (40:18).
40:19 *It is the first of the ways of God* The first means the chief, the masterpiece among God's land creatures. Only its Maker can come near it with a sword. No man can master it.
40:20 *every animal of the field plays there* Though so powerful, it eats grass from the hills, and other animals play nearby without fear.
40:21 *Under the lotus plants it lies, in the hiding place of the reed and the swamp* Shaded by lotus and the poplars of the streambed (40:22). This fits the hippopotamus well.

wadi surround it. **23** Look, the river is violent, ***yet*** it is not alarmed; it is confident though ***the*** Jordan (Yarden) bursts forth to its mouth. **24** By its eyes will anyone take it? With snares will anyone pierce ***its*** nose?

JOB 41

Leviathan

1 Can you draw out Leviathan with a fishhook, and with a cord hold down its tongue? **2** Can you put a rush cord in its nose, and pierce its jaw with a hook? **3** Will it multiply supplications to you? Will it speak soft ***words*** to you? **4** Will it make a covenant with you? Will you take it for a slave forever? **5** Will you play with it like the bird, and will you bind it for your girls? **6** Will partners bargain over it? Will they divide it among ***the*** merchants? **7** Can you fill its hide with harpoons, and its head with a fish spear? **8** Put your hand on it; remember the battle; do not do ***it*** again! **9** Look, his hope is proved a lie; is he not thrown down even at the sight of it? **10** No one ***is so*** fierce that he would rouse it; and who ***is*** he ***who*** can take his stand before Me? **11** Who has confronted Me, that I should repay ***him***? Under all the heavens, it ***is*** Mine.

Leviathan's Strength

12 Concerning it I will keep silent ***about*** its limbs, and the matter of ***its*** mighty strength, and the grace of its arrangement. **13** Who has uncovered the face of its clothing? Into the doubling of its bridle who will come? **14** The doors of its face, who has opened ***them***? Around its teeth ***is*** terror. **15** Pride ***is in*** the rows of shields, shut up ***with*** a tight seal. **16** One draws near to one, and air does not come between them. **17** Each is joined to its brother; they grasp one another, and they are not separated. **18** Its sneezings flash forth light, and its eyes ***are*** like the eyelids of ***the*** dawn. **19** Out of its mouth go torches; sparks of fire escape. **20** Out of its nostrils goes forth smoke, like a pot blown upon, and rushes. **21** Its breath kindles coals, and a flame goes forth from its mouth. **22** In its neck strength lodges, and before it dismay dances. **23** The folds of its flesh cling together, cast hard on it; it is not moved. **24** Its heart ***is*** hard like a stone, and hard like a lower millstone. **25** From its rising up the mighty are afraid; from ***its*** crashings they are bewildered. **26** ***When*** one reaches it ***with*** a sword, it will not stand, ***nor will*** spear, dart, and lance. **27** It counts iron as straw, bronze as rotten wood. **28** The son of the bow does not make it flee; for it the stones of a sling are turned into chaff. **29** The club is regarded like chaff, and it laughs at the shaking of the javelin. **30** Under it ***are*** the sharp points of potsherds; it

40:23 Gen 13:10; Isa 37:25; Ps 55:8
40:24 Job 41:1,2
41:1 Ps 74:14; Job 3:8; Ps 104:26
41:2 Isa 37:29; Ezek 29:4,5; Isa 27:1
41:3 Ps 55:21; Prov 15:1; Prov 18:23
41:4 Exod 21:6; Deut 15:17; 1 Kgs 20:31-34
41:5 Judg 16:25-30; Job 28:11
41:6 Judg 14:11
41:8 1 Kgs 20:11; 2 Kgs 10:4; Luke 14:31,32
41:9 Deut 28:34; 1 Sam 3:11; Isa 28:19
41:10 Job 9:4; Gen 49:9; Num 24:9
41:11 Rom 11:35; Ps 24:1; Exod 19:5
41:12 Gen 1:25
41:13 2 Kgs 19:28; Ps 32:9; James 3:3
41:14 Job 38:10; Eccl 12:4; Ps 57:4
41:15 Rev 5:2; Jer 9:23
41:18 Job 3:9; Rev 1:14
41:19 Ps 18:8
41:20 Jer 1:13,14
41:21 Ps 18:8,12; Isa 30:33; Hab 3:5
41:22 Job 39:19; Job 40:16; Hos 13:14
41:24 Isa 48:4; Jer 5:3; Zech 7:12
41:25 Ps 107:28; Jonah 1:4-6
41:26 Job 39:21-24
41:28 Job 39:7; Hab 1:10
41:29 2 Chr 26:14

40:23 *it is confident though the Jordan bursts forth to its mouth* Even a flooding river like the Jordan does not alarm it.
40:24 *By its eyes will anyone take it* No one can capture it or lead it by a nose ring. If you cannot master a creature I made alongside you, how can you put Me on trial or run the world in My place? God is not mocking Job. He shows him where he stands: a creature, small and loved, before a Creator great beyond measure. That is not a place of despair but of rest. We do not have to run the universe or understand everything. We can be small and trust Him.
41:1 *Can you draw out Leviathan with a fishhook* In some Bibles the chapter begins at what is 41:9 here, because the Hebrew divides the chapters differently; the SLB follows the English numbering. Job had spoken of rousing Leviathan (3:8). Can you catch it like a fish, with a cord through its jaw (41:2)?
41:3 *Will it multiply supplications to you* Will it beg for mercy like a captive?
41:4 *Will it make a covenant with you* Gentle irony. Job wanted God to come to terms with him. Can he even bring Leviathan to terms?
41:5 *Will you play with it like the bird* A pet on a string for your daughters? God formed Leviathan to play in the sea (Ps 104:26). God can play with it. Job cannot. Nor can merchants sell it or harpoons wound it (41:6-7).
41:8 *Put your hand on it; remember the battle; do not do it again* Touch it once and you will never forget the fight. Just seeing it throws a man down (41:9).
41:10 *who is he who can take his stand before Me* The point of the whole description. No man dares rouse Leviathan. If you cannot stand before a creature, who can stand before its Maker? Job wanted to stand before God and argue (13:3; 23:3-7; 31:35-37).
41:11 *Who has confronted Me, that I should repay him? Under all the heavens, it is Mine* God owes no one anything. "Who has first given to Him, and it will be repaid to him?" (Rom 11:35). Job could not demand an answer as if God owed it. Yet God, who owes nothing, gave Job more than an answer. He gave Job Himself.
41:12 *the grace of its arrangement* God will not keep silent about its body, power and form. He is proud of this creature, as an artist of his best work.
41:14 *The doors of its face, who has opened them? Around its teeth is terror* The doors of its face are its jaws. No one can strip its armor or bridle its double row of teeth (41:13).
41:15 *Pride is in the rows of shields, shut up with a tight seal* Scales so close that not even air comes between them (41:16-17). No weapon can find a gap.
41:18 *Its sneezings flash forth light, and its eyes are like the eyelids of the dawn* Fire from its mouth and smoke from its nostrils like a boiling pot (41:19-21). Some take this as poetry: a great creature's spray catching the sun like sparks, its breath like smoke on a cool morning. Others believe God describes a real creature, now extinct, that could produce something like fire, as some insects make a burning spray. Scripture does not say. Either way, Leviathan is terrifying beyond anything Job could face.
41:22 *before it dismay dances* Terror runs ahead of it. Its flesh is firm as cast metal (41:23).
41:24 *Its heart is hard like a stone, and hard like a lower millstone* The lower millstone was the hardest stone, taking the weight. It knows no fear or pity, and even the mighty are afraid when it rises (41:25).
41:27 *It counts iron as straw, bronze as rotten wood* Sword, spear and dart glance off (41:26). The son of the bow is the arrow, and sling stones are chaff to it (41:28). It laughs at the javelin (41:29), as the war horse laughs at fear (39:22).
41:30 *it spreads out a threshing sledge on the mud* Its underside of sharp scales leaves marks like a threshing sledge, a heavy board set with sharp stones dragged over grain.

spreads out a threshing sledge on the mud. **31** It makes the depths boil like the pot; it makes the sea like the ointment pot. **32** Behind it, it makes a path shine; one would think the deep ***to be*** gray hair. **33** On the dust ***there is*** not its likeness, one made without terror. **34** It sees every lofty ***thing***; it ***is*** king over all the sons of pride."

JOB 42

Job Repents

1 And Job (Iyov) answered the LORD, and he said, **2** "I know that You are able ***to do*** everything, and no purpose is withheld from You. **3** 'Who ***is*** this ***who*** conceals counsel without knowledge?' Therefore I have told, and I did not understand, ***things*** too wonderful for me, and I did not know ***them***. **4** 'Listen now, and I will speak; I will ask you, and you make ***it*** known to Me.' **5** By the hearing of the ear I had heard of You, and now my eye has seen You. **6** Therefore I reject ***it***, and I repent on dust and ashes."

The LORD Rebukes the Friends

7 And it was after the LORD had spoken these words to Job, and the LORD said to Eliphaz (Elifaz) the Temanite, "My anger has burned against you and against your two friends, for you have not spoken concerning Me ***what is*** right, as My servant Job ***has***. **8** And now, take for yourselves seven bulls and seven rams, and go to My servant Job, and offer up a burnt offering for yourselves; and Job My servant shall pray for you, for surely his face I will lift up, so as not to do with you ***according to your*** folly; for you have not spoken concerning Me ***what is*** right, as My servant Job ***has***." **9** And Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite ***and*** Zophar (Tsofar) the Naamathite went, and they did as the LORD had spoken to them; and the LORD lifted up the face of Job.

Job Restored

10 And the LORD turned back the captivity of Job when he prayed for his friends; and the LORD increased all that ***belonged*** to Job to double. **11** And all his brothers and all his

41:32 Gen 1:15; Job 28:14; Job 38:16,30
41:33 Job 40:19
41:34 Job 26:12; Isa 28:1; Ezek 29:3
42:2 John 21:17; Matt 19:26; Gen 18:14
42:3 Ps 40:5; Ps 131:1; Ps 139:6
42:4 Job 38:3; Job 40:7; Gen 18:27,30-32
42:5 Luke 5:8; Rom 10:17; John 1:18
42:6 Luke 5:8; Ezra 9:6; Job 40:3,4
42:7 Mark 14:6; Job 2:11; Job 4:1
42:8 Mark 14:6; Acts 8:24; Num 23:1,14,29
42:9 Job 34:31,32; Isa 60:14; Matt 7:24
42:10 James 5:11; Ps 14:7; Job 8:6,7
42:11 James 5:11; Job 2:11; Job 19:13,14

41:31 *It makes the depths boil like the pot* The sea churns like boiling ointment, and its white wake looks like gray hair on the deep (41:32).
41:33 *On the dust there is not its likeness, one made without terror* Nothing on earth is like it, but "made" is the key word. It is not a god. It is a creature.
41:34 *it is king over all the sons of pride* The sons of pride are the proud beasts (28:8). God ends without a lesson and lets Job draw it. God told Job to humble every proud one (40:11-12). Job cannot even catch the king of the proud. God made it, rules it and plays with it. Many say Leviathan is the crocodile, armored, toothed and feared in Egypt. Some think a whale, since it is in the sea where ships go (Ps 104:26), and some an extinct sea reptile or dinosaur-like creature. Others see a poetic picture of chaos and pride. The psalmist says God "crushed the heads of Leviathan" (Ps 74:14) at the Red Sea, and will slay "Leviathan the fleeing serpent" (Isa 27:1), which some see as Satan, "the ancient serpent" (Rev 12:9). The nations told myths of a sea monster the gods fought, but in Job 41 Leviathan is no rival. It is God's creature. We cannot tame the pride in our own hearts, but God can, and no man can stand against Satan alone. But the Son of God came "so that He might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8), triumphed at the cross (Col 2:15), and "the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet quickly" (Rom 16:20).
42:2 *I know that You are able to do everything, and no purpose is withheld from You* Job's last speech begins with God, not himself. He said this before with fear (9:12; 23:13). Now he says it with trust. If God's purposes cannot be stopped, His purpose in Job's suffering will be carried out, and it will be good.
42:3 *I have told, and I did not understand, things too wonderful for me* Job repeats God's first question (38:2) and answers it: I am the one. The heart of his repentance. Not the friends' charges or a secret crime; God called him blameless (1:8; 2:3). His sin was speaking beyond his knowledge, calling God unjust, cruel and his enemy, and demanding an answer as if God owed it. Every one of us has judged God by the little we can see. Job's confession is a good one to make our own.
42:4 *Listen now, and I will speak* Job quotes God's words back (38:3; 40:7). You told me to listen and answer. Here is my answer.
42:5 *By the hearing of the ear I had heard of You, and now my eye has seen You* One of the most important verses in the book. Before, Job knew God faithfully but secondhand. Now he has met Him, His glory in the storm and His heart in coming to speak. God never told Job why he suffered, but once he saw God he no longer needed the explanation. Knowing God was better than knowing why. Many Christians say they knew God most deeply in their darkest season. Job's hope of 19:26-27 had begun to come true, and it will fully: "we will see Him just as He is" (1 John 3:2; Matt 5:8).
42:6 *I reject it, and I repent on dust and ashes* The Hebrew does not say what Job rejects. Many versions read that he abhors himself. Most likely he takes back his bold words and his proud demand to be proved right. He is not saying he is worthless. He sat in ashes in grief (2:8); now in repentance, as Abraham called himself dust and ashes (Gen 18:27). Let me say it plainly: Job did not repent of the friends' charges or confess that his suffering was punishment. He repented of darkening God's counsel and condemning God to justify himself (40:8). His suffering came first, for reasons in heaven. His repentance came at the end, for what he said in it. Do not let anyone tell you your trouble proves hidden sin, and do not fear bringing God what you said in your pain. "A broken and crushed heart, God, You will not despise" (Ps 51:17).
42:7 *you have not spoken concerning Me what is right, as My servant Job has* The LORD's verdict, in prose again, and it is stunning. The friends said many true things but built them on one false idea: great suffering always means great sin. They made God a machine and used that false picture to slander an innocent man (22:5-9). God takes it seriously when people misrepresent Him, even in His defense. Not every word Job spoke was right (38:2; 40:8). But he refused to say his suffering proved guilt, would not lie about God or himself, told the truth about the world, kept speaking to God, hoped in his Redeemer, and humbled himself when God spoke. Honest faith that wrestles with God is closer to the truth than a tidy theology that slanders Him. Some read it as what the friends had not spoken to God. Elihu is not mentioned.
42:8 *Job My servant shall pray for you* "My servant" four times in two verses (42:7-8), as in 1:8. Satan's charge failed. Seven bulls and seven rams showed their sin was serious, and Job acts as priest, as in 1:5. To lift up his face is to accept him. These men had called Job wicked and said his children got what they deserved (8:4). Now Job must forgive and pray for them, and Eliphaz is the guilty man delivered by Job's clean hands (22:30). Job pictures Christ, who prayed for His accusers, "Father, forgive them" (Luke 23:34), and is "always living to intercede for them" (Heb 7:25). And Job is our model: "pray for those mistreating you" (Matt 5:44).
42:10 *the LORD turned back the captivity of Job when he prayed for his friends* God restored his fortunes and doubled them. Notice when: as he prayed for the men who wounded him. Forgiveness often opens the door to healing.
42:11 *all the evil that the LORD had brought on him* Family and friends who had kept away (19:13-19) came back, ate with him, and finally did what the three came to do (2:11). Satan was the instrument, but God allowed it and controlled it (1:12; 2:6), and Job knew it (1:21; 2:10). Scripture never pretends God is not sovereign over our suffering. The God who allowed the trouble also brought the restoration, here partly through the kindness of others' gifts.

sisters and all who had known him before came to him, and they ate bread with him in his house; and they showed him sympathy and comforted him over all the evil that the LORD had brought on him; and they gave him each one a piece of money, and each one a ring of gold. **12** And the LORD blessed the latter part of Job more than his beginning; and he had fourteen thousand sheep and six thousand camels and a thousand pairs of oxen and a thousand female donkeys. **13** And he had seven sons and three daughters. **14** And he called the name of the first Jemimah (Yemima), and the name of the second Keziah (Qetsi'a), and the name of the third Keren-happuch (Qeren-Hapukh). **15** And women ***as*** beautiful as the daughters of Job were not found in all the land; and their father gave them an inheritance among their brothers. **16** And Job lived after this a hundred and forty years, and he saw his sons and the sons of his sons, four generations. **17** And Job died, old and satisfied with days.

42:12 James 5:11; Job 8:7; Job 1:3
42:13 James 5:11; Job 1:2; Ps 107:41
42:14 James 5:11
42:15 James 5:11; Num 27:7; Ps 144:12
42:16 James 5:11; Gen 50:23; Ps 128:6
42:17 James 5:11; Gen 25:8; Job 5:26

42:12 *the LORD blessed the latter part of Job more than his beginning* Every number in 1:3 exactly doubled. Should we expect God always to restore double in this life? No. That would be the friends' mistake upside down. It was grace, not payment. Many faithful believers die without seeing their losses restored here (Heb 11:39-40). For those in Christ, full restoration is still ahead (Rom 8:18).
42:13 *he had seven sons and three daughters* The animals were doubled; the children were not. Ten again, not twenty. Many teachers see a quiet hope. Animals that die are gone, but Job's first ten were not lost forever, and he had prayed and sacrificed for each (1:5). I believe this points to a quiet hope for grieving parents that death does not end a family's story for those who belong to Him. Others see only a full family restored. David said of his son who died, "I am going to him" (2 Sam 12:23), and I believe little children who die are safe with God. We do not grieve as those "who have no hope" (1 Thess 4:13). The new children did not replace the ones he lost. No child can. But God gave new joy alongside the grief.
42:14 *he called the name of the first Jemimah, and the name of the second Keziah, and the name of the third Keren-happuch* Jemimah probably means dove; Keziah is cassia, a fragrant spice; Keren-happuch, a horn of eye paint. Peace, fragrance and beauty filled a home of ashes and sores.
42:15 *their father gave them an inheritance among their brothers* Daughters usually did not inherit when there were sons. It shows his generosity and love, and recalls the daughters of Zelophehad (Num 27:7).
42:16 *Job lived after this a hundred and forty years* Long life like the patriarchs, one reason many place Job near Abraham's time. He had wanted to die. God let him see four generations.
42:17 *Job died, old and satisfied with days* The words used of Isaac (Gen 35:29), nearly those of Abraham (Gen 25:8). The man who cursed his birth (3:1-3) died satisfied. "You have heard of the endurance of Job, and you have seen the outcome of the Lord, that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful" (James 5:11). His endurance was not perfect patience, but he never let go of God, and God never let go of him. We may not know why we suffer or see our losses restored here. But our Redeemer lives, and He "will wipe away every tear from their eyes" (Rev 21:4).

PSALMS

Introduction

Title

The Hebrew title of the book means "praises." Our English name comes from the Greek translation of the Old Testament, where a psalm is a song sung to stringed instruments. Psalms is the longest book in the Bible, with 150 psalms and 2,461 verses. It was Israel's song book and prayer book, and believers have prayed and sung it for about three thousand years. Jesus prayed the psalms too, even on the cross (Matt 27:46).

Many psalms open with a title, such as "A psalm of David." In the Hebrew Bible the title is part of the psalm, so the SLB prints it as verse 0. Titles name a writer, an occasion or a direction for the music. Some musical words in them, such as Maskil and Miktam, and the word Selah inside many psalms, are old terms whose exact meaning is not certain. The notes say so when we come to them.

Author and Date

The Psalms have many writers. The titles name David on 73 psalms. Others come from Asaph, one of David's chief musicians (Psalm 50 and Psalms 73-83), and the sons of Korah, a family of Levites who served in worship (including 42, 46 and 84). Two are connected to Solomon (72 and 127), one to Moses (90), one to Heman (88) and one to Ethan (89). About fifty name no writer at all. The phrase "of David" can also mean for David or belonging to David, but I read the titles as naming the writer, as Jesus and the apostles did when they quoted David's psalms by name (Mark 12:36; Acts 2:25; Rom 4:6).

The psalms were written over about a thousand years. The oldest is probably the prayer of Moses (Psalm 90), from the wilderness years, about 1410 B.C. Most of David's psalms come from around 1000 B.C., and many more from the time of Solomon. Some, such as Psalm 137, were written during or after the exile in Babylon, after 586 B.C. The collection was gathered and arranged over time, probably reaching its final form after the return from exile that began in 538 B.C.

Background and Setting

The psalms were written for the people of Israel, first for worship before the ark in David's day, then at the temple, and for personal prayer. God kept these songs for His people in every age, including us.

The book is arranged in five books: Book One (1-41), Book Two (42-72), Book Three (73-89), Book Four (90-106) and Book Five (107-150). Each of the first four ends with a short blessing of praise to God (41:13; 72:18-19; 89:52; 106:48), and Psalm 150 closes the whole collection with nothing but praise. A note at 72:20 marks the end of an earlier collection of David's prayers. Smaller groups sit inside the books: the psalms of the sons of Korah (42-49), the psalms of Asaph (73-83), the psalms that praise the LORD as King (93-100), the Hallel sung at Passover (113-118), the Songs of Ascents sung by pilgrims going up to Jerusalem (120-134), and the Hallelujah Psalms that end the book (146-150).

Hebrew poetry does not depend on rhyme. Its main feature is parallel lines. A writer says something, then says it again in other words, or builds on it, or sets its opposite beside it: "The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?" (27:1). Once you see this, the psalms become much easier to read, because the second line often explains the first. They are poetry, so a shepherd, a rock, wings and a fortress are pictures that tell us something true about God. But they are also tied to real people and real events, and I take what they say about God, His Messiah and His people Israel at its word.

The psalms come in several kinds, and many mix more than one: songs of praise, cries for help (often called laments), songs of thanksgiving, wisdom psalms that teach how to live, royal psalms about the king God chose, psalms of confession, and the pilgrim songs. A few acrostic psalms begin each verse or stanza with the next letter of the Hebrew alphabet (such as 25, 34, 111, 112, 119 and 145).

A note on the names of God. In the SLB, LORD in capital letters stands for God's personal name, YHWH (often written Yahweh), which He made known to Moses (Exod 3:14-15). Lord in regular letters usually translates Adonai, a title meaning Master. When the two come together, the SLB prints Lord GOD, with GOD standing for the personal name. God usually translates Elohim, the general Hebrew word for God.

Themes

The psalms cover every part of life with God: praise, thanks, sorrow, fear, guilt, anger and hope. They give us words when we have none. Some cry out for help, some confess sin, some celebrate God's Law, and some look ahead to the King God promised to David. Many begin in the depths and end in praise, and they teach us that we may bring every feeling to God honestly.

Through them all, God is the Creator who spoke the world into being (33:6), the King who reigns over all nations (47:7), the Judge who will set the world right (96:13), and the Shepherd who leads His people (23:1). His steadfast love, His loyal covenant love, is forever (136:1). He is a refuge in trouble (46:1), He forgives the one who confesses (32:5), and His Word is a lamp to our feet (119:105).

The psalms also hold God to His promises to Israel and to David's house. God chose Zion, swore an oath to David, and promised that a Son of David would reign forever (89:3-4; 132:11). I believe those promises will be fulfilled to the letter when Jesus returns and reigns on the earth from Jerusalem, and that God still has a future for Israel (Rom 11:26). The book ends with a call to everything that has breath to praise the LORD (150:6).

Key verses: 1:1-2; 23:1; 46:1; 51:10; 119:105.

Christ in Psalms

Jesus said that "all the things which are written concerning Me in the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms must be fulfilled" (Luke 24:44). The New Testament quotes the psalms more than any other Old Testament book, and many of those quotes point to Him.

Psalm 2 shows the Son as the King God sets on Zion, and Psalm 110 shows Him seated at God's right hand as King and as a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek. Jesus used 110:1 to

show that David's Son is also David's Lord (Matt 22:41-45). Psalm 22 describes His suffering on the cross, from the cry of forsakenness (22:1) to the pierced hands and the divided clothes (22:16-18), and it ends in praise and in the nations turning to the LORD. Psalm 16 foretells His resurrection, as Peter preached at Pentecost (Acts 2:25-31). Psalm 118 speaks of the rejected stone that became the head of the corner (118:22), which Jesus applied to Himself (Matt 21:42).

Other psalms show Him too. Psalm 8 speaks of the Son of Man crowned with glory (Heb 2:6-9). Psalm 40 speaks of the One who came to do God's will (Heb 10:5-7). Psalm 45 calls the King God (Heb 1:8). Psalm 69 speaks of the zeal that consumed Him and the vinegar He was given (John 2:17; 19:28-29). Psalm 23 points to the Good Shepherd who lays down His life for the sheep (John 10:11). And the royal psalms look ahead to the day when He will reign over the whole earth (72:8-11).

Hard Passages

Some psalms ask God to punish enemies in strong words, or say the writer hates those who hate God (for example 58:6-9; 69:22-28; 109:6-20; 137:8-9; 139:19-22). These are often called the imprecatory psalms. How should a Christian read them? First, these lines are prayers, not actions. The writer hands his enemies over to God instead of taking revenge himself, and he asks God to do what is right. Second, they come from people who were really wronged, often by those who hated God and His people, and they show how seriously God takes evil. Third, the New Testament teaches the same handing over. Paul tells us not to avenge ourselves but to "give place to the wrath" (Rom 12:19), because the Lord says, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay" (Rom 12:19). And Jesus told us to "love your enemies" (Matt 5:44) and to "pray for those mistreating you and persecuting you" (Matt 5:44). So we can tell God plainly about the wrong done to us, long for Him to set things right, and still pray for those who hurt us. Many notes point back here.

The hardest of these is 137:9, the blessing on one who repays Babylon by seizing its infants. It is a cry of raw grief from people who had seen this done in Jerusalem, and the prophets had already foretold the same judgment on Babylon (Isa 13:16). It is not a pattern for us. I believe little children who die are safe with God.

Psalm 22:16 has a text question. The standard Hebrew text reads like a lion, while the Greek and a Dead Sea scroll read a verb that most take as pierced. The SLB follows pierced, and the note explains both.

Psalm 82:6 calls human judges gods. Jesus quoted it (John 10:34), and the note explains how. Psalm 45:6 calls the King God, and Hebrews applies it to the Son (Heb 1:8).

Psalm 51:5 says David was brought forth in iniquity. It does not mean his mother sinned in conceiving him. It means every person is born with a sinful nature.

Psalm 88 ends in darkness with no turn to praise. It shows that God's Word has room for the darkest seasons of a believer's life, and that we can keep praying in them.

Some of the musical terms in the titles, and a few hard lines, have more than one reading. Where that is so, the notes give the main views.

Outline

I. Book One: Psalms of David (1-41)
- A. The two ways and the chosen King (1-2)
- B. Prayers of David in trouble and trust (3-14)
- C. Who may dwell with God, and the hope of resurrection (15-17)
- D. Deliverance, God's Word and the King's victory (18-21)
- E. The suffering Servant, the Shepherd and the King of glory (22-24)
- F. Trust, confession and thanks (25-34)
- G. Waiting on God when the wicked prosper (35-41)

II. Book Two: Longing and Deliverance (42-72)
- A. Psalms of the sons of Korah (42-49)
- B. A psalm of Asaph (50)
- C. David's confession and prayers in danger (51-65)
- D. Praise from all the earth (66-68)
- E. Suffering and the King's righteous reign (69-72)

III. Book Three: Asaph, Korah and the Crisis of David's House (73-89)
- A. The psalms of Asaph (73-83)
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PSALMS

PSALMS 1

Book One: The Two Ways

1 How blessed ***is*** the man who has not walked in the counsel of ***the*** wicked, and in the way of sinners has not stood, and in the seat of mockers has not sat! **2** But rather his delight ***is*** in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates by day and night. **3** And he shall be like a tree planted by streams of water, which gives its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither; and all that he does prospers. **4** Not so ***are*** the wicked, but rather ***they are*** like the chaff which ***the*** wind drives away. **5** Therefore ***the*** wicked will not stand in the judgment, and sinners ***will not stand*** in the congregation of ***the*** righteous. **6** For the LORD knows the way of ***the*** righteous, and the way of ***the*** wicked will perish.

1:1 Ps 26:4,5; Prov 4:14,15; Jer 15:17
1:2 Rom 7:22; Josh 1:8; Ps 119:11,35,47,48,72,92
1:3 Jer 17:8; Ezek 47:12; Matt 21:19
1:4 Job 21:18; Matt 3:12; Ps 35:5
1:5 Jude 1:15; Ps 5:5; Mal 3:18
1:6 Matt 7:13; Nah 1:7; 2 Tim 2:19
2:1 Acts 4:25-26; Rev 11:18; John 7:19

PSALMS 2

The LORD's Anointed King

1 Why do nations rage, and peoples devise vanity? **2** The kings of ***the*** earth take their stand, and rulers have seated themselves together, against the LORD and against His Anointed: **3** "Let us tear apart their bonds, and let us throw away their cords from us." **4** ***He who*** sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord mocks them. **5** Then He speaks to them in His anger, and in His fury He terrifies them: **6** "And I, I have installed My King on Zion (Tsiyon), the mountain of My holiness." **7** I will recount concerning the decree of the LORD: He said to Me, "You ***are*** My Son; I, today I have begotten You. **8** Ask of Me, and I will make nations Your inheritance, and

2:2 Acts 4:27; Luke 4:18; Rev 11:18
2:3 Acts 4:25; Jer 5:5; Luke 19:14,27
2:4 Ps 59:8; Ps 37:13; Isa 40:22
2:5 Isa 11:4; Ps 110:5,6; Ps 50:16-22
2:6 Rev 14:1; Heb 12:22; Matt 2:2
2:7 Acts 13:33; Heb 1:5; Heb 5:5
2:8 John 17:4; Rev 2:26; Matt 28:18

1:1 *How blessed is the man* The Hebrew word for "blessed" means happy, deeply well off. It describes the life God approves and smiles on. Psalm 1 has no heading and reads like a door into the whole book: before we learn to pray the psalms, we are told where a blessed life begins.
1:1 *has not walked in the counsel of the wicked, and in the way of sinners has not stood, and in the seat of mockers has not sat* Walk, stand, sit. Sin draws a person in a step at a time. First he listens to the advice of the wicked, then he stops in the path sinners take, and at last he sits down at home among the mockers. This is Hebrew parallel poetry, where each line builds on the one before it.
1:2 *his delight is in the law of the LORD* "Law" is the Hebrew torah, instruction or teaching. It includes the commands of Moses but is broader than rules: it is everything God has taught His people. The blessed man does more than put up with God's Word. He delights in it.
1:2 *he meditates by day and night* The word for "meditate" was used for a low murmur, like someone reading half aloud to himself. Biblical meditation is filling the mind with God's Word: read it, repeat it, chew on it, come back to it. We become what we take in.
1:3 *like a tree planted by streams of water* In a dry land a wild tree might wither every summer, but a tree planted by a channel stayed green all year. "Planted" suggests someone put it there on purpose. Jeremiah uses the same picture for the man who trusts in the LORD (Jer 17:7-8).
1:3 *all that he does prospers* This is not a promise that a believer will be rich or never suffer. Many psalms are full of godly people in trouble. It means a life rooted in God bears the fruit God intends, "in its season," and is never wasted.
1:4 *like the chaff which the wind drives away* At harvest, farmers tossed crushed grain into the air. The heavy grain fell back to the threshing floor, and the light husks, the chaff, blew away. A tree has roots, weight and fruit. Chaff has none. A life without God may look full for a moment, but it has nothing to hold it down.
1:5 *the wicked will not stand in the judgment* They chose to stand in the path of sinners (1:1). In the end they will not be able to stand before God, and when He gathers His people, they will not be among "the congregation of the righteous."
1:6 *the LORD knows the way of the righteous* To "know" in the Bible often means to care for and watch over, a close relationship. God knows every step of His people's road. The road of the wicked leads to ruin. Jesus spoke of the same two ways (Matt 7:13-14). Many see in this psalm a portrait only Jesus fully lived out, and God counts as righteous those who trust Him (Ps 32:1-2; Rom 4:6-8).
2:1 *Why do nations rage* Psalm 2 has no heading, but the early church said God spoke it "through the mouth of Your servant David" (Acts 4:25), so we read it as David's. Nations and peoples, kings and rulers: each line enlarges the picture until the whole world seems lined up against God. Their plans are "vanity," empty and doomed.
2:2 *against the LORD and against His Anointed* "Anointed" is one who had oil poured on his head to set him apart for a task from God, as Samuel anointed David (1 Sam 16:13). The Hebrew mashiach gives us "Messiah," and the Greek christos gives us "Christ." The early church saw this verse fulfilled when Herod, Pilate, the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel gathered against Jesus (Acts 4:25-27).
2:3 *Let us tear apart their bonds* To the rebels, God's rule feels like chains. That is how the human heart has seen God's authority ever since Eden.
2:4 *He who sits in the heavens laughs* God is not pacing the floor. He is seated on His throne, and the plots of kings are so small next to Him that He laughs. "The Lord" here is the title Master. The rebels want to throw off their Master, but He is still the Master.
2:5 *Then He speaks to them in His anger* God's anger is His settled, holy opposition to evil, not a fit of temper. One word from Him terrifies those who thought they could defy Him.
2:6 *I have installed My King on Zion, the mountain of My holiness* Zion was first the fortress David captured, the City of David (2 Sam 5:7). Later the name came to mean the temple hill and all Jerusalem, the place God chose to dwell. The nations say they will break free, and God answers that He has already crowned His King. I believe God still has a future for Zion and Israel, and Paul says the Deliverer will come from Zion (Rom 11:26).
2:7 *You are My Son; I, today I have begotten You* God promised that David's royal son would be His son (2 Sam 7:14), but no king of Judah ruled the ends of the earth. Paul says God fulfilled this "having raised up Jesus" (Acts 13:33), and Hebrews 1:5 says God never said it to any angel. "Today" does not mean the Son began to exist (John 1:1). It points to the day God publicly declared and installed His Son as King, tied to the resurrection (Rom 1:4).
2:8 *I will make nations Your inheritance* The nations that rebelled in verse 1 will belong to the Son, to "the ends of the earth." This was always God's plan: all the families of the earth would be blessed through Abraham (Gen 12:3).

the ends of ***the*** earth Your possession. **9** You will break them with a rod of iron; like a vessel of a potter You will smash them." **10** And now, O kings, act prudently; be instructed, O judges of ***the*** earth. **11** Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. **12** Kiss ***the*** Son, lest He be angry and you perish ***in the*** way, for His anger will burn in a little ***while***. How blessed ***are*** all who take refuge in Him!

PSALMS 3

A psalm of David, when he fled from before Absalom (Avshalom) his son. **1** LORD, how my adversaries have multiplied! Many ***are*** rising up against me. **2** Many ***are*** saying of my soul, "There is no salvation for him in God." Selah. **3** And You, LORD, ***are*** a shield about me, my glory, and ***the One who*** lifts up my head. **4** ***With*** my voice I called out to the LORD, and He answered me from the mountain of His holiness. Selah. **5** I, I lay down and slept; I awoke, for the LORD sustains me. **6** I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people who have set ***themselves*** all around against me. **7** Arise, LORD! Save me, my God! For You have struck all my enemies ***on the*** jaw; the teeth of ***the*** wicked You have broken. **8** Salvation ***belongs*** to the LORD; Your blessing ***is*** on Your people. Selah.

PSALMS 4

To the choirmaster, with stringed instruments. A psalm of David. **1** When I call, answer me, O God of my righteousness! In the distress You have made ***it*** wide for me; be gracious to me, and hear my prayer. **2** Sons of man, how long ***will*** my glory ***be turned*** into shame? ***How long*** will you love vanity ***and*** seek a lie? Selah. **3** And know that the LORD has set apart the godly ***one*** for Himself; the LORD will hear when I call to Him. **4** Tremble, and do not sin; speak in your heart on your bed, and be silent. Selah. **5** Sacrifice sacrifices of righteousness, and trust in the LORD. **6** Many ***are*** saying, "Who will show us good?" Lift up the light of Your face on us, LORD. **7** You have put joy in my heart, more than ***at the*** time ***when*** their grain and their new wine have multiplied. **8** In peace I will both lie down and sleep, for You, LORD, alone make me dwell in safety.

PSALMS 5

To the choirmaster, for the flutes. A psalm of David. **1** Give ear to my words, LORD; consider my sighing. **2** Pay attention to the sound of my cry for help, my King and my God, for to You I pray. **3** LORD, ***in the*** morning You hear my voice; ***in the***

2:9 Rev 2:27; Rev 12:5; Rev 19:15
2:10 Hos 14:9; Isa 52:15; Jer 6:8
2:11 Matt 28:8; Phil 2:12; Heb 12:28,29
2:12 John 5:23; Rom 9:33; Rom 10:11
3:1 Ps 17:7; Matt 10:21; 2 Sam 16:15
3:2 Ps 71:11; Ps 22:7; Ps 42:3,10
3:3 Ps 27:6; Ps 28:7; Ps 119:114
3:4 Ps 34:4; Ps 91:15; Ps 2:6
3:5 Ps 4:8; Lev 26:6; Prov 3:24
3:6 Ps 118:10-12; Ps 27:1-3; 2 Kgs 6:15-17
3:7 Ps 58:6; Job 16:10; Ps 10:12
3:8 Isa 43:11; Ps 37:39,40; Jer 3:23
4:1 Ps 18:18,19; Hab 3:19; Jer 23:6
4:2 Hos 4:7; Ps 3:3; Ps 5:6
4:3 Titus 2:14; 1 Pet 2:9; 2 Pet 2:9
4:4 Eph 4:26; Ps 77:6; Ps 63:6
4:5 Deut 33:19; Ps 37:3; Ps 51:19
4:6 Num 6:26; Ps 67:1; Ps 89:15
4:7 Luke 9:33; Isa 9:3; Ps 63:2-5
4:8 Rom 8:37; Ps 3:5; Lev 25:18,19
5:1 Ps 54:2; 1 John 5:14,15; Ps 17:1
5:2 Ps 3:4; Ps 65:2; Ps 10:16
5:3 Ps 88:13; Ps 119:147; Ps 130:6

2:9 *You will break them with a rod of iron* A rod of iron is a rule no one can resist; clay pots smashed by it cannot be mended. The Hebrew says "break." The Greek Old Testament read the same letters as "shepherd" or "rule," and Revelation follows it (Rev 2:27; 12:5). I believe the church will be caught up to meet the Lord before the Tribulation (1 Thess 4:16-17), and this verse points to Christ's return at its end, when "He Himself will shepherd them with a rod of iron" (Rev 19:15) and reigns on the earth. Judgment is His, not ours.
2:10 *And now, O kings, act prudently* After the warning comes an offer. The kings are not yet destroyed. God speaks before He strikes and gives time to be wise.
2:11 *rejoice with trembling* Joy and trembling go together. Serving God is a joy, but He is not to be treated lightly. This is the fear of the LORD (19:9).
2:12 *Kiss the Son* The word for "Son" here is bar, the Aramaic form, not the Hebrew ben of verse 7, and translators have read the line in different ways (kiss His feet, or worship in purity). The SLB reads "the Son," tying back to verse 7, and I take it that way. People kissed a king's hand or the ground at his feet to show loyalty. The rebels are told to bow.
2:12 *How blessed are all who take refuge in Him* "Perish in the way" echoes 1:6, and this closing "blessed" echoes 1:1. The two psalms belong together. The King who will judge the rebels is also the safe place for anyone who runs to Him, and that invitation is still open today.
3:0 *when he fled from before Absalom his son* This is the first psalm with a heading, and it ties the prayer to a real day in David's life (2 Sam 15:13-17). His own son had stolen the hearts of Israel and taken the throne, and David left Jerusalem weeping. Few pains are deeper than betrayal by your own child.
3:2 *There is no salvation for him in God* The enemies' cruelest line was not that David would lose, but that God had given up on him. "Selah" appears here for the first time. Its exact meaning is not certain. Many think it marks a pause or a musical break, a moment to stop and think.
3:3 *a shield about me, my glory, and the One who lifts up my head* David had lost his city, his throne and his honor. God was all three for him: his protection, his glory, and the One who would lift the head of a man walking barefoot and ashamed.
3:5 *I lay down and slept; I awoke, for the LORD sustains me* With an army hunting him, David slept. Peace like that does not come from safe circumstances but from knowing who is holding you. Every morning we wake is His gift.
3:8 *Salvation belongs to the LORD* The enemies said there was no salvation for him in God (3:2). David answers that salvation belongs to no one else. He ends by praying for God's blessing on "Your people," even the nation that had followed Absalom.
4:0 *To the choirmaster* The choirmaster was the leader of the music in Israel's worship. The heading means the psalm was given to him to be sung by God's people together, here "with stringed instruments."
4:1 *In the distress You have made it wide for me* Distress in Hebrew is a tight, narrow place. David remembers how God made room for him before, and that memory gives him courage to ask again.
4:4 *Tremble, and do not sin* Be stirred, even angry, but do not let it carry you into sin. Paul uses the same words, "be angry and do not sin" (Eph 4:26). David tells his enemies to lie awake and talk with their own hearts before God, and be still.
4:7 *You have put joy in my heart* The crowd asks, "Who will show us good?" and measures good by full barns. David has a joy that a good harvest cannot give and a bad one cannot take away.
4:8 *In peace I will both lie down and sleep* Not just lie down, but actually sleep. The safety does not come from walls or guards. "You, LORD, alone" make him dwell safely. Psalm 3 is a morning prayer (3:5) and this one an evening prayer.
5:3 *in the morning I set it in order for You, and I keep watch* The word for setting in order was used for laying out wood or a sacrifice on the altar. David lays his prayer before God at the start of the day and then watches for the answer, the way a watchman waits for the dawn.

morning I set ***it*** in order for You, and I keep watch. **4** For You ***are*** not a God delighting in wickedness; evil does not sojourn with You. **5** ***The*** boastful will not take their stand before Your eyes; You hate all who work iniquity. **6** You destroy those who speak a lie; the LORD abhors a man of blood and deceit. **7** And I, in the abundance of Your steadfast love I will enter Your house; I will bow down toward the temple of Your holiness in fear of You. **8** LORD, lead me in Your righteousness because of my foes; make Your way straight before me. **9** For there is nothing reliable in his mouth; their inner part ***is*** destruction; their throat ***is*** an open grave; their tongue they make smooth. **10** Hold them guilty, O God; let them fall by their own counsels; in the abundance of their transgressions thrust them away, for they have rebelled against You. **11** And let all who take refuge in You rejoice; let them shout for joy forever; and may You cover over them; and let those who love Your name exult in You. **12** For You, You bless the righteous, LORD; like a shield You surround him ***with*** favor.

PSALMS 6

To the choirmaster, with stringed instruments, on the Sheminith. A psalm of David. **1** LORD, do not rebuke me in Your anger, and do not discipline me in Your wrath. **2** Be gracious to me, LORD, for I ***am*** frail; heal me, LORD, for my bones are dismayed. **3** And my soul is greatly dismayed; and You, LORD, how long? **4** Return, LORD; rescue my soul; save me for the sake of Your steadfast love. **5** For there is no remembrance of You in death; in Sheol who will give thanks to You? **6** I have become weary with my groaning; every night I make my bed swim; with my tears I melt my couch. **7** My eye has wasted away from grief; it has grown old because of all my adversaries. **8** Depart from me, all who work iniquity, for the LORD has heard the sound of my weeping. **9** The LORD has heard my supplication; the LORD will accept my prayer. **10** Let all my enemies be ashamed and greatly dismayed; they will turn back, they will be ashamed ***in*** a moment.

PSALMS 7

A Shiggaion of David, which he sang to the LORD concerning the words of Cush (Kush), a Benjaminite. **1** LORD my God, in You I have taken refuge; save me from all my pursuers, and deliver me, **2** lest he tear my soul like a lion, tearing ***it*** in pieces, and there is no deliverer. **3** LORD my God, if I have done this, if there is injustice in my hands, **4** if I have repaid evil to ***him who*** was at peace with me, and have plundered my adversary without cause, **5** let an enemy pursue my soul and overtake ***it***, and let him trample my life to the earth, and let him lay my glory in the dust. Selah. **6** Arise, LORD, in Your anger; lift Yourself up against the furies of my adversaries; and awake for me; You have commanded judgment. **7** And let the congregation of ***the*** peoples surround You, and over it return to the height. **8** Let the LORD judge ***the*** peoples; judge me, LORD, according to my righteousness and according to my integrity ***that is*** on me. **9** Please let the evil of ***the*** wicked come to an end, and establish the righteous; and ***You are*** the

5:4 Ps 50:21; 1 Chr 29:17; Hab 1:13
5:5 Ps 1:5; Hab 1:13; Lev 20:23
5:6 Ps 55:23; Rev 21:8; Ps 4:2
5:7 Ps 138:2; Ps 132:7; Ps 69:13,16
5:8 Matt 3:3; Ps 27:11; Ps 25:4,5
5:9 Rom 3:13; Ps 62:4,9; Ps 52:2
5:10 Rom 3:19; 2 Sam 17:14,23; 2 Sam 15:31
5:11 1 Cor 2:9; Rev 18:20; Ps 35:27
5:12 Ps 32:10; Ps 84:11; Ps 29:11
6:1 Ps 38:1; 1 Chr 15:21; Jer 46:28
6:2 Hos 6:1; Ps 30:2; Num 12:13
6:3 Matt 26:38; Ps 90:13; Ps 22:14
6:4 Ps 17:13; Ps 80:14; Ps 90:13
6:5 Ps 30:9; Ps 88:10-12; Ps 115:17
6:6 Ps 69:3; Ps 42:3; Ps 38:9
6:7 Ps 38:10; Job 17:7; Ps 88:9
6:8 Matt 7:23; Luke 13:27; Heb 5:7
6:9 Ps 66:19,20; Ps 116:1,2; Ps 3:4
6:10 Ps 86:17; Ps 132:18; Jer 20:11
7:1 Ps 31:15; Hab 3:1; 2 Sam 16:1-23
7:2 Isa 38:13; Ps 50:22; Ps 35:15
7:3 Acts 25:5; 1 Sam 24:11; Ps 59:3
7:4 John 15:25; Acts 25:5; 1 Sam 24:7,10,11
7:5 Acts 25:5; Job 31:5-10,38-40; Ps 44:5
7:6 Ps 44:23; Ps 3:7; Isa 33:10
7:7 Rev 18:20; Ps 48:11; Ps 58:10,11
7:8 Ps 96:13; Rom 14:10-12; Ps 98:9
7:9 Rev 2:23; 1 Pet 5:10; Rom 8:27

5:4 *You are not a God delighting in wickedness* God is holy. Evil cannot be His guest. The boastful, the liars and the violent cannot stand before Him. That is bad news for every sinner until we see the next verse.
5:7 *in the abundance of Your steadfast love I will enter Your house* "Steadfast love" is the Hebrew hesed, God's loyal covenant love that keeps its promises and goes beyond them. David does not come into God's presence on his own merit. He comes because God's love is so great. That is the only way any of us can come.
5:9 *their throat is an open grave* Paul quotes this line in his proof that "There is not a righteous one, not even one" (Rom 3:10, 13). Words that pour from the wicked carry the smell of death.
5:10 *Hold them guilty, O God* This is the first of the prayers for judgment in the Psalms. David does not take revenge. He asks God to judge rightly, because "they have rebelled against You." See the introduction on the hard lines in the Psalms.
5:12 *like a shield You surround him with favor* The shield here is the large kind that covered a soldier's whole body. God's favor is around the righteous on every side.
6:0 *on the Sheminith* Sheminith means the eighth. It may name an instrument with eight strings or a lower octave for the music. No one is sure. Christians have long counted Psalm 6 as the first of the seven penitential psalms, the psalms of sorrow over sin.
6:1 *do not rebuke me in Your anger* David does not ask God never to correct him. He asks God not to discipline him in anger. A child of God may be corrected, but he can ask for the Father's mercy in it (Heb 12:5-11).
6:3 *And You, LORD, how long?* The prayer breaks off in the middle. Sometimes pain does not have full sentences. God hears unfinished prayers too.
6:5 *in Sheol who will give thanks to You* Sheol is the Hebrew name for the place of the dead, the grave and the world beyond it. The Old Testament saints saw only dimly what lies past death. David's point is that the dead can no longer praise God among the living, so he asks God to spare him to do it. Christ has since brought "life and incorruptibility to light" (2 Tim 1:10).
6:6 *every night I make my bed swim* This is honest grief, not weakness. God does not ask His people to hide their tears from Him.
6:8 *the LORD has heard the sound of my weeping* Suddenly the psalm turns. Nothing outside has changed yet, but David knows God has heard. Tears have a sound in heaven.
7:0 *A Shiggaion of David* Shiggaion is a rare musical word, perhaps a song full of strong feeling. Cush the Benjaminite is not named anywhere else. He was most likely one of Saul's men, from Saul's own tribe, who spread lies about David.
7:3 *if I have done this, if there is injustice in my hands* David does not claim to be sinless. He claims to be innocent of this charge, and he is willing to have God search him. When we are falsely accused, we can bring our case to the One who knows the truth.
7:9 *the One who tests hearts and kidneys* In Hebrew thinking the kidneys stood for the deepest feelings and the heart for the thoughts and will. God sees all the way down. Nothing can be hidden from the righteous Judge.

One who tests hearts and kidneys, O righteous God. **10** My shield ***is*** on God, the One who saves the upright of heart. **11** God ***is*** a righteous judge, and God ***is*** indignant every day. **12** If ***one*** does not repent, He will sharpen His sword; He has bent His bow and prepared it. **13** And for him He has prepared weapons of death; He makes His arrows into burning ***shafts***. **14** Look, he is in labor with iniquity, and he has conceived mischief and brought forth falsehood. **15** He has dug a hole, and he has hollowed it out; and he has fallen into the pit ***that*** he made. **16** His mischief returns on his own head, and on his crown his violence comes down. **17** I will give thanks to the LORD according to His righteousness, and I will sing praise to the name of the LORD Most High.

PSALMS 8

To the choirmaster, on the Gittith. A psalm of David. **1** LORD, our Lord, how majestic ***is*** Your name in all the earth, You who have set Your splendor above the heavens! **2** From the mouth of infants and nursing babies You have established strength because of Your adversaries, to make an enemy and an avenger cease. **3** When I see Your heavens, the works of Your fingers, ***the*** moon and ***the*** stars which You have established, **4** what ***is*** man that You remember him, and a son of man that You attend to him? **5** And You have made him lack a little from God, and with glory and majesty You crown him. **6** You make him rule over the works of Your hands; You have put everything under his feet: **7** sheep and oxen, all of them, and also the animals of the field, **8** the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes through the paths of the seas. **9** LORD, our Lord, how majestic ***is*** Your name in all the earth!

PSALMS 9

To the choirmaster, on Muth-labben. A psalm of David. **1** I will give thanks to the LORD with all my heart; I will recount all Your wonders. **2** I will rejoice and exult in You; I will sing praises to Your name, O Most High. **3** When my enemies turn back, they stumble and perish from before You. **4** For You have executed my justice and my cause; You have sat on a throne, judging ***in*** righteousness. **5** You have rebuked nations; You have destroyed ***the*** wicked; their name You have wiped out forever and ever. **6** The enemy, they have come to an end, ruins forever; and cities You have uprooted; their memory has perished, they ***themselves***. **7** And the LORD

7:10 Ps 125:4; Ps 3:3; Ps 18:1,2
7:11 Ps 94:15; Ps 7:8; Ps 140:12,13
7:12 Deut 32:41; Ps 85:4; Isa 55:6,7
7:13 Ps 45:5; Ps 11:2; Ps 64:3,7
7:14 James 1:15; Isa 33:11; Job 15:20,35
7:15 Job 4:8; Ps 35:7; Ps 119:85
7:16 Esth 9:25; 1 Kgs 2:32; Ps 36:4,12
7:17 Acts 7:48; Ps 9:2; Ps 71:15,16
8:1 Matt 22:45; Eph 4:10; Ps 113:2-4
8:2 Matt 21:16; 1 Cor 1:27; Luke 10:21
8:3 Heb 1:10; Ps 111:2; Rom 1:20
8:4 Heb 2:6-8; Ps 144:3; Matt 8:20
8:5 Heb 2:7,9,16; Heb 2:9; Gen 1:26,27
8:6 1 Cor 15:27; Eph 1:22; Gen 1:26,28
8:7 Heb 2:6; Gen 2:20
8:8 Matt 17:27; Heb 2:6; Ps 148:10
8:9 Ps 8:1; Ps 104:24; Deut 33:26
9:1 Ps 86:12; Ps 145:1-3; Ps 146:1,2
9:2 Ps 5:11; Ps 83:18; Ps 7:17
9:3 Ps 68:1,2; Ps 76:7; Ps 80:16
9:4 Ps 140:12; 1 Pet 2:23; Ps 16:5
9:5 Prov 10:7; Deut 9:14; Ps 2:1,8,9
9:6 Ps 7:5; Ps 8:2; Exod 15:16
9:7 Ps 90:2; Ps 102:12,24-27; Heb 1:11,12

7:11 *God is a righteous judge, and God is indignant every day* God is never neutral about evil. But verse 12 opens with "If one does not repent." He bends His bow and waits, giving time to turn.
7:15 *he has fallen into the pit that he made* Sin carries its own judgment. The trap the wicked man digs for others becomes his own grave. Haman was hanged on the gallows he built for Mordecai (Esth 7:10).
7:17 *the LORD Most High* Most High is the Hebrew Elyon, a name that sets God over every power in heaven and on earth. It goes back to Melchizedek, "priest of God Most High" (Gen 14:18).
8:0 *on the Gittith* A musical term whose meaning is uncertain. Because it sounds like Gath, a Philistine city, some think it was a lyre or tune from Gath. Others link it to the Hebrew word for a winepress and think it was a harvest song. Psalms 81 and 84 use the same term.
8:1 *LORD, our Lord* The first word is God's personal name, the second the title Master. David speaks to the God who made a covenant with Israel. A covenant is a binding agreement God makes and commits Himself to keep, as at Sinai (Exod 24:7-8) and in the new covenant through Jesus (Luke 22:20). This great God belongs to His people.
8:1 *how majestic is Your name in all the earth* God's name stands for who He is, His character and His fame. His greatness can be seen everywhere on earth, and His splendor reaches higher still, "above the heavens." The sky is not big enough to hold His glory.
8:2 *From the mouth of infants and nursing babies You have established strength* God does not need the mighty to defeat His enemies. He delights to use small things to put down proud things (1 Cor 1:27). When children cried "Hosanna" in the temple, Jesus quoted this verse (Matt 21:15-16). He followed the Greek Old Testament, a translation made by Jewish scholars before His birth, which reads "praise" where the Hebrew has "strength." The two fit: the praise of children was a strength the proud could not answer.
8:3 *the works of Your fingers* The heavens are vast, and God made them with His fingers, as if they were delicate handwork. David may first have felt this as a shepherd boy lying under the stars.
8:4 *what is man that You remember him* Next to the moon and stars, a human being seems so small. "Son of man" here simply means a human being. We know the universe is far bigger than David imagined, which makes his question stronger. And the answer is the same: God does take thought of us.
8:5 *You have made him lack a little from God* The Hebrew word is elohim. It usually means God but can mean heavenly beings. The Greek Old Testament read "angels," and Hebrews 2:7 follows it. Either way, man stands just below the heavenly realm, crowned like a king, made in God's image to rule the earth (Gen 1:26-28). Every human being carries this God-given dignity.
8:6 *You have put everything under his feet* To rule does not mean to abuse. Adam was placed in the garden to work it and keep it (Gen 2:15). But sin brought death, and Hebrews admits "we do not yet see all things subjected to him" (Heb 2:8). Instead we see Jesus, made a little lower and now crowned (Heb 2:9). He is the true Man of Psalm 8. Paul applies the verse to Christ, who will destroy even death (1 Cor 15:26-27).
8:7 *sheep and oxen* David lists the creatures in groups: farm animals, wild animals, birds and fish. From the field to the sky to "the paths of the seas," God put it all under man's care as His steward.
8:9 *LORD, our Lord, how majestic is Your name* The psalm ends where it began. David started with God's glory, marveled at man's place, and came back to God's glory. That is the right order. Our dignity is real, but it is a gift, and the praise belongs to God.
9:0 *on Muth-labben* The words seem to mean death of the son, most likely the name of a tune. No one knows for sure. Psalms 9 and 10 together form a broken acrostic, a poem whose lines begin with the letters of the Hebrew alphabet in order, so many think they were first one psalm.
9:1 *I will give thanks to the LORD with all my heart* Not half a heart. David decides to thank God and to "recount all Your wonders," telling others what God has done. Gratitude grows when it is spoken.
9:7 *the LORD sits enthroned forever* Kings rise and their names are wiped out (9:5-6), but the LORD's throne stands forever. He has set it up "for judgment," and He will judge the world with fairness. The wrongs of history will not stay unanswered (Acts 17:31).

sits ***enthroned*** forever; He has established His throne for judgment. **8** And He, He will judge the world in righteousness; He will judge the peoples with uprightness. **9** And let the LORD be a high refuge for the oppressed, a high refuge for times of trouble. **10** And those who know Your name will trust in You, for You have not forsaken those who seek You, LORD. **11** Sing praises to the LORD, who dwells ***in*** Zion (Tsiyon); declare His deeds among the peoples. **12** For He who seeks blood has remembered them; He has not forgotten the cry of ***the*** humble. **13** Be gracious to me, LORD; see my affliction from those who hate me, You who lift me up from the gates of death, **14** so that I may recount all Your praises in the gates of the daughter of Zion; I will rejoice in Your salvation. **15** Nations have sunk into the pit ***that*** they made; in the net which they hid their own foot has been caught. **16** The LORD has made Himself known; He has executed judgment; in the work of his hands ***He*** is snaring ***the*** wicked. Higgaion. Selah. **17** ***The*** wicked will return to Sheol, all the nations forgetful of God. **18** For the needy will not be forgotten forever; the hope of ***the*** afflicted ***will not*** perish forever. **19** Arise, LORD; let not man prevail; let ***the*** nations be judged before Your face. **20** Set terror for them, LORD; let ***the*** nations know ***that*** they ***are*** men. Selah.

PSALMS 10

1 Why, LORD, do You stand at a distance? ***Why*** do You hide ***Yourself*** in times of trouble? **2** In the pride of ***the*** wicked he hotly pursues the afflicted; they are caught in the schemes which they have devised. **3** For ***the*** wicked boasts of the desire of his soul, and ***the one*** greedy for gain blesses; he spurns the LORD. **4** The wicked, according to the haughtiness of his nose, does not seek ***Him***; "There is no God" ***are*** all his schemes. **5** His ways endure at all times; Your judgments ***are*** on high, away from before him; all his adversaries, he puffs at them. **6** He says in his heart, "I will not be shaken; to generation and generation ***I am one*** who ***will*** not ***be*** in adversity." **7** His mouth is full of cursing and deceits and oppression; under his tongue ***are*** mischief and iniquity. **8** He sits in the ambush of ***the*** villages; in the hiding places he kills the innocent; his eyes lie hidden ***watching*** for the helpless. **9** He lies in wait in the hiding place like a lion in its lair; he lies in wait to seize the afflicted; he seizes the afflicted when he draws ***him*** into his net. **10** He is crushed, he bows down, and a host of disheartened ***ones*** falls by his mighty ones. **11** He says in his heart, "God has forgotten; He has hidden His face; He will never see." **12** Arise, LORD! O God, lift up Your hand! Do not forget the humble. **13** Why has the wicked spurned God? He has said in his heart, "You will not seek ***it*** out." **14** You have seen ***it***, for You, You look on mischief and vexation, to put ***it*** in Your hand; on You the helpless one leaves ***himself***; ***of the*** fatherless You, You have been the helper. **15** Break the arm of the wicked; and the evil ***one***, You will seek out his wickedness, You will not find ***it***. **16** The LORD ***is*** King forever and ever; nations have perished from His land. **17** The desire of the humble You have heard, LORD; You will establish their heart; You will make Your ear pay attention, **18** to judge the fatherless and the oppressed, ***so that*** man who ***is*** from the earth will no longer strike terror.

PSALMS 11

To the choirmaster. Of David. **1** In the LORD I have taken refuge; how will you say to my soul, "Flee ***to*** your mountain ***as*** a bird,

9:8 Rom 2:16; Rom 3:6; Ps 96:13
9:9 Ps 32:7; Prov 18:10; Ps 91:1,2
9:10 Ps 91:14; 2 Tim 1:12; 2 Cor 1:9,10
9:11 Heb 12:22; Rev 14:1; Ps 107:22
9:12 Gen 9:5; Ps 34:6; Exod 3:7,9
9:13 Matt 16:18; Ps 30:3; Ps 86:13
9:14 Matt 21:5; Ps 13:5; Ps 106:2
9:15 Ps 7:15,16; Ps 57:6; Ps 35:8
9:16 Exod 7:5; Exod 14:4,10,31; Prov 12:13
9:17 Ps 50:22; Job 8:13; Isa 5:14
9:18 Prov 23:18; Ps 12:5; Ps 9:12
9:19 Ps 3:7; Ps 7:6; Ps 10:12
9:20 Isa 31:3; Ps 76:12; Exod 15:16
10:1 Ps 22:1; Jer 14:8; Ps 27:9
10:2 Ps 7:16; Ps 31:18; Ps 36:11
10:3 Ps 94:4; Ps 49:6; Ps 35:21
10:4 Rom 1:21; Ps 53:1; Ps 18:27
10:5 Isa 26:11; Ps 12:5; Gen 6:12
10:6 Matt 24:48; Rev 18:7; Eccl 8:11
10:7 Rom 3:14; Rom 3:13; Ps 7:14
10:8 Hab 3:14; 1 Sam 22:18; 1 Sam 23:23
10:9 Ps 17:12; Ps 59:3; Mic 7:2
10:10 1 Sam 2:36; 1 Sam 18:21-26; 1 Sam 23:21,22
10:11 Ps 73:11; Ps 94:7; Ezek 8:12
10:12 Mic 5:9; Ps 9:12; Ps 3:7
10:13 Ps 74:10,18; Num 11:20; 2 Sam 12:9,10
10:14 Ps 68:5; Ps 146:9; Ps 55:22
10:15 Ps 37:17; Job 38:15; Ezek 30:21,22
10:16 1 Tim 1:17; 1 Tim 6:15; Ps 29:10
10:17 Acts 4:26; 1 Chr 29:18; 2 Chr 34:27
10:18 1 Cor 15:47; Ps 82:3; Isa 11:4
11:1 Ps 56:11; 1 Sam 23:14; Ps 7:1

9:9 *a high refuge for the oppressed* A high refuge is a secure height, a stronghold out of the enemy's reach. Those who are crushed by others can run there "in times of trouble."
9:10 *those who know Your name will trust in You* To know God's name is to know who He is. The more we know Him, the easier it is to trust Him, because He has never once forsaken those who seek Him.
9:12 *He who seeks blood has remembered them* God is the avenger of innocent blood (Gen 9:5). The powerful may forget the poor they crushed, but God does not forget "the cry of the humble."
9:16 *Higgaion. Selah* Higgaion seems to mean a quiet murmur or meditation, perhaps a soft musical interlude. Put together with Selah, it calls us to stop and think about what we just read: the wicked are caught in their own traps.
9:20 *let the nations know that they are men* Proud nations forget that they are made of dust. David asks God to remind them. Every empire is only men, and God alone is God.
10:1 *Why, LORD, do You stand at a distance* Psalm 10 has no heading, which fits the view that it once belonged with Psalm 9. It begins with one of the most honest questions in the Bible. God does not rebuke the question. He gave it to us to pray.
10:4 *There is no God* The wicked man may not say it out loud, but it is the plan behind all his schemes. He lives as if no one will ever call him to account. Practical atheism is more common than the spoken kind.
10:9 *like a lion in its lair* The wicked man is pictured as a hunter: lying in ambush, waiting in the hiding place, drawing the helpless into his net. Paul gathers 10:7 into his description of a world under sin (Rom 3:14).
10:14 *of the fatherless You, You have been the helper* The wicked say God will never see (10:11). David answers, You have seen it. The helpless one leaves himself in God's hands. God has always taken the side of the orphan and the widow (Deut 10:18).
10:16 *The LORD is King forever and ever* The psalm that began with God seeming far away ends with God on His throne. Nothing about the wicked had changed yet, but David's eyes had. The King hears "the desire of the humble" (10:17).
11:1 *Flee to your mountain as a bird* Friends urged David to run and hide. The bows were bent and the arrows were on the string. David had already taken refuge in the LORD, so why run to the hills?

2 for look, the wicked bend a bow; they have prepared their arrow on the string, to shoot in darkness at the upright of heart. **3** When the foundations are torn down, what has the righteous done?" **4** The LORD ***is*** in the temple of His holiness; the LORD, in the heavens ***is*** His throne; His eyes see, His eyelids test the sons of man. **5** The LORD tests the righteous, and the wicked and the one who loves violence His soul hates. **6** Let Him rain snares on ***the*** wicked; fire and sulfur and a wind of scorching heat ***will be*** the portion of their cup. **7** For the LORD ***is*** righteous; He loves righteous deeds; the upright will see His face.

PSALMS 12

To the choirmaster, on the Sheminith. A psalm of David. **1** Save, LORD, for the godly ***one*** has come to an end; for the faithful have vanished from the sons of man. **2** They speak emptiness, each with his neighbor; ***with*** a lip of flatteries, with a heart and a heart they speak. **3** May the LORD cut off all lips of flatteries, the tongue that speaks great things, **4** who have said, "With our tongue we will prevail; our lips ***are*** with us; who ***is*** lord over us?" **5** "Because of the devastation of the afflicted, because of the groaning of the needy, now I will arise," says the LORD; "I will set in safety ***him who*** pants for it." **6** The words of the LORD ***are*** pure words, silver refined in a furnace on the earth, purified sevenfold. **7** You, LORD, will keep them; You will guard him from this generation forever. **8** The wicked walk about on every side, when vileness is exalted among the sons of man.

PSALMS 13

To the choirmaster. A psalm of David. **1** How long, LORD? Will You forget me forever? How long will You hide Your face from me? **2** How long will I set counsels in my soul, ***with*** sorrow in my heart by day? How long will my enemy be exalted over me? **3** Look; answer me, LORD my God; give light to my eyes, lest I sleep ***in*** death, **4** lest my enemy say, "I have prevailed over him," ***and*** my adversaries rejoice when I am shaken. **5** And I, in Your steadfast love I have trusted; let my heart rejoice in Your salvation. **6** I will sing to the LORD, for He has dealt bountifully with me.

PSALMS 14

To the choirmaster. Of David. **1** A fool has said in his heart, "There is no God." They have acted corruptly; they have done abominable deeds; there is none who does good. **2** The LORD has looked down from ***the*** heavens on the sons of man to see whether there is ***anyone*** who acts prudently, who seeks God. **3** All have turned aside; together they have become corrupt; there is none who does good, there is not even one. **4** Do all who work iniquity not know, who eat up My people ***as*** they eat bread? They have not called on the LORD. **5** There they have dreaded a dread, for God ***is*** with a righteous generation. **6** You would put to shame the counsel of the afflicted, for the LORD ***is*** his refuge. **7** Oh, that from Zion (Tsiyon) the salvation of Israel (Yisra'el) ***would come***! When the LORD turns back the captivity of His people, let Jacob (Ya'aqov) rejoice, let Israel be glad.

11:2 Ps 37:14; Jer 9:3; Ps 21:12
11:3 Ps 82:5; 2 Tim 2:19; Ps 75:3
11:4 Acts 7:49; Ps 18:6; Ps 103:19
11:5 Heb 1:9; Gen 22:1; James 1:12
11:6 Rev 14:10; Ezek 38:22; Gen 19:24
11:7 Rev 22:4; Ps 45:7; Ps 99:4
12:1 Isa 57:1; Ps 6:1; Gen 6:12
12:2 Matt 2:8; Ps 41:6; Rom 16:18
12:3 Dan 7:8,25; Rev 13:5; Ps 17:10
12:4 James 3:5,6; Jer 18:18; Gen 3:5
12:5 Prov 14:31; Isa 33:10; Ps 10:12
12:6 Prov 30:5; Ps 18:30; Ps 19:8
12:7 Ps 37:28,40; 1 Pet 1:5; Ps 16:1
12:8 Prov 29:12; Hos 5:11; Mic 6:16

13:1 Job 13:24; Ps 89:46; Ps 94:3,4
13:2 Matt 26:38; Mic 7:8-10; Ps 77:2-12
13:3 Ezra 9:8; Jer 51:39,57; Ps 119:153
13:4 Rev 11:10; Ps 25:2; Ps 38:16
13:5 Ps 9:14; Ps 52:8; Hab 3:18
13:6 Ps 116:7; Ps 119:7; Ps 21:13
14:1 Rom 3:10-12; Luke 12:20; Ps 10:4
14:2 Matt 13:15; Ps 33:13,14; Gen 6:12
14:3 Rom 3:10-12,23; Job 14:4; Isa 53:6
14:4 Jer 10:25; Ps 79:6; Isa 64:7
14:5 1 Pet 2:9; Ps 73:15; Ps 24:6
14:6 Ps 9:9; Ps 4:2; Ps 42:10
14:7 Rom 11:26; Ps 53:6

11:3 *When the foundations are torn down, what has the righteous done* This is the friends' question: when law and order fall apart, what can a godly man do? David's answer is the next verse. The foundations of earth may shake, but the LORD's throne does not.
11:4 *His eyelids test the sons of man* The picture is of narrowed eyes looking closely. God is not only in His heavens. He watches every person on earth, and He tests the righteous to refine them (11:5).
11:7 *the upright will see His face* The wicked get "fire and sulfur," the judgment that fell on Sodom (Gen 19:24). The upright get the greatest reward there is: to see God's face. Jesus said the pure in heart will see God (Matt 5:8).
12:1 *the godly one has come to an end* David felt alone, as if the faithful had vanished from the earth. Elijah felt the same (1 Kgs 19:10), but God had seven thousand who had not bowed to Baal.
12:2 *with a heart and a heart they speak* A double heart: one thing in the mouth and another inside. Flattery and boasting fill the air, and the liars think their tongues answer to no one (12:4).
12:6 *The words of the LORD are pure words* Against all the lying words of men stand the words of God. Silver refined seven times has no dross left, and seven is the number of completeness. Every word God speaks is true and can be trusted.
13:1 *How long, LORD* Four times David asks it. He feels forgotten and his prayers seem to hit the ceiling. The Bible gives us this psalm so we know such feelings are not the end of faith. It is faith that keeps asking God, not walking away.
13:3 *give light to my eyes, lest I sleep in death* Dull eyes were a sign of sickness or despair. David asks God to put the light back in them. He feels he is near death, and only God can renew his strength.
13:5 *in Your steadfast love I have trusted* The turn comes with "And I." Nothing outside has changed, but David chooses to trust God's hesed, His loyal covenant love. In six short verses he moves from "How long?" to "I will sing." Feelings follow faith, not the other way around.
14:1 *A fool has said in his heart, There is no God* In the Bible a fool is not someone with a weak mind but someone with a rebellious heart. He lives as if God is not there. Psalm 53 repeats this psalm with small changes.
14:3 *there is none who does good, there is not even one* God looks down on all mankind, and the verdict is total. Paul quotes this psalm to show that Jew and Gentile alike are under sin (Rom 3:10-12). No one is saved by being good enough. We all need a Savior.
14:7 *Oh, that from Zion the salvation of Israel would come* David longs for God's salvation to come out of Zion. "Turns back the captivity" can mean bringing home exiles or, more broadly, restoring good fortunes. Paul says "The One who delivers will come out of Zion" (Rom 11:26), and I believe God will yet save and restore Israel.

PSALMS 15

A psalm of David. **1** LORD, who will sojourn in Your tent? Who will dwell on the mountain of Your holiness? **2** ***He who*** walks blameless, and does righteousness, and speaks truth in his heart; **3** he does not slander with his tongue; he does not do evil to his neighbor, and he does not lift up a reproach against his relative; **4** in his eyes a rejected one is despised, and those who fear the LORD he honors; he swears to ***his own*** harm and does not change; **5** his money he does not give at interest, and a bribe against the innocent he does not take. He who does these ***things*** will not be shaken forever.

PSALMS 16

A Miktam of David. **1** Keep me, O God, for I have taken refuge in You. **2** ***O my soul,*** you have said to the LORD, "You ***are*** the Lord; my good ***is*** not beyond You." **3** As for the holy ones who ***are*** in the land, they and the majestic ones, all my delight ***is*** in them. **4** Their sorrows will multiply, ***those who*** have hurried ***after*** another ***god***; I will not pour out their drink offerings of blood, and I will not take up their names on my lips. **5** The LORD ***is*** the portion of my share and my cup; You hold my lot. **6** Lines have fallen to me in pleasant ***places***; indeed, an inheritance is beautiful to me. **7** I will bless the LORD who has counseled me; also ***in the*** nights my kidneys have instructed me. **8** I have set the LORD before me continually; for ***He is*** at my right hand, I will not be shaken. **9** Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory has rejoiced; also my flesh will dwell in safety. **10** For You will not abandon my soul to Sheol; You will not give Your godly one to see the pit. **11** You will make known to me the path of life; fullness of joys ***is*** with Your presence; pleasant things ***are*** at Your right hand forever.

15:1 Ps 61:4; Ps 23:6; Ps 84:4
15:2 Matt 5:8; Eph 4:25; Col 3:9
15:3 Rom 13:10; Ps 101:5-8; Lev 19:16
15:4 Judg 11:35; Matt 5:33; Ps 101:6
15:5 Exod 22:25; Ezek 18:8,17; Ezek 22:12
16:1 Ps 56:1; Ps 60:1; Ps 17:5,8
16:2 Ps 31:14; Ps 91:2; Zech 13:9
16:3 Titus 3:8; Heb 6:10; Mal 3:17
16:4 Exod 23:13; Ps 32:10; Josh 23:7
16:5 Ps 73:26; Lam 3:24; Ps 23:5
16:6 Ps 78:55; Jer 3:19; Ps 21:1-3
16:7 Ps 73:24; Ps 42:8; Ps 17:3
16:8 Acts 2:25-28; Ps 73:23,26; Ps 110:5
16:9 Luke 10:21; Ps 30:12; Ps 57:8
16:10 Acts 2:31; Acts 13:35; John 20:9
16:11 Acts 2:28; Col 1:27; Rev 7:15-17

15:1 *LORD, who will sojourn in Your tent* David is thinking of the tent he pitched in Jerusalem for the ark of the covenant (2 Sam 6:17), while Moses' older tabernacle stood at Gibeon (1 Chr 16:39). The ark was the gold-covered chest that held the tablets of the Ten Commandments, the sign of God's presence with Israel. To stay in God's tent is to live near God as His welcome guest. What kind of person may do that?

15:2 *He who walks blameless* Blameless means whole, the same person in private as in public. He does what is right in God's eyes, and he "speaks truth in his heart." His honesty starts on the inside. He does not lie even to himself.

15:3 *he does not slander with his tongue* The word pictures someone going around spreading stories. Much of this psalm is about speech. The tongue is small but can set a forest on fire (James 3:5-6). The godly guard their mouths, especially about someone who is not in the room.

15:4 *in his eyes a rejected one is despised* The rejected one is a person who has turned from God and lives wickedly. This does not tell us to hate people. It means the godly do not admire wickedness, even in the rich and powerful. They honor "those who fear the LORD," holding faithful believers above famous ones.

15:4 *he swears to his own harm and does not change* He keeps his promise even when it costs him. Jesus wants our yes to mean yes and our no to mean no (Matt 5:37).

15:5 *his money he does not give at interest* The Law told Israel not to charge interest to a poor fellow Israelite who needed a loan (Exod 22:25; Lev 25:35-37), though it allowed it to foreigners (Deut 23:20). The heart of it: the godly do not get rich off someone else's desperation, and they cannot be bought.

15:5 *He who does these things will not be shaken forever* None of us lives this perfectly. Psalm 15 is not a list of ways to earn a place in God's house. It describes the life God's grace produces. Only Jesus lived it fully, and through Him we are welcomed into God's presence.

16:0 *A Miktam of David* The meaning of Miktam is uncertain. Some link it with a word for gold and think it means a precious psalm. Others think it means an inscription, a poem to be engraved and remembered. Six psalms carry the title (16; 56-60), all connected with David.

16:1 *Keep me, O God, for I have taken refuge in You* The prayer is short and the reason simple. David runs to God the way someone runs into a shelter when a storm hits. The psalm does not dwell on the danger. It dwells on God.

16:2 *my good is not beyond You* David has made his choice: the LORD is his Master. Every good thing he has comes from God, and nothing is truly good to him apart from God.

16:3 *the holy ones who are in the land* The holy ones, or saints, are people set apart for God. In the Bible every true believer is a saint. The world may not think much of them, but to David they are "the majestic ones," nobles. If God is your highest good, His people will become your joy too (1 John 4:20-21).

16:4 *those who have hurried after another god* They ran after idols, and the chase only multiplied their sorrows. Idols always take more than they give. David will not even take their names on his lips (Exod 23:13).

16:5 *The LORD is the portion of my share and my cup* When Israel entered Canaan, each tribe received land by lot, but the priests and Levites got none. God Himself was their portion (Num 18:20; Deut 18:1-2). David says the same of himself. Whatever he owns, his real inheritance is God.

16:6 *Lines have fallen to me in pleasant places* The lines were measuring cords that marked off property. David looks at his share and calls it beautiful. That is contentment. We often measure our lot by what we lack. David measured his by Whom he had.

16:7 *in the nights my kidneys have instructed me* In Hebrew thought the kidneys stood for the inner self, the feelings and conscience. When David lies awake, God's counsel is still at work in him.

16:8 *I have set the LORD before me continually* Faith includes a daily choice to keep looking to God. The right hand was the place of a defender (Ps 121:5). Peter quotes verses 8-11 (Acts 2:25-28) and says "David says concerning Him" (Acts 2:25), meaning the Messiah.

16:9 *my flesh will dwell in safety* "My glory" probably means the inner being, and Peter, following the Greek Old Testament, reads "my tongue" (Acts 2:26). David's whole self rejoices, and even his body rests secure in God's care. The next verse tells why that safety reaches past death.

16:10 *You will not abandon my soul to Sheol* Sheol is the place of the dead. It can mean simply the grave, or the realm of the dead beyond it (Gen 37:35). The Greek word for it is Hades. The Old Testament does not give a full picture of life after death, but psalms like this already hold the hope that God will not leave His own there.

16:10 *You will not give Your godly one to see the pit* The word for "the pit" can also mean decay, and Peter quoted the Greek reading, "Holy One to see decay" (Acts 2:27). David died and was buried, and his tomb was still in Jerusalem (Acts 2:29). So Peter says David spoke as a prophet "concerning the resurrection of the Christ" (Acts 2:31). Paul makes the same argument (Acts 13:35-37). The words were true for David in a lesser way, but they were fulfilled fully only in Jesus, whose body did not decay.

16:11 *You will make known to me the path of life* Psalm 1 showed two ways. Here God Himself shows the road to life. For Jesus that path led through death, out of the tomb, to the Father's right hand (Acts 2:28, 33). The deepest joy is not in what God gives but in being with Him, and the joys at His right hand never end.

PSALMS 17

A prayer of David. **1** Hear righteousness, LORD; pay attention to my cry; give ear to my prayer, without lips of deceit. **2** Let my judgment come forth from before You; let Your eyes see uprightness. **3** You have tested my heart; You have visited ***me by*** night; You have refined me, You will not find ***anything***; I have resolved ***that*** my mouth will not transgress. **4** As for the deeds of man, by the word of Your lips I, I have guarded ***myself from*** the paths of ***the*** violent. **5** My steps have held fast in Your tracks; my footsteps have not been shaken. **6** I, I have called on You, for You will answer me, O God; incline Your ear to me; hear my word. **7** Make Your steadfast loves wonderful, O Savior of those who take refuge from those who rise up ***against them***, by Your right hand. **8** Keep me like the pupil of the daughter of ***the*** eye; hide me in the shadow of Your wings, **9** from before ***the*** wicked who have assailed me, my enemies ***who*** surround me for ***my*** life. **10** Their fat they have closed up; ***with*** their mouth they have spoken with pride. **11** Our steps, now they have surrounded us; their eyes they set to bend ***us*** down to the earth. **12** His likeness ***is*** like a lion ***that*** longs to tear, and like a young lion sitting in hiding places. **13** Arise, LORD; confront his face; make him bow down; deliver my soul from the wicked, Your sword, **14** from men, Your hand, LORD, from men of ***the*** world, whose portion ***is*** in life, and ***whose*** belly You fill ***with*** Your treasured ***things***; they are satisfied ***with*** sons, and they leave their abundance to their infants. **15** I, in righteousness I will see Your face; I will be satisfied, when ***I*** awake, ***with*** Your form.

17:1 Ps 61:1; Ps 142:6; Ps 86:1
17:2 Ps 37:6,33; 2 Thess 1:6-9; Jude 1:24
17:3 Job 23:10; Ps 26:2; Ps 66:10
17:4 Matt 4:4; Ps 14:1-3; Gen 6:5,11
17:5 Ps 18:36; Ps 119:116,117,133; Ps 121:3,7
17:6 Ps 116:2; Ps 55:16; Ps 66:19,20
17:7 Ps 31:21; Ps 20:6; Ps 78:12
17:8 Matt 23:37; Luke 13:34; Deut 32:10
17:9 1 Chr 17:9; Ps 7:5; Ps 35:4,7,12
17:10 Matt 13:15; Acts 28:27; 1 Sam 2:3
17:11 1 Sam 23:26; 1 Sam 24:2,3; 1 Sam 26:2,3
17:12 Ps 7:2; Ps 22:13; 2 Tim 4:17
17:13 Ps 3:7; Ps 7:6; Ps 44:23,26
17:14 John 17:14; Luke 12:20; Luke 16:25
17:15 Acts 2:28; Ps 16:11; Job 19:26,27

PSALMS 18

To the choirmaster. Of the servant of the LORD, of David, who spoke to the LORD the words of this song on the day ***when*** *the LORD rescued him from the hand of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul (Shaul).* **1** And he said, "I love You, LORD, my strength. **2** The LORD ***is*** my crag and my stronghold and my deliverer; my God ***is*** my rock in whom I take refuge, my shield and the horn of my salvation, my high refuge. **3** I call on the LORD, ***who is*** to be praised, and I am saved from my enemies. **4** The cords of death encompassed me, and the torrents of worthlessness terrified me. **5** The cords of Sheol surrounded me; the snares of death confronted me. **6** In my distress I called on the LORD, and to my God I cried for help; He heard my voice from His temple, and my cry for help before Him came into His ears. **7** And the earth shook and quaked, and the foundations of ***the*** mountains trembled, and they shook back and forth, for it burned ***with anger*** in Him. **8** Smoke went up in His nose, and fire from His mouth consumed; coals burned from Him. **9** And He bent ***the*** heavens and came down, and thick darkness ***was*** under His feet. **10** And He rode on a cherub and flew, and He soared on the wings of ***the*** wind. **11** He made darkness His covering, His canopy around Him, darkness of waters, dark clouds of ***the*** skies. **12** From the brightness before Him His dark clouds passed on, hail and coals of fire. **13** And the LORD thundered in the heavens, and the Most High gave forth His voice, hail and coals of fire. **14** And He sent out His arrows and scattered them, and He shot lightnings and routed them. **15** And the

18:1 2 Sam 22:1-51; 1 John 4:19; Col 1:11
18:2 Luke 1:69; Ps 144:2; Ps 28:1
18:3 Luke 1:71; Ps 5:2,3; Ps 28:1,2
18:4 Ps 116:3; 2 Cor 1:9; Matt 27:24,25,39-44
18:5 Ps 86:13; Ps 88:3-8,15-17; Acts 2:24
18:6 Rev 11:19; Ps 50:15; 2 Sam 22:7
18:7 Acts 4:31; Ps 114:4-7; Matt 28:2
18:8 Ps 21:9; Ps 11:6; Ps 74:1
18:9 Ps 68:4; Ps 144:5-15; Deut 33:26
18:10 Luke 9:34; Acts 2:2; Ps 104:3
18:11 Matt 17:5; Ps 97:2; Deut 4:11
18:12 Matt 17:5; Rev 11:19; Josh 10:11
18:13 Ps 104:7; 1 Sam 7:10; Ps 29:3,4
18:14 Ps 144:6; Hab 3:11; Ps 77:17
18:15 Ps 106:9; Exod 15:8; Ps 74:15

17:1 *Hear righteousness, LORD* David brings a just case to the Judge. He prays "without lips of deceit." He is not claiming to be sinless, only that his prayer is honest and his cause is right.
17:3 *You have tested my heart; You have visited me by night* God has searched David in the quiet hours and refined him like metal. He invites God to look again. A clear conscience before God is a strong place to pray from.
17:8 *Keep me like the pupil of the daughter of the eye* The pupil is the tender center of the eye, the part we guard by instinct (Deut 32:10). "The shadow of Your wings" pictures a mother bird covering her young. Jesus used the same picture of Himself and Jerusalem (Matt 23:37).
17:14 *men of the world, whose portion is in life* The wicked have their share now: full bellies, many children, money to leave behind. That is all they will ever have. David's portion is different, as the next verse shows.
17:15 *I will be satisfied, when I awake, with Your form* The worldly are satisfied with sons and riches (17:14). David will be satisfied with God Himself. Some read "when I awake" as each new morning in God's care, others as waking from death to see God's face. Either way, nothing less than God will satisfy him.
18:0 *on the day when the LORD rescued him from the hand of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul* This psalm also appears, with small changes, in 2 Samuel 22, near the end of David's life. It looks back over years of running from Saul and fighting Israel's enemies. David calls himself "the servant of the LORD," the same title given to Moses and Joshua.
18:1 *I love You, LORD, my strength* The word for love here is a tender one, often used for a mother's love. It is rare for a man to say it to God in the Old Testament. Before David tells the story, he tells God how he feels about Him.
18:2 *my crag and my stronghold* David piles up pictures from his years in the wilderness: the high rocks where he hid, the fortress, the shield. "The horn of my salvation" pictures the horn of a strong animal, a sign of power. Zechariah uses the phrase for Jesus (Luke 1:69).
18:6 *He heard my voice from His temple* "Temple" here means God's heavenly dwelling. David's cry rose from a place of death (18:4-5) and reached God's throne. No pit is too deep for a prayer to rise from it.
18:7 *And the earth shook and quaked* Verses 7-15 describe God coming to rescue David in the language of a great storm and earthquake, like His coming down at Sinai (Exod 19:16-18). Scripture does not record a storm like this in David's battles. The poetry shows what was happening unseen: heaven itself moved to save one servant.
18:10 *He rode on a cherub and flew* A cherub is a mighty angel who guards God's holiness (Gen 3:24). Cherubim were carved over the ark (Exod 25:18-22). God is pictured riding to the rescue like a King in His war chariot.

channels of water appeared, and the foundations of the world were uncovered at Your rebuke, LORD, at the blast of the wind of Your nose. **16** He sent from on high; He took me; He drew me out of many waters. **17** He rescued me from my strong enemy and from those who hate me, for they were stronger than I. **18** They confronted me in the day of my calamity, and the LORD became a support to me. **19** And He brought me out into a broad place; He set me free, for He delighted in me. **20** The LORD has dealt with me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands He has repaid me. **21** For I have kept the ways of the LORD, and I have not acted wickedly ***away*** from my God. **22** For all His judgments ***were*** before me, and His statutes I did not remove from me. **23** And I was blameless with Him, and I kept myself from my iniquity. **24** And the LORD has repaid me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands before His eyes. **25** With the godly ***one*** You show Yourself loyal; with the blameless man You show Yourself blameless; **26** with the pure You show Yourself pure, and with the crooked You show Yourself shrewd. **27** For You, You save an afflicted people, and eyes ***that are*** lifted up You bring low. **28** For You, You light my lamp; the LORD my God illumines my darkness. **29** For by You I run ***against*** a raiding band, and by my God I leap over a wall. **30** ***As for*** God, His way ***is*** blameless; the word of the LORD ***is*** refined; He ***is*** a shield to all who take refuge in Him. **31** For who ***is*** God except the LORD? And who ***is*** a rock besides our God? **32** The God who girds me ***with*** strength, and He has made my way blameless; **33** ***He*** makes my feet like the does, and on my high places He makes me stand; **34** ***He*** trains my hands for the battle, and my arms bend a bow of bronze. **35** And You have given me the shield of Your salvation, and Your right hand has supported me, and Your humility has made me great. **36** You have enlarged my steps under me, and my ankles have not slipped. **37** I pursued my enemies and overtook them, and I did not turn back until they were destroyed. **38** I shattered them, and they were not able to rise; they fell under my feet. **39** And You girded me ***with*** strength for the battle; You made those who rose against me bow down under me. **40** And my enemies, You have given me ***their*** neck, and those who hate me, I destroyed them. **41** They cried for help, and there was no one to save; to the LORD, and He did not answer them. **42** And I crushed them like dust on the face of ***the*** wind; like the mud of the streets I emptied them out. **43** You delivered me from the strivings of ***the*** people; You made me the head of nations; a people ***whom*** I have not known serve me. **44** At the hearing of the ear they obey me; sons of a foreign ***land*** cringe before me. **45** Sons of a foreign ***land*** wither, and they come trembling out of their strongholds. **46** The LORD lives, and blessed ***be*** my rock, and let the God of my salvation be exalted, **47** the God who gives vengeance to me, and has subdued peoples under me, **48** who delivers me from my enemies; yes, above those who rise against me You exalt me; from a man of violence You rescue me. **49** Therefore I will give thanks to You among the nations, LORD, and I will sing praises to Your name. **50** ***He*** makes great the salvations of His king, and shows steadfast love to His anointed, to David and to his offspring forever."

18:16 Ps 144:7; Exod 2:10; 2 Sam 22:17
18:17 Ps 35:10; Heb 2:14,15; Ps 38:19
18:18 Deut 32:35; 2 Sam 22:19; Jer 18:17
18:19 Ps 118:5; Ps 31:8; Ps 37:23
18:20 Ps 24:4; Ps 58:11; 1 Sam 24:17,20
18:21 Ps 119:102; Ps 17:4; Ps 26:1
18:22 Ps 119:13,128; John 5:14; Ps 119:112,117
18:23 Ps 7:1-8; Ps 11:7; Ps 17:3
18:24 Ruth 2:12; Matt 10:41,42; 2 Thess 1:6,7
18:25 Matt 18:33-35; Ps 41:1-4; Ps 112:4-6
18:26 Prov 3:34; Lev 26:23,24,27,28; Ps 109:17-19
18:27 Ps 101:5; Ps 9:18; Ps 34:6,19
18:28 Matt 4:16; 1 Pet 2:9; Job 18:6
18:29 Eph 6:10-13; 2 Sam 22:30; 2 Cor 12:9,10
18:30 Deut 32:4; Rev 15:3; Ps 12:6
18:31 Ps 86:8; Deut 32:31,39; 1 Sam 2:2
18:32 Isa 45:5; 2 Cor 3:5; Ps 28:7
18:33 Hab 3:19; Deut 32:13; 2 Sam 2:18
18:34 Ps 144:1; Jer 49:35; 2 Sam 22:36
18:35 2 Sam 22:36; Ps 5:12; Ps 28:7
18:36 Prov 4:12; 2 Sam 22:37; Ps 4:1
18:37 Ps 3:7; Ps 9:3; Ps 35:2,5
18:38 1 Sam 17:49-51; 1 Sam 23:5; 1 Sam 30:17
18:39 1 Cor 15:27; Ps 18:32; Ezek 30:24,25
18:41 Prov 1:28; 2 Sam 22:42,43; Job 35:12,13
18:42 2 Kgs 13:7; Isa 10:6; Zech 10:5
18:43 Rom 16:26; 2 Sam 3:1; Isa 55:5
18:44 Ps 66:3; Ps 81:15; Deut 33:29
18:45 Mic 7:17; Isa 24:4; James 1:11
18:46 Ps 18:2; 2 Sam 22:47; Jer 10:10
18:47 Ps 47:3; Deut 32:35; 2 Sam 22:48
18:48 Ps 140:1,4,11; Ps 22:27-30; Ps 59:1,2
18:49 Rom 15:9; Ps 14:7; Ps 30:12
18:50 Luke 1:69; Acts 2:34; Rom 1:3

18:16 *He drew me out of many waters* The Hebrew verb for drawing out is the word used to name Moses, drawn out of the water (Exod 2:10). Deep waters are a picture of overwhelming trouble.
18:19 *He set me free, for He delighted in me* The reason God rescued David was not his strength but God's delight. That is grace.
18:20 *according to my righteousness* David is not claiming to be sinless, and this psalm comes from the years before his sin with Bathsheba. He means that in his conflict with Saul he had kept God's ways and not raised his hand against the LORD's anointed (1 Sam 24:6). God was faithful to the one who was faithful to Him.
18:25 *With the godly one You show Yourself loyal* God meets people according to their hearts. To the faithful He is faithful, and to the crooked He shows Himself shrewd, outwitting their twisted ways. God does not change, but how we meet Him depends on how we come.
18:28 *You light my lamp* A burning lamp was a sign of life and of a family that would go on. God had promised David that a lamp would always remain for him (1 Kgs 11:36).
18:31 *For who is God except the LORD* There is no other rock. Every other source of strength will crumble.
18:33 *He makes my feet like the does* A doe can stand on steep, rocky heights without slipping. God gives His servant sure footing in dangerous places (Hab 3:19).
18:35 *Your humility has made me great* God's greatness stoops down to lift the lowly. The God of heaven bent down to raise a shepherd boy to the throne. He bent lower still when His Son became a man (Phil 2:6-8).
18:43 *You made me the head of nations* David's victories brought foreign peoples under his rule (2 Sam 8). This points beyond David to his greater Son, who will rule all nations.
18:49 *I will give thanks to You among the nations* Paul quotes this line to show that God always meant for the Gentiles to praise Him for His mercy (Rom 15:9).
18:50 *to David and to his offspring forever* The psalm ends with God's covenant with David, the promise of a forever throne (2 Sam 7:12-16). That promise is kept in Jesus, the Son of David, who will reign forever (Luke 1:32-33).

PSALMS 19

To the choirmaster. A psalm of David. **1** The heavens are recounting the glory of God, and the expanse is declaring the work of His hands. **2** Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge. **3** There is no speech, and there are no words; their voice is not heard. **4** Into all the earth their line has gone out, and their sayings to the end of the world. For the sun He has set a tent in them, **5** and it ***is*** like a bridegroom going forth from his chamber; it rejoices like a mighty man to run ***its*** course. **6** Its going forth ***is*** from the end of the heavens, and its circuit to their ends; and there is nothing hidden from its heat. **7** The law of the LORD ***is*** perfect, restoring the soul; the testimony of the LORD ***is*** reliable, making wise the simple. **8** The precepts of the LORD ***are*** upright, making the heart glad; the commandment of the LORD ***is*** clean, giving light to the eyes. **9** The fear of the LORD ***is*** pure, enduring forever; the judgments of the LORD ***are*** truth; they are righteous altogether. **10** ***They are*** more desirable than gold, and than much fine gold; and sweeter than honey and the drippings of ***the*** honeycombs. **11** Also Your servant is warned by them; in keeping them ***there is*** great reward. **12** Errors, who will discern ***them***? Acquit me from hidden ***faults***. **13** Also from presumptuous ***sins*** keep back Your servant; let them not rule over me; then I will be blameless, and I will be acquitted of great transgression. **14** Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable before You, LORD, my rock and my redeemer.

PSALMS 20

To the choirmaster. A psalm of David. **1** May the LORD answer you in the day of trouble; may the name of the God of Jacob (Ya'aqov) set you on high. **2** May He send your help from the holy place, and from Zion (Tsiyon) may He support you. **3** May He remember all your grain offerings, and may He regard your burnt offering as fat. Selah. **4** May He give to you according to your heart, and may He fulfill all your counsel. **5** Let us shout for joy at your salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up a banner. May the LORD fulfill all your requests. **6** Now I know that the LORD has saved His anointed; He will answer him from the heavens of His holiness with the mighty deeds of the salvation of His right hand.

19:1 Rom 1:19; Rom 1:20; Heb 1:10
19:2 Ps 74:16; Ps 136:8,9; Gen 8:22
19:3 Deut 4:19
19:4 Rom 10:18; Gen 1:14-18; Ps 98:3
19:5 John 3:29; Isa 62:5; Eccl 1:5
19:6 Eccl 1:5; Col 1:23; Ps 139:9
19:7 Ps 111:7; Rev 19:10; Ps 119:130
19:8 Rom 2:20; Gal 3:11; Ps 12:6
19:9 Rev 16:7; 2 Pet 1:19; Ps 34:11-14
19:10 Ps 119:72,127; Ps 119:103; Prov 3:13-15
19:11 Matt 5:12; Prov 29:18; Ps 119:11
19:12 Ps 90:8; Ps 40:12; 1 Cor 4:4
19:13 Ps 119:133; Rom 6:12-14,16-22; Ps 7:10
19:14 1 Pet 1:18; 1 Pet 1:19; Ps 51:15
20:1 Ps 46:7,11; Ps 138:7; Prov 18:10
20:2 Ps 73:17; 1 Kgs 6:16; 1 Kgs 8:44,45
20:3 Gen 4:4; Isa 60:7; Eph 5:2
20:4 Ps 21:2; Ps 145:19; Matt 21:22
20:5 Ps 60:4; Isa 25:9; Luke 1:47
20:6 Acts 2:36; Ps 28:8; Ps 2:2

19:1 *The heavens are recounting the glory of God* The sky is like a preacher who never stops. The expanse is the wide dome of the sky (Gen 1:6-8). In verses 1-6 David calls Him El, God the Creator. In verses 7-14 he uses "the LORD," the covenant name, seven times. Creation shows that God exists and is powerful. His Word shows us His name and His heart.
19:2 *Day to day pours forth speech* The picture is a spring that never runs dry. Each day hands the message to the next. The sky makes no sound (19:3), yet its message is clear. It speaks without words.
19:4 *Into all the earth their line has gone out* The line may be a measuring line marking out the whole earth, or it may mean their voice. Either way no people is left without a witness to God's glory, and so all are "without excuse" (Rom 1:20). Paul borrows this verse to show how far the gospel has gone (Rom 10:18).
19:5 *like a bridegroom going forth from his chamber* The sun comes out each morning bright and full of joy, and runs its course like an athlete who loves to race. Many of Israel's neighbors worshiped the sun. David treats it as a creature God made and placed in the sky. Nothing hides from its heat (19:6), and nothing in us hides from God's Word.
19:7 *The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul* Verses 7-9 give six names for God's Word, each with a quality and an effect. The law, God's instruction, is complete and lacking nothing, and it brings a weary or wandering soul back to life. His testimony, His own witness about Himself, makes "the simple," the naive and easily led, wise. No degree is required. The way to wisdom is to listen to God.
19:8 *The precepts of the LORD are upright, making the heart glad* Precepts are God's specific instructions. They are straight like a good road, and they bring joy. Many think God's commands steal our happiness. David found the opposite. His commandment is clean, with nothing false mixed in, and it gives light to see life clearly (Ps 119:105).
19:9 *The fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever* The fear of the LORD is the reverent awe that takes God seriously as holy and great, and leads us to trust, worship and obey Him. It is more than fear of punishment. It draws near with humble respect, the way a child honors a good and mighty father, and it is "the beginning of wisdom" (Ps 111:10). Here it stands for the Word that teaches that awe. Fashions change, and God's Word stays the same.
19:10 *more desirable than gold* Gold was the most valuable thing people owned, and honey the sweetest thing they knew. God's Word is better than both. Sometimes we read the Bible more as a duty than a delight. David's words can become our prayer: Lord, make Your Word precious and sweet to me.
19:11 *Your servant is warned by them* God's Word warns us of danger before we walk into it, and keeping it brings great reward. God is glad to bless those who walk in His ways.
19:12 *Acquit me from hidden faults* No one can see all his own faults (Jer 17:9). We spot the sins of others and miss many of our own. Hidden faults are sins we have done without knowing it. This humble prayer admits we need forgiveness for more than we can name.
19:13 *from presumptuous sins keep back Your servant* Presumptuous sins are proud, willful sins, done with eyes wide open. Sin wants to be our master, and willful sin repeated becomes a chain. Blameless does not mean sinless. It means whole and sincere before God, with no hidden rebellion in the heart.
19:14 *Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable before You* The heavens speak without words, and David wants his own words, and even his thoughts, to please God. A redeemer in Israel was a close relative who paid to set a family member free or bought back lost land (Lev 25:25, 47-49). God went that far for us, buying us back with the precious blood of Christ (1 Pet 1:18-19). Many believers pray this verse before reading or teaching Scripture.
20:1 *May the LORD answer you in the day of trouble* Psalms 20 and 21 are royal psalms, songs about Israel's king. In Psalm 20 the people pray for the king as he goes out to battle. In Psalm 21 they thank God for the victory. "The God of Jacob" reminds them He is the God who stayed faithful to a weak and wandering man.
20:3 *your burnt offering* A burnt offering was a sacrifice burned whole on the altar, a sign of complete devotion to God. Before battle the king offered sacrifices (1 Sam 13:9-12), and the people ask God to accept them.
20:5 *in the name of our God we will set up a banner* A banner was a flag lifted to rally troops and to mark a victory. Israel's flag was not a symbol of its own strength but the name of its God (Exod 17:15).

7 These ***trust*** in chariotry and these in horses, and we, we will make mention of the name of the LORD our God. **8** They, they have bowed down and fallen, and we, we have risen and stood upright. **9** LORD, save the king! May He answer us in the day we call.

PSALMS 21

To the choirmaster. A psalm of David. **1** LORD, in Your strength the king rejoices, and in Your salvation how greatly he exults! **2** The desire of his heart You have given to him, and the request of his lips You have not withheld. Selah. **3** For You meet him ***with*** blessings of good; You set on his head a crown of pure gold. **4** Life he asked from You; You gave ***it*** to him, length of days forever and ever. **5** Great ***is*** his glory in Your salvation; splendor and majesty You place on him. **6** For You set him ***as*** blessings forever; You make him glad with joy in Your presence. **7** For the king ***is*** trusting in the LORD, and in the steadfast love of the Most High he will not be shaken. **8** Your hand will find all Your enemies; Your right hand will find those who hate You. **9** You will make them like a furnace of fire at the time of Your presence. The LORD in His anger will swallow them up, and fire will consume them. **10** Their fruit You will destroy from the earth, and their seed from the sons of man. **11** For they have stretched out evil against You; they have devised a scheme; they will not prevail. **12** For You will make them ***turn their*** shoulder; on Your bowstrings You will make ready ***Your arrows*** against their faces. **13** Be exalted, LORD, in Your strength! Let us sing and sing praises ***to*** Your might.

PSALMS 22

To the choirmaster, on "The Doe of the Dawn." A psalm of David. **1** My God, my God, why have You forsaken me? ***You are*** far from my salvation, ***from*** the words of my roaring. **2** My God, I call out by day, and You do not answer; and by night, and ***there is*** no silence for me. **3** And You ***are*** holy, sitting ***on*** the praises of Israel (Yisra'el). **4** In You our fathers trusted; they trusted, and You delivered them. **5** To You they cried out and escaped; in You they trusted and were not ashamed. **6** And I ***am*** a worm and not a man, a reproach of mankind and despised by ***the*** people. **7** All who see me mock at me; they open ***wide*** with ***the*** lip; they shake ***the*** head: **8** "Roll ***it*** to the LORD; let Him deliver him; let Him rescue him, for He delights in him." **9** For You ***are the One*** who drew me out from ***the*** belly, who made me trust on the breasts of my mother. **10** On You I was cast from ***the*** womb; from the belly

20:7 2 Chr 32:8; Isa 31:1; Ps 33:16,17
20:8 Ps 34:21,22; Judg 5:31; Ps 125:1
20:9 Ps 118:25,26; Matt 21:9,15; Ps 2:6-10
21:1 Ps 28:7; Ps 2:6; Ps 63:11
21:2 Ps 20:4,5; Ps 92:11; Ps 2:8,9
21:3 Rev 19:12; 2 Sam 12:30; 1 Chr 20:2
21:4 Ps 91:16; Ps 61:5,6; Ps 13:3
21:5 Ps 3:3; Ps 62:7; 2 Sam 7:8,9,19
21:6 Acts 2:28; Ps 16:11; Ps 45:7
21:7 Acts 2:25; Ps 16:8; Ps 13:5
21:8 Acts 2:35; Ps 2:9; Ps 18:1
21:9 Matt 22:44; Acts 2:35; Mal 4:1
21:10 Ps 37:28; Ps 109:13; 1 Kgs 13:34
21:11 Ps 2:1; Ps 10:2; Jer 11:18,19
21:12 Ps 9:3; Ps 44:10; Ps 56:9
21:13 Rev 19:1-6; Ps 18:46; Ps 46:10
22:1 Matt 27:46; Mark 15:34; Luke 24:44
22:2 Luke 2:37; Luke 18:7; Ps 42:3
22:3 Deut 10:21; Isa 6:3; Rev 4:8
22:4 Exod 14:13,14,31; Ps 44:1-7; Gen 15:6
22:5 Isa 49:23; Ps 31:1; Ps 71:1
22:6 Matt 27:39; Job 25:6; Isa 41:14
22:7 Mark 15:29; Matt 27:39-40; Ps 109:25
22:8 Matt 27:43; Matt 27:42; Matt 17:5
22:9 Luke 24:46; Heb 5:7; Ps 71:6
22:10 Isa 49:1; Gal 1:15; Isa 46:3,4

20:7 *These trust in chariotry and these in horses* Chariots were the tanks of the ancient world, and Israel had few. The nations trusted their weapons. Israel was to trust the LORD (Deut 20:1; Isa 31:1). What do we lean on when the day of trouble comes?
21:1 *in Your strength the king rejoices* The prayers of Psalm 20 have been answered. The king does not boast in his own strength. His joy is in God's strength and God's salvation.
21:4 *length of days forever and ever* For an earthly king this meant a long life and a lasting line, as God promised David (2 Sam 7:16). The words reach beyond any man who died. They find their full meaning in the Messiah, the Son of David who lives and reigns forever.
21:7 *in the steadfast love of the Most High he will not be shaken* Here is the secret of the king's strength: he trusts the LORD, and God's loyal love holds him steady.
21:9 *You will make them like a furnace of fire* Verses 8-12 turn to God's judgment on His enemies. These are not personal grudges but God's justice against those who "have stretched out evil against You." In the end, every enemy of God's King will be put down (1 Cor 15:25).
21:13 *Be exalted, LORD, in Your strength* The psalm began with the king rejoicing in God's strength and ends with the people praising it. The glory goes to God, not the king.
22:0 *on The Doe of the Dawn* The Hebrew words are Aijeleth Hashshahar. Their meaning is not certain, but most scholars take them as the name of a tune the psalm was sung to.
22:1 *My God, my God, why have You forsaken me* David still says "my God." He has not stopped believing, but he feels left alone. The psalm does not name his crisis, and as we read on it goes far beyond anything we know David suffered. Faith sometimes sounds like "Why?" David brought his question to God, not away from Him.
22:1 *why have You forsaken me* On the cross, about three in the afternoon, Jesus cried these words (Matt 27:46; Mark 15:34). God made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us (2 Cor 5:21). Jesus bore our sins and felt the separation from God that sin deserves. The Son did not stop being the Son, and the Father did not stop loving Him. He entered the darkness we deserved so we would never be forsaken. Many believe He was also pointing to the whole psalm, which ends in victory.
22:2 *I call out by day, and You do not answer* Day and night David prays, and heaven seems silent. Psalm 22 does not pretend that silence is easy. It also shows that God's silence does not mean God's absence. David keeps talking to Him.
22:3 *And You are holy, sitting on the praises of Israel* In the middle of his pain David says what he knows: God has not become less than God. The ark was called the place where God sat enthroned above the cherubim (1 Sam 4:4). Here God's throne is the worship of His people.
22:4 *In You our fathers trusted* Three times: they trusted, they cried out, they were delivered. When we feel alone, remembering what God has done for others, and for us, helps us hold on.
22:6 *I am a worm and not a man* Crushed and worthless, something people step on. Isaiah says the same of the Servant of the LORD, despised and rejected by men (Isa 53:3).
22:7 *they shake the head* Curled lips and shaking heads were gestures of scorn. At the cross "those passing by were blaspheming Him, wagging their heads" (Matt 27:39).
22:8 *Roll it to the LORD; let Him deliver him* The mockers throw his faith back in his face. The chief priests and elders used almost these very words at the cross: "He has trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now, if He wants Him" (Matt 27:43). They did not seem to realize they were acting out Psalm 22 as they said it.
22:10 *from the belly of my mother You have been my God* David answers the mockers by remembering his story with God. God's care for a person starts before birth. Then the plea: trouble is near, God feels far, and "there is no helper" (22:11).

of my mother You ***have been*** my God. **11** Do not be far from me, for trouble ***is*** near, for there is no helper. **12** Many bulls have surrounded me; mighty ones of Bashan have encircled me. **13** They have opened their mouth against me, a lion tearing and roaring. **14** Like water I have been poured out, and all my bones have come apart; my heart has become like wax; it has melted in the midst of my inward parts. **15** My strength has dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue is made to cling to my jaws; and to the dust of death You set me. **16** For dogs have surrounded me; a company of evildoers has encircled me; they pierced my hands and my feet. **17** I count all my bones; they look, they gaze at me. **18** They divide my garments among themselves, and for my clothing they cast a lot. **19** And You, LORD, do not be far off; my strength, hurry to my help! **20** Rescue my soul from ***the*** sword, my only one from the hand of a dog. **21** Save me from the mouth of a lion; and from the horns of wild oxen You have answered me. **22** I will recount Your name to my brothers; in the midst of ***the*** assembly I will praise You. **23** You who fear the LORD, praise Him! All ***you*** seed of Jacob (Ya'aqov), glorify Him, and be afraid of Him, all ***you*** seed of Israel. **24** For He has not despised and He has not detested the affliction of the afflicted, and He has not hidden His face from him; and when he cried for help to Him, He heard. **25** From You ***comes*** my praise in ***the*** great assembly; my vows I will pay before those who fear Him. **26** The humble will eat and be satisfied; those who seek Him will praise the LORD. Let your heart live forever! **27** All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations will bow down before You. **28** For the kingship ***belongs*** to the LORD, and He ***is*** ruling over the nations. **29** All the fat ones of ***the*** earth have eaten and have bowed down; before Him will bow all who go down ***to the*** dust, and ***he who*** has not kept his soul alive. **30** A seed will serve Him; it will be recounted of the Lord to the generation. **31** They will come and declare His righteousness to a people ***yet*** to be born, that He has done ***it***.

PSALMS 23

A psalm of David. **1** The LORD ***is*** my shepherd; I will not lack.

22:11 Ps 72:12; Ps 10:1; Ps 71:12
22:12 Ps 68:30; Amos 4:1-3; Jer 50:11
22:13 Mark 9:12; Ps 35:21; Job 16:10
22:14 Heb 5:7; Dan 5:6; Josh 7:5
22:15 John 19:28; Acts 26:23; Ps 104:29
22:16 Matt 27:35; John 19:37; John 20:25
22:17 Mark 15:24; John 19:37; Luke 23:27,35
22:18 Matt 27:35; Mark 15:24; Luke 23:34
22:19 Ps 22:11; Ps 10:1; Ps 18:1
22:20 Ps 35:17; Zech 13:7; Ps 17:13
22:21 2 Tim 4:17; Acts 3:18; Rev 13:2
22:22 Heb 2:12; John 20:17; Heb 2:11
22:23 Luke 1:50; Luke 2:20; Matt 17:23
22:24 Heb 5:7; Matt 17:23; Matt 20:18
22:25 Matt 17:23; Matt 20:18; Matt 26:24
22:26 Matt 17:23; Matt 20:18; Matt 26:24
22:27 Luke 18:31; Acts 3:25; Acts 13:47
22:28 Rev 11:15; Ps 47:7,8; Obad 1:21
22:29 Phil 2:10; Matt 17:23; Matt 20:18
22:30 Heb 2:13; 1 Pet 2:9; Matt 17:23
22:31 Ps 78:6; Ps 86:9; Ps 102:18
23:1 Phil 4:19; John 10:11; Isa 40:11

22:12 *mighty ones of Bashan* Bashan was the rich grazing land east of the Jordan and the Sea of Galilee, famous for strong, well-fed cattle (Amos 4:1). The bulls crowd him, and the lion wants to tear him apart. At the cross Jesus was surrounded by priests, rulers and soldiers.
22:14 *Like water I have been poured out, and all my bones have come apart* His strength drains away, his frame is pulled apart, his courage melts. A man hanging on a cross would feel his joints pulled out of place and a terrible thirst (22:15). As far as we know, crucifixion was not practiced in Israel in David's day. Yet David wrote words that fit it closely.
22:15 *my tongue is made to cling to my jaws* A potsherd is a broken piece of clay pot, dry and brittle. Near the end Jesus, "so that the Scripture might be accomplished" (John 19:28), said, "I am thirsty" (John 19:28). John does not name the passage. Many see Psalm 69:21, and many see this verse behind it too.
22:16 *dogs have surrounded me* In Israel dogs were not pets. They roamed in packs and fed on garbage and even dead bodies. Later Jews sometimes used "dogs" for Gentiles (compare Matt 15:26).
22:16 *they pierced my hands and my feet* The standard Hebrew text, the Masoretic Text preserved by Jewish scribes, has a word meaning like a lion, which fits verses 13 and 21. The Greek Old Testament reads they dug, which many take as pierced, and a scroll found at Nahal Hever near the Dead Sea also seems to read a verb. The two Hebrew readings differ by one small letter that looks much like the other. The SLB follows "pierced," as most English Bibles do. Christians have long seen the nails of the cross here (Luke 24:39-40; John 20:25-27).
22:18 *They divide my garments among themselves* In Hebrew poetry the two lines would usually mean the same thing, but at the cross both came true separately. The soldiers split His outer garments four ways, then cast lots for the tunic woven in one piece, "so that the Scripture might be fulfilled" (John 19:24). They were only gambling for a dying man's clothes, but every detail was in God's plan.
22:21 *You have answered me* The animals come back in reverse order, dogs, lion, wild oxen, and then the psalm turns on a few sudden words at the end of the verse. From here on there is no more crying for help. Everything after this is praise. For Jesus we know the answer: God raised Him on the third day (Acts 2:24, 32).
22:22 *I will recount Your name to my brothers* The man who was mocked and alone now stands among his brothers praising God. Hebrews says Jesus "is not ashamed to call them brothers" (Heb 2:11) and gives this verse as His own words (Heb 2:12). After He rose He said, "go to My brothers" (John 20:17). When the church worships, Jesus is the One we praise and the One leading our praise.
22:24 *He has not despised and He has not detested the affliction of the afflicted* In verse 1 it seemed God had turned away. Now David says God was listening all along. Your feelings may tell you God has turned away. This psalm says He has not despised your affliction, and He hears.
22:25 *my vows I will pay* In trouble an Israelite often vowed a thank offering when God delivered him, and part of it was eaten in a feast (Lev 7:16). So "The humble will eat and be satisfied" (22:26). The rescued man shares his joy with others who are hurting. Many Christians hear an echo of the Lord's Supper here. Either way, the poor fed at God's table is a picture of the gospel.
22:27 *All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the LORD* God promised that all the families of the earth would be blessed through Abraham (Gen 12:3), and here that promise flowers. Psalm 2 showed the nations raging. Psalm 22 shows them turning to worship, until the kingdom of the world becomes the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ (Rev 11:15).
22:29 *before Him will bow all who go down to the dust* From the rich ("the fat ones") to the dying, no one is left out. Every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord (Phil 2:10-11).
22:31 *that He has done it* Every generation will tell the next what God has done, even "a people yet to be born." That includes us. Many see a link with Jesus' cry, "It has been finished" (John 19:30). The words differ and the Gospel does not tie them together, but the thought is the same: the work is done.
23:1 *The LORD is my shepherd* David knew sheep. He kept his father's flock and rescued lambs from lions and bears (1 Sam 17:34-35). The almighty Creator of Psalm 19 leads one man like a shepherd. Kings were often called shepherds, yet King David says he is a sheep: unable to find pasture, prone to wander, defenseless. We need a Shepherd.
23:1 *I will not lack* Not everything I want, but nothing I truly need (Phil 4:19). Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep" (John 10:11). Anyone who knew this psalm would have heard the claim. Hebrews calls Him "the great Shepherd of the sheep" (Heb 13:20).

2 In pastures of grass He makes me lie down; beside waters of rest He leads me. **3** He restores my soul; He guides me in tracks of righteousness for the sake of His name. **4** Even when I walk in a valley of deep darkness, I will not fear evil, for You ***are*** with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. **5** You arrange a table before me in front of my adversaries; You have anointed my head with oil; my cup ***is*** overflowing. **6** Surely goodness and steadfast love will pursue me all the days of my life, and I will return ***to dwell*** in the house of the LORD for length of days.

PSALMS 24

Of David. A psalm. **1** To the LORD ***belongs*** the earth and its fullness, the world and those who dwell in it. **2** For He has founded it on ***the*** seas, and on ***the*** rivers He established it. **3** Who will go up on the mountain of the LORD? And who will stand in the place of His holiness? **4** ***He who is*** innocent of hands and pure of heart, who has not lifted up My soul to falsehood and has not sworn to deceit. **5** He will lift up a blessing from the LORD and righteousness from the God of his salvation. **6** This ***is*** the generation of those who seek Him, who seek Your face, Jacob (Ya'aqov). Selah. **7** Lift up, gates, your heads, and be lifted up, everlasting doors, and the King of glory will come in. **8** Who ***is*** this King of glory? The LORD, strong and mighty, the LORD, mighty in battle. **9** Lift up, gates, your heads, and lift ***them*** up, everlasting doors, and the King of glory will come in. **10** Who ***is*** He, this King of glory? The LORD of armies, He ***is*** the King of glory. Selah.

PSALMS 25

Of David. **1** To You, LORD, I lift up my soul. **2** My God, in You I trust; let me not be ashamed; let not my enemies exult over me. **3** Also all who wait for You will not be ashamed; those who act treacherously without cause will be ashamed.

23:2 Rev 7:17; Rev 22:1,17; Ps 46:4
23:3 Ps 51:10,12; Ps 19:7; Prov 8:20
23:4 Isa 41:10; Ps 138:7; Ps 118:6
23:5 Ps 92:10; Ps 16:5; Luke 7:46
23:6 2 Cor 5:1; 2 Tim 4:18; Ps 73:24-26
24:1 1 Cor 10:26; 1 Cor 10:28; Ps 89:11
24:2 Ps 136:6; Ps 104:5,6; Gen 1:9,10
24:3 Ps 15:1; Ps 68:18; Mal 3:1
24:4 Matt 5:8; James 4:8; Job 17:9
24:5 Gal 3:9; Titus 3:4-6; Isa 46:13
24:6 1 Pet 2:9; John 1:47; Ps 27:8
24:7 Matt 25:34; 1 Cor 2:8; Isa 26:2
24:8 Matt 25:34; Rev 19:16; Rev 19:18
24:9 Matt 25:34; 1 Cor 2:8
24:10 Matt 25:31; Matt 25:34; 1 Cor 2:8
25:1 Ps 86:4; Ps 143:8; Ps 24:4
25:2 Ps 31:1; Ps 41:11; Ps 71:1
25:3 Lam 3:25; Isa 40:31; Mic 7:7

23:2 *In pastures of grass He makes me lie down* Shepherds say a sheep will not lie down while it is hungry or afraid. In the dry hills of Judea, green pasture had to be found, and the shepherd knew where. "He makes me" suggests He sometimes has to make us rest. The shepherd walked ahead, and the sheep followed his voice (John 10:4).
23:3 *He restores my soul* "Restores" means to bring back. He refreshes the weary and goes after the one who wandered. Both are true of our Shepherd.
23:3 *for the sake of His name* The tracks of righteousness are right paths, and paths of right living. Why does He lead us there? For the sake of His own name. God's care rests on who He is, more than on how good we are. He has put His name on His people.
23:4 *Even when I walk in a valley of deep darkness* Many Bibles read the shadow of death, and the word carries that sense. It covers every dark time, and death is the darkest. Judea had deep ravines where the sun barely reached. Faith does not keep us out of the valley, but the Shepherd goes through it with us.
23:4 *for You are with me* At the darkest point David stops talking about God and starts talking to Him: no longer "He" but "You." In the valley we need God Himself more than information about Him. Jesus promised, "I am with you all the days, until the consummation of the age" (Matt 28:20). The rod was a short club to drive off wild animals, and the staff a long crook to guide and rescue. One protects, the other guides.
23:5 *You arrange a table before me in front of my adversaries* The picture changes to a banquet. God is the host and David the honored guest. In the ancient Near East a host took responsibility to protect the guest at his table. The enemies can see him but cannot touch him. Oil on the head was a host's welcome (Luke 7:46), and the cup is filled until it runs over.
23:6 *goodness and steadfast love will pursue me* Hesed, steadfast love, is one of the key words of the Old Testament: love that has bound itself by a promise and keeps it, even when the one loved has failed. God named Himself "great in steadfast love and faithfulness" (Exod 34:6). "Pursue" means to chase. Enemies pursue David in other psalms. Here God's love chases him every day of his life.
23:6 *I will return to dwell in the house of the LORD for length of days* In David's day God's house was the tent where the ark rested in Jerusalem, and later the temple. "Length of days" is a long life in God's presence. The New Testament shows the full meaning: "In the house of My Father are many dwelling places" (John 14:2). The sheep's journey ends at home with the Shepherd.
24:1 *To the LORD belongs the earth and its fullness* Everything belongs to God, including you and me. We are managers of what is His. Paul quotes this to free believers to eat any food sold in the market (1 Cor 10:26). The verse lets us enjoy God's world with thanks and reminds us we will give account for how we use it.
24:2 *He has founded it on the seas* Many ancient peoples feared the sea as a power of chaos. God set the dry land in place over the waters (Gen 1:9-10). Nothing is outside His rule.
24:3 *Who will go up on the mountain of the LORD* The hill is Zion, where David pitched the tent for the ark. The question sounds like Psalm 15. Innocent hands mean right actions, and a pure heart right motives. Jesus said the pure in heart will see God (Matt 5:8).
24:4 *who has not lifted up My soul to falsehood* The written Hebrew reads "My soul," as though the LORD speaks of Himself, and many Hebrew copies read his soul. To lift up the soul to something is to long for it or worship it, and falsehood includes empty idols. Who can claim such a record? None of us. We need someone with clean hands to go up the hill for us.
24:5 *righteousness from the God of his salvation* Even the worshiper with clean hands does not earn righteousness. He receives it as a gift from the God who saves him.
24:6 *who seek Your face, Jacob* To seek God's face is to want God Himself. Selah, as at 3:2, is most likely a musical sign. The Greek Old Testament translated it with a word that probably means an interlude. It is also a good call to stop and let the words sink in.
24:7 *Lift up, gates, your heads* The old city gates are pictured as too small for so great a King and told to stand tall. Many think the psalm was sung when David brought the ark up to Jerusalem (2 Sam 6). If so, the ark stood for the LORD's presence entering His city as the warrior King who fought for Israel (Exod 15:3).
24:10 *The LORD of armies, He is the King of glory* Many Bibles say LORD of hosts, and a host is an army. He commands the angels ("Bless the LORD, all His armies," Ps 103:21), the armies of Israel (1 Sam 17:45) and even the stars (Isa 40:26). Paul calls Jesus "the Lord of glory" (1 Cor 2:8). Many see this psalm as a picture of His ascension, and of His return in glory (Matt 25:31). Have we opened the gates of our own hearts to Him?
25:1 *To You, LORD, I lift up my soul* Psalm 25 is an acrostic, a poem whose lines begin with the letters of the Hebrew alphabet in order, though a few letters are missing or repeated. To lift up the soul to God is to set your longing and trust on Him alone (compare 24:4).
25:3 *all who wait for You will not be ashamed* To wait for the LORD is to look to Him with hope and patience, trusting Him to act in His time. Those who wait on Him will never find their trust was misplaced.

4 Make me know Your ways, LORD; teach me Your paths.
5 Lead me in Your truth and teach me, for You ***are*** the God of
my salvation; for You I have waited all the day. **6** Remember
Your compassions, LORD, and Your steadfast loves, for they
are from of old. **7** The sins of my youth and my transgres-
sions do not remember; according to Your steadfast love
remember me, You, for the sake of Your goodness, LORD.
8 Good and upright ***is*** the LORD; therefore He instructs sin-
ners in the way. **9** He leads the humble in justice, and He
teaches the humble His way. **10** All the paths of the LORD ***are***
steadfast love and faithfulness to those who keep His
covenant and His testimonies. **11** For the sake of Your name,
LORD, You will forgive my iniquity, for it ***is*** great. **12** Who ***is***
this, the man who fears the LORD? He will instruct him in the
way ***that*** he will choose. **13** His soul will lodge in good, and
his seed will possess the land. **14** The counsel of the LORD ***is***
for those who fear Him, and His covenant, to make them
know ***it***. **15** My eyes ***are*** continually toward the LORD, for He,
He will bring my feet out from ***the*** net. **16** Turn to me and be
gracious to me, for I ***am*** alone and afflicted. **17** The troubles
of my heart have grown wide; bring me out from my dis-
tresses. **18** See my affliction and my trouble, and forgive all
my sins. **19** See my enemies, for they have become many, and
with a hatred of violence they have hated me. **20** Guard my
soul and rescue me; let me not be ashamed, for I have taken
refuge in You. **21** Let integrity and uprightness preserve me,
for I have waited for You. **22** Ransom Israel (Yisra'el), God,
from all his troubles.

PSALMS 26

Of David. **1** Judge me, LORD, for I, I have walked in my
integrity, and in the LORD I have trusted; I will not slip.
2 Test me, LORD, and try me; refine my kidneys and my
heart. **3** For Your steadfast love ***is*** before my eyes, and I walk
about in Your truth. **4** I have not sat with men of falsehood,
and with those who conceal themselves I will not go in. **5** I
have hated the assembly of evildoers, and with ***the*** wicked I
will not sit. **6** I wash my hands in innocence, and I go around
Your altar, LORD, **7** to make ***it*** heard with a voice of thanks-
giving and to recount all Your wonders. **8** LORD, I love the
habitation of Your house and the place of the tabernacle of
Your glory. **9** Do not gather my soul with sinners, and my life
with men of bloodshed, **10** in whose hands ***is*** wickedness, and
their right hand is full ***of*** a bribe. **11** And I, I will walk in my
integrity; ransom me and be gracious to me. **12** My foot has
stood on level ground; in ***the*** assemblies I will bless the LORD.

PSALMS 27

Of David. **1** The LORD ***is*** my light and my salvation; whom
shall I fear? The LORD ***is*** the stronghold of my life; of whom
shall I be in dread? **2** When evildoers drew near against me to
devour my flesh, my adversaries and my enemies against me,
they stumbled and fell. **3** Though a camp encamps against
me, my heart will not fear; though war rises against me, in

25:4 Ps 27:11; Exod 33:13; Ps 86:11
25:5 Ps 79:9; Ps 88:1; Rev 7:17
25:6 Ps 103:17; Ps 98:3; Isa 63:15
25:7 Job 13:26; Ps 51:1; Job 20:11
25:8 Acts 18:25; Ps 92:15; James 1:5
25:9 Acts 18:25; John 14:6; Ps 22:26
25:10 James 5:11; Heb 8:9; Heb 8:10
25:11 Ps 31:3; Ps 79:9; Ps 109:21
25:12 Ps 37:23; 2 Thess 2:10-12; Ps 111:10
25:13 Prov 1:33; Prov 19:23; Ps 37:11,22,29
25:14 John 14:17; Eph 1:9; Luke 2:26
25:15 Ps 141:8; Ps 123:2; Ps 31:4
25:16 Ps 86:16; Ps 143:4; Ps 60:1
25:17 Ps 34:19; Ps 38:1-8; Ps 42:7
25:18 2 Sam 16:12; Ps 119:132,153; 1 Sam 1:11
25:19 Ps 3:1,2; Ps 27:2,12; Ps 38:19
25:20 Ps 17:8; Ps 22:20,21; Ps 121:7
25:21 Ps 41:12; Prov 20:7; Ps 7:8
25:22 Ps 130:8; Ps 14:7; Ps 51:18,19
26:1 Ps 7:8; 2 Kgs 20:3; Prov 20:7
26:2 2 Cor 13:5; Ps 7:9; Ps 17:3
26:3 2 Kgs 20:3; Ps 52:1; Ps 85:10-13
26:4 Ps 1:1; Jer 15:17; Ps 119:63,115
26:5 Ps 31:6; Ps 139:21,22; Ps 101:3-8
26:6 Ps 73:13; Exod 30:19,20; Ps 43:4
26:7 Ps 9:14; Ps 66:13-15; Ps 95:2
26:8 John 2:17; John 2:14-17; Ps 27:4-6
26:9 Ps 139:19; Ps 28:1-3; 1 Sam 25:29
26:10 Exod 23:8; Deut 16:19; 1 Sam 8:3
26:11 Ps 69:18; Ps 26:1; 1 Sam 12:2-5
26:12 Ps 27:11; Ps 40:2; Prov 10:9
27:1 Ps 118:6; Heb 13:6; John 8:12
27:2 John 11:10; Ps 14:4; Job 19:22
27:3 Rev 2:10; Ps 3:6; Phil 1:28

25:4 *Make me know Your ways, LORD* David does not only ask God to get him out of trouble. He asks God to teach him how to live. Rescue and guidance go together in this psalm.
25:7 *The sins of my youth and my transgressions do not remember* David asks God to forget his sins and remember him. Not by his record, but "according to Your steadfast love." When God forgives, He chooses not to hold our sins against us again (Jer 31:34).
25:11 *You will forgive my iniquity, for it is great* A strange reason, until we see that the plea rests "for the sake of Your name." David does not shrink his sin. He enlarges his view of God's mercy.
25:14 *The counsel of the LORD is for those who fear Him* "Counsel" here means close friendship, the kind of trust where secrets are shared. God makes Himself known to those who revere Him. Jesus called His disciples friends because He made known to them what He heard from His Father (John 15:15).
25:16 *for I am alone and afflicted* Loneliness, trouble, enemies and guilt all press on David at once (25:16-19). He brings them all to God in one prayer.
25:22 *Ransom Israel, God, from all his troubles* The acrostic is finished, and this last line stands outside it. David widens his prayer from himself to the whole people of God. To ransom is to set free by paying a price.
26:1 *Judge me, LORD, for I, I have walked in my integrity* David is not claiming to be sinless. He asks God to vindicate him against false charges, because he has lived with integrity, wholeheartedly loyal to God.
26:2 *Test me, LORD, and try me* David invites God to examine him the way a metalworker refines silver, down to his "kidneys," his deepest feelings, and his heart. Only someone who trusts God's mercy dares to pray this.
26:6 *I wash my hands in innocence* Priests washed before serving at the altar (Exod 30:19-21). David uses the picture for a clean life. Pilate later washed his hands to claim innocence he did not have (Matt 27:24).
26:8 *I love the habitation of Your house* David loves the place where God's glory dwells, because he loves the God who dwells there. Worship with God's people was his joy, not his duty (26:12).
27:1 *The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear* Light shows the way and drives off the fear darkness brings. Salvation here is rescue, and the New Testament fills the word with its deepest meaning, rescue from sin and death through Jesus. A stronghold is a fortress. If God is all three, no one is big enough to make me afraid. Paul asks almost the same question (Rom 8:31). Jesus said, "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12).
27:2 *they stumbled and fell* David remembers enemies who came at him like wild animals, and God brought them down. Past rescues give present courage.
27:3 *Though a camp encamps against me, my heart will not fear* David is not saying war is easy or that he never feels afraid. His confidence is anchored in something bigger than the size of the threat.

this I ***am*** trusting. **4** One ***thing*** I have asked from the LORD; it I will seek: ***that*** I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to look on the pleasantness of the LORD and to inquire in His temple. **5** For He will conceal me in His shelter in a day of trouble; He will hide me in the hiding place of His tent; on a rock He will lift me high. **6** And now my head will be high above my enemies around me, and I will sacrifice in His tent sacrifices of shouting; I will sing and sing praises to the LORD. **7** Hear, LORD, my voice ***when*** I call, and be gracious to me and answer me. **8** To You my heart has said, "Seek My face." Your face, LORD, I will seek. **9** Do not hide Your face from me; do not turn Your servant aside in anger; You have been my help; do not abandon me and do not forsake me, God of my salvation. **10** For my father and my mother have forsaken me, and the LORD will gather me ***in.*** **11** Instruct me, LORD, ***in*** Your way, and lead me in a path of level ground because of my enemies. **12** Do not give me over to the desire of my adversaries, for witnesses of falsehood have risen against me, and ***one who*** breathes out violence. **13** Unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of ***the*** living— **14** Wait for the LORD; be strong, and let your heart take courage; and wait for the LORD.

PSALMS 28

Of David. **1** To You, LORD, I call; my rock, do not be deaf to me, lest You be silent to me and I become like those who go down ***to the*** pit. **2** Hear the voice of my supplications when I cry for help to You, when I lift up my hands toward the inner sanctuary of Your holiness. **3** Do not drag me away with ***the*** wicked and with those who work iniquity, who speak peace with their neighbors, and evil ***is*** in their heart. **4** Give to them according to their work and according to the evil of their deeds; according to the work of their hands give to them; return their recompense to them. **5** For they do not discern the deeds of the LORD and the work of His hands; He will tear them down and will not build them up. **6** Blessed ***be*** the LORD, for He has heard the voice of my supplications. **7** The LORD ***is*** my strength and my shield; in Him my heart has trusted, and I was helped; and my heart exults, and with my song I will give thanks to Him. **8** The LORD ***is*** strength for them, and He ***is*** the stronghold of salvations for His anointed. **9** Save Your people and bless Your inheritance, and shepherd them and carry them forever.

PSALMS 29

A psalm of David. **1** Ascribe to the LORD, sons of gods, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. **2** Ascribe to the LORD the glory of His name; bow down to the LORD in the adornment

27:4 Ps 26:8; Luke 2:37; Luke 10:42
27:5 Matt 7:24; Matt 7:25; Matt 16:18
27:6 Eph 5:19; Ps 3:3; Ps 107:22
27:7 Ps 5:2; Ps 130:2-4; Ps 4:1
27:8 Ps 105:4; Jer 29:12,13; Ps 119:58
27:9 Ps 69:17; Ps 102:2; Ps 143:7
27:10 Isa 49:15; Isa 40:11; John 16:32
27:11 Luke 3:4; Ps 5:8; Ps 86:11
27:12 Matt 26:59; Matt 26:60; Ps 35:11
27:13 Ps 142:5; Ps 56:13; Ezek 26:20
27:14 Ps 31:24; Isa 40:31; Isa 30:18

28:1 Ps 18:2; Ps 83:1; Ps 143:7
28:2 1 Tim 2:8; Ps 141:2; Ps 5:7
28:3 John 14:27; Ps 12:2; Ps 55:21
28:4 Rev 22:12; Rev 20:12; 2 Tim 4:14
28:5 Isa 5:12; Ps 10:5; Ps 92:4-6
28:6 Ps 31:21,22; Ps 66:19,20; Ps 69:33,34
28:7 Col 3:16; Ps 13:5; Ps 30:11,12
28:8 Ps 20:6; 1 Sam 16:13; Isa 61:1
28:9 Matt 2:6; Isa 40:11; Deut 9:29
29:1 Ps 96:7-9; Ps 68:31-34; Ps 2:10-12
29:2 2 Chr 20:21; Ps 90:17; 1 Chr 16:28,29

27:4 *One thing I have asked from the LORD* The heart of the psalm. Of all he could ask, safety, victory, long life, David names one thing: to be near God, to look on His pleasantness and reflect on Him in His presence. Jesus told Martha there was "need of one thing" (Luke 10:42), and Mary had chosen it. If you could ask God for one thing, what would it be?
27:4 *to inquire in His temple* Solomon's temple came after David. The Hebrew word can mean a palace or holy house and was used for the tabernacle at Shiloh (1 Sam 1:9). In David's day the ark rested in his tent in Jerusalem. David means the place where God met His people.
27:5 *He will hide me in the hiding place of His tent* The place David longs to be is also the place he is safe. God shelters His people like a host protecting the guest in his tent (23:5), and lifts them high on a rock, out of reach of flood or enemy.
27:8 *To You my heart has said, Seek My face* God speaks first, inviting His people to seek Him, and David's heart repeats God's words back to Him and answers. Prayer is our response to God's invitation. We do not have to talk God into listening. He asked us to come.
27:9 *Do not hide Your face from me* To seek God's face is to seek His presence and favor. For Him to hide it would mean He had turned away. David pleads from what God has already been: "You have been my help."
27:10 *For my father and my mother have forsaken me, and the LORD will gather me in* The Hebrew can be read as something that has happened or as something that might happen. We have no record that David's parents abandoned him. Either way, God's love is more faithful than the closest human love. Some who read this were neglected or hurt by those who should have loved them most. God sees, and He is "a father of the fatherless" (Ps 68:5).
27:12 *witnesses of falsehood have risen against me* Their words are weapons. Jesus faced false witnesses at His trial (Matt 26:59-60). If people are telling lies about you, ask God to teach you His way and defend you, instead of fighting back with lies of your own.
27:13 *Unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living* In Hebrew the sentence breaks off, and many Bibles finish it with I would have despaired. What held David was faith. He hoped for heaven, but he also believed he would see God's goodness in this life.
27:14 *Wait for the LORD* Waiting for the LORD is active: trusting Him and looking to Him with hope while He works in His time. It takes strength, so David says it twice. The psalm that began with bold confidence ends with patient hope. Both are faith.
28:1 *my rock, do not be deaf to me* David fears God's silence more than his enemies. If God does not answer, he will be like those who "go down to the pit," the grave.
28:2 *when I lift up my hands toward the inner sanctuary of Your holiness* Lifting the hands was a common posture of prayer. The inner sanctuary was the most holy place, where the ark rested and God's presence dwelt.
28:3 *who speak peace with their neighbors, and evil is in their heart* Smiling faces and hidden knives. David asks not to be dragged off with them. Verse 4 asks God to repay them by their deeds, handing justice to Him rather than taking it himself.
28:6 *Blessed be the LORD, for He has heard* The prayer turns to praise in the middle of the psalm. David knows he has been heard before he sees the answer.
28:9 *shepherd them and carry them forever* David ends by praying for the whole people. A good shepherd does more than lead. He picks up the weak lamb and carries it (Isa 40:11).
29:1 *Ascribe to the LORD, sons of gods* To ascribe is to give God the honor that is His due. "Sons of gods" most likely means the angels or heavenly beings, called to worship before the storm comes. Heaven and earth together give Him glory.

of holiness. **3** The voice of the LORD ***is*** over the waters; the God of glory thunders; the LORD ***is*** over many waters. **4** The voice of the LORD ***is*** in power; the voice of the LORD ***is*** in majesty. **5** The voice of the LORD breaks cedars, and the LORD shatters the cedars of Lebanon (Levanon). **6** And He makes them skip like a calf, Lebanon and Sirion (Siryon) like a young wild ox. **7** The voice of the LORD hews out flames of fire. **8** The voice of the LORD makes ***the*** wilderness tremble; the LORD makes the wilderness of Kadesh (Qadesh) tremble. **9** The voice of the LORD makes the does writhe ***in birth***, and it strips forests bare; and in His temple all of it says, "Glory!" **10** The LORD sat at the flood, and the LORD sits ***as*** King forever. **11** The LORD will give strength to His people; the LORD will bless His people with peace.

PSALMS 30

A psalm, a song of the dedication of the house, of David. **1** I will exalt You, LORD, for You have drawn me up and have not made my enemies rejoice over me. **2** LORD my God, I cried for help to You, and You healed me. **3** LORD, You brought up my soul from Sheol; You kept me alive from going down ***to the*** pit. **4** Sing praises to the LORD, His godly ones, and give thanks to the remembrance of His holiness. **5** For a moment ***is*** in His anger, life ***is*** in His favor; in the evening weeping lodges, and at the morning, a shout of joy. **6** And I, I said in my ease, "I will not be shaken forever." **7** LORD, in Your favor You made strength stand for my mountain; You hid Your face; I was dismayed. **8** To You, LORD, I called, and to the Lord I made supplication: **9** "What profit ***is*** in my blood, in my going down to ***the*** pit? Will dust give thanks to You? Will it declare Your faithfulness? **10** Hear, LORD, and be gracious to me; LORD, be a helper to me." **11** You have turned my mourning into dancing for me; You have loosed my sackcloth and girded me ***with*** joy, **12** so that glory may sing praises to You and not be silent. LORD my God, forever I will give thanks to You.

PSALMS 31

To the choirmaster. A psalm of David. **1** In You, LORD, I have taken refuge; let me not be ashamed forever; in Your righteousness deliver me. **2** Incline Your ear to me; rescue me quickly; be for me a rock of stronghold, a house of fortresses to save me. **3** For You ***are*** my crag and my fortress; and for the sake of Your name You will guide me and lead me. **4** You will bring me out from the net which they have hidden for me, for You ***are*** my stronghold. **5** Into Your hand I commit my spirit; You have ransomed me, LORD, God of truth. **6** I hate those who regard vanities of falsehood, and I, I trust in the LORD. **7** I will rejoice and be glad in Your steadfast love, because You have seen my affliction; You have known the troubles of my soul. **8** And You have not shut me up into the hand of ***the*** enemy; You have made my feet stand in a broad place. **9** Be gracious to me, LORD, for it is distressing to me; my eye has wasted away with vexation, my soul and my body. **10** For my life has been spent in sorrow and my years in groaning; my strength has stumbled because of my iniq-

29:3 Acts 7:2; Ps 18:13-15; Ps 24:7-10
29:4 Ps 33:9; Job 26:11-14; Jer 51:15,16
29:5 Isa 2:13
29:6 Deut 3:9; Num 23:22; Ps 114:4-7
29:7 Ps 77:18; Ps 144:5,6; Exod 9:23
29:8 Num 13:26; Ps 18:7; Ps 46:3
29:9 Job 39:1-3; Ps 63:2; Isa 9:18
29:10 1 Tim 1:17; Gen 6:17; Ps 10:16
29:11 Num 6:24-27; John 14:27; Isa 41:10
30:1 Ps 25:2; Ps 35:19,24,25; 2 Sam 5:11
30:2 Ps 6:2; Ps 103:3,4; Exod 15:26
30:3 Ps 28:1; Ps 16:10; Ps 86:13
30:4 Ps 97:12; 1 Chr 16:4; Ps 32:11
30:5 John 16:20; Isa 54:7,8; 2 Cor 4:17
30:6 Acts 2:25; Job 29:18-20; Isa 47:7
30:7 Ps 104:29; Ps 143:7; Ps 30:5
30:8 Ps 34:6; Ps 77:1,2; Ps 130:1,2
30:9 Ps 6:5; Ps 88:10-12; Ps 115:17,18
30:10 Ps 54:4; Ps 51:1,2; Ps 143:1,7-9
30:11 Jer 31:4,13,14; Rev 21:4; Ps 149:3
30:12 Ps 16:9; Ps 57:8; Gen 49:6
31:1 Ps 25:2; Rom 10:11; Ps 71:1,2
31:2 Ps 102:2; Ps 71:2; Ps 86:1
31:3 Ps 23:2,3; Ps 25:11; Ps 79:9
31:4 Ps 25:15; Ps 35:7; Ps 57:6
31:5 Luke 23:46; Acts 7:59; Deut 32:4
31:6 Ps 26:5; 1 Cor 10:20; Ps 139:2
31:7 Isa 63:9,16; Isa 49:13; Ps 119:153
31:8 Deut 32:30; Job 36:16; Ps 88:8
31:9 Ps 6:7; Ps 88:9; Job 17:7
31:10 Ps 32:3,4; Ps 78:33; Ps 88:15

29:3 *The voice of the LORD is over the waters* Seven times the psalm says "the voice of the LORD." David describes a thunderstorm rolling in from the Mediterranean Sea, crashing over the cedars of Lebanon in the north and sweeping down to the desert of Kadesh in the south. The Canaanites gave thunder to Baal, their storm god. David says the storm belongs to the LORD.

29:6 *Lebanon and Sirion like a young wild ox* Sirion is the Sidonian name for Mount Hermon (Deut 3:9). Even the mountains seem to leap at His voice.

29:9 *in His temple all of it says, Glory* While the storm shakes the earth, everyone in God's heavenly temple cries "Glory!" The same voice that frightens the world draws worship from those who know Him.

29:10 *The LORD sat at the flood* The Hebrew word for flood is used elsewhere only for Noah's flood. God sat as King over that judgment, and He still reigns. The psalm ends not in thunder but in peace for His people (29:11).

30:0 *a song of the dedication of the house* Which house is not certain. It may be David's palace (2 Sam 5:11), the site he chose for the temple (1 Chr 22:1), or the temple itself, where the psalm was later sung. Jews later sang it at Hanukkah, the feast of the rededication of the temple.

30:3 *You brought up my soul from Sheol* David had been close to death, perhaps from sickness (30:2), and God pulled him back from the edge of the grave.

30:5 *in the evening weeping lodges, and at the morning, a shout of joy* Weeping is pictured as a guest that stays for the night and then leaves. God's discipline lasts a moment, His favor a lifetime. For the believer, every night of tears has a morning (Rev 21:4).

30:6 *I said in my ease, I will not be shaken forever* When life was easy, David trusted his own security. Then God hid His face, and he was dismayed (30:7). Prosperity can make us forget the One who gave it.

30:9 *Will dust give thanks to You* David's plea: if I die, I can no longer praise You among the living. He wants to live in order to praise God.

30:11 *You have turned my mourning into dancing* Sackcloth was rough cloth worn in grief. God took it off him and dressed him in joy. Only God can make that kind of change.

31:2 *be for me a rock of stronghold* David again uses the pictures of his wilderness years: rock, fortress, crag. And he asks for help "quickly." It is all right to tell God we are in a hurry.

31:5 *Into Your hand I commit my spirit* On the cross Jesus prayed these words just before He died: "Father, into Your hands I will commit My spirit" (Luke 23:46). Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (Acts 7:59). For David it meant, I trust You with my life. For Jesus it meant, I give My life into Your keeping, even in death. For us it can be a prayer for every day and for the last day.

31:10 *my strength has stumbled because of my iniquity* David admits that part of his trouble came from his own sin. Godly people suffer for many reasons, and sometimes the honest answer is that we brought it on ourselves.

uity, and my bones have wasted away. **11** Because of all my adversaries I have become a reproach, and to my neighbors exceedingly, and a dread to my acquaintances; those who see me in the street flee from me. **12** I have been forgotten like a dead ***man*** out of ***the*** heart; I have become like a vessel ***that is*** perishing. **13** For I have heard the slander of many, terror on every side, when they consult together against me; they plot to take my life. **14** And I, I trust in You, LORD; I say, "You ***are*** my God." **15** My times ***are*** in Your hand; rescue me from the hand of my enemies and from those who pursue me. **16** Make Your face shine on Your servant; save me in Your steadfast love. **17** LORD, let me not be ashamed, for I have called on You; let the wicked be ashamed; let them be silent to Sheol. **18** Let the lips of falsehood be mute, which speak arrogance against the righteous with pride and contempt. **19** How great ***is*** Your goodness, which You have stored up for those who fear You, ***which*** You have worked for those who take refuge in You before the sons of man! **20** You hide them in the hiding place of Your presence from the conspiracies of man; You conceal them in a shelter from the strife of tongues. **21** Blessed ***be*** the LORD, for He has made His steadfast love wonderful to me in a city of siege. **22** And I, I said in my alarm, "I have been cut off from before Your eyes." Nevertheless, You heard the voice of my supplications when I cried for help to You. **23** Love the LORD, all His godly ones! The LORD preserves the faithful and repays abundantly the one who acts ***with*** pride. **24** Be strong, and let your heart take courage, all who wait for the LORD.

PSALMS 32

Of David. A Maskil. **1** How blessed ***is*** he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered! **2** How blessed ***is*** the man to whom the LORD does not count iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit! **3** When I kept silent, my bones wore out through my roaring all the day. **4** For day and night Your hand was heavy on me; my moisture was changed by the dry heat of summer. Selah. **5** My sin I made known to You, and my iniquity I did not cover; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD," and You, You forgave the iniquity of my sin. Selah. **6** For this let every godly one pray to You at a time of finding; surely, at a flood of many waters, they will not reach him. **7** You ***are*** a hiding place for me; from distress You will preserve me; with shouts of deliverance You will surround me. Selah. **8** I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go; I will counsel ***you***; My eye ***will be*** on you. **9** Do not be like a horse, like a mule, ***which has*** no understanding, with bit and bridle, its trappings, to restrain

31:11 Rom 15:3; Ps 38:11; Ps 88:8,18
31:12 Ps 88:4,5; Isa 30:14; Isa 38:11,12
31:13 Acts 23:12; Jer 20:10; Matt 27:1
31:14 Ps 43:5; Ps 56:3,4; Ps 16:1,2
31:15 Job 24:1; 2 Sam 7:12; John 7:6,30
31:16 Ps 4:6; Ps 80:3,7,19; Ps 6:4
31:17 Ps 25:2,3; Isa 41:11,12; Ps 115:17
31:18 Jude 1:15; Ps 94:4; 1 Sam 2:3
31:19 1 Cor 2:9; Isa 64:4; 1 Pet 1:4,5
31:20 Ps 27:5; Ps 32:7; Job 5:21
31:21 Ps 17:7; Ps 98:1; Ps 118:23
31:22 Heb 5:7; Ps 116:11; Jonah 2:4
31:23 Ps 97:10; Ps 30:4; Ps 94:2
31:24 Ps 27:14; Heb 12:12,13; Rom 15:12,13
32:1 Rom 4:6-8; James 5:20; Ps 85:2
32:2 John 1:47; Lev 17:4; Rom 5:13
32:3 Heb 12:6; Ps 22:1; Ps 38:8
32:4 Luke 7:42; Heb 12:6; Job 33:7
32:5 1 John 1:9; 2 Sam 12:13; Isa 65:24
32:6 Luke 6:48; Isa 55:6; Isa 43:2
32:7 Col 3:16; Ps 9:9; Ps 119:114
32:8 Matt 11:29; Prov 3:5,6; Ps 33:18
32:9 James 4:8; Prov 26:3; James 3:3

31:11 *those who see me in the street flee from me* Enemies slander him, neighbors scorn him, friends avoid him. Jeremiah used the same phrase, "terror on every side" (31:13; Jer 20:10). Jesus knew this loneliness when His disciples fled (Mark 14:50).
31:15 *My times are in Your hand* Every season of life, its length and its turns, is held by God. This is the same hand into which David committed his spirit (31:5). Our enemies' hands are not the last word.
31:19 *How great is Your goodness, which You have stored up for those who fear You* God keeps a treasure stored up for His people, some given now, more waiting (1 Pet 1:4).
31:22 *I said in my alarm, I have been cut off from before Your eyes* In panic David thought God had lost sight of him. He was wrong. God heard him all along. Our fears are not always true.
31:24 *Be strong, and let your heart take courage, all who wait for the LORD* David ends by turning his own lesson into encouragement for everyone who is still waiting (27:14).
32:0 *A Maskil* Maskil comes from a Hebrew word for wisdom or understanding, so many think it marks a teaching psalm or one written with special skill. The meaning is uncertain. The heading does not name the sin David had in mind. Many connect this psalm with Bathsheba and Uriah and with Psalm 51, but we can't be sure.
32:1 *How blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered* David uses three words for wrong. Transgression is rebellion, stepping over God's line. Sin is missing the mark. Iniquity is something twisted, and it carries guilt. And three pictures for what God does: transgression is forgiven, lifted off and carried away; sin is covered, put out of sight; iniquity is not counted, not charged to our account.
32:2 *to whom the LORD does not count iniquity* Paul quotes verses 1-2 for the blessing of the man God credits with righteousness apart from works (Rom 4:6-8). David lived under the Law, yet no sacrifice could undo what he had done. He was forgiven by God's mercy, received by faith. We now know how God covers sin justly: Jesus bore it (Isa 53:5). "No deceit" does not mean sinless. It means he has stopped pretending before God.
32:3 *When I kept silent, my bones wore out* David tried saying nothing and went on as if all was well. Hidden sin did not stay hidden. Guilt wore on his body, his sleep and his strength.
32:4 *Your hand was heavy on me* God loved him too much to leave him comfortable in his sin (Heb 12:6). Not every illness comes from sin (John 9:2-3), and we should never tell a sufferer it does. But if your conscience is heavy, that weight may be God's kindness calling you home.
32:5 *My sin I made known to You, and my iniquity I did not cover* The same three words return, and David names them all. To confess is to agree with God about our sin, without excuses. He said "I will confess," and the next thing we read is that God forgave. "He who confesses and forsakes them will be shown mercy" (Prov 28:13; 1 John 1:9). The road back to God is shorter than you think.
32:6 *at a time of finding* While God may be found. Isaiah says the same: seek the LORD while He lets Himself be found (Isa 55:6). Don't wait for your heart to grow hard. The forgiven are not promised a life without floods, but the waters will not sweep them away.
32:7 *You are a hiding place for me* A lovely reversal. Before, David hid his sin from God. Now he hides in God, ringed by songs of rescue.
32:8 *I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go* Most teachers believe God Himself answers here, since He says "My eye will be on you." Others think David is now the teacher, keeping his promise to teach sinners God's ways (51:13). Either way, the forgiven are not left to figure out life alone.
32:9 *Do not be like a horse, like a mule* A mule must be dragged with bit and bridle. God would rather have children who listen and come willingly. David had been stubborn, and it cost him dearly. We can learn from his story without repeating it.

it; ***else it will*** not come near to you. **10** Many pains ***belong*** to the wicked, and the one who trusts in the LORD, steadfast love will surround him. **11** Rejoice in the LORD and be glad, righteous ones, and shout for joy, all upright of heart.

PSALMS 33

1 Shout for joy in the LORD, righteous ones; for the upright, praise is fitting. **2** Give thanks to the LORD with ***the*** lyre; with a harp of ten ***strings*** sing praises to Him. **3** Sing to Him a new song; play skillfully with a shout of joy. **4** For the word of the LORD ***is*** upright, and all His work ***is*** in faithfulness. **5** He loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full ***of*** the steadfast love of the LORD. **6** By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and by the breath of His mouth all their host. **7** He gathers the waters of the sea like a heap; He puts ***the*** deeps in storehouses. **8** Let all the earth fear the LORD; let all the inhabitants of the world be afraid of Him. **9** For He, He spoke, and it was; He, He commanded, and it stood. **10** The LORD has made void the counsel of ***the*** nations; He has frustrated the plans of ***the*** peoples. **11** The counsel of the LORD stands forever, the plans of His heart to generation and generation. **12** How blessed ***is*** the nation whose God ***is*** the LORD, the people ***whom*** He has chosen as an inheritance for Himself! **13** From the heavens the LORD looks; He sees all the sons of man. **14** From the place of His dwelling He gazes on all the inhabitants of the earth, **15** He who forms their heart together, who discerns all their deeds. **16** The king is not saved by ***the*** greatness of an army; a mighty man is not rescued by ***the*** greatness of strength. **17** The horse ***is*** a deception for salvation, and by the greatness of its strength it does not deliver. **18** Look, the eye of the LORD ***is*** toward those who fear Him, toward those who hope for His steadfast love, **19** to rescue their soul from death and to keep them alive in famine. **20** Our soul waits for the LORD; He ***is*** our help and our shield. **21** For in Him our heart rejoices, for in the name of His holiness we trust. **22** Let Your steadfast love, LORD, be on us, just as we hope for You.

PSALMS 34

Of David, when he changed his sense before Abimelech (Avimelekh), and he drove him away, and he went. **1** I will bless the LORD at every time; His praise ***will be*** continually in my mouth. **2** In the LORD my soul will boast; let the humble hear and rejoice. **3** Magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt His name together. **4** I sought the LORD, and He answered me, and from all my fears He rescued me. **5** They looked to Him and were radiant, and let their faces not be abashed. **6** This afflicted ***one*** called, and the LORD heard, and from all his

32:10 Prov 16:20; Prov 13:21; Ps 16:4
32:11 Phil 4:4; Phil 3:1; Ps 64:10
33:1 1 Cor 1:31; Ps 32:11; Ps 147:1
33:2 Ps 150:3-6; Ps 144:9; Ps 98:4,5
33:3 Eph 5:19; Col 3:16; Rev 14:3
33:4 Ps 19:8; Ps 119:75,128; Ps 12:6
33:5 Heb 1:9; Ps 11:7; Ps 119:64
33:6 Heb 11:3; 2 Pet 3:5; Acts 14:15
33:7 Rom 1:20; Exod 15:8; Josh 3:13,16
33:8 Rom 1:20; Rev 14:7; Ps 22:27
33:9 Rom 1:20; Gen 1:3; Ps 33:6
33:10 Ps 21:11; Isa 8:9,10; Isa 19:3,11-14
33:11 Acts 4:27; Prov 19:21; Job 23:13
33:12 1 Pet 2:9; Titus 2:14; Ps 144:15
33:13 Ps 11:4; Job 28:24; Ps 14:2
33:14 Ps 123:1; 1 Kgs 8:27,30; Isa 57:15
33:15 Jer 32:19; Ps 44:21; Prov 22:2
33:16 Ps 44:3,6,7; Exod 14:17,18,28; Josh 11:4-8
33:17 Ps 20:7; Prov 21:31; Ps 147:10
33:18 Ps 147:11; Job 36:7; 1 Pet 3:12
33:19 Prov 10:3; Matt 6:31-33; Ps 91:3-7,10
33:20 Ps 144:1,2; Ps 27:14; Ps 62:1,2,5,6
33:21 Luke 1:50; Zech 10:7; John 16:22
33:22 Matt 9:29; Ps 5:11,12; Ps 13:5
34:1 Ps 145:1,2; 1 Thess 5:18; Acts 16:25
34:2 1 Cor 1:31; Jer 9:24; Ps 44:8
34:3 Ps 69:30; Luke 1:46; Rev 19:5,6
34:4 Ps 18:6; Ps 116:1-6; Matt 7:7
34:5 Heb 12:2; Ps 123:1,2; Isa 45:22
34:6 Ps 3:4; Ps 10:17; Ps 40:17

32:10 *steadfast love will surround him* Sin promises happiness but pays out pain. In verse 7 songs of deliverance surround the forgiven man, and here God's hesed surrounds him. He is hemmed in by grace.
32:11 *Rejoice in the LORD and be glad, righteous ones* The righteous here are forgiven sinners, not people who never failed. A psalm that began with a man groaning under guilt ends with God's people shouting for joy.
33:1 *Shout for joy in the LORD, righteous ones* Psalm 33 has no heading and picks up where Psalm 32 ended (32:11). Praise is "fitting" for the upright. It suits them, the way good clothes suit the person wearing them.
33:3 *Sing to Him a new song* A new song is fresh praise for fresh mercies. God's people are not meant to worship only with old words. In heaven they sing a new song to the Lamb (Rev 5:9).
33:6 *By the word of the LORD the heavens were made* God spoke, and it was (33:9). This is Genesis 1 in a song. "Breath" is the same Hebrew word as spirit. John begins his Gospel with the Word through whom all things were made (John 1:1-3).
33:10 *The LORD has made void the counsel of the nations* Nations make their plans, and God overturns them. But His own plan "stands forever" (33:11). History does not belong to the powerful. It belongs to God.
33:12 *How blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD* First of all this is Israel, the people God chose as His inheritance. It is also true of any people who honor the LORD, and of the church, God's own people from every nation (1 Pet 2:9).
33:16 *The king is not saved by the greatness of an army* Armies, warriors and war horses are not where safety comes from. God's eye is on those who fear Him (33:18). He alone can rescue a soul from death.
33:20 *Our soul waits for the LORD* The psalm ends with a quiet resolve: we will wait, rejoice and trust. And a prayer: let Your steadfast love be on us as we hope in You.
34:0 *when he changed his sense before Abimelech* To change his sense is to act as if he had lost his mind. Running from Saul, David went to Gath, was recognized, and saved himself by scribbling on the gate and drooling into his beard (1 Sam 21:10-15). There the king is called Achish. Many think Abimelech was a royal title for Philistine kings, as Pharaoh was for Egypt's. Others think the king had two names, and some that the names were mixed up. I take the heading and 1 Samuel as the same event.
34:1 *I will bless the LORD at every time* Psalm 34 is nearly an acrostic, each verse starting with the next Hebrew letter. To bless the LORD is to praise Him and speak well of Him. David does not boast in his cleverness at Gath. He boasts in the LORD.
34:3 *Magnify the LORD with me* To magnify God is not to make Him bigger. He is already infinitely great. It is to make Him look as big to others as He really is. And David does not want to praise alone.
34:4 *from all my fears He rescued me* David was afraid in Gath (1 Sam 21:12). God did more than get him out of the city. He delivered him from the fear itself.
34:5 *They looked to Him and were radiant* Those who look to God in trouble come away with shining faces, like Moses after he had been with God (Exod 34:29). People who trust the LORD will not end up disappointed.
34:6 *This afflicted one called, and the LORD heard* The anointed future king was at that moment a hunted refugee with nothing. He called, and that was enough.

troubles He saved him. **7** The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear Him, and He frees them. **8** Taste and see that the LORD ***is*** good; how blessed ***is*** the man ***who*** takes refuge in Him! **9** Fear the LORD, His holy ones, for there is no lack for those who fear Him. **10** Young lions are in want and are hungry, and those who seek the LORD do not lack any good ***thing***. **11** Come, sons, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the LORD. **12** Who ***is*** the man who desires life, ***who*** loves days to see good? **13** Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking deceit. **14** Turn away from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it. **15** The eyes of the LORD ***are*** toward ***the*** righteous, and His ears ***are*** toward their cry for help. **16** The face of the LORD ***is*** against those who do evil, to cut off their memory from the earth. **17** They cry out, and the LORD hears, and from all their troubles He rescues them. **18** The LORD ***is*** near to the broken of heart, and the crushed of spirit He saves. **19** Many ***are*** the evils of a righteous ***man***, and from them all the LORD rescues him. **20** He keeps all his bones; not one of them is broken. **21** Evil will kill the wicked, and those who hate the righteous will be held guilty. **22** The LORD ransoms the soul of His servants, and none who take refuge in Him will be held guilty.

PSALMS 35

Of David. **1** Contend, LORD, with those who contend with me; fight against those who fight against me. **2** Take hold of shield and large shield, and rise up for my help. **3** And draw out spear and battle-axe to meet those who pursue me; say to my soul, "I ***am*** your salvation." **4** Let them be ashamed and humiliated who seek my life; let them be turned back and abashed who devise my harm. **5** Let them be like chaff before ***the*** wind, and the angel of the LORD pushing ***them***. **6** Let their way be darkness and slippery places, and the angel of the LORD pursuing them. **7** For without cause they have hidden for me the pit of their net; without cause they have dug for my soul. **8** Let destruction come on him ***that*** he does not know, and let his net which he hid catch him; into destruction let him fall, into it. **9** And my soul will rejoice in the LORD; it will exult in His salvation. **10** All my bones will say, "LORD, who ***is*** like You, who rescues the afflicted from ***one*** too strong for him, and the afflicted and the needy from the one who robs him?" **11** Witnesses of violence rise up; what I do not know they ask me. **12** They repay me evil instead of good, bereavement for my soul. **13** And I, when they were sick, my clothing ***was*** sackcloth; I humbled my soul with fasting, and my prayer returned to my bosom. **14** As ***for*** a friend,

34:7 Dan 6:22; Matt 4:6; Acts 5:19
34:8 1 Pet 2:2; Heb 6:4,5; Ps 119:103
34:9 Rom 8:32; Matt 6:33; Ps 23:1
34:10 Matt 6:32; Matt 6:33; Ps 84:11
34:11 Ps 32:8; Ps 111:10; Prov 1:7
34:12 1 Pet 3:10-12; Ps 21:4; Ps 91:16
34:13 James 3:2,5-10; Ps 39:1; Ps 55:11
34:14 Heb 12:14; Ps 37:27; Isa 1:16,17
34:15 Ps 33:18; Job 36:7; Ps 34:6,17
34:16 Jer 44:11; Lev 17:10; Prov 10:7
34:17 Acts 12:11; Isa 65:24; Ps 34:6,15,19
34:18 Ps 147:3; Ps 145:18; Isa 57:15
34:19 2 Tim 3:11; Ps 34:6,17; Prov 24:16
34:20 John 19:36; Ps 91:12; Ps 35:10
34:21 Ps 94:23; Ps 37:30-40; Isa 3:11
34:22 Rom 8:32; Ps 71:23; Ps 103:4
35:1 Acts 23:9; Ps 43:1; Exod 14:25
35:2 Exod 15:3; Isa 42:13; Ps 7:12,13
35:3 Ps 27:2; Ps 76:10; 1 Sam 23:26,27
35:4 Ps 129:5; Ps 35:26; Ps 31:17,18
35:5 Acts 12:23; Job 21:18; Isa 29:5
35:6 Ps 73:18; Jer 23:12; Prov 4:19
35:7 John 15:25; Ps 9:15; Ps 140:5
35:8 1 Thess 5:3; Ps 64:7; Ps 73:18-20
35:9 Phil 3:1; Isa 61:10; Ps 13:5
35:10 Exod 15:11; Ps 51:8; Ps 86:8
35:11 Ps 27:12; 1 Sam 24:9; 1 Sam 25:10
35:12 John 10:32; Jer 18:20; Ps 38:20
35:13 Job 30:25; Matt 10:13; Ps 69:10,11
35:14 2 Sam 1:11,12,17-27; Luke 19:41,42; Gen 24:67

34:7 *The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear Him* God's angel sets up camp around His people like an army guarding them (2 Kgs 6:15-17). Many believe the angel of the LORD was the Son of God appearing before He was born in Bethlehem. Others see a created angel sent by God. Either way, God's people are not as alone as they feel.
34:8 *Taste and see that the LORD is good* David does not ask us to take his word for it. You can read a menu, but you don't know how good the food is until you taste it. Peter borrows the verse and applies it to Jesus: "you have tasted that the Lord is kind" (1 Pet 2:3). David ran to Gath for safety and found danger. The safest place was the LORD.
34:10 *those who seek the LORD do not lack any good thing* Young lions are strong hunters, yet even they go hungry. Strength does not guarantee supply. God decides what is good for us, and our Father knows what we need (Matt 6:32-33). Believers may go without things they want. They will not go without His care.
34:11 *I will teach you the fear of the LORD* David speaks like a father. Verse 9 told us to fear the LORD. Now he shows what it looks like in daily life.
34:14 *seek peace and pursue it* Four plain commands: guard your tongue, don't lie, turn from evil and do good, chase peace. Peace does not just happen. Peter quotes verses 12-16 to mistreated believers, telling them not to repay evil for evil (1 Pet 3:9-12). David lived it, twice sparing Saul's life (1 Sam 24; 26).
34:16 *The face of the LORD is against those who do evil* God watches and listens to the righteous (34:15), but He is not neutral about evil.
34:18 *The LORD is near to the broken of heart* A word to hold on to in grief. When your heart is broken, God comes close. You may feel crushed, but you are not abandoned. Jesus came to heal the brokenhearted (Isa 61:1; Luke 4:16-21).
34:19 *Many are the evils of a righteous man, and from them all the LORD rescues him* Fearing God does not mean an easy life. Sometimes God delivers us out of trouble, sometimes through it, and for those who die in faith, finally in the resurrection.
34:20 *He keeps all his bones; not one of them is broken* For David this meant God protects the whole person. When the soldiers found Jesus already dead, they did not break His legs, and John says this fulfilled the Scripture, "A bone of His will not be broken" (John 19:36). John may also have had the Passover lamb in mind (Exod 12:46). Jesus is the Righteous One and the Lamb of God (John 1:29).
34:22 *none who take refuge in Him will be held guilty* To ransom is to pay the price to set someone free. For those in Christ Jesus there is "now no condemnation" (Rom 8:1). David began this psalm a frightened refugee. He ends it sure that the LORD ransoms those who hide in Him.
35:1 *Contend, LORD, with those who contend with me* David pictures God as both his lawyer in court and his warrior in battle. He does not fight his own fight. He asks God to take up his case.
35:3 *say to my soul, I am your salvation* More than rescue, David wants to hear God say it. Assurance from God's own word steadies the heart in the middle of the attack.
35:4 *Let them be ashamed and humiliated who seek my life* Verses 4-8 and 26 are prayers for judgment on men who sought David's life "without cause" (35:7). David leaves the outcome to God and the angel of the LORD. See the introduction on the hard lines in the Psalms.
35:13 *when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth* This is what makes the betrayal so painful. When his accusers were sick, David fasted and prayed for them as if for a brother or his own mother. Now they repay him "evil instead of good" (35:12). Jesus knew this too: He healed and fed people who later cried for His death.

as ***for*** a brother to me, I went about; like one mourning ***for*** a mother, I bowed down in mourning. **15** And at my stumbling they rejoiced and gathered; stricken ones gathered against me, and I did not know ***them***; they tore ***at me*** and were not silent. **16** Like godless mockers ***for*** a cake, they gnashed their teeth at me. **17** Lord, how long will You look ***on***? Bring back my soul from their ravages, my only one from ***the*** young lions. **18** I will give thanks to You in ***the*** great assembly; among a numerous people I will praise You. **19** Let not those who are falsely my enemies rejoice over me; ***nor let*** those who hate me without cause wink ***the*** eye. **20** For they do not speak peace, and against the quiet ones of the land they devise words of deceit. **21** And they have opened their mouth wide against me; they have said, "Aha! Aha! Our eye has seen ***it***!" **22** You have seen, LORD; do not be silent; Lord, do not be far from me. **23** Rouse Yourself and awake for my judgment, my God and my Lord, for my cause! **24** Judge me according to Your righteousness, LORD my God, and let them not rejoice over me. **25** Let them not say in their heart, "Aha, our desire!" Let them not say, "We have swallowed him up." **26** Let them be ashamed and abashed altogether who rejoice at my evil; let them be clothed ***with*** shame and humiliation who magnify themselves against me. **27** Let them shout for joy and rejoice who delight in my righteousness, and let them say continually, "Let the LORD be great, who delights in the peace of His servant." **28** And my tongue will utter Your righteousness, Your praise all the day.

PSALMS 36

To the choirmaster. Of the servant of the LORD, of David. **1** An utterance of transgression to the wicked ***is*** in the midst of my heart: there is no dread of God before his eyes. **2** For he flatters himself in his own eyes, to find his iniquity, to hate ***it***. **3** The words of his mouth ***are*** iniquity and deceit; he has ceased to act wisely, to do good. **4** Iniquity he devises on his bed; he sets himself on a way ***that is*** not good; evil he does not reject. **5** LORD, Your steadfast love ***is*** in the heavens, Your faithfulness to the clouds. **6** Your righteousness ***is*** like the mountains of God; Your judgments ***are*** a great deep; man and beast You save, LORD. **7** How precious ***is*** Your steadfast love, God! And the sons of man take refuge in the shadow of Your wings. **8** They drink their fill from the fatness of Your house, and You give them drink ***from*** the river of Your delights. **9** For with You ***is*** a fountain of life; in Your light we see light. **10** Draw out Your steadfast love to those who know You, and Your righteousness to the upright of heart. **11** Let not the foot of pride come to me, and let not the hand of ***the*** wicked make me wander. **12** There those who work iniquity have fallen; they have been thrust down and have not been able to rise.

PSALMS 37

Of David. **1** Do not fret yourself because of evildoers; do not be jealous of those who do unrighteousness. **2** For like grass they will quickly wither, and like the greenery of vegetation they will fade. **3** Trust in the LORD and do good; dwell ***in the*** land and graze ***on*** faithfulness. **4** And take delight in the

35:15 Ps 7:2; Ps 35:25,26; Ps 41:8
35:16 Acts 7:54; Job 16:9; Lam 2:16
35:17 Hab 1:13; Ps 22:20,21; Ps 6:3
35:18 Rom 15:9; Ps 22:22-25,31; Ps 40:9,10
35:19 John 15:25; Rev 11:10; Ps 69:4
35:20 Mark 15:29; Ps 120:5-7; Ps 31:13
35:21 Mark 15:29; Ps 22:13; Ps 40:15
35:22 Exod 3:7; Ps 28:1; Ps 10:1
35:23 Ps 44:23; Ps 7:6; Ps 80:2
35:24 Rev 11:10; Ps 7:8; Ps 26:1
35:25 Rev 11:10; Lam 2:16; Ps 124:3
35:26 Ps 38:16; Ps 132:18; Job 19:5
35:27 Ps 149:4; Ps 40:16; Ps 70:4
35:28 Ps 71:24; Ps 34:1; Ps 50:15
36:1 Rom 3:18; Ps 18:1; Ps 90:1
36:2 Ps 49:18; Deut 29:19; Ps 10:3
36:3 Ps 55:21; Ps 5:9; Ps 12:2,3
36:4 Prov 4:16; Mic 2:1; Isa 65:2
36:5 Ps 57:10; Ps 103:11; Ps 108:4
36:6 Rom 11:33; Ps 71:19; Ps 77:19
36:7 Luke 13:34; Matt 23:37; Ruth 2:12
36:8 Ps 65:4; Ps 16:11; Isa 25:6
36:9 Rev 21:6; Jer 2:13; 1 Pet 2:9
36:10 Jer 22:16; Ps 97:10,11; Ps 103:17
36:11 Rom 8:39; Ps 10:2; Ps 12:3-5
36:12 Ps 1:5; Ps 9:16; Ps 55:23
37:1 Prov 23:17; Ps 37:7; Ps 73:3
37:2 Ps 37:35,36; Ps 73:17-20; Ps 90:5,6
37:3 Jer 17:7,8; 1 Cor 15:57,58; Isa 1:16-19
37:4 John 15:7,16; Ps 145:19; Isa 58:14

35:19 *nor let those who hate me without cause wink the eye* Jesus said His enemies fulfilled the word written in their Law, "They hated Me without cause" (John 15:25). The words are found here and in Psalm 69:4.
35:21 *Aha! Aha! Our eye has seen it* The mockers gloat over his fall. David answers that God has seen too (35:22), and God's seeing is the one that counts.
35:27 *Let the LORD be great, who delights in the peace of His servant* God takes pleasure in the well-being of His people. He is not a reluctant helper.
36:1 *there is no dread of God before his eyes* David looks into the heart of the wicked man and finds no fear of God at all. Paul uses this line to close his description of human sin (Rom 3:18). When people stop fearing God, nothing holds them back.
36:4 *Iniquity he devises on his bed* The godly meditate on God's Word at night (1:2). The wicked man lies awake planning evil.
36:5 *Your steadfast love is in the heavens* Suddenly David turns from the wicked to God. His steadfast love reaches higher than the sky, His righteousness stands like the great mountains, and His judgments go down deeper than the sea. No measure on earth can hold Him.
36:7 *in the shadow of Your wings* People of every kind may run to God and find refuge, like chicks under a mother bird's wings.
36:9 *For with You is a fountain of life; in Your light we see light* God is the source of all life and all true understanding. Apart from Him we see nothing rightly. Jesus offered living water (John 4:14) and said He is the light of the world (John 8:12).
37:1 *Do not fret yourself because of evildoers* David wrote this when he was old (37:25). Like Psalm 34 it is an acrostic. The word behind "fret" means to burn or get heated, the slow burn we feel watching dishonest people prosper. Fretting and jealousy feed each other: we get angry at the wicked, and part of us wishes we had what they have.
37:2 *like grass they will quickly wither* In Israel the grass turns green after the winter rains and dies in the summer heat. The wicked look fresh now, but they will not last (Isa 40:6-8).
37:3 *Trust in the LORD and do good* Trust comes first. When we trust God to deal with the wicked, we are free to spend our energy doing good instead of stewing. "Graze" is a shepherd's word: stay in the pasture where God has put you and feed on faithfulness day after day.
37:4 *take delight in the LORD, and He will give you the requests of your heart* This is not a promise that God gives whatever we want if we are religious enough. The order matters. When God Himself becomes our joy, our desires begin to change. We start wanting what He wants, and above all He gives us Himself. The one who delights in God is never disappointed in the end.

LORD, and He will give you the requests of your heart. **5** Roll your way on the LORD, and trust in Him, and He Himself will act. **6** And He will bring forth your righteousness like the light, and your justice like the noonday. **7** Be still before the LORD and wait longingly for Him; do not fret yourself because of ***one*** who makes his way prosper, because of a man who carries out plots. **8** Refrain from anger and forsake rage; do not fret yourself, only to do evil. **9** For evildoers will be cut off, and those who wait for the LORD, they will possess ***the*** land. **10** And yet a little ***while***, and ***there will be*** no wicked ***one***; and you will look carefully at his place, and he ***will*** not ***be there***. **11** And the humble will possess ***the*** land, and they will take delight in ***the*** abundance of peace. **12** The wicked plots against the righteous and gnashes his teeth at him. **13** The Lord laughs at him, for He sees that his day will come. **14** The wicked have drawn a sword and have bent their bow, to make ***the*** afflicted and ***the*** needy fall, to slaughter ***those*** upright of way. **15** Their sword will enter into their ***own*** heart, and their bows will be broken. **16** Better ***is*** the little of the righteous than the abundance of many wicked. **17** For the arms of the wicked will be broken, and the LORD sustains the righteous. **18** The LORD knows the days of the blameless, and their inheritance will be forever. **19** They will not be ashamed in a time of evil, and in days of famine they will be satisfied. **20** For the wicked will perish, and the enemies of the LORD ***will be*** like the splendor of ***the*** pastures; they will come to an end; in smoke they will come to an end. **21** The wicked borrows and does not repay, and the righteous shows favor and gives. **22** For those blessed by Him will possess ***the*** land, and those cursed by Him will be cut off. **23** From the LORD the steps of a man are established, and He delights in his way. **24** When he falls, he will not be thrown down, for the LORD supports his hand. **25** I have been young, and also I am old, and I have not seen ***the*** righteous forsaken, and his offspring seeking bread. **26** All the day he shows favor and lends, and his offspring ***are*** for a blessing. **27** Turn away from evil and do good, and dwell forever. **28** For the LORD loves justice, and He will not forsake His godly ones; they are preserved forever, and the offspring of the wicked is cut off. **29** The righteous will possess ***the*** land and will dwell on it for all time. **30** The mouth of the righteous utters wisdom, and

37:5 1 Pet 5:7; Prov 16:3; Ps 55:22
37:6 Job 11:17; Isa 54:17; Mic 7:8,9
37:7 James 5:7; Ps 27:14; Ps 40:1
37:8 Eph 4:26; James 1:20; Prov 14:29
37:9 Rev 5:10; Matt 5:5; Isa 60:21
37:10 Job 24:24; Job 7:10,21; Ps 37:35,36
37:11 Matt 5:5; Ps 119:165; Ps 72:7
37:12 Matt 22:13; Ps 35:16; Dan 8:12,24
37:13 Ps 2:4; Prov 1:26; 1 Sam 26:10
37:14 Ps 64:2-6; Acts 12:2,3,11,23; 1 Sam 24:11,17
37:15 Ps 7:14,15; Ps 35:8; Ps 46:9
37:16 Luke 12:15; Prov 16:8; Prov 15:16,17
37:17 Ps 145:14; Ps 63:8; Isa 41:10
37:18 Ps 1:6; Ps 31:7; Ps 73:24
37:19 Eph 5:16; Ps 33:19; Prov 10:3
37:20 Ps 102:3; Ps 68:2; Ps 92:9
37:21 Ps 112:5,9; Deut 28:12,43,44; Prov 22:7
37:22 Gal 3:10; Prov 3:33; Ps 37:9,28
37:23 1 Sam 2:9; Prov 4:26; Jer 10:23
37:24 Ps 145:14; Prov 24:16; John 10:27-30
37:25 Heb 13:5; Ps 25:13; 1 Sam 12:22
37:26 Ps 112:5,9; Ps 37:21; Deut 15:8-10
37:27 1 Pet 3:11; 1 John 2:17; Ps 34:14
37:28 John 10:28; Ps 21:10; Prov 2:22
37:29 Ps 37:9,11,18,27; Prov 2:21; Deut 30:20
37:30 Prov 25:11-13; Ps 71:15,24; Deut 6:7-9

37:5 *Roll your way on the LORD* The Hebrew means just that, to roll. Picture rolling a heavy load off your back onto God: your plans, your problems, your future. "He Himself will act."
37:6 *He will bring forth your righteousness like the light* The good name of the righteous may be hidden now, like the sun behind clouds. God will bring the truth out as bright as noon. We do not have to fight to defend our reputation.
37:7 *Be still before the LORD and wait longingly for Him* Waiting is hard. We want God to act now. Waiting means trusting His timing, even when the wicked's plots seem to succeed.
37:8 *do not fret yourself, only to do evil* The third "do not fret" carries a warning. Anger at evil can turn into evil. Bitterness makes us harsh, and envy makes us copy the people we resent. "The anger of a man does not produce the righteousness of God" (James 1:20; Eph 4:26).
37:9 *those who wait for the LORD, they will possess the land* The first of five promises about possessing the land (37:9, 11, 22, 29, 34). In David's day the land was Canaan, promised to Abraham's descendants, a place to live in peace and pass on to your children.
37:10 *yet a little while, and there will be no wicked one* From where we stand, the wicked seem to last a long time. From God's point of view their time is short.
37:11 *the humble will possess the land* The humble do not grab or push. They trust God instead of their own power. Jesus said, "Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth" (Matt 5:5). The Hebrew word for "land" can also mean earth, and Jesus widens the promise. I believe this will be fulfilled when Christ returns and reigns on the earth with His people (Rev 5:10). The land was promised to Abraham's seed "for an everlasting possession" (Gen 17:8), and "the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable" (Rom 11:29).
37:13 *The Lord laughs at him, for He sees that his day will come* The threats of the wicked are small to God (2:4). They plot, but He already sees their day of judgment.
37:15 *Their sword will enter into their own heart* Evil turns back on itself, as Haman was hanged on the gallows he built for Mordecai (Esth 7:10).
37:16 *Better is the little of the righteous than the abundance of many wicked* A small income with a clean conscience and God's blessing is better than a fortune gained by wrong. A man's "life is not from his possessions" (Luke 12:15).
37:18 *The LORD knows the days of the blameless* God knows every day of our lives, good and hard. The wicked have their wealth a few years. The righteous have an inheritance forever, and God feeds them even in famine, as He fed Elijah (1 Kgs 17:2-16).
37:20 *like the splendor of the pastures* The wildflowers cover the hills in spring and are gone in weeks, and smoke rises and vanishes. So the wicked come to an end.
37:21 *The wicked borrows and does not repay, and the righteous shows favor and gives* The wicked take, the righteous give. How we handle money shows what is in our hearts. The one who trusts God can afford to be generous.
37:24 *When he falls, he will not be thrown down, for the LORD supports his hand* The righteous do fall, into trouble and sometimes into sin. Picture a father walking with a small child over rough ground. The child may trip, but the father's grip keeps him from falling flat. His hand is stronger than our stumbling.
37:25 *I have not seen the righteous forsaken, and his offspring seeking bread* David tells what he saw over a long life. Faithful believers do go hungry, and some were destitute (Heb 11:37). This is not a promise that no believer will ever be poor. It is the general pattern of God's care, and where it seems to fail in this life, God will make it right in the next. If you are in need, it is not a sign God has rejected you.
37:28 *He will not forsake His godly ones; they are preserved forever* God is not indifferent when the wicked hurt people, and He does not abandon His own. Jesus said no one will snatch His sheep out of His hand (John 10:28). The promise grows here from a lifetime to forever, which only God's eternal kingdom can fulfill.

his tongue speaks justice. **31** The law of his God ***is*** in his heart; his steps do not slip. **32** The wicked watches for the righteous and seeks to kill him. **33** The LORD will not forsake him in his hand, and He will not condemn him when he is judged. **34** Wait for the LORD and keep His way, and He will exalt you to possess ***the*** land; when the wicked are cut off, you will see ***it***. **35** I have seen a wicked ***man***, ruthless, and spreading himself like a luxuriant native tree. **36** And he passed away, and look, he ***was*** not ***there***; and I sought him, and he was not found. **37** Watch the blameless and see the upright, for ***there is*** a future for a man of peace. **38** And transgressors will be destroyed altogether; the future of the wicked will be cut off. **39** And the salvation of the righteous ***is*** from the LORD, their place of refuge in a time of trouble. **40** And the LORD has helped them and has delivered them; He delivers them from the wicked and saves them, for they have taken refuge in Him.

PSALMS 38

A psalm of David, to bring to remembrance. **1** LORD, do not rebuke me in Your wrath, and ***do not*** discipline me in Your rage. **2** For Your arrows have sunk into me, and Your hand has come down on me. **3** There is no soundness in my flesh because of Your indignation; there is no peace in my bones because of my sin. **4** For my iniquities have passed over my head; like a heavy burden they are too heavy for me. **5** My wounds stink; they fester because of my folly. **6** I am bent down; I am bowed down exceedingly; all the day I have gone about mourning. **7** For my loins are full of burning, and there is no soundness in my flesh. **8** I am numb and I am crushed exceedingly; I roar because of the groaning of my heart. **9** Lord, all my desire ***is*** before You, and my sighing is not hidden from You. **10** My heart throbs; my strength has left me; and the light of my eyes, even they are not with me. **11** My loved ones and my companions stand off from before my plague, and my near ones have stood far away. **12** And those who seek my life set traps, and those who seek out my harm have spoken destruction, and they devise deceits all the day. **13** And I, like a deaf ***man***, do not hear, and ***I am*** like a mute ***man who*** does not open his mouth. **14** And I have become like a man who does not hear, and in whose mouth there are no reproofs. **15** For I have waited for You, LORD; You Yourself will answer, Lord my God. **16** For I said, "Lest they rejoice over me; when my foot slips, they magnify themselves against me." **17** For I am prepared for stumbling, and my pain ***is*** before me continually. **18** For I declare my iniquity; I am anxious because of my sin. **19** And my enemies ***are*** living ***and*** are numerous, and those who hate me falsely are many. **20** And those who repay evil in place of good accuse me, because of my pursuing good. **21** Do not forsake me, LORD; my God, do not be far from me. **22** Hurry to my help, Lord, my salvation.

37:31 Deut 6:6; Isa 51:7; Ps 37:23
37:32 Luke 20:20; Acts 9:24; John 8:40
37:33 Luke 20:20; Acts 9:24; 2 Pet 2:9
37:34 Ps 27:14; Ps 52:5,6; Ps 91:8
37:35 Job 5:3; Ps 73:3-11; Esth 5:11
37:36 Rev 18:21; Ps 37:10; Exod 15:9,10,19
37:37 Isa 32:17; Job 1:1; Job 42:12-17
37:38 Ps 1:4-6; Ps 52:5; Prov 14:32
37:39 Ps 3:8; Ps 9:9; Ps 91:15
37:40 1 John 2:13; 1 John 2:14; Isa 31:5
38:1 Ps 6:1; Heb 12:5-11; Ps 70:1
38:2 Job 6:4; Ps 32:4; Ps 21:12
38:3 Ps 6:2; Ps 51:8; Ps 31:9
38:4 Ezra 9:6; Ps 40:12; Lev 7:18
38:5 Ps 38:7; Ps 32:3; Isa 1:5,6
38:6 Job 30:28; Ps 35:14; Ps 42:9
38:7 Ps 41:8; 2 Chr 21:18,19; Job 7:5
38:8 Ps 32:3; Job 3:24; Ps 22:1,2
38:9 Ps 102:5,20; John 1:48; Rom 8:22,23,26,27
38:10 Ps 6:7; Ps 69:3; Ps 88:9
38:11 Ps 31:11; Luke 23:49; Job 19:13-17
38:12 Ps 35:20; Ps 140:5; Ps 64:2-5
38:13 Ps 39:2,9; Isa 53:7; 1 Pet 2:23
38:14 Amos 5:13; Mic 7:5; Mark 15:3-5
38:15 Ps 39:7; Ps 123:1-3; Ps 138:3
38:16 Ps 94:18; Ps 13:3,4; Ps 35:24-26
38:17 Ps 35:15; Ps 38:6; Mic 4:6,7
38:18 Ps 32:5; Prov 28:13; Ps 51:3
38:19 Ps 35:19; Ps 3:1; Ps 25:19
38:20 Ps 35:12; 1 John 3:12; Ps 7:4
38:21 Ps 22:1,11,19,24; Ps 35:21,22
38:22 Ps 40:13,17; Ps 27:1; Ps 70:1,5

37:31 *The law of his God is in his heart; his steps do not slip* His mouth speaks wisdom because God's Word lives in his heart, not only on a shelf. "In my heart I have treasured Your word, so that I will not sin against You" (Ps 119:11).
37:33 *He will not condemn him when he is judged* God may let the righteous suffer for a time, but He will not abandon them. Even if a human court rules against him, God's court will not. Stephen was condemned on earth and welcomed in heaven (Acts 7).
37:34 *when the wicked are cut off, you will see it* David does not tell us to bring about their end. God does that. Our part is to wait, keep His way, and pray they turn to Him before that day. See the introduction on the hard lines.
37:35 *spreading himself like a luxuriant native tree* David saw a ruthless man who looked rooted and growing, and then he was gone. His success was real, and short. Remember the rich fool: "This night they are demanding your soul from you" (Luke 12:20).
37:37 *there is a future for a man of peace* "Future" can mean descendants or a good end. Both point the same way: the life of the blameless ends well.
37:40 *for they have taken refuge in Him* Helps, delivers, delivers, saves: four things God does in one verse. Not because His people were stronger or smarter than the wicked, but because they ran to Him. So when you see evil prosper, don't fret. Their day is short, and God's people have a future that lasts forever.
38:0 *to bring to remembrance* Perhaps a psalm used with an offering of remembrance, or a prayer asking God to remember the one who prays. Psalm 70 has the same words. Psalm 38 is one of the seven penitential psalms.
38:3 *there is no peace in my bones because of my sin* David is sick in body and sick at heart, and he knows the two are tied together this time. Not every illness comes from sin (John 9:2-3), but David does not hide behind that truth. He owns his.
38:4 *like a heavy burden they are too heavy for me* Sin promised to be light and turned out to be crushing. Jesus invites the weary and heavy-laden to come to Him for rest (Matt 11:28).
38:9 *Lord, all my desire is before You* Even his sighs are not hidden from God. When we cannot find words, God still knows what we long for (Rom 8:26).
38:11 *My loved ones and my companions stand off from before my plague* Friends kept their distance, as people did from the sick in those days. Sin and suffering can make a person very lonely. Jesus did not stand far off from the sick. He touched them.
38:13 *like a mute man who does not open his mouth* David does not answer his accusers. He leaves his defense with God (38:15). Jesus kept silent before His accusers too (Isa 53:7; Matt 27:12-14), though He had no sin to confess.
38:18 *For I declare my iniquity* The way back is the same as in Psalm 32: honest confession. The psalm ends not with healing yet, but with David clinging to God: "Hurry to my help, Lord, my salvation."

PSALMS 39

To the choirmaster, for Jeduthun (Yedutun). A psalm of David. **1** I said, "I will keep my ways from sinning with my tongue; I will keep a muzzle for my mouth while the wicked ***is*** still before me." **2** I was mute ***in*** silence; I kept silent from good, and my pain was stirred up. **3** My heart became hot within me; in my musing a fire burned; I spoke with my tongue: **4** "LORD, make me know my end, and the measure of my days, what it ***is***; let me know how fleeting I ***am***. **5** Look, You have made my days handbreadths, and my lifespan ***is*** like nothing before You; surely all mankind ***that*** stands ***is*** all vanity." Selah. **6** Surely a man walks about as an image; surely ***in*** vanity they are in turmoil; he heaps up and does not know who will gather them. **7** And now, what do I wait for, Lord? My hope, it ***is*** in You. **8** Deliver me from all my transgressions; do not make me a reproach of the foolish. **9** I am mute; I do not open my mouth, for You Yourself have acted. **10** Remove Your plague from on me; I have come to an end from the hostility of Your hand. **11** With reproofs for iniquity You have disciplined a man, and You have melted like the moth what he desires; surely all mankind ***is*** vanity. Selah. **12** Hear my prayer, LORD, and give ear to my cry for help; do not be silent toward my tears, for I ***am*** a sojourner with You, a resident alien like all my fathers. **13** Look away from me, that I may be cheerful before I go and am not.

PSALMS 40

To the choirmaster. Of David. A psalm. **1** I waited intently for the LORD, and He inclined to me and heard my cry for help. **2** And He brought me up from a pit of roaring, from the mud of the mire, and He set my feet on a rock; He established my steps. **3** And He put a new song in my mouth, praise to our God; many will see and fear, and will trust in the LORD. **4** How blessed ***is*** the man who has made the LORD his trust, and has not turned to the proud and to those who turn aside to falsehood. **5** Many, LORD my God, You Yourself have done: Your wonders and Your plans toward us; there is none to compare to You; I would declare and I would speak, ***but*** they are too numerous to recount. **6** Sacrifice and grain offering You did not desire; ears You have dug for me; burnt offering and sin offering You did not ask for. **7** Then I said, "Look, I have come; in the scroll of the book ***it is*** written about me. **8** I delight to do Your will, my God, and Your law ***is*** in the midst of my inward parts." **9** I have proclaimed good news of righteousness in the great assembly; look, I do not restrain my

39:1 1 Kgs 2:4; 2 Kgs 10:31; Ps 62:1
39:2 Acts 8:32; Ps 38:13,14; Isa 53:7
39:3 Luke 24:32; Jer 20:9; Ezek 3:14
39:4 Ps 90:12; Ps 119:84; Job 14:13
39:5 Ps 89:47; Ps 62:9; Ps 144:4
39:6 1 Cor 7:31; Luke 12:20,21,29; James 4:14
39:7 Rom 15:13; Ps 38:15; Ps 130:5,6
39:8 Ps 44:13; Ps 79:4; Ps 25:11,18
39:9 Acts 8:32; Job 2:10; 2 Sam 16:10
39:10 Job 9:34; Job 13:21; Ps 25:16,17
39:11 Job 13:28; Isa 50:9; Ps 38:1-8
39:12 Heb 5:7; Heb 11:13; 1 Pet 2:11
39:13 Job 10:20,21; Job 14:10-12; Job 14:5,6
40:1 Heb 5:7; Ps 37:7; Ps 27:13,14
40:2 Matt 7:24; Matt 7:25; Heb 5:7
40:3 Rev 14:3; Ps 33:3; Ps 52:6
40:4 Ps 34:8; Ps 125:5; Ps 2:12
40:5 John 21:25; Ps 71:15; Ps 136:4
40:6 Heb 10:5-7; Heb 10:8; Matt 12:7
40:7 Heb 10:9; Luke 24:44; John 5:39
40:8 John 4:34; Rom 7:22; Matt 5:17
40:9 John 21:17; Luke 4:18; Ps 119:13,171,172

39:0 *for Jeduthun* Jeduthun was one of David's chief musicians, a Levite who led worship with Asaph and Heman (1 Chr 16:41-42; 25:1).
39:1 *I will keep a muzzle for my mouth while the wicked is still before me* David did not want to complain about God in front of unbelievers and give them cause to mock. Holding it in only made the fire burn hotter (39:3). So he took it to God instead.
39:4 *LORD, make me know my end, and the measure of my days* A handbreadth is the width of four fingers, about three inches. That is how short life is next to God (39:5). Knowing how brief our days are teaches us to live wisely (90:12).
39:6 *he heaps up and does not know who will gather them* We work, worry and pile up wealth, and someone else will sort through it when we are gone (Eccl 2:18-19). "Vanity" here is a breath or vapor, something that passes quickly.
39:7 *My hope, it is in You* The turn of the psalm. If life is a breath, what is worth waiting for? Only God. He alone does not pass away.
39:12 *I am a sojourner with You, a resident alien like all my fathers* A sojourner lived in a land that was not his own. The patriarchs lived as strangers in Canaan, looking for a better country (Heb 11:13-16). Believers are pilgrims here too (1 Pet 2:11).
39:13 *Look away from me, that I may be cheerful before I go and am not* A startling ending. David feels the weight of God's discipline and asks for relief before he dies. The psalm ends in the dark, and God still put it in His book. He lets us pray honestly even when we cannot yet see the light.
40:1 *I waited intently for the LORD* The Hebrew says, in effect, waiting, I waited. David kept on waiting, and it was not wasted. To incline is to lean down, like a parent bending low to hear a small child.
40:2 *from the mud of the mire, and He set my feet on a rock* A pit was often a cistern cut into rock to hold rainwater, with thick mud at the bottom when dry. Jeremiah sank into one (Jer 38:6). You cannot climb out of a pit like that. Someone has to pull you out. God lifted David from sinking mud to solid rock.
40:3 *He put a new song in my mouth* God gave the song as well as the rescue. When He rescues one person, others hear and trust Him too. Your story of what God has done may be what helps someone else believe.
40:4 *How blessed is the man who has made the LORD his trust* The proud trust themselves, and others chase lies and false gods. The blessed man puts his whole weight on the LORD.
40:5 *they are too numerous to recount* God works wonders and also has plans for His people's good. David would run out of time before he ran out of reasons to praise. Try counting your own blessings and see.
40:6 *Sacrifice and grain offering You did not desire* God Himself commanded these offerings. David means God never wanted them as empty ritual. He wanted obedient hearts (1 Sam 15:22). "For steadfast love I desire, and not sacrifice" (Hos 6:6).
40:6 *ears You have dug for me* God gave David ears to hear and obey. Some link it with the servant whose ear was pierced (Exod 21:6), though the Hebrew word differs. Hebrews quotes the Greek Old Testament here: "a body You prepared for Me" (Heb 10:5). God prepared a body for His Son so He could obey the Father fully, all the way to the cross.
40:7 *in the scroll of the book it is written about me* For David the scroll was probably the Law of Moses, which described the king God wanted (Deut 17:18-20). He was saying, here I am, ready to be what Your Word calls me to be.
40:8 *I delight to do Your will, my God* Obedience was David's joy, with God's Law written on his heart as God promised for the new covenant (Jer 31:33). Hebrews says these words find their full meaning in Jesus: "Look, I have come to do Your will, O God" (Heb 10:9). David could only partly live them. Jesus lived them completely (John 4:34; Matt 26:39). We are made holy "through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Heb 10:10). That is why we no longer bring animals to an altar.
40:9 *I have proclaimed good news of righteousness in the great assembly* The Law was in David's heart to shape his life, but he did not hide God's goodness there to keep it private. He told it. What has God done for you that you have never told anyone?

lips; LORD, You Yourself know. **10** Your righteousness I have not concealed in the midst of my heart; Your faithfulness and Your salvation I have told; I have not hidden Your steadfast love and Your truth from the great assembly. **11** You, LORD, will not withhold Your compassion from me; Your steadfast love and Your truth will continually preserve me. **12** For evils have surrounded me until there is no number; my iniquities have overtaken me, and I am not able to see; they are more numerous than the hairs of my head, and my heart has forsaken me. **13** Be pleased, LORD, to deliver me; LORD, hurry to my help. **14** Let them be ashamed and let them be abashed altogether, those who seek my life to snatch it away; let them be turned backward and let them be humiliated, those who desire my harm. **15** Let them be appalled as the consequence of their shame, those who say to me, "Aha! Aha!" **16** Let all who seek You exult and rejoice in You; let those who love Your salvation say continually, "Let the LORD be great." **17** And I ***am*** afflicted and needy; let the Lord think of me. You ***are*** my help and my deliverer; my God, do not delay.

PSALMS 41

To the choirmaster. A psalm of David. **1** How blessed ***is he who*** considers ***the*** poor; in a day of harm the LORD will deliver him. **2** The LORD will keep him and preserve him alive, and he will be called blessed in the land; and do not give him into the desire of his enemies. **3** The LORD will sustain him on a couch of illness; all his bed You have changed in his sickness. **4** I myself said, "LORD, be gracious to me; heal my soul, for I have sinned against You." **5** My enemies speak evil of me: "When will he die, and his name perish?" **6** And if ***one*** comes to see ***me***, he speaks falsehood; his heart gathers wickedness for itself; he goes out to the outside ***and*** speaks. **7** All who hate me whisper together against me; against me they plot harm for me: **8** "A thing of worthlessness has been poured out on him, and since he has lain down, he will not rise again." **9** Even the man of my peace, in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has made ***his*** heel great against me. **10** And You, LORD, be gracious to me and raise me up, that I may repay them. **11** By this I know that You delight in me: that my enemy does not shout in triumph over me. **12** And I, in my integrity You have upheld me, and You have set me before Your face forever.

Closing Praise of Book One

13 Blessed ***be*** the LORD, the God of Israel (Yisra'el), from everlasting and to everlasting. Amen and Amen.

PSALMS 42

Book Two: Longing for God

To the choirmaster. A Maskil of the sons of Korah (Qorach). **1** As a deer pants for channels of water, so my soul pants for You, God. **2** My soul thirsts for God, for the living God; when will I

40:10 1 Thess 1:8; Rev 22:17; Rom 1:16,17
40:11 Ps 43:3; Ps 57:3; Ps 61:7
40:12 Heb 4:15; Ps 38:4; Ps 69:4
40:13 Matt 26:42; Ps 38:22; Ps 70:1-5
40:14 Ps 35:4,26; Ps 71:13; Ps 31:17,18
40:15 Luke 21:23; Ps 35:21,25; Ps 69:24,25
40:16 Ps 35:27; Ps 22:26; Ps 68:3
40:17 Ps 70:5; Isa 41:17; Ps 40:5
41:1 Prov 14:21; Prov 19:17; 2 Cor 9:8-14
41:2 Ps 27:12; Ps 33:19; Ps 91:3-7
41:3 Ps 73:26; 2 Kgs 1:6,16; 2 Kgs 20:5,6
41:4 Ps 103:3; Ps 147:3; Ps 32:5
41:5 Ps 22:6-8; Ps 102:8; Job 18:17
41:6 Ps 12:2; Prov 26:24,25; Neh 6:1-14
41:7 Prov 16:28; Prov 26:20; Rom 1:29
41:8 Ps 71:11; Ps 38:3-7; Job 2:7,8
41:9 Matt 26:23; Mark 14:18; Luke 22:21
41:10 Ps 57:1; Ps 18:37-42; Ps 21:8-10
41:11 Ps 13:4; Ps 31:8; Ps 35:25
41:12 Job 36:7; Ps 25:21; Ps 94:18
41:13 Eph 1:3; Rev 7:12; Matt 6:13
42:1 Ps 84:1; Ps 143:6,7; Ps 48:1
42:2 John 7:37; Ps 63:1; Matt 16:16

40:12 *my iniquities have overtaken me* In verse 5 God's wonders were too many to count. Now David's troubles and sins seem too many. A believer can sing a new song one day and feel overwhelmed the next. The New Testament applies verses 6-8 to Jesus but not this verse, and we should not either. Jesus had no sins of His own (Heb 4:15). This is David's confession, and often ours.
40:13 *LORD, hurry to my help* Verses 13-17 appear again, with small changes, as Psalm 70. This prayer seems to have been used on its own too.
40:14 *Let them be ashamed and let them be abashed altogether* David asks God to deal with men who want him dead, and leaves the outcome there. "Aha! Aha!" is the sound of gloating. We can pray that God stops those who hurt us and turns their hearts. See the introduction on the hard lines.
40:17 *And I am afflicted and needy; let the Lord think of me* The king calls himself poor and needy. He has nothing to bring but his need, and that is enough. He began content to wait and ends asking God to hurry. God makes room for both prayers.
41:1 *How blessed is he who considers the poor* To consider the poor is to pay attention to them and act wisely for their good. God watches over the one who watches over the weak. Jesus said the merciful will be shown mercy (Matt 5:7).
41:4 *heal my soul, for I have sinned against You* David is sick and admits his sin in the same breath. He does not claim his illness is undeserved. He asks for mercy.
41:5 *When will he die, and his name perish* His enemies visit his sickbed with kind words and then go out and gossip, hoping he will not recover (41:6-8).
41:9 *Even the man of my peace, in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has made his heel great against me* To share bread was a pledge of friendship. To lift the heel was to kick, or to turn and walk away in contempt. David may have had Ahithophel in mind (2 Sam 15:12). Jesus quoted this line of Judas: "The one feeding on the bread with Me lifted up his heel against Me" (John 13:18).
41:10 *raise me up, that I may repay them* As king, David was responsible to put down rebellion and judge treachery. Jesus, the greater Son of David, was raised from the dead and will judge all men in righteousness (Acts 17:31).
41:13 *Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, from everlasting and to everlasting. Amen and Amen* This blessing closes Book One of the Psalms (1-41). Each of the first four books ends with a word of praise like this (72:18-19; 89:52; 106:48). "Amen" means so be it, it is true.
42:0 *A Maskil of the sons of Korah* The sons of Korah were a family of Levites. Korah rebelled against Moses and died under God's judgment (Num 16), but his sons did not die (Num 26:11). Their descendants became singers in Israel's worship (1 Chr 6:31-37). Eleven psalms carry their name. God took a family with a dark past and gave it a song. Psalm 42 opens Book Two (42-72).
42:1 *As a deer pants for channels of water, so my soul pants for You, God* Many believe Psalms 42 and 43 were first one psalm. They share a refrain, and Psalm 43 has no heading. Picture a deer in dry country searching for a stream. The writer does not just want a better mood. He wants God Himself.
42:2 *for the living God* The gods of the nations were wood and stone. Only a living God can satisfy a thirsty soul. "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink" (John 7:37). To appear before God meant going up to His house at the feasts, and the writer cannot go.

come and appear ***before*** the face of God? **3** My tears have been food to me day and night, while ***they*** say to me all the day, "Where ***is*** your God?" **4** These ***things*** I will remember, and I will pour out my soul within me: how I would pass along with the throng; I would lead them slowly to the house of God, with the sound of a shout of joy and thanksgiving, a multitude celebrating a festival. **5** Why are you bowed down, my soul, and ***why*** are you in turmoil within me? Wait for God, for I will yet give thanks to Him, the salvation of His face. **6** My God, my soul is bowed down within me; therefore I will remember You from the land of ***the*** Jordan (Yarden) and ***the*** Hermons (Chermons), from Mount Mizar (Mitsar). **7** Deep calls to deep at the sound of Your waterfalls; all Your breakers and Your waves have passed over me. **8** By day the LORD will command His steadfast love, and in the night His song ***is*** with me, a prayer to the God of my life. **9** I will say to God my rock, "Why have You forgotten me? Why do I walk mourning because of the oppression of an enemy?" **10** With a shattering in my bones my adversaries have taunted me, while they say to me all the day, "Where ***is*** your God?" **11** Why are you bowed down, my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Wait for God, for I will yet give thanks to Him, the salvation of my face and my God.

PSALMS 43

1 Vindicate me, God, and argue my case against a nation ***that is*** not godly; from a man of deceit and injustice You will deliver me. **2** For You ***are*** the God of my refuge; why have You rejected me? Why do I go about mourning because of the oppression of an enemy? **3** Send Your light and Your truth; let them lead me; let them bring me to the mountain of Your holiness and to Your dwelling places. **4** And I will go to the altar of God, to the God of the joy of my rejoicing, and I will give thanks to You with a lyre, God, my God. **5** Why are you bowed down, my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Wait for God, for I will yet give thanks to Him, the salvation of my face and my God.

PSALMS 44

To the choirmaster. Of the sons of Korah (Qorach). A Maskil. **1** God, with our ears we have heard; our fathers have recounted to us the work ***that*** You worked in their days, in the days of old. **2** You, ***by*** Your hand, dispossessed nations, and You planted them; You did harm to peoples, and You sent them out. **3** For not by their sword did they take possession of the land, and their arm did not save them; but Your right hand and Your arm and the light of Your face, for You took pleasure in them. **4** You ***are*** He, my King, God; command the salvation of Jacob (Ya'aqov). **5** Through You we gore our adversaries; in Your name we tread down those who rise up against us. **6** For not in my bow do I trust, and my sword does not save me. **7** For You have saved us from our adversaries, and those who hate us You have put to shame. **8** In God we have boasted all the day, and we will give thanks to Your name forever. Selah.

42:3 Ps 80:5; Ps 79:10,12; Ps 102:9
42:4 Isa 30:29; Ps 62:8; Ps 122:1
42:5 Matt 26:38; Mark 14:33; 1 Pet 1:21
42:6 Matt 26:39; Ps 61:2; Jonah 2:7
42:7 Jonah 2:3; Ps 88:7,15-17; Ps 69:14,15
42:8 Ps 63:6; Ps 149:5; Job 35:10
42:9 Ps 38:6; Ps 18:2; Ps 43:2
42:10 Matt 27:43; Ps 42:3; Joel 2:17
42:11 Ps 42:5; Ps 43:5; Jer 30:17
43:1 Ps 26:1; 1 Sam 24:15; Ps 35:1
43:2 Ps 42:9; Ps 28:7; Ps 140:7
43:3 John 20:13; Ps 2:6; Ps 40:11
43:4 Hab 3:17,18; Ps 57:8; Ps 66:13-15
43:5 John 20:13; Ps 42:5,11
44:1 Ps 42:1; Ps 78:3-6; Exod 13:14,15
44:2 Acts 7:45; Ps 78:55; Exod 15:17,19
44:3 Josh 24:12; Deut 7:7,8; Deut 8:17,18
44:4 Ps 74:12; Ps 42:8; Ps 89:18
44:5 Ps 108:13; Deut 33:17; Ps 60:12
44:6 Hos 1:7; Ps 20:7; Ps 33:16,17
44:7 Ps 140:7; Ps 144:10; Josh 1:5
44:8 Ps 34:2; Jer 9:24; 1 Cor 1:29-31

42:3 *Where is your God* He cries so much he has lost his appetite, and people keep asking why his God does not help. That question hurts most when we are already asking it ourselves.
42:4 *These things I will remember* He once led the festival crowd up to God's house with shouts of joy. Memories can make the present feel emptier. They also remind us that God has been good before, and He has not changed.
42:5 *Why are you bowed down, my soul* The refrain (42:5, 11; 43:5). The writer talks to himself. He does not deny his sadness, but he refuses to let it have the last word. "Wait for God" means waiting with hope. Depression is real, and some also need help from doctors or counselors. That is no shame. If despair ever turns to thoughts of ending your life, tell someone today, a pastor, a friend or a doctor. Jesus knew sorrow of soul too: "My soul is very sorrowful, even to death" (Matt 26:38).
42:6 *from the land of the Jordan and the Hermons, from Mount Mizar* Mount Hermon is the high mountain on Israel's northern edge, about 120 miles north of Jerusalem, where the Jordan begins. Mizar means small, and no one knows which hill it was. The writer is far from Jerusalem. We aren't told why.
42:7 *Deep calls to deep at the sound of Your waterfalls* Streams pour down from Hermon in waterfalls. The water that should speak of quenched thirst now feels like it is drowning him. But he calls them "Your" waves. Even his suffering is under God's control.
42:8 *By day the LORD will command His steadfast love* God gives orders to His loyal love, the way a king issues a decree, and in the long night He gives a song. Only here does the writer use LORD, the covenant name. In his darkest place he remembers that God has bound Himself to His people.
42:9 *I will say to God my rock, Why have You forgotten me* Faith and doubt side by side in one sentence. God does not reject that kind of prayer. The writer is still talking to God, and that matters.
42:11 *the salvation of my face and my God* The refrain again. Nothing outside has changed. He has lost his home, his place in worship and his joy, but not his God. The battle with discouragement is often not won in one round. He had to tell his soul to hope twice in eleven verses, and once more in Psalm 43.
43:1 *Vindicate me, God, and argue my case* Psalm 43 has no heading and continues Psalm 42, with the same refrain (43:5). Now the writer asks God to take his side against ungodly people and a deceitful man.
43:3 *Send Your light and Your truth; let them lead me* He pictures God's light and truth as two guides sent to bring him home to God's holy mountain. The way back to God's presence is lit by His own truth.
43:4 *to the God of the joy of my rejoicing* His goal is not only the altar but God Himself, his deepest joy. The one who cried "Where is your God?" (42:3) now says "my God."
44:1 *our fathers have recounted to us the work that You worked in their days* Psalm 44 is a lament for the nation after a defeat. It opens by remembering how God gave Israel the land. The victory was His, not theirs (44:3).
44:6 *For not in my bow do I trust* The people still trust God, not weapons. That is what makes the next section so hard.

9 Yet You have rejected ***us*** and humiliated us, and You do not go out with our armies. **10** You make us turn back from the adversary, and those who hate us have plundered for themselves. **11** You make us like sheep ***for*** food, and among the nations You have scattered us. **12** You sell Your people for no wealth, and You have not made ***it*** great by their price. **13** You make us a reproach to our neighbors, a mockery and derision to those around us. **14** You make us a byword among the nations, a shaking of ***the*** head among the peoples. **15** All the day my disgrace ***is*** before me, and the shame of my face has covered me, **16** because of the voice of one who taunts and reviles, because of an enemy and avenger. **17** All this has come on us, and we have not forgotten You, and we have not dealt falsely with Your covenant. **18** Our heart has not turned back, and our steps ***have not*** turned aside from Your path, **19** for You have crushed us in a place of jackals and covered us over with deep darkness. **20** If we had forgotten the name of our God and spread out our hands to a strange god, **21** would not God search this out? For He knows the secrets of the heart. **22** For on account of You we have been killed all the day; we have been regarded like sheep ***for*** slaughter. **23** Rouse Yourself! Why do You sleep, Lord? Awake! Do not reject ***us*** perpetually. **24** Why do You hide Your face, ***and*** forget our affliction and our oppression? **25** For our soul has sunk down to the dust; our belly has clung to the earth. **26** Arise, a help for us, and ransom us for the sake of Your steadfast love.

PSALMS 45

To the choirmaster, on "Lilies." Of the sons of Korah (Qorach). A Maskil. A song of loves. **1** My heart overflows ***with*** a good word; I am speaking my works to the King; my tongue ***is*** the stylus of a skilled scribe. **2** You are more handsome than the sons of mankind; grace has been poured on Your lips; therefore God has blessed You forever. **3** Gird Your sword on ***the*** thigh, mighty ***one***, Your splendor and Your majesty. **4** And ***in*** Your majesty prosper; ride on for the cause of truth and humility ***and*** righteousness, and let Your right hand teach You awesome ***things***. **5** Your arrows ***are*** sharpened; peoples will fall under You; ***they are*** in the heart of the enemies of the King. **6** Your throne, God, ***is*** forever and ever; a scepter of uprightness ***is*** the scepter of Your kingdom. **7** You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, Your God, has anointed You ***with*** the oil of joy above Your companions. **8** Myrrh and aloes ***and*** cassia ***are*** all Your garments; from palaces of ivory stringed instruments have made You glad. **9** Daughters of kings ***are*** among Your noble women; a queen consort stands at Your right hand in the gold of Ophir (Ofir). **10** Listen, daughter, and see, and incline your ear, and forget your people and the house of your father. **11** And let the King desire your beauty; for He ***is*** your Lord, and bow down to Him. **12** And the daughter of Tyre (Tsor) ***will come*** with a gift; the rich of ***the*** people will entreat your face. **13** All glorious ***is the*** daughter of ***the*** King within; her clothing ***is*** of settings of gold. **14** In embroidered robes she is led to the King; virgins after her, her companions, are being brought to You. **15** They are led with joy and rejoicing; they enter into the palace of ***the*** King. **16** In place of Your fathers will be Your sons; You will make them princes in all the earth. **17** I will cause Your name to be remembered in every generation and generation; therefore peoples will give thanks to You forever and ever.

44:9 Ps 60:1,10; Ps 74:1; Ps 108:11
44:10 Josh 7:8,12; Ps 89:41; Deut 28:25
44:11 Rom 8:36; Deut 4:27; Deut 28:64
44:12 Jer 15:13; Deut 32:30; Isa 52:3,4
44:13 Ps 79:4; Ps 80:6; Ps 89:51
44:14 Jer 24:9; 2 Kgs 19:21; Job 16:4
44:15 Ps 69:7; Josh 7:7-9; Ezra 9:6
44:16 Ps 8:2; Ps 74:18,22,23; Ps 79:12
44:17 Dan 9:13; Ps 44:20; Ps 9:17
44:18 Ps 119:51,157; Ps 78:57; Zeph 1:6
44:19 Job 3:5; Ps 23:4; Ps 38:8
44:20 Ps 68:31; Job 11:13; Ps 44:17
44:21 Rom 2:16; Jer 17:10; Heb 4:12,13
44:22 Rom 8:36; John 15:21; Ps 44:11
44:23 Ps 7:6; Ps 78:65; Ps 35:23
44:24 Job 13:24; Ps 10:1,11; Ps 13:1
44:25 Ps 119:25; Ps 66:11,12; Isa 51:23
44:26 Ps 26:11; Ps 130:7,8

45:1 Matt 25:34; Matt 21:5; 1 Tim 1:17
45:2 Luke 4:22; Heb 1:3; Heb 1:4
45:3 Heb 1:3; Heb 8:1; Heb 4:12
45:4 Heb 8:1; Rev 6:2; Ps 110:2,3
45:5 Acts 2:37; Acts 7:54; Matt 21:5
45:6 Heb 1:8-9; Ps 93:2; Ps 145:13
45:7 Acts 2:28; Ps 33:5; Heb 1:9
45:8 John 19:39; Matt 21:5; Song 1:3,13
45:9 John 3:29; Matt 20:21; Matt 21:5
45:10 Matt 21:5; Mark 4:3; John 3:29
45:11 Luke 24:52; John 20:28; Matt 2:2
45:12 Acts 21:3; Matt 21:5; Mark 3:8
45:13 Matt 22:11; Matt 21:5; Isa 61:10
45:14 Matt 21:5; John 3:29; Judg 5:30
45:15 Matt 21:5; John 3:29; Isa 35:10
45:16 Rev 1:6; John 3:29; Rev 5:10
45:17 Mal 1:11; Ps 72:17-19; 1 Cor 11:26

44:9 *Yet You have rejected us and humiliated us* Israel had been faithful (44:17-18), and still they lost. Not every defeat is punishment for sin. This psalm gives words to God's people when suffering makes no sense, and it does not explain the mystery away.
44:22 *For on account of You we have been killed all the day* They suffer because they belong to God. Paul quotes this verse and answers it: "But in all these things we more than conquer through the One who loved us" (Rom 8:36-37). Nothing can separate us from God's love in Christ.
44:23 *Why do You sleep, Lord* God does not sleep (121:4), but it can feel that way. The psalm ends with bold prayer, resting on God's steadfast love (44:26), the only ground any of us has.
45:0 *A song of loves* A royal wedding song. "Lilies" is most likely a tune. The first meaning is a wedding of a king from David's line. But the words reach far beyond any earthly king, and the New Testament applies them to Christ.
45:2 *grace has been poured on Your lips* The King is beautiful in person and gracious in speech. The people "were marveling at the words of grace" (Luke 4:22) that came from Jesus' mouth.
45:4 *ride on for the cause of truth and humility and righteousness* The King goes to war for good causes, not for gain. Jesus, the Faithful and True, rides out, and "in righteousness He judges and makes war" (Rev 19:11).
45:6 *Your throne, God, is forever and ever* Here the King is called God. Hebrews quotes verses 6-7 of the Son, "But to the Son" (Heb 1:8), and shows the Son is far above the angels (Heb 1:8-9). The Father calls the Son God. Only Jesus fits these words: God, yet anointed by "God, Your God" (45:7).
45:10 *forget your people and the house of your father* The bride is told to leave her old home and give her loyalty to the King. Scripture pictures God's people as the bride of Christ (Eph 5:25-27; Rev 19:7). Following Him means a new first loyalty.
45:16 *In place of Your fathers will be Your sons* The King's line will go on, and His name will be remembered in every generation (45:17). In Christ that promise has no end.

PSALMS 46

To the choirmaster. Of the sons of Korah (Qorach). On Alamoth. A song. **1** God ***is*** a refuge and strength for us, a help in troubles, found abundantly. **2** Therefore we will not fear when the earth changes and when mountains shake in the heart of the seas. **3** Its waters will roar ***and*** foam; mountains will quake at its swelling. Selah. **4** ***There is*** a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy ***place*** of the dwellings of the Most High. **5** God ***is*** in her midst; she will not be shaken; God will help her at the turning of the morning. **6** Nations roared; kingdoms shook; He gave forth with His voice; the earth melts. **7** The LORD of armies ***is*** with us; a high refuge for us ***is*** the God of Jacob (Ya'aqov). Selah. **8** Come, see the works of the LORD, who has set desolations on the earth. **9** He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; the bow He breaks and cuts the spear in two; carts He burns with fire. **10** Let go, and know that I ***am*** God; I will be exalted among the nations; I will be exalted on the earth. **11** The LORD of armies ***is*** with us; a high refuge for us ***is*** the God of Jacob. Selah.

PSALMS 47

To the choirmaster. Of the sons of Korah (Qorach). A psalm. **1** Strike ***the*** palm, all the peoples; shout for joy to God with the sound of a ringing cry. **2** For the LORD Most High ***is*** to be feared, a great King over all the earth. **3** He subdues peoples under us and nations under our feet. **4** He chooses our inheritance for us, the pride of Jacob (Ya'aqov) whom He loved. Selah. **5** God has gone up with a shout, the LORD with the sound of a ram's horn. **6** Sing praises to God, sing praises; sing praises to our King, sing praises. **7** For God ***is*** the King of all the earth; sing praises ***with*** a Maskil. **8** God reigns over nations; God sits on the throne of His holiness. **9** The nobles of peoples have gathered, the people of the God of Abraham (Avraham); for the shields of ***the*** earth ***belong*** to God; He is greatly exalted.

PSALMS 48

A song. A psalm of the sons of Korah (Qorach). **1** Great ***is*** the LORD, and to be praised exceedingly in the city of our God, the mountain of His holiness. **2** Beautiful in elevation, the joy of all the earth, ***is*** Mount Zion (Tsiyon), the far sides of ***the*** north, the town of ***the*** great King. **3** God ***is*** in her citadels; He

46:1 Ps 145:18; Ps 62:7,8; Ps 91:1-9
46:2 Luke 21:25; Luke 21:26; Ps 23:4
46:3 Luke 21:25; Ps 93:3,4; Jer 5:22
46:4 Rev 22:1; Heb 12:22; Acts 7:48
46:5 Isa 12:6; Ezek 43:7,9; Deut 23:14
46:6 Amos 9:5,13; Josh 2:9,11,24; Nah 1:5
46:7 Matt 28:20; Matt 1:23; 2 Chr 13:12
46:8 Ps 66:5; Ps 92:4-6; Ps 111:2,3
46:9 Isa 2:4; Isa 11:9; Isa 60:18
46:10 Ps 100:3; Hab 2:20; Zech 2:13
46:11 Ps 46:1,7; Ps 48:3; Deut 33:27
47:1 Ps 98:4; Isa 55:12; Ps 46:1
47:2 1 Tim 6:15; Ps 68:35; Deut 7:21
47:3 Ps 18:47; Ps 81:14; Ps 110:1
47:4 1 Pet 1:4; Nah 2:2; Amos 6:8
47:5 Ps 24:7-10; 2 Sam 6:15; Ps 150:3
47:6 Matt 25:34; 1 Tim 1:17; Ps 96:1,2
47:7 1 Tim 1:17; Zech 14:9; Col 3:16
47:8 1 Chr 16:31; Ps 22:27-29; Ps 93:1
47:9 Matt 22:32; Gal 3:29; Rom 4:12
48:1 Heb 12:22; Rev 15:3; Mic 4:1
48:2 Matt 5:35; Heb 12:22; Ps 50:2
48:3 2 Chr 14:9-15; Isa 4:5,6; Zech 2:4,5

46:0 *On Alamoth* The word means young women. 1 Chronicles 15:20 mentions harps tuned to Alamoth, so many think it called for high voices or high instruments. The meaning is uncertain.
46:1 *God is a refuge and strength for us, a help in troubles, found abundantly* Many scholars connect this psalm with Jerusalem's rescue from the Assyrian army about 701 B.C., when the angel of the LORD struck the camp and in the morning "all of them were dead corpses" (Isa 37:36). The heading does not name the occasion. A refuge is a safe place, and strength is power to keep going. God is both, and He is a help easily found, already present when trouble comes.
46:2 *Therefore we will not fear when the earth changes* To ancient people the mountains were the most solid things there were, and the sea a picture of chaos. If the mountains fell into the sea, the world would be coming apart. We know what it is when our world shakes: a diagnosis, a death, a betrayal. The psalm never promises the shaking won't come, only that God is our refuge when it does. We are "receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken" (Heb 12:28).
46:4 *There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God* Jerusalem had no great river. It depended on the Gihon spring and channels. The river is a picture of God's presence refreshing His people while the sea rages outside. Scripture follows this river to the end: from the temple (Ezek 47:1-12), out of Jerusalem (Zech 14:8), to "a pure river of water of life" (Rev 22:1) flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb.
46:5 *God is in her midst; she will not be shaken* The city is safe not because its walls are strong but because God lives inside them. Help comes "at the turning of the morning." I believe God still has a future for Zion, when the Messiah reigns from Jerusalem (Isa 2:2-4; Rom 11:1-2). And every believer can take this personally: God now lives in His people by His Spirit.
46:6 *He gave forth with His voice; the earth melts* Nations roar and shake like the raging sea. God only has to speak, and they melt like wax.
46:7 *The LORD of armies is with us* The commander of heaven's armies is "with us." That is the meaning of Immanuel, "God with us" (Matt 1:23). And why the God of Jacob? Jacob was a schemer who often failed, but God made promises to him and kept them (Gen 28:15). If God was faithful to Jacob, He will be faithful to us.
46:9 *He makes wars cease to the end of the earth* God breaks the bow, snaps the spear and burns the chariots. We do not see that yet. The prophets look ahead to the day when "they will beat their swords into plowshares" (Isa 2:4). I believe this will happen when Christ returns and reigns on the earth. Every war God stops now is a small preview.
46:10 *Let go, and know that I am God* Many Bibles say "Be still." The words mean to let go, stop fighting, drop your hands. God speaks first to the raging nations. His people need the same word: we strive and worry and try to hold everything together. It is a call to quiet trust and a call to surrender. One day every knee will bow (Phil 2:10-11).
46:11 *a high refuge for us is the God of Jacob* The refuge of verse 1 is still standing in verse 11. In between, the earth shook, the seas roared and the nations raged, and none of it changed who God is or where He is. If your world is shaking, read this psalm out loud and make the refrain your own.
47:1 *Strike the palm, all the peoples* All the nations are called to clap and shout to Israel's God. He is not a tribal god. He is "a great King over all the earth" (47:2).
47:5 *God has gone up with a shout* The ram's horn, the shofar, sounded at a king's coronation. The picture may be the ark going up to Zion, God ascending His throne. Many Christians have read it on Ascension Day, as Christ went up and sat down at the Father's right hand.
47:9 *the people of the God of Abraham* The nobles of the nations gather as one people with Abraham's descendants. This is the promise that in Abraham all the families of the earth would be blessed (Gen 12:3), and it comes true in Christ (Gal 3:8, 29).
48:2 *Mount Zion, the far sides of the north* Zion is not very high, but in God's eyes it is lofty and beautiful, the town of the great King. Jesus called Jerusalem "the city of the great King" (Matt 5:35). "The far sides of the north" was a phrase the Canaanites used for the mountain of their gods. The true mountain of God is Zion.

has made Himself known as a high refuge. **4** For look, the kings assembled; they passed on together. **5** They themselves saw; so they were astonished; they were terrified; they hurried away. **6** Trembling seized them there, anguish like ***a woman*** giving birth. **7** With an east wind You shatter the ships of Tarshish. **8** As we have heard, so we have seen in the city of the LORD of armies, in the city of our God; God will establish her forever. Selah. **9** We have reflected, God, ***on*** Your steadfast love in the midst of Your temple. **10** Like Your name, God, so ***is*** Your praise over the ends of the earth; Your right hand is full of righteousness. **11** Mount Zion will rejoice; the daughters of Judah (Yehuda) will be glad because of Your judgments. **12** Go around Zion and circle her; count her towers. **13** Set your heart on her rampart; walk through her citadels, so that you may recount ***it*** to a later generation. **14** For this ***is*** God, our God forever and ever; He Himself will guide us over death.

PSALMS 49

To the choirmaster. Of the sons of Korah (Qorach). A psalm. **1** Hear this, all the peoples; give ear, all inhabitants of the world, **2** both sons of mankind and sons of man, together rich and needy. **3** My mouth will speak wisdom, and the meditation of my heart ***will be*** understanding. **4** I will incline my ear to a proverb; I will open my riddle with a lyre. **5** Why should I fear in days of evil, ***when*** the iniquity of my heels surrounds me, **6** those who trust in their wealth and boast in the abundance of their riches? **7** No man will by any means ransom a brother; he will not give to God his ransom price, **8** for the redemption of their soul is costly, and he will cease forever, **9** that he should live on perpetually ***and*** not see the pit. **10** For he will see ***that*** wise ***men*** die; the fool and the stupid alike perish, and they leave their wealth to others. **11** Their inner ***thought is that*** their houses ***are*** forever, their dwelling places to generation and generation; they have called their lands by their names. **12** And mankind in honor will not remain; he is like the animals ***that*** are destroyed. **13** This ***is*** their way; folly ***is*** theirs; and after them ***men*** take pleasure in their mouth. Selah. **14** Like sheep they are appointed for Sheol; death will shepherd them; and the upright rule over them in the morning, and their form ***is*** for Sheol to wear away, away from his lofty abode. **15** Surely God will ransom my soul from the hand of Sheol, for He will take me. Selah. **16** Do not fear when a man becomes rich, when the glory of his house increases. **17** For in his death he will not take anything; his glory will not go down after him. **18** For in his life he blesses his soul, and they praise you when you do well for yourself; **19** it will go to the generation of his fathers; they will not see light perpetually. **20** Mankind in honor, and ***who*** does not understand, is like the animals ***that*** are destroyed.

PSALMS 50

A psalm of Asaph (Asaf). **1** God, God, the LORD, has spoken, and He has summoned the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting. **2** From Zion (Tsiyon), the perfection of beauty, God has shone forth. **3** Our God comes, and He will not be silent; fire consumes before Him, and around Him it storms exceedingly. **4** He summons the heavens above and the earth, to judge His people: **5** "Gather to Me My godly ones, those who

48:4 2 Sam 10:6,14,16-19; Rev 17:12-14; Ps 83:2-8
48:5 Exod 14:25; 2 Kgs 7:6,7; 2 Kgs 19:35-37
48:6 Hos 13:13; Exod 15:15,16; Isa 13:6-8
48:7 Jer 18:17; 1 Kgs 22:48; Ezek 27:25,26
48:8 Ps 87:5; Ps 48:1,2; Isa 2:2
48:9 Ps 26:3; Ps 40:10; Ps 77:10,11
48:10 Deut 28:58; Josh 7:9; Mal 1:11,14
48:11 Rev 18:20; Rev 19:2; Ps 97:8
48:12 Neh 12:31-40; Matt 24:1,2; Isa 33:18-20
48:13 Isa 58:12; Amos 9:11; Acts 15:14-16
48:14 John 16:13; Ps 73:24,26; Ps 23:3,4
49:1 Rom 10:18; Rev 2:7; Rev 2:17
49:2 Ps 62:9; James 2:1-7; 1 Sam 2:7,8
49:3 Deut 32:2; Job 33:3,33; Prov 4:1,2
49:4 Matt 13:35; Matt 13:15; John 16:25
49:5 Eph 5:16; Ps 27:1,2; Ps 46:1,2
49:6 Ps 52:7; Mark 10:24; Ps 62:10
49:7 Matt 25:9; Matt 16:26; Matt 20:28
49:8 Job 36:18,19
49:9 Acts 2:27; Ps 89:48; Ps 16:10
49:10 Ps 94:8; Ps 39:6; Luke 12:20
49:11 Gen 4:17; Ps 64:6; Ps 5:9
49:12 Ps 49:20; Ps 39:5; Ps 82:7
49:13 Luke 12:20; 1 Cor 3:19; Jer 44:17
49:14 Rom 8:36; Mal 4:3; Job 30:23
49:15 Hos 13:14; Ps 56:13; Ps 73:24
49:16 Ps 49:5; Ps 37:1,7; Esth 3:1-6
49:17 1 Tim 6:7; Job 27:19; Job 1:21
49:18 Luke 16:8; Deut 29:19; Luke 12:19
49:19 Luke 16:8; Gen 15:15; Job 33:30
49:20 Ps 49:12; Esth 7:10; Job 4:21
50:1 Ps 113:3; Josh 22:22; Matt 25:32
50:2 Heb 12:22; Ps 48:2; Ps 80:1
50:3 Matt 25:32; Jude 1:15; Dan 7:10
50:4 Isa 1:2; Deut 31:28; Deut 32:1
50:5 Heb 12:23; 1 Thess 3:13; Matt 26:28

48:4 *the kings assembled; they passed on together* Enemy kings came to attack, took one look, and fled in terror. The city did not need to fight. God was in her citadels (48:3).
48:8 *As we have heard, so we have seen* What their fathers told them about God, they have now seen with their own eyes. God will establish His city forever. I believe God still has a future for Zion (Isa 2:2-4).
48:12 *Go around Zion and circle her; count her towers* Walk around the city and look closely, so you can tell the next generation. The real point is not the towers but the God who keeps them (48:14).
48:14 *He Himself will guide us over death* God guides His people all their days and does not abandon them even at death. The words may mean until death or beyond death, but either way, the God of Zion is our God forever.
49:1 *Hear this, all the peoples* A wisdom psalm for everyone, rich and poor alike. Its riddle is one every person must face: what can money do against death?
49:7 *No man will by any means ransom a brother* No amount of money can buy a life back from death. The price of a soul is too high for anyone to pay. Only God can pay it, and He did in Christ, who gave His life "a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45).
49:12 *he is like the animals that are destroyed* The rich man names lands after himself (49:11), yet he dies like any animal. Honor without understanding does not last (49:20).
49:14 *death will shepherd them* A chilling reversal of Psalm 23. Those who trust in wealth have death for their shepherd. "The upright rule over them in the morning," a hint of the morning when God sets all things right.
49:15 *Surely God will ransom my soul from the hand of Sheol, for He will take me* What no man can pay (49:7), God will. "He will take me" is the word used of Enoch, whom God took (Gen 5:24). Here is an Old Testament hope that reaches past the grave, fulfilled in Christ's resurrection (1 Cor 15:55-57).
49:17 *in his death he will not take anything* You can't take it with you (1 Tim 6:7). So do not fear or envy the rich (49:16).
50:0 *A psalm of Asaph* Asaph was a Levite, one of David's chief musicians, who led worship with cymbals (1 Chr 16:4-5). Twelve psalms carry his name: 50 and 73-83.
50:1 *God, God, the LORD, has spoken* Three names for God: El, Elohim, the LORD. He calls all the earth to court, from sunrise to sunset, and the case is against His own people (50:4).

made My covenant with sacrifice." **6** And the heavens
declare His righteousness, for God, He ***is*** judge. Selah.
7 "Hear, My people, and let Me speak; Israel (Yisra'el), and I
will testify against you: God, your God, I ***am***. **8** Not for your
sacrifices do I rebuke you, and your burnt offerings ***are***
before Me continually. **9** I will not take a young bull from
your house, ***or*** goats from your folds. **10** For every living
thing of the forest ***is*** Mine, the animals on a thousand hills.
11 I know every bird of the mountains, and the moving creatures of the field ***are*** with Me. **12** If I were hungry, I would
not tell you, for the world and its fullness ***are*** Mine. **13** Do I
eat the flesh of bulls, and do I drink the blood of goats?
14 Sacrifice a thank offering to God, and pay your vows to
the Most High. **15** And call to Me in a day of trouble; I will
rescue you, and you will glorify Me." **16** And to the wicked
God says, "What ***is it*** to you to recount My decrees, and ***that***
you have taken My covenant on your mouth? **17** And you,
you hate discipline, and you have thrown My words behind
you. **18** If you saw a thief, you were pleased with him, and
your portion ***was*** with adulterers. **19** You let loose your
mouth in evil, and your tongue harnesses deceit. **20** You sit
and speak against your brother; against the son of your
mother you set a fault. **21** These ***things*** you have done, and I
kept silent; you imagined that I was exactly like you; I will
rebuke you and set ***it*** in order before your eyes. **22** Consider
this, please, you who forget God, lest I tear ***you*** to pieces and
there is no deliverer. **23** He who sacrifices a thank offering
glorifies Me, and ***one who*** sets ***his*** way, I will make him see
the salvation of God."

PSALMS 51

To the choirmaster. A psalm of David, when Nathan (Natan) the prophet came to him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba (Bat-Sheva). **1** Be gracious to me, God, according to Your
steadfast love; according to the abundance of Your compassion wipe out my transgressions. **2** Wash me abundantly
from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. **3** For I myself
know my transgressions, and my sin ***is*** before me continually. **4** Against You, You alone, I have sinned, and I have done
the evil in Your eyes, so that You may be justified when You
speak ***and*** be pure when You judge. **5** Look, in iniquity I was
brought forth, and in sin my mother conceived me. **6** Look,
You desire truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden ***part***
You make me know wisdom. **7** You will purify me from sin
with hyssop, and I will be clean; You will wash me, and I will
be whiter than snow. **8** You will make me hear joy and glad-

50:6 Heb 12:23; Rev 19:11; Ps 75:7
50:7 Ps 81:8; Exod 20:2; Isa 1:18
50:8 Mark 12:33; Heb 10:5; Heb 10:6
50:9 Mark 12:33; Heb 10:6; Isa 43:23,24
50:10 Ps 8:6-8; Ps 104:24,25; Gen 1:24,25
50:11 Heb 10:5; Gen 1:20-22; Matt 6:26
50:12 Exod 19:5; Deut 10:14; Ps 24:1,2
50:13 Heb 10:5
50:14 Heb 13:15; Heb 10:5; Deut 23:21
50:15 Luke 23:43; Heb 10:5; Ps 91:15
50:16 Heb 8:9; Ps 78:36-38; Isa 48:22
50:17 Neh 9:26; Prov 12:1; Prov 1:7,28,29
50:18 Rom 1:32; 1 Tim 5:22; Prov 1:10-19
50:19 Ps 10:7; Jer 9:5; Ps 5:9
50:20 Matt 10:21; Ps 31:18; Matt 5:11
50:21 Luke 1:3; Isa 57:11; Ps 90:8
50:22 Ps 9:17; Ps 7:2; Job 8:13
50:23 Heb 10:5; Ps 91:16; James 3:13
51:1 Acts 3:19; Isa 43:25; Isa 44:22
51:2 Ps 51:7; Rev 1:5; Ezek 36:25
51:3 Gal 5:17; Isa 59:12; Prov 28:13
51:4 Rom 3:4; Gal 5:17; Gen 20:6
51:5 Rom 5:12; Gal 5:17; Job 14:4
51:6 1 Sam 16:7; Job 38:36; Rom 7:22
51:7 Heb 9:14; Isa 1:18; Heb 9:19
51:8 Ps 13:5; Ps 30:11; Ps 119:81,82

50:8 *Not for your sacrifices do I rebuke you* Israel's sacrifices were offered faithfully. The trouble was that they thought God needed them. God owns "the animals on a thousand hills" (50:10). He is not hungry. He wants thankful, trusting hearts (50:14).
50:15 *call to Me in a day of trouble; I will rescue you, and you will glorify Me* This is what God wants: not to be fed, but to be trusted. We call, He rescues, we give Him glory. That is the whole shape of a life with God.
50:16 *What is it to you to recount My decrees* God turns to the wicked who say the right words and live the wrong way. They quote His Law and hate His discipline. Religion on the lips without obedience in the life is what God rebukes most sharply.
50:21 *you imagined that I was exactly like you* God's silence was patience, and they took it as approval. We always shrink God when we sin. But He will not stay silent forever.
50:23 *He who sacrifices a thank offering glorifies Me* The psalm ends where verse 14 pointed: a thankful heart and a life set on God's way. To him God will show "the salvation of God."
51:0 *when Nathan the prophet came to him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba* The account is in 2 Samuel 11-12. David stayed home from the war, saw Uriah's wife bathing, and had her brought to the palace. He was the king, and nothing suggests she was free to refuse. When she was pregnant, he arranged Uriah's death in battle. God sent Nathan with the story of a rich man who took a poor man's only lamb, and said, you are the man. We should not soften any of this. David used his power to take what was not his and destroy a faithful man. Psalm 51 is the prayer of a man who finally stopped hiding.
51:0 *A psalm of David* God's forgiveness was real: Nathan said the LORD had taken away his sin. But it did not undo every consequence, and the child died (2 Sam 12:13-14). The child died because of David's sin, not his own. David said, "I am going to him, and he will not return to me" (2 Sam 12:23). I believe little children who die are safe with God. If you have lost a child, your loss is not God's verdict on your sin.
51:1 *according to Your steadfast love* David has no claim on God and does not list his good deeds. He appeals only to God's character, His hesed and the abundance of His compassion. "Wipe out" is the language of wiping a record clean. "Wash" pictures scrubbing dirty clothes. "Cleanse" is the word for being made clean to come back to worship.
51:3 *my sin is before me continually* David cannot stop seeing what he did. That is what an awakened conscience feels like.
51:4 *Against You, You alone, I have sinned* Did he not sin against Bathsheba and Uriah too? Yes, terribly. They mattered. But all sin at its root is against God, who made them and gave the commands David broke (Gen 39:9). David does not argue with God's verdict. Paul quotes this line: "let God be true, and every man a liar" (Rom 3:4).
51:5 *in iniquity I was brought forth, and in sin my mother conceived me* He does not mean his mother sinned in conceiving him. He means sin goes back as far as he does. Sin entered through Adam and spread to all (Rom 5:12), and most Christians read this to mean every person is born with a sinful nature. We sin because we are sinners. That is why David needs more than a fresh start. He needs a new heart. The same heart is in all of us.
51:6 *You desire truth in the inward parts* David spent months living a lie. God wanted the opposite: truth all the way down, in the hidden places no one else can see.
51:7 *You will purify me from sin with hyssop* Hyssop was a small bushy plant used to put the Passover blood on the doorposts (Exod 12:22) and to sprinkle blood or water in cleansing rites (Lev 14; Num 19). David asks God Himself to do the sprinkling. "They will become white like snow" (Isa 1:18). The blood of animals could not take away sins (Heb 10:4), but the blood of Christ cleanses the conscience (Heb 9:14).
51:8 *let the bones that You have crushed rejoice* Sin always takes our joy. Guilt hurt like broken bones (32:3-4), but the God who wounded his conscience can heal it, and broken bones can dance again.

ness; let the bones ***that*** You have crushed rejoice. **9** Hide Your face from my sins, and wipe out all my iniquities. **10** Create for me a pure heart, God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. **11** Do not cast me away from before You, and do not take the Spirit of Your holiness from me. **12** Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and a willing spirit will sustain me. **13** I will teach transgressors Your ways, and sinners will return to You. **14** Deliver me from bloodguilt, God, the God of my salvation; my tongue will shout for joy ***of*** Your righteousness. **15** Lord, You will open my lips, and my mouth will declare Your praise. **16** For You do not desire sacrifice, or I would give ***it***; You are not pleased with burnt offering. **17** The sacrifices of God ***are*** a broken spirit; a broken and crushed heart, God, You will not despise. **18** Do good in Your favor to Zion (Tsiyon); You will build the walls of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). **19** Then You will delight in sacrifices of righteousness, burnt offering and whole offering; then they will offer young bulls on Your altar.

PSALMS 52

To the choirmaster. A Maskil of David, when Doeg the Edomite came and told Saul (Shaul), and said to him, "David has come to the house of Ahimelech (Achimelekh)." **1** Why do you boast in evil, O mighty man? The steadfast love of God ***is*** all the day. **2** Your tongue devises destruction, like a sharpened razor, O doer of deceit. **3** You love evil more than good, falsehood more than speaking righteousness. Selah. **4** You love all words of swallowing, O tongue of deceit. **5** God also will tear you down forever; He will snatch you up and tear you away from ***your*** tent, and He will uproot you from the land of the living. Selah. **6** And ***the*** righteous will see and fear, and they will laugh at him: **7** "Look, the man ***who*** did not make God his refuge, and he trusted in the abundance of his riches; he was strong in his destruction." **8** And I ***am*** like a luxuriant olive tree in the house of God; I trust in the steadfast love of God forever and ever. **9** I will give thanks to You forever, for You have acted; and I will wait for Your name, for ***it is*** good, before Your godly ones.

PSALMS 53

To the choirmaster, on Mahalath. A Maskil of David. **1** A fool has said in his heart, "There is no God." They have acted corruptly, and they have done abominable injustice; there is none who does good. **2** God has looked down from ***the*** heav-

51:9 Jer 16:17; Isa 38:17; Mic 7:18,19
51:10 2 Cor 5:17; Ezek 11:19; Ezek 18:31
51:11 Eph 4:30; Rom 1:4; 2 Kgs 13:23
51:12 Ps 13:5; Isa 61:10; Isa 41:10
51:13 John 21:15; John 21:16; John 21:17
51:14 2 Sam 12:9; Ps 35:28; Ps 26:9
51:15 Ps 63:3-5; Gen 44:16; 1 Sam 2:9
51:16 Heb 10:5; Ps 40:6; Amos 5:21-23
51:17 Mark 12:33; Luke 4:18; Luke 18:13
51:18 Ps 102:16; Luke 12:32; Ps 25:22
51:19 Rom 12:1; Ps 4:5; Mal 3:3

52:1 Matt 19:17; Ps 94:4; 1 Sam 21:7
52:2 Ps 57:4; Prov 18:21; Ps 59:7
52:3 2 Pet 2:18; Jer 4:22; Mic 3:2
52:4 James 3:6-9; 1 Sam 22:18,19
52:5 Prov 2:22; Ps 27:13; Ps 7:14-16
52:6 Ps 40:3; Ps 37:34; Job 22:19
52:7 John 19:5; Isa 14:16,17; Ps 146:3-5
52:8 Jer 11:16; Ps 92:12-14; Ps 13:5
52:9 Ps 54:6; Ps 48:9,10; Ps 145:1,2
53:1 Rom 3:10-12; Rom 3:22; Ps 14:1-7
53:2 2 Chr 15:2; Ps 111:10; Ps 27:8

51:9 *Hide Your face from my sins* When God forgives, He does not keep a file to open later. He casts our sins into the depths of the sea (Mic 7:19).
51:10 *Create for me a pure heart, God* The heart of the psalm. "Create" is the word of Genesis 1:1, and when it means create, God is always the one who does it. David cannot try harder and become clean. God promised this very thing: "I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you" (Ezek 36:26). In Christ we are a new creation (2 Cor 5:17). If you have tried and failed to change yourself, make this your prayer. God still makes new hearts.
51:11 *do not take the Spirit of Your holiness from me* More than his throne, David fears losing God. He had seen the Spirit come on him and depart from Saul (1 Sam 16:13-14), and Saul's life fell apart. In the Old Testament the Spirit came on kings and prophets for their work. Since Pentecost He lives in every believer (Acts 2:38; Eph 4:30). We can still pray this as a cry never to grieve the Spirit or drift from God.
51:12 *Restore to me the joy of Your salvation* Sin robbed David of the gladness of walking with God. He does not trust himself to stay faithful, so he asks God for a willing spirit to hold him up.
51:13 *I will teach transgressors Your ways* David's sin will not end his usefulness to God. A forgiven sinner makes a good teacher of grace. Peter denied Jesus, wept, was restored and preached at Pentecost (Luke 22:61-62; John 21:15-17). Your worst failure, forgiven, may be the story God uses to bring someone else home.
51:14 *Deliver me from bloodguilt* David names it plainly: Uriah's blood is on his hands, and the Law allowed no ransom for a murderer (Num 35:31). Yet he sings of God's righteousness. At the cross God's justice and mercy meet, and He is righteous when He forgives (Rom 3:26).
51:16 *For You do not desire sacrifice, or I would give it* The Law offered no sacrifice for deliberate adultery and murder (Lev 20:10). David cannot buy his way out, and God never wanted sacrifices without a heart behind them (40:6).
51:17 *a broken and crushed heart, God, You will not despise* Proud people despise a broken heart. God does not. He dwells "with the contrite and lowly of spirit" (Isa 57:15). The tax collector prayed, "God, be propitious to me, the sinner!" (Luke 18:13), and went home justified. To those hurt by someone else's sin: God's forgiveness of the sinner does not mean your pain does not matter. True repentance accepts the consequences and does not demand trust it has not earned.
51:18 *You will build the walls of Jerusalem* A king's sin harms his people, so David prays for the city. Some scholars think verses 18-19 were added after the walls fell in 586 B.C. The heading gives the psalm to David, and David was building up Jerusalem in his day, so it fits him too.
51:19 *Then You will delight in sacrifices of righteousness* Once the heart is right, the offerings are right. For us the one sacrifice for sin is already made (Heb 10:10). Our offerings now are our lives (Rom 12:1) and "a sacrifice of praise" (Heb 13:15). The psalm that began with a guilty man begging for mercy ends with God's people at His altar, worshiping again.
52:0 *when Doeg the Edomite came and told Saul* Doeg saw David receive bread and Goliath's sword from Ahimelech the priest, told Saul, and then killed eighty-five priests and the town of Nob when Saul's own men refused (1 Sam 21:7; 22:9-19). David felt the weight of it: "I have caused the death of every soul of the house of your father" (1 Sam 22:22).
52:1 *Why do you boast in evil, O mighty man* Doeg was proud of what he had done. David answers with a contrast: the wicked man's power lasts a moment, but "the steadfast love of God is all the day."
52:2 *Your tongue devises destruction, like a sharpened razor* Doeg killed with a sword, but it began with his tongue. Words can do terrible harm (James 3:6).
52:7 *the man who did not make God his refuge* Here is the root of it. He trusted his riches and his strength instead of God. The righteous "laugh" (52:6), not with cruel glee but in awe at how God brings the proud down.
52:8 *like a luxuriant olive tree in the house of God* The olive tree lives for centuries and stays green. Doeg will be uprooted (52:5). David, who trusts God's steadfast love, will be planted and fruitful (1:3).
53:1 *A fool has said in his heart, There is no God* Psalm 53 is nearly the same as Psalm 14. The main change is that it uses "God" (Elohim) where Psalm 14 uses "the LORD," as most psalms in Book Two do. Mahalath may be a tune or a word for sickness or sorrow; no one is sure. God thought this truth worth saying twice: all have turned aside (Rom 3:10-12).

ens on the sons of man to see whether there is ***anyone*** who acts prudently, who seeks God. **3** Every one of them has turned back; together they have become corrupt; there is none who does good, there is not even one. **4** Do those who work iniquity not know, who eat up My people ***as*** they eat bread? They have not called on God. **5** There they have dreaded a dread ***where*** there was no dread, for God has scattered the bones of him who encamps against you; you have put ***them*** to shame, for God has rejected them. **6** Oh, that from Zion (Tsiyon) the salvation of Israel (Yisra'el) ***would come***! When God turns back the captivity of His people, let Jacob (Ya'aqov) rejoice, let Israel be glad.

PSALMS 54

To the choirmaster, with stringed instruments. A Maskil of David, when the Ziphites came and said to Saul (Shaul), "Is not David hiding himself with us?" **1** God, save me by Your name, and vindicate me by Your might. **2** God, hear my prayer; give ear to the words of my mouth. **3** For strangers have risen up against me, and ruthless men have sought my life; they have not set God before them. Selah. **4** Look, God ***is*** my helper; the Lord ***is*** among those who sustain my life. **5** He will bring back the evil on my enemies; in Your faithfulness destroy them. **6** With a freewill offering I will sacrifice to You; I will give thanks to Your name, LORD, for ***it is*** good. **7** For from every trouble He has delivered me, and my eye has looked on my enemies.

PSALMS 55

To the choirmaster, with stringed instruments. A Maskil of David. **1** Give ear, God, to my prayer, and do not hide Yourself from my supplication. **2** Pay attention to me and answer me; I am restless in my complaint, and I groan, **3** because of the voice of an enemy, because of the pressure of the wicked; for they drop wickedness on me, and in anger they bear a grudge against me. **4** My heart trembles within me, and the terrors of death have fallen on me. **5** Fear and trembling come on me, and shuddering has covered me. **6** And I said, "Oh, that I ***had*** a wing like the dove! I would fly away and settle down. **7** Look, I would go far away, fleeing; I would lodge in the wilderness. Selah. **8** I would hurry ***to*** my place of escape from a rushing wind, from a storm." **9** Swallow ***them*** up, Lord, divide their tongue, for I have seen violence and strife in the city. **10** Day and night they go around it on its walls, and wickedness and trouble ***are*** in its midst. **11** Destruction ***is*** in its midst, and oppression and deceit do not depart from its square. **12** For ***it is*** not an enemy ***who*** taunts me, then I could bear ***it***; ***it is*** not one who hates me ***who*** has magnified himself against me, then I could hide myself from him. **13** But you, a man as my equal, my close friend and my acquaintance, **14** ***with*** whom together we made counsel sweet; in the house of God we walked in the throng. **15** Let death come deceitfully on them; let them go down ***to*** Sheol alive, for evils ***are*** in their dwelling, in their midst. **16** ***As for*** me, I will call to God, and the LORD will save me. **17** Evening and morning and noon I will complain and moan, and He has heard my voice. **18** He has ransomed my soul in peace from the battle against me, for in great numbers they were with me. **19** God will hear and humble them, and He who sits ***enthroned from*** ancient times, Selah, those who have no changes, and they do not fear God. **20** He has stretched out his hands against his allies; he has profaned his covenant. **21** The creamy ***words*** of his mouth were smooth, and his heart ***was*** war; his words were softer than oil, and they ***were*** drawn swords.

53:3 Rom 3:12; Isa 64:6; Ps 14:3
53:4 Matt 23:37; Jer 4:22; Ps 94:8
53:5 Lev 26:17,36; Prov 28:1; Ezek 6:5
53:6 Ps 14:7; Ps 50:2; Isa 12:6
54:1 Ps 20:1; 1 Sam 26:1; 1 Sam 23:19,20
54:2 Ps 5:1-3; Ps 13:3; Ps 55:1,2
54:3 Ps 86:14; Ps 36:1; Ps 69:8
54:4 Ps 118:6,7,13; 1 Chr 12:18; Isa 41:10
54:5 Ps 89:49; Ps 31:23; Ps 137:8
54:6 Ps 52:9; Ps 116:17; Ps 66:13-16
54:7 Ps 59:10; Ps 92:11; Ps 112:8
55:1 Ps 6:1; Ps 54:1; Ps 5:1
55:2 Isa 38:14; Ps 13:1,2; Ps 32:3
55:3 Matt 26:59; 2 Sam 16:7,8; Ps 12:5
55:4 Heb 5:7; Ps 116:3; Ps 18:4,5
55:5 Ps 119:120; 2 Sam 15:14; Job 6:4
55:6 Rev 12:14; Ps 11:1; Ps 139:9
55:7 Jer 9:2; 1 Sam 27:1; 2 Sam 15:14
55:8 Isa 17:12,13; Matt 7:25-27; Ps 18:4
55:9 Acts 23:10; Jer 6:7; Gen 11:7-9
55:10 Acts 9:24; Ps 59:6,14,15; 1 Sam 19:11
55:11 Jer 5:26,27; Ezek 22:1-12; Acts 7:51,52
55:12 Ps 41:9; Ps 35:26; Matt 26:21-23
55:13 2 Sam 15:12; 2 Sam 16:23; Jer 9:4
55:14 Ps 42:4; Ps 122:1; Isa 2:3
55:15 Acts 1:19; Acts 1:20; Ps 59:13
55:16 Ps 50:15; Ps 73:28; Ps 91:15
55:17 Heb 5:7; Acts 3:1; Eph 6:18
55:18 Ps 3:6,7; Ps 27:1-3; Ps 57:3
55:19 Deut 33:27; Ps 65:5; Ps 143:12
55:20 Ps 7:4; Acts 12:1; 1 Sam 22:17
55:21 Luke 20:20; Ps 28:3; Ps 57:4

53:5 *God has scattered the bones of him who encamps against you* Here Psalm 53 differs most from Psalm 14 (14:5-6). It looks at an enemy army struck down and its dead left unburied, perhaps a particular victory God gave His people.
54:0 *when the Ziphites came and said to Saul* The people of Ziph, a town in Judah, twice betrayed David's hiding place to Saul (1 Sam 23:19; 26:1). They were his own tribe. Betrayal by your own people cuts deep.
54:1 *God, save me by Your name* God's name stands for all He is. David has no army to call on, only God's character and might.
54:4 *Look, God is my helper* The turn of the psalm. Strangers seek his life, but God is on his side. Saul had to break off the chase when the Philistines raided (1 Sam 23:27-28).
54:6 *With a freewill offering I will sacrifice to You* A freewill offering was not required by the Law. It was given out of a glad heart. David promises thanks before the rescue is complete.
55:4 *the terrors of death have fallen on me* David is not calm here. Fear and trembling have covered him. Scripture lets God's people be honest about panic.
55:6 *Oh, that I had a wing like the dove* Who has not wished to fly away from trouble? David longs for escape. In the end he finds it not in the wilderness but in God (55:16, 22).
55:12 *it is not an enemy who taunts me* The hardest wound is from a friend, a companion who worshiped beside him in God's house (55:13-14). Many think David had Ahithophel in mind, his trusted counselor who joined Absalom (2 Sam 15:12, 31). Jesus knew this pain with Judas.
55:15 *let them go down to Sheol alive* A hard line, echoing the judgment on Korah's rebels, who went down alive into the earth (Num 16:30-33). David asks God to judge treachery. See the introduction on the hard lines.
55:17 *Evening and morning and noon I will complain and moan* David prays all day long, with groans as well as words. Daniel prayed three times a day too (Dan 6:10). God hears groaning prayers.
55:21 *his words were softer than oil, and they were drawn swords* The betrayer's words were smooth as cream while his heart was at war. Judas betrayed Jesus with a kiss (Luke 22:48).

22 Cast your burden on the LORD, and He will sustain you; He will never permit the righteous to be shaken. **23** And You, God, will bring them down to the well of the pit; men of bloodshed and deceit will not reach half their days; and I will trust in You.

PSALMS 56

To the choirmaster, on "A Dove of Distant Terebinths." Of David, a Miktam, when the Philistines seized him in Gath (Gat). **1** Be gracious to me, God, for man has crushed me; all the day ***one*** fighting oppresses me. **2** My enemies have crushed ***me*** all the day, for many ***are*** fighting against me loftily. **3** ***In the*** day I fear, I will trust in You. **4** In God I will praise His word; in God I have trusted; I will not fear. What will flesh do to me? **5** All the day they twist my words; all their plans against me ***are*** for evil. **6** They stir up strife, they lie hidden; they watch my heels, as they have waited for my life. **7** Because of wickedness ***will You*** deliver them? In anger bring down peoples, God. **8** You have counted my wandering; put my tears in Your skin bottle; ***are they*** not in Your book? **9** Then my enemies will turn back on the day I call out; this I know, that God ***is*** for me. **10** In God I will praise ***His*** word; in the LORD I will praise ***His*** word. **11** In God I have trusted; I will not fear. What will man do to me? **12** On me, God, ***are*** Your vows; I will pay thank offerings to You. **13** For You have delivered my soul from death, ***have You*** not ***delivered*** my feet from stumbling, to walk before God in the light of life?

PSALMS 57

*To the choirmaster, **on** "Do Not Destroy." Of David, a Miktam, when he fled from before Saul (Shaul) in the cave.* **1** Be gracious to me, God, be gracious to me, for in You my soul takes refuge; and in the shadow of Your wings I will take refuge until destruction passes by. **2** I will call to God Most High, to God who completes ***it*** for me. **3** He will send from heaven and save me; He reproaches the one who crushes me. Selah. God will send His steadfast love and His faithfulness. **4** My soul ***is*** in the midst of lions; I lie down ***among*** those who blaze, the sons of man, their teeth ***are*** a spear and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword. **5** Be exalted above the heavens, God; ***let*** Your glory ***be*** over all the earth. **6** They prepared a net for my steps; my soul was bowed down; they dug a pit before me; they have fallen into its midst. Selah. **7** My heart is steadfast, God, my heart is steadfast; I will sing, and I will sing praises. **8** Awake, my glory! Awake, harp and lyre! I will awaken the dawn. **9** I will give thanks to You among the peoples, Lord; I will sing praises to You among the nations. **10** For Your steadfast love ***is*** great to the heavens, and Your faithfulness to the clouds. **11** Be exalted above the heavens, God; ***let*** Your glory ***be*** over all the earth.

PSALMS 58

*To the choirmaster, **on** "Do Not Destroy." Of David, a Miktam.* **1** Do you indeed speak righteousness ***in*** silence? Do you judge with uprightness, sons of man? **2** Even in ***your*** heart you work injustices; in the land you weigh out the violence of your hands. **3** The wicked are estranged from the womb; those who speak lies go astray from the belly. **4** Their venom ***is*** like the likeness of the venom of a serpent, like a deaf cobra ***that***

55:22 1 Pet 5:7; Ps 37:5; Matt 6:25,31-34
55:23 Ps 5:6; Job 15:32; Prov 10:27
56:1 Ps 16:1; Ps 57:1; Ps 69:13-16
56:2 Ps 54:5; Ps 3:1; Ps 118:10-12
56:3 Ps 34:4; Ps 55:4,5; 1 Sam 30:6
56:4 Ps 118:6; Heb 13:6; Ps 56:10,11
56:5 2 Pet 3:16; Isa 29:20,21; Matt 22:15
56:6 Luke 20:20; Ps 59:3; Ps 71:10
56:7 Ps 94:20,21; Eccl 8:8; Isa 28:15
56:8 Ps 39:12; 2 Kgs 20:5; Mal 3:16
56:9 Rom 8:31; Ps 118:11-13; Exod 17:9-11
56:10 Ps 56:4; Ps 60:6; Gen 32:11
56:11 Heb 13:6; Ps 112:7,8; Isa 51:7,8,12,13
56:12 Ps 9:1-3; Ps 66:13,14; Ps 76:11
56:13 John 8:12; Ps 116:8; Job 33:30
57:1 Isa 26:20; Ps 56:1; Ps 9:10
57:2 Acts 16:17; Heb 7:1; Ps 138:8
57:3 Ps 40:11; Ps 56:1,2; Ps 43:3
57:4 Rev 19:15; Ps 58:6; Ps 55:21
57:5 Hab 2:14; Isa 6:3; Ps 72:19
57:6 Ps 140:5; Ps 7:15,16; Ps 9:15,16
57:7 Ps 112:7; Ps 108:1,2; Ps 34:4
57:8 Ps 16:9; Ps 30:12; Judg 5:12
57:9 Rom 15:9; Ps 96:3; Ps 138:1,4,5
57:10 Ps 103:11; Ps 36:5; Ps 108:4
57:11 Ps 57:5; Ps 8:1,9; Rev 15:3,4
58:1 Ps 57:1; Ps 59:1; Ps 72:1-4
58:2 Mark 7:21; Ps 94:20; Isa 10:1
58:3 Mark 7:21; Ps 51:5; Isa 48:8
58:4 Rom 3:13; Ps 140:3; Eccl 10:11

55:22 *Cast your burden on the LORD, and He will sustain you* David turns from his own story to every reader. Whatever has been given to you to carry, throw it on Him. Peter says the same: "having cast all your anxiety on Him, because He cares about you" (1 Pet 5:7).
56:0 *when the Philistines seized him in Gath* The same time in Gath as Psalm 34 (1 Sam 21:10-15). Psalm 34 is the thanks afterward, Psalm 56 the prayer while he was afraid. "A Dove of Distant Terebinths" is most likely a tune.
56:3 *In the day I fear, I will trust in You* David does not say he never feels afraid. He says what he does when fear comes. Faith is not the absence of fear. It is where we take our fear.
56:4 *What will flesh do to me* Next to God, every enemy is only flesh, weak and passing. Hebrews uses the same thought: "The Lord is my helper, and I will not be afraid; what will man do to me?" (Heb 13:6).
56:8 *put my tears in Your skin bottle; are they not in Your book* A skin bottle held wine or water. David pictures God collecting his tears and writing down his wanderings. Not one tear of His people is lost or forgotten. One day He will wipe every tear away (Rev 21:4).
56:9 *this I know, that God is for me* David cannot see the outcome yet, but he knows this. Paul builds on the same truth: if God is for us, who is against us (Rom 8:31)?
56:13 *to walk before God in the light of life* God saved David's life so he could walk with God. Rescue is never only from something. It is for something.
57:0 *when he fled from before Saul in the cave* Either the cave of Adullam (1 Sam 22:1) or the cave at En-gedi, where David spared Saul's life (1 Sam 24:3). "Do Not Destroy" is likely the name of a tune, and it fits a man who refused to destroy the LORD's anointed.
57:1 *in the shadow of Your wings I will take refuge until destruction passes by* Hidden in a cave, David knows the real shelter is God. The storm has not passed yet, but he knows it will.
57:5 *Be exalted above the heavens, God; let Your glory be over all the earth* The refrain (57:5, 11). In the middle of lions and spears (57:4), David's greatest wish is not his own safety but God's glory.
57:7 *My heart is steadfast, God* Fixed, settled, ready. David decides to sing before the danger is gone. Verses 7-11 appear again in Psalm 108:1-5.
57:8 *I will awaken the dawn* David will be up before the sun, waking the morning with praise instead of waiting for the morning to wake him.
58:1 *Do you indeed speak righteousness in silence* David addresses unjust rulers and judges, "sons of man" who should uphold justice and instead weigh out violence (58:2).
58:4 *like a deaf cobra that shuts its ear* Snake charmers played to cobras. These men are like a snake that will not listen. They refuse every warning.

shuts its ear, **5** which does not listen to the voice of charmers, of one skillfully casting spells. **6** God, break down their teeth in their mouth; tear out the fangs of the young lions, LORD. **7** Let them flow away like waters ***that*** go about by themselves; ***when*** he bends his arrows, let them be as ***if*** cut off. **8** Like a snail ***that*** goes ***along*** melting away, ***like*** the miscarriage of a woman, they have not seen the sun. **9** Before your pots perceive the thorn bush, whether alive or whether burning, He will sweep it away in a storm. **10** The righteous will rejoice when he has seen vengeance; he will bathe his feet in the blood of the wicked. **11** And man will say, "Surely ***there is*** fruit for the righteous; surely there is a God judging on the earth."

PSALMS 59

To the choirmaster, ***on*** *"Do Not Destroy." Of David, a Miktam, when Saul (Shaul) sent, and they watched the house to kill him.* **1** Deliver me from my enemies, my God; set me on high from those who rise up against me. **2** Deliver me from those who work wickedness, and save me from men of bloodshed. **3** For look, they lie in wait for my life; fierce ***men*** stir up strife against me, not ***for*** my transgression and not ***for*** my sin, LORD. **4** Without iniquity they run and set themselves in place; awake to meet me, and see. **5** And You, LORD God of armies, the God of Israel (Yisra'el), awake to punish all the nations; do not be gracious to any who deal treacherously in wickedness. Selah. **6** They return at evening; they growl like the dog and go around ***the*** city. **7** Look, they pour out with their mouth; swords ***are*** in their lips, for "Who hears?" **8** And You, LORD, will laugh at them; You will mock all ***the*** nations. **9** ***Because of*** his strength I will watch for You, for God ***is*** my high refuge. **10** The God of my steadfast love will meet me; God will let me look on my enemies. **11** Do not kill them, lest my people forget; make them wander by Your strength, and bring them down, Lord, our shield. **12** The sin of their mouth ***is*** the word of their lips; and let them be caught in their pride, and because of the curse and because of the lying ***that*** they tell. **13** Make an end in wrath, make an end, and ***let*** them ***be*** no more; and let them know that God rules in Jacob (Ya'aqov) to the ends of the earth. Selah. **14** And they return at evening; they growl like the dog and go around ***the*** city. **15** They wander about to eat; if they are not satisfied, then they grumble. **16** And I will sing of Your strength, and I will sing joyfully of Your steadfast love in the morning; for You have been a high refuge for me, and a place of escape in the day ***when*** distress ***is*** mine. **17** My strength, to You I will sing praises; for God ***is*** my high refuge, the God of my steadfast love.

PSALMS 60

To the choirmaster, on "The Lily of Testimony." A Miktam of David, to teach; when he struggled with Aram-naharaim (Aram-Naharayim) and with Aram-zobah (Aram-Tsova), and Joab (Yo'av) returned and struck Edom in the Valley of Salt (Gay-Melach), twelve thousand. **1** God, You have rejected us, You have broken out against us; You have been angry; restore us. **2** You have made ***the*** earth quake; You have split it open; heal its fractures, for it is shaking. **3** You have made Your people see a hard ***thing***; You have made us drink wine of staggering. **4** You have given to those who fear You a banner, to be displayed because of the bow. Selah. **5** So that Your beloved ones may be rescued, save ***with*** Your right hand, and answer me. **6** God has spoken in His holiness: "I will exult; I will divide up Shechem (Shekhem), and I will measure off the valley of Succoth (Sukot). **7** Gilead (Gilad) ***is*** Mine, and Manasseh (Menashe) ***is*** Mine, and Ephraim (Efrayim) ***is*** the protection of My head; Judah (Yehuda) ***is*** My ruler's staff. **8** Moab (Mo'av) ***is*** the pot of My washing; over Edom I will

58:5 Deut 18:11; Isa 19:3
58:6 Ps 3:7; Job 29:17; Ps 10:15
58:7 Ps 112:10; Josh 7:5; Isa 13:7
58:8 Job 3:16; Eccl 6:3; Ps 37:35,36
58:9 Ps 118:12; Prov 10:25; Eccl 7:6
58:10 Rev 18:20; Rev 11:18; Rev 18:9
58:11 Isa 3:10; Ps 67:4; Ps 73:13-15
59:1 1 Sam 19:11-24; Ps 57:1; Ps 18:48
59:2 Ps 139:19; Ps 26:9; Ps 27:2
59:3 Ps 56:6; Ps 69:4; 1 Sam 24:11,17
59:4 Ps 35:23; 1 Sam 19:12-24; Prov 1:16
59:5 Gen 33:20; Exod 3:15; Exod 20:5
59:6 Ps 59:14; 1 Sam 19:11
59:7 Ps 57:4; Prov 15:2; Ps 10:11,13
59:8 Ps 2:4; Ps 37:13; Prov 1:26
59:9 Ps 9:9; Ps 62:2; Ps 18:1,1,2
59:10 Ps 21:3; Ps 54:7; Ps 59:17
59:11 Ps 3:3; Gen 4:12-15; Judg 1:6,7
59:12 Prov 12:13; Ps 120:3,4; Prov 18:7
59:13 Ps 83:18; Ps 7:9; Ps 59:11
59:14 Ps 59:6; Ps 22:16
59:15 Job 15:23; Ps 109:10; Job 30:1-7
59:16 Rom 15:9; Ps 21:13; Ps 101:1
59:17 Ps 59:9,10; Ps 18:1; Ps 46:1
60:1 Rom 11:2; Ps 44:9; Ps 60:10
60:2 2 Chr 7:14; Isa 30:26; Ps 104:32
60:3 Ps 71:20; Isa 51:17,22; Ps 75:8
60:4 Ps 20:5; Isa 11:12; Exod 17:15
60:5 Ps 108:6-13; Ps 17:7; Ps 60:12
60:6 Gen 12:6; Josh 13:27; Amos 4:2
60:7 Gen 49:10; Deut 33:17; Josh 17:1,5,6
60:8 2 Sam 8:1; 2 Sam 8:14; 1 Chr 18:1,2

58:6 *God, break down their teeth in their mouth* Psalm 58 is one of the hardest prayers for judgment. The wicked are pictured as lions, and David asks God to take away their power to tear. He asks God to do it, not his own hand. See the introduction on the hard lines.
58:10 *he will bathe his feet in the blood of the wicked* A picture from the battlefield of total victory over evil. The point is not cruel delight but that justice is finally done, so that "man will say" there is a God who judges (58:11). Revelation shows the same longing answered (Rev 19:1-2). Until that day, we pray for our enemies (Matt 5:44).
59:0 *when Saul sent, and they watched the house to kill him* Saul's men surrounded David's house at night, and his wife Michal let him down through a window (1 Sam 19:11-17).
59:6 *they growl like the dog and go around the city* Wild dogs roamed the streets at night looking for scraps. That is how David saw the men prowling around his house.
59:11 *Do not kill them, lest my people forget* David asks God not to wipe his enemies out at once, but to humble them, so that the lesson of God's justice is not forgotten. Even in judgment, he wants God's glory known (59:13).
59:16 *I will sing joyfully of Your steadfast love in the morning* They prowl at evening (59:14). David sings in the morning. He came through the night.
60:0 *Joab returned and struck Edom in the Valley of Salt* The battles are in 2 Samuel 8:3-14 and 1 Chronicles 18:12. The numbers differ (12,000 here, 18,000 in 1 Chr 18:12; compare 2 Sam 8:13). Several commanders fought, and the totals may count different parts of the campaign.
60:1 *God, You have rejected us* While David fought in the north, Edom seems to have struck from the south and Israel suffered a defeat. The psalm begins in that shock.
60:6 *I will divide up Shechem* God speaks as the owner of the land. The places named are His: Shechem and Succoth, Gilead and Manasseh. Moab is His washbasin, and over Edom He throws His sandal, a sign of taking possession. Verses 5-12 appear again in Psalm 108:6-13.

throw My sandal; over Me shout aloud, Philistia (Peleshet)." **9** Who will bring me ***to*** a city of fortification? Who has led me to Edom? **10** ***Is it*** not You, God, ***who*** have rejected us? And You do not go out, God, with our armies. **11** Give us help from ***the*** foe, and the deliverance of man ***is*** worthlessness. **12** In God we will do valiantly, and He, He will tread down our foes.

PSALMS 61

To the choirmaster, on a stringed instrument. Of David. **1** Hear, God, my cry; pay attention to my prayer. **2** From the end of the earth I call to You when my heart grows faint; lead me on a rock ***that*** is higher than I. **3** For You have been a refuge for me, a tower of strength from before the enemy. **4** Let me sojourn in Your tent forever; let me take refuge in the shelter of Your wings. Selah. **5** For You, God, have listened to my vows; You have given the possession of those who fear Your name. **6** You will add days to the days of the king; his years ***will be*** like generation and generation. **7** Let him sit ***enthroned*** forever before God; appoint steadfast love and faithfulness ***that*** they may preserve him. **8** So I will sing praises to Your name forever, that I may pay my vows day ***by*** day.

PSALMS 62

To the choirmaster, on Jeduthun (Yedutun). A psalm of David. **1** Only toward God ***is*** my soul ***in*** silence; from Him ***is*** my salvation. **2** Only He ***is*** my rock and my salvation, my high refuge; I will not be greatly shaken. **3** How long will you assail a man? You will be murdered, all of you, like a leaning wall, a fence pushed down. **4** Surely from his loftiness they have planned to thrust ***him*** down; they delight in falsehood; with his mouth they bless, and in their inward part they curse. Selah. **5** Only for God be silent, my soul, for from Him ***is*** my hope. **6** Only He ***is*** my rock and my salvation, my high refuge; I will not be shaken. **7** On God ***rests*** my salvation and my glory; the rock of my strength, my refuge ***is*** in God. **8** Trust in Him at every time, people; pour out your heart before Him; God ***is*** a refuge for us. Selah. **9** Only vanity ***are*** the sons of mankind; a lie ***are*** the sons of man; in the balances they go up; they ***are*** less than vanity altogether. **10** Do not trust in extortion, and do not become vain in robbery; wealth, if it bears fruit, do not set ***your*** heart ***on it***. **11** Once God has spoken; twice I have heard this: that strength ***belongs*** to God; **12** and to You, Lord, ***belongs*** steadfast love; for You, You repay a man according to his work.

PSALMS 63

A psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah

60:9 Judg 1:12,24,25; 1 Chr 11:6,17-19; 2 Sam 11:1
60:10 Ps 108:11; Josh 7:12; Ps 60:1
60:11 Ps 146:3; Ps 25:22; Ps 130:8
60:12 Ps 44:5; Isa 63:3; Ps 18:32-42
61:1 Ps 55:1,2; Phil 4:6; Ps 5:1-3
61:2 Ps 77:3; Deut 4:29; Ps 62:2,6
61:3 Prov 18:10; Ps 116:2; Ps 140:7
61:4 Matt 23:37; Ps 23:6; Ps 27:4
61:5 Ps 56:12; Ps 65:1; Ps 66:19
61:6 Ps 21:4,6; Ps 72:15-17; Isa 53:10
61:7 Ps 40:11; Ps 41:12; Ps 57:3
61:8 Ps 65:1; Ps 30:12; Ps 79:13

62:1 Rev 8:1; Ps 37:7; Ps 33:20
62:2 Luke 6:48; Jude 1:4; Ps 18:2
62:3 Matt 17:17; Ps 4:2; Ps 82:2
62:4 Rom 7:22; Ps 28:3; Ps 55:21
62:5 John 6:68; Ps 27:13,14; Mic 7:7
62:6 Acts 2:25; Ps 62:2; Ps 16:8
62:7 Jer 3:23; Isa 45:25; Ps 94:22
62:8 1 John 2:28; Lam 2:19; Phil 4:6
62:9 Ps 39:5,11; Isa 40:15,17; 1 Sam 18:5,7
62:10 Luke 12:21; Isa 30:12; Ps 52:7
62:11 Rev 19:1; Job 33:14; Job 40:5
62:12 Rom 2:6; Matt 16:27; 1 Pet 1:17

60:12 *In God we will do valiantly* Human help is worthless (60:11). With God they will fight bravely, and He will win the battle.
61:2 *lead me on a rock that is higher than I* David feels far away, "from the end of the earth," and too weak to climb to safety. He needs a rock higher than he can reach, and God has to lead him there.
61:4 *Let me sojourn in Your tent forever* David longs to live as God's guest and hide under His wings. That is the safest place in the world.
61:6 *You will add days to the days of the king* A prayer for the king's long life and throne. The words "forever" (61:7) reach beyond David to the Son of David who reigns forever.
62:0 *on Jeduthun* Jeduthun was one of David's chief musicians (1 Chr 16:41-42; 25:1). "On Jeduthun" may mean the psalm was given to his choir or followed a style or tune connected with him. Many connect the psalm with Absalom's revolt (2 Sam 15), but it does not say.
62:1 *Only toward God is my soul in silence* David is not silent because he has nothing to say. He pours out his heart in verse 8. He is silent because he has stopped arguing, scheming and trying to save himself, and is waiting for God to act. "In keeping quiet and in trust will be your strength" (Isa 30:15).
62:2 *Only He is my rock and my salvation, my high refuge* "Only" runs through the psalm. A rock is solid, and a high refuge is a stronghold up high. Not greatly shaken: David may be rattled, but he will not be knocked down.
62:3 *like a leaning wall, a fence pushed down* His enemies see him as a wall about to fall and want to give it the last push. They bless with their mouths and curse inside (62:4). David does not answer with schemes of his own.
62:5 *Only for God be silent, my soul* In verse 1 his soul was silent. Now he commands it to be. Even a man of faith has to tell his soul to be still more than once.
62:6 *I will not be shaken* Verse 2 said not greatly shaken. Verse 6 drops the word "greatly." His confidence has grown as he prayed. The longer we look at God, the steadier we become.
62:8 *pour out your heart before Him* David turns to the people. Trust Him not only in emergencies but "at every time." Silence before God does not mean keeping everything inside. We tell Him everything, fear, anger, hurt, and then rest and let Him act. "My refuge" (62:7) becomes "a refuge for us."
62:9 *in the balances they go up* Low and high alike: put all humanity on one side of a merchant's scale, and it rises, lighter than a breath. Nations are "like the dust of the scales" (Isa 40:15). Trust in people instead of God, and they will let us down.
62:10 *wealth, if it bears fruit, do not set your heart on it* Riches are not evil, but do not lean your heart on them. Beware the one "who treasures up for himself and is not rich toward God" (Luke 12:21; Matt 6:24).
62:11 *Once God has spoken; twice I have heard this* A Hebrew way of saying something is sure. Strength belongs to God, and so does steadfast love. Power without love would terrify us, and love without power could not help us. He has both, so we can wait for Him.
62:12 *You repay a man according to his work* God "will render to each according to his works" (Rom 2:6; Matt 16:27). We are saved by grace through faith, not by works (Eph 2:8-9), but true faith shows itself in what we do. For the believer, the judgment of works is not about whether we are saved but how we lived as those who are. David does not need to repay the two-faced men himself.
63:0 *when he was in the wilderness of Judah* David was in that wilderness twice: hiding from Saul (1 Sam 23-24), and as king fleeing Absalom (2 Sam 15:23-28). Verse 11 calls him "the king," so many think it is the Absalom years. Either setting fits.

(Yehuda). **1** God, You ***are*** my God; I seek You earnestly; my soul thirsts for You; my flesh longs for You in a dry and weary land without water. **2** So I have gazed on You in the holy place, to see Your strength and Your glory. **3** For Your steadfast love ***is*** better than life; my lips will extol You. **4** So I will bless You in my life; in Your name I will lift up my hands. **5** As ***with*** fat and fatness my soul will be satisfied, and ***with*** lips of joyful cries my mouth will praise ***You***. **6** When I have remembered You on my bed, in the night watches I meditate on You. **7** For You have been a help to me, and in the shadow of Your wings I will sing for joy. **8** My soul clings after You; Your right hand holds me fast. **9** And they, for destruction they seek my life; they will go into the lower parts of the earth. **10** They will pour him out on the hands of the sword; they will be the portion of foxes. **11** And the king will rejoice in God; everyone who swears by Him will boast, for the mouth of those who speak falsehood will be shut.

PSALMS 64

To the choirmaster. A psalm of David. **1** Hear my voice, God, in my complaint; You will preserve my life from dread of an enemy. **2** You will hide me from the secret counsel of evildoers, from the scheming of those who work wickedness, **3** who sharpen their tongue like the sword; they bend their arrow, a bitter word, **4** to shoot from the secret places ***at the*** blameless; suddenly they shoot at him and do not fear. **5** They strengthen for themselves an evil matter; they talk of hiding snares; they say, "Who will see them?" **6** They search out injustices: "We have finished a searched-out plot." And the inward part of a man and ***his*** heart ***is*** deep. **7** And God shot at them ***with*** an arrow; suddenly their wounds came. **8** And they made him stumble; their tongue ***is*** against them; all who look on them will shake ***their heads***. **9** And all mankind feared, and they declared the work of God, and they considered His deed. **10** Let the righteous rejoice in the LORD and take refuge in Him; and let all the upright of heart boast.

PSALMS 65

To the choirmaster. A psalm of David, a song. **1** To You silence ***is*** praise, God, in Zion (Tsiyon); and to You a vow will be paid. **2** You who hear prayer, to You all flesh will come. **3** Matters of iniquities have prevailed over me; our transgressions, You, You make atonement for them. **4** How blessed ***is he whom*** You choose and bring near; he dwells ***in*** Your courts. Let us be satisfied with the goodness of Your house, the holy ***place*** of Your temple. **5** ***With*** awesome ***deeds*** in righteousness You answer us, God of our salvation, the trust of all the ends of ***the*** earth and of ***the*** distant sea, **6** who establishes ***the*** moun-

63:1 Ps 84:2; Ps 143:6; Luke 11:24
63:2 Ps 27:4; Ps 105:4; Ps 78:61
63:3 Phil 1:23; Ps 30:5; Ps 51:15
63:4 Ps 104:33; Ps 134:2; Ps 145:1-3
63:5 Ps 36:7-9; Ps 65:4; Ps 104:34
63:6 Ps 42:8; Ps 77:4-6; Ps 119:55,147,148
63:7 Matt 23:37; Ps 61:4; Ps 54:3,4
63:8 Ps 18:35; Isa 41:10; Isa 42:1
63:9 Matt 12:40; Eph 4:9; Ps 55:15,23
63:10 Rev 19:18; Jer 18:21; Ezek 35:5
63:11 Rom 3:19; Deut 6:13; Isa 45:23
64:1 Ps 27:7; Ps 55:1,2; Ps 130:1,2
64:2 Ps 56:6; Jer 11:19; Ps 27:5
64:3 Ps 58:7; Ps 57:4; Ps 11:2
64:4 Ps 10:8,9; Neh 4:11; Hab 3:14
64:5 Ps 140:5; Ps 10:11; Exod 15:9
64:6 Ps 35:11; 1 Sam 22:9; 1 Sam 24:9
64:7 Ps 7:12,13; Ps 18:14; Deut 32:23,42
64:8 Prov 18:7; Prov 12:13; Ps 140:9
64:9 Jer 51:10; Ps 40:3; Jer 50:28
64:10 1 Cor 1:30; Phil 4:4; 1 Cor 1:31
65:1 Rev 14:1; Ps 62:1; Ps 76:11
65:2 Isa 66:23; Ps 86:9; Ps 145:18,19
65:3 Ps 38:4; Ps 79:9; Isa 6:7
65:4 Ps 33:12; Ps 84:4; Ps 36:8
65:5 Rom 9:28; Ps 45:4; Ps 22:27
65:6 Ps 93:1; Ps 24:2; Ps 119:90

63:1 *God, You are my God; I seek You earnestly* The word is tied to the dawn. David seeks God first. He looks at the cracked ground and empty riverbeds and thinks, my soul is like that without God. We all thirst for something, and only Jesus gives water that satisfies (John 4:14).
63:2 *So I have gazed on You in the holy place* David remembers worship at the tent in Jerusalem, where he saw God's strength and glory. That memory carries him through the dry place. The times we meet God in worship store up strength for the times we feel far from Him.
63:3 *For Your steadfast love is better than life* Running for his life, David says God's loyal love is worth more. He could lose his life. He could not lose God's love. Nothing, not even death, can separate us from it (Rom 8:35-39).
63:4 *in Your name I will lift up my hands* Lifting the hands was a posture of prayer and praise, reaching out to God. David cannot go to the sanctuary, but he can worship where he is.
63:5 *As with fat and fatness my soul will be satisfied* Hungry in the wilderness, David feels as if he has been to a banquet. God Himself satisfies him.
63:6 *in the night watches I meditate on You* The night was divided into watches, shifts when guards stayed awake. David lies awake, perhaps from danger, and fills the hours with God instead of worry. When you can't sleep, try what David did.
63:7 *in the shadow of Your wings I will sing for joy* A mother bird covering her young from heat and danger. Ruth came to take refuge under the LORD's wings (Ruth 2:12), and Jesus longed to gather Jerusalem like a hen gathers her chicks (Matt 23:37).
63:8 *My soul clings after You; Your right hand holds me fast* "Clings" is the word of Genesis 2:24 for a man joined to his wife. David clings to God, and God holds David. Both are true, and David needs both.
63:9 *they will go into the lower parts of the earth* Hard lines. The lower parts of the earth mean the grave, and "foxes" may mean jackals that scavenged battlefields. But look at how David treated these men: he spared Saul (1 Sam 24) and wept over Absalom (2 Sam 18:5, 33). These are the words of a king who put the outcome in God's hands. See the introduction on the hard lines.
63:11 *the king will rejoice in God* Not in his enemies' fall, but in God. David started thirsty and ends with a full heart, and the ground around him is just as dry. He has found that God is enough.
64:3 *who sharpen their tongue like the sword* The enemies attack with words: secret plots, bitter lies shot from hiding. They think no one sees (64:5).
64:7 *And God shot at them with an arrow* The turn is sudden. They shot arrows of words, and God shoots back. Their own tongues bring them down (64:8). God sees what they thought was hidden.
64:9 *And all mankind feared, and they declared the work of God* When God judges, people take notice and think about His ways. The righteous do not boast in themselves but rejoice and take refuge in the LORD (64:10).
65:1 *To You silence is praise, God, in Zion* Some read it as praise waits for You. Either way, worship begins in quiet awe before God, then becomes vows kept and songs sung. Psalm 65 is a harvest song of thanksgiving.
65:2 *You who hear prayer, to You all flesh will come* God's name here is the One who hears prayer. People from every nation will come to Him (Isa 56:7).
65:3 *our transgressions, You, You make atonement for them* Before David praises the harvest, he praises forgiveness. To atone is to cover sin so the sinner is reconciled to God. Our sins overpower us, but God covers them. In Christ He has done it once for all (Rom 3:25).
65:4 *How blessed is he whom You choose and bring near* The greatest blessing is not the harvest but being brought near to God, to live in His courts and be satisfied with Him.

tains by His strength, being girded with might, **7** who calms the roar of ***the*** seas, the roar of their waves, and the tumult of ***the*** peoples. **8** And those who dwell ***at the*** ends feared because of Your signs; You make the goings out of morning and evening shout for joy. **9** You have visited the earth and made it overflow; You greatly enrich it; the stream of God is full of water; You prepare their grain, for so You prepare it, **10** watering its furrows abundantly, settling its ridges; You soften it with showers; You bless its growth. **11** You have crowned the year of Your goodness, and Your tracks drip ***with*** fatness. **12** The pastures of the wilderness drip, and the hills gird themselves ***with*** rejoicing. **13** The meadows are clothed ***with*** the flock, and the valleys cover themselves ***with*** grain; they shout for joy; yes, they sing.

PSALMS 66

To the choirmaster. A song, a psalm. **1** Shout for joy to God, all the earth; **2** sing praises ***to*** the glory of His name; make His praise glory. **3** Say to God, "How awesome ***are*** Your deeds! In the greatness of Your strength Your enemies cringe before You. **4** All the earth bows down to You and sings praises to You; they sing praises to Your name." Selah. **5** Come and see the works of God, awesome ***in His*** deed toward the sons of man. **6** He turned ***the*** sea into dry land; they passed through the river on foot; there let us rejoice in Him, **7** who rules by His might forever; His eyes keep watch on the nations; let not the rebellious exalt themselves. Selah. **8** Bless our God, peoples, and make the sound of His praise heard, **9** who has set our soul in life, and has not let our foot slip. **10** For You have tested us, God; You have refined us as silver is refined. **11** You have brought us into the net; You have laid affliction on our loins. **12** You have made man ride over our head; we have gone through fire and through water, and You have brought us out to abundance. **13** I will come ***into*** Your house with burnt offerings; I will pay to You my vows, **14** which my lips opened ***to utter***, and my mouth spoke when I was in distress. **15** Burnt offerings of fatlings I will offer up to You, with the smoke of rams; I will offer cattle with goats. Selah. **16** Come, hear, all who fear God, and let me recount what He has done for my soul. **17** To Him I called ***with*** my mouth, and exaltation ***was*** under my tongue. **18** If I had regarded wickedness in my heart, the Lord would not listen.
19 Nevertheless, God has heard; He has paid attention to the voice of my prayer. **20** Blessed ***be*** God, who has not turned aside my prayer, nor His steadfast love from me.

PSALMS 67

To the choirmaster, with stringed instruments. A psalm, a song. **1** May God be gracious to us and bless us; may He make His face shine with us, Selah, **2** that Your way may be known on the earth, Your salvation among all nations. **3** Let the peoples give thanks to You, God; let the peoples give thanks to You, all of them. **4** Let the nations rejoice and sing for joy, for You will judge ***the*** peoples ***with*** uprightness, and the nations on the earth, You will guide them. Selah. **5** Let the peoples give thanks to You, God; let the peoples give thanks to You, all of them. **6** ***The*** earth has given its produce; God, our God, will bless us. **7** God will bless us, and all the ends of ***the*** earth will fear Him.

65:7 Ps 89:9; Isa 17:12,13; Ps 107:29
65:8 Ps 2:8; Ps 48:5,6; Ps 66:3
65:9 Ps 46:4; Ps 104:13,14; Ps 68:9,10
65:10 Ps 147:8; 1 Cor 3:6,7
65:11 Ps 5:12; Ps 103:4; Prov 14:18
65:12 Job 38:26,27; Ps 104:10-13; Ps 65:6
65:13 Isa 55:12; Isa 35:1,2,10; Ps 104:24-28
66:1 Ps 100:1; Ps 81:1; Ps 98:4
66:2 Ps 47:6,7; Ps 72:18; Ps 96:3-10
66:3 Ps 65:5; Ps 18:44; Ps 47:2
66:4 Ps 22:27; Ps 117:1; Ps 65:5
66:5 Ps 46:8; Ps 66:16; Ps 111:2
66:6 Heb 11:29; Exod 14:21,22; Josh 3:14,16
66:7 Ps 11:4; Ps 62:11; Dan 4:35
66:8 Rom 15:11; Deut 32:43; Rom 15:10,11
66:9 Ps 121:3; Ps 22:29; 1 Sam 25:29
66:10 Ps 17:3; Isa 48:10; Zech 13:9
66:11 Lam 1:13; Job 19:6; Lam 3:2-66
66:12 James 5:11; Heb 11:34; Isa 51:23
66:13 Eccl 5:4; Ps 51:18,19; Ps 100:4
66:14 Judg 11:35,36; Num 30:2,8,12; Gen 28:20-22
66:15 Jer 41:5; 2 Sam 6:13,17-19; 1 Chr 16:1-3
66:16 Ps 66:5; Ps 34:2,11; Ps 71:18
66:17 Ps 30:1; Ps 30:8; Ps 34:3,4,6
66:18 John 9:31; Prov 28:9; Isa 1:15
66:19 Heb 5:7; Ps 116:1,2; Lam 3:55,56
66:20 Ps 51:11; Ps 86:12,13; 2 Sam 7:14,15
67:1 Ps 4:6; Num 6:24-27; Ps 31:16
67:2 Acts 13:47; Titus 2:11; Ps 98:2,3
67:3 Acts 13:47; Ps 67:5; Ps 45:17
67:4 Ps 98:9; Acts 17:31; Rom 2:5
67:5 Ps 67:3; Matt 6:9,10
67:6 Lev 26:4; Ps 85:9-12; Isa 1:19
67:7 Acts 13:47; Acts 3:26; Ps 22:27

65:7 *who calms the roar of the seas* The God who stills the sea also quiets the restless nations. Jesus calmed the storm with a word, and His disciples asked who this could be (Mark 4:39-41).
65:9 *You have visited the earth and made it overflow* Rain in Israel was never taken for granted. The farmer plows, but God waters the furrows, softens the ground and makes the grain grow. Every harvest is His gift (Acts 14:17).
65:13 *they shout for joy; yes, they sing* The meadows and valleys, covered with flocks and grain, are pictured as singing. Creation praises its Maker when it does what He made it to do.
66:1 *Shout for joy to God, all the earth* The psalm begins with the whole world and ends with one man's testimony (66:16-20). God's great acts for nations and His care for one soul belong together.
66:6 *He turned the sea into dry land* The Red Sea (Exod 14:21-22) and the Jordan (Josh 3:14-17). "There let us rejoice in Him": every generation of God's people shares in what He did then.
66:10 *You have refined us as silver is refined* Israel went "through fire and through water" (66:12). Hard times were not wasted. God used them to purify His people, as a refiner heats silver to burn off the dross (1 Pet 1:6-7). And He brought them out "to abundance."
66:13 *I will pay to You my vows* Promises made "when I was in distress" (66:14) are kept when the trouble is over. It is easy to make vows in a crisis and forget them later.
66:18 *If I had regarded wickedness in my heart, the Lord would not listen* Cherished, unconfessed sin blocks prayer (Isa 59:2). The writer had not held on to sin, and God heard him. This is not a call to be sinless before we pray, but to be honest and turn from what we know is wrong.
67:1 *May God be gracious to us and bless us; may He make His face shine with us* These words echo the priestly blessing God gave Aaron (Num 6:24-26).
67:2 *that Your way may be known on the earth, Your salvation among all nations* Here is why God blesses His people: so the nations will know Him. Israel was blessed to be a blessing (Gen 12:2-3). The church has the same calling (Matt 28:19).
67:4 *You will judge the peoples with uprightness* The nations can rejoice at God's judgment, because He judges fairly and guides them. I believe that will be seen fully when Christ reigns over the nations from Zion (Isa 2:3-4).

PSALMS 68

To the choirmaster. Of David, a psalm, a song. **1** Let God arise; let His enemies be scattered, and let those who hate Him flee from before Him. **2** As smoke is driven away, drive ***them*** away; as wax melts before ***the*** fire, let ***the*** wicked perish before God. **3** And let ***the*** righteous be glad; let them exult before God, and let them rejoice with gladness. **4** Sing to God, sing praises to His name; lift up ***a highway*** for Him who rides through the deserts, His name ***is the*** LORD, and exult before Him. **5** A father of the fatherless and a judge of widows ***is*** God in the dwelling place of His holiness. **6** God causes the solitary to dwell in a house; He brings out prisoners into prosperity; only the rebellious dwell ***in*** a parched land. **7** God, when You went out before Your people, when You marched through the desolate place, Selah, **8** the earth quaked; the heavens also dropped ***rain*** before God, this Sinai (Sinay), before God, the God of Israel (Yisra'el). **9** A rain of freewill ***gifts*** You shed abroad, God; Your inheritance, when it was weary, You, You established it. **10** Your community dwelt in it; You prepared in Your goodness for the poor, God. **11** The Lord gives the word; the women who bear the news ***are*** a great host: **12** "Kings of armies flee, they flee, and she who dwells ***in the*** house divides ***the*** spoil. **13** Though you lie down between the sheepfolds, the wings of a dove ***are*** covered with silver, and its pinions with greenish gold." **14** When the Almighty scatters kings in it, it snows on ***Mount*** Zalmon (Tsalmon). **15** A mountain of God ***is*** the mountain of Bashan; a mountain of peaks ***is*** the mountain of Bashan. **16** Why do you watch with envy, mountains of peaks, the mountain God desired for His dwelling? Yes, the LORD will dwell ***in it*** forever. **17** The chariots of God ***are*** twice ten thousand, thousands repeated; the Lord ***is*** among them, Sinai in holiness. **18** You have gone up to the height; You have taken captive captivity; You have received gifts among mankind, and even ***among the*** rebellious, that ***the*** LORD God may dwell ***there***. **19** Blessed ***be*** the Lord; day ***by*** day He bears a load for us, the God, our salvation. Selah. **20** The God for us ***is*** a God of saving acts, and to GOD the Lord ***belong*** the escapes from death. **21** Surely God will shatter the head of His enemies, the hairy crown of him who goes about in his guilt. **22** The Lord has said, "From Bashan I will bring back, I will bring back from the depths of the sea, **23** so that your foot may shatter ***them*** in blood, the tongue of your dogs ***having*** its portion from ***the*** enemies." **24** They have seen Your processions, God, the processions of my God, my King, in the holy place. **25** Singers went in front, musicians behind, in the midst of young women playing tambourines. **26** In ***the*** assemblies bless God, the LORD, from the fountain of Israel. **27** There ***is*** Benjamin (Binyamin), the youngest, ruling them, the princes of Judah (Yehuda), their throng, the princes of Zebulun (Zevulun), the princes of Naphtali (Naftali). **28** Your God has commanded your strength; be strong, God, You who have acted for us. **29** From Your temple over Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), kings will bring a gift to You. **30** Rebuke the beast of the reeds, the herd of mighty ones with the calves of ***the*** peoples, trampling on pieces of silver; He has scattered peoples ***who*** delight in

68:1 Rev 1:7; Num 10:35; Isa 33:3
68:2 Ps 37:20; Mic 1:4; Isa 9:18
68:3 Ps 64:10; Ps 32:11; Ps 58:10
68:4 Ps 18:10; Deut 33:26; Exod 6:3,8
68:5 Luke 18:3; Acts 7:49; James 1:27
68:6 Acts 12:10; Ps 107:10,41; Ps 113:9
68:7 Exod 13:21; Judg 4:14; Judg 5:4
68:8 Gal 4:25; Judg 5:4,5; Exod 19:16,18
68:9 Ps 78:24-27; Ezek 34:26; Ps 65:9-13
68:10 Ps 74:1,2,19; Exod 19:5,6; Num 16:3
68:11 Exod 15:20; Ps 68:25; Exod 14:15
68:12 Rev 19:18; Rev 19:19; Josh 10:16,42
68:13 Ps 81:6; Exod 1:14; 1 Cor 6:9-11
68:14 Rev 19:15; Ps 51:7; Isa 1:18
68:15 Ps 2:6; Ps 78:68,69; Ps 87:1,2
68:16 Deut 12:5,11; Ps 132:13,14; Heb 12:22,23
68:17 Gal 4:25; Deut 33:2; Dan 7:10
68:18 Eph 4:8; 2 Cor 6:16; Judg 5:12
68:19 Eph 1:3; Ps 72:17-19; Ps 103:1-22
68:20 Deut 32:39; Rev 1:18; Rev 20:1
68:21 Hab 3:13; Ps 110:6; Ps 7:12
68:22 Num 21:33; Isa 11:11-16; Isa 49:22
68:23 Rev 19:18; Ps 58:10; 1 Kgs 21:19
68:24 Ps 24:7-10; Ps 47:5-7; 2 Sam 6:12-17
68:25 Judg 11:34; Exod 15:20; Ps 87:7
68:26 Isa 48:1; Deut 33:28; Ps 107:32
68:27 1 Sam 9:21; Gen 42:32; Judg 20:35
68:28 Ps 42:8; Ps 44:4; Ps 71:3
68:29 Acts 8:27; 1 Kgs 10:10,24,25; Ps 76:11
68:30 2 Sam 8:1-18; 2 Sam 10:1-19; 2 Chr 14:1-15

68:1 *Let God arise; let His enemies be scattered* These are the words Moses spoke whenever the ark set out in the wilderness (Num 10:35). Psalm 68 is a great march of God from Sinai to Zion. Many think it was sung when David brought the ark to Jerusalem (2 Sam 6).
68:4 *Him who rides through the deserts, His name is the LORD* The Canaanites called Baal the rider on the clouds. David says the true Rider is the LORD, who led Israel through the desert (68:33).
68:5 *A father of the fatherless and a judge of widows is God* The mighty God of the march stops for the weakest. He gives the lonely a home and frees prisoners (68:6). God's people are to care for the same people (James 1:27).
68:8 *the earth quaked; the heavens also dropped rain before God, this Sinai* The psalm recalls God coming down on Mount Sinai with earthquake and storm (Exod 19:16-18), and then providing for His people in the land.
68:11 *the women who bear the news are a great host* In Israel women sang the news of victory (Exod 15:20-21; 1 Sam 18:6-7). Kings flee, and those who stayed home divide the spoil.
68:15 *A mountain of God is the mountain of Bashan* The high, many-peaked mountains of Bashan, likely including Hermon, are pictured looking with envy at little Zion (68:16). God did not choose the tallest mountain. He chose the one He desired. God often chooses what the world overlooks (1 Cor 1:27-28).
68:17 *The chariots of God are twice ten thousand, thousands repeated* God's heavenly army is beyond counting, and He comes with it from Sinai to His sanctuary (Deut 33:2; 2 Kgs 6:17).
68:18 *You have gone up to the height; You have taken captive captivity* The picture is a conquering king going up to his capital with captives in his train and receiving tribute. Paul applies it to Christ: "Having ascended on high, He took captivity captive, and He gave gifts to men" (Eph 4:8). The risen Lord went up in triumph and now gives gifts to His church. Paul follows the sense of giving found in some old Jewish and Greek readings of the verse.
68:19 *day by day He bears a load for us* Our God carries our burdens daily, not just once in a great while.
68:20 *to GOD the Lord belong the escapes from death* Only God holds the keys of death. Christ, risen, says, "I have the keys of Hades and of Death" (Rev 1:18).
68:21 *Surely God will shatter the head of His enemies* Verses 21-23 picture total victory in the language of ancient war. They are hard lines, but the enemies are those who go on in their guilt (68:21). See the introduction on the hard lines.
68:24 *They have seen Your processions, God* A worship procession into the holy place: singers, musicians, young women with tambourines, and the tribes from little Benjamin to Judah and the northern tribes (68:25-27).
68:29 *kings will bring a gift to You* The psalm looks beyond Israel. Egypt and Cush, far to the south, will stretch out their hands to God (68:31). All the kingdoms of the earth are called to sing to Him (68:32).

wars. **31** Envoys will come from Egypt (Mitsrayim); Cush (Kush) will make its hands run to God. **32** Kingdoms of the earth, sing to God, sing praises to the Lord, Selah, **33** to Him who rides in the heavens of the heavens of old; look, He gives ***forth*** with His voice a voice of strength. **34** Ascribe strength to God; His majesty ***is*** over Israel, and His strength ***is*** in the clouds. **35** Awesome ***are You***, God, from Your sanctuaries; the God of Israel, He gives strength and power to the people. Blessed ***be*** God.

PSALMS 69

To the choirmaster, on "Lilies." Of David. **1** Save me, God, for ***the*** waters have come to ***my*** neck. **2** I have sunk in ***the*** mire of ***the*** depth, and there is no foothold; I have come into ***the*** depths of waters, and a flood has overflowed me. **3** I have grown weary with my calling out; my throat has become parched; my eyes have failed, waiting for my God. **4** Those who hate me without cause are more than the hairs of my head; those who would destroy me are mighty, my enemies ***by*** falsehood; what I did not steal, then I ***must*** restore. **5** God, You, You know my folly, and my guilty deeds are not hidden from You. **6** Let not those who wait for You be ashamed through me, Lord GOD of armies; let not those who seek You be humiliated through me, God of Israel (Yisra'el). **7** For on account of You I have borne reproach; ignominy has covered my face. **8** I have become estranged to my brothers, and a foreigner to the sons of my mother. **9** For the zeal of Your house has consumed me, and the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me. **10** And I wept with fasting ***of*** my soul, and it became reproaches to me. **11** And I made sackcloth my clothing, and I became a byword to them. **12** Those who sit ***in the*** gate talk about me, and the songs of the drinkers of strong drink ***are about me***. **13** And I, my prayer ***is*** to You, LORD, ***at*** a time of favor; God, in the greatness of Your steadfast love, answer me in the faithfulness of Your salvation. **14** Deliver me from the mud, and let me not sink; let me be delivered from those who hate me and from ***the*** depths of waters. **15** Let not a flood of waters overflow me, and let not the depth swallow me up, and let not the pit close its mouth over me. **16** Answer me, LORD, for Your steadfast love ***is*** good; according to the greatness of Your compassion, turn to me. **17** And do not hide Your face from Your servant, for ***I am in*** distress; hurry, answer me. **18** Draw near to my soul; redeem it; because of my enemies, ransom me. **19** You, You know my reproach and my shame and my ignominy; all my adversaries ***are*** before You. **20** Reproach has broken my heart, and I am sick; and I waited for ***one*** to show sympathy, and there was none, and for comforters, and I did not find ***any***. **21** And they put poison in my food, and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink. **22** Let their table before them become a trap, and for ***those at*** peace, a snare. **23** Let their eyes grow dark from seeing, and make their loins shake continually. **24** Pour out on them Your indignation, and let the burning of Your anger overtake them. **25** Let their encampment be made desolate; in their tents let there be no one dwelling. **26** For ***the one*** whom You, You struck, they have pursued, and about the pain of Your wounded ones they recount. **27** Put iniquity on their iniquity, and let them not

68:31 Isa 45:14; Zeph 3:10; Ps 44:20
68:32 Ps 67:2-5; Ps 100:1; Ps 117:1,2
68:33 Rev 11:12; John 12:29; Ps 18:10
68:34 Ps 29:1,2; Ps 96:6-8; 1 Chr 16:28,29
68:35 Ps 29:11; Ps 65:5; Ps 66:5
69:1 Ps 45:1; Ps 42:7; Isa 43:2
69:2 Ps 40:2; Jer 38:6,22; Ps 88:6,7
69:3 Matt 26:54; Ps 6:6; Ps 119:82,123
69:4 John 15:25; Matt 26:54; Ps 40:12
69:5 Matt 26:24; Matt 26:54; Mark 14:21
69:6 Ps 7:7; Ps 25:3; Ps 35:26
69:7 Jer 15:15; Ps 44:22; Isa 50:6
69:8 Ps 31:11; John 1:11; Job 19:13-19
69:9 John 2:17; Rom 15:3; Ps 119:139
69:10 Ps 102:8,9; Ps 109:24,25; Luke 7:33,34
69:11 1 Kgs 9:7; Jer 24:9; Ps 35:13,14
69:12 Deut 16:18; Matt 27:12,13,20,41,42,62,63; Luke 23:2
69:13 2 Cor 6:2; Matt 26:42; Luke 24:44
69:14 Ps 144:7; Ps 69:1,2,15; Ps 40:1-3
69:15 Matt 26:24; Mark 14:21; 1 Cor 15:3
69:16 Matt 26:24; 1 Cor 15:3; Ps 63:3
69:17 Ps 27:9; Ps 102:2; Ps 13:1
69:18 Ps 10:1; Ps 22:1,19; Jer 14:8
69:19 Heb 12:2; Ps 69:7-9; Ps 22:6,7
69:20 Isa 63:5; Job 16:2; Ps 142:4
69:21 Matt 27:48; Mark 15:36; John 19:28
69:22 Rom 11:9-10; Rom 11:8; Prov 1:32
69:23 Matt 13:15; John 12:40; Acts 28:27
69:24 Ps 79:6; Hos 5:10; Lev 26:14-46
69:25 Acts 1:20; Matt 23:38; 1 Kgs 9:8
69:26 Matt 26:54; Isa 53:4,10; Zech 1:15
69:27 Matt 21:19; Rom 9:31; Matt 26:54

69:1 *Save me, God, for the waters have come to my neck* David is drowning in trouble, sinking in mud with no foothold. Psalm 69 is quoted in the New Testament more than almost any psalm except 22 and 110, and many of its lines are applied to Jesus.

69:4 *Those who hate me without cause are more than the hairs of my head* Jesus said, "They hated Me without cause" (John 15:25), quoting this verse or 35:19. "What I did not steal, then I must restore": the innocent is made to pay for what he did not take.

69:5 *God, You, You know my folly* David confesses his own sins here, and this line the New Testament does not apply to Jesus, who had no sin (Heb 4:15). The psalm is David's, and parts of it point beyond him to Christ.

69:8 *I have become estranged to my brothers, and a foreigner to the sons of my mother* Jesus' brothers did not believe in Him at first (John 7:5). They were the later children of Mary and Joseph (Matt 13:55). After the resurrection they believed, and James became a leader of the church (Acts 1:14; Gal 1:19).

69:9 *For the zeal of Your house has consumed me* When Jesus drove the sellers out of the temple, "His disciples remembered that it is written, The zeal of Your house has consumed Me" (John 2:17). Paul quotes the second line: "The reproaches of those reproaching You fell on Me" (Rom 15:3). Jesus bore the insults aimed at God.

69:13 *at a time of favor* David brings his prayer to God and leaves the timing with Him, resting on "the greatness of Your steadfast love."

69:20 *I waited for one to show sympathy, and there was none* In Gethsemane Jesus' friends slept, and at His arrest they fled (Matt 26:40, 56).

69:21 *for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink* At the cross they offered Jesus "sour wine mixed with gall" (Matt 27:34), and later sour wine on a sponge (Matt 27:48). Jesus said "I am thirsty" (John 19:28) so that the Scripture would be accomplished.

69:22 *Let their table before them become a trap* Verses 22-28 are among the hardest prayers for judgment in the Psalms. Paul quotes verses 22-23 for the hardening that has come on part of Israel for a time, "until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in" (Rom 11:9-10, 25). That hardening is not final: "all Israel will be saved" (Rom 11:26). See the introduction on the hard lines.

69:25 *Let their encampment be made desolate* Peter applied this verse to Judas, whose place became empty (Acts 1:20).

come into Your righteousness. **28** Let them be wiped out from the book of life, and with ***the*** righteous let them not be written. **29** And I ***am*** afflicted and in pain; let Your salvation, God, set me on high. **30** I will praise the name of God with a song, and I will magnify Him with thanksgiving. **31** And it will be better to the LORD than an ox, a young bull horned ***and*** hoofed. **32** The humble have seen; they will rejoice; you who seek God, let your heart live. **33** For the LORD listens to ***the*** needy, and His prisoners He has not despised. **34** Let heaven and earth praise Him, ***the*** seas and everything that moves in them. **35** For God will save Zion (Tsiyon) and will build the cities of Judah (Yehuda), and they will dwell there and possess it. **36** And the offspring of His servants will inherit it, and those who love His name will dwell in it.

PSALMS 70

To the choirmaster. Of David, to bring to remembrance. **1** God, ***hurry*** to deliver me; LORD, hurry to my help! **2** Let them be ashamed and abashed who seek my life; let them be turned back and humiliated who delight in my harm. **3** Let them turn back on account of their shame, those who say, "Aha! Aha!" **4** Let all who seek You exult and rejoice in You; and let those who love Your salvation say continually, "Let God be magnified!" **5** And I ***am*** afflicted and needy; God, hurry to me! You ***are*** my help and my rescuer; LORD, do not delay.

PSALMS 71

1 In You, LORD, I have taken refuge; let me not be ashamed forever. **2** In Your righteousness You will deliver me and rescue me; incline Your ear to me and save me. **3** Become for me a rock ***of*** dwelling, to come ***to*** continually; You have commanded to save me, for You ***are*** my crag and my fortress. **4** My God, rescue me from the hand of ***the*** wicked, from the palm of ***the*** unjust and ruthless. **5** For You ***are*** my hope, Lord GOD, my confidence from my youth. **6** On You I have leaned from ***the*** womb; from the inward parts of my mother You ***are*** the One who cut me ***out***; in You ***is*** my praise continually. **7** I have become like a portent to many, and You ***are*** my strong refuge. **8** My mouth is filled ***with*** Your praise, all the day ***with*** Your splendor. **9** Do not cast me away at ***the*** time of old age; when my strength fails, do not forsake me. **10** For my enemies have spoken about me, and those who watch my life have consulted together, **11** saying, "God has forsaken him; pursue and seize him, for there is no deliverer." **12** God, do not be far from me; my God, hurry to my help! **13** Let them be ashamed, let them come to an end, the accusers of my soul; let them cover themselves ***with*** reproach and ignominy, those who seek my harm. **14** And I, I will wait continually, and I will add to all Your praise. **15** My mouth will recount Your righteousness, all the day Your salvation, for I do not know ***their*** numbers. **16** I will come with the mighty deeds of the Lord GOD; I will bring to remembrance Your righteousness, Yours alone. **17** God, You have taught me from my youth, and until now I declare Your wonders. **18** And even to old age and gray hair, God, do not forsake me, until I declare Your arm to a generation, Your might to everyone who will come. **19** And Your righteousness, God, ***is*** to ***the*** height, You who have done great things; God, who ***is*** like You? **20** You who have made me see many troubles and calamities will again revive me, and from the depths of the earth You will again bring me up. **21** May You increase my greatness and

69:28 Phil 4:3; Rev 3:5; Rev 13:8
69:29 Ps 40:17; Ps 109:22,31; Isa 53:2,3
69:30 Matt 20:18; Mark 14:21; Phil 2:9
69:31 Eph 5:19; Ps 50:13,14,23; Hos 14:2
69:32 Ps 34:2; Ps 22:26,29; Ps 25:9
69:33 Ps 10:17; Ps 34:6; Ps 72:12-14
69:34 Matt 20:18; Mark 14:21; Ps 96:11
69:35 Rev 14:1; Ps 51:18; Isa 44:26
69:36 Ps 102:28; Ps 90:16,17; Isa 44:3,4
70:1 Ps 40:13-17; Ps 38:1; 2 Sam 17:1-21
70:2 Ps 35:4,26; Ps 6:10; Ps 71:13
70:3 Ps 40:15; Acts 1:18; Ps 35:21,25
70:4 Ps 5:11; Ps 35:27; Ps 40:16
70:5 Ps 141:1; Ps 40:17; Ps 69:29
71:1 Ps 25:2,3; Ps 31:1-3; Ps 125:1
71:2 1 Cor 10:13; Ps 17:6; Ps 31:1
71:3 Ps 18:2; Ps 31:2,3; Ps 44:4
71:4 Ps 17:8,9,13; Ps 59:1,2; Ps 140:1-4
71:5 Jer 17:7,13,17; Ps 39:7; Ps 71:17
71:6 Ps 22:9,10; Ps 139:15,16; Jer 1:5
71:7 Luke 2:34; Isa 8:18; 1 Cor 4:9
71:8 Ps 35:28; Ps 146:2; Ps 71:15,24
71:9 Ps 71:18; Isa 46:4; Ps 92:13-15
71:10 Ps 56:6; Ps 83:3; Matt 27:1
71:11 Ps 7:2; Ps 3:2; Ps 37:25,28
71:12 Ps 35:22; Ps 38:21,22; Ps 22:11,19
71:13 Ps 71:24; Ps 35:4,26; Ps 109:29
71:14 1 John 3:3; Ps 43:5; Lam 3:21,26
71:15 Ps 40:5,12; Ps 35:28; Ps 71:8,24
71:16 Rom 3:21; Ps 51:14; Ps 29:11
71:17 Ps 71:5; Ps 119:9,102; Ps 66:16
71:18 Ps 71:9; Isa 46:4; Ps 78:4,6
71:19 Ps 57:10; Ps 35:10; Ps 36:5,6
71:20 Eph 4:9; Ps 60:3; Ps 138:7
71:21 2 Sam 3:1; Ps 72:11; Isa 9:7

69:28 *Let them be wiped out from the book of life* The book of life is God's record of the living, and in the New Testament of those who belong to Him (Phil 4:3; Rev 20:15). David asks God to judge those who persecute the one God has struck (69:26). Jesus, on the cross, prayed for His enemies' forgiveness (Luke 23:34).
69:30 *I will praise the name of God with a song* The psalm turns from lament to praise. A thankful song pleases God more than a fine young bull on the altar (69:31; 50:14).
69:35 *For God will save Zion and will build the cities of Judah* The psalm ends with hope for the whole nation. I believe God will yet restore Israel in the land, and the children of His servants will live there (Rom 11:26-29).
70:1 *God, hurry to deliver me; LORD, hurry to my help* Psalm 70 repeats Psalm 40:13-17 with small changes. It seems this short, urgent prayer was kept on its own for times when there is no time for a long one.
70:5 *And I am afflicted and needy; God, hurry to me* Sometimes the most honest prayer is the shortest: I am needy, You are my help, please hurry.
71:1 *In You, LORD, I have taken refuge* Psalm 71 has no heading. It is the prayer of an old man (71:9, 18) who has trusted God all his life. Its opening lines echo Psalm 31:1-3.
71:6 *On You I have leaned from the womb* God has carried him since before he could know it. A lifetime of God's faithfulness is the best ground for trusting Him in old age.
71:7 *I have become like a portent to many* His long life of trouble and rescue has made him a sign to others, whether of warning or of God's protection. People watch how believers suffer.
71:9 *Do not cast me away at the time of old age* When strength fails, the fear of being set aside grows. The enemies say God has forsaken him (71:11). God answers with a promise: "to old age I am He, and to gray hair I, I will bear you" (Isa 46:4).
71:18 *until I declare Your arm to a generation* The old man does not ask to be spared so he can rest. He asks to live long enough to tell the next generation what God has done. Older believers have something younger ones need.
71:20 *from the depths of the earth You will again bring me up* God sent him many troubles, and God will lift him up again. This hope reaches past every grave (1 Thess 4:16).

turn around ***and*** comfort me. **22** I also, I will give thanks to You with an instrument of a harp, ***for*** Your faithfulness, my God; I will make music to You with a lyre, Holy One of Israel (Yisra'el). **23** My lips will sing for joy when I make music to You, and my soul, which You have ransomed. **24** Also my tongue all the day will utter Your righteousness, for they are ashamed, for they are abashed, those who seek my harm.

PSALMS 72

Of Solomon (Shelomo). **1** God, give Your judgments to the king, and Your righteousness to the son of ***the*** king. **2** He will judge Your people with righteousness, and Your afflicted with justice. **3** The mountains will bear peace to the people, and the hills, in righteousness. **4** He will judge the afflicted of the people; he will save the sons of the needy, and he will crush the oppressor. **5** They will fear You with the sun and before the moon, generation of generations. **6** He will come down like rain on mown grass, like copious showers, a sprinkling of ***the*** earth. **7** In his days the righteous will flourish, and abundance of peace, until ***there is*** no moon. **8** And let him have dominion from sea to sea, and from ***the*** River to the ends of ***the*** earth. **9** Before him the desert dwellers will bow down, and his enemies will lick dust. **10** The kings of Tarshish and of ***the*** coastlands will render tribute; the kings of Sheba (Sheva) and Seba (Seva) will bring near a gift. **11** And let all kings bow down to him; all nations will serve him. **12** For he will deliver ***the*** needy who cries for help, and the afflicted, and ***him*** who has no helper. **13** He will have pity on ***the*** poor and needy, and the lives of ***the*** needy he will save. **14** From oppression and from violence he will redeem their life, and their blood will be precious in his eyes. **15** And let him live, and let one give to him of the gold of Sheba; and let one pray for him continually; all the day let one bless him. **16** Let there be abundance of grain in the land, on the top of ***the*** mountains; let its fruit wave like Lebanon (Levanon); and let them blossom from ***the*** city like the vegetation of the earth. **17** Let his name be forever; before the sun let his name increase; and let them bless themselves by him; all nations, let them call him blessed.

Closing Praise of Book Two

18 Blessed ***be*** the LORD God, the God of Israel (Yisra'el), who does wonders, He alone. **19** And blessed ***be*** the name of His glory forever, and let all the earth be filled ***with*** His glory. Amen and amen. **20** The prayers of David, son of Jesse (Yishay), are finished.

PSALMS 73

Book Three: The Psalms of Asaph

A psalm of Asaph (Asaf). **1** Surely God ***is*** good to Israel (Yisra'el), to ***the*** pure of heart. **2** And I, my feet had almost turned aside; my steps had nearly been poured out. **3** For I was jealous of the boasters, ***as*** I saw the peace of ***the*** wicked. **4** For there are no pangs at their death, and their body ***is*** fat. **5** In the trouble of mortals they are not, and with mankind they are not stricken. **6** Therefore pride is a necklace ***for*** them; a garment of violence covers them. **7** Their eye comes out from fat; the imaginations of ***the*** heart pass beyond ***bounds***. **8** They mock and speak in evil; ***of*** oppression from on

71:22 1 John 2:20; 2 Kgs 19:22; Ps 89:18
71:23 Ps 103:4; Ps 104:33; Ps 63:5
71:24 Ps 71:13; Ps 71:8,15; Ps 37:30
72:1 Heb 1:8; 1 Chr 22:12,13; Ps 127:1
72:2 John 14:27; Isa 32:1,17; Ps 72:12-14
72:3 Isa 52:7; Ps 72:16; Isa 32:16,17
72:4 Isa 11:4; Ps 72:12-14; Ps 109:31
72:5 1 Sam 12:18; 1 Kgs 3:28; Ps 72:7,17
72:6 Deut 32:2; Hos 6:3; 2 Sam 23:4
72:7 John 14:27; Isa 2:4; Eph 2:14-17
72:8 Acts 13:47; Zech 9:10; Exod 23:31
72:9 Isa 49:23; Mic 7:17; 1 Kgs 9:18,20,21
72:10 Ps 68:29; 1 Kgs 10:1,10,25; Isa 49:7
72:11 Matt 4:9; Ps 138:4,5; Isa 49:22,23
72:12 Job 29:12; Ps 72:4; Ps 10:17
72:13 Ps 109:31; Job 5:15,16; Ezek 34:16
72:14 Ps 116:15; Ps 25:22; Ps 130:8
72:15 Rev 1:5; 1 Kgs 10:14; Jude 1:25
72:16 Job 8:7; Isa 30:23; Isa 32:15,20
72:17 Luke 1:48; Matt 1:23; Acts 15:17
72:18 Luke 1:42; Luke 1:68; Luke 19:38
72:19 Matt 6:13; Rev 1:18; Rev 22:20
72:20 Matt 1:6; Luke 3:32; 2 Sam 23:1
73:1 Matt 5:8; Ps 84:11; Luke 12:32
73:2 Ps 94:18; 1 Sam 2:9; Ps 17:15
73:3 Job 21:7; Ps 37:1,7; Jer 12:1
73:4 Ps 17:14; Job 21:23,24; Job 24:20
73:5 Ps 73:12; Jer 12:1,2; Job 21:6
73:6 Ps 109:18,29; Judg 8:26; Prov 1:9
73:7 Ps 17:10; Job 15:27; Jer 5:28
73:8 Jude 1:16; Ps 53:1-4; Prov 30:13,14

72:0 *Of Solomon* Psalm 72 is a prayer for the king, either by Solomon or for him, perhaps written by David for his son (72:20). It describes the ideal king of David's line.
72:1 *God, give Your judgments to the king* The first request for a king is not wealth or power but justice. Solomon asked God for wisdom to judge the people (1 Kgs 3:9).
72:4 *He will judge the afflicted of the people* The mark of a good king is how he treats the poor and needy. This king defends them and crushes the oppressor (72:12-14).
72:6 *He will come down like rain on mown grass* After the grass was cut, rain made it grow again. A righteous king refreshes his land like that.
72:8 *let him have dominion from sea to sea* No king of Israel ruled the ends of the earth, and Solomon's kingdom did not last forever. These words point beyond Solomon to the Messiah. I believe Christ will reign over all the earth in His kingdom (Zech 9:10; Rev 11:15).
72:10 *the kings of Sheba and Seba will bring near a gift* The queen of Sheba brought gifts to Solomon (1 Kgs 10:1-10). The wise men brought gifts to the child Jesus (Matt 2:11). One day all kings will bow to Him (72:11).
72:17 *Let his name be forever* All nations will be blessed in Him. This is God's promise to Abraham (Gen 12:3), fulfilled in Christ (Gal 3:8).
72:18 *Blessed be the LORD God, the God of Israel, who does wonders, He alone* This blessing closes Book Two (42-72). The book ends with a prayer that all the earth be filled with His glory (Num 14:21; Hab 2:14).
72:20 *The prayers of David, son of Jesse, are finished* This note marks the end of an earlier collection of David's psalms. More psalms of David appear later in the book, so the note is about how the Psalms were gathered, not the end of David's writing.
73:0 *A psalm of Asaph* Asaph was the Levite David put in charge of music before the ark (1 Chr 16:4-5). His family led worship for generations, so some Asaph psalms may come from his sons who carried on his name, but the heading ties this one to him. Psalm 73 opens Book Three (73-89).
73:1 *Surely God is good to Israel, to the pure of heart* Asaph starts with the conclusion, so we will not lose our way while he tells about the time he nearly lost his. The pure of heart are those turned toward God (Matt 5:8).
73:3 *For I was jealous of the boasters, as I saw the peace of the wicked* His feet nearly slipped. The wicked seemed to have shalom, peace, and he did not. Asaph says out loud what many believers only think: the coworker who cheats gets the promotion. Scripture lets us say it.
73:4 *there are no pangs at their death* Or, as some read it, no pains until their death. They seem healthy, well fed and free of ordinary troubles. Pride is worn like a necklace (73:6), and they talk against heaven as if they owned the earth (73:9).

high they speak. **9** They have set their mouth in the heavens, and their tongue walks on the earth. **10** Therefore his people turn back here, and full waters are drained out by them. **11** And they say, "How does God know? And is there knowledge with the Most High?" **12** Look, these ***are the*** wicked, and, always at ease, they have increased wealth. **13** Surely in vain I have kept my heart pure and washed my hands in innocence. **14** And I have been stricken all the day, and my rebuke ***comes*** morning by morning. **15** If I had said, "I will speak thus," look, I would have dealt treacherously with the generation of Your sons. **16** And I thought ***how*** to know this; it ***was*** trouble in my eyes, **17** until I went into the sanctuaries of God; ***then*** I discerned their end. **18** Surely You set them on slippery ***places***; You make them fall to ruins. **19** How they have become a desolation, as ***in*** a moment! They have come to an end; they are finished by terrors. **20** Like a dream after awaking, Lord, when ***You*** rouse ***Yourself***, You will despise their image. **21** When my heart was embittered, and ***in*** my kidneys I was pierced, **22** and I ***was*** stupid and did not know; I was ***like*** beasts with You. **23** And I ***am*** continually with You; You have taken hold of my right hand. **24** With Your counsel You guide me, and afterward You will take me ***to*** glory. **25** Whom have I in the heavens? And with You I desire nothing on the earth. **26** My flesh and my heart have failed; God ***is*** the rock of my heart and my portion forever. **27** For look, those far from You will perish; You have destroyed everyone who prostitutes ***himself*** from You. **28** And I, the nearness of God ***is*** good for me; I have set my refuge in the Lord GOD, to recount all Your works.

PSALMS 74

A Maskil of Asaph (Asaf). **1** Why, God, have You rejected ***us*** perpetually? ***Why*** does Your anger smoke against the sheep of Your pasture? **2** Remember Your congregation, ***which*** You acquired of old, ***which*** You redeemed ***as*** the tribe of Your inheritance, the mountain of Zion (Tsiyon), on which You have dwelt. **3** Lift up Your footsteps to the perpetual ruins; the enemy has done harm to everything in the holy place. **4** Your adversaries have roared in the midst of Your meeting place; they have set up their signs ***as*** signs. **5** It was known like one bringing up axes on high into a thicket of trees. **6** And now its engravings, together, with axe and hatchets they strike down. **7** They have sent Your sanctuary into the

73:9 Jude 1:16; Rev 13:6; Exod 5:2
73:10 Jude 1:16; Ps 75:8
73:11 1 Cor 15:35; Ps 73:9; Ps 10:11
73:12 Ps 52:7; Ps 37:35; Jer 12:1,2
73:13 James 4:8; Job 34:9; Ps 26:6
73:14 Ps 34:19; Ps 94:12; Job 7:3,4,18
73:15 1 Sam 2:24; Mal 2:8; Matt 18:6,7
73:16 John 16:18; Eccl 8:17; Ps 36:6
73:17 Ps 77:13; Ps 27:4; Ps 63:2
73:18 Ps 35:6; Deut 32:35; Jer 23:12
73:19 Luke 4:5; Luke 12:20; Ps 58:9
73:20 Job 20:8; Ps 78:65; Ps 90:5
73:21 Ps 73:3; Ps 37:1,7; Job 16:13
73:22 Ps 92:6; Eccl 3:18; Ps 69:5
73:23 Acts 2:25; Ps 63:8; Ps 16:8
73:24 Ps 32:8; Ps 48:14; Ps 49:15
73:25 Phil 3:8; Ps 63:3; Matt 5:8
73:26 Ps 84:2; Ps 18:2; Isa 40:29-31
73:27 Matt 15:8; Ps 119:155; Exod 34:15
73:28 Luke 9:33; James 4:8; Ps 65:4
74:1 Rom 11:2; Deut 29:20; Ps 79:13
74:2 Exod 15:16; Deut 32:9; Jer 10:16
74:3 Ps 79:1; Ps 44:23,26; Josh 10:24
74:4 Matt 24:15; Lam 2:7; 2 Chr 36:17
74:5 1 Kgs 5:6; 2 Chr 2:14; Jer 46:22,23
74:6 1 Kgs 6:18,29,32,35
74:7 2 Kgs 25:9; Ps 89:39; Isa 64:11

73:10 *Therefore his people turn back here, and full waters are drained out by them* A hard verse in Hebrew, and the meaning is uncertain. Many take it that ordinary people are drawn to the wicked and drink in their words like water, because success makes even cruel people popular. Some take "his people" as God's people turning aside.
73:11 *How does God know* They believe God exists but live as though He does not see or care.
73:13 *Surely in vain I have kept my heart pure* You pray, obey and give, and life gets harder while people who ignore God have it easy. Asaph felt that too, and God put his words in the Bible. Doubt brought to God does not have to be the end of faith.
73:15 *I would have dealt treacherously with the generation of Your sons* Asaph did not hide his struggle from God, but he did not broadcast it to pull others down. It is not betrayal to tell a mature believer you are struggling. That is often how God brings us into the sanctuary. Still, he could not reason his way out alone (73:16).
73:17 *until I went into the sanctuaries of God; then I discerned their end* The turn. In Asaph's day the sanctuary was David's tent for the ark in Jerusalem, where Asaph led worship (1 Chr 16:37). The psalm does not say what happened there. He had looked only at how the wicked live. In God's presence he saw how their story ends. In prayer, God's Word and worship, things upside down start to look right side up.
73:18 *Surely You set them on slippery places* Asaph worried about his own feet (73:2). Now he sees the wicked are the ones on slippery ground, and it can all be gone in a moment (Luke 12:20).
73:20 *Like a dream after awaking* A dream feels real while it lasts. The success of the wicked will look like that when God rises to judge. We can wait for His justice instead of envying them.
73:22 *I was like beasts with You* An animal sees only what is in front of it. Asaph had judged everything by what he could see today. When God shows us we have been wrong, the best thing to do is agree with Him.
73:23 *You have taken hold of my right hand* Even while Asaph was bitter and foolish, God had not let go. Picture a father holding a child's hand on a slippery path.
73:24 *afterward You will take me to glory* Many read this as looking beyond this life: when his days are done, God will take him to Himself. Others take it as honor later in this life. "Take" is the word used of Enoch, "God took him" (Gen 5:24). Asaph has something better than the wicked: God now and God forever.
73:25 *Whom have I in the heavens* Asaph had envied the rich. Now God Himself is what he wants most. Nothing in heaven or on earth compares.
73:26 *God is the rock of my heart and my portion forever* Faith does not make us immune to weakness or death. A portion was a share of the inheritance. The Levites got no land, because the LORD was their portion (Num 18:20; Deut 10:9). Asaph was a Levite and understood. Paul counted all things loss next to knowing Christ (Phil 3:8). If we have God, we have our portion forever.
73:28 *the nearness of God is good for me* "And I" again, as in verse 2, but now with a different ending. The wicked have their goods. Asaph has his good, and it is God. Afraid in verse 15 of hurting God's people, he now has something to tell that will help them: this psalm.
74:1 *Why, God, have You rejected us perpetually* Psalm 74 mourns the burning of God's sanctuary (74:7). That fits the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in 586 B.C. (2 Kgs 25:8-9), so it was most likely written then by one of Asaph's descendants, who kept his name as temple singers (Ezra 2:41).
74:2 *Remember Your congregation, which You acquired of old* The plea rests on what God has already done: He bought this people, redeemed them and dwelt among them on Zion. Will He let His own possession lie in ruins?
74:4 *Your adversaries have roared in the midst of Your meeting place* Enemy soldiers shouted in the holy place, hacked the carved woodwork like woodcutters in a forest (74:5-6), and set it on fire. The writer saw it happen.

fire; to the ground they have profaned the tabernacle of Your name. **8** They said in their heart, "Let us oppress them together." They burned all the meeting places of God in the land. **9** Our signs we have not seen; there is no longer a prophet, and there is none with us who knows how long. **10** How long, God, will the adversary taunt? Will the enemy spurn Your name forever? **11** Why do You draw back Your hand, even Your right hand? From the midst of Your bosom, destroy ***them***! **12** And God ***is*** my King from of old, working salvations in the midst of the earth. **13** You, You divided the sea by Your strength; You shattered the heads of the monsters on the waters. **14** You, You crushed the heads of Leviathan; You gave him ***as*** food to a people, to desert dwellers. **15** You, You broke open spring and torrent; You, You dried up ever-flowing rivers. **16** To You ***belongs the*** day; also to You ***belongs the*** night; You, You established ***the*** luminary and ***the*** sun. **17** You, You set all the boundaries of ***the*** earth; summer and winter, You, You formed them.
18 Remember this: ***the*** enemy has taunted, LORD, and a foolish people has spurned Your name. **19** Do not give the soul of Your turtledove to the wild beast; the life of Your afflicted do not forget forever. **20** Look to the covenant, for the dark places of ***the*** land are full ***of*** habitations of violence. **21** Let not the oppressed turn back humiliated; let the afflicted and needy praise Your name. **22** Arise, God, contend ***for*** Your cause; remember Your reproach from a fool all the day. **23** Do not forget the voice of Your adversaries, the uproar of those who rise against You, which goes up continually.

PSALMS 75

*To the choirmaster, **on** "Do Not Destroy." A psalm of Asaph (Asaf), a song.* **1** We give thanks to You, God, we give thanks, and Your name ***is*** near; they recount Your wonders. **2** When I take ***the*** appointed time, I, I will judge ***with*** uprightness. **3** ***The*** earth and all its inhabitants are melting; I, I have made its pillars firm. Selah. **4** I said to the boasters, "Do not boast," and to the wicked, "Do not lift up a horn. **5** Do not lift up your horn on high; ***do not*** speak with an arrogant neck." **6** For not from ***the*** east and from ***the*** west, and not from ***the*** wilderness ***comes*** lifting up. **7** For God ***is*** judge; this ***one*** He brings low, and this ***one*** He lifts up. **8** For a cup ***is*** in the hand of the LORD, and the wine foams; ***it is*** full ***of*** mixture, and He pours out from it; surely its dregs they will drain ***and*** drink, all the wicked of ***the*** earth. **9** And I, I will declare ***it*** forever; I will sing praises to the God of Jacob (Ya'aqov). **10** And all the horns of ***the*** wicked I will cut off; the horns of ***the*** righteous will be lifted up.

PSALMS 76

To the choirmaster, with stringed instruments. A psalm of Asaph (Asaf), a song. **1** God ***is*** known in Judah (Yehuda); in Israel (Yisra'el) His name ***is*** great. **2** And His lair was in Salem (Shalem), and His den in Zion (Tsiyon). **3** There He shattered the flames of ***the*** bow, shield and sword and battle. Selah. **4** You ***are*** resplendent, majestic, more than ***the*** mountains of prey. **5** The stout of heart were plundered; they slumbered their sleep; and all the men of strength did not find their hands. **6** From Your rebuke, God of Jacob (Ya'aqov), both chariot and horse ***were*** cast into deep sleep. **7** You, You ***are*** to be feared; and who will stand before You once Your anger ***is roused***? **8** From heaven You made ***Your*** sentence heard; ***the*** earth feared and was quiet, **9** when God arose for judgment,

74:8 Ps 83:4; Ps 137:7; Esth 3:8,9
74:9 1 Sam 3:1; Amos 8:11; Exod 12:13
74:10 Ps 13:1,2; Ps 79:4,5; Ps 89:46,50,51
74:11 Lam 2:3; Isa 64:12; Ps 44:23
74:12 Ps 44:4; Exod 19:5,6; Num 23:21,22
74:13 Exod 14:21; Ps 78:13; Ezek 29:3
74:14 Isa 27:1; Ps 104:25,26; Job 3:8
74:15 Num 20:11; Ps 105:41; Exod 17:5,6
74:16 Ps 136:7-9; Gen 1:14-18; Gen 1:3-5
74:17 Deut 32:8; Acts 17:26; Gen 8:22
74:18 Ps 39:8; Rev 16:19; Ps 74:22
74:19 Song 2:14; Ps 68:10; Ps 68:13
74:20 Ps 106:45; Gen 17:7,8; Ps 89:28,34-36,39
74:21 Ps 9:18; Ps 12:5; Ps 102:19-21
74:22 Ps 74:18; Ps 9:19,20; Ps 79:9,10
74:23 Isa 37:29; Ps 10:11,12; Ps 13:1
75:1 Ps 76:1; Ps 138:2; Ps 57:1
75:2 Ps 78:70-72; Ps 101:2; 2 Sam 2:4
75:3 1 Sam 2:8; Ps 60:1-3; Ps 78:60-72
75:4 Zech 1:21; Ps 82:2-8; Ps 94:8
75:5 Exod 32:9; Deut 31:27; 2 Chr 30:8
75:7 Ps 50:6; Ps 58:11; Ps 113:7,8
75:8 Rev 14:10; Mark 10:38; John 18:11
75:9 Ps 9:14; Ps 104:33; Ps 145:1,2
75:10 Ps 89:17; Ps 92:10; Jer 48:25
76:1 Ps 4:1; Ps 54:1; Ps 61:1
76:2 Heb 7:1; Heb 7:2; Gen 14:18
76:3 Ps 46:9; Ezek 39:3,4,9,10; 2 Chr 14:12,13
76:4 Ezek 19:1-4,6; Jer 4:7; Ezek 38:12,13
76:5 Isa 46:12; Ps 13:3; Nah 3:18
76:6 Exod 15:1,21; Ps 80:16; Ps 18:15
76:7 Nah 1:6; Ps 89:7; Jer 10:7-10
76:8 2 Chr 20:29,30; Hab 2:20; Exod 19:10
76:9 Ps 9:7-9; Ps 72:4; Ps 82:2-5

74:9 *there is no longer a prophet, and there is none with us who knows how long* The worst of it was the silence. No sign, no prophet's word. Jeremiah had in fact spoken of seventy years (Jer 25:11; 29:10), but in the darkness of those days few understood it.
74:12 *And God is my King from of old* The turn of the psalm. The writer looks past the ruins to God's past works: dividing the sea and creating day and night, summer and winter (74:13-17).
74:14 *You crushed the heads of Leviathan* Leviathan was a great sea monster, a picture of chaos and of proud enemies. Here it most likely stands for Egypt, whose army God crushed at the Red Sea (Isa 51:9-10). The God who did that can deal with Babylon.
74:19 *Do not give the soul of Your turtledove to the wild beast* God's people are pictured as a small, defenseless dove among beasts of prey.
74:20 *Look to the covenant* The final appeal is to God's covenant promises. He bound Himself to His people, and He does not break His word (Lev 26:44-45).
75:1 *Your name is near* God is close to His people and active. They have seen His wonders and tell of them.
75:2 *When I take the appointed time, I, I will judge with uprightness* God speaks. He sets the time for judgment, and it will come exactly when He chooses. Even when the earth seems to melt, He holds its pillars steady (75:3).
75:4 *Do not lift up a horn* A horn stood for strength and pride, like a bull tossing its head. Promotion does not come from east or west or anywhere on earth (75:6). God brings one down and lifts another up (75:7; 1 Sam 2:7).
75:8 *For a cup is in the hand of the LORD* The cup of foaming wine is a picture of God's wrath that the wicked must drink to the dregs (Jer 25:15; Rev 14:10). In Gethsemane Jesus spoke of the cup He would drink (Matt 26:39). He drank the cup of wrath for all who trust in Him.
76:2 *His lair was in Salem, and His den in Zion* Salem is an old name for Jerusalem (Gen 14:18). God is pictured as a lion who has made Zion His home and defends it.
76:5 *The stout of heart were plundered; they slumbered their sleep* The enemy army fell into a sleep from which it did not wake. The Greek Old Testament heading ties this psalm to the Assyrians, and many see the night the angel of the LORD struck their camp (2 Kgs 19:35).

to save all the humble of ***the*** earth. Selah. **10** For the wrath of mankind will praise You; the remnant of wraths You will gird on. **11** Vow and pay to the LORD your God; let all who ***are*** around Him bring a gift to the Awesome ***One***. **12** He cuts off the spirit of rulers; ***He is*** to be feared by the kings of ***the*** earth.

PSALMS 77

To the choirmaster, on Jeduthun (Yedutun). Of Asaph (Asaf), a psalm. **1** My voice ***is*** to God, and I will cry out; my voice ***is*** to God, and He will give ear to me. **2** In the day of my distress I sought the Lord; my hand was stretched out by night and did not grow numb; my soul refused to be comforted. **3** I will remember God and moan; I will muse, and my spirit faints. Selah. **4** You held the eyelids of my eyes ***open***; I was troubled and did not speak. **5** I thought about the days of old, the years of ancient times. **6** I will remember my song in the night; with my heart I will muse, and my spirit searched. **7** Will the Lord reject forever? And will He not again show favor anymore? **8** Has His steadfast love ceased forever? Has ***His*** word come to an end for generation and generation? **9** Has God forgotten to be gracious? Or has He shut up His compassion in anger? Selah. **10** And I said, "This ***is*** my wounding: the years of the right hand of the Most High." **11** I will remember the deeds of ***the*** LORD; for I will remember Your wonders from of old. **12** And I will meditate on all Your work, and on Your doings I will muse. **13** God, Your way ***is*** in holiness; who ***is*** a great god like God? **14** You ***are*** the God who does wonders; You have made known Your strength among the peoples. **15** You redeemed Your people with ***Your*** arm, the sons of Jacob (Ya'aqov) and Joseph (Yosef). Selah. **16** The waters saw You, God; the waters saw You; they writhed; also the deeps trembled. **17** The clouds poured out water; the skies gave forth a sound; also Your arrows went about. **18** The sound of Your thunder ***was*** in the whirlwind; lightnings lit up the world; the earth trembled and shook. **19** In the sea ***was*** Your way, and Your path in many waters, and Your footprints were not known. **20** You led Your people like a flock by the hand of Moses (Moshe) and Aaron (Aharon).

PSALMS 78

A Maskil of Asaph (Asaf). **1** Give ear, my people, ***to*** my law; incline your ear to the words of my mouth. **2** I will open my mouth in a parable; I will pour forth riddles from of old, **3** which we have heard and known, and our fathers have recounted to us. **4** We will not hide ***them*** from their sons, recounting to a later generation the praises of the LORD, and His might and His wonders which He has done. **5** And He established a testimony in Jacob (Ya'aqov), and appointed a law in Israel (Yisra'el), which He commanded our fathers to make known to their sons, **6** so that a later generation might know, sons ***who*** will be born; they will arise and recount ***them*** to their sons, **7** that they may set their confidence in God, and not forget the deeds of God, and observe His commandments, **8** and not be like their fathers, a generation stubborn and rebellious, a generation ***that*** did not make its heart steadfast, and its spirit was not faithful with God. **9** The sons of Ephraim (Efrayim), armed, shooters of ***the*** bow, turned ***back*** on ***the*** day of battle. **10** They did not keep the covenant of God, and in His law they refused to walk, **11** and they forgot His doings and His wonders which He had shown

76:10 Rev 11:18; Acts 12:8; Gen 37:18-20,26-28
76:11 Ps 50:14; Ps 68:29; Eccl 5:4-6
76:12 Rev 6:15; Rev 19:19; Ps 68:12,35
77:1 Ps 3:4; Ps 39:1; Ps 50:1
77:2 Ps 50:15; Isa 26:9,16; Gen 37:35
77:3 Ps 61:2; Job 6:4; Job 23:15,16
77:4 Ps 6:6; Esth 6:1; Job 7:13-15
77:5 Ps 143:5; Deut 32:7; Isa 51:9
77:6 Ps 4:4; Ps 42:8; Job 35:10
77:7 Ps 85:1,5; Ps 13:1,2; Ps 37:24
77:8 Num 23:19; Rom 9:6; Isa 27:11
77:9 Isa 49:14,15; Isa 40:27; Isa 63:15
77:10 Ps 31:22; Ps 73:22; Ps 116:11
77:11 Ps 28:5; Ps 78:11; Ps 111:4
77:12 Ps 104:34; Ps 143:5; Ps 71:24
77:13 Ps 73:17; Exod 15:11; Ps 63:2
77:14 Acts 13:17; Ps 136:4; Exod 15:11
77:15 Acts 13:17; Exod 6:6; Ps 136:11,12
77:16 Acts 13:17; Exod 14:21; Josh 3:15,16
77:17 Ps 18:14; Ps 68:8,9; Ps 144:6
77:18 Rev 11:19; Ps 97:4; Ps 29:3-9
77:19 Hab 3:15; Neh 9:11; Nah 1:3,4
77:20 Acts 7:35; Ps 78:52; Exod 13:21
78:1 Isa 51:4; Isa 55:3; Prov 8:4-6
78:2 Matt 13:35; Matt 13:34; Ps 49:4
78:3 Ps 44:1; Ps 48:8; Exod 12:26,27
78:4 Deut 11:19; Joel 1:3; Ps 145:4-6
78:5 Ps 81:5; Ps 147:19; Deut 4:45
78:6 Ps 102:18; Ps 48:13; Ps 71:18
78:7 Deut 5:29; Deut 4:9; Ps 40:4
78:8 Acts 7:51; Luke 1:17; Heb 3:10
78:9 Deut 1:41-44; Josh 17:16-18; 1 Sam 4:10
78:10 Heb 8:9; Deut 31:16,20; Judg 2:10-12
78:11 Heb 8:9; Ps 106:13,21,22; Ps 78:7

76:10 *For the wrath of mankind will praise You* Even human rage ends up serving God's purpose and bringing Him glory. The rulers raged against Jesus, and God turned the cross into salvation (Acts 4:27-28).
77:2 *my soul refused to be comforted* Asaph prays all night, and nothing helps. Thinking about God at first only makes him moan (77:3). Some seasons of grief are like that.
77:7 *Will the Lord reject forever* Six questions in three verses (77:7-9). Has His steadfast love ended? Has He forgotten to be gracious? Asaph asks what every sufferer fears. The right answer to each is no, but he has to get there.
77:10 *the years of the right hand of the Most High* The turning point, though the line is hard to translate. Asaph decides to look back at the years when God's right hand worked for His people. Memory becomes his medicine.
77:11 *I will remember the deeds of the LORD* Asaph stops looking only at his trouble and starts looking at God's works. When feelings fail, the facts of what God has done still stand.
77:19 *In the sea was Your way* God led Israel through the Red Sea on a path no one could see before He made it, and no one could trace after. His ways are often hidden, but He leads His people safely, like a flock, by the hand of His shepherds (77:20).
78:1 *Give ear, my people, to my law* Psalm 78 is a history lesson in song, from Egypt to David. "Law" here is teaching. Asaph tells the story so each generation will learn from the failures of the last.
78:2 *I will open my mouth in a parable* A parable here is a lesson drawn from history, with riddles about why Israel kept failing. Matthew says Jesus' teaching in parables fulfilled this verse: "I will open My mouth in parables" (Matt 13:35).
78:4 *We will not hide them from their sons* God commanded parents to teach their children His works (Deut 6:6-7). Faith is passed down by telling the story. Children need to hear what God has done, so they will "set their confidence in God" (78:7).
78:9 *The sons of Ephraim, armed, shooters of the bow, turned back on the day of battle* Ephraim was the leading tribe of the north, where the tabernacle stood at Shiloh. Well armed, they still turned and ran, because they had forgotten God's covenant (78:10-11). Weapons cannot replace faithfulness.

them. **12** Before their fathers He did wonders in the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim), the field of Zoan (Tso'an). **13** He split open ***the*** sea and brought them through, and He made ***the*** waters stand like a heap. **14** And He guided them by the cloud by day, and all the night by the light of fire. **15** He split open rocks in the wilderness, and He gave ***them*** drink as ***from*** deeps, abundantly. **16** And He brought out streams from a crag, and He made waters flow down like rivers. **17** And they added again to sin against Him, rebelling against the Most High in the dry land. **18** And they tested God in their heart by asking food for their appetite. **19** And they spoke against God; they said, "Is God able to arrange a table in the wilderness? **20** Look, He struck a rock, and waters flowed out, and torrents overflowed; is He able also to give bread? Or will He prepare meat for His people?" **21** Therefore the LORD heard and was furious, and fire was kindled against Jacob, and also anger went up against Israel, **22** for they did not believe in God, and did not trust in His salvation. **23** And He commanded ***the*** skies above, and the doors of heaven He opened. **24** And He rained down on them manna to eat, and the grain of heaven He gave to them. **25** ***Each*** man ate the bread of mighty ***ones***; He sent them provision to satiety. **26** He made an east wind set out in the heavens, and by His strength He drove the south wind. **27** And He rained down on them meat like the dust, and winged birds like the sand of ***the*** seas. **28** And He made ***them*** fall in the midst of his camp, all around his dwellings. **29** And they ate and were satisfied exceedingly, and their desire He brought to them. **30** They were not estranged from their desire; their food ***was*** still in their mouth, **31** and the anger of God went up against them, and He killed among their robust ones, and the young men of Israel He made bow down. **32** In all this they sinned still, and did not believe in His wonders. **33** And He brought their days to an end in futility, and their years in sudden terror. **34** When He killed them, then they sought Him, and they returned and sought God earnestly. **35** And they remembered that God ***was*** their rock, and God Most High their redeemer. **36** And they deceived Him with their mouth, and with their tongue they lied to Him. **37** And their heart was not steadfast with Him, and they were not faithful in His covenant. **38** And He, compassionate, would make atonement for iniquity and not destroy; and many times He turned back His anger and did not stir up all His rage. **39** And He remembered that they ***were*** flesh, a wind that goes and does not return. **40** How often they rebelled against Him in the wilderness ***and*** grieved Him in the wasteland! **41** And again they tested God, and they pained the Holy One of Israel. **42** They did not remember His hand, the day when He ransomed them from ***the*** adversary, **43** when He set His signs in Egypt, and His portents in the field of Zoan. **44** And He turned their canals into blood, and their streams, they could not drink. **45** He sent among them swarms, and they
devoured them, and frogs, and they destroyed them. **46** And He gave their produce to the grasshopper, and their toil to the locust. **47** He killed their vines with hail, and their sycamore figs with frost. **48** And He delivered up their cattle to the hail, and their livestock to the flames. **49** He sent on them the burning of His anger, fury and indignation and distress, a band of angels of harm. **50** He leveled a path for His anger; He did not withhold their soul from death, and their life He delivered up to the pestilence. **51** And He struck every firstborn in Egypt, the beginning of ***their*** vigor in the tents of

78:12 Acts 7:36; Acts 13:17; Num 13:22
78:13 Acts 13:17; Ps 66:6; Ps 106:9,10
78:14 Ps 105:39; Exod 14:24; Exod 13:21,22
78:15 John 7:38; Ps 105:41; Ps 114:8
78:16 Ps 105:41; Deut 8:15; Deut 9:21
78:17 Matt 4:3; Ps 78:32; Ps 95:8-10
78:18 Matt 4:7; Heb 3:8; Num 11:4
78:19 Acts 13:18; Num 21:5; Num 11:4,13
78:20 1 Cor 10:4; Num 20:11; Gen 18:12-14
78:21 Jude 1:5; Ps 78:31; Num 11:10
78:22 Jude 1:5; Ps 106:24; Isa 7:9
78:23 Gen 7:11; Mal 3:10; Ps 33:9
78:24 John 6:31; John 6:32; John 6:33
78:25 John 6:31; Ps 103:20; Exod 16:8
78:26 Acts 27:13; Num 11:31; Ps 135:7
78:27 Exod 16:12,13; Num 11:18,19,32
78:29 Ps 106:15; Num 11:20
78:30 Num 11:33,34; Num 22:20-22; Prov 1:32
78:32 Num 14:1-45; Num 16:1-17; Ps 78:22
78:33 Num 14:29,35; Num 26:64,65; Ps 90:7-9
78:34 Hos 5:15; Num 21:7; Judg 3:8,9,12-15
78:35 Acts 16:17; Heb 7:1; Deut 32:4,15,30,31
78:36 Ezek 33:31; Isa 29:13; Ps 106:12,13
78:37 Acts 8:21; Ps 78:8; Ps 119:80
78:38 Num 14:18-20; Isa 48:9; Ps 106:43-45
78:39 Gen 6:3; Job 7:7,16; James 4:14
78:40 Acts 13:18; Eph 4:30; Ps 95:8-10
78:41 Heb 3:8; Matt 4:7; Num 14:4,22
78:42 Acts 13:17; Ps 78:11,21,22; Ps 136:10-15
78:43 Acts 7:36; Acts 13:17; Rev 11:8
78:44 Rev 16:6; Ps 105:29; Exod 7:17-21
78:45 Exod 8:21-24; Ps 105:30; Exod 8:2-15
78:46 Ps 105:34,35; Exod 10:12-15; Joel 1:4-7
78:47 Ps 105:32,33; Exod 9:18-34
78:48 Exod 9:28
78:49 Ps 11:6; Job 20:23; Isa 42:25
78:50 2 Pet 2:4; Job 27:22; Ezek 5:11
78:51 Acts 7:36; Acts 13:17; Rev 11:8

78:12 *the field of Zoan* Zoan was a city in the eastern Nile delta, the region where Israel lived in Egypt.
78:15 *He split open rocks in the wilderness* God gave water from the rock (Exod 17:6; Num 20:11). Paul says "the rock was the Christ" (1 Cor 10:4), the source of life for His people.
78:19 *Is God able to arrange a table in the wilderness* After seeing the sea split and water flow from rock, they still doubted. Unbelief has a short memory. Testing God means demanding that He prove Himself on our terms.
78:24 *He rained down on them manna to eat, and the grain of heaven He gave to them* The crowd quoted this to Jesus, and He answered that His Father gives "the true bread out of heaven" (John 6:31-32). Jesus is the bread of life.
78:27 *He rained down on them meat like the dust* God gave the quail they craved, and judgment fell while the meat was still in their mouths (Num 11:31-34). Getting what we demand from God is not always a blessing.
78:34 *When He killed them, then they sought Him* They turned to God when disaster struck, but only with their lips (78:36-37). Repentance that lasts only as long as the trouble is not true repentance.
78:38 *And He, compassionate, would make atonement for iniquity and not destroy* Here is the heart of the psalm. Israel kept failing, and God kept forgiving. He remembered they were frail flesh, a passing breath (78:39; 103:14).
78:41 *they pained the Holy One of Israel* Sin grieves God. "Holy One of Israel" is Isaiah's favorite name for God. Paul warns believers not to grieve the Holy Spirit (Eph 4:30).
78:44 *He turned their canals into blood* Verses 43-51 recall the plagues on Egypt, ending with the death of the firstborn (Exod 7-12). "A band of angels of harm" (78:49) were messengers of God's judgment. The plagues were God's justice on a nation that enslaved and drowned Israel's sons and refused to let them go.

Ham (Cham). **52** And He led out His people like sheep, and drove them like a flock in the wilderness. **53** And He guided them in security, and they did not dread; and the sea covered their enemies. **54** And He brought them to the territory of His holiness, the mountain which His right hand had acquired. **55** And He drove out nations before them, and allotted them by a line of inheritance, and made the tribes of Israel dwell in their tents. **56** And they tested and rebelled against God Most High, and His testimonies they did not keep. **57** And they turned away and acted treacherously like their fathers; they were turned like a bow of deceit. **58** And they provoked Him to anger with their high places, and with their carved images they made Him jealous. **59** God heard and was furious, and He rejected Israel exceedingly. **60** And He abandoned the tabernacle of Shiloh (Shilo), the tent ***which*** He had pitched among mankind. **61** And He gave His strength to captivity, and His splendor into the hand of an adversary. **62** And He delivered up His people to the sword, and against His inheritance He was furious. **63** Fire consumed its young men, and its virgins were not praised. **64** Its priests fell by the sword, and its widows did not weep. **65** And the Lord awoke like one asleep, like a warrior overcome by wine. **66** And He struck His adversaries backward; He gave them an everlasting reproach. **67** And He rejected the tent of Joseph (Yosef), and the tribe of Ephraim He did not choose. **68** And He chose the tribe of Judah (Yehuda), the mountain of Zion (Tsiyon), which He loved. **69** And He built His sanctuary like ***the*** heights, like ***the*** earth ***which*** He has founded forever. **70** And He chose David His servant, and took him from the folds of ***the*** sheep. **71** From after the nursing ***ewes*** He brought him to shepherd Jacob His people, and Israel His inheritance. **72** And he shepherded them according to the integrity of his heart, and with the skill of his hands he guided them.

PSALMS 79

A psalm of Asaph (Asaf). **1** God, ***the*** nations have come into Your inheritance; they have made the temple of Your holiness unclean; they have made Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) into heaps of ruins. **2** They have given the corpses of Your servants ***as*** food to the birds of the heavens, the flesh of Your faithful ones to the living things of the earth. **3** They have poured out their blood like water all around Jerusalem, and there is no one burying ***them***. **4** We have become a reproach to our neighbors, a mockery and derision to those around us. **5** Until when, LORD? Will You be angry forever? Will Your jealousy burn like fire? **6** Pour out Your rage on the nations that do not know You, and on ***the*** kingdoms that have not called on Your name. **7** For ***one*** has devoured Jacob (Ya'aqov), and they have devastated his habitation. **8** Do not remember against us former iniquities; let Your compassion come quickly to meet us, for we have been brought very low. **9** Help us, God of our salvation, on account of the glory of Your name; and deliver us, and make atonement for our sins for the sake of Your name. **10** Why should the nations say, "Where ***is*** their God?" Let the vengeance of the blood of Your servants which has been poured out be known among the nations before our eyes. **11** Let the groaning of the prisoner come before You; according to the greatness of Your arm, leave remaining the sons of death. **12** And repay to our neighbors sevenfold into their bosom their reproach with which they have reproached You, Lord. **13** And we, Your people and the sheep of Your pasture, will give thanks to You forever; to generation and generation we will recount Your praise.

78:52 Acts 13:17; Ps 77:20; Neh 9:12
78:53 Acts 13:17; Heb 8:9; Exod 14:27,28
78:54 Heb 8:9; Ps 44:3; Exod 15:13,17
78:55 Acts 7:45; Ps 44:2; Josh 13:7
78:56 Heb 7:1; Judg 2:11,12; Ps 78:40,41
78:57 Heb 8:9; Hos 7:16; Ezek 20:27,28
78:58 Lev 26:30; Deut 12:2,4; 1 Kgs 11:7,10
78:59 Ps 106:40; Ps 11:4; Ps 14:2-5
78:60 Josh 18:1; 1 Sam 4:4-11; Jer 26:6-9
78:61 Ps 132:8; Judg 18:30; 2 Chr 6:41
78:62 1 Sam 4:2,10,11; Ps 89:38; Isa 64:9
78:63 Jer 7:34; Jer 16:9; Ps 78:21
78:64 Job 27:15; 1 Sam 4:11,17; Ezek 24:23
78:65 Ps 44:23; Ps 7:6; Isa 51:9
78:66 1 Sam 5:6; 1 Sam 6:4; Job 40:12
78:67 1 Sam 6:21; 2 Sam 6:2,17; 1 Sam 7:1
78:68 Ps 87:2; Gen 49:8-10; Ruth 4:17-22
78:69 1 Kgs 9:8; 2 Chr 3:4; 1 Chr 29:1,19
78:70 Acts 13:22; 1 Sam 16:11,12; Ps 89:19,20
78:71 Matt 2:6; John 21:16; Acts 7:46
78:72 Acts 13:22; Matt 2:6; 1 Kgs 9:4
79:1 Luke 21:24; Lam 1:10; 2 Chr 36:19
79:2 Jer 7:33; Jer 16:4; Jer 34:20
79:3 Matt 23:35; Rev 16:6; Rev 18:24
79:4 Ps 80:6; Ps 44:13,14; Ps 89:41
79:5 Rev 6:10; Ps 89:46; Ps 74:1,9,10
79:6 Rom 10:13; Rev 16:8; Jer 10:25
79:7 Ps 80:13; Isa 9:12; Jer 50:7
79:8 Isa 64:9; Ps 116:6; Ps 142:6
79:9 2 Chr 14:11; Jer 14:7,21; Ps 25:11
79:10 Rev 6:10; Ps 42:3,10; Ps 115:2
79:11 Ps 102:20; Ps 12:5; Ps 69:33
79:12 Gen 4:15; Jer 32:18; Lev 26:21,28
79:13 Ps 74:1; Ps 95:7; Isa 43:21

78:52 *He led out His people like sheep* After all the judgment comes the Shepherd. God brought His flock safely through the wilderness to His holy land (78:54).
78:60 *He abandoned the tabernacle of Shiloh* When Israel turned to idols, God let the Philistines capture the ark (1 Sam 4). The priests Hophni and Phinehas fell, and Phinehas' widow died giving birth (1 Sam 4:11, 19-22). Later Shiloh was a ruin (Jer 7:12). God's presence is not a lucky charm.
78:65 *the Lord awoke like one asleep* A bold picture. God seemed inactive while His people suffered, and then He rose up and struck their enemies (1 Sam 5-7).
78:68 *He chose the tribe of Judah, the mountain of Zion, which He loved* God moved the center of worship from Ephraim's Shiloh to Judah's Zion. This was His choice of grace, not Judah's merit.
78:70 *He chose David His servant, and took him from the folds of the sheep* The story ends with a shepherd boy made king (1 Sam 16:11-13), who shepherded Israel with integrity and skill. David points to his greater Son, the Good Shepherd and King, who will never fail His flock (John 10:11; Ezek 34:23).
79:1 *the nations have come into Your inheritance* Like Psalm 74, this is a lament over Jerusalem's fall to Babylon in 586 B.C. The temple was defiled, the city was rubble and the dead lay unburied (79:2-3).
79:6 *Pour out Your rage on the nations that do not know You* A prayer for judgment on the nations that destroyed God's people and mocked His name. Jeremiah prays almost the same words (Jer 10:25). The concern is God's honor: "Why should the nations say, Where is their God?" (79:10). See the introduction on the hard lines.
79:8 *Do not remember against us former iniquities* The people know the fall of Jerusalem came because of sin. They do not plead innocence. They plead for mercy "for the sake of Your name" (79:9).
79:13 *Your people and the sheep of Your pasture* Even in ruins, they still belong to their Shepherd. The psalm ends in a promise to praise Him through every generation.

PSALMS 80

To the choirmaster, on "Lilies," a testimony. Of Asaph (Asaf), a psalm. **1** Shepherd of Israel (Yisra'el), give ear, You who lead Joseph (Yosef) like a flock; You who sit ***above*** the cherubim, shine forth! **2** Before Ephraim (Efrayim) and Benjamin (Binyamin) and Manasseh (Menashe), stir up Your might, and come for salvation for us. **3** God, restore us, and make Your face shine, and let us be saved. **4** LORD God of armies, until when have You smoked ***with anger*** against the prayer of Your people? **5** You have fed them the bread of tears, and You have made them drink tears ***by*** the third ***measure***. **6** You make us a contention to our neighbors, and our enemies mock among themselves. **7** God of armies, restore us, and make Your face shine, and let us be saved. **8** You uprooted a vine from Egypt (Mitsrayim); You drove out nations and planted it. **9** You cleared ***the ground*** before it, and it made its roots take root, and it filled the land. **10** ***The*** mountains were covered ***with*** its shade, and its branches ***were like*** the cedars of God. **11** It stretched out its branches to ***the*** sea, and its young shoots to ***the*** River. **12** Why have You broken down its walls, so that all who pass by on the road pluck it? **13** The boar from the forest eats it away, and the moving creatures of the field graze on it. **14** God of armies, return, please; look from heaven and see, and attend to this vine, **15** and the root which Your right hand planted, and ***look*** on the son ***whom*** You made strong for Yourself. **16** ***It is*** burned with fire; ***it is*** cut down; they perish from the rebuke of Your face. **17** Let Your hand be on the man of Your right hand, on the son of mankind ***whom*** You made strong for Yourself. **18** And we will not turn back from You; give us life, and we will call on Your name. **19** LORD God of armies, restore us; make Your face shine, and let us be saved.

PSALMS 81

To the choirmaster, on the Gittith. Of Asaph (Asaf). **1** Sing for joy to God our strength; shout for joy to the God of Jacob (Ya'aqov). **2** Lift up music, and sound a tambourine, a pleasant lyre with a harp. **3** Blow a ram's horn at the new moon, at the full moon, for the day of our festival. **4** For it ***is*** a statute for Israel (Yisra'el), an ordinance of the God of Jacob. **5** He set it ***as*** a testimony in Joseph (Yehosef) when He went out over the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim). I heard a language I did not know: **6** "I removed his shoulder from the burden; his hands passed away from the basket. **7** In the distress you called, and I rescued you; I answered you in the hiding place of thunder; I tested you at the waters of Meribah (Meriva). Selah. **8** Hear, My people, and let Me testify against you; Israel, if you would listen to Me! **9** There shall not be a strange god among you, and you shall not bow down to a foreign god. **10** I ***am*** the LORD your God, who brought you up from the land of Egypt; open your mouth wide, and I will fill it. **11** And My people did not listen to My voice, and Israel was not willing toward Me. **12** And I gave them over to the stubbornness of their heart; they walked in their own counsels. **13** If only My people were listening to Me, ***if*** Israel would walk in My ways! **14** In a little ***while*** I would subdue their enemies, and against their adversaries I would turn My hand. **15** Those who hate the LORD would cringe before Him, and their time would be forever. **16** And He would feed him from the fat of the wheat, and from ***the*** rock I would satisfy you ***with*** honey."

80:1 Heb 13:20; 1 Pet 2:25; 1 Pet 5:4
80:2 Num 2:18-24; Ps 35:23; Num 10:22-24
80:3 Ps 85:4; Lam 5:21; Ps 4:6
80:4 Ps 85:5; Isa 58:2,3,6-9; Lam 3:44
80:5 Ps 42:3; Isa 30:20; Ps 102:9
80:6 Ps 79:4; Jer 15:10; Ps 44:13,14
80:7 Ps 80:3,19; Ps 51:10; Luke 1:16
80:8 John 15:1; Acts 7:45; Jer 2:21
80:9 John 15:1; Josh 24:12; Ps 105:44
80:10 John 15:1; Ps 104:16
80:11 John 15:1; Ps 72:8; Gen 15:18
80:12 John 15:1; Isa 5:5; Ps 89:40,41
80:13 John 15:1; 2 Kgs 18:1-19; 2 Kgs 24:1-25
80:14 John 15:1; Isa 63:15,17; Ps 90:13
80:15 John 15:1; John 15:6; Ps 80:8
80:16 John 15:6; John 15:1; Ps 39:11
80:17 Ps 89:21; Ps 80:15; Ps 110:1
80:18 Ps 79:13; John 6:66-69; Heb 10:38,39
80:19 Ps 80:3,7; Jer 3:22,23; Ps 80:1
81:1 Matt 22:32; Ps 66:1; Ps 8:1
81:2 Ps 92:3; Ps 149:1-3; Ps 95:1,2
81:3 2 Chr 8:13; Ps 98:6; Num 10:1-9
81:5 Ps 114:1; Deut 28:49; Jer 5:15
81:6 Isa 9:4; Isa 10:27; Exod 1:14
81:7 Ps 50:15; Exod 19:19; Num 20:13,24
81:8 Ps 50:7; Deut 32:46; Isa 55:3,4
81:9 Deut 32:12; Isa 43:12; Exod 20:3-5
81:10 Rev 21:6; Exod 20:2; Ps 37:3,4
81:11 John 5:40; Acts 7:42; Exod 32:1
81:12 Rom 1:24,26,27; Jer 7:24; Acts 7:42
81:13 Deut 5:29; Isa 48:18; Matt 23:37
81:14 Amos 1:8; Num 14:9,45; Josh 23:13
81:15 Luke 20:20; Rom 1:30; Ps 83:2-18
81:16 Ps 147:14; Deut 32:13,14; Job 29:6

80:1 *Shepherd of Israel, give ear* Psalm 80 prays for the northern tribes, Joseph, Ephraim, Manasseh and Benjamin (80:2), probably when Assyria was crushing the north before Samaria fell in 722 B.C. God sits "above the cherubim," enthroned over the ark.
80:3 *God, restore us, and make Your face shine, and let us be saved* The refrain grows each time: God, God of armies, LORD God of armies (80:3, 7, 19). It echoes the priestly blessing (Num 6:25). Salvation comes when God turns His face toward us in favor.
80:8 *You uprooted a vine from Egypt* Israel is pictured as God's vine, brought out of Egypt and planted in Canaan until it filled the land (Isa 5:1-7). Now its walls are broken and wild animals trample it (80:12-13). Jesus said, "I am the true vine" (John 15:1). He is the faithful Israel, and we bear fruit by abiding in Him.
80:17 *on the son of mankind whom You made strong for Yourself* The man of God's right hand may be the king of Israel, or Israel itself as God's son (80:15; Exod 4:22). Many also see a hint of the Messiah, the true Son of Man at God's right hand.
81:3 *Blow a ram's horn at the new moon, at the full moon* The ram's horn, the shofar, announced the feasts. The seventh month opened with trumpets at the new moon, and the Feast of Booths began at the full moon (Lev 23:24, 34). The psalm was likely sung at these feasts.
81:6 *I removed his shoulder from the burden* God speaks. He set Israel free from the bricks and baskets of slavery in Egypt (Exod 1:11-14).
81:10 *open your mouth wide, and I will fill it* God, who brought them out of Egypt, promised to give them all they needed. Like baby birds, they only needed to open wide and trust Him.
81:11 *And My people did not listen to My voice* God's sorrow is plain. He let them go their own way (81:12). Paul describes the same judgment: God gave them over to what they wanted (Rom 1:24).
81:16 *from the rock I would satisfy you with honey* If they had listened, God would have given them the best of the land. What we miss by not listening to God is far more than we know.

PSALMS 82

A psalm of Asaph (Asaf). **1** God takes His stand in the congregation of God; in the midst of the gods He judges. **2** Until when will you judge ***with*** injustice and lift up the face of ***the*** wicked? Selah. **3** Judge ***for the*** poor and ***the*** fatherless; do justice to ***the*** afflicted and ***the*** destitute. **4** Rescue ***the*** poor and ***the*** needy; deliver ***them*** from the hand of ***the*** wicked. **5** They do not know, and they do not understand; they walk about in darkness; all the foundations of ***the*** earth are shaken. **6** I, I said, "You ***are*** gods, and sons of the Most High, all of you. **7** Nevertheless, like mankind you will die, and like one of the princes you will fall." **8** Arise, God, judge the earth, for You will inherit among all the nations.

PSALMS 83

A song, a psalm of Asaph (Asaf). **1** God, let ***there*** be no silence for You; do not be silent, and do not be still, God. **2** For look, Your enemies are in an uproar, and those who hate You have lifted up ***the*** head. **3** Against Your people they make crafty counsel, and they consult together against Your treasured ones. **4** They have said, "Come, and let us wipe them out from ***being*** a nation, and the name of Israel (Yisra'el) will not be remembered anymore." **5** For they have consulted together ***with one*** heart; against You they make a covenant: **6** the tents of Edom and ***the*** Ishmaelites, Moab (Mo'av) and ***the*** Hagrites, **7** Gebal (Geval) and Ammon (Amon) and Amalek (Amaleq), Philistia (Peleshet) with the inhabitants of Tyre (Tsor). **8** Assyria (Ashur) also has joined with them; they have become an arm for the sons of Lot. Selah. **9** Do to them as ***to*** Midian (Midyan), as ***to*** Sisera (Sisra), as ***to*** Jabin (Yavin) at the wadi of Kishon (Qishon), **10** ***who*** were destroyed at En-dor; they became dung for the ground. **11** Make their nobles like Oreb (Orev) and like Zeeb (Ze'ev), and like Zebah (Zevach) and like Zalmunna (Tsalmuna) all their princes, **12** who said, "Let us take possession for ourselves ***of*** the pastures of God." **13** My God, make them like the whirling dust, like chaff before a wind. **14** Like fire ***that*** burns a forest, and like a flame ***that*** sets ***the*** mountains ablaze, **15** so pursue them with Your tempest, and terrify them with Your storm wind. **16** Fill their faces ***with*** dishonor, and let them seek Your name, LORD. **17** Let them be ashamed and dismayed forever and ever, and let them be abashed and perish, **18** and let them know that You, whose name ***is*** the LORD, You alone, ***are*** the Most High over all the earth.

PSALMS 84

Psalms of the Sons of Korah

To the choirmaster, on the Gittith. Of the sons of Korah (Qorach), a psalm. **1** How lovely ***are*** Your dwelling places, LORD of armies! **2** My soul has longed, and also has wasted away, for the courts of the LORD; my heart and my flesh shout for joy to the living God. **3** Even a bird has found a home, and a swallow a nest for herself, where she has put her young: Your

82:1 2 Chr 19:6,7; Eccl 5:8; Exod 21:6
82:2 Deut 1:17; Prov 18:5; Ps 58:1,2
82:3 Ps 10:18; Jer 22:3,16; Deut 10:18
82:4 Ps 72:12-14; Job 29:12,16,17; Prov 24:11,12
82:5 Mic 3:1; Ps 11:3; Prov 2:13
82:6 John 10:34; John 10:35; John 10:36
82:7 Ps 49:12; Ezek 31:14; Job 21:32
82:8 Ps 2:8; Rev 11:15; Ps 96:13
83:1 Ps 28:1; Ps 35:22; Ps 50:3
83:2 Acts 17:5; Acts 4:26; Acts 4:27
83:3 Acts 4:26; Ps 27:5; Ps 64:2
83:4 Acts 4:26; Jer 11:19; Exod 1:10
83:5 Rev 19:19; Acts 4:26; Ps 2:2
83:6 Acts 4:26; 1 Chr 5:10,19,20; 2 Chr 20:1,10,11
83:7 Josh 13:5; Ezek 27:9
83:8 Deut 2:9; Gen 10:11; Gen 25:3
83:9 Isa 9:4; Judg 5:21; Num 31:7,8
83:10 Zeph 1:17; Josh 17:11; 1 Sam 28:7
83:11 Judg 7:25; Judg 8:12-21
83:12 2 Chr 20:11; Ps 83:4; Ps 74:7,8
83:13 Ps 35:5; Job 21:18; Job 13:25
83:14 Deut 32:22; Isa 30:33; Isa 33:11,12
83:15 Job 9:17; Ps 58:9; Ps 11:6
83:16 Ps 6:10; Ps 9:19,20; Ps 34:5
83:17 Rom 9:17; Ps 35:4,26; Ps 40:14,15
83:18 Rom 9:17; Ps 59:13; Exod 6:3
84:1 Ps 27:4; Ps 8:1; Ps 36:8
84:2 Heb 12:22; Ps 42:1,2; Ps 73:26
84:3 Matt 8:20; Matt 23:37; Ps 90:1

82:1 *in the midst of the gods He judges* God holds court. "Gods" here most likely means human rulers and judges, who stood in God's place to judge His people (Exod 21:6; 22:8-9). Some teachers see heavenly powers behind the nations. God charges these judges with injustice.
82:3 *Judge for the poor and the fatherless* This is what God expects of everyone with power: defend the weak, rescue the needy. Rulers who favor the wicked shake the foundations of a society (82:5).
82:6 *You are gods, and sons of the Most High, all of you* Jesus quoted this line when He was accused of making Himself God: "Is it not written in your law, I said, you are gods?" (John 10:34). If Scripture called judges "gods" because God's word came to them, how much more is the One the Father sent rightly called the Son of God (John 10:35-36)?
82:8 *Arise, God, judge the earth* Human judges fail and die like other men (82:7). The psalm ends by calling on God, the true Judge, to rule all nations. I believe that will happen when Christ returns to reign (Acts 17:31; Rev 19:11).
83:1 *God, let there be no silence for You* The last Asaph psalm. A whole ring of nations has made a covenant to wipe Israel off the map (83:4-8). The occasion may be Jehoshaphat's day, when Moab, Ammon and others came against Judah (2 Chr 20), though the psalm does not say.
83:4 *let us wipe them out from being a nation* The enemies' goal is that Israel's name be remembered no more. That hatred has appeared again and again in history. God has kept His people, and I believe He will keep His promises to Israel (Jer 31:35-37; Rom 11:1-2).
83:9 *Do to them as to Midian, as to Sisera, as to Jabin* The psalmist recalls the victories of the judges: Gideon over Midian and its princes Oreb, Zeeb, Zebah and Zalmunna (Judg 7-8), and Deborah and Barak over Sisera and Jabin at the Kishon (Judg 4-5).
83:16 *Fill their faces with dishonor, and let them seek Your name, LORD* Even in this prayer for judgment there is a hope: that the enemies will be humbled and seek the LORD. The goal is that all will know He alone is Most High over all the earth (83:18). See the introduction on the hard lines.
84:0 *Of the sons of Korah* Psalm 84 is a pilgrim's song by the Levite family we met at Psalm 42. Some of the family were doorkeepers of God's house (1 Chr 9:19). On "Gittith," see 8:0.
84:1 *How lovely are Your dwelling places, LORD of armies* The word for "dwelling places" is plural, probably the whole temple area with its courts. "Lovely" means dear or beloved. What the writer loves about the place is that God is there.
84:2 *My soul has longed, and also has wasted away, for the courts of the LORD* To waste away is to faint with longing. He wants to be there so badly it wears him out, and what he wants most is "the living God."
84:3 *Even a bird has found a home* Sparrows and swallows are as common and unimportant as birds get, yet they nested near God's altars. Even a sparrow was closer to God's house than he was. Not one sparrow falls apart from the Father (Matt 10:29). If God makes room for sparrows, He has room for you.

altars, LORD of armies, my King and my God. **4** How blessed ***are*** those who dwell in Your house! They are still praising You. Selah. **5** How blessed ***is the*** man whose strength ***is*** in You, in whose heart ***are*** highways! **6** Passing through the valley of Baca (Bakha), they make it a spring; the early rain also covers ***it with*** blessings. **7** They go from strength to strength; ***each*** appears before God in Zion (Tsiyon). **8** LORD God of armies, hear my prayer; give ear, God of Jacob (Ya'aqov). Selah. **9** Our shield, see, God, and look on the face of Your anointed. **10** For a day in Your courts ***is*** better than a thousand; I have chosen to stand at the threshold in the house of my God rather than to dwell in the tents of wickedness. **11** For the LORD God ***is*** a sun and a shield; the LORD gives favor and glory; He does not withhold good from those who walk in blamelessness. **12** LORD of armies, how blessed ***is the*** man who trusts in You!

PSALMS 85

To the choirmaster. Of the sons of Korah (Qorach), a psalm. **1** LORD, You have shown favor to Your land; You have turned back the captivity of Jacob (Ya'aqov). **2** You have lifted away the iniquity of Your people; You have covered all their sin. Selah. **3** You have withdrawn all Your fury; You have turned back from the burning of Your anger. **4** Restore us, God of our salvation, and break off Your vexation with us. **5** Will You be angry with us forever? Will You draw out Your anger to generation and generation? **6** Will You not return ***and*** give us life, so that Your people may rejoice in You? **7** Show us, LORD, Your steadfast love, and give us Your salvation. **8** Let me hear what God the LORD will speak, for He will speak peace to His people and to His faithful ones; and let them not return to folly. **9** Surely His salvation ***is*** near to those who fear Him, that glory may dwell in our land. **10** Steadfast love and truth have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed. **11** Truth springs up from the earth, and righteousness looks down from heaven. **12** Also the LORD will give what ***is*** good, and our land will give its produce.
13 Righteousness will go before Him, and will make His footsteps into a way.

PSALMS 86

A prayer of David. **1** Incline Your ear, LORD, answer me, for I ***am*** afflicted and needy. **2** Keep my soul, for I ***am*** faithful; You ***are*** my God; save Your servant who trusts in You. **3** Be gracious to me, Lord, for to You I call all the day. **4** Make glad the soul of Your servant, for to You, Lord, I lift up my soul. **5** For You, Lord, ***are*** good and ready to forgive, and great in steadfast love to all who call on You. **6** Give ear, LORD, to my

84:4 Ps 65:4; Ps 27:4; Ps 23:6
84:5 Ps 28:7,8; Isa 45:24; Zech 10:12
84:6 Rom 5:3-5; Ps 68:9; Ps 66:10-12
84:7 Prov 4:18; 2 Cor 3:18; Isa 40:31
84:9 Ps 2:2,6; Gen 15:1; Ps 84:11
84:10 Ps 27:4; Ps 63:2; Ps 26:8-10
84:11 Prov 2:7; Ps 34:9,10; Matt 6:33
84:12 Ps 62:8; Ps 2:12; Ps 34:8
85:1 Ps 14:7; Ps 77:7; Jer 30:18
85:2 Ps 32:1; Ps 79:8,9; Jer 50:20
85:3 Deut 13:17; Isa 6:7; Isa 12:1
85:4 Ps 80:3,7,19; Dan 9:16; Jer 31:18
85:5 Ps 79:5; Ps 74:1; Ps 80:4
85:6 Ps 80:18; Hab 3:2; Ezra 9:8,9
85:7 Ps 50:23; Ps 91:16; Jer 42:12
85:8 John 14:27; John 16:33; Zech 9:10
85:9 Mark 12:32; Mark 12:33; Mark 12:34
85:10 John 16:33; Ps 89:14; Ps 72:3
85:11 Matt 3:17; Isa 45:8; Isa 4:2
85:12 James 1:17; Ps 84:11; Ps 67:6
85:13 1 John 2:6; Heb 12:2; Ps 89:14
86:1 Ps 31:2; Ps 40:17; Ps 102:1
86:2 Ps 4:3; Eph 1:12,13; Ps 37:28
86:3 Ps 57:1; Ps 88:9; Ps 56:1
86:4 Ps 25:1; Ps 143:8; Ps 51:12
86:5 Rom 10:12; Joel 2:13; Ps 103:8
86:6 Ps 5:1,2; Ps 17:1; Ps 130:2

84:4 *How blessed are those who dwell in Your house* The priests and Levites who served there spent their work in worship. God's dwelling is no longer one building. Jesus dwelt among us (John 1:14), and God now lives by His Spirit in His people (Eph 2:22). Through Jesus we can draw near (Heb 10:19).
84:5 *in whose heart are highways* Three times a year faithful Israelites went up to Jerusalem for the feasts (Deut 16:16). The road to Zion ran through their hearts before they packed a bag. What road is in your heart? What we dream about and plan for shows what we love.
84:6 *Passing through the valley of Baca, they make it a spring* No one knows where Baca was. The word sounds like weeping, and it may also name a tree that grows in dry places. Faith turned a hard stretch of road into a place of blessing, and God sent the early rain. He does not always take us around valleys of weeping, but He can bring springs in them.
84:7 *They go from strength to strength* Travelers usually grow weaker on a long journey. These grew stronger the closer they came to God (Isa 40:31). And they all made it.
84:9 *look on the face of Your anointed* "Our shield" and "Your anointed" most likely mean the king, who protected the people. Anointed is the word behind Messiah and Christ. Many see a longing here that reaches past David's line to Jesus, the Anointed One.
84:10 *For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand* One day near God is worth nearly three years anywhere else. The threshold was the doorway of God's house, and some of Korah's family kept it (1 Chr 9:19, 22). He would choose a humble place at God's door over comfort in the tents of wickedness. Would we rather have a small place near God or a big place far from Him?
84:11 *For the LORD God is a sun and a shield* The sun gives light, warmth and life, and a shield protection. God gives grace now and glory in the end. A good father does not hand a child everything he asks for, but God never holds back what is truly good. He "did not spare His own Son" (Rom 8:32).
84:12 *how blessed is the man who trusts in You* The third "blessed" in the psalm (84:4, 5, 12). Not everyone could live at the temple or make the journey. Some were too old, poor or far away. But anyone can trust God, and the blessing is open to all who do.
85:1 *You have turned back the captivity of Jacob* The psalm remembers a past restoration, most likely the return from exile in Babylon after 538 B.C. (Ezra 1). God had forgiven and brought His people home.
85:4 *Restore us, God of our salvation* Even after the return, life was hard and the people felt God's displeasure still (Hag 1:5-11). They pray, "Will You not return and give us life?" (85:6). Revival is something only God can give.
85:8 *Let me hear what God the LORD will speak* The writer stops and listens. God speaks peace to His people, with a warning not to go back to folly. Forgiveness is never permission to repeat the sin.
85:10 *Steadfast love and truth have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed* A beautiful picture of God's qualities meeting like friends. Mercy and truth, justice and peace, seem as if they must pull apart, but in God they embrace. They met fully at the cross, where God is both "righteous and the One justifying" (Rom 3:26) the one who has faith in Jesus.
85:11 *Truth springs up from the earth, and righteousness looks down from heaven* Heaven and earth answer each other. Many Christians have seen here a picture of the coming of Christ, the Truth who came to earth from heaven.
86:1 *Incline Your ear, LORD, answer me, for I am afflicted and needy* The only psalm in Book Three that bears David's name. Much of it is built from phrases found in other psalms and in Exodus 34:6. David prays Scripture back to God.
86:5 *For You, Lord, are good and ready to forgive* God is not reluctant to forgive. He is ready, eager, and great in steadfast love to all who call on Him.

prayer, and pay attention to the voice of my supplications. **7** In the day of my distress I call on You, for You will answer me. **8** ***There is*** none like You among the gods, Lord, and ***there are*** none like Your works. **9** All the nations whom You have made will come and bow down before You, Lord, and they will glorify Your name. **10** For You ***are*** great and do wonders; You ***are*** God, You alone. **11** Teach me Your way, LORD; I will walk in Your truth; unite my heart to fear Your name. **12** I will give thanks to You, Lord my God, with all my heart, and I will glorify Your name forever. **13** For Your steadfast love ***is*** great toward me, and You have delivered my soul from the lowest Sheol. **14** God, arrogant ***men*** have risen up against me, and a company of ruthless ***men*** have sought my life, and they have not set You before them. **15** And You, Lord, ***are*** a God compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and great in steadfast love and faithfulness. **16** Turn to me and be gracious to me; give Your strength to Your servant, and save the son of Your maidservant. **17** Make with me a sign for good, and let those who hate me see ***it*** and be ashamed, because You, LORD, have helped me and comforted me.

PSALMS 87

Of the sons of Korah (Qorach), a psalm, a song. **1** His foundation ***is*** on the mountains of holiness. **2** The LORD loves the gates of Zion (Tsiyon) more than all the dwelling places of Jacob (Ya'aqov). **3** Glorious things are spoken of you, city of God. Selah. **4** I will make mention of Rahab (Rahav) and Babylon (Bavel) among those who know Me; look, Philistia (Peleshet) and Tyre (Tsor), with Cush (Kush): "This one was born there." **5** And of Zion it will be said, "Man and man was born in her"; and the Most High Himself will establish her. **6** The LORD will count when He records the peoples: "This one was born there." Selah. **7** And singers as well as pipers ***say***, "All my springs ***are*** in you."

PSALMS 88

A song, a psalm of the sons of Korah (Qorach). To the choirmaster, on Mahalath, to sing. A Maskil of Heman the Ezrahite. **1** LORD, God of my salvation, by day I have cried out, in the night, before You. **2** Let my prayer come before You; incline Your ear to my cry. **3** For my soul is filled with troubles, and my life has reached Sheol. **4** I am counted with those who go down ***to the*** pit; I have become like a man without strength, **5** free among the dead, like ***the*** slain who lie ***in the*** grave, whom You remember no more, and they are cut off from Your hand. **6** You have put me in ***the*** pit of the lowest parts, in dark places, in the depths. **7** Your rage has lain heavy on me, and with all Your breakers You have afflicted ***me***. Selah. **8** You have removed my acquaintances far from me; You have made me an abomination to them; ***I am*** shut in, and I cannot go out. **9** My eye languishes because of affliction; I have called on You, LORD, every day; I have spread out my hands to You. **10** Will You do wonders for the dead? Will ***the*** shades arise ***and*** give thanks to You? Selah. **11** Will Your steadfast love be recounted in the grave, Your faithfulness in Abaddon? **12** Will Your wonders be known in the darkness, and Your righteousness in the land of forgetfulness? **13** And I, to You, LORD, cry for help, and in the morning my prayer comes to meet You. **14** Why, LORD, do You reject my soul? ***Why*** do You hide Your face from me? **15** I ***am*** afflicted and

86:7 Heb 5:7; Ps 50:15; Ps 34:4-6
86:8 Ps 89:6,8; Exod 15:11; Deut 3:24
86:9 Rev 15:4; Rom 15:9; Luke 24:47
86:10 Ps 72:18; Isa 37:16,20; Mark 12:29
86:11 Col 3:17; Jer 32:38,39; Ps 5:8
86:12 Deut 6:5; Rom 15:6; 1 Cor 10:31
86:13 Acts 2:27; Ps 103:8-12; Luke 1:58
86:14 Ps 54:3; Ps 36:11; Ps 119:51,69,85
86:15 Ps 86:5; Ps 103:8; Ps 111:4
86:16 Ps 25:16; Ps 69:16; Ps 90:13
86:17 Ps 41:10,11; 1 Cor 5:5; Ps 40:1
87:1 Isa 28:16; Matt 16:18; 1 Cor 3:10,11
87:2 Ps 78:67-69; Ps 132:13,14; Deut 12:5
87:3 Heb 12:22; Rev 14:1; Ezek 37:27,28
87:4 Acts 8:27; Rev 17:5; Rev 18:2
87:5 Heb 12:22; Luke 1:76; John 1:12-14
87:6 Isa 4:3; Ezek 13:9; Luke 10:20
87:7 Isa 12:3; 1 Chr 23:5; Rev 14:1-3
88:1 Luke 2:37; Heb 5:7; Ps 22:2
88:2 Ps 79:11; Ps 141:1,2; 1 Kgs 8:31
88:3 Matt 26:38; Mark 14:34; Ps 107:18
88:4 Ps 28:1; Ps 143:7; Ps 30:9
88:5 Isa 53:8; Ps 31:22; Isa 14:9-12
88:6 Luke 24:44; Ps 69:15; Ps 143:3
88:7 Ps 42:7; Ps 38:1; Ps 90:7
88:8 Ps 31:11; Isa 49:7; Zech 11:8
88:9 Job 11:13; Ps 86:3; Ps 143:6
88:10 Ps 6:5; Ps 30:9; Ps 115:17
88:11 Ps 55:23; Ps 73:18; Job 21:30
88:12 Jude 1:5; Eccl 9:5; Ps 143:3
88:13 Ps 5:3; Ps 119:147,148; Mark 1:35
88:14 Job 13:24; Ps 43:2; Ps 13:1
88:15 Job 6:4; Ps 73:14; Job 17:1,11-16

86:9 *All the nations whom You have made will come and bow down before You* God made all nations, and all will one day worship Him (Rev 15:4).
86:11 *unite my heart to fear Your name* A divided heart wants God and other things too. David asks God to make his heart one, wholly given to Him. That is a prayer every believer needs.
86:15 *a God compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and great in steadfast love and faithfulness* These are God's own words about Himself to Moses (Exod 34:6). David's whole prayer rests on what God said He is.
87:2 *The LORD loves the gates of Zion* Psalm 87 is a short song in praise of Zion, the city of God (87:3), loved more than any other place in Israel.
87:4 *I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon among those who know Me* Rahab here is a poetic name for Egypt (Isa 30:7). Egypt, Babylon, Philistia, Tyre and Cush, Israel's old enemies, are listed among those who know the LORD and are counted as born in Zion. A stunning picture: the nations enrolled as citizens of God's city. It looks ahead to the gospel going to all peoples (Gal 3:28-29) and to the day when the nations come to Jerusalem to worship (Isa 2:2-3; Zech 14:16).
87:6 *The LORD will count when He records the peoples* God keeps the register of His city. To be written down as born there is to belong to Him. Paul says "the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all" (Gal 4:26).
87:7 *All my springs are in you* The singers and dancers say that every source of their joy is found in Zion, that is, in God who dwells there.
88:0 *A Maskil of Heman the Ezrahite* Heman was one of David's chief musicians, from Korah's line (1 Chr 6:33; 15:19). He was famous for wisdom (1 Kgs 4:31). On Mahalath, see 53:0.
88:1 *LORD, God of my salvation* Psalm 88 is the darkest psalm in the Bible. It has no turn to praise and ends in darkness. Yet its first words hold on: he still calls God "God of my salvation" and keeps praying day and night.
88:5 *free among the dead* He feels already counted among the dead, cut off and forgotten. "Abaddon" (88:11) means destruction, another name for the place of the dead.
88:8 *You have removed my acquaintances far from me* Friends have pulled away, perhaps because of a long illness that has lasted since his youth (88:15). Loneliness is part of his suffering.
88:10 *Will the shades arise and give thanks to You* "Shades" are the departed. The questions expect the answer no: the dead do not praise God among the living. The full hope of resurrection was not yet made plain. Christ has now brought it to light (1 Cor 15:20).
88:13 *in the morning my prayer comes to meet You* Even with no answer, he gets up and prays again. That is faith, not the lack of it.

about to die from ***my*** youth; I have borne Your terrors; I am helpless. **16** Your burning angers have passed over me; Your terrors have destroyed me. **17** They have surrounded me like water all the day; they have encircled me altogether. **18** You have removed far from me lover and friend; my acquaintances ***are*** darkness.

PSALMS 89

A Maskil of Ethan (Etan) the Ezrahite. **1** I will sing of the steadfast loves of the LORD forever; to generation and generation I will make known Your faithfulness with my mouth. **2** For I have said, "Steadfast love will be built up forever; the heavens, You establish Your faithfulness in them." **3** "I have made a covenant with My chosen one; I have sworn to David My servant: **4** 'I will establish your offspring forever, and I will build your throne to generation and generation.'" Selah. **5** And the heavens will praise Your wonders, LORD, also Your faithfulness in the assembly of the holy ones. **6** For who in the clouds can be compared to the LORD? ***Who*** is like the LORD among the sons of gods, **7** a God greatly dreaded in the council of the holy ones, and feared above all who ***are*** around Him? **8** LORD God of armies, who ***is*** mighty like You, LORD? And Your faithfulness ***is*** all around You. **9** You rule over the swelling of the sea; when its waves rise, You calm them. **10** You crushed Rahab (Rahav) like one slain; with the arm of Your strength You scattered Your enemies. **11** The heavens ***are*** Yours; the earth also ***is*** Yours; the world and its fullness, You founded them. **12** North and south, You created them; Tabor (Tavor) and ***Mount*** Hermon (Chermon) shout for joy in Your name. **13** Yours ***is*** an arm with might; Your hand is strong; Your right hand is exalted. **14** Righteousness and justice ***are*** the foundation of Your throne; steadfast love and truth go before Your face. **15** How blessed ***is*** the people who know the shout of joy! LORD, they walk in the light of Your face. **16** In Your name they rejoice all the day, and in Your righteousness they are exalted. **17** For You ***are*** the splendor of their strength, and in Your favor our horn is exalted. **18** For our shield ***belongs*** to the LORD, and our King to the Holy One of Israel (Yisra'el). **19** Then You spoke in a vision to Your faithful ones, and You said, "I have placed help on a mighty one; I have exalted one chosen from the people. **20** I have found David My servant; with the oil of My holiness I have anointed him, **21** with whom My hand will be established; My arm also will strengthen him. **22** An enemy will not deceive him, and a son of injustice will not afflict him. **23** And I will crush his adversaries before him, and those who hate him I will strike down. **24** And My faithfulness and My steadfast love ***will be*** with him, and in My name his horn will be exalted. **25** And I will set his hand on the sea and his right hand on the rivers. **26** He will call to Me, 'You ***are*** my Father, my God, and the rock of my salvation.' **27** I also will make him ***the*** firstborn, ***the*** highest of the kings of the earth. **28** Forever I will keep My steadfast love for him, and My covenant ***will be*** faithful to him. **29** And I will establish his offspring forever, and his throne like the days of the heavens. **30** If his sons forsake My law and do not walk in My judgments, **31** if they profane My statutes and do not keep My commandments, **32** then I will punish their transgression with a rod and their iniquity with plagues. **33** But My steadfast love I will not break off from him, and I will not deal

88:16 Ps 38:1,2; Ps 89:46; Ps 90:7,11
88:17 Ps 22:16; Ps 42:7; Ps 69:1,2
88:18 Ps 88:8; Ps 38:11; Ps 31:11
89:1 Ps 101:1; Ps 36:5; Ps 119:90
89:2 Ps 36:5; Ps 103:17; Neh 1:5
89:3 Matt 12:18; Luke 1:32; Luke 1:69
89:4 Acts 13:34; Acts 13:36; 2 Sam 7:12-16,29
89:5 1 Pet 1:12; Ps 19:1; Ps 97:6
89:6 Ps 86:8; Ps 113:5; Ps 29:1
89:7 Matt 10:28; Mark 4:41; Luke 12:5
89:8 Ps 35:10; Ps 71:19; Jer 32:17
89:9 Mark 4:39; Ps 65:7; Matt 8:26
89:10 Luke 1:51; Ps 144:6; Ps 78:43-72
89:11 1 Chr 29:11; Gen 1:1; Ps 24:1,2
89:12 Job 26:7; Josh 19:22; Josh 12:1
89:13 Matt 6:13; Dan 4:34,35; Ps 89:10
89:14 Ps 97:2; Ps 85:13; Ps 45:6,7
89:15 Rom 10:15; 1 John 1:7; Lev 25:9
89:16 Ps 89:12; Ps 29:5,7; Ps 33:21
89:17 Ps 75:10; Ps 92:10; Ps 148:14
89:18 Mark 1:24; Rev 3:7; Ps 47:9
89:19 Luke 1:70; 2 Pet 1:21; Rev 3:7
89:20 Acts 13:22; Luke 1:69; Acts 13:34
89:21 Acts 13:22; Ps 18:32-39; Ps 80:15-17
89:22 John 17:12; Matt 4:6; Acts 13:22
89:23 2 Sam 3:1; 2 Sam 7:1,9; 2 Sam 22:40-44
89:24 Ps 89:2-5,28,33; Ps 61:7; John 1:17
89:25 Ps 2:8; Ps 72:8-11; Ps 80:11
89:26 Mark 15:34; Matt 26:39; Matt 26:42
89:27 Col 1:15; Rev 21:24; Rev 1:5
89:28 Isa 55:3; 2 Sam 7:15,16; Isa 54:10
89:29 Ps 89:4,36; Deut 11:21; Isa 9:7
89:30 2 Sam 7:14; 1 Chr 28:9; Ps 119:53
89:31 Ps 55:20
89:32 2 Sam 7:14; Heb 12:6-11; Exod 32:34
89:33 2 Sam 7:13,15; 1 Kgs 11:13,32,36; Isa 54:8-10

88:18 *my acquaintances are darkness* The psalm ends with the word darkness. God put this psalm in the Bible for those whose prayers seem to go unanswered for a long time. It tells them they are not alone, and that it is right to keep bringing the darkness to God. Jesus also cried out in darkness on the cross (Matt 27:45-46), and the darkness did not have the last word.

89:0 *A Maskil of Ethan the Ezrahite* Ethan, like Heman (88:0), was a musician and wise man of David's and Solomon's day (1 Kgs 4:31; 1 Chr 15:19). Psalm 89 closes Book Three. It celebrates God's covenant with David and then laments that the throne seems lost.

89:1 *I will sing of the steadfast loves of the LORD forever* Steadfast love and faithfulness are the two key words of the psalm, each used seven times. Ethan builds his whole prayer on God's character.

89:3 *I have made a covenant with My chosen one; I have sworn to David My servant* God's covenant with David promised that his offspring would sit on his throne forever (2 Sam 7:12-16). The rest of the psalm wrestles with that promise.

89:10 *You crushed Rahab like one slain* Rahab here is a poetic name for Egypt or for the sea monster of chaos (87:4; Isa 51:9). The God who rules the raging sea can keep His word.

89:14 *Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne* God's throne rests on what is right. Steadfast love and truth go before Him like heralds.

89:20 *I have found David My servant; with the oil of My holiness I have anointed him* Samuel anointed the shepherd boy with oil (1 Sam 16:13). Paul quotes this line in his sermon at Antioch, adding that from David's offspring God brought "a Savior, Jesus" (Acts 13:22-23).

89:26 *You are my Father, my God, and the rock of my salvation* The king of David's line would call God Father (2 Sam 7:14). Jesus, the Son of David, called God Father in a way no king before Him could.

89:27 *I also will make him the firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth* Firstborn here means the one with the highest rank and the full inheritance. John calls Jesus "the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth" (Rev 1:5).

89:30 *If his sons forsake My law* God warned that disobedient kings would be disciplined, but the covenant itself would stand (89:33-34). Sin would bring the rod, not the end of the promise.

falsely with My faithfulness. **34** I will not profane My
covenant, and what has gone out from My lips I will not change. **35** Once I have sworn by My holiness: I will not lie to David. **36** His offspring will be forever, and his throne like the sun before Me. **37** Like the moon it will be established forever, and a witness in the clouds ***is*** faithful." Selah. **38** And You, You have spurned and rejected; You have been furious with Your anointed. **39** You have repudiated the covenant of Your servant; You have profaned his crown to the ground. **40** You have broken through all his walls; You have made his strongholds a ruin. **41** All who pass by on the road have plundered him; he has become a reproach to his neighbors. **42** You have exalted the right hand of his adversaries; You have made all his enemies rejoice. **43** Also You turn back the flint of his sword, and You have not made him stand in the battle. **44** You have made ***him*** cease from his luster, and You have hurled his throne to the ground. **45** You have shortened the days of his youth; You have wrapped him ***with*** shame. Selah. **46** Until when, LORD? Will You hide Yourself forever? Will Your rage burn like fire? **47** Remember, as for me, what ***my*** lifespan ***is***; for what emptiness have You created all the sons of mankind! **48** What man will live and not see death? ***Who*** will deliver his soul from the hand of Sheol? Selah. **49** Where ***are*** Your former steadfast loves, Lord, ***which*** You swore to David in Your faithfulness? **50** Remember, Lord, the reproach of Your servants, ***how*** I bear in my bosom ***the reproach of*** all the many peoples, **51** with which Your enemies have reproached, LORD, with which they have
reproached the footsteps of Your anointed.

Closing Praise of Book Three

52 Blessed ***be*** the LORD forever. Amen and amen.

PSALMS 90

Book Four: The Prayer of Moses

A prayer of Moses (Moshe), the man of God. **1** Lord, You have been a dwelling place for us in generation and generation. **2** Before ***the*** mountains were born, and You brought forth the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, You ***are*** God. **3** You return man to crushed dust, and You say, "Return, sons of mankind." **4** For a thousand years in Your eyes ***are*** like yesterday when it passes, and ***like*** a watch in the night. **5** You sweep them away ***like*** a flood; they are ***like*** sleep; in the morning ***they are*** like grass ***that*** sprouts again. **6** In the morning it flourishes and sprouts again; toward evening it withers and dries up. **7** For we are consumed by Your anger, and by Your rage we are terrified. **8** You have set our iniquities before You, our hidden ***sins*** in the light of Your face. **9** For all our days have turned away in

89:34 Num 23:19; Jer 33:20; Mal 3:6
89:35 Luke 1:69; Acts 13:22; Acts 13:34
89:36 John 12:34; Rev 1:5; Ps 72:5,17
89:37 Rev 1:5; Ps 72:7; Ps 104:19
89:38 1 Chr 28:9; Deut 32:19; Ps 89:51
89:39 Ps 74:7; Lam 5:16; Ps 89:34-36
89:40 Ps 80:12; Lam 2:2,5; Job 1:10
89:41 Ps 79:4; Ps 44:10-14; Ps 80:13
89:42 John 16:20; Lev 26:17,25; Deut 28:25,43
89:43 Ezek 30:21-25; Lev 26:36,37; Num 14:42,45
89:44 1 Sam 4:21,22; 1 Kgs 12:16-20; 1 Kgs 14:25-28
89:45 Ps 109:29; Ps 44:15; Ps 89:28,29
89:46 Ps 79:5; Ps 78:63; Ps 85:5
89:47 Job 7:7; Job 10:9; Job 14:1
89:48 Acts 2:27; Luke 2:26; 1 Cor 15:55
89:49 Luke 2:26; Acts 15:16; 2 Sam 7:15
89:50 Ps 74:18,22; Ps 69:9,19,20; Ps 44:13-16
89:51 Matt 5:10-12; Acts 5:41; 1 Cor 4:12,13
89:52 Matt 6:13; 1 Tim 1:17; Rom 9:5
90:1 Ezek 11:16; Ps 71:3; Deut 33:27
90:2 Heb 1:10; Rev 1:8; Gen 1:1
90:3 Gen 3:19; Ps 104:29; Job 34:14,15
90:4 2 Pet 3:8; Matt 14:25; Matt 24:43
90:5 Isa 40:6; Job 22:16; Ps 73:20
90:6 Job 14:2; Ps 92:7; Matt 6:30
90:7 Ps 39:11; Ps 90:9,11; Ps 59:13
90:8 Ps 19:12; Jer 16:17; Eccl 12:14
90:9 1 John 2:17; Ps 78:33; Ps 90:4

89:35 *Once I have sworn by My holiness: I will not lie to David* God swore by Himself, because there is no one greater (Heb 6:13). His throne will last like the sun and moon (89:36-37). Gabriel told Mary that God would give her Son "the throne of David His father" (Luke 1:32).

89:38 *And You, You have spurned and rejected* The psalm turns sharply. The king has been defeated and humiliated, his crown thrown to the ground. It seems God has broken His covenant. This may reflect the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. or an earlier defeat of a king of Judah.

89:46 *Until when, LORD? Will You hide Yourself forever* Ethan does not pretend. He holds God's promise in one hand and the painful facts in the other, and he brings both to God. Faith can live with unanswered questions, as long as it keeps talking to God.

89:49 *Where are Your former steadfast loves, Lord, which You swore to David* The answer came in Jesus, born of David's line, who rose from the dead and will reign forever (Acts 2:30-31). I believe He will sit on David's throne and reign on the earth when He returns. God did not lie to David.

89:52 *Blessed be the LORD forever. Amen and amen* This blessing closes Book Three (73-89). Even after the darkest questions, the book ends in praise.

90:0 *A prayer of Moses, the man of God* Deuteronomy 33:1 gives Moses the same title, a name for a prophet. Many conservative scholars take the heading at face value, as I do, and place the psalm in the forty years in the wilderness, when a whole generation died outside the promised land. Others date it later. If Moses wrote it, it is probably the oldest psalm in the book. Psalm 90 opens Book Four (90-106).

90:1 *Lord, You have been a dwelling place for us* Moses grew up in a palace, fled to Midian and spent his last forty years in tents. Yet he says Israel always had a home: God Himself (Deut 33:27). Houses change and are sold or torn down. God does not change.

90:2 *from everlasting to everlasting, You are God* Mountains seem permanent, but God was there before them. He did not start, and He will not stop. Moses begins with God's eternity before he says a word about our frailty. Our weakness is easier to face when we know He is our home.

90:3 *You return man to crushed dust* God told Adam he would return to the ground (Gen 3:19). One generation goes back to the dust and another takes its place. Even death is under God's command.

90:4 *a thousand years in Your eyes are like yesterday when it passes* To God a thousand years are like a day just ended, or a watch in the night, a few hours that pass in your sleep. Peter uses this to answer those who mocked the promise of Christ's return: God is not slow but patient, giving time to repent (2 Pet 3:8-9).

90:5 *You sweep them away like a flood* A flash flood in a dry riverbed comes without warning and carries everything off. And people are like grass that is green in the morning and withered by evening (90:6; Isa 40:6-8). We are not built to last on our own.

90:7 *For we are consumed by Your anger* Death came because of sin (Gen 3; Rom 5:12). Moses watched the wilderness generation die, funeral after funeral (Num 14:29-34). He speaks of the human race and that rebellious generation, not saying each illness is God's anger at that person (John 9:2-3; Luke 13:1-5). For those in Christ, the anger sin deserves has already fallen on Him.

90:8 *our hidden sins in the light of Your face* God sees every sin, even those we hide from everyone and sometimes from ourselves. We cannot understand God's mercy until we face the truth about our sin, and Moses tells that truth because he is about to ask for grace.

Your fury; we have finished our years like a sigh. **10** The days of our years in them ***are*** seventy years, and if by strength, eighty years; yet their pride ***is*** toil and trouble, for it passes quickly, and we fly away. **11** Who knows the strength of Your anger, and Your fury according to the fear of You? **12** So teach ***us*** to count our days, that we may bring in a heart of wisdom. **13** Return, LORD! Until when? And have compassion on Your servants. **14** Satisfy us in the morning ***with*** Your steadfast love, that we may shout for joy and rejoice all our days. **15** Make us rejoice according to the days ***in which*** You have afflicted us, the years ***in which*** we have seen evil. **16** Let Your work appear to Your servants, and Your majesty to their sons. **17** And let the pleasantness of the Lord our God be on us; and establish the work of our hands on us; yes, the work of our hands, establish it.

PSALMS 91

1 He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will lodge in the shadow of the Almighty. **2** I will say of the LORD, "My refuge and my stronghold, my God, in whom I trust." **3** For He will deliver you from the snare of the fowler, from the plague of destruction. **4** With His pinion He will cover you, and under His wings you will take refuge; His faithfulness ***is*** a shield and a wall. **5** You will not be afraid of the dread of night, of ***the*** arrow ***that*** flies by day, **6** of ***the*** plague ***that*** walks in the darkness, of ***the*** destruction ***that*** devastates at noon. **7** A thousand will fall at your side, and ten thousand at your right hand; to you it will not draw near. **8** Only with your eyes will you look, and you will see the retribution of ***the*** wicked. **9** For You, LORD, ***are*** my refuge! You have made the Most High your dwelling place. **10** No evil will befall you, and no plague will draw near your tent. **11** For He will command His angels concerning you, to guard you in all your ways. **12** On ***their*** hands they will lift you up, lest you strike your foot against the stone. **13** On ***the*** lion and cobra you will tread; you will trample ***the*** young lion and ***the*** serpent.

90:10 James 4:14; 2 Sam 19:35; Ps 78:39
90:11 Lev 26:18,21,24,28; Deut 28:59; Deut 29:20-29
90:12 Ps 39:4; Deut 32:29; John 9:4
90:13 Ps 135:14; Deut 32:36; Ps 106:45
90:14 Ps 85:6; Ps 23:6; Ps 86:4
90:15 John 16:20; Ps 30:5; Ps 126:5,6
90:16 Ps 44:1; Hab 3:2; Num 14:15-24
90:17 1 Cor 3:7; Prov 16:3; Isa 26:12
91:1 Ps 32:7; Ps 36:7; Ps 17:8
91:2 Ps 18:2; Ps 142:5; Isa 12:2
91:3 Ps 124:7; Ps 141:9; Ps 91:6
91:4 Matt 23:37; Ps 17:8; Ps 57:1
91:5 Isa 43:2; Job 5:19-27; Heb 13:6
91:6 1 Cor 10:8; Ps 121:5,6; Exod 12:29,30
91:7 Josh 14:10; Gen 7:23; Exod 12:12,13
91:8 Ps 37:34; Ps 58:10,11; Ps 92:11
91:9 Acts 7:48; Ps 71:3; Ps 142:4,5
91:10 Prov 12:21; Ps 121:7; Rom 8:25
91:11 Matt 4:6; Luke 4:10-11; Heb 1:14
91:12 Heb 1:14; Isa 63:9; Ps 37:24
91:13 Luke 10:19; Rom 16:20; Rev 12:9

90:10 *The days of our years in them are seventy years, and if by strength, eighty years* The usual measure of a life. Moses himself lived to 120 (Deut 34:7). Even the best years are full of toil, and they pass quickly. Our life is "a vapor" (James 4:14). Ask anyone who is seventy whether it felt long.
90:12 *So teach us to count our days, that we may bring in a heart of wisdom* To count our days is to remember they are limited and each one matters. What would change if you believed your days were numbered? You might forgive sooner, pray more and spend less time on what will not last. Moses does not ask for more days. He asks for wisdom to use the ones he has.
90:13 *have compassion on Your servants* The word can mean to relent. Moses used it after the golden calf, asking God to turn from destroying Israel (Exod 32:12), and God heard him (Exod 32:14).
90:14 *Satisfy us in the morning with Your steadfast love* Fresh each day, like the manna. Life is short and hard, but a life filled with God's love can be glad all the way through.
90:15 *Make us rejoice according to the days in which You have afflicted us* A bold prayer: as many years of gladness as of slavery and wandering. God does more than balance the scales. Our light affliction is producing "an eternal weight of glory" (2 Cor 4:17).
90:16 *Your majesty to their sons* The wilderness generation would die before entering the land. Moses prays that their children would see God's work. We pray the same for our children and grandchildren.
90:17 *establish the work of our hands on us; yes, the work of our hands, establish it* Moses has spent the whole psalm saying people pass like grass. Now he asks God to make their work last anyway, and says it twice. When God's favor rests on what we do, it outlasts the worker. Our "toil is not empty in the Lord" (1 Cor 15:58).
91:1 *He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will lodge in the shadow of the Almighty* The psalm has no heading. The Greek Old Testament adds David's name, and some old Jewish teachers thought Moses wrote it. Four names for God appear in two verses: Most High, Almighty (Shaddai), LORD and my God. "Dwells" and "lodge" mean to live somewhere. The promise is for the one who makes God home, not only a place to run in emergencies.
91:2 *My refuge and my stronghold, my God, in whom I trust* A refuge is a place to run to, and a stronghold a fortress no enemy can break. The writer says it out loud. Trust has to be spoken and lived.
91:3 *He will deliver you from the snare of the fowler* A fowler hid snares to catch birds. These are dangers we do not see coming. God sees them. He also delivers from the plagues that swept through ancient towns with no cure.
91:4 *under His wings you will take refuge* A mother bird spreading her wings over her chicks (Matt 23:37). His faithfulness, His keeping His word, is our shield and wall. Our safety rests on His character.
91:5 *You will not be afraid of the dread of night* Night and day, seen and unseen, the psalm names dangers at every hour. They may be real, but the one who lives in God's shelter does not have to live in fear of them. Many lie awake with worries. This psalm tells us who is watching while we sleep.
91:7 *A thousand will fall at your side* People fall all around, as in a battle or a plague, and the one who trusts God is kept. Verse 8 adds that he will see the payback of the wicked, as Israel was spared while the plagues struck Egypt (Exod 12:13, 22-23). It gives no one permission to enjoy another's suffering. God will set things right, and those who trust Him will be safe when He does.
91:9 *You have made the Most High your dwelling place* The voices change. It may be a priest encouraging a worshiper, or the writer encouraging himself. The promise is for the one who has made the LORD his home.
91:10 *No evil will befall you* Do these words mean a believer will never be sick, hurt or die young? They cannot. Paul was beaten and shipwrecked (2 Cor 11:23-27), James was killed with the sword (Acts 12:2), and faithful believers today get cancer and lose children. Their suffering is not a sign they lacked faith. God protects His people far more often than we know, and the promise reaches past this life: "The one believing in Me, even if he dies, will live" (John 11:25).
91:11 *He will command His angels concerning you, to guard you in all your ways* Angels are "ministering spirits" (Heb 1:14) sent to serve God's people. Satan quoted verses 11-12 to Jesus on the temple pinnacle (Matt 4:5-6) and left out "in all your ways." The promise is for those walking in God's ways, not those who leap into danger to force God's hand. Jesus answered, "You shall not test the Lord your God" (Matt 4:7). Satan can quote the Bible. A verse pulled out of context to push us toward folly is not God speaking.
91:13 *you will trample the young lion and the serpent* Lions and snakes were real dangers, the strong enemy and the hidden one. Many see Satan, the old serpent, here (Gen 3:15). Jesus gave His disciples authority "to tread upon serpents and scorpions" (Luke 10:19), and God will soon crush Satan under our feet (Rom 16:20). Satan stopped quoting one verse too soon.

14 "Because he has set his love on Me, I will deliver him; I will set him on high, because he knows My name. **15** He will call on Me, and I will answer him; I ***will be*** with him in trouble; I will rescue him and honor him. **16** With length of days I will satisfy him, and I will show him My salvation."

PSALMS 92

A psalm, a song for the day of the Sabbath. **1** ***It is*** good to give thanks to the LORD, and to sing praises to Your name, Most High; **2** to declare Your steadfast love in the morning, and Your faithfulness in the nights, **3** on a ten-stringed ***instrument*** and on a harp, on a melody with a lyre. **4** For You have made me rejoice, LORD, by Your deeds; in the works of Your hands I sing for joy. **5** How great are Your works, LORD! Your thoughts are very deep. **6** A senseless man does not know, and a fool does not understand this: **7** when ***the*** wicked sprout like vegetation, and all who work iniquity blossom, ***it is*** so that they may be destroyed forever and ever. **8** But You, LORD, ***are*** on high forever. **9** For look, Your enemies, LORD, for look, Your enemies will perish; all who work iniquity will be scattered. **10** And You have raised up my horn like ***that of*** a wild ox; I have been anointed with fresh oil. **11** And my eye has looked on my enemies; my ears have heard of the evildoers who rise up against me. **12** The righteous will flourish like the palm tree; he will grow like a cedar in Lebanon (Levanon). **13** Planted in the house of the LORD, they will flourish in the courts of our God. **14** They will still bear fruit in old age; they will be full of sap and fresh, **15** to declare that the LORD ***is*** upright; ***He is*** my rock, and ***there is*** no injustice in Him.

PSALMS 93

The LORD Reigns

1 The LORD reigns; He is clothed ***with*** majesty; the LORD is clothed; He has girded Himself ***with*** strength. Also the world is established; it will not be shaken. **2** Your throne ***has been*** established from of old; You ***are*** from everlasting. **3** The rivers have lifted up, LORD, the rivers have lifted up their voice; the rivers lift up their pounding. **4** More than the sounds of many waters, mighty breakers of the sea, the LORD on high ***is*** mighty. **5** Your testimonies are very faithful; holiness befits Your house, LORD, for length of days.

PSALMS 94

1 God of vengeance, LORD, God of vengeance, shine forth! **2** Lift Yourself up, Judge of the earth; return recompense on the proud. **3** Until when ***will the*** wicked, LORD, until when will ***the*** wicked exult? **4** They pour forth, they speak arrogance; all who work iniquity boast themselves. **5** Your people, LORD, they crush, and Your inheritance they afflict.

91:14 John 14:23; John 16:27; Ps 9:10
91:15 John 12:26; Heb 5:7; John 16:32
91:16 Ps 21:4; Prov 3:2,16; Ps 50:23
92:1 Eph 5:19; Acts 7:48; Ps 147:1
92:2 Lam 3:22,23; John 1:17; Ps 71:15
92:3 Ps 33:2; Ps 57:8; Ps 68:25
92:4 Isa 65:13,14; Luke 1:47; 2 Cor 2:14
92:5 Rom 11:33; Rev 15:3; Isa 55:8,9
92:6 Ps 73:22; Ps 94:8; Ps 49:10
92:7 Ps 73:18-20; 1 Pet 1:24; Job 12:6
92:8 Ps 83:18; Ps 56:2; Ps 102:26,27
92:9 Ps 37:20; Ps 89:10; Ps 21:8,9
92:10 Ps 23:5; Ps 89:17,24; Ps 45:7
92:11 Ps 54:7; Ps 91:8; Ps 37:34
92:12 Ps 52:8; Ps 92:7; Isa 55:13
92:13 Matt 7:17; Ps 100:4; Isa 60:21
92:14 John 15:4; John 15:5; Isa 46:4
92:15 Matt 7:25; Ps 18:2; Ps 62:6
93:1 Heb 1:3; Ps 96:10; Ps 65:6
93:2 Ps 45:6; Ps 90:2; Rev 2:8
93:3 Ps 96:11; Ps 18:4; Ps 69:1,2,14-16
93:4 Rev 14:2; Ps 65:7; Ps 89:6,9
93:5 Lev 19:2; Ps 19:7,8; Ps 119:111,129,138,144
94:1 Nah 1:2; Deut 32:35,41,42; Isa 35:4
94:2 Ps 7:6; Gen 18:25; Ps 31:23
94:3 Rev 6:10; Job 20:5; Ps 43:2
94:4 Ps 31:18; Ps 52:1; Ps 59:7,12
94:5 Isa 3:15; Ps 7:2; Ps 14:4

91:14 *Because he has set his love on Me, I will deliver him* Now God speaks. To set one's love is to cling to Him. To know His name is to know Him personally and trust His character. The safety this psalm promises flows from a relationship.
91:15 *I will be with him in trouble* Eight promises in three verses: deliver, set on high, answer, be with, rescue, honor, satisfy, show salvation. God expects trouble will come and promises to be in it with us. He did not keep Daniel's friends out of the furnace, but a fourth figure walked with them in the fire (Dan 3:25).
91:16 *With length of days I will satisfy him, and I will show him My salvation* Long life was a sign of blessing, and many believers do live long, full lives. Some die young, as Stephen and James did. For every believer, "My salvation" reaches beyond this life. The life God gives through Jesus does not end.
92:0 *a song for the day of the Sabbath* The only psalm headed for a particular day. The Sabbath was Israel's seventh day of rest (Exod 20:8-11), and this song of thanks was sung in worship on it. It is a fitting song for any day of rest.
92:2 *to declare Your steadfast love in the morning, and Your faithfulness in the nights* Begin the day with God's love and end it with His faithfulness. Both are worth singing about.
92:5 *How great are Your works, LORD! Your thoughts are very deep* God's plans run deeper than we can see. The fool looks only at the surface and envies the wicked (92:6-7).
92:7 *when the wicked sprout like vegetation* The wicked spring up like grass after rain, and like grass they will not last. Their success is short. The LORD is on high forever (92:8).
92:10 *You have raised up my horn like that of a wild ox* The wild ox was a symbol of strength. God has made the writer strong and refreshed him with fresh oil, like a guest honored at a feast.
92:12 *The righteous will flourish like the palm tree* The wicked are grass (92:7). The righteous are palms and cedars, tall, strong and long-lived. They grow because they are planted in God's house (92:13; 1:3).
92:14 *They will still bear fruit in old age* Getting older does not have to mean drying up. Those rooted in God stay fresh and fruitful, and their long lives declare that the LORD is upright.
93:1 *The LORD reigns; He is clothed with majesty* Psalm 93 begins a group of psalms (93-100) that celebrate the LORD as King. He is not becoming King. He has always reigned (93:2). Because He reigns, the world stands firm.
93:3 *The rivers have lifted up, LORD* The floods roar and pound like enemies rising against God. But the LORD on high is mightier than all the breakers of the sea (93:4). Whatever rises against Him, He is greater.
93:5 *Your testimonies are very faithful* The King's word can be trusted, and His house must be holy. A King this great deserves a holy people (1 Pet 1:15-16).
94:1 *God of vengeance, LORD* Vengeance here means God's just repayment, not personal spite. Because vengeance belongs to God, we do not have to take it ourselves (Deut 32:35; Rom 12:19). The writer asks the Judge to act against the proud who crush the weak.

6 ***The*** widow and ***the*** sojourner they kill, and orphans they murder. **7** And they said, "***The*** LORD will not see, and the God of Jacob (Ya'aqov) will not perceive." **8** Understand, senseless ones among the people! And fools, when will you have insight? **9** He who plants the ear, does He not hear? Or He who forms the eye, does He not look? **10** He who disciplines nations, does He not rebuke, He who teaches mankind knowledge? **11** The LORD knows the thoughts of mankind, that they ***are*** vanity. **12** How blessed ***is*** the man whom You discipline, LORD, and from Your law You teach him, **13** to give him quiet from days of evil, until a pit is dug for the wicked. **14** For the LORD will not abandon His people, and His inheritance He will not forsake. **15** For judgment will return to righteousness, and after it ***will be*** all the upright of heart. **16** Who will rise up for me against evildoers? Who will take his stand for me against those who work iniquity? **17** If the LORD ***had*** not ***been*** a help to me, my soul would almost have dwelt ***in*** silence. **18** If I said, "My foot has slipped," Your steadfast love, LORD, supported me. **19** In the multitude of my anxious thoughts within me, Your consolations delight my soul. **20** Will a throne of destructions be joined with You, which forms trouble by statute? **21** They band together against the life of the righteous, and innocent blood they condemn. **22** And the LORD has become a high refuge for me, and my God the rock of my refuge. **23** And He has brought back on them their iniquity, and in their evil He will destroy them; the LORD our God will destroy them.

PSALMS 95

1 Come, let us sing for joy to the LORD; let us shout for joy to the rock of our salvation. **2** Let us come before His face with thanksgiving; with songs let us shout for joy to Him. **3** For the LORD ***is*** a great God, and a great King above all gods, **4** in whose hand ***are*** the depths of the earth, and the peaks of the mountains ***are*** His, **5** whose ***is*** the sea, and He made it, and the dry land His hands formed. **6** Come, let us bow down and bend low; let us kneel before the LORD our Maker. **7** For He ***is*** our God, and we ***are*** the people of His pasture and the flock of His hand. Today, if you will listen to His voice, **8** do not harden your heart as ***at*** Meribah (Meriva), as ***on*** the day of Massah (Masa) in the wilderness, **9** when your fathers tested Me; they tried Me, also they saw My work. **10** Forty years I loathed ***that*** generation, and I said, "They ***are*** a people who go astray in heart, and they have not known My ways." **11** So I swore in My anger, "They shall not enter into My rest."

94:6 Isa 10:2; Isa 13:15-18; Jer 7:6
94:7 Ps 10:11-13; Ps 59:7; Job 22:12,13
94:8 Ps 92:6; Ps 49:10; Ps 73:22
94:9 Exod 4:11; Prov 20:1,12; Ps 11:4
94:10 Job 35:11; Isa 28:26; Ps 44:2
94:11 1 Cor 3:20; Ps 49:10-13; Job 11:11,12
94:12 James 1:12; Prov 3:11; Job 5:17
94:13 Ps 55:23; Ps 9:15; Hab 3:16
94:14 1 Sam 12:22; Ps 37:28; Rom 11:1,2
94:15 Mic 7:9; Ps 94:2,3; Ps 7:8,9
94:16 Exod 32:26-29; Num 25:6-13; Judg 5:23
94:17 Ps 124:1,2; Ps 31:17; Ps 118:13
94:18 Ps 38:16; Ps 37:23,24; Ps 121:3
94:19 Ps 61:2; Ps 77:2-10; Hab 3:16-18
94:20 Ps 58:2; Amos 6:3; Isa 10:1
94:21 Acts 4:27; Acts 7:52; Matt 23:35
94:22 Ps 18:2; Ps 59:9,16,17; Ps 62:2,6
94:23 Ps 7:16; Prov 2:22; Ps 9:16,17
95:1 1 Cor 10:4; Eph 5:19; Col 3:16
95:2 Eph 5:19; James 5:13; Rev 19:7
95:3 Matt 5:35; Ps 96:4; Ps 97:9
95:4 Ps 135:6; Ps 21:2; Job 11:10
95:5 Gen 1:9,10; Ps 33:7; Job 38:10,11
95:6 Matt 4:9; Rev 22:8; Rev 22:17
95:7 Heb 3:7-11; Heb 3:15; Heb 4:7
95:8 Heb 3:13; Acts 13:18; Num 20:13
95:9 John 15:24; Luke 20:23; Acts 13:18
95:10 Heb 3:17; Acts 13:18; Mark 3:5
95:11 Heb 4:3; Heb 4:5; Heb 3:18

94:6 *The widow and the sojourner they kill, and orphans they murder* God's law gave special care to the widow, the foreigner and the orphan (Exod 22:21-24). Those who prey on them, thinking God does not see (94:7), are His enemies.
94:9 *He who plants the ear, does He not hear* A simple, unanswerable argument. The One who made ears and eyes is not deaf or blind. God sees every wrong.
94:12 *How blessed is the man whom You discipline, LORD* God's discipline is a mark of His love, teaching us from His Word (Heb 12:5-11). It gives us quiet in evil days while He deals with the wicked.
94:14 *the LORD will not abandon His people* However dark things look, God will not forsake those who belong to Him. Paul uses these words: "God did not reject His people whom He foreknew" (Rom 11:2).
94:18 *If I said, My foot has slipped, Your steadfast love, LORD, supported me* The moment he felt himself falling, God's love caught him.
94:19 *In the multitude of my anxious thoughts within me, Your consolations delight my soul* Many anxious thoughts, and one God whose comfort is greater. When worry multiplies, turn to His comforts in His Word.
95:1 *Come, let us sing for joy to the LORD* The psalm has no heading, but Hebrews says God spoke it "through David" (Heb 4:7). Psalms 95-100 continue the songs of the LORD as King. "Let us" runs through the opening: worship is something we do together. "The rock of our salvation" may recall the rock that gave water in the wilderness (Exod 17:6), which returns in verse 8.
95:2 *Let us come before His face with thanksgiving* Israel's worship was loud and glad. Some of us are more reserved by nature, and that is fine. But God has given us something to shout about.
95:3 *a great King above all gods* The nations worshiped many gods. The next psalm says what they really are, "worthless idols" (96:5). Whatever powers people bow to, the LORD rules them all.
95:5 *whose is the sea, and He made it* The sea frightened ancient peoples, and some of Israel's neighbors told stories of gods fighting the sea. Israel knew the sea belongs to the LORD because He made it, and He shaped the land like a potter shaping clay. We worship Him first because of who He is.
95:6 *let us bow down and bend low; let us kneel before the LORD our Maker* Verse 1 called us to sing and shout. Now we bow and kneel. Worship holds both joy and reverence. The Hebrew word for worship means to bow low before someone greater.
95:7 *we are the people of His pasture and the flock of His hand* The King of creation is our Shepherd, caring for His sheep personally. "My sheep hear My voice" (John 10:27). That leads straight into the warning: singing to God and then ignoring what He says makes no sense. True worship includes hearing and obeying.
95:8 *do not harden your heart as at Meribah, as on the day of Massah* Meribah means quarreling, and Massah testing. With no water, Israel quarreled with Moses and asked whether the LORD was among them (Exod 17:1-7; Num 20:1-13). They had seen the plagues, the sea and the manna, and still did not trust Him. A hard heart grows one refusal at a time, so we encourage one another daily (Heb 3:13).
95:10 *Forty years I loathed that generation* Strong words of a grieved God. They had His law and His miracles but did not know His ways, because they did not want them.
95:11 *They shall not enter into My rest* The rest was Canaan, and that generation died in the wilderness, all but Joshua and Caleb (Num 14:20-35). Hebrews notes that the psalm still says "Today" long after Joshua, so the rest is more than Canaan: "there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God" (Heb 4:9). It is the rest of trusting Christ instead of our own efforts, and in the end eternal rest with God. If God is speaking to you, respond today.

PSALMS 96

1 Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth. **2** Sing to the LORD, bless His name; bring good news of His salvation from day to day. **3** Recount His glory among the nations, His wonders among all the peoples. **4** For the LORD ***is*** great and greatly to be praised; He ***is*** to be feared above all gods. **5** For all the gods of the peoples ***are*** worthless idols, and the LORD made the heavens. **6** Splendor and majesty ***are*** before Him; strength and beauty ***are*** in His sanctuary. **7** Ascribe to the LORD, families of peoples, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. **8** Ascribe to the LORD the glory of His name; lift up an offering and come into His courts. **9** Bow down to the LORD in the adornment of holiness; tremble before Him, all the earth. **10** Say among the nations, "The LORD reigns; also the world is established; it will not be shaken; He will judge peoples with uprightness." **11** Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea thunder, and its fullness. **12** Let the field exult, and all that ***is*** in it; then all the trees of the forest will shout for joy **13** before the LORD, for He is coming, for He is coming to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness, and peoples in His faithfulness.

PSALMS 97

1 The LORD reigns; let the earth be glad; let the many coastlands rejoice. **2** Cloud and thick darkness ***are*** all around Him; righteousness and justice ***are*** the foundation of His throne. **3** Fire goes before Him, and it burns up His adversaries all around. **4** His lightnings light up the world; the earth sees, and it trembles. **5** ***The*** mountains melt like wax before the LORD, before the Lord of all the earth. **6** The heavens declare His righteousness, and all the peoples see His glory. **7** Let all who serve a carved image be ashamed, who boast themselves in worthless idols; bow down to Him, all gods. **8** Zion (Tsiyon) heard, and it rejoiced, and the daughters of Judah (Yehuda) were glad, because of Your judgments, LORD. **9** For You, LORD, ***are*** Most High over all the earth; You are exalted exceedingly above all gods. **10** You who love the LORD, hate evil! He guards the lives of His faithful ones; from the hand of the wicked He delivers them. **11** Light is sown for the righteous, and joy for the upright of heart. **12** Rejoice, righteous ones, in the LORD, and give thanks to the remembrance of His holiness.

96:1 Rev 5:9; Rev 14:3; Rom 15:11
96:2 Acts 13:26; Acts 13:47; Ps 71:15
96:3 Matt 28:19; Luke 24:47; Ps 22:27
96:4 Ps 18:3; Ps 89:7; Ps 95:3
96:5 Ps 115:15; Isa 42:5; Jer 10:11
96:6 Heb 1:3; 2 Pet 1:17; Ps 104:1
96:7 Ps 22:27; Ps 29:1,2; Ps 68:32-34
96:8 Ps 100:4; Ps 108:3-5; Mal 1:11
96:9 Ps 29:2; Ps 33:8; Ps 110:3
96:10 Rom 3:6; Ps 93:1; Ps 9:8
96:11 Rev 18:20; Ps 69:34; Isa 49:13
96:12 Rev 18:20; Isa 55:12,13; Ps 65:12,13
96:13 Rev 19:11; Acts 17:31; Rom 2:16

97:1 Ps 96:10,11; Ps 93:1; Ps 99:1
97:2 Mark 9:7; Rev 1:7; Ps 89:14
97:3 Ps 18:8; Ps 50:3; Dan 7:10
97:4 Ps 77:18; Ps 104:32; Ps 144:5,6
97:5 Nah 1:5; Judg 5:4,5; Isa 24:19,20
97:6 Ps 50:6; Ps 19:1; Isa 6:3
97:7 Heb 1:6; 1 Pet 1:12; Isa 42:17
97:8 Rev 18:20; Matt 21:5; Ps 48:11
97:9 Ps 83:18; Ps 95:3; Exod 18:11
97:10 Acts 12:11; Prov 8:13; Rom 12:9
97:11 John 16:20; Prov 4:18; Ps 112:4
97:12 Phil 4:4; Ps 30:4; Ps 32:11

96:1 *Sing to the LORD a new song* Nearly the same words appear in 1 Chronicles 16:23-33, part of the song David gave Asaph's family the day the ark came to Jerusalem. A new song is fresh praise for fresh mercies (Lam 3:22-23). In heaven the redeemed sing "a new song" to the Lamb (Rev 5:9).
96:2 *bring good news of His salvation from day to day* The Greek Old Testament uses the word that later gives us "gospel." God's people are to announce His salvation every day.
96:3 *Recount His glory among the nations* Israel was never meant to keep God to itself (Gen 12:3). Jesus sent His disciples to "make disciples of all the nations" (Matt 28:19). Every believer has a part, by going, sending, giving or praying. Who in your life has not yet heard?
96:5 *all the gods of the peoples are worthless idols* The Hebrew word for idols sounds like the word for God but means nothings. The nations' gods are no-gods, like scarecrows that cannot speak (Jer 10:5). People today may not bow to statues, but money, success and self are just as worthless. Only the Maker of heaven deserves worship.
96:6 *strength and beauty are in His sanctuary* Some think of God's power as harsh and His beauty as weak. In Him they are perfectly joined.
96:7 *Ascribe to the LORD, families of peoples* To ascribe is to give God the credit that is His. Psalm 29 called the heavenly beings. Here the nations are called, and even invited to bring offerings into His courts (96:8), a remarkable invitation that looks ahead to Gentiles brought near through Christ (Eph 2:13).
96:9 *Bow down to the LORD in the adornment of holiness* This may mean the priests' holy clothing, or the beauty of a life set apart for God. The joy of verses 1-3 and the trembling of verse 9 belong together. Many churches lean toward joy without reverence or reverence without joy. This psalm calls us to both.
96:10 *Say among the nations, The LORD reigns* This is the message to carry to the world. Because God reigns, the world is held steady, and He will judge fairly. Paul preached the same to Athens: God "has set a day in which He is about to judge the inhabited earth in righteousness" (Acts 17:31) by the Man He raised from the dead.
96:12 *then all the trees of the forest will shout for joy* Creation has been under a curse since Adam's sin (Gen 3:17-18) and groans waiting to be set free (Rom 8:19-22). When God comes to rule, it will finally be set right (Isa 55:12).
96:13 *for He is coming, for He is coming to judge the earth* He says it twice. I believe this points to the return of Jesus Christ, called Faithful and True, who judges in righteousness (Rev 19:11) and then reigns on the earth (Rev 20:4-6). He comes after the Great Tribulation and reigns over Israel and the nations. For those who know Him, the coming of the Judge is the day everything is made right. "Come, Lord Jesus" (Rev 22:20).
97:1 *The LORD reigns; let the earth be glad* The King's reign is good news for the whole world, even "the many coastlands," the farthest places people knew.
97:2 *Cloud and thick darkness are all around Him* God's coming is pictured as at Sinai, with cloud, fire and lightning (Exod 19:16-18). He is beyond our sight, yet His throne stands on righteousness and justice. We cannot see all of God, but what we know of Him is good.
97:7 *Let all who serve a carved image be ashamed* When the true King appears, idol worshipers will be embarrassed by what they trusted. "Bow down to Him, all gods": every power people worship must bow to the LORD. Hebrews 1:6 uses similar words of the angels worshiping the Son.
97:10 *You who love the LORD, hate evil* Love for God and hatred of evil go together. We cannot love the Holy One and be comfortable with what He hates (Rom 12:9). And He guards His faithful ones.
97:11 *Light is sown for the righteous* Like seed scattered in a field, light and joy are planted for God's people, and they will spring up in His time.

PSALMS 98

A psalm. **1** Sing to the LORD a new song, for He has done wonders; His right hand and the arm of His holiness have saved for Him. **2** The LORD has made known His salvation; to the eyes of the nations He has revealed His righteousness. **3** He has remembered His steadfast love and His faithfulness to the house of Israel (Yisra'el); all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. **4** Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth; break forth, and sing for joy, and sing praises. **5** Sing praises to the LORD with a lyre, with a lyre and the sound of melody. **6** With trumpets and the sound of a ram's horn shout for joy before the King, the LORD. **7** Let the sea thunder, and its fullness, the world and those who dwell in it. **8** Let ***the*** rivers clap ***their*** hands; together let ***the*** mountains sing for joy **9** before the LORD, for He is coming to judge the earth; He will judge the world in righteousness, and peoples with uprightness.

PSALMS 99

1 The LORD reigns; let peoples tremble! ***He*** sits ***on*** the cherubim; let the earth quake! **2** The LORD in Zion (Tsiyon) ***is*** great, and He ***is*** exalted over all the peoples. **3** Let them give thanks to Your name, great and to be feared; holy ***is*** He. **4** And the strength of a King loves justice; You have established uprightness; justice and righteousness in Jacob (Ya'aqov) You have done. **5** Exalt the LORD our God, and bow down at the footstool of His feet; holy ***is*** He. **6** Moses (Moshe) and Aaron (Aharon) ***were*** among His priests, and Samuel (Shemu'el) among those who call on His name; they called to the LORD, and He answered them. **7** In a pillar of cloud He spoke to them; they kept His testimonies and the statute ***that*** He gave to them. **8** LORD our God, You answered them; a forgiving God You were to them, and One taking vengeance on their deeds. **9** Exalt the LORD our God, and bow down at the mountain of His holiness, for the LORD our God ***is*** holy.

PSALMS 100

A psalm for thanksgiving. **1** Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth. **2** Serve the LORD with joy; come before Him with joyful singing. **3** Know that the LORD, He ***is*** God; He made us, and we ***are*** His, His people and the flock of His pasture. **4** Enter His gates with thanksgiving, His courts with praise; give thanks to Him, bless His name. **5** For the LORD ***is*** good; His steadfast love ***is*** forever, and His faithfulness ***is*** to generation and generation.

PSALMS 101

Of David. A psalm. **1** ***Of*** steadfast love and justice I will sing; to

98:1 Rev 14:3; Rev 17:14; Rev 19:14
98:2 Rom 1:17; Rom 10:18; Acts 13:47
98:3 Luke 1:54; Luke 3:6; Acts 13:47
98:4 Isa 44:23; Ps 66:1,4; Ps 47:1-5
98:5 Rev 14:2; Rev 14:3; Ps 33:2
98:6 Matt 25:34; Rev 19:16; Ps 47:5
98:7 Ps 96:11-99; Isa 49:13; Isa 61:11
98:8 Isa 55:12; Ps 47:1; 2 Kgs 11:12
98:9 Rom 2:16; Rom 3:6; Ps 96:10,13
99:1 Ps 97:1; Ps 80:1; Exod 25:22
99:2 Heb 12:22; Rev 14:1; Ps 97:9
99:3 Deut 28:58; Josh 24:19; Isa 6:3
99:4 Rev 19:16; Rev 15:3; Jer 23:5
99:5 Matt 5:35; Ps 132:7; Ps 34:3
99:6 Acts 3:24; Heb 11:32; Jer 15:1
99:7 Exod 33:9; Num 12:5; Exod 19:9
99:8 Jer 46:28; Num 20:12,24; Ps 89:33
99:9 Rev 4:8; Ps 2:6; Ps 48:1,2
100:1 Ps 98:4; Ps 66:1,4; Zeph 3:14
100:2 Rev 19:7; Ps 95:2; Deut 28:47
100:3 Gal 3:7; Ps 46:10; Ps 95:6
100:4 Heb 13:15; Col 3:17; Ps 116:17-19
100:5 Rom 15:9; Ps 106:1; Ps 107:1,8,15,22
101:1 Ps 89:1; Rev 19:1-3; Ps 71:22,23

98:1 *Sing to the LORD a new song, for He has done wonders* God's right hand has won the victory. Mary's song echoes this psalm: He has done mighty things and remembered His mercy to Israel (Luke 1:49-54).
98:3 *He has remembered His steadfast love and His faithfulness to the house of Israel* God's salvation for Israel is seen by all the nations. He keeps His promises to Israel, and through Israel's Messiah "all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God" (98:3; Isa 52:10; Luke 2:30-32).
98:6 *With trumpets and the sound of a ram's horn shout for joy before the King* The music of a coronation. The whole earth is invited to the celebration.
98:8 *Let the rivers clap their hands* Creation joins the song, because the King is coming to set things right (98:9; 96:13). I believe that day comes when Christ returns to judge and reign.
99:1 *He sits on the cherubim* God was enthroned above the cherubim over the ark (Exod 25:22). The King of all the earth chose to dwell in Zion among His people.
99:3 *holy is He* The refrain of the psalm (99:3, 5, 9). God's holiness is His perfect purity and His being set apart from all sin. Isaiah heard the seraphim cry "Holy, holy, holy" (Isa 6:3).
99:5 *bow down at the footstool of His feet* The ark was called God's footstool (1 Chr 28:2). Even the place He rests His feet is holy ground.
99:6 *Moses and Aaron were among His priests, and Samuel among those who call on His name* These leaders prayed for the people, and God answered (Exod 32:11-14; 1 Sam 7:9). Prayer matters. God hears those who call on Him.
99:8 *a forgiving God You were to them, and One taking vengeance on their deeds* God forgave Moses and Aaron, yet He still disciplined them (Num 20:12). Forgiveness does not always remove the consequences. God is both merciful and just.
100:0 *A psalm for thanksgiving* The Hebrew word, todah, is also the name of the thank offering an Israelite brought for a particular blessing (Lev 7:12). The psalm may have been sung as worshipers came with those offerings. No other psalm has this heading.
100:1 *Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth* The shout of a crowd welcoming a king. Once again the call goes to the whole earth, not just Israel.
100:2 *Serve the LORD with joy* The word for serve means both to work and to worship. Our work, worship and daily obedience are all service to God, and He wants it done gladly. A grumbling servant obeys, but a glad servant shows his master is good.
100:3 *Know that the LORD, He is God; He made us, and we are His* Worship starts with knowing who God is. We did not make ourselves. The Hebrew can be read two ways here, we are His or not we ourselves, and both are true. If God made me and I belong to Him, I do not have to prove my worth or carry my life alone. We are His flock, and the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep (John 10:11).
100:4 *Enter His gates with thanksgiving, His courts with praise* Worshipers passed through the temple gates into the courts, each step taken with thanks. Before we bring God our requests, we thank Him (Phil 4:6). Through Jesus the way into God's presence is open (Heb 10:19). The question is whether we will come in thankful.
100:5 *For the LORD is good; His steadfast love is forever* Three reasons for every shout and song: God is good, His hesed never ends, and He keeps His word from generation to generation. When feelings say otherwise, this verse is a good place to stand. Psalm 100 is the basis of the hymn All People That on Earth Do Dwell, sung to the tune Old Hundredth.
101:1 *Of steadfast love and justice I will sing* Psalm 101 is a king's pledge. David promises to rule his house and his kingdom with integrity, guided by the steadfast love and justice he sees in God.

You, LORD, I will sing praises. **2** I will give attention to a blameless way. When will You come to me? I will walk about in the integrity of my heart in the midst of my house. **3** I will not set before my eyes a thing of worthlessness; the doing of deviations I hate; it will not cling to me. **4** A perverse heart will depart from me; evil I will not know. **5** Whoever slanders his neighbor in secret, him I will destroy; the haughty of eyes and arrogant of heart, him I will not be able ***to endure***. **6** My eyes ***will be*** on the faithful of the land, to dwell with me; he who walks in a blameless way, he will serve me. **7** He who does deceit will not dwell in the midst of my house; he who speaks lies will not be established before my eyes. **8** Morning by morning I will destroy all the wicked of the land, to cut off from the city of the LORD all who work iniquity.

PSALMS 102

*A prayer of an afflicted **one**, when he grows faint and pours out his complaint before the LORD.* **1** LORD, hear my prayer, and let my cry for help come to You. **2** Do not hide Your face from me in the day ***when*** distress ***comes*** to me; incline Your ear to me; in the day ***when*** I call, hurry, answer me. **3** For my days have come to an end in smoke, and my bones have been burned like a hearth. **4** My heart has been struck like vegetation, and it has withered, for I have forgotten to eat my bread. **5** From the sound of my groaning my bones cling to my flesh. **6** I am like a desert owl of the wilderness; I have become like an owl of the waste places. **7** I lie awake, and I have become like a bird alone on a roof. **8** All the day my enemies have taunted me; those who mock me have sworn by me. **9** For I have eaten ashes like bread, and my drinks I have mixed with weeping, **10** because of Your indignation and Your wrath, for You have lifted me up, and You have thrown me away. **11** My days ***are*** like a stretched-out shadow, and I wither like vegetation. **12** And You, LORD, sit forever, and Your remembrance ***is*** to generation and generation. **13** You will arise; You will have compassion on Zion (Tsiyon), for ***it is*** time to show favor to her, for the appointed time has come. **14** For Your servants take pleasure in her stones, and they show favor to her dust. **15** And nations will fear the name of the LORD, and all the kings of the earth Your glory. **16** For the LORD has built Zion; He has appeared in His glory. **17** He has turned to the prayer of the destitute, and He has not despised their prayer. **18** Let this be written for a later generation, and a people to be created will praise ***the*** LORD. **19** For He has looked down from the height of His holiness; the LORD has looked from heaven to earth, **20** to hear the groaning of the prisoner, to set free the sons of death, **21** to recount in Zion the name of the LORD, and His praise in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), **22** when peoples are gathered together, and kingdoms, to serve the LORD. **23** He has afflicted my strength in the way; He has cut short my days. **24** I said, "My God, do not take me up in the middle of my days; Your years ***are*** in a generation of generations. **25** Of old You founded the earth, and the heavens ***are*** the work of Your hands. **26** They will perish, and You will endure; and all of them will wear out like a garment; like clothing You will change them, and they will pass away. **27** And You ***are*** He, and Your years will not come to an end. **28** The sons of Your servants will dwell, and their offspring will be established before You."

101:2 Ps 119:106,115; 1 Kgs 9:4; Ps 101:6
101:3 Job 31:1; Ps 119:37,113; 2 Sam 11:2,3
101:4 Prov 11:20; Prov 2:12-15; Prov 3:32
101:5 Ps 50:20; Ps 18:27; Ps 15:3
101:6 Luke 12:43,44; Rom 13:1-4; Rev 21:3
101:7 2 Sam 4:10-12; 2 Kgs 5:26,27; Prov 29:12
101:8 Ps 75:10; Jer 21:12; Ps 48:2,8
102:1 Heb 5:7; Ps 61:2; Ps 18:6
102:2 Ps 69:17; Ps 27:9; Ps 13:1
102:3 James 4:14; Ps 37:20; Job 30:30
102:4 Ps 37:2; Isa 40:7; Ezra 10:6
102:5 Job 19:20; Prov 17:22; Lam 4:8
102:6 Zeph 2:14; Job 30:29,30; Isa 38:14
102:7 Ps 77:4; Ps 38:11; Ps 22:2
102:8 Acts 23:12; Acts 26:11; Ps 31:11-13
102:9 Ps 42:3; Ps 80:5; Ps 69:21
102:10 Ps 38:3,18; Ps 39:11; Ps 90:7-9
102:11 Job 14:2; Ps 109:23; Ps 144:4
102:12 Ps 9:7; Ps 135:13; Exod 3:15
102:13 Gal 4:4; Ps 44:26; Isa 40:2
102:14 Neh 4:2,6,10; Ps 79:1,7-10; Ps 137:5,6
102:15 Rev 21:24; Ps 138:4; 1 Kgs 8:43
102:16 Isa 60:1,2,7; Ps 147:2; Ps 51:18
102:17 Neh 1:6,11; Ps 22:24; Ps 9:18
102:18 Rom 15:4; 1 Cor 10:11; Ps 22:30,31
102:19 Heb 8:1; Deut 26:15; Ps 14:2
102:20 Ps 79:11; Ps 146:7; Exod 2:23-25
102:21 Ps 22:22; Ps 9:13,14; Ps 51:14,15
102:22 Zech 8:20-23; Ps 72:8-11; Isa 49:22,23
102:23 Ps 89:38-47; 2 Thess 2:3-12; 1 Tim 4:1-3
102:24 Hab 1:12; Ps 39:13; Ps 102:12
102:25 Heb 1:10-12; Luke 16:17; Gen 1:1
102:26 Matt 5:18; Luke 16:17; 2 Pet 3:10
102:27 Luke 16:17; Mal 3:6; James 1:17
102:28 Ps 45:16,17; Ps 69:35,36; Ps 22:30,31

101:2 *I will walk about in the integrity of my heart in the midst of my house* Integrity starts at home, where no crowd is watching. "When will You come to me?" shows David knows he needs God's help to keep his vow.
101:3 *I will not set before my eyes a thing of worthlessness* What we look at shapes what we become. David refuses to put anything worthless or wicked in front of his eyes. In a world of screens, that is a vow worth making.
101:5 *Whoever slanders his neighbor in secret, him I will destroy* A king was responsible to protect his people from liars and the proud. David would not let slanderers and arrogant men run his court. The faithful would be his advisers (101:6).
101:8 *Morning by morning I will destroy all the wicked of the land* In Israel the king held court in the morning (2 Sam 15:2; Jer 21:12). David vows to deal with evil every day, not let it pile up. Only Christ will fully keep this vow, when He reigns in righteousness (Isa 11:3-5).
102:0 *A prayer of an afflicted one, when he grows faint* The heading names no writer. It describes the person who should pray it: anyone worn out and pouring out his heart to God. Psalm 102 is one of the seven penitential psalms.
102:3 *my days have come to an end in smoke* He feels his life burning away. He forgets to eat (102:4) and lies awake alone, like a lonely bird on a rooftop (102:7). Deep grief can be that consuming.
102:12 *And You, LORD, sit forever* The turn. His days are like a lengthening shadow (102:11), but God is on His throne forever. Our brief lives look different when set beside the eternal King.
102:13 *You will arise; You will have compassion on Zion* The psalmist looks for the time God will restore Jerusalem, perhaps at the end of the exile. God's servants love even the dust and stones of the ruined city (102:14). I believe God will yet build up Zion and the nations will fear His name (102:15-16).
102:18 *Let this be written for a later generation* The writer knew his prayer was for people not yet born. Here we are, reading it.
102:25 *Of old You founded the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands* Hebrews 1:10-12 quotes verses 25-27 and says they speak of the Son. The Son is the Creator, who will outlast the universe He made. Heaven and earth will wear out like clothes, but He is the same forever (Heb 13:8).
102:28 *The sons of Your servants will dwell* Because God does not change, the children of His people have a future. His faithfulness passes from generation to generation.

PSALMS 103

Of David. **1** Bless the LORD, my soul, and all my inward parts, the name of His holiness. **2** Bless the LORD, my soul, and do not forget all His benefits, **3** who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, **4** who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you ***with*** steadfast love and compassion, **5** who satisfies your ornament with good; your youth renews itself like the eagle. **6** The LORD does righteous acts and judgments for all who are oppressed. **7** He made known His ways to Moses (Moshe), His deeds to the sons of Israel (Yisra'el). **8** The LORD ***is*** compassionate and gracious, slow to anger and great in steadfast love. **9** He will not contend perpetually, and He will not keep ***His anger*** forever. **10** He has not done to us according to our sins, and He has not repaid us according to our iniquities. **11** For as the heavens are high above the earth, His steadfast love is strong toward those who fear Him. **12** As the east is far from the west, He has removed our transgressions far from us. **13** As a father has compassion on ***his*** sons, the LORD has compassion on those who fear Him. **14** For He knows our frame; He remembers that we ***are*** dust. **15** Man, his days ***are*** like grass; like the flower of the field, so he flourishes. **16** For a wind passes over it, and it is no more, and its place will not recognize it again. **17** And the steadfast love of the LORD ***is*** from everlasting and to everlasting upon those who fear Him, and His righteousness to the sons of sons, **18** to those who keep His covenant, and to those who remember His precepts to do them. **19** The LORD has established His throne in the heavens, and His kingdom rules over all. **20** Bless the LORD, His angels, mighty ones of strength, who do His word, obeying the voice of His word. **21** Bless the LORD, all His armies, His ministers who do His will. **22** Bless the LORD, all His works, in all places of His dominion. Bless the LORD, my soul.

PSALMS 104

1 Bless the LORD, my soul. LORD my God, You are very great; You are clothed ***with*** splendor and majesty, **2** wrapping

103:1 Ps 63:5; Ps 146:1,2; Ps 57:7-11
103:2 Ps 105:5; Ps 116:12; Deut 8:2-4,10-14
103:3 James 5:15; Exod 15:26; Jer 17:14
103:4 Ps 34:22; Ps 56:13; Ps 71:23
103:5 Ps 107:9; Isa 40:31; Ps 63:5
103:6 Ps 12:5; Ps 146:7; Deut 24:14,15
103:7 John 5:45; Acts 7:35; John 5:46
103:8 James 5:11; Ps 145:8; Exod 34:6,7
103:9 Ps 30:5; Isa 57:16; Jer 3:5
103:10 Ezra 9:13; Lam 3:22; Ps 130:3
103:11 Luke 1:50; Matt 7:11; Rev 11:18
103:12 Isa 43:25; Acts 3:19; 1 John 1:7
103:13 Heb 12:5; Acts 13:26; Matt 7:11
103:14 Gen 3:19; Job 10:9; Ps 78:38,39
103:15 1 Pet 1:24; James 1:10,11; Isa 51:12
103:16 Isa 40:7; Job 20:9; Gen 5:24
103:17 Eph 1:4; Luke 1:50; Acts 13:34
103:18 Heb 8:10; Deut 7:9; Ps 25:10
103:19 Heb 8:1; Ps 47:2; Ps 11:4
103:20 Matt 6:10; Matt 22:30; Rev 5:2
103:21 Matt 6:10; Heb 1:7; 1 Kgs 22:19
103:22 Ps 145:10; Ps 148:3-12; Ps 150:6
104:1 Heb 8:1; Ps 93:1; Ps 104:35
104:2 Isa 40:22; Dan 7:9; Matt 17:2

103:1 *Bless the LORD, my soul* David speaks to himself. Sometimes we need to preach to our own hearts, because feelings drift and thanks grow cold. He wants every part of him, mind, heart and will, to praise God. Half-hearted praise is not enough for a God this good.
103:2 *do not forget all His benefits* We remember our problems and forget God's kindness. One simple practice is to count His benefits on purpose, even to write them down. Forgetfulness is a quiet enemy of faith.
103:3 *who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases* Forgiveness comes first, and it is all, not some. David knew it after Bathsheba (2 Sam 12:13). God heals in many ways, through medicine, the body's recovery and answered prayer (James 5:14-15). Yet He does not heal every sickness in this life, and when healing does not come, it is not because someone lacked faith. The full answer comes at the resurrection (Phil 3:21; Rev 21:4).
103:4 *who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and compassion* Redemption is rescue at a cost, and for us the cost was the blood of Christ (1 Pet 1:18-19). God lifts us out of the pit and puts a crown on our heads. He treats forgiven sinners like royalty.
103:5 *your youth renews itself like the eagle* "Ornament" is hard to pin down; many take it as the whole person or the years of life. The eagle pictures strength and soaring flight (Isa 40:31). The body grows old, but God renews the spirit. Many elderly believers are young in spirit.
103:7 *He made known His ways to Moses, His deeds to the sons of Israel* Israel saw God's acts. Moses was shown His ways, the character behind the acts, because he asked, "let me know, please, Your ways" (Exod 33:13). Some see only what God does. Others come to know who God is.
103:8 *The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger and great in steadfast love* God's own words about Himself after the golden calf (Exod 34:6), repeated through the Old Testament (Num 14:18; Joel 2:13; Jonah 4:2). Compassionate, tender like a mother. Gracious, giving favor to the undeserving. Slow to anger, patient. Many picture God as harsh and quick to punish. That is not how He describes Himself.
103:10 *He has not done to us according to our sins* That is grace. If God gave us what our sins deserve, none of us could stand. He can forgive and still be just because Christ took our punishment (Rom 3:25-26). David received it looking forward, and we look back to the cross.
103:11 *as the heavens are high above the earth* Try to measure how high the sky goes. You cannot. God's love toward those who fear Him is like that.
103:12 *As the east is far from the west, He has removed our transgressions far from us* North and south meet at the poles, but east and west never meet. God does not keep our sins nearby to bring up later. "Their sins and their lawless deeds I will certainly not remember any more" (Heb 8:12). If God has forgiven you, you don't need to keep your sin in front of you either.
103:13 *As a father has compassion on his sons* The father in Jesus' story saw his son far off and "was moved with compassion" (Luke 15:20). If your own father was harsh or absent, the picture may hurt. God is the Father every earthly father should have imitated.
103:14 *He remembers that we are dust* God made us from the ground (Gen 2:7) and knows how we are built. He does not expect more from us than dust can do, and He gives us the strength we lack.
103:15 *Man, his days are like grass* A hot desert wind could wither wildflowers in a day, and the place forgets they grew there (90:5-6). Our lives are short, so we need something that lasts longer than we do.
103:17 *the steadfast love of the LORD is from everlasting and to everlasting* Man is grass, but God's love had no beginning and has no end, and His faithfulness reaches to our grandchildren. Keeping His covenant (103:18) describes those who have received His love, not a way to earn it. Grace comes first, and obedience follows.
103:19 *His kingdom rules over all* This verse holds the psalm together. The God who forgives, heals and pities us is the King over everything. His love has all a King's strength behind it, and His power is always used with love.
103:20 *Bless the LORD, His angels, mighty ones of strength, who do His word* The angels are powerful, yet they live to obey. We pray that God's will be done on earth as in heaven (Matt 6:10).
103:22 *Bless the LORD, my soul* After calling angels, armies and all creation, David comes back to himself. All heaven is praising God, and he does not want to be left out. Neither should we.
104:1 *Bless the LORD, my soul. LORD my God, You are very great* Psalm 104 begins and ends like Psalm 103. That psalm praised God for His mercy. This one praises Him for His creation, following much the order of Genesis 1: light, sky, waters, land, plants, sun and moon, sea creatures, man.
104:2 *wrapping Yourself in light like a garment, stretching out the heavens like a tent curtain* God puts on light the way we put on a coat, and spreads out the sky as easily as a man pitching a tent.

Yourself ***in*** light like a garment, stretching out the heavens like a tent curtain, **3** who lays the beams of His upper rooms in the waters, who makes clouds His chariot, who walks on the wings of the wind, **4** who makes His messengers winds, His ministers a flaming fire. **5** He founded the earth on its foundations; it will not be shaken forever and ever. **6** ***With*** the deep like clothing You covered it; the waters stood above the mountains. **7** From Your rebuke they fled; from the sound of Your thunder they hurried away. **8** They went up mountains; they went down valleys, to the place that You founded for them. **9** You set a boundary ***that*** they will not pass over; they will not return to cover the earth. **10** He sends forth springs into the ravines; between the mountains they go. **11** They give drink to every living thing of the field; wild donkeys break their thirst. **12** By them the flying things of the heavens dwell; from among the branches they give voice. **13** He waters the mountains from His upper rooms; from the fruit of Your works the earth is satisfied. **14** He causes grass to sprout for the livestock, and vegetation for the labor of mankind, to bring forth bread from the earth, **15** and wine ***that*** makes glad the heart of man, to make ***his*** face shine with oil, and bread ***that*** sustains the heart of man. **16** The trees of the LORD are satisfied, the cedars of Lebanon (Levanon) which He planted, **17** where the birds make nests; the stork, the cypresses ***are*** her home. **18** The high mountains ***are*** for the mountain goats; the crags ***are*** a refuge for the rock badgers. **19** He made the moon for appointed times; the sun knows its setting. **20** You make darkness, and it becomes night; in it every living thing of the forest moves about. **21** The young lions roar for the prey, and to seek their food from God. **22** The sun rises; they withdraw, and in their dens they lie down. **23** Man goes out to his work and to his labor until evening. **24** How many are Your works, LORD! In wisdom You have made all of them; the earth is full of Your possessions. **25** This sea, great and broad in extent, there ***are*** moving things, and ***there is*** no number ***to them***, living things small along with great. **26** There the ships go about, ***and*** Leviathan, which You formed to play in it. **27** All of them wait for You, to give their food in its time. **28** You give to them; they gather ***it*** up; You open Your hand; they are satisfied ***with*** good. **29** You hide Your face; they are terrified; You withdraw their breath; they die, and to their dust they return. **30** You send forth Your Spirit; they are created, and You renew the face of the ground. **31** Let the glory of the LORD be forever; let the LORD rejoice in His works, **32** who looks at the earth, and it trembles; He touches the mountains, and they smoke. **33** I will sing to the LORD in my life; I will sing praises to my God while I still ***exist***. **34** Let my meditation be pleasing to Him; I, I will rejoice in the LORD. **35** Let sinners be consumed from the earth, and ***let the*** wicked be no more. Bless the LORD, my soul. Praise ***the*** LORD!

PSALMS 105

1 Give thanks to the LORD; call on His name; make known His deeds among the peoples. **2** Sing to Him; sing praises to Him; tell of all His wonders. **3** Boast in the name of His holiness; let the heart of those who seek the LORD rejoice. **4** Seek the

104:3 Amos 9:6; Isa 19:1; 2 Sam 22:11
104:4 Heb 1:7; 2 Kgs 2:11; 2 Kgs 6:17
104:5 Ps 24:2; Job 26:7; Ps 96:10
104:6 2 Pet 3:5; Gen 7:19; Gen 1:2-10
104:7 Gen 8:1; Prov 8:28; Mark 4:39
104:8 Gen 8:5
104:9 Gen 9:11-15; Job 26:10; Job 38:10,11
104:10 Isa 41:18; Ps 107:35; Deut 8:7
104:11 Ps 145:16; Job 39:5-8
104:12 Ps 148:10; Ps 104:16,17; Ps 50:11
104:13 Ps 147:8; Jer 10:13; Deut 11:11
104:14 Job 28:5; Ps 147:8,9; Gen 3:18
104:15 Ps 23:5; Judg 9:13; Prov 31:6
104:16 Num 24:6; Ps 29:5; Ps 92:2
104:17 Matt 8:20; Ps 104:12; Lev 11:19
104:18 Prov 30:26; Job 39:1; 1 Sam 24:2
104:19 Ps 8:3; Ps 136:7-9; Gen 1:14-18
104:20 Isa 45:7; Ps 74:16; Ps 139:10-12
104:21 Job 38:39; Ps 34:10; Isa 31:4
104:22 Job 24:13-17; Nah 3:17; John 3:20
104:23 Gen 3:19; Judg 19:16; Eccl 5:12
104:24 Rom 11:33; Ps 40:5; Jer 10:12
104:25 Ps 95:4,5; Gen 1:20-22,28; Deut 33:14-16,19
104:26 Ps 107:23; Ps 74:14; Isa 27:1
104:27 Ps 136:25; Ps 147:9; Job 38:41
104:29 Job 34:14,15; Ps 30:7; Eccl 12:7
104:30 Job 33:4; Rev 21:5; Job 26:13
104:31 Gen 1:31; Rom 11:36; Gal 1:5
104:32 Ps 144:5; Exod 19:18; Ps 97:4,5
104:33 Ps 63:4; Ps 146:2; Ps 145:1,2
104:34 Phil 4:4; Ps 1:2; Ps 77:12
104:35 Ps 37:38; Ps 59:13; Ps 1:4
105:1 Rom 10:13; Isa 12:4; Joel 2:32
105:2 Eph 5:19; Luke 2:28; Luke 24:16
105:3 1 Cor 1:31; Eph 5:19; Luke 11:9,10
105:4 Ps 27:8; Ps 78:61; Amos 5:4-6

104:4 *who makes His messengers winds, His ministers a flaming fire* Wind and fire obey Him like servants. Hebrews quotes this of the angels, to show that the Son is far greater than they (Heb 1:7).
104:6 *the waters stood above the mountains* At creation the deep covered the earth (Gen 1:2, 9). At God's rebuke the waters fled to the place He set for them, and He fixed a boundary they will not cross (104:9). He kept that promise after the flood (Gen 9:11).
104:14 *He causes grass to sprout for the livestock, and vegetation for the labor of mankind* God feeds animals and people alike. Bread, wine and oil (104:15) were the basic gifts of the land. Every meal is from His hand.
104:15 *wine that makes glad the heart of man* Scripture counts wine among God's good gifts, while warning plainly against drunkenness (Prov 20:1; Eph 5:18).
104:19 *He made the moon for appointed times* Israel's calendar and feasts were set by the moon. Sun and moon keep the times God gave them (Gen 1:14).
104:21 *The young lions roar for the prey, and to seek their food from God* Even a lion's hunt is a kind of prayer. Night belongs to the beasts, and day to man and his work (104:22-23). God orders it all.
104:24 *How many are Your works, LORD! In wisdom You have made all of them* The more we learn about creation, the more reason we have to praise its Maker's wisdom (Prov 3:19).
104:26 *Leviathan, which You formed to play in it* Elsewhere Leviathan is a fearsome monster (74:14). Here it is a great sea creature God made to play, like a pet in His ocean. What terrifies us is a plaything to God.
104:29 *You withdraw their breath; they die* All life depends on God moment by moment. He gives breath, and when He takes it, creatures return to dust (Gen 3:19).
104:30 *You send forth Your Spirit; they are created* The same word means breath and Spirit. God's Spirit was at work in creation (Gen 1:2), and He renews the earth every spring.
104:35 *Let sinners be consumed from the earth* The only dark line in the psalm. Sin is the one thing spoiling God's good creation, and the writer longs for the day it will be gone (Rev 21:27). "Praise the LORD" here is Hallelujah, the first time it appears in the Psalms.
105:1 *Give thanks to the LORD; call on His name; make known His deeds among the peoples* Verses 1-15 also appear in 1 Chronicles 16:8-22, sung when the ark came to Jerusalem. Psalm 105 tells Israel's story as a story of God's faithfulness, from Abraham to the promised land.

LORD and His strength; seek His face continually.
5 Remember His wonders which He has done, His portents and the judgments of His mouth, **6** offspring of Abraham (Avraham) His servant, sons of Jacob (Ya'aqov), His chosen ones! **7** He ***is*** the LORD our God; His judgments ***are*** in all the earth. **8** He has remembered His covenant forever, the word ***that*** He commanded for a thousand generations, **9** which He made with Abraham, and His oath to Isaac (Yischaq). **10** And He confirmed it to Jacob for a statute, to Israel (Yisra'el) ***as*** an everlasting covenant, **11** saying, "To you I will give the land of Canaan (Kena'an), the measured portion of your inheritance," **12** when they were men few in number, a mere few, and sojourners in it. **13** And they went about from nation to nation, from a kingdom to another people. **14** He did not allow a man to oppress them, and He rebuked kings on their account: **15** "Do not touch My anointed ones, and do not do harm to My prophets." **16** And He called a famine on the land; He broke every staff of bread. **17** He sent a man before them; Joseph (Yosef) was sold as a slave. **18** They afflicted his foot with shackles; his neck came ***into*** iron, **19** until the time ***that*** his word came; the word of the LORD refined him. **20** The king sent, and he released him, the ruler of peoples, and he set him free. **21** He made him lord of his house and ruler over all his possessions, **22** to bind his officials at his will, and to make his elders wise. **23** And Israel came ***into*** Egypt (Mitsrayim), and Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham (Cham). **24** And He made His people very fruitful, and He made them stronger than their adversaries. **25** He turned their heart to hate His people, to deal craftily with His servants. **26** He sent Moses (Moshe) His servant, ***and*** Aaron (Aharon) whom He had chosen. **27** They set among them the matters of His signs, and portents in the land of Ham. **28** He sent darkness, and He made ***it*** dark, and they did not rebel against His word. **29** He turned their waters into blood, and He caused their fish to die. **30** Their land swarmed ***with*** frogs, in the chambers of their kings. **31** He spoke, and ***there*** came a swarm, gnats in all their territory. **32** He made their rains hail, a fire of flames in their land. **33** And He struck down their vines and their fig trees, and He broke the trees of their territory. **34** He spoke, and ***there*** came locusts, and young locusts, and ***there was*** no number. **35** And it ate all the vegetation in their land, and it ate the fruit of their ground. **36** And He struck down every firstborn in their land, the first of all their vigor. **37** And He brought them out with silver and gold, and ***there was*** no one among His tribes who stumbled. **38** Egypt was glad when they went out, for the dread of them had fallen on them. **39** He spread out a cloud for a covering, and fire to give light ***at*** night. **40** ***The people*** asked, and He brought quail, and ***with*** the bread of heaven He satisfied them. **41** He opened a rock, and waters flowed out; they went in the dry places ***as*** a river. **42** For He remembered the word of His holiness, Abraham His servant. **43** And He brought out His people with joy, His chosen ones with a shout of joy. **44** And He gave them the lands of nations, and they took possession of the labor of peoples, **45** so that they might keep His statutes and observe His laws. Praise ***the*** LORD!

PSALMS 106

1 Praise ***the*** LORD! Give thanks to the LORD, for ***He is*** good; for His steadfast love ***is*** forever. **2** Who will speak the mighty deeds of the LORD, ***who*** will proclaim all His praise? **3** How

105:5 Ps 77:11; Isa 43:18,19; Ps 119:13
105:6 Luke 1:55; Acts 3:13; Acts 13:26
105:7 Isa 26:9; Ps 95:7; Ps 100:3
105:8 Luke 1:72; Luke 1:73; Acts 3:25
105:9 Acts 7:8; Gal 3:17; Luke 1:55
105:10 Acts 3:13; Acts 3:25; Acts 13:17
105:11 Acts 13:17; Gen 13:15; Gen 15:18
105:12 Acts 13:17; Gen 34:30; Deut 7:7
105:14 Gen 35:5; Gen 31:24-29; Exod 7:16,17
105:15 Gen 26:11; 1 John 2:27; Gen 20:7
105:16 Isa 3:1; Ezek 4:16; Lev 26:26
105:17 Acts 7:9; Gen 50:20; Gen 37:27,28,36
105:18 Gen 39:20; Gen 40:15; Acts 16:24
105:19 Prov 21:1; Acts 7:10; Ps 44:4
105:20 Gen 41:14
105:21 Gen 41:40-44,55; Gen 45:8,26
105:22 Gen 41:33,38; Isa 19:11
105:23 Acts 13:17; Acts 7:11; Acts 7:12
105:24 Acts 13:17; Deut 26:5; Gen 13:16
105:25 Acts 7:19; Gen 15:13; Exod 9:16
105:26 John 9:29; Acts 7:35; Acts 13:17
105:27 Acts 13:17; Ps 78:43-51; Ps 135:8,9
105:28 2 Pet 2:17; Ps 99:7; Exod 10:21-23
105:29 Ps 78:44; Exod 7:20,21; Isa 50:2
105:30 Ps 78:45; Exod 8:3-14; Rev 16:13,14
105:31 Exod 8:21-24; Exod 8:16-18; Ps 78:45
105:32 Ps 78:47,48; Exod 9:18-28; Rev 8:7
105:33 Rev 9:4
105:34 Exod 10:12-15; Ps 78:46; Joel 1:4-7
105:36 Acts 13:17; Ps 78:51; Ps 135:8
105:37 Acts 13:17; Exod 12:35,36; Gen 15:14
105:38 Acts 13:17; Exod 12:33; Gen 35:5
105:39 Acts 13:17; Neh 9:12,19; Ps 78:14
105:40 John 6:31; John 6:48; John 6:32
105:41 1 Cor 10:4; Exod 17:6; Num 20:11
105:42 Luke 1:55; Luke 1:73; Acts 13:17
105:43 Acts 13:17; Ps 78:52,53; Ps 106:8-12
105:44 Ps 78:55; Josh 11:23; Deut 6:10,11
105:45 Deut 4:40; Deut 5:33; Ezek 36:24-28
106:1 Ps 107:1; 1 Chr 16:34; Ps 105:45
106:2 Ps 40:5; Ps 139:17,18; Ps 145:3-12
106:3 Rev 22:14; Luke 11:28; Ps 15:2

105:8 *He has remembered His covenant forever* The covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob promised the land of Canaan "as an everlasting covenant" (105:10-11; Gen 17:7-8). "A thousand generations" means forever. I believe God still keeps this promise to Israel (Rom 11:28-29).
105:15 *Do not touch My anointed ones, and do not do harm to My prophets* The patriarchs were few and wandering, but God protected them, even rebuking kings like Pharaoh and Abimelech (Gen 12:17; 20:3-7). "Anointed ones" here means the patriarchs, set apart by God, not later kings.
105:17 *He sent a man before them; Joseph was sold as a slave* What his brothers meant for evil, God meant for good, to keep His people alive (Gen 45:5; 50:20). Joseph's chains were part of God's plan.
105:19 *until the time that his word came; the word of the LORD refined him* Joseph waited years in prison while God's word tested him. God's promises often take longer than we expect, and the waiting shapes us.
105:25 *He turned their heart to hate His people* God was sovereign even over Egypt's hatred, using it to bring about the exodus. That does not excuse Egypt's cruelty, which God judged.
105:28 *He sent darkness* The psalm lists eight of the ten plagues, not in Exodus order, as a poet would (Exod 7-12). Each showed the LORD's power over the gods of Egypt (Exod 12:12).
105:37 *He brought them out with silver and gold* Israel left with the wealth of Egypt (Exod 12:35-36), and none was too weak to travel. God brought them out whole.
105:42 *For He remembered the word of His holiness, Abraham His servant* The whole story turns on this: God remembered His promise. The goal was that His people would keep His ways (105:45). Grace comes first, then obedience.
106:1 *Praise the LORD! Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; for His steadfast love is forever* Psalm 106 tells the same history as Psalm 105, but from the other side: Israel's unfaithfulness. Psalm 105 shows God never failed. Psalm 106 shows His people often did, and He kept loving them.

blessed ***are*** those who keep justice, ***the one*** who does righteousness at every time! **4** Remember me, LORD, with the favor of Your people; visit me with Your salvation, **5** to look on the good of Your chosen ones, to rejoice in the joy of Your nation, to boast with Your inheritance. **6** We have sinned with our fathers; we have acted perversely; we have acted wickedly. **7** Our fathers in Egypt (Mitsrayim) did not consider Your wonders; they did not remember the abundance of Your steadfast loves, and they rebelled at ***the*** sea, at the Red Sea. **8** And He saved them for the sake of His name, to make known His might. **9** And He rebuked the Red Sea, and it dried up; and He led them through the deeps as ***through*** the wilderness. **10** And He saved them from the hand of the one who hated ***them***, and He redeemed them from the hand of ***the*** enemy. **11** And the waters covered their adversaries; not one of them was left. **12** And they believed in His words; they sang His praise. **13** They hastened, they forgot His works; they did not wait for His counsel. **14** And they craved a craving in the wilderness, and they tested God in ***the*** desert. **15** And He gave them their request, and He sent leanness into their soul. **16** And they were jealous of Moses (Moshe) in the camp, of Aaron (Aharon), the holy one of the LORD. **17** ***The*** earth opened, and it swallowed Dathan (Datan), and it covered over the company of Abiram (Aviram). **18** And fire burned in their company; a flame set the wicked ablaze. **19** They made a calf at Horeb (Chorev), and they bowed down to a molten image. **20** And they exchanged their glory for the likeness of an ox that eats plants. **21** They forgot God their Savior, who did great ***things*** in Egypt, **22** wonders in the land of Ham (Cham), awesome ***things*** at the Red Sea. **23** And He said ***He would*** destroy them, had not Moses His chosen one stood in the breach before Him, to turn back His wrath from destroying. **24** And they rejected the land of desire; they did not believe His word. **25** And they grumbled in their tents; they did not listen to the voice of the LORD. **26** And He lifted His hand to them, to make them fall in the wilderness, **27** and to make their offspring fall among the nations, and to scatter them among the lands. **28** And they joined themselves to Baal of Peor, and they ate sacrifices of ***the*** dead. **29** And they provoked ***Him*** to anger with their deeds, and a plague broke out among them. **30** And Phinehas (Pinchas) stood up and intervened, and the plague was restrained. **31** And it was reckoned to him for righteousness, to generation and generation, until forever. **32** And they provoked ***Him*** to wrath at the waters of Meribah (Meriva), and it went badly for Moses because of them, **33** for they rebelled against His Spirit, and he spoke rashly with his lips. **34** They did not destroy the peoples, as the LORD had said to them, **35** and they mingled with the nations, and they learned their works. **36** And they served their idols, and they became a snare to them. **37** And they sacrificed their sons and their daughters to the demons. **38** And they shed innocent blood, the blood of their sons and their daughters, whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan (Kena'an); and the land was polluted with the blood. **39** And they became unclean by their works, and they played the prostitute by their deeds. **40** And the anger of the LORD burned against His people, and He abhorred His inheritance. **41** And He gave them into the hand of ***the*** nations, and those who hated them ruled over them. **42** And their enemies oppressed them, and they were humbled under their hand. **43** Many times He delivered them, and

106:4 Luke 23:42; Ps 119:132; Acts 15:14
106:5 1 Pet 2:9; Ps 105:6,43; Deut 7:6
106:6 1 Kgs 8:47; Ps 78:8; Lev 26:40
106:7 Acts 7:25; Acts 13:17; Ps 78:42
106:8 Rom 9:17; Acts 7:36; Acts 13:17
106:9 Matt 8:26; Acts 7:36; Heb 11:29
106:10 Luke 1:71; Exod 14:30; Ps 107:2
106:11 Exod 15:5,10,19; Ps 78:53; Exod 14:13,27,28
106:12 Exod 14:31; Luke 8:13; John 8:30,31
106:13 Exod 16:2; Ps 78:11; Exod 15:17,24
106:14 Heb 3:8; Acts 13:18; Heb 3:9
106:15 Isa 10:16; Ps 78:29-31; Num 11:31-34
106:16 John 9:29; Num 16:1,3-50; Exod 28:36
106:17 Deut 11:6; Num 16:29-33; Num 26:10
106:18 Num 16:35-40,46; Heb 12:29
106:19 Acts 7:41; Exod 32:4-8,35; Deut 9:12-16,21
106:20 Rom 1:23; Jer 2:11; Ps 89:17
106:21 Luke 1:47; Titus 1:3; Titus 2:10
106:22 Ps 78:51; Ps 105:23,27-36; Exod 14:25-28
106:23 Matt 12:18; Ps 105:6,26; Ezek 22:30
106:24 Jude 1:5; Num 14:31; Ezek 20:6
106:25 Num 14:1-4,27-29; Deut 1:26,27; Ps 95:7-9
106:26 Acts 13:18; Ezek 20:15; Ps 95:11
106:27 Ps 44:11; Lev 26:33; Deut 4:26,27
106:28 Hos 9:10; Deut 4:3; Num 25:1-3,5
106:29 Rom 1:21; Ps 106:39; Ps 99:8
106:30 Num 25:6-8,14,15; Deut 13:9-11,15-17; Josh 7:12
106:31 Rom 4:3; Num 25:11-13; Deut 24:13
106:32 Ps 81:7; Num 20:2,6,13; Deut 1:37
106:33 Num 20:10,11; Ps 39:1; Ps 141:3
106:34 Deut 7:2,16,23,24; Josh 15:63; Josh 16:10
106:35 Josh 15:63; Judg 1:27-36; Judg 2:2,3
106:36 Deut 7:16; Exod 23:33; Judg 2:3,14,15
106:37 2 Kgs 16:3; 2 Kgs 17:17; Deut 32:17
106:38 Num 35:33; Deut 21:9; 2 Kgs 21:16
106:39 Ezek 20:18,30,31,43; Lev 17:7; Num 15:39
106:40 Judg 2:14,20; Deut 9:29; Deut 32:19
106:41 Judg 2:14; Deut 32:30; Judg 3:8,12
106:43 Judg 2:16-18; Ps 81:12; 1 Sam 12:9-11

106:6 *We have sinned with our fathers* The writer does not blame only the past. He confesses that his own generation shares the guilt. Honest confession says "we," not only "they" (Dan 9:5; Neh 9:33).
106:8 *He saved them for the sake of His name* Israel rebelled even at the Red Sea (Exod 14:11-12), and God saved them anyway. He did it for His own name, not because they deserved it.
106:15 *He gave them their request, and He sent leanness into their soul* They demanded meat and got it, with judgment (Num 11:31-34). Getting what we want can leave the soul starved. It is better to want what God wants.
106:20 *they exchanged their glory for the likeness of an ox that eats plants* At Sinai they traded the living God, their true glory, for a golden calf (Exod 32). Paul says all mankind made the same trade (Rom 1:23).
106:23 *had not Moses His chosen one stood in the breach before Him* A breach is a gap in a city wall. Moses stood in the gap and prayed, and God spared Israel (Exod 32:11-14). God still looks for those who will pray for others (Ezek 22:30). Jesus is the perfect intercessor who stands in the gap for us (Heb 7:25).
106:24 *they rejected the land of desire; they did not believe His word* At Kadesh they refused to enter Canaan (Num 14), and that generation died in the wilderness. Unbelief kept them out (Heb 3:19).
106:30 *Phinehas stood up and intervened, and the plague was restrained* When Israel joined in the worship of Baal of Peor and its immorality, Phinehas the priest acted to stop it (Num 25:1-13). His zeal for God "was reckoned to him for righteousness," the same words used of Abraham's faith (Gen 15:6). His act showed a heart wholly for God.
106:33 *he spoke rashly with his lips* Even Moses failed at Meribah and was kept out of the land (Num 20:10-12). The people's rebellion provoked him, but he was still responsible for his words.
106:37 *they sacrificed their sons and their daughters to the demons* The lowest point of Israel's sin: child sacrifice to the gods of Canaan (2 Kgs 17:17; Jer 7:31). Behind the idols were demons (1 Cor 10:20). God hated this, and it polluted the land.

they, they rebelled in their counsel, and they sank in their iniquity. **44** And He saw, when distress ***came*** to them, when He heard their cry. **45** And He remembered for them His covenant, and He relented according to the abundance of His steadfast loves. **46** And He gave them to compassion before all their captors. **47** Save us, LORD our God, and gather us from the nations, to give thanks to the name of Your holiness, to glory in Your praise.

Closing Praise of Book Four

48 Blessed ***be*** the LORD, the God of Israel (Yisra'el), from everlasting and to everlasting. And all the people shall say, "Amen." Praise ***the*** LORD!

PSALMS 107

Book Five: The Redeemed Give Thanks

1 Give thanks to the LORD, for ***He is*** good; for His steadfast love ***is*** forever. **2** Let the redeemed of the LORD say ***so***, whom He has redeemed from the hand of ***the*** adversary, **3** and from the lands He has gathered them, from east and from west, from north and from ***the*** sea. **4** They wandered in the wilderness, in a desert way; a city of dwelling they did not find. **5** Hungry, also thirsty, their soul fainted within them. **6** And they cried out to the LORD when distress ***came*** to them; from their troubles He delivered them. **7** And He led them by a straight way, to go to a city of dwelling. **8** Let them give thanks to the LORD ***for*** His steadfast love, and His wonders to the sons of man. **9** For He has satisfied a longing soul, and a hungry soul He has filled ***with*** good. **10** Those who sat in darkness and deep darkness, prisoners of affliction and iron, **11** for they had rebelled against the words of God, and the counsel of the Most High they had spurned. **12** And He humbled their heart with toil; they stumbled, and ***there was*** no helper. **13** And they cried out to the LORD when distress ***came*** to them; from their troubles He saved them. **14** He brought them out from darkness and deep darkness, and their bonds He tore apart. **15** Let them give thanks to the LORD ***for*** His steadfast love, and His wonders to the sons of man. **16** For He has broken doors of bronze, and bars of iron He has cut down. **17** Fools, because of the way of their transgression and because of their iniquities, were afflicted. **18** All food their soul loathed, and they reached to the gates of death. **19** And they cried out to the LORD when distress ***came*** to them; from their troubles He saved them. **20** He sent His word and healed them, and He rescued ***them*** from their pits. **21** Let them give thanks to the LORD ***for*** His steadfast love, and His wonders to the sons of man. **22** And let them sacrifice sacrifices of thanksgiving, and let them recount His works with a shout of joy. **23** Those who go down to the sea in ships, who do work on many waters, **24** they have seen the works of the LORD, and His wonders in the deep. **25** And He spoke and raised up a wind of storm, and it lifted up its waves. **26** They went up ***to the*** heavens, they went down ***to the*** deeps; their soul melted in trouble. **27** They reeled and staggered like the drunkard, and all their skill was swallowed up. **28** And they cried out to the LORD when distress ***came*** to them, and from their troubles He brought them out. **29** He settled the storm into a calm, and their waves were hushed. **30** And they rejoiced because they were quiet, and He guided them to the harbor of their desire. **31** Let them give thanks to the LORD ***for*** His steadfast love, and His wonders to the

106:44 Judg 3:9; Judg 4:3; Judg 2:18
106:45 Luke 1:72; Ps 105:8; Judg 2:18
106:46 Ezra 9:9; Jer 42:12; 1 Kgs 8:50
106:47 Ps 14:7; Ps 126:1; 1 Chr 16:35
106:48 1 Cor 14:16; Matt 6:13; Luke 1:68
107:1 Ps 106:1; Ps 118:1; 1 Chr 16:34,41
107:2 1 Pet 1:18; Gal 3:13; Ps 106:10
107:3 Ps 106:47; Isa 43:5,6; Jer 29:14
107:4 Num 14:33; Deut 32:10; Ps 107:40
107:5 Judg 15:18,19; 1 Sam 30:11,12; Isa 44:12
107:6 Ps 50:15; Ps 107:13,19,28; Ps 91:15
107:7 Jer 31:9; Ps 107:4,36; Ps 77:20
107:8 Ps 107:15,21,31; Ps 81:13-16; Deut 5:29
107:9 Luke 1:53; Ps 34:10; Ps 132:15
107:10 Luke 1:79; Matt 4:16; Job 3:5
107:11 Luke 7:30; Matt 4:16; Ps 106:43
107:12 Ps 22:11; Exod 2:23; Exod 5:18,19
107:13 Ps 107:6,19,28; Ps 18:6; Ps 116:3-6
107:14 Ps 116:16; Ps 107:10; Isa 42:16
107:15 Ps 107:8,21,31; Ps 116:17-19
107:16 Luke 4:18; Isa 45:1,2; Judg 16:3
107:17 Lam 3:39; Ps 14:1; Ps 92:6
107:18 Matt 16:18; Ps 88:3; Ps 9:13
107:19 Ps 107:6,13,28; Ps 30:8-12; Ps 34:4-6
107:20 Ps 147:15,19; 2 Kgs 20:4,5; Matt 8:8
107:21 Ps 107:8,15,31; Ps 66:5; 2 Chr 32:25
107:22 Ps 118:17; Ps 50:14; Ps 9:11
107:23 Ps 48:7; Ezek 27:26; Acts 27:9-28
107:24 Mark 4:37; Ps 95:5; Ps 104:24-27
107:25 Mark 4:37; Acts 27:14; Jonah 1:4
107:26 Mark 4:37; Acts 27:14; Ps 22:14
107:27 Job 12:25; Isa 19:14; Isa 29:9
107:28 Mark 4:37; Matt 8:25; Acts 27:23-25
107:29 Mark 4:37; Matt 8:26; Ps 65:7
107:30 Mark 4:37; Acts 27:12; John 6:21
107:31 Ps 107:8,15,21; Ps 103:2; Ps 105:1

106:45 *He remembered for them His covenant, and He relented* Again and again God delivered them. His steadfast love was greater than their unfaithfulness. That is the gospel in the Old Testament.

106:47 *gather us from the nations* A prayer from exile, or from a scattered people. I believe God will gather Israel from the nations, as the prophets promised (Ezek 36:24).

106:48 *Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, from everlasting and to everlasting* This blessing closes Book Four (90-106). The people answer "Amen" and "Praise the LORD!" (1 Chr 16:36).

107:1 *Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; for His steadfast love is forever* Psalm 107 opens Book Five (107-150). It picks up right where Book Four ended, with God gathering His people from the lands (106:47; 107:3).

107:2 *Let the redeemed of the LORD say so* If God has rescued you, say so. Testimony is part of thanksgiving. The psalm then gives four pictures of people in trouble who cried out and were saved.

107:4 *They wandered in the wilderness* The first picture: lost travelers, hungry and thirsty, with no city to call home. God led them by a straight way. He satisfies the longing soul (107:9). Jesus is the bread of life for every hungry heart (John 6:35).

107:6 *they cried out to the LORD when distress came to them* The refrain comes four times (107:6, 13, 19, 28), each followed by a call to give thanks for His steadfast love (107:8, 15, 21, 31). Trouble, a cry, rescue, thanks: that is the pattern of the whole psalm.

107:10 *Those who sat in darkness and deep darkness, prisoners of affliction and iron* The second picture: prisoners who had rebelled against God and brought their chains on themselves. Even so, when they cried out, He broke the bars of iron (107:16). Jesus came to proclaim freedom to captives (Luke 4:18).

107:17 *Fools, because of the way of their transgression* The third picture: people sick because of their own sin, so ill they loathed food. "He sent His word and healed them" (107:20). God's word has power to heal and save.

107:23 *Those who go down to the sea in ships* The fourth picture: sailors in a storm, tossed until their skill was gone. God stilled the storm and brought them to harbor (107:29-30). Jesus did the same on the Sea of Galilee, and His disciples asked, "Who then is this?" (Mark 4:39-41).

sons of man. **32** And let them exalt Him in the assembly of ***the*** people, and in the seat of the elders let them praise Him. **33** He makes rivers into a wilderness, and springs of water into thirsty ground, **34** a land of fruit into saltiness, because of the evil of those who dwell in it. **35** He makes a wilderness into a pool of water, and a land of dryness into springs of water. **36** And He made the hungry dwell there, and they established a city of dwelling. **37** And they sowed fields, and they planted vineyards, and they made fruit of produce. **38** And He blessed them, and they multiplied greatly, and their livestock He did not make few. **39** And they became few, and they were bowed down by the oppression of trouble and sorrow. **40** He pours contempt on nobles, and He made them wander in formlessness, ***where there is*** no way. **41** And He set the needy on high from affliction, and He made ***their*** families like the flock. **42** The upright see, and they rejoice, and all injustice shuts its mouth. **43** Who ***is*** wise? Then let him keep these ***things***, and let them consider the steadfast loves of the LORD.

PSALMS 108

A song. A psalm of David. **1** My heart is steadfast, God; I will sing, and I will sing praises, also my glory. **2** Awake, harp and lyre! I will awaken the dawn. **3** I will give thanks to You among the peoples, LORD, and I will sing praises to You among the nations. **4** For Your steadfast love ***is*** great above the heavens, and Your faithfulness to the clouds. **5** Be exalted above the heavens, God, and ***let*** Your glory ***be*** over all the earth. **6** So that Your beloved ones may be rescued, save ***with*** Your right hand, and answer me. **7** God has spoken in His holiness: "I will exult; I will divide up Shechem (Shekhem), and I will measure off the valley of Succoth (Sukot). **8** Gilead (Gilad) ***is*** Mine, Manasseh (Menashe) ***is*** Mine, and Ephraim (Efrayim) ***is*** the protection of My head; Judah (Yehuda) ***is*** My ruler's staff. **9** Moab (Mo'av) ***is*** the pot of My washing; over Edom I will throw My sandal; over Philistia (Peleshet) I will shout aloud." **10** Who will bring me ***to*** a city of fortification? Who has led me to Edom? **11** ***Have*** not You, God, rejected us? And You do not go out, God, with our armies. **12** Give us help from ***the*** foe, and the deliverance of man ***is*** worthlessness. **13** In God we will do valiantly, and He, He will tread down our foes.

PSALMS 109

To the choirmaster. Of David. A psalm. **1** God of my praise, do not be silent. **2** For the mouth of ***the*** wicked and the mouth of deceit they have opened against me; they have spoken with me ***with*** a tongue of falsehood. **3** And ***with*** words of hatred they have surrounded me, and they have fought against me without cause. **4** In return for my love they accuse me, and I ***am*** prayer. **5** And they have set on me evil in return for good, and hatred in return for my love. **6** Appoint a wicked ***man*** over him, and let an accuser stand at his right ***hand***. **7** When he is judged, let him come out guilty, and let his prayer become sin. **8** Let his days be few; let another take his office. **9** Let his sons be fatherless, and his wife a widow. **10** And let his sons surely wander and beg, and let them seek ***food*** away from their ruins. **11** Let ***the*** creditor ensnare all that ***is*** his, and let strangers plunder his toil. **12** Let there be no ***one*** to him who extends steadfast love, and let there be no ***one*** who shows favor to his fatherless children. **13** Let his posterity be for cutting off; in another generation let their name be wiped out. **14** Let the iniquity of his fathers be remembered before the LORD, and let the sin of his mother not be wiped out.

107:32 Luke 8:38; Luke 18:43; Acts 4:10
107:33 Isa 50:2; Isa 42:15; 1 Kgs 17:1-7
107:34 Gen 13:10,13; Gen 14:3; Deut 29:23-28
107:35 Ps 114:8; Isa 35:6,7; Isa 41:17-19
107:36 Ps 107:7; Ps 146:7; Luke 1:53
107:37 2 Cor 9:10; 1 Cor 3:7; Jer 29:5
107:38 Gen 12:2; Exod 1:7; Ps 128:1-6
107:39 2 Kgs 10:32; Ps 30:6,7; Gen 45:11
107:40 Job 12:24; Job 12:21,24; Isa 23:8,9
107:41 1 Sam 2:8; Job 21:11; Esth 8:15-17
107:42 Job 22:19; Ps 63:11; Rom 3:19
107:43 1 Tim 5:21; Ps 64:9; Jer 9:12
108:1 Ps 57:7-11; Ps 34:1; Ps 104:33
108:2 Ps 33:2; Ps 69:30; Ps 81:2
108:3 Ps 22:22,27; Ps 96:10; Ps 117:1
108:4 Ps 36:5; Mic 7:18-20; Eph 2:4-7
108:5 Ps 57:5,11; Ps 8:1; Ps 21:13
108:6 Matt 3:17; Ps 60:5-12; Deut 33:12
108:7 Ps 89:35,36; Amos 4:2; Ps 16:9-11
108:8 Gen 49:10; Josh 13:8-11; 2 Sam 2:8
108:9 Ps 60:8-10; 2 Sam 8:1,2; John 13:8,14
108:10 Ps 20:6-8; Ps 60:1; Isa 63:1-6
108:11 Ps 44:9; 1 Sam 29:1-31; Num 10:9
108:12 Ps 20:1-9; Isa 2:22; Isa 30:3-5
108:13 Ps 60:12; Isa 63:3; Ps 18:29-34
109:1 Ps 28:1; Ps 83:1; Deut 10:21
109:2 Ps 31:13,18; Ps 64:3,4; Ps 140:3
109:3 John 15:25; Ps 69:4; Ps 35:7,20
109:4 Ps 38:20; Luke 23:34; Ps 35:7,12
109:5 Prov 17:13; Ps 35:7-12; Gen 44:4
109:6 Matt 26:24; Zech 3:1; Matt 5:25
109:7 Matt 26:24; Prov 28:9; Prov 15:8
109:8 Acts 1:20; Ps 55:23; Acts 1:16-26
109:9 Acts 1:20; Exod 22:24; Jer 18:21
109:10 Ps 37:25; Gen 4:12-14; 2 Sam 3:29
109:11 Job 5:5; Job 18:9-19; Job 20:18
109:12 Acts 1:20; Isa 27:11; Luke 6:38
109:13 Acts 1:20; Prov 10:7; Ps 37:28
109:14 Acts 1:20; Exod 20:5; Neh 4:5

107:33 *He makes rivers into a wilderness* God can turn a fruitful land to salt because of its people's wickedness, and turn a desert into springs for the hungry (107:35). He lifts up the needy and brings down the proud (107:40-41).
107:43 *Who is wise? Then let him keep these things, and let them consider the steadfast loves of the LORD* The wise person thinks about these stories and sees God's loyal love in them. Look back over your own life. Where has God brought you out of trouble?
108:1 *My heart is steadfast, God* Psalm 108 joins two earlier psalms: verses 1-5 are 57:7-11, and verses 6-13 are 60:5-12. God's people sometimes put old prayers together for new needs. Praise comes first, then the request.
108:12 *the deliverance of man is worthlessness* The lesson of both parent psalms: human help fails, but "In God we will do valiantly" (108:13).
109:1 *God of my praise, do not be silent* Psalm 109 is the harshest of the prayers for judgment. David is falsely accused by people he had loved and prayed for (109:4-5).
109:4 *In return for my love they accuse me, and I am prayer* The Hebrew says simply, and I, prayer. When attacked, David does not strike back. He becomes all prayer. That is the right first response.
109:6 *Appoint a wicked man over him, and let an accuser stand at his right hand* Verses 6-19 call down judgment on one enemy. Most read these as David's own prayer, handing his case to God the Judge. Some think David is quoting what his enemies said against him, since he speaks of "them" before and after (109:2-5, 20) and of "him" here. Either way, the curses return on the one who "loved cursing" (109:17). See the introduction on the hard lines.
109:8 *Let his days be few; let another take his office* Peter applied this verse to Judas, the betrayer, whose place among the apostles had to be filled (Acts 1:20).

15 Let them be before the LORD continually, and let Him cut off their memory from the earth, **16** because he did not remember to do steadfast love, and he pursued an afflicted and needy man, and the disheartened in heart, to put ***him*** to death. **17** And he loved cursing, and it came to him; and he did not delight in blessing, and it was far from him. **18** And he put on cursing like his garment, and it came like water into his inner parts, and like oil into his bones. **19** Let it be to him like a garment ***that*** he wraps himself ***in***, and for a belt ***that*** he girds on continually. **20** This ***is*** the wages of my accusers from the LORD, and of those who speak evil against my soul. **21** And You, GOD the Lord, deal with me for the sake of Your name; for Your steadfast love ***is*** good, deliver me. **22** For I ***am*** afflicted and needy, and my heart is pierced within me. **23** Like a shadow when it stretches out, I have gone; I have been shaken off like the locust. **24** My knees have stumbled from fasting, and my flesh has grown lean, without fatness. **25** And I, I have become a reproach to them; they see me, they shake their head. **26** Help me, LORD my God; save me according to Your steadfast love, **27** and they will know that this ***is*** Your hand; You, LORD, You have done it. **28** They, they will curse, and You, You will bless; they have arisen, and they have been put to shame, and Your servant will rejoice. **29** Let my accusers be clothed ***with*** dishonor, and let them be wrapped ***with*** their shame like the robe. **30** I will give thanks to the LORD greatly with my mouth, and in the midst of many I will praise Him. **31** For He stands at the right ***hand*** of the needy, to save ***him*** from those who judge his soul.

PSALMS 110

The Priest-King

Of David. A psalm. **1** The LORD declares to my Lord, "Sit at My right ***hand*** until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet." **2** The LORD will send out the staff of Your strength from Zion (Tsiyon); rule in the midst of Your enemies. **3** Your people ***will be*** freewill offerings in the day of Your power, in ***the*** splendors of holiness; from the womb of dawn, the dew of Your youth ***is*** Yours. **4** The LORD has sworn, and He will not relent: "You ***are*** a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek (Malki-Tsedeq)." **5** The Lord ***is*** at Your right ***hand***; He has shattered kings in the day of His anger. **6** He will judge among the nations; He has filled ***them with*** corpses; He has shattered ***the*** head over a great land. **7** From the brook on the way He will drink; therefore He will lift up ***the*** head.

109:15 Matt 26:24; Mark 14:21; Ps 34:16
109:16 Ps 34:18; 2 Sam 17:1,2; Matt 5:7
109:17 Prov 14:14; Ezek 35:6; Matt 7:2
109:18 Ps 73:6; Num 5:22,27; Job 29:14
109:19 Ps 35:26; Ps 132:18
109:20 Mark 14:21; Ps 2:5,6,12; Ps 21:8-12
109:21 Ps 25:11; Ps 31:3; Ps 79:9,10
109:22 Ps 40:17; Ps 86:1; Ps 22:6
109:23 Ps 144:4; 1 Chr 29:15; Job 14:2
109:24 Heb 12:12; Ps 22:14; Ps 35:13,14
109:25 Ps 22:6,7; Rom 15:3; Ps 31:11-13
109:26 Ps 119:86; Ps 40:12; Heb 5:7
109:27 Job 37:7; Ps 17:13,14; Ps 64:8,9
109:28 Ps 109:17; Num 22:12; Num 23:20,23
109:29 Ps 35:26; Ps 132:18; Ps 109:17-19
109:30 Ps 35:18; Ps 111:1; Ps 22:22,25
109:31 Acts 2:25; Acts 7:55; Rom 8:34
110:1 Matt 22:44; Mark 12:36; Luke 20:42-43
110:2 Acts 2:34; Matt 21:5; Acts 2:35
110:3 Judg 5:2; Ps 96:9; Titus 2:14
110:4 Heb 5:6; Heb 6:20; Heb 7:17
110:5 Acts 2:34; Acts 7:55; Rev 11:18
110:6 Rev 19:18; Isa 2:4; Ps 68:21
110:7 John 18:11; Judg 7:5,6; Ps 27:6

109:16 *because he did not remember to do steadfast love, and he pursued an afflicted and needy man* The reason for the judgment: he showed no mercy and hunted the weak. God gives the merciless what they gave others (James 2:13).
109:21 *deal with me for the sake of Your name; for Your steadfast love is good* David turns from his enemy to God. He rests his own case not on his innocence but on God's name and love.
109:28 *They, they will curse, and You, You will bless* Let them curse. If God blesses, their words cannot harm. Jesus, cursed and mocked, prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34). We are to bless those who curse us (Luke 6:28).
109:31 *For He stands at the right hand of the needy* The accuser stood at the right hand of the wicked man (109:6). God stands at the right hand of the needy as his defender.
110:0 *Of David. A psalm* Jesus' argument about this psalm depends on David being its writer (Matt 22:43). Some read the heading as "for David," a court singer writing about the king as his lord. I take it as naming David, as Jesus and Peter did, and no one in the crowd disputed it (Matt 22:46).
110:1 *The LORD declares to my Lord* The first word is God's personal name. The second is adoni, my lord, a title for a master or superior. No king in Israel stood above David, so who could be David's lord? Jesus asked, "How then does David in the Spirit call Him Lord?" (Matt 22:43). The Messiah is David's son and David's Lord, human and divine.
110:1 *Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet* The right hand was the place of highest honor and shared rule. Peter preached that God has made Jesus "both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:34-36). After one sacrifice for sins He sat down, "from then on waiting until His enemies are placed as a footstool for His feet" (Heb 10:12-13). The cross is finished. The full defeat of His enemies is still to come. Many count this as the Old Testament verse most often cited in the New.
110:2 *rule in the midst of Your enemies* The staff is the king's rod of authority. Jesus reigns now at the Father's right hand while the world still opposes Him. I believe He will return at the end of the Tribulation and rule the nations from Zion, when His feet stand on the Mount of Olives and "the LORD will be King over all the earth" (Zech 14:4, 9). God has not finished with Israel (Rom 11:26, 29).
110:3 *Your people will be freewill offerings in the day of Your power* The King's people are not forced into His army. They offer themselves gladly (Rom 12:1). The rest of the verse is hard in Hebrew. "The dew of Your youth" seems to picture His young warriors coming out fresh and many like dew at dawn. Some take it as the King's own renewed youth.
110:4 *You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek* God swore it with an oath (Heb 7:20-21). In Israel kings came from Judah and priests from Levi, and King Uzziah was struck with leprosy for taking a priest's work (2 Chr 26:16-21). Melchizedek was king of Salem, an early name for Jerusalem, and priest of God Most High (Gen 14:18-20). His name means king of righteousness, and Salem means peace (Heb 7:2). Abraham gave him a tenth, so his priesthood is greater than Levi's. Jesus, from Judah, is King and Priest, "always living to intercede for them" (Heb 7:25). Right now He is praying for His people.
110:5 *He has shattered kings in the day of His anger* The Lord fights at the King's right hand, or the King Himself goes out to battle. These are hard words of victory over rebel rulers (110:6). The same King who gave His life for sinners will judge those who refuse Him when He returns (Rev 19:15). That judgment is His, not ours. Our part while He waits is to tell everyone the good news.
110:7 *From the brook on the way He will drink; therefore He will lift up the head* The meaning is debated. Most picture a king refreshed at a stream as he pursues his enemies, pressing on to victory. Many also see the King who bowed His head on the cross (John 19:30) and now has His head lifted high in glory.

PSALMS 111

1 Praise ***the*** LORD! I will give thanks to the LORD with all ***my*** heart, in the council of ***the*** upright and ***the*** congregation. **2** Great ***are*** the works of the LORD, studied by all who delight in them. **3** Splendor and majesty ***is*** His work, and His righteousness stands forever. **4** A remembrance He has made for His wonders; gracious and compassionate ***is*** the LORD. **5** Food He has given to those who fear Him; He will remember His covenant forever. **6** The power of His works He has declared to His people, to give them the inheritance of ***the*** nations. **7** The works of His hands ***are*** faithfulness and justice; all His precepts ***are*** trustworthy. **8** ***They are*** upheld forever ***and*** ever, done in faithfulness and uprightness. **9** Redemption He has sent to His people; He has commanded His covenant forever; holy and awesome ***is*** His name. **10** The fear of the LORD ***is*** the beginning of wisdom; good understanding ***belongs*** to all who do them; His praise stands forever.

PSALMS 112

1 Praise ***the*** LORD! How blessed ***is*** the man ***who*** fears the LORD, ***who*** delights greatly in His commandments! **2** His offspring will be mighty in the land; the generation of the upright will be blessed. **3** Wealth and riches ***are*** in his house, and his righteousness stands forever. **4** Light has risen in the darkness for the upright, gracious and compassionate and righteous. **5** Good ***is*** the man who shows favor and lends; he will maintain his affairs with justice. **6** For forever he will not be shaken; the righteous will be for an everlasting remembrance. **7** He will not be afraid of bad news; his heart is steadfast, trusting in the LORD. **8** His heart ***is*** upheld; he will not be afraid, until he looks on his foes. **9** He has scattered, he has given to the needy; his righteousness stands forever; his horn will be exalted in glory. **10** The wicked will see, and he will be vexed; his teeth he will gnash, and he will melt away; the desire of the wicked will perish.

PSALMS 113

The Hallel

1 Praise ***the*** LORD! Praise, servants of the LORD, praise the name of the LORD! **2** Let the name of the LORD be blessed from now and to forever. **3** From the rising of ***the*** sun to its setting, the name of the LORD ***is*** to be praised. **4** The LORD ***is*** exalted over all nations; His glory ***is*** above the heavens. **5** Who ***is*** like the LORD our God, who makes ***Himself*** high to sit, **6** who makes ***Himself*** low to look on the heavens and on the earth? **7** ***He*** raises up ***the*** poor from the dust; from the ash heap He lifts up ***the*** needy, **8** to make ***him*** sit with nobles, with the nobles of His people. **9** ***He*** makes the barren ***woman*** of the house dwell ***as*** a joyful mother of children. Praise ***the*** LORD!

PSALMS 114

1 When Israel (Yisra'el) went out from Egypt (Mitsrayim), the house of Jacob (Ya'aqov) from a people of foreign speech,

111:1 Ps 138:1; Ps 149:1; 1 Chr 29:10-20
111:2 Rev 15:3; Ps 104:24; Ps 143:5
111:3 Ps 119:142,144; Ps 19:1; Ps 145:4,5,10-12,17
111:4 Luke 22:19; Ps 103:8; Ps 86:5,15
111:5 Luke 1:72; Ps 105:8; Ps 34:9,10
111:6 Ps 80:8; Ps 78:12-72; Ps 105:27-45
111:7 Ps 19:7; Ps 85:10; Ps 89:14
111:8 Matt 5:18; Ps 19:9; Rev 15:3
111:9 Luke 1:49; Luke 1:68; Ps 99:3,5,9
111:10 Acts 9:31; Eph 5:17; Prov 9:10
112:1 Ps 128:1; Ps 119:16,35,47,48,70-72,97,143; Ps 111:10
112:2 Gen 17:7; Ps 25:13; Ps 37:26
112:3 Prov 3:16; Prov 15:6; Matt 6:33
112:4 1 John 2:29; Ps 97:11; Job 11:17
112:5 Ps 37:25,26; Deut 15:7-10; Prov 2:20
112:6 Prov 10:7; Ps 15:5; Ps 62:2,6
112:7 John 14:27; Ps 57:7; Prov 1:33
112:8 Ps 59:10; Ps 31:24; Heb 13:9
112:9 2 Cor 9:9; Ps 75:10; Heb 13:16
112:10 Luke 13:28; Matt 22:13; Acts 7:54
113:1 Rev 19:5; Eph 5:20; Ps 112:1
113:2 Dan 2:20; Ps 41:13; Ps 106:48
113:3 Isa 59:19; Mal 1:11; Ps 72:11,17-19
113:4 Ps 99:2; Ps 8:1; Ps 97:9
113:5 Ps 89:6,8; Exod 15:11; Deut 33:26
113:6 Ps 11:4; Ps 138:6; Isa 57:15
113:7 Ps 107:41; 1 Sam 2:7,8; Job 5:11,15,16
113:8 Ps 45:16; Ps 68:13; Gen 41:41
113:9 Gal 4:27; Ps 68:6; 1 Sam 2:5
114:1 Acts 13:17; Exod 13:3; Ps 81:5

111:1 *Praise the LORD! I will give thanks to the LORD with all my heart* Psalms 111 and 112 are twin acrostics, each line beginning with the next letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Psalm 111 praises what God is like. Psalm 112 shows what the man who fears Him becomes.

111:2 *Great are the works of the LORD, studied by all who delight in them* Those who love God's works study them, in creation and in history. Many scientists have taken this verse as a reason to search out the wonders of God's world.

111:4 *A remembrance He has made for His wonders* God gave Israel feasts like Passover so they would remember what He had done (Exod 12:14). The Lord's Supper is a remembrance for us (1 Cor 11:24-25).

111:9 *Redemption He has sent to His people* God redeemed Israel from Egypt. Zechariah sang that God had "visited and has worked redemption for His people" (Luke 1:68) in sending Jesus.

111:10 *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom* Wisdom starts with taking God seriously (Prov 9:10). Without that starting point, all our learning stands on sand.

112:1 *How blessed is the man who fears the LORD, who delights greatly in His commandments* Psalm 111:10 ended with the fear of the LORD. Psalm 112 picks it up and shows the life it produces.

112:4 *Light has risen in the darkness for the upright* Godly people still face dark times, but light dawns for them. The words "gracious and compassionate" were used of God in 111:4. The one who fears God starts to resemble Him.

112:7 *He will not be afraid of bad news; his heart is steadfast, trusting in the LORD* Bad news will come. The difference is a heart fixed on God. Many believers have leaned on this verse waiting for a phone call or a test result.

112:9 *He has scattered, he has given to the needy* The righteous man gives freely. Paul quotes this verse to encourage generous giving (2 Cor 9:9).

113:1 *Praise, servants of the LORD* Psalms 113-118 are called the Hallel, from the Hebrew word for praise. Jewish families sang them at Passover and the other pilgrim feasts. See the note at 118:29.

113:5 *Who is like the LORD our God, who makes Himself high to sit* God is enthroned so high that He must stoop even to look at the heavens (113:6). Yet this exalted God bends down to the poor.

113:7 *He raises up the poor from the dust; from the ash heap He lifts up the needy* The ash heap was the town dump where beggars sat. God lifts them to sit with princes. Hannah sang these words (1 Sam 2:8), and Mary echoed them (Luke 1:52-53). It is what God did for us in Christ (Eph 2:4-6).

113:9 *He makes the barren woman of the house dwell as a joyful mother of children* Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, Hannah and Elizabeth all knew this grief and God's answer. God sees those who long for children.

114:1 *When Israel went out from Egypt* A short poem of the exodus. Judah became God's holy place, the people among whom He lived (114:2).

2 Judah (Yehuda) became His holy place, Israel His dominion.
3 The sea saw and fled; the Jordan (Yarden) turned back.
4 The mountains skipped like rams, ***the*** hills like young ones of ***the*** flock. **5** What ***is it*** to you, sea, that you flee, Jordan, ***that*** you turn back, **6** mountains, ***that*** you skip like rams, hills, like young ones of ***the*** flock? **7** Before ***the*** Lord tremble, earth, before the God of Jacob, **8** who turns the rock into a pool of water, the flint into a spring of water.

PSALMS 115

1 Not to us, LORD, not to us, but to Your name give glory, because of Your steadfast love, because of Your faithfulness.
2 Why should the nations say, "Where, now, ***is*** their God?"
3 And our God ***is*** in the heavens; all that He desires, He does.
4 Their idols ***are*** silver and gold, the work of the hands of man. **5** They have a mouth, and they do not speak; they have eyes, and they do not see; **6** they have ears, and they do not hear; they have a nose, and they do not smell; **7** their hands, and they do not feel; their feet, and they do not walk; they do not make a sound with their throat. **8** Like them will be those who make them, everyone who trusts in them. **9** Israel (Yisra'el), trust in the LORD; He ***is*** their help and their shield.
10 House of Aaron (Aharon), trust in the LORD; He ***is*** their help and their shield. **11** You who fear the LORD, trust in the LORD; He ***is*** their help and their shield. **12** The LORD has remembered us; He will bless; He will bless the house of Israel; He will bless the house of Aaron. **13** He will bless those who fear the LORD, the small with the great. **14** May the LORD add to you, to you and to your sons. **15** Blessed ***are*** you by the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth. **16** The heavens ***are*** the heavens of the LORD, and the earth He has given to the sons of man. **17** The dead do not praise ***the*** LORD, and not any who go down ***into*** silence. **18** And we, we will bless ***the*** LORD from now and to forever. Praise ***the*** LORD!

PSALMS 116

1 I love, for the LORD hears my voice, my supplications. **2** For He has inclined His ear to me, and in my days I will call.
3 The cords of death surrounded me, and the distresses of Sheol found me; I found trouble and sorrow. **4** And on the name of the LORD I called: "Please, LORD, deliver my soul!"
5 Gracious ***is*** the LORD, and righteous, and our God ***is*** compassionate. **6** The LORD keeps the simple; I was brought low, and He saved me. **7** Return, my soul, to your rest, for the LORD has dealt bountifully with you. **8** For You have rescued my soul from death, my eye from tears, my foot from stumbling. **9** I will walk before the LORD in the lands of the living.
10 I believed, for I spoke: "I, I have been greatly afflicted."
11 I, I said in my alarm, "Every man ***is*** a liar."
12 What shall I return to the LORD ***for*** all His benefits toward me? **13** A cup of salvations I will lift up, and on the name of the LORD I will call. **14** My vows to the LORD I will pay, now, before all His people. **15** Precious in the eyes of the LORD ***is*** the death of His godly ones. **16** Please, LORD, for I ***am*** Your servant; I ***am*** Your servant, the son of Your maidservant; You have loosed my bonds. **17** To You I will sacrifice a sacrifice of thanksgiv-

114:2 Acts 13:17; Exod 25:8; Exod 29:45,46
114:3 Ps 77:16; Exod 14:21; Josh 3:13-16
114:4 Exod 19:18; Judg 5:4,5; Hab 3:6,8
114:5 Hab 3:8; Jer 47:6,7
114:6 Ps 114:4; Ps 29:6
114:7 Acts 13:17; Isa 64:1-3; Ps 77:18
114:8 1 Cor 10:4; Ps 107:35; Num 20:11
115:1 Rom 15:9; Ps 79:9,10; Isa 48:11
115:2 Ps 42:3,10; Ps 79:10; Exod 32:12
115:3 Rom 9:19; Ps 135:6; Dan 4:35
115:4 Rev 9:20; 1 Cor 8:4; Deut 4:28
115:5 1 Cor 8:4
115:6 1 Cor 8:4
115:7 1 Cor 8:4
115:8 1 Cor 8:4; Ps 135:18; Isa 44:9-20
115:9 Ps 62:8; Ps 118:2-4; Ps 135:19,20
115:10 Exod 28:1; Num 16:5,40; Num 18:7
115:11 Ps 33:18; Ps 118:4; Ps 147:11
115:12 Ps 136:23; Isa 49:14-16; Gen 12:2,3
115:13 Rev 11:18; Rev 19:5; Acts 13:26
115:14 Acts 2:39; Acts 3:25; Rev 11:18
115:15 Eph 1:3; Gen 1:1; Gen 14:19
115:16 Ps 89:11; Gen 1:28-30; Jer 27:5,6
115:17 Ps 6:5; Ps 88:10-12; Ps 31:17
115:18 Ps 113:2; Dan 2:20; Ps 118:17-19
116:1 1 John 4:19; 1 John 5:2,3; Ps 66:19,20
116:2 Ps 55:16,17; Ps 86:6,7; Ps 88:1
116:3 Heb 5:7; Matt 26:38; Mark 14:34
116:4 Ps 118:5; Ps 22:20; Ps 22:1-3
116:5 Ezra 9:15; Neh 9:8,33; Ps 103:8
116:6 Ps 19:7; Ps 79:8; Ps 142:6
116:7 Jer 6:16; Ps 13:6; Ps 95:11
116:8 Ps 56:13; Rev 21:4; Ps 86:13
116:9 Ps 27:13; Ps 61:7; Gen 17:1
116:10 2 Cor 4:13; Prov 21:28; Heb 11:1
116:11 Rom 3:4; Ps 31:22; 1 Sam 27:1
116:12 Ps 103:2; 1 Cor 6:20; Rom 12:1
116:13 Ps 105:1; Ps 116:17; Luke 22:17,18,20
116:14 Ps 22:25; Ps 116:18; Jonah 2:9
116:15 Ps 72:14; Ps 37:32,33; Luke 16:22
116:16 Ps 86:16; Ps 119:125; Ps 143:12
116:17 Ps 50:14; Lev 7:12; Ps 116:13

114:3 *The sea saw and fled; the Jordan turned back* The Red Sea parted (Exod 14:21), and the Jordan stopped flowing (Josh 3:16). The psalmist teases the sea and the mountains: what is wrong with you? The answer is the presence of the Lord (114:7).
114:8 *who turns the rock into a pool of water* The God who made water flow from flint (Exod 17:6) can bring life from the hardest places.
115:1 *Not to us, LORD, not to us, but to Your name give glory* A prayer for every success. The glory belongs to God, because of His steadfast love and faithfulness, not our worth.
115:4 *Their idols are silver and gold, the work of the hands of man* The nations mock, "Where, now, is their God?" (115:2). The answer: our God is in heaven and does all He pleases. Their gods have mouths, eyes and ears and cannot use any of them.
115:8 *Like them will be those who make them* We become like what we worship. Worship a dead idol and the heart grows deaf and blind. Worship the living God, and we are changed into His likeness (2 Cor 3:18).
115:9 *Israel, trust in the LORD* Three groups are called: Israel, the priests of Aaron's house, and "you who fear the LORD" (115:11), which may include Gentiles who worshiped Israel's God. All find in Him their help and shield.
115:17 *The dead do not praise the LORD* While we live, we are to praise Him. "And we, we will bless the LORD from now and to forever" (115:18), a forever that Christ has opened beyond the grave.
116:1 *I love, for the LORD hears my voice* The writer had been near death (116:3) and God rescued him. His first words: I love Him, because He heard me.
116:7 *Return, my soul, to your rest* After the storm, he tells his soul to settle down again in God's care.
116:10 *I believed, for I spoke* Even in deep trouble he kept believing, and so he spoke. Paul quotes this, "I believed, therefore I spoke" (2 Cor 4:13), and says we also believe and therefore speak (2 Cor 4:13).
116:12 *What shall I return to the LORD for all His benefits toward me* We can never repay God. What He asks is that we receive more, lifting "a cup of salvations," calling on His name and keeping our promises (116:13-14).
116:15 *Precious in the eyes of the LORD is the death of His godly ones* God does not treat the death of His people lightly. It is costly in His sight, and He is present in it. Jesus called death for believers falling asleep (John 11:11).

ing, and on the name of the LORD I will call. **18** My vows to the LORD I will pay, now, before all His people, **19** in the courts of the house of the LORD, in your midst, Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). Praise ***the*** LORD!

PSALMS 117

1 Praise the LORD, all nations; extol Him, all the peoples! **2** For His steadfast love has prevailed over us, and the faithfulness of the LORD ***is*** forever. Praise ***the*** LORD!

PSALMS 118

1 Give thanks to the LORD, for ***He is*** good; for His steadfast love ***is*** forever. **2** Let Israel (Yisra'el) now say that His steadfast love ***is*** forever. **3** Let the house of Aaron (Aharon) now say that His steadfast love ***is*** forever. **4** Let those who fear the LORD now say that His steadfast love ***is*** forever. **5** From the distress I called on ***the*** LORD; ***the*** LORD answered me in the broad place. **6** The LORD ***is*** for me; I will not fear; what can man do to me? **7** The LORD ***is*** for me among my helpers, and I, I will look on those who hate me. **8** ***It is*** better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in man. **9** ***It is*** better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in nobles. **10** All nations surrounded me; in the name of the LORD indeed I will cut them off. **11** They surrounded me, also they surrounded me; in the name of the LORD indeed I will cut them off. **12** They surrounded me like bees; they were extinguished like a fire of thorns; in the name of the LORD indeed I will cut them off. **13** You surely pushed me to fall, and the LORD helped me. **14** My strength and song ***is the*** LORD, and He has become salvation for me. **15** The sound of a shout of joy and salvation ***is*** in the tents of ***the*** righteous: "The right hand of the LORD does valiantly. **16** The right hand of the LORD is exalted; the right hand of the LORD does valiantly." **17** I will not die, but I will live, and I will recount the deeds of ***the*** LORD. **18** ***The*** LORD has surely disciplined me, and to death He has not given me. **19** Open to me the gates of righteousness; I will go in through them; I will give thanks to ***the*** LORD. **20** This ***is*** the gate of the LORD; ***the*** righteous will go in through it. **21** I will give thanks to You, for You have answered me, and You have become salvation for me. **22** A stone ***which*** the builders rejected has become the head of ***the*** corner. **23** From the LORD this has come; it ***is*** wonderful in our eyes. **24** This ***is*** the day ***which*** the LORD has made; let us be glad, and let us

116:18 Ps 116:14; Ps 22:25; Ps 76:11
116:19 Ps 96:8; Ps 135:2; Ps 100:4
117:1 Rom 15:11; Rev 15:4; Rev 5:9
117:2 Ps 100:4,5; Isa 25:1; Ps 89:1
118:1 Ps 106:1; Ps 136:1; 1 Chr 16:8,34
118:2 Ps 115:9-11; Ps 135:19,20; Ps 145:10
118:3 Ps 134:1-3; 1 Pet 2:5; Rev 1:6
118:4 Ps 22:23; Rev 19:5
118:5 Ps 18:19; Ps 40:1-3; Ps 18:6
118:6 Heb 13:6; Rom 8:31; Ps 56:4,9,11
118:7 Heb 13:6; Ps 54:4; Ps 59:10
118:8 Ps 40:4; Jer 17:5-7; Ps 62:8,9
118:9 Ps 146:3-5; Isa 30:2,3,15-17; Isa 31:1,8
118:10 Zech 14:1-3; 2 Sam 5:1-25; 2 Sam 8:1-18
118:11 Ps 88:17; Ps 22:12-16; 1 Sam 23:26
118:12 Deut 1:44; Isa 27:4; Nah 1:10
118:13 Ps 18:17,18; Ps 56:1-3; 1 Sam 20:3
118:14 Isa 12:2; Ps 18:2; Exod 15:2-6
118:15 Ps 89:13; Acts 2:46,47; Ps 60:12
118:16 Acts 2:33; Acts 2:34; Exod 15:6
118:17 Ps 73:28; Ps 6:5; Hab 1:12
118:18 2 Cor 6:9; Heb 12:10; Heb 12:5
118:19 Isa 26:2; Rev 22:14; Ps 9:13,14
118:20 Rev 21:24-27; Ps 24:3,4,7,9; Isa 26:2
118:21 Ps 116:1; Ps 118:14; Isa 49:8
118:22 Matt 21:42; Mark 12:10-11; Luke 20:17
118:23 Acts 2:36; Acts 4:11; 1 Pet 2:7
118:24 Ps 84:10; Isa 58:13; Zech 3:9

117:1 *Praise the LORD, all nations; extol Him, all the peoples* The shortest psalm and the shortest chapter in the Bible. It calls every nation to praise Israel's God. Paul quotes it to show that God always meant the Gentiles to glorify Him for His mercy (Rom 15:11).

117:2 *For His steadfast love has prevailed over us* His love is strong and has won out over us, and His faithfulness never ends. Two short verses hold the whole gospel for the nations.

118:1 *Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; for His steadfast love is forever* God is good, and His hesed never runs out. Three groups are called to say it: all Israel, the priests of Aaron's house, and "those who fear the LORD," which some think includes Gentiles who worshiped Israel's God (115:9-13). Picture a leader calling a line and the crowd answering. Whatever your place among God's people, you have the same reason to give thanks.

118:5 *From the distress I called on the LORD; the LORD answered me in the broad place* Distress is a tight, hemmed-in place. God answered with the opposite: room to breathe.

118:6 *The LORD is for me; I will not fear; what can man do to me* Hebrews quotes this to teach contentment and trust (Heb 13:6). If God is for us, who is against us (Rom 8:31)? "I will look on those who hate me" (118:7) means seeing God vindicate him, leaving any payback in God's hands.

118:8 *It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in man* Verse 9 narrows it: not even the most powerful people can carry the full weight of our trust. God often uses people to help us, but people fail, change their minds and die (146:3-4).

118:10 *All nations surrounded me* Four times in three verses: surrounded, surrounded, surrounded, like bees. He was trapped, and they burned out like dry thorns. The victory came "in the name of the LORD." The psalm names no occasion. Some link it to a king's victory, others to the return from exile (Ezra 3:11 uses its refrain).

118:13 *You surely pushed me to fall, and the LORD helped me* He was going down. God caught him.

118:14 *My strength and song is the LORD, and He has become salvation for me* These are the words Moses and Israel sang after the Red Sea (Exod 15:2). The speaker sees his rescue as one more chapter of the same story. God did more than send help. He Himself is the help.

118:15 *The right hand of the LORD does valiantly* Said three times. The right hand stands for strength in action, the same hand that shattered the enemy at the sea (Exod 15:6). The speaker gives God all the credit.

118:17 *I will not die, but I will live, and I will recount the deeds of the LORD* He had expected to die. Now he has a reason to live: to tell what God has done. Martin Luther is reported to have written this verse on his wall at Coburg in 1530. We are kept alive to speak of Him.

118:18 *The LORD has surely disciplined me* He does not blame everything on his enemies. God allowed the trouble and used it to train him, because He loves His children (Heb 12:5-11). Hard seasons are not proof that God has abandoned you.

118:19 *Open to me the gates of righteousness* The procession reaches the temple, and the gatekeepers answer that only the righteous may enter (118:20; 15:1; 24:3). Jesus said, "I am the door" (John 10:9). He makes us righteous so we can enter and give thanks.

118:22 *A stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner* Builders set aside stones they judged not good enough. In the psalm the rejected stone is the speaker, whom God set in the most important place. "Head of the corner" may be the cornerstone at the base or the top stone that locks a corner. Jesus applied it to Himself (Matt 21:42). Peter told the council Jesus is the stone "treated with contempt by you, the builders" (Acts 4:11; 1 Pet 2:7), and Paul calls Him "the cornerstone" (Eph 2:20). What will you do with that stone?

118:23 *From the LORD this has come; it is wonderful in our eyes* No human planner would choose the rejected stone. Only God turns rejection into honor.

118:24 *This is the day which the LORD has made* Every day is God's gift, and that is true. But in the psalm, "the day" is the day God lifted up the rejected one. For Christians it points to the day God raised Jesus from the dead (Acts 4:10-11).

rejoice in it. **25** Please, LORD, save now! Please, LORD, give success now! **26** Blessed ***is*** the one who comes in the name of the LORD; we bless you from the house of the LORD. **27** The LORD ***is*** God, and He has given light to us; bind the festival ***sacrifice*** with cords up to the horns of the altar. **28** You ***are*** my God, and I will give thanks to You; my God, I will exalt You. **29** Give thanks to the LORD, for ***He is*** good; for His steadfast love ***is*** forever.

PSALMS 119

The Great Psalm of God's Word: Aleph

1 How blessed ***are*** the blameless of way, those who walk in the law of the LORD! **2** How blessed ***are*** those who observe His testimonies; with all ***their*** heart they seek Him. **3** Also they do not work injustice; in His ways they walk. **4** You, You have commanded Your precepts, to keep ***them*** exceedingly. **5** O that my ways may be established to keep Your statutes! **6** Then I will not be ashamed, when I look to all Your commandments. **7** I will give thanks to You in uprightness of heart, when I learn the judgments of Your righteousness. **8** Your statutes I will keep; do not forsake me utterly.

Beth

9 By what will a youth keep his path pure? By keeping ***it*** according to Your word. **10** With all my heart I have sought You; do not let me stray from Your commandments. **11** In my heart I have treasured Your word, so that I will not sin against You. **12** Blessed ***are*** You, LORD; teach me Your statutes. **13** With my lips I have recounted all the judgments of Your mouth. **14** In the way of Your testimonies I have exulted, as over all wealth. **15** On Your precepts I will meditate, and I will look to Your paths. **16** In Your statutes I will delight myself; I will not forget Your word.

Gimel

17 Deal bountifully with Your servant; I will live, and I will keep Your word. **18** Uncover my eyes, and let me look at wonderful ***things*** from Your law. **19** I ***am*** a sojourner on the

118:25 Matt 21:9; Mark 11:9; John 12:13
118:26 Matt 21:9; Matt 23:39; Mark 11:9-10
118:27 Esth 8:16; 1 Pet 2:9; Ps 18:28
118:28 Exod 15:2; Isa 25:1,9; Ps 145:1
118:29 Ps 118:1; Ps 103:17; Ezra 3:11
119:1 Acts 18:25; Ps 128:1; Ezek 11:20
119:2 Luke 11:28; 1 John 2:5; Rev 22:14
119:3 1 John 3:9; 1 John 5:18
119:4 1 John 5:3; Deut 4:1,9; Deut 5:29-33
119:5 Ps 51:10; 2 Thess 3:5; Ps 119:32,36,44,45,131,159,173
119:6 1 John 2:28; Job 22:26; Ps 119:31,80
119:7 Ps 119:171; Ps 9:1; Ps 86:12,13
119:8 Ps 119:16,106,115; Josh 24:15; Ps 38:21,22
119:9 James 1:21-25; 2 Tim 2:22; Ps 25:7
119:10 2 Chr 15:15; 1 Sam 7:3; Ps 119:2,34,58,69
119:11 Col 3:16; Luke 2:19; Ps 37:31
119:12 Luke 24:45; Mark 14:61; 1 Tim 1:11
119:13 Ps 40:9,10; Ps 71:15-18; Ps 119:46,172
119:14 Jer 15:16; Ps 119:47,72,77,111,127,162; Ps 19:9,10
119:15 Ps 1:2; Ps 119:23,48,78,97,131,148; James 1:25
119:16 Heb 10:16,17; Ps 119:14,24,35,47,70,77,92; Ps 40:8
119:17 Ps 13:6; Ps 116:7; Ps 119:65,124,132
119:18 Luke 24:45; Eph 1:17,18; Isa 32:3
119:19 Heb 11:13; 1 Chr 29:15; Ps 39:12

118:25 *Please, LORD, save now* In Hebrew, hoshi'ah na, save, please. That is where "Hosanna" comes from. When Jesus rode into Jerusalem, the crowds shouted it with palm branches (Matt 21:9; John 12:13). A cry for help became a welcome to the One who came to save.

118:26 *Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the LORD* The priests welcomed the king's procession with these words, and the crowds welcomed Jesus with them (Matt 21:9). Days later Jesus said Jerusalem would not see Him again "until you say, Blessed is the One coming in the name of the Lord" (Matt 23:39). I believe that is a promise as well as a warning. When Jesus returns, Israel will greet Him with this psalm (Rom 11:26).

118:27 *bind the festival sacrifice with cords up to the horns of the altar* The horns were the corner points of the altar. The line is hard to translate. The SLB reads it as tying the sacrifice to the altar, and others read a festival procession with branches. Many see a picture of Christ, the true sacrifice, though the New Testament doesn't draw it, so I hold it lightly.

118:29 *Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good* The last verse repeats the first, and everything in between has proved it true. Psalms 113-118 are the Hallel, which Jewish tradition says was sung at Passover. Jesus and His disciples sang a hymn after the Last Supper (Matt 26:30). If it was this psalm, He sang on the way to the cross, knowing He was the rejected stone, that the LORD is good and His steadfast love is forever.

119:1 *How blessed are the blameless of way, those who walk in the law of the LORD* This is the longest psalm and the longest chapter in the Bible. It is an acrostic of 22 stanzas, one for each letter of the Hebrew alphabet, and all eight verses of a stanza begin with the same letter. The writer is not named. Some think David wrote it, and others a later teacher of the Law such as Ezra. It opens like Psalm 1, and blameless here means whole, with no double life.

119:2 *with all their heart they seek Him* God's Word is never only a rulebook. The person who keeps His testimonies is looking for God Himself. The psalm uses eight words for God's Word: law (teaching), testimonies (what God bears witness to), precepts (charges given with care), statutes (from a root for carving, things fixed), commandments, judgments (His rulings), word, and saying or promise. Almost every verse has one of them.

119:4 *You, You have commanded Your precepts, to keep them exceedingly* From here on the writer speaks to God directly through nearly the whole psalm. That is worth noticing. This is not a lecture about the Bible. It is a long prayer to the God who gave it. God gave the commands, and He meant them to be kept with great care.

119:5 *O that my ways may be established to keep Your statutes* This is a sigh. He knows the standard, and he knows he falls short. He asks God to make his steps steady. The next line explains why: shame comes when we are caught living against what we know, and the one who walks in God's commandments can look at them without flinching.

119:8 *Your statutes I will keep; do not forsake me utterly* The first stanza ends with resolve and a plea side by side. He means to obey, but he knows he cannot do it without God. Jesus told His disciples that apart from Him they could do nothing (John 15:5).

119:9 *By what will a youth keep his path pure? By keeping it according to Your word* Young people hear many voices and face strong pull. A pure life has to be guarded, and the guard is God's Word, not willpower alone. I have found this true at every age, not only in youth.

119:11 *In my heart I have treasured Your word, so that I will not sin against You* To treasure is to store away like hidden wealth. Memorizing Scripture and thinking on it puts God's Word where temptation strikes, in the heart. When Satan tempted Jesus in the wilderness, He answered each time with Scripture (Matt 4:1-11).

119:12 *Blessed are You, LORD; teach me Your statutes* He praises first and then asks to be taught. The God who gave the Word is its best Teacher. Jesus opened His disciples' minds to understand the Scriptures (Luke 24:45), and the Holy Spirit still does that for us. The request teach me Your statutes comes back again and again in this psalm.

119:14 *In the way of Your testimonies I have exulted, as over all wealth* Picture the joy of someone who just came into a fortune. That is how he feels about God's Word. The next verses give two habits, meditating on it and keeping his eyes on it, and then join delight and memory. We remember what we love.

119:18 *Uncover my eyes, and let me look at wonderful things from Your law* This is a good prayer to pray before you open your Bible. The wonders are already there. What we need is eyes to see them. Without God's help we can read the words and miss the glory.

119:19 *I am a sojourner on the earth* A sojourner is a foreigner living in a land that is not home. The people of faith confessed they were strangers and sojourners on the earth (Heb 11:13). Because this world is not our home, we need God's directions, so he asks God not to hide His commandments from him.

earth; do not hide Your commandments from me. **20** My soul
is crushed with longing for Your judgments at every time.
21 You have rebuked ***the*** arrogant, ***the*** cursed, who stray
from Your commandments. **22** Roll away from upon me
reproach and contempt, for I have observed Your testi-
monies. **23** Also officials have sat; against me they have
spoken together; Your servant meditates on Your statutes.
24 Also Your testimonies ***are*** my delight, the men of my
counsel.

Daleth

25 My soul clings to the dust; keep me alive according to
Your word. **26** My ways I recounted, and You answered me;
teach me Your statutes. **27** The way of Your precepts make
me understand, and let me meditate on Your wonders. **28** My
soul weeps from grief; raise me up according to Your word.
29 The way of falsehood remove from me, and graciously
grant me Your law. **30** The way of faithfulness I have chosen;
Your judgments I have set ***before me***. **31** I have clung to Your
testimonies; LORD, do not put me to shame. **32** The way of
Your commandments I will run, for You will enlarge my
heart.

He

33 Instruct me, LORD, ***in*** the way of Your statutes, and I will
observe it ***to the*** end. **34** Give me understanding, and let me
observe Your law, and I will keep it with all ***my*** heart.
35 Make me tread in the pathway of Your commandments,
for in it I take pleasure. **36** Incline my heart to Your testi-
monies, and not to unjust gain. **37** Turn away my eyes from
looking at worthlessness; in Your ways keep me alive.
38 Confirm to Your servant Your word, which ***is*** for the fear
of You. **39** Turn away my reproach which I dread, for Your
judgments ***are*** good. **40** Look, I have longed for Your pre-
cepts; in Your righteousness keep me alive.

Waw

41 And let Your steadfast loves come to me, LORD, Your sal-
vation according to Your word. **42** And I will answer the one
who taunts me ***with*** a word, for I have trusted in Your word.
43 And do not snatch the word of truth from my mouth
utterly, for I have hoped for Your judgment. **44** And I will
keep Your law continually, forever and ever. **45** And I will
walk about in a broad place, for Your precepts I have sought.
46 And I will speak of Your testimonies before kings, and I

119:20 Ps 63:1; Ps 84:2; Ps 119:40,131,174
119:21 Ps 119:10,110,118; Ps 119:78; Ps 138:6
119:22 Ps 39:8; Ps 119:39,42; 1 Pet 2:20
119:23 Ps 2:1,2; 1 Sam 20:31; 1 Sam 22:7-13
119:24 Rom 7:22; Ps 119:16,77,92,143,162; Job 27:10
119:25 Rom 7:22; Ps 44:25; Ps 143:11
119:26 Ps 25:4,8,9; Ps 86:11; Ps 27:11
119:27 Ps 105:2; Ps 71:17; Ps 78:4
119:28 Ps 107:26; Ps 22:14; Josh 2:11,24
119:29 Ps 119:37,104,128,163; Ps 141:3,4; Prov 30:8
119:30 Josh 24:15; Prov 1:29; Luke 10:42
119:31 Ps 119:48,115; Deut 4:4; Deut 10:20
119:32 1 Kgs 4:29; 1 Cor 9:24-26; Isa 60:5
119:33 Matt 24:13; Ps 119:12,26,27; Phil 1:6
119:34 James 2:10; Matt 7:24; Ps 119:73
119:35 Phil 2:13; Ps 119:27,36,173; Ezek 36:26,27
119:36 1 Kgs 8:58; Mark 7:21,22; Luke 12:15
119:37 Isa 33:15; Num 15:39; Prov 4:25
119:38 Jer 32:39-41; Ps 119:49; 2 Sam 7:25-29
119:39 Ps 119:22,31; 1 Tim 3:7; Titus 2:8
119:40 Phil 3:13,14; John 10:10; Ps 119:5,20
119:41 Ps 119:58,76,77,132; Ps 69:16; Ps 106:4,5
119:42 Acts 27:25; Ps 3:2; Ps 42:10
119:43 Eph 1:13; James 1:18; 2 Cor 6:7
119:44 Ps 119:33,34; Rev 7:15; Rev 22:11
119:45 John 8:31; John 8:32; 2 Pet 2:19
119:46 Matt 10:18; 1 John 2:28; Acts 26:26

119:21 *You have rebuked the arrogant, the cursed, who stray from Your commandments* Pride is the root of wandering. The arrogant think they need no direction from God, and they live under His rebuke. The arrogant show up again and again in this psalm as the ones who mock and oppress the writer.

119:23 *Also officials have sat; against me they have spoken together* Powerful people were meeting to plot against him, and he answered by going deeper into God's Word. Then he says God's testimonies are the men of my counsel. When others take counsel against you, God's Word becomes your own counsel, and it is a better set of advisers.

119:25 *My soul clings to the dust; keep me alive according to Your word* The fourth stanza goes low. He feels pressed to the ground, perhaps near death. He asks God to give him life again, as He has promised. Keep me alive is one of the key prayers of this psalm.

119:28 *My soul weeps from grief; raise me up according to Your word* The Bible lets believers cry. This writer loves God's Word with his whole heart, and he still weeps. Faith and grief live side by side in many of God's people, and there is no shame in that.

119:30 *The way of faithfulness I have chosen; Your judgments I have set before me* He sees two ways, a way of falsehood and the way of God's law, and he chooses. He asks God to take the false way out of his path and to grant His law graciously. Even the law is a gift of grace. He keeps God's Word in front of him like a map.

119:31 *I have clung to Your testimonies* Verse 25 used the same Hebrew word: his soul clung to the dust. Now he clings to God's Word instead. What we hold onto decides where we end up.

119:32 *The way of Your commandments I will run, for You will enlarge my heart* Earlier he lay in the dust. Now he is running. God enlarging his heart means giving him freedom, joy and more room to love Him. Obedience becomes a race run gladly instead of a load dragged along.

119:33 *Instruct me, LORD, in the way of Your statutes, and I will observe it to the end* Nearly every verse of this stanza begins with a request: instruct me, give me understanding, make me tread, incline my heart, turn away my eyes. He wants a devotion that lasts to the end, and he knows it must come from God.

119:35 *Make me tread in the pathway of Your commandments, for in it I take pleasure* He already delights in God's way, and still he asks God to make him walk in it. Desire is not enough. We need God's power to follow through, and God works in us both to will and to work (Phil 2:13).

119:36 *Incline my heart to Your testimonies, and not to unjust gain* Our hearts always lean toward something. He names the pull he feels most, money gained the wrong way, and asks God to tilt his heart toward His Word. Jesus said we cannot serve God and wealth (Matt 6:24).

119:37 *Turn away my eyes from looking at worthlessness* Worthlessness means things that are empty and of no value. What we look at shapes what we want. In a world full of screens, this may be one of the most needed prayers in the psalm.

119:38 *Confirm to Your servant Your word, which is for the fear of You* He asks God to make His promise stand. The purpose is reverence. When God keeps His word, people fear and honor Him.

119:41 *And let Your steadfast loves come to me, LORD, Your salvation according to Your word* Steadfast love is God's loyal covenant love (see 23:6). Here it is plural, many acts of that love, and it is tied to salvation and to God's promise. With that in hand he can answer the one who taunts him. Peter tells us to be ready to give an answer for our hope (1 Pet 3:15).

119:45 *And I will walk about in a broad place, for Your precepts I have sought* We might expect God's precepts to feel like walls. He says they are freedom, like walking in a wide, open space. Jesus said that those who continue in His word will know the truth and be set free (John 8:31-32).

119:46 *And I will speak of Your testimonies before kings, and I will not be ashamed* He is ready to speak God's Word to the most powerful people around. Paul did that before King Agrippa (Acts 26), and Jesus told His disciples they would stand before kings for His sake (Matt 10:18).

will not be ashamed. **47** And I will delight myself in Your commandments, which I have loved. **48** And I will lift up my hands to Your commandments, which I have loved, and I will meditate on Your statutes.

Zayin

49 Remember the word to Your servant, on which You have made me hope. **50** This ***is*** my comfort in my affliction, that Your word has kept me alive. **51** ***The*** arrogant have mocked me utterly; from Your law I have not turned away. **52** I have remembered Your judgments from of old, LORD, and I have comforted myself. **53** Burning indignation has seized me because of ***the*** wicked, who forsake Your law. **54** Your statutes have been songs to me in the house of my sojournings. **55** I have remembered Your name in the night, LORD, and I have kept Your law. **56** This has been mine, that I have observed Your precepts.

Heth

57 My portion ***is*** the LORD; I have said ***I would*** keep Your words. **58** I have entreated Your face with all ***my*** heart; be gracious to me according to Your word. **59** I have thought about my ways, and I have turned my feet to Your testimonies. **60** I have hurried, and I have not delayed, to keep Your commandments. **61** The cords of ***the*** wicked have surrounded me; Your law I have not forgotten. **62** ***At*** the middle of the night I rise to give thanks to You for the judgments of Your righteousness. **63** I ***am*** a companion of all who fear You, and of those who keep Your precepts. **64** ***Of*** Your steadfast love, LORD, the earth is full; teach me Your statutes.

Teth

65 You have done good with Your servant, LORD, according to Your word. **66** Teach me goodness of discernment and knowledge, for I have believed in Your commandments. **67** Before I was afflicted, I was erring; and now I keep Your word. **68** You ***are*** good and doing good; teach me Your statutes. **69** ***The*** arrogant have smeared falsehood on me; I, with all ***my*** heart I observe Your precepts. **70** Their heart is insensitive like fat; I, I delight in Your law. **71** It was good for me that I was afflicted, so that I may learn Your statutes. **72** The law of Your mouth ***is*** better for me than thousands of gold and silver.

Yod

73 Your hands made me and established me; give me under-

119:47 Ps 119:16,24; Ps 112:1; John 4:34
119:48 Ps 119:15; Ps 10:12; Ezek 44:12
119:49 Ps 71:14; 2 Sam 7:25; Ps 105:2,42
119:50 Rom 15:4; Ps 28:7; Ps 42:8,11
119:51 Jer 20:7; Ps 44:18; Job 23:11
119:52 Ps 77:5,11,12; Ps 105:5; Exod 14:29,30
119:53 Ezra 9:3,14; Ps 119:136,158; Ezra 10:6
119:54 Gen 47:9; Ps 89:1; Ps 10:1
119:55 Ps 42:8; Ps 63:6; Isa 26:9
119:56 Ps 119:165; Ps 18:18-22; 1 John 3:19-24
119:57 Ps 16:5; Lam 3:24; Ps 73:26
119:58 Ps 119:41,65,76,170; Ps 119:10; Ps 4:6
119:59 Lam 3:40; Ezek 18:28,30; Hag 1:5,7
119:60 Ps 95:7,8; Ezek 10:6-8; Prov 27:1
119:61 Ps 119:176; Ps 119:95; Ps 3:1
119:62 Acts 16:25; Ps 42:8; Mark 1:35
119:63 Ps 101:6; Prov 13:20; Ps 119:79,115
119:64 Ps 33:5; Ps 119:12,26; Ps 104:13
119:65 Ps 119:17; Ps 13:6; Ps 16:5,6
119:66 Phil 1:9; James 3:13-18; Ps 119:34
119:67 Jer 31:18,19; Ps 119:71,75; Ps 119:176
119:68 Ps 106:1; Ps 107:1; Matt 19:17
119:69 Job 13:4; Ps 35:11; Ps 109:2,3
119:70 Rom 7:22; Ps 17:10; Isa 6:10
119:71 Ps 119:67; Ps 94:12,13; 1 Cor 11:32
119:72 Rom 7:22; Ps 19:10; Prov 8:10,11,19
119:73 Ps 139:14-16; Ps 138:8; Ps 111:10

119:47 *And I will delight myself in Your commandments, which I have loved* Love appears twice in these two verses. He loves God's commands because he loves the God who gave them. Jesus tied the two together when He said that those who love Him will keep His commandments (John 14:15). Lifting up the hands was a posture of prayer, and he reaches toward God's Word like a worshiper.

119:49 *Remember the word to Your servant, on which You have made me hope* When God remembers, He acts on His promise. He reminds God of what He said, not because God forgets, but because that is how faith prays. It holds God to His word.

119:50 *This is my comfort in my affliction, that Your word has kept me alive* He doesn't say God took the affliction away. He says God's Word kept him alive in the middle of it. Many believers in hospital rooms and hard seasons have found the same thing.

119:52 *I have remembered Your judgments from of old, LORD, and I have comforted myself* Mockers laughed at him, and he kept walking. He looked back at what God had said and done in the past, and it steadied him. Remembering God's faithfulness, in the Bible's history and in our own lives, is one way God comforts us.

119:53 *Burning indignation has seized me because of the wicked, who forsake Your law* His anger is grief that people would throw away God's good Word and the life it brings. Later the same writer weeps streams of tears for the same reason (119:136). Zeal for God's honor and tears for people belong together. See the introduction on the hard lines.

119:54 *Your statutes have been songs to me in the house of my sojournings* The house of his sojournings is wherever he lives during his life on earth, a temporary stop. Travelers sing to pass the miles, and God's Word has become his music for the road. At night, the time of fear and sleeplessness, he remembers God's name.

119:56 *This has been mine, that I have observed Your precepts* The Hebrew is brief and has been read in more than one way. It may mean that keeping God's precepts has become his own portion and blessing, or that comfort came to him because he kept them. Either way, obedience has become part of who he is.

119:57 *My portion is the LORD* When Israel divided the land, each tribe received a portion, but the priestly tribe of Levi received none, because the LORD was their inheritance (Num 18:20; Deut 10:9). The writer says the same of himself. God is what he gets, and that is enough (see 73:26).

119:59 *I have thought about my ways, and I have turned my feet to Your testimonies* This is what repentance looks like. He stopped, took a hard look at his life, and changed direction. Then he hurried and did not delay. Delayed obedience is easy to excuse, and it often turns into no obedience at all.

119:62 *At the middle of the night I rise to give thanks to You* The cords of the wicked had wrapped him like a snare, and still he got up at midnight to thank God. Paul and Silas did the same in the Philippian jail, praying and singing hymns at about midnight (Acts 16:25).

119:63 *I am a companion of all who fear You* Love for God's Word draws him to God's people. We need friends who fear God and keep His Word, and we need to be that kind of friend.

119:64 *Of Your steadfast love, LORD, the earth is full; teach me Your statutes* The eighth stanza ends with a wide view. Everywhere he looks he sees God's loyal love. His last request is the one he has made again and again. After sixty-four verses he still wants to learn.

119:67 *Before I was afflicted, I was erring; and now I keep Your word* From here on the notes are lighter. This stanza is about the good that suffering did him. Before trouble came he was wandering. Hardship brought him back. He says it again: It was good for me that I was afflicted (119:71). God does not waste our pain.

119:72 *The law of Your mouth is better for me than thousands of gold and silver* He weighs God's Word against a fortune, and the Word wins. Compare 19:10, where the judgments of the LORD are more desirable than gold.

119:73 *Your hands made me and established me; give me understanding* The God who made him knows how he works, so He is the right One to teach him. It is like going back to the maker for the instructions.

standing, and let me learn Your commandments. **74** Those who fear You will see me and rejoice, for I have hoped in Your word. **75** I know, LORD, that Your judgments ***are*** righteousness, and ***in*** faithfulness You have afflicted me. **76** Let Your steadfast love, please, be to comfort me, according to Your word to Your servant. **77** Let Your compassion come to me, and I will live, for Your law ***is*** my delight. **78** Let ***the*** arrogant be ashamed, for ***with*** falsehood they have subverted me; I, I will meditate on Your precepts. **79** Let those who fear You turn to me, and those who know Your testimonies. **80** Let my heart be blameless in Your statutes, so that I will not be ashamed.

Kaph

81 My soul is spent for Your salvation; for Your word I have hoped. **82** My eyes are spent for Your word, saying, "When will You comfort me?" **83** For I have become like a wineskin in smoke; Your statutes I have not forgotten. **84** How many ***are*** the days of Your servant? When will You execute judgment on those who pursue me? **85** ***The*** arrogant have dug pits for me, which ***are*** not according to Your law. **86** All Your commandments ***are*** faithfulness; ***with*** falsehood they have pursued me; help me! **87** Almost they have made an end of me on the earth; and I, I have not forsaken Your precepts. **88** According to Your steadfast love keep me alive, and let me keep the testimony of Your mouth.

Lamed

89 Forever, LORD, Your word stands firm in the heavens. **90** Your faithfulness ***is*** to generation and generation; You have established the earth, and it stands. **91** By Your judgments they stand this day, for all things ***are*** Your servants. **92** Unless Your law ***had been*** my delight, then I would have perished in my affliction. **93** Forever I will not forget Your precepts, for by them You have kept me alive. **94** I ***am*** Yours; save me, for I have sought Your precepts. **95** ***The*** wicked have waited for me, to destroy me; Your testimonies I will consider. **96** Of all perfection I have seen an end; Your commandment ***is*** exceedingly broad.

Mem

97 How I love Your law! All the day it ***is*** my meditation. **98** Your commandments make me wiser than my enemies, for forever they ***are*** mine. **99** I have more insight than all my teachers, for Your testimonies ***are*** my meditation. **100** I gain understanding more than ***the*** aged, for I have observed Your precepts. **101** From every evil path I have restrained my feet, so that I may keep Your word. **102** From Your judgments I have not turned aside, for You, You have instructed me. **103** How smooth Your word is to my palate, more than honey to my mouth! **104** From Your precepts I gain understanding; therefore I hate every path of falsehood.

Nun

105 A lamp to my foot ***is*** Your word, and a light to my pathway. **106** I have sworn, and I have confirmed ***it***, to keep the judgments of Your righteousness. **107** I have been afflicted utterly; LORD, keep me alive according to Your word. **108** Accept, please, the freewill offerings of my mouth, LORD,

119:74 Ps 34:2-6; Ps 66:16; Ps 119:42,147
119:75 Rom 3:4; Rom 3:5; Heb 12:10,11
119:76 Ps 86:5; Ps 106:4,5; 2 Cor 1:3-5
119:77 Heb 8:10; Ps 119:41; Ps 51:1-3
119:78 Ps 119:21,51,85; Ps 35:26; Ps 7:3-5
119:79 Ps 119:63,74; Ps 7:7; Ps 142:7
119:80 1 John 2:28; Deut 26:16; Ps 25:21
119:81 Ps 84:2; Song 5:8; Rev 3:15,16
119:82 Ps 69:3; Ps 119:123; Deut 28:32
119:83 Job 30:30; Ps 22:15; Ps 102:3,4
119:84 Ps 39:4,5; Ps 89:47,48; Ps 90:12
119:85 Ps 35:7; Ps 119:78; Ps 7:15
119:86 Ps 119:78; Rom 7:12; Ps 119:128,138,142,151
119:87 1 Sam 20:3; 1 Sam 23:26,27; 2 Sam 17:16
119:88 Ps 119:25,40,159; Ps 119:2,146; Ps 25:10
119:89 Matt 5:18; 1 Pet 1:25; Ps 89:2
119:90 2 Pet 3:5; Matt 5:18; 2 Pet 3:7
119:91 Jer 33:25; Isa 48:13; Ps 148:5,6
119:92 Rom 7:22; Ps 119:24,77,143; Rom 15:4
119:93 Ps 119:16,50; John 6:63; 1 Pet 1:23
119:94 Ps 86:2; Josh 10:4-6; Isa 41:8-10
119:95 Ps 119:61,69,85-87; Ps 10:8-10; Ps 27:2
119:96 Matt 22:40; Heb 4:12,13; Ps 39:5,6
119:97 Acts 17:11; Ps 1:2; Ps 119:48,113,127,159,165,167
119:98 Deut 4:6,8; Ps 119:104; 1 Sam 18:5,14,30
119:99 Deut 4:6-8; 2 Sam 15:24-26; 1 Chr 15:11-13
119:100 Acts 17:11; 2 Tim 3:17; Job 12:12
119:101 Prov 1:15; Ps 119:59,60,104,126; Ps 18:23
119:102 Ps 18:21; Prov 5:7; Jer 32:40
119:103 Rev 10:10; Prov 8:11; Ps 19:10
119:104 Ps 119:128; Ps 119:98,100; Ps 36:4
119:105 Prov 6:23; 2 Pet 1:19; Ps 43:3
119:106 Neh 10:29; Ps 56:12; Ps 66:13,14
119:107 Ps 119:25,88; Ps 6:1; Ps 22:14-18
119:108 Hos 14:2; Heb 13:15; Ps 119:12,26,130,169

119:75 *in faithfulness You have afflicted me* This is a bold confession. He does not say his suffering happened in spite of God's faithfulness. He says it came from it. A loving Father disciplines His children for their good (Heb 12:10-11).

119:83 *For I have become like a wineskin in smoke* A skin bottle hung in the smoke of a tent dried out, shriveled and turned black. That is how worn out he feels. He is spent from waiting, asking how many days are left and when God will act. Still he has not forgotten God's statutes.

119:89 *Forever, LORD, Your word stands firm in the heavens* The twelfth stanza turns from his trouble to God's unchanging Word. It is settled in heaven, beyond the reach of every enemy. Jesus said heaven and earth will pass away, but His words will not pass away (Matt 24:35).

119:91 *for all things are Your servants* The same Word that is fixed in heaven holds the earth in place. Creation stands by God's rulings and serves Him. The God who keeps the world running can keep His promises to me.

119:92 *Unless Your law had been my delight, then I would have perished in my affliction* He is honest about how close he came to going under. What kept him was not his own strength but God's Word, which he loved.

119:94 *I am Yours; save me* This is one of the shortest and best prayers in the Bible. He belongs to God, so he asks God to take care of what is His.

119:96 *Of all perfection I have seen an end; Your commandment is exceedingly broad* Everything in this world that looks complete has a limit. He has seen the edge of it all. God's commandment has no such edge. It reaches farther than anything he can measure.

119:97 *How I love Your law! All the day it is my meditation* This stanza is a love song to God's Word. Because he meditates on it, he is wiser than his enemies, has more insight than his teachers and more understanding than the aged. Years and schooling help, but they cannot match a heart that takes God's Word in.

119:103 *How smooth Your word is to my palate, more than honey to my mouth* God's Word has a taste, and he finds it sweet. Compare 19:10. People who only read the Bible as a duty may never taste this, but it is there for those who keep coming back.

119:105 *A lamp to my foot is Your word, and a light to my pathway* Picture a small oil lamp on a dark road at night. It doesn't light up the whole journey, only the next step. That is often how God guides us. His Word shows us enough to walk forward in obedience today.

119:106 *I have sworn, and I have confirmed it* He has made a promise to keep God's righteous judgments, and then he has made it again. It is good to renew our commitments to God, not only to make them once.

and teach me Your judgments. **109** My life ***is*** in my hand continually, and Your law I have not forgotten. **110** ***The*** wicked have set a snare for me, and from Your precepts I have not gone astray. **111** I have inherited Your testimonies forever, for they ***are*** the joy of my heart. **112** I have inclined my heart to do Your statutes forever, ***to the*** end.

Samekh

113 ***The*** half-hearted I hate, and Your law I love. **114** My hiding place and my shield ***are*** You; for Your word I have hoped. **115** Depart from me, evildoers, and let me observe the commandments of my God. **116** Sustain me according to Your word, and I will live; and do not put me to shame for my hope. **117** Uphold me, and let me be saved, and I will have regard for Your statutes continually. **118** You have rejected all who stray from Your statutes, for their deceitfulness ***is*** falsehood. **119** ***As*** dross You have made all the wicked of the earth cease; therefore I have loved Your testimonies. **120** My flesh bristles from dread of You, and I am afraid of Your judgments.

Ayin

121 I have done justice and righteousness; do not leave me to my oppressors. **122** Be surety for Your servant for good; do not let ***the*** arrogant oppress me. **123** My eyes are spent for Your salvation, and for the word of Your righteousness. **124** Do with Your servant according to Your steadfast love, and teach me Your statutes. **125** I ***am*** Your servant; give me understanding, and let me know Your testimonies. **126** ***It is*** a time to act for the LORD; they have broken Your law. **127** Therefore I have loved Your commandments more than gold and more than fine gold. **128** Therefore all the precepts of everything I count right; every path of falsehood I hate.

Pe

129 Your testimonies ***are*** wonders; therefore my soul observes them. **130** The opening of Your words gives light, giving understanding to ***the*** simple. **131** My mouth I opened wide, and I panted, for I yearned for Your commandments. **132** Turn to me and be gracious to me, according to ***the*** custom toward those who love Your name. **133** Establish my steps by Your word, and do not let any iniquity have power over me. **134** Ransom me from the oppression of man, and let me keep Your precepts. **135** Make Your face shine on Your servant, and teach me Your statutes. **136** Streams of water have gone down my eyes, because they have not kept Your law.

Tsadhe

137 Righteous ***are*** You, LORD, and upright ***are*** Your judgments. **138** You have commanded the righteousness of Your testimonies, and faithfulness exceedingly. **139** My zeal has destroyed me, for my foes have forgotten Your words. **140** Your word ***is*** refined exceedingly, and Your servant has loved it. **141** I ***am*** small and despised; Your precepts I have not forgotten. **142** Your righteousness ***is*** righteousness forever, and Your law ***is*** truth. **143** Distress and anguish have found me; Your commandments ***are*** my delight. **144** The righteousness of Your testimonies ***is*** forever; give me understanding, and I will live.

119:109 Judg 12:3; Job 13:14; 1 Sam 19:5
119:110 Ps 140:5; Ps 141:9; Ps 119:85
119:111 Deut 33:4; Ps 119:14,127,162; Ps 16:5
119:112 Ps 119:33,44; Ps 119:36; Ps 141:4
119:113 Ps 94:11; Isa 55:7; Jer 4:14
119:114 Ps 91:1,2; Ps 32:7; Isa 32:2
119:115 Luke 13:27; Ps 6:8; Ps 139:19
119:116 Rom 10:11; 1 Pet 2:6; Ps 25:2
119:117 Ps 119:6,48,111,112; Ps 17:5; Ps 71:6
119:118 Ps 119:10,21; Isa 25:10; Isa 63:3
119:119 Mal 3:2,3; 1 Sam 15:23; Jer 6:30
119:120 Hab 3:16; Ps 119:53; Lev 10:1-3
119:121 2 Sam 8:15; Ps 7:3-5; Ps 18:20-24
119:122 Heb 7:22; Gen 43:9; Prov 22:26,27
119:123 Ps 119:81,82; Ps 69:3; Ps 130:6
119:124 Ps 119:12,26; Dan 9:18; Ps 143:10-12
119:125 Ps 116:16; Ps 119:94; Ps 86:16
119:126 Jer 8:8; Hab 1:4; Mal 2:8
119:127 Ps 19:10; Ps 119:72; Prov 3:13-18
119:128 Matt 5:19; Ps 119:104,118; Ps 119:6
119:129 Ps 139:6; Ps 119:18; Ps 119:2,31,146
119:130 Prov 6:23; Ps 19:7; Ps 119:105
119:131 Ps 42:1; Ps 119:20; Isa 26:8,9
119:132 Ps 106:4; Ps 119:124; Ps 25:18
119:133 Ps 17:5; Ps 19:13; Ps 119:116
119:134 Ps 56:1,2,13; Ps 119:122; Ezek 11:17-20
119:135 Ps 4:6; Ps 119:12,26; Ps 80:1,3,7,19
119:136 Jer 9:1,18; Ezek 9:4; Ps 119:53,158
119:137 Rev 15:3; Rev 16:7; Ezra 9:15
119:138 Ps 19:7-9; Ps 119:86,144; Deut 4:8,45
119:139 Ps 69:9; John 2:17; 1 Kgs 19:10,14
119:140 Ps 12:6; Ps 19:8; Ps 119:128
119:141 Ps 22:6; Ps 40:17; Prov 15:16
119:142 Ps 19:9; Ps 119:151; Ps 119:144
119:143 Ps 119:107; Ps 18:4,5; Ps 88:3-18
119:144 Matt 13:19; Prov 10:21; Isa 27:11

119:109 *My life is in my hand continually* This is an old way of saying his life is always at risk. The wicked have set a snare, and still he has not gone astray from God's precepts.

119:113 *The half-hearted I hate, and Your law I love* Half-hearted is a word for people divided in mind, wavering between God and something else. He wants an undivided heart. James warns against being double-minded (Jas 1:8).

119:114 *My hiding place and my shield are You* God is both a place to hide and a shield to hold up. When he is under attack, he has somewhere to go and something to protect him.

119:119 *As dross You have made all the wicked of the earth cease* Dross is the scum skimmed off when metal is melted down. God will remove the wicked the way a refiner removes waste. The next verse adds that this makes him tremble. God's judgments are not only for others.

119:122 *Be surety for Your servant for good* A surety is one who guarantees a debt or stands in for another. He asks God to step in and stand for him against the arrogant. I think of Jesus, who has become the guarantee of a better covenant (Heb 7:22).

119:126 *It is a time to act for the LORD; they have broken Your law* When people break God's law openly, he asks God to act. The next verse says that is exactly why he loves God's commandments more than gold. The darker the times, the more precious the Word.

119:130 *The opening of Your words gives light, giving understanding to the simple* The simple are those who are easily led and lack wisdom. When God's Word is opened up and explained, light comes in. You don't need a degree to understand the Bible. You need God's Word opened and a heart willing to receive it.

119:136 *Streams of water have gone down my eyes, because they have not kept Your law* Earlier his indignation burned (119:53). Here he weeps. Both come from the same love for God and for people. Jesus wept over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41).

119:139 *My zeal has destroyed me* His zeal for God's words burns him up because his foes have forgotten them. Compare 69:9, where zeal for God's house consumes the writer, a verse the disciples remembered about Jesus (John 2:17).

119:140 *Your word is refined exceedingly* Refined means tested in fire and found pure, with no dross in it (compare 12:6). God's Word has been tried by every generation, and it holds.

Qoph

145 I have called with all ***my*** heart; answer me, LORD; Your statutes I will observe. **146** I have called to You; save me, and let me keep Your testimonies. **147** I have gone before the twilight and cried for help; for Your word I have hoped. **148** My eyes have gone before the night watches, to meditate on Your word. **149** Hear my voice according to Your steadfast love; LORD, according to Your judgment keep me alive. **150** Those who pursue wicked scheming draw near; from Your law they are far. **151** Near ***are*** You, LORD, and all Your commandments ***are*** truth. **152** Long ago I have known from Your testimonies that You have founded them forever.

Resh

153 See my affliction and rescue me, for Your law I have not forgotten. **154** Plead my case and redeem me; according to Your word keep me alive. **155** Salvation ***is*** far from ***the*** wicked, for Your statutes they have not sought. **156** Your compassion ***is*** great, LORD; according to Your judgments keep me alive. **157** Many ***are*** those who pursue me and my foes; from Your testimonies I have not turned away. **158** I have seen ***the*** treacherous, and I have loathed ***them***, because they have not kept Your word. **159** See that I have loved Your precepts; LORD, according to Your steadfast love keep me alive. **160** The sum of Your word ***is*** truth, and every judgment of Your righteousness ***is*** forever.

Shin

161 Officials have pursued me without cause, and my heart stands in dread of Your word. **162** I ***am*** exulting over Your word like one who finds much plunder. **163** Falsehood I hate, and I abhor ***it***; Your law I love. **164** Seven ***times*** in the day I praise You for the judgments of Your righteousness.
165 Great peace ***belongs*** to those who love Your law, and ***there is*** no stumbling block for them. **166** I have waited for Your salvation, LORD, and Your commandments I have done. **167** My soul has kept Your testimonies, and I have loved them exceedingly. **168** I have kept Your precepts and Your testimonies, for all my ways ***are*** before You.

Taw

169 Let my cry draw near before You, LORD; according to Your word give me understanding. **170** Let my supplication come before You; according to Your word deliver me. **171** Let my lips pour forth praise, for You will teach me Your statutes. **172** Let my tongue sing ***of*** Your word, for all Your commandments ***are*** righteousness. **173** Let Your hand be ***ready*** to help me, for I have chosen Your precepts. **174** I have longed for Your salvation, LORD, and Your law ***is*** my delight. **175** Let my soul live, and it will praise You; and let Your judgments help me. **176** I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek Your servant, for Your commandments I have not forgotten.

PSALMS 120

The Songs of Ascents

A song of the ascents. **1** To the LORD in my distress I called, and He answered me. **2** LORD, deliver my soul from a lip of falsehood, from a tongue of deceit. **3** What will he give to you, and what will he add to you, tongue of deceit? **4** Sharpened arrows of a warrior, with burning coals of broom trees.

119:145 Ps 119:10; Ps 61:1,2; Ps 62:8
119:146 Ps 119:134; Judg 10:15,16; Matt 1:21
119:147 Ps 5:3; Mark 1:35; Ps 130:5
119:148 Lam 2:19; Ps 119:62; Ps 63:1,6
119:149 Ps 119:25,40,154,156; Ps 5:2,3; Ps 55:2
119:150 Ps 22:11-13,16; Ps 27:2; 1 Sam 23:16
119:151 Ps 145:18; Ps 46:1; Ps 75:1
119:152 Luke 21:33; Ps 119:144,160; Ps 89:34-37
119:153 Lam 5:1; Ps 119:16,98,109,141,176; Ps 119:159
119:154 1 Sam 24:15; Mic 7:9; Ps 35:1
119:155 Job 5:4; Ps 18:27; Isa 46:12
119:156 Ps 51:1; Ps 86:5,13,15; 1 Chr 21:13
119:157 Ps 119:51,110; Ps 3:1,2; Ps 22:12,16
119:158 Ps 119:53,136; Ezek 9:4; Mark 3:5
119:159 Ps 119:97,153; 2 Kgs 20:3; Neh 5:19
119:160 2 Tim 3:16; John 17:17; Rom 3:4
119:161 John 15:25; 1 Sam 26:18; Ps 119:23,157
119:162 Jer 15:16; Ps 119:72,111; 1 Sam 30:16
119:163 Ps 119:29,113,128; Ps 101:7; Prov 6:16-19
119:164 Ps 119:62; Ps 55:17; Ps 48:11
119:165 1 Pet 2:7; Isa 32:17; Prov 3:1,2,17
119:166 Gen 49:18; Ps 119:81,174; Ps 4:5
119:167 Heb 10:16; Rom 7:22; Ps 119:6-8,97,111,159
119:168 Prov 5:21; Ps 139:3; Ps 44:20,21
119:169 Ps 18:6; Ps 119:144; Prov 2:3-5
119:170 Ps 119:41; Ps 89:20-25; Gen 32:9-12
119:171 Ps 119:7; Ps 50:23; Ps 71:17,23,24
119:172 Ps 119:13,46; Ps 37:30; Ps 40:9,10
119:173 Luke 10:42; Ps 119:94,117; Isa 41:10-14
119:174 Rom 7:22; Ps 119:16,24,47,77,111,162,167; Ps 119:81,166
119:175 Ps 9:13,14; Ps 30:9; Ps 51:14,15
119:176 Isa 53:6; Ezek 34:6,16; Matt 15:24
120:1 Ps 18:6; Jonah 2:2; Heb 5:7
120:2 Ps 35:11; Ps 52:2-4; Ps 109:1,2
120:3 Job 27:8; Matt 16:26; Rom 6:21
120:4 Rom 12:20; Ps 57:4; Ps 59:7

119:147 *I have gone before the twilight and cried for help* He is up before dawn and awake through the night watches to pray and meditate. This is the second time this psalm mentions the night (119:62). Some of the best time with God is the quiet before the day starts.
119:151 *Near are You, LORD, and all Your commandments are truth* The wicked draw near to hurt him (119:150), but God is nearer. That is the comfort of every believer under attack.
119:160 *The sum of Your word is truth* Not only each part, but the whole of God's Word added together, is truth. We read the Bible best when we let all of it speak, not only the parts we like.
119:162 *I am exulting over Your word like one who finds much plunder* Plunder is what a winning army carries home after battle. Finding treasure in God's Word feels like that. Even officials pursuing him cannot take this joy away.
119:164 *Seven times in the day I praise You* Seven is a number of fullness. He means that praise fills his whole day. Later believers took this verse as a pattern for set times of prayer.
119:165 *Great peace belongs to those who love Your law, and there is no stumbling block for them* Love for God's Word brings peace, and it keeps us from tripping over the things that make others fall away.
119:176 *I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek Your servant* After 175 verses of love for God's Word, the psalm ends with a confession. He has still wandered. He doesn't say he will find his way back. He asks God to come and find him. Jesus is the Shepherd who leaves the ninety-nine to seek the one lost sheep (Luke 15:4). That is a good place for any believer to end.
120:0 *A song of the ascents* This title begins a group of fifteen psalms (120-134), all called songs of the ascents. Jerusalem sits high in the hills, so people always spoke of going up to it. Many think pilgrims sang these on the road to the three great feasts (Deut 16:16). The group starts far from home, in a land of lies, and ends in the house of the LORD (134:1).
120:2 *LORD, deliver my soul from a lip of falsehood, from a tongue of deceit* The writer is surrounded by people who lie about him. Words can wound as deeply as swords. He asks the tongue what it will gain, and the answer is that God will repay it with a warrior's sharp arrows and the hot coals of broom wood, which burn a long time.

5 Woe to me, that I have sojourned ***in*** Meshech (Meshekh), ***that*** I have dwelt with the tents of Kedar (Qedar)! **6** Long has my soul dwelt with one who hates peace. **7** I ***am*** peace, and when I speak, they ***are*** for war.

PSALMS 121

A song for the ascents. **1** I lift up my eyes to the mountains; from where will my help come? **2** My help ***is*** from the LORD, Maker of heaven and earth. **3** May He not let your foot slip; may your Keeper not slumber. **4** Look, He will not slumber and He will not sleep, the Keeper of Israel (Yisra'el). **5** The LORD ***is*** your Keeper; the LORD ***is*** your shade at your right hand. **6** By day the sun will not strike you, and the moon in the night. **7** The LORD will keep you from all evil; He will keep your soul. **8** The LORD will keep your going out and your coming in, from now and until forever.

PSALMS 122

A song of the ascents. Of David. **1** I rejoiced in those who said to me, "Let us go ***to*** the house of the LORD." **2** Our feet were standing in your gates, Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), **3** Jerusalem, which is built like a city that is joined together to itself, **4** where the tribes went up, the tribes of ***the*** LORD, ***as*** a testimony to Israel (Yisra'el), to give thanks to the name of the LORD. **5** For there thrones have sat for judgment, thrones of the house of David. **6** Ask for the peace of Jerusalem; may those who love you be at ease. **7** Let ***there*** be peace in your rampart, ease in your fortresses. **8** For the sake of my brothers and my friends let me speak, please: "Peace ***be*** in you." **9** For the sake of the house of the LORD our God let me seek good for you.

PSALMS 123

A song of the ascents. **1** To You I have lifted up my eyes, You who sit in the heavens. **2** Look, as the eyes of slaves ***are*** to the hand of their masters, as the eyes of a female slave ***are*** to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes ***are*** to the LORD our God, until He is gracious to us. **3** Be gracious to us, LORD, be gracious to us, for greatly we have been sated ***with*** contempt. **4** Greatly our soul has been sated ***with*** the mockery of the self-confident, the contempt of ***the*** proud oppressors.

120:5 Gen 10:2; Ezek 27:13; Gen 25:13
120:6 Ps 57:4; 1 Sam 20:30-33; Ezek 2:6
120:7 Ps 34:14; Ps 35:20; Ps 55:20
121:1 Ps 120:1; Ps 123:1; Jer 3:23
121:2 John 17:1; Ps 124:8; Isa 40:28,29
121:3 1 Sam 2:9; Prov 3:23,26; Ps 91:12
121:4 Ps 127:1; Ps 32:7,8; Ps 27:1
121:5 Ps 16:8; Isa 25:4; Isa 32:2
121:6 Rev 7:16; Isa 49:10; Ps 91:5-10
121:7 John 17:15; Ps 91:9,10; 2 Tim 4:18
121:8 Acts 9:28; Deut 28:6,19; Ps 113:2
122:1 Mic 4:2; Isa 2:3; Ps 42:4
122:2 Ps 84:7; Ps 87:1-3; Ps 100:4
122:3 2 Sam 5:9; Eph 2:20,21; Eph 4:4-7
122:4 Deut 16:16; Exod 23:17; Ps 78:68
122:5 Deut 17:8,18; 2 Chr 19:8; 2 Sam 8:18
122:6 Ps 51:18; Jer 51:50; Gen 12:3
122:7 John 14:27; Ps 48:3; Isa 9:7
122:8 Eph 6:23; Ps 16:3; Ps 42:4
122:9 Neh 2:10; Ps 26:8; Ps 69:9
123:1 Ps 121:1; Ps 141:8; Ps 2:4
123:2 Ps 40:1-3; Ps 130:5,6; Luke 18:1
123:3 Luke 18:11-13; Ps 56:1,2; Ps 57:1
123:4 Ps 119:51; Job 12:5; Ps 73:5-9

120:5 *Woe to me, that I have sojourned in Meshech, that I have dwelt with the tents of Kedar* Meshech was far to the north near the Black Sea, and Kedar was a desert tribe of Arabia to the southeast. He likely did not live in both. He uses them as names for wild, hostile people far from God's house. He feels like a foreigner among people who love war.
120:7 *I am peace, and when I speak, they are for war* The pilgrim life starts with being tired of a world at odds with God. That longing for peace turns the heart toward Jerusalem. Jesus said the peacemakers are blessed (Matt 5:9).
121:1 *I lift up my eyes to the mountains; from where will my help come* The traveler looks at the hills he must cross. Some think the hills look threatening, with steep paths, robbers and the high places where false gods were worshiped. Others think he is looking toward the hills of Jerusalem, where God's house stood. Either way he admits he needs help. Faith often starts with a question like that.
121:2 *My help is from the LORD, Maker of heaven and earth* The hills cannot help him. His help comes from the One who made them. If God made heaven and earth, no road is outside His reach. God uses money, doctors, friends and planning, but the psalm wants us to look past all of them to the One who made them.
121:3 *May He not let your foot slip; may your Keeper not slumber* Now a second voice speaks to the traveler, and through him to us. On rocky paths one slip could mean a broken leg. A watchman might doze off. God never does. Elijah mocked Baal's prophets by saying their god might be asleep (1 Kgs 18:27). When we lie awake with worry, Someone else is awake too.
121:4 *the Keeper of Israel* The God who watches over one traveler is the same God who has watched over His whole people for centuries. The word keep is used six times in these eight verses. I believe He is still keeping Israel today, and He has a future for them (Rom 11:1-2).
121:5 *the LORD is your shade at your right hand* In that dry land the midday sun could be dangerous. The right hand was the side of help, where a bodyguard would stand. God stands that close. Sun by day and moon by night together mean all the time. There is no hour when God stops keeping you.
121:7 *The LORD will keep you from all evil; He will keep your soul* Believers still get sick, lose loved ones and suffer harm, and the psalmists knew it well. The second line explains the first. God may let us walk through trouble, but our very life before Him is in His keeping. Jesus said no one will snatch His sheep out of His hand (John 10:28).
121:8 *The LORD will keep your going out and your coming in, from now and until forever* Going out and coming in is a Hebrew way of saying your whole life, every trip and every day from start to finish. The pilgrim would one day reach Jerusalem, but God's keeping does not end when the trip ends. If you are starting something new or hard, take this psalm with you.
122:1 *I rejoiced in those who said to me, Let us go to the house of the LORD* David remembers the joy of being invited to worship. Now the pilgrims stand inside the gates. Going to God's house with God's people is meant to be a joy, not a chore.
122:3 *built like a city that is joined together to itself* Jerusalem was packed tight on its hills, with walls and houses close together. The picture also fits the people. The tribes came up together, united in giving thanks to the LORD's name. The thrones of the house of David were there, where the king gave justice.
122:6 *Ask for the peace of Jerusalem* The Hebrew name Jerusalem sounds like the word for peace, shalom. Pilgrims prayed for the city's peace for the sake of their brothers and for the sake of God's house. Believers still pray for Jerusalem. I believe its full peace will come when the Son of David reigns there (Isa 2:3-4).
123:1 *To You I have lifted up my eyes, You who sit in the heavens* In 121:1 the pilgrim lifted his eyes to the hills. Here he lifts them higher, to God's throne. A slave watched his master's hand for a signal, waiting for what it would give. God's people watch Him that way, until He is gracious to us.
123:3 *Be gracious to us, LORD, be gracious to us, for greatly we have been sated with contempt* They have had their fill of being looked down on by the proud and comfortable. They do not answer the mockers. They take it to God and ask for grace, twice.

PSALMS 124

A song of the ascents. Of David. **1** If ***it had*** not ***been*** the LORD who was for us, let Israel (Yisra'el) say, please, **2** if ***it had*** not ***been*** the LORD who was for us, when man rose up against us, **3** then they would have swallowed us alive, when their anger burned against us; **4** then the waters would have overflowed us; a torrent would have passed over our soul; **5** then the raging waters would have passed over our soul. **6** Blessed ***be*** the LORD, who has not given us ***as*** prey to their teeth. **7** Our soul has escaped like a bird from a snare of fowlers; the snare is broken, and we, we have escaped. **8** Our help ***is*** in the name of the LORD, Maker of heaven and earth.

PSALMS 125

A song of the ascents. **1** Those who trust in the LORD ***are*** like the mountain of Zion (Tsiyon), ***which*** will not be shaken; forever it will remain. **2** Jerusalem (Yerushalayim): mountains ***are*** around it, and the LORD ***is*** around His people, from now and until forever. **3** For the scepter of wickedness will not rest on the lot of the righteous, so that the righteous will not stretch out their hands to injustice. **4** Do good, LORD, to the good, and to ***the*** upright in their hearts. **5** And those who turn aside ***to*** their crooked ***ways***, the LORD will lead them away with those who work iniquity. Peace ***be*** on Israel (Yisra'el).

PSALMS 126

A song of the ascents. **1** When the LORD brought back the restoration of Zion (Tsiyon), we were like those who dream. **2** Then our mouth was filled ***with*** laughter, and our tongue ***with*** a shout of joy; then they said among the nations, "The LORD has done great ***things*** with these." **3** The LORD has done great ***things*** with us; we were glad. **4** Bring back our captivity, LORD, like streams in the Negeb (Negev). **5** Those who sow with tears will reap with a shout of joy. **6** He will surely go, and weep, carrying the bag of seed; he will surely come with a shout of joy, carrying his sheaves.

PSALMS 127

A song of the ascents. Of Solomon (Shelomo). **1** If the LORD does not build a house, in vain its builders have toiled on it; if the LORD does not keep a city, in vain the watchman has stayed awake. **2** ***It is*** in vain for you who rise early to get up, who delay sitting down, who eat the bread of toils; so He gives to

124:1 Ps 129:1; Ps 120:1; Ps 54:4
124:2 Ps 21:1,2; Ps 3:1; Ps 22:12,13,16
124:3 Ps 35:25; Ps 57:3; Prov 1:12
124:4 Ps 18:4; Ps 42:7; Ps 69:15
124:5 Job 38:11; Ps 93:3,4; Jer 5:22
124:6 Ps 17:9; Ps 118:13; Ps 145:5,6
124:7 Ps 91:3; Prov 6:5; Ps 25:15
124:8 Ps 121:2; Ps 134:3; Gen 1:1
125:1 Rev 14:1; Jer 17:7,8; Ps 120:1
125:2 Zech 2:5; Lam 4:12; Ps 34:7
125:3 Prov 22:8; Ps 103:9,14; Isa 14:5,6
125:4 Ps 41:1-3; Ps 51:18; Ps 73:1
125:5 Gal 6:16; John 14:27; Matt 24:49
126:1 Hos 6:11; Ps 85:1; Jer 31:8-10
126:2 Luke 1:49; Job 8:21; Ps 14:7
126:3 Luke 1:49; Rev 19:1-7; Ps 18:50
126:4 Ps 85:4; Ps 126:1; Hos 1:11
126:5 John 16:20; John 16:21; James 4:9
126:6 John 16:20; James 4:9; Ps 30:5
127:1 Prov 16:9; 1 Cor 3:7; 1 Cor 3:9-15
127:2 Ps 4:8; Eccl 5:12; Ps 39:5,6

124:1 *If it had not been the LORD who was for us, let Israel say, please* David calls the whole people to say it with him. If God had not been on their side, enemies would have swallowed them whole like a monster, or swept them away like a flash flood in a dry valley. Looking back at what could have happened makes us thankful for what God prevented.
124:7 *Our soul has escaped like a bird from a snare of fowlers; the snare is broken* A bird in a trap cannot free itself. Someone has to break the snare. That is a picture of every rescue God gives, and most of all of our salvation. We did not break free. He broke the trap.
124:8 *Our help is in the name of the LORD, Maker of heaven and earth* This echoes 121:2. The same God who keeps the single traveler is the help of the whole nation. Many churches have opened their worship with this verse.
125:1 *Those who trust in the LORD are like the mountain of Zion, which will not be shaken* Mount Zion does not move. Those who trust in God share that steadiness, not because they are strong, but because of the One they lean on. Jerusalem is ringed by higher hills, and in the same way the LORD is around His people forever.
125:3 *For the scepter of wickedness will not rest on the lot of the righteous* A scepter is a ruler's rod. Wicked rule will not last forever over the land God gave His people. If it did, even the righteous might be tempted to give up and join in evil. God limits how long the wicked can press on His people (1 Cor 10:13).
125:5 *Peace be on Israel* The psalm closes with two paths. God does good to the upright in heart, and those who turn aside to crooked ways will be led away with the evildoers. The last word is a blessing on God's people. Paul ends Galatians with a similar blessing on the Israel of God (Gal 6:16).
126:1 *When the LORD brought back the restoration of Zion, we were like those who dream* This likely looks back to the return from exile in Babylon after 538 B.C. It seemed too good to be true, like a dream. Their mouths filled with laughter, and even the nations said the LORD had done great things for them. God's people agreed and were glad.
126:4 *Bring back our captivity, LORD, like streams in the Negeb* The Negeb is the dry south of Judah. Its stream beds sit empty most of the year, then fill suddenly when the rains come. The first return had happened, but there was more to be restored. They ask God to send it like a flash flood in the desert.
126:5 *Those who sow with tears will reap with a shout of joy* Sowing seed in a hungry year was hard. A farmer might weep as he threw seed he could have eaten. But the harvest comes, and he returns singing with his arms full. Tears spent in faithful work for God are never wasted (Gal 6:9). The weeping does not last, and the joy does.
127:0 *Of Solomon* I take this as authorship, as with the other psalm titles. Solomon was David's son, who built the temple in Jerusalem (1 Kgs 6). This is another of the songs of the ascents, the pilgrim songs (see 120:0).
127:1 *If the LORD does not build a house, in vain its builders have toiled on it* The man who built God's house says the real Builder is God. House can mean a building, a household or a family line. God promised to build David a house, meaning a lasting dynasty (2 Sam 7:11), and the second half of the psalm is about children. Walls and watchmen matter, but a career, a marriage or a church built without God will not stand.
127:2 *It is in vain for you who rise early to get up, who delay sitting down, who eat the bread of toils* Picture someone up before dawn and still working at midnight, eating meals made bitter by worry. The psalm does not condemn hard work. Proverbs praises the diligent (Prov 6:6-11). It warns against anxious striving that thinks everything depends on us.
127:2 *so He gives to His beloved sleep* Some read this as God giving to His beloved even while they sleep. Either way He provides while His people rest. Sleep is an act of trust. Beloved may be a play on Solomon's other name, Jedidiah, beloved of the LORD (2 Sam 12:25). Whether he meant that or not, every child of God is His beloved.

His beloved sleep. **3** Look, the inheritance of the LORD ***is*** sons; a reward ***is*** the fruit of the womb. **4** Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, so ***are*** the sons of ***one's*** youth. **5** How blessed ***is*** the man who has filled his quiver with them; they will not be ashamed when they speak with enemies in the gate.

PSALMS 128

A song of the ascents. **1** How blessed ***is*** everyone who fears the LORD, who walks in His ways. **2** For you will eat the labor of your hands; how blessed ***are*** you, and it will be good for you. **3** Your wife ***will be*** like a fruitful vine in the innermost parts of your house; your sons like shoots of olive trees around your table. **4** Look, for thus will a man be blessed who fears the LORD. **5** May the LORD bless you from Zion (Tsiyon); and see the good of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) all the days of your life. **6** And see sons of your sons. Peace ***be*** on Israel (Yisra'el).

PSALMS 129

A song of the ascents. **1** Greatly they have harassed me from my youth, let Israel (Yisra'el) say, please; **2** greatly they have harassed me from my youth; yet they have not prevailed against me. **3** On my back plowers have plowed; they have made their furrows long. **4** The LORD ***is*** righteous; He has cut the cord of ***the*** wicked. **5** Let them be ashamed and turned backward, all who hate Zion (Tsiyon). **6** Let them be like grass of ***the*** roofs, which withers before it shoots up, **7** with which the reaper has not filled his hand, and the binder of sheaves his bosom. **8** And those who pass by have not said, "The blessing of the LORD ***be*** on you; we bless you in the name of the LORD."

PSALMS 130

A song of the ascents. **1** From ***the*** depths I have called to You, LORD. **2** Lord, hear my voice; let Your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications. **3** If You keep iniquities, LORD, Lord, who will stand? **4** For with You ***is*** forgiveness, so that You may be feared. **5** I wait for the LORD; my soul waits, and for His word I hope. **6** My soul ***waits*** for the Lord more than watchmen for the morning, watchmen for the morning.

127:3 Gen 33:5; Deut 28:4; Ps 128:3,4
127:4 Jer 50:9; Prov 17:6; Prov 31:28
127:5 Prov 27:11; Job 42:12-16; Job 5:4
128:1 Ps 119:1; Ps 112:1; Luke 1:50
128:2 Isa 3:10; Eccl 8:12; Isa 62:8
128:3 Ezek 19:10; Ps 52:8; Prov 5:15-18
128:5 Ps 20:2; Ps 134:3; Ps 118:26
128:6 Job 42:16; Ps 125:5; Gen 50:23
129:1 Ps 124:1; Hos 2:15; Jer 2:2
129:2 Matt 16:18; Ps 34:19; Ps 118:13
129:3 Isa 51:23; Ps 141:7
129:4 Ezra 9:15; Neh 9:33; Lam 1:18
129:5 Ps 83:4-11; Ps 122:6; Esth 6:13
129:6 Ps 37:2; Ps 92:7; Jer 17:5,6
129:7 Gal 6:8; Ps 126:6; Isa 17:10,11
129:8 Ps 118:26; Ruth 2:4
130:1 Ps 42:7; Ps 121:1; Ps 122:1
130:2 2 Chr 6:40; Ps 61:1,2; Neh 1:6,11
130:3 Rom 3:23; Ps 143:2; Job 10:14
130:4 Jer 33:8,9; Isa 55:7; Dan 9:9
130:5 Ps 33:20; Ps 27:14; Ps 40:1
130:6 Ps 63:6; Ps 119:147; Acts 27:29

127:3 *Look, the inheritance of the LORD is sons; a reward is the fruit of the womb* The word sons often means children in general. Children are not a cost to cut or a product to design. They are a gift. If you have longed for children and never had them, or lost a child, please do not read this as a verdict on you. When a gift does not come, that is not a punishment. Sarah, Rachel and Hannah waited long years.

127:3 *a reward is the fruit of the womb* Some of God's faithful servants never had children. Jeremiah was told not to marry (Jer 16:2), and Paul lived single and called Timothy his true child in the faith (1 Tim 1:2). To eunuchs God promised "a name better than sons and than daughters" (Isa 56:5). God's love for you does not rise or fall with the size of your family.

127:4 *Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, so are the sons of one's youth* Arrows go where the warrior cannot. Children carry their parents' lives and values into places and years the parents will never reach. Arrows also need aiming. We cannot control where our children land, but we can point them toward God.

127:5 *How blessed is the man who has filled his quiver with them* The psalm sets no number. A full quiver is whatever God gives. The city gate was where elders sat and cases were settled (Ruth 4:1-11). Grown sons standing with a man gave him support when someone accused him. The psalm began with work and ends with family, and both rest on God.

128:1 *How blessed is everyone who fears the LORD, who walks in His ways* This psalm pairs with 127. It shows the blessing of a home where God is feared. A man eats the fruit of his own work, his wife is like a fruitful vine at the heart of the house, and his children are like young olive shoots around the table. These are pictures of the normal blessing of a godly home, not promises that every faithful family will look this way.

128:5 *May the LORD bless you from Zion* The blessing of the home is tied to the blessing of God's city and people. A family that lives long enough to see grandchildren and peace on Israel has seen God's goodness spread across the generations.

129:1 *Greatly they have harassed me from my youth, let Israel say, please* Israel speaks as one person who has been attacked since youth, from slavery in Egypt onward. Yet they have not prevailed against me. No nation has been hated as long as Israel, and none has been kept like Israel. God keeps His promises (Jer 31:35-37).

129:3 *On my back plowers have plowed; they have made their furrows long* Israel's back has been torn by whips as deep as plow furrows. But the LORD is righteous, and He has cut the cord, the harness that tied the oxen to the plow. He stops the oppressor's work.

129:6 *Let them be like grass of the roofs, which withers before it shoots up* Flat roofs of packed dirt sprouted thin grass that died in the sun before it amounted to anything. No reaper could gather it. The prayer is that those who hate Zion would come to nothing, never receiving the blessing harvesters gave one another. See the introduction on the hard lines.

130:1 *From the depths I have called to You, LORD* The depths are deep waters, the picture of being in over your head and unable to save yourself. Jonah prayed from the deep in the same way (Jonah 2:2-3). Verse 3 shows that his sin is a big part of what pulled him down. Christians have long counted this among the seven penitential psalms, a church tradition, not part of the text.

130:3 *If You keep iniquities, LORD, Lord, who will stand* To keep iniquities is to keep a record of them, the way a merchant marks every debt in his book. The answer is no one. All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Rom 3:23). He does not compare himself with worse sinners. Admitting that is where real hope starts.

130:4 *For with You is forgiveness, so that You may be feared* Everything turns on this line. Forgiveness belongs to who God is. We might expect it to make people careless. The opposite is true. People forgiven much stand in awe of God, because they know what it cost. Jesus took the record of our sins and nailed it to the cross (Col 2:13-14), so God is just when He forgives (Rom 3:26).

130:6 *My soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen for the morning, watchmen for the morning* Picture a guard on the wall in the last cold hours of the night. He cannot make the sun rise. He can only watch the eastern sky, sure that morning will come. The repeated line shows how long the wait is. If you are waiting on God in guilt or grief, the night may be long, but the morning is certain.

7 Hope, Israel (Yisra'el), in the LORD, for with the LORD ***is*** steadfast love, and with Him ***is*** abundant redemption. **8** And He, He will ransom Israel from all his iniquities.

PSALMS 131

A song of the ascents. Of David. **1** LORD, my heart has not been lofty, and my eyes have not been raised up; and I have not walked in great ***things***, and in ***things too*** wonderful for me. **2** Surely I have calmed and quieted my soul; like a weaned ***child*** on his mother, like the weaned ***child*** on me ***is*** my soul. **3** Hope, Israel (Yisra'el), in the LORD, from now and until forever.

PSALMS 132

A song of the ascents. **1** Remember, LORD, for David all his being afflicted, **2** who swore to the LORD; he vowed to the Mighty One of Jacob (Ya'aqov): **3** "Surely I will not go into the tent of my house; surely I will not go up on the couch of my bed; **4** surely I will not give sleep to my eyes, ***or*** slumber to my eyelids, **5** until I find a place for the LORD, dwelling places for the Mighty One of Jacob." **6** Look, we heard of it in Ephrathah (Efrata); we found it in the fields of Jaar (Ya'ar). **7** Let us go into His dwelling places; let us bow down at the footstool of His feet. **8** Arise, LORD, to Your resting place, You and the ark of Your strength. **9** Let Your priests be clothed ***with*** righteousness, and let Your faithful ones shout for joy. **10** For the sake of David Your servant, do not turn away the face of Your anointed. **11** The LORD swore to David ***in*** faithfulness; He will not turn back from it: "Of the fruit of your belly I will set ***one*** on the throne for you. **12** If your sons keep My covenant and My testimonies which I will teach them, their sons also forever shall sit on the throne for you." **13** For the LORD has chosen Zion (Tsiyon); He has desired it for a dwelling place for Himself: **14** "This ***is*** My resting place forever; here I will dwell, for I have desired it. **15** Its provision I will surely bless; its needy I will satisfy ***with*** bread. **16** And its priests I will clothe ***with*** salvation, and its faithful ones will surely shout for joy. **17** There I will make a horn sprout for David; I have arranged a lamp for My anointed. **18** His enemies I will clothe ***with*** shame, and on him his crown will shine."

130:7 Ps 86:5,15; Rom 5:20,21; Eph 1:7,8
130:8 Titus 2:14; Matt 1:21; Ps 103:3,4
131:1 Rom 12:16; Job 42:3; Jer 45:5
131:2 1 Cor 14:20; Isa 30:15; Lam 3:26
131:3 Ps 130:7; Ps 146:5; Isa 26:4
132:1 Ps 120:1; Ps 121:1; Ps 122:1
132:2 Acts 7:46; Gen 49:24; Ps 56:12
132:3 Eccl 9:10; Hag 1:4; Matt 6:33
132:4 Prov 6:4; Ruth 3:18; Gen 24:33
132:5 Eph 2:22; Acts 7:46; 2 Sam 6:17
132:6 1 Sam 17:12; 1 Sam 7:1; Ruth 1:2
132:7 Ps 5:7; Ps 99:5,9; Ps 66:13,14
132:8 2 Chr 6:41,42; Ps 68:1; Num 10:35,36
132:9 Ps 132:16; Job 29:14; Isa 61:10
132:10 1 Kgs 11:12,13,34; 1 Kgs 15:4,5; 2 Kgs 19:34
132:11 Acts 2:30; Luke 1:32; Luke 1:69
132:12 Ps 89:30-35; Ps 102:28; Ps 115:14
132:13 Heb 12:22; Rev 14:1; Ps 68:16
132:14 Eph 2:22; Ps 132:8; Isa 66:1
132:15 Ps 147:14; Exod 23:25; Lev 26:4,5
132:16 2 Chr 6:41; Ps 132:9; Ps 140:4
132:17 Luke 1:69; Ezek 29:21; 1 Kgs 11:36
132:18 Job 8:22; Ps 35:26; Ps 109:29

130:7 *with the LORD is steadfast love, and with Him is abundant redemption* What he found for himself he now offers to the whole people. God's loyal love has more than enough to buy back and set free all who come to Him. No one's sin is too great for it.
130:8 *And He, He will ransom Israel from all his iniquities* The iniquities of verse 3 come back. God is no longer counting them. He is ransoming Israel from them. Jesus was named because "He Himself will save His people from their sins" (Matt 1:21), and He gave Himself "that He might redeem us from all lawlessness" (Titus 2:14). I believe this also looks ahead to the day when all Israel will be saved (Rom 11:26).
131:1 *LORD, my heart has not been lofty, and my eyes have not been raised up* David, a king, says he has not reached for things too great and too wonderful for him. This is not a lack of ambition. It is a man who knows his limits before God and is content to leave to God what belongs to God.
131:2 *like a weaned child on his mother* A nursing baby cries and grabs for milk. A weaned child sits on his mother's lap, content just to be with her. David has quieted his soul like that. He wants God, not only what God gives. This calm did not come by itself. He says, I have calmed and quieted my soul.
131:3 *Hope, Israel, in the LORD, from now and until forever* What David learned for himself he passes on to the whole nation. A quiet, humble trust is the way for all God's people to wait for Him.
132:1 *Remember, LORD, for David all his being afflicted* The psalm recalls David's hardships and his vow not to rest until he found a place for the LORD to dwell (2 Sam 7:1-2). He longed to build God a house. God did not let him build the temple, but He honored the longing.
132:6 *we heard of it in Ephrathah; we found it in the fields of Jaar* It means the ark. Ephrathah is the area of Bethlehem, David's hometown, where they first heard of it. The fields of Jaar likely point to Kiriath-jearim, the town where the ark stayed for twenty years before David brought it up to Jerusalem (1 Sam 7:1-2; 2 Sam 6).
132:8 *Arise, LORD, to Your resting place, You and the ark of Your strength* These words echo Moses' cry when the ark set out in the wilderness (Num 10:35). Solomon prayed them when he dedicated the temple (2 Chr 6:41-42). God's people ask Him to come and settle among them, and they ask that the priests be clothed with righteousness.
132:11 *The LORD swore to David in faithfulness; He will not turn back from it* David swore to God (132:2), and now God swears to David. God's oath is the one that matters. He promised that one of David's own descendants would sit on his throne (2 Sam 7:12-16). Peter said David knew this oath pointed to the Christ (Acts 2:30).
132:12 *If your sons keep My covenant and My testimonies* Each king's own reign depended on his faithfulness, and many failed, until the line seemed cut off in the exile. But God's promise did not fail. It came to rest on Jesus, the faithful Son of David, who will sit on David's throne forever (Luke 1:32-33).
132:13 *For the LORD has chosen Zion; He has desired it for a dwelling place for Himself* God chose a man, David, and a place, Zion. He says this is His resting place forever. He promises to bless its food, satisfy its poor and clothe its priests with salvation. God's answers are bigger than the prayers. They asked for righteousness (132:9), and He gives salvation.
132:17 *There I will make a horn sprout for David; I have arranged a lamp for My anointed* A horn is a picture of strength, and to sprout is to grow like a branch. The prophets called the coming King the Branch of David (Jer 23:5). Zechariah praised God for raising up a horn of salvation in the house of David (Luke 1:69). The lamp means David's line would not go out. I believe this will be fully seen when Jesus reigns from Zion.

PSALMS 133

A song of the ascents. Of David. **1** Look, how good and how pleasant ***is*** the dwelling of brothers, also together! **2** ***It is*** like the good oil on the head, running down on the beard, the beard of Aaron (Aharon), that runs down on the mouth of his robes; **3** like the dew of ***Mount*** Hermon (Chermon) that runs down on the mountains of Zion (Tsiyon). For there the LORD has commanded the blessing: life until forever.

PSALMS 134

A song of the ascents. **1** Look, bless the LORD, all servants of the LORD, who stand in the house of the LORD in the nights. **2** Lift up your hands ***to the*** sanctuary, and bless the LORD. **3** May the LORD bless you from Zion (Tsiyon), Maker of heaven and earth.

PSALMS 135

Praise for the LORD's Mighty Acts

1 Praise ***the*** LORD! Praise the name of the LORD; praise, servants of the LORD, **2** who stand in the house of the LORD, in the courts of the house of our God. **3** Praise ***the*** LORD, for the LORD ***is*** good; sing praises to His name, for ***it is*** pleasant. **4** For Jacob (Ya'aqov) ***the*** LORD has chosen for Himself, Israel (Yisra'el) for His treasured possession. **5** For I know that the LORD ***is*** great, and our Lord ***is*** above all gods. **6** All that the LORD desires He does, in the heavens and on the earth, in the seas and all deeps. **7** ***He is*** bringing up clouds from the end of the earth; He makes lightnings for the rain, bringing out wind from His storehouses; **8** who struck down the firstborn of Egypt (Mitsrayim), from man to animal. **9** He sent signs and wonders into your midst, Egypt, on Pharaoh and on all his servants; **10** who struck down many nations and killed mighty kings: **11** Sihon (Sichon), king of the Amorites, and Og, king of Bashan, and all the kingdoms of Canaan (Kena'an); **12** and He gave their land ***as*** an inheritance, an inheritance to Israel His people. **13** LORD, Your name ***is*** forever; LORD, Your remembrance ***is*** to generation and generation. **14** For the LORD will vindicate His people, and on His servants He will have compassion. **15** The idols of the nations ***are*** silver and gold, the work of the hands of man. **16** They have a mouth, and they do not speak; they have eyes, and they do not see; **17** they have ears, and they do not give ear; also there is no breath in their mouth. **18** Like them will be those who make them, everyone who trusts in them.

133:1 John 17:21; Eph 4:3; 1 Cor 1:10
133:2 Lev 8:12; Exod 30:25-30; Ps 141:5
133:3 Deut 4:48; Ps 42:8; Lev 25:21
134:1 Ps 135:1,2,19-21; Ps 120:1; Ps 103:21
134:2 Ps 28:2; 1 Tim 2:8; Ps 63:4
134:3 Rom 11:26; Ps 128:5; Ps 124:8
135:1 Rev 19:5; Ps 134:1; Ps 96:1-4
135:2 Ps 92:13; Ps 116:19; Luke 2:37
135:3 Ps 147:1; Ps 119:68; Ps 106:1
135:4 1 Pet 2:9; Titus 2:14; Deut 10:15
135:5 Ps 48:1; Ps 95:3; Ps 97:9
135:6 Matt 8:26; Ps 115:3; Ps 33:9,11
135:7 Jer 10:13; Jer 51:16; Zech 10:1
135:8 Acts 7:36; Acts 13:17; Ps 78:51
135:9 Acts 7:36; Acts 13:17; Ps 136:15
135:10 Ps 136:17-22; Ps 44:2,3
135:11 Acts 13:19; Num 21:21-35; Deut 2:30-37
135:12 Ps 78:55; Ps 136:21,22; Ps 44:1-3
135:13 Ps 102:12,21; Exod 3:15; Ps 8:1,9
135:14 Deut 32:36; Ps 50:4; Ps 7:8
135:15 John 12:40; Rev 9:20; Ps 115:4-8
135:16 Matt 13:15; Matt 13:16; John 12:40
135:17 John 12:40
135:18 Ps 97:7; Ps 115:8; Isa 44:18-20

133:1 *Look, how good and how pleasant is the dwelling of brothers, also together* Look means pay attention. Unity is good, right before God, and pleasant, a joy to live in. Picture the feasts, when families from every tribe camped together in Jerusalem. David knew how rare that was, since the tribes had been split between his house and Saul's (2 Sam 2-3).

133:1 *the dwelling of brothers, also together* For Christians, the brothers and sisters are all who belong to Christ. Jesus prayed "that they all may be one" (John 17:21), and Paul urged believers to be "diligent to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph 4:3). The Spirit gives the unity. Our job is to guard it.

133:2 *It is like the good oil on the head, running down on the beard, the beard of Aaron* When Aaron became high priest, Moses poured the holy anointing oil on his head (Lev 8:12). It was made by God's own recipe and set apart for holy use (Exod 30:22-33). It was poured so generously that it ran down to the opening of his robes. Unity is like that, fragrant and holy.

133:2 *that runs down on the mouth of his robes* The mouth of his robes is the opening at the neck. The high priest carried the names of the twelve tribes on his shoulders and over his heart (Exod 28:9-12, 21). Many teachers see the oil reaching those names, a picture of God's blessing covering all His people together. The psalm itself only says the oil reached his robes.

133:3 *like the dew of Mount Hermon that runs down on the mountains of Zion* Hermon is the high mountain on Israel's northern edge, often capped with snow and known for heavy dew. In a dry land dew kept plants alive all summer. Hermon's dew did not really fall on Zion, about 120 miles south. The picture is poetry. Unity refreshes everyone it touches.

133:3 *For there the LORD has commanded the blessing: life until forever* God commands blessing where His people are united. That doesn't mean we agree on everything. It means love, forgiveness and putting up with one another (Col 3:13-14). Peace is not pretending, and it does not mean going back into an unsafe relationship. Paul says "if possible, so far as it is from you, being at peace with all men" (Rom 12:18).

134:1 *Look, bless the LORD, all servants of the LORD, who stand in the house of the LORD in the nights* This is the last song of the ascents. Pilgrims, perhaps leaving for home, call on the priests and Levites who keep watch in the temple at night to keep praising God. The servants answer with a blessing on the people. The journey that began far away in 120 ends with blessing from Zion.

134:3 *May the LORD bless you from Zion, Maker of heaven and earth* The God who chose a small hill in Jerusalem is the Maker of everything. The songs of the ascents have said this before (121:2; 124:8). The pilgrims go home blessed by the God of all the earth.

135:1 *Praise the LORD! Praise the name of the LORD; praise, servants of the LORD* This psalm picks up where 134 ended, with the servants in God's house. It is a mosaic of lines from other Scriptures, from Exodus, Deuteronomy and other psalms. It praises God as the One who chose Israel, rules creation, and rescued His people.

135:4 *For Jacob the LORD has chosen for Himself, Israel for His treasured possession* Treasured possession is the word God used at Sinai (Exod 19:5). A king's personal treasure was what he kept for himself. Israel was chosen out of love, not because they were great (Deut 7:6-8). Peter uses the same idea for believers in Christ (1 Pet 2:9), but God has not cast off Israel.

135:6 *All that the LORD desires He does, in the heavens and on the earth, in the seas and all deeps* God is not limited to one land the way the nations imagined their gods were. He runs the weather, the seas and history. He struck Egypt's firstborn and gave Israel the land of kings like Sihon and Og (Num 21:21-35).

135:15 *The idols of the nations are silver and gold, the work of the hands of man* These lines are close to 115:4-8. An idol has a mouth, eyes and ears, and it cannot use any of them. Those who trust in idols become like them, deaf and blind to God. We become like what we worship.

19 House of Israel, bless the LORD; house of Aaron (Aharon), bless the LORD; **20** house of the Levites, bless the LORD; you who fear the LORD, bless the LORD. **21** Blessed ***be*** the LORD from Zion (Tsiyon), who dwells ***in*** Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). Praise ***the*** LORD!

PSALMS 136

1 Give thanks to the LORD, for ***He is*** good, for His steadfast love ***is*** forever. **2** Give thanks to the God of the gods, for His steadfast love ***is*** forever. **3** Give thanks to the Lord of the lords, for His steadfast love ***is*** forever. **4** To Him who alone does great wonders, for His steadfast love ***is*** forever. **5** To Him who made the heavens by understanding, for His steadfast love ***is*** forever. **6** To Him who spread out the earth over the waters, for His steadfast love ***is*** forever. **7** To Him who made great luminaries, for His steadfast love ***is*** forever. **8** The sun for rule in the day, for His steadfast love ***is*** forever. **9** The moon and stars for rule in the night, for His steadfast love ***is*** forever. **10** To Him who struck down Egypt
(Mitsrayim) in their firstborn, for His steadfast love ***is*** forever. **11** And brought out Israel (Yisra'el) from their midst, for His steadfast love ***is*** forever. **12** With a strong hand and with an outstretched arm, for His steadfast love ***is*** forever. **13** To Him who cut the Red Sea into pieces, for His steadfast love ***is*** forever. **14** And made Israel pass through the middle of it, for His steadfast love ***is*** forever. **15** And shook off Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea, for His steadfast love ***is*** forever. **16** To Him who led His people in the wilderness, for His steadfast love ***is*** forever. **17** To Him who struck down great kings, for His steadfast love ***is*** forever. **18** And killed mighty kings, for His steadfast love ***is*** forever. **19** Sihon (Sichon), king of the Amorites, for His steadfast love ***is*** forever. **20** And Og, king of Bashan, for His steadfast love ***is*** forever. **21** And gave their land ***as*** an inheritance, for His steadfast love ***is*** forever. **22** An inheritance to Israel His servant, for His steadfast love ***is*** forever. **23** Who remembered us in our low condition, for His steadfast love ***is*** forever. **24** And tore us away from our foes, for His steadfast love ***is*** forever. **25** Who gives food to all flesh, for His steadfast love ***is*** forever. **26** Give thanks to the God of the heavens, for His steadfast love ***is*** forever.

PSALMS 137

1 By the rivers of Babylon (Bavel), there we sat; also we wept when we remembered Zion (Tsiyon). **2** On the poplars in its midst we hung up our lyres. **3** For there our captors asked us ***for*** words of a song, and our tormentors ***asked for*** gladness: "Sing for us ***one*** of the songs of Zion!" **4** How shall we sing the

135:19 Ps 115:9-11; Ps 118:1-4; Ps 145:10
135:20 Acts 13:16
135:21 Ps 134:3; Ps 132:13,14; Ps 76:2
136:1 Ps 106:1; Ps 118:1; Ps 107:1
136:2 Deut 10:17; Josh 22:22; 2 Chr 2:5
136:3 1 Tim 6:15; Rev 17:14; Rev 19:16
136:4 Heb 13:15; Ps 72:18; Ps 86:10
136:5 Heb 13:15; Gen 1:1; Jer 51:15
136:6 2 Pet 3:5; Heb 13:15; Ps 24:2
136:7 Heb 13:15; Ps 74:16,17; Ps 104:19
136:8 Ps 148:3; Jer 31:35; Matt 5:45
136:9 Ps 8:3; Ps 89:36,37; Job 31:26
136:10 Acts 7:36; Acts 13:17; Heb 13:15
136:11 Acts 13:17; Heb 8:9; Exod 12:51
136:12 Acts 13:17; Exod 6:6; Jer 32:21
136:13 Heb 11:29; Acts 7:36; Acts 13:17
136:14 Exod 14:22; Ps 106:9; Ps 78:13
136:15 Acts 7:36; Acts 13:17; Heb 11:29
136:16 Heb 13:15; Exod 13:18; Exod 15:22
136:17 Heb 13:15; Ps 135:10,11; Josh 12:1-24
136:19 Num 21:21,23; Deut 2:30-36; Deut 29:7
136:20 Num 21:33; Deut 3:1-29
136:21 Ps 44:2,3; Ps 78:55; Ps 105:44
136:22 Ps 47:4
136:23 Ps 102:17; Gen 8:1; Deut 32:36
136:24 Exod 15:13; Deut 15:15; Prov 23:10,11
136:25 Ps 104:27; Ps 145:15; Ps 147:9
136:26 Rev 11:13; Ps 136:1-3; Ps 115:3
137:1 Ezek 1:1; Gen 2:10-14; Ezra 8:21,31
137:2 Isa 24:8; Ezek 26:13; Ps 33:2
137:3 Rev 14:1; Rev 14:3; Ps 123:3,4
137:4 Eccl 3:4; Isa 22:12; Lam 5:14,15

135:19 *House of Israel, bless the LORD; house of Aaron, bless the LORD* The call to praise goes out to the whole nation, the priests, the Levites and all who fear the LORD. Then it comes home to Zion, where God chose to dwell.
136:1 *Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good, for His steadfast love is forever* Jewish tradition calls this psalm the Great Hallel, and it came to be used at Passover. Picture a leader calling out each line and the whole crowd answering with the refrain. Even a child could join in. The same words were sung when God's glory filled Solomon's temple (2 Chr 5:13) and when the exiles laid the second temple's foundation (Ezra 3:11).
136:2 *Give thanks to the God of the gods* The first three verses give God three titles: the LORD, the God of the gods, and the Lord of the lords. He is above every so-called god the nations worshiped and above every ruler on earth. The psalm starts with who God is before it says what He has done.
136:5 *to Him who made the heavens by understanding* Verses 4-9 follow Genesis 1. Proverbs also says the LORD made the heavens by understanding (Prov 3:19). Creation itself is an act of God's steadfast love.
136:8 *the sun for rule in the day* Egypt and other nations bowed to the sun and moon as gods. Israel sang that the LORD made them and gave them jobs to do. They rule only because He put them there. Every sunrise is a reminder that His love has not run out.
136:10 *to Him who struck down Egypt in their firstborn* This was the last plague, when Israel's homes were spared by the blood of the Passover lamb (Exod 12). It is a heavy line to sing with the refrain, and Scripture does not ask us to sing it lightly. Pharaoh had ordered Hebrew baby boys thrown into the Nile (Exod 1:22). God's judgment fell where his cruelty began. Saving the oppressed meant stopping the oppressor.
136:13 *to Him who cut the Red Sea into pieces* God split the sea, led Israel through on dry ground, and shook off Pharaoh's army like a man shaking dust from his clothes (Exod 14). Then for forty years He fed them with manna and led them with the cloud and fire, teaching them that man does not live by bread alone (Deut 8:2-3).
136:19 *Sihon, king of the Amorites* Sihon and Og came out to fight Israel east of the Jordan before Israel entered Canaan, and God gave Israel the victory (Num 21:21-35). Israel remembered these two wins for generations as proof that God keeps His promises (Neh 9:22). Then He gave the land as an inheritance, as He had promised Abraham (Gen 15:18-21).
136:23 *who remembered us in our low condition* The story comes close to home. The psalm does not say which low time it means. It may be the judges or the exile. It fits every low time God's people have known, including yours.
136:25 *who gives food to all flesh* The circle widens to the whole world. The God who parted the sea is the same God who puts food on your table. Twenty-six times the people answer that His steadfast love is forever. Try writing down your own story with God line by line, and after each line say the refrain. It is still true.
137:1 *By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat; also we wept when we remembered Zion* This psalm was written after Babylon destroyed Jerusalem in 586 B.C. and carried its people away. Babylon was full of rivers and canals. The exiles sat beside them and wept. They hung their harps on the trees because they could not bring themselves to play.
137:3 *Sing for us one of the songs of Zion* Their captors mocked them, asking for a happy song about the city they had burned. The songs of Zion praised the LORD who dwelt there. Singing them for entertainment in a pagan land felt like betraying them.

song of the LORD on foreign ground? **5** If I forget you, Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), let my right ***hand*** forget. **6** Let my tongue cling to my palate if I do not remember you, if I do not lift up Jerusalem above the head of my joy. **7** Remember, LORD, against the sons of Edom the day of Jerusalem, who said, "Lay ***it*** bare, lay ***it*** bare, to the foundation in it!" **8** Daughter of Babylon, who is to be devastated, how blessed ***is he*** who repays you your dealing that you dealt to us! **9** How blessed ***is he*** who seizes and smashes your infants against the rock!

PSALMS 138

Of David. **1** I will give thanks to You with all my heart; before ***the*** gods I will sing praises to You. **2** I will bow down toward the temple of Your holiness, and give thanks to Your name for Your steadfast love and for Your faithfulness; for You have made Your word great above all Your name. **3** In the day I called, and You answered me; You made me bold in my soul ***with*** strength. **4** All the kings of the earth will give thanks to You, LORD, for they have heard the words of Your mouth. **5** And they will sing of the ways of the LORD, for great ***is*** the glory of the LORD. **6** For the LORD ***is*** exalted, and the lowly He sees; and the lofty He knows from a distance. **7** If I walk in the midst of distress, You preserve me alive; against the anger of my enemies You stretch out Your hand, and Your right ***hand*** saves me. **8** The LORD will complete ***it*** for me; LORD, Your steadfast love ***is*** forever; do not abandon the works of Your hands.

PSALMS 139

To the choirmaster. Of David. A psalm. **1** LORD, You have searched me and known ***me***. **2** You, You know my sitting and my rising; You understand my thought from a distance. **3** My traveling and my lying down You sift, and ***with*** all my ways You are acquainted. **4** For there is not a word on my tongue; look, LORD, You know all of it. **5** Behind and in front You have hemmed me in, and You have placed Your palm on me. **6** ***Such*** knowledge ***is too*** wonderful for me; it is set on high; I am not able ***to reach*** to it. **7** Where shall I go from Your

137:5 Ps 84:1,2,10; Ps 102:13,14; Ps 122:5-9
137:6 Ezek 3:26; Ps 22:15; Isa 41:17
137:7 Ezek 25:12-14; Obad 1:10-14,18-21; Jer 49:7-22
137:8 Rev 18:6; Rev 14:8; Rev 17:5
137:9 Isa 13:16; Hos 13:16; Hos 10:14
138:1 Eph 5:19; John 10:35; Col 3:16
138:2 John 10:35; Rom 15:9; Ps 5:7
138:3 Ps 18:6; Eph 3:16; Phil 4:13
138:4 Rev 21:24; Ps 102:15,22; Ps 72:11
138:5 Ps 21:5; Mal 1:11; Rev 4:11
138:6 Prov 3:34; James 4:6; Ps 113:5,6
138:7 Ps 71:20,21; Ps 23:3,4; Isa 5:25
138:8 Phil 1:6; Ps 57:2; 1 Thess 5:24
139:1 Jer 12:3; Ps 17:3; Ps 44:21
139:2 2 Kgs 19:27; Matt 9:4; Ps 94:11
139:3 Job 31:4; Prov 5:20,21; Jer 23:24
139:4 Job 8:2; Ps 50:19-21; Ps 19:14
139:5 Deut 33:27; Job 23:8,9; Exod 24:11
139:6 Rom 11:33; Job 42:3; Ps 40:5
139:7 Jonah 1:3,10; Jer 23:23,24; Acts 5:9

137:5 *If I forget you, Jerusalem, let my right hand forget* A harpist plays with his right hand and sings with his tongue. He asks that his hand lose its skill and his tongue stick to the roof of his mouth before he forgets Jerusalem. Jerusalem stands for God's presence and promises. The exiles would not trade them for comfort in Babylon.

137:7 *Remember, LORD, against the sons of Edom the day of Jerusalem* Edom came from Esau, Jacob's brother. When Babylon sacked Jerusalem, Edom cheered and helped, shouting to tear it down to the ground. The prophet Obadiah condemned Edom for exactly this (Obad 10-14). Note that the writer asks God to remember. He leaves the matter in God's hands.

137:8 *Daughter of Babylon, who is to be devastated* Daughter of Babylon means the city and its people. God had already said through the prophets that Babylon would be judged for what it did (Jer 51:24; Isa 13:1). The writer calls blessed the one who repays Babylon with the same treatment it gave Jerusalem. Persia conquered Babylon in 539 B.C.

137:9 *How blessed is he who seizes and smashes your infants against the rock* This may be the hardest line in the Psalms. Conquering armies did this in war, and Babylon had likely done it in Jerusalem. Isaiah foretold the same for Babylon (Isa 13:16). This is a cry of raw grief, asking for justice in kind. It is a prayer, not an act, and it leaves vengeance with God (Rom 12:19). Jesus calls us to love our enemies (Matt 5:44). I believe little children who die are safe with God. See the introduction on the hard lines.

138:1 *I will give thanks to You with all my heart; before the gods I will sing praises to You* David praises the LORD openly, in front of the so-called gods of the nations, or perhaps in front of earthly rulers. He is not embarrassed by his God. He bows toward God's holy temple, which may mean the tabernacle in his day.

138:2 *for You have made Your word great above all Your name* The Hebrew here is hard. It seems to mean that God has magnified His promise even beyond everything He was already known for. What God says He will do, He does, and that makes His name greater still.

138:3 *In the day I called, and You answered me; You made me bold in my soul with strength* God did not always change David's circumstances right away. Sometimes He answered by making David strong inside to face them. That is a real answer to prayer.

138:4 *All the kings of the earth will give thanks to You, LORD* David looks ahead to a day when every king on earth will hear God's words and sing of His ways. I believe this will be fulfilled when Christ reigns and the nations come to worship Him (Isa 2:2-3; Rev 21:24).

138:6 *For the LORD is exalted, and the lowly He sees; and the lofty He knows from a distance* God is high above all, yet He draws near to the humble and keeps the proud at arm's length. Peter says God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble (1 Pet 5:5).

138:8 *The LORD will complete it for me* God finishes what He starts. David asks Him not to abandon the works of His hands. Paul had the same confidence that He who began a good work in us will complete it (Phil 1:6).

139:0 *To the choirmaster. Of David. A psalm* The choirmaster was the leader of the music in Israel's worship (see 4:0). So this very personal psalm was meant to be sung by God's people together, not only prayed alone.

139:1 *LORD, You have searched me and known me* To search is to dig through carefully, the way you would search a house or a field. God has gone through David's whole life and knows all of it. David says this without fear, speaking directly to God. The rest of the psalm unpacks this one verse.

139:2 *You understand my thought from a distance* God knows our ordinary moments, sitting down and getting up, going out and lying down. He sifts our ways the way grain is sifted. He does not need to be close to read our minds. He knows our thoughts from heaven.

139:4 *For there is not a word on my tongue; look, LORD, You know all of it* God knows what we will say before we say it. Jesus said "your Father knows what things you have need of before you ask Him" (Matt 6:8). That humbles us, since He hears the unkind words we hold back. It also comforts us when we cannot find words to pray.

139:5 *Behind and in front You have hemmed me in, and You have placed Your palm on me* That could sound like being trapped, but David means being protected. God's hand on him is a hand of care. He cannot get his mind around such knowledge, so instead of trying to figure it out, he worships.

139:7 *Where shall I go from Your Spirit? And where shall I flee from Your presence* Spirit and presence are two words for one idea. David has no plan to run. His point is that there is no place where God is not. Jonah tried to flee from the LORD on a ship to Tarshish (Jonah 1:3), and God met him in the storm and in the sea.

Spirit? And where shall I flee from Your presence? **8** If I ascend ***to the*** heavens, You ***are*** there; and ***if*** I make my bed ***in*** Sheol, look, You ***are there***. **9** ***If*** I take up the wings of dawn, ***if*** I dwell at the end of the sea, **10** even there Your hand will lead me, and Your right ***hand*** will grasp me. **11** And I said, "Surely darkness will crush me, and the light around me ***will be*** night," **12** even darkness is not dark to You, and night shines like the day; the darkness ***is*** as the light. **13** For You, You created my kidneys; You wove me together in the womb of my mother. **14** I will give thanks to You, because ***in*** awesome ***ways*** I am distinguished; wonderful ***are*** Your works, and my soul knows ***it*** exceedingly. **15** My frame was not hidden from You when I was made in the secret place, woven in the lower parts of the earth. **16** Your eyes saw my unformed substance, and on Your scroll all of them were written, ***the*** days ***that*** were formed, and to it ***was*** one among them. **17** And to me, how precious are Your thoughts, God! How vast are their sums! **18** I will count them; they are more numerous than sand. I awake, and I ***am*** still with You. **19** If only You would slay the wicked, God! And men of bloodshed, depart from me! **20** They speak of You for wicked scheming; lifted up for falsehood ***are*** Your enemies. **21** Do I not hate those who hate You, LORD? And those who rise up against You, do I ***not*** loathe? **22** ***With*** the completeness of hatred I hate them; they have become enemies to me. **23** Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. **24** And see if ***there is*** a way of pain in me, and lead me in the everlasting way.

PSALMS 140

To the choirmaster. A psalm of David. **1** Rescue me, LORD, from an evil man; from a man of violence preserve me, **2** who plan evil things in ***the*** heart; every day they stir up wars. **3** They sharpen their tongue like a serpent; the venom of a viper ***is*** under their lips. Selah. **4** Keep me, LORD, from the hands of the wicked; from a man of violence preserve me, who have planned to trip up my steps. **5** The proud have hidden a trap for me, and cords; they have spread a net beside ***the*** track; snares they have set for me. Selah. **6** I say to the LORD, "You ***are*** my God; give ear, LORD, to the voice of my supplications.

139:8 Job 26:6; Prov 15:11; Amos 9:2-4
139:9 Mal 4:2; Ps 18:10; Ps 19:6
139:10 Ps 63:8; Ps 73:23; Ps 143:9,10
139:11 Heb 4:13; Job 12:22; Ps 94:7
139:12 Heb 4:13; Job 34:22; Dan 2:22
139:13 Jer 1:5; Isa 44:2; Job 10:9-12
139:14 Gen 1:26,27; Ps 104:24; Ps 92:4,5
139:15 Eph 4:9; Ps 139:13; Ps 63:9
139:16 Rev 20:12; Ps 56:8; Mal 3:16
139:17 Ps 40:5; Isa 55:8,9; Jer 29:11
139:18 Ps 3:5; Ps 139:3; Ps 40:12
139:19 Isa 11:4; Ps 5:6; Ps 6:8
139:20 Jude 1:15; Exod 20:7; Ps 73:8,9
139:21 Ps 31:6; 2 Chr 19:2; Ps 15:4
139:22 Ps 101:3-8; Luke 14:26
139:23 Ps 26:2; Job 31:6; Prov 17:3
139:24 Matt 7:14; Ps 5:8; Prov 28:26
140:1 Ps 18:48; Ps 71:4; Ps 140:4,11
140:2 Ps 56:6; Ps 36:4; Ps 2:1,2
140:3 Rom 3:13; 2 Cor 11:3; James 3:8
140:4 Ps 71:4; Ps 17:8,9; Ps 36:11
140:5 Ps 35:7; Ps 142:3; Ps 57:6
140:6 Ps 16:2,5,6; Ps 31:14; Ps 142:5

139:8 *if I make my bed in Sheol, look, You are there* Sheol is the place of the dead (see 16:10). The highest place and the lowest both belong to God. Even death cannot take us out of His reach.
139:9 *If I take up the wings of dawn, if I dwell at the end of the sea* The dawn rises in the east, and for Israel the sea lay to the west. Even if David could fly with the morning light from one end of the world to the other, God would already be there, His hand leading and holding him. A believer far from home or in a hospital bed is never beyond God's hand.
139:12 *even darkness is not dark to You, and night shines like the day* Darkness hides sins from people, and it can also mean seasons of depression, grief or fear when we feel lost. God sees in the dark as well as in the light. No one can hide sin from Him, and no one is lost so deep He cannot see them. "There is no creature hidden before Him" (Heb 4:13).
139:13 *For You, You created my kidneys; You wove me together in the womb of my mother* God knows David so well because He made him. The kidneys stood for the deepest inner life. God wove him like cloth, thread by thread. The child in the womb is a person God is forming, which is why Christians have long treated unborn life as precious. God told Jeremiah "Before I formed you in the belly I knew you" (Jer 1:5).
139:13 *You wove me together in the womb of my mother* If you have lost a child through miscarriage or stillbirth, that loss was not your fault, and God does not hold it against you. He formed your little one and knew him or her, and I believe little children who die are safe with God. If you carry guilt over a past abortion, there is forgiveness with God (130:4). He does not turn away anyone who comes to Him.
139:14 *I will give thanks to You, because in awesome ways I am distinguished* Distinguished means set apart, made with care. This is a good word for anyone who struggles with how they look or what others have said about them. God made you with care. We still suffer in our bodies in a fallen world, but your worth comes from your Maker, not your appearance or abilities.
139:15 *My frame was not hidden from You when I was made in the secret place* Frame means the bones. No one could see inside the womb in David's day, but God could. The lower parts of the earth is a poetic way to describe that hidden place, and woven is a word used for fine embroidery.
139:16 *Your eyes saw my unformed substance, and on Your scroll all of them were written* Before David had a shape, God saw him, and every one of his days was written down before one of them came. God is not surprised by your hard season. That is true even of the little one who lived only a few days, or none outside the womb. Not one of those days was hidden from God.
139:17 *And to me, how precious are Your thoughts, God! How vast are their sums* David tries to count God's thoughts toward him, and they outnumber the sand. I awake, and I am still with You may mean he fell asleep counting, or that every morning God is still there. Both carry the same comfort, and it will hold when we wake on the other side of death.
139:19 *If only You would slay the wicked, God* After so much wonder, the turn can shock us. But if God sees everything, He sees the violent and cruel too. David's main concern is God's honor. These men use God's name for lies, and David wants His justice upheld.
139:21 *Do I not hate those who hate You, LORD* David does not pick up a sword. He brings his anger to the God who just searched his heart and leaves judgment with Him (Rom 12:19). Jesus took us further. He told us to love our enemies (Matt 5:44) and prayed for those who crucified Him (Luke 23:34). We can hate evil and still pray for evildoers to repent. See the introduction on the hard lines.
139:23 *Search me, God, and know my heart* He began by saying God had searched him. Now he asks for it. To test is to try, like metal in a fire. Right after speaking of the wicked, David admits evil can hide in his own heart. Before we ask God to deal with others, we ask Him to deal with us.
139:24 *And see if there is a way of pain in me, and lead me in the everlasting way* A way of pain is a hurtful way that grieves God and others. The everlasting way is the path of life with God that goes on forever. He wants to be searched, and then led. We can pray these last two verses every day.
140:1 *Rescue me, LORD, from an evil man; from a man of violence preserve me* David faces men who plan evil and stir up fights. Their words poison like a snake's venom. Paul quotes 140:3 among the lines showing all are under sin (Rom 3:13).
140:5 *The proud have hidden a trap for me, and cords* Like hunters, his enemies set nets and snares along the path. David does not set traps back. He

7 GOD the Lord, the strength of my salvation, You have covered my head in ***the*** day of weaponry. **8** Do not grant, LORD, the desires of the wicked; do not promote his plot; they would be exalted." Selah. **9** ***As for*** the head of those surrounding me, let the mischief of their lips cover them. **10** Let burning coals be dropped on them; into the fire let Him make them fall, into pits; they will not rise. **11** Let a man of tongue not be established in the land; ***as for*** a man of violence, let evil hunt him with thrusts. **12** I know that the LORD will execute the cause of the afflicted, the justice of the needy. **13** Surely the righteous will give thanks to Your name; the upright will dwell with Your presence.

PSALMS 141

A psalm of David. **1** LORD, I call out to You; hurry to me! Give ear to my voice when I call to You. **2** Let my prayer be established ***as*** incense before You, the lifting up of my palms ***as*** an evening offering. **3** Set, LORD, a guard for my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips. **4** Do not turn my heart to an evil thing, to practice practices in wickedness with men who work iniquity; and I will not eat of their delicacies. **5** Let a righteous ***one*** strike me: steadfast love; and let him rebuke me: oil for the head; let my head not refuse ***it***. For still my prayer ***is*** against their evil deeds. **6** Their judges have been thrown down by the sides of the rock, and they will hear my words, for they are pleasant. **7** As one plowing and breaking up the earth, our bones have been scattered at the mouth of Sheol. **8** For to You, GOD the Lord, ***are*** my eyes; in You I take refuge; do not lay bare my soul. **9** Keep me from the hands of the trap ***that*** they have laid for me, and the snares of those who work iniquity. **10** Let the wicked fall into his nets together, while I, I pass by.

PSALMS 142

A Maskil of David, when he was in the cave. A prayer. **1** ***With*** my voice I cry out to the LORD; ***with*** my voice I plead for favor to the LORD. **2** I pour out my complaint before Him; my distress before Him I declare. **3** When my spirit faints within me, and You, You know my path. In the way ***in*** which I walk they have hidden a snare for me. **4** Look ***to the*** right and see, and there is no one who recognizes me; refuge has perished from me; there is no one who seeks after my soul. **5** I cry out to You, LORD; I say, "You ***are*** my refuge, my portion in the land of the living." **6** Give attention to my cry, for I have been brought very low; deliver me from my pursuers, for they are stronger than I. **7** Bring my soul out from prison, to give thanks to Your name; the righteous will surround me, for You will deal bountifully with me.

PSALMS 143

A psalm of David. **1** LORD, hear my prayer; give ear to my supplications; in Your faithfulness answer me, in Your righteousness. **2** And do not enter into judgment with Your ser-

140:7 Ps 144:10; Ps 18:1,2,35; Ps 27:1
140:8 Ps 27:12; Ps 94:20,21; 2 Sam 15:31
140:9 Ps 7:16; Prov 18:7; Prov 12:13
140:10 Rev 21:8; Rom 12:20; Rev 16:9
140:11 Ps 34:21; Ps 12:3,4; Prov 6:17
140:12 Ps 9:4; 1 Kgs 8:45,49; Ps 10:17,18
140:13 Ps 16:11; Ps 32:11; Isa 3:10
141:1 Ps 70:5; Ps 40:13; Ps 69:17,18
141:2 Rev 5:8; Rev 8:3; Luke 1:9
141:3 Mic 7:5; James 1:26; Ps 39:1
141:4 2 Cor 6:17; Ps 119:36; 1 Kgs 8:58
141:5 Prov 19:25; Prov 25:12; Gal 6:1
141:6 Luke 4:22; 1 Sam 31:1-8; 2 Sam 1:17-27
141:7 Ps 44:22; 1 Sam 22:18,19; Rom 8:36
141:8 Ps 25:15; Ps 123:1,2; 2 Chr 20:12
141:9 Ps 140:5; Ps 119:110; Ps 142:3
141:10 Ps 35:8; Ps 7:15,16; Ps 37:14,15
142:1 Ps 57:1; Ps 54:1; Ps 28:2
142:2 Heb 5:7; Ps 102:1; Isa 26:16
142:3 Ps 140:5; Ps 143:4; Ps 22:14
142:4 Ps 31:11; Ps 69:20; Ps 88:8,18
142:5 Ps 16:5; Ps 27:13; Ps 46:1,7,11
142:6 Ps 79:8; Ps 116:6; Ps 44:24-26
142:7 Ps 13:6; Ps 143:11; Ps 146:7
143:1 Ps 71:2; Ps 31:1; 1 John 1:9
143:2 Rom 3:20; Gal 2:16; Gal 3:11

says to the LORD, You are my God, and asks Him to listen.

140:7 *You have covered my head in the day of weaponry* God was David's helmet in battle. The same God who protected him before can protect him now from schemes as well as swords.

140:10 *Let burning coals be dropped on them* David asks that the evil his enemies planned would fall back on their own heads. It is a prayer for justice handed to God, not a plan of his own. See the introduction on the hard lines.

140:12 *I know that the LORD will execute the cause of the afflicted, the justice of the needy* This is the ground of his prayer. God takes up the case of the weak. The psalm ends with the upright dwelling in God's presence.

141:2 *Let my prayer be established as incense before You, the lifting up of my palms as an evening offering* Incense rose from the altar every morning and evening (Exod 30:7-8). David asks that his prayer rise to God the same way. In Revelation the prayers of the saints go up with the incense before God (Rev 8:4).

141:3 *Set, LORD, a guard for my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips* David asks God to post a guard at his mouth. James says no one can tame the tongue on his own (Jas 3:8). This is a good prayer before a hard conversation.

141:5 *Let a righteous one strike me: steadfast love; and let him rebuke me: oil for the head* David would rather be corrected by a godly friend than enjoy the delicacies of wicked men. A true friend's rebuke is a kindness, like soothing oil. Proverbs says the wounds of a friend are faithful (Prov 27:6).

141:8 *For to You, GOD the Lord, are my eyes; in You I take refuge* His enemies have traps set, and his people are scattered like broken ground. David keeps his eyes fixed on God and asks Him to let the wicked fall into their own nets while he passes by safely.

142:0 *A Maskil of David, when he was in the cave. A prayer* David hid in caves while Saul hunted him, at Adullam (1 Sam 22:1) and at En-gedi (1 Sam 24:3). Psalm 57 has a similar title. A Maskil is likely a psalm meant to teach or give insight (see 32:0).

142:2 *I pour out my complaint before Him* David does not hide his distress or dress it up. He pours it out before God like water from a jar. God invites that kind of honesty. Peter tells us to cast all our anxiety on Him (1 Pet 5:7).

142:4 *Look to the right and see, and there is no one who recognizes me* The right hand was where a helper or defender would stand in court. David looks there and no one is standing with him. No one seems to care whether he lives. Many believers have felt that alone. David's answer is in the next verse.

142:5 *You are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living* With no one beside him, David says God is enough. He is both shelter now and David's share in this life, not only in the next. Prison in 142:7 may be the cave itself. He looks ahead to the day the righteous gather around him again.

143:1 *in Your faithfulness answer me, in Your righteousness* David appeals to God's own character, His faithfulness to His promises and His righteousness. He does not appeal to his own goodness, as the next verse shows. Christians have long counted this among the seven penitential psalms.

143:2 *And do not enter into judgment with Your servant, for no one living is righteous before You* If God took David to court on his own record, he would lose, and so would everyone. Paul echoes this line when he says no flesh will be justified before Him by works of law (Rom 3:20; Gal 2:16). We are saved by grace through faith.

vant, for no one living is righteous before You. **3** For the enemy has pursued my soul; he has crushed my life to the ground; he has made me dwell in dark places like those dead long ago. **4** And my spirit faints within me; my heart is appalled in my midst. **5** I have remembered the days from of old; I have meditated on all Your deeds; on the work of Your hands I muse. **6** I have spread out my hands to You; my soul ***is*** like an exhausted land to You. Selah. **7** Hurry, answer me, LORD; my spirit is exhausted; do not hide Your face from me, and I will be like those who go down ***to the*** pit. **8** Make me hear Your steadfast love in the morning, for in You I have trusted; make known to me the way in which I should go, for to You I lift up my soul. **9** Deliver me from my enemies, LORD; in You I have covered ***myself***. **10** Teach me to do Your will, for You ***are*** my God; let Your good Spirit lead me in a land of level ground. **11** For the sake of Your name, LORD, You will preserve me alive; in Your righteousness You will bring my soul out of distress. **12** And in Your steadfast love You will cut off my enemies, and You will destroy all the adversaries of my soul, for I ***am*** Your servant.

PSALMS 144

Of David. **1** Blessed ***be*** the LORD, my rock, who trains my hands for war, my fingers for battle; **2** my steadfast love and my fortress, my high refuge and my deliverer for me, my shield, and in Him I take refuge, who subdues my people under me. **3** LORD, what ***is*** man, that You know him, a son of man, that You consider him? **4** Man is like a breath; his days ***are*** like a passing shadow. **5** LORD, bend down Your heavens and come down; touch the mountains, and they will smoke. **6** Flash lightning and scatter them; send Your arrows and rout them. **7** Stretch out Your hands from on high; set me free and deliver me from many waters, from the hand of foreign sons, **8** whose mouth speaks falsehood, and their right ***hand is*** a right ***hand*** of deception. **9** God, a new song I will sing to You; with a harp of ten ***strings*** I will make music to You, **10** who gives deliverance to kings, who sets free David His servant from ***the*** evil sword. **11** Set me free and deliver me from the hand of foreign sons, whose mouth speaks falsehood, and their right ***hand is*** a right ***hand*** of deception; **12** that our sons ***may be*** like plants grown large in their youth, our daughters like corners carved ***in*** the pattern of a palace; **13** our granaries full, providing from kind to kind; our flocks producing thousands, producing ten thousands in our open places; **14** our cattle loaded; no breach and no going out, and no outcry in our open places. **15** How blessed ***is*** the people for whom ***it is*** thus! How blessed ***is*** the people whose God ***is*** the LORD!

PSALMS 145

A praise of David. **1** I will exalt You, my God, the King, and I will bless Your name forever and ever. **2** Every day I will bless You, and I will praise Your name forever and ever. **3** Great ***is*** the LORD and greatly to be praised, and of His

143:3 Ps 88:4-6; Ps 7:1,2; Ps 17:9-13
143:4 Ps 77:3; Ps 142:3; Ps 55:5
143:5 Ps 77:5,6,10-12; 1 Sam 17:34-37,45-50; Mic 6:5
143:6 Ps 63:1; Ps 88:9; Job 11:13
143:7 Ps 69:17; Ps 27:9; Ps 28:1
143:8 Ps 46:5; Ps 25:4,5; Isa 48:17
143:9 Ps 34:2-4; Ps 56:9; Ps 61:3,4
143:10 John 14:26; Ps 25:4,5,8,9,12; Neh 9:20
143:11 Ps 119:25,37,40,88,107; Ps 31:1; Ps 71:2
143:12 Ps 54:5; Ps 116:16; Ps 55:23
144:1 Ps 18:34; Ps 18:2,31; Deut 32:30,31
144:2 2 Sam 22:2,3,40-48; Ps 18:47; Jer 16:19
144:3 Heb 2:6; Ps 8:4; Job 7:17
144:4 Ps 102:11; Ps 109:23; Job 8:9
144:5 Ps 18:9; Ps 104:32; Isa 64:1,2
144:6 Deut 32:23,42; Ps 18:13,14; Ps 77:17,18
144:7 Ps 18:16; Ps 69:1,2,14,15; 2 Sam 22:17
144:8 Ps 12:2; Ps 41:6; Isa 44:20
144:9 Rev 14:3; Ps 33:2,3; Ps 40:3
144:10 Heb 11:34; Ps 18:50; Ps 140:7
144:11 Ps 144:7,8; 2 Sam 10:6-19; 2 Sam 16:5-14
144:12 Ps 128:3; Ps 115:14,15; Ps 127:4,5
144:13 Ps 107:37,38; Lev 26:5,10; Deut 28:8
144:14 Deut 28:7,25; Judg 5:8; Judg 6:3,6
144:15 Ps 33:12; Ps 146:5; Deut 33:29
145:1 Matt 25:34; Rev 19:16; Ps 30:1
145:2 Ps 72:15; Ps 119:164; Rev 7:15
145:3 Rev 15:3; Job 5:9; Job 9:10

143:5 *I have remembered the days from of old; I have meditated on all Your deeds* Crushed and in the dark, David looks back at what God has done. Memory feeds hope. Then he spreads out his hands, thirsty for God like dry ground waiting for rain.
143:8 *Make me hear Your steadfast love in the morning* He asks to wake up to a fresh word of God's love, and to be shown the way he should go. This is a fine prayer to begin a day.
143:10 *Teach me to do Your will, for You are my God; let Your good Spirit lead me in a land of level ground* David asks not only to know God's will but to be taught to do it. Level ground is a path without stumbling places. God's good Spirit still leads His people (Rom 8:14).
143:12 *And in Your steadfast love You will cut off my enemies* God's love for His servant includes stopping those who are trying to destroy him. David leaves the cutting off to God. See the introduction on the hard lines.
144:1 *Blessed be the LORD, my rock, who trains my hands for war, my fingers for battle* Much of this psalm echoes Psalm 18. David the warrior king credits God with his skill in battle. Whatever skills we have for our work, God gave and trained them.
144:3 *LORD, what is man, that You know him, a son of man, that You consider him* This recalls 8:4. Here the stress is on how short life is. Man is like a breath, and his days are like a passing shadow. That God would notice such a creature at all is a wonder. James says our life is a vapor (Jas 4:14).
144:5 *LORD, bend down Your heavens and come down* David asks God to come down in power, as at Sinai when the mountain smoked (Exod 19:18). He wants God to rescue him from foreign enemies whose oaths are lies. The right hand raised to swear an oath was a hand of deception.
144:9 *God, a new song I will sing to You* A new rescue calls for a new song. A lyre of ten strings was a harp-like instrument. God gives victory to kings, and David knows his own deliverance came from Him.
144:12 *that our sons may be like plants grown large in their youth* David pictures a nation at peace: strong sons, daughters as graceful as the carved pillars of a palace, full barns, growing flocks, and no breach in the walls or cry of alarm in the streets. All of it is God's gift.
144:15 *How blessed is the people whose God is the LORD* Full barns are good, but the greatest blessing is not the harvest. It is belonging to the LORD. A people can have much and still miss this, or have little and still have everything.
145:0 *A praise of David* This is the only psalm whose title uses this word for praise, tehillah. Its plural, Tehillim, Praises, became the Hebrew name of the whole book. The psalm is an acrostic, an A to Z of praise, each verse starting with the next letter of the Hebrew alphabet.
145:1 *I will exalt You, my God, the King* David was Israel's king, but he calls God the King. He knew his own throne belonged to a greater King. Every day he will bless God, on ordinary days as much as feast days, and forever.
145:3 *Great is the LORD and greatly to be praised, and of His greatness there is no searching* We will never reach the bottom of who God is. We can study Him all our lives and still find more. That means worship will never get old, now or in eternity.

greatness there is no searching. **4** Generation to generation will extol Your works, and Your mighty deeds they will declare. **5** The splendor of the glory of Your majesty and the matters of Your wonders I will meditate on. **6** And the might of Your awesome deeds they will tell, and Your greatness, I will recount it. **7** The remembrance of the abundance of Your goodness they will pour forth, and ***of*** Your righteousness they will shout for joy. **8** The LORD ***is*** gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and great in steadfast love. **9** The LORD ***is*** good to all, and His compassions ***are*** over all His works. **10** All Your works will give thanks to You, LORD, and Your faithful ones will bless You. **11** The glory of Your kingdom they will tell, and Your might they will speak of, **12** to make known to the sons of mankind His mighty deeds and the glory of the splendor of His kingdom. **13** Your kingdom ***is*** a kingdom of all ages, and Your dominion ***is*** in every generation and generation. **14** The LORD sustains all who fall and raises up all who are bowed down. **15** The eyes of all wait for You, and You give them their food in its time. **16** You open Your hand and satisfy every living thing ***with*** desire. **17** The LORD ***is*** righteous in all His ways and faithful in all His works. **18** The LORD ***is*** near to all who call on Him, to all who call on Him in truth. **19** The desire of those who fear Him He will do, and their cry for help He will hear, and He will save them. **20** The LORD keeps all who love Him, and all the wicked He will destroy. **21** My mouth will speak the praise of the LORD, and let all flesh bless the name of His holiness forever and ever.

PSALMS 146

The Hallelujah Psalms

1 Praise ***the*** LORD! Praise the LORD, my soul! **2** I will praise the LORD in my life; I will sing praises to my God while I still ***exist***. **3** Do not trust in nobles, in a son of man, who has no deliverance. **4** His breath goes out; he returns to his ground; in that day his plans perish. **5** How blessed ***is he*** whose help ***is*** the God of Jacob (Ya'aqov), whose hope ***is*** on the LORD his God, **6** who made heaven and earth, the sea and all that ***is*** in

145:4 Isa 38:19; Ps 44:1,2; Ps 71:18
145:5 Ps 40:9,10; Ps 66:3,4; Ps 71:17-19,24
145:6 Dan 3:28,29; Ps 98:2,3; Ps 113:3
145:7 Isa 63:7; Ps 51:14; Ps 36:5-8
145:8 James 5:11; Num 14:18; Ps 86:5,15
145:9 Matt 5:45; Nah 1:7; Ps 25:8
145:10 Ps 19:1; Ps 103:22; Ps 96:11-13
145:11 Rev 11:15; Ps 45:6,7; 1 Chr 29:11,12
145:12 Ps 98:1; Ps 105:5; Ps 106:2
145:13 Rev 11:15; 1 Tim 1:17; Ps 146:10
145:14 Ps 146:8; Ps 37:24; Luke 22:31,32
145:15 Ps 136:25; Ps 147:8,9; Acts 17:25
145:16 Ps 104:28; Ps 107:9; Ps 132:15
145:17 Rev 15:3; Rev 19:11; Deut 32:4
145:18 John 4:24; Ps 34:18; Deut 4:7
145:19 1 John 5:15; Luke 1:50; John 9:31
145:20 James 2:5; Rom 8:29; Heb 13:15
145:21 Ps 71:8,15,23,24; Ps 150:6; Ps 145:1,2,5
146:1 Ps 103:1,22; Ps 105:45; Ps 104:1,35
146:2 Ps 104:33; Ps 63:4; Ps 71:14,15
146:3 Heb 2:6; Ps 118:8,9; Isa 2:22
146:4 Ps 104:29; Eccl 12:7; Gen 2:7
146:5 Ps 144:15; Ps 71:5; Jer 17:7,8
146:6 Acts 14:15; Rev 14:7; Col 1:16

145:4 *Generation to generation will extol Your works* Faith is meant to be handed down. Grandparents tell parents, and parents tell children. Are we passing ours on? Our children and the younger believers in our churches need to hear what God has done in our lives.
145:7 *The remembrance of the abundance of Your goodness they will pour forth* Pour forth pictures words bubbling up like a spring. When people remember God's goodness, they cannot keep quiet about it. Some praise is quiet meditation, and some is spoken out loud.
145:8 *The LORD is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and great in steadfast love* These are the words God spoke about Himself to Moses at Sinai (Exod 34:6; see 103:8), and the Bible comes back to them often (Joel 2:13; Jonah 4:2). Gracious means He gives what we do not deserve. Slow to anger means He is patient. God does get angry at sin, but slowly, and His love abounds.
145:9 *The LORD is good to all, and His compassions are over all His works* God's goodness reaches every creature, believers and unbelievers alike. Jesus said the Father "makes His sun rise on evil and good" (Matt 5:45).
145:11 *The glory of Your kingdom they will tell* God's faithful ones speak of His kingdom so that all people will know His mighty acts. Praise is meant to be overheard. When believers talk about God, the world is listening.
145:13 *Your kingdom is a kingdom of all ages* Earthly kingdoms rise and fall, and even David's line lost its throne for a time. God's kingdom never ends. I look ahead to the day when "The kingdoms of the world have become those of our Lord and of His Christ, and He will reign to the ages of the ages" (Rev 11:15).
145:13 *and Your dominion is in every generation and generation* The standard Hebrew text has no verse for the letter nun, which should come here. One Dead Sea Scroll and the ancient Greek translation have a line like 145:17, and some English versions print it. The SLB follows the standard Hebrew text. Nothing the psalm teaches about God is lost either way.
145:14 *The LORD sustains all who fall and raises up all who are bowed down* Earthly kings often ignore the weak. This King stoops to lift them. If you have fallen, or life has bent you low, He is the One who helps you stand again.
145:15 *The eyes of all wait for You, and You give them their food in its time* Picture every creature looking up to the One who feeds it. Every meal is a gift from God's open hand. Christians have long prayed 145:15-16 before meals, and Martin Luther put them in the mealtime prayer of his Small Catechism.
145:18 *The LORD is near to all who call on Him, to all who call on Him in truth* The great King of verse 1 is not far away. But David adds in truth. God is near to those who call on Him sincerely, not those who only use His name. Those who fear Him come to want what He wants, and He gives it.
145:20 *The LORD keeps all who love Him, and all the wicked He will destroy* God's love and His justice stand side by side. He keeps His people safe, and He will bring an end to evil. The wicked are those who will not turn to Him, and the door is still open, since He is near to all who call on Him in truth.
145:21 *let all flesh bless the name of His holiness forever and ever* David's own praise opened the psalm and closes it. Then it becomes a call to the whole world. Psalm 145 opens the door to the last five psalms, where all creation joins in.
146:1 *Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD, my soul* In Hebrew the first words are Hallelu Yah, which gives us hallelujah. Hallelu is a call to a group to praise, and Yah is a short form of God's name. Psalms 146-150 all begin and end with it, and many call them the Hallelujah Psalms. The writer is not named. The old Greek translation links it with Haggai and Zechariah, but that is not in the Hebrew. Before he calls others, he stirs up his own soul.
146:2 *I will sing praises to my God while I still exist* He commits his whole life to praise, as long as he has breath. That sets up the warning that follows. His life will end, and so will everyone else's.
146:3 *Do not trust in nobles, in a son of man, who has no deliverance* Nobles are princes and rulers, the powerful of the world. The psalm does not call them all evil. It says they cannot save. We should pray for our leaders (1 Tim 2:1-2), and good government matters. But when we look to a human being as our savior, we will be let down.
146:4 *His breath goes out; he returns to his ground; in that day his plans perish* The most powerful ruler will breathe his last and be buried. God told Adam "you are dust, and to dust you shall return" (Gen 3:19). His promises and big ideas end at his grave.
146:5 *How blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob* The God of Jacob kept His promises to a flawed man (see 46:7), and He will be faithful to us. Princes rule a small piece of land for a short time. This God made heaven, earth and sea, and He keeps faithfulness forever.

them, who keeps faithfulness forever, **7** who executes justice for the oppressed, who gives food to the hungry. The LORD sets free the prisoners; **8** the LORD opens ***the eyes of*** the blind; the LORD raises up those who are bowed down; the LORD loves the righteous; **9** the LORD watches over the sojourners; the fatherless and widow He helps up, and the way of the wicked He makes crooked. **10** The LORD will reign forever, your God, Zion (Tsiyon), to generation and generation. Praise ***the*** LORD!

PSALMS 147

1 Praise ***the*** LORD! For ***it is*** good to sing praises to our God; for ***it is*** pleasant; praise ***is*** fitting. **2** The LORD ***is*** the builder of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim); the banished ones of Israel (Yisra'el) He gathers, **3** who heals the broken of heart and binds up their wounds. **4** He counts the number of the stars; to all of them He calls names. **5** Great ***is*** our Lord and abundant in power; to His understanding there is no number. **6** The LORD relieves the humble, bringing the wicked low to the ground. **7** Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving; make music to our God with ***the*** lyre, **8** who covers the heavens with clouds, who prepares rain for the earth, who makes grass sprout ***on the*** mountains, **9** who gives to the animal its food, to the young of the raven, which call out. **10** Not in the strength of the horse does He delight; not in the legs of the man does He take pleasure. **11** The LORD takes pleasure in those who fear Him, in those who hope for His steadfast love. **12** Extol the LORD, Jerusalem; praise your God, Zion (Tsiyon)! **13** For He has strengthened the bars of your gates; He has blessed your sons in your midst, **14** who makes your territory peace; ***with*** the fat of wheat He satisfies you, **15** who sends His utterance ***to the*** earth; His word runs very quickly. **16** Who gives snow like wool; frost like ashes He scatters. **17** He throws His ice like crumbs; before His cold who can stand? **18** He sends His word and melts them; He makes His wind blow; waters flow. **19** He declares His words to Jacob (Ya'aqov), His statutes and His judgments to Israel. **20** He has not done so for any nation, and ***His*** judgments they have not known. Praise ***the*** LORD!

PSALMS 148

1 Praise ***the*** LORD! Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise Him in the heights. **2** Praise Him, all His angels; praise Him, all His armies. **3** Praise Him, sun and moon; praise Him, all

146:7 Luke 4:18; Ps 103:6; Ps 68:6
146:8 Matt 11:5; Luke 13:11; Luke 4:18
146:9 James 1:27; Ps 68:5; Jer 49:11
146:10 Rev 11:15; Ps 10:16; Exod 15:18
147:1 Rev 19:5; Ps 135:3; Ps 33:1
147:2 Deut 30:3; Ps 51:18; Isa 56:8
147:3 Luke 4:18; Job 5:18; John 12:40
147:4 Isa 40:26; Gen 15:5; Ps 8:3
147:5 Rev 15:3; Isa 40:28; Ps 48:1
147:6 Ps 146:8,9; Ps 25:9; Ps 37:11
147:7 Eph 5:19; Rev 14:2; Ps 95:1,2
147:8 James 5:18; Job 5:10; Gen 9:14
147:9 Luke 12:24; Ps 104:27,28; Job 38:41
147:10 1 Sam 16:7; Ps 20:7; Ps 33:16-18
147:11 Luke 1:50; John 4:23; Rev 11:18
147:12 Ps 135:19-21; Ps 146:10; Ps 149:2
147:13 Ps 115:14,15; Isa 44:3-5; Ps 128:3-6
147:14 Isa 60:17,18; Ps 81:16; Deut 32:14
147:15 2 Thess 3:1; Job 37:12; Ps 33:9
147:16 Job 37:6; Job 38:29; Ps 148:8
147:17 Ps 78:47,48; Exod 9:23-25; Josh 10:11
147:18 Ps 147:15; Job 6:16,17; Job 37:10,17
147:19 Mal 4:4; Ps 78:5; Deut 33:2-4
147:20 Heb 3:10; Deut 4:32-34; Rom 3:1,2
148:1 Rev 19:5; Ps 89:5; Luke 2:13,14
148:2 Ps 103:20,21; Job 38:7; Isa 6:2-4
148:3 Ps 19:1-6; Ps 8:1-3; Ps 89:36,37

146:7 *who executes justice for the oppressed, who gives food to the hungry. The LORD sets free the prisoners* These are the people princes often ignored or even crushed. The LORD is a King of a different kind. He cares for the people at the bottom.
146:8 *the LORD opens the eyes of the blind; the LORD raises up those who are bowed down* The LORD's name begins line after line. It is hard to read this without thinking of Jesus. He opened blind eyes and straightened a woman bent over for eighteen years (Luke 13:10-13). When John the Baptist asked if He was the One, Jesus pointed to these kinds of works (Matt 11:4-5). Jesus did what this psalm says the LORD does.
146:9 *the LORD watches over the sojourners; the fatherless and widow He helps up* Sojourners were foreigners with no land or family to protect them, and the fatherless and widow had lost their protector. God's law told Israel to care for all three (Deut 10:18-19), because He does. James says pure religion includes visiting orphans and widows (Jas 1:27). The road of the wicked looks smooth, but God turns it to ruin.
146:10 *The LORD will reign forever, your God, Zion, to generation and generation* Princes die, and their kingdoms pass away. The LORD's reign never ends. I believe that reign will be seen by all when Christ returns and rules over the earth (Rev 11:15). God has not forgotten Zion.
147:1 *Praise the LORD! For it is good to sing praises to our God* Praise is good for us, pleasant to God, and fitting, the right response to who He is. This psalm likely comes from after the exile, when the walls of Jerusalem were rebuilt (Neh 12:27).
147:2 *The LORD is the builder of Jerusalem; the banished ones of Israel He gathers* God brought the exiles home and rebuilt the city. I believe He will do this again in full at the end, gathering Israel from all the nations (Isa 11:12).
147:3 *who heals the broken of heart and binds up their wounds* The same God who counts and names every star stoops to bandage a broken heart. Great power and gentle care go together in Him. Jesus came to heal the broken (Luke 4:18).
147:4 *He counts the number of the stars; to all of them He calls names* There are more stars than anyone can count, and God knows each one by name. If He knows the stars, He knows you. His understanding has no number.
147:9 *who gives to the animal its food, to the young of the raven, which call out* Ravens were unclean birds, and their young cry loudly for food. God feeds them anyway. Jesus said the same about ravens to show that God will care for us (Luke 12:24).
147:10 *Not in the strength of the horse does He delight; not in the legs of the man does He take pleasure* Horses were the war machines of the day, and a runner's legs were a sign of strength. God is not impressed by military power or human ability. He takes pleasure in those who fear Him and hope in His steadfast love.
147:15 *who sends His utterance to the earth; His word runs very quickly* God's word is like a fast messenger. He speaks, and snow falls like wool and frost like ashes. He speaks again, and it melts and the waters flow. The weather does what He says.
147:19 *He declares His words to Jacob, His statutes and His judgments to Israel* Israel's greatest gift was not the land or the harvest, but God's Word. Paul says the Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God (Rom 3:2). No other nation had received it the way Israel did. Through Israel, that Word has now come to the world.
148:1 *Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise Him in the heights* The psalm starts as high as it can go. The first voices called are His angels and His armies, the hosts of heaven (see 24:10). Angels already praise God day and night (Isa 6:3; Rev 4:8). The psalm invites them to keep going.
148:3 *Praise Him, sun and moon; praise Him, all stars of light* The sun, moon and stars cannot speak, so they praise God by shining, by doing what He made them to do. Psalm 19 says the heavens recount God's glory without a word (19:1-3).

stars of light. **4** Praise Him, heavens of the heavens, and the waters which ***are*** above the heavens. **5** Let them praise the name of the LORD, for He, He commanded, and they were created. **6** And He established them forever and ever; a decree He gave, and it will not pass away. **7** Praise the LORD from the earth, sea monsters and all deeps, **8** fire and hail, snow and smoke, wind of storm doing His word, **9** the mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars, **10** the living things and all livestock, moving things and winged birds, **11** kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all judges of the earth, **12** young men and also virgins, elders with youths. **13** Let them praise the name of the LORD, for His name alone is exalted; His splendor ***is*** above earth and heavens. **14** And He has raised up a horn for His people, praise for all His faithful ones, for the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), a people near to Him. Praise ***the*** LORD!

PSALMS 149

1 Praise ***the*** LORD! Sing to the LORD a new song, His praise in the assembly of faithful ones. **2** Let Israel (Yisra'el) rejoice in its Maker; let the sons of Zion (Tsiyon) be glad in their King. **3** Let them praise His name with dancing; with tambourine and lyre let them make music to Him. **4** For the LORD takes pleasure in His people; He adorns the humble with salvation. **5** Let the faithful ones exult in glory; let them shout for joy on their beds. **6** ***Let*** the high praises of God ***be*** in their throat, and a sword of two edges in their hand, **7** to execute vengeance on the nations, punishments among the peoples, **8** to bind their kings with fetters, and their honored ones with shackles of iron, **9** to execute on them the judgment written. This ***is*** glory for all His faithful ones. Praise ***the*** LORD!

PSALMS 150

Let Everything That Has Breath Praise the LORD

1 Praise ***the*** LORD! Praise God in His holy place; praise Him in the expanse of His strength. **2** Praise Him for His mighty deeds; praise Him according to the abundance of His great-

148:4 Gen 1:7; 1 Kgs 8:27; Ps 113:6
148:5 Ps 33:6-9; Ps 95:5; Gen 1:1,2,6
148:6 Jer 33:25; Ps 89:37; Jer 31:35,36
148:7 Gen 1:21; Ps 74:13,14; Ps 104:25,26
148:8 Matt 8:26; Matt 8:27; Ps 147:15-18
148:9 Isa 44:23; Isa 49:13; Ps 65:12,13
148:10 Ps 50:10,11; Ps 103:22; Ps 150:6
148:11 Rev 21:24; Ps 102:15; Ps 2:10-12
148:12 Ps 8:2; Ps 68:25; Jer 31:13
148:13 Eph 4:10; Ps 8:1,9; Ps 113:4
148:14 Eph 2:13; 1 Pet 2:9; 2 Cor 2:14
149:1 Rev 14:3; Ps 33:3; Ps 89:5
149:2 Matt 21:5; Matt 25:34; Luke 19:38
149:3 Exod 15:20; Ps 81:2; Jer 31:13
149:4 Ps 35:27; Ps 147:11; Ps 132:16
149:5 Job 35:10; Ps 118:15; Ps 42:8
149:6 Heb 4:12; Rev 1:16; Neh 9:5
149:7 Rev 19:15; Ps 137:8,9; Num 31:2,3
149:8 Josh 10:23,24; Josh 12:7; Judg 1:6,7
149:9 Jude 1:15; Ps 148:14; 1 Cor 6:2,3
150:1 Ps 134:2; Ps 149:1; Ps 29:9
150:2 Deut 3:24; Ps 145:5,6; Rev 15:3,4

148:4 *and the waters which are above the heavens* This goes back to Genesis 1:6-8, when God separated the waters above the expanse from those below. Whatever exactly those upper waters are, every part of the sky, as high as anyone can imagine, belongs to God and owes Him praise.
148:5 *for He, He commanded, and they were created* God needed no tools or help. He spoke, and the universe came to be (Gen 1:3; Heb 11:3). John tells us all things came into being through the Word, the Son of God (John 1:1-3).
148:6 *a decree He gave, and it will not pass away* God made the heavens and keeps them in place. The Son is "upholding all things by the word of His power" (Heb 1:3). The sun rises every morning because God set its course. The order of the universe is a daily sign of His faithfulness.
148:7 *Praise the LORD from the earth, sea monsters and all deeps* Sea monsters are the great creatures of the ocean. In Israel's world the deep sea was a place of fear and danger. Even it is called to praise. Nothing is outside God's rule.
148:8 *fire and hail, snow and smoke, wind of storm doing His word* Even the weather obeys God. A storm that frightens us is still doing what He says. When Jesus calmed the sea, His disciples asked who He was, "that even the winds and the sea obey Him" (Matt 8:27).
148:9 *the mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars* The list walks through the days of creation, from land to trees to animals and birds. A cedar praises God by growing tall, and a bird by flying and singing. When we enjoy a mountain view, we are watching creation praise its Maker.
148:11 *kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all judges of the earth* Finally come people, young and old, men and women, rulers and ordinary folk. Nobody is too important to praise God, and nobody is too small. One day every tongue will confess "that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil 2:11).
148:13 *for His name alone is exalted; His splendor is above earth and heavens* The call of verse 5 comes again with a second reason. God made all things, and God alone is supreme. The psalm has walked through earth and heaven, and His splendor is higher than all of it.
148:14 *And He has raised up a horn for His people* A horn is a picture of strength. Many see a hint of the Messiah here. Zacharias praised God, who "has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of David His servant" (Luke 1:69). Israel is called a people near to Him. Through Israel's Messiah, those once far off have been brought near too (Eph 2:13).
148:14 *for the sons of Israel, a people near to Him* God has not forgotten Israel. Paul says they are still "beloved on account of the fathers" (Rom 11:28), because "the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable" (Rom 11:29). From the highest angel to the smallest child, the call is the same: Praise the LORD!
149:1 *Sing to the LORD a new song, His praise in the assembly of faithful ones* The faithful ones are God's loyal people, gathered together. A new song fits a new act of God. Israel rejoices in its Maker and its King, with dancing, tambourine and harp.
149:4 *For the LORD takes pleasure in His people; He adorns the humble with salvation* God does more than put up with His people. He delights in them. He dresses the humble in salvation like beautiful clothes. That is why they shout for joy even on their beds, at rest and at night.
149:6 *Let the high praises of God be in their throat, and a sword of two edges in their hand* Praise and a sword together can trouble us. In Israel's history God did use His people to judge nations, as in the conquest. This is not a command for believers today to take up arms for the faith. Our sword now is the word of God (Eph 6:17; Heb 4:12).
149:9 *to execute on them the judgment written* The judgment is already written. It is God's decision, not theirs. I believe the full meaning lies ahead, when Christ returns to judge the nations (Rev 19:15) and His saints share in His reign. Paul says "the saints will judge the world" (1 Cor 6:2). See the introduction on the hard lines.
150:1 *Praise God in His holy place; praise Him in the expanse of His strength* The holy place may be the temple in Jerusalem or God's heavenly dwelling. The expanse is the word used for the sky God made on the second day (Gen 1:6-8). Either way, praise rises from the temple floor and fills the sky, on earth where His people gather and in heaven where He reigns.
150:2 *Praise Him for His mighty deeds; praise Him according to the abundance of His greatness* We praise God for what He has done, from creation and the exodus to sending His Son to die and rise again. We also praise Him for who He is. Our praise should fit how great He is. That is a high standard, and eternity will not exhaust it.

ness. **3** Praise Him with a blast of ***the*** ram's horn; praise Him with harp and lyre. **4** Praise Him with tambourine and dancing; praise Him with strings and flute. **5** Praise Him with cymbals of sound; praise Him with cymbals of shouting. **6** Let everything that has breath praise ***the*** LORD. Praise ***the*** LORD!

150:3 Ps 33:2; Ps 149:3; 1 Chr 15:24,28
150:4 Rev 14:2; Ps 149:3; Isa 38:20
150:5 1 Chr 15:16,19,28; 1 Chr 25:1,6; 1 Chr 16:5
150:6 Rev 5:13; Rev 19:5; Ps 103:22

150:3 *Praise Him with a blast of the ram's horn; praise Him with harp and lyre* The ram's horn is the shofar, blown for feasts and to call God's people together (81:3; Lev 25:9). The lyre and harp were plucked stringed instruments. David played the lyre for King Saul (1 Sam 16:23).
150:4 *Praise Him with tambourine and dancing* The tambourine was a small hand drum. Miriam took one and led the women in dancing after the Red Sea (Exod 15:20-21). David danced before the LORD with all his might when the ark came to Jerusalem (2 Sam 6:14).
150:5 *Praise Him with cymbals of sound; praise Him with cymbals of shouting* We don't know exactly how these two kinds of cymbals differed. Perhaps one was clear and the other a loud crash. The psalm does not give rules about which instruments a church must use. Organ, guitar or no instruments at all, the call is the same: praise Him with what you have and with all your heart.
150:6 *Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD* God breathed life into Adam (Gen 2:7), and He is "giving to all life and breath and all things" (Acts 17:25). If you have breath, you have a reason to praise and the means to do it. The book began with the blessed man in Psalm 1 and passed through every kind of sorrow, but it ends here. One day every creature will give praise to the One on the throne and to the Lamb (Rev 5:13).

PROVERBS

Introduction

Title

The Hebrew title comes from the book's first words, "The proverbs of Solomon" (1:1). The word for proverb, mashal, means a comparison or a saying that sets one thing beside another. In our English Bibles Proverbs stands among the poetic and wisdom books, right after Psalms. In the Hebrew Bible it belongs to the Writings. The wisdom books deal with how to live under God and with the hard questions of life. Proverbs teaches how life usually works under God. Job and Ecclesiastes look at what happens when life does not seem to work that way. We need all three.

Author and Date

The book names its main author three times (1:1; 10:1; 25:1). Solomon most likely gave the long talks of chapters 1 to 9, the sayings of 10:1 to 22:16, and chapters 25 to 29. God gave him wisdom beyond anyone of his day, and he spoke three thousand proverbs (1 Kgs 4:29-34). Two shorter collections come from wise men who are not named (22:17-24:22; 24:23-34). Chapter 30 gives the words of Agur, and chapter 31 the words of King Lemuel, which his mother taught him. We know nothing more of Agur or Lemuel. Some Jewish teachers thought Lemuel was another name for Solomon, but the text does not say so.

Solomon reigned about 970 to 930 B.C. Hezekiah reigned about 715 to 686 B.C., and his men copied more of Solomon's proverbs about 700 B.C. (25:1). The book was likely put in its final form in Hezekiah's day or not long after. Many modern scholars believe the book grew over many centuries and was finished long after Solomon. I take the headings at their word. The book tells us plainly where each part came from.

Background and Setting

Most of the book comes from the best years of Israel's kingdom: peace on every side, the temple built in Jerusalem, and visitors from other nations coming to hear the king's wisdom. Over and over the book says "my son." It was written first for young men in Israel, likely including the king's sons and young men trained to serve, but it speaks to anyone willing to listen (1:4-5), and the mother's teaching stands beside the father's (1:8; 31:1). Its world is ordinary life: the home, the field, the market, the king's court and the city gate where the elders judged cases. People have changed very little, so it still speaks plainly to us.

The book has a cast of characters. The wise person fears the LORD and listens to correction. The simple (peti) is naive and easily led but can still learn. The fool (kesil, sometimes 'ewil) will not learn and despises wisdom. The scoffer or mocker (lets) laughs at correction. The sluggard always has an excuse. Wisdom is pictured as a noble woman calling in the street, and folly as a loud woman calling people to death (9:13-18).

Most of the book is Hebrew poetry. Its lines come in pairs, and the second line often repeats the first in other words, adds to it, or says the opposite. This is called parallelism, and seeing it helps us read each saying. A proverb packs a general truth into a few words. It describes how life usually works in God's world, not a promise that comes true in every case. Wise people usually prosper, but some godly people stay poor (16:8). The notes show this reading where a proverb sounds like a promise (3:2; 10:27; 22:6).

Themes

The theme is wisdom, the skill of living God's way in the real world. The Hebrew word hokmah was used of a craftsman's skill, and in Proverbs it means a life well built. The key verse is "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge" (1:7), said again at 9:10 and 15:33. The fear of the LORD is not terror. It is the awe, trust and reverence that take God seriously and want to please Him, and it shows itself in hating evil (8:13).

The book sets two ways before us at every turn: wisdom and folly, the righteous and the wicked, the diligent and the lazy, Wisdom's house and Folly's house. It speaks to speech, money, work, friendship, marriage, sexual purity, anger, pride, parents and children, the poor, and the use of power. Under it all is the LORD's rule over every plan, word and lot (16:1, 9, 33), and His care for the poor, the widow and the fatherless (14:31; 23:10-11).

Christ in Proverbs

Proverbs is not a book of prophecy, but it points to Jesus. He said that "something greater than Solomon is here" (Matt 12:42). Solomon taught wisdom but did not always live it (1 Kgs 11:4). Jesus is the wise Son who lived every line of this book, growing in wisdom and favor with God and men (Luke 2:52). The New Testament calls Christ the wisdom of God (1 Cor 1:24, 30), in whom "all the treasures of wisdom and of knowledge are hidden" (Col 2:3). When wisdom speaks in chapter 8 of being with God before the world was made, many teachers see a picture that points to Christ, through whom all things were made (John 1:1-3), though the passage is a poem about wisdom and does not teach that the Son was created. Agur's question about the name of God's Son (30:4) finds its answer in Him, and the way of wisdom leads, in the end, to Him.

Hard Passages

Do the promises of long life and riches always come true (3:2, 9-10; 10:27; 22:4)? They are general truths about how wisdom usually works, and they are fully true in eternity. The notes name counterexamples the Bible itself gives, such as Abel, Stephen and the poor widow, and answer the use of these verses as a formula for wealth.

Does 22:6 guarantee that a well-trained child will never wander? No. It is a general truth, not a verdict on parents whose grown children have turned away. The notes give the main readings of "according to his way" and a word of hope for those parents.

The rod sayings (13:24; 22:15; 23:13-14; 29:15) are read as loving correction that never excuses anger or abuse (Eph 6:4). Godly parents today differ on spanking, and the notes do not take a side. The warnings about adultery (chapters 5 to 7) are handled plainly and modestly, with married love honored and mercy offered to the fallen.

Wisdom's words in 8:22-31 are read as poetry, with the pic-

ture of Christ many teachers see, and a plain word that the passage does not teach the Son was created. Other hard spots: wisdom laughing at calamity (1:26), answering and not answering a fool (26:4-5), sayings about slaves (29:19-21), and the wife of strength, who is a real ideal and not a checklist to shame women (31:10-31).

Outline

I. A Father's Call to Wisdom (1:1-9:18)
  A. Purpose, motto and two voices (1:1-33)
  B. Searching for wisdom (2:1-22)
  C. Trust in the LORD (3:1-35)
  D. Guard your heart (4:1-27)
  E. Warnings against adultery (5:1-6:35)
  F. The way to her house (7:1-27)
  G. Wisdom calls out (8:1-36)
  H. Two invitations (9:1-18)
II. The Proverbs of Solomon (10:1-22:16)
  A. The righteous and the wicked (10:1-12:28)
  B. Words, work and the fear of the LORD (13:1-15:33)
  C. The LORD directs the steps (16:1-18:24)
  D. The counsel of the LORD stands (19:1-22:16)
III. The Words of the Wise (22:17-24:34)
  A. Thirty sayings of the wise (22:17-24:22)
  B. More sayings of the wise (24:23-34)
IV. Proverbs Copied by Hezekiah's Men (25:1-29:27)
  A. Kings, words and neighbors (25:1-28)
  B. Fools, sluggards and whisperers (26:1-28)
  C. Friends and faithful work (27:1-27)
  D. The righteous and the ruler (28:1-29:27)
V. The Words of Agur (30:1-33)
VI. The Words of Lemuel and the Wife of Strength (31:1-31)
  A. A mother's counsel to a king (31:1-9)
  B. The wife of strength (31:10-31)

PROVERBS

PROVERBS 1

The Purpose of Proverbs

1 The proverbs of Solomon (Shelomo), son of David, king of
Israel (Yisra'el): **2** to know wisdom and discipline, to discern
sayings of understanding, **3** to receive the discipline of wise
dealing, righteousness and justice and uprightness, **4** to give
to simple ones prudence, to a youth knowledge and discre-
tion. **5** Let a wise ***one*** hear and increase learning, and let a
discerning ***one*** acquire guidance, **6** to discern a proverb and
an enigma, the words of wise ***ones*** and their riddles. **7** The
fear of the LORD ***is*** the beginning of knowledge; wisdom and
discipline fools have despised.

A Warning Against Violent Men

8 Hear, my son, the discipline of your father, and do not for-
sake the instruction of your mother; **9** for they ***are*** a wreath
of grace for your head and necklaces for your neck. **10** My
son, if sinners entice you, do not consent. **11** If they say,
"Come with us; let us lie in wait for blood; let us lurk for the
innocent without cause; **12** let us swallow them alive like
Sheol, and whole, like those who go down ***to*** the pit; **13** we
will find all precious wealth; we will fill our houses ***with***
plunder; **14** you will cast your lot in our midst; one purse will
be for all of us," **15** my son, do not walk in the way with
them; hold back your foot from their path; **16** for their feet
run to evil, and they hurry to shed blood. **17** For in vain the
net ***is*** spread out in the eyes of every owner of a wing; **18** and
they lie in wait for their ***own*** blood; they lurk for their ***own***
lives. **19** So ***are*** the paths of everyone who gains unjust gain;
it takes the life of its owners.

Wisdom Calls in the Street

20 Wisdom cries aloud in the street; in the squares she gives
her voice; **21** at the head of ***the*** noisy ***streets*** she calls out; at
the entrances of ***the*** gates, in the city, she says her sayings:

1:1 Prov 10:1; 1 Kgs 4:31,32; Prov 25:1
1:2 Prov 7:4; Deut 4:5,6; Prov 4:5-7
1:3 Prov 2:1-9; Job 22:22; 1 Kgs 3:28
1:4 Prov 8:5; Prov 1:22,23; Prov 9:4-6
1:5 Prov 9:9; Prov 12:1; Job 34:10,16,34
1:6 Ps 78:2; Mark 4:11,34; Ps 49:4
1:7 Prov 9:10; Job 28:28; Eccl 12:13
1:8 Prov 6:20; Prov 2:1; Prov 4:1-4
1:9 Prov 4:9; Gen 41:42; Prov 3:22
1:10 Eph 5:11; Ps 50:18; Ps 1:1
1:11 John 15:25; Prov 1:18; Prov 12:6
1:12 Ps 28:1; Ps 124:3; Ps 35:25
1:13 Prov 1:19; Job 24:2,3; Isa 10:13,14
1:15 Ps 1:1; Ps 119:101; Prov 4:14,15
1:16 Rom 3:15; Prov 6:18; Isa 59:7
1:17 Prov 7:23; Job 35:11; Isa 1:3
1:18 Prov 5:22,23; Prov 9:17,18; Prov 28:17
1:19 2 Pet 2:16; Prov 15:27; Prov 23:3,4
1:20 Prov 9:3; 1 Cor 1:24,30; Col 2:3
1:21 Prov 9:3; Matt 10:27; Matt 13:2

1:1 *The proverbs of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel* Solomon was the son God promised would build His house (2 Sam 7:12-13). He asked God for an understanding heart, and God gave him wisdom beyond anyone of his day (1 Kgs 3:9-12; 4:29-34). The Hebrew word for proverb, mashal, means a comparison, a saying that sets one thing beside another. Solomon's own later years remind us that knowing wisdom is not the same as walking in it (1 Kgs 11:1-6).
1:2 *to know wisdom and discipline* Wisdom is skill for living God's way. Discipline means training and correction, the kind a father gives a son. Verses 2-6 give the purpose of the whole book in a string of overlapping words.
1:3 *righteousness and justice and uprightness* Wisdom in Proverbs is never only clever thinking. It is moral. It shows up in how we treat people: being right with God, fair with others and straight in our dealings.
1:4 *to give to simple ones prudence* The simple are the naive, the easily led, people whose minds are open in the wrong way. Prudence is the good sense to see trouble coming. Discretion is the ability to think a thing through before acting. Young people face the biggest choices with the least experience, and this book was written with them in mind.
1:5 *Let a wise one hear and increase learning* Proverbs is not only for beginners. A truly wise person is always still learning. The word for guidance comes from a word used for steering a ship. Wisdom helps us steer through life.
1:6 *an enigma, the words of wise ones and their riddles* Some sayings are plain. Others make us stop and think. God did not give us a book to skim. He gave us one to chew on.
1:7 *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge* This is the key verse of the book. The fear of the LORD is not the terror of a slave (1 John 4:18), but it is more than respect. It is deep awe of God that takes Him seriously, hates what He hates and trusts what He says. "Beginning" means both the starting point and the first and most important part. You cannot begin to be wise without it, and you never move past it (9:10; Job 28:28; Ps 111:10).
1:7 *wisdom and discipline fools have despised* The fool in Proverbs is not someone slow of mind. He is someone who will not bow to God. He does not lack the chance to learn. He looks down on it. This verse divides the human race into two kinds of people, and every chapter shows the difference. For us, the fear of the LORD leads to Christ, in whom all the treasures of wisdom are hidden (Col 2:3).
1:8 *Hear, my son, the discipline of your father* The first of many times the father says "my son." The home is the first school of wisdom, and the mother's teaching stands right beside the father's (Deut 6:6-7).
1:9 *a wreath of grace for your head and necklaces for your neck* A wreath or a neck chain was a sign of honor. Godly teaching, received and lived, makes a life beautiful. Not every reader had godly parents, but God can be a Father to the fatherless (Ps 68:5), and His Word can give what a home did not.
1:10 *if sinners entice you, do not consent* The father warns ahead of time. Temptation will come. The answer is short: say no.
1:12 *let us swallow them alive like Sheol* Sheol is the Hebrew name for the grave, the place of the dead. The gang speaks of its victims the way death speaks of its prey.
1:14 *one purse will be for all of us* The gang's pitch has two hooks: money (v. 13) and belonging. Many young people are drawn into sin less by the sin itself than by the group. The father names it so his son can see it.
1:15 *do not walk in the way with them* The best way to avoid falling into sin is not to walk down the road that leads to it (Ps 1:1).
1:16 *their feet run to evil, and they hurry to shed blood* These men do not drift into sin. They run to it. Paul uses words very close to these from Isaiah 59:7 to describe the whole human race (Rom 3:15). This is what the heart can become without God.
1:17 *in vain the net is spread out in the eyes of every owner of a wing* A bird that sees the net being set will not fly into it. These men are less wise than birds. The trap they set for others is really set for themselves (v. 18).
1:19 *it takes the life of its owners* Greed eats up the greedy. Money gained by hurting others does not bring the life it promised. It takes life away (1 Tim 6:10).
1:20 *Wisdom cries aloud in the street* Wisdom is pictured as a woman, a teacher calling out in public. This word picture is called personification, where something that is not a person is described as if it were one. The Hebrew word for wisdom is feminine, which fits the picture.
1:21 *at the entrances of the gates* The city gate was where business was done, cases were judged and people came and went. Wisdom does not hide in a classroom for the few. God's truth is offered openly to everyone.

22 "Until when, simple ones, will you love simplicity? And scoffers have delighted for themselves in scoffing, and fools hate knowledge? **23** Turn back at my reproof; look, I will pour out my spirit to you; I will make my words known to you. **24** Because I called and you refused, I stretched out my hand and no one ***was*** paying attention, **25** and you neglected all my counsel, and my reproof you did not want, **26** I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your dread comes, **27** when your dread comes like a devastation, and your calamity arrives like a whirlwind, when trouble and distress come on you. **28** Then they will call me, and I will not answer; they will seek me earnestly, and they will not find me; **29** because they hated knowledge, and the fear of the LORD they did not choose; **30** they did not consent to my counsel; they spurned all my reproof. **31** And they will eat from the fruit of their way, and from their ***own*** devices they will be filled. **32** For the turning away of simple ones will kill them, and the complacency of fools will destroy them. **33** And he who listens to me will dwell ***in*** security, and will be at ease from dread of evil."

PROVERBS 2

Seeking Wisdom Like Silver

1 My son, if you receive my sayings and treasure my commandments with you, **2** to make your ear attentive to wisdom, ***if*** you incline your heart to understanding; **3** for if you call out to discernment, ***if*** you give your voice to understanding, **4** if you seek her like silver and search for her like hidden treasures, **5** then you will discern the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God. **6** For the LORD gives wisdom; from His mouth ***come*** knowledge and understanding. **7** He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; ***He is*** a shield to those who walk ***in*** integrity, **8** to guard the paths of justice; and He preserves the way of His faithful ones. **9** Then you will understand righteousness and justice and uprightness, every good course. **10** For wisdom will come into your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul;
11 discretion will watch over you; understanding will preserve you,

Wisdom Guards From Evil

12 to deliver you from an evil way, from a man who speaks

1:22 Matt 13:19; Ps 1:1; Prov 5:12
1:23 John 7:39; Acts 2:17; 1 Pet 1:12
1:24 Rom 10:21; Isa 65:12; Isa 66:4
1:25 Prov 1:30; Luke 7:30; Ps 81:11
1:26 Ps 2:4; Judg 10:14; Ps 37:13
1:27 1 Thess 5:3; Prov 3:25,26; Prov 10:24,25
1:28 Job 27:9; Jer 11:11; Mic 3:4
1:29 Prov 1:22; Prov 6:23; Isa 27:11
1:30 Matt 23:37; Luke 13:34; Prov 1:25
1:31 Matt 23:37; Prov 14:14; Job 4:8
1:32 Prov 8:36; John 3:36; Heb 10:38,39
1:33 Ps 25:12,13; Prov 9:11; Prov 14:26

2:1 Matt 13:19; Prov 7:1; Prov 4:1
2:2 Matt 13:19; Ps 119:111,112; Ps 90:12
2:3 Matt 13:19; Eph 1:17,18; James 1:5
2:4 Matt 19:21; Matt 13:44; Prov 3:14,15
2:5 Eph 5:17; Luke 11:9-13; 2 Chr 1:10-12
2:6 James 1:5,17; Job 32:8; Isa 8:20
2:7 Prov 30:5; Ps 84:11; Prov 14:8
2:8 1 Sam 2:9; Ps 66:9; Ps 145:20
2:9 Prov 1:2-6; Ps 25:8,9; Ps 32:8
2:10 Col 3:16; Job 23:12; Prov 18:1,2
2:11 Prov 4:6; Ps 25:21; Prov 6:22-24
2:12 2 Cor 6:17; 1 Cor 15:33; Prov 13:20

1:22 *simple ones* Wisdom names three kinds of people. The simple (peti) love being naive. The scoffers (lets) delight in mocking. The fools (kesil) hate knowledge. Each is a step further from God than the last. The simple can still learn. The scoffer laughs at learning. The fool hates it.
1:23 *Turn back at my reproof* To turn back means to repent, to change direction. God is always ready to give more light to those who respond to the light they have (Matt 13:12).
1:26 *I also will laugh at your calamity* We must read this as the poetry it is. They laughed at wisdom's warnings, and now the warnings have come true. Her laughter is the laughter of being proven right, not delight in pain. God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked (Ezek 33:11).
1:27 *your calamity arrives like a whirlwind* Judgment that seems slow for a long time can come suddenly at the end. That is why the time to listen is now.
1:28 *Then they will call me, and I will not answer* One of the most sobering verses in the book. There can come a time when it is too late. This cry is not repentance. It is the cry of people who want to escape the consequences, not people who want God.
1:29 *the fear of the LORD they did not choose* The fear of the LORD is a choice, and these people made theirs. God's patience is long, but it is not wise to treat it as if it will always wait: "now is a day of salvation" (2 Cor 6:2).
1:31 *they will eat from the fruit of their way* Often the punishment for sin is simply getting what we chose (Gal 6:7-8).
1:32 *the complacency of fools will destroy them* Complacency means being careless and at ease, sure nothing bad will happen. That false comfort is deadly.
1:33 *he who listens to me will dwell in security* Wisdom does not only warn. She invites. This does not mean nothing hard will ever happen. It means the one who listens does not live in dread, because his life is built on solid ground (Matt 7:24-25).
2:1 *if you receive my sayings and treasure my commandments with you* The chapter starts with a big "if." Wisdom is a gift, but it is not forced on anyone. To treasure the father's commands is to store them up like something valuable so they cannot be lost (Ps 119:11).
2:2 *to make your ear attentive to wisdom, if you incline your heart to understanding* The ear hears, and the heart leans in. It is possible to hear words without taking them in. The father wants a son whose heart is turned toward the truth.
2:3 *if you call out to discernment* This is not casual interest. It is a cry, like someone calling for help. If anyone lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously (James 1:5).
2:4 *if you seek her like silver and search for her like hidden treasures* Men have dug deep and moved tons of rock to find silver (Job 28:1-11). The father says to search for wisdom that way. How much effort do we give to God's Word compared to what we give to earning money?
2:5 *then you will discern the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God* The prize of the search is God Himself. The fear of the LORD is both the beginning of wisdom (1:7) and its reward. The more we know God, the deeper our reverence for Him grows.
2:6 *For the LORD gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding* We do not find wisdom by our own cleverness. God gives it, and it comes "from His mouth," through what He has spoken. For us that means the Bible.
2:7 *He is a shield to those who walk in integrity* Integrity means being whole, the same on the inside as on the outside. God protects such people.
2:8 *His faithful ones* The word is related to hesed, steadfast love. These are people loyal to God because He has been loyal to them. He watches over their road.
2:9 *every good course* A good course is a well-worn path, a track a wagon wheel can run in. Wisdom teaches us how to live: what is right, what is fair and what is straight.
2:10 *knowledge will be pleasant to your soul* At first learning God's ways can feel like hard work. When wisdom comes into the heart, what once felt like a duty becomes a delight.
2:11 *discretion will watch over you* Wisdom is like a guard posted at the door, keeping us from choices we would regret.
2:12 *from a man who speaks perverse things* Perverse means twisted, turned upside down. These men call good evil and evil good (Isa 5:20).

perverse things, **13** those who forsake the paths of uprightness to walk in the ways of darkness, **14** who are glad to do evil; they exult in the perverse things of evil, **15** whose paths ***are*** twisted, and ***who are*** devious in their tracks; **16** to deliver you from a strange woman, from a foreign ***woman who*** has made her sayings smooth, **17** who forsakes the close companion of her youth and has forgotten the covenant of her God; **18** for her house sinks down to death, and her tracks to the shades; **19** all who go in to her will not return, and they will not reach the paths of life; **20** so that you may walk in the way of good ***ones*** and keep the paths of righteous ***ones***. **21** For upright ***ones*** will dwell ***in*** the land, and blameless ***ones*** will remain in it; **22** and wicked ***ones*** will be cut off from the land, and treacherous ***ones*** will be torn away from it.

PROVERBS 3

Trust in the LORD

1 My son, do not forget my instruction, and let your heart keep my commandments; **2** for length of days and years of life and peace they will add to you. **3** Do not let steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you; bind them on your neck; write them on the tablet of your heart, **4** and find grace and good insight in the eyes of God and mankind. **5** Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and on your ***own*** understanding do not lean. **6** In all your ways know Him, and He will make your paths straight. **7** Do not be wise in your ***own*** eyes; fear the LORD and turn aside from evil. **8** Let it be healing to your navel and refreshment to your bones. **9** Honor the LORD from your wealth, and from the first of all your yield; **10** and your storehouses will be filled ***with*** plenty, and your wine

2:13 Prov 4:19; John 3:19,20; Prov 21:16
2:14 Prov 10:23; Jer 11:15; Rom 1:32
2:15 Ps 125:5; Deut 32:5; Isa 30:8-13
2:16 Prov 6:24; Prov 23:27; Prov 7:5-23
2:17 Jer 3:4; Prov 5:18; Ezek 16:8,59,60
2:18 Prov 5:4-14; Prov 6:26-35; Prov 7:22-27
2:19 Acts 2:28; Eccl 7:26; Ps 81:12
2:20 Heb 6:12; Prov 13:20; Ps 119:63,115
2:21 Ps 84:11; Job 1:1; Job 42:12
2:22 Ps 52:5; Prov 5:22,23; Job 18:16-18

3:1 Prov 4:5; Prov 1:8; John 14:21-24
3:2 1 Pet 3:10; Prov 4:10; Prov 9:11
3:3 2 Cor 3:3; Prov 7:3; Prov 6:21
3:4 Luke 2:52; Ps 111:10; 1 Sam 2:26
3:5 Jer 17:7,8; Prov 28:26; Ps 37:3,5,7
3:6 Prov 16:3; Ps 32:8; Phil 4:6
3:7 Rom 12:16; Job 28:28; Prov 16:6
3:8 Job 21:24; Prov 4:22; Ps 147:3
3:9 Exod 23:19; Phil 4:17,18; Exod 22:29
3:10 Deut 28:8; Prov 11:24,25; Eccl 11:1,2

2:13 *those who forsake the paths of uprightness to walk in the ways of darkness* They once knew a better way and left it. They do not just slip into sin; they enjoy it (v. 14). People love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil (John 3:19). Wisdom helps us see such men for what they are, even when they are charming or successful.
2:16 *a strange woman, from a foreign woman* We meet her here for the first time, and again in chapters 5, 6 and 7. "Strange" means outside the bounds: another man's wife or a woman who lives outside God's law. She may or may not be foreign by birth. She lives as an outsider to God's covenant. Some teachers also see a picture of idolatry. Her weapon is smooth, flattering words.
2:17 *who forsakes the close companion of her youth and has forgotten the covenant of her God* The close companion is her husband. Marriage is a covenant, a solemn binding agreement, made before God (Mal 2:14). Adultery breaks faith with a spouse and with God at the same time.
2:18 *her tracks to the shades* The shades are the dead in Sheol. Sexual sin promises life and pleasure, but the road ends in ruin. There is forgiveness for those who repent (1 Cor 6:9-11), but the scars can last, and many never turn back (v. 19).
2:20 *so that you may walk in the way of good ones* Wisdom does not only keep us from bad company. It leads us into good company.
2:21 *upright ones will dwell in the land* For Israel, the land God promised Abraham was the sign of His blessing (Deut 30:19-20). The wicked being "cut off from the land" (v. 22) came true in the exiles, Israel to Assyria in 722 B.C. and Judah to Babylon in 586 B.C. Jesus echoed the promise: the gentle will inherit the earth (Matt 5:5).
3:1 *do not forget my instruction* The word for instruction is torah, the same word used for God's Law. A father's teaching grounded in God's Word was meant to be kept in the heart, not only in memory.
3:2 *for length of days and years of life and peace they will add to you* Read as the general truth it is, this says a wise life tends to be longer and more peaceful, because wise choices avoid much of what cuts life short. Godly people sometimes die young, and the Bible knows it (Isa 57:1). Peace is shalom: wholeness and well-being, not only the absence of war.
3:3 *Do not let steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you* Steadfast love is hesed, loyal covenant love; faithfulness means being true and reliable. The two are often used of God Himself (Exod 34:6). Worn like a necklace, they are seen by everyone; written on the heart, they go deep. God promised to write His law on His people's hearts (Jer 31:33).
3:4 *find grace and good insight in the eyes of God and mankind* Luke says almost the same of the boy Jesus (Luke 2:52).
3:5 *Trust in the LORD with all your heart* To trust is to lean your whole weight on someone, like leaning on a strong wall. The object is the LORD, a Person who has proved Himself faithful, not trust itself or a good feeling. In the Bible the heart is the center of a person: mind, will and desires. God does not want part of our trust while we keep a back-up plan in the other hand.
3:5 *on your own understanding do not lean* Our understanding is not worthless. God gave us minds. But it is limited, and it is bent by sin. We do not see the end from the beginning. God does. To trust the LORD is to let His Word have the final say, even when we cannot see how things will work out.
3:6 *In all your ways know Him* The Hebrew word is the simple word "know." It means to recognize God and bring Him into every part of life: work, money, family, plans and leisure. Many of us bring God into the big decisions and leave Him out of the small ones. "All your ways" leaves nothing out.
3:6 *He will make your paths straight* To make straight is to level the road, clear the obstacles and bring it to its goal. It does not promise an easy path. Joseph's path went through a pit and a prison before the palace (Gen 37-41). But the one who trusts God will not be lost. This looks like praying before we decide, doing what the Word says when our reasoning argues the other way, and being willing to wait.
3:7 *Do not be wise in your own eyes* This is verse 5 put another way. Pride is the enemy of wisdom (26:12). The fear of the LORD shows itself in turning from evil, as with Job (Job 1:1).
3:8 *healing to your navel and refreshment to your bones* The navel and the bones stand for the whole body, inside and out. Pride, worry and sin wear a person down. Trust and obedience bring rest.
3:9 *Honor the LORD from your wealth, and from the first of all your yield* Israel brought the firstfruits of the harvest to God (Exod 23:19; Deut 26:1-11). Giving God the first, not the leftovers, said that everything belonged to Him. We honor Him when our giving comes off the top, cheerfully and with thanks (2 Cor 9:7).
3:10 *your storehouses will be filled with plenty* This fits God's covenant blessings on Israel's land (Deut 28:1-14), and as a proverb it says God honors those who honor Him. It is not a formula to get money from God. Paul knew hunger and plenty (Phil 4:12), and the widow Jesus praised stayed poor (Mark 12:41-44). God's blessing may be in our barns, or in our hearts and in eternity.

vats will burst open ***with*** new wine. **11** The discipline of the LORD, my son, do not reject, and do not loathe His reproof; **12** for whom the LORD loves He reproves, and like a father a son ***in whom*** he is pleased.

Wisdom More Precious Than Jewels

13 How blessed ***is*** the man ***who*** has found wisdom, and the man ***who*** obtains understanding! **14** For better ***is*** her profit than the profit of silver, and her yield than gold. **15** She ***is*** more precious than jewels, and all your desires do not compare with her. **16** Length of days ***is*** in her right ***hand***; in her left ***hand are*** riches and honor. **17** Her ways ***are*** ways of pleasantness, and all her paths ***are*** peace. **18** She ***is*** a tree of life to those who take hold of her, and those who hold her fast ***are*** called blessed. **19** The LORD by wisdom founded the earth; He established the heavens by understanding. **20** By His knowledge ***the*** depths were split open, and ***the*** clouds drip dew. **21** My son, let them not depart from your eyes; keep sound wisdom and discretion, **22** and they will be life to your soul and grace to your neck. **23** Then you will walk your way in security, and your foot will not stumble. **24** If you lie down, you will not dread; and you will lie down, and your sleep will be pleasant. **25** Do not be afraid of sudden dread, and of the devastation of wicked ***ones*** when it comes; **26** for the LORD will be your confidence, and He will keep your foot from capture.

Doing Good to Your Neighbor

27 Do not withhold good from its owners, when ***it*** is in the power of your hand to do ***it***. **28** Do not say to your neighbor, "Go, and come back, and tomorrow I will give ***it***," and ***it*** is with you. **29** Do not devise evil against your neighbor, and he ***is*** dwelling in security with you. **30** Do not contend with a man without cause, if he has not dealt evil to you. **31** Do not be envious of a man of violence, and do not choose any of his ways; **32** for an abomination of the LORD ***is*** a devious ***one***, and His intimate counsel ***is*** with upright ***ones***. **33** The curse of the LORD ***is*** in the house of a wicked ***one***, and the dwelling of righteous ***ones*** He blesses. **34** Surely He scoffs at the scoffers, and to humble ***ones*** He gives grace. **35** Wise ***ones*** will inherit honor, and fools ***are*** lifting up shame.

PROVERBS 4

A Father's Instruction

1 Hear, sons, the discipline of a father, and pay attention to

3:11 Heb 12:5-6; Job 5:17; 1 Cor 11:32
3:12 Rev 3:19; Deut 8:5; Prov 29:17
3:13 Eccl 9:15-18; Prov 4:5-9; Prov 8:32-35
3:14 1 Pet 1:7; Prov 16:16; Prov 2:4
3:15 1 Pet 1:7; Prov 8:11; Prov 20:15
3:16 Prov 3:2; Ps 21:4; 1 Kgs 3:13
3:17 Matt 11:28-30; Ps 119:165; Prov 2:10
3:18 Rev 2:7; Rev 22:2; Prov 11:30
3:19 Ps 104:24; Ps 136:5; Prov 8:27-29
3:20 Gen 7:11; Deut 33:28; Gen 1:9
3:21 1 John 2:24; Josh 1:8; Deut 6:6-9
3:22 Prov 4:22; Prov 1:9; Isa 38:16
3:23 John 11:9; Prov 4:12; Prov 10:9
3:24 Ps 3:5; Prov 6:22; Ps 4:8
3:25 Ps 91:5; Isa 41:10-14; 1 Pet 3:14
3:26 1 Sam 2:9; Ps 91:3,9,10; Prov 14:26
3:27 Gal 6:10; James 2:15,16; Rom 13:7
3:28 James 2:16; Lev 19:13; Prov 27:1
3:29 Prov 6:14,18; Prov 16:29,30; Ps 35:20
3:30 Prov 17:14; Prov 18:6; Prov 25:8,9
3:31 Prov 24:1,19,20; Ps 37:1,7-9; Gal 5:21
3:32 Prov 11:20; Ps 25:14; Ps 18:26
3:33 Mal 2:2; Lev 26:14-46; Ps 37:22
3:34 James 4:6; 1 Pet 5:5; Ps 138:6
3:35 Prov 4:8; 1 Sam 2:30; Ps 73:24
4:1 Prov 1:8; Ps 34:11; 1 Thess 2:11,12

3:11 *The discipline of the LORD, my son, do not reject* God corrects us through His Word, through other people and through hard times. We are tempted to resent it or give up. The father says not to.
3:12 *for whom the LORD loves He reproves* God's correction is a sign of His love, not His rejection. Hebrews 12:5-11 quotes these verses: God disciplines His children for their good, that they may share His holiness. Not every hard thing is punishment for a particular sin, as Job shows. But God can use every hard thing to train us if we receive it.
3:13 *How blessed is the man who has found wisdom* Blessed means truly happy, well off in God's eyes (Ps 1:1). Riches can be lost, stolen or left behind at death. Wisdom shapes who we are, and the wisdom that comes from God lasts forever (vv. 14-15).
3:16 *Length of days is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor* Wisdom holds gifts in both hands. These are the usual fruits of a wise life, not a guarantee in every case, while folly tends to destroy them.
3:17 *Her ways are ways of pleasantness* God's way is not a grim road of misery. It is the good way, the way we were made for.
3:18 *She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her* The tree of life stood in Eden (Gen 2:9), and after the fall man was barred from it (Gen 3:22-24). Wisdom gives back some of what was lost: life as God meant it (11:30; 13:12; 15:4). In the end the tree of life appears again in the new Jerusalem (Rev 22:2, 14).
3:19 *The LORD by wisdom founded the earth* The wisdom the father offers is the wisdom by which God made the world. That is why it works. When we live wisely, we live with the grain of the world God made. When we live foolishly, we go against it, and it hurts. Chapter 8 says much more.
3:22 *they will be life to your soul and grace to your neck* Wisdom is life inside and beauty outside.
3:24 *you will lie down, and your sleep will be pleasant* Many lie awake with guilt, worry or fear. A clear conscience and trust in God bring a rest money cannot buy (Ps 4:8).
3:25 *Do not be afraid of sudden dread* The father does not say disaster will never come. He says not to be afraid of it, because the LORD is our confidence. He keeps His people's feet from the trap (v. 26).
3:27 *Do not withhold good from its owners* The owners of good are those to whom it is owed: a worker who has earned his wages, a neighbor we promised to help, someone in need we are able to help.
3:28 *tomorrow I will give it* Putting off a neighbor when we have what he needs right now is a quiet selfishness (James 2:15-16). Delayed kindness is often no kindness at all.
3:29 *he is dwelling in security with you* It is especially wicked to plot against someone who trusts you and lives beside you without suspicion.
3:30 *Do not contend with a man without cause* Some people love a fight. Wisdom does not. As far as it depends on us, we are to be at peace with all people (Rom 12:18).
3:31 *Do not be envious of a man of violence* Violent men sometimes seem to get ahead (Ps 37; 73). But the devious one is an abomination to the LORD, something He finds disgusting, while "His intimate counsel is with upright ones" (v. 32; Ps 25:14). The violent may have power for a while. The upright have God's friendship.
3:33 *The curse of the LORD is in the house of a wicked one* The difference between the houses is not their size. It is whether God's curse or His blessing rests on them.
3:34 *to humble ones He gives grace* James 4:6 and 1 Peter 5:5 quote this verse in its Greek form. God resists the one who sets himself against Him, but pours out grace on the one who bows low.
3:35 *fools are lifting up shame* The wise inherit honor. Fools hold up only their shame for all to see. The chapter ends, as Proverbs often does, by showing us the end of two roads.
4:1 *Hear, sons, the discipline of a father* This time the father speaks to more than one son, perhaps his own children, perhaps young men he was training. Listening is the first step in learning.

know understanding; **2** for good teaching I have given to you;
do not forsake my instruction. **3** For I was a son to my father,
tender and an only ***one*** before my mother. **4** And he taught
me, and he said to me, "Let your heart hold fast my words;
keep my commandments and live. **5** Acquire wisdom; acquire
understanding; do not forget, and do not turn from the say-
ings of my mouth. **6** Do not forsake her, and she will keep
you; love her, and she will guard you. **7** The beginning of
wisdom ***is***: acquire wisdom; and with all your acquiring
acquire understanding. **8** Prize her highly, and she will exalt
you; she will honor you when you embrace her. **9** She will
put on your head a wreath of grace; a crown of beauty she
will bestow on you."

Two Paths

10 Hear, my son, and receive my sayings, and the years of life
will be many for you. **11** In the way of wisdom I have taught
you; I have led you in tracks of uprightness. **12** When you
walk, your step will not be hampered; and if you run, you will
not stumble. **13** Take hold of discipline; do not let go; keep
her, for she ***is*** your life. **14** Do not enter the path of wicked
ones, and do not walk straight on in the way of evil ***ones***.
15 Avoid it; do not pass over on it; turn away from it and pass
on. **16** For they do not sleep unless they have done evil, and
their sleep is taken away unless they make ***someone*** stumble.
17 For they eat the bread of wickedness, and the wine of vio-
lence they drink. **18** And the path of righteous ***ones is*** like the
light of brightness, going on and shining until the day is
established. **19** The way of wicked ***ones is*** like deep darkness;
they do not know over what they stumble.

Guard Your Heart

20 My son, pay attention to my words; incline your ear to my
sayings. **21** Let them not depart from your eyes; keep them in
the midst of your heart; **22** for they ***are*** life to those who find
them, and healing to all his flesh. **23** More than all guarding,
guard your heart, for from it ***are*** the outflows of life.
24 Remove from yourself crookedness of mouth, and put
deviousness of lips far from yourself. **25** Let your eyes look
straight ahead, and let your eyelids look straight before you.
26 Make level the track of your foot, and let all your ways be
established. **27** Do not turn right or left; remove your foot
from evil.

4:2 Deut 32:2; Prov 8:6-9; Job 33:3
4:3 1 Chr 22:5; 1 Chr 29:1; 2 Sam 12:24,25
4:4 Prov 7:2; Eph 6:4; 1 Chr 28:9
4:5 Prov 1:22,23; Prov 2:2-4; Prov 3:13-18
4:6 2 Thess 2:10; Prov 4:21,22; Prov 2:10-12
4:7 Matt 13:44-46; Phil 3:8; Eccl 7:12
4:8 1 Sam 2:30; Prov 3:35; Prov 22:4
4:9 Prov 1:9; Prov 3:22; 1 Tim 2:9,10
4:10 Prov 3:2,16; Prov 8:10; Prov 19:20
4:11 Ps 23:3; Prov 4:4; Deut 4:5
4:12 John 11:9; John 11:10; Rom 9:33
4:13 Prov 3:18; Prov 23:23; Heb 2:1
4:14 Ps 1:1; Prov 1:10,15; 1 Cor 15:33
4:15 Prov 5:8; Prov 6:5; Exod 23:7
4:16 Ps 36:4; Mic 2:1; Prov 1:16
4:17 Prov 9:17; Prov 20:17; Job 24:5,6
4:18 Matt 5:14; 2 Pet 1:19; Job 11:17
4:19 Isa 59:9,10; John 12:35; Jer 23:12
4:20 Prov 5:1; Prov 7:1; Isa 55:3
4:21 Prov 2:1; Prov 3:3,21; Ps 40:8
4:22 Prov 3:8; Prov 12:18; Prov 4:4,10
4:23 Mark 7:21-23; Ps 139:23,24; Jer 17:9
4:24 Eph 4:25-31; James 1:21,26; 1 Pet 2:1
4:25 Matt 6:22; Ps 119:37; Prov 23:5,33
4:26 Heb 12:13; 1 Thess 3:13; 2 Thess 3:3
4:27 Deut 5:32; Deut 28:14; Josh 1:7

4:2 *for good teaching I have given to you* The father is not passing on opinions. He is passing on what he learned from God's Word and from life. Every parent who teaches children the Scriptures can say the same.
4:3 *tender and an only one before my mother* If this is Solomon, his father was David and his mother Bathsheba. She had other sons (1 Chr 3:5), so "only one" likely means dearly loved, treasured as if he were the only one.
4:4 *And he taught me* Here is David, the man after God's own heart, teaching his young son. We hear some of that charge in 1 Kings 2:1-4 and 1 Chronicles 28:9. Faith passes from one generation to the next through parents who teach their children (Deut 6:6-7; Ps 78:4-7).
4:5 *Acquire wisdom; acquire understanding* Acquire means to buy, to get. Wisdom is worth paying for.
4:7 *The beginning of wisdom is: acquire wisdom* The first step to wisdom is to decide you want it and go after it. Whatever else you get in life, get understanding, even if it costs all you have. Some things are worth everything (Matt 13:45-46).
4:8 *Prize her highly, and she will exalt you* The picture is of a man who loves and honors his bride. Wisdom returns honor to those who honor her, crowning them with grace and beauty (v. 9).
4:10 *the years of life will be many for you* As in 3:2, a general truth about the fruit of wisdom, not a promise that no wise person will die young.
4:11 *I have led you in tracks of uprightness* The father has not only told his son the way. He has walked ahead of him. Our example teaches as much as our words.
4:12 *if you run, you will not stumble* Wisdom frees us. The one who lives wisely does not get tangled in the mess folly creates.
4:13 *Take hold of discipline; do not let go* The picture is of someone gripping a rope. Instruction and correction are not something to put up with. They are life itself.
4:15 *Avoid it; do not pass over on it; turn away from it and pass on* The commands pile up. The best way to deal with the path of evil is to stay off it altogether. Do not stand at the edge and look. Turn around and walk the other way.
4:16 *For they do not sleep unless they have done evil* Sin has become their habit and their hunger. Evil is their daily bread and wine (v. 17). When sin becomes what we feed on, it takes over.
4:18 *the path of righteous ones is like the light of brightness* Think of the dawn. The sky grows gray, then light appears at the edge of the world, then the sun rises until it is full day. The life of the righteous is not perfect at the start, but it grows brighter as they walk with God, until the full day when we see Him face to face (1 John 3:2).
4:19 *they do not know over what they stumble* The wicked keep falling and do not know why. They blame bad luck, others or God, but they are walking in the dark. Whoever follows Jesus will not walk in darkness (John 8:12).
4:21 *keep them in the midst of your heart* The ear, the eyes and the heart all take in the father's words. Hearing is not enough. God's words are not a burden. They are medicine (v. 22).
4:23 *More than all guarding, guard your heart, for from it are the outflows of life* A key verse of Proverbs. The heart is the inner control center: what we think, love and choose. Like a spring feeding a river, everything flows from it (Matt 15:18-19; Luke 6:45). We guard it by watching what we let in, filling it with God's Word (Ps 119:11) and confessing sin quickly (1 John 1:9). Only God can make a heart new, through faith in Christ (Ezek 36:26; 2 Cor 5:17). After that, guarding it is our daily work.
4:24 *Remove from yourself crookedness of mouth* Lies, twisted words, flattery and gossip start in the heart and come out the mouth. The tongue is small but can set a forest on fire (James 3:5-6).
4:25 *Let your eyes look straight ahead* Many fall because they look to the side, at what someone else has or at a temptation. Fix your eyes on Jesus (Heb 12:2).
4:27 *Do not turn right or left* The same charge was given to Joshua (Josh 1:7). Notice the order of verses 23-27: heart, mouth, eyes, feet. The whole person is kept for God, from the inside out.

PROVERBS 5

Warning Against Adultery

1 My son, pay attention to my wisdom; incline your ear to my
understanding, **2** to keep discretion, and your lips will guard
knowledge. **3** For the lips of a strange ***woman*** drip honey, and
her palate ***is*** smoother than oil; **4** and her end ***is*** bitter like
wormwood, sharp like a double-edged sword. **5** Her feet go
down ***to*** death; her steps take hold of Sheol. **6** Lest she make
level the path of life, her tracks wander; she does not know.
7 And now, sons, listen to me, and do not turn aside from the
sayings of my mouth. **8** Keep your way far from her, and do
not draw near to the entrance of her house, **9** lest you give
your splendor to others, and your years to a cruel ***one***; **10** lest
strangers be satisfied ***with*** your strength, and your toils ***be*** in
the house of a foreigner; **11** and you groan at your end, when
your flesh and your body waste away, **12** and you say, "How I
hated discipline, and my heart spurned reproof! **13** And I did
not listen to the voice of my teachers, and to my instructors I
did not incline my ear. **14** I was almost in all evil in the midst
of ***the*** assembly and congregation."

Rejoice in the Wife of Your Youth

15 Drink water from your ***own*** cistern, and flowing ***water***
from the midst of your ***own*** well. **16** Should your springs be
scattered outside, streams of water in the squares? **17** Let
them be for you alone, and not for strangers with you. **18** Let
your fountain be blessed, and rejoice in the wife of your
youth, **19** a doe of loves and a mountain goat of grace; let her
breasts satisfy you at all times; in her love may you be lost
continually. **20** And why should you be lost, my son, with a
strange ***woman***, and embrace the bosom of a foreign ***woman***?
21 For before the eyes of the LORD ***are*** the ways of a man,
and all his tracks He makes level. **22** His iniquities will cap-
ture him, the wicked ***one***, and by the cords of his sin he will
be held. **23** He will die without discipline, and in the great-
ness of his folly he will be lost.

5:1 Prov 22:17; Prov 2:1; Prov 4:1,20
5:2 Prov 10:21; Prov 15:2,7; Prov 16:23
5:3 Rev 17:6; Prov 2:16; Ps 55:21
5:4 Eccl 7:26; Ps 55:21; Heb 4:12
5:5 Prov 7:27; Prov 2:18,19
5:6 Prov 4:26; Ps 16:11; Ps 119:59
5:7 Prov 4:1; Prov 8:32-36; Prov 22:17-21
5:8 Prov 4:15; Prov 6:27,28; Matt 6:13
5:9 Prov 6:29-35; Gen 38:23-26; Judg 16:19-21
5:10 Prov 6:35; Hos 7:9; Luke 15:30
5:11 Rev 22:15; Prov 7:23; Deut 32:29
5:12 Prov 12:1; Prov 1:7,22,29,30; Prov 15:5
5:13 Luke 15:18; 1 Thess 4:8; 1 Thess 5:12,13
5:14 2 Pet 2:16; Prov 13:20; Num 25:1-6
5:15 1 Cor 6:18; 1 Cor 7:2-5; Prov 5:18,19
5:16 Ps 68:26; Deut 33:28; Isa 48:21
5:18 Eccl 9:9; Mal 2:14,15
5:19 Song 2:9; Song 4:5; Song 7:3
5:20 Prov 6:24; Prov 7:5; Prov 2:16-19
5:21 Rev 2:18; Heb 4:13; Prov 15:3
5:22 Ps 7:15,16; Ps 9:15; Prov 1:18,31
5:23 Job 4:21; Job 36:12; Prov 10:21

5:2 *to keep discretion* The father wants his son's own words guarded by wisdom, so that when temptation speaks, his answer is ready.
5:3 *the lips of a strange woman drip honey* As in 2:16, the strange woman is an adulteress. She flatters and makes sin sound attractive and harmless. Temptation never shows its true face at the start.
5:4 *her end is bitter like wormwood* Wormwood was a very bitter plant, and it became a word for grief (Lam 3:15, 19). What begins sweet ends bitter. Adultery wounds a marriage, children, families, churches and the one who commits it.
5:5 *Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold of Sheol* Under the Law adultery could bring a death sentence (Lev 20:10), or a husband's rage (6:34). Even apart from that, it brings the death of trust, of a home and of a good name.
5:6 *her tracks wander; she does not know* She does not think about where she is going. A person caught in sexual sin often stops thinking about the end of the road, so the father makes his son think about it now.
5:8 *Keep your way far from her* He does not say go near and be strong. He says stay far away; do not even walk down her street. Paul says to flee sexual sin (1 Cor 6:18), and Joseph ran (Gen 39:12). Today that may mean ending a friendship going the wrong way, not being alone with someone, or guarding a phone. The wise man does not test how close he can get to the fire.
5:9 *lest you give your splendor to others* The best years of a man's life, his strength and his honor, can be thrown away on sin and on people who do not care about him.
5:10 *your toils be in the house of a foreigner* Adultery can bring financial ruin, through payments, lawsuits, a lost job, divorce or the cost of a double life.
5:11 *you groan at your end* This may mean disease, the toll of sin on the body, or simply growing old full of regret.
5:12 *How I hated discipline, and my heart spurned reproof* Some of the saddest words in Proverbs. The man knew better. He had been taught. His ruin came close to complete, and it was public before the assembly (v. 14). The father lets his son hear this now so that he will never have to say it himself.
5:15 *Drink water from your own cistern* In a dry land a cistern or well was precious. Water meant life. Here it pictures a man's wife and the joy of married love. God made husband and wife to satisfy each other's desire for love and closeness.
5:16 *Should your springs be scattered outside* Should a man's love, meant for his wife, be poured out in the streets? Some take the springs as a picture of children born outside marriage. Either way, married love is precious and not to be wasted.
5:17 *Let them be for you alone* Marriage is exclusive: one man and one woman, joined by God, for life (Gen 2:24; Matt 19:4-6).
5:18 *rejoice in the wife of your youth* God blesses married love. A man is to keep rejoicing in the wife he married when young as they grow old together.
5:19 *a doe of loves and a mountain goat of grace* Tender love poetry, pictures of beauty and grace in that world. Faithfulness is not only saying no to others. It is saying yes, again and again, to your own spouse. For singles, this shows that God's commands about sex are not because He is against pleasure. He made it, and He made marriage its home. The Song of Songs celebrates the same gift.
5:20 *why should you be lost, my son, with a strange woman* The word for "lost" is used in verse 19 for being captivated by a wife's love. Why trade a spring of living water for a poisoned cup?
5:21 *before the eyes of the LORD are the ways of a man* The adulterer thinks no one sees. God sees everything (Heb 4:13). David thought he had covered his sin, but the LORD sent Nathan (2 Sam 12:1-12).
5:22 *by the cords of his sin he will be held* The man who thinks he is free ends up tied by his own choices, habits and lies. Everyone who practices sin is a slave of sin (John 8:34).
5:23 *in the greatness of his folly he will be lost* "Lost" comes a third time: lost in a wife's love, in an adulteress's arms, or at last in his own folly. Is there hope for one who has fallen? Yes. David confessed and was forgiven (Ps 51; 2 Sam 12:13). Jesus told the woman caught in adultery to go and sin no more (John 8:11). The consequences may remain, but the guilt can be washed away by the blood of Christ (1 Cor 6:11).

PROVERBS 6

Warnings Against Surety and Laziness

1 My son, if you have become surety for your neighbor, ***if*** you
have struck your palms for the stranger, **2** you have been
snared by the sayings of your mouth; you have been caught
by the sayings of your mouth. **3** Do this then, my son, and
deliver yourself, for you have come into the palm of your
neighbor: go, humble yourself, and press your neighbor
hard. **4** Do not give sleep to your eyes, and slumber to your
eyelids; **5** deliver yourself like a gazelle from ***the*** hand, and
like a bird from the hand of a fowler. **6** Go to the ant, slug-
gard; consider its ways, and be wise, **7** which has no com-
mander, officer, and ruler; **8** it prepares its bread in the sum-
mer; it gathers its food at the harvest. **9** Until when, slug-
gard, will you lie down? When will you rise from your sleep?
10 A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands
to lie down, **11** and your poverty will come like a wanderer,
and your need like a man with a shield.

Things the LORD Hates

12 A man of worthlessness, a man of wickedness, ***is*** one walk-
ing ***with*** crookedness of mouth, **13** winking with his eyes,
scraping with his feet, pointing with his fingers;
14 perversities ***are*** in his heart; ***he is*** devising evil at every
time; he sends out contentions. **15** Therefore his calamity
will come suddenly; in an instant he will be broken, and ***there***
is no healing. **16** These six ***things*** the LORD hates, and seven
are an abomination of His soul: **17** haughty eyes, a tongue of
falsehood, and hands shedding innocent blood, **18** a heart
devising plans of wickedness, feet hurrying to run to evil,
19 a witness of falsehood ***who*** breathes out lies, and one
sending out contentions between brothers.

The Cost of Adultery

20 Keep, my son, the commandment of your father, and do
not forsake the instruction of your mother; **21** bind them on
your heart continually; tie them on your neck. **22** When you
walk about, it will lead you; when you lie down, it will watch
over you; and ***when*** you awake, it will talk with you. **23** For a
lamp ***is*** the commandment, and the instruction ***is*** a light, and
the reproofs of discipline ***are*** a way of life, **24** to keep you
from a woman of evil, from the smoothness of the tongue of
a foreign ***woman***. **25** Do not desire her beauty in your heart,
and do not let her take you with her eyelids; **26** for the price
of a woman ***who is*** a prostitute ***is*** up to a loaf of bread, and

6:1 Prov 11:15; Prov 17:18; Prov 22:26
6:2 Prov 12:13; Prov 18:7
6:3 2 Sam 24:14; 2 Chr 12:5; Ps 31:8
6:4 Mark 13:15; Ps 132:4; Prov 6:10,11
6:5 Ps 124:7; Prov 1:17; Ps 11:1
6:6 Prov 10:26; Prov 13:4; Prov 20:4
6:7 Job 38:39-41; Job 41:4-34; Job 39:1-12,26-30
6:8 Prov 30:25; 1 Tim 6:19
6:9 Rom 13:11; Eph 5:14; Prov 24:33,34
6:10 Prov 6:6; Prov 23:33,34; Prov 24:33,34
6:11 Prov 10:4; Prov 13:4; Prov 20:4
6:12 Prov 4:24; Prov 17:4; Matt 12:34
6:13 Ps 35:19; Prov 10:10; Job 15:12
6:14 Mic 2:1; Prov 6:18; Prov 2:14
6:15 2 Chr 36:16; Jer 19:11; Prov 1:27
6:16 Prov 8:13; Prov 30:18,21,24,29; Prov 3:32
6:17 Prov 12:22; Ps 101:5; Isa 1:15
6:18 Gen 6:5; Prov 1:16; Rom 3:15
6:19 Prov 19:5,9; Ps 27:12; Prov 6:14
6:20 Eph 6:1; Prov 1:8,9; Prov 7:1-4
6:21 Prov 3:3; Prov 4:6,21; Prov 7:3,4
6:22 Prov 2:11; Prov 3:23,24; Ps 17:4
6:23 Ps 19:8; Ps 119:98-100,105; Isa 8:20
6:24 Prov 2:16; Prov 5:3; Prov 7:5
6:25 Matt 5:28; 2 Kgs 9:30; James 1:14,15
6:26 Prov 29:3,8; Prov 5:10; 1 Sam 2:36

6:1 *if you have become surety for your neighbor* To become surety is to promise to pay someone else's debt if he does not, much like co-signing a loan today. Striking palms sealed the deal, like a handshake. Helping with money is not always wrong (Deut 15:7-8; Matt 5:42). The warning is against promising more than you can pay and putting your family at risk for a debt you do not control, especially for a stranger (11:15; 17:18; 22:26-27).
6:3 *go, humble yourself, and press your neighbor hard* If you have made such a promise, swallow your pride. Go and plead to be released, or urge him to pay what he owes.
6:5 *deliver yourself like a gazelle from the hand* A trapped gazelle or bird fights with everything to get free. Unwise promises should be dealt with quickly. It is better to admit a mistake and fix it than to let it grow.
6:6 *Go to the ant, sluggard* A sluggard is a lazy man, one who will not work. Proverbs mocks him often, sometimes with humor. Here he is sent to school, and his teacher is an ant.
6:7 *which has no commander, officer, and ruler* No one stands over the ant with a whip, and yet it works hard, works ahead and works without being told (v. 8). God made us to work before sin ever came (Gen 2:15; 2 Thess 3:10). This is not about those who cannot work because of sickness or age, but about those who will not.
6:10 *A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to lie down* The father imitates the sluggard's excuse. He never plans to be lazy forever. He just wants a little more rest, again and again.
6:11 *your poverty will come like a wanderer, and your need like a man with a shield* Poverty sneaks up like a drifter and then arrives like an armed robber. Laziness ruins a person a little at a time, and then all at once (24:33-34).
6:12 *A man of worthlessness* The Hebrew is a man of belial, a worthless, good-for-nothing person, always twisting the truth with his mouth.
6:13 *winking with his eyes, scraping with his feet, pointing with his fingers* Secret signals to his partners, mocking someone behind his back or setting someone up. It all starts with the perversity in his heart (v. 14), and he loves to stir up fights.
6:15 *in an instant he will be broken, and there is no healing* The troublemaker who plots against others will one day fall, and fast. God sees what he is doing.
6:16 *These six things the LORD hates, and seven* A Hebrew poetic way of making a list: six, then seven. The seventh gets the place of emphasis. An abomination is something God finds disgusting.
6:17 *haughty eyes, a tongue of falsehood, and hands shedding innocent blood* Pride comes first, at the root of many other sins. The list moves through the body: eyes, tongue, hands, heart, feet, and then the whole person. We tend to rank lying and pride as small sins. God puts them on the same list as murder.
6:19 *one sending out contentions between brothers* The seventh sin, stirring up division in a family or among God's people, gets the emphasis. God loves unity (Ps 133:1), and Jesus prayed that His followers would be one (John 17:21). The one who breaks up families, friendships or churches with gossip and division does what the LORD hates.
6:22 *When you walk about, it will lead you* These words echo Deuteronomy 6:7. God's Word is meant to go with us all day, every day: guiding as we go, guarding as we sleep, speaking when we wake.
6:23 *For a lamp is the commandment, and the instruction is a light* In the dark a lamp shows where to step (Ps 119:105). Even correction, which we do not enjoy, is the road to life.
6:25 *Do not desire her beauty in your heart* Adultery begins in the heart long before it happens in the body. Jesus said lustful looking is already adultery in the heart (Matt 5:28). The battle has to be won there first.
6:26 *the wife of a man hunts a precious life* Sin with a prostitute can bring a man down to a loaf of bread. Sin with another man's wife hunts his very life. Both are wrong. The cost is higher than he imagines.

the wife of a man hunts a precious life. **27** Can a man scoop up fire in his bosom, and his garments not be burned? **28** Or can a man walk on the burning coals, and his feet not be scorched? **29** So ***is*** he who goes in to the wife of his neighbor; everyone who touches her will not go unpunished. **30** They do not despise the thief if he steals to fill his appetite when he is hungry; **31** and ***if*** he is found, he will repay sevenfold; all the wealth of his house he will give. **32** He who commits adultery ***with*** a woman lacks sense; he who destroys his ***own*** soul, he does it. **33** A wound and shame he will find, and his reproach will not be wiped away. **34** For jealousy ***is*** the rage of a man, and he will not spare in ***the*** day of vengeance. **35** He will not accept any ransom, and he will not be willing though you multiply ***the*** bribe.

PROVERBS 7

Treasure Wisdom

1 My son, keep my sayings, and treasure my commandments with you. **2** Keep my commandments and live, and my instruction like the pupil of your eyes. **3** Bind them on your fingers; write them on the tablet of your heart. **4** Say to wisdom, "You ***are*** my sister," and you will call understanding a relative, **5** to keep you from a strange woman, from a foreign ***woman who*** has made her sayings smooth.

The Youth Lacking Sense

6 For at the window of my house, through my lattice, I looked down, **7** and I saw among the simple ones, I discerned among the sons, a youth lacking sense, **8** passing in the street near her corner, and he strides ***along*** the way to her house, **9** in ***the*** twilight, in the evening of ***the*** day, in the pupil of ***the*** night and darkness. **10** And look, a woman to meet him, ***in*** the garment of a prostitute, and guarded of heart. **11** She ***is*** boisterous and rebellious; her feet do not stay in her house; **12** now outside, now in the squares, and beside every corner she lies in wait. **13** And she takes hold of him and kisses him; she has made her face bold, and she says to him,

14 "Sacrifices of peace offerings ***are*** on me; today I have paid my vows. **15** Therefore I have come out to meet you, to seek your face earnestly, and I have found you. **16** With coverings I have spread my couch, colored ***fabrics***, linen of Egypt (Mitsrayim). **17** I have sprinkled my bed ***with*** myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon. **18** Come, let us take our fill of lovemaking until the morning; let us delight ourselves with loves. **19** For the man is not in his house; he has gone on a journey far

6:27 Job 31:9-12; Hos 7:4-7; James 3:5
6:29 Gen 12:18,19; Lev 20:10; 2 Sam 11:3,4
6:31 1 Cor 6:18; Exod 22:1,3,4; 2 Sam 12:6
6:32 1 Cor 6:18; Prov 7:7; Gen 39:9,10
6:33 Prov 5:9-11; Judg 16:19-21; Ps 38:1-8
6:34 Prov 27:4; Song 8:6; Num 5:14
6:35 Prov 4:3; Prov 7:13; Prov 8:25
7:1 Prov 1:8; Luke 11:28; John 14:23
7:2 Ps 17:8; Lev 18:5; Isa 55:3
7:3 Deut 11:18-20; Prov 3:3; Isa 30:8
7:4 Luke 11:27; Prov 2:2-4; Prov 4:6-8
7:5 Prov 2:16; Prov 6:24; Prov 5:3
7:6 Gen 26:8; 2 Sam 6:16
7:7 Prov 6:32; Prov 1:4,22,32; Rom 16:18,19
7:8 Prov 4:14,15; Prov 5:8; Judg 16:1
7:9 Rom 13:12; Job 24:13-15; Gen 39:11
7:10 Gen 38:14,15; 1 Tim 2:9; 2 Kgs 9:22,30
7:11 1 Cor 6:18; Prov 9:13; Titus 2:5
7:12 1 Cor 6:18; Prov 23:28; Prov 9:14
7:13 1 Cor 6:18; Gen 39:7,12; Num 25:1,6-8
7:14 Prov 15:8; Prov 17:1; Prov 21:27
7:16 Isa 19:9; Ezek 27:7; Song 1:16
7:17 John 19:39; Ps 45:8; Song 3:6
7:19 Luke 12:46; Matt 20:11; Matt 24:43

6:27 *Can a man scoop up fire in his bosom, and his garments not be burned* Of course not. Fire burns. Many think they can be the exception, keep it secret or handle the consequences. No one can (v. 29). Sin has consequences built into it, and beyond them God Himself will judge adulterers (Heb 13:4).
6:30 *They do not despise the thief if he steals to fill his appetite when he is hungry* People may pity a starving man who steals bread. That does not make it right, and he still must repay.
6:31 *he will repay sevenfold* The Law required a thief to repay two, four or five times what he took (Exod 22:1-4). Sevenfold here likely means full and complete payment, whatever it costs. Some take it as an actual amount set by custom. Either way, the thief can pay, and the matter is settled.
6:32 *He who commits adultery with a woman lacks sense* The adulterer is not driven by hunger. He has no excuse, and he does not just lose money. He destroys himself.
6:33 *his reproach will not be wiped away* The thief can pay back what he took. The adulterer cannot undo what he did. Even when God forgives, as He does those who repent, people remember, trust is slow to rebuild and scars can last.
6:34 *For jealousy is the rage of a man* In Israel the Law set death as the penalty for adultery (Lev 20:10; Deut 22:22), and a betrayed husband's anger could be fierce.
6:35 *He will not accept any ransom* The thief could pay his way out. The adulterer cannot. Some damage cannot be bought back. To the betrayed, these verses say the pain is real and God takes it seriously. To the fallen, God's mercy is greater than our sin (Ps 51:1-2; 1 John 1:9).
7:2 *my instruction like the pupil of your eyes* The pupil is the tender part of the eye we protect without thinking. God guards His people that way (Deut 32:10). The son is to guard his father's teaching just as carefully.
7:3 *Bind them on your fingers; write them on the tablet of your heart* The fingers are always in view, and the heart is where we live. God's Word belongs both before our eyes and deep inside.
7:4 *Say to wisdom, "You are my sister,"* In Hebrew love poetry "sister" was also a tender word for a bride (Song 4:9). The best protection against a wrong love is a stronger right love.
7:6 *through my lattice, I looked down* A lattice was a wooden screen over a window that let in air and kept people from seeing inside. The father watched the street below and now tells what he saw.
7:7 *a youth lacking sense* "Lacking sense" is in Hebrew "lacking heart." He is naive and easily led, with no inner guard.
7:8 *he strides along the way to her house* He is not dragged there. He walks there. He knows where her house is. Most falls begin with small steps in the wrong direction.
7:9 *in the pupil of the night and darkness* The time moves from dusk into deep night. Sin loves the dark (John 3:20). He thinks no one sees, but the father sees from his window, and the LORD sees everything (5:21).
7:10 *in the garment of a prostitute, and guarded of heart* She is a married woman (v. 19), dressed to draw a man's eye. "Guarded of heart" means she hides what she really wants. Her heart is closed and scheming.
7:12 *beside every corner she lies in wait* She is loud, restless and will not stay home (v. 11). She is a hunter looking for prey.
7:13 *she has made her face bold* She does not wait for him to move. Temptation is often bolder and faster than we expect.
7:14 *Sacrifices of peace offerings are on me; today I have paid my vows* A peace offering was a sacrifice of thanks or for a vow, and the worshiper ate most of the meat that day or the next (Lev 7:15-16). She has a feast at home. She is also using religion to cover sin. Religion without a changed heart can live beside gross sin (Matt 15:8).
7:15 *to seek your face earnestly, and I have found you* She flatters him, as if she had been looking for him alone. She has likely said the same to others.
7:17 *myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon* Costly spices, like the Egyptian linen of verse 16. She appeals to every sense and makes sin sound beautiful, luxurious and harmless. The father lets his son hear her words so he will recognize them.
7:19 *For the man is not in his house* She does not call him her husband, only "the man." She has already put him out of her heart.

away. **20** He has taken the bag of money in his hand; at the day of the full moon he will come ***to*** his house." **21** She turns him with the greatness of her persuasion; with the smoothness of her lips she drives him. **22** He goes after her suddenly, like an ox ***that*** goes to the slaughter, and like a fetter to the discipline of a fool, **23** until an arrow pierces his liver; like a bird hurries into a trap, and he does not know that it ***is*** for his life. **24** And now, sons, listen to me, and pay attention to the sayings of my mouth. **25** Do not let your heart turn away to her ways; do not go astray in her paths; **26** for many ***are*** the slain she has made fall, and numerous ***are*** all those killed by her. **27** Her house ***is*** the ways of Sheol, going down to the chambers of death.

PROVERBS 8

Wisdom Calls Out

1 Does not wisdom call out, and understanding give her voice? **2** At the top of ***the*** heights, beside ***the*** way, between ***the*** paths she takes her stand; **3** beside ***the*** gates, at the mouth of ***the*** town, at the entrance of ***the*** doorways, she cries aloud: **4** "To you, men, I call, and my voice ***is*** to the sons of mankind. **5** Understand prudence, simple ones; and fools, understand sense. **6** Hear, for I will speak noble things, and the opening of my lips ***will be*** uprightness; **7** for my palate will utter truth, and wickedness ***is*** an abomination of my lips. **8** All the sayings of my mouth ***are*** in righteousness; there is nothing twisted and crooked in them. **9** All of them ***are*** straightforward to the one who discerns, and upright to those who find knowledge. **10** Take my discipline and not silver, and knowledge rather than choice gold; **11** for wisdom ***is*** better than jewels, and all desires do not compare with her. **12** I, wisdom, dwell ***with*** prudence, and I find knowledge of discretion. **13** The fear of the LORD ***is*** to hate evil; pride and arrogance and a way of evil and a mouth of perversities I hate. **14** Counsel and sound wisdom ***are*** mine; I ***am*** understanding; strength ***is*** mine. **15** By me kings reign, and rulers decree righteousness; **16** by me princes rule, and nobles, all the judges of righteousness. **17** I love those who love me, and those who seek me earnestly find me. **18** Riches and honor ***are*** with me, enduring wealth and righteousness. **19** My fruit ***is*** better than gold, and than pure gold, and my yield than choice silver. **20** I walk in the path of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of justice, **21** to cause those who love me to inherit substance, and I fill their treasuries.

7:20 2 Chr 2:4
7:21 Acts 16:15; Prov 5:3; Ps 12:2
7:22 Job 13:27; Acts 14:13; Jer 20:2
7:23 Eccl 9:12; Num 25:8,9; Prov 1:17
7:24 Prov 5:7; Prov 4:1; Prov 8:32,33
7:25 Prov 5:8; Prov 4:14,15; Prov 6:25
7:26 Neh 13:26; Prov 6:33; Judg 16:21
7:27 Matt 7:13; Prov 5:5; Prov 9:18
8:1 Matt 3:3; Rom 15:18-21; Prov 1:20,21
8:3 Matt 22:9; Luke 14:21-23; John 18:20
8:4 Rev 22:17; Ps 49:1-3; Ps 50:1
8:5 Prov 1:22; Rev 3:17,18; Prov 9:4
8:6 Matt 13:35; Matt 7:28,29; Prov 2:6,7
8:7 John 8:14,45,46; Job 36:4; John 1:17
8:8 Ps 12:6; Isa 45:23; Isa 63:1
8:9 Prov 14:6; Prov 15:14,24; Prov 17:24
8:10 Acts 17:11; Ps 119:72,127,162; Eccl 7:11
8:11 Phil 3:8; Prov 3:14; Prov 16:16
8:12 Ps 104:24; Isa 55:8,9; Rom 11:33
8:13 Acts 9:31; Prov 16:6; Ps 97:10
8:14 Eccl 7:19; Isa 9:6; Isa 40:14
8:15 Rev 19:11; Rev 1:5; Dan 2:21
8:16 Rev 1:5
8:17 John 14:21,23; 1 Sam 2:30; Ps 91:14
8:18 Eph 3:8; Prov 3:16; Matt 6:33
8:19 Prov 3:14; Prov 8:10; Eccl 7:12
8:20 Rev 7:17; Acts 2:28; Deut 5:32
8:21 Prov 8:18; Prov 1:13; Prov 6:31

7:20 *at the day of the full moon he will come to his house* He took money for a long trip and will be gone for days. That is the lie of sexual sin: no one will know. But your sin will find you out (Num 32:23).
7:22 *like an ox that goes to the slaughter* An ox led to the butcher has no idea what is coming. The next line, "like a fetter to the discipline of a fool," is hard in Hebrew. It seems to picture a fool led in chains to his punishment. Many translations read it differently.
7:23 *until an arrow pierces his liver* The liver was thought of as a seat of life, so this is a deadly wound. The bird sees the bait, not the snare. The young man sees the pleasure, not the price.
7:25 *Do not let your heart turn away to her ways* First the heart turns, then the feet go astray. The young man's fall began when his heart started to wander (4:23).
7:26 *many are the slain she has made fall* Strong, wise and godly men have fallen this way: Samson (Judg 16), David (2 Sam 11), Solomon himself (1 Kgs 11:3-4). No one is too strong to fall (1 Cor 10:12).
7:27 *Her house is the ways of Sheol* Her house looks like a place of pleasure. It is a road to the grave. Today the danger may be an online relationship, a coworker or an image on a screen. The road is the same. God provides a way out (1 Cor 10:13), often simply not walking down that street. For one who has gone through that door, the way back is still open (28:13; 1 John 1:9).
8:2 *between the paths she takes her stand* Wisdom stands at the crossroads, where people choose which way to go, and at the city gate, the busiest place in town (v. 3). Compare the woman of chapter 7, who whispered in the dark at a corner. Sin hides. Truth stands in the open (Rom 1:20).
8:4 *my voice is to the sons of mankind* Wisdom's call is for everyone, not only for Israel, not only for the clever or the religious.
8:5 *Understand prudence, simple ones; and fools, understand sense* Even the simple and the fools are invited. No one is too far gone to be called (Luke 5:32).
8:7 *wickedness is an abomination of my lips* Wisdom cannot lie. Her words have nothing twisted in them (v. 8), the opposite of the smooth words of the strange woman (7:21) and the evil man (2:12).
8:9 *All of them are straightforward to the one who discerns* The problem is not that God's truth is too hard. The problem is that some do not want it.
8:10 *Take my discipline and not silver* If you had to choose between a bag of silver and wisdom, which would you take? Solomon chose wisdom, and God gave him riches too (1 Kgs 3:11-13). Verse 11 repeats 3:15.
8:13 *The fear of the LORD is to hate evil* One of the clearest definitions in the Bible. The fear of the LORD is not only awe. It is a moral stance: to hate what God hates. You cannot love God and love evil at the same time. Pride comes first in the list, as haughty eyes did in 6:17. The proud man fears no one. The wise man bows before God.
8:15 *By me kings reign* Good government depends on wisdom. Solomon asked God for wisdom to govern His people (1 Kgs 3:9). Leaders in nations, businesses, churches and homes need the same, and we should pray for those in authority (1 Tim 2:1-2).
8:17 *those who seek me earnestly find me* "Earnestly" can also mean early, seeking first thing. God promises the same (Jer 29:13; Matt 7:7). Compare 1:28, where those who refused wisdom seek her and do not find her. Those who love wisdom seek her because they want her. Those who hated her seek her only when trouble comes.
8:18 *enduring wealth and righteousness* Wisdom's wealth is the kind that lasts, and it comes together with righteousness. Wealth gained by wickedness does not last (10:2).
8:19 *My fruit is better than gold* The best things wisdom gives are not things at all: good character, a right relationship with God and a life that pleases Him.
8:21 *to cause those who love me to inherit substance* As a general truth, wise and righteous living tends to bring blessing. But the true treasure of wisdom is treasure in heaven that moth and rust cannot destroy (Matt 6:19-21).

Wisdom at Creation

22 The LORD possessed me ***at*** the beginning of His way,
before His works of old. **23** From long ago I was installed,
from ***the*** beginning, from the earliest times of ***the*** earth.
24 When ***there were*** no deeps I was brought forth, when
there were no springs heavy ***with*** water. **25** Before ***the*** moun-
tains were settled, before ***the*** hills, I was brought forth,
26 while He had not yet made ***the*** earth and ***the*** open places,
and the first of the dusts of the world. **27** When He estab-
lished the heavens, I ***was*** there; when He marked out a circle
on the face of ***the*** deep, **28** when He made firm the clouds
above, when the springs of ***the*** deep became strong, **29** when
He set for the sea its limit, and the waters would not pass
beyond His command, when He marked out the foundations
of ***the*** earth, **30** then I was beside Him ***as*** an artisan, and I was
His delight day ***by*** day, playing before Him at every time,
31 playing in the world of His earth, and my delights ***were***
with the sons of mankind.

Blessed Are Those Who Listen

32 And now, sons, listen to me, and how blessed ***are those***
who keep my ways! **33** Hear discipline and be wise, and do
not neglect ***it***. **34** How blessed ***is*** the man ***who*** listens to me,
keeping watch at my doors day ***by*** day, guarding the door-
posts of my doorways! **35** For he who finds me finds life, and
obtains favor from the LORD. **36** And he who misses me does
violence to his ***own*** soul; all who hate me love death."

PROVERBS 9

Wisdom's Feast

1 Wisdom has built her house; she has hewn out her seven
pillars. **2** She has slaughtered her meat; she has mixed her
wine; also she has arranged her table. **3** She has sent out her
young women; she calls out on the elevations of the heights
of ***the*** town: **4** "Who ***is*** simple? Let him turn aside here!" One
lacking sense, she says to him, **5** "Come, eat of my bread, and
drink of the wine I have mixed. **6** Forsake simple ones and
live, and walk straight on in the way of understanding. **7** He
who disciplines a scoffer receives shame for himself, and he
who reproves a wicked ***one***, his blemish. **8** Do not reprove a
scoffer, lest he hate you; reprove a wise ***one***, and he will love
you. **9** Give to a wise ***one***, and he will be wiser still; make
known to a righteous ***one***, and he will increase learning.

8:22 Rev 3:14; John 1:1,2; Col 1:17
8:23 John 17:24; Ps 2:6; Mic 5:2
8:24 Ps 2:7; John 1:14; John 3:16
8:25 Heb 1:6; Ps 90:2; Job 15:7,8
8:26 Gen 1:1-31
8:27 Ps 33:6; Ps 103:19; Ps 136:5
8:28 Rev 14:7
8:29 Heb 1:10; Rev 14:7; Ps 104:9
8:30 Matt 17:5; John 1:18; John 1:3
8:31 Ps 16:3; Ps 40:6-8; John 13:1
8:32 Luke 11:28; Ps 119:1,2; Ps 128:1
8:33 Prov 4:1; Prov 1:2,3,8; Prov 5:1
8:34 Rev 1:3; Prov 1:21; Prov 2:3,4
8:35 Prov 12:2; Col 3:3; Prov 1:33
8:36 Prov 1:31; Prov 20:2; John 3:19,20
9:1 Eph 2:20-22; Matt 16:18; 1 Cor 3:9-15
9:2 Isa 25:6; Matt 22:3,4-14; Gen 43:16
9:3 Prov 9:14; Prov 8:1-3; Matt 22:3,4,9
9:4 John 2:10; Prov 6:32; Prov 9:16
9:5 Matt 26:26; Luke 14:17; Song 5:1
9:6 Prov 13:20; Prov 4:14,15; Prov 4:11
9:7 Prov 15:12; Gen 19:8,9; 1 Kgs 18:17
9:8 Ps 141:5; Matt 7:6; Prov 29:1
9:9 Prov 1:5; Matt 13:11,12; Prov 25:12

8:22 *The LORD possessed me at the beginning of His way* Now Wisdom speaks of her place before creation. The Hebrew word qanah usually means get, own or acquire, and in a few places may mean create, so some translations say "created." Either way, Wisdom belonged to the LORD from the very start. This is poetry. Wisdom is pictured as a woman, and the poet is saying God never lacked wisdom. He did not have to learn how to make the world (3:19).
8:23 *From long ago I was installed* "Installed" is a word used of setting up a king (Ps 2:6). Wisdom was in place before the world began.
8:24 *I was brought forth* The language of birth. Wisdom is pictured as born before the oceans, the springs and the mountains (v. 25).
8:27 *when He marked out a circle on the face of the deep* God drew the horizon, the line where sky meets sea.
8:29 *when He set for the sea its limit* God told the sea how far it could go, and it obeyed (Job 38:8-11). The whole picture is of a wise Builder laying out His work with care. Creation shows order, design and limits. That is wisdom at work.
8:30 *then I was beside Him as an artisan* An artisan is a master craftsman. Some translate the word as little child or nursling, which fits the delight and play that follow. Creation was not hard labor for God. It was a delight.
8:31 *my delights were with the sons of mankind* God's wisdom delights in the world He made, and especially in people. That is why she calls out in the streets. Many Bible teachers see in 8:22-31 a picture pointing to Christ, "the wisdom of God" (1 Cor 1:24), through whom all things were made (John 1:1-3; Col 1:16-17).
8:31 *playing in the world of His earth* We must be careful. This is a poem about wisdom pictured as a woman, not a direct statement about the Son, and it does not teach that the Son was created. The New Testament never quotes it of Jesus. The Son is eternal (John 1:3; Mic 5:2). In the A.D. 300s Arius used verse 22 to claim the Son was created, and the church rightly rejected him. Pressed that far, the poem would mean God was once without wisdom. The fullness of God's wisdom has come to us in a Person, Jesus Christ (1 Cor 1:30).
8:34 *keeping watch at my doors day by day* Like one waiting eagerly at the door of the one he loves, or a servant at his master's door each morning. Contrast the young man of chapter 7, who went to the wrong door at night.
8:35 *For he who finds me finds life, and obtains favor from the LORD* The greatest promise of the chapter. Jesus is the way, the truth and the life (John 14:6), and whoever has the Son has life (1 John 5:12).
8:36 *all who hate me love death* No one sets out to love death, but those who reject God's wisdom choose the road that leads there. Moses set the same choice before Israel: choose life (Deut 30:19).
9:1 *Wisdom has built her house; she has hewn out her seven pillars* Hewn stone pillars show a strong, beautiful house. Seven is often a number of completeness. Some have tried to name the seven pillars, but the text does not. Wisdom's house lacks nothing.
9:2 *she has arranged her table* Mixed wine was blended with spices, or with water as was the custom. Everything is ready. The guests have only to come. This points ahead to the gospel invitation (Matt 22:1-4).
9:4 *Who is simple? Let him turn aside here* Her invitation is for the simple, the very people most in danger, those who know they need help. Jesus came to call sinners (Luke 5:32).
9:5 *Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine I have mixed* Isaiah gives a similar call (Isa 55:1), and Jesus said, "I am the bread of life" (John 6:35).
9:6 *Forsake simple ones and live* Accepting her invitation means leaving something behind: foolish ways and perhaps foolish friends. Coming to wisdom always means turning from folly. That is repentance.
9:7 *He who disciplines a scoffer receives shame for himself* Correct a mocker and you get insults in return. He will try to stain your name.
9:8 *Do not reprove a scoffer, lest he hate you; reprove a wise one, and he will love you* One of the clearest tests of wisdom: how do you respond when corrected? There are times when correcting one who will only mock is wasted breath (Matt 7:6). This does not mean we never speak the truth. It means we use wisdom about when and how.
9:9 *Give to a wise one, and he will be wiser still* The wise are always teachable. The one who most needs correction is often least willing to receive it.

10 The beginning of wisdom ***is*** the fear of the LORD, and the knowledge of ***the*** Holy One ***is*** understanding. **11** For by me your days will be many, and they will add to you years of life. **12** If you are wise, you are wise for yourself; and ***if*** you scoff, you alone will bear ***it***."

The Woman of Folly

13 The woman of folly ***is*** boisterous; ***she is*** simplicity, and she does not know anything. **14** And she sits at the doorway of her house, on a seat ***at*** the heights of ***the*** town, **15** to call to those who pass along the way, who are making their paths straight: **16** "Who ***is*** simple? Let him turn aside here!" And one lacking sense, she says to him, **17** "Stolen waters are sweet, and bread of secrecy is pleasant." **18** And he does not know that the shades ***are*** there, her invited ***ones*** in the depths of Sheol.

PROVERBS 10

The Proverbs of Solomon

1 The proverbs of Solomon (Shelomo). A wise son makes a father glad, and a foolish son ***is*** the grief of his mother. **2** Treasures of wickedness do not profit, and righteousness delivers from death. **3** The LORD does not let the soul of ***the*** righteous hunger, and the craving of ***the*** wicked He thrusts away. **4** Poor ***is*** he who works ***with*** a slack palm, and the hand of ***the*** diligent makes rich. **5** He who gathers in the summer ***is*** a son who acts prudently; he who sleeps in the harvest ***is*** a son who acts shamefully. **6** Blessings ***are*** for the head of ***the*** righteous, and the mouth of ***the*** wicked conceals violence. **7** The memory of ***the*** righteous ***is*** for a blessing, and the name of ***the*** wicked will rot. **8** The wise of heart will accept commandments, and a fool of lips will be ruined. **9** He who walks in integrity walks ***in*** security, and he who perverts his ways will become known. **10** He who winks an eye gives sorrow, and a fool of lips will be ruined. **11** The mouth of a righteous ***one is*** a fountain of life, and the mouth of ***the*** wicked conceals violence. **12** Hatred stirs up contentions, and love covers over all transgressions. **13** On the lips of a discerning ***one*** wisdom is found, and a rod ***is*** for the back of one lacking sense. **14** Wise ***ones*** store up knowledge, and the mouth of a fool ***is*** ruin near. **15** The wealth of a rich ***man is*** the town of his strength; the ruin of ***the*** poor ***is*** their poverty.

9:10 1 John 5:20; Prov 1:7; Job 28:28
9:11 Prov 10:27; Prov 3:2,16; Deut 6:2
9:12 2 Pet 3:3; Job 22:2,3,21; Prov 16:26
9:13 Prov 7:11; Prov 21:9,19; 1 Tim 6:4
9:14 Prov 7:10-12
9:15 Prov 7:13-15,25-27; Prov 23:27,28
9:16 John 2:10
9:17 Prov 20:17; Prov 23:31,32; Prov 30:20
9:18 Prov 7:27; Prov 1:7; Ps 82:5
10:1 Prov 29:3,15; Prov 1:1; Prov 15:20
10:2 Prov 11:4; Ps 49:6-10; Isa 10:2,3
10:3 Ps 34:9,10; Matt 6:30-33; Job 5:20
10:4 Prov 21:5; Prov 20:4,13; Prov 13:4
10:5 Prov 17:2; Prov 19:26; Prov 6:6,8
10:6 Prov 10:11; Prov 28:20; Prov 11:26
10:7 Ps 112:6; Ps 109:13,15; Mark 14:9
10:8 Prov 12:1; Prov 1:5; Prov 9:9
10:9 Prov 28:18; Isa 33:15,16; Ps 26:11,12
10:10 Prov 6:13; Ps 35:19; Prov 10:8
10:11 Prov 13:14; Prov 10:6; Prov 18:4
10:12 1 Pet 4:8; Prov 17:9; Prov 15:18
10:13 Prov 26:3; Prov 6:32; Prov 15:7,23
10:14 Prov 18:7; Prov 10:8,10; Prov 9:9
10:15 Prov 18:11; Ps 52:7; Prov 19:7

9:10 *The beginning of wisdom is the fear of the LORD* Part One began with this truth (1:7) and now ends with it. The Holy One is God, set apart, pure and perfect, Isaiah's favorite title. To know Him, not just know about Him, is true understanding. Eternal life is to know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom He sent (John 17:3).
9:12 *if you scoff, you alone will bear it* Each person is responsible for his own choice (Ezek 18:20). We cannot ride into heaven on our parents' faith. Each of us must answer Wisdom's call.
9:13 *The woman of folly is boisterous* Folly is loud and restless like the adulteress of 7:11, and she knows nothing.
9:14 *on a seat at the heights of the town* Folly copies Wisdom, calling from the same heights (9:3). Sin rarely announces itself as sin. But Wisdom worked: she built, hewed, slaughtered, mixed and sent messengers. Folly just sits. She has prepared nothing.
9:16 *Who is simple? Let him turn aside here* Folly uses the very same words as Wisdom (9:4). Both invitations sound the same at first. That is why we need discernment.
9:17 *Stolen waters are sweet, and bread of secrecy is pleasant* Folly has nothing of her own. She offers what belongs to someone else and says it tastes better because it is forbidden. In chapters 5-7 the stolen water points to adultery (5:15), but it fits every sin. The serpent made the one forbidden tree seem most desirable of all (Gen 3:1-6).
9:18 *the shades are there, her invited ones in the depths of Sheol* Her earlier guests are not at the table. They are in the grave. Part One ends with two houses: Wisdom's leads to life (9:6), Folly's to death. We all hear both voices. Jesus ended the Sermon on the Mount the same way, with two roads and two houses (Matt 7:13-14, 24-27).
10:1 *A wise son makes a father glad, and a foolish son is the grief of his mother* "The proverbs of Solomon" is the book's second heading (1:1). From here most sayings stand alone, two lines set side by side. Often the second line says the opposite of the first, and the contrast makes the point. This one is about the home: our choices affect the people who love us most.
10:2 *Treasures of wickedness do not profit* Money gained by evil does not give what it promised (1:19), and it cannot save anyone from death. Righteousness can, because the righteous belong to God.
10:3 *The LORD does not let the soul of the righteous hunger* God provides for His people (Ps 37:25). This is the general rule. Godly people have gone hungry at times (Heb 11:37; 2 Cor 11:27), and God was with them even then. The deepest hunger, the hunger of the soul, He always satisfies.
10:4 *Poor is he who works with a slack palm* Laziness usually leads to poverty and steady work to plenty. Not every poor person is lazy, and Proverbs knows it (13:23). But the lazy will almost always be poor.
10:5 *he who sleeps in the harvest is a son who acts shamefully* Harvest time is short. Miss it and the year is lost. Some opportunities come only once.
10:7 *the name of the wicked will rot* When the righteous die, people remember them with thanks. The names of the wicked spoil like rotting food. What will people say about you when you are gone?
10:9 *He who walks in integrity walks in security* A person of integrity has nothing to hide, so he does not live in fear of being found out. The one who twists his ways will be exposed sooner or later (Num 32:23).
10:10 *He who winks an eye gives sorrow* The wink is a sign of secret scheming (6:13). The second line repeats verse 8: the fool's chatter undoes him.
10:11 *The mouth of a righteous one is a fountain of life* The words of the righteous refresh people like a spring in the desert. The words of the wicked cover plans to harm.
10:12 *love covers over all transgressions* Hatred digs up old wrongs and keeps the fight going. Love lets them go. Peter draws on this verse (1 Pet 4:8). It does not mean love hides crimes or ignores abuse. It means love forgives, does not keep score and does not spread a person's faults around (17:9).
10:13 *a rod is for the back of one lacking sense* The fool will not learn from words, so he learns from pain.
10:14 *Wise ones store up knowledge* The wise keep knowledge for the right time. The fool says everything he thinks, and ruin is never far away.
10:15 *The wealth of a rich man is the town of his strength* An observation, not a command. Money gives a kind of protection, like a walled town, and poverty leaves people exposed to every trouble. Proverbs also warns that wealth is a false security if we trust in it (11:28; 18:11).

16 The wages of ***the*** righteous ***is*** for life; the produce of ***the*** wicked ***is*** for sin. **17** A path to life ***is*** he who keeps discipline, and he who forsakes rebuke leads astray.

The Lips of the Righteous

18 He who conceals hatred ***has*** lips of falsehood, and he who brings out slander, he ***is*** a fool. **19** In a multitude of words transgression does not cease, and he who restrains his lips acts prudently. **20** The tongue of ***the*** righteous ***is*** choice silver; the heart of ***the*** wicked ***is*** like a little ***thing***. **21** The lips of ***the*** righteous feed many, and fools die by lack of heart. **22** The blessing of the LORD, it makes rich, and He does not add sorrow with it. **23** To do a wicked scheme ***is*** like sport for a fool, and wisdom for a man of understanding. **24** The dread of ***the*** wicked, it will come to him, and the desire of ***the*** righteous will be given. **25** When a storm-wind passes by, then the wicked ***is*** no more; and a righteous ***one*** ***is*** an everlasting foundation. **26** Like vinegar to the teeth and like smoke to the eyes, so ***is*** the sluggard to those who send him. **27** The fear of the LORD adds days, and the years of ***the*** wicked will be short. **28** The expectation of ***the*** righteous ***is*** joy, and the hope of ***the*** wicked will perish. **29** The way of the LORD ***is*** a stronghold for integrity, and ruin for those who do evil. **30** ***The*** righteous will never be shaken, and ***the*** wicked will not dwell ***in the*** land. **31** The mouth of a righteous ***one*** will bear fruit ***of*** wisdom, and a tongue of perversities will be cut off. **32** The lips of ***the*** righteous know ***what is*** acceptable, and the mouth of ***the*** wicked ***knows*** perversities.

PROVERBS 11

Honest Scales and Integrity

1 Scales of deceit ***are*** an abomination of the LORD, and a perfect weight ***is*** His delight. **2** Pride comes, and shame comes; and with ***the*** modest ***is*** wisdom. **3** The integrity of ***the*** upright guides them, and the crookedness of ***the*** treacherous
destroys them. **4** Wealth does not profit in ***the*** day of fury, and righteousness delivers from death. **5** The righteousness of a blameless ***one*** makes his way straight, and by his wickedness a wicked ***one*** falls. **6** The righteousness of ***the*** upright delivers them, and by the craving of ***the*** treacherous they are caught. **7** At the death of a wicked man hope will perish, and the expectation of strength has perished. **8** A righteous ***one*** is delivered from distress, and a wicked ***one*** comes in his place. **9** By ***the*** mouth a godless ***one*** ruins his neighbor, and by knowledge ***the*** righteous are delivered. **10** In the prosperity of ***the*** righteous a town rejoices, and when ***the*** wicked perish

10:16 John 6:27; 1 Cor 15:58; Gal 6:7-9
10:17 Prov 3:1,2,18; Prov 1:25,26,30; Prov 5:12
10:18 Prov 26:24-26; 1 Sam 18:21,22,29; 2 Sam 3:27
10:19 James 1:19; James 3:2; Eccl 5:3
10:20 Prov 12:18; Prov 15:4; Prov 16:13
10:21 Matt 13:19; Hos 4:6; Job 4:3,4
10:22 Gen 24:35; Ps 107:38; Gen 26:12
10:23 Prov 15:21; Prov 14:9; Prov 26:18,19
10:24 Ps 145:19; Matt 5:6; 1 John 5:14,15
10:25 Ps 15:5; Ps 58:9; Prov 10:30
10:26 Prov 25:13,20; Matt 25:26; Rom 12:11
10:27 Prov 3:2,16; Prov 9:11; Job 15:32,33
10:28 Rom 15:13; Job 8:13; Prov 11:7
10:29 Prov 21:15; Ps 37:20; Ps 84:7
10:30 Ps 37:22,28,29; Ps 125:1; Prov 10:25
10:31 Ps 37:30; Prov 10:11,13,20,21; Ps 31:18
10:32 Luke 4:22; Eccl 12:10; Dan 4:27
11:1 Prov 16:11; Prov 20:10,23; Deut 25:13-16
11:2 Luke 18:14; Prov 16:18,19; Luke 14:8-11
11:3 Prov 13:6; Prov 11:5; Ps 25:21
11:4 Prov 10:2; Zeph 1:18; Gen 7:1
11:5 Prov 5:22; Prov 11:3; Prov 1:31,32
11:6 Eccl 10:8; Prov 5:22; 1 Sam 12:3,4
11:7 Prov 10:28; Job 8:13,14; Prov 14:32
11:8 Prov 21:18; Esth 7:9,10; Isa 43:3,4
11:9 1 Kgs 13:18-22; Ps 55:12,20,21; Prov 2:10-16
11:10 Prov 28:12,28; Esth 8:15,16; Exod 15:21

10:16 *the produce of the wicked is for sin* What the righteous earn goes to good use. What the wicked gain feeds more sin (Rom 6:23).
10:17 *he who forsakes rebuke leads astray* The one who accepts correction walks the path of life and shows it to others. The one who refuses leads others astray with him.
10:18 *he who brings out slander, he is a fool* Whether you hide hatred behind a smile or spread it with gossip, both are wrong.
10:19 *In a multitude of words transgression does not cease* The more we talk, the more likely we are to sin with words. Be quick to hear and slow to speak (James 1:19).
10:21 *The lips of the righteous feed many* Godly words nourish people like food. Fools cannot even feed themselves.
10:22 *The blessing of the LORD, it makes rich, and He does not add sorrow with it* Riches gained by our own scheming often bring worry and pain. What God gives comes without that sting. This does not mean every believer will be wealthy. God's riches may be money or things money cannot buy: peace, family, joy and a clear conscience.
10:23 *To do a wicked scheme is like sport for a fool* The fool treats sin as a game. What we enjoy shows who we are.
10:25 *a righteous one is an everlasting foundation* When the storm came, only the house on the rock stood (Matt 7:24-27).
10:26 *Like vinegar to the teeth and like smoke to the eyes* A worker who cannot be trusted is a constant irritation to the one who depends on him.
10:27 *The fear of the LORD adds days* This shows how to read a proverb. As a general rule a God-fearing life avoids much that shortens life: violence, drunkenness, sexual sin, reckless anger and guilt. But it is not a promise for every case. Abel was murdered young (Gen 4:8), Stephen and James were killed early (Acts 7:59-60; 12:2), and some wicked men live long (Ps 73:3-12). Proverbs describes how God's world usually works. In the deepest sense the verse is always true: the one who fears the LORD has eternal life.
10:29 *The way of the LORD is a stronghold for integrity, and ruin for those who do evil* The same way of the LORD is safety for the upright and destruction for the wicked. God's ways do not change. What changes is how we stand toward them.
10:30 *the wicked will not dwell in the land* For Israel, staying in the land was the sign of God's blessing (2:21-22).
10:32 *The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable* The righteous know what is fitting to say: what will help, encourage or heal. By our words we will be justified or condemned (Matt 12:37).
11:1 *Scales of deceit are an abomination of the LORD* Goods were weighed on a balance against stone weights. A dishonest merchant might carry a heavy set for buying and a light set for selling. The Law forbade it (Lev 19:35-36; Deut 25:13-16). Cheating a customer, padding a bill or cutting corners on a job is not small to God.
11:2 *Pride comes, and shame comes* Pride and shame arrive together. Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled (Luke 14:11). The humble are wise because they are willing to learn.
11:3 *The integrity of the upright guides them* A person of integrity does not have to figure out each day which lie to tell. His character guides him.
11:4 *Wealth does not profit in the day of fury* The day of fury is the day God's judgment falls. No money can buy a way out then (Zeph 1:18).
11:6 *by the craving of the treacherous they are caught* Their desires become their snare.
11:7 *At the death of a wicked man hope will perish* Everything he lived for stays behind. For the believer, death is not the end of hope but the door to it (Phil 1:21).
11:8 *a wicked one comes in his place* Haman built gallows for Mordecai and was hanged on them himself (Esth 7:10).

there is a shout of joy. **11** By the blessing of ***the*** upright a town is exalted, and by the mouth of ***the*** wicked it is torn down. **12** He who despises his neighbor ***is*** lacking sense, and a man of understanding keeps quiet. **13** He who goes about ***as*** a slanderer reveals a secret, and one faithful of spirit conceals a matter. **14** When ***there is*** no guidance, a people falls, and victory ***is*** in a multitude of counselors. **15** He will surely be harmed, for he has stood surety for a stranger; and he who hates those who strike ***hands is*** secure.

Kindness and Generosity

16 A woman of grace lays hold of honor, and ruthless ***ones*** lay hold of wealth. **17** A man of steadfast love deals bountifully with his ***own*** soul, and a cruel ***one*** troubles his ***own*** body. **18** A wicked ***one*** makes wages of falsehood, and he who sows righteousness ***has*** a reward of truth. **19** True righteousness ***is*** for life, and he who pursues evil ***is*** for his ***own*** death. **20** Those perverse of heart ***are*** an abomination of the LORD, and those blameless of way ***are*** His delight. **21** Hand to hand, an evil ***one*** will not go unpunished, and the seed of ***the*** righteous will be delivered. **22** ***As*** a ring of gold in the nose of a pig, ***so is*** a woman beautiful and turning aside from discretion. **23** The desire of ***the*** righteous ***is*** only good; the hope of ***the*** wicked ***is*** fury. **24** There is one who scatters, and he is increased still; and one who withholds from uprightness, only to poverty. **25** A soul of blessing will be made fat, and he who gives water, he also will be given water. **26** He who withholds grain, ***the*** people curse him, and a blessing ***is*** for the head of him who sells grain. **27** He who diligently seeks good seeks favor, and he who seeks evil, it will come to him. **28** He who trusts in his wealth, he will fall, and like the leaf ***the*** righteous will bud. **29** He who troubles his household will inherit wind, and a fool ***will be*** a servant to the wise of heart. **30** The fruit of ***the*** righteous ***is*** a tree of life, and he who takes souls ***is*** wise. **31** Look, a righteous ***one*** is repaid on the earth; how much more a wicked ***one*** and a sinner!

PROVERBS 12

Loving Discipline

1 He who loves discipline loves knowledge, and he who hates rebuke ***is*** stupid. **2** A good ***one*** obtains favor from the LORD, and a man of evil devices He condemns. **3** A man is not established by wickedness, and the root of ***the*** righteous will not be shaken. **4** A wife of strength ***is*** the crown of her husband, and like rottenness in his bones ***is*** she who acts shamefully. **5** The plans of ***the*** righteous ***are*** justice; the guidance of ***the***

11:11 Prov 29:8; Prov 14:34; Gen 41:38-42
11:12 Judg 9:27-29,38; Neh 4:2-4; Ps 123:3,4
11:13 Prov 20:19; Lev 19:16; Josh 2:14,20
11:14 Prov 15:22; Prov 24:6; Prov 16:22
11:15 Prov 17:18; Prov 6:1-5; Prov 20:16
11:16 Prov 31:30,31; 1 Sam 25:32,33; 2 Sam 20:16-22
11:17 Matt 5:7; Matt 25:34-40; Ps 41:1-4
11:18 Hos 10:12,13; James 3:18; Eccl 10:8
11:19 Prov 10:16; Prov 19:23; Prov 12:28
11:20 Prov 6:14,16-19; Prov 8:13; Ps 18:25,26
11:21 Prov 16:5; Ps 112:1,2; Jer 32:39
11:22 Prov 31:30; Ezek 16:15-22; Nah 3:4-6
11:23 Rom 2:8,9; Prov 10:28; Ps 10:17
11:24 Prov 19:17; Ps 112:9; Luke 6:38
11:25 Matt 5:7; Prov 28:27; Isa 32:8
11:26 Job 29:13; Amos 8:4-6
11:27 Esth 7:10; Ps 7:15,16; Ps 57:6
11:28 Jer 17:8; 1 Tim 6:17; Ps 1:3
11:29 Eccl 5:16; Gen 34:30; Josh 7:24,25
11:30 Matt 23:34; John 15:5; Rev 2:7
11:31 1 Pet 4:18; Jer 25:29; 2 Sam 7:14,15
12:1 2 Thess 2:10; Prov 18:1; Prov 9:7,8
12:2 Prov 8:35; Ps 112:5; Eccl 8:8
12:3 Prov 10:25; Job 5:3-5; Job 15:29
12:4 1 Cor 11:7; Prov 14:30; Prov 14:1
12:5 Prov 11:23; Prov 24:9; Ps 119:15

11:11 *By the blessing of the upright a town is exalted* Godly people bless their cities by prayer, work and example. Wicked words tear a city apart. Believers are to seek the good of the place where they live (Jer 29:7).
11:13 *He who goes about as a slanderer reveals a secret* The gossip carries stories from house to house. A faithful friend can be trusted with what you tell him. Which kind of friend are you?
11:14 *victory is in a multitude of counselors* Rehoboam rejected the older men's counsel and lost most of his kingdom (1 Kgs 12:6-16). None of us sees everything. Families, churches and businesses need others' counsel too.
11:15 *he has stood surety for a stranger* The warning of 6:1-5 again. The one who refuses careless promises keeps himself safe.
11:16 *A woman of grace lays hold of honor, and ruthless ones lay hold of wealth* Both get what they go after, but honor is worth more (22:1). She is the opposite of the loud woman of chapters 7 and 9.
11:17 *A man of steadfast love deals bountifully with his own soul* Kindness blesses the one who shows it, and cruelty comes back on the cruel (Matt 5:7).
11:18 *he who sows righteousness has a reward of truth* The wages of the wicked look real but do not last. Righteousness is like seed sown, bringing a true and lasting harvest.
11:21 *Hand to hand, an evil one will not go unpunished* "Hand to hand" means you can count on it, as sure as a handshake. God's justice may seem slow, but it is sure.
11:22 *As a ring of gold in the nose of a pig* A gold nose ring was jewelry in that world. On a pig it is wasted. Beauty without good sense is the same, for women and for men. The beauty that matters to God is the hidden person of the heart (1 Pet 3:3-4).
11:24 *There is one who scatters, and he is increased still* It sounds backward, but generous people tend to be blessed, and stingy people often end up poorer in money, friends and joy (2 Cor 9:6). These are general truths, and the blessing comes in many forms, not only money. We do not give to get. We give because God has given to us (Luke 6:38).
11:25 *he who gives water, he also will be given water* The one who refreshes others will be refreshed.
11:26 *He who withholds grain, the people curse him* In a famine a merchant might hoard grain to drive up the price. God cares how we use what we have when others are in need.
11:28 *He who trusts in his wealth, he will fall* Money can disappear overnight. The rich are not to set their hope on uncertain riches but on God (1 Tim 6:17). The righteous are like a green leaf (Ps 1:3).
11:29 *He who troubles his household will inherit wind* The man who brings trouble on his own family through anger, folly or bad money choices ends up with nothing, like grabbing at the wind.
11:30 *he who takes souls is wise* The righteous life is like a tree of life, giving food and shade to others (3:18). "He who takes souls" here means one who wins people over, drawing them to wisdom and life. For believers this points to bringing people to Christ (Dan 12:3). The phrase can elsewhere mean taking a life, and some read it differently.
11:31 *a righteous one is repaid on the earth; how much more a wicked one and a sinner* If even the righteous are disciplined here, how much more will the wicked be judged? Peter quotes this verse in its Greek form (1 Pet 4:18). No one escapes God's justice. That is why we all need His mercy in Christ.
12:1 *he who hates rebuke is stupid* The word for stupid describes one like a dumb animal, who will not learn. If you want to grow, you have to welcome correction. It is a hard word, but a loving one.
12:3 *the root of the righteous will not be shaken* Wickedness may build something that looks strong, but it has no roots. The righteous are like a tree with deep roots (Ps 1:3; Jer 17:7-8).
12:4 *A wife of strength is the crown of her husband* The same phrase is used in 31:10: a woman of noble character, strong in faith, wisdom and work. She brings her husband honor. A wife who brings shame eats at him from the inside like a disease in the bones. The same is true of husbands. A godly spouse is one of God's greatest gifts.

wicked ***is*** deceit. **6** The words of ***the*** wicked ***are*** to lie in wait for blood, and the mouth of ***the*** upright delivers them. **7** ***The*** wicked are overthrown, and they ***are*** no more, and the house of ***the*** righteous will stand. **8** According to his prudence a man is praised, and one perverted of heart will be for contempt. **9** Better ***is*** one lightly esteemed who has a servant than one who honors himself and lacks bread. **10** A righteous ***one*** knows the life of his animal, and the compassions of ***the*** wicked ***are*** cruel. **11** He who works his ground will be satisfied ***with*** bread, and he who pursues worthless ***things is*** lacking sense. **12** A wicked ***one*** covets the net of evil ***ones***, and the root of ***the*** righteous yields. **13** In the transgression of ***the*** lips ***is*** an evil snare, and a righteous ***one*** comes out from trouble. **14** From the fruit of the mouth of a man he will be satisfied ***with*** good, and the dealing of the hands of a man will be returned to him.

The Tongue of the Wise

15 The way of a fool ***is*** right in his ***own*** eyes, and he who listens to counsel ***is*** wise. **16** A fool, his vexation is known on the day, and he who conceals shame ***is*** prudent. **17** He who breathes out faithfulness declares righteousness, and a witness of lies, deceit. **18** There is one who speaks rashly like thrusts of a sword, and the tongue of ***the*** wise ***is*** healing. **19** A lip of truth will be established forever, and a tongue of falsehood ***only*** for a moment. **20** Deceit ***is*** in the heart of those who devise evil, and for counselors of peace ***is*** joy. **21** No trouble will happen to the righteous, and ***the*** wicked are full ***of*** evil. **22** Lips of falsehood ***are*** an abomination of the LORD, and doers of faithfulness ***are*** His delight. **23** A prudent man conceals knowledge, and the heart of fools proclaims folly. **24** The hand of ***the*** diligent will rule, and slackness will be for forced labor. **25** Anxiety in the heart of a man bows it down, and a good word makes it glad. **26** A righteous ***one*** is more excellent than his neighbor, and the way of ***the*** wicked leads them astray. **27** Slackness does not roast its game, and the precious wealth of a man ***is*** diligence. **28** In the path of righteousness ***is*** life, and ***in*** the way of ***its*** pathway ***there is*** no death.

PROVERBS 13

Guarding the Mouth

1 A wise son ***hears*** the discipline of a father, and a mocker does not listen to rebuke. **2** From the fruit of the mouth of a man he eats good, and the soul of ***the*** treacherous ***is*** violence.

12:6 Prov 14:3; Prov 1:11-19; 2 Sam 17:1-4
12:7 Prov 11:21; Matt 7:24-27; Prov 14:11
12:8 Luke 16:8; 1 Cor 3:10; Gen 41:39
12:9 Luke 14:11; Prov 13:7
12:10 Deut 25:4; John 4:11; James 2:13-16
12:11 Prov 28:19; 1 Thess 4:11,12; Prov 14:4,23
12:12 Ps 10:9; Prov 1:17-19; Prov 29:5,6
12:13 2 Pet 2:9; Ps 64:8; Prov 11:8
12:14 Prov 13:2; Isa 3:10,11; Prov 18:20,21
12:15 Prov 3:7; Prov 19:20; Prov 16:2,25
12:16 Prov 29:11; Prov 10:12; James 1:19
12:17 Prov 14:5,25; Prov 6:19; 1 Sam 22:14,15
12:18 Ps 57:4; Prov 16:24; Ps 59:7
12:19 Prov 19:9; Zech 1:4-6; Matt 24:35
12:20 Mark 7:21; Prov 12:12; Prov 26:24-26
12:21 Rev 18:6; Jer 13:12-14; Hab 2:16
12:22 Rev 22:15; Prov 6:16,17; Ps 5:6
12:23 Prov 13:16; Prov 15:2; Prov 11:13
12:24 Prov 10:4; Prov 12:27; Prov 21:25,26
12:25 Prov 15:13,15,23; Prov 15:23; Isa 50:4
12:26 Prov 12:13; Prov 17:27; Ps 16:3
12:27 Prov 13:4; Prov 23:2; Prov 26:15
12:28 3 John 1:11; Prov 8:35; Prov 9:11
13:1 Prov 10:1; Prov 9:7,8; Prov 4:1-14,20-22
13:2 Prov 12:14; Prov 18:20; Prov 1:11-13,18,31

12:6 *The words of the wicked are to lie in wait for blood* Wicked words set traps, like the gang in chapter 1. The words of the upright rescue people.
12:9 *Better is one lightly esteemed who has a servant than one who honors himself and lacks bread* One of many "better" sayings. It is better to be ordinary with enough to live on than a show-off who cannot feed his family. Pride often spends what it does not have.
12:10 *A righteous one knows the life of his animal* The Law gave animals Sabbath rest (Exod 23:12) and forbade muzzling an ox at work (Deut 25:4). God cares for His creatures (Jonah 4:11), and those who love Him do too. How we treat those who cannot speak for themselves shows our heart.
12:11 *he who pursues worthless things is lacking sense* Steady, ordinary work puts food on the table. Chasing get-rich-quick schemes shows a lack of sense.
12:13 *In the transgression of the lips is an evil snare* A lie leads to another lie until the liar is trapped. Those who speak the truth find their way out of trouble.
12:14 *the dealing of the hands of a man will be returned to him* Our words and our work both come back to us (Gal 6:7).
12:15 *The way of a fool is right in his own eyes* The fool never doubts himself, so he never asks for advice. The wise man knows he can be wrong, so he listens.
12:16 *he who conceals shame is prudent* The fool shows his anger the moment he feels it. The prudent man can take an insult without striking back. That is not weakness. It is strength under control (16:32).
12:18 *There is one who speaks rashly like thrusts of a sword, and the tongue of the wise is healing* Most of us remember something cruel said to us years ago. Wise words can bind up a wound. Let only what builds up come out of our mouths (Eph 4:29).
12:19 *a tongue of falsehood only for a moment* Lies may work for a while, but they do not last. In the end God's truth will stand.
12:20 *for counselors of peace is joy* Blessed are the peacemakers (Matt 5:9).
12:21 *No trouble will happen to the righteous* Read alone, it sounds like a promise that nothing bad will happen to the godly. But Job lost almost everything (Job 1), Jesus said we will have trouble in the world (John 16:33), and Paul suffered greatly (2 Cor 11:23-27). As a general truth, the righteous avoid much of the harm the wicked bring on themselves. In the deepest sense no harm can destroy a child of God, and even trials work for our good (Rom 8:28, 38-39).
12:22 *Lips of falsehood are an abomination of the LORD* Lying is on the list of things the LORD hates (6:17, 19). God cannot lie (Titus 1:2), and Satan is the father of lies (John 8:44). When we lie, we act like the enemy.
12:23 *A prudent man conceals knowledge* The wise man does not have to show off all he knows. He waits for the right time.
12:24 *slackness will be for forced labor* Hard workers rise to lead. Joseph worked faithfully as a slave and a prisoner, and God raised him to rule Egypt (Gen 39:2-6, 22-23; 41:41).
12:25 *Anxiety in the heart of a man bows it down, and a good word makes it glad* Many carry anxiety no one else can see. A kind word can lift that weight. Who needs a good word from you today? And we can cast our own cares on the Lord, because He cares for us (1 Pet 5:7).
12:26 *A righteous one is more excellent than his neighbor* The Hebrew of this line can be read more than one way. The SLB says the righteous man is more excellent than his neighbor: his life stands out from the people around him. Others read that he guides his neighbor or chooses friends with care. Either way, the righteous are careful about relationships.
12:27 *Slackness does not roast its game* The lazy hunter catches something and is too lazy to cook it. He starts things and never finishes. A man's most precious possession is the habit of hard work and follow-through.
12:28 *in the way of its pathway there is no death* Some see here one of the Old Testament's glimpses of life beyond the grave. I believe it is true in its fullest sense in Christ, who said whoever believes in Him will never die (John 11:25-26). Some scholars read it only as long life in this world.
13:1 *a mocker does not listen to rebuke* The difference between the wise son and the mocker is not how smart they are. It is whether they listen.

3 He who guards his mouth keeps his soul; he who opens
wide his lips, ruin ***is*** for him. **4** The soul of a sluggard craves,
and ***there is*** nothing, and the soul of ***the*** diligent will be made
fat. **5** A righteous ***one*** hates a word of falsehood, and a wicked
one acts odiously and acts shamefully. **6** Righteousness
guards integrity of way, and wickedness subverts sin.
7 There is one who makes himself rich, and ***there is*** not anything; one who makes himself poor, and ***there is*** great
wealth. **8** The ransom of the life of a man ***is*** his riches, and a
poor ***one*** does not hear rebuke. **9** The light of ***the*** righteous
rejoices, and the lamp of ***the*** wicked will be put out. **10** Only
through pride ***does one*** give contention, and with those who
take counsel ***is*** wisdom. **11** Wealth from vanity will diminish,
and he who gathers by hand will increase ***it***.

Walking With the Wise

12 Expectation deferred makes ***the*** heart sick, and a tree of
life ***is*** desire that comes. **13** He who despises a word will be in
pledge to it, and he who fears a commandment, he will be
repaid. **14** The instruction of a wise ***one is*** a fountain of life,
to turn aside from the snares of death. **15** Good insight gives
favor, and the way of ***the*** treacherous ***is*** hard. **16** Every prudent ***one*** acts with knowledge, and a fool spreads out folly.
17 A wicked messenger falls into evil, and an envoy of faithfulness ***is*** healing. **18** Poverty and shame ***are for*** him who
ignores discipline, and he who keeps rebuke is honored.
19 Desire fulfilled is sweet to the soul, and to turn aside from
evil ***is*** an abomination of fools. **20** He who walks with wise
ones will become wise, and he who associates with fools will
be harmed. **21** Calamity pursues sinners, and good repays ***the***
righteous. **22** A good ***one*** leaves an inheritance to children of
children, and the wealth of a sinner ***is*** stored up for the
righteous. **23** Abundance of food ***is in*** the fallow ground of
poor ***ones***, and there is ***what*** is swept away for lack of justice.
24 He who withholds his rod hates his son, and he who loves
him seeks him early ***with*** discipline. **25** A righteous ***one*** eats
to the satisfying of his soul, and the belly of ***the*** wicked will
lack.

13:3 Prov 21:23; James 3:2-12; Prov 12:13
13:4 Prov 10:4; Prov 12:11,24; Prov 2:2-9
13:5 Col 3:9; Prov 3:35; Prov 6:17
13:6 Prov 11:3,5,6; Ps 15:2; Ps 25:21
13:7 Luke 12:21; Luke 18:11-14; Rev 3:17
13:8 Prov 6:35; Exod 21:30; Job 2:4
13:9 Prov 4:18; Prov 24:20; 1 Kgs 11:36
13:10 James 4:1,5,6; Prov 21:24; Judg 12:1-6
13:11 Prov 20:21; Prov 10:2; James 5:1-5
13:12 Rev 22:2; Rev 2:7; Prov 13:19
13:13 2 Chr 36:16; Ps 115:13; Ps 19:11
13:14 Prov 10:11; Prov 14:27; Ps 18:5
13:15 Prov 3:4; Luke 2:52; Jer 2:19
13:16 Prov 15:2; Eccl 10:3; Prov 12:22,23
13:17 Prov 25:13,23; Prov 10:26; Prov 26:6
13:18 Prov 15:5,31,32; Prov 12:1; Prov 13:13
13:19 Prov 13:12; 1 Kgs 1:48; Ps 21:1,2
13:20 1 Cor 15:33,34; Prov 9:6; 2 Cor 6:14-18
13:21 Ps 32:10; Gen 4:7; Isa 3:10,11
13:22 Prov 28:8; Job 27:16,17; Eccl 2:26
13:23 Prov 12:11,14; Prov 28:19; Prov 27:18,23-27
13:24 Prov 29:15,17; Rom 9:13; Prov 19:18
13:25 Ps 34:10; 1 Tim 4:8; Heb 13:5

13:3 *He who guards his mouth keeps his soul* Many have ruined a marriage, a friendship or a career with a few careless words. David prayed for a guard over his mouth (Ps 141:3).
13:4 *The soul of a sluggard craves, and there is nothing* The lazy man wants many things, but wanting is all he does. Wishing is not working.
13:6 *wickedness subverts sin* Righteousness guards the one who walks straight. "Sin" here stands for the sinner himself. His own wickedness brings him down.
13:7 *one who makes himself poor, and there is great wealth* Some pretend to be rich and have nothing but debt. Others live simply and have more than anyone knows. A person can be rich in this world and poor toward God, or poor here and rich in faith (Luke 12:21; James 2:5).
13:8 *The ransom of the life of a man is his riches* Riches make a man a target for robbers and kidnappers. The poor man has nothing anyone wants. Wealth has its own troubles.
13:9 *the lamp of the wicked will be put out* A lamp burning in a house meant someone lived there. A lamp put out meant the family was gone.
13:10 *Only through pride does one give contention* Pride is behind most quarrels. The proud must always be right. If you are in many fights, look for pride first, starting with your own.
13:11 *Wealth from vanity will diminish* Easy money from schemes, gambling or dishonest gain tends to slip away as fast as it came. Money gathered little by little by honest work tends to grow.
13:12 *Expectation deferred makes the heart sick, and a tree of life is desire that comes* Waiting for a child, for healing, for a prodigal to come home: the Bible does not pretend it is easy. Our greatest hope, Christ's return, seems long delayed to us, but it will surely come, and every longing will be satisfied (2 Pet 3:8-9; Rev 21:4).
13:13 *He who despises a word will be in pledge to it* The one who despises God's Word will have to pay for it, like a debtor on a pledge.
13:14 *The instruction of a wise one is a fountain of life* Almost the same words are used of the fear of the LORD in 14:27.
13:15 *the way of the treacherous is hard* The way of the treacherous is rough going, and it wears a person down. Either way, they do not win the favor good insight brings.
13:16 *a fool spreads out folly* Like a peddler laying out his goods, the fool puts his folly on display.
13:17 *an envoy of faithfulness is healing* In a world without phones or mail, a bad messenger could ruin a deal or start a war. The church is called to be faithful messengers of the good news (2 Cor 5:20).
13:19 *to turn aside from evil is an abomination of fools* Fools so love their evil that turning from it is unbearable, even to gain what would truly satisfy them.
13:20 *He who walks with wise ones will become wise* We become like the people we spend time with (1 Cor 15:33). Who are you walking with? Who are your children walking with? This does not mean we never spend time with unbelievers. Jesus ate with sinners to reach them (Luke 15:1-2). It means we choose carefully whose voices shape us most.
13:21 *Calamity pursues sinners* Trouble follows sinners like a hunter. This is the general pattern now, and in eternity it will be true without exception.
13:22 *A good one leaves an inheritance to children of children* A good man thinks of his grandchildren and leaves more than money: a good name and a godly example.
13:23 *there is what is swept away for lack of justice* The fields of the poor could produce plenty, but injustice takes it away. Proverbs does not blame all poverty on laziness. Sometimes others cheat the poor or deny them justice. God sees, and He cares (14:31; 22:22-23).
13:24 *He who withholds his rod hates his son* The rod was a picture of correction, and the father did use physical discipline. The point is love. A father who never corrects his child is failing him (3:11-12; Heb 12:6). This verse must never excuse anger, cruelty or abuse. Discipline in Proverbs is controlled and for the child's good (Eph 6:4). Godly parents differ on spanking today, but agree a loving parent must correct firmly and patiently. Anyone hurt as a child in the name of this verse should hear that it was wrong and not what God meant.
13:25 *the belly of the wicked will lack* The wicked never have enough. Contentment is a gift God gives to those who trust Him (Phil 4:11-13).

PROVERBS 14

The Wise Woman Builds Her House

1 The wise of women builds her house, and folly tears it down with her hands. **2** He who walks in his uprightness fears the LORD, and he who is devious ***in*** his ways despises Him. **3** In the mouth of a fool ***is*** a shoot of pride, and the lips of ***the*** wise will keep them. **4** When ***there are*** no cattle, the trough ***is*** clean, and abundance of produce ***is*** by the strength of an ox. **5** A witness of faithfulness will not lie, and a witness of falsehood breathes out lies. **6** A mocker seeks wisdom, and ***there is*** none, and knowledge ***is*** easy for a discerning ***one***. **7** Go from before a man ***who is*** a fool, and you will not have known lips of knowledge. **8** The wisdom of a prudent ***one is*** to discern his way, and the folly of fools ***is*** deceit. **9** Fools mock guilt, and among ***the*** upright ***is*** favor. **10** A heart knows the bitterness of its ***own*** soul, and in its joy a stranger does not share. **11** The house of ***the*** wicked will be destroyed, and the tent of ***the*** upright will flourish. **12** There is a way right before a man, and its end ***is*** ways of death. **13** Even in laughter a heart is in pain, and its end, joy, ***is*** grief. **14** The backslider of heart will be satisfied from his ways, and a good man from himself. **15** A simple ***one*** believes every word, and a prudent ***one*** considers his step. **16** A wise ***one*** fears and turns aside from evil, and a fool is arrogant and confident. **17** One short of anger does folly, and a man of evil devices is hated. **18** ***The*** simple inherit folly, and ***the*** prudent surround ***themselves with*** knowledge. **19** Evil ***ones*** bow before good ***ones***, and wicked ***ones*** at the gates of a righteous ***one***.

The Poor and the Fear of the LORD

20 Even by his neighbor a poor ***one*** is hated, and those who love a rich ***one are*** many. **21** He who despises his neighbor sins, and he who shows favor to ***the*** humble, how blessed ***is*** he! **22** Do they not go astray, those who devise evil? And steadfast love and truth ***are for*** those who devise good. **23** In all toil there is profit, and a word of lips ***leads*** only to poverty. **24** The crown of ***the*** wise ***is*** their riches; the folly of fools ***is*** folly. **25** A witness of truth delivers souls, and he who breathes out lies ***is*** deceit. **26** In the fear of the LORD ***is*** confidence of strength, and for his children it will be a refuge. **27** The fear of the LORD ***is*** a fountain of life, to turn aside

14:1 Prov 31:10-31; Prov 21:9,19; Prov 24:3,4
14:2 Luke 10:16; Luke 16:14; Acts 10:35
14:3 Prov 12:6; Prov 18:6; Prov 21:24
14:4 1 Cor 9:9-11; Amos 4:6; Prov 13:23
14:5 Prov 6:19; Prov 12:17; Exod 23:1
14:6 Matt 11:25-27; Prov 8:9; Prov 17:24
14:7 Prov 13:20; Prov 9:6; Prov 19:27
14:8 Eph 5:17; Col 1:9,10; Prov 2:9
14:9 Prov 10:23; Prov 1:22; Prov 26:18,19
14:10 1 Cor 2:11; 1 Sam 1:10; Prov 18:14
14:11 Prov 3:33; Job 8:15; Prov 12:7
14:12 Prov 16:25; Prov 12:15; Matt 7:13,14
14:13 James 4:9; Eccl 2:2,10,11; Prov 5:4
14:14 Prov 12:14; Jer 8:5; Heb 3:12
14:15 Eph 5:17; Prov 4:26; Prov 22:3
14:16 Prov 22:3; Prov 3:7; Prov 16:6,17
14:17 Prov 14:29; Prov 29:22; Prov 15:18
14:18 Prov 3:35; Prov 11:29; Jer 16:19
14:19 Rev 3:9; Gen 42:6; Gen 43:28
14:20 Prov 19:4,6; Prov 10:15; Job 6:21-23
14:21 Prov 11:12; Prov 19:17; Prov 17:5
14:22 Prov 12:2; Prov 14:17; Isa 32:7,8
14:23 Prov 12:24; Prov 28:19; John 6:27
14:24 Luke 12:20; Ps 112:9; Eccl 7:11,12
14:25 Prov 14:5; Acts 20:21,26,27; Acts 26:16-20
14:26 Acts 9:31; Prov 18:10; Prov 19:23
14:27 Acts 9:31; Prov 13:14; Isa 33:6

14:1 *The wise of women builds her house, and folly tears it down with her hands* Most homes are not destroyed from outside. They are torn down from within, one choice at a time, and the same is true of husbands. Every day we are either building our homes or tearing them down.
14:2 *he who is devious in his ways despises Him* How we live shows what we think of God, whatever we say with our lips.
14:3 *In the mouth of a fool is a shoot of pride* Pride grows out of the fool's mouth like a shoot from a stump. His boasting and insults show what is inside.
14:4 *When there are no cattle, the trough is clean* No oxen, no mess, but also no one to plow. A clean barn means an empty harvest. A family, church or business that bears fruit will have some disorder. That is no reason to avoid it.
14:6 *A mocker seeks wisdom, and there is none* The mocker may go looking for wisdom but never finds it, because his heart is not humble enough to receive it.
14:7 *Go from before a man who is a fool* Do not stay around a fool hoping to learn something. Walk away (13:20).
14:9 *Fools mock guilt* Fools laugh at sin and make light of wrongdoing. A culture that mocks guilt is a culture of fools.
14:10 *A heart knows the bitterness of its own soul* No one else knows exactly how deep our grief goes or how high our joy rises, so we should be slow to say we know just how someone feels. But God sees every hidden sorrow (Ps 56:8), and Jesus our High Priest sympathizes with our weaknesses (Heb 4:15).
14:11 *the tent of the upright will flourish* The house will fall and the tent will flourish. What lasts is whether God's blessing is on a dwelling, not how strong it looks.
14:12 *There is a way right before a man, and its end is ways of death* Repeated word for word in 16:25. The way looks good and feels right, and many may walk it, but our hearts can deceive us (Jer 17:9). Many believe they will reach God by being good or following a religion. It seems right. But Jesus said, "No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6), and the broad way leads to destruction (Matt 7:13-14).
14:13 *Even in laughter a heart is in pain* A smile can hide a broken heart. Be gentle with people. Their laughter may not tell the whole story.
14:14 *The backslider of heart will be satisfied from his ways* The backslider turns away from God. He will get his fill of the way he chose (1:31).
14:15 *A simple one believes every word* The simple believe every rumor, sales pitch and story online. The prudent check before they step (1 John 4:1).
14:16 *a fool is arrogant and confident* The wise see danger and step back. The fool charges ahead, sure of himself.
14:17 *One short of anger does folly* The hot-tempered do foolish things in the heat of the moment. The schemer who plots coldly is hated. Neither is the way of wisdom.
14:19 *Evil ones bow before good ones* In the end evil bows to good. Joseph's brothers bowed before him (Gen 42:6), and one day every knee will bow before Jesus (Phil 2:10-11).
14:20 *Even by his neighbor a poor one is hated* An honest observation of human nature, not praise for it. People avoid the poor and crowd around the rich.
14:21 *He who despises his neighbor sins* Right after the observation comes God's verdict. Looking down on a neighbor, especially a poor one, is sin (James 2:1-9).
14:23 *a word of lips leads only to poverty* Hard work pays. Talk does not. Some spend all their energy talking about what they will do and never do it.
14:24 *the folly of fools is folly* Fools end where they began. Folly produces nothing but more folly.
14:25 *A witness of truth delivers souls* A truthful witness can save an innocent life. A lying witness's words can kill.
14:26 *for his children it will be a refuge* The fear of the LORD does not make a person timid. It makes him secure. A parent who fears the LORD gives his children a safe place to grow.
14:27 *The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life* Almost the same as 13:14, where the teaching of the wise is the fountain.

from the snares of death. **28** In the multitude of a people ***is*** the splendor of a king, and in the lack of people ***is*** the ruin of a ruler. **29** One long of anger ***is*** great of understanding, and one short of spirit exalts folly. **30** A heart of healing ***is*** the life of ***the*** flesh, and jealousy ***is*** rottenness of bones. **31** He who oppresses a poor ***one*** reproaches his Maker, and he who shows favor to a needy ***one*** honors Him. **32** By his evil a wicked ***one*** is thrust down, and a righteous ***one*** seeks refuge in his death. **33** In the heart of a discerning ***one*** wisdom rests, and in the inner part of fools it is made known.
34 Righteousness exalts a nation, and sin ***is*** a shame to peoples. **35** The favor of a king ***is*** for a servant who acts prudently, and his fury will be ***on*** him who acts shamefully.

PROVERBS 15

A Soft Answer

1 A soft answer turns away rage, and a word of pain raises anger. **2** The tongue of ***the*** wise makes knowledge good, and the mouth of fools pours forth folly. **3** In every place ***are*** the eyes of the LORD, watching evil ***ones*** and good ***ones***. **4** Healing of tongue ***is*** a tree of life, and perverseness in it ***is*** a breaking in spirit. **5** A fool spurns the discipline of his father, and he who keeps rebuke is prudent. **6** ***In*** the house of a righteous ***one is*** great wealth, and in the income of a wicked ***one is*** trouble. **7** The lips of ***the*** wise scatter knowledge, and the heart of fools ***is*** not right. **8** The sacrifice of ***the*** wicked ***is*** an abomination of the LORD, and the prayer of ***the*** upright ***is*** His delight. **9** The way of a wicked ***one is*** an abomination of the LORD, and he who pursues righteousness He loves. **10** Discipline ***is*** bad for him who forsakes ***the*** path; he who hates rebuke will die. **11** Sheol and Abaddon ***are*** before the LORD; how much more the hearts of the sons of mankind! **12** A mocker does not love ***one*** reproving him; to ***the*** wise he will not go. **13** A glad heart makes a face good, and by sorrow of heart a spirit ***is*** stricken. **14** A discerning heart seeks knowledge, and the mouth of fools feeds on folly. **15** All the days of an afflicted ***one are*** evil, and he who is good of heart ***has*** a feast continually.

Better Is a Little

16 Better ***is*** a little with the fear of the LORD than great trea-

14:28 Exod 1:12,22; 1 Kgs 4:20,21; 1 Kgs 20:27
14:29 James 1:19; Eccl 7:9; Prov 14:17
14:30 Prov 12:4; Prov 17:22; Prov 4:23
14:31 1 John 4:21; Matt 25:44; 1 John 3:19
14:32 2 Tim 4:18; Gen 49:18; 2 Cor 1:9
14:33 Prov 12:16,23; Prov 29:11; Prov 13:16
14:34 Deut 28:1-14; Ps 107:34; Deut 4:6-8
14:35 Prov 22:11; Matt 24:45-51; Prov 19:12,13
15:1 Prov 25:15; 1 Sam 25:21-33; 1 Kgs 12:13-16
15:2 Prov 12:23; Prov 13:16; Isa 50:4
15:3 1 Pet 3:12; Heb 4:13; 2 Chr 16:9
15:4 Rev 2:7; Prov 3:18; Prov 12:18
15:5 Prov 13:1,18; Prov 15:31,32; Prov 10:1
15:6 Prov 8:21; Prov 21:20; Ps 112:3
15:7 Matt 12:34; Ps 37:30; Ps 45:2
15:8 Prov 15:29; Prov 21:27; Jer 6:20
15:9 Rom 9:30; 1 Tim 6:11; Prov 21:21
15:10 Prov 12:1; Prov 5:12; Prov 13:1
15:11 2 Chr 6:30; Ps 44:21; Job 26:6
15:12 Amos 5:10; Prov 15:10; Prov 9:7,8
15:13 Prov 17:22; Prov 12:25; Prov 18:14
15:14 Prov 1:5; Prov 9:9; 1 Kgs 3:6-12
15:15 Prov 17:22; 2 Cor 6:10; Rom 5:2,3,11
15:16 Prov 16:8; 1 Tim 6:6; Ps 37:16

14:28 *In the multitude of a people is the splendor of a king* A king's glory is in the people he rules, so good leaders serve them well. Jesus, the King of kings, will rule a great multitude from every nation (Rev 7:9).
14:29 *One long of anger is great of understanding* Long of anger means slow to anger, patient. God Himself is described this way (Exod 34:6). A quick temper puts folly on display.
14:30 *jealousy is rottenness of bones* A calm heart is good for the body. Envy eats at a person from the inside. Our inner life affects our health.
14:31 *He who oppresses a poor one reproaches his Maker* One of the strongest verses in Proverbs about the poor. Every poor person is made in God's image (Gen 1:27). To oppress them insults the God who made them. Whatever we do for the least of Jesus' brothers, we do for Him (Matt 25:40).
14:32 *a righteous one seeks refuge in his death* The righteous have a refuge even in death. This is one of the places in Proverbs that looks beyond the grave. For believers, death means being with the Lord (2 Cor 5:8).
14:33 *in the inner part of fools it is made known* Wisdom rests quietly in the wise. Fools cannot keep anything inside. The line is hard, and some read it to mean that even among fools wisdom makes itself known.
14:34 *Righteousness exalts a nation, and sin is a shame to peoples* A word for every nation. God raises nations and brings them down (Dan 2:21). Justice, honesty and care for the weak lift a nation up. Corruption, violence and injustice bring shame and in time ruin. Believers should pray for their nation and live righteously in it (1 Tim 2:1-2).
14:35 *The favor of a king is for a servant who acts prudently* Daniel served kings so well that they promoted him (Dan 6:3). Believers should be the best workers wherever they serve, because we serve the Lord Christ (Col 3:23-24).
15:1 *A soft answer turns away rage* A harsh reply throws fuel on a fire. Gideon calmed the angry men of Ephraim this way (Judg 8:1-3), and Abigail turned away David's wrath (1 Sam 25:23-35). A soft answer is not weakness. It takes more strength to answer gently than to lash out.
15:2 *the mouth of fools pours forth folly* The wise say things well, at the right time and in the right way. Words pour out of fools like water from a broken pipe.
15:3 *In every place are the eyes of the LORD* A warning to the wicked, who think they are hidden (Heb 4:13), and a comfort to the righteous, whose suffering and secret faithfulness God sees (Matt 6:4). Hagar called Him the God who sees (Gen 16:13).
15:4 *Healing of tongue is a tree of life* Some carry for years the wounds of a parent's or spouse's harsh words. Our tongues can give life or break hearts.
15:6 *in the income of a wicked one is trouble* The righteous may or may not have much money, but their house is rich in what matters.
15:8 *The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination of the LORD* God hates even a costly offering from a heart that is not right (Isa 1:11-17; Amos 5:21-24). To obey is better than sacrifice (1 Sam 15:22). But the simple prayer of an upright person delights Him.
15:9 *he who pursues righteousness He loves* God hates the sacrifice of the wicked because He hates their way of life. Worship cannot cover living. "Pursues" shows that righteousness is something we go after (1 Tim 6:11).
15:11 *Sheol and Abaddon are before the LORD* Sheol is the place of the dead, and Abaddon means destruction, another name for it (Job 26:6). If God sees into the grave, He certainly sees into our hearts (Ps 139:1-4).
15:12 *to the wise he will not go* The mocker keeps around people who tell him what he wants to hear.
15:13 *A glad heart makes a face good* What is in our hearts shows on our faces. The Bible is honest that sorrow is real and it hurts.
15:14 *the mouth of fools feeds on folly* We all feed on something. What are you feeding your mind on?
15:15 *he who is good of heart has a feast continually* For the crushed, every day feels hard. A cheerful heart can turn even a plain day into a feast. Paul and Silas sang in prison (Acts 16:25). Joy in the Lord does not depend on what is happening around us (Phil 4:4).
15:16 *Better is a little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure and turmoil with it* A small income with God's peace is worth more than great wealth with worry. Godliness with contentment is great gain (1 Tim 6:6).

sure and turmoil with it. **17** Better ***is*** a portion of vegetables and love there than a fattened ox and hatred with it. **18** A man of rage stirs up strife, and one long of anger quiets a dispute. **19** The way of a sluggard ***is*** like a hedge of thorns, and the path of ***the*** upright ***is*** built up. **20** A wise son makes a father glad, and a fool of a man despises his mother. **21** Folly ***is*** joy to one lacking sense, and a man of understanding makes ***his*** walking straight. **22** Plans go wrong when ***there is*** no counsel, and in a multitude of counselors it is established. **23** Joy ***belongs*** to the man in the answer of his mouth, and a word in its time, how good! **24** The path of life ***is*** upward for one who acts prudently, so as to turn aside from Sheol beneath. **25** The house of ***the*** proud the LORD tears down, and He will establish the border of a widow. **26** The plans of an evil ***one are*** an abomination of the LORD, and words of pleasantness ***are*** clean. **27** He who gains unjust gain troubles his ***own*** house, and he who hates gifts will live. **28** The heart of a righteous ***one*** considers to answer, and the mouth of ***the*** wicked pours forth evil ***things***. **29** The LORD ***is*** far from ***the*** wicked, and the prayer of ***the*** righteous He hears. **30** Light of eyes makes a heart glad; a good report fattens ***the*** bone. **31** An ear that hears the rebuke of life will remain in the midst of ***the*** wise. **32** He who ignores discipline rejects his ***own*** soul, and he who hears rebuke acquires heart. **33** The fear of the LORD ***is*** the discipline of wisdom, and before honor ***is*** humility.

PROVERBS 16

The LORD Directs His Steps

1 To a man ***belong*** the arrangements of ***the*** heart, and from the LORD ***is*** the answer of ***the*** tongue. **2** All the ways of a man ***are*** pure in his ***own*** eyes, and the LORD weighs spirits. **3** Roll your works to the LORD, and your plans will be established. **4** The LORD has made everything for its purpose, and also the wicked for a day of evil. **5** Everyone haughty of heart ***is*** an abomination of the LORD; hand to hand, he will not go unpunished. **6** By steadfast love and truth iniquity is atoned for, and by the fear of the LORD ***is*** turning aside from evil. **7** When the LORD is pleased with the ways of a man, even his

15:17 Prov 17:1; Prov 21:19; Ps 133:1-3
15:18 Prov 26:21; Prov 29:22; Prov 28:25
15:19 Prov 22:5,13; Prov 26:13; Num 14:1-3,7-9
15:20 Prov 10:1; Prov 29:3; Prov 30:17
15:21 Eph 5:15; Prov 10:23; Prov 14:9
15:22 Prov 11:14; Prov 20:18; Eccl 8:6
15:23 Prov 12:14; Isa 50:4; Prov 16:13
15:24 Phil 3:20; Col 3:1,2; Prov 2:18
15:25 Ps 146:9; Prov 12:7; Prov 14:11
15:26 Prov 6:16-19; Prov 24:9; Jer 4:14
15:27 Exod 23:8; Prov 1:19; 2 Kgs 5:27
15:28 1 Pet 3:15; Prov 15:2; Prov 16:23
15:29 John 9:31; Prov 15:8; Ps 145:18,19
15:30 Prov 25:25; Prov 13:9; Ezra 9:8
15:31 Prov 15:5; Prov 25:12; Prov 1:23
15:32 Prov 1:24-33; Matt 7:24-27; James 1:22
15:33 Prov 18:12; Prov 1:7; James 4:10
16:1 Prov 19:21; Prov 16:9; Prov 20:24
16:2 Prov 21:2; 1 Sam 16:7; Prov 30:12
16:3 Ps 37:4,5; Ps 55:22; Phil 4:6
16:4 Rom 9:22; 1 Pet 2:8; Isa 43:7,21
16:5 Prov 6:16,17; Prov 8:13; Prov 11:21
16:6 Eph 5:21; Acts 9:31; Prov 14:16,27
16:7 Gen 33:4; 1 John 3:22; Jer 15:11

15:17 *Better is a portion of vegetables and love there than a fattened ox and hatred with it* What makes a home rich is not what is on the table, but who is around it and how they treat each other.
15:18 *one long of anger quiets a dispute* Every family, church and workplace needs people who are slow to anger. Man's anger does not produce God's righteousness (James 1:20).
15:19 *The way of a sluggard is like a hedge of thorns* To the lazy man every task looks like a thorn bush, and there is always a reason it cannot be done. The road of the upright is a raised, smooth highway.
15:20 *a fool of a man despises his mother* The first line repeats 10:1. The second goes further: the fool looks down on his mother. Children of any age should honor their parents (Exod 20:12).
15:22 *Plans go wrong when there is no counsel* Plans checked with many wise counselors tend to succeed (11:14). Before a big decision, ask godly people what they think.
15:23 *a word in its time, how good* Timing matters. The right word at the right moment can change a life (25:11).
15:24 *The path of life is upward for one who acts prudently* The road of the wise leads up toward life, the road of the fool down to the grave. In the New Testament we learn the end of the wise is life with God forever (Col 3:1-4).
15:25 *He will establish the border of a widow* A greedy neighbor might move the boundary stones of a widow's field and steal her land. The Law forbade it (Deut 19:14). The LORD Himself guards her border. He is the defender of the weak (Ps 68:5).
15:27 *he who hates gifts will live* The gifts are bribes. Achan's greed brought death on his house (Josh 7:24-26). The one who refuses bribes keeps his life and his integrity.
15:28 *The heart of a righteous one considers to answer* The righteous weigh their words (1 Pet 3:15).
15:29 *The LORD is far from the wicked, and the prayer of the righteous He hears* God always hears the sinner who turns to Him in repentance (Luke 18:13-14). But those who live in rebellion should not expect Him to answer while they refuse to turn (Ps 66:18).
15:30 *a good report fattens the bone* Good news refreshes the whole body. The best news of all is the gospel.
15:32 *he who hears rebuke acquires heart* To refuse correction is to hurt yourself. To acquire heart is to gain sense.
15:33 *before honor is humility* The fear of the LORD is the school where wisdom is learned, and humility comes before honor. The way up is down. Jesus humbled Himself to the cross, and God highly exalted Him (Phil 2:8-9). Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will lift you up (James 4:10).
16:1 *from the LORD is the answer of the tongue* We arrange our thoughts and plan what to say, but what comes out, and what it accomplishes, is in God's hands. Balaam set out to curse Israel and could only bless (Num 23:11-12).
16:2 *the LORD weighs spirits* We are good at seeing ourselves in the best light. God weighs our motives, the reasons behind what we do (1 Sam 16:7; 1 Cor 4:4-5).
16:3 *Roll your works to the LORD* Picture rolling a heavy load off your back onto someone stronger. This does not promise that every plan will succeed. Plans handed to God that fit His will are established (1 Pet 5:7).
16:4 *also the wicked for a day of evil* Everything God made has its purpose and end, and even the wicked do not escape His plan. God does not make anyone sin (James 1:13), and He takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked (Ezek 33:11). But He rules over evil, and the wicked will meet their day of judgment. Teachers in different traditions weigh this verse differently.
16:5 *hand to hand, he will not go unpunished* As sure as a handshake on a deal. The proud will be punished, even if they join hands with others to protect themselves (11:21).
16:6 *By steadfast love and truth iniquity is atoned for* To atone is to cover and pay for sin. In Israel atonement came through the sacrifices God gave, and they pointed ahead to the cross, where God's love and truth met and Jesus paid for sin once for all (Heb 10:10). Then the fear of the LORD keeps us turning from evil.
16:7 *even his enemies He causes to be at peace with him* God turned Esau's heart toward Jacob (Gen 33:4). This is the usual pattern, not a promise of no enemies. Jesus pleased His Father perfectly and was still crucified (2 Tim 3:12).

enemies He causes to be at peace with him. **8** Better ***is*** a little with righteousness than abundance of produce without justice. **9** The heart of a man plans his way, and the LORD directs his step. **10** Divination ***is*** on the lips of a king; in judgment his mouth will not act unfaithfully. **11** A balance and scales of justice ***belong*** to the LORD; all the weights of the bag ***are*** His work. **12** To do wickedness ***is*** an abomination of kings, for by righteousness a throne is established. **13** Lips of righteousness ***are*** the delight of kings, and he who speaks upright ***things*** he loves. **14** The rage of a king ***is*** messengers of death, and a wise man will appease it. **15** In the light of the face of a king ***is*** life, and his favor ***is*** like a cloud of spring rain.

Pride Before a Fall

16 To acquire wisdom, how much better than gold! And to acquire understanding ***is*** to be chosen more than silver. **17** The highway of ***the*** upright ***is*** to turn aside from evil; he who guards his way keeps his soul. **18** Before breaking ***is*** pride, and before stumbling, haughtiness of spirit. **19** Better ***is*** to be lowly of spirit with ***the*** humble than to divide plunder with ***the*** proud. **20** He who gives attention to a word will find good, and he who trusts in the LORD, how blessed ***is*** he! **21** The wise of heart will be called discerning, and sweetness of lips increases learning. **22** Prudence ***is*** a fountain of life to its owners, and the discipline of fools ***is*** folly. **23** The heart of a wise ***one*** gives insight to his mouth, and upon his lips it adds learning. **24** Words of pleasantness ***are*** a honeycomb of honey, sweet to the soul and healing to the bone. **25** There is a way right before a man, and its end ***is*** ways of death. **26** The soul of a laborer labors for him, for his mouth presses on him. **27** A man of worthlessness digs up evil, and on his lip ***it is*** like a scorching fire. **28** A man of perversities sends out strife, and a whisperer separates a close friend. **29** A man of violence entices his neighbor and leads him in a way ***that is*** not good. **30** He who shuts his eyes ***does so*** to devise perversities; he who purses his lips accomplishes evil. **31** Gray hair ***is*** a crown of splendor; in the way of righteousness it is found. **32** Better ***is*** one long of anger than a mighty ***one***, and he who rules over his spirit than he who captures a city. **33** Into the lap the lot is thrown, and from the LORD ***is*** its every judgment.

16:8 Prov 15:16; Ps 37:16; Mic 6:10
16:9 Prov 16:1; Prov 19:21; Ps 37:23
16:10 Isa 32:1,2; Prov 16:12,13; Gen 44:5,15
16:11 Prov 11:1; Prov 20:10,23; Lev 19:35,36
16:12 Prov 25:5; Prov 29:14; Prov 28:9
16:13 Prov 14:35; Prov 22:11; Ps 101:5-7
16:14 Prov 19:12; Prov 20:2; Dan 3:13-25
16:15 Job 29:23,24; Ps 72:6; Prov 19:12
16:16 Prov 8:10,11,19; Job 28:13-28; Prov 3:15-18
16:17 Isa 35:8; Rev 3:10; Prov 4:24-27
16:18 Matt 26:33; Matt 26:34; Matt 26:35
16:19 Isa 57:15; Exod 15:9; Ps 34:18
16:20 Prov 19:8; Ps 2:12; Ps 34:8
16:21 Prov 16:23; Isa 50:4; 1 Kgs 3:12
16:22 Prov 10:11; Prov 13:14; John 5:24
16:23 Col 3:16; Prov 15:28; Matt 12:34,35
16:24 Rev 10:10; Prov 24:13,14; Prov 25:11,12
16:25 Prov 14:12; Prov 12:26; Acts 26:9
16:26 Eccl 6:7; Prov 9:12; Prov 14:23
16:27 James 3:6; 1 Sam 25:17; 2 Sam 20:1
16:28 Prov 17:9; Prov 15:18; Prov 18:8
16:29 Prov 1:10-14; Prov 2:12-15; Prov 3:31
16:30 Prov 6:12-14; Prov 10:10; Isa 6:10
16:31 2 Pet 2:21; Prov 20:29; Lev 19:32
16:32 Prov 14:29; Prov 15:18; Prov 19:11
16:33 Acts 1:26; 1 Sam 14:41,42; Neh 11:1

16:8 *Better is a little with righteousness* This verse alone shows that Proverbs does not promise riches to the righteous. Sometimes they have little, but they have it with a clean conscience (15:16).
16:9 *The heart of a man plans his way, and the LORD directs his step* One of the clearest verses on God's sovereignty, His right and power to rule over everything. Both halves are true: man really plans, and God really directs. Plan humbly, saying "If the Lord wills" (James 4:13-15). When our plans fall apart, God has not lost control (Gen 50:20).
16:10 *Divination is on the lips of a king* Not sorcery, which the Law forbade (Deut 18:10), but a weighty decision, as if from God. A king's word was final, so he must judge rightly. This describes what a king ought to be. Many failed.
16:11 *all the weights of the bag are His work* Merchants carried stone weights in a bag. Cheating in business is cheating against God (11:1).
16:12 *by righteousness a throne is established* A good king hates wrong because his throne rests on justice, and he values advisers who tell him the truth (v. 13).
16:14 *The rage of a king is messengers of death* The wise know how to calm an angry ruler, as Daniel did (Dan 2:14-16).
16:15 *his favor is like a cloud of spring rain* The late spring rain ripened the grain before harvest. If an earthly king's favor matters so much, how much more the favor of the King of kings?
16:16 *To acquire wisdom, how much better than gold* Gold stays behind when we die. Wisdom shapes who we are forever (3:14; 8:10-11).
16:17 *The highway of the upright is to turn aside from evil* The upright walk a raised, well-made road that goes around evil, not through it.
16:18 *Before breaking is pride* The source of our saying that pride goes before a fall. Pharaoh, Haman, Nebuchadnezzar and Herod all show it (Esth 7:10; Dan 4:30-33; Acts 12:21-23). Pride blinds us to the edge we are walking toward.
16:19 *Better is to be lowly of spirit with the humble* Better humble and poor than sharing the gains of the proud. God opposes the proud and gives grace to the humble (James 4:6).
16:20 *he who trusts in the LORD, how blessed is he* Listening to God's word and trusting the LORD go together (Ps 1:1-2).
16:21 *sweetness of lips increases learning* Truth spoken harshly is often rejected. Truth spoken kindly is often heard.
16:23 *The heart of a wise one gives insight to his mouth* Wise words start in a wise heart (Luke 6:45).
16:24 *Words of pleasantness are a honeycomb of honey* Kind words taste good and do good, reaching the inner person and even helping the body. Who needs a sweet word from you this week?
16:25 *There is a way right before a man* Word for word as 14:12. Saying it twice makes it stronger. A road can look right, feel right and be popular, and still end in death. Only God's Word shows the true way (John 14:6).
16:26 *The soul of a laborer labors for him* Hunger keeps a worker working. Need teaches us to work (2 Thess 3:10).
16:27 *A man of worthlessness digs up evil* He goes digging for dirt on others, and his words burn like fire (James 3:6).
16:28 *a whisperer separates a close friend* A whisperer is a gossip. A few quiet words in the right ear can split the closest friends. Do not be the whisperer, and do not listen to one.
16:30 *He who shuts his eyes does so to devise perversities* Closed eyes and pressed lips are the face of a man plotting (6:13-14).
16:31 *Gray hair is a crown of splendor* Israel honored the aged (Lev 19:32). Our world chases youth. God honors age that has walked with Him. As with 10:27, this is a general truth.
16:32 *he who rules over his spirit than he who captures a city* Self-control takes more strength than winning a battle. A man can conquer a city and still be a slave to his temper (Gal 5:22-23).
16:33 *Into the lap the lot is thrown, and from the LORD is its every judgment* The lot was like casting dice or drawing straws. Israel used it to divide the land (Josh 18:10), and the apostles to choose Matthias (Acts 1:26). Nothing is chance with God. The chapter began with the LORD giving the answer of the tongue and ends with Him deciding the lot. This does not make us puppets, since the chapter also calls us to plan and choose wisely. But it lets us rest (Rom 8:28).

PROVERBS 17

Peace in the Home

1 Better ***is*** a dry morsel and quietness with it than a house
full of sacrifices of strife. **2** A servant who acts prudently will
rule over a son who acts shamefully, and in the midst of
brothers he will share the inheritance. **3** A crucible ***is*** for sil-
ver, and a furnace for gold, and the LORD tests hearts. **4** An
evildoer pays attention to a lip of trouble; falsehood gives ear
to a tongue of destructions. **5** He who mocks the poor
reproaches his Maker; he who is glad at calamity will not go
unpunished. **6** Children of children ***are*** the crown of old ***men***,
and the splendor of children ***is*** their fathers. **7** A lip of excel-
lence is not fitting for a senseless ***one***; how much less for a
noble a lip of falsehood! **8** The bribe ***is*** a stone of favor in the
eyes of its owners; to all that it turns, it prospers. **9** He who
covers a transgression seeks love, and he who repeats a
matter separates a close friend. **10** A rebuke goes deeper into
one who understands than striking a fool a hundred ***times***.
11 An evil ***one*** seeks only rebellion, and a cruel messenger
will be sent against him. **12** Let a bear robbed of cubs meet a
man, and not a fool in his folly. **13** He who returns evil for
good, evil will not depart from his house.

A Friend Loves at Every Time

14 One who lets out water ***is*** the beginning of strife; and
before the dispute breaks out, abandon ***it***. **15** He who justifies
the wicked and he who condemns ***the*** righteous, even both of
them ***are*** an abomination of the LORD. **16** Why ***is*** this, a price
in the hand of a fool to acquire wisdom, and ***there is*** no
heart? **17** At every time the friend loves, and a brother is
born for adversity. **18** A man lacking sense strikes a palm,
pledging a pledge before his neighbor. **19** He who loves
transgression loves contention; he who makes his entrance
high seeks breaking. **20** One twisted of heart will not find
good, and one perverted in his tongue will fall into trouble.
21 He who fathers a fool ***does so*** to his grief, and the father of
a senseless ***one*** does not rejoice. **22** A glad heart makes heal-
ing good, and a stricken spirit dries up ***the*** bone. **23** A wicked
one accepts a bribe from ***the*** bosom to turn aside the paths of
justice. **24** Wisdom ***is*** before the face of one who has under-

17:1 Prov 15:17; Prov 21:9,19; Ps 37:16
17:2 Eccl 4:13; Prov 10:5; Prov 19:26
17:3 Prov 27:21; Ps 26:2; Jer 17:10
17:4 Prov 28:4; 2 Tim 4:3,4; 1 John 4:5
17:5 Job 31:29; Obad 1:11-13,16; Rom 12:15
17:6 Ps 127:3-5; Gen 50:23; Job 42:16,17
17:7 Prov 26:7; Ps 50:16,17; Matt 7:5
17:8 Prov 17:23; Exod 23:8; Ps 18:16
17:9 Prov 10:12; 1 Pet 4:8; Prov 16:28
17:10 Prov 9:8,9; Prov 13:1; Prov 15:5
17:11 2 Sam 15:12; 2 Sam 16:5-9; 2 Sam 18:15,19
17:12 2 Sam 17:8; Hos 13:8; Prov 27:3
17:13 Ps 35:12; 1 Pet 3:9; 1 Sam 24:17
17:14 Prov 20:3; Prov 25:8; 1 Thess 4:11
17:15 Rom 4:5; Exod 23:7; Isa 5:23
17:16 Prov 1:22,23; Prov 8:4,5; Prov 9:4-6
17:17 Prov 18:24; Ruth 1:16; Heb 2:11
17:18 Prov 11:15; Prov 6:1-5; Prov 20:16
17:19 Prov 16:18; Prov 17:14; Prov 29:9,22
17:20 Prov 18:6,7; Prov 3:32; Prov 6:12-15
17:21 Prov 10:1; Prov 19:13; Prov 17:25
17:22 Prov 15:13; Prov 12:25; Prov 18:14
17:23 Prov 17:8; Exod 23:8; Mic 7:3
17:24 1 John 2:16; Eccl 2:14; Prov 14:6

17:1 *than a house full of sacrifices of strife* The sacrifices are the feast after a peace offering, when the family ate meat together (7:14). Peace in the home is worth more than plenty in it (15:17).

17:2 *A servant who acts prudently will rule over a son who acts shamefully* Character counts for more than birth. Abraham once thought his servant Eliezer would be his heir (Gen 15:2-3). God honors faithfulness, whatever our station.

17:3 *the LORD tests hearts* A crucible is a pot that can take great heat. The refiner heats the metal until the impurities rise to be skimmed away. God tests our hearts through trials, not to destroy us but to purify us (1 Pet 1:6-7; Mal 3:3). If you are in the furnace, remember who is watching the fire.

17:4 *An evildoer pays attention to a lip of trouble* What we like to hear says a lot about us.

17:5 *he who is glad at calamity will not go unpunished* To mock the poor insults their Maker (14:31). To be glad when anyone suffers, even an enemy, invites God's judgment (24:17-18).

17:6 *Children of children are the crown of old men* Each generation can be a crown to the other. Fathers, live so that your children can be proud of you.

17:7 *how much less for a noble a lip of falsehood* Fine words do not fit a fool. Lies fit a leader even less.

17:8 *The bribe is a stone of favor in the eyes of its owners* An observation, not an approval. The briber thinks of his gift as a lucky charm that opens every door, and in a crooked world it often works. Verse 23 says what God thinks of it.

17:9 *He who covers a transgression seeks love* Covering a wrong means forgiving it and not bringing it up again (10:12). This is not about covering crime or abuse. It is about the small hurts every friendship has.

17:10 *A rebuke goes deeper into one who understands than striking a fool a hundred times* Which are you when someone corrects you?

17:12 *Let a bear robbed of cubs meet a man, and not a fool in his folly* A mother bear robbed of her cubs is about as dangerous as anything in nature (2 Sam 17:8). A fool in full folly is worse.

17:13 *He who returns evil for good, evil will not depart from his house* David repaid Uriah's loyalty with murder, and the sword never left his house (2 Sam 12:10). We are called to the opposite: return good for evil (Rom 12:17-21).

17:14 *One who lets out water is the beginning of strife* A small leak in a dam soon becomes a flood. The wise walk away before a quarrel begins. Not every hill is worth fighting on.

17:15 *He who justifies the wicked and he who condemns the righteous* To justify is to declare someone in the right, and judges who twist this are hateful to God (Deut 25:1; Isa 5:23). How then can God justify sinners? Paul answers: God is "righteous and the One justifying the one who is of faith of Jesus" (Rom 3:26). Our guilt was not ignored. Christ paid for it on the cross.

17:16 *a price in the hand of a fool to acquire wisdom, and there is no heart* "Heart" often means sense. Money cannot buy wisdom where there is no desire to learn (2:1-5).

17:17 *At every time the friend loves, and a brother is born for adversity* A true friend loves when you are up and when you are down, as Jonathan loved David (1 Sam 18:1-3; 20:17). Many see a picture of Jesus, who calls us friends (John 15:13-15) and is not ashamed to call us brothers (Heb 2:11). Am I that kind of friend to anyone?

17:18 *A man lacking sense strikes a palm* Striking hands guaranteed another's debt (6:1-5; 11:15). Helping the needy is not wrong. Promising to pay a debt you cannot afford is foolish.

17:19 *he who makes his entrance high seeks breaking* This may mean a man who builds a showy gate to display his wealth, or one who opens his mouth proudly. Either way, pride invites a crash.

17:21 *He who fathers a fool does so to his grief* Raising a child who rejects wisdom is one of life's deepest griefs. God knows it too (Isa 1:2).

17:22 *A glad heart makes healing good* A cheerful heart is good medicine. This is not a cure for every illness, and depression is not simply a lack of cheer. But joy in the Lord truly strengthens us (Neh 8:10).

17:23 *A wicked one accepts a bribe from the bosom* Slipped out of a fold in the robe, out of sight, to bend justice. Verse 8 told how bribes look to their users. This verse says what they are (Exod 23:8).

17:24 *the eyes of a fool are on the end of the earth* Wisdom is right in front of us, in the plain duties of today. The fool is always dreaming of somewhere far away and missing what is in front of him.

standing, and the eyes of a fool ***are*** on the end of the earth. **25** A son ***who is*** a fool ***is*** vexation to his father and bitterness to her who bore him. **26** Also to fine a righteous ***one is*** not good, ***nor*** to strike nobles for uprightness. **27** He who restrains his words knows knowledge, and one precious of spirit ***is*** a man of understanding. **28** Even a fool who keeps silent is considered wise; he who shuts his lips, discerning.

PROVERBS 18

Words Like Deep Waters

1 One who separates himself seeks for ***his own*** desire; against all sound wisdom he breaks out. **2** A fool does not delight in understanding, but only in his heart revealing itself. **3** When a wicked ***one*** comes, contempt also comes, and with dishonor, reproach. **4** Deep waters ***are*** the words of the mouth of a man; a flowing torrent, a fountain of wisdom. **5** To lift up the face of a wicked ***one is*** not good, ***nor*** to turn aside a righteous ***one*** in judgment. **6** The lips of a fool go into strife, and his mouth calls for blows. **7** The mouth of a fool ***is*** ruin to him, and his lips ***are*** the snare of his soul. **8** The words of a whisperer ***are*** like delicacies, and they go down ***into*** the chambers of the belly. **9** Also one who shows himself slack in his work, he ***is*** a brother to a master of destruction.

The Name of the LORD Is a Tower

10 A tower of strength ***is*** the name of the LORD; into it a righteous ***one*** runs and is set on high. **11** The wealth of a rich ***man is*** the town of his strength, and like a wall set on high in his imagination. **12** Before breaking, the heart of a man is haughty, and before honor ***is*** humility. **13** He who returns a word before he hears, it ***is*** folly to him and shame. **14** The spirit of a man will sustain his sickness, and a stricken spirit, who will bear it? **15** A discerning heart acquires knowledge, and the ear of ***the*** wise seeks knowledge. **16** The gift of a man makes room for him, and it leads him before ***the*** great. **17** The first in his case ***is*** righteous, and his neighbor comes and examines him. **18** The lot causes contentions to cease, and it separates between ***the*** mighty. **19** A brother transgressed against ***is more*** than a town of strength, and contentions ***are*** like the bar of a fortress. **20** From the fruit of the mouth of a man his belly is satisfied; ***with*** the produce of his lips he is satisfied. **21** Death and life ***are*** in the hand of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit. **22** He who

17:25 Prov 10:1; Prov 15:20; Prov 19:13
17:26 Prov 17:15; Prov 18:5; Gen 18:25
17:27 James 1:19; Prov 10:19; James 3:2
17:28 Job 13:5; Prov 15:2; Eccl 5:3
18:1 Matt 13:19; Col 3:16; Prov 2:1-6
18:2 Matt 13:19; Prov 1:7,22; Prov 17:16
18:3 Prov 11:2; Prov 22:10; Prov 29:16
18:4 John 7:38; Col 3:16; Prov 20:5
18:5 Prov 24:23; Prov 28:21; Lev 19:15
18:6 Prov 12:16; Prov 13:10; Prov 14:16
18:7 Prov 12:13; Prov 13:3; Prov 10:8,14
18:8 Prov 16:28; Lev 19:16; Prov 12:18
18:9 Prov 10:4; Prov 28:24; Prov 23:20,21
18:10 2 Sam 22:3,51; Isa 26:4; Ps 91:2
18:11 Prov 10:15; Prov 11:4; Deut 32:31
18:12 Prov 15:33; Prov 11:2; Prov 16:18
18:13 John 7:51; Deut 13:14; 2 Sam 16:4
18:14 Prov 17:22; Ps 147:3; 2 Cor 12:9,10
18:15 Prov 15:14; Ps 119:97-104; Prov 1:5
18:16 Gen 32:20; 1 Sam 25:27; Prov 17:8
18:17 Prov 18:13; 2 Sam 16:1-3; 2 Sam 19:24-27
18:18 Prov 16:33; Josh 14:2; 1 Sam 10:21-27
18:19 Acts 15:39; Prov 6:19; Gen 4:5-8
18:20 Prov 12:13,14; Prov 13:2; Prov 25:11,12
18:21 Eph 4:29; Matt 12:35-37; Col 4:6
18:22 Prov 19:14; Prov 12:4; Prov 31:10-31

17:26 *to fine a righteous one is not good* Punishing people for doing right turns justice upside down. It happened most of all to Jesus (1 Pet 2:22-23).
17:27 *one precious of spirit is a man of understanding* The wise do not say everything they think. "Precious of spirit" may also be read cool of spirit, calm.
17:28 *Even a fool who keeps silent is considered wise* Almost funny, but true. Silence hides a lot of foolishness. If you are not sure what to say, sometimes the wisest thing is to say nothing (James 1:19).
18:1 *One who separates himself seeks for his own desire* The man who cuts himself off from others usually does it so no one can tell him no. God made us for community (Heb 10:24-25). Time alone with God is good. Cutting ourselves off from all counsel is not.
18:2 *only in his heart revealing itself* The fool only wants to air his own opinions. Some people do not listen in a conversation. They just wait for their turn to talk.
18:4 *Deep waters are the words of the mouth of a man* Words can have more meaning than appears on the surface. From a wise heart they are like a flowing stream that keeps refreshing those who hear (20:5).
18:5 *To lift up the face of a wicked one is not good* To lift up the face means to show favor. A judge must not favor the guilty or deny the innocent their rights (17:15; James 2:1-4).
18:7 *his lips are the snare of his soul* The fool's own words trap him. He is his own worst enemy.
18:8 *The words of a whisperer are like delicacies* Gossip tastes good, and once we swallow it, it goes deep and stays. It is hard to stop listening and hard to forget. The best cure is to refuse the first bite (26:22).
18:9 *he is a brother to a master of destruction* One tears down; the other lets things fall down. Neglect does as much damage as vandalism.
18:10 *A tower of strength is the name of the LORD* A strong tower was a city's last place of safety when enemies broke in. The name of the LORD stands for God Himself, all He has shown Himself to be (Exod 34:5-7). This does not promise that believers never suffer. It promises a refuge no enemy can finally reach (Ps 18:2; Rom 8:35-39). There is salvation in no other name than Jesus (Acts 4:12).
18:11 *like a wall set on high in his imagination* Set beside verse 10. The rich man has a tower too, his money. The first line is 10:15, but now his wall is high only in his imagination. Wealth cannot stop death or judgment (11:4; Luke 12:16-21). Two towers. Only one is real.
18:12 *before honor is humility* As in 16:18 and 15:33. God brings down the proud and lifts up the humble (1 Pet 5:5-6).
18:13 *He who returns a word before he hears* How many arguments happen because someone did not listen first? Listen to the end before you answer.
18:14 *a stricken spirit, who will bear it* Inner wounds can be harder to bear than outer ones. Be gentle with someone whose spirit is crushed. The Lord is near to the brokenhearted (Ps 34:18).
18:16 *The gift of a man makes room for him* A gift opens doors. It can be a bribe (17:23) or an honest present, as Jacob sent Esau (Gen 32:20) and Abigail brought David (1 Sam 25:27). Our motive decides whether it is right.
18:17 *The first in his case is righteous* The first to tell his side sounds right until the other side speaks. Wise counsel for judges, parents, church leaders and anyone who hears a complaint: never decide on one side of a story.
18:18 *The lot causes contentions to cease* When two strong men could not settle a matter, the lot ended the fight, because it was in God's hands (16:33).
18:19 *A brother transgressed against is more than a town of strength* It is easier to take a walled city than to win back a brother you have hurt. Be slow to offend and quick to make it right (Matt 5:23-24).
18:21 *Death and life are in the hand of the tongue* Words can crush a child's spirit or build it up, spread lies that ruin a man or the gospel that saves him. Those who love to talk will eat the fruit of their talk, sweet or bitter (James 3:5-6).
18:22 *He who finds a wife finds a good thing* Marriage is God's good gift (Gen 2:18). This does not mean every man must marry or that a single person lacks God's favor. Paul speaks well of singleness for those called to it (1 Cor 7:7-8). But a husband should thank God for his wife (19:14; 31:10).

finds a wife finds a good ***thing***, and obtains favor from the LORD. **23** A poor ***one*** speaks supplications, and a rich ***one*** answers strong ***things***. **24** A man of companions ***is*** to be shattered, and there is one who loves ***who*** clings more than a brother.

PROVERBS 19

Wealth, Poverty and Friends

1 Better ***is*** a poor ***one*** who walks in his integrity than one perverse of his lips, and he ***is*** a fool. **2** Also without knowledge a soul ***is*** not good, and he who hastens with ***his*** feet misses. **3** The folly of a man subverts his way, and his heart rages against the LORD. **4** Wealth adds many friends, and a poor ***one*** is separated from his friend. **5** A witness of falsehoods will not go unpunished, and he who breathes out lies will not escape. **6** Many entreat the face of a noble, and everyone ***is*** the friend of a man of gift. **7** All the brothers of a poor ***one*** hate him; how much more do his companions go far from him! He pursues ***with*** words; they ***are*** to him. **8** He who acquires heart loves his soul; he who keeps understanding ***is*** to find good. **9** A witness of falsehoods will not go unpunished, and he who breathes out lies will perish. **10** Luxury is not fitting for a fool; how much less for a servant to rule over princes! **11** The prudence of a man makes his anger long, and his splendor ***is*** to pass over transgression. **12** A roaring like the young lion ***is*** the rage of a king, and like dew on vegetation ***is*** his favor. **13** Destructions to his father ***is*** a son ***who is*** a fool, and a continual dripping ***are*** the contentions of a wife. **14** House and wealth ***are*** an inheritance of fathers, and from the LORD ***is*** a wife who acts prudently.

The Counsel of the LORD Will Stand

15 Laziness makes deep sleep fall, and a soul of slackness will be hungry. **16** He who keeps a commandment keeps his soul; he who despises his ways will die. **17** A lender to the LORD ***is*** he who shows favor to a poor ***one***, and his recompense He will repay to him. **18** Discipline your son, for there is hope, and do not lift up your soul to putting him to death. **19** One great of rage bears the penalty; for if you rescue ***him***, then you will add again. **20** Listen to counsel and accept discipline, so that you may become wise in your end. **21** Many ***are*** the plans in the heart of a man, and the counsel of the LORD, it will stand. **22** The desire of a man ***is*** his steadfast love, and

18:23 James 2:3; Ruth 2:7; 1 Sam 2:36
18:24 Prov 17:17; Prov 27:9; 1 Chr 12:38-40
19:1 Prov 28:6; Prov 19:22; Prov 12:26
19:2 Prov 21:5; Eccl 12:9; Isa 27:11
19:3 Gen 3:6-12; Gen 4:5-14; Num 16:19-41
19:4 Prov 14:20; Prov 19:6,7; Luke 15:13-15
19:5 Prov 21:28; Exod 23:1; Prov 6:19
19:6 Prov 29:26; Prov 17:8; Prov 18:16
19:7 Ps 38:11; Prov 19:4; Prov 18:23
19:8 Prov 16:20; Prov 17:16; Ezek 36:26
19:9 Isa 9:15-17; Jer 23:25-32; Jer 28:15-17
19:10 Luke 16:19; Prov 30:21,22; 1 Sam 25:36
19:11 Prov 16:32; Prov 14:29; Prov 15:18
19:12 Prov 16:14,15; Hos 14:5; Prov 20:2
19:13 Prov 27:15; Prov 21:9,19; Prov 10:1
19:14 Prov 18:22; 2 Cor 12:14; Prov 31:10-31
19:15 Prov 20:13; Prov 23:21; Prov 6:9,10
19:16 Luke 10:28; Prov 16:17; Prov 13:13
19:17 Prov 28:27; 2 Cor 9:6-8; Eccl 11:1
19:18 Prov 13:24; Prov 29:15,17; Prov 22:15
19:19 Prov 22:24,25; Prov 25:28; Prov 29:22
19:20 Rev 3:18; Prov 1:8; Prov 2:1-9
19:21 Prov 16:1,9; Isa 14:24,26,27; Ps 33:10,11
19:22 Mark 12:43; Mark 14:6-8; 1 Chr 29:2,3,17

18:23 *a rich one answers strong things* An observation, not an approval. Money can make people hard. God hears the poor when others brush them off.
18:24 *there is one who loves who clings more than a brother* A man with many casual companions may still come to ruin, because they will not stand with him when it counts. Better one true friend who sticks closer than a brother. Many believers see the fullest such friend in Jesus (John 15:15; Heb 13:5).
19:1 *Better is a poor one who walks in his integrity* A man with little money and a clean life is richer than a smooth-talking fool (28:6).
19:2 *he who hastens with his feet misses* Zeal without knowledge is not good (Rom 10:2). Slow down long enough to learn the right way.
19:3 *his heart rages against the LORD* A man ruins his life by his own choices and then blames God. Adam blamed God for giving him Eve (Gen 3:12). Before we get angry at God for our trouble, we should ask whether we brought it on ourselves.
19:4 *Wealth adds many friends* This is how the world often works, not how it should.
19:5 *A witness of falsehoods will not go unpunished* Lying in court breaks the Ten Commandments (Exod 20:16). The liar may fool a judge but not God. Verse 9 repeats it with a stronger ending: he will perish.
19:6 *everyone is the friend of a man of gift* People crowd around the powerful and generous, often hoping to get something. Such friends are not true friends (18:24).
19:7 *He pursues with words; they are to him* The last line is hard in Hebrew. It seems to mean the poor man chases his friends with pleading words, but they are gone. Jesus was not like this. He drew near to the poor (Luke 4:18).
19:8 *He who acquires heart loves his soul* To get wisdom is to love yourself in the right way.
19:10 *how much less for a servant to rule over princes* Position without character is dangerous (30:21-22).
19:11 *his splendor is to pass over transgression* Good sense makes a man slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook an offense. That does not mean pretending sin does not matter. It means not taking every slight personally and forgiving freely, as God forgave us (Eph 4:32).
19:12 *like dew on vegetation is his favor* A king's anger is as fearful as a lion's roar, his favor as refreshing as dew (16:14-15).
19:13 *a continual dripping are the contentions of a wife* Like a roof that drips and drips (27:15). The same is true of a quarrelsome husband. A home without peace wears everyone down.
19:14 *from the LORD is a wife who acts prudently* A man can inherit a house from his father. A wise wife is a gift only God can give (18:22).
19:15 *Laziness makes deep sleep fall* The lazy man drifts along until he wakes up hungry.
19:17 *A lender to the LORD is he who shows favor to a poor one* One of the most beautiful verses in Proverbs. Kindness to the poor is a loan to God, and God always pays back. Whatever we do for the least of Jesus' brothers, we do for Him (Matt 25:40; Luke 12:33). The repayment may come in this life or the next, in His own form and time. It is not a scheme to get rich, but a promise that God will not forget (Heb 6:10).
19:18 *Discipline your son, for there is hope* Correct a child while he is young. The second line may mean, do not let anger go so far that you harm him, or, do not by neglect let him go on to a road that ends in death. Either way it calls for loving, timely correction, not rage (Eph 6:4).
19:19 *if you rescue him, then you will add again* Bail out a hot-tempered man once and you will do it again and again. Sometimes love lets a person face the results of his choices so he can learn.
19:20 *so that you may become wise in your end* Wisdom grows over a lifetime of listening. The goal is to be wise at the end, not only clever at the start.
19:21 *the counsel of the LORD, it will stand* Like 16:9. It humbles us, because our plans may fail, and comforts us, because God's purpose never does (Isa 46:10). Plan, but hold your plans loosely.
19:22 *The desire of a man is his steadfast love* What people value most in a person is loyal kindness, so a poor man who is true beats a rich liar. The line may also mean that a man's real desire shows in his kindness.

better ***is*** a poor ***one*** than a man of a lie. **23** The fear of the LORD ***is*** to life, and satisfied he will lodge; he will not be visited ***with*** evil. **24** A sluggard hides his hand in the dish; even to his mouth he does not bring it back. **25** You strike a mocker, and a simple ***one*** becomes prudent; and reproving a discerning ***one***, he will understand knowledge. **26** He who assaults a father ***and*** drives away a mother ***is*** a son who brings shame and causes disgrace. **27** Cease, my son, to listen to discipline, to stray from the words of knowledge. **28** A witness of worthlessness mocks justice, and the mouth of wicked ***ones*** swallows evil. **29** Judgments are prepared for the mockers, and blows for the back of fools.

PROVERBS 20

Wine Is a Mocker

1 Wine ***is*** a mocker, strong drink ***is*** noisy, and anyone who strays by it is not wise. **2** A roaring like the young lion ***is*** the terror of a king; he who infuriates him sins ***against*** his ***own*** life. **3** Honor to the man ***is*** ceasing from strife, and every fool breaks out. **4** From winter a sluggard does not plow; and he asks in the harvest, and ***there is*** nothing. **5** Counsel in the heart of a man ***is*** deep waters, and a man of understanding will draw it out. **6** A multitude of men, each proclaims his steadfast love; and a man of faithfulness, who will find? **7** A righteous ***one*** who goes about in his integrity, how blessed ***are*** his sons after him! **8** A king who sits on a throne of judgment winnows all evil with his eyes. **9** Who will say, "I have made my heart pure; I am clean from my sin"? **10** A weight and a weight, an ephah and an ephah, even both of them ***are*** an abomination of the LORD. **11** Even by his deeds a youth makes himself known, whether his work ***is*** pure and whether ***it is*** upright. **12** An ear that hears and an eye that sees, the LORD has made even both of them. **13** Do not love sleep, lest you become poor; open your eyes, be satisfied ***with*** bread. **14** "Bad, bad," says the buyer; and he goes his way, then he boasts. **15** There is gold and an abundance of jewels, and a vessel of preciousness ***are*** lips of knowledge.

The Lamp of the LORD

16 Take his garment, for he has stood surety for a stranger, and for a foreign ***woman*** hold it in pledge. **17** Bread of falsehood ***is*** sweet to the man, and afterward his mouth will be

19:23 Acts 9:31; Matt 5:6; Heb 13:5,6
19:24 Prov 15:19; Prov 19:15; Prov 6:9,10
19:25 Prov 21:11; Deut 13:11; Deut 21:21
19:26 Prov 10:5; Prov 17:2; Prov 10:1
19:27 Mark 7:10; Mark 7:11; Mark 7:12
19:28 Job 15:16; Job 34:7; Job 20:12,13
19:29 Prov 26:3; Prov 10:13; Prov 9:12
20:1 Hos 4:11; Prov 31:4; Isa 28:7
20:2 Prov 8:36; Prov 19:12; 1 Kgs 2:23
20:3 Prov 17:14; Prov 14:29; Prov 16:32
20:4 Prov 19:15,24; Prov 10:4; Prov 26:13-16
20:5 Prov 18:4; Ps 64:6; 1 Cor 2:11
20:6 Matt 6:2; Luke 18:8,11,28; Ps 12:1
20:7 Ps 112:2; Ps 37:26; Prov 19:1
20:8 Prov 20:26; Prov 16:12; Prov 29:14
20:9 1 Kgs 8:46; Job 14:4; Eccl 7:20
20:10 Prov 20:23; Prov 11:1; Deut 25:13
20:11 Matt 7:16; Prov 21:8; Prov 22:15
20:12 Matt 13:15; Matt 13:16; Ps 94:9
20:13 Prov 19:15; Prov 6:9-11; Prov 12:11
20:14 Eccl 1:10; Hos 12:7,8; 1 Thess 4:6
20:15 Prov 3:15; Prov 8:11; Prov 10:20,21
20:16 Prov 27:13; Prov 11:15; Prov 22:26,27
20:17 Prov 9:17,18; Eccl 11:9; Heb 11:25

19:23 *he will not be visited with evil* A general truth. Believers face trouble (John 16:33), but no evil can finally harm one who belongs to God (Rom 8:28).
19:24 *A sluggard hides his hand in the dish* A funny picture on purpose. He is too lazy to lift the food to his mouth. Laziness can grow until it is ridiculous (26:15).
19:25 *You strike a mocker, and a simple one becomes prudent* The mocker may not learn from punishment, but the simple one watching does. The discerning learn from a word alone (21:11).
19:26 *He who assaults a father and drives away a mother* Honoring parents includes caring for them when they are old (Exod 20:12; 1 Tim 5:4, 8).
19:27 *Cease, my son, to listen to discipline, to stray* A sharp, almost ironic warning: stop listening to discipline and you will wander from knowledge. The father means, do not stop listening.
19:29 *Judgments are prepared for the mockers* Mockers laugh at judgment, but it is ready for them. God's justice may wait, but it comes (10:13; 26:3).
20:1 *Wine is a mocker, strong drink is noisy* Wine came from grapes; strong drink was beer or another drink from grain or fruit. Here they act like characters in the book: one a mocker, the other a brawler. "Strays by it" means staggers, led astray. Scripture plainly forbids drunkenness (Eph 5:18; 23:29-35). Believers differ on whether to drink in moderation (Ps 104:15; John 2:1-11) or not at all, for the dangers named here and the weaker brother (Rom 14:21). Both agree drink can deceive. If drink has a hold on you, get help. There is freedom in Christ.
20:3 *Honor to the man is ceasing from strife* Any fool can start a fight. The honorable thing is to stop one or stay out of it (Matt 5:9).
20:4 *From winter a sluggard does not plow* Plowing was done in the cold, rainy season. The lazy man stayed in, and at harvest there was nothing. Work done or not done in the hard season shows up later.
20:5 *Counsel in the heart of a man is deep waters* A person's true purposes can lie deep, like water in a well. A wise man draws them out with good questions and patient listening, a good word for parents, counselors and friends.
20:6 *a man of faithfulness, who will find* Many talk about how loyal they are. Few prove it. Faithfulness shows itself over time (31:10).
20:7 *how blessed are his sons after him* Children inherit a father's example, his good name and often God's kindness for his sake. The best thing a father can give his children is his own walk with God.
20:8 *winnows all evil with his eyes* A farmer winnowed grain by throwing it into the wind so the chaff blew away. A good king sees through evil and separates it out.
20:9 *I have made my heart pure; I am clean from my sin* No one honestly can say it. Placed right after the king who sees all evil, it humbles all of us (1 Kgs 8:46; Rom 3:23; 1 John 1:8). We cannot clean our own hearts. Only God can, through Christ. David prayed for a pure heart (Ps 51:10), and God forgives and cleanses those who confess (1 John 1:9).
20:10 *A weight and a weight, an ephah and an ephah* An ephah was a grain measure of a little over half a bushel. A dishonest merchant kept two sets, heavy for buying and light for selling. God hates cheating (Deut 25:13-16). The saying returns in verse 23.
20:11 *Even by his deeds a youth makes himself known* Even a child shows his character by what he does. Parents, watch what your children do, not only what they say.
20:12 *An ear that hears and an eye that sees, the LORD has made even both of them* The One who made ears and eyes surely hears and sees us (Ps 94:9). We should use them for Him.
20:14 *"Bad, bad," says the buyer; and he goes his way, then he boasts* A scene from the market. The buyer runs down the goods to get a lower price, then walks away bragging about his deal. Proverbs smiles, but it also exposes a small dishonesty most of us have practiced.
20:15 *a vessel of preciousness are lips of knowledge* Gold and jewels are common compared to wise words.
20:16 *Take his garment, for he has stood surety for a stranger* If a man is foolish enough to guarantee a stranger's debt, the lender should take his coat as a pledge, because he will probably end up owing (6:1-5; 27:13).
20:17 *afterward his mouth will be filled with gravel* Things gained by lying taste sweet at first and turn to gravel later. Sin always promises more than it gives.

filled ***with*** gravel. **18** Plans are established by counsel, and by guidance make war. **19** He who goes about ***as*** a slanderer reveals a secret, and with one who opens wide his lips do not get involved. **20** He who curses his father and his mother, his lamp will be put out in the pupil of darkness. **21** An inheritance gained hastily at the first, and its end will not be blessed. **22** Do not say, "I will repay evil"; wait for the LORD, and let Him save you. **23** An abomination of the LORD ***are*** a weight and a weight, and scales of deceit ***are*** not good. **24** From the LORD ***are*** the steps of a man; and mankind, how will he understand his way? **25** A snare to a man ***is that*** he says rashly, "Holy!" and after vows ***he begins*** to inquire. **26** A wise king winnows wicked ***ones***, and he turns back a wheel over them. **27** The lamp of the LORD ***is*** the breath of mankind, searching all the chambers of the belly.
28 Steadfast love and truth preserve a king, and he sustains his throne by steadfast love. **29** The splendor of young men ***is*** their strength, and the majesty of old ***men is*** gray hair. **30** Stripes of a wound ***are*** a cleansing against evil, and blows, the chambers of the belly.

PROVERBS 21

The King's Heart in the LORD's Hand

1 Streams of water ***is*** the heart of a king in the hand of the LORD; to all that He desires He turns it. **2** Every way of a man ***is*** upright in his eyes, and the LORD weighs hearts. **3** To do righteousness and justice ***is*** chosen by the LORD more than sacrifice. **4** Haughtiness of eyes and an arrogant heart, the lamp of wicked ***ones***, ***is*** sin. **5** The plans of a diligent ***one are*** only to advantage, and everyone who hastens, only to poverty. **6** The acquiring of treasures by a tongue of falsehood ***is*** a vapor driven about, seekers of death. **7** The violence of wicked ***ones*** will drag them away, for they refuse to do justice. **8** Crooked ***is*** the way of a man ***who is*** guilty, and a pure ***one***, his work ***is*** upright. **9** Better ***is*** to dwell on a corner of a roof than ***with*** a woman of contentions and a house of association. **10** The soul of a wicked ***one*** craves evil; his neighbor is not shown favor in his eyes. **11** When a mocker is punished, a simple ***one*** becomes wise; and when insight is given to a wise ***one***, he receives knowledge. **12** A righteous

20:18 Prov 15:22; Prov 24:6; Luke 14:31
20:19 Prov 11:13; Rom 16:18; Prov 18:8
20:20 Mark 7:10; Mark 7:11; Mark 7:12
20:21 Prov 13:22; Prov 23:4; Prov 28:20,22
20:22 1 Thess 5:15; Prov 24:29; Rom 12:17-19
20:23 Prov 20:10; Ezek 45:10; Hos 12:7
20:24 Prov 16:9; Jer 10:23; Ps 25:4,12
20:25 Prov 18:7; Lev 5:15; Lev 22:10-15
20:26 Prov 20:8; 2 Sam 4:9-12; Ps 101:5-8
20:27 1 Cor 2:11; 2 Cor 4:2-6; Prov 20:30
20:28 Prov 29:14; Prov 16:12; Prov 16:6
20:29 1 John 2:14; Prov 16:31; Jer 9:23,24
20:30 Prov 22:15; Prov 19:25; Heb 12:10

21:1 Prov 20:24; Acts 7:10; Dan 4:35
21:2 Prov 16:2,25; Luke 16:15; Prov 24:12
21:3 Mark 12:33; 1 Sam 15:22; Prov 15:8
21:4 Prov 6:17; Prov 8:13; Prov 30:13
21:5 Prov 10:4; Prov 13:4; Prov 14:29
21:6 Prov 13:11; Prov 10:2; 2 Pet 2:3
21:7 Prov 1:18,19; Prov 10:6; Prov 22:22,23
21:8 Gen 6:5,6,12; Job 15:14-16; Ps 14:2,3
21:9 Prov 19:13; Prov 21:19; Prov 25:24
21:10 Prov 3:29; Mark 7:21,22; Mic 3:2,3
21:11 Prov 19:25; Num 16:34; Deut 13:11
21:12 Ps 37:35,36; Job 5:3; Job 8:15

20:18 *Plans are established by counsel* Even the decision to go to war should be made with wise advice (15:22; 24:6; Luke 14:31).
20:19 *with one who opens wide his lips do not get involved* If he tells you other people's secrets, he will tell yours.
20:20 *He who curses his father and his mother* Under the Law cursing a parent was a capital crime (Exod 21:17). The lamp going out in deep darkness pictures a life and family line ending in ruin.
20:21 *An inheritance gained hastily at the first* Money grabbed early, as the prodigal grabbed his inheritance (Luke 15:12-13), or gained by schemes, usually does not end well.
20:22 *Do not say, "I will repay evil"; wait for the LORD, and let Him save you* Do not even say it. God will deliver you and deal with the wrong in His time (Rom 12:19). Leaving revenge to God is not weakness. It is faith.
20:24 *From the LORD are the steps of a man* We often cannot see why our lives go as they do. We do not have to understand every step to trust the One who orders them (16:9; Jer 10:23).
20:25 *after vows he begins to inquire* To call something holy was to set it apart for God as a gift or vow. The man promised quickly, then began asking whether he really had to keep it. Think first, promise second (Eccl 5:4). Jephthah is the sad example of a rash vow (Judg 11:30-35).
20:26 *he turns back a wheel over them* A threshing wheel was rolled over grain to break the husks. A wise ruler separates the wicked and deals with them firmly so evil does not spread (Rom 13:3-4).
20:27 *The lamp of the LORD is the breath of mankind* The human spirit, the breath God breathed into man (Gen 2:7), is a lamp God uses to search our inner parts. That inner light includes conscience. God sees into rooms of our hearts we hide even from ourselves (Heb 4:12-13), so we can never hide from Him, and we can ask Him to search us (Ps 139:23-24).
20:28 *he sustains his throne by steadfast love* A king lasts by loyal love and faithfulness, not force alone. The throne of Jesus, the Son of David, is established forever this way (Isa 16:5; Luke 1:32-33).
20:29 *the majesty of old men is gray hair* Each age has its glory: strength for the young, wisdom and experience for the old (16:31). A church needs both, and each should honor the other.
20:30 *Stripes of a wound are a cleansing against evil* Sometimes pain is what it takes to clean out evil, and hard correction reaches the inner person. God's discipline yields the fruit of righteousness (Heb 12:11). This speaks of the work of correction, not permission for cruelty.
21:1 *Streams of water is the heart of a king in the hand of the LORD* A farmer guided water to his crops through small channels, turning it with his hand. God turned the hearts of Pharaoh, Cyrus and Artaxerxes to carry out His plans (Exod 12:31; Ezra 1:1; Neh 2:8). Kings are responsible for their choices, yet God rules over them. No ruler is outside His reach, a comfort when we pray for leaders (1 Tim 2:1-2).
21:2 *the LORD weighs hearts* Close to 16:2. We all think we are right. God weighs what is really going on inside.
21:3 *To do righteousness and justice is chosen by the LORD more than sacrifice* God wanted the sacrifices offered, but never instead of obedience (1 Sam 15:22; Hos 6:6; Mic 6:6-8). Going to church does not cover a life of injustice.
21:4 *the lamp of wicked ones, is sin* Pride is the lamp the wicked walk by, first on the list of what the LORD hates (6:16-17).
21:5 *everyone who hastens, only to poverty* Careful planning usually pays. The get-rich-quick spirit usually ends in loss (28:20).
21:6 *a vapor driven about, seekers of death* Wealth gained by lying is mist blown by the wind. Those who chase it are chasing death.
21:7 *The violence of wicked ones will drag them away* The violence they use on others sweeps them away like fish dragged in a net.
21:9 *Better is to dwell on a corner of a roof* Flat roofs were used like a porch. Living alone in a corner up there in sun and rain beats sharing a house with a quarrelsome wife (25:24; v. 19). The same is true of a quarrelsome husband. These sayings are against strife, not against wives.
21:10 *his neighbor is not shown favor in his eyes* Sin makes a person cold toward others.
21:11 *When a mocker is punished, a simple one becomes wise* Close to 19:25. Better to be the one who learns from a word.
21:12 *A righteous one gives attention to the house of a wicked one* A hard verse. "A righteous one" may be God, the Righteous One, who watches the house of the wicked and brings them to ruin, or a righteous judge looking into their ways. Either way, the wicked do not get away with it.

one gives attention to the house of a wicked ***one***, subverting wicked ***ones*** to evil. **13** He who shuts his ear from the cry of ***the*** poor, he also will call out and will not be answered. **14** A gift in secret subdues anger, and a bribe in the bosom, strong rage. **15** To do justice ***is*** a joy to the righteous, and ruin to those who work evil. **16** A man who wanders from the way of insight will rest in the assembly of the shades.

The Victory Belongs to the LORD

17 A man of poverty ***is*** he who loves joy; he who loves wine and oil will not become rich. **18** A ransom for the righteous ***is*** a wicked ***one***, and in place of upright ***ones***, one who acts treacherously. **19** Better ***is*** to dwell in a land of wilderness than ***with*** a woman of contentions and vexation. **20** Desirable treasure and oil ***are*** in the dwelling of a wise ***one***, and a foolish man swallows it up. **21** He who pursues righteousness and steadfast love will find life, righteousness, and honor. **22** A wise ***one*** goes up ***to*** a city of warriors and brings down the strength of its confidence. **23** He who guards his mouth and his tongue guards his soul from troubles. **24** Proud, arrogant, "Mocker" ***is*** his name, he who acts in a fury of pride. **25** The desire of a sluggard kills him, for his hands refuse to work. **26** All the day he craves a craving, and a righteous ***one*** gives and does not hold back. **27** The sacrifice of wicked ***ones is*** an abomination; how much more when he brings it with a wicked scheme! **28** A witness of lies will perish, and a man who listens will speak forever. **29** A wicked man makes his face strong, and an upright ***one***, he considers his way. **30** ***There is*** no wisdom and no understanding and no counsel opposite the LORD. **31** A horse is prepared for a day of battle, and the victory ***belongs*** to the LORD.

PROVERBS 22

A Good Name

1 A name ***is*** to be chosen more than great riches; more than silver and more than gold, grace ***is*** good. **2** A rich ***one*** and a poor ***one*** meet together; the Maker of them all ***is*** the LORD. **3** A prudent ***one*** sees evil and hides himself, and simple ***ones*** pass on and are punished. **4** The consequence of humility, the fear of the LORD, ***is*** riches and honor and life. **5** Thorns, snares ***are*** in the way of a perverse ***one***; he who guards his

21:13 James 2:13-16; Ps 58:4; Acts 7:57
21:14 Prov 18:16; Prov 19:6; Prov 17:8,23
21:15 Prov 10:29; Job 29:12-17; Ps 40:8
21:16 Prov 13:20; Ps 125:5; Zeph 1:6
21:17 Prov 23:21; Prov 21:20; Prov 5:10,11
21:18 Prov 11:8; Isa 43:3,4; Isa 53:4,5
21:19 Prov 21:9; Ps 55:6,7; Ps 120:5,6
21:20 Ps 112:3; Matt 25:3,4; Prov 10:22
21:21 Rom 9:30; Matt 5:6; Prov 15:9
21:22 Eccl 7:19; 2 Sam 20:16-22; Eccl 9:13-18
21:23 Prov 12:13; Prov 13:3; Prov 18:21
21:24 Prov 6:17; Prov 16:18; Prov 18:12
21:25 Prov 13:4; Prov 12:24,27; Prov 15:19
21:26 Ps 37:26; Ps 112:9; Acts 20:33-35
21:27 Heb 11:4; Prov 15:8; Isa 66:3
21:28 Prov 19:5,9; Prov 6:19; Prov 25:18
21:29 Prov 11:5; Prov 28:14; Prov 29:1
21:30 Acts 5:39; Prov 19:21; Isa 8:9,10
21:31 Isa 31:1; Ps 20:7; Ps 33:17,18
22:1 Eccl 7:1; 1 Kgs 1:47; Luke 10:20
22:2 Job 31:15; Prov 14:31; Prov 29:13
22:3 Prov 14:16; Prov 27:12; Heb 11:7
22:4 Prov 21:21; Prov 3:16; Ps 112:1-3
22:5 Prov 15:19; 1 John 5:18; Prov 13:15

21:13 *He who shuts his ear from the cry of the poor* If we refuse to hear the poor, God may refuse to hear us (Luke 16:19-31; James 2:13).
21:14 *A gift in secret subdues anger* An observation. A quiet gift can calm an angry man, as Jacob's gifts calmed Esau (Gen 32:20). It does not approve bribes that bend justice (17:23).
21:16 *will rest in the assembly of the shades* The shades are the dead (2:18; 9:18). Wandering is how it starts. Death is where it ends.
21:17 *he who loves wine and oil will not become rich* Joy here means pleasure, the party life, and wine and oil were luxuries for feasts. Enjoying God's gifts is not sin (Eccl 9:7). Loving pleasure more than wisdom ruins a person (2 Tim 3:4).
21:18 *A ransom for the righteous is a wicked one* The trouble the wicked plan for the righteous falls on themselves, as with Haman (Esth 7:10; 11:8). This is not the gospel. Jesus is the true ransom, the righteous One who gave His life for the unrighteous (Mark 10:45; 1 Pet 3:18).
21:19 *Better is to dwell in a land of wilderness* Verse 9 said even more strongly. Husbands and wives, let us make our homes places of peace (1 Pet 3:7-8).
21:20 *a foolish man swallows it up* The wise save. The fool spends everything as fast as it comes (6:6-8).
21:21 *He who pursues righteousness and steadfast love will find life* Chase what is right and loyal love, and you find more than you looked for (Matt 6:33).
21:22 *A wise one goes up to a city of warriors* Wisdom is stronger than walls and warriors (Eccl 9:14-16; 2 Cor 10:4).
21:23 *He who guards his mouth and his tongue guards his soul from troubles* Much of our trouble comes from our mouths (13:3).
21:24 *"Mocker" is his name* Pride and scorn go together. When we find ourselves mocking others, pride is usually underneath.
21:25 *The desire of a sluggard kills him* He wants things but will not work. His wants eat him alive.
21:26 *a righteous one gives and does not hold back* The sluggard craves all day. The righteous works and then gives freely. One lives to get, the other to give (Acts 20:35).
21:27 *how much more when he brings it with a wicked scheme* Worse than worship from a wicked heart (15:8) is using religion to cover evil plans. God cannot be bribed.
21:29 *A wicked man makes his face strong* The wicked puts on a bold face and pushes ahead. The upright thinks about his path.
21:30 *There is no wisdom and no understanding and no counsel opposite the LORD* No plan can succeed against God (Ps 2). The greatest plot ever against Him was the cross, and He turned it into our salvation (Acts 4:27-28).
21:31 *the victory belongs to the LORD* Get the horse ready and train the army. Do your part. But victory comes from God (Ps 20:7). Work and trust go together. The chapter ends as it began: the LORD rules.
22:1 *A name is to be chosen more than great riches* A good name is a good reputation built on good character. "Grace" here means favor, being well thought of. Money can be lost and earned again. A ruined name is very hard to rebuild.
22:2 *A rich one and a poor one meet together; the Maker of them all is the LORD* Both were made by the same God. The rich should not look down on the poor, and the poor should not envy the rich. We all stand on level ground before our Maker (Job 31:15; James 2:1-5).
22:3 *A prudent one sees evil and hides himself* The prudent see trouble coming and take cover. The simple walk straight into it (27:12).
22:4 *The consequence of humility, the fear of the LORD, is riches and honor and life* Humility and the fear of the LORD go together, and their usual result is blessing. This is a general truth, not a promise that every humble believer will be wealthy. Jesus was humble and poor. The riches, honor and life come partly in this life and fully in the next (Matt 5:5; 1 Pet 5:6).
22:5 *Thorns, snares are in the way of a perverse one* Many troubles can be avoided simply by not going where they are.

soul will be far from them. **6** Train the youth according to his
way; even when he is old he will not turn aside from it. **7** A
rich ***one*** rules over poor ***ones***, and a borrower ***is*** a servant to a
man who lends. **8** He who sows unrighteousness will reap
evil, and the rod of his fury will come to an end. **9** One good
of eye, he will be blessed, for he gives from his bread to the
poor. **10** Drive out a mocker, and strife will go out, and dis-
pute and dishonor will cease. **11** He who loves purity of
heart, the grace of his lips, a king ***is*** his friend. **12** The eyes of
the LORD preserve knowledge, and He subverts the words of
one who acts treacherously. **13** A sluggard says, "A lion ***is***
outside! In the midst of the squares I will be murdered!" **14** A
deep pit ***is*** the mouth of strange ***women***; one denounced by
the LORD will fall there. **15** Folly ***is*** bound in the heart of a
youth; the rod of discipline will put it far from him. **16** One
who oppresses a poor ***one*** to make much for him, one who
gives to a rich ***one***, only to poverty.

The Words of the Wise

17 Incline your ear and hear the words of wise ***ones***, and set
your heart to my knowledge; **18** for ***it is*** pleasant if you keep
them in your belly; they will be prepared together on your
lips. **19** So that your trust may be in the LORD, I have made
you know today, even you. **20** Have I not written for you
excellent ***things*** in counsels and knowledge, **21** to make you
know the certainty of words of truth, to bring back true
words to those who send you? **22** Do not rob a poor ***one***
because he ***is*** poor, and do not crush an afflicted ***one*** in the
gate; **23** for the LORD will plead their case, and He will
despoil those who despoil them ***of*** life. **24** Do not associate
with a master of anger, and with a man of rages do not go,
25 lest you learn his paths and take a snare for your soul.
26 Do not be among those who strike a palm, among those
who stand surety ***for*** debts. **27** If you have nothing to pay,
why should he take your bed from under you? **28** Do not dis-
place an ancient boundary which your fathers made. **29** Do
you see a man skilled in his work? Before kings he will stand;
he will not stand before obscure ***ones***.

22:6 Eph 6:4; 2 Tim 3:15; Gen 18:19
22:7 Prov 18:23; James 2:6; Prov 22:16,22
22:8 Job 4:8; Ps 125:3; Hos 10:13
22:9 2 Cor 9:9; Prov 19:17; Heb 13:16
22:10 Gen 21:9,10; Prov 21:24; Neh 4:1-3
22:11 Luke 4:22; Prov 16:13; Matt 5:8
22:12 2 Chr 16:9; Isa 59:19-21; Matt 16:16-18
22:13 Prov 15:19; Prov 26:13-16; Num 13:32,33
22:14 Prov 23:27; Eccl 7:26; Prov 6:24-29
22:15 Prov 13:24; Prov 19:18; Prov 23:13,14
22:16 Ps 12:5; James 2:13; Prov 22:22,23
22:17 Prov 23:12; Prov 2:2-5; Prov 5:1,2
22:18 John 7:38; Prov 2:10; Prov 3:17
22:19 Prov 3:5; Ps 62:8; Isa 12:2
22:20 Prov 8:6; Ps 12:6; Hos 8:12
22:21 Luke 1:3; 1 John 5:13; Luke 1:4
22:22 Exod 23:6; Zech 7:10; Mal 3:5
22:23 1 Sam 25:39; Ps 12:5; Prov 23:11
22:24 Prov 29:22; Prov 21:24; 2 Cor 6:14-17
22:25 1 Cor 15:33; Prov 13:20; Ps 106:35
22:26 Prov 11:15; Prov 17:18; Prov 6:1-5
22:27 Prov 20:16; Exod 22:26,27; 2 Kgs 4:1
22:28 Prov 23:10; Deut 19:14; Deut 27:17
22:29 Prov 10:4; Prov 12:24; 1 Kgs 11:28

22:6 *Train the youth according to his way; even when he is old he will not turn aside from it* To train is to start a child off and dedicate him; the same word is used for dedicating a house or the temple (Deut 20:5; 1 Kgs 8:63). "According to his way" may mean the way he should go, God's way, or according to the child's own nature and stage of life. Both fit Scripture. A few read it as a warning: let a child go his own way and he will never leave it.

22:6 *even when he is old he will not turn aside from it* This is not a promise that a child raised well will always follow God. A proverb tells how life usually works (10:27). Every child grows up and makes his own choices before God (Ezek 18:20). God is the perfect Father, and Israel still rebelled (Isa 1:2). If your grown child has turned from the Lord, this verse is not a verdict against you. Keep praying, keep loving, keep the door open. The father of the prodigal kept watching the road (Luke 15:20).

22:7 *a borrower is a servant to a man who lends* The one who owes is under the power of the one he owes. Debt is a kind of slavery. The Bible does not forbid all borrowing, but warns against taking on that weight lightly (Rom 13:8).

22:8 *He who sows unrighteousness will reap evil* What we sow we reap (Gal 6:7). The rod the wicked used in anger will be broken.

22:9 *One good of eye, he will be blessed* A good eye is a generous eye, one that sees others' needs and is glad to help (19:17; 2 Cor 9:6-7).

22:10 *Drive out a mocker, and strife will go out* Sometimes one person is the cause of all the fighting. Church leaders and employers sometimes have to make that hard decision (Titus 3:10).

22:11 *a king is his friend* A pure heart and gracious words win the favor of good leaders, as Daniel and Nehemiah were trusted by kings.

22:13 *A lion is outside* The lazy man's excuses can be wild. A lion in the streets! So he stays in bed. We laugh, but we all have our own lions. What excuses keep you from the work God has given you? (26:13)

22:14 *A deep pit is the mouth of strange women* The adulteress's smooth talk is a trap dug for animals (5:3-5; 23:27). The one who falls in has already turned from God. Sexual sin is both a sin and a judgment on those who walk away from the LORD (Rom 1:24).

22:15 *Folly is bound in the heart of a youth* Children are not born wise. Folly is tied up tight in their hearts, and loving correction loosens it. As at 13:24, the rod pictures correction and included physical discipline. A loving parent does not leave a child alone with his folly, but correction must never come from rage or cross into abuse (Eph 6:4). Godly parents differ on spanking and agree children must be corrected with firmness and love.

22:16 *One who oppresses a poor one to make much for him* Squeezing the poor or giving to the rich to win favor are both ways of using people for gain, and both end in loss. This closes the collection that began at 10:1.

22:17 *Incline your ear and hear the words of wise ones* A new section, "the words of wise ones," runs to 24:22, with a short addition in 24:23-34. Parts of it are much like an Egyptian book of sayings called the Instruction of Amenemope. Many believe the inspired writer used and reshaped wisdom known in his day, under God's guidance, setting it on its true foundation, the fear of the LORD.

22:18 *they will be prepared together on your lips* Keep wisdom inside, and the right words will be ready when you need them.

22:19 *So that your trust may be in the LORD* This is the purpose of all that follows. Wisdom is not an end in itself. It leads us to trust God, and it is for "you," personally, "today."

22:21 *to make you know the certainty of words of truth* God wants us to know the truth with certainty (Luke 1:4) and to be people who bring back a true report to those who send us.

22:22 *do not crush an afflicted one in the gate* The gate was where the elders held court. The poor could not hire anyone to defend them, but the LORD Himself pleads their case (v. 23). Anyone who robs the poor is fighting God (Exod 22:22-24).

22:24 *Do not associate with a master of anger* Anger is catching. Spend time with a hothead and you start to act like him (13:20; 1 Cor 15:33).

22:27 *why should he take your bed from under you* If the borrower fails, the lender takes what you have, down to your bed. Better to give what you can afford than promise what you cannot (6:1-5).

22:28 *Do not displace an ancient boundary which your fathers made* The land was divided among Israel's families by God's command (Josh 13-21), and boundary stones marked each field. Moving one at night quietly stole land, often from widows and orphans (23:10). The Law cursed it (Deut 19:14; 27:17).

22:29 *Before kings he will stand* Good work gets noticed. Joseph and Daniel served before kings because they were skilled and faithful (Gen 41:46; Dan 1:19-20). Whatever your work, do it well, as for the Lord (Col 3:23).

PROVERBS 23

Dining With a Ruler

1 When you sit down to eat with a ruler, you shall carefully consider what ***is*** before you, **2** and put a knife to your throat if you ***are*** a master of appetite. **3** Do not crave his delicacies, and it ***is*** bread of lies. **4** Do not labor to gain riches; from your understanding cease. **5** Will you make your eyes fly on it, and it ***is*** not? For it will surely make for itself wings; like an eagle it will fly ***to*** the heavens. **6** Do not eat the bread of one evil of eye, and do not crave his delicacies; **7** for as he calculates in his soul, so ***is*** he. "Eat and drink," he says to you, and his heart ***is*** not with you. **8** Your morsel ***that*** you have eaten you will vomit up, and you will spoil your pleasant words. **9** In the ears of a fool do not speak, for he will despise the prudence of your words. **10** Do not displace an ancient boundary, and into the fields of fatherless ***ones*** do not go; **11** for their Redeemer ***is*** strong; He will plead their case with you.

Do Not Envy Sinners

12 Bring your heart to discipline, and your ear to words of knowledge. **13** Do not withhold discipline from a youth; when you strike him with the rod, he will not die. **14** You, with the rod you will strike him, and his soul from Sheol you will deliver. **15** My son, if your heart is wise, my heart will rejoice, I also; **16** and my kidneys will exult when your lips speak uprightness. **17** Do not let your heart be jealous of sinners, but ***be*** in the fear of the LORD all the day; **18** for surely there is a future, and your hope will not be cut off. **19** Listen, you, my son, and be wise, and guide your heart in the way. **20** Do not be among drunkards of wine, among gluttons of flesh for themselves; **21** for a drunkard and a glutton will become poor, and drowsiness will clothe ***with*** rags. **22** Listen to your father who fathered you, and do not despise your mother when she is old. **23** Buy truth, and do not sell ***it***: wisdom and discipline and understanding. **24** The father of a righteous ***one*** will surely be joyful, and he who fathers a wise ***one***, he will rejoice in him. **25** Let your father and your mother rejoice, and let her who bore you be joyful. **26** My son, give your heart to me, and let your eyes observe my ways. **27** For a prostitute ***is*** a deep pit, and a foreign ***woman is*** a narrow well. **28** Also she, like a robber, lies in wait, and she increases the treacherous among mankind.

23:1 Gen 43:32-34; Jude 1:12
23:2 Matt 18:8,9; 1 Cor 9:27; Phil 3:19
23:3 Prov 23:6; Ps 141:4; Dan 1:8
23:4 Prov 28:20; Prov 3:5; John 6:27
23:5 Prov 27:24; 1 Tim 6:17; Ps 119:36,37
23:6 Ps 141:4; Deut 15:9; Prov 23:3
23:7 Ps 12:2; Judg 16:15; Ps 55:21
23:9 Matt 7:6; Prov 9:7,8; Prov 26:4,5
23:10 Prov 22:28; Deut 19:14; Jer 22:3
23:11 Prov 22:23; Exod 22:22-24; Deut 27:19
23:12 Prov 2:2-6; Prov 23:19; Prov 5:1,2
23:13 Prov 13:24; Prov 19:18; Prov 29:15,17
23:14 1 Cor 5:5; Prov 22:15; 1 Cor 11:32
23:15 Prov 23:24,25; Prov 29:3; 2 John 1:4
23:16 Prov 8:6; Eph 4:29; Eph 5:4
23:17 Acts 9:31; Prov 28:14; Prov 3:31
23:18 Jer 29:11; Prov 24:14; Ps 9:18
23:19 Prov 4:10-23; Prov 23:12,26
23:20 Rom 13:13; Eph 5:18; Prov 28:7
23:21 Prov 21:17; Deut 21:20; Phil 3:19
23:22 Mark 7:10; Prov 1:8; Prov 6:20
23:23 Matt 13:44,46; Prov 2:2-4; Prov 4:5-7
23:24 Prov 10:1; Prov 15:20; Prov 23:15,16
23:25 Luke 11:27; Prov 17:25; 1 Chr 4:9,10
23:26 2 Pet 1:19; Matt 10:37,38; Ps 119:2,9-11
23:27 Prov 22:14
23:28 Prov 7:12,22-27; Eccl 7:26; Prov 2:16-19

23:2 *put a knife to your throat if you are a master of appetite* A strong way of saying, control your appetite at a powerful man's table.
23:3 *it is bread of lies* The ruler's fine food may come with strings attached, a test or a bid for your loyalty. Daniel refused the king's food and kept his heart free (Dan 1:8). Not every free dinner is free.
23:4 *Do not labor to gain riches* Proverbs praises hard work everywhere. This forbids wearing yourself out to get rich, making wealth the goal of life, and trusting your own cleverness to get ahead.
23:5 *like an eagle it will fly to the heavens* You glance at money and it has flown away. Those who want to be rich fall into many traps (1 Tim 6:9, 17). Store up treasure in heaven, where nothing is lost (Matt 6:19-21).
23:6 *one evil of eye* The opposite of the good eye of 22:9: a stingy, grudging spirit.
23:7 *for as he calculates in his soul, so is he* He says "Eat and drink," but he is counting the cost of every bite. What a man thinks in his heart is what he really is. Once you see it, the meal turns your stomach (v. 8).
23:9 *In the ears of a fool do not speak* Do not waste wisdom on someone who mocks it (Matt 7:6). Knowing when to answer a fool takes wisdom (26:4-5).
23:11 *for their Redeemer is strong* The fatherless had no one to stand up for them, but they have a Redeemer. The word is go'el, the close relative who bought back lost land, freed a relative sold into slavery and stood up for the family (Lev 25:25; Ruth 4:1-10). God Himself is the go'el of the fatherless. Jesus is our Redeemer, who bought us back with His own blood (1 Pet 1:18-19).
23:12 *Bring your heart to discipline* Before the teacher tells parents to correct their children, he tells the son to welcome correction himself.
23:13 *when you strike him with the rod, he will not die* The correction will not kill him, but neglect may. As at 13:24 and 22:15, the rod pictures correction and in that world included physical discipline. It is not correction that ruins children but the lack of it. These verses must never defend anger, cruelty or abuse (Eph 6:4). Godly parents differ on spanking today. If you were hurt as a child in the name of verses like these, what was done was wrong, and it was not what God meant.
23:14 *his soul from Sheol you will deliver* Sheol is the place of the dead. A child left alone with his folly is on the road to death, and a parent who corrects him lovingly helps save him from it.
23:16 *my kidneys will exult when your lips speak uprightness* The kidneys stood for the deepest feelings, as we speak of the heart. Nothing makes a godly parent happier than a child who walks in wisdom (3 John 4).
23:17 *Do not let your heart be jealous of sinners* It is easy to envy the wicked who seem to get away with everything. Instead, live in the fear of the LORD all day long, at work, at home and in private.
23:18 *surely there is a future, and your hope will not be cut off* This life is not the end. Asaph almost slipped when he envied the wicked, until he went into God's sanctuary and saw their end (Ps 73:2-3, 16-17). Our hope in Christ is a living hope (1 Pet 1:3-4).
23:20 *Do not be among drunkards of wine, among gluttons of flesh* Living for the belly leads to poverty and rags (v. 21). The Law named the rebellious son "a glutton and a drunkard" (Deut 21:20).
23:22 *do not despise your mother when she is old* Honor your parents all their lives, even when they grow old and weak (Exod 20:12).
23:23 *Buy truth, and do not sell it* Truth is worth any price. Get it, and never trade it away.
23:25 *Let your father and your mother rejoice* A wise son is one of the best gifts a child can give his parents.
23:26 *My son, give your heart to me* The father wants more than outward obedience. He wants his son's love and trust, so the son will watch how he lives and follow it. God asks the same of us.
23:27 *a prostitute is a deep pit, and a foreign woman is a narrow well* Sexual sin is easy to fall into and very hard to climb out of (22:14). She waits like a robber and turns men into traitors to their wives and their God (v. 28). The way out is not to go near (5:8).

The Drunkard's Woe

29 Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaint? Who has wounds without cause? Who has dullness of eyes? **30** Those who linger over the wine, those who go to examine mixed wine. **31** Do not look at wine when it is red, when it gives its eye in the cup, ***when*** it goes with smoothness. **32** Its end: like a snake it will bite, and like a viper it will sting. **33** Your eyes will see strange ***things***, and your heart will speak perversities. **34** And you will be like one who lies down in the heart of the sea, and like one who lies down at the top of a mast. **35** "They struck me; I was not hurt. They beat me; I did not know. When will I awake? I will add; I will seek it again."

PROVERBS 24

Do Not Envy Evil Men

1 Do not be jealous of men of evil, and do not desire to be with them; **2** for their heart meditates violence, and their lips speak trouble. **3** By wisdom a house is built, and by understanding it is established; **4** and by knowledge the chambers are filled ***with*** all precious and pleasant wealth. **5** A wise man ***is*** in strength, and a man of knowledge makes power firm; **6** for by guidance you will make war for yourself, and victory ***is*** in a multitude of counselors. **7** Wisdom ***is too*** high for a fool; in the gate he does not open his mouth. **8** He who plans to do evil, they will call him a master of schemes. **9** The wicked scheme of folly ***is*** sin, and an abomination to mankind ***is*** a mocker.

Rescue Those Taken to Death

10 ***If*** you show yourself slack in a day of trouble, your power ***is*** narrow. **11** Deliver those taken to death, and those staggering to the slaughter, if you will hold back. **12** If you say, "Look, we did not know this," does not He who weighs hearts, He, perceive ***it***? And He who guards your soul, He, know ***it***? And He will repay to mankind according to his work. **13** My son, eat honey, for ***it is*** good, and honey from the comb ***is*** sweet on your palate. **14** So know wisdom for your soul; if you find ***it***, then there is a future, and your hope will not be cut off. **15** Do not lie in wait, wicked ***one***, against the dwelling of a righteous ***one***; do not devastate his resting place; **16** for a righteous ***one*** will fall seven ***times*** and rise, and wicked ***ones*** will stumble in evil. **17** When your enemy falls, do not rejoice, and when he stumbles, let your heart not be joyful, **18** lest the LORD see, and it be evil in His eyes, and

23:29 Eph 5:18; Prov 23:21; Isa 5:11,22
23:30 Eph 5:18; Isa 5:11; Ps 75:8
23:31 Eph 5:18; Prov 6:25; 2 Sam 11:2
23:32 Eph 5:18; Prov 5:11; Isa 28:3,7,8
23:33 Eph 5:18; Gen 19:32-38; Prov 31:5
23:34 Matt 26:43; Eph 5:18; 1 Sam 25:33-38
23:35 Eph 5:18; Jer 5:3; Isa 56:12
24:1 Prov 3:31; Prov 23:17; Ps 37:1,7
24:2 Ps 10:7; Ps 7:14; Ps 28:3
24:3 Prov 14:1; Prov 9:1; Jer 10:12
24:4 Prov 15:6; Prov 21:20; Neh 10:39
24:5 Prov 21:22; Eccl 7:19; Col 1:11
24:6 Prov 20:18; Prov 11:14; Luke 14:31
24:7 Prov 14:6; Ps 10:5; 1 Cor 2:14
24:8 Rom 1:30; Prov 6:14,18; Prov 14:22
24:9 Matt 15:19; Acts 8:22; Prov 29:8
24:10 Job 4:5; Isa 40:28-31; Eph 3:13
24:11 Ps 82:4; Isa 58:6,7; 1 Sam 26:8,9
24:12 Rev 2:23; Rom 2:6; Matt 16:27
24:13 Song 5:1; Prov 25:16,27; Isa 7:15
24:14 Prov 23:18; Ps 119:103,111; James 1:25
24:15 Prov 1:11; 1 Sam 9:11; 1 Sam 22:18,19
24:16 Ps 37:24; Rev 18:20; Mic 7:8-10
24:17 1 Cor 13:6; Job 31:29; Prov 17:5
24:18 Lam 4:21,22; Zech 1:15,16

23:29 *Who has woe? Who has sorrow* The longest picture of drunkenness in the Bible begins with six questions: misery, fights, complaining, injuries from brawls he cannot remember and bloodshot eyes.
23:30 *those who go to examine mixed wine* Those who sit over drinks for hours and go looking for new kinds to try. Mixed wine was spiced to make it stronger.
23:31 *Do not look at wine when it is red* Wine sparkles in the cup and goes down smoothly. That is the danger. Do not even look at it with longing when it is drawing you in.
23:32 *like a snake it will bite* The smooth drink ends in a snake bite that poisons body, mind and home.
23:33 *Your eyes will see strange things* The drunk sees things that are not there and says what he would never say sober. Some read "strange women," since drink and sexual sin often go together.
23:34 *like one who lies down at the top of a mast* Swaying back and forth like a man trying to sleep at sea, sick and dizzy and in danger of falling.
23:35 *When will I awake? I will add; I will seek it again* The saddest line of all. He was beaten and did not feel it, and his first thought on waking is another drink. That is addiction: the thing that hurts you is the thing you crave. Scripture forbids drunkenness (Gal 5:21). As at 20:1, believers differ on drinking in moderation or not at all. If you are caught in this, there is hope. Christ sets people free. Do not fight it alone.
24:1 *Do not be jealous of men of evil* Evil men can look free, powerful and rich. Look past the outside. Their hearts are full of violence and their mouths full of trouble (v. 2; 23:17).
24:3 *By wisdom a house is built* A real house and a family. Its rooms are filled with good things (v. 4), not only furniture but love, peace and joy. Many homes are full of nice things and empty of these. Wisdom builds what money cannot (14:1; Ps 127:1).
24:6 *victory is in a multitude of counselors* Wisdom is a kind of strength. Battles are won by planning and wise advice (11:14; 20:18).
24:7 *in the gate he does not open his mouth* The elders met at the gate to judge and decide matters for the town. The fool has nothing to say there. Wisdom is out of his reach because he never reached for it.
24:9 *The wicked scheme of folly is sin* Even planning folly is sin. Sin begins in the heart before it reaches the hands (Matt 5:28).
24:10 *If you show yourself slack in a day of trouble, your power is narrow* Trouble shows what we are made of. Be strong in the hard day in the strength God gives (Isa 40:29-31; Phil 4:13). The next verses show that the hard day may be someone else's.
24:11 *Deliver those taken to death* One of the strongest commands in the book. Some are being led away to die, perhaps falsely condemned, perhaps victims of violence. Rescue them. Believers have applied this to the unjustly condemned, the unborn, the victims of trafficking and abuse, the persecuted church and the hungry. Each of us must ask where God calls us to act. There is a deeper sense too: Jesus delivered us when we were staggering to the slaughter, and now sends us to snatch others from the fire (Jude 23).
24:12 *Look, we did not know this* The teacher answers our excuse before we make it. God knows whether we really did not know, or did not want to know. We cannot rescue everyone, but we cannot say we did not know.
24:13 *My son, eat honey, for it is good* Honey was the sweetest thing they knew. God's words are sweeter (Ps 19:10), and wisdom gives what honey cannot: a future and a hope (v. 14; 23:18).
24:16 *a righteous one will fall seven times and rise* Seven times means many times. The righteous may be knocked down again and again, but God lifts him up (Ps 37:23-24; Mic 7:8). The wicked stumble once and do not rise. Here the fall is mainly trouble and attack from outside, though God also lifts believers who fall into sin and confess (1 John 1:9). If you have been knocked down, get up. God is not done with you.
24:17 *When your enemy falls, do not rejoice* It is natural to be glad when someone who hurt us gets hurt. God says do not. Gloating is sin, and it may move Him to turn His anger from the enemy (v. 18). Leave justice to God and pray for your enemies (Matt 5:44; Job 31:29).

He turn back His anger from him. **19** Do not fret yourself because of the evildoers; do not be jealous of the wicked; **20** for there will be no future for the evil ***one***; the lamp of wicked ***ones*** will be put out. **21** Fear the LORD, my son, and the king; with those who change do not get involved; **22** for suddenly their calamity will arise, and the disaster of both of them, who knows?

More Sayings of the Wise

23 These also ***are*** for wise ***ones***: to regard faces in judgment ***is*** not good. **24** He who says to a wicked ***one***, "You ***are*** righteous," peoples will curse him, nations will denounce him. **25** And for those who rebuke, it will be pleasant, and on them will come a blessing of good. **26** He kisses lips, he who returns right words. **27** Establish your work outside, and make it ready for yourself in the field; afterward, then build your house. **28** Do not be a witness against your neighbor without cause, and will you deceive with your lips? **29** Do not say, "Just as he has done to me, so I will do to him; I will repay to the man according to his work." **30** By the field of a sluggardly man I passed, and by the vineyard of a man lacking sense; **31** and look, it had all gone up ***in*** thorns; its surface was covered ***with*** nettles, and its wall of stones was broken down. **32** And I looked, I myself; I set my heart; I saw; I received discipline: **33** a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to lie down, **34** and your poverty will come walking about, and your needs like a man with a shield.

PROVERBS 25

Proverbs Copied by Hezekiah's Men

1 These also ***are*** the proverbs of Solomon (Shelomo), which the men of Hezekiah (Chizqiya), king of Judah (Yehuda), copied: **2** The glory of God ***is*** to conceal a matter, and the glory of kings ***is*** to search out a matter. **3** The heavens for height, and the earth for depth, and the heart of kings, ***there is*** no searching. **4** Remove the dross from silver, and a vessel comes out for the refiner. **5** Remove a wicked ***one*** before a king, and his throne will be established in righteousness. **6** Do not honor yourself before a king, and in the place of great ***ones*** do not stand; **7** for better ***is*** saying to you, "Come up here," than putting you low before a noble whom your eyes have seen. **8** Do not go out quickly to contend,
lest—what will you do at its end, when your neighbor puts you to shame? **9** Plead your case with your neighbor, and do not reveal the secret of another, **10** lest he who hears put you to shame, and your evil report not turn back.

A Word at the Right Time

11 Apples of gold in settings of silver ***is*** a word spoken at its

24:19 Ps 37:1; Prov 24:1; Prov 23:17
24:20 Rev 18:23; Prov 13:9; Prov 20:20
24:21 1 Pet 2:17; Rom 13:1-7; Titus 3:1
24:22 Num 16:31-35; 1 Sam 31:1-7; 2 Sam 18:7,8
24:23 Prov 18:5; Prov 28:21; Ps 107:43
24:24 Prov 17:15; Prov 11:26; Exod 23:6,7
24:25 1 Tim 5:20; Prov 28:23; Lev 19:17
24:26 Prov 25:11,12; Prov 15:23; Prov 16:1
24:27 1 Kgs 5:17,18; 1 Kgs 6:7; Luke 14:28-30
24:28 John 15:25; Eph 4:25; Prov 14:5
24:29 Rom 12:19; Rev 20:12; Prov 20:22
24:30 Job 4:8; Job 5:27; Job 15:17
24:31 Gen 3:17-19; Job 31:40; Jer 4:3
24:32 Jude 1:7; Job 7:17; Ps 4:4
24:33 Prov 6:4-11; Rom 13:11; Eph 5:14
24:34 Prov 10:4; Prov 13:4
25:1 Prov 1:1; 1 Kgs 4:32; Prov 10:1
25:2 Deut 29:29; Rom 11:33,34; 1 Kgs 3:9-28
25:3 Rom 8:39; Ps 103:11; Isa 7:11
25:4 2 Tim 2:20,21; Prov 17:3; Isa 1:25-27
25:5 Prov 20:8; Prov 16:12; Prov 20:28
25:6 Luke 14:8; Luke 14:10; Prov 25:27
25:7 Rev 4:1; Luke 18:14; 1 Pet 5:5
25:8 Matt 5:25; Prov 17:14; Prov 18:6
25:9 Matt 18:5-17; Prov 11:13; Prov 20:19
25:10 Ps 119:39
25:11 Prov 15:23; Prov 24:26; Eccl 12:10

24:19 *Do not fret yourself because of the evildoers* To fret is to burn inside with anger or worry. Psalm 37 begins the same way. The lamp of the wicked is going out (v. 20).
24:21 *Fear the LORD, my son, and the king* Honor God first and the government He has set over you (Rom 13:1-7; 1 Pet 2:17). "Those who change" are likely rebels who want to overthrow the order of things. "Both of them" may mean punishment from the LORD and from the king. This ends the words of the wise.
24:23 *to regard faces in judgment is not good* A short appendix begins. To regard faces is to play favorites because someone is rich, powerful or a friend (18:5).
24:24 *He who says to a wicked one, "You are righteous,"* Everyone despises a judge who lets the guilty go free. Those with the courage to call wrong what it is will be blessed (v. 25).
24:26 *He kisses lips, he who returns right words* An honest answer is a sign of real friendship. Flattery feels nice, but truth spoken in love is the greater kindness (27:6; Eph 4:15).
24:27 *afterward, then build your house* First things first. Get your fields and your living in order before you build a house and start a family. Good counsel about planning, saving and order (Luke 14:28).
24:28 *Do not be a witness against your neighbor without cause* Do not testify against someone without good reason, and do not lie about him.
24:29 *Just as he has done to me, so I will do to him* The voice of revenge. It sounds fair. But repaying a man according to his work belongs to God (24:12). Overcome evil with good (Matt 5:38-39; Rom 12:17-21).
24:31 *its wall of stones was broken down* Thorns and nettles had taken over, and the wall that kept out animals and thieves had fallen. No one did anything terrible. He just did nothing.
24:32 *I set my heart; I saw; I received discipline* We can learn from other people's mistakes if we stop and look.
24:34 *your poverty will come walking about* Almost word for word as 6:10-11. Ruin comes a little at a time and then arrives like an armed man. The same is true spiritually. Neglect prayer and God's Word a little at a time, and the walls come down. Is there a field in your life going to thorns?
25:1 *which the men of Hezekiah, king of Judah, copied* Hezekiah reigned about 715 to 686 B.C., one of Judah's best kings. He cleansed the temple, restored true worship and trusted the LORD when Assyria came (2 Kgs 18:1-7; 2 Chr 29-31). His men gathered more of Solomon's sayings, likely from older written collections. God used faithful men to preserve His Word.
25:2 *The glory of God is to conceal a matter* God does not explain everything. The secret things belong to Him (Deut 29:29), and His ways are past finding out (Rom 11:33). A king's glory is the opposite: to search out the truth so he can judge rightly. Good leaders do their homework.
25:3 *the heart of kings, there is no searching* A king's heart can be as hard to read as the sky is high and the earth deep.
25:4 *Remove the dross from silver* Dross is the waste that floats up when silver is melted. Skim it off and pure silver is left. A king must remove wicked advisers, and then his throne will be just and lasting (v. 5). Leaders are shaped by the people around them.
25:7 *better is saying to you, "Come up here,"* Better to be invited up than sent down in front of everyone. Jesus taught the same: take the lowest place at the feast (Luke 14:8-11).
25:8 *Do not go out quickly to contend* Do not rush to court or into a fight. You may find you were wrong and be shamed in public.
25:9 *do not reveal the secret of another* Settle a problem with your neighbor directly, without dragging others' secrets in, or you will get a name that will not go away (v. 10; Matt 18:15).
25:11 *Apples of gold in settings of silver is a word spoken at its right times* Picture fine gold fruit set in silver. The right word at the right time is beautiful and precious. The same words at the wrong time can hurt (15:23).

right times. **12** A ring of gold and an ornament of fine gold ***is*** a wise reprover on a listening ear. **13** Like the cold of snow on a day of harvest ***is*** a faithful envoy to those who send him, and he restores the soul of his masters. **14** Clouds and wind, and ***there is*** no rain, ***is*** a man who boasts in a gift of falsehood. **15** By length of anger a ruler will be persuaded, and a soft tongue will break bone. **16** ***If*** you have found honey, eat your sufficiency, lest you have your fill of it and vomit it up. **17** Make your foot rare from the house of your neighbor, lest he have his fill of you and hate you. **18** A war club and a sword and a sharpened arrow ***is*** a man who testifies against his neighbor ***as*** a witness of falsehood. **19** A broken tooth and a slipping foot ***is*** the confidence of one who acts treacherously in a day of trouble. **20** One who removes a garment on a day of cold, vinegar on soda, and one who sings songs on a sad heart. **21** If one who hates you is hungry, give him bread to eat; and if ***he is*** thirsty, give him water to drink; **22** for you are heaping burning coals on his head, and the LORD will repay you. **23** The north wind brings forth rain, and indignant faces, a tongue of secrecy. **24** Better ***is*** to dwell on a corner of a roof than ***with*** a woman of contentions and a house of association. **25** Cool waters on a weary soul, and a good report from a land of distance. **26** A fouled spring and a ruined fountain ***is*** a righteous ***one*** who sways before a wicked ***one***. **27** To eat much honey ***is*** not good, and the searching out of their honor ***is*** honor. **28** A city broken into, without a wall, ***is*** a man who has no restraint for his spirit.

PROVERBS 26

Answering a Fool

1 Like snow in the summer and like rain at the harvest, so honor ***is*** not suitable for a fool. **2** Like the bird in fluttering, like the swallow in flying, so a curse without cause, to him it will come. **3** A whip ***is*** for the horse, a bridle for the donkey, and a rod for the back of fools. **4** Do not answer a fool according to his folly, lest you become like him, you also. **5** Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own eyes.

25:12 Ps 141:5; Job 42:11; Prov 1:8,9
25:13 Prov 13:17; Prov 25:25; Prov 26:6
25:14 Jude 1:12; Prov 20:6; 1 Kgs 22:11
25:15 Prov 15:1; Eccl 10:4; Prov 16:14
25:16 Prov 25:27; Prov 24:13,14; Judg 14:8,9
25:17 Rom 15:24; Gen 19:2,3; Judg 19:18-21
25:18 Prov 12:18; Ps 57:4; Ps 52:2
25:19 2 Chr 28:20,21; Job 6:14-20; Isa 30:1-3
25:20 Rom 12:15; Eccl 3:4; Deut 24:12-17
25:21 Rom 12:20; Exod 23:4,5; Matt 5:44
25:22 2 Sam 16:12; Matt 10:13; 1 Cor 15:18
25:23 Ps 101:5; Job 37:22; Prov 26:20
25:24 Prov 21:9,19; Prov 19:13; Prov 27:15,16
25:25 Rev 21:6; Prov 15:30; Gen 21:16-19
25:26 Gen 4:8; 1 Sam 22:14-18; 2 Chr 24:21,22
25:27 Prov 27:2; John 5:44; 2 Cor 12:1,11
25:28 Prov 16:32; 1 Sam 20:30; Prov 22:24
26:1 Prov 28:16; Ps 12:8; Ps 15:4
26:2 Num 23:8; 2 Sam 16:12; Deut 23:4,5
26:3 Ps 32:9; Prov 10:13; Prov 17:10
26:4 Prov 17:14; Judg 12:1-6; 2 Sam 19:41-43
26:5 John 9:30; Matt 16:1-4; Prov 28:11

25:12 *a wise reprover on a listening ear* Wise correction given to one willing to listen is like jewelry. Both are needed: the one who corrects and the ear that hears.
25:13 *Like the cold of snow on a day of harvest* Not a snowstorm at harvest, which would be a disaster (26:1), but snow water from the mountains refreshing hot workers. A faithful messenger refreshes the one who sends him.
25:14 *Clouds and wind, and there is no rain* In a dry land, clouds raise hope of rain, and then nothing falls. That is the man who brags about what he will give and never gives it (Jude 12).
25:15 *a soft tongue will break bone* We think forceful words win. Patience and gentleness win more often (15:1).
25:16 *eat your sufficiency, lest you have your fill of it and vomit it up* Even good things need limits.
25:17 *Make your foot rare from the house of your neighbor* Do not wear out your welcome. A good friend knows when to go home.
25:18 *A war club and a sword and a sharpened arrow* A false witness is a deadly weapon, striking up close and from far away.
25:19 *A broken tooth and a slipping foot* Trusting an unfaithful man in a crisis is like biting on a broken tooth. He fails you just when you need him most.
25:20 *one who sings songs on a sad heart* Soda here is a natural mineral used for washing, and vinegar poured on it fizzes and ruins it. Singing cheerful songs to the grieving is as unkind as taking a man's coat on a cold day. When someone is hurting, sit with him first (Rom 12:15).
25:21 *If one who hates you is hungry, give him bread to eat* A high point of Old Testament ethics: feed your enemy. Paul quotes these verses in Romans 12:20 and adds that we are to overcome evil with good (Rom 12:21). Jesus went further: love your enemies and pray for them (Matt 5:44), and He did it on the cross (Luke 23:34).
25:22 *you are heaping burning coals on his head* Not kindness meant to hurt. The most common reading is that kindness makes the enemy burn with shame, which may lead to regret and repentance. Some point to an old custom of carrying coals in a pan on the head, so that giving coals was an act of help. Either way, the goal is to win the enemy, not the fight.
25:23 *The north wind brings forth rain* As surely as a certain wind brings rain, a gossiping tongue brings angry faces. In Israel rain usually came from the west, and some read this as a northwest wind. The point stays the same.
25:24 *Better is to dwell on a corner of a roof* Word for word as 21:9.
25:25 *a good report from a land of distance* When news traveled slowly, word from a loved one far away was cold water to the thirsty. The best news ever to come from far away is the gospel (Isa 52:7).
25:26 *a righteous one who sways before a wicked one* People looked to him for clean water and now find mud. Stand firm, because others are drinking from your example.
25:27 *the searching out of their honor is honor* The second line is hard in Hebrew. Many translations read it as saying that seeking your own glory is not glory. The SLB reads it positively: searching out what is truly honorable is honor. Either way, the verse warns against overdoing what feels sweet, including praise.
25:28 *A city broken into, without a wall* A city without walls was open to every enemy. A man without self-control lets anger, lust and greed walk right in. Self-control is a fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:23).
26:1 *Like snow in the summer and like rain at the harvest* Snow in summer was unheard of in Israel, and rain at harvest could ruin the crop (1 Sam 12:17-18). Honor or high position for a fool is just as out of place, and it does damage.
26:2 *so a curse without cause, to him it will come* Birds flit about and never land. Most translations read that an undeserved curse is like that: it never lands on the one cursed. The SLB follows a reading of the Hebrew that may mean the curse comes back on the one who spoke it. Either way, the innocent need not fear a curse without cause (Num 23:8).
26:3 *a rod for the back of fools* A fool who will not learn by words learns by pain (10:13; 19:29). The saying is about the fool, not a child (Ps 32:9).
26:4 *Do not answer a fool according to his folly, lest you become like him* Verses 4 and 5 stand together on purpose, and they teach us how to read Proverbs. Do not argue with a fool on his terms. If he shouts, do not shout back. If he insults, do not trade insults. Answer folly with folly and you have become a fool too.
26:5 *Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own eyes* The next verse says the opposite, and each has its own reason. Verse 4 guards you. Verse 5 guards him and others. Some see the difference in manner (do not copy his folly) and answer (expose it). Others see it in the situation. Jesus did both (Matt 21:23-27; 22:23-33; Luke 23:9). A proverb is a tool, and wisdom knows which tool fits the moment. Online, at home or with mockers of the faith, answer with grace and truth, not with his weapons (Col 4:6; 1 Pet 3:15).

6 Cutting off feet, drinking violence, ***is*** he who sends words by the hand of a fool. **7** The legs hang limp from the lame, and a proverb in the mouth of fools. **8** Like binding a stone in a sling, so ***is*** he who gives honor to a fool. **9** A thorn goes up into the hand of a drunkard, and a proverb in the mouth of fools. **10** An archer who wounds everyone, and he who hires a fool, and he who hires those who pass by. **11** Like a dog that returns to its vomit, a fool repeats his folly. **12** Have you seen a man wise in his own eyes? Hope for a fool ***is*** more than for him.

Sluggards, Meddlers and Whisperers

13 A sluggard says, "A lion ***is*** in the road, a lion ***is*** between the squares!" **14** The door turns on its hinge, and a sluggard on his bed. **15** A sluggard hides his hand in the dish; he is weary to bring it back to his mouth. **16** A sluggard ***is*** wiser in his own eyes than seven who reply ***with*** discernment. **17** Taking hold of the ears of a dog ***is*** one passing by who becomes furious over a dispute ***that is*** not his. **18** Like a madman who shoots firebrands, arrows, and death, **19** so ***is*** a man ***who*** has deceived his neighbor and says, "Am I not jesting?" **20** With no wood a fire goes out, and with no whisperer strife becomes quiet. **21** Charcoal to burning coals and wood to fire, and a man of contentions to kindle strife. **22** The words of a whisperer ***are*** like delicacies, and they go down ***into*** the chambers of the belly. **23** Silver of dross overlaid on earthenware ***are*** burning lips and an evil heart. **24** He who hates disguises himself with his lips, and in his inner being he sets deceit. **25** When he makes his voice gracious, do not trust in him, for seven abominations ***are*** in his heart. **26** Hatred covers itself with deception; his wickedness will be revealed in the assembly. **27** He who digs a pit will fall in it, and he who rolls a stone, it will return to him. **28** A tongue of falsehood hates its crushed ***ones***, and a smooth mouth makes ruin.

PROVERBS 27

Do Not Boast About Tomorrow

1 Do not boast yourself about the day of tomorrow, for you do not know what a day will bring forth. **2** Let a stranger praise you, and not your mouth; a foreigner, and not your lips. **3** The heaviness of a stone and the weight of the sand, and the provocation of a fool ***is*** heavier than both of them. **4** The cruelty of rage and the flood of anger, and who will stand before jealousy? **5** Better ***is*** an uncovered rebuke than

26:6 Prov 10:26; Prov 13:17; Prov 25:13
26:7 Prov 26:9; Matt 7:4,5; Prov 17:7
26:8 Prov 26:1; Prov 30:22; Prov 19:10
26:9 Prov 23:35
26:10 Prov 11:31; Rom 2:6
26:11 2 Pet 2:22; Matt 12:45; Exod 8:15
26:12 Prov 29:20; Matt 21:31; Prov 26:5,16
26:13 Prov 22:13; Prov 15:19; Prov 19:15
26:14 Prov 6:9,10; Prov 12:24,27; Prov 24:33
26:15 Prov 19:24
26:16 Prov 26:12; 1 Pet 3:15; Prov 12:15
26:17 Prov 17:11; Prov 18:6; Prov 20:3
26:18 Prov 7:23; Prov 25:18; Gen 49:23
26:19 Eph 5:4; Prov 10:23; Prov 14:9
26:20 Prov 16:28; Prov 22:10; James 3:6
26:21 Prov 15:18; Prov 29:22; Prov 10:12
26:22 Prov 18:8; Prov 20:19; Ezek 22:9
26:23 Luke 22:47,48; Prov 10:18; 2 Sam 20:9,10
26:24 Prov 11:1; Prov 12:5,17,20; Prov 14:8
26:25 Prov 6:16-19; Ps 28:3; Jer 12:6
26:26 Gen 4:8; 1 Sam 18:17,21; 2 Sam 3:27-30
26:27 Prov 28:10; Esth 7:10; Ps 7:15,16
26:28 Prov 29:5; John 8:40,44-49; John 10:32,33
27:1 James 4:14; James 4:13-16; Luke 12:19,20
27:2 Prov 25:27; 2 Cor 12:11; 2 Cor 10:12,18
27:3 Prov 17:12; Gen 34:25,26; Gen 49:7
27:4 Prov 6:34; Prov 14:30; Job 5:2
27:5 1 Tim 5:20; Prov 28:23; Gal 2:14

26:6 *he who sends words by the hand of a fool* The message will not get there, or it will get there wrong. You will drink the trouble that follows.
26:7 *a proverb in the mouth of fools* A lame man's legs are there but useless. A fool can quote a wise saying but cannot use it.
26:8 *Like binding a stone in a sling* A stone tied into a sling cannot be thrown and may swing back to hurt you. Honoring a fool is just as silly.
26:9 *A thorn goes up into the hand of a drunkard* A drunk waving a thornbush hurts himself and everyone near him. Even Scripture used without wisdom can wound. Satan quoted Scripture to Jesus (Matt 4:6).
26:10 *An archer who wounds everyone, and he who hires a fool* Hiring a fool or a passer-by without checking him is like an archer shooting at random. The Hebrew is hard and translations differ, but the warning is clear.
26:11 *Like a dog that returns to its vomit, a fool repeats his folly* A disgusting picture on purpose. The fool goes right back to the sin that made him sick. Peter uses this verse of those who turn back to the filth of the world (2 Pet 2:20-22).
26:12 *Have you seen a man wise in his own eyes? Hope for a fool is more than for him* After eleven verses on the fool, a surprise: someone worse. The fool might still learn. The proud man thinks he has nothing to learn (John 9:41). Humility is the door to wisdom.
26:13 *A lion is in the road* The sluggard's old excuse (22:13). He always has a reason not to go out to work.
26:14 *The door turns on its hinge, and a sluggard on his bed* A door swings back and forth and goes nowhere, like the lazy man rolling over in bed.
26:16 *A sluggard is wiser in his own eyes than seven who reply with discernment* His worst problem. He has an answer for every argument. Laziness and pride go together, and he cannot be helped because he will not admit he needs help.
26:17 *Taking hold of the ears of a dog* Grab a stray dog by the ears and you get bitten. There are times to step in as a peacemaker, but meddling in others' quarrels usually makes things worse.
26:19 *Am I not jesting* Tricking someone and then saying it was only a joke is like a madman shooting flaming arrows into a crowd. A joke that hurts someone is not harmless because we laugh (Eph 5:4).
26:20 *With no wood a fire goes out* Take away the gossip and the quarrel dies down. If you want to end strife, stop feeding it.
26:21 *a man of contentions to kindle strife* Some people add fuel wherever they go.
26:22 *The words of a whisperer are like delicacies* Word for word as 18:8. Stop gossip before it starts.
26:23 *Silver of dross overlaid on earthenware are burning lips and an evil heart* A clay pot with a thin silver glaze looks valuable and is cheap underneath. Warm, eager words over an evil heart are a cheap coating (Matt 23:27).
26:25 *seven abominations are in his heart* Seven means complete. Do not be fooled by a sweet voice. Judas betrayed Jesus with a kiss (Luke 22:47-48).
26:26 *his wickedness will be revealed in the assembly* He can hide for a while, but nothing hidden will stay hidden (Luke 12:2-3).
26:27 *He who digs a pit will fall in it* The trap we set for others catches us. Haman hung on his own gallows (Esth 7:10; Ps 7:15-16).
26:28 *A tongue of falsehood hates its crushed ones* We tend to hate the people we have wronged, because they remind us of our guilt. Flattery ruins.
27:1 *Do not boast yourself about the day of tomorrow* Tomorrow is not ours. We are a vapor, so we ought to say, "If the Lord wills" (James 4:13-15; Luke 12:16-20). Plan humbly, and do not put off what matters most. Now is the day of salvation (2 Cor 6:2).
27:2 *Let a stranger praise you, and not your mouth* Self-praise is empty. If no one praises you, God still sees (Matt 6:4).
27:3 *the provocation of a fool is heavier than both of them* Being around a fool wears a person out.
27:4 *who will stand before jealousy* Anger may pass. Jealousy burns on (6:34; Song 8:6). Cain's jealousy led to the first murder (Gen 4:5-8).
27:5 *Better is an uncovered rebuke than hidden love* A friend who loves you but never tells you the truth is not much help.

hidden love. **6** Faithful ***are*** the wounds of one who loves, and abundant ***are*** the kisses of one who hates. **7** A satisfied soul tramples honey, and ***to*** a hungry soul every bitter thing ***is*** sweet. **8** Like a bird that wanders from its nest, so ***is*** a man who wanders from his place. **9** Oil and incense make the heart glad, and the sweetness of his friend ***is*** from counsel of ***the*** soul. **10** Do not forsake your friend and the friend of your father, and do not go ***into*** the house of your brother on the day of your calamity; better ***is*** a neighbor ***who is*** near than a brother far away. **11** Be wise, my son, and make my heart glad, and let me reply ***with*** a word ***to*** him who taunts me. **12** A prudent ***one*** has seen evil; he hides himself; simple ***ones*** pass on; they are punished. **13** Take his garment, for he has stood surety for a stranger, and for a foreign ***woman*** hold it in pledge. **14** He who blesses his neighbor with a loud voice, rising early in the morning, a curse it will be reckoned to him. **15** A continual dripping on a day of persistent rain and a wife of contentions are alike. **16** Those who hide her have hidden ***the*** wind, and his right hand meets oil.

Iron Sharpens Iron

17 Iron grows sharp by iron, and a man sharpens the face of his neighbor. **18** He who keeps a fig tree will eat its fruit, and he who guards his master will be honored. **19** As ***in*** the water the face ***is*** to the face, so the heart of man ***is*** to man. **20** Sheol and Abaddon are not satisfied, and the eyes of man are not satisfied. **21** A crucible ***is*** for silver, and a furnace for gold, and a man according to his praise. **22** If you pound the fool in the mortar among the grain with the pestle, his folly will not depart from him. **23** You shall surely know the face of your flock; set your heart on the herds; **24** for wealth ***is*** not forever, and ***is*** a crown to generation and generation? **25** The grass has disappeared, and new grass appears, and the plants of the mountains are gathered. **26** Lambs ***are*** for your clothing, and goats ***are*** the price of a field, **27** and enough milk of goats for your food, for the food of your household, and life for your maidens.

PROVERBS 28

The Righteous Are Bold as a Lion

1 The wicked flee, and there is no one pursuing, and the righteous, like a young lion, are confident. **2** By the transgression of a land its princes ***are*** many, and by a man who

27:6 Matt 26:48; Matt 26:49; Mark 14:44
27:7 Num 11:4-9,18-20; Num 21:5; Job 6:7
27:8 Isa 16:2; Job 39:14-16; Prov 21:16
27:9 Ps 133:2; Song 4:10; Prov 7:17
27:10 Prov 18:24; 1 Kgs 12:6-8; Prov 17:17
27:11 Prov 10:1; Ps 119:42; Prov 23:15,16,24,25
27:12 Prov 22:3; Prov 18:10; Exod 9:20,21
27:13 Prov 20:16; Prov 6:1-4; Exod 22:26
27:14 2 Sam 15:2-7; 2 Sam 16:16-19; Acts 12:22,23
27:15 Prov 19:13; Prov 21:9,19; Prov 25:24
27:16 John 12:3
27:17 Heb 10:24; Prov 27:9; Job 4:3,4
27:18 1 Cor 9:7,13; Song 8:12; Prov 22:29
27:19 Mark 7:21; James 1:22-25; Gen 6:5
27:20 Eccl 1:8; Prov 30:15,16; Hab 2:5
27:21 Prov 17:3; Ps 12:6; Ps 66:10
27:22 Prov 23:35; Jer 5:3; Isa 1:5
27:23 1 Pet 5:2; John 21:15-17; Gen 31:38-40
27:24 Prov 23:5; Zeph 1:18; 1 Tim 6:17,18
27:25 Prov 10:5; Ps 104:14
27:26 Job 31:20
27:27 Prov 30:8,9; Matt 6:33
28:1 Deut 28:7,25; Ps 53:5; Lev 26:17,36
28:2 Gen 45:5-8; 1 Kgs 15:25,28; 1 Kgs 16:8-29

27:6 *Faithful are the wounds of one who loves* Honest words from a friend may hurt, but they come from love and they heal. An enemy's flattery is false, like Judas's kiss (Matt 26:48-49). Paul rebuked Peter to his face because he loved him and the truth (Gal 2:11). Do you have friends who will wound you faithfully? Are you that kind of friend?
27:7 *A satisfied soul tramples honey* The one full of God's goodness can turn down sin's sweets. The one starving inside will take almost anything.
27:8 *Like a bird that wanders from its nest* A man who leaves his home, family and duties out of restlessness is in danger, and so are those he leaves behind. Going at God's call, as Abraham did, is another matter.
27:9 *the sweetness of his friend is from counsel of the soul* Like perfume and fragrant oil, a friend's heartfelt counsel is a sweet gift.
27:10 *better is a neighbor who is near than a brother far away* Keep old friends, even your family's old friends. When trouble comes, a friend close by can help faster than a relative far away, in miles or in heart (Luke 10:36-37).
27:11 *let me reply with a word to him who taunts me* A father's best answer to his critics is a wise son (2 Cor 3:2).
27:12 *A prudent one has seen evil; he hides himself* This repeats 22:3, and verse 13 repeats 20:16. Some warnings need to be heard twice.
27:14 *He who blesses his neighbor with a loud voice, rising early in the morning* Banging on a neighbor's door at dawn with a loud cheerful greeting is not welcome. Even blessings need good timing and sense, and overdone praise sounds false.
27:15 *A continual dripping on a day of persistent rain* A leaky roof on a rainy day never stops dripping (19:13).
27:16 *Those who hide her have hidden the wind* Restraining her is like holding back the wind or grabbing oil. As at 21:9, these warn against strife in the home and apply to husbands as well.
27:17 *Iron grows sharp by iron* A blade is sharpened against another piece of iron, with friction and sparks. We grow sharper through honest friendship, hard questions and loving correction. "The face of his neighbor" may mean his look, the way his face shows his character. Believers need each other (Heb 10:24-25). Who sharpens you? Whom do you sharpen?
27:18 *he who guards his master will be honored* The man who tends his fig tree eats the figs. Faithful work is rewarded in time (Matt 25:21; Col 3:23-24).
27:19 *As in the water the face is to the face, so the heart of man is to man* Still water shows your face. A man's heart shows who he really is. It may also mean that in others' hearts we see our own.
27:20 *the eyes of man are not satisfied* Sheol and Abaddon, death and destruction, never say "enough." Neither do human eyes. Only God satisfies (Eccl 1:8; John 4:13-14). If you always want more, the problem is not what you have but what you are looking for.
27:21 *a man according to his praise* Silver and gold are tested by fire, a man by praise (17:3). Some do well in hard times and fall apart in success. Herod took praise that belonged to God and was struck down (Acts 12:21-23).
27:22 *his folly will not depart from him* Grain was pounded in a mortar until the husk came off. Folly is not on the outside. It is in the heart, and only a changed heart can change him.
27:23 *You shall surely know the face of your flock* A little poem for the farmer and shepherd. Pay attention to what God has given you to care for. Money and even crowns do not last (v. 24), but faithful care keeps on providing. Elders are to shepherd God's flock (1 Pet 5:2), and Jesus the Good Shepherd knows His sheep (John 10:14).
27:25 *The grass has disappeared, and new grass appears* The seasons turn. God provides through the steady rhythm of the year.
27:27 *enough milk of goats for your food* Care for the flock and it cares for you: clothing, land, milk for the whole household. Not get-rich-quick. Enough.
28:1 *The wicked flee, and there is no one pursuing* A guilty conscience hears footsteps that are not there (Lev 26:17, 36). The righteous have nothing to hide and stand firm like a lion. Peter and John stood boldly before the council that crucified Jesus (Acts 4:13). That courage comes from a clean heart and a close walk with God.
28:2 *By the transgression of a land its princes are many* A sinful nation's leaders come and go quickly. The northern kingdom had nineteen kings in about two hundred years, many murdered by the next (1 Kgs 15-16; 2 Kgs 15). A wise, just leader brings stability.

understands ***and*** knows right, it will last long. **3** A poor man who oppresses ***the*** poor ***is*** a rain that sweeps away, and there is no food. **4** Those who forsake ***the*** law praise the wicked, and those who keep ***the*** law contend with them. **5** Men of evil do not understand justice, and those who seek the LORD understand everything. **6** Better ***is*** a poor ***man*** who walks in his integrity than one perverse of two ways, and he ***is*** rich. **7** He who keeps ***the*** law ***is*** a son who understands, and he who associates with gluttons shames his father. **8** He who increases his wealth by interest and usury gathers it for one who shows favor to ***the*** poor. **9** He who turns aside his ear from hearing ***the*** law, even his prayer ***is*** an abomination. **10** He who leads upright ***ones*** astray in an evil way, into his own pit he will fall, and blameless ***ones*** will inherit good. **11** A rich man ***is*** wise in his own eyes, and a poor ***man*** who understands searches him out. **12** When righteous ***ones*** rejoice, glory ***is*** great, and when wicked ***ones*** arise, man is searched for.

Confession and Mercy

13 He who covers his transgressions will not prosper, and he who confesses and forsakes ***them*** will be shown mercy. **14** How blessed ***is*** the man who fears continually, and he who hardens his heart will fall into calamity. **15** A roaring lion and a rushing bear ***is*** a wicked ruler over a poor people. **16** A leader lacking understanding and great ***in*** oppressions; he who hates unjust gain will prolong ***his*** days. **17** A man oppressed by the blood of a soul will flee to the pit; let them not lay hold of him. **18** He who walks blameless will be saved, and he who is crooked ***in*** two ways will fall at once. **19** He who tills his ground will be satisfied ***with*** bread, and he who pursues empty ***things*** will be satisfied ***with*** poverty. **20** A man of faithfulness ***will be*** great ***in*** blessings, and he who hastens to become rich will not go unpunished. **21** To regard faces ***is*** not good, and for a piece of bread a man will transgress. **22** A man with an evil eye hastens after wealth, and he does not know that want will come to him. **23** He who reproves a man will afterward find favor more than he who makes ***his*** tongue smooth. **24** He who robs his father and his mother and says, "There is no transgression," he ***is*** a companion to a man who destroys. **25** He who is arrogant of soul stirs up strife, and he who trusts in the LORD will be made

28:3 Matt 18:28-30
28:4 Eph 5:11; Rom 1:32; 1 Kgs 18:18,21
28:5 Ps 92:6; John 7:17; 1 John 2:20,27
28:6 Prov 19:1,22; Luke 16:19-23; Prov 28:18
28:7 Prov 2:1-6; Prov 29:3,15; 1 Pet 4:3,4
28:8 Prov 13:22; Lev 25:36; Job 27:16,17
28:9 Ps 66:18; Ps 109:7; Zech 7:11-13
28:10 Prov 26:27; Matt 6:33; Prov 15:6
28:11 Prov 26:16; Rom 12:16; Eccl 9:15-17
28:12 Prov 29:2; Prov 11:10; Prov 28:28
28:13 Job 31:33; Ps 32:3-5; 1 John 1:8-10
28:14 Heb 3:8; Prov 23:17; Isa 66:2
28:15 Matt 2:16; 1 Pet 5:8; 2 Kgs 21:16
28:16 Isa 3:12; 1 Kgs 12:10,14; Neh 5:15
28:17 Gen 9:6; Exod 21:14; Num 35:14-34
28:18 Prov 10:9,25; Prov 28:6; Prov 11:3-6
28:19 Prov 12:11; Prov 27:23-27; Prov 13:20
28:20 Prov 13:11; Prov 20:21; Prov 28:22
28:21 Ezek 13:19; Prov 18:5; Prov 24:23
28:22 Prov 23:6; Prov 28:20; 1 Tim 6:9
28:23 Prov 27:5,6; 1 Kgs 1:23,32-40; Matt 18:15
28:24 Prov 18:9; Prov 19:26; Judg 17:2
28:25 Prov 15:18; Prov 11:25; 1 Tim 6:6

28:3 *A poor man who oppresses the poor is a rain that sweeps away* Rain should bring a crop, but a flood washes it away. The poor man who gains a little power and crushes the poor should understand them best and treats them worst (Matt 18:28-34).
28:4 *Those who forsake the law praise the wicked* "The law" is torah, instruction, in Israel God's law through Moses. Those who throw it off end up cheering for the wicked (Rom 1:32). For believers the Law is fulfilled in Christ (Rom 10:4). We are not saved by keeping it, but its moral heart shows what pleases God, and we walk in it because we have been saved (Eph 2:8-10).
28:5 *those who seek the LORD understand everything* Not every fact, but what is right and wrong and what life is about (1 Cor 2:15; 1 John 2:20). Evil blinds a person to justice.
28:6 *one perverse of two ways* "Two ways" pictures a man walking two roads at once, a double life. Honest poverty beats crooked riches (19:1).
28:8 *He who increases his wealth by interest and usury* The Law forbade charging interest to a poor fellow Israelite (Exod 22:25; Lev 25:35-37). God will see that such money ends up with someone kind to the poor. Believers differ on how these laws apply to ordinary business loans, but all agree that profiting from someone's desperation is sin.
28:9 *even his prayer is an abomination* If we will not listen to God, why should He listen to us? Prayer is not a way to get what we want while ignoring what He says (Isa 1:15-17; 1 John 3:22). But the door is always open for the one who turns back (v. 13).
28:10 *He who leads upright ones astray in an evil way* Leading good people into sin is terrible (Matt 18:6). The tempter falls into his own trap (26:27).
28:11 *A rich man is wise in his own eyes* Money can make a man think he is smart, but a poor man with understanding sees right through him.
28:12 *when wicked ones arise, man is searched for* When the wicked come to power, people go into hiding and are hunted out. The saying returns in verse 28 and 29:2.
28:13 *He who covers his transgressions will not prosper, and he who confesses and forsakes them will be shown mercy* One of the most hopeful verses in the book. Adam and Eve hid (Gen 3:8), and David's body wasted under his hidden sin (Ps 32:3-4). To confess is to agree with God that it is sin; to forsake is to turn from it. That is repentance. David confessed and was forgiven (Ps 32:5), and God promises to forgive and cleanse all who confess (1 John 1:9). Is there something you have been covering? Bring it into the light today.
28:14 *How blessed is the man who fears continually* The fear of the LORD, a tender heart that takes God and sin seriously, is the opposite of a hard heart. Pharaoh hardened his heart until disaster came (Exod 8:15, 32; Heb 3:7-8).
28:15 *A roaring lion and a rushing bear is a wicked ruler over a poor people* A wicked ruler is as dangerous as a wild animal, and the poor suffer most.
28:17 *A man oppressed by the blood of a soul will flee to the pit* A murderer weighed down by guilt runs until the grave. The second line likely means, do not shield him from justice (Gen 9:6; Num 35:31). Some read it as, let no one stop him. Even so, the gospel reaches murderers. Paul once approved the killing of believers, and God saved him (1 Tim 1:13-15).
28:18 *he who is crooked in two ways will fall at once* The double life again. It cannot last.
28:19 *he who pursues empty things will be satisfied with poverty* Steady work feeds you. Chasing fantasies fills you only with want (12:11).
28:20 *he who hastens to become rich will not go unpunished* Faithfulness over time brings many blessings. Trying to get rich fast usually leads to cutting corners and to trouble (13:11; 1 Tim 6:9-10).
28:21 *for a piece of bread a man will transgress* How cheaply some sell their integrity.
28:22 *A man with an evil eye hastens after wealth* The stingy, greedy man does not see poverty coming. The evil eye is the opposite of the good eye of 22:9.
28:23 *He who reproves a man will afterward find favor* The key word is "afterward." Honest correction stings at first, but in the end people respect it more than flattery (27:5-6).
28:24 *He who robs his father and his mother and says, "There is no transgression,"* A son who takes from his parents and tells himself it is not stealing is no better than a vandal. Jesus rebuked those who used religious excuses to avoid caring for their parents (Mark 7:10-13).
28:25 *he who trusts in the LORD will be made fat* Pride starts fights. "Made

fat. **26** He who trusts in his own heart, he ***is*** a fool, and he who walks in wisdom, he will be delivered. **27** He who gives to the poor ***will have*** no lack, and he who hides his eyes ***will be*** great ***in*** curses. **28** When wicked ***ones*** arise, man hides himself, and when they perish, righteous ***ones*** increase.

PROVERBS 29

When the Wicked Rule

1 A man of rebukes who hardens ***his*** neck will suddenly be broken, and there is no healing. **2** When righteous ***ones*** increase, the people rejoice, and when a wicked ***one*** rules, a people sighs. **3** A man who loves wisdom makes his father glad, and he who associates with prostitutes destroys wealth. **4** A king by justice establishes a land, and a man of contributions tears it down. **5** A man who flatters his neighbor spreads a net for his footsteps. **6** In the transgression of an evil man ***is*** a snare, and a righteous ***one*** sings aloud and rejoices. **7** A righteous ***one*** knows the cause of ***the*** poor; a wicked ***one*** does not understand knowledge. **8** Men of scoffing inflame a town, and wise ***ones*** turn away anger. **9** A wise man ***who*** enters into judgment with a foolish man, and he rages and he laughs, and there is no rest. **10** Men of blood hate a blameless ***one***, and upright ***ones*** seek his life. **11** A fool sends forth all his spirit, and a wise ***one*** stills it back. **12** A ruler who pays attention to a word of falsehood, all his ministers ***are*** wicked. **13** A poor ***man*** and a man of oppressions meet together; the LORD gives light ***to*** the eyes of both of them. **14** A king who judges ***the*** poor in truth, his throne will be established forever.

Where There Is No Vision

15 A rod and rebuke give wisdom, and a youth let loose puts his mother to shame. **16** When wicked ***ones*** increase, transgression increases, and righteous ***ones*** will look on their downfall. **17** Discipline your son, and he will give you rest, and he will give delights to your soul. **18** When there is no vision, a people is let loose, and he who keeps ***the*** law, how blessed ***is*** he! **19** By words a slave will not be disciplined, for

28:26 Prov 3:5; Job 28:28; James 3:13-18
28:27 2 Cor 9:9; Prov 19:17; Prov 22:9
28:28 Prov 28:12; Prov 29:2; Job 24:4
29:1 Prov 6:15; 1 Sam 2:25,34; Prov 1:24-31
29:2 Prov 28:12,28; Esth 8:15; Prov 11:10
29:3 Prov 10:1; Prov 15:20; Prov 27:11
29:4 Prov 29:14; Prov 16:12; Prov 20:8
29:5 Ps 5:9; Ps 12:2; Prov 7:5,21
29:6 Prov 5:22; Prov 11:5,6; Prov 12:13
29:7 Job 29:16; Ps 41:1; Prov 21:13
29:8 Prov 11:11; Isa 28:14-22; Matt 27:39-43
29:9 Eccl 10:13; Prov 26:4; Matt 7:6
29:10 Gen 4:5-8; 1 Sam 20:31-33; 1 Sam 22:11-23
29:11 Prov 12:16,23; Judg 16:17; Prov 14:33
29:12 Prov 20:8; Prov 25:23; 1 Sam 22:8-23
29:13 Prov 22:2; Ps 13:3; Matt 5:45
29:14 Prov 16:12; Prov 29:4; Prov 25:5
29:15 Prov 10:1,5; Prov 29:17,21; Prov 22:6,15
29:16 Ps 58:10; Ps 91:8; Ps 37:34,36
29:17 Prov 29:15; Prov 13:24; Prov 19:18
29:18 James 1:25; Luke 11:28; 1 Sam 3:1
29:19 Prov 26:3; Prov 30:22; Job 19:16

fat" meant prospering, well fed, a picture of blessing, not a promise of wealth.

28:26 *He who trusts in his own heart, he is a fool* Our world says trust your heart. Proverbs says that is foolish, because the heart is deceitful (Jer 17:9). Trust the LORD and walk in His wisdom (3:5-6).

28:27 *he who hides his eyes will be great in curses* A general truth about God's care for the generous, not a promise of riches. God sees who helps and who looks away (19:17; 21:13).

28:28 *when they perish, righteous ones increase* As in verse 12. Pray for your leaders and for righteousness in your land (1 Tim 2:1-2).

29:1 *A man of rebukes who hardens his neck will suddenly be broken* "Hardens his neck" pictures a stubborn ox that will not bow to the yoke. Warned again and again, he will not listen, and his ruin comes all at once. God's patience has an end (2 Pet 3:9-10). If God is warning you, listen now.

29:2 *when a wicked one rules, a people sighs* Leaders' character affects everyone under them (28:12, 28), which is why we pray for those in authority.

29:3 *he who associates with prostitutes destroys wealth* As the prodigal did (Luke 15:13, 30). Sexual sin destroys more than money. It destroys families and lives (6:26).

29:4 *a man of contributions tears it down* A ruler greedy for gifts, whether heavy taxes or bribes. Justice builds a nation. Greed tears it down. Rehoboam lost most of his kingdom promising heavier burdens (1 Kgs 12:13-16).

29:5 *A man who flatters his neighbor spreads a net for his footsteps* The flatterer wants something. Be careful when someone praises you too much.

29:6 *a righteous one sings aloud and rejoices* Sin traps. Righteousness frees.

29:7 *A righteous one knows the cause of the poor* The righteous take time to understand the situation of the poor, as Job did (Job 29:16). The wicked do not care to know.

29:8 *Men of scoffing inflame a town* One troublemaker can set a community on fire. One wise voice can put it out.

29:9 *he rages and he laughs, and there is no rest* Try to settle a matter with a fool, and he either rages or laughs. Nothing gets settled (26:4).

29:10 *Men of blood hate a blameless one, and upright ones seek his life* Violent men hate the innocent, as Cain hated Abel (1 John 3:12). The second line likely means the upright seek to protect the blameless man's life. It can also be read of the bloodthirsty seeking the life of the upright.

29:11 *A fool sends forth all his spirit, and a wise one stills it back* Self-control does not mean we never feel anger. It means anger does not rule us (Eph 4:26).

29:12 *A ruler who pays attention to a word of falsehood, all his ministers are wicked* If a leader listens to lies, liars will gather around him. Leaders set the tone.

29:13 *the LORD gives light to the eyes of both of them* Both the poor man and his oppressor owe their life and sight to the LORD (22:2). The oppressor depends on God every day too.

29:14 *A king who judges the poor in truth, his throne will be established forever* This points ahead to the Messiah, the Son of David, who will judge the poor with righteousness (Isa 11:4) and reign forever (Luke 1:32-33).

29:15 *a youth let loose puts his mother to shame* As at 13:24, 22:15 and 23:13-14, the rod is a picture of correction. A child must not be left without guidance. Loving correction, never in anger and never abuse, gives wisdom (Eph 6:4). Godly parents differ on spanking and agree children need firm, loving correction.

29:16 *righteous ones will look on their downfall* When the wicked grow in number, sin spreads, but it will not last. Do not lose heart when evil seems to be winning (Ps 37:34-36).

29:17 *Discipline your son, and he will give you rest* Correction takes work now and brings peace and joy later. A general pattern, as at 22:6, not a guarantee.

29:18 *When there is no vision, a people is let loose* Often quoted to mean a group needs goals and long-range plans. That is not its meaning. "Vision" is a prophet's vision, God's word revealed (1 Sam 3:1; Isa 1:1). Without it people throw off restraint and run wild, as at the golden calf (Exod 32:25) and in the days of the judges (Judg 21:25). The second line makes it clear: blessed is he who keeps the law. God has spoken fully in His Son and in Scripture (Heb 1:1-2).

29:19 *By words a slave will not be disciplined* Many households had servants, often people who sold themselves to pay a debt (Lev 25:39-43). A stubborn servant may understand an order and still refuse. These sayings describe that world, not approve slavery. The Law limited and protected Hebrew servants (Exod 21:2, 26-27), and it was not the race-based chattel slavery of later centuries. Masters are to be just, knowing they have a Master in heaven (Col 4:1; Gal 3:28).

he will understand, and there is no answering. **20** Have you seen a man hasty in his words? Hope for a fool ***is*** more than for him. **21** He who pampers his slave from youth, and his end will be trouble. **22** A man of anger stirs up strife, and a master of rage ***is*** great ***in*** transgression. **23** The pride of a man will bring him low, and ***one*** lowly of spirit will lay hold of honor. **24** He who shares with a thief hates his own soul; he hears the oath and does not tell. **25** The trembling of man sets a snare, and he who trusts in the LORD will be set on high. **26** Many seek the face of a ruler, and the justice of a man ***is*** from the LORD. **27** An abomination of righteous ***ones is*** a man of injustice, and an abomination of the wicked ***is*** one upright of way.

PROVERBS 30

The Words of Agur

1 The words of Agur the son of Jakeh (Yaqe), the oracle. The utterance of the man to Ithiel (Iti'el), to Ithiel and Ucal (Ukhal): **2** For I ***am*** more stupid than ***any*** man, and the understanding of a man ***is*** not mine. **3** And I have not learned wisdom, and the knowledge of ***the*** Holy One I ***do not*** know. **4** Who has gone up ***to the*** heavens and come down? Who has gathered the wind in his fists? Who has wrapped the waters in the garment? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What ***is*** his name, and what ***is*** the name of his son? Surely you know! **5** Every word of God ***is*** refined; He ***is*** a shield to those who take refuge in Him. **6** Do not add to His words, lest He rebuke you, and you be proved a liar.

Agur's Prayer

7 Two ***things*** I have asked from You; do not withhold ***them*** from me before I die: **8** Emptiness and a word of lies put far from me; poverty and wealth do not give to me; feed me the food of my portion, **9** lest I be satisfied and deny ***You*** and say, "Who ***is*** the LORD?" and lest I be poor and steal, and seize the name of my God. **10** Do not slander a slave to his master, lest he curse you and you be held guilty. **11** A generation curses its father and does not bless its mother. **12** A generation pure in its own eyes, and it has not been washed from its filth. **13** A generation, how lofty are its eyes, and its eyelids are lifted up! **14** A generation, its teeth ***are*** swords and its jaw-

29:20 James 1:19; Prov 26:12; Eccl 5:2
29:22 Prov 15:18; Prov 17:19; Prov 26:21
29:23 Matt 23:12; Luke 14:11; Isa 66:2
29:24 Lev 5:1; Prov 8:36; Prov 1:11-19
29:25 John 12:42; Ps 118:8; Ps 91:14
29:26 Prov 19:6; Ps 20:9; Prov 16:7
29:27 Ps 139:21; 1 John 3:13; Prov 24:9
30:1 2 Pet 1:19; Prov 31:1
30:2 Ps 73:22; Job 42:3-6; Isa 6:5
30:3 Rev 3:7; Amos 7:14,15; Matt 16:17
30:4 John 3:13; Rev 19:12; Luke 10:22
30:5 Ps 18:30; Ps 12:6; Ps 84:11
30:6 Rev 22:18; Rev 22:19; Deut 4:2
30:7 2 Kgs 2:9; Ps 27:4; 1 Kgs 3:5-9
30:8 Matt 6:11,33; Ps 62:9,10; Ps 119:29,37
30:9 Rev 3:8; Deut 31:20; Hos 13:6
30:10 Prov 24:23; Deut 23:15; 1 Sam 22:9,10
30:11 Mark 7:10; Mark 7:11; Mark 7:12
30:12 Luke 18:11; Isa 65:5; Prov 21:2
30:13 Prov 6:17; Isa 2:11; Prov 21:4
30:14 Ps 57:4; Ps 3:7; Ps 14:4

29:20 *Have you seen a man hasty in his words* Like 26:12. The man who speaks before he thinks is worse off than a fool (James 1:19).
29:21 *his end will be trouble* A servant spoiled from youth may take over or become a burden. The last word is hard in Hebrew, and some read it as "a son" or heir. Indulgence without discipline leads to trouble.
29:22 *a master of rage is great in transgression* Anger opens the door to many other sins (Eph 4:26-27).
29:23 *one lowly of spirit will lay hold of honor* Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted (Luke 14:11).
29:24 *he hears the oath and does not tell* When a curse was pronounced on anyone who knew of a crime and stayed silent, the silent one was guilty (Lev 5:1). Keeping quiet to protect a thief makes you part of the sin.
29:25 *The trembling of man sets a snare* The fear of what people think or can do makes us say yes when we should say no and stay quiet when we should speak. Peter denied Jesus before a servant girl (Matt 26:69-75). The one who trusts the LORD is lifted out of reach (18:10; Matt 10:28). Whom do you fear more, people or God?
29:26 *the justice of a man is from the LORD* People line up for the favor of the powerful. Earthly rulers may fail us. God will not.
29:27 *an abomination of the wicked is one upright of way* The two roads are so different that those who walk them cannot stand each other (John 15:18-19). This is the last of Solomon's proverbs in the book.
30:1 *The words of Agur the son of Jakeh, the oracle* An oracle is a weighty message, often from God. Ithiel and Ucal seem to be the men Agur spoke to, perhaps students or sons. Some read the Hebrew letters as words meaning, I am weary, God, I am weary and worn out, which fits what follows. Scripture does not tell us who Agur was. Some Jewish teachers thought he was Solomon, but nothing in the text says so.
30:2 *For I am more stupid than any man* Agur is comparing himself to God. Next to the Holy One, all our wisdom is foolishness (1 Cor 3:19).
30:3 *the knowledge of the Holy One I do not know* He has not learned wisdom, and he does not have the knowledge of the Holy One by his own effort. That knowledge has to come from God. Either way, humility is where wisdom starts (1:7).
30:4 *Who has gone up to the heavens and come down* Questions like those God asked Job (Job 38:4-11). Only God holds the wind, wraps the waters and set the ends of the earth.
30:4 *What is his name, and what is the name of his son? Surely you know* In the Old Testament Israel is called God's son (Exod 4:22), and so is David's royal heir (Ps 2:7). Many teachers see more: a question pointing to Christ, the eternal Son, who came down from heaven and went back up (John 3:13; Eph 4:9-10), commanded the wind (Mark 4:39-41) and made all things (John 1:3). Agur may not have known all his question pointed to, but God, who inspired it, knew.
30:5 *Every word of God is refined* Like silver through the fire with no impurity left (Ps 12:6; 18:30). Every word of it is true, and God Himself shields all who run to Him.
30:6 *Do not add to His words* Moses gave the same warning (Deut 4:2), and so does the Bible's last chapter (Rev 22:18-19). A warning to every Bible teacher, including me. We may explain God's Word, but never put our words in His mouth. Many false teachings begin by adding new revelations, rules or books beside the Bible. God's Word is enough (2 Tim 3:16-17).
30:7 *Two things I have asked from You* The only prayer in Proverbs. First, keep me from falsehood, both lying and being deceived. Second, give me neither too little nor too much (v. 8). Jesus taught us to pray for daily bread (Matt 6:11).
30:9 *Who is the LORD* Riches might make Agur feel he did not need God, the proud question Pharaoh asked (Exod 5:2). Poverty might tempt him to steal and so dishonor God's name. Some read "seize the name" as swearing falsely by it. Both riches and poverty have their temptations (Phil 4:11-13).
30:10 *Do not slander a slave to his master* A servant has little power to defend himself. God cares for those with little power and will hold the slanderer guilty.
30:11 *A generation curses its father* "Generation" here means a kind of people. Four kinds follow: those who dishonor parents, the self-righteous, the proud and the cruel.
30:12 *A generation pure in its own eyes* They think they are clean but are not, like the Pharisee who thanked God he was not like other men (Luke 18:11).
30:14 *its teeth are swords and its jawbones are knives* The cruel eat up the poor like wild animals (2 Tim 3:1-5).

bones ***are*** knives, to devour the afflicted from the earth and the needy from mankind.

Three Things and Four

15 The leech has two daughters: "Give, give." Three ***things*** are not satisfied; four do not say, "Enough": **16** Sheol, and the barrenness of ***the*** womb, land ***that*** is not satisfied ***with*** water, and fire ***that*** does not say, "Enough." **17** An eye ***that*** mocks a father and despises obedience to a mother, the ravens of the wadi will pluck it out, and the young of an eagle will eat it. **18** Three ***things*** are too wonderful for me, and four I do not know: **19** the way of the eagle in the heavens, the way of a serpent on a rock, the way of a ship in the heart of the sea, and the way of a man with a young woman. **20** Thus ***is*** the way of an adulterous woman: she eats and wipes her mouth and says, "I have not done evil." **21** Under three ***things*** the earth quakes, and under four it is not able to bear up: **22** under a slave when he becomes king, and a senseless ***one*** when he is satisfied ***with*** food, **23** under a hated ***woman*** when she is married, and a female servant when she dispossesses her mistress. **24** Four ***things*** are small ***things*** of the earth, and they ***are*** wise, made wise: **25** the ants ***are*** a people not strong, and they prepare their food in the summer; **26** rock badgers ***are*** a people not mighty, and they make their home in the rock; **27** the locust has no king, and it goes out dividing, all of it; **28** a lizard you grasp with ***your*** hands, and it ***is*** in the palaces of a king. **29** Three ***things*** are doing well ***in*** step, and four are doing well ***in*** walking: **30** a lion, mighty among the animals, and it does not turn back from before anything; **31** a rooster of loins, or a male goat, and a king, a band of soldiers with him. **32** If you have been foolish in exalting yourself, and if you have plotted, hand to mouth! **33** For the pressing of milk brings forth curds, and the pressing of the nose brings forth blood, and the pressing of anger brings forth strife.

PROVERBS 31

A Mother's Counsel to a King

1 The words of Lemuel (Lemu'el) the king, an oracle which his mother taught him: **2** What, my son? And what, son of my womb? And what, son of my vows? **3** Do not give your strength to women, and your ways to wiping out kings. **4** ***It is*** not for kings, Lemuel, not for kings to drink wine, and for rulers, "Where ***is*** strong drink?" **5** lest he drink and forget what is decreed, and change the cause of all the sons of

30:15 Prov 30:21,24,29; Prov 6:16; Isa 57:3
30:16 Prov 27:20; Hab 2:5
30:17 Matt 19:19; Mark 7:10; Prov 23:22
30:18 Job 42:3; Ps 139:6
30:19 Job 39:27; Isa 40:31; Exod 22:16
30:20 Prov 7:13-23; Num 5:11-30
30:22 Prov 19:10; Eccl 10:7; Prov 28:3
30:23 Prov 19:13; Prov 21:9,19; Prov 27:15
30:24 Job 12:7
30:25 Prov 6:6-8
30:26 Ps 104:18; Lev 11:5
30:27 Exod 10:4-6,13-15; Ps 105:34; Joel 1:4,6,7
30:30 Judg 14:18; Num 23:24
30:31 Prov 16:14; Prov 20:2; Dan 3:15-18
30:32 Job 21:5; Job 40:4; Prov 26:12
30:33 Prov 29:22; Prov 15:18; Prov 16:28
31:1 Prov 6:20; Prov 1:8; 2 Tim 1:5
31:2 Isa 49:15; 1 Sam 1:11,28
31:3 Deut 17:17; Neh 13:26; Prov 5:9-11
31:4 Eccl 10:17; Lev 10:9,10; Isa 28:7,8
31:5 Hab 2:5

30:15 *The leech has two daughters* A leech sucks blood and never stops, and its daughters cry, "Give, give." The pattern of three and then four says, here are several, and one more to finish the list. The grave, a woman longing for a child (Gen 30:1), dry ground and fire never say enough (v. 16). They picture the greedy heart, which only God can satisfy (Ps 107:9). Barrenness is named as a picture of deep longing, with no blame implied.
30:17 *the ravens of the wadi will pluck it out* A harsh picture. The worst end was to lie unburied with birds eating the body. The child who scorns his parents is headed for a shameful end. It is a word picture of judgment, not a command for anyone to carry out (Exod 20:12).
30:19 *the way of a man with a young woman* An eagle in the sky, a snake on a rock and a ship at sea leave no track. How do they find their way? The greatest wonder is how a man and a young woman are drawn together in love. God made it, and it is a marvel (Gen 2:23-24; Song 8:6-7).
30:20 *she eats and wipes her mouth and says, "I have not done evil."* The dark side of that wonder. She sins as casually as eating a meal, leaves no visible track and feels no guilt. Sin can make a conscience numb (1 Tim 4:2; Eph 4:19). What God made beautiful, sin twists.
30:22 *under a slave when he becomes king* Four things upset the order of life: a servant suddenly in power with no wisdom, a fool well fed and fuller of himself, an unloved woman who marries and takes revenge for the years of rejection, and a servant girl who takes her mistress's place, as Hagar despised Sarah (Gen 16:4). Power, plenty or position without character makes life hard for everyone around.
30:24 *they are wise, made wise* Four small creatures teach big lessons.
30:25 *the ants are a people not strong* Tiny and weak, but they plan ahead (6:6-8). Wisdom prepares.
30:26 *rock badgers are a people not mighty, and they make their home in the rock* The rock badger, or hyrax, is small and shy. It cannot fight, so it lives among rocks where enemies cannot reach. Wisdom knows where to hide. Our Rock is the LORD (Ps 18:2).
30:27 *the locust has no king* Yet locusts move together in ranks like an army (Joel 2:7-8). Wisdom works together.
30:28 *it is in the palaces of a king* A lizard is easy to catch, yet it gets into a king's palace. Small and weak is not the same as foolish. God uses the weak things of the world (1 Cor 1:27).
30:31 *a rooster of loins, or a male goat, and a king, a band of soldiers with him* Pictures of stately confidence and order: the lion, the strutting rooster, the goat leading the flock, the king marching with his army. The Hebrew for "a rooster of loins" is uncertain, and some read greyhound or war horse.
30:32 *hand to mouth* If you have puffed yourself up or plotted evil, put your hand over your mouth and stop talking, as Job did before God (Job 40:4).
30:33 *the pressing of anger brings forth strife* The same Hebrew word, "pressing," comes three times. Churn milk and you get curds. Squeeze a nose and you get blood. Keep pushing and provoking and you get a fight. Agur ends with a call to humility and peace.
31:1 *The words of Lemuel the king, an oracle which his mother taught him* We know nothing of King Lemuel outside this chapter. His name means belonging to God. Some Jewish teachers thought he was Solomon, which would make his mother Bathsheba, but the text does not say so. This king's wisdom came from his mother, and he was not ashamed to say so (2 Tim 1:5). Mothers, your teaching matters more than you know.
31:2 *And what, son of my vows* We hear a mother's love and worry. "Son of my vows" may mean she prayed and made vows to God for him, as Hannah did for Samuel (1 Sam 1:11).
31:3 *Do not give your strength to women* A king could have a large harem, and many kings were ruined by their lusts. Solomon's wives turned his heart from the LORD (1 Kgs 11:1-4), and the Law warned the king not to multiply wives (Deut 17:17).
31:4 *It is not for kings, Lemuel, not for kings to drink wine* A ruler needs a clear head. A drunk ruler forgets the law and twists justice for the poor (v. 5; Eccl 10:17).

affliction. **6** Give strong drink to him who is perishing, and wine to those bitter of soul. **7** He will drink and forget his poverty, and he will not remember his trouble again. **8** Open your mouth for the mute, for the cause of all the sons of passing away. **9** Open your mouth, judge ***in*** righteousness, and plead the cause of ***the*** afflicted and needy.

The Wife of Strength

10 A wife of strength, who will find? And her price ***is*** far beyond jewels. **11** The heart of her husband trusts in her, and he will not lack spoil. **12** She repays him good and not evil all the days of her life. **13** She seeks wool and flax, and she works in the delight of her hands. **14** She is like the ships of a merchant; from afar she brings her food. **15** And she rises while ***it is*** still night, and gives food to her household, and an allotted portion to her maidens. **16** She considers a field and buys it; from the fruit of her hands she plants a vineyard. **17** She girds her loins with strength, and makes her arms strong. **18** She tastes that her profit ***is*** good; her lamp does not go out in the night. **19** She stretches out her hands to the distaff, and her palms grasp the spindle. **20** She spreads out her palm to the afflicted, and stretches out her hands to the needy. **21** She is not afraid for her household from snow, for all her household ***is*** clothed ***in*** scarlet. **22** She makes coverings for herself; her clothing ***is*** fine linen and purple. **23** Her husband is known in the gates, when he sits with the elders of the land. **24** She makes linen garments and sells ***them***, and she supplies belts to the merchant. **25** Strength and majesty ***are*** her clothing, and she laughs at the day to come. **26** She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the instruction of steadfast love ***is*** on her tongue. **27** She watches over the ways of her household, and she does not eat the bread of sluggishness. **28** Her sons rise up and call her blessed; her husband, and he praises her: **29** "Many daughters have done ***deeds of*** strength, and you have gone up above all of them." **30** Charm ***is*** falsehood, and beauty ***is*** vanity; a woman ***who*** fears the

31:6 1 Tim 5:23; Ps 104:15; 1 Sam 1:10
31:7 Eph 5:18
31:8 Ps 82:3,4; 1 Sam 22:14,15; Jer 26:16-19,24
31:9 Rev 19:11; Isa 1:17,23; Lev 19:15
31:10 Prov 19:14; Prov 12:4; Prov 18:22
31:11 2 Kgs 4:9,10,22,23; 1 Pet 3:1-7
31:12 1 Sam 25:18-22,26,27
31:13 1 Tim 5:10,14; Gen 18:6-8; Gen 24:13,14,18-20
31:14 Prov 31:24; 1 Kgs 9:26-28; 2 Chr 9:10
31:15 Rom 12:11; Luke 12:42; Josh 3:1
31:16 Josh 15:18; Song 8:12; Matt 13:44
31:17 1 Pet 1:13; 1 Kgs 18:46; 2 Kgs 4:29
31:18 Gen 31:40; Ps 127:2; Matt 25:3-10
31:19 Exod 35:25,26
31:20 Rom 10:21; Eph 4:28; Prov 22:9
31:21 Prov 25:20; Gen 45:22
31:22 Rev 19:14; Rev 19:8; Prov 7:16
31:23 Ruth 4:1; Prov 12:4; Deut 16:18
31:24 Luke 16:19; Ezek 27:16; Prov 31:13,19
31:25 Job 29:14; Job 40:10; Ps 132:9,16
31:26 Luke 1:45; Eph 4:29; Prov 31:8,9
31:27 Prov 14:1; 1 Tim 5:10; Titus 2:4
31:28 2 Tim 3:15-17; Prov 31:1; 1 Kgs 2:19
31:29 Song 6:8,9; Eph 5:27
31:30 1 Pet 3:4,5; Prov 6:25; Prov 11:22

31:6 *Give strong drink to him who is perishing, and wine to those bitter of soul* Hard to read. It seems to say strong drink belongs to the dying and those in deep pain, as comfort or medicine, not to kings who need clear minds. Wine was one of the few pain relievers then. Jesus was offered wine mixed with myrrh on the cross and refused it (Mark 15:23). Some read the verses as a sharp contrast, others as compassion for the suffering. They do not prescribe drowning sorrow in drink (20:1; 23:29-35). The real cure for a bitter soul is the Lord who heals the brokenhearted (Ps 147:3).
31:8 *Open your mouth for the mute* Her most important word. "The sons of passing away" are the perishing, with no one to stand up for them. The king must speak for those who cannot speak for themselves.
31:9 *plead the cause of the afflicted and needy* This is the heart of godly leadership and a calling for every believer (Isa 1:17; James 1:27; Luke 4:18). Whose voice is not being heard where you live? Can you open your mouth for them?
31:10 *A wife of strength, who will find? And her price is far beyond jewels* The poem that closes the book is an acrostic: each verse begins with the next letter of the Hebrew alphabet, from the first letter to the last. The phrase is 'eshet hayil. Hayil means strength, ability, wealth, even a soldier's valor. She is a woman of strong character and real ability, the phrase Boaz used of Ruth (Ruth 3:11). Like wisdom, she is rare and precious (3:15; 8:11).
31:11 *The heart of her husband trusts in her, and he will not lack spoil* He has complete confidence in her. "Spoil" is the goods won after a battle. Her work brings in real gain.
31:12 *all the days of her life* She is faithful all the way through, not just at the start of the marriage.
31:13 *She seeks wool and flax* Wool for warm clothing, flax for linen. She enjoys her work and does not work grudgingly.
31:14 *She is like the ships of a merchant* She shops wisely and goes the distance for good things, like a trading ship bringing goods from far away.
31:15 *she rises while it is still night* Up before dawn to feed everyone, including the servant girls, she plans the day's work and gives each her share.
31:16 *She considers a field and buys it* She thinks before she buys, then invests what she has earned and plants a vineyard. This woman does business, and Proverbs praises her for it.
31:17 *She girds her loins with strength* To gird the loins was to tuck a long robe into the belt so you could work or run. She gets ready for hard work.
31:18 *her lamp does not go out in the night* She may work late when needed, or her household is never in want. A lamp going out pictured disaster (13:9). Her house has light.
31:19 *She stretches out her hands to the distaff* The distaff and spindle were tools for spinning thread, the ordinary work of the home.
31:20 *stretches out her hands to the needy* The same hands that hold the spindle reach out to the poor. Her success does not make her selfish. Dorcas was this kind of woman (Acts 9:36).
31:21 *all her household is clothed in scarlet* Winter does not worry her. She has prepared warm, quality wool, likely dyed red.
31:22 *her clothing is fine linen and purple* The clothes of the well-to-do. She cares for herself too, but her real beauty is not in her clothes.
31:23 *Her husband is known in the gates* The town's leaders met at the gate. Part of his good name is her doing (12:4).
31:24 *She makes linen garments and sells them* She runs a business, as did Lydia, the seller of purple (Acts 16:14).
31:25 *she laughs at the day to come* Her real clothing is strength and dignity. She is not anxious about tomorrow, because she has prepared and, more than that, she trusts the LORD (27:1; Matt 6:34).
31:26 *the instruction of steadfast love is on her tongue* Teaching given with hesed, loyal and gracious love. Here she sounds just like Lady Wisdom in chapters 1-9.
31:27 *she does not eat the bread of sluggishness* She is the opposite of the sluggard we met so often in this book.
31:28 *Her sons rise up and call her blessed* Her family sees her worth and says so. Husbands, do you praise your wife out loud? Children, do you thank your mother?
31:29 *you have gone up above all of them* There are many good women, he says, but you are the best of them all.
31:30 *Charm is falsehood, and beauty is vanity; a woman who fears the LORD, she will be praised* The key to the poem. Charm can deceive and beauty fades. Her strength, work, generosity and wisdom all grow from the fear of the LORD (1 Pet 3:3-4). The book that began with the fear of the LORD (1:7) ends with a woman who fears the LORD. She is a real ideal that honors women's work, wisdom and ability, and she is wisdom with hands and feet, a call to every reader. Some also see a picture of the church, Christ's bride, but that is not the plain meaning.

LORD, she will be praised. **31** Give to her from the fruit of her
hands, and let her works praise her in the gates.

31:31 Mark 14:9; Prov 31:16; Prov 11:30

31:31 *let her works praise her in the gates* This poem is not a checklist to shame women. It sums up a whole life over many years. Single or married, with children or without, at home or outside it, every woman can find here what the fear of the LORD looks like, and that is open to all. Nor is it a standard for husbands to hold over wives. It shows them what to praise (vv. 28-29).

ECCLESIASTES

Introduction

Title

The Hebrew title is Qoheleth, the name the writer gives himself in the first verse. The SLB translates it "Preacher." The word comes from a Hebrew root that means to gather or assemble, so Qoheleth is one who gathers people together and speaks to them. The old Greek translation of the Old Testament turned that into Ekklesiastes, from the Greek word for an assembly, and that is where our English name comes from. In our English Bibles the book stands with Job, Psalms, Proverbs and Song of Songs among the books of wisdom and poetry. In the Hebrew Bible it belongs to the Writings.

Author and Date

The writer calls himself "the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem" (1:1). He says he was king over Israel in Jerusalem (1:12), that he had more wisdom, wealth, servants and pleasures than all who were before him (1:16; 2:7-9), and that he "set in order many proverbs" (12:9). Only one son of David was king over all Israel in Jerusalem and fits that picture: Solomon. Jewish and Christian tradition have held that he wrote the book, most likely late in his life.

Many modern scholars, and some conservative scholars too, believe a later writer wrote it after the exile, in the 400s to 200s B.C., speaking in Solomon's voice as a way of teaching. They point to some late Hebrew words, a few words borrowed from Persian, and the way 1:12 says the Preacher "was king," as though looking back. Those who hold to Solomon answer that wisdom writing is hard to date, that "was king" can simply mean he had been king for some time, and that the book's own claims point plainly to Solomon. I take the book at its word and believe Solomon is the Preacher. The closing verses (12:9-14) speak of the Preacher in the third person. Solomon may have written them about himself, as wise teachers sometimes did, or a later editor guided by the Holy Spirit may have added them.

Solomon ruled about 970 to 930 B.C., so the book was most likely written about 935 B.C. In his old age his many wives turned his heart toward other gods (1 Kgs 11:4). Many Bible teachers believe Ecclesiastes is the fruit of an old king looking back on those wasted years and coming home to the fear of God. Scripture does not say that directly, but it fits the book well.

Background and Setting

The setting is Jerusalem in the golden age of Israel's kingdom. Solomon had peace on every side, built the temple and his own palace, and received gold from all over the world (1 Kgs 10). No one was better placed to test whether this world can satisfy. The book reads like an older man teaching younger people what he learned the hard way, so they will not waste their lives chasing the wind. Twice he speaks to "my son" (12:12) or "young man" (11:9).

The key word is hebel. It means a breath or a vapor, the little puff of steam you see on a cold morning, there for a moment and then gone. Many older Bibles translate it "vanity." The SLB translates it "futility." It is the same word as the name of Abel, whose short life passed like a breath (Gen 4:8). The point is not that life is worthless. The point is that nothing in this world lasts or satisfies by itself. The other key phrase is "under the sun," which the Preacher uses twenty-nine times. It describes life as it looks from ground level, with our eyes only on this world. "A chasing of wind" (1:14) pictures work that gets you nowhere. "Portion" (2:10) is the share in life God hands to each person to enjoy.

The Preacher does not give neat answers on every page. He thinks out loud. Sometimes he reports what life looks like under the sun, and sometimes he tells us what he knows is true about God. When he says man has no advantage over the animals (3:19) or that "the dead do not know anything" (9:5), he is describing death as it looks from under the sun. When he says God will bring every deed into judgment (12:14), he is telling us what is true beyond the sun. The Preacher's words are recorded truly, but each statement has to be read in light of the whole book and the whole Bible.

Themes

The search for meaning. The Preacher tried learning, laughter, wine, building projects, gardens, servants, money, music and women. He threw himself into work. Every time he came back with the same answer: "Futility of futilities! Everything is futility" (1:2). Nothing under the sun can fill the heart.

The gifts of God. Again and again he lifts his eyes above the sun. Food, drink, work and joy are gifts from God's hand (2:24-25; 3:13; 5:19). The one who grabs at them as a goal loses them. The one who receives them from God enjoys them with thanks.

Time, eternity and the ways of God. There is a time for everything (3:1-8). God "has made everything beautiful in its time," and He "has put eternity in their heart" (3:11), yet we cannot see the whole of His work. We are made for more than this world, and so this world never satisfies.

Death and judgment. The wise and the fool both die, the righteous often suffer and the wicked often prosper, and what we work for is left to someone else. But God will judge every deed (3:17; 11:9; 12:14). Everything counts.

The fear of God. The book does not end in despair. It ends with the whole duty of man: "fear God and keep His commandments, for this is all of man" (12:13). To fear God is to hold Him in such awe and trust that we obey Him above everything else, and the Preacher wants us to begin while we are young (12:1).

Christ in Ecclesiastes

Ecclesiastes is not a book of prophecy, but it leaves an ache that only Christ fills. Paul writes that the creation was subjected to futility because of sin, and that it waits in hope to be set free (Rom 8:20-21). The word Paul uses there is the same word the old Greek translation used for the Preacher's hebel. The Preacher saw the futility clearly. He could not see its end. Jesus Christ came and abolished death and brought life and incorruptibility to light through the gospel (2 Tim 1:10).

The Preacher asked again and again what advantage there is in all our toil. Paul answers for everyone who belongs to Christ: our toil is not empty in the Lord (1 Cor 15:58). Solomon was the

wisest king of Israel, but Jesus said that something greater than Solomon is here (Matt 12:42). The wisdom the Preacher searched for is found in Him. The words of the wise are "given from one shepherd" (12:11), and it is hard to read that without thinking of the Good Shepherd (John 10:11). And the God who will bring every deed into judgment (12:14) has given that judgment to the risen Jesus, who died for our sins (Acts 17:31). A man who has learned that everything under the sun is a breath is ready to hear about the One who came down from above the sun to give life that does not pass away.

Hard Passages

Man and animals (3:19-21). The Preacher says man has no advantage over the animals and asks who knows whether man's spirit goes upward. He is describing death as it looks from under the sun. Later he gives the answer: "the spirit returns to God who gave it" (12:7). Only man was made in God's image (Gen 1:27), and a believer who dies goes to be with Christ (2 Cor 5:8).

The dead know nothing (9:5-6, 10). Some use these verses to teach soul sleep or that nothing comes after death. But verse 6 explains that the dead have no portion in all that is done under the sun. They do not know what happens on earth and can no longer work here. Scripture shows the dead are aware (Luke 16:25), and to depart is to be with Christ (Phil 1:23). The chance to serve and make things right ends at the grave, so do it now.

Eat, drink and enjoy (2:24; 3:12-13; 5:18; 8:15; 9:7). These are not calls to live for pleasure. They are the opposite of the godless motto, eat and drink for tomorrow we die (1 Cor 15:32). The Preacher has just shown that pleasure as a goal is empty. The difference is receiving daily gifts from God's hand with thanks.

Do not be greatly righteous (7:16-17). This is not a warning against holiness. Most teachers read it as a warning against self-righteousness, a show of goodness and wisdom that is really pride, and against thinking our goodness forces God to give us a long life.

A woman among all these (7:26-28). Solomon speaks of his own search in his own circle, and he had a thousand wives and concubines (1 Kgs 11:3). Upright men were just as rare, one in a thousand. This is not God's verdict on women. Scripture praises the wife of strength (Prov 31:10), and in Christ men and women are co-heirs of grace (1 Pet 3:7).

The miscarriage (6:3-5). A man with every blessing whose heart is never content is worse off than a child who never saw the sun. The Preacher is not saying such a child does not matter. God forms every child in the womb (Ps 139:13-16). I believe little children who die are safe with God (2 Sam 12:23).

Outline

I. Everything Is Futility (1:1-2:26)
  A. Everything Is Futility (1:1-11)
  B. The Preacher's Search for Wisdom (1:12-18)
  C. Testing Pleasure and Great Works (2:1-11)
  D. Wisdom, Folly and Toil Left Behind (2:12-26)
II. Time, Work and the Ways of God (3:1-5:20)
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  A. Riches Without Rest (6:1-12)
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V. Remember Your Creator (12:1-14)
  A. Remember Your Creator Before the Evil Days (12:1-8)
  B. The Whole Duty of Man (12:9-14)

ECCLESIASTES

ECCLESIASTES 1

Everything Is Futility

1 The words of ***the*** Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). **2** "Futility of futilities," said ***the*** Preacher, "futility of futilities! Everything ***is*** futility." **3** What advantage ***is there*** for man in all his toil that he toils under the sun? **4** A generation goes, and a generation comes, and the earth stands forever. **5** And the sun rises, and the sun sets, and to its place it pants, rising there. **6** Going to ***the*** south and circling to ***the*** north, circling, circling goes the wind, and on its circuits the wind returns. **7** All the rivers go to the sea, and the sea is not full; to the place where the rivers go, there they return to go. **8** All the things ***are*** wearisome; a man is not able to speak ***them***; an eye is not satisfied with seeing, and an ear is not filled from hearing. **9** Whatever has been, it ***is*** what will be, and whatever has been done, it ***is*** what will be done; and there is not any new ***thing*** under the sun. **10** Is there a thing of which one will say, "See this, it ***is*** new"? Already it has been in the ages which were before us. **11** There is no remembrance of the former ***ones***; and also of the latter ***ones*** who will be, there will be no remembrance of them with those who will be at the last.

The Preacher's Search for Wisdom

12 I, ***the*** Preacher, was king over Israel (Yisra'el) in Jerusalem. **13** And I gave my heart to seek and to explore by wisdom concerning all that has been done under the heavens. It ***is*** an evil task ***that*** God has given to the sons of man to be occupied with it. **14** I have seen all the works that have been done under the sun, and look, everything ***is*** futility and a chasing of wind. **15** ***What is*** made crooked cannot become straight, and ***what is*** lacking cannot be counted. **16** I myself spoke with my heart, saying, "I, look, I have made great and increased wisdom above everyone who was before me over Jerusalem, and my heart has seen much wisdom and knowledge." **17** And I gave my heart to know wisdom and to know madness and folly; I knew that this also is a striving of wind. **18** For in abundance of wisdom ***is*** abundance of vexation, and ***whoever*** increases knowledge increases pain.

1:1 Eccl 1:12; Eccl 7:27; Eccl 12:8-10
1:2 Rom 8:20; Eccl 12:8; Ps 39:5,6
1:3 Eccl 2:22; Eccl 3:9; Eccl 5:16
1:4 Ps 104:5; Matt 24:35; Zech 1:5
1:5 Ps 19:4-6; Hab 3:11; Gen 8:22
1:6 Acts 27:13; John 3:8; Job 37:9,17
1:7 Job 38:10,11; Ps 104:6-9
1:8 Prov 27:20; Matt 11:28; Eccl 4:8
1:9 Rev 21:5; Eccl 3:15; Jer 31:22
1:10 Matt 23:30; Matt 5:12; Luke 17:26-30
1:11 Eccl 2:16; Ps 9:6; Isa 41:22-26
1:12 Eccl 1:1; 1 Kgs 4:1-19
1:13 Eccl 3:10; Eccl 1:17; Gen 3:19
1:14 Eccl 2:11,17,26; Eccl 1:17,18; 1 Kgs 4:30-32
1:15 Eccl 7:12,13; Isa 40:4; Eccl 3:14
1:16 Eccl 2:9; 1 Kgs 4:30; 1 Kgs 10:7,23,24
1:17 Eccl 2:3,12; 1 Thess 5:21; Eccl 2:10,11
1:18 Eccl 12:12,13; 1 Cor 3:18-20; Eccl 2:15

1:1 *The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem* A son of David, king in Jerusalem: that is Solomon. "Preacher" translates Qoheleth, one who gathers an assembly and speaks to it, as Solomon once gathered Israel to dedicate the temple (1 Kgs 8:1-2). Scripture does not say why he does not give his name. The wisest and richest king in Israel's history is about to tell us that wisdom and riches cannot satisfy, and that carries extra weight coming from him.
1:2 *Futility of futilities* In Hebrew, saying a word this way makes it as strong as it can be, as holy of holies means the most holy place (Exod 26:33). The word is hebel, a breath or vapor, often translated "vanity." Like your breath on a cold morning, everything under the sun is real but does not last, and it cannot fill a heart (James 4:14). This does not mean nothing matters. The Preacher believes God, His commandments and His judgment matter. The world cut off from God cannot give us what we are looking for.
1:3 *What advantage is there for man in all his toil that he toils under the sun* The question of the whole book. "Advantage" means profit, something left over when the books are added up. "Under the sun" is the key phrase: life on earth seen from ground level, with our eyes on this world alone. A man works all his life, dies and leaves it all behind (Matt 16:26).
1:4 *A generation goes, and a generation comes, and the earth stands forever* People come and go like waves, but the ground we walk on was here before us and will be here after us.
1:5 *to its place it pants* The sun is pictured as a runner panting back around to rise again. The wind circles and the rivers run to a sea that is never full (vv. 6-7). In their place these things are beautiful (3:11), but from under the sun everything moves and nothing finishes. If nature is on a treadmill, what hope does a man have of making a lasting mark?
1:8 *an eye is not satisfied with seeing, and an ear is not filled from hearing* One of the truest lines in the book. We want the next picture, the next song, the next headline. We scroll and watch and are never full. The heart was made for more than this world can give. Only God can fill it.
1:9 *there is not any new thing under the sun* Not that no one invents anything, but that the basic patterns of life never change. The tools change, but the human heart does not. Pride, greed, fear and longing look the same in every age.
1:11 *There is no remembrance of the former ones* How many of your great-great-grandparents can you name? Under the sun we are forgotten within a few generations. If our hope rests on being remembered by people, it rests on a breath. But God knows His sheep by name (John 10:3), and His people's names are written in heaven (Luke 10:20).
1:13 *It is an evil task that God has given to the sons of man* To give your heart to something is to throw your whole self into it, and Solomon studied everything (1 Kgs 4:33). "Evil" here means hard or painful, not wicked. God made us to search for meaning, but under the curse since the fall (Gen 3:17-19), the search wears us out. The struggle is meant to drive us back to God.
1:14 *everything is futility and a chasing of wind* Try to catch the wind in your hand and close your fist. What do you have? Nothing.
1:15 *What is made crooked cannot become straight* Wisdom can see what is wrong with the world but cannot fix it. Later the Preacher says God made some things crooked (7:13). Only God can make them straight, and one day He will (Isa 40:3-4; Luke 3:4-6).
1:16 *I have made great and increased wisdom above everyone who was before me* Not bragging. It was true. God had given him a wise and discerning heart (1 Kgs 3:12).
1:18 *whoever increases knowledge increases pain* The more you know, the more you see what is broken. A doctor who knows more about disease sees more danger. This does not mean we should stop learning, and the Preacher praises wisdom often (2:13; 7:12; 9:16-18). Knowledge by itself cannot heal the heart. In Christ all the treasures of wisdom are hidden (Col 2:3).

ECCLESIASTES 2

Testing Pleasure and Great Works

1 I myself said in my heart, "Come now, let me test you with joy, and see good." And look, this also ***was*** futility. **2** Of laughter I said, "***It is*** mad," and of joy, "What does this do?" **3** I searched in my heart to draw my flesh with wine, and my heart ***was*** guiding with wisdom, and to take hold of folly, until I might see where this ***is***, the good for the sons of man which they should do under the heavens ***for*** the number of the days of their life. **4** I made my works great: I built for myself houses; I planted for myself vineyards. **5** I made for myself gardens and parks, and I planted in them trees of every ***kind of*** fruit. **6** I made for myself pools of water to water from them a forest sprouting trees. **7** I acquired male slaves and female slaves, and sons of ***the*** house were mine; also livestock, herds and flocks, much was mine, more than all who were before me in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). **8** I gathered for myself also silver and gold and the treasure of kings and the provinces; I acquired for myself male singers and female singers, and the delights of the sons of man, a concubine and concubines. **9** And I became great and increased more than all who were before me in Jerusalem; also my wisdom stood by me. **10** And all that my eyes asked I did not withhold from them; I did not restrain my heart from any joy, for my heart ***was*** joyful from all my toil, and this was my portion from all my toil. **11** And I myself turned to all my works that my hands had done and to the toil that I had toiled to do, and look, everything ***was*** futility and a chasing of wind, and ***there was*** no advantage under the sun.

Wisdom, Folly and Toil Left Behind

12 And I myself turned to see wisdom and madness and folly; for what ***is*** the man who will come after the king? ***It is*** that which they have already done. **13** And I myself saw that there is an advantage to wisdom over folly, like the advantage of the light over the darkness. **14** The wise man, his eyes ***are*** in his head, and the fool walks in the darkness; and I myself also knew that one fate happens to all of them. **15** And I myself said in my heart, "Like the fate of the fool, it will happen to me, even me; and why then have I been excessively wise?" And I said in my heart that this also ***is*** futility. **16** For there is no remembrance of the wise man with the fool forever, seeing that already ***in*** the coming days everything is forgotten. And how the wise man dies with the fool! **17** And I hated life, for the work that was done under the sun ***was*** evil to me, for everything ***is*** futility and a chasing of wind. **18** And I myself hated all my toil at which I toil under the sun, that I will leave it to the man who will be after me. **19** And who knows whether he will be a wise man or a fool? And he will have power over all my toil at which I have toiled and at which I have been wise under the sun. This also ***is*** futility. **20** And I myself turned to make my heart despair over all the toil at which I had toiled under the sun. **21** For there is a man whose toil ***is*** with wisdom and with knowledge and with skill, and to a man who has not toiled in it he will give it ***as*** his portion. This also ***is*** futility and a great evil. **22** For what comes to the man in all his toil and in the striv-

2:1 James 4:13; James 5:1; Rev 18:7
2:2 James 4:9; Prov 14:13; Eccl 7:2-6
2:3 Eccl 1:17; Prov 20:1; Prov 31:4,5
2:4 1 Kgs 7:1,2,8-12; Gen 11:4; 2 Sam 18:18
2:5 Song 4:12-16; Song 6:2; Jer 39:4
2:6 Neh 2:14; Song 7:4; Ps 1:3
2:7 1 Kgs 9:20-22; Ezra 2:58; Neh 7:57
2:8 1 Kgs 10:10; 2 Sam 19:35; 1 Kgs 9:14,28
2:9 Eccl 1:16; 1 Chr 29:25; 1 Kgs 3:12
2:10 Eccl 3:22; Eccl 5:18; Eccl 9:9
2:11 Eccl 1:14; Eccl 1:3,14; 1 John 2:16,17
2:12 Eccl 1:17; Eccl 7:25
2:13 Eccl 7:11,12; Matt 6:23; Eph 5:8
2:14 1 John 2:11; John 11:10; Prov 17:24
2:15 Eccl 1:16,18; 1 Kgs 3:12; Eccl 1:2,14
2:16 Eccl 1:11; Ps 88:12; Exod 1:6,8
2:17 Eccl 2:11,22; Num 11:15; 1 Kgs 19:4
2:18 Ps 39:6; Ps 49:10; Eccl 2:4-9
2:19 Eccl 3:22; 1 Kgs 12:14-20; 1 Kgs 14:25-28
2:20 Luke 12:20; Gen 43:14; Job 17:11-15
2:21 Eccl 2:17,18; Eccl 9:18; 2 Chr 31:20,21
2:22 Luke 12:20; Eccl 1:3; Eccl 3:9

2:1 *let me test you with joy, and see good* The Preacher speaks to his own heart as if it were another person. If wisdom cannot satisfy, maybe pleasure can. He gives the answer before the details: "this also was futility."
2:2 *Of laughter I said, "It is mad,"* Laughter is not wrong. There is "a time to laugh" (3:4). But laughter as a way of life, a constant search for the next good time, covers the emptiness for a moment and then leaves it bigger.
2:3 *my heart was guiding with wisdom* He was not a drunk who lost control. He was a careful scientist, trying wine and folly to see whether they held the good men look for. Many run the same test today. Solomon ran it with more money than anyone, and he tells us how it came out.
2:4 *I built for myself houses* Solomon spent thirteen years building his own palace (1 Kgs 7:1). Notice how often he says "for myself." Building a house or a garden is not wrong. God put Adam in a garden. But a life built only for myself ends up empty, because the self is too small a thing to live for.
2:5 *gardens and parks* The word for parks gives us our word paradise: a walled garden full of trees.
2:7 *more than all who were before me in Jerusalem* One day's food for his household is listed in 1 Kings 4:22-23, and it is staggering.
2:8 *a concubine and concubines* Silver was as common as stones in Jerusalem (1 Kgs 10:27). The Hebrew words at the end are rare, but most take them to mean many women. Solomon had seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines (1 Kgs 11:3). A concubine was a secondary wife with fewer rights. He broke God's law for kings against multiplying wives and gold (Deut 17:17), and his wives turned his heart away from God.
2:10 *all that my eyes asked I did not withhold from them* Have you thought that more money, freedom and fun would make you happy? Solomon had all three without limit. The pleasure was real, even in the work itself. It just did not last.
2:11 *there was no advantage under the sun* When the party was over, he found nothing left in his hands. The pleasures of this world are like cotton candy: sweet, then gone, and you are still hungry.
2:13 *like the advantage of the light over the darkness* Wisdom has a real advantage. The wise man sees where he is going and avoids much pain (v. 14).
2:14 *one fate happens to all of them* The problem: both the wise man and the fool die. Under the sun, death erases the difference between them.
2:16 *how the wise man dies with the fool* In a few generations both are forgotten. You can hear his anger in these words.
2:17 *And I hated life* One of the darkest lines in the Bible, recorded truly. Many have felt this way, and God is not shocked by it. The Preacher shows us life without the hope of God so that we will look higher. If you are in that dark place now, talk with someone you trust today, a pastor, friend or counselor, and tell God about it. He hears.
2:19 *who knows whether he will be a wise man or a fool* This came true. Solomon's son Rehoboam refused wise counsel, and ten of the twelve tribes broke away (1 Kgs 12:1-20). Much of what Solomon built was divided within days of his son taking the throne.
2:21 *to a man who has not toiled in it he will give it as his portion* Anyone who has built a business, a ministry or a home and watched someone else waste it knows this pain.

ing of his heart at which he toils under the sun? **23** For all his days ***are*** pains, and his task ***is*** vexation; even in the night his heart does not rest. This also is futility. **24** There is nothing good for man ***except*** that he should eat and drink and make his soul see good in his toil. This also I myself have seen, that it ***is*** from the hand of God. **25** For who will eat, and who will enjoy, apart from me? **26** For to a man who ***is*** good before Him He gives wisdom and knowledge and joy; and to the sinner He gives a task, to gather and to collect, to give to ***one who is*** good before God. This also ***is*** futility and a chasing of wind.

ECCLESIASTES 3

A Time for Everything

1 For everything ***there is*** an appointed time, and a time for every matter under the heavens: **2** a time to give birth and a time to die; a time to plant and a time to uproot what is planted; **3** a time to kill and a time to heal; a time to break down and a time to build; **4** a time to weep and a time to laugh; a time to mourn and a time to dance; **5** a time to throw away stones and a time to gather stones; a time to embrace and a time to be far from embracing; **6** a time to seek and a time to lose; a time to keep and a time to throw away; **7** a time to tear and a time to sew; a time to be silent and a time to speak; **8** a time to love and a time to hate; a time of war and a time of peace. **9** What advantage ***has*** the worker in that at which he toils? **10** I have seen the task which God has given to the sons of man to be occupied with it. **11** He has made everything beautiful in its time; also He has put eternity in their heart, yet so that man will not find out the work which God has done from beginning to end. **12** I know that there is nothing good for them except to rejoice and to do good in his life. **13** And also every man who eats and drinks and sees good in all his toil, it ***is*** a gift of God. **14** I know that all that God does, it will be forever; to it there is nothing to add, and from it there is nothing to take away; and God has done ***it*** so that they will fear before Him. **15** Whatever is, already it has been, and what is to be has already been; and

2:23 Job 14:1; Job 5:7; Ps 127:2
2:24 Luke 12:19; Luke 12:20; Eccl 5:18
2:25 Eccl 2:1-12; 1 Kgs 4:21-24
2:26 1 Cor 1:30; Prov 13:22; Col 3:17
3:1 Eccl 3:17; Eccl 8:5,6; 2 Kgs 5:26
3:2 Heb 9:27; Job 14:5,14; Gal 4:4
3:3 1 Sam 2:6,25; Hos 6:1,2; Deut 32:39
3:4 James 4:9; Luke 6:25; John 20:13
3:5 2 Kgs 3:25; Joel 2:16; Josh 4:3-9
3:6 Matt 16:25,26; Mark 8:35-37; Luke 9:24,25
3:7 Amos 5:13; Gen 37:29,34; 2 Sam 1:11
3:8 Luke 14:26; Eph 5:25,28,29; Ezek 16:8
3:9 Eccl 1:3; Eccl 2:11,22,23; Eccl 5:16
3:10 Eccl 1:13,14; Eccl 2:26; Gen 3:19
3:11 Rom 1:20; Rom 11:33; Rom 1:19,20,28
3:12 Eccl 3:22; Ps 37:3; Eccl 9:7-9
3:13 Eccl 2:24; Eccl 5:18-20; Eccl 9:7
3:14 Rom 11:36; John 19:10; Acts 2:23
3:15 Eccl 1:9,10

2:23 *even in the night his heart does not rest* Under the sun work follows us home, and we lie awake planning and fretting. The rest we cannot find by working harder is a gift God gives to His beloved (Ps 127:2).
2:24 *it is from the hand of God* After all his searching, the Preacher comes back to simple things: a meal, a drink, a day's work. He has just shown that pleasure as a goal is empty. The difference is where we see it coming from. The one who grabs at pleasure loses it. The one who receives daily bread from God's hand enjoys it with thanks (1 Tim 6:17). This is the opposite of the godless motto, eat and drink for tomorrow we die (1 Cor 15:32), and of the rich fool who left God out (Luke 12:19-20).
2:25 *who will eat, and who will enjoy, apart from me* The Hebrew can be read two ways. Some old copies and translations read apart from Him: no one truly enjoys anything apart from God. The SLB reads "apart from me": no one had more to enjoy than Solomon.
2:26 *to a man who is good before Him He gives wisdom and knowledge and joy* God gives the ability to enjoy life to those who please Him. The sinner gathers, and what he gathered goes to someone else (Prov 13:22). This is the first clear signpost of the book: joy is real, and it comes from God.
3:1 *For everything there is an appointed time, and a time for every matter under the heavens* Two Hebrew words for time: a set appointment and a season or occasion. Chapters 1-2 showed life spinning in circles. Now we learn the circles move on God's schedule. "My times are in Your hand" (Ps 31:15). The same God appointed the fullness of the time when He sent His Son (Gal 4:4).
3:2 *a time to give birth and a time to die* The poem is Hebrew parallelism: pairs of opposites meant to cover everything in between, as head to toe means the whole body. It starts where life starts and ends. We did not choose the day we were born and will not choose the day we die.
3:3 *a time to kill and a time to heal* Not permission to murder, which God forbids (Exod 20:13). Scripture recognizes times when life is lawfully taken: government bearing the sword against evil (Rom 13:4), a just war, animals for food. And there is a time to bind up and restore.
3:4 *a time to weep and a time to laugh* Life has funerals and weddings (Rom 12:15). A wise person knows which time it is. Have you seen someone tell jokes at a funeral or lecture people at a wedding? They did not know the time.
3:5 *a time to throw away stones and a time to gather stones* Scripture does not say exactly what this means. Perhaps a farmer clearing his field and then gathering stones for a wall, or an army ruining an enemy's field with stones (2 Kgs 3:19, 25). The time to refrain from embracing may include husband and wife setting aside a short time for prayer by agreement (1 Cor 7:5).
3:6 *a time to keep and a time to throw away* Sometimes we search for what we lost. Sometimes we have to let go.
3:7 *a time to tear and a time to sew; a time to be silent and a time to speak* People tore their clothes in grief (Gen 37:34) and sewed them when the grief was past. Job's friends did well when they sat with him in silence for seven days (Job 2:13). They did worse when they started talking.
3:8 *a time to love and a time to hate* We are to hate evil because we love what God loves (Ps 97:10; Rom 12:9). The poem ends with peace, and so does God's story, when the Prince of Peace reigns (Isa 9:6-7). We do not control the seasons. We learn to recognize them and live faithfully in each.
3:10 *I have seen the task which God has given to the sons of man* In 1:13 he called it an evil task. Here he simply names it. God has given us work to do and a world to puzzle over.
3:11 *He has made everything beautiful in its time* A high point of the book. A season that feels painful may later be seen as part of something beautiful. Joseph learned that God meant his suffering for good (Gen 50:20).
3:11 *also He has put eternity in their heart* One of the deepest statements in Scripture about being human. Animals do not lie awake wondering what it all means. We long for things to last and feel that death is wrong, because God made us for eternity. That is why nothing under the sun satisfies. Yet we cannot see the whole plan, only a few frames of the film. God sees the end from the beginning (Isa 46:10). The longing is answered in Jesus, who gives eternal life to all who believe (John 3:16; 1 Cor 13:12).
3:12 *to rejoice and to do good in his life* Since we cannot see the whole plan, enjoy the life God gives and use it to bless others.
3:13 *it is a gift of God* The second time he says it (2:24). Even the ability to enjoy simple joys is a gift.
3:14 *God has done it so that they will fear before Him* Our work passes like a breath. God's does not, and no one can improve on it or undo it. Seeing how small we are and how great He is, the right response is to fear Him, to trust and obey.
3:15 *God seeks what is pursued* A hard phrase. Many take it to mean that God calls the past to account: nothing slips out of His reach, and no deed is lost. Others read it as God seeking out the persecuted. It leads into the next verses on judgment.

God seeks what is pursued.

Injustice and the Judgment of God

16 And still I have seen under the sun: the place of justice,
there ***is*** wickedness, and the place of righteousness, there ***is***
wickedness. **17** I myself said in my heart, "God will judge the
righteous and the wicked, for ***there is*** a time for every matter
and for every deed there." **18** I myself said in my heart con-
cerning the matter of the sons of man, "***It is*** for God to test
them, and to see that they themselves ***are*** animals." **19** For
the fate of the sons of man and the fate of the animal, even
one fate ***is*** theirs: as the death of this, so ***is*** the death of that,
and one spirit ***is*** for all; and the advantage of man over the
animal ***is*** nothing, for everything ***is*** futility. **20** Everything
goes to one place; everything was from the dust, and every-
thing returns to the dust. **21** Who knows the spirit of the
sons of man, the ***one*** that goes upward, and the spirit of the
animal, the ***one*** that goes down below to the earth? **22** And I
saw that there is nothing better than that man should rejoice
in his works, for that ***is*** his portion; for who will bring him to
see what will be after him?

ECCLESIASTES 4

Oppression and Lonely Toil

1 And I myself returned and saw all the oppressions which
are done under the sun, and look, the tears of the oppressed,
and they have no comforter; and from the hand of their
oppressors ***there is*** power, and they have no comforter.
2 And I myself praised the dead who have already died more
than the living who are still alive. **3** And better than both of
them ***is the one*** who has not yet been, who has not seen the
evil work which is done under the sun. **4** And I myself saw all
the toil and all the skill of the work, that it ***is*** the envy of a
man toward his neighbor. This also ***is*** futility and a chasing
of wind. **5** The fool folds his hands and eats his own flesh.
6 Better ***is*** a palmful of quietness than two fistfuls of toil and
a chasing of wind. **7** And I myself returned and saw futility
under the sun: **8** There is one, and there is no second; also he
has no son or brother, and there is no end to all his toil; also
his eye is not satisfied with wealth. "And for whom am I toil-
ing and depriving my soul of good?" This also ***is*** futility, and
it ***is*** an evil task.

Two Are Better Than One

9 The two ***are*** better than the one, in that they have a good
reward for their toil. **10** For if they fall, the one will raise up
his companion; and woe to him, the one who falls and there
is no second to raise him up. **11** Also if two lie down, then it
will be warm for them; and for one, how will it be warm?
12 And though ***someone*** may overpower the one, the two will
stand against him; and the threefold cord will not quickly be

3:16 Eccl 4:1; Eccl 5:8; 1 Kgs 21:9-21
3:17 Rom 2:16; Matt 16:27; Eccl 3:1
3:18 Rom 3:4; Ps 73:22; Gen 3:17-19
3:19 Ps 49:12,20; Eccl 2:16; Ps 92:6,7
3:20 Gen 3:19; Job 34:15; Eccl 6:6
3:21 Eccl 12:7; Luke 16:22,23; John 14:3
3:22 Eccl 3:11,12; Eccl 6:12; Eccl 8:7
4:1 Eccl 3:16; Eccl 5:8; Isa 5:7
4:2 Eccl 2:17; Eccl 9:4-6; Job 3:17-21
4:3 Luke 23:29; Eccl 6:3-5; Job 3:10-16
4:4 Eccl 1:14; Eccl 2:21,26; Gen 4:4-8
4:5 Isa 9:20; Prov 6:10,11; Prov 12:27
4:6 Prov 15:16,17; Prov 16:8; Ps 37:16
4:7 Eccl 4:1; Ps 78:33; Zech 1:6
4:8 Prov 27:20; Eccl 1:8; Eccl 1:13
4:9 Mark 6:7; Gen 2:18; 1 Cor 12:18-21
4:10 Mark 6:7; 1 Thess 5:11; Gal 6:1
4:11 1 Kgs 1:1,2
4:12 Eph 4:3; Dan 3:16,17; 2 Sam 23:9,16,18,19,23

3:16 *the place of justice, there is wickedness* The courts that should do justice are corrupt. That is still true in many places.

3:17 *God will judge the righteous and the wicked* The season poem has a last appointment no one can skip. "It is appointed to men to die once, and after this judgment" (Heb 9:27). Injustice under the sun is not the last word.

3:18 *to see that they themselves are animals* These verses are often pulled out to teach that people are only animals or that there is no life after death. The Preacher is saying that in body and in death, seen from under the sun, you cannot tell the difference.

3:20 *everything was from the dust, and everything returns to the dust* Exactly what God told Adam (Gen 3:19; Ps 49:12). The word for "spirit" in verse 19 also means breath. Both breathe and both die.

3:21 *Who knows the spirit of the sons of man, the one that goes upward* No one can answer this by looking at a grave. The Preacher later says the spirit returns to God (12:7). Only man was made in God's image and given the breath of life by God Himself (Gen 1:27; 2:7). The Old Testament gave glimpses (Ps 49:15; Dan 12:2), and Christ brought life and incorruptibility to light (2 Tim 1:10). A believer's spirit does not die or sleep with the body. It goes to be with Christ (Luke 23:43; 2 Cor 5:8), and one day the body will be raised.

3:22 *for who will bring him to see what will be after him* No one under the sun can show us the future. Enjoy today's work as your portion and leave tomorrow with God, who is already there (Matt 6:34).

4:1 *the tears of the oppressed, and they have no comforter* The Preacher was a king, but he did not close his eyes to the weak. Twice he says it: no comforter. The poor are still cheated, workers unpaid, children hurt. But God sees (Exod 3:7), and Jesus promised another Helper, the Holy Spirit (John 14:16). God's people are also called to comfort the suffering and speak up for them (Prov 31:8-9).

4:2 *I myself praised the dead who have already died more than the living* Job and Jeremiah felt the same in their pain (Job 3:11-13; Jer 20:14-18). These words are a cry of grief recorded truly, not a teaching that life is worthless. The same book says a living dog is better than a dead lion (9:4) and that the light is sweet (11:7). If you have felt the dead were better off, tell God, and tell someone who can help.

4:4 *it is the envy of a man toward his neighbor* Why do people work so hard? Often to keep up with the neighbor or get ahead of him. Envy is never satisfied, because someone always has more (Exod 20:17).

4:5 *The fool folds his hands and eats his own flesh* The opposite error. The lazy man consumes himself by doing nothing (Prov 6:10-11).

4:6 *Better is a palmful of quietness than two fistfuls of toil* One open hand holding a little with peace, or two clenched fists full of work and worry. Do not be lazy, and do not be a workaholic. Work enough and be content (1 Tim 6:6).

4:8 *And for whom am I toiling and depriving my soul of good* A man with no family keeps toiling, never enjoys any of it and never asks this question. A man can build a fortune and lose his family, friends and health on the way (Luke 12:20).

4:9 *The two are better than the one* The chapter turns from loneliness to friendship. Two get more done and share the reward.

4:10 *the one will raise up his companion* Picture two travelers on a rocky road. One falls into a ditch, and the other pulls him out. God never meant us to walk alone (Gen 2:18), in marriage, in friendship or in the church (Gal 6:2). Who lifts you up? Whom are you lifting?

4:11 *if two lie down, then it will be warm for them* Travelers slept close together on cold desert nights. Friends bring warmth to each other in hard times.

4:12 *the threefold cord will not quickly be torn apart* A robber may attack one traveler but not two, and a rope of three cords is very hard to break. The Preacher may simply be adding one more friend to make the point. Many Christians also use the verse as a picture of a marriage bound together with God. It does not say that directly, but it is a fitting use.

torn apart. **13** Better ***is*** a poor and wise youth than an old and foolish king who no longer knows ***how*** to be warned. **14** For from the house of the prisoners he came out to reign, for even in his kingdom he was born poor. **15** I saw all the living who walk about under the sun with the youth, the second, who will stand in his place. **16** There is no end to all the people, to all before whom he was; also the latter ***ones*** will not rejoice in him. For this also ***is*** futility and a striving of wind.

ECCLESIASTES 5

Guard Your Steps Before God

1 Guard your foot when you go to the house of God, and drawing near to listen ***is better*** than the fools' giving of a sacrifice, for they do not know ***that*** they are doing evil. **2** Do not be hasty with your mouth, and let not your heart hasten to bring forth a word before God; for God ***is*** in the heavens and you ***are*** on the earth; therefore let your words be few. **3** For the dream comes with abundance of business, and the voice of a fool with abundance of words. **4** When you vow a vow to God, do not delay to pay it, for there is no pleasure in fools. What you vow, pay. **5** Better ***is it*** that you do not vow than that you vow and do not pay. **6** Do not let your mouth cause your flesh to sin, and do not say before the messenger that it ***was*** an error. Why should God be angry at your voice and destroy the work of your hands? **7** For in abundance of dreams ***are*** both futilities and many words; but fear God. **8** If you see oppression of a poor man and robbery of justice and righteousness in the province, do not be astonished at the matter; for a high ***one*** watches above a high ***one***, and high ***ones are*** over them. **9** And the advantage of a land in everything ***is*** this: a king for a cultivated field.

Riches That Do Not Satisfy

10 ***He who*** loves silver will not be satisfied with silver, and whoever loves abundance ***will*** not ***be satisfied with*** income. This also ***is*** futility. **11** When the good increases, those who consume it increase; and what benefit ***is there*** for its owners except the sight of his eyes? **12** Sweet ***is*** the sleep of the laborer, whether he eats little or much; and the plenty of the rich man does not let him sleep. **13** There is a sickening evil ***that*** I have seen under the sun: wealth kept by its owner to his harm. **14** And that wealth perished in an evil business, and he fathered a son, and there is nothing in his hand. **15** As he came out from the womb of his mother, naked he will return, to go as he came; and he will carry away nothing from his toil that he may take in his hand. **16** And this also ***is*** a sickening evil: exactly as he came, so he will go; and what

4:13 Eccl 9:15,16; Gen 37:2; Prov 19:1
4:14 Gen 41:14,33-44; Job 5:11; Ps 113:7,8
4:15 2 Sam 15:6
4:16 Eccl 1:14; 2 Sam 15:12,13; 1 Kgs 1:5-7,40
5:1 Acts 10:33; Acts 17:11; Prov 15:8
5:2 Prov 10:19; Matt 6:7; Isa 55:9
5:3 Prov 15:2; Prov 10:19; Eccl 10:12-14
5:4 Num 30:2; Ps 76:11; Ps 66:13,14
5:5 Prov 20:25; Acts 5:4; Deut 23:22
5:6 Mark 14:4; Mal 2:7; Eccl 5:1,2
5:7 Eccl 12:13; Eccl 7:18; Eccl 8:12
5:8 Ps 12:5; Eccl 3:16; Eccl 4:1
5:9 Gen 1:29,30; Gen 3:17-19; Ps 104:14,15
5:10 Eccl 4:8; 1 Tim 6:10; Luke 12:15
5:11 Gen 12:16; Gen 13:2,5-7; 1 Kgs 4:22,23
5:12 Prov 3:24; Ps 4:8; Ps 127:2
5:13 Luke 16:10; Eccl 6:1,2; Gen 19:14,26,31-38
5:14 Eccl 2:26; Job 5:5; Job 20:15-29
5:15 1 Tim 6:7; Job 1:21; Ps 49:17
5:16 Eccl 1:3; Prov 11:29; Eccl 5:13

4:13 *Better is a poor and wise youth than an old and foolish king* Age and position do not guarantee wisdom. An old king who will not listen to advice is worse off than a poor youth who is wise.
4:14 *from the house of the prisoners he came out to reign* Some think of Joseph, who went from prison to rule in Egypt (Gen 41:14, 41), others of David. The Preacher may be describing a pattern: the humble are raised and the proud and foolish fall.
4:16 *also the latter ones will not rejoice in him* The crowds flock to the new young king, but the next generation forgets him. The same crowds that welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem soon cried for His death. If you live for people's approval, you build on wind. Live for God's approval, which does not change.
5:1 *Guard your foot when you go to the house of God* Watch your step, the Preacher says. Do not walk into God's presence as carelessly as into a market. The fool brings his offering and thinks he has done his duty, but God wants a heart that listens and obeys (1 Sam 15:22). It is possible to go to church every week, give and sing, and still not listen to God at all. We come prepared, confessing sin and ready to hear and obey (Heb 12:28-29).
5:2 *God is in the heavens and you are on the earth; therefore let your words be few* The heart of the passage. This does not mean God is far away or does not care. It means we come with humility and awe. Jesus warned against babbling in prayer and taught us to begin with God's holiness (Matt 6:7-9). Prayer is not about the number of our words but the honesty of our hearts.
5:3 *the voice of a fool with abundance of words* Too much business brings restless dreams, and too much talk brings foolishness (Prov 10:19).
5:4 *What you vow, pay* A vow was a solemn promise to God, often an offering or service if He answered a prayer. Hannah kept her vow (1 Sam 1:11, 27-28), and the Law required it (Deut 23:21).
5:5 *Better is it that you do not vow than that you vow and do not pay* Vows were voluntary, but once made they were binding. We still make promises to God in songs, prayers, weddings and baptisms. Do we keep them? Let your yes be yes (Matt 5:37).
5:6 *do not say before the messenger that it was an error* The messenger is most likely the priest, called the LORD's messenger in Malachi 2:7. Some take it as an angel, and the Greek translation reads "before God." Do not make excuses to get out of a vow.
5:7 *but fear God* Empty dreams, words and promises are futility. The answer is simple. The fear of God is the awe of a child who knows his Father is great and holy and would never want to dishonor Him. The book comes back to it at the end (12:13).
5:8 *do not be astonished at the matter; for a high one watches above a high one* Do not be shocked by injustice in fallen governments. The line can be read of layers of officials each squeezing those below, so corruption runs all the way up, or as a reminder that over every official is a higher one, and over all is God. Both are true.
5:9 *a king for a cultivated field* Hard Hebrew. Many take it to mean that even with its faults, a land is better off with a king who cares for its fields. Even imperfect order is better than chaos.
5:10 *He who loves silver will not be satisfied with silver* A law of the human heart. Money promises satisfaction and never delivers. Money is not evil. Loving it is (1 Tim 6:10).
5:11 *those who consume it increase* More wealth brings more servants, advisers, tax collectors and relatives to share it. The rich man can look at it, but he can only eat so much.
5:12 *Sweet is the sleep of the laborer* The working man sleeps well. The rich man lies awake worrying about his investments. Which would you rather have?
5:13 *wealth kept by its owner to his harm* He hoards it, loses it in one bad deal, and has nothing to leave his son (v. 14).
5:15 *naked he will return, to go as he came* Job said nearly the same (Job 1:21), and so did Paul (1 Tim 6:7). You never see a moving truck behind a hearse.

advantage ***is there*** to him that he toils for the wind? **17** Also all his days he eats in darkness, and he is greatly vexed, and ***has*** his sickness and wrath. **18** Look, what I myself have seen ***to be*** good, which ***is*** beautiful: to eat and to drink and to see good in all his toil at which he toils under the sun ***for*** the number of the days of his life which God has given him, for that ***is*** his portion. **19** Also every man to whom God has given wealth and riches, and has given him power to eat from it and to receive his portion and to rejoice in his toil, this is a gift of God. **20** For he will not much remember the days of his life, because God keeps ***him*** occupied with the joy of his heart.

ECCLESIASTES 6

Riches Without Rest

1 There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, and it ***is*** great upon man: **2** a man to whom God gives wealth and riches and honor, and he is not lacking for his soul anything of all that he desires; and God does not give him power to eat from it, for a foreign man eats it. This ***is*** futility, and it ***is*** an evil sickness. **3** If a man fathers a hundred ***children*** and lives many years, and many are the days of his years, and his soul is not satisfied with the good, and also he has no burial, I say, "Better than he ***is*** the miscarriage." **4** For in futility it came, and in darkness it goes, and in darkness its name is covered. **5** Also it has not seen the sun and has not known ***it***; rest ***belongs*** to this one more than to that one. **6** And even if he lived a thousand years twice, and did not see good, does not everything go to one place? **7** All the toil of man ***is*** for his mouth, and yet the soul is not filled. **8** For what more ***is there*** for the wise man than for the fool? What ***is there*** for the poor man who knows ***how*** to walk before the living? **9** Better ***is*** the sight of the eyes than the going of the soul. This also ***is*** futility and a chasing of wind. **10** Whatever has been, already its name has been called, and it is known that he ***is*** man; and he is not able to contend with ***one*** who is mightier than he. **11** For there are many words that increase futility; what more ***is there*** for man? **12** For who knows what ***is*** good for man in life, ***for*** the number of the days of the life of his futility, and he makes them like the shadow? For who will tell man what will be after him under the sun?

ECCLESIASTES 7

Wisdom for the Good Day and the Evil Day

1 A name ***is*** better than good oil, and the day of death than the day of his being born. **2** ***It is*** better to go to a house of mourning than to go to a house of feasting, because that ***is*** the end of every man, and the living will lay ***it*** to his heart. **3** Vexation ***is*** better than laughter, for by sadness of face a heart becomes good. **4** The heart of wise men ***is*** in a house of

5:17 Ps 127:2; Gen 3:17; 1 Kgs 17:12
5:18 Eccl 2:24; Eccl 2:10; Eccl 3:22
5:19 Eccl 6:2; Eccl 3:13; Eccl 2:24
5:20 Isa 65:13,14,21-24; Ps 37:16; Deut 28:8-12,47
6:1 Eccl 5:13
6:2 Luke 12:19; Eccl 5:19; Ps 17:14
6:3 Matt 26:24; Eccl 4:3; Job 3:16
6:4 Ps 109:13
6:5 Job 3:10-13; Job 14:1; Ps 58:8
6:6 Eccl 3:20; Job 30:23; Heb 9:27
6:7 Prov 16:26; Matt 6:25; John 6:27
6:8 Eccl 2:14-16; Eccl 5:11; Gen 17:1
6:9 Eccl 3:12,13; Eccl 5:18; Job 31:7
6:10 Eccl 3:15; Job 40:2; Isa 45:9,10
6:11 Eccl 1:6-9,17,18; Eccl 2:3-11; Eccl 3:19
6:12 Job 14:2; Lam 3:24-27; James 4:14
7:1 Prov 22:1; Eccl 4:2; Song 1:3
7:2 James 4:9; Gen 48:1-22; Gen 49:2-33
7:3 John 16:21; James 4:9; 2 Cor 7:9-11
7:4 James 4:9; Neh 2:2-5; Isa 53:3,4

5:17 *all his days he eats in darkness* The man who piles up money works for the wind (v. 16) and ends anxious, angry and miserable. Treasure in God's kingdom cannot be lost in a bad deal (Matt 6:33).
5:18 *for that is his portion* The light in the darkness again (2:24; 3:13). Instead of hoarding, enjoy what God gives for the days He gives.
5:19 *this is a gift of God* Wealth is one gift, and the power to enjoy it is a second. When God gives both, it is grace. Chapter 6 shows the man who has the first without the second.
5:20 *God keeps him occupied with the joy of his heart* The one who receives life as God's gift is not always brooding over how short and hard it is. God fills his days with gladness instead of dread. That is the difference God makes, even under the sun.
6:2 *God does not give him power to eat from it, for a foreign man eats it* He has wealth, riches and honor, and something stops him from enjoying them: illness, war, early death or a restless heart. A stranger enjoys what he worked for. Having things and enjoying things are two different gifts (5:19), and the second cannot be bought. Many wealthy people are miserable. Life does not consist in possessions (Luke 12:15).
6:3 *Better than he is the miscarriage* Many children and long life were seen as the greatest blessings, and an unburied body as a great disgrace (Jer 22:18-19). A man with all that whose heart is never content is worse off than a child who never saw the sun, for that child at least has rest (v. 5). These words may touch a deep wound for any who have lost a child before birth. The Preacher is not saying such a child does not matter. God forms every child in the womb (Ps 139:13-16). I believe little children who die are safe with God (2 Sam 12:23).
6:6 *even if he lived a thousand years twice, and did not see good* More than twice Methuselah's age, and still the grave. Length of life is not fullness of life. A short life with God is richer than a long life without Him.
6:7 *All the toil of man is for his mouth, and yet the soul is not filled* We work to eat and eat to work. The soul's hunger is never filled by food. Only Jesus gives water after which we never thirst (John 4:13-14).
6:9 *Better is the sight of the eyes than the going of the soul* Better to enjoy what is in front of you than to let your desires wander after what you do not have (Phil 4:11). Yet even contentment, if it is only about this world, cannot answer the deepest question.
6:10 *it is known that he is man* To name something, in Hebrew thinking, was to define it, and God has named everything. The word for man, adam, sounds like the word for ground. Man is dust, not God, and cannot contend with Him and win (Isa 45:9; Rom 9:20). We may bring our questions to God, as the Preacher does, but we cannot put Him on trial.
6:12 *For who knows what is good for man in life* Our days pass like a shadow. Under the sun no one can say what is truly good or what comes after. These questions are answered only from above the sun. God has told us what is good (Mic 6:8) and what comes after: judgment (12:14), and for those who trust Him, eternal life through His Son.
7:1 *A name is better than good oil* Fine perfumed oil was costly and treasured. In Hebrew, name (shem) and oil (shemen) make a play on words (Prov 22:1). Perfume fades by evening. A good name lasts.
7:1 *the day of death than the day of his being born* At birth no one knows what kind of life a person will live. At death the story is finished and the name made. For the believer, to die is gain (Phil 1:21). The Preacher did not see all that, but he saw that the end tells the truth about a life.
7:2 *It is better to go to a house of mourning than to go to a house of feasting* A funeral teaches more than a party. At a funeral we remember that life is short and ask how we are living.
7:3 *by sadness of face a heart becomes good* Sorrow slows us down, humbles us and makes our hearts tender. Many believers grew closer to God in grief than in ease.
7:4 *The heart of wise men is in a house of mourning* The wise are not gloomy people who hate fun. They do not run from the hard truths of life (Ps 90:12).

mourning, and the heart of fools ***is*** in a house of joy. **5** ***It is*** better to hear the rebuke of a wise man than for a man to hear the song of fools. **6** For like the sound of the thorns under the pot, so ***is*** the laughter of the fool; and this also ***is*** futility. **7** For oppression makes a wise man mad, and a bribe destroys the heart. **8** The end of a matter ***is*** better than its beginning; the patient in spirit ***is*** better than the proud in spirit. **9** Do not be hasty in your spirit to be vexed, for vexation rests in the bosom of fools. **10** Do not say, "Why was ***it*** that the former days were better than these?" For not from wisdom have you asked about this. **11** Wisdom ***is*** good with an inheritance, and a profit to those who see the sun. **12** For in a shadow ***is*** wisdom, in a shadow ***is*** silver; and the advantage of knowledge ***is that*** wisdom keeps its owners alive. **13** Consider the work of God, for who is able to make straight what He has made crooked? **14** In a day of good, be in good, and in a day of evil, consider: God has made also this one alongside that one, to the end that man will not find out anything after him.

The Limits of Wisdom

15 Everything I have seen in the days of my futility: there is a righteous ***man*** perishing in his righteousness, and there is a wicked ***man*** prolonging ***his days*** in his evil. **16** Do not be greatly righteous, and do not make yourself excessively wise; why should you destroy yourself? **17** Do not be greatly wicked, and do not be a fool; why should you die when ***it is*** not your time? **18** ***It is*** good that you take hold of this, and also from that do not let your hand rest; for ***he who*** fears God will go out with all of them. **19** Wisdom gives strength to the wise man more than ten rulers who are in the city. **20** For there is not a righteous man on the earth who does good and does not sin. **21** Also to all the words which they speak do not give your heart, so that you will not hear your servant cursing you. **22** For also many times your heart knows that you also have cursed others. **23** All this I tested by wisdom; I said, "Let me be wise," and it ***was*** far from me. **24** What has been ***is*** far off, and deep, deep; who will find it out? **25** I myself turned, and my heart, to know and to explore and to seek wisdom and an explanation, and to know wickedness ***as*** stupidity, and folly ***as*** madness. **26** And I myself find more bitter than death the woman who ***is*** snares, and nets ***are*** her heart, fetters ***are*** her hands. ***He who is*** good before God will escape from her, and a sinner will be captured by her. **27** See, this I have found, said ***the*** Preacher, ***adding*** one to one to find an explanation, **28** which my soul has still sought, and I have not found: one man among a thousand I have found, and a

7:5 James 4:9; Ps 141:5; Prov 15:31,32
7:6 Ps 58:9; Ps 118:12; Eccl 2:2
7:7 Deut 16:19; Exod 23:8; Prov 17:23
7:8 Prov 14:29; Heb 10:36; 1 Pet 1:13
7:9 James 1:19; Prov 14:17; Prov 16:32
7:10 Judg 6:13; Jer 44:17-19; Ps 14:2,3
7:11 Eccl 11:7; 1 Tim 6:17-19; Eccl 9:15-18
7:12 Phil 3:8; Prov 3:18; Prov 8:35
7:13 Eccl 1:15; Job 12:14; Isa 14:27
7:14 Eccl 3:4; Deut 28:47; Ps 30:11,12
7:15 Eccl 8:12,13; Eccl 6:12; Eccl 2:23
7:16 Rom 12:3; Prov 25:16; Luke 18:12
7:17 Prov 10:27; Ps 55:23; Gen 38:7-10
7:18 Eccl 12:13; Eccl 11:6; Luke 11:42
7:19 Prov 21:22; Prov 24:5; Col 1:9-11
7:20 Rom 3:12; 1 Kgs 8:46; 2 Chr 6:36
7:21 2 Sam 19:19; 2 Sam 16:10; Isa 29:21
7:22 1 Kgs 2:44; Matt 15:19; Matt 18:32-35
7:23 1 Cor 1:20; Rom 1:22; Gen 3:5
7:24 Rom 11:33; 1 Tim 6:16; Deut 30:11-14
7:25 Eccl 10:13; Eccl 1:13-17; Eccl 2:1-3,12,20
7:26 Prov 22:14; Prov 5:3-5; Prov 2:18,19
7:27 Eccl 1:1,2; Eccl 12:8-10
7:28 Job 33:23; Eccl 7:23,24; Isa 26:9

7:5 *to hear the rebuke of a wise man* A wise friend who tells the truth does more good than a crowd of flatterers (Prov 27:6).
7:6 *like the sound of the thorns under the pot* Dry thorns crackle loudly, burn out fast and give little heat. Another wordplay: thorns (sirim) under the pot (sir).
7:7 *a bribe destroys the heart* Even a wise man can be corrupted by oppression or a bribe. Wisdom must be guarded.
7:8 *The end of a matter is better than its beginning* It is easy to start and harder to finish well. Patience waits to see how things end. Pride assumes it already knows.
7:9 *vexation rests in the bosom of fools* The fool carries his anger around like a pet he holds close (James 1:19).
7:10 *Why was it that the former days were better than these* Every generation says the good old days were better. The past had its own sins and troubles. Looking back with longing keeps us from living faithfully now.
7:12 *wisdom keeps its owners alive* Wisdom and money both give shade, like a tree in a hot land. Money protects from some troubles. Wisdom protects from many more, including the foolish choices that destroy a life.
7:13 *who is able to make straight what He has made crooked* As in 1:15. God is sovereign over the hard things too.
7:14 *In a day of good, be in good, and in a day of evil, consider* Enjoy good times with thanks. In hard times, stop and think. Both come from His hand (Job 2:10). "Evil" means trouble, not sin. God mixes the days so we cannot control the future and stay dependent on Him.
7:15 *there is a righteous man perishing in his righteousness* Good people die young, and the wicked live long. The Bible does not hide it (Ps 73:17). God's justice is real, but not always done quickly in this life.
7:16 *Do not be greatly righteous* Not a warning against holiness. We are to be holy as God is holy (1 Pet 1:16). Most teachers read it as a warning against self-righteousness, a show of goodness and wisdom that is really pride, like the Pharisees (Matt 23:28). Do not think your righteousness guarantees a long life or forces God to bless you (7:15).
7:17 *Do not be greatly wicked, and do not be a fool* The other ditch is just as deadly. If righteousness does not always pay, some decide to sin freely. Sin brings death sooner.
7:18 *he who fears God will go out with all of them* The way through is the fear of God. The one who fears God neither trusts in his own goodness nor throws goodness away. He trusts God.
7:20 *there is not a righteous man on the earth who does good and does not sin* This is why no one should be proud of his righteousness (1 Kgs 8:46; Rom 3:10, 23). No one can be saved by his own goodness. We need a righteousness from outside ourselves, the righteousness from God through faith in Christ (Phil 3:9).
7:22 *your heart knows that you also have cursed others* If you listen at every door, you will hear something bad about yourself. Be honest: you have said unkind things too. That should make us slow to take offense.
7:24 *deep, deep; who will find it out* Even the wisest man admits true wisdom was beyond him (Rom 11:33).
7:25 *to know wickedness as stupidity, and folly as madness* Wickedness is not clever. It is stupid.
7:26 *the woman who is snares, and nets are her heart* Some have used these verses to look down on women. The Preacher does not say all women are like this. He describes the seductive, immoral woman Proverbs warns about (Prov 5:3-4). Solomon knew this danger from his own life (1 Kgs 11:4). The way to escape is to walk with God.
7:28 *one man among a thousand I have found, and a woman among all these I have not found* Upright men were just as rare: one in a thousand, a sad report on the whole race. Solomon speaks of his own search in his own circle, and he had a thousand wives and concubines (1 Kgs 11:3). Many teachers believe that is what lies behind his words. This is not God's verdict on women. Scripture praises the wife of strength (Prov 31:10), Ruth (Ruth 3:11) and many others, and in Christ men and women are co-heirs of grace (1 Pet 3:7).

woman among all these I have not found. **29** Only see this, I have found: that God made man upright, and they have sought many schemes.

ECCLESIASTES 8

The King and the Word of Authority

1 Who ***is*** like the wise man? And who knows the interpretation of a matter? The wisdom of a man makes his face shine, and the strength of his face is changed. **2** I ***say***, keep the command of a king, and ***that*** on account of the oath of God. **3** Do not be hasty to go from his presence; do not stand in an evil matter, for all that he desires he will do. **4** Because the word of a king ***is*** power, who then will say to him, "What are you doing?" **5** ***He who*** keeps a commandment will know no evil thing, and a wise heart will know time and judgment. **6** For to every matter there is a time and judgment, for the evil of man ***is*** great upon him. **7** For he does not know what will be; for as it will be, who will tell him? **8** There is no man who has power over the spirit to restrain the spirit, and there is no power over the day of death, and there is no discharge in the war, and wickedness will not deliver its owners. **9** All this I have seen, and ***I*** gave my heart to every work which is done under the sun, a time when man has power over man for evil to him.

When Judgment Is Delayed

10 And so I have seen the wicked buried, and they came in, and from a holy place they would go, and they were forgotten in the city where they had done so. This also ***is*** futility. **11** Because the sentence ***against*** the evil deed is not done quickly, therefore the heart of the sons of man is full in them to do evil. **12** Though a sinner does evil a hundred ***times*** and prolongs ***his days*** for himself, yet I myself also know that it will be good for those who fear God, who fear before Him. **13** And it will not be good for the wicked, and he will not prolong days like the shadow, because he does not fear before God. **14** There is a futility which is done on the earth: that there are righteous ***men*** to whom it happens according to the deed of the wicked, and there are wicked ***men*** to whom it happens according to the deed of the righteous. I said that this also ***is*** futility. **15** And I myself praised joy, because there is nothing good for man under the sun except to eat and to drink and to rejoice; and this will accompany him in his toil ***through*** the days of his life which God has given him under the sun. **16** When I gave my heart to know wisdom and to see the task which is done on the earth, for even by day and by night he does not see sleep in his eyes, **17** then I saw all the work of God, that man is not able to find out the work which is done under the sun; because though man toils to seek, and he will not find ***it***; and even if the wise man says ***he will*** know, he will not be able to find ***it*** out.

7:29 Gen 1:26,27; Gen 3:6,7; Jer 4:22
8:1 2 Pet 1:20; Acts 6:15; Deut 28:50
8:2 1 Kgs 2:43; Prov 24:21; Rom 13:1-4
8:3 Eccl 10:4; Prov 14:29; 1 Kgs 1:50-52
8:4 Heb 1:3; Rom 13:1-4; Job 34:18,19
8:5 Eccl 8:2; Exod 1:17,20,21; Ps 119:6
8:6 Eccl 3:1,11,17; Eccl 7:13,14; Eccl 11:9,10
8:7 Matt 24:50; 1 Thess 5:2; Eccl 6:12
8:8 Job 14:5; Isa 28:15,18; Heb 9:27
8:9 Eccl 5:8,13; Exod 14:5-9,28; Eccl 1:14
8:10 Eccl 9:5; Eccl 2:16; Prov 10:7
8:11 2 Pet 3:3; Matt 24:48; Matt 24:50
8:12 Luke 1:50; Matt 10:28; Matt 25:44
8:13 2 Pet 2:3; Eccl 6:12; Job 14:2
8:14 Eccl 7:15; Eccl 2:14; Mal 3:15
8:15 Eccl 2:24; Eccl 5:18; Eccl 3:12,13,22
8:16 Eccl 2:23; Ps 127:2; Eccl 8:9
8:17 Mark 4:27; Eccl 3:11; Ps 73:16

7:29 *God made man upright, and they have sought many schemes* The key to the passage. "Man" is adam, mankind, male and female (Gen 1:27; 5:2). God made people good, and all of us have gone after our own schemes, as in Genesis 3. That points to the only One truly upright, Jesus, who knew no sin and was made sin for us (2 Cor 5:21).
8:1 *The wisdom of a man makes his face shine* Wisdom shows on a face. The hard, stubborn look softens. Moses' face shone after he had been with God (Exod 34:29). True wisdom changes us from the inside out.
8:2 *keep the command of a king, and that on account of the oath of God* The oath may be the loyalty sworn before God when a king was crowned (2 Sam 5:3; 2 Kgs 11:17), or it may mean God Himself placed kings in authority. Either way, obeying rulers is tied to our duty to God (Rom 13:1).
8:4 *who then will say to him, "What are you doing?"* A king's word was law. Must we then obey rulers in everything? No. When a ruler commands what God forbids, we must obey God (Acts 5:29; Dan 3:18). In ordinary matters God's people are good citizens who pray for those in authority (1 Tim 2:2).
8:5 *a wise heart will know time and judgment* The wise know the right time and way to act, when to speak to the king and when to wait.
8:7 *For he does not know what will be* Even the wise must act without knowing how things will turn out. Say, "If the Lord wills" (James 4:13-15).
8:8 *there is no power over the day of death, and there is no discharge in the war* "Spirit" can also mean wind or breath. No one can hold back the wind or keep his breath when it is time to die. Some men could be released from military service (Deut 20:5-8), but from the war with death there is no release, and no scheme can buy a way out (Ps 49:7). Only One has power over death. Jesus holds "the keys of Hades and of Death" (Rev 1:18).
8:10 *they were forgotten in the city where they had done so* The Hebrew is hard. It seems to describe wicked men who went in and out of the holy place looking religious, were buried with honor, and were then forgotten. Some old copies read "praised" instead of "forgotten." Either way, the wicked are honored, and that is futility.
8:11 *Because the sentence against the evil deed is not done quickly* One of the most practical verses in the book. When justice is slow, people grow bold. A child never corrected keeps misbehaving. God's judgment often seems slow too, but His delay is mercy, giving time to repent (2 Pet 3:9). Those who mistake His patience for weakness store up wrath (Rom 2:4-5).
8:12 *it will be good for those who fear God* The Preacher speaks from faith. He has seen the wicked live long, but he knows that in the end it will be well for those who fear God. Twice in two verses he names the fear of God as the dividing line. Under the sun it may not look like it matters. Above the sun it is everything.
8:13 *he will not prolong days like the shadow* The wicked man's life, however long, is a shadow, and it will end.
8:14 *there are righteous men to whom it happens according to the deed of the wicked* Good people suffer what the wicked deserve, and the wicked enjoy what the righteous deserve. The Preacher holds both truths at once. That is honest faith. We need not pretend life is fair to trust that God will set it right.
8:15 *And I myself praised joy* The fourth time he says this (2:24; 3:12-13; 5:18). Not a call to live for pleasure. Life is not fair, justice is slow and the future hidden, so do not wear yourself out trying to figure it all out. Receive God's daily gifts and enjoy them. Notice again who gives the days: God. This is not the godless motto of 1 Corinthians 15:32. It is like Nehemiah's feast day, when the joy of the LORD was their strength (Neh 8:10). When we cannot understand His ways, we can still thank Him for today's bread.
8:17 *man is not able to find out the work which is done under the sun* After working day and night, his conclusion is humble. No one can figure out all God's work (Isa 55:8). God did not explain His reasons to Job (Job 38:4). This is not the failure of wisdom but its beginning. The wise do not need to know everything, because they know the One who does.

ECCLESIASTES 9

One Fate for All

1 For all this I laid to my heart, even to make clear all this: that the righteous and the wise and their works ***are*** in the hand of God; whether love or hatred, man does not know; everything ***is*** before them. **2** Everything ***is*** as ***it is*** for everyone: one fate ***is*** for the righteous and for the wicked, for the good and for the clean and for the unclean, and for the one who sacrifices and for the one who does not sacrifice; as the good, so the sinner; the one who swears, as the one who fears an oath. **3** This ***is*** an evil in all that is done under the sun, that one fate ***is*** for everyone; and also the heart of the sons of man is full of evil, and madness ***is*** in their heart in their lives, and after it ***they go*** to the dead. **4** For whoever is joined to all the living, there is hope; for a living dog, it ***is*** better than the dead lion. **5** For the living know that they will die, and the dead do not know anything, and they no longer have a reward, for their memory is forgotten. **6** Also their love, also their hatred, also their envy has already perished, and they no longer have a portion forever in all that is done under the sun.

Enjoy Life Today

7 Go, eat your bread with joy, and drink your wine with a good heart, for God has already accepted your works. **8** At every time let your clothes be white, and let not oil be lacking on your head. **9** See life with a wife whom you love all the days of the life of your futility which He has given you under the sun, all the days of your futility; for that ***is*** your portion in life and in your toil at which you toil under the sun. **10** All that your hand finds to do, do with your strength, for there is no work or explanation or knowledge or wisdom in Sheol, where you are going. **11** I returned and saw under the sun that the race ***is*** not to the swift, and the war not to the mighty, and also not bread to the wise, and also not wealth to the understanding, and also not favor to the knowledgeable; for time and chance happen to all of them. **12** For also man does not know his time: like the fish that are caught in an evil net, and like the birds that are caught in the snare, like them the sons of man are snared at an evil time, when it falls upon them suddenly.

Wisdom Better Than Strength

13 Also this I have seen ***as*** wisdom under the sun, and it ***was*** great to me: **14** ***There was*** a small city and few men in it, and a great king came against it and surrounded it and built great siege works against it. **15** And one found in it a poor wise man, and he delivered the city by his wisdom; and no man remembered that poor man. **16** And I myself said, "Wisdom ***is*** better than might, and the wisdom of the poor

9:1 Deut 33:3; Eccl 8:14; John 10:27-30
9:2 Eccl 2:14-16; Ps 73:3; Mal 3:5,18
9:3 Mark 7:21; Eccl 8:11; Jer 17:9
9:4 Job 14:7-12; Job 27:8; Isa 38:18
9:5 Job 14:21; Isa 26:14; Ps 6:5
9:6 Ps 146:3,4; Exod 1:8; Job 3:17,18
9:7 John 4:50; Matt 8:13; Eccl 8:15
9:8 Rev 19:14; 2 Sam 19:24; Esth 8:15
9:9 Prov 5:18,19; Eccl 2:10,24; Eccl 6:12
9:10 Eph 5:16; Col 3:23; Rom 12:11
9:11 Jer 9:23; Prov 21:30,31; Amos 2:14-16
9:12 Prov 29:6; Eccl 8:5-7,11; Luke 21:34-36
9:13 Eccl 6:1; Eccl 7:15; Eccl 8:16
9:14 2 Sam 20:15-22; 2 Kgs 6:24-33; 2 Kgs 7:1-20
9:15 Gen 40:23; Esth 6:2,3
9:16 Eccl 7:19; Prov 21:22; Prov 24:5

9:1 *the righteous and the wise and their works are in the hand of God* A comfort before the hard truths. The righteous are not adrift (John 10:28).
9:1 *whether love or hatred, man does not know* Good times are not proof of God's favor, and hard times are not proof of His anger. We cannot judge God's love by our circumstances. We judge it by His Word, above all by the cross (Rom 5:8).
9:2 *one fate is for the righteous and for the wicked* Death does not check our record before it comes. The godly and the godless are buried in the same ground.
9:3 *madness is in their heart in their lives, and after it they go to the dead* Because death comes to all, many decide nothing matters, fill their short lives with folly, and then it is over.
9:4 *a living dog, it is better than the dead lion* Dogs were scavengers, the lowest of animals, and the lion was king of beasts. As long as you are alive there is hope. You can still change, repent and turn to God. Once you are dead the chance is gone.
9:5 *the dead do not know anything* Used by some to teach soul sleep or nothing after death. The key is verse 6: they have no portion "in all that is done under the sun." The dead do not know what happens on earth, earn no more wages here, and are forgotten. The Preacher describes death as it looks from the earth. Scripture shows the dead are aware (Luke 16:25; Rev 6:9-10), and to depart is to be with Christ (Phil 1:23). The dead are cut off from this world. Those who die in Christ are with Him.
9:7 *Go, eat your bread with joy, and drink your wine with a good heart* Life is short, so enjoy what God gives and do not waste it on worry. Bread and wine were Israel's ordinary food and drink (Ps 104:15). This is not a license to party. Scripture warns plainly against drunkenness (Prov 20:1; Eph 5:18).
9:7 *for God has already accepted your works* Spoken to one who fears God. He can eat with a free conscience. In Christ we are accepted by grace, not by works (Eph 1:6). A believer does not have to earn God's favor before he can enjoy a meal.
9:8 *let your clothes be white, and let not oil be lacking on your head* White clothes were cooler and worn on festive days, and oil on the head was a sign of gladness (Ps 23:5). Live with a festive spirit. Let your life show that you know God's goodness.
9:9 *See life with a wife whom you love* To see is to experience and enjoy. One wife: Solomon, with his thousand women, knew the emptiness of the other way, and he points back to God's plan (Gen 2:24). This leads straight into the Song of Songs. Husbands and wives, treat each other as God's gift. For the single, widowed or those in a hard marriage, God gives other gifts too, and He Himself is the greatest portion (Ps 73:26).
9:10 *All that your hand finds to do, do with your strength* Give your best to the work God puts in front of you (Col 3:23).
9:10 *there is no work or explanation or knowledge or wisdom in Sheol* Sheol is the place of the dead, the grave. Your chance to work in this world ends at death (John 9:4). Like 9:5, this does not teach soul sleep. Believers who die are at home with the Lord (2 Cor 5:8) and will be raised (1 Thess 4:14-16). But the chance to serve, love, share the gospel and make things right ends at the grave. So do it now.
9:11 *time and chance happen to all of them* The fastest runner does not always win. Smart people go hungry. From under the sun life looks like chance. Above the sun, God rules every detail (Prov 16:33; 21:31).
9:12 *like the fish that are caught in an evil net* Disaster and death often come without warning. That is why we must be ready.
9:15 *he delivered the city by his wisdom; and no man remembered that poor man* One poor man saved a whole city, as a wise woman saved hers from Joab (2 Sam 20:16-22), and then everyone forgot him. Many Christians see a picture of Jesus, who became poor for us (2 Cor 8:9), delivered us from a far greater enemy and is still despised by most of the world. The Preacher was not writing prophecy, but the picture fits.
9:16 *the wisdom of the poor man is despised* People still listen to the rich and important and ignore the poor and wise.

man ***is*** despised, and his words are not heard." **17** The words of wise men in quietness are heard more than the cry of a ruler among fools. **18** Wisdom ***is*** better than weapons of battle, and one sinner destroys much good.

ECCLESIASTES 10

A Little Folly

1 Dead flies make the oil of a perfumer stink ***and*** ferment; weightier than wisdom, than honor, ***is*** a little folly. **2** The heart of a wise man ***is*** to his right, and the heart of a fool to his left. **3** And also on the way, when the fool walks, his heart is lacking, and he says to everyone ***that*** he ***is*** a fool. **4** If the spirit of the ruler rises against you, do not leave your place, for calmness lays great sins to rest. **5** There is an evil ***that*** I have seen under the sun, like an error that goes out from before the ruler: **6** folly is set in many high places, and rich men sit in the low place. **7** I have seen slaves on horses, and princes walking like slaves on the ground. **8** ***He who*** digs a pit will fall into it, and ***he who*** breaks through a wall, a snake will bite him. **9** ***He who*** quarries stones will be hurt by them; ***he who*** splits wood will be endangered by it. **10** If the iron is blunt, and he has not sharpened ***its*** face, then he must increase strength; and wisdom ***has*** the advantage of giving success. **11** If the snake bites without charming, then there is no advantage for the master of the tongue. **12** The words of a wise man's mouth ***are*** favor, and the lips of a fool swallow him. **13** The beginning of the words of his mouth ***is*** folly, and the end of his mouth ***is*** evil madness. **14** And the fool multiplies words; man does not know what will be, and what will be after him, who will tell him? **15** The toil of fools wearies him, who does not know ***how*** to go to a city. **16** Woe to you, O land, whose king ***is*** a youth, and whose princes eat in the morning. **17** How blessed ***are*** you, O land, whose king ***is*** a son of nobles, and whose princes eat at the ***proper*** time, for strength and not for drunkenness. **18** Through laziness the rafter sinks, and through lowering of hands the house leaks. **19** For laughter they make bread, and wine makes life glad, and the silver answers everything. **20** Even in your thought do not curse a king, and in the chambers of your bed do not curse a rich man; for a bird of the heavens will carry the sound, and a master of wings will tell the matter.

9:17 James 3:17,18; Gen 41:33-40; 1 Sam 7:3-6
9:18 Josh 7:1,5,11,12; Josh 22:20; 1 Sam 14:28,29,36-46
10:1 Matt 5:13-16; Gal 2:12-14; Exod 30:34,35
10:2 Eccl 9:10; Prov 14:8; Luke 14:28-32
10:3 Prov 13:16; Prov 18:2,6; Eccl 5:3
10:4 Eccl 8:3; Prov 25:15; 1 Sam 25:24-44
10:5 Eccl 4:7; Eccl 5:13; Eccl 6:1
10:6 Prov 28:12,28; Esth 3:1; Judg 9:14-20
10:7 Prov 19:10; Prov 30:22
10:8 Prov 26:27; Amos 5:19; Judg 9:5,53-57
10:10 Eccl 10:15; Exod 18:19-23; Eph 5:15-17
10:11 Ps 58:4,5; Jer 8:17; Ps 52:2
10:12 Luke 4:22; Luke 19:22; Prov 15:2,23
10:13 Judg 14:15; 1 Sam 20:26-33; 1 Sam 22:7,8,16-18
10:14 Prov 15:2; Eccl 5:3; Eccl 3:22
10:15 Eccl 10:3,10; Isa 44:12-17; Isa 47:12,13
10:16 Isa 3:4,5,12; 2 Chr 13:7; Isa 5:11,12
10:17 Prov 31:4,5; Eccl 10:6,7; Prov 28:2,3
10:18 Prov 14:1; Prov 20:4; Prov 12:24
10:19 Ps 104:15; Luke 12:19; Eccl 2:1,2
10:20 Exod 22:28; Acts 23:5; Isa 8:21

9:17 *The words of wise men in quietness are heard more than the cry of a ruler among fools* You do not have to be loud to be right.
9:18 *one sinner destroys much good* It takes years to build something good and one bad choice to tear it down. Achan's one sin brought defeat on all Israel (Josh 7). Our sin is never only our own.
10:1 *Dead flies make the oil of a perfumer stink and ferment* A few flies die in a jar of costly perfume, and the whole jar stinks. One foolish act can undo years of wisdom and a good name. A pastor faithful for thirty years can lose it in one moral failure (Gal 5:9). Small sins are never as small as they look.
10:2 *The heart of a wise man is to his right, and the heart of a fool to his left* The right hand is the side of strength, skill and favor. This has nothing to do with being left-handed or with politics. It is about the direction of the heart.
10:3 *he says to everyone that he is a fool* He does not have to announce it. His folly is on display every time he steps out the door.
10:4 *for calmness lays great sins to rest* If a ruler or boss is angry with you, do not storm off. Stay at your post. A calm answer can settle much trouble (Prov 15:1).
10:6 *folly is set in many high places, and rich men sit in the low place* "Rich men" likely means those of noble character and ability. Fools are put in charge and capable people pushed aside.
10:7 *I have seen slaves on horses, and princes walking like slaves on the ground* Riding a horse was a mark of honor. The world is upside down when people are promoted for flattery or connections. The Preacher offers no fix. Under the sun, things are not always as they should be.
10:8 *He who digs a pit will fall into it* Evil schemes come back on those who plan them (Prov 26:27; Esth 7:10). Snakes often hid in the cracks of old stone walls.
10:9 *he who splits wood will be endangered by it* Every kind of work has risks (Deut 19:5). Life is full of dangers we cannot fully control, so we need wisdom and care.
10:10 *If the iron is blunt, and he has not sharpened its face, then he must increase strength* A dull axe takes more effort. Wisdom is a sharp axe. Sometimes the answer is not to work harder but to stop, pray and plan. Time spent sharpening is not wasted.
10:11 *If the snake bites without charming* A snake charmer who is too slow is no use. Good advice given too late helps no one.
10:12 *the lips of a fool swallow him* The wise man's gracious words win favor. The fool talks himself into trouble, and the longer he talks the worse it gets (v. 13).
10:14 *the fool multiplies words* He talks on about the future as if he knew it, and only shows his ignorance (James 3:5).
10:15 *who does not know how to go to a city* The fool wears himself out because he does not even know the way to town.
10:16 *Woe to you, O land, whose king is a youth, and whose princes eat in the morning* A nation is in trouble when its king is childish and its leaders feast first thing in the morning instead of working (Isa 5:11). Rehoboam listened to the young men and the kingdom split (1 Kgs 12:8-16).
10:17 *for strength and not for drunkenness* Blessed is the land whose leaders are mature and self-controlled. The same is true of homes, churches and businesses.
10:18 *Through laziness the rafter sinks* Neglect the roof and the rafters sag and rain comes in. True of a nation, a marriage and a soul. Fix the little leak before the ceiling caves in.
10:19 *the silver answers everything* This may describe the careless princes of verse 16, who think money solves every problem, or simply observe that money pays for the feast. Money may answer every bill, but not every question (5:10).
10:20 *for a bird of the heavens will carry the sound* We still say a little bird told me. Words get out (Luke 12:3). If our thoughts are right, our words will be too. Even when no person hears, God does.

ECCLESIASTES 11

Send Your Bread on the Waters

1 Send your bread on the face of the waters, for in the abundance of the days you will find it. **2** Give a portion to seven, and also to eight, for you do not know what evil will be on the earth. **3** If the clouds are filled ***with*** rain, they pour ***it*** out on the earth; and if a tree falls in the south or in the north, the place where the tree falls, there it will be. **4** ***He who*** watches the wind will not sow, and ***he who*** looks at the clouds will not reap. **5** As you do not know what ***is*** the way of the wind, as the bones in the womb of the pregnant ***woman***, so you do not know the work of God who makes everything. **6** In the morning sow your seed, and toward evening do not let your hand rest; for you do not know which will succeed, this or that, or whether both of them alike ***will be*** good.

Rejoice in Your Youth

7 And the light ***is*** sweet, and ***it is*** good for the eyes to see the sun. **8** For if a man lives many years, let him rejoice in all of them, and let him remember the days of the darkness, for they will be many. All that comes ***is*** futility. **9** Rejoice, O young man, in your youth, and let your heart do you good in the days of your young manhood, and walk in the ways of your heart and in the sight of your eyes; and know that for all these God will bring you into judgment. **10** And remove vexation from your heart, and put away evil from your flesh, for youth and the black hair ***are*** futility.

ECCLESIASTES 12

Remember Your Creator Before the Evil Days

1 And remember your Creator in the days of your young manhood, before the days of evil come and the years arrive of which you will say, "I have no pleasure in them"; **2** before the sun grows dark, and the light and the moon and the stars, and the clouds return after the rain; **3** in the day when the keepers of the house tremble, and the men of strength bend themselves, and the grinding women cease because they are few, and those who look through the windows grow dim; **4** and the doors on the street are shut, when the sound of the grinding mill is low, and one rises at the sound of the bird, and all the daughters of song are brought low; **5** also

11:1 Prov 19:17; Eccl 11:6; Heb 6:10
11:2 Eph 5:16; Matt 5:42; Luke 6:38
11:3 Ps 65:9-13; 1 Kgs 18:45; Isa 55:10,11
11:4 Prov 22:13; Prov 3:27; Prov 20:4
11:5 John 3:8; Eccl 8:17; Ps 92:5
11:6 2 Cor 9:10; Eccl 9:10; 2 Tim 4:2
11:7 Eccl 7:11; Matt 5:45; Job 33:28,30
11:8 Eccl 6:6; Eccl 8:12; Eccl 3:12,13
11:9 1 John 2:16; Eccl 12:14; Eccl 3:17
11:10 2 Cor 7:1; 2 Tim 2:22; Eccl 12:1
12:1 Eph 5:16; Eccl 11:8; Lam 3:27
12:2 Eccl 11:7,8; Gen 27:1; Gen 48:10
12:3 2 Sam 21:15-17; Ps 90:9,10; Ps 102:23
12:4 Rev 18:22; Luke 16:9; 2 Sam 19:35
12:5 Mark 5:38; Luke 16:9; Job 17:13

11:1 *Send your bread on the face of the waters* Some think of merchants sending grain across the sea, not knowing when profit would return. Others see generous giving, casting bread out freely where you may never see it again. Either way, be bold and generous with what God has given and trust Him for the return (Luke 6:38; 2 Cor 9:6).
11:2 *Give a portion to seven, and also to eight* Seven is fullness, and eight means even more. Some read this as spreading resources so one disaster does not wipe you out. Others read it as generosity to many while you can, before hard times come. Both are wise.
11:3 *the place where the tree falls, there it will be* When clouds are full it rains, and a fallen tree lies where it fell. We cannot control the weather or the events of life.
11:4 *He who watches the wind will not sow* The farmer who waits for the perfect day never plants. We wait for the perfect time to share our faith, serve, give, make things right or start reading the Bible. It never comes. Wisdom acts in faith and leaves the results with God.
11:5 *as the bones in the womb of the pregnant woman* The word for wind is also the word for spirit. We cannot see where the wind goes or how a baby's bones are formed. God does that work in secret (Ps 139:13). Jesus used the wind as a picture of the new birth (John 3:8). We do not understand all God is doing, but He is at work.
11:6 *In the morning sow your seed, and toward evening do not let your hand rest* You teach a class, share the gospel with a neighbor, pray for a wayward child, and see no results. Keep sowing. You do not know which seed will grow (Gal 6:9).
11:7 *the light is sweet, and it is good for the eyes to see the sun* After so many hard words, a simple joy. Waking to a sunrise is a gift.
11:8 *let him remember the days of the darkness, for they will be many* Rejoice in every year God gives. The days of darkness may be old age or the long darkness of death. Remembering them does not ruin our joy. It makes us treasure the light while we have it.
11:9 *Rejoice, O young man, in your youth* Youth is a gift. Enjoy it, follow the good desires God gave you, chase your dreams. Not a license to do whatever you want, for the verse goes on, "know that for all these God will bring you into judgment." Each of us will give an account to God (Rom 14:12). This does not dampen joy. It guards it. The joy that lasts need not be ashamed before God (2 Tim 2:22; 1 Tim 4:12).
11:10 *for youth and the black hair are futility* Put away worry and sin, which waste and ruin youth. Dark hair turns gray soon enough. Some translate the word as the dawn of life. Youth is here in the morning and gone by noon, so use it well: remember your Creator (12:1).
12:1 *And remember your Creator in the days of your young manhood* The most important thing of all. To remember in the Bible is to keep someone in mind and act on it, as when God remembered Noah and saved him (Gen 8:1). Live every day knowing God made you, owns you and will call you to account. The One who made you knows what you were made for (3:11). Youth is the best time to begin, while the heart is soft and a life lies ahead. Later is not promised.
12:1 *before the days of evil come* Days of trouble, not of sin: the hardships of old age when strength fails and pleasures fade. Old age has its blessings (Prov 16:31), but it is far better to come to God with a lifetime ahead than with a few weak years left.
12:2 *and the clouds return after the rain* The poem on old age begins. In youth storms come and go and the sun returns. In old age one trouble follows another and the lights of life grow dim, whether the eyes, the mind or a winter that never turns to spring.
12:3 *the keepers of the house tremble* A great house falling into decay, each part a picture of the aging body. We hold the details with an open hand, but the main picture is plain. The keepers are likely the shaking hands and arms, the men of strength the bending legs and back, the grinding women the few teeth left, and those looking through the windows the dimming eyes.
12:4 *one rises at the sound of the bird* The doors may be the ears closing to the street or lips closed over a toothless mouth. The old sleep lightly and wake at the first bird. The voice can no longer sing, or the ears no longer enjoy music.
12:5 *the almond tree blossoms, and the grasshopper drags itself along, and the caper-berry fails* Heights and the street become frightening. The almond's white blossoms in late winter picture white hair. A grasshopper should leap, but this one drags, like the stiff, slow steps of age. The caper-berry was used to stir up appetite and desire, and now desire fades.
12:5 *for man goes to the house of his eternity* The picture becomes plain: the grave, and mourners in the street. "House of his eternity" reminds us death is not only an end but a passage to a place that lasts. For the believer, Jesus has gone to prepare a place (John 14:2).

they are afraid of a high ***place***, and terrors ***are*** in the way; and the almond tree blossoms, and the grasshopper drags itself along, and the caper-berry fails; for man goes to the house of his eternity, and the mourners go about in the street; **6** before the silver cord is snapped, and the golden bowl is crushed, and the jar is broken at the spring, and the wheel is crushed into the well; **7** and the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit returns to God who gave it. **8** "Futility of futilities," said the Preacher, "everything ***is*** futility."

The Whole Duty of Man

9 And further, because ***the*** Preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; and he weighed and searched out; he set in order many proverbs. **10** ***The*** Preacher sought to find words of delight, and ***what was*** written ***in*** uprightness, words of truth. **11** The words of wise men ***are*** like goads, and like nails firmly fixed ***are*** the masters of collections; they are given from one shepherd. **12** And beyond these, my son, be warned: of making many books there is no end, and much study ***is*** a weariness of the flesh. **13** The end of the matter, everything has been heard: fear God and keep His commandments, for this ***is*** all of man. **14** For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every hidden thing, whether good or evil.

12:7 Gen 3:19; Ps 146:4; Gen 2:7
12:8 Eccl 1:2,14; Eccl 2:17; Eccl 4:4
12:9 1 Kgs 4:32; Prov 1:1; 1 Kgs 8:12-21
12:10 1 Tim 1:15; Col 1:5; Eccl 1:1,12
12:11 Luke 4:22; Acts 2:37; Ps 80:1
12:12 John 20:31; John 21:25; Eccl 1:18
12:13 Deut 10:12; Eccl 5:7; Deut 6:2
12:14 2 Cor 5:10; Rom 2:16; 1 Cor 4:5

12:6 *before the silver cord is snapped, and the golden bowl is crushed* Picture a golden lamp on a silver chain. The chain snaps, the lamp breaks and the light goes out. Then a well: the jar shatters and the wheel falls in. No more water can be drawn. Life is precious and fragile.

12:7 *the spirit returns to God who gave it* The answer to 3:21. The body returns to dust (Gen 3:19), but man's spirit does not fade away. It goes back to God who gave it (Gen 2:7), and every person will stand before Him. For the believer this is not fearful (Acts 7:59; Luke 23:46), and the body will be raised in glory (1 Cor 15:52; Phil 3:21). If you are young, remember your Creator now. If older, it is not too late (Luke 23:43). If you care for an aging parent, see their losses with tenderness (Isa 46:4).

12:8 *Futility of futilities* The book ends where it began (1:2). The verdict on life under the sun has not changed. But now we hear it after learning that life is God's gift, that God will judge and that the spirit returns to Him. Futility is real, but it is not the whole story.

12:9 *he set in order many proverbs* The book now speaks of the Preacher in the third person, like a closing note on his work. He weighed his words and taught what he learned (1 Kgs 4:32).

12:10 *words of delight, and what was written in uprightness, words of truth* Pleasing words, but never at the cost of truth. Good teaching is not harsh for the sake of it, nor sweet at the cost of honesty.

12:11 *The words of wise men are like goads* A goad was a pointed stick that kept oxen moving the right way. Wise words poke and push us where we need to go. Like nails firmly fixed, gathered sayings give us something solid to hang our lives on.

12:11 *they are given from one shepherd* In the Old Testament God is the Shepherd of His people (Ps 23:1). These words did not come from human cleverness alone. This is a plain claim of inspiration. It is hard to read "one shepherd" without thinking of Jesus, the Good Shepherd (John 10:11; 1 Pet 5:4).

12:12 *of making many books there is no end* People can read all their lives and never find the answer. Study is good, but it wears us out if it does not lead to God. The answer comes in a few simple words.

12:13 *fear God and keep His commandments, for this is all of man* The conclusion of the book. To fear God is to hold Him in awe, trust Him and honor Him as God. To keep His commandments is to live that fear out (3:14; 5:7; 8:12-13). This is the whole of man, what we were made for. Pleasure, wealth, wisdom, work and fame are a breath. A life of reverent obedience is a full life (John 14:15).

12:14 *For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every hidden thing* Under the sun nothing seemed to make a lasting difference. Above the sun every deed counts. Who can stand? No one on his own (7:20; Rom 2:16). The Judge is the risen Jesus (Acts 17:31), and He is the One who died for our sins, so there is no condemnation for those in Him (Rom 8:1). Believers still stand before the judgment seat of Christ, not to decide salvation but for rewards (2 Cor 5:10). The book that began "everything is futility" ends with this: everything counts.

SONG OF SONGS

Introduction

Title

The Hebrew title is the book's first line: "The song of the songs, which is of Solomon" (1:1). Saying "the song of the songs" is a Hebrew way of saying the greatest song, the best of all songs. Solomon wrote a thousand and five songs (1 Kgs 4:32), and this one was counted his finest. Some Bibles call it the Song of Solomon, and older writers sometimes called it Canticles, from the Latin word for songs. In our English Bibles it comes right after Ecclesiastes and right before Isaiah, the last of the books of wisdom and poetry.

Author and Date

The first verse says the song is "of Solomon" (1:1). The Hebrew can mean written by Solomon, written for him or about him, but Jewish and Christian tradition have long held that Solomon wrote it. Solomon is named seven times in the book (1:1, 5; 3:7, 9, 11; 8:11, 12). The Song is full of things a king in his day would know: plants and animals from all over the land, spices and perfumes, horses from Egypt, and places from Lebanon to Engedi. Solomon spoke of trees, animals and birds (1 Kgs 4:33), and the Song is full of them. Many modern scholars believe the book was written or collected much later, and some see it as a set of separate love songs gathered together. I take the first verse at its word and hold that Solomon wrote it.

It was most likely written early in Solomon's reign, about 965 B.C. Solomon ruled about 970 to 930 B.C. The book shows the kingdom whole and at peace, and it names both Jerusalem and Tirzah (6:4), a northern city that later became a capital of the northern kingdom after the kingdom divided (1 Kgs 15:33).

Background and Setting

Song of Songs is a love poem, the song of a man and a woman who love each other, long for each other, marry and delight in each other. There is no other book like it in the Bible. It does not tell a story in order like a history book or teach in plain sentences like a letter. It sings. The woman is called "the Shulammite" (6:13), a young woman from the country, darkened by the sun from working in her brothers' vineyards (1:6). Her name may mean a woman from Shunem, or it may be a feminine form of Solomon's own name. The man is the king, Solomon (1:4; 3:11), who also speaks of himself as a shepherd in the language of love (1:7; 2:16). He calls her "my darling" and "bride," and she calls him "my beloved." The daughters of Jerusalem, the women of the city, answer at times like a chorus. Her brothers appear at the start and at the end (1:6; 8:8-9). The SLB does not add headings to show who is speaking, but the Hebrew shows whether the speaker is a man or a woman, and the notes point it out.

For most of history, both Jews and Christians read the Song mainly as an allegory, a story in which every detail stands for something spiritual: God and Israel, or Christ and the church. That reading sometimes went too far, turning every line into a hidden code the text does not support. Today most Bible teachers read it first as what it plainly is, a real love song about a husband and wife, and then see in it a picture of God's love for His people, as the rest of Scripture does with marriage. That is how these notes read it. Some teachers hold the shepherd view, with three main characters: the young woman, a shepherd she loves back home, and King Solomon, who tries to win her for his palace. These notes read the Song with two main characters, because the text calls the bridegroom the king and Solomon (1:4; 3:11) and does not clearly mark a second man, but the shepherd view is held by serious teachers.

The man who wrote this song of one love later gathered seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines, and his wives turned aside his heart (1 Kgs 11:3). Scripture does not explain how. Most likely Solomon wrote the Song early, about one wife he truly loved, before his heart turned. The Song shows God's ideal of one faithful love, even though its writer later failed to live it. Knowing what is right and writing beautifully about it is not the same as living it.

The Song speaks openly about love and desire, but always in pictures: gardens, fountains, fruit, wine, spices, gazelles and doves. It is never crude. The notes explain those pictures in plain and modest words, fit for a church group, without going into more detail than the poem itself does. "Sister" (4:9) was a common word of love and closeness, not a family relation, and "bride" is used for her only in chapters 4 and 5, around the wedding.

Themes

Married love is God's good gift. From the first pages of Scripture, God made man and woman for each other and joined them as one flesh (Gen 2:24). The Song celebrates that gift with joy, the physical side included. The marriage bed is honorable and undefiled (Heb 13:4).

Love has its time. Three times the bride warns her friends not to awaken love "until it pleases" (2:7; 3:5; 8:4). The Song shows the right order: longing, waiting, the public covenant of marriage, and then the full joy of union. The locked garden (4:12) pictures purity kept for marriage, and the bride who was "a wall" (8:10) found peace.

Love belongs and is exclusive. "My beloved is mine, and I am his" (2:16). Against all others, "One is she, my dove, my perfect one" (6:9). This is God's design: one man and one woman, each the only one for the other.

Love is tested and restored. The hard night of chapter 5, when she delays to open the door, shows how small excuses become distance. Chapter 6 shows love that forgives without scolding and speaks the words of the wedding day again.

Love is strong. The key verses are 8:6-7: love is "strong like death," its flashes are "a flame of the LORD," and "Many waters are not able to quench the love." It cannot be bought. It must be given freely.

Christ in Song of Songs

The Song is first of all about a real husband and wife, and these notes read it that way. But the whole Bible uses marriage as a picture of God's love for His people. God told Israel that her Maker is her Husband (Isa 54:5), and promised to betroth her to Himself forever (Hos 2:19). Paul quotes God's first words about marriage, that the two will become one flesh, and then says he

speaks of Christ and the church (Eph 5:31-32). Jesus called Himself the Bridegroom (Mark 2:19-20), and the Bible ends with the marriage of the Lamb (Rev 19:7).

So when we see a love that seeks, delights, forgives and will not let go, a love "strong like death" that many waters cannot quench (8:6-7), we are right to think of the greater love of Christ, who loved the church and gave Himself up for her (Eph 5:25). His love is stronger than death, and nothing can separate us from it (Rom 8:38-39). It cannot be bought, but is given by grace (Eph 2:8). The Song ends with the bride calling her beloved to come quickly (8:14), and the Bible ends with the Spirit and the bride saying, Come (Rev 22:17, 20). The New Testament does not quote Song of Songs, so I hold this as a picture, not as the main meaning of each verse, and the notes mention it where it fits without forcing it into every line.

Hard Passages

The locked garden and the wedding night (4:12-5:1). The locked garden and sealed fountain picture the bride's purity, kept for her husband. When she calls it "his garden" (4:16) and he answers, "I have come to my garden" (5:1), the poem speaks of their wedding night, but only in its own gentle pictures, and the notes say no more than that. For any who have not kept themselves pure, Christ forgives and makes a new beginning (1 Cor 6:11).

The watchmen (5:7). Those who should have protected her beat her and took her shawl. Scripture does not hide that kind of hurt, and God is near the broken of heart (Ps 34:18). Anyone being harmed should tell someone they trust and get help.

The husband's praise (4:1-7; 7:1-9). These verses praise the bride's beauty with pictures of fawns, palms, wheat and wine. They are tender, not crude, and the notes handle them in general terms of beauty, plenty and delight. God approves of a husband's delight in his own wife (Prov 5:18-19).

Solomon's many wives (6:8; 1 Kgs 11:3). The Song lifts up one faithful love though its writer later failed to live it. Most likely he wrote it early, before his heart turned.

Obscure verses (6:12; 8:6). The Hebrew of 6:12 is famously unclear, and we should not build anything on it. In 8:6 the word for flame ends with Yah, the short form of God's name. Some take it as a mighty flame, but the SLB follows "a flame of the LORD."

Outline

I. Courtship and Longing (1:1-3:5)
  A. The Bride and Her King (1:1-8)
  B. Delight in Each Other (1:9-2:7)
  C. The Call of Spring (2:8-17)
  D. The Night Search (3:1-5)
II. The Wedding (3:6-5:1)
  A. The Wedding Procession (3:6-11)
  B. You Are Beautiful, My Bride (4:1-7)
  C. A Garden Locked (4:8-5:1)
III. Love Tested and Restored (5:2-7:13)
  A. The Door Opened Too Late (5:2-8)
  B. This Is My Beloved and My Friend (5:9-6:3)
  C. Love Restored (6:4-13)
  D. The Delight of Married Love (7:1-13)
IV. Love Made Strong (8:1-14)
  A. Love Is Strong Like Death (8:1-7)
  B. The Little Sister and the Vineyard (8:8-14)

SONG OF SONGS

SONG OF SONGS 1

The Bride and Her King

1 The song of the songs, which ***is*** of Solomon (Shelomo). **2** Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth, for your love ***is*** better than wine. **3** For fragrance your oils ***are*** good; your name ***is*** oil poured out; therefore young women love you. **4** Draw me after you; let us run. The king has brought me ***into*** his chambers. Let us rejoice and let us be glad in you; let us make mention of your love more than wine. In uprightness they love you. **5** I ***am*** black, and lovely, daughters of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), like the tents of Kedar (Qedar), like the curtains of Solomon. **6** Do not look at me because I ***am*** swarthy, because the sun has gazed on me. The sons of my mother were angry with me; they made me a keeper of the vineyards; my vineyard, which ***is*** mine, I have not kept. **7** Tell me, you whom my soul loves, where do you pasture ***your flock***? Where do you make ***it*** lie down at noon? For why should I be like one who is veiled beside the flocks of your companions? **8** If you do not know for yourself, beautiful ***one*** among the women, go out for yourself in the footprints of the flock, and pasture your young goats beside the dwellings of the shepherds.

Delight in Each Other

9 To my mare among the chariots of Pharaoh I have likened you, my darling. **10** Your cheeks are lovely with ornaments, your neck with strings of beads. **11** Ornaments of gold we will make for you, with beads of the silver. **12** While the king ***was*** at his table, my nard gave forth its fragrance. **13** A bundle of myrrh ***is*** my beloved to me; between my breasts it lodges. **14** A cluster of henna ***is*** my beloved to me, in the vineyards of Engedi. **15** Look, you ***are*** beautiful, my darling; look, you ***are*** beautiful; your eyes ***are*** doves. **16** Look, you ***are*** beautiful, my beloved, also pleasant; also our couch ***is*** lush. **17** The beams of our houses ***are*** cedars; our rafters ***are*** cypresses.

1:1 Col 3:16; Ps 14:1; Isa 5:1
1:2 1 Pet 5:14; Song 1:4; Song 4:10
1:3 Eccl 7:1; Song 4:10; John 12:3
1:4 John 12:32; John 21:15; John 6:44
1:5 Matt 22:11; Gal 4:26; Ps 120:5
1:6 Ps 69:8; Song 8:11,12; Ruth 1:19-21
1:7 John 21:17; Song 3:1-4; Ps 23:1,2
1:8 Song 5:9; Song 6:1,4-10; Song 1:15
1:9 Song 2:2,10,13; Song 4:1,7; Song 5:2
1:10 Ezek 16:11-13; 1 Pet 3:4; Gen 24:22,47
1:11 Ps 149:4; Phil 3:21; Song 8:9
1:12 John 12:3; Song 7:5; Ps 45:1
1:13 Ps 45:8; John 19:39; Song 4:6,14
1:14 Song 2:3; Song 4:13,14; Josh 15:62
1:15 Song 4:1,7,10; Song 5:12; Song 1:8
1:16 Song 2:3; Song 5:10-16; Ps 45:2
1:17 Song 8:9; 2 Chr 2:8,9; Ps 92:12

1:1 *The song of the songs, which is of Solomon* The title of the book. "The song of the songs" means the greatest of songs, the way King of kings means the greatest King. Solomon wrote over a thousand songs (1 Kgs 4:32), and this one was counted the best. God put a love song in the Bible because He made love. He brought man and woman together and called it "very good" (Gen 1:31).
1:2 *Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth* The woman speaks first, and she is open about her longing to be close to the man she loves. Notice the shift from "him" to "your." She speaks about him and then to him, as if he has suddenly come near. That is how a person in love talks.
1:2 *your love is better than wine* Wine was the drink of joy and celebration. His love gives her more joy than any feast.
1:3 *your name is oil poured out* A man of rank smelled of costly perfumed oils. But his name, his character and who he is, is like perfume poured out, filling the room. Others can see he is a man of good name.
1:4 *The king has brought me into his chambers* He has welcomed her into his private rooms, the inner part of the palace, a picture of being brought close, received and loved. The voices that join in are likely the young women of Jerusalem sharing her joy. Christians have long thought here of the believer's desire for Christ, but first see what the poem plainly says: a young woman loves a good man and is not ashamed of it.
1:5 *I am black, and lovely* A woman of the palace had fair skin from staying indoors. A country girl who worked the fields was tanned. The tents of Kedar were woven from black goat hair, and the curtains of Solomon were rich and fine. She is dark like those tents and beautiful like those curtains. She does not hide or apologize for who she is.
1:6 *The sons of my mother were angry with me* Her brothers, likely in charge of the family since her father is never mentioned, put her to work in the vineyards. "My vineyard" is herself: she was so busy with theirs that she had no time to care for her own life. The king loved her for who she was, not her looks or rank (1 Sam 16:7).
1:7 *Tell me, you whom my soul loves, where do you pasture your flock* She uses the language of shepherds, who rested their flocks in the shade at noon. She does not want to wander among other shepherds looking for him, like a veiled woman who might be mistaken for one of loose character. She wants to go straight to him, with honor.
1:8 *beautiful one among the women* The answer may come from him or from the women. Whatever she thinks of herself, others see her beauty. Kings were often called shepherds of their people, and in love poetry the king can play the part of a shepherd. Jesus, our King, calls Himself the good shepherd who knows His own (John 10:14).
1:9 *To my mare among the chariots of Pharaoh I have likened you, my darling* Now the man speaks. This was high praise. Solomon brought horses from Egypt (1 Kgs 10:28), and a beautiful mare in ornaments drew every eye. You stand out from everyone else. "My darling" is his favorite name for her, a dear companion. He loves her as a wife and treasures her as a friend.
1:12 *my nard gave forth its fragrance* Nard was a costly perfume from far away. Mary of Bethany poured pure nard on Jesus' feet (John 12:3). While the king is near, her perfume fills the air, and her love reaches out to him like that fragrance.
1:13 *A bundle of myrrh is my beloved to me* Women sometimes wore a little pouch of myrrh on a cord around the neck, so the fragrance stayed with them day and night. Her beloved is always near her heart.
1:14 *in the vineyards of Engedi* Engedi was an oasis by the Dead Sea, with springs and vineyards in the middle of the desert (1 Sam 24:1). Henna has fragrant clusters of small white flowers. He is to her like fresh blossoms in a dry land.
1:15 *Look, you are beautiful, my darling; look, you are beautiful; your eyes are doves* He says it twice because he means it. Doves are gentle and pure, and her eyes tell of a gentle heart. Most of us say I love you less often than we should.
1:17 *The beams of our houses are cedars* Some see an outdoor scene under tall trees, others the cedar-paneled rooms of the palace. Either way she dreams of a shared life, a place that is theirs. Love looks forward to a home.

SONG OF SONGS 2

1 I ***am*** the crocus of the Sharon, the lily of the valleys. **2** Like a lily among the thorns, so ***is*** my darling among the daughters. **3** Like an apple tree among the trees of the forest, so ***is*** my beloved among the sons. In his shade I delighted and sat down, and his fruit ***was*** sweet to my palate. **4** He has brought me into the house of the wine, and his banner over me ***is*** love. **5** Sustain me with the raisin cakes; refresh me with the apples, for I ***am*** sick with love. **6** His left ***hand is*** under my head, and his right ***hand*** embraces me. **7** I adjure you, daughters of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), by gazelles or by the does of the field, that you not rouse and that you not arouse the love until it pleases.

The Call of Spring

8 The sound of my beloved! Look, this ***one is*** coming, leaping over the mountains, bounding over the hills. **9** My beloved is like a gazelle or a fawn of the stags. Look, this ***one is*** standing behind our wall, gazing from the windows, peering from the lattices. **10** My beloved answered and said to me, "Arise for yourself, my darling, my beautiful ***one***, and come for yourself. **11** For look, the winter has passed; the rain has passed away; it has gone for itself. **12** The blossoms have appeared in the land; the time of the pruning has arrived, and the sound of the turtledove has been heard in our land. **13** The fig tree has ripened its early figs, and the vines ***in*** blossom have given forth fragrance. Arise for yourself, my darling, my beautiful ***one***, and come for yourself. **14** My dove, in the clefts of the rock, in the hiding place of the steep way, show me your form; make me hear your voice, for your voice ***is*** sweet, and your form ***is*** lovely." **15** Seize for us foxes, little foxes ruining vineyards, and our vineyards ***are in*** blossom. **16** My beloved ***is*** mine, and I ***am*** his, who pastures among the lilies. **17** Until the day breathes and the shadows flee, turn; be for yourself, my beloved, like a gazelle or a fawn of the stags on the mountains of Bether (Bater).

SONG OF SONGS 3

The Night Search

1 On my bed in the nights I sought him whom my soul loves; I

2:1 Isa 35:1,2; Ps 85:11; Song 2:16
2:2 Isa 55:13; Matt 6:28,29; Matt 10:16
2:3 Heb 1:3; Heb 3:6; Song 8:5
2:4 John 15:13; Song 1:4; Song 5:1
2:5 Song 5:8; 2 Sam 6:19; Hos 3:1
2:6 Isa 54:5-10; Zeph 3:17; Jer 32:41
2:7 Song 3:5; Song 8:4; Song 1:5
2:8 Luke 6:23; Luke 3:5; Song 5:2
2:9 Song 8:14; Song 2:17; 1 Cor 13:12
2:10 Song 2:13; Song 2:8; 2 Sam 23:3
2:11 Eccl 3:4,11; Isa 12:1,2; Isa 40:2
2:12 Song 6:2,11; Isa 35:1,2; Hos 14:5-7
2:13 Song 2:10; Song 6:11; Song 7:8,11-13
2:14 Song 8:13; Song 1:5,8; Song 5:2
2:15 Ezek 13:4-16; Luke 13:32; 2 Pet 2:1-3
2:16 Song 6:3; Song 7:10,13; Ps 48:14
2:17 Heb 8:5; 2 Pet 1:19; Song 4:6
3:1 Song 5:6; Isa 26:9; Song 1:7

2:1 *I am the crocus of the Sharon, the lily of the valleys* The Sharon was the coastal plain, covered with wildflowers in spring. She is not boasting. She calls herself one common flower among many. Hymns call Jesus the Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the Valley, but here the bride speaks of herself. Using the words of Him is a devotional use, and we should know the difference.
2:2 *Like a lily among the thorns, so is my darling among the daughters* He answers her humble words. You may call yourself an ordinary flower, but next to you the others seem like thorns. A good husband sees his wife this way.
2:3 *Like an apple tree among the trees of the forest* An apple tree stands out in a forest because it gives fruit and shade. In a hot land shade means rest and protection. A wife should find rest, safety and joy in her husband's love. It also pictures the rest Jesus offers (Matt 11:28).
2:4 *his banner over me is love* The house of wine is the banqueting hall. A banner was raised over an army or a camp to show who it belonged to. Everyone can see that she belongs to him and that he loves her (Exod 17:15). When a man's love is displayed openly over his wife, she is secure.
2:6 *His left hand is under my head, and his right hand embraces me* A picture of tender closeness and safety, repeated in 8:3. The poem describes no more than this, and neither will we.
2:7 *that you not rouse and that you not arouse the love until it pleases* The first of three times she says this (3:5; 8:4), and one of the most important verses in the book. To adjure is to put under a solemn oath. Right after speaking of her desire, she gives a warning. Desire is God's good gift, but it can be awakened too soon, and once stirred it is hard to put back to sleep. "Until it pleases" means the right time, and in the Song that is marriage (4:16-5:1).
2:7 *I adjure you, daughters of Jerusalem* A word every young person needs. The world says follow your feelings. God says desire has its place: guard your heart and "make no provision for the flesh" (Rom 13:14; 1 Thess 4:3). Married people should guard against desire for anyone but their spouse. Waiting is not wasted. And anyone who awakened love too soon can find forgiveness in Christ (Ps 51:10).
2:9 *standing behind our wall, gazing from the windows* He has come to her family's house and looks through the lattice, the wooden screen over the window. He is close but respectful. He waits outside and calls to her.
2:11 *the winter has passed; the rain has passed away* In Israel winter is the cold, gray rainy season. In spring the land bursts to life. Flowers are out, vines are pruned and the turtledoves are back. The Hebrew word for pruning can also mean singing, so some read it as the time of singing.
2:13 *Arise for yourself, my darling, my beautiful one, and come for yourself* He repeats his invitation: come, enjoy this season with me. Married couples should not lose love's springtime. Make time to walk together and delight in each other, even after many years. Many Christians hear the call of Christ here, a sweet picture that fits the Bible's teaching, but the plain meaning is a young man calling his love into the spring.
2:14 *My dove, in the clefts of the rock* Doves nest in cracks of high cliffs, hard to reach. She is shy or still out of sight. He wants to see her face and hear her voice, not just admire her from a distance. Husbands, do you ask your wife what she thinks and feels, and listen?
2:15 *Seize for us foxes, little foxes ruining vineyards* Foxes dug around vines and ate tender shoots, and a vineyard in blossom was easily damaged. The vineyard often pictures love or the bride (1:6; 8:12). The little foxes are small things that damage a growing love: careless words, selfishness, neglect, jealousy, unresolved anger. Big problems often start as little foxes no one caught.
2:16 *My beloved is mine, and I am his* The heart of the Song: a statement of belonging, mutual and exclusive. Paul teaches the same about marriage (1 Cor 7:4). It also echoes God's covenant, "you, you will be My people" (Lev 26:12). Believers can say of Christ, He is mine and I am His (John 15:9).
2:17 *Until the day breathes and the shadows flee* Likely the cool breeze of evening or the dawn when shadows disappear. She asks him to come back swiftly. Bether is not known on any map. The name may mean mountains of separation, or cleft mountains, the mountains that keep them apart.
3:1 *On my bed in the nights I sought him whom my soul loves* Four times in these verses she calls him "him whom my soul loves." Her love comes from the depth of who she is. Many Bible teachers believe this is a dream or the anxious longing that comes at night, since a young woman of that day would not normally wander the city alone after dark (5:2). Either way, the fear of losing him is real.

sought him, and I did not find him. **2** Let me arise now and go around in the city, in the streets and in the open squares; let me seek him whom my soul loves. I sought him, and I did not find him. **3** The watchmen who go around in the city found me. "Have you seen him whom my soul loves?" **4** Scarcely had I passed from them when I found him whom my soul loves. I grasped him, and I would not let him go until I had brought him into the house of my mother, and into the chamber of her who conceived me. **5** I adjure you, daughters of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), by gazelles or by the does of the field, that you not rouse and that you not arouse the love until it pleases.

The Wedding Procession

6 Who ***is*** this coming up from the wilderness like columns of smoke, perfumed ***with*** myrrh and frankincense, from every scented powder of a merchant? **7** Look, his bed, which ***belongs*** to Solomon (Shelomo)! Sixty mighty men ***are*** around it, from the mighty men of Israel (Yisra'el). **8** All of them gripping a sword, trained ***in*** war, each man ***has*** his sword on his thigh because of dread in the nights. **9** A litter King Solomon made for himself from the wood of Lebanon (Levanon). **10** Its posts he made ***of*** silver, its back ***of*** gold, its seat ***of*** purple; its interior ***was*** inlaid ***with*** love from the daughters of Jerusalem. **11** Go out and look, daughters of Zion (Tsiyon), on King Solomon, on the crown ***with*** which his mother crowned him on the day of his wedding, and on the day of the gladness of his heart.

SONG OF SONGS 4

You Are Beautiful, My Bride

1 Look, you ***are*** beautiful, my darling; look, you ***are*** beautiful; your eyes ***are*** doves behind your veil. Your hair ***is*** like the flock of the goats that have streamed down from the mountain of Gilead (Gilad). **2** Your teeth ***are*** like the flock of the shorn ***ewes*** that have come up from the washing, all of which bear twins, and there is no bereaved ***one*** among them. **3** Your lips ***are*** like a thread of scarlet, and your mouth ***is*** lovely. Your temple ***is*** like a slice of pomegranate behind your veil. **4** Your neck ***is*** like the tower of David, built in courses; the thousand shields ***are*** hung on it, all the small shields of the mighty men. **5** Your two breasts ***are*** like two fawns, twins of a gazelle, which pasture among the lilies. **6** Until the day breathes and the shadows flee, I will go for myself to the mountain of the myrrh and to the hill of the frankincense. **7** All of you ***is*** beautiful, my darling, and there is no blemish in you.

3:2 John 20:15; Song 5:5; Isa 64:7
3:3 John 20:15; Song 5:7; Isa 21:6-8,11,12
3:4 Gal 4:26; John 6:21; Prov 8:17
3:5 Song 2:7; Song 8:4; Mic 4:8
3:6 Song 8:5; Deut 8:2; Isa 43:19
3:7 Song 3:9; Song 1:16; 1 Sam 8:16
3:8 Ps 45:3; Ps 149:5-9; Isa 27:3
3:9 Song 3:7; 2 Sam 23:5; Rev 14:6
3:10 Ps 87:3; 1 Tim 3:15,16; Rev 3:12
3:11 Matt 12:42; Isa 62:5; Jer 2:2
4:1 Song 1:15; Song 6:5,7; Song 7:5
4:2 Song 6:6; Jer 15:16; John 15:7
4:3 Luke 4:22; Song 6:7; Josh 2:18
4:4 Song 7:4; Neh 3:19; Song 1:10
4:5 Song 7:3,7; Song 2:16; Song 6:3
4:6 2 Pet 1:19; Song 2:17; Luke 1:78
4:7 Song 4:1; Song 5:16; Num 24:5

3:2 *I sought him, and I did not find him* She gets up and looks everywhere, and twice she says she did not find him. Real love feels the absence of the one it loves. The bride's longing pictures how a believer can long for God (Ps 63:1).
3:4 *I would not let him go until I had brought him into the house of my mother* Bringing him to her mother's house was a way of bringing him into her family, showing them the man she would marry. It looks ahead to the wedding that follows. The poem does not say anything improper happened. She simply wants him where her family is, and not to lose him again.
3:5 *that you not rouse and that you not arouse the love until it pleases* The second charge, word for word as in 2:7. Just when her longing is strongest she says again: wait. It falls right before the wedding procession, and the timing is the lesson. The Song shows the right order: longing, waiting, the public covenant of marriage, then the full joy of union. Intimacy outside marriage tries to take the gift without the covenant, and it always leaves wounds (Mark 10:9).
3:6 *Who is this coming up from the wilderness like columns of smoke* A crowd sees a procession coming from the wilderness, with dust or burning incense rising like columns of smoke and the air full of costly perfumes. Some think "Who is this?" means the bride brought from her country home, others the king's litter. Most likely the whole royal wedding procession is meant.
3:8 *because of dread in the nights* The "bed" of verse 7 is a litter, a covered seat carried on poles, guarded by sixty of Israel's mighty men (2 Sam 23:8-39). Travel through the wilderness could be dangerous at night. The king protects his bride and the wedding party. A husband who loves his wife will guard her body, her heart and her honor.
3:10 *its interior was inlaid with love from the daughters of Jerusalem* Cedar of Lebanon was the finest wood (1 Kgs 5:6), and silver, gold and costly purple were signs of royalty. The women of the city had lovingly decorated the inside. Marriage is a covenant before God and a joy for the whole community, and it is right to make the wedding beautiful.
3:11 *on the crown with which his mother crowned him on the day of his wedding* Not his royal crown but a wedding crown, placed on his head by his mother Bathsheba as a family blessing. His wedding day was "the day of the gladness of his heart," and a man's gladness in marrying the woman he loves should be seen.
3:11 *Go out and look, daughters of Zion, on King Solomon* This scene points beyond itself to the day when Christ the King receives His bride, for "the marriage of the Lamb has come" (Rev 19:7; 2 Cor 11:2). For believers that is not a story about someone else. It is our future.
4:1 *your eyes are doves behind your veil* He begins as in 1:15, saying it twice. Brides wore a veil at their wedding (Gen 24:65). The goats of Israel were mostly black, and a herd flowing down the hills of Gilead in the evening light is a picture of her long, dark hair. These word pictures are not a portrait to draw detail by detail. They are meant to be felt: you are lovely, and you move me.
4:3 *Your temple is like a slice of pomegranate behind your veil* The word may mean her cheek or temple. A cut pomegranate is rosy red, perhaps the blush of a bride. Her lips are red and her words lovely.
4:4 *Your neck is like the tower of David* Her neck is tall and graceful, hung with necklaces like a tower hung with shields for display (Ezek 27:11). She carries herself with dignity and honor.
4:5 *Your two breasts are like two fawns, twins of a gazelle* He praises her womanly beauty with a gentle and tender picture. It is not crude. It is the language of a husband delighting in his wife, the rejoicing Proverbs commands in "the wife of your youth" (Prov 5:18).
4:6 *I will go for myself to the mountain of the myrrh and to the hill of the frankincense* He echoes her words in 2:17. These fragrant hills picture the bride herself. Now that they are married, the waiting of 2:7 and 3:5 is over.
4:7 *All of you is beautiful, my darling, and there is no blemish in you* Not that she had no flaws, but that his love sees her as wholly beautiful. It pictures Christ's love for His church, whom He will present to Himself "not having spot or wrinkle" (Eph 5:27). We are full of flaws, but Christ has washed us.

A Garden Locked

8 With me from Lebanon (Levanon), bride, with me from Lebanon you will come. You will descend from the top of Amana, from the top of Senir and ***Mount*** Hermon (Chermon), from the dens of lions, from the mountains of leopards. **9** You have stolen my heart, my sister, bride; you have stolen my heart with one of your eyes, with one chain of your necklaces. **10** How beautiful is your love, my sister, bride! How ***much*** better is your love than wine, and the fragrance of your oils than all spices! **11** Your lips drip flowing honey, bride; honey and milk ***are*** under your tongue, and the fragrance of your garments ***is*** like the fragrance of Lebanon. **12** A garden locked ***is*** my sister, bride, a spring locked, a fountain sealed. **13** Your shoots ***are*** an orchard of pomegranates with fruit of choice things, henna ***plants*** with nard ***plants***, **14** nard and saffron, calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense, myrrh and aloes, with all the finest spices. **15** A fountain of gardens, a well of living water, and streams from Lebanon. **16** Awake, north ***wind***, and come, south ***wind***! Make my garden breathe; let its spices flow. Let my beloved come to his garden and eat the fruit of its choice things.

SONG OF SONGS 5

1 I have come to my garden, my sister, bride; I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk. Eat, friends; drink and become drunk, beloved ones!

The Door Opened Too Late

2 I ***was*** sleeping, and my heart ***was*** awake. The sound of my beloved knocking! "Open to me, my sister, my darling, my dove, my perfect ***one***, for my head is filled ***with*** dew, my locks ***with*** the drops of night." **3** I have taken off my tunic; how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet; how shall I soil them? **4** My beloved stretched out his hand from the hole, and my inner parts were in turmoil over him. **5** I myself arose to open to my beloved, and my hands dripped myrrh, and my fingers ***dripped*** flowing myrrh on the handles of the bolt. **6** I myself opened to my beloved, and my beloved had turned away; he had passed on. My soul went out when he spoke. I sought him, and I did not find him; I called him, and he did not answer me. **7** The watchmen who go around in the city found me; they struck me; they bruised me; the watchmen of the walls lifted my shawl from on me. **8** I adjure you, daughters of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim): if you find my beloved, what will you tell him? That I ***am*** sick with love.

This Is My Beloved and My Friend

9 What ***is*** your beloved more than a beloved, beautiful ***one*** among the women? What ***is*** your beloved more than a

4:8 Deut 3:9; Ps 45:10; Song 2:13
4:9 Song 5:1,2; Gen 20:12; Matt 12:50
4:10 Song 1:2; Song 3:6; Song 5:5
4:11 Gen 27:27; Song 5:1; Song 4:3
4:12 Prov 5:15-18; Song 6:2,11; Isa 58:11
4:13 Song 1:14; Song 6:11; Eccl 2:5
4:14 John 19:39; Exod 30:23; Song 4:6
4:15 John 7:38; John 4:10,14; Jer 2:13
4:16 Acts 27:13; Song 5:1; Song 1:4

5:1 John 3:29; John 2:10; Song 6:2,11
5:2 Luke 9:32; Eph 5:14; Song 2:14
5:3 Luke 11:7; Prov 3:28; Prov 13:4
5:4 Song 1:4; Ps 110:3; Acts 16:14
5:5 Song 5:13; Song 5:2; Luke 12:36
5:6 Song 5:2,4; Ps 30:7; Isa 8:17
5:7 Song 3:3; Isa 6:10,11; Hos 9:7,8
5:8 Song 2:7; Ps 42:1-3; Song 8:4
5:9 Song 1:8; Song 6:1,9,10; Isa 53:2

4:8 *With me from Lebanon, bride* For the first time he calls her "bride," six times through 5:1. The wedding has come. Amana, Senir and Hermon are high, wild mountains in the far north (Deut 3:9), home to lions and leopards. He calls her down from the high, dangerous places, perhaps from her old life or her fears, to be close to him in safety (Gen 2:24).

4:9 *You have stolen my heart, my sister, bride* One look from her and he is undone. "My sister" was a common word of love in that day for someone very close and dear. It does not mean they were related.

4:11 *honey and milk are under your tongue* Her kisses and her words are sweet. Milk and honey recall the Promised Land (Exod 3:8). She is to him a land of plenty and delight.

4:12 *A garden locked is my sister, bride, a spring locked, a fountain sealed* One of the most important pictures in the Song. A locked garden was walled and shut to outsiders, and a sealed spring was covered so no one else could drink. She has kept herself pure for him. Purity before marriage is a gift a bride and groom give each other (Prov 5:15-17). If you have not kept yourself pure, do not despair: "you were washed" (1 Cor 6:11).

4:16 *Let my beloved come to his garden and eat the fruit of its choice things* The bride answers. In verse 12 it was a garden locked. Now she calls it "my garden" and then "his garden." On their wedding night, in the covenant of marriage, she gives herself to him freely and with joy. The poem says it with gentle pictures, and that is all we need to say. The marriage bed is "undefiled" (Heb 13:4), and as in Eden there is no shame in it (Gen 2:25).

5:1 *I have come to my garden, my sister, bride* The groom answers her invitation of 4:16. He uses the pictures of chapter 4 to say their marriage is now complete, and he receives her love as his own treasure. Notice how often he says "my."

5:1 *Eat, friends; drink and become drunk, beloved ones* Most likely the wedding guests or friends, rejoicing with the couple and blessing their love. Some Bible teachers believe it is God Himself, who made marriage, blessing the union. The Hebrew does not tell us. "Become drunk" is poetry for drinking deeply of love (Prov 5:19). It is not permission for drunkenness, which Scripture forbids (Eph 5:18).

5:2 *I was sleeping, and my heart was awake* Time has passed, and the bride is now a wife. She is half awake, perhaps dreaming, as in 3:1-4. Her husband comes to the door late at night, wet with the dew, and calls her by four tender names.

5:3 *I have taken off my tunic; how shall I put it on* She has gone to bed and washed her dusty feet, and getting up would be a bother. These are small excuses. She is not angry, just comfortable. Many marriages suffer not from great betrayals but from moments like this: too tired, too busy or too comfortable to respond to a spouse's love. Not now, said often enough, becomes distance.

5:4 *My beloved stretched out his hand from the hole* Doors often had a hole near the latch so a person could reach in and open it. Seeing his hand, her heart is stirred and her love rushes back.

5:6 *my beloved had turned away; he had passed on* She was too late, and her delay cost her his presence. Many Christians have heard here a picture of the Lord knocking at the door of our hearts (Rev 3:20). The Song is first about a husband and wife, but the lesson fits our walk with God too. When He calls, answer quickly.

5:7 *they struck me; they bruised me* In 3:3 the watchmen only found her. Now they beat her and take her shawl, perhaps mistaking her for a woman of bad character. Those who should have protected her harmed her. Scripture does not hide such things, and God sees them (Ps 34:18). If you are being harmed, please tell someone you trust and get help.

5:8 *That I am sick with love* It begins like the refrain of 2:7, but instead of a warning it is a plea. She does not blame him or say he should not have left. She says, tell him I love him. That is the beginning of healing in any marriage.

5:9 *What is your beloved more than a beloved* What makes him so special? Their question gives her the chance to say what she loves about him. When love has cooled for a moment, it helps to remember and say out loud what you love about the other.

beloved, that thus you have adjured us? **10** My beloved ***is*** dazzling and ruddy, conspicuous above ten thousand. **11** His head ***is*** gold of pure gold; his locks ***are*** curls, black like the raven. **12** His eyes ***are*** like doves beside channels of water, washing in the milk, sitting on fullness. **13** His cheeks ***are*** like a bed of the spice, towers of aromatic herbs; his lips ***are*** lilies dripping flowing myrrh. **14** His hands ***are*** rods of gold filled with the chrysolite; his abdomen ***is*** a plate of ivory covered ***with*** sapphires. **15** His legs ***are*** pillars of marble founded on bases of pure gold; his appearance ***is*** like Lebanon (Levanon), choice like the cedars. **16** His mouth ***is*** sweetness, and all of him ***is*** desirable. This ***is*** my beloved, and this ***is*** my friend, daughters of Jerusalem.

SONG OF SONGS 6

1 Where has your beloved gone, beautiful ***one*** among the women? Where has your beloved turned, that we may seek him with you? **2** My beloved has gone down to his garden, to the beds of the spice, to pasture in the gardens and to gather lilies. **3** I ***am*** my beloved's, and my beloved ***is*** mine, who pastures among the lilies.

Love Restored

4 You ***are*** beautiful, my darling, like Tirzah (Tirtsa), lovely like Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), fearsome like the ***troops*** with banners. **5** Turn your eyes away from before me, for they have overwhelmed me. Your hair ***is*** like the flock of the goats that have streamed down from Gilead (Gilad). **6** Your teeth ***are*** like the flock of the ewes that have come up from the washing, all of which bear twins, and there is no bereaved ***one*** among them. **7** Your temple ***is*** like a slice of pomegranate behind your veil. **8** Sixty queens ***are*** they, and eighty concubines, and young women without number. **9** One ***is*** she, my dove, my perfect ***one***; one ***is*** she to her mother; pure ***is*** she to her who bore her. Daughters saw her, and they called her blessed; queens and concubines, and they praised her.
10 Who ***is*** this who looks down like the dawn, beautiful like the full moon, pure like the sun, fearsome like the ***troops*** with banners? **11** To a garden of nuts I went down, to look at the green shoots of the valley, to see whether the vine had budded, ***whether*** the pomegranates had bloomed. **12** I did not know; my soul set me ***on*** the chariots of my noble people. **13** Return, return, Shulammite; return, return, that we may look on you. What will you look at in the Shulammite, as ***at*** the dance of the two camps?

5:10 Song 2:1; Deut 32:31; Ps 45:17
5:11 Dan 2:37,38; Eph 1:21,22; Song 7:5
5:12 Song 1:15; Song 4:1; Heb 4:13
5:13 Song 1:10; Isa 50:6; Ps 4:6,7
5:14 Exod 24:10; Isa 54:11; Exod 15:6
5:15 Rev 1:15; Exod 26:19; Song 2:14
5:16 Ps 45:2; Isa 9:6,7; Song 1:2
6:1 John 20:15; Song 1:8; Song 5:9
6:2 Song 5:13; Song 6:11; Song 4:12-16
6:3 Song 2:16; Song 7:10; Heb 8:10
6:4 Song 6:10; Ps 48:2; 1 Kgs 14:17
6:5 Gen 32:26-28; Exod 32:10; Jer 15:1
6:6 Song 4:2; Matt 21:19; Matt 25:30
6:7 Song 4:3
6:8 Ps 45:14; 1 Kgs 11:1; 2 Chr 11:21
6:9 Song 5:2; Song 2:14; Num 23:9
6:10 Song 6:4; Job 31:26; Song 3:6
6:11 Song 7:12; Song 6:2; Song 4:12-15
6:12 Jer 31:18-20; Hos 11:8,9; Luke 15:20
6:13 Gen 32:2; Song 2:14; Jer 3:12-14,22

5:10 *My beloved is dazzling and ruddy, conspicuous above ten thousand* He is radiant and healthy, ruddy like David (1 Sam 16:12). In a crowd she would pick him out at once. He praised her from head to toe in chapter 4, and now she praises him. Love in the Song is never one-sided.
5:12 *His eyes are like doves beside channels of water* He praised her eyes as doves (1:15; 4:1), and now she says the same of his: clear, bright and gentle, like white doves by a stream. "Sitting on fullness" may mean well set, like jewels in a ring.
5:14 *His hands are rods of gold filled with the chrysolite* She describes a man in his strength in the modest language of art, like a statue of the finest materials, gold, ivory and precious stones.
5:16 *This is my beloved, and this is my friend* Perhaps the most beautiful line in the chapter. He is the man she desires and also her friend. Romance without friendship burns out, and friendship without romance grows cold. Christians have often read this and thought of Jesus (Ps 45:2). Could you tell someone what you love about Him?
6:1 *Where has your beloved gone, beautiful one among the women* Her praise moved the daughters of Jerusalem, and now they want to help her look for him. When believers speak with love and joy about Jesus, others want to know where to find Him.
6:2 *My beloved has gone down to his garden* His garden is the bride herself (4:12-16; 5:1). Some think of a real garden, but many take it as a poetic way of saying he has come back to her. He has not gone far. His heart is still with her.
6:3 *I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine* The words of 2:16 in a new order. Early love often thinks first of what it has. Mature love thinks first of whom it belongs to. After the hard night of chapter 5 she has learned to give herself first. We too belong to Christ first, for we were bought with a price (1 Cor 6:19-20).
6:4 *You are beautiful, my darling, like Tirzah, lovely like Jerusalem* Tirzah was a lovely northern city whose name means pleasant. "Fearsome like the troops with banners" means her beauty is overwhelming. Notice what he does not say. He does not scold her or bring up the night at the door. That is forgiveness, for love "does not count the evil" (1 Cor 13:5; Eph 4:32).
6:5 *Turn your eyes away from before me, for they have overwhelmed me* He is lovestruck. The praise that follows is almost the same as on their wedding day (4:1-3). Nothing has changed. Their distance did not lessen his love. Couples married many years should still be able to say what they said on their wedding day, and mean it.
6:8 *Sixty queens are they, and eighty concubines* Kings had many wives. This may describe Solomon's court at the time, or simply mean however many others there are, it makes no difference. Solomon later took far more, and they turned his heart from God (1 Kgs 11:3-4).
6:9 *One is she, my dove, my perfect one* Against all the others, there is only one for him. This is the heart of God's design for marriage: one man and one woman, each the only one for the other. Even the other women praise her, like the worthy wife whose husband "praises her" (Prov 31:28).
6:10 *Who is this who looks down like the dawn, beautiful like the full moon, pure like the sun* Perhaps the queens praising her, or her husband. The poetic words for moon and sun mean the white one and the hot one. The light grows: dawn, then moon, then sun. That is how love sees the one it loves, and how God sees His people (Prov 4:18).
6:11 *To a garden of nuts I went down* Most likely the bride goes down to a walnut orchard to see whether spring has come. In the Song spring is the season of love (2:11-13). She is checking whether their love has blossomed again.
6:12 *I did not know; my soul set me on the chariots of my noble people* One of the hardest verses in the Bible to translate, and translators render it many ways. One common reading is that before she knew it, her heart carried her away with joy, as if in a royal chariot. We should be humble here and not build anything on it.
6:13 *Return, return, Shulammite* The only place her title appears. The crowd calls her back so they can look at her. The dance of the two camps may be a well-known dance, perhaps tied to Mahanaim, which means two camps (Gen 32:2). By the end of this chapter the distance is gone. Love that is tested and forgiven can come back stronger than before.

SONG OF SONGS 7

The Delight of Married Love

1 How beautiful are your feet in the sandals, daughter of a noble! The curves of your thighs ***are*** like jewels, the work of the hands of a craftsman. **2** Your navel ***is*** a rounded bowl; let it not lack the mixed wine. Your belly ***is*** a heap of wheat fenced around with lilies. **3** Your two breasts ***are*** like two fawns, twins of a gazelle. **4** Your neck ***is*** like the tower of ivory; your eyes ***are*** pools in Heshbon (Cheshbon) by the gate of Bath-rabbim (Bat-Rabim); your nose ***is*** like the tower of Lebanon (Levanon), which watches the face of Damascus (Dameseq). **5** Your head on you ***is*** like Carmel (Karmel), and the hair of your head ***is*** like the purple; a king is bound by the tresses. **6** How beautiful you are, and how pleasant you are, love, in delights! **7** This stature of yours is like a palm tree, and your breasts ***are like*** clusters. **8** I said, "I will go up on the palm tree; let me take hold of its fruit stalks. And let your breasts be, please, like the clusters of the vine, and the fragrance of your nose like the apples, **9** and your mouth like the good wine, going to my beloved smoothly, gliding ***over*** the lips of sleepers." **10** I ***am*** my beloved's, and his desire ***is*** toward me. **11** Come, my beloved, let us go out ***to*** the field; let us lodge in the villages. **12** Let us rise early to the vineyards; let us see whether the vine has budded, ***whether*** the blossom has opened, ***whether*** the pomegranates have bloomed. There I will give my love to you. **13** The mandrakes have given forth fragrance, and over our doorways ***are*** all choice things, new and also old, my beloved, ***which*** I have stored up for you.

SONG OF SONGS 8

Love Is Strong Like Death

1 Who will make you like a brother to me, nursing at the breasts of my mother? I would find you outside; I would kiss you; also they would not despise me. **2** I would lead you; I would bring you into the house of my mother; she would teach me; I would give you to drink from the spiced wine, from the juice of my pomegranate. **3** His left ***hand is*** under my head, and his right ***hand*** embraces me. **4** I adjure you, daughters of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim): why would you rouse, and why would you arouse the love until it pleases? **5** Who ***is*** this coming up from the wilderness, leaning on her beloved? Under the apple tree I aroused you; there your mother was in labor with you; there she was in labor ***and***

7:1 Ps 45:13; Luke 15:22; Eph 6:15
7:2 Prov 3:8; Song 5:14; Ps 45:16
7:3 Song 4:5; Song 6:6
7:4 Song 4:4; Ps 144:12; Song 1:10
7:5 Isa 35:2; Song 4:1; Eph 1:22
7:6 Song 1:15,16; Ps 45:11; Song 7:10
7:7 Song 4:5; Ps 92:12; Jer 10:5
7:8 Song 4:16; Jer 32:41; John 14:21-23
7:9 Song 5:16; Song 2:14; Prov 16:24
7:10 Song 2:16; Song 6:3; Ps 45:11
7:11 Song 4:8; Song 1:4; Song 2:10-13
7:12 Song 6:11; Eph 6:24; Prov 8:17
7:13 1 Cor 2:9; Gen 30:14; Matt 13:52
8:1 Zech 9:9; Gal 4:26; Isa 7:14
8:2 Song 3:4; Gal 4:26; Song 4:10-16
8:3 Song 2:6; Deut 33:27; Isa 62:4,5
8:4 Song 2:7; Song 3:5
8:5 John 1:48; Song 3:6; Song 2:3

7:1 *How beautiful are your feet in the sandals, daughter of a noble* In chapter 4 he praised her from the head down. Now he begins with her feet and moves upward, perhaps as she dances (6:13). The country girl of the vineyards (1:6) is a princess in his eyes. Love lifts the one it loves. Her graceful form is like the work of a master artist, and he is praising God's handiwork in her (Ps 139:14).
7:2 *Your belly is a heap of wheat fenced around with lilies* Pictures of plenty and celebration. Mixed wine was served at feasts, and a heap of wheat after harvest meant food for the year. She is to him a feast, a harvest, a full blessing. A healthy, full form was a picture of life and fruitfulness.
7:4 *your eyes are pools in Heshbon* Heshbon, east of the Jordan, was known for its reservoirs. Her eyes are deep, clear and still. A tower stood for strength and dignity, so he praises the noble shape of her face and her bearing.
7:5 *a king is bound by the tresses* Mount Carmel rises above the sea, crowned with green forest. Her hair is so dark it shines with a purple sheen, the color of royalty. The most powerful man in the land is held captive by his wife's beauty.
7:8 *I will go up on the palm tree* The date palm is tall and graceful with its fruit in clusters. Using that picture he says he desires her and wants to be close to her. These are a husband's words to his wife, kept in picture language. The Bible is not shy about saying a husband's desire for his wife is good and right.
7:9 *and your mouth like the good wine, going to my beloved smoothly* Grapes, apples and wine picture sweetness and refreshment. Then she seems to finish his sentence. Take three things from these verses: God approves of married love and does not want couples ashamed of it; it is spoken of with honor and tenderness, never crude; and it belongs inside marriage (Heb 13:4). The Song lifts it back to where God placed it.
7:10 *I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me* The third time she says she belongs to him (2:16; 6:3), but now she does not add that he is hers. She is secure enough not to claim him. The word "desire" is used elsewhere of Eve after the fall (Gen 3:16), when sin brought struggle into marriage. Many Bible teachers see here a glimpse of marriage restored, as Christ restores what sin broke. Husbands, does your wife feel secure in your love?
7:12 *There I will give my love to you* It is spring again (2:11-13; 6:11). In chapter 5 she hesitated to open the door. Now she is the one inviting him, freely and with joy.
7:13 *The mandrakes have given forth fragrance* Mandrakes had a strong, pleasant smell and were believed to help love and the bearing of children (Gen 30:14-16). Here they say it is the season for love.
7:13 *new and also old, my beloved, which I have stored up for you* Married love should have both: the old delights of memories and years together, and new ones too. A couple married forty years can still surprise each other. After courtship, wedding, testing and forgiveness, love is fresh, secure and full of joy. It reminds us of Christ's love, new every morning (Lam 3:22-23).
8:1 *Who will make you like a brother to me* In that culture a husband and wife did not show affection in public, but a sister could kiss her brother in the street and no one would think anything of it. She wishes she could show her love for her husband freely anywhere.
8:3 *His left hand is under my head, and his right hand embraces me* The same words as 2:6. Then she longed for this embrace before the wedding. Now she is a wife and rests in it. What she waited for, she now enjoys.
8:4 *why would you rouse, and why would you arouse the love until it pleases* The third and last charge (2:7; 3:5), shorter, and now a question. She has lived the whole story: longing, waiting, wedding, joy, the hard night and the restoring. From the far side of marriage she tells the young women it was worth the wait. God's timing for love is not a cage. It is a protection.
8:5 *Who is this coming up from the wilderness, leaning on her beloved* An echo of 3:6. Then it was a grand royal parade. Now it is simply a husband and wife walking together, and she leans on him. That is a mature marriage: two people who have walked through hard places and lean on each other. It also pictures the believer leaning on Christ through the wilderness of this life.
8:5 *Under the apple tree I aroused you* In 2:3 she compared him to an apple tree. Now she remembers a place, perhaps where his mother bore him or where she first stirred his love. Love remembers where it began.

bore you. **6** Set me like the seal on your heart, like the seal on your arm, for love ***is*** strong like death, jealousy ***is*** hard like Sheol; its flashes ***are*** flashes of fire, a flame of ***the*** LORD. **7** Many waters are not able to quench the love, and rivers will not overflow it. If a man would give all the wealth of his house for the love, they would utterly despise him.

The Little Sister and the Vineyard

8 We have a little sister, and she has no breasts. What shall we do for our sister on the day when she is spoken for? **9** If she ***is*** a wall, we will build on her a battlement of silver; and if she ***is*** a door, we will enclose her ***with*** a board of cedar. **10** I ***am*** a wall, and my breasts ***are*** like the towers; then I was in his eyes like one who finds peace. **11** A vineyard belonged to Solomon (Shelomo) at Baal-hamon; he gave the vineyard to the keepers; each man would bring for its fruit a thousand ***pieces of*** silver. **12** My vineyard, which ***is*** mine, ***is*** before me. The thousand ***is*** for you, Solomon, and two hundred for those who keep its fruit. **13** You who dwell in the gardens, companions are listening for your voice; make me hear ***it.*** **14** Flee, my beloved, and be for yourself like a gazelle or a fawn of the stags on the mountains of spices.

8:6 Rom 12:20; John 21:19; Isa 49:16
8:7 Rom 8:36; Rom 8:39; Rom 12:20
8:8 Ps 2:8; 1 Pet 2:12; Ezek 16:46,55,56,61
8:9 Song 2:9; Rev 21:12-19; Isa 58:12
8:10 Ezek 16:7; Song 4:5; Song 7:3,4,7,8
8:11 Matt 21:42; Matt 21:43; Eccl 2:4
8:12 Song 1:6; Prov 4:23; Acts 20:28
8:13 Song 1:7; Song 2:13; Song 4:16
8:14 Song 2:17; Rev 22:17,20; Luke 19:12

8:6 *Set me like the seal on your heart, like the seal on your arm* The high point of the Song. A seal was a stone or ring carved with a person's mark, worn over the heart or on the hand (Gen 38:18). It was precious, personal and never given away. On his heart she is always in his love, and on his arm always in his strength. It pictures the lifelong, exclusive covenant of marriage. God says, "I have engraved you on My palms" (Isa 49:16), and believers are sealed with the Holy Spirit (Eph 1:13).
8:6 *for love is strong like death, jealousy is hard like Sheol* Death is the one power no one can resist, and Sheol never gives back what it takes. True love takes hold and will not let go. Jealousy here is not sinful envy but a burning zeal to guard what is rightly yours. God Himself is "a jealous God" (Exod 34:14), and Paul was jealous for the church with the jealousy of God (2 Cor 11:2). True love is fierce in its faithfulness.
8:6 *a flame of the LORD* The only time the LORD's name appears in the Song. The Hebrew word for flame ends with Yah, the short form of God's name. Some take it as a mighty flame, the greatest of flames, but the SLB follows "a flame of the LORD." Either way, true love is a fire God Himself kindled. When we honor it, we honor Him. When we cheapen it, we despise His gift.
8:7 *Many waters are not able to quench the love* Floods of trouble, hardship, sickness, distance and pain cannot drown real love (Ps 69:1). That is why couples promise to love in sickness and in health until death parts them. Christ's love is stronger than death. The floods of judgment rolled over Him at the cross and His love did not go out, and nothing can separate us from it (Rom 8:38-39).
8:7 *If a man would give all the wealth of his house for the love, they would utterly despise him* Love cannot be bought. Solomon, the richest of men, knew his gold could not buy what the bride gave him freely. God's love in Christ cannot be bought either. It is a gift we receive by grace through faith (Eph 2:8).
8:8 *We have a little sister, and she has no breasts* These seem to be her brothers (1:6), remembering when she was a little girl. They had a duty to protect her until the day she was promised in marriage.
8:9 *If she is a wall, we will build on her a battlement of silver* If she proved firm and pure, like a wall, they would honor her with silver. If she was like a door open to anyone, they would board her up with cedar. Either way they would guard her purity. Parents, brothers, grandparents and churches all have a part in helping young people grow up pure.
8:10 *I am a wall* She kept herself pure and came to her husband with nothing to hide. The Hebrew for peace is shalom, which sounds like Solomon and Shulammite. She found shalom with Solomon. Purity before marriage led to peace in marriage. Those who failed can still find peace, for Christ forgives, but the choice to wait is never wasted.
8:12 *My vineyard, which is mine, is before me* In 1:6 she had not kept her own vineyard. Now she has. Her vineyard is herself. She is not one of Solomon's possessions rented out for profit. You may have your thousand pieces of silver, she says, but my vineyard I give you myself, freely, out of love, and that is worth more than silver (8:7).
8:14 *Flee, my beloved, and be for yourself like a gazelle* The last words of the Song. She calls him to come quickly. The mountains of separation (2:17) are now mountains of spices. The book ends with love still alive and eager. The Bible ends the same way, with the bride saying, "Come," and the church answering, "Yes, come, Lord Jesus!" (Rev 22:17, 20). Until He comes for us, we wait, watch and love Him.

ISAIAH

Introduction

Title

The book is named for its writer, Isaiah. His name means the LORD is salvation, and that one phrase sums up the whole book. Isaiah is the first of the Major Prophets, called major because of their length, not because they matter more than the others. It has 66 chapters and 1,292 verses, and the New Testament quotes Isaiah more than any other prophet.

Author and Date

The book names its writer: Isaiah the son of Amoz (1:1). He was a prophet in Jerusalem, married to a woman he calls the prophetess (8:3), and the father of at least two sons whose names were messages from God, Shear-jashub, a remnant will return (7:3), and Maher-shalal-hash-baz (8:1-3). Some scholars teach that chapters 40-66, or parts of them, were written by later, unnamed writers during or after the exile. I take the book's own claim at face value, and the New Testament does too. John quotes 53:1 and 6:10 side by side and says, "Isaiah said these things when he saw His glory" (John 12:41). Jesus read from the second half at Nazareth from the scroll of Isaiah (Luke 4:16-21).

Isaiah received his visions in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah (1:1). His call came in the year King Uzziah died (6:1), about 739 B.C. He lived through the fall of the northern kingdom in 722 B.C. and Sennacherib's invasion in 701 B.C., and he records Sennacherib's death (37:38), which took place about 681 B.C. So his ministry ran from about 739 to 681 B.C., roughly sixty years, and the book was written in Jerusalem during those years.

Background and Setting

Assyria was the superpower of Isaiah's day, and its armies were feared for their cruelty. Judah was a small kingdom caught between Assyria to the north and Egypt to the south, and its kings kept trying to save themselves by deals with one side or the other. Ahaz turned to Assyria when Israel and Aram attacked him (2 Kgs 16:5-9). Assyria took Damascus about 732 B.C. and Samaria in 722 B.C. In 701 B.C. Sennacherib took Judah's fortified cities and surrounded Jerusalem, and the angel of the LORD struck down his army in one night (37:36). Isaiah's message never changed: trust the LORD, not horses, chariots or treaties (31:1).

Isaiah also looked far ahead. He warned that Babylon, then a minor rebel, would carry away the king's treasures and sons (39:6-7), which happened when Jerusalem fell in 586 B.C. He named Cyrus, the Persian king who would let the Jews go home, about 150 years before he did it (44:28-45:1). Cyrus took Babylon in 539 B.C., and the first exiles returned in 538 B.C. Beyond that, Isaiah saw the Messiah's first coming, His suffering in our place, and His return to reign.

The book has two great parts. Chapters 1-39 are heavy with sin and judgment. Chapters 40-66 open with "Comfort, comfort My people" (40:1) and close with the new heavens and new earth (65:17; 66:22). In 1947 a complete scroll of Isaiah was found among the Dead Sea Scrolls near Qumran. It was copied more than a hundred years before Jesus was born, and apart from small spelling differences it reads remarkably close to the Hebrew text our Bibles were translated from. God has kept His Word.

Themes

The holiness of God. Isaiah saw the Lord high and lifted up and heard the seraphim cry, "Holy, holy, holy" (6:3). His favorite title for God is the Holy One of Israel, used about twenty-five times.

Sin and judgment. God put His people on trial (1:2-31). Empty religion, pride, injustice and idols bring judgment, first through Assyria and Babylon, and finally in the Day of the LORD, when God steps into history to judge the world.

Trust in the LORD alone. Again and again Judah leaned on Egypt or Assyria. Isaiah called them to wait for the LORD, who gives power to the faint (40:29-31) and keeps in peace the one who trusts Him (26:3).

The remnant. God always keeps a faithful few. Isaiah's son was named for it (7:3; 10:20-22).

God alone knows the future. Idols cannot tell what is coming. The LORD is "declaring the end from the beginning" (46:10), and He proved it by naming Cyrus and Babylon ahead of time.

The coming King and the Servant. A Child is born who is Mighty God (9:6), a Branch from Jesse rules in righteousness (11:1-5), and the Servant of the LORD suffers for the sins of His people and is exalted (52:13-53:12).

Salvation for Israel and the nations. God has not cast off Israel. A Redeemer will come to Zion (59:20), and Israel will be restored in the kingdom. The Servant is also a light to the nations (49:6), and the call goes out, "Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth" (45:22).

The kingdom and the new creation. Isaiah describes a time when Christ reigns from Jerusalem, nations stop making war, and the animal world is at peace (2:2-4; 11:6-9; 65:18-25), and beyond it the new heavens and new earth (65:17; 66:22).

Christ in Isaiah

Isaiah shows us Jesus more fully than any other Old Testament prophet. He is the virgin's son called Immanuel, God with us (7:14; Matt 1:22-23). He is the great light in Galilee (9:1-2; Matt 4:12-16) and the Child born and Son given who is "Mighty God" and reigns on David's throne forever (9:6-7; Luke 1:31-33). He is the shoot from the stump of Jesse with the Spirit resting on Him (11:1-2, 10; Rom 15:12), the One whose way the voice in the wilderness prepared (40:3; Matt 3:1-3), and the gentle Servant who won't break a crushed reed (42:1-4; Matt 12:15-21).

The fourth Servant Song (52:13-53:12) reads as if it were written at the foot of the cross, though it was written about seven hundred years earlier. "He was pierced for our transgressions" (53:5). He was silent like a lamb before its shearers, buried with a rich man, numbered with the transgressors, and then He sees offspring and prolongs His days, the resurrection foretold (53:7-12; Acts 8:32-35; Luke 22:37).

At Nazareth Jesus read 61:1-2 and said, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled" (Luke 4:21). He stopped in the middle of a sentence, before the day of vengeance. Some of Isaiah's prophe-

cies were fulfilled at His first coming, and some wait for His second, when He returns as the warrior from Edom (63:1-6), the Redeemer comes to Zion (59:20; Rom 11:26), and He reigns as King.

Hard Passages

One book or several writers (chapters 40-66). The notes take the book's own claim and the New Testament's witness that Isaiah wrote it all (John 12:38-41), and they mention the other view.

The virgin (7:14). The Hebrew almah is a young woman of marriageable age, never clearly used of a married woman, and the Greek translators before Jesus chose the word for virgin. The sign was given to the house of David and fulfilled in Jesus (Matt 1:22-23). Teachers disagree whether there was also a child in Ahaz's day.

The fallen star (14:12-15). The first meaning is the king of Babylon. Behind him, as with the king of Tyre (Ezek 28), many see Satan, whose pride the king copied.

Children in judgment (13:16). The verse describes the horror of war without approving it. I believe little children who die are safe with God (2 Sam 12:23).

Calamity from God (45:7). The word means disaster, not moral evil. God rules over hard days as well as good, but He is never the author of sin (Jas 1:13).

The LORD pleased to crush Him (53:10). God did not delight in His Son's pain. He delighted in the plan that would save sinners (Acts 2:23).

Sacrifices in the kingdom (56:7; 60:7). Christ's one sacrifice took away sin for good (Heb 10:12-14). Teachers differ on offerings in the Millennium, and the notes hold the memorial view loosely.

Death in the new creation (65:17-25). Verse 17 points to the eternal new heavens and new earth, but verse 20 still has death, so the notes read 65:18-25 as the Millennium, its first stage.

The undying worm (66:24). Jesus used these words for hell (Mark 9:48). Isaiah offers mercy chapter after chapter and does not pretend there is no cost to refusing it.

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ISAIAH

ISAIAH 1

The Great Case Against Judah

1 The vision of Isaiah (Yeshayahu) the son of Amoz (Amots), which he saw concerning Judah (Yehuda) and Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) in the days of Uzziah (Uziyahu), Jotham (Yotam), Ahaz (Achaz), ***and*** Hezekiah (Chizqiyahu), the kings of Judah. **2** Hear, heavens, and give ear, earth, for the LORD has spoken: "Sons I have reared and brought up, and they have transgressed against Me. **3** An ox knows its owner, and a donkey the feeding trough of its master; Israel (Yisra'el) does not know; My people does not understand." **4** Woe, sinning nation, a people heavy with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, sons who act corruptly! They have forsaken the LORD; they have spurned the Holy One of Israel; they have become estranged backward. **5** Why will you be struck again? You will add revolt. The whole head ***is*** sick, and the whole heart ***is*** faint. **6** From the sole of the foot and to the head there is no soundness in it: bruise and welt and fresh wound; they have not been pressed out, and they have not been bound up, and it has not been softened with the oil. **7** Your land ***is*** a desolation; your cities ***are*** burned ***with*** fire; your ground, in front of you strangers ***are*** devouring it, and ***it is*** a desolation like the overthrow of strangers. **8** And the daughter of Zion (Tsiyon) has been left like a shelter in a vineyard, like a lodging hut in a cucumber field, like a besieged city. **9** Unless the LORD of armies had left us a survivor, a few, we would have been like Sodom (Sedom); we would have resembled Gomorrah (Amora). **10** Hear the word of the LORD, rulers of Sodom; give ear to the law of our God, people of Gomorrah. **11** "Why ***is*** the multitude of your sacrifices to Me?" says the LORD. "I am sated ***with*** burnt offerings of rams and the fat of fatlings, and in the blood of bulls and lambs and male goats I do not delight. **12** When you come to appear ***before*** My face, who has required this from your hand, to trample My courts? **13** Do not continue to bring a grain offering of worthlessness; incense, it ***is*** an abomination to Me. New moon and Sabbath, the calling of a convocation: I am not able ***to endure*** wickedness and solemn assembly. **14** Your new moons and your appointed feasts My soul hates; they have become a burden on Me; I am weary of bearing ***them***. **15** And when you spread out your hands, I will hide My eyes from you; also when you multiply prayer, I will not be hearing; your hands are full ***of*** blood. **16** Wash; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your deeds from before My eyes; cease to do evil; **17** learn to do good; seek justice; set right the oppressor; vindicate the fatherless; plead ***for*** the widow."

1:1 Acts 8:28; Rom 9:27; Isa 2:1
1:2 Mic 1:2; Deut 32:1; Deut 4:26
1:3 Matt 13:19; 2 Pet 3:5; Matt 13:14
1:4 Acts 7:51; Acts 7:52; Jer 2:13,17,19
1:5 Isa 9:13,21; Jer 5:3; Jer 2:30
1:6 Jer 6:14; Matt 9:12; Luke 10:34
1:7 Isa 6:11; Lev 26:34; Isa 5:5,6,9
1:8 John 12:15; Zech 9:9; Zech 2:10
1:9 Rom 9:29; Luke 17:29; 2 Pet 2:6
1:10 Rev 11:8; Rom 9:29; Matt 21:33
1:11 Mark 12:33; Heb 10:4; Heb 10:5
1:12 Mark 12:33; Exod 23:17; Isa 58:1,2
1:13 Matt 15:9; Isa 66:3; Luke 11:42
1:14 Matt 15:9; Amos 5:21; Isa 43:24
1:15 Luke 13:28; Isa 59:2; Mic 3:4
1:16 James 1:27; Ps 26:6; 2 Cor 7:1
1:17 Acts 3:19; James 1:27; Jer 22:3,15,16

1:1 *The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz* The title for the whole book. Isaiah's name means the LORD is salvation, the heart of all he wrote. He served under four kings of Judah, from about 740 B.C. into the early 600s B.C. Some scholars split the book among two or three later writers. The New Testament credits both halves to Isaiah (John 12:38-41), and I believe one prophet wrote all sixty-six chapters.
1:2 *Hear, heavens, and give ear, earth* God calls creation as witnesses, as Moses did (Deut 32:1). The picture is a courtroom, and God brings a lawsuit against His people. His complaint is personal. They are "sons" He raised, and they turned their backs on their Father. Sin is first of all a broken relationship.
1:3 *An ox knows its owner* Even dull farm animals know who feeds them. God's people have forgotten who gave them everything. It is easy to enjoy God's blessings every day and never stop to think where they came from.
1:4 *they have spurned the Holy One of Israel* One of Isaiah's favorite titles, used about twenty-five times and rare elsewhere. It comes from what he saw in chapter 6. God is holy, set apart from all sin, and yet He has bound Himself to Israel.
1:5 *Why will you be struck again* Judah has been disciplined again and again, and still they rebel. Discipline is meant to turn us back to God. When it only makes us harder, the problem is in the heart.
1:6 *they have not been pressed out, and they have not been bound up* No healthy spot is left, and no one has cleaned or bandaged the wounds. Only God can heal wounds like these, and He is the One they have walked away from.
1:7 *your cities are burned with fire* Real invasions, the worst in 701 B.C., when the Assyrian king Sennacherib seized the fortified cities of Judah (2 Kgs 18:13). Assyria, based in what is now northern Iraq, was the great empire of that day.
1:8 *the daughter of Zion has been left like a shelter in a vineyard* A tender name for Jerusalem. Zion was the hill of the city and temple. Jerusalem stands alone like a flimsy watchman's hut after harvest, as it did in 701 B.C., surrounded while the rest of Judah lay in ruins.
1:9 *Unless the LORD of armies had left us a survivor, a few* The first mention of the remnant, a small group God keeps for Himself when judgment falls on the rest. Without it Judah would have been wiped out like Sodom (Gen 19). Paul quotes this verse to show God has always kept a faithful remnant in Israel (Rom 9:29).
1:10 *rulers of Sodom* That must have shocked his listeners. In their behavior God's people looked like the most wicked cities in their history.
1:11 *Why is the multitude of your sacrifices to Me* God commanded these sacrifices, but they had become a show. The people went through the motions while living as they pleased. God never wanted animal blood by itself. He wanted their hearts (1 Sam 15:22).
1:13 *I am not able to endure wickedness and solemn assembly* God cannot stand iniquity and worship side by side. When we come to church on Sunday and live in open sin the rest of the week, we do what Judah did. Notice that He calls them "your" feasts (v. 14), not His. They had made His gifts their own religious routine.
1:15 *your hands are full of blood* People prayed with hands spread toward heaven. God closes His eyes to hands stained with violence and injustice. He does not refuse a repentant sinner, but He will not be bribed by long prayers while we hold on to sin (Ps 66:18).
1:17 *learn to do good; seek justice* Good here is not more sacrifices but justice for the weak. Orphans and widows had no one to stand up for them and were easy to cheat. God expects His people to defend them (Jas 1:27).

Come Now, and Let Us Argue

18 "Come now, and let us argue ***the case*** together," says the LORD. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they will become white like snow; though they are red like crimson, they will be like wool. **19** If you are willing and you obey, you will eat the good of the land. **20** And if you refuse and you rebel, you will be eaten ***by the*** sword." For the mouth of the LORD has spoken. **21** How the faithful town has become a prostitute! ***She was*** full of justice; righteousness would lodge in her, and now murderers. **22** Your silver has become dross; your drink ***is*** diluted with the water. **23** Your princes ***are*** rebellious and companions of thieves; every one of them loves a bribe and pursues rewards. They do not vindicate the fatherless, and the case of the widow does not come to them. **24** Therefore declares the Lord, the LORD of armies, the Mighty One of Israel: "Woe! I will get relief from My adversaries, and I will avenge Myself on My enemies. **25** And I will turn My hand against you, and I will refine your dross as ***with*** lye, and I will remove all your tin. **26** And I will restore your judges as at the first, and your counselors as at the beginning. After this you will be called the city of righteousness, a faithful town." **27** Zion will be ransomed with justice, and her returning ones with righteousness. **28** And the crushing of transgressors and sinners ***will be*** together, and those who forsake the LORD will come to an end. **29** For they will be ashamed of the terebinths which you desired, and you will be abashed because of the gardens which you have chosen. **30** For you will be like an oak whose leaf is withering, and like a garden which has no water. **31** And the strong ***one*** will become tinder, and his work a spark, and both of them will burn together, and there is none who quenches.

ISAIAH 2

The Mountain of the LORD

1 The word which Isaiah (Yeshayahu) the son of Amoz (Amots) saw concerning Judah (Yehuda) and Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). **2** And it will be at the end of the days ***that*** the mountain of the house of the LORD will be established at the top of the mountains, and it will be lifted up above the hills, and all the nations will stream to it. **3** And many peoples will come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob (Ya'aqov), that He may teach us from His ways, and that we may walk in His paths." For from Zion (Tsiyon) ***the*** law will go forth, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. **4** And He will judge between the nations and will decide for many peoples, and they will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears

1:18 Rev 7:14; Ps 51:7; Acts 3:19
1:19 Acts 3:19; Isa 3:10; Isa 55:1-3,6,7
1:20 Acts 3:19; Heb 2:2; Heb 2:3
1:21 Luke 13:34; Acts 7:52; Isa 48:2
1:22 Jer 6:28-30; Lam 4:1,2; Ezek 22:18-22
1:23 Exod 23:8; Mic 7:3; Zech 7:10
1:24 Rev 18:8; Luke 1:49; Isa 49:26
1:25 Mal 3:3; Zech 13:7-9; Rev 3:19
1:26 Jer 33:7,15-17; Isa 32:1,2; Isa 60:17,18
1:27 Rom 11:26; Isa 5:16; Isa 45:21-25
1:28 Job 31:3; Ps 1:6; 2 Thess 1:8,9
1:29 Isa 57:5; Isa 65:3; Isa 66:17
1:30 Isa 5:6; Jer 17:5,6; Ezek 17:9,10,24
1:31 Isa 66:24; Ezek 32:21; Isa 27:4
2:1 Luke 24:47; Isa 1:1; Isa 13:1
2:2 Heb 1:2; Acts 2:17; 2 Pet 3:3
2:3 Luke 24:47; Acts 13:46; Matt 8:11
2:4 Hos 2:18; Joel 3:10; Zech 9:10

1:18 *Come now, and let us argue the case together* One of the most beautiful invitations in the Bible. After all the charges God opens the door. Scarlet and crimson were dyes that could not be washed out, a picture of sin we cannot scrub out ourselves. God can make it white because Jesus would pay for it with His blood (Rev 7:14; Ps 51:7). I believe this is still God's offer to every person (1 John 1:7).
1:19 *If you are willing and you obey, you will eat the good of the land* The invitation comes with a choice, an echo of the blessings and curses of Deuteronomy 28. "The mouth of the LORD has spoken" (v. 20) seals it. His word will stand either way.
1:21 *How the faithful town has become a prostitute* A funeral song over Jerusalem. God's covenant, His binding commitment to His people, was like a marriage, so unfaithfulness is pictured as adultery. The city known for justice in David's day now holds murderers.
1:22 *Your silver has become dross* Dross is the worthless scum left when metal is melted. Things look the same outside, but the value is gone, as with a people who keep the form of religion and lose its heart.
1:23 *every one of them loves a bribe* The rulers who should protect the people are friends of thieves. The orphan and widow cannot even get a hearing. When leaders sell justice, the weakest pay the price.
1:24 *I will avenge Myself on My enemies* "LORD of armies" means the commander of heaven's armies. Shockingly, God calls His own people His adversaries. Their sin has put them on the wrong side of Him.
1:25 *I will refine your dross as with lye* God is a refiner. Heat brings the dross to the top so it can be removed, leaving pure silver (Mal 3:2-3). His judgment is meant to purify Jerusalem, not destroy her.
1:26 *you will be called the city of righteousness, a faithful town* I believe this will be kept for Jerusalem just as it reads. It was partly seen after the exile, but its full fulfillment comes when Jesus returns and reigns from Jerusalem in the Millennium, His thousand-year reign on earth (Zech 8:3).
1:27 *Zion will be ransomed with justice, and her returning ones with righteousness* Not everyone in Jerusalem will be saved, but those who turn back to God will be. I believe this looks ahead to the day when all Israel will be saved (Rom 11:26).
1:28 *those who forsake the LORD will come to an end* The same fire that purifies the repentant destroys the rebel. We choose our side by how we respond to Him.
1:29 *they will be ashamed of the terebinths which you desired* Pagan worship was often held under sacred trees and in groves. Idols promise life and end in shame. They loved the oaks and gardens, so they will become like a dying oak and a garden without water (v. 30). We become like what we worship.
1:31 *the strong one will become tinder, and his work a spark* The man who thinks he does not need God becomes the tinder, and his own works light the fire. Sin destroys the one who commits it. But God's offer in verse 18 means the fire does not have to be our story.
2:1 *The word which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw* A new section that runs through chapter 4. Isaiah "saw" the word. God's message came to him as a vision, not his own idea (2 Pet 1:21).
2:2 *at the end of the days* The end of history, when God finishes His plan. The last days began with Jesus' first coming (Heb 1:2), but this looks to their final stage, after He returns. The temple mountain stands above every other religion and power, and may be raised physically (Zech 14:10). Water flows down a mountain, but the nations "stream" up to it, drawn and not forced. This has never happened yet. I believe it describes the Millennium, Christ's thousand-year reign on earth (Rev 20:4-6; Zech 14:16).
2:3 *For from Zion the law will go forth* Today the nations ignore God's word. In the kingdom they will seek it out. "Law" means instruction, God's teaching for how to live, and Jerusalem will be the world's capital. Micah, Isaiah's fellow prophet, gives almost the same words (Mic 4:1-3).
2:4 *they will beat their swords into plowshares* I believe "He" is Jesus Christ reigning as King. Nations go to war because no one is strong and fair enough to settle their disputes, and He will be that Judge (Rev 19:15). Tools of death become tools for growing food. Before the final battle the world arms itself one last time (Joel 3:10). Treaties and world governments will never bring lasting peace. That comes only when the Prince of Peace reigns (9:6-7).

into pruning knives; nation will not lift up sword against nation, and they will not learn war again. **5** House of Jacob, come, and let us walk in the light of the LORD.

The Day of the LORD Against Pride

6 For You have abandoned Your people, the house of Jacob, for they are full from the east, and ***they are*** soothsayers like the Philistines, and with the children of foreigners they clap ***hands***. **7** And its land has been filled ***with*** silver and gold, and there is no end to its treasures; and its land has been filled ***with*** horses, and there is no end to its chariots. **8** And its land has been filled ***with*** idols; to the work of its hands they bow down, to what its fingers have made. **9** And mankind has been humbled, and man has been brought low; and do not forgive them. **10** Go into the rock, and hide yourself in the dust from before the dread of the LORD and from the splendor of His majesty. **11** The haughty eyes of mankind will be brought low, and the pride of men will be humbled, and the LORD alone will be exalted in that day. **12** For the LORD of armies has a day against everything proud and lofty, and against everything lifted up, and it will be brought low, **13** and against all the cedars of Lebanon (Levanon), the lofty and the lifted up, and against all the oaks of Bashan, **14** and against all the lofty mountains, and against all the hills that are lifted up, **15** and against every high tower, and against every fortified wall, **16** and against all the ships of Tarshish, and against all the vessels of delight. **17** And the haughtiness of mankind will be humbled, and the pride of men will be brought low, and the LORD alone will be exalted in that day. **18** And the idols will completely pass away. **19** And they will go into the caves of the rocks and into the holes of the dust from before the dread of the LORD and from the splendor of His majesty, when He arises to terrify the earth. **20** In that day mankind will throw away his idols of silver and his idols of gold, which they made for him to bow down ***to***, to the moles and to the bats, **21** to go into the crevices of the rocks and into the clefts of the cliffs from before the dread of the LORD and from the splendor of His majesty, when He arises to terrify the earth. **22** Cease for yourselves from man, whose breath ***is*** in his nostrils; for at what is he to be accounted?

ISAIAH 3

A Nation Without Leaders

1 For look, the Lord, the LORD of armies, is about to remove from Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) and from Judah (Yehuda) support and prop, every support of food and every support of water; **2** warrior and man of war, judge and prophet, and diviner and elder; **3** commander of fifty and ***one*** lifted up of face, and counselor and skilled ***one*** of magic arts, and discerning ***one*** of charm. **4** And I will make youths their leaders,

2:5 1 John 1:7; Rom 13:12; Rom 13:13
2:6 Deut 31:16,17; 2 Chr 15:2; 2 Chr 24:20
2:7 Isa 30:16; Isa 31:1; Deut 17:16,17
2:8 Rev 9:20; Jer 2:28; Isa 37:19
2:9 Isa 5:15; Ps 49:2; Jer 5:4,5
2:10 2 Thess 1:9; Rev 6:15,16; Isa 2:19-21
2:11 Luke 3:5; Luke 14:11; Isa 5:15,16
2:12 James 4:6; 2 Pet 3:10; Isa 13:6,9
2:13 Luke 3:5; Isa 14:8; Isa 10:33,34
2:14 Luke 3:5; Isa 30:25; Isa 40:4
2:15 Luke 3:5
2:16 Luke 3:5; 1 Kgs 10:22; Isa 23:1
2:17 Luke 3:5; Luke 14:11; Isa 2:11
2:18 Isa 27:9; Ezek 36:25; Ezek 37:23
2:19 2 Thess 1:9; Rev 6:15; Isa 2:10,21
2:20 Isa 30:22; Isa 31:7; Isa 46:1
2:21 2 Thess 1:9; Isa 2:10,19; Exod 33:22
2:22 Ps 146:3; Jer 17:5; Ps 144:3,4
3:1 Lev 26:26; Isa 1:24; Isa 2:22
3:2 Isa 2:13-15; 2 Kgs 24:14-16; Ps 74:9
3:3 Exod 18:21; Deut 1:15; 1 Sam 8:12
3:4 Eccl 10:16; 1 Kgs 3:7-9; 2 Chr 33:1

2:5 *House of Jacob, come, and let us walk in the light of the LORD* If the nations will one day walk in God's light, how much more should Israel now? The future hope is meant to change how we live today (1 John 3:3).
2:6 *they are soothsayers like the Philistines* "Full from the east" probably means fortune-telling and magic from Aram and Mesopotamia. Soothsayers claimed to tell the future. The Law strictly forbids all of this (Deut 18:10-12).
2:7 *its land has been filled with silver and gold* Judah grew rich and strong under Uzziah (2 Chr 26:8-15), but the kings were warned not to multiply horses or gold (Deut 17:16-17). Prosperity is not wrong, but it can quietly take God's place in our hearts.
2:8 *to the work of its hands they bow down* The third "filled": money, then military power, then idols. The three go together. Every idol in every age is something we made and then started to serve.
2:9 *and do not forgive them* Isaiah agrees with God's judgment on those who refuse to repent. Forgiveness is always open to those who turn back (1:18), but those who hold on to their idols will face what they have chosen.
2:10 *Go into the rock, and hide yourself in the dust* Not from an enemy army but from the terror of the LORD. When God shows His majesty, sinful people cannot stand before Him. The line returns in verses 19 and 21.
2:11 *the LORD alone will be exalted in that day* "In that day" usually points to the Day of the LORD, when God steps into history to judge sin and set things right. In Isaiah it can mean a near judgment, like the Assyrian invasion, and also the final judgment of this age. I believe both are in view here, reaching full meaning at Christ's return.
2:12 *the LORD of armies has a day against everything proud and lofty* The Day of the LORD is aimed above all at pride, the first sin and the root of every other (Jas 4:6).
2:16 *against all the ships of Tarshish* Cedars of Lebanon, oaks of Bashan, mountains, towers, walls and the great trading ships of distant Tarshish: nature's grandeur, military defense and commercial wealth. Nothing man builds or admires can stand when God arises.
2:18 *And the idols will completely pass away* A verse of only a few words. The idols are not defeated in battle. They are simply gone, because they were never anything to begin with.
2:19 *when He arises to terrify the earth* I believe Revelation 6:15-17 describes the fulfillment, when at the sixth seal the great men hide in caves from the wrath of the Lamb. Isaiah saw the scene some eight hundred years before John did.
2:20 *to the moles and to the bats* Animals of dark holes and ruins. The idols people spent fortunes on are tossed aside like trash, extra weight as they run for the caves. When God arises, there is nowhere to hide except in Him.
2:22 *Cease for yourselves from man, whose breath is in his nostrils* Stop trusting in people. Man's life is only a breath and can be gone in a moment (Ps 146:3-4). We are tempted to hope in leaders, experts or ourselves. Put your hope in the LORD, who alone will be exalted.
3:1 *every support of food and every support of water* God will remove everything Judah leaned on, beginning with bread and water, the first things to run out in a siege. It happened when Babylon surrounded Jerusalem more than a century later (2 Kgs 25:3).
3:2 *judge and prophet, and diviner and elder* Judah trusted fortune-tellers alongside true leaders. God will sweep away the good and the false together.
3:3 *commander of fifty and one lifted up of face* Every kind of person a healthy nation needs will be gone, as when Babylon carried off Jerusalem's leaders and craftsmen (2 Kgs 24:14).
3:4 *caprices will rule over them* Rulers who act on whim, without wisdom or self-control. When God gives a people foolish leaders, it is often because they rejected wisdom first.

and caprices will rule over them. **5** And the people will be oppressed, man by man and man by his neighbor; they will act insolently, the youth against the elder, and the lightly esteemed against the honored. **6** For a man will seize his brother ***in*** the house of his father: "You have a cloak; you shall be a ruler for us, and this heap of ruins ***shall be*** under your hand." **7** He will lift up ***his voice*** in that day, saying, "I will not be one who binds ***wounds***, and in my house ***there is*** no food and no cloak; you shall not make me a ruler of ***the*** people." **8** For Jerusalem has stumbled and Judah has fallen, for their tongue and their deeds ***are*** against the LORD, to rebel against the eyes of His glory. **9** The expression of their faces has testified against them, and they have declared their sin like Sodom (Sedom); they have not hidden ***it***. Woe to their soul! For they have dealt evil to themselves. **10** Say ***of the*** righteous that it is good, for they will eat the fruit of their deeds. **11** Woe to ***the*** wicked! It is evil, for the recompense of his hands will be done to him. **12** My people, its oppressors ***are*** acting like children, and women have ruled over it. My people, those who guide you are leading ***you*** astray, and they have swallowed up the way of your paths. **13** The LORD is taking His stand to contend, and is standing to judge peoples. **14** The LORD will come in judgment with the elders of His people and its leaders: "And you, you have consumed the vineyard; the plunder of the afflicted ***is*** in your houses. **15** What ***is it*** to you ***that*** you crush My people and grind the faces of ***the*** afflicted?" declares the Lord GOD of armies.

The Daughters of Zion

16 And the LORD said: Because the daughters of Zion (Tsiyon) are haughty, and they walk ***with*** neck stretched out and ogling ***with*** eyes, walking and mincing they go, and with their feet they tinkle ***their anklets***, **17** the Lord will make scabby the scalp of the daughters of Zion, and the LORD will lay bare their forehead. **18** In that day the Lord will remove the splendor of the anklets and the headbands and the crescent ornaments, **19** the pendants and the bracelets and the veils, **20** the headdresses and the ankle chains and the sashes and the perfume boxes and the charms, **21** the signet rings and the rings of the nose, **22** the festal robes and the overtunics and the cloaks and the purses, **23** and the mirrors and the linen garments and the turbans and the shawls. **24** And it will be ***that*** instead of perfume ***there*** will be rottenness, and instead of a belt, a rope, and instead of a work of well-set hair, baldness, and instead of a robe, a girding of sackcloth; branding instead of beauty. **25** Your men will fall by the sword, and your might in the battle. **26** And her gates will lament and mourn, and she will be emptied; she will sit on the ground.

ISAIAH 4

The Branch of the LORD

1 And seven women will take hold of one man in that day, saying, "We will eat our food and we will wear our clothing; only let your name be called over us; take away our

3:5 Jer 9:3-8; Isa 9:19-21; Isa 11:13
3:6 John 6:15; Isa 4:1; Judg 11:6-8
3:7 Hos 5:13; Gen 14:22; Deut 32:40
3:8 2 Chr 28:5-7,18; 2 Chr 33:11; 2 Chr 36:17-19
3:9 Jude 1:11; Gen 13:13; Isa 3:16
3:10 Eccl 8:12; Ezek 9:4; Ezek 18:9-19
3:11 Jude 1:11; Isa 48:22; Isa 65:13-15,20
3:12 Isa 3:4; 2 Kgs 11:1; Nah 3:13
3:13 Mic 6:2; Ps 12:5; Prov 22:22,23
3:14 Job 22:4; Ps 143:2; Job 34:23
3:15 Ezek 18:2; Jonah 1:6; Isa 58:4
3:16 Matt 21:5; Isa 4:4; Isa 32:9-11
3:17 Jer 13:22; Lev 13:29,30,43,44; Deut 28:27
3:18 Judg 8:21
3:19 Gen 24:22,30,53; Gen 38:18,25; Exod 35:22
3:20 Gen 35:4; Exod 32:2; Ezek 16:12
3:21 1 Pet 3:3; 1 Pet 3:4; Gen 24:47
3:22 1 Pet 3:3
3:23 1 Pet 3:3; Exod 38:8; Gen 41:42
3:24 Isa 22:12; Lam 2:10; Ezek 27:31
3:25 2 Chr 29:9; Jer 11:22; Jer 14:18
3:26 Jer 14:2; Lam 2:10; Lam 1:4
4:1 Luke 1:25; Isa 13:12; Gen 30:23

3:5 *the youth against the elder* Without real authority people turn on each other, and everyone does what is right in his own eyes (Judg 21:25).
3:6 *You have a cloak; you shall be a ruler for us* Owning a cloak is enough to make a man a leader, and still he refuses (v. 7). No one can bind up a nation that rejects God.
3:8 *to rebel against the eyes of His glory* God's glory lived in the temple in their own city, and they sinned against Him anyway, in word and deed.
3:9 *they have declared their sin like Sodom; they have not hidden it* Worse than sinning in secret is sinning openly without shame. They do not know how to blush (Jer 6:15). When a culture is proud of its sin, judgment is near.
3:12 *those who guide you are leading you astray* "My people!" You can hear God's sorrow. Childish oppressors and women ruling pictured weak and unfit leadership in that culture. Some think the king's mother and wives held real power, as in some reigns. When leaders confuse the paths, those who follow get lost too.
3:13 *The LORD is taking His stand to contend* A courtroom again. The judge stood to give his verdict. God is not a distant observer of injustice. He rises to deal with it.
3:14 *you have consumed the vineyard* The vineyard is Israel (5:1-7). The leaders were to tend it and ate it up instead. The proof is in their houses, full of what they took from the poor.
3:15 *grind the faces of the afflicted* Like grain between millstones. God calls the poor "My people." Whoever harms the weak deals with God Himself (Prov 14:31).
3:16 *Because the daughters of Zion are haughty* Noses in the air, flirting eyes, dainty steps to jingle their anklets. Everything says, look at me. Beauty and jewelry are not sinful in themselves. The problem was the heart, and luxury gained while the poor were crushed (3:14-15).
3:17 *the Lord will make scabby the scalp of the daughters of Zion* Judgment strikes the very thing they were proud of. God often humbles us at the exact point of our pride.
3:18 *the crescent ornaments* The long list in verses 18-23 makes its own point: so many things it takes a paragraph to name them. Crescent ornaments were moon symbols, and charms were worn for luck or protection. Outward beauty can be carried off by an enemy. The hidden beauty of the heart cannot (1 Pet 3:3-4).
3:24 *branding instead of beauty* A great reversal. Perfume becomes rot, a fine belt becomes a captive's rope, styled hair a shaved head, fine robes sackcloth, and beauty the brand burned onto slaves.
3:25 *Your men will fall by the sword* Husbands, sons and brothers will die. It is judgment on pride, but also a deep tragedy, and God takes no pleasure in it (Ezek 33:11).
3:26 *her gates will lament and mourn* The city is pictured as a widow sitting in the dust, as Lamentations pictures Jerusalem after Babylon destroyed it (Lam 1:1).
4:1 *seven women will take hold of one man in that day* This belongs with the end of chapter 3. So many men have fallen (3:25) that seven women beg for one man's name, so they will not be shamed as unmarried and childless. The pride of the daughters of Zion has come to this.

reproach." **2** In that day the branch of the LORD will be for beauty and for glory, and the fruit of the land for majesty and for splendor for the escaped remnant of Israel (Yisra'el). **3** And it will be ***that*** the one who remains in Zion (Tsiyon) and the one who is left in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) will be called holy, everyone who is written for life in Jerusalem, **4** when the Lord has washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and cleanses the bloodshed of Jerusalem from its midst by a spirit of judgment and by a spirit of burning. **5** And the LORD will create over every site of Mount Zion and over her assemblies a cloud by day, and smoke and the brightness of a flaming fire by night; for over all the glory ***there will be*** a canopy. **6** And a booth will be for a shade by day from the heat, and for a refuge and for a shelter from the storm and from the rain.

ISAIAH 5

The Song of the Vineyard

1 Let me sing, please, for my well-beloved a song of my beloved concerning His vineyard: My well-beloved had a vineyard on a very fertile hill. **2** And He dug it and cleared it of stones, and planted it ***with*** a choice vine, and built a tower in its midst, and also hewed out a wine vat in it; and He waited ***for it*** to produce grapes, and it produced wild grapes. **3** And now, inhabitant of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) and man of Judah (Yehuda), judge, please, between Me and My vineyard. **4** What ***is there*** to do still for My vineyard that I have not done in it? Why, ***when*** I waited ***for it*** to produce grapes, did it produce wild grapes? **5** And now, please, let Me make known to you what I am about to do to My vineyard: I will remove its hedge, and it will be for consuming; I will break down its wall, and it will be for trampling. **6** And I will make it a waste; it will not be pruned and it will not be hoed, and thorn and thornbush will come up; and I will command the clouds not to send rain on it. **7** For the vineyard of the LORD of armies ***is*** the house of Israel (Yisra'el), and the man of Judah ***is*** the plant of His delight; and He waited for justice, and look, bloodshed; for righteousness, and look, an outcry.

Six Woes

8 Woe ***to*** those who make house touch house; field to field they bring near, until ***there is*** no room, and you are made to dwell by yourselves in the midst of the land! **9** In my ears the LORD of armies ***said***, "Surely many houses will become a desolation, great and fine, without inhabitant. **10** For ten acres of vineyard will produce approximately 6 gallons (one bath), and approximately 6 bushels (a homer) of seed will produce approximately 3/5 bushel (an ephah)." **11** Woe ***to*** those who rise early in the morning; strong drink they pursue; who stay

4:2 Rom 11:4; Jer 23:5; Zech 3:8
4:3 Luke 10:20; 1 Pet 2:9; Rev 13:8
4:4 Matt 23:37; Ezek 36:25,29; Mal 3:2,3
4:5 Exod 13:21,22; Num 9:15-22; Isa 33:20
4:6 Isa 25:4; Ps 27:5; Isa 32:2,18,19
5:1 Matt 21:33; Mark 12:1; Luke 20:9
5:2 Luke 13:6; Matt 20:1; Luke 13:7
5:3 Matt 21:33; Mark 12:1; Luke 13:6
5:4 Matt 21:33; Mark 12:1; Luke 13:6
5:5 Matt 21:19; Luke 13:35; Luke 20:9
5:6 Luke 13:35; Luke 20:9; John 15:1
5:7 James 5:4; Matt 21:41; Luke 20:9
5:8 Matt 23:14; Mic 2:2; Jer 22:13-17
5:9 Matt 23:38; Isa 22:14; Amos 3:7
5:10 Lev 27:16; Ezek 45:10,11; Joel 1:17
5:11 Eph 5:18; Isa 5:22; Prov 23:29,30

4:2 *In that day the branch of the LORD will be for beauty and for glory* Some read this as crops growing again. I believe it means more. Later prophets use "the Branch" for the Messiah, the anointed King from David's line (Jer 23:5; Zech 3:8; 6:12; Isa 11:1). "Branch of the LORD" points to His divine origin, "fruit of the land" to His human birth. He is fully God and fully man. The remnant who look on the One they pierced (Zech 12:10) will see Him as their glory.
4:3 *everyone who is written for life in Jerusalem* Being written for life goes back to God's book (Exod 32:32-33), the book of life (Rev 20:15). God knows by name everyone who belongs to Him. These survivors are holy not because they were tougher or luckier, but because God set them apart and cleansed them.
4:4 *by a spirit of judgment and by a spirit of burning* The refining fire of 1:25. I believe this looks ahead to the Tribulation, the coming seven years of trouble at the end of this age, the time of distress for Jacob (Jer 30:7). God will bring a remnant of Israel through the fire and refine them like silver (Zech 13:9).
4:5 *a cloud by day, and smoke and the brightness of a flaming fire by night* The same cloud and fire that led Israel out of Egypt (Exod 13:21-22), the visible sign of God with them. The word for canopy is used for a wedding canopy, God's glory spread over His people. I believe this describes Jerusalem in the Millennium, when Christ reigns there.
4:6 *for a refuge and for a shelter from the storm* People who trusted in walls and horses will find their safety in God. This is a future promise, but it tells us who God is today (Ps 91:1). Whatever storm you are in, He is still a refuge.
5:1 *My well-beloved had a vineyard on a very fertile hill* Isaiah starts like a singer at a harvest festival, and listeners would expect a happy love song. The beloved is God, though Isaiah does not say so yet. He lets the story draw them in first.
5:2 *and it produced wild grapes* The owner did everything a good farmer could: dug, cleared stones, planted the best vines, built a watchtower and cut a wine vat, expecting a harvest. The Hebrew describes small, sour, rotten fruit.
5:3 *judge, please, between Me and My vineyard* Like Nathan's story to David (2 Sam 12:1-7), the listeners are asked to pass judgment before they realize they are on trial.
5:4 *What is there to do still for My vineyard that I have not done in it* The question at the center of the song. God chose Israel, brought them out of Egypt, gave His law and planted them in a good land. The failure was not on His side. We cannot blame God for a lack of fruit either (2 Pet 1:3).
5:5 *I will remove its hedge* Without its hedge and wall the vineyard is eaten and trampled. God would remove His protection and let Assyria and later Babylon overrun the land.
5:6 *I will command the clouds not to send rain on it* No ordinary farmer could say this. Only God controls the rain. With this line Isaiah lets his listeners know who the owner really is.
5:7 *He waited for justice, and look, bloodshed* Now it is plain: God is the owner and Israel the vineyard. The Hebrew plays on words. He looked for mishpat (justice) and found mispach (bloodshed), for tsedaqah (righteousness) and heard tseaqah (a cry). The words sound alike but mean the opposite. Jesus took up this song in His parable of the vineyard, where the tenants kill the owner's son (Matt 21:33-41). He is that Son.
5:8 *Woe to those who make house touch house* The first of six woes, a cry of grief and a warning of judgment together. The land was to stay with each family (Lev 25:23), but the rich pushed the poor off theirs, like Ahab with Naboth (1 Kgs 21).
5:10 *ten acres of vineyard will produce approximately 6 gallons* Ten acres yield one bath of wine, and a homer of seed yields an ephah, a tenth of what was planted (Ezek 45:11). The great houses will stand empty (v. 9), and the land they stole will not even feed them. Greed always wants more and ends with nothing.
5:11 *Woe to those who rise early in the morning; strong drink they pursue* The second woe, against people whose lives revolve around drinking from morning to night. What fills us controls us (Eph 5:18).

late in the twilight; wine inflames them! **12** And lyre and harp, tambourine and flute, and wine are their feast; and the deed of the LORD they do not regard, and the work of His hands they have not seen. **13** Therefore My people have gone into exile for lack of knowledge; and its glory ***is*** men of hunger, and its multitude ***is*** parched ***with*** thirst.
14 Therefore Sheol has enlarged her appetite and opened her mouth without limit; and her splendor and her multitude and her uproar and the one exulting in her will go down. **15** And mankind has been humbled, and man has been brought low, and the eyes of the haughty will be brought low. **16** And the LORD of armies has been exalted in justice, and the holy God shows Himself holy in righteousness. **17** And lambs will graze as ***in*** their pasture, and sojourners will eat the ruins of the fat ones. **18** Woe ***to*** those who draw iniquity with cords of emptiness, and sin as ***with*** the rope of the cart; **19** who say, "Let Him hurry, let Him hasten His work, so that we may see; and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw near and come, so that we may know!" **20** Woe ***to*** those who say of evil "good," and of good "evil"; who put darkness for light and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter! **21** Woe ***to the*** wise in their eyes, and discerning before their faces! **22** Woe ***to*** mighty ones at drinking wine, and men of strength at mixing strong drink; **23** who justify ***the*** wicked for a bribe, and take away the righteousness of ***the*** righteous from him! **24** Therefore, as a tongue of fire eats stubble, and dry grass sinks down in the flame, their root will be like rottenness, and their blossom will go up like dust; for they have rejected the law of the LORD of armies, and have spurned the word of the Holy One of Israel. **25** Therefore the anger of the LORD has burned against His people, and He has stretched out His hand against it and struck it, and the mountains have quaked, and their corpses became like offal in the midst of the streets. For all this His anger has not turned back, and His hand ***is*** still stretched out. **26** And He will lift up a banner for the nations from afar, and whistle for it from the end of the earth; and look, quickly, swiftly it will come. **27** ***There is*** none weary and none stumbling among it; none will slumber and none will sleep; and the waistband of its loins has not been opened, and the thong of its sandals has not been torn apart; **28** whose arrows ***are*** sharpened, and all its bows bent; the hooves of its horses are regarded as flint, and its wheels as the whirlwind. **29** Its roaring ***is*** like the lion; it roars like the young lions; and it growls and seizes prey and carries ***it*** off, and ***there is*** no deliverer. **30** And it will growl over it in that day like the growling of the sea; and one will look to the land, and look, darkness, distress; and the light has become dark in its clouds.

5:12 Job 34:27; Ps 28:5; Isa 22:13
5:13 Hos 4:6; Isa 1:3; Isa 27:11
5:14 Acts 25:23; Hab 2:5; Rev 20:13-15
5:15 Isa 2:9,11,17; Isa 9:14-17; Isa 24:2-4
5:16 Ps 46:10; 1 Pet 2:15; Isa 29:23
5:17 Zeph 2:6,14; Isa 7:21,22,25; Isa 17:2
5:18 John 16:2; Jer 23:10,14,24; Isa 28:15
5:19 2 Pet 3:3; John 6:30; Eph 1:11
5:20 Matt 23:16; Matt 23:23; Prov 17:15
5:21 1 Cor 3:19; Prov 3:7; Rom 12:16
5:22 Isa 5:11; Hab 2:15; Isa 28:1-3,7
5:23 Isa 10:2; Ps 94:21; James 5:6
5:24 Job 18:16; Joel 2:5; Isa 30:12
5:25 1 Thess 2:16; 2 Kgs 9:37; Isa 10:4
5:26 Zech 10:8; Isa 7:18; Deut 28:49
5:27 Joel 2:7,8; Job 12:18,21; Isa 11:5
5:28 Ps 45:5; Ps 120:4; Jer 5:16
5:29 Zech 11:3; Isa 42:22; Isa 49:24,25
5:30 Luke 21:25; Isa 8:22; Jer 4:23-28

5:12 *the deed of the LORD they do not regard* Music and a good meal are not wrong. The problem is they never think about what the LORD is doing, so busy entertaining themselves that they miss the judgment coming toward them.
5:13 *My people have gone into exile for lack of knowledge* Because they would not pay attention to God, they will be carried away (Hos 4:6). Those who feasted without God will end up starving.
5:14 *Sheol has enlarged her appetite* Sheol is the place of the dead, the grave, pictured as a monster opening its mouth to swallow Jerusalem's partygoers. Those who partied as if there were no tomorrow will find death is real.
5:16 *the holy God shows Himself holy in righteousness* God's holiness is His purity, and it is also seen in what He does. When He judges sin, the world sees that He is holy and right.
5:18 *Woe to those who draw iniquity with cords of emptiness* The third woe. They drag their sin like an ox pulling a cart. Sin starts as something we pull on lightly, but before long it is pulling us (Prov 5:22).
5:19 *Let Him hurry, let Him hasten His work* They mock God's warnings and dare Him to prove it. Mockers still ask where the promise of His coming is (2 Pet 3:3-4). God's patience is not weakness. He is giving time to repent (2 Pet 3:9).
5:20 *Woe to those who say of evil "good," and of good "evil"* The fourth woe. More than doing wrong, it is changing the definition of wrong so you can feel good about it. When a culture praises what God calls sin and mocks what God calls good, it stands under this woe.
5:21 *Woe to the wise in their eyes* The fifth woe. They think they know better than God's word (Prov 3:7). True wisdom always starts with humility before God.
5:22 *Woe to mighty ones at drinking wine* The sixth woe. These leaders and judges should have been strong for the people, but they were strong only at the wine table.
5:23 *who justify the wicked for a bribe* Justice is for sale, and the righteous have nowhere to turn. God commanded judges never to take a bribe (Exod 23:8).
5:25 *For all this His anger has not turned back, and His hand is still stretched out* Some see a past earthquake here, perhaps the great one in Uzziah's day (Amos 1:1). This refrain returns four more times (9:12, 17, 21; 10:4). The judgments so far have not turned the people back, so more is coming.
5:26 *He will lift up a banner for the nations from afar* A banner on a pole gathered troops. God only whistles, and a faraway nation comes: in Isaiah's day Assyria, later Babylon (Deut 28:49).
5:28 *the hooves of its horses are regarded as flint* Assyria's army was the most feared of its time, tireless and ready (v. 27), known for chariots and archers. Judah trusted its own horses and chariots (2:7), and God sends a better army against them.
5:29 *Its roaring is like the lion* A lion does not negotiate with its prey, and Judah will be the prey. Only God can deliver from a lion like this, and later in the book He does (37:36).
5:30 *the light has become dark in its clouds* A grim ending. But the next chapter opens with Isaiah seeing the LORD on His throne. Even when the land is dark, God still reigns.

ISAIAH 6

Holy, Holy, Holy

1 In the year of the death of King Uzziah (Uziyahu), and I saw
the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and His skirts
were filling the temple. **2** Seraphim were standing above
Him; six wings, six wings ***belonged*** to each one: with two he
covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with
two he flew. **3** And this one called to this one and said, "Holy,
holy, holy ***is*** the LORD of armies; the fullness of all the earth
is His glory." **4** And the foundations of the thresholds shook
at the voice of the one who called, and the house was filled
with smoke. **5** And I said, "Woe to me! For I am destroyed, for
I ***am*** a man of unclean lips, and in the midst of a people of
unclean lips I dwell; for my eyes have seen the King, the
LORD of armies." **6** And one of the seraphim flew to me, and
in his hand ***was*** a live coal; with tongs he had taken ***it*** from
on the altar. **7** And he made ***it*** touch my mouth and said,
"Look, this has touched your lips, and your iniquity is
removed, and your sin is atoned for." **8** And I heard the voice
of the Lord saying, "Whom will I send, and who will go for
Us?" And I said, "Here I ***am***; send me." **9** And He said, "Go,
and say to this people, 'Hear indeed, and do not understand;
and see indeed, and do not know.' **10** Make the heart of this
people fat, and make its ears heavy, and smear over its eyes,
lest it see with its eyes, and hear with its ears, and its heart
understand, and it return, and ***one*** heal it." **11** And I said,
"Until when, O Lord?" And He said, "Until cities lie desolate
without inhabitant, and houses without man, and the ground
is devastated, a desolation, **12** and the LORD sends mankind
far away, and the forsaken ***places*** become many in the midst
of the land. **13** And still a tenth ***will be*** in it, and it will return
and be for burning, like the terebinth and like the oak, in
which, in the felling, a stump ***remains***; the seed of holiness ***is***
its stump."

ISAIAH 7

The Sign of Immanuel

1 And it was in the days of Ahaz (Achaz) the son of Jotham
(Yotam), the son of Uzziah (Uziyahu), king of Judah (Yehuda),
that Rezin (Retsin) king of Syria (Aram) and Pekah (Peqach)
the son of Remaliah (Remalyahu), king of Israel (Yisra'el),
went up ***to*** Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) for battle against it,

6:1 John 12:41; Rev 5:1; Rev 4:2
6:2 Rev 4:8; John 12:41; John 1:18
6:3 Acts 7:55; Rev 4:8,9; Ps 72:19
6:4 Rev 15:8; Amos 9:1; Ezek 1:24
6:5 Luke 5:8; Exod 6:12,30; Jer 9:3-8
6:6 Rev 8:3-5; Isa 6:2; Dan 9:21-23
6:7 Jer 1:9; Dan 10:16; Isa 53:5,10
6:8 Acts 28:26; Acts 28:27; Exod 4:10-13
6:9 Matt 13:14-15; Mark 4:12; Luke 8:10
6:10 John 12:39; John 12:41; Matt 13:15
6:11 Isa 1:7; Isa 3:26; Ps 90:13
6:12 Jer 4:29; Isa 26:15; 2 Kgs 25:11,21
6:13 Rom 11:5; Gal 3:16; Rom 9:29
7:1 Matt 1:9; 2 Kgs 15:37; 2 Kgs 16:1

6:1 *In the year of the death of King Uzziah* Uzziah reigned about fifty years and died about 740 B.C. His pride drove him to burn incense in the temple, a work only for priests, and he died a leper (2 Chr 26:16-21). The earthly throne was empty and Assyria was rising. At that moment Isaiah saw the true King. When the leaders we trust fail or pass away, look up. Our King is still on His throne.

6:1 *I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up* John says Isaiah "saw His glory" (John 12:41) and spoke of Jesus. I believe Isaiah saw the glory of the Son of God before He came as a man. A long robe was a sign of royalty, and the hem alone fills the temple. How great must He be?

6:2 *Seraphim were standing above Him* The only place they are named. The word means burning ones. Even these sinless beings cover their faces before His glory, cover their feet in humility, and fly ready to serve. I believe they are the same kind of beings John saw around the throne (Rev 4:8). If they come with reverence, how much more should we?

6:3 *Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of armies* In Hebrew, repeating a word strengthens it, and three times is the highest degree. Holiness is the only attribute of God raised to the third degree. To be holy is to be set apart, completely separate from all sin and far above all He made. Many see in the threefold "holy" a hint of the Trinity (v. 8), but the main point is His absolute holiness. His glory fills the earth even when people refuse to see it (Hab 2:14).

6:4 *the house was filled with smoke* Smoke and cloud often surround God's presence (Exod 19:18; 1 Kgs 8:10-11; Rev 15:8). The smoke both reveals Him and hides His full glory, for no sinner could survive seeing it all.

6:5 *Woe to me! For I am destroyed, for I am a man of unclean lips* Isaiah gave six woes in chapter 5. Now he gives one to himself. When he saw God as He is, he saw himself as he was. His lips, the tool of a prophet, were unclean, and he did not set himself above his people. Seeing God's holiness shows us our sin (Luke 5:8). If we never feel our sin, we may never have really looked at God.

6:6 *in his hand was a live coal; with tongs he had taken it from on the altar* The coal was so holy the seraph would not hold it in his hand. The altar is the place of sacrifice, where atonement was made. Atonement means covering sin and making peace between God and man. Isaiah's cleansing came from where a sacrifice had already been offered, a picture of the cross.

6:7 *your iniquity is removed, and your sin is atoned for* God met him at the very point of his need, his lips. Isaiah confessed first, and then God cleansed him (1 John 1:9). He did nothing to earn it. The cleansing was painful but complete.

6:8 *Whom will I send, and who will go for Us* I believe "Us" points to the Trinity, as in Genesis 1:26. "Here I am; send me." Isaiah did not ask where or what it would cost. He had seen the King and been forgiven. This is the order for every believer: see God, see our sin, receive His cleansing, then serve. God still asks the question (Rom 10:14-15).

6:9 *Hear indeed, and do not understand* Not that God wants them lost. He tells Isaiah ahead of time what will happen. They had already hardened their hearts, and clearer truth would make their refusal plainer and harder. Jesus quoted this to explain His parables (Matt 13:13-15), and Paul at the end of Acts (Acts 28:25-27).

6:10 *Make the heart of this people fat* Make it dull so nothing gets through. The same sun that melts wax hardens clay. There can come a point when God gives people over to what they keep choosing (Rom 1:24). John quotes this to explain Israel's unbelief and credits it to Isaiah (John 12:39-41). Yet Israel's hardening is not final. It lasts until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in, and then all Israel will be saved (Rom 11:25-26).

6:11 *Until when, O Lord* Until judgment runs its course. Isaiah saw Assyria destroy the north in 722 B.C. and waste Judah in 701 B.C., and Babylon destroyed Jerusalem in 586 B.C. Like Isaiah, we may preach to people who do not seem to listen. God calls us to be faithful, not successful.

6:12 *the LORD sends mankind far away* Exile, first under Assyria and later Babylon. Disobedience led them away from the place God had planted them.

6:13 *the seed of holiness is its stump* Even a tenth will be burned again, and the nation is like a felled tree. But a stump still has life in its roots. God will keep a holy remnant (Rom 11:5), and from that stump "a shoot" will come, the Messiah Himself (11:1). Judgment is never God's last word for Israel.

7:1 *Rezin king of Syria and Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, went up to Jerusalem* The book shifts to history. Rezin of Aram (Syria), capital Damascus, and Pekah of the northern kingdom wanted Judah to join them against Assyria. When Ahaz refused, they marched on Jerusalem about 734 B.C. (2 Kgs 16:5; 2 Chr 28). Isaiah tells the end first: they could not take it.

and he was not able to fight against it. **2** And it was told to the house of David, saying, "Syria has settled on Ephraim (Efrayim)." And his heart and the heart of his people shook as the trees of the forest shake before a wind. **3** And the LORD said to Isaiah (Yeshayahu), "Go out, please, to meet Ahaz, you and Shear-jashub (She'ar-Yashuv) your son, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool, at the highway of the launderer's field, **4** and say to him, 'Be careful and be quiet; do not be afraid, and do not let your heart be faint because of these two tails of smoking firebrands, at the heat of the anger of Rezin and Syria and the son of Remaliah. **5** Because Syria has planned evil against you, ***with*** Ephraim and the son of Remaliah, saying, **6** "Let us go up against Judah and terrify it, and let us break it open for ourselves, and let us make a king reign in its midst, the son of Tabeel (Tav'al)," **7** thus says the Lord GOD: It will not stand, and it will not happen. **8** For the head of Syria ***is*** Damascus (Dameseq), and the head of Damascus ***is*** Rezin; and within sixty-five years Ephraim will be shattered from ***being*** a people. **9** And the head of Ephraim ***is*** Samaria (Shomron), and the head of Samaria ***is*** the son of Remaliah. If you do not believe, surely you will not be established.'" **10** And the LORD again spoke to Ahaz, saying, **11** "Ask a sign for yourself from the LORD your God; make ***it*** deep ***as*** Sheol or make ***it*** high above." **12** And Ahaz said, "I will not ask, and I will not test the LORD." **13** And he said, "Hear, please, house of David! ***Is it too*** little for you to weary men, that you will weary my God also? **14** Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Look, the virgin ***is*** pregnant and bearing a son, and she will call His name Immanuel (Imanu'el). **15** Curds and honey He will eat, when He knows to reject the evil and to choose the good. **16** For before the boy knows to reject the evil and to choose the good, the land whose two kings you dread will be forsaken.

The Coming of Assyria

17 The LORD will bring on you and on your people and on the house of your father days that have not come since the day Ephraim departed from Judah, the king of Assyria (Ashur). **18** And it will be in that day ***that*** the LORD will whistle for the fly which ***is*** at the end of the streams of Egypt (Mitsrayim), and for the bee which ***is*** in the land of Assyria. **19** And they will come and settle, all of them, in the wadis of the cliffs and in the clefts of the rocks, and on all the thorn-bushes and on all the watering places. **20** In that day the Lord will shave with the razor hired beyond the River, with the king of Assyria, the head and the hair of the feet; and it will

7:2 Matt 1:20; Acts 21:3; Isa 7:13
7:3 Rom 9:27; Matt 1:9; Isa 36:2
7:4 Isa 35:4; Deut 20:3; Amos 4:11
7:5 Ps 2:2; Ps 83:3,4; Nah 1:11
7:7 Acts 4:26; Isa 8:10; Isa 46:10,11
7:8 Isa 17:1-3; 2 Sam 8:6; Isa 8:4
7:9 2 Chr 20:20; 1 Kgs 16:24-29; Acts 27:11,25
7:10 Matt 1:9; Isa 1:5,13; Isa 8:5
7:11 Isa 38:7,8,22; Isa 37:30; Judg 6:36-40
7:12 Matt 1:9; 2 Kgs 16:15; 2 Chr 28:22
7:13 Luke 1:69; Matt 1:20; Matt 22:42
7:14 Matt 1:23; Luke 1:27; Luke 1:31
7:15 Matt 3:4; Isa 7:22; Ps 51:5
7:16 Isa 8:4; Deut 1:39; Jonah 4:11
7:17 Isa 8:7,8; Isa 10:5,6; Isa 36:1-37
7:18 Isa 5:26; Isa 30:1,2; Isa 31:1
7:19 Isa 2:19,21; Jer 16:16; 2 Chr 33:11
7:20 Ezek 5:1-4; 2 Kgs 16:7,8; 2 Chr 28:20,21

7:2 *his heart and the heart of his people shook as the trees of the forest shake* Ephraim, the largest northern tribe, stands for the whole northern kingdom. Fear is a normal reaction to danger. What matters is what we do with it. Ahaz must choose between trusting God and trusting man.
7:3 *you and Shear-jashub your son* His name means a remnant will return, a message in itself. Ahaz was probably inspecting the water supply before a siege. Years later the Rabshakeh would stand at this same spot and mock Hezekiah's trust in God (36:2).
7:4 *these two tails of smoking firebrands* Stay calm and trust Me. The two kings are burned-out ends of sticks, still smoking but nearly out, and both were soon dead (2 Kgs 15:30; 16:9). Many things we fear are like that. God knows how little fire is left in them.
7:6 *let us make a king reign in its midst, the son of Tabeel* We do not know who he was, but the plan was to remove David's family from the throne. God had promised David's line would last forever (2 Sam 7:16). Satan has always tried to wipe out the line of the Messiah, and this was one more attempt.
7:8 *within sixty-five years Ephraim will be shattered from being a people* The heads of Aram are only Damascus and Rezin, just men. Samaria fell in 722 B.C., about twelve years later. Assyria then settled foreigners in the land, and later kings kept doing so (2 Kgs 17:24; Ezra 4:2). Many believe the sixty-five years run to that final resettlement, when the northern tribes ceased to be a separate nation.
7:9 *If you do not believe, surely you will not be established* The heart of the chapter. God does not even name Pekah, only "the son of Remaliah." The Hebrew plays on words: if you will not stand firm in faith, you will not be made to stand firm (2 Chr 20:20). Faith in God is the only firm ground.
7:11 *Ask a sign for yourself from the LORD your God* Ahaz had not responded in faith, but God came back with another offer, and He set no limits, deep as Sheol or high as heaven. It is hard to think of a more generous offer in Scripture.
7:12 *I will not ask, and I will not test the LORD* It sounds spiritual (Deut 6:16), but God Himself told him to ask. It was disobedience dressed in religious words. Ahaz had already sent temple silver and gold to Tiglath-pileser of Assyria for help (2 Kgs 16:7-8). A sign would have forced him to trust God instead.
7:13 *Hear, please, house of David* In Hebrew the "you" of verses 13-14 is plural. The sign is for David's whole royal line, not only this faithless king. Isaiah now says "my God." Ahaz had pushed God away.
7:14 *Look, the virgin is pregnant and bearing a son* The Hebrew almah means a young woman of marriageable age, never clearly used in the Bible of a married woman. Jewish scholars translating into Greek before Jesus chose parthenos, virgin. A young woman having a baby the normal way would be no sign. A virgin conceiving is a true miracle. Matthew says this was fulfilled when Jesus was born of the virgin Mary (Matt 1:22-23).
7:14 *she will call his name Immanuel* Immanuel means God with us. This child would not only be sent by God. He would be God, the "Mighty God" of 9:6. Teachers disagree whether there was also a child in Ahaz's day. I read the sign as given to David's house and fulfilled in Jesus, with verses 15-16 using a child's early years as a measure of time. God came to be with us, and He promises to be with us always (Matt 28:20).
7:15 *Curds and honey he will eat* Thick yogurt or butter and honey were simple food, what people ate when the land was stripped (v. 22). The child would grow up in humble, hard times. Jesus was laid in a manger and grew up in a land under foreign rule.
7:16 *the land whose two kings you dread will be forsaken* Before a child born now knew right from wrong, Ahaz's enemies would be gone. In 732 B.C. Tiglath-pileser took Damascus and killed Rezin (2 Kgs 16:9), and Pekah was murdered about then (2 Kgs 15:30), just as God said.
7:17 *the king of Assyria* Because Ahaz chose Assyria over God, God would bring Assyria on Judah, days unlike any since the kingdom split after Solomon (1 Kgs 12). What we lean on instead of God can become the thing that crushes us.
7:18 *the LORD will whistle for the fly which is at the end of the streams of Egypt* The fly is Egypt from the Nile branches, the bee is Assyria. Ahaz thought he was playing politics with world powers, but God was the One calling them. They will settle everywhere, like a swarm over a field (v. 19).
7:20 *the Lord will shave with the razor hired beyond the River* The razor is Assyria from beyond the Euphrates. Ahaz paid Assyria to help (2 Kgs 16:8), and now that hired razor shaves Judah. Shaving head, body and beard was a terrible humiliation (2 Sam 10:4-5).

sweep away the beard also. **21** And it will be in that day ***that*** a man will keep alive a heifer of the herd and two sheep. **22** And it will be ***that*** from the abundance of the producing of milk he will eat curds; for curds and honey everyone who is left in the midst of the land will eat. **23** And it will be in that day ***that*** every place where there were a thousand vines, at a thousand ***pieces of*** silver, will become thorn and thornbush. **24** With arrows and with bow ***one*** will go there, for all the land will be thorn and thornbush. **25** And all the hills which used to be hoed with the hoe, you will not go there ***for*** fear of thorn and thornbush; and it will become a place for sending out oxen and a trampling place of sheep."

ISAIAH 8

God With Us

1 And the LORD said to me, "Take for yourself a large tablet, and write on it with the stylus of a man, 'For Maher-shalal-hash-baz (Maher-Shalal-Chash-Baz).'" **2** And I will call reliable witnesses to testify for me, Uriah (Uriya) the priest and Zechariah (Zekharyahu) the son of Jeberechiah (Yeverekhyahu). **3** And I drew near to the prophetess, and she conceived and bore a son. And the LORD said to me, "Call his name Maher-shalal-hash-baz; **4** for before the boy knows to call out, 'My father' and 'My mother,' ***one*** will carry off the wealth of Damascus (Dameseq) and the plunder of Samaria (Shomron) before the king of Assyria (Ashur)." **5** And the LORD again spoke to me further, saying, **6** "Because this people has rejected the waters of the Shiloah (Shiloach) that go gently, and ***is*** rejoicing with Rezin (Retsin) and the son of Remaliah (Remalyahu), **7** therefore, look, the Lord is about to bring up on them the waters of the River, mighty and many, the king of Assyria and all his glory; and it will rise over all its channels and go over all its banks. **8** And it will sweep on into Judah (Yehuda); it will overflow and pass through; it will reach to the neck; and the spreading of its wings will be the fullness of the breadth of your land, O Immanuel (Imanu'el). **9** Be broken, peoples, and be shattered; and give ear, all distant places of ***the*** earth; gird yourselves and be shattered; gird yourselves and be shattered. **10** Plan a plan, and it will be frustrated; speak a word, and it will not stand; for God ***is*** with us."

The Stone of Stumbling

11 For thus the LORD said to me with strength of the hand, and He instructed me against walking in the way of this people, saying, **12** "Do not call conspiracy all that this people calls conspiracy, and do not fear what it fears, and do not be in dread. **13** The LORD of armies, Him you shall regard as holy, and He ***shall be*** your fear, and He your dread. **14** And He will become a sanctuary, and a stone of striking and a rock of stumbling to both houses of Israel (Yisra'el), a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). **15** And many will stumble over them, and they will fall and be bro-

7:21 Isa 5:17; Jer 39:10; Isa 7:25
7:22 Isa 7:15; 2 Sam 17:29; Matt 3:4
7:23 Isa 5:6; Song 8:11,12; Matt 21:33
7:24 Gen 27:3
7:25 Isa 7:21,22; Isa 13:20-22; Isa 17:2
8:1 Rev 19:9; Isa 30:8; Jer 36:2,28,32
8:2 2 Kgs 16:10,11; Ruth 4:2,10,11; 2 Cor 13:1
8:3 Luke 1:60; Judg 4:4; 2 Kgs 22:14
8:4 Rom 9:11; Deut 1:39; Jonah 4:11
8:5 Isa 7:10
8:6 John 9:7; Neh 3:15; 1 Kgs 7:16
8:7 Isa 17:12,13; Gen 6:17; Amos 8:8
8:8 Matt 1:23; Rev 17:15; Isa 7:14
8:9 Isa 7:1,2; Isa 14:5,6; Ps 37:14,15
8:10 Rom 8:31; Job 5:12; Isa 7:5-7
8:11 Ezek 3:14; Jer 20:7,9; Acts 4:20
8:12 1 Pet 3:14-15; Luke 12:4; Luke 21:9
8:13 Matt 10:28; Luke 12:5; Rom 11:9
8:14 Rom 9:32-33; 1 Pet 2:8; Luke 2:34
8:15 Luke 20:17; Rom 9:32; Luke 2:34

7:22 *for curds and honey everyone who is left in the midst of the land will eat* Not a picture of plenty. With so few people left and fields gone wild, the survivors live off what grows by itself.
7:23 *every place where there were a thousand vines* Vineyards worth a thousand pieces of silver go back to briars and thorns, as in the vineyard song (5:6). Farmland becomes hunting ground (v. 24) and grazing land (v. 25).
7:25 *it will become a place for sending out oxen* The chapter ends sadly because Ahaz chose fear and Assyria over faith. But the sign of Immanuel stands in the middle of it. Even when kings fail, God keeps His promise to send the Son of David who is God with us.
8:1 *Take for yourself a large tablet* Written in ordinary letters anyone could read, like a billboard: Maher-shalal-hash-baz, the spoil speeds, the prey hastens. No one could say later they had not been warned.
8:2 *Uriah the priest and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah* Two witnesses confirmed the matter (Deut 19:15). This Uriah is probably the priest who later copied a pagan altar for Ahaz (2 Kgs 16:10-11). Even a witness who sided with the king would have to admit Isaiah's word was written first.
8:3 *And I drew near to the prophetess* Isaiah's wife, perhaps a prophet herself or simply married to one. Every time someone called the boy, they heard God's warning.
8:4 *before the boy knows to call out, 'My father' and 'My mother,'* Within a year or two Assyria would plunder Damascus and Samaria, and in 732 B.C. it did (2 Kgs 15:29; 16:9). Some see this child as the near sign of chapter 7. I believe Immanuel is fulfilled in Jesus, while Isaiah's son was a sign of the near events (8:18).
8:6 *this people has rejected the waters of the Shiloah that go gently* Shiloah was a small, quiet channel from the Gihon spring, which gave its name to the pool of Siloam (John 9:7). It pictures God's quiet, steady care for Jerusalem and David's line. God's care often looks small to people who want something loud and powerful.
8:7 *the waters of the River, mighty and many, the king of Assyria* Since they rejected the gentle stream, God sends the flood of the Euphrates. Ahaz wanted Assyria's power, and he would get far more of it than he wanted.
8:8 *it will reach to the neck* A careful picture: the head stays above water. Assyria covered nearly all Judah in 701 B.C. but could not take Jerusalem (36:1; 37:33-36). And the land belongs to Immanuel. God has not forgotten His promise.
8:10 *for God is with us* In Hebrew the word is Immanuel. The nations may arm and plan, but none of it will stand, for one reason (Rom 8:31). The world's plans against God's people never get the last word.
8:12 *Do not call conspiracy all that this people calls conspiracy* All Jerusalem talked of plots and alliances. God gripped Isaiah with a strong hand (v. 11) so he would not be swept along with the crowd. Fear spreads quickly. Faith has to choose to stand apart from it (1 Pet 3:14).
8:13 *The LORD of armies, Him you shall regard as holy* The cure for fear: fear God instead of men. To regard Him as holy is to set Him apart in your heart as the One who really matters. Peter applies this to believers under pressure (1 Pet 3:15). When we fear God, we need not fear anything else.
8:14 *a stone of striking and a rock of stumbling* The same God is a sanctuary to one and a stumbling stone to another, depending on how we respond. The New Testament applies this to Jesus (Rom 9:33; 1 Pet 2:8; Luke 2:34). He is either the rock we stand on or the rock we stumble over. Those who fall trip over the One they refused to trust (v. 15).

ken, and be ensnared and be captured." **16** Bind up the testimony; seal the law among my disciples. **17** And I will wait for the LORD, who is hiding His face from the house of Jacob (Ya'aqov), and I will hope for Him. **18** Look, I and the children whom the LORD has given me ***are*** for signs and for portents in Israel from the LORD of armies, who dwells on Mount Zion (Tsiyon). **19** And when they say to you, "Consult the mediums and the spiritists who whisper and mutter," should not a people consult its God? On behalf of the living ***should they consult*** the dead? **20** To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, ***it is*** because ***there is*** no dawn for it. **21** And he will pass through it, hard pressed and hungry; and it will be ***that*** when he is hungry, he will be enraged and curse by his king and by his God, and turn upward. **22** And he will look to the earth, and look, distress and darkness, gloom of anguish; and ***he will be*** thrust into thick darkness.

ISAIAH 9

A Child Is Born

1 For ***there will be*** no gloom for her who ***was*** in distress. As ***at*** the former time He treated with contempt the land of Zebulun (Zevulun) and the land of Naphtali (Naftali), so at the latter ***time*** He will make glorious the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan (Yarden), Galilee (Galil) of the nations. **2** The people who walk in the darkness have seen a great light; those who dwell in a land of deep darkness, a light has shone on them. **3** You have multiplied the nation; You have made great the joy for it; they rejoice before You as ***with*** the joy at the harvest, as ***men*** are glad when they divide plunder. **4** For the yoke of its burden and the staff of its shoulder, the rod of the one who oppresses it, You have shattered as ***in*** the day of Midian (Midyan). **5** For every boot of the one who tramps with tumult, and the cloak rolled in blood, will be for burning, fuel of fire. **6** For a child has been born to us, a son has been given to us; and the dominion is on His shoulder; and ***one*** has called His name Wonder, Counselor, Mighty God, Father of Eternity, Prince of Peace. **7** Of the increase of the dominion and of peace ***there will be*** no end, on the throne of David and over His kingdom, to establish it and to sustain it with justice and with righteousness from now and until forever. The zeal of the LORD of armies will do this.

His Hand Is Still Stretched Out

8 The Lord has sent a word into Jacob (Ya'aqov), and it will fall on Israel (Yisra'el). **9** And the people will know, all of it, Ephraim (Efrayim) and the inhabitant of Samaria (Shomron),

8:16 Heb 3:5; Dan 12:4; Isa 29:11
8:17 Heb 2:13; Heb 9:28; Luke 2:38
8:18 Heb 2:13; Luke 2:34; Heb 12:22
8:19 Isa 19:3; Lev 20:6; 1 Sam 28:8
8:20 2 Pet 1:19; Acts 17:11; Luke 16:30
8:21 Rev 16:11; Isa 9:20; Isa 8:7,8
8:22 Matt 22:13; Luke 21:25; Isa 5:30
9:1 Matt 4:15-16; Matt 4:14; Matt 15:29
9:2 Luke 1:78; John 8:12; 1 Pet 2:9
9:3 Acts 8:8; Isa 26:15; Isa 65:18
9:4 Isa 14:25; Isa 10:26; Nah 1:13
9:5 Acts 2:19; Rev 19:13; 2 Thess 1:8
9:6 Matt 1:23; Luke 2:11; Matt 28:18
9:7 Luke 1:32-33; Heb 1:8; Rev 19:11
9:8 Isa 7:7,8; Isa 8:4-8; Mic 1:1-9
9:9 Isa 46:12; Isa 26:11; 1 Kgs 22:25

8:16 *Bind up the testimony; seal the law among my disciples* Important documents were tied and sealed until needed. This is the first mention of Isaiah's disciples. While the nation turned away, a faithful few gathered around God's word and kept it until it was fulfilled.
8:17 *I will wait for the LORD, who is hiding His face* God has turned from them in judgment for a time, but Isaiah will hope in Him. Waiting on God is a great theme of Isaiah (40:31), trusting His timing when we cannot see. Hebrews puts the Greek form of this verse in the mouth of Christ (Heb 2:13).
8:18 *I and the children whom the LORD has given me are for signs* Their names were messages: the LORD is salvation, a remnant will return, the spoil speeds. The family was a living sermon. Hebrews applies this to Jesus and those He saves, whom He is not ashamed to call brothers (Heb 2:11-13).
8:19 *On behalf of the living should they consult the dead* In fear people look for answers anywhere. God forbade mediums (Deut 18:10-12), and Saul tried one the night before he died (1 Sam 28). People still turn to psychics and horoscopes. Go to God.
8:20 *To the law and to the testimony* The test for every message: does it agree with God's word? If not, there is no dawn in it. The Bereans checked even Paul against the Scriptures (Acts 17:11). Test every teacher, book and idea the same way.
8:21 *curse by his king and by his God* Instead of turning to God in trouble, they blame Him for it, as people will at the end of the age (Rev 16:11).
8:22 *he will be thrust into thick darkness* This is where life without God's word ends. But the very next verse promises no more gloom for her who was in distress. Out of the darkness God brings a great light, and Matthew tells us that light is Jesus (Matt 4:15-16).
9:1 *Galilee of the nations* Zebulun and Naphtali, around the Sea of Galilee, were the first to fall to Assyria about 732 B.C. (2 Kgs 15:29). This mixed, looked-down-on region would be honored first. Jesus began His ministry by settling in Capernaum, in that very region, to fulfill this word (Matt 4:13-16). The light of the world began shining where the darkness first fell.
9:2 *The people who walk in the darkness have seen a great light* Isaiah speaks of the future as already done, so certain is God's promise. Darkness is sin, not knowing God, living without hope. Jesus is the light of the world (John 8:12). If you are in a dark place, the Light has come and still shines on those who look to Him.
9:3 *they rejoice before You as with the joy at the harvest* The joy of a full harvest and of dividing spoil after victory. I believe "You have multiplied the nation" reaches to the Messiah's kingdom, when Israel is restored and the nations come to Him.
9:4 *You have shattered as in the day of Midian* In Gideon's day God won with three hundred men so no one could boast (Judg 7). The yoke, staff and rod of slavery God Himself will break. Our freedom from sin is God's work from start to finish.
9:5 *the cloak rolled in blood, will be for burning* When war is truly over you burn its equipment (2:4). That kind of peace has never yet come. I believe it will when Christ returns and reigns.
9:6 *For a child has been born to us, a son has been given to us* One of the greatest verses in the Old Testament, telling more of the Son of 7:14. The child is born, truly human. The Son is given, sent from heaven by the Father (John 3:16). The yoke sat on Israel's shoulder (v. 4). Now the weight of ruling the world rests on His.
9:6 *Wonder, Counselor, Mighty God, Father of Eternity, Prince of Peace* He is beyond anything human, with wisdom that needs no advice. "Mighty God" is El Gibbor, the title Isaiah gives the LORD Himself (10:21). This child is God. "Father of Eternity" does not mean the Son is the Father, but that He cares for His people like a father forever. He makes peace with God by His cross (Col 1:20) and will bring peace to the earth. No king of Judah fit these names. Only Jesus does.
9:7 *on the throne of David and over his kingdom* The throne God promised forever (2 Sam 7:12-16), the promise Gabriel gave Mary (Luke 1:32-33). Some teachers say Jesus fulfills it only from heaven now. I read it plainly. Christ reigns now at the Father's right hand, but this also promises a real throne and kingdom of justice on earth, the Millennium (Rev 20:4-6), going on into eternity. His zeal guarantees it, not Israel's or ours.
9:8 *The Lord has sent a word into Jacob* The tone changes. From here to 10:4 is one poem of judgment against the northern kingdom, in four stanzas with the same closing line. God's word lands where He aims it.

in pride and in greatness of heart, saying, **10** "Bricks have fallen, and ***with*** hewn ***stone*** we will build; sycamores have been cut down, and cedars we will put in ***their*** place." **11** And the LORD set on high the adversaries of Rezin (Retsin) against him, and He stirs up his enemies: **12** Syria (Aram) from the east and ***the*** Philistines from the west; and they have devoured Israel with all ***their*** mouth. For all this His anger has not turned back, and His hand ***is*** still stretched out. **13** And the people have not turned back to the One who struck it, and the LORD of armies they have not sought. **14** And the LORD cut off from Israel head and tail, palm branch and reed, in one day. **15** The elder and ***the one*** lifted up of face, he ***is*** the head; and the prophet who teaches falsehood, he ***is*** the tail. **16** And those who guide this people were leading ***them*** astray, and those who are guided by them are swallowed up. **17** Therefore the Lord does not rejoice over its young men, and on its fatherless and its widows He has no compassion; for every one of it ***is*** godless and an evildoer, and every mouth speaks folly. For all this His anger has not turned back, and His hand ***is*** still stretched out. **18** For wickedness has burned like the fire; it eats thorn and thornbush, and it has kindled the thickets of the forest, and they roll upward, a rising of smoke. **19** By the wrath of the LORD of armies the land has been scorched, and the people became like fuel of fire; a man does not spare his brother. **20** And he cut on the right, and was hungry; and he ate on the left, and they were not satisfied; each eats the flesh of his arm. **21** Manasseh (Menashe) ***against*** Ephraim, and Ephraim ***against*** Manasseh; together they ***are*** against Judah (Yehuda). For all this His anger has not turned back, and His hand ***is*** still stretched out.

ISAIAH 10

The Rod of His Anger

1 Woe ***to*** those who decree decrees of wickedness, and ***to*** writers ***who*** have written trouble, **2** to turn aside the poor from judgment, and to rob the afflicted of My people of ***their*** justice, so that widows may be their plunder, and they may despoil the fatherless! **3** And what will you do in the day of punishment, and in the devastation ***that*** will come from afar? To whom will you flee for help, and where will you leave your glory? **4** Nothing ***is left*** but ***that one*** has bowed down under the prisoners, and they will fall under the slain. For all this His anger has not turned back, and His hand ***is*** still stretched out. **5** Woe ***to*** Assyria (Ashur), the rod of My anger; and the staff in their hand, it ***is*** My indignation. **6** Against a godless nation I send him, and against the people of My wrath I command him, to take plunder and to seize spoil, and to make it a trampling place like the mud of the streets. **7** And he does not intend so, and his heart does not plan so; for to destroy ***is*** in his heart, and to cut off nations not a few. **8** For he says, "Are not my commanders kings, all alike? **9** Is not Calno (Kalno) like Carchemish (Karkemish)? Is

9:10 Mal 1:4; 1 Kgs 7:9-12; 1 Kgs 10:27
9:11 Isa 8:4-7; Isa 10:9-11; Isa 17:1-5
9:12 2 Chr 28:18; Isa 5:25; 2 Kgs 16:6
9:13 Hos 7:10,16; Jer 5:3; Isa 31:1
9:14 Rev 18:8; Isa 19:15; Isa 3:2,3
9:15 Matt 24:24; 2 Pet 2:1; Isa 29:10
9:16 Matt 15:14; Matt 23:31; Isa 3:12
9:17 Jer 18:21; Isa 10:6; Isa 27:11
9:18 Mal 4:1; Isa 1:31; Isa 30:30,33
9:19 Mic 7:2,6; Isa 5:30; Isa 8:22
9:20 Isa 49:26; Lev 26:26-29; Jer 19:9
9:21 Isa 5:25; 2 Chr 28:6-8; Isa 9:12,17
10:1 Luke 11:52; Matt 23:23; Matt 11:21
10:2 Mal 3:5; Isa 3:14; Isa 29:21
10:3 Hos 9:7; Luke 19:44; Isa 20:6
10:4 Isa 5:25; Isa 9:12,17,21; Lev 26:17,36,37
10:5 Jer 51:20-24; Gen 10:11; Isa 10:15
10:6 Isa 9:17; Isa 19:17; Isa 29:13
10:7 Gen 50:20; Mic 4:11,12; Acts 2:23
10:8 2 Kgs 18:24; Isa 36:8; 2 Kgs 19:10
10:9 2 Chr 35:20; 2 Kgs 16:9; Jer 46:2

9:10 *Bricks have fallen, and with hewn stone we will build* The voice of pride. They saw the damage but would not see God's hand in it. We too can promise to rebuild bigger and better when God is asking us to turn back to Him.
9:12 *For all this His anger has not turned back, and His hand is still stretched out* Rezin's Aram, once Israel's ally (7:1), and the Philistines become its attackers. The refrain of 5:25 returns. Here the outstretched hand is raised to strike, because the people still refuse to repent.
9:13 *the people have not turned back to the One who struck it* The real problem. Discipline was meant to bring them back (Heb 12:11). The same hardship can soften one heart and harden another.
9:15 *the prophet who teaches falsehood, he is the tail* God cuts off leaders top to bottom in one day. The head is the elders and men of rank. The false prophet is the tail because a tail follows and wags, saying what the powerful want to hear.
9:17 *on its fatherless and its widows He has no compassion* A hard verse, from the God who defends orphans and widows all through Scripture. Sin had spread to everyone, and no group was untouched. When a whole society turns from God, judgment falls on the whole society.
9:18 *For wickedness has burned like the fire* Sin destroys itself. It starts among the thorns and spreads until the whole forest is ablaze. It never stays the size it begins.
9:19 *a man does not spare his brother* Wickedness burns (v. 18) and the LORD's wrath burns. Both are true. God often judges by letting sin run its course (Rom 1:24-28), turning people against one another.
9:20 *each eats the flesh of his arm* A starving society that grabs on every side and is never filled. I take "the flesh of his arm" as their own kinsmen, since verse 21 explains it as tribe against tribe. Life without God is a hunger nothing in this world satisfies.
9:21 *Manasseh against Ephraim, and Ephraim against Manasseh* Brother tribes, sons of Joseph, fought each other and joined only to attack Judah. In Israel's last years king after king was murdered (2 Kgs 15). About 722 B.C. Samaria fell and the northern kingdom ended, as Isaiah warned.
10:1 *Woe to those who decree decrees of wickedness* The last stanza of the poem begun at 9:8. These men did not break the law. They made bad laws and used paperwork to rob widows and orphans (Exod 22:22). A thing can be permitted by the courts and still be wicked in God's sight, and He calls the poor "My people."
10:3 *where will you leave your glory* What will you do, where will you run, where will you leave your money? Stolen wealth cannot save them (Matt 16:26).
10:4 *For all this His anger has not turned back* Only two outcomes remain: crouch among the captives or lie among the dead. The refrain sounds the fourth and last time, because the people have not turned back.
10:5 *Woe to Assyria, the rod of My anger* Assyria, centered in what is now northern Iraq with Nineveh its chief city, was famous for cruelty. God calls it His rod. It did not know it was a tool. That does not make God the author of its evil, but no nation ever moves outside His control.
10:6 *Against a godless nation I send him* The godless nation is God's own people. When God's people live like the world, He may let the world discipline them. Judgment begins with the household of God (1 Pet 4:17).
10:7 *And he does not intend so* Assyria has no idea it serves God. God's purpose was discipline, Assyria's was greed and conquest, and God would judge Assyria for its own motives (Gen 50:20).
10:9 *Is not Samaria like Damascus* Real cities of Syria and the upper Euphrates, all taken. Damascus fell in 732 B.C. and Samaria about 722 B.C. To the king they were trophies on a list.

not Hamath (Chamat) like Arpad? Is not Samaria (Shomron) like Damascus (Dameseq)? **10** As my hand has found the kingdoms of the idol, and their carved images ***were more*** than Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) and than Samaria, **11** shall I not, as I have done to Samaria and to her idols, so do to Jerusalem and to her images?" **12** And it will be, when the Lord has finished all His work on Mount Zion (Tsiyon) and in Jerusalem, ***that*** I will punish the fruit of the greatness of heart of the king of Assyria, and the splendor of the haughtiness of his eyes. **13** For he has said, "By the strength of my hand I have done ***it***, and by my wisdom, for I have understanding; and I remove the boundaries of peoples, and I have plundered their stores, and like a mighty one I bring down the inhabitants. **14** And my hand has found, like a nest, the wealth of the peoples; and as one gathers abandoned eggs, I have gathered all the earth; and there was none that fluttered a wing or opened a mouth or chirped." **15** Does the axe glorify itself over the one who hews with it? Or does the saw magnify itself over the one who wields it? As if a rod should wield those who lift it up! As if a staff should lift up ***one who is*** not wood! **16** Therefore the Lord, the LORD of armies, will send leanness among his fat ones, and under his glory a burning will burn like the burning of fire. **17** And the light of Israel (Yisra'el) will become a fire, and his Holy One a flame; and it will burn and eat his thornbush and his thorn in one day. **18** And the glory of his forest and of his fruitful land He will bring to an end, from soul even to flesh; and it will be as when a sick ***man*** wastes away. **19** And the remnant of the trees of his forest will be ***few in*** number, and a boy will write them down.

A Remnant Will Return

20 And it will be in that day ***that*** the remnant of Israel and the escaped remnant of the house of Jacob (Ya'aqov) will no longer again lean on the one who struck him, and will lean on the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, in truth. **21** A remnant will return, the remnant of Jacob, to the Mighty God. **22** For though your people, Israel, be like the sand of the sea, a remnant within it will return; destruction is decided, overflowing ***with*** righteousness. **23** For a complete destruction, and ***one that is*** decided, the Lord GOD of armies is about to make in the midst of all the land. **24** Therefore thus says the Lord GOD of armies: "Do not be afraid, My people who dwell ***in*** Zion, of Assyria; with the rod he will strike you, and he will lift up his staff against you in the way of Egypt (Mitsrayim). **25** For yet a very little ***while***, and the indignation will be finished, and My anger ***will be*** for their destruction." **26** And the LORD of armies will stir up a whip against him, like the striking of Midian (Midyan) at the rock of Oreb (Orev); and His staff ***will be*** over the sea, and He will lift it up in the way of Egypt. **27** And it will be in that day ***that*** his burden will turn aside from on your shoulder, and his yoke from on your neck, and the yoke will be destroyed because of fatness. **28** He has come against Aiath (Ayyat); he has passed through Migron; at Michmash (Mikhmas) he deposits his baggage. **29** They have passed over the pass; Geba (Geva) ***is*** a lodging

10:10 Isa 10:14; 2 Kgs 18:33-35; 2 Kgs 19:12,13,17-19
10:11 Isa 36:19,20; Isa 37:10-13
10:12 Jer 50:18; Isa 10:5,6; Isa 14:24-27
10:13 Dan 4:30; Isa 10:8; Isa 37:23,24
10:14 Job 31:25; Isa 5:8; Prov 18:12
10:15 Rom 9:20; Rom 9:21; Isa 10:5
10:16 Ps 106:15; Isa 5:17; Isa 14:24-27
10:17 Heb 12:29; Num 11:1-3; Isa 27:4
10:18 Isa 10:33,34; 2 Kgs 19:23,28; Isa 9:18
10:19 Isa 37:36
10:20 Rom 9:27; 2 Kgs 16:7; 2 Chr 28:20
10:21 Rom 9:27; Isa 9:6; 2 Cor 3:14-16
10:22 Rom 9:27-28; Rev 20:8; Isa 6:13
10:23 Isa 14:26,27; Isa 24:1-23; Dan 4:35
10:24 Heb 12:22; Isa 37:6,22,33-35; Isa 4:3
10:25 Heb 10:37; Dan 11:36; Isa 10:33,34
10:26 Isa 9:4; Judg 7:25; 2 Kgs 19:35
10:27 Isa 9:4; Isa 14:25; Ps 105:15
10:28 1 Sam 14:2; 1 Sam 13:2,5; Josh 7:2
10:29 1 Sam 13:23; 1 Sam 7:17; Josh 21:17

10:11 *shall I not, as I have done to Samaria and to her idols, so do to Jerusalem* He puts the LORD on the same shelf as the idols. That was his fatal mistake, repeated later outside Jerusalem's walls (36:18-20). The living God is not one more idol.
10:12 *I will punish the fruit of the greatness of heart of the king of Assyria* God finishes disciplining Jerusalem first, then turns to Assyria. Pride is the root and cruelty the fruit. God lets proud men go only so far.
10:13 *By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom* Count the "my" and "I." He takes all the credit and says robbing nations was as easy as taking eggs from an abandoned nest. Nebuchadnezzar talked the same way and was humbled (Dan 4). Watch for the word "I" in our own boasting.
10:16 *the Lord, the LORD of armies* The SLB shows two Hebrew names together: Adonai, Lord or Master, and Yahweh, God's personal name. He will send a wasting sickness among Assyria's warriors, a fire smoldering under their glory.
10:17 *the light of Israel will become a fire* God is light to His people and a consuming fire to His enemies (Heb 12:29). Now Assyria is the thicket, burned "in one day." I believe this was fulfilled in 701 B.C., when the angel of the LORD struck the Assyrian camp in one night (37:36).
10:18 *as when a sick man wastes away* Assyria lasted almost another century and even conquered Egypt. But God's word stood, and Nineveh fell in 612 B.C. So few trees remain that a boy could count them (v. 19).
10:20 *will no longer again lean on the one who struck him* The remnant is the small part God preserves after judgment. Ahaz leaned on Assyria (2 Kgs 16:7), and that alliance became a beating. The remnant will lean on the Holy One alone. Hardship had done its work.
10:21 *A remnant will return, the remnant of Jacob, to the Mighty God* In Hebrew, Shear-jashub, the name of Isaiah's son (7:3). They return to El Gibbor, the title of the Child in 9:6. I believe this is a clear hint that the coming Messiah is God Himself.
10:22 *a remnant within it will return* Israel was promised descendants like the sand (Gen 22:17), yet only a remnant returns. Paul quotes this to explain Israel's unbelief (Rom 9:27). But he also says all Israel will be saved when the Deliverer comes out of Zion (Rom 11:25-27). I believe that points to the day of Christ's return. God has not given up on Israel.
10:24 *Do not be afraid, My people who dwell in Zion, of Assyria* Assyria will strike as Egypt did long ago, but Egypt's power ended at the Red Sea. Remembering what God did before helps us trust Him now.
10:25 *yet a very little while, and the indignation will be finished* God's anger toward His people has a limit, and then it turns on their oppressor (Ps 30:5). Hard seasons are real but not forever.
10:26 *like the striking of Midian at the rock of Oreb* Gideon's men killed Oreb (Judg 7:25), and Moses lifted his staff over the sea (Exod 14:26-28). God had done both before and would do it to Assyria.
10:27 *the yoke will be destroyed because of fatness* The yoke breaks as 9:4 promised. The last phrase is hard to translate, and some read it as because of the anointing. I take it that Judah, blessed and strengthened by God, will outgrow the yoke and burst it. Either way it breaks because of what God does.
10:29 *Gibeah of Saul has fled* A vivid march from the north through towns a few miles from Jerusalem: Aiath (old Ai), Migron, Michmash, Geba, Ramah, Gibeah, Anathoth (Jer 1:1). Panic spreads hilltop to hilltop. Some read it as Sennacherib's actual route in 701 B.C., others as a poetic picture. Either way the threat was close.

place for us; Ramah (Rama) has trembled; Gibeah (Giva) of Saul (Shaul) has fled. **30** Cry aloud ***with*** your voice, daughter of Gallim (Galim)! Pay attention, Laishah (Laysha)! O afflicted Anathoth (Anatot)! **31** Madmenah (Madmena) has fled; the inhabitants of Gebim (Gevim) have taken refuge. **32** Yet today ***he will*** stand at Nob (Nov); he will shake his hand ***at*** the mountain of the daughter of Zion, the hill of Jerusalem. **33** Look, the Lord, the LORD of armies, is about to lop off the boughs with a crash; and the exalted of height ***will be*** cut down, and the lofty will be brought low. **34** And He will cut down the thickets of the forest with the iron, and the Lebanon (Levanon) will fall by a mighty one.

ISAIAH 11

The Branch from Jesse

1 And a shoot will come forth from the stump of Jesse (Yishay), and a branch from his roots will bear fruit. **2** And the Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him, ***the*** spirit of wisdom and understanding, ***the*** spirit of counsel and might, ***the*** spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD. **3** And His delight ***will be*** in the fear of the LORD; and He will not judge by the sight of His eyes, and He will not decide by the hearing of His ears; **4** and He will judge the poor with righteousness, and decide with uprightness for the humble of the earth; and He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He will put the wicked to death. **5** And righteousness will be the waistband of His hips, and faithfulness the waistband of His loins. **6** And the wolf will sojourn with the lamb, and the leopard will lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling ***will be*** together; and a small boy will lead them. **7** And the cow and the bear will graze; their young will lie down together; and the lion, like the ox, will eat straw. **8** And the nursing child will play over the hole of the cobra, and the weaned ***child*** will put out his hand over the nest of the viper. **9** They will not do evil and they will not destroy in all the mountain of My holiness; for the earth will be full ***of*** the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

The Root of Jesse and the Second Gathering

10 And it will be in that day ***that*** the root of Jesse, who will stand as a banner of the peoples, nations will seek Him, and His resting place will be glory. **11** And it will be in that day ***that*** the Lord will again ***set*** His hand a second time to acquire the remnant of His people which will remain, from Assyria (Ashur) and from Egypt (Mitsrayim) and from Pathros
(Patros) and from Cush (Kush) and from Elam and from Shinar and from Hamath (Chamat) and from the coastlands of the sea. **12** And He will lift up a banner for the nations, and He will gather the banished of Israel (Yisra'el), and the scattered of Judah (Yehuda) He will assemble from the four cor-

10:30 1 Sam 25:44; Jer 1:1; Josh 21:18
10:31 Josh 15:31
10:32 1 Sam 21:1; 1 Sam 22:19; Isa 19:16
10:33 Amos 2:9; Isa 10:16-19; Isa 37:24-36,38
10:34 Isa 37:24; Isa 10:18; Jer 22:7
11:1 Acts 13:22; Rev 5:5; Matt 1:6
11:2 Matt 3:16; 1 Cor 1:30; John 1:32
11:3 Luke 4:18; Acts 9:31; John 7:24
11:4 2 Thess 2:8; Rev 19:15; Luke 4:18
11:5 Eph 6:14; Isa 25:1; Isa 59:17
11:6 Isa 65:25; Hos 2:18; Gal 3:26,27
11:8 Isa 59:5; Ps 140:3
11:9 Hab 2:14; Job 5:23; Ps 98:2,3
11:10 Rom 15:12; Rev 22:16; Rev 5:5
11:11 Rom 9:27; Mic 7:12; Gen 10:22
11:12 Rom 11:26; Rev 7:1; Isa 11:10

10:32 *he will shake his hand at the mountain of the daughter of Zion* Nob, a town of priests (1 Sam 21:1), was within sight of the city. The fist is shaken but never strikes. God sets the line.
10:34 *the Lebanon will fall by a mighty one* Assyria called itself the axe (v. 15), and now it is the tree cut down, a forest of stumps with no new life. But chapter 11 begins with a stump that sprouts.
11:1 *a shoot will come forth from the stump of Jesse* Isaiah names Jesse, not David, because David's royal house will look like a stump, back to its humble beginnings in Bethlehem (1 Sam 16:11). Jesus was born in David's line (Matt 1:1-16), but to a carpenter's family with no throne. "Branch" became a title of the Messiah (Jer 23:5; Zech 3:8), the Anointed One, Christ in Greek. Assyria fell and stayed fallen. David's stump sprouted.
11:2 *the Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him* The Spirit came on judges and kings for a season. On this King He remains. Wisdom and understanding, counsel and might, knowledge and the fear of the LORD. The Spirit came down on Jesus at His baptism and remained (John 1:32-33), and He read, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me" (Luke 4:18).
11:3 *His delight will be in the fear of the LORD* Reverence and love that want to please God. He always did what pleased the Father (John 8:29). He will not judge by appearances or rumor. He sees the heart, a comfort if you have been misjudged and a warning if you are hiding something.
11:4 *with the breath of His lips He will put the wicked to death* The poor will get a fair hearing. He needs no army, for His word is enough. Paul draws on this for the Lord Jesus slaying the lawless one at His coming (2 Thess 2:8; Rev 19:15). At His first coming He came to save, not slay. I believe verses 4-9 describe His second coming and the kingdom that follows.
11:5 *righteousness will be the waistband of His hips* A belt held a robe together for work. Everything He does is held together by righteousness and faithfulness, and what is true of the King is meant to be true of His people (Eph 6:14).
11:6 *the wolf will sojourn with the lamb* Some say this pictures only peace between people. I take it as written, for nothing marks it as a figure, and creation itself waits to be set free from corruption (Rom 8:19-22). It has not happened yet. I believe it describes the Millennium, Christ's thousand-year reign (Rev 20:4-6), when a child is safe among animals that once would have killed him.
11:7 *the lion, like the ox, will eat straw* Predators become plant eaters, as at the beginning (Gen 1:30; Isa 65:25). The violence that entered creation through sin is undone.
11:8 *the nursing child will play over the hole of the cobra* Every parent knows the terror of that picture today. Some see a reminder of the serpent in Eden. The creature that brought death will be harmless around the smallest child.
11:9 *the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea* The holy mountain is Zion, the center of His rule. No spot in the sea is left dry, and no person will be ignorant of God (Hab 2:14). Until then we have a part in spreading that knowledge, one person at a time.
11:10 *the root of Jesse, who will stand as a banner of the peoples* In verse 1 He is a shoot from Jesse, here the root, because He is both David's descendant and David's Lord (Rev 22:16). Paul quotes this to show God always planned to bring the Gentiles to Christ (Rom 15:12). If you are not Jewish and trust Jesus, this verse is about you.
11:11 *the Lord will again set His hand a second time to acquire the remnant of His people* The first time was Egypt (v. 16). Some apply this to the return under Cyrus in 538 B.C., but that came mostly from one place. This list covers the known world: Pathros in southern Egypt, Cush south of Egypt, Elam east of Babylon, Shinar or Babylon, Hamath in Syria, and the coastlands. I believe it points to a final regathering of Israel when Christ returns (Matt 24:31).
11:12 *from the four corners of the earth* Both north and south are gathered. Many see the modern return of Jews to the land and the State of Israel in 1948 as a step toward this. I do not want to read too much into headlines, but God keeps His promises to Israel, and the full keeping comes when the nation turns to its Messiah (Rom 11:25-27).

ners of the earth. **13** And the jealousy of Ephraim (Efrayim) will turn aside, and those who oppose Judah will be cut off; Ephraim will not be jealous of Judah, and Judah will not oppose Ephraim. **14** And they will fly on the shoulder of ***the*** Philistines toward the west; together they will despoil the sons of the east; Edom and Moab (Mo'av) ***will be*** the stretching out of their hand, and the sons of Ammon (Amon) their subjects. **15** And the LORD will devote to destruction the tongue of the sea of Egypt, and He will wave His hand over the River with the scorching of His wind, and He will strike it into seven wadis, and He will make ***men*** walk ***over*** in sandals. **16** And there will be a highway for the remnant of His people which will remain from Assyria, as there was for Israel in the day he came up from the land of Egypt.

ISAIAH 12

The Song of the Redeemed

1 And you will say in that day, "I will give thanks to You, O LORD, for You were angry with me; let Your anger turn back, and may You comfort me. **2** Look, God ***is*** my salvation; I will trust and I will not dread; for my strength and song ***is the*** LORD, the LORD, and He has become salvation for me." **3** And you will draw water with joy from the springs of the salvation. **4** And you will say in that day, "Give thanks to the LORD; call on His name; make known His deeds among the peoples; bring to remembrance that His name is exalted. **5** Sing praises to the LORD, for He has done majestic ***things***; this is made known in all the earth. **6** Cry aloud and shout for joy, inhabitant of Zion (Tsiyon), for great in your midst ***is*** the Holy One of Israel (Yisra'el)."

ISAIAH 13

The Fall of Babylon

1 The oracle of Babylon (Bavel), which Isaiah (Yeshayahu) the son of Amoz (Amots) saw. **2** On a bare mountain lift up a banner; raise a voice to them; wave a hand, so that they may enter the doors of ***the*** nobles. **3** I have commanded My consecrated ones; I have also summoned My mighty ones for My anger, the exultant ones of My pride. **4** The sound of a tumult on the mountains, the likeness of a great people! The sound of an uproar of kingdoms of nations gathered together! The LORD of armies is mustering an army of battle. **5** They are coming from a distant land, from the end of the heavens, the LORD and the weapons of His indignation, to destroy all the land. **6** Wail, for the day of the LORD ***is*** near; it will come like destruction from the Almighty. **7** Therefore all hands will go limp, and every heart of man will melt. **8** And they will be terrified; pangs and pains will seize ***them***; they will writhe like a woman giving birth; each will look in astonishment at his neighbor; their faces ***will be*** faces of flames. **9** Look, the day of the LORD is coming, cruel, and ***with*** wrath and burning of anger, to make the land a waste; and He will destroy its

11:13 Rom 11:26; Jer 3:18; Hos 1:11
11:14 Jer 49:28; Isa 25:10; Dan 11:41
11:15 Rev 16:12; Rom 11:26; Isa 50:2
11:16 Isa 19:23; Exod 14:26-29; Isa 11:11
12:1 John 16:20; Isa 25:1,9; Ps 30:5
12:2 Exod 15:2; Ps 118:14; Ps 27:1
12:3 John 7:37; John 7:38; Rev 21:6
12:4 Ps 105:1; Ps 117:1,2; Exod 33:19
12:5 Exod 15:1,21; Ps 98:1; Ps 68:32-35
12:6 Matt 21:5; Heb 12:22; Rev 21:3
13:1 Rev 17:5; Isa 1:1; Isa 14:28
13:2 Isa 5:26; Jer 50:2; Jer 51:58
13:3 Rev 18:23; Joel 3:11; Ps 149:2,5-9
13:4 Rev 19:14; Rev 19:17; Rev 19:19
13:5 Matt 24:31; Isa 13:17; Jer 50:3,9
13:6 1 Thess 5:2; James 5:1; 1 Thess 5:3
13:7 Ezek 21:7; Ezek 7:17; Isa 19:1
13:8 John 16:21; 1 Thess 5:3; Isa 26:17
13:9 Rev 17:16; Rev 18:8; Rev 19:17

11:13 *Ephraim will not be jealous of Judah* The old rivalry of north and south (9:21) is over, one nation under one king (Ezek 37:15-22). Under Christ's rule old hatreds can finally be laid down.
11:14 *Edom and Moab will be the stretching out of their hand* Israel's old enemies on every side will no longer threaten God's people, who will be secure in the land under the King.
11:15 *He will make men walk over in sandals* God dries the tongue of Egypt's sea and splits the River, the Euphrates, so people cross dry-shod, as at the Red Sea and the Jordan (Exod 14; Josh 3). He removes every barrier to His people coming home.
11:16 *there will be a highway for the remnant of His people* Highways run through Isaiah (19:23; 35:8; 40:3). God does not only call people home. He makes the road. If you feel far from God, He is the One who builds the way back.
12:1 *let Your anger turn back, and may You comfort me* "That day" is the day of chapter 11, and the "you" is singular. Each person sings for himself. The singer admits God was rightly angry. Through chapters 9-10 His anger "has not turned back," and now at last he asks God to turn it. Jesus took that anger on Himself at the cross (Rom 5:9), so every believer can sing this.
12:2 *Look, God is my salvation* Not only does God save. He is my salvation. My rescue is a Person. Fear and trust cannot both rule one heart. The rest echoes the Red Sea song (Exod 15:2; Ps 118:14). A new Exodus deserves the old Exodus song.
12:3 *you will draw water with joy from the springs of the salvation* In a dry land a spring meant life, and drawing water was hard daily work, done here with joy. At the Feast of Booths, where water was later poured at the temple, Jesus cried out that the thirsty should come to Him and drink (John 7:37-38). Are you drinking from Him, or from wells that leave you thirsty?
12:4 *make known His deeds among the peoples* Salvation is never meant to stay private (49:6; Matt 28:19-20). The song closes with joy that the Holy One lives among His people (v. 6). The God who undid Isaiah in chapter 6 becomes their gladness, which is what forgiveness does (Rev 21:3).
13:1 *The oracle of Babylon* The word can also mean burden, a heavy message of judgment. Isaiah saw it more than a century before Babylon fell. Predicting the future is what the God of the Bible does (46:9-10). Chapters 13-23 hold oracles against the nations.
13:3 *I have commanded My consecrated ones* Set apart for a task. These are pagan armies, but God sets them apart to carry out His anger, as He used Assyria in chapter 10. They have no idea whose plan they fulfill.
13:5 *from the end of the heavens* The Medes and Persians came from far northeast of Babylon. "All the land" can also mean the whole earth, a hint that this judgment reaches past Babylon.
13:6 *Wail, for the day of the LORD is near* Any time God steps into history to judge sin is a day of the LORD, like Babylon's fall, and there is a final Day of the LORD at the end of this age (2 Pet 3:10; 1 Thess 5:2). In Hebrew "destruction" sounds like Shaddai, the Almighty. No one can stand against it.
13:8 *they will writhe like a woman giving birth* Strong men go weak, a picture Jesus also used for the troubles before His return (Matt 24:8). Every proud empire comes to the moment it finds it is not in control.
13:9 *cruel, and with wrath and burning of anger* Hard words, but God's anger is not a temper like ours. It is His settled, holy opposition to evil. Sin will not be allowed to stay, and God has given sinners a way to be saved before that day.

sinners from it. **10** For the stars of the heavens and their constellations will not flash forth their light; the sun will be dark at its going forth, and the moon will not make its light shine. **11** And I will punish the world ***for*** evil, and the wicked ***for*** their iniquity; and I will put an end to the pride of the arrogant, and the haughtiness of the ruthless I will bring low. **12** I will make man more rare than pure gold, and mankind than the gold of Ophir (Ofir). **13** Therefore I will make the heavens tremble, and the earth will shake from its place at the wrath of the LORD of armies and in the day of the burning of His anger. **14** And it will be ***that*** like a hunted gazelle, and like sheep with no one gathering ***them***, each will turn to his people, and each will flee to his land. **15** Everyone who is found will be pierced through, and everyone who is caught will fall by the sword. **16** And their children will be dashed in pieces before their eyes; their houses will be plundered, and their wives lain with. **17** Look, I am about to stir up Media (Maday) against them, who do not value silver, and gold, they do not delight in it. **18** And ***their*** bows will dash youths in pieces, and on the fruit of the womb they will have no compassion; on sons their eye will not look with pity. **19** And Babylon, the beauty of kingdoms, the splendor of the pride of ***the***
Chaldeans (Kasdim), will be like God's overthrow of Sodom (Sedom) and Gomorrah (Amora). **20** It will not be inhabited ever, and it will not be dwelt in from generation to generation; and an Arab will not pitch a tent there, and shepherds will not make ***their flocks*** lie down there. **21** And desert creatures will lie down there, and their houses will be full of howling creatures; and the daughters of the ostrich will dwell there, and wild goats will leap about there. **22** And hyenas will cry out in its citadels, and jackals in the palaces of delight; and its time ***is*** near to come, and its days will not be prolonged.

ISAIAH 14

The Fallen Star

1 For the LORD will have compassion on Jacob (Ya'aqov), and will again choose Israel (Yisra'el), and will give them rest on their land; and the sojourner will join himself to them, and they will attach themselves to the house of Jacob. **2** And peoples will take them and bring them to their place, and the house of Israel will possess them as an inheritance on the land of the LORD as male servants and female servants; and they will be captors of their captors, and they will have dominion over their oppressors. **3** And it will be in the day the LORD gives you rest from your pain and from your turmoil and from the hard labor with which you were made to labor, **4** that you will take up this proverb against the king of Babylon (Bavel), and say, "How the oppressor has ceased! The raging has ceased! **5** The LORD has broken the staff of ***the*** wicked, the scepter of rulers, **6** which struck peoples in wrath, a blow without ceasing, which had dominion over nations in anger, a persecution without restraint. **7** All the earth is at rest, it is quiet; they break forth ***into*** a shout of

13:10 Matt 24:29; Mark 13:24; Luke 21:25
13:11 Dan 5:22,23; Isa 14:21; Isa 24:4-6
13:12 Isa 4:1; Isa 24:6; Isa 13:15-18
13:13 Heb 12:26; 2 Pet 3:10; Heb 12:27
13:14 Rev 18:9; 1 Kgs 22:17,36; Jer 50:16
13:15 Isa 14:19-22; Isa 47:9-14; Jer 50:27,35-42
13:16 Nah 3:10; Ps 137:8,9; Hos 10:14
13:17 Jer 51:11,27,28; Prov 6:34,35; Isa 21:2
13:18 2 Kgs 8:12; Isa 13:16; Hos 13:16
13:19 Luke 17:29; Rom 9:29; 2 Pet 2:6
13:20 Rev 18:21; Isa 14:23; Jer 50:3,13,21,39,45
13:21 Rev 18:2; Isa 34:11-15
13:22 Isa 35:7; Jer 51:33; Deut 32:35
14:1 Eph 2:12; Eph 2:13; Ps 102:13
14:2 Rev 3:9; Isa 61:5; Isa 60:14
14:3 Rev 18:20; Luke 1:71; Ezra 9:8,9
14:4 Rev 18:20; Isa 49:26; Rev 18:16
14:5 Isa 9:4; Ps 125:3; Isa 14:29
14:6 Rev 18:9; Isa 33:1; 2 Chr 36:17
14:7 Rev 18:20; Ps 126:1-3; Isa 49:13

13:10 *the sun will be dark at its going forth* The scene widens to the cosmos. Jesus used this language for right after the Tribulation and before His return (Matt 24:29; Joel 2:31; Rev 6:12-13). I read it as a double fulfillment: Babylon's fall was a near Day of the LORD, but the language looks ahead to the final Day at the end of the Tribulation.
13:11 *I will punish the world for evil* Not Babylon only but the world, and God singles out pride, the sin that started the rebellion and the one He brings low at the end (Jas 4:6).
13:12 *I will make man more rare than pure gold* Ophir's gold was the finest Israel knew (1 Kgs 9:28). Revelation describes huge numbers dying in the Tribulation judgments (Rev 6:8; 9:15). The final judgment is real, and it is coming.
13:13 *I will make the heavens tremble* God will shake heaven and earth so only what cannot be shaken remains (Heb 12:26-27). Everything built without God will be shaken loose.
13:14 *each will flee to his land* Babylon was full of foreigners, traders and captives. A city held together by money and power falls apart when the power fails.
13:16 *Their children will be dashed in pieces before their eyes* Among the hardest verses in Isaiah. He does not approve these horrors. He describes what war is and what Babylon's enemies would do. Babylon had done the same to others, Jerusalem included (Ps 137:8-9), and what it sowed it would reap (Gal 6:7). The Bible never hides how terrible sin and its fruit can be. I believe little children who die are safe with God (2 Sam 12:23).
13:17 *I am about to stir up Media against them* In Isaiah's day the Medes were scattered mountain tribes, yet God named them. In 539 B.C. Cyrus, ruling the Medes and Persians, took Babylon, the night of Belshazzar's feast (Dan 5:30-31). This is real predictive prophecy. They could not be bought off with silver.
13:19 *Babylon, the beauty of kingdoms* Famous for its walls, gates and gardens, ruled in its last great age by the Chaldeans. Cyrus took it with little fighting, but it declined over centuries into ruin. Revelation takes up the name for the final world system, which falls in a single hour (Rev 18:10). I believe the full weight of this verse lands there.
13:20 *It will not be inhabited ever* By the early centuries after Christ the city was largely abandoned, and it has never again become what it was. God's word held true.
13:21 *the daughters of the ostrich will dwell there* The Hebrew names of some of these animals are not certain. The picture is clear: the palace of the world's proudest city becomes a den of wild creatures (Rev 18:2).
13:22 *its time is near to come* More than a century away for Isaiah's readers, but near in God's sight (2 Pet 3:8). The judgment of the proud may seem slow, but it always comes on time.
14:1 *the LORD will have compassion on Jacob, and will again choose Israel* Babylon falls because God has compassion on Jacob. His choice of Israel was not canceled by their sin. Foreigners will join them, as Ruth did (Ruth 1:16), and in the end people of every nation are joined to God's people through the Messiah (Eph 2:12-13).
14:2 *they will be captors of their captors* The tables turn. Cyrus paying to send the Jews home and rebuild the temple was a first taste (Ezra 1:1-4). I believe the full picture waits for the Messiah's kingdom (60:10-14).
14:4 *you will take up this proverb against the king of Babylon* A mocking song over a fallen tyrant. It is not personal revenge but rejoicing that God has ended evil (Rev 18:20). Verse 4 says plainly whom the song is about, and we start there.
14:6 *which struck peoples in wrath, a blow without ceasing* Babylon carried off whole peoples, Judah among them. Its kings thought their rod would never break, and God snapped it like a stick (v. 5).

joy. **8** The cypresses also rejoice over you, the cedars of Lebanon (Levanon): 'Since you lay down, the cutter does not come up against us.' **9** Sheol beneath is stirred up over you to meet your coming; it rouses the shades for you, all the leaders of the earth; it has raised from their thrones all the kings of the nations. **10** All of them will answer and say to you, 'You also have been made weak as we; you have become like us.' **11** Your pride has been brought down to Sheol, the sound of your harps; under you maggots are spread as a bed, and worms ***are*** your covering. **12** How you have fallen from heaven, O shining one, son of dawn! You have been cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations! **13** And you said in your heart, 'I will ascend ***to*** the heavens; above the stars of God I will raise my throne; and I will sit on the mount of assembly in the remotest parts of ***the*** north. **14** I will ascend above the high places of the cloud; I will make myself like the Most High.' **15** Yet you are brought down to Sheol, to the remotest parts of the pit. **16** Those who see you will stare at you; they will consider you ***closely***: 'Is this the man who made the earth tremble, who made kingdoms shake, **17** who made the world like the wilderness, and tore down its cities, ***who*** did not open ***the way*** home for his prisoners?' **18** All the kings of the nations, all of them, lie in glory, each in his house. **19** And you have been cast out from your tomb like an abhorred branch, ***like*** the clothing of the slain, pierced by the sword, who go down to the stones of the pit, like a trampled corpse. **20** You will not be joined with them in burial, for you have ruined your land, you have slain your people. The offspring of evildoers will never be named. **21** Prepare a place of slaughter for his sons because of the iniquity of their fathers; let them not rise and possess the earth and fill the face of the world ***with*** cities." **22** "And I will rise up against them," declares the LORD of armies, "and I will cut off from Babylon name and remnant, and descendant and posterity," declares the LORD. **23** "And I will make it a possession of the hedgehog, and pools of water; and I will sweep it with the broom of destruction," declares the LORD of armies.

Assyria and Philistia

24 The LORD of armies has sworn, saying, "Surely as I have intended, so it has happened; and as I have planned, it will stand: **25** to break Assyria (Ashur) in My land, and on My mountains I will trample him; and his yoke will turn aside from on them, and his burden will turn aside from on his shoulder." **26** This ***is*** the plan that is planned concerning all the earth, and this ***is*** the hand that is stretched out over all the nations. **27** For the LORD of armies has planned, and who will frustrate ***it***? And His hand ***is*** the one stretched out, and

14:8 Ezek 31:16; Isa 55:12,13; Zech 11:2
14:9 Luke 16:23; Prov 15:24; Ezek 32:21-32
14:10 Ps 49:6-14,20; Ps 82:6,7; Eccl 2:16
14:11 Isa 21:4,5; Isa 22:2; Job 21:11-15
14:12 Luke 10:18; 2 Pet 1:19; Rev 12:9
14:13 Matt 11:23; 2 Thess 2:4; Rev 18:7
14:14 Isa 47:8; 2 Thess 2:4; Isa 37:23,24
14:15 Matt 11:23; Ezek 32:23; Isa 14:3-11
14:16 Jer 50:23; Ps 58:10,11; Ps 64:9
14:17 Joel 2:3; Isa 45:13; Isa 13:19-22
14:18 Isa 22:16; 2 Chr 24:16,25; Eccl 6:3
14:19 Jer 41:7,9; 1 Kgs 21:19,24; 2 Kgs 9:25,34-36
14:20 Ps 21:10; Job 18:16,19; Ps 37:28
14:21 Exod 20:5; Lev 26:39; Matt 23:35
14:22 Prov 10:7; 1 Kgs 14:10; Isa 13:5
14:23 Zeph 2:14; Isa 34:11-15; 1 Kgs 14:10
14:24 Heb 6:17; Heb 6:18; Acts 4:28
14:25 Isa 9:4; Nah 1:13; Isa 10:16-19,32-34
14:26 Isa 5:25; Zeph 3:6-8
14:27 Rom 8:28; Gal 3:17; Isa 43:13

14:8 *Since you lay down, the cutter does not come up against us* Conquering kings cut Lebanon's forests for their buildings and wars (37:24). Now even the trees rest. When evil is removed, all creation benefits (Rom 8:21).
14:9 *Sheol beneath is stirred up over you to meet your coming* Sheol is the place of the dead. The spirits of dead kings rise to meet the newcomer. It is poetry built on truth: the dead are conscious (Luke 16:22-24), and earthly rank means nothing there.
14:11 *under you maggots are spread as a bed* The man who slept in a palace lies in decay, and the dead kings mock his weakness (v. 10). Every ruler ends here unless God raises him. Our only hope beyond the grave is the One who rose from it.
14:12 *How you have fallen from heaven, O shining one, son of dawn* Hebrew helel ben shachar, the bright morning star that fades at sunrise. First and plainly this is the king of Babylon (v. 4), a man with a body and a grave (vv. 16-20). Early church writers applied it to the devil, tying it to Luke 10:18. Jerome's Latin Bible used lucifer, the everyday Latin name for the morning star, and it became a proper name in the King James Version. The SLB goes back to "shining one."
14:12 *You have been cut down to the ground* The language goes beyond any human king, as with the king of Tyre who was "in Eden" (Ezek 28:12-17; Rev 12:9). I read it both ways, in order. The king of Babylon is the first meaning. Behind him stands Satan, who drives every proud empire. The king's pride copies the devil's, and his fall previews the devil's final fall (Rev 20:10).
14:13 *And you said in your heart* Sin began where no one could see. Count five "I will" boasts in verses 13-14. The mount of assembly was where ancient peoples imagined the gods met, far north, and Zion is God's true dwelling (Ps 48:2). He wanted God's seat. Satan tempted Eve with the same offer (Gen 3:5). When we insist on running our lives without God, we echo those words.
14:14 *I will make myself like the Most High* Not wanting God's character, but God's throne without God's heart. Jesus was equal with God yet emptied Himself and took the form of a slave, and was given the name above every name (Phil 2:6-9). The way up in God's kingdom is down.
14:15 *Yet you are brought down to Sheol, to the remotest parts of the pit* One word ends five boasts. He wanted the heights and gets the depths. For Satan the final place is the lake of fire (Rev 20:10).
14:16 *Is this the man who made the earth tremble* At the first level this is a human king. Babylon's kings did not let captives go home (v. 17). The terror of the world turns out to be small and weak like everyone else.
14:19 *you have been cast out from your tomb like an abhorred branch* Other kings lie in honor. Being refused burial was the final disgrace. The man who wanted a throne above the stars does not even get a grave.
14:21 *Prepare a place of slaughter for his sons* Harsh to our ears, but the point is that Babylon's empire will not rise again under his descendants. God ends a dynasty that filled the earth with violence, and Babylon's royal line ended in 539 B.C.
14:23 *I will sweep it with the broom of destruction* The greatest city on earth, built among the Euphrates canals, becomes a swamp for the hedgehog, swept away like dust.
14:24 *The LORD of armies has sworn* Isaiah turns from far-off Babylon to Assyria, the threat in front of him. There is no stronger promise than God's oath (Heb 6:17-18). The near fulfillment would prove the far one.
14:25 *to break Assyria in My land* Not far away but right in Judah. In 701 B.C. the angel of the LORD struck 185,000 Assyrians in one night outside Jerusalem (37:36), and the yoke came off as promised (10:27).
14:27 *For the LORD of armies has planned, and who will frustrate it* The hand that warned Israel is stretched over all nations (v. 26). No one can cancel His plan or push back His hand. If God has planned your salvation and future (Rom 8:28-30), no enemy can undo it.

who will turn it back? **28** In the year of the death of King Ahaz (Achaz) this oracle came: **29** Do not rejoice, Philistia (Peleshet), all of you, that the rod of the one who struck you is broken; for from the root of the snake a viper will come forth, and its fruit ***will be*** a flying serpent. **30** And the firstborn of the poor will graze, and the needy will lie down in security; and I will put your root to death by famine, and it will slay your remnant. **31** Wail, O gate! Cry out, O city! Melt away, Philistia, all of you! For from the north smoke is coming, and ***there is*** no straggler in his ranks. **32** And what will one answer the messengers of the nation? That the LORD has founded Zion (Tsiyon), and in it the afflicted of His people will take refuge.

ISAIAH 15

Moab Weeps

1 The oracle of Moab (Mo'av): For in a night Ar of Moab was devastated, it was cut off; for in a night Kir (Qir) of Moab was devastated, it was cut off. **2** He has gone up ***to*** the house and ***to*** Dibon (Divon), ***to*** the high places, for weeping; over Nebo (Nevo) and over Medeba (Medva) Moab wails; on all its heads ***is*** baldness, every beard ***is*** clipped. **3** In its streets they have girded on sackcloth; on its roofs and in its open squares all of it wails, going down in weeping. **4** And Heshbon (Cheshbon) cries out, and Elealeh (Elale); their voice is heard as far as Jahaz (Yahats). Therefore the armed ***men*** of Moab shout; its soul trembles within it. **5** My heart cries out for Moab; its fugitives ***flee*** as far as Zoar (Tso'ar), ***to*** Eglath-shelishiyah (Eglat-Shelishiyah). For the ascent of Luhith (Luchit), with weeping he goes up on it; for ***on*** the road of Horonaim (Choronayim) they rouse a cry of shattering. **6** For the waters of Nimrim are desolations; for the grass has dried up, the vegetation has wasted away, ***there*** is no greenery.
7 Therefore the abundance ***that*** it has made and their stored goods they carry off over the wadi of the willows. **8** For the cry has gone around the territory of Moab; its wailing ***is*** as far as Eglaim (Eglayim), and its wailing ***is at*** Beer-elim. **9** For the waters of Dimon are full of blood; for I will put added ***things*** on Dimon: for the escaped of Moab a lion, and for the remnant of the land.

ISAIAH 16

The Pride of Moab

1 Send a lamb ***to*** the ruler of the land, from Sela toward the wilderness, to the mountain of the daughter of Zion (Tsiyon). **2** And it will be ***that*** like a fluttering bird, a nest sent away, ***so*** the daughters of Moab (Mo'av) will be ***at*** the fords of the Arnon. **3** Bring counsel, make a decision; make your shade like the night in the middle of noon; hide the outcasts; do not expose the fugitive. **4** Let my outcasts sojourn among you, Moab; be a shelter to them from before the destroyer. For the oppressor has come to an end, devastation has ceased, the trampler is consumed from the land. **5** And a throne will be established in steadfast love, and he will sit on it in faithfulness in the tent of David, judging and seeking justice and

14:28 2 Kgs 16:20; 2 Chr 28:27; Isa 6:1
14:29 2 Chr 26:6; Isa 11:8; Isa 30:6
14:30 Isa 7:21,22; Job 18:13; Isa 5:17
14:31 Jer 1:14; Isa 13:6; Isa 20:1
14:32 Heb 12:22; Ps 87:1,5; Ps 102:16,28
15:1 Isa 11:14; Ezek 25:8-11; Amos 2:1-3
15:2 Jer 48:1; Lev 21:5; Jer 48:18,22,23
15:3 Jonah 3:6-8; 2 Sam 3:31; 2 Kgs 6:30
15:4 Jer 48:34; Isa 16:8,9; Num 32:3,4
15:5 Luke 19:41; Luke 19:42; Luke 19:43
15:6 Joel 1:10-12; Num 32:3,36; Josh 13:27
15:7 Isa 5:29; Isa 10:6,14; Nah 2:12,13
15:8 Isa 15:2-5; Jer 48:20-24,31-34; Ezek 47:10
15:9 2 Kgs 17:25; Lev 26:18,21,24,28; Jer 48:43-45
16:1 2 Kgs 3:4; Isa 10:32; 2 Kgs 14:7
16:2 Prov 27:8; Judg 11:18; Isa 13:14
16:3 Isa 25:4; Isa 32:2; Isa 1:17
16:4 Isa 14:4; Isa 51:13; Deut 23:15,16
16:5 Luke 1:69; Acts 15:16; Luke 1:32

14:28 *In the year of the death of King Ahaz* The faithless king of chapter 7. Scholars date his death between about 727 and 715 B.C. His godly son Hezekiah came to the throne.
14:29 *Do not rejoice, Philistia* The coastal enemy since Samson and David celebrated because some rod that struck them was broken, perhaps a king of Judah or of Assyria. A worse attacker is coming, a darting flying serpent. Philistia was trading a bad master for a worse one.
14:30 *the needy will lie down in security* God's poor are fed while Philistia's root dies of famine. The humble are lifted and the proud brought down (Luke 1:52-53).
14:31 *For from the north smoke is coming* A disciplined army with no stragglers fits Assyria, which took the Philistine city of Ashdod (20:1).
14:32 *That the LORD has founded Zion, and in it the afflicted of His people will take refuge* Messengers, probably from Philistia, hoped Judah would join them against Assyria. The answer: Judah's safety is in God, not alliances. When people offer us security everywhere but the Lord, our reply is the same.
15:1 *For in a night Ar of Moab was devastated* Ar and Kir, two chief cities, ruined overnight. Kir is probably Kir-hareseth (16:7). The Moabites descended from Lot (Gen 19:36-37) and lived on the plateau east of the Dead Sea, relatives of Israel and often enemies. Yet Ruth, David's great-grandmother, was a Moabitess. God's dealings with Moab were never simple hatred.
15:2 *He has gone up to the house and to Dibon, to the high places, for weeping* In distress they ran to the shrines of Chemosh (1 Kgs 11:7), who could not help. The Moabite Stone of King Mesha was found at Dibon. Shaved heads and clipped beards were signs of deep mourning.
15:5 *My heart cries out for Moab* Isaiah announces judgment on an idol-worshiping nation, yet he grieves, and through him we hear God's heart (Jer 48:31-36; Ezek 33:11). Jesus wept over Jerusalem as He foretold its fall (Luke 19:41-44). When we speak of judgment, our hearts should be broken, not hard. The refugees flee toward Zoar, where Lot once fled (Gen 19:22).
15:7 *they carry off over the wadi of the willows* Everything they stored up is now a bundle on their backs, carried across the border stream. Treasure on earth can be lost (Matt 6:19-20).
15:9 *the waters of Dimon are full of blood* The Hebrew spells it Dimon, which sounds like dam, blood, a grim wordplay. Even then a lion awaits the survivors. Those who escape one judgment while refusing God meet another. Moab's only safe place was the one it would not go to, the God of Israel.
16:1 *Send a lamb to the ruler of the land* Moab once paid Israel a tribute of a hundred thousand lambs (2 Kgs 3:4). Now from Sela, a rock fortress in Edom where refugees fled, they are to send lambs to Zion. Moab should humble itself and seek the protection of David's house.
16:3 *hide the outcasts; do not expose the fugitive* A plea for mercy, from the refugees or from Isaiah on their behalf: shade us like night at noon. God's law told Israel to care for the stranger (Deut 10:19). Even an old enemy in distress should be sheltered.
16:5 *a throne will be established in steadfast love* The heart of the chapter. Steadfast love is hesed, God's loyal covenant love. No king of Isaiah's day fully fit this. I believe it points to the Messiah of 9:7 and 11:1-5, raising up David's tent (Amos 9:11; Acts 15:16). Moab's refuge is not only Jerusalem but the King on David's throne, and Jesus is that refuge for anyone from any nation.

swift ***in*** righteousness. **6** We have heard the pride of Moab, ***it is*** very proud, its haughtiness and its pride and its arrogance; its empty boasts ***are*** not right. **7** Therefore Moab will wail for Moab; all of it will wail. For the raisin cakes of Kir-hareseth (Qir-Chareset) you will moan, utterly stricken. **8** For the fields of Heshbon (Cheshbon) have withered, the vine of Sibmah (Sivmah); the lords of the nations have struck down its choice vines; they reached as far as Jazer (Yazer), they wandered ***into*** the wilderness; its shoots were spread out, they passed over ***the*** sea. **9** Therefore I weep with the weeping of Jazer ***for*** the vine of Sibmah; I drench you ***with*** my tears, Heshbon and Elealeh (Elale); for over your summer fruit and over your harvest the shouting has fallen. **10** And gladness and rejoicing will be removed from the fruitful field, and in the vineyards it will not be sung, it will not be shouted; the treader will not tread wine in the winepresses; I have made the shouting cease. **11** Therefore my inward parts sound like the lyre for Moab, and my inner being for Kir-haresh (Qir-Chares). **12** And it will be, when it is seen that Moab has wearied itself on the high place, and it comes to its sanctuary to pray, that it will not prevail. **13** This ***is*** the word which the LORD spoke concerning Moab long ago. **14** And now the LORD has spoken, saying, "In three years, like the years of a hired laborer, the glory of Moab will be held in contempt with all the great multitude, and a remnant ***will be*** small, very little, not mighty."

ISAIAH 17

Damascus and Ephraim

1 The oracle of Damascus (Dameseq): Look, Damascus is about to be removed from ***being*** a city, and it will be a heap of ruin. **2** The cities of Aroer (Aro'er) ***will be*** abandoned; they will be for flocks, and they will lie down, and ***there will be*** none who terrifies ***them***. **3** And the fortress will cease from Ephraim (Efrayim), and the kingdom from Damascus, and the remnant of Syria (Aram); they will be like the glory of the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), declares the LORD of armies. **4** And it will be in that day ***that*** the glory of Jacob (Ya'aqov) will become low, and the fatness of his flesh will be made lean. **5** And it will be like the gathering of the harvest of standing grain, and his arm reaps the ears of grain; and it will be like one who gathers ears of grain in the valley of Rephaim (Refa'im). **6** And gleanings will be left in it like the beating of an olive tree, two ***or*** three olives at the top of the highest branch, four ***or*** five on the branches of the fruit-bearing ***tree***, declares the LORD, the God of Israel. **7** In that day man will look to his Maker, and his eyes will look to the Holy One of Israel. **8** And he will not look to the altars, the work of his hands; and what his fingers have made he will not regard, either the Asherah poles or the incense altars. **9** In that day his strong cities will be like the forsaken ***place*** of the forest and the treetop which they abandoned because of the sons of Israel; and it will be a desolation. **10** For you have forgotten the God of your salvation, and the rock of your stronghold

16:6 James 4:6; Amos 2:1; Obad 1:3,4
16:7 James 4:6; 2 Kgs 3:25; Jer 48:20
16:8 Isa 15:4; Num 32:38; Isa 24:7
16:9 Isa 15:4; Jer 40:10,12; Jer 48:32-34
16:10 Jer 48:33; Amos 5:11,17; Isa 32:10
16:11 Isa 15:5; Isa 63:15; Jer 48:36
16:12 Isa 15:2; Num 22:39,41; Jer 48:35
16:13 Isa 44:8
16:14 Isa 21:16; Isa 7:16; Isa 15:5
17:1 Acts 9:2; Zech 9:1; Amos 1:3-5
17:2 Ezek 25:5; Num 32:34; Deut 2:36
17:3 Isa 8:4; Isa 7:8,16; Hos 9:11
17:4 Isa 10:16; Isa 9:8,21; Isa 10:4
17:5 Jer 51:33; Joel 3:13; Matt 13:30,39-42
17:6 Rom 11:5; Isa 24:13; Deut 4:27
17:7 Hos 6:1; Mic 7:7; Hos 3:5
17:8 Isa 30:22; Isa 27:9; Isa 2:8
17:9 Isa 27:10; Isa 17:4,5; Isa 6:11-13
17:10 Isa 51:13; Isa 12:2; Isa 26:4

16:6 *We have heard the pride of Moab, it is very proud* Why Moab does not take the offer (Jer 48:29). Its boasts have nothing behind them. Pride still keeps people from the Son of David. It is hard to ask for shelter when you will not admit you need it.
16:7 *For the raisin cakes of Kir-hareseth you will moan* A delicacy of pressed grapes, perhaps used in worship. The small luxuries taken for granted are the first missed when judgment comes.
16:8 *the vine of Sibmah* Moab's vineyards were famous, their branches reaching to Jazer, the desert and the sea. Foreign lords have trampled the best of them.
16:9 *Therefore I weep with the weeping of Jazer* Verse 10 says "I have made the shouting cease," which sounds like God Himself. I believe the grief is God's own, carried in His prophet's voice.
16:10 *the treader will not tread wine in the winepresses* The grape harvest was a time of singing as workers trod grapes in stone presses. Joy not rooted in God can be taken in a single season (Jer 48:33).
16:11 *my inward parts sound like the lyre for Moab* Like lyre strings vibrating low. God's judgments are not cold. If He grieves over a proud pagan nation, how much more does He care for you?
16:12 *Moab has wearied itself on the high place* It wears itself out praying to Chemosh, and no one is there to hear (1 Kgs 18:26). Moab had a living God offering shelter in Zion and chose an idol that could not even hear.
16:14 *In three years, like the years of a hired laborer* The earlier word (v. 13) now comes due with an exact deadline. A hired man counts his years and works not a day more. We are not told when this was spoken, so we cannot date its fulfillment, but Moab fell under Assyria and in time disappeared as a people. God has also set the day of Christ's return (Acts 17:31).
17:1 *Damascus is about to be removed from being a city* The capital of Aram, whose king Rezin joined Israel against Judah (7:1). In 732 B.C. Tiglath-pileser took Damascus and killed Rezin (2 Kgs 16:9). Damascus was rebuilt and is a major city today, so some believe a final fulfillment remains. I read it as fulfilled plainly in 732 B.C., when it ceased to be a royal capital. It may have a future layer, but I hold that loosely and would not tie it to any headline.
17:3 *the fortress will cease from Ephraim* Samaria, Ephraim's fortress. The allies against Judah fall together, Samaria about 722 B.C., ten years after Damascus.
17:4 *the glory of Jacob will become low* Israel's prosperity under kings like Jeroboam II had made them forget God (Amos 6:1-6). Now it melts away like a strong man wasting to skin and bone.
17:6 *two or three olives at the top of the highest branch* Grace in judgment. A few olives always stayed out of reach. That is the remnant. Some from the fallen north later worshiped at Jerusalem in Hezekiah's day (2 Chr 30:11), and there is still a remnant by grace (Rom 11:5).
17:7 *In that day man will look to his Maker* The goal of judgment. Sometimes God must take everything else away before we look up. That feels harsh, but it is mercy, like a shepherd bringing a straying sheep home.
17:8 *either the Asherah poles or the incense altars* Asherah poles were wooden poles or images for a Canaanite goddess. You cannot look to your Maker and to the things you made at the same time (1 Thess 1:9).
17:10 *For you have forgotten the God of your salvation* The reason for everything. Many think the "pleasant plantings" were gardens for foreign fertility gods, trusted for a good harvest instead of the LORD. Forgetting God always leads to replacing Him with something else.

you have not remembered; therefore you plant pleasant plantings, and you sow it ***with*** the vine branch of a stranger. **11** In the day of your planting you make ***it*** grow, and in the morning you make your seed sprout; a heap ***is*** the harvest in a day of sickness and incurable pain. **12** Woe ***to*** the tumult of many peoples; they roar like the roaring of the seas; and the rumbling of nations; they rumble like the rumbling of mighty waters. **13** Nations rumble like the rumbling of many waters, and He will rebuke it, and it will flee far away, and it will be chased like the chaff of the mountains before a wind and like whirling dust before a storm wind. **14** At evening time, and look, sudden terror! Before morning it is no more. This ***is*** the portion of those who plunder us, and the lot of those who despoil us.

ISAIAH 18

Cush

1 Woe, land of the whirring of wings, which ***is*** beyond the rivers of Cush (Kush), **2** which sends envoys by the sea, and in vessels of papyrus on the face of the waters: "Go, swift messengers, to a nation tall and smooth-skinned, to a people feared from it and onward, a nation of strength, strength, and trampling, whose land the rivers divide." **3** All inhabitants of the world and dwellers of ***the*** earth, when a banner is lifted up ***on the*** mountains, you will see ***it***, and when a trumpet is blown, you will hear ***it***. **4** For thus the LORD said to me, "I will be quiet, and I will look on from My dwelling place, like dazzling heat upon light, like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest." **5** For before harvest, when the bud is finished, and the blossom becomes a ripening grape, then He will cut off the shoots with the pruning knives, and the tendrils He will remove, He will cut away. **6** They will be left together for the birds of prey of the mountains and for the beasts of the earth; and the birds of prey will spend the summer on it, and every beast of the earth will spend the winter on it. **7** At that time a gift will be brought to the LORD of armies ***from*** a people tall and smooth-skinned, and from a people feared from it and onward, a nation of strength, strength, and trampling, whose land the rivers divide, to the place of the name of the LORD of armies, Mount Zion (Tsiyon).

ISAIAH 19

Egypt Judged

1 The oracle of Egypt (Mitsrayim): Look, the LORD is riding on a swift cloud, and He is coming ***to*** Egypt; and the idols of Egypt will tremble before Him, and the heart of Egypt will melt within it. **2** And I will stir up Egypt against Egypt, and they will fight, each against his brother and each against his neighbor, city against city, kingdom against kingdom. **3** And the spirit of Egypt will be emptied out within it, and its counsel I will swallow up; and they will seek the idols and the mutterers and the mediums and the spiritists. **4** And I will hand over Egypt into the hand of a cruel master, and a strong king will rule over them, declares the Lord, the LORD of

17:11 Gal 6:7; Gal 6:8; Job 4:8
17:12 Luke 21:25; Rev 17:15; Ps 18:4
17:13 Rev 14:2; Ps 9:5; Isa 41:15,16
17:14 Isa 10:28-32; 2 Kgs 19:3,35; Ps 37:36
18:1 Zeph 3:10; 2 Kgs 19:9; Ezek 30:4,5
18:2 Gen 10:8,9; 2 Chr 12:2-4; 2 Chr 14:9
18:3 Matt 13:16; Isa 5:26; Isa 26:11
18:4 Isa 26:21; Hos 5:15; Isa 18:7
18:5 Song 2:13,15; Ezek 17:6-10; Isa 17:11
18:6 Jer 7:33; Ezek 32:4-6; Ezek 39:17-20
18:7 Acts 8:27; Acts 8:28; Isa 45:14
19:1 Rev 1:7; Acts 1:9; Joel 3:19
19:2 Matt 24:7; Mark 13:8; Luke 21:10
19:3 Isa 8:19; Dan 2:2; 1 Chr 10:13
19:4 Isa 20:4; Jer 46:26; Ezek 29:19

17:11 *a heap is the harvest in a day of sickness and incurable pain* Their pagan gardens bloomed fast, but they reaped grief (Gal 6:7-8). What we plant in place of God never brings the harvest it promises.
17:12 *they roar like the roaring of the seas* The sea often stands for the restless nations (Rev 17:15). Here it is Assyria's army of many conquered peoples flooding toward Judah (8:7-8).
17:13 *and He will rebuke it, and it will flee far away* God only rebukes, and they are blown off like chaff (Ps 1:4). Armies that seem unstoppable are weightless in His hand.
17:14 *At evening time, and look, sudden terror! Before morning it is no more* Fulfilled exactly in 701 B.C., when 185,000 Assyrians lay dead by morning (37:36). I believe it also points ahead to the nations gathering against Jerusalem at the end of the age and being destroyed when Christ returns (Zech 14:2-3; Rev 19:19). God's people may be plundered for a night, but joy comes in the morning (Ps 30:5).
18:1 *Woe, land of the whirring of wings, which is beyond the rivers of Cush* Cush is the land south of Egypt along the upper Nile, roughly Sudan today, called Ethiopia in older Bibles. The whirring may be its insect swarms or its fast river boats. God sees a real nation far from Jerusalem.
18:2 *Go, swift messengers, to a nation tall and smooth-skinned* Kings from Cush then ruled Egypt too, and their envoys came in papyrus boats, most likely seeking partners against Assyria. Isaiah describes them with respect but sends them home. Judah's safety would come from the LORD, not a treaty.
18:3 *when a banner is lifted up on the mountains, you will see it* When God acts, no one will miss it. I believe this was seen first in Assyria's sudden defeat, and it looks ahead to the great trumpet and every eye seeing Christ return (Matt 24:30-31).
18:4 *I will be quiet, and I will look on from My dwelling place* While the nations rush about making alliances, God sits still and watches, steady as the sun's heat or harvest dew. The Bible does not fully say why He waits, but He sees and acts at the right time. His quiet is not His absence.
18:5 *then He will cut off the shoots with the pruning knives* Assyria's plans looked ready for harvest, and God cut them off, as in 701 B.C. (37:36). The fallen army is left to birds and beasts (v. 6). Those who set themselves against God's purpose will not stand.
18:7 *At that time a gift will be brought to the LORD of armies* The same feared people will bring gifts to Mount Zion. I believe this points to the Millennium, when the nations worship the King in Jerusalem (Zeph 3:10; Zech 14:16). A first taste came when an Ethiopian official read Isaiah and believed in Jesus (Acts 8:26-39).
19:1 *the LORD is riding on a swift cloud, and He is coming to Egypt* An oracle is a solemn message, often of judgment. Egypt worshiped many gods, and every one trembles before the real God. Idols cannot protect the people who made them.
19:2 *I will stir up Egypt against Egypt* Civil war. Egypt was long divided among rival rulers in this period. A nation that looks strong outside can crumble from within.
19:3 *they will seek the idols and the mutterers and the mediums and the spiritists* When people will not seek the living God, they look in dark places, and the answers only add to their confusion (8:19).
19:4 *a strong king will rule over them* Teachers suggest different rulers. Assyria's Esarhaddon took Memphis about 671 B.C., and other foreign kings followed. I take it as fulfilled in that run of conquest. The land Judah trusted could not even keep itself free.

armies. **5** And the waters will be dried up from the sea, and the river will become parched and will be dry. **6** And the rivers will stink; the streams of Egypt (Matsor) will become low and will dry up; reed and rush will wither. **7** The bare places by the Nile (Ye'or), by the mouth of the Nile, and all the sown land of the Nile will be dry; it is driven away, and it is no more. **8** And the fishermen will lament, and all who cast a hook into the Nile will mourn, and those who spread a net on the face of the waters will languish. **9** And the workers of combed flax will be ashamed, and those who weave white cloth. **10** And its foundations will be crushed; all who work for wages ***will be*** grieved of soul. **11** The officials of Zoan (Tso'an) ***are*** only fools; the wise ones of the counselors of Pharaoh ***give*** senseless counsel. How will you say to Pharaoh, "I ***am*** a son of the wise, a son of kings of old"? **12** Where ***are*** they, then, your wise ones? And let them tell you, please, and let them know what the LORD of armies has planned against Egypt. **13** The officials of Zoan have become fools; the officials of Memphis (Nof) have been deceived; they have led Egypt astray, the cornerstone of its tribes. **14** The LORD has mixed within it a spirit of distortion, and they have led Egypt astray in all its work, as a drunkard staggers in his vomit. **15** And ***there*** will not be for Egypt a work which head and tail, palm branch and bulrush, can do.

Egypt and Assyria Turn to the LORD

16 In that day Egypt will be like women, and it will tremble and be in dread because of the waving of the hand of the LORD of armies, which He is waving over it. **17** And the land of Judah (Yehuda) will become a terror to Egypt; everyone to whom one mentions it will be in dread because of the plan of the LORD of armies which He is planning against it. **18** In that day five cities in the land of Egypt will be speaking the language of Canaan (Kena'an) and swearing to the LORD of armies; one will be called City of Destruction (Ir-Heres). **19** In that day there will be an altar to the LORD in the middle of the land of Egypt, and a pillar to the LORD beside its border. **20** And it will become a sign and a witness to the LORD of armies in the land of Egypt; for they will cry out to the LORD because of oppressors, and He will send them a savior and a defender, and he will rescue them. **21** And the LORD will make Himself known to Egypt, and Egypt will know the LORD in that day; and they will serve ***with*** sacrifice and grain offering, and they will vow a vow to the LORD and will pay ***it***. **22** And the LORD will strike Egypt, striking and healing; and they will return to the LORD, and He will be entreated by them, and He will heal them. **23** In that day there will be a highway from Egypt toward Assyria (Ashur), and Assyria will come into Egypt, and Egypt into Assyria; and Egypt will serve with Assyria. **24** In that day Israel (Yisra'el) will be a third to Egypt and to Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth, **25** whom the LORD of armies will bless, saying, "Blessed ***be*** My people Egypt, and the work of My hands Assyria, and My inheritance Israel."

19:5 Jer 51:36; Ezek 30:12; Zech 10:11
19:6 Isa 37:25; Exod 2:3; Job 8:11
19:7 Isa 32:20; Jer 14:4; Ezek 19:13
19:8 Ezek 47:10; Hab 1:15; Num 11:5
19:9 Ezek 27:7; Prov 7:16; 1 Kgs 10:28
19:10 Exod 7:19; Exod 8:5; Deut 11:10
19:11 1 Cor 1:19; 1 Cor 1:20; Num 13:22
19:12 1 Cor 1:20; Isa 5:21; Isa 47:10-13
19:13 Jer 2:16; Ezek 30:13; Jer 46:14,19
19:14 1 Kgs 22:20-23; Ezek 14:7-9; 2 Thess 2:11
19:15 Isa 9:14,15; Ps 128:2; Prov 14:23
19:16 Jer 51:30; Nah 3:13; Isa 11:15
19:17 Isa 14:24,26,27; Dan 4:35; Isa 36:1
19:18 Zeph 3:9; Zech 2:11; Isa 2:11
19:19 Gen 28:18; Josh 22:10,26; Exod 24:4
19:20 James 5:4; Isa 55:13; Josh 4:20,21
19:21 Isa 11:9; Hab 2:14; Mal 1:11
19:22 Deut 32:39; Heb 12:11; Hos 14:1
19:23 Acts 2:10; Isa 11:16; Isa 35:8-10
19:24 Gal 3:14; Acts 2:10; Isa 65:8,22
19:25 Eph 1:3; Acts 2:10; Isa 29:23

19:5 *the river will become parched and will be dry* Egypt's whole life hung on the Nile's yearly flood. "The sea" likely means the Nile itself, so wide it was called a sea. The God who made the river can stop it. The canals stink and the riverbank fields blow away (vv. 6-7). What people build their security on can become the very thing that fails them.
19:9 *the workers of combed flax will be ashamed* Egypt was famous for fine white linen woven from Nile flax. One failure leads to the next, rippling through a whole economy.
19:10 *its foundations will be crushed* Probably the leaders and wealthy who held society up. From the top to the hired workers at the bottom, no class is spared.
19:11 *The officials of Zoan are only fools* Zoan in the delta was where Pharaoh's officials gathered. Egypt was proud of its wisdom and its long lines of wise men. Wisdom that leaves God out ends in foolishness (1 Cor 1:20).
19:13 *the officials of Memphis have been deceived* Memphis was the ancient capital. The cornerstone that should hold the nation together has led it astray.
19:14 *as a drunkard staggers in his vomit* The picture is ugly on purpose. God gives people over to the confusion they chose (Rom 1:28). No one, high or low, can get anything done (v. 15; Ps 127:1).
19:16 *In that day Egypt will be like women* Prose now, with "in that day" six times in verses 16-25. God waves His hand over Egypt as in Moses' day (Exod 14:16, 26). Fear is the first step, not the last.
19:18 *five cities in the land of Egypt will be speaking the language of Canaan* Hebrew, and swearing loyalty to the LORD. Some ancient copies read City of the Sun, Heliopolis, a center of sun worship. If so, a city of false worship becomes one of true worship. Readers differ on details, but the point is plain: Egypt will turn to the LORD.
19:19 *there will be an altar to the LORD in the middle of the land of Egypt* Like the altars and pillars of Abraham and Jacob (Gen 12:7; 28:18), signs the land belongs to the LORD. The old house of slavery becomes a place of worship.
19:20 *He will send them a savior and a defender* Egypt cries out, and God answers as in the days of the judges. I believe the final Savior is Jesus Christ, for no other can bring a nation to know God (Acts 4:12). Those who cried to idols (19:3) now cry to the LORD.
19:21 *Egypt will know the LORD in that day* More than defeat, this is conversion. I take it as the Millennium, when the nations worship the King (Zech 14:16-19).
19:22 *striking and healing* God strikes Egypt so it will return, and then He heals. His correction is never meant to destroy His children but to bring us home (Heb 12:6, 11).
19:23 *there will be a highway from Egypt toward Assyria* Armies once marched this road between the two great powers. In that day worshipers will travel it together. Only God turns old enemies into fellow worshipers. I believe it will be seen in Christ's thousand-year reign.
19:25 *Blessed be My people Egypt, and the work of My hands Assyria, and My inheritance Israel* Israel is a blessing in the middle of the earth, fulfilling the promise to Abraham (Gen 12:3). "My people" and "the work of My hands" were Israel's names, now given to Egypt and Assyria. Yet Israel is still "My inheritance." God brings in the Gentiles without throwing Israel out (Rom 11:1, 25-26).

ISAIAH 20

Naked and Barefoot

1 In the year of the coming of ***the*** supreme commander to Ashdod, when Sargon the king of Assyria (Ashur) sent him, and he fought against Ashdod and captured it, **2** at that time the LORD spoke by the hand of Isaiah (Yeshayahu) the son of Amoz (Amots), saying, "Go, and loosen the sackcloth from your waist, and take off your sandals from your feet." And he did so, walking naked and barefoot. **3** And the LORD said, "Just as My servant Isaiah has walked naked and barefoot three years ***as*** a sign and a portent against Egypt (Mitsrayim) and against Cush (Kush), **4** so the king of Assyria will lead away the captives of Egypt and the exiles of Cush, young men and old ***men***, naked and barefoot, with buttocks uncovered, the nakedness of Egypt. **5** And they will be dismayed and ashamed because of Cush their hope and because of Egypt their boast. **6** And the inhabitant of this coastland will say in that day, 'Look, thus ***is*** our hope, where we fled for help to be delivered from before the king of Assyria; and how will we ourselves escape?'"

ISAIAH 21

Babylon Has Fallen

1 The oracle of the wilderness of the sea: Like storm winds in the Negeb (Negev) sweeping through, it comes from the wilderness, from a land to be feared. **2** A harsh vision has been told to me: the traitor is acting treacherously, and the destroyer is destroying. Go up, Elam! Lay siege, Media (Maday)! All its groaning I have made to cease. **3** Therefore my loins are filled with anguish; pangs have seized me like the pangs of ***a woman*** giving birth; I am bent over from hearing; I am terrified from seeing. **4** My heart has wandered; shuddering has overwhelmed me; the twilight of my desire He has made into trembling for me. **5** Arranging the table, spreading out the rug, eating, drinking! Arise, officials; anoint a shield! **6** For thus the Lord has said to me, "Go, station the watchman; what he sees, let him tell." **7** And he will see a rider, a pair of horsemen, a rider of a donkey, a rider of a camel; and he will listen ***with*** attentiveness, great attentiveness. **8** And he called out ***like*** a lion, "On a watchtower, Lord, I am standing continually by day, and at my post I am stationed all the nights. **9** And look, this ***is*** coming: a rider, a man, a pair of horsemen." And he answered and said, "Babylon (Bavel) has fallen, has fallen, and all the carved images of her gods He has shattered to the ground." **10** My threshed one, and the son of my threshing floor, what I have heard from the LORD of armies, the God of Israel (Yisra'el), I have told to you. **11** The oracle of Dumah (Duma): ***One*** is calling to me from Seir (Se'ir), "Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?" **12** The watchman says, "Morning comes, and also night. If you will inquire, inquire; return, come." **13** The oracle against Arabia (Arav): In the thicket in Arabia you will lodge, caravans of Dedanites. **14** To meet the thirsty bring water, inhabitants of the land of Tema; with his bread they have met the fugitive. **15** For they have fled from before swords, from before a drawn sword, and from before a bent bow, and from before the weight of battle. **16** For thus the Lord has said to me, "Within yet a

20:1 2 Kgs 18:17; 1 Sam 6:17; Jer 25:20
20:2 1 Sam 19:24; Mic 1:8,11; Zech 13:4
20:3 Isa 8:18; Num 14:34; Ezek 4:5,6
20:4 Isa 19:4; Jer 13:22,26; Jer 46:26
20:5 Isa 30:3,5,7; 2 Kgs 18:21; Ezek 29:6,7
20:6 Matt 23:33; Heb 2:3; 1 Thess 5:3
21:1 Isa 13:1; Jer 51:42; Zech 9:14
21:2 Isa 33:1; Ps 60:3; Isa 24:16
21:3 Isa 13:8; Isa 26:17; Ps 48:6
21:4 Isa 5:11-14; 1 Sam 25:36-38; 2 Sam 13:28,29
21:5 Isa 22:13,14; Dan 5:1-5; 1 Cor 15:32
21:6 2 Kgs 9:17-20; Jer 51:12,13; Ezek 3:17
21:7 Isa 21:9; Isa 37:24; Heb 2:1
21:8 Hab 2:1,2; Isa 5:29; Jer 4:7
21:9 Rev 14:8; Rev 18:2; Rev 18:21
21:10 Jer 51:33; Mic 4:13; Isa 41:15,16
21:11 Gen 25:14; 1 Chr 1:30; Isa 34:1-17
21:12 Isa 17:14; Jer 50:27; Ezek 7:5-7,10,12
21:13 Gal 4:25; Jer 25:23,24; Gen 25:3
21:14 Gen 25:15; Job 6:19; 1 Chr 1:30
21:15 Job 6:19,20
21:16 Isa 16:14; Isa 60:7; Ps 120:5

20:1 *when Sargon the king of Assyria sent him* Philistine Ashdod rebelled, counting on Egypt, and was captured about 711 B.C. Sargon was once known only from this verse, until digs uncovered his palace and records, a reminder that the Bible's history can be trusted.
20:2 *walking naked and barefoot* Sackcloth was the rough garment of mourners and prophets. "Naked" most likely means stripped to an undergarment, the way prisoners of war were marched away. Isaiah let his own life become the message, even at the cost of his dignity.
20:3 *three years as a sign and a portent against Egypt and against Cush* A long time to be a walking sign. God calls him "My servant," a title of honor. Faithfulness can look foolish to the world, but God sees and honors it.
20:4 *so the king of Assyria will lead away the captives of Egypt* Esarhaddon conquered Egypt and took Memphis in 671 B.C., and Ashurbanipal pushed farther south. What Isaiah acted out came true.
20:6 *and how will we ourselves escape* The coastland is Philistia and, by extension, Judah. It is the honest cry of anyone whose false hope has collapsed. Isaiah's answer is always the same: turn to the LORD (Ps 20:7).
21:1 *The oracle of the wilderness of the sea* Babylon (v. 9), in the flat land of southern Mesopotamia where rivers and marshes spread out like a sea. The attack is like a sudden desert windstorm out of the Negeb, the dry land south of Judah.
21:2 *Go up, Elam! Lay siege, Media* Elam lay east of Babylon, the Medes to the northeast. In 539 B.C. Cyrus of Persia, with the Medes, took Babylon. I take this as a plain prophecy of that event, given well over a century ahead.
21:3 *pangs have seized me like the pangs of a woman giving birth* A true prophet does not deliver judgment with a cold heart. Even deserved judgment grieves him, a good word for us when we speak of it.
21:5 *Arranging the table, spreading out the rug, eating, drinking* While danger is at the door, Babylon's leaders feast. Then the order: oil the leather shields so they will not crack. Belshazzar's feast ended with the city's fall that same night (Dan 5:30).
21:8 *On a watchtower, Lord, I am standing continually by day* Watching is slow, hard work, and most of the time nothing happens. Faithful waiting is part of the job, as for the church awaiting Christ (Luke 12:37).
21:9 *Babylon has fallen, has fallen* Her gods could not save her. Nearly the same words ring out over end-times Babylon (Rev 14:8; 18:2). Both falls are certain because the same God has spoken.
21:11 *Watchman, what of the night* Dumah sounds like the word for silence, and Seir is the mountain country of Edom. It is the cry of a people under Assyria's shadow, asking when the night will end.
21:12 *Morning comes, and also night. If you will inquire, inquire; return, come* Relief may come, but darkness will return. I take the invitation as a door left open. The only lasting morning comes to those who turn to the LORD.
21:14 *To meet the thirsty bring water, inhabitants of the land of Tema* Hospitality was a sacred duty in the desert. Even in judgment there is a call to mercy for those running for their lives.
21:16 *all the glory of Kedar will be finished* Kedar was a strong Arabian tribe from Ishmael (Gen 25:13). Within a year, counted like a hired man's contract, its archers will be few. Babylon, Edom and Arabia seemed beyond Judah's reach, but none was beyond God's.

year, like the years of a hired laborer, all the glory of Kedar (Qedar) will be finished. **17** And the remnant of the number of the archers, the warriors of the sons of Kedar, will be few; for the LORD, the God of Israel, has spoken."

ISAIAH 22

The Valley of Vision

1 The oracle of the valley of vision: What ***is the matter*** with you, then, that you have gone up, all of you, to the roofs? **2** Full of noises, turbulent city, jubilant town, your slain ***are*** not slain by the sword, and not dead in battle. **3** All your rulers have fled together; without the bow they have been captured; all who were found of you were captured together; they had fled far away. **4** Therefore I said, "Look away from me; let me weep bitterly; do not insist on comforting me over the devastation of the daughter of my people." **5** For ***it is*** a day of tumult and trampling and confusion for the Lord GOD of armies in the valley of vision, a breaking down of a wall and a crying out to the mountain. **6** And Elam took up a quiver, with chariots of men ***and*** horsemen; and Kir (Qir) uncovered a shield. **7** And it was ***that*** the choicest of your valleys were full of chariots, and the horsemen surely took ***their*** stand toward the gate. **8** And he uncovered the covering of Judah (Yehuda); and you looked in that day to the weapons of the House of the Forest. **9** And you saw the breaches of the city of David, that they were many; and you gathered the waters of the lower pool. **10** And you counted the houses of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), and you pulled down the houses to fortify the wall. **11** And you made a reservoir between the two walls for the water of the old pool; and you did not look to the One who made it, and the One who formed it long ago you did not see. **12** And the Lord GOD of armies called in that day for weeping and for mourning and for baldness and for girding on sackcloth. **13** And look, joy and gladness, killing cattle and slaughtering sheep, eating flesh and drinking wine: "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die." **14** And the LORD of armies has revealed Himself in my ears: "Surely this iniquity will not be atoned for you until you die," says the Lord GOD of armies.

Shebna and Eliakim

15 Thus says the Lord GOD of armies: "Go, come to this steward, to Shebna (Shevna), who ***is*** over the house: **16** What ***is*** yours here, and whom ***do*** you ***have*** here, that you have dug out a tomb for yourself here, digging out his tomb on high, cutting a dwelling for himself in the rock? **17** Look, the LORD is about to hurl you away ***with*** a hurling, O man, and to grasp you firmly. **18** He will surely wind you up ***in*** a winding, like a ball, into a land broad on both sides; there you will die, and there the chariots of your glory ***will be***, the disgrace of the house of your master. **19** And I will push you from your office, and from your post He will tear you down. **20** And it will be in that day ***that*** I will summon My servant, Eliakim (Elyaqim) the son of Hilkiah (Chilqiyahu), **21** and I will clothe him ***with*** your tunic, and ***with*** your sash I will make him firm, and your authority I will put into his hand; and he will become a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. **22** And I will put the key of the house of David on his shoulder; and he will open, and ***there will be***

21:17 Isa 1:20; Num 23:19; Zech 1:6
22:1 Jer 21:13; Ps 125:2; Isa 15:3
22:2 Isa 32:13; Isa 23:7; Jer 14:18
22:3 Isa 3:1-8; 2 Kgs 25:4-7,18-21; Jer 39:4-7
22:4 Matt 2:18; Luke 19:41; Jer 9:1
22:5 Matt 24:16; Isa 37:3; Isa 10:6
22:6 2 Kgs 16:9; Isa 21:2; Amos 1:5
22:7 Isa 8:7,8; Isa 10:28-32; Isa 37:34
22:8 1 Kgs 7:2; 1 Kgs 10:17; Isa 36:1-3
22:9 2 Kgs 20:20; 2 Chr 32:1-6,30
22:11 Neh 3:16; Isa 8:17; Isa 17:7
22:12 Rom 13:13; James 4:9; Rev 18:7
22:13 1 Cor 15:32; Rom 13:13; James 4:9
22:14 John 8:22; Isa 5:9; 1 Sam 3:14
22:15 Acts 8:27; Isa 36:3; 2 Kgs 18:18,37
22:16 Matt 27:60; Mark 15:46; 2 Sam 18:18
22:17 Esth 7:8; Job 9:24; Jer 14:3
22:18 Isa 17:13; Amos 7:17
22:19 Job 40:11,12; Ezek 17:24; Ps 75:6,7
22:20 Isa 36:3,11,22; 2 Kgs 18:18,37; Isa 37:2
22:21 Gen 45:8; Gen 41:42,43; 1 Sam 18:4
22:22 Rev 3:7; Job 12:14; Rev 1:18

22:1 *The oracle of the valley of vision* Unlike the oracles around it, this one is about Jerusalem, the city of Isaiah's visions, ringed by valleys. The people are on their flat rooftops, perhaps celebrating, perhaps watching the enemy.
22:2 *your slain are not slain by the sword* Many think they died of hunger and disease in a siege, or while fleeing. A city can be loud with celebration and still be on the edge of ruin.
22:3 *All your rulers have fled together* Zedekiah fled by night and was caught near Jericho (2 Kgs 25:4-6). I believe Isaiah may be looking past his own day to the fall of 586 B.C., though teachers differ. Either way, leaders abandon their people.
22:4 *let me weep bitterly* While the city laughs, the prophet weeps, as Jesus wept over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41-44). A heart close to God breaks over sin and its cost.
22:6 *And Elam took up a quiver* Soldiers from distant lands, Elam and Kir, where Assyria exiled Damascus (2 Kgs 16:9). Far-off nations are at Jerusalem's door, and chariots fill its valleys (v. 7).
22:8 *you looked in that day to the weapons of the House of the Forest* Solomon's cedar hall where shields were stored (1 Kgs 7:2; 10:17). Being prepared is not wrong. The problem was where they placed their trust.
22:10 *you pulled down the houses to fortify the wall* Archaeologists have found a thick wall from this period built over the remains of houses. Inspecting walls and gathering water were sensible, and people gave up their homes for it.
22:11 *you did not look to the One who made it* The heart of the chapter. Hezekiah also cut a tunnel through rock to bring Gihon's water into the city, and it can still be walked today (2 Kgs 20:20; 2 Chr 32:30). They checked walls, water and weapons but never looked to God. We too plan and prepare and forget to pray.
22:13 *Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die* Instead of repenting they party. Paul shows this is how people live when they do not believe in the resurrection (1 Cor 15:32). Despair can look a lot like celebration.
22:14 *Surely this iniquity will not be atoned for you until you die* A hard word. I take it that those who laughed at God's call to repent would carry their guilt to the grave. There can come a point when the door of repentance is shut (Heb 3:15).
22:16 *that you have dug out a tomb for yourself here* Shebna, steward over the royal household, carved a costly tomb high in the rock while the nation was in danger, thinking of his own legacy. Tombs from this time have been found cut into the hills near Jerusalem.
22:18 *He will surely wind you up in a winding, like a ball* He wanted to stay forever and is tossed into a wide country to die, his chariots going with him into disgrace (Prov 16:18).
22:19 *I will push you from your office* Later Shebna appears as a scribe while Eliakim is over the house (36:3). It seems he was demoted. God gives positions of power and can take them away.
22:20 *My servant, Eliakim the son of Hilkiah* A title of honor. Shebna served himself. Eliakim would serve God and the people.
22:22 *I will put the key of the house of David on his shoulder* The steward's key decided who entered the palace. Jesus takes these words for Himself as the One who has the key of David (Rev 3:7). Christ alone opens the door to the King's house, and no one can shut it.

none who shuts; and he will shut, and ***there will be*** none who opens. **23** And I will drive him ***as*** a tent peg in a firm place, and he will become a throne of glory for the house of his father. **24** And they will hang on him all the glory of the house of his father, the offspring and the offshoots, all the vessels of the small ***kind***, from the vessels of bowls even to all the vessels of jars. **25** In that day, declares the LORD of armies, the tent peg that was driven in a firm place will be removed; and it will be cut down and will fall, and the burden that ***was*** on it will be cut off; for the LORD has spoken."

ISAIAH 23

Tyre

1 The oracle of Tyre (Tsor): Wail, ships of Tarshish, for it has been devastated, without house, without entrance; from the land of Cyprus (Kiti) it has been revealed to them. **2** Be silent, inhabitants of the coastland, the merchant of Sidon (Tsidon); those who pass over the sea have filled you. **3** And on many waters ***was*** the seed of Shihor (Shichor), the harvest of the Nile (Ye'or), her revenue; and she became the trade of nations. **4** Be ashamed, Sidon, for the sea has spoken, the stronghold of the sea, saying, "I have not been in labor, and I have not given birth, and I have not brought up young men, ***nor*** raised virgins." **5** When the report ***comes*** to Egypt (Mitsrayim), they will be in anguish according to the report of Tyre. **6** Pass over to Tarshish; wail, inhabitants of the coastland. **7** ***Is*** this your jubilant ***city***, whose origin ***is*** from the days of antiquity, whose feet carried her far away to sojourn? **8** Who has planned this against Tyre, the bestower of crowns, whose traders ***were*** princes, whose merchants ***were*** the honored of the earth? **9** The LORD of armies has planned it, to profane the pride of all splendor, to treat with contempt all the honored of the earth. **10** Pass over your land like the Nile, daughter of Tarshish; ***there is*** no restraint any longer. **11** He has stretched out His hand over the sea; He has made kingdoms tremble; the LORD has given command concerning Canaan (Kena'an) to destroy its strongholds. **12** And He said, "You will not again exult any more,
oppressed one, virgin daughter of Sidon. Arise, pass over to Cyprus; even there ***there*** will be no rest for you." **13** Look, the land of the Chaldeans (Kasdim): this ***is*** the people ***that*** was not; Assyria (Ashur) assigned it to desert creatures; they raised up its siege towers; they stripped bare its palaces; he made it a ruin. **14** Wail, ships of Tarshish, for your stronghold has been devastated. **15** And it will be in that day ***that*** Tyre will be forgotten seventy years, like the days of one king. At the end of seventy years it will be for Tyre like the song of the prostitute: **16** "Take a lyre, go around the city, forgotten prostitute; play well, sing many songs, so that you may be remembered." **17** And it will be at the end of seventy years ***that*** the LORD will visit Tyre, and she will return to her hire, and she will prostitute herself with all the kingdoms of the earth on the face of the ground. **18** And her profit and her hire will be holiness to the LORD; it will not be stored up, and it will not be hoarded; for her profit will be for those who dwell before the LORD, for eating to satisfaction and for choice covering.

22:23 Ezra 9:8; Zech 10:4; 1 Sam 2:8
22:24 Gen 41:44,45; Gen 47:11-25; Dan 6:1-3
22:25 Isa 46:11; Mic 4:4; Isa 22:15,16
23:1 Matt 11:22; Mark 3:8; Mark 7:24
23:2 Matt 11:22; Mark 3:8; Mark 7:24
23:3 Mark 3:8; 1 Chr 13:5; Jer 2:18
23:4 Matt 11:22; Mark 3:8; Mark 7:24
23:5 Matt 11:22; Mark 3:8; Luke 10:13
23:6 Isa 23:10,12; Isa 21:15; Isa 23:1,2
23:7 Isa 22:2; Josh 19:29; Isa 47:1,2
23:8 Rev 18:23; Matt 11:22; Mark 3:8
23:9 James 4:6; Rev 18:11; Isa 13:11
23:10 Isa 23:14; 1 Sam 28:20; Job 12:21
23:11 Zech 9:3,4; Isa 2:19; Isa 14:16,17
23:12 Matt 11:22; Mark 3:8; Mark 7:24
23:13 Acts 7:4; Isa 13:19; Gen 11:28,31
23:14 Isa 23:1,6; Ezek 27:25-30; Rev 18:11-19
23:15 Matt 11:22; Mark 3:8; Luke 10:13
23:16 Mark 3:8; Prov 7:10-12; Jer 30:14
23:17 Rev 18:9; Rev 17:2; Matt 11:22
23:18 Mark 3:8; Acts 21:3; Acts 21:4

22:23 *I will drive him as a tent peg in a firm place* A peg in the wall held heavy household things. Eliakim would be secure and dependable.
22:25 *the tent peg that was driven in a firm place will be removed* Teachers differ on whether Eliakim later failed or this returns to Shebna. I take it as a warning that even the best human leader can fail under the weight people put on him. Only Christ, the true holder of David's key, never gives way.
23:1 *Wail, ships of Tarshish* Tarshish was a far western port, most likely in Spain, and its ships were the great ocean traders. Coming home by way of Cyprus, they hear Tyre is destroyed. There is no harbor to come back to.
23:2 *the merchant of Sidon* Tyre's older sister city to the north. The coast grown rich by sea trade has nothing to say.
23:3 *the harvest of the Nile, her revenue* Tyre did not grow much. She carried others' goods, like Egypt's grain, and became the trade of nations.
23:5 *When the report comes to Egypt, they will be in anguish* Egypt sold grain through Tyre. In a world tied together by trade, one city's collapse is felt everywhere, as when a great financial center fails today.
23:7 *whose feet carried her far away to sojourn* Ancient Tyre planted colonies far away, Carthage among them. Now her own people will be scattered (v. 6).
23:9 *The LORD of armies has planned it, to profane the pride of all splendor* Who could bring down a city that crowned kings (v. 8)? God has nothing against beauty or honest trade, but He is against pride (Jas 4:6).
23:10 *there is no restraint any longer* I take it that with Tyre's grip broken, her colonies are on their own, though teachers read it several ways. Tyre's control is gone.
23:11 *He has stretched out His hand over the sea* Canaan is the old name for the coast of Tyre and Sidon. No harbor is beyond the reach of the God of Israel.
23:13 *Look, the land of the Chaldeans* Sennacherib destroyed Babylon in 689 B.C. If Babylon could fall, so could Tyre.
23:15 *Tyre will be forgotten seventy years, like the days of one king* About one long reign or lifetime. Nebuchadnezzar besieged Tyre thirteen years in the 500s B.C., and its power waned under Babylon's rule (Jer 25:11).
23:16 *Take a lyre, go around the city, forgotten prostitute* A harsh picture of a city that sold itself to anyone for profit, described in the Bible's terms for unfaithfulness.
23:17 *she will prostitute herself with all the kingdoms of the earth* Tyre recovered and became a great trader again. Revelation uses this picture for end-times Babylon and her merchants (Rev 18:3, 11-19).
23:18 *her profit and her hire will be holiness to the LORD* A surprise. There were believers in Tyre, and Paul stayed a week with them (Acts 21:3-4). I also believe this looks ahead to the Millennium, when the wealth of the nations comes to the King (60:5). God can take what was used for greed and use it for His glory.

ISAIAH 24

The Earth Laid Waste

1 Look, the LORD is about to empty the earth and lay it waste,
and He will twist its surface and scatter its inhabitants. **2** And it will be, like the people, like the priest; like the servant, like his master; like the maidservant, like her mistress; like the buyer, like the seller; like the lender, like the borrower; like the creditor, like the one who owes him. **3** The earth will surely be emptied, and it will surely be plundered, for the LORD has spoken this word. **4** The earth has mourned, it has withered; the world has languished, it has withered; the exalted of the people of the earth have languished. **5** And the earth has been polluted under its inhabitants, for they have transgressed laws, they have overstepped the statute, they have broken the everlasting covenant. **6** Therefore a curse has consumed the earth, and those who dwell in it are held guilty; therefore the inhabitants of the earth have dwindled, and few of mankind are left. **7** The new wine has mourned, the vine has languished; all the glad of heart have groaned. **8** The gaiety of tambourines has ceased; the uproar of the jubilant has stopped; the gaiety of the lyre has ceased. **9** With song they will not drink wine; strong drink will be bitter to those who drink it. **10** The town of formlessness has been broken; every house has been shut up from entering.

11 ***There is*** an outcry over the wine in the streets; all gladness has turned to evening; the gaiety of the earth has departed. **12** Desolation has remained in the city, and the gate will be crushed ***to*** ruin. **13** For thus it will be in the midst of the earth among the peoples, like the beating of an olive tree, like gleanings when the grape harvest has ended. **14** They will lift up their voice; they will shout for joy; in the majesty of the LORD they cry aloud from ***the*** west.
15 Therefore glorify the LORD in the east, the name of the LORD, the God of Israel (Yisra'el), in the coastlands of the sea. **16** From the edge of the earth we have heard songs,
"Splendor to the righteous one." And I said, "Leanness to me, leanness to me; woe to me! The treacherous act treacherously, and ***with*** treachery the treacherous act treacherously." **17** Dread and pit and snare ***are*** on you, inhabitant of the earth. **18** And it will be ***that*** the one who flees from the sound of the dread will fall into the pit, and the one who goes up from the midst of the pit will be caught in the snare; for the windows from on high have been opened, and the foundations of the earth have shaken. **19** The earth has been utterly broken; the earth has been utterly split apart; the earth has been utterly shaken. **20** The earth will surely stagger like the drunkard, and it will sway like the hut; and its transgression will be heavy on it, and it will fall and will not rise again. **21** And it will be in that day ***that*** the LORD will visit ***punishment*** on the host of the height in the height, and

24:1 Isa 42:15; Nah 2:10; Isa 1:7-9
24:2 Hos 4:9; Ezek 7:12,13; Isa 2:9
24:3 Isa 24:1; Isa 6:11; Lev 26:30-35
24:4 Isa 33:9; Hos 4:3; Isa 3:26
24:5 Num 35:33,34; Rom 8:20,21; Dan 7:25
24:6 Matt 7:14; Zech 5:3,4; Mal 4:1,6
24:7 Isa 16:8,10; Joel 1:10-12; Isa 32:9-13
24:8 Rev 18:22; Hos 2:11; Jer 7:34
24:9 Eccl 9:7; Isa 5:11,12; Ps 69:12
24:10 Isa 24:12; Isa 25:2; Isa 27:10
24:11 Prov 31:6; Hos 7:14; Joel 1:15
24:12 Isa 32:14; Jer 9:11; Lam 1:1,4
24:13 Acts 13:47; Isa 1:9; Isa 6:13
24:14 Acts 13:47; Isa 12:1-6; Isa 25:1
24:15 Mal 1:11; Isa 42:4,10; Isa 49:1
24:16 Acts 13:47; Rev 16:7; Isa 21:2
24:17 Jer 48:43,44; Lev 26:21,22; 1 Kgs 19:17
24:18 Gen 7:11; Ps 18:7,15; Josh 10:10,11
24:19 Nah 1:5; Rev 20:11; Isa 24:1-5
24:20 Isa 19:14; Isa 29:9; Dan 11:19
24:21 Rev 18:9; Mark 13:24; Rev 6:15

24:1 *Look, the LORD is about to empty the earth and lay it waste* Chapters 24-27 belong together and move beyond the single nations to the whole world at the end of the age. I believe they describe the worldwide judgment of the Tribulation, the seven years of trouble before Christ returns, followed by His kingdom. God made the world, so He has the right to judge it.
24:2 *like the people, like the priest; like the servant, like his master* Money and position can buy a way out of most trouble, but not this. Kings and slaves alike will hide from the wrath of the Lamb (Rev 6:15-17).
24:3 *for the LORD has spoken this word* Isaiah repeats the words to make the point as strong as he can. When God says it, it is settled.
24:4 *The earth has mourned, it has withered* Creation droops like a plant without water. Sin does not only hurt people. It damages the world God gave us to care for (Rom 8:20-22).
24:5 *they have broken the everlasting covenant* I take this as God's basic covenant with all mankind through Noah, which called for respect for human life (Gen 9:5-6, 16). Not only Israel is accountable to God. Every person is.
24:6 *few of mankind are left* This fits the Tribulation, when a third of the earth burns and great numbers die (Rev 8:7; 9:18). "Few" is sobering, but it holds hope: God always keeps a faithful remnant.
24:8 *The gaiety of tambourines has ceased* Music falls silent, as in end-times Babylon (Rev 18:22). A world that lived for pleasure without God loses the very pleasures it lived for, and even strong drink turns bitter (v. 9).
24:10 *The town of formlessness has been broken* Unnamed, it seems to stand for the whole proud world system organized without God, like Babylon in Revelation 17-18. People hide behind locked doors, but there is no safety there.
24:11 *all gladness has turned to evening* The world chose joy without God, and joy cut off from God cannot last (Ps 16:11). The smashed gate, where business and judgment happened, means the city's strength has collapsed (v. 12).
24:13 *like the beating of an olive tree, like gleanings when the grape harvest has ended* A few olives always remained after the beating, a few grapes for gleaners. Most are gone, but a remnant remains, as with Israel (17:6).
24:14 *They will lift up their voice; they will shout for joy* The turning point. Out of the ruins comes worship, like the multitude who came out of the great tribulation (Rev 7:9-14). From east to west God's name is honored (v. 15). Their praise does not depend on comfortable circumstances.
24:16 *Splendor to the righteous one* I believe the righteous one is the LORD Himself, whom we know in Jesus Christ (Acts 3:14). But Isaiah cannot yet join the song, for the treacherous are still at work. We can rejoice in God's final victory and still grieve over the evil around us.
24:17 *Dread and pit and snare are on you, inhabitant of the earth* In Hebrew the three words sound alike, ringing like a warning bell. They are hunters' words: terror drives, the pit catches, the snare holds (Jer 48:43-44).
24:18 *the windows from on high have been opened* There is no escape. The words recall Noah's flood (Gen 7:11). God has judged the whole world before and will again, and Jesus compared His coming to Noah's days (Matt 24:37-39).
24:19 *The earth has been utterly broken* A great earthquake unlike any since man has been on the earth (Rev 16:18-20). There is no reason to soften these words.
24:20 *its transgression will be heavy on it, and it will fall and will not rise again* The earth staggers like a drunk and sways like a flimsy hut. Sin has real weight, and at the end it brings the proud world system down. Only the cross can lift that weight from us (53:6).
24:21 *the LORD will visit punishment on the host of the height in the height* Not God's holy angels, but Satan and the fallen angels behind the rulers of this world (Eph 6:12; Dan 10:13, 20). Evil in heaven and on earth face the same Judge.

on the kings of the earth on the earth. **22** And they will be gathered, a gathering of prisoners, into a pit, and they will be shut up in a prison; and after many days they will be visited. **23** And the moon will be abashed, and the sun will be ashamed, for the LORD of armies will reign on Mount Zion (Tsiyon) and in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), and before His elders ***will be*** glory.

ISAIAH 25

Death Swallowed Up

1 O LORD, You ***are*** my God; I will exalt You; I will give thanks to Your name; for You have done a wonder, plans from long ago, faithfulness ***and*** firmness. **2** For You have made a city into a heap, a fortified town into a ruin, a fortress of strangers ***to be*** no city; it will never be rebuilt. **3** Therefore a strong people will glorify You; the town of ruthless nations will fear You. **4** For You have been a stronghold for the poor, a stronghold for the needy in his distress, a shelter from the rainstorm, a shade from the heat; for the breath of the ruthless ***is*** like a rainstorm ***against*** a wall. **5** Like heat in a dry land You will subdue the uproar of strangers; ***like*** heat by the shade of a cloud, the song of the ruthless will be humbled. **6** And the LORD of armies will make for all the peoples on this mountain a feast of fat things, a feast of aged wines, of fat things full of marrow, of aged wines refined. **7** And He will swallow up on this mountain the face of the covering that covers over all the peoples, and the veil that is woven over all the nations. **8** He will swallow up death forever; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from all faces, and the reproach of His people He will remove from all the earth; for the LORD has spoken. **9** And one will say in that day, "Look, this ***is*** our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us. This ***is*** the LORD; we have waited for Him; let us be glad and let us rejoice in His salvation." **10** For the hand of the LORD will rest on this mountain, and Moab (Mo'av) will be trampled down in its place, as straw is trampled down in a dunghill. **11** And it will spread out its hands in its midst, as the swimmer spreads ***them*** out to swim; and He will bring low its pride together with the tricks of its hands. **12** And the fortress of the high refuge of your walls He will lay low, He will bring low, He will make ***it*** touch the ground, down to the dust.

ISAIAH 26

Perfect Peace

1 In that day this song will be sung in the land of Judah (Yehuda): A city of strength ***is*** ours; He sets salvation ***as*** walls and rampart. **2** Open the gates, that a righteous nation that

24:22 Mark 13:24; Zech 9:11; Jer 38:6-13
24:23 Heb 12:22; Rev 21:23; Mark 13:24
25:1 Exod 15:2; Ps 118:28; Ps 40:5
25:2 Isa 17:1; Isa 13:22; Isa 25:12
25:3 Isa 49:23-26; Zech 14:9,16; Isa 60:10-14
25:4 Matt 7:25-27; Isa 32:2; Zeph 3:12
25:5 Isa 10:8-15,32-34; Isa 13:11; Isa 14:10-16
25:6 Matt 8:11; Matt 22:1; Rev 19:9
25:7 Matt 27:51; 2 Cor 3:13; 2 Cor 3:14
25:8 1 Cor 15:54; Rev 21:4; Rev 7:17
25:9 Rev 1:7; Luke 2:25; Luke 2:28
25:10 Isa 25:6; Zeph 2:9; Jer 48:2
25:11 Rev 19:19; Isa 5:25; Isa 14:26
25:12 Isa 26:5; Jer 51:58,64; 2 Cor 10:4,5
26:1 Isa 60:18; Isa 25:9; Isa 27:1,2
26:2 1 Pet 2:9; Isa 60:11; Isa 62:10

24:22 *after many days they will be visited* This fits Revelation 20 closely. At Christ's return Satan is bound in the abyss for a thousand years, then released briefly and thrown into the lake of fire (Rev 20:1-3, 7-10). I take "after many days" as Christ's thousand-year reign. Teachers of other views read it differently, but the plain sense fits the premillennial view I hold.
24:23 *for the LORD of armies will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem* Sun and moon look dim beside the King's glory, and His glory shines before His elders (Rev 4:4). I believe this is Christ's reign from Jerusalem in the Millennium (2:2-4; Zech 14:9), looking on to the eternal city that needs no sun or moon (Rev 21:23). The judgment is terrible, but the King is coming to reign.
25:1 *O LORD, You are my God; I will exalt You* Isaiah answers the vision with personal worship. God is not only great but his. Nothing in chapter 24 caught God by surprise. When the world is shaking, you can still call Him "my God."
25:2 *You have made a city into a heap* Like the town of 24:10, unnamed. I take it as the proud world city Revelation calls Babylon the great, thrown down and found no longer (Rev 18:21). Man's proudest city falls, and God's city stands.
25:3 *the town of ruthless nations will fear You* When God judges He also shows the world who He is, and some who were His enemies come to honor Him.
25:4 *a shelter from the rainstorm, a shade from the heat* The fury of the ruthless beats against the wall like rain, but the wall holds. Those who trust Him may face the storm, but it cannot reach them where He shelters them. If you are in a hard season, He is your wall today.
25:5 *the song of the ruthless will be humbled* God does not need to shout His enemies down. He simply brings them to silence, as a cloud's shade cools the heat.
25:6 *a feast of fat things, a feast of aged wines* On Mount Zion the LORD spreads a feast for all peoples, Gentiles welcome at His table. Jesus said many will come from east and west to recline with Abraham (Matt 8:11), the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev 19:9). I believe it begins when Christ returns to reign in the Millennium. At the Last Supper He looked forward to drinking it new in His Father's kingdom (Matt 26:29).
25:7 *the veil that is woven over all the nations* A shroud covered the face of the dead. I take it as the shadow of death over the human race and the blindness that keeps people from seeing God (2 Cor 3:15-16; 4:4). God will swallow it. When Jesus died the temple veil tore from top to bottom (Matt 27:51), the first sign of this.
25:8 *He will swallow up death forever* Death has swallowed everyone who ever lived, and now God swallows death. Paul quotes this of the resurrection of believers (1 Cor 15:54). Death does not get the last word. Jesus does.
25:8 *the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from all faces* Picture the Lord Himself gently wiping the tears from your face (Rev 21:4). Every grief and every funeral will be answered, and the long shame of God's people removed, "for the LORD has spoken."
25:9 *Look, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us* Generations lived and died waiting, but not in vain. I believe this will be Israel's cry when Christ returns and they look on the One they pierced (Zech 12:10; Rom 11:26). It is every believer's cry too. Waiting on God is never wasted.
25:10 *Moab will be trampled down in its place* Moab, Israel's proud neighbor, stands for all God's enemies. On the day God's people feast, His enemies are brought low.
25:11 *as the swimmer spreads them out to swim* Moab struggles to stay afloat, but no struggling saves a proud heart. Only humility before God brings rescue (Jas 4:10). Every proud fortress set against God falls to the dust (v. 12).
26:1 *A city of strength is ours; He sets salvation as walls and rampart* The proud world city lies in ruins (25:2), but God's people have a city that stands. Our security does not come from stones we stack. God Himself is our wall.

keeps faithfulness may enter. **3** The steadfast mind You will keep ***in*** peace, peace, for ***it is*** trusting in You. **4** Trust in the LORD forever, for in ***the*** LORD, the LORD, ***is*** an everlasting rock. **5** For He has laid low the inhabitants of the height, the lofty town; He brings it low, He brings it low to the ground; He makes it touch the dust. **6** The foot will trample it, the feet of the afflicted, the steps of the poor. **7** The way of the righteous ***is*** uprightness; O Upright One, You make level the track of the righteous. **8** Yes, in the way of Your judgments, O LORD, we have waited for You; for Your name and for Your remembrance ***is*** the desire of ***our*** soul. **9** ***With*** my soul I have desired You in the night; yes, ***with*** my spirit within me I will seek You earnestly; for when Your judgments ***are*** on the earth, the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness. **10** ***Though*** the wicked is shown favor, he does not learn righteousness; in a land of straightforwardness he acts unjustly, and he does not see the majesty of the LORD. **11** O LORD, Your hand is lifted up, ***but*** they do not see ***it***. They will see, and they will be ashamed ***at Your*** zeal for ***the*** people; yes, the fire of Your adversaries will consume them. **12** O LORD, You will establish peace for us, for also all our works You have done for us. **13** O LORD our God, lords besides You have ruled over us; ***but*** by You only we bring to remembrance Your name. **14** ***The*** dead will not live; ***the*** shades will not rise; therefore You have visited and destroyed them, and You have made all remembrance of them perish. **15** You have added to the nation, O LORD, You have added to the nation; You have been glorified; You have extended all the borders of the land. **16** O LORD, in distress they sought You; they poured out a whispered ***prayer when*** Your chastening ***was*** on them. **17** Like a pregnant ***woman who*** draws near to give birth, she is in labor, she cries out in her pangs, so were we because of You, O LORD. **18** We were pregnant, we were in labor, we gave birth, as it were, ***to*** wind; we do not accomplish salvation ***for*** the earth, and the inhabitants of the world do not fall. **19** Your dead will live; my corpse, they will rise. Awake and shout for joy, dwellers of ***the*** dust! For Your dew ***is*** a dew of lights, and the earth will cast forth the shades. **20** Come, My people, enter into your rooms, and shut your door behind you; hide for a little moment until the indignation passes by. **21** For look, the LORD is about to come out from His place to visit the iniquity of the inhabitants of the earth on them; and the earth will reveal its bloodshed, and will no longer cover its slain.

26:3 Phil 4:7; John 16:33; John 14:27
26:4 Luke 6:48; Isa 12:2; Isa 50:10
26:5 Job 40:11-13; Isa 2:12; Isa 13:11
26:6 Rev 3:9; Luke 1:52; Isa 25:10
26:7 1 Sam 2:2-4; Isa 35:8; 1 Chr 29:17
26:8 Isa 64:4,5; Num 36:13; Job 23:10-12
26:9 Ps 63:1; Matt 6:33; Ps 119:62
26:10 Rom 2:4; Hos 11:7; John 5:37,38
26:11 Acts 28:27; Mic 5:9; Isa 5:24
26:12 Eph 2:10; Phil 2:13; Deut 30:6
26:13 Isa 51:22; 2 Chr 12:8; John 8:32
26:14 Isa 8:19; Isa 26:19; Isa 51:12,13
26:15 Rev 11:18; Isa 9:3; Isa 10:22
26:16 John 16:21; Hos 5:15; Deut 4:29,30
26:17 John 16:21; 1 Thess 5:3; Isa 13:8
26:18 John 16:21; Ps 17:14; Isa 37:3
26:19 Eph 5:14; Rev 20:5; John 20:9
26:20 Matt 6:6; Heb 10:37; Rev 11:18
26:21 Rev 6:9; Rev 18:24; Matt 23:35

26:3 *The steadfast mind You will keep in peace, peace, for it is trusting in You* The Hebrew doubles the word to show complete, perfect peace. Isaiah sings this right after describing the end of the world. Peace does not come from calm circumstances but from a mind fixed on God. When our thoughts run to our problems we lose it. When they rest on Him, He keeps us (Phil 4:6-7).
26:4 *for in the LORD, the LORD, is an everlasting rock* A rock is the same in sunshine and storm. Everything else we lean on wears out, but He will not, so trust in Him can last forever.
26:6 *the feet of the afflicted, the steps of the poor* The proud city is trampled by those it looked down on. The humble are lifted and the proud brought low (Luke 1:52; 14:11).
26:7 *O Upright One, You make level the track of the righteous* The righteous still face hills and rocks, but God goes ahead and makes a way. When you walk with God, He takes responsibility for the road (Prov 3:5-6).
26:8 *for Your name and for Your remembrance is the desire of our soul* Waiting on God means walking in His ways while we look for His coming. A believer's deepest longing is God Himself.
26:9 *With my soul I have desired You in the night* For every believer who has lain awake longing for God. His judgments are meant to wake people up, and even in the Tribulation some will turn to Him (Rev 7:14; 11:13).
26:10 *Though the wicked is shown favor, he does not learn righteousness* God's kindness should lead to repentance (Rom 2:4), but a hard heart turns even kindness into an excuse to keep sinning.
26:11 *O LORD, Your hand is lifted up, but they do not see it* A sad blindness that refuses to see God working in plain sight, as people in the Tribulation will see His judgments and still not repent (Rev 9:20-21; 16:9).
26:12 *also all our works You have done for us* Our good works are His work in us (Phil 2:13; Eph 2:10). The believer takes no credit and simply thanks Him.
26:13 *lords besides You have ruled over us* Egypt, Assyria, Babylon and idols ruled them. In the end they confess the LORD alone. God can free us from what rules our lives and make His name the only one we serve.
26:14 *The dead will not live; the shades will not rise* The old tyrants are gone for good and their names fade. The contrast with verse 19, where God's own dead live, is on purpose.
26:15 *You have extended all the borders of the land* I believe this will be seen in full in the Millennium, when Israel is gathered back and the promises of the land are kept (54:2-3).
26:16 *they poured out a whispered prayer when Your chastening was on them* Sometimes the pain is so heavy all we can manage is a whisper. That is enough. God hears whispered prayers, and the Spirit helps us when we do not know how to pray (Rom 8:26).
26:18 *we gave birth, as it were, to wind; we do not accomplish salvation for the earth* Labor pains often picture end-time distress (Matt 24:8; Rev 12:2). After all the pain, no one was born. Israel was meant to be a light, but by its own effort it could save no one. Neither can we. Salvation must come from God, as the next verse promises.
26:19 *Your dead will live; my corpse, they will rise* God does what they could not. With Daniel 12:2, this is about as clear a promise of bodily resurrection as the Old Testament gives: real bodies from real graves. Jesus is firstborn from the dead (Col 1:18). The dead in Christ are raised when He comes for His church before the Tribulation (1 Thess 4:16; 1 Cor 15:52), and those who die for Him in the Tribulation are raised when He returns at its end. Together this is the first resurrection (Rev 20:5-6). If you buried someone who loved the Lord, they will rise.
26:20 *hide for a little moment until the indignation passes by* Like the first Passover behind blood-marked doors (Exod 12:22-23) and Noah shut in the ark (Gen 7:16). Some see a picture of the church taken out before the Tribulation, and I believe the church will already be with Christ, for God did not appoint us for wrath (1 Thess 4:16-17; 5:9). In its setting God speaks to Israel. I believe it fits the faithful remnant of Israel in the Tribulation, sheltered as in Goshen (Exod 8:22) and in the wilderness (Rev 12:6, 14). His wrath lasts only a little moment.
26:21 *the earth will reveal its bloodshed, and will no longer cover its slain* Every murder covered up and every innocent life taken will come to light. Abel's blood cried from the ground (Gen 4:10), and the martyrs ask how long (Rev 6:9-10). This is God's answer. Justice will be done.

ISAIAH 27

Leviathan and the Vineyard

1 In that day the LORD will visit ***punishment*** with His fierce and great and mighty sword on Leviathan the fleeing serpent, and on Leviathan the twisting serpent; and He will slay the sea monster that ***is*** in the sea. **2** In that day, a vineyard of delight, sing of it! **3** I, the LORD, ***am*** its keeper; every moment I water it; lest ***anyone*** visit ***harm*** on it, night and day I keep it. **4** Wrath I do not have. Who will give Me thorns ***and*** briers in battle? Let Me march against it; I will burn it altogether. **5** Or let him take hold of My stronghold; let him make peace with Me; peace let him make with Me. **6** ***In days*** to come Jacob (Ya'aqov) will take root; Israel (Yisra'el) will blossom and bud, and they will fill the face of the world ***with*** fruit. **7** Like the striking of the one who struck him, has He struck him? Or like the slaughter of his slain, has he been slain? **8** By startling, by sending her away, You contend with her; He drove ***her*** out with His fierce wind in the day of the east wind. **9** Therefore by this the iniquity of Jacob will be atoned for, and this ***is*** all the fruit of the removing of his sin: when he makes all the stones of the altar like crushed chalk stones, Asherah poles and incense altars will not stand. **10** For the fortified city ***is*** solitary, a habitation deserted and forsaken like the wilderness; there the calf will graze, and there it will lie down, and it will consume its branches. **11** When its branches dry up, they are broken off; women come ***and*** set it on fire. For it ***is*** not a people of understanding; therefore the One who made it will not have compassion on it, and the One who formed it will not show it favor. **12** And it will be in that day ***that*** the LORD will beat out ***grain*** from the flowing stream of the River to the Brook of Egypt (Mitsrayim); and you will be gathered one by one, sons of Israel. **13** And it will be in that day ***that*** a great trumpet will be blown, and those who were perishing in the land of Assyria (Ashur) and the outcasts in the land of Egypt will come, and they will bow down to the LORD on the holy mountain in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim).

ISAIAH 28

Woe to the Drunkards of Ephraim

1 Woe ***to*** the crown of pride of the drunkards of Ephraim (Efrayim), and the withering flower of the beauty of its splendor, which ***is*** on the head of the valley of fatness of those struck down by wine. **2** Look, the Lord has a mighty and strong one, like a storm of hail, a tempest of destruction, like a storm of mighty overflowing waters; he has cast ***it*** down to the earth with ***his*** hand. **3** With feet the crown of pride of the drunkards of Ephraim will be trampled. **4** And the withering flower of the beauty of its splendor, which ***is***

27:1 Rev 20:2; Rev 12:9; Rev 12:14
27:2 Jer 2:21; Isa 5:1-7; Num 21:17
27:3 Isa 58:11; 1 Sam 2:9; Isa 46:4,9
27:4 Isa 10:17; Matt 3:12; Heb 6:8
27:5 Rom 5:1; Isa 25:4; Job 22:21
27:6 Rom 11:26; Isa 37:31; Hos 14:5,6
27:7 Isa 10:20-25; Isa 14:22,23; Isa 17:3,14
27:8 Jer 10:24; Jer 4:11,27; Ezek 19:12
27:9 Rom 11:27; Isa 48:10; Dan 11:35
27:10 John 15:4; John 15:6; Isa 17:2
27:11 Matt 13:15; Matt 13:19; John 15:6
27:12 Gen 15:18; Isa 56:8; Deut 30:3,4
27:13 Matt 24:31; Heb 12:22; John 4:21
28:1 James 1:11; Hos 7:5; Isa 28:3
28:2 Isa 30:30; Ezek 13:11; Isa 29:6
28:3 Isa 26:6; Isa 25:10; 2 Kgs 9:33
28:4 James 1:11; Mic 7:1; Nah 3:12

27:1 *Leviathan the fleeing serpent* A fearsome sea creature (Job 41; Ps 104:26) that became a picture of chaos and evil against God. Some see the great empires like Egypt, often pictured as a monster in the water (Ezek 29:3), and that may be part of it. I believe the deeper target is Satan, the great dragon and ancient serpent (Rev 12:9; 20:2). Since the garden the serpent has warred against God's people (Gen 3:15). God does not negotiate with him. He kills him (Rev 20:10).
27:2 *In that day, a vineyard of delight, sing of it* In chapter 5 Isaiah sang a sad song over a vineyard of worthless grapes (5:1-7). Now the same vineyard is fruitful and loved. That is the story of God's grace.
27:3 *I, the LORD, am its keeper* In chapter 5 God removed the hedge. Here He is the hedge. I believe this is Israel restored in the Millennium. The One who keeps us never sleeps (Ps 121:4).
27:4 *Wrath I do not have* His anger against His vineyard is over. The thorns and briers are its enemies, and perhaps the sin that once choked it. God is no longer at war with His people but for them.
27:5 *let him make peace with Me; peace let him make with Me* Even the enemy may take hold of God's protection instead of being burned. God says it twice. This is the gospel in the Old Testament, for through Jesus we have peace with God (Rom 5:1).
27:6 *Israel will blossom and bud, and they will fill the face of the world with fruit* The opposite of chapter 5. I believe this will be seen in the Millennium, when Israel is restored to her land and Messiah and blesses all nations (Gen 12:3; Rom 11:12). In one sense her fruit already fills the world, for the Savior and the Scriptures came through her.
27:7 *Like the striking of the one who struck him, has He struck him* No. Assyria and Babylon are gone, and Israel is still here. God's discipline of His people is measured, but His judgment on His enemies is final.
27:8 *He drove her out with His fierce wind in the day of the east wind* The hot desert wind, and the empires that came from the east. It was real discipline, but He did not drive them out forever.
27:9 *by this the iniquity of Jacob will be atoned for* The exile's purpose, proven when Israel crushes her altar stones like chalk and tears down the Asherah poles of a false goddess. Paul draws on this for all Israel saved and their sins taken away (Rom 11:26-27). Forgiveness rests finally on the cross, and true forgiveness shows in a changed life. When God forgives, we let go of our idols.
27:10 *For the fortified city is solitary* Unnamed again (25:2; 26:5). Some take it as Jerusalem or Samaria under judgment. I lean toward the proud world city, set against God's fruitful vineyard. The city that trusted its walls ends as a pasture.
27:11 *For it is not a people of understanding* A hard verse. God's mercy is offered, but it can be refused. Those who will not turn face their Maker without His favor.
27:12 *you will be gathered one by one, sons of Israel* From the Euphrates to the Brook of Egypt, the borders promised Abraham (Gen 15:18). God does not gather His people in a crowd where some get lost. He picks up each one by hand, and that is how carefully He gathers you.
27:13 *a great trumpet will be blown* The trumpet called Israel to feasts and to the jubilee, when slaves went free (Lev 25:9). Jesus will send His angels with a great trumpet to gather His elect (Matt 24:31). I believe this looks to His return at the end of the Tribulation, bringing Israel home to worship in Jerusalem. Chapters 24-27 began with the earth laid waste and end with worship on God's holy mountain. That is where history is headed.
28:1 *Woe to the crown of pride of the drunkards of Ephraim* The first of six woes in chapters 28-33. Samaria, capital of the north, sat on a hill above a rich valley like a crown of flowers on a drunk man's head at a feast, proud of its beauty and soaked in luxury. Isaiah probably spoke this shortly before Samaria fell in 722 B.C.
28:2 *the Lord has a mighty and strong one* Assyria, "the rod of My anger" (10:5), coming like hail and flood. God is not watching from a distance. Ephraim's proud crown ends in the dirt (v. 3; Prov 16:18).
28:4 *like an early fig before summer* A first-ripe fig was eaten on the spot. That is how quickly Assyria would swallow Samaria.

on the head of the valley of fatness, will be like an early fig before summer, which the one who sees it sees; while it ***is*** still in his hand, he swallows it. **5** In that day the LORD of armies will become a crown of beauty and a diadem of splendor for the remnant of His people, **6** and a spirit of justice for the one who sits in judgment, and strength ***for*** those who turn back the battle toward the gate. **7** And these also reel with wine and stagger with strong drink; priest and prophet reel with strong drink; they are swallowed up by the wine; they stagger from the strong drink; they reel in the vision; they totter ***in*** giving judgment. **8** For all tables are full of vomit, filth, without ***a*** place. **9** Whom will he teach knowledge, and whom will he make understand the message? Those weaned from milk, those removed from the breasts? **10** For ***it is*** command to command, command to command, line to line, line to line, a little there, a little there. **11** For with stammerings of lip and with another tongue He will speak to this people, **12** to whom He said, "This ***is*** the rest; give rest to the weary; and this ***is*** the repose"; and they were not willing to hear. **13** And the word of the LORD will be to them command to command, command to command, line to line, line to line, a little there, a little there, so that they may go and stumble backward, and be broken, and be snared, and be captured.

The Cornerstone

14 Therefore hear the word of the LORD, men of mockery, rulers of this people who ***are*** in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). **15** Because you have said, "We have made a covenant with death, and with Sheol we have made an agreement; an overflowing scourge, when it passes through, will not come to us; for we have made falsehood our refuge, and in deception we have hidden ourselves," **16** therefore thus says the Lord GOD: "Look, I ***am He who*** has laid in Zion (Tsiyon) a stone, a stone of testing, a precious corner of a foundation, firmly founded; the one who believes will not hurry. **17** And I will make justice the measuring line and righteousness the plumb line; and hail will sweep away the refuge of falsehood, and waters will overflow the hiding place. **18** And your covenant with death will be annulled, and your agreement with Sheol will not stand; an overflowing scourge, when it passes through, you will become a trampling place for it. **19** As often as it passes through, it will take you; for morning by morning it will pass through, by day and by night; and it will be sheer terror to understand the message." **20** For the bed is too short to stretch oneself out, and the blanket is narrow when one wraps oneself up. **21** For the LORD will rise up as ***at*** the mountain of Perazim (Peratsim); He will rage as ***in*** the valley in Gibeon (Givon), to do His deed, strange ***is*** His deed, and to work His work, alien ***is*** His work. **22** And now, do not be mockers, lest your bonds become strong; for a complete end, and ***one*** decided, I have heard from the Lord GOD of armies upon all the earth. **23** Give ear and hear my voice; pay attention and hear my utterance. **24** Does the plowman plow all

28:5 1 Pet 2:7; Isa 62:3; Isa 41:16
28:6 1 Kgs 3:28; John 5:30; Isa 11:2-4
28:7 Isa 19:14; Isa 56:10-12; Matt 24:29
28:8 Jer 48:26; Prov 26:11; Hab 2:15,16
28:9 Mark 7:18; Ps 131:2; Jer 6:10
28:10 Isa 28:13; 2 Chr 36:15,16; Jer 25:3-7
28:11 1 Cor 14:21; Deut 28:49; Jer 5:15
28:12 Matt 11:28; Isa 30:15; Jer 6:16
28:13 1 Pet 2:8; Matt 21:44; Isa 28:10
28:14 Isa 28:22; Isa 1:10; Isa 29:20
28:15 Isa 8:7,8; Hos 2:18; Dan 11:22
28:16 Rom 9:33; Rom 10:11; 1 Pet 2:6
28:17 Rev 11:19; 2 Kgs 21:13; Amos 7:7-9
28:18 Isa 7:7; Isa 8:10; Isa 28:3
28:19 Isa 10:5,6; 2 Kgs 17:6; 2 Kgs 18:13
28:20 Isa 57:12,13; Isa 59:5,6; Isa 64:6
28:21 2 Sam 5:20; 1 Chr 14:11; Josh 10:10,12
28:22 Isa 10:22,23; 2 Chr 30:10; 2 Chr 36:16
28:23 Rev 2:7; Rev 2:11; Rev 2:29
28:24 Jer 4:3; Hos 10:11,12

28:5 *the LORD of armies will become a crown of beauty and a diadem of splendor for the remnant of His people* Two crowns side by side. The drunkards' fading flowers are trampled, but God Himself crowns the faithful remnant. When everything people boasted in is gone, the faithful find the Lord was their glory all along. I believe "that day" reaches to Christ's reign, when Israel's remnant has the Lord as King.
28:6 *a spirit of justice for the one who sits in judgment* Justice in the court and courage at the gate both come from Him. A nation is only as strong as the character God puts into its people.
28:7 *priest and prophet reel with strong drink* Judah's leaders are no better than Ephraim's. Those who should teach God's law and speak His word are drunk on the job. When spiritual leaders are compromised, the whole nation loses its way. The vomit-covered tables are ugly on purpose (v. 8).
28:10 *For it is command to command, command to command, line to line, line to line* In Hebrew a string of short sounds, tsav la-tsav, kav la-kav, as if Isaiah talked baby talk, drilling them like children.
28:11 *For with stammerings of lip and with another tongue He will speak to this people* Since they would not listen in their own language, they would hear the harsh speech of Assyrian soldiers. Paul quotes this to show that unknown tongues were a sign of judgment to unbelievers (1 Cor 14:21).
28:12 *This is the rest; give rest to the weary* The heart of Isaiah's message: trust the Lord, stop running to foreign powers, and find peace in Him. They refused. Jesus makes the same offer (Matt 11:28).
28:13 *so that they may go and stumble backward* They mocked His word as a little here, a little there, so that is all they get, and it trips them. When people reject God's plain word, that word becomes what judges them.
28:15 *We have made a covenant with death, and with Sheol we have made an agreement* Sheol is the grave. I take this as their political deals, most likely the alliance with Egypt against Assyria (chs. 30-31). Isaiah says it plainly: they made lies their refuge.
28:16 *I am He who has laid in Zion a stone, a stone of testing, a precious corner of a foundation* While the rulers built on lies, God laid a tested foundation. The cornerstone was the first stone, and every other was lined up by it. Paul and Peter apply this to Jesus (Rom 9:33; 1 Pet 2:6-7; Ps 118:22). He was tested in every way and did not fail, the only foundation that will hold (1 Cor 3:11).
28:16 *the one who believes will not hurry* The word carries the idea of rushing in panic, as Judah's leaders rushed to Egypt. The one who trusts Christ need not run from plan to plan (Rom 10:11). Are you trusting Jesus, or your own arrangements?
28:17 *I will make justice the measuring line and righteousness the plumb line* God checks the wall like a builder with line and level. Anything crooked comes down, and the flood sweeps away the refuge of lies.
28:18 *your covenant with death will be annulled* Every promise made apart from God will be broken. Their judgment would come morning after morning (v. 19), and understanding it at last would be terror.
28:20 *For the bed is too short to stretch oneself out* Probably a common saying. Your feet hang off and the blanket will not cover you. Every human refuge apart from God turns out too small.
28:21 *strange is His deed, and to work His work, alien is His work* At Perazim God broke through the Philistines for David (2 Sam 5:20), and at Gibeon He threw hailstones on Israel's enemies (Josh 10:10-11). Now He will fight His own people. Judging them is not what He delights in, but He will do it.
28:22 *for a complete end, and one decided, I have heard* Stop mocking, or the chains grow tighter. "Upon all the earth" points, I believe, beyond Assyria to the final Day of the LORD.
28:24 *Does the plowman plow all day to sow* A parable from the farm. Plowing has a purpose and stops when the ground is ready. God's judgment breaks up the hard heart so something can grow.

day to sow? ***Does*** he ***keep*** loosening and harrowing his ground? **25** Does he not, when he has leveled its surface, scatter black cumin and sprinkle cumin, and put wheat in rows and barley in ***its*** appointed ***place***, and spelt ***in*** its border? **26** And his God instructs him for judgment; He teaches him. **27** For black cumin is not threshed with a threshing sledge, and the wheel of a cart is ***not*** turned over cumin; for black cumin is beaten out with a staff, and cumin with a rod. **28** ***Grain for*** bread is crushed, for he does not keep threshing it forever; and ***when*** he drives the wheel of his cart and his horses ***over it***, he does not crush it. **29** This also has gone out from the LORD of armies; He has made counsel wonderful; He has made sound wisdom great.

ISAIAH 29

Ariel

1 Woe ***to*** Ariel, Ariel, the town ***where*** David camped! Add year to year; let festivals go around. **2** And I will bring distress to Ariel, and there will be mourning and lamentation, and she will be to Me like Ariel. **3** And I will encamp like a circle against you, and I will lay siege against you ***with*** siege works, and I will raise up fortifications against you. **4** And you will be brought low; from the earth you will speak, and from the dust your utterance will be humbled; and your voice will be like a medium from the earth, and from the dust your utterance will whisper. **5** And the multitude of your strangers will be like fine dust, and the multitude of the ruthless like chaff that passes away; and it will be in an instant, suddenly. **6** From the LORD of armies you will be visited with thunder and with earthquake and great noise, storm wind and tempest, and the flame of devouring fire. **7** And the multitude of all the nations that wage war against Ariel will be like a dream, a vision of the night, even all who wage war against her and her stronghold, and those who bring distress to her. **8** And it will be just as when the hungry ***one*** dreams, and look, he is eating, and he awakes, and his soul ***is*** empty; and just as when the thirsty ***one*** dreams, and look, he is drinking, and he awakes, and look, ***he is*** faint, and his soul ***is*** longing; so will be the multitude of all the nations that wage war against Mount Zion (Tsiyon). **9** Delay and be astounded; blind yourselves and be blind! They are drunk, and not ***with*** wine; they stagger, and not ***with*** strong drink. **10** For the LORD has poured out on you a spirit of deep sleep, and He has shut your eyes, the prophets; and your heads, the seers, He has covered. **11** And the vision of all has become to you like the words of the sealed scroll, which they give to one who knows writing, saying, "Read this, please," and he says, "I am not able, for it ***is*** sealed." **12** And the scroll is given to one who does not know writing, saying, "Read this, please," and he says, "I do not know writing."

Lip Service and a Great Reversal

13 And the Lord said, "Because this people has drawn near with its mouth, and with its lips they have honored Me, and its heart it has put far from Me, and their fear of Me has

28:25 Exod 9:31,32; Ezek 4:9
28:26 Exod 28:3; Exod 31:3-6; Exod 36:2
28:27 Amos 1:3; Isa 41:15; 2 Kgs 13:7
28:28 1 Cor 9:10; Isa 21:10; Amos 9:9
28:29 Isa 9:6; Rom 11:33; Jer 32:19
29:1 2 Sam 5:9; Ezek 43:15,16; Hos 5:6
29:2 Isa 5:25-30; Isa 10:5,6,32; Isa 17:14
29:3 Luke 19:43,44; Ezek 21:22; 2 Kgs 18:17
29:4 Isa 8:19; Isa 2:11-21; Isa 3:8
29:5 1 Thess 5:3; Isa 37:36; Isa 17:13
29:6 Rev 11:19; Rev 11:13; Matt 24:7
29:7 Job 20:8; Ps 73:20; Isa 37:36
29:8 Isa 10:7-16; 2 Chr 32:21; Isa 44:12
29:9 Isa 51:21,22; Isa 33:13,14; Isa 19:14
29:10 Rom 11:8; John 12:40; Isa 44:18
29:11 Rev 5:1; Rev 5:2; Rev 5:3
29:12 Matt 13:15; Rev 5:2; John 7:15,16
29:13 Matt 15:8-9; Mark 7:6-7; Col 2:22

28:26 *And his God instructs him for judgment; He teaches him* The farmer plants each seed in its place (v. 25), and even that common sense is God's gift. If God gives a farmer such wisdom, how much more does He know how to handle His people?
28:27 *black cumin is beaten out with a staff, and cumin with a rod* Delicate seeds are not crushed under a sledge. A good farmer uses only the force each crop needs. God's discipline is measured, and He knows how much we can bear (1 Cor 10:13).
28:28 *for he does not keep threshing it forever* Even wheat is not threshed until it is ruined. God's goal is to separate grain from chaff, not destroy. If you are in a hard season, God knows when to stop.
28:29 *He has made counsel wonderful* The same Hebrew as the Messiah's name, "Wonder, Counselor" (9:6). God's ways may look harsh in the middle of them, but He never wastes a single blow.
29:1 *Woe to Ariel, Ariel, the town where David camped* The second woe. Ariel is Jerusalem, which David made his capital (2 Sam 5:6-9). The word can mean lion of God, and a similar word means the altar hearth (Ezek 43:15). I lean toward the altar meaning. The feasts went on schedule, but the routine had become empty.
29:2 *she will be to Me like Ariel* The city that burned sacrifices would itself become like an altar hearth, a place of fire and blood. Religion without a real heart for God protects no one.
29:3 *I will encamp like a circle against you* Not only Assyria. God Himself surrounds the city where David once camped as king. The enemy army was only a tool in His hand.
29:5 *it will be in an instant, suddenly* The picture flips, and the attackers become dust and chaff. I believe this was fulfilled in 701 B.C., when the angel of the LORD struck 185,000 Assyrians in one night (37:36).
29:6 *From the LORD of armies you will be visited with thunder and with earthquake* "Visited" can mean a visit in judgment or in rescue, and readers take it both ways. Since verses 5 and 7 blow the enemy away, I read the storm as falling mainly on the attackers.
29:7 *will be like a dream, a vision of the night* Assyria's army held soldiers of many nations, fitting Isaiah's day. I also see a far fulfillment when all nations gather against Jerusalem at the end of the age and the Lord fights for His city (Zech 12:2-9; 14:2-3).
29:8 *he awakes, and his soul is empty* They thought Jerusalem was theirs to swallow and woke with nothing. Whoever sets himself against God's purposes ends up empty.
29:9 *They are drunk, and not with wine* Dazed and blind to what God is doing. When people keep refusing to see, God eventually lets them have their blindness.
29:10 *the LORD has poured out on you a spirit of deep sleep* The prophets, the nation's eyes, had them shut. Paul uses this to explain why much of Israel did not recognize Jesus (Rom 11:8), yet the hardening is partial and temporary (Rom 11:25-26). God is not finished with Israel.
29:11 *I am not able, for it is sealed* The truth was in front of them, but they could not open it, and the unlearned had another excuse (v. 12). The problem was a closed heart, not a lack of education. Many treat the Bible the same way.
29:13 *this people has drawn near with its mouth, and with its lips they have honored Me, and its heart it has put far from Me* This should make every churchgoer stop and think, me included. Right words and motions, but hearts far away, and worship that was habit passed down without love. Jesus quoted this against the leaders of His day (Matt 15:7-9). You can sing every song in church and keep your heart at a distance. God wants you, not a performance.

become a commandment of men that has been taught, **14** therefore look, I ***am He who*** will again deal wonderfully with this people, wonderfully, and ***with*** a wonder; and the wisdom of its wise ones will perish, and the understanding of its discerning ones will hide itself." **15** Woe ***to*** those who go deep to hide counsel from the LORD, and their deeds are in a dark place, and they say, "Who sees us? And who knows us?" **16** Your perversity! Is the potter to be regarded like the clay, that the thing made should say to its maker, "He did not make me," and the thing formed say to the one who formed it, "He has no understanding"? **17** Is it not yet a very little ***while***, and Lebanon (Levanon) will turn into the fruitful field, and the fruitful field will be regarded as the forest? **18** And in that day the deaf will hear the words of a scroll, and out of gloom and out of darkness the eyes of the blind will see. **19** And the humble will increase joy in the LORD, and the needy of mankind will be glad in the Holy One of Israel (Yisra'el). **20** For the ruthless one will come to an end, and the mocker will be finished, and all who watch for wickedness will be cut off, **21** who make a man sin with a word, and lay a trap for the one who reproves in the gate, and turn aside the righteous with emptiness. **22** Therefore thus says the LORD, who ransomed Abraham (Avraham), to the house of Jacob (Ya'aqov): "Jacob will not now be ashamed, and his face will not now grow pale. **23** For when he sees his children, the work of My hands, in his midst, they will sanctify My name; and they will sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and they will stand in awe of the God of Israel. **24** And those who go astray in spirit will know understanding, and those who murmur will learn instruction."

ISAIAH 30

Help from Egypt

1 "Woe ***to*** rebellious sons," declares the LORD, "to make a plan, and not from Me, and to pour out a libation, and not ***of*** My Spirit, so as to add sin to sin; **2** who walk to go down ***to*** Egypt (Mitsrayim), and My mouth they have not asked, to take shelter in the stronghold of Pharaoh, and to seek refuge in the shadow of Egypt. **3** And the stronghold of Pharaoh will become to you for shame, and the refuge in the shadow of Egypt for disgrace. **4** For his officials have been in Zoan (Tso'an), and his messengers have reached Hanes (Chanes). **5** Everyone will be put to shame over a people ***who*** will not profit them, not for help and not for profit, but for shame and also for reproach." **6** The oracle of the animals of the Negeb (Negev): In a land of trouble and distress, ***of*** lioness and lion, from which ***come*** viper and flying serpent, they carry their wealth on the shoulder of young donkeys, and their treasures on the hump of camels, to a people ***who*** will not profit. **7** And Egypt, ***with*** futility and emptiness they will help; therefore I have called this ***one*** "Rahab (Rahav), they ***are*** a sitting still." **8** Now go, write it on a tablet with them, and inscribe it on a scroll, and let it be for a latter day, for perpetuity, forever. **9** For it ***is*** a people of rebellion, lying sons, sons ***who*** have not been willing to hear the law of the

29:14 1 Cor 1:19; Acts 28:26; 1 Cor 3:19
29:15 1 Cor 3:19; Ezek 8:12; Isa 30:1
29:16 Rom 9:20; Rom 9:21; Rom 9:19,21
29:17 Heb 10:37; Isa 32:15; Isa 63:18
29:18 Matt 11:5; Mark 7:37; Luke 7:22
29:19 Luke 4:18; James 2:5; Isa 61:1
29:20 Luke 20:20; Mic 2:1; Isa 29:5
29:21 Matt 22:15; Luke 20:20; Amos 5:10-12
29:22 Isa 51:2,11; Isa 54:4; Isa 45:17,25
29:23 2 Cor 5:5; Isa 19:25; Isa 8:13
29:24 Isa 28:7; Luke 15:17-19; Isa 29:10,11
30:1 Isa 1:2; Isa 29:15; Isa 30:9
30:2 Isa 36:6; Jer 43:7; Num 27:21
30:3 Isa 20:5; Isa 30:5-7; Jer 37:5-10
30:4 Isa 19:11; Jer 43:7; Isa 57:9
30:5 Jer 2:36; Isa 30:16; Isa 20:5,6
30:6 Deut 8:15; Isa 46:1,2; Jer 11:4
30:7 Isa 31:1-5; Jer 37:7; Isa 30:15
30:8 Isa 8:1; Hab 2:2; Deut 31:19,22
30:9 Isa 30:1; Isa 1:4; Deut 31:27-29

29:14 *the wisdom of its wise ones will perish* The advisers pushing the Egypt alliance would be shown fools. Paul quotes this to show the cross makes the world's wisdom look foolish (1 Cor 1:19).
29:15 *Woe to those who go deep to hide counsel from the LORD* The third woe. They made their plans in secret, probably with Egypt, as if God could not see. Anything we plan in the dark we plan in His full view (Heb 4:13).
29:16 *Is the potter to be regarded like the clay* They acted as if they were the potter and God the clay (Rom 9:20-21). Our part is to trust our Maker, not correct Him.
29:17 *Lebanon will turn into the fruitful field* A great reversal and renewal. I believe it points to the kingdom age, when even the land is restored.
29:18 *in that day the deaf will hear the words of a scroll* The sealed book of verse 11 is opened. This happens spiritually whenever someone comes to faith, and Jesus did it physically (Matt 11:5), a preview of His kingdom (35:5).
29:21 *who make a man sin with a word, and lay a trap for the one who reproves in the gate* They twisted words to get people charged and trapped the honest judge at the gate where court was held. God sees injustice in the courtroom, and when Christ returns He will remove the ruthless and the mockers (v. 20).
29:22 *who ransomed Abraham* God called Abraham out of an idol-worshiping family (Josh 24:2-3) and kept him. He will keep Jacob's descendants, and Israel will no longer be ashamed.
29:23 *they will sanctify the Holy One of Jacob* I take this as a promise to the nation. When Israel turns to Jesus (Zech 12:10; Rom 11:26), they will honor God's name and stand in awe of Him.
29:24 *those who go astray in spirit will know understanding* The chapter ends with mind and heart. The sealed book is open at last. No heart is so hard that God cannot open it.
30:1 *Woe to rebellious sons* The fourth woe. God calls Judah His children, which makes the rebellion hurt more. They made a plan and an alliance, and neither came from God. Making plans is not wrong. Making them without God is.
30:2 *who walk to go down to Egypt, and My mouth they have not asked* Most scholars place this around 705-701 B.C., when Hezekiah's officials sought Egyptian help against Assyria. God brought them up out of Egypt and slavery, and now they ran back for protection. The shelter would become their shame (v. 3).
30:4 *his officials have been in Zoan, and his messengers have reached Hanes* Royal cities of Egypt, north and south. All that effort was spent in the wrong direction. Egypt did send an army in 701 B.C., but it did not save Judah. Only the Lord did (37:36).
30:6 *The oracle of the animals of the Negeb* The dry desert between Judah and Egypt. A caravan carries Judah's treasure through country full of lions and snakes, all to pay a nation that could not deliver.
30:7 *Rahab, they are a sitting still* Not the woman of Jericho but a proud sea monster, a poetic name for Egypt (Ps 87:4). Versions render the phrase differently, but the sense is clear: Egypt talks big and does nothing.
30:9 *sons who have not been willing to hear the law of the LORD* Torah, God's teaching. They knew what God said. They did not want to hear it.

LORD; **10** who have said to the seers, "You shall not see," and to the visionaries, "You shall not envision for us right things; speak to us smooth things; envision deceptions. **11** Turn away from the way; turn aside from the path; cause the Holy One of Israel (Yisra'el) to cease from before us." **12** Therefore thus says the Holy One of Israel: "Because you have rejected this word, and you have trusted in oppression and crookedness, and you have leaned on it, **13** therefore this iniquity will be to you like a breach about to fall, bulging out in a high wall, whose breaking comes suddenly, in an instant. **14** And He will break it like the breaking of a potters' jar, crushed; He will not spare, and there will not be found among its fragments a potsherd to snatch up fire from a hearth and to scoop water from a cistern." **15** For thus says the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel: "In returning and rest you will be saved; in keeping quiet and in trust will be your strength. And you were not willing. **16** And you said, 'No, for on horse we will flee'; therefore you will flee! 'And on a swift ***one*** we will ride'; therefore those who pursue you will be swift. **17** One thousand ***will flee*** because of the rebuke of one; because of the rebuke of five you will flee, until you are left like a flagstaff on the top of the mountain, and like a banner on the hill."

The LORD Waits to Be Gracious

18 And therefore the LORD waits to show favor to you, and therefore He rises up to have compassion on you. For the LORD ***is*** a God of justice; how blessed ***are*** all who wait for Him. **19** For a people will dwell in Zion (Tsiyon), in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim); you will surely not weep. He will surely show favor to you at the sound of your cry; when He hears it, He will answer you. **20** And the Lord will give you bread ***of*** distress and water ***of*** oppression, and your Teacher will no longer hide Himself, and your eyes will be seeing your Teacher. **21** And your ears will hear a word behind you, saying, "This ***is*** the way; walk in it," when you go to the right and when you go to the left. **22** And you will defile the plating of your images of silver and the sheathing of your molten image of gold; you will scatter them like a menstrual ***rag***; "Filth!" you will say to it. **23** And He will give the rain of your seed with which you sow the ground, and bread, the produce of the ground, and it will be fat and rich. Your livestock will graze in that day ***in*** a roomy pasture. **24** And the oxen and the donkeys that work the ground will eat salted fodder, which ***one*** winnows with the shovel and with the fork. **25** And ***there*** will be on every high mountain and on every lifted-up hill streams, channels of water, in a day of great slaughter, when towers fall. **26** And the light of the moon will be like the light of the sun, and the light of the sun will be sevenfold, like the light of seven days, in the day the LORD binds up the fracture of His people, and the wound of His blow He heals. **27** Look, the name of the LORD comes from afar; His anger ***is*** burning, and heavy ***is the*** rising ***smoke***; His lips are full of indignation, and His tongue ***is*** like a consuming fire. **28** And His breath ***is*** like an overflowing torrent; up to the neck it reaches, to shake nations in a sieve of worthlessness, and a bridle that leads astray ***is*** on the jaws of the

30:10 Luke 6:26; Amos 7:13; Jer 11:21
30:11 Rev 3:7; Isa 29:21; Amos 7:13
30:12 Rom 9:28; Isa 5:24; Isa 30:1,7,15-17
30:13 Rom 9:28; 1 Kgs 20:30; Ps 62:3
30:14 Ps 2:9; Jer 19:10,11; Rev 2:27
30:15 Luke 13:34; Matt 23:37; Heb 12:25
30:16 Isa 31:1; Isa 5:26-30; Isa 10:28-32
30:17 John 15:3; Lev 26:8,36; Deut 28:25
30:18 Matt 15:22; Luke 2:25; Acts 5:31
30:19 Rom 11:26; Isa 60:20; Isa 65:24
30:20 Eph 4:11; 1 Kgs 22:27; Ps 74:9
30:21 Ps 32:8; Prov 3:5,6; Isa 58:11
30:22 Isa 46:6; Judg 17:3,4; Isa 31:7
30:23 Isa 32:20; Ps 65:9-13; Ps 104:13,14
30:24 Gen 45:6; Deut 25:4; 1 Cor 9:9,10
30:25 Isa 35:6,7; Isa 43:19,20; Isa 2:14,15
30:26 Rev 22:5; Isa 60:19,20; Deut 32:39
30:27 Isa 9:5; Isa 10:16,17; Isa 33:12
30:28 Isa 37:29; Isa 11:4; 2 Thess 2:8

30:10 *speak to us smooth things; envision deceptions* Perhaps the most honest thing a rebellious people ever said. They wanted nice things, not truth. People still gather teachers who tell them what they want to hear (2 Tim 4:3-4).
30:11 *cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us* They were tired of hearing about a holy God. A holy God is uncomfortable for anyone who wants to keep sinning.
30:13 *bulging out in a high wall, whose breaking comes suddenly, in an instant* They traded God's word for force and trickery (v. 12). Sin builds pressure quietly like a bulging wall, and then everything gives way at once, shattered past saving like a smashed clay jar (v. 14).
30:15 *In returning and rest you will be saved; in keeping quiet and in trust will be your strength* The heart of the chapter. Turn back, stop striving, be quiet before Him and trust Him. "And you were not willing," among the saddest words in Scripture (Matt 23:37). When you are anxious and grabbing for control, this verse is worth memorizing.
30:17 *One thousand will flee because of the rebuke of one* The obedient were to have five chase a hundred (Lev 26:8). Now it is reversed. I believe this pictures Judah in 701 B.C., when Assyria took its fortified cities and only Jerusalem was left standing like a lone flagpole (36:1).
30:18 *therefore the LORD waits to show favor to you* After all that rebellion we expect more judgment, but God waits to be gracious and rises up to have compassion. He is just and will not ignore sin, but His heart is to restore. God waits to be gracious, and blessed are those who wait for Him. That is where God and His people meet.
30:19 *He will surely show favor to you at the sound of your cry* I believe this looks ahead to Israel's full restoration when Christ reigns from Jerusalem. It also shows how God answers anyone who cries to Him humbly.
30:20 *your eyes will be seeing your Teacher* After the hard rations of siege, their Teacher would no longer be hidden. Some take it as the prophets. The SLB's capital T reflects the reading I agree with: God Himself teaching His people.
30:21 *This is the way; walk in it* Like a shepherd behind his sheep calling when one wanders. The Holy Spirit guides believers into truth (John 16:13), usually through God's word. When unsure which way to turn, ask Him, and listen.
30:22 *"Filth!" you will say to it* Even costly idols plated with silver and gold are thrown away. Real repentance always gets rid of whatever has taken God's place.
30:23 *He will give the rain of your seed* Blessing on the land was a covenant promise (Deut 28:12). I believe it will be fulfilled in full in Christ's thousand-year reign, when the curse on the ground is largely lifted. His blessing reaches even to the oxen and donkeys (v. 24).
30:25 *in a day of great slaughter, when towers fall* Blessing for God's people and judgment on His enemies on the same day, the pattern of the Day of the LORD. The towers are the proud strongholds of the nations.
30:26 *the light of the sun will be sevenfold* I take this as real changes in creation when Christ returns, though teachers differ on how far to press details. The God who wounded them for sin will bind them up (Hos 6:1).
30:27 *Look, the name of the LORD comes from afar* His name stands for God Himself in all His character and power, coming against Assyria in the language of storm and Sinai.

peoples. **29** The song will be yours like a night of consecrating a festival, and gladness of heart like the one who walks with the flute to go to the mountain of the LORD, to the Rock of Israel. **30** And the LORD will cause the majesty of His voice to be heard, and He will show the lowering of His arm, with the raging of anger and a flame of consuming fire, a driving storm and a rainstorm and hailstones. **31** For at the voice of the LORD Assyria (Ashur) will be shattered; with the rod He will strike. **32** And every stroke of the staff of appointment which the LORD will lay on him will be with tambourines and with lyres; and in battles of brandishing He will fight against them. **33** For a burning place is arranged from yesterday; it also has been prepared for the king; He has made ***it*** deep, He has made ***it*** large; its pile ***is*** fire and much wood; the breath of the LORD, like a torrent of sulfur, burns in it.

ISAIAH 31

Horses and Chariots

1 Woe ***to*** those who go down ***to*** Egypt (Mitsrayim) for help; on horses they lean, and they trust in chariotry because ***it is*** much, and in horsemen because they are exceedingly numerous; and they have not looked to the Holy One of Israel (Yisra'el), and the LORD they have not sought. **2** And He also ***is*** wise, and He has brought calamity, and His words He has not turned aside; and He will rise up against the house of evildoers, and against the help of those who do wickedness. **3** And Egypt ***is*** man and not God, and their horses ***are*** flesh and not spirit; and the LORD will stretch out His hand, and the one who helps will stumble, and the one who is helped will fall, and together all of them will come to an end. **4** For thus the LORD has said to me: "Just as the lion growls, and the young lion, over its prey, against which a multitude of shepherds is called out, ***and*** it is not dismayed by their voice, and it does not cringe at their tumult, so the LORD of armies will come down to wage war on the mountain of Zion (Tsiyon) and on its hill. **5** Like flying birds, so the LORD of armies will defend Jerusalem (Yerushalayim); He will defend and He will rescue ***it***; He will pass over and He will deliver ***it***." **6** Return to ***Him against*** whom the sons of Israel have made rebellion deep. **7** For in that day they will reject, each man, his idols of silver and his idols of gold, which your hands have made for you ***as*** sin. **8** And Assyria (Ashur) will fall by a sword not of a man, and a sword not of mankind will consume him; and he will flee for himself from before a sword, and his young men will become forced labor. **9** And his rock will pass away because of terror, and his commanders will be dismayed at the banner, declares the LORD, who has a fire in Zion, and has an oven in Jerusalem.

ISAIAH 32

A Righteous King

1 Look, a king will reign for righteousness, and as for princes, they will rule for justice. **2** And a man will be like a hiding place from ***the*** wind, and a shelter from ***the*** rainstorm, like streams of water in a dry place, like the shadow of a heavy rock in a weary land. **3** And the eyes of those who see will not look away, and the ears of those who hear will pay attention. **4** And the heart of the hasty will understand knowledge, and

30:29 Col 3:16; Ps 42:4; Isa 2:3
30:30 Ps 18:13,14; Isa 29:6; Isa 28:2
30:31 Isa 9:4; Isa 10:5,15,24; Isa 37:32-38
30:32 Isa 11:15; Isa 2:19; Isa 19:16
30:33 Matt 25:41; Rev 18:9; 2 Kgs 23:10
31:1 Ps 20:7; Isa 36:6; Isa 30:16
31:2 Num 23:19; Isa 45:7; 1 Sam 2:3
31:3 Isa 9:17; Ezek 28:9; Jer 15:6
31:4 Amos 3:8; Hos 11:10; Isa 42:13
31:5 Deut 32:11; Ps 91:4; Isa 10:14
31:6 Isa 55:7; Jer 3:10,14,22; Jer 31:18-20
31:7 Isa 2:20; Isa 30:22; Deut 7:25
31:8 Isa 14:25; Isa 10:16-19,33,34; Isa 29:5
31:9 Isa 29:6; Isa 18:3; Isa 4:4
32:1 Rev 19:11; Isa 9:6,7; Jer 33:15
32:2 Matt 7:24; Matt 7:25; Isa 25:4
32:3 Mark 7:37; Mark 7:35; Luke 4:18
32:4 Mark 7:35; Isa 29:24; Neh 8:8-12

30:29 *The song will be yours like a night of consecrating a festival* Probably Passover, which began at night, and pilgrims going up to Jerusalem with flutes. Their deliverance will be like a holy feast.
30:31 *at the voice of the LORD Assyria will be shattered* The empire that terrified every nation would be terrified at His voice, as when He struck Sennacherib's army (37:36). God needs no Egyptian horses. He brings His own weapons from the sky (v. 30), and His people's part is to trust and praise (v. 32).
30:33 *For a burning place is arranged from yesterday; it also has been prepared for the king* The Hebrew is Topheth, in the valley of Hinnom, where some of Judah's kings burned their children to false gods (2 Kgs 23:10; Jer 7:31). I take the king first as Assyria's king. In the New Testament the valley's name, Gehenna, becomes a word for hell (Mark 9:43), the final end of all who set themselves against God.
31:1 *on horses they lean, and they trust in chariotry because it is much* The fifth woe. Egypt's horses and chariots were the tanks of the ancient world, and Judah looked at the numbers and felt safe. The real issue was where they put their trust (Ps 20:7).
31:3 *Egypt is man and not God, and their horses are flesh and not spirit* When God stretches out His hand, helper and helped fall together. Whenever we lean on people or things more than God, we lean on something that can fall with us.
31:4 *Just as the lion growls, and the young lion, over its prey* The shepherds shout, but the lion will not let go. Jerusalem is held firmly in God's grip, and no army on earth can pry it out of His hand.
31:5 *Like flying birds, so the LORD of armies will defend Jerusalem* Now a mother bird hovering over her nest. "Pass over" recalls the first Passover (Exod 12:13), and Jesus used the picture of a hen gathering her chicks (Matt 23:37).
31:6 *Return to Him against whom the sons of Israel have made rebellion deep* They had gone deep into rebellion, but the door was still open. No matter how far someone has gone, the call is the same: come back to Him.
31:7 *they will reject, each man, his idols of silver and his idols of gold* Some saw this in Hezekiah's reforms (2 Kgs 18:4). I believe the full answer comes when Israel turns to the Lord as a nation at Christ's return.
31:8 *Assyria will fall by a sword not of a man* Fulfilled plainly in 701 B.C., when the angel of the LORD struck 185,000 in a night without a human weapon lifted (37:36). Sennacherib went home and was later killed by his own sons (37:37-38).
31:9 *who has a fire in Zion, and has an oven in Jerusalem* Assyria's strength flees in panic at God's banner. The same fire that warms and protects God's people consumes His enemies (Heb 12:29).
32:1 *a king will reign for righteousness* Some see Hezekiah, and his reign brought real reform. I believe the full meaning is the Messiah of 9:6-7 and 11:1-5, for only Jesus reigns in perfect righteousness. The princes ruling with Him fit the promise that His people will reign with Him (Rev 20:4-6; 2 Tim 2:12).
32:2 *like the shadow of a heavy rock in a weary land* Isaiah's own leaders had been the storm. In the kingdom leaders will be the shelter, and Christ Himself is all of this to His people.
32:3 *the eyes of those who see will not look away* The judgment of 6:9-10 is lifted. The hardening of chapter 6 is not the end of the story. The hasty will understand and stammerers speak clearly (v. 4).

the tongue of stammerers will hasten to speak clearly. **5** The fool will no longer be called noble, and of the scoundrel it will not be said, "eminent." **6** For a fool speaks folly, and his heart does wickedness, to do godlessness and to speak error concerning the LORD, to keep empty the soul of the hungry; and the drink of the thirsty he causes to fail. **7** And the scoundrel, his weapons ***are*** evil; he plans evil schemes to ruin the afflicted with words of falsehood, and when the needy speaks justice. **8** And a noble plans noble things, and he stands on noble things. **9** Untroubled women, rise; hear my voice; confident daughters, give ear to my saying. **10** Days beyond a year you will be agitated, confident ***women***; for the grape harvest will fail; the gathering will not come.
11 Tremble, untroubled ***women***; be agitated, confident ***women***; strip, and make yourselves bare, and gird ***yourselves*** on ***your*** loins. **12** Over ***the*** breasts ***they are*** mourning, over fields of delight, over ***the*** fruitful vine. **13** Over the ground of my people thorn ***and*** brier will come up, indeed, over all the houses of joy, a jubilant town. **14** For the palace has been forsaken; the tumult of the city has been abandoned; hill and watchtower have become for caves forever, a joy of wild donkeys, a pasture of flocks; **15** until ***the*** Spirit is poured out on us from on high, and the wilderness becomes the orchard, and the orchard is considered the forest. **16** And justice will dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness will live in the orchard. **17** And the work of righteousness will be peace, and the labor of righteousness keeping quiet and security forever. **18** And my people will live in a habitation of peace, and in dwellings of confidence, and in untroubled resting places. **19** And it will hail when the forest comes down, and in lowness the city will become low. **20** How blessed ***are*** you who sow beside all waters, who let loose the foot of the ox and the donkey.

ISAIAH 33

The King in His Beauty

1 Woe, destroyer, and you ***have*** not ***been*** destroyed; and one who deals treacherously, and they have not dealt treacherously with him! When you finish destroying, you will be destroyed; when you complete dealing treacherously, they will deal treacherously with you. **2** LORD, show favor to us; for You we have waited. Be their arm in the mornings, also our salvation in a time of distress. **3** At the sound of tumult peoples have fled; at Your rising nations have scattered. **4** And your plunder will be gathered ***as*** the gathering of the caterpillar; like the rushing of locusts ***one*** is rushing on it. **5** The LORD is exalted, for He dwells ***on*** high; He has filled Zion (Tsiyon) ***with*** justice and righteousness. **6** And He will be the faithfulness of your times, a wealth of salvations, of wisdom and knowledge; the fear of the LORD, it ***is*** His treasure. **7** Look, their valiant ones have cried outside; the messengers of peace weep bitterly. **8** Highways have been made desolate; the one who passes on the path has ceased; he has broken covenant, he has rejected cities, he has not valued

32:5 Isa 5:20; Ps 15:4; Mal 3:18
32:6 Matt 24:48; 1 Sam 24:13; 1 Sam 25:10,11
32:7 Jer 5:26-28; Isa 5:23; Isa 1:23
32:8 Ps 112:9; Prov 11:24; Luke 6:33-35
32:9 Isa 28:23; Isa 3:16; Isa 47:7,8
32:10 Isa 7:23; Isa 3:17-26; Isa 24:7-12
32:11 Isa 2:19,21; Isa 22:4,5; Isa 33:14
32:12 Lam 2:11; Lam 4:3,4; Deut 8:7,8
32:13 Rev 18:8; Isa 22:2,12,13; Isa 7:23
32:14 Isa 25:2; Isa 27:10; Isa 5:9
32:15 Luke 24:49; Acts 2:17; Matt 12:18
32:16 Matt 12:18; Acts 2:17; Isa 35:8
32:17 Rom 5:1; Ps 119:165; Ps 85:8
32:18 Hos 2:18-23; Isa 60:17,18; Ezek 34:25,26
32:19 Rev 18:21; Isa 28:2,17; Isa 30:30
32:20 Eccl 11:1; Isa 30:23; Isa 19:5-7
33:1 Isa 21:2; Matt 7:2; Isa 17:14
33:2 Isa 25:9; Isa 26:8; Isa 30:18,19
33:3 Isa 10:13,14,32-34; Isa 17:12-14; Isa 37:11-18,29-36
33:4 Isa 33:23; 2 Kgs 7:15,16; 2 Chr 14:13
33:5 Rom 11:26; Isa 33:10; Isa 2:11,17
33:6 Acts 9:31; Matt 6:33; Prov 24:3-7
33:7 2 Kgs 18:18,37; Isa 36:3,22; 2 Kgs 19:1-3
33:8 Judg 5:6; Isa 10:29-31; Lam 1:4

32:6 *For a fool speaks folly* A fool lives as though there is no God (Ps 14:1). Foolishness always shows up in how we treat people in need.
32:7 *to ruin the afflicted with words of falsehood* The scoundrel uses lies to crush the poor even when the poor man is in the right. God notices every such lie.
32:8 *And a noble plans noble things* What we plan reveals who we are. A good test for my own heart: what am I planning, and would God call it noble?
32:9 *Untroubled women, rise* At ease in a careless way, feeling safe when they were not (3:16-4:1). Isaiah is not singling out women as worse. He speaks to a comfortable class who assumed life would go on as always.
32:10 *Days beyond a year you will be agitated* I take this as the Assyrian invasion of 701 B.C., which ruined Judah's countryside (37:30). Most date the prophecy shortly before it. God's kindest word is sometimes a warning that shakes us out of complacency (v. 11).
32:14 *For the palace has been forsaken* The hill and watchtower are probably the Ophel area of Jerusalem. I believe this covers the long desolation after Babylon's destruction about 586 B.C. and the years of foreign rule.
32:15 *until the Spirit is poured out on us from on high* Everything turns on "until." The desolation is not permanent (Joel 2:28-29; Ezek 36:26-27). The church received the Spirit at Pentecost (Acts 2:16-17), but I believe the full outpouring on Israel comes at Christ's return (Zech 12:10).
32:17 *the work of righteousness will be peace* Peace is the fruit of righteousness. The world keeps trying for peace without righteousness, and it never works. For the believer, peace with God comes through being made righteous by faith in Christ (Rom 5:1).
32:19 *it will hail when the forest comes down* A forest sometimes pictures a proud enemy army (10:18-19, 33-34). I take it as God's enemies falling when He restores His people, and the city as the proud world city (24:10; 25:2).
32:20 *Blessed are you who sow beside all waters* A peaceful farm with plenty of water and no enemy at the gate, a simple picture of a world where God reigns.
33:1 *Woe, destroyer, and you have not been destroyed* The sixth woe, against Assyria, which crushed nations and broke every promise. What a nation sows it eventually reaps (Gal 6:7).
33:2 *LORD, show favor to us; for You we have waited* The right response to chapters 28-32. Instead of running to Egypt, the faithful ask for grace. A good prayer for any of us: Lord, be my strength this morning, and save me in my distress.
33:4 *And your plunder will be gathered as the gathering of the caterpillar* After God struck Sennacherib's army, the abandoned camp was stripped like a field by locusts (v. 23).
33:5 *He has filled Zion with justice and righteousness* While the destroyer rages, the Lord is still on His throne. Zion is the temple hill, often standing for the city and people of God.
33:6 *the fear of the LORD, it is His treasure* With Assyria at the gates, God was their steady ground. The fear of the LORD is the deep awe that makes us take God seriously.
33:7 *the messengers of peace weep bitterly* Hezekiah paid Sennacherib huge tribute for peace (2 Kgs 18:14-16), and Assyria still sent its army (2 Kgs 18:17). He broke covenant (v. 8). Trusting the word of a godless power is dangerous.

man. **9** The land has mourned, it has languished; Lebanon (Levanon) has been put to shame, it has withered; Sharon has become like the Arabah (Arava), and Bashan and Carmel (Karmel) are shaking off ***their leaves***. **10** "Now I will arise," says the LORD, "now I will exalt Myself, now I will lift Myself up. **11** You will conceive chaff; you will give birth to stubble; your breath, a fire, will consume you. **12** And the peoples will be burnings of lime; thorns cut down, they will be kindled with fire. **13** Hear, you who are far off, what I have done; and know, you who are near, My might." **14** Sinners in Zion are in dread; trembling has seized the godless: "Who of us will sojourn ***with*** the consuming fire? Who of us will sojourn ***with*** everlasting burnings?" **15** He who walks ***in*** righteousness and speaks uprightness, who rejects the unjust gain of extortion, who shakes out his palms from grasping the bribe, who stops his ear from hearing ***of*** bloodshed, and shuts his eyes from looking on evil, **16** he will dwell ***on*** the heights; strongholds of cliffs ***will be*** his fortress; his bread will be given, his water ***will be*** sure. **17** Your eyes will see a king in his beauty; they will see a land of distances. **18** Your heart will meditate on terror: "Where ***is*** the one who counted? Where ***is*** the one who weighed? Where ***is*** the one who counted the towers?" **19** You will not see the barbarous people, a people too deep of lip to hear, of stammering tongue, ***with*** no understanding. **20** Look upon Zion, the town of our appointed feasts; your eyes will see Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), an untroubled habitation, a tent ***that no one*** will pack up; ***no one*** will pull out its tent pegs forever, and all its ropes will not be torn apart. **21** But there the LORD ***will be*** majestic for us, a place of rivers, canals wide on both sides; a ship with oars will not go on it, and a majestic ship will not pass along it. **22** For the LORD ***is*** our judge; the LORD ***is*** our lawgiver; the LORD ***is*** our king; He, He will save us. **23** Your ropes hang loose; they do not hold firm the base of their mast; they have not spread out the sail. Then the booty of abundant plunder will be divided; the lame will plunder spoil. **24** And no inhabitant will say, "I am sick"; the people who dwell in it ***will be*** forgiven of iniquity.

ISAIAH 34

The Day of Vengeance

1 Draw near, nations, to hear; and peoples, pay attention! Let the earth hear, and what fills it, the world and all its offspring. **2** For the LORD has wrath against all the nations, and rage against all their army; He has devoted them to destruction; He has given them to the slaughter. **3** And their slain will be thrown out, and their corpses, their stench will go up, and mountains will melt with their blood. **4** And all the host of the heavens will rot away, and the heavens will be rolled up like the scroll; and all their host will wither, as the leaf withers from the vine, and like the withered ***fruit*** from the

33:9 Isa 35:2; Isa 65:10; Nah 1:4
33:10 Ps 12:5; Isa 10:16,33; Isa 42:13,14
33:11 Isa 59:4; Ps 7:14; James 1:15
33:12 Isa 27:4; 2 Sam 23:6,7; Amos 2:1
33:13 Isa 49:1; Ps 48:10; Eph 2:11-18
33:14 Heb 12:29; Deut 5:24,25; Isa 66:24
33:15 Ps 119:37; 2 Pet 2:14-16; Isa 56:1,2
33:16 Isa 32:18; Luke 12:29-31; Ps 15:1
33:17 1 John 3:2; Rev 22:4; Isa 32:1,2
33:18 1 Cor 1:20; 2 Kgs 18:14,31; Isa 38:9-22
33:19 Isa 28:11; Deut 28:49,50; Jer 5:15
33:20 Ps 46:5; Isa 54:2; Ps 48:12,13
33:21 Ps 46:4,5; Ps 29:3; Acts 7:2
33:22 James 4:12; Ps 89:18; Isa 25:9
33:23 2 Kgs 7:8; Ps 68:12; 1 Cor 1:27
33:24 Rev 21:4; Jer 50:20; Mic 7:18,19
34:1 Rev 2:7; Rev 11:18; Isa 41:1
34:2 Rev 19:15; Rev 11:18; Rev 19:17
34:3 Rev 14:20; Rev 11:18; Joel 2:20
34:4 Matt 24:29; Rev 6:13-14; Acts 2:19

33:9 *Sharon has become like the Arabah* Lebanon, Sharon, Bashan and Carmel were the land's most fertile regions. War ruins the land as well as people.
33:10 *Now I will arise* Three times "now." When things are at their worst God steps in. His timing often seems late to us, but He knows the exact moment.
33:11 *your breath, a fire, will consume you* Their plans produce nothing, and their own raging becomes the fire that burns them. Evil carries the seeds of its own destruction.
33:14 *Who of us will sojourn with the consuming fire* A surprise: the terrified are the godless in Zion. Seeing God's fire on the enemy, they realized the same holy God lived among them. It is the most important question a person can ask.
33:15 *He who walks in righteousness and speaks uprightness* Like Psalms 15 and 24:3-4. No one lives this perfectly except Jesus, which is why we need His righteousness credited to us by faith (2 Cor 5:21). Those made right with God begin to live this way.
33:17 *Your eyes will see a king in his beauty* During the siege they saw Hezekiah in sackcloth (37:1). The promise reaches past him to the Messiah. Isaiah saw Christ's glory in chapter 6 (John 12:41), and every believer will see Jesus face to face (1 John 3:2; Rev 22:4). If you are weary, let this verse lift your eyes.
33:18 *Where is the one who counted the towers* Assyrian officials who counted tribute, weighed silver and surveyed defenses. Paul echoes these questions (1 Cor 1:20). The enemy's experts are gone, and the strange foreign tongue of judgment is heard no more (v. 19; 28:11).
33:20 *a tent that no one will pack up* Jerusalem has been destroyed, rebuilt and fought over many times since. I believe this awaits full fulfillment when Christ reigns from Jerusalem in the Millennium.
33:21 *there the LORD will be majestic for us, a place of rivers* Nineveh and Babylon had rivers for trade and defense, and Jerusalem had none. The LORD Himself will be its broad rivers, where no enemy warship can sail.
33:22 *For the LORD is our judge; the LORD is our lawgiver; the LORD is our king* Power usually split among roles rests in one Person. I believe this is Christ in His reign. And the best part: "He, He will save us."
33:23 *the lame will plunder spoil* The enemy ship is helpless, ropes loose and mast unheld. When God wins, even the weakest of His people share in the victory.
33:24 *no inhabitant will say, "I am sick"* Healing and forgiveness side by side, looking to Christ's kingdom and finally the new creation (Rev 21:4). Forgiveness is the root and healing the fruit. Sin is the deepest sickness, and Jesus came to heal it.
34:1 *Draw near, nations, to hear* Chapters 13-23 judged nations one by one. Here every nation is summoned at once. I believe this is the final judgment on the nations at the end of the age, when Christ returns.
34:2 *He has devoted them to destruction* Spoken as already done, because God's word makes it certain. The world's armies gather against Christ at His return and are destroyed (Rev 19:17-21).
34:3 *mountains will melt with their blood* Grim, and I do not believe Isaiah exaggerates (Rev 14:20). God takes rebellion seriously, and the end of those who reject Him is real.
34:4 *the heavens will be rolled up like the scroll* Jesus spoke of sun and moon darkened and stars falling before His return (Matt 24:29), and Revelation uses nearly Isaiah's words (Rev 6:13-14). I take it as real upheaval in the heavens in the Tribulation and at Christ's return, not just a figure for political change.

fig tree. **5** For My sword has drunk its fill in the heavens;
look, it will come down on Edom, and on the people of My
total destruction, for judgment. **6** The LORD has a sword; it is
filled ***with*** blood; it has been made fat with fat, with the
blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams.
For the LORD has a sacrifice in Bozrah (Botsra), and a great
slaughter in the land of Edom. **7** And wild oxen will go down
with them, and young bulls with mighty ***bulls***; and their land
will drink its fill of blood, and their dust will be made fat
with fat. **8** For the LORD has a day of vengeance, a year of
recompenses for the cause of Zion (Tsiyon). **9** And its tor-
rents will be turned into pitch, and its dust into sulfur, and
its land will become burning pitch. **10** Night and day it will
not be quenched; forever its smoke will go up; from genera-
tion to generation it will lie desolate; to the perpetuity of
perpetuities ***there will be*** none passing through it. **11** And the
desert owl and the hedgehog will possess it, and the great
owl and the raven will dwell in it; and He will stretch out
over it a measuring line of formlessness and stones of empti-
ness. **12** Its nobles, and ***there is*** none there ***whom*** they will
call ***to*** kingship; and all its princes will be nothing. **13** And
thorns will grow up ***in*** its fortresses, nettle and thistle in its
fortifications; and it will be a habitation of jackals, an abode
for daughters of the ostrich. **14** And desert creatures will
meet hyenas, and the goat will call to its companion; surely
there the night creature will rest and will find for itself a
resting place. **15** There the owl will make its nest and lay
eggs and hatch and gather ***its brood*** in its shadow; surely
there the black kites will be gathered, each ***with*** its compan-
ion. **16** Seek from the scroll of the LORD and read: not one of
these will be missing; each ***with*** its companion, they will not
be lacking. For my mouth, it has commanded, and His Spirit,
He has gathered them. **17** And He, He has cast a lot for them,
and His hand has divided it to them by the measuring line;
forever they will possess it; to generation and generation
they will dwell in it.

ISAIAH 35

The Highway of Holiness

1 The wilderness and the dry land will be glad, and let the
desert plain rejoice, and let it blossom like the crocus. **2** It
will surely blossom, and let it rejoice, also ***with*** rejoicing and
shouting for joy. The glory of Lebanon (Levanon) will be
given to it, the splendor of Carmel (Karmel) and Sharon.
They, they will see the glory of the LORD, the splendor of our
God. **3** Strengthen slack hands, and make firm stumbling
knees. **4** Say to those who are hasty of heart, "Be strong; do
not be afraid. Look, your God! Vengeance will come, the rec-
ompense of God; He, He will come and save you." **5** Then the
eyes of the blind will be opened, and the ears of the deaf will

34:5 Rev 19:17; Mal 1:4; Jer 46:10
34:6 Rev 19:17; Rev 19:13; Isa 63:1
34:7 Num 23:22; Ps 68:30; Num 24:8
34:8 Isa 63:4; Isa 61:2; Isa 35:4
34:9 Rev 21:8; Rev 18:9; Deut 29:23
34:10 Rev 19:3; Rev 14:11; Rev 18:9
34:11 Rev 18:2; Zeph 2:14; 2 Kgs 21:13
34:12 Isa 3:6-8; Eccl 10:16,17; Isa 41:24
34:13 Jer 9:11; Jer 10:22; Mal 1:3
34:14 Isa 13:21; Isa 13:22
34:16 Rev 5:1; Josh 1:8; Ps 33:6,9
34:17 Isa 34:10; Ps 78:55; Josh 18:8
35:1 Isa 51:3; Isa 55:12,13; Isa 29:17
35:2 2 Cor 3:18; Luke 2:9; Isa 60:13,21
35:3 Heb 12:12; Heb 12:13; Job 4:3,4
35:4 James 5:7; Rev 2:10; Rom 4:20
35:5 Matt 11:3; Matt 9:27; Matt 21:14

34:5 *look, it will come down on Edom* Edom came from Esau, Jacob's twin (Gen 36:1), south and east of the Dead Sea, a bitter enemy for centuries that cheered Jerusalem's fall (Ps 137:7; Obad 10-14). Here it stands as the leading example of the nations that hate God's people.
34:6 *For the LORD has a sacrifice in Bozrah* Bozrah was a chief city of Edom. The Lord also comes from Bozrah with garments stained red (63:1), and Christ returns clothed in a robe dipped in blood (Rev 19:13). I see these as the same event. The wild oxen and bulls are Edom's mighty men (v. 7).
34:8 *For the LORD has a day of vengeance, a year of recompenses for the cause of Zion* The key to the chapter. God has not forgotten what the nations did to His people. Isaiah 61:2 reverses the pair, "a year of favor" and "a day of vengeance." His favor is long and His vengeance short. Jesus stopped reading before the day of vengeance (Luke 4:18-21), which waits for His second coming.
34:10 *forever its smoke will go up* The language of Babylon's judgment and of the beast's worshipers (Rev 19:3; 14:11). The Edomites, later Idumeans, faded from history in Roman times. I believe the full and final fulfillment comes at the end of the age.
34:11 *a measuring line of formlessness and stones of emptiness* Builders used line and plumb stones to build straight walls. God uses them to measure a ruin. Some animal names here are hard to identify, and translations differ, but the picture is the same.
34:12 *there is none there whom they will call to kingship* Edom had kings before Israel did (Gen 36:31), and now it will have no ruler at all.
34:13 *thorns will grow up in its fortresses* Edom's rock cities seemed untouchable (Obad 3-4). God's judgment reaches the highest fortress, and jackals move in.
34:14 *surely there the night creature will rest* The Hebrew is lilith. Scholars are unsure whether it is a night bird, a wild animal, or a demonic creature of folklore. The point is a land of fear and darkness, abandoned by people.
34:16 *Seek from the scroll of the LORD and read: not one of these will be missing* God keeps track even of the birds in the ruins, each with its mate. If He is that careful in judgment, we can trust Him to be that careful in His promises.
34:17 *He, He has cast a lot for them* As Joshua divided Canaan by lot (Josh 18:10), God gives Edom to the wild creatures forever. That is the end for all who set themselves against God. But chapter 35 tells the other side.
35:1 *The wilderness and the dry land will be glad* Edom's land became a waste (34:9-10). Now the wilderness rejoices. The desert plain is the harsh Arabah rift running through the Dead Sea. I take this at face value: when Christ reigns, the land will be physically renewed, part of creation's freedom (Rom 8:19-22; Gen 3:17-18). It also speaks to the dry places of our lives. God specializes in making deserts bloom.
35:2 *They, they will see the glory of the LORD, the splendor of our God* Lebanon, Carmel and Sharon, withered in 33:9, now lend their beauty to the desert. But the greatest gift of the kingdom is not the flowers but God Himself, seen and known (33:17). In the Millennium Jesus will be present, reigning from Jerusalem.
35:3 *Strengthen slack hands, and make firm stumbling knees* A word for God's tired people while they wait, quoted to weary believers (Heb 12:12). You probably know someone whose knees are shaking. Strengthen them with the hope of this chapter. Tell them where the story is going.
35:4 *Look, your God! Vengeance will come, the recompense of God; He, He will come and save you* The same words used for Edom (34:8). Christ's coming is vengeance for those who reject Him (Rev 19:11-21) and salvation for His own. The One who comes is your God, not a stranger. If you are anxious, He is coming, and He is coming for you.
35:5 *Then the eyes of the blind will be opened* When John the Baptist asked from prison whether Jesus was the One, Jesus pointed to this very work (Matt 11:2-5). Every healing was a sign the King had come. I believe the complete fulfillment is in the Millennium, when healing will be the normal state of the kingdom, and in the eternal state there will be no pain at all (Rev 21:4).

be unstopped. **6** Then the lame will leap like the deer, and the tongue of the mute will shout for joy; for waters will burst forth in the wilderness, and torrents in the desert plain. **7** And the parched ground will become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; in the habitation of jackals, its resting place, grass ***will become*** reed and papyrus. **8** And there will be a highway there, and a way, and it will be called the way of holiness; the unclean will not pass along it, and it ***will be*** for them; one who walks the way, and fools, will not wander about. **9** No lion will be there, and a violent one of the living things will not go up on it; it will not be found there; and the redeemed will walk. **10** And the ransomed of the LORD will return and come ***to*** Zion (Tsiyon) with a shout of joy, and everlasting gladness ***will be*** on their head; joy and gladness they will overtake, and sorrow and sighing will flee.

ISAIAH 36

The Taunt

1 And it was in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah (Chizqiyahu) ***that*** Sennacherib (Sancheriv) the king of Assyria (Ashur) came up against all the fortified cities of Judah (Yehuda), and he seized them. **2** And the king of Assyria sent the Rabshakeh from Lachish (Lakhish) to Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), to King Hezekiah, with a heavy army; and he stood by the conduit of the upper pool, on the highway of the field of the launderer. **3** And ***there*** went out to him Eliakim (Elyaqim) the son of Hilkiah (Chilqiyahu), who ***was*** over the house, and Shebna (Shevna) the scribe, and Joah (Yo'ach) the son of Asaph (Asaf), the recorder. **4** And the Rabshakeh said to them, "Say, please, to Hezekiah, 'Thus says the great king, the king of Assyria: What ***is*** this trust in which you trust? **5** I say, only a word of lips ***is*** counsel and strength for the war. Now in whom do you trust, that you have rebelled against me? **6** Look, you trust in the staff of this crushed reed, in Egypt (Mitsrayim), on which a man will lean, and it will go into his palm and pierce it; so ***is*** Pharaoh the king of Egypt to all who trust in him. **7** And if you say to me, "In the LORD our God we trust," is it not He whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah has removed, and he has said to Judah and to Jerusalem, "Before this altar you shall bow down"? **8** And now, make a wager, please, with my master the king of Assyria, and let me give you two thousand horses, if you are able to put riders on them for yourself. **9** And how will you turn back the face of one governor of the least of the servants of my master, and you trust for yourself in Egypt for chariotry and for horsemen? **10** And now, is it without the LORD ***that*** I have come up against this land to destroy it? The LORD said to me, "Go up to this land and destroy it."'" **11** And Eliakim and Shebna and Joah said to the Rabshakeh, "Speak, please, to your servants ***in*** Aramaic, for we understand; and do not speak to us ***in*** Judean in the ears of the people who ***are*** on the wall." **12** And the Rabshakeh said, "Is it to your master and to you ***that*** my master has sent me to speak these words? ***Is it*** not to the men who sit on the wall, to eat their excrement and to drink the water of their

35:6 Matt 9:32; Matt 21:14; Matt 15:31
35:7 Luke 11:24; Isa 34:13; Isa 29:17
35:8 Heb 12:14; John 14:6; Rev 21:27
35:9 1 Pet 1:18; John 14:6; Isa 62:12
35:10 Rev 21:4; Rev 14:1; Isa 25:8
36:1 Matt 1:9; 2 Chr 32:1; 2 Kgs 18:13,17
36:2 Matt 1:9; Isa 7:3; 2 Kgs 18:17-37
36:3 Isa 22:15-20; 2 Sam 8:16,17; 2 Sam 20:24,25
36:4 Matt 1:9; Isa 10:8-14; Isa 37:11-15
36:5 2 Kgs 18:7; Prov 21:30,31; Prov 24:5,6
36:6 Ezek 29:6,7; Isa 20:5,6; Isa 30:1-7
36:7 Matt 1:9; 2 Kgs 18:4; 1 Chr 5:20
36:8 1 Sam 17:40-43; 2 Kgs 14:14; Isa 10:13,14
36:9 Isa 10:8; 2 Kgs 18:24; Isa 36:6
36:10 1 Kgs 13:18; Isa 10:5-7; Isa 37:28
36:11 Ezra 4:7; Dan 2:4; 2 Kgs 18:26,27
36:12 Isa 9:20; Lev 26:29; Deut 28:53-57

35:6 *Then the lame will leap like the deer* Not just standing but leaping, not whispering but shouting (Acts 3:8). God's healing brings us past normal into joy. Healing of people and of the land go together. Water in the desert is one of Isaiah's favorite pictures (41:18; 43:19-20; 44:3), and Jesus used it for the Spirit (John 7:38-39).

35:7 *in the habitation of jackals, its resting place, grass will become reed and papyrus* Even the dry dens of 34:13 grow plants that need plenty of water. No life is so dry and no situation so hopeless that God cannot bring living water into it.

35:8 *it will be called the way of holiness* A highway is a raised, cleared road. Translations differ on the last line, some reading that even simple people will not get lost. At face value I believe it is a real road home to Zion in the kingdom (11:16; 19:23). It also teaches that Jesus is the way (John 14:6) and the road to God is holy (Heb 12:14). We walk it because He has made us clean.

35:9 *and the redeemed will walk* No lion or robber on this road. To redeem is to buy back, as a close relative could buy a family member out of slavery (Lev 25:25, 47-49). We were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ (1 Pet 1:18-19), and every traveler was bought at the same price.

35:10 *And the ransomed of the LORD will return and come to Zion with a shout of joy* Repeated almost word for word in 51:11. The near view includes the return from Babylon, but I believe it reaches to Israel's regathering at the start of Christ's kingdom (Rom 11:26) and on to the eternal state (Rev 21:4). Gladness comes and finds us, and sorrow and sighing flee. If you belong to Christ, your story ends on this road with joy on your head.

36:1 *Sennacherib the king of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah, and he seized them* Isaiah shifts from prophecy to history. Most scholars date this to 701 B.C. Sennacherib's own clay prism (the Taylor Prism) boasts that he took forty-six walled cities and shut Hezekiah in Jerusalem like a bird in a cage. It never claims he took Jerusalem. Only the capital was left, and that is often where God does His best work.

36:2 *he stood by the conduit of the upper pool, on the highway of the field of the launderer* Lachish, Judah's second city, was under siege, and carvings of that siege were found in his palace at Nineveh. Rabshakeh is a title for a high official, not a name. He stands at the exact spot where Ahaz refused God's sign and leaned on Assyria (7:3). What we trust in place of God can become what comes against us.

36:3 *Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was over the house, and Shebna the scribe* Eliakim now holds the office Isaiah said he would take from Shebna, who serves as scribe (22:15-22).

36:6 *you trust in the staff of this crushed reed, in Egypt* Here he is right, preaching Isaiah's own sermon (30:1-3; 31:1). Satan also points out our real failures, not to lead us to God but to make us give up.

36:7 *is it not He whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah has removed* Here he is wrong. Hezekiah tore down the hilltop shrines that mixed the LORD's worship with pagan practice (2 Kgs 18:4) and called the people back to one altar. To a man of many gods that looked like an insult, but it was obedience. The devil still takes our faithfulness and calls it the reason things went wrong.

36:10 *The LORD said to me, "Go up to this land and destroy it."* The boldest lie, carrying some truth. God did call Assyria His rod (10:5-6), but He said Assyria would go too far and be judged (10:7, 12). Test anyone who claims to speak for God against what God has already said. A half-truth used to scare God's people is still a lie.

36:11 *Speak, please, to your servants in Aramaic* Aramaic was the language of trade and diplomacy, like English today. "Judean" is Hebrew. He crudely refuses, aiming to break the ordinary soldier's will (v. 12).

feet with you?" **13** And the Rabshakeh stood and called out with a great voice ***in*** Judean, and he said, "Hear the words of the great king, the king of Assyria. **14** Thus says the king: 'Do not let Hezekiah deceive you, for he will not be able to deliver you. **15** And do not let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD, saying, "The LORD will surely deliver us; this city will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria." **16** Do not listen to Hezekiah, for thus says the king of Assyria: "Make a blessing with me and come out to me, and eat, each man ***from*** his vine and each man ***from*** his fig tree, and drink, each man the water of his cistern, **17** until I come and take you to a land like your land, a land of grain and new wine, a land of bread and vineyards." **18** ***Beware*** lest Hezekiah mislead you, saying, "The LORD will deliver us." Have the gods of the nations delivered, each one his land, from the hand of the king of Assyria? **19** Where ***are*** the gods of Hamath (Chamat) and Arpad? Where ***are*** the gods of Sepharvaim (Sefarvayim)? And have they delivered Samaria (Shomron) from my hand? **20** Who among all the gods of these lands ***are those*** who have delivered their land from my hand, that the LORD will deliver Jerusalem from my hand?'" **21** And they kept silent and did not answer him a word, for it ***was*** the command of the king, saying, "You shall not answer him." **22** And Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who ***was*** over the house, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph, the recorder, came to Hezekiah ***with*** garments torn, and they told him the words of the Rabshakeh.

ISAIAH 37

Hezekiah's Prayer

1 And it was, when King Hezekiah (Chizqiyahu) heard, and he tore his clothes, and he covered himself with sackcloth, and he went ***into*** the house of the LORD. **2** And he sent Eliakim (Elyaqim), who ***was*** over the house, and Shebna (Shevna) the scribe, and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah (Yeshayahu) the son of Amoz (Amots), the prophet. **3** And they said to him, "Thus says Hezekiah: 'A day of distress and rebuke and contempt ***is*** this day, for children have come to birth, and ***there is*** no strength to give birth. **4** Perhaps the LORD your God will hear the words of the Rabshakeh, whom his master the king of Assyria (Ashur) has sent to taunt the living God, and will rebuke ***him*** for the words which the LORD your God has heard; and you shall lift up a prayer for the remnant that is found.'" **5** And the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah. **6** And Isaiah said to them, "Thus you shall say to your master: 'Thus says the LORD: "Do not be afraid because of the words which you have heard, ***with*** which the young men of the king of Assyria have blasphemed Me. **7** Look, I am about to put a spirit in him, and he will hear a report and return to his land; and I will make him fall by the sword in his land."'" **8** And the Rabshakeh returned and found the king of Assyria fighting against Libnah (Livna), for he had heard that he had departed from Lachish (Lakhish). **9** And he heard concerning Tirhakah (Tirhaqa) the king of Cush (Kush), saying, "He has come out to fight with you." And he heard, and he sent messengers to Hezekiah, saying, **10** "Thus you shall say to Hezekiah the king of Judah (Yehuda), saying, 'Do not let your God, in whom you are trusting, deceive you, saying, "Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria." **11** Look, you have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all the lands, devoting them to destruction; and will you

36:13 2 Chr 32:18; 1 Sam 17:8-11; 2 Kgs 18:28-32
36:14 Matt 1:9; Isa 37:10-13; 2 Kgs 19:10-13,22
36:15 Matt 1:9; Isa 36:7; Isa 37:23,24
36:16 Matt 1:9; Zech 3:10; Mic 4:4
36:17 2 Kgs 17:6-23; 2 Kgs 18:9-12; 2 Kgs 24:11
36:18 Matt 1:9; Isa 36:7,10,15; Isa 37:10
36:19 Jer 49:23; Isa 10:9; Num 34:8
36:20 Isa 37:18,19,23-29; Isa 45:16,17; Exod 5:2
36:21 Prov 26:4; 2 Kgs 18:26,37; Ps 38:13-15
36:22 Matt 1:9; Isa 36:3,11; Isa 33:7

37:1 2 Kgs 19:1-19; Isa 36:22; 2 Kgs 22:11
37:2 Isa 37:14; Isa 36:3; 2 Kgs 18:18
37:3 Hos 13:13; Isa 66:9; Isa 33:2
37:4 Rom 9:27; Isa 36:20; Isa 1:9
37:6 Mark 5:36; Isa 7:4; Isa 35:4
37:7 Isa 10:16-18,33,34; Isa 17:13,14; Isa 29:5-8
37:8 Josh 10:29,31-34; 2 Kgs 19:8,9; Num 33:20,21
37:9 1 Sam 23:27,28
37:10 Isa 36:4,15,20; 2 Kgs 18:5; 2 Kgs 19:10-13
37:11 Isa 36:18-20; Isa 37:18,19; Isa 10:7-14

36:15 *do not let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD* The heart of the attack. Assyria did not mind if Judah prayed. It could not allow them to trust. Real trust in God is the one thing an enemy cannot answer.

36:17 *until I come and take you to a land like your land* Vine and fig tree were a picture of peace (Mic 4:4), but the fine print was deportation, as with Samaria in 722 B.C. (2 Kgs 17:6). The world still promises rest now and leaves out where the road ends. Sin always takes more than it gives.

36:20 *Who among all the gods of these lands are those who have delivered their land from my hand* Hamath, Arpad and Sepharvaim's gods had not saved them. His fatal mistake was putting the living God on the shelf with idols. He had insulted Hezekiah. Now he insulted the LORD, and God answers him personally (37:23).

36:21 *And they kept silent and did not answer him a word* Not every taunt needs a reply, and arguing with a liar on his terms usually helps him. Their silence left the answer to God, as Jesus did before His accusers (Matt 27:12-14).

36:22 *came to Hezekiah with garments torn* Torn clothes were a sign of grief and alarm. Nothing is solved yet. What happens next depends on what Hezekiah does with the bad news.

37:1 *he tore his clothes, and he covered himself with sackcloth, and he went into the house of the LORD* Hezekiah's first move was not to the war room but to the house of the LORD. When bad news comes, go to God before you go anywhere else. Sackcloth showed he knew Judah's only hope was the LORD.

37:3 *children have come to birth, and there is no strength to give birth* This was a proverb for a crisis at its worst moment. The baby is ready to be born, but the mother has no strength left. Judah had come to the end of itself, which is right where God loves to work.

37:4 *you shall lift up a prayer for the remnant that is found* Most of Judah's cities had already fallen (36:1). Only Jerusalem was left, a remnant. Hezekiah asked the prophet to pray. It is right to ask godly people to pray for us when we are in trouble.

37:6 *Do not be afraid because of the words which you have heard* God's first word was comfort. The Assyrians had blasphemed Him, so this was now His fight, not just Hezekiah's. Fear fades when we see that the battle belongs to the LORD.

37:7 *he will hear a report and return to his land; and I will make him fall by the sword in his land* This was a very specific prophecy with three parts: a report, a return home, and death by the sword in his own land. Every part came true (37:9, 37, 38). God's word is exact.

37:9 *Tirhakah the king of Cush* Tirhakah was a Cushite ruler of Egypt. His army coming up from the south was the report that pulled Sennacherib's attention away. God can use the movements of nations to keep His word.

37:10 *Do not let your God, in whom you are trusting, deceive you* Sennacherib moved from mocking Hezekiah to calling God a liar. This is the oldest lie of all, that God cannot be trusted to keep His word (Gen 3:4-5). It is the enemy's favorite attack on faith.

be delivered? **12** Did the gods of the nations deliver them, whom my fathers destroyed: Gozan and Haran (Charan) and Rezeph (Retsef) and the sons of Eden who ***were*** in Telassar (Telasar)? **13** Where ***is*** the king of Hamath (Chamat), and the king of Arpad, and the king of the city of Sepharvaim (Sefarvayim), Hena, and Ivvah (Ivva)?'" **14** And Hezekiah took the letters from the hand of the messengers, and he read it; and he went up ***to*** the house of the LORD, and Hezekiah spread it out before the LORD. **15** And Hezekiah prayed to the LORD, saying, **16** "LORD of armies, God of Israel (Yisra'el), who sits ***on*** the cherubim, You are He, the God, You alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; You have made the heavens and the earth. **17** Incline Your ear, LORD, and hear; open Your eyes, LORD, and see; and hear all the words of Sennacherib (Sancheriv), which he has sent to taunt the living God. **18** Truly, LORD, the kings of Assyria have laid waste all the lands and their land, **19** and they have put their gods into the fire, for they ***were*** not gods, but the work of the hands of man, wood and stone; and they destroyed them. **20** And now, LORD our God, save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You ***are*** the LORD, You alone."

The Answer

21 And Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: '***As for*** what you have prayed to Me concerning Sennacherib the king of Assyria, **22** this ***is*** the word which the LORD has spoken concerning him: "She has despised you, she has mocked you, the virgin daughter of Zion (Tsiyon); behind you she has shaken ***her*** head, the daughter of Jerusalem. **23** Whom have you taunted and blasphemed? And against whom have you raised a voice and lifted up your eyes on high? Against the Holy One of Israel! **24** By the hand of your servants you have taunted the Lord, and you have said, 'With the abundance of my chariots I, I have gone up ***to*** the height of mountains, ***to*** the remotest parts of Lebanon (Levanon); and I will cut down the height of its cedars, the choicest of its cypresses; and I will come ***to*** the height of its end, the forest of its orchard. **25** I, I have dug and drunk water, and I will dry up with the sole of my feet all the canals of Egypt (Matsor).' **26** Have you not heard? From afar I did it; from days of antiquity I formed it; now I have brought it, and you are to make fortified cities crash ***into*** ruined heaps. **27** And their inhabitants ***were*** short of hand; they were dismayed and were ashamed; they were the vegetation of the field and the greenery of grass, the grass of roofs, and a field before standing grain. **28** And your sitting down and your going out and your coming in I know, and your raging against Me. **29** Because of your raging against Me, and your arrogance has come up into My ears, I will put My hook in your nose and My bridle in your lips, and I will turn you back by the way by which you came. **30** And this ***will be*** the sign for you: eating this year self-sown grain, and in the second year self-seeded growth, and in the third year sow and reap, and plant vineyards and eat their fruit. **31** And the escaped remnant of the house of Judah that remains will

37:12 Acts 7:2; Gen 11:31; 2 Kgs 17:6
37:13 Isa 10:9; Isa 36:19; Jer 49:23
37:14 2 Kgs 19:14; Isa 37:1; 1 Kgs 8:28-30,38
37:15 1 Sam 7:8,9; 2 Sam 7:18-29; 2 Kgs 19:15-19
37:16 Exod 25:22; Ps 99:1; Ps 86:10
37:17 2 Chr 6:40; Ps 17:6; 1 Pet 3:12
37:18 2 Kgs 15:29; 2 Kgs 16:9; 2 Kgs 17:6,24
37:19 Isa 10:9-11; Isa 36:18-20; Isa 46:1,2
37:20 Ps 46:10; 1 Kgs 18:36,37; Ezek 36:23
37:21 Isa 38:3-6; Isa 58:9; Isa 65:24
37:22 Matt 21:5; Matt 27:39; Jude 1:15
37:23 Jude 1:15; Ezek 39:7; Isa 37:10-13
37:24 Isa 14:8; Isa 10:18; Isa 37:4
37:25 1 Kgs 20:10; Isa 36:12; 2 Kgs 19:23,24
37:26 Acts 2:23; Acts 4:27,28; 1 Pet 2:8
37:27 1 Pet 1:24; Ps 129:6; Isa 19:16
37:28 Jude 1:15; Prov 5:21; Prov 15:3
37:29 Acts 9:4; John 15:23; Jude 1:15
37:30 Jude 1:15; Isa 7:14; Isa 38:7
37:31 Isa 27:6; 2 Kgs 19:30,31; Ps 80:9

37:14 *Hezekiah spread it out before the LORD* Hezekiah did not answer the letter. He laid it open before God. This is a beautiful picture of casting all our anxiety on Him (1 Pet 5:7). Take the actual thing that is troubling you and lay it before the Lord.
37:16 *LORD of armies, God of Israel, who sits on the cherubim* Hezekiah began his prayer with who God is, not with the problem. God is enthroned above the cherubim and is the Maker of heaven and earth. When we see how big God is, the enemy shrinks to his true size.
37:17 *which he has sent to taunt the living God* Hezekiah's concern was God's honor. Assyria's gods were dead idols. Judah's God is the living God, and He hears and sees.
37:19 *for they were not gods, but the work of the hands of man, wood and stone* Hezekiah admitted the facts. Assyria really had destroyed many nations and their gods. But those gods fell because they were never gods at all. The living God is in a different category.
37:20 *that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You are the LORD, You alone* The highest goal of the prayer was God's glory, not just Judah's safety. When we pray for His name to be known, we are praying in line with His will.
37:21 *As for what you have prayed to Me concerning Sennacherib* God connects His answer to Hezekiah's prayer. Prayer matters. Sometimes we do not have because we do not ask (Jas 4:2).
37:22 *She has despised you, she has mocked you, the virgin daughter of Zion* Jerusalem is pictured as a young woman who is not afraid of the great king. She shakes her head at him as he runs away. The city that was trembling will soon be laughing.
37:23 *Against the Holy One of Israel* This is the heart of the matter. Sennacherib thought he was fighting a small king in a small city. In fact he had raised his voice against the Holy One of Israel, and no one does that and wins.
37:24 *With the abundance of my chariots I, I have gone up to the height of mountains* Notice how often the king says "I." Pride boasts in its own power, like Nebuchadnezzar on his roof (Dan 4:30-32). God humbles those who walk in pride.
37:26 *From afar I did it; from days of antiquity I formed it* Sennacherib thought his victories were his own. God says He planned them long ago. Assyria was only the rod in His hand (10:5-6). God rules over history, even through proud men who do not know Him.
37:27 *the grass of roofs* Grass on a flat roof springs up fast and withers before it grows tall. The nations Assyria conquered were like that, and so is all human strength (40:6-8).
37:28 *your raging against Me* God knows everything about the proud king, his rest, his comings and goings, and his rage. Nothing about our enemies is hidden from Him.
37:29 *I will put My hook in your nose and My bridle in your lips* The Assyrians were known for leading captives by hooks through the nose. Now God would do the same to the king of Assyria and lead him home like an animal. God often turns the proud man's cruelty back on his own head.
37:30 *in the third year sow and reap, and plant vineyards and eat their fruit* The sign was that life would return to normal. For two years they would live on what grew by itself, but in the third year they would farm again in peace. Assyria would not be back.
37:31 *take root downward and produce fruit upward* The remnant is pictured as a tree with deep roots and good fruit. A healthy spiritual life is like this too. Roots grow down in God's word before fruit shows up.

again ***take*** root downward and produce fruit upward. **32** For from Jerusalem a remnant will go out, and an escaped remnant from the mountain of Zion; the zeal of the LORD of armies will do this. **33** Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the king of Assyria: He will not come into this city, and he will not shoot an arrow there, and he will not confront it ***with*** a shield, and he will not pour out a siege mound against it. **34** By the way by which he came, by it he will return, and into this city he will not come, declares the LORD. **35** And I will defend this city to save it, for My own sake and for the sake of David My servant."'" **36** And the angel of the LORD went out and struck down in the camp of Assyria one hundred and eighty-five thousand; and they rose early in the morning, and look, all of them ***were*** dead corpses. **37** And Sennacherib the king of Assyria set out and went and returned, and he dwelt in Nineveh (Ninve). **38** And it was, he ***was*** bowing down ***in*** the house of Nisroch (Nisrokh) his god, and Adrammelech (Adrammelekh) and Sharezer (Sharetser) his sons struck him down with the sword; and they escaped ***to*** the land of Ararat. And Esarhaddon (Esar-Chadon) his son reigned in his place.

ISAIAH 38

The Fifteen Years

1 In those days Hezekiah (Chizqiyahu) became sick to ***the point of*** dying. And Isaiah (Yeshayahu) the son of Amoz (Amots), the prophet, came to him and said to him, "Thus says the LORD: 'Command your house, for you ***are*** dying, and you will not live.'" **2** And Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the LORD. **3** And he said, "Please, LORD, remember, please, how I have walked before You in faithfulness and with a complete heart, and I have done what ***is*** good in Your eyes." And Hezekiah wept ***with*** a great weeping. **4** And the word of the LORD came to Isaiah, saying, **5** "Go and say to Hezekiah, 'Thus says the LORD, the God of David your father: "I have heard your prayer; I have seen your tears. Look, I ***am He who*** will add to your days fifteen years. **6** And from the hand of the king of Assyria (Ashur) I will deliver you and this city; and I will defend this city. **7** And this ***will be*** the sign for you from the LORD, that the LORD will do this thing which He has spoken: **8** Look, I am about to turn back the shadow on the steps, which has gone down on the steps of Ahaz (Achaz) with the sun, backward ten steps."'" And the sun returned ten steps on the steps which it had gone down. **9** A writing of Hezekiah the king of Judah (Yehuda), when he had been sick and had revived from his sickness: **10** I, I said, "In the middle of my days I must go into the gates of Sheol; I have been deprived of the remainder of my years." **11** I said, "I will not see ***the*** LORD, ***the*** LORD, in the land of the living; I will no longer look at man with the inhabitants of cessation.

37:32 Jude 1:15; Isa 9:7; Isa 59:17
37:33 Jude 1:15; Isa 8:7-10; Isa 10:32-34
37:34 Jude 1:15; Isa 37:29; Prov 21:30
37:35 Isa 31:5; Isa 38:6; 2 Kgs 20:6
37:36 Acts 12:23; 1 Thess 5:2; Isa 10:12,16-19,33,34
37:37 Jonah 1:2; Jonah 3:3; Isa 37:7,29
37:38 Gen 8:4; Jer 51:27; Ezra 4:2
38:1 Acts 9:37; 2 Sam 17:23; 2 Chr 32:24
38:2 1 Kgs 8:30; Ps 50:15; Ps 91:15
38:3 Neh 13:14,22,31; Ps 6:8; Ps 32:2
38:5 Matt 22:32; Acts 10:31; 2 Sam 7:3-5
38:6 Isa 37:35; Isa 12:6; Isa 31:4
38:7 Isa 37:30; Isa 38:22; Isa 7:11-14
38:8 Josh 10:12-14; 2 Chr 32:24,31; Matt 16:1
38:9 Isa 12:1-6; Exod 15:1-21; Judg 5:1-31
38:10 Matt 16:18; 2 Cor 1:9; Isa 38:1
38:11 Ps 27:13; Job 35:14,15; Ps 6:4,5

37:32 *the zeal of the LORD of armies will do this* The same words promise the coming King's kingdom (9:7). The remnant's survival did not depend on Judah's strength but on God's zeal for His own promises.
37:33 *he will not shoot an arrow there* God was more specific than any general could be. Not one arrow, not one shield and not one siege mound. The Assyrian army was right there, yet it never touched the city.
37:35 *for My own sake and for the sake of David My servant* God saved Jerusalem for His own honor and because of His promise to David (2 Sam 7:16). He keeps His covenant promises even when His people are weak, That faithfulness runs to Jesus, the Son of David, who will one day reign from Jerusalem.
37:36 *the angel of the LORD went out and struck down in the camp of Assyria one hundred and eighty-five thousand* This was a direct act of God, not just a plague or bad luck. In one night the greatest army on earth was gone. Sennacherib's own records boast about shutting Hezekiah up in Jerusalem but never claim he took the city.
37:38 *he was bowing down in the house of Nisroch his god, and Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons struck him down with the sword* He was killed about 681 B.C., years after the siege, but just as God said (37:7). The irony is sharp. He mocked Hezekiah's God for not saving, and his own god could not save him in his own temple.
38:1 *Command your house, for you are dying, and you will not live* "In those days" is loose. Since God promises to deliver the city from Assyria (38:6), this illness most likely came before the events of chapters 36-37. Isaiah arranged these chapters by theme, leading us toward Babylon. Every one of us will hear this word someday, so it is wise to have our house in order with God now.
38:2 *Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the LORD* He turned away from everyone in the room and poured out his heart to God alone. When the news is worst, there is still one place to turn.
38:3 *remember, please, how I have walked before You in faithfulness and with a complete heart* I don't believe Hezekiah was boasting. He knew his sins (38:17). He was speaking honestly to the God he had served. God invites that kind of honesty, and the Psalms are full of it.
38:5 *I have heard your prayer; I have seen your tears. Look, I am He who will add to your days fifteen years* Before Isaiah had left the courtyard, God sent him back (2 Kgs 20:4). Does prayer change God's mind? God's first word showed where the illness was heading, and He planned all along to answer His servant's prayer. God does not change, but He has chosen to work through our prayers.
38:6 *from the hand of the king of Assyria I will deliver you and this city* This promise is what places the illness before Sennacherib's defeat. Hezekiah's healing and Jerusalem's rescue came as a package from the same faithful God.
38:8 *Look, I am about to turn back the shadow on the steps, which has gone down on the steps of Ahaz with the sun, backward ten steps* The steps likely worked like a sundial. Hezekiah chose the harder sign, the shadow going backward (2 Kgs 20:8-11). How God did it the text does not say, and I won't guess. The God who made the sun can move a shadow.
38:9 *A writing of Hezekiah the king of Judah, when he had been sick and had revived from his sickness* This psalm is found only here, not in 2 Kings. It moves from despair to thanksgiving and gives an honest look inside a believer facing death.
38:10 *In the middle of my days I must go into the gates of Sheol* Hezekiah was about thirty-nine (2 Kgs 18:2). Sheol is the grave, the place of the dead. To an Old Testament believer, going there in mid-life felt like being robbed of his years.
38:11 *I will not see the LORD, the LORD, in the land of the living* His deepest grief was losing worship with God's people. The Old Testament saints did not yet have the full light on life after death that came through Christ's resurrection (2 Tim 1:10). We do, and that is a great gift.

12 My dwelling has been pulled up and removed from me
like the tent of a shepherd; I have rolled up my life like the
weaver; He cuts me off from the loom; from day to night You
make an end of me. **13** I have lain down until morning; like
the lion, so He breaks all my bones; from day to night You
make an end of me. **14** Like a swallow, a crane, so I chirp; I
moan like the dove; my eyes have languished toward the
height. Lord, oppression ***is*** mine; stand surety for me."
15 What shall I speak? And He has said to me, and He, He has
acted. I will walk slowly all my years on ***account of*** the bitter-
ness of my soul. **16** Lord, by these ***things*** they live, and in all
of them ***is*** the life of my spirit; and may You restore me to
health and make me live. **17** Look, for peace ***it*** was bitter to
me, bitter; and You, You have loved my soul ***and kept it*** from
the pit of destruction, for You have thrown all my sins
behind Your back. **18** For Sheol does not give thanks to You;
death does not praise You; those who go down to the pit do
not hope for Your faithfulness. **19** The living, the living, he
gives thanks to You, as I ***do*** this day; a father makes known to
sons Your faithfulness. **20** The LORD ***is ready*** to save me, and
we will play my songs all the days of our life at the house of
the LORD. **21** And Isaiah said, "Let them take a cake of figs,
and let them rub ***it*** on the boil, and let him live." **22** And
Hezekiah said, "What ***is*** the sign that I will go up ***to*** the house
of the LORD?"

ISAIAH 39

The Visitors from Babylon

1 At that time Merodach-baladan (Merodakh-Baladan) the
son of Baladan, the king of Babylon (Bavel), sent letters and a
gift to Hezekiah (Chizqiyahu), and he heard that he had been
sick and had become strong. **2** And Hezekiah was glad over
them, and he showed them the house of his treasure, the
silver and the gold and the spices and the good oil, and all
the house of his weapons, and all that was found in his store-
houses. There was not a thing which Hezekiah did not show
them in his house and in all his realm. **3** And Isaiah
(Yeshayahu) the prophet came to King Hezekiah and said to
him, "What did these men say? And from where do they
come to you?" And Hezekiah said, "From a distant land they
have come to me, from Babylon." **4** And he said, "What did
they see in your house?" And Hezekiah said, "All that ***is*** in
my house they saw; there was not a thing which I did not
show them in my storehouses." **5** And Isaiah said to
Hezekiah, "Hear the word of the LORD of armies: **6** 'Look,
days ***are*** coming, and all that ***is*** in your house, and what your
fathers have stored up until this day, will be carried ***to*** Baby-
lon; not a thing will be left,' says the LORD. **7** 'And some of
your sons who will come out from you, whom you will father,
they will take; and they will be eunuchs in the palace of the
king of Babylon.'" **8** And Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "Good ***is*** the

38:12 Ps 89:45-47; Ps 102:11,23,24; Isa 1:8
38:13 Ps 51:8; Dan 6:24; 1 Kgs 13:24-26
38:14 Isa 59:11; Job 30:29; Ezek 7:16
38:15 1 Kgs 21:27; Job 7:11; Job 10:1
38:16 Deut 8:3; Isa 64:5; Job 33:19-28
38:17 Isa 43:25; Jer 31:34; Ps 30:3
38:18 Eccl 9:10; Ps 6:5; Ps 30:9
38:19 Deut 6:7; Deut 4:9; Ps 78:3-6
38:20 Ps 9:13,14; Ps 27:5,6; Ps 30:11,12
38:21 2 Kgs 20:7; Mark 7:33; John 9:6
38:22 2 Kgs 20:8; Ps 42:1,2; Ps 84:1,2,10-12
39:1 2 Kgs 20:12-19; Isa 13:1,19; Isa 14:4
39:2 2 Chr 32:25,31; Job 31:25; Ps 146:3,4
39:3 Deut 28:49; 2 Sam 12:1; 2 Chr 16:7
39:4 Josh 7:19; Job 31:33; Prov 23:5
39:5 1 Sam 13:13,14; 1 Sam 15:16
39:6 2 Kgs 24:13; 2 Kgs 25:13-15; Jer 20:5
39:7 2 Kgs 24:12; 2 Chr 36:10,20; 2 Kgs 25:6,7
39:8 James 5:10; 2 Chr 34:28; Lev 10:3

38:12 *like the tent of a shepherd; I have rolled up my life like the weaver* A shepherd's tent comes down in an afternoon. A weaver cuts finished cloth from the loom and rolls it up. Life is that fragile, and Hezekiah felt God cutting his thread quickly.
38:13 *like the lion, so He breaks all my bones* He saw God's hand even in his pain. That is not a lack of faith. It is honest faith that admits God is in control of the hard things too.
38:14 *Lord, oppression is mine; stand surety for me* To stand surety is to guarantee another person's debt by standing in for him. Hezekiah asked God to stand in for him. In the end that is exactly what Jesus did for us.
38:15 *I will walk slowly all my years on account of the bitterness of my soul* God had spoken and God had acted. Hezekiah vowed to walk humbly for the rest of his life. Suffering taught him something he would not forget, at least for a while (39:2).
38:16 *Lord, by these things they live* Life comes from God's word and God's acts, not from our own strength. His prayer is short and plain: restore me and let me live.
38:17 *You have thrown all my sins behind Your back* This is the key verse of the song. The bitter trial was for his good. When you throw something behind your back you no longer see it. God does not keep forgiven sins before His eyes (Ps 103:12). For those who trust Jesus, this is ours too.
38:19 *a father makes known to sons Your faithfulness* Telling our children about God's faithfulness is one of the best uses of the years God gives us. Sadly, Manasseh was born during these extra years (2 Kgs 21:1) and became one of Judah's most wicked kings. We must not only tell our children. We must keep on telling them.
38:21 *Let them take a cake of figs, and let them rub it on the boil* These two verses fill in details from earlier (2 Kgs 20:7-8). God healed Hezekiah and used a simple remedy to do it. Using medicine is not a lack of faith. The healing still came from God.

39:1 *Merodach-baladan the son of Baladan, the king of Babylon, sent letters and a gift to Hezekiah* Merodach-baladan was a Chaldean who ruled Babylon more than once and fought for years to break free of Assyria. Babylon was not yet a great empire. These letters were more than get-well cards. He was likely seeking an ally against Assyria. The envoys also asked about the sign (2 Chr 32:31).
39:2 *Hezekiah was glad over them, and he showed them the house of his treasure* Flattered by the attention, he showed them everything. His heart had grown proud after his healing, and God left him to test him (2 Chr 32:25-26, 31). Instead of telling them about the God who healed him, he showed off his wealth. Success can be a harder test than suffering.
39:3 *What did these men say? And from where do they come to you* Like God's question to Adam (Gen 3:9), Isaiah's questions were not for information. God already knew. He wanted Hezekiah to say it out loud and see what he had done.
39:6 *all that is in your house, and what your fathers have stored up until this day, will be carried to Babylon* In Isaiah's day Assyria was the great power and Babylon a minor rebel. Yet Isaiah named Babylon. It happened more than a century later when Nebuchadnezzar took Jerusalem's treasures and destroyed the city in 586 B.C. (2 Kgs 24:13; 25:13-15). Fulfilled prophecy is fulfilled plainly.
39:7 *they will be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon* Some of Hezekiah's descendants would serve in Babylon's palace. Daniel and his friends were among the young men of the royal family taken for this (Dan 1:3-6). What we show off to the world can end up in the world's hands.
39:8 *Good is the word of the LORD which you have spoken* Bible teachers read this two ways, as humble acceptance or as relief that the trouble would fall on others. I believe there is some of both. His concern seems to stop at his own lifetime. We should care about the generations after us, because the faith we pass on will outlive us.

word of the LORD which you have spoken." And he said, "For there will be peace and security in my days."

ISAIAH 40

Comfort My People

1 "Comfort, comfort My people," says your God. **2** "Speak to the heart of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), and call out to her that her service has been completed, that her iniquity has been accepted, that she has received from the hand of the LORD double for all her sins." **3** A voice ***is*** calling, "In the wilderness clear the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert plain a highway for our God. **4** Every valley will be lifted up, and every mountain and hill will become low; and the steep ground will become level ground, and the rough places a plain. **5** And the glory of the LORD will be revealed, and all flesh will see ***it*** together; for the mouth of the LORD has spoken." **6** A voice is saying, "Call out." And he said, "What shall I call out?" All flesh ***is*** grass, and all its steadfast love ***is*** like the flower of the field. **7** Grass dries up, a flower withers, when the breath of the LORD blows on it; surely the people ***is*** grass. **8** Grass dries up, a flower withers, and the word of our God will stand forever. **9** On a high mountain go up for yourself, bearer of good news of Zion (Tsiyon); lift up your voice with strength, bearer of good news of Jerusalem; lift ***it*** up, do not be afraid; say to the cities of Judah (Yehuda), "Look, your God!" **10** Look, the Lord GOD will come in strength, and His arm rules for Him; look, His reward ***is*** with Him, and His recompense before Him. **11** Like a shepherd He will shepherd His flock; in His arm He will gather lambs, and in His bosom He will carry ***them***; nursing ***ewes*** He will lead.

To Whom Will You Liken God

12 Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, and gauged the heavens with the span, and contained the dust of the earth in the third-measure, and weighed the mountains in the balance and the hills in scales? **13** Who has gauged the Spirit of the LORD, and ***who is*** the man of His counsel ***who*** will inform Him? **14** With whom did He take counsel, and ***who*** gave Him understanding, and taught Him in the path of justice, and taught Him knowledge, and will inform Him ***of*** the way of understandings? **15** Look, nations ***are*** like a drop from a bucket, and like the dust of the scales they are regarded; look, He lifts islands like fine ***dust***. **16** And Lebanon (Levanon) ***is*** not enough to burn, and its living things ***are*** not enough ***for*** a burnt offering. **17** All the nations ***are*** as nothing before Him; ***as*** less than nothingness and formlessness they are regarded by Him. **18** And to whom will

40:1 Zeph 3:14-17; Luke 2:25; 2 Cor 1:4
40:2 Isa 61:7; Zech 9:12; Hos 2:14
40:3 Matt 3:3; Mark 1:3; Luke 3:4-6
40:4 Mark 1:3; John 1:23; Luke 3:5
40:5 Acts 2:17; 2 Cor 3:18; John 1:14
40:6 1 Pet 1:24-25; James 1:10-11; Luke 24:44
40:7 1 John 2:17
40:8 Matt 24:35; John 10:35; Luke 21:33
40:9 Matt 21:5; John 12:15; Isa 12:2
40:10 Rev 22:12; Rev 17:14; John 12:13
40:11 John 10:11; Matt 2:6; Heb 8:9
40:12 Heb 1:10; Prov 30:4; Ps 102:25,26
40:13 Rom 11:34; 1 Cor 2:16; Luke 10:22
40:14 1 Cor 2:16; Col 2:3; 1 Cor 12:4-6
40:15 Isa 40:22; Jer 10:10; Job 34:14,15
40:16 Heb 10:8; Mic 6:6,7; Ps 40:6
40:17 Ps 62:9; Dan 4:34,35; Job 25:6
40:18 Isa 46:5,9; Acts 17:29; 1 Sam 2:2

40:1 *Comfort, comfort My people," says your God* The doubled word is meant to sink in. After thirty-nine chapters of warning, God still says "My people" and "your God." Many say a later writer begins here, but I take the book's own claim. Isaiah wrote it all, and the New Testament names him for these chapters (Matt 3:3; John 12:38-41). Comfort comes after judgment, not instead of it.

40:2 *Speak to the heart of Jerusalem* This means speak tenderly. Her hard service is over, her iniquity is paid for, and she has received "double," which I take to mean full and complete punishment. The near fulfillment was the return from Babylon in 538 B.C. The deeper fulfillment is in Christ, and one day Israel as a nation will know her sin is pardoned through the Messiah (Rom 11:26-27).

40:3 *In the wilderness clear the way of the LORD* When a king was coming, workers went ahead to smooth his road. All four Gospels apply this to John the Baptist (Matt 3:3; Mark 1:3; Luke 3:4; John 1:23). The road is for "the LORD," and John prepared the way for Jesus. That tells us Jesus is the LORD. John's road was repentance, and that is still how we get ready for Him.

40:4 *Every valley will be lifted up, and every mountain and hill will become low* This is road-building language that also describes hearts. The proud are humbled and the lowly lifted (Luke 3:5). I believe the first coming fulfilled the spiritual side, and the second coming will fulfill the physical side too, when the earth itself is changed (Zech 14:4).

40:5 *And the glory of the LORD will be revealed, and all flesh will see it together* God's glory was revealed in Jesus at His first coming (John 1:14), but only some saw it. A day is coming when every eye will see Him at once (Rev 1:7). It is certain because the LORD has said it.

40:6 *All flesh is grass, and all its steadfast love is like the flower of the field* The word for steadfast love here is hesed, the same word used of God's loyal love. Even our best human loyalty fades. That humbling message is part of the prophet's call.

40:7 *surely the people is grass* In Israel grass could be green at dawn and brown by evening when the hot east wind blew. Kings, armies and empires, including the boasting Assyria of chapter 37, all wither this way.

40:8 *the word of our God will stand forever* People fade, but God's word does not. Peter quotes this and calls it the gospel preached to us (1 Pet 1:24-25). The promises of this chapter rest on a word that cannot fail. Anything else we build on will wither like grass.

40:9 *bearer of good news of Zion* The Greek Old Testament used the same word family the New Testament uses for the gospel. The message is short: "Look, your God!" The best news there is, is that God Himself has come. We have the same calling to lift up our voice and not be afraid.

40:10 *look, His reward is with Him, and His recompense before Him* In Isaiah the arm of the LORD is His power in action, later tied to the Servant (53:1). Jesus echoes this at the end of the Bible (Rev 22:12). I believe it looks ahead to Christ's second coming, when He returns in power, reigns on the earth and rewards His people.

40:11 *Like a shepherd He will shepherd His flock; in His arm He will gather lambs* The arm that rules in 40:10 is the arm that carries the lambs. Jesus is the Good Shepherd (John 10:11). He knows who is weak, young or worn out, and He moves at their pace. If you feel like one of the weak ones, this verse is for you.

40:12 *Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand* The span is the width of a hand from thumb to little finger. What would take us a lifetime to measure, God holds in His palm. Only He can answer these questions.

40:13 *Who has gauged the Spirit of the LORD, and who is the man of His counsel who will inform Him* No one has ever given God advice. Paul quotes this as he worships God for His plan for Israel and the Gentiles (Rom 11:34; 1 Cor 2:16). God does not need our counsel. He wants our trust.

40:15 *nations are like a drop from a bucket* Whole nations are like a drop on the edge of a bucket or dust that does not move the scale. Assyria and later Babylon seemed unstoppable. Isaiah wanted the exiles to see their captors at their true size.

40:17 *All the nations are as nothing before Him* This is not because people do not matter to God. He made us and loves us. It is because no nation can stand next to Him or threaten His plans. Even all of Lebanon's cedars and animals could not make an offering worthy of Him (40:16).

you liken God, and what likeness will you compare to Him? **19** The idol, a craftsman has cast ***it***, and a refiner overlays it with gold, and ***he is*** refining chains of silver. **20** The impoverished ***one***, ***for*** a contribution he chooses wood ***that*** will not rot; he seeks for himself a skillful craftsman to prepare an idol ***that*** will not be shaken. **21** Do you not know? Do you not hear? Has it not been told to you from ***the*** beginning? Have you not understood the foundations of the earth? **22** ***It is*** the One who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants ***are*** like grasshoppers; the One who stretched out the heavens like the curtain, and He spread them out like the tent to dwell ***in***; **23** the One who makes rulers into nothing; He makes the judges of the earth like formlessness. **24** Scarcely have they been planted, scarcely have they been sown, scarcely has their stock taken root in the earth, and He also blows on them and they dry up, and the tempest carries them off like the stubble. **25** "And to whom will you liken Me, that I should be equal?" says the Holy One. **26** Lift up your eyes on high and see: who created these? The One who brings out their host by number, He calls them all by name; from the abundance of vigor, and ***being*** strong in power, not one is missing. **27** Why do you say, Jacob (Ya'aqov), and speak, Israel (Yisra'el), "My way is hidden from the LORD, and my justice passes away from my God"? **28** Have you not known? Or have you not heard? The LORD ***is*** the God of perpetuity, the Creator of the ends of the earth; He does not grow faint, and He does not grow weary; ***there is*** no searching of His understanding. **29** He gives power to the faint, and to ***him who has*** no vigor He increases might. **30** And youths may grow faint and grow weary, and young men will surely stumble; **31** and those who wait for the LORD will renew power; they will go up ***with*** wings like the eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not grow faint.

ISAIAH 41

Do Not Fear

1 Be silent to Me, coastlands, and let peoples renew strength; let them approach, then let them speak; let us draw near together for judgment. **2** Who has stirred up from the east ***the one whom*** righteousness calls to his foot? He gives nations before him, and He subdues kings; He makes ***them*** like the dust ***for*** his sword, like driven chaff ***for*** his bow. **3** He pursues them, he passes on ***in*** peace, ***by*** a path ***on which*** he does not come with his feet. **4** Who has worked and done ***it***, calling the generations from ***the*** beginning? I, the LORD, ***am*** first, and with the last ones I ***am*** He. **5** Coastlands have seen and they are afraid; the ends of the earth tremble; they have drawn near, and they have come. **6** Each man helps his neighbor, and to his brother he says, "Be strong." **7** And a craftsman strengthened a refiner, one smoothing ***with*** a hammer ***strengthened*** one striking an anvil, saying of the sol-

40:19 Ps 115:4-8; Hab 2:18,19; Isa 37:18,19
40:20 Rev 9:20; Jer 10:3,4; Isa 41:7
40:21 Rom 1:20; Acts 14:17; Isa 27:11
40:22 Heb 1:10; Num 13:33; Ps 104:2
40:23 Rev 19:19; Job 12:21; Ps 107:40
40:24 Isa 41:16; Isa 17:13; Isa 14:21,22
40:25 Isa 40:18; Deut 4:15-18,33; Deut 5:8
40:26 Isa 51:6; Isa 48:13; Col 1:16,17
40:28 Acts 13:47; 1 Cor 6:19; John 14:9
40:29 2 Cor 12:9; Isa 41:10; Phil 4:13
40:30 Isa 13:18; Ps 33:16; Amos 2:14
40:31 Ps 103:5; Lam 3:25,26; 2 Cor 12:9,10
41:1 Hab 2:20; Zech 2:13; Isa 1:18
41:2 Isa 45:1; Isa 40:24; Isa 41:25
41:3 Isa 57:2; Job 5:24
41:4 Rev 22:13; Rev 1:17; Rev 2:8
41:5 Ezek 26:15,16; Josh 5:1; Ps 67:7
41:6 Isa 40:19; Isa 44:12; 1 Sam 4:7-9
41:7 Isa 40:19; Isa 44:12-15; Isa 46:6,7

40:20 *to prepare an idol that will not be shaken* The scene is sad and almost funny. The God of 40:12 holds the oceans. The idol has to be fixed in place so it won't tip over. Anything we trust in place of God, whether money, success or a relationship, is just as unable to hold us up.
40:21 *Do you not know? Do you not hear* Four questions in a row say this truth has been plain from the beginning. Creation itself shows there is a God, and people are without excuse (Rom 1:20).
40:22 *It is the One who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers* The circle is the vault or horizon of the world. God is far above us, yet He spread the heavens like a tent for people to live under. He is high but not distant from what He made.
40:24 *He also blows on them and they dry up* Rulers are barely planted before He blows on them. Sennacherib, Nebuchadnezzar and Cyrus all had their moment and passed. The powerful of our day will too. Only God's kingdom lasts.
40:25 *And to whom will you liken Me, that I should be equal?" says the Holy One* Now God asks the question Himself. He is not the biggest of the gods. He is in a category of His own.
40:26 *He calls them all by name* Babylon worshiped the stars and thought they ruled human life. Isaiah says they are servants who answer roll call (Ps 147:4). If God keeps track of every star, He can keep track of you.
40:27 *My way is hidden from the LORD* This is the real problem. The exiles felt God did not see or care. We can feel that way too. The whole chapter answers it. The God who measures the oceans and names the stars has not lost track of Jacob.
40:28 *He does not grow faint, and He does not grow weary; there is no searching of His understanding* Our trouble does not exhaust God. When we cannot see why He allows something, it is because His understanding goes deeper than ours, not because He stopped paying attention. He is not tired of us, and He is not confused about us.
40:29 *He gives power to the faint* God does not just have power. He gives it to the weary. Paul learned that His power is perfected in weakness (2 Cor 12:9). The less we have, the more room there is for His strength.
40:30 *youths may grow faint and grow weary* Even the strongest young people tire and fall. Isaiah is not insulting the young. No one, even at his best, can carry life on his own strength forever.
40:31 *those who wait for the LORD will renew power* To wait for the LORD is to hope in Him, look to Him and trust Him to act. The order surprises us: fly, run, then walk. Anyone in a long trial knows that walking day after day can take more strength than flying. God gives strength simply to keep walking with Him when the road is long.
41:1 *let peoples renew strength* The scene is a courtroom. God summons the far-off nations to make their case. "Renew strength" repeats the words of 40:31. In effect God says, gather all the strength you can, and let's see whose argument stands.
41:2 *Who has stirred up from the east the one whom righteousness calls to his foot* Isaiah names him later. This is Cyrus of Persia (44:28; 45:1), who rose from the east and took Babylon in 539 B.C. Isaiah wrote this long before Cyrus was born, and that is God's point. Only the true God can name the future.
41:4 *I, the LORD, am first, and with the last ones I am He* God was there before history began and will be there at its end, calling each generation onto the stage. Jesus takes this same title in Revelation (Rev 22:13). He is the LORD of this verse.
41:6 *to his brother he says, "Be strong* The nations see the conqueror and huddle together instead of turning to the LORD. Fear without God makes people run to each other or to something they can make with their hands.
41:7 *he strengthened it with nails; it will not totter* They are building a god to save them from a conqueror the real God sent. People still do this. When fear comes we build something to hold onto and tell each other it will be fine, while the One who is really in control goes ignored.

dering, "It ***is*** good"; and he strengthened it with nails; it will not totter. **8** And you, Israel (Yisra'el), My servant, Jacob (Ya'aqov), whom I have chosen, the offspring of Abraham (Avraham), My friend, **9** whom I took hold of from the ends of the earth, and from its remotest parts I called you, and I said to you, "You ***are*** My servant; I have chosen you, and I have not rejected you": **10** do not be afraid, for I ***am*** with you; do not look about, for I ***am*** your God. I have strengthened you; indeed, I have helped you; indeed, I have upheld you with the right hand of My righteousness. **11** Look, all who are angry with you will be ashamed and disgraced; the men of your strife will be as nothing, and they will perish. **12** You will seek them, and you will not find them, the men of your contention; the men of your war will be as nothing and as nothingness. **13** For I, the LORD your God, ***am*** holding your right hand, who says to you, "Do not be afraid; I will help you." **14** Do not be afraid, worm of Jacob, men of Israel; I will help you, declares the LORD, and your Redeemer ***is*** the Holy One of Israel. **15** Look, I have made you into a threshing sledge, sharp, new, possessing teeth; you will thresh mountains and crush ***them***, and you will make hills like the chaff. **16** You will winnow them, and a wind will carry them away, and a tempest will scatter them; and you, you will rejoice in the LORD; in the Holy One of Israel you will boast. **17** The afflicted and the needy are seeking water, and ***there is*** none; their tongue has dried up with thirst. I, the LORD, will answer them; the God of Israel, I will not forsake them. **18** I will open rivers on bare heights, and springs in the midst of valleys; I will make a wilderness into a pool of water, and a dry land into sources of water. **19** I will put in the wilderness cedar, acacia and myrtle, and oil tree; I will set in the desert plain cypress, elm and box tree together, **20** so that they may see and know, and set ***it to heart*** and have insight together, that the hand of the LORD has done this, and the Holy One of Israel has created it.

The Idols on Trial

21 Bring near your case, says the LORD; bring forward your strong arguments, says the King of Jacob. **22** Let them bring ***them*** forward and tell us what will happen. The former things, what they ***were***, tell, and let us set our heart ***on them*** and know their end; or make us hear the coming things. **23** Tell the things coming afterward, and let us know that you ***are*** gods; indeed, you may do good, and you may do harm, and let us look about and see together. **24** Look, you ***are*** from nothing, and your work from worthlessness; an abomination ***is he who*** chooses you. **25** I have stirred up ***one*** from the north, and he has come; from the rising of the sun he will call on My name; and he will come ***on*** officials as ***on***

41:8 James 2:23; Matt 3:9; John 8:33
41:9 Mark 12:26; Rom 11:2; 1 Cor 1:26-29
41:10 Josh 1:9; Isa 43:1,5; Rom 8:31
41:11 Rev 3:9; Isa 45:24; Exod 23:22
41:12 Ps 37:35,36; Job 20:7-9
41:13 Acts 2:25; Heb 8:9; Isa 45:1
41:14 John 6:20; Rev 3:7; Ps 22:6
41:15 Mic 4:13; Hab 3:12; Isa 21:10
41:16 1 Cor 1:31; Phil 3:1; Rev 3:7
41:17 John 7:37; Rev 21:6; John 7:38
41:18 Isa 35:6,7; Isa 30:25; Ps 107:35
41:19 Isa 55:13; Isa 37:31,32; Isa 27:6
41:20 Rev 3:7; Job 12:9; Isa 43:7-13,21
41:21 Job 23:3,4; Job 38:3; Job 40:7-9
41:22 John 13:19; John 16:4; Isa 45:21
41:23 John 13:19; John 16:4; Isa 42:9
41:24 Rev 17:5; Ps 115:8; 1 Cor 8:4
41:25 Rev 16:12; Isa 41:2; 2 Sam 22:43

41:8 *And you, Israel, My servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen, the offspring of Abraham, My friend* The tone changes completely. Abraham is called God's friend in this special way (2 Chr 20:7; Jas 2:23). Israel's standing came from God's choice, not her goodness. In chapters 41-48 "servant" usually means the nation. In 42:1 we meet a Servant who does what Israel could not.
41:9 *I have chosen you, and I have not rejected you* God called Abraham from Ur and Haran at the ends of the earth. The exiles in Babylon may have thought God was finished with them. He wasn't, and He isn't. God has not rejected His people (Rom 11:2).
41:10 *do not be afraid, for I am with you; do not look about, for I am your God* God does not say nothing bad will happen. He says do not fear because He is present. To look about pictures someone glancing around in panic for help. Then the promises stack up: strengthened, helped, upheld. If you are afraid today, read this verse slowly and out loud.
41:11 *all who are angry with you will be ashamed and disgraced* This was true of Babylon and of many nations that tried to destroy the Jewish people. I believe it will be true in the final days, when the nations gather against Jerusalem and the Lord Himself fights for her (Zech 12:2-3, 9).
41:12 *You will seek them, and you will not find them* Her enemies will simply be gone. Think of the Assyrian army in chapter 37. In the morning the threat over the city was nothing but dead men.
41:13 *I, the LORD your God, am holding your right hand* God repeats Himself on purpose. A parent walking with a small child holds the child's hand. God is not shouting encouragement from far away. He is holding on.
41:14 *Do not be afraid, worm of Jacob* That sounds harsh but it is tender. God knows how small Israel feels (Ps 22:6). This is the first time Isaiah calls God Israel's Redeemer. A redeemer was a close relative who bought back family land or freed a relative sold into slavery (Lev 25:25, 47-49). God is Israel's next of kin, and for us He paid that price in Jesus.
41:15 *I have made you into a threshing sledge, sharp, new, possessing teeth* A threshing sledge was a heavy board with sharp stones or iron teeth underneath. The worm becomes the thresher. Micah uses this picture for the last days (Mic 4:13). I believe the full answer waits for Christ's return and reign, when Israel is restored and her enemies brought down.
41:17 *The afflicted and the needy are seeking water, and there is none* God Himself will answer them and not forsake them. Thirst pictures the soul's deep need, and Jesus invites the thirsty to come to Him and drink (John 7:37).
41:18 *I will make a wilderness into a pool of water* This repeats 35:6-7. It came true in part when the exiles came home. I believe it will be fulfilled in full in the Millennium, when the land is restored and the curse begins to lift. God also brings life to dry hearts.
41:19 *I will put in the wilderness cedar, acacia and myrtle, and oil tree* These trees would never grow together naturally in a desert. Only God can make a garden out of a wasteland.
41:20 *that the hand of the LORD has done this* When God does what cannot be explained any other way, the glory goes to Him. The same is true of a changed life. The best answer we can give is that the Lord did this.
41:21 *says the King of Jacob* God calls the idols back to court. Israel had no human king in exile, but she still had a King.
41:22 *tell us what will happen* A real god should be able to explain history and predict the future. That is God's test, and He alone passes it.
41:23 *indeed, you may do good, and you may do harm* There is holy mockery here, like Elijah on Carmel (1 Kgs 18:27). Do anything at all, good or bad. The idols cannot even do harm.
41:24 *an abomination is he who chooses you* The idols are nothing. The person who chooses them is an abomination to God. Choosing something in God's place is something God takes personally.
41:25 *I have stirred up one from the north, and he has come; from the rising of the sun he will call on My name* Both directions fit Cyrus. Persia lay east, and his armies came on Babylon from the north. Cyrus was not a worshiper like Israel, but his decree named the LORD, the God of heaven, as the One who gave him his kingdoms (Ezra 1:2-3).

clay, and as a potter tramples mud. **26** Who told ***it*** from ***the*** beginning, so that we may know, and from beforehand, so that we may say, "***He is*** right"? Indeed, ***there is*** none who told; indeed, ***there is*** none who made ***it*** heard; indeed, ***there is*** none who heard your words. **27** First to Zion (Tsiyon): "Look, look ***at*** them"; and to Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) I will give one who brings good news. **28** And I look, and ***there is*** no man; and from these ***there is*** no counselor, that I may ask them and they may return a word. **29** Look, all of them ***are*** deception; their works ***are*** nothingness; their molten images ***are*** wind and formlessness.

ISAIAH 42

My Servant

1 Look, My servant, whom I uphold, My chosen one, ***in whom*** My soul is pleased; I have put My Spirit on Him; He will bring forth justice to the nations. **2** He will not cry out, and He will not lift up, and He will not make His voice heard in the street. **3** A crushed reed He will not break, and a dim wick He will not extinguish; He will bring forth justice in truth. **4** He will not grow dim, and He will not be crushed until He establishes justice on the earth; and the coastlands will wait for His law. **5** Thus says the God, the LORD, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and its produce, who gives breath to the people on it and spirit to those who walk in it: **6** I, the LORD, have called You in righteousness, and I will take hold of Your hand, and I will watch over You, and I will give You for a covenant of ***the*** people, for a light of ***the*** nations, **7** to open blind eyes, to bring out ***the*** prisoner from ***the*** dungeon, those who dwell ***in*** darkness from a house of confinement. **8** I ***am*** the LORD; that ***is*** My name; and My glory I will not give to another, and My praise to carved images. **9** The former things, look, have come, and new things I am telling; before they spring up I will make you hear ***them***.

A New Song and a Blind Servant

10 Sing to the LORD a new song, His praise from the end of the earth, you who go down ***to*** the sea, and its fullness, coastlands and their inhabitants. **11** Let the wilderness and its cities lift up ***their voice***, the villages ***where*** Kedar (Qedar) dwells; let the inhabitants of Sela shout for joy; let them cry aloud from the top of the mountains. **12** Let them give glory to the LORD, and let them declare His praise in the coastlands. **13** The LORD will go forth like the mighty man; like a man of wars He will stir up zeal; He will shout, indeed, He will raise a battle cry; over His enemies He will show Himself

41:26 2 Pet 1:19; Isa 41:22; Isa 44:7
41:27 Rev 2:8; Isa 40:9; Isa 52:7
41:28 Isa 63:5; Dan 2:10,11; Dan 4:7,8
41:29 Isa 41:24; Jer 5:13; Isa 44:9-20
42:1 Matt 12:18-20; Luke 3:22; Matt 17:5
42:2 Matt 12:16; Matt 12:17; Zech 9:9
42:3 Matt 12:17; Matt 11:28; Isa 40:11,29-31
42:4 Matt 12:20-21; Matt 12:17; Isa 55:5
42:5 Heb 1:10; Isa 45:12,18; Acts 17:25
42:6 Luke 2:32; Acts 13:47; Acts 26:23
42:7 Matt 11:5; Acts 26:18; Luke 4:18
42:8 Isa 48:11; Ps 83:18; Exod 20:3-5
42:9 John 13:19; 1 Pet 1:12; Rev 21:5
42:10 Rom 15:9; Rev 5:9; Rev 14:3
42:11 Isa 32:16; Isa 60:7; Isa 41:18,19
42:12 Isa 24:15,16; Isa 66:18,19; Ps 22:27
42:13 Ps 78:65; Nah 1:2; Hos 11:10

41:26 *Who told it from the beginning, so that we may know* None of the idols announced it. Only the LORD told His people beforehand. That is why fulfilled prophecy matters so much. It shows who is really God.
41:27 *to Jerusalem I will give one who brings good news* This ties back to 40:9. God speaks first, and He speaks good news. He does not leave His people guessing.
41:29 *their molten images are wind and formlessness* The courtroom ends in silence. The nations have nothing to say. This sets the stage for 42:1, where God says, "Look, My servant." Over against empty idols, God presents a real Person.
42:1 *Look, My servant, whom I uphold, My chosen one, in whom My soul is pleased; I have put My Spirit on Him* This begins the first of four Servant Songs. In chapter 41 the servant was Israel, but this Servant does what Israel never could. Matthew quotes 42:1-4 and says it was fulfilled in Jesus (Matt 12:15-21). At His baptism the Spirit came on Him and the Father spoke His delight from heaven (Matt 3:16-17). The Servant is Jesus Christ, and He brings justice to the nations.
42:2 *He will not cry out, and He will not lift up, and He will not make His voice heard in the street* The Servant does not promote Himself like a politician. Jesus often told those He healed not to spread the news (Matt 12:16). Many wanted a loud Messiah to throw off Rome. Instead the Anointed One came first in humility.
42:3 *A crushed reed He will not break, and a dim wick He will not extinguish* Most people would snap off a cracked reed and pinch out a smoking wick. Jesus does neither. Think of the woman caught in adultery (John 8:10-11) or Peter after his denial (John 21:15-17). If you feel like a bruised reed, He won't break you. Yet He is still committed to setting the world right.
42:4 *He will not grow dim, and He will not be crushed until He establishes justice on the earth* The same two words from 42:3 return. The reed and the wick are weak, but the Servant is not. The world is plainly not yet full of justice. I believe this looks ahead to His second coming and His thousand-year reign on earth (2:4; Rev 20:4-6).
42:5 *who gives breath to the people on it and spirit to those who walk in it* Before God speaks to His Servant, we are reminded who is speaking. The One who sends the Servant is Creator of all and giver of every breath. That is why the mission cannot fail.
42:6 *I will give You for a covenant of the people, for a light of the nations* The Servant does not just bring a covenant. He is the covenant. Jesus spoke of the new covenant in His blood (Luke 22:20). Simeon called the baby Jesus a light to the Gentiles (Luke 2:32). From the start God planned to bless all the families of the earth through Abraham's offspring (Gen 12:3).
42:7 *to open blind eyes, to bring out the prisoner from the dungeon* Jesus gave sight to the blind again and again (Matt 11:5; John 9) and read a related passage in Nazareth as fulfilled in Himself (Luke 4:18-21). He also opens spiritually blind eyes and sets sin's captives free (Acts 26:18). Every person who comes to Christ was once in that dark cell.
42:8 *My glory I will not give to another* LORD is God's personal name, given to Moses at the bush (Exod 3:14-15). Yet Jesus asked the Father for the glory He had with Him before the world was (John 17:5). Since God does not share His glory with another, the only way to make sense of this is that Jesus is not "another." He is God the Son.
42:9 *The former things, look, have come, and new things I am telling* That is the argument of chapters 40-48 in a sentence. The God who kept His word, as with Assyria's fall, will keep it again. The coming of the Servant was one of those new things, told about seven hundred years before Jesus was born.
42:10 *Sing to the LORD a new song* New acts of God call for new praise. The redeemed sing a new song to the Lamb for people from every nation (Rev 5:9). That is where this verse is headed.
42:11 *the villages where Kedar dwells; let the inhabitants of Sela shout for joy* Kedar was a nomadic Arab tribe east of Israel. Sela, meaning rock, was a stronghold in Edom. These were far and often hostile places. Even there the light to the nations reaches.
42:13 *The LORD will go forth like the mighty man; like a man of wars He will stir up zeal* The God who is gentle with the bruised reed is fierce against evil. Both are true of Jesus. At His second coming He rides out from heaven to judge and make war in righteousness (Rev 19:11-15). I believe this looks ahead to that day.

mighty. **14** I have kept quiet from long ago; I have been silent; I have restrained Myself; like the ***woman*** giving birth I will groan; I will gasp and pant together. **15** I will lay waste mountains and hills, and all their vegetation I will dry up; and I will make rivers into islands, and pools I will dry up. **16** And I will lead ***the*** blind by a way ***that*** they have not known; in paths ***that*** they have not known I will make them tread; I will make the dark place before them into light, and rough places into level ground. These ***are*** the things; I will do them, and I will not forsake them. **17** They will be turned away backward, they will be ashamed ***with*** shame, those who trust in the carved image, who say to a molten image, "You ***are*** our gods." **18** You deaf, hear; and you blind, look, to see. **19** Who ***is*** blind but My servant, and deaf like My messenger ***whom*** I send? Who ***is*** blind like the one at peace, and blind like the servant of the LORD? **20** Seeing many things, and you do not keep ***them***; opening ears, and he does not hear. **21** The LORD was pleased for the sake of His righteousness; He will magnify ***the*** law, and He will make ***it*** glorious. **22** And it ***is*** a people despoiled and plundered; all of them are trapped in holes, and they are hidden in houses of confinement; they have become spoil, and ***there is*** no deliverer; plunder, and ***there is*** none who says, "Bring ***it*** back." **23** Who among you will give ear to this, will pay attention and hear for ***the*** time afterward? **24** Who gave Jacob (Ya'aqov) to plunder, and Israel (Yisra'el) to despoilers? ***Was it*** not the LORD, ***He*** against whom we have sinned? And they were not willing to walk in His ways, and they did not listen to His law. **25** And He poured out on him rage, His anger, and the fierceness of battle; and it set him ablaze from all around, and he did not know; and it burned against him, and he does not lay ***it*** to heart.

ISAIAH 43

You Are Mine

1 And now thus says the LORD, who created you, Jacob (Ya'aqov), and who formed you, Israel (Yisra'el): Do not be afraid, for I have redeemed you; I have called ***you*** by your name; you ***are*** Mine. **2** When you pass through the waters, I ***will be*** with you; and through the rivers, they will not overflow you; when you walk through fire, you will not be burned, and a flame will not burn you. **3** For I ***am*** the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior; I have given Egypt (Mitsrayim) ***as*** your ransom, Cush (Kush) and Seba (Seva) in place of you. **4** Because you are precious in My eyes, you are honored, and I, I love you; and I will give mankind in place of you, and peoples in place of your life. **5** Do not be afraid, for I ***am*** with you; from the east I will bring your offspring, and from the west I will gather you. **6** I will say to the north, "Give ***them*** up," and to the south, "Do not withhold; bring My sons from far away, and My daughters from the end

42:14 2 Pet 3:9; Job 32:18,20; Ps 50:2
42:15 Isa 50:2; Nah 1:4-6; Isa 2:12-16
42:16 Luke 3:5; Luke 4:18; Isa 30:21
42:17 Luke 4:18; Isa 1:29; Isa 44:11
42:18 Mark 7:37; Luke 4:18; Isa 29:18
42:19 Matt 13:14; John 12:40; Matt 13:15
42:20 Matt 13:13; John 12:40; Acts 28:23
42:21 Matt 5:17; Gal 3:13; Phil 3:9
42:22 Isa 14:17; Isa 1:7; Isa 18:2
42:23 Acts 3:23; Isa 48:18; Isa 1:18-20
42:24 Isa 10:5,6; Isa 45:7; Isa 47:6
42:25 Rev 16:6; Hos 7:9; Isa 57:11
43:1 Heb 8:8; John 6:20; Heb 8:9
43:2 Dan 3:25-27; Matt 1:23; John 6:20
43:3 Titus 2:10; Titus 3:4; Jude 1:25
43:4 Exod 19:5,6; Deut 32:9-14; Gen 12:2
43:5 Luke 13:29; Isa 43:2; Isa 49:12
43:6 2 Cor 6:18; Rom 4:17; Rom 9:26

42:14 *I have kept quiet from long ago; I have been silent; I have restrained Myself* God's long silence is patience, not wishing any to perish (2 Pet 3:9). But patience has an end. Labor pains mean something new is about to be born and cannot be held back. Jesus used the same picture for the troubles at the end of the age (Matt 24:8).

42:15 *I will lay waste mountains and hills* This reverses 41:18. The power that blesses His people can judge His enemies. It is a picture of the Day of the LORD.

42:16 *I will do them, and I will not forsake them* In the middle of judgment God leads the blind on a road they do not know. He finishes what He starts (Phil 1:6).

42:17 *those who trust in the carved image* On the day God acts, everyone will see what they have trusted in, and the idols will fail the people who leaned on them.

42:19 *Who is blind but My servant, and deaf like My messenger whom I send* Here is the painful twist. This servant is Israel (42:24), not the Servant of 42:1-9. Israel was meant to be a light to the nations but was as blind as they were. That is why the true Servant had to come. Where Israel failed, Jesus succeeded.

42:20 *Seeing many things, and you do not keep them* Israel saw the Exodus, the sea parted and Assyria's army fall, yet did not listen. It is possible to grow up hearing sermon after sermon and still not see (Matt 13:13-15).

42:21 *He will magnify the law, and He will make it glorious* God's law was a gift. Israel's failure did not make it less glorious. It showed our need for a Savior who would keep it perfectly. Jesus came not to abolish the law but to fulfill it (Matt 5:17).

42:22 *it is a people despoiled and plundered* This pictures the Babylonian exile foretold in 39:6-7. It also pictures every life that goes its own way. Sin promises freedom and leaves us captive.

42:24 *Was it not the LORD, He against whom we have sinned* It was not Babylon's strength or gods. This is hard to hear but also a comfort. If the LORD allowed the exile, it was in His hands, and He could end it too.

42:25 *it burned against him, and he does not lay it to heart* Israel suffered and still did not learn. But God's answer opened the chapter: My Servant. In Him God would do for Israel what she could not do herself. One day all Israel will be saved (Rom 11:26).

43:1 *Do not be afraid, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; you are Mine* After the rebuke of chapter 42 we might expect more anger, but God speaks tenderly. A people He made on purpose is a people He won't throw away. To redeem is to buy back. Every believer has this in Christ. We were bought with a price (1 Cor 6:20), and we belong to Him.

43:2 *When you pass through the waters, I will be with you* God says "when," not "if." The promise is not that we will be spared the river and the fire, but that He will be in it with us. Israel crossed the sea and the Jordan, and Daniel's friends walked out of the furnace without the smell of smoke (Dan 3:27).

43:3 *I have given Egypt as your ransom, Cush and Seba in place of you* Cush is roughly modern Sudan, and Seba was probably nearby. Some see this fulfilled when Persia, after freeing the Jews, conquered Egypt in 525 B.C. under Cyrus's son Cambyses. The point is that God moves empires for His people's sake.

43:4 *Because you are precious in My eyes, you are honored, and I, I love you* Israel had done nothing to earn this. They were blind and deaf (42:18-20). That is grace, God's favor to people who do not deserve it. God's love never rested on how lovely we are. It rests on Him.

43:5 *from the east I will bring your offspring, and from the west I will gather you* Isaiah wrote this before the exile, yet he speaks to a scattered people God already sees. A first fulfillment came after 538 B.C. I believe the fuller fulfillment is still ahead, when God gathers Israel from the whole earth at the return of Christ (Matt 24:31).

of the earth, **7** everyone who is called by My name, and whom I created for My glory; I formed him; indeed, I made him." **8** Bring out a blind people, and there are eyes, and deaf ***ones***, and they have ears. **9** All the nations have been gathered together, and let ***the*** peoples be assembled. Who among them will tell this, and make us hear former things? Let them give their witnesses, and let them be justified; and let them hear and say, "***It is*** truth." **10** You ***are*** My witnesses, declares the LORD, and My servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe Me and understand that I ***am*** He. Before Me no god was formed, and after Me ***there*** will be none. **11** I, I ***am*** the LORD, and besides Me ***there is*** no Savior. **12** I, I have declared, and I have saved, and I have made ***it*** heard, and ***there was*** no strange ***god*** among you; and you ***are*** My witnesses, declares the LORD, and I ***am*** God. **13** Even from ***the*** day I ***am*** He, and ***there is*** no deliverer from My hand; I act, and who will turn it back?

A New Thing

14 Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: For your sake I have sent to Babylon (Bavel), and I will bring down all of them ***as*** fugitives, and the Chaldeans (Kasdim), in the ships their shout of joy. **15** I ***am*** the LORD, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King. **16** Thus says the LORD, who makes a way in the sea, and a path in mighty waters, **17** who brings out chariot and horse, army and mighty ***one*** together: they lie down, they will not rise; they are snuffed out; like the wick they are extinguished. **18** Do not remember former things, and ancient things do not consider. **19** Look, I am doing a new thing; now it springs up; do you not know it? Indeed, I will make a way in the wilderness, rivers in a desolate place. **20** The living things of the field will honor Me, jackals and daughters of an ostrich, for I have put water in the wilderness, rivers in a desolate place, to give drink to My people, My chosen, **21** the people whom I formed for Myself; they will recount My praise. **22** And you have not called on Me, Jacob, for you have grown weary of Me, Israel. **23** You have not brought to Me the sheep of your burnt offerings, and ***with*** your sacrifices you have not honored Me; I have not burdened you with grain offering, and I have not wearied you with frankincense. **24** You have not bought calamus for Me with money, and ***with*** the fat of your sacrifices you have not satisfied Me; only, you have burdened Me with your sins; you have wearied Me with your iniquities. **25** I, I ***am*** He who wipes out your transgressions for My own sake,

43:7 1 Pet 2:9; Acts 15:17; Eph 2:10
43:8 Isa 6:9; Ezek 12:2; Isa 42:18-20
43:9 Isa 43:26; Isa 45:20,21; Isa 48:14
43:10 John 15:27; John 20:31; Acts 1:8
43:11 Luke 2:11; Titus 2:13; Titus 2:10
43:12 Deut 32:12; Isa 43:10; Isa 44:8
43:13 Ps 90:2; Job 9:12; Isa 14:27
43:14 Rev 18:21; Isa 43:1; Isa 44:6
43:15 Matt 25:34; Rev 3:7; Isa 43:1,7,21
43:16 Isa 51:10,15; Ps 77:19; Isa 43:2
43:17 Rev 19:19; Isa 1:31; Exod 14:4-9,23-28
43:18 Isa 65:17; Isa 46:9; 1 Chr 16:12
43:19 2 Cor 5:17; Rev 21:5; Isa 48:6
43:20 1 Pet 2:9; John 4:10; John 7:37
43:21 1 Pet 2:9; Ps 102:18; 1 Cor 10:31
43:22 Acts 22:7; Mic 6:3; Mal 1:13
43:23 Acts 7:42; Acts 22:7; Amos 5:25
43:24 Acts 22:7; Jer 6:20; Isa 1:14,24
43:25 Heb 8:12; Heb 10:17; Isa 1:18

43:7 *whom I created for My glory* God speaks to the four directions like a commander and calls them "My sons" and "My daughters." This is why we exist, to show the world what God is like. When we live for His glory, we are doing what we were made to do.
43:8 *Bring out a blind people, and there are eyes, and deaf ones, and they have ears* The courtroom again. God is honest that Israel is blind and deaf, yet these are the very people He calls as witnesses. God does not wait for perfect people before He uses them.
43:9 *Who among them will tell this, and make us hear former things* Which god foretold the past events? Let them bring witnesses. Prophecy is history written in advance, and only God can write it. The idols have no record to show.
43:10 *You are My witnesses, declares the LORD* Israel's history was the evidence that God foretells and fulfills. He was not formed in a workshop like the idols. He simply is. Jesus used this language when He warned that unless they believed that He is He, they would die in their sins (John 8:24). I believe He was claiming to be the God who speaks here.
43:11 *I, I am the LORD, and besides Me there is no Savior* There is one Savior and no other. The world offers many roads to rescue, some very spiritual sounding. Salvation belongs to God alone, and it comes through one name, Jesus Christ (Acts 4:12).
43:12 *I, I have declared, and I have saved, and I have made it heard* God declared, saved, then proclaimed it. No strange god did that for Israel. Every believer has a testimony too. What has God done in your life that you could tell someone this week?
43:13 *there is no deliverer from My hand; I act, and who will turn it back* No one snatches anyone out of His hand, as Jesus said of His sheep (John 10:28). That is a comfort to those who trust Him and a warning to those who fight Him.
43:14 *For your sake I have sent to Babylon* Babylon is named here, though in Isaiah's day Assyria was the great threat. The Chaldeans were Babylon's ruling people and were proud of their river trade. Their ships of joy would become boats for fleeing.
43:15 *the Creator of Israel, your King* Israel's kings failed them over and over. Their true King was the LORD. One day the King will reign in Jerusalem in plain sight, when Christ returns and rules the earth for a thousand years (Rev 20:4-6).
43:17 *like the wick they are extinguished* This looks back to the Exodus, when Pharaoh's chariots drowned in the path God made through the sea. The God who did that has not grown weaker since.
43:18 *Do not remember former things* God does not mean forget His past works. He means don't think the past was the best He can do. Some of us live looking backward at our failures or our good old days. God isn't finished.
43:19 *Look, I am doing a new thing* The new thing is a second exodus, out of Babylon through the desert. I believe it reaches further. God's greatest new thing is the new covenant in Christ, and Revelation ends with Him making all things new (Rev 21:5).
43:20 *jackals and daughters of an ostrich* Even creatures of dry, lonely places benefit when God brings water for His people. Creation shares in the blessing of redemption (Rom 8:19-21).
43:21 *the people whom I formed for Myself; they will recount My praise* This explains the whole chapter. Peter applies the same idea to the church (1 Pet 2:9). Praise is the reason we were made, not an extra.
43:22 *for you have grown weary of Me, Israel* Faith had become a chore. It is possible to go to church and sing the songs and still be tired of God. The cure isn't more effort but a fresh look at the God who never grows weary of you.
43:23 *I have not burdened you with grain offering* Many think this speaks of the exile, when there was no temple. Others see offerings brought with empty hearts (1:11-13). Either way, God was not demanding more.
43:24 *only, you have burdened Me with your sins; you have wearied Me with your iniquities* Calamus was used in the holy anointing oil (Exod 30:23). God did not weigh Israel down, but Israel weighed God down with sin. That load the Lord Himself would one day carry (53:6).
43:25 *I, I am He who wipes out your transgressions for My own sake, and your sins I will not remember* Right after listing their sins, God announces forgiveness. It comes from His own nature, not our merit. God does not forget the way we do. He will not hold our sins against us or bring them up again. Hebrews repeats this as part of the new covenant (Heb 8:12).

and your sins I will not remember. **26** Remind Me; let us enter into judgment together; you, recount, so that you may be justified. **27** Your first father sinned, and your spokesmen transgressed against Me. **28** So I will profane the officials of holiness, and I will give Jacob ***to be*** devoted to destruction, and Israel to reviling words.

ISAIAH 44

The Spirit Poured Out

1 And now listen, Jacob (Ya'aqov), My servant, and Israel (Yisra'el), whom I have chosen. **2** Thus says the LORD, who made you and who formed you from the womb, ***who*** will help you: Do not be afraid, My servant Jacob, and Jeshurun (Yeshurun), whom I have chosen. **3** For I will pour out water on ***the*** thirsty ***ground***, and streams on ***the*** dry ground; I will pour out My Spirit on your offspring, and My blessing on your descendants. **4** And they will spring up in among ***the*** grass, like poplars by watercourses of water. **5** This one will say, "I ***am*** the LORD's," and this one will call ***himself*** by the name of Jacob, and this one will write ***on*** his hand, "The LORD's," and he will surname ***himself*** with the name of Israel. **6** Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the LORD of armies: I ***am*** first and I ***am*** last, and besides Me ***there is*** no God. **7** And who ***is*** like Me? Let him proclaim ***it***, and let him declare it and set it in order for Me, since I established the ancient people; and the coming things, and what will come, let them declare to them. **8** Do not be in dread, and do not be frightened. Did I not make you hear from then, and declare ***it***? And you ***are*** My witnesses. Is there a God besides Me? And ***there is*** no Rock; I do not know ***one***.

The Living God and the Block of Wood

9 Those who form a carved image, all of them ***are*** formlessness, and their desired things do not profit; and their witnesses, they do not see and they do not know, so that they will be ashamed. **10** Who has formed a god and cast a carved image to no profit? **11** Look, all his companions will be ashamed, and the craftsmen, they ***are*** from mankind; let them all gather together; let them stand up; let them be in dread; let them be ashamed together. **12** A craftsman of iron ***uses*** a cutting tool, and he works ***it*** in the coals, and with hammers he forms it, and he works it with the arm of his strength; also he is hungry, and ***there is*** no strength; he has not drunk water, and he grows weary. **13** A craftsman of wood stretches out a line; he outlines it with the marker; he makes it with scraping tools, and with the compass he outlines it; and he makes it like the form of a man, like the beauty of mankind, to dwell ***in*** a house. **14** ***He goes*** to cut down cedars for himself; and he takes a holm tree and an oak, and he lets it grow strong for himself among the trees of the forest; he plants a laurel, and the rain makes ***it*** grow. **15** And it is for man to burn, and he takes from them and warms himself; also he kindles ***a fire*** and bakes bread; also he makes a god and bows down; he makes it a carved image and

43:26 Acts 22:7; Titus 3:1; Isa 1:18
43:27 Jer 5:31; Ezek 16:3; Isa 28:7
43:28 Jer 24:9; Zech 8:13; Isa 47:6
44:1 Isa 41:8; Jer 30:10; Jer 46:27,28
44:2 Jer 1:5; Isa 43:1,7,21; Isa 44:24
44:3 Joel 2:28; Acts 2:17; Isa 59:21
44:4 Gal 3:14; Isa 58:11; Ps 1:3
44:5 Deut 26:17-19; Ps 116:16; Jer 50:5
44:6 Isa 41:4; Rev 22:13; Rev 1:8,11,17,18
44:7 Isa 41:22,26; Isa 43:9,12; Isa 45:21
44:8 Acts 1:8; Mark 12:32; John 6:20
44:9 1 Cor 8:4; Isa 41:24,29; Ps 97:7
44:10 1 Cor 8:4; Jer 10:5; Hab 2:18
44:11 Rev 19:19; Isa 42:17; Isa 45:16
44:12 Isa 40:19; Isa 41:6,7; Isa 46:6,7
44:13 Judg 17:4,5; Exod 20:4,5; Deut 4:16-18,28
44:14 Isa 40:20; Jer 10:3-8; Hos 4:12
44:15 2 Chr 25:14; Isa 44:10; Isa 45:20

43:26 *you, recount, so that you may be justified* If you think you are innocent, make your case. No one can. The whole world stands guilty before God (Rom 3:19). The only way to be declared right is God's own forgiveness (43:25).
43:27 *Your first father sinned* Many take this as Jacob, whose life was full of scheming (Hos 12:2-3). Some think of Adam. I lean toward Jacob, since the chapter speaks to Jacob by name. From the start the family has needed grace.
43:28 *I will give Jacob to be devoted to destruction* The word means set apart for destruction. This happened when Babylon destroyed Jerusalem and the temple in 586 B.C. But it is not the end of the story. The very next verse opens with "And now" (44:1).
44:1 *And now listen, Jacob, My servant, and Israel, whom I have chosen* God turns from judgment straight back to grace. In chapters 41-48 the servant is often the nation, as here. Israel's calling always depended on God's choice, not on her success.
44:2 *and Jeshurun, whom I have chosen* Jeshurun means upright one and is used only here and in Deuteronomy (Deut 32:15; 33:5, 26). It is like a pet name, calling Israel what God intended her to be. He has cared for her from the womb, from the start of her life as a nation.
44:3 *I will pour out My Spirit on your offspring, and My blessing on your descendants* Water on thirsty ground pictures the Spirit giving life. A first taste came after the return. The great outpouring came at Pentecost on Jewish believers in Jerusalem (Acts 2:1-4, 17). I believe a future outpouring is coming for the nation of Israel, when they look on Him whom they pierced (Zech 12:10).
44:5 *this one will write on his hand, "The LORD's* A slave or soldier might be marked with his owner's name. This is a willing mark of love. The beast forces his mark on people (Rev 13:16), but God's servants bear His name freely (Rev 14:1).
44:6 *I am first and I am last, and besides Me there is no God* Nothing came before Him and nothing will outlast Him. Jesus takes these same words for Himself (Rev 1:17; 22:13). He was not borrowing a phrase. Jesus is the eternal God who speaks here.
44:7 *And who is like Me? Let him proclaim it* No idol can tell the past from the beginning and announce what is coming. This is why Bible prophecy matters so much. It shows the God of the Bible is real and in control of history.
44:8 *there is no Rock; I do not know one* God had told His people ahead of time what was coming. Prophecy is meant to settle our fear, not stir it up. If the all-knowing God does not know of another rock, there is none.
44:9 *their witnesses, they do not see and they do not know* The LORD's witnesses had seen Him act. The idols' witnesses have seen nothing, and in the end they will be ashamed.
44:10 *Who has formed a god and cast a carved image to no profit* The question answers itself, yet people did it all the time. We may not carve statues, but we build our lives around money, success or approval, and those gods can't help when it counts.
44:11 *the craftsmen, they are from mankind* That is the whole problem. A god made by a man can be no greater than the man who made it.
44:12 *also he is hungry, and there is no strength; he has not drunk water, and he grows weary* The blacksmith can't keep himself going without food and water. How can what he makes keep him going? The God of Israel never grows weary (40:28).
44:14 *he plants a laurel, and the rain makes it grow* Before the woodworker carved, someone planted the tree, and the rain made it grow. The LORD sends the rain. The idol depends from start to finish on the God it replaces.

prostrates himself to it. **16** Half of it he burns in a fire; over half of it he eats meat; he roasts a roast and is satisfied; also he warms himself and says, "Aha, I am warm; I have seen ***the*** fire." **17** And the remainder of it he makes into a god, into his carved image; he prostrates himself to it, and he bows down, and he prays to it, and he says, "Deliver me, for you ***are*** my god." **18** They do not know, and they do not understand, for He has smeared their eyes from seeing, their hearts from having insight. **19** And he does not bring ***it*** back to his heart, and ***there is*** no knowledge and no understanding to say, "Half of it I burned in a fire, and also I baked bread on its coals; I roast meat and eat ***it***; and shall I make the rest of it into an abomination? Shall I prostrate myself to a block of wood?" **20** He feeds ***on*** ashes; a deceived heart has turned him aside, and he will not deliver his soul, and he will not say, "***Is there*** not a falsehood in my right hand?"

Cyrus My Shepherd

21 Remember these ***things***, Jacob, and Israel, for you ***are*** My servant; I formed you; you ***are*** a servant to Me, Israel; you will not be forgotten by Me. **22** I have wiped out your transgressions like the thick cloud, and your sins like the cloud; return to Me, for I have redeemed you. **23** Shout for joy, heavens, for the LORD has acted; shout aloud, lower parts of ***the*** earth; break forth ***into*** a shout of joy, mountains, forest, and every tree in it; for the LORD has redeemed Jacob, and in Israel He will glorify Himself. **24** Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, and the One who formed you from the womb: I ***am*** the LORD, who makes everything, who stretches out the heavens alone, who spreads out the earth by Myself, **25** who frustrates the signs of empty talkers, and makes diviners mad; who turns ***the*** wise backward, and makes their knowledge foolish; **26** who establishes the word of His servant, and performs the counsel of His messengers; who says of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), "She will be inhabited," and of the cities of Judah (Yehuda), "They will be rebuilt, and I will raise up her ruins"; **27** who says to the ocean depth, "Be dried up, and I will make your rivers dry"; **28** who says of Cyrus (Koresh), "My shepherd, and he will perform all My desire," even saying of Jerusalem, "Let her be rebuilt," and ***of*** the temple, "Let it be founded."

ISAIAH 45

Cyrus, God's Anointed

1 Thus says the LORD to His anointed, to Cyrus (Koresh), whose right hand I have taken hold of, to subdue nations before him, and I will loosen the loins of kings, to open doors before him, and gates will not be shut: **2** I, I will go before you, and I will make the swelling places straight; I will break doors of bronze, and I will cut through bars of iron. **3** And I will give you treasures of darkness and hidden riches of secret places, so that you may know that I ***am*** the LORD, who calls ***you*** by your name, the God of Israel (Yisra'el). **4** For the sake of My servant Jacob (Ya'aqov), and Israel My chosen one, I called you by your name; I surname you, and you have

44:17 Isa 36:19,20; Isa 37:38; Dan 3:17,29
44:18 Rom 11:8; Matt 13:14; Rom 1:21
44:19 Mark 3:5; Rom 10:19; Deut 27:15
44:20 Matt 13:15; Mark 3:5; Rom 10:19
44:21 Isa 44:1,2; Isa 42:23; Isa 46:8,9
44:22 1 Pet 1:18; Luke 7:42; Isa 43:25
44:23 Eph 4:9; Isa 49:13; Ps 69:34
44:24 Heb 1:10; Isa 42:5; Isa 43:14
44:25 1 Cor 1:20; 2 Sam 15:31; Job 5:12-14
44:26 Zech 1:6; Isa 42:9; Exod 11:4-6
44:27 Isa 42:15; Jer 50:38; Isa 11:15,16
44:28 Isa 45:1,3; Isa 45:13; 2 Chr 36:22,23
45:1 Acts 12:10; Isa 44:28; Isa 42:6
45:2 Luke 3:5; Acts 12:10; Isa 40:4
45:3 Jer 50:37; Isa 43:1; Isa 48:15
45:4 Isa 41:8,9; Acts 17:23; Isa 44:1

44:17 *Deliver me, for you are my god* Half the log warms him and cooks his meat. The other half becomes his savior. Isaiah wants us to see how foolish that is. A god you made with your own hands can't rescue you.
44:18 *for He has smeared their eyes from seeing* This is God's judgment on people who keep refusing the truth. When someone rejects God long enough, God may give him over to his choice (Rom 1:21-25). It echoes Isaiah's call (6:10). Blindness can become a judgment.
44:20 *He feeds on ashes* Ashes are what is left after the fire. They feed no one. "Is there not a falsehood in my right hand?" is a question worth asking ourselves. What am I holding onto to save me that can't?
44:21 *you will not be forgotten by Me* The idol maker formed his god. Israel's God formed Israel. That is the difference between false religion and the truth.
44:22 *I have wiped out your transgressions like the thick cloud, and your sins like the cloud; return to Me, for I have redeemed you* A cloud hiding the sun can be gone in an hour. Notice the order. God forgives first, then says return. He does not ask us to clean ourselves up before we come home. He has already paid the price.
44:23 *Shout for joy, heavens, for the LORD has acted* The idols could not make a tree. The true God made the trees, and now even they are told to sing. When God saves His people, all creation has reason to celebrate.
44:24 *who stretches out the heavens alone, who spreads out the earth by Myself* This long sentence builds to the naming of Cyrus. No helper and no other god was there at creation. That is what makes Him able to say what comes next.
44:25 *who frustrates the signs of empty talkers, and makes diviners mad* Babylon was famous for omen readers. Diviners claimed to read the future through signs and magic. When God speaks, the world's wise men have to back down.
44:26 *who establishes the word of His servant* The servant here is likely Isaiah and the prophets God sent. In Isaiah's day Jerusalem had not even fallen, yet God promised it would be inhabited and rebuilt.
44:27 *who says to the ocean depth, "Be dried up* This recalls the Red Sea and the Jordan. It may also point to Babylon, protected by the Euphrates and its canals. Nothing that shields God's enemies stands when He speaks.
44:28 *who says of Cyrus, "My shepherd, and he will perform all My desire* Isaiah wrote in the late 700s or early 600s B.C. Cyrus took Babylon in 539 B.C. and soon decreed the temple rebuilt (Ezra 1:1-4). Isaiah named him well over a hundred years ahead. No man can name a king before he is born, but God can. A pagan king did God's will without knowing it.
45:1 *Thus says the LORD to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have taken hold of* Anointed is the word from which we get Messiah. It means set apart by God for a task. Cyrus was not the Messiah and not a believer, but God chose him to free His people. Babylon fell to him in 539 B.C. with little fighting.
45:2 *I will break doors of bronze, and I will cut through bars of iron* Babylon's walls and gates were among the greatest in the world. No gate is strong enough when God opens it. When God sends you through a door, nothing can keep it shut (Rev 3:8).
45:3 *treasures of darkness and hidden riches of secret places* Cyrus gathered great wealth from Lydia and Babylon. God's purpose went beyond the gold. He wanted even this pagan king to know who had called him by name.
45:4 *For the sake of My servant Jacob* God's main interest was not the Persian Empire but His people. "You have not known Me" shows God can use people who don't follow Him to bless those who do. He rules the whole world, not just the church.

not known Me. **5** I ***am*** the LORD, and ***there is*** none else; besides Me ***there is*** no God. I will gird you, and you have not known Me, **6** so that they may know from the rising of the sun and from its setting that ***there is*** none apart from Me; I ***am*** the LORD, and ***there is*** none else, **7** who forms light and creates darkness, who makes peace and creates calamity; I ***am*** the LORD, who does all these ***things***. **8** Drip down, heavens, from above, and let clouds pour down righteousness; let ***the*** earth open, and let them be fruitful ***with*** salvation, and let it make righteousness sprout together; I, the LORD, have created it. **9** Woe ***to him who*** contends with the one who formed him, a potsherd with potsherds of the ground! Does the clay say to the one who forms it, "What are you making?" and your work, "He has no hands"? **10** Woe ***to him who*** says to a father, "What are you fathering?" and to a woman, "What are you in labor with?" **11** Thus says the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, and the One who formed him: Ask Me ***about*** the coming things; concerning My sons and concerning the work of My hands you command Me. **12** I, I made ***the*** earth, and I created mankind on it; I, My hands stretched out ***the*** heavens, and all their host I commanded. **13** I, I have stirred him up in righteousness, and all his ways I will make straight; he, he will build My city, and he will let My exiles go, not for price and not for bribe, says the LORD of armies.

Turn to Me and Be Saved

14 Thus says the LORD: The toil of Egypt (Mitsrayim) and the merchandise of Cush (Kush), and the Sabeans (Seva'im), men of stature, will pass over to you, and they will be yours; they will walk behind you; in the fetters they will pass over; and to you they will bow down; to you they will pray: "Surely God ***is*** among you, and ***there is*** none else, no God." **15** Truly You ***are*** a God who hides Himself, God of Israel, Savior. **16** They have been ashamed and also disgraced, all of them; together they have gone in humiliation, the craftsmen of images. **17** Israel has been saved by the LORD ***with*** a salvation of ages; you will not be ashamed, and you will not be disgraced, to ages of perpetuity. **18** For thus says the LORD, who created the heavens (He ***is*** the God), who formed the earth and made it (He established it; He did not create it ***as*** formlessness; He formed it to be dwelt in): I ***am*** the LORD, and ***there is*** none else. **19** I did not speak in secret, in a place of a land of darkness; I did not say to the offspring of Jacob, "Seek Me ***in*** formlessness." I ***am*** the LORD, speaking righteousness,
declaring upright things. **20** Gather yourselves and come; draw near together, survivors of the nations. They do not know, those who carry the wood of their carved image, and who pray to a god ***that*** will not save. **21** Declare and bring ***it*** near; indeed, let them take counsel together. Who made this heard from antiquity, ***who*** declared it from then? ***Was it*** not I, the LORD? And ***there is*** no other God besides Me, a right-

45:5 Mark 12:32; Isa 44:8; Isa 46:9
45:6 Mark 12:32; Mal 1:11; Isa 37:20
45:7 Amos 3:6; Eccl 7:13,14; Acts 7:50
45:8 Acts 7:50; Acts 15:17; Hos 10:12
45:9 Rom 9:20; Rom 9:21; Isa 64:8
45:10 Deut 27:16; Mal 1:6; Heb 12:9
45:11 Mark 11:24; 2 Cor 6:18; Rom 9:20
45:12 Acts 7:50; Heb 1:2; Isa 42:5
45:13 1 Pet 1:18; Isa 41:2,25; 2 Chr 36:22,23
45:14 1 Cor 14:25; Mark 12:32; Luke 4:7
45:15 John 4:42; Acts 5:31; Acts 13:23
45:16 Isa 42:17; Isa 44:9,11; Isa 45:20
45:17 Rom 10:11; Ps 25:3; Isa 54:4
45:18 Mark 12:32; Heb 1:2; Isa 42:5
45:19 John 7:28; John 7:37; John 18:20
45:20 Isa 43:9; Isa 41:5,6,21; Isa 4:2
45:21 Titus 2:13; Mark 12:32; Luke 1:47

45:5 *I will gird you, and you have not known Me* To gird is to strap on belt and armor for battle. God helped a man who did not worship Him because His plans were bigger than one man. He was keeping His promises to Israel.
45:7 *who makes peace and creates calamity* Older translations read create evil, which has confused many. The word means disaster or trouble, not moral sin. God is never the author of sin (Jas 1:13). He is sovereign over good days and hard days, over Cyrus's rise and Babylon's fall.
45:8 *let clouds pour down righteousness* The picture is a field after rain, bursting with life. When God acts, right living and rescue spring up together. "I, the LORD, have created it." This harvest is His work, not ours.
45:9 *Does the clay say to the one who forms it, "What are you making* Some in Israel must have complained about a pagan deliverer. God answers with the potter picture (29:16), which Paul also uses (Rom 9:20-21). When we argue with God's plans, we forget who is the potter and who is the clay.
45:10 *Woe to him who says to a father, "What are you fathering* A child has no say in being born. Israel had no business questioning how God brought about her new birth as a nation. We may bring honest questions to God, but we don't put Him on trial.
45:11 *Ask Me about the coming things; concerning My sons and concerning the work of My hands you command Me* Instead of arguing, His people can come to Him and trust Him with the work of His hands. A good prayer is not asking why He is doing this to me but telling Him I trust Him with what He is making of me.
45:12 *I, I made the earth, and I created mankind on it* The One who stretched out the heavens can surely handle the return of some fifty thousand exiles (Ezra 2:64-65). Our biggest problems are small things to the Creator.
45:13 *he will let My exiles go, not for price and not for bribe* God stirred him up (Ezra 1:1). Conquerors usually demanded ransom. Cyrus let the Jews go freely and even sent back the temple vessels Nebuchadnezzar had taken (Ezra 1:7-11).
45:14 *Surely God is among you, and there is none else, no God* The Sabeans were tall men from a land south of Egypt. The picture looks further ahead. I believe it points to the Millennium, when Christ reigns from Jerusalem and the nations come to worship (Zech 8:22-23; 14:16). The fetters, I think, picture full surrender to Israel's God.
45:15 *Truly You are a God who hides Himself, God of Israel, Savior* God often works out of sight, through a pagan king, exile and hard years, and we see His hand only later. He may seem hidden, but He is still Savior. Hidden doesn't mean absent.
45:16 *the craftsmen of images* The two outcomes are sharp. Idol makers end in shame, Israel in salvation (45:17). Every person will one day be ashamed of what he trusted or glad he trusted the LORD.
45:17 *Israel has been saved by the LORD with a salvation of ages* The return from Babylon did not last forever. Israel was conquered again. So this reaches further, to salvation through the Messiah. I believe the promise that all Israel will be saved (Rom 11:26) is still ahead for the nation, and God will keep it.
45:18 *For thus says the LORD, who created the heavens, who formed the earth and made it* God did not create the earth as tohu, the word for formlessness in Genesis 1:2. He made it to be lived in by people who know Him. That purpose hasn't changed, and the new earth will fulfill it (Rev 21:3).
45:19 *I did not speak in secret, in a place of a land of darkness* Pagan oracles gave murky, hidden answers. God spoke openly through Moses and the prophets. Seeking Him is never useless. If you seek Him, you will find Him (Jer 29:13).
45:20 *those who carry the wood of their carved image* The idol has to be carried. The LORD carries His people (46:3-4). This call to the survivors of the nations hints at the open door of 45:22.
45:21 *a righteous God and a Savior* A righteous judge must punish sin, and a Savior rescues sinners. At the cross both are true at once. God stays just, and He justifies those who believe (Rom 3:26).

eous God and a Savior; ***there is*** none besides Me. **22** Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth; for I ***am*** God, and ***there is*** none else. **23** By Myself I have sworn; righteousness has gone out from My mouth, a word, and it will not return, that to Me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear. **24** Only in the LORD, ***one*** has said of Me, ***are*** righteousnesses and strength; to Him ***one*** will come, and all who are angry with Him will be ashamed. **25** In the LORD all the offspring of Israel will be justified, and they will boast.

ISAIAH 46

The God Who Carries

1 Bel has bowed down; Nebo (Nevo) is stooping low; their idols have become ***a load*** for the beast and for the livestock; the things you carry ***are*** loaded, a load for a weary ***one***. **2** They have stooped low; they have bowed down together; they have not been able to rescue the load, and their soul has gone into captivity. **3** Listen to Me, house of Jacob (Ya'aqov), and all the remnant of the house of Israel (Yisra'el), who have been loaded from ***the*** belly, who have been carried from ***the*** womb: **4** and to old age I ***am*** He, and to gray hair I, I will bear ***you***; I, I have made ***you***, and I, I will carry, and I, I will bear and will rescue. **5** To whom will you liken Me and make ***Me*** equal, and compare Me, that we may be alike? **6** Those who pour out gold from a bag, and weigh out silver on the scale, hire a refiner, and he makes it a god; they prostrate themselves; indeed, they bow down. **7** They lift it up on ***the*** shoulder; they bear it, and they set it down in its place, and it stands; from its place it does not move. Indeed, ***one*** cries out to it, and it does not answer; it does not save him from his trouble. **8** Remember this, and be firm; bring ***it*** back to heart, transgressors. **9** Remember former things from long ago, for I ***am*** God, and ***there is*** none else; ***I am*** God, and ***there is*** none like Me, **10** declaring the end from ***the*** beginning, and from antiquity what has not been done, saying, "My counsel will stand, and all My desire I will do," **11** calling a bird of prey from the east, the man of My counsel from a far land. Indeed, I have spoken; indeed, I will bring it ***about***; I have formed ***it***; indeed, I will do it. **12** Listen to Me, mighty of heart, who ***are*** far from righteousness: **13** I have brought near My righteousness; it is not far away, and My salvation will not delay; and I will give salvation in Zion (Tsiyon), to Israel My beauty.

45:22 John 6:40; Matt 11:28; Mark 12:32
45:23 Rom 14:11; Phil 2:10-11; Heb 6:13
45:24 Matt 11:27; Luke 13:17; John 7:37
45:25 1 Cor 1:31; Isa 41:16; Isa 45:17,24
46:1 Isa 21:9; Jer 50:2; Jer 51:44,47,52
46:2 Judg 18:17,18,24; 2 Sam 5:21; Jer 48:7
46:3 Mark 4:3; Deut 1:31; Isa 10:22
46:4 Ps 71:18; Isa 43:13,25; Rom 11:29
46:5 Heb 1:3; Isa 40:18,25; Exod 15:11
46:6 Isa 40:19,20; Isa 41:6,7; Isa 44:12-19
46:7 Isa 45:20; Jer 10:5; 1 Sam 5:3
46:8 Isa 44:18-21; Deut 32:29; Ps 115:8
46:9 Mark 12:32; Deut 32:7; Isa 42:9
46:10 Prov 19:21; Ps 33:11; Acts 23:11
46:11 Num 23:19; Isa 41:2,25; Ps 119:24
46:12 Mark 4:3; Rev 3:18; Isa 46:3
46:13 1 Pet 2:6; Isa 61:3; Isa 51:5

45:22 *Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth* The invitation goes past Israel to every nation. It doesn't ask you to earn anything or climb anywhere. It asks you to turn. That invitation now comes through Jesus Christ, the only Savior. If you have never turned to Him, today is the day.
45:23 *to Me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear* God swears by Himself since there is no one greater (Heb 6:13). Paul applies this to the final judgment (Rom 14:11) and says every knee will bow at the name of Jesus (Phil 2:10-11). What Isaiah says of the LORD, Paul says of Jesus. That tells us plainly who Jesus is.
45:24 *Only in the LORD, one has said of Me, are righteousnesses and strength* Neither being right with God nor the strength to live for Him comes from ourselves. Every knee will bow, some in joy and some in defeat. Better to bow now, willingly.
45:25 *In the LORD all the offspring of Israel will be justified* Justified means declared right with God, the same idea Paul uses for righteousness by faith. I believe this looks ahead to the day Israel as a nation turns to Jesus, the One they once rejected.
46:1 *Bel has bowed down; Nebo is stooping low; their idols have become a load for the beast* Bel, meaning lord, was a title for Marduk, Babylon's chief god. Nebo was his son, god of writing and wisdom, whose name appears in Nebuchadnezzar. At festivals their images were paraded in glory. Isaiah sees another parade. When Babylon falls they are loaded on weary animals and carted off.
46:2 *they have not been able to rescue the load, and their soul has gone into captivity* Conquerors often carried off defeated peoples' gods as trophies. These gods could not even save their own statues. A god who can be captured is no god at all.
46:3 *who have been loaded from the belly, who have been carried from the womb* Israel did not carry God around. God carried Israel, ever since He made them a people in Egypt. The remnant is the small group left after judgment whom God keeps for Himself.
46:4 *and to old age I am He, and to gray hair I, I will bear you* God does not tire of His people as the years go by. If you are getting older, or caring for someone who is, hold onto this. You were never meant to carry yourself. The God who carried you as a child still carries you now.
46:5 *To whom will you liken Me and make Me equal* Every idol is an attempt to make God smaller, something we can see, handle and control (40:18, 25). God won't be shrunk to our size.
46:6 *hire a refiner, and he makes it a god* The man pays for the god and the craftsman shapes it. The god has no say. How can something you bought be your Lord?
46:7 *one cries out to it, and it does not answer; it does not save him from his trouble* The idol is set in place and cannot move. The LORD hears His people when they call and comes to rescue them (Ps 34:17). A god who can't hear can't help.
46:8 *Remember this, and be firm; bring it back to heart, transgressors* Many exiles were tempted to worship Babylon's gods, which seemed to be winning. God says stop, remember and stand on solid ground. Don't be pulled away by what looks powerful today.
46:9 *Remember former things from long ago, for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like Me* Remembering what God has done, from the Exodus on, is one of the best ways to trust what He will do. "There is none like Me" is the message of these chapters in one sentence.
46:10 *declaring the end from the beginning* Prophecy is history written in advance. God tells the end before the story begins because He is the author. What God said about the past came true exactly. That is why I take prophecy at face value, including the return of Christ.
46:11 *calling a bird of prey from the east, the man of My counsel from a far land* This is Cyrus, swift and strong from Persia. Four statements follow: spoken, bring about, formed, do. There is no gap between God's word and His deed.
46:12 *Listen to Me, mighty of heart, who are far from righteousness* This describes many in Israel then and every one of us apart from grace. God does not walk away from stubborn people. Hard hearts are still within reach of His voice.
46:13 *I have brought near My righteousness; it is not far away* We could never reach righteousness, so God brings it near. That is the gospel in a sentence. The return was a first step, the full answer came in Jesus, and Israel's final glory will come when He returns to reign from Jerusalem.

ISAIAH 47

The Fall of the Queen

1 Go down and sit on ***the*** dust, virgin daughter of Babylon (Bavel); sit on the earth, ***where there is*** no throne, daughter of the Chaldeans (Kasdim); for you will not again ***have them*** call you tender and delicate. **2** Take a pair of millstones and grind flour; uncover your veil; strip off ***the*** skirt; uncover ***the*** leg; pass through rivers. **3** Let your nakedness be uncovered; also your reproach will be seen. I will take vengeance, and I will not meet a man. **4** Our Redeemer, the LORD of armies ***is*** His name, the Holy One of Israel (Yisra'el). **5** Sit silently and go into the darkness, daughter of the Chaldeans; for you will not again ***have them*** call you mistress of kingdoms. **6** I was angry with My people; I profaned My inheritance, and I gave them into your hand; you did not set compassion for them; on the old man you made your yoke exceedingly heavy. **7** And you said, "I will be mistress forever," so that you did not lay these ***things*** on your heart; you did not remember its end. **8** And now hear this, voluptuous ***one***, who sits in security, who says in her heart, "I ***am***, and besides me ***there is*** none else; I will not sit ***as*** a widow, and I will not know loss of children." **9** And these two ***things*** will come to you in a moment, in one day: loss of children and widowhood; in their completeness they will come on you, in the abundance of your sorceries, in the very great power of your spells. **10** And you trusted in your evil; you said, "***There is*** no one who sees me." Your wisdom and your knowledge, it has turned you away; and you said in your heart, "I ***am***, and besides me ***there is*** none else." **11** And evil will come on you; you will not know ***how*** to charm it away; and disaster will fall on you; you will not be able to cover it; and ruin will come on you suddenly, ***which*** you will not know. **12** Stand now in your spells and in the abundance of your sorceries, in which you have labored from your youth; perhaps you will be able to profit; perhaps you will strike terror. **13** You are weary with the abundance of your counsels; let them stand now and save you, those who divide the heavens, who gaze at the stars, who make known at the new moons, from what will come on you. **14** Look, they have become like chaff; fire has burned them; they will not deliver their soul from the hand of the flame; ***there is*** no coal to warm them, ***no*** fire to sit before it. **15** So they have become to you, those ***for*** whom you have labored, your traders from your youth; they have wandered, each man to his side; ***there is*** none saving you.

ISAIAH 48

Refined in the Furnace

1 Listen to this, house of Jacob (Ya'aqov), who are called by the name of Israel (Yisra'el), and who came out from the waters of Judah (Yehuda), who swear by the name of the LORD and make mention of the God of Israel, not in truth and

47:1 Ps 137:8; Zech 2:7; Jer 51:33
47:2 Matt 24:41; Exod 11:5; Judg 16:21
47:3 Rom 12:19; Rev 18:7; Nah 3:5
47:4 Rev 3:7; Isa 41:14; Isa 43:3,14
47:5 Matt 22:13; Isa 47:7; Isa 14:23
47:6 Zech 1:15; 2 Chr 28:9; Ps 69:26
47:7 Rev 18:7; Isa 47:5; Deut 32:29
47:8 Rev 18:8; Zeph 2:15; Isa 32:9
47:9 Rev 18:8; Rev 18:7; Rev 18:10
47:10 1 Cor 1:21; Rev 18:8; Ps 52:7
47:11 Rev 18:10; 1 Thess 5:3; Isa 37:36
47:12 Isa 47:9,10; Isa 8:19; Isa 19:3
47:13 Isa 44:25; Isa 57:10; Ezek 24:12
47:14 Nah 1:10; Mal 4:1; Isa 41:2
47:15 Rev 18:11; Isa 56:11; Ezek 27:12-25
48:1 Matt 15:8; Rev 3:9; Ps 68:26

47:1 *Go down and sit on the dust, virgin daughter of Babylon* Virgin means a city never conquered. Babylon was tender and delicate, used to luxury. Sitting on the ground is the posture of mourning. Isaiah announced her fall before she became the power that destroyed Jerusalem.
47:2 *Take a pair of millstones and grind flour* Grinding grain was slaves' work. The proud queen is marched into exile, wading rivers barefoot, the very thing Babylon did to others.
47:3 *I will take vengeance* God's vengeance is the just punishment of a holy Judge, not petty human revenge. Believers are told not to avenge themselves but to leave room for His wrath (Rom 12:19). We can leave wrongs in His hands.
47:4 *Our Redeemer, the LORD of armies is His name, the Holy One of Israel* Isaiah breaks in with praise. Babylon's fall is bad news for Babylon and good news for God's people. The One judging the proud is the One redeeming the humble.
47:5 *you will not again have them call you mistress of kingdoms* Babylon really was the greatest kingdom for a time, the head of gold (Dan 2). But every earthly kingdom has an end date. Only Christ's kingdom lasts forever (Dan 2:44).
47:6 *you did not set compassion for them; on the old man you made your yoke exceedingly heavy* God handed His people to Babylon as discipline, but Babylon went too far. God uses nations but still holds them responsible for cruelty. Being used by God isn't the same as being approved by Him.
47:7 *I will be mistress forever* Pride always forgets the end of the road. Jesus told of a rich man planning bigger barns whose soul was required that night (Luke 12:20).
47:8 *I am, and besides me there is none else* This is the language God uses of Himself (45:5-6). Babylon put herself in God's place. The end-times Babylon boasts the same way that she is a queen and no widow (Rev 18:7).
47:9 *these two things will come to you in a moment, in one day* Babylon fell to Cyrus in a single night in 539 B.C. (Dan 5:30). Revelation uses the same words of the final Babylon (Rev 18:8). I believe the ancient city is the first fulfillment, and Revelation picks up the name for the world system of the last days.
47:10 *you said, "There is no one who sees me* Sinners have always told themselves this, but God sees everything (Heb 4:13). Knowledge without the fear of the LORD only makes a person a more skillful fool.
47:11 *you will not know how to charm it away* Spells and money could not stop this disaster. There is only one protection from God's judgment, His own provision of mercy. For us, that provision is the blood of Christ.
47:12 *perhaps you will be able to profit* God mocks Babylon's magic. The repeated "perhaps" shows how empty it is. You can't bet your life on a perhaps.
47:13 *those who divide the heavens, who gaze at the stars, who make known at the new moons* Babylon was famous for astrology. God forbade His people these practices (Deut 18:10-12). Horoscopes and fortune telling are as useless now as they were in Babylon.
47:14 *there is no coal to warm them, no fire to sit before it* Chaff burns in a moment. This is not a cozy fire to warm your hands. It is a fire of judgment that leaves nothing behind.
47:15 *there is none saving you* Her trading partners all wander off. In Revelation the merchants likewise stand far off and weep but do not help (Rev 18:11, 15). The world's friends disappear in the day of judgment. Only God saves.
48:1 *who swear by the name of the LORD and make mention of the God of Israel, not in truth and not in righteousness* They used all the proud names and said the right words, but their lives didn't match. It is possible to know the religious language and not truly know God. Jesus said the same of people who honored Him with their lips while their hearts were far away (Matt 15:8).

not in righteousness. **2** For they have called themselves after the city of holiness, and they have supported themselves on the God of Israel; the LORD of armies ***is*** His name. **3** The former things I declared from then, and they went out from My mouth, and I made them heard; suddenly I acted, and they came. **4** Because I knew that you ***are*** stubborn, and your neck ***is*** a sinew of iron, and your forehead bronze, **5** I declared ***them*** to you from then; before ***it*** came I made ***it*** heard to you, lest you should say, "My idol did them, and my carved image and my molten image commanded them." **6** You have heard; look at all of it; and you, will you not declare ***it***? I have made you hear new things from now, and hidden things, and you have not known them. **7** Now they have been created, and not from then; and before today you had not heard them, lest you should say, "Look, I knew them." **8** Neither have you heard, nor have you known, nor from then has your ear been opened; for I knew ***that*** you would surely act treacherously, and "a transgressor from ***the*** womb" you have been called. **9** For the sake of My name I will lengthen My anger, and ***for*** My praise I will restrain ***it*** for you, so as not to cut you off. **10** Look, I have refined you, and not with silver; I have chosen you in a furnace of affliction. **11** For My own sake, for My own sake I will act; for how should ***it*** be profaned? And My glory I will not give to another. **12** Listen to Me, Jacob, and Israel, My called one: I ***am*** He; I ***am*** first; indeed, I ***am*** last. **13** Indeed, My hand founded the earth, and My right hand spread out the heavens; I call to them; they stand together. **14** Gather together, all of you, and listen. Who among them has declared these ***things***? The LORD loves him; he will do His pleasure on Babylon (Bavel), and his arm ***will be on*** the Chaldeans (Kasdim). **15** I, I have spoken; indeed, I have called him; I have brought him, and he will make his way successful. **16** Draw near to Me; listen to this: from ***the*** beginning I have not spoken in secret; from the time it came to be, I ***was*** there. And now the Lord GOD has sent Me, and His Spirit. **17** Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: I ***am*** the LORD your God, who teaches you to profit, who makes you tread in the way ***that*** you should go. **18** Oh that you had paid attention to My commandments! And your peace would have been like the river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea; **19** and your offspring would have been like the sand, and the descendants of your inward parts like its grains; his name would not be cut off and would not be destroyed from before Me. **20** Go out from Babylon; flee from ***the*** Chaldeans; with a voice of a shout of joy declare, make this heard; send it out to the end of the earth; say, "The LORD has redeemed His servant Jacob." **21** And they did not thirst ***when*** He led them through the waste places; He made water flow from a rock

48:2 John 8:40; Rev 22:19; Mic 3:11
48:3 Isa 41:22; Isa 42:9; Isa 43:9
48:4 Exod 32:9; Zech 7:11,12; Deut 31:27
48:5 John 13:19; Isa 48:3; Luke 1:70
48:6 1 Cor 2:9; Rom 16:26; 1 Pet 1:12
48:8 Matt 13:15; Ps 58:3; Isa 6:9,10
48:9 Ps 78:38; Isa 48:11; Neh 9:30,31
48:10 1 Pet 1:7; Deut 4:20; Jer 9:7
48:11 Ezek 20:9,39; Isa 42:8; Deut 32:26,27
48:12 Rev 22:13; Rev 1:17; Rev 2:8
48:13 Heb 1:10; Rom 4:17; Isa 40:26
48:14 Isa 43:9; Isa 45:20,21; Isa 13:4,5,17,18
48:15 Josh 1:8; Ps 45:4; Ezek 1:2
48:16 John 20:21; Luke 4:18; Isa 45:19
48:17 Ps 32:8; Deut 8:17,18; Job 22:21,22
48:18 Isa 66:12; Deut 32:29; Deut 5:29
48:19 Rom 9:27; Isa 10:22; Gen 22:17
48:20 Rev 18:4; Isa 52:9; Jer 50:8
48:21 1 Cor 10:4; Exod 17:6; Isa 30:25

48:2 *they have called themselves after the city of holiness* A holy address doesn't make a holy heart. Some trust that church membership or a family's faith will carry them. God looks for faith that is real, not borrowed.
48:4 *your neck is a sinew of iron, and your forehead bronze* A stiff neck pictures an ox that won't take the yoke, and a bronze forehead is hard and unashamed. God called Israel stiff-necked as far back as the golden calf (Exod 32:9). Nothing had changed.
48:5 *lest you should say, "My idol did them* This is why God announced things ahead of time. He took away the excuse. God's foreknowledge is not only a show of power. It is a mercy to hard hearts.
48:6 *I have made you hear new things from now, and hidden things* The fall of Babylon and the return home were new. Beyond them lay greater new things, the coming of the Servant and the salvation of the nations, which the rest of Isaiah unfolds.
48:7 *lest you should say, "Look, I knew them* God reveals some things only when the time is right, so no one can boast in his own wisdom. Our part is to listen and receive.
48:8 *a transgressor from the womb" you have been called* God is honest about His people. This is a picture of every human heart, not only Israel's (Ps 51:5). We all need a grace we did not earn.
48:9 *For the sake of My name I will lengthen My anger* God's patience rested on His own character and His promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. His mercy toward us rests on who He is, not on who we are.
48:10 *Look, I have refined you, and not with silver; I have chosen you in a furnace of affliction* Many take "not with silver" to mean God did not turn the heat as high as silver requires, or Israel would have been consumed. The exile was a measured furnace. For those in Christ, trials are there to purify us, not pay us back (1 Pet 1:7).
48:11 *For My own sake, for My own sake I will act* If God abandoned Israel, the nations would say Babylon's gods were stronger (42:8). Our salvation and His glory go hand in hand.
48:12 *I am He; I am first; indeed, I am last* This is the title of 44:6, which Jesus claims (Rev 1:17). The One there at the beginning will be there at the end, and everything in between is in His hands.
48:13 *I call to them; they stand together* Heaven and earth stand at attention like servants awaiting orders. If creation answers when God calls, how much more should His people?
48:14 *The LORD loves him; he will do His pleasure on Babylon* In context this is Cyrus. It is striking that God says this of a pagan king. It shows His favor resting on the man He chose for the task.
48:15 *I have brought him, and he will make his way successful* Cyrus's victories were God's doing, not luck or skill alone. History is not a string of accidents. It is God carrying out His word.
48:16 *And now the Lord GOD has sent me, and His Spirit* A new speaker appears. Some say Isaiah. I believe it is the Servant stepping forward just before chapter 49, where He speaks in the first person. If so, we glimpse the Father who sends, the Son who is sent and the Spirit (Luke 4:18; 61:1).
48:17 *who teaches you to profit, who makes you tread in the way that you should go* God's commands are a loving teacher's instructions from One who knows the road ahead. Following Him is how life works best.
48:18 *Oh that you had paid attention to My commandments! And your peace would have been like the river* You can hear God's ache. Peace, shalom, would have flowed like a river that never runs dry. Obedience doesn't earn God's love, but disobedience costs us the peace He wanted us to have.
48:19 *your offspring would have been like the sand* This was God's promise to Abraham (Gen 22:17). The exile shrank the nation, but the promise was not cancelled. It will still be kept, by a harder road.
48:20 *Go out from Babylon; flee from the Chaldeans* Isaiah speaks as if the day had come. It came after Cyrus's decree in 538 B.C. The same call rings out in Revelation (Rev 18:4). God's people are always called to come out from the world's pride and sin and not share in its judgment.
48:21 *He made water flow from a rock for them* The God who split the rock in the wilderness (Exod 17:6; Num 20:11) would provide on the road home. Paul says that rock pictured Christ (1 Cor 10:4).

for them; and He split a rock, and waters gushed out. **22** ***There is*** no peace, says the LORD, for the wicked.

ISAIAH 49

A Light to the Nations

1 Listen to Me, coastlands, and pay attention, peoples, from far away: the LORD called Me from ***the*** womb; from the inward parts of My mother He made mention of My name. **2** And He made My mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of His hand He hid Me; and He made Me into a polished arrow; in His quiver He concealed Me. **3** And He said to Me, "You ***are*** My servant, Israel (Yisra'el), in whom I will glorify Myself." **4** And I, I said, "I have labored for emptiness; I have spent My strength for formlessness and vanity; truly My justice ***is*** with the LORD, and My reward with My God." **5** And now says the LORD, who formed Me from ***the*** womb ***to be*** His servant, to bring back Jacob (Ya'aqov) to Him, and ***that*** Israel might be gathered to Him (and I am honored in the eyes of the LORD, and My God has been My strength); **6** and He said, "It is too light for You to be My servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved ones of Israel; and I will give You for a light of ***the*** nations, to be My salvation to the end of the earth." **7** Thus says the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel, his Holy One, to ***the One*** despised of soul, to ***the One*** abhorred by ***the*** nation, to a servant of rulers: Kings will see and arise, princes, and they will bow down, because of the LORD, who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, and He has chosen You. **8** Thus says the LORD: In a time of favor I have answered You, and in a day of salvation I have helped You; and I will watch over You and give You for a covenant of ***the*** people, to raise up the land, to make ***them*** inherit the desolate inheritances, **9** saying to the prisoners, "Come out," to those who ***are*** in the darkness, "Show yourselves." They will graze along the roads, and on all bare heights ***will be*** their pasture. **10** They will not hunger, and they will not thirst, and burning heat and sun will not strike them; for He who has compassion on them will guide them, and to springs of water He will lead them. **11** And I will make all My mountains into a road, and My highways will be raised up. **12** Look, these will come from far away, and look, these from the north and from the sea, and these from the land of Sinim. **13** Shout for joy, heavens, and rejoice, earth, and break forth ***into*** a shout of joy, mountains; for the LORD has comforted His people, and He will have compassion on His afflicted.

I Will Not Forget You

14 And Zion (Tsiyon) said, "The LORD has forsaken me, and

48:22 Luke 11:24; Isa 57:21; Job 15:20-24
49:1 Gal 1:15; Matt 1:21; Luke 24:44
49:2 Rev 1:16; Heb 4:12; Rev 2:12
49:3 John 17:4; Matt 12:18; Luke 24:44
49:4 John 1:11; Isa 53:10-12; Isa 65:2
49:5 Matt 17:5; Matt 28:18; 1 Pet 3:22
49:6 Acts 13:47; Luke 2:32; Luke 24:46
49:7 Luke 23:35; John 19:15; Luke 22:27
49:8 2 Cor 6:2; Acts 2:27; Isa 42:6
49:9 Luke 4:18; 1 Pet 2:9; Isa 42:7
49:10 Rev 7:16-17; Matt 5:6; Isa 4:6
49:11 Luke 3:5; Isa 11:16; Isa 62:10
49:12 Luke 13:29; Isa 43:5,6; Isa 2:2,3
49:13 2 Cor 7:6; Rev 12:12; Rev 18:20
49:14 Rev 14:1; Isa 40:27; Ps 22:1

48:22 *There is no peace, says the LORD, for the wicked* This line returns at 57:21, and the book closes on a similar warning (66:24). Many see it dividing chapters 40-66 into three parts of nine chapters. Real peace comes only by being made right with God, which the Servant comes to bring.

49:1 *the LORD called Me from the womb; from the inward parts of My mother He made mention of My name* This is the second Servant Song (49:1-13). The Servant calls to the far nations, so His mission is worldwide. I believe the Servant is Jesus Christ. Before His birth He was named, and the angel told why (Matt 1:21). He came into the world for this mission, born of a real mother.

49:2 *He made My mouth like a sharp sword* The Servant's weapon is His word (Heb 4:12). John saw a sharp sword from Jesus' mouth (Rev 1:16), and with it He strikes the nations when He returns (Rev 19:15). An arrow is hidden until the right moment. Jesus lived quietly in Nazareth for thirty years. Seasons of hiddenness aren't wasted.

49:3 *You are My servant, Israel, in whom I will glorify Myself* If He is called Israel, is He just the nation? No. This Servant brings Israel back to God (49:5-6), which the nation could not do for itself. Jesus is the true Israel, the one Israelite who did perfectly what the nation was called to do (Matt 2:15; John 17:4).

49:4 *I have labored for emptiness* The Servant sounds discouraged. Jesus was rejected at home, many disciples left (John 6:66), His nation did not receive Him (John 1:11), and the Twelve fled. Yet He left the results with God (Luke 23:46), and the Father raised Him. If your service feels wasted, the results belong to God.

49:5 *to bring back Jacob to Him, and that Israel might be gathered to Him* The Servant is distinct from Israel. He brings Israel back. Jesus' ministry began with the lost sheep of Israel (Matt 15:24). I believe the full gathering is still ahead, when the nation turns to the One it pierced (Zech 12:10; Rom 11:26).

49:6 *It is too light for You to be My servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob* Restoring Israel was not enough. The Servant is also a light to the nations. Simeon called the baby Jesus a light for the Gentiles (Luke 2:32), and Paul and Barnabas quoted this verse to explain preaching to Gentiles (Acts 13:47). If you are not Jewish and know Jesus, God had you in mind here.

49:7 *to the One despised of soul, to the One abhorred by the nation, to a servant of rulers: Kings will see and arise* Jesus was despised by the religious leaders and handed over to Pilate. Then everything turns. This is the gospel pattern, humiliation first, then glory (Phil 2:8-9). When Christ returns, every king will bow to Him (Rev 19:16).

49:8 *In a time of favor I have answered You, and in a day of salvation I have helped You* The Servant is the covenant (Luke 22:20). Paul quotes this verse and says now is the day of salvation (2 Cor 6:2). The favorable time is now.

49:9 *saying to the prisoners, "Come out* The first picture is exiles leaving Babylon. The deeper picture is sinners set free by Christ, who came to proclaim release to captives (Luke 4:18).

49:10 *They will not hunger, and they will not thirst, and burning heat and sun will not strike them* Revelation applies this to the multitude coming out of the great tribulation, whom the Lamb shepherds to springs of the water of life (Rev 7:14-17). The promise for the road home reaches all the way to heaven.

49:11 *I will make all My mountains into a road* Mountains were a traveler's hardest obstacle. This echoes the highway of 40:3-4. What mountain stands between you and where God leads? He can make it a road.

49:12 *these from the land of Sinim* Many scholars think Sinim is Syene, today Aswan in southern Egypt, and the Great Isaiah Scroll from the Dead Sea Scrolls reads Syene here. God's people come home from every direction. I believe that gathering is complete when Christ returns and gathers His elect from the four winds (Matt 24:31).

49:13 *for the LORD has comforted His people* The song ends in praise. This part of Isaiah began with "Comfort, comfort My people" (40:1), and that comfort comes through the Servant.

49:14 *The LORD has forsaken me, and the Lord has forgotten me* Zion feels abandoned, as many believers have in hard times. Even Jesus cried out that He was forsaken (Matt 27:46). God does not scold Zion for her feelings. He answers with love.

the Lord has forgotten me." **15** Will a woman forget her nursing child, from having compassion on the son of her womb? Even these will forget, and I, I will not forget you. **16** Look, I have engraved you on ***My*** palms; your walls ***are*** before Me continually. **17** Your sons have hurried; those who tear you down and those who lay you waste will go out from you. **18** Lift up your eyes all around and see: all of them have gathered together; they have come to you. ***As*** I live, declares the LORD, you will surely put on all of them like the ornament, and you will tie them on like the bride. **19** For your waste places and your desolate places and the land of your destruction, for now you will be too cramped for inhabitants, and those who swallowed you up will be far away. **20** Yet the sons of your bereavement will say in your ears, "The place is too cramped for me; make room for me, so that I may dwell." **21** And you will say in your heart, "Who has fathered these for me, and I ***was*** bereaved and barren, an exile and thrust away? And these, who has brought ***them*** up? Look, I, I was left alone; these, where ***were*** they?" **22** Thus says the Lord GOD: Look, I will lift up My hand to the nations, and to peoples I will raise My standard; and they will bring your sons in ***the*** bosom, and your daughters will be carried on ***the*** shoulder. **23** And kings will be your foster fathers, and their princesses your nursing mothers; ***with*** faces ***to the*** earth they will bow down to you, and they will lick up the dust of your feet; and you will know that I ***am*** the LORD; those who wait for Me will not be ashamed. **24** Will booty be taken from a mighty man, or will the captives of a righteous ***one*** escape? **25** For thus says the LORD: Even the captives of a mighty man will be taken, and the booty of a ruthless ***one*** will escape; and with the one who contends with you, I, I will contend, and your sons I, I will save. **26** And I will make those who oppress you eat their own flesh, and they will become drunk ***with*** their own blood as ***with*** the sweet wine; and all flesh will know that I ***am*** the LORD, your Savior and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.

ISAIAH 50

The Obedient Servant

1 Thus says the LORD: Where ***is*** this, the document of the divorce of your mother, ***by*** which I sent her away? Or which of My creditors ***is it*** to whom I sold you? Look, for your iniquities you were sold, and for your transgressions your mother was sent away. **2** Why did I come, and ***there was*** no man? ***Why*** did I call, and ***there was*** none answering? Is My hand really too short for ransom? Or ***is there*** no strength in Me to deliver? Look, by My rebuke I dry up ***the*** sea; I make rivers a wilderness; their fish stink because ***there is*** no water, and they die of thirst. **3** I clothe ***the*** heavens ***with*** blackness, and I make sackcloth their covering. **4** The Lord GOD has given Me a tongue of disciples, to know ***how*** to sustain the weary ***with*** a word. He awakens morning ***by*** morning; He

49:15 Isa 44:21; Hos 11:1; 1 Kgs 3:26,27
49:16 Exod 13:9; Isa 60:18; Song 8:6
49:17 Isa 62:5; Isa 51:13,22,23; Isa 51:18-20
49:18 Rom 14:11; Isa 54:1-3; Isa 54:9
49:19 Acts 3:19; Zech 10:10; Hos 1:10,11
49:20 Gal 4:27; Isa 60:4; Hos 1:10
49:21 Jer 31:15-17; Rom 11:11-17,24; Gal 3:29
49:22 Luke 13:29; Isa 49:12; Isa 2:2,3
49:23 Rom 10:11; Rom 9:33; Rev 3:9
49:24 Matt 12:29; Ezek 37:3,11; Isa 42:22
49:25 Isa 54:15-17; Isa 41:11,12; Rom 8:37
49:26 Rev 16:6; Rev 17:6; Acts 2:17
50:1 Deut 32:30; Jer 3:8; 2 Kgs 4:1
50:2 Matt 8:26; Matt 23:37; Luke 13:34
50:3 Rev 6:12; Matt 27:45; Matt 8:26
50:4 Matt 11:28; Luke 4:18; Luke 24:44

49:15 *Will a woman forget her nursing child* A mother's love is one of earth's strongest bonds, yet sadly some forget. God's love is deeper. If someone who should have loved you forgot you, hear this verse. Your heavenly Father has never forgotten you for one moment.
49:16 *Look, I have engraved you on My palms* People sometimes wrote a name on the hand as a reminder. Zion's name is carved into God's palms. Many think of the nail prints Jesus showed Thomas (John 20:27). The verse is about God's love for Zion, so I would call that an application, but a true one.
49:17 *Your sons have hurried* The returning exiles under Cyrus, Ezra and Nehemiah began to rebuild. The destroyers' day was ending and the builders' day beginning.
49:18 *you will tie them on like the bride* God swears by His own life. Zion wears her returning children like a bride's jewels. To God's city, the return of His people is glory, not a burden.
49:20 *The place is too cramped for me; make room for me, so that I may dwell* Imagine a grieving mother suddenly hearing her children argue over room in the house. This pictures many Jews returning to the land. I believe its complete fulfillment comes in the Millennium, when Israel is fully restored under Christ.
49:21 *Who has fathered these for me* Zion did not produce her own restoration. It came as a gift. That is grace. When God's people ask how all this happened, the only answer is that the LORD did it.
49:22 *to peoples I will raise My standard; and they will bring your sons in the bosom* A standard is a banner soldiers rally to. The nations that once scattered Israel will help bring her children home. God can turn enemies into helpers.
49:23 *those who wait for Me will not be ashamed* I believe this points to the Millennium, when Christ reigns from Jerusalem and the nations honor the city of the great King (Zech 14:16). Waiting on God is never wasted.
49:24 *Will booty be taken from a mighty man* Babylon was strong. How could they ever get free? When we are held by something stronger than we are, we ask the same thing.
49:25 *with the one who contends with you, I, I will contend, and your sons I, I will save* God fights for His people. Jesus spoke of tying up the strong man and plundering his house (Matt 12:29), describing His victory over Satan. No captor is stronger than our Redeemer.
49:26 *all flesh will know that I am the LORD, your Savior and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob* The oppressors turn on each other. God's rescue of Israel will be so clear that the whole world will recognize who did it.
50:1 *Where is this, the document of the divorce of your mother, by which I sent her away* A man who divorced his wife gave her a written certificate (Deut 24:1). There is no such paper for Zion. The exile was real, but it came from Israel's sin, not God's unfaithfulness. Because there was no divorce, the relationship could be restored.
50:2 *Is My hand really too short for ransom* God came through His prophets and no one answered. The God who dries up the sea is strong enough to bring them home. The problem was never His power but Israel's unwillingness to answer.
50:3 *I clothe the heavens with blackness* This recalls the darkness over Egypt (Exod 10:21-23). It may look ahead to the darkness at the cross (Matt 27:45) and the darkened sun before Christ returns (Matt 24:29; Rev 6:12).
50:4 *The Lord GOD has given Me a tongue of disciples, to know how to sustain the weary with a word* This is the third Servant Song (50:4-11), and I believe the speaker is Jesus. A disciple is a learner. Jesus lifted weary people with His words (Matt 11:28). Before speaking to people, He listened to God morning by morning (Mark 1:35). Our words help the weary only if we have first heard from God.

awakens My ear to hear like the disciples. **5** The Lord GOD has opened My ear, and I, I was not rebellious; I did not turn away backward. **6** I gave My back to those who strike, and My cheeks to those who pluck ***them*** bare; I did not hide My face from humiliations and spitting. **7** And the Lord GOD helps Me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set My face like the flint, and I know that I will not be ashamed. **8** He who justifies Me ***is*** near; who will contend with Me? Let us stand up together. Who ***is*** the master of My judgment? Let him draw near to Me. **9** Look, the Lord GOD helps Me; who ***is*** he ***who*** will condemn Me? Look, all of them will wear out like the garment; ***the*** moth will eat them. **10** Who among you fears the LORD, listens to the voice of His servant? He who has walked ***in*** darkness and has no brightness, let him trust in the name of the LORD and lean on his God. **11** Look, all of you who kindle a fire, who gird on firebrands, walk in the light of your fire and among the firebrands ***that*** you have kindled. From My hand this will be yours: you will lie down in pain.

ISAIAH 51

Look to the Rock

1 Listen to Me, you who pursue righteousness, who seek the LORD: look to the rock ***from which*** you were hewn, and to the hollow of the pit ***from which*** you were dug. **2** Look to Abraham (Avraham) your father, and to Sarah (Sara) ***who*** gave birth to you; for ***as*** one I called him, and I blessed him and multiplied him. **3** For the LORD has comforted Zion (Tsiyon); He has comforted all her waste places, and He has made her wilderness like Eden, and her desert plain like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the sound of song. **4** Pay attention to Me, My people, and give ear to Me, My nation; for law will go out from Me, and My justice I will set at rest for a light of peoples. **5** My righteousness ***is*** near; My salvation has gone out, and My arms will judge peoples; the coastlands will wait for Me, and for My arm they will hope. **6** Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look to the earth beneath; for ***the*** heavens will vanish like the smoke, and the earth will wear out like the garment, and its inhabitants will die like gnats; and My salvation will be forever, and My righteousness will not be shattered. **7** Listen to Me, you who know righteousness, a people ***with*** My law in their heart: do not fear the reproach of men, and do not be dismayed at their reviling words. **8** For like the garment ***the*** moth will eat them, and like the wool ***the*** clothes moth will eat them; and My righteousness will be forever, and My salvation to a generation of generations. **9** Awake, awake, put on strength, arm of the LORD; awake as ***in the*** days of antiquity, generations of ages. ***Are*** You not the one who cut Rahab (Rahav) in pieces, who pierced the monster?

50:5 Heb 5:8; John 14:31; Phil 2:8
50:6 Matt 26:67; Mark 14:65; Luke 22:63-64
50:7 Luke 9:51; John 16:33; Mark 12:14
50:8 Rom 8:33; Mark 12:14; Luke 9:51
50:9 John 8:29; John 16:32; Heb 2:13
50:10 Isa 9:2; John 12:46; Ps 25:12,14
50:11 Matt 22:13; Isa 28:15-20; Ps 20:7,8
51:1 Isa 51:7; Ps 94:15; Heb 12:14
51:2 Gal 3:9; Rom 4:1; Rom 4:16
51:3 Gal 3:14; Isa 52:9; Gen 13:10
51:4 1 Pet 2:9; John 16:9; John 16:10
51:5 Matt 28:18; Rom 10:18; Isa 46:13
51:6 Matt 24:35; 2 Pet 3:10; Heb 1:10
51:7 Matt 5:11; Luke 12:4; Ps 37:31
51:8 Rom 3:21; Isa 50:9; Isa 51:6
51:9 John 12:38; Isa 27:1; Ps 74:13,14

50:5 *I, I was not rebellious; I did not turn away backward* Israel's ears were closed (48:8), but the Servant's ear was open. Obedience led Him to the cross, yet He prayed for the Father's will (Luke 22:42) and learned obedience through suffering (Heb 5:8). Where Adam and Israel failed, Christ obeyed all the way.
50:6 *I gave My back to those who strike, and My cheeks to those who pluck them bare* About seven hundred years before the cross, Isaiah described Jesus beaten and spat upon (Matt 26:67; 27:26, 30). The Gospels don't mention His beard, but Isaiah does. Notice the word "gave." No one took His life. He laid it down Himself (John 10:18).
50:7 *therefore I have set My face like the flint* Flint is very hard stone. Jesus set His face to go to Jerusalem (Luke 9:51), knowing what waited there. His resolve came from trust, not stubbornness. The cross looked like disgrace, but the empty tomb showed God had not abandoned Him.
50:8 *He who justifies Me is near; who will contend with Me* The falsely condemned Servant was cleared by God when He raised Jesus from the dead (Rom 1:4). Paul uses this language for believers (Rom 8:33). Because the Servant is vindicated, everyone who belongs to Him is too.
50:9 *who is he who will condemn Me? Look, all of them will wear out like the garment* His accusers' charges won't last. For the believer, every accusation, whether from people, conscience or Satan (Rev 12:10), falls silent before Christ (Rom 8:1, 34).
50:10 *He who has walked in darkness and has no brightness, let him trust in the name of the LORD and lean on his God* Faith does not always mean seeing clearly. Faithful people walk through dark seasons. If you are in a dark place, you are not disqualified. Lean on God as the Servant did.
50:11 *all of you who kindle a fire, who gird on firebrands, walk in the light of your fire* The other path is to make your own light, refusing to wait on God. It ends in pain. Our own fires can't light the way home. Jesus is the light of the world (John 8:12).
51:1 *look to the rock from which you were hewn* God speaks to the remnant who still seek Him. Like stone from a quarry, Israel came from Abraham and Sarah (51:2). When we feel small and forgotten, it helps to remember where God started with us.
51:2 *for as one I called him, and I blessed him and multiplied him* Abraham was one old, childless man, and Sarah was barren (Gen 12:1-3). If God built a nation from them, He can restore a scattered people. Those who believe are Abraham's sons by faith (Gal 3:7).
51:3 *He has made her wilderness like Eden, and her desert plain like the garden of the LORD* Jerusalem was rebuilt after the exile, but nothing in history has yet made her like Eden. I read this as a real promise that waits for Christ's reign on earth (35:1-2) and reaches its fullness in the river and tree of life (Rev 22:1-2).
51:4 *My justice I will set at rest for a light of peoples* This is the hope of 2:3. The Servant was given as a light to the nations (42:6; 49:6). God's plan was never for Israel only.
51:5 *for My arm they will hope* The arm of the LORD is God's power in action, like a man rolling up his sleeve. Watch for it in 51:9, 52:10 and 53:1, where we learn who that arm is.
51:6 *the heavens will vanish like the smoke, and the earth will wear out like the garment* Sky and earth feel permanent, but both will pass (2 Pet 3:10; Rev 21:1). Jesus said His words will not pass away (Matt 24:35). God's salvation and righteousness last, so that is where we should put our weight.
51:7 *do not fear the reproach of men* Faithful people still feel the sting of insults, which is why God has to say this. Jesus said the same to His followers (Matt 5:11-12).
51:8 *For like the garment the moth will eat them* Critics wear away like wool in a closet full of moths. The universe wears out like a garment (51:6), and so do those who mock God's people.
51:9 *Awake, awake, put on strength, arm of the LORD* God does not sleep (Ps 121:4), but this is how people pray when He seems quiet too long. Rahab here is not the woman of Jericho but a poetic name for Egypt, the proud sea monster (Ps 87:4; 30:7).

10 ***Are*** You not the one who dried up ***the*** sea, the waters of the great deep; who made the depths of ***the*** sea a way for ***the*** redeemed to pass over? **11** And the ransomed of the LORD will return and come ***to*** Zion with a shout of joy, and everlasting gladness ***will be*** on their head; they will obtain joy and gladness; sorrow and sighing will flee.

The Cup of Staggering

12 I, I ***am*** He who comforts you. Who ***are*** you, that you are afraid of man ***who*** dies, and of the son of mankind ***who*** is made ***as*** grass? **13** And you have forgotten the LORD your Maker, who stretched out the heavens and founded the earth; and you are in dread continually all the day because of the rage of the oppressor, when he has prepared to destroy. And where ***is*** the rage of the oppressor? **14** The one bowed down will hasten to be set free, and he will not die ***and go*** to the pit, and his bread will not be lacking. **15** And I ***am*** the LORD your God, who stirs up the sea, and its waves roar; the LORD of armies ***is*** His name. **16** And I have put My words in your mouth, and with the shadow of My hand I have covered you, to plant ***the*** heavens and to found ***the*** earth, and to say to Zion, "You ***are*** My people." **17** Rouse yourself, rouse yourself, arise, Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), who have drunk from the hand of the LORD the cup of His rage; the bowl of the cup of staggering you have drunk, you have drained. **18** ***There is*** none leading her from all the sons ***whom*** she has borne, and ***there is*** none taking hold of her hand from all the sons ***whom*** she has brought up. **19** These two ***things*** have befallen you (who will show sympathy to you?): the devastation and the destruction, and the famine and the sword; ***by*** whom will I comfort you? **20** Your sons have fainted; they have lain down at the head of all ***the*** streets like an antelope ***in*** a net, those full of the rage of the LORD, the rebuke of your God. **21** Therefore hear this now, afflicted ***one***, and drunk ***one***, and not from wine. **22** Thus says your Lord, the LORD, and your God, ***who*** contends ***for*** His people: Look, I have taken from your hand the cup of staggering, the bowl of the cup of My rage; you will not drink it again anymore. **23** And I will put it into the hand of those who torment you, who have said to your soul, "Bow down, so that we may pass over"; and you made your back like the earth and like the street for those who pass over.

ISAIAH 52

Your God Reigns

1 Awake, awake, put on your strength, Zion (Tsiyon); put on the garments of your beauty, Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), the city of holiness; for the uncircumcised and the unclean will not again come into you anymore. **2** Shake yourself from the dust; arise, sit, Jerusalem; loosen the fetters of your neck, captive one, daughter of Zion. **3** For thus says the LORD: You were sold for nothing, and not with money will you be redeemed. **4** For thus says the Lord GOD: My people went down to Egypt (Mitsrayim) at the first to sojourn there, and Assyria (Ashur) oppressed it without cause. **5** And now, what ***is there*** for Me here, declares the LORD, that My people have been taken for nothing? Its rulers wail, declares the LORD,

51:10 Isa 43:16; Isa 50:2; Isa 63:11,12
51:11 Rev 21:4; Rev 14:1; Isa 35:10
51:12 Heb 2:6; Ps 118:6; 1 Pet 1:24
51:13 1 Cor 1:20; Matt 2:18; Heb 1:10
51:14 Zech 9:11; Isa 48:20; Isa 52:2
51:15 Luke 21:25; Jer 31:35; Isa 51:10
51:16 Heb 12:22; Isa 59:21; Deut 18:18
51:17 Matt 20:22; Luke 22:42; Isa 52:1
51:18 Heb 8:9; Isa 49:21; Ps 88:18
51:19 Isa 47:9; Amos 7:2; Ezek 14:21
51:20 Lam 2:11,12; Isa 40:30; Jer 14:18
51:22 Matt 20:22; Isa 51:17; Jer 50:34
51:23 Rev 17:18; Rev 17:8; Zech 12:2
52:1 Rev 21:27; Rev 21:2; Matt 22:11
52:2 Luke 21:24; Acts 3:19; Isa 3:26
52:3 1 Pet 1:18; Isa 45:13; Ps 44:12
52:4 John 15:25; Acts 7:15; Gen 46:6
52:5 Rom 2:24; Isa 22:16; Judg 18:3

51:10 *who made the depths of the sea a way for the redeemed to pass over* God turned the Red Sea into a road (Exod 14:21-22). When we pray, it is good to remember what He has already done. If He opened the sea once, He can open a way again.
51:11 *sorrow and sighing will flee* This almost repeats 35:10. The return from Babylon was a first answer. Everlasting gladness points to the day God wipes away every tear (Rev 21:4). I believe Israel will see it fully when Christ returns and reigns.
51:13 *And you have forgotten the LORD your Maker* The real problem was forgetting God, not the oppressor. When we forget how big God is, our enemies look huge. Babylon fell to Cyrus in 539 B.C., and its rage came to nothing.
51:14 *The one bowed down will hasten to be set free* The exile is a prisoner bent low. For the Jews this came true under Cyrus (Ezra 1:1-4). God does not leave His people to die in the pit.
51:16 *I have put My words in your mouth, and with the shadow of My hand I have covered you* Similar words were said of the Servant (49:2). Israel was meant to carry God's word, and the Servant would do it perfectly. Belonging to God isn't earned. He says it over us.
51:17 *who have drunk from the hand of the LORD the cup of His rage* The cup of wrath is a common picture in the prophets (Jer 25:15). In the garden Jesus prayed for the cup to pass (Matt 26:39). He drank God's wrath so those who trust Him never have to.
51:19 *the devastation and the destruction, and the famine and the sword; by whom will I comfort you* These are pairs, ruin on the land and famine and sword on the people, all suffered in 586 B.C. I take God's question as the grief of a Father over judgment He had to bring.
51:20 *like an antelope in a net* The harder it struggles, the more tangled it gets. This is what sin does when it runs its course. We can't free ourselves.
51:22 *Look, I have taken from your hand the cup of staggering* God defends His people in court. Jerusalem was judged again by Rome in A.D. 70, so I believe "you will not drink it again anymore" looks ahead to the day Israel turns to her Messiah and is restored for good (Rom 11:26-27).
51:23 *And I will put it into the hand of those who torment you* God keeps His promise to curse those who curse Abraham's family (Gen 12:3). The same cup is handed to the beast's followers (Rev 14:10). God sees how His people are treated, and He will settle it.
52:1 *Awake, awake, put on your strength, Zion; put on the garments of your beauty* In chapter 51 the people asked God's arm to wake up. Now God tells Zion to wake and dress like a bride. Jerusalem was invaded again by Greeks and Romans after the return, so I read the promise of no more unclean invaders as looking ahead to Christ's reign and finally the New Jerusalem (Rev 21:27).
52:2 *loosen the fetters of your neck, captive one, daughter of Zion* God has already unlocked the chain. He tells her to shake off the dust and take it off. He does the rescuing, and then He calls us to stand up and walk in it.
52:3 *You were sold for nothing, and not with money will you be redeemed* God received nothing when He handed them over, so He owes nothing to get them back. We too were redeemed not with silver or gold but with the precious blood of Christ (1 Pet 1:18-19).
52:4 *My people went down to Egypt at the first to sojourn there, and Assyria oppressed it without cause* Israel went to Egypt as guests and became slaves. Later Assyria destroyed the northern kingdom and Samaria in 722 B.C.
52:5 *continually all the day My name is reviled* Paul quotes this (Rom 2:24). When God's people live badly, or are defeated because of their sin, the world blames God. Our lives carry His reputation.

and continually all the day My name is reviled. **6** Therefore My people will know My name; therefore in that day ***they will know*** that I ***am*** He who speaks: here I ***am***. **7** How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who makes peace heard, who brings good news of good, who makes salvation heard, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns." **8** The voice of your watchmen! They lift up a voice; together they shout for joy; for eye to eye they will see when the LORD returns ***to*** Zion. **9** Break forth, shout for joy together, waste places of Jerusalem; for the LORD has comforted His people; He has redeemed Jerusalem. **10** The LORD has bared the arm of His holiness before the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God. **11** Depart, depart, go out from there; do not touch ***the*** unclean; go out from her midst; purify yourselves, bearers of the vessels of the LORD. **12** For you will not go out in haste, and you will not go in flight; for the LORD ***is*** going before you, and the God of Israel (Yisra'el) ***is*** your rear guard.

The Suffering Servant

13 Look, My servant will act wisely; He will be high and lifted up, and exalted exceedingly. **14** Just as many were appalled at You (so His appearance ***was*** a disfigurement beyond ***that of*** a man, and His form beyond the sons of mankind), **15** so He will sprinkle many nations; kings will shut their mouth because of Him; for what had not been recounted to them they will see, and what they had not heard they will understand.

ISAIAH 53

1 Who has believed our report? And the arm of the LORD, to whom has it been revealed? **2** And He grew up like the sapling before Him, and like the root from dry ground; ***there was*** no form to Him and no splendor, that we should look at Him, and no appearance, that we should desire Him. **3** He ***was*** despised and rejected by men, a man of pains and acquainted with sickness; and like a hiding of ***the*** face from Him, He ***was*** despised, and we did not value Him. **4** Surely our sicknesses He Himself bore, and our pains, He carried them; and we, we considered Him stricken, struck by God, and afflicted. **5** And He ***was*** pierced for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; the chastening of our peace ***was*** on Him, and by His wound ***there*** was healing for us. **6** All of us like the sheep have gone astray; each to his own way we have turned; and the LORD has caused to fall on Him the

52:6 Exod 33:19; Exod 34:5-7; Ps 48:10
52:7 Rom 10:15; Eph 6:15; Luke 13:35
52:8 Acts 2:1; Isa 62:6; Acts 2:46,47
52:9 Gal 4:27; Isa 51:3; Isa 14:7
52:10 Luke 3:6; Acts 13:47; Luke 2:30
52:11 2 Cor 6:17; Rev 18:4; Isa 48:20
52:12 Isa 58:8; Isa 45:2; Mic 2:13
52:13 Phil 2:9; Matt 12:18; Isa 42:1
52:14 Matt 26:67; Matt 27:29; Matt 27:30
52:15 Rom 15:21; Rom 15:20; Heb 12:24
53:1 John 12:38; Rom 10:16; Mark 9:12
53:2 Mark 6:3; Luke 2:7; John 1:10
53:3 John 1:10; Matt 26:67; Heb 5:7
53:4 Matt 8:17; 1 Pet 2:24; 1 John 2:2
53:5 1 Pet 2:24; 2 Cor 5:21; 1 Cor 15:3
53:6 1 Pet 2:25; 1 Pet 3:18; Matt 20:18

52:7 *How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news* The watchmen see the runner's feet on the mountain road before they hear his words: "Your God reigns." Paul applies this to gospel preachers (Rom 10:15). The greater news is that Jesus has paid for sin and God's kingdom is coming. Every believer who shares it has lovely feet.

52:8 *eye to eye they will see when the LORD returns to Zion* I believe this has a near and a far meaning. The exiles saw God bring His people home. The fullest moment is still ahead, when the Lord Jesus returns and every eye sees Him (Rev 1:7).

52:9 *Break forth, shout for joy together, waste places of Jerusalem* Even the ruins are told to sing. The verbs are past tense though the event was future. When God promises something, it is as good as done.

52:10 *The LORD has bared the arm of His holiness before the eyes of all the nations* God rolls back His sleeve (51:5, 9). Simeon thanked God for seeing His salvation in the baby Jesus (Luke 2:30-32). God's bared arm has a name and a face, and 53:1 asks who has believed it.

52:11 *purify yourselves, bearers of the vessels of the LORD* The priests and Levites carried the temple vessels home, which Cyrus returned (Ezra 1:7-11). Paul applies this call to the church (2 Cor 6:17). God still calls His people out of the world's ways.

52:12 *the LORD is going before you, and the God of Israel is your rear guard* The first Exodus was in haste (Exod 12:11). This one will not be. God goes before and behind, as the pillar of cloud moved behind Israel at the sea (Exod 14:19). He surrounds His people on every side.

52:13 *Look, My servant will act wisely; He will be high and lifted up, and exalted exceedingly* This begins the fourth Servant Song (52:13-53:12). This Servant is one Person who suffers for God's people (53:8), and I believe with the New Testament that He is Jesus. The words echo the LORD on His throne (6:1; 57:15). Only God is lifted that high. The song begins with the ending. The cross is the road to the throne (Phil 2:9).

52:14 *Just as many were appalled at You* He would be beaten so badly He hardly looked human. Jesus was struck, scourged, crowned with thorns and hit on the head (Matt 26:67; 27:29-30; John 19:1). The One lifted highest in 52:13 was brought lowest here. When we think our sin is small, this verse tells us what it cost.

52:15 *so He will sprinkle many nations* Sprinkling was a priest's work to atone and cleanse (Lev 14:7; 16:14). The Servant cleanses many nations (Heb 12:24; 1 Pet 1:2). Some translations read startle, but I follow the SLB, which fits the priestly picture of chapter 53. Paul quoted the end of the verse for preaching where Christ was unknown (Rom 15:21).

53:1 *Who has believed our report? And the arm of the LORD, to whom has it been revealed* John quotes this to explain why many saw Jesus' miracles and did not believe (John 12:37-38; Rom 10:16). He also quotes 6:10 and says Isaiah spoke of Jesus' glory, crediting both chapters to the same man (John 12:41). God's arm turns out to be a Person. The Great Isaiah Scroll holds this chapter and was copied before Jesus was born.

53:2 *He grew up like the sapling before Him, and like the root from dry ground* Nobody expects much from a shoot in the desert. Jesus came from the cut-down stump of Jesse (11:1), born to a poor couple and raised in despised Nazareth (John 1:46). There was nothing in His looks to make people stare. God often works through what the world overlooks.

53:3 *He was despised and rejected by men, a man of pains and acquainted with sickness* His own did not receive Him (John 1:11). He wept at Lazarus' tomb and over Jerusalem (John 11:35; Luke 19:41). Notice "we did not value Him." If you have ever felt rejected or overlooked, your Savior has been there, and He understands.

53:4 *Surely our sicknesses He Himself bore, and our pains, He carried them* Here the chapter turns. "He" and "our" sit side by side. Matthew applies this to Jesus' healings (Matt 8:17). Onlookers thought God was punishing Him for His own wrongs (Matt 27:41-43). God was striking Him, but for our sins, not His.

53:5 *And He was pierced for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities* This may be the center of the Old Testament. Transgressions are crossing God's line, and iniquity is the twisted sin inside us. He was pierced by nails and spear (John 19:34; Zech 12:10). The wound is a whip's welt. Peter applies the healing to sin (1 Pet 2:24). Our deepest wound was sin, and His wound healed it. This is substitution, seven centuries before the cross.

53:6 *All of us like the sheep have gone astray* Sheep don't wander out of hatred. They keep their heads down until they are lost. Sin is choosing my way over God's (Rom 3:23). The verse starts and ends with "all." Like the goat on the Day of Atonement (Lev 16:21), the Servant bore it all (2 Cor 5:21; 1 Pet 2:25).

iniquity of all of us. **7** He was oppressed, and He ***was*** afflicted, and He did not open His mouth; like the lamb ***that*** is brought to the slaughter, and like a ewe ***that*** before her shearers is mute, and He did not open His mouth. **8** From oppression and from judgment He was taken away; and His generation, who will consider ***it***? For He was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of My people a wound ***was*** His. **9** And ***one*** assigned His grave with wicked ***men***, and with a rich ***man*** in His deaths, although He had done no violence, and no deceit ***was*** in His mouth. **10** And the LORD was pleased to crush Him; He made ***Him*** sick. If His soul makes a guilt offering, He will see offspring, He will prolong days, and the pleasure of the LORD will prosper in His hand. **11** From the labor of His soul He will see; He will be satisfied. By His knowledge the Righteous One, My servant, will justify the many, and their iniquities He Himself will bear. **12** Therefore I will apportion to Him ***a share*** among the many, and with mighty ***ones*** He will apportion plunder, because He poured out His soul to death, and with transgressors He was numbered; and He Himself bore the sin of many, and for the transgressors He will intercede.

ISAIAH 54

The Barren Woman

1 Shout for joy, barren ***woman who*** has not given birth; break forth ***into*** a shout of joy and cry aloud, ***you who*** have not been in labor; for many ***are*** the sons of the desolate ***woman***, more than the sons of the married ***woman***, says the LORD. **2** Enlarge the place of your tent, and let them stretch out the curtains of your dwellings; do not hold back; lengthen your cords, and strengthen your pegs. **3** For right and left you will spread out, and your offspring will possess nations, and they will make desolated cities inhabited. **4** Do not be afraid, for you will not be put to shame; and do not be humiliated, for you will not be disgraced; for the shame of your youth you will forget, and the reproach of your widowhood you will not remember again. **5** For your Husband ***is*** your Maker; the LORD of armies ***is*** His name; and your Redeemer ***is*** the Holy One of Israel (Yisra'el); He is called the God of all the earth. **6** For like a wife abandoned and grieved of spirit the LORD has called you, and a wife of youth when she is rejected, says your God. **7** For a small moment I abandoned you, and with great compassion I will gather you. **8** In a flood of wrath I hid My face ***for*** a moment from you, and with everlasting steadfast love I will have compassion on you, says your Redeemer, the LORD. **9** For this ***is*** the waters of Noah (Noach) to Me: as I swore that the waters of Noah would not pass over the earth

53:7 Acts 8:32-33; Matt 26:63; Mark 14:61
53:8 Luke 24:46; Acts 8:33; Dan 9:26
53:9 1 Pet 2:22; Matt 27:57-60; Matt 26:24
53:10 Matt 17:5; Acts 2:24; Rom 6:9
53:11 1 John 2:1; 1 Pet 2:24; Rom 4:24
53:12 Matt 27:38; Mark 15:27-28; Luke 22:37
54:1 Gal 4:27; 1 Sam 2:5; Isa 62:4
54:2 Gal 4:27; Isa 33:20; Isa 49:19,20
54:3 Luke 13:29; Isa 43:5,6; Isa 60:3-11
54:4 1 Pet 2:6; Rom 9:33; Isa 41:10,14
54:5 Eph 5:25; Rom 7:4; Eph 5:26
54:6 Isa 62:4; Isa 49:14; Hos 2:1,2,14,15
54:7 2 Cor 4:17; Isa 26:20; Mic 4:6
54:8 Isa 55:3; Isa 54:5; Isa 47:6
54:9 Isa 12:1; Gen 8:21; Isa 55:11

53:7 *like the lamb that is brought to the slaughter* Jesus gave no answer before Pilate or Herod (Matt 27:12-14; Luke 23:9). He was silent because He came to die. John called Him the Lamb of God (John 1:29). The Ethiopian read this verse, and Philip began from it and preached Jesus (Acts 8:26-35). That is still the right answer to his question.

53:8 *for the transgression of My people a wound was His* Jesus was tried at night with false witnesses (Mark 14:55-56) and condemned by a governor who found no guilt (John 18:38). He was cut off young with no children. The Servant suffers for God's people, so He cannot be those same people. He is the innocent One who stands in for them.

53:9 *And one assigned His grave with wicked men, and with a rich man in His deaths* Jesus died between criminals (Luke 23:32-33), yet rich Joseph of Arimathea laid Him in his own new tomb (Matt 27:57-60). Both halves came true. He had no deceit in His mouth (1 Pet 2:22). Only a sinless One could be a substitute.

53:10 *And the LORD was pleased to crush Him* God did not enjoy His Son's pain. The pleasure was in the plan (Acts 2:23). A guilt offering paid for a wrong and made it right (Lev 5:14-6:7). Then the surprise: the crushed and buried Servant will see offspring and prolong days. This is the resurrection told seven centuries ahead.

53:11 *By His knowledge the Righteous One, My servant, will justify the many, and their iniquities He Himself will bear* He sees what His death accomplished and is satisfied (John 19:30; Heb 12:2). To justify is to declare not guilty in God's court. "By His knowledge" may mean His own knowledge or people knowing Him. I lean toward the second, since faith is knowing and trusting Him (Rom 5:19).

53:12 *and with transgressors He was numbered; and He Himself bore the sin of many, and for the transgressors He will intercede* Jesus quoted this the night before the cross (Luke 22:37). "Many" means a great multitude. He prayed for His killers (Luke 23:34) and still intercedes (Heb 7:25). The spoils of His victory will be shared openly when He reigns. If you belong to Him, He is praying for you today.

54:1 *Shout for joy, barren woman who has not given birth* Chapter 53 ends with the Servant seeing offspring, and chapter 54 opens with a childless woman told to sing. The barren one is Zion, emptied by exile. Paul quotes this of the Jerusalem above (Gal 4:27). I believe it is first about Israel, whom God will restore, and Paul rightly shows it takes in the family born through the Servant's death, Jew and Gentile together.

54:2 *Enlarge the place of your tent* A growing family needs room. When God promises to bless, we should make room for it and expect Him to do more than we planned.

54:3 *your offspring will possess nations, and they will make desolated cities inhabited* I read this as part of Israel's coming restoration. It began when the exiles resettled Judah's towns, and it will be complete when Christ reigns and Israel lives in the land in peace.

54:4 *the shame of your youth you will forget, and the reproach of your widowhood you will not remember again* The shame of youth probably looks back to early unfaithfulness and slavery in Egypt. Widowhood points to the exile. Grace doesn't just cover our shame. In time it lets us stop living under it.

54:5 *For your Husband is your Maker* The God who made her has bound Himself to her in love. Scripture often calls this a marriage (Jer 3:14; Hos 2:19-20), and the New Testament carries it on with Christ the Bridegroom and His bride (Eph 5:25-27; Rev 19:7).

54:6 *a wife of youth when she is rejected* The wife of youth is the love of a man's early years. God has not traded Israel for someone else. He calls her back as His first love. God has not rejected His people (Rom 11:2).

54:7 *For a small moment I abandoned you, and with great compassion I will gather you* The exile lasted about seventy years (Jer 29:10) and felt endless, yet to God it was a moment next to the compassion to follow. Paul calls our troubles momentary beside the coming glory (2 Cor 4:17), not because the pain is small, but because God's plan is so much bigger.

54:8 *and with everlasting steadfast love I will have compassion on you* A flood of wrath for a moment, steadfast love forever. The word is hesed, God's covenant love that keeps its promises. His anger at sin is real, but it is not the last word. His compassion is.

54:9 *For this is the waters of Noah to Me* After the flood God swore never again to destroy the earth by water and set the rainbow as a sign (Gen 9:11-16). He swears the same way not to stay angry with Zion. If you wonder whether He keeps this promise, look at the sky after rain.

again, so I have sworn not to be angry with you and not to rebuke you. **10** For the mountains will be removed, and the hills will shake, and My steadfast love will not be removed from you, and the covenant of My peace will not shake, says the One who has compassion on you, the LORD. **11** Afflicted ***one***, storm-tossed, not comforted, look, I am setting your stones in antimony, and I will found you with sapphires. **12** And I will make your battlements ***of*** ruby, and your gates ***of*** stones of beryl, and all your border ***of*** stones of delight. **13** And all your sons ***will be*** taught by the LORD, and great ***will be*** the peace of your sons. **14** In righteousness you will be established; be far from oppression, for you will not be afraid, and from terror, for it will not come near you. **15** Look, anyone may surely stir up strife, ***it is*** not from Me; whoever stirs up strife with you will fall because of you. **16** Look, I Myself created a craftsman who blows on a fire of charcoal and brings out a weapon for his work; and I Myself created a destroyer to ruin. **17** Every weapon ***that*** is formed against you will not succeed, and every tongue ***that*** rises against you in judgment you will condemn. This ***is*** the inheritance of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness ***is*** from Me, declares the LORD.

ISAIAH 55

Come to the Waters

1 Oh, everyone ***who is*** thirsty, come to the waters; and ***you*** who have no money, come, buy grain and eat; and come, buy grain without money and without price, wine and milk. **2** Why do you weigh out money for ***what is*** not bread, and your toil for ***what is*** not for satisfaction? Listen carefully to Me, and eat ***what is*** good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. **3** Incline your ear and come to Me; listen, and let your soul live; and I will make for you an everlasting covenant, the faithful ***acts of*** steadfast love of David. **4** Look, I have made him a witness to peoples, a leader and commander of peoples. **5** Look, a nation ***that*** you do not know you will call, and a nation ***that*** has not known you will run to you, because of the LORD your God, and for the Holy One of Israel (Yisra'el), for He has glorified you. **6** Seek the LORD while He lets Himself be found; call on Him while He is near. **7** Let the wicked ***man*** forsake his way, and the man of wickedness his thoughts; and let him return to the LORD, that He may have compassion on him, and to our God, for He will abundantly forgive. **8** For My thoughts ***are*** not your thoughts, and your ways ***are*** not My ways, declares the LORD. **9** For ***as*** the heav-

54:10 Matt 5:18; Rom 11:26; Heb 8:7
54:11 Rev 21:19; 1 Chr 29:2; Isa 54:6
54:13 John 6:45; John 14:27; Ps 119:165
54:14 Acts 3:19; Prov 3:25,26; Zech 9:8
54:15 Ezek 38:8-23; Joel 3:9-14; Rev 16:14
54:16 Prov 16:4; Exod 9:16; Isa 10:5,6,15
54:17 Isa 50:8; John 10:28-30; Matt 12:41
55:1 John 7:37; Rev 21:6; Rev 3:18
55:2 Matt 15:9; Mark 7:14; Matt 11:28
55:3 Acts 13:34; Matt 11:28; John 5:24
55:4 Rev 1:5; Rev 3:14; Jer 30:9
55:5 Eph 3:5; Heb 5:5; Rom 10:20
55:6 Jer 29:12-14; Isa 45:19; Ps 32:6
55:7 Luke 23:43; 2 Thess 1:11; James 5:11
55:8 Ps 92:5; Ps 40:5; Ezek 18:29
55:9 Ps 103:11; Rom 11:31-36; Ps 77:19

54:10 *For the mountains will be removed, and the hills will shake, and My steadfast love will not be removed from you* Mountains are the most solid things we know. Ezekiel speaks of this covenant of peace too (Ezek 37:26). I believe it will be kept with Israel when they turn to their Messiah. God's love is more stable than the ground under your feet.
54:11 *Afflicted one, storm-tossed, not comforted, look, I am setting your stones in antimony* Antimony was the dark mineral women used to line their eyes, so the stones are set in a dark, beautiful mortar. The battered city is rebuilt with jewels.
54:12 *And I will make your battlements of ruby* Battlements are the notches along the top of a wall. John saw a city like this with jeweled foundations and gates of pearl (Rev 21:18-21). I believe Isaiah's restored Zion points ahead to that final city. God builds with jewels.
54:13 *And all your sons will be taught by the LORD* Jesus quoted this to say everyone who learns from the Father comes to Him (John 6:45). No one will need a go-between to know God (Jer 31:34).
54:14 *In righteousness you will be established* This has never fully been true of Jerusalem. It will be when Christ rules from Zion and nations no longer learn war (2:4).
54:15 *anyone may surely stir up strife, it is not from Me* God once sent Assyria and Babylon to discipline (10:5). In this coming day any attack will be without His approval, and the attacker will fall. When discipline is over, God becomes His people's defender.
54:16 *I Myself created a destroyer to ruin* The smith who makes swords and the destroyer both exist under God's control. Scripture doesn't answer every question about why God allows destroyers, but no destroyer works outside His reach or beyond His limits.
54:17 *Every weapon that is formed against you will not succeed* This doesn't mean God's people will never be attacked (54:15). It means no attack will finally succeed. Notice the plural "servants." After the one Servant of chapter 53 come many who belong to Him, and their vindication is from God (Rom 8:31).
55:1 *Oh, everyone who is thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy grain and eat* God calls like a man in a marketplace, but what He sells is free. How do you buy without money? Someone else has paid the price, as chapter 53 showed. Jesus made the same offer (John 7:37), and the Bible ends with it (Rev 22:17). If you are thirsty, come.
55:2 *Why do you weigh out money for what is not bread* People chase money, pleasure, approval and success and come away hungry. God feeds the soul through His word. Jesus is the bread of life (John 6:35). Many of us are tired because we keep buying what can't fill us.
55:3 *I will make for you an everlasting covenant, the faithful acts of steadfast love of David* God promised David an everlasting throne (2 Sam 7:12-16). Paul quotes this verse to show God kept it by raising Jesus (Acts 13:34). A king who stays dead can't reign forever. A risen King can.
55:4 *Look, I have made him a witness to peoples, a leader and commander of peoples* Him is David, but David died, so these words point to his greater Son. Jesus is the faithful witness and ruler of the kings of the earth (Rev 1:5). The prophets often called the coming Messiah "David" (Ezek 34:23-24).
55:5 *a nation that has not known you will run to you* Not because Israel is impressive but because of the LORD. This has been happening since Pentecost, and it will be seen in full in the kingdom, when the nations stream to Jerusalem (2:2-3; Zech 8:23).
55:6 *Seek the LORD while He lets Himself be found; call on Him while He is near* The offer is free but not open forever (2 Cor 6:2; Matt 25:10). For each of us the time ends at death or at Christ's return, whichever comes first. If you have been putting it off, don't wait.
55:7 *let him return to the LORD, that He may have compassion on him, and to our God, for He will abundantly forgive* Repentance starts with how we think and works out to how we live. It means to turn around. This verse is written to the wicked, so that is exactly who it is for. No one has gone so far that God's pardon can't cover him (Luke 23:42-43).
55:8 *For My thoughts are not your thoughts* In context this explains 55:7. We hold grudges and want people to earn their way back. God pardons abundantly because He doesn't think the way we do. It is first of all a statement about grace.
55:9 *so My ways are higher than your ways* The same picture appears in Ps 103:11. When God's ways seem strange to us, the problem is our height, not His.

ens are higher than the earth, so My ways are higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts. **10** For just as the rain and the snow come down from the heavens, and do not return there unless they have watered the earth, and made it bring forth and made it sprout, and given seed to the sower and bread to the eater, **11** so My word that goes out from My mouth will be; it will not return to Me empty, unless it has done what I desired, and has prospered ***in that for*** which I sent it. **12** For in joy you will go out, and in peace you will be led; the mountains and the hills will break forth before you ***into*** a shout of joy, and all the trees of the field will clap ***the*** palm. **13** Instead of the thornbush a cypress will grow up, and instead of the nettle a myrtle will grow up; and it will be for the LORD for a name, for an everlasting sign ***that*** will not be cut off.

ISAIAH 56

A House of Prayer

1 Thus says the LORD: Keep justice and do righteousness, for My salvation ***is*** near to come, and My righteousness to be revealed. **2** How blessed ***is*** the man ***who*** does this, and the son of man ***who*** takes hold of it, keeping ***the*** Sabbath from profaning it, and keeping his hand from doing any evil. **3** And let not the son of the foreigner who has joined himself to the LORD say, saying, "The LORD will surely separate me from His people"; and let not the eunuch say, "Look, I ***am*** a dry tree." **4** For thus says the LORD to the eunuchs who keep My Sabbaths, and choose what I delight in, and take hold of My covenant: **5** And I will give to them in My house and within My walls a monument and a name better than sons and than daughters; an everlasting name I will give to him, which will not be cut off. **6** And the sons of the foreigner who join themselves to the LORD, to minister to Him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be His servants, everyone who keeps ***the*** Sabbath from profaning it, and those who take hold of My covenant, **7** and I will bring them to My holy mountain, and I will make them rejoice in My house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices ***will be*** for acceptance on My altar; for My house will be called a house of prayer for all the peoples. **8** Declares the Lord GOD, who gathers the banished of Israel (Yisra'el): Yet I will gather ***others*** to him, to his gathered ones. **9** All ***you*** animals of the field, come to devour, all ***you*** animals in the forest. **10** His watchmen ***are*** blind; all of them do not know; all of them ***are*** mute dogs; they are not able to bark; dreaming, lying down, loving to slumber. **11** And the dogs ***are*** strong of appetite; they do not know satisfaction; and they ***are*** shepherds ***who*** do not know ***how*** to understand; all of them have turned to their own way, each to his unjust gain, to the last one. **12** "Come, let me take wine, and let us drink our fill of strong drink; and tomorrow will be like this day, great, abundant exceedingly."

55:10 2 Cor 9:10; Isa 30:23; Hos 10:12
55:11 Matt 24:35; Isa 46:10; John 6:63
55:12 Rom 15:13; Isa 44:23; Isa 48:20
55:13 Isa 41:19; Isa 60:13,21; Jer 33:9
56:1 Matt 3:2; Rom 1:17; Ps 85:9
56:2 Rev 22:14; Luke 12:43; Isa 58:13
56:3 1 Cor 6:17; Acts 8:27; Acts 8:28
56:4 Mark 2:24; Acts 8:27; Rev 2:17
56:5 Heb 3:6; Acts 8:27; Isa 55:13
56:6 James 2:5; 2 Cor 8:5; James 1:12
56:7 Matt 21:13; Mark 11:17; Luke 19:46
56:8 John 10:16; Isa 60:3-11; Isa 54:7
56:9 Rev 19:17; Jer 12:9; Deut 28:26
56:10 Phil 3:2; Isa 29:10; Jer 14:13,14
56:11 John 8:43; Matt 13:15; Luke 12:45
56:12 Luke 12:19; 1 Cor 15:32; Luke 12:45

55:11 *it will not return to Me empty* This comforts anyone who teaches the Bible, raises children or shares the gospel. Some seed takes years to sprout, but God's word is never wasted (Heb 4:12). It is also a warning. To those who reject it, the word becomes a witness against them (John 12:48).
55:12 *all the trees of the field will clap the palm* This is a new exodus, out of Babylon and home. Trees don't have palms. Creation itself will celebrate when God redeems His people (Rom 8:19-22). When Christ returns and reigns, the whole earth will seem to sing.
55:13 *Instead of the thornbush a cypress will grow up* After the fall the ground grew thorns (Gen 3:18). Here the curse is reversed. I read this as the renewed earth in Christ's kingdom. Every redeemed life is a small version of that sign, thorns replaced with something green and alive.
56:1 *Keep justice and do righteousness, for My salvation is near to come* Notice the order. We don't do right to earn salvation. We do right because salvation is coming and we want to be found ready. John the Baptist preached the same way (Matt 3:2).
56:2 *keeping the Sabbath from profaning it, and keeping his hand from doing any evil* The Sabbath was the seventh day, the sign of God's covenant with Israel (Exod 20:8-11; 31:13). Christians differ on how it applies today (Rom 14:5-6; Col 2:16-17). All of us can learn the heart of it. Setting apart time for God shows whom we belong to.
56:3 *let not the eunuch say, "Look, I am a dry tree* The foreigner feared being separated from God's people, and the eunuch feared he had no children and no future. The Law kept certain foreigners and eunuchs out of the assembly (Deut 23:1-3). God now tells both not to say that.
56:4 *and choose what I delight in, and take hold of My covenant* The barrier was outward. God looks at the heart. A man who could never have children could still be fully faithful to the LORD.
56:5 *a monument and a name better than sons and than daughters* The eunuch's sorrow was that his name would die with him. God answers it directly. In Acts an Ethiopian eunuch was reading Isaiah when Philip told him about Jesus, and he was baptized (Acts 8:26-39). We can see this verse coming true there.
56:6 *And the sons of the foreigner who join themselves to the LORD* This is not second-class membership. Foreigners who come to God this way are His servants just as Israelites are. It was always God's plan to bless all the families of the earth (Gen 12:3).
56:7 *for My house will be called a house of prayer for all the peoples* Jesus quoted this when He cleared the temple (Mark 11:17). The outer court where Gentiles could pray had become a market. Christ's one sacrifice took away sin for good (Heb 10:12-14). Some see millennial offerings as memorials pointing back to the cross (Ezek 40-48), and others see worship language. I hold the first view loosely.
56:8 *Yet I will gather others to him, to his gathered ones* These others are non-Israelites. Jesus spoke of other sheep He must bring (John 10:16). God gathers Israel and the nations into one flock, and that includes most of us reading this.
56:9 *All you animals of the field, come to devour* The mood shifts. Wild beasts picture enemy nations coming to devour Israel. The next verses explain why. Her guardians have failed.
56:10 *all of them are mute dogs; they are not able to bark* Watchmen were to warn of danger (Ezek 33:6-7). A sheepdog that won't bark is useless. These leaders were asleep when danger came. Church leaders today should read this verse with care.
56:11 *all of them have turned to their own way, each to his unjust gain* This echoes 53:6. Even the shepherds are lost and greedy. Jesus, by contrast, is the Good Shepherd who lays down His life for the sheep (John 10:11).
56:12 *tomorrow will be like this day, great, abundant exceedingly* They never expected a reckoning, like the rich fool whose soul was required that night (Luke 12:19-20). Assuming tomorrow will always be like today is one of the oldest traps there is.

ISAIAH 57

Idolatry Exposed

1 The righteous ***man*** has perished, and ***there is*** no man laying ***it*** to heart; and men of steadfast love are gathered away, with no one understanding that from before the evil the righteous ***man*** is gathered away. **2** He enters ***into*** peace; they rest on their beds, ***each*** one walking ***in*** his uprightness. **3** And you, draw near here, sons of a sorceress, offspring of an adulterer, and she has played the prostitute. **4** Against whom are you making sport? Against whom do you make wide a mouth ***and*** make long a tongue? Are you not children of transgression, offspring of deception, **5** who inflame yourselves among the terebinths, under every luxuriant tree, who slaughter the children in the wadis, under the clefts of the cliffs? **6** Among the smooth ***stones*** of the wadi ***is*** your portion; they, they ***are*** your lot; also to them you have poured out a drink offering; you have offered up a grain offering. Should I relent concerning these ***things***? **7** On a high and lifted-up mountain you have set your bed; also there you have gone up to sacrifice a sacrifice. **8** And behind the door and the doorpost you have set up your memorial; for ***away*** from Me you have uncovered ***yourself***, and you have gone up; you have made wide your bed, and you have cut ***a covenant*** for yourself with them; you have loved their bed; you have looked on a hand. **9** And you journeyed to the king with oil, and you multiplied your perfumes; and you sent your envoys to far away, and you abased ***yourself*** to Sheol. **10** With the greatness of your way you became weary; you did not say, "Hopeless!" You found the life of your hand; therefore you did not become weak. **11** And whom did you dread, and fear, that you lie, and you did not remember Me, ***and*** did not lay ***it*** to your heart? Have I not been silent, even from long ago, and you do not fear Me? **12** I, I will declare your righteousness and your deeds, and they will not benefit you. **13** When you cry out, let your collections ***of idols*** deliver you; and a wind will carry all of them away; a breath will take ***them***. And the one who takes refuge in Me will inherit the land and will possess My holy mountain.

The High and Lifted-Up One

14 And one will say, "Build up, build up, clear ***the*** way; lift up ***the*** obstacle from the way of My people." **15** For thus says the High and Lifted-Up One, who dwells forever, and holy ***is*** His name: ***In*** a high and holy ***place*** I dwell, and with the contrite and lowly of spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the crushed. **16** For I will not contend forever, and I will not be angry perpetually; for the spirit would grow faint before Me, and the breaths ***that*** I, I have made. **17** In the iniquity of his unjust gain I was angry, and I struck him; I hid ***My face*** and was angry; and he went on, turning away, in the way of his heart. **18** I have seen his ways, and I will heal him; and I will lead him, and I will restore comforts

57:1 2 Kgs 22:20; Ps 12:1; Isa 42:25
57:2 Phil 1:23; Luke 16:22; Rev 14:13
57:3 Matt 16:4; Isa 45:20; Joel 3:9-11
57:4 Ps 35:21; Isa 1:4; Isa 10:15
57:5 Isa 1:29; 2 Kgs 16:3,4; Ezek 16:20
57:6 Jer 3:9; Jer 7:18; Hab 2:19
57:7 Ezek 16:16,25; Jer 2:20; Jer 3:2
57:8 Ezek 8:8-12; Ezek 16:32; Ezek 16:25-28
57:9 Ezek 23:16; Isa 30:1-6; Isa 31:1-3
57:10 Jer 2:25; Isa 47:13; Jer 2:36
57:11 Matt 26:75; Prov 29:25; Ps 50:21
57:12 Isa 1:11-15; Mic 3:2-4; Isa 58:2-6
57:13 Ps 37:3,9; Isa 11:9; Isa 56:7
57:14 Matt 3:3; Luke 3:4; Isa 62:10
57:15 Luke 1:49; Rev 3:7; Luke 4:18
57:16 Luke 22:61; Mic 7:18; Ps 85:5
57:17 Isa 56:11; Jer 6:13; Isa 5:8,9
57:18 Matt 13:15; John 12:40; Hos 14:4-8

57:1 *from before the evil the righteous man is gathered away* Godly people die and no one asks why. God sometimes brings His people home before a coming disaster, as He promised Josiah (2 Kgs 22:19-20).
57:2 *He enters into peace; they rest on their beds* For the believer, death is not the end. The body rests in the grave while the person is at peace with God. To depart and be with Christ is very much better (Phil 1:23). When a godly person dies young, it is our loss but their peace.
57:3 *sons of a sorceress, offspring of an adulterer* This is spiritual language. The parents practiced witchcraft and unfaithfulness, and the children followed. Scripture often calls idolatry adultery (Jer 3:8-9).
57:5 *who slaughter the children in the wadis* Canaanite fertility worship under green trees often included sexual acts. Worse, they killed their own children. Ahaz and Manasseh did this (2 Kgs 16:3; 21:6), and Jeremiah condemned it in the Valley of Hinnom (Jer 7:31). Our culture has its own ways of sacrificing children to comfort and convenience. God sees, and He hates it.
57:6 *they, they are your lot* You chose the smooth stones as gods, so they are all you get. Should God simply overlook it? A holy God can't shrug at idolatry.
57:8 *And behind the door and the doorpost you have set up your memorial* God told Israel to write His words on the doorposts (Deut 6:9). They put a pagan sign there instead. The language is strong on purpose. Sin is more than rule-breaking. It is a broken relationship.
57:9 *And you journeyed to the king with oil* The king may be a foreign ruler whose help they bought, or Molech, whose name is close to the word for king and who was tied to child sacrifice (Lev 18:21). Bible teachers read it both ways. The point is the same. They went to any length for help, except to God.
57:10 *you did not say, "Hopeless* They wore themselves out but always found a little more strength to keep going the wrong way. People will exhaust themselves rather than admit their path isn't working. The better thing is to stop and turn back to the Lord.
57:11 *Have I not been silent, even from long ago, and you do not fear Me* Fear of people drove them to false gods. They took God's patience as permission. God's patience is meant to lead us to repentance, not make us careless (2 Pet 3:9).
57:12 *I, I will declare your righteousness and your deeds, and they will not benefit you* This is irony. God will lay out their religious busyness and expose it as worthless. Good-looking religion can't save anyone.
57:13 *And the one who takes refuge in Me will inherit the land and will possess My holy mountain* A breath blows the idols away. The one who trusts God inherits the land. Jesus said the meek will inherit the earth (Matt 5:5). I believe this will be fulfilled when Christ reigns over the earth with His people.
57:15 *In a high and holy place I dwell, and with the contrite and lowly of spirit* God has two addresses, the highest place in the universe and the broken heart. "High and lifted up" are the words of 6:1 and 52:13. Contrite means crushed over sin. The proud have no room for God (Ps 51:17; Jas 4:6). If you feel crushed today, you are exactly the kind of person God loves to dwell with.
57:16 *For I will not contend forever, and I will not be angry perpetually* He made us and knows how frail we are (Ps 103:14). His discipline always has a limit and a purpose.
57:17 *and he went on, turning away, in the way of his heart* Punishment alone didn't change them. Discipline can show us our sin, but it can't give us a new heart. Only grace can do that.
57:18 *I have seen his ways, and I will heal him* This is pure grace. God saw all their stubborn ways and decided to heal anyway, not because they finally got it right. That is how He saves all of us.

to him and to his mourners, **19** creating ***the*** fruit of ***the*** lips: Peace, peace, to the far and to the near, says the LORD, and I will heal him. **20** And the wicked ***are*** like the tossed sea, for it is not able to be quiet, and its waters toss up mire and mud. **21** ***There is*** no peace, says my God, for the wicked.

ISAIAH 58

The True Fast

1 Call out with ***the*** throat; do not hold back; like the trumpet raise your voice, and declare to My people their transgression, and to the house of Jacob (Ya'aqov) their sins. **2** And they seek Me day ***by*** day, and they delight in the knowledge of My ways, like a nation that has done righteousness and has not forsaken the judgment of its God; they ask Me ***for*** judgments of righteousness; they delight in the nearness of God. **3** "Why have we fasted, and You have not seen? ***Why*** have we afflicted our soul, and You do not know?" Look, on the day of your fast you find pleasure, and you oppress all your laborers. **4** Look, for strife and contention you fast, and to strike with a fist of wickedness; you do not fast as ***you do*** this day to make your voice heard on high. **5** Is it like this, the fast that I choose, a day for a man to afflict his soul? ***Is it*** to bow down his head like a bulrush, and to spread out sackcloth and ashes ***as his bed***? Will you call this a fast and a day of acceptance to the LORD? **6** Is not this the fast that I choose: to loosen the bonds of wickedness, to unfasten the bindings of the yoke-bar, and to let the crushed go free, and ***that*** you tear apart every yoke-bar? **7** Is it not to break your bread for the hungry, and ***that*** you bring the afflicted homeless ***into your*** house; when you see the naked, and you cover him, and you do not hide yourself from your own flesh? **8** Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will spring up quickly; and your righteousness will go before you; the glory of the LORD will be your rear guard. **9** Then you will call, and the LORD will answer; you will cry for help, and He will say, "Here I ***am***." If you remove from your midst the yoke-bar, the stretching out of ***the*** finger, and the speaking of wickedness, **10** and you offer your soul to the hungry and satisfy the soul of the afflicted, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your gloom ***will be*** like the noonday. **11** And the LORD will lead you continually, and He will satisfy your soul in scorched places, and He will strengthen your bones; and you will be like a watered garden, and like a spring of waters whose waters do not fail. **12** And ***those*** from you will rebuild the ancient ruins; the foundations of generation and generation you will raise up; and you will be called One Who Walls Up a Breach, One Who Restores Paths for Dwelling. **13** If you turn back your foot from the Sabbath, ***from*** doing your pleasures on My holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy ***day*** of the LORD honorable, and honor it, ***turning*** from doing your own ways, from finding your own

57:19 Luke 10:5; Eph 2:13; Eph 2:17
57:20 Jude 1:13; Job 18:5-14; Isa 3:11
57:21 Isa 48:22; Isa 3:11; 2 Kgs 9:22
58:1 Mic 3:8-12; Acts 20:26,27; Ezek 20:4
58:2 Mark 12:14; Matt 15:8; Matt 15:9
58:3 Luke 5:33; Mal 3:14; Zech 7:5-7
58:4 1 Kgs 21:9-13; Prov 21:27; Joel 2:13,14
58:5 Zech 7:5; Dan 9:3-19; Lev 16:29
58:6 Neh 5:10-12; Jer 34:8-11; Mic 3:2-4
58:7 Matt 25:35; Acts 16:15; Matt 25:36
58:8 Matt 13:15; Jer 33:6; Ps 37:6
58:9 Ps 50:15; Isa 65:24; Ps 12:2
58:10 Isa 58:7; Job 11:17; Ps 37:6
58:11 John 4:14; John 7:38; Jer 31:12
58:12 Isa 61:4; Amos 9:14; Amos 9:11
58:13 Matt 12:2; Mark 2:27; Luke 23:56

57:19 *Peace, peace, to the far and to the near* Doubling makes it full and complete peace. Paul applies this to the gospel, peace to Gentiles far off and Jews near, both with access to the Father (Eph 2:17). Whether you grew up near to God or far from Him, this peace is offered to you.
57:20 *And the wicked are like the tossed sea* A heart without God is restless, and what it stirs up is dirty. Many try to quiet that restlessness with noise, busyness or pleasure.
57:21 *There is no peace, says my God, for the wicked* This closes the second set of nine chapters as at 48:22, and the idea returns at 66:24. Peace is offered to all in 57:19, but those who refuse to turn shut themselves out. Peace is free, but it must be received.
58:1 *like the trumpet raise your voice, and declare to My people their transgression* The trumpet is the shofar, a ram's horn blown to warn or gather. This message is for "My people," not outsiders. Sometimes those who most need a wake-up call are the ones sitting in church.
58:2 *like a nation that has done righteousness* They seek God daily and enjoy learning His ways. The key word is "like." It is a performance. It is possible to enjoy religion and still be far from God.
58:3 *Why have we fasted, and You have not seen* To fast is to go without food for a time to seek God. On their fast days they did as they pleased and drove their workers hard. They skipped meals but kept squeezing their employees.
58:4 *Look, for strife and contention you fast* Their fasts ended in fistfights. Religious acts done with a hateful heart don't reach God. Jesus said to make things right with your brother before offering your gift (Matt 5:23-24).
58:5 *to bow down his head like a bulrush, and to spread out sackcloth and ashes as his bed* Sackcloth and ashes are signs of grief and are not wrong in themselves. But without a changed heart they are only a costume.
58:6 *Is not this the fast that I choose: to loosen the bonds of wickedness* A yoke was the bar across the neck of an animal or slave. When Jesus read Isaiah 61 at Nazareth, He also read words from this verse about release for the oppressed (Luke 4:18). Setting people free was at the heart of His mission.
58:7 *Is it not to break your bread for the hungry* "Your own flesh" means your own relatives and people. Jesus said the same (Matt 25:35-36), and James calls caring for orphans and widows pure religion (Jas 1:27). The question isn't whether we skip meals, but whether our faith feeds anyone.
58:8 *Then your light will break forth like the dawn* When God's people live this way, everything changes. This echoes 52:12. Their righteousness goes ahead, and God's glory guards them from behind.
58:9 *Then you will call, and the LORD will answer; you will cry for help, and He will say, "Here I am* This answers the complaint of 58:3. Their sin was in the way. "The stretching out of the finger" means accusing and looking down on others. Many of us want God to answer while we keep pointing fingers. Put the finger down.
58:10 *and you offer your soul to the hungry* Not just food but yourself. Real compassion costs our time and attention, not just our leftovers. People who pour themselves out often find their own darkness lifting.
58:11 *and you will be like a watered garden, and like a spring of waters whose waters do not fail* The person who pours out is never left empty. Rivers of living water flow from the one who believes in Jesus (John 7:38). We become a spring for others because God is our source.
58:12 *and you will be called One Who Walls Up a Breach* The returning exiles began rebuilding Jerusalem and Judah, as Ezra and Nehemiah record. A breach is a gap in a city wall. That is a good name for any believer, someone who repairs what is broken.
58:13 *and call the Sabbath a delight* The Sabbath was a sign of Israel's covenant (Exod 31:13). Christians differ on how it applies under the new covenant (Rom 14:5-6; Col 2:16-17). God wants a people who delight in Him, not grudging rule keepers. The Sabbath was made for man (Mark 2:27).

pleasure, and speaking a word, **14** then you will take delight in the LORD, and I will make you ride on the high places of the earth, and I will feed you ***with*** the inheritance of Jacob your father; for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

ISAIAH 59

Sin Separates

1 Look, the hand of the LORD is not too short to save, and His ear is not too heavy to hear. **2** But your iniquities have been separating between you and your God, and your sins have hidden ***His*** face from you so that ***He does*** not hear. **3** For your palms are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken falsehood; your tongue mutters injustice. **4** ***There is*** no one calling in righteousness, and ***there is*** no one pleading ***his case*** in faithfulness; trusting in emptiness and speaking worthlessness, conceiving trouble and bringing forth wickedness. **5** They have hatched eggs of a viper, and they weave webs of a spider; the one who eats of their eggs will die, and the crushed ***egg*** is hatched ***into*** an adder. **6** Their webs will not become clothing, and they will not cover themselves with their works; their works ***are*** works of wickedness, and the deed of violence ***is*** in their palms. **7** Their feet run to evil, and they hasten to shed innocent blood; their thoughts ***are*** thoughts of wickedness; devastation and destruction ***are*** in their highways. **8** A way of peace they do not know, and ***there is*** no justice in their tracks; they have made their paths crooked for themselves; everyone who treads on it does not know peace. **9** Therefore justice is far from us, and righteousness does not overtake us; we wait for light, and look, darkness; for brightness, ***and*** in gloom we walk. **10** We grope for ***the*** wall like the blind, and like ***those who have*** no eyes we grope; we have stumbled at noonday as ***in*** the twilight, among the robust like the dead. **11** We growl like the bears, all of us, and like the doves we moan and moan; we wait for justice, and ***there is*** none; for salvation, ***and*** it is far from us. **12** For our transgressions are many before You, and our sins testify against us; for our transgressions ***are*** with us, and our iniquities, we know them: **13** transgressing and denying the LORD, and turning back from after our God, speaking oppression and revolt, conceiving and uttering from ***the*** heart words of falsehood. **14** And justice is driven back, and righteousness stands far off; for truth has stumbled in the public square, and uprightness is not able to enter. **15** And the truth was lacking, and the one turning aside from evil ***was*** plundered. And the LORD saw, and it was evil in His eyes that ***there was*** no justice.

The Redeemer Will Come

16 And He saw that ***there was*** no man, and He was appalled that ***there was*** no one to intercede; and His own arm brought salvation to Him, and His righteousness, it upheld Him. **17** And He put on righteousness like the body armor, and a helmet of salvation on His head; and He put on garments of vengeance ***for*** clothing, and He wrapped Himself in zeal like the robe. **18** According to ***their*** deeds, accordingly He will repay: rage to His adversaries, recompense to His enemies; to

58:14 Deut 32:13; Job 22:26; Hab 3:18
59:1 Acts 11:21; Isa 50:2; Num 11:23
59:2 Jer 5:25; Mic 3:4; Ezek 39:23,24,29
59:3 Isa 1:15,21; Jer 2:30,34; Ezek 7:23
59:4 James 1:15; Job 15:35; Isa 30:12
59:5 Isa 14:29; Prov 23:32; Matt 3:7
59:6 Isa 57:12; Jer 6:7; Ezek 7:11,23
59:7 Rom 3:15-17; Mark 7:21; Prov 1:16
59:8 Luke 1:79; Isa 48:22; Isa 57:20,21
59:9 Isa 5:30; Lam 5:16,17; Hab 1:13
59:10 John 11:9; John 12:35; John 12:40
59:11 Isa 38:14; Ezek 7:16; Isa 51:20
59:12 Rom 3:19; 1 Thess 2:16; Ezra 9:6
59:13 Mark 7:21,22; Isa 32:6; Isa 48:8
59:14 Hab 1:4; Isa 59:4; Isa 5:23
59:15 Isa 48:1; Ps 5:9; Ps 12:1,2
59:16 Heb 7:25; Ps 98:1; Ezek 22:30
59:17 Eph 6:17; Eph 6:14; 1 Thess 5:8
59:18 Rev 19:15; Rev 20:12; Rev 20:13

58:14 *and I will feed you with the inheritance of Jacob your father* Those who make God's day a delight find their delight in God Himself. I believe the inheritance promised to Jacob's family will be fully given to Israel in Christ's kingdom.
59:1 *Look, the hand of the LORD is not too short to save, and His ear is not too heavy to hear* The people blamed God (50:2). If our prayers seem to hit the ceiling, the first thing to check isn't God's ability.
59:2 *But your iniquities have been separating between you and your God* Sin is a wall. Isaiah speaks to a nation in open sin. Not every unanswered prayer means hidden sin, as Job and Paul show (2 Cor 12:9). But when sin is the wall, confess it and turn. Separation from God is sin's deepest wage (Rom 6:23), and in Christ that wall is torn down (Eph 2:14).
59:3 *For your palms are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity* Hands, fingers, lips, tongue. Isaiah checks each part of the body. Sin isn't only in one corner of our lives. It touches all of us.
59:4 *conceiving trouble and bringing forth wickedness* The courts were broken. Sin is pictured as a pregnancy that starts as an idea in the heart and is born as an action (Jas 1:15).
59:6 *Their webs will not become clothing* A spider web looks like fabric, but you can't make clothes from it. We try to cover sin with our own works like Adam and Eve's fig leaves (Gen 3:7). Only God can clothe us with His righteousness.
59:7 *Their feet run to evil, and they hasten to shed innocent blood* Paul quotes 59:7-8 to prove there is none righteous (Rom 3:10, 15-17). Isaiah described Israel, and Paul shows it describes the whole human race.
59:9 *Therefore justice is far from us* The voice turns from "they" to "we." Real change begins when we stop saying "they" and start saying "we," as Daniel prayed for his people (Dan 9:5).
59:11 *We growl like the bears, all of us, and like the doves we moan and moan* They say their frustration to God instead of pretending. Lament, an honest cry of grief to God, is a real part of faith.
59:12 *For our transgressions are many before You, and our sins testify against us* Confession is agreeing with God about our sin (1 John 1:9). We can't be healed of what we refuse to admit.
59:13 *transgressing and denying the LORD* Notice where it starts. All the other sins come from turning away from Him. When God is pushed out of the center, everything else goes crooked.
59:14 *for truth has stumbled in the public square* Picture truth lying in the town square while people step over it. Many of us know what it is to live in a culture like that.
59:15 *and the one turning aside from evil was plundered. And the LORD saw* Doing right got you robbed. Then the turning point. God is not blind to injustice. He sees it, and He doesn't like it.
59:16 *And He saw that there was no man, and He was appalled that there was no one to intercede; and His own arm brought salvation to Him* No one could stand between the guilty and judgment. The arm of the LORD returns (51:9; 52:10; 53:1), and we know it is the Servant. There is one mediator, Christ Jesus (1 Tim 2:5). Since 63:5 repeats this of judgment, I read it as both comings of Christ.
59:17 *And He put on righteousness like the body armor, and a helmet of salvation on His head* Paul borrows this armor for believers (Eph 6:14, 17; 1 Thess 5:8). God fights first, then clothes us in what He wore.
59:18 *According to their deeds, accordingly He will repay* This looks ahead to Christ's return on the white horse, judging in righteousness (Rev 19:11-15). God's justice has been delayed for centuries, but it hasn't been canceled.

the coastlands He will repay recompense. **19** And they will fear the name of the LORD from the west, and His glory from the rising of the sun; for He will come like a pent-up river ***which*** the wind of the LORD drives on. **20** And a Redeemer will come to Zion (Tsiyon), and to those who turn from transgression in Jacob (Ya'aqov), declares the LORD. **21** And as for Me, this ***is*** My covenant with them, says the LORD: My Spirit that ***is*** on you, and My words that I have put in your mouth, will not depart from your mouth, and from the mouth of your offspring, and from the mouth of the offspring of your offspring, says the LORD, from now and until forever.

ISAIAH 60

The Glory of Zion

1 Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has dawned on you. **2** For look, the darkness will cover ***the*** earth, and thick darkness the peoples; and on you the LORD will dawn, and His glory will appear over you. **3** And nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawning. **4** Lift up your eyes all around and see: all of them have gathered together; they have come to you; your sons will come from far away, and your daughters will be carried on ***the*** hip. **5** Then you will see and be radiant, and your heart will tremble and be enlarged, for the abundance of the sea will be turned to you; the wealth of nations will come to you. **6** A multitude of camels will cover you, young camels of Midian (Midyan) and Ephah (Efa); all of them will come from Sheba (Sheva); they will carry gold and frankincense, and they will bring good news of the praises of the LORD. **7** All the flocks of Kedar (Qedar) will be gathered to you; the rams of Nebaioth (Nevayot) will minister to you; they will go up for acceptance on My altar, and I will beautify the house of My splendor. **8** Who ***are*** these ***who*** fly like the cloud, and like the doves to their windows? **9** For the coastlands will wait for Me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring your sons from far away, their silver and their gold with them, to the name of the LORD your God, and to the Holy One of Israel (Yisra'el), for He has glorified you. **10** And sons of the foreigner will rebuild your walls, and their kings will minister to you; for in My wrath I struck you, and in My favor I have had compassion on you. **11** And your gates will be open continually; day and night they will not be shut, to bring to you the wealth of nations, and their kings being led. **12** For the nation and the kingdom that will not serve you will perish, and the nations will be utterly laid waste. **13** The glory of Lebanon (Levanon) will come to you, cypress, elm, and box tree together, to beautify the place of My sanctuary; and I will glorify the place of My feet. **14** And the sons of those who afflicted you will come to you bowing low, and all

59:19 Ps 113:3; Isa 49:12; Rev 20:1-3
59:20 Rom 11:26; Acts 3:19; Matt 12:18
59:21 Rom 11:27; Jer 31:31-34; Heb 10:16
60:1 Eph 5:14; John 8:12; Matt 4:16
60:2 1 Pet 2:9; Matt 4:16; Matt 15:14
60:3 Rev 21:24; Matt 2:1; John 12:32
60:4 John 4:35; Acts 13:44; Acts 3:19
60:5 Acts 24:17; Acts 3:19; Isa 61:6
60:6 Matt 2:11; Acts 3:19; Acts 8:26
60:7 Isa 56:7; Gen 25:13; Isa 42:11
60:8 Rev 11:12; Isa 60:4; Isa 45:22
60:9 John 17:26; Acts 9:15; Acts 3:19
60:10 Zech 6:15; Isa 49:23; Rev 21:24,26
60:11 Rev 21:25-26; Isa 60:5; Neh 13:19
60:12 Zech 14:12-19; Isa 41:11; Isa 54:15
60:13 Isa 35:2; 1 Chr 28:2; Ps 132:7
60:14 Rev 3:9; Heb 12:22; Rev 14:1

59:19 *for He will come like a pent-up river which the wind of the LORD drives on* The word for wind is also the word for Spirit. Jesus' return will be as sudden and unstoppable as a flash flood, and every nation will see His glory (Matt 24:27, 30).
59:20 *And a Redeemer will come to Zion, and to those who turn from transgression in Jacob* A redeemer was a relative who paid to free family (Lev 25:47-49). Paul quotes this when he says all Israel will be saved, with the Deliverer coming "out of Zion" (Rom 11:26). Both are true. He comes to Zion and rules from it. I believe God has not abandoned Israel. When Christ returns, Israel will turn to Him (Zech 12:10).
59:21 *My Spirit that is on you, and My words that I have put in your mouth, will not depart from your mouth* Paul joins this with 59:20 (Rom 11:27). It is the new covenant (Jer 31:31-34). I believe it will be fulfilled for Israel when they turn to the Messiah, and every believer, Jew or Gentile, already shares that Spirit and word (Acts 2:38-39).
60:1 *Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has dawned on you* Zion does not shine with her own light. A Redeemer was promised to come to Zion (59:20), and I take this light to be Him, Jesus, the light of the world (John 8:12). She shines because He has come to her. Our job too is to rise and reflect a light we didn't make.
60:2 *For look, the darkness will cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; and on you the LORD will dawn* I believe this fits the end of the age, when the world sinks into the darkness of the Tribulation, the seven years of judgment before Christ returns, and then the Lord appears in glory over His people. Light shines brightest against a black sky.
60:3 *And nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawning* They are not forced but drawn. This picks up 2:2-4. The wise men who came to the child Jesus were an early taste of it (Matt 2:1-2).
60:5 *the wealth of nations will come to you* Zion's heart pounds with joy as her children return. The nations that once plundered Israel now bring her their best.
60:6 *they will carry gold and frankincense, and they will bring good news of the praises of the LORD* Midian, Ephah and Sheba were in Arabia. The wise men's gifts (Matt 2:11) were a small preview. These Gentiles come as worshipers, not only traders.
60:7 *All the flocks of Kedar will be gathered to you; the rams of Nebaioth will minister to you* Kedar and Nebaioth were tribes from Ishmael (Gen 25:13). God welcomes Ishmael's descendants at His altar. Teachers differ on animal offerings in the Millennium (Ezek 40-48). I read it plainly as worship in Christ's kingdom, though no offering adds to Jesus' finished sacrifice (Heb 10:12).
60:8 *Who are these who fly like the cloud, and like the doves to their windows* Sails fill the sky, so many and so fast they look like birds racing home. The next verse says they are ships bringing Israel's sons.
60:9 *the ships of Tarshish first, to bring your sons from far away* Tarshish ships were the great merchant ships of the ancient world. The nations do this to the name of the LORD. They honor the God who kept His word to Israel, not Israel's own greatness.
60:10 *for in My wrath I struck you, and in My favor I have had compassion on you* The exile was real discipline for real sin, but His anger was for a moment and His mercy lasts (54:7-8). God has not abandoned Israel (Rom 11:1-2).
60:11 *And your gates will be open continually* Gates were shut at night against enemies. Zion has nothing left to fear. The New Jerusalem's gates likewise are never shut (Rev 21:25-26).
60:12 *For the nation and the kingdom that will not serve you will perish* We shouldn't soften this. The Millennium is peace under a King who rules with a rod of iron (Ps 2:9; Rev 19:15). Nations that refuse to come up and worship receive no rain (Zech 14:16-19).
60:13 *and I will glorify the place of My feet* Solomon built with Lebanon's cedars (1 Kgs 5:6). Its finest trees come again for God's sanctuary, the place on earth where He chooses to set His presence.
60:14 *and they will call you the City of the LORD, Zion of the Holy One of Israel* Jesus echoes this for the faithful church in Philadelphia (Rev 3:9). God has a way of turning the tables for those who stay faithful to Him.

those who despised you will bow down at the soles of your feet; and they will call you the City of the LORD, Zion (Tsiyon) of the Holy One of Israel. **15** Instead of your being forsaken and hated, with no one passing through, I will make you an everlasting majesty, a joy of generation and generation. **16** And you will suck the milk of nations, and you will suck the breast of kings; and you will know that I, the LORD, ***am*** your Savior and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob (Ya'aqov). **17** Instead of the bronze I will bring gold, and instead of the iron I will bring silver, and instead of the wood, bronze, and instead of the stones, iron; and I will make your overseers peace, and your oppressors righteousness. **18** Violence will not be heard again in your land, devastation and destruction within your borders; and you will call your walls Salvation, and your gates Praise. **19** The sun will no longer be for you for light by day, and for brightness the moon will not give light to you; and the LORD will be for you an everlasting light, and your God your splendor. **20** Your sun will no longer go down, and your moon will not be withdrawn; for the LORD will be for you an everlasting light, and the days of your mourning will be completed. **21** And your people, all of them ***will be*** righteous; forever they will possess the land, the shoot of My planting, the work of My hands, to beautify Myself. **22** The small ***one*** will become a thousand, and the little ***one*** a mighty nation. I ***am*** the LORD; in its time I will hasten it.

ISAIAH 61

The Anointed One

1 The Spirit of the Lord GOD ***is*** on Me, because the LORD has anointed Me to bring good news to ***the*** humble; He has sent Me to bind up the broken of heart, to proclaim liberty to captives, and to ***those who are*** bound, release; **2** to proclaim a year of favor of the LORD, and a day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all mourners; **3** to grant to the mourners of Zion (Tsiyon), to give to them a headdress instead of ashes, oil of joy instead of mourning, a mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit; and they will be called terebinths of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, to beautify Himself. **4** And they will rebuild the ancient ruins; they will raise up the former desolate places; and they will renew the cities of devastation, the desolate places of generation and generation. **5** And strangers will stand and shepherd your flocks, and sons of the foreigner ***will be*** your farmers and your vinedressers. **6** And you, you will be called priests of the LORD; ministers of our God, it will be said of you; you will eat the wealth of nations, and in their glory you will boast. **7** Instead of your shame, ***you will have*** a double ***portion***; and ***instead of*** humiliation they will shout for joy ***over*** their portion; therefore in their land they will possess a double ***portion***; everlasting joy will be theirs. **8** For I, the LORD, love justice; I hate robbery

60:15 Isa 61:7; Jer 30:17; Isa 49:14-23
60:16 1 Tim 1:1; Isa 49:23; Isa 66:11,12
60:17 Isa 30:26; 1 Kgs 10:21-27; Zech 12:8
60:18 Rev 19:5; Isa 26:1; Isa 11:9
60:19 Rev 22:5; Rev 21:23; Acts 8:26
60:20 Rev 21:4; Acts 8:26; Isa 35:10
60:21 Acts 8:26; Matt 15:13; Ps 37:11,22
60:22 Hab 2:3; Isa 5:19; Matt 13:31,32

61:1 Luke 4:18-19; Luke 7:22; Isa 42:7
61:2 2 Cor 6:2; 2 Thess 1:7; Matt 11:5
61:3 1 Pet 2:9; Jer 17:7,8; Matt 12:18
61:4 Isa 58:12; Isa 49:6-8; Ezek 36:23-26,33-36
61:5 Isa 14:1,2; Isa 60:10-14; Eph 2:12-20
61:6 1 Pet 2:9; Rev 1:6; Rev 20:6
61:7 Isa 40:2; Zech 9:12; Ps 16:11
61:8 Isa 55:3; Ps 11:7; Gen 17:7

60:15 *Instead of your being forsaken and hated, with no one passing through, I will make you an everlasting majesty* Jerusalem has known long seasons so empty that travelers went around her. Many carry a past that feels like ruins. God specializes in making forsaken places into places of joy.
60:16 *and you will know that I, the LORD, am your Savior and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob* Zion draws strength from the nations like a nursing child. Every blessing in this chapter is meant to lead to knowing God.
60:17 *and I will make your overseers peace, and your oppressors righteousness* Everything is upgraded, beyond even Solomon's day (1 Kgs 10:27). The government itself changes. That is what a city looks like when Christ is King.
60:18 *and you will call your walls Salvation, and your gates Praise* The city's protection is God's saving work, and the way in is praise. We still come to God through thanksgiving and praise (Ps 100:4).
60:19 *and the LORD will be for you an everlasting light* John saw the New Jerusalem lit by God's glory with the Lamb as its lamp (Rev 21:23). Much of this chapter describes the Millennium, but I read 60:19-20 as reaching past it to the eternal city. Isaiah often sees both mountain peaks without the valley between.
60:20 *and the days of your mourning will be completed* God will wipe away every tear (Rev 21:4). Whatever you are grieving today, it has an end date in God's plan.
60:21 *And your people, all of them will be righteous; forever they will possess the land* Not because Israel earned it. God makes them righteous as His planting. Paul looks to this day (Rom 11:26), and the land was promised to Abraham forever (Gen 17:8).
60:22 *I am the LORD; in its time I will hasten it* God has a set time, and then He acts quickly. We don't know the day or hour (Matt 24:36) and shouldn't set dates. Our part is to trust His timing and live ready.
61:1 *The Spirit of the Lord GOD is on Me, because the LORD has anointed Me to bring good news to the humble* Anointed gives us Messiah, and in Greek, Christ. At Nazareth Jesus read this from the scroll of Isaiah and said, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your ears" (Luke 4:21). He came for the humble, the brokenhearted and the captives, empowered by the Spirit (Luke 3:22; 42:1).
61:2 *to proclaim a year of favor of the LORD, and a day of vengeance of our God* This recalls the Jubilee, when debts were canceled and slaves freed (Lev 25). Jesus stopped reading mid-verse (Luke 4:19). His first coming brought the year of favor, still open now (2 Cor 6:2). His second will bring the day of vengeance (2 Thess 1:7-8). One small "and" holds a gap of more than two thousand years.
61:3 *to give to them a headdress instead of ashes, oil of joy instead of mourning, a mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit* Mourners put ashes on their heads, and the festive headdress replaces them. Every exchange moves from grief to joy. Jesus doesn't just tell us to cheer up. He takes what we carry and gives us something better. His people become deep-rooted trees (Ps 1:3).
61:4 *And they will rebuild the ancient ruins* Israel rebuilt after the exile, but Jerusalem was torn down again. I believe the full fulfillment comes when Christ returns and Israel is restored in His kingdom. No damage is too old for God to repair.
61:5 *And strangers will stand and shepherd your flocks* This doesn't make the nations slaves. It frees Israel for her priestly work (61:6). The nations that once took Israel's harvest (62:8) now help bring it in.
61:6 *And you, you will be called priests of the LORD* Israel was meant to be a kingdom of priests (Exod 19:6) and never fully lived it. Here it finally happens. Peter calls believers a royal priesthood (1 Pet 2:9), and believers reign as priests in the thousand years (Rev 20:6). The calling is shared, not taken away from Israel.
61:7 *Instead of your shame, you will have a double portion* The firstborn received a double share (Deut 21:17), and Israel is God's firstborn (Exod 4:22). Where they once received double for their sins (40:2), they now receive double in blessing.
61:8 *For I, the LORD, love justice* God acts from His character. The everlasting covenant is the new covenant (Jer 31:31-34), sealed in Jesus' blood (Luke 22:20).

with injustice; and I will give their recompense in faithfulness, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. **9** And their offspring will be known among the nations, and their descendants in the midst of the peoples; all who see them will recognize them, that they ***are*** offspring ***whom*** the LORD has blessed. **10** I will greatly rejoice in the LORD; let my soul exult in my God; for He has clothed me ***with*** garments of salvation; He has covered me ***with*** a robe of righteousness, like the bridegroom ***who*** acts as a priest ***with*** a headdress, and like the bride ***who*** adorns herself ***with*** her ornaments. **11** For like the earth ***that*** brings forth its growth, and like a garden ***that*** makes the things sown in it spring up, so the Lord GOD will make righteousness and praise spring up before all the nations.

ISAIAH 62

A New Name

1 For the sake of Zion (Tsiyon) I will not be silent, and for the sake of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) I will not be quiet, until her righteousness goes forth like the brightness, and her salvation like a torch ***that*** burns. **2** And nations will see your righteousness, and all kings your glory; and you will be called a new name, which the mouth of the LORD will designate. **3** And you will be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD, and a turban of royalty in the palm of your God. **4** It will no longer be said of you, "Forsaken," and of your land it will no longer be said, "Desolation"; for you will be called Hephzibah (Cheftsi-Vah), and your land Married; for the LORD delights in you, and your land will be married. **5** For ***as*** a young man marries a virgin, ***so*** your sons will marry you; and ***with*** the joy of a bridegroom over a bride your God will rejoice over you. **6** On your walls, Jerusalem, I have
appointed watchmen; all the day and all the night continually they will not be silent. You who remind the LORD, ***let there be*** no rest for you, **7** and do not give Him rest until He establishes, and until He makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth. **8** The LORD has sworn by His right hand and by the arm of His strength: I will not again give your grain ***as*** food to your enemies, and sons of the foreigner will not drink your new wine for which you have labored; **9** for those who gather it will eat it and praise the LORD, and those who collect it will drink it in the courts of My holiness. **10** Pass through, pass through the gates; clear the way of the people; build up, build up the highway; rid ***it*** of stones; lift up a banner over the peoples. **11** Look, the LORD has proclaimed to the end of the earth: Say to the daughter of Zion, "Look, your salvation is coming; look, His reward ***is*** with Him, and His recompense before Him." **12** And they will call them the Holy People, the Redeemed of the LORD; and you will be called Sought Out, A City Not Forsaken.

ISAIAH 63

The Winepress

1 Who ***is*** this coming from Edom, ***with*** reddened garments

61:9 Isa 44:3; Gen 22:18; Zech 8:13
61:10 Rev 19:7; Rev 21:2; Phil 3:9
61:11 1 Cor 3:6; Ps 85:11; Isa 60:18
62:1 1 Pet 2:9; Isa 62:6,7; Prov 4:18
62:2 Rev 2:17; Acts 3:19; Isa 62:4,12
62:3 Acts 3:19; Zech 9:16; 1 Thess 2:19
62:4 John 3:29; John 15:11; Rom 9:26
62:5 John 3:29; Isa 65:19; Heb 12:2
62:6 Luke 18:1; Isa 52:8; Isa 56:10
62:7 Matt 6:10; Jer 33:9; Zeph 3:19,20
62:8 Jer 5:17; Isa 65:21-23; Deut 28:31,33
62:9 Deut 12:7,12; Deut 14:23-29; Deut 16:11,14
62:10 Luke 3:4; Isa 57:14; Isa 49:22
62:11 Matt 21:5; Rev 22:12; John 12:15
62:12 1 Pet 2:9; Luke 19:10; Isa 62:4
63:1 Rev 19:13; Isa 34:5,6; Ps 137:7

61:9 *that they are offspring whom the LORD has blessed* God wants His people to be living proof of His goodness. Those around the church too should be able to see the Lord has been good to us.
61:10 *for He has clothed me with garments of salvation; He has covered me with a robe of righteousness* I take this as redeemed Zion answering the Messiah. Some hear the Messiah speaking. God does the dressing. Our own righteousness is a soiled garment (64:6), but He gives us His through faith in Christ (2 Cor 5:21; Phil 3:9). The bride points ahead to Rev 19:7-8.
61:11 *so the Lord GOD will make righteousness and praise spring up before all the nations* Spiritual growth is God's work. We plant and water, but He makes things grow (1 Cor 3:6-7). One day the whole world will see the harvest.
62:1 *For the sake of Zion I will not be silent, and for the sake of Jerusalem I will not be quiet* Bible teachers disagree on the speaker. Some hear Isaiah praying for his city. I believe it is the Messiah of chapter 61 still speaking. Either way, God has not given up on Jerusalem, and He won't stay quiet about her.
62:2 *and you will be called a new name, which the mouth of the LORD will designate* A name often tells who someone is, as when Abram became Abraham and Jacob became Israel. A new name means a new identity. Jesus promises overcomers a new name on a white stone (Rev 2:17).
62:3 *And you will be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD* God holds the crown in His hand like a king admiring a treasured jewel. He doesn't just put up with His people. He treasures them.
62:4 *for you will be called Hephzibah, and your land Married; for the LORD delights in you* Hephzibah means my delight is in her, and Married is Beulah in Hebrew. God says this to a people who broke His heart many times. His love isn't based on our record. In Christ, God's verdict over you is not Forsaken but Hephzibah.
62:6 *You who remind the LORD, let there be no rest for you* These watchmen pray, calling on God to keep His promises, day and night. This pictures what Jesus taught about always praying and not losing heart (Luke 18:1).
62:7 *and do not give Him rest until He establishes, and until He makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth* That is bold language. God is not annoyed by persistent prayer for what He has promised. He welcomes it. "Your kingdom come" (Matt 6:10) is the same prayer.
62:8 *The LORD has sworn by His right hand and by the arm of His strength* Enemies often swept in and ate Israel's harvest (Judg 6:3-6). God swears by Himself, since no one is greater (Heb 6:13). The promise is as sure as God is.
62:9 *and those who collect it will drink it in the courts of My holiness* In God's kingdom work and worship go together. Labor is no longer wasted or stolen. It becomes an offering of praise (65:21-22).
62:10 *build up, build up the highway; rid it of stones; lift up a banner over the peoples* The doubled commands give urgency. This picks up the highway of 40:3 and 57:14. Nothing is left in the road to trip God's people on their way home.
62:11 *Look, your salvation is coming; look, His reward is with Him* Salvation is a Person who comes. Matthew uses "Say to the daughter of Zion" when Jesus rides into Jerusalem (Matt 21:5), and Jesus promises His reward is with Him when He comes (Rev 22:12).
62:12 *and you will be called Sought Out, A City Not Forsaken* Once avoided, Jerusalem is sought by the nations and above all by God. I believe this will be fully true when Christ returns and reigns from Jerusalem. It pictures every believer too. He came looking for us (Luke 19:10).
63:1 *Who is this coming from Edom, with reddened garments from Bozrah* Edom, from Esau, was Israel's long-time enemy, and in Isaiah it stands for nations set against God (34:5-6). This is no tired soldier but a conqueror. "Great to save" tells us who He is. I believe this is the Lord Jesus Christ at His second coming.

from Bozrah (Botsra), this ***one*** adorned in His clothing, stooping in the greatness of His strength? "I, speaking in righteousness, great to save." **2** Why ***is there*** red on Your clothing, and Your garments like ***one who*** treads in a winepress? **3** "I have trodden the winepress alone, and from the peoples no man ***was*** with Me; and I trod them in My anger, and I trampled them in My rage, and their lifeblood spattered on My garments, and I have defiled all My clothing. **4** For a day of vengeance ***was*** in My heart, and the year of My redemption had come. **5** And I looked, and ***there was*** no one helping; and I was appalled, and ***there was*** no one upholding; and My own arm brought salvation to Me, and My rage, it upheld Me. **6** And I trod down peoples in My anger, and I made them drunk in My rage, and I brought down their lifeblood to the earth."

Remembering the Days of Old

7 I will make mention of the ***acts of*** steadfast love of the LORD, the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD has bestowed on us, and the great goodness to the house of Israel (Yisra'el), which He has bestowed on them according to His compassion, and according to the greatness of His ***acts of*** steadfast love. **8** And He said, "Surely they ***are*** My people, sons ***who*** will not deal falsely." And He became a Savior to them. **9** In all their distress He ***was*** distressed, and the angel of His presence saved them; in His love and in His pity He Himself redeemed them; and He lifted them up and carried them all the days of old. **10** And they rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit; and He turned Himself to be an enemy to them; He Himself fought against them. **11** And His people remembered the days of old, ***the days of*** Moses (Moshe): Where ***is*** He who brought them up from the sea with the shepherds of His flock? Where ***is*** He who put in its midst His Holy Spirit, **12** who caused the arm of His splendor to go at the right hand of Moses, who split the waters before them, to make for Himself an everlasting name, **13** who led them through the deeps? Like the horse in the wilderness, they did not stumble. **14** Like the livestock ***that*** goes down into the valley, the Spirit of the LORD gave them rest. So You led Your people, to make for Yourself a name of splendor. **15** Look down from heaven and see, from the lofty dwelling of Your holiness and Your splendor. Where ***are*** Your zeal and Your mighty deeds? The stirring of Your inward parts and Your compassion toward me have restrained themselves. **16** For You ***are*** our Father, for Abraham (Avraham) does not know us, and Israel does not acknowledge us; You, LORD, ***are*** our Father; our Redeemer from long ago ***is*** Your name. **17** Why, LORD, do You make us go astray from Your ways, ***and*** harden our heart from fear of You? Return for the sake of Your servants, the tribes of Your inheritance. **18** For a little while Your holy people possessed ***it***; our adversaries have trodden down Your sanctuary. **19** We have become ***like those*** over

63:3 Rev 14:19-20; Rev 19:15; John 20:21
63:4 Rev 19:13; Isa 34:8; Isa 35:4
63:5 John 16:32; Ps 44:3; Isa 41:28
63:6 Rev 18:21; Rev 11:18; Isa 49:26
63:7 James 5:11; Ps 51:1; Eph 2:4
63:8 1 John 4:14; Jude 1:25; Rom 11:2
63:9 Acts 12:11; Titus 2:14; Heb 2:18
63:10 Eph 4:30; Acts 7:51; John 14:26
63:11 Acts 7:35; Acts 13:17; Num 11:17,25,29
63:12 Acts 7:35; Acts 13:17; Josh 3:16
63:13 Acts 13:17; Heb 8:9; Ps 106:9
63:14 Josh 23:1; Isa 63:12; Josh 22:4
63:15 Deut 26:15; Ps 80:14; Ps 123:1
63:16 Matt 6:9; 1 Pet 1:18; Luke 11:2
63:17 John 12:40; Mark 8:17; Rom 9:19
63:18 1 Pet 2:9; Luke 21:24; Ps 74:3-7
63:19 Acts 15:17; Ps 79:6; Ps 135:4

63:2 *Why is there red on Your clothing, and Your garments like one who treads in a winepress* Grapes were crushed by stomping in a stone trough, and the juice stained the robes. The question sets up a sobering answer.
63:3 *I have trodden the winepress alone, and from the peoples no man was with Me* This is not Christ's own blood from the cross. The verse says it is His enemies' blood. John saw this scene (Rev 14:19-20; 19:13, 15). Isaiah and John look at the same day, when Christ returns at the end of the Tribulation and defeats the armies gathered against Him.
63:4 *For a day of vengeance was in My heart, and the year of My redemption had come* Jesus stopped reading before "a day of vengeance" at Nazareth (61:2). Here is that day. Vengeance and redemption arrive together. For the believer, Christ's return is the day we are set free for good (Luke 21:28).
63:5 *and My own arm brought salvation to Me* This repeats 59:16. No human army will defeat evil at the end, and no human effort could save us from sin. Salvation is God's work from start to finish, which is humbling and a great relief.
63:6 *And I trod down peoples in My anger, and I made them drunk in My rage* These are hard words (51:17; Rev 19:21). God's wrath is never cruel or out of control. It is a holy God's response to evil that refused every offer of mercy. Before that day, His patience still holds the door open (2 Pet 3:9).
63:7 *I will make mention of the acts of steadfast love of the LORD* The tone changes completely. A long prayer begins and runs through chapter 64. Hesed, God's loyal covenant love, appears twice. It is good to start prayer where Isaiah does, remembering what God has done.
63:9 *In all their distress He was distressed, and the angel of His presence saved them* God felt Israel's suffering and carried them like a father (Deut 1:31). God's presence went with them (Exod 33:14). Many teachers, and I am one, see this angel as the LORD Himself appearing before Christ was born. In Jesus He took on our suffering Himself (Heb 4:15).
63:10 *And they rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit* The Spirit is a Person who can be grieved, not a force (Eph 4:30). God fought against His own people through wilderness judgments, Assyria and Babylon. His discipline comes from a love that won't let His people keep destroying themselves.
63:11 *And His people remembered the days of old, the days of Moses* Sometimes the first step back to God is remembering what He did before and longing for Him to do it again.
63:12 *who caused the arm of His splendor to go at the right hand of Moses, who split the waters before them* When Moses raised his staff, it was God's power that split the sea (Exod 14:21). The Exodus showed the whole world who God is, and people still speak of it thousands of years later.
63:14 *the Spirit of the LORD gave them rest* Like cattle going down to graze after a long walk. The Spirit appears in 63:10, 11 and 14, guiding, grieving and giving rest through Israel's whole story.
63:15 *Look down from heaven and see* This is an honest prayer. God's people may tell Him plainly that they feel His absence, as the Psalms do (Ps 13:1; 44:23-24).
63:16 *For You are our Father, for Abraham does not know us* Even if Abraham and Jacob would not recognize this ruined people, God does. Calling God Father this directly is unusual in the Old Testament. Jesus taught us to pray the same way (Matt 6:9).
63:17 *Why, LORD, do You make us go astray from Your ways, and harden our heart from fear of You* Is God to blame for their sin? No. The prayer admits the sin was theirs (64:5-7). When people keep rejecting God, He can hand them over to the hardness they chose (6:9-10; Rom 1:24). This is a cry for Him to return.
63:18 *our adversaries have trodden down Your sanctuary* Isaiah looks ahead to Babylon destroying the temple in 586 B.C. Jesus warned that Jerusalem would be trampled until the times of the nations are fulfilled (Luke 21:24). The trampling has an end date.
63:19 *We have become like those over whom You have not ruled from long ago* The prayer ends low. Yet the fact that they are praying shows they still belong to Him. When we feel far from God, the right move is to keep praying.

whom You have not ruled from long ago, over whom Your name has not been called.

ISAIAH 64

The Potter and the Clay

1 Oh that You had torn the heavens ***and*** come down, ***that*** the mountains had quaked at Your presence, **2** as fire kindles brushwood, ***as*** fire makes water boil, to make Your name known to Your adversaries; the nations will tremble at Your presence. **3** When You did awesome ***things that*** we did not look for, You came down; the mountains quaked at Your presence. **4** And from long ago they have not heard, they have not given ear; ***the*** eye has not seen a God besides You, ***who*** acts for the one who waits for Him. **5** You meet the one who rejoices and does righteousness, ***those who*** remember You in Your ways. Look, You, You were angry, and we sinned; in them ***we have been*** a long time, and will we be saved? **6** And we have all become like the unclean, and all our righteous deeds like a garment of menstruation; and we all wither like the leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, carry us away. **7** And ***there is*** no one who calls on Your name, who rouses himself to take hold of You; for You have hidden Your face from us, and You have melted us by the hand of our iniquities. **8** And now, LORD, You ***are*** our Father; we ***are*** the clay, and You ***are*** our Potter; and all of us ***are*** the work of Your hand. **9** Do not be angry, LORD, exceedingly, and do not remember iniquity forever. Look, please look: Your people ***are*** all of us. **10** Your holy cities have become a wilderness; Zion (Tsiyon) has become a wilderness, Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) a desolation. **11** The house of our holiness and our splendor, where our fathers praised You, has become a burning of fire, and all our pleasant things have become a ruin. **12** Will You restrain Yourself at these ***things***, LORD? Will You be silent and afflict us exceedingly?

ISAIAH 65

A Rebellious People and a Remnant

1 I let Myself be inquired of by those who did not ask; I let Myself be found by those who did not seek Me. I said, "Here I ***am***, here I ***am***," to a nation ***that*** was not called by My name. **2** I spread out My hands all the day to a rebellious people, who walk ***in*** the way ***that is*** not good, after their own thoughts; **3** the people who provoke Me to anger to My face continually, sacrificing in the gardens and making smoke on the bricks; **4** who sit among the graves and spend the night in the secret places; who eat the flesh of the pig, and broth of unclean meat ***is in*** their vessels; **5** who say, "Keep to yourself; do not come near me, for I am ***too*** holy for you." These ***are***

64:1 Mic 1:3,4; Mark 1:10; Ps 68:8
64:2 Rev 11:12; Ps 99:1; Jer 5:22
64:3 Ps 66:3,5; Ps 106:22; Exod 34:10
64:4 1 Cor 2:9; Luke 2:25; 1 John 3:1
64:5 Exod 20:24; Ps 90:7-9; Exod 25:22
64:6 Phil 3:9; Matt 22:11; Ps 90:5,6
64:7 Heb 6:18; Isa 59:16; Ezek 22:30
64:8 John 8:41; Rom 9:21; Heb 1:10
64:9 Ps 74:1,2; Ps 79:13; Ps 6:1
64:10 Matt 23:38; Luke 13:35; Isa 1:7
64:11 2 Kgs 25:9; Ps 74:5-7; Lam 1:7,10,11
64:12 Isa 42:14; Ps 74:10,11,18,19; Ps 83:1
65:1 Rom 10:20; John 1:43; Acts 15:17
65:2 Rom 10:21; Matt 23:37; Luke 13:34
65:3 Rom 10:21; Isa 1:29; Job 1:11
65:4 Rom 10:21; Lev 11:7; Isa 66:3,17
65:5 Luke 18:9; Jude 1:19; Luke 18:10

64:1 *Oh that You had torn the heavens and come down, that the mountains had quaked at Your presence* This is a desperate prayer for God to rip the sky open like a curtain. I believe it will be answered in full when Christ returns and heaven opens (Rev 19:11). The warrior of 63:1-6 is the answer. Until then believers pray, "Come, Lord Jesus" (Rev 22:20).
64:2 *to make Your name known to Your adversaries* The goal of the fire is not destruction for its own sake but that God's name be known. When God shows up, no one can pretend He isn't real anymore.
64:3 *When You did awesome things that we did not look for, You came down; the mountains quaked at Your presence* This looks back to Sinai, which trembled and smoked as the LORD came down in fire (Exod 19:18). God is not limited to what we imagine He can do.
64:4 *the eye has not seen a God besides You, who acts for the one who waits for Him* Idols do nothing. The LORD acts. Paul draws on this for what God has prepared for those who love Him (1 Cor 2:9). To wait for God is to keep trusting and expecting Him to move (40:31).
64:5 *You, You were angry, and we sinned; in them we have been a long time, and will we be saved* That is the right question for any sinner to ask. The answer is found in God's mercy, not in us (64:8-9).
64:6 *and all our righteous deeds like a garment of menstruation* Not just our sins but our best deeds are stained before a holy God. Good deeds are not worthless before people, but they can't pay for sin (Rom 3:10). We need a righteousness not our own (Phil 3:9). In 61:10 God clothes His people with a robe of righteousness. Our rags are exchanged for His robe.
64:7 *And there is no one who calls on Your name, who rouses himself to take hold of You* This is a people who stopped seeking God. When prayer dries up we slowly drift, and the results of our choices start to rule us.
64:8 *And now, LORD, You are our Father; we are the clay, and You are our Potter* Everything turns here. They point not to themselves but to who God is. A potter doesn't throw away marred clay. He reshapes it (Jer 18:4-6; Rom 9:21). If you feel broken or spoiled, you are still in the Potter's hands.
64:9 *Look, please look: Your people are all of us* They don't deny their guilt. They ask God to remember the relationship. Under the new covenant He promised not to remember sins (Jer 31:34; Heb 8:12).
64:10 *Zion has become a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation* In Isaiah's day Jerusalem still stood, spared from Sennacherib in 701 B.C. Isaiah speaks as though standing in the ruins of 586 B.C. God let him see it ahead and pray as if it had happened.
64:11 *The house of our holiness and our splendor, where our fathers praised You, has become a burning of fire* Babylon burned Solomon's temple (2 Kgs 25:9) more than a century later. God knows the future and does not hide hard things from His people (6:11-12). He prepares us for sorrow and gives us words to pray in it.
64:12 *Will You restrain Yourself at these things, LORD* The prayer is left hanging. The next chapter is God's reply. When heaven feels quiet, it is all right to ask this same question. Keep praying, because God answers.
65:1 *I let Myself be found by those who did not seek Me* God answers the prayer of chapters 63-64. Paul applies this to the Gentiles, who weren't looking for God and found Him through the gospel (Rom 10:20). Most of us weren't searching for God when He found us. He came looking first.
65:2 *I spread out My hands all the day to a rebellious people* The picture is outstretched arms pleading for someone to come home. Paul applies this to Israel (Rom 10:21). God had not been silent. He had been calling, and Israel had been refusing.
65:3 *sacrificing in the gardens and making smoke on the bricks* Gardens were places of pagan worship (1:29), and the bricks were probably small altars to other gods. God gave one place to worship Him, and they set up their own altars.
65:4 *who sit among the graves and spend the night in the secret places; who eat the flesh of the pig* They were likely trying to contact the dead, which God forbade (Deut 18:10-12; 8:19), and they ate what the Law called unclean (Lev 11:7). These were deliberate turns to the practices of the nations.
65:5 *Keep to yourself; do not come near me, for I am too holy for you* Few things offend God more than people deep in sin who still look down on others. They are like smoke that keeps stinging the eyes. Jesus faced this attitude too (Luke 18:9-14).

smoke in My nose, a fire ***that*** burns all the day. **6** Look, it is written before Me: I will not be silent, but I will repay, and I will repay into their bosom **7** your iniquities and the iniquities of your fathers together, says the LORD, who made smoke on the mountains and taunted Me on the hills; and I will measure their former recompense into their bosom. **8** Thus says the LORD: As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one says, "Do not destroy it, for a blessing ***is*** in it," so I will do for the sake of My servants, so as not to destroy all. **9** And I will bring forth offspring from Jacob (Ya'aqov), and from Judah (Yehuda) a possessor of My mountains; and My chosen ones will possess it, and My servants will dwell there. **10** And Sharon will become a pasture of sheep, and the Valley of Achor (Akhor) a resting place of cattle, for My people who have sought Me. **11** And you who forsake the LORD, who forget My holy mountain, who arrange a table for Fortune, and who fill mixed wine for Destiny, **12** and I will destine you for the sword, and all of you will bow down to the slaughter; because I called, and you did not answer; I spoke, and you did not listen; and you did what is evil in My eyes, and you chose that in which I did not delight.

13 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Look, My servants will eat, and you will be hungry; look, My servants will drink, and you will be thirsty; look, My servants will rejoice, and you will be put to shame; **14** look, My servants will shout for joy from goodness of heart, and you will cry out from pain of heart, and from brokenness of spirit you will wail. **15** And you will leave your name for a curse to My chosen ones, and the Lord GOD will put you to death; and He will call His servants ***by*** another name, **16** so that he who blesses himself in the land will bless himself by the God of Amen, and he who swears in the land will swear by the God of Amen; because the former distresses are forgotten, and because they are hidden from My eyes.

New Heavens and a New Earth

17 For look, I am creating new heavens and a new earth; and the former ***things*** will not be remembered, and they will not come up on ***the*** heart. **18** But rejoice and be glad forever ***in*** what I am creating; for look, I am creating Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) ***as*** gladness, and her people ***as*** joy. **19** And I will be glad in Jerusalem and rejoice in My people; and the sound of weeping and the sound of crying will not be heard in her again. **20** There will no longer be from there an infant ***living but a few*** days, or an old man who does not fill out his days; for the youth will die a son of a hundred years, and the sinner, a son of a hundred years, will be cursed. **21** And they will build houses and dwell ***in them***; and they will plant vineyards and eat their fruit. **22** They will not build and another dwell; they will not plant and another eat; for like the days of the tree ***will be*** the days of My people, and My chosen ones will fully use the work of their hands. **23** They will not labor in vain, and they will not bear ***children*** for sudden terror; for they ***are*** the offspring of the blessed of the LORD, and their

65:6 Rev 20:12; Ps 50:3,21; Jer 16:18
65:7 Matt 23:32; Exod 20:5; Isa 57:7
65:8 Rom 11:5; Isa 6:13; Jer 30:11
65:9 Rev 21:7; Amos 9:11-15; Isa 27:6
65:10 Isa 35:2; Isa 33:9; Hos 2:15
65:11 Isa 1:28; Isa 65:25; Isa 2:2
65:12 Jer 7:13; 2 Chr 36:15,16; Isa 50:2
65:13 Rev 2:17; Ps 37:19,20; Mal 3:18
65:14 Luke 6:21; Matt 8:12; Ps 66:4
65:15 1 Pet 2:9; Rev 2:17; Zech 8:13
65:16 Rev 3:14; 2 Cor 1:20; Ps 31:5
65:17 2 Pet 3:13; Rev 21:1; 1 Cor 2:9
65:18 Acts 3:19; Ps 98:1-9; Isa 66:10-14
65:19 Rev 21:4; Isa 35:10; Isa 25:8
65:20 Deut 4:40; Job 5:26; Ps 34:12
65:21 Amos 9:14; Isa 62:8,9; Jer 31:4,5
65:22 Ps 92:12-14; Isa 65:9,15; Gen 5:5,27
65:23 Acts 3:19; Isa 61:9; Acts 2:39

65:6 *Look, it is written before Me: I will not be silent, but I will repay* God keeps a record. Repaying into the bosom pictures grain measured into the fold of a garment. The books are opened at the final judgment (Rev 20:12).

65:7 *your iniquities and the iniquities of your fathers together* The children kept doing what their parents did on the high places. God is patient, but He does not forget unrepented sin.

65:8 *Do not destroy it, for a blessing is in it," so I will do for the sake of My servants* A farmer doesn't throw away a cluster because some grapes are bad. God will save His servants, the remnant, the faithful few He always keeps (Rom 11:5).

65:10 *and the Valley of Achor a resting place of cattle* Sharon was the fertile western plain. Achor, meaning trouble, was where Achan was stoned (Josh 7:24-26), and Hosea promised it would be a door of hope (Hos 2:15). God can turn a valley of trouble into a place of rest.

65:11 *who arrange a table for Fortune, and who fill mixed wine for Destiny* In Hebrew these are Gad and Meni, gods of luck. People still trust luck or fate rather than the living God.

65:12 *and I will destine you for the sword* God plays on words. They poured drinks to Destiny, so He destines them for the sword, because He called and they did not answer. Judgment is never God's first word.

65:13 *Look, My servants will eat, and you will be hungry* Three times "look." In this life the faithful and faithless often seem treated alike. In the end God will make a clear difference (Mal 3:18).

65:15 *and He will call His servants by another name* The rebels' name becomes a curse. God's servants receive a new name (62:2; Rev 2:17; 3:12), a new identity in Him.

65:16 *will bless himself by the God of Amen* Amen means it is true, so be it. Jesus calls Himself the Amen, the faithful and true Witness (Rev 3:14). In His kingdom people will rely on God's word fully.

65:17 *For look, I am creating new heavens and a new earth* God will not only repair the old world but create a new one, using the creating word of Gen 1:1 (2 Pet 3:13; Rev 21:1). Teachers differ here, and I hold my view with care. Verse 17 points to the eternal new creation. Since 65:20 still has death (Rev 21:4), I believe 65:18-25 describe the Millennium, its first stage and foretaste.

65:18 *for look, I am creating Jerusalem as gladness, and her people as joy* God commands joy. The city that was a desolation (64:10) becomes the center of joy on earth. Christ will reign from Jerusalem (Zech 14:9, 16), and the city will finally be what God always meant.

65:19 *and the sound of weeping and the sound of crying will not be heard in her again* Imagine a city where no one cries. God doesn't only stop the weeping. He shares in the joy, and in eternity He wipes away every tear (Rev 21:4).

65:20 *for the youth will die a son of a hundred years* Death still exists here, though rarely. That is why I place this in the Millennium. Survivors of the Tribulation, including Israel turned to Christ and spared Gentiles, enter in natural bodies and live very long lives (Zech 12:10; 14:16). Sin is rare but not gone (Rev 20:7-9). Raised believers won't die again (Rev 20:6).

65:21 *And they will build houses and dwell in them* Deuteronomy's curse said others would live in the houses they built (Deut 28:30). Christ's kingdom reverses the curse. Ordinary life will finally be good, safe and lasting.

65:22 *for like the days of the tree will be the days of My people* Some trees stand for centuries. People will live long enough to enjoy everything they make. Under Christ's rule our labor will bear lasting fruit.

65:23 *and they will not bear children for sudden terror* Every parent who has feared for a child's future can feel this. The blessing passes from one generation to the next.

descendants with them. **24** And it will be that before they call, I will answer; while they are still speaking, I will hear. **25** Wolf and lamb will graze as one, and the lion like the ox will eat straw, and ***as for the*** snake, dust ***will be*** its food. They will not do evil and they will not destroy in all My holy mountain, says the LORD.

ISAIAH 66

The One Who Trembles at My Word

1 Thus says the LORD: The heavens ***are*** My throne, and the earth ***is*** the footstool of My feet. Where then ***is*** a house that you could build for Me, and where then ***is*** a place of My rest? **2** And all these ***things*** My hand has made, and all these ***things*** came to be, declares the LORD. And to this ***one*** I will look: to the afflicted and stricken of spirit, and trembling at My word. **3** He who slaughters the ox ***is like*** one who strikes down a man; he who sacrifices the lamb, ***like*** one who breaks the neck of a dog; he who offers up a grain offering, ***like one who offers*** the blood of a pig; he who offers frankincense as a memorial, ***like*** one who blesses wickedness. They also have chosen their own ways, and their soul delights in their detestable things. **4** I also will choose their punishments, and I will bring their fears on them; because I called, and ***there was*** no one answering; I spoke, and they did not listen; and they did what is evil in My eyes, and they chose that in which I did not delight. **5** Hear the word of the LORD, you who tremble at His word: Your brothers who hate you, who exclude you for the sake of My name, have said, "Let the LORD be glorified, that we may see your joy"; and they will be put to shame. **6** A sound of uproar from the city! A sound from the temple! The sound of the LORD repaying recompense to His enemies! **7** Before she was in labor, she gave birth; before pain came to her, she delivered a male. **8** Who has heard ***anything*** like this? Who has seen ***anything*** like these? Will a land be brought forth in one day? Or will a nation be born at one time? For Zion (Tsiyon) was in labor; she also gave birth to her sons. **9** Will I break open ***the womb*** and not cause ***it*** to bring forth? says the LORD. Or ***am*** I the One who causes to bring forth, and will I shut ***it***? says your God. **10** Rejoice with Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) and be glad in her, all who love her; exult with her ***with*** exultation, all who mourn over her, **11** so that you may suck and be satisfied from the breast of her consolations, so that you may drink deeply and delight yourselves from the abundance of her glory. **12** For thus says the LORD: Look, I am extending to her peace like a river, and the glory of the nations like an overflowing torrent; and you will suck; you will be carried on ***the*** hip, and you will be bounced on ***the*** knees. **13** Like a man whom his mother comforts, so I will comfort you; and in Jerusalem you will be comforted. **14** And you will see, and your heart will exult, and your bones will sprout like the grass; and the hand of the LORD will be made known to His servants, and He will be indignant against His enemies.

65:24 Mark 11:24; Dan 10:12; John 1:48
65:25 Rev 14:1; Rev 20:2; Rev 20:3
66:1 Acts 7:48-50; Matt 5:34; Acts 17:24
66:2 Heb 1:2; Luke 1:48; Heb 1:3
66:3 Lev 2:2; Isa 1:11-15; Prov 15:8
66:4 Acts 7:42; Acts 28:26; Isa 65:12
66:5 Luke 13:17; John 16:2; John 8:54
66:6 Isa 59:18; Isa 34:8; Isa 65:5-7
66:7 Rev 12:2-5; Isa 54:1; Gal 4:26
66:8 1 Cor 2:9; Rev 12:2; Isa 64:4
66:9 Luke 1:58; Isa 37:3; Gen 18:14
66:10 Luke 15:6; John 16:21; Rom 12:15
66:11 Joel 3:18; Isa 60:5,16; Ps 36:8
66:12 Luke 21:24; Isa 48:18; Isa 60:16
66:13 2 Cor 1:4; Isa 51:3; 1 Thess 2:7
66:14 Acts 3:19; Zech 10:7; Prov 3:8

65:24 *And it will be that before they call, I will answer* This is the opposite of 64:12, where God seemed silent. Even now our Father knows what we need before we ask (Matt 6:8). That should give us confidence in prayer today.
65:25 *Wolf and lamb will graze as one, and the lion like the ox will eat straw, and as for the snake, dust will be its food* This repeats 11:6-9. I take it as written. When Christ reigns, the curse on creation lifts (Rom 8:19-21). The serpent stays under its curse (Gen 3:14), and Satan is bound for the thousand years (Rev 20:2-3).
66:1 *The heavens are My throne, and the earth is the footstool of My feet* God is not rejecting the temple. He chose it and filled it with glory (1 Kgs 8:10-11). He warns against thinking a building can hold Him. Solomon said heaven cannot contain Him (1 Kgs 8:27), and Stephen quoted this verse at his trial (Acts 7:49-50).
66:2 *to the afflicted and stricken of spirit, and trembling at My word* God needs nothing from us. He looks for a heart broken over sin that takes Scripture seriously (Ps 51:17). You don't need to be important or impressive for God to notice you.
66:3 *He who slaughters the ox is like one who strikes down a man* Their offerings were right outwardly, but they had chosen their own ways and loved detestable things. Isaiah said the same in 1:11-15. Worship without a changed heart is not worship to God. It offends Him.
66:4 *because I called, and there was no one answering* God repeats the charge of 65:12. People receive the result of the path they insisted on. When you hear His voice, don't harden your heart (Heb 3:15).
66:5 *Let the LORD be glorified, that we may see your joy"; and they will be put to shame* The faithful are mocked and pushed out by their own brothers, as Jesus warned (John 16:2). If you are mocked for your faith, God sees it, and He will vindicate you.
66:6 *The sound of the LORD repaying recompense to His enemies* The mockers asked God to show Himself, and He does, in judgment. God may seem slow, but when He acts, everyone will hear it.
66:7 *Before she was in labor, she gave birth; before pain came to her, she delivered a male* I believe this points first to the Messiah born from Israel. In my Revelation study I noted how closely Revelation 12:2-5 echoes this. The woman stands for Israel, and her son who rules the nations is Jesus Christ.
66:8 *Will a land be brought forth in one day? Or will a nation be born at one time* Nations take generations to form. Teachers read the details differently, but in my view the fullest fulfillment comes at Christ's return, when Israel looks on Him whom they pierced (Zech 12:10) and all Israel is saved (Rom 11:26). The birth pains of the Tribulation will be short.
66:10 *Rejoice with Jerusalem and be glad in her, all who love her* Many have grieved over Jerusalem's long suffering, and Jesus wept over the city (Luke 19:41). God promises that grief will turn to joy.
66:12 *Look, I am extending to her peace like a river* Peace steady and full, never drying up, and the glory of the nations flowing in as in chapter 60. God's people are carried and bounced on the knee like little children.
66:13 *Like a man whom his mother comforts, so I will comfort you* God usually compares Himself to a father, but here to a mother. Isaiah 40 began with comfort, and near the end God is still comforting. Whatever you carry, He offers that kind of comfort (2 Cor 1:3-4).
66:14 *and the hand of the LORD will be made known to His servants, and He will be indignant against His enemies* Bones sprouting like grass picture new strength. The same coming of God brings joy to some and judgment to others.

The Final Word

15 For look, the LORD will come in fire, and His chariots ***will be*** like the storm wind, to render His anger with rage, and His rebuke with flames of fire. **16** For by fire the LORD will enter into judgment, and by His sword, with all flesh; and the slain of the LORD will be many. **17** Those who consecrate themselves and purify themselves ***to go*** to the gardens, following one in the midst, eating the flesh of the pig and the detestable thing and the mouse, will come to an end together, declares the LORD. **18** And I, their deeds and their thoughts ***I know***; ***the time*** is coming to gather all the nations and the tongues; and they will come and see My glory. **19** And I will set a sign among them, and I will send survivors from them to the nations: Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, those who draw the bow, Tubal (Tuval) and Greece (Yavan), the distant coastlands that have not heard My report and have not seen My glory; and they will declare My glory among the nations. **20** And they will bring all your brothers from all the nations ***as*** an offering to the LORD, on horses and in chariots and in wagons and on mules and on camels, to My holy mountain Jerusalem, says the LORD, just as the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) bring the grain offering in a clean vessel ***to*** the house of the LORD. **21** And also from them I will take for priests ***and*** for Levites, says the LORD. **22** For just as the new heavens and the new earth which I am making will stand before Me, declares the LORD, so your offspring and your name will stand. **23** And it will be that from new moon to new moon, and from Sabbath to Sabbath, all flesh will come to bow down before Me, says the LORD. **24** And they will go out and look on the corpses of the men who have transgressed against Me; for their worm will not die, and their fire will not be extinguished; and they will be an abhorrence to all flesh.

66:15 2 Pet 3:10; 2 Thess 1:8; 2 Thess 1:7
66:16 Rev 19:12; Rev 19:15; Rev 19:18
66:17 Isa 65:3,4; Lev 11:2-8; Deut 14:3-8
66:18 Rev 2:9; Rev 2:13; Luke 13:29
66:19 Rom 15:21; Luke 2:34; Matt 28:19
66:20 Rom 15:16; Luke 13:29; Luke 24:47
66:21 1 Pet 2:9; Rev 1:6; Luke 24:47
66:22 Rev 21:1; 2 Pet 3:13; John 10:27
66:23 Acts 2:17; Ezek 46:1,6; Ps 86:9
66:24 Mark 9:43-44; Mark 9:48; Rev 19:21

66:15 *For look, the LORD will come in fire, and His chariots will be like the storm wind* Paul describes Christ revealed from heaven in flaming fire (2 Thess 1:7-8). This is the second coming of Christ at the end of the Tribulation.
66:16 *For by fire the LORD will enter into judgment, and by His sword, with all flesh* This is the Day of the LORD, when the sword from Christ's mouth strikes down the nations gathered against Him (Rev 19:15, 21).
66:17 *eating the flesh of the pig and the detestable thing and the mouse* These were unclean under the Law (Lev 11). This repeats 65:3-4. The book won't end without making clear that idolatry has no future.
66:18 *the time is coming to gather all the nations and the tongues; and they will come and see My glory* Nothing is hidden from God. This reverses the scattering at Babel (Gen 11:9). John saw a multitude from every nation and tongue before the throne (Rev 7:9).
66:19 *and I will send survivors from them to the nations* Survivors of the judgment become missionaries to far peoples who never heard of Him. Tarshish was a far western port, Lud probably Lydia in Asia Minor, Tubal a people of Asia Minor, and Greece the Ionian Greeks. This was God's heart from Abraham on (Gen 12:3; 49:6), and the church carries it now (Matt 28:19).
66:20 *And they will bring all your brothers from all the nations as an offering to the LORD* The nations bring scattered Israel home like a grain offering in a clean vessel. Paul seems to draw on this when he calls his Gentile ministry an acceptable offering (Rom 15:16).
66:21 *And also from them I will take for priests and for Levites* Some take "them" as returning Israelites, others as the Gentiles who bring them. I lean toward the Gentiles, a stunning sign of grace, since under the Law only Levites served. Believers from every nation are now a royal priesthood (1 Pet 2:9; Rev 1:6).
66:22 *For just as the new heavens and the new earth which I am making will stand before Me, declares the LORD, so your offspring and your name will stand* Israel's future is as secure as the new creation itself (Jer 31:35-36). I see this reaching to the eternal new heaven and earth (Rev 21:1), with the Millennium as its first stage. Our lives are heading toward a world God has made new.
66:23 *from new moon to new moon, and from Sabbath to Sabbath, all flesh will come to bow down before Me* New moons and Sabbaths were Israel's set times of worship. This fits the Millennium, when the nations come up to worship the King (Zech 14:16). One day every knee will bow (Phil 2:10-11).
66:24 *for their worm will not die, and their fire will not be extinguished* Outside lie those slain at His coming (66:16; Rev 19:21). Jesus used these words for hell (Mark 9:48), pointing to the lake of fire (Rev 20:14-15). Isaiah began by calling sinners to reason with God (1:18) and ends with two destinies. The choice is still open. Come to Jesus, who was pierced for our transgressions (53:5).

JEREMIAH

Introduction

Title

The book is named for the prophet whose messages it holds, Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah. It is the second of the Major Prophets, after Isaiah and before Lamentations. They are called major because they are long, not because they matter more than the twelve shorter books. By number of words Jeremiah is the longest book in the Bible. Jeremiah has 52 chapters and 1,364 verses.

Author and Date

The book names its author in its first verse: "Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah, from the priests who were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin" (1:1). Anathoth was a small town a few miles north of Jerusalem. Jeremiah was a priest by family, but God called him to be a prophet. He dictated his messages to his helper Baruch the son of Neriah, a scribe (36:4). When King Jehoiakim cut up and burned that first scroll in 605 B.C., Jeremiah dictated it again, and many more words were added (36:32). Jeremiah's own words end at 51:64: "Thus far are the words of Jeremiah." Chapter 52 was added by another hand, most likely Baruch or another faithful scribe, and it is nearly the same as 2 Kings 24:18-25:30. Many modern scholars think the book grew over a long time and that later editors wrote many of its prose sermons in Jeremiah's name. I take the book at its word. It tells us plainly how Jeremiah's words were written down, by whom and when.

The book was written over Jeremiah's whole ministry, which began in 627 B.C. and ran past the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. The last messages came from Egypt, and chapter 52 was added after Jehoiachin's release about 560 B.C.

Background and Setting

God called Jeremiah in the thirteenth year of King Josiah, 627 B.C., while he was still young (1:2, 6). He preached through the reigns of Judah's last five kings. Dates here follow Edwin Thiele and those who built on his work. Josiah (about 640 to 609 B.C.) found the Book of the Law and led a great reform, but the hearts of the people did not change. Jehoahaz, also called Shallum (22:11), reigned three months in 609 B.C. and was taken to Egypt. Jehoiakim (about 609 to 598 B.C.) was Jeremiah's bitter enemy and burned his scroll. Jehoiachin, also called Coniah and Jeconiah (22:24; 24:1), reigned three months and was taken to Babylon in 597 B.C. Zedekiah (about 597 to 586 B.C.) asked Jeremiah for God's word more than once but would not obey it.

Assyria, which had destroyed the northern kingdom in 722 B.C., was dying. Nineveh fell in 612 B.C. In 605 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar crushed Pharaoh Neco at Carchemish (46:2), and from then on Babylon ruled the region. Babylon took captives from Jerusalem in 605 B.C. (when Daniel was taken), in 597 B.C. (when Jehoiachin and Ezekiel were taken), and in 586 B.C., when the city and temple were burned. Jeremiah often calls the Babylonians the Chaldeans. After the fall he stayed with the poor left in the land, and then he was forced to go to Egypt with those who fled after Gedaliah's murder (43:6-7). Scripture does not tell us how or when he died.

The book is arranged mostly by subject, not by date. Chapters 1-6 come largely from Josiah's days; much of 7-20 and chapters 22, 25, 26, 35, 36 and 45 from Jehoiakim's; chapters 21, 24, 27-29, 32-34 and 37-39 from Zedekiah's; and chapters 40-44 from after the fall. The old Greek translation gives a shorter form of the book, about one eighth shorter, and places the words against the nations after 25:13. The SLB follows the Hebrew text, as nearly all English Bibles do.

Themes

God gave Jeremiah a double work on the day He called him: "to pluck up and to pull down, and to destroy and to tear down, to build and to plant" (1:10). Four words tear down and two build up, and that is the shape of the book. Most of it exposes sin and warns of judgment. Judah had forsaken God, "a spring of living water" (2:13), for idols. The people trusted the temple instead of the LORD who lived there (7:4). The heart is deceitful (17:9), and the prophets, priests and kings led the people astray. For forty years Jeremiah called them to return, and they would not.

But judgment is not God's last word. He promised that the exile would last seventy years (25:11; 29:10), that He would bring His people home, and, above all in chapters 30-33, that He would make "a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah" (31:31), writing His law on their hearts. That promise was made to Israel, and I believe God will keep it to the nation in the last days, while all who trust Christ share in its forgiveness now. God also judges the nations, Babylon included, as the Judge of all the earth.

Jeremiah shows us what faithfulness looks like when it costs everything. He was beaten, put in stocks, jailed and thrown into a cistern. He wept over his people and argued honestly with God in his laments. God kept him through it all, just as He promised (1:8, 19).

Christ in Jeremiah

The clearest link is the new covenant. Jeremiah heard God promise a covenant that would forgive sin and remember it no more (31:31-34). The night before He died, Jesus took the cup and said, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood" (Luke 22:20), and Hebrews 8:8-12 quotes Jeremiah's promise in full. Jeremiah also promised a King from David's line, "a righteous Branch" (23:5), whose name would be "The LORD Our Righteousness" (23:5-6; 33:15-16). That King is Jesus, the Son of David. Matthew quotes Jeremiah when Herod killed the children of Bethlehem (Matt 2:17-18; Jer 31:15), and Jesus used Jeremiah's words from the temple sermon when He cleared the temple (Matt 21:13; Jer 7:11). Jeremiah himself is a picture of Christ in some ways: rejected by his own people, plotted against by his hometown, weeping over Jerusalem, and suffering for the truth. Some even thought Jesus was Jeremiah (Matt 16:14). But Jeremiah could only warn and weep. Jesus wept over the city and then gave His life for sinners.

Hard Passages

Why did God tell Jeremiah not to pray for the people (7:16; 11:14; 14:11)? Their sin had reached the point where judgment was fixed. The notes explain that this was for that moment and that people, not a rule for us today.

How could Jeremiah speak so harshly to God and even curse the day he was born (15:10-18; 20:7-18)? These laments are honest prayers from a suffering servant. God did not cast him off but called him back and renewed His promise (15:19-21).

The prophet's call to surrender to Babylon (21:9; 38:2) made him sound like a traitor. The notes show that Babylon was God's tool of judgment and that Jeremiah was trying to save lives.

Jeremiah 22:30 says none of Jehoiachin's offspring would sit on David's throne, yet Jesus descends from him (Matt 1:11-12). The notes give the common answer: Matthew traces Jesus' legal line through Joseph, while many believe Luke traces His physical line through Mary.

The time of Jacob's trouble (30:7), the new covenant (31:31-34) and the promises to David (33:14-26) are read differently by different teachers. The notes take them as promises to the nation of Israel, fulfilled in part at the return from exile and fully in the last days and the Messiah's kingdom, and they name the other views.

The words against the nations (chapters 46-51) are hard to read. The notes frame them as the justice of the Judge of all the earth and point out the promises of mercy to Egypt, Moab, Ammon and Elam. Babylon's fall in 539 B.C. is taken as the first fulfillment of chapters 50-51, with the full fulfillment in the Babylon of Revelation 17-18.

Some numbers and dates differ from 2 Kings, such as the deportation counts in 52:28-30 and the days in 52:12 and 52:31. The notes give the common explanations honestly.

Outline

I. The Call of the Prophet (1:1-19)
  A. Called before birth (1:1-10)
  B. The almond branch and the boiling pot (1:11-19)
II. Warnings to Judah and Jerusalem (2:1-25:38)
  A. Forsaking the spring of living water (2:1-3:5)
  B. Return, faithless Israel (3:6-4:4)
  C. Disaster from the north (4:5-6:30)
  D. The temple sermon and false trust (7:1-8:3)
  E. Sin, sorrow and the living God (8:4-10:25)
  F. The broken covenant and Jeremiah's complaints (11:1-12:17)
  G. Signs of judgment: the sash, the drought and the unmarried prophet (13:1-17:27)
  H. The potter, the flask and the stocks (18:1-20:18)
  I. Words to the last kings and the false prophets (21:1-23:40)
  J. The figs, the seventy years and the cup of wrath (24:1-25:38)
III. Conflict With Kings and False Prophets (26:1-29:32)
  A. Jeremiah on trial (26:1-24)
  B. The yoke of Babylon and Hananiah (27:1-28:17)
  C. The letter to the exiles (29:1-32)
IV. The Book of Comfort (30:1-33:26)
  A. The time of Jacob's trouble and healing (30:1-24)
  B. The new covenant (31:1-40)
  C. Jeremiah buys a field (32:1-44)
  D. The promise to David renewed (33:1-26)
V. The Last Days of Jerusalem and After (34:1-45:5)
  A. Broken promises and the faithful Rechabites (34:1-35:19)
  B. The king burns the scroll (36:1-32)
  C. Jeremiah imprisoned and the city taken (37:1-39:18)
  D. Gedaliah and his murder (40:1-41:18)
  E. The flight to Egypt (42:1-43:13)
  F. The queen of heaven in Egypt (44:1-30)
  G. A word to Baruch (45:1-5)
VI. Words Against the Nations (46:1-51:64)
  A. Against Egypt (46:1-28)
  B. Against the Philistines (47:1-7)
  C. Against Moab (48:1-47)
  D. Against Ammon, Edom, Damascus, Kedar, Hazor and Elam (49:1-39)
  E. Against Babylon (50:1-51:64)
VII. The Fall of Jerusalem (52:1-34)
  A. The city falls and the temple burns (52:1-27)
  B. The exiles numbered (52:28-30)
  C. Jehoiachin released (52:31-34)

JEREMIAH

JEREMIAH 1

The Call of Jeremiah

1 The words of Jeremiah (Yirmeyahu) the son of Hilkiah (Chilqiyahu), from the priests who ***were*** in Anathoth (Anatot) in the land of Benjamin (Binyamin), **2** to whom the word of the LORD came in the days of Josiah (Yoshiyahu) the son of Amon, king of Judah (Yehuda), in the thirteenth year of his reigning. **3** And it came in the days of Jehoiakim (Yehoyaqim) the son of Josiah, king of Judah, until the finishing of the eleventh year of Zedekiah (Tsidqiyahu) the son of Josiah, king of Judah, until the exile of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) in the fifth month. **4** And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **5** "Before I formed you in the belly I knew you, and before you came forth from ***the*** womb I consecrated you; a prophet to the nations I appointed you." **6** And I said, "Alas, Lord GOD! Look, I do not know ***how*** to speak, for I ***am*** a youth." **7** And the LORD said to me, "Do not say, 'I ***am*** a youth,' for to all to whom I send you, you will go, and all that I command you, you will speak. **8** Do not be afraid of their faces, for I ***am*** with you to deliver you," declares the LORD. **9** And the LORD stretched out His hand and touched my mouth, and the LORD said to me, "Look, I have put My words in your mouth. **10** See, I have appointed you this day over the nations and over the kingdoms, to pluck up and to pull down, and to destroy and to tear down, to build and to plant."

Two Visions

11 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, "What ***are*** you seeing, Jeremiah?" And I said, "I am seeing a rod of almond." **12** And the LORD said to me, "You have done well to see, for I ***am*** watching over My word to do it." **13** And the word of the LORD came to me a second ***time***, saying, "What ***are*** you seeing?" And I said, "I am seeing a pot blown upon, and its face ***is*** from the face of ***the*** north." **14** And the LORD said to me, "From the north the calamity will be opened on all the inhabitants of the land. **15** For look, I ***am*** calling to all the clans of the kingdoms of the north," declares the LORD, "and they will come, and they will set each one his throne ***at*** the entrance of the gates of Jerusalem, and against all its walls all around, and against all the cities of Judah. **16** And I will speak My judgments with them concerning all their evil, in that they have forsaken Me and have burned incense to other gods and have bowed down to the works of their

1:1 1 Chr 6:60; 2 Chr 36:21; Ezek 1:3
1:2 Matt 1:10; Jer 1:4,11; 1 Kgs 13:20
1:3 Matt 1:10; 2 Chr 36:5-8; Jer 25:1-3
1:4 Ezek 1:3; Ezek 3:16; Jer 1:2
1:5 Isa 49:1,5; Gal 1:15; Ps 71:5,6
1:6 Exod 6:12,30; Jer 32:17; 1 Kgs 3:7-9
1:7 Acts 9:15; Num 22:20,38; Jer 1:17,18
1:8 Josh 1:5,9; Exod 3:12; Luke 12:4,5
1:9 Exod 4:11,12; Ezek 3:10; Jer 5:14
1:10 2 Cor 10:4,5; Rev 11:3-6; Ezek 32:18
1:11 Amos 7:8; Amos 8:2; Zech 5:2
1:12 Deut 32:35; Ezek 12:22,23,25,28; Luke 10:28
1:13 2 Cor 13:1; 2 Cor 13:2; Ezek 11:3,7
1:14 Jer 4:6; Jer 10:22; Isa 41:25
1:15 Jer 25:9,28,31,32; Jer 39:3; Jer 4:16
1:16 Acts 7:41; Rev 9:20; Jer 19:4

1:1 *The words of Jeremiah* These are Jeremiah's words, and yet verse 2 says at once that "the word of the LORD came" to him. That is what a prophet is: a man whose words are God's words.

1:1 *from the priests who were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin* Anathoth was a small priests' town about three miles northeast of Jerusalem (Josh 21:18). Many think the family came from Abiathar, whom Solomon sent home to Anathoth (1 Kgs 2:26), but Scripture does not say so. This Hilkiah is probably not the high priest who found the Book of the Law (2 Kgs 22:8), though we cannot be sure.

1:2 *in the thirteenth year of his reigning* The thirteenth year of Josiah was 627 B.C. The word kept coming until Jerusalem went into exile in 586 B.C. (1:3). The heading skips Jehoahaz and Jehoiachin, who reigned only three months each. It marks the main span: forty years of warning a nation that would not listen.

1:5 *Before I formed you in the belly I knew you* To "know" here is the knowing of a personal choice (Amos 3:2). "Formed" is the potter's word, used of God forming Adam (Gen 2:7). To consecrate is to set apart for God's use. Jeremiah's call to be a prophet was special to him, as Paul's was (Gal 1:15). But the truth under it belongs to all of us. God forms each child in the womb and knows him before birth (Ps 139:13-16). That is why the unborn child is precious to God. Your parents may not have planned you, but God did.

1:5 *a prophet to the nations* He would speak mostly to Judah, but his words would reach Egypt, Moab, Edom, Babylon and the rest (chapters 46 to 51).

1:6 *Alas, Lord GOD* "Lord GOD" stands for Adonai Yahweh, Lord YHWH. "Youth" covered anyone from a boy to a young man not yet settled in life, and in that culture the young listened while the elders spoke. Moses gave nearly the same excuse (Exod 4:10).

1:8 *for I am with you to deliver you* God did not argue about Jeremiah's age or skill. He did not promise that people would listen or that Jeremiah would not suffer. He would be beaten, jailed and left in a muddy pit. God promised His presence and deliverance, and He kept that promise every time. Jesus gave His followers the same promise (Matt 28:20).

1:9 *Look, I have put My words in your mouth* When Isaiah was called, a seraph touched his lips (Isa 6:6-7). Here God touched Jeremiah's mouth Himself. This fulfills the promise that God would raise up prophets and put His words in their mouths (Deut 18:18). Jeremiah's worry was that he could not speak. God's answer was that the words would not be his.

1:10 *to pluck up and to pull down, and to destroy and to tear down, to build and to plant* Jeremiah never held an office or led an army. His authority was the word he carried. Four verbs tear down and two build up, and that is the shape of the whole book. God tears down so that He can build (24:6; 31:28). He often has to tear down our pride and our idols first, but He does not tear down to leave us in ruins.

1:11 *a rod of almond* A play on words. The almond tree is shaqed, the "wakeful" tree, the first to bloom in late winter. God says He is "watching" (shoqed) over His word. People mocked Jeremiah because his warnings seemed slow to come true (17:15), but God was not asleep. He does what He says, in His warnings and in His promises.

1:13 *a pot blown upon, and its face is from the face of the north* A large cooking pot over a fanned fire, tipped toward the south. Babylon lay east, but the desert between was impassable for an army, so invaders came around by the north. Jeremiah speaks often of the enemy "from the north" (4:6; 6:1, 22), and later names it: Babylon (20:4).

1:15 *they will set each one his throne at the entrance of the gates of Jerusalem* The gate was where judgment was given. Foreign kings in Jerusalem's gates meant they would pass sentence. It came true in 586 B.C. when Babylon's officials sat in the middle gate (39:3).

1:16 *they have forsaken Me and have burned incense to other gods* The root of it all was forsaking the LORD. Idolatry fills the empty place when we leave God. People do not stop worshiping. They worship something smaller, something their own hands made.

hands. **17** And you, you will gird your loins, and you will arise, and you will speak to them all that I command you. Do not be dismayed before them, lest I dismay you before them. **18** And I, look, I have made you this day into a fortified city and into an iron pillar and into bronze walls against all the land, against the kings of Judah, against its officials, against its priests, and against the people of the land. **19** And they will fight against you, and they will not prevail against you, for I ***am*** with you," declares the LORD, "to deliver you."

JEREMIAH 2

Forsaking the Spring of Living Water

1 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **2** "Go, and you will proclaim in the ears of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), saying, 'Thus says the LORD: I remember for you the steadfast love of your youth, the love of your betrothals, your walking after Me in the wilderness, in a land not sown. **3** Israel (Yisra'el) ***was*** holiness to the LORD, the first of His produce; all who devour it will be held guilty; calamity will come to them,' declares the LORD." **4** Hear the word of the LORD, O house of Jacob (Ya'aqov), and all the clans of the house of Israel. **5** Thus says the LORD: "What injustice did your fathers find in Me, that they went far from Me, and walked after vanity, and became vain? **6** And they did not say, 'Where ***is*** the LORD, who brought us up from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim), who led us in the wilderness, in a land of desert plain and pit, in a land of dryness and deep darkness, in a land ***that*** no one has passed through, and ***where*** no man has dwelt?' **7** And I brought you into the land of the fruitful field, to eat its fruit and its good things; and you came in and made My land unclean, and My inheritance you made into an abomination. **8** The priests did not say, 'Where ***is*** the LORD?' And those who handle the law did not know Me, and the shepherds transgressed against Me, and the prophets prophesied by Baal and walked after ***things that*** do not profit. **9** Therefore I will contend with you again," declares the LORD, "and with your sons' sons I will contend. **10** For pass over ***to*** the coasts of Cyprus (Kiti) and see, and send to Kedar (Qedar) and consider carefully, exceedingly, and see whether ***anything*** like this has happened. **11** Has a nation exchanged gods, and they ***are*** not gods? And My people has exchanged its glory for ***that which*** does not profit. **12** Be appalled, O heavens, at this, and shudder, be exceedingly desolate," declares the LORD. **13** "For My people has done two evils: they have forsaken Me, a spring of living water, to hew out for themselves cisterns, broken cisterns, which cannot hold the water. **14** ***Is*** Israel a slave? Or ***is*** he one born of ***the*** household? Why has he become plunder? **15** Against him young lions roar; they have given their voice, and they have made his land into a waste; his cities are burned, without inhabitant. **16** Also the sons of Memphis (Nof) and Tahpanhes (Tachpanches) will graze on you, ***on the*** crown ***of your head***. **17** Have you not done this to yourself by your forsaking the LORD your God at the time ***when*** He was leading you in the

1:17 1 Pet 1:13; 1 Kgs 18:46; Ezek 3:14-18
1:18 Jer 6:27; Isa 50:7; Jer 15:20
1:19 Josh 1:9; Jer 1:8; Jer 11:19
2:1 Jer 23:28; Jer 1:11; Jer 7:1
2:2 John 7:37; Ezek 16:8,22,60; Deut 2:7
2:3 James 1:18; Exod 19:5,6; Deut 7:6
2:4 Acts 2:36; Jer 5:21; Jer 7:2
2:5 Matt 15:8; Acts 22:7; 2 Kgs 17:15
2:6 Deut 32:10; Hos 13:4; Deut 8:14-16
2:7 Deut 8:7-9; Jer 16:18; Num 13:27
2:8 John 16:3; Rom 2:18; Hab 2:18
2:9 Ezek 20:35,36; Mic 6:2; Exod 20:5
2:10 Ps 120:5; Gen 10:4,5; Num 24:24
2:11 Jer 16:20; Isa 37:19; Ps 106:20
2:12 Isa 1:2; Jer 6:19; Jer 22:29
2:13 John 7:37; Rev 21:6; John 4:10
2:14 Exod 4:22; Isa 50:1; Gen 15:3
2:15 Jer 4:7; Jer 50:17; Isa 5:29
2:16 Jer 46:14,19; Isa 19:13; Jer 43:7-9
2:17 Jer 4:18; Lev 26:15-46; Deut 28:15-68

1:17 *you will gird your loins* Tuck the long robe into the belt so you can run or work or fight. Get ready for action. "Lest I dismay you" is a hard word: if fear of people ruled Jeremiah, God would let him be shaken before them. The fear of man is a trap (Prov 29:25).
1:18 *into a fortified city and into an iron pillar and into bronze walls* A young man who felt weak would stand like a fortress, and he would need to. Kings, officials, priests and people would all be against him.
1:19 *they will not prevail against you, for I am with you* The chapter ends where verse 8 did. Jeremiah's courage would come from God's presence, not his own strength. When we stand for the truth and feel outnumbered, we are not alone.
2:2 *I remember for you the steadfast love of your youth, the love of your betrothals* Steadfast love is hesed, loyal covenant love. God looks back to the exodus and the wilderness years as Israel's engagement, when she followed Him "in a land not sown," trusting Him for food and water. Israel grumbled often in those years, but she followed, and God remembers that.
2:3 *Israel was holiness to the LORD, the first of His produce* The firstfruits of the harvest belonged to God and were holy (Lev 23:10). Anyone who ate them without right was guilty. Israel belonged to God, and nations that tried to devour her would answer to Him. God has not given up His claim on Israel (Rom 11:28-29).
2:5 *What injustice did your fathers find in Me* God invites them to name one wrong He had done. They could not. "Vanity" is hebel, a breath or vapor, the word that runs through Ecclesiastes. People who worship nothing become empty themselves. We become like what we worship (Ps 115:8).
2:8 *The priests did not say, 'Where is the LORD?'* Every group of leaders failed. The priests stopped seeking Him, the teachers of the law did not know Him, the shepherds (kings and rulers) rebelled, and the prophets spoke by Baal, the Canaanite storm god thought to send rain and crops. When those who should lead people to God stop seeking Him, the whole nation drifts.
2:9 *I will contend with you* A law-court word. God is bringing charges.
2:10 *the coasts of Cyprus* From Cyprus in the west to Kedar in the eastern desert, search the world. Pagan nations stayed loyal to idols that were not gods at all. Israel traded the living God, her glory, for nothing. Paul describes the same exchange in Romans 1:23.
2:13 *they have forsaken Me, a spring of living water, to hew out for themselves cisterns, broken cisterns* The key verse of the chapter. Living water is running water, fresh and always flowing, and you do not have to make it. A cistern was a pit cut in rock to catch rain. It was hard work, the water went stale, and if the rock cracked it all drained away. The first evil was leaving God. The second was trying to replace Him. Idols, alliances with Egypt and Assyria, and their own plans were all broken cisterns.
2:13 *a spring of living water* We dig for satisfaction in money, success, pleasure, people, even religion without God, and the cisterns never hold. Jesus invited the thirsty to come to Him and drink (John 7:37-38), and said whoever drinks the water He gives will never thirst (John 4:13-14). The spring Israel left is open to us in Christ. Why keep digging?
2:14 *Is Israel a slave* Israel was God's own son (Exod 4:22), not a slave. Yet "young lions," the invading armies, roared at him. The northern kingdom had already fallen to Assyria in 722 B.C.
2:16 *the sons of Memphis and Tahpanhes* Two cities of Egypt. Judah trusted Egypt, and Egypt would turn on her. In 609 B.C. Pharaoh Neco killed Josiah and put Judah under tribute (2 Kgs 23:29-35).
2:17 *Have you not done this to yourself* Judah's troubles were not bad luck. They came from forsaking the LORD.

way? **18** And now, what ***is it*** to you ***to be*** on the way to Egypt, to drink the waters of the Shihor (Shichor)? And what ***is it*** to you ***to be*** on the way to Assyria (Ashur), to drink the waters of ***the*** River (Nahar)? **19** Your evil will discipline you, and your apostasies will rebuke you. And know and see that ***it is*** evil and bitter, your forsaking the LORD your God, and the dread of Me ***is*** not in you," declares the Lord GOD of armies.

Israel's Unfaithfulness

20 "For from long ago you broke your yoke; you tore off your bonds, and you said, 'I will not transgress.' For on every high hill and under every luxuriant tree you ***are*** lying down, playing the prostitute. **21** And I, I had planted you a choice vine, all of it a seed of truth. And how have you turned yourself, toward Me, ***into*** the degenerate ***shoots*** of the alien vine? **22** For though you wash with soda, and use much soap for yourself, your iniquity ***is*** stained before Me," declares the Lord GOD. **23** "How can you say, 'I have not made myself unclean; after the Baals I have not walked'? See your way in the valley; know what you have done, a swift young camel entwining her paths, **24** a wild donkey accustomed to ***the*** wilderness, in the desire of her soul she sniffs the wind; her heat, who can turn it back? All who seek her will not grow weary; in her month they will find her. **25** Withhold your foot from ***being*** barefoot, and your throat from thirst. And you said, '***It is*** hopeless! No, for I have loved strangers, and after them I will walk.' **26** Like the shame of a thief when he is found, so they have been put to shame, the house of Israel, they, their kings, their officials, and their priests and their prophets, **27** who say to the wood, 'You ***are*** my father,' and to the stone, 'You gave birth to us.' For they have turned to Me a back and not a face; and in the time of their calamity they will say, 'Arise and save us!' **28** And where ***are*** your gods which you made for yourself? Let them arise, if they can save you in the time of your calamity; for your gods have been ***as many as*** the number of your cities, O Judah (Yehuda). **29** Why do you contend with Me? All of you have transgressed against Me," declares the LORD. **30** "In vain I have struck your sons; they did not accept correction. Your sword has devoured your prophets like a destroying lion. **31** O generation, you, see the word of the LORD! Have I been a wilderness to Israel, or a land of deep darkness? Why have My people said, 'We have roamed free; we will not come to You again'? **32** Will a virgin forget her ornaments, a bride her sashes? And My people have forgotten Me days without number. **33** How you make your way good to seek love! Therefore you have also taught the wicked women your ways. **34** Also on your skirts is found the blood of the souls of the innocent needy; you did not find them breaking in, but on all these ***things***. **35** And you said, 'For I am innocent; surely His anger has turned back from me.' Look, I ***am*** entering into judgment with you because of your saying, 'I have not sinned.' **36** Why do you go about so much to change your way? Also by Egypt you will be ashamed, just as you were ashamed by Assyria. **37** Also from this ***one*** you will go out, and your hands ***will be*** on your head; for the LORD has rejected your objects of confidence, and you will not prosper by them."

2:18 Josh 13:3; Jer 2:36; Isa 31:1
2:19 Isa 3:9; Hos 5:5; Jer 4:18
2:20 Deut 12:2; Lev 26:13; Jer 30:8
2:21 Exod 15:17; Ps 80:8; Isa 5:4
2:22 Jer 17:1; Job 14:17; Hos 13:12
2:23 Jer 7:31; Prov 30:12,20; Gen 3:12,13
2:24 Jer 14:6; Job 11:12; Job 39:5-8
2:25 Deut 32:16; Jer 3:13; Jer 18:12
2:26 Jer 32:32; Ezra 9:7; Neh 9:32-34
2:27 Isa 26:16; Jer 10:8; Ps 115:4-8
2:28 Jer 11:13; Deut 32:37; Isa 45:20
2:29 Jer 5:1; Jer 6:13; Dan 9:11
2:30 Rev 16:9; Matt 23:36; Luke 11:50
2:31 Deut 32:15; Amos 1:1; Mic 6:9
2:32 Jer 3:21; Ps 106:21; Jer 2:11
2:33 Jer 2:23,36; Jer 3:1,2; Isa 57:7-10
2:34 Matt 23:35; Rev 18:24; 2 Kgs 21:16
2:35 Prov 28:13; Jer 2:23,29; Job 33:9
2:36 Jer 31:22; Hos 5:13; Hos 12:1
2:37 2 Sam 13:19; Jer 37:7-10; Jer 17:5

2:18 *to drink the waters of the Shihor* Running back and forth between Egypt and Assyria (the River is the Euphrates) were more broken cisterns.
2:19 *Your evil will discipline you* Often God's judgment is simply letting sin bring its own results. We reap what we sow, and sin is always "evil and bitter" in the end.
2:20 *you broke your yoke* An ox that breaks its yoke runs free, but it is no longer useful or safe. "I will not transgress" is likely I will not serve.
2:20 *playing the prostitute* The first of many places where Jeremiah calls idolatry spiritual adultery. God's covenant with Israel was like a marriage, and turning to other gods was unfaithfulness to Him. The picture also fit the facts, since worship at the high places, the hilltop shrines, often included sexual rites. God uses strong words because He takes our faithfulness seriously.
2:21 *I had planted you a choice vine* Compare Isaiah 5:1-7. The good vine had turned wild.
2:22 *though you wash with soda, and use much soap for yourself, your iniquity is stained before Me* We cannot scrub away our own sin. Only God can, and He has, through the blood of Jesus Christ (1 John 1:7).
2:23 *See your way in the valley* Most likely the valley of Hinnom outside Jerusalem, where they worshiped idols (7:31). Judah denied going after the Baals, and God pointed to the place.
2:24 *a wild donkey accustomed to the wilderness* A young camel running every way and a wild donkey in season sniffing the wind: Judah's chase after false gods was restless, driven by desire and out of control.
2:25 *It is hopeless! No, for I have loved strangers* This is what sin does when we keep feeding it. We stop thinking we can change, and then we stop wanting to.
2:27 *who say to the wood, 'You are my father,' and to the stone, 'You gave birth to us.'* They gave the honor of Creator and Father to a carved pole and a standing stone. Many people treat God this way, ignoring Him when life is good and expecting Him to come running in trouble. God answers, Where are your gods? Let them save you (2:28).
2:30 *Your sword has devoured your prophets like a destroying lion* Manasseh filled Jerusalem with innocent blood (2 Kgs 21:16), and tradition says Isaiah was killed in his days. Jesus mourned over Jerusalem as the city that kills the prophets (Matt 23:37).
2:31 *We have roamed free* Had God ever been a wilderness to them? They wanted independence from Him all the same.
2:32 *Will a virgin forget her ornaments, a bride her sashes* One of the saddest lines in the book. No bride forgets her wedding dress, but God's people forgot Him for days beyond counting.
2:34 *the blood of the souls of the innocent needy* They had not caught these poor people breaking in, which could excuse killing a thief at night (Exod 22:2). These were innocent people crushed by the powerful.
2:35 *I am entering into judgment with you because of your saying, 'I have not sinned.'* The most dangerous place a person can be is denying his sin. If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves, but if we confess, God is faithful to forgive (1 John 1:8-9).
2:37 *your hands will be on your head* A sign of grief and captivity (2 Sam 13:19). Anything we trust in place of God, He will one day take away.

JEREMIAH 3

Return, Faithless Israel

1 Saying, "Look, a man sends away his wife, and she goes from him and belongs to another man; will he return to her again? Will not that land be utterly polluted? And you, you have played the prostitute ***with*** many companions; and return to Me?" declares the LORD. **2** "Lift up your eyes to the bare heights and see: where have you not been lain with? By the roads you sat for them, like an Arab in the wilderness; and you have polluted ***the*** land with your prostitutions and with your evil. **3** And the showers have been withheld, and ***the*** spring rain has not come; and you have had the forehead of a prostitute woman; you refused to be ashamed. **4** Have you not just now called to Me, 'My father, You ***are*** the companion of my youth. **5** Will He keep ***anger*** forever? Will He watch ***it*** to perpetuity?' Look, you have spoken, and you have done the evil things, and you have been able." **6** And the LORD said to me in the days of Josiah (Yoshiyahu) the king, "Have you seen what apostate Israel (Yisra'el) has done? She ***has been*** going on every high hill and under every luxuriant tree, and she has played the prostitute there. **7** And I said, 'After she has done all these ***things***, she will return to Me.' And she did not return. And her treacherous sister Judah (Yehuda) saw ***it***. **8** And I saw that for all the causes ***for*** which apostate Israel committed adultery, I sent her away and gave her the document of her divorce; and treacherous Judah her sister was not afraid, and she went and played the prostitute, she also. **9** And it was, from the lightness of her prostitution, that she polluted the land, and she committed adultery with the stone and with the wood. **10** And also for all this her treacherous sister Judah did not return to Me with all her heart, but rather with falsehood," declares the LORD. **11** And the LORD said to me, "Apostate Israel has justified herself more than treacherous Judah. **12** Go, and you will proclaim these words toward the north, and you will say, 'Return, apostate Israel,' declares the LORD; 'I will not make My face fall on you, for I ***am*** loyal,' declares the LORD; 'I will not keep ***anger*** forever. **13** Only know your iniquity, that against the LORD your God you have transgressed, and you have scattered your ways to the strangers under every luxuriant tree, and to My voice you have not listened,' declares the LORD. **14** Return, O backsliding sons," declares the LORD, "for I, I have been husband over you; and I will take you, one from a city and two from a clan, and I will bring you ***to*** Zion (Tsiyon). **15** And I will give you shepherds according to My heart, and they will shepherd you ***with*** knowledge and insight. **16** And it will be, when you multiply and are fruitful in the land in those days," declares the LORD, "they will not say again, 'The ark of the covenant of the LORD,' and it will not come up on a heart, and they will not remember it, and

3:1 Matt 5:31; Matt 19:9; 1 Cor 7:11
3:2 Gen 38:14; Ezek 16:24,25; Jer 2:7
3:3 Jer 14:4,22; Lev 26:19; Deut 28:23
3:4 Jer 3:19; Jer 2:2; Jer 31:9,18-20
3:5 Isa 57:16; Jer 3:12; Ps 77:7-9
3:6 Jer 3:8,11-14; Jer 2:19; Jer 7:24
3:7 Ezek 16:46; 2 Kgs 17:13,14; 2 Chr 30:6-12
3:8 Deut 24:1; Jer 3:1; Isa 50:1
3:9 Jer 2:27; Jer 3:2; Isa 57:6
3:10 Hos 7:14; 2 Chr 34:33; Ps 78:36,37
3:11 Ezek 23:11; Hos 4:16; Hos 11:7
3:12 Ezek 33:11; Jer 3:18; 2 Kgs 17:6,23
3:13 Jer 3:25; Deut 30:1-3; Deut 12:2
3:14 Hos 2:19,20; Jer 31:32; Isa 54:5
3:15 Jer 23:4; John 21:16; Acts 20:28
3:16 John 4:21; Isa 65:17; Jer 30:19

3:1 *will he return to her again* The Law said a man who divorced his wife could not take her back after she married another (Deut 24:1-4). That law kept marriage from becoming a revolving door. By that standard Judah, who had gone after many gods, had no way back. Yet the chapter shows God's grace going beyond what the Law allowed. That is the wonder of the gospel.
3:1 *you have played the prostitute with many companions* God is not teaching about human divorce here, or speaking about any woman's worth. He uses the closest human bond there is to show how deeply idolatry wounds Him. His love is like a faithful husband's love, and our turning to other gods is that personal.
3:2 *Lift up your eyes to the bare heights and see* The bare hilltops were the sites of the high places. She waited for her lovers "like an Arab in the wilderness," like a desert raider waiting by the road.
3:3 *the showers have been withheld, and the spring rain has not come* The Law warned that drought would follow idolatry (Deut 11:16-17). The Baals were supposed to bring rain, and they brought none. Still Judah had a face that would not blush.
3:4 *My father, You are the companion of my youth* The kind of repentance God rejects: pious words with no change of life. "You have spoken, and you have done the evil things." Many think this points to the days after Josiah's reform, when the temple was cleaned up but hearts stayed the same.
3:6 *apostate Israel* Apostate means one who has turned away from the faith. Israel here is the northern kingdom, the ten tribes that broke away after Solomon.
3:8 *I sent her away and gave her the document of her divorce* The exile of the northern kingdom to Assyria in 722 B.C. (2 Kgs 17:6-18). Judah watched it and learned nothing. It is far worse to sin after watching God judge the same sin in someone else.
3:10 *did not return to Me with all her heart, but rather with falsehood* Josiah's reform was real for Josiah. He tore down the high places and cleansed the temple (2 Kgs 23). For many of the people it was outward only. They went along with the king, and their hearts did not change.
3:11 *Apostate Israel has justified herself more than treacherous Judah* Israel was not innocent, but Judah had more light, more warnings and a godly king, and she faked her return. Pretended repentance is worse in God's eyes than open rebellion. Jesus said much the same of cities that saw His miracles and did not repent (Matt 11:20-24).
3:12 *proclaim these words toward the north* The northern tribes had been in exile about a hundred years, and God still called them home. "Loyal" comes from the same root as hesed. God keeps His covenant when His people do not.
3:13 *Only know your iniquity* Repentance begins with honesty. God does not ask us to fix ourselves before we come. He asks us to tell the truth about what we have done (1 John 1:9).
3:14 *I have been husband over you* The word can also mean master or owner. He still claims them. "One from a city and two from a clan" is a remnant, a faithful few, gathered one by one to Zion.
3:15 *I will give you shepherds according to My heart* The bad shepherds of 2:8 would be replaced. God gave some good leaders after the exile, like Zerubbabel, Ezra and Nehemiah, but the full meaning points to the Messiah, the Good Shepherd (23:4-6; John 10:11).
3:16 *The ark of the covenant of the LORD* The ark was the gold-covered chest holding the tablets of the Law, kept in the Most Holy Place as the throne of God's presence. A day is coming when no one will miss it, because all Jerusalem will be "The throne of the LORD." Scripture does not tell us what became of the ark. It was most likely destroyed or taken when Babylon burned the temple in 586 B.C.

they will not miss ***it***, and it will not be made again. **17** At that time they will call Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) 'The throne of the LORD,' and all the nations will be gathered to it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem; and they will not walk again after the stubbornness of their evil heart. **18** In those days the house of Judah will walk with the house of Israel, and they will come together from the land of ***the*** north to the land that I gave as an inheritance to your fathers.

A Call to Come Home

19 And I, I said, 'How I will set you among the sons and give you a land of desire, an inheritance of the beauty of the beauties of nations!' And I said, 'You will call Me, My father, and from after Me you will not turn back.' **20** Surely ***as*** a woman deals treacherously from her companion, so you have dealt treacherously with Me, O house of Israel," declares the LORD. **21** A voice on the bare heights is heard, the weeping of the supplications of the sons of Israel; for they have perverted their way, they have forgotten the LORD their God.

22 "Return, O backsliding sons; I will heal your apostasies."
"Look, we have come to You, for You ***are*** the LORD our God. **23** Truly, ***it is*** for falsehood, from the hills ***and the*** tumult ***on the*** mountains; truly in the LORD our God ***is*** the salvation of Israel. **24** And the shameful thing has consumed the toil of our fathers from our youth, their flock and their herd, their sons and their daughters. **25** Let us lie down in our shame, and let our disgrace cover us; for against the LORD our God we have sinned, we and our fathers, from our youth even until this day, and we have not listened to the voice of the LORD our God."

JEREMIAH 4

Circumcise Your Hearts

1 "If you return, O Israel (Yisra'el)," declares the LORD, "to Me you will return; and if you remove your detestable things from before Me, and you do not wander, **2** and you swear, 'As the LORD lives,' in truth, in justice, and in righteousness, then nations will bless themselves in Him, and in Him they will boast." **3** For thus says the LORD to the man of Judah (Yehuda) and to Jerusalem (Yerushalayim): "Break up for yourselves unplowed ground, and do not sow among thorns. **4** Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, and remove the foreskins of your heart, O man of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, lest My rage go forth like fire and burn, and there be no one who quenches ***it***, because of the evil of your deeds."

Disaster From the North

5 Declare in Judah, and in Jerusalem make ***it*** heard, and say, "Blow a trumpet in the land"; call out, fill ***your voice***, and say, "Gather yourselves, and let us go into the fortified cities." **6** Lift up a standard toward Zion (Tsiyon); take refuge, do not stand still; for I ***am*** bringing calamity from the north, and great destruction. **7** A lion has gone up from his thicket, and a destroyer of nations has set out; he has gone out from his place to make your land into a waste; your cities will be laid in ruins, without inhabitant. **8** For this gird yourselves ***with*** sackcloth; mourn and wail; for the burning of the anger of the LORD has not turned back from us. **9** "And it will be in that day," declares the LORD, "***that*** the heart of the king will perish, and the heart of the officials; and the priests will be

3:17 Rom 11:26; Jer 17:12; Ezek 43:7
3:18 Rom 11:26; Jer 50:4,20; Hos 1:11
3:19 Rom 11:26; 2 Cor 6:18; 1 Pet 1:17
3:20 Rom 11:26; Jer 5:11; Isa 48:8
3:21 Rom 11:26; Jer 31:9,18-20; Isa 15:2
3:22 Matt 13:15; Rom 11:26; Hos 6:1
3:23 Rom 11:26; Ps 121:1,2; Ps 3:8
3:24 Hos 9:10; Jer 11:13; Ezek 16:61,63
3:25 Jer 22:21; Jer 2:26; Jer 6:26

4:1 Joel 2:12; Jer 3:1,14; Gen 35:2
4:2 John 4:23; Isa 65:16; Jer 9:24
4:3 Hos 10:12; Matt 13:7,22; Mark 4:7,18,19
4:4 Col 2:11; Deut 10:16; Jer 9:26
4:5 Jer 8:14; Jer 6:1; Josh 10:20
4:6 Jer 50:2; Jer 1:13-15; Jer 4:21
4:7 Jer 5:6; Jer 2:15; Jer 25:9
4:8 Jer 6:26; Isa 22:12; Isa 32:11
4:9 Acts 13:41; Isa 22:3-5; Isa 29:9,10

3:17 *all the nations will be gathered to it* This did not happen in the return from Babylon. The ten tribes were not gathered as a nation, and the nations did not stream to Jerusalem with changed hearts. I believe this points to the thousand-year reign of Jesus Christ from Jerusalem (Isa 2:2-4; Zech 14:16). Some read it as fulfilled spiritually in the church, but the details are about Jerusalem, Judah, Israel and the land, and I take it as God's promise to Israel that He will keep.
3:18 *the house of Judah will walk with the house of Israel* The divided kingdom will be one again in its land (Ezek 37:15-28).
3:19 *You will call Me, My father* God tells what He had longed to do: treat Israel as a beloved child and give her the most beautiful land among the nations.
3:20 *so you have dealt treacherously with Me* God's heart is open here. This is not a cold judge reading charges but a Father and Husband who has been betrayed.
3:22 *Return, O backsliding sons; I will heal your apostasies* God answers their weeping at once. He does more than forgive. He heals the sickness that made them wander.
3:24 *the shameful thing* A name for Baal. Idolatry ate up everything their fathers worked for, even their children.
3:25 *against the LORD our God we have sinned, we and our fathers* This is what real repentance sounds like, the opposite of verses 4-5 and 10. It blames no one else, admits a long history, and names the root: "we have not listened." God gave His people the words to say. When we come to Him honestly, He always receives us (Luke 15:20-24).

4:1 *If you return, O Israel* Real repentance is not just turning away from something. It is turning back to Someone. They were to put away their "detestable things," the idols, and stop wandering.
4:2 *then nations will bless themselves in Him* To swear "As the LORD lives" in truth was to confess Him as the true God. Then the promise to Abraham would come to life, that all nations would be blessed through his seed (Gen 12:3; 22:18). When God's people walk with Him, others see Him. When they do not, His name is dragged through the mud (Rom 2:24).
4:3 *Break up for yourselves unplowed ground* Hard ground gone wild will not take seed, and seed among thorns is choked. Judah's heart had to be broken up before God's word could take root (Hos 10:12). Jesus told a parable of seed on hard ground and among thorns (Matt 13:3-9).
4:4 *remove the foreskins of your heart* Circumcision was the sign of God's covenant with Abraham (Gen 17:10-11). God always wanted more than the outward sign. He wanted a heart cut free from sin and given to Him (Deut 10:16; 30:6). Real circumcision is of the heart, by the Spirit (Rom 2:28-29). His "rage" is not a temper tantrum but holy anger against evil.
4:5 *Blow a trumpet in the land* Jeremiah speaks like a watchman on the wall. When an army came, country people ran for the walled towns. A "standard" (4:6) was a flag on a pole showing where to run.
4:7 *a destroyer of nations has set out* Not named yet, but this is Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon.
4:8 *gird yourselves with sackcloth* Rough goat-hair cloth worn in mourning. Notice "from us." Jeremiah does not stand apart from his people. He grieves with them.

appalled, and the prophets will be astounded." **10** And I said, "Alas, Lord GOD! Truly You have utterly deceived this people and Jerusalem, saying, 'Peace will be yours,' and a sword has reached to the soul." **11** At that time it will be said to this people and to Jerusalem, "A scorching wind of the bare heights in the wilderness ***is on*** the way of the daughter of My people, not to winnow and not to cleanse, **12** a wind too full for these ***things*** will come for Me; now I also, I will speak judgments with them." **13** Look, like clouds he goes up, and like the storm wind ***are*** his chariots; his horses are swifter than eagles. Woe to us, for we are devastated! **14** Wash your heart from evil, O Jerusalem, so that you may be saved. Until when will your thoughts of wickedness lodge in your inner being? **15** For a voice declares from Dan, and proclaims trouble from the hill country of Ephraim (Efrayim). **16** Make ***it*** known to the nations, look; proclaim against Jerusalem, "Besiegers are coming from the land of the distance, and they have given their voice against the cities of Judah. **17** Like guards of a field they are against her all around, for she has rebelled against Me," declares the LORD. **18** Your way and your deeds have done these ***things*** to you. This ***is*** your evil, for ***it is*** bitter, for it has reached to your heart.

Jeremiah's Anguish

19 My inward parts, my inward parts! I writhe! The walls of my heart! My heart is in turmoil within me; I cannot keep silent; for you have heard the sound of a trumpet, O my soul, the shout of battle. **20** Destruction on destruction is proclaimed, for all the land is devastated; suddenly my tents are devastated, in a moment my curtains. **21** Until when will I see a standard, ***and*** hear the sound of a trumpet? **22** "For My people ***is*** foolish; they do not know Me; they ***are*** foolish sons, and they ***are*** not understanding; they ***are*** wise to do evil, and to do good they do not know." **23** I looked at the earth, and look, ***it was*** formlessness and emptiness; and to the heavens, and their light ***was*** not. **24** I looked at the mountains, and look, they ***were*** quaking, and all the hills shook to and fro. **25** I looked, and look, there ***was*** no man, and all the birds of the heavens had fled. **26** I looked, and look, the fruitful field ***was*** the wilderness, and all its cities were pulled down from before the LORD, from before the burning of His anger. **27** For thus says the LORD: "All the land will be a desolation, and I will not make a complete end. **28** For this the land will mourn, and the heavens above will be dark, because I have spoken, I have purposed, and I have not relented, and I will not turn back from it." **29** From the sound of ***the*** horseman and ***the*** archer every city is fleeing; they have gone into the thickets, and they have gone up on the rocks; every city ***is*** abandoned, and there ***is*** not a man dwelling in them. **30** And you, O devastated one, what will you do? Though you clothe ***yourself in*** scarlet, though you adorn ***yourself with*** ornaments of gold, though you tear open your eyes with paint, in vain you make yourself beautiful; lovers reject you; they seek your life. **31** For I have heard a sound like a sick ***woman***, distress like one bearing her first child, the sound of the daugh-

4:10 Jer 5:12; Jer 1:6; Jer 14:13
4:11 Jer 8:19; Jer 9:1,7; Jer 14:17
4:12 Jer 1:16; Ezek 5:8; Ezek 6:11-13
4:13 Isa 5:28; Isa 19:1; Isa 66:15
4:14 Mark 7:21; James 4:8; Isa 55:7
4:15 Jer 8:16; Jer 6:1; Judg 18:29
4:16 Jer 5:15; Ezek 21:22; Isa 39:3
4:17 Luke 21:22; Luke 21:24; Jer 5:23
4:18 Jer 2:17,19; Ps 107:17; Isa 50:1
4:19 Isa 16:11; Isa 22:4; Jer 9:1,10
4:20 Ps 42:7; Jer 4:6; Jer 17:18
4:21 Jer 4:5,6,19; Jer 6:1; 2 Chr 35:25
4:22 John 16:3; 1 Cor 1:20; Luke 16:8
4:23 Acts 2:19; Luke 21:26; Mark 13:24,25
4:24 Isa 5:25; Ezek 38:20; Jer 10:10
4:25 Hos 4:3; Zeph 1:2,3
4:26 Ps 107:34; Jer 12:4; Jer 14:2-6
4:27 Jer 5:10,18; Jer 30:11; Jer 46:28
4:28 Jer 12:4; Hos 4:3; Isa 50:3
4:29 Isa 2:19-21; Jer 39:4-6; Jer 52:7
4:30 Rev 17:4; Rev 17:16; Rev 17:18
4:31 Matt 21:5; Matt 2:18; Isa 1:15

4:10 *Truly You have utterly deceived this people and Jerusalem* One of the hardest lines in the book. The false prophets had been saying, "Peace will be yours." God had told the truth for years through Jeremiah, but He let the false prophets speak and let the people believe what they wanted to hear, as a judgment on those who refuse the truth (1 Kgs 22:19-23; 2 Thess 2:10-12). God does not lie (Num 23:19; Titus 1:2). Jeremiah takes his anguish to God, which is the right place for our confusion. Some read the verse as a question or as Jeremiah's mistaken complaint.
4:11 *not to winnow and not to cleanse* Farmers used a gentle breeze to blow chaff from grain. This would be a hot desert wind, too strong for that work, sent to judge.
4:13 *his horses are swifter than eagles* Babylon's army would roll in like a storm. Habakkuk, living at the same time, describes their horses the same way (Hab 1:8).
4:14 *Wash your heart from evil, O Jerusalem, so that you may be saved* Even with the enemy on the move, it was not too late. Evil thoughts were like guests that had moved in and would not leave. Repentance throws them out.
4:15 *a voice declares from Dan* Dan was the far northern edge of the land, then Ephraim closer still, like messengers running from town to town ahead of the enemy.
4:17 *Like guards of a field* Men camped around a field to protect a crop. These "guards" were there to keep the people in.
4:18 *Your way and your deeds have done these things to you* Not bad luck or politics, but the harvest of sin.
4:19 *My inward parts, my inward parts! I writhe!* Jeremiah doubles over in pain. This is why he is called the weeping prophet. He did not stand above his people pointing a finger. He stood with them and broke inside. That is the heart every pastor and Christian should have toward a world under judgment. Jesus had it when He wept over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41-44).
4:22 *they are wise to do evil, and to do good they do not know* Clever in sin and clueless about righteousness. Paul wanted the opposite for believers (Rom 16:19).
4:23 *it was formlessness and emptiness* The same two Hebrew words as Genesis 1:2, tohu and bohu. Four times Jeremiah says "I looked," and he sees creation run backward: no light, quaking mountains, no man, no birds, the fruitful field a wilderness. This is poetry describing Judah after Babylon came. When God's people reject their Creator, everything good He made begins to come apart.
4:23 *I looked at the earth* Some have used this verse for a gap of long ages between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2. I do not think Jeremiah is speaking of that. The context is the invasion of Judah and "the burning of His anger" (4:26). Others see the words also looking ahead to the day of the LORD, when heaven is darkened and earth shaken (Isa 13:10; Matt 24:29). The words fit that day, but the first meaning is the coming ruin of Judah.
4:27 *I will not make a complete end* A ray of light. Even in His anger God keeps a remnant, because His promises to Abraham and David cannot fail (5:10, 18; 30:11; 46:28).
4:28 *I have spoken, I have purposed, and I have not relented* There comes a point when warnings have been rejected so long that judgment is fixed. Judah was close to it.
4:30 *in vain you make yourself beautiful* Jerusalem is pictured trying to save herself with scarlet, gold and eye paint, as cities tried to win invaders or allies with gifts and charm. The nations she flirted with would turn on her.
4:31 *the sound of the daughter of Zion gasping for breath* "Daughter of Zion" is a tender name for Jerusalem. The chapter ends with the cry of a woman in labor. Sin always promises beauty and ends in pain.

ter of Zion gasping for breath; she spreads out her hands: "Woe to me now, for my soul faints before murderers!"

JEREMIAH 5

Not One Who Does Justice

1 Rove about in the streets of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), and see, please, and know, and search in its open places, if you can find a man, if there is one who does justice, who seeks faithfulness, and I will forgive it. **2** And though they say, "As the LORD lives," therefore they swear to falsehood. **3** O LORD, ***are*** not Your eyes on faithfulness? You struck them, and they did not writhe; You brought them to an end; they refused to accept correction; they made their faces stronger than rock; they refused to return. **4** And I, I said, "Surely these ***are*** poor; they have acted foolishly, for they do not know the way of the LORD, the judgment of their God. **5** I will go for myself to the great ***ones***, and I will speak with them, for they, they know the way of the LORD, the judgment of their God." Surely they altogether had broken the yoke, had torn off the bonds. **6** Therefore a lion from the forest has struck them; a wolf of the desert plains will devastate them; a leopard ***is*** watching over their cities; everyone who goes out from them will be torn in pieces; for their transgressions are many, their apostasies are numerous. **7** "How, for this, can I forgive you? Your sons have forsaken Me and have sworn by ***those that are*** not gods. And I satisfied them, and they committed adultery, and ***to*** the house of a prostitute they thronged. **8** They have been well-fed horses, lustful; each one neighs to the wife of his neighbor. **9** Will I not punish for these ***things***?" declares the LORD. "Or on a nation which ***is*** like this, will My soul not avenge itself? **10** Go up among its vine rows and destroy, and do not make a complete end; remove its tendrils, for they ***are*** not the LORD's. **11** For the house of Israel (Yisra'el) and the house of Judah (Yehuda) have utterly dealt treacherously with Me," declares the LORD. **12** They have denied the LORD, and they have said, "Not He! And harm will not come on us, and sword and famine we will not see. **13** And the prophets will become wind, and the word ***is*** not in them. Thus let it be done to them." **14** Therefore thus says the LORD God of armies: "Because you have spoken this word, look, I am making My words in your mouth into a fire, and this people wood, and it will consume them. **15** Look, I am bringing on you a nation from afar, O house of Israel," declares the LORD. "It ***is*** an enduring nation; it ***is*** a nation from long ago, a nation whose language you do not know, and you do not hear what it says. **16** Its quiver ***is*** like an open grave; all of them ***are*** mighty men. **17** And it will devour your harvest and your food; they will devour your sons and your daughters; it will devour your flock and your herd; it will devour your vine and your fig tree; it will shatter the cities of your fortifications in which you are trusting, with the sword. **18** And also in those days," declares the LORD, "I will not make a complete end with you. **19** And it will be, when you say, 'Why has the LORD our God done all these ***things*** to us?' then you will say to them, 'Just as you forsook Me and served gods of foreignness in your land, so you will serve strangers in a land ***that is*** not yours.'

5:1 2 Chr 16:9; Ezek 22:30; Gen 18:23-32
5:2 Titus 1:16; Jer 4:2; Jer 7:9
5:3 Luke 8:6; Rev 16:9; 2 Chr 16:9
5:4 Jer 8:7; Hos 4:6; Isa 27:11
5:5 James 2:5-7; Amos 4:1; Mic 3:1
5:6 Jer 4:7; Hab 1:8; Zeph 3:3
5:7 Matt 23:37; Josh 23:7; Deut 32:21
5:8 Jer 13:27; Gen 39:9; Exod 20:14,17
5:9 Jer 9:9; Jer 5:29; Jer 23:2
5:10 Jer 4:27; Jer 39:8; Ps 78:61,62
5:11 Jer 3:6-11,20; Isa 48:8; Hos 5:7
5:12 2 Chr 36:16; Jer 5:31; Jer 4:10
5:13 Jer 14:13,15; Job 8:2; Jer 18:18
5:14 Rev 11:5; Jer 1:9; Jer 23:29
5:15 Deut 28:49; Jer 4:16; Isa 5:26
5:16 Rom 3:13; Isa 5:28; Ps 5:9
5:17 Lev 26:16; Deut 28:30,31,33; Judg 6:3,4
5:18 Jer 5:10; Jer 4:27; Ezek 9:8
5:19 1 Kgs 9:8,9; Jer 13:22; Jer 22:8,9

5:1 *if you can find a man, if there is one who does justice* God would have spared Sodom for ten righteous people (Gen 18:23-32). Here He offers to spare Jerusalem for one. That shows how ready God is to forgive and how deep the rot had gone. Jeremiah and a few others, like Baruch and Ebed-melech, were faithful, so the search is about the city's public life and its people at large.
5:2 *they swear to falsehood* They used God's name in their most solemn promises, and the promises were lies. Religious on the outside, dishonest at the core.
5:3 *You struck them, and they did not writhe* God disciplined them, and they felt nothing. They set their faces like rock. God disciplines those He loves, for our good (Heb 12:5-11). The right response is to be trained by it, not to harden ourselves.
5:5 *I will go for myself to the great ones* Maybe the poor had never been taught. But the leaders, who knew the most, had thrown off God's yoke just as completely. Knowledge without obedience is worse than ignorance, because it is willful (James 4:17).
5:6 *a lion from the forest* Lion, wolf and leopard picture the enemy armies waiting to tear apart anyone who went out.
5:7 *How, for this, can I forgive you* Not that God was unable to forgive, but that they gave Him no ground, because they would not repent. He filled them with good things, and they used His gifts to sin. "The house of a prostitute" can mean both pagan shrines and real immorality.
5:8 *They have been well-fed horses, lustful* Prosperity had made them like animals in season, chasing other men's wives. When people forget God, sexual sin is never far behind (Rom 1:24-25).
5:9 *Will I not punish for these things* God asks it twice in this chapter (5:29). His justice requires it.
5:10 *do not make a complete end; remove its tendrils, for they are not the LORD's* God speaks to the invaders like workers in a vineyard. Prune the wild branches that do not belong to Him. The vine itself would survive.
5:12 *They have denied the LORD, and they have said, "Not He!"* They did not deny that God existed. They denied that He would act. That is a common kind of unbelief, even among religious people. Peter warned that mockers would say the same about Christ's return (2 Pet 3:3-4).
5:13 *the prophets will become wind* Wind is ruach, which also means spirit. They said Jeremiah was all hot air.
5:14 *I am making My words in your mouth into a fire, and this people wood* They called his words wind. God would make them fire. The words they mocked would come true and burn them up.
5:15 *a nation whose language you do not know* Moses warned of exactly this (Deut 28:49-52). Babylon was an old nation with roots going back to Babel (Gen 11:9), and its language, Akkadian, was strange to Judah. Paul applies a similar warning from Isaiah in 1 Corinthians 14:21.
5:16 *Its quiver is like an open grave* Every arrow meant a death. Four times the enemy will "devour" (5:17). Whatever we trust in place of God will fail us.
5:18 *I will not make a complete end with you* The third time God promises a remnant (4:27; 5:10). He is angry, but He is faithful.
5:19 *so you will serve strangers in a land that is not yours* The punishment fit the sin. They wanted foreign gods in God's land, so God would send them to serve foreigners in a foreign land.

A Stubborn and Rebellious Heart

20 Declare this in the house of Jacob (Ya'aqov), and proclaim it in Judah, saying, **21** 'Hear this, please, O foolish people, and without heart; eyes they have, and they do not see; ears they have, and they do not hear. **22** Do you not fear Me?' declares the LORD. 'Or do you not tremble before Me, who appointed the sand ***as*** a boundary for the sea, a perpetual decree, and it will not pass over it? And they shook back and forth, and they will not prevail; and its waves roar, and they will not pass over it. **23** And this people has a stubborn and rebellious heart; they have turned aside and have gone away. **24** And they have not said in their heart, "Let us fear, please, the LORD our God, who gives rain, autumn rain and spring rain in its time, the weeks of the appointments of harvest He keeps for us." **25** Your iniquities have turned these aside, and your sins have withheld the good from you. **26** For wicked ***men*** are found among My people; he watches like the bending down of fowlers; they set a trap; they catch men. **27** Like a cage full of birds, so their houses ***are*** full of deceit; therefore they have become great and have grown rich. **28** They have grown fat; they have become sleek; also they have passed beyond matters of evil; they have not pleaded the cause, the cause of the fatherless, that they may prosper; and the justice of the needy they have not judged. **29** Will I not punish for these ***things***?' declares the LORD. 'Or on a nation which ***is*** like this, will My soul not avenge itself? **30** An appalling and horrible thing has occurred in the land: **31** the prophets have prophesied with falsehood, and the priests rule by their hands, and My people have loved ***it*** so. And what will you do at its end?'"

JEREMIAH 6

Jerusalem Under Siege

1 Flee for refuge, O sons of Benjamin (Binyamin), from the midst of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), and in Tekoa (Teqoa) blow a trumpet, and over Beth-haccherem (Bet-Hakerem) raise a signal; for calamity has looked down from the north, and great destruction. **2** The lovely and the dainty one, I have likened the daughter of Zion (Tsiyon). **3** To her shepherds and their flocks will come; they will pitch tents against her all around; they will graze, each one ***at*** his hand. **4** Consecrate battle against her; arise, and let us go up at noon. Woe to us, for the day has turned, for the shadows of evening are stretched out. **5** Arise, and let us go up in the night, and let us destroy her fortresses. **6** For thus says the LORD of armies: "Cut down trees, and pour out a siege mound against Jerusalem. She ***is*** the city to be punished; all of her ***is*** oppression in her midst. **7** As a well keeps its water fresh, so she keeps her evil fresh; violence and devastation are heard in her; before My face continually ***are*** sickness and wound. **8** Let yourself be disciplined, O Jerusalem, lest My soul be alienated from you, lest I make you a desolation, a land not inhabited." **9** Thus says the LORD of armies: "They will thoroughly glean the remnant of Israel (Yisra'el) like the vine; return your hand like a grape gatherer over ***the*** branches." **10** To whom will I speak and give warning, that

5:21 Acts 28:26; John 12:40; Rom 11:8
5:22 Ps 119:120; Jer 10:7; Deut 28:58
5:23 Jer 6:28; Ps 95:10; Jer 5:5
5:24 Ps 147:8; Gen 8:22; Joel 2:23
5:25 Jer 3:3; Jer 2:17-19; Deut 28:23,24
5:26 Prov 1:11,17,18; Jer 18:22; Jer 4:22
5:27 Rev 18:2; Prov 1:11-13; Hos 12:7,8
5:28 Deut 32:15; Isa 1:23; Zech 7:10
5:29 Jer 5:9; Mal 3:5; Jer 9:9
5:30 Jer 23:14; Hos 6:10; Jer 2:12
5:31 2 Pet 2:1; Ezek 13:6; Jer 14:14
6:1 Neh 3:14; Judg 1:21; 2 Sam 14:2
6:2 Jer 4:31; Isa 1:8; Isa 3:16,17
6:3 Luke 19:43; Nah 3:18; Jer 4:16,17
6:4 Jer 15:8; Joel 3:9; Zeph 2:4
6:5 Jer 52:13; Isa 32:14; Jer 9:21
6:7 Ezek 7:11,23; Jer 20:8; Isa 57:20
6:8 Matt 23:37; Ezek 23:18; Hos 9:12
6:9 Jer 16:16; Jer 49:9; Obad 1:5,6
6:10 Col 1:28; John 8:43; Acts 7:51,60

5:21 *eyes they have, and they do not see* This sounds like the idols of Psalm 115:5-6. They had become like what they worshiped. Jesus used similar words (Mark 8:18). "Without heart" means without understanding.
5:22 *who appointed the sand as a boundary for the sea* The waves roar but cannot cross the line God set (Job 38:8-11). The sea obeys its Creator. His people would not.
5:24 *autumn rain and spring rain in its time* Autumn rains in October and November softened the ground for planting. Spring rains in March and April brought the crops to harvest.
5:25 *your sins have withheld the good from you* When the rains failed, God had not become stingy. Their sins had blocked the blessing. Sin always costs us good things God wanted to give.
5:27 *Like a cage full of birds, so their houses are full of deceit* The rich caught men like fowlers catch birds and filled their houses with what they took.
5:28 *the cause of the fatherless* They looked successful, but orphans and the poor had no one to stand up for them. God has always cared how we treat the weak (Exod 22:22-24; Deut 10:18; James 1:27). A nation can be wealthy and religious and still be under judgment because it crushes the poor.
5:31 *and My people have loved it so* False prophets, self-serving priests, and the worst part: the people liked it. The lies were comfortable. Paul warned of people gathering teachers to tell them what their itching ears want (2 Tim 4:3-4).
5:31 *And what will you do at its end* When the comfortable lies fall apart, what then? The only safe place to stand at the end is on the truth of God's Word and the work of Christ.
6:1 *Flee for refuge, O sons of Benjamin, from the midst of Jerusalem* Jeremiah was a Benjamite, and Jerusalem sat on the border of Benjamin and Judah. People usually fled into Jerusalem when an enemy came. Now they are told to flee out of it. The city that seemed safest would be the most dangerous place to be.
6:1 *in Tekoa blow a trumpet* Tekoa, the hometown of Amos, lay about ten miles south of Jerusalem, and its name sounds like the Hebrew for blowing a trumpet. Beth-haccherem was a nearby hilltop for signal fires. The warning went south because the danger came from the north.
6:3 *To her shepherds and their flocks will come* Enemy kings and their armies, camping around Jerusalem and grazing her bare.
6:4 *Consecrate battle against her* Ancient armies offered sacrifices before battle. Armies usually rested at midday, but these were so eager they would attack at noon, and when evening came, they would attack by night. Babylon would be relentless.
6:6 *pour out a siege mound against Jerusalem* A ramp of dirt and timber built against the wall so soldiers and battering rams could reach the top. Here we learn who is giving the orders. God Himself stands behind Babylon's army.
6:7 *As a well keeps its water fresh, so she keeps her evil fresh* As a spring keeps pouring out new water, Jerusalem kept pouring out new evil, day after day.
6:8 *Let yourself be disciplined, O Jerusalem, lest My soul be alienated from you* Even now God pleads. His heart was still reaching for her.
6:9 *They will thoroughly glean the remnant of Israel like the vine* Gleaners went back over a vineyard for what pickers had left. The north was already gone. Now Judah, the remnant, would be picked clean.
6:10 *their ear is uncircumcised* Like their hearts (4:4), their ears were closed to God's word. Worse, it had "become a reproach to them." They mocked it. The man of Psalm 1:2 delights in God's law. What we delight in shows where our heart is.

they may listen? Look, their ear ***is*** uncircumcised, and they are not able to pay attention. Look, the word of the LORD has become a reproach to them; they do not delight in it. **11** And I am full of the rage of the LORD; I am weary of holding ***it*** in. "Pour ***it*** out on the child in the street, and on the gathering of young men together; for also a husband with a wife will be caught, the old with the one full of days. **12** And their houses will be turned over to others, fields and wives together; for I will stretch out My hand against the inhabitants of the land," declares the LORD. **13** "For from their least even to their greatest, every one ***is*** gaining unjust gain; and from prophet even to priest, every one ***is*** doing falsehood. **14** And they have healed the fracture of My people lightly, saying, 'Peace, peace,' and there ***is*** no peace. **15** Were they ashamed because they had done an abomination? They are not at all ashamed, and they do not know ***how*** to blush. Therefore they will fall among those who fall; at the time I punish them they will stumble," says the LORD.

The Ancient Paths

16 Thus says the LORD: "Stand by the roads and look, and ask for the paths of ancient time, where this ***is***, the good way, and walk in it, and find rest for your soul." And they said, "We will not walk ***in it***." **17** "And I raised up watchmen over you: 'Pay attention to the sound of the trumpet.'" And they said, "We will not pay attention." **18** "Therefore hear, O nations, and know, O congregation, what ***is*** in them. **19** Hear, O earth: look, I am bringing calamity on this people, the fruit of their schemes; for they have not paid attention to My words, and My law, they have rejected it. **20** Why ***is*** this to Me, frankincense ***that*** comes from Sheba (Sheva), and the good cane from a land of distance? Your burnt offerings ***are*** not for acceptance, and your sacrifices are not pleasing to Me." **21** Therefore thus says the LORD: "Look, I am giving stumbling blocks to this people, and they will stumble over them, fathers and sons together; a neighbor and his friend, and they will perish." **22** Thus says the LORD: "Look, a people is coming from the land of ***the*** north, and a great nation will be roused from the remotest parts of ***the*** earth. **23** They take hold of bow and javelin; it ***is*** cruel, and they have no mercy; their voice roars like the sea, and on horses they ride, arranged like a man for battle against you, O daughter of Zion." **24** We have heard the report of it; our hands hang limp; distress has taken hold of us, anguish like ***a woman*** giving birth. **25** Do not go out ***into*** the field, and do not walk on the road, for the enemy has a sword; terror ***is*** all around. **26** O daughter of my people, gird yourself ***with*** sackcloth and roll in ashes; make for yourself the mourning of an only ***child***, a wailing of bitterness; for suddenly the destroyer will come on us. **27** "I have made you an assayer among My people, a fortification, that you may know, and you will test their way. **28** All of them ***are*** the most stubborn of rebels, going about ***with*** slander; bronze and iron, all of them ***are*** destroyers. **29** The bellows puff; from the fire the lead is consumed; in vain someone has refined thoroughly, and the evil ***ones*** have not been separated. **30** They have called them rejected silver, for the LORD has rejected them."

JEREMIAH 7

The Temple Sermon

1 The word that came to Jeremiah (Yirmeyahu) from the

6:11 Acts 2:4; Jer 20:9; Jer 9:21
6:12 Jer 8:10; Isa 5:25; Deut 28:30-33,39-43
6:13 Heb 8:11; Jer 23:11; Jer 8:10
6:14 2 Pet 2:1; Ezek 13:10; Jer 23:17
6:15 Jer 3:3; Jer 8:12; Isa 3:9
6:16 Jer 18:15; Deut 32:7; Matt 11:29
6:17 Jer 25:4; Isa 58:1; Isa 21:11
6:18 Jer 4:10; Jer 31:10; Deut 29:24-28
6:19 Jer 8:9; Jer 22:29; Isa 1:2
6:20 Heb 10:5; Isa 1:11; Ps 40:6
6:21 Rom 9:33; 1 Pet 2:8; Rev 2:14
6:22 Jer 10:22; Jer 50:41-43; Jer 6:1
6:23 Luke 21:25; Luke 21:26; Isa 13:18
6:24 Jer 4:31; Jer 49:24; Jer 50:43
6:25 Jer 49:29; Jer 14:18; Jer 20:10
6:26 Jer 4:8; Zech 12:10; Jer 6:14
6:27 Jer 1:18; Jer 15:20; Ezek 3:8-10
6:28 Jer 9:4; Jer 5:23; Jer 18:18
6:29 Jer 9:7; Prov 17:3; Zech 13:9
6:30 Ps 119:119; Isa 1:22,25; Hos 9:17

6:11 *Pour it out on the child in the street* Jeremiah could not hold God's message in any longer (20:9). No age would escape. This is painful to read. When judgment comes on a nation, the innocent suffer with the guilty, and that is one reason sin is so terrible: its effects spread to everyone around it.
6:12 *their houses will be turned over to others* One of the covenant curses Moses warned about (Deut 28:30).
6:14 *they have healed the fracture of My people lightly, saying, 'Peace, peace,' and there is no peace* Like a doctor who puts a small bandage on a broken leg and says the patient is fine. That kind of preaching feels kind but is cruel, because it keeps people from real help. Any message that tells people they are fine without dealing with their sin is a light healing. The gospel begins with the bad news so that the good news of Christ can really heal.
6:15 *they do not know how to blush* When a person or a nation can no longer blush at sin, it is in grave danger.
6:16 *ask for the paths of ancient time, where this is, the good way* A traveler at a crossroads is told to stop, look and ask. The ancient paths are not just old traditions but the covenant way of trust and obedience that Abraham, Moses and David walked. Jesus used the same words when He promised rest for our souls to all who come to Him (Matt 11:28-29). The good way leads to Christ.
6:17 *We will not pay attention* Two invitations and two refusals. They were not confused about what God wanted. They knew, and they said no. The watchmen were prophets like Jeremiah.
6:19 *the fruit of their schemes* Their own plans had planted this harvest.
6:20 *frankincense that comes from Sheba, and the good cane from a land of distance* Frankincense was costly incense from southern Arabia, and the fragrant cane went into the holy anointing oil (Exod 30:23). They spared no cost on worship, but God did not want gifts without obedience (1 Sam 15:22). Church attendance, giving and worship songs mean nothing to Him if we reject His Word in daily life.
6:23 *it is cruel, and they have no mercy* Babylon's army, roaring like the sea.
6:25 *terror is all around* Jeremiah used the phrase so often it became a nickname for him (20:3, 10).
6:26 *the mourning of an only child* The deepest grief in that culture, because with an only child the family line ended.
6:27 *I have made you an assayer among My people* An assayer tested ore to see how much silver was in it. Jeremiah's preaching showed what the people were made of: bronze and iron, base metals.
6:29 *The bellows puff; from the fire the lead is consumed* Silver was refined by heating ore with lead, which carried off the impurities. The fire burned all the lead away, and still no silver came out. All God's warnings had produced nothing.
6:30 *They have called them rejected silver* The word for rejected sounds like the word for silver. God refines His people so their faith comes out pure (1 Pet 1:7; Mal 3:3). When people refuse the fire, there is nothing left but rejection.

LORD, saying, **2** "Stand in the gate of the house of the LORD, and you will proclaim there this word, and you will say, 'Hear the word of the LORD, all Judah (Yehuda), who come in through these gates to bow down to the LORD. **3** Thus says the LORD of armies, the God of Israel (Yisra'el): Make your ways and your deeds good, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. **4** Do not trust for yourselves in the words of falsehood, saying, "The temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD ***are*** these." **5** For if you thoroughly make your ways and your deeds good, if you thoroughly do justice between a man and his neighbor, **6** ***if*** you do not oppress the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow, and do not shed innocent blood in this place, and do not walk after other gods to your harm, **7** then I will cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, from long ago and until forever. **8** Look, you are trusting for yourselves in the words of falsehood, to no profit. **9** Will you steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear to falsehood, and burn incense to Baal, and walk after other gods whom you have not known, **10** and come and stand before Me in this house, on which My name is called, and say, "We are delivered," so as to do all these abominations? **11** Has this house, on which My name is called, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Also I, look, I have seen ***it***,' declares the LORD. **12** 'For go, please, to My place which ***was*** in Shiloh (Shilo), where I caused My name to dwell at the first, and see what I did to it because of the evil of My people Israel. **13** And now, because you have done all these deeds,' declares the LORD, 'and I spoke to you, rising early and speaking, and you did not listen, and I called you, and you did not answer, **14** then I will do to the house on which My name is called, in which you are trusting, and to the place which I gave to you and to your fathers, just as I did to Shiloh. **15** And I will cast you out from before My face, just as I cast out all your brothers, all the offspring of Ephraim (Efrayim).'"

Do Not Pray for This People

16 "And you, do not pray for this people, and do not lift up for them a cry and a prayer, and do not entreat Me, for I ***am*** not hearing you. **17** Are you not seeing what they are doing in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim)? **18** The sons are gathering wood, and the fathers are kindling the fire, and the women are kneading dough, to make cakes for the queen of the heavens; and ***they are*** pouring out drink offerings to other gods, so as to provoke Me to anger. **19** Are they provoking Me?" declares the LORD. "Is it not themselves, for the shame of their faces? **20** Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: 'Look, My anger and My rage ***are*** about to be poured out on this place, on mankind and on the animals, and on the trees of the field, and on the fruit of the ground; and it will burn and not be quenched.' **21** Thus says the LORD of armies, the God of Israel: 'Add your burnt offerings to your sacrifices, and eat

7:2 Jer 26:2; Jer 17:19; Jer 19:2,14
7:3 Jer 18:11; Jer 26:13; Jer 7:5-7
7:4 Acts 21:28; Mic 3:11; Jer 7:8
7:5 Acts 21:28; Jer 4:1,2; Isa 1:19
7:6 Matt 23:35; Acts 21:28; Jer 13:10
7:7 Deut 4:40; Jer 3:18; Jer 18:7,8
7:8 Rom 2:17; Jer 7:4; Isa 28:15
7:9 Rom 2:17; Matt 23:38; Rom 2:22
7:10 John 13:18; Matt 23:38; Acts 7:49
7:11 Matt 21:13; Mark 11:17; Luke 19:46
7:12 Matt 23:38; Acts 21:28; Josh 18:1
7:13 Acts 21:28; Isa 65:12; Jer 7:25
7:14 Jer 7:4,10; Deut 28:52; 2 Kgs 25:9
7:15 Acts 21:28; Jer 15:1; Jer 52:3
7:16 Exod 32:10; Jer 11:14; Jer 15:1
7:17 Jer 6:27; Ezek 8:6-18; Ezek 14:23
7:18 Jer 19:13; Jer 44:17-19,25; 1 Cor 10:22
7:19 1 Cor 10:22; Jer 2:17,19; Deut 32:16,21,22
7:20 Jer 42:18; Lam 2:3-5; Lam 4:11
7:21 Mark 12:33; Hos 8:13; Jer 6:20

7:2 *Stand in the gate of the house of the LORD* On feast days thousands streamed through the temple gates, and Jeremiah was to speak right where they entered. Chapter 26 tells of this same sermon, given "in the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim" (26:1), about 609 B.C. The priests and prophets demanded his death for it (26:8-11).
7:3 *Make your ways and your deeds good, and I will cause you to dwell in this place* God's promise of the land was tied to how they lived (Deut 4:40).
7:4 *The temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD are these* A slogan, almost a magic charm. About a hundred years earlier God had saved Jerusalem from Assyria in one night (2 Kgs 19:35), and many came to believe He would never let His city or temple fall, no matter what. A building cannot protect people who will not obey the God who lives there. A person can point to his church, his baptism or his believing family and feel safe while his life shows no faith at all. What saves is a living trust in God that changes how we live (James 2:17).
7:6 *the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow* The foreigner, the orphan and the widow had no one to stand up for them in court (Deut 10:18). Justice for the weak and faithfulness to God go side by side (Matt 22:37-40).
7:9 *Will you steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear to falsehood* A walk through the Ten Commandments (Exod 20:3-16). They broke them all week and then went to the temple and said, "We are delivered."
7:11 *Has this house, on which My name is called, become a den of robbers in your eyes* A den was the cave where robbers hid between raids. Judah robbed and murdered in the city and ran to the temple as a hideout. Six hundred years later Jesus drove the merchants from the temple and joined Isaiah 56:7 with this verse (Matt 21:13). The same sin came back, and the same end followed: Jeremiah's temple was burned, and the temple of Jesus' day was destroyed in A.D. 70.
7:12 *go, please, to My place which was in Shiloh* Shiloh, about twenty miles north of Jerusalem, held the tabernacle in the days of the judges (Josh 18:1; 1 Sam 1:3). In Eli's day Israel carried the ark into battle like a lucky charm and lost it (1 Sam 4), and God abandoned Shiloh (Ps 78:60). It was a ruin they could walk to in a day.
7:13 *rising early and speaking* A picture of how eager and constant God was in warning them. He kept sending word (7:25).
7:15 *all the offspring of Ephraim* Ephraim was the leading tribe of the northern kingdom, taken into exile by Assyria in 722 B.C.
7:16 *do not pray for this people* One of the hardest verses in Jeremiah, and God says it three times (11:14; 14:11). God would not need to say it if Jeremiah had not been praying. It was a word to a prophet about a generation whose judgment was fixed (15:1). It did not end God's care for individuals. Jeremiah kept praying (14:7-9), and God spared those who listened, like Ebed-melech (39:15-18) and Baruch (45:5). We do not know such things about anyone, so we pray for all people (1 Tim 2:1), even enemies (Matt 5:44), as Jesus prayed for those who crucified Him (Luke 23:34). If you have prayed for someone for years, keep going.
7:18 *to make cakes for the queen of the heavens* A whole-family project. The queen of heaven was most likely the Babylonian goddess Ishtar, called Astarte in Canaan, a goddess of love and fertility tied to the planet Venus. Some suggest another goddess such as Asherah or Anat. Chapter 44 tells more.
7:19 *Is it not themselves, for the shame of their faces* Their sin grieved God, but in the end they hurt themselves most. Sin always comes back on the sinner.
7:21 *Add your burnt offerings to your sacrifices, and eat flesh* The burnt offering was wholly burned for God. With bitter irony God says, eat that too. It means nothing to Me.

flesh. **22** For I did not speak with your fathers, and I did not command them in the day ***that*** I brought them out from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim), concerning matters of burnt offering and sacrifice. **23** But this thing I commanded them, saying, "Listen to My voice, and I will be God to you, and you, you will be a people to Me; and you will walk in all the way that I command you, so that it may go well for you." **24** And they did not listen, and they did not incline their ear, and they walked in counsels, in the stubbornness of their evil heart, and they went backward and not forward. **25** From the day that your fathers came out from the land of Egypt until this day, and I sent to you all My servants the prophets, day ***by day*** rising early and sending. **26** And they did not listen to Me, and they did not incline their ear, and they stiffened their neck; they did evil more than their fathers. **27** And you will speak all these words to them, and they will not listen to you; and you will call to them, and they will not answer you. **28** And you will say to them, "This ***is*** the nation that did not listen to the voice of the LORD its God, and did not accept correction; faithfulness has perished, and it has been cut off from their mouth." **29** Cut off your hair and throw ***it*** away, and take up a lamentation on the bare heights; for the LORD has rejected and has abandoned the generation of His fury.

The Valley of Slaughter

30 For the sons of Judah have done the evil in My eyes,' declares the LORD. 'They have put their detestable things in the house on which My name is called, to make it unclean. **31** And they have built the high places of the Topheth (Tofet), which ***is*** in the valley of the son of Hinnom (Hinom), to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire, which I did not command, and it did not come up on My heart.

32 Therefore look, days are coming,' declares the LORD, 'and it will no longer be said, "The Topheth," and "The valley of the son of Hinnom," but rather "The valley of the slaughter"; and they will bury in Topheth for lack of room. **33** And the corpses of this people will become food for the birds of the heavens and for the animals of the earth, and there ***will be*** no one who terrifies ***them***. **34** And I will cause to cease from the cities of Judah and from the streets of Jerusalem the sound of joy and the sound of gladness, the sound of ***the*** bridegroom and the sound of ***the*** bride; for the land will become a desolation.'"

JEREMIAH 8

1 "At that time," declares the LORD, "they will bring out the bones of the kings of Judah (Yehuda), and the bones of its officials, and the bones of the priests, and the bones of the prophets, and the bones of the inhabitants of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), from their graves. **2** And they will spread them out to the sun and to the moon and to all the host of the heavens, which they loved, and which they served, and which they walked after, and which they sought, and which they bowed down to. They will not be gathered, and they will not be buried; they will become dung on the face of the ground. **3** And death will be chosen rather than life by all the remnant who remain of this evil clan, in all the places that remain, where I have banished them," declares the LORD of armies.

7:22 Mark 12:33; Hos 6:6; 1 Sam 15:22
7:23 Mark 12:33; Exod 15:26; Deut 6:3
7:24 Luke 13:34; Deut 29:19; Jer 7:26
7:25 Jer 25:4; 2 Chr 36:15; Jer 32:30,31
7:26 Acts 7:51; Jer 16:12; Jer 7:24
7:27 Jer 1:7; Jer 26:2; Isa 50:2
7:28 Luke 11:51; Isa 59:14,15; Jer 2:30
7:29 Matt 12:39; Matt 16:4; Matt 23:36
7:30 Jer 32:34; Ezek 7:20; 2 Kgs 21:4,7
7:31 Deut 17:3; Jer 32:35; 2 Kgs 17:17
7:32 Jer 19:6; Jer 19:11,13; 2 Kgs 23:10
7:33 Rev 19:17; Deut 28:26; Jer 12:9
7:34 Rev 18:23; Rev 18:22; Ezek 26:13
8:1 Ezek 6:5; Jer 7:32-34; 1 Kgs 13:2
8:2 Acts 7:42; 2 Kgs 23:5; Jer 9:22
8:3 Rev 9:6; Job 7:15,16; Jer 23:3,8

7:22 *I did not command them in the day that I brought them out from the land of Egypt, concerning matters of burnt offering and sacrifice* God did give laws on sacrifice. But Hebrew often says not this but that when it means not mainly this but that. At Sinai God's first word was about obedience (Exod 19:5), and the sacrifices came as part of a life of listening to Him. Obedience was always the heart of the covenant (Hos 6:6; Matt 9:13).
7:26 *they stiffened their neck* Like an ox that will not bend to the yoke.
7:27 *they will not listen to you* God told Jeremiah ahead of time. Faithfulness, not success, is what God asks of His servants (1 Cor 4:2).
7:28 *faithfulness has perished* The word also means truth. It had disappeared from their mouths.
7:29 *Cut off your hair and throw it away* A sign of mourning (Job 1:20), on the very hills of her idolatry.
7:30 *They have put their detestable things in the house on which My name is called* Manasseh had put idols in the temple (2 Kgs 21:4-7), and it seems to have come back after Josiah.
7:31 *the high places of the Topheth, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire* The valley of Hinnom ran along the south and west of Jerusalem, and Topheth was a place in it, perhaps a fire pit or altar. There people sacrificed their own children to Molech (32:35) and Baal (19:5). Ahaz and Manasseh did it with their own sons (2 Kgs 16:3; 21:6). Josiah defiled Topheth to stop it (2 Kgs 23:10), but it came back. The Law forbade it in the strongest terms (Lev 18:21; Deut 12:31). God loves children, and Jesus took them in His arms and blessed them (Mark 10:16).
7:31 *which I did not command, and it did not come up on My heart* Ge Hinnom became Gehenna, the word Jesus used for hell (Matt 5:22). If this touches a wound for you, God's anger here is against those who killed children and kept on doing it. For anyone who comes to Him in repentance there is full forgiveness in Christ (1 John 1:9). And I believe little children who die are safe with God (2 Sam 12:23).
7:32 *The valley of the slaughter* So many would die in the siege that they would bury in Topheth. The place where they killed their children would become their own graveyard.
7:33 *the corpses of this people will become food for the birds of the heavens* To be left unburied was the deepest disgrace, one of the covenant curses (Deut 28:26).
7:34 *the sound of the bridegroom and the sound of the bride* No more weddings, no more laughter in the streets (16:9; 25:10). But in 33:10-11 God promises that the voice of the bridegroom and the bride will be heard in Jerusalem again.
8:1 *they will bring out the bones of the kings of Judah* Invading armies sometimes opened tombs to rob the treasure buried with the dead or to shame a conquered people.
8:2 *to the sun and to the moon and to all the host of the heavens, which they loved, and which they served* The host of heaven is the stars and planets. Five verbs show how fully Judah had worshiped the sky (2 Kgs 21:3-5; 23:5). Now their bones would lie before those same lights, and the lights would do nothing. Their gods could not even protect their graves.
8:3 *death will be chosen rather than life* Sin promises life and freedom. In the end it makes people wish they were dead.

A People Who Will Not Return

4 "And you will say to them, 'Thus says the LORD: Do they fall
and not rise? Does one turn away and not return? **5** Why has
this people, Jerusalem, turned away ***in*** an enduring apostasy?
They have kept hold of deceitfulness; they have refused to
return. **6** I have paid attention, and I have heard; they do not
speak ***what is*** right; there is no man who relents over his evil,
saying, "What have I done?" Every one ***is*** turning in their
course, like a horse rushing in the battle. **7** Even a stork in
the heavens knows her appointed times; and turtledove and
swift and crane keep the time of their coming; and My people
do not know the judgment of the LORD. **8** How can you say,
"We ***are*** wise, and the law of the LORD ***is*** with us"? Truly,
look, the stylus of falsehood of ***the*** scribes has made ***it*** into
falsehood. **9** The wise ***men*** are put to shame; they are dis-
mayed, and they have been captured. Look, they have
rejected the word of the LORD, and what wisdom do they
have? **10** Therefore I will give their wives to others, their
fields to those who dispossess, for from the small even to the
great, every one ***is*** gaining unjust gain; from prophet even to
priest, every one ***is*** doing falsehood. **11** And they have healed
the fracture of the daughter of My people lightly, saying,
"Peace, peace," and there ***is*** no peace. **12** Were they ashamed
because they had done an abomination? They are not at all
ashamed, and they do not know ***how*** to blush. Therefore they
will fall among those who fall; at the time of their punish-
ment they will stumble,' says the LORD. **13** 'Gathering, I will
make an end of them,' declares the LORD. 'There ***will be*** no
grapes on the vine, and no figs on the fig tree, and the leaf
will wither; and ***what*** I gave them will pass away from
them.'" **14** Why ***are*** we sitting? Gather yourselves, and let us
go into the fortified cities, and let us perish there; for the
LORD our God has silenced us, and has given us water of
poison to drink, for we have sinned against the LORD. **15** ***We***
waited for peace, and ***there was*** no good; for a time of heal-
ing, and look, terror. **16** From Dan the snorting of his horses
has been heard; at the sound of the neighings of his mighty
ones all the land has shaken; and they have come and have
consumed ***the*** land and what fills it, ***the*** city and those who
dwell in it. **17** "For look, I am sending among you snakes,
vipers, which have no charm, and they will bite you,"
declares the LORD.

Is There No Balm in Gilead?

18 My cheerfulness ***is*** upon sorrow; my heart ***is*** faint upon
me. **19** Look, the sound of the cry for help of the daughter of
my people from a land of distances: "***Is*** the LORD not in Zion
(Tsiyon)? ***Is*** her King not in her?" "Why have they provoked
Me to anger with their idols, with vanities of foreignness?"
20 ***The*** harvest has passed, ***the*** summer has come to an end,
and we, we have not been saved. **21** Over the fracture of the
daughter of my people I am broken; I mourn; horror has
taken hold of me. **22** Is there no balm in Gilead (Gilad)? Is

8:4 Prov 24:16; Mic 7:8; Hos 6:1
8:5 Jer 9:6; Zech 7:11; Hos 11:7
8:6 Ps 14:2; Mal 3:16; 2 Pet 3:9
8:7 Isa 1:3; Song 2:12; Jer 5:4
8:8 Rom 2:17; Rom 2:18; Rom 2:26
8:9 Mark 7:13; 1 Cor 1:19; 1 Cor 1:20
8:10 2 Pet 2:1; Jer 6:12; Deut 28:30-32
8:11 Jer 6:14; Lam 2:14; Jer 14:14,15
8:12 Jer 3:3; Jer 6:15; Isa 3:9
8:13 Matt 21:19; Joel 1:7,10-12; Isa 24:21,22
8:14 Jer 23:15; Jer 9:15; Jer 35:11
8:15 Jer 14:19; Jer 4:10; Mic 1:12
8:16 Judg 5:22; Judg 18:29; Jer 4:15,16
8:17 Deut 32:24; Ps 58:4,5; Eccl 10:11
8:18 Isa 22:4; Lam 1:16,17; Jer 6:24
8:19 Isa 39:3; Isa 13:5; Jer 4:16,17,30,31
8:20 Prov 10:5; Luke 13:25; Luke 19:44
8:21 Jer 14:17; Joel 2:6; Nah 2:10
8:22 Jer 46:11; Gen 37:25; Jer 30:12-17

8:4 *Do they fall and not rise? Does one turn away and not return* Common sense. A man who trips gets up. A traveler who takes a wrong turn turns back. Judah fell and stayed down.
8:6 *What have I done* No one stopped to ask the simple question that begins repentance. They rushed into sin like a war horse charging into battle, head down, into danger.
8:7 *Even a stork in the heavens knows her appointed times* Israel lies on one of the world's great bird migration routes, and every spring and fall storks, doves, swifts and cranes pass over right on schedule. Birds follow their Maker's design by instinct. God's people, who had His written Word, ignored His. The ox knows its owner, but Israel did not know Him (Isa 1:3).
8:8 *the stylus of falsehood of the scribes has made it into falsehood* A stylus was a pen. Judah was proud of having the law, and Josiah's reform had brought the Book of the Law back to the center of national life (2 Kgs 22-23). But the scribes twisted it with false teaching. It is possible to own Bibles, study them and teach them, and still bend them to say what we want.
8:9 *they have rejected the word of the LORD, and what wisdom do they have* Wisdom begins with the fear of the LORD (Prov 9:10). If we reject His Word, all our learning is foolishness (1 Cor 1:20).
8:11 *And they have healed the fracture of the daughter of My people lightly* Verses 10-12 repeat 6:12-15 almost word for word. Some truths need to be said over and over. God's patience shows in the repetition, and so does Judah's hardness.
8:13 *There will be no grapes on the vine, and no figs on the fig tree* "Gathering" is the harvest word. God came looking for fruit and found leaves. Jesus cursed a fig tree with leaves and no fruit as a sign against a Jerusalem that looked religious and bore no fruit (Mark 11:12-14, 20-21). God looks for fruit, not just leaves (John 15:2).
8:14 *for we have sinned against the LORD* They admit their sin only when it is too late to escape. There is a sorrow that comes only from getting caught. Paul calls it "the grief of the world produces death" (2 Cor 7:10), as opposed to godly sorrow that leads to repentance.
8:15 *We waited for peace, and there was no good* They believed the false prophets, and the promised peace never came.
8:16 *From Dan the snorting of his horses has been heard* Dan was the northern border where invaders entered (4:15).
8:17 *snakes, vipers, which have no charm* Snake charmers could calm some snakes. These could not be charmed. Babylon could not be bought off or talked out of it, like the snakes God sent when Israel rebelled in the wilderness (Num 21:6).
8:18 *My cheerfulness is upon sorrow* The Hebrew is hard to translate, but the meaning is clear: Jeremiah is overwhelmed with grief.
8:19 *Is the LORD not in Zion? Is her King not in her* The exiles cannot understand how this happened. God answers with His own question. He had been in Zion, and they pushed Him out with their idols. The problem was never God's absence but their unfaithfulness.
8:20 *The harvest has passed, the summer has come to an end, and we, we have not been saved* Probably a common saying. Grain came in late spring and fruit at the end of summer. If both failed, there was nothing for the winter. Season after season passed with no rescue. There is a time to respond to God, and it does not last forever. Paul says, "now is a day of salvation" (2 Cor 6:2). Do not wait until the harvest is past.
8:21 *Over the fracture of the daughter of my people I am broken* Jeremiah takes his people's wound on himself.
8:22 *Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there* Gilead, east of the Jordan, was famous for balm, a healing ointment from tree resin (Gen 37:25). The cure was available, but the people would not come. The physician was the LORD Himself, who heals His people (Exod 15:26). The old spiritual answers the question: there is a balm in Gilead. For us the balm is Jesus Christ, the physician for the sick (Matt 9:12), by whose wounds we are healed (Isa 53:5; 1 Pet 2:24).

there no physician there? For why has the healing of the daughter of my people not come up?

JEREMIAH 9

Jeremiah Weeps for His People

1 Who will give ***that*** my head ***be*** water, and my eye a fountain of tears, that I may weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people! **2** Who will give me in the wilderness a lodging place of travelers, that I may leave my people and go from them! For all of them ***are*** adulterers, an assembly of treacherous ***men***. **3** And they have bent their tongue, their bow of falsehood; and not for faithfulness are they strong in the land; for from evil to evil they have gone out, and Me they do not know, declares the LORD. **4** Take heed, each one, of his neighbor, and do not rely on any brother; for every brother surely supplants, and every neighbor goes about ***as*** a slanderer. **5** And each one deceives his neighbor, and they do not speak truth; they have taught their tongue to speak falsehood; they weary themselves committing iniquity.
6 Your dwelling ***is*** in the midst of deceit; through deceit they refuse to know Me, declares the LORD. **7** Therefore thus says the LORD of armies: "Look, I am refining them, and I will test them; for how will I act because of the daughter of My people? **8** Their tongue ***is*** a beaten arrow; it speaks deceit; with his mouth one speaks peace with his neighbor, and in his inner being he sets his ambush. **9** Will I not punish them for these ***things***?" declares the LORD. "Or on a nation which ***is*** like this, will My soul not avenge itself?" **10** Over the mountains I will take up weeping and wailing, and over the pastures of the wilderness a lamentation, for they are burned up, without anyone passing through, and they do not hear the sound of livestock; from the birds of the heavens even to the animals, they have fled, they have gone. **11** "And I will make Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) into heaps of stones, a habitation of jackals; and the cities of Judah (Yehuda) I will make a desolation, without inhabitant." **12** Who ***is*** the wise man, that he may understand this? And ***who is he*** to whom the mouth of the LORD has spoken, that he may declare it? Why has the land perished, ***and*** been burned up like the wilderness, without anyone passing through? **13** And the LORD said, "Because they have forsaken My law which I set before them, and they have not listened to My voice, and they have not walked in it, **14** and they have walked after the stubbornness of their heart, and after the Baals, which their fathers taught them, **15** therefore thus says the LORD of armies, the God of Israel (Yisra'el): 'Look, I am feeding them, this people, wormwood, and I will give them water of poison to drink. **16** And I will scatter them among the nations which they have not known, they and their fathers; and I will send the sword after them until I have made an end of them.'" **17** Thus says the LORD of armies: "Consider, and summon the wailing women, that they may come; and send to the skillful women, that they may come; **18** and let them hasten, and let them take up a wailing over us, that our eyes may run down ***with*** tears, and our eyelids flow ***with*** water. **19** For a sound of wailing has been heard from Zion (Tsiyon): 'How we are devastated! We are exceedingly ashamed, for we have left ***the*** land, for they have cast down our dwellings.'" **20** For hear, O women, the word of the LORD, and let your ear receive the word of His mouth; and teach your daughters a mourning song, and each woman her neighbor a lamentation. **21** For death has come up into our windows; it has come into our fortresses, to cut off ***the*** child from ***the*** street, young men

9:1 Jer 13:17; Isa 22:4; Lam 2:11,18,19
9:2 Jer 5:7,8; Jer 23:10; Hos 4:2
9:3 Mark 8:38; John 8:54; Matt 10:32
9:4 Eph 4:25; Ps 12:2,3; Prov 26:24,25
9:5 Eph 4:25; Mic 6:12; Job 15:5
9:6 John 7:28; Jer 13:10; Job 21:14,15
9:7 Isa 1:25; Mal 3:3; Isa 48:10
9:8 Ps 28:3; Jer 9:3,5; Ps 12:2
9:9 Jer 5:9,29; Isa 1:24
9:10 Jer 12:4,10; Hos 4:3; Jer 7:29
9:11 Isa 25:2; Jer 51:37; Isa 34:13
9:12 Matt 24:15; Ps 107:43; Hos 14:9
9:13 2 Chr 7:19; Jer 22:9; Deut 31:16,17
9:14 Jer 7:24; Jer 3:17; Rom 1:21-24
9:15 Rev 8:11; Jer 8:14; Ps 80:5
9:16 Lev 26:33; Ezek 5:2,12; Jer 44:27
9:17 2 Chr 35:25; Eccl 12:5; Job 3:8
9:18 Jer 14:17; Jer 9:1; Isa 22:4
9:19 Matt 2:18; Jer 4:13,20,30; Ezek 7:16-18
9:20 Matt 2:18; Isa 32:9-13; Job 22:22
9:21 Matt 2:18; Jer 6:11; Jer 15:7

9:1 *Who will give that my head be water, and my eye a fountain of tears* The reason Jeremiah is called the weeping prophet. Ordinary weeping was not enough for his grief. He preached judgment and wept over it, and those belong together. If we speak of God's judgment without tears, we have not understood it. Jesus wept over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41), and Paul had constant pain in his heart for his people (Rom 9:2-3).
9:2 *Who will give me in the wilderness a lodging place of travelers* A bare desert shelter for caravans. Jeremiah loved his people and was also worn out by them. Anyone who has loved someone caught in sin knows both feelings. God records both. We do not have to pretend with Him.
9:3 *they have bent their tongue, their bow of falsehood* The chapter focuses on one sin above all, lying. Their tongues were bows shooting lies like arrows.
9:4 *every brother surely supplants* The word behind the name Jacob, who cheated his brother (Gen 27:36). Every brother had become a Jacob.
9:5 *they weary themselves committing iniquity* They worked at sin until they were tired from it. When lying becomes normal, no one can trust anyone.
9:6 *through deceit they refuse to know Me* Lies and knowing God cannot live together, because God is truth (John 14:6).
9:7 *I am refining them, and I will test them* God as refiner again (6:27-30). What else could He do with a people like this?
9:8 *Their tongue is a beaten arrow* An arrow hammered to a deadly point. They said "peace" while setting an ambush (Ps 28:3).
9:9 *Will I not punish them for these things* The third time God asks it (5:9, 29). A holy God cannot ignore sin forever.
9:11 *heaps of stones, a habitation of jackals* Jackals live in ruins. The proud capital would become rubble where wild dogs howled. Lamentations 5:18 describes exactly this after the fall.
9:13 *Because they have forsaken My law which I set before them* God answers His own question. They had His Word and threw it away.
9:14 *after the Baals, which their fathers taught them* Sin was handed down from parents to children. What we teach our children matters for generations, for good or evil.
9:15 *wormwood* A very bitter plant. Moses used the same picture of the bitter fruit of idolatry (Deut 29:18), and warned that God would scatter them among the nations (Deut 28:64). God did exactly what He said.
9:16 *until I have made an end of them* Strong words, yet God had promised not to make a complete end (4:27; 5:18). The judgment would be thorough for that generation, but a remnant would remain.
9:17 *summon the wailing women* Families hired professional mourners who knew the songs of grief and led the weeping, a custom still seen in parts of the Middle East. A great funeral was coming, and it was Judah's own.
9:19 *How we are devastated* "How" is the word that opens Lamentations (Lam 1:1), the sound of a city going into exile.
9:21 *death has come up into our windows* Death pictured as a thief climbing in. Walls and locks could not keep it out. So many would die that every woman would need to learn the mourning songs (9:20).

from the open places. **22** Speak thus, declares the LORD: "And the corpses of mankind will fall like dung on the face of the field, and like cut grain behind the reaper, and there ***will be*** no one who gathers ***them***."

Let Him Who Boasts Boast in This

23 Thus says the LORD: "Let not a wise ***man*** boast in his wisdom, and let not the mighty ***man*** boast in his might; let not a rich ***man*** boast in his riches; **24** but in this let him who boasts boast: ***in*** having insight and knowing Me, that I ***am*** the LORD who does steadfast love, justice, and righteousness on the earth; for in these I delight," declares the LORD. **25** "Look, days are coming," declares the LORD, "and I will punish every circumcised ***one*** in ***his*** foreskin: **26** on Egypt (Mitsrayim), and on Judah, and on Edom, and on the sons of Ammon (Amon), and on Moab (Mo'av), and on all who are cut ***at the*** corner, who dwell in the wilderness; for all the nations ***are*** uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel ***are*** uncircumcised of heart."

JEREMIAH 10

The Idols and the Living God

1 Hear the word which the LORD has spoken to you, O house of Israel (Yisra'el). **2** Thus says the LORD: "Do not learn the way of the nations, and do not be dismayed at the signs of the heavens, for the nations are dismayed at them. **3** For the statutes of the peoples, it ***is*** vanity; for a tree from a forest someone has cut down, the work of the hands of a craftsman with an axe. **4** With silver and with gold he beautifies it; with nails and with hammers they fasten it, and it will not totter. **5** They ***are*** like a scarecrow of a cucumber field, and they do not speak; they must surely be carried, for they do not step. Do not be afraid of them, for they do no harm, and also doing good is not in them." **6** There is none like You, O LORD; You ***are*** great, and Your name ***is*** great in might. **7** Who would not fear You, O King of the nations? For to You it is fitting; for among all the wise of the nations and in all their kingdom ***there is*** none like You. **8** And in one they are stupid and foolish; the instruction of vanities, it ***is*** wood. **9** Beaten silver is brought from Tarshish, and gold from Uphaz (Ufaz), the work of a craftsman and of the hands of a refiner; violet and purple ***are*** their clothing; the work of skilled ***ones are*** all of them. **10** And the LORD ***is the*** true God; He ***is*** a living God and an everlasting King. At His wrath the earth quakes, and nations will not endure His indignation. **11** Thus you shall say to them: "The gods who did not make the heavens and the earth shall perish from the earth and from under these heavens." **12** ***He is*** the Maker of the earth by His power, the Establisher of the world by His wisdom, and by His under-

9:22 Jer 8:2; Jer 16:4; Jer 25:33
9:23 1 Cor 1:19; 1 Cor 1:20; 1 Cor 1:21
9:24 1 Cor 1:31; 2 Cor 10:17; Matt 11:27
9:25 Acts 7:51; Rom 2:8,9,25,26; Ezek 28:10
9:26 Acts 7:51; Acts 2:10; Acts 2:36
10:1 Jer 13:15-17; Jer 22:2; Jer 42:15
10:2 Luke 21:25; Luke 21:26; Lev 20:23
10:3 1 Pet 1:18; Isa 44:9-20; Isa 45:20
10:4 Isa 40:19,20; Isa 46:7; Ps 115:4
10:5 1 Cor 12:2; Isa 41:23,24; Hab 2:19
10:6 Exod 15:11; Ps 48:1; Ps 96:4
10:7 Rev 15:4; 1 Cor 1:20; Ps 22:28
10:8 Rev 9:20; Jer 10:14; Isa 41:29
10:9 Rev 9:20; Ps 115:4; Dan 10:5
10:10 1 John 5:20; 1 Tim 1:17; 1 Tim 6:15
10:11 Acts 7:50; Ps 96:5; Isa 2:18
10:12 Gen 1:1,6-9; Job 9:8; Isa 40:22

9:22 *like cut grain behind the reaper, and there will be no one who gathers them* Bodies lying in rows like cut grain with no one to bury them. God gave this terrible picture so people would turn before it happened.

9:23 *Let not a wise man boast in his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast in his might; let not a rich man boast in his riches* To boast is to find your worth and confidence in something. Judah had wisdom, might and riches, and all three were about to fail. Our world still says get smart, get strong, get rich, and you will be secure. God gives these things, but they make terrible gods. They cannot save us, and they can be taken in a day.

9:24 *in having insight and knowing Me* Not knowing about Him, but knowing Him, the way one knows a friend. Eternal life is to know the true God and Jesus Christ whom He sent (John 17:3). Paul counted all he once boasted in as loss compared to knowing Christ (Phil 3:7-8).

9:24 *that I am the LORD who does steadfast love, justice, and righteousness on the earth; for in these I delight* Hesed, justice and righteousness, and He does them "on the earth." He is not distant, and He loves to do these things. If we know Him, we will delight in them too, which is why knowing God and caring for the wronged go together (22:16). Paul quotes this verse (1 Cor 1:31; 2 Cor 10:17). Christ became for us wisdom from God, righteousness, holiness and redemption (1 Cor 1:30), so our boasting is in Him.

9:25 *I will punish every circumcised one in his foreskin* Those with the outward sign but not the inward reality. Several of these nations also practiced circumcision.

9:26 *all who are cut at the corner* Desert tribes who trimmed the hair at their temples as a religious custom, forbidden to Israel (Lev 19:27). Judah is listed among the pagan nations: the outward sign meant nothing without a heart given to God (4:4). Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but a new creation (Gal 6:15).

10:2 *Do not learn the way of the nations* God's people were to be different (Rom 12:2).

10:2 *do not be dismayed at the signs of the heavens* The Babylonians were famous for astrology. They watched eclipses, comets and planets and believed these controlled the future. The stars are not gods. God made them and rules them (Gen 1:14-16). Many still read horoscopes and fear omens. The child of God has no reason to.

10:3 *a tree from a forest someone has cut down* Like Isaiah (Isa 44:9-20), Jeremiah describes an idol being made step by step, with quiet mockery in every line. A god is made from firewood and then nailed down so it will not tip over.

10:5 *They are like a scarecrow of a cucumber field* Sticks and rags that look like a man from far off. The true God carries His people (Isa 46:3-4). Idols have to be carried by theirs. An idol can neither hurt nor help. It is nothing (1 Cor 8:4), though demons stand behind idol worship (1 Cor 10:19-20). Its danger is what it does to the one who trusts it.

10:7 *Who would not fear You, O King of the nations* The idols belonged to the nations, but the LORD is King over them. Seeing how empty idols are should turn us to worship. Revelation 15:4 echoes this verse in the song of Moses and the Lamb.

10:9 *Beaten silver is brought from Tarshish, and gold from Uphaz* Tarshish was a distant port, probably in Spain. Where Uphaz was is not known. Violet and purple were the costly royal dyes. The best materials and finest craftsmen still made a dead thing.

10:10 *the LORD is the true God; He is a living God and an everlasting King* Three titles that answer the idols. They are false, dead and rot away. He is true, living and everlasting. The idol cannot stand without nails. The LORD shakes the earth.

10:11 *The gods who did not make the heavens and the earth shall perish* This verse is in Aramaic, the common language of trade and government, which Babylonians could understand. God gave His people a message for their neighbors in their own language. Some critics call it a later insertion, but it reads as a planned word for the exiles. The test of a real God is whether He made heaven and earth. We too should be ready to give an answer (1 Pet 3:15) in words people understand.

10:12 *He is the Maker of the earth by His power* Power, wisdom and understanding all show in creation (Prov 3:19; Rom 1:20).

standing He stretched out the heavens. **13** At the sound of His giving forth, ***there is*** a roar of waters in the heavens; and He makes mists go up from the end of the earth; He makes lightnings for the rain, and He brings out wind from His storehouses. **14** Every man is stupid, without knowledge; every refiner has been put to shame by the carved image, for his molten image ***is*** falsehood, and ***there is*** no breath in them. **15** They ***are*** vanity, a work of mockeries; at the time of their punishment they will perish. **16** Not like these ***is*** the Portion of Jacob (Ya'aqov), for He ***is*** the Former of everything, and Israel ***is*** the tribe of His inheritance; the LORD of armies ***is*** His name.

A Prayer in the Coming Exile

17 Gather up your bundle from the land, O you who dwell in the siege. **18** For thus says the LORD: "Look, I am slinging out the inhabitants of the land at this time, and I will bring distress on them, so that they may find ***it***." **19** Woe to me because of my fracture! My wound is severe. And I, I said, "Surely this ***is*** a sickness, and I will bear it." **20** My tent has been devastated, and all my tent cords have been snapped; my sons have gone out from me, and they are not; there is no one stretching out my tent again and raising my curtains. **21** For the shepherds have become stupid, and they have not sought the LORD; therefore they have not prospered, and all their flock has been scattered. **22** The sound of a report! Look, it is coming, and a great quaking from the land of the north, to make the cities of Judah (Yehuda) a desolation, a habitation of jackals. **23** I know, O LORD, that his way ***is*** not to mankind; ***it is*** not to a man who walks to direct his step. **24** Correct me, O LORD, only with justice, not in Your anger, lest You diminish me. **25** Pour out Your rage on the nations that have not known You, and on the clans that have not called on Your name; for they have eaten Jacob, and they have eaten him and have made an end of him, and his habitation they have made desolate.

JEREMIAH 11

The Broken Covenant

1 The word which came to Jeremiah (Yirmeyahu) from the LORD, saying, **2** "Hear the words of this covenant, and you shall speak them to the man of Judah (Yehuda) and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim); **3** and you shall say to them, 'Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel (Yisra'el): "Cursed ***is*** the man who does not hear the words of this covenant, **4** which I commanded your fathers in the day I brought them out from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim), from the iron furnace, saying, 'Listen to My voice, and you shall do them according to all that I command you; and you shall be to Me for a people, and I, I will be to you for God,' **5** so as to establish the oath which I swore to your fathers, to give to them a land flowing ***with*** milk and honey, as ***it is*** this day."'" And I answered and said, "Amen, O LORD." **6** And the LORD said to me, "Proclaim all these words in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem, saying, 'Hear the words of this covenant, and you shall do them. **7** For I surely warned your fathers in the day I brought them up from the land of

10:13 Ps 135:7; Job 38:34,35; Job 38:22
10:14 Jer 10:8; Jer 51:17,18; Isa 46:7,8
10:15 Isa 41:24,29; Jer 14:22; Jer 51:18
10:16 Deut 32:9; Ps 74:2; Jer 31:35
10:17 Ezek 12:3-12; Jer 6:1; Mic 2:10
10:18 1 Sam 25:29; Jer 15:1,2; Jer 16:13
10:19 Mic 7:9; Ps 39:9; Jer 4:19,31
10:20 Jer 4:20; Jer 31:15; Isa 54:2
10:21 Jer 12:10; Ezek 34:2-10; Jer 10:8,14
10:22 Jer 9:11; Jer 1:15; Jer 4:6
10:23 Prov 20:24; Prov 16:1; Ps 37:23
10:24 Ps 6:1; Ps 38:1; Jer 30:11
10:25 Ps 79:6,7; Jer 8:16; Job 18:21
11:2 Jer 11:6; Exod 19:5; Jer 34:13-16
11:3 Gal 3:10; Gal 3:12; Gal 3:13
11:4 2 Cor 6:16; Heb 8:8; Heb 8:9
11:5 Matt 6:13; 1 Cor 14:16; Luke 1:73
11:6 Rom 2:13; James 1:22; Jer 3:12
11:7 Heb 8:9; 1 Sam 8:9; Exod 15:26

10:13 *He makes lightnings for the rain* The Canaanites said Baal sent the storm. Jeremiah says the LORD does (Ps 135:7).
10:14 *there is no breath in them* The living God breathed life into man (Gen 2:7). The idol has no breath at all, and its maker will be ashamed of it.
10:16 *Not like these is the Portion of Jacob* A portion was a share of an inheritance. Israel's portion was God Himself (Ps 16:5; 73:26; Lam 3:24), and Israel is His inheritance. It goes both ways. Verses 12-16 appear again in 51:15-19, against Babylon. The God who made all things will judge the city of idols.
10:17 *Gather up your bundle from the land* The small sack a captive could carry into exile.
10:18 *I am slinging out the inhabitants of the land* Thrown out hard and far, like a stone from a sling.
10:20 *My tent has been devastated, and all my tent cords have been snapped* A family tent in a storm, the poles down, the children gone, and no one left to set it up again.
10:21 *the shepherds have become stupid, and they have not sought the LORD* The kings and leaders. When leaders do not seek God, the people they lead suffer. That is a heavy warning for anyone who leads a nation, a church or a home.
10:23 *it is not to a man who walks to direct his step* One of the humblest, wisest lines in the book. We make plans, but we cannot guide our own steps (Prov 16:9; 20:24). Judah tried, trusting Egypt, then Babylon, then idols, and it ended in ruin. A prayer worth praying every morning: Lord, I cannot run my own life. Lead me.
10:24 *Correct me, O LORD, only with justice, not in Your anger* Jeremiah does not ask God to skip the discipline. He asks that it be measured, as a father corrects a child. God disciplines us for our good (Heb 12:10) and does not deal with us as our sins deserve (Ps 103:10).
10:25 *Pour out Your rage on the nations that have not known You* Psalm 79:6-7 has almost the same words. Having asked God to correct Judah justly, Jeremiah asks Him to deal justly with the nations who devoured Jacob. God would judge Babylon too (25:12; chapters 50 and 51). Jeremiah leaves vengeance with God, as Scripture tells us to (Rom 12:19).
11:2 *Hear the words of this covenant* A covenant was a binding agreement with promises and conditions. God's covenant with Israel was made at Sinai and renewed by Moses in Deuteronomy. Many think "this covenant" points to the Book of the Law found in Josiah's eighteenth year, about 622 B.C., when he led the people in renewing it (2 Kgs 22:8-13; 23:1-3). Others see a general reminder of the Sinai covenant. Jeremiah may have gone from town to town pressing its words.
11:3 *Cursed is the man who does not hear the words of this covenant* Compare Deuteronomy 27:26 and 28:15. Paul quotes Deuteronomy 27:26 to show that all who rely on keeping the law are under a curse, since no one keeps it perfectly (Gal 3:10). That is why we need Christ, who "redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us" (Gal 3:13).
11:4 *from the iron furnace* Egypt was like a smelting furnace for Israel, a place of hard suffering (Deut 4:20). "You shall be to Me for a people, and I, I will be to you for God" is the heart of every covenant God made with His people (Exod 6:7; 31:33; Rev 21:3).
11:5 *Amen, O LORD* Amen means so be it, it is true. Jeremiah agreed with God's covenant, curses included. The land was a gift that came from God's oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
11:6 *Hear the words of this covenant, and you shall do them* Hearing was not enough. The covenant had to be done (James 1:22).

Egypt, and until this day, rising early and warning, saying, "Listen to My voice." **8** And they did not listen, and they did not incline their ear, and they walked, each one, in the stubbornness of their evil heart; and I brought on them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded ***them*** to do, and they did not do ***them***.'" **9** And the LORD said to me, "A conspiracy has been found among the man of Judah and among the inhabitants of Jerusalem. **10** They have returned to the iniquities of their former fathers, who refused to hear My words; and they, they have walked after other gods to serve them. The house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken My covenant which I made with their fathers. **11** Therefore thus says the LORD: 'Look, I am bringing calamity to them which they will not be able to go out from; and they will cry out to Me, and I will not listen to them. **12** And the cities of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem will go, and they will cry out to the gods to whom they are burning incense, and they will surely not save them in the time of their calamity. **13** For ***as many as*** the number of your cities your gods have been, O Judah; and ***as many as*** the number of the streets of Jerusalem you have set up altars to the shameful thing, altars to burn incense to Baal.' **14** And you, do not pray for this people, and do not lift up for them a cry and a prayer; for I will not be listening in the time of their calling to Me on account of their calamity. **15** What ***is there*** for My beloved in My house, her doing the scheme ***with*** the many? And the flesh of holiness will pass away from you; for your evil, then you exult. **16** 'A luxuriant olive tree, beautiful of fruit ***and*** form,' the LORD called your name. At the sound of a great tumult He has kindled a fire on it, and its branches are broken. **17** And the LORD of armies, who planted you, has spoken calamity against you, on account of the evil of the house of Israel and of the house of Judah, which they have done for themselves, to provoke Me to anger by burning incense to Baal."

The Plot at Anathoth

18 And the LORD made ***it*** known to me, and I knew ***it***; then You showed me their deeds. **19** And I ***was*** like a docile lamb ***that*** is led to slaughter; and I did not know that against me they had planned plans: "Let us destroy the tree with its bread, and let us cut him off from the land of the living, and let his name not be remembered again." **20** And O LORD of armies, who judges righteousness, who tests the kidneys and the heart, let me see Your vengeance on them, for to You I have revealed my case. **21** Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the men of Anathoth (Anatot) who are seeking your life, saying, "You shall not prophesy in the name of the LORD, and you will not die by our hand." **22** Therefore thus says the LORD of armies: "Look, I am punishing them; the young men will die by the sword; their sons and their daughters will die by famine; **23** and a remnant will not belong to them, for I will bring calamity to the men of Anathoth, the year of their punishment."

11:8 Heb 8:9; Jer 7:24,26; Jer 3:17
11:9 Hos 6:9; Jer 5:31; Jer 6:13
11:10 Heb 8:9; Deut 31:16; Judg 2:17,19
11:11 1 Thess 5:3; Heb 1:3; Prov 1:28
11:12 Deut 32:37; Jer 2:28; Jer 44:17-27
11:13 Jer 2:28; Jer 3:1,2; Deut 32:16,17
11:14 Jer 7:16; 1 John 5:16; Jer 11:11
11:15 Rom 11:28; Prov 2:14; Luke 8:28
11:16 Rom 11:17-18; John 15:6; Ps 52:8
11:17 Isa 5:2; Jer 2:21; Jer 12:2
11:18 1 Sam 23:11,12; 2 Kgs 6:9,10,14-20; Ezek 8:6-18
11:19 Acts 8:32; Isa 53:7; Jer 18:18
11:20 Rev 18:20; Jer 20:12; Ps 7:9
11:21 Jer 12:5,6; Jer 20:10; Isa 30:10
11:22 Jer 18:21; 2 Chr 36:17; Jer 9:21
11:23 Jer 23:12; Hos 9:7; Mic 7:4

11:8 *I brought on them all the words of this covenant* The curses He had warned about. God's covenant has blessings and curses, and He keeps both.
11:9 *A conspiracy has been found* As if the whole nation had quietly agreed to turn against God. Josiah's reform had been on the surface, and underneath the people were ready to go back to their idols.
11:10 *have broken My covenant which I made with their fathers* Both kingdoms broke it. The covenant was not broken by God.
11:11 *they will cry out to Me, and I will not listen to them* Those who refuse God's call again and again may call in trouble and not be answered (Prov 1:24-31). This is not cruelty. They wanted Him only to escape the consequences, not because they wanted Him.
11:13 *altars to the shameful thing* Baal. Judah had as many gods as cities and as many altars as Jerusalem had streets, and not one would answer.
11:14 *do not pray for this people* The second time (7:16). A word to Jeremiah about a nation whose judgment was fixed, which would cry out only to get out of trouble. It does not forbid us from praying for anyone. We pray for all people, because God wants all people to be saved (1 Tim 2:1-4).
11:15 *What is there for My beloved in My house* God still calls Judah "My beloved," but what right did she have in His temple while plotting evil? The holy meat of the sacrifices could not save her.
11:16 *A luxuriant olive tree, beautiful of fruit and form* The olive lived for centuries and gave oil for food, light and anointing (Ps 52:8). The tumult is the noise of the invading army. Paul uses this picture in Romans 11:17-24. Some natural branches were broken off for unbelief, and Gentile believers were grafted in by faith. But the tree is still God's olive tree, and He is able to graft the natural branches back in, and "all Israel will be saved" (Rom 11:26). God has not cut down the tree.
11:18 *the LORD made it known to me* The first of Jeremiah's "confessions," where he pours out his own heart to God (11:18-12:6; 15:10-21; 17:14-18; 18:18-23; 20:7-18). God told him of the plot.
11:19 *I was like a docile lamb that is led to slaughter* A pet lamb trusts the people who feed it and follows them to the knife. The plotters were the men of his own hometown (11:21), even his own family (12:6). This is a picture of Christ, led like a lamb to the slaughter (Isa 53:7; Acts 8:32-35), rejected in Nazareth (Luke 4:28-30), whose brothers, the later children of Mary and Joseph, did not believe in Him at first (John 7:5). Jeremiah did not know the plot. Jesus knew exactly where He was going and went willingly.
11:20 *who tests the kidneys and the heart* In Hebrew thinking the kidneys were the seat of the deepest feelings, and the heart the center of thought and will. God sees all the way down and judges fairly.
11:20 *let me see Your vengeance on them, for to You I have revealed my case* A prayer for judgment on enemies, like many in the Psalms. Jeremiah did not plot back or take revenge. He handed his case to the Judge, as Scripture tells us to (Rom 12:19; Neh 4:4-5). Jesus teaches us to go further, to love our enemies and pray for them (Matt 5:44), and He prayed for those who crucified Him (Luke 23:34). Our first prayer for those who hurt us should be for their salvation. We can also hand our case to God, which frees us from carrying the burden of revenge.
11:21 *You shall not prophesy in the name of the LORD, and you will not die by our hand* Stop preaching or we will kill you. Perhaps Anathoth, a town of priests, lost standing when Josiah closed the local shrines (2 Kgs 23:8-9), or perhaps they were ashamed of a native son who preached against the nation. Scripture does not say exactly why.
11:23 *a remnant will not belong to them* Judgment would fall on the plotters' families. Yet Ezra 2:23 lists 128 men of Anathoth among the returning exiles, and Jeremiah would later buy a field there as a sign of hope (chapter 32).

JEREMIAH 12

Why Does the Way of the Wicked Prosper?

1 Righteous ***are*** You, O LORD, when I bring a case to You;
nevertheless, I will speak judgments with You: Why does the
way of the wicked prosper? ***Why*** are all who deal treacherously ***with*** treachery at ease? **2** You have planted them; they
have also taken root; they go on; they have also produced
fruit. You ***are*** near in their mouth and far from their kidneys.
3 And You, O LORD, You know me; You see me, and You test
my heart with You. Drag them away like sheep to slaughter,
and set them apart for a day of killing. **4** Until when will the
land mourn, and the vegetation of every field be dried up?
Because of the evil of those who dwell in it, animals and birds
are swept away, for they have said, "He will not see our end."
5 If you have run with foot soldiers and they have wearied
you, and how will you compete with the horses? And in a
land of peace you ***are*** trusting, and how will you do in the
thicket of the Jordan (Yarden)? **6** For even your brothers and
the house of your father, even they have dealt treacherously
with you; even they have called out after you fully. Do not
trust in them when they speak good things to you. **7** I have
forsaken My house; I have abandoned My inheritance; I have
given the beloved of My soul into the hand of her enemies.
8 My inheritance has become to Me like a lion in the forest; it
has given forth against Me with its voice; therefore I hate it.
9 ***Is*** My inheritance to Me a speckled bird of prey? ***Are*** the
birds of prey all around against it? Go, gather every living
thing of the field; bring ***them*** for food. **10** Many shepherds
have ruined My vineyard; they have trodden down My portion; they have made the portion of My desire into a wilderness of desolation. **11** He has set it into a desolation; it
mourns to Me, desolate; all the land has been made desolate,
for there is no man who sets ***it*** on ***his*** heart. **12** Over all the
bare heights in the wilderness destroyers have come, for a
sword of the LORD is devouring from ***one*** end of the land and
to the ***other*** end of the land; there is no peace for any flesh.
13 They have sown wheat, and they have reaped thorns; they
have wearied themselves; they do not profit. And be
ashamed of your produce because of the burning of the
anger of the LORD. **14** Thus says the LORD concerning all My
evil neighbors who touch the inheritance which I caused My
people Israel (Yisra'el) to inherit: "Look, I am plucking them
up from their ground, and the house of Judah (Yehuda) I will
pluck up from their midst. **15** And it will be, after I have
plucked them up, I will return, and I will have compassion on
them, and I will bring them back, each one to his inheritance
and each one to his land. **16** And it will be, if they will surely
learn the ways of My people, to swear by My name, 'As the
LORD lives,' just as they taught My people to swear by Baal,

12:1 Job 12:6; Mal 3:15; Ps 51:4
12:2 Matt 15:8; Mark 7:6; Isa 29:13
12:3 James 5:5; John 21:17; Acts 8:32
12:4 Jer 9:10; Jer 4:25; Jer 23:10
12:5 Jer 49:19; Jer 50:44; 1 Pet 4:12
12:6 Jer 9:4; Prov 26:25; Gen 37:4-11
12:7 Jer 11:15; Isa 2:6; Ps 78:59,60
12:8 Hos 9:15; Amos 6:8; Jer 2:15
12:9 Rev 19:17; Isa 56:9; Jer 7:33
12:10 Isa 5:1-7; Isa 63:18; Jer 6:3
12:11 Isa 42:25; Jer 23:10; Jer 14:2
12:12 Jer 47:6; Amos 9:4; Isa 34:6
12:13 Deut 28:38; Mic 6:15; Hag 1:6
12:14 Zech 2:8; Zeph 2:8-10; Jer 2:3
12:15 Acts 15:16; Jer 49:6,39; Jer 48:47
12:16 Rom 14:11; Jer 4:2; Josh 23:7

12:1 *Righteous are You, O LORD, when I bring a case to You* Before he complains, Jeremiah confesses that God is righteous. He comes to Him as to a judge with a case he does not understand.
12:1 *Why does the way of the wicked prosper* One of the oldest questions in the Bible (Job 21:7; Ps 73; Hab 1:13). His enemies at Anathoth lived comfortably while he was in danger. Is it wrong to ask God why? No. God put this question in the Bible. It is better to bring it to Him honestly than to let it eat at our faith in silence. Asaph found his answer when he went into God's sanctuary and saw the end of the wicked (Ps 73:17).
12:2 *You are near in their mouth and far from their kidneys* They talked about God constantly, but in their deepest self He was far away (Isa 29:13; Matt 15:8). God gives life and blessing even to the wicked (Matt 5:45), and that was part of what troubled Jeremiah.
12:3 *Drag them away like sheep to slaughter* In 11:19 Jeremiah was the lamb. Now he asks God to turn it around. As at 11:20, he does not take revenge but asks God to judge, in line with what God had already said (11:22-23). We also hand our enemies to God (Rom 12:19), and Jesus teaches us to pray for their good (Luke 6:27-28).
12:4 *Until when will the land mourn* There seems to have been a drought (chapter 14). The land suffered for the people's sin. "He will not see our end" may mean God will not see, or Jeremiah will not live to see their downfall. Either way, they were sure nothing would happen.
12:5 *If you have run with foot soldiers and they have wearied you, and how will you compete with the horses* God answers with a question. The plot at Anathoth was the footrace. Kings, priests and armies would be the horses. The thicket of the Jordan was the jungle of brush along the river where lions lived (49:19). God did not explain the prosperity of the wicked. He called Jeremiah to get stronger and keep running. Sometimes He gives us Himself instead of an explanation and calls us to endure (Heb 12:1-3).
12:6 *even your brothers and the house of your father, even they have dealt treacherously with you* "Called out after you fully" may mean they raised a mob. Jesus said a man's enemies would be those of his own household (Matt 10:36). If your family has rejected you for your faith, you are not alone.
12:7 *I have given the beloved of My soul into the hand of her enemies* God's own words, showing His heart. Even as He judges her, she is the one He loves. This is a Father handing over a child who will not stop running away, and it hurts Him.
12:8 *therefore I hate it* Judah had roared at God like a lion. In Hebrew, to hate can mean to turn away from or reject (Mal 1:2-3). God set Himself against what Judah had become.
12:9 *a speckled bird of prey* A strangely colored bird is attacked by other birds. Judah had made herself strange, not by holiness but by mixing with idols, and the nations would gather to attack.
12:10 *Many shepherds have ruined My vineyard* Probably the enemy kings and their armies, grazing the land (6:3). No one took it to heart and repented (12:11).
12:12 *a sword of the LORD is devouring* God's sword, though Babylon holds it. The false prophets promised peace, and there would be none.
12:13 *They have sown wheat, and they have reaped thorns* If God is against us, we can work and plan and sow and still reap thorns (Hag 1:6).
12:14 *all My evil neighbors who touch the inheritance* Nations like Edom, Moab, Ammon and the Philistines, who grabbed land and plunder when Judah fell. Babylon would conquer them too. Plucking up the house of Judah from their midst may mean pulling His scattered people out from among them, though some read it as part of Judah's judgment.
12:15 *I will have compassion on them, and I will bring them back* Amazing grace. God's compassion would reach even these nations (48:47; 49:6).
12:16 *if they will surely learn the ways of My people, to swear by My name* They once taught Israel to swear by Baal. Now they could learn from Israel to worship the true God, as God promised to bless all nations through Abraham (Gen 12:3; Isa 56:6-7). In Christ, Gentiles have been brought near (Eph 2:12-19), and in the coming kingdom the nations will come to Jerusalem to learn His ways (Isa 2:2-3). They are built up "in the midst of My people." They are added in. They do not replace Israel.

and they will be built up in the midst of My people. **17** And if they will not listen, and I will pluck up that nation, plucking up and destroying," declares the LORD.

JEREMIAH 13

The Linen Sash

1 Thus the LORD said to me: "Go, and you shall buy for yourself a loincloth of linen, and you shall put it on your loins, and you shall not bring it into water." **2** And I bought the loincloth according to the word of the LORD, and I put ***it*** on my loins. **3** And the word of the LORD came to me a second ***time***, saying, **4** "Take the loincloth which you bought, which ***is*** on your loins, and arise, go to Euphrates (Perat), and hide it there in a cleft of the rock." **5** And I went, and I hid it at Euphrates, just as the LORD had commanded me. **6** And it was at the end of many days, and the LORD said to me, "Arise, go to Euphrates, and take from there the loincloth which I commanded you to hide there." **7** And I went to Euphrates, and I dug, and I took the loincloth from the place where I had hidden it; and look, the loincloth was ruined; it was not profitable for anything. **8** And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **9** "Thus says the LORD: 'Thus I will ruin the pride of Judah (Yehuda) and the great pride of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). **10** This evil people, who refuse to hear My words, who walk in the stubbornness of their heart, and have walked after other gods to serve them and to bow down to them, let it be like this loincloth, which is not profitable for anything. **11** For just as the loincloth clings to the loins of a man, so I have made all the house of Israel (Yisra'el) and all the house of Judah cling to Me,' declares the LORD, 'to be for Me for a people and for a name and for praise and for beauty; and they did not listen.'

The Wine Jars and a Warning Against Pride

12 And you shall speak to them this word: 'Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: "Every jar will be filled ***with*** wine."' And they will say to you, 'Do we not surely know that every jar will be filled ***with*** wine?' **13** And you shall say to them, 'Thus says the LORD: "Look, I am filling all the inhabitants of this land, and the kings who sit for David on his throne, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, ***with*** drunkenness. **14** And I will smash them, each one against his brother, and the fathers and the sons together," declares the LORD. "I will not spare, and I will not pity, and I will not have compassion, from ruining them."'" **15** Hear and give ear; do not be haughty, for the LORD has spoken. **16** Give glory to the LORD your God before He brings darkness, and before your feet stumble on the mountains of twilight, and you wait for light, and He sets it into deep darkness, and makes ***it*** into thick darkness. **17** And if you will not listen to it, my soul will weep in secret places because of pride; and it will surely shed tears, and my eye will run down ***with*** tears, for the flock of the LORD has been taken captive. **18** Say to the king and to the queen mother, "Make yourselves low, sit down, for your headdress has come down, the crown of your beauty." **19** The cities of the Negeb (Negev) have been shut up, and there is no one who opens; Judah has been taken into exile, all of it; it has been taken into exile completely. **20** Lift up your eyes and see those who are

12:17 Isa 60:12; Ps 2:8-12; Zech 14:16-19
13:1 Acts 21:11; Jer 13:11; Jer 19:1
13:2 Acts 21:11; Isa 20:2; Ezek 2:8
13:3 Acts 21:11
13:4 Acts 21:11; Jer 51:63,64; Ps 137:1
13:5 Acts 21:11; Exod 40:16; Exod 39:42,43
13:6 Acts 21:11
13:7 Acts 21:11; Isa 64:6; Jer 13:10
13:8 Acts 21:11
13:9 Acts 21:11; Lev 26:19; Jer 13:15-17
13:10 Acts 21:11; Jer 16:12; Num 14:11
13:11 John 5:37; John 5:39; John 5:40
13:12 Ezek 24:19
13:13 Ps 60:3; Ps 75:8; Isa 51:17,21
13:14 Deut 29:20; Jer 19:9-11; Ps 2:9
13:15 Rev 2:29; Isa 28:14-22; Isa 42:23
13:16 Matt 4:16; John 11:10; Rev 11:13
13:17 Mal 2:2; Jer 9:1; Jer 14:17
13:18 Rev 18:7; Jer 22:26; 2 Kgs 24:12,15
13:19 Jer 52:27; Deut 28:52; Jer 39:9
13:20 Jer 6:22; Jer 1:14; Hab 1:6

12:17 *if they will not listen, and I will pluck up that nation* The offer is real, and so is the judgment for refusing it. Plucking up and building, as in Jeremiah's call (1:10).

13:1 *a loincloth of linen* A cloth or sash worn around the waist next to the body, the piece of clothing that clung most closely to a man. Linen was what the priests wore (Lev 16:4). He was not to wash it, a detail that matters later.

13:2 *And I bought the loincloth according to the word of the LORD* The first of Jeremiah's acted-out messages, or sign-acts. Isaiah walked barefoot (Isa 20:2-4), Ezekiel lay on his side (Ezek 4:4-6), and Jeremiah will wear a yoke (27:2) and buy a field (32:6-15). People forget sermons. They remember pictures. Jeremiah obeyed without asking why.

13:4 *go to Euphrates, and hide it there in a cleft of the rock* The Euphrates was about 350 miles away, weeks on foot each way. Some think Jeremiah went to Parah near Anathoth (Josh 18:23), whose name sounds almost like Perath, the Euphrates. Others believe he went to the river itself, since the text names it four times with its usual name. Either way, it was the river of Babylon, and the cloth points to exile.

13:7 *the loincloth was ruined; it was not profitable for anything* Damp ground, mold and time rotted the linen. What was once fresh and close to his body was now fit only to throw away.

13:9 *Thus I will ruin the pride of Judah* The cloth stood for the people. Pride was their sin, and pride was what God would bring down. Their contact with Babylon and its gods would leave them rotten and useless.

13:11 *so I have made all the house of Israel and all the house of Judah cling to Me* The heart of the chapter. "Cling" is the word of Genesis 2:24. God wanted His people as close as the clothing next to a man's skin, to be His people, carry His name and show His beauty (1 Pet 2:9). "And they did not listen" explains the whole tragedy. God does not want a people at arm's length. Jesus said, "Remain in Me" (John 15:4). Pride pushes God away. Humility clings to Him.

13:12 *Every jar will be filled with wine* Probably a common saying at feasts, like a toast. Of course jars are for wine.

13:13 *with drunkenness* The jars are the people and the wine is God's judgment. Judah would stagger in confusion as if drunk on His wrath (25:15-17), and the jars would smash against one another.

13:14 *I will not spare, and I will not pity* Some of the hardest words God speaks in the book. His patience had been long. Now the time had come.

13:16 *Give glory to the LORD your God before He brings darkness* To give God glory here means to confess Him and admit your sin (Josh 7:19). Do it now, like travelers who must get off the mountain before night falls. There comes a point when the light goes out.

13:17 *my soul will weep in secret places because of pride* The weeping prophet would weep alone, where no one could see. He still calls them "the flock of the LORD." They belonged to God even in exile.

13:18 *Say to the king and to the queen mother* Most likely Jehoiachin, who was eighteen, and his mother Nehushta, who held great influence (2 Kgs 24:8). In 597 B.C. they surrendered and were taken to Babylon (2 Kgs 24:12, 15; 29:2). They really did lose their crowns. Some suggest Jehoiakim and his mother.

13:19 *The cities of the Negeb have been shut up* The Negeb was the dry south. Even the towns farthest from the invader would be helpless.

coming from the north. Where ***is*** the flock ***that*** was given to you, the sheep of your beauty? **21** What will you say when He appoints over you—and you, you taught them over
you—close friends for head? Will not pains seize you like a woman giving birth? **22** And if you say in your heart, "Why have these ***things*** happened to me?" In the greatness of your iniquity your skirts have been uncovered; your heels have suffered violence. **23** Will a Cushite change his skin, and a leopard its spots? ***Then*** also you, you will be able to do good, ***you who are*** trained to do evil. **24** And I will scatter them like chaff passing away to the wind of the wilderness. **25** This ***is*** your lot, the portion of your measures from Me, declares the LORD, because you have forgotten Me, and you have trusted in falsehood. **26** And also I, I will strip off your skirts over your face, and your shame will be seen. **27** Your adulteries and your neighings, the wickedness of your prostitution on hills in the field, I have seen your detestable things. Woe to you, O Jerusalem! You will not be clean; after how long yet?

JEREMIAH 14

Drought, Prayer and False Prophets

1 That which came ***as*** the word of the LORD to Jeremiah (Yirmeyahu) concerning the matters of the droughts: **2** Judah (Yehuda) mourns, and her gates languish; they are darkened to the ground, and the outcry of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) has gone up. **3** And their nobles have sent their little ones for water; they have come to the cisterns; they have not found water; they have returned, their vessels empty; they are ashamed and humiliated, and they have covered their head. **4** Because of the ground ***that*** is cracked, for there has been no rain in the land, the farmers are ashamed; they have covered their head. **5** For even the doe in the field has given birth and forsaken ***it***, for there is no grass. **6** And wild donkeys have stood on the bare heights; they have panted for breath like jackals; their eyes have failed, for there is no vegetation. **7** Though our iniquities testify against us, O LORD, act for the sake of Your name; for our apostasies are many; against You we have sinned. **8** O Hope of Israel (Yisra'el), its Savior in a time of distress, why are You like a sojourner in the land, and like a traveler ***who*** has turned aside to spend the night? **9** Why are You like a man astounded, like a mighty man ***who*** is not able to save? And You ***are*** in our midst, O LORD, and Your name is called on us; do not leave us. **10** Thus says the LORD concerning this people: "So they have loved to wander; their feet they have not restrained. And the LORD has not accepted them; now He will remember their iniquity and punish their sins." **11** And the LORD said to me, "Do not pray for this people for good. **12** When they fast, I

13:21 1 Thess 5:3; Isa 13:8; Jer 4:31
13:22 Luke 5:22; Nah 3:5; Jer 5:19
13:23 Matt 19:24-28; Jer 9:5; Jer 2:22,30
13:24 Ps 1:4; Lev 26:33; Ezek 5:2,12
13:25 Job 20:29; Ps 11:6; Matt 24:51
13:26 Lam 1:8; Hos 2:10; Jer 13:22
13:27 Matt 11:21; Rev 8:13; Jude 1:11
14:1 Jer 17:8
14:2 Isa 3:26; Jer 8:21; 1 Sam 5:12
14:3 2 Sam 15:30; 2 Kgs 18:31; Ps 40:14
14:4 Joel 1:19,20; Joel 1:11,17; Deut 28:23,24
14:5 Ps 29:9; Job 39:1-4
14:6 Jer 2:24; Job 39:5,6; Joel 1:18
14:7 Hos 5:5; Ps 25:11; Isa 59:12
14:8 1 Tim 1:1; Jer 17:13; Isa 43:3,11
14:9 Acts 15:17; Isa 59:1; Isa 63:19
14:10 Ps 119:101; Hos 8:13; Hos 9:9
14:11 Jer 7:16; Jer 11:14; Jer 15:1
14:12 Ezek 8:18; Jer 6:20; Jer 11:11

13:21 *close friends for head* Judah had courted the Babylonians as friends (2 Kgs 20:12-18). Now they would rule her. The verse is hard to translate, but the point is plain: the ones she trusted would become her masters.
13:22 *your skirts have been uncovered; your heels have suffered violence* The language of public shame. Captives were sometimes led away stripped and barefoot (Isa 20:4). The reason was the greatness of her own sin.
13:23 *Will a Cushite change his skin, and a leopard its spots* Cush lay south of Egypt, around modern Sudan and Ethiopia, and its people had dark skin. The verse does not say dark skin is bad. Moses married a Cushite (Num 12:1), and the Cushite Ebed-melech is a hero of this book (38:7-13). The point is that some things cannot be changed by trying harder. Sin had become part of who they were.
13:23 *you who are trained to do evil* We cannot make ourselves good by effort. Sin is part of our nature (Rom 3:10-12; Eph 2:1-3). But God promised to write His law on our hearts (31:33) and give a new heart (Ezek 36:26). "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation" (2 Cor 5:17). The leopard cannot change its spots, but God can make a new creature.
13:24 *like chaff passing away to the wind of the wilderness* The dry husk blown away at threshing.
13:25 *This is your lot* A share measured out, what Judah had earned by trusting in falsehood.
13:26 *I will strip off your skirts over your face* The picture of the unfaithful wife again (5:8). God uses strong language because idolatry is as personal as adultery in a marriage, and the shame of exile would match the shame of their sin. It is God's judgment in the language of a broken covenant. It is not a picture of how anyone should treat another, and nothing in it excuses abuse.
13:27 *You will not be clean; after how long yet* Even here God's question carries a longing. One day He would provide the cleansing they could not provide for themselves (Ezek 36:25; Zech 13:1).
14:1 *concerning the matters of the droughts* The word is plural, so this may have been several dry years. In a land that lived on the autumn and spring rains, drought meant hunger and death. God had warned that He would shut the heavens if Israel turned to other gods (Deut 11:16-17; 28:23-24), as He did in Elijah's day to show Baal could not give rain (1 Kgs 17:1).
14:3 *they have come to the cisterns; they have not found water* God called Himself the spring of living water and accused Judah of digging broken cisterns (2:13). Now their real cisterns were empty too. Covering the head was a sign of grief and shame.
14:5 *even the doe in the field has given birth and forsaken it* The doe was known for caring for her young. She left her fawn because she had no milk. The wild donkeys stood sniffing the air for any hint of water.
14:7 *Though our iniquities testify against us, O LORD, act for the sake of Your name* A model prayer for a time of trouble. Jeremiah admits guilt and does not ask God to act because the people deserve it. He asks for the sake of God's own name and promises, the strongest ground any prayer can stand on.
14:8 *O Hope of Israel, its Savior in a time of distress* Beautiful names for God (17:13). Paul called his message "the hope of Israel" (Acts 28:20). A traveler stopping for the night does not care about the town. Jeremiah asks why God seems so distant.
14:9 *Your name is called on us; do not leave us* To have God's name called on them meant they belonged to Him. Jeremiah holds God to that, and so may we. He has promised never to leave or forsake us (Heb 13:5).
14:10 *So they have loved to wander* Jeremiah's prayer was right, but the people had not changed. A prophet's prayer could not take the place of their own repentance (Hos 8:13).
14:11 *Do not pray for this people for good* The third time (7:16; 11:14). "For good" means do not ask Me to spare them. Jeremiah kept praying anyway (14:19-22), and God did not rebuke him. That is the heart of a true intercessor. We do not have Jeremiah's special knowledge, so we pray for all people (1 Tim 2:1) and leave the outcome with God.
14:12 *When they fast, I am not listening to their cry* They fasted and sacrificed, but their hearts had not turned (Isa 58:3-7). Sword, famine and pestilence come together often in Jeremiah, the three great killers in a siege.

am not listening to their cry; and when they offer up a burnt offering and a grain offering, I am not accepting them; for by the sword and by the famine and by the pestilence I am bringing them to an end." **13** And I said, "Alas, Lord GOD! Look, the prophets are saying to them, 'You will not see a sword, and famine will not come to you, for I will give you peace of truth in this place.'" **14** And the LORD said to me, "The prophets are prophesying falsehood in My name. I did not send them, and I did not command them, and I did not speak to them. A vision of falsehood, and divination, and a worthless thing, and the deceit of their heart, they are prophesying to you. **15** Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the prophets who are prophesying in My name, and I, I did not send them, and they are saying, 'Sword and famine will not be in this land': By the sword and by the famine those prophets will be consumed. **16** And the people to whom they are prophesying will be thrown out in the streets of Jerusalem because of the famine and the sword, and ***there will be*** no one burying them—them, their wives and their sons and their daughters; and I will pour out on them their evil. **17** And you shall say to them this word: 'Let my eyes run down ***with*** tears night and day, and let them not cease; for the virgin daughter of my people has been broken ***with*** a great breaking, a very severe wound. **18** If I go out ***to*** the field, then look, those slain by the sword! And if I enter the city, then look, the diseases of famine! For both prophet and priest have roamed to a land, and they do not know.'" **19** Have You utterly rejected Judah? Has Your soul abhorred Zion (Tsiyon)? Why have You struck us, and there is no healing for us? ***We*** waited for peace, and ***there was*** no good, and for a time of healing, and look, terror! **20** We know, O LORD, our wickedness, the iniquity of our fathers, for we have sinned against You. **21** Do not spurn ***us*** for the sake of Your name; do not disgrace the throne of Your glory; remember, do not break Your covenant with us. **22** Are there among the vanities of the nations ***any*** who send rain? Or do the heavens give showers? ***Is it*** not You, He, O LORD our God? And we will wait for You, for You, You have made all these ***things***.

JEREMIAH 15

Judgment Will Not Be Turned Back

1 And the LORD said to me, "Though Moses (Moshe) and Samuel (Shemu'el) should stand before Me, My soul ***would*** not ***be*** toward this people. Send ***them*** away from before My face, and let them go out. **2** And it will be, when they say to you, 'Where shall we go out?' then you shall say to them, 'Thus says the LORD: "***Those*** who ***are*** for death, to death; and ***those*** who ***are*** for the sword, to the sword; and ***those*** who ***are*** for the famine, to the famine; and ***those*** who ***are*** for captivity, to captivity."' **3** And I will appoint over them four kinds, declares the LORD: the sword to kill, and the dogs to drag away, and the birds of the heavens and the animals of the earth to devour and to ruin. **4** And I will make them a horror to all the kingdoms of the earth, on account of Manasseh (Menashe) the son of Hezekiah (Chizqiyahu), king of Judah (Yehuda), for what he did in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). **5** For who will have pity on you, O Jerusalem? And who will show sympathy to you? And who will turn aside to ask about your welfare? **6** You, you have abandoned Me, declares the LORD; you keep going backward. And I have stretched out My hand against you, and I have ruined you; I am weary of relenting.

14:13 2 Pet 2:1; Jer 6:14; Jer 4:10
14:14 Matt 7:15; Jer 29:8,9,31; Ezek 12:24
14:15 2 Pet 2:1; 2 Pet 2:2; Jer 5:12,13
14:16 Jer 7:33; Jer 15:2,3; Ps 79:2,3
14:17 Jer 9:1; Jer 13:17; Lam 1:15
14:18 Ezek 7:15; Lam 1:20; Jer 8:10
14:19 Rom 11:2; Lam 5:22; Jer 8:15
14:20 Ps 32:5; Lev 26:40-42; Neh 9:2
14:21 Luke 1:72; Heb 8:9; Jer 14:7
14:22 Isa 30:23; Deut 32:21; Jer 5:24
15:1 Acts 3:24; Heb 11:32; 1 John 5:16
15:2 Rev 13:10; 1 John 5:16; Rev 6:8
15:3 Rev 6:8; Rev 19:17; Rev 19:18
15:4 Jer 24:9; Jer 29:18; 2 Kgs 24:3,4
15:5 Isa 51:19; Nah 3:7; Jer 21:7
15:6 Jer 7:24; Zeph 1:4; Isa 1:4

14:13 *for I will give you peace of truth in this place* Jeremiah seems to make excuses for the people. They were being misled by prophets who claimed to speak for God.
14:14 *I did not send them, and I did not command them, and I did not speak to them* Divination was seeking the future through omens and magic, which the Law forbade (Deut 18:10-12). Their message came from their own hearts.
14:15 *By the sword and by the famine those prophets will be consumed* A prophet whose word does not come true has not spoken from the LORD (Deut 18:21-22). Their own deaths would prove them false. The people who listened would die too. They chose what they wanted to hear (5:31). Jesus said we will know false prophets by their fruits (Matt 7:15-20), and we test every message by God's Word (1 John 4:1). Anyone promising comfort and safety while we live in sin speaks like these prophets.
14:17 *Let my eyes run down with tears night and day* God's own grief, spoken through His prophet's tears. "Virgin daughter" is a tender name for a city never conquered, now crushed.
14:18 *both prophet and priest have roamed to a land, and they do not know* They wandered confused, or were taken to a land they did not know. Either way, those who promised peace were helpless.
14:20 *We know, O LORD, our wickedness, the iniquity of our fathers* Daniel and Nehemiah later prayed this way in exile (Dan 9:4-19; Neh 1:5-11).
14:21 *remember, do not break Your covenant with us* Three appeals: God's name, His glory (the throne of His glory is Jerusalem and the temple, 3:17) and His covenant. God would answer, not by stopping the exile, but by keeping His covenant after it (31:31-37).
14:22 *Are there among the vanities of the nations any who send rain* Not Baal, not even the sky itself. Only the LORD. When the cisterns are empty and the drought goes on, the believer waits for God. Waiting is not doing nothing. It is trusting Him alone, and "those who wait for the LORD will renew power" (Isa 40:31).
15:1 *Though Moses and Samuel should stand before Me* The two great intercessors of Israel's history. Moses pleaded after the golden calf (Exod 32:11-14; Num 14:13-20), and Samuel prayed and God answered (1 Sam 7:5-9; 12:19-23; Ps 99:6). Jeremiah's prayers were not too weak. Even they could not change this. That explains the "do not pray" commands of chapters 7, 11 and 14. The nation had passed the point where judgment would be turned aside.
15:2 *Those who are for death, to death* Four destinies: disease, battle, hunger and captivity in Babylon. Moses had warned of all this (Deut 28:25-26).
15:4 *on account of Manasseh the son of Hezekiah* Manasseh reigned fifty-five years, the longest and worst reign in Judah. He rebuilt the high places, put idols in the temple, burned his son and filled Jerusalem with innocent blood (2 Kgs 21:1-16), and Jerusalem fell for his sins (2 Kgs 24:3-4). He did repent, and God forgave him (2 Chr 33:12-16). But the nation never left the paths he led them down. The children were not punished for a father's sin while innocent (Ezek 18:20). They had made his sins their own.
15:5 *who will have pity on you, O Jerusalem* No one would even stop to ask how she was. Lamentations 1:12 echoes this.
15:6 *I am weary of relenting* God had turned back His judgment many times. His patience had a purpose, and that purpose had been refused (Rom 2:4-5).

7 And I have winnowed them with a winnowing fork in the gates of the land; I have bereaved ***them***; I have destroyed My people; from their ways they have not turned back. **8** Its widows have become more numerous to Me than the sand of the seas; I have brought to them, against the mother of a young man, a destroyer at noon; I have made anguish and terrors fall on her suddenly. **9** She who bore seven has languished; she has breathed out her soul; her sun has gone down while ***it was*** still day; she has been ashamed and abashed. And their remnant I will give to the sword before their enemies," declares the LORD.

Jeremiah's Lament and God's Answer

10 Woe to me, my mother, that you gave birth to me, a man of strife and a man of contention to all the land! I have not lent, and they have not lent to me, ***yet*** all of them curse me. **11** The LORD said, "Surely I will set you free for good; surely I will cause the enemy to plead with you in a time of evil and in a time of distress. **12** Will iron break iron from the north, and bronze? **13** Your wealth and your treasures I will give for plunder, not for a price, and for all your sins, and in all your territories. **14** And I will make your enemies pass into a land ***which*** you have not known; for a fire has been kindled in My anger; against you it will burn." **15** You, You know, O LORD; remember me, and visit me, and avenge Yourself for me on those who pursue me. Do not, in the slowness of Your anger, take me away; know ***that*** I bear reproach for Your sake. **16** Your words were found, and I ate them; and Your word became to me a joy and the delight of my heart; for Your name is called on me, O LORD God of armies. **17** I did not sit in the council of merrymakers and exult; because of Your hand I sat alone, for You filled me ***with*** indignation. **18** Why has my pain been perpetual, and my wound incurable? It has refused to be healed. You will surely be to me like a deceptive ***stream***, waters ***that*** are not reliable. **19** Therefore thus says the LORD: "If you return, then I will bring you back; before Me you will stand. And if you bring out the precious from the worthless, like My mouth you will be. They, they will return to you, and you, you shall not return to them. **20** And I will make you to this people a fortified wall of bronze; and they will fight against you, and they will not prevail over you, for I ***am*** with you to save you and to deliver you," declares the LORD. **21** "And I will deliver you from the hand of evil ***ones***, and I will ransom you from the palm of ruthless ***ones***."

15:7 Isa 9:13; Jer 51:2; Ps 1:4
15:8 Isa 3:25,26; Jer 4:16; Jer 5:6
15:9 1 Sam 2:5; Isa 47:9; Lam 1:1
15:10 Exod 22:25; Jer 15:20; Jer 1:18,19
15:11 Prov 16:7; Jer 29:11-14; Ps 106:46
15:12 Jer 1:18,19; Hab 1:5-10; Jer 21:4,5
15:13 Jer 17:3; Ps 44:12; Jer 20:5
15:14 Jer 16:13; Deut 32:22; Jer 17:4
15:15 John 21:15; Rev 18:20; John 21:16
15:16 Rev 10:9; Ezek 3:1-3; Job 23:12
15:17 Ps 1:1; Lam 3:28; Ps 26:4,5
15:18 Job 34:6; Mic 1:9; Jer 30:12,15
15:19 Luke 10:16; Acts 23:11; Zech 3:7
15:20 Rev 9:20; Jer 1:18,19; Ezek 3:9
15:21 Gen 48:16; Ps 37:40; Isa 29:5,20

15:7 *I have winnowed them with a winnowing fork* Grain tossed in the air for the wind to carry off the chaff. God would scatter His people.
15:8 *more numerous to Me than the sand of the seas* The words of God's promise to Abraham about his descendants (Gen 22:17), now describing widows.
15:9 *She who bore seven has languished* A mother of seven sons was greatly blessed (Ruth 4:15; 1 Sam 2:5). Now she would lose them all. Her sun went down at noon, a picture of grief without words.
15:10 *Woe to me, my mother, that you gave birth to me* Raw honesty. God's message made Jeremiah a man of strife, and he wishes he had never been born (20:14-18). Money lending caused bitter quarrels, but he had not cheated anyone. He was hated for telling the truth. This is lament like Job 3 and many psalms, and God put it in the Bible. Jesus said the world would hate His followers because it hated Him first (John 15:18-20).
15:11 *I will cause the enemy to plead with you in a time of evil* This came true. King Zedekiah, who let Jeremiah be thrown in a pit, later came to him secretly asking for a word from God (21:1-2; 37:17; 38:14).
15:12 *Will iron break iron from the north, and bronze* Hard to translate. It probably means no one can break the iron from the north, Babylon. Or it may mean that Jeremiah, made iron and bronze by God (1:18), could not be broken.
15:13 *Your wealth and your treasures I will give for plunder, not for a price* Verses 13-14 speak to the nation, not Jeremiah. The same words appear in 17:3-4.
15:15 *avenge Yourself for me on those who pursue me* As at 11:20 and 12:3, Jeremiah puts the matter in God's hands. "Avenge Yourself" because attacks on him were attacks on God's word, the same cry as the souls under the altar (Rev 6:10). He bore reproach for God's sake, and Jesus calls such people blessed (Matt 5:10-12; 1 Pet 4:14).
15:16 *Your words were found, and I ate them* To eat God's words is to take them in completely and make them part of yourself (Ezek 3:1-3; Rev 10:9-10; Matt 4:4). Some think "found" points to the Book of the Law found in Josiah's day (2 Kgs 22:8). It may simply mean the words God gave him at his call (1:9). In the middle of his lament he remembers his first love for God's word.
15:17 *because of Your hand I sat alone* He could not join the parties and laughter, knowing what was coming. Faithfulness sometimes means sitting alone, not from pride, but because standing with God means we cannot stand with the crowd.
15:18 *like a deceptive stream, waters that are not reliable* Many streams in Israel ran in the rainy season and dried up in summer, and a thirsty traveler might walk miles to find a dry bed (Job 6:15-20). God had called Himself "a spring of living water" (2:13). Now Jeremiah says He has become a dry creek. He was wrong, but God let him say it. In seasons of depression or grief when God seems silent, keep talking to Him, as Jeremiah did. He can take it. And do not carry it alone. Talk to a pastor, a trusted friend or a counselor too.
15:19 *If you return, then I will bring you back; before Me you will stand* God's answer is a call to repent, using the word Jeremiah had preached to the people (3:12; 4:1). God does the restoring. To stand before Him is to serve Him (1 Kgs 17:1). Jeremiah was not fired. God does not tell a discouraged servant he is fine or finished. He calls him back, as He restored Peter (John 21:15-19).
15:19 *if you bring out the precious from the worthless, like My mouth you will be* Some of what Jeremiah said was true and good, and some, like calling God a deceptive stream, was not. He must speak only what is true, and he must not bend the message to win the people back.
15:20 *they will fight against you, and they will not prevail over you, for I am with you* The promise of his call repeated (1:18-19). The fight would not stop, but they would not win. He was beaten, jailed and dropped in a cistern, but never destroyed, and Babylon set him free when the city fell (39:11-14). The chapter that began "Woe to me" ends "I am with you."
15:21 *I will ransom you from the palm of ruthless ones* To ransom is to pay the price to set someone free.

JEREMIAH 16

Jeremiah Forbidden to Marry

1 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **2** "You shall not take for yourself a wife, and there shall not be to you sons and daughters in this place. **3** For thus says the LORD concerning the sons and concerning the daughters who are born in this place, and concerning their mothers who bore them, and concerning their fathers who fathered them in this land: **4** Deaths of diseases they will die; they will not be lamented, and they will not be buried; they will be for dung on the surface of the ground; and by the sword and by the famine they will come to an end; and their corpses will be for food for the birds of the heavens and for the animals of the earth. **5** For thus says the LORD: Do not enter a house of mourning, and do not go to lament, and do not show sympathy to them; for I have withdrawn My peace from this people, declares the LORD, the steadfast love and the compassions. **6** And great and small will die in this land; they will not be buried, and they will not lament for them, and ***one*** will not cut himself, and ***one*** will not make himself bald for them. **7** And they will not break ***bread*** for them in mourning, to comfort him for the dead, and they will not give them a cup of consolations to drink for his father and for his mother. **8** And a house of feasting you shall not enter, to sit with them, to eat and to drink. **9** For thus says the LORD of armies, the God of Israel (Yisra'el): Look, I am causing to cease from this place, before your eyes and in your days, the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of a bridegroom and the voice of a bride. **10** And it will be, when you tell this people all these words, and they say to you, 'Why has the LORD spoken against us all this great evil? And what ***is*** our iniquity, and what ***is*** our sin which we have sinned against the LORD our God?' **11** then you shall say to them, 'Because your fathers forsook Me,' declares the LORD, 'and walked after other gods, and served them, and bowed down to them; and Me they forsook, and My law they did not keep. **12** And you, you have done evil more than your fathers; and look, you are walking, each one, after the stubbornness of his evil heart, so as not to listen to Me. **13** And I will hurl you from this land to the land which you have not known, you and your fathers; and you will serve other gods there day and night, for I will not give you favor.'

A New Exodus Promised

14 Therefore look, days are coming, declares the LORD, and it will not be said again, 'As the LORD lives, who brought up the sons of Israel from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim),' **15** but, 'As the LORD lives, who brought up the sons of Israel from the land of the north and from all the lands where He had banished them.' And I will bring them back to their land which I gave to their fathers. **16** Look, I am sending for many fishermen, declares the LORD, and they will fish them out; and after that I will send for many hunters, and they will hunt them from every mountain and from every hill and from the clefts of the rocks. **17** For My eyes ***are*** on all their ways; they have not been hidden from before Me, and their iniquity has not been concealed from before My eyes. **18** And I will repay first the double of their iniquity and their sin, because they

16:1 Jer 1:2,4; Jer 2:1
16:2 1 Cor 7:26,27; Gen 19:14; Luke 21:23
16:3 Jer 16:5,9
16:4 Rev 19:17; Jer 25:33; Jer 9:22
16:5 Ezek 24:16-23; Isa 27:11; Jer 15:1-4
16:6 Rev 20:12; Jer 41:5; Jer 47:5
16:7 Ezek 24:17; Hos 9:4; Deut 26:14
16:8 Matt 24:38; Jer 15:17; Eccl 7:2-4
16:9 Rev 18:23; Jer 7:34; Ezek 26:13
16:10 Jer 5:19; Jer 13:22; Deut 29:24,25
16:11 Ps 106:35-41; Jer 5:7-9; Neh 9:26-29
16:12 Mark 7:21; Jer 7:26; Jer 13:10
16:13 Deut 28:36,63-65; Jer 17:4; Deut 4:26-28
16:14 Jer 23:7,8; Deut 15:15; Exod 20:2
16:15 Jer 3:18; Jer 24:6; Jer 32:37
16:16 Amos 4:2; Hab 1:14,15; Mic 7:2
16:17 Prov 15:3; Jer 32:19; 2 Chr 16:9
16:18 Isa 40:2; Jer 17:18; Rev 18:6

16:2 *You shall not take for yourself a wife* The only place in the Old Testament where God tells a man not to marry. In Israel marriage and children were a great blessing (Gen 1:28; Ps 127:3-5), and people would ask why he had no family. His single life was a sermon: the families of this city are going to die. "In this place" shows the reason was the coming judgment, not that marriage is bad (Heb 13:4).
16:4 *Deaths of diseases they will die; they will not be lamented, and they will not be buried* So many would die in the siege that no one would be left to bury them, one of the covenant curses (Deut 28:26). If you have longed for marriage or children and not had them, Jeremiah's story does not mean God is against you. His life without a family was one of the most fruitful in the Old Testament. Paul was unmarried and said a single person can serve the Lord with an undivided heart (1 Cor 7:7-8, 32-35), and Jesus Himself never married.
16:5 *Do not enter a house of mourning* Neighbors came to weep with a grieving family, and staying away was an insult. "Peace" is shalom, wholeness and well-being, and "steadfast love" is hesed. God had not stopped being loving. The time of sparing them was over.
16:6 *one will not cut himself, and one will not make himself bald for them* Pagan mourning customs the Law forbade (Deut 14:1), though many in Judah did them. There would be no funeral meal, no cup of comfort. Death would be everywhere, and grief would have no time to be spoken.
16:8 *a house of feasting you shall not enter* Cut off from his people's sorrows and their joys. "In your days" (16:9) means those listening would live to see it.
16:9 *the voice of a bridegroom and the voice of a bride* As in 7:34 and 25:10. But in 33:10-11 God promises those voices will be heard again. Jeremiah's whole life said one thing: God means what He says. Does the way we live say anything about what we believe?
16:10 *what is our iniquity, and what is our sin* They truly did not see what they had done wrong. That is what long years of sin do to a heart. It stops seeing.
16:12 *you have done evil more than your fathers* They could not blame their fathers. They had taken their fathers' sins and gone further.
16:13 *you will serve other gods there day and night* Sad irony. In Babylon they would have all the false gods they wanted, and none could help.
16:14 *As the LORD lives, who brought up the sons of Israel from the land of Egypt* The usual form of a solemn oath, recalling the greatest rescue in their history.
16:15 *from the land of the north and from all the lands where He had banished them* A rescue so great it would make the exodus look small. The return from Babylon in 538 B.C. was a first taste, but it brought back a small group from one land. This reaches to "all the lands." I believe it points to the day God will gather Israel from every nation and bring them home for good (23:7-8; Isa 11:11-12; Ezek 36:24), and He will keep it to the letter. He has not cast away His people (Rom 11:1-2, 25-29).
16:16 *I am sending for many fishermen* The Babylonian armies, dragging people out like fish and then hunting down anyone who hid. This is not the happy picture of fishers of men (Matt 4:19). Here they catch people for judgment.
16:18 *the double of their iniquity and their sin* Likely a full and fitting payment (Isa 40:2). Their idols were dead things, like corpses, filling God's land. The land was His, and Israel lived there as His tenants (Lev 25:23).

have profaned My land with the corpses of their detestable things, and ***with*** their abominations they have filled My inheritance." **19** O LORD, my strength and my stronghold, and my refuge in a day of distress, to You nations will come from the ends of the earth, and they will say, "Surely our fathers inherited falsehood, vanity, and ***there is*** nothing in them that profits." **20** Will man make gods for himself? And they ***are*** not gods! **21** Therefore look, I am making them know; at this time I will make them know My hand and My might, and they will know that My name ***is*** the LORD.

JEREMIAH 17

The Deceitful Heart

1 The sin of Judah (Yehuda) is written with a stylus of iron; with a point of flint ***it is*** engraved on the tablet of their heart and on the horns of your altars, **2** while their sons remember their altars and their Asherim beside the luxuriant tree on the high hills. **3** O My mountain in the field, your wealth, all your treasures I will give for plunder, your high places for sin in all your territories. **4** And you will let go, even through yourself, of your inheritance which I gave you; and I will make you serve your enemies in the land which you do not know; for you have kindled a fire in My anger; it will burn forever. **5** Thus says the LORD: "Cursed ***is*** the man who trusts in mankind and makes flesh his arm, and from the LORD his heart turns aside. **6** And he will be like a juniper in the desert plain, and he will not see when good comes; and he will dwell ***in*** parched places in the wilderness, a land of saltiness, and it is not inhabited. **7** Blessed ***is*** the man who trusts in the LORD, and the LORD is his trust. **8** And he will be like a tree transplanted by water, and ***that*** sends out its roots by a stream; and it will not see when heat comes, and its leaves will be luxuriant; and in a year of drought it will not be anxious, and it will not cease from producing fruit. **9** The heart ***is*** deceitful more than everything, and it ***is*** incurable; who can know it? **10** I, the LORD, search the heart; I test the kidneys, even to give to each one according to his ways, according to the fruit of his deeds. **11** ***As*** a partridge gathers ***a brood*** and has not laid ***it***, ***so is*** one who makes riches, and not with justice; in the middle of his days it will leave him, and at his end he will be a fool." **12** A throne of glory, on high from the first, ***is*** the place of our sanctuary. **13** O Hope of Israel (Yisra'el), O LORD, all who forsake You will be ashamed; and those who turn aside from Me will be written in the earth, for they have forsaken the spring of living water, the LORD. **14** Heal me, O LORD, and I will be healed; save me, and I will be saved; for

16:19 1 Pet 1:18; Acts 13:47; Rom 10:18
16:20 Ps 115:4-8; Isa 37:19; Hos 8:4-6
16:21 Jer 33:2; Ps 9:16; Ps 83:18
17:1 Prov 3:3; 2 Cor 3:3; Prov 7:3
17:2 2 Chr 24:18; Jer 2:20; Jer 7:18
17:3 Jer 15:13; Jer 26:18; 2 Kgs 24:13
17:4 Jer 15:14; Jer 16:13; Jer 7:20
17:5 Ps 118:8,9; Ps 146:3,4; Isa 2:22
17:6 Deut 29:23; Jer 48:6; Job 20:17
17:7 Ps 34:8; Prov 16:20; Ps 84:12
17:8 Ezek 31:4-10; Matt 7:17; Ps 1:3
17:9 Mark 7:21; Matt 15:19; Matt 13:15
17:10 Rev 2:23; Rev 22:12; Jer 32:19
17:11 Prov 28:8,16,20,22; Prov 15:27; Prov 21:6
17:12 Jer 3:17; Jer 14:21; Ps 96:6
17:13 Luke 10:20; John 8:6; John 4:10
17:14 Matt 13:15; Deut 10:21; Ps 6:2,4

16:19 *O LORD, my strength and my stronghold, and my refuge in a day of distress* In his loneliness and all the bad news, Jeremiah runs to God.
16:19 *to You nations will come from the ends of the earth* Irony. Judah was running to idols, and one day idol-worshiping nations would run from them to Judah's God. That began when the gospel went to the Gentiles (Acts 14:15; 1 Thess 1:9), and it will be complete in Christ's kingdom, when the nations come to Jerusalem (Isa 2:2-3; Zech 8:22-23).
16:20 *Will man make gods for himself? And they are not gods* The foolishness of idolatry in two lines. A god you can make is no god at all.
16:21 *they will know that My name is the LORD* The chapter that began with no wife, no funerals and no feasts ends with the earth knowing the LORD.
17:1 *The sin of Judah is written with a stylus of iron* An iron stylus with a hard point cut letters into stone so they would last. God wrote His law on stone at Sinai (Exod 31:18). Judah's hearts had become tablets too, but what was written there was sin. Later God promises to write His law on their hearts (31:33). The horns were the altar's corners, where the blood of the sin offering made atonement (Lev 4:7).
17:2 *their Asherim beside the luxuriant tree on the high hills* Wooden poles for Asherah, a Canaanite fertility goddess. Their children grew up remembering them. Sin was passed down like a family heirloom.
17:3 *O My mountain in the field* Jerusalem, God's own mountain. High places were hilltop shrines, often to false gods. Verses 3-4 repeat 15:13-14.
17:5 *Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind and makes flesh his arm* Two ways to live, as in Psalm 1. The arm stands for strength. Judah's kings looked to Egypt (2:36-37; 37:5-7). Getting help from people is not the sin. The sin is a heart that turns from God and puts its whole weight on something else.
17:6 *like a juniper in the desert plain* A low, dry shrub in salty ground. Even when blessing comes, such a man cannot take it in.
17:7 *Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, and the LORD is his trust* The tree is "transplanted." It did not start by the water. God moved it there, as He does with us when we come to Him by faith.
17:8 *in a year of drought it will not be anxious* The heat still comes, but the tree does not fear it. We are not promised that there will be no drought, but that our roots will find water when everything around is dry. The difference is not the weather but where the roots go. When the heat comes, what do you reach for first?
17:9 *The heart is deceitful more than everything, and it is incurable; who can know it* The heart in Hebrew is the whole inner person: mind, will, desires and feelings (Prov 4:23). "Deceitful" shares the root of Jacob's name, the trickster (Gen 27:36). It fools its owner most of all, as Judah did not know what it had done wrong (16:10). "Incurable" is the word for a wound that will not heal (15:18; 30:12). That is why the advice to follow your heart is so dangerous. David asked God to search him (Ps 139:23-24), and Paul knew a clear conscience did not make him innocent (1 Cor 4:4).
17:9 *who can know it* Sin comes out of the heart (Mark 7:21-23), so the cure must start there. God promised to write His law on the heart (31:33) and give a new heart (Ezek 36:26), and He does it when a person is born again through faith in Christ (John 3:3-7; 2 Cor 5:17). Even then believers still fight the old ways (Gal 5:17), so let God's Word judge your heart, not the other way around (Heb 4:12).
17:10 *I, the LORD, search the heart; I test the kidneys* The kidneys stood for the deepest feelings and hidden thoughts, as we might say the gut. What is in the heart shows up in what we do, and God judges both. Jesus says the same of Himself (Rev 2:23). We can hide nothing from Him, so we can bring Him the truth.
17:11 *As a partridge gathers a brood and has not laid it* People believed the partridge sat on eggs it had not laid, and the chicks ran off when they hatched. The exact Hebrew is uncertain. Wealth gained by cheating was never really his. Compare the rich fool (Luke 12:16-21).
17:12 *A throne of glory, on high from the first* God's true throne is in heaven, and has been from the beginning.
17:13 *those who turn aside from Me will be written in the earth* Names written in dust are soon blown away, unlike names written in God's book (Exod 32:32; Luke 10:20). They left the spring of living water (2:13), which Jesus offers to all who come to Him (John 4:10-14).
17:14 *Heal me, O LORD, and I will be healed* The man who just called the heart incurable asks God to heal him. Only God can, and when He does, the healing is real.

You ***are*** my praise. **15** Look, they are saying to me, "Where ***is*** the word of the LORD? Let it come, please!" **16** And I, I have not hurried away from ***being*** a shepherd after You, and the incurable day I have not desired; You, You know; what came out of my lips was before Your face. **17** Do not become a terror to me; You ***are*** my refuge in a day of calamity. **18** Let those who pursue me be put to shame, and let me not be put to shame, me; let them be dismayed, them, and let me not be dismayed, me. Bring on them a day of calamity, and break them ***with*** a double breaking.

Keep the Sabbath Holy

19 Thus the LORD said to me: "Go, and you shall stand in the Gate of the Sons of the People, by which the kings of Judah come in and by which they go out, and in all the gates of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim); **20** and you shall say to them, 'Hear the word of the LORD, O kings of Judah, and all Judah, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, who come in through these gates. **21** Thus says the LORD: "Take heed for your lives, and do not carry a burden on the day of the Sabbath and bring ***it*** in through the gates of Jerusalem. **22** And you shall not bring out a burden from your houses on the day of the Sabbath, and you shall not do any work; and you shall sanctify the day of the Sabbath, just as I commanded your fathers. **23** And they did not listen, and they did not incline their ear, and they stiffened their neck so as not to listen and not to accept correction. **24** And it will be, if you will surely listen to Me, declares the LORD, so as not to bring a burden through the gates of this city on the day of the Sabbath, and to sanctify the day of the Sabbath, so as not to do any work on it, **25** and there will come in through the gates of this city kings and officials sitting on the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, they and their officials, the man of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and this city will remain forever. **26** And they will come from the cities of Judah and from around Jerusalem, and from the land of Benjamin (Binyamin), and from the Shephelah, and from the hill country, and from the Negeb (Negev), bringing burnt offering and sacrifice, and grain offering and frankincense, and bringing a thank offering ***to*** the house of the LORD. **27** And if you will not listen to Me to sanctify the day of the Sabbath, and not to carry a burden and come in through the gates of Jerusalem on the day of the Sabbath, and I will kindle a fire in its gates, and it will devour the fortresses of Jerusalem, and it will not be quenched."'"

JEREMIAH 18

At the Potter's House

1 The word which came to Jeremiah (Yirmeyahu) from the LORD, saying, **2** "Arise, and you shall go down ***to*** the house of the potter, and there I will make you hear My words." **3** And I went down ***to*** the house of the potter, and look, he was doing work on the wheels. **4** And the vessel which he was making with the clay was ruined in the hand of the potter; and he would again make it another vessel, just as it was right in the eyes of the potter to make. **5** And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **6** "Like this potter am I not able to do to you, O house of Israel (Yisra'el)?" declares the LORD. "Look, like the clay in the hand of the potter, so ***are*** you in My hand, O house of Israel. **7** ***At*** one moment I may speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up and to pull down and

17:15 2 Pet 3:3; 2 Pet 3:4; Isa 5:19
17:16 Jer 4:19,20; Jer 1:4-10; Jer 20:9
17:17 Jer 16:19; Nah 1:7; Ps 88:15,16
17:18 Ps 35:4,26,27; Jer 20:11; Ps 40:14
17:19 Acts 5:20; Jer 7:2; Jer 26:2
17:20 Jer 19:3; Jer 22:2; Ps 49:1,2
17:21 Mark 4:24; John 5:9; John 5:10
17:22 Luke 6:5; Luke 23:56; Ezek 20:12,20,21
17:23 Acts 7:51; Jer 11:10; Jer 19:15
17:24 Luke 23:56; Deut 11:13,22; Jer 17:21,22
17:25 Heb 12:22; Luke 1:32; Jer 22:4
17:26 Jer 32:44; Jer 33:13; Zech 7:7
17:27 John 5:10; 2 Kgs 25:9; Jer 7:20
18:2 Jer 19:1,2; Heb 1:1; Jer 13:1
18:3 Rom 9:21; Jonah 1:3; John 15:14
18:4 Rom 9:20; Rom 9:21; Jer 18:6
18:5 Rom 9:21
18:6 Rom 9:20; Rom 9:21; Isa 64:8
18:7 Jer 1:10; Jer 12:14-17; Jer 25:9-14

17:15 *Where is the word of the LORD? Let it come, please* He had warned for years, and they mocked. Scoffers say the same about Christ's coming, but God's delay is His patience, not His forgetfulness (2 Pet 3:3-9).
17:16 *the incurable day I have not desired* He had not run from his calling, and he took no pleasure in announcing disaster.
17:17 *Do not become a terror to me* His greatest fear was not his enemies but that God might turn against him too.
17:18 *Bring on them a day of calamity* As at 11:20 and 15:15, Jeremiah hands his case to the righteous Judge and asks for what God had already said He would do. Jesus teaches us to love and pray for our enemies (Matt 5:44), and Paul tells us to leave vengeance to God (Rom 12:19).
17:21 *do not carry a burden on the day of the Sabbath* The Sabbath was the seventh day, Saturday, set apart as Israel's day of rest and a sign of God's covenant (Exod 20:8-11; 31:13-17), remembering creation and freedom from Egypt (Deut 5:12-15). Farmers and merchants were carrying goods in to sell as on any other day. Nehemiah faced the same (Neh 13:15-22).
17:25 *this city will remain forever* Two paths again. Obedience would bring kings on David's throne and worshipers from every region.
17:27 *I will kindle a fire in its gates* Exactly what happened in 586 B.C. (52:13). The Sabbath was a test of trust. If they could not stop for one day to honor God, their hearts belonged to money and work. The Sabbath was a shadow, and the substance belongs to Christ (Col 2:16-17). There is a rest we enter by faith (Heb 4:9-10). Believers differ on how the command applies today: some keep Saturday, many keep Sunday, the Lord's Day, and others see every day as the Lord's (Rom 14:5-6). The heart question is the same: do we trust God enough to stop?
18:2 *you shall go down to the house of the potter* God sometimes taught Jeremiah through ordinary things. A potter's shop would be in the lower city, near water and clay.
18:3 *he was doing work on the wheels* Two stone disks joined by a shaft. The potter turned the lower one with his feet and shaped the clay on the upper one with his hands.
18:4 *he would again make it another vessel, just as it was right in the eyes of the potter* Perhaps a stone or lump spoiled the clay. The potter did not throw it away. He kept working with it, and he decided what the new vessel would be.
18:6 *like the clay in the hand of the potter, so are you in My hand* The heart of the chapter (Isa 29:16; 45:9; 64:8; Rom 9:20-21). For Judah it was a warning. The clay does not tell the potter what to do. Yet there was hope too. The potter did not give up on the clay. God would bring Judah down, but He would build Israel again (31:4, 28).
18:7 *to pluck up and to pull down and to destroy* The words of Jeremiah's call (1:10).

to destroy; **8** and that nation turns back from its evil, concerning which I had spoken against it, and I will relent concerning the calamity which I had planned to do to it. **9** And ***at another*** moment I may speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to build up and to plant; **10** and it does the evil in My sight, so as not to listen to My voice, and I will relent concerning the good which I had said ***I would*** do good to it. **11** And now, say, please, to the man of Judah (Yehuda) and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), saying, 'Thus says the LORD: "Look, I am forming calamity against you and planning a plan against you. Turn back, please, each one from his evil way, and make your ways and your deeds good."' **12** And they say, '***It is*** hopeless! For after our plans we will walk, and we will do, each one, the stubbornness of his evil heart.' **13** Therefore thus says the LORD: Ask, please, among the nations: Who has heard ***things*** like these? The virgin of Israel has done a very horrible thing. **14** Does the snow of Lebanon (Levanon) leave the rock of the field? Or are the strange, cold, flowing waters plucked up? **15** For My people have forgotten Me; they burn incense to worthlessness, and they have made them stumble in their ways, the ancient tracks, to walk ***in*** paths, a way not built up, **16** to make their land a horror, a perpetual hissing; everyone who passes by it will be appalled and shake his head. **17** Like an east wind I will scatter them before the enemy; ***the*** back and not ***the*** face I will show them in the day of their disaster."

A Plot Against Jeremiah

18 And they said, "Come, and let us plan plans against Jeremiah, for law will not perish from the priest, and counsel from the wise, and word from the prophet. Come, and let us strike him with the tongue, and let us not pay attention to any of his words." **19** Pay attention to me, O LORD, and listen to the voice of my opponents. **20** Should evil be repaid in place of good? For they have dug a pit for my life. Remember my standing before You to speak good concerning them, to turn back Your rage from them. **21** Therefore give their sons to the famine, and pour them out over the hands of the sword; and let their wives become childless and widows, and let their men be slain by death, their young men struck down by the sword in battle. **22** Let a cry be heard from their houses when You bring a raiding band on them suddenly; for they have dug a pit to capture me, and they have hidden snares for my feet. **23** And You, O LORD, You know all their counsel against me for death. Do not make atonement for their iniquity, and do not wipe out their sin from before You; and let them be made to stumble before You; in the time of Your anger deal with them.

JEREMIAH 19

The Broken Flask

1 Thus said the LORD: "Go, and you shall buy a potter's flask of earthenware, and ***take*** some of the elders of the people and some of the elders of the priests, **2** and you shall go out to the valley of the son of Hinnom (Hinom), which ***is at*** the

18:8 Ezek 18:21; Jer 26:3,13; Judg 2:18
18:9 Jer 1:10; Jer 11:17; Amos 9:11-15
18:10 1 Sam 2:30; Ezek 33:18; 1 Sam 13:13
18:11 2 Kgs 17:13; Jer 35:15; Isa 1:16-19
18:12 Mark 7:21; Jer 2:25; Deut 29:19
18:13 Jer 5:30; Isa 66:8; Jer 23:14
18:14 John 6:68
18:15 Jer 6:16; Isa 57:14; Jer 10:15
18:16 Matt 27:39; Mark 15:29; Jer 25:9
18:17 Jer 13:24; Jer 2:27; Job 27:21
18:18 Matt 22:15; Jer 11:19; Ps 52:2
18:19 1 John 5:16; Neh 6:9; Jer 20:12
18:20 1 John 5:16; Ps 35:7; Ps 57:6
18:21 1 John 5:16; Ps 109:9-20; Jer 16:3,4
18:22 Rom 11:2; Jer 6:26; Ps 140:5
18:23 Rom 11:2; Isa 2:9; Neh 4:4,5
19:1 Matt 26:3; Matt 27:1; Jer 18:2-4
19:2 Josh 15:8; 2 Kgs 23:10; Jer 7:31,32

18:8 *I will relent concerning the calamity which I had planned to do to it* Nineveh is the clearest example (Jonah 3:4-10). To relent does not mean God made a mistake or changed His character. God does not change (Mal 3:6) or change His mind as men do (Num 23:19). He changes what He does when people change how they stand before Him. His warnings often carry an unspoken unless you turn.
18:10 *I will relent concerning the good* God's blessing was not a blank check for a people living in rebellion, as Saul learned (1 Sam 15:23, 26). This does not cancel His unconditional covenants with Abraham and David, which rest on His own faithfulness (31:35-37; 33:20-26). What one generation enjoys of the blessing can be lost by sin. The promise itself stands.
18:11 *Turn back, please, each one from his evil way* God says "please." He pleads. "Forming" is the potter's word. God is the sovereign Potter, and His call to turn is real and sincere, both taught in the same few verses. Good teachers explain how these fit in different ways, and I will not try to settle that here. No one can say he wanted to turn and God would not let him. If something in your life has been spoiled, a marriage, a calling, a season, the potter did not throw the clay away. God can remake a broken life that turns to Him.
18:12 *It is hopeless! For after our plans we will walk* It sounds like despair, but they are not saying they cannot change. They are saying they will not. Sometimes people say they are too far gone when the truth is they do not want to give it up. Be honest with God about which one it is.
18:14 *Does the snow of Lebanon leave the rock of the field* The snow on Lebanon's peaks was always there, and its cold streams never ran dry. Nature is faithful. Even pagans did not abandon their gods (2:10-11), but God's people forgot Him.
18:15 *the ancient tracks* The old paths of faithfulness (6:16). They left the good road for rough tracks that go nowhere.
18:16 *a perpetual hissing* Passers-by would hiss and shake their heads in shock.
18:17 *the back and not the face I will show them* The east wind was the hot desert wind that withered everything. They turned their backs on God (2:27). In their trouble He would turn His back on them.
18:18 *Come, and let us plan plans against Jeremiah* Irony. God was planning a plan against them (18:11), and they planned plans against His prophet. We have priests, wise men and prophets, they said, and they cannot fail. Attack the messenger and stop listening is still how many people deal with an unwelcome truth.
18:20 *Remember my standing before You to speak good concerning them* He had prayed for these very people, and they dug a pit for him. David knew this pain (Ps 109:4-5), and so did Jesus, who did good to His people and was crucified by them.
18:21 *give their sons to the famine* One of the hardest prayers in Jeremiah. It is honest, from a man betrayed by people he prayed for, and God recorded it as He did the imprecatory psalms (Ps 109; 137). He does not take revenge. He asks for the very judgments God had announced (15:2, 8).
18:23 *in the time of Your anger deal with them* He leaves the timing to God. This is not where the Bible leaves us. Jesus prayed for those who crucified Him (Luke 23:34), and Stephen did the same (Acts 7:60). We bless those who persecute us and leave vengeance to God (Rom 12:14, 19). When someone has hurt you deeply, tell God the truth first, then let Him have it, and ask for grace to pray for them as Jesus did.
19:1 *a potter's flask of earthenware* A narrow-necked clay water jar. Unlike the soft clay of chapter 18, this jar had already been fired. If it broke, it could not be reshaped. That difference is the whole message. The elders of the people and priests came as witnesses.
19:2 *the gate of the potsherd* Likely where broken pottery was thrown out into the valley of Hinnom below (7:31-32), a fitting place to break a jar.

entrance of the Gate of the Potsherd, and you shall proclaim there the words which I will speak to you. **3** And you shall say, 'Hear the word of the LORD, O kings of Judah (Yehuda) and inhabitants of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). Thus says the LORD of armies, the God of Israel (Yisra'el): "Look, I am bringing calamity on this place, which everyone who hears of it, his ears will tingle, **4** because they have forsaken Me and have made this place foreign, and have burned incense in it to other gods whom they did not know, they and their fathers and the kings of Judah; and they have filled this place ***with*** the blood of innocent ***ones***, **5** and they have built the high places of Baal to burn their sons in the fire ***as*** burnt offerings to Baal, which I did not command, and I did not speak ***it***, and it did not come up on My heart. **6** Therefore look, days are coming," declares the LORD, "and this place will not be called again Topheth (Tofet) and the valley of the son of Hinnom, but the valley of the slaughter. **7** And I will make void the counsel of Judah and Jerusalem in this place, and I will make them fall by the sword before their enemies and by the hand of those who seek their life; and I will give their corpses for food to the birds of the heavens and to the animals of the earth. **8** And I will make this city a horror and a hissing; everyone who passes by it will be appalled and will hiss because of all its wounds. **9** And I will make them eat the flesh of their sons and the flesh of their daughters, and each one will eat the flesh of his neighbor in the siege and in the distress with which their enemies and those who seek their life will distress them."' **10** And you shall break the flask before the eyes of the men who go with you, **11** and you shall say to them, 'Thus says the LORD of armies: "Thus I will break this people and this city, just as one breaks the vessel of the potter, which cannot be repaired again; and they will bury in Topheth, because ***there is*** no place to bury. **12** Thus I will do to this place," declares the LORD, "and to its inhabitants, to make this city like Topheth. **13** And the houses of Jerusalem and the houses of the kings of Judah will be like the place of Topheth, unclean, all the houses on whose roofs they burned incense to all the host of the heavens, and poured out drink offerings to other gods."'" **14** And Jeremiah (Yirmeyahu) came from Topheth, where the LORD had sent him to prophesy, and he stood in the court of the house of the LORD, and he said to all the people, **15** "Thus says the LORD of armies, the God of Israel: 'Look, I am bringing to this city and on all its cities all the calamity which I have spoken against it, because they have stiffened their neck so as not to hear My words.'"

JEREMIAH 20

Pashhur and the Stocks

1 And Pashhur (Pashchur) the son of Immer (Imer), the priest, and he ***was*** an overseer, a leader, in the house of the LORD, heard Jeremiah (Yirmeyahu) prophesying these
things. **2** And Pashhur struck Jeremiah the prophet, and he put him in the stocks that ***were*** at the Upper Gate of Benjamin (Binyamin), which ***was*** in the house of the LORD. **3** And it was on the next day, and Pashhur brought Jeremiah out from the stocks; and Jeremiah said to him, "The LORD has

19:3 Matt 21:33; 1 Sam 3:11; Jer 17:20
19:4 Matt 23:34; Luke 11:50; Rev 16:6
19:5 Rom 11:4; Jer 32:35; Lev 18:21
19:6 Josh 15:8; Jer 19:2,11; Isa 30:33
19:7 Rev 19:19; Lev 26:17; Jer 16:4
19:8 Jer 18:16; Jer 49:13; 1 Kgs 9:8
19:9 Lev 26:29; Isa 9:20; Lam 4:10
19:10 Jer 51:63,64; Jer 48:12
19:11 Acts 21:11; Ps 2:9; Isa 30:14
19:12 Jer 10:13; Jer 11:5
19:13 Acts 7:42; Jer 32:29; 2 Kgs 23:12
19:14 Jer 26:2; 2 Chr 20:5; Jer 19:2,3
19:15 Jer 7:26; Jer 17:23; Jer 35:15-17
20:1 1 Chr 24:14; Ezra 2:37,38; 2 Kgs 25:18
20:2 Heb 11:36; Matt 23:36; Heb 11:37
20:3 Acts 4:5; Jer 20:10; Isa 8:3

19:3 *his ears will tingle* News so shocking it would make ears ring, the words used of Shiloh in Eli's day (1 Sam 3:11) and of Jerusalem in Manasseh's day (2 Kgs 21:12).
19:4 *have made this place foreign* They turned God's city into a place belonging to foreign gods. The innocent blood likely includes the children killed at Topheth and the people Manasseh put to death (2 Kgs 21:16; 24:4).
19:5 *which I did not command, and I did not speak it, and it did not come up on My heart* The sin of 7:31, here to Baal and in 32:35 to Molech. Ahaz and Manasseh did it with their own sons (2 Kgs 16:3; 21:6). It was the murder of children, and God denies it three ways. The Law forbade it (Lev 18:21; Deut 12:31). If this touches a wound for you, God's anger is against those who killed children and kept on. For anyone who comes in repentance there is full forgiveness in Christ (1 John 1:9), and I believe little children who die are safe with God (2 Sam 12:23).
19:6 *the valley of the slaughter* As in 7:32. The place where they killed their children would be filled with their own dead.
19:7 *I will make void the counsel of Judah and Jerusalem* The Hebrew for "make void" sounds like the word for "flask." As Jeremiah held up the jar, God said He would empty out all their plans.
19:9 *I will make them eat the flesh of their sons and the flesh of their daughters* One of the most terrible verses in the Bible. Moses had warned of this as a covenant curse (Lev 26:29; Deut 28:53-57). It happened in the siege of Samaria (2 Kgs 6:28-29) and of Jerusalem (Lam 2:20; 4:10). These people had burned their children to Baal, and now their sin came back on their own heads. We will not dwell on it. God's warnings are true, and sin left unchecked leads where no one would choose to go.
19:11 *just as one breaks the vessel of the potter, which cannot be repaired again* Soft clay can be reshaped. A fired pot, once broken, cannot be mended. Judah had hardened year after year, and the time for reshaping was over. God would restore His people later (30:3; 31:4), but that generation, city and kingdom would be shattered first.
19:13 *all the houses on whose roofs they burned incense to all the host of the heavens* Flat roofs were used like porches, and people worshiped the sun, moon and stars there (Zeph 1:5; 2 Kgs 23:12). Our idols are not always in a distant valley. Sometimes they are at home, in the private places where we think no one sees.
19:15 *because they have stiffened their neck so as not to hear My words* An ox that would not bow its neck to the yoke was useless. That one phrase sums up the problem of the whole book.
20:1 *Pashhur the son of Immer, the priest* Immer was an old priestly family (1 Chr 24:14). Pashhur was something like the chief of temple security, and he decided Jeremiah was a threat to order. He is not the Pashhur son of Malchiah in 21:1.
20:2 *Pashhur struck Jeremiah the prophet, and he put him in the stocks* Likely a beating of up to forty blows, as the Law allowed (Deut 25:2-3). The stocks held the feet, and sometimes hands and neck, in a twisted position, painful and shameful, at a busy gate where all could mock him. The first physical attack on Jeremiah, and not the last (37:15; 38:6). A priest in God's house beat God's prophet for speaking God's word.
20:3 *Terror All Around* A night in the stocks did not silence him. A new name in the Bible often tells who a person really is or what will happen to him. Pashhur tried to frighten Jeremiah, and terror would surround Pashhur. The Hebrew is Magor-missabib, a phrase Jeremiah used often (6:25; 46:5), and his enemies made it his nickname (20:10).

not called your name Pashhur, but Terror All Around. **4** For thus says the LORD: 'Look, I am making you a terror to yourself and to all your friends; and they will fall by the sword of their enemies, and your eyes ***will be*** seeing ***it***; and all Judah (Yehuda) I will give into the hand of the king of Babylon (Bavel), and he will take them into exile to Babylon, and he will strike them down with the sword. **5** And I will give all the wealth of this city, and all its labor, and all its precious things, and all the treasures of the kings of Judah I will give into the hand of their enemies; and they will plunder them, and they will take them, and they will bring them to Babylon. **6** And you, Pashhur, and all who dwell in your house, will go into captivity; and to Babylon you will come, and there you will die, and there you will be buried, you and all your friends to whom you have prophesied in falsehood.'"

Jeremiah's Complaint

7 You have enticed me, O LORD, and I was enticed; You were stronger than I, and You prevailed. I have become a laughingstock all the day; every one ***is*** mocking me. **8** For as often as I speak, I cry out; "Violence and destruction!" I proclaim; for the word of the LORD has become for me a reproach and a derision all the day. **9** And I say, "I will not remember Him, and I will not speak again in His name"; and it becomes in my heart like a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I am weary of holding ***it*** in, and I am not able. **10** For I have heard the whispering of many: "Terror ***is*** all around! Tell, and let us tell about him!" Every man of my peace ***is*** watching for my stumbling: "Perhaps he will be enticed, and we will prevail over him, and we will take our vengeance on him." **11** And the LORD ***is*** with me like a ruthless mighty man; therefore my pursuers will stumble, and they will not prevail; they will be greatly ashamed, for they have not prospered, an everlasting dishonor ***that*** will not be forgotten. **12** And O LORD of armies, who tests the righteous, who sees the kidneys and the heart, let me see Your vengeance on them, for to You I have revealed my case. **13** Sing to the LORD; praise the LORD; for He has delivered the soul of the needy from the hand of evildoers. **14** Cursed ***be*** the day on which I was born! The day ***on*** which my mother bore me, let it not be blessed! **15** Cursed ***be*** the man who brought the news to my father, saying, "A son, a male, has been born to you," surely making him rejoice. **16** And let that man be like the cities which the LORD overthrew and did not relent; and let him hear a cry in the morning and a shout of alarm at the time of noon, **17** because he did not kill me from the womb, and my mother would have been to me my grave, and her womb pregnant forever. **18** Why ***is*** this, ***that*** I came forth from the womb to see trouble and sorrow, and my days have come to an end in shame?

JEREMIAH 21

Zedekiah's Question

1 The word which came to Jeremiah (Yirmeyahu) from the

20:4 Jer 29:21; Job 18:11-21; Jer 39:6,7
20:5 Jer 15:13; Ezek 22:25; 2 Kgs 20:17,18
20:6 Jer 14:14,15; Lam 2:14; Jer 20:4
20:7 1 Cor 4:9; Lam 3:14; Ezek 3:14
20:8 Jer 6:10; 2 Chr 36:16; Jer 4:19-22
20:9 1 Cor 9:16; Ps 39:3; Luke 24:32
20:10 Luke 11:53; Luke 20:20; Ps 31:13
20:11 Jer 1:8,19; Jer 15:20; Jer 17:18
20:12 Jer 11:20; Ps 62:8; Ps 54:7
20:13 Ps 34:6; Ps 69:33; Ps 109:30,31
20:14 Jer 15:10; Job 3:3-16
20:15 Jer 1:5; Gen 21:5,6; Luke 1:14
20:16 Jer 18:22; Deut 29:23; Jer 48:3,4
20:17 Job 10:18,19; Job 3:10,11,16; Eccl 6:3
20:18 Job 3:20; Job 14:1,13; Lam 3:1
21:1 Jer 29:25; Jer 37:3; Jer 38:1

20:4 *all Judah I will give into the hand of the king of Babylon* The first time the book names Babylon as the enemy from the north.
20:6 *to whom you have prophesied in falsehood* Pashhur was also telling people all would be well, and his lies would follow him into exile. Scripture does not say when he was taken, but many think it was in 597 B.C., with Jehoiachin and the leading men (2 Kgs 24:14-16).
20:7 *You have enticed me, O LORD, and I was enticed* A startling thing to say to God. "Enticed" is used of someone talked into something, even by trickery (1 Kgs 22:20-22). God had not deceived him. He said from the first day that the people would fight him (1:19). But Jeremiah feels overpowered and used, the laughingstock of the city. God put these words in the Bible. He would rather have our honest pain than our polite silence (Ps 13; 22:1-2; 88).
20:8 *the word of the LORD has become for me a reproach and a derision* Every message was bad news, and the word God gave him had made him a joke. He was faithful, and faithfulness brought him only shame.
20:9 *like a burning fire shut up in my bones* One of the great verses about God's word. Jeremiah tried to quit, and he could not hold it in. God's word is alive (Heb 4:12), and God had put it in his mouth (1:9). Peter and John could not stop speaking what they had seen and heard (Acts 4:20), and Paul said woe to him if he did not preach (1 Cor 9:16). What hurt Jeremiah also kept him going. Sometimes what holds us when we want to give up is not our strength but the word of God that has taken root in us.
20:10 *Every man of my peace is watching for my stumbling* A "man of my peace" is a close friend. They whispered his own words as a nickname and hoped he would be "enticed" so they could "prevail," the very words he used of God. David knew a friend's betrayal (Ps 41:9; 55:12-14), and Jesus applied Psalm 41:9 to Judas (John 13:18).
20:11 *the LORD is with me like a ruthless mighty man* Suddenly the tone changes. Jeremiah remembers the promise of his call (1:8, 19). Feelings do not change all at once, but he turns his eyes from his enemies to God, and from his feelings to God's promises. That is how faith works in the dark.
20:12 *let me see Your vengeance on them, for to You I have revealed my case* Almost the same prayer as 11:20. He hands his case to the Judge (17:10; Rom 12:19). Jesus calls us further, to pray for those who persecute us (Matt 5:44), but Jeremiah still teaches us where to take our wrongs.
20:13 *Sing to the LORD; praise the LORD* Still surrounded and not yet set free, he praises God by faith as if it were done. "The needy" is Jeremiah himself.
20:14 *Cursed be the day on which I was born* Then he falls lower than ever. He does not curse God or his parents but the day and the messenger, things that cannot be harmed. This is the language of deep grief, like Job 3. God put it in the Bible and did not cast him off for it. The God who said, "Before I formed you in the belly I knew you" (1:5), did not take back His purpose. Some think verses 14-18 were spoken at another time and placed here by subject.
20:16 *like the cities which the LORD overthrew and did not relent* Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 19:24-25).
20:18 *Why is this, that I came forth from the womb to see trouble and sorrow* The chapter ends with only the question. The swing from praise in verse 13 to this is true to life, as many in grief and depression know. If you are in that place, Jeremiah's feelings were real but not the last word. God kept him, and he served many more years. Bring your darkness to God, and do not carry it alone. Talk to a pastor, a trusted friend or a counselor. If you are thinking of ending your life, reach out today to someone near you or to a crisis line where you live. Your life matters to God, who knew you before you were born.
21:1 *when King Zedekiah sent to him Pashhur the son of Malchiah* Chapters 21 to 24 are not in time order with chapter 20. Zedekiah was Judah's last king, about 597 to 586 B.C. Babylon began its final siege in his ninth year, about 588 B.C. (52:4), and this message likely comes early in it. It may sit here because both chapters have a Pashhur. This one later helped throw Jeremiah into the cistern (38:1-6). Zephaniah the priest was friendlier (29:29; 37:3).

LORD when King Zedekiah (Tsidqiyahu) sent to him Pashhur (Pashchur) the son of Malchiah (Malkiya) and Zephaniah (Tsefanya) the son of Maaseiah (Ma'aseya), the priest, saying, **2** "Inquire, please, of the LORD for us, for Nebuchadnezzar (Nevukhadretsar) king of Babylon (Bavel) is waging war against us. Perhaps the LORD will deal with us according to all His wonders, and he will go up from us." **3** And Jeremiah said to them, "Thus you shall say to Zedekiah: **4** 'Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel (Yisra'el): "Look, I am turning back the weapons of war that ***are*** in your hand, with which you are fighting the king of Babylon and the Chaldeans (Kasdim) who are besieging you outside the wall; and I will gather them into the midst of this city. **5** And I, I will fight against you with an outstretched hand and with a strong arm, and in anger and in rage and in great wrath. **6** And I will strike the inhabitants of this city, both mankind and animals; by a great pestilence they will die. **7** And after that," declares the LORD, "I will give Zedekiah king of Judah (Yehuda), and his servants, and the people, and those who remain in this city from the pestilence, from the sword, and from the famine, into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of those who seek their life; and he will strike them with the edge of the sword; he will not have pity on them, and he will not spare, and he will not have compassion."'" **8** And to this people you shall say, "Thus says the LORD: 'Look, I am setting before you the way of life and the way of death. **9** He who remains in this city will die by the sword and by the famine and by the pestilence; and he who goes out and falls away to the Chaldeans who are besieging you will live, and his life will be to him for plunder. **10** For I have set My face against this city for calamity and not for good,' declares the LORD. 'Into the hand of the king of Babylon it will be given, and he will burn it with fire.'" **11** And to the house of the king of Judah: Hear the word of the LORD, **12** O house of David, thus says the LORD: Judge justice in the morning, and deliver the one robbed from the hand of the oppressor, lest My rage go forth like fire and burn, and ***there be*** no one who quenches ***it***, because of the evil of your deeds. **13** Look, I ***am*** against you, O inhabitant of the valley, O rock of the plain, declares the LORD, you who say, "Who will come down against us? And who will come into our dwelling places?" **14** And I will punish you according to the fruit of your deeds, declares the LORD; and I will kindle a fire in its forest, and it will devour all ***that is*** around it.

JEREMIAH 22

Words to the Kings of Judah

1 Thus said the LORD: "Go down ***to*** the house of the king of Judah (Yehuda), and you shall speak there this word, **2** and you shall say, 'Hear the word of the LORD, O king of Judah, who sits on the throne of David, you and your servants and your people who come in through these gates. **3** Thus says the LORD: "Do justice and righteousness, and deliver the one who has been robbed from the hand of the oppressor. And the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow do not maltreat; do not treat ***them*** violently; and innocent blood do not shed in this place. **4** For if you indeed do this thing, and kings sitting for David on his throne will come in through the gates of this house, riding in chariots and on horses, he and his ser-

21:2 Jer 37:3,7; Ezek 20:1-3; Jer 42:4-6
21:4 Jer 32:5; Jer 37:8-10; Jer 33:5
21:5 Exod 6:6; Isa 63:10; Jer 32:17
21:6 Luke 21:24; Jer 12:3,4; Jer 33:12
21:7 Jer 37:17; 2 Kgs 25:5-7,18-21; Hab 1:6-10
21:8 Deut 30:15,19; Deut 11:26; Isa 1:19,20
21:9 Jer 38:2,17-23; Jer 39:18; Jer 45:5
21:10 Jer 44:11,27; Amos 9:4; Jer 52:13
21:11 Jer 13:18; Jer 17:20; Mic 3:1
21:12 Luke 1:69; Isa 1:17; Jer 4:4
21:13 Ps 125:2; Lam 4:12; Obad 1:3,4
21:14 Isa 3:10,11; Jer 32:19; Prov 1:31
22:1 Acts 5:20; Jer 21:11; Jer 34:2
22:2 Luke 1:32; Jer 22:4,30; Isa 9:7
22:3 Jer 21:12; Jer 22:17; Ezek 22:7
22:4 Jer 17:25

21:2 *Perhaps the LORD will deal with us according to all His wonders* Zedekiah was likely thinking of Hezekiah's day, when the angel of the LORD struck down the Assyrian army in one night (2 Kgs 19:1-7, 35-36). But Hezekiah humbled himself and trusted God. Zedekiah wanted God's miracle without God's word (37:2). Many still pray that way, wanting God to get them out of trouble but not to change them.
21:4 *I am turning back the weapons of war that are in your hand* The army would be driven back inside the walls.
21:5 *I, I will fight against you with an outstretched hand and with a strong arm* Exodus words (Deut 4:34; 26:8). God's mighty arm that fought for Israel against Pharaoh would now fight against them. Zedekiah hoped God would fight Babylon. Instead He would fight Jerusalem. The hardest thing is not to have enemies against you but to have God against you. The good news is that in Christ, God is for us (Rom 8:31).
21:6 *by a great pestilence they will die* In a besieged city, packed with people, short of food and clean water, disease spreads fast.
21:7 *I will give Zedekiah king of Judah, and his servants* It came true exactly. Zedekiah fled by night, was caught near Jericho, saw his sons killed at Riblah, was blinded and taken to Babylon in chains (39:4-7; 52:8-11).
21:8 *I am setting before you the way of life and the way of death* Moses set life and death before Israel and told them to choose life (Deut 30:15, 19). Here the choice is a strange one.
21:9 *he who goes out and falls away to the Chaldeans who are besieging you will live* To fall away is to surrender. The Chaldeans are the Babylonians. In war a soldier was lucky to come home with plunder. Those who surrendered would come away with one prize: their life. Babylon was God's tool of judgment, and to resist Babylon was to resist God. This made Jeremiah sound like a traitor, and the officials used these words to demand his death (38:2-4). But he was trying to save as many as he could. Whoever loses his life for Christ's sake will find it (Matt 16:25). Surrender to God is never defeat.
21:12 *Judge justice in the morning* The king was the highest judge, and court was held in the morning. Judge promptly, and do not make the poor wait. The king was to do what God Himself does, protecting the weak from the strong (Ps 72:1-4, 12-14). Anyone with authority, in a home, business, church or government, answers to God for how he treats those under him.
21:13 *O inhabitant of the valley, O rock of the plain* Jerusalem, on hills ringed by deep valleys, felt like a fortress on a rock. Even with Babylon at the gates they said, Who can get in? No wall stands when God is against it.
21:14 *I will kindle a fire in its forest* Likely the cedar buildings of the palace, one of which was called the House of the Forest of Lebanon (1 Kgs 7:2; 22:23). Some take it as the woods around the city. Babylon burned the palace and every great house (52:13). They trusted the temple (7:4), their walls and a miracle without repentance. Our security is in Christ alone, the rock that does not fall (Matt 7:24-25).
22:1 *Go down to the house of the king of Judah* The palace stood just below the temple, so Jeremiah went "down" to it.
22:3 *the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow do not maltreat* A sojourner was a foreigner living in Israel without family land. These three had no one to defend them. This was what God always asked of kings (Deut 17:18-20). Power is given to protect, not to take.

vants and his people. **5** And if you will not listen to these words, by Myself I swear," declares the LORD, "that this house will become a ruin."'" **6** For thus says the LORD concerning the house of the king of Judah: "You ***are*** Gilead (Gilad) to Me, the top of Lebanon (Levanon); surely I will make you a wilderness, cities ***that*** are not inhabited. **7** And I will consecrate destroyers against you, each ***with*** his
weapons, and they will cut down the choicest of your cedars, and they will cast ***them*** on the fire. **8** And many nations will pass by this city, and they will say, each to his neighbor, 'Why has the LORD done thus to this great city?' **9** And they will say, 'Because they forsook the covenant of the LORD their God, and they bowed down to other gods and served them.'" **10** Do not weep for the dead, and do not show sympathy to him; indeed weep for the one who goes away, for he will not return again and see the land of his kindred. **11** For thus says the LORD concerning Shallum (Shalum) the son of Josiah (Yoshiyahu), the king of Judah, who was reigning in place of Josiah his father, who went out from this place: "He will not return there again; **12** for in the place where they have taken him into exile, there he will die, and this land he will not see again.

Woe to Jehoiakim

13 Woe ***to*** him who builds his house without righteousness, and his upper rooms without justice; he makes his neighbor work for nothing, and his wages he does not give to him; **14** who says, 'I will build for myself a house of ***great*** dimensions and spacious upper rooms,' and he cuts out for himself ***its*** windows, and ***it is*** paneled with cedar and painted with vermilion. **15** Do you reign because you are competing in cedar? Your father, did he not eat and drink, and do justice and righteousness? Then it was well for him. **16** He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well. Is not that the knowledge of Me?" declares the LORD. **17** "For your eyes and your heart ***are on*** nothing except on your unjust gain, and on the blood of the innocent, to shed ***it***, and on oppression and on extortion, to do ***it***." **18** Therefore thus says the LORD concerning Jehoiakim (Yehoyaqim) the son of Josiah, the king of Judah: "They will not mourn for him, 'Alas, my brother!' and 'Alas, sister!' They will not mourn for him, 'Alas, lord!' and 'Alas, his splendor!' **19** ***With*** the burial of a donkey he will be buried, dragged and thrown out beyond the gates of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). **20** Go up ***to*** Lebanon and cry out, and in Bashan give forth your voice, and cry out from Abarim (Avarim), for all your lovers have been broken. **21** I spoke to you in your prosperity; you said, 'I will not listen.' This ***has been*** your way from your youth, that you have not listened to My voice. **22** All your shepherds the wind will shepherd, and your lovers will go into captivity; for then you will be ashamed, and you will be humiliated because of all your wickedness. **23** O you who dwell in Lebanon, nested among the cedars, how you will groan when labor pains come to you, anguish like ***a woman*** giving birth!"

22:5 Amos 6:8; Heb 6:13,17; Jer 17:27
22:6 Ps 107:34; Isa 6:11; Isa 27:10
22:7 Jer 4:6,7; Isa 10:33,34; Isa 37:24
22:8 Heb 8:9; 1 Kgs 9:8,9; 2 Chr 7:20-22
22:9 Heb 8:9; 2 Kgs 22:17; 2 Chr 34:25
22:10 Eccl 4:2; Isa 57:1; Lam 4:9
22:11 1 Chr 3:15; 2 Chr 36:1-4; 2 Chr 28:12
22:12 2 Kgs 23:34; Jer 22:18
22:13 Lev 19:13; Mic 3:10; James 5:4
22:14 2 Sam 7:2; Isa 5:8,9; Hag 1:4
22:15 2 Kgs 23:25; Isa 3:10; Eccl 10:17
22:16 John 8:19; John 8:54; John 16:3
22:17 Ezek 19:6; 2 Pet 2:14; Jer 22:3
22:18 1 Kgs 13:30; Jer 22:10; Jer 16:4,6
22:19 1 Kgs 21:23,24; Jer 15:3; Jer 36:6,30
22:20 Lam 1:2,19; Jer 2:36,37; Jer 30:13-15
22:21 Jer 3:25; Jer 32:30; Prov 30:9
22:22 Hos 13:15; Jer 5:30,31; Jer 10:21
22:23 1 Thess 5:3; Jer 6:24; Jer 22:6

22:5 *by Myself I swear* There is no one greater to swear by, so God swears by Himself (Heb 6:13).
22:6 *You are Gilead to Me, the top of Lebanon* Both were known for tall forests, and the cedar palace was like a forest (1 Kgs 7:2). God valued it, but He would still make it a wilderness.
22:7 *I will consecrate destroyers against you* God would set apart the Babylonian army for His work of judgment. The cedar beams would burn (52:13).
22:9 *Because they forsook the covenant of the LORD their God* Moses said the nations would ask this very question (Deut 29:24-26). Even the pagan world would understand why Jerusalem fell.
22:10 *Do not weep for the dead* Josiah, killed at Megiddo in 609 B.C. and deeply mourned (2 Kgs 23:29-30; 2 Chr 35:24-25). He was at rest. Weep instead for the son who would never come home.
22:11 *Shallum the son of Josiah* His personal name. As king he was Jehoahaz (2 Kgs 23:30-34; 1 Chr 3:15). After three months Pharaoh Neco took him to Egypt, and he died there. Josiah died with honor. His son lived on as a prisoner, the sadder end.
22:13 *Woe to him who builds his house without righteousness* Jehoiakim (22:18), king about 609 to 598 B.C. While Judah paid heavy tribute to Egypt (2 Kgs 23:35), he built a new palace with forced labor and unpaid wages. The Law said to pay a hired man the same day (Lev 19:13; Deut 24:14-15), and James says withheld wages cry out to God (James 5:4).
22:14 *painted with vermilion* A bright red paint. A beautiful house built on the backs of the poor.
22:15 *Do you reign because you are competing in cedar* Does the biggest house make you a king? Josiah ate and drank and enjoyed life, and God was not against that. But he also did what was right.
22:16 *Is not that the knowledge of Me* One of the most important lines in Jeremiah. To know God is not only to know facts about Him but to live as He lives and care for those He cares for (9:24). Whoever says he knows God and does not keep His commands is a liar (1 John 2:3-4). Real knowledge of God changes how we treat people who cannot pay us back.
22:17 *on the blood of the innocent* Jehoiakim killed the prophet Uriah for preaching what Jeremiah preached (26:20-23).
22:19 *With the burial of a donkey he will be buried* A dead donkey was dragged outside the city and left. No one would mourn him (22:18). Second Kings 24:6 says he slept with his fathers, which can mean only that he died, and Scripture does not say exactly how this word was fulfilled. He died about 598 B.C. as Babylon came against Jerusalem, and many think his body was thrown out in the siege or dishonored later (36:30). I take God at His word that it happened as He said.
22:20 *Go up to Lebanon and cry out* From Lebanon in the north, Bashan in the northeast and Abarim in Moab, Jerusalem would cry. Her "lovers" were the allies she trusted instead of God.
22:21 *I spoke to you in your prosperity; you said, 'I will not listen.'* Prosperity is often more dangerous to faith than trouble.
22:22 *All your shepherds the wind will shepherd* The kings and leaders, blown away like chaff.
22:23 *nested among the cedars* Jerusalem with its cedar palaces felt as safe as a bird in a high nest.

Coniah Cast Out

24 "***As*** I live," declares the LORD, "though Coniah (Konyahu) the son of Jehoiakim, the king of Judah, were a signet ring on My right hand, yet from there I would pull you off. **25** And I will give you into the hand of those who seek your life, and into the hand of those whom you dread, and into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar (Nevukhadretsar) the king of Babylon (Bavel), and into the hand of the Chaldeans (Kasdim). **26** And I will hurl you and your mother who bore you to another land, where you were not born, and there you will die. **27** And to the land to which they lift up their soul to return, there they will not return." **28** ***Is*** this man Coniah a despised, smashed pot, or a vessel in which there is no pleasure? Why have they been hurled, he and his offspring, and thrown to the land which they did not know? **29** O land, land, land, hear the word of the LORD! **30** Thus says the LORD: "Write this man ***down as*** childless, a man ***who*** will not prosper in his days; for no man from his offspring will prosper, sitting on the throne of David and ruling again over Judah."

JEREMIAH 23

The Righteous Branch

1 "Woe ***to*** the shepherds who destroy and scatter the flock of My pasture!" declares the LORD. **2** Therefore thus says the LORD, the God of Israel (Yisra'el), concerning the shepherds who shepherd My people: "You have scattered My flock, and you have banished them, and you have not visited them. Look, I am about to visit on you the evil of your deeds," declares the LORD. **3** "And I, I will gather the remnant of My flock from all the lands where I have banished them, and I will bring them back to their pasture, and they will be fruitful, and they will multiply. **4** And I will raise up shepherds over them, and they will shepherd them; and they will not be afraid again, and they will not be dismayed, and they will not be missing," declares the LORD. **5** "Look, days are coming," declares the LORD, "and I will raise up for David a righteous Branch; and He will reign ***as*** king, and He will act prudently, and He will do justice and righteousness in the land. **6** In His days Judah (Yehuda) will be saved, and Israel will dwell in security; and this ***is*** His name ***by*** which one will call Him: 'The LORD Our Righteousness.' **7** Therefore look, days are coming," declares the LORD, "and they will no longer say, '***As*** the LORD lives, who brought up the sons of Israel from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim),' **8** but, '***As*** the LORD lives, who brought up and who brought in the offspring of the house of

22:24 Rom 14:11; Jer 37:1; 1 Chr 3:16
22:25 Jer 34:20,21; Jer 21:7; 2 Kgs 24:15,16
22:26 2 Kgs 24:15; Isa 22:17; Jer 15:2-4
22:27 Jer 44:14; Jer 22:11; Jer 52:31-34
22:28 Ps 31:12; Hos 8:8; Jer 48:38
22:29 Jer 6:19; Deut 32:1; Mic 1:2
22:30 Luke 1:32; Matt 1:12; Matt 1:13
23:1 Jer 10:21; Ezek 34:2; Matt 23:14
23:2 Exod 32:34; Mic 7:4; Matt 25:36,43
23:3 Jer 32:37; Jer 29:14; Jer 31:8
23:4 Matt 2:6; John 21:16; Jer 3:14,15
23:5 Luke 1:32; Rev 19:11; John 1:49
23:6 1 Cor 1:30; 2 Cor 5:21; Phil 3:9
23:7 Heb 8:8; Jer 16:14,15; Jer 23:3
23:8 Isa 43:5,6; Amos 9:14,15; Ezek 34:13

22:24 *though Coniah the son of Jehoiakim, the king of Judah, were a signet ring on My right hand* Coniah is a short form of Jeconiah, called Jehoiachin as king. He reigned three months in 597 B.C. (2 Kgs 24:8-15). A signet ring carried a king's seal and never left his hand. Even if Coniah were that precious, God would pull him off. Yet after the exile God told Coniah's grandson Zerubbabel that He would make him like a signet ring (Hag 2:23). God had not given up on David's line.
22:26 *I will hurl you and your mother who bore you to another land* His mother Nehushta went with him (13:18). He was held in Babylon thirty-seven years, later released and fed at the king's table, but he never came home (52:31-34).
22:28 *a despised, smashed pot* The broken pot of chapter 19. The people may have hoped he would come back.
22:30 *Write this man down as childless* Coniah had sons (1 Chr 3:17-18). "Childless" means as far as the throne goes. None of his offspring ever ruled Judah as king. His uncle Zedekiah reigned after him, and even Zerubbabel was only a governor under Persia.
22:30 *for no man from his offspring will prosper, sitting on the throne of David* God promised David's throne would last forever (2 Sam 7:16; 33:17). How can both stand? Matthew gives Joseph's line through Solomon and Jeconiah (Matt 1:6-7, 11-12), which gave Jesus the legal right to the throne. But Jesus was not Joseph's physical son. He was born of the virgin Mary (Matt 1:18-25). Luke gives a line through David's son Nathan (Luke 3:31), which many teachers understand to be Mary's, making Jesus truly David's descendant in the flesh (Rom 1:3) without coming from Coniah. Only the virgin birth could make both true. Jesus will reign on David's throne forever (Luke 1:32-33).
23:1 *Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the flock of My pasture* Kings and leaders are often called shepherds. The sheep never belonged to the kings. They belonged to God.
23:2 *you have not visited them. Look, I am about to visit on you the evil of your deeds* A play on one word. To visit is to look after. You did not visit My sheep with care, so I will visit you with judgment (Ezek 34).
23:3 *I, I will gather the remnant of My flock from all the lands where I have banished them* The remnant is the part of God's people that survives the judgment. God takes the scattering on Himself, and the gathering will be His work too.
23:4 *they will not be afraid again* After the return God raised up good leaders like Zerubbabel, Ezra and Nehemiah. But "not be afraid again" and "from all the lands" reach further, to the day when Christ reigns and Israel is gathered from every nation.
23:5 *I will raise up for David a righteous Branch* One of the great promises of the Messiah, the Anointed King from David's line (Christ in Greek). After chapter 22 David's tree looked like a stump, but a shoot would come from the stump of Jesse (Isa 11:1; Zech 3:8; 6:12). He is righteous, unlike Jehoiakim (22:13). "Act prudently" is the word used of the Servant (Isa 52:13). He will do the justice God asked of David's sons (22:3). Jesus is the Son of David (Matt 1:1), and God will give Him David's throne forever (Luke 1:32-33).
23:6 *In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell in security* Both kingdoms, split since about 930 B.C., saved together (Ezek 37:15-22). This has not happened fully. At His first coming Jesus was rejected and did not set up His kingdom. After the Tribulation He will return in glory, "all Israel will be saved" (Rom 11:26), and He will reign on the earth a thousand years (Rev 20:4-6). I believe this means a real King over a real, gathered Israel in their own land, not a promise taken from Israel and given to the church. Gentile believers share in the blessing (Rom 11:17-18), but Israel's promises remain Israel's.
23:6 *The LORD Our Righteousness* YHWH Tsidqenu. The King from David's line bears God's own name. Only God the Son, who became man, can be both David's son and David's Lord (Isa 9:6; Matt 22:41-45). There may be a wordplay with Zedekiah, whose name means the LORD is my righteousness. The true King will be what that name only claimed. None of us can meet God's standard (Rom 3:10, 23), but this King gives His righteousness to those who trust Him (1 Cor 1:30; 2 Cor 5:21; Phil 3:9). If you trust Jesus, your standing before God is not your record. It is His.
23:8 *from a land northward and from all the lands where I had banished them* The promise of 16:14-15 again, now right after the righteous Branch. The regathering of Israel and the Messiah's reign belong together. "Their own ground" is the land God gave Abraham, and I believe He will keep it to the letter.

Israel from a land northward and from all the lands where I had banished them'; and they will dwell on their own ground."

The False Prophets

9 Concerning the prophets: My heart is broken within me; all my bones have become weak; I have become like a drunken man, and like a man whom wine has overcome, because of the LORD and because of the words of His holiness. **10** For the land is full of adulterers; for because of a curse the land mourns; the pastures of the wilderness have dried up. And their course has become evil, and their might ***is*** not right. **11** "For both prophet and priest are polluted; even in My house I have found their wickedness," declares the LORD. **12** "Therefore their way will be to them like slippery places in the darkness; they will be pushed down, and they will fall in it; for I will bring calamity on them, the year of their punishment," declares the LORD. **13** "And among the prophets of Samaria (Shomron) I saw offensiveness: they prophesied by Baal, and they caused My people Israel to err. **14** And among the prophets of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) I have seen a horrible thing: committing adultery and walking in falsehood; and they strengthen the hands of evildoers, so that they have not turned back, each from his evil. All of them have become to Me like Sodom (Sedom), and its inhabitants like Gomorrah (Amora)." **15** Therefore thus says the LORD of armies concerning the prophets: "Look, I am about to make them eat wormwood, and I will make them drink water of poison; for from the prophets of Jerusalem profaneness has gone out to all the land." **16** Thus says the LORD of armies: "Do not listen to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you; they are deluding you; they speak a vision of their own heart, not from the mouth of the LORD. **17** They keep saying to those who despise Me, 'The LORD has spoken: "You will have peace"'; and ***to*** everyone who walks in the stubbornness of his own heart they have said, 'Calamity will not come on you.' **18** For who has stood in the council of the LORD, that he may see and hear His word? Who has paid attention to His word and listened? **19** Look, the storm of the LORD! Rage has gone out, and a whirling storm; it will whirl on the head of the wicked. **20** The anger of the LORD will not turn back until He has done and until He has carried out the purposes of His heart. At the end of the days you will understand it ***with*** understanding. **21** I did not send the prophets, and they, they ran; I did not speak to them, and they, they prophesied. **22** And if they had stood in My council, then they would have made My people hear My words, and they would have turned them back from their evil way and from the evil of their deeds. **23** Am I a God from near," declares the LORD, "and not a God from afar? **24** Or can anyone hide himself in hiding places, and I not see him?" declares the LORD. "Do I not fill the heavens and the earth?" declares the LORD. **25** "I have heard what the prophets have said who prophesy falsehood in My name, saying, 'I have dreamed, I have dreamed!' **26** Until when? Is there ***this*** in the heart of the prophets who prophesy falsehood, and the prophets of the deceit of their own heart, **27** who plan to make My people forget My name by their dreams which they recount, each to his neighbor, just as their fathers forgot My name for Baal? **28** The prophet with whom ***is*** a dream, let him recount a dream; and ***he*** with whom ***is*** My word, let him speak My word ***in*** truth. What ***has*** the straw ***to do*** with the grain?" declares the LORD. **29** "Is not My word thus, like fire," declares the LORD, "and like a hammer ***that*** shatters rock? **30** Therefore look, I ***am*** against the prophets," declares the LORD, "who steal My words, each

23:9 Hab 3:16; Jer 9:1; Jer 14:17,18
23:10 Jer 9:2; Hos 4:2,3; Jer 9:10
23:11 Jer 6:13; Zeph 3:4; Jer 8:10
23:12 Jer 13:16; Ps 35:6; Jer 11:23
23:13 Jer 2:8; Isa 9:16; Hos 9:7,8
23:14 Matt 11:24; 2 Pet 2:1; 2 Pet 2:6
23:15 Rev 8:11; Jer 8:14; Jer 9:15
23:16 Matt 7:15; 1 John 4:1; Acts 15:24
23:17 Luke 10:16; Matt 7:22; 2 Pet 2:1
23:18 Jer 23:22; 1 Cor 2:16; 1 Kgs 22:24
23:19 Jer 25:32; Jer 30:23; Amos 1:14
23:20 1 Thess 5:2; Jer 30:24; Zech 1:6
23:21 Jer 14:14; Jer 27:15; Jer 23:32
23:22 Jer 23:18; Jer 25:5; Zech 1:4
23:23 Ps 139:1-10; 1 Kgs 20:23,28; Ps 113:5
23:24 Acts 7:49; Prov 15:3; Ps 90:8
23:25 Matt 24:5; Mark 13:6; Jer 23:28,32
23:26 2 Pet 2:1; 2 Pet 2:16; 1 Tim 4:1,2
23:27 2 Pet 2:1; Judg 3:7; Judg 8:33,34
23:28 2 Pet 2:1; 1 Cor 3:12,13; Prov 14:5
23:29 Acts 2:3; Jer 5:14; Jer 20:9
23:30 Deut 18:20; Ezek 13:8,20; Jer 14:14,15

23:9 *Concerning the prophets* The chapter turns to the false prophets. Jeremiah staggers like a drunken man, crushed by God's holy words.
23:10 *because of a curse the land mourns* The drought of chapter 14 was the covenant curse at work.
23:11 *even in My house I have found their wickedness* Those who should have led people to God brought their sin right into the temple.
23:13 *they prophesied by Baal* The northern prophets openly served Baal. Jerusalem's prophets claimed to speak for the LORD and lived in sin (23:14). That was worse, because they did it in God's name.
23:14 *they strengthen the hands of evildoers* By telling sinners all was well, they made it easier to keep sinning. They had become like Sodom (Gen 19).
23:15 *from the prophets of Jerusalem profaneness has gone out to all the land* Their poison spread everywhere, and now they would drink it themselves.
23:16 *they speak a vision of their own heart, not from the mouth of the LORD* The test of a prophet: does the message come from God's mouth or from the speaker's heart?
23:17 *Calamity will not come on you* People will gather teachers to tickle their ears (2 Tim 4:3-4). A message that promises peace without repentance is not from God.
23:18 *who has stood in the council of the LORD* God's throne room, where He makes His plans (1 Kgs 22:19). The false prophets had never been there.
23:20 *At the end of the days you will understand it with understanding* After the fall of Jerusalem they would look back and see that Jeremiah had been right.
23:22 *they would have turned them back from their evil way* Another test. A true word from God calls people away from sin. A false word leaves them comfortable in it. Does what I hear agree with God's Word and call me to follow Christ, or only tell me what I want to hear?
23:23 *Am I a God from near* They treated God like a small local god, close by and easy to manage. He fills heaven and earth, and no one can hide from Him (Ps 139:7-12).
23:25 *I have dreamed, I have dreamed* God did speak in dreams at times (Num 12:6), but these men made theirs up. False teaching does not always deny God openly. Sometimes it just buries His name (23:27).
23:28 *What has the straw to do with the grain* Straw looks like grain but feeds no one. Only God's word nourishes.
23:29 *Is not My word thus, like fire* Fire burns away what is false, as Jeremiah knew in his bones (20:9). A hammer breaks hard hearts nothing else can break (Isa 55:11; Heb 4:12). Opinions and feelings cannot change a heart. The Word of God can.
23:30 *I am against the prophets* Three times: those who borrow each other's words to sound real, those who use "declares the LORD" for their own ideas, and those who preach made-up dreams.

from his neighbor. **31** Look, I ***am*** against the prophets," declares the LORD, "who take their tongue and declare a declaration. **32** Look, I ***am*** against those who prophesy dreams of falsehood," declares the LORD, "and they recount them, and they cause My people to err by their falsehoods and by their recklessness; and I, I did not send them, and I did not command them, and they surely do not benefit this people," declares the LORD.

The Burden of the LORD

33 "And if this people or the prophet or a priest asks you, saying, 'What ***is*** the burden of the LORD?' and you shall say to them, 'What burden? And I will abandon you,' declares the LORD. **34** And the prophet and the priest and the people who says, 'The burden of the LORD,' and I will punish that man and his house. **35** Thus you shall say, each to his neighbor and each to his brother: 'What has the LORD answered?' and 'What has the LORD spoken?' **36** And the burden of the LORD you shall not remember again, for the burden will be to each man his own word, and you have overturned the words of the living God, the LORD of armies, our God. **37** Thus you shall say to the prophet: 'What has the LORD answered you?' and 'What has the LORD spoken?' **38** And if you say, 'The burden of the LORD,' therefore thus says the LORD: 'Because you have said this word, "The burden of the LORD," and I sent to you, saying, "You shall not say, 'The burden of the LORD,'" **39** therefore look, I, I will surely forget you, and I will abandon you and the city which I gave to you and to your fathers, away from My face. **40** And I will put on you an everlasting reproach and an everlasting shame which will not be forgotten.'"

JEREMIAH 24

Two Baskets of Figs

1 The LORD showed me, and look, two baskets of figs set before the temple of the LORD, after Nebuchadnezzar (Nevukhadretsar) the king of Babylon (Bavel) had taken into exile Jeconiah (Yekhonyahu) the son of Jehoiakim (Yehoyaqim), the king of Judah (Yehuda), and the officials of Judah, and the craftsmen, and the smiths, from Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), and had brought them ***to*** Babylon. **2** One basket ***had*** very good figs, like the early figs; and the other basket ***had*** very bad figs, which cannot be eaten because of badness. **3** And the LORD said to me, "What are you seeing, Jeremiah (Yirmeyahu)?" And I said, "Figs; the good figs ***are*** very good, and the bad ***are*** very bad, which cannot be eaten because of badness." **4** And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **5** "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel (Yisra'el): 'Like these good figs, so I will regard the exiles of Judah, whom I have sent from this place ***to*** the land of the Chaldeans (Kasdim), for good. **6** And I will set My eye on them for good, and I will bring them back to this land; and I will build them up and not tear ***them*** down, and I will plant them and not pluck ***them*** up. **7** And I will give them a heart to know Me, that I ***am*** the LORD; and they will be to Me for a people, and I, I will be to them for God; for they will return to Me with all their heart. **8** And like the bad figs which cannot be eaten because of badness'—for thus says the LORD—'so I will make Zedekiah (Tsidqiyahu) the king of Judah, and his officials, and the remnant of Jerusalem who remain in this land, and those who dwell in the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim). **9** And I will make them into a terror, into an evil to all the kingdoms of the earth, into a reproach and into a byword, into a taunt and into a curse, in all the places where I will

23:31 2 Pet 2:1; Jer 23:17; Isa 30:10
23:32 2 Pet 2:1; Jer 7:8; Lam 2:14
23:33 Mal 1:1; Isa 13:1; Nah 1:1
23:35 Heb 8:11; Jer 31:34
23:36 Gal 6:5; 1 Tim 3:15; 2 Pet 3:16
23:38 2 Chr 11:13,14
23:39 Jer 23:33; Ezek 8:18; Gen 6:17
23:40 Jer 20:11; Ezek 5:14,15; Jer 42:18

24:1 Jer 29:2; 2 Chr 36:10; 2 Kgs 24:12-16
24:2 Isa 5:4,7; Mic 7:1; Jer 24:5-7
24:3 Amos 8:2; Jer 1:11-14; Zech 4:2
24:5 Nah 1:7; Zech 13:9; Matt 25:12
24:6 Jer 42:10; Jer 29:10; Jer 33:7
24:7 Heb 8:10; John 8:19; 2 Cor 6:16
24:8 Jer 24:2,5; Jer 43:1-44; Jer 29:16-18
24:9 Jer 15:4; Jer 29:18,22; Jer 34:17

23:33 *What is the burden of the LORD* Massa means a burden and was also used for a prophet's heavy message (Isa 13:1). The people turned it into a joke to mock Jeremiah. God's answer: "What burden?" You are the burden, and I will throw you off.
23:35 *What has the LORD answered* God forbade the mocking phrase. They had worn out His words with jokes and "overturned the words of the living God" (23:36). We must not treat God's Word lightly. The right question is the humble one: what has the LORD spoken?
24:1 *two baskets of figs set before the temple of the LORD* A vision, or real baskets God used to teach. Firstfruits were brought to the temple in baskets (Deut 26:2). Jeconiah is Coniah (22:24) and Jehoiachin, taken to Babylon in 597 B.C. with the leaders and skilled workers who could make weapons and lead a revolt (2 Kgs 24:14-16). Ezekiel went in this group (Ezek 1:1-2). Zedekiah was left as a servant king (2 Kgs 24:17), so this comes about 597 B.C. or soon after.
24:2 *very good figs, like the early figs* The first figs of early summer were prized as the best (Isa 28:4; Hos 9:10).
24:3 *the good figs are very good, and the bad are very bad* God asks the question of 1:11 so the lesson will sink in. There is no basket in between. The difference was total.
24:5 *Like these good figs, so I will regard the exiles of Judah* This would shock Jerusalem. Those left behind thought the exiles were the sinners God threw away (Ezek 11:15). The exiles were not better by nature. The difference was what God would do with them. "Whom I have sent" means He did not lose them. Daniel and his friends were among the faithful exiles. Sometimes God sends us into a hard place "for good," to share His holiness and bear the peaceful fruit of righteousness (Heb 12:10-11).
24:6 *I will set My eye on them for good* In 21:10 God set His face against Jerusalem "for calamity and not for good." Now His eye is on the exiles. Cyrus let them go home in 538 B.C. (Ezra 1:1-4). Building and planting are the words of Jeremiah's call (1:10).
24:7 *I will give them a heart to know Me* The most important promise in the chapter. The heart is deceitful and incurable (17:9), so God Himself will change it. "They will be to Me for a people" is the heart of His covenant (Exod 6:7; Lev 26:12; 31:33; Rev 21:3). After the exile Israel never again fell into open idolatry as before. The full gift of a new heart for the nation is still ahead, in the new covenant (31:31-34; Ezek 36:26-27), complete when Israel turns to her Messiah at His return (Zech 12:10; Rom 11:26-27). For each of us, this is what God does when we are born again (2 Cor 5:17).
24:7 *for they will return to Me with all their heart* Not halfway, as in Josiah's day (3:10), but wholly.
24:8 *so I will make Zedekiah the king of Judah, and his officials* The bad figs were those who stayed with Zedekiah and refused God, and those in Egypt. Some went there with Jehoahaz (2 Kgs 23:34), and more fled after the fall against God's word (chapters 42 to 44), and they would die there (44:27-28).
24:9 *into a byword* A name people use as a warning, the curse Moses foretold (Deut 28:37).

banish them. **10** And I will send on them the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, until they are finished from upon the ground which I gave to them and to their fathers.'"

JEREMIAH 25

Seventy Years

1 The word which came to Jeremiah (Yirmeyahu) concerning all the people of Judah (Yehuda) in the fourth year of Jehoiakim (Yehoyaqim) the son of Josiah (Yoshiyahu), the king of Judah; it ***was*** the first year of Nebuchadnezzar (Nevukhadretsar) the king of Babylon (Bavel); **2** which Jeremiah the prophet spoke to all the people of Judah and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), saying, **3** "From the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon, the king of Judah, and until this day, these twenty-three years, the word of the LORD has come to me, and I have spoken to you, rising early and speaking, and you have not listened. **4** And the LORD has sent to you all His servants the prophets, rising early and sending, and you have not listened, and you have not inclined your ear to hear, **5** saying, 'Turn back, please, each one from his evil way and from the evil of your deeds, and dwell on the ground which the LORD gave to you and to your fathers from long ago and until forever. **6** And do not walk after other gods to serve them and to bow down to them, and do not provoke Me to anger with the work of your hands, and I will not do harm to you.' **7** And you have not listened to Me," declares the LORD, "so as to provoke Me to anger with the work of your hands, for harm to you. **8** Therefore thus says the LORD of armies: 'Because you have not listened to My words, **9** look, I am about to send, and I will take all the clans of the north,' declares the LORD, 'and to Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant, and I will bring them against this land and against its inhabitants and against all these nations around; and I will utterly destroy them, and I will make them into a horror and into a hissing and into everlasting ruins. **10** And I will destroy from them the sound of joy and the sound of gladness, the sound of a bridegroom and the sound of a bride, the sound of millstones and the light of a lamp. **11** And all this land will become a ruin, a horror, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years. **12** And it will be, when seventy years are completed, I will visit on the king of Babylon and on that nation,' declares the LORD, 'their iniquity, and on the land of the Chaldeans (Kasdim); and I will make it into everlasting desolations. **13** And I will bring on that land all My words which I have spoken against it, all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah prophesied against all the nations. **14** For many nations and great kings will make servants of them, even of them; and I will repay them according to their deeds and according to the work of their hands.'"

The Cup of Wrath

15 For thus said the LORD, the God of Israel (Yisra'el), to me: "Take this cup of the wine of rage from My hand, and you shall make all the nations to whom I am sending you drink it. **16** And they will drink, and they will stagger, and they will act like madmen because of the sword which I am about to send among them." **17** And I took the cup from the hand of the LORD, and I made all the nations drink to whom the

24:10 Isa 51:19; Ezek 5:12-17; Jer 5:12
25:1 Jer 36:1; 2 Kgs 24:1,2; Jer 46:2
25:2 Jer 18:11; Jer 19:14,15; Jer 26:2
25:3 Matt 23:37; Jer 1:2; Jer 11:7
25:4 Matt 23:37; Acts 7:52; Jer 26:5
25:5 Matt 23:37; Jer 7:7; Jer 18:11
25:6 Deut 8:19; Jer 7:6,9; Jer 35:15
25:7 2 Kgs 21:15; Jer 32:30-33; Deut 32:21
25:9 Jer 1:15; Jer 18:16; Jer 43:10
25:10 Rev 18:22-23; Jer 7:34; Ezek 26:13
25:11 Dan 9:2; Zech 7:5; 2 Chr 36:21,22
25:12 Rev 18:2; Rev 18:7; Rev 18:9
25:13 Rev 10:11; Jer 1:5,10; Dan 5:28,31
25:14 Rev 18:21; Rev 18:23; Jer 51:6,27,28
25:15 Rev 14:10; Rev 16:19; Matt 20:22
25:16 Rev 14:8; Matt 20:22; Nah 3:11
25:17 Matt 20:22; Rev 10:11; Jer 1:10

24:10 *until they are finished from upon the ground* They stayed in the land but did not turn to God. Being in the right place did not make them right with Him. We judge by health, money and ease, but God looks at the heart (1 Sam 16:7). Not everyone in Jerusalem was lost. Jeremiah stayed, and so did faithful Ebed-melech (39:15-18). God knows each person who trusts Him.

25:1 *in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, the king of Judah; it was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar* 605 B.C., one of the great years of ancient history. Nebuchadnezzar, then crown prince, defeated Pharaoh Neco at Carchemish (46:2), Babylon became the ruling power, and that year he took the first captives from Jerusalem, Daniel among them (Dan 1:1-6). Daniel 1:1 says "third year," usually explained by different ways of counting a king's years. This is also the year Jeremiah wrote his scroll (36:1-2).

25:3 *these twenty-three years* From 627 B.C. (1:2) to 605 B.C., counting both ends. Twenty-three years of faithful preaching with little to show for it. If you have served God a long time without much fruit, Jeremiah understands. God measures faithfulness, not results.

25:4 *all His servants the prophets* Men like Zephaniah, Habakkuk and Uriah (26:20). Their message was simple: turn back.

25:9 *Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant* The enemy "from the north" (1:14; 4:6) is named. A pagan king is God's servant because God was using him to carry out judgment, as He later called Cyrus His anointed (Isa 45:1). God rules kings who do not know Him (Prov 21:1). Nebuchadnezzar would later humble himself before God (Dan 4:34-37).

25:10 *the sound of millstones and the light of a lamp* Every home ground grain each morning and lit a lamp at night. When those stopped, no one lived there.

25:11 *these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years* One of the most precise time prophecies in the Bible. The most common count runs from 605 B.C., when Babylon took control and the first captives, to 538 B.C., when Cyrus let the Jews go home (Ezra 1:1-4). Another runs from the burning of the temple in 586 B.C. to the new temple in 516 B.C., exactly seventy years. Both show God keeping His word. The land would also enjoy the Sabbath rests Israel had ignored for centuries (Lev 25:1-7; 26:34-35; 2 Chr 36:21).

25:11 *seventy years* Daniel, an old man in Babylon, read this and saw that the seventy years were nearly over (Dan 9:2). He did not sit back. He prayed and confessed his people's sin (Dan 9:3-19). God's promises do not make prayer unnecessary. They give us something to pray for.

25:12 *I will visit on the king of Babylon and on that nation* Babylon was God's tool but not innocent. It did its work with pride and cruelty (compare Assyria, Isa 10:5-15). Babylon fell to Cyrus in 539 B.C. (Dan 5) and faded over the centuries until it was empty. Many teachers see a final fulfillment of chapters 50 and 51 still to come, in the fall of the Babylon of Revelation 17 and 18.

25:13 *all that is written in this book* Likely the scroll written that year (36:2) and the messages against the nations in chapters 46 to 51. In the old Greek translation those chapters come right here.

25:15 *Take this cup of the wine of rage from My hand* The cup is a common picture of God's judgment, which makes nations stagger (Ps 75:8; Isa 51:17). Most likely a vision or an acted sign before the nations' messengers (27:3). In Gethsemane Jesus asked the Father to remove "this cup" (Luke 22:42), the cup of wrath against sin. He drank it all on the cross in our place, so that those who trust Him never will (Rom 5:9).

LORD sent me: **18** Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, and its kings, its officials, to make them into a ruin, into a horror, into a hissing, and into a curse, as ***it is*** this day; **19** Pharaoh the king of Egypt (Mitsrayim), and his servants and his officials and all his people; **20** and all the mixed people, and all the kings of the land of Uz (Uts), and all the kings of the land of the Philistines, and Ashkelon (Ashqelon) and Gaza (Aza) and Ekron (Eqron) and the remnant of Ashdod; **21** Edom and Moab (Mo'av) and the sons of Ammon (Amon); **22** and all the kings of Tyre (Tsor) and all the kings of Sidon (Tsidon), and the kings of the coastland which ***is*** beyond the sea; **23** and Dedan and Tema and Buz, and all who are cut ***at the*** corner; **24** and all the kings of Arabia (Arav), and all the kings of the mixed people who dwell in the wilderness; **25** and all the kings of Zimri and all the kings of Elam and all the kings of Media (Maday); **26** and all the kings of the north, the near and the far, each to his brother, and all the kingdoms of the earth which ***are*** on the face of the ground; and the king of Sheshach (Sheshakh) will drink after them. **27** "And you shall say to them, 'Thus says the LORD of armies, the God of Israel: "Drink, and be drunk, and vomit, and fall, and you will not rise, because of the sword which I am about to send among you."' **28** And it will be, if they refuse to take the cup from your hand to drink, and you shall say to them, 'Thus says the LORD of armies: "You will surely drink. **29** For look, on the city over which My name is called I am beginning to do harm, and you, will you indeed go unpunished? You will not go unpunished, for I am calling a sword against all the inhabitants of the earth," declares the LORD of armies.' **30** And you, you shall prophesy to them all these words, and you shall say to them, 'The LORD will roar from on high, and from the dwelling of His holiness He will give forth His voice; He will surely roar against His pasture; a shout like those who tread ***grapes*** He will sing out to all the inhabitants of the earth. **31** An uproar has come to the end of the earth, for the LORD ***has*** a controversy with the nations; He is entering into judgment with all flesh; the wicked He has given to the sword,' declares the LORD." **32** Thus says the LORD of armies: "Look, calamity is going out from nation to nation, and a great storm will be roused from the remotest parts of the earth. **33** And the slain of the LORD will be in that day from the end of the earth and to the end of the earth; they will not be mourned, and they will not be gathered, and they will not be buried; they will become dung on the face of the ground. **34** Wail, O shepherds, and cry out; and roll yourselves ***in ashes***, O nobles of the flock; for your days for slaughter have been completed, and your scatterings, and you will fall like a desirable vessel. **35** And refuge will perish from the shepherds, and escape from the nobles of the flock. **36** The sound of the outcry of the shepherds and the wailing of the nobles of the flock! For the LORD is destroying their pasture. **37** And the pastures of peace will be devastated because of the burning of the anger of the LORD. **38** He has left His lair like the young lion; for their land has become a waste because of the burning of the oppressor and because of the burning of His anger."

JEREMIAH 26

Jeremiah on Trial for His Life

1 In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim (Yehoyaqim) the son of Josiah (Yoshiyahu), the king of Judah (Yehuda), this word came from the LORD, saying, **2** "Thus says the LORD: 'Stand in the court of the house of the LORD, and you shall speak to all the cities of Judah who come to bow down ***in*** the house of the LORD all the words which I have commanded you to speak to them; do not hold back a word. **3** Perhaps they will listen and turn back, each one from his evil way,

25:18 Matt 20:22; Rev 10:11; Ps 60:3
25:19 Jer 46:2,13-26; Nah 3:8-10; Jer 43:9-11
25:20 Job 1:1; Jer 50:37; Ezek 30:5
25:21 Jer 48:1-47; Ps 137:7; Jer 9:26
25:22 Matt 11:22; Jer 47:4; Jer 27:3
25:23 Jer 9:26; Jer 49:8; Jer 49:32
25:24 2 Chr 9:14; Jer 25:20; Jer 50:37
25:25 Gen 10:22; Isa 11:11; Jer 49:34-39
25:26 Matt 20:22; Rev 18:7; Rev 18:9
25:27 Matt 20:22; Hab 2:16; Jer 25:16
25:28 Matt 20:22; Job 34:33; Jer 4:28
25:29 Matt 20:22; Prov 11:31; Ezek 38:21
25:30 Rev 19:15; Rev 10:11; Joel 3:16
25:31 Hos 4:1; Joel 3:2; Mic 6:2
25:32 Luke 21:25; Jer 23:19; Isa 34:2
25:33 Rev 19:17; Rev 19:19; Isa 66:16
25:34 Jer 6:26; Jer 25:23,36; Jer 4:8,9
25:35 Job 11:20; Amos 2:14; Jer 32:4
25:36 Jer 4:8; Jer 25:34
25:37 Isa 27:10,11; Isa 32:14
25:38 Jer 4:7; Jer 5:6; Hos 5:14
26:1 Jer 27:1; 2 Chr 36:4,5; Jer 1:3
26:2 Jer 19:14; Deut 4:2; Jer 1:17
26:3 Jer 18:7-10; Jer 36:3; Isa 1:16-19

25:18 *Jerusalem and the cities of Judah* The list starts at home and moves out to Egypt, the Philistine cities, Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre and Sidon, the Arabian tribes, and Elam and Media far east. God is not a local god. Every nation answers to Him (Acts 17:26).
25:26 *the king of Sheshach will drink after them* Sheshach is a code name for Babylon (51:41), formed by a letter game called atbash that swaps the first letter of the alphabet for the last, and so on. Babylon, who handed the cup to everyone, would drink last.
25:29 *on the city over which My name is called I am beginning to do harm* If God did not spare His own city, how could the nations escape? Judgment begins at the house of God (1 Pet 4:17). God's people are not exempt from His discipline, and His patience with the world does not mean He will never judge it.
25:30 *The LORD will roar from on high* Like a lion before it springs (Amos 1:2; Joel 3:16). Workers shouted as they trampled grapes. Revelation uses this picture for the judgment at Christ's return (Rev 14:19-20; 19:15).
25:31 *the LORD has a controversy with the nations* A controversy is a lawsuit. God is bringing charges against all flesh.
25:33 *from the end of the earth and to the end of the earth* These words reach beyond Babylon, which never ruled the ends of the earth. Like many prophecies this had a near fulfillment and points ahead to the day of the LORD, when God judges the whole earth at the end of the Tribulation and Christ returns (Rev 19:11-21). Some read it only of the Babylonian era.
25:34 *Wail, O shepherds* The kings and rulers of the nations, shattering like a dropped jar.
25:38 *He has left His lair like the young lion* God's patience has ended, and He has risen to act. His word comes true to the year. But the cup of wrath does not have to be ours. Jesus drank it. Have you put your trust in Him?
26:1 *In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim* About 609 B.C., soon after Josiah died and Pharaoh Neco put Jehoiakim on the throne. This is the occasion of the temple sermon. Chapter 7 gives the sermon, and chapter 26 gives the trial that followed.
26:2 *do not hold back a word* It would have been easy to leave out the part about the temple and keep the crowd friendly. Paul too declared the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27).
26:3 *Perhaps they will listen and turn back* The principle of 18:7-8. God's warning came with an open door.

and I will relent concerning the calamity which I am planning to do to them because of the evil of their deeds. **4** And you shall say to them, "Thus says the LORD: 'If you will not listen to Me, to walk in My law which I have set before you, **5** to listen to the words of My servants the prophets, whom I am sending to you, even rising early and sending, and you have not listened, **6** and I will make this house like Shiloh (Shilo), and this city I will make into a curse for all the nations of the earth.'"'" **7** And the priests and the prophets and all the people heard Jeremiah (Yirmeyahu) speaking these words in the house of the LORD. **8** And it was, when Jeremiah had finished speaking all that the LORD had commanded ***him*** to speak to all the people, and the priests and the prophets and all the people seized him, saying, "You will surely die! **9** Why have you prophesied in the name of the LORD, saying, 'This house will be like Shiloh, and this city will be desolate, without inhabitant'?" And all the people assembled to Jeremiah in the house of the LORD. **10** And the officials of Judah heard these things, and they came up from the house of the king ***to*** the house of the LORD, and they sat at the entrance of the New Gate of the LORD. **11** And the priests and the prophets said to the officials and to all the people, saying, "A sentence of death ***belongs*** to this man, for he has prophesied against this city, just as you have heard with your own ears." **12** And Jeremiah said to all the officials and to all the people, saying, "The LORD sent me to prophesy against this house and against this city all the words which you have heard. **13** And now, make your ways and your deeds good, and listen to the voice of the LORD your God, and the LORD will relent concerning the calamity which He has spoken against you. **14** And I, look, I ***am*** in your hand; do to me as ***is*** good and as ***is*** right in your eyes. **15** Only, you must surely know that if you put me to death, you ***are*** putting innocent blood on yourselves and on this city and on its inhabitants; for in truth the LORD has sent me to you to speak all these words in your ears."

Jeremiah Spared

16 And the officials and all the people said to the priests and to the prophets, "There ***is*** no sentence of death for this man, for he has spoken to us in the name of the LORD our God." **17** And men from the elders of the land arose, and they said to all the assembly of the people, saying, **18** "Micah (Mikha) the Morashtite was prophesying in the days of Hezekiah (Chizqiyahu) the king of Judah, and he said to all the people of Judah, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of armies: "Zion (Tsiyon) will be plowed ***as*** a field, and Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) will become heaps of ruins, and the mountain of the house high places of a forest."' **19** Did Hezekiah the king of Judah and all Judah indeed put him to death? Did he not fear the LORD and entreat the face of the LORD, and the LORD relented concerning the calamity which He had spoken against them? And we are about to do great harm against ourselves." **20** And also ***there*** was a man prophesying in the name of the LORD, Uriah (Uriyahu) the son of Shemaiah (Shemayahu) from Kiriath-jearim (Qiryat-Ye'arim); and he prophesied against this city and against this land according to all the words of Jeremiah. **21** And King Jehoiakim and all his mighty men and all the officials heard his words, and the king sought to put him to death; and Uriah heard, and he was afraid, and he fled, and he went ***to*** Egypt (Mitsrayim). **22** And King Jehoiakim sent men ***to*** Egypt, Elnathan (Elnatan) the son of Achbor (Akhbor), and men with him, to Egypt. **23** And they brought Uriah out from Egypt, and they brought

26:4 1 Kgs 9:6; Isa 1:20; Jer 44:10
26:5 Rev 11:18; Jer 25:3,4; Jer 7:13,25
26:6 Jer 24:9; 2 Kgs 22:19; Jer 25:18
26:7 Matt 21:15; Jer 5:31; Mic 3:11
26:8 Matt 26:59; Matt 23:34; Lam 4:13,14
26:9 Matt 21:23; John 8:20; Acts 17:5
26:10 Jer 36:10; Jer 26:16,17,24; Jer 34:19
26:11 Jer 38:4; Deut 18:20; Matt 26:66
26:12 Acts 4:19; Acts 5:29; Jer 26:2,15
26:13 Jer 35:15; Jer 26:3,19; Jer 18:8
26:14 Luke 12:4; Jer 38:5; Josh 9:25
26:15 Matt 23:30; Matt 26:25; Rev 16:6
26:16 Acts 23:9; James 5:10; Rev 16:6
26:17 Acts 5:34; Mic 1:1
26:18 Neh 4:2; Mic 1:1; Mic 3:12
26:19 Rev 18:21; Exod 32:14; 2 Sam 24:16
26:20 1 Sam 7:2; Josh 15:60; Josh 18:14
26:21 Matt 10:23,28,39; Jer 36:26; 2 Chr 16:10
26:22 2 Kgs 22:12,14; Ps 12:8; Prov 29:12
26:23 Rev 11:8; Jer 2:30; Jer 26:15

26:6 *I will make this house like Shiloh* Shiloh held the tabernacle in the judges' days and was destroyed after the ark was lost (7:12-14; 1 Sam 4). To people sure the temple could never fall (7:4), this sounded like blasphemy.
26:8 *You will surely die* The religious leaders led the attack. The priests and the false prophets who promised peace (23:17) saw their place, income and pride threatened. The Law said a false prophet must die (Deut 18:20), but they never asked whether his message was true. Jesus was accused of speaking against the temple (Mark 14:57-58), and so was Stephen (Acts 6:13).
26:10 *they sat at the entrance of the New Gate of the LORD* The king's council came up from the palace and sat as judges. Courts were held at a gate (Deut 21:19; Ruth 4:1).
26:11 *for he has prophesied against this city* Not that he lied, but that he spoke against Jerusalem. To them it was treason.
26:12 *The LORD sent me* A short defense. He did not deny or soften what he said. He named who sent him. Then, on trial for his life, he preached again (26:13), more concerned for their lives than his own.
26:14 *I am in your hand* He did not beg, threaten or run. He was first in God's hands.
26:15 *you are putting innocent blood on yourselves and on this city* Killing an innocent man brought guilt on the whole land (Deut 19:10). Courage like this comes from God (Matt 10:18-20; Acts 5:29).
26:16 *There is no sentence of death for this man* The crowd that shouted "You will surely die!" now joined the officials. The crowd that shouted Hosanna shouted Crucify Him a few days later (Mark 11:9; 15:13). It is God's approval that matters.
26:18 *Micah the Morashtite* From Moresheth in the lowlands of Judah, about a hundred years earlier. These are the very words of Micah 3:12, a prophet's book quoted word for word a century later, known and respected as God's word.
26:19 *Did he not fear the LORD and entreat the face of the LORD* A good king listens to a hard word and repents, and God spares. A foolish king kills the prophet.
26:20 *Uriah the son of Shemaiah from Kiriath-jearim* A town about eight miles west of Jerusalem where the ark once stayed (1 Sam 7:1-2). The only place we read of him. He preached what Jeremiah preached.
26:22 *Elnathan the son of Achbor* Egypt, which had put Jehoiakim on the throne (2 Kgs 23:34), handed Uriah over. Elnathan later begged the king not to burn Jeremiah's scroll (36:12, 25). People are not always simple.
26:23 *he struck him with the sword, and he threw his corpse into the graves of the sons of the people* The common burial ground, denying him an honorable grave. This shows how real Jeremiah's danger was, and the innocent blood Jehoiakim shed (22:17). Faithfulness does not always end in rescue in this life. Some believers were delivered and some were killed by the sword, and the world was not worthy of them (Heb 11:33-38; Matt 23:37). Was Uriah wrong to flee? Scripture does not say, and Jesus allowed fleeing persecution (Matt 10:23). Both men were in God's hands.

him to King Jehoiakim, and he struck him with the sword, and he threw his corpse into the graves of the sons of the people. **24** Nevertheless the hand of Ahikam (Achiqam) the son of Shaphan (Shafan) was with Jeremiah, so as not to give him into the hand of the people to put him to death.

JEREMIAH 27

The Yoke of Babylon

1 In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim (Yehoyaqim) the son of Josiah (Yoshiyahu), the king of Judah (Yehuda), this word came to Jeremiah (Yirmeya) from the LORD, saying, **2** Thus said the LORD to me: "Make for yourself fetters and yoke-bars, and you shall put them on your neck. **3** And you shall send them to the king of Edom and to the king of Moab (Mo'av) and to the king of the sons of Ammon (Amon) and to the king of Tyre (Tsor) and to the king of Sidon (Tsidon), by the hand of the messengers who have come ***to*** Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) to Zedekiah (Tsidqiyahu) the king of Judah. **4** And you shall command them ***to go*** to their masters, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of armies, the God of Israel (Yisra'el): "Thus you shall say to your masters: **5** 'I, I made the earth, mankind and the animals which ***are*** on the face of the earth, by My great power and by My outstretched arm, and I give it to whom it is right in My eyes. **6** And now I, I have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar (Nevukhadnetsar) the king of Babylon (Bavel), My servant; and also the living things of the field I have given to him to serve him. **7** And all the nations will serve him and his son and his son's son, until the time of his own land comes, also it; and many nations and great kings will make him serve. **8** And it will be, the nation and the kingdom which will not serve him, Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, and which will not put its neck in the yoke of the king of Babylon, with the sword and with the famine and with the pestilence I will punish that nation,' declares the LORD, 'until I have consumed them by his hand. **9** And you, do not listen to your prophets and to your diviners and to your dreams and to your soothsayers and to your sorcerers, who are saying to you, saying, "You shall not serve the king of Babylon." **10** For they are prophesying falsehood to you, so as to remove you far from your ground, and I will drive you out, and you will perish. **11** And the nation which will bring its neck into the yoke of the king of Babylon and serve him, I will let it remain on its own ground,' declares the LORD, 'and it will till it and dwell in it.'"'" **12** And to Zedekiah the king of Judah I spoke according to all these words, saying, "Bring your necks into the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him and his people, and live. **13** Why will you die, you and your people, by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence, just as the LORD has spoken concerning the nation which will not serve the king of Babylon? **14** And do not listen to the words of the prophets who say to you, saying, 'You shall not serve the king of Babylon,' for they are prophesying falsehood to you. **15** For I have not sent them," declares the LORD, "and they are prophesying falsely in My name, so that I will drive you out and you will perish, you and the prophets who are

26:24 Acts 23:10; Heb 11:34; Jer 39:14
27:1 Jer 27:3,12,19,20; Jer 26:1; Jer 28:1
27:2 Amos 7:1,4; Jer 27:12; Jer 28:10-14
27:3 Matt 11:22; Jer 25:19-26; Ezek 25:1-28
27:4 Jer 10:10,16; Jer 25:27; Jer 51:19
27:5 Heb 1:10; Acts 14:15; Heb 1:2
27:6 Matt 4:9; Rom 9:17; Rev 17:17
27:7 Rev 17:16; Rev 17:17; Jer 52:31
27:8 Jer 38:17-19; Ezek 17:19-21; Jer 24:10
27:9 Jer 14:14; Jer 29:8; Isa 8:19
27:10 Jer 32:31; Jer 27:14; Jer 28:16
27:11 Jer 27:2,8,12; Jer 21:9; Jer 38:2
27:12 Jer 28:1; Jer 38:17; 2 Chr 36:11-13
27:13 Jer 27:8; Prov 8:36; Jer 38:20
27:14 2 Pet 2:1; Jer 14:14; Jer 27:9
27:15 2 Pet 2:1; Jer 27:10; 2 Chr 25:16

26:24 *the hand of Ahikam the son of Shaphan was with Jeremiah* Ahikam was sent to Huldah when the Book of the Law was found (2 Kgs 22:12-14), and his father Shaphan read it to Josiah, a family that loved God's word. His son Gedaliah would later protect Jeremiah too (39:14; 40:5-6). God kept His promise (1:8) through one man with courage. Is there someone standing alone who needs you to be their Ahikam?

27:1 *In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah* A long puzzle. The rest of the chapter names Zedekiah (27:3, 12), and 28:1 places these events in Zedekiah's fourth year. The Hebrew reads Jehoiakim here, but a few Hebrew manuscripts and some old translations read Zedekiah. Most think an early copyist repeated 26:1 by mistake. Others suggest the word came under Jehoiakim and was acted out under Zedekiah. Either way, the setting is Zedekiah's fourth year, about 593 B.C. "The beginning of the reign" can mean the early part of a reign (28:1).

27:2 *Make for yourself fetters and yoke-bars* A yoke was a heavy wooden bar across the necks of a pair of oxen, held by straps. To wear one meant to serve someone else. Jeremiah walked Jerusalem wearing it, another acted message (13:1-11; 19:1-11).

27:3 *by the hand of the messengers who have come to Jerusalem to Zedekiah* Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre and Sidon had sent envoys, most likely to plan a revolt against Babylon together. Egypt, under a new Pharaoh, may have been urging them on, though Scripture does not say. Picture diplomats at secret talks being handed a prophet's message from the God of Israel.

27:5 *I give it to whom it is right in My eyes* The foundation of the message. Because God made the earth, it is His to give (Dan 4:17, 25; Acts 17:24-26). No ruler, election or war is outside His hand. He sets up kings and takes them down (Dan 2:21).

27:6 *also the living things of the field I have given to him* God's "servant" again (25:9). Even the wild animals were under his rule, the language of Genesis 1:28 (Dan 2:38).

27:7 *him and his son and his son's son, until the time of his own land comes* Babylon's rule had a time limit of a few generations (25:11-12). Nebuchadnezzar died in 562 B.C., his son Evil-merodach followed (52:31), and Babylon fell to Cyrus in 539 B.C. The great master became a servant.

27:8 *which will not put its neck in the yoke of the king of Babylon* To resist Babylon was to resist God's judgment, and fighting it would only make it worse.

27:9 *your diviners and to your dreams and to your soothsayers and to your sorcerers* Diviners read omens such as the livers of sacrificed animals, and sorcerers practiced magic, all forbidden by the Law (Deut 18:10-12). They all told their kings the same pleasing thing.

27:11 *I will let it remain on its own ground* Submission meant survival. Judgment was coming either way. Sometimes God's mercy is telling us not to fight the discipline He has sent.

27:12 *Bring your necks into the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him and his people, and live* Spoken to Zedekiah himself.

27:13 *Why will you die, you and your people* The cry of a man who wanted them to live. Ezekiel said it from Babylon, and God takes no pleasure in anyone's death (Ezek 18:31-32).

27:15 *they are prophesying falsely in My name* Judah's prophets said the same as the pagan diviners. A prophet in God's own temple can sound exactly like a sorcerer if he is not speaking God's word (23:21).

prophesying to you." **16** And to the priests and to all this people I spoke, saying, "Thus says the LORD: 'Do not listen to the words of your prophets who are prophesying to you, saying, "Look, the articles of the house of the LORD will now shortly be brought back from Babylon," for they are prophesying falsehood to you. **17** Do not listen to them; serve the king of Babylon and live. Why should this city become a ruin? **18** And if they are prophets, and if the word of the LORD is with them, let them entreat, please, the LORD of armies, that the articles which remain in the house of the LORD and ***in*** the house of the king of Judah and in Jerusalem may not go ***to*** Babylon. **19** For thus says the LORD of armies concerning the pillars and concerning the sea and concerning the stands and concerning the rest of the articles which remain in this city, **20** which Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon did not take when he took Jeconiah (Yekhonya) the son of Jehoiakim, the king of Judah, into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon, and all the nobles of Judah and Jerusalem; **21** for thus says the LORD of armies, the God of Israel, concerning the articles which remain ***in*** the house of the LORD and ***in*** the house of the king of Judah and ***in*** Jerusalem: **22** "They will be brought to Babylon, and there they will be until the day I visit them," declares the LORD. "And I will bring them up, and I will bring them back to this place."'"

JEREMIAH 28

Hananiah the False Prophet

1 And it was in that year, in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah (Tsidqiya) the king of Judah (Yehuda), in the fourth year, in the fifth month, Hananiah (Chananya) the son of Azzur (Azur), the prophet who ***was*** from Gibeon (Givon), said to me in the house of the LORD, before the eyes of the priests and all the people, saying, **2** "Thus says the LORD of armies, the God of Israel (Yisra'el), saying, 'I have broken the yoke of the king of Babylon (Bavel). **3** Within two more years I am bringing back to this place all the articles of the house of the LORD which Nebuchadnezzar (Nevukhadnetsar) the king of Babylon took from this place and brought ***to*** Babylon. **4** And Jeconiah (Yekhonya) the son of Jehoiakim (Yehoyaqim), the king of Judah, and all the exiles of Judah who went to Babylon, I am bringing back to this place,' declares the LORD, 'for I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon.'" **5** And Jeremiah (Yirmeya) the prophet said to Hananiah the prophet before the eyes of the priests and before the eyes of all the people who were standing in the house of the LORD; **6** and Jeremiah the prophet said, "Amen! May the LORD do so! May the LORD carry out your words which you have prophesied, by bringing back the articles of the house of the LORD and all the exiles from Babylon to this place. **7** Nevertheless, listen, please, to this word which I am speaking in your ears and in the ears of all the people: **8** The prophets who were before me and before you from long ago, and they prophesied against many lands and against great kingdoms, of war and of calamity and of pestilence. **9** The prophet who prophesies of peace, when the word of the prophet comes, the prophet whom the LORD has sent in truth will be known." **10** And Hananiah the prophet took the yoke-bar from the neck of Jeremiah the prophet, and he broke it. **11** And Hananiah said before the eyes of all the people, saying, "Thus says the

27:16 Jer 28:3; 2 Kgs 24:13; Dan 1:2
27:17 Jer 27:11,12; Jer 38:17,23; Jer 27:13
27:18 1 Sam 7:8; 1 Kgs 18:24,26; Jer 18:20
27:19 2 Kgs 25:13,17; Jer 52:17-23; 1 Kgs 7:15-22
27:20 Matt 1:11; Jer 24:1; 2 Chr 36:10,18
27:22 Jer 29:10; Jer 32:5; Jer 25:11,12
28:1 Jer 27:1; Jer 28:11; Jer 36:12
28:2 Jer 27:2-12; Ezek 13:5-16; Mic 3:11
28:3 2 Kgs 24:13; 2 Chr 36:10; Dan 1:2
28:4 Jer 22:24,28; Jer 24:1; Jer 28:2,10
28:5 Jer 28:1; Jer 7:2; Jer 19:14
28:6 Matt 6:13; Matt 28:20; 1 Cor 14:16
28:7 1 Kgs 22:28
28:8 1 Kgs 17:1; Amos 1:2; Lev 26:14-46
28:9 Deut 18:22; Jer 6:14; Jer 4:10
28:10 Jer 27:2; Jer 28:2,4; Jer 36:23,24
28:11 Jer 23:17; Jer 29:9; 1 Kgs 13:18

27:16 *the articles of the house of the LORD will now shortly be brought back from Babylon* In 597 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar took the temple's gold vessels (2 Kgs 24:13). The false prophets promised quick recovery. How many people want to hear their trouble will soon be over, with no change of heart? It is the most popular sermon there is.

27:18 *let them entreat, please, the LORD of armies* A test. A true prophet also speaks to God for the people (18:20). These men were not praying, only promising. False teachers are often long on promises and short on prayer.

27:19 *concerning the pillars and concerning the sea and concerning the stands* Solomon's great bronze works: the two pillars Jachin and Boaz, the "sea," a huge bronze basin for the priests' washing, and the stands for smaller basins (1 Kgs 7:15-39). They were broken up and carried off in 586 B.C. (52:17-23).

27:22 *And I will bring them up, and I will bring them back to this place* Hope even here. Cyrus returned thousands of gold and silver articles (Ezra 1:7-11). The false prophets said it would all come back soon with no need to change. Jeremiah said more would be lost first, but God would bring it back in His time. We want the quick way out. God gives the true way through.

28:1 *Hananiah the son of Azzur, the prophet who was from Gibeon* Zedekiah's fourth year was about 593 B.C., and the fifth month fell in July or August. Jeremiah was still wearing the yoke. Gibeon, about six miles northwest of Jerusalem, was a priests' town (Josh 21:17). Hananiah is called "the prophet" six times. He was known and respected as one, but that did not make him one. He chose the most public place he could find.

28:2 *I have broken the yoke of the king of Babylon* He used Jeremiah's very words, "Thus says the LORD of armies," and spoke as if it were already done.

28:3 *Within two more years* Specific, hopeful and exactly what everyone wanted to hear. God had said seventy years (25:11). Hananiah said two.

28:4 *And Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim* Many in Jerusalem still thought of Jehoiachin as the true king. The message was political too: Babylon's day is almost over and revolt will succeed.

28:6 *Amen! May the LORD do so* Not sarcasm. Jeremiah loved his people and took no pleasure in judgment (17:16). He would have loved to see the exiles home in two years. But wishing does not make a thing true. We can long for good things for people, even those who oppose us, and still not pretend a lie is true.

28:8 *they prophesied against many lands and against great kingdoms, of war and of calamity and of pestilence* The true prophets of the past mostly warned of judgment and called people to repent.

28:9 *the prophet whom the LORD has sent in truth will be known* Moses' test (Deut 18:21-22). A warning of judgment can be turned aside by repentance, as at Nineveh (18:7-8). A promise of peace to an unrepentant people can only be proved by happening. Jeremiah himself would speak great words of peace in chapters 30 to 33, but peace without repentance carries a heavy burden of proof.

28:10 *took the yoke-bar from the neck of Jeremiah the prophet, and he broke it* Hananiah matched Jeremiah's sign with one of his own. It was dramatic, powerful and a lie.

28:11 *And Jeremiah the prophet went his way* One of the most striking lines in the chapter. He did not argue or make up an answer. He walked away and waited for God to speak. When we do not have a word from God, it is better to be quiet than to say something of our own.

LORD: 'Thus I will break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon within two more years from the neck of all the nations.'" And Jeremiah the prophet went his way. **12** And the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah after Hananiah the prophet had broken the yoke-bar from the neck of Jeremiah the prophet, saying, **13** "Go, and you shall say to Hananiah, saying, 'Thus says the LORD: "You have broken yoke-bars of wood, and you will make in place of them yoke-bars of iron." **14** For thus says the LORD of armies, the God of Israel: "A yoke of iron I have put on the neck of all these nations, to serve Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, and they will serve him; and also the living things of the field I have given to him."'" **15** And Jeremiah the prophet said to Hananiah the prophet, "Listen, please, Hananiah: the LORD has not sent you, and you, you have made this people trust in falsehood. **16** Therefore thus says the LORD: 'Look, I am about to send you away from the face of the ground. This year you ***will*** die, for you have spoken rebellion against the LORD.'" **17** And Hananiah the prophet died in that year, in the seventh month.

JEREMIAH 29

Jeremiah's Letter to the Exiles

1 And these ***are*** the words of the letter which Jeremiah (Yirmeya) the prophet sent from Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) to the remainder of the elders of the exiles, and to the priests, and to the prophets, and to all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar (Nevukhadnetsar) had taken into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon (Bavel), **2** after Jeconiah (Yekhonya) the king and the queen mother and the court officials, the officials of Judah (Yehuda) and Jerusalem, and the craftsmen and the smiths had gone out from Jerusalem, **3** by the hand of Elasah (Elasa) the son of Shaphan (Shafan) and Gemariah (Gemarya) the son of Hilkiah (Chilqiya), whom Zedekiah (Tsidqiya) the king of Judah sent to Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, to Babylon, saying, **4** "Thus says the LORD of armies, the God of Israel (Yisra'el), to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: **5** 'Build houses and dwell ***in them***, and plant gardens and eat their produce. **6** Take wives and father sons and daughters, and take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters; and multiply there, and do not diminish. **7** And seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf; for in its welfare you will have welfare.' **8** For thus says the LORD of armies, the God of Israel: 'Do not let your prophets who ***are*** in your midst and your diviners deceive you, and do not listen to your dreams which you are dreaming. **9** For they are prophesying falsely to you in My name; I did not send them,' declares the LORD. **10** For thus says the LORD: 'When seventy years for Babylon are completed, I will visit you, and I will carry out on you My good word, to bring you back to this place. **11** For I, I know the plans which I am planning concerning you,' declares the LORD, 'plans of wel-

28:12 Jer 1:2; Jer 29:30; 2 Kgs 20:4
28:13 Jer 27:15; Ps 149:8; Lam 2:14
28:14 Deut 28:48; Jer 27:6,7; Jer 27:4,7
28:15 2 Pet 2:1; Lam 2:14; Ezek 13:2,3,22
28:16 2 Pet 2:1; Jer 29:32; Gen 7:4
28:17 Isa 44:25,26; Zech 1:6
29:1 Acts 15:23; Esth 9:20; Jer 29:25-29
29:2 Jer 22:24-28; Jer 27:20; 2 Kgs 24:12-16
29:3 Jer 26:24; Jer 39:14; 2 Kgs 22:8
29:4 Jer 24:5; Isa 5:5; Isa 10:5,6
29:5 Ezek 28:26; Jer 29:10,28
29:6 Jer 16:2-4; Gen 1:27,28; Gen 9:7
29:7 Ezra 6:10; 1 Tim 2:1,2; Ezra 7:23
29:8 Eph 5:6; Jer 14:14; Jer 23:21
29:9 2 Pet 2:1; Jer 27:15; Jer 29:23,31
29:10 Jer 25:12; Dan 9:2; Jer 24:6,7
29:11 Isa 55:8-12; Ps 33:11; Ps 40:5

28:13 *You have broken yoke-bars of wood, and you will make in place of them yoke-bars of iron* By leading the people to resist Babylon, Hananiah set them up for a much harder bondage. When Zedekiah rebelled, Babylon destroyed the city. Moses warned of "a yoke of iron" for those who would not serve the LORD with joy (Deut 28:47-48).
28:14 *A yoke of iron I have put on the neck of all these nations* When we throw off God's discipline our own way, we often end up in something heavier. Jesus offers another yoke. "My yoke is easy, and My burden is light" (Matt 11:28-30). The way out is not breaking the yoke ourselves but coming to Him.
28:15 *you have made this people trust in falsehood* The real crime. He led a nation to trust a lie that would cost thousands of lives.
28:16 *I am about to send you away from the face of the ground* A wordplay. God had not "sent" him, so God would "send" him off the earth. The Law said a prophet who "has spoken rebellion against the LORD" (Deut 13:5) must die (Deut 18:20).
28:17 *And Hananiah the prophet died in that year, in the seventh month* He promised two years and did not live two months. By Moses' test, Jeremiah was true and Hananiah false. Teachers will be judged more strictly (James 3:1), and anyone who teaches God's Word carries that weight. False voices may be loud and popular for a while, but God's word stands forever (Isa 40:8). We test every voice by Scripture (Acts 17:11; 1 John 4:1).
29:1 *the words of the letter which Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem* To the exiles of 597 B.C. (2 Kgs 24:12-16), the good figs of chapter 24. Scripture gives no year, but it was likely early in Zedekiah's reign, near chapters 27 and 28.
29:3 *by the hand of Elasah the son of Shaphan and Gemariah the son of Hilkiah* Jeremiah's letter went with royal envoys to Babylon. Elasah was probably a brother of Ahikam, who had saved Jeremiah's life (26:24).
29:4 *to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile* Not Nebuchadnezzar, but "I have sent." The exile was God's discipline, not His defeat, and if God sent them, He was with them there.
29:5 *Build houses and dwell in them, and plant gardens* You do not build a house and plant a garden if you expect to leave in two years. Some exiles were living out of their bags. Jeremiah told them to unpack, marry and think three generations ahead.
29:7 *seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf* Welfare is shalom. Babylon was the enemy, and God told them to seek its peace and pray for it, because their own peace was tied to it. They were not to become Babylonians. Daniel and his friends served the king faithfully but would not bow to idols (Dan 1:8; 3:16-18; 6:10). Believers too are "sojourners and exiles" (1 Pet 2:11), citizens of heaven (Phil 3:20), called to do good to our cities and pray for those in authority (1 Pet 2:12; 1 Tim 2:1-2). Have you prayed for your town and leaders this week?
29:8 *Do not let your prophets who are in your midst and your diviners deceive you* There were Hananiahs in Babylon too, promising the trouble would soon be over.
29:10 *When seventy years for Babylon are completed* The timeline of 25:11-12. Most who read the letter would die in Babylon. Their children or grandchildren would go home, as they did under Cyrus in 538 B.C. (Ezra 1:1).
29:11 *plans of welfare and not for calamity, to give you a latter end and a hope* One of the most loved verses in the Bible, and it must be read where God put it. "You" is plural, a promise to the exiles as a people, right after "seventy years." It did not mean home next week. It meant God had not abandoned them, and their story would not end in Babylon. It is not a promise of health, wealth or an easy road, and the plans are His, not ours. But it shows God's heart. For every believer, God works all things for good (Rom 8:28-29), and our hope is an inheritance kept in heaven (1 Pet 1:3-4). Read it in Babylon, in the hard place, where it was written.

fare and not for calamity, to give you a latter end and a hope. **12** And you will call on Me, and you will come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. **13** And you will seek Me and find ***Me***, when you seek Me with all your heart. **14** And I will be found by you,' declares the LORD, 'and I will turn back your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have banished you,' declares the LORD, 'and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile.' **15** Because you have said, 'The LORD has raised up prophets for us in Babylon,' **16** for thus says the LORD concerning the king who sits on the throne of David, and concerning all the people who dwell in this city, your brothers who did not go out with you into exile; **17** thus says the LORD of armies: 'Look, I am about to send on them the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, and I will make them like the rotten figs which cannot be eaten because of badness. **18** And I will pursue after them with the sword, with the famine, and with the pestilence, and I will make them into a terror to all the kingdoms of the earth, into a curse and into a horror and into a hissing and into a reproach among all the nations where I have banished them, **19** because they have not listened to My words,' declares the LORD, 'which I sent to them by My servants the prophets, rising early and sending; and you did not listen,' declares the LORD. **20** And you, hear the word of the LORD, all the exiles whom I have sent from Jerusalem to Babylon. **21** Thus says the LORD of armies, the God of Israel, concerning Ahab (Achav) the son of Kolaiah (Qolaya), and concerning Zedekiah (Tsidqiyahu) the son of Maaseiah (Ma'aseya), who are prophesying falsehood to you in My name: 'Look, I am about to give them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, and he will strike them down before your eyes. **22** And a curse will be taken from them by all the exiles of Judah who ***are*** in Babylon, saying, "May the LORD make you like Zedekiah and like Ahab, whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire," **23** because they have done folly in Israel, and they have committed adultery with the wives of their neighbors, and they have spoken a word in My name falsely, which I did not command them; and I ***am*** the one who knows, and a witness,' declares the LORD."

A Word Against Shemaiah

24 And to Shemaiah (Shemayahu) the Nehelamite you shall speak, saying, **25** "Thus says the LORD of armies, the God of Israel, saying, 'Because you, you have sent letters in your own name to all the people who ***are*** in Jerusalem, and to Zephaniah (Tsefanya) the son of Maaseiah the priest, and to all the priests, saying, **26** "The LORD has made you priest in place of Jehoiada (Yehoyada) the priest, to be overseers ***in*** the house of the LORD for every man who is mad and who prophesies, and you shall put him into the stocks and into the iron collar. **27** And now, why have you not rebuked Jeremiah the Anathothite, who is prophesying to you? **28** For therefore he has sent to us ***in*** Babylon, saying, 'It ***will be*** long; build houses and dwell ***in them***, and plant gardens and eat their produce.'"'" **29** And Zephaniah the priest read this letter in the ears of Jeremiah the prophet. **30** And the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, saying, **31** "Send to all the exiles, saying, 'Thus says the LORD concerning Shemaiah the Nehelamite: "Because Shemaiah has prophesied to you, and I, I did not send him, and he has made you trust in falsehood, **32** therefore thus says the LORD: 'Look, I am about to punish Shemaiah the Nehelamite and his offspring; he will not have a man dwelling among this people, and he will not look on the good which I am doing for My people,' declares the LORD, 'for he has spoken rebellion against the LORD.'"'"

JEREMIAH 30

The Time of Jacob's Trouble

1 The word which came to Jeremiah (Yirmeyahu) from the

29:12 Jer 33:3; Ps 50:15; Matt 7:7,8
29:13 Ps 119:2,10,58,69,145; Jer 24:7; Joel 2:12
29:14 Rom 10:20; Jer 30:3,10; Ps 32:6
29:15 Jer 29:8,9; Jer 28:1-17; Ezek 1:1,3
29:16 Jer 38:2,3,17-23; Jer 29:3; Jer 24:2
29:17 Jer 24:8-10; Jer 15:2,3; Jer 34:17-22
29:18 Luke 21:24; Jer 15:4; 2 Chr 29:8
29:19 Jer 6:19; Jer 26:5; Jer 7:13,24-26
29:20 Jer 24:5; Mic 4:10; Ezek 3:11,15
29:21 Matt 7:15; Jer 29:8,9; Jer 14:14,15
29:22 Dan 3:6,21; Isa 65:15; Gen 48:20
29:23 Rev 1:5; 2 Pet 2:18; Jer 23:14,21
29:24 Jer 29:31,32
29:25 Jer 29:29; Jer 37:3; Jer 52:24
29:26 Jer 20:1,2; 2 Kgs 9:11; Hos 9:7
29:27 2 Chr 25:16; Amos 7:12,13; John 11:47-53
29:31 2 Pet 2:1; Jer 29:9,23; Jer 14:14,15
29:32 2 Pet 2:1; Jer 28:16; Jer 17:6
30:1 Jer 1:1,2; Jer 26:15

29:12 *you will come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you* God's plan would come as His people turned to Him. Daniel did exactly this when he read Jeremiah's prophecy (Dan 9:2-3).
29:13 *you will seek Me and find Me, when you seek Me with all your heart* Moses said the same of Israel scattered among the nations (Deut 4:27-29). Judah's problem was always a divided heart (3:10). In exile, without temple or land, they would learn to seek God Himself. He is not hiding from those who seek Him honestly (Matt 7:7).
29:14 *I will gather you from all the nations* To "turn back your captivity" is to restore their fortunes. The return under Cyrus brought some home, but like 16:15 and 23:8 this reaches further, to God gathering Israel from every nation when Christ returns.
29:15 *The LORD has raised up prophets for us in Babylon* The exiles were proud of prophets who said the exile would be short.
29:17 *I will make them like the rotten figs* Zedekiah and those left in Jerusalem, the picture of chapter 24. And the exiles had not listened either (29:19).
29:21 *Ahab the son of Kolaiah, and concerning Zedekiah the son of Maaseiah* Two false prophets in Babylon. This Zedekiah is not the king. Nebuchadnezzar would kill them, probably because promising Babylon's fall stirred hope of revolt.
29:22 *whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire* Burning was a known Babylonian punishment. God delivered three faithful men from that furnace (Dan 3). These two had no such deliverance.
29:23 *they have committed adultery with the wives of their neighbors* Their lives matched their lies. We know false prophets by their fruit (Matt 7:15-20). They hid their sins from people, but God is the witness.
29:24 *Shemaiah the Nehelamite* In Babylon, furious at Jeremiah's letter, he wrote to the priest Zephaniah, who now held Pashhur's old post (20:1), demanding Jeremiah be put in the stocks.
29:26 *for every man who is mad and who prophesies* People who speak God's truth have often been called crazy. Festus said it of Paul (Acts 26:24), and some said it of Jesus (Mark 3:21).
29:29 *Zephaniah the priest read this letter in the ears of Jeremiah* He did not lock him up. Zephaniah seems more open to Jeremiah than others (21:1; 37:3).
29:32 *he will not look on the good which I am doing for My people* The charge brought against Hananiah (28:16). Shemaiah wanted the exiles to have hope, but a quick, false one. Because he rejected God's true hope, he and his family would have no share in it.

LORD, saying, **2** "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel (Yisra'el), saying, 'Write for yourself all the words which I have spoken to you in a book. **3** For look, days are coming,' declares the LORD, 'and I will turn back the captivity of My people Israel and Judah (Yehuda),' says the LORD, 'and I will bring them back to the land which I gave to their fathers, and they will possess it.'" **4** And these ***are*** the words which the LORD spoke concerning Israel and concerning Judah: **5** "For thus says the LORD: 'A sound of trembling we have heard, of dread, and ***there is*** no peace. **6** Ask, please, and see whether a male gives birth. Why have I seen every man ***with*** his hands on his loins like ***a woman*** giving birth, and all faces turned to paleness? **7** Alas! For that day ***is*** great, so that ***there is*** none like it; and it ***is*** a time of distress for Jacob (Ya'aqov), and from it he will be saved. **8** And it will be in that day,' declares the LORD of armies, 'I will break his yoke from your neck, and your fetters I will tear apart; and strangers will no longer make him serve. **9** And they will serve the LORD their God and David their king, whom I will raise up for them. **10** And you, do not fear, O My servant Jacob,' declares the LORD, 'and do not be dismayed, O Israel; for look, I am about to save you from afar, and your offspring from the land of their captivity; and Jacob will return and be undisturbed and be at ease, and ***there will be*** none who terrifies ***him***. **11** For I ***am*** with you,' declares the LORD, 'to save you; for I will make a full end of all the nations where I have scattered you; only of you I will not make a full end; and I will discipline you in justice, and I will by no means leave you unpunished.'

Healing for an Incurable Wound

12 For thus says the LORD: 'Your fracture ***is*** incurable; your wound ***is*** severe. **13** There is none who pleads your cause, for ***your*** sore; remedies of healing there are none for you. **14** All your lovers have forgotten you; they do not seek you; for with the blow of an enemy I have struck you, ***with*** the correction of a cruel one, because of the greatness of your iniquity; your sins are numerous. **15** Why do you cry out over your fracture? Your pain ***is*** incurable. Because of the greatness of your iniquity, your sins are numerous; I have done these ***things*** to you. **16** Therefore all who devour you will be devoured, and all your opponents, all of them, will go into captivity; and those who plunder you will become plunder, and all who despoil you I will make into spoil. **17** For I will bring up healing for you, and from your wounds I will heal you,' declares the LORD, 'for they have called you an outcast: "She ***is*** Zion (Tsiyon); there is none who seeks her."' **18** Thus says the LORD: 'Look, I am about to turn back the captivity of the tents of Jacob, and on his dwellings I will have compassion; and the city will be rebuilt on its mound, and the citadel

30:2 Rev 1:19; Isa 30:8; Jer 36:2-4,32
30:3 Heb 8:8; Jer 29:14; Jer 16:15
30:5 Isa 5:30; Amos 5:16-18; Jer 4:15-20
30:6 1 Thess 5:3; John 16:21; Jer 4:31
30:7 Matt 24:21; Mark 13:19; Rom 11:26
30:8 Ezek 34:27; Jer 27:2; Isa 9:4
30:9 Luke 1:69; Acts 13:34; Hos 3:5
30:10 John 12:15; Jer 46:27,28; Isa 43:5
30:11 Jer 10:24; Jer 4:27; Jer 1:8,19
30:12 Jer 15:18; Jer 30:15; Jer 14:17
30:13 Jer 8:22; Ps 106:23; Ps 142:4
30:14 Lam 1:2,19; Job 30:21; Jer 5:6
30:15 Jer 30:12,17; Jer 15:18; Josh 9:10,11
30:16 Jer 10:25; Isa 14:2; Isa 33:1
30:17 Rom 11:26; Ps 107:20; Jer 33:6
30:18 Hag 2:7-9; Jer 30:3; Ps 102:13

30:2 *Write for yourself all the words which I have spoken to you in a book* Chapters 30 to 33 are often called the Book of Comfort. Many of these promises would not be fulfilled for a long time, so God had them kept in writing. The chapter is not dated, but many think it comes from the last years before the fall, near chapters 32 and 33.
30:3 *I will turn back the captivity of My people Israel and Judah* Both names. The north had been in exile since 722 B.C., and Judah was going now. God promises to restore both as one people to the real land He gave Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Gen 15:18; 17:8; 3:18; 23:6).
30:6 *Why have I seen every man with his hands on his loins like a woman giving birth* Strong men bent double and white with fear. The prophets use birth pains for the terror of the day of the LORD (Isa 13:6-8), and Jesus called the troubles before His return "the beginning of birth pains" (Matt 24:8).
30:7 *that day is great, so that there is none like it; and it is a time of distress for Jacob* One of the key verses in the Old Testament about the last days, often called the time of Jacob's trouble. "That day" is the day of the LORD (Isa 2:12; Joel 2:1-2; Zeph 1:14-15). "None like it" was not true even of 586 B.C. Daniel speaks of "a time of distress such as has not been since there was a nation until that time" (Dan 12:1), and Jesus of a great tribulation unlike any before or after (Matt 24:21). It is focused on Jacob, the nation of Israel (Gen 32:28), not the church.
30:7 *and from it he will be saved* I believe, with many teachers, this is the coming seven-year Tribulation, Daniel's seventieth week (Dan 9:24-27). Before it begins Christ will come for His church and catch believers up to meet Him in the air (1 Thess 4:13-18; 1 Cor 15:51-52). He promised to keep us from the hour of trial (Rev 3:10), for God has not appointed us to wrath (1 Thess 5:9). Israel will go through it, many will look on Him whom they pierced (Zech 12:10), and at its end Christ will return visibly (Matt 24:29-31; Rev 19:11-16), and "all Israel will be saved" (Rom 11:26). Others see only the Babylonian crisis, or A.D. 70, or apply it to the church, but "none like it" and what follows in 30:8-10 have not happened yet. If God will not abandon Jacob, He will not abandon anyone who belongs to Him (John 14:1-3).
30:8 *I will break his yoke from your neck* Hananiah broke a wooden yoke and promised freedom in two years (chapter 28). "In that day" God Himself will break the yoke, and foreigners will never again rule Israel.
30:9 *David their king, whom I will raise up for them* David had been dead about four hundred years. Most teachers take "David" as the Messiah, the great Son of David, Jesus Christ (23:5; Hos 3:5; Ezek 34:23-24; 37:24-25), to whom God gives "the throne of David His father" (Luke 1:32). Some premillennial teachers believe David himself will be raised to serve as a prince under Christ (Dan 12:2). Either way, the King is Jesus. They still serve, but now the right Master.
30:10 *do not fear, O My servant Jacob* After the terror, tenderness. Undisturbed and at ease will be fully true in the kingdom.
30:11 *only of you I will not make a full end* The promise God made Jeremiah at his call (1:8, 19), now made to the nation. History bears it out. Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome are gone, and the Jewish people are still here. God disciplines "in justice," a father's discipline, not final rejection (Heb 12:6; Rom 11:1-2).
30:12 *Your fracture is incurable; your wound is severe* Like the heart in 17:9, the nation had a wound no doctor could heal, and the allies it trusted had forgotten it (22:20).
30:15 *I have done these things to you* God is honest. The wound came from His hand because of their sin. As long as Judah blamed others there was no cure. When we stop making excuses and own our sin, we are ready for God's healing.
30:16 *Therefore all who devour you will be devoured* You would expect therefore I will destroy you. Instead God turns on those who devoured Israel with cruelty and pride.
30:17 *For I will bring up healing for you, and from your wounds I will heal you* In verse 12 the wound is incurable. Here God heals it. What is impossible with man is possible with God (Luke 18:27). The nations called Zion an outcast no one cared about. God cared. Our wound of sin is incurable by any human remedy, but by Christ's wound we are healed (1 Pet 2:24).
30:18 *the city will be rebuilt on its mound* Ancient cities were rebuilt on their own ruins and over time sat on a hill of rubble called a tell. Jerusalem would rise again.

will dwell on its proper place. **19** And thanksgiving will go out from them, and the sound of those who make merry; and I will multiply them, and they will not diminish; and I will make them honored, and they will not be insignificant. **20** And his sons will be as long ago, and his congregation will be established before Me; and I will punish all who oppress him. **21** And his noble one will be from him, and his ruler will come out from his midst; and I will bring him near, and he will draw near to Me; for who is he, this one who has pledged his heart to draw near to Me?' declares the LORD. **22** 'And you will be to Me for a people, and I, I will be to you for God.'" **23** Look, the storm of the LORD! Rage has gone out, a sweeping storm; it will whirl on the head of the wicked. **24** The burning of the anger of the LORD will not turn back until He has done and until He has carried out the purposes of His heart. At the end of the days you will understand it.

JEREMIAH 31

Loved With an Everlasting Love

1 At that time, declares the LORD, I will be God to all the clans of Israel (Yisra'el), and they, they will be a people to Me. **2** Thus says the LORD: The people of the survivors of the sword found favor in the wilderness, going to give him rest, Israel. **3** From afar the LORD appeared to me: And ***with*** an everlasting love I have loved you; therefore I have drawn you ***with*** steadfast love. **4** Again I will build you, and you will be built, O virgin of Israel; again you will adorn yourself ***with*** your tambourines, and you will go out in the dance of those making merry. **5** Again you will plant vineyards on the mountains of Samaria (Shomron); planters will plant, and they will put ***them*** to common use. **6** For there is a day ***when*** watchmen will call out on the mountain of Ephraim (Efrayim), "Arise, and let us go up ***to*** Zion (Tsiyon), to the LORD our God." **7** For thus says the LORD: Cry out ***with*** gladness for Jacob (Ya'aqov), and shout for joy at the head of the nations; proclaim, praise, and say, "Save, O LORD, Your people, the remnant of Israel." **8** Look, I am bringing them from the land of ***the*** north, and I will gather them from the remotest parts of ***the*** earth; among them ***are the*** blind and ***the*** lame, ***the*** pregnant and ***the one*** giving birth together; a great assembly, they will return here. **9** With weeping they will come, and with supplications I will bring them; I will make them walk to torrents of water, on a straight path; they will not stumble on it; for I have become a father to Israel, and Ephraim, he ***is*** My firstborn. **10** Hear the word of the LORD, O nations, and declare ***it*** in the coastlands from afar, and say, "He who scattered Israel will gather him, and He will keep him as a shepherd ***keeps*** his flock." **11** For the LORD has ransomed Jacob, and He has redeemed him from the hand of ***one*** stronger than he. **12** And they will come and shout for joy on the height of Zion, and they will stream to the goodness of the LORD, for grain and for new wine and for fresh oil, and for the young of the flock and the herd; and their soul will be like a watered garden, and they will not languish again anymore. **13** Then ***the*** virgin will rejoice in the dance,

30:19 Rom 11:26; Isa 51:11; Jer 33:22
30:20 Jer 32:39; Gen 17:5-9; Ps 90:16,17
30:21 Rom 11:26; Num 16:5,40; Gen 49:10
30:22 Heb 8:10; Ezek 36:28; Jer 24:7
30:23 Jer 23:19,20; Jer 25:32; Ps 58:9
30:24 Jer 23:20; Jer 4:28; Hos 3:5
31:1 John 20:17; Rom 11:27; 2 Cor 6:18
31:2 Ps 95:11; Num 10:33; Exod 1:16,22
31:3 Hos 11:4; Isa 54:8,9; Deut 7:7-9
31:4 Jer 33:7; Jer 31:13; Judg 11:34
31:5 Amos 9:14; Deut 28:30; Isa 62:8,9
31:6 Jer 50:4,5; Jer 6:17; Isa 40:9
31:7 Rom 9:27; Ps 14:7; Ps 28:9
31:8 Jer 23:8; Ezek 34:13; Isa 42:16
31:9 Matt 3:3; Luke 3:4; Heb 12:23
31:10 John 16:20; Isa 40:11; Isa 66:19
31:11 Luke 11:22; Isa 44:23; Isa 48:20
31:12 John 16:20; Isa 35:10; Isa 58:11
31:13 John 16:20; James 4:9; Ps 30:11

30:19 *thanksgiving will go out from them, and the sound of those who make merry* The joy silenced in 7:34 and 16:9 comes back. The return from Babylon was a beginning. The full joy and honor wait for Christ's kingdom.
30:21 *his ruler will come out from his midst* Not a foreigner set over them, but one of their own, as the Messiah came from Judah and David's family (Heb 7:14).
30:21 *I will bring him near, and he will draw near to Me* Only priests could come near God in the temple. King Uzziah was struck with leprosy for trying (2 Chr 26:16-21). Who would risk his life to draw near? Only one God invites. This points to a Ruler who is also a Priest (Ps 110:4; Zech 6:13), and Hebrews says that is Jesus (Heb 5:5-6; 7:1-17). Some apply it first to a ruler of the restored nation like Zerubbabel, with the full meaning in Christ.
30:22 *And you will be to Me for a people* The heart of the covenant (24:7; 31:33). Through this Priest-King, God and His people will be together at last.
30:24 *At the end of the days you will understand it* Verses 23-24 repeat 23:19-20, now aimed at the wicked who oppress Israel. "The end of the days" is the prophets' phrase for the last days (Isa 2:2; Dan 10:14). God will finish both His judgment and His restoration.
31:1 *I will be God to all the clans of Israel* "At that time" points back to the last days (30:24). The northern tribes, carried off in 722 B.C., were thought lost for good. God did not think so. The covenant promise of the exodus (Exod 6:7) comes back in verse 33.
31:2 *The people of the survivors of the sword found favor in the wilderness* Israel escaped Pharaoh's sword and found grace in the desert. God would do it again for the survivors of Babylon's sword.
31:3 *with an everlasting love I have loved you; therefore I have drawn you with steadfast love* Steadfast love is hesed, loyal covenant love that will not let go. God did not bring them back because they earned it. His love does not end. That is the same reason He saves anyone (Eph 2:4-5). His love comes first, and it draws us to Him.
31:4 *Again I will build you, and you will be built, O virgin of Israel* The building of Jeremiah's call (1:10). The nation once called an unfaithful wife (3:1-3) is now called "virgin," clean and restored. Tambourines and dancing come back.
31:6 *Arise, and let us go up to Zion, to the LORD our God* Since Jeroboam's golden calves about 930 B.C. the north had refused to worship in Jerusalem (1 Kgs 12:26-30). One day north and south will worship together at Zion.
31:8 *among them are the blind and the lame, the pregnant and the one giving birth together* The weakest are not left behind (Isa 40:11).
31:9 *With weeping they will come* Tears of repentance and of joy together.
31:9 *Ephraim, he is My firstborn* Ephraim, Joseph's son, led the northern tribes and stands for them all. The tribes that seemed lost were still God's children (Exod 4:22).
31:10 *He who scattered Israel will gather him* The scattering was God's judgment, and the gathering will be His grace. He will keep them as a shepherd keeps his flock.
31:11 *He has redeemed him from the hand of one stronger than he* To redeem is the work of the go'el, the kinsman-redeemer, the close relative who bought back a family member's land or freedom (Lev 25:25, 47-49). Babylon was stronger than Israel, and God was stronger than Babylon. He is our Redeemer too, and the price was the blood of Christ (1 Pet 1:18-19).
31:12 *they will not languish again anymore* Fulfilled in part after 538 B.C., but Jerusalem suffered again under Greece and Rome. I believe the full meaning waits for the day when Christ reigns and Israel is gathered for good (Amos 9:14-15).

and young men and old ***men*** together; and I will turn their mourning into joy, and I will comfort them, and I will make them glad from their sorrow. **14** And I will saturate the soul of the priests ***with*** fatness, and My people will be satisfied ***with*** My goodness, declares the LORD.

Rachel Weeping for Her Children

15 Thus says the LORD: A voice is heard in Ramah (Rama), lamentation, weeping of bitterness; Rachel is weeping over her sons; she refuses to be comforted over her sons, because they are not. **16** Thus says the LORD: Restrain your voice from weeping and your eyes from tears, for there is a reward for your work, declares the LORD, and they will return from the land of ***the*** enemy. **17** And there is hope for your latter end, declares the LORD, and ***the*** sons will return to their own territory. **18** I have certainly heard Ephraim bemoaning himself: "You have disciplined me, and I was disciplined, like a calf ***that was*** not trained; bring me back, and let me return, for You ***are*** the LORD my God. **19** For after my turning, I repented; and after my being instructed, I slapped ***my*** thigh; I was ashamed, and also I was humiliated, for I bore the reproach of my youth." **20** ***Is*** Ephraim a dear son to Me? Or a child of delights? For as often as I speak against him, I certainly remember him still; therefore My inward parts are in a tumult for him; I will surely have compassion on him, declares the LORD. **21** Set up road markers for yourself; make guideposts for yourself; set your heart to the highway, the way ***which*** you went. Return, O virgin of Israel; return to these your cities. **22** Until when will you waver, O apostate daughter? For the LORD has created a new ***thing*** in the earth: a female will surround a man. **23** Thus says the LORD of armies, the God of Israel: Again they will say this word in the land of Judah (Yehuda) and in its cities, when I turn back their captivity: "May the LORD bless you, O abode of righteousness, O mountain of holiness." **24** And Judah and all its cities will dwell in it together, farmers, and they will set out with ***the*** flock. **25** For I have saturated the weary soul, and every soul that has languished I have filled. **26** On this I awoke, and I looked, and my sleep was pleasant to me. **27** Look, days are coming, declares the LORD, and I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah ***with*** the seed of mankind and the seed of animals. **28** And it will be, just as I kept watch over them to pluck up and to pull down and to tear down and to destroy and to do harm, so I will keep watch over them to build and to plant, declares the LORD. **29** In those days they will not say again, "Fathers have eaten sour grapes, and ***the*** teeth of sons will be blunt." **30** But each man will die for his own iniquity; every man who eats the sour grapes, his teeth will be blunt.

The New Covenant

31 Look, days are coming, declares the LORD, and I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, **32** not like the covenant which I made with their fathers on the day I took hold of their hand to bring them out from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim), in that they, they broke My covenant, and I, I was a husband over them, declares the

31:14 John 16:20; Jer 31:25; Deut 33:8-11
31:15 Matt 2:18; Jer 40:1; Josh 18:25
31:16 John 20:13; John 20:15; Jer 30:3,18
31:17 Jer 29:11-16; Jer 46:27,28; Ps 102:13,14
31:18 Acts 3:19; James 4:9; Ps 80:3,7,19
31:19 John 6:45; Acts 3:19; James 4:9
31:20 Mark 14:72; Luke 22:61; Acts 3:19
31:21 Jer 50:5; Isa 48:20; Isa 57:14
31:22 Acts 3:19; Jer 3:6,8,11,12,14,22; Jer 49:4
31:23 Acts 3:19; Zech 8:3; Isa 1:26
31:24 Acts 3:19; Zech 8:4-8; Ezek 36:10
31:25 Jer 31:14; Ps 107:9; Matt 5:6
31:26 Ps 127:2; Zech 4:1,2
31:27 Heb 8:8; Hos 2:23; Ezek 36:9
31:28 Jer 44:27; Jer 1:10; Jer 24:6
31:29 Lam 5:7; Ezek 18:2,3
31:30 Gal 6:5; Isa 3:11; Deut 24:16
31:31 Heb 8:8-12; Luke 22:20; 2 Cor 3:6
31:32 Rom 11:26; Rom 11:27; Heb 9:19

31:15 *A voice is heard in Ramah* Rachel, Jacob's beloved wife and mother of Joseph and Benjamin (Gen 35:16-19), is pictured as mother of the nation. Ramah, a Benjamite town about five miles north of Jerusalem, was where Babylon later gathered the captives in chains (40:1).
31:15 *Rachel is weeping over her sons; she refuses to be comforted over her sons, because they are not* When Herod killed the boys of Bethlehem, Matthew says this word was fulfilled (Matt 2:16-18). Rachel's tomb was on the way to Bethlehem (Gen 35:19), and the same grief came back, with Jesus born into the middle of it. The Child Herod tried to kill escaped, and He would bring His people the true return. Some see a more direct prediction. If you have lost a child, this verse does not hurry you. God put a mother's grief in His word and did not call it weak. And I believe little children who die are safe with God (2 Sam 12:23).
31:17 *there is hope for your latter end* God does not mock Rachel's grief. He answers it. Hope does not deny the loss but looks past it. In Christ we grieve, but not as those without hope (1 Thess 4:13-14).
31:18 *like a calf that was not trained* A young ox fights the yoke until it learns. "Bring me back, and let me return": Ephraim asks God to give him even his repentance. Slapping the thigh was a sign of grief and shame.
31:20 *therefore My inward parts are in a tumult for him; I will surely have compassion on him* One of the tenderest verses in the Old Testament. Every time God spoke against Ephraim, He still remembered him. Jesus told of a father who saw his son far off and ran to him (Luke 15:20). If you have wandered, the Father is not waiting to shame you. He is longing for you to come home.
31:21 *Set up road markers for yourself* Exiles marching to Babylon should mark the road, because they would walk it back.
31:22 *a female will surround a man* One of the hardest lines in Jeremiah. Many think Israel, pictured as a woman, will cling to the LORD where before she ran from Him. Others see a reversal so new that the weak will protect the strong. Some in the early church saw the virgin birth in it. "Created" is the word of Genesis 1:1, for what only God can do. Whatever the exact picture, God is doing something new.
31:23 *O abode of righteousness, O mountain of holiness* Jerusalem blessed again.
31:25 *I have saturated the weary soul* Jesus makes the same offer to the weary (Matt 11:28).
31:26 *On this I awoke, and I looked, and my sleep was pleasant to me* It seems this message came in a dream. For a prophet with so few pleasant words to carry, this one was sweet.
31:28 *so I will keep watch over them to build and to plant* God watched over His words of judgment, and they came true (1:12). He will watch over His words of blessing with the same care.
31:29 *Fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the teeth of sons will be blunt* A saying used to complain of being punished for parents' sins (Ezek 18:2-4). Sin's results pass down through families, but each person answers to God for his own sin. The new covenant is personal in the same way.
31:31 *I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah* A covenant is a binding agreement in which God commits Himself to His people. This one is made with the whole nation, north and south.
31:32 *on the day I took hold of their hand to bring them out from the land of Egypt* The old covenant made at Sinai. God led them like a father holding a small child's hand. The trouble was never on God's side. The Law was holy and good (Rom 7:12), but written on stone, outside them, it could not change their hearts (Heb 8:7-8).

LORD. **33** For this ***is*** the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put My law in their inward part, and on their heart I will write it; and I will be God to them, and they, they will be a people to Me. **34** And they will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, "Know the LORD," for all of them will know Me, from the least of them and to the greatest of them, declares the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will not remember again. **35** Thus says the LORD, who gives the sun for light by day, the statutes of the moon and the stars for light by night, who stirs up the sea, and its waves roar; the LORD of armies ***is*** His name: **36** If these statutes depart from before Me, declares the LORD, also the seed of Israel will cease from being a nation before Me all the days. **37** Thus says the LORD: If the heavens above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth below can be searched out, also I, I will reject all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, declares the LORD. **38** Look, days are coming, declares the LORD, and the city will be built for the LORD from the tower of Hananel (Chananel) ***to*** the Gate of the Corner. **39** And the measuring line will go out again in front of it over the hill of Gareb (Garev), and it will turn toward Goah (Go'a). **40** And all the valley of the corpses and of the fat ashes, and all the fields to the wadi of Kidron (Qidron), to the corner of the Gate of the Horses toward the east, ***will be*** holy to the LORD; it will not be plucked up, and it will not be torn down again forever.

JEREMIAH 32

Jeremiah Buys a Field

1 The word which came to Jeremiah (Yirmeyahu) from the LORD in the tenth year of Zedekiah (Tsidqiyahu) the king of Judah (Yehuda); that ***was*** the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar (Nevukhadretsar). **2** And then the army of the king of Babylon (Bavel) was besieging Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), and Jeremiah the prophet was shut up in the court of the guard, which ***was in*** the house of the king of Judah, **3** where Zedekiah the king of Judah had shut him up, saying, "Why are you prophesying, saying, 'Thus says the LORD: "Look, I am giving this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he will capture it; **4** and Zedekiah the king of Judah will not escape from the hand of the Chaldeans (Kasdim), for he will certainly be given into the hand of the king of Babylon, and his mouth will speak with his mouth, and his eyes will see his eyes; **5** and he will lead Zedekiah ***to*** Babylon, and there he will be until I visit him," declares the LORD. "Though you fight with the Chaldeans, you will not succeed"'?" **6** And Jeremiah said, "The word of the LORD came to me, saying, **7** 'Look, Hanamel (Chanamel) the son of Shallum (Shalum), your uncle, is coming to you, saying, "Buy for yourself my field which ***is*** in Anathoth (Anatot), for the right of the

31:33 Heb 10:16-17; 2 Cor 3:3; Jer 24:7
31:34 John 6:45; Matt 11:27; John 17:6
31:35 Matt 8:26; Isa 51:15; Jer 10:16
31:36 Jer 33:20-26; Isa 54:9,10; Ps 89:36,37
31:37 Rom 11:2; Jer 33:22; Jer 33:24-26
31:38 Heb 8:8; Zech 14:10; 2 Kgs 14:13
31:39 Zech 2:1,2; Ezek 40:8
31:40 John 18:1; 2 Sam 15:23; Joel 3:17
32:1 Jer 39:1,2; 2 Kgs 25:1,2; Jer 25:1
32:2 Matt 5:12; Jer 37:21; Neh 3:25
32:3 Jer 34:2,3; Jer 21:4-7; Jer 26:8,9
32:4 Jer 38:18,23; Jer 37:17; Jer 39:4-7
32:5 Jer 27:22; Jer 33:5; Ezek 17:9,10,15
32:7 Jer 1:1; Jer 11:21; 1 Kgs 14:5

31:33 *I will put My law in their inward part, and on their heart I will write it* At Sinai God wrote on stone (Exod 31:18). Now He would write on hearts. It is not a different law but God's same holy will, now inside, so His people want to do it. God will give a new heart and His Spirit (Ezek 36:26-27), writing "not on tablets of stone but on fleshy tablets of heart" (2 Cor 3:3). The goal of every covenant is a relationship.
31:34 *for all of them will know Me, from the least of them and to the greatest of them* Under the old covenant many were born into Israel without knowing God. In the new, every member knows the LORD personally. There are still teachers (Eph 4:11), but no member needs to be told to start knowing God.
31:34 *for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will not remember again* "For" makes forgiveness the foundation of the rest. God does not forget as we forget. He chooses never to bring our sin up again. He can because Someone paid. Jesus said, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is being poured out for you" (Luke 22:20). Hebrews quotes this passage and says no further offering for sin is needed (Heb 8:8-12; 10:17-18). The sacrifices covered sin until Christ's one sacrifice took it away (Heb 10:4, 10).
31:34 *I will forgive their iniquity* How does a covenant made with Israel touch us? Christ's blood put it into effect, and believers today, Jews and Gentiles, share its spiritual blessings now: forgiveness, the Spirit within, a heart that knows God (2 Cor 3:6). Gentiles are grafted into Israel's tree and share her spiritual things (Rom 11:17; 15:27). The church has not replaced Israel, and the national fulfillment is still future, when Israel looks on Him whom they pierced (Zech 12:10) and "all Israel will be saved" (Rom 11:26-27). Most dispensational teachers hold this one-covenant view. Some older teachers spoke of two new covenants, a few gave the church no part in it, and others teach the church is now the Israel of the promise. I believe verse 31 means what it says. Do you know the Lord, and not just about Him?
31:35 *who gives the sun for light by day* God swears by His creation. Israel will last as long as the sun comes up.
31:37 *I, I will reject all the seed of Israel for all that they have done* Only if the heavens could be measured. God knows all they have done and still will not cast them off. That is why I cannot accept that God is finished with Israel. "The gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable" (Rom 11:1, 29). Many see a living sign of this in the survival of the Jewish people through two thousand years of scattering. If God will not break His word to Israel, He will not break it to you (Phil 1:6).
31:38 *from the tower of Hananel to the gate of the corner* Landmarks of the city wall (Neh 3:1; 2 Kgs 14:13). Gareb and Goah (31:39) can no longer be found on a map.
31:40 *all the valley of the corpses and of the fat ashes* Most likely the valley of Hinnom, where children were burned (7:31-32). The most defiled place around Jerusalem will be holy, as God makes sinners holy (1 Cor 6:11). Jerusalem was rebuilt after the exile (Neh 3:1, 28), but Rome destroyed it in A.D. 70, so "forever" points to Christ's kingdom (Zech 14:10-11).
32:1 *in the tenth year of Zedekiah the king of Judah* 587 B.C. The siege had begun about a year before (39:1), and the city would fall the next summer. This chapter is placed out of time order because it belongs with the promises of chapters 30 to 33.
32:2 *shut up in the court of the guard* An open courtyard by the palace where prisoners were kept under watch. Chapters 37 and 38 tell how he got there.
32:3 *Why are you prophesying* Zedekiah did not want the truth. He wanted Jeremiah quiet. Many people still deal with God's word that way, not arguing with it but locking it away where they do not have to hear it.
32:4 *his eyes will see his eyes* Zedekiah would meet Nebuchadnezzar face to face (39:5-7).
32:7 *for the right of the redemption is yours, to buy it* Land was not to leave a family for good. If a man had to sell, his nearest relative, the go'el or redeemer, had the right and duty to buy it back (Lev 25:25), as Boaz did for Naomi (Ruth 4:1-10). Anathoth was Jeremiah's hometown (1:1).

redemption ***is*** yours, to buy ***it***.'" **8** And Hanamel the son of my uncle came to me according to the word of the LORD, to the court of the guard, and he said to me, 'Buy, please, my field which ***is*** in Anathoth, which ***is*** in the land of Benjamin (Binyamin); for the right of the possession ***is*** yours, and the redemption ***is*** yours; buy ***it*** for yourself.' And I knew that it ***was*** the word of the LORD. **9** And I bought the field which ***was*** in Anathoth from Hanamel the son of my uncle, and I weighed out to him the silver, approximately 7 ounces (seventeen shekels) of silver. **10** And I wrote in the document, and I sealed ***it***, and I had witnesses testify, and I weighed out the silver on scales. **11** And I took the document of the purchase, the sealed ***one***, the commandment and the statutes, and the open ***one***; **12** and I gave the document of the purchase to Baruch (Barukh) the son of Neriah (Neriya), the son of Mahseiah (Machseya), before the eyes of Hanamel my uncle, and before the eyes of the witnesses who wrote in the document of the purchase, before the eyes of all the Jews who were sitting in the court of the guard. **13** And I commanded Baruch before their eyes, saying, **14** 'Thus says the LORD of armies, the God of Israel (Yisra'el): "Take these documents, this document of the purchase, both the sealed ***one*** and this open document, and put them in an earthenware vessel, so that they may remain many days." **15** For thus says the LORD of armies, the God of Israel: "Houses and fields and vineyards will again be bought in this land."'

Jeremiah's Prayer

16 And I prayed to the LORD after I had given the document of the purchase to Baruch the son of Neriah, saying, **17** 'Ah, Lord GOD! Look, You, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great strength and by Your outstretched arm; nothing is too difficult for You, **18** who shows steadfast love to thousands, and repays the iniquity of ***the*** fathers into the bosom of their sons after them; the great, the mighty God, the LORD of armies ***is*** His name; **19** great in counsel and mighty in deed, whose eyes ***are*** open on all the ways of the sons of mankind, to give to each man according to his ways and according to the fruit of his deeds; **20** who performed signs and wonders in the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim) until this day, and in Israel and among mankind; and You have made for Yourself a name, as ***at*** this day. **21** And You brought out Your people Israel from the land of Egypt with signs and with wonders, and with a strong hand and with an outstretched arm, and with great terror; **22** and You gave them this land, which You swore to their fathers to give them, a land flowing ***with*** milk and honey. **23** And they came in and took possession of it, and they did not listen to Your voice, and in Your law they did not walk; all that You commanded them to do, they did not do; and You have caused all this calamity to meet them. **24** Look, the siege mounds have come ***to*** the city to capture it, and the city has been given into the hand of the Chaldeans who are fighting against it, because of the sword and the famine and the pestilence; and what You spoke has happened, and look, You are seeing ***it***. **25** And You, You have said to me, O Lord GOD, "Buy for yourself the field with silver, and have witnesses testify," and the city has been given into the hand of the Chaldeans!'"

Nothing Is Too Hard for the LORD

26 And the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, saying, **27** "Look, I ***am*** the LORD, the God of all flesh; is anything too

32:8 Jer 32:2; Jer 33:1; 1 Sam 9:16,17
32:9 Gen 23:15,16; 1 Kgs 20:39; Esth 3:9
32:10 Jer 32:12,44; Isa 44:5; Deut 32:34
32:11 Luke 2:27; Acts 26:3; 1 Cor 11:16
32:12 Jer 32:16; Jer 51:59; Jer 36:4,5,16-19,26
32:15 Jer 30:18; Amos 9:14,15; Jer 32:37,43,44
32:16 Jer 12:1; Gen 32:9-12; Phil 4:6,7
32:17 Heb 1:10; Heb 1:2; Jer 27:5
32:18 Jer 10:16; Exod 34:7; Deut 5:9,10
32:19 Rev 22:12; Rev 20:12; Jer 17:10
32:20 Acts 7:36; Acts 13:17; Neh 9:10
32:21 Acts 13:17; Exod 6:6; Deut 26:8
32:22 Exod 13:5; Exod 3:8,17; Jer 11:5
32:23 Ezra 9:7; Ps 78:54,55; Ps 44:2,3
32:24 Jer 33:4; Deut 4:26; Josh 23:15,16
32:25 Ps 77:19; Ps 97:2; John 13:7
32:27 Jer 32:17; Mark 14:36; Matt 19:26

32:8 *And I knew that it was the word of the LORD* Humanly, a terrible deal. The land was under Babylonian control, and Hanamel may have wanted his money while money still meant something. But Hanamel came just as God said.
32:9 *approximately 7 ounces of silver* Seventeen shekels, weighed on scales, because coins were not yet in common use.
32:11 *the sealed one, the commandment and the statutes, and the open one* Two copies. The sealed one was rolled and closed with clay seals so no one could change it. The open one could be read any time, and if questioned, the sealed copy could be opened in court.
32:12 *Baruch the son of Neriah* Jeremiah's faithful scribe, a trained writer who drew up documents. Clay seal impressions called bullae, used to close documents like this, have been found from this period. One bears the name Berechiah son of Neriah the scribe, the long form of Baruch, though scholars debate whether that piece is genuine.
32:14 *put them in an earthenware vessel, so that they may remain many days* A clay jar kept papers safe for a long time. The Dead Sea Scrolls lasted about two thousand years that way. The deed would be needed long after the siege.
32:15 *Houses and fields and vineyards will again be bought in this land* With Babylon outside the wall, land was worthless, and Jeremiah bought it in public with witnesses. His purchase was a sermon. Faith acts on God's word. Abraham bought a burial field in a land he did not yet own (Gen 23). Jeremiah did the same in the land's darkest hour.
32:17 *nothing is too difficult for You* Jeremiah starts with creation, because that is where faith stands when circumstances say no. If God made heaven and earth, a siege and an empire are not too hard for Him (Gen 18:14; Luke 1:37). He prayed this before he knew how it would turn out. He was taken to Egypt, and Scripture never says he came back. When your situation looks hopeless, begin where he began: remind yourself who God is.
32:18 *who shows steadfast love to thousands, and repays the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their sons* Words from the Ten Commandments (Exod 20:5-6). God's mercy is wide and His justice real. Children who follow their parents' sins share their judgment (31:29-30).
32:19 *whose eyes are open on all the ways of the sons of mankind* Nothing escapes His notice (Heb 4:13).
32:23 *and they did not listen to Your voice* One line sums up Israel's history. God kept every promise, and they broke every command. Jeremiah does not blame God for the siege.
32:24 *the siege mounds have come to the city* Ramps of earth piled against the wall for soldiers and battering rams.
32:25 *Buy for yourself the field with silver, and have witnesses testify* Jeremiah obeyed first and asked afterward. He was not doubting God's power. He had just praised it. He was trying to understand God's plan. God is not offended when we bring our questions with a trusting heart (Ps 62:8).
32:27 *I am the LORD, the God of all flesh; is anything too difficult for Me* God turns Jeremiah's own words into a question: did you mean it? Babylon's soldiers, Judah's people and Jeremiah were all flesh, all in His hand (Num 16:22). Sometimes the words we pray are truer than we know. With God all things are possible (Matt 19:26). Is a marriage, a prodigal child, an addiction or a sin you cannot break too hard for Him? The answer is no.

difficult for Me? **28** Therefore thus says the LORD: 'Look, I am giving this city into the hand of the Chaldeans and into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, and he will capture it. **29** And the Chaldeans who are fighting against this city will come, and they will set this city on fire with fire, and they will burn it, and the houses on whose roofs they have burned incense to Baal and poured out drink offerings to other gods, so as to provoke Me to anger. **30** For the sons of Israel and the sons of Judah have been only doing evil in My eyes from their youth; for the sons of Israel have only been provoking Me to anger by the work of their hands, declares the LORD. **31** For this city has been to Me ***a cause*** of My anger and of My rage from the day that they built it and until this day, to remove it from before My face, **32** because of all the evil of the sons of Israel and the sons of Judah which they have done to provoke Me to anger, they, their kings, their officials, their priests and their prophets, and the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. **33** And they have turned to Me ***the*** back and not ***the*** face; and ***I was*** teaching them, rising early and teaching, and they were not listening to receive discipline. **34** And they put their detestable things in the house on which My name is called, to make it unclean. **35** And they built the high places of Baal which ***are*** in the valley of the son of Hinnom (Hinom), to make their sons and their daughters pass through to Molech, which I did not command them, and it did not come up on My heart, to do this abomination, so as to cause Judah to sin.' **36** And now therefore thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning this city of which you are saying, 'It has been given into the hand of the king of Babylon by the sword and by the famine and by the pestilence': **37** 'Look, I am gathering them from all the lands where I have banished them in My anger and in My rage and in great wrath; and I will bring them back to this place, and I will make them dwell in security. **38** And they will be a people to Me, and I, I will be God to them. **39** And I will give them one heart and one way, to fear Me all the days, for good to them and to their sons after them. **40** And I will make with them an everlasting covenant, that I will not turn back from after them, to do them good; and I will put My fear in their heart, so as not to turn aside from Me. **41** And I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land in faithfulness, with all My heart and with all My soul. **42** For thus says the LORD: "Just as I have brought all this great calamity to this people, so I, I am bringing on them all the good which I, I am speaking concerning them. **43** And the field will be bought in this land of which you are saying, 'It ***is*** a desolation, without man and animal; it has been given into the hand of the Chaldeans.' **44** They will buy fields for silver, and write in the document, and seal ***it***, and have witnesses testify, in the land of Benjamin and in the surroundings of Jerusalem and in the cities of Judah and in the cities of the hill country and in the cities of the Shephelah and in the cities of the Negeb (Negev); for I will turn back their captivity," declares the LORD.'"

JEREMIAH 33

Health and Healing Restored

1 And the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah (Yirmeyahu) a second time, and he ***was*** still shut up in the court of the guard, saying, **2** "Thus says the LORD who made it, the LORD who formed it to establish it, the LORD ***is*** His name: **3** 'Call to Me, and I will answer you, and I will tell you great and inac-

32:28 Jer 32:3,24,36; Jer 19:7-12; Jer 20:5
32:29 Jer 21:10; Jer 19:13; Jer 52:13
32:30 Jer 7:22-26; Jer 2:7; Jer 3:25
32:31 Matt 23:37; Luke 13:34; 2 Kgs 23:27
32:32 Jer 2:26; Isa 1:4-6,23; Ezra 9:7
32:33 Jer 2:27; Ezek 8:16; Jer 7:13
32:34 Jer 7:30; Jer 23:11; 2 Kgs 21:4-7
32:35 Jer 7:31; Lev 18:21; 2 Chr 33:6
32:36 Jer 32:3,24,28; Jer 16:12-15; Isa 43:24,25
32:37 Jer 23:3,8; Jer 23:6; Ps 106:47
32:38 Heb 8:10; Rev 21:7; John 20:17
32:39 John 17:21; John 14:6; Mark 10:14
32:40 John 10:27; Mark 10:14; John 10:29
32:41 Rom 11:26; Jer 24:6; Deut 30:9
32:42 Jer 31:28; Zech 8:14,15; Josh 23:14,15
32:43 Ezek 37:11-14; Jer 32:36
32:44 Jer 17:26; Jer 33:7,11,26; Jer 32:37
33:1 Jer 37:21; Jer 38:28; Jer 32:2,3,8
33:2 Exod 6:3; Exod 15:3; Isa 37:26
33:3 Jer 29:12; Isa 48:6; Rev 2:17

32:29 *the houses on whose roofs they have burned incense to Baal* Flat roofs were living space turned into altars (19:13). The houses where they worshiped idols would burn.
32:33 *they have turned to Me the back and not the face* Someone who will not even look at the person speaking to him, though God kept "rising early and teaching."
32:34 *they put their detestable things in the house on which My name is called* Idols in God's own temple, as in Manasseh's day (2 Kgs 21:4-7; 7:30).
32:35 *to make their sons and their daughters pass through to Molech* Molech was an Ammonite god (1 Kgs 11:7), and to make a child "pass through" meant giving him to be burned, the horror of Topheth (7:31; 19:5). God never commanded or willed it (Lev 18:21). If this touches a wound in your life, there is full forgiveness in Christ for all who turn to Him (1 John 1:9).
32:36 *And now therefore* After all that sin we expect judgment as the last word. God turns.
32:38 *they will be a people to Me, and I, I will be God to them* The covenant promise again (31:33). The judgment is real, but it is not God's last word.
32:39 *I will give them one heart and one way, to fear Me all the days* To fear God is to hold Him in reverent awe. A divided heart was Israel's problem. God will give an undivided one.
32:40 *I will make with them an everlasting covenant* The new covenant of 31:31-34. God commits Himself never to stop doing them good, and puts His fear in their heart so they will not turn away. It is kept on both sides because God works on both sides.
32:41 *with all My heart and with all My soul* Nowhere else does God say He does something with all His heart and soul. He is wholehearted about restoring His people. The planting was fulfilled in part after 538 B.C. and fully waits for Israel's future.
32:44 *They will buy fields for silver* Now Jeremiah knew why he bought the field. Deeds would be signed again from Benjamin to the Shephelah, the low western hills, and the Negeb, the dry south. The exiles came home after seventy years (Ezra 1). Jeremiah did not see it, but his faith was not wasted. Our acts of faith never are, even when we do not see the result in our lifetime (Heb 11:13).
33:1 *he was still shut up in the court of the guard* The same year as chapter 32, about 587 B.C. Walls could hold Jeremiah, but they could not keep God's word out.
33:2 *the LORD who formed it to establish it* The One who planned the future and is forming it is the One who speaks.
33:3 *Call to Me, and I will answer you, and I will tell you great and inaccessible things which you have not known* "Inaccessible" describes something fenced off, like a walled city no one can enter, things Jeremiah could never figure out alone. This was a promise to a prophet, and God gave him words now in our Bibles, so it is not a promise of new revelation. But its heart is for every believer. God invites us to call, and He answers (Ps 50:15). He shows us in His word what we could never find ourselves (1 Cor 2:9-10). When you are shut in by trouble, call to Him first.

cessible things which you have not known.' **4** For thus says the LORD, the God of Israel (Yisra'el), concerning the houses of this city and concerning the houses of the kings of Judah (Yehuda) which are pulled down because of the siege mounds and because of the sword: **5** 'They are coming to fight with the Chaldeans (Kasdim), and to fill them with the corpses of the men whom I have struck down in My anger and in My rage, and ***for*** whom I have hidden My face from this city on account of all their evil. **6** Look, I am bringing to it health and healing, and I will heal them, and I will reveal to them an abundance of peace and truth. **7** And I will turn back the captivity of Judah and the captivity of Israel, and I will build them as at the first. **8** And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity by which they have sinned against Me, and I will forgive all their iniquities by which they have sinned against Me and by which they have transgressed against Me. **9** And it will be to Me a name of joy, for praise and for beauty, to all the nations of the earth who will hear all the good which I am doing for them; and they will be in dread, and they will tremble over all the good and over all the peace which I am doing for it.' **10** Thus says the LORD: 'Again there will be heard in this place, of which you are saying, "It ***is*** desolate, without man and without animal," in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) that are desolated, without man and without inhabitant and without animal, **11** the sound of joy and the sound of gladness, the sound of ***the*** bridegroom and the sound of ***the*** bride, the sound of those saying, "Give thanks to the LORD of armies, for the LORD ***is*** good, for His steadfast love ***is*** forever," ***of those*** bringing a thank offering ***to*** the house of the LORD. For I will turn back the captivity of the land as at the first,' says the LORD. **12** Thus says the LORD of armies: 'Again there will be in this place, which is desolate, without man and even animal, and in all its cities, a pasture of shepherds making ***the*** flock lie down. **13** In the cities of the hill country, in the cities of the Shephelah, and in the cities of the Negeb (Negev), and in the land of Benjamin (Binyamin), and in the surroundings of Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, the flock will again pass by the hands of ***one who*** counts ***them***,' says the LORD.

The Promise to David Renewed

14 'Look, days are coming,' declares the LORD, 'and I will carry out the good word which I have spoken to the house of Israel and concerning the house of Judah. **15** In those days and at that time I will cause to sprout for David a Branch of righteousness, and He will do justice and righteousness in the land. **16** In those days Judah will be saved, and Jerusalem will dwell in security; and this ***is what*** one will call her: "The LORD Our Righteousness."' **17** For thus says the LORD: '***There*** will not be cut off for David a man sitting on the throne of the house of Israel; **18** and for the priests, the Levites, ***there*** will not be cut off a man from before Me offering up a burnt offering and burning a grain offering and making a sacrifice all the days.'" **19** And the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, saying, **20** "Thus says the LORD: 'If you can break My covenant of the day and My covenant of the night, so that

33:4 Jer 32:24; Ezek 4:2; Hab 1:10
33:5 Isa 8:17; Jer 21:4-7; Jer 32:5
33:6 Matt 13:15; Isa 30:26; John 10:10
33:7 Jer 30:3; Isa 1:26; Amos 9:14,15
33:8 Acts 3:26; Zech 13:1; Jer 31:34
33:9 Rev 11:11; Jer 13:11; Isa 60:5
33:10 Jer 32:36; Ezek 37:11
33:11 John 3:29; Rev 18:23; Rev 18:22
33:12 Isa 65:10; Jer 36:29; Jer 51:62
33:13 Lev 27:32; Luke 15:4; John 10:3,4
33:14 Luke 24:44; Acts 2:36; Jer 29:10
33:15 Rev 19:11; Matt 1:1; Mark 11:10
33:16 Rom 11:26; Acts 13:34; Rom 4:6
33:17 Luke 1:32; Matt 1:1; Mark 11:10
33:18 Isa 56:7; Isa 61:6; Ezek 43:19-27
33:19 Acts 3:19
33:20 Jer 33:25,26; Gen 8:22; Ps 89:37

33:4 *the houses of the kings of Judah which are pulled down because of the siege mounds* Defenders tore down houses for stones to strengthen the wall (Isa 22:10). God does not hide the cost of sin before He speaks of grace.
33:6 *I am bringing to it health and healing, and I will heal them* Jeremiah asked, "Is there no balm in Gilead?" (8:22). Here is the answer. God Himself will heal.
33:8 *I will cleanse them from all their iniquity* Three words for sin: iniquity, the crookedness of sin; sinning, missing the mark; and transgressing, rebellion. God forgives all of it, the new covenant again (31:34). Healing for a nation, or a person, begins with forgiveness from God (1 John 1:9).
33:9 *they will be in dread, and they will tremble over all the good* Jerusalem, once a byword of shame, will bring God praise. The nations will be shaken by how much good God does for His people. Grace on this scale is frightening to those who have not known it.
33:11 *Give thanks to the LORD of armies, for the LORD is good, for His steadfast love is forever* The silenced sounds return (7:34; 16:9; 25:10), with Israel's song of worship (Ps 136:1). "LORD of armies" means He commands all the hosts of heaven and earth. When the exiles laid the second temple's foundation about 536 B.C., they sang this very song (Ezra 3:10-11). The full joy waits for Christ's reign, and the Bible ends with a wedding, the marriage of the Lamb (Rev 19:7-9).
33:13 *the flock will again pass by the hands of one who counts them* A shepherd counted his sheep through the gate at night, touching each one. Peace will be so real that shepherds can count flocks in the open again. Jesus knows His sheep by name and loses none (John 10:3, 28).
33:15 *I will cause to sprout for David a Branch of righteousness* A promise already made in 23:5-6. From the stump of David's fallen line a new shoot would sprout (Isa 11:1; Zech 3:8; 6:12). That King is Jesus, born of David's line (Matt 1:1; Rom 1:3), the only King who always did what is just. He reigns at the Father's right hand now and will rule the earth in righteousness when He returns (Isa 9:7; Rev 19:11). These verses (33:14-26) are not in the old Greek form of Jeremiah, which is shorter. The Hebrew and SLB are followed.
33:16 *this is what one will call her: "The LORD Our Righteousness."* In 23:6 this is the King's name. Here it is the city's. The city bears its King's name because His righteousness is its own. So God makes sinners right with Him: we have none of our own, but in Christ we receive His (2 Cor 5:21; Phil 3:9).
33:17 *There will not be cut off for David a man sitting on the throne of the house of Israel* God promised David a throne forever (2 Sam 7:12-16). After 586 B.C. no son of David sat in Jerusalem, but God kept the line alive through Zerubbabel to Joseph and Mary. God will give Jesus "the throne of David His father" (Luke 1:32), and His kingdom will have no end (Luke 1:33). He sits at the Father's right hand now and will reign from Jerusalem when He returns (Matt 25:31; Rev 20:4-6).
33:18 *for the priests, the Levites, there will not be cut off a man from before Me* The Levites served at God's sanctuary, and the priests were Aaron's sons within that tribe. How is this kept when Christ's one sacrifice ended the need for sacrifice for sin (Heb 10:10-18)? Many who read prophecy as I do see it kept in Ezekiel's future temple, where Levites and the sons of Zadok serve (Ezek 40-48; 44:15), with offerings as memorials looking back to the cross, as the Lord's Supper does now, not a return to it. Others see it kept in Christ, who "holds the priesthood permanently" (Heb 7:24), and in believers, "a royal priesthood" (1 Pet 2:9). Both agree no offering will ever add to what Christ finished.
33:20 *If you can break My covenant of the day and My covenant of the night* Can anyone stop the sun from rising? Then no one can stop God's promise to David.

daytime and night will not be in their time, **21** also My covenant with David My servant can be broken, so that ***there will*** not be for him a son reigning on his throne, and with the Levites, the priests, My ministers. **22** As the host of the heavens cannot be counted and the sand of the sea cannot be measured, so I will multiply the seed of David My servant and the Levites who minister to Me.'" **23** And the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, saying, **24** "Have you not seen what this people have spoken, saying, 'The two clans which the LORD chose, He has rejected them'? And they spurn My people, from ***their*** being a nation again before them. **25** Thus says the LORD: 'If My covenant ***with*** daytime and night ***is*** not, ***if*** I have not made the statutes of heaven and earth, **26** also the seed of Jacob (Ya'aqov) and David My servant I will reject, from taking from his seed rulers over the seed of Abraham (Avraham), Isaac (Yischaq), and Jacob. For I will turn back their captivity, and I will have compassion on them.'"

JEREMIAH 34

A Word to Zedekiah

1 The word which came to Jeremiah (Yirmeyahu) from the LORD, and Nebuchadnezzar (Nevukhadretsar) the king of Babylon (Bavel) and all his army and all the kingdoms of ***the*** earth ***under*** the rule of his hand and all the peoples were fighting against Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) and against all its cities, saying, **2** Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel (Yisra'el): "Go, and you shall speak to Zedekiah (Tsidqiyahu) the king of Judah (Yehuda), and you shall say to him, 'Thus says the LORD: Look, I am giving this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he will burn it with fire. **3** And you, you will not escape from his hand, for you will certainly be captured, and into his hand you will be given; and your eyes will see the eyes of the king of Babylon, and his mouth will speak with your mouth, and you will go ***to*** Babylon.' **4** Nevertheless hear the word of the LORD, O Zedekiah king of Judah: Thus says the LORD concerning you: 'You will not die by the sword. **5** In peace you will die; and as ***with*** the burnings of your fathers, the former kings who were before you, so they will burn for you; and "Alas, lord!" they will mourn for you. For I, I have spoken a word, declares the LORD.'" **6** And Jeremiah the prophet spoke all these words to Zedekiah the king of Judah in Jerusalem, **7** and the army of the king of Babylon was fighting against Jerusalem and against all the cities of Judah that were left, against Lachish (Lakhish) and against Azekah (Azeqa); for they, they remained among the cities of Judah, cities of fortification.

Freedom Promised and Broken

8 The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD after King Zedekiah had made a covenant with all the people who ***were*** in Jerusalem, to proclaim liberty to them, **9** for each man to let go his male slave and each man his female slave, the Hebrew ***man*** and the Hebrew ***woman***, free, so that no man should make them serve, a Jew his brother. **10** And all the officials and all the people who had entered into the covenant obeyed, to let go each man his male slave and each man his female slave free, so as not to make them serve again; and they obeyed, and they let ***them*** go. **11** And they turned back afterward, and they brought back the male slaves and the female slaves whom they had let go free, and they subjugated them as male slaves and as female slaves. **12** And the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, **13** "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: 'I, I made a covenant with your fathers on the day I brought

33:21 Luke 1:32; Luke 1:69; Luke 20:41
33:22 Luke 1:69; Rev 20:8; Gen 15:5
33:23 Acts 3:19
33:24 Acts 13:17; Rom 11:2; Neh 4:2-4
33:25 Acts 3:19; Acts 13:17; Rom 11:26
33:26 Matt 1:1; Matt 1:20; Mark 11:10
34:1 Jer 1:15; Jer 32:2; Dan 2:37,38
34:2 Jer 34:22; Jer 22:1,2; 2 Chr 36:11,12
34:3 Jer 32:4; Jer 21:7; Jer 34:21
34:5 2 Chr 16:14; Jer 22:18; 2 Kgs 22:20
34:6 1 Sam 3:18; 1 Sam 15:16-24; 2 Sam 12:7-12
34:7 Josh 10:3,11; Jer 4:5; Josh 15:35,39
34:8 Lev 25:10,39-46; 2 Kgs 11:17; 2 Kgs 23:2,3
34:9 Phil 3:5; Gen 14:13; Exod 2:6
34:10 Jer 26:10,16; Jer 36:12,24,25; Jer 38:4
34:11 Jer 34:21; Jer 37:5; Exod 8:8,15
34:13 Heb 8:10; Heb 8:11; Josh 24:17

33:22 *As the host of the heavens cannot be counted* The words used of Abraham's descendants (Gen 22:17). Every sunrise reminds us God keeps His word, and every promise in Christ is yes (2 Cor 1:20).
33:24 *The two clans which the LORD chose, He has rejected them* Most likely Israel and Judah, though some think the families of Jacob and David (33:26). People looking at the ruins said God was finished with His people. People still say it. God's answer has not changed (Rom 11:1-2).
33:26 *For I will turn back their captivity, and I will have compassion on them* The same oath as before. As long as heaven and earth hold their order, God will not reject the seed of Jacob and David.
34:1 *all the kingdoms of the earth under the rule of his hand* Babylon's army included soldiers from every nation it ruled, the whole known world against one small city.
34:3 *your eyes will see the eyes of the king of Babylon* It happened just as God said (39:5-7).
34:5 *In peace you will die; and as with the burnings of your fathers* The fires were not cremation but spices burned to honor a dead king (2 Chr 16:14). Zedekiah was blinded and died in prison in Babylon (39:7; 52:11). Some think this was fulfilled in part: he did not die by the sword and was mourned in exile. Others think this kinder end depended on the surrender God kept offering him (38:17-18), which he refused. Either way, God's word came true, and the king's choices shaped his end.
34:7 *against Lachish and against Azekah* Lachish lay about thirty miles southwest of Jerusalem and Azekah about eleven. They were the last strongholds left. Letters written in ink on broken pottery were found at Lachish in the 1930s, from these last days. In one an officer says they are watching for the signal fires of Lachish but can no longer see Azekah's. It seems Azekah had already fallen.
34:8 *to proclaim liberty to them* Zedekiah and the people made a covenant to free their Hebrew slaves.
34:9 *the Hebrew man and the Hebrew woman, free* This was not the race-based slavery of later centuries. Kidnapping a man to sell him was a capital crime (Exod 21:16). An Israelite in debt could sell himself to work for another Israelite, with hard limits: six years and freedom in the seventh (Exod 21:2), no harsh rule (Lev 25:39-43), and gifts from flock, grain and wine when he left, remembering Israel's own slavery in Egypt (Deut 15:12-15). It was a way to pay off debt and get a fresh start. Judah had ignored the limits and kept their brothers for life.
34:10 *and they obeyed, and they let them go* Why then? Perhaps real fear of God, perhaps freed slaves could help defend the walls, or masters could not feed them in a siege. The text does not say.
34:11 *they brought back the male slaves and the female slaves whom they had let go free* The Babylonians lifted the siege to meet Pharaoh's army (34:21; 37:5), the danger seemed past, and the masters grabbed their slaves back. Imagine walking out free and being dragged back weeks later. It was cruel, and God saw it.
34:13 *from a house of slaves* Israel itself had been a nation of slaves. God set them free and required them to free their own brothers.

them out from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim), from a house of slaves, saying, **14** "At the end of seven years you shall let go each man his brother, the Hebrew, who has been sold to you; and he shall serve you six years, and you shall let him go free from with you." And your fathers did not listen to Me, and they did not incline their ear. **15** And you, you turned back today, and you did what is right in My eyes, by proclaiming liberty each man to his neighbor; and you made a covenant before Me in the house on which My name is called. **16** And you turned back, and you profaned My name, and you brought back each man his male slave and each man his female slave whom you had let go free to their desire, and you subjugated them to be male slaves and female slaves to you. **17** Therefore thus says the LORD: You, you have not listened to Me by proclaiming liberty each man to his brother and each man to his neighbor. Look, I am proclaiming liberty to you, declares the LORD, to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine; and I will make you into a terror to all the kingdoms of the earth. **18** And I will make the men who have transgressed My covenant, who have not carried out the words of the covenant which they made before Me, ***like*** the calf which they cut in two and passed between its pieces, **19** the officials of Judah and the officials of Jerusalem, the court officials and the priests and all the people of the land who passed between the pieces of the calf; **20** and I will give them into the hand of their enemies and into the hand of those who seek their life, and their corpse will be food for the birds of the heavens and for the animals of the earth. **21** And Zedekiah the king of Judah and his officials I will give into the hand of their enemies and into the hand of those who seek their life, and into the hand of the army of the king of Babylon which has gone up from you. **22** Look, I am commanding, declares the LORD, and I will bring them back to this city, and they will fight against it, and they will capture it, and they will burn it with fire; and the cities of Judah I will make a desolation without inhabitant.'"

JEREMIAH 35

The Faithful Rechabites

1 The word which came to Jeremiah (Yirmeyahu) from the LORD in the days of Jehoiakim (Yehoyaqim) the son of Josiah (Yoshiyahu), the king of Judah (Yehuda), saying, **2** "Go to the house of the Rechabites, and speak with them, and bring them ***to*** the house of the LORD, into one of the chambers, and give them wine to drink." **3** And I took Jaazaniah (Ya'azanya) the son of Jeremiah, the son of Habazziniah (Chavatsinya), and his brothers and all his sons and all the house of the Rechabites, **4** and I brought them ***into*** the house of the LORD, into the chamber of the sons of Hanan (Chanan) the son of Igdaliah (Yigdalyahu), the man of God, which ***was*** beside the chamber of the officials, which ***was*** above the chamber of Maaseiah (Ma'aseyahu) the son of Shallum (Shalum), the keeper of the threshold. **5** And I set before the sons of the house of the Rechabites bowls full ***of*** wine, and cups, and I said to them, "Drink wine." **6** And they said, "We will not drink wine, for Jonadab (Yonadav) the son of Rechab (Rekhav), our father, commanded us, saying, 'You shall not drink wine, you and your sons, forever. **7** And a house you shall not build, and seed you shall not sow, and a vineyard you shall not plant, and it shall not be yours; for in tents you shall dwell all your days, so that you may live many days on the face of the ground where you are sojourning.' **8** And we have listened to the voice of Jonadab (Yehonadav) the son of Rechab, our father, in all that he commanded us, not to drink wine all our days, we, our wives, our sons, and our daughters,

34:14 Deut 15:12; 1 Kgs 9:22; 1 Sam 8:7,8
34:15 Matt 15:8; Jer 34:8; 2 Kgs 23:3
34:16 Lev 19:12; Jer 34:11; Ezek 3:20
34:17 Matt 7:2; Gal 6:7; Jer 29:18
34:18 Gen 15:10,17,18; Deut 17:2; Hos 6:7
34:19 Jer 34:10; Zeph 3:3,4; Jer 29:2
34:20 Rev 19:17; Rev 19:18; Rev 19:19
34:21 Jer 39:6; Jer 52:10,24-27; 2 Kgs 25:18-21
34:22 Jer 9:11; Jer 39:1,2,8; Jer 52:7,13
35:1 Jer 1:3; Jer 25:1; 2 Kgs 23:35
35:2 1 Chr 2:55; 1 Chr 9:26; 1 Kgs 6:5,6,10
35:4 2 Tim 3:17; Deut 33:1; 2 Chr 8:14
35:5 Amos 2:12; Jer 35:2; Eccl 9:7
35:6 2 Kgs 10:15; Lev 10:9; Luke 1:15
35:7 Gen 25:27; Jer 35:10; Lev 23:42,43
35:8 Col 3:20; Prov 1:8,9; Prov 4:1,2,10

34:14 *you shall let go each man his brother, the Hebrew* "Brother" is the key word. A Hebrew servant was family, not property. The law had been ignored for generations.
34:16 *you turned back, and you profaned My name* To profane is to treat what is holy as common. Twice "you turned back," first toward God, then away. Many make vows in a crisis, and when the crisis passes the old life returns. God takes our promises seriously, even ones we forget (Eccl 5:4-5).
34:17 *Look, I am proclaiming liberty to you, declares the LORD, to the sword* A terrible freedom: released from God's protection into the hands of death. When we refuse others the mercy God commands, we cut ourselves off from His mercy (Matt 18:32-35; James 2:13). How different is the liberty Jesus came "to proclaim" to captives (Luke 4:18; Isa 61:1), freeing all who come to Him from the slavery of sin.
34:18 *the calf which they cut in two and passed between its pieces* An ancient way of making a solemn oath: may I be cut in pieces like this if I break my word. When God made His covenant with Abraham, God alone passed between the pieces (Gen 15:9-17), putting the whole weight of the promise on Himself. Judah's leaders broke their oath, and God would hold them to it.
34:21 *the army of the king of Babylon which has gone up from you* The pullback was only a pause.
34:22 *Look, I am commanding, declares the LORD, and I will bring them back to this city* The Babylonians thought they followed their own king's orders, but they followed God's. A pause in God's judgment is His patience, giving time to repent (2 Pet 3:9).
35:1 *in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah* Verse 11 places this near the end of his reign, when raiders from Babylon and Syria attacked Judah (2 Kgs 24:1-2), about 599 or 598 B.C. It sits here, out of time order, as a contrast with the broken covenant of chapter 34.
35:2 *Go to the house of the Rechabites* "House" means family. The temple had side rooms around its courts. God was not tempting them to sin. He knew what they would do and was setting up a lesson for everyone watching.
35:4 *the keeper of the threshold* One of the high temple officers (52:24). This was a public place, near important men.
35:5 *I set before the sons of the house of the Rechabites bowls full of wine* A prophet of God, in God's house, offering wine. It would have been easy to say yes.
35:6 *We will not drink wine, for Jonadab the son of Rechab, our father, commanded us* They did not argue. They explained. Jonadab rode with King Jehu about 841 B.C. when Jehu wiped out Baal worship in the north (2 Kgs 10:15-23), a man zealous for the LORD. The Rechabites seem to have been Kenites, the family of Moses' father-in-law (Judg 1:16; 1 Chr 2:55).
35:7 *for in tents you shall dwell all your days* Scripture does not say why. Many think Jonadab wanted his family kept apart from the soft, Baal-worshiping city life he fought, living simply as strangers in the land. It was his rule for his family, never God's command for all Israel.
35:8 *we, our wives, our sons, and our daughters* For about two hundred and forty years they had kept his word.

9 and not to build houses for our dwelling; and vineyard and field and seed will not be ours. **10** And we have dwelt in tents, and we have obeyed, and we have done according to all that Jonadab our father commanded us. **11** And it came about, when Nebuchadnezzar (Nevukhadretsar) the king of Babylon (Bavel) came up against the land, that we said, 'Come, and let us go ***to*** Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) because of the army of the Chaldeans (Kasdim) and because of the army of Syria (Aram).' And we have dwelt in Jerusalem." **12** And the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, saying, **13** "Thus says the LORD of armies, the God of Israel (Yisra'el): Go, and say to the men of Judah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, 'Will you not receive discipline, to listen to My words? declares the LORD. **14** The words of Jonadab the son of Rechab, which he commanded his sons, not to drink wine, have been carried out, and they have not drunk until this day, for they have obeyed the commandment of their father. And I, I have spoken to you, rising early and speaking, and you have not listened to Me. **15** And I have sent to you all My servants the prophets, rising early and sending, saying, "Turn back, please, each man from his evil way, and make your deeds good, and do not walk after other gods to serve them, and dwell on the ground which I gave to you and to your fathers"; and you have not inclined your ear, and you have not listened to Me. **16** For the sons of Jonadab the son of Rechab have carried out the commandment of their father which he commanded them, and this people has not listened to Me. **17** Therefore thus says the LORD, the God of armies, the God of Israel: Look, I am bringing to Judah and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem all the calamity which I have spoken against them, because I spoke to them, and they did not listen, and I called to them, and they did not answer.'" **18** And to the house of the Rechabites Jeremiah said, "Thus says the LORD of armies, the God of Israel: 'Because you have listened to the commandment of Jonadab your father, and you have kept all his commandments, and you have done according to all that he commanded you, **19** therefore thus says the LORD of armies, the God of Israel: ***There*** will not be cut off for Jonadab the son of Rechab a man standing before Me all the days.'"

JEREMIAH 36

Baruch Reads the Scroll

1 And it came about in the fourth year of Jehoiakim (Yehoyaqim) the son of Josiah (Yoshiyahu), the king of Judah (Yehuda), ***that*** this word came to Jeremiah (Yirmeyahu) from the LORD, saying, **2** "Take for yourself a scroll of a book, and write on it all the words which I have spoken to you concerning Israel (Yisra'el) and concerning Judah and concerning all the nations, from the day I spoke to you, from the days of Josiah, and until this day. **3** Perhaps the house of Judah will hear all the calamity which I am planning to do to them, so that they may turn back, each man from his evil way, and I will forgive their iniquity and their sin." **4** And Jeremiah called Baruch (Barukh) the son of Neriah (Neriya), and Baruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the LORD which He had spoken to him on a scroll of a book. **5** And Jeremiah commanded Baruch, saying, "I ***am*** shut up; I am not able to go ***into*** the house of the LORD. **6** And you, you shall go, and you shall read aloud in the scroll which you have written from my mouth the words of the LORD in the ears of the people ***in*** the house of the LORD on a day of fasting; and also in the ears of all Judah who are coming from their cities you shall read them aloud. **7** Perhaps their supplication will fall before the LORD, and they will turn back, each man from his evil way; for great ***is*** the anger and the rage which the LORD has spoken against this people." **8** And

35:9 1 Tim 6:6; Jer 35:7; Ps 37:16
35:11 Mark 13:14; Jer 8:14; Dan 1:1,2
35:13 Jer 5:3; Jer 32:33; Jer 6:8-10
35:14 Luke 13:34; Jer 7:13,25; Isa 30:9
35:15 Luke 10:16; Luke 13:34; Matt 23:37
35:16 Matt 11:28; Matt 11:29; Luke 15:29
35:17 Rom 10:21; Luke 13:35; Jer 7:13,26,27
35:18 Exod 20:12; Eph 6:1-3; Deut 5:16
35:19 Jer 15:19; 1 Chr 2:55; Luke 21:36

36:1 Jer 25:1; Jer 35:1; 2 Kgs 24:1,2
36:2 Rev 5:1; Jer 30:2; Exod 17:14
36:3 Acts 3:19; Matt 13:15; Acts 26:18
36:4 Jer 32:12; Ezek 2:9; Jer 43:3
36:5 Jer 32:2; Jer 33:1; 2 Cor 11:23
36:6 Jer 36:8; Ezek 2:3-7; Jer 7:2
36:7 Jer 36:3; 2 Chr 33:12,13; Jer 4:4
36:8 Luke 4:18; Luke 4:19; Luke 4:22

35:11 *let us go to Jerusalem because of the army of the Chaldeans* They moved inside the walls for safety in an emergency. They were flexible where they could be, but would not break the clear command.
35:13 *Will you not receive discipline, to listen to My words* To receive discipline is to accept correction and learn from it.
35:14 *And I, I have spoken to you, rising early and speaking, and you have not listened to Me* Jonadab was a man, long dead, who spoke once, and his family obeyed for generations. God is the living Creator who spoke again and again, and His own people would not listen. If a human father's word can be kept that faithfully, how much more our Father in heaven's (Heb 12:9)?
35:15 *Turn back, please, each man from his evil way* The whole message of Jeremiah in one sentence. It was not complicated or hidden.
35:16 *this people has not listened to Me* A small wandering family put the whole nation to shame.
35:17 *because I spoke to them, and they did not listen, and I called to them, and they did not answer* God's judgment was not sudden or unfair. When people face judgment, it will not be because God was silent, but because they would not hear (John 3:19).
35:19 *There will not be cut off for Jonadab the son of Rechab a man standing before Me all the days* To "stand before" God means to serve Him (15:19; 1 Kgs 17:1). Scripture does not say how this was kept later, but God promised it. The passage does not require believers to refuse wine. God praised obedience to a father's rule. Scripture forbids drunkenness (Prov 20:1; Eph 5:18), many choose not to drink for good reasons, and believers differ and should act in love (Rom 14:21). God honors those who honor Him (1 Sam 2:30). One faithful father's choice shaped his family for two hundred and forty years.
36:1 *in the fourth year of Jehoiakim* 605 B.C., the year of Carchemish (46:2) and of the seventy-years prophecy (25:1, 11).
36:2 *Take for yourself a scroll of a book* A long strip of papyrus or leather sheets joined together, written in columns and rolled up. It would hold about twenty-three years of preaching (25:3).
36:3 *so that they may turn back, each man from his evil way, and I will forgive* Even now God's purpose in warning was mercy. He warns so that He may forgive (2 Pet 3:9).
36:4 *Baruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the LORD* This is how much of our book came to be. God gave the words, Jeremiah spoke them, Baruch wrote them, and the Holy Spirit guided it all (2 Pet 1:21).
36:5 *I am shut up; I am not able to go into the house of the LORD* Not in prison yet. He seems to have been banned from the temple after the trouble of 20:1-2 and 26:8-11.
36:7 *Perhaps their supplication will fall before the LORD* "Perhaps" twice in this passage. God's servants keep hoping as long as God gives time.

Baruch the son of Neriah did according to all that Jeremiah the prophet had commanded him, reading aloud in the book the words of the LORD ***in*** the house of the LORD. **9** And it came about in the fifth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, the king of Judah, in the ninth month, ***that*** they proclaimed a fast before the LORD, all the people in Jerusalem
(Yerushalayim) and all the people who were coming from the cities of Judah to Jerusalem. **10** And Baruch read aloud in the book the words of Jeremiah ***in*** the house of the LORD, in the chamber of Gemariah (Gemaryahu) the son of Shaphan (Shafan) the scribe, in the upper court, ***at*** the entrance of the New Gate of the house of the LORD, in the ears of all the people. **11** And Micaiah (Mikhayhu) the son of Gemariah, the son of Shaphan, heard all the words of the LORD from the book, **12** and he went down ***to*** the house of the king, to the chamber of the scribe; and look, all the officials were sitting there: Elishama the scribe, and Delaiah (Delayahu) the son of Shemaiah (Shemayahu), and Elnathan (Elnatan) the son of Achbor (Akhbor), and Gemariah the son of Shaphan, and Zedekiah (Tsidqiyahu) the son of Hananiah (Chananyahu), and all the officials. **13** And Micaiah told them all the words which he had heard when Baruch read aloud in the book in the ears of the people. **14** And all the officials sent Jehudi (Yehudi) the son of Nethaniah (Netanyahu), the son of Shelemiah (Shelemyahu), the son of Cushi (Kushi), to Baruch, saying, "The scroll in which you have read aloud in the ears of the people, take it in your hand and come." And Baruch the son of Neriah took the scroll in his hand, and he came to them. **15** And they said to him, "Sit down, please, and read it aloud in our ears." And Baruch read ***it*** aloud in their ears. **16** And it came about, when they heard all the words, they were in dread, each man toward his neighbor; and they said to Baruch, "We will certainly tell the king all these words." **17** And they asked Baruch, saying, "Tell us, please, how did you write all these words from his mouth?" **18** And Baruch said to them, "From his mouth he called out all these words to me, and I was writing on the book with ink." **19** And the officials said to Baruch, "Go, hide yourself, you and Jeremiah, and let no man know where you ***are***."

The King Burns the Scroll

20 And they went in to the king ***into*** the court, and they had deposited the scroll in the chamber of Elishama the scribe; and they told all the words in the ears of the king. **21** And the king sent Jehudi to fetch the scroll, and he fetched it from the chamber of Elishama the scribe; and Jehudi read it aloud in the ears of the king and in the ears of all the officials who were standing beside the king. **22** And the king was sitting ***in*** the winter house in the ninth month, and the brazier ***was*** burning before him. **23** And it came about, when Jehudi had read aloud three columns and four, he would tear it with the knife of the scribe and throw ***it*** into the fire that ***was*** in the brazier, until all the scroll was consumed on the fire that ***was*** on the brazier. **24** And they were not afraid, and they did not tear their garments, the king and all his servants who heard all these words. **25** And also Elnathan and Delaiah and Gemariah had made entreaty to the king not to burn the scroll, and he did not listen to them. **26** And the king commanded Jerahmeel (Yerachme'el) the son of the king and Seraiah (Serayahu) the son of Azriel and Shelemiah the son of Abdeel (Avde'el) to seize Baruch the scribe and Jeremiah the prophet; and the LORD hid them. **27** And the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah after the king had burned the scroll and the words which Baruch had written from the mouth of Jeremiah, saying, **28** "Return, take for yourself another
scroll, and write on it all the former words which were on the first scroll which Jehoiakim the king of Judah burned. **29** And concerning Jehoiakim the king of Judah you shall say, 'Thus says the LORD: You, you have burned this scroll, saying, "Why have you written on it, saying, 'The king of Baby-

36:9 2 Chr 20:3; Esth 4:16; Jonah 3:5
36:10 Jer 52:25; Jer 26:10; Jer 35:4
36:11 2 Kgs 22:12-14; 2 Kgs 25:22; 2 Chr 34:20
36:12 Jer 26:22; Jer 36:25; 2 Kgs 22:12,14
36:13 2 Kgs 22:10,19; 2 Chr 34:16-18,24; Jonah 3:6
36:14 Jer 36:2; Jer 40:8; Jer 41:1,2,16,18
36:16 Jer 36:24; Jer 13:18; Amos 7:10,11
36:17 John 9:15; John 9:10,11,15,26,27
36:18 Jer 36:2,4; Jer 43:2,3; Prov 26:4,5
36:19 Luke 13:31; 1 Kgs 17:3; Jer 36:26
36:20 Jer 36:12,21
36:21 2 Kgs 22:10; 2 Chr 34:18; Ezek 2:4,5
36:22 Amos 3:15; Jer 22:14-16; Jer 3:20
36:23 1 Kgs 22:8,27; Prov 1:30; Prov 13:13
36:24 Jer 36:16; Ps 36:1; Ps 64:5
36:25 Jer 36:12; Gen 37:22,26-28; Acts 5:34-39
36:26 1 Kgs 19:1-3,10,14; Ps 91:1; 1 Kgs 17:3,9
36:28 Zech 1:5,6; Jer 28:13,14; Jer 44:28
36:29 Jer 26:9; Isa 30:10; Deut 29:19

36:9 *in the fifth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, the king of Judah, in the ninth month* About December 604 B.C. Babylonian records say Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Ashkelon about then, so the fast may have been called in fear of Babylon. It took courage for Baruch to read words the king would hate.

36:10 *in the chamber of Gemariah the son of Shaphan the scribe* Shaphan read the Book of the Law to Josiah (2 Kgs 22:8-10), and his family stood with Jeremiah (26:24; 39:14). A clay seal impression with the name Gemariah son of Shaphan has been found in the City of David, likely this man, a reminder that these were real people.

36:12 *Elnathan the son of Achbor* The man who fetched Uriah from Egypt to be killed (26:22-23), yet here he pleads for the scroll (36:25). The word of God can move hard hearts.

36:16 *they were in dread, each man toward his neighbor* The right response to God's word, Josiah's response (2 Kgs 22:11-13). These men had it, but not the power to make the king share it.

36:18 *I was writing on the book with ink* They wanted to be sure the words were Jeremiah's. Simple and honest.

36:19 *Go, hide yourself, you and Jeremiah* They knew Jehoiakim had already killed one prophet (26:23). Sometimes God protects His people through people of influence who quietly do right.

36:22 *the brazier was burning before him* It was December, cold and rainy. A brazier was a metal pan of burning coals to heat a room.

36:23 *he would tear it with the knife of the scribe and throw it into the fire* Every few columns the king sliced off what had been read with the small blade used to trim reed pens and dropped it in the coals. Cold, calm, deliberate contempt. Josiah tore his clothes when he heard God's word. Jehoiakim tore the scroll. People still cut out the parts they do not like, openly or by quietly skipping them. But cutting words out of the Book does not cut them out of reality (Isa 40:8; Matt 24:35).

36:24 *they did not tear their garments* Tearing garments was a sign of grief and repentance. There was none.

36:25 *Elnathan and Delaiah and Gemariah had made entreaty to the king not to burn the scroll* Three men spoke up in the king's own room. It did not change him, but God recorded their names.

36:26 *and the LORD hid them* Scripture does not say how, only that God did it. The king could burn a scroll, but he could not find the men God hid.

36:28 *take for yourself another scroll* God was not shaken. He simply ordered a second copy. Kings and empires have burned Bibles, and the Bible has outlived every one of them.

lon (Bavel) will certainly come, and he will destroy this land, and he will cause man and animal to cease from it'?" **30** Therefore thus says the LORD concerning Jehoiakim the king of Judah: ***There*** will not be for him ***one*** sitting on the throne of David, and his corpse will be thrown out to the heat by day and to the frost by night. **31** And I will visit their iniquity on him and on his seed and on his servants; and I will bring on them and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem and on the men of Judah all the calamity which I have spoken against them, and they did not listen.'" **32** And Jeremiah took another scroll, and he gave it to Baruch the son of Neriah, the scribe; and he wrote on it from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the book which Jehoiakim the king of Judah had burned in the fire; and again many words like them were added to them.

JEREMIAH 37

Zedekiah Seeks a Word

1 And King Zedekiah (Tsidqiyahu) the son of Josiah (Yoshiyahu) reigned in place of Coniah (Konyahu) the son of Jehoiakim (Yehoyaqim), whom Nebuchadnezzar (Nevukhadretsar) the king of Babylon (Bavel) made king in the land of Judah (Yehuda). **2** And he did not listen, he and his servants and the people of the land, to the words of the LORD which He spoke by the hand of Jeremiah (Yirmeyahu) the prophet. **3** And King Zedekiah sent Jehucal (Yehukhal) the son of Shelemiah (Shelemya) and Zephaniah (Tsefanyahu) the son of Maaseiah (Ma'aseya), the priest, to Jeremiah the prophet, saying, "Pray, please, for us to the LORD our God." **4** And Jeremiah was coming in and going out among the people, and they had not put him ***into*** the house of imprisonment. **5** And the army of Pharaoh had come out from Egypt (Mitsrayim); and the Chaldeans (Kasdim) who were besieging Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) heard the report of them, and they withdrew from Jerusalem. **6** And the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, saying, **7** "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel (Yisra'el): 'Thus you shall say to the king of Judah who sent you to Me to inquire of Me: "Look, the army of Pharaoh which came out to you for help is going to return to its own land, Egypt. **8** And the Chaldeans will return, and they will fight against this city, and they will capture it, and they will burn it with fire."' **9** Thus says the LORD: 'Do not deceive yourselves, saying, "The Chaldeans will certainly go away from us," for they will not go away. **10** For even if you had struck down all the army of ***the*** Chaldeans who are fighting with you, and there remained among them men pierced through, each man in his tent, they would rise up and burn this city with fire.'"

Jeremiah Arrested and Imprisoned

11 And it came about, when the army of the Chaldeans had withdrawn from Jerusalem because of the army of Pharaoh, **12** that Jeremiah went out from Jerusalem to go ***to*** the land of Benjamin (Binyamin), to receive a portion from there among the people. **13** And he was at the Gate of Benjamin, and a captain of the guard ***was*** there, and his name ***was*** Irijah (Yir'iya) the son of Shelemiah, the son of Hananiah (Chananya); and he seized Jeremiah the prophet, saying, "You are falling away to the Chaldeans." **14** And Jeremiah said, "A lie! I am not falling away to the Chaldeans." And he did not listen to him; and Irijah seized Jeremiah, and he brought him to the officials. **15** And the officials were angry at Jeremiah, and they struck him, and they put him ***in*** the house of the fetters, the house of Jonathan (Yehonatan) the scribe; for they had made it into the house of imprisonment.

36:30 Jer 22:30; 2 Kgs 24:12-15; Jer 22:18
36:31 Prov 29:1; Jer 23:34; Jer 19:15
36:32 Rev 22:18; Jer 36:4,18; Exod 4:15,16
37:1 2 Kgs 24:17; Jer 22:24,28; 2 Kgs 24:12
37:2 2 Kgs 24:19,20; 2 Chr 36:12-16; Prov 29:12
37:3 Acts 8:24; Jer 21:1,2; Jer 52:24
37:4 Jer 37:15; Jer 32:2,3
37:5 Ezek 17:15; 2 Kgs 24:7; Jer 37:11
37:7 Lam 4:17; Jer 21:2; 2 Kgs 22:18
37:8 Jer 38:23; Jer 39:2-8; Jer 32:29
37:9 Obad 1:3; Matt 24:4,5; Eph 5:6
37:10 Lev 26:36-38; Isa 30:17; Jer 21:4-7
37:12 Jer 1:1; 1 Kgs 19:3,9; Neh 6:11
37:13 Jer 38:7; Zech 14:10; Jer 38:1,10-17
37:14 Jer 40:4-6; Ps 27:12; Ps 52:1,2
37:15 Jer 20:1-3; Jer 26:16; Matt 21:35

36:30 *There will not be for him one sitting on the throne of David* His son Jehoiachin reigned only three months before exile (2 Kgs 24:8-15), and none of his line ruled again (22:30). His unburied body echoes "the burial of a donkey" (22:19). Second Kings 24:6 says only that he died, and Scripture does not say exactly what happened to his body. The man who threw God's word in the fire would himself be thrown out.
36:32 *and again many words like them were added to them* The king's fire did not shrink God's word. It grew. When men try to silence His word, He speaks more. You hold in your Bible what a king tried to burn. Read it with Josiah's fear, not Jehoiakim's contempt.
37:1 *whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon made king in the land of Judah* Coniah, or Jehoiachin, was taken in 597 B.C., and Nebuchadnezzar put Josiah's son Mattaniah on the throne and renamed him Zedekiah (2 Kgs 24:8-17). The Babylonian Chronicle, clay tablets recording each year of Babylon's kings, says that in 597 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar captured the city of Judah, seized its king and appointed a king of his own choice, a clear outside witness to this history.
37:2 *And he did not listen* The summary of Zedekiah's whole reign, about 597 to 586 B.C.
37:3 *Pray, please, for us to the LORD our God* Zedekiah wanted God's help, but he did not want to obey God (21:1-2).
37:5 *the army of Pharaoh had come out from Egypt* Pharaoh Hophra (44:30), who reigned about 589 to 570 B.C. Zedekiah had turned to Egypt for help (Ezek 17:15). The Babylonians pulled back to meet him, and to those inside it looked like rescue. This is the pause that tempted the masters to take back their slaves (34:11, 21).
37:7 *the army of Pharaoh which came out to you for help is going to return to its own land* God's word did not bend to the good news. Prayer is not a way to get God to approve our plans. It is where we learn His.
37:9 *Do not deceive yourselves* The most dangerous lies are the ones we tell ourselves.
37:10 *there remained among them men pierced through, each man in his tent, they would rise up and burn this city* Even if only wounded men were left, they would burn Jerusalem anyway. The point is not Babylon's strength but God's decree. When God has spoken, no human strength can overturn it (Prov 21:30).
37:12 *to receive a portion from there among the people* He was heading home toward Anathoth, probably to settle a share of family property. The field he bought from his cousin came later (32:6-9).
37:13 *You are falling away to the Chaldeans* Irijah accused him of deserting. On the surface it made sense, since Jeremiah urged surrender (21:9) and some had deserted (38:19). But it was false. Some think Irijah's grandfather was the false prophet Hananiah (28:1-17), but Scripture does not say.
37:15 *the officials were angry at Jeremiah, and they struck him* Not the men who protected him under Jehoiakim (36:19). Those had gone into exile in 597 B.C. or lost their places. The new officials were hostile.

16 For Jeremiah had come into the house of the cistern and into the vaults, and Jeremiah remained there many days. **17** And King Zedekiah sent and took him, and the king asked him in his house in secret, and he said, "Is there a word from the LORD?" And Jeremiah said, "There is." And he said, "Into the hand of the king of Babylon you will be given." **18** And Jeremiah said to King Zedekiah, "What have I sinned against you and against your servants and against this people, that you have put me into the house of imprisonment? **19** And where ***are*** your prophets who prophesied to you, saying, 'The king of Babylon will not come against you and against this land'? **20** And now listen, please, my lord the king; please let my supplication fall before you, and do not send me back ***to*** the house of Jonathan the scribe, so that I will not die there." **21** And King Zedekiah commanded, and they committed Jeremiah to the court of the guard, and they gave him a round loaf of bread daily from the street of the bakers, until all the bread from the city was finished. And Jeremiah remained in the court of the guard.

JEREMIAH 38

Jeremiah in the Cistern

1 And Shephatiah (Shefatya) the son of Mattan (Matan), and Gedaliah (Gedalyahu) the son of Pashhur (Pashchur), and Jucal (Yukhal) the son of Shelemiah (Shelemyahu), and Pashhur the son of Malchiah (Malkiya) heard the words which Jeremiah (Yirmeyahu) was speaking to all the people, saying, **2** "Thus says the LORD: 'He who remains in this city will die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence; and he who goes out to the Chaldeans (Kasdim) will live, and his life will be to him for plunder, and he will live.' **3** Thus says the LORD: 'This city will certainly be given into the hand of the army of the king of Babylon (Bavel), and he will capture it.'" **4** And the officials said to the king, "Please let this man be put to death, because he is making slack the hands of the men of war who remain in this city, and the hands of all the people, by speaking to them according to these words; for this man is not seeking welfare for this people, but rather calamity." **5** And King Zedekiah (Tsidqiyahu) said, "Look, he ***is*** in your hand; for the king is not able ***to do*** anything against you." **6** And they took Jeremiah, and they threw him into the cistern of Malchiah (Malkiyahu) the son of the king, which ***was*** in the court of the guard; and they let down Jeremiah with ropes. And in the cistern ***there was*** no water, but mud, and Jeremiah sank in the mud. **7** And Ebed-melech (Eved-Melekh) the Cushite, a man, a court official, and he ***was*** in the house of the king, heard that they had put Jeremiah into the cistern; and the king ***was*** sitting in the Gate of Benjamin (Binyamin). **8** And Ebed-melech went out from the house of the king, and he spoke to the king, saying, **9** "My lord the king, these men have done evil ***in*** all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet, whom they have thrown into the cistern; and he will die in his place because of the famine, for there is no more bread in the city." **10** And the king commanded Ebed-melech the Cushite, saying, "Take with you from here thirty men, and bring up Jeremiah the prophet from the cistern before he dies." **11** And Ebed-melech took the men with him, and he went ***into*** the house of the king, to ***a place*** under the storehouse, and he

37:16 Jer 38:6,10-13; Gen 40:15; Lam 3:53,55
37:17 Jer 21:7; Jer 38:5,14-16,24-27; 1 Kgs 14:1-4
37:18 Acts 25:8; John 10:32; Dan 6:22
37:19 2 Pet 2:1; Jer 2:28; 2 Kgs 3:13
37:20 Jer 36:7; Jer 26:15; Jer 38:6-9
37:21 Jer 38:13,28; Jer 32:2,8; Jer 38:9
38:1 Ezra 2:3; Neh 7:9; Jer 21:1-10
38:2 Jer 34:17; Jer 39:18; Jer 45:5
38:3 Jer 21:10; Jer 32:3-5
38:4 Rev 11:10; Jer 26:11,21-23; Exod 5:4
38:5 John 19:12; John 19:14; John 19:15
38:6 Jer 37:21; Jer 37:16; Zech 9:11
38:7 Acts 8:27; Acts 8:28; Acts 8:38
38:9 Jer 52:6; Esth 7:4-6; Job 31:34
38:10 Esth 5:2; Esth 8:7; Ps 75:10

37:16 *into the house of the cistern and into the vaults* A private house turned prison, with an underground cell, dark and damp. Jeremiah was no longer young, and he suffered for a crime he did not commit. If you suffer unfairly for doing right, you are in good company (Matt 5:11-12; 1 Pet 2:19-21).

37:17 *Is there a word from the LORD* Afraid of his officials, the king met the prophet in secret. He knew Jeremiah spoke for God. Maybe he hoped weeks in the dungeon had made him ready to say something nicer. "There is," and in one sentence, the truth. One kind word could have bought his freedom. A faithful servant does not shape the message to please the one who holds power over him (Gal 1:10).

37:19 *where are your prophets who prophesied to you* The false prophets' words had failed and Jeremiah's had come true, yet he was the one in prison.

37:20 *listen, please, my lord the king* He was not too proud to ask for mercy, and he spoke respectfully to a weak and wrong king. Standing firm on God's word did not make him rude (Rom 13:7; 1 Pet 2:17).

37:21 *a round loaf of bread daily from the street of the bakers* Bakers often worked on one street. God kept Jeremiah alive through the siege as He fed Elijah by the brook (1 Kgs 17:2-6), keeping His promise (1:8) one loaf at a time. In this prison yard he bought the field (32:2) and heard "Call to Me" (33:1). Some of the greatest promises in his book came to him here.

38:1 *Gedaliah the son of Pashhur, and Jucal the son of Shelemiah* Jucal is the Jehucal of 37:3, and Pashhur son of Malchiah appeared in 21:1. Clay seal impressions bearing the names Jehucal son of Shelemiah and Gedaliah son of Pashhur have been found in the City of David, and many believe these are the very men named here.

38:2 *his life will be to him for plunder* Plunder is what a soldier carries off from battle. Whoever surrendered would escape with his life as his prize. The city's fall was God's judgment, and surrender was the way to accept it and live (21:8-10).

38:4 *he is making slack the hands of the men of war* To weaken the hands is to drain courage. One of the Lachish letters from these same months uses the same phrase of words from Jerusalem. "Not seeking welfare for this people" was false. Jeremiah was the one man trying to save them, praying and weeping for them (9:1; 14:7-9). They called the truth treason.

38:5 *Look, he is in your hand; for the king is not able to do anything against you* One of the weakest things a king ever said. He knew Jeremiah was right and handed him over anyway, as Pilate washed his hands and gave Jesus to the crowd (Matt 27:24-26).

38:6 *in the cistern there was no water, but mud, and Jeremiah sank in the mud* A cistern was a pit cut in rock and plastered to hold rainwater, often bottle-shaped, with no climbing out. They left him to die of hunger and cold so no one could say they shed his blood. Lamentations 3:52-55 may look back on this. Joseph was thrown into a pit by his brothers (Gen 37:24), Jeremiah by his nation's leaders.

38:7 *Ebed-melech the Cushite, a man, a court official* His name means servant of the king. Cush lay south of Egypt, in today's Sudan and part of Ethiopia. The word for court official sometimes means a eunuch, and many think he was one. He was an outsider with little standing.

38:9 *these men have done evil in all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet* He spoke to the king in public, at the gate, naming the evil of the most powerful men in Jerusalem. He had every reason to stay quiet. When the leaders of God's people did nothing, a foreigner did what was right.

38:10 *Take with you from here thirty men* Enough to protect the rescue if the officials tried to stop it. The king changed his mind as quickly as before.

took from there worn-out pieces of cloth and worn-out rags, and he let them down to Jeremiah into the cistern with ropes. **12** And Ebed-melech the Cushite said to Jeremiah, "Put, please, the worn-out pieces of cloth and the rags under your armpits, under the ropes." And Jeremiah did so. **13** And they drew out Jeremiah with the ropes, and they brought him up from the cistern; and Jeremiah remained in the court of the guard.

Zedekiah's Secret Meeting

14 And King Zedekiah sent, and he took Jeremiah the prophet to himself, to the third entrance which ***was*** in the house of the LORD; and the king said to Jeremiah, "I am asking you a thing; do not hide anything from me." **15** And Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, "If I tell you, will you not certainly put me to death? And if I counsel you, you will not listen to me." **16** And King Zedekiah swore to Jeremiah in secret, saying, "***As*** the LORD lives, who made for us this life, I will not put you to death, and I will not give you into the hand of these men who are seeking your life." **17** And Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, "Thus says the LORD, the God of armies, the God of Israel (Yisra'el): 'If you will certainly go out to the officials of the king of Babylon, then your soul will live, and this city will not be burned with fire; and you will live, you and your house. **18** And if you will not go out to the officials of the king of Babylon, then this city will be given into the hand of the Chaldeans, and they will burn it with fire; and you, you will not escape from their hand.'" **19** And King Zedekiah said to Jeremiah, "I am anxious about the Jews who have fallen away to the Chaldeans, lest they give me into their hand, and they deal wantonly with me." **20** And Jeremiah said, "They will not give ***you***. Listen, please, to the voice of the LORD in what I am speaking to you, so that it may go well with you, and your soul may live. **21** And if you are refusing to go out, this ***is*** the word which the LORD has shown me: **22** And look, all the women who are left in the house of the king of Judah (Yehuda) ***are*** being brought out to the officials of the king of Babylon, and they ***are*** saying, 'They misled you and prevailed over you, the men of your peace; your feet are sunk in the mire; they have turned backward.' **23** And all your wives and your sons they ***are*** bringing out to the Chaldeans, and you, you will not escape from their hand, for by the hand of the king of Babylon you will be captured, and this city you will burn with fire." **24** And Zedekiah said to Jeremiah, "Let no man know of these words, and you will not die. **25** And if the officials hear that I have spoken with you, and they come to you and say to you, 'Tell us, please, what you said to the king; do not hide ***it*** from us, and we will not put you to death; and what did the king say to you?' **26** then you shall say to them, 'I was making my supplication fall before the king, not to send me back ***to*** the house of Jonathan (Yehonatan) to die there.'" **27** And all the officials came to Jeremiah, and they asked him, and he told them according to all these words which the king had commanded; and they kept silent from him, for the matter had not been heard. **28** And Jeremiah remained in the court of the guard until the day that Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) was captured. And it came about, when Jerusalem was captured,

JEREMIAH 39

The Fall of Jerusalem

1 In the ninth year of Zedekiah (Tsidqiyahu) the king of Judah (Yehuda), in the tenth month, Nebuchadnezzar (Nevukhadretsar) the king of Babylon (Bavel) and all his army came to Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), and they besieged it. **2** In the eleventh year of Zedekiah, in the fourth month, on the ninth ***day*** of the month, the city was broken into.

38:12 Rom 12:10,15; Eph 4:32
38:13 Jer 37:21; Acts 23:35; Acts 28:16,30
38:14 Jer 21:1,2; Jer 37:17; Jer 42:2-5,20
38:15 Luke 22:67
38:16 Jer 37:17; Isa 57:16; John 3:2
38:17 Jer 38:2; Jer 27:12,17; Jer 39:3
38:18 Jer 38:3,23; Jer 24:8-10; Jer 32:3-5
38:19 John 19:12; John 12:42; Isa 51:12,13
38:20 Isa 55:3; Jer 26:13; 2 Chr 20:20
38:21 Jer 5:3; Exod 10:3,4; Exod 16:28
38:22 Jer 43:6; Jer 20:10; Jer 41:10
38:23 Jer 41:10; Jer 38:18; Jer 39:6
38:25 Jer 38:4-6,27
38:26 Jer 37:15,20; Jer 42:2; Esth 4:8
38:27 1 Sam 10:15,16; 1 Sam 16:2-5; 2 Kgs 6:19
38:28 Jer 37:21; Jer 39:14; Jer 38:13
39:1 Jer 52:4-7; Ezek 24:1,2; 2 Kgs 25:1,2-7
39:2 2 Kgs 25:3; Jer 5:10; Jer 52:6,7

38:12 *Put, please, the worn-out pieces of cloth and the rags under your armpits, under the ropes* Jeremiah was weak and starving, and the ropes would cut him as they pulled him from deep mud. Ebed-melech thought of that. Courage and kindness belong together. When we help someone in a pit, we should lift without hurting them more (Gal 6:1-2). God did not forget him (39:15-18).
38:14 *do not hide anything from me* A private meeting at a temple entrance.
38:16 *As the LORD lives, who made for us this life* Zedekiah believed in God enough to swear by Him, but did not trust Him enough to obey.
38:17 *then your soul will live, and this city will not be burned with fire* The clearest choice in the book. Even this late, God offered mercy: life for the king, his family and the city. God always puts the choice plainly before us (Deut 30:19).
38:19 *I am anxious about the Jews who have fallen away to the Chaldeans* He was more afraid of being mocked than of God. "The trembling of man sets a snare" (Prov 29:25), and Zedekiah is that proverb in a single life. Jeremiah's "please" (38:20) shows he was pleading, not gloating.
38:22 *your feet are sunk in the mire* "The men of your peace" were his trusted advisers who pushed him into war and would desert him. A bitter reversal: the king let Jeremiah sink in mud, and now he himself would be stuck with no one to pull him out.
38:23 *this city you will burn with fire* Babylon would set the fire, but by his refusal Zedekiah would burn it. Our choices affect the people who depend on us.
38:26 *I was making my supplication fall before the king* Jeremiah had made that very request (37:20) and likely made it again. What he told the officials was true, but not the whole conversation. Teachers differ: some see a fair keeping of a confidence, others a half-truth Scripture records without praising. Scripture does not comment.
38:28 *Jeremiah remained in the court of the guard until the day that Jerusalem was captured* God kept him alive through the whole siege. The last words begin a sentence that runs into chapter 39. Chapter breaks were added much later.
39:1 *in the ninth year of Zedekiah the king of Judah, in the tenth month* January 588 B.C. A siege surrounded a city, cut off supplies and slowly starved it until it gave up or the walls broke.
39:2 *in the fourth month, on the ninth day of the month, the city was broken into* July 586 B.C., after about a year and a half, with a short break when Egypt came (37:5). Some date the fall to 587 B.C. By the end there was no bread (38:9; 52:6). After the exile the Jews still fasted in the fourth and tenth months to remember these days (Zech 8:19).

3 And all the officials of the king of Babylon came in, and they sat in the Middle Gate: Nergal-sar-ezer
(Nergal-Sharetser), Samgar-nebo (Samgar-Nevo), Sarsechim (Sarsekhim) the Rab-saris, Nergal-sar-ezer the Rab-mag, and all the rest of the officials of the king of Babylon. **4** And it came about, when Zedekiah the king of Judah and all the men of war saw them, that they fled, and they went out at night from the city ***by*** the way of the garden of the king, through the gate between the two walls; and he went out ***by*** the way of the Arabah (Arava). **5** And the army of ***the*** Chaldeans (Kasdim) pursued after them, and they overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho (Yericho); and they seized him, and they brought him up to Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon ***at*** Riblah (Rivla) in the land of Hamath (Chamat), and he spoke judgments with him. **6** And the king of Babylon slaughtered the sons of Zedekiah at Riblah before his eyes; and all the nobles of Judah the king of Babylon slaughtered. **7** And the eyes of Zedekiah he blinded, and he bound him with bronze fetters to bring him ***to*** Babylon. **8** And the house of the king and the house of the people the Chaldeans burned with fire, and the walls of Jerusalem they broke down. **9** And the rest of the people who remained in the city, and those falling away who had fallen away to him, and the rest of the people who remained, Nebuzaradan (Nevuzaradan) the chief of the bodyguards took into exile ***to*** Babylon. **10** And some of the poor people who had nothing, Nebuzaradan the chief of the bodyguards left in the land of Judah, and he gave them vineyards and fields on that day.

Jeremiah Freed and Ebed-melech Spared

11 And Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon commanded concerning Jeremiah (Yirmeyahu) by the hand of Nebuzaradan the chief of the bodyguards, saying, **12** "Take him, and set your eyes on him, and do not do anything harmful to him; but just as he says to you, so do with him." **13** And Nebuzaradan the chief of the bodyguards sent, and Nebushazban (Nevushazban) the Rab-saris, and Nergal-sar-ezer the
Rab-mag, and all the chiefs of the king of Babylon; **14** and they sent, and they fetched Jeremiah from the court of the guard, and they gave him over to Gedaliah (Gedalyahu) the son of Ahikam (Achiqam), the son of Shaphan (Shafan), to bring him out to the house; and he remained among the people. **15** And to Jeremiah the word of the LORD had come while he was shut up in the court of the guard, saying, **16** "Go, and say to Ebed-melech (Eved-Melekh) the Cushite, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of armies, the God of Israel (Yisra'el): "Look, I am bringing My words against this city for calamity and not for good, and they will happen before you on that day. **17** And I will deliver you on that day," declares the LORD, "and you will not be given into the hand of the men before whom you are afraid. **18** For I will certainly rescue you, and by the sword you will not fall; and your life will be to you for plunder, for you have trusted in Me," declares the LORD.'"

39:3 Jer 21:4; Jer 38:17; Jer 1:15
39:4 Amos 2:14; 2 Chr 32:5; Jer 38:18-20
39:5 2 Kgs 23:33; Josh 5:10; Jer 32:4,5
39:6 Jer 52:10; 2 Kgs 25:7; Deut 28:34
39:7 Ezek 12:13; Jer 32:4,5; Jer 52:11
39:8 Neh 1:3; Jer 21:10; Jer 38:18
39:9 Matt 1:11; Jer 40:1; Gen 37:36
39:10 2 Kgs 25:12; Jer 40:7; Ezek 33:24
39:11 Acts 24:23; Jer 15:11,21; Job 5:19
39:12 Prov 16:7; Jer 40:4; Ps 105:14,15
39:13 Jer 39:3,9
39:14 2 Kgs 25:22-25; Jer 26:24; Jer 37:21
39:15 Jer 32:1,2; Jer 36:1-5; Jer 37:21
39:16 Acts 8:27; Dan 9:12; Zech 1:6
39:17 Ps 41:1,2; Ps 50:15; Jer 1:19
39:18 Jer 21:9; Jer 38:2; Jer 17:7,8

39:3 *they sat in the middle gate* The gate was where leaders held court. Conquerors sitting there meant they ruled the city, as Jeremiah foretold at his call (1:15). Nergal-sar-ezer is most likely Neriglissar, later king of Babylon (about 560 to 556 B.C.). Rab-saris means something like chief official, and the exact meaning of Rab-mag is uncertain. The names fit what we know of Babylon's court.
39:4 *they went out at night from the city by the way of the garden of the king* Slipping out at the southeast corner toward the Arabah, the Jordan valley, likely hoping to cross the river and escape east.
39:5 *they overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho* He got about fifteen miles. Riblah, Nebuchadnezzar's headquarters in Syria, was about two hundred miles north. Zedekiah had sworn loyalty in God's name and broken his oath (2 Chr 36:13; Ezek 17:15-19). Jeremiah had told him he would not escape (38:18). Running from God's word never works.
39:7 *And the eyes of Zedekiah he blinded* One of the saddest passages in the Bible, and I will not add to what it says. The last thing Zedekiah saw was the death of his sons (39:6). Jeremiah said he would see Babylon's king (34:3; 32:4), and Ezekiel said he would be brought to Babylon yet not see it (Ezek 12:13). He saw Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah and arrived in Babylon blind. He asked for God's word many times and never obeyed it. Hearing is not enough (James 1:22).
39:8 *the walls of Jerusalem they broke down* The palace and houses burned, and the temple about a month later (52:12-13). The walls lay in ruins until Nehemiah rebuilt them about 445 B.C.
39:9 *Nebuzaradan the chief of the bodyguards took into exile to Babylon* The third and largest deportation, after 605 and 597 B.C.
39:10 *some of the poor people who had nothing* A strange justice. The rich who oppressed the poor and took back their slaves (34:11) were in chains, and the poor were given fields and vineyards. God does not forget the poor (Ps 9:18).
39:12 *do not do anything harmful to him* How Nebuchadnezzar knew of Jeremiah, Scripture does not say. Deserters surely reported his call to surrender (38:2, 19). God was keeping His promise (1:19). Judah's kings imprisoned him, and Babylon's king set him free.
39:14 *they gave him over to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan* The family that had protected him before (26:24). Gedaliah would soon be governor (40:5). Jeremiah chose to stay with the poor in the ruined land. Chapter 40 says he was later found in chains at Ramah, so it seems he was swept up with the captives in the confusion and freed again.
39:16 *Go, and say to Ebed-melech the Cushite* The writer steps back in time to a word given during the siege for the man who pulled Jeremiah from the cistern (38:7-13).
39:17 *you will not be given into the hand of the men before whom you are afraid* He had made enemies of powerful officials, and God spoke to his fear personally.
39:18 *for you have trusted in Me* The reason God saved him. A foreigner, not a priest or prince, believed God and acted on it when Jerusalem's leaders did not, and he lived while king and nobles fell. God has always saved people, Jew or Gentile, by grace through faith (Eph 2:8-9). Ebed-melech is a small picture of the gospel going to the nations, like the Ethiopian official who later believed in Jesus (Acts 8:26-39).

JEREMIAH 40

Gedaliah at Mizpah

1 The word which came to Jeremiah (Yirmeyahu) from the LORD after Nebuzaradan (Nevuzaradan) the chief of ***the*** bodyguards had set him free from Ramah (Rama), when he took him, and he ***was*** bound with chains in the midst of all the exiles of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) and Judah (Yehuda) who were being taken into exile to Babylon (Bavel). **2** And the chief of ***the*** bodyguards took Jeremiah, and he said to him, "The LORD your God spoke this calamity against this place. **3** And the LORD has brought ***it***, and He has done just as He spoke, for you sinned against the LORD and did not listen to His voice, and this thing has happened to you. **4** And now, look, I have set you free today from the chains which ***are*** on your hand. If it is good in your eyes to come with me ***to*** Babylon, come, and I will set my eye on you; and if it is displeasing in your eyes to come with me ***to*** Babylon, refrain. See, all the land ***is*** before you; to ***what is*** good and to ***what is*** right in your eyes to go there, go." **5** And ***while*** he ***was*** still not returning, ***he said***, "And return to Gedaliah (Gedalya) the son of Ahikam (Achiqam), the son of Shaphan (Shafan), whom the king of Babylon has appointed over the cities of Judah, and dwell with him in the midst of the people; or to any ***place*** right in your eyes to go, go." And the chief of ***the*** bodyguards gave him a food allowance and a present, and he let him go. **6** And Jeremiah went to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, to Mizpah (Mitspa), and he dwelt with him in the midst of the people who remained in the land. **7** And all the commanders of the forces who ***were*** in the field, they and their men, heard that the king of Babylon had appointed Gedaliah the son of Ahikam over the land, and that he had entrusted to him men and women and little ones, and some of the poor of the land, of those who had not been taken into exile to Babylon. **8** And they came to Gedaliah, to Mizpah: and Ishmael (Yishma'el) the son of Nethaniah (Netanyahu), and Johanan (Yochanan) and Jonathan (Yonatan) the sons of Kareah (Qareach), and Seraiah (Seraya) the son of Tanhumeth (Tanchumet), and the sons of Ephai (Eifay) the Netophathite, and Jezaniah (Yezanyahu) the son of the Maacathite, they and their men. **9** And Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, swore to them and to their men, saying, "Do not be afraid of serving the Chaldeans (Kasdim). Dwell in the land and serve the king of Babylon, and it will go well for you. **10** And I, look, I am dwelling at Mizpah to stand before the Chaldeans who will come to us; and you, gather wine and summer fruit and oil, and put ***them*** in your vessels, and dwell in your cities which you have seized." **11** And also all the Jews who ***were*** in Moab (Mo'av) and among the sons of Ammon (Amon) and in Edom, and who ***were*** in all the lands, heard that the king of Babylon had given a remnant to Judah, and that he had appointed over them Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan. **12** And all the Jews returned from all the places where they had been driven, and they came ***to*** the land of Judah, to Gedaliah, to Mizpah; and they gathered wine and summer fruit, very much. **13** And Johanan the son of Kareah and all the commanders of the forces who ***were*** in the field came to Gedaliah, to Mizpah. **14** And they said to him, "Do you really know that Baalis the king of the sons of Ammon has sent Ishmael the son of Nethaniah to strike you ***and take your*** life?" And Gedaliah the son of Ahikam did not believe them. **15** And Johanan the son of Kareah said to Gedaliah in secret at Mizpah, saying, "Let me go, please, and let me strike Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and no one will know. Why should he strike you ***and take your*** life, and all Judah who have gathered to you be scattered, and the remnant of Judah perish?"

40:1 Jer 31:15; Josh 18:25; Acts 12:6,7
40:2 Jer 22:8,9; Deut 29:24-28; 1 Kgs 9:8,9
40:3 Rom 2:5; Jer 50:7; Dan 9:11,12
40:5 Jer 39:14; Jer 41:2; 2 Kgs 8:7-9
40:6 Jer 39:14; Judg 20:1; Judg 21:1
40:7 Jer 39:10; Jer 39:4; 2 Kgs 25:4,22,23-26
40:8 Jer 42:1,8; Deut 3:14; Jer 40:6,11,12
40:9 Jer 27:11; 1 Sam 20:16,17; 2 Kgs 25:24
40:10 Luke 21:36; Jer 40:12; Jer 35:19
40:11 Isa 16:4; Jer 24:9; Ezek 5:3,12
40:14 Jer 41:10; Jer 25:21; 2 Sam 10:1-6
40:15 1 Sam 26:8; 2 Sam 21:17; 1 Sam 24:4

40:1 *after Nebuzaradan the chief of the bodyguards had set him free from Ramah* This line seems to introduce chapters 40 to 44, Jeremiah's ministry after the fall. The word itself comes at 42:7. Ramah, about five miles north of Jerusalem, is where the captives were gathered, the Ramah where Rachel weeps (31:15). In the confusion Jeremiah seems to have been swept up with the prisoners. In chains, the prophet waited with his people.
40:3 *for you sinned against the LORD and did not listen to His voice* A pagan general preaches Jeremiah's own message back to him, probably having heard it from deserters. Judah's kings, priests and prophets would not admit their sin brought this. A foreign soldier said it plainly. Sometimes outsiders see the truth about God's people more clearly than God's people do (Rom 2:24).
40:4 *See, all the land is before you* In Babylon he would be cared for. Or he could stay.
40:5 *gave him a food allowance and a present* Gedaliah came from the godly family of Shaphan, and his father Ahikam had saved Jeremiah's life (26:24).
40:6 *Jeremiah went to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, to Mizpah* Mizpah, about eight miles north of Jerusalem, where Samuel once gathered Israel to repent (1 Sam 7:5-6), became Judah's new center. Babylon offered comfort. Jeremiah chose the ruined land and the poor people. He had bought a field there as a sign of return (32:15) and would not leave it now. Moses chose to suffer with God's people rather than enjoy Egypt (Heb 11:24-26).
40:7 *all the commanders of the forces who were in the field* Judah's soldiers, scattered into the countryside when the army broke up.
40:8 *Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and Johanan and Jonathan the sons of Kareah* Watch the first two names. Ishmael and Johanan shape the next three chapters.
40:9 *Do not be afraid of serving the Chaldeans* Jeremiah's message for years (27:11-12; 29:7), and Gedaliah believed it.
40:10 *gather wine and summer fruit and oil* Gedaliah would stand between them and Babylon, and their job was to farm. He did not fight a war God said would fail. He helped a broken people live and rebuild under God's judgment. There is wisdom in accepting what God has allowed and working faithfully within it.
40:11 *all the Jews who were in Moab and among the sons of Ammon and in Edom* People who had fled east of the Jordan came home.
40:12 *they gathered wine and summer fruit, very much* The summer of 586 B.C. saw Jerusalem burn, and that autumn brought a big harvest, a small sign God had not abandoned the poor remnant. In judgment He remembers mercy (Hab 3:2).
40:14 *Baalis the king of the sons of Ammon has sent Ishmael the son of Nethaniah* Ammon had joined plots against Babylon before (27:3), and its king may have wanted to keep Judah from settling down. Ishmael was of David's royal family (41:1) and may have resented a governor who was not a king's son.

16 And Gedaliah the son of Ahikam said to Johanan the son of Kareah, "Do not do this thing, for you are speaking falsehood concerning Ishmael."

JEREMIAH 41

The Murder of Gedaliah

1 And it was in the seventh month ***that*** Ishmael (Yishma'el) the son of Nethaniah (Netanya), the son of Elishama, of the seed of the kingship, and the chiefs of the king, and ten men with him, came to Gedaliah (Gedalyahu) the son of Ahikam (Achiqam), to Mizpah (Mitspa); and they ate bread there together at Mizpah. **2** And Ishmael the son of Nethaniah arose, and the ten men who were with him, and they struck Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan (Shafan), with the sword; and he killed him whom the king of Babylon (Bavel) had appointed over the land. **3** And all the Jews who were with him, with Gedaliah, at Mizpah, and the Chaldeans (Kasdim) who were found there, the men of war, Ishmael struck. **4** And it was on the second day of the killing of Gedaliah, and no one knew, **5** and men came from Shechem (Shekhem), from Shiloh (Shilo), and from Samaria
(Shomron), eighty men, shaven of beard and torn of clothes and cutting themselves, and a grain offering and frankincense ***were*** in their hand, to bring ***to*** the house of the LORD. **6** And Ishmael the son of Nethaniah went out from Mizpah to meet them, going along and weeping as he went; and it was, as he met them, ***that*** he said to them, "Come to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam." **7** And it was, when they came into the midst of the city, ***that*** Ishmael the son of Nethaniah slaughtered them ***and threw them*** into the midst of the cistern, he and the men who ***were*** with him. **8** And ten men were found among them, and they said to Ishmael, "Do not kill us, for we have hidden treasures in the field: wheat and barley and oil and honey." And he refrained, and he did not kill them in the midst of their brothers. **9** And the cistern where Ishmael threw all the corpses of the men whom he had struck along with Gedaliah, it ***is the one*** which King Asa made because of Baasha (Basha) the king of Israel (Yisra'el); Ishmael the son of Nethaniah filled it ***with the*** slain. **10** And Ishmael took captive all the remnant of the people who ***were*** at Mizpah, the daughters of the king and all the people who remained at Mizpah, whom Nebuzaradan (Nevuzaradan) the chief of ***the*** bodyguards had entrusted to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam; and Ishmael the son of Nethaniah took them captive, and he went to cross over to the sons of Ammon (Amon).

Johanan Rescues the Captives

11 And Johanan (Yochanan) the son of Kareah (Qareach) and all the commanders of the forces who ***were*** with him heard ***of*** all the evil which Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had done. **12** And they took all the men, and they went to fight with Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and they found him by the great waters which ***are*** in Gibeon (Givon). **13** And it was, when all the people who ***were*** with Ishmael saw Johanan the son of Kareah and all the commanders of the forces who ***were*** with him, ***that*** they rejoiced. **14** And all the people whom Ishmael had taken captive from Mizpah turned around, and they returned and went to Johanan the son of Kareah. **15** And Ishmael the son of Nethaniah escaped with eight men from before Johanan, and he went to the sons of Ammon. **16** And Johanan the son of Kareah and all the commanders of the forces who ***were*** with him took all the remnant of the people whom he had brought back from Ishmael the son of

40:16 Jer 41:2; Matt 10:16,17; Rom 3:8
41:1 John 13:18; Jer 40:6,8; Ps 41:9
41:2 2 Kgs 25:25; Jer 40:7
41:3 Jer 41:11,12; 2 Kgs 25:25; Eccl 9:18
41:4 1 Sam 27:11; Ps 52:1,2
41:5 Matt 2:8; Josh 18:1; 1 Kgs 16:24,29
41:6 Matt 2:8; 2 Sam 3:16; Jer 50:4
41:7 Matt 2:8; Ps 55:23; Isa 59:7
41:8 Phil 3:8; Job 2:4; Prov 13:8
41:9 Judg 6:2; 1 Sam 13:6; 2 Sam 17:9
41:10 Jer 40:14; Jer 40:7; Jer 40:11,12
41:11 Jer 40:7,8,13-16; Jer 41:2,3,7; Jer 42:1,3
41:12 2 Sam 2:13; Gen 14:14-16; 1 Sam 30:1-8,18-20
41:15 Job 21:30; Prov 28:17; 1 Sam 30:17
41:16 Jer 42:8; Jer 43:4-7; Jer 41:10

40:16 *Do not do this thing, for you are speaking falsehood concerning Ishmael* Gedaliah was right not to approve a secret murder on a rumor. He was wrong to ignore the warning entirely. He could have set guards or questioned Ishmael. A good man's trust became blindness. Jesus said, "be shrewd as the serpents and innocent as the doves" (Matt 10:16). Gedaliah was the dove but not the serpent, and the next chapter shows what it cost.
41:1 *it was in the seventh month* About October. The year is not given. Most likely it was a few months after the fall, though some place it later, perhaps 582 B.C. (52:30). Ishmael was of David's royal family and may have thought the leadership should be his. Baalis of Ammon was behind him (40:14).
41:1 *they ate bread there together at Mizpah* Sharing a meal made a bond of trust. Gedaliah opened his table to the man he had been warned about.
41:2 *they struck Gedaliah the son of Ahikam* Betrayal at the table. David wrote of a friend who ate his bread and lifted his heel against him (Ps 41:9), and Jesus applied it to Judas (John 13:18). We cannot always prevent betrayal, but God sees it and will judge it. The Jews kept a fast in the seventh month after the exile (Zech 7:5; 8:19), commonly identified with this day, and many still keep the Fast of Gedaliah. With his death the last hope of a settled community in the land ended.
41:5 *shaven of beard and torn of clothes and cutting themselves* Eighty men from Shechem, Shiloh and Samaria in the old north, mourning most likely for Jerusalem and the temple. The temple was in ruins, but they still came with offerings to worship where it had stood. Faith was still alive in some hearts, even in the land of the old golden calves.
41:6 *weeping as he went* Ishmael pretended to share their grief.
41:7 *Ishmael the son of Nethaniah slaughtered them* Scripture does not say why, perhaps to keep the murder secret, perhaps to rob them. It was pure evil, the killing of worshipers on their way to God. If you have lost someone to violence, God does not shrug at it. He hates the shedding of innocent blood (Prov 6:16-17), and one day He will set every wrong right (Rev 21:4).
41:8 *we have hidden treasures in the field* In wartime farmers hid food in pits in the fields. Ishmael's greed was stronger than his rage.
41:9 *it is the one which King Asa made because of Baasha the king of Israel* About three hundred years earlier Asa fortified Mizpah against Baasha (1 Kgs 15:22). A cistern dug for defense became a grave for innocent worshipers.
41:10 *the daughters of the king* Women of Zedekiah's household left in Judah. Jeremiah and Baruch were probably among the captives, since they lived at Mizpah.
41:12 *by the great waters which are in Gibeon* A few miles from Mizpah. Its great pool is mentioned in David's day (2 Sam 2:13). Johanan, who had warned Gedaliah, now acted.
41:15 *Ishmael the son of Nethaniah escaped with eight men* He came with ten, and Scripture does not say what became of the other two, or of him. Evil men do not always face justice in this life, but no one escapes the judgment of God (Heb 9:27).
41:16 *women and little ones and eunuchs* Eunuchs here were palace officials.

Nethaniah, from Mizpah, after he had struck Gedaliah the son of Ahikam: men, men of war, and women and little ones and eunuchs, whom he had brought back from Gibeon. **17** And they went, and they dwelt in Geruth Chimham (Gerut Kimham), which ***is*** beside Bethlehem (Bet-Lechem), to go to enter Egypt (Mitsrayim), **18** from before the Chaldeans, for they were afraid of them, for Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had struck Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, whom the king of Babylon had appointed over the land.

JEREMIAH 42

The Remnant Asks for a Word

1 And all the commanders of the forces approached, and Johanan (Yochanan) the son of Kareah (Qareach) and Jezaniah (Yezanya) the son of Hoshaiah (Hosha'aya), and all the people from the small even to the great, **2** and they said to Jeremiah (Yirmeyahu) the prophet, "Let our supplication fall, please, before you, and pray for us to the LORD your God, for all this remnant; for we are left a few out of many, just as your eyes see us; **3** so that the LORD your God may declare to us the way in which we should go, and the thing which we should do." **4** And Jeremiah the prophet said to them, "I have heard. Look, I am about to pray to the LORD your God according to your words; and it will be ***that*** every word which the LORD answers you I will tell you; I will not withhold a word from you." **5** And they said to Jeremiah, "May the LORD be against us a witness true and faithful, if we do not do so according to every word with which the LORD your God sends you to us. **6** Whether good or whether bad, to the voice of the LORD our God, to whom we are sending you, we will listen, so that it may go well for us, for we will listen to the voice of the LORD our God."

Stay in the Land

7 And it was at the end of ten days, and the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah. **8** And he called Johanan the son of Kareah and all the commanders of the forces who ***were*** with him, and all the people from the small even to the great, **9** and he said to them, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel (Yisra'el), to whom you sent me to make your supplication fall before Him: **10** 'If you will indeed dwell in this land, then I will build you up and not tear ***you*** down, and I will plant you and not pluck ***you*** up; for I relent concerning the calamity which I have done to you. **11** Do not be afraid of the king of Babylon (Bavel), of whom you are afraid; do not be afraid of him,' declares the LORD, 'for I ***am*** with you, to save you and to deliver you from his hand. **12** And I will give you compassion, and he will have compassion on you and bring you back to your ground.' **13** And if you are saying, 'We will not dwell in this land,' so as not to listen to the voice of the LORD your God, **14** saying, 'No, but we will go ***to*** the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim), where we will not see war, and we will not hear the sound of a trumpet, and we will not be hungry for bread; and there we will dwell,' **15** then now, therefore, hear the word of the LORD, O remnant of Judah (Yehuda). Thus says the LORD of armies, the God of Israel: 'If you really set your faces to go ***to*** Egypt, and you go to sojourn there, **16** then it will be ***that*** the sword of which you are afraid will overtake you there, in the land of Egypt; and the famine about which you are anxious will cling close after you there ***in*** Egypt; and there you will die. **17** And it will be ***that*** all the men who have set their faces to go ***to*** Egypt to sojourn there will die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence; and there will not be for them a survivor and an escapee from before the calamity which I am bringing on them.' **18** For thus says the

41:17 2 Sam 19:37,38; Jer 42:14,19; Jer 43:7
41:18 Jer 40:5; Luke 12:4,5; Jer 42:11,16
42:1 Jer 41:11,16; Jer 6:13; Jer 42:8
42:2 Acts 8:24; Jer 36:7; Lev 26:22
42:3 Mark 12:14; Ps 86:11; Prov 3:6
42:4 Exod 8:29; 1 Sam 12:23; 1 Sam 3:17,18
42:5 Rev 1:5; Rev 3:14; Gen 31:50
42:6 Jer 7:23; Deut 5:29,33; Rom 7:7,13
42:7 Ps 27:14; Isa 28:16; Hab 2:3
42:8 Jer 42:1; Jer 40:8,13; Jer 41:11-16
42:9 Jer 42:2; 2 Kgs 19:4,6,20-37; 2 Kgs 22:15-20
42:10 Acts 15:16; Jer 24:6; Jer 31:28
42:11 Rom 8:31; Jer 41:18; Jer 1:19
42:12 Neh 1:11; Ps 106:45,46; Prov 16:7
42:13 Jer 44:16; Exod 5:2; Jer 42:10
42:14 Jer 41:17; Jer 4:19,21; Isa 31:1
42:15 Luke 9:51; Jer 44:12-14; Deut 17:16
42:16 Ezek 11:8; Amos 9:1-4; Jer 42:13
42:17 Jer 42:22; Jer 24:10; Jer 44:28
42:18 Jer 7:20; Jer 39:1-9; Jer 18:16

41:17 *Geruth Chimham, which is beside Bethlehem* Seemingly a lodging place on the road south to Egypt. Its name may go back to Chimham, whom David honored (2 Sam 19:37-40).
41:18 *for they were afraid of them* Babylon's governor and soldiers had been murdered, and they feared Babylon would punish them all. Their fear was understandable, but they had not asked God. Their hearts were already set on Egypt. It is easy to make plans in fear and then ask God to bless them, instead of asking Him first.
42:1 *Jezaniah the son of Hoshaiah* Seemingly the same man called Azariah son of Hoshaiah in 43:2, though some see two brothers. Everyone came, from least to greatest.
42:2 *pray for us to the LORD your God* "Your God," not "our God," a small hint of distance. They wanted Jeremiah's God to give them an answer. On the surface it was the right prayer.
42:4 *I will not withhold a word from you* God's whole answer, not just the parts they wanted.
42:6 *Whether good or whether bad, to the voice of the LORD our God, to whom we are sending you, we will listen* A beautiful promise, calling God as witness against themselves, and now "our God." Every believer should be able to say, Lord, whatever You say, I will do. But words are cheap. The test comes when God's answer is not what we want, like the son who said he would go and did not (Matt 21:28-31).
42:7 *at the end of ten days* Jeremiah did not give his own opinion and call it God's word. False prophets always had a quick answer (23:21). True prophets waited. Waiting is often part of God's guidance (Ps 27:14; Isa 40:31).
42:10 *I will build you up and not tear you down, and I will plant you and not pluck you up* The words of Jeremiah's call (1:10). After forty years of tearing down, God offered to build right there in the ruined land. "I relent" means God turns from judgment to mercy (18:7-8), not that He had done wrong.
42:11 *Do not be afraid of the king of Babylon, of whom you are afraid* Exactly their fear (41:18), and God spoke right to it. He would move Babylon's king to mercy. Often the hardest thing God asks is not to go somewhere, but to stay and trust Him where we are.
42:14 *we will go to the land of Egypt, where we will not see war* Egypt looked safe: far from Babylon, rich in grain and at peace.
42:16 *the sword of which you are afraid will overtake you there* What they ran from would follow them. You cannot outrun God's hand by moving to another country, as Jonah learned at sea (Jonah 1:3-4). God told Israel never to go back to Egypt (Deut 17:16), and the prophets warned against seeking help there (Isa 31:1; 2:18, 36; 37:7). Going back was a way of undoing the exodus, trusting Pharaoh rather than the LORD.
42:17 *there will not be for them a survivor and an escapee* Not cruelty, but God telling them plainly, in advance, where their road led.

LORD of armies, the God of Israel: 'Just as My anger and My rage were poured out on the inhabitants of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), so My rage will be poured out on you when you go ***to*** Egypt; and you will become a sworn curse and a horror and a curse and a reproach, and you will not see this place again.' **19** The LORD has spoken to you, O remnant of Judah: 'Do not go ***to*** Egypt.' Know for certain that I have warned you today. **20** For you have led ***yourselves*** astray at ***the cost of*** your souls; for you sent me to the LORD your God, saying, 'Pray for us to the LORD our God, and according to all that the LORD our God says, so tell us, and we will do ***it***.' **21** And I have told you today, and you have not listened to the voice of the LORD your God, even to all with which He has sent me to you. **22** And now, know for certain that by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence you will die in the place to which you desire to go to sojourn."

JEREMIAH 43

The Flight to Egypt

1 And it was, when Jeremiah (Yirmeyahu) had finished speaking to all the people all the words of the LORD their God, with which the LORD their God had sent him to them, all these words, **2** ***that*** Azariah (Azarya) the son of Hoshaiah (Hosha'aya) and Johanan (Yochanan) the son of Kareah (Qareach) and all the arrogant men said, saying to Jeremiah, "You are speaking falsehood. The LORD our God has not sent you to say, 'You must not go ***to*** Egypt (Mitsrayim) to sojourn there.' **3** For Baruch (Barukh) the son of Neriah (Neriya) is inciting you against us, so as to give us into the hand of the Chaldeans (Kasdim), to kill us and to take us into exile ***to*** Babylon (Bavel)." **4** And Johanan the son of Kareah and all the commanders of the forces and all the people did not listen to the voice of the LORD, to dwell in the land of Judah (Yehuda). **5** And Johanan the son of Kareah and all the commanders of the forces took all the remnant of Judah who had returned from all the nations where they had been driven, to sojourn in the land of Judah: **6** the men and the women and the little ones and the daughters of the king, and every soul whom Nebuzaradan (Nevuzaradan) the chief of ***the*** bodyguards had left with Gedaliah (Gedalyahu) the son of Ahikam (Achiqam), the son of Shaphan (Shafan), and Jeremiah the prophet and Baruch the son of Neriah; **7** and they went ***to*** the land of Egypt, for they did not listen to the voice of the LORD; and they came as far as Tahpanhes (Tachpanches).

Stones at Tahpanhes

8 And the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah in Tahpanhes, saying, **9** "Take large stones in your hand, and hide them in the mortar in the brick terrace which ***is*** at the entrance of the house of Pharaoh in Tahpanhes, before the eyes of Jewish men. **10** And you shall say to them, 'Thus says the LORD of armies, the God of Israel (Yisra'el): "Look, I am about to send, and I will take Nebuchadnezzar (Nevukhadretsar) the king of Babylon, My servant, and I will set his throne above these stones which I have hidden, and he will spread his canopy over them. **11** And he will come and strike the land of Egypt: those who ***are*** for death, to death; and those who ***are*** for captivity, to captivity; and those who ***are*** for the sword, to the sword. **12** And I will kindle a fire in the houses of the gods of Egypt, and he will burn them and take them captive; and he will pick clean the land of Egypt just as the shepherd picks clean his garment, and he will go out from there in peace.

42:19 Deut 17:16; Isa 30:1-7; Neh 9:26,29,30
42:20 Jer 3:10; Jer 17:10; Ps 18:44
42:21 Ezek 2:7; Zech 7:11,12; Deut 11:26,27
42:22 Jer 42:17; Ezek 6:11; Hos 9:6
43:1 Jer 26:8; Jer 42:22; Jer 51:63
43:2 Jer 40:8; Jer 5:12,13; 2 Chr 36:13
43:3 Jer 43:6; Jer 36:4,10,26; Jer 45:1-3
43:4 Jer 42:5,6; Jer 44:5; 2 Chr 25:16
43:5 Jer 40:11,12; Jer 41:15,16; 1 Sam 26:19
43:6 Jer 39:10; Jer 40:7; Jer 41:10
43:7 Jer 2:16; Jer 44:1; Jer 46:14
43:8 Ps 139:7; 2 Tim 2:9
43:9 Rev 18:21; Jer 18:2-12; Jer 19:1-15
43:10 Jer 1:15; Isa 44:28; Ps 18:11
43:11 Rev 13:10; Jer 15:2; Jer 44:13
43:12 Jer 46:25; Ezek 30:13; Exod 12:12

42:19 *Do not go to Egypt* It could not be clearer. They could never say they did not know.
42:20 *For you have led yourselves astray at the cost of your souls* Jeremiah could already see their minds were set (43:2). The Hebrew may mean deceived yourselves or erred at the cost of your lives. One of the clearest warnings in the Bible about asking God's will when we have already decided. We can pray long prayers and make sincere-sounding promises with our minds made up. God is not fooled (Gal 6:7). Only an honest willingness to obey makes our asking real (John 7:17).
43:2 *all the arrogant men* The writer calls them what they were. Ten days earlier they swore to obey "whether good or whether bad" (42:5-6). When the answer was not what they wanted, they said God had not spoken. Pride cannot admit it was wrong, so it attacks the messenger. When Scripture crosses our plans, it is easier to say God does not really mean it than to obey.
43:3 *For Baruch the son of Neriah is inciting you against us* They could not deny Jeremiah was a true prophet, so they said Baruch was manipulating him. When you cannot attack the leader, attack the man beside him. Baruch paid for twenty years of faithfulness with slander.
43:4 *did not listen to the voice of the LORD, to dwell in the land of Judah* The whole story of Judah's last days, said again in verse 7.
43:6 *and Jeremiah the prophet and Baruch the son of Neriah* They did not go willingly. They were taken. Perhaps the leaders feared what he might say behind them, or wanted a prophet along. Scripture does not say. Jeremiah went with his people even into their disobedience. He did not abandon them.
43:7 *they came as far as Tahpanhes* A fortress city on Egypt's northeastern border, the first major Egyptian city on the road from Judah. About nine hundred years after God brought Israel out of Egypt, the last of Judah walked back in against His word, as if undoing the exodus, one of the curses of a broken covenant (Deut 28:68).
43:8 *the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah in Tahpanhes* God was not left behind in Judah.
43:9 *hide them in the mortar in the brick terrace which is at the entrance of the house of Pharaoh in Tahpanhes* Probably a royal building used when the king visited, with a paved brick area in front. Another acted message, done before Jewish witnesses.
43:10 *he will spread his canopy over them* A canopy was the royal awning over a king's throne when he sat in judgment. God's "servant" Nebuchadnezzar (25:9; 27:6) would sit in judgment on this very spot. They ran to Egypt to escape him, and he would follow. There is no hiding place from God's word.
43:11 *those who are for death, to death* The words God used of Jerusalem (15:2). Egypt would get the judgment the refugees ran from.
43:12 *just as the shepherd picks clean his garment* A shepherd living outdoors picked his cloak clean of lice and burrs. Nebuchadnezzar would strip Egypt that easily and leave unharmed.

13 And he will break the sacred pillars of Beth-shemesh (Bet-Shemesh), which ***is*** in the land of Egypt, and the houses of the gods of Egypt he will burn with fire."'"

JEREMIAH 44

The Queen of Heaven in Egypt

1 The word which came to Jeremiah (Yirmeyahu) concerning all the Jews who were dwelling in the land of Egypt
(Mitsrayim), who were dwelling in Migdol and in Tahpanhes (Tachpanches) and in Memphis (Nof) and in the land of Pathros (Patros), saying, **2** "Thus says the LORD of armies, the God of Israel (Yisra'el): 'You, you have seen all the calamity which I brought on Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) and on all the cities of Judah (Yehuda); and look, they ***are*** a ruin this day, and there is no inhabitant in them, **3** because of their evil which they did to provoke Me to anger, by going to burn incense, to serve other gods whom they had not known, they, you, and your fathers. **4** And I sent to you all My servants the prophets, rising early and sending, saying, "Do not, please, do this thing of abomination which I hate." **5** And they did not listen, and they did not incline their ear to turn from their evil, so as not to burn incense to other gods. **6** And My rage and My anger were poured out, and it burned in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem; and they became a ruin, a desolation, as ***at*** this day.' **7** And now, thus says the LORD, the God of armies, the God of Israel: 'Why are you doing great evil against your souls, to cut off for yourselves man and woman, child and nursing infant, from the midst of Judah, so as not to leave for yourselves a remnant, **8** by provoking Me to anger with the works of your hands, by burning incense to other gods in the land of Egypt, where you have come to sojourn, so as to cut yourselves off, and so as to become a curse and a reproach among all the nations of the earth? **9** Have you forgotten the evil deeds of your fathers, and the evil deeds of the kings of Judah, and the evil deeds of his wives, and your evil deeds, and the evil deeds of your wives, which they did in the land of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? **10** They have not been made contrite to this day, and they have not feared, and they have not walked in My law and in My statutes which I set before you and before your fathers.' **11** Therefore thus says the LORD of armies, the God of Israel: 'Look, I am about to set My face against you for harm, and to cut off all Judah. **12** And I will take the remnant of Judah who have set their faces to go ***to*** the land of Egypt to sojourn there, and they will all be consumed in the land of Egypt; they will fall by the sword; by the famine they will be consumed; from the small even to the great, by the sword and by the famine they will die; and they will become a sworn curse, a horror, and a curse, and a reproach. **13** And I will punish those who dwell in the land of Egypt, just as I punished Jerusalem, by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence. **14** And there will not be an escapee and a survivor for the remnant of Judah who have gone to sojourn there in the land of Egypt, even to return ***to*** the land of Judah, to which they are lifting up their soul to return to dwell there; for they will not return, except escapees.'"

The People Refuse

15 And all the men who knew that their wives were burning incense to other gods, and all the women who were standing by, a great assembly, and all the people who were dwelling in the land of Egypt, in Pathros, answered Jeremiah, saying, **16** "The word which you have spoken to us in the name of

43:13 Isa 19:18
44:1 Jer 46:14; Exod 14:2; Isa 11:11
44:2 Jer 9:11; Jer 34:22; Isa 6:11
44:3 Deut 13:6; Deut 29:26; Deut 32:17
44:4 Matt 23:37; Luke 13:34; Jer 7:13,25
44:5 Luke 13:34; Jer 7:24; 2 Chr 36:16
44:6 Rom 10:21; Jer 7:20; Jer 42:18
44:7 Num 16:38; Hab 2:10; Jer 51:22
44:8 Heb 3:16; Jer 42:18; Jer 25:6,7
44:9 Jer 7:17,18; Josh 22:17-20; Ezra 9:7-15
44:10 Jer 8:12; Prov 28:14; Exod 9:17
44:11 Jer 21:10; Amos 9:4; Lev 17:10
44:12 Jer 42:15-18,22; Isa 65:15; Hos 4:6
44:13 Jer 44:27,28; Jer 11:22; Jer 43:11
44:14 Heb 2:3; Jer 22:26,27; Rom 9:27
44:15 2 Pet 2:1; Jer 5:1-5; Prov 11:21
44:16 Jer 16:15-17; Jer 8:6,12; Jer 18:18

43:13 *the sacred pillars of Beth-shemesh* House of the sun, most likely the city the Greeks called Heliopolis, the Bible's On (Gen 41:45), a center of sun worship famous for its stone obelisks. A broken Babylonian tablet tells of a campaign against Egypt in Nebuchadnezzar's thirty-seventh year, about 568 or 567 B.C., and Ezekiel foretold it too (Ezek 29:19-20). The remnant trusted Egypt to protect them, and Egypt could not protect itself. Only God is a true refuge (Ps 46:1).
44:1 *Migdol and in Tahpanhes and in Memphis and in the land of Pathros* Jewish settlements had spread from the eastern border (Migdol, Tahpanhes) to Memphis and on south to Pathros, Upper Egypt. Some time had passed since chapter 43, perhaps several years. Papyri from a later Jewish colony at Elephantine in the fifth century B.C. show a temple to the God of Israel mixed with other worship, the kind of compromise this chapter condemns.
44:2 *they are a ruin this day* The refugees had seen the ruins with their own eyes. God starts with the evidence in front of them. Judgment had come exactly as His prophets said, and they still had not learned from it.
44:4 *Do not, please, do this thing of abomination which I hate* God did not only command. He pleaded, sending prophet after prophet, "rising early." The word "please" shows the heart of a Father begging His children to turn back before it was too late.
44:7 *Why are you doing great evil against your souls* Sin is first against God, but it also wounds the one who commits it. Their idolatry was cutting off their own families and leaving no remnant. Every sin is in the end self-destructive (Prov 8:36).
44:9 *the evil deeds of his wives* Five groups are named: the fathers, the kings, the kings' wives, the people, and the people's wives. The kings' wives recall Solomon's foreign wives, who turned his heart to other gods (1 Kgs 11:4-8). Sin forgotten is sin ready to be repeated.
44:10 *They have not been made contrite to this day* The ruin of Jerusalem had not broken their pride. God does not despise a broken and contrite heart (Ps 51:17), but these hearts stayed hard after the worst judgment in their history.
44:12 *the remnant of Judah who have set their faces to go to the land of Egypt* They had set their faces toward Egypt, so God set His face against them (44:11). The very place they chose for safety would become the place of their judgment.
44:14 *for they will not return, except escapees* They longed to return to Judah someday, but they would die in Egypt. Only a handful would make it back (44:28). The choice to disobey had lasting results they could not undo.
44:15 *a great assembly* The men who knew what their wives were doing and the women themselves stood together in open defiance. This was not private weakness but a community decision to reject God's word.
44:16 *we are not listening to you* This is the plainest statement of rebellion in the book. They did not pretend Jeremiah was a false prophet. They knew he spoke in the LORD's name and refused anyway.

the LORD, we are not listening to you. **17** For we will certainly do every thing that has gone out from our mouth, to burn incense to the queen of the heavens and to pour out drink offerings to her, just as we have done, we and our fathers, our kings and our officials, in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem; and we were satisfied ***with*** bread, and we were well, and calamity we did not see. **18** And since we ceased to burn incense to the queen of the heavens and to pour out drink offerings to her, we have lacked everything, and by the sword and by the famine we have been consumed. **19** And when we were burning incense to the queen of the heavens and pouring out drink offerings to her, was it without our husbands that we made cakes for her to form her image and to pour out drink offerings to her?"

Jeremiah's Answer

20 And Jeremiah said to all the people, to the men and to the women and to all the people who had answered him ***with*** a word, saying, **21** "The incense which you burned in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem, you and your fathers, your kings and your officials, and the people of the land, did not the LORD remember them, and did it not come up on His heart? **22** And the LORD was no longer able to bear ***it***, because of the evil of your deeds, because of the abominations which you did; and your land has become a ruin and a horror and a curse, without an inhabitant, as ***at*** this day. **23** Because you burned incense, and because you sinned against the LORD and did not listen to the voice of the LORD, and in His law and in His statutes and in His testimonies you did not walk, therefore this calamity has happened to you, as ***at*** this day." **24** And Jeremiah said to all the people and to all the women, "Hear the word of the LORD, all Judah who ***are*** in the land of Egypt. **25** Thus says the LORD of armies, the God of Israel, saying: 'You and your wives, you have both spoken with your mouth and fulfilled ***it*** with your hands, saying, "We will certainly perform our vows which we have vowed, to burn incense to the queen of the heavens and to pour out drink offerings to her." You will certainly carry out your vows, and you will certainly perform your vows.'

26 Therefore hear the word of the LORD, all Judah who dwell in the land of Egypt: 'Look, I have sworn by My great name,' says the LORD, 'that My name will no longer be called on by the mouth of any man of Judah, saying, "***As*** the Lord GOD lives," in all the land of Egypt. **27** Look, I am watching over them for harm and not for good; and every man of Judah who ***is*** in the land of Egypt will be consumed by the sword and by the famine until they come to an end. **28** And the escapees of ***the*** sword will return from the land of Egypt ***to*** the land of Judah, few in number; and all the remnant of Judah who went to the land of Egypt to sojourn there will know whose word will be established, Mine or theirs. **29** And this ***will be*** the sign to you,' declares the LORD, 'that I am about to punish you in this place, so that you may know that My words will certainly be established against you for harm.' **30** Thus says the LORD: 'Look, I am about to give Pharaoh Hophra (Chafra) the king of Egypt into the hand of his enemies and into the hand of those who seek his life, just as I gave Zedekiah (Tsidqiyahu) the king of Judah into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar (Nevukhadretsar) the king of Babylon (Bavel), his enemy and the one who sought his life.'"

JEREMIAH 45

A Word to Baruch

1 The word which Jeremiah (Yirmeyahu) the prophet spoke to Baruch (Barukh) the son of Neriah (Neriya), when he wrote these words on a scroll from the mouth of Jeremiah, in

44:17 Jer 7:18; Neh 9:34; Deut 23:23
44:18 Mal 3:13-15; Jer 40:12; Num 11:5,6
44:19 Jer 7:18; Jer 44:15; Gen 3:6,11,12,16,17
44:21 Jer 44:9,17; Jer 11:13; Jer 14:10
44:22 Gal 3:13; Isa 7:13; Isa 43:24
44:23 2 Cor 6:16; 1 Kgs 9:9; Dan 9:11,12
44:24 Jer 43:7; Jer 42:15; Jer 44:15,26
44:25 Matt 14:9; Jer 44:15-19; Isa 28:15
44:26 Gen 22:16; Heb 6:13,18; Ps 50:16
44:27 Jer 31:28; Jer 1:10; 2 Kgs 21:14
44:28 Jer 44:14; Isa 10:19,22; Isa 27:12,13
44:29 Prov 19:21; Matt 24:15,16,32-34; Isa 40:8
44:30 2 Kgs 25:4-7; Jer 43:9-13; Jer 34:21
45:1 Jer 36:1,4,8,14-18,26,32; Jer 32:12,16; Jer 25:1

44:17 *the queen of the heavens* Most likely the Mesopotamian goddess Ishtar, known in Canaan as Astarte, a goddess of fertility and war (7:18). Her worship had been family religion in Judah, with incense, drink offerings and cakes. The people remembered those years as good times of plenty.

44:18 *since we ceased to burn incense to the queen of the heavens* They most likely meant Josiah's reform about 622 B.C., when the idols were torn down (2 Kgs 23:4-14). Their reasoning was backward: they credited the idol for the good years and blamed obeying God for the hard ones. The disasters came from generations of sin, not from Josiah's reform. God disciplines the children He loves (Heb 12:6).

44:19 *was it without our husbands* Under the Law a husband could cancel his wife's vow (Num 30:6-8). The women said their husbands had approved, so the whole household shared the guilt. The cakes were shaped in the goddess's image.

44:21 *did not the LORD remember them* Jeremiah gives the true explanation. God had not forgotten the incense offered to other gods. The years of plenty were His patience, not the goddess's blessing (Rom 2:4).

44:22 *the LORD was no longer able to bear it* God's patience is long, but it has a limit. The ruin of the land was the result of sin finally reaching its full measure.

44:23 *therefore this calamity has happened to you* Jeremiah names the cause four ways: they burned incense, sinned against the LORD, did not listen to His voice, and did not walk in His law. The judgment was not random. It matched their choices.

44:25 *You will certainly carry out your vows* God answers with holy irony. If they are set on keeping their vows to the goddess, let them. This is God giving people over to what they insist on choosing (Rom 1:24-25).

44:26 *My name will no longer be called on by the mouth of any man of Judah* They wanted to keep both, the queen of the heavens and the oath "As the Lord GOD lives." God would not share His name with an idol. Mixed worship ends in losing the true God altogether.

44:27 *I am watching over them for harm and not for good* At Jeremiah's call God was "watching over My word to do it" (1:12). The same watchful care that had protected them now ensured their judgment.

44:28 *whose word will be established, Mine or theirs* The contest was between God's word and their vows. History would settle it. The word of our God stands forever (Isa 40:8), and what people say against it will not stand.

44:30 *I am about to give Pharaoh Hophra the king of Egypt into the hand of his enemies* Hophra was the Pharaoh whose army briefly drew the Babylonians away from Jerusalem (37:5). Ancient history tells us he was overthrown about 570 B.C. in a revolt led by Amasis and later killed. This is the last recorded message of Jeremiah's ministry, and Scripture does not tell us how he died. God measures His servants by faithfulness, not by results (Matt 25:21).

45:1 *in the fourth year of Jehoiakim* That is 605 B.C., when Baruch wrote the first scroll (36:1-8). The book is arranged mostly by subject, so this word to Baruch closes the long section on Jeremiah's sufferings (chapters 26-45). Placed after the flight to Egypt, it shows that God kept His promise: Baruch was still alive (43:6).

the fourth year of Jehoiakim (Yehoyaqim) the son of Josiah (Yoshiyahu) the king of Judah (Yehuda), saying, **2** "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel (Yisra'el), concerning you, O Baruch: **3** 'You said, "Woe to me now! For the LORD has added sorrow to my pain; I am weary with my groaning, and rest I have not found."' **4** Thus you shall say to him: 'Thus says the LORD: "Look, what I have built I am about to tear down, and what I have planted I am about to pluck up, and all the land itself. **5** And you, you are seeking great things for yourself; do not seek ***them***. For look, I am about to bring calamity on all flesh," declares the LORD, "and I will give you your life as plunder in all the places where you go."'"

JEREMIAH 46

Against Egypt

1 That which came ***as*** the word of the LORD to Jeremiah (Yirmeyahu) the prophet concerning the nations. **2** Of Egypt (Mitsrayim): concerning the army of Pharaoh Neco (Nekho) the king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates (Perat) at Carchemish (Karkemish), which Nebuchadnezzar (Nevukhadretsar) the king of Babylon (Bavel) struck in the fourth year of Jehoiakim (Yehoyaqim) the son of Josiah (Yoshiyahu) the king of Judah (Yehuda): **3** "Set in order shield and body shield, and draw near for battle! **4** Harness the horses, and mount the steeds; and take your stand with helmets; polish the spears; put on the armor! **5** Why have I seen them terrified, turned back backward? And their mighty men are crushed, and they have fled ***in*** flight, and they have not turned back; terror ***is*** from all around, declares the LORD. **6** Let not the swift flee, and let not the mighty man escape; to the north, beside the river Euphrates, they have stumbled and fallen. **7** Who ***is*** this ***that*** rises like the Nile (Ye'or), ***whose*** waters surge like the rivers? **8** Egypt rises like the Nile, and like the rivers ***its*** waters surge; and he has said, 'I will rise, I will cover ***the*** earth; I will destroy a city and the inhabitants in it.' **9** Go up, O horses, and drive madly, O chariotry, and let the mighty men go out: Cush (Kush) and Put, who handle the shield, and Ludim, who handle ***and*** bend the bow. **10** And that day ***is*** for the Lord GOD of armies, a day of vengeance, to avenge Himself on His adversaries; and the sword will devour and be satisfied, and it will drink its fill of their blood; for a sacrifice ***is*** for the Lord GOD of armies in the land of the north by the river Euphrates. **11** Go up ***to*** Gilead (Gilad) and take balm, O virgin, daughter of Egypt; in vain you have multiplied remedies; there is no healing for you. **12** Nations have heard your dishonor, and your outcry has filled the earth; for mighty man has stumbled against mighty man; together they have fallen, both of them."

45:2 Isa 63:9; Mark 16:7; 2 Cor 1:4
45:3 2 Cor 4:1,16; Gal 6:9; Jer 9:1
45:4 Jer 18:7-10; Jer 31:28; Jer 1:10
45:5 Jer 21:9; Jer 39:18; Rom 12:16
46:1 Jer 1:10; Jer 4:7; Jer 25:15-29
46:2 2 Kgs 23:29; Jer 46:14; Ezek 29:1-32
46:3 Isa 21:5; Jer 51:11,12; Joel 3:9
46:4 Ezek 21:9-11,28; Jer 51:3
46:5 Jer 6:25; Jer 49:29; Rev 6:15
46:6 Dan 11:19,22; Jer 46:12; Judg 4:15-21
46:7 Jer 47:2; Isa 8:7,8; Dan 11:22
46:8 Ezek 29:3; Ezek 32:2; Exod 15:9,10
46:9 Ezek 27:10; Isa 66:19; Nah 3:9
46:10 Joel 1:15; Deut 32:42; Jer 46:2,6
46:11 Jer 8:22; Isa 47:1; Mic 1:9
46:12 Nah 3:8-10; Jer 14:2; Jer 46:6

45:2 *concerning you, O Baruch* The God of Israel had a word just for one faithful scribe. Baruch wrote the scroll, read it in the temple at risk to himself, wrote it again, kept Jeremiah's deed (32:12), and was slandered and taken to Egypt (43:3, 6). God sees the helpers whose names we barely know.

45:3 *the LORD has added sorrow to my pain* Writing out twenty-three years of warnings against his own people was heavy work, and standing with Jeremiah meant sharing his hatred. Baruch's words sound like Jeremiah's own laments (15:10; 20:18). God did not rebuke him for feeling it. He heard and answered.

45:4 *what I have built I am about to tear down* These are the words of Jeremiah's call (1:10), but now God speaks of tearing down what He Himself had planted (Exod 15:17). Baruch's sorrow was real, but God's was greater. He takes no pleasure in judgment (Ezek 33:11), and those who suffer with Him share something that grieves His own heart.

45:5 *you are seeking great things for yourself; do not seek them* Baruch came from a notable family, and his brother Seraiah later served King Zedekiah (51:59; see 32:12). He may have hoped for a high post at court. With calamity coming on all flesh, any name he built would soon be ash. Hard work is not wrong, but self-advancement as life's goal is building on sand. Seek first His kingdom (Matt 6:33).

45:5 *I will give you your life as plunder* Plunder is what a soldier carries off from battle. When everything else was lost, Baruch would carry away his life, through Jehoiakim's anger, the siege, Gedaliah's murder and Egypt. God made the same promise to Ebed-melech (39:18). He did not promise an easy life, but He kept him. In Christ He gives eternal life, which no calamity can touch (John 10:28).

46:1 *concerning the nations* This heads chapters 46-51. In the Hebrew text these oracles come near the end of the book; in the old Greek translation they follow 25:13. God is not a local god of one people but the Judge of all the earth (Gen 18:25). The nations answer to Him, and Judah learned that the powers it feared or trusted were in His hand.

46:2 *at Carchemish* A city on the upper Euphrates, on today's Turkey-Syria border. There in 605 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar, then crown prince and king later that year, defeated Egypt. Neco had killed good King Josiah at Megiddo four years earlier (2 Kgs 23:29). After Carchemish Egypt never again ruled north of its border (2 Kgs 24:7).

46:3 *Set in order shield and body shield* The poem opens with officers shouting orders: shields, horses, helmets, spears, armor. Egypt looked unbeatable. Then in one verse the scene turns to panic and flight.

46:5 *terror is from all around* One of Jeremiah's own sayings (6:25; 20:10), now turned on Egypt. The mighty men run without looking back.

46:6 *Let not the swift flee, and let not the mighty man escape* The fastest and strongest could not get away. Speed and strength mean nothing when God has decided the outcome (Eccl 9:11).

46:8 *Egypt rises like the Nile* Egypt's life depended on the yearly Nile flood. Its army surged north like the river in flood, boasting it would cover the earth. That flood was about to dry up.

46:9 *Cush and Put* Cush lay south of Egypt along the Nile (Ethiopia and Sudan today); Put was most likely in Libya; Ludim were also hired archers. Egypt's army was made up largely of soldiers from other nations.

46:10 *that day is for the Lord GOD of armies, a day of vengeance* Carchemish was not only Babylon against Egypt. It was the LORD's day, and Nebuchadnezzar won because God gave him the victory (27:6). Egypt had killed Josiah, deported Jehoahaz and set up Jehoiakim (2 Kgs 23:29-35). God's vengeance is not temper but justice. The prophets sometimes picture a battlefield as a sacrifice (Isa 34:6; Zeph 1:7).

46:11 *Go up to Gilead and take balm* Gilead was famous for its healing balm. Jeremiah had asked "Is there no balm in Gilead?" for Judah (8:22). Egypt was famous for its doctors and medicines, but no remedy heals a wound God has given.

46:12 *mighty man has stumbled against mighty man* The fleeing soldiers ran so hard they fell over each other. The whole world heard of Egypt's shame.

Babylon Will Strike Egypt

13 The word which the LORD spoke to Jeremiah the prophet concerning the coming of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon to strike the land of Egypt: **14** "Declare in Egypt, and proclaim in Migdol, and proclaim in Memphis (Nof) and in Tahpanhes (Tachpanches); say, 'Take your stand and prepare yourself, for the sword has devoured around you.' **15** Why has your mighty one been swept away? He has not stood, for the LORD has pushed him down. **16** He has multiplied the one who stumbles; also each man has fallen on his neighbor; and they said, 'Arise, and let us return to our people and to the land of our kindred, from before the sword of the oppressor.' **17** They called out there, 'Pharaoh the king of Egypt ***is*** a noise; he has let the appointed time pass by.' **18** ***As*** I live, declares the King, the LORD of armies ***is*** His name, surely like Tabor (Tavor) among the mountains, and like Carmel (Karmel) by the sea, he will come. **19** Make for yourself baggage for exile, O inhabitant, daughter of Egypt, for Memphis will become a horror, and it will be laid waste, without an inhabitant. **20** Egypt ***is*** a very beautiful heifer; a gadfly from the north is coming, is coming. **21** Also her hired soldiers in her midst ***are*** like calves of the stall, for they also have turned, they have fled together; they have not stood, for the day of their disaster has come on them, the time of their punishment. **22** Her sound goes like the serpent, for they go with an army, and with axes they come to her, like cutters of wood. **23** They have cut down her forest, declares the LORD, for it will not be searched; for they are more numerous than the locust, and there is no number to them. **24** The daughter of Egypt has been put to shame; she has been given into the hand of the people of the north. **25** The LORD of armies, the God of Israel (Yisra'el), says: Look, I am about to punish Amon of Thebes (No), and Pharaoh and Egypt and her gods and her kings, and Pharaoh and those who trust in him. **26** And I will give them into the hand of those who seek their life, and into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, and into the hand of his servants; and afterward it will dwell as ***in*** the days of old, declares the LORD.

Do Not Fear, O Jacob

27 And you, do not fear, O My servant Jacob (Ya'aqov), and do not be dismayed, O Israel; for look, I am about to save you from afar, and your offspring from the land of their captivity; and Jacob will return and be undisturbed and be at ease, and ***there will be*** none who terrifies ***him***. **28** You, do not fear, O My servant Jacob, declares the LORD, for I ***am*** with you; for I will make a full end of all the nations where I have driven you, and of you I will not make a full end; and I will discipline you in justice, and I will by no means leave you unpunished."

JEREMIAH 47

Against the Philistines

1 That which came ***as*** the word of the LORD to Jeremiah (Yirmeyahu) the prophet concerning the Philistines, before Pharaoh struck Gaza (Aza). **2** "Thus says the LORD: Look, waters are rising from the north, and they will become an overflowing torrent, and they will overflow a land and its fullness, a city and those who dwell in it; and the men will

46:13 Jer 43:10-13; Jer 44:30; Isa 19:1-25
46:14 Jer 44:1; Jer 46:10; Jer 46:3,4
46:15 Isa 66:15,16; Jer 46:5,21; Ps 18:14,39
46:16 Lev 26:36,37; Jer 51:9; Jer 46:21
46:17 Isa 19:11-16; Exod 15:9; 1 Kgs 20:10,18
46:18 Matt 5:35; 1 Tim 1:17; 1 Tim 6:15
46:19 Isa 20:4; Jer 48:18; Jer 44:1
46:20 Hos 10:11; Jer 47:2; Jer 46:6,10
46:21 2 Kgs 7:6; Jer 46:5,15,16; 2 Sam 10:6
46:22 Isa 29:4; Isa 14:8; Mic 1:8
46:23 Judg 7:12; Judg 6:5; Joel 2:25
46:24 Jer 1:15; Jer 46:11,19; Ps 137:8
46:25 Jer 43:12,13; Exod 12:12; Zeph 2:11
46:26 Jer 44:30; Ezek 32:11; Ezek 29:8-14
46:27 Jer 30:10,11; Jer 50:19; Isa 41:13,14
46:28 Jer 30:11; Jer 4:27; Jer 10:24
47:1 Jer 25:20; Gen 10:19; Zech 9:5-7
47:2 Isa 8:7,8; Jer 1:14; Jer 8:16

46:13 *the coming of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon to strike the land of Egypt* Egypt had lost at Carchemish but still felt safe at home behind its deserts and river. Now Babylon would come to Egypt itself. A Babylonian text fragment tells of a campaign against Egypt about 568 B.C. (see 43:8-13).
46:14 *proclaim in Migdol, and proclaim in Memphis and in Tahpanhes* The very towns where the Jews fleeing after Gedaliah's murder settled (43:7; 44:1). They thought Egypt was the safe place. The sword was coming there too.
46:17 *Pharaoh the king of Egypt is a noise* All talk and no action. Egypt promised Judah help more than once, and its help never came when it mattered (37:5-7).
46:18 *declares the King, the LORD of armies is His name* Pharaoh claimed to be a god-king, but the true King is the LORD. Like Tabor rising alone over the plain and Carmel towering over the sea, the conqueror God sends would stand over Egypt.
46:20 *Egypt is a very beautiful heifer* A sleek, proud young cow, a pointed picture in a land that worshiped a sacred bull. A stinging gadfly from the north would send her running.
46:21 *like calves of the stall* Egypt's hired soldiers were fattened and soft. When the day came they turned and ran.
46:22 *Her sound goes like the serpent* Egypt would hiss and slither away as the invaders came with axes like woodcutters, cutting down her forest. They would be more numerous than locusts.
46:25 *Amon of Thebes* Amon was Egypt's chief god, and Thebes, far up the Nile, was the center of his worship. God judged Egypt's gods as He had at the exodus (Exod 12:12). He also names "those who trust in him", pointing straight at the Jews who had fled to Egypt.
46:26 *afterward it will dwell as in the days of old* After judgment Egypt would be lived in again. This is the first of several restoration promises in these chapters (48:47; 49:6, 39). God judges because He is just, yet takes no pleasure in destruction (Ezek 33:11). Egypt did recover, and I believe the fullest answer comes in Messiah's kingdom, when Egypt will worship the LORD (Isa 19:25; Zech 14:16).
46:27 *do not fear, O My servant Jacob* Nearly the same as 30:10-11. If God could bring down Egypt, Judah might fear He would wipe them out too. He would not.
46:28 *of you I will not make a full end* Assyria, Babylon and the other empires of Jeremiah's day are gone. Israel is still here after more than twenty-five hundred years. Yet God would discipline them justly. His love does not ignore sin; it disciplines so His people are not lost (Heb 12:6).
47:1 *concerning the Philistines, before Pharaoh struck Gaza* The Philistines came from Caphtor, most likely Crete (Amos 9:7), and held five cities on the southern coast: Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Ekron and Gath. They fought Israel from the judges to David; Goliath was one of them. Scripture does not name this Pharaoh. It may have been Neco about 609 B.C. or a later king. The note dates the message to a time when Gaza still stood strong.
47:2 *waters are rising from the north* Babylon is the flood, the same picture used of Egypt (46:7-8), rising until it covers the land and every city in it.

cry out, and every inhabitant of the land will wail. **3** From the sound of the stamping of the hooves of his stallions, from the rattling of his chariotry, the din of his wheels, fathers have not turned back to ***their*** sons, from slackness of hands, **4** on account of the day that is coming to devastate all the Philistines, to cut off for Tyre (Tsor) and for Sidon (Tsidon) every survivor ***who*** helps; for the LORD is devastating the Philistines, the remnant of the coastland of Caphtor (Kaftor). **5** Baldness has come to Gaza; Ashkelon (Ashqelon) has been silenced, O remnant of their valley; until when will you cut yourself? **6** Alas, O sword of the LORD, until when will you not be quiet? Gather yourself into your sheath; rest and be still. **7** How can you be quiet, and the LORD has commanded it? Against Ashkelon and against the coast of the sea, there He has appointed it."

JEREMIAH 48

Against Moab

1 Of Moab (Mo'av). Thus says the LORD of armies, the God of Israel (Yisra'el): "Woe to Nebo (Nevo), for it has been devastated! Kiriathaim (Qiryatayim) has been put to shame; it has been captured; the stronghold has been put to shame, and it is shattered. **2** There is no longer praise of Moab; in Heshbon (Cheshbon) they have planned calamity against her: 'Come, and let us cut her off from ***being*** a nation.' Also, O Madmen, you will be silenced; the sword will go after you. **3** The sound of an outcry from Horonaim (Choronayim): devastation and great destruction! **4** Moab has been broken; her little ones have made an outcry heard. **5** For ***on*** the ascent of Luhith (Luchit) with weeping, weeping goes up; for on the descent of Horonaim they have heard the distresses of the outcry of destruction. **6** Flee, save your lives, and let them be like a juniper in the wilderness. **7** For because of your trusting in your works and in your treasures, you also will be captured; and Chemosh will go out into exile, his priests and his officials together. **8** And a destroyer will come to every city, and a city will not escape; and the valley will perish, and the plain will be destroyed, as the LORD has said. **9** Give a wing to Moab, for she will surely go out flying; and her cities will become a horror, without an inhabitant in them. **10** Cursed ***is*** he who does the work of the LORD with slackness, and cursed ***is*** he who withholds his sword from blood.

Moab Settled on His Lees

11 Moab has been at ease from his youth, and he has been undisturbed on his lees, and he has not been emptied from vessel to vessel, and into exile he has not gone; therefore his taste has remained in him, and his aroma has not been changed. **12** Therefore, look, days are coming, declares the LORD, and I will send to him tilters, and they will tilt him, and his vessels they will empty, and their jars they will smash. **13** And Moab will be ashamed of Chemosh, just as the house of Israel was ashamed of Bethel (Bet-El), their trust.

47:3 Jer 8:16; Judg 5:22; Jer 46:9
47:4 Amos 9:7; Isa 20:6; Deut 2:23
47:5 Jer 48:37; Jer 25:20; Mic 1:16
47:6 John 18:11; Jer 12:12; Ezek 21:3-5
47:7 Ezek 14:17; Mic 6:9; Isa 10:6
48:1 Jer 48:22,23; Num 32:3,37,38; Jer 25:21
48:2 Isa 16:14; Num 32:37; Jer 31:36
48:3 Isa 15:5; Jer 48:5,34; Jer 4:20,21
48:4 Num 21:27-30; Esth 8:11; Ps 137:9
48:5 Isa 15:5
48:6 Matt 24:16; Jer 17:6; Jer 51:6
48:7 Rev 18:7; Num 21:29; Jer 49:3
48:8 Jer 6:26; Jer 48:18; Jer 15:8
48:9 Jer 48:28; Ps 11:1; Isa 16:2
48:10 1 Sam 15:3,9,13-35; 1 Kgs 20:42; Judg 5:23
48:11 Zeph 1:12; Zech 1:15; Nah 2:2,10
48:12 Jer 48:8,15; Jer 25:9; Isa 16:2
48:13 Judg 11:24; Isa 45:16,20; Hos 8:5,6

47:3 *fathers have not turned back to their sons, from slackness of hands* The noise of hooves and chariots would make men's hands go limp, and they would run without grabbing their children. This is not God's pleasure but what war's terror does. When a nation trusts its own strength and that strength fails, fear overwhelms even a father's love.
47:4 *for the LORD is devastating the Philistines* Babylon was the tool, but the LORD was acting. Tyre and Sidon, their Phoenician allies, would lose all help. The Babylonian records tell that Nebuchadnezzar took Ashkelon in 604 B.C., and after the exile the Philistines disappear from history as a people.
47:5 *until when will you cut yourself* Shaving the head and cutting the body were pagan signs of grief and worship (16:6; 1 Kgs 18:28), forbidden to Israel (Deut 14:1). The Philistines grieved with no one to hear them. Believers grieve too, but not as those who have no hope (1 Thess 4:13).
47:6 *Alas, O sword of the LORD, until when will you not be quiet* The speaker may be the Philistines begging for the killing to stop, or, as many think, Jeremiah himself. He took no joy in announcing judgment, even on Israel's enemies (48:31-32; 9:1). Neither should we.
47:7 *there He has appointed it* The sword cannot rest because God has given it a task, but it is aimed. It goes where He sends it and no further. His judgment is never out of control. For those in Christ, the sword of God's justice fell on Jesus (Isa 53:5), and there is no condemnation left for us (Rom 8:1).
48:1 *Woe to Nebo, for it has been devastated* Nebo here is a town near the mountain where Moses viewed the promised land before he died (Deut 34:1). Moab came from Lot's older daughter (Gen 19:37). Israel was told not to attack it (Deut 2:9), yet Moab hired Balaam to curse Israel (Num 22) and fought her for centuries.
48:2 *There is no longer praise of Moab* Moab had been admired; now its name would be a byword. In Heshbon on its northern edge the enemy plotted to end it as a nation. Yet Ruth, David's great-grandmother, was a Moabitess, named in Jesus' family line (Ruth 4:13-17; Matt 1:5). God's grace has always reached beyond Israel.
48:5 *on the ascent of Luhith with weeping* The poem moves from town to town like a runner carrying bad news. Refugees climb one road and descend another, crying all the way.
48:6 *like a juniper in the wilderness* A small, scraggly desert bush standing alone. That is how Moab's scattered refugees would look.
48:7 *because of your trusting in your works and in your treasures* Moab trusted what it had built and owned. Its national god Chemosh, for whom Solomon once built a high place (1 Kgs 11:7), would be carried into exile like luggage, as conquerors hauled off the idols of nations they beat. A god who must be carried cannot carry you (Isa 46:1-4).
48:9 *Give a wing to Moab* Moab would need wings to escape the destroyer coming to every town, valley and plain.
48:10 *cursed is he who withholds his sword from blood* Spoken to the army God was sending against Moab. In this one judgment they were His tools and must finish the work, the lesson Saul failed to learn (1 Sam 15). It is not a command for anyone today to take up the sword. The principle beneath it does apply: God's work is never to be done halfway (Col 3:23).
48:11 *he has been undisturbed on his lees* Wine was poured carefully from jar to jar to leave the dregs behind. Wine left on its lees grew thick and harsh. Moab had never been poured out by exile, so its pride stayed unchanged. Ease is not always a blessing, and God often changes us most through hard times (Zeph 1:12).
48:12 *I will send to him tilters* Men who tip the jars would empty Moab's vessels and smash them. Moab would finally be poured out.
48:13 *just as the house of Israel was ashamed of Bethel, their trust* Bethel was where Jeroboam set up a golden calf (1 Kgs 12:28-29). It did not save Israel from Assyria, and Chemosh would fail Moab the same way.

14 How do you say, 'We ***are*** mighty men, and men of strength for battle'? **15** Moab has been devastated, and he has gone up ***into*** her cities, and the choicest of his young men have gone down to the slaughter, declares the King, the LORD of armies ***is*** His name. **16** The disaster of Moab ***is*** near to come, and his calamity has hastened exceedingly. **17** Show sympathy to him, all who ***are*** around him, and all who know his name; say, 'How the staff of strength is broken, the rod of splendor!' **18** Come down from glory and sit in thirst, O inhabitant, daughter of Dibon (Divon); for the destroyer of Moab has come up against you; he has ruined your strongholds. **19** Stand by the road and watch, O inhabitant of Aroer (Aro'er); ask him who flees and her who escapes; say, 'What has happened?' **20** Moab has been put to shame, for it has been shattered. Wail and cry out! Declare at the Arnon that Moab has been devastated. **21** And judgment has come to the land of the plain, to Holon (Cholon) and to Jahaz (Yahats) and upon Mephaath (Mefa'at), **22** and upon Dibon and upon Nebo and upon Beth-diblathaim (Bet-Divlatayim), **23** and upon Kiriathaim and upon Beth-gamul (Bet-Gamul) and upon Beth-meon (Bet-Meon), **24** and upon Kerioth (Qeriyot) and upon Bozrah (Botsra) and upon all the cities of the land of Moab, the far and the near. **25** The horn of Moab has been cut off, and his arm has been broken, declares the LORD. **26** Make him drunk, for he has magnified himself against the LORD; and Moab will wallow in his vomit, and he also will become a laughingstock. **27** And was not Israel a laughingstock to you? Or was he found among thieves, that as often as your words ***were*** about him you shook yourself? **28** Abandon cities and dwell in the rock, O inhabitants of Moab, and be like a dove ***that*** makes a nest in the sides of the mouth of a ravine.

The Pride of Moab

29 We have heard the pride of Moab, very proud: his haughtiness and his pride and his arrogance and the loftiness of his heart. **30** I, I know his fury, declares the LORD, and ***it is*** not right; his empty boasts, they have done ***what is*** not right. **31** Therefore over Moab I will wail, and for Moab, all of it, I will cry out; for the men of Kir-heres (Qir-Cheres) one will moan. **32** More than the weeping of Jazer (Yazer) I will weep for you, O vine of Sibmah (Sivma); your tendrils passed over ***the*** sea; they reached as far as the sea of Jazer; upon your summer fruit and upon your grape harvest a destroyer has fallen. **33** And joy and rejoicing have been removed from the garden land and from the land of Moab; and wine from wine-presses I have made to cease; no one will tread ***with*** shouting; the shouting ***is*** no shouting. **34** From the outcry of Heshbon as far as Elealeh (Elale), as far as Jahaz, they have given their voice, from Zoar (Tso'ar) as far as Horonaim, ***to*** Eglath-shelishiyah (Eglat-Shelishiya); for also the waters of Nimrim will become desolations. **35** And I will put an end for Moab, declares the LORD, to him who offers up ***on*** a high place and him who burns incense to his gods. **36** Therefore my heart moans for Moab like flutes, and my heart moans for the men of Kir-heres like flutes; therefore the abundance ***that*** he made has perished. **37** For every head ***is*** baldness, and every beard ***is*** clipped; on all hands ***are*** gashes, and on ***the*** loins sackcloth. **38** On all the roofs of Moab and in her open places, all of it ***is*** lamentation; for I have broken Moab like a vessel in which there is no pleasure, declares the LORD. **39** How it has been shattered! They have wailed! How Moab

48:14 Ps 33:16; Isa 10:13,16; Jer 8:8
48:15 James 5:4; Rev 19:16; Jer 50:27
48:16 Isa 13:22; Jer 1:12; Deut 32:35
48:17 Rev 18:20; Isa 9:4; Jer 48:31-33
48:18 Isa 47:1; Num 21:30; Isa 15:2
48:19 Deut 2:36; 1 Sam 4:13,14,16; Num 32:34
48:20 Isa 16:2; Jer 48:1-5; Isa 15:1-5,8
48:21 Josh 13:18; Isa 15:4; Jer 48:8
48:22 Num 33:46; Jer 48:1,18; Num 32:34
48:23 Josh 13:17; Jer 48:1; Gen 14:5
48:24 Amos 2:2; Jer 48:41; Deut 4:43
48:25 Ps 75:10; Ps 10:15; Zech 1:19-21
48:26 Isa 29:9; Jer 48:42; Isa 19:14
48:27 Jer 2:26; Mic 7:8-10; Lam 2:15-17
48:28 Judg 6:2; Ps 55:6,7; Song 2:14
48:29 Isa 16:6; Ps 138:6; Prov 8:13
48:30 Jer 50:36; Isa 16:6; Isa 37:28,29
48:31 Isa 15:5; 2 Kgs 3:25; Jer 48:36
48:32 Isa 16:8,9; Num 21:32; Josh 13:19
48:33 Isa 5:10; Hag 2:16; Jer 25:9,10
48:34 Isa 15:4-6; Num 32:3; Jer 48:2
48:35 Isa 15:2; Isa 16:12; Jer 48:7
48:36 Isa 15:7; Isa 16:11; Isa 15:5
48:37 Jer 41:5; Jer 47:5; Isa 15:2,3
48:38 Jer 22:28; Isa 22:1; Jer 25:34
48:39 Rev 18:9; Jer 48:17; Lam 1:1

48:15 *declares the King, the LORD of armies is His name* Moab's soldiers bragged of their strength (48:14), but its best young men would fall. The nations had their kings; there is one King over them all.
48:17 *How the staff of strength is broken, the rod of splendor* The staff and rod were signs of a ruler's power. Neighbors are told to mourn as Moab's power snaps like a stick.
48:18 *Come down from glory and sit in thirst, O inhabitant, daughter of Dibon* Dibon was one of Moab's chief cities. Its proud people would come down and sit in the dust.
48:19 *Stand by the road and watch, O inhabitant of Aroer* Aroer sat on the edge of the Arnon gorge, Moab's northern border. Its people would watch refugees stream past and ask what had happened.
48:24 *all the cities of the land of Moab, the far and the near* Jeremiah lists eleven towns (48:21-24) and then adds every other one. No town would be missed.
48:25 *The horn of Moab has been cut off* A horn, like a bull's, pictured strength; the arm was the power to fight. Both would be gone.
48:26 *Make him drunk, for he has magnified himself against the LORD* Drunkenness pictures the cup of God's wrath (25:15-17). Moab would stagger and become a laughingstock.
48:27 *was not Israel a laughingstock to you* Moab had mocked Israel and shaken its head at her troubles. That mockery would come back on Moab. God takes it personally when people laugh at His people's suffering (Zeph 2:8-10).
48:29 *his haughtiness and his pride and his arrogance and the loftiness of his heart* Four words for pride in a row. Isaiah said nearly the same (Isa 16:6). Pride was Moab's root sin, and it still goes before a fall (Prov 16:18). God opposes the proud and gives grace to the humble (Jas 4:6).
48:31 *Therefore over Moab I will wail* The LORD Himself speaks, and the prophet feels it with Him. God judges Moab, and He weeps over Moab. He is no cold judge who enjoys punishing. Jesus showed the same heart weeping over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41).
48:32 *O vine of Sibmah* Moab was famous for vineyards whose tendrils spread far. The destroyer would fall on the harvest, and the shouting of grape treaders would stop.
48:35 *him who offers up on a high place* A high place was a hilltop shrine, usually for idols. Moab's false worship would end.
48:36 *my heart moans for Moab like flutes* Flutes were played at funerals (Matt 9:23). The prophet's heart played a funeral song for Moab.
48:37 *every head is baldness, and every beard is clipped* Shaved heads, clipped beards, cuts and sackcloth, the rough goat's-hair cloth of grief, were the signs of mourning in that world.
48:38 *like a vessel in which there is no pleasure* The potter picture again (18:4; 19:10-11). Moab would be broken like a useless jar.

has turned ***his*** back, ashamed! And Moab will become a laughingstock and a terror to all around him. **40** For thus says the LORD: Look, like the eagle he will swoop, and he will spread his wings toward Moab. **41** Kerioth has been captured, and the strongholds have been seized; and the heart of the mighty men of Moab will be in that day like the heart of a woman in labor. **42** And Moab will be destroyed from ***being*** a people, for he has magnified himself against the LORD. **43** Terror and pit and snare ***are*** upon you, O inhabitant of Moab, declares the LORD. **44** He who flees from before the terror will fall into the pit, and he who climbs up from the pit will be caught in the snare; for I will bring upon her, upon Moab, the year of their punishment, declares the LORD. **45** In the shadow of Heshbon those who flee have stood without strength; for a fire has gone out from Heshbon, and a flame from the midst of Sihon (Sichon), and it has consumed the forehead of Moab and the scalp of the sons of uproar. **46** Woe to you, O Moab! The people of Chemosh has perished; for your sons have been taken into captivity, and your daughters into captivity. **47** And I will turn back the captivity of Moab at the end of the days, declares the LORD." Thus far ***is*** the judgment of Moab.

JEREMIAH 49

Against Ammon

1 Of the sons of Ammon (Amon). Thus says the LORD: "Has Israel (Yisra'el) no sons? Or has he no heir? Why has Milcom dispossessed Gad, and ***why*** has his people dwelt in its cities? **2** Therefore, look, days are coming, declares the LORD, and I will make a shout of battle heard against Rabbah (Raba) of the sons of Ammon; and it will become a mound of desolation, and her daughters will be burned with fire; and Israel will dispossess those who dispossessed him, says the LORD. **3** Wail, O Heshbon (Cheshbon), for Ai (Ay) has been devastated! Cry out, O daughters of Rabbah; gird on sackcloth; mourn and run to and fro among the walls; for Milcom will go into exile, his priests and his officials together. **4** Why do you boast in the valleys? Your valley is flowing, O backsliding daughter, who trusts in her treasures, ***saying***, 'Who will come against me?' **5** Look, I am about to bring terror upon you, declares the Lord GOD of armies, from all who ***are*** around you; and you will be driven out, each man before him, and there will be none who gathers the fugitive. **6** And afterward I will turn back the captivity of the sons of Ammon, declares the LORD."

Against Edom

7 Of Edom. Thus says the LORD of armies: "Is there no longer wisdom in Teman? Has counsel perished from those who understand? Has their wisdom been corrupted? **8** Flee, turn back, go deep to dwell, O inhabitants of Dedan; for I have brought the disaster of Esau (Esav) upon him, the time ***that*** I punish him. **9** If grape gatherers came to you, would they not leave gleanings? If thieves ***came*** in the night, they would destroy ***only*** their sufficiency. **10** For I, I have stripped Esau bare; I have uncovered his hiding places, and he will not be able to hide himself; his seed has been devastated, and his

48:40 Deut 28:49; Isa 8:8; Jer 49:22
48:41 1 Thess 5:3; Isa 13:8; Isa 21:3
48:42 Jer 48:2; Isa 7:8; Isa 37:23
48:43 Isa 24:17,18; Lam 3:47; Deut 32:23-25
48:44 1 Kgs 19:17; Jer 11:23; Amos 5:19
48:45 Num 24:17; Num 21:28; Amos 2:2
48:46 Num 21:29; Jer 48:7,13; Judg 11:24
48:47 Jer 49:6,39; Jer 46:26; Isa 18:7
49:1 Deut 23:3; 2 Chr 20:1,23; Ezek 21:28-32
49:2 Jer 4:19; Deut 3:11; Ezek 21:20
49:3 Jer 48:7; Isa 15:2; Jer 48:37
49:4 Rev 18:7; Jer 9:23; 1 Tim 6:17
49:5 Jer 49:29; Jer 46:5; Jer 15:8
49:6 Jer 49:39; Jer 48:47; Jer 46:26
49:7 Gen 25:30; Amos 1:11,12; Jer 49:20
49:8 Matt 24:16; Matt 24:18; Jer 25:23
49:9 Obad 1:5,6; Isa 17:6
49:10 Rom 9:13; Isa 17:14; Mal 1:3,4

48:40 *like the eagle he will swoop* The eagle is Nebuchadnezzar, swift and strong (Ezek 17:3). The hearts of Moab's mighty men would be gripped with fear like a woman in labor.
48:42 *Moab will be destroyed from being a people* This came true. Babylon subdued Moab in the years after Jerusalem fell, often dated about 582 B.C., and in time the Moabites disappeared as a separate people.
48:43 *Terror and pit and snare* Isaiah used the same words (Isa 24:17-18). In Hebrew they sound alike: pachad, pachat, pach. Like a hunted animal, whoever escaped one trap fell into the next. Sin does that: it promises escape and closes every door. The only way out is to turn to God (1 Cor 10:13).
48:45 *a fire has gone out from Heshbon, and a flame from the midst of Sihon* Lines from an old song sung when Israel defeated Sihon, the Amorite king who had taken land from Moab (Num 21:28-29). The forehead of Moab echoes Balaam's star from Jacob who would crush Moab (Num 24:17), which many see as the Messiah.
48:47 *I will turn back the captivity of Moab at the end of the days* After all the woe, the last word is mercy. To turn back the captivity means to restore. The end of the days points to Messiah's kingdom, when people from Moab's land will worship the true God among every nation (Rev 5:9). If God had mercy for the nation that hired Balaam, there is mercy for anyone who comes to Him.
49:1 *Why has Milcom dispossessed Gad* The Ammonites also came from Lot (Gen 19:38) and lived around Rabbah, where Amman, Jordan, stands today. When Assyria carried off the northern tribes in 722 B.C., Ammon moved into Gad's land east of the Jordan. Did they think Israel had no heir? The land was Israel's by God's gift. Milcom, also called Molech, was Ammon's god (1 Kgs 11:7).
49:2 *Israel will dispossess those who dispossessed him* Rabbah would become a mound of ruins and its surrounding towns, her daughters, would burn. Ammon was a cruel nation (Amos 1:13), and what it took would be given back.
49:3 *Milcom will go into exile, his priests and his officials together* The same words used of Chemosh (48:7). The gods of the nations could not even save themselves.
49:4 *Who will come against me* Ammon's land was well watered and rich, and she trusted her treasures. That question is the voice of every proud heart. The answer was God Himself.
49:6 *afterward I will turn back the captivity* Mercy after judgment, as with Egypt and Moab (46:26; 48:47). Ammon disappeared as a separate people long ago, but God's word does not fail. I believe its fullest answer comes when the Messiah reigns and the nations come to worship Him.
49:7 *Is there no longer wisdom in Teman* Edom came from Esau, Jacob's twin (Gen 25:30), and lived in the mountains south and east of the Dead Sea. Close relatives, they were bitter enemies and cheered Jerusalem's fall (Ps 137:7; Obad 10-14). Teman was famous for wise men such as Eliphaz (Job 2:11), but worldly wisdom cannot protect a nation set against God (1 Cor 1:20).
49:8 *O inhabitants of Dedan* Dedan was a trading people to the southeast. They were warned to get away and hide, because disaster was coming on Esau.
49:9 *If grape gatherers came to you, would they not leave gleanings* Much of Edom's message is shared with Obadiah (Obad 1-9). Harvesters leave gleanings and thieves take only what they want, but God would strip Esau bare.

brothers and his neighbors, and he is no more. **11** Leave your fatherless; I, I will keep ***them*** alive; and your widows, let them trust in Me. **12** For thus says the LORD: Look, those whose judgment was not to drink the cup will certainly drink ***it***; and are you the one who will be altogether exempt from punishment? You will not be exempt from punishment, for you will certainly drink ***it***. **13** For by Myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, that Bozrah (Botsra) will become a horror, a reproach, a ruin, and a curse; and all her cities will become everlasting ruins. **14** I have heard a report from the LORD, and an envoy has been sent among the nations: 'Gather together and come against her, and rise up for battle!' **15** For look, I have made you small among the nations, despised among mankind. **16** Your terribleness has deceived you, the arrogance of your heart, O you who dwell in the clefts of the rock, who hold the height of the hill; though you make your nest high like the eagle, from there I will bring you down, declares the LORD. **17** And Edom will become a horror; everyone who passes by her will be appalled and will hiss at all her wounds. **18** Like the overthrow of Sodom (Sedom) and Gomorrah (Amora) and her neighbors, says the LORD, no man will dwell there, and no son of man will sojourn in her. **19** Look, like a lion he will go up from the thicket of the Jordan (Yarden) to the ever-flowing pasture; for in a moment I will make him run from her; and whoever is chosen, I will appoint over her. For who ***is*** like Me? And who will summon Me? And who ***is*** this shepherd who will stand before Me? **20** Therefore hear the counsel of the LORD which He has counseled against Edom, and His purposes which He has purposed against the inhabitants of Teman: surely the little ones of the flock will drag them away; surely he will make their pasture desolate over them. **21** From the sound of their fall the earth has shaken; ***there is*** an outcry; at the Red Sea its sound has been heard. **22** Look, like the eagle he will go up and swoop, and he will spread his wings over Bozrah; and the heart of the mighty men of Edom will be in that day like the heart of a woman in labor."

Against Damascus

23 Of Damascus (Dameseq). "Hamath (Chamat) has been put to shame, and Arpad, for they have heard a bad report; they have melted away; in the sea ***there is*** anxiety; it is not able to be quiet. **24** Damascus has grown slack; she has turned to flee, and panic has taken hold ***of her***; distress and pains have seized her, like a woman giving birth. **25** How has the city of praise not been forsaken, the town of my joy! **26** Therefore her young men will fall in her open places, and all the men of war will be silenced in that day, declares the LORD of armies. **27** And I will kindle a fire on the wall of Damascus, and it will consume the fortresses of Ben-hadad."

Against Kedar and Hazor

28 Of Kedar (Qedar) and of the kingdoms of Hazor (Chatsor), which Nebuchadnezzar (Nevukhadretsar) the king of Babylon (Bavel) struck. Thus says the LORD: "Arise, go up against Kedar, and devastate the sons of the east. **29** Their tents and their flocks they will take; their tent curtains and all their equipment and their camels they will carry off for themselves; and they will call out against them, 'Terror ***is*** from all around!' **30** Flee, wander far away, go deep to dwell, O inhabitants of Hazor, declares the LORD; for Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon has counseled counsel against you, and he has purposed a purpose against you. **31** Arise, go up against a nation at ease, which dwells in security, declares the LORD; it

49:11 Ps 68:5; Hos 14:3; Deut 10:18
49:12 Matt 20:22; Jer 25:28,29; Obad 1:16
49:13 Gal 3:13; Gen 22:16; Gen 36:33
49:14 Isa 30:4; Jer 51:46; Isa 37:7
49:15 1 Sam 2:7,8,30; Ps 53:5; Obad 1:2
49:16 Job 39:27; Amos 9:2; Isa 14:13-15
49:17 Ezek 35:7,15; Jer 50:13; Jer 49:13
49:18 2 Pet 2:6; Jude 1:7; Rom 9:29
49:19 Jer 12:5; Jer 4:7; Jer 50:44-46
49:20 Jer 50:45; Mal 1:3,4; Jer 49:7
49:21 Jer 50:46; Isa 14:4-15; Ezek 26:15-18
49:22 1 Thess 5:3; Jer 48:40,41; Hos 8:1
49:23 Luke 21:25; 2 Cor 11:32; 2 Kgs 18:34
49:25 Rev 18:10; Jer 33:9; Jer 51:41
49:26 Jer 50:30; Jer 11:22; Amos 4:10
49:27 Amos 1:3-5; 1 Kgs 15:18-20; 1 Kgs 20:1-22
49:28 Gen 25:13; Judg 6:3; Isa 11:14
49:29 Jer 6:25; Jer 46:5; Ps 120:5
49:30 Jer 25:9,24,25; Jer 27:6; Isa 10:7
49:31 Ezek 38:11; Isa 47:8; Num 23:9

49:11 *Leave your fatherless; I, I will keep them alive* In the middle of judgment God stops to speak of orphans and widows, those who could not help themselves. He is a Father to the fatherless (Ps 68:5). Even in judgment He sees the weak, and He invites the helpless to trust in Him.
49:12 *those whose judgment was not to drink the cup will certainly drink it* The cup is God's wrath (25:15-29). Most likely this means Judah, His own people. If He did not spare them, how could Edom expect to escape? Judgment begins with the house of God (1 Pet 4:17).
49:13 *by Myself I have sworn* There is no one greater to swear by. Bozrah, a chief city of Edom, would become everlasting ruins.
49:16 *though you make your nest high like the eagle, from there I will bring you down* Edom's cities sat high in the cliffs behind narrow passes, and they felt no army could reach them. Pride deceives us into thinking we are safe. Mountains can keep out armies, but not God. Feeling too high to need Him is the most dangerous place to be.
49:18 *Like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah* This came true. Edom was overrun after Jerusalem fell, and by Malachi's day, about 430 B.C., its mountains lay waste (Mal 1:3). Some Edomites moved into southern Judah and were later called Idumeans; Herod the Great came from them. After the Roman wars of the first century A.D. they vanish from history.
49:19 *like a lion he will go up from the thicket of the Jordan* The thick brush along the Jordan sheltered lions in those days (12:5). No shepherd of any nation can stand before God or summon Him to court.
49:20 *the little ones of the flock will drag them away* Even the weakest of the enemy would be enough to carry off Edom.
49:22 *he will spread his wings over Bozrah* The eagle again, as over Moab (48:40). Unlike Egypt, Moab, Ammon and Elam, Edom receives no promise of restoration here. Obadiah ends the same way, with Edom cut off and the kingdom the LORD's (Obad 10, 18, 21). Scripture does not give every reason for the difference, and I will not guess beyond it.
49:23 *Of Damascus* The capital of Aram, our Syria, with Hamath and Arpad to its north. At the bad news they melted with fear.
49:25 *the town of my joy* Possibly the voice of a citizen of Damascus mourning the city he loved.
49:27 *it will consume the fortresses of Ben-hadad* Amos used almost the same words (Amos 1:4). Ben-hadad was the name of several kings of Damascus who fought Israel (1 Kgs 20; 2 Kgs 6:24). Assyria took Damascus in 732 B.C. (2 Kgs 16:9), but it rose again; now Babylon would take it. Damascus still stands, and on its road the risen Jesus met Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9:3-6).
49:28 *Of Kedar and of the kingdoms of Hazor* Kedar was an Arab tribe from Ishmael (Gen 25:13), desert people with black goat-hair tents and camels (Song 1:5; Isa 21:16-17). This Hazor is not the Canaanite city in Galilee but most likely the unwalled Arab settlements of the desert. Babylonian records tell of a raid by Nebuchadnezzar against the Arabs about 599 B.C.
49:31 *it has no doors and no bar; they dwell alone* They had no walls because they thought no one would bother to attack them. Distance and poverty do not put anyone beyond God's reach.

has no doors and no bar; they dwell alone. **32** And their camels will become spoil, and the multitude of their livestock plunder; and I will scatter to every wind those who are clipped at the corner ***of the hair***, and from all its sides I will bring their disaster, declares the LORD. **33** And Hazor will become a habitation of jackals, a desolation forever; no man will dwell there, and no son of man will sojourn in her."

Against Elam

34 That which came ***as*** the word of the LORD to Jeremiah (Yirmeyahu) the prophet concerning Elam, at the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah (Tsidqiya) the king of Judah (Yehuda), saying, **35** "Thus says the LORD of armies: Look, I am about to break the bow of Elam, the chief of their might. **36** And I will bring upon Elam four winds from the four ends of the heavens, and I will scatter them to all these winds; and there will be no nation to which the outcasts of Elam will not come. **37** And I will shatter Elam before their enemies and before those who seek their life; and I will bring calamity upon them, the burning of My anger, declares the LORD; and I will send the sword after them until I have made an end of them. **38** And I will set My throne in Elam, and I will destroy from there king and officials, declares the LORD. **39** And it will be at the end of the days ***that*** I will turn back the captivity of Elam, declares the LORD."

JEREMIAH 50

Against Babylon

1 The word which the LORD spoke concerning Babylon (Bavel), concerning the land of ***the*** Chaldeans (Kasdim), by the hand of Jeremiah (Yirmeyahu) the prophet: **2** Declare among the nations, and proclaim, and lift up a standard; proclaim, do not hide ***it***; say, "Babylon has been captured; Bel has been put to shame; Marduk (Merodakh) has been shattered; her images have been put to shame; her idols have been shattered." **3** For a nation has come up against her from ***the*** north; it will make her land into a horror, and ***there*** will not be an inhabitant in it; from man even to beast they have wandered off, they have gone. **4** In those days and at that time, declares the LORD, the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) will come, they and the sons of Judah (Yehuda) together; going on and weeping they will go, and the LORD their God they will seek. **5** ***For*** Zion (Tsiyon) they will ask, ***with*** their faces ***toward*** the way hither: "Come!" And they will join themselves to the LORD ***in*** an everlasting covenant ***that*** will not be forgotten. **6** My people have been lost sheep; their shepherds have caused them to wander; ***on*** the mountains they have turned them away; from mountain to hill they have gone; they have forgotten their resting place. **7** All who found them have devoured them; and their adversaries have said, "We are not guilty, because they have sinned against the LORD, the habitation of righteousness, and the hope of their fathers, the LORD." **8** Wander away from the midst of Babylon, and from the land of ***the*** Chaldeans go out, and be like male goats before the flock. **9** For look, I am about to stir up and bring up against Babylon an assembly of great nations from a land of ***the*** north; and they will set themselves in array against her; from there she will be captured. Its arrows ***are*** like a skillful mighty man ***who*** does not return empty. **10** And ***the*** Chaldeans will become spoil; all who spoil her will

49:32 Jer 9:26; Jer 49:36; Ezek 5:10,12
49:33 Jer 9:11; Jer 10:22; Jer 51:37
49:34 Jer 25:25; Gen 10:22; Gen 14:1
49:35 Isa 22:6; Jer 51:56; Ps 46:9
49:36 Rev 7:1; Jer 49:32; Dan 8:8,22
49:37 Jer 9:16; Jer 48:2; Jer 49:5,22,24,29
49:38 Jer 43:10; Dan 7:9-14
49:39 Jer 48:47; Isa 2:2; Ezek 38:16
50:1 Acts 7:4; Rev 18:2; Rev 18:10
50:2 Rev 18:2; Rev 14:8; Isa 46:1
50:3 Zeph 1:3; Jer 50:9,41; Jer 51:11,27,48
50:4 Hos 3:5; Hos 1:11; Isa 11:12,13
50:5 2 Cor 8:5; Heb 8:7; Heb 8:8
50:6 Mark 6:34; Luke 15:6; Isa 53:6
50:7 Jer 14:8; Jer 2:3; Jer 40:2,3
50:8 2 Cor 6:17; Jer 51:6,45; Isa 48:20
50:9 Jer 50:3,21,26,41,42; Jer 15:14; Jer 51:1-4,11,27,28
50:10 Jer 25:12; Jer 27:7; Isa 33:4,23

49:32 *those who are clipped at the corner of the hair* A custom of some desert tribes who trimmed the hair at the temples (9:26; 25:23). They would be scattered to every wind.
49:34 *concerning Elam, at the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah* About 597 B.C. Elam lay far east of Babylon in what is now southwest Iran. Its chief city Susa is where Daniel saw a vision and Nehemiah and Esther later lived (Dan 8:2; Neh 1:1; Esth 1:2).
49:35 *I am about to break the bow of Elam, the chief of their might* Elam was known for its archers (Isa 22:6). God would break the very thing they were best at.
49:38 *I will set My throne in Elam* God would show that He, not Elam's kings, rules there. Elam was later swallowed by Persia, and Susa became a Persian royal city. His throne is over every land.
49:39 *at the end of the days that I will turn back the captivity of Elam* The last restoration promise in these chapters, to a far-off nation, shows God's purposes reach the ends of the earth. Elamites heard the gospel at Pentecost (Acts 2:9), a first taste. I believe the full turning back points to Messiah's kingdom, when the nations come to Him.
50:1 *concerning Babylon, concerning the land of the Chaldeans* The longest oracle in the book (chapters 50-51) is saved for the empire that destroyed Jerusalem. The Chaldeans were the people ruling Babylon in Jeremiah's day. The tool of God's judgment would itself be judged.
50:2 *Bel has been put to shame; Marduk has been shattered* Marduk was Babylon's chief god, and Bel, meaning lord, was one of his titles. Babylon thought its god had made it great. The true God would shame him before the nations.
50:3 *a nation has come up against her from the north* All through Jeremiah the enemy from the north was Babylon (1:14; 4:6). Now Babylon would face its own. The Medes, from the mountains north and east, joined the Persians under Cyrus and took the city in 539 B.C. (Dan 5:30-31).
50:4 *they and the sons of Judah together; going on and weeping they will go* Israel and Judah, divided since about 930 B.C., return as one people (Ezek 37:15-22), and they come weeping in repentance, seeking God, not only going home.
50:5 *an everlasting covenant that will not be forgotten* The new covenant of 31:31-34 and 32:40. It was fulfilled in part when a remnant came home after Cyrus' decree in 538 B.C. (Ezra 1:1), but the nation did not turn with all its heart. I believe the full answer comes in the last days, when Israel looks on Him whom they pierced (Zech 12:10) and all Israel is saved (Rom 11:26).
50:6 *their shepherds have caused them to wander* Judah's kings, priests and false prophets (23:1-2) led the flock to the idol shrines on the hills, and the sheep forgot their true resting place, God Himself. Jesus is the good shepherd who leads His lost sheep home (John 10:11).
50:7 *We are not guilty, because they have sinned against the LORD* Judah had sinned, but Babylon did not destroy Judah to serve God. It acted from greed and cruelty and would answer for it. God can use a nation as His tool and still judge it for its own evil (Isa 10:5-12).
50:8 *be like male goats before the flock* The male goats walked out in front when a flock moved. God's people were to be first out of Babylon.

be satisfied, declares the LORD. **11** Because you rejoice, because you exult, O plunderers of My inheritance, because you skip about like a heifer threshing, and you neigh like the mighty ***horses***, **12** your mother has been greatly ashamed; she who bore you has been abashed. Look, the last of the nations ***is*** a wilderness, a dry land, and a desert plain. **13** Because of the wrath of the LORD she will not be inhabited, and she will be a desolation, all of her; everyone who passes by Babylon will be appalled and will hiss because of all her wounds. **14** Set yourselves in array against Babylon all around, all ***you*** who bend a bow; shoot at her; do not spare an arrow, for she has sinned against the LORD. **15** Shout against her all around; she has given her hand; her towers have fallen; her walls have been torn down. For it ***is*** the vengeance of the LORD; take vengeance on her; just as she has done, do to her. **16** Cut off the sower from Babylon, and the one who wields a sickle at the time of harvest; from before the sword of the oppressor each one will turn to his people, and each one will flee to his land.

Israel Restored and Forgiven

17 Israel ***is*** a scattered sheep; lions have driven ***him*** away. The first, the king of Assyria (Ashur), devoured him; and this last, Nebuchadnezzar (Nevukhadretsar) the king of Babylon, has gnawed his bones. **18** Therefore thus says the LORD of armies, the God of Israel: "Look, I am about to punish the king of Babylon and his land, just as I punished the king of Assyria. **19** And I will bring Israel back to his pasture, and he will graze ***on*** the Carmel (Karmel) and the Bashan, and in the hill country of Ephraim (Efrayim) and the Gilead (Gilad) his soul will be satisfied. **20** In those days and at that time, declares the LORD, the iniquity of Israel will be sought, and ***there*** will be none, and the sins of Judah, and they will not be found; for I will forgive those whom I leave as a remnant." **21** Against the land of Merathaim (Meratayim), go up against it, and against the inhabitants of Pekod (Peqod); slay and devote ***them*** to destruction after them, declares the LORD, and do according to all that I have commanded you. **22** A sound of battle ***is*** in the land, and great destruction. **23** How the hammer of all the earth has been cut down and broken! How Babylon has become a horror among the nations! **24** I set a snare for you, and you were also captured, O Babylon, and you yourself did not know; you were found and also seized, because you engaged in strife against the LORD. **25** The LORD has opened His treasury, and He has brought out the weapons of His indignation; for it ***is*** a work for the Lord GOD of armies in the land of ***the*** Chaldeans. **26** Come against her from ***the*** end; open her granaries; pile her up like heaps, and devote her to destruction; let ***there*** not be a remnant for her. **27** Slay all her young bulls; let them go down to the slaughter. Woe on them! For their day has come, the time of their punishment. **28** The sound of fugitives and escapees from the land of Babylon, to declare in Zion the vengeance of the LORD our God, the vengeance of His temple! **29** Summon archers against Babylon, all who bend a bow; encamp against her all around; let ***there*** not be an escape for her; repay her according to her deed; according to all that she has done, do to her; for she has acted proudly against the LORD, against the Holy One of Israel. **30** Therefore her young men will fall in her open places, and all her men of war will be silenced in that day, declares the LORD. **31** Look, I ***am*** against you, O arrogance, declares the Lord GOD of armies, for your day has come, the time ***when*** I will punish you. **32** And arrogance will stumble and fall, and ***there*** will be none to raise him up; and I will kindle a fire in his cities, and it will devour all around him.

50:11 Rev 11:10; Isa 47:6; Prov 17:5
50:12 Rev 17:5; Rev 18:21; Rev 18:23
50:13 Jer 18:16; Jer 49:17; Zech 1:15
50:14 Rev 17:5; Jer 50:29,42; Jer 50:9
50:15 Rev 18:6; Rom 12:19; Jer 46:10
50:16 Isa 13:14; Jer 46:16; Jer 51:9
50:17 Matt 9:38; Jer 2:15; Jer 50:6
50:18 Isa 37:36-38; Ezek 31:3-17; Nah 1:1-3
50:19 Ezek 34:13,14; Mic 7:14,18; Jer 31:6
50:20 Rom 11:26; Heb 8:10; Mic 7:19
50:21 Ezek 23:23; Jer 50:3,9,15; Jer 34:22
50:22 Jer 4:19-21; Jer 51:54-56; Isa 21:2-4
50:23 Jer 51:20-24; Isa 14:4-6,12-17; Rev 18:16
50:24 Dan 5:30,31; Job 9:4; Job 40:2,9
50:25 Rev 18:8; Jer 50:15; Jer 50:35-38
50:26 Rev 18:21; Isa 14:23; Jer 50:10
50:27 Rev 18:10; Jer 46:21; Isa 34:7
50:28 Isa 48:20; Jer 50:15; Lam 1:10
50:29 Rev 18:6; Jer 51:56; Isa 47:10
50:30 Jer 49:26; Jer 9:21; Jer 18:21
50:31 Rev 18:8; Jer 21:13; Nah 2:13
50:32 Rev 18:8; Jer 21:14; Jer 49:27

50:11 *O plunderers of My inheritance* Babylon plundered God's people and frisked over it like a threshing heifer, which ate as she worked and grew fat.
50:12 *the last of the nations is a wilderness* The mother is the land of Babylon itself. The greatest empire would become the last of the nations.
50:13 *will hiss because of all her wounds* The same words spoken over Jerusalem (19:8) now fall on Babylon.
50:15 *just as she has done, do to her* God repays nations in kind, a principle all through Scripture. Babylon's treatment of others would come back on her.
50:17 *this last, Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, has gnawed his bones* Assyria devoured the northern kingdom in 722 B.C.; Babylon finished Judah. First one lion, then another. Nineveh fell in 612 B.C., and Babylon's turn would come too. No lion is stronger than the Shepherd of Israel.
50:19 *he will graze on the Carmel and the Bashan* Carmel, Bashan, Ephraim and Gilead were Israel's richest grazing lands, west and east of the Jordan. God would bring His sheep back to all of it.
50:20 *the iniquity of Israel will be sought, and there will be none* Someone searches for Israel's sins and cannot find them, because God has forgiven them (31:34). Animal blood could not do that (Heb 10:4). Jesus poured out His blood for the new covenant (Luke 22:20). I believe this will be fulfilled for the nation of Israel in the last days (Rom 11:26-27), and the same forgiveness is offered now to anyone who comes to God through Christ. When God forgives, He does not keep a file.
50:21 *Against the land of Merathaim* Wordplays on real place names. Merathaim, a region of southern Babylonia, sounds like double rebellion; Pekod, a people of eastern Babylonia (Ezek 23:23), sounds like punishment. To devote to destruction was to hand something over to God completely in judgment.
50:23 *How the hammer of all the earth has been cut down and broken* Babylon smashed nations like a blacksmith's hammer. Now the hammer itself would break.
50:24 *you yourself did not know* Daniel 5 tells of that night. Belshazzar was feasting with the cups taken from God's temple when the city fell.
50:25 *the weapons of His indignation* This time God's weapons were the armies of the Medes and Persians (51:11).
50:28 *the vengeance of His temple* Babylon had burned God's house in Jerusalem (52:13). God had not forgotten it.
50:29 *she has acted proudly against the LORD, against the Holy One of Israel* Babylon's sin was pride against God Himself. Nebuchadnezzar learned that when God humbled him (Dan 4:30-37); Belshazzar did not (Dan 5:22-23).
50:31 *I am against you, O arrogance* God calls Babylon by the name of its sin. Arrogance will stumble with none to lift it up. Pride always falls in the end.

The Strong Redeemer

33 Thus says the LORD of armies: "The sons of Israel ***are*** oppressed, and the sons of Judah together; and all their captors have held fast to them; they have refused to let them go." **34** Their Redeemer ***is*** strong; the LORD of armies ***is*** His name; He will surely plead their case, so as to give rest to the earth and to bring disquiet to the inhabitants of Babylon. **35** A sword against the Chaldeans, declares the LORD, and against the inhabitants of Babylon, and against her officials, and against her wise ***ones***! **36** A sword against the empty talkers, and they will become fools! A sword against her mighty men, and they will be shattered! **37** A sword against his horses and against his chariotry, and against all the mixed people who ***are*** in her midst, and they will become women! A sword against her treasures, and they will be plundered! **38** A drought against her waters, and they will become dry! For it ***is*** a land of carved images, and in the terrors they act like madmen. **39** Therefore desert creatures will dwell with hyenas, and daughters of the ostrich will dwell in her; and she will not be inhabited again forever, and she will not be settled until generation and generation. **40** Like God's overthrow of Sodom (Sedom) and Gomorrah (Amora) and her neighbors, declares the LORD, no man will dwell there, and no son of man will sojourn in her. **41** Look, a people is coming from ***the*** north, and a great nation, and many kings will be stirred up from the remotest parts of the earth. **42** Bow and javelin they will grasp; they ***are*** cruel, and they will not have compassion; their sound ***is*** like the sea ***that*** roars, and on horses they will ride, set in array like a man for the battle against you, O daughter of Babylon. **43** The king of Babylon has heard the report of them, and his hands have gone limp; distress has seized him, anguish like the ***woman*** giving birth. **44** Look, like a lion he will go up from the thicket of the Jordan (Yarden) to the ever-flowing pasture; for in a moment I will make them run from her; and whoever is chosen, I will appoint over her. For who ***is*** like Me? And who will summon Me? And who ***is*** this shepherd who will stand before Me? **45** Therefore hear the counsel of the LORD which He has counseled against Babylon, and His purposes which He has purposed against the land of ***the*** Chaldeans: surely the little ones of the flock will drag them away; surely he will make ***their*** pasture desolate over them. **46** At the sound of "Babylon has been captured!" the earth has shaken, and an outcry among the nations has been heard.

JEREMIAH 51

The Fall of Babylon

1 Thus says the LORD: Look, I am about to stir up against Babylon (Bavel) and against the inhabitants of Leb-kamai (Lev-Qamay) a destroying wind. **2** And I will send strangers to Babylon, and they will winnow her, and they will empty her land; for they will be against her from all around in the day of calamity. **3** Let not the one who bends bend his bow, and let him not lift himself up in his armor; and do not spare her young men; devote all her army to destruction. **4** And the slain will fall in the land of ***the*** Chaldeans (Kasdim), and those pierced through in her streets. **5** For Israel (Yisra'el) and Judah (Yehuda) ***are*** not forsaken by his God, by the LORD of armies; for their land is full of guilt against the Holy One of Israel. **6** Flee from the midst of Babylon, and save each one his life; do not be destroyed in her iniquity; for it ***is*** a time of vengeance for the LORD; He is about to repay a recompense

50:33 Isa 14:17; Isa 58:6; Jer 50:7,17,18
50:34 Rev 18:8; Jer 51:36; Isa 43:14
50:35 Jer 47:6; Hos 11:6; Dan 5:1,2,30
50:36 Jer 49:22; Isa 44:25; Jer 48:30
50:37 Jer 51:30; Nah 3:13; Jer 51:21
50:38 Rev 16:12; Isa 44:27; Jer 50:2
50:39 Isa 13:20-22; Rev 18:2,21-24; Jer 25:12
50:40 2 Pet 2:6; Jude 1:7; Rev 11:8
50:41 Jer 6:22,23; Isa 13:2-5,17,18; Jer 50:2,3,9
50:42 Rev 19:18; Isa 5:30; Isa 13:17,18
50:43 Jer 51:31; Isa 13:6-8; Isa 21:3,4
50:44 Jer 49:19-21; Jer 25:38; Job 41:10,11
50:45 Rev 17:16; Jer 49:20; Jer 51:10,11
50:46 Rev 18:9; Rev 18:10; Jer 49:21
51:1 Jer 4:11,12; Hos 13:15; Jer 50:9,14-16,21
51:2 Jer 15:7; Matt 3:12; Isa 41:16
51:3 Jer 50:14,41,42; Jer 46:4; Jer 50:21
51:4 Jer 49:26; Jer 50:30,37; Isa 13:15
51:5 Rom 11:2; Hos 4:1; Jer 33:24-26
51:6 Rev 16:19; 2 Cor 6:17; Jer 50:8,28

50:33 *they have refused to let them go* It sounds like Pharaoh (Exod 5:1-2). Babylon held God's people as Egypt once did.
50:34 *Their Redeemer is strong* The redeemer, go'el in Hebrew, was the close relative who bought back a family member sold into slavery or rescued him from trouble (Lev 25:47-49; Ruth 4). God is Israel's next of kin and would plead their case and win. Jesus redeemed us with His own precious blood, not with silver or gold (1 Pet 1:18-19).
50:36 *A sword against the empty talkers* The sword comes against every part of Babylon, even her fortune-tellers. Her famous wise men could not save her (Dan 2:2).
50:38 *it is a land of carved images, and in the terrors they act like madmen* Babylon depended on the Euphrates and its canals, and a drought would dry them. The root of it all was idols. A nation that worships the work of its hands ends up acting like a madman.
50:39 *she will not be inhabited again forever* Like Isaiah's words (Isa 13:19-20). In 539 B.C. Cyrus took Babylon with little fighting and left it standing. It declined slowly over centuries but was never overthrown suddenly like Sodom.
50:40 *Like God's overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah* So I believe these words reach beyond 539 B.C. to the Babylon of the last days. In Revelation 17 and 18 Babylon the Great rules the kings of the earth during the Tribulation, after Christ takes His church to Himself, and falls in one hour (Rev 18:10). Jeremiah was fulfilled in part with Cyrus and will be fulfilled fully then.
50:41 *a people is coming from the north, and a great nation* Almost line for line the words once spoken of Babylon against Jerusalem (6:22-24) now describe the nation coming against Babylon. She showed no mercy and would receive none.
50:43 *his hands have gone limp* Belshazzar's face went pale and his knees knocked when he saw the handwriting on the wall (Dan 5:6).
50:44 *who is this shepherd who will stand before Me* The words spoken against Edom (49:19-21) are now aimed at Babylon. Every empire set against God will fall, however strong it looks. Our hope is in the King whose kingdom will never be destroyed (Dan 2:44).
51:1 *the inhabitants of Leb-kamai* A code name meaning the heart of those who rise against Me. It is formed by an old Hebrew letter code that swaps the first letter of the alphabet for the last, and so on, which turns it into the word for Chaldea. Sheshach in 51:41 works the same way for Babel.
51:2 *they will winnow her* Winnowing tossed grain into the wind so the chaff blew away. Foreign armies would blow Babylon away like chaff.
51:5 *Israel and Judah are not forsaken by his God* Their land was full of guilt, yet God had not forsaken them. That is grace. He judged them, but He did not let them go.
51:6 *Flee from the midst of Babylon* God's people were not to be swept away in Babylon's judgment. Revelation gives the same call about the final Babylon (Rev 18:4). For us it means living in the world without sharing in its sins (John 17:15-16).

to her. **7** Babylon ***was*** a cup of gold in the hand of the LORD, making all the earth drunk; from her wine nations have drunk; therefore nations act like madmen. **8** Suddenly Babylon has fallen, and she has been broken; wail over her; take balm for her pain; perhaps she will be healed. **9** "We healed Babylon, and she was not healed; leave her, and let us go each one to his land; for her judgment has reached to the heavens, and it has been lifted up to the clouds. **10** The LORD has brought forth our righteousnesses; come, and let us recount in Zion (Tsiyon) the work of the LORD our God." **11** Sharpen the arrows; fill the shields; the LORD has stirred up the spirit of the kings of Media (Maday), for His purpose ***is*** against Babylon, to destroy her; for it ***is*** the vengeance of the LORD, the vengeance of His temple. **12** Against the walls of Babylon lift up a standard; strengthen the watch; station watchmen; prepare those lying in ambush; for the LORD has both purposed and done that which He spoke concerning the inhabitants of Babylon. **13** O you who dwell on many waters, great in treasures, your end has come, the cubit of your cutting off. **14** The LORD of armies has sworn by Himself: "Surely I will fill you ***with*** men like the locust, and they will sing a shout over you."

The Maker of All Things

15 ***He is*** the Maker of the earth by His power, the Establisher of the world by His wisdom, and by His understanding He stretched out the heavens. **16** At the sound of His giving forth, ***there is*** a roar of waters in the heavens; and He makes mists go up from the end of the earth; He makes lightnings for the rain, and He brings out wind from His storehouses. **17** Every man is stupid, without knowledge; every refiner has been put to shame by the carved image, for his molten image ***is*** falsehood, and ***there is*** no breath in them. **18** They ***are*** vanity, a work of mockeries; at the time of their punishment they will perish. **19** Not like these ***is*** the Portion of Jacob (Ya'aqov), for He ***is*** the Former of everything, and the tribe of His inheritance; the LORD of armies ***is*** His name. **20** You ***are*** My war club, weapons of war; and with you I smash nations, and with you I destroy kingdoms; **21** and with you I smash horse and its rider, and with you I smash chariot and its rider; **22** and with you I smash man and woman, and with you I smash old ***man*** and youth, and with you I smash young man and virgin; **23** and with you I smash shepherd and his flock, and with you I smash farmer and his team, and with you I smash governors and prefects. **24** And I will repay Babylon and all the inhabitants of the Chaldeans for all their evil which they have done in Zion before your eyes, declares the LORD. **25** Look, I ***am*** against you, O destroying mountain, declares the LORD, which destroys all the earth; and I will stretch out My hand against you, and I will roll you down from the crags, and I will make you a mountain of burning. **26** And they will not take from you a stone for a corner, and a stone for foundations, for you will be everlasting desolations, declares the LORD. **27** Lift up a standard in the land; blow a trumpet among the nations; consecrate nations against her; summon against her the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni (Mini), and Ashkenaz; appoint an official against her; bring up horses like bristly locusts. **28** Consecrate nations against her: the kings of Media, her governors and all her prefects, and all the land of his dominion. **29** And the land has quaked and writhed, for the plans of the LORD have stood against Babylon, to make the land of Babylon a horror without inhabitant. **30** The mighty men of Babylon have ceased to fight; they

51:7 Rev 14:8; Rev 17:2-4; Rev 18:3
51:8 Rev 14:8; Rev 18:2; Rev 18:8
51:9 Rev 18:5; Rev 18:10; Jer 50:16
51:10 Rev 14:1; Rev 19:1; Jer 50:28
51:11 Jer 46:4,9; Jer 50:45; Jer 50:9,14,25,28,29
51:12 Isa 13:2; Nah 2:1; Jer 46:3-5
51:13 Rev 17:1; Luke 12:21; Isa 45:3
51:14 Heb 6:13; Jer 49:13; Amos 6:8
51:15 Rom 1:20; Heb 1:3; Jer 10:12-16
51:16 Ps 135:7; Ps 18:13; Jonah 1:4
51:17 Jer 10:14; Hab 2:18,19; Isa 44:18-20
51:18 Jer 10:8,15; Jonah 2:8; Acts 14:15
51:19 Jer 10:16; Ps 73:26; Ps 16:5
51:20 Isa 41:15,16; Isa 10:5,15; Mic 4:13
51:21 Exod 15:1,21; Jer 50:37; Ps 46:9
51:22 2 Chr 36:17; Jer 6:11; Deut 32:25
51:24 Rev 18:20; Jer 50:15,17,18,28,29,33,34; Jer 51:11,35,49
51:25 Rev 8:8; Rev 18:9; Rev 17:5
51:26 Rev 18:20; Rev 18:21; Rev 18:23
51:27 Gen 8:4; Gen 10:3; Jer 51:12
51:28 Jer 51:11; Jer 25:25; Gen 10:2
51:29 Rev 18:2; Rev 18:21; Jer 8:16
51:30 Rev 18:10; Nah 3:13; Lam 2:9

51:7 *Babylon was a cup of gold in the hand of the LORD* Babylon was rich and beautiful like a golden cup, but the wine in it was God's judgment, and the nations staggered from it (25:15-17). Revelation pictures the final Babylon holding a golden cup full of abominations (Rev 17:4).
51:8 *Suddenly Babylon has fallen, and she has been broken* Revelation echoes this cry over the final Babylon (Rev 18:2). Balm is called for, but no one could heal her.
51:10 *The LORD has brought forth our righteousnesses* God's people speak. He would vindicate them before the nations, and they would go home to Zion and tell what He had done.
51:11 *the LORD has stirred up the spirit of the kings of Media* Jeremiah names the nation, as Isaiah named the Medes and even Cyrus himself (Isa 13:17; 45:1). Ezra uses the same words of Cyrus (Ezra 1:1). God moves the hearts of kings to do His will.
51:13 *O you who dwell on many waters* Babylon sat on the Euphrates and its canals. Revelation describes the final Babylon sitting on many waters and explains that the waters are peoples and nations (Rev 17:1, 15).
51:15 *He is the Maker of the earth by His power* These verses repeat 10:12-16 almost word for word. In the middle of a war prophecy they remind us who is doing all this. When the world shakes, we need to remember who made it.
51:17 *there is no breath in them* The idol maker is put to shame by his own work. An idol has no life and cannot help.
51:19 *Not like these is the Portion of Jacob* The LORD is Israel's portion, their share and inheritance, and Israel is the tribe of His inheritance. He belongs to them and they belong to Him.
51:20 *You are My war club* Bible teachers differ on who the war club is: Babylon, which smashed the nations (50:23), Cyrus, the next club God would use, or Israel, just named in 51:19. If it is Babylon, the point is sharp. God used Babylon as His tool, but that did not excuse its cruelty (51:24).
51:24 *for all their evil which they have done in Zion before your eyes* The exiles would see with their own eyes that God repays. What Babylon did to Zion would come back on her.
51:25 *O destroying mountain* A mountain can picture a kingdom (Dan 2:35). Babylon would be rolled down from the crags and left a burned-out mountain.
51:26 *they will not take from you a stone for a corner* Babylon would never be rebuilt as a great city. Daniel saw another stone, cut without hands, become a mountain filling the earth (Dan 2:34-35, 44). That is the Messiah's kingdom.
51:27 *the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz* Peoples in the mountains north of Babylon, in what is now eastern Turkey and Armenia, joined with the Medes against her.
51:30 *The mighty men of Babylon have ceased to fight* Babylon's soldiers would lose heart and hide in their strongholds.

have remained in the strongholds; their might has dried up; they have become women; they have set her dwellings on fire; her bars have been broken. **31** Runner runs to meet runner, and announcer to meet announcer, to announce to the king of Babylon that his city has been captured from ***the*** end, **32** and the fords have been seized, and the reed marshes they have burned with fire, and the men of war are terrified.

God Pleads Zion's Case

33 For thus says the LORD of armies, the God of Israel: The daughter of Babylon ***is*** like a threshing floor at the time ***when*** it is trodden; yet a little ***while***, and the time of the harvest will come for her. **34** "Nebuchadnezzar (Nevukhadretsar) the king of Babylon has devoured me; he has confused me; he has set me down ***as*** an empty vessel; he has swallowed me like the sea monster; he has filled his belly with my delicacies; he has rinsed me out." **35** "My violence and my flesh ***be*** upon Babylon," the inhabitant of Zion will say; and "My blood ***be*** upon the inhabitants of the Chaldeans," Jerusalem
(Yerushalayim) will say. **36** Therefore thus says the LORD: Look, I am about to plead your case, and I will avenge your vengeance; and I will dry up her sea, and I will make her spring dry. **37** And Babylon will become heaps, a habitation of jackals, a horror and a hissing, without inhabitant. **38** Together like young lions they will roar; they will growl like the cubs of lions. **39** When they are heated, I will make their feast, and I will make them drunk, so that they may exult, and they will sleep an everlasting sleep and not wake up, declares the LORD. **40** I will bring them down like lambs to slaughter, like rams with male goats. **41** How Sheshach (Sheshakh) has been captured, and the praise of all the earth has been seized! How Babylon has become a horror among the nations! **42** The sea has come up over Babylon; with the tumult of its waves she has been covered. **43** Her cities have become a horror, a dry land and a desert plain, a land ***where*** no man will dwell in them, and a son of man will not pass through them. **44** And I will punish Bel in Babylon, and I will bring out what he has swallowed from his mouth; and nations will not stream to him again; also the wall of Babylon has fallen.

Come Out of Her, My People

45 Come out from her midst, O My people, and save each one his life from the burning of the anger of the LORD. **46** And lest your heart grow faint and you fear at the report which is heard in the land: and the report will come in ***one*** year, and after it, in ***another*** year, the report, and violence ***will be*** in the land, ruler against ruler. **47** Therefore look, days are coming, and I will punish the carved images of Babylon; and all her land will be ashamed, and all her slain will fall in her midst. **48** And ***the*** heavens and ***the*** earth and all that ***is*** in them will shout for joy over Babylon; for from the north the devastators will come to her, declares the LORD. **49** Also Babylon ***is*** to fall, O slain of Israel; also for Babylon the slain of all the earth have fallen. **50** O escapees from the sword, go, do not stand still; remember the LORD from afar, and let Jerusalem come up on your heart. **51** "We are ashamed, for we have heard reproach; disgrace has covered our faces, for strangers have come into the sanctuaries of the house of the LORD." **52** Therefore look, days are coming, declares the LORD, and I will punish her carved images, and through all her land the fatally wounded will groan. **53** Though Babylon should go up to the heavens, and though she should fortify the height of her strength, from Me devastators will come to

51:31 2 Sam 18:19-31; 2 Chr 30:6; Jer 4:20
51:32 Isa 44:27; Jer 51:30; Jer 50:37
51:33 Matt 13:30; Isa 21:10; Hos 6:11
51:34 Jer 51:44; Isa 24:1-3; Job 20:15
51:35 Jer 50:29; Judg 9:20,24,56,57; Ps 9:12
51:36 Rom 12:19; Jer 50:38; Ps 140:12
51:37 Rev 18:2; Rev 18:21; Jer 25:9,12,18
51:38 Jer 2:15; Job 4:10,11; Ps 34:10
51:39 Jer 51:57; Jer 25:27; Isa 21:4,5
51:40 Acts 8:32; Jer 50:27; Ps 37:20
51:41 Rev 18:10; Jer 25:26; Isa 13:19
51:42 Luke 21:25; Rev 17:15; Isa 8:7,8
51:43 Jer 2:6; Isa 13:20; Jer 51:29,37
51:44 Rev 18:9; Rev 18:10; Jer 51:34
51:45 Rev 18:4; 2 Cor 6:17; Rev 14:8
51:46 2 Kgs 19:7; Isa 13:3-5; Isa 19:2
51:47 Rev 17:5; Rev 18:20; Jer 50:2
51:48 Rev 18:20; Rev 17:5; Isa 44:23
51:49 Rev 18:24; Jer 51:10,11,24,35; Jer 50:11,17,18,29,33,34
51:50 Jer 44:28; Rev 18:4; Deut 4:29-31
51:51 Lam 1:10; Ps 79:4,12; Ps 44:13-16
51:52 Jer 51:47; Jer 50:38; Isa 13:15,16
51:53 Jer 49:16; Gen 11:4; Jer 51:25,58

51:31 *Runner runs to meet runner* Messengers race from every part of the city to tell the king it has been captured. Daniel 5 shows Belshazzar feasting that night, unaware until the hand wrote on the wall.
51:33 *like a threshing floor at the time when it is trodden* A threshing floor was packed hard just before harvest. Babylon's harvest of judgment was near.
51:34 *he has swallowed me like the sea monster* Jerusalem speaks. Nebuchadnezzar devoured her, filled himself with her good things, and rinsed her out like an empty jar.
51:35 *My violence and my flesh be upon Babylon* Jerusalem asks God to bring on Babylon the violence she suffered. It is a victim's cry for justice, and God answers it in the next verse.
51:36 *I am about to plead your case, and I will avenge your vengeance* The believer does not need to take revenge. We leave room for God's wrath, for vengeance belongs to Him (Rom 12:19). Babylon's river and canals, her life and defense, would fail.
51:39 *they will sleep an everlasting sleep and not wake up* God would make their feast their last. Belshazzar held a great feast for a thousand nobles, and that night he was killed (Dan 5:1, 30).
51:41 *How Sheshach has been captured* The same letter code as Leb-kamai (51:1), here a name for Babel. The praise of all the earth was taken.
51:42 *The sea has come up over Babylon* Armies flood over the city like waves of the sea.
51:44 *I will bring out what he has swallowed from his mouth* Babylon's god had swallowed the nations' treasures, including the holy articles of God's temple. Cyrus brought out those vessels and sent them home with the exiles (Ezra 1:7).
51:45 *Come out from her midst, O My people* When the way home opened, many exiles stayed where they had done well. God wanted their hearts in Zion.
51:46 *lest your heart grow faint* Rumors would come year after year, ruler against ruler. God told them ahead of time so they would not lose heart, as Jesus told His disciples of wars and rumors of wars (Matt 24:6).
51:48 *the heavens and the earth and all that is in them will shout for joy over Babylon* Heaven is told to rejoice over the final Babylon as well (Rev 18:20). Evil's fall is cause for joy.
51:50 *remember the LORD from afar, and let Jerusalem come up on your heart* Far away in Babylon the exiles were to keep the LORD and Jerusalem in their hearts, as Daniel prayed with his windows open toward Jerusalem (Dan 6:10). However far you feel from God, you can remember Him from afar. He has not forgotten you.
51:51 *strangers have come into the sanctuaries of the house of the LORD* The exiles were ashamed that foreigners had defiled God's house. God answers their shame with judgment on Babylon's idols.
51:53 *Though Babylon should go up to the heavens* This recalls the tower of Babel, built in the same land, reaching for the heavens (Gen 11:4). God always brings that pride down.

her, declares the LORD. **54** The sound of an outcry from Babylon, and great destruction from the land of ***the*** Chaldeans! **55** For the LORD is about to devastate Babylon, and He will destroy from her a great sound; and their waves will roar like many waters; the uproar of their voice is given forth. **56** For a devastator has come against her, against Babylon, and her mighty men will be captured; their bows have been shattered; for the LORD ***is*** a God of recompenses; He will surely repay. **57** And I will make drunk her officials and her wise ***ones***, her governors and her prefects and her mighty men; and they will sleep an everlasting sleep and not wake up, declares the King, the LORD of armies ***is*** His name. **58** Thus says the LORD of armies: The walls of Babylon, the broad ***one***, will be utterly laid bare, and her high gates will be burned with fire; and peoples will labor for emptiness, and nations for fire, and they will grow weary.

The Scroll in the Euphrates

59 The word which Jeremiah (Yirmeyahu) the prophet commanded Seraiah (Seraya) the son of Neriah (Neriya), the son of Mahseiah (Machseya), when he went with Zedekiah (Tsidqiyahu) the king of Judah ***to*** Babylon in the fourth year of his reign; and Seraiah ***was*** an official of ***the*** resting place. **60** And Jeremiah wrote all the calamity which would come to Babylon in one scroll, all these words which are written concerning Babylon. **61** And Jeremiah said to Seraiah, "When you come ***to*** Babylon, then you will see, and you will read aloud all these words, **62** and you will say, 'O LORD, You Yourself have spoken concerning this place, to cut it off, so that ***there*** will not be an inhabitant in it, from man even to beast, for it will be everlasting desolations.' **63** And it will be, when you finish reading aloud this scroll, you will tie a stone to it, and you will throw it into the midst of the Euphrates (Perat), **64** and you will say, 'Thus Babylon will sink, and she will not rise because of the calamity which I am about to bring upon her; and they will grow weary.'" Thus far ***are*** the words of Jeremiah.

JEREMIAH 52

Jerusalem Falls

1 Zedekiah (Tsidqiyahu) ***was*** a son of twenty-one years when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim); and the name of his mother ***was*** Hamutal (Chamutal) the daughter of Jeremiah (Yirmeyahu) from Libnah (Livna). **2** And he did the evil in the eyes of the LORD, according to all that Jehoiakim (Yehoyaqim) had done. **3** For because of the anger of the LORD it came to pass in Jerusalem and Judah (Yehuda), until He had cast them out from His face. And Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon (Bavel). **4** And it was in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, on the tenth of the month, Nebuchadnezzar (Nevukhadretsar) the king of Babylon came, he and all his army, against Jerusalem, and they encamped against it, and they built a siege wall against it all around. **5** And the city came under siege until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah. **6** In the fourth month, on the ninth of the month, and the famine was severe in the city, and there was no bread for the people of the land. **7** And the city was broken into, and all the men of war fled, and they went out from the city by night ***by*** the way of the gate between the two walls, which ***was*** by the garden of the king, and the Chaldeans (Kasdim) ***were*** against the city all around; and they went ***by*** the way of the Arabah (Arava). **8** And the army of ***the*** Chaldeans pursued after the king, and they overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho

51:54 Jer 50:22,27,43,46; Jer 48:3-5; Isa 13:6-9
51:55 Rev 18:23; Jer 51:38,39; Jer 25:10
51:56 Rev 17:16; Rev 18:20; Jer 51:48
51:57 Rev 18:9; Rev 18:7; Jer 46:18
51:58 Rev 18:8; Hab 2:13; Jer 51:44
51:59 Jer 32:12; Jer 36:4; Jer 45:1
51:60 Rev 18:2; Jer 30:2,3; Isa 30:8
51:61 Rev 1:3; Rev 18:2; Matt 24:1
51:62 Rev 18:21; Jer 50:3,13,39,40; Isa 13:19-22
51:63 Rev 18:21; Rev 9:14; Jer 19:10,11
51:64 Rev 14:8; Rev 18:2; Jer 51:58
52:1 2 Kgs 24:18; Josh 10:29; 2 Chr 36:11
52:2 1 Kgs 14:22; 2 Kgs 24:19,20; 2 Chr 36:12,13
52:3 Isa 3:4,5; 2 Chr 36:13; 2 Sam 24:1
52:4 Jer 39:1; Ezek 24:1,2; Zech 8:19
52:6 Isa 3:1; Jer 39:2; 2 Kgs 25:3
52:7 2 Kgs 25:4; Jer 39:4-7; Jer 51:32
52:8 Jer 21:7; Jer 32:4; Jer 34:21

51:56 *the LORD is a God of recompenses; He will surely repay* He is patient, but He does not forget.
51:58 *The walls of Babylon, the broad one, will be utterly laid bare* Babylon's walls were famous, wide enough for chariots on top. They would not save her. All the labor poured into Babylon would end in smoke (Hab 2:13). Only what is built for God will stand (1 Cor 3:11-15).
51:59 *Seraiah was an official of the resting place* Seraiah, Baruch's brother (32:12), was the officer who arranged where the king's party stopped. Zedekiah's fourth year was about 594 or 593 B.C., seven years before Jerusalem fell. He may have gone to show loyalty to Babylon.
51:60 *Jeremiah wrote all the calamity which would come to Babylon in one scroll* At the very time Jeremiah told Judah to serve Babylon (chapters 27-28), he wrote down Babylon's doom. Both messages were true: Babylon would rule seventy years and then fall (25:11-12).
51:63 *you will tie a stone to it, and you will throw it into the midst of the Euphrates* An acted prophecy, like the linen sash and the broken flask (chapters 13, 19). In Revelation a mighty angel throws a great millstone into the sea over the final Babylon (Rev 18:21).
51:64 *Thus far are the words of Jeremiah* The end of Jeremiah's own words; chapter 52 was added by another hand. He was called over nations and kingdoms to pluck up and pull down (1:10), and his last words are about the fall of the greatest kingdom of his day. The God who tore down would build and plant again.
52:1 *Zedekiah was a son of twenty-one years when he became king* He reigned from about 597 to 586 B.C. His mother's father was a different Jeremiah, not the prophet. Zedekiah was a son of Josiah and full brother of Jehoahaz (2 Kgs 23:31). This chapter, added by another hand, closely follows 2 Kings 24:18-25:30.
52:2 *he did the evil in the eyes of the LORD* Zedekiah was weak more than wicked. He asked Jeremiah for God's word and even protected him (37:17-21; 38:14-16), but he feared his officials and never obeyed (38:5, 19). Knowing God's will and not doing it is still sin (Jas 4:17).
52:3 *until He had cast them out from His face* Behind Babylon's armies stood the LORD. Zedekiah had sworn loyalty to Nebuchadnezzar in God's name and broke that oath, hoping Egypt would help (2 Chr 36:13; Ezek 17:13-19), though God had told him to serve Babylon and live (27:12).
52:4 *in the tenth month, on the tenth of the month* The winter of 588 B.C. The day was remembered for generations, and after the exile the Jews fasted on it (Zech 8:19). The siege wall sealed the city so no one could get in or out.
52:6 *there was no bread for the people of the land* After about a year and a half, in the summer of 586 B.C., the famine was severe. Lamentations shows what that hunger was like (Lam 4:4-10).
52:7 *by the way of the gate between the two walls, which was by the garden of the king* When the wall was breached, the soldiers fled by night, most likely near the southeast corner of the city, toward the Arabah, the Jordan valley.

(Yericho); and all his army was scattered from him. **9** And they seized the king and brought him up to the king of Babylon ***at*** Riblah (Rivla) in the land of Hamath (Chamat), and he spoke judgments with him. **10** And the king of Babylon slaughtered the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes; and also all the officials of Judah he slaughtered at Riblah. **11** And the eyes of Zedekiah he blinded, and he bound him with bronze fetters; and the king of Babylon brought him ***to*** Babylon, and he put him ***in*** the house of punishments until the day of his death.

The Temple Burned

12 And in the fifth month, on the tenth of the month, it ***was*** the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, Nebuzaradan (Nevuzaradan) the chief of the bodyguards, ***who*** stood before the king of Babylon, came into Jerusalem. **13** And he burned the house of the LORD and the house of the king and all the houses of Jerusalem; and every house of the great ***one*** he burned with fire. **14** And all the walls of Jerusalem all around, all the army of ***the*** Chaldeans who ***were*** with the chief of the bodyguards broke down. **15** And some of the poor of the people, and the rest of the people who remained in the city, and the deserters who had deserted to the king of Babylon, and the rest of the craftsmen, Nebuzaradan the chief of the bodyguards carried into exile. **16** And some of the poor of the land Nebuzaradan the chief of the bodyguards left as vinedressers and as plowmen. **17** And the pillars of bronze which ***belonged*** to the house of the LORD, and the stands, and the sea of bronze which ***was*** in the house of the LORD, the Chaldeans broke in pieces, and they carried all their bronze ***to*** Babylon. **18** And the pots and the shovels and the snuffers and the bowls and the dishes and all the articles of bronze with which they ministered, they took. **19** And the basins and the firepans and the bowls and the pots and the lampstands and the dishes and the cups, what ***was*** gold, gold, and what ***was*** silver, silver, the chief of the bodyguards took. **20** The two pillars, the one sea, and the twelve bronze bulls which ***were*** under the stands, which King Solomon (Shelomo) had made for the house of the LORD: there was no weight for their bronze, all these articles. **21** And the pillars: approximately 27 feet (eighteen cubits) ***was*** the height of the one pillar, and a line of approximately 18 feet (twelve cubits) would go around it; and its thickness ***was*** approximately 3 inches (four fingers); ***it was*** hollow. **22** And a capital on it ***was*** bronze; and the height of the one capital ***was*** approximately 7.5 feet (five cubits), and a network and pomegranates ***were*** on the capital all around, the whole ***was*** bronze; and like these ***belonged*** to the second pillar, and pomegranates. **23** And the pomegranates were ninety-six toward the side; all the pomegranates ***were*** one hundred on the network all around. **24** And the chief of the bodyguards took Seraiah (Seraya) the head priest and Zephaniah (Tsefanya) the second priest and the three keepers of the threshold. **25** And from the city he took one eunuch who was an overseer over the men of war, and seven men of those who saw the face of the king, who were found in the city, and the scribe of the commander of the army, who mustered the people of the land, and sixty men of the people of the land who were found in the midst of the city. **26** And Nebuzaradan the chief of the bodyguards took them and brought them to the king of Babylon ***at*** Riblah. **27** And the king of Babylon struck them down and put them to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath. And Judah went into exile from its ground.

52:9 Jer 39:5; Num 13:21; 2 Kgs 25:6
52:10 Jer 22:30; 2 Kgs 25:7; Jer 39:6,7
52:11 Matt 1:11; Ezek 12:13; Jer 34:3-5
52:12 Matt 1:11; 2 Kgs 25:8; Zech 8:19
52:13 2 Chr 36:19; Ps 79:1; Mic 3:12
52:14 Neh 1:3; 2 Kgs 25:10
52:15 Matt 1:11; Jer 15:1,2; Zech 14:2
52:16 2 Kgs 25:12; Jer 39:9,10; Jer 40:5-7
52:17 Jer 27:19-22; Jer 52:21-23; 2 Chr 4:12,13
52:18 Exod 27:3; Num 4:14; 1 Kgs 7:40,45
52:19 1 Kgs 7:49; Lev 26:12; Num 16:46
52:20 1 Kgs 7:47; 2 Kgs 25:16; 1 Chr 22:14
52:21 2 Kgs 25:17; 1 Kgs 7:15-21; 2 Chr 3:15-17
52:22 Exod 28:14-22,25; Exod 39:15-18; 2 Chr 3:15
52:23 1 Kgs 7:20
52:24 2 Kgs 25:18; 1 Chr 6:14; Jer 21:1
52:25 Esth 1:14; 2 Kgs 25:19; Matt 18:10
52:27 Ezek 8:11-18; Jer 25:9-11; Isa 6:11,12

52:9 *he spoke judgments with him* At Riblah in Syria, Nebuchadnezzar's headquarters, Zedekiah was put on trial for breaking his oath.
52:10 *the king of Babylon slaughtered the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes* One of the saddest verses in the Bible. The last thing Zedekiah saw was the death of his sons. I will not add to it. Jeremiah had pleaded that if he surrendered, he and his house would live (38:17).
52:11 *he put him in the house of punishments until the day of his death* Ezekiel said Zedekiah would be brought to Babylon yet not see it, and he was brought there blind (Ezek 12:13). Jeremiah alone adds that he died a prisoner. God had also said he would die in peace and be mourned (34:4-5); Scripture tells no more of his last years. Hearing God's word is not the same as obeying it (Jas 1:22).
52:12 *in the fifth month, on the tenth of the month* August 586 B.C., about a month after the wall fell. Kings gives the seventh (2 Kgs 25:8). Nebuzaradan may have arrived on the seventh and set the fire on the tenth, or a number may have changed in copying.
52:13 *he burned the house of the LORD* Solomon's temple had stood nearly four hundred years, from about 966 to 586 B.C. The people had trusted that the temple could never fall (7:4). It fell, and the Jews still remember the day with a fast.
52:14 *all the walls of Jerusalem all around* A city without walls had no protection. Nehemiah would rebuild them about 140 years later (Neh 6:15).
52:16 *some of the poor of the land* The poor, oppressed by the rich for years (5:28; 34:8-11), were left to care for the land. Chapters 39-41 tell what happened to them under Gedaliah.
52:17 *the pillars of bronze which belonged to the house of the LORD* The temple's glory was broken up and carried away. Jeremiah had told the false prophets these very articles would go to Babylon (27:19-22), and also that God would bring them back (27:22). He did (Ezra 1:7-11).
52:20 *there was no weight for their bronze* No one even tried to weigh it. The account of Solomon making these is in 1 Kings 7:15-47.
52:21 *approximately 27 feet was the height of the one pillar* The hollow pillars were about 18 feet around with walls about 3 inches thick, each topped by a bronze capital about 7.5 feet high with network and a hundred pomegranates. The detail shows the glory the people had trusted in.
52:24 *Seraiah the head priest and Zephaniah the second priest* This Seraiah is not Baruch's brother (51:59). He was the high priest and an ancestor of Ezra the scribe (Ezra 7:1). Zephaniah had carried messages between the king and Jeremiah (21:1; 37:3).
52:27 *Judah went into exile from its ground* These simple words close the history of the kingdom of Judah. Moses had warned that turning from the LORD would tear Israel from the land (Deut 28:63-64). It came true. The leaders who pushed the rebellion were executed at Riblah.

The Exiles Numbered

28 This ***is*** the people whom Nebuchadnezzar carried into exile: in ***the*** seventh year, three thousand and twenty-three Jews; **29** in the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar, from Jerusalem, eight hundred thirty-two souls; **30** in the twenty-third year of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuzaradan the chief of the bodyguards carried into exile Jews, seven hundred forty-five souls; all the souls ***were*** four thousand and six hundred.

Jehoiachin Released

31 And it was in the thirty-seventh year of the exile of Jehoiachin (Yehoyakhin) the king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the twenty-fifth of the month, Evil-merodach (Evil-Merodakh) the king of Babylon, in the year of his kingship, lifted up the head of Jehoiachin the king of Judah, and he brought him out from the house of the prison. **32** And he spoke good things with him, and he set his throne above the throne of the kings who ***were*** with him in Babylon. **33** And he changed the clothes of his prison, and he ate bread before him continually all the days of his life. **34** And his allowance, a continual allowance, was given to him from the king of Babylon, the portion of a day in its day, until the day of his death, all the days of his life.

52:28 2 Kgs 24:2,3,12-16; Dan 1:1-3
52:29 Jer 52:12; Gen 12:5; Jer 39:9
52:30 Jer 52:15; Jer 6:9
52:31 2 Kgs 25:27-30; Ps 3:3; Gen 40:13,20
52:32 Prov 12:25; Jer 27:6-11; Dan 2:37
52:33 2 Sam 9:7,13; Gen 41:14,42; 1 Kgs 2:7
52:34 2 Sam 9:10; Matt 6:11; Luke 11:3

52:28 *in the seventh year, three thousand and twenty-three Jews* These verses are not in Kings. The seventh year is 597 B.C., when Jehoiachin was taken. Kings gives 10,000 then (2 Kgs 24:14) and calls it the eighth year (2 Kgs 24:12). Many think this list follows Babylonian year counting and comes from a different record, perhaps counting only adult men, family heads or one group. Scripture does not say which.
52:30 *in the twenty-third year of Nebuchadnezzar* About 582 B.C., perhaps after Gedaliah's murder (chapter 41). The exile came in waves, just as Jeremiah said.
52:31 *lifted up the head of Jehoiachin the king of Judah* About 560 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar had died, and his son Evil-merodach freed Jehoiachin at the start of his reign. Kings gives the twenty-seventh day (2 Kgs 25:27); the order may have been given one day and carried out another. To lift up the head meant to raise to honor (Gen 40:13).
52:32 *he set his throne above the throne of the kings who were with him in Babylon* Jehoiachin was taken at eighteen (2 Kgs 24:8) and was now about fifty-five. After all the fire and ashes, the book ends with a son of David alive and honored. David's line had not been wiped out.
52:33 *he ate bread before him continually all the days of his life* None of Jehoiachin's offspring would sit on David's throne (22:30), yet his grandson Zerubbabel led the exiles home (Ezra 3:2; Matt 1:12). Matthew traces Jesus' legal line through Joseph and Jehoiachin, while many believe Luke traces His physical line through Mary to David's son Nathan (Luke 3:31). Jesus is the rightful heir to David's throne (Luke 1:32; 33:17).
52:34 *until the day of his death, all the days of his life* The book that tore down ends with a hint of building up. A king of David's line ate at a table in Babylon by another king's kindness. One day the Son of David, the righteous Branch (23:5), will reign, and all who trust Him will be welcomed at His table (Rev 19:9).

LAMENTATIONS

Introduction

Title

The Hebrew title is the book's first word, Ekah, which means "How!" It is a cry of shock and grief. The English name comes from the old Greek and Latin titles, which mean laments or songs of mourning. In our English Bibles Lamentations comes right after Jeremiah. In the Hebrew Bible it is placed among the Writings.

Author and Date

The book does not name its writer. Jewish and Christian tradition have long held that it was Jeremiah, and there are good reasons for that view. Jeremiah saw Jerusalem fall with his own eyes (Jer 39). He was the prophet who wept for his people (Jer 9:1), and he wrote laments before: "Jeremiah lamented over Josiah" (2 Chr 35:25). Lamentations shares many words and pictures with the book of Jeremiah, such as eyes running down with tears and "the daughter of my people" (2:11; Jer 8:21). The old Greek translation begins the book with a line saying that Jeremiah sat weeping and spoke this lament over Jerusalem. Some scholars think the poems came from one or more other writers who lived through the fall, and some date parts of the book later. The book itself does not say, so we cannot be certain. These notes follow the long-held view, and nothing in the book stands against it.

It was written soon after Jerusalem fell in 586 B.C., while the memory was still raw. The poems speak as if the burning of the city were very recent, and they say nothing of the return from exile in 538 B.C. Most conservative scholars date the book between 586 B.C. and about 575 B.C.

Background and Setting

Jeremiah spent forty years warning that Jerusalem would fall. Lamentations is written in the ashes after it did. In 586 B.C. the Babylonians broke through the walls, burned the temple of the LORD, tore down the city and carried its people away. The siege had lasted about a year and a half, and famine had filled the city (2 Kgs 25:3; Jer 52:6). King Zedekiah was blinded and taken to Babylon (Jer 52:8-14). Those left behind were poor, hungry and ruled by foreigners (ch. 5). The book does not tell that story in order, the way Jeremiah 52 and 2 Kings 25 do. It shows what it felt like: the empty streets, the hungry children, the priests and elders dying, the enemy laughing, and the shame of knowing it was all deserved. The poems were written first for the survivors, in the ruined land and in Babylon, to give them words they could pray to God, and for every generation after them who would face loss, judgment, or a season when God seems far away.

The poems are carefully built. Chapters 1, 2 and 4 each have 22 verses, and each verse begins with the next letter of the Hebrew alphabet, which has 22 letters. A poem built that way is called an acrostic. Chapter 3 is a triple acrostic: it has 66 verses, and each group of three verses begins with the same letter. Chapter 5 also has 22 verses, but it is not an acrostic. The form may have helped people learn the poems by heart. It may say the sorrow is poured out completely, from A to Z. And it may hold grief inside a frame, because grief without any shape can swallow a person whole. When the last poem breaks the pattern, it is as if the writer has nothing left but a raw prayer.

The Jews have long read Lamentations aloud on the fast that remembers the burning of the temple, the Ninth of Av, in the summer. Zechariah mentions fasts in the fourth and fifth months kept to mourn the fall of the city (Zech 7:3-5; 8:19).

Themes

Honest grief brought to God. The book never pretends that sin is small or that judgment is easy to bear. It pours out real sorrow, and it does so in prayer. Grief is not unbelief. We can bring our tears, our questions and even our complaints to God.

Judgment for sin, just as God warned. The book says plainly that the LORD did this, and that He was right to do it: "Righteous is He, the LORD, for I have rebelled against His mouth" (1:18). "The LORD has done what He purposed; He has fulfilled His word" (2:17), the warnings given through Moses and the prophets (Deut 28; Jer 7).

No comforter. Five times the first poem says Jerusalem had no comforter (1:2, 9, 16, 17, 21). The lovers she trusted, the nations and false gods, left her, and the false prophets never uncovered her sin (2:14).

Hope in the middle of suffering. At the very center of the book, in the middle of its darkest poem, the writer chooses to remember who God is: "The steadfast loves of the LORD, for we are not finished, for His compassions do not come to an end. They are new in the mornings; great is Your faithfulness" (3:22-23). God "has not afflicted from His heart" (3:33).

God's throne and the prayer for return. Everything on earth had fallen, but "You, O LORD, will sit forever" (5:19). The book does not end with everything fixed. It ends with a prayer: "Cause us to return, O LORD, to Yourself, and let us return" (5:21). That is where hope begins.

Christ in Lamentations

The New Testament does not quote Lamentations directly, so we should be careful. But the book helps us understand Jesus in several ways. Jesus wept over the same city as He came near it (Luke 19:41), and He warned that it would be destroyed again, as it was in A.D. 70. The man of chapter 3, who suffers under the rod of God's fury and gives his cheek to the one who strikes him (3:1, 30), is a picture of the Suffering Servant, "despised and rejected by men, a man of pains" (Isa 53:3), whose face was struck (Matt 26:67).

Many believers have also heard in Jerusalem's cry, "Look and see if there is pain like my pain" (1:12), a picture of Christ on the cross. The difference is important. Jerusalem suffered for her own sins. Jesus suffered for ours. King Zedekiah, "the anointed of the LORD," was captured and failed (4:20), but God promised a righteous Branch of David who will reign as King (Jer 23:5). Because Jesus bore God's anger for us, the hope of 3:22-23 is ours: the LORD's compassions never end. And the fear of 5:22, that God has utterly rejected His people, is answered in Christ, who cried out as one forsaken (Matt 27:46) so that all who trust in Him could be received.

Hard Passages

The suffering of children (2:11-12, 20; 4:4, 10). The poems tell of children fainting from hunger and of mothers driven by famine to things too awful to name, the very curse Moses warned of in a siege (Deut 28:53-57). The notes keep to the words of the text and add nothing. These verses are not given to shock us. They show how complete the ruin was and that God's warnings are not empty. The poet's response is grief, not a quick answer. God is not cold toward children (Mark 10:14), and I believe little children who die are safe with God (2 Sam 12:23).

The Lord like an enemy (2:4-5; 3:1-18). God was still their God, but in judgment He acted against them as an enemy would, as He had warned (Lev 26:23-24). The man of chapter 3 even says God has shut out his prayer (3:8). God kept these honest words in Scripture. Feeling forsaken is not the same as being forsaken, and the man in the pit goes on to say, "great is Your faithfulness" (3:23).

Evils from the mouth of the Most High (3:38). Nothing happens outside God's rule, but this does not mean God makes people sin, for He tempts no one (Jas 1:13). The word means calamities (Isa 45:7). And God "has not afflicted from His heart" (3:33).

Prayers against enemies (1:21-22; 3:64-66). These are not revenge. They hand evildoers over to God, the righteous Judge, who had promised to deal with Babylon and Edom (Jer 50:15, 29; 49:12). Jesus taught us to pray for our enemies (Matt 5:44), and vengeance belongs to God (Rom 12:19).

The abuse of women (5:11). The poem names it in a few words as a terrible evil that God saw. The women were not to blame, and the shame belongs to the one who did it.

The fathers' sins (5:7). The people say they bore their fathers' iniquities, but they also confess, "we have sinned!" (5:16). Sin's results pass down, but each person is responsible for his own sin (Ezek 18:20).

No more exile (4:22). The Babylonian exile ended in 538 B.C., yet Jerusalem fell again in A.D. 70. I believe the fullest meaning waits for the day God plants Israel in their land, never to be uprooted again (Amos 9:15), when they turn to the Messiah and He reigns in Zion.

Outline

I. The City in Mourning (1:1-22)
  A. The Lonely City (1:1-11)
  B. Look and See My Pain (1:12-22)
II. The LORD's Anger Against Zion (2:1-22)
  A. The Lord Has Become Like an Enemy (2:1-10)
  B. The Children Faint in the Streets (2:11-17)
  C. Pour Out Your Heart Before the Lord (2:18-22)
III. Hope in the Middle of Suffering (3:1-66)
  A. The Man Who Has Seen Affliction (3:1-18)
  B. His Compassions Do Not Come to an End (3:19-39)
  C. Let Us Return to the LORD (3:40-54)
  D. You Drew Near When I Called (3:55-66)
IV. The Siege Remembered (4:1-22)
  A. The Gold Grown Dim (4:1-11)
  B. Failed Leaders and a Failed Hope (4:12-22)
V. A Prayer for Restoration (5:1-22)
  A. Remember, O LORD (5:1-18)
  B. Your Throne Is Forever (5:19-22)

LAMENTATIONS

LAMENTATIONS 1

The Lonely City

1 How she sits alone, the city great with people! She has become like a widow, great among the nations; a princess among the provinces, she has become forced labor!
2 Weeping, she weeps in the night, and her tears ***are*** on her cheek; ***there is*** no comforter for her from all her lovers; all her friends have dealt treacherously with her; they have become her enemies. **3** Judah (Yehuda) has gone into exile from affliction and from abundance of servitude; she dwells among the nations; she has not found a resting place; all her pursuers have overtaken her between the narrow places. **4** The roads of Zion (Tsiyon) ***are*** mourning, without those who come ***to the*** appointed feast; all her gates ***are*** desolate; her priests ***are*** groaning; her virgins ***are*** grieved; and she, it is bitter to her. **5** Her adversaries have become the head; her enemies are at ease; for the LORD has caused her grief because of the multitude of her transgressions; her little ones have gone ***into*** captivity before the adversary. **6** And all her splendor has gone out from the daughter of Zion; her officials have become like deer ***that*** have not found pasture, and they have gone without strength before a pursuer. **7** Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) has remembered, ***in*** the days of her affliction and her wanderings, all her precious things which were from days of antiquity, when her people fell into the hand of an adversary, and ***there was*** no helper for her; adversaries saw her; they laughed at her downfall.
8 Jerusalem has sinned a sin; therefore she has become a filthy thing; all who honored her despise her, for they have seen her nakedness; she herself also groans, and she has turned backward. **9** Her uncleanness ***was*** on her skirts; she did not remember her end; and she has come down astonishingly; ***there is*** no comforter for her. "See, O LORD, my affliction, for the enemy has magnified himself!" **10** The adversary has spread out his hand over all her precious things; for she has seen nations enter her sanctuary, ***those*** whom You commanded ***that*** they will not come into the assembly of Yours. **11** All her people ***are*** groaning, seeking bread; they have given their precious things for food to restore ***the*** soul. "See, O LORD, and look, for I have become despised."

Look and See My Pain

12 "Not to you, all who pass by on the road? Look and see if there is pain like my pain, which has been dealt to me, with which the LORD has caused grief in the day of the burning of His anger. **13** From on high He has sent fire into my bones, and He has mastered it; He has spread out a net for my feet; He has turned me backward; He has made me desolate, faint all the day. **14** The yoke of my transgressions has been bound on by His hand; they are woven together; they have come up

1:1 Rev 18:7; Isa 3:26; 1 Kgs 4:21
1:2 Ps 6:6; Mic 7:5; Lam 1:16
1:3 Lam 2:9; Deut 28:64-67; 2 Kgs 24:14,15
1:4 Jer 9:11; Joel 1:8-13; Lam 2:6,7
1:5 Ps 90:7,8; Jer 30:14,15; Ezek 8:17,18
1:6 2 Kgs 19:21; Ps 48:2,3; Isa 1:21
1:7 Ps 42:4; Ps 79:4; Job 29:2-25
1:8 Isa 59:2-13; Jer 13:22,26; Lam 1:4,11,21,22
1:9 Deut 32:29; Isa 47:7; Lam 1:17
1:10 Mark 13:14; Jer 51:51; Deut 23:3
1:11 Jer 52:6; Jer 38:9; Lam 2:12
1:12 Dan 9:12; Luke 23:28-31; Lam 2:13
1:13 Job 30:30; Hab 3:16; Ps 22:14
1:14 Deut 28:48; Isa 47:6; Prov 5:22

1:1 *How she sits alone, the city great with people* The word "how" is the Hebrew title of the book, Ekah, the cry of someone who cannot believe what he sees. Jerusalem had been full of people at the feasts. Now it was nearly empty, and the city that once ruled others now served.
1:1 *She has become like a widow* A widow in that world was one of the most helpless people, without husband, protector or income. Jerusalem was not truly a widow, because the LORD, her Husband, was still alive (Isa 54:5). But God had stepped back, and she felt alone.
1:2 *there is no comforter for her from all her lovers* Nights are often hardest for the grieving, and no one wipes her tears. Her lovers were the nations and false gods she trusted instead of the LORD, such as Egypt (Jer 2:36-37). They left her. The LORD is the only one who never deals treacherously with His people.
1:3 *she has not found a resting place* Moses had warned that among the nations they would find no rest (Deut 28:65). The people were taken away after long suffering.
1:4 *The roads of Zion are mourning, without those who come to the appointed feast* Three times a year the roads had been crowded with families going up to worship (Deut 16:16). Now even the roads are pictured as mourners. The priests had no temple to serve in, and the young women no weddings to look forward to (Jer 7:34).
1:5 *for the LORD has caused her grief because of the multitude of her transgressions* Moses had said the obedient would be the head and the disobedient the tail (Deut 28:13, 44), and it happened. This is the first time the poem names the cause. It was not bad luck or bad politics. It was sin, and the LORD brought the grief.
1:6 *all her splendor has gone out from the daughter of Zion* Daughter of Zion is a tender name for Jerusalem and its people. Her leaders were like starving deer, too weak to run from the hunter.
1:7 *they laughed at her downfall* In misery she remembers how good things used to be, and memory makes the loss feel deeper. Enemies like Edom watched and laughed (Ps 137:7). Being mocked while you suffer adds shame to pain.
1:8 *Jerusalem has sinned a sin* The Hebrew repeats the word for emphasis: she sinned greatly. The picture of nakedness means her sin and disgrace were laid open for all the nations to see, a picture the prophets used for Judah's unfaithfulness (Jer 13:22-26).
1:9 *she did not remember her end* She never stopped to think where her sin would lead. Sin does not let us think about the end (Deut 32:29). Then for the first time she cries out, "See, O LORD, my affliction." When we are in trouble because of our own sin, the place to turn is still to God.
1:10 *she has seen nations enter her sanctuary* The Babylonians took the temple treasures (Jer 52:17-23), and pagan soldiers walked into the holy place, where only priests could go. Moses had said Ammonites and Moabites could not even enter the assembly of the LORD (Deut 23:3).
1:11 *they have given their precious things for food to restore the soul* During the siege people traded jewelry and treasures for a little food just to stay alive. Again she turns to God.
1:12 *Look and see if there is pain like my pain* Jerusalem speaks to those walking past: does this mean nothing to you? Many believers have heard here a picture of Jesus on the cross, as people passed by and mocked Him (Matt 27:39). The first meaning is Jerusalem's own pain, but the picture fits. Jesus suffered not for His own sin but for ours.
1:14 *The yoke of my transgressions has been bound on by His hand* Her own sins were tied together like the straps of a yoke and laid on her neck. Sin is never as free as it looks. It ends as a heavy yoke. Jesus offers a yoke that is easy and light (Matt 11:29-30).

on my neck; He has made my strength stumble; the Lord has given me into the hands ***of those whom*** I am not able to rise ***against***. **15** The Lord has rejected all my mighty ones in my midst; He has proclaimed an appointed time against me to break my young men; the Lord has trodden a winepress for the virgin daughter of Judah. **16** Over these ***things*** I am weeping; my eye, my eye is running down ***with*** water; for a comforter is far from me, one who restores my soul; my sons are desolate, for the enemy has prevailed." **17** Zion has spread out her hands; ***there is*** no comforter for her; the LORD has commanded concerning Jacob (Ya'aqov) ***that*** those around him ***be*** his adversaries; Jerusalem has become an impure thing among them. **18** "Righteous ***is*** He, the LORD, for I have rebelled ***against*** His mouth. Hear, please, all the peoples, and see my pain; my virgins and my young men have gone into captivity. **19** I called to my lovers; they themselves deceived me; my priests and my elders perished in the city, for they sought food for themselves, that they might restore their soul. **20** See, O LORD, for distress ***is*** mine; my inward parts are in turmoil; my heart is overturned within me, for I have surely rebelled; from outside the sword has bereaved; in the house ***it is*** like death. **21** They have heard that I am groaning; ***there is*** no comforter for me; all my enemies have heard of my calamity; they rejoice that You Yourself have done ***it***; You have brought the day ***which*** You proclaimed, and let them be like me. **22** Let all their evil come before You, and deal with them just as You have dealt with me because of all my transgressions; for my groanings ***are*** many, and my heart ***is*** faint."

LAMENTATIONS 2

The Lord Has Become Like an Enemy

1 How the Lord covers the daughter of Zion (Tsiyon) with a cloud in His anger! He has thrown from heaven ***to*** earth the splendor of Israel (Yisra'el), and He has not remembered the footstool of His feet in the day of His anger. **2** The Lord has swallowed up, and He has not spared, all the settlements of Jacob (Ya'aqov); He has torn down in His wrath the fortifications of the daughter of Judah (Yehuda); He has made ***them*** touch the ground; He has profaned the kingdom and its princes. **3** He has cut off in the heat of anger every horn of Israel; He has turned His right hand backward from before the enemy; and He has burned in Jacob like a fire of flame ***that*** has consumed all around. **4** He has bent His bow like an enemy; His right hand has taken a stand like an opponent; and He has killed all the delights of ***the*** eye in the tent of the daughter of Zion; He has poured out His rage like fire. **5** The Lord has become like an enemy; He has swallowed up Israel; He has swallowed up all her palaces; He has ruined its fortifications; and He has multiplied in the daughter of Judah mourning and lamentation. **6** And He has treated His booth violently like a garden; He has ruined His appointed place; the LORD has caused appointed feast and Sabbath to be forgotten in Zion; and He has spurned in the indignation of His anger king and priest. **7** The Lord has rejected His altar; He has repudiated His sanctuary; He has delivered up into the hand of an enemy the walls of her palaces; they have given forth a voice in the house of the LORD as in ***the*** day of an appointed feast. **8** The LORD has planned to destroy the wall

1:15 Isa 28:18; Mal 4:3; Isa 63:3
1:16 Luke 13:34; Lam 1:2,9; Lam 2:11,18
1:17 Jer 4:31; Isa 1:15; Lam 1:9
1:18 Rom 3:19; Rev 15:3; Jer 12:1
1:19 Lam 1:2; Lam 1:11; Lam 2:20
1:20 Lam 2:11; Isa 16:11; Deut 32:25
1:21 Lam 2:15; Jer 50:11; Lam 1:2,8,11,12,16,22
1:22 Neh 4:4,5; Ps 109:14,15; Jer 8:18

2:1 Ps 132:7; Lam 3:43,44; Ezek 30:18
2:2 Lam 2:17,21; Lam 3:43; Ps 89:39
2:3 Ps 74:11; Ps 75:5,10; Isa 42:25
2:4 Jer 7:20; Jer 21:5; Ezek 24:25
2:5 Lam 2:2; Jer 30:14; 2 Kgs 25:9
2:6 Lam 1:4; Zeph 3:18; Lam 4:16,20
2:7 Ps 78:59-61; Jer 52:13; Ezek 7:20-22
2:8 2 Kgs 21:13; Isa 34:11; Isa 3:26

1:15 *the Lord has trodden a winepress for the virgin daughter of Judah* Grapes were trodden until the juice ran out, a picture of judgment (Isa 63:3; Rev 14:19-20).
1:16 *my eye, my eye is running down with water* The repeated words show how deep the grief was. A comforter is one who stays beside you in sorrow and helps your soul recover, and hers is far away.
1:17 *Zion has spread out her hands; there is no comforter for her* Spread hands are the gesture of one begging for help, and no one came. Five times this chapter says she had no comforter (1:2, 9, 16, 17, 21). God's answer comes later: "Comfort, comfort My people" (Isa 40:1; John 14:16; 2 Cor 1:3). If it feels as if no one comforts you, Jerusalem's cry is in the Bible for you, and so is God's answer (Ps 34:18).
1:18 *Righteous is He, the LORD, for I have rebelled against His mouth* Perhaps the most important verse in the chapter. Jerusalem does not accuse God. She says He was right. This is true confession, like David's (Ps 51:4). Real repentance does not make excuses. It agrees with God about our sin.
1:19 *I called to my lovers; they themselves deceived me* The allies she trusted did nothing, and even the priests and elders died of hunger.
1:20 *from outside the sword has bereaved; in the house it is like death* Outside the walls, the sword. Inside the houses, famine and disease. Nowhere was safe. Again she confesses that she rebelled.
1:22 *deal with them just as You have dealt with me* She is not taking revenge. She asks God, the righteous Judge, to deal with evildoers as He dealt with her, and He had promised to do so (Jer 50:15, 29). It is right to leave justice in God's hands (Rom 12:19). There is no tidy ending. But it is grief spoken to God, and that is the beginning of hope.
2:1 *How the Lord covers the daughter of Zion with a cloud in His anger* The same cry as chapter 1. A cloud had once been the sign of God's presence and glory (Exod 40:34). Now a cloud of anger covers the city. "The footstool of His feet" is the ark and the temple where it stood (1 Chr 28:2; Ps 132:7). Even His own footstool was not spared.
2:2 *He has profaned the kingdom and its princes* Every village in the land was destroyed. To profane is to treat something holy as common. David's kingdom, chosen by God, was brought low.
2:3 *He has turned His right hand backward from before the enemy* The horn was a picture of strength. God's right hand had fought for Israel in the past (Exod 15:6). Now He drew it back.
2:5 *The Lord has become like an enemy* The startling truth of this poem. Not their enemy in every way, but "like an enemy." He was still their God, but in judgment He acted against them as an enemy would. He had warned that if they rejected Him He would walk against them (Lev 26:23-24). Love that never disciplines is not love (Heb 12:6-8).
2:6 *He has treated His booth violently like a garden* The temple was torn down as easily as a farmer tears down a garden shed after harvest. The feasts and the Sabbath, God's gifts to His people, were no longer kept, and both king and priest were rejected.
2:7 *The Lord has rejected His altar; He has repudiated His sanctuary* The people believed the temple could never fall (Jer 7:4). Once it rang with songs at the feasts. Now it rang with the shouts of Babylonian soldiers. A building is not holy in itself. When His people made His house a den of robbers, He let it be torn down (Jer 7:11-14).
2:8 *He has stretched out a measuring line* A builder uses a measuring line to build. God uses it here to tear down, carefully and thoroughly. It was not an accident. It was planned.

of the daughter of Zion; He has stretched out a measuring line; He has not turned back His hand from swallowing up; and He has caused rampart and wall to mourn; together they have languished. **9** Her gates have sunk into the ground; He has destroyed and He has broken her bars; her king and her princes ***are*** among the nations; there is no law; also her prophets have not found a vision from the LORD. **10** The elders of the daughter of Zion sit on the ground; they are silent; they have made dust go up on their head; they have girded on sackcloth; the virgins of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) have brought down their head to the ground.

The Children Faint in the Streets

11 My eyes have failed with tears; my inward parts are in turmoil; my liver has been poured out to the ground over the brokenness of the daughter of my people, because child and nursing infant faint in the open places of a town. **12** To their mothers they say, "Where ***are*** grain and wine?" as they faint like the fatally wounded in the open places of a city, as their soul pours itself out into the bosom of their mothers. **13** What shall I testify for you? What shall I liken to you, O daughter of Jerusalem? What shall I make equal to you, that I may comfort you, O virgin daughter of Zion? For your brokenness ***is*** great like the sea; who will heal you? **14** Your prophets have seen for you worthlessness and insipid ***things***; and they have not uncovered your iniquity to turn back your captivity; and they have seen for you oracles of worthlessness and enticements. **15** All who pass by ***the*** road have clapped ***their*** hands at you; they have hissed, and they have shaken their head at the daughter of Jerusalem: "Is this the city of which they said, 'The perfection of beauty, a joy to all the earth'?" **16** All your enemies have opened their mouth against you; they have hissed, and they have gnashed ***their*** teeth; they have said, "We have swallowed ***her*** up! Surely this ***is*** the day that we have waited for; we have found ***it***; we have seen ***it***!" **17** The LORD has done what He purposed; He has fulfilled His word which He commanded from days of old; He has torn down, and He has not spared; and He has caused an enemy to rejoice over you; He has lifted up the horn of your opponents.

Pour Out Your Heart Before the Lord

18 Their heart has cried out to the Lord. O wall of the daughter of Zion, send down tears like a torrent by day and night; do not give yourself rest; do not let the pupil of your eye be still. **19** Arise, cry out in the night, at the beginning of the night watches; pour out your heart like water before the face of the Lord; lift up your hands to Him for the life of your children, who are faint from hunger at the head of all ***the*** streets. **20** See, O LORD, and look! To whom have You dealt severely like this? Shall women eat their fruit, the children of ***their*** tender care? Shall priest and prophet be killed in the sanctuary of the Lord? **21** Youth and old ***man*** have lain down on the ground ***in the*** streets; my virgins and my young men have fallen by the sword; You have killed ***them*** in the day of Your anger; You have slaughtered; You have not spared. **22** You have summoned, as ***in the*** day of an appointed feast, my terrors from all around; and there was not in the day of the anger of the LORD an escapee and a survivor; those whom I tended and I reared, my enemy has made an end of them.

2:9 Hos 3:4; Neh 1:3; 2 Chr 15:3
2:10 Isa 3:26; Job 2:12; Isa 15:3
2:11 Lam 1:16; Lam 1:20; Job 16:13
2:12 Ezek 30:24; Isa 53:12
2:13 Lam 1:12; 2 Sam 5:20; Jer 14:17
2:14 Isa 58:1; Jer 5:31; Jer 2:8
2:15 Matt 27:39; Mark 15:29; Jer 18:16
2:16 Acts 7:54; Matt 27:39; Lam 3:46
2:17 Ps 89:42; Ezek 5:11; Deut 28:15-68
2:18 Ps 119:145; Lam 2:8; Jer 9:1,17,18
2:19 Ps 62:8; Isa 26:9; Ps 142:2
2:20 Lam 4:10; Jer 19:9; Ps 78:64
2:21 2 Chr 36:17; Lam 3:43; Jer 13:14
2:22 Jer 6:25; Ps 31:13; Jer 16:2-4

2:9 *also her prophets have not found a vision from the LORD* Zedekiah was blind in Babylon, and there were no priests to teach God's law. Heaven seemed silent. That may be the hardest thing of all, when God seems to say nothing.
2:10 *The elders of the daughter of Zion sit on the ground; they are silent* Dust and sackcloth were signs of deep mourning (Job 2:12). Sometimes there are no words. Job's friends did best when they sat with him seven days and said nothing (Job 2:13). When someone is crushed by grief, sometimes we just need to sit with them.
2:11 *because child and nursing infant faint in the open places of a town* In Hebrew the inner organs stood for the deepest feelings, and the poet is undone. The children were starving. They had not chosen the sins of their parents and leaders, but they paid for them. He does not explain it away. He weeps. When children suffer, the right response is grief, not a quick answer.
2:12 *To their mothers they say, "Where are grain and wine?"* They asked for food and there was none. God is not cold toward children (Mark 10:14). I believe little children who die are safe with God (2 Sam 12:23). If you have lost a child, these verses may be very hard to read. God sees such tears, and He will wipe away every tear (Rev 21:4).
2:13 *For your brokenness is great like the sea; who will heal you* The poet wants to comfort Zion but can find nothing to compare to her pain. The question hangs in the air. Only the LORD can heal what He has broken (Hos 6:1).
2:14 *they have not uncovered your iniquity to turn back your captivity* Insipid means tasteless, like whitewash. The false prophets said peace when there was no peace (Jer 6:14; 14:13). A true prophet and every faithful preacher uncovers sin so people can repent and be restored. Teaching that never names sin is not kindness. It is cruelty dressed up as comfort (2 Tim 4:3-4).
2:15 *The perfection of beauty, a joy to all the earth* Clapping, hissing and shaking the head were gestures of scorn. Those words come from the psalms about Zion (Ps 48:2; 50:2). The world mocked Jerusalem with her own praises.
2:16 *Surely this is the day that we have waited for* Edom and others had waited for this day, and they gloated over it.
2:17 *The LORD has done what He purposed; He has fulfilled His word* The key to the chapter. God had warned through Moses centuries earlier (Lev 26; Deut 28) and through prophet after prophet. This cuts both ways. God's warnings are real. But if He kept His word about judgment, He will keep His word about mercy, for He also said He would never reject His people completely (Lev 26:44).
2:19 *pour out your heart like water before the face of the Lord* The turning point of the chapter. The poet does not tell Zion to stop crying or hold it together. He tells her to take her tears to God (Ps 62:8). Lift up your hands for the children. Parents and grandparents, keep praying for your children.
2:20 *See, O LORD, and look! To whom have You dealt severely like this* Hunger had driven mothers to things too awful to name, the very thing Moses warned of in a siege (Deut 28:53), and priests and prophets were killed in the sanctuary. These words are not given to shock us but to show how complete the ruin was, and how desperately Zion needed God to look.
2:22 *those whom I tended and I reared, my enemy has made an end of them* The poem ends with a mother's grief and no answer yet. Sometimes our prayers are raw and unfinished. But it is a prayer. Zion did not stop talking to God, and in the next chapter, out of the deepest darkness, hope will come.

LAMENTATIONS 3

The Man Who Has Seen Affliction

1 I ***am*** the man ***who*** has seen affliction by the rod of His fury.
2 He has driven me, and He has made ***me*** walk ***in*** darkness
and not ***in*** light. **3** Surely against me He turns back; He turns
His hand all the day. **4** He has made my flesh and my skin
waste away; He has broken my bones. **5** He has built against
me, and He has surrounded ***me with*** poison and hardship.
6 In dark places He has made me dwell, like the dead of
antiquity. **7** He has walled up behind me, and I will not go
out; He has made my bronze fetter heavy. **8** Also when I cry
out and I cry for help, He has shut out my prayer. **9** He has
walled up my ways with hewn ***stone***; He has made my paths
crooked. **10** He ***is*** to me a bear lying in wait, a lion in hiding
places. **11** He has turned aside my ways, and He has torn me
in pieces; He has made me desolate. **12** He has bent His bow,
and He has set me up like the target for the arrow. **13** He has
brought into my kidneys the sons of His quiver. **14** I have
become a laughingstock to all my people, their taunt song all
the day. **15** He has sated me with bitter things; He has made
me drink wormwood. **16** And He has broken my teeth with
gravel; He has made me cower in ashes. **17** And You have cast
off my soul from peace; I have forgotten good. **18** And I said,
"My endurance has perished, and my hope from the LORD."

His Compassions Do Not Come to an End

19 Remember my affliction and my homelessness, the worm-
wood and the poison. **20** My soul surely remembers, and it
bows down within me. **21** This I bring back to my heart;
therefore I will wait. **22** The steadfast loves of the LORD, for
we are not finished, for His compassions do not come to an
end. **23** ***They are*** new in the mornings; great ***is*** Your faithful-
ness. **24** "The LORD ***is*** my portion," says my soul; "therefore I
will wait for Him." **25** Good ***is*** the LORD to those who wait for
Him, to the soul ***that*** seeks Him. **26** Good ***it is*** that ***one*** should
wait, and silently, for the salvation of the LORD. **27** Good ***it is***

3:1 Ps 88:7,15,16; Job 19:21; Lam 1:12-14
3:2 Jude 1:6; Job 30:26; Isa 59:9
3:3 Lam 2:4-7; Deut 29:20; Job 31:21
3:4 Ps 51:8; Isa 38:13; Jer 50:17
3:5 Lam 3:19; Jer 23:15; Job 19:8
3:6 Ps 88:5,6; Ps 143:3,7
3:7 Job 3:23; Job 19:8; Ps 88:8
3:8 Job 30:20; Ps 22:2; Job 19:7
3:9 Isa 63:17; Lam 3:11; Isa 30:28
3:10 Job 10:16; Isa 38:13; Hos 5:14
3:11 Hos 6:1; Job 16:12,13; Lam 1:13
3:12 Job 7:20; Ps 38:2; Job 6:4
3:13 Job 6:4; Deut 32:23; Job 41:28
3:14 1 Cor 4:9; Jer 20:7; Lam 3:63
3:15 Jer 9:15; Lam 3:19; Ruth 1:20
3:16 Prov 20:17; Jer 6:26; Ps 3:7
3:17 Isa 59:11; Lam 1:16; Ps 119:155
3:18 Job 17:15; Ezek 37:11; 1 Sam 27:1
3:19 Lam 3:5,15; Jer 9:15; Neh 9:32
3:20 Ps 42:5,6,11; Job 21:6; Ps 43:5
3:21 Ps 130:7; Ps 77:7-11; Lam 3:24-29
3:22 James 5:11; Ps 86:15; Ps 78:38
3:23 Ps 30:5; Isa 33:2; Zeph 3:5
3:24 Rom 15:12; 1 Pet 1:21; Ps 16:5
3:25 Gen 49:18; Ps 25:8; Ps 27:14
3:26 Acts 28:28; Ps 37:7,34; Heb 10:35
3:27 Eccl 12:1; Ps 90:12; Ps 94:12

3:1 *I am the man who has seen affliction by the rod of His fury* Many think this is Jeremiah himself. Others think he speaks for the whole nation. Both may be true. In these first verses he does not name God. He only says He and His.
3:2 *He has made me walk in darkness and not in light* This is how deep grief and depression often feel. Not only do bad things happen. It feels as if God Himself is against you, and it goes on "all the day" (v. 3).
3:4 *He has made my flesh and my skin waste away* Grief takes a toll on the body. "He has built against me" is the language of siege walls.
3:6 *like the dead of antiquity* He feels as good as buried and forgotten.
3:7 *He has walled up behind me, and I will not go out* He feels trapped and chained.
3:8 *He has shut out my prayer* The hardest line. Have you ever felt your prayers hit the ceiling? This man felt it too, and his words are in the Bible. God did not edit them out.
3:10 *He is to me a bear lying in wait, a lion in hiding places* The God who had been his Shepherd now feels like a wild animal.
3:13 *He has brought into my kidneys the sons of His quiver* The arrows are "the sons of His quiver." In Hebrew thinking the kidneys stood for the deepest feelings.
3:14 *I have become a laughingstock to all my people* As Jeremiah was (Jer 20:7).
3:15 *He has made me drink wormwood* Wormwood is a very bitter plant.
3:17 *And You have cast off my soul from peace; I have forgotten good* For the first time he speaks to God as You. He cannot remember what good felt like.
3:18 *My endurance has perished, and my hope from the LORD* The bottom. These verses are in the Bible because God knew His people would go through times like this (Ps 13:1). Jesus cried on the cross, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" (Matt 27:46). Feeling forsaken is not the same as being forsaken. Tell God exactly how you feel, and do not stop at verse 18. Do not carry it alone. If you are thinking about ending your life, reach out for help today, to someone near you or a crisis line. Your life matters to God.
3:20 *My soul surely remembers, and it bows down within me* He cannot stop going over his pain, and it crushes him. That is where most of us live when we suffer.
3:21 *This I bring back to my heart; therefore I will wait* The turning point of the whole book. Nothing outside has changed. Jerusalem is still in ruins and the man is still in pain. But now he chooses to remember something else. We cannot always choose our feelings, but we can choose what we bring back to our hearts.
3:22 *The steadfast loves of the LORD* The Hebrew is hesed, God's covenant love that keeps its promises and will not let go, the word God used of Himself to Moses (Exod 34:6). Here it is plural, "loves." His steadfast love comes again and again, in act after act.
3:22 *for we are not finished* Some translations read, we are not consumed. Jerusalem was burned, but a remnant still lived, not because they deserved it but because of His steadfast love. If God had given only what they deserved, no one would be left to write this poem.
3:22 *for His compassions do not come to an end* The word for compassions, rachamim, comes from the Hebrew word for a mother's womb, the tender love a mother has for the child she carried. We run out of patience. God does not run out of compassion.
3:23 *They are new in the mornings; great is Your faithfulness* Like manna, given new every morning (Exod 16:21), His compassion does not need to be stored up for tomorrow. Now he speaks to God directly. The same man who said "You have cast off my soul from peace" (3:17) now says "great is Your faithfulness." What changed was what he remembered. For those in Christ, every one of these mercies comes through the cross.
3:24 *The LORD is my portion* A portion was a share of the inheritance. The priests received no land, because the LORD was their portion (Num 18:20). He has lost home, city and peace, but if you still have God, you still have everything that matters (Ps 73:26). Hope in Scripture is not wishful thinking. It is waiting with confidence for God to keep His word.
3:26 *Good it is that one should wait, and silently, for the salvation of the LORD* Three verses in a row begin with the word good (3:25-27). Waiting silently does not mean never crying out, for this whole book cries out. It means we stop fighting God and trust Him to act in His time (Isa 40:31). Some of God's best work in us happens in the waiting.
3:27 *Good it is for the man that he should bear a yoke in his youth* A yoke was the wooden frame placed on an ox for work. Hardship learned young can shape a person for good.

for the man that he should bear a yoke in his youth. **28** Let him sit alone, and let him be silent, for He has laid ***it*** on him. **29** Let him put his mouth in the dust; perhaps there is hope. **30** Let him give ***his*** cheek to the one who strikes him; let him be sated with reproach. **31** For the Lord will not reject forever. **32** For though He has caused grief, then He will have compassion according to the greatness of His steadfast loves. **33** For He has not afflicted from His heart, and ***has not*** grieved the sons of man. **34** To crush under his feet all the prisoners of ***the*** earth, **35** to turn aside the justice of a man before the face of the Most High, **36** to subvert a man in his case at law, the Lord has not seen ***it***. **37** Who ***is*** this ***who*** has said ***something***, and it has come to be, ***when*** the Lord has not commanded ***it***? **38** From the mouth of the Most High do not the evils and the good go forth? **39** Why should a living man complain, a man over his sins?

Let Us Return to the LORD

40 Let us search our ways, and let us examine ***them***, and let us return to the LORD. **41** Let us lift up our heart with ***our*** palms to God in the heavens. **42** We have transgressed, and we have rebelled; You have not forgiven. **43** You have covered Yourself with anger, and You have pursued us; You have killed; You have not spared. **44** You have covered Yourself with a cloud, from prayer passing through. **45** Scouring and refuse You have made us in the midst of the peoples. **46** All our enemies have opened their mouth against us. **47** Terror and a pit have come to us, devastation and brokenness. **48** My eye runs down ***with*** streams of water over the brokenness of the daughter of my people. **49** My eye has poured out, and it will not cease, without stopping, **50** until the LORD looks down and sees from heaven. **51** My eye deals severely with my soul because of all the daughters of my city. **52** My enemies have surely hunted me like the bird, without cause. **53** They have silenced my life in the pit, and they have thrown a stone on me. **54** Waters have overflowed over my head; I said, "I have been cut off."

You Drew Near When I Called

55 I called on Your name, O LORD, from a pit of lowest parts. **56** You heard my voice; do not hide Your ear to my relief, to my cry for help. **57** You drew near on the day ***when*** I called on You; You said, "Do not fear." **58** You have conducted, O Lord, the cases of my soul; You have redeemed my life. **59** You have seen, O LORD, my oppression; judge my judgment. **60** You have seen all their vengeance, all their plans against me. **61** You have heard their reproach, O LORD, all their plans against me, **62** the lips of those who rise against me and their muttering against me all the day. **63** Their sit-

3:28 Jer 15:17; Lam 2:10; Ps 39:9
3:29 Job 40:4; 2 Chr 33:12; Job 42:5,6
3:30 Luke 6:29; Isa 50:6; Job 16:10
3:31 Ps 94:14; Ps 77:7; Isa 54:7-10
3:32 Ps 78:38; Hos 11:8; Ps 106:43-45
3:33 Ezek 33:11; Ezek 18:32; Heb 12:9,10
3:34 Isa 51:22,23; Jer 50:17,33,34; Jer 51:33-36
3:36 Hab 1:13; 2 Sam 11:27; Isa 59:15
3:37 Matt 2:8; Acts 19:21; Ps 33:9-11
3:38 Isa 45:7; Job 2:10; Amos 3:6
3:39 Mic 7:9; Prov 19:3; Lam 3:22
3:40 Ps 119:59; 2 Cor 13:5; Job 11:13-15
3:41 Ps 25:1; Ps 28:2; Ps 141:2
3:42 Neh 9:26; 2 Kgs 24:4; Lam 1:18
3:43 Lam 3:66; Ps 83:15; Lam 2:1
3:44 Lam 3:8; Ps 97:2; Zech 7:13
3:45 1 Cor 4:13; Lam 3:14; Lam 2:15
3:46 Lam 2:16; Ps 22:6-8; Exod 11:7
3:47 Isa 24:17,18; Isa 51:19; Jer 48:43,44
3:48 Lam 2:11,18; Jer 9:1,18; Ps 119:136
3:49 Jer 14:17; Ps 77:2; Lam 1:16
3:50 Isa 63:15; Lam 5:1; Lam 2:20
3:51 Gen 44:34; 1 Sam 30:3,4; Jer 4:19-21
3:52 John 15:25; Ps 35:7,19; Jer 37:15,16
3:53 Jer 38:6,9; Dan 6:17; Jer 37:20
3:54 Jonah 2:3-5; Ezek 37:11; Ps 18:4
3:55 2 Chr 33:11,12; Ps 18:5,6; Ps 40:1,2
3:56 Ps 55:1; Job 34:28; 2 Chr 33:13,19
3:57 Rev 2:10; Isa 41:10,14; James 4:8
3:58 1 Sam 25:39; Jer 51:36; Gen 48:16
3:59 Ps 26:1; Ps 43:1; Jer 11:19-21
3:60 Jer 11:19,20; Ps 10:14
3:61 Lam 5:1; Ps 74:18; Ps 89:50
3:62 Ezek 36:3; Ps 59:7,12; Ps 140:3
3:63 Ps 139:2; Lam 3:14; Job 30:9

3:29 *Let him put his mouth in the dust; perhaps there is hope* To put the mouth in the dust was to bow all the way down. Notice the honest "perhaps." He does not pretend to know the outcome, but he humbles himself and hopes.
3:30 *Let him give his cheek to the one who strikes him* Jesus taught His followers to turn the other cheek (Matt 5:39), and He lived this verse when He was struck and did not strike back (1 Pet 2:23).
3:31 *For the Lord will not reject forever* The first of three reasons for hope, each beginning with "For." The rejection was real but not final. God's discipline has an end (Ps 30:5).
3:32 *according to the greatness of His steadfast loves* He does not deny that God caused the grief. But compassion comes after, and its measure is not the size of our sin or our pain. It is the greatness of His love.
3:33 *For He has not afflicted from His heart* One of the most comforting verses in the Old Testament. God does not bring suffering because He enjoys it (Ezek 33:11). Even when He sends hard things, His heart is not in the hurting but in the healing. He disciplines as a loving father, for our good (Heb 12:10-11; Ps 103:13). The cross shows His heart most clearly (Rom 8:32).
3:36 *the Lord has not seen it* This can be read as a question, does the Lord not see it, or as saying He does not approve of it. Either way, God sees every injustice.
3:38 *From the mouth of the Most High do not the evils and the good go forth* Nothing happens outside God's rule. "Evils" does not mean God makes people sin, for He tempts no one (Jas 1:13). It means calamities (Isa 45:7).
3:39 *Why should a living man complain, a man over his sins* If we are alive, we have received more mercy than we deserve. This is not a rule against honest lament. It warns against bitterness that blames God for what our sin has brought.
3:40 *Let us search our ways, and let us examine them, and let us return to the LORD* Now the poet speaks for all of them. Look at our lives honestly and turn back to God, lifting the heart with the hands (v. 41).
3:42 *We have transgressed, and we have rebelled; You have not forgiven* They confess, yet the ruin is still around them. Sometimes the results of sin go on after we repent. That does not mean God has not heard.
3:44 *You have covered Yourself with a cloud, from prayer passing through* Their prayers feel blocked again, and the nations treat them as refuse. Even after verses 22 to 33, grief returns. Hope does not erase grief in a moment. It holds us while the grief comes in waves.
3:48 *My eye runs down with streams of water* Words that sound just like Jeremiah (Jer 9:1). He will weep until the LORD looks down from heaven (v. 50). The tears themselves are a prayer aimed at heaven.
3:53 *They have silenced my life in the pit* This sounds very much like Jeremiah's own story, when his enemies threw him into a muddy cistern (Jer 38:6). He thought it was the end.
3:57 *You drew near on the day when I called on You; You said, "Do not fear."* God came near and told him not to fear. That memory gives him confidence now. Remembering what God has done before keeps hope alive (Jonah 2:2).
3:59 *judge my judgment* He asks God to take up his case, for God has heard all their plans and mocking.

ting and their rising, look! I ***am*** their mocking song. **64** You will repay to them recompense, O LORD, according to the work of their hands. **65** You will give to them a covering of heart; Your curse ***be*** on them. **66** You will pursue ***them*** in anger, and You will destroy them from under the heavens of the LORD.

LAMENTATIONS 4

The Gold Grown Dim

1 How the gold is dimmed, the fine gold is changed! The stones of holiness lie scattered at the head of all ***the*** streets. **2** The precious sons of Zion (Tsiyon), who were weighed with pure gold, how they are considered as jars of earthenware, the work of the hands of a potter! **3** Even jackals draw out a breast; they nurse their young; the daughter of my people ***has become*** cruel, like the ostriches in the wilderness. **4** The tongue of a nursing infant has cleaved to its palate in thirst; children have asked for bread; there is no one breaking ***it*** for them. **5** Those who ate delicacies are desolate in the streets; those brought up on crimson have embraced ash heaps. **6** And the iniquity of the daughter of my people has become greater than the sin of Sodom (Sedom), which was overthrown as in a moment, and hands did not twist on it. **7** Her nobles were brighter than snow; they were more dazzling than milk; they were redder ***in*** bone than corals; their polishing ***was*** sapphire. **8** Their appearance is darker than soot; they are not recognized in the streets; their skin has shriveled on their bone; it has become dry like wood. **9** Better were the slain of a sword than the slain of hunger, who flow away, pierced through, from ***lack of*** the produce of the field. **10** The hands of compassionate women have boiled their own children; they have become food for them in the brokenness of the daughter of my people. **11** The LORD has completed His rage; He has poured out the burning of His anger; and He has kindled a fire in Zion, and it has consumed her foundations.

Failed Leaders and a Failed Hope

12 The kings of the earth did not believe, all the inhabitants of the world, that opponent and enemy would come into the gates of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). **13** Because of the sins of her prophets ***and*** the iniquities of her priests, who shed in her midst the blood of righteous ***ones***, **14** they wandered ***as*** blind ***men*** in the streets; they were defiled with the blood, without ***anyone*** being able ***to*** touch their garments.
15 "Depart! Unclean!" they called out to them. "Depart! Depart! Do not touch!" For they fled; also they wandered; they said among the nations, "They will not again sojourn."
16 The face of the LORD has scattered them; He will not again regard them; they did not lift up the face of priests, and

3:64 Ps 28:4; Jer 11:20; 2 Tim 4:14
3:65 Isa 6:10; Deut 2:30; Deut 27:15-26
3:66 Ps 8:3; Lam 3:43; Deut 25:19
4:1 Ezek 7:19-22; Isa 1:21; Lam 2:19
4:2 Jer 19:11; Isa 30:14; Isa 51:18
4:3 Isa 49:15; Ezek 5:10; Lam 2:20
4:4 Mark 13:17; Ps 22:15; Lam 2:11,12
4:5 Amos 6:3-7; Luke 7:25; 1 Tim 5:6
4:6 Luke 10:12; Matt 11:23; Matt 11:24
4:7 Ps 51:7; Song 5:10; Num 6:2-21
4:8 Lam 5:10; Ps 102:3-5,11; Job 19:20
4:9 Lev 26:39; Ezek 24:23; Ezek 33:10
4:10 Lam 2:20; Isa 49:15; Lam 4:3
4:11 Jer 7:20; Ezek 22:31; Lam 4:22
4:12 Deut 29:24-28; 1 Kgs 9:8,9; Ps 48:4-6
4:13 Luke 11:47; Acts 7:52; Matt 23:34
4:14 Matt 23:35; Jer 2:34; Deut 28:28,29
4:16 Heb 8:9; Lam 5:12; Isa 9:14-16

3:64 *You will repay to them recompense, O LORD* Like many psalms, a prayer for God's justice. He does not take revenge. He hands his enemies to God. Jesus taught us to pray for our enemies (Matt 5:44), and we pray for their salvation first. But it is not wrong to ask God to deal with unrepented evil, for vengeance belongs to Him (Rom 12:19).
3:66 *You will pursue them in anger* The poem that began in affliction ends with confidence that God sees, hears and will judge rightly. The darkness is still there, but the man is no longer alone in it.
4:1 *How the gold is dimmed, the fine gold is changed* Gold does not easily rust or tarnish, so dimmed gold is a picture of something that should never happen. "The stones of holiness" may be the temple stones thrown into the streets, or the people themselves, as the next verse says.
4:2 *how they are considered as jars of earthenware* God's people were worth their weight in gold to Him. Now the nations treated them like cheap clay pots to be smashed and thrown away (Jer 19:10-11). Sin takes what God made precious and makes it look worthless. But even here God calls them "precious."
4:3 *the daughter of my people has become cruel, like the ostriches in the wilderness* Even jackals nurse their young. The ostrich was known for leaving its eggs in the sand (Job 39:13-16).
4:4 *children have asked for bread; there is no one breaking it for them* The point is not that every mother stopped loving her child. The famine was so terrible that even what is most natural became impossible, and the children suffered for the sins of the adults. God's heart is the opposite of this: "I, I will not forget you" (Isa 49:15). I believe little children who die are safe with God (2 Sam 12:23).
4:5 *those brought up on crimson have embraced ash heaps* Crimson cloth was the clothing of the wealthy. The rich were now digging through garbage.
4:6 *greater than the sin of Sodom* Jerusalem had the law, the temple, the covenant and the prophets, and Sodom had none of that. Jesus said it would be more tolerable for Sodom than for towns that saw His miracles and did not repent (Matt 11:24; Luke 12:48). Sodom's end came "as in a moment," but Jerusalem's suffering dragged on through a year and a half of siege.
4:8 *they are not recognized in the streets* Her nobles had been healthy and handsome, their faces glowing. Hunger changed them so much that their own neighbors did not know them.
4:9 *Better were the slain of a sword than the slain of hunger* Those who died quickly by the sword were better off than those who wasted away slowly.
4:10 *The hands of compassionate women have boiled their own children* The worst thing the book records, and I will not add to it. It is the curse Moses warned of in a siege (Deut 28:56-57; Jer 19:9). These were not monsters but loving mothers driven past all limits by starvation. The verse does not approve what it reports. It shows that God's warnings are not empty. If you carry guilt from something dark in your past, the blood of Jesus can wash it away (1 John 1:7).
4:11 *The LORD has completed His rage* The judgment was complete. The fire consumed the city down to her foundations.
4:12 *The kings of the earth did not believe* Jerusalem had stood for centuries, and God had saved it from Assyria in a single night (2 Kgs 19:35). No one thought it could fall.
4:13 *Because of the sins of her prophets and the iniquities of her priests* The very men who should have led the people to God killed the righteous. They tried to kill Jeremiah (Jer 26:8), and a king killed the prophet Uriah (Jer 26:23). Jesus wept over the same city that killed the prophets (Matt 23:37). Those who claim to speak for God carry a heavier responsibility (Jas 3:1).
4:15 *"Depart! Unclean!" they called out to them* That was the cry the Law gave a leper, who had to warn others away (Lev 13:45). The holy men had become like lepers, and even the nations would not let them stay. They had not honored God, and now no one honored them.

elders they did not favor. **17** Still our eyes fail for our help, ***in*** futility; in our watchtower we have watched for a nation ***that*** will not save. **18** They hunted our steps from walking in our open places; our end drew near; our days were completed; for our end had come. **19** Our pursuers were swifter than the eagles of heaven; on the mountains they hotly pursued us; in the wilderness they lay in wait for us. **20** The breath of our nostrils, the anointed of the LORD, was captured in their pits, of whom we had said, "In his shadow we will live among the nations." **21** Exult and rejoice, O daughter of Edom, who dwells in the land of Uz (Uts); also to you the cup will pass; you will become drunk, and you will strip yourself naked. **22** Your iniquity is finished, O daughter of Zion; He will not again take you into exile; He will punish your iniquity, O daughter of Edom; He will uncover your sins.

LAMENTATIONS 5

Remember, O LORD

1 Remember, O LORD, what has happened to us; look, and see our reproach. **2** Our inheritance has been turned over to strangers, our houses to foreigners. **3** We have become fatherless ones, and there is no father; our mothers ***are*** like widows. **4** Our water we have drunk for money; our wood comes for a price. **5** On our neck we have been pursued; we have become weary, and no rest has been given to us. **6** ***To*** Egypt (Mitsrayim) we have given a hand, ***and to*** Assyria (Ashur), to be satisfied ***with*** bread. **7** Our fathers sinned, and they are no more; and we have borne their iniquities. **8** Slaves have ruled over us; there is no one rescuing ***us*** from their hand. **9** With our life we bring in our bread, because of the sword of the wilderness. **10** Our skin has grown hot like an oven because of the burning heat of hunger. **11** They have humiliated women in Zion (Tsiyon), virgins in the cities of Judah (Yehuda). **12** Princes have been hanged by their hand; the faces of elders have not been honored. **13** Young men have lifted a mill, and youths have staggered under the wood. **14** Old ***men*** have ceased from the gate, young men from their music. **15** The joy of our heart has ceased; our dancing has been changed into mourning. **16** The crown of

4:17 2 Kgs 24:7; Isa 20:5; Ezek 29:6,7,16
4:18 Amos 8:2; Ezek 7:2-12; Lam 3:52
4:19 Isa 5:26-28; Jer 4:13; Hab 1:8
4:20 Gen 2:7; 2 Sam 19:21; Jer 39:5
4:21 Ps 137:7; Job 1:1; Amos 1:11
4:22 Isa 40:2; Ps 137:7; Lam 4:6
5:1 Luke 23:42; Ps 44:13-16; Lam 3:61
5:2 Zeph 1:13; Isa 1:7; Deut 28:30-68
5:3 Jer 18:21; Exod 22:24; Hos 14:3
5:4 Isa 3:1; Deut 28:48; Ezek 4:9-17
5:5 Neh 9:36,37; Lam 1:14; Lam 4:19
5:6 Hos 9:3; Hos 12:1; Gen 24:2
5:7 Jer 16:12; Jer 31:29; Ezek 18:2
5:8 Neh 5:15; Zech 11:6; Prov 30:22
5:9 Jer 40:9-12; Judg 6:11; 2 Sam 23:17
5:10 Lam 4:8; Job 30:30; Lam 3:4
5:11 Zech 14:2; Isa 13:16; Deut 28:30
5:12 Lam 4:16; Isa 47:6; Lam 2:10,20
5:13 Judg 16:21; Exod 11:5; Job 31:10
5:14 Jer 7:34; Lam 1:4,19; Lam 2:10
5:15 James 4:9; Amos 8:10; Ps 30:11
5:16 Rev 2:10; Ps 89:39; Jer 13:18

4:17 *we have watched for a nation that will not save* They kept watching for Egypt. An Egyptian army came once and the Babylonians pulled back briefly, but Egypt went home and the siege went on (Jer 37:5-8). Many of us put our hope in leaders, money, health or people, and they fail us (Ps 146:3).
4:19 *Our pursuers were swifter than the eagles of heaven* There was nowhere to hide, on the mountains or in the wilderness.
4:20 *The breath of our nostrils, the anointed of the LORD, was captured in their pits* King Zedekiah, anointed as David's heir. The people spoke as if their life depended on him, but he was captured as he fled (Jer 52:8-11). That hope failed. God had promised a different Anointed One, the righteous Branch who "will reign as king" (Jer 23:5). Jesus' shadow truly shelters His people, and He will never fail.
4:21 *also to you the cup will pass* Edom cheered when Jerusalem fell (Ps 137:7; Obad 12). Celebrate for now, the poet says. Edom would drink the cup of God's judgment too (Jer 49:12). The land of Uz was the region where Edom lived.
4:22 *Your iniquity is finished, O daughter of Zion; He will not again take you into exile* The first clear word of hope for the nation in this poem (Isa 40:2). The Babylonian exile did end, and the people came home in 538 B.C. Jerusalem was destroyed again in A.D. 70, and the Jews were scattered for centuries. I believe the fullest meaning waits for the day God plants Israel in their land never to be uprooted again (Amos 9:15), when they turn to the Messiah and He reigns in Zion.
5:1 *Remember, O LORD, what has happened to us* Three requests: remember, look and see. They do not doubt that God knows. They ask Him to act on what He knows. In Scripture, when God remembers, He acts. He remembered Noah and sent the wind (Gen 8:1), and He remembered His covenant and sent Moses (Exod 2:24).
5:2 *Our inheritance has been turned over to strangers* The land God gave Israel as an inheritance was now owned by others.
5:3 *We have become fatherless ones, and there is no father* So many men had died that the land was full of orphans and widows. It may also mean they felt like orphans, with no king and no protector.
5:4 *Our water we have drunk for money* They had to pay their conquerors for water from their own wells and wood from their own forests. Everyday life had become a burden.
5:6 *To Egypt we have given a hand, and to Assyria* To give the hand meant to make a pact. Judah had made deals with the great powers, hoping to survive (Jer 2:18, 36). It never worked. They looked for bread in the wrong places.
5:7 *Our fathers sinned, and they are no more; and we have borne their iniquities* There is truth in this. The sins of Manasseh and others had piled up (2 Kgs 24:3-4), and sin always hurts the next generation. But in verse 16 they say, "we have sinned!" Each person is responsible for his own sin (Ezek 18:20; Jer 31:29-30). We may carry real wounds from those before us, but we cannot hide behind them. When we own our sin and turn to God, the chain can be broken.
5:8 *Slaves have ruled over us* The officials governing them may have been servants of the Babylonian king, men of low rank given power over Judah.
5:9 *because of the sword of the wilderness* Going out to the fields for food was dangerous, because raiders roamed the countryside. Hunger burned in them like a fever (v. 10).
5:11 *They have humiliated women in Zion, virgins in the cities of Judah* The abuse of women by conquering soldiers, said in a few words, and so will I. It was a terrible evil. The women were not to blame, and God counted it a deep wrong. If you or someone you love has suffered this harm, it was not your fault, and the shame belongs to the one who did it (Ps 34:18). God sees and will set it right. Please talk with a pastor, a counselor or a friend.
5:12 *Princes have been hanged by their hand* The leaders were killed and their bodies hung up in shame, and the elders who should have been respected were treated with contempt.
5:13 *Young men have lifted a mill* Grinding grain was slaves' work, often done by women or prisoners (Judg 16:21). Boys staggered under loads of firewood.
5:14 *Old men have ceased from the gate, young men from their music* The gate was where the elders sat to judge and talk, and it was empty. All the ordinary joys of life were gone.
5:15 *our dancing has been changed into mourning* David sang, "You have turned my mourning into dancing for me" (Ps 30:11). Here it is the other way around.
5:16 *The crown of our head has fallen; woe now to us, for we have sinned* The crown is their glory: king, city and temple. Then comes the plain confession, the only place in the poem they say it, and the key to everything. They suffered not only for their fathers' sins but for their own. Restoration begins with confession (1 John 1:9).

our head has fallen; woe now to us, for we have sinned!
17 Because of this our heart has become faint; because of these ***things*** our eyes have grown dim, **18** because of the mountain of Zion, which ***is*** desolate; foxes have prowled on it.

Your Throne Is Forever

19 You, O LORD, will sit forever; Your throne ***is*** to generation and generation. **20** Why do You forget us perpetually, ***and*** abandon us for length of days? **21** Cause us to return, O LORD, to Yourself, and let us return; renew our days as of old.
22 Unless You have utterly rejected us; You have been angry against us exceedingly.

5:17 Isa 1:5; Lam 2:11; Job 17:7
5:18 Mic 3:12; Lam 2:8,9; 1 Kgs 9:7,8
5:19 Heb 1:8; Ps 102:12,25-27; Ps 45:6
5:20 Ps 13:1; Ps 44:24; Ps 74:1
5:21 Ps 80:3,7,19; Jer 31:18; 1 Kgs 18:37
5:22 Ps 60:1,2; Ps 44:9; Jer 15:1-5

5:18 *foxes have prowled on it* Mount Zion was where God put His name, and the temple courts had been full of worshipers. Now foxes or jackals wandered over the ruins.
5:19 *You, O LORD, will sit forever; Your throne is to generation and generation* The turning point of the prayer. City, temple, king and people had fallen, and Babylon's throne would fall too, but the LORD's throne had not (Ps 102:12). Hope stands there when everything else is gone, not on circumstances, leaders or feelings. If your world has fallen apart, hold this verse (Heb 13:8).
5:20 *Why do You forget us perpetually* Right after praising His eternal throne, they ask the honest question. Faith and questions sit side by side (Ps 13:1). It is not unbelief to ask God why. God had not forgotten them. He had said the exile would last seventy years and He would bring them back (Jer 29:10). To people in the ruins it felt like forever.
5:21 *Cause us to return, O LORD, to Yourself, and let us return* The heart of the prayer. Notice the order. They cannot turn back to God on their own, so they ask God to turn them, and then they will turn. Repentance is a gift of grace (2 Tim 2:25; Jer 31:18). God answered: the exiles came home in 538 B.C., the temple was rebuilt by 516 B.C., and He promised a new heart in the new covenant (Jer 31:33). In Christ He turns us, and we return.
5:22 *Unless You have utterly rejected us* Some translate it as a question. Either way, it is the fear left after the prayer. Real prayer does not always end with a neat answer. For centuries readers in the synagogue have read verse 21 again after verse 22, so the last words heard are the prayer for return. God did not reject His people (Rom 11:1). Jesus cried out as one forsaken (Matt 27:46) so that all who trust Him could be received and brought home.

EZEKIEL

Introduction

Title

The book is named for the prophet whose messages it holds, Ezekiel the son of Buzi. His name means God strengthens, which fits the forehead God made hard for him (3:8-9). Ezekiel is one of the Major Prophets, after Jeremiah and Lamentations and before Daniel. They are called major because they are long, not because they matter more than the twelve shorter books. Ezekiel has 48 chapters and 1,273 verses.

Author and Date

The book names its author: "Ezekiel the son of Buzi, the priest" (1:3). Almost all of it is written in the first person, and its dated messages run in order. Jewish and Christian tradition have always held that Ezekiel wrote it. Some critical scholars have argued that later editors added or rearranged parts, especially chapters 40 to 48, but the book's unity of style and outlook supports one author. Ezekiel served about 593 to 571 B.C. among the exiles in Babylon. His first dated message is from the fifth year of King Jehoiachin's exile, about 593 B.C. (1:2), and his last from the twenty-seventh year, about 571 B.C. (29:17). He likely gathered the messages in their present order near the end of that time. The phrase "the thirtieth year" (1:1) is most likely his own age, the year a priest would begin to serve (Numbers 4:3).

Background and Setting

Solomon's kingdom split about 930 B.C. The northern kingdom fell to Assyria in 722 B.C. Judah lasted longer, but it too turned to idols. Babylon took its first captives from Jerusalem in 605 B.C. In 597 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar took King Jehoiachin and about ten thousand leading people to Babylon (2 Kings 24:10-16), and Ezekiel was among them. Dates here follow Edwin Thiele and those who built on his work. Zedekiah reigned in Jerusalem about 597 to 586 B.C. He broke his oath to Babylon, and the city and temple were destroyed in 586 B.C.

Ezekiel lived among the exiles at Tel-abib by the river Chebar, usually identified with a large canal near Nippur, southeast of Babylon (1:1; 3:15). The exiles were not chained slaves. They had houses and elders, and the elders came to Ezekiel's house to hear the word of the LORD (8:1; 14:1; 20:1). Ezekiel was a priest who expected to serve in the temple, yet God made him a prophet in a foreign land. That is why the temple, God's glory, holiness, clean and unclean, and the Sabbaths fill his book.

For the first half of the book Jerusalem is still standing, and the exiles were sure it could never fall while the temple stood. Ezekiel told them it would fall and why. He often acted out his messages: he built a model of the siege, lay on his side for months, shaved his head with a sword, dug through a wall, and did not mourn his wife in public. God called him a sign to the house of Israel (12:6). In chapter 33 an escapee arrives with the news, "The city has been struck" (33:21). From then on the message turns to hope.

Themes

The great theme of Ezekiel is that God will make Himself known. Some form of the words "you shall know that I am the LORD" (6:7) comes more than sixty times. God is known by His judgment on Judah's sin, by His judgment on the nations, and most of all by bringing Israel home and dwelling among them.

The glory of the LORD runs through the book. Ezekiel sees it by the Chebar (chapter 1), watches it leave the defiled temple and the city (chapters 10 and 11), and sees it return to a new temple (43:1-5). The book ends with a city whose name is "The LORD Is There" (48:35).

Ezekiel also teaches personal responsibility. Each person stands before God for his own life: "The soul that sins, it shall die" (18:4). Yet God says, "I do not take pleasure in the death of the one who dies" (18:32), and He calls everyone to turn and live. Ezekiel himself was a watchman who had to warn the wicked (3:17; 33:7).

After the fall, God promises a future for Israel that rests on His own name, not on Israel's merit. He will be their Shepherd and set over them one shepherd, "My servant David" (34:23). He will gather them from the nations and give them a new heart and His Spirit (36:24-27). He will raise the dry bones of the nation and join Judah and Israel into one kingdom (37). He will defeat the last invader, Gog (38-39), and dwell among them in a temple and land described in detail (40-48). These promises are for Israel and are not set aside in favor of the church, though believers now share the new covenant's blessings in Christ.

Christ in Ezekiel

God calls Ezekiel "Son of man" (2:1) over ninety times, a mere human being before the glory of God. Jesus took Son of Man as His favorite name for Himself, mostly from Daniel 7:13, where one like a son of man receives an everlasting kingdom. Ezekiel saw on the throne something like the appearance of a man (1:26), and John saw the risen Christ in the same glory (Revelation 1:13-16).

Ezekiel promises a tender shoot that God will plant on the high mountain of Israel (17:22-23), a ruler "to whom the judgment belongs" (21:27), and one Shepherd, "My servant David" (34:23; 37:24-25). Jesus is that Good Shepherd who seeks the lost (John 10:11; Luke 19:10). The new heart and Spirit of 36:25-27 stand behind Jesus' words about being born of water and the Spirit (John 3:5). The glory that left the temple came back in the Son, who tabernacled among us (John 1:14), and will return when He comes to reign. The river from the temple pictures the life He gives (47:1-12; John 7:38).

Hard Passages

Some scenes in Ezekiel are hard to read. Bread baked over dung (4:12-15) and parents and children turning on each other in famine (5:10) show the horror of the siege and the uncleanness of exile. The notes explain them plainly and briefly.

In chapter 9 the city's people are struck down in a vision, beginning at the sanctuary. This pictures Babylon's judgment in 586 B.C. after long warning. The notes affirm that the Judge of all the earth does right, and I believe little children who die are

safe with God.

Chapters 16 and 23 picture Jerusalem and Samaria as unfaithful wives. The language is strong because their idolatry was shameful. The notes stay modest and show that these chapters end in grace (16:60-63).

Is the king of Tyre in 28:11-19 a man only, or does the lament look past him to Satan? The notes give both views.

Who is Gog, and when does he come (38-39)? The notes name the views on Rosh and the peoples of the north without naming modern nations as certain. They place the invasion in the last days after Israel is regathered, give the main pre-tribulation views of its timing, and distinguish it from Revelation 20:8.

Is the temple of chapters 40 to 48 a real future building? The notes take it as a real temple in Christ's millennial kingdom, and they name the other views: a plan for the returning exiles, a symbol of the church, heaven, or an ideal never meant to be built. Why would there be sacrifices after Christ's one sacrifice (Hebrews 10:10-14)? The notes explain them as memorials looking back to the cross and as ceremonial cleansing for people in natural bodies during the kingdom, never as taking away sin. The prince of these chapters is treated as a human ruler under Christ, since he offers a sin offering for himself (45:22).

Outline

I. Ezekiel's Call (1:1-3:27)
  A. The vision of the glory of God (1:1-28)
  B. Sent to a rebellious house (2:1-3:15)
  C. The watchman, bound and silent (3:16-27)
II. Judgment on Jerusalem and Judah (4:1-24:27)
  A. The siege acted out (4:1-5:17)
  B. Against the mountains of Israel and the end has come (6:1-7:27)
  C. The glory leaves the temple (8:1-11:25)
  D. Signs, false prophets and idols in the heart (12:1-14:23)
  E. The vine, the unfaithful wife and the two eagles (15:1-17:24)
  F. The soul who sins shall die (18:1-32)
  G. A lament and a history of rebellion (19:1-20:49)
  H. The sword and the city of bloodshed (21:1-22:31)
  I. The two sisters (23:1-49)
  J. The boiling pot and the death of Ezekiel's wife (24:1-27)
III. Judgment on the Nations (25:1-32:32)
  A. Ammon, Moab, Edom and Philistia (25:1-17)
  B. Tyre and Sidon (26:1-28:26)
  C. Egypt (29:1-32:32)
IV. The Restoration of Israel (33:1-39:29)
  A. The watchman and the fall of the city (33:1-33)
  B. The shepherds and the Good Shepherd (34:1-31)
  C. Against Mount Seir and hope for the mountains of Israel (35:1-36:15)
  D. A new heart and a new spirit (36:16-38)
  E. The dry bones and the two sticks (37:1-28)
  F. The invasion and defeat of Gog (38:1-39:29)
V. The New Temple and the Land (40:1-48:35)
  A. The temple measured (40:1-42:20)
  B. The glory returns and the altar (43:1-27)
  C. Priests, prince and offerings (44:1-46:24)
  D. The river from the temple (47:1-12)
  E. The borders and division of the land (47:13-48:35)

EZEKIEL

EZEKIEL 1

The Vision by the Chebar

1 And it was in the thirtieth year, in the fourth ***month***, on the fifth ***day*** of the month, and I ***was*** in the midst of the exiles by the river Chebar (Kevar), ***that*** the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God. **2** On the fifth ***day*** of the month, it ***was*** the fifth year of the exile of King Jehoiachin (Yoyakhin), **3** the word of the LORD surely came to Ezekiel (Yechezqel) the son of Buzi, the priest, in the land of the Chaldeans (Kasdim) by the river Chebar; and the hand of the LORD was on him there. **4** And I saw, and look, a storm wind coming from the north, a great cloud and fire flashing, and brightness ***was*** all around it, and from its midst ***there was something*** like the appearance of the shining substance, from the midst of the fire. **5** And from its midst ***came*** the likeness of four living creatures; and this ***was*** their appearance: they had the likeness of a man. **6** And each one had four faces, and each one of them had four wings. **7** And their feet ***were*** a straight foot, and the sole of their feet ***was*** like the sole of the foot of a calf; and ***they were*** gleaming like the appearance of burnished bronze. **8** And the hands of a man ***were*** under their wings on their four sides; and the four of them had their faces and their wings. **9** Their wings ***were*** touching, each one to another; they did not turn when they went; each one went in the direction of its face. **10** And the likeness of their faces ***was*** the face of a man; and the four of them had the face of a lion on the right ***side***; and the four of them had the face of an ox on the left ***side***; and the four of them had the face of an eagle. **11** And their faces and their wings ***were*** spread out above; each one had two ***wings*** touching one another, and two ***wings*** covering their bodies. **12** And each one went in the direction of its face; wherever the spirit was ***about*** to go, they went; they did not turn when they went. **13** And ***as for*** the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance ***was*** like coals of fire burning, like the appearance of the torches; it was moving about between the living creatures; and the fire ***had*** brightness, and from the fire lightning was going out. **14** And the living creatures were running and returning like the appearance of the flash.

The Wheels and the Throne

15 And I saw the living creatures, and look, one wheel ***was*** on the ground beside the living creatures, for ***each of*** its four faces. **16** The appearance of the wheels and their construction ***was*** like the appearance of chrysolite, and the four of them had one likeness; and their appearance and their construction ***were*** as it would be, the wheel in the midst of the wheel. **17** When they went, they went on their four sides; they did not turn when they went. **18** And ***as for*** their rims, they had height, and they had awesomeness; and their rims

1:1 Matt 3:16; Rev 19:11; John 1:51
1:2 Ezek 8:1; Ezek 20:1; Ezek 40:1
1:3 2 Kgs 3:15; Ezek 3:14,22; 1 Kgs 18:46
1:4 Rev 4:6; Rev 14:1; Ezek 1:27
1:5 Rev 4:6; Rev 6:6
1:6 Rev 4:6; Rev 4:8; Ezek 10:10,14,21,22
1:7 Rev 1:15; Rev 4:6; Dan 10:6
1:8 Rev 4:6; Ezek 8:3; Ezek 10:2,7,8,18,21
1:9 Luke 9:51; Rev 4:6; Ezek 1:11
1:10 Rev 4:7; Rev 4:6; Ezek 10:14
1:11 Rev 4:6; Isa 6:2; Ezek 1:23
1:12 Rev 4:6; Ezek 1:9,17; Ezek 10:22
1:13 Rev 4:5; Heb 1:7; Rev 4:6
1:14 Rev 4:6; Zech 4:10; Matt 24:27,31
1:15 Rev 4:6; Ezek 10:9,13-17; Ezek 1:19-21
1:16 Rev 4:6; Dan 10:6; Ezek 10:9
1:17 Rev 4:6; Ezek 1:9,12; Ezek 10:1-11
1:18 Rev 4:6; Rev 4:8; Ezek 10:12

1:1 *in the thirtieth year* Not explained, but many believe it was Ezekiel's age. A priest began full service at thirty (Num 4:3). The very year he should have put on the priest's robes in Jerusalem, God met him in Babylon instead.
1:1 *by the river Chebar* Most likely a large canal near the city of Nippur. By the waters of Babylon the exiles sat and wept (Ps 137:1). That is where the heavens opened. No place is too far for God to reach, and no exile is so deep that His word cannot come there.
1:2 *the fifth year of the exile of King Jehoiachin* Jehoiachin was taken to Babylon in 597 B.C. with Ezekiel and about ten thousand others (2 Kgs 24:12-16). The fifth year is about 593 B.C. Jerusalem still stood, Zedekiah reigned there, and most exiles expected to be home soon.
1:3 *the hand of the LORD was on him there* Two phrases run through the book. The word of the LORD came, so this is not Ezekiel's opinion. And the hand of the LORD, God's power taking hold of a man to make him see and speak, was on him (3:14, 22; 8:1; 37:1; 40:1).
1:4 *a storm wind coming from the north, a great cloud and fire flashing* God often comes in storm, cloud and fire, as at Sinai (Exod 19:16-18; Ps 18:9-13). The north was also the direction Babylon's armies would come from (Jer 1:14). This is God Himself coming, and coming in judgment.
1:4 *the shining substance* The Hebrew word hashmal is uncertain. Some think of polished amber, others of glowing metal. Ezekiel uses it only for the brightness around God (1:27; 8:2), a light too bright to look at for long.
1:5 *four living creatures* Chapter 10 tells us they were cherubim (10:15, 20), a high order of angels always pictured near God's throne. Cherubim guarded the tree of life (Gen 3:24), and golden cherubim spread their wings over the ark's mercy seat (Exod 25:18-22). They are fearsome servants who guard God's holiness. Having the likeness of a man most likely means they stood upright.
1:9 *they did not turn when they went; each one went in the direction of its face* With a face looking every way, they never had to turn around. Wherever God sent them, they were already facing that way.
1:10 *the face of a man* Man in front, a lion, an ox and an eagle. Many see the best of creation here: the king of wild beasts, the strongest tame animal, the ruler of the sky, and man its crown, all serving God's throne. John saw similar creatures in heaven (Rev 4:7). Some since the early church have linked the faces to the four Gospels, but Scripture does not make that link.
1:11 *two wings covering their bodies* Even these mighty beings cover themselves in the presence of God.
1:12 *wherever the spirit was about to go, they went* The word for spirit can also mean wind or breath. Whether Ezekiel means the Holy Spirit or the will of the creatures moved by God's command, they did nothing on their own. They went where they were sent.
1:14 *running and returning like the appearance of the flash* They move like lightning. When God commands, it is done at once. When we pray for His will to be done on earth as in heaven (Matt 6:10), we ask to be that quick to obey.
1:16 *the wheel in the midst of the wheel* Most likely two wheels set crosswise inside each other, so they could roll in any of four directions without turning. Chrysolite was a yellow or green precious stone.
1:18 *their rims were full of eyes all around* Eyes picture God's knowledge (Prov 15:3). The wheels belong to His throne-chariot (1 Chr 28:18). Judah thought God lived only in the Jerusalem temple, and the nations thought each god ruled his own land. This throne has wheels and came to Babylon. God goes where He wills and sees everything.

were full of eyes all around the four of them. **19** And when the living creatures went, the wheels went beside them; and when the living creatures were lifted up from on the ground, the wheels were lifted up. **20** Wherever the spirit was ***about*** to go, they went, there the spirit ***was*** to go; and the wheels were lifted up close beside them, for the spirit of the living creature ***was*** in the wheels. **21** When they went, these went; and when they stood still, these stood still; and when they were lifted up from on the ground, the wheels were lifted up close beside them, for the spirit of the living creature ***was*** in the wheels. **22** And ***there was*** a likeness over the heads of the living creature, an expanse like the appearance of the awesome ice, spread out over their heads above. **23** And under the expanse their wings ***were*** straight, each one toward another; each one had two ***wings*** covering them, and each one had two ***wings*** covering them, their bodies. **24** And I heard the sound of their wings like the sound of many waters, like the sound of the Almighty, when they went, the sound of a tumult like the sound of an army; when they stood still, they let their wings drop. **25** And ***there*** was a voice from above the expanse which ***was*** over their head; when they stood still, they let their wings drop. **26** And above the expanse which ***was*** over their head, like the appearance of a sapphire stone, ***was*** the likeness of a throne; and on the likeness of the throne ***was*** a likeness like the appearance of a man on it, above. **27** And I saw ***something*** like the appearance of shining substance, like the appearance of fire with an enclosure for it all around, from the appearance of His hips and upward; and from the appearance of His hips and downward I saw ***something*** like the appearance of fire, and brightness ***was*** all around Him. **28** Like the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud on the day of the rain, so ***was*** the appearance of the brightness all around. That ***was*** the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. And I saw ***it***, and I fell on my face, and I heard a voice speaking.

EZEKIEL 2

Sent to a Rebellious House

1 And He said to me, "Son of man, stand on your feet, and I will speak with you." **2** And a spirit came into me when He spoke to me, and it made me stand on my feet; and I heard ***Him*** speaking to me. **3** And He said to me, "Son of man, I am sending you to the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), to nations, the rebelling ***ones*** who have rebelled against Me; they and their fathers have transgressed against Me to this very day. **4** And the sons ***are*** stern of face and hard of heart; I am sending you to them, and you shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD.' **5** And they, whether they hear or whether they refrain, for they ***are*** a house of rebellion, they will know that a prophet has been in their midst. **6** And you, son of man, do not be afraid of them, and do not be afraid of their words, for briers and thorns ***are*** with you, and you are dwelling among scorpions; do not be afraid of their words, and do not be dismayed

1:19 Rev 4:6; Ezek 10:16; Ps 103:20
1:20 Ezek 1:12; Ezek 10:17; 1 Cor 14:32
1:21 Ezek 10:17; Ezek 1:19,20; Rom 8:2
1:22 Rev 4:6; Ezek 10:1; Ezek 1:26
1:23 Ezek 1:11; Job 4:18; Ps 89:7
1:24 Rev 1:15; Rev 19:6; Dan 10:6
1:26 Heb 8:1; Rev 4:3; Ezek 10:1
1:27 John 1:18; Acts 7:55; Ezek 1:4
1:28 Rev 10:1; Rev 4:3; Matt 26:39
2:1 Acts 26:16; Dan 10:11,19; Ezek 3:1,4,10,17
2:2 Rev 11:11; Ezek 3:12,14,24; Ezek 36:27
2:3 John 20:21; Acts 7:51; Jer 3:25
2:4 Acts 7:51; Ezek 3:7; Ps 95:8
2:5 Ezek 2:7; Matt 10:12-15; Acts 13:46
2:6 Jer 1:8,17; Mic 7:4; Isa 51:12

1:20 *the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels* Creatures and wheels moved as one living thing under one direction. Ezekiel repeats it to drive the point home. Around God's throne there is perfect unity and order. His purposes do not get stuck or fall apart, and He is not shaken by what shakes us.
1:22 *an expanse like the appearance of the awesome ice* The word for expanse is the one used for the sky in Genesis 1:6-8. It was a platform, clear and shining like crystal, over the creatures' heads.
1:24 *like the sound of many waters, like the sound of the Almighty* A roar like a waterfall or a marching army. When the glory returns, God's voice is like many waters (43:2), and John heard the risen Jesus speak the same way (Rev 1:15).
1:25 *there was a voice from above the expanse* When the voice spoke, the creatures stood still and lowered their wings. All the motion and noise stopped because God was speaking. That is the right response to His voice: everything else goes quiet, and we listen.
1:26 *a likeness like the appearance of a man on it, above* Ezekiel words this with reverence: a likeness, an appearance. No one can see God in His full glory and live (Exod 33:20). Many teachers believe this was the Son of God appearing in the likeness of a man before He took on flesh. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and has made Him known (Heb 1:3; John 1:18), and John saw Christ much as Ezekiel did (Rev 1:13-15).
1:27 *brightness was all around Him* Ezekiel cannot describe a face. All he sees is glowing light and fire, from the waist up and from the waist down.
1:28 *the bow that is in the cloud on the day of the rain* A rainbow, as John also saw around the throne (Rev 4:3). After the flood God set His bow in the cloud as the sign of His covenant promise (Gen 9:12-17). At the center of a vision of fire and judgment stands a reminder of mercy.
1:28 *That was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD* The Hebrew word for glory, kabod, carries the idea of weight: the shining out of who God is. Ezekiel fell on his face, as all who truly see God do (Isa 6:5; Rev 1:17). We now see that glory in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Cor 4:6), and one day we will see Him as He is (1 John 3:2).
2:1 *Son of man, stand on your feet* The first of more than ninety times God calls Ezekiel son of man, meaning simply a human being, a mortal. After the blazing vision it reminds him how small he is. Jesus took the Son of Man as His favorite title mainly from Daniel 7:13. Ezekiel is a son of man because he is only human; Jesus is the Son of Man because He is truly human and also the King from heaven.
2:2 *a spirit came into me when He spoke to me, and it made me stand on my feet* Most teachers take this as the Spirit of God, who fills and moves the prophet elsewhere (3:24; 11:5). God never gives a command without giving the power to keep it.
2:3 *to nations, the rebelling ones* Nations was the usual word for Gentile peoples. God's own people had become like the pagans around them, and their rebellion went back generations.
2:4 *stern of face and hard of heart* Stubborn outside and inside. They had the law, the temple and the prophets. Their problem was not lack of knowledge but a hard heart.
2:4 *Thus says the Lord GOD* This phrase gave Ezekiel his authority and kept him humble. A prophet was God's mouthpiece, not the author of his own message.
2:5 *they will know that a prophet has been in their midst* Success was not counted by how many listened but by whether Ezekiel was faithful. No one could say God never warned them. We are responsible to speak the truth in love and leave the results to God (1 Cor 3:6). House of rebellion becomes one of Ezekiel's common names for Israel (2:6, 8; 3:9, 26-27).
2:6 *you are dwelling among scorpions* Three times God says do not be afraid. Briers scratch and scorpions sting; his own people would hurt him. A man who expects opposition is not knocked down when it comes (John 15:18). God does not promise an easy road, but He promises to be with us on the hard one.

at their faces, for they ***are*** a house of rebellion. **7** And you shall speak My words to them, whether they hear or whether they refrain, for they ***are*** rebellious.

Eat This Scroll

8 And you, son of man, hear what I am speaking to you: do not be rebellious like the house of rebellion; open your mouth and eat what I am giving to you." **9** And I looked, and look, a hand ***was*** stretched out to me, and look, in it ***was*** a scroll of a book. **10** And He spread it out before me, and it ***was*** written front and back, and written on it ***were*** lamentations and moaning and woe.

EZEKIEL 3

1 And He said to me, "Son of man, what you find, eat; eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel (Yisra'el)." **2** And I opened my mouth, and He made me eat this scroll. **3** And He said to me, "Son of man, make your belly eat, and fill your inward parts ***with*** this scroll which I am giving to you." And I ate ***it***, and it was in my mouth like honey for sweetness.

A Forehead Like Diamond

4 And He said to me, "Son of man, go, come to the house of Israel, and you shall speak with My words to them. **5** For not to a people deep of lip and heavy of tongue are you sent, ***but*** to the house of Israel; **6** not to many peoples deep of lip and heavy of tongue, whose words you cannot understand. Surely if I had sent you to them, they would listen to you. **7** And the house of Israel will not be willing to listen to you, for they are not willing to listen to Me; for all the house of Israel ***are*** hard of forehead and stern of heart. **8** Look, I have made your face hard against their faces, and your forehead hard against their forehead. **9** Like diamond, harder than flint, I have made your forehead. You shall not fear them, and you shall not be dismayed at their faces, for they ***are*** a house of rebellion." **10** And He said to me, "Son of man, all My words which I will speak to you, take into your heart, and hear with your ears. **11** And go, come to the exiles, to the sons of your people, and you shall speak to them and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD,' whether they hear or whether they refrain." **12** And a spirit lifted me up, and I heard behind me a sound of a great rumbling: "Blessed ***be*** the glory of the LORD from His place!" **13** And ***there was*** the sound of the wings of the living creatures touching each one to another, and the sound of the wheels close beside them, and a sound of a great rumbling. **14** And a spirit lifted me up and took me, and I went bitter in the heat of my spirit, and the hand of the LORD was strong on me. **15** And I came to the exiles at Tel-abib (Tel-Aviv), who were dwelling by the river Chebar (Kevar), and I sat ***where*** they were dwelling, and I sat there seven days, appalled, in their midst.

The Watchman for Israel

16 And it was at the end of seven days, and the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **17** "Son of man, I have appointed you a watchman for the house of Israel; and you shall hear a word from My mouth, and you shall warn them from Me.

2:7 Ezek 3:10,17; Jer 1:7,17; Jer 23:28
2:8 Rev 10:9; Isa 50:5; Jer 15:16
2:9 Rev 5:1; Rev 10:8; Heb 10:7
2:10 Rev 10:10; Rev 8:13; Isa 3:11
3:1 Rev 10:9-10; Ezek 2:8,9; Ezek 3:10
3:2 Jer 25:17; Acts 26:19
3:3 Jer 15:16; Rev 10:9,10; Ps 19:10
3:4 Matt 15:24; Matt 10:6; Ezek 3:11
3:5 Jonah 1:2; Isa 33:19; Jonah 3:2-4
3:6 Acts 28:26; Jonah 3:5-10; Matt 11:20-24
3:7 Luke 10:16; John 5:40; John 15:20
3:8 Heb 3:8; Jer 1:18; Exod 4:15,16
3:9 Heb 3:8; Ezek 2:6; Isa 50:7
3:10 Ezek 3:1-3; Job 22:22; Ezek 2:8
3:11 Acts 2:4; Ezek 33:2,12,17,30; Ezek 3:27
3:12 Rev 1:10; Ezek 8:3; Acts 8:39
3:13 Ezek 1:24; Ezek 10:16,17; Ezek 10:5
3:14 Rev 10:9; Rev 10:10; Ezek 37:1
3:15 Job 2:13; Ps 137:1; Ezek 1:1
3:17 Isa 52:8; Jer 6:17; Isa 56:10

2:7 *you shall speak My words to them* Not Ezekiel's words, and not softer words to make people like him. The pressure on any teacher is to soften the message. God says to speak what He says and leave it there.
2:8 *do not be rebellious like the house of rebellion* The same hard heart could take root in the prophet. Before he could call anyone to obey, Ezekiel had to obey, and he had to agree to eat before he saw what God would give him. That is real obedience. Before I warn anyone else, am I doing what God has told me?
2:10 *it was written front and back* Scrolls were usually written on one side. This one was full on both, with no room to add anything. Its message was lamentation, moaning and woe. The good news would come after Jerusalem fell (chapters 33-48), but people must see their sin before they welcome a Savior. John was given a scroll to eat as well (Rev 10:8-11).
3:1 *eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel* First eat, then go, then speak. This happened in a vision (1:1), so most teachers take it as something seen in the vision, not a literal meal. God's word was not to stay outside Ezekiel like a script. It was to become part of him.
3:3 *it was in my mouth like honey for sweetness* A message of lamentation (2:10) tasted sweet because it was God's word. There is sweetness in knowing and doing His will even when the message is hard (Ps 19:10; Jer 15:16). Do we only read the Word, or let it fill us until it shapes how we think and speak?
3:6 *Surely if I had sent you to them, they would listen to you* Pagan nations would have listened, as Nineveh did to Jonah (Jonah 3:5; Matt 12:41). Israel spoke Ezekiel's language and still would not hear.
3:7 *they are not willing to listen to Me* Ezekiel was not to take their rejection personally. They were rejecting God (Luke 10:16). The more light people have, the harder their hearts can grow if they refuse it, a warning for those who grew up around the Bible.
3:9 *Like diamond, harder than flint, I have made your forehead* Ezekiel's name means God strengthens or God makes hard. This is not a call to be harsh but to be steady. A forehead of diamond does not crack when people push. If God calls you to stand firm in a hard place, He will give you the backbone to do it.
3:10 *take into your heart, and hear with your ears* The heart comes before the ears. God wants His words received deeply, not just heard.
3:11 *to the exiles, to the sons of your people* Ezekiel was sent to his neighbors. Sometimes the hardest place to speak for God is at home, among people who know us best.
3:12 *Blessed be the glory of the LORD from His place* As the vision moved off, Ezekiel heard a great rumbling and a cry of praise. His ministry would be full of judgment, but it began and ended with the glory of God.
3:14 *I went bitter in the heat of my spirit* The scroll was sweet in his mouth, but now he felt the bitterness of the message. He felt what God felt about Israel's sin.
3:15 *I sat there seven days, appalled, in their midst* Tel-abib means something like mound of green grain, a hopeful name for a refugee camp. Seven days was the time of mourning for the dead (Gen 50:10; Job 2:13). A good teacher feels the weight of the message before he speaks it.
3:17 *I have appointed you a watchman for the house of Israel* A watchman stood on the wall day and night and blew the trumpet when he saw an army coming. Ezekiel's warning was not his own; he heard it from God's mouth. God repeats this charge at the turning point of the book (33:1-9).

18 When I say to the wicked ***man***, 'You shall surely die,' and you do not warn him, and do not speak to warn the wicked ***man*** from his wicked way to keep him alive, that wicked ***man*** shall die in his iniquity, and his blood I will require from your hand. **19** And you, if you warn the wicked ***man***, and he does not turn from his wickedness and from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; and you have delivered your soul. **20** And when a righteous ***man*** turns from his righteousness and does injustice, and I put a stumbling block before him, he shall die; because you did not warn him, he shall die in his sin, and his ***acts of*** righteousness which he did shall not be remembered; and his blood I will require from your hand. **21** And you, if you warn him, the righteous ***man***, that the righteous ***man*** should not sin, and he does not sin, he shall surely live, because he was warned; and you have delivered your soul."

Bound and Silent

22 And the hand of the LORD was on me there, and He said to me, "Arise, go out to the plain, and there I will speak with you." **23** And I arose and went out to the plain, and look, there ***was*** the glory of the LORD standing, like the glory which I had seen by the river Chebar; and I fell on my face. **24** And a spirit came into me and made me stand on my feet, and He spoke with me and said to me, "Go, shut yourself in the midst of your house. **25** And you, son of man, look, they will put ropes on you and bind you with them, and you shall not go out in their midst. **26** And I will make your tongue cling to your palate, and you shall be mute, and you shall not be to them a reproving man, for they ***are*** a house of rebellion. **27** And when I speak with you, I will open your mouth, and you shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD.' The ***one*** hearing, let him hear; and the ***one*** refraining, let him refrain; for they ***are*** a house of rebellion."

EZEKIEL 4

The Siege Acted Out

1 "And you, son of man, take for yourself a brick, and set it before you, and engrave on it a city, Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). **2** And put a siege against it, and build a siege wall against it, and pour out a mound against it, and set camps against it, and set battering rams against it all around. **3** And you, take for yourself a griddle of iron, and make it a wall of iron between you and the city; and set your face toward it, and it shall be in siege, and you shall lay siege against it. It ***is*** a sign for the house of Israel (Yisra'el). **4** And you, lie down on your left side, and put the iniquity of the house of Israel on it; ***for*** the number of the days that you lie on it, you shall bear their iniquity. **5** And I have given to you the years of their iniquity according to a number of days, three hundred and ninety days; and you shall bear the iniquity of the house of Israel. **6** And you shall complete these, and you shall lie down on your right side a second ***time***, and you shall bear the iniquity of the house of Judah (Yehuda) forty days; a day for the year, a day for the year, I have given it to you. **7** And toward the siege of Jerusalem you shall set your face, and your arm ***shall be*** bared, and you shall prophesy against it. **8** And look, I will put ropes on you, and you

3:18 Ezek 33:6,8; Luke 11:51; Ezek 18:4,13,20
3:19 Ezek 14:14,20; Acts 18:5,6; Acts 20:26
3:20 Rom 9:32; Rom 9:33; Rev 2:14
3:21 Acts 20:31; Matt 24:24,25; 1 Cor 4:14
3:22 Acts 9:6; Ezek 1:3; Ezek 8:4
3:23 Acts 7:55; Luke 2:9; Ezek 1:28
3:24 Ezek 2:2; Ezek 37:10; Dan 10:8-10,19
3:25 Ezek 4:8; Mark 3:21; John 21:18
3:26 Luke 1:20; Luke 1:22; Ezek 24:27
3:27 Matt 11:15; Rev 22:11; Ezek 12:2,3
4:1 Ezek 5:1-17; Ezek 12:3-16; 1 Sam 15:27,28
4:2 Ezek 21:22; Jer 39:1,2; Jer 52:4
4:3 Luke 2:34; Heb 2:4; Ezek 12:6,11
4:4 Lev 16:22; Lev 10:17; Num 18:1
4:5 Isa 53:6
4:6 Num 14:34; Dan 9:24-26; Dan 12:11,12
4:7 Isa 52:10; Ezek 4:3; Ezek 6:2
4:8 Ezek 3:25

3:18 *his blood I will require from your hand* The wicked man is still guilty and dies for his own sin. But a silent watchman shares the guilt. In Ezekiel's setting the death first in view was the coming judgment on Jerusalem by sword, famine and plague (5:12; Deut 30:15-20). A man who dies unrepentant also faces something worse than a sword.
3:19 *you have delivered your soul* If the watchman warns and the man refuses, the watchman is clear. He did his job. Paul seems to echo this when he says he was clean from the blood of all because he declared the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:26-27).
3:20 *I put a stumbling block before him* Not God tempting anyone (Jas 1:13). God brings a test or judgment into the path of a man who has already turned away, and he falls over it.
3:20 *his acts of righteousness which he did shall not be remembered* This explains Ezekiel's office under the old covenant, when a man who had lived rightly by the law turned to injustice before Jerusalem fell (18:24). I do not believe it teaches that a believer in Christ can lose salvation. Jesus' sheep will never perish (John 10:28), and believers are sealed by the Spirit (Eph 1:13-14). Some read it otherwise.
3:23 *there was the glory of the LORD standing* Before Ezekiel began a hard and lonely job, God showed His glory a second time. Before a hard season He often reminds us who He is.
3:25 *they will put ropes on you and bind you with them* It may mean the exiles would tie him up to silence him, or it may picture God's own restraint (4:8). Either way his freedom was taken, and his life became a sign.
3:26 *you shall be mute* Ezekiel would not argue with the people on his own. This lasted until news of Jerusalem's fall arrived (24:27; 33:22).
3:27 *when I speak with you, I will open your mouth* Chapters 4-24 are full of messages, so he was not wholly silent. He spoke only when God gave him a word, so no one could dismiss it as his opinion. Each person must choose what to do with what he hears (Mark 4:9).
4:1 *take for yourself a brick* Babylonian bricks were large, flat blocks of clay, often drawn or written on while soft. Ezekiel drew Jerusalem on one, then built a model siege around it: siege wall, ramps, camps and battering rams. This is the first of many acted signs in the book.
4:3 *make it a wall of iron between you and the city* Ezekiel plays the part of God. The iron griddle pictures the barrier their sin had raised between God and Jerusalem, so their prayers would not get through (Isa 59:2). The exiles thought Jerusalem was safe because the temple was there. The brick said otherwise.
4:4 *you shall bear their iniquity* To bear iniquity is to carry the guilt or punishment of sin. Ezekiel was acting out the punishment, not taking sin away. Only one Person has truly borne others' sins to remove them (Isa 53:11; 1 Pet 2:24). Facing east, north is on the left and south on the right, so Israel lay on his left side and Judah on his right.
4:5 *three hundred and ninety days* Each day stood for a year (4:6). Scripture does not explain the numbers, and good teachers differ. Many count 390 years of Israel's sin from the division of the kingdom about 930 B.C. to the fall; others see years of punishment still to come. The 40 for Judah may echo the wilderness years, a full generation under judgment.
4:7 *your arm shall be bared* A soldier bared his arm for battle. It meant God was ready to act (Isa 52:10). Ezekiel's silent posture preached that God was coming against the city.
4:8 *I will put ropes on you* He prepared his food during these days (4:9-15), so most think he lay on his side for part of each day as a public sign. God's ropes held him there, a picture of the siege: once it began, no one could leave until it was over.

shall not turn yourself from your side to your side until you complete the days of your siege.

The Bread of the Siege

9 And you, take for yourself wheat and barley and beans and lentils and millet and spelt, and put them in one vessel, and make them into bread for yourself; ***according to*** the number of the days that you are lying on your side, three hundred and ninety days, you shall eat it. **10** And your food which you eat ***shall be*** by weight, approximately 8 ounces (twenty shekels) a day; from time to time you shall eat it. **11** And you shall drink water by measure, approximately 2/3 quart (a sixth of the hin); from time to time you shall drink ***it***. **12** And you shall eat it ***as*** a cake of barley, and you shall bake it on dung of the excrement of man before their eyes." **13** And the LORD said, "Thus the sons of Israel shall eat their bread unclean among the nations where I will drive them." **14** And I said, "Ah, Lord GOD! Look, my soul has not been made unclean; and a carcass and a torn animal I have not eaten from my youth until now, and foul flesh has not come into my mouth." **15** And He said to me, "See, I have given to you the dung of the cattle in place of the dung of man, and you shall make your bread on it." **16** And He said to me, "Son of man, look, I am breaking the staff of bread in Jerusalem, and they shall eat bread by weight and in anxiety, and they shall drink water by measure and in horror, **17** so that they may lack bread and water, and they shall be appalled, a man and his brother, and they shall waste away in their iniquity."

EZEKIEL 5

The Razor and the Hair

1 "And you, son of man, take for yourself a sharp sword; ***as*** a barbers' razor you shall take it for yourself, and make ***it*** pass over your head and over your beard; and take for yourself scales of weight and divide them. **2** A third you shall burn with fire in the midst of the city when the days of the siege are completed; and you shall take a third ***and*** strike ***it*** with the sword all around it; and a third you shall scatter to the wind, and I will draw out a sword after them. **3** And you shall take from there a few in number and bind them in your skirts. **4** And from them again you shall take and throw them into the midst of the fire and burn them in the fire; from it a fire will go out to all the house of Israel (Yisra'el).

Jerusalem Among the Nations

5 Thus says the Lord GOD: 'This ***is*** Jerusalem (Yerushalayim); I have set it in the midst of the nations, and lands ***are*** around it. **6** And it has rebelled against My judgments in wickedness more than the nations, and ***against*** My statutes more than the lands that ***are*** around it; for they have rejected My judgments, and My statutes, they have not walked in them. **7** Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Because your turmoil ***is*** more than the nations that ***are*** around you, ***and*** you have not walked in My statutes, and you have not done My judgments, and you have not ***even*** done according to the judgments of the nations that ***are*** around you, **8** therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Look, I ***am*** against you, even I, and I will execute judgments in your midst before the eyes of the nations.

4:9 Ezek 4:13,16
4:10 Ezek 4:16; Ezek 14:13; Lev 26:26
4:11 Ezek 4:16; Isa 5:13; John 3:34
4:12 Gen 18:6
4:13 Dan 1:8; Hos 9:3,4
4:14 Acts 10:14; Ezek 9:8; Ezek 20:49
4:16 Ezek 5:16; Lev 26:26; Ezek 14:13
4:17 Ezek 24:23; Lev 26:39

5:1 Ezek 44:20; Lev 21:5; Isa 7:20
5:2 Ezek 5:12; Lev 26:33; Ezek 4:1-8
5:3 Jer 39:10; Jer 40:6; Jer 52:16
5:4 2 Kgs 25:25; Jer 41:1-44; Jer 52:30
5:5 Ezek 4:1; Jer 6:6; Ezek 16:14
5:6 Jer 11:10; Ezek 16:47; 2 Kgs 17:8-20
5:7 2 Chr 33:9; Jer 2:10,11; 2 Kgs 21:9-11
5:8 Ezek 15:7; Ezek 21:3; Jer 21:5,13

4:9 *wheat and barley and beans and lentils and millet and spelt* No one baked bread from such a mix in good times. This was siege bread, made from whatever scraps were left in the jars.
4:10 *approximately 8 ounces a day* About half a pound of bread and about two and a half cups of water a day (4:11), eaten at set times. Enough to stay alive, barely. This is what Jerusalem would face when the bread ran out (Jer 52:6).
4:12 *you shall bake it on dung of the excrement of man before their eyes* Dried animal dung was a common cooking fuel, but the law required human waste to be buried outside the camp because the LORD walked among His people (Deut 23:12-14). The shocking sign showed that in exile they could not keep the food laws or stay set apart as God's holy people (4:13).
4:14 *Ah, Lord GOD! Look, my soul has not been made unclean* Ezekiel was a priest who had kept the law all his life (Lev 22:8; 7:18). He objected honestly, and God allowed cattle dung instead (4:15). The sign remained, but God heard His servant. He does not want us to pretend.
4:16 *I am breaking the staff of bread in Jerusalem* Bread was the staff people leaned on. When God breaks it, people fall, just as the law warned (Lev 26:26).
4:17 *they shall waste away in their iniquity* The famine was not bad luck but the result of sin. That is hard, yet hopeful: if judgment came because of sin, turning from sin was the way back. Sin always costs more than it promises. The only lasting bread is Christ (John 6:35).
5:1 *as a barbers' razor you shall take it for yourself* Priests were forbidden to shave their heads or beards (Lev 21:5). Shaving was a sign of mourning or disgrace (Isa 15:2; Jer 41:5). The razor is a sword: Babylon's army would pass over Jerusalem and leave it bare. The hair was weighed out, because God's judgment is measured and exact.
5:2 *A third you shall burn with fire in the midst of the city* One third burned, likely on the clay model of chapter 4, one third struck with the sword, one third scattered to the wind. Verse 12 explains each.
5:3 *bind them in your skirts* The hem or fold of a robe was where a person tucked away something valuable. These few hairs picture a remnant, the part God keeps after judgment so His promises will not fail.
5:4 *from them again you shall take and throw them into the midst of the fire* Even some survivors would face more judgment. After the fall some murdered Gedaliah, fled to Egypt against God's word and died there (2 Kgs 25:25-26; Jer 42-44). Being spared once is not the same as being safe forever.
5:5 *I have set it in the midst of the nations* Jerusalem stood at the crossroads of the ancient world. Israel was placed there to be a kingdom of priests and a light to the nations (Exod 19:5-6; Deut 4:6-8). God puts His people where they are on purpose (Matt 5:14-16).
5:6 *it has rebelled against My judgments in wickedness more than the nations* Jerusalem had not just failed to shine. She had grown darker than the darkness around her.
5:7 *you have not even done according to the judgments of the nations* The pagans were at least loyal to their false gods. Israel was not loyal to the true God (Jer 2:10-11).
5:8 *Look, I am against you, even I* Some of the most frightening words in the Bible. The God who fought for Israel at the Red Sea now declared Himself her opponent.

9 And I will do in you that which I have not done, and that which I will not do like it again, because of all your abominations. **10** Therefore fathers shall eat sons in your midst, and sons shall eat their fathers; and I will execute judgments on you, and I will scatter all your remnant to every wind. **11** Therefore, ***as*** I live, declares the Lord GOD, surely because you have made My sanctuary unclean with all your
detestable things and with all your abominations, I also will diminish ***you***, and My eye shall not pity, and I also will not spare. **12** A third of you shall die by the pestilence and be consumed by the famine in your midst; and a third shall fall by the sword all around you; and a third I will scatter to every wind, and I will draw out a sword after them. **13** And My anger shall be spent, and I will cause My rage to rest on them, and I will comfort Myself; and they shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken in My jealousy, when I have spent My rage on them. **14** And I will make you a ruin and a reproach among the nations that ***are*** around you, before the eyes of everyone who passes by. **15** And it shall be a reproach and a taunt, a warning and a horror to the nations that ***are*** around you, when I execute judgments on you in anger and in rage and with rebukes of rage. I, the LORD, have spoken. **16** When I send against them the evil arrows of the famine, which shall be for destruction, which I will send to destroy you, then I will add famine on you and break the staff of bread for you; **17** and I will send on you famine and evil beasts, and they will bereave you; and pestilence and blood shall pass through you, and I will bring a sword on you. I, the LORD, have spoken.'"

EZEKIEL 6

Against the Mountains of Israel

1 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **2** "Son of man, set your face toward the mountains of Israel (Yisra'el), and prophesy against them, **3** and say, 'Mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord GOD! Thus says the Lord GOD to the mountains and to the hills, to the ravines and to the valleys: Look, I, even I, am bringing a sword on you, and I will destroy your high places. **4** And your altars shall be made desolate, and your incense altars shall be broken, and I will make your slain fall before your idols. **5** And I will put the corpses of the sons of Israel before their idols, and I will scatter your bones around your altars. **6** In all your dwelling places the cities shall be laid waste, and the high places shall be desolate, so that your altars may be laid waste and be held guilty, and your idols shall be broken and cease, and your incense altars shall be cut down, and your works shall be wiped out. **7** And the slain shall fall in your midst, and you shall know that I ***am*** the LORD.

A Remnant Will Remember

8 And I will leave ***a remnant***, in that you will have escapees of the sword among the nations, when you are scattered among the lands. **9** And your escapees shall remember Me among the nations where they have been taken captive, how I have been broken ***by*** their heart that plays the prostitute, which has turned aside from Me, and ***by*** their eyes that play the prostitute after their idols; and they shall loathe themselves

5:9 Dan 9:12; Matt 24:21; Amos 3:2
5:10 Ezek 12:14; Deut 28:64; Zech 2:6
5:11 2 Pet 2:4; Rom 14:11; Ezek 7:20
5:12 Ezek 5:2; Jer 15:2; Jer 21:9
5:13 Isa 1:24; Ezek 36:5,6; Ezek 6:12
5:14 Ezek 22:4; Neh 2:17; Ps 74:3-10
5:15 Ezek 25:17; Jer 22:8,9; 1 Kgs 9:7
5:16 Deut 32:23,24; Ezek 4:16; Ps 7:13
5:17 Ezek 38:22; Ezek 14:15,21; Ezek 33:27
6:2 Ezek 13:17; Ezek 20:46; Ezek 21:2
6:3 Lev 26:30; Ezek 36:1-4,8; Jer 22:29
6:4 2 Chr 14:5; Lev 26:30; 2 Chr 34:4
6:6 Isa 6:11; Ezek 5:14; Mic 1:7
6:7 Ezek 9:7; Jer 14:18; Jer 18:21
6:8 Ezek 14:22; Ezek 12:16; Isa 6:13
6:9 Ezek 20:43; Ps 78:40; Isa 7:13

5:9 *that which I will not do like it again* The fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. was the worst disaster in Israel's history to that point. An abomination is something God finds disgusting, especially idol worship and the evil that comes with it. Jesus spoke of a coming tribulation in the same terms (Matt 24:21).
5:10 *fathers shall eat sons in your midst* One of the darkest verses in the Bible, and I will not dwell on it. In long sieges the starving were driven to unthinkable things, just as the law warned (Lev 26:29; Deut 28:53-57) and as happened in Samaria and Jerusalem (2 Kgs 6:28-29; Lam 4:10). God takes no pleasure in it (18:23). It shows where sin leads, and what it cost God to save us (Rom 8:32).
5:11 *because you have made My sanctuary unclean* The worst sin was bringing idols into God's house, as chapter 8 will show. My eye shall not pity recurs in Ezekiel (7:4, 9; 8:18; 9:10). For years God had spared them; the time for mercy was ending.
5:12 *a third I will scatter to every wind* Some would die inside the walls by plague and famine, some by the sword trying to escape, and some would be scattered among the nations with the sword still following.
5:13 *I, the LORD, have spoken in My jealousy* God's anger is not a loss of temper but His settled opposition to evil. When it is spent, justice is fully done. His jealousy is the right love of a husband who will not share his wife with another (Exod 20:5; 34:14).
5:15 *a warning and a horror to the nations* The city meant to be a light became a warning sign. The nations would see the ruins and know what happens to a people who forsake their God (Deut 29:24-28).
5:17 *famine and evil beasts* Famine, beasts, plague and sword were the judgments the law had warned of (Lev 26:22-26; Deut 32:23-25). God was doing exactly what He said He would, after more than eight hundred years of warnings. He is patient, not wishing any to perish (2 Pet 3:9), but patience is not approval.
6:2 *set your face toward the mountains of Israel* Ezekiel was hundreds of miles away and could not see them. To set his face meant to turn toward them with fixed purpose as God's spokesman.
6:3 *I will destroy your high places* A high place was a hilltop shrine with an altar, a sacred pole or standing stone. God had told Israel to tear them down (Num 33:52). Is there a high place in your life, something you turn to instead of God when afraid?
6:4 *your incense altars shall be broken* Small stands where incense was burned to the sun god or other gods (2 Chr 34:4).
6:5 *I will scatter your bones around your altars* A corpse was the most unclean thing for an Israelite (Num 19:11-16). Josiah burned bones on Bethel's altar to defile it forever (2 Kgs 23:16). The worshipers who came to idols for life would lie dead before them, and the gods they trusted could not save.
6:7 *you shall know that I am the LORD* The great refrain of the book, already heard in 5:13. When the idols fell, Israel would learn who the true God is. God would rather teach it through blessing, but He will teach it one way or another.
6:8 *I will leave a remnant* Even in judgment God keeps some alive among the nations.
6:9 *how I have been broken by their heart that plays the prostitute* The language of a husband betrayed, developed in chapter 16. Idolatry was not only breaking a rule but betraying a love, and it broke God's heart (Eph 4:30). In exile, stripped of everything, they would remember Him.
6:9 *they shall loathe themselves for the evils which they have done* True repentance is not being sorry we got caught. It is seeing sin as God sees it and hating it, the grief that leads to real change (2 Cor 7:10).

for the evils which they have done, for all their abominations. **10** And they shall know that I ***am*** the LORD; not in vain did I speak of doing this evil to them. **11** Thus says the Lord GOD: Strike with your palm and stamp with your foot, and say, "Alas, because of all the evil abominations of the house of Israel, who shall fall by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence!" **12** The ***one*** far off shall die by the pestilence, and the ***one*** near shall fall by the sword, and the ***one*** who remains and the ***one*** who is preserved shall die by the famine; and I will spend My rage on them. **13** And you shall know that I ***am*** the LORD, when their slain are in the midst of their idols around their altars, on every high hill, on all the tops of the mountains, and under every luxuriant tree, and under every leafy terebinth, the place where they gave a soothing aroma to all their idols. **14** And I will stretch out My hand against them and make the land a desolation and a horror, more than the wilderness toward Diblah (Divla), in all their dwelling places; and they shall know that I ***am*** the LORD.'"

EZEKIEL 7

The End Has Come

1 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **2** "And you, son of man, thus says the Lord GOD to the soil of Israel (Yisra'el): An end! The end has come on the four corners of the land. **3** Now the end ***is*** on you, and I will send My anger against you, and I will judge you according to your ways, and I will put on you all your abominations. **4** And My eye shall not pity you, and I will not spare; for I will put your ways on you, and your abominations shall be in your midst; and you shall know that I ***am*** the LORD. **5** Thus says the Lord GOD: Evil, one evil! Look, an evil is coming! **6** An end has come; the end has come; it has awakened against you; look, it is coming! **7** The doom has come to you, O inhabitant of the land; the time has come; the day ***is*** near, tumult, and not the joyful shout of the mountains. **8** Now shortly I will pour out My rage on you and spend My anger on you, and I will judge you according to your ways, and I will put on you all your abominations. **9** And My eye shall not pity, and I will not spare; according to your ways I will put on you, and your abominations shall be in your midst; and you shall know that I, the LORD, ***am*** striking. **10** Look, the day! Look, it is coming! The doom has gone out; the rod has blossomed; arrogance has budded. **11** Violence has risen up into a rod of wickedness; not of them, and not of their multitude, and not of their wealth, and no eminence ***is*** among them. **12** The time has come; the day has arrived. Let not the buyer rejoice, and let not the seller mourn, for burning anger ***is*** against all its multitude. **13** For the seller shall not return to what was sold, though their life ***is*** still among the living; for the vision concerning all its multitude shall not turn back; and no man shall strengthen himself in his iniquity ***for*** his life.

Silver and Gold Cannot Save

14 They have blown the trumpet and prepared everything, and ***there is*** none going to the battle, for My burning anger ***is*** against all its multitude. **15** The sword ***is*** outside, and the

6:10 Ezek 6:7; Ezek 14:22,23; Jer 5:12-14
6:11 Ezek 5:12; Ezek 9:4; Ezek 21:14-17
6:12 Ezek 5:13; Dan 9:7; Lam 4:11,22
6:13 Ezek 20:28; Hos 4:13; 1 Kgs 14:23
6:14 Isa 5:25; Ezek 20:33,34; Isa 9:12,17,21
7:1 Matt 24:14; Ezek 12:22; Ezek 21:2
7:2 Matt 24:14; Rev 7:1
7:3 Ezek 18:30; Ezek 7:8,9; Ezek 5:13
7:4 Ezek 5:11; Ezek 11:21; Ezek 6:7,14
7:5 Matt 24:14; Ezek 5:9; 2 Kgs 21:12,13
7:6 Matt 24:14; Zech 13:7; Ezek 7:3
7:7 Matt 24:14; Ezek 7:12; Ezek 12:23-25,28
7:8 Ezek 9:8; Ezek 14:19; Ezek 20:8,13,21,33
7:9 Isa 9:13; Mic 6:9; Gal 6:7
7:10 Isa 10:5; Ezek 7:6; 1 Thess 5:3
7:11 Zeph 1:18; Ezek 7:23; Isa 59:6-8
7:12 Isa 5:13,14; Ezek 7:5-7,10; 1 Cor 7:29-31
7:13 Lev 25:24-28,31; Eccl 8:8; Ezek 13:22
7:14 Jer 4:5; Jer 6:1; Jer 51:27
7:15 Jer 14:18; Ezek 5:12; Lam 1:20

6:10 *not in vain did I speak of doing this evil to them* God's warnings were not empty threats. And because His warnings came true, His promises of restoration are sure as well.
6:11 *Strike with your palm and stamp with your foot* Not joy here but strong feeling, grief or the anger of a verdict (21:14, 17). Ezekiel preached with his body as well as his voice.
6:12 *The one far off shall die by the pestilence* Far away, nearby or hiding in the city, judgment would find them. No one can outrun God (Ps 139:7-12; Amos 9:1-4). The only safe place is under His mercy.
6:13 *the place where they gave a soothing aroma to all their idols* Hilltops and shady trees were favorite Canaanite worship sites. A soothing aroma is the law's phrase for offerings that pleased the LORD (Lev 1:9). Israel gave the language of true worship to idols.
6:14 *more than the wilderness toward Diblah* Diblah is unknown elsewhere. Many think it is a form of Riblah in the far north, since d and r look alike in Hebrew, where Zedekiah was later judged (2 Kgs 25:6-7). If so, the whole land from south to north would be desolate. God's judgments are meant to bring us back to Him (Heb 12:10).
7:2 *The end has come on the four corners of the land* The four corners means every part of the land. Amos had announced the end for the northern kingdom more than a century before (Amos 8:2), and Samaria fell in 722 B.C. Now the end had come for Judah.
7:3 *I will judge you according to your ways* The key to the chapter. Judgment fit what they had done. Whatever a man sows he will reap (Gal 6:7).
7:5 *Evil, one evil* The words come quick, as if Ezekiel were out of breath. Evil here means disaster, not sin. A calamity like no other was coming.
7:6 *it has awakened against you* The people thought judgment was asleep, that God had forgotten. Now it was wide awake.
7:7 *not the joyful shout of the mountains* The happy shouts of feasts at the hilltop shrines would be replaced by the noise of war.
7:9 *you shall know that I, the LORD, am striking* Verses 8-9 repeat 3-4 to make the point stick, with one change. They could not blame Babylon or bad luck. They would know who was behind it.
7:10 *Look, the day* The day of the LORD is when God steps into history to judge sin and set things right. The prophets used it of near judgments like 586 B.C. and of the great day at the end of this age (Joel 2:31). A blossoming rod may picture Nebuchadnezzar as God's rod, or Judah's own pride grown full.
7:11 *Violence has risen up into a rod of wickedness* The violence in Jerusalem grew into the rod that would punish the city. Sin carries its own punishment inside it.
7:12 *Let not the buyer rejoice, and let not the seller mourn* When the city falls, land deals will not matter. The buyer will lose what he bought, and the seller will have nothing left to lose.
7:13 *the seller shall not return to what was sold* In the jubilee every fiftieth year, sold land went back to the family (Lev 25:10-13, 23-28). Exile would make that impossible. What does a man gain if he gains the whole world and loses his life (Matt 16:26)?
7:14 *there is none going to the battle* The trumpet sounded, but no one went. The army was ready on paper, but no army stands against God's anger.
7:15 *The sword is outside, and the pestilence and the famine within* Babylon waited outside the walls while disease and hunger worked inside. There was no safe place.

pestilence and the famine within; he who ***is*** in the field shall die by the sword, and he who ***is*** in the city, famine and pestilence shall devour him. **16** And their escapees shall escape, and they shall be on the mountains like doves of the valleys, all of them moaning, each man for his iniquity. **17** All the hands shall go limp, and all knees shall run ***with*** water. **18** And they shall gird themselves ***with*** sackcloth, and shuddering shall cover them; and on all faces ***shall be*** shame, and on all their heads baldness. **19** Their silver they shall throw into the streets, and their gold shall become an unclean thing; their silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the fury of the LORD; their soul they shall not satisfy, and their inward parts they shall not fill; for it has become the stumbling block of their iniquity. **20** And the beauty of its ornament he set for pride, and they made the images of their abominations, their detestable things, with it; therefore I will make it an unclean thing to them. **21** And I will give it into the hand of the strangers for spoil, and to the wicked of the earth for plunder, and they shall profane it. **22** And I will turn My face from them, and they shall profane My treasured ***place***; and robbers shall enter it and profane it. **23** Make the chain, for the land is full of judgment of bloodshed, and the city is full of violence. **24** And I will bring the evil ***ones*** of the nations, and they shall possess their houses; and I will make the pride of the strong cease, and their sanctuaries shall be profaned. **25** Anguish has come, and they shall seek peace, and ***there shall be*** none. **26** Disaster on disaster shall come, and report shall be on report; and they shall seek a vision from a prophet, and the law shall perish from the priest, and counsel from the elders. **27** The king shall mourn, and the prince shall be clothed ***with*** desolation, and the hands of the people of the land shall be terrified. According to their way I will do to them, and by their judgments I will judge them; and they shall know that I ***am*** the LORD."

EZEKIEL 8

Abominations in the Temple

1 And it was in the sixth year, in the sixth ***month***, on the fifth ***day*** of the month, I ***was*** sitting in my house, and the elders of Judah (Yehuda) ***were*** sitting before me, and the hand of the Lord GOD fell on me there. **2** And I looked, and look, a likeness like the appearance of fire; from the appearance of His hips and downward, fire; and from His hips and upward, like the appearance of brightness, like the appearance of the shining substance. **3** And He stretched out the form of a hand and took me by a lock of my head; and a spirit lifted me up between the earth and the heavens and brought me to Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) in visions of God, to the entrance of the gate of the inner ***court*** that faces north, where the seat of the image of jealousy, which provokes to jealousy, ***was***. **4** And look, the glory of the God of Israel (Yisra'el) ***was*** there, like the appearance which I had seen in the plain. **5** And He said to me, "Son of man, lift up your eyes, please, toward the north." And I lifted up my eyes toward the north, and look, north of the gate of the altar ***was*** this image of jealousy, in the entrance. **6** And He said to me, "Son of man, do you see what they are doing, the great abominations which the house of Israel are doing here, to be far from My sanctuary?

7:16 Ezra 9:15; Isa 38:14; Isa 59:11
7:17 Ezek 21:7; Jer 6:24; Heb 12:12
7:18 Isa 15:2,3; Amos 8:10; Isa 3:24
7:19 Luke 12:20; Prov 11:4; Zeph 1:18
7:20 Ezek 24:21; Jer 7:30; Isa 64:11
7:21 2 Kgs 24:13; Ps 74:2-8; 2 Kgs 25:9,13-16
7:22 Jer 18:17; Ps 10:11; Ps 35:22
7:23 Jer 27:2; Ezek 9:9; Ezek 11:6
7:24 Acts 25:23; Ezek 28:7; Ezek 21:31
7:25 Isa 57:21; Isa 59:8-12; Jer 8:15,16
7:26 Jer 4:20; Ezek 14:1; Ps 74:9
7:27 Ezek 12:10-22; Ezek 17:15-21; Ezek 21:25
8:1 Ezek 20:1; Ezek 1:2; Ezek 14:1,4
8:2 Ezek 1:4,26,27; Dan 7:9,10; Rev 1:14,15
8:3 Deut 32:16,21; Ezek 11:1,24; Ezek 2:9
8:4 Heb 1:3; Ezek 3:22,23; Ezek 1:26-28
8:5 Ezek 8:3; Jer 3:2; Zech 5:5-11
8:6 Ezek 5:11; Ezek 8:9,17; Ezek 10:19

7:16 *all of them moaning, each man for his iniquity* Doves make a low, sad sound. At last the survivors would grieve for their own sin, not only their losses.
7:17 *all knees shall run with water* Fear so strong that the body fails. Hands cannot hold a weapon, and legs give way.
7:18 *on all faces shall be shame* There is a shame that comes too late. Better to be ashamed of sin while there is still time to turn (Isa 55:6-7; 2 Cor 6:2).
7:19 *their silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the fury of the LORD* In a siege money loses its value; you cannot eat gold. Zephaniah said nearly the same (Zeph 1:18). Their wealth had become their stumbling block.
7:20 *they made the images of their abominations, their detestable things, with it* They took the silver and gold God gave them and made idols of it (Hos 2:8). Money itself is not evil, but the love of it is a root of evils (1 Tim 6:10).
7:22 *they shall profane My treasured place* The temple, God's own house. The people thought He would never let it be touched, but He would turn His face away. A building, even a holy one, cannot protect people who have turned from God (Jer 7:4).
7:23 *Make the chain* Chains for prisoners led into exile. They filled the land with bloodshed, and now they would be led away bound.
7:24 *I will bring the evil ones of the nations* God was not approving Babylon. He used a wicked nation to judge His people and would later judge Babylon too (Jer 25:12; Hab 1-2). He can use evil people for His purposes without being the author of their evil.
7:26 *they shall seek a vision from a prophet, and the law shall perish from the priest* In crisis people turn to spiritual leaders, but there would be no vision, no instruction and no counsel. The false prophets had promised peace (13:10).
7:27 *by their judgments I will judge them* God judged them by the standards they used on others (Matt 7:2). A greater end is coming when Christ returns. For believers that day is not terror but hope (Titus 2:13), and it should send us to those who do not know Him.
8:1 *in the sixth year, in the sixth month, on the fifth day of the month* About 592 B.C., a little over a year after Ezekiel's call (1:2), likely during the days of lying on his side (chapter 4). The elders of the exiles came hoping for a word about going home. They got a word, but not the one they wanted.
8:2 *a likeness like the appearance of fire* The same figure Ezekiel saw on the throne (1:26-27). The One enthroned by the Chebar now comes to Ezekiel in his own house.
8:3 *brought me to Jerusalem in visions of God* Ezekiel's body most likely stayed in his house with the elders, for afterward he tells them what he saw (11:24-25). He was carried in vision, the way Paul was caught up (2 Cor 12:2-4).
8:4 *the glory of the God of Israel was there* God's glory was still in His house. In chapters 9-11 we will watch it leave, step by step.
8:5 *this image of jealousy* Ezekiel does not name the idol. Many think it was an image of Asherah, the Canaanite mother goddess. Manasseh had set one in the temple (2 Kgs 21:7), and Josiah removed it (2 Kgs 23:6). An idol in God's house was like another lover brought into the marriage home (Exod 20:4-5).
8:6 *to be far from My sanctuary* Their sin was driving God away from His own house. And this was only the beginning.

And yet you will again see great abominations." **7** And He brought me to the entrance of the court, and I looked, and look, one hole in the wall. **8** And He said to me, "Son of man, dig, please, in the wall." And I dug in the wall, and look, one entrance. **9** And He said to me, "Go in and see the evil abominations which they are doing here." **10** And I went in and looked, and look, every form of moving thing and beast, a detestable thing, and all the idols of the house of Israel, carved on the wall all around, all around. **11** And seventy men of the elders of the house of Israel, and Jaazaniah (Ya'azanyahu) the son of Shaphan (Shafan) standing in their midst, ***were*** standing before them, each man ***with*** his censer in his hand, and the fragrance of the cloud of the incense ***was*** going up. **12** And He said to me, "Have you seen, son of man, what the elders of the house of Israel are doing in the darkness, each man in the rooms of his carved image? For they are saying, 'The LORD does not see us; the LORD has forsaken the land.'" **13** And He said to me, "You will again see great abominations which they are doing."

Weeping for Tammuz and Bowing to the Sun

14 And He brought me to the entrance of the gate of the house of the LORD which ***was*** toward the north; and look, there the women ***were*** sitting, weeping ***for*** the Tammuz. **15** And He said to me, "Have you seen, son of man? You will again see great abominations, more than these." **16** And He brought me to the inner court of the house of the LORD, and look, at the entrance of the temple of the LORD, between the porch and the altar, ***were*** about twenty-five men, their backs toward the temple of the LORD and their faces eastward; and they ***were*** bowing down eastward to the sun. **17** And He said to me, "Have you seen, son of man? Is it a light thing to the house of Judah to do the abominations which they have done here, that they have filled the land ***with*** violence and have turned back to provoke Me to anger? And look, they are putting the branch to their nose. **18** And I also will act in rage; My eye shall not pity, and I will not spare; and they shall call in My ears ***with*** a loud voice, and I will not hear them."

EZEKIEL 9

The Mark on the Foreheads

1 And He called in my ears ***with*** a loud voice, saying, "Draw near, O punishments of the city, each man ***with*** his weapon of destruction in his hand." **2** And look, six men ***were*** coming from the direction of the upper gate which faces north, each man ***with*** his weapon of shattering in his hand; and one man in their midst ***was*** clothed ***in*** linen, and the writing case of the scribe ***was*** at his hips. And they came and stood beside the bronze altar. **3** And the glory of the God of Israel (Yisra'el) was taken up from the cherub on which it had been, to the threshold of the house; and He called to the man clothed ***in*** linen, at whose hips ***was*** the writing case of the scribe. **4** And the LORD said to him, "Pass through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), and mark a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and who groan over all the abominations which are done in its

8:7 1 Kgs 7:12; 2 Kgs 21:5
8:8 Isa 29:15; Job 34:22; Jer 2:34
8:9 Ezek 20:8
8:10 Exod 20:4; Rom 1:23; Lev 11:10-12,29-31,42-44
8:11 Num 11:16,25; Num 16:17,35; Exod 24:1,9
8:12 Ezek 9:9; Isa 29:15; Ezek 8:6,15,17
8:13 Ezek 8:6,15; Jer 9:3; 2 Tim 3:13
8:14 Ezek 44:4; Ezek 46:9
8:15 Ezek 8:6,12; 2 Tim 3:13; Ezek 8:9,13
8:16 Acts 7:42; Jer 2:27; Joel 2:17
8:17 Ezek 7:23; Ezek 9:9; Amos 3:10
8:18 Isa 1:15; Mic 3:4; Jer 11:11
9:1 Rev 14:7; Isa 6:8; Ezek 43:6,7
9:2 Ezek 10:2,6,7; Lev 16:4; 2 Kgs 15:35
9:3 Ezek 10:4; Ezek 11:22,23; Ezek 3:23
9:4 Rev 7:2; Rev 7:3; Rev 9:4

8:8 *dig, please, in the wall* Some sin is hidden behind walls where people think no one is watching. Nothing is hidden from God (Heb 4:13). He shows us our hidden sin, not to shame us, but so we can bring it into the light and be forgiven (1 John 1:7-9).
8:10 *every form of moving thing and beast* Animal forms on the walls sound much like the gods of Egypt, and Judah's leaders were looking to Egypt for help against Babylon.
8:11 *seventy men of the elders of the house of Israel* Seventy elders once went up Sinai with Moses and saw the God of Israel (Exod 24:9-11). Now seventy burned incense to carvings. Jaazaniah may be a son of Shaphan, the scribe who read the found book of the law to Josiah (2 Kgs 22:8-10), whose family protected Jeremiah (Jer 26:24). A godly father does not guarantee a godly son.
8:12 *The LORD does not see us; the LORD has forsaken the land* Two lies people still tell: God does not see what I do in private, and God has let me down, so I will look elsewhere. He who formed the eye sees (Ps 94:9). God had not forsaken them; they had forsaken Him.
8:14 *the women were sitting, weeping for the Tammuz* Tammuz was a Mesopotamian god of crops and spring growth who in the myths died each year, and his worshipers wept for him in the dry summer. They mourned a god who could not keep himself alive at the gate of the God who gives rain and harvest (Deut 11:13-15).
8:16 *their backs toward the temple of the LORD and their faces eastward* The worst of all. Between the porch and the altar was where priests wept and prayed for the people (Joel 2:17). The temple faced east, so to worship the sun they turned their backs on God's presence. Many think these men were priests; twenty-four courses plus the high priest makes twenty-five (1 Chr 24).
8:17 *they have filled the land with violence* Idolatry and violence go together. When people turn from God, they soon turn on each other. No one is sure what putting the branch to the nose meant, perhaps a pagan rite or an insulting gesture toward God. Either way it was the final insult.
8:18 *they shall call in My ears with a loud voice, and I will not hear them* A time comes when God stops listening to those who refused to listen to Him (Prov 1:24-28; Jer 11:11). Not because He is cruel, but because they waited until judgment had come. Today is the time to call on Him.
9:1 *Draw near, O punishments of the city* God called with a loud voice, the same loud voice the people would cry with and not be heard (8:18).
9:2 *six men were coming from the direction of the upper gate* Heavenly beings often look like men in Ezekiel's visions (40:3). These are best taken as angels carrying out judgment, like the destroyer at the Passover (Exod 12:23). In history the judgment came through Babylon. They stood by the bronze altar, so the place of sacrifice became the place where judgment began.
9:2 *one man in their midst was clothed in linen* Linen was priestly clothing (Lev 16:4), and the writing case held pen and ink. He came to record and mark, not destroy. Many see a high angel like the one Daniel saw (Dan 10:5-6); some believe he is the Son of God before His incarnation.
9:3 *the glory of the God of Israel was taken up from the cherub* The first step in the glory's departure. It had rested above the cherubim over the ark (Exod 25:22). Now it moves to the threshold. God is getting ready to leave.
9:4 *the men who sigh and who groan over all the abominations* The mark is taw, the last Hebrew letter, written like an X or small cross in the old script, a striking picture though we build no doctrine on it. Not those who said the right words, but those grieved by sin were marked, as at the Passover (Exod 12:13) and in Revelation (Rev 7:3). Have we grown used to what is wrong around us?

midst." **5** And to these He said in my ears, "Pass through the city after him, and strike; let not your eye pity, and do not spare. **6** Old man, young man and virgin, and little ones and women, kill to destruction; and do not come near any man on whom ***is*** the mark; and begin at My sanctuary." And they began with the old men who ***were*** before the house. **7** And He said to them, "Make the house unclean, and fill the courts ***with*** slain. Go out!" And they went out and struck in the city. **8** And it was, as they were striking, and I was left, ***that*** I fell on my face and cried out and said, "Ah, Lord GOD! Are You destroying all the remnant of Israel in Your pouring out of Your rage on Jerusalem?" **9** And He said to me, "The iniquity of the house of Israel and Judah (Yehuda) ***is*** very, very great, and the land has been filled ***with*** bloodshed, and the city is full of perversity; for they have said, 'The LORD has forsaken the land, and the LORD does not see.' **10** And I also, My eye shall not pity, and I will not spare; their way I will put on their head." **11** And look, the man clothed ***in*** the linen, at whose hips ***was*** the writing case, ***was*** bringing back word, saying, "I have done according to all that You commanded me."

EZEKIEL 10

The Glory Over the Threshold

1 And I looked, and look, in the expanse which ***was*** over the head of the cherubim, like a sapphire stone, like the appearance of the likeness of a throne, it appeared above them. **2** And He spoke to the man clothed ***in*** the linen, and He said, "Go in between the whirling wheels, under the cherub, and fill the hollows of your hands ***with*** coals of fire from between the cherubim, and scatter ***them*** over the city." And he went in before my eyes. **3** And the cherubim ***were*** standing on the south of the house when the man went in, and the cloud filled the inner court. **4** And the glory of the LORD rose from on the cherub to the threshold of the house; and the house was filled ***with*** the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the glory of the LORD. **5** And the sound of the wings of the cherubim was heard as far as the outer court, like the voice of God Almighty when He speaks. **6** And it was, when He commanded the man clothed ***in*** the linen, saying, "Take fire from between the whirling wheels, from between the cherubim," ***that*** he went in and stood beside the wheel. **7** And the cherub stretched out his hand from between the cherubim to the fire which ***was*** between the cherubim, and lifted ***some*** and put ***it*** into the hollows of the hands of the ***one*** clothed ***in*** the linen; and he took ***it*** and went out. **8** And there appeared on the cherubim the form of the hand of a man under their wings.

The Wheels and the Cherubim

9 And I looked, and look, four wheels beside the cherubim, one wheel beside one cherub, and one wheel beside one cherub; and the appearance of the wheels ***was*** like the appearance of a chrysolite stone. **10** And ***as for*** their appearance, the four of them had one likeness, as it would be, the wheel in the midst of the wheel. **11** When they went, they went on their four sides; they did not turn when they went; for ***to*** the place where the head turned, they went after it; they did not turn when they went. **12** And all their flesh, and their backs, and their hands, and their wings, and the wheels ***were*** full of eyes all around; the four of them had their

9:5 Ezek 5:11; 1 Sam 9:15; Isa 5:9
9:6 1 Pet 4:17; Rev 14:4; 2 Chr 36:17
9:7 Rev 16:1; Ezek 7:20-22; 2 Chr 36:17
9:8 Ezek 11:13; Num 14:5; Josh 7:6
9:9 Matt 23:37; Ezek 8:12; Job 22:13
9:10 Ezek 7:4; Ezek 8:18; Ezek 11:21
9:11 Ps 103:20; Isa 46:10,11; Zech 1:10,11
10:1 Exod 24:10; Rev 4:2,3; Isa 21:8,9
10:2 Rev 8:5; Rev 16:1; Ezek 1:13
10:3 Ezek 9:3; Ezek 43:4
10:4 Acts 7:55; Ezek 1:28; Ezek 9:3
10:5 John 12:29; Ezek 1:24; Job 40:9
10:6 Ezek 10:2; Ps 80:1; Ps 99:1
10:7 Ezek 1:13; Ezek 41:23-26; Matt 13:41,42,49,50
10:8 Ezek 1:8; Ezek 10:21; Isa 6:6
10:9 Rev 14:1; Dan 10:6; Rev 21:20
10:10 Ezek 1:16; Ps 36:6; Ps 97:2
10:11 Ezek 1:17; Ezek 10:22; Ezek 1:20
10:12 Rev 4:6; Rev 4:8; Ezek 1:18

9:6 *Old man, young man and virgin, and little ones and women* This is a vision of what Babylon would do in 586 B.C. (2 Chr 36:17), after centuries of warning (Jer 7:1-15). The Judge of all the earth does right (Gen 18:25). No one marked was touched. I believe little children who die are safe with God, as David believed of his child (2 Sam 12:23).
9:6 *begin at My sanctuary* Judgment began where the worst sins were done and with the elders who had the most light (8:11-16). Judgment begins at the house of God (1 Pet 4:17), and those who lead will give an account (Jas 3:1).
9:7 *Make the house unclean, and fill the courts with slain* A corpse made anything unclean (Num 19:11-16). The people had already defiled the temple with idols. The house they trusted would not protect them.
9:8 *Are You destroying all the remnant of Israel* Ezekiel fell on his face and pleaded, as Moses did after the golden calf and Abraham did for Sodom (Exod 32:11-14; Gen 18:22-33). A true prophet hates the sin and loves the sinner. Anyone who speaks of judgment without tears has not understood it (Luke 19:41).
9:9 *The iniquity of the house of Israel and Judah is very, very great* God names bloodshed and perversity, sins of people against people, alongside idolatry (22:6-12). Their excuse is the same lie as 8:12: God is gone and blind.
9:10 *their way I will put on their head* They said God did not see; now they would learn He saw everything. Ezekiel's prayer was not wasted. A marked remnant was spared, and God would gather and restore them (11:16-20).
9:11 *I have done according to all that You commanded me* The man in linen did not miss one of God's people. In Israel's worst day God did not lose track of a single one of His own (2 Tim 2:19; John 10:28). If you belong to Christ, you are sealed with His Spirit, and He will not lose you.
10:1 *like the appearance of the likeness of a throne* Ezekiel sees again the platform and sapphire throne of 1:22-26, and now he calls the living creatures by their right name, cherubim.
10:2 *fill the hollows of your hands with coals of fire from between the cherubim* The hands that marked the faithful now scatter fire on the city. Altar fire can purify, as with Isaiah's lips (Isa 6:6-7), or consume. This pictured the burning of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. (2 Kgs 25:9). The fire came first from God's presence.
10:3 *the cherubim were standing on the south of the house* The idols and sun worshipers were on the north and east (8:3-16). God's presence stood apart from them.
10:4 *the house was filled with the cloud* At Solomon's dedication the cloud filled the house so that priests could not minister (1 Kgs 8:10-11). Ezekiel sees the glory fill the house once more, but now it is getting ready to go.
10:5 *like the voice of God Almighty when He speaks* The roar of the wings (1:24) was like God's own voice. Heaven was moving.
10:7 *the cherub stretched out his hand* The cherub handed the fire to the man. Judgment was not random violence. It came from God's holy presence, in His time, by His command. The cherubim's hands (10:8) show they are workers who carry out His will.
10:12 *the wheels were full of eyes all around* Now their whole bodies are covered with eyes. The leaders said the LORD does not see (8:12). His throne sees everything.

wheels. **13** As for the wheels, it was called to them in my ears, "The whirling wheel." **14** And each one had four faces: the face of the one ***was*** the face of the cherub, and the face of the second ***was*** the face of a man, and the third ***was*** the face of a lion, and the fourth ***was*** the face of an eagle. **15** And the cherubim rose up. That ***was*** the living creature which I had seen by the river Chebar (Kevar). **16** And when the cherubim went, the wheels went beside them; and when the cherubim lifted up their wings to rise from on the earth, the wheels also did not turn from beside them. **17** When they stood still, they stood still; and when they rose up, they rose up with them; for the spirit of the living creature ***was*** in them. **18** And the glory of the LORD went out from on the threshold of the house and stood over the cherubim. **19** And the cherubim lifted up their wings and rose from the earth before my eyes when they went out, and the wheels ***were*** close beside them; and it stood at the entrance of the east gate of the house of the LORD, and the glory of the God of Israel (Yisra'el) ***was*** over them, above. **20** That ***was*** the living creature which I had seen under the God of Israel by the river Chebar; and I knew that they ***were*** cherubim. **21** Each one had four faces apiece, and each one had four wings, and the likeness of the hands of a man ***was*** under their wings. **22** And ***as for*** the likeness of their faces, they ***were*** the faces which I had seen by the river Chebar, their appearance and themselves; each one went in the direction of its face.

EZEKIEL 11

Judgment on the Leaders

1 And a spirit lifted me up and brought me to the east gate of the house of the LORD, which faces eastward; and look, at the entrance of the gate ***were*** twenty-five men; and I saw in their midst Jaazaniah (Ya'azanya) the son of Azzur (Azur) and Pelatiah (Pelatyahu) the son of Benaiah (Benayahu), officials of the people. **2** And He said to me, "Son of man, these ***are*** the men who devise mischief and who counsel evil counsel in this city, **3** who say, '***It is*** not near, to build houses. It ***is*** the pot, and we ***are*** the flesh.' **4** Therefore prophesy against them; prophesy, son of man." **5** And the Spirit of the LORD fell on me, and He said to me, "Say, 'Thus says the LORD: So you have said, O house of Israel (Yisra'el); and the things that come up in your spirit, I know them. **6** You have multiplied your slain in this city, and you have filled its streets ***with*** slain. **7** Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Your slain whom you have put in its midst, they ***are*** the flesh, and it ***is*** the pot; and you, ***I will*** bring out from its midst. **8** You have feared a sword, and a sword I will bring on you, declares the Lord GOD. **9** And I will bring you out from its midst and give you into the hand of strangers, and I will execute judgments on you. **10** By the sword you shall fall; at the border of Israel I will judge you; and you shall know that I ***am*** the LORD. **11** It shall not be a pot for you, and you ***shall not*** be flesh in its midst; at the border of Israel I will judge you. **12** And you shall know that I ***am*** the LORD, in whose statutes you have not walked, and whose judgments you have not done; and according to the judgments of the nations that ***are*** around

10:14 Rev 4:7; Ezek 10:21; 1 Kgs 7:29,36
10:15 Ezek 1:5,13,14; Ezek 10:18,19; Ezek 8:6
10:16 Ezek 1:19-21
10:17 Rev 11:11; Ezek 1:12,20,21; Gen 2:7
10:18 Matt 23:38; Matt 23:39; Acts 7:55
10:19 Ezek 1:17-21; Ezek 11:22,23; Ezek 8:16
10:20 Ezek 1:1; Ezek 10:15; Ezek 1:22-28
10:21 Rev 4:8; Ezek 10:14; Ezek 41:18,19
10:22 Ezek 1:10; Ezek 10:11; Ezek 1:12
11:1 Ezek 11:24; Ezek 3:12,14; Ezek 10:19
11:2 Isa 30:1; Ps 2:1,2; Ps 52:2
11:3 Ezek 12:22,27; Ezek 7:7; Isa 5:19
11:4 Ezek 3:2-15,17-21; Ezek 20:46,47; Ezek 21:2
11:5 John 21:17; Acts 10:44; Jer 17:10
11:6 Matt 23:35; Ezek 7:23; Ezek 22:2-6,9,12,27
11:7 Ezek 24:3-13; Mic 3:2,3; 2 Kgs 25:18-22
11:8 Prov 10:24; Job 3:25; Isa 24:17,18
11:9 Jude 1:15; Ezek 5:8,10,15; Deut 28:36,49,50
11:10 2 Kgs 14:25; 2 Kgs 25:19-21; Jer 39:6
11:11 Ezek 11:3,7-10
11:12 Ezek 8:10,14,16; Ezek 11:21; Ezek 20:16,21,24

10:13 *The whirling wheel* The word can mean a whirlwind or something rolling swiftly, the speed and power of God's throne in motion. The throne leaving Jerusalem is the same one that came to Ezekiel in Babylon. God went to be with His people in exile (11:16).
10:14 *the face of the one was the face of the cherub* In 1:10 the faces were man, lion, ox and eagle. Most think the ox face is what Ezekiel here calls the cherub's face, though Scripture does not explain the change.
10:15 *That was the living creature which I had seen by the river Chebar* The moment of recognition. Beside the place where golden cherubim stood over the ark, Ezekiel understood what he had seen.
10:18 *the glory of the LORD went out from on the threshold of the house* Step by step the glory left: from the Most Holy Place to the threshold (9:3; 10:4), to the cherubim, to the east gate (10:19), and then to the mountain east of the city (11:23). It is as if God left slowly, looking back. Israel pushed God out of His house with idols, and He let them have what they wanted.
10:19 *it stood at the entrance of the east gate of the house of the LORD* The glory left by the east gate, and in chapter 43 it returns from the east by the same gate (43:2-5). Between leaving and returning, the glory came in Jesus (John 1:14). Rejected, He too left the temple for the Mount of Olives (Matt 23:38; 24:1-3), and He will return there (Acts 1:11-12; Zech 14:4).
10:20 *I knew that they were cherubim* One God and one throne. The God who met Ezekiel in exile was the God of the temple. It is possible to go on with religious activity long after God's presence has left (Rev 2:5). The temple still stood, but the house was empty.
11:1 *Jaazaniah the son of Azzur and Pelatiah the son of Benaiah, officials of the people* At the east gate, where the glory had stopped (10:19), stood twenty-five leaders. This Jaazaniah is a different man from the son of Shaphan (8:11).
11:2 *the men who devise mischief and who counsel evil counsel in this city* While Jeremiah urged the king to submit to Babylon as God said (Jer 27:12-15), these men gave the opposite advice.
11:3 *It is the pot, and we are the flesh* The first half is read two ways: no danger is near, so no hurry to build; or a mocking reply to Jeremiah's letter telling the exiles to build houses (Jer 29:5). The pot is clearer. Jerusalem's walls would protect them, the choice meat, while the exiles were the scraps thrown out.
11:5 *the things that come up in your spirit, I know them* God knew not only their public words but their private thoughts (Ps 139:1-4).
11:6 *You have multiplied your slain in this city* These leaders were killers, likely through corrupt courts, oppression of the poor and silencing opponents, as Jehoiakim killed the prophet Uriah (Jer 26:20-23).
11:7 *they are the flesh, and it is the pot* God turns their saying around. The only meat staying in the pot would be the bodies of their victims. The leaders themselves would be dragged out.
11:8 *You have feared a sword, and a sword I will bring on you* What they feared most came. Hiding behind the walls would not save them.
11:10 *at the border of Israel I will judge you* Fulfilled exactly. Zedekiah, his sons and many leaders were taken to Riblah at Israel's far northern border and killed there (2 Kgs 25:6-7, 18-21).
11:12 *according to the judgments of the nations that are around you, you have done* Their problem was not just bad politics. They threw away God's law and copied the pagans.

you, you have done.'" **13** And it was, when I prophesied, ***that*** Pelatiah the son of Benaiah died. And I fell on my face and cried out ***with*** a loud voice and said, "Ah, Lord GOD! Are You making a complete end of the remnant of Israel?"

A New Heart Promised

14 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **15** "Son of man, your brothers, your brothers, the men of your redemption, and all the house of Israel, all of it, ***are those*** to whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) have said, 'Be far from the LORD; to us it has been given, the land, for a possession.' **16** Therefore say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD:
Although I have removed them far off among the nations,
and although I have dispersed them among the lands, yet I have become to them a sanctuary ***for*** a little ***while*** in the lands where they have gone.' **17** Therefore say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: And I will gather you from the peoples and assemble you from the lands where you have been dispersed, and I will give you the soil of Israel.' **18** And they shall come there and remove all its detestable things and all its abominations from it. **19** And I will give them one heart, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, **20** so that they may walk in My statutes and keep My judgments and do them; and they shall be a people to Me, and I will be God to them. **21** And to the heart of their detestable things and their abominations their heart is going; their way I will put on their head, declares the Lord GOD."

The Glory Leaves the City

22 And the cherubim lifted up their wings, and the wheels ***were*** close beside them, and the glory of the God of Israel ***was*** over them, above. **23** And the glory of the LORD went up from over the midst of the city and stood over the mountain which ***is*** on the east of the city. **24** And a spirit lifted me up and brought me to ***the*** Chaldeans (Kasdim), to the exiles, in the vision by the Spirit of God; and the vision which I had seen went up from me. **25** And I spoke to the exiles all the words of the LORD which He had shown me.

EZEKIEL 12

The Exile Acted Out

1 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **2** "Son of man, you are dwelling in the midst of the house of rebellion, who have eyes to see and do not see, ears to hear and do not hear; for they ***are*** a house of rebellion. **3** And you, son of man, make for yourself baggage of exile, and go into exile by day before their eyes; and you shall go into exile from your place to another place before their eyes. Perhaps they will see, for they ***are*** a house of rebellion. **4** And you shall bring out your baggage like baggage of exile by day before their eyes; and you shall go out in the evening before their eyes like the goings out of exile. **5** Before their eyes dig for yourself in the wall, and bring ***it*** out through it. **6** Before their eyes you shall lift ***it*** up on ***your*** shoulder; in the dark you shall bring ***it*** out; you shall cover your face, and you shall not see the land; for I have made you a portent to the house of

11:13 Ezek 11:1; Ezek 9:8; Acts 5:5,10
11:15 Ezek 33:24; Jer 24:1-5; Isa 65:5
11:16 Isa 8:14; Ps 90:1; Ps 31:20
11:17 Ezek 28:25; Ezek 34:13; Jer 24:5
11:18 Ezek 5:11; Ezek 37:23; Ezek 7:20
11:19 Ezek 36:26,27; 2 Cor 3:3; Jer 31:33
11:20 Heb 8:10; 2 Cor 6:16; Ps 105:45
11:21 Mark 7:21; Ezek 9:10; Ezek 11:18
11:22 Ezek 10:19; Ezek 1:19,20
11:23 Matt 23:39; Acts 7:55; Zech 14:4
11:24 Ezek 11:1; Ezek 8:3; Ezek 1:3
11:25 Ezek 3:4,17,27; Ezek 2:7
12:2 John 12:40; Acts 28:26; Mark 8:18
12:3 Jer 36:3,7; Jer 26:3; 2 Tim 2:25
12:4 Jer 39:4; Ezek 12:12; 2 Kgs 25:4
12:5 2 Kgs 25:4; Jer 39:2-4
12:6 Ezek 4:3; Ezek 24:24; Isa 8:18

11:13 *Pelatiah the son of Benaiah died* He seems to have died in Jerusalem at that very moment, and the exiles would later hear and know Ezekiel's word was true. His name means something like the LORD delivers. Ezekiel may have feared it meant no remnant at all, so he fell on his face and cried out. God's answer is no; there will be a remnant, but not where they expected.
11:15 *the men of your redemption* Ezekiel's true family were the exiles, the ones a kinsman-redeemer would buy back. Those left in Jerusalem said the exiles were far from God and the land was theirs. It is dangerous to look at others' suffering and decide God has rejected them and blessed us (Luke 13:1-5).
11:16 *I have become to them a sanctuary for a little while* One of the most tender verses in Ezekiel. The exiles lost the temple, but God Himself became their sanctuary. The phrase can also mean in a small measure, real but not yet complete. Believers are now God's temple, and His Spirit dwells in us (John 4:21-24; 1 Cor 3:16).
11:17 *I will give you the soil of Israel* Fulfilled in part in 538 B.C. under Cyrus (Ezra 1:1-4), after which Israel never returned to idolatry as before. But that return was small. I believe the full gathering is still ahead, when God brings Israel home at Christ's return (36:24; 37:21-28; Rom 11:26-29).
11:19 *I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh* Israel's problem was never a lack of laws or temples but hard hearts (2:4; 3:7). God does not say try harder. He says I will give, I will put, I will remove (36:26-27). One heart means undivided, not split between God and idols.
11:20 *so that they may walk in My statutes* Obedience follows the new heart; it does not produce it. They shall be My people is the covenant promise (Exod 6:7; Jer 31:33). The new covenant was made with Israel and Judah and will be kept with the nation, while all who come to Christ share its blessings now (Luke 22:20). Have you been given a new heart?
11:21 *their way I will put on their head* The new heart is offered but not forced on those who keep running after idols. The invitation is real, and so is the warning.
11:23 *stood over the mountain which is on the east of the city* The Mount of Olives. The glory left the temple, then the city, and paused looking back. There Jesus later wept over Jerusalem, taught of His return and ascended (Luke 19:37-41; Matt 24:3; Acts 1:9-12), and there His feet will stand when He returns (Zech 14:4).
11:25 *I spoke to the exiles all the words of the LORD* Ezekiel told the elders everything. That is still the shape of the gospel: bad news first, then good news. Sin and judgment are real, and God gives a new heart to all who turn to Him.
12:2 *who have eyes to see and do not see, ears to hear and do not hear* Blind and deaf in heart, not body (Deut 29:4). The message was not unclear; they did not want to obey it. People often say they do not understand the Bible when they understand it well enough and dislike what it says.
12:3 *Perhaps they will see* God had just said they would not see, yet He still says perhaps. He never stops reaching out to rebels (2 Pet 3:9). Baggage of exile was the small bundle a captive could carry: a bowl, a blanket, a bit of food.
12:5 *dig for yourself in the wall* Babylonian houses were mud brick, so a man could dig through by hand.
12:6 *I have made you a portent to the house of Israel* A portent is a sign pointing ahead to what will happen. Ezekiel's own actions were the message.

Israel (Yisra'el)." **7** And I did so, as I was commanded: my baggage I brought out like baggage of exile by day, and in the evening I dug for myself in the wall with ***my*** hand; in the dark I brought ***it*** out; on ***my*** shoulder I lifted ***it*** up before their eyes. **8** And the word of the LORD came to me in the morning, saying, **9** "Son of man, have not the house of Israel, the house of rebellion, said to you, 'What are you doing?' **10** Say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: The prince ***is*** this burden in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), and all the house of Israel who ***are*** in their midst.' **11** Say, 'I ***am*** your portent; as I have done, so it shall be done to them; into exile, into captivity they shall go.' **12** And the prince who ***is*** in their midst shall lift ***it*** up on ***his*** shoulder in the dark and go out; they shall dig in the wall to bring ***him*** out through it; he shall cover his face, because he shall not see the land with ***his*** eye, he himself. **13** And I will spread My net over him, and he shall be caught in My snare; and I will bring him to Babylon (Bavel), the land of the Chaldeans (Kasdim); and he shall not see it, and he shall die there. **14** And all who ***are*** around him, his help, and all his troops, I will scatter to every wind, and I will draw out a sword after them. **15** And they shall know that I ***am*** the LORD, when I disperse them among the nations and scatter them among the lands. **16** And I will leave of them men ***few in*** number from the sword, from the famine, and from the pestilence, so that they may recount all their abominations among the nations where they go; and they shall know that I ***am*** the LORD."

Bread With Trembling

17 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **18** "Son of man, you shall eat your bread in quaking, and you shall drink your water in trembling and in anxiety. **19** And you shall say to the people of the land, 'Thus says the Lord GOD concerning the inhabitants of Jerusalem on the soil of Israel: They shall eat their bread in anxiety and drink their water in horror, so that its land may be desolate from its fullness, because of the violence of all those dwelling in it. **20** And the inhabited cities shall be laid waste, and the land shall become a desolation; and you shall know that I ***am*** the LORD.'"

No More Delay

21 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **22** "Son of man, what ***is*** this proverb that you have about the soil of Israel, saying, 'The days are prolonged, and every vision perishes'? **23** Therefore say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: I will make this proverb cease, and they shall not use it as a proverb again in Israel.' But speak to them, 'The days have drawn near, and the word of every vision.' **24** For there shall no longer be any vision of worthlessness and divination of flattery in the midst of the house of Israel. **25** For I, the LORD, will speak what I will speak, a word, and it shall be done; it shall not be delayed again; for in your days, O house of rebellion, I will speak a word and do it, declares the Lord GOD." **26** And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **27** "Son of man, look, the house of Israel are saying, 'The vision that he sees ***is*** for many days, and for distant times he is prophesying.' **28** Therefore say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: None of My words shall be delayed again; what I speak, a word, it shall be done, declares the Lord GOD.'"

EZEKIEL 13

Against the False Prophets

1 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **2** "Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel (Yisra'el) who are prophesying, and say to the prophets from their heart,

12:7 Ezek 24:18; Ezek 37:7,10; Ezek 2:8
12:9 Ezek 17:12; Ezek 24:19; Ezek 20:49
12:10 2 Kgs 9:25; Isa 13:1; Isa 14:28
12:11 Jer 15:2; Jer 52:15,28-30
12:12 Ezek 12:6; 2 Kgs 25:4; Jer 39:4
12:13 Hos 7:12; Isa 24:17,18; Jer 39:7
12:14 Ezek 5:2,12; Ezek 17:21; 2 Kgs 25:4,5
12:15 Ezek 6:7,14; Ezek 5:13; Ezek 7:4
12:16 Ezek 14:22,23; Jer 22:8,9; Ezek 6:8-10
12:18 Ezek 4:16,17; Ezek 23:33; Lev 26:26,36
12:19 Zech 7:14; Ezek 6:6,7,14; Mic 7:13
12:20 Isa 7:23,24; Jer 4:7,23-29; Isa 3:26
12:22 Ezek 11:3; Ezek 18:2,3; Ezek 12:27
12:23 Rev 22:10; Joel 2:1; Zeph 1:14
12:24 Ezek 13:23; Zech 13:2-4; Jer 14:13-16
12:25 Ezek 12:28; Isa 55:11; Isa 14:24
12:27 Dan 10:14; Ezek 12:22; 2 Pet 3:4
12:28 Matt 24:48-51; Ezek 12:23-25; Jer 4:7
13:2 Jer 37:19; Ezek 22:25,28; Isa 9:15

12:7 *I did so, as I was commanded* A respected priest digging through his own wall and sneaking out at night must have looked mad. Obedience sometimes makes us look foolish (1 Cor 1:18). Are we willing to look foolish for God?
12:10 *The prince is this burden in Jerusalem* The word burden also means an oracle, a weighty message: a play on words. The prince was Zedekiah, called prince perhaps because the exiles still counted Jehoiachin as king (1:2).
12:12 *he shall cover his face, because he shall not see the land with his eye* Fulfilled in detail. In 586 B.C. Zedekiah fled by night through a gate between the walls (2 Kgs 25:4; Jer 39:4), was caught near Jericho, and at Riblah his sons were killed before him and his eyes put out (2 Kgs 25:5-7).
12:13 *he shall not see it, and he shall die there* It sounded like a riddle until 586 B.C. Zedekiah went to Babylon blind. The net was God's, not only Babylon's. Zedekiah had broken an oath sworn in God's name (17:13-19; 2 Chr 36:13), and he could not outrun God.
12:14 *I will scatter to every wind* When Zedekiah fled, his army scattered (2 Kgs 25:5).
12:16 *so that they may recount all their abominations among the nations* God spared a few so they could tell the nations why this happened: we sinned and God judged us. Even judgment made Him known.
12:18 *you shall eat your bread in quaking* Ezekiel ate with shaking hands, as people would in the besieged city when every meal might be the last.
12:19 *because of the violence of all those dwelling in it* The land would be stripped because the people filled it with injustice. Fear is a fruit of sin (Gen 3:10). Those at peace with God through Christ need not live in terror (1 John 4:18).
12:22 *The days are prolonged, and every vision perishes* The prophets had warned for years, and Jerusalem still stood. The delay made people careless.
12:24 *divination of flattery* Divination was seeking the future by omens such as animal livers or the flight of birds, which the law forbade (Deut 18:10-12). The false prophets told people what they wanted to hear.
12:25 *in your days, O house of rebellion, I will speak a word and do it* Not in some distant generation, but in their lifetime. People say the same of Christ's return (2 Pet 3:3-4), and the answer is the same: God is not slow but patient, and the day will come (2 Pet 3:9-10).
12:27 *for distant times he is prophesying* A second excuse: it may happen someday, but not to me. Within about five years Jerusalem fell, and these very exiles heard the news (33:21). Both sayings lead to doing nothing. Now is the time to respond (2 Cor 6:2).
13:2 *the prophets from their heart* Many prophets spoke in Jerusalem and among the exiles; Jeremiah named some who prophesied lies in God's name (Jer 29:21-23, 31). Their messages came from their own minds, not from God.

'Hear the word of the LORD! **3** Thus says the Lord GOD: Woe to the foolish prophets who walk after their spirit and have not seen! **4** Like foxes among ruins your prophets have been, O Israel. **5** You have not gone up into the breaches, and ***have not*** built up a wall around the house of Israel, to stand in the battle in the day of the LORD. **6** They have seen worthlessness and divination of a lie, who say, "Declares the LORD," and the LORD has not sent them; and they have hoped to confirm a word. **7** Have you not seen a vision of worthlessness, and spoken a divination of a lie, and ***you are*** saying, "Declares the LORD," and I have not spoken? **8** Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Because you have spoken worthlessness and seen a lie, therefore, look, I ***am*** against you, declares the Lord GOD. **9** And My hand shall be against the prophets who see worthlessness and who divine a lie; they shall not be in the council of My people, and in the register of the house of Israel they shall not be written, and into the soil of Israel they shall not enter; and you shall know that I ***am*** the Lord GOD. **10** Because, even because they have led My people astray, saying, "Peace," and ***there is*** no peace; and he ***is*** building a wall, and look, they are plastering it ***with*** whitewash; **11** say to those who plaster ***with*** whitewash that it shall fall: a flooding rain will come, and you, O stones of hail, shall fall, and a wind of tempests shall burst ***it***. **12** And look, the wall has fallen; will it not be said to you, "Where ***is*** the coating with which you plastered ***it***?" **13** Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: I will cause a wind of tempests to burst forth in My rage, and there shall be a flooding rain in My anger, and stones of hail in rage for a complete end. **14** And I will tear down the wall which you plastered ***with*** whitewash, and bring it down to the ground, and its foundation shall be laid bare; and it shall fall, and you shall be consumed in its midst; and you shall know that I ***am*** the LORD. **15** And I will spend My rage on the wall and on those who plastered it ***with*** whitewash; and I will say to you, "The wall ***is*** no more, and those who plastered it ***are*** no more, **16** the prophets of Israel who prophesy concerning Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), and who see for it a vision of peace, and ***there is*** no peace," declares the Lord GOD.'

Against the False Prophetesses

17 And you, son of man, set your face against the daughters of your people who prophesy from their heart, and prophesy against them, **18** and say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: Woe to the ***women*** who sew bands on all the joints of ***the*** hands, and who make the veils on the head of every stature, to hunt souls! Will you hunt the souls of My people, and keep souls alive for yourselves? **19** And you have profaned Me among My people for handfuls of barley and for pieces of bread, to put to death souls that should not die and to keep alive souls that should not live, by your lying to My people who listen to a lie. **20** Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Look, I ***am*** against your bands with which you are hunting there the souls as flying ***things***, and I will tear them from your arms, and I will set free the souls, the souls that you are hunting as flying ***things***. **21** And I will tear off your veils and deliver My people from your hand, and they shall no longer be in your hand as prey; and you shall know that I ***am*** the LORD. **22** Because you have disheartened the heart of the righteous ***with*** falsehood, and I have not caused him pain, and ***have*** strengthened the

13:3 Luke 11:52; Matt 23:14; Matt 23:15
13:4 2 Pet 2:1; Song 2:15; Mic 2:11
13:5 1 Thess 5:2; 2 Pet 3:10; 2 Pet 2:1
13:6 Ezek 22:28; Jer 14:14; Jer 29:8
13:7 Ezek 13:2,3,6; Matt 24:23,24
13:8 2 Pet 2:1; Ezek 5:8; Ezek 21:3
13:9 2 Pet 2:1; Ps 87:6; Ezek 20:38
13:10 1 John 2:26; Rev 2:20; Matt 7:27
13:11 2 Pet 2:1; Ezek 38:22; Isa 28:2,15-18
13:12 Deut 32:37; Judg 9:38; Judg 10:14
13:13 Matt 7:27; Isa 30:30; Ps 148:8
13:14 Matt 7:27; Mic 1:6; Jer 6:15
13:15 2 Pet 2:1; Neh 4:3; Ps 62:3
13:16 2 Pet 2:1; Ezek 13:10; Jer 6:14
13:17 2 Pet 2:1; Ezek 13:2; Judg 4:4
13:18 2 Pet 2:1; 2 Pet 2:14; Ezek 13:10,16
13:19 Prov 28:21; Mic 3:5,11; Ezek 20:39
13:20 2 Tim 3:8,9; Ezek 13:8,9,15,16
13:22 Jer 23:14; Ezek 9:4; Jer 4:10

13:3 *Woe to the foolish prophets who walk after their spirit and have not seen* Foolish in Scripture does not mean unintelligent. It means living as if God does not matter (Ps 14:1). They may have been clever and persuasive, but they spoke without God.
13:4 *Like foxes among ruins* Foxes or jackals live in rubble. They build nothing and make the damage worse. The false prophets lived off Israel's ruins instead of helping rebuild.
13:5 *You have not gone up into the breaches* When an enemy broke a wall, brave men rushed into the gap to hold it. A true prophet stands in the gap by calling for repentance and praying (22:30). These men left the walls broken and said the city was safe.
13:6 *they have hoped to confirm a word* They used God's name to sound official, and some may have believed their own lies. A person can be sincere and sincerely wrong. The law's tests were plain (Deut 18:21-22; 13:1-5), and they failed both.
13:9 *in the register of the house of Israel they shall not be written* Three penalties: no seat in the council, no name in the family records (Ezra 2:59-62), and no return to the land. They promised others a quick return and would never return themselves.
13:10 *saying, "Peace," and there is no peace* The heart of the charge. No need to repent or fear Babylon, they said. Jeremiah faced the same men (Jer 6:14). Someone built a flimsy wall, and the prophets painted it white so it looked solid.
13:11 *a flooding rain will come* God's storm would bring the wall down, and people would ask what happened to all the promises. Jesus told of houses built on rock and sand (Matt 7:24-27). The difference is hearing His words and doing them.
13:14 *you shall be consumed in its midst* The wall would fall on the men who painted it.
13:16 *who see for it a vision of peace, and there is no peace* A warning for teachers today. People gather teachers who tell them what itching ears want (2 Tim 4:3-4). Listeners must test the spirits (1 John 4:1) and check teaching against Scripture (Acts 17:11). If someone tells you what you want to hear, check it twice.
13:17 *the daughters of your people who prophesy from their heart* God does not condemn them for being women. Scripture names faithful prophetesses such as Miriam, Deborah and Huldah (Exod 15:20; Judg 4:4; 2 Kgs 22:14). These were condemned, like the men, for being false.
13:18 *who sew bands on all the joints of the hands* The exact items are uncertain. Most think the bands and veils were magic charms used in fortune telling or spells, to trap people.
13:19 *for handfuls of barley and for pieces of bread* They sold out God's people for a meal. Their words frightened those right with God and promised safety to those who were not.
13:20 *I will set free the souls* God speaks as the rescuer of trapped birds and still calls them My people. In Christ we are free (John 8:36; Gal 5:1). No charm, curse or spell has power over those who belong to Him.
13:22 *you have disheartened the heart of the righteous with falsehood* They discouraged the righteous and encouraged the wicked, exactly backwards. True teaching comforts the repentant and warns the unrepentant. A message that says you can keep sinning and be safe, or that the repentant can never be forgiven, is not from God.

hands of the wicked, so that he does not turn back from his evil way, to keep him alive, **23** therefore you shall not see worthlessness, and you shall not divine divination again; and I will deliver My people from your hand; and you shall know that I ***am*** the LORD.'"

EZEKIEL 14

Idols in the Heart

1 And men from the elders of Israel (Yisra'el) came to me, and they sat before me. **2** And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **3** "Son of man, these men have brought up their idols on their heart, and the stumbling block of their iniquity they have put before their faces. Should I indeed let Myself be consulted by them? **4** Therefore speak with them, and you shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: Any man of the house of Israel who brings up his idols to his heart, and puts the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face, and comes to the prophet, I, the LORD, will let Myself answer him, ***as he*** comes with the multitude of his idols, **5** so as to seize the house of Israel by their heart, who have become estranged from Me by their idols, all of them.' **6** Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: Turn back, and turn ***yourselves*** away from your idols, and from all your abominations turn away your faces. **7** For any man of the house of Israel and of the sojourner who sojourns in Israel, who separates himself from after Me and brings up his idols to his heart, and puts the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face, and comes to the prophet to consult him about Me, I, the LORD, will let Myself answer him by Myself. **8** And I will set My face against that man, and I will make him a sign and bywords, and I will cut him off from the midst of My people; and you shall know that I ***am*** the LORD. **9** And the prophet, if he is deceived and speaks a word, I, the LORD, have deceived that prophet; and I will stretch out My hand against him and destroy him from the midst of My people Israel. **10** And they shall bear their iniquity; like the iniquity of the one consulting, like the iniquity of the prophet it shall be, **11** so that the house of Israel may no longer wander from after Me, and may no longer make themselves unclean with all their transgressions; and they shall be a people to Me, and I will be God to them, declares the Lord GOD.'"

Noah, Daniel and Job

12 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **13** "Son of man, a land, if it sins against Me by acting unfaithfully ***with*** unfaithfulness, and I stretch out My hand against it, and I break the staff of bread for it, and I send famine on it, and I cut off from it man and animal, **14** and these three men are in its midst, Noah (Noach), Daniel (Daniyel), and Job (Iyov), they by their righteousness will deliver their ***own*** life, declares the Lord GOD. **15** If I cause evil beasts to pass through the land, and they bereave it, and it becomes a desolation, without ***anyone*** passing through because of the beasts, **16** ***and*** these three men ***are*** in its midst, ***as*** I live, declares the Lord GOD, they will deliver neither sons nor daughters; they alone will be delivered, and the land will be a desolation. **17** Or ***if*** I bring a sword on that land, and I say, 'Let a sword pass through the land,' and I cut off from it man and animal, **18** and these three men ***are*** in its midst, ***as*** I live, declares the Lord GOD, they will not deliver sons and daughters, for they alone will be delivered. **19** Or ***if*** I send pestilence into that land, and I pour out My rage on it in blood, to cut off from it man and animal, **20** and Noah, Daniel, and Job ***are*** in its midst, ***as*** I live, declares the Lord GOD, they will deliver neither son nor daughter; they by their righteousness will

13:23 Ezek 13:21; Ezek 12:24; Mic 3:6
14:1 Ezek 8:1; Ezek 20:1; 2 Kgs 6:32
14:2 1 Kgs 14:4; Amos 3:7
14:3 1 Pet 2:8; Rev 2:14; Rom 14:13
14:4 Isa 66:4; Ezek 14:7; Isa 3:11
14:5 Isa 1:4; Zech 11:8; Ezek 14:9,10
14:6 Acts 3:19; James 4:9; Ezek 18:30
14:7 Acts 7:42; Exod 12:48; Exod 20:10
14:8 Acts 7:42; Ezek 15:7; Ezek 5:15
14:9 Acts 7:42; Ezek 20:25; Jer 4:10
14:10 Acts 7:42; Ezek 17:18-20; Ezek 23:49
14:11 Heb 8:10; Rev 21:7; Ezek 37:23
14:13 Ezek 4:16; Lev 26:26; Ezek 5:16
14:14 Heb 11:7; Matt 25:9; Luke 3:36
14:15 Ezek 5:17; Lev 26:22; 1 Kgs 20:36
14:16 Gen 19:29; Ezek 14:14,18; Matt 18:19,20
14:17 Ezek 21:3,4,9-15; Lev 26:25; Ezek 5:12,17
14:19 Rev 16:6; Ezek 38:22; Ezek 5:12
14:20 1 John 2:29; Heb 11:7; Ezek 14:14,16

14:1 *men from the elders of Israel came to me, and they sat before me* Leaders of the exiles came to hear from God. On the outside it looked good, but God saw what Ezekiel could not.
14:3 *these men have brought up their idols on their heart* They may have had no idol on a shelf, but they had one in the heart. An idol of the heart is anything we love, trust or serve more than God. One can attend worship and ask for prayer while something else holds first place (1 John 5:21). A stumbling block is something we keep looking at and tripping over.
14:5 *so as to seize the house of Israel by their heart* God would answer, but not with the comfort they wanted. His goal was to grab hold of their hearts and bring them home. Even His hard answers are meant to win back hearts.
14:6 *Turn back, and turn yourselves away from your idols* The Hebrew word for repent means to turn. You cannot face two directions at once. To turn to God is to turn your face away from idols.
14:8 *I will make him a sign and bywords* The same rule applied to Israelites and foreigners living among them. Such a man's judgment would be so plain that people would point to him as a warning.
14:9 *I, the LORD, have deceived that prophet* God cannot lie (Titus 1:2) and tempts no one (Jas 1:13). A prophet willing to give a pleasing word to a man with idols has already chosen the lie, and God gives him over to it (1 Kgs 22:19-23; 2 Thess 2:10-11; Rom 1:24-28).
14:10 *like the iniquity of the one consulting, like the iniquity of the prophet it shall be* Both would be judged alike. The one asking could not blame the prophet, and the prophet could not blame the one who asked.
14:11 *they shall be a people to Me, and I will be God to them* The judgment had a purpose: to bring His people back and restore the covenant.
14:14 *Noah, Daniel, and Job* Each stood firm in a hard time, and each one's righteousness touched others. Noah saved his family (Gen 6:9), Job prayed for his children and friends (Job 1:5; 42:8-10), and Daniel, Ezekiel's contemporary taken to Babylon in 605 B.C., was already famous for faithfulness (Dan 1:8-20; 28:3). Yet in a land as far gone as Judah they could save only themselves.
14:16 *they will deliver neither sons nor daughters* God would have spared Sodom for ten (Gen 18:32), but Jerusalem was past that point (Jer 15:1). Parents should pray for, teach and live before their children (Deut 6:6-7; Eph 6:4), but our children cannot be saved by our faith. They need their own.
14:20 *they by their righteousness will deliver their own life* Four judgments in all, the ones the law warned of (Lev 26:22-26). Their righteousness here means faithful lives before God, not earning salvation. Noah found favor with the LORD and was an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith (Gen 6:8; Heb 11:7).

deliver their ***own*** life. **21** For thus says the Lord GOD: 'How much more when I send My four evil judgments, sword and famine and evil beasts and pestilence, against Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), to cut off from it man and animal! **22** And look, an escaped remnant shall be left in it, those being brought out, sons and daughters; look, they are coming out to you, and you shall see their way and their deeds, and you shall be comforted concerning the calamity which I have brought on Jerusalem, all that I have brought on it. **23** And they shall comfort you when you see their way and their deeds, and you shall know that not without cause have I done all that I have done in it, declares the Lord GOD.'"

EZEKIEL 15

The Useless Vine

1 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **2** "Son of man, what is the wood of the vine more than any tree, the vine branch which is among the trees of the forest? **3** Is wood taken from it to make ***anything*** for work? Or do they take from it a peg to hang any vessel on it? **4** Look, it is given to the fire for fuel; the fire consumes its two ends, and its middle is charred. Is it useful for work? **5** Look, when it was whole, it was not made for work; how much less, when fire has consumed it and it is charred, will it still be made for work! **6** Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: 'As the wood of the vine among the trees of the forest, which I have given to the fire for fuel, so I have given the inhabitants of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). **7** And I will set My face against them; from the fire they have come out, and the fire shall consume them; and you shall know that I ***am*** the LORD, when I set My face against them. **8** And I will make the land a desolation, because they have acted unfaithfully ***with*** unfaithfulness, declares the Lord GOD.'"

EZEKIEL 16

The Foundling Made a Queen

1 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **2** "Son of man, make Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) know her abominations, **3** and you shall say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD to Jerusalem: Your origins and your births ***were*** from the land of the Canaanite; your father ***was*** the Amorite, and your mother a Hittite. **4** And ***as for*** your births, on the day you were born your navel cord was not cut, and you were not washed with water for cleansing, and you were not rubbed with salt at all, and you were not wrapped at all. **5** No eye looked with pity on you, to do for you one of these ***things***, in compassion for you; and you were thrown out on the face of the field, in the loathing of your soul, on the day you were born. **6** And I passed by you and saw you kicking about in your blood, and I said to you in your blood, "Live!" And I said to you in your blood, "Live!" **7** I made you a myriad like the growth of the field, and you grew and became great, and you came to ***the*** ornament of ornaments; ***your*** breasts were formed, and your hair had grown; and you ***were*** naked and bare. **8** And I passed by you and saw you, and look, your time ***was*** a time of love; and I spread My skirt over you and cov-

14:21 Rev 6:8; Ezek 33:27; Ezek 14:13,15,17,19
14:22 Ezek 20:43; Ezek 6:8; Deut 4:31
14:23 Jer 22:8,9; Ezek 8:6-18; Ezek 9:8,9
15:2 John 15:4; John 15:5; Isa 5:1-7
15:3 John 15:4; John 15:6; Jer 24:8
15:4 John 15:6; Isa 27:11; Ps 80:16
15:5 Jer 3:16
15:6 Ezek 15:2; Ezek 17:3-10; Ezek 20:47,48
15:7 Ezek 14:8; Ps 34:16; Isa 24:18
15:8 Ezek 6:14; Ezek 14:13-21; Ezek 33:29
16:1 Ezek 8:9-17
16:2 Ezek 22:2; Ezek 20:4; Isa 58:1
16:3 Ezek 16:45; Ezek 21:30; Gen 15:16
16:4 Luke 2:7; Hos 2:3; Gen 15:13
16:5 Ezek 2:6; Isa 49:15; Lam 2:11,19
16:6 John 5:25; Eph 2:4,5; Titus 3:3-7
16:7 Exod 1:7; Deut 1:10; Ezek 16:22
16:8 2 Cor 6:2; Heb 8:9; Ruth 3:9

14:21 *How much more when I send My four evil judgments* If one judgment showed that the righteous could save only themselves, how much worse would all four be on Jerusalem.
14:22 *look, they are coming out to you* Some sons and daughters would survive and be brought to Babylon. When the exiles saw their wicked ways, they would understand why God judged the city, and their grief would be eased.
14:23 *not without cause have I done all that I have done in it* God never acts without a reason. We may not understand His judgments at first, but one day we will see that He was right in all He did (Rev 16:7).
15:2 *what is the wood of the vine more than any tree* Israel as God's vine runs through the Old Testament (Ps 80:8-11; Isa 5:1-7). But God asks Ezekiel to think of the vine as wood. Next to oak or cedar, a grapevine's wood is worth nothing.
15:3 *do they take from it a peg to hang any vessel on it* Vine wood is twisted, soft and thin, too weak even for a peg. A vine has one purpose, to bear fruit. God did not choose Israel for greatness (Deut 7:7) but to bear fruit for Him before the nations.
15:4 *the fire consumes its two ends, and its middle is charred* If useless before, it is more useless burned. Many see the two burned ends as earlier judgments, the north in 722 B.C. and Judah's deportations in 605 and 597 B.C., leaving a charred Jerusalem.
15:6 *so I have given the inhabitants of Jerusalem* God's own explanation. Jerusalem is the vine wood, and He has given it to the fire.
15:7 *from the fire they have come out, and the fire shall consume them* They came through the fire of 597 B.C. and thought they were safe, but the fire of 586 B.C. would finish the work. Jesus is the true vine who never failed (John 15:1, 5), and we bear fruit only by staying joined to Him.
15:8 *they have acted unfaithfully with unfaithfulness* The doubled word shows how deep it went, the language of betrayed trust in a marriage, painted in full in chapter 16. God asks not that we be impressive but faithful and fruitful (Gal 5:22-23; John 15:16). If there is little fruit, the answer is not to try harder alone but to come back to the vine.
16:2 *make Jerusalem know her abominations* This long chapter tells Jerusalem's history as a parable: an abandoned baby, a royal bride, an unfaithful wife. It is meant to make the people see their sin as God sees it. The language is strong on purpose, and I will keep these notes plain.
16:3 *your father was the Amorite, and your mother a Hittite* Israel was proud to be Abraham's children, but Jerusalem was a Canaanite city long before David took it (2 Sam 5:6-9), and its people had come to act like their pagan neighbors. This is about spiritual family, not race (John 8:39-44).
16:4 *on the day you were born your navel cord was not cut* A newborn was normally washed, rubbed with salt and wrapped in cloths. This baby received none of that care.
16:5 *you were thrown out on the face of the field* In the ancient world unwanted babies were sometimes left in the open to die. Jerusalem had nothing to offer and did not earn God's love. She was helpless and dying when He found her.
16:6 *Live* God says it twice. No one else cared, and God gave life with a word. That is how He saves every one of us. We were dead in sins, and God, rich in mercy, made us alive (Eph 2:1-5). We did not find God; He found us.
16:8 *I spread My skirt over you* When she was grown, God took her as His bride. Spreading a garment's corner over someone was a sign of marriage and protection (Ruth 3:9). Marriage is a covenant (Mal 2:14), and this points to the covenant at Sinai (Exod 19:5; 24:7-8). God's people are often pictured as His bride (Isa 54:5; Eph 5:25-27).

ered your nakedness; and I swore to you and entered into a covenant with you, declares the Lord GOD, and you became Mine. **9** And I washed you with water, and washed off your blood from you, and anointed you with oil. **10** And I clothed you ***with*** embroidered cloth, and shod you ***with*** leather, and wrapped you ***with*** fine linen, and covered you ***with*** silk. **11** And I adorned you ***with*** ornaments, and I put bracelets on your hands and a chain on your neck. **12** And I put a ring on your nose, and earrings on your ears, and a crown of splendor on your head. **13** And you adorned yourself ***with*** gold and silver, and your clothing ***was*** fine linen and silk and embroidered cloth; fine flour and honey and oil you ate. And you were exceedingly, exceedingly beautiful, and you prospered into kingship. **14** And your name went out among the nations because of your beauty, for it ***was*** perfect because of My majesty which I had put on you, declares the Lord GOD.

Jerusalem's Unfaithfulness

15 And you trusted in your beauty, and you acted as a prostitute because of your name, and you poured out your prostitutions on everyone who passed by; let it be his. **16** And you took some of your clothes and made for yourself high places of many colors, and you acted as a prostitute on them; ***such things*** have not come, and it shall not be. **17** And you took the articles of your splendor, from My gold and from My silver which I had given you, and made for yourself images of a male, and you acted as a prostitute with them. **18** And you took your embroidered clothes and covered them, and My oil and My incense you set before them. **19** And My food which I had given you, fine flour and oil and honey ***with which*** I fed you, you set it before them for a soothing aroma; and it happened, declares the Lord GOD. **20** And you took your sons and your daughters whom you had borne to Me, and you sacrificed them to them to be devoured. ***Were*** your prostitutions too little? **21** And you slaughtered My sons, and gave them, by making them pass over to them. **22** And in all your abominations and your prostitutions you did not remember the days of your youth, when you were naked and bare; kicking about in your blood you were. **23** And it came about after all your wickedness, woe, woe to you, declares the Lord GOD, **24** that you built for yourself a mound, and made for yourself a lofty place in every square. **25** At every head of a road you built your lofty place, and you made your beauty abominable, and you spread your feet to everyone who passed by, and you multiplied your prostitutions. **26** And you acted as a prostitute with the sons of Egypt (Mitsrayim), your neighbors, great of flesh; and you multiplied your prostitution to provoke Me to anger. **27** And look, I stretched out My hand against you, and I diminished your allotted portion, and I gave you to the desire of those who hate you, the daughters of the Philistines, who were ashamed of your lewd way. **28** And you acted as a prostitute with the sons of Assyria (Ashur), because you were not satisfied; and you acted as a prostitute with them, and still you were not satisfied. **29** And you multiplied your prostitution to the land of merchants, to ***the*** Chaldeans (Kasdim), and even with this you were not satisfied. **30** How weak is your heart, declares the Lord GOD, when you do all these, the deeds of a woman, an imperious prostitute, **31** when you built your mound at the head of every road, and made your lofty place in every square! And you were not like the prostitute, in scorning hire. **32** O wife who commits adultery, ***who*** instead of her husband takes strangers! **33** To all prostitutes they give a gift, and you, you have given your gifts to all your lovers, and you have bribed them to come to you from all around in your prostitutions. **34** And in you there was the opposite from the women in your prostitutions, in that after you ***there*** was no prostituting, and in your giving hire, while hire was not given to you; and you became the opposite.

Judgment on the Unfaithful Wife

35 Therefore, O prostitute, hear the word of the LORD.

16:9 Rev 1:5; Ps 23:5; Ezek 16:4
16:10 Ezek 16:13,18; Ezek 16:7; Ps 45:13,14
16:11 Gen 24:22,47,53; Gen 41:42; Isa 3:19
16:13 Luke 16:19; Deut 32:13,14; Ps 50:2
16:14 Lam 2:15; Deut 4:6-8,32-38; Josh 2:9-11
16:15 Isa 57:8; Jer 2:20; Ezek 16:25,36,37
16:16 2 Kgs 23:7; Ezek 7:20; 2 Chr 28:24
16:17 Ezek 7:19; Ezek 23:14-21; Exod 32:1-4
16:19 Ezek 16:13; Deut 32:14-17; Hos 2:8-13
16:20 Ezek 23:37,39; Exod 13:2,12; Ps 106:37,38
16:21 2 Kgs 17:17; Ps 106:37; Lev 18:21
16:22 Jer 2:2; Hos 11:1; Ezek 16:3-7,43,60-63
16:23 Matt 23:29; Ezek 2:10; Ezek 13:3,18
16:24 Ezek 16:31,39; Ps 78:58; Ezek 20:28,29
16:25 Rev 17:16; Ezek 16:31; Jer 3:2
16:26 Ezek 20:7,8; Ezek 8:10,14; Ezek 23:3,8,19-21
16:27 Rev 17:16; Isa 9:12,17; Ezek 16:37
16:28 2 Kgs 16:7,10-18; Jer 2:18,36; Hos 10:6
16:29 Ezek 13:14-23; Judg 2:12-19; 2 Kgs 21:9
16:30 Jer 3:3; Prov 9:13; Isa 1:3
16:31 Ezek 16:33,34; Isa 52:3; Ezek 16:24,39
16:32 Ezek 16:8; Ezek 23:37,45; Jer 2:25,28
16:33 Isa 57:9; Hos 8:9,10; Gen 38:16-18
16:35 Rev 17:5; Isa 1:21; Isa 23:15,16

16:13 *you prospered into kingship* Washed, clothed in fine linen and silk and adorned with jewelry, she grew into royal splendor, a picture of Israel under David and Solomon (1 Kgs 10:14-27).
16:14 *it was perfect because of My majesty which I had put on you* The Queen of Sheba came to see it (1 Kgs 10:1-9). But all Jerusalem's beauty came from God. She had nothing that was not given.
16:15 *you trusted in your beauty* Jerusalem began to trust the gifts instead of the Giver. Pride came first, then unfaithfulness. Scripture pictures idolatry as adultery because giving worship to another god is like a wife giving herself to another man.
16:17 *from My gold and from My silver which I had given you* Notice the repeated My. Everything she used for idols belonged to God. Our time, money, talents and bodies are His gifts. Using them to serve something else is doing what Jerusalem did.
16:20 *you took your sons and your daughters whom you had borne to Me* The worst of all was child sacrifice, especially to Molech, which God strictly forbade (Lev 18:21; Deut 18:10), yet Ahaz and Manasseh did it (2 Kgs 16:3; 21:6). When people turn from God the weakest suffer most. I believe little children who die are safe with God (2 Sam 12:23).
16:22 *you did not remember the days of your youth* She forgot she had been a dying baby whom God saved. Forgetting God's grace is often where unfaithfulness begins.
16:24 *a lofty place in every square* Idolatry was no longer hidden. It stood on every street corner.
16:26 *the sons of Egypt, your neighbors* The unfaithfulness also means political alliances. Judah's kings kept running to Egypt, Assyria and Babylon for help (Isa 30:1-3; 31:1), trusting their armies and taking on their gods instead of trusting the LORD.
16:28 *because you were not satisfied* Three times God says she was not satisfied. Sin always promises satisfaction and never gives it. Only God satisfies the soul (Ps 107:9; John 4:13-14).
16:30 *How weak is your heart* Her sin was not strength but weakness, a heart that could not stay faithful.
16:31 *you were not like the prostitute, in scorning hire* A prostitute is paid, but Jerusalem paid her lovers, sending tribute to foreign kings. We pay a high price to serve things that give us nothing back (Isa 55:2).

36 Thus says the Lord GOD: Because your lust was poured out and your nakedness was uncovered in your prostitutions with your lovers, and because of all the idols of your abominations, and according to the blood of your sons whom you gave to them, **37** therefore look, I am gathering all your lovers to whom you were pleasing, and all whom you loved, along with all whom you hated; and I will gather them against you from all around, and I will uncover your nakedness to them, and they shall see all your nakedness. **38** And I will judge you ***with*** the judgments of adulteresses and of those who shed blood, and I will make you blood of rage and jealousy. **39** And I will give you into their hand, and they shall tear down your mound, and your lofty places shall be broken down, and they shall strip you of your clothes, and they shall take the articles of your splendor, and they shall leave you naked and bare. **40** And they shall bring up an assembly against you, and they shall stone you with stones, and they shall cut you to pieces with their swords. **41** And they shall burn your houses with fire, and they shall execute judgments on you before the eyes of many women; and I will make you cease from ***being*** a prostitute, and also you shall no longer give hire. **42** And I will cause My rage to rest on you, and My jealousy shall turn away from you, and I will be quiet and will no longer be angry. **43** Because you did not remember the days of your youth, and you raged against Me in all these ***things***, so also I, look, I have put your way on ***your*** head, declares the Lord GOD; and did you not do the lewdness on top of all your abominations?

Worse Than Sodom and Samaria

44 Look, everyone who speaks a proverb shall speak a proverb about you, saying, "Like her mother, her daughter." **45** You ***are*** the daughter of your mother, who loathed her husband and her sons; and you ***are*** the sister of your sisters, who loathed their husbands and their sons. Your mother ***was*** a Hittite, and your father an Amorite. **46** And your older sister ***is*** Samaria (Shomron), she and her daughters, who dwell at your left; and your sister who is younger than you, who dwells at your right, ***is*** Sodom (Sedom) and her daughters. **47** And you did not walk in their ways, and ***not*** according to their abominations did you do, as ***if that were*** a very little ***thing***; and you acted more corruptly than they in all your ways. **48** ***As*** I live, declares the Lord GOD, Sodom your sister, she and her daughters, has not done as you have done, you and your daughters. **49** Look, this was the iniquity of Sodom your sister: pride, fullness of bread, and the ease of quietness were hers and her daughters'; and the hand of the poor and the needy she did not strengthen. **50** And they were haughty, and they did abomination before Me; and I removed them when I saw ***it***. **51** And Samaria has not sinned half of your sins; and you have multiplied your abominations more than they, and you have justified your sisters by all your abominations which you have done. **52** You also, bear your disgrace, you who have mediated for your sisters by your sins in which you have acted more abominably than they; they are more righteous than you. And you also, be ashamed and bear your disgrace, in your justifying your sisters. **53** And I will turn back their captivity, the captivity of Sodom and her daughters, and the captivity of Samaria and her daughters, and the captivity of your captivities in their midst, **54** so that you may bear your disgrace and be ashamed of all that you have done, in your comforting them. **55** And your sisters, Sodom and her daughters, shall return to their former state, and Samaria and her daughters shall return to their former state, and you and your daughters shall return to your former state. **56** And Sodom your sister was not a report in your mouth in the day of your pride, **57** before your wickedness was uncovered, as ***at*** the time of the reproach of the daughters of Syria (Aram) and all ***those***

16:36 Ezek 23:10,18,29; Ezek 16:15-22; Ezek 22:15
16:37 Jer 13:22,26; Ezek 23:9,10,22-30; Lam 1:8,19
16:38 Rev 17:16; Lev 20:10; Gen 9:6
16:39 Rev 17:16; Ezek 23:26,29; Hos 2:3,9-13
16:40 John 8:5; Hab 1:6-10; Ezek 23:10,47
16:41 1 Tim 5:20; 2 Kgs 25:9; Jer 39:8
16:42 Rev 17:16; Ezek 5:13; Ezek 39:29
16:43 Rev 17:16; Ezek 16:22; Ps 78:42
16:44 Rev 17:16; Ezek 18:2,3; 1 Sam 24:13
16:45 Ezek 23:37-39; Isa 1:4; Zech 11:8
16:46 2 Pet 2:6; Jude 1:7; Rev 11:8
16:47 2 Kgs 21:9,16; Ezek 5:6,7; 1 Kgs 16:31
16:48 Matt 10:15; Matt 11:23; Mark 6:11
16:49 Matt 10:15; Matt 11:23; Mark 6:11
16:50 2 Pet 2:6; Jude 1:7; Rev 18:9
16:51 Rom 3:20; Jer 3:8-11; Luke 12:47,48
16:52 Matt 7:1-5; Ezek 16:56; Luke 6:37
16:53 Matt 10:15; 2 Pet 2:6; Rev 11:8
16:54 Jer 2:26; Ezek 14:22,23; Ezek 16:52,63
16:55 Matt 10:15; 2 Pet 2:6; Rev 11:8
16:56 Matt 10:15; 2 Pet 2:6; Isa 65:5
16:57 2 Kgs 16:5-7; Ezek 16:36,37; 2 Chr 28:5,6,18-23

16:38 *I will judge you with the judgments of adulteresses and of those who shed blood* Under the law both adultery and murder carried death (Lev 20:10; Num 35:16-21). Jerusalem was guilty of both, spiritual adultery through idols and bloodshed through child sacrifice. God's jealousy is the holy love of a betrayed husband (Exod 34:14).
16:39 *I will give you into their hand* The nations she courted would turn on her. Babylon would tear down the shrines and strip the city bare. This is a picture of the fall of a city. It is not a pattern for how any man may treat his wife and gives no excuse for abuse (Eph 5:25; 1 Pet 3:7).
16:41 *I will make you cease from being a prostitute* Stoning came from the law's penalty for adultery, and the fire was the burning of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. The judgment would end her idolatry, and after the exile the Jews never again fell into idol worship as before.
16:42 *I will be quiet and will no longer be angry* God's anger has an end. When justice is done, His anger is satisfied.
16:44 *Like her mother, her daughter* Jerusalem had become just like the pagan family she came from.
16:46 *your older sister is Samaria* Facing east, left is north and right is south. Samaria, capital of the north, was the bigger sister; Sodom, south by the Dead Sea, the smaller. Both stood for wickedness.
16:47 *you acted more corruptly than they in all your ways* Jerusalem was worse than Samaria, whom Judah despised, and worse than Sodom itself. A stunning charge.
16:49 *pride, fullness of bread, and the ease of quietness* Many think of only one sin when they think of Sodom. Ezekiel names pride, excess, ease, and neglect of the poor. These do not seem great sins to many of us, but God names them with Sodom's (Jas 5:1-5; 1 John 3:17).
16:50 *they did abomination before Me* This points back to the sins Genesis 19 describes, which Jude calls sexual immorality (Jude 7). Pride and neglect of the poor stand together with that abomination; Scripture keeps both in view.
16:51 *you have justified your sisters* Jerusalem had more light: the temple, priests, prophets and law. To whom much is given, much is required (Luke 12:48). Her sin made her sisters look righteous by comparison.
16:53 *I will turn back their captivity, the captivity of Sodom and her daughters* Sodom was never rebuilt, so teachers read this two ways. Some take it as a humbling comparison: Jerusalem's restoration would be as much pure grace as Sodom's. Others see the future kingdom, when even the Dead Sea region is healed (47:8-11).

around her, the daughters of the Philistines, who despise you from all around. **58** Your lewdness and your abominations, you, you bear them, declares the LORD.

An Everlasting Covenant

59 For thus says the Lord GOD: And I will do with you as you have done, you who have despised an oath by breaking a covenant. **60** And I Myself will remember My covenant with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish for you an everlasting covenant. **61** And you shall remember your ways and be ashamed, when you receive your sisters, those older than you along with those younger than you; and I will give them to you for daughters, and not by your covenant. **62** And I Myself will establish My covenant with you, and you shall know that I ***am*** the LORD, **63** so that you may remember and be ashamed, and there may no longer be to you an opening of ***the*** mouth because of your disgrace, when I make atonement for you for all that you have done, declares the Lord GOD.'"

EZEKIEL 17

The Two Eagles and the Vine

1 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **2** "Son of man, pose a riddle and speak a parable to the house of Israel (Yisra'el), **3** and you shall say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: The great eagle, great of wings, long of pinion, full of plumage, which had many colors, came to Lebanon (Levanon) and took the top of the cedar. **4** It plucked off the top of its young shoots and brought it to a land of merchants; in a city of traders it set it. **5** And it took some of the seed of the land and put it in a field of seed; it took ***it*** beside many waters; ***as*** a willow it set it. **6** And it sprouted and became a spreading vine, low of stature, its branches turning toward it, and its roots were under it; and it became a vine, and produced shoots, and sent out boughs. **7** And there was one great eagle, great of wings and abundant of plumage; and look, this vine bent its roots toward it, and sent out its branches toward it, for it to water it, from the beds of its planting. **8** In a good field, by many waters, it was planted, to produce limbs and to bear fruit, to become a majestic vine.' **9** Say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: Will it prosper? Will he not pull up its roots and strip off its fruit, and it withers? All the fresh ***leaves*** of its sprouting will wither; and not by a great arm and by many people, to lift it up from its roots. **10** And look, ***it is*** planted; will it prosper? Will it not utterly wither when the east wind touches it? On the beds of its sprouting it will wither.'"

The Riddle Explained

11 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **12** "Say now to the house of rebellion, 'Do you not know what these ***are***?' Say, 'Look, the king of Babylon (Bavel) came ***to*** Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), and took its king and its princes, and brought them to himself to Babylon. **13** And he took ***one*** of the royal seed, and made a covenant with him, and brought him into an oath; and the mighty of the land he took, **14** that it might be a lowly kingdom, not lifting itself up, to keep his covenant, that it might stand. **15** And he rebelled against him by sending his messengers to Egypt (Mitsrayim), to give him horses and many people. Will he prosper? Will he who does these ***things*** escape? And will he

16:58 Ezek 23:49; Gen 4:13; Lam 5:7
16:59 Heb 8:9; Isa 24:5; Ezek 7:4,8,9
16:60 Heb 12:24; Luke 1:72; Heb 8:10
16:61 Rom 15:9; Heb 8:8; Gal 4:26,27
16:62 Jer 24:7; Ezek 6:7; Ezek 16:60
16:63 Rom 3:19; Dan 9:7,8; Ps 39:9
17:3 Jer 48:40; Hos 8:1; Ezek 17:7,12-21
17:4 Isa 43:14; Isa 47:15; Jer 51:13
17:5 Deut 8:7-9; Isa 44:4; Ezek 17:13
17:6 Ezek 17:14; Prov 16:18,19
17:7 Ezek 17:15; 2 Kgs 24:20; 2 Chr 26:13
17:8 Ezek 17:5,6
17:9 Num 14:41; 2 Chr 13:12; 2 Chr 20:20
17:10 Matt 21:19; Hos 13:15; Ezek 19:12-14
17:12 Mark 4:13; Ezek 24:19; Ezek 17:3
17:13 2 Chr 36:13; Ezek 17:5; 2 Kgs 24:15,16
17:14 Matt 22:21; Ezek 29:14; Ezek 17:6
17:15 Ezek 17:7; 2 Kgs 24:20; 2 Chr 36:13

16:59 *you who have despised an oath by breaking a covenant* Jerusalem broke the Sinai covenant and would bear the penalty.

16:60 *I Myself will remember My covenant with you in the days of your youth* After sixty verses of sin comes one of Scripture's most beautiful turns. She did not remember (16:22, 43), but God remembers. If we are faithless, He remains faithful (2 Tim 2:13). The everlasting covenant is the new covenant (Jer 31:31-34; 37:26), promised to Israel and to be fulfilled for the nation (Rom 11:26-27), whose blessings believers share now (Luke 22:20).

16:61 *not by your covenant* Not on the basis of the Sinai covenant she broke, but by God's grace. Samaria and Sodom will be given to her as daughters.

16:63 *when I make atonement for you for all that you have done* Atonement is the covering of sin so a sinner can be brought back to God (Lev 17:11). God Himself will do it, for all she has done. Her shame is the shame of a forgiven sinner overwhelmed by grace, who stops making excuses. The chapter that began with an abandoned baby ends with a forgiven bride.

17:2 *pose a riddle and speak a parable to the house of Israel* A riddle has a hidden meaning that makes the hearer think; a parable is a picture standing for something else. Jesus taught the same way and explained His parables to His disciples (Matt 13:10-17). The best explanation is the one God gives, here in 17:11-21.

17:3 *The great eagle* The king of birds, strong and proud, with wide wings picturing a wide empire. This is Nebuchadnezzar (17:12). Lebanon's cedars were the wood of palaces (1 Kgs 7:2), and here they stand for David's royal house in Jerusalem.

17:4 *It plucked off the top of its young shoots and brought it to a land of merchants* King Jehoiachin, who reigned three months before being taken to Babylon in 597 B.C. (2 Kgs 24:8-15). Babylon was a great trading city.

17:5 *it took some of the seed of the land* Not a foreign tree but a man of the royal family: Zedekiah, Jehoiachin's uncle, whom Nebuchadnezzar made king (2 Kgs 24:17).

17:6 *a spreading vine, low of stature* The cedar became a low vine. Judah would live and even prosper, but as a humble vassal turned toward Babylon.

17:7 *this vine bent its roots toward it* The second eagle is Egypt under Pharaoh (17:15). Planted in good soil with all it needed, the vine stretched toward another eagle. We do the same when we stretch our roots toward something else we think will make us stronger (Phil 4:11).

17:9 *Will it prosper* The exiles hoped Egypt would save Jerusalem. God's answer is no. Babylon would pull up the vine by the roots.

17:10 *when the east wind touches it* The hot, dry desert wind could wither crops in a day. Babylon, the power of the east, would blow over Judah like that wind.

17:13 *made a covenant with him, and brought him into an oath* Zedekiah swore loyalty to Nebuchadnezzar in the LORD's name (2 Chr 36:13). Taking away the strong leaders kept Judah weak but alive. Had Zedekiah kept his oath, the kingdom would have stood (17:14).

17:15 *sending his messengers to Egypt, to give him horses and many people* Egypt was famous for horses, and God had long warned Israel's kings not to go back there for them (Deut 17:16). Three questions follow, and the answer to each is no.

break a covenant and escape? **16** ***As*** I live, declares the Lord GOD, surely in the place of the king who made him king, whose oath he despised and whose covenant he broke, with him in the midst of Babylon he shall die. **17** And not with a great army and with a large assembly will Pharaoh deal with him in the battle, when ***they*** pour out a mound and build a siege wall to cut off many lives. **18** And he despised the oath by breaking the covenant; and look, he had given his hand, and all these ***things*** he did; he shall not escape. **19** Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: ***As*** I live, surely My oath which he despised and My covenant which he broke, and I will put it on his head. **20** And I will spread My net over him, and he shall be caught in My snare, and I will bring him to Babylon, and I will enter into judgment with him there ***for*** his unfaithfulness with which he has acted unfaithfully against Me. **21** And all his fugitives among all his troops shall fall by the sword, and those who remain shall be scattered to every wind; and you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken.

The Tender Shoot

22 Thus says the Lord GOD: And I Myself will take from the top of the high cedar and set ***it***; from the top of its young shoots I will pluck off a tender ***one***, and I Myself will plant ***it*** on a high and lofty mountain. **23** On the mountain of the height of Israel I will plant it, and it shall bear limbs and produce fruit, and become a majestic cedar; and under it shall dwell every bird ***of*** every wing; in the shadow of its branches they shall dwell. **24** And all the trees of the field shall know that I, the LORD, bring low a high tree, raise up a low tree, dry up a moist tree, and make a dry tree sprout. I, the LORD, have spoken, and I will do ***it***.'"

EZEKIEL 18

The Soul Who Sins Shall Die

1 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **2** "What ***is it*** to you, you who speak this proverb concerning the soil of Israel (Yisra'el), saying, 'Fathers eat sour grapes, and the teeth of the sons are blunted'? **3** ***As*** I live, declares the Lord GOD, you shall no longer have ***occasion*** to speak this proverb in Israel. **4** Look, all the souls are Mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son, they are Mine. The soul that sins, it shall die. **5** And a man, if he is righteous and does justice and righteousness, **6** ***and*** he has not eaten on the mountains, and has not lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, and has not defiled the wife of his neighbor, and does not draw near to a woman in ***her*** menstruation, **7** and does not oppress anyone, returns his pledge ***for*** a debt, does not commit robbery, gives his bread to the hungry, and covers the naked ***with*** clothing, **8** does not lend at interest, and does not take increase, turns his hand back from injustice, does true justice between man and man, **9** walks in My statutes, and has kept My judgments so as to deal truly, he ***is*** righteous; he shall surely live, declares the Lord GOD. **10** And ***if*** he fathers a son who is violent, a shedder of blood, and he does, alas, any one of these ***things***, **11** and he did not do all these ***things***, but he has even eaten on the mountains, and has defiled the wife of his neighbor, **12** has oppressed the poor and the needy, has committed robberies, does not

17:16 Ezek 12:13; Jer 52:11; Ezek 17:18,19
17:17 Jer 37:7; Ezek 29:6,7; Isa 36:6
17:18 Heb 2:3; 1 Chr 29:24; 2 Chr 30:8
17:19 Ezek 21:23-27; Deut 5:11; Jer 5:2,9
17:20 Ezek 12:13; Ezek 32:3; Ezek 20:35,36
17:21 2 Kgs 25:5,11; Ezek 5:12; Ezek 12:14
17:22 Acts 15:16; Ezek 20:40; Ps 2:6
17:23 Matt 13:32; John 15:5; Mark 4:31
17:24 Matt 13:32; Luke 3:5; Acts 15:16
18:2 Lam 5:7; Isa 3:15; Jer 31:29,30
18:3 Ezek 18:19,20,30; Ezek 33:11-20; Ezek 36:31,32
18:4 Gal 3:11; Ezek 18:20; Num 16:22
18:5 1 John 2:29; Ps 15:2-5; Ps 24:4-6
18:6 Ezek 6:13; Deut 4:19; Ezek 18:11,15
18:7 2 Cor 9:10; Ezek 18:16; Ezek 18:12,16,18
18:8 Exod 22:25; Zech 8:16; Deut 23:19,20
18:9 Rom 1:17; 1 John 2:29; Ezek 20:11
18:10 Exod 21:12; Lev 19:13; Mal 3:8,9
18:11 Matt 7:21-27; Luke 11:28; John 13:17
18:12 Ezek 8:6,17; Amos 4:1; 2 Kgs 21:11

17:16 *with him in the midst of Babylon he shall die* Fulfilled exactly. Zedekiah was blinded and taken to Babylon, where he died a prisoner (2 Kgs 25:7; Jer 52:11).
17:17 *not with a great army and with a large assembly will Pharaoh deal with him* Pharaoh's army did march out during the siege, and Babylon lifted the siege briefly, but Egypt went home and the siege resumed (Jer 37:5-8).
17:18 *he had given his hand* To give the hand was to pledge oneself. God praises the one who keeps his oath even when it hurts (Ps 15:4). A believer's yes should mean yes (Matt 5:37).
17:19 *My oath which he despised and My covenant which he broke* Zedekiah thought he was breaking a treaty with a pagan king. Because he swore by God's name, God counted it as breaking an oath to Him.
17:20 *I will spread My net over him* Babylon's army caught Zedekiah, but it was God's net (12:13).
17:22 *I Myself will take from the top of the high cedar and set it* Now God does the planting. From David's royal line He will take a tender shoot. I believe this is the Messiah, Jesus, the shoot from Jesse's stump and the Branch (Isa 11:1; 53:2; Jer 23:5; Zech 6:12).
17:23 *On the mountain of the height of Israel I will plant it* Mount Zion (20:40). The low, withered vine of Zedekiah is replaced by a majestic cedar sheltering every bird, the nations finding rest under Messiah's rule (Matt 13:32). I believe its fullest fulfillment is Christ's reign from Jerusalem in the millennial kingdom.
17:24 *bring low a high tree, raise up a low tree* The trees of the field are the kings and nations. God brings down the proud and lifts the humble (Luke 1:52). The kings of Judah failed, but God's promise to David cannot be broken (2 Sam 7:16; Ps 89:34-37; Luke 1:32).
18:2 *Fathers eat sour grapes, and the teeth of the sons are blunted* Unripe grapes set the teeth on edge. The saying meant: our fathers sinned and we are paying for it. Jeremiah heard it too (Jer 31:29-30). There was some truth in it, for judgment came partly for Manasseh's sins (2 Kgs 24:3-4), but the people used that truth to hide behind.
18:3 *you shall no longer have occasion to speak this proverb in Israel* God swears by His own life to end this excuse.
18:4 *all the souls are Mine* Every person belongs to God, father and son alike, and He deals with each one. Soul, nephesh, means the whole living person. The death first in view was death in the coming judgment. Since all have sinned (Rom 3:23), every soul is in trouble, but the chapter, like the gospel, does not stop there.
18:6 *he has not eaten on the mountains* He did not join the feasts at hill shrines (6:13) or look to idols. The righteous life covers worship, sexual purity and the treatment of neighbors.
18:7 *returns his pledge for a debt* A poor man's pledge might be his only cloak, which the law said must be returned by sundown (Exod 22:26-27). The righteous man also feeds the hungry and clothes the naked (Matt 25:35-36).
18:8 *does not lend at interest* Israelites were not to charge interest to a poor brother (Lev 25:35-37). Taking advantage of another's need is not righteousness.
18:9 *he is righteous; he shall surely live* Not life earned by works. The list begins with turning from idols to the LORD, a heart turned to Him in faith (Gen 15:6; Hab 2:4), and the rest shows what that faith looks like (Jas 2:21-23). We are saved by grace through faith, not from works, yet created for good works (Eph 2:8-10).

return a pledge, and has lifted up his eyes to the idols, has done abomination, **13** has lent at interest, and has taken increase; shall he then live? He shall not live. He has done all these abominations; he shall surely be put to death; his blood shall be on him. **14** And look, ***if*** he fathers a son, and he sees all the sins of his father which he did, and he sees and does not do like them, **15** he has not eaten on the mountains, and has not lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, has not defiled the wife of his neighbor, **16** and has not oppressed anyone, has not taken a pledge, and has not committed robbery, has given his bread to the hungry, and has covered the naked ***with*** clothing, **17** has turned his hand back from the poor, has not taken interest and increase, has done My judgments, has walked in My statutes, he shall not die for the iniquity of his father; he shall surely live. **18** His father, because he practiced extortion, committed robbery against a brother, and did what ***is*** not good among his people, look, he shall die for his iniquity. **19** And you say, 'Why does the son not bear the iniquity of the father?' And the son has done justice and righteousness, has kept all My statutes and done them; he shall surely live. **20** The soul that sins, it shall die. A son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, and a father shall not bear the iniquity of the son; the righteousness of the righteous shall be on him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be on him.

Turn and Live

21 And the wicked, if he turns away from all his sins which he has done, and keeps all My statutes, and does justice and righteousness, he shall surely live; he shall not die. **22** All his transgressions which he has done shall not be remembered against him; by his righteousness which he has done he shall live. **23** Do I indeed take pleasure in the death of the wicked, declares the Lord GOD? ***Is it*** not in his turning back from his ways, that he may live? **24** And when a righteous ***one*** turns away from his righteousness and does injustice, according to all the abominations which the wicked ***one*** does, he does, shall he live? All his ***acts of*** righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered; for his unfaithfulness with which he has acted unfaithfully, and for his sin which he has sinned, for them he shall die. **25** And you say, 'The way of the Lord is not right.' Hear now, O house of Israel: Is My way not right? Is it not your ways ***that*** are not right? **26** When a righteous ***one*** turns away from his righteousness and does injustice, and dies for them, for his injustice which he has done he shall die. **27** And when a wicked ***one*** turns away from his wickedness which he has done, and does justice and righteousness, he shall keep his soul alive. **28** And he sees and turns away from all his transgressions which he has done; he shall surely live; he shall not die. **29** And the house of Israel says, 'The way of the Lord is not right.' Are My ways not right, O house of Israel? Is it not your ways ***that*** are not right? **30** Therefore, each man according to his ways, I will judge you, O house of Israel, declares the Lord GOD. Turn back, and turn ***yourselves*** away from all your transgressions, and it shall not be a stumbling block of iniquity to you. **31** Throw away from you all your transgressions by which you have transgressed, and make for yourselves a new heart and a new spirit; and why will you die, O house of Israel? **32** For I do not take pleasure in the death of the one who dies, declares the Lord GOD; and turn ***yourselves*** away, and live!"

18:13 Ezek 18:8,17; Ezek 3:18; Lev 20:9,11-13,27
18:14 2 Chr 34:21; Prov 23:24; Ezek 18:10
18:15 Ezek 18:6,7,11-13
18:16 Job 22:7; Job 31:19; Prov 22:9
18:17 Ezek 18:8; Job 29:16; Prov 14:31
18:18 Ezek 3:18; Ezek 18:4,20,24,26; Isa 3:11
18:19 Luke 11:48; Exod 20:5; Jer 15:4
18:20 Deut 24:16; 2 Kgs 14:6; Ezek 18:4,13
18:21 Acts 3:19; Ezek 18:27,28,30; Prov 28:13
18:22 Ezek 33:16; Isa 43:25; Mic 7:19
18:23 Ezek 18:32; Ezek 33:11; 1 Tim 2:4
18:24 1 John 5:16; Rev 2:10; 1 Sam 15:11
18:25 Rom 3:5; Matt 20:15; Ezek 33:17,20
18:27 Isa 1:18; Ezek 18:21; Isa 55:7
18:28 Ezek 18:14; Ezek 12:3; Deut 32:29
18:29 Ezek 18:2,25; Prov 19:3
18:30 1 Pet 1:17; Acts 3:19; Ezek 18:21
18:31 Rom 8:13; Acts 3:19; Acts 13:46
18:32 Ezek 18:23; 2 Pet 3:9; Lam 3:33

18:13 *his blood shall be on him* The violent son of a righteous father bears his own guilt. Hezekiah was followed by Manasseh, and Josiah by evil sons (2 Kgs 23:32, 37). A godly father does not make a godly son.
18:14 *he sees all the sins of his father which he did, and he sees and does not do like them* Good news for anyone raised in a home marked by sin. Your father's sins need not become yours. Josiah was Manasseh's grandson and became one of Judah's best kings.
18:19 *Why does the son not bear the iniquity of the father* A strange question. They had built their complaint on suffering for their fathers, and God says each person answers for himself.
18:20 *A son shall not bear the iniquity of the father* Moses taught the same for human courts (Deut 24:16). God's visiting the fathers' sin on later generations is said of those who hate Him (Exod 20:5): when sons follow fathers' sins, judgment grows. His mercy reaches thousands (Exod 20:6). Only once did the Righteous One bear others' sins, by His own will (Isa 53:6; 2 Cor 5:21).
18:21 *the wicked, if he turns away from all his sins which he has done* The door of hope. The wicked man is not trapped by his past.
18:22 *All his transgressions which he has done shall not be remembered against him* God does not keep a file of old sins to pull out later (Jer 31:34). Turning to God is repentance, and the new life that follows is its proof.
18:23 *Do I indeed take pleasure in the death of the wicked* Some picture God waiting for us to slip so He can strike. He takes no pleasure in anyone's death (1 Tim 2:4; 2 Pet 3:9). If you have been away from God, He is not waiting to crush you. He is waiting for you to come home.
18:24 *All his acts of righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered* Many in Judah counted on their past, the temple and their descent from Abraham. A past record will not shield one living in sin now. As at 3:20, this speaks of Israel under the old covenant and the coming judgment, not of a believer losing salvation (John 10:28). One who walks away entirely shows he never truly belonged (1 John 2:19).
18:25 *The way of the Lord is not right* First they said God punished sons for fathers; now they call it unfair that He judges each by his own path. God turns the charge back: their ways were the crooked ones. When we call God unfair, the problem is usually our own way.
18:28 *he sees and turns away from all his transgressions* Repentance begins when we see our sin for what it is, as the grandson saw his father's (18:14).
18:30 *each man according to his ways, I will judge you* Not only as a nation or family, but each one. The Hebrew word for turn, shub, is the great Old Testament word for repentance: a full turn from sin to God.
18:31 *make for yourselves a new heart and a new spirit* How can a man make himself a new heart? Ezekiel answers later: God gives it (11:19; 36:26). God commands, and God gives the power to obey (Phil 2:12-13). Why will you die is not a cold verdict but a plea.
18:32 *turn yourselves away, and live* The chapter began with a proverb of blame and ends with an invitation, repeated with an oath in 33:11. The exiles thought they were victims and nothing they did mattered. God says your turning matters, and His door is open.

EZEKIEL 19

A Lament for the Princes of Israel

1 "And you, take up a lamentation for the princes of Israel (Yisra'el), **2** and you shall say, 'What ***was*** your mother? A lioness! Among lions she lay down; in the midst of young lions she reared her cubs. **3** And she brought up one of her cubs; he became a young lion, and he learned to tear prey; he devoured men. **4** And nations heard about him; he was caught in their pit, and they brought him with hooks to the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim). **5** And she saw that she had waited, ***that*** her hope was lost, and she took one of her cubs; she made him a young lion. **6** And he went about among lions; he became a young lion, and he learned to tear prey; he devoured men. **7** And he knew his widows, and laid waste their cities; and the land and its fullness was desolate from the sound of his roaring. **8** And nations set ***themselves*** against him all around from ***the*** provinces, and they spread their net over him; he was caught in their pit. **9** And they put him in the cage with hooks, and brought him to the king of Babylon (Bavel); they brought him into strongholds, so that his voice would no longer be heard on the mountains of Israel. **10** Your mother ***was*** like the vine in your blood, planted by waters; fruitful and full of boughs she was, because of many waters. **11** And it had rods of strength for scepters of rulers, and its stature was lofty among the thick foliage, and it was seen in its height with the abundance of its branches. **12** And it was plucked up in rage; it was thrown down to the ground, and the east wind dried up its fruit; they were torn off and dried up, its rod of strength; fire consumed it. **13** And now ***it is*** planted in the wilderness, in a dry and thirsty land. **14** And fire has gone out from the rod of its shoots; it has consumed its fruit, and there is not in it a rod of strength, a scepter to rule.' It ***is*** a lamentation, and it has become a lamentation."

EZEKIEL 20

Israel's History of Rebellion

1 And it came about in the seventh year, in the fifth ***month***, on the tenth of the month, ***that*** men from the elders of Israel (Yisra'el) came to consult the LORD, and they sat before me. **2** And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **3** "Son of man, speak with the elders of Israel, and you shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: Are you coming to consult Me? ***As*** I live, I will not let Myself be consulted by you, declares the Lord GOD.' **4** Will you judge them? Will you judge, son of man? Make them know the abominations of their fathers, **5** and you shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: On the day when I chose Israel, and I lifted up My hand to the seed of the house of Jacob (Ya'aqov), and I made Myself known to them in the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim), and I lifted up My hand to them, saying, "I ***am*** the LORD your God," **6** on that day I lifted up My hand to them, to bring them out from the land of Egypt to a land which I had searched out for them, flowing ***with*** milk and honey; it ***is*** a beauty to all the lands. **7** And I said to them, "Throw away, each man, the

19:1 Ezek 26:17; Ezek 27:2; 2 Kgs 24:6,12
19:2 Nah 2:11,12; Zeph 3:1-4; Job 4:11
19:3 Ezek 19:6; 2 Kgs 23:31,32; 2 Chr 36:1,2
19:4 2 Chr 36:4,6; Jer 22:11,12,18; 2 Kgs 23:31,33,34
19:5 Ezek 19:3; 2 Kgs 23:34-37
19:6 2 Kgs 24:1-7; 2 Chr 36:5; Jer 22:13-17
19:7 Ezek 30:12; Ezek 22:25; Prov 19:12
19:8 Ezek 19:4; Ezek 12:13; 2 Kgs 24:1-6
19:9 2 Chr 36:6; Ezek 6:2; Jer 22:18,19
19:10 Ps 80:8-11; Deut 8:7,9; Ezek 19:2
19:11 Ezek 31:3; Ps 80:15,17; Dan 4:11,20,21
19:12 John 15:6; Ezek 17:10; Hos 13:15
19:13 John 15:6; Hos 2:3; Ezek 19:10
19:14 2 Kgs 24:20; Ezek 19:11; Ezek 19:1
20:1 Ezek 8:1; Ezek 1:2; Ezek 24:1
20:3 Matt 15:8; Matt 15:9; John 4:21
20:4 Luke 13:35; Acts 7:52; Ezek 22:2
20:5 Exod 6:6,7; Deut 7:6; Ezek 20:15,23
20:6 Acts 7:39; Ezek 20:15; Exod 3:8,17
20:7 Acts 7:39; Lev 18:3; Deut 29:16-18

19:1 *take up a lamentation for the princes of Israel* A funeral song for the last kings of David's line in Jerusalem. Ezekiel usually calls them princes (12:10). God's judgment is never cold. These were David's sons, given the throne God promised David, and they threw it away.
19:2 *What was your mother? A lioness* Most see the mother as Judah or the royal house; some think of Hamutal, mother of Jehoahaz and Zedekiah (2 Kgs 23:31; 24:18). The lion was the emblem of Judah (Gen 49:9). Living among the nations, she raised her cubs to rule like them.
19:3 *he learned to tear prey; he devoured men* The first cub is Jehoahaz, made king when Josiah was killed in 609 B.C. (2 Kgs 23:30-32).
19:4 *they brought him with hooks to the land of Egypt* After three months Pharaoh Neco took Jehoahaz captive to Egypt, where he died (2 Kgs 23:33-34; Jer 22:10-12).
19:5 *she took one of her cubs; she made him a young lion* Many believe the second cub is Jehoiachin, carried to Babylon in 597 B.C. (2 Kgs 24:8-15). Others think of Jehoiakim, whose long violent reign fits the roaring (2 Chr 36:6).
19:7 *he knew his widows, and laid waste their cities* A hard phrase. It may mean he made widows by killing their husbands, or seized what belonged to others.
19:9 *they put him in the cage with hooks, and brought him to the king of Babylon* Babylonian carvings show captive kings led by hooks and kept in cages. These heirs of David had every advantage but learned to tear prey like the nations and ended in a cage. Power without God always ends badly.
19:10 *Your mother was like the vine in your blood, planted by waters* The picture changes to the vine of chapters 15 and 17, fruitful with strong branches.
19:11 *it had rods of strength for scepters of rulers* The strong branches were kings, lofty among the nations.
19:12 *the east wind dried up its fruit* The rage is God's anger and the east wind is Babylon (17:10). The vine was torn up and burned.
19:13 *now it is planted in the wilderness, in a dry and thirsty land* Ezekiel's hearers were already there. Babylon was the wilderness, far from the many waters of home.
19:14 *fire has gone out from the rod of its shoots* The fire came from one of its own branches, most likely Zedekiah, whose rebellion brought Babylon down on the city. After him no son of David sat on the throne in Jerusalem for nearly six hundred years. But God had not forgotten David. The throne waits for the One whose right it is (21:27; Luke 1:32).
20:1 *in the seventh year, in the fifth month, on the tenth of the month* About 591 B.C., five years before Jerusalem fell. The elders came to consult the LORD again, as in 14:1.
20:3 *I will not let Myself be consulted by you* They wanted a word from God while keeping idols in their hearts (14:1-5). So God answers with their history instead.
20:4 *Make them know the abominations of their fathers* Ezekiel is to act as a judge and bring the charges. The elders had to see that they were part of a long pattern of rebellion.
20:5 *I lifted up My hand to the seed of the house of Jacob* To lift up the hand was to swear an oath. The chapter traces four stages: Egypt, the wilderness, the second generation and the land.
20:7 *do not make yourselves unclean with the idols of Egypt* Exodus says little of Israel's idolatry in Egypt, but the golden calf shows how deep it went (Exod 32:4; Josh 24:14).

detestable things of his eyes, and do not make yourselves unclean with the idols of Egypt; I ***am*** the LORD your God." **8** And they rebelled against Me, and they were not willing to listen to Me; each man did not throw away the detestable things of their eyes, and the idols of Egypt they did not forsake. And I said ***I would*** pour out My rage on them, to complete My anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt. **9** And I acted for the sake of My name, so that it would not be profaned in the eyes of the nations in whose midst they ***were***, before whose eyes I had made Myself known to them, in bringing them out from the land of Egypt. **10** And I brought them out from the land of Egypt, and I brought them into the wilderness. **11** And I gave them My statutes, and My judgments I made known to them, which the man shall do, and he shall live by them. **12** And also My Sabbaths I gave to them, to be a sign between Me and them, to know that I ***am*** the LORD who sanctifies them. **13** And the house of Israel rebelled against Me in the wilderness; in My statutes they did not walk, and My judgments they rejected, which the man shall do, and he shall live by them; and My Sabbaths they greatly profaned. And I said ***I would*** pour out My rage on them in the wilderness, to make an end of them. **14** And I acted for the sake of My name, so that it would not be profaned in the eyes of the nations before whose eyes I had brought them out. **15** And also I lifted up My hand to them in the wilderness, not to bring them into the land which I had given, flowing ***with*** milk and honey; it ***is*** a beauty to all the lands, **16** because they rejected My judgments, and My statutes, they did not walk in them, and My Sabbaths they profaned; for their heart was walking after their idols. **17** And My eye looked with pity on them, from destroying them, and I did not make an end of them in the wilderness. **18** And I said to their sons in the wilderness, "Do not walk in the statutes of your fathers, and do not keep their judgments, and do not make yourselves unclean with their idols. **19** I ***am*** the LORD your God; walk in My statutes, and keep My judgments, and do them, **20** and keep My Sabbaths holy, and they shall be a sign between Me and you, to know that I ***am*** the LORD your God." **21** And the sons rebelled against Me; in My statutes they did not walk, and My judgments they did not keep, to do them, which the man shall do, and he shall live by them; My Sabbaths they profaned. And I said ***I would*** pour out My rage on them, to complete My anger against them in the wilderness. **22** And I turned back My hand, and I acted for the sake of My name, so that it would not be profaned in the eyes of the nations before whose eyes I had brought them out. **23** Also I lifted up My hand to them in the wilderness, to disperse them among the nations and to scatter them among the lands, **24** because they had not done My judgments, and they had rejected My statutes, and they had profaned My Sabbaths, and their eyes were after the idols of their fathers. **25** And also I gave them statutes ***that were*** not good, and judgments by which they shall not live. **26** And I made them unclean by their gifts, in ***their*** making everything that opens the womb pass through, so that I might make them desolate, so that they might know that I ***am*** the LORD.'

Rebellion in the Land

27 Therefore speak to the house of Israel, son of man, and you shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: Yet in this your fathers blasphemed Me, in their acting unfaithfully against Me ***with*** unfaithfulness. **28** And I brought them into the land which I had lifted up My hand to give to them, and they saw every high hill and every leafy tree, and they sacrificed there their sacrifices, and they presented there the provocation of their offering, and they made there their soothing aroma, and they poured out there their drink offerings. **29** And I said to them, "What ***is*** the high place to which

20:8 Acts 7:39; Isa 63:10; Ezek 5:13
20:9 Acts 7:39; Ezek 20:14,22; Ezek 39:7
20:10 Acts 7:39; Exod 13:17,18; Exod 14:17-22
20:11 Lev 18:5; Deut 4:8; Rom 10:5
20:12 Matt 19:17; John 17:18; Exod 20:8-11
20:13 Acts 13:18; Ezek 20:21; Ezek 20:8
20:14 Ezek 20:9,22; Ezek 36:22,23; Eph 1:6,12
20:15 Acts 13:18; Ps 95:11; Ps 106:26
20:16 Num 15:39; Ezek 20:8; Ezek 14:3,4
20:17 Acts 13:18; Ezek 11:13; Jer 4:27
20:18 Luke 11:48; Deut 4:3-6; 1 Pet 1:18
20:19 Exod 20:2,3; Deut 5:6,7; Deut 7:4-6
20:20 Jer 17:22,24,27; Ezek 20:12; Ezek 44:24
20:21 Acts 13:18; Acts 7:53; Ezek 20:8,13
20:22 Ezek 20:9,14,22; Ps 78:38; Isa 48:9-11
20:23 Lev 26:33; Ezek 20:15; Deut 32:40
20:24 Ezek 6:9; Ezek 20:13,16; Ezek 18:6,12,15
20:25 Ps 81:12; Isa 66:4; Ezek 14:9-11
20:26 Luke 2:23; Lev 18:21; Ezek 6:7
20:27 Rom 2:24; Ezek 2:7; Ezek 3:4,11,27
20:28 Ezek 6:13; Neh 9:22-26; Isa 57:5-7
20:29 Ezek 16:24,25,31

20:9 *I acted for the sake of My name* The key to the chapter. God spared Israel not because they deserved it but because of who He is, so His name would not be dishonored among the nations. That is the only reason any of us are spared (Titus 3:5).
20:11 *which the man shall do, and he shall live by them* God's law was good and pointed to life. Paul quotes this to show the difference between law and faith (Gal 3:12; Rom 10:5). No sinner could keep it perfectly, so it drives us to grace.
20:12 *My sabbaths I gave to them, to be a sign between Me and them* The Sabbath was the sign of God's covenant with Israel (Exod 31:13). Believers differ on how it applies today; Christ is our rest (Col 2:16-17; Heb 4:9-10).
20:13 *the house of Israel rebelled against Me in the wilderness* The wilderness generation refused His statutes, and God barred them from the land (Num 14:28-35).
20:17 *My eye looked with pity on them* Even in judgment there was pity. He fed them with manna and raised up their children.
20:18 *Do not walk in the statutes of your fathers* God gave the children a chance to be different, but at Baal-peor they fell into the same sins (Num 25:1-3). Three times God held back His wrath for His name's sake. That is long-suffering love.
20:23 *to disperse them among the nations* Even before Israel entered the land, God warned that idolatry would lead to exile (Lev 26:33; Deut 28:64). The exile was not a surprise. It was the end of a long road.
20:25 *I gave them statutes that were not good* One of the hardest verses in Ezekiel. God never commanded child sacrifice; He forbade it in the strongest terms (Lev 18:21; Deut 12:31). Most read it as God giving them over to the pagan customs they chose (Ps 81:12; Acts 7:42; Rom 1:24-28). Others see His good law twisted by sin into a snare (Rom 7:10), or His sentences of judgment.
20:26 *in their making everything that opens the womb pass through* These are the words of God's law of the firstborn (Exod 13:12), which Israel twisted into child sacrifice. All readings agree this is judgment: God handed a rebellious people over to their own choices. The worst thing He can do to one who keeps pushing Him away is to let him have his way.
20:28 *they saw every high hill and every leafy tree* Instead of worshiping at the place God chose, they sacrificed wherever the pagans did.
20:29 *its name has been called Bamah to this day* A bamah was a hilltop shrine or raised platform. God's question may hold a wordplay: what is this high place you go to? The name stuck, and so did the sin.

you are going?" And its name has been called Bamah to this day.' **30** Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: Are you making yourselves unclean in the way of your fathers? And are you acting as prostitutes after their detestable things? **31** And in lifting up your gifts, in making your sons pass through the fire, you are making yourselves unclean with all your idols to this day. And shall I let Myself be consulted by you, O house of Israel? ***As*** I live, declares the Lord GOD, I will not let Myself be consulted by you. **32** And what comes up on your spirit shall surely not happen, ***that*** which you are saying, "We will be like the nations, like the clans of the lands, to serve wood and stone."

A New Exodus

33 ***As*** I live, declares the Lord GOD, surely with a strong hand and with an outstretched arm and with poured-out rage I will reign over you. **34** And I will bring you out from the peoples, and I will gather you from the lands in which you have been scattered, with a strong hand and with an outstretched arm and with poured-out rage. **35** And I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and I will enter into judgment with you there face to face. **36** As I entered into judgment with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will enter into judgment with you, declares the Lord GOD. **37** And I will make you pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant. **38** And I will purge from you the rebels and those who transgress against Me; from the land of their sojournings I will bring them out, and into the soil of Israel he shall not enter; and you shall know that I ***am*** the LORD. **39** And you, O house of Israel, thus says the Lord GOD: Go, serve each man his idols; and afterward, if you are not listening to Me, and My holy name you shall no longer profane with your gifts and with your idols. **40** For on My holy mountain, on the mountain of the height of Israel, declares the Lord GOD, there all the house of Israel, all of it, shall serve Me in the land; there I will accept them, and there I will seek your contributions and the first of your offerings, with all your holy things. **41** As a soothing aroma I will accept you, when I bring you out from the peoples and gather you from the lands in which you have been scattered; and I will be sanctified in you before the eyes of the nations. **42** And you shall know that I ***am*** the LORD, when I bring you into the soil of Israel, into the land which I lifted up My hand to give to your fathers. **43** And you shall remember there your ways and all your deeds by which you have made yourselves unclean, and you shall loathe yourselves in your ***own*** faces for all your evils which you have done. **44** And you shall know that I ***am*** the LORD, when I deal with you for the sake of My name, not according to your evil ways and according to your corrupt deeds, O house of Israel, declares the Lord GOD.'"

Fire in the South

45 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **46** "Son of man, set your face the way southward, and drip ***words*** toward the south, and prophesy against the forest of the field of the Negeb (Negev). **47** And you shall say to the forest of the Negeb, 'Hear the word of the LORD. Thus says the Lord GOD: Look, I am about to kindle a fire in you, and it shall consume in you every moist tree and every dry tree; the flaming flame shall not be quenched, and all faces from south to north shall be scorched by it. **48** And all flesh shall see that I, the LORD, have kindled it; it shall not be quenched.'" **49** And I said, "Ah, Lord GOD! They are saying of me, 'Is he not speaking parables?'"

20:30 Matt 23:32; Jer 16:12; Judg 2:19
20:31 Ezek 20:26; Ps 106:37-39; Jer 7:31
20:32 Ezek 11:5; Jer 44:17,29; Deut 4:28
20:33 Jer 21:5; Ezek 8:18; Jer 42:18
20:34 Ezek 20:38; Ezek 34:16; Amos 9:9,10
20:35 Hos 2:14; Ezek 19:13; Ezek 17:20
20:36 Num 11:1-35; 1 Cor 10:5-10; Ezek 20:13,21
20:37 Heb 8:9; Lev 27:32; Jer 33:13
20:38 Heb 4:6; Jude 1:5; Heb 8:9
20:39 Acts 7:42; Ezek 20:25,26; Judg 10:14
20:40 Isa 56:7; Isa 60:7; Mal 3:4
20:41 Ezek 11:17; Isa 27:12,13; Ezek 28:22,25
20:42 Ezek 38:23; Ezek 34:13; Ezek 36:23
20:43 Ezek 6:9; Hos 5:15; Ezek 36:31
20:44 Ezek 24:24; Ezek 20:9,14,22; Ezek 20:38
20:46 Ezek 21:2; Amos 7:16; Jer 13:19
20:47 Jer 21:14; Isa 9:18,19; Ezek 17:24
20:48 Deut 29:24-28; 2 Chr 7:20-22; Isa 26:11
20:49 John 16:25; Matt 13:13,14; Acts 17:18

20:31 *in making your sons pass through the fire* The elders sitting in Ezekiel's house were doing the same as their fathers. That is why God would not answer them.
20:32 *We will be like the nations* In exile some were ready to stop being Israel and blend in. God says it will not happen. He would not let them go.
20:33 *with a strong hand and with an outstretched arm and with poured-out rage I will reign over you* The words of the exodus (Deut 4:34), now joined with rage. God will be King over Israel whether they like it or not.
20:34 *I will gather you from the lands in which you have been scattered* The peoples and lands are plural. This reaches beyond the return from Babylon to a worldwide gathering. I believe it will happen at Christ's return, after the Tribulation (Jer 30:7; Matt 24:29-31).
20:35 *the wilderness of the peoples* As God judged their fathers in the wilderness of Egypt (20:36), He will judge Israel personally, face to face, as the nation is gathered (Zech 13:9; Mal 3:3).
20:37 *I will make you pass under the rod* A shepherd counted his sheep one by one under his staff, as with the tithe of the flock (Lev 27:32). God will examine each one. The bond of the covenant is the new covenant (Jer 31:31-34).
20:38 *I will purge from you the rebels* Not every Israelite will enter the kingdom. The rebels will be removed, and the rest brought into the land as a people who know the LORD (Rom 11:26). Some read these verses as fulfilled at the return from Babylon or in the church; I take the plain words as still ahead.
20:39 *Go, serve each man his idols* Bitter irony: if you will not listen, go ahead. But a day is coming when God's name will no longer be profaned.
20:40 *on the mountain of the height of Israel* The mountain where God plants the tender shoot (17:23). There all Israel will serve Him in the land.
20:41 *As a soothing aroma I will accept you* The law's phrase for offerings that pleased God (Lev 1:9). Here He accepts the people themselves. God will show Himself holy through them before the nations.
20:43 *you shall loathe yourselves in your own faces* When God restores them, they will see their sin clearly for the first time. Grace does not make us proud; it humbles us.
20:44 *not according to your evil ways and according to your corrupt deeds* The heart of the gospel in Ezekiel. God deals with us for His name's sake, not as our sins deserve (Ps 103:10).
20:46 *prophesy against the forest of the field of the Negeb* In the Hebrew Bible these verses begin chapter 21. From Babylon, south meant Judah and Jerusalem, as 21:2 explains.
20:47 *every moist tree and every dry tree* Green and dry mean everyone, righteous and wicked alike, caught in the coming fire (21:3-4). Jesus used a similar picture on the way to the cross (Luke 23:31).
20:49 *Is he not speaking parables* People brushed off Ezekiel's messages as stories. People still call God's Word myth so they need not obey it. Ezekiel's parables were not fairy tales. Every one came true.

EZEKIEL 21

The Sword of the LORD

1 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **2** "Son of man, set your face toward Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), and drip ***words*** against the sanctuaries, and prophesy against the soil of Israel (Yisra'el), **3** and you shall say to the soil of Israel, 'Thus says the LORD: Look, I ***am*** against you, and I will bring out My sword from its sheath, and I will cut off from you the righteous and the wicked. **4** Because I have cut off from you the righteous and the wicked, therefore My sword shall go out from its sheath against all flesh from south to north. **5** And all flesh shall know that I, the LORD, have brought out My sword from its sheath; it shall not return again.' **6** And you, son of man, groan with the breaking of ***your*** loins, and with bitterness you shall groan before their eyes. **7** And it shall be, when they say to you, 'For what are you groaning?' that you shall say, 'Because of the report, for it is coming; and every heart shall melt, and all hands shall hang limp, and every spirit shall grow faint, and all knees shall go ***as*** water. Look, it is coming, and it shall happen, declares the Lord GOD.'" **8** And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **9** "Son of man, prophesy, and you shall say, 'Thus says the Lord: Say, "A sword, a sword has been sharpened, and also polished; **10** in order to slaughter a slaughter it has been sharpened; in order that it may have lightning it has been polished. Or shall we rejoice? The scepter of my son despises every tree. **11** And he gave it to be polished, to be grasped in the palm; it has been sharpened, the sword, and it has been polished, to give it into the hand of the slayer."' **12** Cry out and wail, son of man, for it is against My people; it ***is*** against all the princes of Israel; thrown to the sword they are with My people; therefore strike ***your*** thigh. **13** For it has been tested; and what if even the scepter that despises shall not be? declares the Lord GOD. **14** And you, son of man, prophesy, and strike palm to palm, and let the sword be doubled, the third ***time***, the sword of the slain; it ***is*** the sword of the great slain ***one***, which surrounds them, **15** so that ***the*** heart may melt and the stumblings be multiplied; at all their gates I have set the slaughter of the sword. Ah! It is made for lightning, wrapped for slaughter. **16** Be sharp, go to the right; set ***yourself***, go to the left, wherever your face is appointed. **17** And I also, I will strike My palm to My palm, and I will cause My rage to rest; I, the LORD, have spoken."

The King of Babylon at the Crossroads

18 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **19** "And you, son of man, make for yourself two ways for the sword of the king of Babylon (Bavel) to come; from one land both of them shall go out. And carve a marker; at the head of the way to a city carve ***it***. **20** A way you shall make for the sword to come to Rabbah (Raba) of the sons of Ammon (Amon), and to Judah (Yehuda), into fortified Jerusalem. **21** For the king of Babylon has stood at the mother of the way, at the head of the two ways, to divine ***by*** divination; he has shaken the arrows, he has inquired of the teraphim, he has looked at the liver. **22** In his right ***hand*** was the divination ***for*** Jerusalem: to set battering rams, to open ***the*** mouth in killing, to raise ***the*** voice with a war cry, to set battering rams against the gates, to pour out a mound, to build a siege wall. **23** And it shall be to them like divining falsehood in their eyes; oaths of

21:2 Ezek 20:46; Ezek 4:7; Ezek 25:2
21:3 Jer 21:13; Job 9:22; Ezek 5:8
21:4 Ezek 20:47; Ezek 7:2; Ezek 6:11-14
21:5 Ezek 21:30; Nah 1:9; Ezek 20:48
21:6 Ezek 6:11; Isa 22:4; Ezek 21:12
21:7 Luke 21:26; Ezek 7:17; Ezek 7:26
21:9 Ezek 21:3,15,28; Deut 32:41,42; Job 20:25
21:10 Ezek 20:47; Ps 110:5,6; Jer 46:4
21:11 Ezek 21:19; Jer 25:9,33; Jer 51:20-23
21:12 Ezek 21:6; Joel 1:13; Ezek 9:8
21:13 Ezek 21:10,25; Job 9:23; 2 Cor 8:2
21:14 Num 24:10; 2 Kgs 24:1,10-16; Ezek 6:11
21:15 Jer 17:27; Ezek 21:7; Ezek 21:10,28
21:16 Ezek 21:4,20; Ezek 14:17; Ezek 16:46
21:17 Ezek 5:13; Ezek 21:14; Ezek 22:13
21:19 Ezek 4:1-3; Jer 1:10; Ezek 5:1-17
21:20 Jer 49:2; Amos 1:14; Ezek 25:5
21:21 Prov 16:33; Gen 31:19,30; Judg 17:5
21:22 Ezek 4:2; Exod 32:17,18; Josh 6:10,20
21:23 Num 5:15; Ezek 29:16; Ezek 11:3

21:2 *set your face toward Jerusalem, and drip words against the sanctuaries* This explains 20:46-48. The south was Jerusalem, the forest was the land of Israel, and the fire becomes a sword.
21:3 *I will cut off from you the righteous and the wicked* This seems to clash with chapter 18, but it does not. When war falls on a nation, it falls on all, as Daniel and Ezekiel themselves went into exile. Chapter 18 speaks of each person's standing before God. The righteous who died in the judgment were not condemned.
21:5 *it shall not return again* Once drawn, God's sword would sweep the land from south to north and not go back until its work was done.
21:6 *groan with the breaking of your loins* Ezekiel was to groan like a man doubled over in pain, so the people would ask why. A preacher of judgment should groan, not gloat.
21:7 *every heart shall melt, and all hands shall hang limp* When the news of Jerusalem's fall came, courage would fail completely.
21:9 *A sword, a sword has been sharpened, and also polished* The song of the sword, with short, sharp lines like blows. God prepared the sword and placed it in the slayer's hand, Nebuchadnezzar's.
21:10 *The scepter of my son despises every tree* Obscure, and translations differ. Most take it as the people's false hope: Shall we rejoice, since Judah's scepter (Gen 49:10) is greater than any rod? The sword treats it like any other stick. Others see God's rod of discipline despising every lesser rod.
21:12 *it is against all the princes of Israel* This time the sword was aimed not at Israel's enemies but at God's own people and leaders. Striking the thigh was a sign of grief (Jer 31:19).
21:14 *strike palm to palm* Not applause but a gesture of anger, a signal to attack. The doubled and tripled sword shows its relentless force.
21:16 *wherever your face is appointed* God speaks to the sword itself, sending it wherever He directs.
21:17 *I also, I will strike My palm to My palm* God Himself gives the signal. Judah heard gentle warnings for years and would not listen. Sometimes God speaks loudly because we would not hear Him softly.
21:19 *make for yourself two ways for the sword of the king of Babylon to come* Ezekiel drew a map with a fork in the road and a signpost. One way led to Rabbah of Ammon, the other to Jerusalem.
21:20 *Rabbah of the sons of Ammon* Rabbah was Ammon's capital east of the Jordan, where Amman, Jordan, stands today. Ammon and Judah had both plotted against Babylon (Jer 27:3).
21:21 *he has shaken the arrows, he has inquired of the teraphim, he has looked at the liver* Nebuchadnezzar sought omens at the fork. Marked arrows were shaken and one drawn; teraphim were household idols; Babylonian priests read the livers of sacrificed animals, and clay liver models have been found in Mesopotamia.
21:22 *In his right hand was the divination for Jerusalem* The favorable lot fell on Jerusalem. God condemns divination (Deut 18:10-12), but He rules even the lots of pagan kings (Prov 16:33).
21:23 *it shall be to them like divining falsehood in their eyes* Jerusalem would not believe the omen. They trusted their treaties and oaths, the very oaths Zedekiah had broken.

oaths ***are*** theirs; and he brings iniquity to remembrance, that they may be seized. **24** Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Because you have brought your iniquity to remembrance, in your transgressions being uncovered, so that your sins are seen in all your deeds, because you have been remembered, you shall be seized by the palm. **25** And you, O profane, wicked one, prince of Israel, whose day has come, in the time of the iniquity of the end, **26** thus says the Lord GOD: Remove the turban, and take off the crown; this ***shall*** not ***be*** this; exalt the low ***one***, and bring low the exalted ***one***. **27** A ruin, a ruin, a ruin I will make it; this also has not been, until he comes to whom the judgment ***belongs***, and I will give it.

Against the Ammonites

28 And you, son of man, prophesy, and you shall say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD concerning the sons of Ammon and concerning their reproach,' and you shall say, 'A sword, a sword is drawn; for slaughter ***it is*** polished, to contain ***it***, because of ***its*** lightning, **29** while they see worthlessness for you, while they divine a lie for you, to put you on the necks of the profane of the wicked, whose day has come, in the time of the iniquity of the end. **30** Put ***it*** back into its sheath! In the place where you were created, in the land of your origins, I will judge you. **31** And I will pour out My indignation on you; with the fire of My wrath I will blow on you, and I will give you into the hand of brutish men, craftsmen of destruction. **32** For the fire you shall be fuel; your blood shall be in the midst of the land; you shall not be remembered, for I, the LORD, have spoken.'"

EZEKIEL 22

The City of Bloodshed

1 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **2** "And you, son of man, will you judge, will you judge the city of bloodshed? Then you shall make known to it all its abominations. **3** And you shall say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: A city shedding blood in its midst, so that its time comes, and it has made idols on itself to become unclean! **4** By your blood which you have shed you have become guilty, and by your idols which you have made you have become unclean; and you have brought your days near, and you have come to your years. Therefore I have made you a reproach to the nations and a derision to all the lands. **5** The ***ones*** near and the ***ones*** far from you shall deride you, unclean of name, great in turmoil. **6** Look, the princes of Israel (Yisra'el), each according to his arm, have been in you in order to shed blood. **7** Father and mother they have treated with contempt in you; toward the sojourner they have acted with oppression in your midst; fatherless and widow they have mistreated in you. **8** My holy things you have despised, and My Sabbaths you have profaned. **9** Men of slander have been in you in order to shed blood; and on the mountains they have eaten in you; lewdness they have done in your midst. **10** The nakedness of a father one has uncovered in you; the ***woman*** unclean in menstruation they have humiliated in you. **11** And a man has done abomination with the wife of his neighbor, and a man has made his daughter-in-law unclean with lewdness, and a man has humiliated his sister, the daughter of his father, in you. **12** A bribe they have taken in you in order to shed blood; interest and increase you have taken, and you have gained unjustly ***from*** your neighbors by oppression, and Me

21:24 Ezek 16:16-22; Ezek 22:3-12,24-31; Ezek 23:5-21
21:25 Ezek 35:5; Ezek 17:19; 2 Chr 36:13
21:26 Ezek 17:24; Jer 13:18; Ps 75:7
21:27 Ps 2:6; Hag 2:21,22; Gen 49:10
21:28 Ezek 21:20; Zeph 2:8-10; Ezek 21:9,10
21:29 Ezek 21:25; Ezek 22:28; Jer 27:9
21:30 Jer 47:6,7; Ezek 16:38; Ezek 21:4,5
21:31 Ezek 7:8; Ezek 14:19; Nah 1:6
21:32 Ezek 25:10; Mal 4:1; Ezek 20:47,48
22:2 Acts 7:52; Matt 23:35; Ezek 24:6,9
22:3 Ezek 22:27; Ezek 24:6-9; Zeph 3:3
22:4 2 Kgs 21:16; Ezek 22:2; Ezek 5:14,15
22:5 Jer 15:2,3
22:6 Ezek 22:27; Isa 1:23; Neh 9:34
22:7 Mark 7:10; Deut 27:16; Exod 22:21,22
22:8 Ezek 22:26; Ezek 20:13,21,24; Ezek 23:38,39
22:9 Lev 19:16; Ezek 18:6,11,15; Ezek 16:43
22:10 Lev 18:19; Lev 18:7,8; Lev 20:11
22:11 Lev 18:15; Lev 20:17; Lev 18:9
22:12 Deut 27:25; Ezek 23:35; Deut 16:19

21:24 *your sins are seen in all your deeds* Sin is never truly hidden; it will find us out (Num 32:23). The only safe place for sin is under the blood of Christ, where God covers it.
21:25 *O profane, wicked one, prince of Israel* Zedekiah, the last king of Judah, profane because he treated holy things, even his oath in God's name, as common.
21:26 *Remove the turban, and take off the crown* The word for turban is used of the high priest's turban (Exod 28:4), so some see both royal and priestly honor removed. Things would not stay as they are. God exalts the low and brings down the exalted (Luke 1:52).
21:27 *until he comes to whom the judgment belongs, and I will give it* A ruin three times over, the strongest way Hebrew can say it. The throne would stay overturned until One comes to whom it belongs. These words echo Jacob's blessing on Judah (Gen 49:10). I believe He is Jesus, the Son of David (Rom 1:3; Luke 1:32-33), the Lion of Judah who will reign as King of kings (Rev 5:5; 19:16).
21:28 *concerning the sons of Ammon and concerning their reproach* Ammon may have thought it escaped when Nebuchadnezzar chose Jerusalem first, and it mocked Judah's fall (25:3, 6). Its turn was coming.
21:29 *while they divine a lie for you* Ammon's own diviners told them they were safe. Their lies would not save them.
21:30 *In the place where you were created, in the land of your origins, I will judge you* Some read put it back into its sheath as a command to Ammon to stop resisting; others as Babylon's sword sheathed after its work. Israel went into exile and came back; Ammon would be judged in its own land.
21:32 *you shall not be remembered* Ammon was conquered and later absorbed by other peoples. The name survives in the city of Amman. Israel endures not because she was better but because God keeps His covenant with Abraham.
22:2 *will you judge the city of bloodshed* As in 20:4, Ezekiel brings the charges. Two sins run through the chapter: bloodshed, sin against people, and idols, sin against God.
22:4 *you have brought your days near, and you have come to your years* By her sins Jerusalem was hurrying her own judgment.
22:6 *the princes of Israel, each according to his arm* The kings used their power to kill. Manasseh filled Jerusalem with innocent blood (2 Kgs 21:16), and Jehoiakim killed the prophet Uriah (Jer 26:23).
22:7 *Father and mother they have treated with contempt in you* Many charges come straight from the law (Exod 20:12; 22:21-24). The sojourner, fatherless and widow were the people God told Israel to protect.
22:9 *Men of slander have been in you in order to shed blood* Lies and false witness were used to get people killed, as Jezebel did to Naboth (1 Kgs 21:10-13).
22:11 *in you* Verses 10-11 list sexual sins the law forbade (Lev 18:6-20; 20:10-21). Jerusalem had broken the very commands meant to keep families pure.
22:12 *Me you have forgotten* Bribes to condemn the innocent (Exod 23:8) and interest charged to the poor grew from this root. They had not forgotten that God existed; they still had the temple. They forgot Him in daily life. Forgetting God is where every other sin begins.

you have forgotten, declares the Lord GOD. **13** And look, I have struck My palm at your unjust gain which you have made, and at your blood which has been in your midst. **14** Will your heart endure, or will your hands be strong, in the days when I ***am*** dealing with you? I, the LORD, have spoken, and I will act. **15** And I will disperse you among the nations and scatter you among the lands, and I will make an end of your uncleanness from you. **16** And you shall be profaned through yourself in the eyes of the nations, and you shall know that I ***am*** the LORD.'"

Dross in the Furnace

17 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **18** "Son of man, the house of Israel has become dross to Me; all of them ***are*** bronze and tin and iron and lead in the midst of a furnace; dross of silver they have become. **19** Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Because all of you have become dross, therefore look, I ***am*** gathering you into the midst of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). **20** ***As*** the gathering of silver and bronze and iron and lead and tin into the midst of a furnace, to blow fire on it to melt ***it***, so I will gather ***you*** in My anger and in My rage, and I will set ***you*** down and melt you. **21** And I will collect you and blow on you with the fire of My wrath, and you shall be melted in its midst. **22** Like the melting of silver in the midst of a furnace, so you shall be melted in its midst; and you shall know that I, the LORD, have poured out My rage on you."

No One in the Breach

23 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **24** "Son of man, say to it, 'You ***are*** a land that is not cleansed, not rained on in a day of indignation.' **25** A conspiracy of its prophets ***is*** in its midst, like a roaring lion tearing prey; they have devoured souls; treasure and precious things they take; its widows they have multiplied in its midst. **26** Its priests have done violence to My law and have profaned My holy things; between the holy and the common they have not made a distinction, and between the unclean and the clean they have not made ***it*** known; and from My Sabbaths they have hidden their eyes, and I am profaned in their midst. **27** Its officials in its midst ***are*** like wolves tearing prey, to shed blood, to destroy souls, in order to gain unjust gain. **28** And its prophets have plastered ***with*** whitewash for them, seeing worthlessness and divining a lie for them, saying, 'Thus says the Lord GOD,' and the LORD has not spoken. **29** The people of the land have oppressed ***with*** oppression and robbed ***with*** robbery; and the poor and the needy they have mistreated, and the sojourner they have oppressed without justice. **30** And I sought from among them a man building a wall and standing in the breach before Me for the land, so that I would not destroy it; and I did not find ***one***. **31** And I have poured out My indignation on them; with the fire of My wrath I have consumed them; their way I have put on their head, declares the Lord GOD."

EZEKIEL 23

Oholah and Oholibah

1 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **2** "Son of man, ***there*** were two women, the daughters of one mother. **3** And they played the prostitute in Egypt (Mitsrayim); in their youth they played the prostitute; there their breasts were pressed, and there they squeezed the nipples of their

22:13 Isa 33:15; Ezek 21:14,17; Ezek 22:27
22:14 Ezek 21:7; Ezek 17:24; Ezek 24:14
22:15 Deut 4:27; Zech 7:14; Neh 1:8
22:16 Ezek 6:7; Ezek 7:24; Ps 83:18
22:18 Ps 119:119; Isa 1:22; Jer 6:28-30
22:19 Ezek 11:7; Ezek 24:3-6; Mic 4:12
22:20 Ezek 21:31,32; Isa 54:16; Ezek 24:13
22:21 Ezek 15:6,7; Ezek 20:47,48; Deut 4:24
22:22 Ezek 20:8,33; Hos 5:10; Ezek 22:16,31
22:24 Isa 9:13; Jer 2:30; Zeph 3:2
22:25 Mark 12:40; Hos 6:9; Ezek 13:19
22:26 1 Sam 2:12-17,22; Jer 2:8,26,27; Ezek 44:23
22:27 Matt 7:15; Rev 18:24; Ezek 22:13
22:28 Jer 23:25-32; Ezek 13:6,7; Ezek 22:25
22:29 Ezek 22:7; Isa 5:7; Exod 23:9
22:30 Isa 59:16; Jer 5:1; Ezek 13:5
22:31 Ezek 9:10; Ezek 16:43; Ezek 7:3,8,9
23:2 Ezek 16:44,46; Jer 3:7-10
23:3 Lev 17:7; Josh 24:14; Ezek 16:22

22:13 *I have struck My palm at your unjust gain* God claps His hands in anger, as in 21:17.
22:14 *Will your heart endure, or will your hands be strong* They felt strong and secure. God asks whether their courage would hold when He dealt with them.
22:15 *I will make an end of your uncleanness from you* The exile would scatter them and also burn out their idolatry.
22:18 *the house of Israel has become dross to Me* Dross is the scum skimmed off when metal is melted. Israel was meant to be silver, precious to God, but had become waste metal.
22:19 *I am gathering you into the midst of Jerusalem* When Babylon came, people from all Judah fled into Jerusalem for safety. God says the city would be a furnace, not a refuge.
22:22 *Like the melting of silver in the midst of a furnace* Here the furnace shows there was no silver left, only dross. Elsewhere God uses refining fire to purify a remnant (Zech 13:9; Mal 3:3; 1 Pet 1:7).
22:24 *not rained on in a day of indignation* In a dry land rain was a sign of God's blessing (Deut 11:13-17). Now God goes through every class of leaders and people, and every group is guilty.
22:25 *A conspiracy of its prophets* The prophets should have been the nation's conscience. Instead they banded together to devour people for gain. The Greek Old Testament reads princes, but the SLB follows the Hebrew.
22:26 *between the holy and the common they have not made a distinction* The priests' job was to teach God's law and guard what was holy (Lev 10:10-11). When leaders stop teaching the difference, people stop seeing it.
22:27 *Its officials in its midst are like wolves tearing prey* The rulers were wolves. Jesus warned of wolves in sheep's clothing (Matt 7:15).
22:28 *its prophets have plastered with whitewash for them* The false prophets covered the officials' sins like whitewash over a cracked wall (13:10-16).
22:29 *The people of the land have oppressed with oppression* The common people followed their leaders. From top to bottom the nation was corrupt (Jer 5:1).
22:30 *a man building a wall and standing in the breach before Me for the land* Often called standing in the gap. Such a man would rebuild what sin broke down and pray for the people, as Moses stood in the breach after the golden calf (Ps 106:23; Exod 32:11-14). God still looks for people who will pray for their families and nations (Jas 5:16). Above all this points to Christ, who stood in the breach for us (Isa 59:16).
22:31 *their way I have put on their head* God speaks as if the judgment has already happened, so certain was it. Jerusalem fell because no one stood in the breach. We are saved because Someone did.
23:2 *there were two women, the daughters of one mother* The mother is the one nation of Israel, from which both kingdoms came when it divided about 930 B.C. Like chapter 16, this is a parable of unfaithfulness. Its language is strong, and I will keep these notes plain.

virginity. **4** And their names ***were*** Oholah (Ohola) the elder and Oholibah (Oholiva) her sister; and they became Mine, and they bore sons and daughters. And ***as for*** their names: Samaria (Shomron) ***is*** Oholah, and Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) ***is*** Oholibah. **5** And Oholah played the prostitute ***while*** under Me, and she lusted after her lovers, after Assyria (Ashur), ***those*** near, **6** clothed ***in*** blue, governors and prefects, desirable young men all of them, horsemen riding horses. **7** And she bestowed her prostitutions on them, the choicest of the sons of Assyria, all of them; and with all after whom she lusted, with all their idols, she made herself unclean. **8** And her prostitutions from Egypt she did not forsake, for they had lain with her in her youth, and they had squeezed the nipples of her virginity and poured out their prostitution on her. **9** Therefore I gave her into the hand of her lovers, into the hand of the sons of Assyria, after whom she had lusted. **10** They uncovered her nakedness; her sons and her daughters they took, and her they killed with the sword; and she became a name among women, and they executed judgments on her. **11** And her sister Oholibah saw ***it***, and she made her lust more corrupt than she, and her prostitutions more than the harlotries of her sister. **12** After the sons of Assyria she lusted, governors and prefects, ***those*** near, clothed ***in*** perfection, horsemen riding horses, desirable young men all of them. **13** And I saw that she had made herself unclean; one way ***was*** for both of them. **14** And she added to her prostitutions; and she saw men carved on the wall, images of the Chaldeans (Kasdim) engraved in vermilion, **15** girded ***with*** a belt on their hips, ***with*** overhanging turbans on their heads, the appearance of officers, all of them, the likeness of the sons of Babylon (Bavel), Chaldeans ***being*** the land of their birth. **16** And she lusted after them at the sight of her eyes, and she sent messengers to them, to ***the*** Chaldeans. **17** And the sons of Babylon came to her, to the bed of love, and they made her unclean with their prostitution; and she became unclean with them, and her soul was wrenched away from them. **18** And she uncovered her prostitutions and uncovered her nakedness; and My soul was wrenched away from her, just as My soul had been alienated from her sister. **19** And she multiplied her prostitutions, remembering the days of her youth, when she played the prostitute in the land of Egypt. **20** And she lusted after their paramours, whose flesh ***is*** the flesh of donkeys, and whose emission ***is*** the emission of horses. **21** And you sought the lewdness of your youth, when ***those*** from Egypt squeezed your nipples on account of the breasts of your youth.

Judgment on Oholibah

22 Therefore, Oholibah, thus says the Lord GOD: Look, I ***am*** rousing your lovers against you, ***those*** from whom your soul was alienated, and I will bring them against you from all around: **23** the sons of Babylon and all the Chaldeans, Pekod (Peqod) and Shoa and Koa (Qoa), all the sons of Assyria with them, desirable young men, governors and prefects all of them, officers and called ***ones***, riding horses all of them. **24** And they shall come against you ***with*** weapons, chariots and wheels, and with an assembly of peoples; large shield and shield and helmet they shall set against you all around; and I will set judgment before them, and they shall judge you according to their judgments. **25** And I will set My jealousy against you, and they shall deal with you in rage; your nose and your ears they shall remove, and the rest of you shall fall by the sword; they shall take your sons and your daughters, and the rest of you shall be devoured by the fire. **26** And they shall strip you of your clothes and take away the articles of your beauty. **27** And I will make your lewdness cease from

23:4 Ezek 16:8,20; Ezek 16:40; 1 Kgs 12:20
23:5 2 Kgs 15:19; 2 Kgs 16:7; 2 Kgs 17:3
23:7 Hos 5:3; Hos 6:10; Ezek 20:7
23:8 Ezek 23:3,19,21; Exod 32:4; 1 Kgs 12:28
23:9 2 Kgs 15:29; Hos 11:5; 2 Kgs 17:3-6,23
23:10 Ezek 23:29; Ezek 16:37-41; Hos 2:3,10
23:11 Jer 3:8; Ezek 23:4; Ezek 16:47-51
23:12 2 Kgs 16:7-15; Ezek 23:5; Ezek 16:28
23:13 Ezek 23:31; 2 Kgs 17:18,19; Hos 12:1,2
23:14 Ezek 8:10; Jer 22:14; Isa 46:1
23:15 1 Sam 18:4; Isa 22:21; Judg 8:18
23:16 Ezek 16:29; Matt 5:28; Gen 3:6
23:17 Ezek 23:22,28; Gen 10:10; Gen 11:9
23:18 Ps 78:59; Ps 106:40; Jer 12:8
23:19 Ezek 23:3,8,21; Ezek 23:14; Ezek 16:25,29,51
23:20 Ezek 17:15; Ezek 16:20,26; Jer 5:8
23:22 Ezek 16:37; Ezek 23:9,28; Isa 10:5,6
23:23 Acts 7:4; Jer 50:21; 2 Kgs 20:14-17
23:24 Ezek 26:10; Jer 47:3; Nah 2:3,4
23:25 Rev 18:8; Ezek 23:47; Ezek 5:13
23:26 Rev 17:16; Jer 13:22; Ezek 23:29
23:27 Ezek 16:41; Ezek 23:3,19; Ezek 22:15

23:4 *Samaria is Oholah, and Jerusalem is Oholibah* The names come from ohel, tent: Oholah, her tent, and Oholibah, my tent is in her. Many see Samaria's own man-made shrines in the first and God's temple in Jerusalem in the second. Their unfaithfulness began early, in Egypt (23:3; Josh 24:14). God explains the picture Himself.

23:5 *Oholah played the prostitute while under Me* While bound to God in covenant, Samaria courted Assyria. The unfaithfulness means idolatry and foreign alliances that brought foreign gods. Jehu paid tribute to Assyria, Menahem bought its favor, and Hoshea turned to Egypt (2 Kgs 15:19-20; 17:4).

23:6 *clothed in blue, governors and prefects, desirable young men all of them* Assyria looked impressive: splendid uniforms, officials and cavalry. Samaria was dazzled by worldly power.

23:9 *I gave her into the hand of her lovers* The nation Samaria courted destroyed her in 722 B.C. (2 Kgs 17:5-6). The thing we run to instead of God becomes the thing that ruins us.

23:11 *her sister Oholibah saw it, and she made her lust more corrupt than she* Jerusalem watched Samaria fall, had every warning she needed, and did worse.

23:12 *After the sons of Assyria she lusted* Ahaz sent silver and gold to Assyria's king and copied an Assyrian altar for the temple (2 Kgs 16:7-18).

23:14 *images of the Chaldeans engraved in vermilion* Vermilion is bright red paint. Babylonian palaces were decorated with painted reliefs of soldiers and officials. Judah saw and was drawn in, as Hezekiah showed his treasures to Babylon's envoys (2 Kgs 20:12-19). Sin often begins with the eyes (Gen 3:6; Josh 7:21; 2 Sam 11:2).

23:17 *her soul was wrenched away from them* Judah became Babylon's vassal and then turned against her. Jehoiakim and Zedekiah both rebelled (2 Kgs 24:1, 20).

23:18 *My soul was wrenched away from her* The saddest line here. God turned away from her in grief, as He had from Samaria.

23:22 *I am rousing your lovers against you* The nations Jerusalem courted would become her destroyers.

23:24 *with an assembly of peoples* Babylon's army was made up of many nations. God would let them judge Jerusalem by their own harsh standards.

23:25 *I will set My jealousy against you* Ancient armies mutilated captives, cutting off noses and ears. God was not inventing new cruelty but giving Jerusalem over to the people she had trusted.

23:26 *they shall strip you of your clothes and take away the articles of your beauty* As in 16:39, the city stripped of its wealth and glory.

23:27 *Egypt you shall not remember again* The exile would end the long habit of running to Egypt and its gods.

you, and your harlotry from the land of Egypt; and you shall not lift up your eyes to them, and Egypt you shall not remember again. **28** For thus says the Lord GOD: Look, I ***am*** giving you into the hand of ***those*** whom you hate, into the hand of ***those*** from whom your soul was alienated. **29** And they shall deal with you in hatred and take all your labor and leave you naked and bare; and the nakedness of your harlotries shall be uncovered, and your lewdness and your prostitutions. **30** ***They will*** do these ***things*** to you because you played the prostitute after ***the*** nations, because you made yourself unclean with their idols. **31** In the way of your sister you have walked; and I will put her cup into your hand. **32** Thus says the Lord GOD: The cup of your sister you shall drink, the deep and the wide; it shall be for laughter and for derision, much to contain. **33** With drunkenness and sorrow you shall be filled; a cup of horror and desolation ***is*** the cup of your sister Samaria. **34** And you shall drink it and drain ***it***, and its shards you shall gnaw, and your breasts you shall tear out; for I have spoken, declares the Lord GOD. **35** Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Because you have forgotten Me and cast Me behind your back, so you also, bear your lewdness and your prostitutions."

Both Sisters Judged

36 And the LORD said to me, "Son of man, will you judge Oholah and Oholibah? Then declare to them their abominations. **37** For they have committed adultery, and blood ***is*** on their hands; and with their idols they have committed adultery; and also their sons whom they bore to Me they have made pass through to them for food. **38** Moreover, this they have done to Me: they have made My sanctuary unclean on that day, and My Sabbaths they have profaned. **39** And when they had slaughtered their sons to their idols, they came into My sanctuary on that day to profane it; and look, thus they have done in the midst of My house. **40** And moreover, they sent for men coming from afar, to whom a messenger was sent; and look, they came, for whom you bathed, painted your eyes, and adorned ***yourself with*** ornaments. **41** And you sat on a glorious couch, and a table ***was*** arranged before it, and My incense and My oil you set on it. **42** And the sound of a multitude at ease ***was*** in her; and to men from the multitude of mankind Sabeans were brought from the wilderness; and they put bracelets on their hands and a crown of beauty on their heads. **43** And I said of the ***one*** worn out ***with*** adulteries, 'Now they will play the prostitute ***with*** her prostitutions, and she ***too***.' **44** And ***one*** went in to her as ***one*** goes in to a woman, a prostitute; so they went in to Oholah and to Oholibah, the women of lewdness. **45** And righteous men, they shall judge them ***with*** the judgment of adulteresses and the judgment of ***women who*** shed blood; for they ***are*** adulteresses, and blood ***is*** on their hands. **46** For thus says the Lord GOD: Bring up an assembly against them, and give them over to terror and to plunder. **47** And the assembly shall stone them ***with*** stones and cut them down with their swords; their sons and their daughters they shall kill, and their houses they shall burn with fire. **48** And I will make lewdness cease from the land, and all the women shall be warned and shall not do according to your lewdness. **49** And they shall put your lewdness on you, and the sins of your idols you shall bear; and you shall know that I ***am*** the Lord GOD."

EZEKIEL 24

The Boiling Pot

1 And the word of the LORD came to me in the ninth year, in the tenth month, on the tenth of the month, saying, **2** "Son

23:28 Ezek 23:17,22; Ezek 16:37; Jer 34:20
23:29 Ezek 23:25,26,45-47; Ezek 16:39; Deut 28:47-51
23:30 Ezek 6:9; Ezek 23:12-21; Ps 106:35-38
23:31 John 18:11; 2 Kgs 21:13; Jer 7:14,15
23:32 Matt 20:22; Matt 20:23; Ps 60:3
23:33 Jer 25:27; Hab 2:16; Isa 51:17,22
23:34 Ps 75:8; Isa 51:17; Ezek 23:3,8
23:35 1 Kgs 14:9; Ezek 22:12; Isa 17:10
23:36 Luke 11:39; Matt 23:31; Matt 23:35
23:37 Ezek 16:36,38; Ezek 16:20,21,36,45; Ezek 20:26,31
23:38 Ezek 20:13,24; Ezek 7:20; Jer 17:27
23:39 2 Kgs 21:4; Ezek 44:7; Jer 23:11
23:40 2 Kgs 9:30; Jer 4:30; Ezek 16:13-16
23:41 Esth 1:6; Amos 6:4; Ezek 44:16
23:42 Ezek 16:11,12; Exod 32:6,18,19; Hos 13:6
23:43 Ezra 9:7; Ps 106:6; Jer 13:23
23:44 Ezek 23:3,9-13
23:45 Rev 17:16; Hos 6:5; Lev 20:10
23:46 Rev 17:16; Ezek 16:40; Jer 15:4
23:47 John 8:5; Rev 17:16; Ezek 24:21
23:48 Rev 17:16; Ezek 23:27; Ezek 16:41
23:49 Ezek 7:4,9; Ezek 9:10; Isa 59:18
24:1 Ezek 8:1; Ezek 20:1; Ezek 1:2
24:2 2 Kgs 25:1; Jer 39:1; Jer 52:4

23:28 *into the hand of those whom you hate* She turned against Babylon but would fall into Babylon's hand.
23:30 *because you made yourself unclean with their idols* God names the sin plainly so no one misses the meaning of the picture.
23:31 *I will put her cup into your hand* A cup is often a picture of God's judgment (Jer 25:15). In Gethsemane Jesus asked that the cup pass from Him (Matt 26:39). It was the cup of wrath we deserved, and He drank it so we would not have to.
23:32 *The cup of your sister you shall drink, the deep and the wide* Jerusalem would drink Samaria's cup in full measure and become a laughingstock.
23:35 *you have forgotten Me and cast Me behind your back* The root again (22:12). They did not just drift; they threw God behind them.
23:37 *blood is on their hands* God says plainly that the adultery is idolatry, and it led to child sacrifice. I believe little children who die are safe with God (2 Sam 12:23).
23:39 *they came into My sanctuary on that day to profane it* They sacrificed their children to idols and then came to God's house the same day. A person can sit in worship on Sunday and serve other gods all week. No one can serve two masters (Matt 6:24).
23:43 *the one worn out with adulteries* Jerusalem was worn out by her sin and still kept going. Sin wears us out, and still we go back to it, until God sets us free.
23:45 *righteous men, they shall judge them* Most take these as the nations God used to carry out His righteous sentence; some see righteous judges who rightly condemn by the law. Adultery and murder carried death under the law (Lev 20:10).
23:46 *Bring up an assembly against them* As in chapter 16, stoning is the law's penalty used to picture the cities' fall. This is a picture of two cities' judgment, not a pattern for how anyone may treat a wife (Eph 5:25).
23:48 *all the women shall be warned* The other nations, pictured as women, would learn from Jerusalem's fall.
23:49 *the sins of your idols you shall bear* This chapter ends without a promise, but 16:60-63 has already told how the story ends. God will remember His covenant, and through Christ He makes atonement for His unfaithful people.
24:1 *in the ninth year, in the tenth month, on the tenth of the month* About 588 B.C., the day the siege of Jerusalem began (2 Kgs 25:1; Jer 52:4). The Jews later kept a fast on this day (Zech 8:19).
24:2 *write for yourself the name of the day, this very day* Ezekiel was hundreds of miles away, yet God told him the very day the siege began. When the news came months later, the exiles would know his word was true. Nothing that happens to God's people is hidden from Him (Ps 139:1-12).

of man, write for yourself the name of the day, this very day. The king of Babylon (Bavel) has leaned against Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) on this very day. **3** And speak a parable to the house of rebellion, and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: Set on the pot, set ***it*** on, and also pour water into it. **4** Gather its pieces into it, every good piece, thigh and shoulder; fill ***it with*** the choicest of the bones. **5** Take the choicest of the flock, and also pile the bones under it; make its boiling boil; also its bones have boiled in its midst. **6** Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Woe ***to*** the city of bloodshed, the pot whose rust ***is*** in it, and whose rust has not gone out of it! By its pieces, by its pieces bring it out; no lot has fallen on it. **7** For its blood has been in its midst; on a bare rock it put it; it did not pour it out on the ground to cover it over ***with*** dust. **8** To stir up rage, to avenge vengeance, I have put its blood on a bare rock, so that it is not covered. **9** Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Woe ***to*** the city of bloodshed! I also will make the pile great. **10** Multiply the wood, kindle the fire, consume the flesh, and mix the seasoning, and let the bones be burned. **11** And set it empty on its coals, so that it may grow hot, and its bronze may burn, and its uncleanness be melted in its midst, its rust be consumed. **12** It has wearied ***itself with*** toils, and its great rust does not go out of it; in fire ***is*** its rust. **13** In your uncleanness ***is*** lewdness. Because I cleansed you, and you were not clean, from your uncleanness you shall not be clean again until I bring My rage to rest on you. **14** I, the LORD, have spoken; it is coming, and I will act. I will not let ***it*** go, and I will not pity, and I will not relent; according to your ways and according to your deeds they have judged you, declares the Lord GOD.'"

The Death of Ezekiel's Wife

15 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **16** "Son of man, look, I ***am*** taking from you the desire of your eyes with a stroke; and you shall not lament, and you shall not weep, and your tears shall not come. **17** Groan, be silent; mourning ***for the*** dead you shall not make; bind your turban on yourself, and your sandals you shall put on your feet, and you shall not cover over ***your*** mustache, and the bread of men you shall not eat." **18** And I spoke to the people in the morning, and my wife died in the evening; and I did in the morning as I had been commanded. **19** And the people said to me, "Will you not tell us what these ***things are*** to us, that you ***are*** doing ***them***?" **20** And I said to them, "The word of the LORD came to me, saying, **21** 'Say to the house of Israel (Yisra'el), "Thus says the Lord GOD: Look, I ***am*** profaning My sanctuary, the pride of your strength, the desire of your eyes, and the compassion of your soul; and your sons and your daughters whom you have left behind shall fall by the sword. **22** And you shall do just as I have done: you shall not cover over ***your*** mustache, and the bread of men you shall not eat. **23** And your turbans ***shall be*** on your heads, and your sandals on your feet; you shall not lament, and you shall not weep; and you shall waste away in your iniquities and groan, each to his brother. **24** And Ezekiel (Yechezqel) shall be a portent for you; according to all that he has done you shall do; when it

24:3 Mark 12:12; Ezek 17:2; Ezek 20:49
24:4 Mic 3:2,3; Ezek 22:18-22; Matt 7:2
24:5 Jer 52:10,24-27; Jer 39:6; Ezek 20:47
24:6 Matt 23:35; Ezek 22:2,6-9,12,27; Nah 3:1
24:7 Lev 17:13; Deut 12:16,24; 1 Kgs 21:19
24:8 Rev 17:6; Rev 18:10; Deut 32:21,22
24:9 Jude 1:7; Rev 21:8; Ezek 24:6
24:10 Jer 17:3; Jer 20:5; Lam 1:10
24:11 Jer 21:10; Mal 4:1; Jer 32:29
24:12 Jer 9:5; Isa 47:13; Isa 57:9,10
24:13 Matt 23:37; Matt 20:26; Ezek 22:24
24:14 Ezek 18:30; Num 23:19; 1 Sam 15:29
24:16 Jer 22:10,18; Jer 13:17; Ezek 24:18,21,25
24:17 Hos 9:4; Lev 10:6; Lev 21:10
24:18 1 Cor 7:29,30
24:19 Ezek 12:9; Ezek 37:18; Ezek 17:12
24:21 Acts 21:11; Jer 7:14; Ps 27:4
24:22 Ezek 24:16,17; Job 27:15; Ps 78:64
24:23 Ezek 4:17; Ezek 33:10; Lev 26:39
24:24 John 13:19; John 16:4; Ezek 4:3

24:3 *Set on the pot, set it on* The leaders had boasted that Jerusalem was the pot and they the choice meat (11:3). God takes their saying and turns it into a picture of judgment.
24:4 *every good piece, thigh and shoulder* The choice pieces are the leading people of Jerusalem and those who fled into the city. The pot would not protect them; it would cook them.
24:6 *the pot whose rust is in it* The picture shifts. The pot itself is crusted with corrosion, the city's guilt. The pieces would be taken out one by one with no lot cast to spare any.
24:7 *on a bare rock it put it* The law said blood must be covered with dust (Lev 17:13). Jerusalem shed innocent blood openly and did not even try to hide it.
24:8 *I have put its blood on a bare rock, so that it is not covered* Because Jerusalem did not cover the blood, God would not cover it either. It would cry out for justice like Abel's (Gen 4:10).
24:9 *I also will make the pile great* God Himself piles on the wood.
24:11 *set it empty on its coals* After the meat is gone, the empty pot is heated until the rust burns off. The fire was meant to purge the city, but even that would not remove the deep rust.
24:13 *Because I cleansed you, and you were not clean* God had tried to cleanse them through prophets and discipline, and nothing worked.
24:14 *I will not let it go, and I will not pity, and I will not relent* Some of the strongest words of final judgment in the book. God is patient for a long time to lead us to repentance (Rom 2:4), but a heart that keeps refusing can reach a point where judgment is fixed.
24:16 *I am taking from you the desire of your eyes with a stroke* The book becomes very personal. The desire of his eyes was Ezekiel's wife. We do not know her name, but we know what she was to him. With a stroke means a sudden death.
24:17 *Groan, be silent* In Israel mourning was loud and public: weeping, uncovering the head, removing sandals, covering the lip and eating funeral bread from neighbors. God forbade the public rites, not the grief. That He told Ezekiel to groan shows the grief was real.
24:18 *my wife died in the evening; and I did in the morning as I had been commanded* One of the shortest and saddest verses in the Bible. Scripture does not say she died for any sin. If you have lost a husband or wife, God does not ask you to hold back tears. Ezekiel's silence was a one-time sign. Jesus wept at a friend's grave (John 11:35), and we grieve, but with hope (1 Thess 4:13).
24:19 *Will you not tell us what these things are to us* When they saw him go out without mourning, they knew something was wrong and asked. The sign got their attention.
24:21 *the desire of your eyes, and the compassion of your soul* The same words used of Ezekiel's wife are used of the temple. It was the people's pride and delight, and God would let it be destroyed, along with sons and daughters left behind.
24:23 *you shall waste away in your iniquities and groan, each to his brother* When the news came they would not mourn in the usual way either. Some think the grief would be too deep for the usual rites; others that captives were not free to mourn openly.
24:24 *Ezekiel shall be a portent for you* One of only two places the prophet's name appears in the book (1:3). God does not stand far off from the grief He asks His servants to bear. Ezekiel's loss pictured God's own loss over His house and people.

comes, you shall know that I ***am*** the Lord GOD."'" **25** "And you, son of man, ***will it*** not ***be*** on the day when I take from them their stronghold, the joy of their beauty, the desire of their eyes, and the lifting up of their soul, their sons and their daughters, **26** ***that*** on that day the escapee shall come to you to make ***your*** ears hear ***it***? **27** On that day your mouth shall be opened with the escapee, and you shall speak and be mute no more; and you shall be a portent for them, and they shall know that I ***am*** the LORD."

EZEKIEL 25

Against Ammon and Moab

1 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **2** "Son of man, set your face toward the sons of Ammon (Amon), and prophesy against them. **3** And you shall say to the sons of Ammon, 'Hear the word of the Lord GOD. Thus says the Lord GOD: Because you said, "Aha!" over My sanctuary when it was profaned, and over the soil of Israel (Yisra'el) when it was made desolate, and over the house of Judah (Yehuda) when they went into exile, **4** therefore look, I ***am*** giving you to the sons of the east for a possession, and they shall set up their encampments in you and make their dwellings in you; they shall eat your fruit, and they shall drink your milk. **5** And I will make Rabbah (Raba) a pasture of camels, and the sons of Ammon a resting place of flocks; and you shall know that I ***am*** the LORD. **6** For thus says the Lord GOD: Because you clapped ***your*** hand and stamped with ***your*** foot, and rejoiced with all your scorn in ***your*** soul over the soil of Israel, **7** therefore look, I have stretched out My hand against you, and I will give you as plunder to the nations, and I will cut you off from the peoples and make you perish from the lands; I will destroy you, and you shall know that I ***am*** the LORD.' **8** Thus says the Lord GOD: Because Moab (Mo'av) and Seir (Se'ir) said, 'Look, the house of Judah ***is*** like all the nations,' **9** therefore look, I ***am*** opening the shoulder of Moab from the cities, from its cities, from its frontier, the beauty of the land, Beth-jeshimoth (Bet-Hayshimot), Baal-meon (Ba'al-Meon), and to Kiriathaim (Qiryatayim), **10** to the sons of the east, along with the sons of Ammon; and I will give it for a possession, so that the sons of Ammon shall not be remembered among the nations. **11** And on Moab I will execute judgments, and they shall know that I ***am*** the LORD.

Against Edom and Philistia

12 Thus says the Lord GOD: Because Edom acted by avenging vengeance on the house of Judah, and they have surely become guilty and have avenged themselves on them,
13 therefore thus says the Lord GOD: And I will stretch out My hand against Edom and cut off from it man and animal, and I will make it a desolation; from Teman and to Dedan they shall fall by the sword. **14** And I will put My vengeance on Edom by the hand of My people Israel, and they shall do in Edom according to My anger and according to My rage; and they shall know My vengeance, declares the Lord GOD.
15 Thus says the Lord GOD: Because the Philistines acted in vengeance and avenged themselves ***with*** vengeance with scorn in ***the*** soul, to destroy ***with*** everlasting enmity,
16 therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Look, I ***am*** stretching out My hand against the Philistines, and I will cut off the Kerethites and make the remnant of the coast of the sea per-

24:25 Ezek 24:21; Ps 48:2; Ps 50:2
24:26 Job 1:15-19; Ezek 33:21,22; 1 Sam 4:12-18
24:27 Luke 1:20; Ezek 33:22; Ezek 3:26,27
25:2 Jer 49:1-6; Ezek 6:2; Amos 1:13-15
25:3 Ezek 36:2; Prov 17:5; Ezek 25:6,8
25:4 Deut 28:33,51; Isa 1:7; Gen 29:1
25:5 Ezek 21:20; 2 Sam 12:26; Isa 17:2
25:6 Obad 1:12; Zeph 2:8,10; Job 27:23
25:7 Zeph 1:4; Ezek 25:13,16; Ezek 14:9
25:8 Isa 15:1-16; Jer 25:21; Jer 48:1-47
25:9 Josh 13:17,19; Jer 48:23; Num 32:37,38
25:10 Ezek 21:32; Ps 83:3-6; Isa 23:16
25:11 Jude 1:15; Ezek 25:17; Ezek 5:8,10,15
25:12 Rom 12:19; Ps 137:7; Jer 49:7-22
25:13 Mal 1:3,4; Ezek 29:8; Jer 25:23
25:14 Isa 11:14; Gen 27:29; Isa 63:1-6
25:15 Ezek 25:6,12; Isa 14:29-31; Jer 25:20
25:16 1 Sam 30:14; Ezek 25:7,13; 2 Sam 15:18

24:26 *the escapee shall come to you* A survivor would bring the news to Babylon, as 33:21 records.
24:27 *your mouth shall be opened with the escapee, and you shall speak and be mute no more* His silence, except when God gave a word (3:26-27), would end with the news (33:22). The first half of Ezekiel ends here. Chapters 25-32 speak to the nations, and in chapter 33 the news arrives and the message turns to hope.
25:2 *set your face toward the sons of Ammon* Chapters 25-32 turn to the nations around Israel, while Jerusalem's fall is pending. The Ammonites lived east of the Jordan around Rabbah, today's Amman. God judges all nations, not only Israel.
25:3 *Because you said, "Aha!" over My sanctuary when it was profaned* Ammon's sin was gloating over the temple's ruin, the land's desolation and Judah's exile.
25:4 *I am giving you to the sons of the east for a possession* The desert tribes beyond Ammon would move in and eat its fruit and milk.
25:5 *I will make Rabbah a pasture of camels* The proud capital would become a grazing ground. Ammon was conquered by Babylon a few years after Jerusalem fell, and Arab tribes later moved into its land. The Ammonites faded from history.
25:6 *Because you clapped your hand and stamped with your foot* They did not just say Aha; they celebrated. Gloating takes pleasure in another's pain (Prov 24:17-18). Even a quiet satisfaction when someone we dislike falls is the same sin in seed form.
25:8 *Look, the house of Judah is like all the nations* Moab lived east of the Dead Sea, and Seir is Edom's mountain country. Their contempt said Israel's God was no different from any other. Judah had become like the nations in sin (5:7; 20:32), but God's people were disciplined, not destroyed.
25:9 *I am opening the shoulder of Moab from the cities* The shoulder is Moab's frontier with its strong cities on the high ground. God would leave it open to invaders. Isaiah and Jeremiah also spoke against Moab (Isa 15-16; Jer 48).
25:10 *so that the sons of Ammon shall not be remembered among the nations* Ammon and Moab would both be absorbed by the peoples from the east.
25:12 *Because Edom acted by avenging vengeance on the house of Judah* Edom, descended from Esau, lived south of the Dead Sea. When Jerusalem fell, Edom cheered and took revenge (Ps 137:7; Obad 10-14). An ancient grudge became open cruelty.
25:13 *from Teman and to Dedan they shall fall by the sword* From one end of Edom to the other. Teman was in its heart; Dedan lay to the southeast.
25:14 *by the hand of My people Israel* Unlike the others, Edom would be judged by Israel. In part this came when the Jewish ruler John Hyrcanus conquered the Idumeans about 125 B.C. Some see a further fulfillment still ahead (Obad 18; Isa 11:14). Vengeance belongs to God (Rom 12:19).
25:15 *to destroy with everlasting enmity* The Philistines on the coast had been Israel's enemies since the judges. Their hatred was long and deep.
25:16 *I will cut off the Kerethites* A people related to the Philistines, probably from Crete (1 Sam 30:14; Zeph 2:5). In Hebrew there is a wordplay: I will cut off, hikrati, the Kerethites, keretim.

ish. **17** And I will execute great vengeance on them with rebukes of rage; and they shall know that I ***am*** the LORD, when I put My vengeance on them."

EZEKIEL 26

Against Tyre

1 And it came about in the eleventh year, on the first of the month, ***that*** the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **2** "Son of man, because Tyre (Tsor) has said against Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), 'Aha! It is broken, the doors of the peoples; it has turned to me; I shall be filled; it has been laid waste,' **3** therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Look, I ***am*** against you, Tyre, and I will bring up many nations against you, as the sea brings up its waves. **4** And they shall destroy the walls of Tyre and tear down its towers; and I will scrape its dust from it and make it a bare rock. **5** It shall be a spreading place of nets in the midst of the sea, for I have spoken, declares the Lord GOD; and it shall become plunder for the nations. **6** And its daughters which ***are*** in the field shall be killed by the sword; and they shall know that I ***am*** the LORD. **7** For thus says the Lord GOD: Look, I ***am*** bringing against Tyre Nebuchadnezzar (Nevukhadretsar) king of Babylon (Bavel) from the north, a king of kings, with horses and with chariots and with horsemen, and an assembly and a great people. **8** Your daughters in the field he shall kill with the sword; and he shall set a siege wall against you, and pour out a mound against you, and raise up a large shield against you. **9** And the blow of his battering ram he shall set against your walls, and your towers he shall break down with his swords. **10** From the abundance of his horses their dust shall cover you; from the sound of horseman and wheel and chariot your walls shall shake, when he enters your gates like the entering of a city broken into. **11** With the hooves of his horses he shall trample all your streets; your people he shall kill with the sword, and the pillars of your strength shall come down to the ground. **12** And they shall plunder your wealth and take your merchandise as spoil, and tear down your walls; and the houses of your desire they shall pull down; and your stones and your wood and your dust they shall put in the midst of the waters. **13** And I will put an end to the noise of your songs, and the sound of your lyres shall not be heard again. **14** And I will make you a bare rock; a spreading place of nets you shall be; you shall not be built again; for I, the LORD, have spoken, declares the Lord GOD.

The Coastlands Tremble

15 Thus says the Lord GOD to Tyre: Will not the coastlands shake at the sound of your fall, when the wounded groan, when slaughter is done in your midst? **16** And all the princes of the sea shall go down from their thrones and remove their robes and strip off their embroidered garments; tremblings they shall put on; on the ground they shall sit, and they shall tremble every moment and be appalled at you. **17** And they shall take up a lamentation over you and say to you, 'How you have perished, ***you who were*** inhabited from the seas, the city that was praised, which was mighty in the sea, it and its inhabitants, who gave their terror to all its inhabitants! **18** Now the coastlands tremble ***on*** the day of your fall, and the coastlands that ***are*** in the sea are terrified at your going out.' **19** For thus says the Lord GOD: When I make you a desolate city, like the cities that are not inhabited, when I bring

25:17 Ezek 25:11; Ezek 5:15; Ps 9:16
26:1 Mark 3:8; Ezek 20:1; Ezek 1:2
26:2 Matt 11:22; Mark 3:8; Luke 10:13
26:3 Luke 21:25; Matt 11:22; Mark 3:8
26:4 Matt 11:22; Mark 3:8; Luke 10:13
26:5 Ezek 29:19; Ezek 27:32; Ezek 47:10
26:6 Mark 3:8; Ezek 26:8; Ezek 16:46,48
26:7 Matt 11:22; Mark 3:8; Luke 10:13
26:8 Mark 3:8; Ezek 21:22; Jer 52:4
26:9 2 Chr 26:15
26:10 Jer 47:3; Ezek 26:15; Ezek 27:28
26:11 Isa 5:28; Isa 26:5; Hab 1:8
26:12 Isa 23:8,11,17,18; 2 Chr 32:27; Amos 5:11
26:13 Rev 18:22; Jer 7:34; Isa 14:11
26:14 Mark 3:8; Job 12:14; Mal 1:4
26:15 Matt 11:22; Mark 3:8; Luke 10:13
26:16 Mark 3:8; Rev 18:9; Ezek 32:10
26:17 Isa 14:12; Ezek 19:1,14; Ezek 27:2,32
26:18 Mark 3:8; Ezek 26:15; Isa 23:5-7,10-12
26:19 Mark 3:8; Ezek 26:3; Isa 8:7,8

25:17 *when I put My vengeance on them* The Philistines were conquered and later disappeared as a people. God sees how people treat His people and takes it personally, and He is Judge of all nations.
26:1 *in the eleventh year, on the first of the month* About 587 or 586 B.C., the year Jerusalem fell. The month is not given. Chapters 26-28 are the longest of the messages to the nations, all against Tyre and Sidon.
26:2 *Aha! It is broken, the doors of the peoples* Tyre was the great Phoenician trading city on the coast north of Israel, with a mainland town and an island fortress. Jerusalem sat on the trade routes, a gate between nations. With it gone, Tyre expected the trade to flow her way. Greed looks at another's disaster and asks what is in it for me.
26:3 *as the sea brings up its waves* A fitting picture for a city in the sea. Nation after nation would come against Tyre, wave upon wave.
26:4 *make it a bare rock* Tyre, Tsor in Hebrew, means rock. God would scrape the city down to the bare rock it was named for.
26:6 *its daughters which are in the field* The towns and villages on the mainland that belonged to Tyre.
26:7 *Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon from the north, a king of kings* God names the first wave. Babylonian kings called themselves king of kings, but only God truly is (Rev 19:16).
26:8 *he shall set a siege wall against you* Notice he in verses 7-11. Nebuchadnezzar besieged Tyre about thirteen years, from about 586 to 573 B.C., and destroyed the mainland city, while the island fortress held out and finally submitted (29:18).
26:12 *your stones and your wood and your dust they shall put in the midst of the waters* Notice the change from he to they, the many nations of 26:3. In 332 B.C. Alexander the Great, unable to take the island by sea, built a causeway from the ruins of the old mainland city, throwing its stones and timbers into the water, and took the island after about seven months.
26:13 *the sound of your lyres shall not be heard again* Tyre was a city of feasting and music (Isa 23:16). The songs would stop.
26:14 *you shall not be built again* A town called Sur stands near the site today, but the great island city of Tyre's glory never returned as it was, and much of the ancient city lies under the sand and sea, a place where fishermen spread nets. Fulfilled prophecy like this is strong evidence that the Bible is God's Word.
26:16 *all the princes of the sea shall go down from their thrones* The rulers of the trading cities would mourn like men at a funeral.
26:17 *How you have perished, you who were inhabited from the seas* Notice what they mourned: not the people who died but the loss of their trading partner. When the world's systems of wealth fall, the mourning is over lost profit (Rev 18:9-19).
26:19 *when I bring up the deep over you and the many waters cover you* The sea that made Tyre great would cover it.

up ***the*** deep over you and the many waters cover you, **20** and I will bring you down with those who go down to the pit, to the people of long ago, and I will make you dwell in the land of the lowest parts, like the ruins from long ago, with those who go down to the pit, so that you shall not be inhabited; and I will set beauty in the land of the living. **21** Terrors I will make you, and you shall be no more; and you shall be sought, and you shall not be found again forever, declares the Lord GOD."

EZEKIEL 27

A Lament Over Tyre the Ship

1 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **2** "And you, son of man, take up a lamentation over Tyre (Tsor), **3** and say to Tyre, who dwells at the entrances of the sea, the trader of the peoples to many coastlands, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: Tyre, you have said, "I ***am*** perfect of beauty." **4** Your borders ***are*** in the heart of the seas; your builders have perfected your beauty. **5** Of cypresses from Senir they have built for you all the planks; a cedar from Lebanon (Levanon) they have taken to make a mast on you. **6** ***Of*** oaks from Bashan they have made your oars; your deck they have made ***of*** ivory inlaid in pine from the coastlands of Cyprus (Kiti). **7** Fine linen with embroidery from Egypt (Mitsrayim) was your sail, to be a banner for you; blue and purple from the coastlands of Elishah (Elisha) was your covering. **8** The inhabitants of Sidon (Tsidon) and Arvad were your rowers; your wise men, Tyre, were in you; they ***were*** your sailors. **9** The elders of Gebal (Geval) and its wise men were in you, repairing your breaches; all the ships of the sea and their mariners were in you to trade your merchandise. **10** Persia (Paras) and Lud and Put were in your army, your men of war; shield and helmet they hung in you; they gave your splendor. **11** The sons of Arvad and Helech (Cheilekh) ***were*** on your walls all around, and the Gamad (Gamadim) were in your towers; their shields they hung on your walls all around; they perfected your beauty. **12** Tarshish ***was*** your merchant because of the abundance of all wealth; with silver, iron, tin, and lead they gave ***for*** your wares. **13** Greece (Yavan), Tubal (Tuval), and Meshech (Meshekh), they ***were*** your traders; with the souls of men and vessels of bronze they gave ***for*** your merchandise. **14** From the house of Togarmah (Togarma) they gave ***for*** your wares horses and steeds and mules. **15** The sons of Dedan ***were*** your traders; many coastlands ***were*** the market of your hand; horns of ivory and ebony they brought back ***as*** your tribute. **16** Syria (Aram) ***was*** your merchant because of the abundance of your products; with turquoise, purple, and embroidery, and fine linen, and coral, and ruby they gave ***for*** your wares. **17** Judah (Yehuda) and the land of Israel (Yisra'el), they ***were*** your traders; with wheat of Minnith (Minit), and cake, and honey, and oil, and balm they gave ***for*** your merchandise. **18** Damascus (Dameseq) ***was*** your merchant in the abundance of your products, because of the abundance of all wealth, in wine of Helbon (Chelbon) and wool of Sahar (Tsachar). **19** Vedan and Greece from Uzal gave wrought iron for your wares; cassia and calamus were in your merchandise. **20** Dedan ***was*** your trader in garments of spreading for riding. **21** Arabia (Arav) and all the princes of Kedar (Qedar), they ***were*** the merchants of your hand; in lambs and rams and goats, in these ***they were*** your merchants. **22** The traders of Sheba (Sheva) and Raamah (Rama), they ***were*** your traders; with the best of every spice, and with every precious stone and gold they gave ***for*** your wares. **23** Haran (Charan) and Canneh (Kane) and Eden, the traders of Sheba, Assyria (Ashur) ***and*** Chilmad (Kilmad) ***were*** your trader. **24** They ***were*** your traders in choice garments, in

26:20 Mark 3:8; Ps 27:13; Zech 2:8
26:21 Rev 18:21; Ezek 27:36; Ezek 28:19
27:3 Ezek 26:17; Ezek 28:2,3; Isa 23:2
27:4 Ezek 26:5
27:5 Deut 3:9; Song 4:8; 1 Kgs 5:1,6
27:6 Isa 2:13; Gen 10:4; Zech 11:2
27:7 Luke 16:19; Exod 25:4; Jer 10:9
27:8 Gen 10:18; 1 Kgs 9:27; Ezek 27:11
27:9 1 Kgs 5:18; Josh 13:5; Ps 83:7
27:10 Ezek 38:5; Ezek 30:5; Isa 66:19
27:11 Ezek 27:3,4
27:12 Ezek 38:13; Gen 10:4; 1 Kgs 10:22
27:13 Rev 18:12-13; Gen 10:2,4; Isa 66:19
27:14 Ezek 38:6; Gen 10:3; 1 Chr 1:6
27:15 Gen 10:7; 1 Kgs 10:22; Rev 18:12
27:16 Judg 10:6; Gen 10:22; Gen 28:5
27:17 Judg 11:33; 1 Kgs 5:9; Deut 8:8
27:18 Acts 9:2; Isa 7:8; Gen 15:2
27:19 Exod 30:23,24; Judg 18:29; Ps 45:8
27:20 Gen 25:3; Ezek 27:15
27:21 Gal 4:25; Isa 60:7; Gen 25:13
27:22 Gen 10:7; Isa 60:6; 1 Kgs 10:1-13
27:23 Acts 7:4; 2 Kgs 19:12; Isa 37:12
27:24 2 Kgs 2:8

26:20 *with those who go down to the pit, to the people of long ago* The pit is the grave, Sheol, the world of the dead. Tyre would join the ancient ruined cities. Many teachers read the next words as God setting beauty in the land of Israel instead, in contrast to Tyre.
26:21 *you shall be sought, and you shall not be found again forever* Tyre trusted its walls, ships, wealth and island. None of it could stand against God's word. Heaven and earth will pass away, but His words will not (Matt 24:35).
27:2 *take up a lamentation over Tyre* A funeral song sung before the funeral. The whole chapter pictures Tyre as a magnificent merchant ship that sinks at sea.
27:3 *I am perfect of beauty* Tyre's harbors opened onto the Mediterranean, and its ships traded with many coastlands. The root of its sin was pride. Tyre admired itself.
27:5 *Of cypresses from Senir they have built for you all the planks* Senir is Mount Hermon (Deut 3:9). Every part of the ship came from the best source in the world: cedar from Lebanon, oak from Bashan, ivory and pine from Cyprus.
27:7 *Fine linen with embroidery from Egypt was your sail* Egypt was famous for linen, and the sail was also the ship's banner. Blue and purple came from Elishah, perhaps Cyprus or a western coast.
27:8 *The inhabitants of Sidon and Arvad were your rowers* Other Phoenician cities supplied the crew, and Gebal, Byblos, its skilled repairmen (27:9). Tyre had everything the world could offer.
27:10 *Persia and Lud and Put were in your army* Tyre hired soldiers from far away: Persia to the east, Lud probably Lydia in Asia Minor, Put probably Libya.
27:12 *Tarshish was your merchant because of the abundance of all wealth* The trade list runs roughly west to east around the known world. Tarshish, probably in Spain, was where Jonah tried to flee (Jonah 1:3), at the far edge of the known world.
27:13 *with the souls of men and vessels of bronze* Slaves were traded alongside bronze, a sad sign of a world where people were goods (Joel 3:6; Rev 18:13).
27:17 *Judah and the land of Israel, they were your traders* Israel sent wheat, honey, oil and balm, as in Solomon's day (1 Kgs 5:11). Trade itself was not the sin.
27:22 *The traders of Sheba and Raamah* From Arabia came spices, precious stones and gold. The whole world came to Tyre's door, and when it fell the whole world would feel it.

cloaks of blue and embroidery, and in chests of variegated cloth, with cords bound and made firm, in your marketplace. **25** The ships of Tarshish ***were*** your carriers ***for*** your merchandise; and you were filled and became very heavy in the heart of the seas.

The Ship Is Wrecked

26 Into many waters your rowers have brought you; the east wind has broken you in the heart of the seas. **27** Your wealth and your wares, your merchandise, your mariners and your sailors, the repairers of your breaches and the traders of your merchandise, and all your men of war who ***are*** in you, and with all your assembly which ***is*** in your midst, shall fall in the heart of the seas on the day of your fall. **28** At the sound of the outcry of your sailors the pasturelands shall shake. **29** And all who handle the oar, the mariners, all the sailors of the sea, shall come down from their ships; they shall stand on the land. **30** And they shall make their voice heard over you and cry out bitterly, and they shall bring up dust on their heads; they shall roll in the ashes. **31** And they shall make themselves bald for you ***with*** baldness and gird themselves ***with*** sackcloth, and they shall weep for you in bitterness of soul, ***with*** bitter wailing. **32** And in their wailing they shall take up a lamentation for you and lament over you: "Who ***is*** like Tyre, like ***the one*** silenced in the midst of the sea? **33** When your wares went out from the seas, you satisfied many peoples; with the abundance of your wealth and your merchandise you made rich the kings of the earth. **34** ***Now, at the*** time ***you are*** broken by the seas, in the depths of the waters, your merchandise and all your assembly in your midst have fallen. **35** All the inhabitants of the coastlands are appalled at you, and their kings shudder ***with*** shuddering; ***their*** faces are troubled. **36** The merchants among the peoples hiss at you; you have become terrors, and you ***shall*** be no more forever."'"

EZEKIEL 28

The Pride of the Prince of Tyre

1 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **2** "Son of man, say to the ruler of Tyre (Tsor), 'Thus says the Lord GOD: Because your heart has been haughty, and you have said, "I ***am*** a god; I sit ***in*** the seat of gods in the heart of the seas," and you ***are*** a man and not a god, and you have made your heart like the heart of God, **3** look, you ***are*** wiser than Daniel (Daniyel); no hidden ***thing*** have they kept dark from you. **4** By your wisdom and by your understanding you have made wealth for yourself, and you have made gold and silver in your treasuries. **5** By the abundance of your wisdom, by your trade, you have multiplied your wealth, and your heart has been haughty in your wealth. **6** Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Because you have made your heart like the heart of God, **7** therefore look, I ***am*** bringing strangers against you, the ruthless of the nations; and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of your wisdom and profane your splendor. **8** To the pit they shall bring you down, and you shall die the deaths of the slain in the heart of the seas. **9** Will you really say, "I ***am*** a god," before him who kills you? And you ***are*** a man and not a god in the hand of those who pierce you. **10** The deaths of the uncircumcised you shall die by the hand of strangers; for I have spoken, declares the Lord GOD.'"

A Lament Over the King of Tyre

11 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **12** "Son of man, take up a lamentation over the king of Tyre, and say to him, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: You ***were*** a sealer of a pattern,

27:25 Isa 2:16; Ps 48:7; Isa 23:14
27:26 Ps 48:7; Ezek 26:19; Acts 27:14,41
27:27 Prov 11:4; Ezek 27:7-9,12,18,19,22,24,34; Ezek 26:12
27:28 Ezek 26:10,15-18; Ezek 27:35; Ezek 31:16
27:29 Rev 18:17-19; Rev 18:21; Rev 18:22
27:30 Rev 18:9; Rev 18:10; Jer 6:26
27:31 Ezek 7:18; Isa 22:12; Isa 16:9
27:32 Rev 18:18; Ezek 26:17; Ezek 27:2
27:33 Rev 18:3; Rev 18:23; Ezek 27:3,12-36
27:34 Ezek 27:26,27; Zech 9:3,4; Ezek 26:12-15,19-21
27:35 Isa 23:6; Ezek 32:10; Ezek 26:15-18
27:36 Jer 18:16; Jer 19:8; Zeph 2:15
28:2 2 Thess 2:4; Mark 7:24; Rev 18:7
28:3 Rev 18:7; Dan 1:20; Dan 5:11,12
28:4 Ezek 29:3; Deut 8:17,18; Prov 18:11
28:5 Rev 18:7; Ps 62:10; Ezek 28:2
28:6 Rev 18:7; Ezek 28:2; Exod 9:17
28:7 Rev 18:7; Ezek 31:12; Ezek 30:11
28:8 Rev 18:7; Ezek 27:26,27,34; Ezek 32:18-30
28:9 Rev 18:7; Ezek 28:2; Ps 82:7
28:10 John 8:24; Ezek 31:18; Ezek 32:19,21,24-30
28:12 Ezek 19:1,14; Ezek 26:17; Ezek 27:2,32

27:25 *The ships of Tarshish were your carriers* Large ocean-going trading ships. Tyre was filled and heavy, like a ship loaded too deep.
27:26 *the east wind has broken you in the heart of the seas* The rowers took the proud, heavy ship into deep water, and the east wind, Babylon, broke it. Everything she carried went down with her (27:27).
27:29 *all who handle the oar, the mariners, all the sailors of the sea, shall come down from their ships* Sailors of other ships came ashore to mourn with dust, ashes, shaved heads and sackcloth.
27:32 *Who is like Tyre, like the one silenced in the midst of the sea* The busiest port in the world fell silent.
27:33 *you made rich the kings of the earth* Tyre's trade enriched the world's rulers, and its fall impoverished them.
27:36 *you have become terrors, and you shall be no more forever* Revelation 18 tells of Babylon the great's fall at the end of the age in words that echo this chapter: kings, merchants and sea captains mourning (Rev 18:9-19). Business is not evil, but a life built on wealth and pride will sink. Only what is built on God will last.
28:2 *I am a god; I sit in the seat of gods in the heart of the seas* The ruler of Tyre at this time was most likely Ethbaal (Ittobaal III), who reigned during Nebuchadnezzar's siege. His island city rising from the sea was like a throne, and many ancient kings claimed to be divine. God cuts him down in one line: you are a man and not a god.
28:3 *you are wiser than Daniel* Sarcasm. Daniel, Ezekiel's fellow exile, was already known for God-given wisdom (Dan 1:20; 2:48; 14:14). The king thought himself wiser still.
28:5 *your heart has been haughty in your wealth* Wisdom and wealth are God's gifts, but when we take credit for them they become a trap (Deut 8:17-18).
28:7 *the ruthless of the nations* The Babylonians (30:11; 31:12). They would profane the splendor he was so proud of.
28:9 *Will you really say, "I am a god," before him who kills you* With a sword at his throat he would not feel like a god. Death shows every man what he is.
28:10 *The deaths of the uncircumcised you shall die* Circumcision was the sign of God's covenant (Gen 17:10-11). To die as the uncircumcised was to die in shame, outside God's people. God opposes the proud (Jas 4:6).
28:12 *take up a lamentation over the king of Tyre* The title shifts from ruler to king, and the language rises far above any earthly ruler. Teachers read 28:11-19 two main ways. Many see Satan, the power behind the king, described here. Others read it as the human king in exalted poetry, compared with Adam in Eden or mocked through his own claims. Both views teach the danger of pride.
28:12 *You were a sealer of a pattern, full of wisdom and perfect of beauty* A seal stamped a pattern into clay. He was the model of perfection, the finished work.

full of wisdom and perfect of beauty. **13** In Eden, the garden of God, you were; every precious stone ***was*** your covering: ruby, topaz, and emerald, chrysolite, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, turquoise, and beryl, and gold; the workmanship of your tambourines and your settings ***was*** in you; on the day you were created they were prepared. **14** You ***were*** an outstretched cherub that covers, and I set you on the holy mountain of God; you were ***there***; in the midst of stones of fire you walked about. **15** You ***were*** blameless in your ways from the day you were created, until unrighteousness was found in you. **16** By the abundance of your trade they filled your midst ***with*** violence, and you sinned; and I profaned you from the mountain of God, and I destroyed you, covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. **17** Your heart was haughty because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor. On the ground I cast you; before kings I set you, for ***them*** to look at you. **18** By the abundance of your iniquities, by the unrighteousness of your trade, you profaned your sanctuaries; and I brought out fire from your midst; it has consumed you, and I have made you ashes on the earth in the eyes of all who see you. **19** All who know you among the peoples are appalled at you; you have become terrors, and you ***shall*** be no more forever.'"

Against Sidon

20 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **21** "Son of man, set your face toward Sidon (Tsidon), and prophesy against it, **22** and say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: Look, I ***am*** against you, Sidon, and I will be glorified in your midst; and they shall know that I ***am*** the LORD, when I execute judgments in it and show Myself holy in it. **23** And I will send pestilence into it and blood into its streets; and the slain shall fall in its midst by the sword ***that is*** against it all around; and they shall know that I ***am*** the LORD. **24** And there shall no longer be for the house of Israel (Yisra'el) a brier that pricks and a thorn that pains from all ***those*** around them who despise them; and they shall know that I ***am*** the Lord GOD. **25** Thus says the Lord GOD: When I gather the house of Israel from the peoples among whom they have been dispersed, and show Myself holy among them in the eyes of the nations, and they shall dwell on their soil which I gave to My servant, to Jacob (Ya'aqov). **26** And they shall dwell on it in security, and they shall build houses and plant vineyards; and they shall dwell in security, when I execute judgments on all who despise them from around them; and they shall know that I ***am*** the LORD their God.'"

EZEKIEL 29

Against Pharaoh the Great Monster

1 In the tenth year, in the tenth ***month***, on the twelfth of the month, the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **2** "Son of man, set your face against Pharaoh king of Egypt (Mitsrayim), and prophesy against him and against Egypt, all of it. **3** Speak and say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: Look, I ***am*** against you, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great monster lying in the midst of his streams, who has said, "My Nile (Ye'or) ***is***

28:13 Rev 21:19; Ezek 31:8,9; Gen 2:8
28:14 Exod 25:17-20; Exod 30:26; Exod 40:9
28:15 Ezek 28:3-6,12; Ezek 27:3,4; Ezek 28:17,18
28:16 2 Pet 2:4; Ezek 8:17; Hab 2:8,17
28:17 1 Cor 1:19; 1 Cor 1:20; Ezek 28:2,5
28:18 Rev 18:8; Mal 4:3; Amos 1:9,10,14
28:19 Rev 18:9; Ezek 27:35,36; Ps 76:12
28:21 Mark 7:24; Ezek 6:2; Gen 10:15
28:22 Mark 7:24; Ezek 39:13; Exod 14:4,17
28:23 Ezek 38:22; Ezek 5:12; Jer 15:2
28:24 Num 33:55; Josh 23:13; Isa 55:13
28:25 Ezek 20:41; Ezek 11:17; Ps 106:47
28:26 Ezek 28:24; Ezek 28:22,24; Ezek 38:8
29:1 Ezek 29:17; Ezek 26:1; Ezek 20:1
29:2 Ezek 6:2; Jer 44:30; Jer 46:2-16
29:3 Ezek 32:2; Isa 27:1; Jer 44:30

28:13 *In Eden, the garden of God, you were* On the first view, Satan in Eden, the ancient serpent (Gen 3; Rev 12:9). On the second, the king compared to Adam or boasting of his paradise. The nine stones are among the twelve on the high priest's breastplate (Exod 28:17-20). The words for tambourines and settings are uncertain.
28:14 *You were an outstretched cherub that covers* Cherubim stand closest to God's throne (1:5; 10:20), and covering cherubim spread their wings over the ark (Exod 25:20). On the first view, Satan's place before his fall as a guardian cherub in God's presence. On the second, the king's proud self-image.
28:15 *You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created, until unrighteousness was found in you* God did not make him evil. Everything God made was good (Gen 1:31). Jesus said the devil did not stand in the truth (John 8:44), which suggests he once did. Scripture tells us little about Satan's origin, and we should not say more than it does (Isa 14:12-15; 1 Tim 3:6).
28:16 *By the abundance of your trade they filled your midst with violence* This fits the merchant king of Tyre. Some who see Satan here think the word for trade, from a root meaning to go about, points to slander and scheming.
28:17 *Your heart was haughty because of your beauty* The root again: pride. Pride takes God's gifts and turns them into reasons to admire ourselves. Pride was the first sin and remains the root of many others (Jas 4:6).
28:18 *I brought out fire from your midst* The fire came from within, as sin destroys from the inside. Satan still deceives the world (Rev 12:9), but his doom is certain. Christ came to render him powerless through His death (Heb 2:14), and he will be cast into the lake of fire (Rev 20:10).
28:19 *you shall be no more forever* The covering cherub, created blameless, reached for God's place and was cast down. Jesus, existing in the form of God, humbled Himself to the cross and was exalted (Phil 2:6-11). The way up is down.
28:21 *set your face toward Sidon* Sidon, Tyre's older sister city about twenty miles north, was home to Jezebel (1 Kgs 16:31). Sidon later revolted against Persia and was destroyed in the middle of the 300s B.C.
28:22 *I will be glorified in your midst* Sidon completes six neighbors in chapters 25-28: Ammon, Moab, Edom, Philistia, Tyre and Sidon. With Egypt in chapters 29-32 they make seven nations, a picture of completeness.
28:24 *a brier that pricks and a thorn that pains* The nations around Israel had been thorns in her side, as Moses warned (Num 33:55). That would end.
28:25 *When I gather the house of Israel from the peoples* After judging the nations, God turns to Israel's future. The land was given to Jacob, His servant, and God has not taken it back (Rom 11:29).
28:26 *they shall build houses and plant vineyards; and they shall dwell in security* Pictures of settled peace (Isa 65:21). The return in 538 B.C. was a foretaste, but Israel did not live securely afterward. I believe this will be fully true when Christ returns and reigns (34:25-28; 37:21-28).
29:1 *In the tenth year, in the tenth month, on the twelfth of the month* About 587 B.C., in winter, during the siege of Jerusalem, likely when Pharaoh's army briefly drew Babylon away (Jer 37:5-7). Chapters 29-32 hold seven messages against Egypt.
29:2 *set your face against Pharaoh king of Egypt* The Pharaoh was Hophra, also called Apries, who reigned about 589 to 570 B.C. (Jer 44:30). Zedekiah was trusting him for help.
29:3 *the great monster lying in the midst of his streams* The word tannin can mean a great sea creature or dragon; here it most likely pictures the Nile crocodile. Pharaoh's sin was claiming the Nile as his own creation. Every crop and city depended on a river God made.

mine, and I made ***it*** for myself." **4** And I will put hooks in your jaws, and I will make the fish of your streams cling to your scales; and I will bring you up from the midst of your streams, and all the fish of your streams shall cling to your scales. **5** And I will abandon you to the wilderness, you and all the fish of your streams; on the surface of the field you shall fall; you shall not be brought in, and you shall not be gathered; to the living things of the earth and to the flying things of the heavens I have given you for food. **6** And all the inhabitants of Egypt shall know that I ***am*** the LORD, because they have been a staff of reed to the house of Israel (Yisra'el). **7** When they took hold of you by the hand, you were crushed and tore every shoulder of theirs; and when they leaned on you, you were broken and made all their hips stand ***still***. **8** Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Look, I ***am*** bringing a sword against you, and I will cut off from you man and animal. **9** And the land of Egypt shall become a desolation and a ruin; and they shall know that I ***am*** the LORD. Because he said, "Nile ***is*** mine, and I made ***it***," **10** therefore look, I ***am*** against you and against your streams, and I will make the land of Egypt ruins of waste, a desolation, from Migdol ***to*** Syene (Sevene), and to the border of Cush (Kush). **11** The foot of man shall not pass through it, and the foot of animal shall not pass through it, and it shall not be inhabited forty years. **12** And I will make the land of Egypt a desolation in the midst of lands made desolate, and its cities in the midst of cities laid waste shall be a desolation forty years; and I will disperse Egypt among the nations and scatter them among the lands. **13** For thus says the Lord GOD: At the end of forty years I will gather Egypt from the peoples where they were dispersed. **14** And I will turn back the captivity of Egypt and bring them back ***to*** the land of Pathros (Patros), to the land of their origin; and they shall be there a lowly kingdom. **15** It shall be lowlier than the kingdoms, and it shall not exalt itself again over the nations; and I will make them few, so that they shall not have dominion over the nations. **16** And it shall no longer be a confidence for the house of Israel, bringing iniquity to remembrance when they turn after them; and they shall know that I ***am*** the Lord GOD.'"

Egypt Given to Nebuchadnezzar

17 And it came about in the twenty-seventh year, in the first ***month***, on the first of the month, ***that*** the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **18** "Son of man, Nebuchadnezzar (Nevukhadretsar) king of Babylon (Bavel) made his army labor a great labor against Tyre (Tsor); every head was made bald, and every shoulder was rubbed bare; and ***there*** were no wages for him and for his army from Tyre for the labor which he labored against it. **19** Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Look, I ***am*** giving to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon the land of Egypt, and he shall carry off its multitude and plunder its spoil and take its plunder as spoil; and it shall be wages for his army. **20** ***As*** his recompense for which he labored, I have given him the land of Egypt, since they acted for Me, declares the Lord GOD. **21** On that day I will make a horn sprout for the house of Israel, and to you I will give an opening of the mouth in their midst; and they shall know that I ***am*** the LORD."

29:4 Ezek 38:4; 2 Kgs 19:28; Job 41:1,2
29:5 Rev 19:17; Ezek 32:4-6; Jer 8:2
29:6 2 Kgs 18:21; Isa 36:6; Ezek 28:22-24,26
29:7 Ezek 17:15-17; Jer 37:5-11; Ps 118:8,9
29:8 Ezek 14:17; Ezek 29:19,20; Ezek 30:4,10
29:9 Ezek 29:3; Prov 16:18; Prov 18:12
29:10 Ezek 30:12; Hab 3:8; Ezek 30:6-9
29:11 Ezek 32:13; Jer 43:11,12; Ezek 30:10-13
29:12 Ezek 30:7; Ezek 30:23; Jer 46:19
29:13 Isa 19:22; Jer 46:26
29:14 Ezek 30:14; Isa 11:11; Jer 44:1
29:15 Ezek 30:13; Zech 10:11; Ezek 17:6,14
29:16 Hos 8:13; Ezek 29:6,7; Isa 20:5
29:17 Ezek 29:1; Ezek 1:2
29:18 Matt 11:22; Jer 27:6; Ezek 26:7-12
29:19 Jer 43:10-13; Ezek 29:8-10; Ezek 30:10-12
29:20 Isa 10:6,7; Jer 25:9; Isa 45:1-3
29:21 Ps 132:17; Ezek 24:27; Ezek 33:22

29:4 *I will put hooks in your jaws* Crocodiles were caught with hooks. The fish clinging to its scales are Egypt's people, dragged out with their king.
29:5 *I will abandon you to the wilderness* To lie unburied was the worst disgrace. Hophra's own army revolted, Amasis took the throne, and Hophra was later killed, as Jeremiah foretold (Jer 44:30).
29:6 *they have been a staff of reed to the house of Israel* A Nile reed looks like a walking stick, but lean on it and it snaps (Isa 36:6). Egypt promised help and failed.
29:7 *when they leaned on you, you were broken* The splintered reed tore the hand and left the leaner falling. When we put the full weight of life on anything but God, it breaks.
29:9 *Because he said, "Nile is mine, and I made it,"* God repeats the boast because it is the reason for the judgment.
29:10 *from Migdol to Syene, and to the border of Cush* From the northern border to Aswan in the far south, the whole length of Egypt.
29:12 *shall be a desolation forty years* Hard to match fully with history. Nebuchadnezzar invaded Egypt about 568 B.C. (29:19), and some count the years of Babylonian domination until Persia rose. Others take forty as a round number for a generation of judgment (4:6; Num 14:34), and some see a future fulfillment (Dan 11:42-43).
29:14 *they shall be there a lowly kingdom* Pathros is Upper Egypt, the land of their origin. For two thousand years Egypt had been a great power. After this it never again ruled an empire, governed in turn by Persia, Greece and Rome.
29:16 *it shall no longer be a confidence for the house of Israel* The real point for Israel: Egypt would no longer tempt them to trust it instead of God. Yet God's plan for Egypt is not only judgment. One day He will say, Blessed be My people Egypt (Isa 19:25), which I believe will come in Messiah's kingdom.
29:17 *in the twenty-seventh year, in the first month, on the first of the month* About 571 B.C., sixteen years later and the latest dated message in the book.
29:18 *there were no wages for him and for his army from Tyre* The thirteen-year siege rubbed heads bald and shoulders raw. Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the mainland city, but the island submitted after its wealth was largely moved by sea, so there was little plunder. This is no failed prophecy. Chapter 26 said many nations would come in waves, and Alexander completed the work in 332 B.C.
29:19 *I am giving to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon the land of Egypt* A broken Babylonian tablet tells of a campaign against Egypt about 568 B.C. (Jer 43:10-13).
29:20 *since they acted for Me* Nebuchadnezzar was a pagan king, yet God paid him for serving His purpose. God used Assyria as His rod (Isa 10:5) and Cyrus as His shepherd (Isa 44:28). That does not excuse their sins, but shows that God rules the kings of the earth.
29:21 *I will make a horn sprout for the house of Israel* A horn pictures strength. God would renew Israel's strength, and many see a hint of the Messiah, the horn of salvation from David's house (Ps 132:17; Luke 1:69). Ezekiel's opening of the mouth means confident speech after his words came true.

EZEKIEL 30

The Day of the LORD on Egypt

1 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **2** "Son of man, prophesy and say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: Wail, "Alas for the day!" **3** For a day ***is*** near, and a day of the LORD ***is*** near; a day of clouds, a time of nations it shall be. **4** And a sword shall come on Egypt (Mitsrayim), and there shall be anguish in Cush (Kush), when the slain fall in Egypt, and they take away its multitude, and its foundations are torn down. **5** Cush and Put and Lud and all the mixed ***people***, and Libya (Kuv), and the sons of the land of the covenant with them shall fall by the sword. **6** Thus says the LORD: And those who support Egypt shall fall, and the pride of its strength shall come down; from Migdol ***to*** Syene (Sevene) they shall fall in it by the sword, declares the Lord GOD. **7** And they shall be desolate in the midst of lands made desolate, and its cities shall be in the midst of cities laid waste. **8** And they shall know that I ***am*** the LORD, when I set fire in Egypt and all its helpers are broken. **9** On that day messengers shall go out from before Me in ships to make secure Cush tremble; and there shall be anguish on them on the day of Egypt; for look, it is coming. **10** Thus says the Lord GOD: And I will put an end to the multitude of Egypt by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar (Nevukhadretsar) king of Babylon (Bavel). **11** He and his people with him, the ruthless of the nations, shall be brought in to destroy the land; and they shall draw their swords against Egypt and fill the land ***with*** the slain. **12** And I will make the streams dry ground, and I will sell the land into the hand of evil men; and I will make the land and its fullness desolate by the hand of strangers; I, the LORD, have spoken. **13** Thus says the Lord GOD: And I will destroy idols and make worthless idols cease from Memphis (Nof); and there shall no longer be a prince from the land of Egypt; and I will put fear in the land of Egypt. **14** And I will make Pathros (Patros) desolate, and set fire in Zoan (Tso'an), and execute judgments in Thebes (No). **15** And I will pour out My rage on Pelusium (Sin), the stronghold of Egypt, and cut off the multitude of Thebes. **16** And I will set fire in Egypt; Pelusium shall surely writhe, and Thebes shall be ***for*** breaking through, and Memphis ***shall have*** distresses by day. **17** The young men of On (Aven) and Pi-beseth (Pi-Veset) shall fall by the sword, and they shall go into captivity. **18** And in Tahpanhes (Techafneches) the day shall withhold ***its light***, when I break there the yoke bars of Egypt; and the pride of its strength shall cease in it; as for it, a cloud shall cover it, and its daughters shall go into captivity. **19** And I will execute judgments on Egypt, and they shall know that I ***am*** the LORD.'"

Pharaoh's Arms Broken

20 And it came about in the eleventh year, in the first ***month***, on the seventh of the month, ***that*** the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **21** "Son of man, the arm of Pharaoh king of Egypt I have broken; and look, it has not been bound up to give healings, to put a bandage to bind it, for it to be strong to wield the sword. **22** Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Look, I ***am*** against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and I will break his arms, the strong and the broken, and I will make the sword fall from his hand. **23** And I will disperse Egypt among the

30:2 Isa 13:6; Ezek 21:12; Isa 15:2
30:3 Phil 4:5; Rev 19:15; Ezek 7:7,12
30:4 Ezek 29:8; Isa 19:2; Jer 50:35-37
30:5 Acts 2:10; Jer 25:20,24; Ezek 27:10
30:6 Ezek 29:10; Isa 20:3-6; Job 9:13
30:7 Ezek 29:12; Jer 25:18-26; Ezek 32:18-32
30:8 Ezek 29:6,9,16; Ps 58:11; Ezek 30:14,16
30:9 1 Thess 5:2; Isa 18:1,2; Ezek 32:9,10
30:10 Ezek 29:4,5,19; Ezek 32:11-16; Ezek 30:24,25
30:11 Ezek 28:7; Ezek 31:12; Ezek 32:12
30:12 Ezek 29:3; Isa 19:4-10; Isa 44:27
30:13 Zech 10:11; Jer 2:16; Jer 46:14
30:14 Ezek 29:14; Jer 46:25; Ps 78:12,43
30:15 Ps 11:6; Nah 1:6; Rev 16:1
30:16 Ezek 30:8,9; Ezek 28:18
30:17 Gen 41:45
30:18 Acts 25:23; Ezek 30:3; Jer 2:16
30:19 Ezek 30:14; Ezek 5:8,15; Ezek 25:11
30:20 Ezek 26:1; Ezek 29:1,17; Ezek 1:2
30:21 Rev 18:21; Jer 30:13; Jer 46:11
30:22 Ezek 29:3; Ps 37:17; 2 Kgs 24:7
30:23 Ezek 30:17,18,26; Ezek 29:12,13

30:2 *Wail, "Alas for the day!"* The message to Egypt begins with a cry of grief.
30:3 *a day of the LORD is near; a day of clouds, a time of nations it shall be* The day of the LORD is when God acts openly in judgment. Here it is His judgment on Egypt, and also a preview of the final day of the LORD at the end of the age (Joel 2:31; Zeph 1:14-18; 1 Thess 5:2). A day of clouds pictures a storm about to break.
30:5 *the sons of the land of the covenant with them shall fall by the sword* Egypt's allies and hired troops from Africa and beyond would fall with her. The sons of the land of the covenant may be treaty allies, or the Jews who fled to Egypt against God's word (Jer 42-44).
30:6 *those who support Egypt shall fall* Egypt was the helper Judah wanted, and Egypt's own helpers would fall. From Migdol to Syene means the whole land, north to south (29:10).
30:9 *messengers shall go out from before Me in ships to make secure Cush tremble* Cush felt safe far up the Nile, but news of Egypt's fall would come by boat.
30:10 *by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon* God names His instrument for this day of the LORD.
30:12 *I will make the streams dry ground* Pharaoh claimed the Nile as his own (29:3). God can dry it up (Isa 19:5-6). God sells the land to strangers, as a master sells off what is his.
30:13 *I will destroy idols and make worthless idols cease from Memphis* Memphis was the ancient capital of Lower Egypt, full of temples. Egypt's gods were judged as at the exodus (Exod 12:12). No prince from Egypt would rule an empire again.
30:14 *I will make Pathros desolate, and set fire in Zoan, and execute judgments in Thebes* A roll call of Egypt's great cities. Pathros is Upper Egypt; Zoan, or Tanis, an important city in the delta; Thebes the great southern capital and center of the god Amon.
30:15 *Pelusium, the stronghold of Egypt* A fortress on the eastern border that guarded the way into Egypt from the north. Aven is On, or Heliopolis, center of sun worship (30:17).
30:18 *in Tahpanhes the day shall withhold its light* Tahpanhes was a border city where the Jewish refugees went (Jer 43:7). The yoke bars of Egypt are its power over other nations. Every city was a center of Egypt's pride and worship, and not one would escape.
30:20 *in the eleventh year, in the first month, on the seventh of the month* About 587 B.C., in spring, three months after 29:1.
30:21 *the arm of Pharaoh king of Egypt I have broken* The arm stands for strength in battle. This most likely points to Hophra's army being driven back when it tried to relieve Jerusalem (Jer 37:5-7). It would not be bandaged and healed.
30:22 *I will break his arms, the strong and the broken* One arm was already broken, and the other would be too. Egypt would never again be a great military power.

nations and scatter them among the lands. **24** And I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon and put My sword in his hand; and I will break the arms of Pharaoh, and he shall groan the groans of a wounded ***man*** before him. **25** And I will make strong the arms of the king of Babylon, and the arms of Pharaoh shall fall; and they shall know that I ***am*** the LORD, when I put My sword into the hand of the king of Babylon and he stretches it out against the land of Egypt. **26** And I will disperse Egypt among the nations and scatter them among the lands; and they shall know that I ***am*** the LORD."

EZEKIEL 31

Pharaoh the Fallen Cedar

1 And it came about in the eleventh year, in the third ***month***, on the first of the month, ***that*** the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **2** "Son of man, say to Pharaoh king of Egypt (Mitsrayim) and to his multitude: Whom are you like in your greatness? **3** Look, Assyria (Ashur) ***was*** a cedar in Lebanon (Levanon), beautiful of branches, and a forest giving shade, and tall of height; and its treetop was among the thick foliage. **4** The waters made it grow; the deep raised it up, with its rivers going around its planting place, and it sent out its channels to all the trees of the field. **5** Therefore its height was taller than all the trees of the field, and its boughs became great, and its limbs became long, from many waters when it sent ***them*** out. **6** In its boughs every bird of the heavens made nests, and under its limbs every animal of the field gave birth, and in its shade all great nations dwelt. **7** And it was beautiful in its greatness, in the length of its shoots, for its root was by many waters. **8** Cedars in the garden of God did not eclipse it; cypresses were not like its boughs, and plane trees were not like its limbs; no tree in the garden of God was like it in its beauty. **9** I made it beautiful in the abundance of its shoots, and all the trees of Eden which ***were*** in the garden of God envied it. **10** Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Because you were tall in height, and it set its treetop among the thick foliage, and its heart was lifted up in its height, **11** I will give it into the hand of a mighty one of nations; he shall surely deal with it; according to its wickedness I have driven it out. **12** And strangers, the ruthless ones of nations, cut it down and abandoned it; on the mountains and in all the valleys its shoots have fallen, and its limbs were broken in all the ravines of the land; and all the peoples of the earth went down from its shade and abandoned it. **13** On its fallen trunk every bird of the heavens dwells, and on its limbs every animal of the field is, **14** so that no trees of ***the*** water may be lifted up in their height, and may not set their treetop among the thick foliage, and their mighty ones may not stand in their height, all drinkers of water; for all of them have been given to death, to the lowest earth, in the midst of the sons of man, with those who go down to ***the*** pit. **15** Thus says the Lord GOD: On the day it went down to Sheol I caused mourning; I covered the deep over it, and I withheld its rivers, and many waters were restrained; and I made Lebanon mourn for it, and all the trees of the field ***were*** faint over it. **16** At the sound of its downfall I made nations tremble, when I brought it down to Sheol with those who go down to ***the*** pit; and they were comforted in the lowest earth, all the trees of Eden, the choicest and ***the*** best of Lebanon, all drinkers of water. **17** They also went down with it to Sheol, to the slain of ***the*** sword; and its arm, they dwelt in its shade

30:24 Zeph 2:12; Neh 6:9; Isa 45:1,5
30:25 Ezek 30:19,26; Ezek 29:16,21; Ezek 32:15
30:26 Ezek 29:12; Ezek 30:17,18,23; Ezek 6:13
31:1 Ezek 30:20; Jer 52:5,6; Ezek 1:2
31:2 Ezek 29:19; Ezek 30:10; Ezek 31:18
31:3 Mark 4:32; Isa 10:33,34; Dan 4:10,20-23
31:4 Mark 4:32; Ezek 17:5,8; Rev 17:1,15
31:5 Mark 4:32; Dan 4:11; Ps 37:35,36
31:6 Matt 13:32; Mark 4:32; Luke 13:19
31:7 Mark 4:32
31:8 Ezek 28:13; Gen 13:10; Ps 80:10
31:9 Ezek 16:14; Exod 9:16; Ps 75:6,7
31:10 Ezek 28:17; Dan 5:20; 2 Chr 32:25
31:11 Ezek 32:11,12; Dan 5:18,19; Deut 18:12
31:12 Ezek 28:7; Ezek 30:11; Hab 1:6,11
31:13 Rev 19:17; Rev 19:18; Ezek 32:4
31:14 Ps 82:7; Deut 13:11; Deut 21:21
31:15 Rev 18:9; Nah 2:8-10; Mal 3:4
31:16 Rev 18:9; Rev 18:21; Rev 18:22
31:17 Ps 9:17; Ezek 31:3,6; Ezek 32:20-30

30:24 *I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon and put My sword in his hand* The heart of the message. Babylon was strong because God made it strong, and it carried God's sword.
30:26 *I will disperse Egypt among the nations* Nations rise and fall by God's hand. He removes kings and sets up kings (Dan 2:21). Empires that seem unbeatable are broken in a generation. Our hope is not in any nation but in the kingdom that cannot be shaken (Heb 12:28).
31:1 *in the eleventh year, in the third month, on the first of the month* About 587 B.C., in early summer, about two months before Jerusalem fell.
31:2 *Whom are you like in your greatness* Egypt thought itself unmatched. God answers with a picture from recent history.
31:3 *Assyria was a cedar in Lebanon* Lebanon's cedar was the tallest, grandest tree Israel knew. Assyria had been the greatest empire of its day. Some scholars read the word as a kind of tree, so that the cedar is Egypt itself; either way the point is the same.
31:4 *The waters made it grow* Assyria lay along the Tigris and Euphrates, and its wealth came from those rivers, as Egypt's came from the Nile.
31:6 *in its shade all great nations dwelt* Like the tree in Nebuchadnezzar's dream (Dan 4:10-12), the empire gave shelter to many peoples.
31:8 *Cedars in the garden of God did not eclipse it* Ezekiel uses the language of Eden: no tree in God's garden matched it.
31:9 *I made it beautiful in the abundance of its shoots* God made Assyria great. Its power did not come from itself. There is no authority except from God (Rom 13:1).
31:10 *its heart was lifted up in its height* The same sin as Tyre (28:2, 17) and Pharaoh (29:3). Isaiah records Assyria's boast of its own strength and wisdom (Isa 10:12-14).
31:11 *I will give it into the hand of a mighty one of nations* Babylon. In 612 B.C. the Babylonians and Medes destroyed Nineveh, and Assyria ended about 609 B.C., even as Pharaoh Neco marched to help it (2 Kgs 23:29).
31:12 *strangers, the ruthless ones of nations, cut it down and abandoned it* The great tree lay broken across the mountains and valleys.
31:13 *On its fallen trunk every bird of the heavens dwells* The birds that once nested in it now perch on its fallen trunk. Nations that sheltered under Assyria now picked over its remains.
31:14 *so that no trees of the water may be lifted up in their height* God brought Assyria down as a lesson for every proud nation. No tree should think itself too tall to fall.
31:15 *On the day it went down to Sheol I caused mourning* Sheol is the place of the dead. The New Testament shows different conditions there for the righteous and the wicked (Luke 16:22-26). The picture of nations in Sheol is poetry for fallen empires.
31:16 *they were comforted in the lowest earth* The fallen trees below found grim comfort that even the greatest had joined them. If Assyria could fall, who was safe?
31:17 *its arm, they dwelt in its shade* Assyria's allies who lived in its shade went down with it.

in the midst of the nations. **18** Whom are you like thus in glory and in greatness among the trees of Eden? And you shall be brought down with the trees of Eden to the lowest earth; in the midst of ***the*** uncircumcised you shall lie, with the slain of ***the*** sword. That ***is*** Pharaoh and all his multitude, declares the Lord GOD."

EZEKIEL 32

A Lament Over Pharaoh

1 And it came about in the twelfth year, in the twelfth month, on the first of the month, ***that*** the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **2** "Son of man, take up a lamentation over Pharaoh king of Egypt (Mitsrayim), and you shall say to him: You have been likened ***to*** a young lion of nations, and you ***were*** like the sea monster in the seas; and you burst forth in your rivers, and you made the waters turbid with your feet, and you fouled their rivers. **3** Thus says the Lord GOD: And I will spread My net over you with a company of many peoples, and they shall bring you up in My net. **4** And I will abandon you on the land; on the surface of the field I will throw you; and I will cause every bird of the heavens to settle on you, and I will satisfy the animals of all the earth from you. **5** And I will put your flesh on the mountains, and I will fill the valleys ***with*** your height. **6** And I will make the land drink your outflow, from your blood, to the mountains; and the ravines shall be filled from you. **7** And when I extinguish you, I will cover ***the*** heavens and darken their stars; the sun I will cover with the cloud, and the moon shall not make its light shine. **8** All the luminaries of light in the heavens I will darken over you, and I will put darkness over your land, declares the Lord GOD. **9** And I will disturb the heart of many peoples, when I bring your breaking among the nations, to lands which you have not known. **10** And I will make many peoples appalled over you, and their kings shall shudder ***with*** shuddering over you, when I brandish My sword before their faces; and they shall tremble at every moment, each man for his life, on the day of your downfall. **11** For thus says the Lord GOD: The sword of the king of Babylon (Bavel) shall come upon you. **12** By the swords of mighty men I will make your multitude fall, the ruthless ones of nations, all of them; and they shall devastate the pride of Egypt, and all its multitude shall be destroyed. **13** And I will destroy all its livestock from beside many waters; and the foot of man shall not make them turbid again, and the hooves of livestock shall not make them turbid. **14** Then I will make their waters settle, and I will make their rivers go like oil, declares the Lord GOD. **15** When I make the land of Egypt a desolation, and the land ***is*** made desolate of its fullness, when I strike down all who dwell in it, and they shall know that I ***am*** the LORD. **16** It ***is*** a lamentation, and they shall chant it; the daughters of the nations shall chant it; over Egypt and over all its multitude they shall chant it, declares the Lord GOD."

Egypt Goes Down to the Pit

17 And it came about in the twelfth year, on the fifteenth of the month, ***that*** the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **18** "Son of man, wail over the multitude of Egypt, and bring it down, it and the daughters of majestic nations, to the earth of the lowest parts, with those who go down to ***the*** pit. **19** Than whom are you more lovely? Go down, and be laid with ***the*** uncircumcised. **20** In the midst of the slain of ***the*** sword they shall fall; a sword has been given; draw it down, and all its multitudes. **21** The mighty ones of the mighty men shall speak to him from the midst of Sheol with his helpers: they have gone down, they lie, the uncircumcised, the slain

31:18 Ezek 32:19; Ezek 28:10; Ezek 31:2
32:1 Ezek 32:17; Ezek 30:20; Ezek 1:2
32:2 Ezek 29:3; Ezek 27:2,32; Nah 2:11-13
32:3 Ezek 12:13; Ezek 17:20; Eccl 9:12
32:4 Rev 19:17; Isa 18:6; Ezek 29:5
32:6 Rev 16:6; Isa 34:3,7; Exod 7:17
32:7 Matt 24:29; Mark 13:24; Rev 8:12
32:8 Matt 24:29; Luke 21:25; Rev 8:12
32:9 Rev 18:9; Rev 18:10-15; Rev 11:18
32:10 Rev 18:10; Rev 18:9; Ezek 27:35
32:11 Ezek 26:7; Ezek 30:4,22-25; Jer 43:10
32:12 Ezek 28:7; Ezek 31:11; Ezek 29:19
32:13 Ezek 29:11; Ezek 29:8; Ezek 30:12
32:15 Ezek 6:7; Exod 7:5; Exod 14:4,18
32:16 Ezek 32:2; Ezek 26:17; 2 Sam 1:17
32:17 Ezek 32:1; Ezek 1:2
32:18 Ezek 31:14; Ezek 32:2,16; Mic 1:8
32:19 Ezek 31:2,18; Ezek 32:21,24,29,30; Ezek 28:10
32:20 Ps 28:3; Ezek 32:23-26,29,30; Ezek 29:8-12
32:21 Isa 14:9,10; Ezek 32:27; Isa 1:31

31:18 *Whom are you like thus in glory and in greatness among the trees of Eden* Now Pharaoh knows the answer: he is like Assyria and will fall the same way. Every earthly power is temporary, and pride goes before a fall (Prov 16:18). Compare God's tender shoot planted on His mountain, which becomes a cedar that will stand forever (17:22-24).
32:1 *in the twelfth year, in the twelfth month, on the first of the month* About 585 B.C., in early spring, more than a year after Jerusalem fell. This funeral song was sung over Pharaoh while he still lived.
32:2 *You have been likened to a young lion of nations* Pharaoh liked to see himself as a lion among nations. God says he was really a sea monster thrashing in the waters, muddying the streams.
32:3 *I will spread My net over you with a company of many peoples* Hunters caught great river creatures with nets. God's net is Babylon and its allies (32:11).
32:4 *I will abandon you on the land* As in 29:5, the monster dragged from the water and left for birds and beasts.
32:7 *the sun I will cover with the cloud, and the moon shall not make its light shine* The prophets' language for the day of the LORD (Isa 13:10; Joel 2:31), used by Jesus of the final day (Matt 24:29). For Egypt it struck home: their chief god was Ra, the sun, and Pharaoh was called his son. It recalls the ninth plague (Exod 10:22).
32:9 *I will disturb the heart of many peoples* News of Egypt's fall would reach lands Egypt had never known, and kings would shudder.
32:11 *The sword of the king of Babylon shall come upon you* God names the net plainly.
32:13 *the foot of man shall not make them turbid again* With people and cattle gone, the muddied waters would lie still.
32:14 *I will make their rivers go like oil* Smooth, silent, lifeless rivers, a picture of a land emptied.
32:16 *the daughters of the nations shall chant it* Women were often the professional mourners (Jer 9:17). The nations would sing Egypt's funeral song.
32:17 *in the twelfth year, on the fifteenth of the month* The month is not given, probably two weeks after 32:1. The last message against Egypt follows it down to the grave.
32:18 *bring it down* Ezekiel's word was to send Egypt down, so sure was the judgment, to the lowest parts with those who go to the pit.
32:19 *Than whom are you more lovely* Egypt thought itself more beautiful than all. God says go down and lie with the uncircumcised, the shamed and unclean.
32:21 *The mighty ones of the mighty men shall speak to him from the midst of Sheol* The great warriors already there greet Pharaoh, as in Isaiah's song over Babylon's king (Isa 14:9-11). This is a funeral song in poetry, not a map of the afterlife, but death and judgment are real (Heb 9:27).

of ***the*** sword. **22** Assyria (Ashur) ***is*** there and all its company; its graves ***are*** around it; all of them ***are*** slain, fallen by the sword, **23** whose graves have been put in the remotest parts of ***the*** pit; and its company was around its grave; all of them ***are*** slain, fallen by the sword, who put terror in the land of the living. **24** Elam ***is*** there and all its multitude around its grave; all of them ***are*** slain, fallen by the sword, who went down uncircumcised to the earth of the lowest parts, who put their terror in the land of the living; and they have borne their disgrace with those who go down to ***the*** pit. **25** In the midst of ***the*** slain they have made a bed for it with all its multitude; its graves ***are*** around it; all of them ***are*** uncircumcised, slain of ***the*** sword; for their terror was put in the land of the living, and they have borne their disgrace with those who go down to ***the*** pit; in the midst of ***the*** slain it has been put. **26** Meshech (Meshekh), Tubal (Tuval), and all its multitude ***are*** there; its graves ***are*** around it; all of them ***are*** uncircumcised, pierced of ***the*** sword, for they put their terror in the land of the living. **27** And they do not lie with the mighty men, the fallen from ***the*** uncircumcised, who went down to Sheol with their weapons of war; and they put their swords under their heads, and their iniquities were on their bones; for the terror of mighty men ***was*** in the land of the living. **28** And you, in the midst of ***the*** uncircumcised you shall be broken, and you shall lie with the slain of ***the*** sword. **29** Edom ***is*** there, its kings and all its princes, who have been put in their might with the slain of ***the*** sword; they shall lie with ***the*** uncircumcised and with those who go down to ***the*** pit. **30** The chiefs of the north ***are*** there, all of them, and every Sidonian, who went down with the slain in their terror, being ashamed of their might; and they lay uncircumcised with the slain of ***the*** sword, and they have borne their disgrace with those who go down to ***the*** pit. **31** Pharaoh shall see them, and he shall be comforted over all his multitude, the slain of ***the*** sword, Pharaoh and all his army, declares the Lord GOD. **32** For I have put My terror in the land of the living, and he shall be laid in the midst of ***the*** uncircumcised with the slain of ***the*** sword, Pharaoh and all his multitude, declares the Lord GOD."

EZEKIEL 33

The Watchman Again

1 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **2** "Son of man, speak to the sons of your people, and you shall say to them: A land, when I bring a sword upon it, and the people of the land take a man, one from their borders, and set him for themselves as a watchman, **3** and he sees the sword coming upon the land, and he blows on the trumpet and warns the people, **4** and the one who hears hears the sound of the trumpet and does not take warning, and the sword comes and takes him away, his blood shall be on his head. **5** He heard the sound of the trumpet and did not take warning; his blood shall be on him. And he who took warning delivered his soul. **6** And the watchman, if he sees the sword coming and does not blow on the trumpet, and the people are not warned, and the sword comes and takes away a soul from them, he is taken away in his iniquity, and his blood I will require from the hand of the watchman. **7** And you, son of man, I have appointed you a watchman for the house of Israel (Yisra'el); and you shall hear a word from My mouth, and you shall warn them from Me. **8** When I say to the wicked ***man***, 'O wicked ***man***, you shall surely die,' and you do not speak to warn the wicked ***man*** from his way, that wicked ***man*** shall die in his iniquity, and his blood I will require from your hand. **9** And you, if you warn the wicked ***man*** from his way to turn back from it, and he does not turn back from his way, he shall die in his iniquity, and you have delivered your soul.

32:22 Ezek 32:24,26,29,30; Ezek 31:3-18; Num 24:24
32:23 Ezek 26:20; Ezek 26:17,20; Ps 27:13
32:24 Gen 10:22; Jer 49:34-39; Ezek 32:18,21
32:25 Ps 139:8; Rev 2:22; Ezek 32:19,21
32:26 Ezek 27:13; Gen 10:2,12; Ezek 38:2,3
32:27 Isa 14:18,19; Ezek 32:21; Job 3:13-15
32:28 Dan 2:34,35
32:29 Jer 49:7-22; Ezek 25:1-17; Ezek 35:1-15
32:30 Ezek 38:6,15; Ezek 39:2; Ezek 32:24,25
32:31 Ezek 31:16; Ezek 14:22; Lam 2:13
32:32 Ezek 32:27; Gen 35:5; Job 31:23
33:2 Acts 20:26; Ezek 3:11,27; Ezek 33:17,30
33:3 Acts 20:26; 1 Cor 14:11; 1 Cor 14:21
33:4 Acts 20:26; Ezek 18:13; 2 Chr 25:16
33:5 Acts 20:26; Exod 9:19-21; Heb 11:7
33:6 Acts 20:26; Ezek 3:18-20; Ezek 33:8,9
33:7 Acts 20:26; Acts 20:27; Jer 26:2
33:8 Acts 20:26; Acts 20:27; Ezek 33:14
33:9 Acts 13:46; John 8:24; Acts 20:26

32:22 *Assyria is there and all its company* The great tree of chapter 31, fallen by the sword. Each nation is named with the same grim refrain.
32:24 *Elam is there and all its multitude around its grave* Elam lay east of Babylon in what is now western Iran, famous for its archers (Jer 49:35).
32:26 *Meshech, Tubal, and all its multitude are there* Fierce peoples of the north, in what is now Turkey (27:13). Again and again: they put terror in the land of the living. Those who ruled by fear ended in the pit.
32:27 *they put their swords under their heads* Warriors of old were buried with honor and their weapons. These lay in disgrace. Some translations read it as a question; either way their might could not save them.
32:29 *Edom is there, its kings and all its princes* Edom, which gloated over Judah's fall (25:12-14), lay there too.
32:30 *The chiefs of the north are there, all of them, and every Sidonian* Assyria and Elam to the east, Meshech and Tubal to the north, Edom to the south, Sidon to the northwest. Egypt would join them all.
32:31 *Pharaoh shall see them, and he shall be comforted* Only the bitter comfort of knowing he was not alone in ruin.
32:32 *I have put My terror in the land of the living* The last word. These nations spread their terror, but the final terror was God's. So ends chapters 25-32: God is Lord of all nations, and pride is the root sin. Chapter 33 brings the news of Jerusalem's fall, and the message turns to hope.
33:2 *when I bring a sword upon it* The second half of Ezekiel opens by renewing his watchman charge. A city chose a man to watch the borders and blow the trumpet. Babylon was only the instrument; the judgment was the LORD's.
33:4 *his blood shall be on his head* If a man hears the trumpet and ignores it, his death is his own fault.
33:5 *he who took warning delivered his soul* The warning was given so people could escape. God warns because He wants people to live.
33:6 *he is taken away in his iniquity* If the watchman keeps quiet, those who die are still sinners justly judged, but the watchman shares the guilt.
33:7 *I have appointed you a watchman for the house of Israel* Repeated from 3:17 because the message was about to turn from judgment to hope, but the office stays the same. As there, this is about Ezekiel's accountability as a prophet to Israel, not a teaching that believers can lose salvation (John 10:28).

Why Will You Die?

10 And you, son of man, say to the house of Israel: Thus you have spoken, saying, 'Surely our transgressions and our sins ***are*** on us, and in them we are wasting away; and how shall we live?' **11** Say to them, '***As*** I live, declares the Lord GOD, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked ***man***, but in a wicked ***man*** turning back from his way, and ***that*** he live. Turn back, turn back from your evil ways! And why will you die, O house of Israel?' **12** And you, son of man, say to the sons of your people: The righteousness of the righteous ***man*** shall not deliver him on the day of his transgression; and ***as for*** the wickedness of the wicked ***man***, he shall not stumble by it on the day he turns back from his wickedness; and a righteous ***man*** shall not be able to live by it on the day he sins. **13** When I say to the righteous ***man***, 'He shall surely live,' and he trusts in his righteousness and does injustice, all his ***acts of*** righteousness shall not be remembered; and in his injustice which he has done, in it he shall die. **14** And when I say to the wicked ***man***, 'You shall surely die,' and he turns back from his sin and does justice and righteousness, **15** ***if*** a wicked ***man*** returns a pledge, repays robbery, walks in the statutes of life so as not to do injustice, he shall surely live; he shall not die. **16** All his sins which he has sinned shall not be remembered against him; he has done justice and righteousness; he shall surely live. **17** And the sons of your people say, 'The way of the Lord is not right'; and ***as for*** them, their way is not right. **18** When a righteous ***man*** turns back from his righteousness and does injustice, and he shall die in them. **19** And when a wicked ***man*** turns back from his wickedness and does justice and righteousness, by them he shall live. **20** And you say, 'The way of the Lord is not right.' Each man according to his ways I will judge you, O house of Israel."

The City Has Been Struck

21 And it came about in the twelfth year of our exile, in the tenth ***month***, on the fifth of the month, ***that*** the escapee from Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) came to me, saying, "The city has been struck." **22** And the hand of the LORD had been upon me in the evening, before the escapee came; and He opened my mouth by the time he came to me in the morning; and my mouth was opened, and I was no longer mute. **23** And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **24** "Son of man, those who dwell in these waste places on the soil of Israel are saying, 'Abraham (Avraham) was one, and he possessed the land; and we ***are*** many; to us the land has been given for a possession.' **25** Therefore say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: You eat with the blood, and you lift up your eyes to your idols, and you shed blood; and shall you possess the land? **26** You have stood on your sword; you have done abomination, and each man has defiled the wife of his neighbor; and shall you possess the land?' **27** Thus you shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: ***As*** I live, surely those who ***are*** in the waste places shall fall by the sword, and him who ***is*** on the surface of the field I will give to the animals to eat him, and those who ***are*** in the strongholds and in the caves shall die by pestilence. **28** And I will make the land a desolation and a waste, and the pride of its strength shall cease, and the mountains of Israel shall be desolate, with no one passing through. **29** And they shall know that I ***am*** the LORD, when I make the land a desolation and a waste because of all their abominations which they have done.' **30** And you, son of man, the sons of your people who are speaking together

33:10 Ezek 24:23; Lev 26:39; Ezek 37:11
33:11 1 Tim 2:4; 2 Pet 3:9; Acts 3:19
33:12 2 Chr 7:14; Ezek 33:18; Ezek 18:21,27-32
33:13 Ezek 18:24; Heb 10:38; Ezek 3:20
33:14 Ezek 18:27; Ezek 33:8; Jer 18:7,8
33:15 Ezek 20:11,13,21; Luke 19:8; Exod 22:1-4
33:16 Ezek 18:22; Isa 43:25; Isa 1:18
33:17 Ezek 18:25,29; Ezek 33:20; Job 35:2
33:18 Ezek 33:12,13; Ezek 18:26,27; 2 Pet 2:20-22
33:19 Ezek 33:14; Ezek 18:27,28
33:20 Rev 20:13; Ezek 18:25,29; Ezek 33:17
33:21 Ezek 1:2; Ezek 24:26,27; 2 Kgs 24:4-7
33:22 Ezek 1:3; Ezek 3:26,27; Ezek 37:1
33:24 Luke 3:8; Matt 3:9; Rom 4:12
33:25 Gen 9:4; Deut 12:16; Jer 7:9,10
33:26 Rev 21:27; Gen 27:40; Mic 2:1,2
33:27 Jer 42:22; 1 Sam 13:6; Ezek 39:4
33:28 Ezek 7:24; Ezek 6:14; Jer 44:2,6,22
33:29 Ezek 6:7; Ezek 7:27; Ezek 23:49
33:30 Matt 15:8; Isa 29:13; Isa 58:2

33:10 *in them we are wasting away; and how shall we live* Something new. For years the exiles blamed their fathers (18:2) and called God unfair (18:25). Now they admit their sin, but they are close to despair. Conviction of sin is a step toward God; despair is a step away from Him.
33:11 *I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked man* God swears by His own life, since there is none greater (Heb 6:13). He will judge sin, but His heart is for the sinner to turn and live. The Hebrew shuv means to turn around and go back. Why will you die is a Father's cry. The Lord is patient, not wishing any to perish (2 Pet 3:9; 1 Tim 2:4).
33:12 *The righteousness of the righteous man shall not deliver him on the day of his transgression* A past record will not save one who turns to sin now, and a past record of sin need not condemn one who turns to God.
33:13 *he trusts in his righteousness and does injustice* The trap: thinking a good record has earned the right to sin. The same teaching as 3:20 and 18:24. Trusting our own righteousness is always a mistake.
33:15 *if a wicked man returns a pledge, repays robbery* Turning is practical. He gives back what he took and walks in God's statutes, as Zacchaeus did (Luke 19:8).
33:16 *All his sins which he has sinned shall not be remembered against him* God does not keep the old record on file to pull out later.
33:17 *as for them, their way is not right* We sometimes want God to grade us on our past or on how we compare to others. He looks at where each of us stands with Him now. That is not unfair; it is merciful.
33:21 *the escapee from Jerusalem came to me, saying, "The city has been struck."* About 585 B.C. Jerusalem fell in 586 B.C. and was burned (2 Kgs 25:8-10), and the journey of about nine hundred miles took months. The whole first half of the book builds to this moment. The false prophets said Jerusalem would stand; Ezekiel's word came true.
33:22 *He opened my mouth by the time he came to me in the morning* The silence of 3:26 and 24:27 ended. On the morning the exiles learned their city and temple were gone, God opened His prophet's mouth to begin speaking hope.
33:24 *Abraham was one, and he possessed the land* Those left in Judah's ruins reasoned that if one man got the land, many would surely keep it. It sounded like faith, but Abraham received the land by promise and believed God (Gen 15:6-7). They wanted the promise without the God of the promise.
33:25 *You eat with the blood, and you lift up your eyes to your idols, and you shed blood* They broke the law (Lev 17:10-14), worshiped idols and committed murder. Jeremiah shows what followed: Gedaliah was murdered, and they fled to Egypt (Jer 40-44). It is possible to quote God's promises while living in open rebellion (Matt 3:9).
33:27 *those who are in the waste places shall fall by the sword* An oath of judgment. The fall of the city had not changed their hearts.
33:30 *the sons of your people who are speaking together about you beside the walls* With his words proven true, Ezekiel became popular. People invited one another to come hear him.

about you beside the walls and in the doorways of the houses, and one speaks with one, each man with his brother, saying, 'Come now, and hear what the word ***is*** that comes out from the LORD.' **31** And they come to you as a people comes, and they sit before you ***as*** My people, and they hear your words, and they do not do them; for ***with*** lustful desires in their mouth they are doing, ***and*** their heart is going after their unjust gain. **32** And look, you ***are*** to them like a song of lustful desires, beautiful of voice and doing well ***at*** playing; and they hear your words, and they are not doing them. **33** And when it comes, look, it is coming, and they shall know that a prophet has been in their midst."

EZEKIEL 34

Woe to the Shepherds of Israel

1 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **2** "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel (Yisra'el); prophesy, and you shall say to them, to the shepherds, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: Woe ***to*** the shepherds of Israel who have been shepherding themselves! Should not the shepherds shepherd the flock? **3** You eat the fat, and you clothe yourselves ***with*** the wool; you slaughter the fat ***ones***; the flock you do not shepherd. **4** The weak you have not strengthened, and the sick you have not healed, and the broken you have not bound up, and the strayed you have not brought back, and the lost you have not sought; and with force you have ruled them, and with harshness. **5** And they have been scattered because ***there was*** no shepherd, and they have become food for every animal of the field, and they have been scattered. **6** My flock wanders over all the mountains and on every high hill; and over all the surface of the earth My flock has been scattered, and there is no one searching and no one seeking. **7** Therefore, O shepherds, hear the word of the LORD: **8** ***As*** I live, declares the Lord GOD, surely because My flock has become prey, and My flock has become food for every animal of the field, because ***there is*** no shepherd, and My shepherds have not searched for My flock, and the shepherds have shepherded themselves, and My flock they have not shepherded, **9** therefore, O shepherds, hear the word of the LORD: **10** Thus says the Lord GOD: Look, I ***am*** against the shepherds, and I will require My flock from their hand, and I will make them cease from shepherding ***the*** flock, and the shepherds shall not shepherd themselves again; and I will deliver My flock from their mouth, and they shall not be food for them.

God Seeks His Sheep

11 For thus says the Lord GOD: Look, I, I Myself, will search for My flock and seek them out. **12** As a shepherd seeks out his flock on the day he is in the midst of his scattered sheep, so I will seek out My flock, and I will deliver them from all the places where they were scattered there on a day of cloud and thick darkness. **13** And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the lands, and I will bring them to their own ground; and I will shepherd them on the mountains of Israel, by the ravines, and in all the habitable places of the land. **14** In good pasture I will shepherd them, and on the mountains of the height of Israel shall be their pastureland; there they shall lie down in good pastureland, and ***in*** rich pasture they shall graze on the mountains of Israel. **15** I Myself will shepherd My flock, and I Myself will make them lie down, declares the Lord GOD. **16** The lost I will seek, and the strayed I will bring back, and the broken I will bind up, and the sick I will strengthen; and the fat and the strong I will destroy; I will shepherd it with justice.

33:31 Acts 10:33; Matt 13:20; Matt 15:8
33:32 Mark 4:16; Matt 13:20; Mark 6:20
33:33 Jer 28:9; Ezek 2:5; 1 Sam 3:19,20
34:2 Jer 23:1; Jer 3:15; Jude 1:12
34:3 Matt 9:36; Zech 11:5,16; Isa 56:11,12
34:4 Matt 9:36; Ezek 34:16; Zech 11:15,16
34:5 Matt 9:36; Matt 26:31; 1 Kgs 22:17
34:6 Matt 9:36; Matt 26:31; 1 Pet 2:25
34:7 Ezek 34:9; Ps 82:1-7; Isa 1:10
34:8 Jude 1:12; Luke 2:8; Ezek 34:5,6,31
34:10 Ezek 13:8; Jer 21:13; Zech 10:3
34:11 Luke 15:4; John 10:11; Luke 19:10
34:12 John 10:11; Luke 15:4; Acts 2:19
34:13 Ezek 28:25,26; Ezek 11:17; Isa 11:11-16
34:14 John 10:9; Jer 31:12-14,25; Ezek 34:27
34:15 Jer 3:15; Song 1:7,8; Isa 11:6,7
34:16 Luke 19:10; Luke 15:4; Isa 49:26

33:31 *they hear your words, and they do not do them* They sat before him like God's people, but their hearts went after gain. Their mouths spoke of love.
33:32 *you are to them like a song of lustful desires, beautiful of voice and doing well at playing* To them Ezekiel was entertainment, a pleasant singer. It is possible to love good preaching and still not obey. Be doers of the word and not hearers only (Jas 1:22).
33:33 *they shall know that a prophet has been in their midst* When the rest of his words came true, they would know he was no mere singer but God's messenger (2:5).
34:2 *prophesy against the shepherds of Israel* The shepherds were the kings, princes and leaders of the nation (Jer 23:1-4). One question sums up the charge: should not the shepherds shepherd the flock? They fed themselves instead.
34:3 *You eat the fat, and you clothe yourselves with the wool* A shepherd may live from his flock, but these took everything and gave nothing.
34:4 *The weak you have not strengthened, and the sick you have not healed* Five failures: the weak, the sick, the broken, the strayed and the lost. The word for harshness describes Pharaoh's taskmasters (Exod 1:13-14). Peter, told by Jesus to feed His sheep (John 21:15-17), told elders to shepherd willingly, not for gain, as examples (1 Pet 5:2-3).
34:5 *they have been scattered because there was no shepherd* The exile was the result. Without real leaders the people fell apart and became prey for the nations.
34:6 *My flock wanders over all the mountains and on every high hill* The hills were where Israel worshiped idols (6:13). The sheep were lost spiritually as well. God keeps saying My flock. The kings acted as if the people were theirs.
34:10 *I will require My flock from their hand* God will hold leaders accountable for every sheep (Heb 13:17).
34:11 *Look, I, I Myself, will search for My flock and seek them out* God would not just hire better shepherds; He would come Himself (Ps 80:1; Isa 40:11). Jesus told of the shepherd who left the ninety-nine (Luke 15:4-7) and came to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10).
34:12 *a day of cloud and thick darkness* Phrases from the day of the LORD (Joel 2:2). God would gather them from the dark day of their scattering.
34:13 *I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the lands* A real people and a real land. Fulfilled in part under Cyrus in 538 B.C. (Ezra 1), but the promise reaches to a gathering from all lands. I believe it will be fully kept in Israel's future restoration in the kingdom.
34:15 *I Myself will make them lie down* Sheep lie down only when fed and safe (Ps 23:2). God promises both.
34:16 *The lost I will seek, and the strayed I will bring back, and the broken I will bind up* Point for point God does what the false shepherds failed to do (34:4). The fat and strong, who grew rich by crushing others, He will judge. If you are broken or strayed, He does not wait for you to fix yourself. He comes looking.

Judgment Between Sheep and Sheep

17 And you, O My flock, thus says the Lord GOD: Look, I ***am*** judging between sheep and sheep, between the rams and the male goats. **18** ***Is it too*** little for you ***that*** you graze the good pasture, and the rest of your pastures you trample with your feet, and ***that*** you drink the clear waters, and the rest you foul with your feet? **19** And My flock grazes ***on*** what your feet have trampled, and drinks what your feet have fouled. **20** Therefore thus says the Lord GOD to them: Look, I, I Myself, will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. **21** Because you push with side and with shoulder, and thrust at all the weak with your horns, until you have scattered them abroad, **22** I will save My flock, and they shall no longer be prey; and I will judge between sheep and sheep.

My Servant David and the Covenant of Peace

23 And I will raise up over them one shepherd, and he shall shepherd them, My servant David; he shall shepherd them, and he shall be a shepherd for them. **24** And I, the LORD, will be God to them, and My servant David ***will be*** prince in their midst; I, the LORD, have spoken. **25** And I will make with them a covenant of peace, and I will make evil animals cease from the land; and they shall dwell in the wilderness in security, and sleep in the forests. **26** And I will make them and the places around My hill a blessing; and I will bring down the rain in its season; they shall be rains of blessing. **27** And the tree of the field shall give its fruit, and the land shall give its produce, and they shall be on their own ground in security; and they shall know that I ***am*** the LORD, when I break the bars of their yoke and deliver them from the hand of those who made them serve. **28** And they shall no longer be plunder for the nations, and the animal of the land shall not devour them; and they shall dwell in security, and no one shall make ***them*** afraid. **29** And I will raise up for them a planting place of renown, and they shall no longer be taken away by famine in the land, and they shall no longer bear the disgrace of the nations. **30** And they shall know that I, the LORD their God, ***am*** with them, and they, the house of Israel, ***are*** My people, declares the Lord GOD. **31** And you ***are*** My flock, the flock of My pasture; you ***are*** men; I ***am*** your God, declares the Lord GOD.'"

EZEKIEL 35

Against Mount Seir

1 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **2** "Son of man, set your face against Mount Seir (Se'ir), and prophesy against it, **3** and you shall say to it, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: Look, I ***am*** against you, O Mount Seir, and I will stretch out My hand against you, and I will make you a desolation and a waste. **4** Your cities I will make a ruin, and you shall be a desolation; and you shall know that I ***am*** the LORD. **5** Because you have had a perpetual enmity, and you gave over the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) to the hands of the sword at the time of their disaster, at the time of the iniquity of the end, **6** therefore, ***as*** I live, declares the Lord GOD, surely I will make you ***into*** blood, and blood shall pursue you; since you have not hated blood, blood shall pursue you. **7** And I will make Mount Seir into a devastation and a desolation, and I will cut off from it the one who passes through and the one

34:17 Matt 25:32; Ezek 34:20-22; Zech 10:3
34:18 Num 16:9,13; 2 Sam 7:19; Isa 7:13
34:20 Ezek 34:10,17; Ps 22:12-16; Matt 25:31-46
34:21 Zech 11:5,16,17; Luke 13:14-16; Ezek 34:3-5
34:22 Ps 72:12-14; Jer 23:2,3; Ezek 34:10
34:23 Rev 22:16; Matt 22:42; Mark 11:10
34:24 Matt 2:6; Matt 22:42; Mark 11:10
34:25 Isa 11:6-9; Ezek 37:26; Lev 26:6
34:26 Gen 12:2; Lev 26:4; Deut 28:12
34:27 John 15:5; Jer 30:8; Lev 26:13
34:28 Luke 1:71; Rom 11:26; Ezek 34:25,29
34:29 Rom 11:26; Isa 4:2; Ezek 36:29
34:30 Acts 2:36; Rom 11:26; Heb 8:11
34:31 Ps 100:3; Ezek 36:38; Ps 78:52
35:1 Ezek 21:1; Ezek 22:1; Ezek 34:1
35:2 Ezek 6:2; Ezek 25:8; Gen 32:3
35:3 Jer 6:12; Ezek 6:14; Jer 15:6
35:4 Ezek 35:9; Mal 1:3,4; Ezek 6:6
35:5 Ps 137:7; Amos 1:11; Ezek 21:25,29
35:6 Rev 16:6; Isa 63:2-6; Ps 109:16
35:7 Ezek 35:3,9; Ezek 29:11; Ezek 33:28

34:17 *I am judging between sheep and sheep* Not all the trouble came from the kings. Some of the people did the same on a smaller scale.
34:18 *the rest of your pastures you trample with your feet* Some are not content to take the best; they ruin what is left. God sees how the strong treat the weak among His people.
34:21 *you push with side and with shoulder* The strong shoved the weak away. Jesus spoke of separating sheep and goats when He comes in glory (Matt 25:31-33).
34:23 *I will raise up over them one shepherd, and he shall shepherd them, My servant David* David had been dead about four hundred years. I believe this is the Messiah, the Son of David (Jer 30:9; Hos 3:5), Jesus, to whom God gives David's throne (Luke 1:32-33). He called Himself the good Shepherd (John 10:11). One shepherd means divided Israel united under one King (37:22-24).
34:24 *My servant David will be prince in their midst* Prince, nasi, is a ruler lifted up among the people. Jesus is the good Shepherd of all believers now, but this promise is made to Israel as a nation, and I believe it will be fulfilled when Christ reigns over restored Israel. Some think David himself will be raised to rule under Christ.
34:25 *I will make with them a covenant of peace* Shalom means wholeness, well-being and safety, not just no war. These are the law's blessings for obedience (Lev 26:4-6), which Israel never fully enjoyed. Now God Himself will give them (37:26).
34:26 *rains of blessing* His hill is Zion. Rain in its season was the sign of God's favor in a dry land.
34:27 *when I break the bars of their yoke* A yoke was the wooden bar on an ox's neck. God would free Israel as He did from Egypt (Lev 26:13).
34:28 *they shall no longer be plunder for the nations* Israel has been plundered many times. God says a day is coming when no one will make them afraid.
34:29 *a planting place of renown* A fruitful land known among the nations, with no more famine or disgrace.
34:31 *you are My flock, the flock of My pasture; you are men; I am your God* God explains His own picture: the sheep are people, and He is their God. We were like sheep going astray, but have returned to the Shepherd of our souls (1 Pet 2:25).
35:2 *set your face against Mount Seir* Seir is Edom's mountain country south and east of the Dead Sea. Edom was already judged in 25:12-14, but it appears again here because chapter 36 will speak to the mountains of Israel. Edom wanted Israel's land, and God answers before He promises to restore it.
35:3 *I will make you a desolation and a waste* Edom came from Esau, who sold his birthright (Gen 25:29-34) and hated Jacob for taking the blessing (Gen 27:41).
35:5 *Because you have had a perpetual enmity* Edom's hatred was old and never let go. At Judah's worst moment, Edom handed fleeing people over to the sword (Obad 10-14; Ps 137:7).
35:6 *I will make you into blood, and blood shall pursue you* In Hebrew Edom (adom, red) sounds like dam, blood. Edom loved bloodshed, and blood would pursue it. Holding a grudge for generations poisoned Edom's whole history. Jesus calls us to forgive from the heart (Matt 18:35).

who returns. **8** And I will fill its mountains ***with*** its slain; your hills and your valleys and all your ravines, those slain by ***the*** sword shall fall in them. **9** Perpetual desolations I will make you, and your cities shall not return; and you shall know that I ***am*** the LORD. **10** Because you said, "The two nations and the two lands shall be mine, and we will possess it," and the LORD was there, **11** therefore, ***as*** I live, declares the Lord GOD, I will act according to your anger and according to your jealousy which you showed out of your hatred against them; and I will make Myself known among them when I judge you. **12** And you shall know that I, the LORD, have heard all your insults which you have spoken against the mountains of Israel, saying, "They are desolate; they have been given to us for devouring." **13** And you magnified yourselves against Me with your mouth, and multiplied your words against Me; I Myself have heard. **14** Thus says the Lord GOD: When all the earth rejoices, I will make you a desolation. **15** As you rejoiced over the inheritance of the house of Israel because it was desolate, so I will do to you; you shall be a desolation, O Mount Seir, and all Edom, all of it; and they shall know that I ***am*** the LORD.'"

EZEKIEL 36

Hope for the Mountains of Israel

1 "And you, son of man, prophesy to the mountains of Israel (Yisra'el), and you shall say, O mountains of Israel, hear the word of the LORD. **2** Thus says the Lord GOD: Because the enemy has said against you, 'Aha!' and, 'The ancient high places have become a possession for us,' **3** therefore prophesy, and you shall say, Thus says the Lord GOD: Because, yes, because they made ***you*** desolate and crushed you from all around, so that you became a possession for the rest of the nations, and you have been taken up on the lip of ***the*** tongue and ***in*** the slander of ***the*** people, **4** therefore, O mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord GOD: Thus says the Lord GOD to the mountains and to the hills, to the ravines and to the valleys, and to the desolate waste places and to the forsaken cities, which have become plunder and a mockery to the rest of the nations which ***are*** all around; **5** therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Surely in the fire of My jealousy I have spoken against the rest of the nations and against Edom, all of it, who gave My land to themselves as a possession with the joy of all ***their*** heart, with scorn of soul, so that its pastureland ***should be*** for plunder. **6** Therefore prophesy concerning the soil of Israel, and you shall say to the mountains and to the hills, to the ravines and to the valleys, Thus says the Lord GOD: Look, I have spoken in My jealousy and in My rage, because you have borne the disgrace of ***the*** nations. **7** Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: I Myself have lifted up My hand: surely the nations which ***are*** all around you, they shall bear their disgrace. **8** And you, O mountains of Israel, you shall put forth your branches and bear your fruit for My people Israel, for they have drawn near to come. **9** For look, I ***am*** for you, and I will turn to you, and you shall be tilled and sown. **10** And I will multiply man on you, all the house of Israel, all of it; and the cities shall be inhabited, and the waste places shall be rebuilt. **11** And I will multiply on you man and livestock, and they shall multiply and be fruitful; and I will cause you to be inhabited as in your former times, and I will do more good ***to you*** than at your beginnings; and you shall know that I ***am*** the LORD. **12** And I will cause man to walk on you, My people Israel; and they shall possess you, and you shall be an inheritance for them, and you shall not

35:8 Ezek 31:12; Ezek 32:4,5; Ezek 39:4,5
35:9 Ezek 35:4; Ezek 25:13; Ezek 6:7
35:10 Ezek 36:5; Ezek 48:35; Ps 83:4-12
35:11 Matt 7:2; Ps 9:16; Ps 137:7
35:12 Ezek 36:2; Ezek 35:9; Ezek 6:7
35:13 Jude 1:15; Dan 11:36; 1 Sam 2:3
35:14 Isa 14:7,8; Isa 65:13-15
35:15 Lam 4:21; Ezek 35:3,4; Isa 34:5,6
36:1 Ezek 6:2,3; Ezek 33:28; Ezek 34:14
36:2 Deut 32:13; Ezek 25:3; Ezek 35:10
36:3 Ps 44:13,14; Jer 18:16; Lam 2:15
36:4 Deut 11:11; Ezek 34:28; Ezek 36:1,6
36:5 Ezek 36:3; Ezek 38:19; Deut 4:24
36:6 Ezek 34:29; Ps 123:3,4; Ps 74:10,18,23
36:7 Ezek 20:5,15; Deut 32:40; Rev 10:5,6
36:8 Isa 27:6; Ezek 34:26-29; Isa 4:2
36:9 Ps 46:11; Ps 99:8; Hos 2:21-23
36:10 Ezek 36:33; Ezek 36:37; Isa 27:6
36:11 Heb 8:8; Heb 8:10; Heb 8:11
36:12 Jer 15:7; Jer 32:15,44; Obad 1:17-21

35:9 *Perpetual desolations I will make you* Perpetual enmity answered by perpetual desolation. After the exile Arab peoples, the Nabateans, pushed Edom out, and its remnant moved into southern Judah as the Idumeans. Herod the Great came from them. After A.D. 70 they vanish from history.
35:10 *The two nations and the two lands shall be mine* Israel and Judah. With both carried away, Edom thought it could take the land. Then four words change everything: and the LORD was there. The people were gone, but God had not given up His claim. The book ends with the city named The LORD Is There (48:35).
35:11 *I will act according to your anger and according to your jealousy* God would treat Edom as Edom treated Israel.
35:12 *They are desolate; they have been given to us for devouring* Edom mocked Israel's ruin as a meal laid out for it.
35:13 *you magnified yourselves against Me with your mouth* When Edom insulted Israel, it insulted Israel's God. God hears every word. That should make us careful with our own (Matt 12:36).
35:14 *When all the earth rejoices, I will make you a desolation* When the whole earth rejoices in God's reign, Edom will have no part in it. Some read it as the nations rejoicing at Edom's fall.
35:15 *As you rejoiced over the inheritance of the house of Israel because it was desolate, so I will do to you* Edom rejoiced at Israel's ruin and would be ruined, a warning against gloating (Prov 24:17-18). In the prophets Edom also stands for the nations who hate God's people in the last days (Isa 34:5-6; 63:1-6). God still curses those who curse Israel (Gen 12:3).
36:1 *prophesy to the mountains of Israel* In chapter 6 Ezekiel prophesied against these mountains for their idol shrines. Now he speaks hope to them. The mountains stand for the whole land.
36:2 *The ancient high places have become a possession for us* Edom's boast from chapter 35. The nations thought Israel's land was theirs for the taking.
36:5 *in the fire of My jealousy I have spoken against the rest of the nations and against Edom* God's jealousy is the zeal of love for what belongs to Him. The land is His (Lev 25:23), and He calls it My land.
36:7 *I Myself have lifted up My hand* Lifting the hand was the sign of an oath. The nations that mocked Israel would bear their own disgrace.
36:8 *you shall put forth your branches and bear your fruit for My people Israel* The land itself would get ready for its people, as if waiting for them to come home.
36:9 *look, I am for you* To Mount Seir God said I am against you (35:3). To the mountains of Israel He says I am for you.
36:10 *all the house of Israel, all of it* The land would be tilled, sown, inhabited and rebuilt. Partly kept when exiles returned under Cyrus in 538 B.C., but all the house of Israel points to a fuller restoration still to come.
36:11 *I will do more good to you than at your beginnings* The latter days of the land will be better than its first days.
36:12 *you shall not again bereave them anymore* To bereave is to lose children. The land had been a place where its people died by famine, sword and exile. That would end.

again bereave them anymore. **13** Thus says the Lord GOD: Because they are saying to you, 'You ***are*** a devourer of man, and you have been a bereaver of your nations,' **14** therefore you shall not devour man anymore, and you shall not bereave your nations anymore, declares the Lord GOD. **15** And I will not let you hear the disgrace of the nations anymore, and you shall not bear the reproach of ***the*** peoples anymore, and you shall not make your nations stumble anymore, declares the Lord GOD."

For My Holy Name

16 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **17** "Son of man, the house of Israel ***was*** dwelling on their own ground, and they made it unclean by their way and by their doings; like the uncleanness of menstruation their way was before Me. **18** And I poured out My rage on them for the blood which they had poured out on the land, and with their idols they had made it unclean. **19** And I dispersed them among the nations, and they were scattered among the lands; according to their way and according to their doings I judged them. **20** And they came to the nations where they went, and they profaned My holy name, when it was said of them, 'These ***are*** the people of the LORD, and they have come out of His land.' **21** And I had pity on My holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations where they went.

A New Heart and a New Spirit

22 Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord GOD: Not for your sake am I acting, O house of Israel, but for My holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you went. **23** And I will sanctify My great name, which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst; and the nations shall know that I ***am*** the LORD, declares the Lord GOD, when I am sanctified through you before their eyes. **24** And I will take you from the nations, and gather you from all the lands, and bring you into your own ground. **25** And I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; from all your uncleannesses and from all your idols I will cleanse you. **26** And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. **27** And My Spirit I will put within you, and I will bring about that you walk in My statutes, and you shall keep My judgments and do ***them***. **28** And you shall dwell in the land which I gave to your fathers; and you shall be a people to Me, and I will be God to you. **29** And I will save you from all your uncleannesses; and I will call for the grain and multiply it, and I will not put famine on you. **30** And I will multiply the fruit of the tree and the produce of the field, so that you shall no longer receive the reproach of famine among the nations. **31** And you shall remember your evil ways and your deeds which ***were*** not good, and you shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations. **32** Not for your sake am I acting, declares the Lord GOD; let it be known to you. Be ashamed and be humiliated for your ways, O house of Israel.

The Land Like the Garden of Eden

33 Thus says the Lord GOD: On the day I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will cause the cities to be inhabited, and the waste places shall be rebuilt. **34** And the desolate land shall be tilled, instead of its being a desolation in the eyes of

36:14 Ezek 37:25-28; Isa 60:21; Amos 9:15
36:15 Ezek 34:29; Ps 89:50; Ezek 36:6
36:17 Jer 2:7; Lev 18:24-28; Num 35:33,34
36:18 Rev 16:6; Ezek 7:8; 2 Chr 34:21,26
36:19 Rev 20:12; Rev 20:13; Deut 28:64
36:20 Rom 2:24; Isa 52:5; Jer 33:24
36:21 Rom 2:24; Ps 74:18; Isa 48:9
36:22 Rom 2:24; Ezek 36:32; Deut 7:7,8
36:23 1 Pet 2:9; Rom 2:24; Ezek 20:41
36:24 Ezek 37:21,25; Ezek 34:13; Ezek 11:17
36:25 Titus 3:5; John 3:5; Acts 2:17
36:26 Ezek 11:19,20; Ps 51:10; 2 Cor 3:3
36:27 Gal 5:16; Titus 3:3-6; Acts 2:17
36:28 2 Cor 6:16; Heb 8:10; Rev 21:7
36:29 Matt 1:21; Hos 2:21-23; Ezek 36:25
36:30 Deut 29:23-28; Joel 2:17,26
36:31 Ezek 6:9; Ezek 20:43; Ezek 16:61-63
36:32 Acts 13:38; Acts 28:28; Deut 9:5
36:33 Ezek 36:10; Zech 8:7,8; Isa 58:12
36:34 Ezek 6:14; Deut 29:23-28; 2 Chr 36:21

36:13 *You are a devourer of man* The spies said something similar long ago (Num 13:32). The nations called the land cursed. God says that reputation is over.
36:17 *like the uncleanness of menstruation their way was before Me* A picture from the law of ceremonial uncleanness (Lev 15:19-24). Their bloodshed and idols made the land unfit for God's presence.
36:19 *according to their way and according to their doings I judged them* The exile was not cruelty but justice.
36:20 *These are the people of the LORD, and they have come out of His land* Israel's presence in exile made the nations mock: their God must be weak, since He could not keep His people. When those who bear God's name live badly, the world blames God (Rom 2:24).
36:21 *I had pity on My holy name* God cared about His name, not from vanity, but because the nations' knowledge of the true God was at stake.
36:22 *Not for your sake am I acting, O house of Israel, but for My holy name* One of the most humbling verses in the Bible. God would restore Israel not because they deserved it but because of who He is. That is how grace works for all of us (Titus 3:5).
36:23 *I will sanctify My great name* To sanctify is to show as holy. When God restores Israel, the nations will know He is the LORD.
36:24 *gather you from all the lands, and bring you into your own ground* The order matters: first the return to the land, then cleansing and a new heart. All the lands is wider than the return from Babylon. Many teachers see the modern return of Jews to the land, and Israel's founding in 1948, as the start of this gathering in unbelief, with spiritual rebirth to follow (37:7-10). I hold that with caution and set no timetable.
36:25 *I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean* A priest's picture. Under the law sprinkled water cleansed the unclean (Num 19:9-19). But God Himself will do it, washing the heart. This is not water baptism directly but the inner cleansing the law pictured (Titus 3:5; Heb 10:22).
36:26 *I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you* The heart is the center of the whole person: mind, will and desires. A heart of stone does not soak in God's word, however much is poured on it. God does not soften the old heart; He removes it and gives a living one (11:19). The command of 18:31 shows our need; this verse shows God's gift.
36:27 *My Spirit I will put within you* The high point of the chapter. God puts His own Spirit within, and obedience grows from inside. Jesus likely had this passage in mind when He spoke of being born of water and the Spirit (John 3:5). It is part of the new covenant made with Israel (Jer 31:31-34), to be fulfilled for the nation when Christ returns (Rom 11:26-27). Believers share its blessings now.
36:28 *you shall be a people to Me, and I will be God to you* The covenant promise repeated in the land God gave their fathers.
36:30 *you shall no longer receive the reproach of famine among the nations* God will bless the land as well as the people.
36:31 *you shall loathe yourselves in your own sight* Notice when this happens: after God has blessed them. Kindness, not punishment, finally breaks their hearts (Rom 2:4).
36:32 *Not for your sake am I acting* Repeated so they will not miss it. Grace leaves no room for boasting.

everyone who passes by. **35** And they shall say, 'This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden; and the wasted and desolate and broken-down cities are fortified ***and*** inhabited.' **36** And the nations which are left all around you shall know that I, the LORD, have rebuilt the broken-down ***places***, I have planted the desolate ***land***; I, the LORD, have spoken, and I will do ***it***. **37** Thus says the Lord GOD: This also I will let Myself be sought by the house of Israel to do for them: I will multiply them like the flock ***with*** men. **38** Like the flock of holy ***offerings***, like the flock of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) at its appointed times, so the wasted cities shall be full of flocks of men; and they shall know that I ***am*** the LORD."

EZEKIEL 37

The Valley of Dry Bones

1 The hand of the LORD was upon me, and He brought me out by the Spirit of the LORD and set me down in the midst of the valley; and it ***was*** full ***of*** bones. **2** And He made me pass by them all around, all around; and look, ***they were*** very many on the surface of the valley; and look, ***they were*** very dry. **3** And He said to me, "Son of man, shall these bones live?" And I said, "O Lord GOD, You, You know." **4** And He said to me, "Prophesy over these bones, and you shall say to them, 'O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. **5** Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: Look, I am bringing breath into you, and you shall live. **6** And I will put sinews on you, and I will bring up flesh over you, and I will cover you over with skin, and I will put breath in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I ***am*** the LORD.'" **7** And I prophesied as I was commanded; and there was a sound as I prophesied, and look, a rattling, and the bones drew near, bone to its bone. **8** And I looked, and look, sinews ***were*** on them, and flesh came up, and skin covered them over from above; and breath, ***there was*** none in them. **9** And He said to me, "Prophesy to the breath; prophesy, son of man, and you shall say to the breath, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these killed ones, that they may live.'" **10** And I prophesied as He commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood on their feet, a very, very great army. **11** And He said to me, "Son of man, these bones are all the house of Israel (Yisra'el). Look, they are saying, 'Our bones have dried up, and our hope has perished; we have been cut off, ***as for*** us.'

12 Therefore prophesy, and you shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: Look, I am opening your graves, and I will bring you up from your graves, O My people, and I will bring you into the soil of Israel. **13** And you shall know that I ***am*** the LORD, when I open your graves and when I bring you up from your graves, O My people. **14** And I will put My Spirit in you, and you shall live, and I will set you down on your own

36:35 Isa 51:3; Joel 2:3; Ps 58:11
36:36 Ezek 17:24; Ezek 22:14; Ezek 37:14
36:37 Ezek 14:3; 1 John 5:14; Ezek 20:3,31
36:38 John 10:16; Exod 23:17; Exod 34:23
37:1 Acts 8:39; Ezek 1:3; Ezek 33:22
37:2 Ps 141:7; Ezek 37:11; Deut 11:30
37:3 Rom 4:17; John 5:21; John 11:25,26
37:4 Ezek 36:1; John 5:25,28,29; Jer 22:29
37:5 Gen 2:7; Ps 104:29,30; Ezek 37:9,10,14
37:6 Joel 2:27; Joel 3:17; Ezek 6:7,13
37:7 Acts 2:2; Acts 4:19; Acts 5:20-29
37:9 Acts 2:2; Rev 11:11; John 3:8
37:10 Rev 11:11; Acts 2:2; Ps 104:30
37:11 Rev 11:11; Ezek 36:10; Ezek 39:25
37:12 Isa 26:19; Hos 13:14; Isa 66:14
37:13 Ezek 37:6; Ezek 16:62; Ps 126:2,3
37:14 Ezek 36:27; Ezek 39:29; Joel 2:28,29

36:35 *This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden* Isaiah says the same (Isa 51:3). The cleansing of the people and the renewal of the land go together.
36:36 *I, the LORD, have spoken, and I will do it* The nations left around Israel will know who rebuilt it.
36:37 *This also I will let Myself be sought by the house of Israel* Earlier God refused to be consulted (14:3; 20:3). Now He invites their prayers. Restored people pray.
36:38 *Like the flock of holy offerings, like the flock of Jerusalem at its appointed times* Ezekiel remembered Jerusalem at the great feasts, crowded with sheep for the sacrifices. The empty cities will be that full of people.
37:1 *it was full of bones* This is a vision, for Ezekiel was carried "by the Spirit of the LORD." For a priest, a valley of human bones was the most unclean place imaginable (Num 19:16). God brought His priest into the place of death to show what He would do with it.
37:2 *they were very dry* The bones were "very many" and "very dry." These were not the newly dead but people long gone, beyond any human hope of recovery. The point is that Israel's condition was past fixing by ordinary means.
37:3 *shall these bones live* Ezekiel answered, "O Lord GOD, You, You know." He did not claim faith he lacked or doubt God's power. He left the answer with the only One who could give life.
37:4 *O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD* Preaching to bones looks foolish, yet God's word does its work whether or not the hearers seem able to respond. Life would come through the spoken word of God, as it does in every true conversion (Rom 10:17).
37:5 *I am bringing breath into you, and you shall live* The Hebrew ruach means breath, wind, and spirit, and all three meanings run through this chapter. As at creation, the body comes first and then God's breath makes it a living being (Gen 2:7).
37:6 *you shall know that I am the LORD* The goal of Israel's revival is the same as the goal of her judgment: that she would know the LORD. God restores His people so that His name is honored.
37:7 *a rattling, and the bones drew near, bone to its bone* The restoration came in stages. First there was a noise and movement as scattered bones found their places, an orderly rebuilding by God's word.
37:8 *breath, there was none in them* The bodies were whole but still dead. Many see here a picture of Israel regathered to her land in unbelief before her spiritual rebirth. That reading fits the order of the vision, though it should be held with care and no dates set.
37:9 *breathe on these killed ones* The bones were people who had been slain, victims of judgment. The breath comes "from the four winds," from God Himself. Jesus used wind as a picture of the Spirit's new birth (John 3:8), and He breathed on His disciples (John 20:22).
37:10 *a very, very great army* The breath came and they stood. A valley of the dead became a host ready to serve. God does not merely revive a few; He raises a nation.
37:11 *these bones are all the house of Israel* God interpreted the vision Himself. The bones are not the church or mankind in general but "all the house of Israel," both kingdoms, as verses 15-22 make plain.
37:11 *Our bones have dried up, and our hope has perished* This was what the exiles were saying. They felt as good as dead and cut off. God answered their despair with a promise that does not depend on how they felt.
37:12 *I am opening your graves* The graves picture the nations where Israel lay buried in exile. Bodily resurrection is taught elsewhere (Dan 12:2; John 5:28-29) and stands behind the image, but the main point here is national return to "the soil of Israel." Note the tender "O My people."
37:14 *I will put My Spirit in you, and you shall live* This joins the vision to 36:27. The return from Babylon in 538 B.C. was a partial fulfillment, but Israel did not then receive the Spirit as a nation. I take the full fulfillment as future, when Israel is regathered and born again at Christ's return. Some see only the return from exile, and others see a spiritual fulfillment in the church. No one is too dead for God to raise.

ground; and you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken and will do ***it***, declares the LORD.'"

The Two Sticks Made One

15 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **16** "And you, son of man, take for yourself one stick and write on it, 'For Judah (Yehuda) and for the sons of Israel, his companions'; and take one stick and write on it, 'For Joseph (Yosef), the stick of Ephraim (Efrayim), and all the house of Israel, his companions.' **17** And bring them near, one to one, for yourself into one stick, and they shall become one in your hand. **18** And when the sons of your people speak to you, saying, 'Will you not tell us what these ***are*** to you?' **19** speak to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: Look, I am taking the stick of Joseph, which ***is*** in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel, his companions; and I will put them with it, with the stick of Judah, and I will make them one stick, and they shall be one in My hand.' **20** And the sticks on which you write shall be in your hand before their eyes. **21** And speak to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: Look, I am taking the sons of Israel from among the nations where they have gone, and I will gather them from all around, and I will bring them into their own ground. **22** And I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king for all of them; and they shall no longer be two nations, and they shall no longer be divided into two kingdoms anymore. **23** And they shall no longer make themselves unclean with their idols and with their detestable things and with all their transgressions; and I will save them from all their dwelling places in which they have sinned, and I will cleanse them; and they shall be a people to Me, and I will be God to them. **24** And My servant David ***will be*** king over them, and there shall be one shepherd for all of them; and they shall walk in My judgments, and keep My statutes, and do them. **25** And they shall dwell on the land which I gave to My servant, to Jacob (Ya'aqov), in which your fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell on it, they and their sons and their sons' sons, forever; and David My servant ***will be*** prince for them forever. **26** And I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; and I will set them ***in place*** and multiply them, and I will put My sanctuary in their midst forever. **27** And My tabernacle shall be over them; and I will be God to them, and they shall be a people to Me. **28** And the nations shall know that I, the LORD, sanctify Israel, when My sanctuary is in their midst forever.'"

EZEKIEL 38

Gog of the Land of Magog

1 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **2** "Son of man, set your face toward Gog, of the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech (Meshekh) and Tubal (Tuval), and prophesy against him, **3** and you shall say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: Look, I ***am*** against you, O Gog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal. **4** And I will turn you around, and put hooks in your jaws, and I will bring you out, and all your army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed ***in*** perfection, a great company ***with*** large shield and shield, all of

37:16 2 Chr 15:9; Num 17:2,3; 2 Chr 10:17
37:17 Isa 11:13; Jer 50:4; Hos 1:11
37:18 Ezek 12:9; Ezek 24:19; Ezek 17:12
37:19 Ezek 37:16,17; Zech 10:6; 1 Chr 9:1-3
37:20 Ezek 12:3; Num 17:6-9; Hos 12:10
37:21 John 1:49; Ezek 36:24; Obad 1:17-21
37:22 John 1:49; Ezek 37:24; Jer 3:18
37:23 Rev 21:7; John 1:49; John 17:21
37:24 Luke 1:32; Matt 2:6; Mark 11:10
37:25 Luke 1:32; Matt 2:6; Mark 11:10
37:26 2 Cor 6:16; Matt 2:6; Heb 8:8
37:27 2 Cor 6:16; Rev 21:3; John 20:17
37:28 Ezek 20:12; Exod 31:13; Ezek 36:23,36
38:2 Rev 20:8; Ezek 39:1; Gen 10:2
38:3 Rev 20:8; Ezek 13:8; Ezek 29:3
38:4 Ezek 29:4; Ezek 38:15; Dan 11:40

37:16 *take for yourself one stick* A new sign act. One stick was for Judah, the southern kingdom, and one for Joseph and Ephraim, the northern kingdom. The kingdom had split about 930 B.C. after Solomon's death (1 Kgs 12).
37:17 *they shall become one in your hand* Ezekiel held the two sticks so they looked like one. The people saw a picture of a divided nation made whole.
37:18 *Will you not tell us what these are to you* Ezekiel's signs drew questions, as earlier (12:9; 24:19). God used the people's curiosity to deliver His message.
37:19 *I am taking the stick of Joseph* Ezekiel's hand held the sticks, but God says they will be "one in My hand." Only God can heal this old split. The northern tribes were never truly lost; many joined Judah over the years (2 Chr 11:16), and Anna was of Asher (Luke 2:36).
37:21 *I will gather them from all around* The promise is a gathering from "the nations where they have gone," worldwide, and back to "their own ground." The scope is wider than the return from Babylon alone.
37:22 *I will make them one nation in the land* One nation under one king, never again two kingdoms. This has not happened since 930 B.C. It awaits the reign of the Messiah.
37:23 *they shall no longer make themselves unclean with their idols* God will save them from their sins and cleanse them. Then the old covenant words come true at last: they will be His people and He will be their God.
37:24 *there shall be one shepherd for all of them* "My servant David" is the Messiah, David's greater Son, as at 34:23-24. Under Him Israel will finally keep God's law from the heart (36:27). Jesus called Himself the good shepherd (John 10:11).
37:25 *they and their sons and their sons' sons, forever* The land promise to Jacob is renewed and made permanent. David My servant will be prince "forever," which only the risen Christ can be. This is a future for national Israel, not a promise transferred to someone else.
37:26 *I will put My sanctuary in their midst forever* The covenant of peace is "everlasting." In chapters 8-11 the glory left a defiled temple. Here God promises to dwell among His people forever, which chapters 40-48 describe.
37:27 *My tabernacle shall be over them* God's dwelling will cover them like a shelter. John wrote that the Word tabernacled among us (John 1:14), and Revelation ends with God dwelling with His people (Rev 21:3).
37:28 *the nations shall know that I, the LORD, sanctify Israel* Israel's restoration will be a witness to the whole world. God's gifts and calling to Israel are not withdrawn (Rom 11:29).
38:2 *set your face toward Gog, of the land of Magog* Gog is a ruler, a real person addressed directly, known in Scripture only here and in Revelation 20:8. Magog is his land. Magog, Meshech, and Tubal were sons of Japheth (Gen 10:2), peoples of Asia Minor and the far north.
38:2 *the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal* The Hebrew ro'sh usually means head or chief, and the SLB reads it as a title. Others read prince of Rosh, taking Rosh as a place. The popular link of Rosh with Russia and Meshech with Moscow rests on sound alone and is not proven. We should not name any modern nation as certain.
38:4 *put hooks in your jaws, and I will bring you out* Gog thinks he is choosing to invade, but God drags him out like a captured beast, as He said of Pharaoh (29:4). The nations move only within God's control.
38:4 *all of them clothed in perfection* Gog's army is splendidly equipped, described in the weapons of Ezekiel's own day: horses, shields, and swords. The prophet used the terms his hearers knew to describe a vast, well-armed host.

them wielding swords; **5** Persia (Paras), Cush (Kush), and Put with them, all of them ***with*** shield and helmet; **6** Gomer and all its troops, the house of Togarmah (Togarma), the
remotest parts of the north, and all its troops, many peoples with you. **7** Be prepared, and prepare yourself, you and all your company that are assembled about you, and you shall be a guard for them. **8** After many days you shall be mustered; in the latter part of the years you shall come into a land restored from ***the*** sword, gathered from many peoples, on the mountains of Israel (Yisra'el), which had been a continual waste; and it has been brought out from the peoples, and they shall dwell in security, all of them. **9** And you shall go up; like the storm you shall come; like the cloud to cover the land you shall be, you and all your troops, and many peoples with you.

Gog's Evil Plan

10 Thus says the Lord GOD: And it shall come about on that day ***that*** things shall come up on your heart, and you shall devise an evil plan, **11** and you shall say, "I will go up against a land of open villages; I will come to those who are at rest, who dwell in security, all of them dwelling without a wall, and they have no bars and gates," **12** to seize spoil and to take plunder, to turn your hand against the inhabited waste places, and against a people gathered from nations, who have acquired livestock and goods, who dwell at the navel of the earth. **13** Sheba (Sheva) and Dedan and the traders of Tarshish and all its young lions shall say to you, "Have you come to seize spoil? Have you assembled your company to take plunder, to carry away silver and gold, to take livestock and goods, to seize great spoil?"' **14** Therefore prophesy, son of man, and you shall say to Gog, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: On that day, when My people Israel dwell in security, will you not know ***it***? **15** And you shall come from your place, from the remotest parts of the north, you and many peoples with you, all of them riding horses, a great company and a numerous army. **16** And you shall come up against My people Israel like the cloud to cover the land; at the end of the days it shall be, and I will bring you against My land, so that the nations may know Me, when I am sanctified through you before their eyes, O Gog.

God's Fury Against Gog

17 Thus says the Lord GOD: ***Are*** you he of whom I spoke in former days by the hand of My servants the prophets of Israel, who prophesied in those days ***for*** years that I would bring you against them? **18** And it shall come about on that day, on the day Gog comes against the soil of Israel, declares the Lord GOD, ***that*** My rage shall come up in My anger. **19** And in My jealousy, in the fire of My wrath, I have spoken: Surely on that day there shall be a great quaking on the soil of Israel. **20** And the fish of the sea and the birds of the heavens and the animals of the field and every moving thing that moves on the ground, and all mankind who ***are*** on the surface of the ground, shall quake before Me; and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the earth. **21** And I will call for a sword against him on all My mountains, declares the Lord GOD; the

38:5 Ezek 27:10; Ezek 30:5; Gen 10:6
38:6 Gen 10:2; Ezek 27:14; 1 Chr 1:5
38:7 Isa 8:9,10; 2 Chr 25:8; Ps 2:1-4
38:8 Isa 24:22; Ezek 38:16; Ezek 34:13
38:9 Isa 28:2; Jer 4:13; Joel 2:2
38:10 Mark 7:21; Ps 36:4; Mic 2:1
38:11 Rev 11:18; Rev 16:14; Rev 19:19
38:12 Rev 11:18; Rev 16:14; Rev 19:19
38:13 Rev 11:18; Rev 19:19; Ezek 27:12,15,20,22,23,25
38:14 Rev 20:8; Ezek 38:8,11; Zech 2:5,8
38:15 Rev 11:18; Ezek 39:2; Dan 11:40
38:16 Heb 1:2; Rev 11:18; Rev 20:8
38:17 Rev 11:18; Isa 34:1-6; Isa 63:1-6
38:18 Rev 11:18; Rev 20:8; Ezek 36:5,6
38:19 Rev 11:13; Rev 11:18; Hag 2:6,7,21,22
38:20 Rev 6:14; Rev 11:18; Hos 4:3
38:21 Ezek 14:17; Judg 7:22; 1 Sam 14:20

38:5 *Persia, Cush, and Put with them* Persia lay east, in what is now Iran. Cush was south of Egypt on the upper Nile, and Put was in North Africa. With the northern peoples of verse 6, Israel is surrounded on every side.
38:6 *Gomer and all its troops, the house of Togarmah* Gomer and Togarmah also come from Genesis 10:2-3, peoples of the far north of Ezekiel's world. "The remotest parts of the north" was the direction from which Israel's great invaders usually came.
38:7 *Be prepared, and prepare yourself* God almost mocks Gog. Let him gather and arm his allies; no preparation will help against the LORD.
38:8 *in the latter part of the years* This verse sets the time. The attack comes after Israel has been "gathered from many peoples" to mountains that had been "a continual waste." That cannot be the Babylonian invasion, which came before the exile, and nothing in later history matches it. I take it as future, in the last days.
38:8 *they shall dwell in security, all of them* Pre-tribulation premillennial teachers agree the invasion is future but differ on when. Some place it before the seven-year Tribulation, some early or near its midpoint under the covenant of Daniel 9:27, and some at its end with Armageddon. Israel's apparent security favors an earlier time, but we should not be dogmatic.
38:9 *like the cloud to cover the land you shall be* The army is so large it covers the whole land like a storm cloud. To human eyes Israel has no chance.
38:10 *you shall devise an evil plan* God brings Gog out, yet the wicked plan is Gog's own. God uses the evil already in men's hearts without being its author (Jas 1:13).
38:11 *a land of open villages* Israel will be living without walls, bars, or gates, apparently at peace. Gog sees an easy target. What looks like weakness will become the stage for God's power.
38:12 *who dwell at the navel of the earth* Israel is at the center of the earth in God's plan, the land bridge between continents and the place where He set His name (5:5). Gog's motive is plunder: livestock, goods, and wealth.
38:13 *Sheba and Dedan and the traders of Tarshish* Trading nations of Arabia and the far west watch and question Gog, but they do nothing to stop him. Their interest is commerce, not justice.
38:14 *when My people Israel dwell in security* God calls them "My people Israel." Gog will notice their unguarded state, but he forgets whose people they are.
38:16 *so that the nations may know Me* Here is God's real purpose. He brings Gog against "My land" so that He will be "sanctified" before the nations. The invasion will end in a display of God's holiness to the world.
38:17 *Are you he of whom I spoke in former days* No earlier prophet names Gog, but many foretold a final enemy and a gathering of nations against Jerusalem that God would defeat (Joel 3:1-2; Zeph 3:8; Zech 14:2-3). Gog fulfills that whole line of prophecy.
38:18 *My rage shall come up in My anger* Israel does not win this battle; God Himself goes to war for His people. The language is strong because the attack is on what belongs to Him.
38:19 *there shall be a great quaking on the soil of Israel* A great earthquake is part of God's intervention. Scripture links such shaking with the day of the LORD (Joel 3:16; Zech 14:4-5; Rev 16:18).
38:20 *all mankind who are on the surface of the ground, shall quake before Me* Creatures, people, and mountains all tremble. The whole creation
responds when God steps in to judge.
38:21 *the sword of each man shall be against his brother* Gog's army will turn on itself in confusion, as Gideon's enemies did (Judg 7:22) and as the armies that came against Jehoshaphat did (2 Chr 20:23).

sword of each man shall be against his brother. **22** And I will enter into judgment with him with pestilence and with blood; and an overflowing rain and hailstones, fire and sulfur I will rain on him and on his troops and on the many peoples who ***are*** with him. **23** And I will magnify Myself and sanctify Myself, and I will make Myself known in the eyes of many nations; and they shall know that I ***am*** the LORD.'"

EZEKIEL 39

The Defeat of Gog

1 "And you, son of man, prophesy against Gog, and you shall say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: Look, I ***am*** against you, O Gog, chief prince of Meshech (Meshekh) and Tubal (Tuval). **2** And I will turn you around and lead you on, and I will bring you up from the remotest parts of the north, and I will bring you against the mountains of Israel (Yisra'el). **3** And I will strike your bow from your left hand, and I will make your arrows fall from your right hand. **4** On the mountains of Israel you shall fall, you and all your troops and the peoples who ***are*** with you; to birds of prey, birds of every wing, and ***to*** the animals of the field I have given you for food. **5** On the surface of the field you shall fall, for I have spoken, declares the Lord GOD. **6** And I will send fire on Magog and on those who dwell in the coastlands in security; and they shall know that I ***am*** the LORD. **7** And My holy name I will make known in the midst of My people Israel, and I will not let My holy name be profaned anymore; and the nations shall know that I, the LORD, ***am*** holy in Israel. **8** Look, it is coming, and it shall be done, declares the Lord GOD; that ***is*** the day of which I have spoken. **9** And those who dwell in the cities of Israel shall go out and burn and kindle ***fires*** with weapons, shield and large shield, with bow and with arrows, and with hand-staff and with spear; and they shall kindle fire with them seven years. **10** And they shall not carry wood from the field, and shall not cut ***it*** from the forests, for with the weapons they shall kindle fire; and they shall despoil those who despoiled them, and plunder those who plundered them, declares the Lord GOD.

Burying Gog's Army

11 And it shall come about on that day ***that*** I will give to Gog a place there, a grave in Israel, the valley of those who pass through, east of the sea; and it shall block those who pass through; and they shall bury Gog and all his multitude there, and they shall call ***it*** the valley of Hamon-gog. **12** And the house of Israel shall bury them, in order to cleanse the land, seven months. **13** And all the people of the land shall bury ***them***, and it shall become a name for them, the day I am glorified, declares the Lord GOD. **14** And they shall set apart men of continual ***duty***, passing through the land, burying those who pass through, those who remain on the surface of the land, to cleanse it; at the end of seven months they shall search. **15** And those who pass through shall pass through the land, and one shall see a bone of man, and he shall build a marker beside it, until the buriers have buried it in the valley of Hamon-gog. **16** And also the name of ***the*** city ***is*** Hamonah. And they shall cleanse the land.'

38:22 Rev 8:7; Ps 11:6; Isa 66:16
38:23 Ezek 36:23; Ezek 38:16; Ezek 37:28
39:1 Ezek 38:2,3; Ezek 35:3; Nah 2:13
39:2 Ezek 38:15; Ps 40:14; Ps 68:2
39:3 Ps 76:3; Hos 1:5; Jer 21:4,5
39:4 Ezek 39:17-20; Ezek 33:27; Ezek 38:21
39:5 Ezek 29:5; Ezek 32:4; Jer 8:2
39:6 Rev 20:9; Ezek 30:8,16; Amos 1:4,7,10
39:7 Ezek 38:16,23; Exod 20:7; Isa 12:6
39:8 Rev 21:6; Ezek 38:17; Ezek 7:2-10
39:9 Ps 46:9; Isa 66:24; Mal 1:5
39:10 Isa 33:1; Isa 14:2; Mic 5:8
39:11 Ezek 47:18; Num 34:11; Luke 5:1
39:12 Deut 21:23; Ezek 39:14,16; Num 19:16
39:13 Ezek 28:22; Zeph 3:19,20; Jer 33:9
39:14 Num 19:11-19
39:15 Luke 11:44

38:22 *an overflowing rain and hailstones, fire and sulfur* God judges from heaven, as with the hail on Egypt (Exod 9:23-24) and the fire and sulfur on Sodom (Gen 19:24). No army can stand against weapons like these.
38:23 *I will magnify Myself and sanctify Myself* This is the heart of chapters 38-39. They are not mainly a puzzle about modern politics but a revelation that God is holy, keeps His promises to Israel, and rules the nations.
39:1 *Look, I am against you, O Gog* God repeats the opening words of 38:3. Chapter 39 retells the invasion with more attention to its outcome and its meaning for Israel and the nations.
39:2 *I will turn you around and lead you on* God leads Gog to the very place of his defeat. Some see in this passage the same event as Revelation 20:8, at the end of the thousand years; most premillennial teachers see a separate, earlier invasion, since Gog's dead are buried for months afterward. Amillennial teachers take both as one symbolic last battle.
39:3 *I will strike your bow from your left hand* An archer held the bow in his left hand and drew with his right. God disarms Gog's army before it can fight.
39:4 *On the mountains of Israel you shall fall* The land Gog came to plunder becomes his grave. The defeat is total, and the bodies are left to the birds and beasts, a mark of utter disgrace in the ancient world.
39:6 *I will send fire on Magog and on those who dwell in the coastlands in security* Judgment reaches past the battlefield to Gog's homeland and distant allies who thought themselves safe. Those who attacked Israel's "security" lose their own.
39:7 *I will not let My holy name be profaned anymore* Israel's exile had profaned God's name among the nations (36:20-23). Gog's defeat will show the world that the LORD is holy and is Israel's God.
39:8 *it is coming, and it shall be done* God speaks of the future as already settled. What He has spoken is as certain as what has already happened.
39:9 *they shall kindle fire with them seven years* The weapons are so many that they serve as fuel for seven years. Ezekiel named the weapons of his own day, made of wood and leather. Some think future weapons will also be burnable; others take the words as standing for war material in general. The seven years also bear on the timing views at 38:8.
39:10 *plunder those who plundered them* Gog came to take plunder (38:12), but Israel takes his instead. God turns the tables on those who attack His people.
39:11 *a grave in Israel, the valley of those who pass through, east of the sea* The sea is likely the Dead Sea. The valley will be renamed Hamon-gog, meaning multitude of Gog. Gog wanted a name and a prize; he gets only a burial place.
39:12 *in order to cleanse the land, seven months* Dead bodies made the land unclean (Num 19:11-16; Deut 21:22-23). Israel's long work of burial shows both the size of the slaughter and God's concern that His land be pure.
39:13 *the day I am glorified* Burying the enemy will become a memorial for Israel. The day of victory is the day God is glorified.
39:14 *they shall set apart men of continual duty* Even after seven months, men will search the land for remaining bones. The care given to cleanliness prepares for the holy land and temple of chapters 40-48.
39:16 *the name of the city is Hamonah* Hamonah also means multitude. A town nearby will bear a name that recalls God's victory.

The Great Sacrifice

17 And you, son of man, thus says the Lord GOD: Say to the birds of every wing and to every animal of the field, 'Assemble and come; gather yourselves from all around to My sacrifice which I am sacrificing for you, a great sacrifice on the mountains of Israel; and you shall eat flesh and drink blood. **18** The flesh of mighty men you shall eat, and the blood of the princes of the earth you shall drink, of rams, lambs, and male goats, bulls, fatlings of Bashan, all of them. **19** And you shall eat fat to satiety and drink blood to drunkenness from My sacrifice which I have sacrificed for you. **20** And you shall be satisfied at My table ***with*** horse and charioteer, mighty man and every man of war, declares the Lord GOD.'

Israel Restored and the Spirit Poured Out

21 And I will set My glory among the nations, and all the nations shall see My judgment which I have executed and My hand which I have laid on them. **22** And the house of Israel shall know that I ***am*** the LORD their God from that day and onward. **23** And the nations shall know that for their iniquity the house of Israel went into exile, because they acted unfaithfully against Me, and I hid My face from them and gave them into the hand of their adversaries, and they fell by the sword, all of them. **24** According to their uncleanness and according to their transgressions I have dealt with them, and I hid My face from them. **25** Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Now I will turn back the captivity of Jacob (Ya'aqov), and I will have compassion on all the house of Israel, and I will be jealous for My holy name. **26** And they shall bear their disgrace and all their unfaithfulness with which they acted unfaithfully against Me, when they dwell on their own ground in security, and no one makes ***them*** afraid, **27** when I bring them back from the peoples and gather them from the lands of their enemies, and I am sanctified through them in the eyes of the many nations. **28** And they shall know that I ***am*** the LORD their God, in that I sent them into exile to the nations, and I will gather them to their own ground, and I will not leave any of them there anymore. **29** And I will not hide My face from them anymore, for I have poured out My Spirit on the house of Israel, declares the Lord GOD."

EZEKIEL 40

The Vision of the New Temple

1 In the twenty-fifth year of our exile, at ***the*** beginning of the year, on the tenth of the month, in the fourteenth year after the city was struck down, on this very day the hand of the LORD was on me, and He brought me there. **2** In visions of God He brought me to the land of Israel (Yisra'el), and He set me down on a very high mountain, and on it ***was something*** like the structure of a city on the south. **3** And He brought me there, and look, a man, his appearance ***was*** like the appearance of bronze, and a cord of linen ***was*** in his hand, and the reed of measurement; and he ***was*** standing in the gate. **4** And the man spoke to me, "Son of man, see with your

39:17 Rev 19:17-18; Zeph 1:7; Jer 12:9
39:18 Ps 22:12; Jer 51:40; Ezek 29:5
39:19 Rev 19:18
39:20 Rev 19:18; Ezek 38:4; Ps 76:5,6
39:21 Ezek 36:23; Ezek 38:16,23; Exod 9:16
39:22 Heb 8:10; Jer 24:7; Ezek 39:7,28
39:23 Jer 22:8,9; Isa 1:15; Isa 59:2
39:24 Ezek 36:19; Jer 2:17,19; Jer 4:18
39:25 Rom 11:26; Acts 2:36; Acts 3:19
39:26 Acts 2:36; Acts 3:19; Rom 11:26
39:27 Ezek 36:23,24; Ezek 38:16,23; Ezek 39:25
39:28 Acts 2:36; Rom 11:2; Ezek 39:22
39:29 Acts 2:17; Acts 2:18; Acts 2:36
40:1 Ezek 33:21; Ezek 1:2; Ezek 32:1,17
40:2 Rev 21:10; Ezek 1:1; Dan 7:1,7
40:3 Rev 11:1; Rev 1:15; Rev 21:15
40:4 Matt 24:15; Ezek 44:5; Jer 26:2

39:17 *My sacrifice which I am sacrificing for you* This is a hard picture, and it is meant to shock. God calls the slain army a sacrifice and invites the birds and beasts to it. It is the language of complete judgment, not something to dwell on in detail.
39:18 *The flesh of mighty men you shall eat* The mighty and the princes who came against Israel are brought low. Revelation 19:17-18 uses the same picture at Christ's return. Whether that is the same event or a parallel one is not certain.
39:20 *you shall be satisfied at My table* The warriors who came to feast on Israel's goods become food themselves. It shows how serious it is to fight against God.
39:21 *I will set My glory among the nations* The battle now turns to its meaning. The nations will see both God's judgment and His hand, and they will know that He is the true God.
39:22 *from that day and onward* From that day on Israel will never again doubt who her God is. This points to a lasting change, not a passing revival.
39:23 *for their iniquity the house of Israel went into exile* The nations will understand that Israel's exile was not the LORD's weakness but His judgment on her sin. He "hid My face," turning away His favor, as Moses warned (Deut 31:17-18).
39:25 *Now I will turn back the captivity of Jacob* These closing verses look past Gog to the whole restoration. God will bring His people home, have compassion on them, and be "jealous for My holy name."
39:26 *they shall bear their disgrace* Living in safety, Israel will remember her sin with shame, as at 36:31. Grace does not make sin seem small; it humbles those who receive it.
39:28 *I will not leave any of them there anymore* No return in history has gathered every Jew to the land. This full gathering awaits the future, when the Messiah returns.
39:29 *I have poured out My Spirit on the house of Israel* God hid His face because of sin; He will never hide it again, because His Spirit will be on His people (36:27; 37:14). Pentecost was a first fulfillment of the parallel promise in Joel 2:28 (Acts 2:16-17), but the full outpouring on the nation is still ahead. Believers today already have the Spirit and are never forsaken (Rom 8:38-39).
40:1 *In the twenty-fifth year of our exile* This is about 573 B.C., fourteen years after Jerusalem fell. "The beginning of the year" may mean the first month, when the Passover lamb was chosen on the tenth day (Exod 12:3), or the seventh month, when the Day of Atonement fell on the tenth day and the jubilee was announced (Lev 25:9). Twenty-five years is half a jubilee.
40:2 *In visions of God He brought me to the land of Israel* Ezekiel's last great vision (chapters 40-48) answers his vision of the defiled temple (chapters 8-11). There he saw the glory leave; here he will see it return. I take this as a real future temple in Christ's millennial kingdom. Others see Zerubbabel's temple, a symbol of the church, heaven, or an ideal never meant to be built.
40:2 *a very high mountain* This fits prophecies that in the last days the mountain of the LORD's house will be raised above the hills (Isa 2:2; Mic 4:1), and that the land around Jerusalem will be changed (Zech 14:10).
40:3 *his appearance was like the appearance of bronze* The guide is a heavenly messenger, perhaps an angel, holding a linen cord for long distances and a measuring reed for shorter ones. Measuring in Scripture marks what God claims and protects (Zech 2:1-5; Rev 11:1; 21:15).
40:4 *Tell all that you are seeing to the house of Israel* Ezekiel was to look closely and report it all. The detail was meant for Israel to study (43:10-11), which is one reason I take the temple as real and not merely symbolic.

eyes, and with your ears hear, and set your heart on all that I am showing you, for in order to show you, you have been brought here. Tell all that you are seeing to the house of Israel."

The Outer Wall and the East Gate

5 And look, a wall ***was*** on the outside of the house, all around, all around; and in the hand of the man ***was*** the reed of measurement, approximately 10.5 feet (six cubits) by the cubit and a handbreadth. And he measured the breadth of the structure, approximately 10.5 feet (one reed), and the height, approximately 10.5 feet (one reed). **6** And he went to the gate whose face ***was in*** the direction toward the east, and he went up on its steps, and he measured the threshold of the gate, approximately 10.5 feet (one reed) ***in*** breadth, and the one threshold, approximately 10.5 feet (one reed) ***in*** breadth. **7** And the chamber ***was*** approximately 10.5 feet (one reed) ***in*** length and approximately 10.5 feet (one reed) ***in*** breadth; and between the chambers ***were*** approximately 8.75 feet (five cubits); and the threshold of the gate beside the porch of the gate from the inside ***was*** approximately 10.5 feet (one reed). **8** And he measured the porch of the gate from the inside, approximately 10.5 feet (one reed). **9** And he measured the porch of the gate, approximately 14 feet (eight cubits), and its pillars, approximately 3.5 feet (two cubits); and the porch of the gate ***was*** from the inside. **10** And the chambers of the gate ***in*** the direction of the east ***were*** three on this side and three on this side; one measurement ***belonged*** to the three of them, and one measurement ***belonged*** to the pillars on this side and on this side. **11** And he measured the breadth of the entrance of the gate, approximately 17.5 feet (ten cubits), ***and*** the length of the gate, approximately 23 feet (thirteen cubits). **12** And a barrier before the chambers ***was*** approximately 1.75 feet (one cubit), and approximately 1.75 feet (one cubit) ***was*** the barrier on this side; and the chamber ***was*** approximately 10.5 feet (six cubits) on this side and approximately 10.5 feet (six cubits) on this side. **13** And he measured the gate from the roof of the chamber to its roof, a breadth of approximately 44 feet (twenty-five cubits), entrance opposite entrance. **14** And he made pillars, approximately 105 feet (sixty cubits), and to the pillar of the courtyard ***was*** the gate, all around, all around. **15** And at the face of the gate of the entrance, to the front of the porch of the inner gate, ***was*** approximately 87.5 feet (fifty cubits). **16** And closed windows ***were*** toward the chambers and toward their pillars within the gate all around, all around, and so for the vestibules; and windows ***were*** all around, all around within; and on the pillar ***were*** palm trees.

The Outer Court and Its Gates

17 And he brought me into the outer courtyard, and look, rooms and a pavement made for the courtyard all around, all around; thirty rooms ***were*** on the pavement. **18** And the pavement ***was*** by the side of the gates, corresponding to the length of the gates, the lower pavement. **19** And he measured the breadth from before the lower gate to the front of the inner courtyard on the outside, approximately 175 feet (a hundred cubits), ***on*** the east and ***on*** the north. **20** And the gate whose face ***was in*** the direction of the north, belonging to the outer courtyard, he measured its length and its breadth. **21** And its chambers, three on this side and three on this side, and its pillars and its vestibules were according to the measurement of the first gate: its length approximately 87.5 feet (fifty cubits), and the breadth approximately 44 feet (twenty-five ***cubits***) by the cubit. **22** And its windows and its vestibules and its palm trees ***were*** according to the measurement of the gate whose face ***was in*** the direction of the east; and by seven steps they go up into it, and its vestibules ***were*** before them. **23** And a gate to the inner courtyard ***was*** opposite the gate to the north and to the east; and he measured from gate to gate, approximately 175 feet (a hundred cubits). **24** And he led me ***in*** the direction of the south, and look, a gate ***in*** the direction of the south; and he measured its pillars and its vestibules according to these measurements. **25** And windows ***belonged*** to it and to its vestibules all around, all around, like these windows; the length ***was*** approximately 87.5 feet (fifty cubits), and the breadth approximately 44 feet (twenty-five cubits). **26** And seven steps ***were*** its stairways, and its vestibules ***were*** before them; and palm trees ***belonged*** to it, one on this side and one on this side, on its pillars. **27** And a gate ***belonged*** to the inner courtyard ***in*** the direction of the south; and he measured from gate to the gate ***in*** the direction of the south, approximately 175 feet (a hundred cubits).

The Gates of the Inner Court

28 And he brought me into the inner courtyard by the gate of

40:5 Ezek 42:20; Isa 26:1; Ps 125:2
40:6 Ezek 8:16; Ezek 43:1; Ezek 40:20
40:7 Ezek 42:5; 1 Kgs 6:5-10; 1 Chr 9:26
40:9 Ezek 45:19
40:14 Exod 27:9; Ezek 8:7; Ezek 42:1
40:16 1 Kgs 6:4; 2 Chr 3:5; Ezek 40:21,22,25,30
40:17 Ezek 42:1; Rev 11:2; Ezek 10:5
40:19 Ezek 40:23,27; Ezek 46:1,2
40:21 Ezek 40:7,10-16,29,30,36,37; Ezek 40:16,26,30,34; Ezek 40:8,10,13,15,25,29
40:22 Ezek 40:16,31,37; Ezek 40:6,26,31,34,37,49; 1 Kgs 6:29,32,35
40:23 Ezek 40:19,27,28,44; Exod 27:9-18; Exod 38:9-12
40:24 Ezek 40:6,20,35; Ezek 46:9; Ezek 40:21,28,29,33,35,36
40:25 Ezek 40:16,22,29; Ezek 40:21,33; John 12:46
40:26 Ezek 40:16,22; Ezek 40:6,22,29; 2 Pet 3:18
40:27 Ezek 40:23,32; Ezek 40:19,23,47
40:28 Ezek 40:32,35

40:5 *a wall was on the outside of the house, all around* The first thing Ezekiel sees is a wall around the whole area. Its purpose is stated at 42:20: to separate the holy from the common. The SLB gives the long cubit, a cubit and a handbreadth, as about 1.75 feet, so the reed is about 10.5 feet.

40:6 *he went to the gate whose face was in the direction toward the east* The tour begins at the east gate, facing the way the glory departed (10:19; 11:23) and the way it will return (43:1-2).

40:10 *three on this side and three on this side* Each gate is a large building with three guardrooms on each side of its passage. Gates of this shape from Solomon's era have been found at Megiddo, Hazor, and Gezer. Here they guard the holiness of God's house.

40:16 *on the pillar were palm trees* Palms recall the carvings of Solomon's temple (1 Kgs 6:29). They stood for life, fruitfulness, and victory (Ps 92:12; John 12:13).

40:17 *thirty rooms were on the pavement* These rooms in the outer court were probably for worshipers, perhaps for eating the meals of the peace offerings. The outer court is the people's place.

40:21 *according to the measurement of the first gate* The north gate matches the east gate exactly, and so does the south (40:24-25). No gate is better than another; all who come to God come by the same measure. There is no west gate.

40:22 *by seven steps they go up into it* The outer gates are reached by seven steps. The temple rises as one moves inward, picturing a climb toward the presence of God.

the south, and he measured the gate of the south according to these measurements. **29** And its chambers and its pillars and its vestibules ***were*** according to these measurements; and windows ***belonged*** to it and to its vestibules all around, all around; the length ***was*** approximately 87.5 feet (fifty cubits), and the breadth approximately 44 feet (twenty-five cubits). **30** And vestibules ***were*** all around, all around; the length ***was*** approximately 44 feet (twenty-five cubits), and the breadth approximately 8.75 feet (five cubits). **31** And its vestibules ***were*** toward the outer courtyard, and palm trees ***were*** on its pillars, and eight steps ***were*** its ascents. **32** And he brought me into the inner courtyard ***in*** the direction of the east, and he measured the gate according to these measurements. **33** And its chambers and its pillars and its vestibules ***were*** according to these measurements; and windows ***belonged*** to it and to its vestibules all around, all around; the length ***was*** approximately 87.5 feet (fifty cubits), and the breadth approximately 44 feet (twenty-five cubits). **34** And its vestibules ***were*** toward the outer courtyard, and palm trees ***were*** on its pillars on this side and on this side, and eight steps ***were*** its ascents. **35** And he brought me to the gate of the north, and he measured ***it*** according to these measurements: **36** its chambers, its pillars and its vestibules; and windows ***belonged*** to it all around, all around; the length ***was*** approximately 87.5 feet (fifty cubits), and the breadth approximately 44 feet (twenty-five cubits). **37** And its pillars ***were*** toward the outer courtyard, and palm trees ***were*** on its pillars on this side and on this side, and eight steps ***were*** its ascents.

Tables for the Offerings

38 And a room and its entrance ***were*** by the pillars of the gates; there they rinse the burnt offering. **39** And in the porch of the gate ***were*** two tables on this side and two tables on this side, to slaughter on them the burnt offering and the sin offering and the guilt offering. **40** And at the side outside, for the one going up to the entrance of the gate toward the north, ***were*** two tables; and at the other side, which ***belonged*** to the porch of the gate, ***were*** two tables. **41** Four tables ***were*** on this side and four tables on this side, at the side of the gate: eight tables on which they slaughter. **42** And four tables for the burnt offering ***were*** hewn stones: the length approximately 2.6 feet (one cubit and a half), and the breadth approximately 2.6 feet (one cubit and a half), and the height approximately 1.75 feet (one cubit). On them they set down the instruments with which they slaughter the burnt offering and the sacrifice. **43** And the hooks, approximately 3 inches (one handbreadth), ***were*** fixed on the inside all around, all around; and on the tables ***was*** the flesh of the offering.

Rooms for the Singers and Priests

44 And outside the inner gate ***were*** rooms of singers in the inner courtyard, which ***was*** at the side of the gate of the north, and their faces ***were in*** the direction of the south; one ***was*** at the side of the gate of the east, ***its*** face ***in*** the direction of the north. **45** And he spoke to me, "This room whose face ***is in*** the direction of the south ***is*** for the priests, the keepers of the charge of the house. **46** And the room whose face ***is in*** the direction of the north ***is*** for the priests, the keepers of the charge of the altar. They ***are*** the sons of Zadok (Tsadoq), the ones drawing near from the sons of Levi to the LORD to minister to Him." **47** And he measured the courtyard, the length approximately 175 feet (a hundred cubits) and the breadth approximately 175 feet (a hundred cubits), squared; and the altar ***was*** before the house. **48** And he brought me to the porch of the house, and he measured the pillar of the porch, approximately 8.75 feet (five cubits) on this side and approximately 8.75 feet (five cubits) on this side; and the breadth of the gate ***was*** approximately 5.25 feet (three cubits) on this side and approximately 5.25 feet (three cubits) on this side. **49** The length of the porch ***was*** approximately 35 feet (twenty cubits), and the breadth approximately 19 feet (eleven cubits), and ***it was*** by the steps by which they go up to it; and columns ***were*** by the pillars, one on this side and one on this side.

40:29 Ezek 40:7,10,12; Ezek 40:16,22,25; 1 Chr 28:11,12
40:30 Ezek 40:21,25,29,33,36
40:31 Ezek 40:26,34; Ezek 40:22,26,34,37
40:32 Ezek 40:28-31,35
40:33 Ezek 40:21,25,36
40:34 Ezek 40:6,22,26,31,34,37,49
40:35 Ezek 47:2; Ezek 44:4; Ezek 40:27,32
40:36 Ezek 40:21,29,36
40:37 Ezek 40:31,34
40:38 Ezek 40:12; Ezek 41:10,11; 1 Kgs 6:8
40:39 Lev 1:3-17; Lev 4:2,3,13-35; Ezek 41:22
40:43 Lev 1:6,8; Lev 8:20
40:44 1 Chr 6:31,32; Ezek 40:23,27; 1 Chr 16:41-43
40:45 1 Chr 9:23; Lev 8:35; Ps 134:1
40:46 Ezek 44:15; Ezek 43:19; 1 Kgs 2:35
40:47 Ezek 40:19,23,27
40:48 1 Kgs 6:3; 2 Chr 3:4
40:49 Ezek 40:31,34,37; 1 Kgs 7:15-21; 2 Chr 3:17

40:31 *eight steps were its ascents* The inner gates have eight steps, so the inner court stands higher still. Some see eight as the number of a new beginning, but Scripture does not explain the numbers, so this is only a thought.
40:34 *its vestibules were toward the outer courtyard* The inner gates face outward, mirroring the outer gates. Every part of the plan draws the worshiper inward and upward toward God's house.
40:39 *the burnt offering and the sin offering and the guilt offering* At the inner gates are tables for the offerings. A burnt offering was wholly burned in full dedication (Lev 1). Sin and guilt offerings dealt with sin and wrongs done. Their meaning in the coming kingdom is discussed at 43:18-27.
40:41 *eight tables on which they slaughter* Four tables stand on each side of the gate. The temple is a place of real worship, with the kinds of offerings Israel knew.
40:44 *rooms of singers in the inner courtyard* Song will fill this temple as it did in David's time (1 Chr 25). Worship in the kingdom will be joyful and ordered.
40:46 *They are the sons of Zadok* Zadok was the priest who stayed loyal to David and anointed Solomon (1 Kgs 1:32-39). His line alone will serve at the altar, a reward for faithfulness explained at 44:15.
40:47 *squared; and the altar was before the house* The inner court is a perfect square, and the altar stands at its center, before the temple building. Everything in the plan is arranged around the place of sacrifice.
40:49 *it was by the steps by which they go up to it* Steps lead up to the porch of the temple itself, higher again. God is holy, yet He has made a way to come near. For us that way is Christ (Heb 10:19-22).

EZEKIEL 41

The Temple Building

1 And he brought me to the temple, and he measured the pillars, approximately 10.5 feet (six cubits) ***in*** breadth on this side and approximately 10.5 feet (six cubits) ***in*** breadth on this side, the breadth of the tent. **2** And the breadth of the entrance ***was*** approximately 17.5 feet (ten cubits), and the sides of the entrance ***were*** approximately 8.75 feet (five cubits) on this side and approximately 8.75 feet (five cubits) on this side; and he measured its length, approximately 70 feet (forty cubits), and the breadth, approximately 35 feet (twenty cubits). **3** And he went inward, and he measured the pillar of the entrance, approximately 3.5 feet (two cubits), and the entrance, approximately 10.5 feet (six cubits), and the breadth of the entrance, approximately 12 feet (seven cubits). **4** And he measured its length, approximately 35 feet (twenty cubits), and the breadth, approximately 35 feet (twenty cubits), before the face of the temple; and he said to me, "This ***is*** the holy of holies."

The Side Chambers

5 And he measured the wall of the house, approximately 10.5 feet (six cubits), and the breadth of the side chamber, approximately 7 feet (four cubits), all around, all around the house, all around. **6** And the side chambers ***were*** side chamber upon side chamber, thirty-three times; and ***they were*** entering into the wall which ***belonged*** to the house for the side chambers all around, all around, to be held, but they would not be held in the wall of the house. **7** And it became broad and it wound around higher and higher for the side chambers, for the winding around of the house ***went*** higher and higher all around, all around the house; therefore the breadth of the house ***increased*** upward, and so ***from*** the lowest ***story one*** goes up to the highest by the middle ***story***. **8** And I saw a height ***belonging*** to the house all around, all around: the foundations of the side chambers ***were*** the fullness of the reed, approximately 10.5 feet (six cubits), ***to*** the joint. **9** The breadth of the wall which ***belonged*** to the side chamber toward the outside ***was*** approximately 8.75 feet (five cubits); and that which ***was*** left free ***was*** between the side chambers which ***belonged*** to the house. **10** And between the rooms ***was*** a breadth of approximately 35 feet (twenty cubits) around the house, all around, all around. **11** And the entrance of the side chamber ***was*** toward the free space, one entrance ***in*** the direction of the north and one entrance toward the south; and the breadth of the place of the free space ***was*** approximately 8.75 feet (five cubits) all around, all around. **12** And the structure which ***was*** before the face of the separate area, ***at*** the side ***in*** the direction of the west, ***was*** approximately 122.5 feet (seventy cubits) ***in*** breadth, and the wall of the structure ***was*** approximately 8.75 feet (five cubits) ***in*** breadth all around, all around, and its length approximately 157.5 feet (ninety cubits). **13** And he measured the house, the length approximately 175 feet (a hundred cubits); and the separate area and the structure and its walls, the length approximately 175 feet (a hundred cubits); **14** and the breadth of the face of the house and the separate area toward the east, approximately 175 feet (a hundred cubits).

Carvings and Doors

15 And he measured the length of the structure before the face of the separate area which ***was*** behind it, and its galleries on this side and on this side, approximately 175 feet (a hundred cubits); and the inner temple and the porches of the courtyard, **16** the thresholds and the closed windows and the galleries all around the three of them opposite the threshold ***were*** paneling of wood all around, all around, and ***from*** the ground to the windows, and the windows ***were*** covered, **17** to ***the space*** above the entrance, and to the inner house, and to the outside, and on all the wall all around, all around, in the inner ***part*** and in the outer ***part***, ***by*** measurements. **18** And ***it was*** made ***with*** cherubim and palm trees, and a palm tree ***was*** between cherub and cherub; and two faces ***belonged*** to the cherub: **19** and the face of a man ***was*** toward the palm tree on this side, and the face of a young lion ***was*** toward the palm tree on this side; ***it was*** made on all the house all around, all around. **20** From the ground to above the entrance the cherubim and the palm trees ***were*** made, and ***on***

41:1 Ezek 40:2,3,17; 1 Kgs 6:2; Zech 6:12,13
41:2 1 Kgs 6:2,17; 2 Chr 3:3; Exod 26:36
41:4 Heb 9:3; Rev 21:16; 1 Kgs 6:20
41:5 Ezek 42:3-14; 1 Kgs 6:5,6
41:6 1 Pet 1:5; 1 Kgs 6:6,10
41:7 1 Kgs 6:8; Matt 13:32; Heb 6:1
41:8 Ezek 40:5; Rev 21:16
41:9 Ezek 41:11; Ezek 42:1,4
41:11 Ezek 41:9; Ezek 42:4
41:12 Ezek 42:1,10,13; Rev 21:27; Rev 22:14,15
41:15 Ezek 42:3; Song 1:17; Song 7:5
41:16 1 Kgs 6:4; Ezek 40:16,25; 1 Kgs 6:15
41:17 Ezek 42:15
41:18 1 Kgs 7:36; Ezek 40:16,22; 2 Chr 3:7

41:1 *he brought me to the temple* The word here means the main hall, the holy place. As Ezekiel moves inward, the doorways grow narrower: the way into God's presence narrows the deeper one goes.
41:3 *he went inward* The guide entered the inner room alone. Ezekiel was a priest but not the high priest, and only the high priest could enter the most holy place, once a year (Lev 16:2, 34).
41:4 *This is the holy of holies* The inner room is a perfect square. Ezekiel mentions no ark. Jeremiah said that in days to come no one would miss the ark, for Jerusalem itself would be called the throne of the LORD (Jer 3:16-17). Ezekiel also names no high priest, lampstand, or veil.
41:6 *side chamber upon side chamber, thirty-three times* Side rooms surround the building on three stories, usually taken as thirty rooms on each level. Some details of verses 7-9 are hard in the Hebrew, but the picture is clear: an ordered house surrounded by rooms for those who serve.
41:8 *the foundations of the side chambers were the fullness of the reed* The whole building stands on a raised platform about 10.5 feet high. God's house is lifted above its surroundings.
41:12 *the structure which was before the face of the separate area* A large building stands west of the temple. Ezekiel does not say what it was for. Some compare it with the Parbar of 1 Chronicles 26:18, but that is only a guess.
41:13 *he measured the house, the length approximately 175 feet* The temple area is a perfect square. Squares run through this vision, and the holy city of Revelation is also foursquare (Rev 21:16).
41:18 *a palm tree was between cherub and cherub* The walls are carved with cherubim and palm trees. Cherubim guarded the way to the tree of life after the fall (Gen 3:24), and palms speak of life. Some see a picture of paradise restored, with access to God opened again.
41:19 *the face of a man was toward the palm tree on this side, and the face of a young lion* The cherubim of chapter 1 had four faces, but carved on a flat wall only two are shown, a man and a young lion, each turned toward a palm.

the wall of the temple. **21** The temple: a squared doorpost; and the face of the holy place: the appearance ***was*** like the appearance. **22** The altar ***was*** wood, approximately 5.25 feet (three cubits) high, and its length approximately 3.5 feet (two cubits); and its corners ***belonged*** to it, and its length and its sides ***were*** wood. And he spoke to me, "This ***is*** the table which ***is*** before the LORD." **23** And two doors ***belonged*** to the temple and to the holy place. **24** And two leaves ***belonged*** to the doors, two turning leaves: two ***leaves belonged*** to one door, and two leaves to the other. **25** And ***there were*** made on them, on the doors of the temple, cherubim and palm trees, just as ***they were*** made on the walls; and a threshold of wood ***was*** on the face of the porch from the outside. **26** And closed windows and palm trees ***were*** on this side and on this side, on the sides of the porch, and the side chambers of the house, and the thresholds.

EZEKIEL 42

The Priests' Rooms

1 And he brought me out into the outer courtyard, ***by*** the way ***in*** the direction of the north; and he brought me to the room which ***was*** opposite the separate area and which ***was*** opposite the structure toward the north. **2** Before the face of the length of approximately 175 feet (a hundred cubits) ***was*** the entrance of the north, and the breadth ***was*** approximately 87.5 feet (fifty cubits). **3** Opposite the approximately 35 feet (twenty ***cubits***) which ***belonged*** to the inner courtyard, and opposite the pavement which ***belonged*** to the outer courtyard, ***was*** gallery before the face of gallery in three ***stories***. **4** And before the rooms ***was*** a walkway of approximately 17.5 feet (ten cubits) ***in*** breadth toward the inner ***part***, a way of approximately 1.75 feet (one cubit); and their entrances ***were*** toward the north. **5** And the upper rooms ***were*** short, for galleries consumed from them, more than from the lower and from the middle ***rooms*** of the structure. **6** For they ***were*** threefold, and there ***were*** no columns ***belonging*** to them like the columns of the courtyards; therefore it was reduced more than the lower and more than the middle from the ground. **7** And the wall which ***was*** outside, corresponding to the rooms, ***in*** the direction of the outer courtyard before the face of the rooms, its length ***was*** approximately 87.5 feet (fifty cubits). **8** For the length of the rooms which ***belonged*** to the outer courtyard ***was*** approximately 87.5 feet (fifty cubits), and look, on the face of the temple ***was*** approximately 175 feet (a hundred cubits). **9** And below these rooms ***was*** the ***way*** leading in from the east, when one comes to them from the outer courtyard. **10** In the breadth of the wall of the courtyard ***in*** the direction of the east, before the face of the separate area and before the face of the structure, ***were*** rooms. **11** And a way ***was*** before them, like the appearance of the rooms which ***were in*** the direction of the north; like their length, so ***was*** their breadth, and all their exits, and like their arrangements, and like their entrances. **12** And like the entrances of the rooms which ***were in*** the direction of the south ***was*** an entrance at the head of the way, the way in front of the corresponding wall ***in*** the direction of the east, when one comes to them. **13** And he said to me, "The rooms of the north ***and*** the rooms of the south which ***are*** before the face of the separate area, they ***are*** the rooms of holiness where the priests who ***are*** near to the LORD shall eat the most holy things. There they shall set down the most holy things, and the grain offering and the sin offering and the guilt offering, for the place ***is*** holy. **14** When the priests go in, then they shall not go out from the holy place into the outer courtyard, and there they shall set down their garments in which they minister, for they ***are*** holiness; and they shall put on other garments, and they shall draw near to that which ***is*** for the people."

The Wall Around the Temple

15 And he finished the measurements of the inner house, and he brought me out ***by*** the way of the gate whose face ***is in*** the direction of the east, and he measured it all around, all around. **16** He measured the side of the east with the reed of measurement, approximately 5,250 feet (five hundred reeds), by the reed of measurement all around. **17** He measured the side of the north, approximately 5,250 feet (five hundred reeds), by the reed of measurement all around. **18** The side of the south he measured, approximately 5,250 feet (five hun-

41:21 Ezek 40:14; 1 Kgs 6:33
41:22 Ezek 23:41; Ezek 44:16; Mal 1:7,12
41:23 1 Kgs 6:31-35; 2 Chr 4:22
41:24 Ezek 40:48
41:26 Ezek 41:16; Ezek 40:16
42:1 Ezek 40:20; Ezek 41:1; Ezek 42:4
42:3 Ezek 41:15,16; Ezek 41:10; Ezek 40:17,18
42:4 Matt 7:14; Luke 13:24
42:5 Ezek 41:7
42:6 Ezek 41:6; 1 Kgs 6:8
42:9 Ezek 46:19
42:10 Ezek 42:1,13; Ezek 41:12; Ezek 41:13-15
42:13 Lev 7:6; Ezek 40:46; Exod 29:31
42:14 Ezek 44:19; Lev 8:7,13,33-35; Exod 29:4-9
42:15 Ezek 41:2-5,15; Ezek 40:6-16
42:16 Ezek 40:3; Zech 2:1; Rev 11:1,2

41:22 *The altar was wood* This wooden piece is called "the table which is before the LORD." Most take it as the table of showbread, where loaves were set before God each Sabbath (Exod 25:23-30; Lev 24:5-9). Some take it as the altar of incense. Jesus is the bread of life (John 6:35).
41:24 *two turning leaves* The doors of the holy place and the inner room each had two folding leaves, as in Solomon's temple (1 Kgs 6:31-35).
41:25 *cherubim and palm trees, just as they were made on the walls* The doors carry the same carvings, but no gold overlay is mentioned. This temple's glory is not in its gold but in the presence of the LORD who will fill it (43:5). For believers today, the way into the holiest is already open through Christ (Heb 10:19-20).
42:1 *he brought me out into the outer courtyard* Ezekiel is shown long buildings of rooms north and south of the temple. The Hebrew of verses 3-12 is hard in places, and scholars draw the plan in slightly different ways, but the purpose of the rooms is made plain in verse 13.
42:5 *the upper rooms were short* The rooms stood in three stories, with the upper ones narrower because they had no columns and galleries took up space. The building was carefully made for its use.
42:13 *they are the rooms of holiness* These rooms are where the priests eat the most holy offerings and store them. Under the law, parts of the grain, sin, and guilt offerings belonged to the priests and were eaten in a holy place (Lev 6:16, 26; 7:6).
42:14 *they shall set down their garments in which they minister, for they are holiness* The priests must change clothes before going out to the people. God was teaching the difference between holy and common (44:23). We are not under these rules, but we are still called to be holy as God is holy (1 Pet 1:15-16).
42:16 *He measured the side of the east with the reed of measurement* Each side measures about 5,250 feet in the SLB, which follows the Hebrew reeds. Some scholars, following the Greek in places, read cubits, about 875 feet a side. The larger figure fits the size of the holy portion in chapter 45, though others think it too big for the temple area alone.

dred reeds), by the reed of measurement. **19** He turned to the side of the west; he measured approximately 5,250 feet (five hundred reeds) by the reed of measurement. **20** On ***the*** four sides he measured it; a wall ***belonged*** to it all around, all around, the length five hundred and the breadth five hundred, to separate between the holy and the common.

EZEKIEL 43

The Glory Returns

1 And he led me to the gate, the gate which ***was*** facing the direction of the east. **2** And look, the glory of the God of Israel (Yisra'el) came from the direction of the east; and His sound ***was*** like the sound of many waters, and the earth shone from His glory. **3** And ***it was*** like the appearance of the vision which I saw, like the vision which I saw when I came to destroy the city; and visions ***were*** like the vision which I saw by the river Chebar (Kevar); and I fell on my face. **4** And the glory of the LORD came into the house ***by*** the way of the gate whose face ***was in*** the direction of the east. **5** And a spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner courtyard; and look, the glory of the LORD filled the house. **6** And I heard ***One*** speaking to me from the house, and a man was standing beside me. **7** And He said to me, "Son of man, ***this is*** the place of My throne and the place of the soles of My feet, where I will dwell there in the midst of the sons of Israel forever. And the house of Israel shall not again defile My holy name, they and their kings, by their prostitution and by the corpses of their kings, their high places, **8** in their setting their threshold with My threshold and their doorpost beside My doorpost, and the wall ***was*** between Me and them; and they defiled My holy name by their abominations which they did, and I consumed them in My anger. **9** Now let them put far away their prostitution and the corpses of their kings from Me, and I will dwell in their midst forever.

The Law of the House

10 You, son of man, declare the house to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities; and let them measure the pattern. **11** And if they are ashamed of all that they have done, the design of the house and its arrangement and its exits and its entrances, and all its designs and all its statutes, and all its designs and all its laws, make known to them; and write ***it*** before their eyes, so that they may keep all its design and all its statutes, and do them. **12** This ***is*** the law of the house: on the top of the mountain all its territory all around, all around ***shall be*** a holy of holies. Look, this ***is*** the law of the house.

The Altar and Its Cleansing

13 And these ***are*** the measurements of the altar by cubits (a cubit ***is*** a cubit and a handbreadth): and the gutter ***is*** approximately 1.75 feet (the cubit), and approximately 1.75 feet (a cubit) the breadth, and its border on its edge all around ***is*** approximately 9 inches (one span); and this ***is*** the mound of the altar. **14** And from the gutter on the ground to the lower ledge ***is*** approximately 3.5 feet (two cubits), and the breadth approximately 1.75 feet (one cubit); and from the smaller ledge to the larger ledge ***is*** approximately 7 feet (four cubits), and the breadth approximately 1.75 feet (the cubit). **15** And the altar hearth ***is*** approximately 7 feet (four cubits), and from the altar hearth and upward ***are*** the horns, four. **16** And the altar hearth ***is*** approximately 21 feet (twelve ***cubits***) ***in*** length by approximately 21 feet (twelve ***cubits***) ***in*** breadth, square on its four sides. **17** And the ledge ***is*** approximately

42:20 Rev 21:16; Rev 21:17; Ezek 45:2
43:1 Ezek 42:15; Ezek 44:1; Ezek 40:6
43:2 Rev 1:15; Rev 18:1; Rev 14:2
43:3 Ezek 9:1,5; Ezek 32:18; Jer 1:10
43:4 Ezek 44:2; Ezek 10:18,19
43:5 Ezek 8:3; Ezek 11:24; 2 Cor 12:2-4
43:6 Ezek 40:3; Lev 1:1; Isa 66:6
43:7 Acts 7:48; 2 Cor 6:16; Acts 7:49
43:8 Ezek 5:11; Ezek 8:3-16; Ezek 23:39
43:9 2 Cor 6:16; Ezek 43:7; Ezek 18:30,31
43:10 Ezek 40:4; Ezek 16:61,63; Exod 25:40
43:11 Heb 8:5; Ezek 11:20; Ezek 36:27
43:12 Ezek 40:2; Ezek 42:20; Ps 93:5
43:13 Exod 27:1-8; 2 Chr 4:1; Ezek 40:5
43:15 Exod 27:2; Lev 9:9; Ps 118:27
43:16 Exod 27:1; 2 Chr 4:1; Ezra 3:3
43:17 Exod 20:26; Ezek 40:6; Exod 25:25

42:20 *to separate between the holy and the common* This line sums up the whole tour. The wall does not shut people out of God's love; it marks what belongs to God. In chapters 8-11 that line had been erased, and the glory left. Now it is drawn clearly again, so the glory can return.
43:2 *the glory of the God of Israel came from the direction of the east* This is the moment the whole book has waited for. The glory left by the east gate and paused over the mount east of the city (10:18-19; 11:23). Now it returns the same way. Premillennial teachers connect this with Christ's return to the Mount of Olives (Zech 14:4; Acts 1:11-12), though the New Testament does not cite Ezekiel 43 for it.
43:2 *His sound was like the sound of many waters* The sound matches the vision of 1:24, and John heard the risen Christ speak with a voice like many waters (Rev 1:15). The earth itself shines with His glory.
43:3 *when I came to destroy the city* Ezekiel saw the same glory he had seen at the Chebar (chapter 1) and when he prophesied Jerusalem's fall (chapters 8-11). The God who judged is the God who returns, and Ezekiel falls on his face again.
43:5 *the glory of the LORD filled the house* As when the tabernacle and Solomon's temple were dedicated (Exod 40:34-35; 1 Kgs 8:10-11), the glory fills the house. No record says this happened at the second temple. The glory did come there in the Son (John 1:14), but He was rejected.
43:7 *this is the place of My throne and the place of the soles of My feet* The voice from the house is the LORD Himself. The ark had been called His footstool (1 Chr 28:2; Ps 132:7); now He needs no ark, for He is present. He promises to dwell among Israel "forever."
43:8 *their setting their threshold with My threshold* Solomon's palace stood right beside the temple, with only a wall between. Kings had treated God's house as their own chapel and brought in idols. In the new plan the temple stands apart in the holy portion.
43:9 *the corpses of their kings* This may mean dead idols, called corpses in contempt, or royal tombs and memorials placed too close to the temple. Either way, nothing dead or unclean will stand beside God's dwelling again.
43:10 *that they may be ashamed of their iniquities* A clear picture of God's holiness exposes sin. The vision was meant to humble Israel and lead to repentance, not to satisfy curiosity.
43:11 *write it before their eyes* Ezekiel was to record the plan and its laws so that Israel would keep them. That command fits a real temple meant to be built and used.
43:12 *shall be a holy of holies* In the old temple only one small room was most holy. Here the whole mountain top is holy. Holiness spreads outward from God's presence (Zech 14:20-21).
43:13 *these are the measurements of the altar by cubits* The altar of burnt offering rises in stages from a base with a gutter, through two ledges, to a hearth about 21 feet square with four horns. Its total height before the horns is about 17 to 19 feet, depending on how the base is counted.
43:17 *its steps are facing east* Moses forbade steps up to an altar so the priest would not be exposed (Exod 20:26), but later the priests wore linen undergarments (Exod 28:42-43). The great size of this altar needs steps.

24.5 feet (fourteen ***cubits***) ***in*** length by approximately 24.5 feet (fourteen ***cubits***) ***in*** breadth on its four sides; and the border around it ***is*** approximately 10.5 inches (half of the cubit), and its gutter ***is*** approximately 1.75 feet (a cubit) all around; and its steps ***are*** facing east." **18** And He said to me, "Son of man, thus says the Lord GOD: These ***are*** the statutes of the altar on the day it is made, to offer up on it a burnt offering and to sprinkle on it blood. **19** And you shall give to the priests, the Levites, who ***are*** of the seed of Zadok (Tsadoq), the ones near to Me, declares the Lord GOD, to minister to Me, a young bull, a son of ***the*** herd, for a sin offering. **20** And you shall take some of its blood and put ***it*** on its four horns and on the four corners of the ledge and on the border all around; and you shall cleanse it from sin and make atonement for it. **21** And you shall take the bull of the sin offering, and one shall burn it in the appointed place of the house, outside the sanctuary. **22** And on the second day you shall bring near a male goat of ***the*** goats without blemish for a sin offering; and they shall cleanse the altar from sin, just as they cleansed ***it*** from sin with the bull. **23** When you finish cleansing ***it*** from sin, you shall bring near a young bull, a son of ***the*** herd, without blemish, and a ram from the flock without blemish. **24** And you shall bring them near before the LORD, and the priests shall throw salt on them, and they shall offer them up ***as*** a burnt offering to the LORD. **25** Seven days you shall offer a male goat of sin offering for each day; and a young bull, a son of ***the*** herd, and a ram from the flock, without blemish, they shall offer. **26** Seven days they shall make atonement for the altar and purify it, and they shall fill its hands. **27** And they shall complete the days; and it shall be on the eighth day and onward ***that*** the priests shall offer your burnt offerings and your peace offerings on the altar; and I will accept you, declares the Lord GOD."

EZEKIEL 44

The Shut East Gate

1 And he brought me back ***by*** the way of the outer gate of the sanctuary which faces east; and it ***was*** shut. **2** And the LORD said to me, "This gate shall be shut; it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter by it, for the LORD, the God of Israel (Yisra'el), has entered by it; and it shall be shut. **3** ***As for*** the prince, a prince he ***is***; he shall sit in it to eat bread before the LORD. By the way of the porch of the gate he shall enter, and by its way he shall go out."

The Levites Who Went Astray

4 And he brought me ***by*** the way of the gate of the north before the face of the house; and I saw, and look, the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD; and I fell on my face. **5** And the LORD said to me, "Son of man, set your heart, and see with your eyes, and with your ears hear all that I am speaking to you concerning all the statutes of the house of the LORD and all its laws; and set your heart on the entrance of the house, with all the exits of the sanctuary. **6** And you shall say to Rebellion, to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: Enough for you of all your abominations, O house of Israel, **7** in your bringing in sons of a foreign ***land***, uncircumcised of heart and uncircumcised of flesh, to be in My sanctuary, to profane it, My house, when you bring near My food, fat and blood; and they broke My covenant, in addition to all your abominations. **8** And you have not kept the charge

43:18 Heb 10:6; Heb 10:8; Exod 40:29
43:19 Ezek 40:46; Ezek 44:15; Ezek 45:18,19
43:20 Lev 8:15; Lev 16:19; Exod 29:12,36
43:21 Exod 29:14; Lev 4:12; Lev 8:17
43:22 1 Pet 1:19; Ezek 43:25; Ezek 43:20,26
43:24 Lev 2:13; Mark 9:49,50; Num 18:19
43:25 Lev 8:33; Exod 29:35-37
43:26 Lev 8:34; Exod 29:24; Exod 32:29
43:27 Lev 9:1; Rom 15:16; Phil 2:17
44:1 Ezek 43:1,4; Ezek 40:6,17; Ezek 42:14
44:2 Ezek 43:2-4; Exod 24:10; Isa 6:1-5
44:3 Ezek 46:2,8; Ezek 34:24; Ezek 37:25
44:4 Rev 14:1; Ezek 1:28; Ezek 3:23
44:5 Acts 8:37; Ezek 40:4; Ezek 43:10,11
44:6 Ezek 3:9,26,27; Ezek 45:9; 1 Pet 4:3
44:7 Acts 7:51; Heb 8:9; Lev 22:25
44:8 Lev 22:2-33; Num 18:3-5; Acts 7:53

43:18 *These are the statutes of the altar on the day it is made* Like Moses' altar (Exod 29:36-37), this one must be cleansed and set apart before use. This raises the hard question of why there would be sacrifices after Christ died once for all (Heb 10:10-14).
43:20 *you shall cleanse it from sin and make atonement for it* These offerings do not take away sin. Animal blood never did (Heb 10:4). Premillennial teachers see them as a memorial looking back to the cross, as the Lord's Supper does now (1 Cor 11:24-26), and as ceremonial cleansing for people in natural bodies during the kingdom (Isa 65:20). The Hebrew kipper here means to cleanse or purge.
43:21 *outside the sanctuary* The sin offering is burned outside, as under the law (Lev 4:12). Jesus suffered outside the gate (Heb 13:11-12). Other teachers take the sacrifices as Ezekiel's own terms for future worship, not literal animals, and many amillennial teachers see them as proof the temple is symbolic.
43:22 *a male goat of the goats without blemish* Every offering had to be without defect, pointing to Christ, the Lamb without blemish (1 Pet 1:19). I hold the memorial and cleansing views, with humility about details, but I am sure the cross is enough.
43:24 *the priests shall throw salt on them* Salt was added to every offering (Lev 2:13) and stood for the lasting covenant between God and His people.
43:26 *Seven days they shall make atonement for the altar* Seven days of preparation match Aaron's ordination (Exod 29:35-37) and the dedication of Solomon's temple (2 Chr 7:9). "Fill its hands" means to consecrate it for service.
43:27 *I will accept you, declares the Lord GOD* This is the goal of everything. The glory has returned, the altar is ready, and God accepts His people. Believers already have that acceptance in Christ (Eph 1:6).
44:2 *This gate shall be shut* The LORD's glory entered by this gate (43:1-4), so no one else may use it. The shut gate honors Him and signals that He will not leave again. Many link it with the sealed Golden Gate of Jerusalem's Old City today, but that gate is in a later wall and is not the fulfillment. The old reading of the gate as a picture of Mary is not in the text.
44:3 *As for the prince, a prince he is* The prince of chapters 44-48 is best seen as a human ruler under Christ, probably of David's line. He cannot be Christ Himself, because he offers a sin offering for himself (45:22), has sons (46:16), and is warned against oppression (45:8-9). Some think he is David raised from the dead, and others a line of Davidic princes.
44:4 *I fell on my face* Every time Ezekiel saw the glory he fell down. He never grew used to it, and neither should we become casual in God's presence.
44:6 *you shall say to Rebellion* God gives Israel a name that sums up her past: Rebellion, the word He used from the start (2:5-8). The new order begins by naming the old sin.
44:7 *uncircumcised of heart and uncircumcised of flesh* Israel had let unbelieving foreigners serve in the sanctuary. The ban is not about race but about the heart. Foreigners who join themselves to the LORD are welcome (Isa 56:6-7), and settled foreigners will even share the land (47:22-23).

of My holy things, but you set ***them as*** keepers of My charge in My sanctuary for yourselves. **9** Thus says the Lord GOD: No son of a foreign ***land***, uncircumcised of heart and uncircumcised of flesh, shall enter My sanctuary, of any son of a foreign ***land*** who ***is*** in the midst of the sons of Israel. **10** But the Levites who went far from Me when Israel went astray, who went astray from Me after their idols, and they shall bear their iniquity. **11** And they shall be in My sanctuary ministering, ***as*** overseers at the gates of the house, and ministering ***to*** the house; they shall slaughter the burnt offering and the sacrifice for the people, and they shall stand before them to minister to them. **12** Because they ministered to them before their idols, and they became a stumbling block of iniquity to the house of Israel, therefore I have lifted up My hand against them, declares the Lord GOD, and they shall bear their iniquity. **13** And they shall not draw near to Me to serve as priest to Me, and to draw near to any of My holy things, to the most holy things; and they shall bear their disgrace and their abominations which they have done. **14** And I will make them keepers of the charge of the house, for all its service and for all that is done in it.

The Sons of Zadok

15 And the priests, the Levites, the sons of Zadok (Tsadoq), who kept the charge of My sanctuary when the sons of Israel went astray from Me, they shall come near to Me to minister to Me, and they shall stand before Me to bring near to Me fat and blood, declares the Lord GOD. **16** They shall enter My sanctuary, and they shall come near to My table to minister to Me, and they shall keep My charge. **17** And it shall be, when they enter the gates of the inner courtyard, they shall be clothed ***with*** linen garments; and wool shall not come up on them while they minister in the gates of the inner courtyard and inward. **18** Linen headdresses shall be on their head, and linen undergarments shall be on their loins; they shall not gird themselves with sweat. **19** And when they go out into the outer courtyard, into the outer courtyard to the people, they shall take off their garments in which they ***were*** ministering and set them down in the rooms of holiness, and they shall put on other garments; and they shall not sanctify the people with their garments. **20** And their head they shall not shave, and ***their*** hair they shall not let grow loose; they shall surely trim their heads. **21** And no priest shall drink wine when they enter the inner courtyard. **22** And a widow and a divorced ***woman*** they shall not take for themselves for wives; but virgins of the seed of the house of Israel, and the widow who is a widow from a priest, they shall take. **23** And they shall teach My people ***the difference*** between the holy and the common, and between the unclean and the clean they shall make them know. **24** And in a dispute they shall stand for judgment; by My judgments they shall judge it; and My laws and My statutes in all My appointed times they shall keep, and My Sabbaths they shall sanctify. **25** And to a dead man he shall not go to become unclean; but for father, and for mother, and for son, and for daughter, for brother, and for sister who has not belonged to a husband, they may make themselves unclean. **26** And after his cleansing, they shall count seven days for him. **27** And on the day he goes into the holy place, into the inner courtyard, to minister in the holy place, he shall bring near his sin offering, declares the Lord GOD. **28** And it shall be for them an inheritance: I ***am*** their inheritance; and a possession you shall not give them in Israel: I ***am*** their possession. **29** The grain offering and the sin offering and the guilt offering, they shall eat them; and every devoted thing in Israel shall belong to them. **30** And the first of all the firstfruits of everything, and every contribution of everything from all your contributions, shall

44:9 Acts 7:51; Ezek 44:7; Joel 3:17
44:10 Ezek 22:26; Ezek 48:11; Ezek 44:15
44:11 Num 16:9; 2 Chr 29:34; Ezek 44:14
44:12 Rev 2:14; 2 Kgs 16:10-16; Ezek 14:3,4
44:13 Num 18:3; 2 Kgs 23:9; Ezek 32:20
44:14 Num 18:4; 1 Chr 23:28-32
44:15 Ezek 40:46; Ezek 43:19; Ezek 48:11
44:16 Ezek 41:22; Mal 1:7,12; Num 18:7,8
44:17 Rev 19:8; Exod 39:27-29; Exod 28:39,40,43
44:18 Exod 28:40,41; Exod 39:28; 1 Cor 11:4-10
44:19 Ezek 46:20; Lev 6:27; Lev 6:10,11
44:20 Num 6:5; Lev 21:5-24; Deut 14:1
44:21 Lev 10:9; Luke 1:15; 1 Tim 3:8
44:22 Lev 21:7,13,14; 1 Tim 3:2,4,5,11,12; Titus 1:6
44:23 Ezek 22:26; Lev 10:10,11; Hos 4:6
44:24 1 Chr 23:4; 2 Chr 19:8-10; Ezek 22:26
44:25 Lev 21:1-6; Lev 22:4; Matt 8:21,22
44:26 Num 6:10-21; Num 19:11-13; Heb 9:13,14
44:27 Num 6:9-11; Lev 4:3-35; Lev 8:14-36
44:28 Num 18:20; Deut 10:9; Deut 18:1,2
44:29 Num 18:14; Lev 27:21,28; Lev 6:14-18,26,29
44:30 Neh 10:35-37; Exod 23:19; Num 15:19-21

44:10 *the Levites who went far from Me* These Levites had served at idol shrines and high places. They will still serve in the house, but in a lower role.
44:13 *they shall not draw near to Me to serve as priest to Me* Forgiveness is real, yet sin can have lasting consequences. A person fully forgiven may not be restored to every place of trust he once held.
44:15 *the sons of Zadok, who kept the charge of My sanctuary* Zadok stayed loyal to David in Absalom's revolt (2 Sam 15:24-29) and anointed Solomon (1 Kgs 1:32-39). His sons remained faithful when others strayed. Faithfulness in hard times is remembered by God.
44:17 *they shall be clothed with linen garments* Priests wore linen, as the law required (Exod 28:39-43). Wool causes sweat, and nothing of human effort or uncleanness was to mark their service.
44:19 *they shall take off their garments in which they were ministering* Holy garments were not to be carried among the people. The line between holy and common is kept at every point.
44:20 *their head they shall not shave* Shaved heads and loose hair were signs of mourning or pagan practice (Lev 21:5). The priests must keep a modest, ordered appearance.
44:21 *no priest shall drink wine* This is the law given after Nadab and Abihu died (Lev 10:9). A priest needed a clear head to teach the difference between holy and common.
44:22 *virgins of the seed of the house of Israel* Marriage rules for priests follow Leviticus 21:7, 13-14. These laws assume people in natural bodies who marry and have children, which fits the millennial reign before the eternal state.
44:23 *they shall teach My people the difference between the holy and the common* This was the very failure of the priests of Ezekiel's day (22:26). In the kingdom the priests will teach it faithfully.
44:24 *My Sabbaths they shall sanctify* The priests will judge disputes by God's judgments and keep His feasts and Sabbaths, which were given to Israel. Believers today differ on how the Sabbath applies to the church (Col 2:16-17).
44:25 *to a dead man he shall not go to become unclean* Priests could touch the dead only for close family (Lev 21:1-3). Death came through sin, and God is life. One day death itself will be swallowed up (1 Cor 15:54).
44:28 *I am their inheritance* The priests would own no farmland. They lived on the people's gifts, and God Himself was their portion. Every believer can say the LORD is my portion (Ps 16:5).
44:30 *to cause a blessing to rest on your house* Giving to God's work brings blessing to the giver. It is never a loss.

belong to the priests; and the first of your dough you shall give to the priest, to cause a blessing to rest on your house. **31** Any carcass and torn ***animal***, from the flying things and from the beasts, the priests shall not eat.'"

EZEKIEL 45

The Holy Portion of the Land

1 "And when you allot the land ***as*** an inheritance, you shall offer up a contribution to the LORD, a holy ***portion*** from the land: ***as*** length, twenty-five thousand ***in*** length, and the breadth ten thousand; it ***shall be*** holy in all its territory all around. **2** Of this there shall be for the holy place five hundred by five hundred, squared all around, and approximately 87.5 feet (fifty cubits) ***of*** pasture land ***shall belong*** to it all around. **3** And from this measured area you shall measure a length of twenty-five thousand and a breadth of ten thousand; and in it shall be the sanctuary, a holy of holies. **4** It ***is*** a holy ***portion*** from the land; it shall belong to the priests, the ministers of the sanctuary, who draw near to minister to the LORD; and it shall be for them a place for houses and a sanctuary for the sanctuary. **5** And twenty-five thousand ***in*** length and ten thousand ***in*** breadth shall belong to the Levites, the ministers of the house, for them for a possession: twenty rooms. **6** And ***as*** the possession of the city you shall give five thousand ***in*** breadth and twenty-five thousand ***in*** length, corresponding to the holy contribution; it shall belong to all the house of Israel (Yisra'el). **7** And to the prince ***shall belong land*** on this side and on this side of the holy contribution and of the possession of the city, before the face of the holy contribution and before the face of the possession of the city, from the west side westward and from the east side eastward, and ***in*** length corresponding to one of the portions, from the west border to the east border. **8** Of the land it shall belong to him for a possession in Israel; and My princes shall no longer oppress My people, and the land they shall give to the house of Israel according to their tribes.

Honest Rulers and Honest Measures

9 Thus says the Lord GOD: Enough for you, O princes of Israel! Remove violence and plunder, and do justice and righteousness; lift off your evictions from My people,
declares the Lord GOD. **10** Let balances of righteousness and an ephah of righteousness and a bath of righteousness be for you. **11** The ephah and the bath shall be one measure, so that the bath carries a tenth of the homer, and the ephah a tenth of the homer; according to the homer shall be its measurement. **12** And the shekel ***shall be*** approximately 2/5 ounce (twenty gerahs); twenty shekels, twenty-five shekels, ***and*** fifteen shekels shall be the mina for you.

Offerings and Feasts

13 This ***is*** the contribution which you shall offer up: approximately 3 quarts (a sixth of the ephah) from a homer of wheat, and you shall give approximately 3 quarts (a sixth of the ephah) from a homer of barley; **14** and the prescribed portion of the oil, the bath of oil, ***shall be*** approximately 2.5 quarts (a tenth of the bath) from the kor, approximately 60 gallons (ten baths), a homer, for approximately 60 gallons (ten baths) ***are*** a homer; **15** and one sheep from the flock, from the two hundred, from the well-watered land of Israel, for a grain offering and for a burnt offering and for peace offerings, to make atonement for them, declares the Lord GOD. **16** All the people of the land shall be ***bound*** to this contribution for the prince in Israel. **17** And on the prince shall be the burnt offerings and the grain offering and the drink offering at the feasts and at the new moons and on the Sabbaths, at all the appointed times of the house of Israel; he shall offer the sin offering and the grain offering and the burnt offering and the peace offerings to make atonement for the house of Israel. **18** Thus says the Lord GOD: In the first

44:31 Lev 22:8; Exod 22:31; Deut 14:21
45:1 Ezek 48:29; Num 34:13; Zech 14:20,21
45:2 Ezek 42:16-20
45:3 Ezek 48:10
45:4 Ezek 40:45; Ezek 43:19; Num 16:5
45:5 Ezek 48:10,13,20; 1 Cor 9:13,14; Ezek 40:17
45:6 Ezek 48:15-18,30-35
45:7 Ezek 48:21; Ezek 34:24; Ezek 37:24
45:8 Ezek 46:18; Ezek 22:27; Isa 11:3-5
45:9 Ezek 44:6; Jer 22:3; Zech 8:16
45:10 Amos 8:4-6; Mic 6:10,11; Lev 19:35,36
45:11 Isa 5:10
45:12 Exod 30:13; Lev 27:25; Num 3:47
45:14 Luke 16:6
45:15 Lev 1:4; Lev 6:30; Prov 3:9,10
45:16 Exod 30:14,15; Isa 16:1
45:17 Col 2:16; Ezek 46:4-12; 2 Chr 31:3
45:18 1 Pet 1:19; Lev 16:16,33; Exod 12:2

44:31 *the priests shall not eat* Even in food, the priests were to be clean (Lev 22:8).
45:1 *you shall offer up a contribution to the LORD, a holy portion from the land* The word contribution means something lifted up and set apart for God. The unit for twenty-five thousand by ten thousand is not given. Most take it as long cubits, a strip about 8 by 3 miles; some read reeds, which would be far larger.
45:2 *five hundred by five hundred, squared all around* The sanctuary area of 42:16-20 sits in the middle of the holy portion, with open land around it. God's dwelling is at the center of the land.
45:4 *it shall belong to the priests, the ministers of the sanctuary* The priests live nearest the sanctuary, and the Levites have the strip beside them. Those who serve God live closest to Him, and the rest of the land is arranged around that center.
45:5 *twenty rooms* The SLB follows the Hebrew here. The ancient Greek reads cities to dwell in, a small difference in letters, and many prefer it. Either way, the Levites receive a place to live.
45:6 *it shall belong to all the house of Israel* The city's strip belongs to the whole nation, not to one tribe. Jerusalem will be shared by all Israel.
45:8 *My princes shall no longer oppress My people* The prince receives his own land so he will not seize others'. Israel's kings had taken fields (1 Sam 8:14), and Ahab had Naboth killed for his vineyard (1 Kgs 21). That will end.
45:9 *Enough for you, O princes of Israel* This is a word for Ezekiel's own day too. The princes had used violence and driven families from their land (22:6, 27). God calls them to justice now, not only in the future.
45:10 *Let balances of righteousness* God cares about honest weights and measures. Cheating in business is cheating one's neighbor (Prov 11:1; Amos 8:5). Faith shows up in the marketplace.
45:13 *This is the contribution which you shall offer up* The people's offering is a small share of their produce, about one sixtieth of grain and one hundredth of oil. God asks for a portion, not a crushing burden.
45:16 *All the people of the land shall be bound to this contribution for the prince* The people give to the prince, and he provides the offerings for the nation at the feasts, new moons, and Sabbaths. He leads Israel in worship.
45:17 *he shall offer the sin offering* The offerings "make atonement," a word for cleansing. As at 43:18-27, I take them as memorial and ceremonial cleansing, not removing the guilt of sin, which Christ took away once for all (Heb 10:10-14).
45:18 *you shall cleanse the sanctuary from sin* The year begins with cleansing. Blood on the doorpost recalls the first Passover in Egypt (Exod 12:7).

month, on the first ***day*** of the month, you shall take a young bull, a son of ***the*** herd, without blemish, and you shall cleanse the sanctuary from sin. **19** And the priest shall take some of the blood of the sin offering and put ***it*** on the doorpost of the house and on the four corners of the ledge of the altar and on the doorpost of the gate of the inner courtyard. **20** And so you shall do on the seventh ***day*** in the month for each man who errs and for the simple ***one***; and you shall make atonement for the house. **21** In the first ***month***, on the fourteenth day of the month, the Passover shall be for you, a feast of weeks of days; unleavened bread shall be eaten. **22** And the prince shall offer on that day, for himself and for all the people of the land, a young bull ***as*** a sin offering. **23** And ***during*** the seven days of the feast he shall offer a burnt offering to the LORD, seven young bulls and seven rams without blemish, daily, the seven days; and a sin offering, a male goat of ***the*** goats, daily. **24** And ***as*** a grain offering he shall offer approximately 3/5 bushel (an ephah) for the young bull and approximately 3/5 bushel (an ephah) for the ram, and oil, approximately 1 gallon (a hin) for the ephah. **25** In the seventh ***month***, on the fifteenth day of the month, at the feast, he shall offer like these ***for*** the seven days, like the sin offering, like the burnt offering, and like the grain offering, and like the oil."

EZEKIEL 46

Worship on Sabbaths and New Moons

1 "Thus says the Lord GOD: The gate of the inner courtyard which faces east shall be shut the six days of work, and on the day of the Sabbath it shall be opened, and on the day of the new moon it shall be opened. **2** And the prince shall enter ***by*** the way of the porch of the gate from outside, and he shall stand by the doorpost of the gate; and the priests shall offer his burnt offering and his peace offerings, and he shall bow down at the threshold of the gate; and he shall go out, and the gate shall not be shut until the evening. **3** And the people of the land shall bow down ***at*** the entrance of that gate on the Sabbaths and on the new moons before the LORD. **4** And the burnt offering which the prince shall bring near to the LORD on the day of the Sabbath ***shall be*** six lambs without blemish and a ram without blemish; **5** and the grain offering ***shall be*** approximately 3/5 bushel (an ephah) for the ram, and for the lambs the grain offering ***shall be*** the gift of his hand, and oil, approximately 1 gallon (a hin) for the ephah. **6** And on the day of the new moon, a young bull, a son of ***the*** herd, without blemish, and six lambs and a ram; they shall be without blemish. **7** And approximately 3/5 bushel (an ephah) for the young bull and approximately 3/5 bushel (an ephah) for the ram he shall offer ***as*** a grain offering, and for the lambs as much as his hand can reach, and oil, approximately 1 gallon (a hin) for the ephah. **8** And when the prince enters, he shall enter ***by*** the way of the porch of the gate, and by its way he shall go out. **9** And when the people of the land come before the LORD at the appointed times, the one who enters ***by*** the way of the gate of the north to bow down shall go out ***by*** the way of the gate of the south, and the one who enters ***by*** the way of the gate of the south shall go out ***by*** the way of the gate toward the north; he shall not return ***by*** the way of the gate by which he entered, for he shall go out opposite it. **10** And the prince ***shall be*** in their midst; when they enter, he shall enter, and when they go out, they shall go out. **11** And at the feasts and at the appointed times the grain offering shall be approximately 3/5 bushel (an ephah) for the young bull and approximately 3/5 bushel (an ephah) for the ram, and for the lambs the gift of his hand, and oil, approximately 1 gallon (a hin) for the ephah. **12** And when the prince offers a freewill offering, a burnt offering or peace offerings, ***as*** a freewill offering to the LORD, then one shall open for him the gate which faces east, and he shall offer his burnt offering and his peace offerings just as he offers on the day of the Sabbath; and he shall go out, and one shall shut the gate after

45:19 Ezek 43:14,20; Lev 16:18-20
45:20 Lev 4:27-35; Ps 19:12; Ezek 45:15,18
45:21 1 Cor 5:7; John 18:28; Lev 23:5-8
45:22 Lev 4:14; Matt 20:28; Matt 26:26-28
45:23 Heb 10:8; Lev 23:8; Job 42:8
45:24 Ezek 46:5-7; Num 28:12-15
45:25 Num 29:12-38; Lev 23:33-43; 2 Chr 5:3
46:1 Luke 13:14; Heb 4:9; Isa 66:23
46:2 Heb 5:7; Ezek 44:3; Ezek 46:8
46:3 Col 2:16; Luke 1:10; John 10:9
46:4 Ezek 45:17; Num 28:9,10
46:5 Ezek 45:24; Ezek 46:7,11,12; Num 28:12
46:8 Ezek 46:2; Ezek 44:1-3; Col 1:18
46:9 Exod 23:14-17; Exod 34:23; Deut 16:16
46:10 Ps 42:4; 1 Chr 29:20,22; 2 Sam 6:14-19
46:11 Ezek 46:5,7; Lev 23:1-44; Num 15:1-41
46:12 Ezek 46:1,2,8; Ezek 45:17; Lev 23:38

45:20 *for each man who errs and for the simple one* This offering covers those who sin without intent or from ignorance. Some read the seventh month with the Greek, giving two cleansings a year. Ezekiel never mentions the Day of Atonement or a high priest. One suggestion is that Christ, our High Priest, has entered once for all (Heb 9:11-12), but the text does not say.
45:21 *the Passover shall be for you, a feast of weeks of days* The Passover is joined with the seven days of Unleavened Bread (Exod 12:15-18). It remembered the rescue from Egypt and pointed to Christ, our Passover (1 Cor 5:7).
45:22 *for himself and for all the people of the land* The prince offers a sin offering for himself as well as for the people. This is one of the clearest signs he is not Christ, who had no sin (Heb 4:15).
45:25 *In the seventh month, on the fifteenth day of the month, at the feast* This is the Feast of Booths. Zechariah says the nations will go up yearly to keep it in the kingdom (Zech 14:16). Ezekiel does not name the Feast of Weeks; some suggest it was fulfilled at Pentecost, but that is only a suggestion.
46:1 *on the day of the Sabbath it shall be opened* This is the inner east gate, not the outer one shut forever (44:1-2). It opens on the Sabbath and new moon, days set apart for God in Israel's calendar. Believers today differ on how the Sabbath applies now (Col 2:16-17).
46:2 *he shall stand by the doorpost of the gate* The prince comes to the threshold, watches the priests offer for him, and bows down. He is the highest ruler under Christ, yet he does not act as priest. King Uzziah was struck with leprosy for trying (2 Chr 26:16-21).
46:3 *the people of the land shall bow down at the entrance of that gate* With the gate open, the people can look toward the altar and worship. Ruler and people bow together before the LORD.
46:4 *six lambs without blemish and a ram without blemish* These amounts differ from the law of Moses (Num 28:9-15). Premillennial teachers see a new order of worship in the kingdom, not the Mosaic system restored. Others use such differences to argue the vision is symbolic.
46:9 *shall go out by the way of the gate of the south* Worshipers leave by the opposite gate. At crowded feasts this kept order, and many see a lesson as well: no one should leave God's presence the same way he came in.
46:10 *the prince shall be in their midst* At the feasts the prince does not stand apart. He enters and leaves with the people, a ruler who worships among those he leads.
46:12 *when the prince offers a freewill offering* A freewill offering is given gladly, not because it is required. The inner east gate opens for it, for God welcomes willing worship (2 Cor 9:7).

his going out. **13** And a lamb, a son of its year, without blemish, you shall offer ***as*** a burnt offering daily to the LORD; morning by morning you shall offer it. **14** And a grain offering you shall offer with it morning by morning, approximately 3 quarts (a sixth of the ephah), and oil, approximately 1/3 gallon (a third of the hin), to moisten the fine flour, a grain offering to the LORD, statutes forever, continually. **15** They shall offer the lamb and the grain offering and the oil morning by morning, a continual burnt offering.

The Prince's Inheritance

16 Thus says the Lord GOD: When the prince gives a gift to any man from his sons, it ***is*** his inheritance; it shall belong to his sons; it ***is*** their possession by inheritance. **17** And when he gives a gift from his inheritance to one of his servants, then it shall belong to him until the year of liberty, and it shall return to the prince; only his inheritance, ***as for*** his sons, it shall belong to them. **18** And the prince shall not take from the inheritance of the people, to oppress them out of their possession; from his own possession he shall cause his sons to inherit, so that My people shall not be scattered, each man from his possession."

The Temple Kitchens

19 And he brought me through the entrance which ***was*** at the side of the gate, to the rooms of holiness for the priests, which faced north; and look, there ***was*** a place there in the far parts westward. **20** And he said to me, "This ***is*** the place where the priests shall boil the guilt offering and the sin offering, where they shall bake the grain offering, so as not to bring ***them*** out into the outer courtyard to sanctify the people." **21** And he brought me out into the outer courtyard, and he caused me to pass to the four corners of the courtyard; and look, a courtyard ***was*** in the corner of the courtyard, a courtyard in the corner of the courtyard. **22** In the four corners of the courtyard ***were*** enclosed courtyards, approximately 70 feet (forty ***cubits***) ***in*** length and approximately 52.5 feet (thirty ***cubits***) ***in*** breadth; one measurement ***belonged*** to the four of them, set in corners. **23** And a row ***was*** all around in them, around the four of them, and boiling places ***were*** made under the rows all around. **24** And he said to me, "These ***are*** the house of the ones boiling, where the ministers of the house shall boil the sacrifice of the people."

EZEKIEL 47

The River From the Temple

1 And he brought me back to the entrance of the house; and look, waters ***were*** going out from under the threshold of the house eastward, for the face of the house ***was*** east; and the waters ***were*** going down from under, from the south side of the house, from the south of the altar. **2** And he brought me out ***by*** the way of the gate toward the north, and he led me around ***by*** the way outside to the gate of the outside, ***by*** the way which faces east; and look, waters ***were*** trickling from the south side. **3** When the man went out eastward, and a line ***was*** in his hand, he measured approximately 1,750 feet (a thousand by the cubit), and he made me pass through the waters, waters ***up to the*** ankles. **4** And he measured approximately 1,750 feet (a thousand ***cubits***), and he made me pass through the waters, waters ***up to the*** knees; and he measured approximately 1,750 feet (a thousand ***cubits***), and he made me pass through, waters ***up to the*** loins. **5** And he measured approximately 1,750 feet (a thousand ***cubits***), a river which I was not able to pass through, for the waters had risen, waters of swimming, a river which could not be passed through. **6** And he said to me, "Have you seen, son of man?" And he led me and brought me back ***to*** the bank of the river. **7** When I returned, look, on the bank of the river ***were*** very many trees on this side and on this side. **8** And he said to me, "These waters are going out to the eastern region, and they shall go down to the Arabah (Arava), and they shall go toward the sea; into the sea ***they go***, the ***waters*** brought out,

46:13 John 1:29; 1 Pet 1:19; Rev 13:8
46:14 Num 28:5
46:15 Heb 10:8; Heb 7:27; Heb 9:26
46:16 2 Chr 21:3; Gen 25:5,6; Ps 37:18
46:17 Lev 25:10; Matt 25:14-29; Luke 19:25,26
46:18 Ezek 45:8; Ezek 22:27; 1 Kgs 21:19
46:19 Ezek 42:9; Ezek 40:44-46
46:20 2 Chr 35:13; Ezek 44:29; Lev 2:4-7
46:24 John 21:17; Ezek 46:20; Matt 24:45
47:1 Rev 22:1; John 7:38; Ps 46:4
47:2 John 7:38; Ezek 44:2,4
47:3 John 7:38; Ezek 40:3; Zech 2:1
47:4 John 7:38; Acts 19:10-20; Rom 15:19
47:5 John 7:38; Isa 11:9; Hab 2:14
47:6 Matt 13:51; John 7:38; Ezek 40:4
47:7 Rev 22:2; John 7:38; Ezek 47:12
47:8 Luke 11:24; John 7:38; Deut 3:17

46:13 *morning by morning you shall offer it* Moses' law required a lamb in the morning and another in the evening (Exod 29:38-42; Num 28:3-8). Here only the morning lamb is named, another difference in the new order. Every believer can start the day with the Lord (Ps 5:3).
46:16 *it shall belong to his sons* The prince has sons who inherit his land, another reason I take him as a human ruler and not Christ (44:3).
46:17 *until the year of liberty* Land given to a servant returns to the prince in the jubilee year (Lev 25:10-13). Royal land stays in the royal family.
46:18 *so that My people shall not be scattered, each man from his possession* The prince may not seize the people's land. Each family's land was its share in the promise to Abraham, and God protects it.
46:20 *This is the place where the priests shall boil the guilt offering* The priests cook the holy offerings in their own rooms, so holy things are not carried among the people.
46:24 *where the ministers of the house shall boil the sacrifice of the people* Kitchens in the four corners of the outer court are for the peace offerings, which worshipers shared as a meal with family. After all the gates and rules, the chapter ends with families eating together in the courts of the LORD. Worship is joyful fellowship with God.
47:1 *waters were going out from under the threshold of the house eastward* Jerusalem's old temple had no river; the city drew water from springs and cisterns. Here water flows from God's house itself. The glory returned in chapter 43, and now life flows out from where God dwells.
47:2 *waters were trickling from the south side* Ezekiel goes out by the north gate, since the outer east gate is shut (44:2). The river begins as a mere trickle.
47:3 *waters up to the ankles* The guide measures about a third of a mile at a time. Ankle-deep, then knee-deep, then waist-deep, the water rises as Ezekiel goes on.
47:5 *a river which I was not able to pass through* No streams join it and no rain falls, yet it grows into a river too deep to cross. God's work often starts small and grows by His power, like the mustard seed (Matt 13:31-32).
47:7 *on the bank of the river were very many trees* The valley from Jerusalem to the Dead Sea runs through the wilderness of Judea, one of the driest places in the land. Now its banks are lined with trees.
47:8 *the waters shall be healed* The Arabah is the deep Jordan valley. The sea is the Dead Sea, about 1,400 feet below sea level and so salty that fish cannot live in it. The river turns its salt water fresh.

and the waters shall be healed. **9** And it shall be ***that*** every living being which swarms, wherever the two rivers go, shall live; and the fish shall be very many, for these waters have gone there, and they shall be healed; and everything shall live wherever the river goes. **10** And it shall be ***that*** fishermen shall stand beside it; from Engedi as far as Eneglaim (En-Eglayim) there shall be a spreading place for nets; their fish shall be according to its kind, like the fish of the Great Sea, very many. **11** Its swamps and its marshes, and they shall not be healed; to salt they are given. **12** And by the river, on its bank on this side and on this side, every tree for food shall grow up; its leaf shall not wither, and its fruit shall not come to an end; according to its months it shall bear new fruit, because its waters, they ***are*** going out from the sanctuary; and its fruit shall be for food, and its leaf for healing."

The Borders of the Land

13 Thus says the Lord GOD: "This ***is*** the border by which you shall inherit the land for the twelve tribes of Israel (Yisra'el): Joseph (Yosef) ***shall have*** portions. **14** And you shall inherit it, each man like his brother, ***concerning*** which I lifted up My hand to give it to your fathers; and this land shall fall to you as an inheritance. **15** And this ***is*** the border of the land: on the north side, from the Great Sea ***by*** the way of Hethlon (Chetlon), to the entrance of Zedad (Tsedad), **16** Hamath (Chamat), Berothah (Berota), Sibraim (Sivrayim), which ***is*** between the border of Damascus (Dameseq) and the border of Hamath; Hazer-hatticon (Chatser-Hatikhon), which ***is*** on the border of Hauran (Chavran). **17** And the border shall be from the sea ***to*** Hazar-enan (Chatsar-Enon), the border of Damascus, and north northward, and the border of Hamath; and ***this is*** the north side. **18** And the east side: from between Hauran and from between Damascus and from between Gilead (Gilad) and from between the land of Israel, the Jordan (Yarden); from ***the*** border to the eastern sea you shall measure; and ***this is*** the east side. **19** And the south side southward: from Tamar as far as the waters of Meribah of Kadesh (Qadesh), ***to*** the wadi, to the Great Sea; and ***this is*** the south side southward. **20** And the west side ***is*** the Great Sea, from ***the*** border as far as opposite the entrance of Hamath; this ***is*** the west side. **21** And you shall divide this land for yourselves according to the tribes of Israel. **22** And it shall be ***that*** you shall allot it ***as*** an inheritance for yourselves and for the sojourners who sojourn in your midst, who have fathered sons in your midst; and they shall be to you like the native-born among the sons of Israel; with you they shall be allotted an inheritance in the midst of the tribes of Israel. **23** And it shall be ***that*** in the tribe with which the sojourner sojourns, there you shall give ***him*** his inheritance, declares the Lord GOD."

EZEKIEL 48

The Tribes North of the Holy Portion

1 "And these ***are*** the names of the tribes: from the end toward the north, beside the way of Hethlon (Chetlon), ***to*** the entrance of Hamath (Chamat), Hazar-enan (Chatsar-Enan), the border of Damascus (Dameseq) northward, beside
Hamath, and they shall belong to him, the east side ***to*** the west: Dan, one ***portion***. **2** And by the border of Dan, from the east side to the west side: Asher, one ***portion***. **3** And by the border of Asher, from the east side and to the west side: Naphtali (Naftali), one ***portion***. **4** And by the border of Naphtali, from the east side to the west side: Manasseh (Menashe), one ***portion***. **5** And by the border of Manasseh, from the east side to the west side: Ephraim (Efrayim), one ***portion***. **6** And by the border of Ephraim, from the east side and to the west

47:9 John 7:38; John 3:16; Ps 78:16
47:10 Matt 13:47; John 7:38; Matt 4:19
47:11 John 7:38; Rev 22:2; Deut 29:23
47:12 Rev 22:2; John 7:38; Ezek 47:7
47:13 Num 34:2-12; Ezek 48:4-6; Gen 48:5
47:14 Ezek 20:5,6,28,42; Gen 12:7; Ezek 48:29
47:15 Num 34:8; Ezek 48:1
47:16 Acts 9:2; Num 13:21; 2 Sam 8:8
47:17 Ezek 48:1; Num 34:9
47:18 Gen 13:10; Gen 31:23,47; Num 32:1
47:19 Ezek 48:28; Deut 32:51; Num 20:13
47:22 Eph 3:6; Col 3:11; Isa 56:6,7
48:1 Ezek 47:15-17; Josh 19:40-47; Exod 1:1-5
48:2 Josh 19:24-31; Gen 30:12,13
48:3 Josh 19:32-39; Gen 30:7,8
48:4 Josh 17:1-11; Josh 13:29-31; Gen 30:22-24
48:5 Josh 17:8-10,14-18; Josh 16:1-10
48:6 Josh 13:15-21; Gen 29:32; Gen 49:3,4

47:9 *wherever the two rivers go* The Hebrew is a dual form. It may mean the river divides, as Zechariah says living waters will flow east and west from Jerusalem (Zech 14:8), or it may simply intensify the word. Wherever the river goes, everything lives.
47:10 *from Engedi as far as Eneglaim there shall be a spreading place for nets* En-gedi is an oasis on the western shore of the Dead Sea (1 Sam 24:1). En-eglaim's location is uncertain, likely also on the shore. Fishermen will work a sea that was dead.
47:11 *to salt they are given* Some marshes stay salty. Salt was needed for the offerings (43:24) and for daily life, so God leaves a supply.
47:12 *its leaf shall not wither, and its fruit shall not come to an end* The trees bear new fruit every month, and their leaves bring healing. This reaches back to Eden's river and tree of life (Gen 2:9-10) and forward to the river of life in the new Jerusalem (Rev 22:1-2).
47:12 *because its waters, they are going out from the sanctuary* I take this as a real river flowing from the millennial temple after the land is changed at Christ's return (Zech 14:4, 8), a foretaste of Revelation 22. Some read it only as a picture of the Spirit and the gospel (John 7:38-39); amillennial teachers see it fulfilled in Revelation 22 or in the church. The spiritual lesson is true either way: where the Spirit goes, dead hearts live.
47:13 *Joseph shall have portions* The land is divided among the twelve tribes. Levi has no tribal share (44:28), so Joseph receives two portions through Ephraim and Manasseh, keeping the number at twelve.
47:14 *each man like his brother* Unlike in Joshua's day, each tribe receives an equal share. God keeps the oath He swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Gen 15:18; 26:3; 28:13).
47:15 *this is the border of the land* The borders closely match Numbers 34:1-12. Several place names, such as Hethlon, Zedad, Berothah, and Sibraim, cannot be located with certainty. The north border reaches into what is now Lebanon and Syria. These notes make no claim about modern politics.
47:18 *the Jordan* The east border is the Jordan, so the land east of it, settled by Reuben, Gad, and half of Manasseh in Moses' day, is not included. Israel has never held all of this land as described. I believe it will be fulfilled in the kingdom.
47:22 *they shall be to you like the native-born among the sons of Israel* Sojourners who have raised families in Israel will receive an inheritance among the tribes. This is grace to Gentiles, as with Rahab and Ruth, and as Paul says Gentiles once far off have been brought near (Eph 2:12-19). The land still belongs to Israel by tribes.
48:1 *these are the names of the tribes* The tribes are listed from north to south, each receiving an equal strip from east to west. Unlike Joshua's day, no tribe lives east of the Jordan. Dan, the first tribe to fall into open idolatry (Judg 18:30-31), still receives its place. Dan is missing from the list in Revelation 7:5-8, but here it is restored.

side: Reuben (Reuven), one ***portion***. **7** And by the border of Reuben, from the east side to the west side: Judah (Yehuda), one ***portion***.

The Holy Portion and the City

8 And by the border of Judah, from the east side to the west side, shall be the contribution which you shall offer up, twenty-five thousand ***in*** breadth, and ***in*** length like one of the portions, from the east side to the west side; and the sanctuary shall be in its midst. **9** The contribution which you shall offer up to the LORD ***shall be*** twenty-five thousand ***in*** length and ten thousand ***in*** breadth. **10** And for these shall be the holy contribution: for the priests, northward twenty-five thousand, and westward ten thousand ***in*** breadth, and eastward ten thousand ***in*** breadth, and southward twenty-five thousand ***in*** length; and the sanctuary of the LORD shall be in its midst. **11** For the priests who ***are*** sanctified, from the sons of Zadok (Tsadoq), who kept My charge, who did not go astray when the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) went astray, just as the Levites went astray, **12** it shall belong to them, a contribution from the contribution of the land, a holy of holies, by the border of the Levites. **13** And the Levites, corresponding to the border of the priests, ***shall have*** twenty-five thousand ***in*** length and ten thousand ***in*** breadth; all the length ***shall be*** twenty-five thousand and the breadth ten thousand. **14** And they shall not sell any of it, and one shall not exchange ***it***, and one shall not transfer the first of the land; for ***it is*** holy to the LORD. **15** And the five thousand which remain in the breadth before the face of the twenty-five thousand, it ***is*** common ***land*** for the city, for dwelling and for pasture land; and the city shall be in its midst. **16** And these ***shall be*** its measurements: the north side four thousand five hundred, and the south side four thousand five hundred, and on the east side four thousand five hundred, and the west side four thousand five hundred. **17** And the city shall have pasture land: northward two hundred fifty, and southward two hundred fifty, and eastward two hundred fifty, and westward two hundred fifty. **18** And the remainder in the length corresponding to the holy contribution ***shall be*** ten thousand eastward and ten thousand westward; and it shall be corresponding to the holy contribution, and its produce shall be for food for the workers of the city. **19** And the worker of the city, they shall work it, from all the tribes of Israel. **20** All the contribution ***shall be*** twenty-five thousand by twenty-five thousand; foursquare you shall offer up the holy contribution, with the possession of the city. **21** And the remainder ***shall belong*** to the prince, on this side and on this side of the holy contribution and of the possession of the city, before the face of the twenty-five thousand ***of the*** contribution as far as the east border, and westward before the face of the twenty-five thousand at the west border, corresponding to the portions ***belonging*** to the prince; and the holy contribution and the sanctuary of the house shall be in its midst. **22** And from the possession of the Levites and from the possession of the city, in the midst of what shall belong to the prince, between the border of Judah and the border of Benjamin (Binyamin), it shall belong to the prince.

The Tribes to the South

23 And the rest of the tribes: from the east side to the west side, Benjamin, one ***portion***. **24** And by the border of Benjamin, from the east side to the west side: Simeon (Shimon), one ***portion***. **25** And by the border of Simeon, from the east side to the west side: Issachar (Yisashkhar), one ***portion***. **26** And by the border of Issachar, from the east side to the west side: Zebulun (Zevulun), one ***portion***. **27** And by the border of Zebulun, from the east side to the west side: Gad, one ***portion***. **28** And by the border of Gad, at the south side southward, the border shall be from Tamar ***to*** the waters of Meribah of Kadesh (Qadesh), ***to*** the wadi, to the Great Sea. **29** This ***is*** the land which you shall allot by inheritance to the tribes of Israel, and these ***are*** their divisions, declares the Lord GOD.

The Gates of the City

30 And these ***shall be*** the exits of the city: from the north

48:7 Josh 15:1-63; Josh 19:9; Gen 29:35
48:8 Ezek 45:1-6; Isa 12:6; Isa 33:20-22
48:10 Ezek 45:4; Ezek 44:28; Num 35:1-9
48:11 Ezek 40:46; Ezek 44:10; Ezek 43:19
48:12 Ezek 45:4; Lev 27:21
48:13 Ezek 45:3; Deut 12:19; Luke 10:7
48:14 Rev 21:16; Exod 22:29; Ezek 48:12
48:15 Ezek 42:20; Ezek 45:6; Ezek 22:26
48:18 Josh 9:27; Ezra 2:43-58; Neh 7:46-62
48:19 Ezek 45:6; 1 Kgs 4:7-23; Neh 11:1-36
48:20 Heb 12:17; Rev 21:16
48:21 Ezek 34:23,24; Ezek 37:24; Ezek 45:7,8
48:23 Josh 18:21-28; Ezek 48:1-7; Gen 35:16-19
48:24 Josh 19:1-9; Gen 29:33; Gen 49:5-7
48:25 Josh 19:17-23; Gen 30:14-18
48:26 Josh 19:10-16; Gen 30:19,20
48:27 Josh 13:24-28; Gen 30:10,11
48:28 Ezek 47:19; 2 Chr 20:2; Ezek 47:15,19,20
48:29 Ezek 47:13-22; Num 34:2,13; Josh 13:1-21
48:30 Ezek 48:16,32-35; Rev 21:16

48:7 *Judah, one portion* The sons of Jacob's servant wives (Dan, Asher, Naphtali, Gad) are placed toward the ends, and Judah and Benjamin lie next to the holy portion, as is commonly noted. Judah, the royal tribe, borders the holy land on the north.
48:8 *shall be the contribution which you shall offer up* The holy portion of 45:1-8 lies between Judah and Benjamin. God's dwelling is at the heart of the nation, not at its edge.
48:11 *who did not go astray when the sons of Israel went astray* The Zadokite priests are honored again for their faithfulness (44:15). God remembers those who stayed true when others did not.
48:14 *they shall not sell any of it* The Levites' land cannot be sold or traded, for it is holy to the LORD. All we have is held in trust from God (1 Cor 4:7; 1 Pet 4:10).
48:15 *the city shall be in its midst* The city stands in its own strip of common land, south of the priests' and Levites' portions, with the sanctuary in the priests' strip. Temple and city are near but distinct.
48:16 *four thousand five hundred* The city is a square. The unit is not stated; if long cubits, it is about 1.5 miles on each side, with pasture land around it.
48:19 *the worker of the city, they shall work it, from all the tribes of Israel* Workers from every tribe farm the city's land. The capital belongs to the whole nation, a sign that the old divisions are healed (37:22).
48:20 *foursquare you shall offer up the holy contribution* The whole holy portion is a perfect square. Squares mark the vision's holy places, as the new Jerusalem is foursquare (Rev 21:16).
48:22 *between the border of Judah and the border of Benjamin* The prince's land lies on both sides of the holy portion, between these two tribes. Benjamin had stayed with Judah when the kingdom divided (1 Kgs 12:21).
48:23 *the rest of the tribes* South of the holy portion are Benjamin, Simeon, Issachar, Zebulun, and Gad. Every tribe is named and given its share.
48:29 *This is the land which you shall allot by inheritance to the tribes of Israel* God promised this land to Abraham (Gen 13:14-17; 15:18), and here He assigns it tribe by tribe. Not one is forgotten. God keeps His promises in detail.

side, four thousand five hundred ***in*** measurement. **31** And the gates of the city ***shall be*** by the names of the tribes of Israel: three gates northward: the Gate of Reuben, one; the Gate of Judah, one; the Gate of Levi, one. **32** And at the east side, four thousand five hundred, and three gates: and the Gate of Joseph (Yosef), one; the Gate of Benjamin, one; the Gate of Dan, one. **33** And the south side, four thousand five hundred ***in*** measurement, and three gates: the Gate of Simeon, one; the Gate of Issachar, one; the Gate of Zebulun, one. **34** The west side, four thousand five hundred, their gates three: the Gate of Gad, one; the Gate of Asher, one; the Gate of Naphtali, one. **35** All around ***shall be*** eighteen thousand; and the name of the city from ***that*** day ***shall be*** 'The LORD ***Is*** There.'"

48:31 Rev 21:12-13; Isa 26:1,2; Isa 54:12

48:35 Rev 3:12; Jer 33:16; Jer 3:17

48:31 *the gates of the city shall be by the names of the tribes of Israel* Twelve gates, three on each side, bear the tribes' names. Here Levi has a gate and Joseph one, following the twelve sons of Jacob (Gen 35:23-26), since in the city there is no land division to balance.

48:32 *the gate of Joseph, one; the gate of Benjamin, one; the gate of Dan, one* The new Jerusalem also has twelve gates with the names of the tribes (Rev 21:12-13). I take Ezekiel's city as the millennial city and John's as the eternal city, sharing the same pattern. Some teachers identify the two.

48:35 *the name of the city from that day shall be 'The LORD Is There.'* In Hebrew, Yahweh Shammah. The book began with the glory appearing by the Chebar (chapter 1), then leaving the temple (10:18-19; 11:23), then returning (43:1-5). It ends with the LORD dwelling among His people. Most take the city as Jerusalem renamed (Jer 3:17; Zech 8:3); some see a separate city in the holy portion.

48:35 *All around shall be eighteen thousand* The wall is about six miles around if the unit is the long cubit. More important than its size is who lives there. Heaven is where God is, and every believer will be with Him forever (Rev 21:3).

DANIEL

Introduction

Title

The book is named for Daniel, its main character and its writer. His name means God is my judge. In our English Bibles Daniel sits with the Major Prophets, after Ezekiel. In the Hebrew Bible it is placed among the Writings, but Jesus called him "Daniel the prophet" (Matt 24:15) and told His disciples to understand what Daniel wrote. You cannot fully understand Revelation without Daniel, and you cannot fully understand Daniel without Revelation. Daniel was told to seal up his book until the time of the end (12:4), and John was told not to seal his (Rev 22:10). The two fit together like two halves of one message.

Author and Date

Daniel wrote the book. Chapters 1-6 speak of him in the third person, and chapters 7-12 in the first person, "I, Daniel" (7:15; 8:1; 9:2; 10:2). He came from the royal family or the nobles of Judah (1:3), and Ezekiel, who lived at the same time, names him with Noah and Job as a model of righteousness (Ezek 14:14, 20). Daniel lived from about 620 B.C. to some time after 536 B.C. The events run from 605 B.C. (1:1) to the third year of Cyrus, about 536 B.C. (10:1), and he most likely finished the book near the end of his life, about 530 B.C.

Some critics date the book to about 165 B.C., in the days of the Maccabees, mainly because its predictions in chapter 11 match history so closely that they believe it was written after the events. I reject that view. Jesus called him a prophet, and a God who knows the end from the beginning (Isa 46:10) has no trouble telling Daniel what is coming. Even a late date could not explain the fourth kingdom, Rome, which did not take Jerusalem until 63 B.C. The accuracy of Daniel is not a problem to explain away. It is evidence that God is real.

Background and Setting

Daniel was taken from Jerusalem to Babylon as a teenager in 605 B.C., the first of three deportations (597 and 586 B.C. followed). He served the kings of Babylon and then of Persia for about seventy years, through the whole exile, and lived to see Cyrus let the Jews go home in 538 B.C. (Ezra 1:1-4). The book was written in Babylon, in what is now Iraq.

The book is written in two languages. From 1:1 to the middle of 2:4, and again in chapters 8-12, it is in Hebrew, the language of God's people. From 2:4 through 7:28 it is in Aramaic, the common language of the Babylonian and Persian empires. That middle section is mainly about the Gentile world powers, so God gave it in the world's language.

The chapters are not all in time order. The stories come first (chapters 1-6) and the dated visions second (chapters 7-12). In order of events: chapter 1 (605 B.C.), chapter 2 (about 603 B.C.), chapters 3 and 4 (later in Nebuchadnezzar's reign, which ended in 562 B.C.), chapter 7 (about 553 B.C.), chapter 8 (about 551 B.C.), chapter 5 (October 539 B.C.), chapters 9 and 6 (539-538 B.C., under Darius the Mede), and chapters 10-12 (about 536 B.C.).

Themes

The message of Daniel comes down to one truth: God is in control. "The Most High rules over the kingdom of mankind, and to whomever He wills He gives it" (4:17). Kings rise and fall, and empires look unbeatable for a while and then are gone. The book shows this truth in two ways. In the stories, God protects and honors people who stay faithful to Him under pressure: a teenager who will not defile himself (1:8), three men who will not bow (3:18), and an old man who keeps praying with his windows open (6:10). In the visions, God lays out the sweep of world history from Babylon to the return of Christ.

Four kingdoms run through the book: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome, seen as a great statue in chapter 2 and as four beasts in chapter 7. Every vision ends the same way. God sets up a kingdom that will never be destroyed (2:44; 7:14, 27), the dead are raised (12:2), and God's people inherit everything.

This study holds the dispensational premillennial view and the pre-tribulation rapture. Christ comes for His church before the Tribulation (1 Thess 4:16-17). The Tribulation is the seven years of Daniel's seventieth week (9:27), and its last three and a half years are the great tribulation under the Antichrist (7:25; 12:7). Then Christ returns visibly, destroys the beast, and reigns on earth (Rev 19:11-20:6). God still has a future for Israel, Daniel's people. Many faithful Christians see these things differently, and the notes name the main views where they matter. Daniel's numbers are given to help God's people know the season and endure it, not to set dates (Matt 25:13).

Christ in Daniel

Jesus called Himself the Son of Man more than by any other title, taking the name from 7:13, and at His trial He claimed that verse for Himself: they would see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven (Matt 26:64). He is the stone cut out without hands that crushes the kingdoms of the world and fills the earth (2:34-35, 44). The seventy weeks point to the time of Messiah's coming, "an anointed one, a prince" (9:25), and to His being "cut off" (9:26) in the early first century A.D., exactly when Jesus came. The fourth man in the furnace (3:25) and the man clothed in linen (10:5-6) are seen by many, and I lean this way, as the Son of God appearing before His birth in Bethlehem. Antiochus IV in chapters 8 and 11 is a preview of the Antichrist, whom Christ will destroy at His coming (2 Thess 2:8).

Hard Passages

When was Daniel written? The notes at 1:1 and 2:45 explain why this study takes the book as written by Daniel in the sixth century B.C.

Who was Darius the Mede (5:31)? He has not yet been found in records outside the Bible. Some identify him with Gubaru, a governor under Cyrus, and others take the name as another title for Cyrus (6:28). The notes give both views. Critics once said the same of Belshazzar, until records naming him were found.

Who was the fourth man in the fire (3:25), and the man in linen (10:5-6)? Some see an angel, others the Son of God before His birth. The notes give both and lean toward the second.

Why were the accusers' families thrown to the lions (6:24)? That was the king's harsh Persian practice, not God's command (Deut 24:16). The Bible records it without approving it.

How should the seventy weeks be read (9:24-27)? The notes give the two main starting dates (457 and 445/444 B.C.), the futurist reading with a gap before the seventieth week, which this study holds, and the view that the seventieth week was fulfilled in Christ's first coming.

Where does chapter 11 move from Antiochus to the Antichrist? The notes place the shift at 11:36 and explain why, and they give the main views on "the desire of women" (11:37), the last kings of the north and south (11:40), and the 1,290 and 1,335 days (12:11-12).

Outline

I. Daniel and His Friends in Babylon (1:1-6:28)
  A. Faithful in a foreign land (1:1-21)
  B. The dream of the great image (2:1-49)
  C. The golden image and the fiery furnace (3:1-30)
  D. The king who learned who rules (4:1-37)
  E. The writing on the wall (5:1-31)
  F. Daniel in the lions' den (6:1-28)
II. Daniel's Visions of the Future (7:1-12:13)
  A. The four beasts and the Son of Man (7:1-28)
  B. The ram, the goat and the little horn (8:1-27)
  C. Daniel's prayer and the seventy weeks (9:1-27)
  D. The war behind the curtain (10:1-21)
  E. The kings of the north and the south (11:1-35)
  F. The king who exalts himself (11:36-45)
  G. The time of the end and the resurrection (12:1-13)

DANIEL

DANIEL 1

Taken to Babylon

1 In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim (Yehoyaqim) king of Judah (Yehuda), Nebuchadnezzar (Nevukhadnetsar) king of Babylon (Bavel) came ***to*** Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), and he laid siege against it. **2** And ***the*** Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, and some of the vessels of the house of God; and he brought them ***to*** the land of Shinar, ***to*** the house of his god, and he brought the vessels ***into*** the treasure house of his god. **3** And the king said to Ashpenaz, the chief of his officials, to bring ***some*** of the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), and of the offspring of the kingship, and of the nobles, **4** youths in whom ***was*** not any blemish, and good of appearance, and having insight in all wisdom, and knowing knowledge, and understanding learning, and in whom ***was*** ability to stand in the palace of the king, and to teach them the writing and the tongue of the Chaldeans (Kasdim). **5** And the king assigned to them a day's portion in its day from the delicacies of the king and from the wine of his drinking, and ***he said*** to bring them up three years, and at the end of them they should stand before the king. **6** And ***there*** were among them, from the sons of Judah, Daniel (Daniyel), Hananiah (Chananya), Mishael, and Azariah (Azarya). **7** And the chief of the officials set names for them; and he set for Daniel ***the name*** Belteshazzar (Belteshatsar), and for Hananiah Shadrach (Shadrakh), and for Mishael Meshach (Meshakh), and for Azariah Abednego (Aved-Nego).

Daniel's Resolve

8 And Daniel set on his heart that he would not defile himself with the delicacies of the king and with the wine of his drinking; and he sought from the chief of the officials that he might not defile himself. **9** And God gave Daniel favor and compassion before the chief of the officials. **10** And the chief of the officials said to Daniel, "I fear my lord the king, who has assigned your food and your drink; for why should he see your faces more dejected than the youths who ***are*** of your age? And you would endanger my head to the king." **11** And Daniel said to the guardian whom the chief of the officials had assigned over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, **12** "Please test your servants ***for*** ten days, and let them give us some of the vegetables, and let us eat, and water, and let us drink. **13** And let our appearance and the appearance of the youths who eat the delicacies of the king be seen before you; and as you see, deal with your servants." **14** And he listened to them in this matter, and he tested them ***for*** ten

1:1 2 Chr 36:5-7; 2 Kgs 24:1,2,13
1:2 2 Chr 36:7; Zech 5:11; Gen 11:2
1:3 Isa 39:7; 2 Kgs 20:17,18; Jer 41:1
1:4 2 Sam 14:25; Dan 5:11; Acts 7:22
1:5 Dan 1:19; Gen 41:46; 1 Sam 16:22
1:6 Matt 24:15; Mark 13:14; Ezek 14:14,20
1:7 Dan 2:49; Dan 4:8; Dan 5:12
1:8 Hos 9:3,4; Lev 11:45-47; Ezek 4:13,14
1:9 Gen 39:21; Ps 106:46; Prov 16:7
1:10 Prov 29:25; John 12:42,43; Matt 6:16-18
1:12 Rev 2:10; Dan 1:16; Gen 1:29,30

1:1 *In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah* Daniel opens with a date because he is writing history, not myth. This is 605 B.C., the year Nebuchadnezzar beat Egypt at Carchemish and came south to take Jerusalem. Jeremiah calls it the fourth year (Jer 25:1). Babylon did not count a king's first partial year, and Judah did, so Daniel in Babylon and Jeremiah in Judah simply counted differently.
1:1 *Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem* This was the first of three deportations. The second came in 597 B.C., when King Jehoiachin and Ezekiel were taken, and the third in 586 B.C., when Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed (2 Kgs 24-25).
1:2 *the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand* Nebuchadnezzar did not win because his gods were stronger. God had warned for generations that idolatry would end in exile (Jer 25:8-11). Babylon was the tool of His discipline, not the master of His people. God disciplines those He loves (Heb 12:6), and the exile cured Israel of idol worship and kept a faithful remnant.
1:2 *the land of Shinar* The old name for the region of Babylon, where men built the tower of Babel (Gen 11:2). Putting the temple vessels in a pagan temple was a way of saying, my god beat yours. The rest of the book answers that claim, and in chapter 5 those same vessels come back into the story.
1:3 *Ashpenaz, the chief of his officials* Taking young men of the royal family fulfilled what Isaiah told Hezekiah a century earlier (Isa 39:7). The Hebrew word for "officials" can also mean eunuchs. Some believe Daniel and his friends were made eunuchs, while others note the word often meant court officers in general. Scripture does not settle it, and I would not be dogmatic. Daniel never mentions a wife or children.
1:4 *the writing and the tongue of the Chaldeans* The Chaldeans were the ruling people of Babylon, and the word also came to mean a class of learned men who studied astrology, omens and old texts. The goal was plain: take the best young minds of a conquered nation, probably teenagers, reshape them, and use them for the empire.
1:6 *Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah* Each Hebrew name honored the God of Israel. Daniel means God is my judge, Hananiah the LORD has been gracious, Mishael likely who is what God is, and Azariah the LORD has helped. Their names reminded them every day whose they were.
1:7 *the chief of the officials set names for them* The new names appear to honor Babylonian gods (compare 4:8). Abednego is commonly taken as servant of Nego, likely a form of Nabu. Babylon changed their language, schooling, diet and names until nothing of Judah would be left. The world still works this way, slowly. Notice that Daniel accepted what he could without sin and saved his stand for where obedience to God was at stake.
1:8 *Daniel set on his heart that he would not defile himself* Daniel made up his mind before the pressure came. The text does not say why the food defiled. It may have been unclean under the Law (Lev 11), not drained of blood (Lev 17:10-12), or first offered to idols. I believe the main issue was God's Law and the link to idol worship. Far from home, with no one watching, a teenager chose to obey. Great acts of faith grow out of small private choices like this.
1:8 *he sought from the chief of the officials* Daniel did not stage a protest. He asked respectfully. Standing firm and being gracious are not opposites, and Daniel shows us how to do both.
1:9 *God gave Daniel favor and compassion* Daniel made the decision, but God opened the door. When we honor God, we can trust Him with the results (Prov 16:7).
1:12 *Please test your servants for ten days* Daniel offered a short trial that protected the overseer instead of asking him to break the king's order outright. The word for vegetables likely means food grown from seed, including grains and beans. Faith does not mean being careless about other people's risk.

days. **15** And at the end of ten days their appearance was seen ***to be*** good, and ***they were*** fat of flesh more than all the youths who were eating the delicacies of the king. **16** And the guardian was taking away their delicacies and the wine of their drinking, and giving them vegetables.

God Gives Wisdom

17 And these youths, the four of them, God gave them learning and insight in all writing and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in every vision and dreams. **18** And at the end of the days that the king had said to bring them in, the chief of the officials brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. **19** And the king spoke with them, and not ***one*** was found among all of them like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; and they stood before the king. **20** And ***in*** every matter of wisdom of understanding that the king sought from them, he found them ten times above all the magicians, the conjurers who ***were*** in all his kingdom. **21** And Daniel was ***there*** until the first year of Cyrus (Koresh) the king.

DANIEL 2

The Impossible Demand

1 And in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar (Nevukhadnetsar), Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams; and his spirit was troubled, and his sleep was finished on him. **2** And the king said to call the magicians and the conjurers and the sorcerers and the Chaldeans (Kasdim) to tell the king his dreams; and they came and stood before the king. **3** And the king said to them, "I have dreamed a dream, and my spirit is troubled to know the dream." **4** And the Chaldeans spoke to the king ***in*** Aramaic, "O king, live forever! Tell the dream to your servants, and we will declare the interpretation." **5** The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, "The word from me ***is*** firm: if you do not make known to me the dream and its interpretation, you will be made ***into*** pieces, and your houses will be made a refuse heap. **6** And if you declare the dream and its interpretation, you will receive from before me gifts and a reward and great honor. Therefore declare to me the dream and its interpretation." **7** They answered a second time and said, "Let the king tell the dream to his servants, and we will declare the interpretation." **8** The king answered and said, "I know for certain that you are buying time, because you have seen that the word from me ***is*** firm, **9** that if you do not make known to me the dream, one ***is*** the decree for you; and you have agreed together to speak a lying and corrupt word before me until the time is changed. Therefore tell me the dream, and I will know that you can declare to me its interpretation." **10** The Chaldeans answered before the king and said, "There is not a man on the earth who is able to declare the matter of the king, because no king, great and powerful, has asked a matter like this of any magician and conjurer and Chaldean. **11** And the matter that the king is asking ***is*** difficult, and there is not another who can declare it before the king except gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh." **12** Because of this the king was angry and very furious, and he said to destroy all the wise men of Babylon (Bavel). **13** And the decree went out, and the wise men were being killed; and they sought Daniel (Daniyel) and his companions to be killed.

Daniel Prays and God Answers

14 Then Daniel returned counsel and discretion to Arioch (Aryokh), the chief of the executioners of the king, who had

1:15 Exod 23:25; Prov 10:22; Deut 28:1-14
1:17 1 Kgs 3:12,28; James 1:5,17; Job 32:8
1:19 Gen 41:46; Dan 1:5; Prov 22:29
1:20 1 Kgs 4:29-34; Gen 31:7; Num 14:22
1:21 Dan 6:28; Dan 10:1
2:1 Dan 4:5; Dan 6:18; Esth 6:1
2:2 Dan 1:20; Dan 5:7; Dan 4:6
2:3 Dan 2:1; Gen 40:8; Gen 41:15
2:4 Dan 3:9; Dan 5:10; Ezra 4:7
2:5 Dan 3:29; Ezra 6:11; 2 Kgs 10:27
2:6 Dan 5:7,16,29; Dan 2:48; Num 22:7,17,37
2:7 Dan 2:4,9; Eccl 10:4
2:8 Eph 5:16; Col 4:5
2:9 Esth 4:11; Isa 41:23; Dan 3:15
2:11 John 1:14; Dan 5:11; Gen 41:39
2:12 Dan 3:13; Ps 76:10; Job 5:2
2:13 Dan 1:19,20; Dan 6:9-15; Esth 3:12-15
2:14 Gen 37:36; 2 Sam 20:16-22; Eccl 9:13-18

1:15 *they were fat of flesh* In a time when food was not always plentiful, this was a sign of good health. Some use this verse to teach that a vegetarian diet is the biblical ideal. I don't believe that is the point. Jesus declared all foods clean (Mark 7:19). God honored their faithfulness, and a ten-day difference this clear was His doing.
1:17 *God gave them learning and insight in all writing and wisdom* They studied hard, but the text says plainly that God was the giver. Babylon was full of men who claimed to read dreams. God prepared Daniel to be the one man who could interpret what God Himself revealed. Learning what the world believes is not the same as believing it.
1:19 *not one was found among all of them like Daniel* Three years of training seems to clash with "the second year" in 2:1. Using the Babylonian way of counting from 1:1, the training ran through the accession year and two more, so the dates fit. I believe that is the best answer, though some suggest chapter 2 happened before the training was finished.
1:20 *ten times above all the magicians* A way of saying far better. You do not have to become like the world to be useful in it. God can make His people excellent right where He has placed them (Col 3:23).
1:21 *Daniel was there until the first year of Cyrus the king* This jumps ahead about seventy years to 539/538 B.C., after Babylon fell, when Cyrus let the Jews go home (Ezra 1:1-4). It does not mean Daniel died then, since 10:1 dates a vision to Cyrus' third year. Empires rose and fell, but God kept His servant through the whole exile.
2:1 *in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar* About 603 B.C. (see 1:19). In the ancient world people believed dreams could carry messages from the gods, especially dreams given to kings. The most powerful man on earth could not sleep. No power can shield a man from the hand of God.
2:2 *the magicians and the conjurers and the sorcerers and the Chaldeans* Each practiced a different occult art, and the Chaldeans here are learned men who read the stars and omens. Babylon kept large written collections of dream meanings. All these men needed was the dream.
2:4 *in Aramaic* Here the original text switches from Hebrew to Aramaic, the common language of the Babylonian and Persian empires, and stays there through 7:28. I believe this is because that section deals mainly with the Gentile empires, so God recorded it in their language. When the book turns back to Israel's future in chapter 8, it returns to Hebrew.
2:5 *if you do not make known to me the dream and its interpretation* Many believe the king had not forgotten the dream. He was testing them. If they truly heard from the gods, they could tell him what he dreamed, and if not, he could not trust their interpretation either (2:9).
2:9 *a lying and corrupt word* The king saw through their stalling. His reasoning was sharp: if they could do the first, he would believe the second.
2:11 *except gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh* Without meaning to, they confessed the emptiness of their own religion. Their gods were distant and silent. The God of Israel speaks and reveals, and one day He would come to dwell with mortal flesh in Jesus Christ (John 1:14).
2:14 *counsel and discretion* Arioch was captain of the king's bodyguard. Daniel did not panic or lash out. When danger comes suddenly, a calm and respectful answer can open doors that anger would slam shut (Prov 15:1).

gone out to kill the wise men of Babylon. **15** He answered and said to Arioch, the captain of the king, "Why ***is*** the decree from before the king ***so*** harsh?" Then Arioch made the matter known to Daniel. **16** And Daniel went in and asked from the king that he would give him time, and to declare the interpretation to the king. **17** Then Daniel went to his house, and he made the matter known to Hananiah (Chananya), Mishael, and Azariah (Azarya), his companions, **18** and to ask compassion from before the God of the heavens concerning this mystery, that they would not destroy Daniel and his companions with the rest of the wise men of Babylon. **19** Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in the vision of the night. Then Daniel blessed the God of the heavens. **20** Daniel answered and said, "Let the name of God be blessed from everlasting and to everlasting, for the wisdom and the might, they ***are*** His. **21** And He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and sets up kings; He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who know understanding. **22** He reveals the deep things and the hidden things; He knows what ***is*** in the darkness, and the light dwells with Him. **23** To You, O God of my fathers, I give thanks and praise, for You have given me the wisdom and the might; and now You have made known to me what we asked from You, for You have made known to us the matter of the king."

Daniel Tells the Dream

24 Because of this Daniel went in to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise men of Babylon; he went and said thus to him, "Do not destroy the wise men of Babylon. Bring me in before the king, and I will declare the interpretation to the king." **25** Then Arioch in haste brought Daniel in before the king, and said thus to him, "I have found a man from the sons of the exile of Judah (Yehud) who will make known the interpretation to the king." **26** The king answered and said to Daniel, whose name ***was*** Belteshazzar (Belteshatsar), "Are you able to make known to me the dream that I saw, and its interpretation?" **27** Daniel answered before the king and said, "The mystery that the king is asking, wise men, conjurers, magicians, ***and*** diviners are not able to declare to the king. **28** But there is a God in the heavens ***who*** reveals mysteries, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter part of the days. Your dream and the visions of your head on your bed, this ***is*** it: **29** You, O king, your thoughts came up on your bed ***about*** what will be after this; and He who reveals mysteries has made known to you what will be. **30** And ***as for*** me, not by wisdom that is in me more than all the living has this mystery been revealed to me, but for the purpose that they may make known the interpretation to the king, and ***that*** you may know the thoughts of your heart. **31** You, O king, were seeing, and look, one great image! This image ***was*** large, and its splendor ***was*** extraordinary; ***it was*** standing before you, and its appearance ***was*** terrifying. **32** That image, its head ***was*** of fine gold, its breast and its arms of silver, its belly and its thighs of bronze, **33** its legs of iron, its feet, some of them of iron and some of them of clay. **34** You were seeing until a stone was cut out, which ***was*** not by hands, and it struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and shattered them. **35** Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were shattered as one, and they became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, and no place was found for them. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled all the earth.

2:16 Dan 2:9-11; Dan 1:18,19
2:17 Dan 3:12; Dan 1:7,11
2:18 Matt 18:19; Isa 37:4; Jer 33:3
2:19 1 Pet 1:12; Num 12:6; Job 33:15,16
2:20 1 Cor 1:21; Ps 113:2; Ps 115:18
2:21 Rev 19:16; Acts 13:22; Rom 13:1
2:22 Heb 4:13; 1 John 1:5; John 21:17
2:23 Matt 11:25; Luke 10:21; John 15:15
2:24 Acts 27:24; Dan 2:12,13
2:25 Dan 1:6; Dan 6:13; Prov 24:11
2:26 Dan 1:7; Dan 4:8,19; Dan 5:12
2:27 Dan 2:2,10,11; Dan 5:7,8; Job 5:12,13
2:28 2 Pet 3:3; Heb 1:2; 1 Pet 1:12
2:29 1 Pet 1:12; Ezek 38:10; Dan 2:22,28,47
2:30 2 Cor 4:15; Gen 41:16; Acts 3:12
2:31 Hab 1:7; Dan 7:3-17; Matt 4:8
2:32 Dan 2:37,38; Dan 4:22,30; Dan 7:4
2:33 Dan 2:40-43; Dan 7:7,8,19-26
2:34 Matt 21:44; Luke 20:18; Rev 19:15
2:35 Rev 20:11; Rev 11:15; Luke 20:18

2:16 *asked from the king that he would give him time* The king had just accused the others of stalling, yet he gave Daniel time. Daniel trusted God to answer before he had any answer to give.
2:18 *the God of the heavens* A title common in Daniel, Ezra and Nehemiah. In a land that worshiped the sun, moon and stars, it says Israel's God is above them all. Notice Daniel went to prayer before he went to work, and he gathered his friends to pray with him (Matt 18:19-20).
2:20 *the wisdom and the might, they are His* Daniel's prayer in verses 20-23 is one of the great prayers of the Bible. Babylon thought wisdom belonged to its experts and power to its king. Daniel knew better.
2:21 *He removes kings and sets up kings* The theme of the whole book in one line. Every ruler holds power only as long as God allows (Rom 13:1). History is not random. When the news feels out of control, this is a great comfort.
2:23 *O God of my fathers* The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, faithful for centuries. Daniel said God answered "what we asked from You," sharing the credit with his friends. He never took the glory for himself.
2:24 *Do not destroy the wise men of Babylon* Daniel's faith saved even the men who practiced the occult arts God condemns. God's people are often a blessing to those around them who do not deserve it.
2:28 *there is a God in the heavens who reveals mysteries* Daniel agreed that no wise man could do this, then gave the answer they could not. "The latter part of the days" points to the far future, and in the Old Testament it often reaches to the Messiah's kingdom. This dream stretches from Nebuchadnezzar to the end of human history.
2:31 *one great image* A single huge, bright statue: the glory of human power as the world sees it. In chapter 7 Daniel sees the same kingdoms as God sees them, as beasts.
2:33 *some of them of iron and some of them of clay* Going down the statue, the metals lose value but gain hardness, from gold to iron. Then the feet are iron mixed with clay, which does not hold. The kingdoms grow stronger in military might but weaker in unity and glory.
2:34 *a stone was cut out, which was not by hands* No human made it. I believe the stone is Jesus Christ and the kingdom He sets up when He returns. Scripture calls the Messiah a stone: the stone the builders rejected (Ps 118:22; Matt 21:42), the precious cornerstone (Isa 28:16; 1 Pet 2:6), and the stone that crushes (Luke 20:18). His kingdom is God's work, not man's.
2:35 *the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled all the earth* The stone strikes the final stage, the feet, and destroys every part at once, like chaff in the wind. It does not grow slowly inside the kingdoms. It comes from outside and replaces them. I believe this is the second coming of Christ, when He ends the kingdoms of the world and sets up His own on earth (Rev 11:15; 19:11-16).

The Interpretation

36 This ***is*** the dream; and its interpretation we will tell before the king. **37** You, O king, ***are*** the king of kings, to whom the God of the heavens has given the kingdom, the power, and the strength, and the honor; **38** and wherever the sons of mankind dwell, the beasts of the field and the birds of the heavens He has given into your hand, and He has made you ruler over all of them. You ***are*** the head of gold. **39** And after you will arise another kingdom lower than you, and another third kingdom, of bronze, which will rule over all the earth. **40** And a fourth kingdom will be strong as iron, because iron shatters and crushes everything; and like iron that breaks, all these it will shatter and break. **41** And that you saw the feet and the toes, some of them of potter's clay and some of them of iron: it will be a divided kingdom, and some of the firmness of the iron will be in it, because you saw the iron mixed with the clay of the mud. **42** And the toes of the feet, some of them of iron and some of them of clay: part of the kingdom will be strong, and part of it will be brittle. **43** And that you saw the iron mixed with the clay of the mud: they will be mixing with the seed of mankind, and they will not be clinging this with this, just as iron does not mix with clay. **44** And in the days of those kings the God of the heavens will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and the kingdom will not be left to another people; it will shatter and put an end to all these kingdoms, and it will stand forever, **45** because you saw that from the mountain a stone was cut out which ***was*** not by hands, and it shattered the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold. A great God has made known to the king what will be after this; and the dream ***is*** certain, and its interpretation ***is*** trustworthy."

Daniel Is Promoted

46 Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face and paid homage to Daniel, and he said to offer to him an offering and soothing ***aromas***. **47** The king answered Daniel and said, "Truly your God, He ***is*** the God of gods and the Lord of kings, and a revealer of mysteries, for you have been able to reveal this mystery." **48** Then the king made Daniel great and gave him many great gifts, and he made him ruler over all the province of Babylon and chief of prefects over all the wise men of Babylon. **49** And Daniel asked from the king, and he appointed Shadrach (Shadrakh), Meshach (Meshakh), and Abednego (Aved-Nego) over the administration of the province of Babylon; and Daniel ***was*** in the gate of the king.

DANIEL 3

The Golden Image

1 Nebuchadnezzar (Nevukhadnetsar) the king made an image of gold; its height ***was*** approximately 90 feet (sixty cubits), ***and*** its width approximately 9 feet (six cubits). He set it up on the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon (Bavel).

2:36 Dan 2:23,24
2:37 Rev 1:5; Rev 19:16; Matt 20:25
2:38 Matt 20:25; Dan 4:21,22; Ps 50:10,11
2:39 Matt 20:25; Dan 2:32; Isa 44:28
2:40 Rev 17:18; Dan 7:7; Dan 11:36-45
2:41 Rev 17:12; Dan 2:33-35; Dan 7:7,24
2:42 Rev 17:12; Dan 7:24; Rev 13:1
2:44 Rev 11:15; Matt 3:2; Rev 19:15
2:45 Rev 19:17; Mark 14:58; Isa 28:16
2:46 Rev 22:8; Luke 17:16; 1 Tim 6:15
2:47 Rev 19:16; Rev 1:5; Dan 11:36
2:48 Dan 2:6; Dan 4:9; Dan 5:11
2:49 Esth 2:19,21; Amos 5:15; Dan 2:17
3:1 Isa 46:6; Jer 16:20; Hab 2:19

2:37 *the king of kings* The greatest king of his day. But the God of heaven had given him the kingdom. He had not earned it, and it could be taken away, as chapter 4 shows.
2:38 *You are the head of gold* No guessing needed. Daniel says the head is Nebuchadnezzar, standing for the Babylonian Empire. Babylon was famous for its wealth, and gold fits it well.
2:39 *another kingdom lower than you, and another third kingdom, of bronze* The book later names them: Babylon goes to the Medes and Persians (5:28), and then comes Greece (8:20-21). I believe the silver is Medo-Persia, which took Babylon in 539 B.C., and the bronze is Alexander's Greece, which beat Persia in 331 B.C. Two arms fit two peoples in one empire. Persia was larger, but its king was bound by laws he could not change (6:8, 15).
2:40 *a fourth kingdom will be strong as iron* I believe this is Rome, which took the lands of the Greek kingdoms and conquered Jerusalem in 63 B.C. Rome was known for military might and iron discipline. The two legs may picture the later split into an eastern and a western empire, but the text does not explain them, so I offer that as a possibility only.
2:42 *the toes of the feet* A statue has ten toes, and the fourth beast has ten horns that are ten kings (7:7, 24). I believe these are the same: ten kings ruling together in the final form of the fourth kingdom. That stage has never yet existed. I believe it points to a future, revived form of the Roman Empire whose ten rulers give their power to the Antichrist (Rev 17:12-13).
2:43 *they will be mixing with the seed of mankind* The meaning is debated. Some see marriages between ruling families, as in 11:6. Others see many peoples trying to form one union. I lean toward a forced union of strong and weak nations that will never truly be one. Either way, it will look powerful and be brittle.
2:44 *in the days of those kings the God of the heavens will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed* The high point of the chapter. Some believe the stone is the church, with Christ's kingdom slowly filling the earth since His first coming. I respect that view, but it does not fit the text. The stone destroys the kingdoms suddenly and strikes the ten kings, who have not yet appeared. I hold that this is Christ's second coming and His literal reign on earth (Rev 19:15; 20:4-6). Every human kingdom is temporary. If you belong to Christ, you belong to the one that lasts.
2:45 *the dream is certain, and its interpretation is trustworthy* Babylon fell to Persia, Persia to Greece, and Greece to Rome, just as Daniel said. That record gives us every reason to trust the rest. Some critics date Daniel to about 165 B.C. because they do not accept detailed prophecy. Jesus called him "Daniel the prophet" (Matt 24:15), and I take Jesus at His word. And even a late date could not explain Rome, which did not take Jerusalem until 63 B.C.
2:46 *paid homage to Daniel* The text does not say Daniel accepted worship. Verse 47 shows the king knew the honor belonged to Daniel's God. He honored God's messenger in the only way his culture knew.
2:47 *the God of gods and the Lord of kings, and a revealer of mysteries* A big step, but not yet true faith. He saw Daniel's God as the greatest of the gods, not the only God. He would soon build a golden image (ch 3), and it would take a hard humbling before he truly praised the Most High (ch 4).
2:48 *he made him ruler over all the province of Babylon* The young exile of chapter 1 was now one of the most powerful men in the empire. God honors those who honor Him (1 Sam 2:30).
2:49 *he appointed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego* Daniel did not forget his friends. This sets up chapter 3, where the three face their own test without Daniel at their side.
3:1 *Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold* No date is given, but it was likely some years after chapter 2. Sixty by six cubits is tall and thin, so it may have stood on a base or been a pillar with a figure on top, probably overlaid with gold. God had told the king he was only the head of gold. This statue looks like his answer: gold all the way down. Pride does not like to hear it is temporary. Bowing to it was a test of loyalty, and for the Jews it was idolatry (Exod 20:3-5).

2 And Nebuchadnezzar the king sent to gather the satraps, the prefects, and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates, and all the authorities of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up. **3** Then the satraps, the prefects, and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates, and all the authorities of the provinces were gathered for the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up; and they were standing before the image which Nebuchadnezzar had set up. **4** And the herald was proclaiming with strength, "To you they say, O peoples, nations, and languages, **5** at the time that you hear the sound of the horn, the flute, the lyre, the trigon, the harp, the bagpipe, and all kinds of music, you shall fall down and pay homage to the image of gold which Nebuchadnezzar the king has set up. **6** And whoever does not fall down and pay homage, in that very moment he will be thrown into the midst of the furnace of the burning fire." **7** Because of this, at that time, as all the peoples were hearing the sound of the horn, the flute, the lyre, the trigon, the harp, and all kinds of music, all the peoples, nations, and languages were falling down, paying homage to the image of gold which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.

The Three Refuse

8 Because of this, at that time Chaldean men approached and denounced the Jews. **9** They answered and said to Nebuchadnezzar the king, "O king, live forever! **10** You, O king, have made a decree that every man who hears the sound of the horn, the flute, the lyre, the trigon, the harp, and the bagpipe, and all kinds of music, shall fall down and pay homage to the image of gold; **11** and whoever does not fall down and pay homage will be thrown into the midst of the furnace of the burning fire. **12** There are Jewish men whom you have appointed over the administration of the province of Babylon: Shadrach (Shadrakh), Meshach (Meshakh), and Abednego (Aved-Nego). These men have not set regard on you, O king; they are not serving your god, and they are not paying homage to the image of gold which you have set up." **13** Then Nebuchadnezzar in rage and fury said to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Then these men were brought before the king. **14** Nebuchadnezzar answered and said to them, "***Is it*** on purpose, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, ***that*** you are not serving my gods, and you are not paying homage to the image of gold which I have set up? **15** Now if you are ready, at the time that you hear the sound of the horn, the flute, the lyre, the trigon, the harp, and the bagpipe, and all kinds of music, to fall down and pay homage to the image which I have made—and if you do not pay homage, in that very moment you will be thrown into the midst of the furnace of the burning fire; and who ***is*** the god who will deliver you from my hands?" **16** Shadrach,
Meshach, and Abednego answered and said to King Nebuchadnezzar, "We have no need to answer you concerning this matter. **17** If our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of the burning fire, and from your hand, O king, He will deliver ***us***. **18** And if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we are not serving your god, and we will not pay homage to the image of gold which you have set up."

The Fiery Furnace

19 Then Nebuchadnezzar was filled ***with*** fury, and the image of his face was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. He answered and said to heat the furnace seven times more than it was proper to heat it. **20** And to certain mighty men of strength who ***were*** in his army he said to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, to throw ***them*** into the furnace of the burning fire. **21** Then these men were bound in their mantles, their trousers, and their caps, and their garments, and they were thrown into the midst of the furnace of

3:2 Exod 32:4-6; Num 25:2; Judg 16:23
3:3 Ps 82:1-8; Acts 19:34,35; Rom 1:21-28
3:4 Dan 4:1; Dan 6:25; Dan 4:14
3:5 Dan 3:10,15
3:6 Rev 13:15; Matt 4:9; Jer 29:22
3:7 Jer 51:7; Acts 14:16; 1 John 5:19
3:8 Acts 16:20; Dan 6:12,13; Ezra 4:12-16
3:9 Dan 5:10; Dan 6:6,21; Dan 2:4
3:10 Dan 3:4-7; Dan 6:12; Esth 3:12-14
3:12 Dan 2:49; Dan 6:13; 1 Sam 18:7-11
3:13 Dan 3:19; Dan 2:12; Gen 4:5
3:14 Dan 3:1; Isa 46:1; Jer 50:2
3:15 Luke 13:9; Exod 5:2; 2 Kgs 18:35
3:17 1 Cor 10:13; Ps 27:1,2; Luke 1:37
3:18 Acts 4:10; Acts 13:38; Luke 12:3-9
3:19 Heb 11:34; Dan 3:13; Lev 26:18,21,24,28
3:20 Matt 2:16; Heb 11:34; Dan 3:15
3:21 Heb 11:34

3:3 *the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up* The chapter repeats this phrase again and again. This god was made and set up by a man. It could not move, speak or save. The God of Israel is set up by no one.
3:5 *all kinds of music* Some of the instrument names are Greek words, and critics once claimed this proves a late date. But Greek trade and soldiers were already in the Near East in the 6th century B.C., so a few borrowed words are no surprise. The music moved the crowd so that everyone bowed at one signal.
3:6 *the furnace of the burning fire* Babylon was built of fired brick, so large kilns were common, and Jeremiah mentions men the king of Babylon "roasted in the fire" (Jer 29:22). False worship is often enforced by fear. The same pattern returns in the last days with the image of the beast (Rev 13:15).
3:7 *all the peoples, nations, and languages were falling down* It is easy to stand when no one is watching, and much harder when the whole crowd goes down at once and you are the only one left standing.
3:8 *denounced the Jews* The Aramaic says something like they ate their pieces, a way of saying slandered. Jealousy was likely part of it (2:49). Where was Daniel? The text does not say. He may have been away or excused by his post at court. From the rest of the book we can be sure he would not have bowed.
3:15 *who is the god who will deliver you from my hands* The heart of the chapter. He had called Daniel's God "the God of gods" (2:47), but now in his pride he put himself above every god. He was about to get his answer.
3:16 *We have no need to answer you concerning this matter* Not rudeness. They addressed the king with respect. They simply had nothing to debate. The question of whom they would worship had been settled long before, as Daniel settled his in 1:8.
3:17 *He will deliver us* They answered the king's challenge directly. There is a God who can deliver, and He is the God they serve.
3:18 *And if not* Some of the great words of faith in the Bible. They believed God could save them but did not presume He would. Their faith rested on God Himself, not on an outcome. Many believers have gone into the fire and not been rescued from it, and their faith was no weaker (Heb 11:32-38). I believe the church will be taken to Christ before the Tribulation, but many will come to Him during those years and face the beast's power (7:21; Rev 13:7). God will keep them, by delivering them from death or through death into His presence.
3:19 *seven times more than it was proper to heat it* Likely a way of saying as hot as possible. It made no sense, since a hotter fire would only kill them faster. Anger rarely thinks clearly.
3:21 *bound in their mantles, their trousers, and their caps* Clothing burns quickly. When they come out with their clothes untouched, no one can doubt the miracle.

the burning fire. **22** Because of this, since the word of the king ***was*** harsh and the furnace was heated exceedingly, those men who took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, the flame of the fire killed them. **23** And these men, the three of them, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell bound into the midst of the furnace of the burning fire. **24** Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was alarmed, and he rose up in haste. He answered and said to his counselors, "Did we not throw three men bound into the midst of the fire?" They answered and said to the king, "Certainly, O king." **25** He answered and said, "Look, I see four men loosed, walking in the midst of the fire, and there is no harm on them; and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of ***the*** gods." **26** Then Nebuchadnezzar approached the door of the furnace of the burning fire. He answered and said, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out and come ***here***!" Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out from the midst of the fire. **27** And the satraps, the prefects, and the governors, and the counselors of the king were gathered, seeing these men, that the fire had not had power over their bodies, and the hair of their head was not singed, and their mantles were not changed, and the smell of fire had not passed onto them.

The King Blesses God

28 Nebuchadnezzar answered and said, "Blessed ***be*** the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent His angel and has delivered His servants, who trusted in Him; and they changed the word of the king, and gave their bodies, so that they would not serve and would not pay homage to any god except their own God. **29** And from me a decree is made that any people, nation, and language that says ***anything*** negligent against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego shall be made ***into*** pieces, and his house shall be made a refuse heap, because there is not another god who is able to rescue like this." **30** Then the king caused Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to prosper in the province of Babylon.

DANIEL 4

The King's Testimony

1 Nebuchadnezzar (Nevukhadnetsar) the king, to all the peoples, nations, and languages who dwell in all the earth: May your peace increase! **2** The signs and the wonders which the Most High God has done with me, it has seemed good before me to declare. **3** His signs, how great! And His wonders, how strong! His kingdom ***is*** an everlasting kingdom, and His dominion ***is*** with generation and generation.

The Dream of the Great Tree

4 I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at ease in my house and flourishing in my palace. **5** I saw a dream, and it made me afraid; and the imaginings on my bed and the visions of my head alarmed me. **6** And a decree was made from me to bring in before me all the wise men of Babylon (Bavel), that they might make known to me the interpretation of the dream. **7** Then the magicians, the conjurers, the Chaldeans (Kasdim), and the diviners came in; and I told the dream before them, and they did not make known to me its interpretation. **8** And at last Daniel (Daniyel) came in before me, whose name ***is*** Belteshazzar (Belteshatsar), according to the name of my god, and in whom ***is*** a spirit of holy gods; and I told the dream before him: **9** "O Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, because I know that a spirit of holy gods ***is*** in you, and no mystery troubles you, tell the visions of my dream which I saw, and

3:22 Exod 12:33; Prov 11:8; Prov 21:18
3:23 Dan 6:16,17; Ps 34:19; Ps 66:11,12
3:24 Dan 6:7,22; Dan 5:6; Acts 5:23-25
3:25 Luke 1:35; John 19:7; Isa 43:2
3:26 Acts 16:17; Heb 11:34; Dan 3:17
3:27 Heb 11:34; Acts 26:26; Acts 7:30
3:28 Matt 4:10; 1 Pet 1:21; Acts 12:9
3:29 Dan 6:26,27; Dan 2:5; Dan 3:15,17,28
3:30 1 Sam 2:30; Ps 91:14; John 12:26
4:1 2 Pet 1:2; Dan 6:25,27; Dan 3:4,29
4:2 Acts 16:17; Heb 7:1; Dan 3:26
4:3 Heb 2:4; Dan 2:44; Ps 105:27
4:4 Isa 47:7,8; Ps 30:6,7; Isa 56:12
4:5 Dan 2:1; Dan 5:5,6,10; Dan 7:28
4:6 Dan 2:2; Gen 41:7,8; Isa 8:19
4:7 Isa 44:25; Dan 2:7; Jer 27:9,10
4:8 Dan 1:7; Dan 2:11; Dan 5:11,14
4:9 Dan 2:48; Dan 5:11; Dan 1:20

3:22 *the flame of the fire killed them* The fire was real and deadly. No one could later say the furnace had cooled. Sometimes God lets His people go all the way into the fire before He shows His hand.
3:25 *the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods* The fire burned only their ropes. Who was the fourth? Some believe an angel, as the king himself says in verse 28 (compare 6:22). Others believe it was the Son of God appearing before His birth, as the Angel of the LORD sometimes speaks as God (Gen 16:7-13; Exod 3:2-6). I lean toward the second view, but I would not divide over it. The Aramaic, spoken by a pagan king, is better rendered "a son of the gods." Either way, God did not keep them out of the fire. He met them in it (Isa 43:2; Matt 28:20).
3:27 *the smell of fire had not passed onto them* The officials who had bowed to the image became witnesses to the true God. God's rescue was complete. Not a hair was singed and their clothes did not even smell of smoke.
3:28 *Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego* The king who demanded worship now praised the men who refused him. People who will not listen to our words may still see our faith under pressure.
3:29 *there is not another god who is able to rescue like this* He still spoke of other gods and still used threats to enforce religion. He was moving the right way but had not yet bowed his own heart. That comes in chapter 4.
3:30 *the king caused Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to prosper* Their enemies' plan backfired. This is the last we hear of the three, but Hebrews likely remembers them among those who "quenched the power of fire" (Heb 11:34).
4:1 *Nebuchadnezzar the king, to all the peoples, nations, and languages* The chapter is a royal letter sent across the empire, written mostly by a pagan king. These events likely came late in his reign (605 to 562 B.C.), when his building in Babylon was largely done (4:30). The surprise is the subject. The king tells the world a story that does not flatter him at all.
4:3 *His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom* The head of gold who built a golden image now confesses that only God's kingdom lasts, the lesson of the stone in 2:44. He starts with the ending so we read the story through what he finally learned. A good testimony points to God first.
4:4 *I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at ease in my house* His wars were over and his city was splendid. Comfort is often when pride does its quiet work. Moses warned of this very danger (Deut 8:11-14). God has a way of breaking into our ease when we are drifting from Him.
4:8 *according to the name of my god, and in whom is a spirit of holy gods* Belteshazzar was tied to Bel, the title of Marduk, Babylon's chief god. The king still thought as a polytheist, one who believes in many gods. So his praise in verses 2-3 came after these events. "Chief of the magicians" was Daniel's office (2:48), not his practice. Daniel prayed, and God answered.

its interpretation. **10** And the visions of my head on my bed: I was seeing, and look, a tree in the midst of the earth, and its height ***was*** great. **11** The tree grew great and grew strong, and its height reached to the heavens, and its sight ***was*** to the end of all the earth. **12** Its foliage ***was*** beautiful, and its fruit plentiful, and food for all ***was*** in it. Under it the beasts of the field had shade, and in its branches the birds of the heavens dwelt, and all flesh was fed from it. **13** I was seeing in the visions of my head on my bed, and look, a watcher and a holy one was coming down from the heavens. **14** He was proclaiming with strength, and thus he was saying: 'Cut down the tree and cut off its branches; strip off its foliage and scatter its fruit. Let the beasts flee from under it, and the birds from its branches. **15** Yet leave the stump of its roots in the ground, and with a band of iron and bronze, in the grass of the field; and let it be drenched with the dew of the heavens, and its portion ***be*** with the beasts in the grass of the ground. **16** Let them change its heart from ***that of*** mankind, and let the heart of a beast be given to it; and let seven times pass over it. **17** The edict ***is*** by the decree of the watchers, and the matter ***is*** by the word of the holy ones, to the end that the living may know that the Most High rules over the kingdom of mankind, and to whomever He wills He gives it, and He sets up over it the lowly of men.' **18** This dream I, King Nebuchadnezzar, saw. And you, O Belteshazzar, tell its interpretation, because all the wise men of my kingdom are not able to make known to me the interpretation; but you are able, for a spirit of holy gods ***is*** in you."

Daniel Interprets the Dream

19 Then Daniel, whose name ***was*** Belteshazzar, was appalled for about one moment, and his thoughts alarmed him. The king answered and said, "Belteshazzar, do not let the dream and its interpretation alarm you." Belteshazzar answered and said, "My lord, ***may*** the dream ***be*** for those who hate you, and its interpretation for your adversaries! **20** The tree that you saw, which grew great and grew strong, and whose height reached to the heavens, and its sight to all the earth, **21** and whose foliage ***was*** beautiful and its fruit plentiful, and food for all ***was*** in it; under which the beasts of the field dwelt, and in whose branches the birds of the heavens settled, **22** it ***is*** you, O king, who have grown great and grown strong; and your greatness has grown great and has reached to the heavens, and your dominion to the end of the earth. **23** And that the king saw a watcher and a holy one coming down from the heavens and saying, 'Cut down the tree and destroy it; yet leave the stump of its roots in the ground, and with a band of iron and bronze, in the grass of the field; and let it be drenched with the dew of the heavens, and its portion ***be*** with the beasts of the field, until seven times pass over it,' **24** this ***is*** the interpretation, O king, and it ***is*** the decree of the Most High which has reached my lord the king: **25** and they will drive you away from mankind, and your dwelling will be with the beasts of the field; and they will feed you grass like oxen, and they will drench you with the dew of the heavens; and seven times will pass over you, until you know that the Most High rules over the kingdom of mankind, and to whomever He wills He gives it. **26** And that they said to leave the stump of the roots of the tree: your kingdom ***will be*** enduring for you from ***the time*** that you know that the heavens rule. **27** Therefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable to you, and break off your sin by righteousness, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the afflicted; perhaps there will be a lengthening of your prosperity."

4:10 Dan 4:20-26; Ps 37:35,36; Isa 10:33,34
4:11 Mark 4:32; Dan 4:21,22; Deut 9:1
4:12 Luke 13:19; Matt 13:32; Mark 4:32
4:13 Mark 4:32; Deut 33:2; Dan 7:1
4:14 Matt 3:10; Luke 3:9; Luke 13:7
4:15 Job 14:7-9; Dan 4:25-27; Ezek 29:14,15
4:16 Dan 4:23,25,31; Isa 6:10; Mark 5:4,5
4:17 John 19:11; Acts 7:48; Dan 4:25,32-35
4:18 Dan 5:8,15; Gen 41:8,15; Dan 4:7
4:19 Dan 7:28; Dan 8:27; Dan 10:16,17
4:20 Mark 4:32; Dan 4:10-12; Ezek 31:3,16
4:21 Mark 4:32; Luke 13:19
4:22 Mark 4:32; Dan 2:37,38; 2 Sam 12:7
4:23 Dan 5:21; Dan 4:15
4:24 Acts 7:48; Ps 107:40; Isa 46:10,11
4:25 Acts 7:48; Dan 4:17,32,34,35; Ps 83:18
4:26 Matt 5:34; Matt 21:20; Luke 15:18,21
4:27 Isa 55:6,7; Acts 8:22; 1 Kgs 21:29

4:10 *a tree in the midst of the earth* A great tree was a common picture of a great king or kingdom. Ezekiel pictures Assyria as a towering cedar cut down for its pride (Ezek 31). Jesus used birds nesting in branches for the growth of God's kingdom (Matt 13:31-32).
4:13 *a watcher and a holy one* "Watcher" means one who stays awake and keeps watch, and "holy one" makes clear this is an angel. This is the only chapter in the Bible that calls angels watchers. One word from heaven brings down the greatest tree on earth.
4:15 *leave the stump of its roots in the ground* Partway through, the language shifts from it to him: the tree is a person. The band of iron and bronze may picture protection or restraint, and both fit, since God both restrained and preserved the king.
4:16 *let seven times pass over it* Most interpreters take this as seven years, and I agree. The same word means a year in 7:25. Some suggest seasons or months, but years is the plain reading. Seven is also the number of completeness. The humbling would last exactly as long as God decided.
4:17 *the Most High rules over the kingdom of mankind* The key verse of the chapter. Kings think they rise by their own strength, but God gives authority and takes it away (Rom 13:1). Even the Antichrist will be given authority for a set time and not a day more (Rev 13:5). We can pray for our leaders and respect the office without living in fear.
4:19 *may the dream be for those who hate you* Daniel was shaken and did not rush in with bad news. This was the king who destroyed Jerusalem, yet Daniel truly cared about him. He lived what Jeremiah told the exiles: seek the good of the city where God sent you (Jer 29:7). It is a picture of loving our enemies.
4:22 *it is you, O king* Daniel neither flattered nor insulted him. The king really was great, and his empire fed many people. The problem was not his greatness but his belief that it was his own doing.
4:24 *it is the decree of the Most High* Verse 17 called it the decree of the watchers. There is no contradiction. The angels announced and carried it out, but the decision was God's. Angels are His servants, not independent rulers.
4:25 *until you know that the Most High rules* The goal was recognition, not destruction. The word "until" shows the judgment had an end point. His condition has been compared to a rare illness in which a man believes he is an animal, but the text's point is that this was a judgment from God.
4:26 *from the time that you know that the heavens rule* "The heavens" is a respectful way to say God, an early example of a use that became common among the Jews and lies behind the phrase kingdom of the heavens in Matthew. Kingdoms did not usually wait seven years for a mad king. That his throne was waiting is itself the hand of God.
4:27 *break off your sin by righteousness, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the afflicted* Like a true prophet, Daniel called the king to repent. Great building projects were often built on the backs of the poor and captives. Note the word "perhaps." God's warnings are often an invitation, as Nineveh found (Jonah 3:10). He is patient, not wanting any to perish (2 Pet 3:9).

The King Humbled and Restored

28 All ***this*** reached Nebuchadnezzar the king. **29** At the end of twelve months he was walking about on the palace of the kingdom of Babylon. **30** The king answered and said, "Is not this the great Babylon, which I have built for a house of the kingdom by the strength of my power and for the honor of my majesty?" **31** While the word ***was*** still in the mouth of the king, a voice fell from the heavens: "To you they say, O King Nebuchadnezzar: the kingdom has passed from you. **32** And they will drive you away from mankind, and your dwelling ***will be*** with the beasts of the field; they will feed you grass like oxen, and seven times will pass over you, until you know that the Most High rules over the kingdom of mankind, and to whomever He wills He gives it." **33** In that very moment the word was fulfilled on Nebuchadnezzar; and he was driven away from mankind, and he ate grass like oxen, and his body was drenched with the dew of the heavens, until his hair grew long like eagles' ***feathers*** and his nails like birds' ***claws***. **34** And at the end of the days I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to the heavens, and my knowledge returned to me; and I blessed the Most High, and I praised and glorified Him who lives forever, for His dominion ***is*** an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom ***is*** with generation and generation. **35** And all the inhabitants of the earth ***are*** counted as nothing, and He does according to His will with the army of the heavens and the inhabitants of the earth; and there is no one who can strike on His hand and say to Him, "What have You done?" **36** At that time my knowledge returned to me, and for the honor of my kingdom my majesty and my splendor returned to me; and my counselors and my nobles sought me, and I was established over my kingdom, and surpassing greatness was added to me. **37** Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and exalt and glorify the King of the heavens, for all His works ***are*** truth and His ways ***are*** justice; and those who walk in pride He is able to bring low.

DANIEL 5

Belshazzar's Feast

1 Belshazzar (Belshatsar) the king made a great feast for a thousand of his nobles, and he was drinking the wine before the thousand. **2** Belshazzar said, at the tasting of the wine, to bring the vessels of gold and of silver which Nebuchadnezzar (Nevukhadnetsar) his father had brought out from the temple which ***was*** in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), that the king and his nobles, his wives and his concubines might drink from them. **3** Then they brought the vessels of gold which they had brought out from the temple which ***was*** the house of God which ***was*** in Jerusalem; and the king and his nobles, his wives and his concubines drank from them. **4** They drank the wine, and they praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone.

The Hand and the Writing

5 In that very moment fingers of a man's hand came out, and they were writing opposite the lampstand on the plaster of the wall of the palace of the king; and the king was seeing the palm of the hand that was writing. **6** Then the king's brightness changed on him, and his thoughts alarmed him; and the joints of his loins were loosened, and his knees were knock-

4:28 Num 23:19; Zech 1:6; Prov 10:24
4:29 Gen 6:3; Eccl 8:11; 1 Pet 3:20
4:30 Rev 17:5; Rev 18:21; Rev 16:19
4:31 Matt 3:17; Luke 12:20; Acts 9:3-5
4:32 Dan 5:21; Job 12:18-21; Prov 8:15,16
4:33 Dan 4:25,32; Dan 5:5; Job 20:5
4:34 Acts 7:48; Rom 11:36; Rev 1:6
4:35 1 Cor 2:16; Acts 2:23; Acts 15:17
4:36 Prov 22:4; 2 Chr 33:12,13; Matt 6:33
4:37 Rev 15:3; James 4:6; 1 Tim 1:17
5:1 Esth 1:3; Isa 22:12,14; Gen 40:20
5:2 Dan 1:2; 2 Kgs 24:13; 2 Kgs 25:15
5:4 Rev 9:20; Dan 5:23; Hab 2:19
5:5 John 8:6; Rev 20:13; Dan 4:31,33
5:6 Dan 7:28; Ezek 7:17; Nah 2:10

4:29 *At the end of twelve months* God gave him a full year of grace, and it seems he did not use it. When God gives us time after a warning, that time is a gift, not proof the warning was empty.
4:30 *Is not this the great Babylon, which I have built* Count the I and my in one sentence. Babylon truly was great, with huge walls, palaces and the Ishtar Gate, and many bricks found there bear his name. The final Babylon will show the same pride and hear the same verdict (Rev 14:8; 18:2, 7).
4:31 *While the word was still in the mouth of the king* He had a year to repent, but when judgment came it came in an instant. Pride goes before destruction (Prov 16:18).
4:33 *his hair grew long like eagles' feathers* The man who saw himself as a tree reaching the sky now lived lower than his subjects. When we try to take God's place, we do not rise to be like God. We fall below what we were made to be. Kings rarely recorded their humiliations, so the lack of a Babylonian record is no surprise. I take Daniel's account as true history (Matt 24:15).
4:34 *I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to the heavens, and my knowledge returned to me* Notice the order. Animals look down at the ground. The first sign of his recovery was looking up to God, and then his mind returned.
4:35 *all the inhabitants of the earth are counted as nothing* Not bitterness but the honest worship of a man who finally saw the difference between Creator and creature (Isa 40:15-17). When we see God this way, our worries and our pride shrink to their proper size.
4:36 *surpassing greatness was added to me* Just as Daniel promised (4:26). God's discipline is meant to restore, and afterward it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness (Heb 12:11).
4:37 *those who walk in pride He is able to bring low* Was he truly converted? Christians disagree. Some see real saving faith in his praise and public letter. Others think he only ranked Israel's God above his others. I lean toward believing his change was real, but I hold that humbly. Either way, God opposes the proud and gives grace to the humble (James 4:6). We can learn humility the easy way or the hard way.
5:1 *Belshazzar the king made a great feast* Many years have passed. Nebuchadnezzar died in 562 B.C. The last king, Nabonidus (556 to 539 B.C.), spent about ten years at the desert oasis of Tayma, and his son Belshazzar ruled Babylon as co-regent. Critics once said Belshazzar never existed, until records found in the 1800s named him as Nabonidus' eldest son with royal power. The spade has a way of catching up with Scripture. He feasted while the Persian army was already in the land.
5:2 *Nebuchadnezzar his father* In the Bible's languages "father" can mean grandfather, ancestor or predecessor, just as Jesus is called the son of David. Some suggest his mother was Nebuchadnezzar's daughter, but we do not know. Bringing out the temple vessels (1:2) for a drunken party was deliberate defiance, as if Israel's God were just another defeated god.
5:4 *they praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone* The list echoes the statue of chapter 2. Sin often takes what belongs to God and uses it for selfish pleasure, then praises something else for it. Our bodies, gifts, time and money belong to God.
5:5 *on the plaster of the wall of the palace of the king* A large throne room with white plastered walls has been found in Nebuchadnezzar's palace, and many believe it was the kind of room for this feast. God did not send an army. He sent a hand, and that was enough to stop the party cold.
5:6 *his knees were knocking this against this* His body told the truth his boasting hid. The wicked flee when no one pursues (Prov 28:1). Belshazzar had no peace because he had no peace with God.

ing this against this. **7** The king called with strength to bring in the conjurers, the Chaldeans (Kasdim), and the diviners. The king answered and said to the wise men of Babylon (Bavel), "Any man who reads this writing and declares to me its interpretation will be clothed ***with*** purple, and the necklace of gold ***will be*** on his neck, and he will rule ***as*** third in the kingdom." **8** Then all the wise men of the king were coming in, and they were not able to read the writing and to make known its interpretation to the king. **9** Then King Belshazzar was greatly alarmed, and his brightness was changing on him, and his nobles were perplexed. **10** The queen, because of the words of the king and his nobles, came into the house of the feast. The queen answered and said, "O king, live forever! Let not your thoughts alarm you, and let not your brightness be changed. **11** There is a man in your kingdom in whom ***is*** a spirit of holy gods; and in the days of your father illumination and insight and wisdom like the wisdom of gods were found in him; and King Nebuchadnezzar your father appointed him chief of the magicians, conjurers, Chaldeans, ***and*** diviners, your father the king, **12** because an extraordinary spirit, and knowledge and insight, interpreting dreams and declaring riddles and loosening knots, were found in him, in Daniel (Daniyel), whose name the king made Belteshazzar (Belteshatsar). Now let Daniel be called, and he will declare the interpretation."

Daniel Reads the Writing

13 Then Daniel was brought in before the king. The king answered and said to Daniel, "You ***are*** that Daniel who ***is*** of the sons of the exile of Judah (Yehud), whom the king my father brought from Judah. **14** And I have heard concerning you that a spirit of gods ***is*** in you, and illumination and insight and extraordinary wisdom have been found in you. **15** And now the wise men, the conjurers, have been brought in before me, that they might read this writing and make known to me its interpretation; and they were not able to declare the interpretation of the matter. **16** And I have heard concerning you that you are able to interpret interpretations and to loosen knots. Now if you are able to read the writing and to make known to me its interpretation, you will be clothed ***with*** purple, and the necklace of gold ***will be*** on your neck, and you will rule ***as*** the third in the kingdom." **17** Then Daniel answered and said before the king, "Let your gifts be for yourself, and give your rewards to another; nevertheless I will read the writing to the king, and I will make known to him the interpretation. **18** You, O king: the Most High God gave the kingdom and the greatness and the honor and the majesty to Nebuchadnezzar your father. **19** And because of the greatness that He gave him, all the peoples, nations, and languages were trembling and fearing before him. Whom he wished, he was killing; and whom he wished, he was keeping alive; and whom he wished, he was lifting up; and whom he wished, he was bringing low. **20** And when his heart was lifted up and his spirit grew strong to act proudly, he was brought down from the throne of his kingdom, and they removed the honor from him. **21** And he was driven away from the sons of mankind, and they made his heart like ***that of*** the beasts, and his dwelling ***was*** with the wild donkeys; they fed him grass like oxen, and his body was drenched with the dew of the heavens, until he knew that the Most High God rules over the kingdom of mankind, and whomever He wills He sets up over it. **22** And you, his son, O Belshazzar, have not brought low your heart, inasmuch as you knew all this. **23** And you have lifted yourself up against the Lord of the heavens; and the vessels of His house they have brought before you, and you and your nobles, your wives and your concubines, are drinking wine from them; and you have praised the gods of silver and gold, bronze, iron, wood, and stone, which do not see and do not hear and do not know; and the God in whose hand ***is*** your breath, and whose ***are*** all your ways, you have not glorified. **24** Then from before Him the palm of the hand was sent, and this writing was inscribed. **25** And this ***is*** the writing that was inscribed: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, and PARSIN. **26** This ***is*** the interpretation of the matter: MENE, God has numbered your kingdom

5:7 Dan 5:16,29; Dan 2:6; Dan 2:48
5:8 Dan 2:27; Dan 4:7; Gen 41:8
5:9 Dan 5:6; Dan 2:1; Isa 13:6-8
5:10 Dan 3:9; Dan 2:4; Dan 6:6,21
5:11 Acts 16:16; Dan 4:8,9,18; Dan 2:47
5:12 Dan 5:14; Dan 6:3; Dan 5:16
5:13 Dan 5:11; Dan 2:25; Dan 6:13
5:14 Dan 5:11,12
5:15 Dan 5:7,8; Isa 47:12; Dan 2:3-11
5:16 Dan 5:7; Gen 40:8; Acts 8:18
5:17 2 Kgs 5:16,26; Dan 5:29; Gen 14:23
5:18 Acts 7:48; Acts 16:17; Heb 7:1
5:19 Dan 2:12,13; Dan 3:6,20,21,29; Dan 3:4
5:20 Jer 13:18; Exod 9:17; Job 40:11,12
5:21 Acts 16:17; Heb 7:1; Dan 4:25,32,33
5:22 Luke 12:47; 2 Chr 33:23; Exod 10:3
5:23 Rev 9:20; Job 12:10; Jer 10:23
5:26 Jer 27:7; Dan 9:2; Job 14:14

5:7 *he will rule as third in the kingdom* A quiet proof of Daniel's accuracy. Nabonidus was first and Belshazzar second, so third was the highest honor he could give. A writer centuries later would not likely have known this. Purple was the color of royalty.

5:10 *The queen* The king's wives were already at the feast (5:2-3), so this was most likely the queen mother, a respected older woman of the royal house. She remembered what everyone else had forgotten.

5:11 *There is a man in your kingdom* Belshazzar did not seem to know Daniel. The man so important under Nebuchadnezzar had been set aside, and he was now about eighty. Faithfulness in the quiet years is never wasted. God knows where His servants are, and when He needed Daniel, he was ready.

5:13 *You are that Daniel who is of the sons of the exile of Judah* This may have been meant to put Daniel in his place. Belshazzar says only "a spirit of gods" (5:14), leaving out the word "holy," a small detail that fits a king who respected nothing holy.

5:17 *Let your gifts be for yourself* Not rudeness. God's word could not be bought, and the gifts would not shape the message (2 Cor 2:17). Daniel later received them (5:29) because the king insisted, but he had already spoken without any promise of reward, and the honor lasted only hours.

5:22 *inasmuch as you knew all this* The heart of his guilt. He knew what happened to Nebuchadnezzar and did it anyway. The servant who knew his master's will and did not do it receives the greater punishment (Luke 12:47-48). Many today are like Belshazzar. They have heard the truth, maybe grown up around it, and chosen to ignore it.

5:23 *the God in whose hand is your breath* The sharpest line of all. It is foolish to praise gods that "do not see and do not hear," and ignore the God who keeps you breathing.

5:25 *MENE, MENE, TEKEL, and PARSIN* Aramaic terms for weights or money: a mina, a shekel, and halves or parts. Read as a list, they sounded like a line from a merchant's scale, which may be why the wise men could not make sense of them. God gave Daniel the meaning.

5:26 *God has numbered your kingdom and has finished it* The word is written twice, stressing that the matter was settled. Every life has days numbered by God (Ps 90:12). Belshazzar never learned to number his days, so God numbered them for him.

and has finished it. **27** TEKEL, you have been weighed in the scales and have been found lacking. **28** PERES, your kingdom has been divided and has been given to Media (Maday) and Persia (Paras)." **29** Then Belshazzar spoke, and they clothed Daniel ***with*** purple, and the necklace of gold ***was*** on his neck; and they proclaimed concerning him that he would be ruling ***as*** the third in the kingdom.

The Fall of Babylon

30 In that night Belshazzar, the Chaldean king, was killed. **31** And Darius (Daryavesh) the Mede received the kingdom, ***being*** about sixty-two years old.

DANIEL 6

The Plot Against Daniel

1 It seemed good before Darius (Daryavesh), and he appointed over the kingdom one hundred and twenty satraps, who would be over all the kingdom; **2** and above them three overseers, of whom Daniel (Daniyel) ***was*** one, that these satraps might be giving them account, and the king would not be suffering loss. **3** Then this Daniel was distinguishing himself above the overseers and the satraps, because an extraordinary spirit ***was*** in him; and the king was planning to appoint him over all the kingdom. **4** Then the overseers and the satraps were seeking to find an occasion against Daniel from the side of the kingdom; and they were not able to find any occasion or corruption, because he ***was*** trustworthy, and no negligence or corruption was found in him. **5** Then these men were saying, "We will not find any occasion against this Daniel unless we have found ***it*** against him in the law of his God." **6** Then these overseers and satraps came thronging to the king, and thus they were saying to him, "Darius the king, live forever! **7** All the overseers of the kingdom, the prefects and the satraps, the counselors and the governors, have taken counsel together to establish a statute of the king and to make strong a prohibition, that whoever asks a petition from any god or man for thirty days, except from you, O king, shall be thrown into the den of the lions. **8** Now, O king, establish the prohibition and sign the writing, which is not to be changed, according to the law of Media (Maday) and Persia (Paras), which does not pass away." **9** Because of this King Darius signed the writing and the prohibition.

Daniel Keeps Praying

10 And when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and windows ***were*** opened for him in his upper room toward Jerusalem (Yerushalayim); and three times in the day he was kneeling on his knees and praying and giving thanks before his God, just as he had been doing from before this. **11** Then these men came thronging and found Daniel asking and imploring favor before his God. **12** Then they approached and were saying before the king

5:27 Ps 62:9; Job 31:6; Jer 6:30
5:28 Dan 6:28; Isa 13:17; Dan 5:31
5:29 Dan 5:7,16
5:30 Dan 5:1,2; Isa 21:4-9; Isa 47:9
5:31 Dan 9:1; Dan 6:1
6:1 Dan 5:31; Esth 1:1; 1 Pet 2:14
6:2 Dan 2:48,49; Dan 5:16,29; Ezra 4:22
6:3 Dan 5:12,14; Prov 22:29; Dan 9:23
6:4 Phil 2:15; 1 Pet 2:12; 1 Pet 3:16
6:5 John 19:7; Acts 24:13-16,20,21; 1 Sam 24:17
6:6 Dan 2:4; Dan 6:21; Neh 2:3
6:7 Acts 4:26; Dan 3:2,27; Ps 59:3
6:8 Esth 1:19; Dan 6:12,15; Esth 3:12
6:9 Ps 118:9; Ps 146:3; Ps 62:9,10
6:10 Acts 5:29; Acts 2:1; Col 3:17
6:11 Ps 37:32,33; Dan 6:6; Ps 10:9
6:12 Dan 6:8; Dan 3:8-12; Esth 1:19

5:27 *you have been weighed in the scales and have been found lacking* God does not grade on a curve. He weighs us against His own holiness, and every one of us comes up short (Rom 3:23). Jesus was weighed and found perfect, and those who trust Him are counted righteous in Him (2 Cor 5:21). Belshazzar stood on the scale alone. We do not have to.
5:28 *your kingdom has been divided and has been given to Media and Persia* The same Aramaic letters also point to Persia, so the word itself named the conquerors. Isaiah had foretold the Medes against Babylon and even named Cyrus (Isa 13:17-19; 45:1), and Jeremiah set Babylon's seventy years (Jer 25:11-12). God's timetable was on schedule.
5:29 *they clothed Daniel with purple* The king did not repent or even argue. He handed out the reward like the end of a party game. Perhaps he did not believe judgment could come so fast. It came within hours.
5:30 *In that night Belshazzar, the Chaldean king, was killed* The fall of the greatest city on earth in one sentence. This was October 539 B.C., when Babylon fell to Cyrus the Great. The head of gold gave way to the silver (2:39). The final Babylon will also be feasting when her judgment comes "in one hour" (Rev 18:10).
5:31 *Darius the Mede received the kingdom* In the Aramaic text this is 6:1. Darius has not yet been found in records outside the Bible. Some believe he was Gubaru, a governor Cyrus placed over Babylon. Others think it is another name for Cyrus, reading 6:28 as Darius, even Cyrus. Both views take the text seriously, and I do not take a firm side. The Bible proved right about Belshazzar before.
6:1 *one hundred and twenty satraps* Satraps were regional governors. Persia was known for this kind of ordered government by provinces (compare Esth 1:1). Daniel, named third ruler on the night Babylon fell (5:29), was at once given a high post in the new government. The new rulers saw his integrity.
6:3 *an extraordinary spirit was in him* Daniel was likely in his early eighties, taken to Babylon as a teenager in 605 B.C. and still excellent and trusted after 539 B.C. God does not retire His servants because they grow old. There is no age limit on faithfulness.
6:4 *no negligence or corruption was found in him* His enemies searched for bribes, mistakes, laziness or favoritism and came up empty after more than sixty years of service. Our faith should make us better workers (Col 3:23). When people look closely at our work, they should find honesty and diligence.
6:5 *unless we have found it against him in the law of his God* Quite a testimony. His enemies were sure of two things: he was blameless at work, and he would never compromise his faith. Would the people who know you say the same?
6:7 *All the overseers of the kingdom* A lie, since Daniel, one of the three, had not agreed. The law flattered a new ruler by making him the only one anyone could pray to. It previews the last days, when the Antichrist will demand worship and those who refuse will face death (Rev 13:15; 2 Thess 2:4). Darius was not evil as the Antichrist will be, but the pattern is the same: a government demanding what belongs to God alone.
6:8 *the law of Media and Persia, which does not pass away* A signed Persian decree could not be revoked, the same rule seen in Esther 8:8. Darius did not stop to think whom the law would touch. Pride and flattery together can trap even a well-meaning leader.
6:10 *three times in the day he was kneeling on his knees* One of my favorite verses in Daniel. He did not panic or make a show. He kept doing "just as he had been doing from before this." His prayer life was the habit of a lifetime, so it held when pressure came. He faced Jerusalem because of Solomon's prayer for captives who pray toward the land (1 Kgs 8:46-50), and he gave thanks under a death sentence. To hide his prayers would have said faith can be hidden when it is dangerous (Acts 5:29).
6:11 *found Daniel asking and imploring favor before his God* They did not have to search. Everyone knew Daniel's habits. Is your faith that steady, so people know where to find you when it is time to pray?

concerning the prohibition of the king, "Did you not sign a prohibition that any man who asks from any god or man for thirty days, except from you, O king, shall be thrown into the den of the lions?" The king answered and said, "The word ***is*** certain, according to the law of Media and Persia, which does not pass away." **13** Then they answered and were saying before the king, "Daniel, who ***is*** of the sons of the exile of Judah (Yehud), has not set regard on you, O king, or on the prohibition which you signed; and three times in the day he is asking his petition." **14** Then the king, when he heard the word, was greatly displeased, and he set ***his*** mind on Daniel to deliver him; and until the going down of the sun he was striving to rescue him. **15** Then these men came thronging to the king and were saying to the king, "Know, O king, that ***it is*** a law of Media and Persia that any prohibition and statute which the king establishes is not to be changed." **16** Then the king spoke, and they brought Daniel and threw ***him*** into the den of the lions. The king answered and said to Daniel, "Your God whom you serve continually, may He deliver you." **17** And one stone was brought and set on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his signet ring and with the signet rings of his nobles, that nothing might be changed concerning Daniel.

Delivered from the Lions

18 Then the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting, and diversions were not brought in before him, and his sleep fled from him. **19** Then the king arose at dawn, at daylight, and went in haste to the den of the lions. **20** And as he approached the den, he cried out to Daniel with a pained voice. The king answered and said to Daniel, "O Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?" **21** Then Daniel spoke with the king, "O king, live forever! **22** My God sent His angel and shut the mouth of the lions, and they have not harmed me, because before Him innocence was found in me; and also before you, O king, I have done no crime." **23** Then the king was very glad, and he said to take Daniel up from the den. And Daniel was taken up from the den, and no harm was found on him, because he had trusted in his God. **24** And the king spoke, and they brought those men who had denounced Daniel, and they threw them, their sons and their wives, into the den of the lions; and they had not reached the bottom of the den before the lions overpowered them and shattered all their bones.

Darius Honors the Living God

25 Then King Darius wrote to all the peoples, nations, and languages who dwell in all the earth: "May your peace increase! **26** From before me a decree is made, that in all the dominion of my kingdom they shall be trembling and fearing before the God of Daniel; for He ***is*** the living God and enduring forever, and His kingdom ***is one*** which will not be destroyed, and His dominion ***will be*** to the end. **27** He delivers and rescues, and He does signs and wonders in the heavens and on the earth, who has delivered Daniel from the hand of the lions." **28** And this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus (Koresh) the Persian.

DANIEL 7

The Four Beasts

1 In the first year of Belshazzar (Belshatsar) king of Babylon (Bavel), Daniel (Daniyel) saw a dream and visions of his head on his bed. Then he wrote the dream; he told the sum of the

6:13 Dan 2:25; Dan 3:12; Dan 5:13
6:14 John 19:7; John 19:8; Mark 6:26
6:15 Esth 8:8; Dan 6:8,12; Ps 94:20,21
6:16 John 19:15; John 19:16; Ps 37:39,40
6:17 Matt 27:66; Lam 3:53; Matt 27:60-66
6:18 Dan 2:1; Esth 6:1; 2 Sam 12:16,17
6:19 Matt 28:1; Mark 16:2; 2 Cor 2:13
6:20 Dan 3:17; Dan 6:16,27; 1 Chr 16:11
6:21 Heb 11:33; Dan 2:4; Dan 6:6
6:22 Heb 11:33; Acts 12:11; 1 John 3:19
6:23 Heb 11:33; Dan 3:25,27,28; 1 Chr 5:20
6:24 Esth 7:10; Deut 24:16; 2 Kgs 14:6
6:25 2 Pet 1:2; Dan 4:1; Ezra 1:1,2
6:26 Rom 9:26; Matt 16:16; Heb 12:22
6:27 Heb 2:4; Dan 4:2,3,34; Job 36:15
6:28 Dan 1:21; Isa 44:28; 2 Chr 36:22,23
7:1 Acts 2:17; Dan 5:1,22,30; Dan 4:5

6:13 *has not set regard on you, O king* Twisted words. Daniel had served the king faithfully. He simply would not let the king take God's place. Believers through history have had their devotion to God painted as rebellion.
6:16 *Your God whom you serve continually, may He deliver you* Perhaps more hope than faith, but a pagan king had watched Daniel closely enough to know he served God continually. Daniel's life had preached to the king long before this night. The den was likely a pit with an opening at the top (6:23-24).
6:17 *the king sealed it with his signet ring* So nothing could be changed. Many Christians see a picture here of the stone sealed over Jesus' tomb (Matt 27:66). Men sealed both stones, and God brought His servant out alive. Daniel was not raised from the dead, but his rescue is a small picture of Christ's victory over death.
6:20 *servant of the living God* The gods of Babylon and Persia were idols. Darius had begun to see that Daniel's God is alive and acts.
6:22 *My God sent His angel and shut the mouth of the lions* Daniel did not boast of his courage. He gave God the credit and affirmed his loyalty to the king. Breaking an unjust law to obey a higher authority is not rebellion. Hebrews almost certainly remembers him among those who "shut the mouths of lions" (Heb 11:33). God did not keep him from the trial. He kept him in it.
6:23 *because he had trusted in his God* Faith is not a magic shield. It is reliance on the One who can protect. Not every faithful believer is spared death in this life (Heb 11:35-37; Dan 3:18). God delivers some from death and others through death into His presence. I hold that Christ will take His church before the Tribulation, and I respect those who differ. For believers in every age and for those saved in the Tribulation, God's people may be thrown into the den, but never out of His hand (7:21-22; Rev 13:7-10).
6:24 *their sons and their wives* A hard verse, and it should be. Throwing in the families was the king's harsh Persian practice, not God's command. God's Law said children must not die for their fathers' sins (Deut 24:16). The Bible records it without approving it. The lions were not tame, so Daniel's survival was God's doing. Those who dig a pit fall into it (Prov 26:27).
6:26 *for He is the living God and enduring forever* The plotters wanted no prayer to any god but the king. They got a decree for the whole empire to honor Daniel's God (Gen 50:20). The everlasting kingdom ties the first half of the book together (4:3, 34), and in the next chapter it is given to One like a Son of Man (7:13-14).
6:28 *in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian* Some read Darius, even Cyrus, as one man. Others see two rulers (see 5:31). Either way, Daniel lived to see Cyrus' decree letting the Jews go home (Ezra 1:1-4). Taken captive at the start of the exile, he lived to see God open the door.
7:1 *In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon* Most likely about 553 B.C., when Nabonidus left Belshazzar in charge, so this vision came before the fall of Babylon in chapter 5. Chapters 1-6 are arranged as stories and 7-12 as dated visions. Daniel, now in his late sixties, wrote the dream down. God meant it to be read by His people for generations, including us.

matters. **2** Daniel answered and said, "I was seeing in my vision by night, and look, the four winds of the heavens were stirring up the great sea. **3** And four great beasts were coming up from the sea, different this from this. **4** The first ***was*** like a lion, and it had wings of an eagle. I was seeing until its wings were plucked off, and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a man, and the heart of a man was given to it. **5** And look, another beast, a second, like a bear; and it was raised up on one side, and three ribs ***were*** in its mouth between its teeth; and thus they were saying to it, 'Arise, devour much flesh.' **6** After this I was seeing, and look, another, like a leopard, and it had four wings of a bird on its back; and the beast had four heads, and dominion was given to it. **7** After this I was seeing in the visions of the night, and look, a fourth beast, fearful and terrible and exceedingly strong; and it had great teeth of iron; it was devouring and shattering, and it was trampling the rest with its feet; and it ***was*** different from all the beasts that ***were*** before it, and it had ten horns. **8** I was considering the horns, and look, another horn, a small ***one***, came up between them, and three of the first horns were uprooted from before it; and look, eyes like the eyes of man ***were*** in this horn, and a mouth speaking great ***things***.

The Ancient of Days and the Son of Man

9 I was seeing until thrones were placed, and ***the*** Ancient of Days sat; His clothing ***was*** white like snow, and the hair of His head like pure wool; His throne ***was*** flames of fire, its wheels burning fire. **10** A river of fire was flowing and coming out from before Him; a thousand thousands were ministering to Him, and a myriad of myriads were standing before Him. The court sat, and books were opened. **11** I was seeing then, because of the sound of the great words which the horn was speaking; I was seeing until the beast was killed, and its body was destroyed and given to the burning of fire. **12** And ***as for*** the rest of the beasts, they removed their dominion, and a prolonging of life was given to them until a season and a time. **13** I was seeing in the visions of the night, and look, with the clouds of the heavens ***one*** like a son of man was coming; and He reached the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. **14** And to Him was given dominion and honor and a kingdom, and all the peoples, nations, and languages will serve Him. His dominion ***is*** an everlasting dominion, which will not pass away, and His

7:2 Rev 7:1; Rev 17:15
7:3 Rev 13:1; Dan 2:32,33,37-40; Zech 6:1-8
7:4 Rev 13:2; Rev 4:7; Jer 4:7,13
7:5 Rev 17:16; Dan 2:39; Dan 8:3
7:6 Rev 13:2; Dan 2:39; Dan 8:5-7,20,21
7:7 Rev 13:1; Rev 12:3; Rev 17:12
7:8 Rev 13:5; Rev 13:1; Jude 1:16
7:9 Rev 1:14; Rev 19:18; Rev 20:4
7:10 Rev 5:11; Matt 25:31; Rev 20:12
7:11 Rev 19:20; 2 Pet 2:18; Jude 1:16
7:12 Mark 13:26; Rev 19:20; Dan 7:4-6
7:13 Matt 26:64; Rev 1:7; Rev 1:13
7:14 Rev 11:15; Matt 28:18; Matt 21:5

7:2 *the four winds of the heavens were stirring up the great sea* The four winds are the four directions, God's power moving over the whole earth. The great sea was the Mediterranean, around which these empires ruled, and in prophecy the sea also pictures the restless nations (Rev 17:15). These kingdoms rise out of the turmoil of the nations because God's winds stir the sea.

7:3 *four great beasts were coming up from the sea* Each beast is a kingdom (7:17, 23). In chapter 2 the king saw these empires as a splendid statue, the way proud men see their own power. Here God shows what they really are: violent and hungry. Without God, human government tends toward the animal, as Nebuchadnezzar learned in chapter 4.

7:4 *The first was like a lion, and it had wings of an eagle* Babylon, the head of gold (2:38). Winged lions decorated Babylon's gates, and Jeremiah pictured Nebuchadnezzar as a lion and his armies as eagles (Jer 4:7, 13). The plucked wings and the "heart of a man" point back to chapter 4: Babylon's swift rise stopped, and its greatest king learned to think like a man who answers to God.

7:5 *another beast, a second, like a bear* Medo-Persia, the silver (2:32). Raised up on one side fits an empire of two peoples, with Persia stronger (8:3). The three ribs are most often taken as three great conquests: Lydia (546 B.C.), Babylon (539 B.C.) and Egypt (525 B.C.). Persia reached from India to Egypt. Notice the bear eats because it is told to.

7:6 *another, like a leopard, and it had four wings of a bird on its back* Greece, the bronze. A four-winged leopard fits Alexander the Great, who broke Persia in about three years (334-331 B.C.) and died in 323 B.C. at about thirty-two. The four heads are the four generals who divided his empire (8:8, 22), including the Seleucids and Ptolemies of chapter 11. "Dominion was given to it." Even Alexander held only what God gave.

7:7 *a fourth beast, fearful and terrible and exceedingly strong* Rome, the iron of chapter 2. Rome crushed and absorbed nations, ruled longer than the others, and ruled Judea when Jesus was born and crucified and when the temple fell in A.D. 70. Daniel never sees a fifth kingdom replace this one.

7:7 *it had ten horns* A horn is a symbol of power, here of kings (7:24), matching the ten toes (2:41-44). Historic Rome never ruled through ten kings at once, so I believe with many students of prophecy that the horns point to a final, future form of the Roman Empire, ten rulers who hand their power to the Antichrist (Rev 17:12-13).

7:8 *another horn, a small one, came up between them* I believe this little horn is the future Antichrist, the beast of Revelation 13. Both have a mouth speaking great things (Rev 13:5), both war on the saints (7:21; Rev 13:7), and both rule three and a half years (7:25; Rev 13:5). One man, seen by two prophets six hundred years apart. Do not confuse him with the horn of 8:9, which comes from Greece and was fulfilled in Antiochus IV.

7:9 *the Ancient of Days sat* God the Father, who existed before all days. The beasts come and go, and He is eternal. White clothing and hair speak of purity and wisdom, and the fiery throne of holiness and judgment (Ezek 1:15-28). John saw the glorified Jesus with hair white as wool and snow (Rev 1:14). I believe that is deliberate: the Son shares the Father's glory. The plural thrones are for the saints (7:22; Rev 20:4).

7:10 *The court sat, and books were opened* A myriad of myriads is a number too large to count (Rev 5:11). This is a courtroom. The beasts have had their time, and God judges by His record (Rev 20:12). Nothing done on earth goes unseen or unrecorded.

7:11 *the beast was killed, and its body was destroyed and given to the burning of fire* The little horn is still boasting when God ends him. This matches the beast thrown into the lake of fire when Christ returns (Rev 19:20). That is how every proud power has fallen, and how the last one will fall.

7:12 *a prolonging of life was given to them* Each earlier empire was absorbed into the next. Babylonian culture lived on under Persia, Persian under Greece, and Greek inside Rome. The fourth beast is not absorbed. It is destroyed, because God's kingdom replaces it.

7:13 *with the clouds of the heavens one like a son of man was coming* One of the most important verses in the Old Testament. He looks human, unlike the beasts, yet He rides the clouds, which in Scripture is something God does (Ps 104:3; Isa 19:1). I believe without doubt this is Jesus Christ. Son of Man was His favorite name for Himself, and at His trial He claimed this verse, and the high priest called it blasphemy (Matt 26:64). He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him (Rev 1:7).

7:14 *to him was given dominion and honor and a kingdom* The beasts had dominion for a time. His is everlasting, the stone that fills the earth (2:44-45). Some see this as the ascension, with the kingdom fully present now in a spiritual sense. I believe Christ reigns now at the Father's right hand, but this verse looks to His second coming, since the kingdom is given when the beast is judged (7:11, 26-27), which has not yet happened. As a premillennialist, I believe it is fulfilled when He returns to reign on earth (Rev 11:15; 20:4-6).

kingdom ***one*** which will not be destroyed.

The Vision Explained

15 ***As for*** me, Daniel, my spirit was distressed in the midst of ***its*** sheath, and the visions of my head alarmed me. **16** I approached one of those standing ***there***, and I was asking from him the truth concerning all this. And he said to me, and he made known to me the interpretation of the matters: **17** 'These great beasts, which are four, ***are*** four kings ***who*** will arise from the earth. **18** And the holy ones of the Most High will receive the kingdom, and they will possess the kingdom until the age, and until the age of the ages.' **19** Then I desired to make certain concerning the fourth beast, which was different from all of them, exceedingly terrible, its teeth of iron and its claws of bronze, devouring, shattering, and trampling the rest with its feet, **20** and concerning the ten horns that ***were*** on its head, and the other ***horn*** which came up, and before which three fell, even that horn which had eyes and a mouth speaking great ***things***, and whose appearance ***was*** greater than its companions. **21** I was seeing, and that horn was making war with the holy ones and prevailing against them, **22** until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given for the holy ones of the Most High, and the season arrived, and the holy ones possessed the kingdom. **23** Thus he said: 'The fourth beast will be a fourth kingdom on the earth, which will be different from all the kingdoms; and it will devour all the earth, and tread it down, and shatter it. **24** And the ten horns: from it, the kingdom, ten kings will arise; and another will arise after them, and he will be different from the former ***ones***, and he will bring low three kings. **25** And he will speak words against the Most High, and he will wear out the holy ones of the Most High, and he will intend to change seasons and law; and they will be given into his hand until a time and times and half a time. **26** And the court will sit, and they will remove his dominion, to annihilate and to destroy ***it*** until the end. **27** And the kingdom and the dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under all the heavens will be given to the people of the holy ones of the Most High; his kingdom ***is*** an everlasting kingdom, and all the dominions will serve and obey him.' **28** Until here ***is*** the end of the matter. ***As for*** me, Daniel, my thoughts greatly alarmed me, and my brightness was changed on me; and I kept the matter in my heart."

DANIEL 8

The Ram and the Goat

1 In the third year of the reign of Belshazzar (Belshatsar) the king, a vision appeared to me, I, Daniel (Daniyel), after the ***one*** that appeared to me at the beginning. **2** And I saw in the vision; and it was, when I saw, that I ***was*** in Susa (Shushan) the citadel, which ***is*** in Elam the province; and I saw in the

7:15 Rev 10:11; Dan 7:28; Dan 8:27
7:16 Rev 7:14; Rev 7:13,14; Rev 5:5
7:17 Rev 13:11; Dan 7:3,4; Dan 2:37-40
7:18 Rev 5:10; Rev 22:5; Rev 20:4
7:19 Rev 13:1; Dan 7:7; Dan 2:40-43
7:20 Rev 12:3; Rev 13:5; Rev 17:3
7:21 Rev 13:5-7; Rev 19:19; Rev 11:7
7:22 1 Cor 6:2; Rev 20:4; Rev 19:11
7:23 Rev 17:18; Rev 19:19; Dan 2:40
7:24 Rev 17:12; Rev 17:16; Rev 13:11
7:25 Rev 12:14; Rev 11:2; Rev 13:5
7:26 2 Thess 2:8; Rev 11:18; Dan 7:10,11,22
7:27 Rev 11:15; Rev 20:4; Dan 2:44
7:28 Luke 2:19,51; Dan 7:15; Dan 8:27
8:1 Dan 7:1; Dan 8:15; Dan 7:15,28
8:2 Neh 1:1; Esth 1:2; Esth 2:8

7:15 *my spirit was distressed* Prophecy rightly understood does not entertain. It humbles. Daniel saw how much suffering lay ahead for God's people before the kingdom comes.
7:16 *I was asking from him the truth concerning all this* When we do not understand God's Word, we should ask. Because the angel explains the vision, we are not left to guess, and I take his interpretation as final.
7:18 *the holy ones of the Most High will receive the kingdom* The main point of the vision. "Holy ones" means saints, people set apart to God. In Daniel's day that meant faithful Israel, and I believe in the whole of Scripture it includes all God's redeemed, Jew and Gentile, who belong to Christ (Rev 5:9-10). God's people, however weak they seem, will inherit everything.
7:20 *whose appearance was greater than its companions* The horn began small and outgrew the others. That is how the Antichrist will rise: not as an obvious tyrant at first, but as a smaller figure who outgrows and replaces the powers around him.
7:21 *that horn was making war with the holy ones and prevailing against them* Revelation says nearly the same of the beast (Rev 13:7). God does not promise His people they will never suffer. He promises the suffering has an end and the victory is His.
7:22 *until the Ancient of Days came* I hold the pre-tribulation view: Christ gathers His church before the Tribulation (1 Thess 4:16-17; Rev 3:10). I understand these holy ones as those who come to faith during the Tribulation, Israel among them, after the church is taken up. God will sustain them until Christ returns and gathers His elect (Matt 24:29-31). Others see the church here and hold a post-tribulation, mid-tribulation or pre-wrath view. These are sincere believers, and this need not divide us.
7:24 *ten kings will arise; and another will arise after them* The angel interprets: the horns are kings, ruling at the same time as the beast for "one hour" (Rev 17:12), not centuries of popes or a list of medieval nations. Some fit them to the tribes that broke up the Western Empire, but those kingdoms were not ended by the coming of the Son of Man. The ten kings are on the scene when Christ returns, so I believe they are still future.
7:25 *until a time and times and half a time* He will blaspheme, "wear out the holy ones" like cloth worn thin, and try to change "seasons and law," perhaps the calendar, feasts or God's moral law. A time, times and half a time is three and a half years, the same as forty-two months and 1,260 days in Revelation (Rev 11:2-3; 12:6, 14; 13:5). I believe this is the second half of the seven-year Tribulation, after the Antichrist breaks his covenant (9:27), which Jesus called the great tribulation (Matt 24:15-21). God set the clock, and it is short.
7:26 *they will remove his dominion* The court of verse 10 now deals with the little horn. Paul describes the same moment: the Lord will slay the lawless one by the breath of His mouth at His coming (2 Thess 2:8).
7:27 *his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom* The verse moves from the saints to the King. They reign because they belong to Him, and they reign with Christ (Rev 20:4-6; 22:5). However hard the world gets, God's people are not on the losing side. The meek will inherit the earth (Matt 5:5).
7:28 *I kept the matter in my heart* Daniel did not understand everything and did not pretend to. We will not grasp every detail of prophecy, and anyone who claims to have it all figured out should be heard with caution. But we can hold to what is plain: the beasts fall, the Son of Man comes, and the saints receive the kingdom.
8:1 *In the third year of the reign of Belshazzar the king* About 551 B.C., two years after chapter 7. Here the book returns to Hebrew. Chapter 7 gave the big picture, and chapter 8 zooms in on two of those kingdoms and what they would mean for the Jewish people.
8:2 *I was in Susa the citadel* Some think Daniel was carried there in the vision, as Ezekiel was (Ezek 8:3), and the wording sounds that way to me, but the meaning is the same. In 551 B.C. Susa was not yet a Persian capital. Later it was, where Nehemiah served and Esther's story took place. God set Daniel in the future capital of the very empire the vision is about.

vision, and I was at the canal of Ulai (Ulay). **3** And I lifted up my eyes and saw, and look, one ram standing before the canal, and it had two horns; and the two horns ***were*** high, and the one ***was*** higher than the second, and the higher ***one*** was coming up last. **4** I saw the ram thrusting westward and northward and southward, and no beasts could stand before it, and there was none delivering from its hand; and it did according to its will, and it magnified itself. **5** And I was observing, and look, the male goat of the goats was coming from the west over the face of all the earth, and not touching the ground; and the goat ***had*** a conspicuous horn between its eyes. **6** And it came to the ram, the owner of the two horns, which I had seen standing before the canal, and it ran at it in the rage of its strength. **7** And I saw it approaching beside the ram, and it was enraged against it, and it struck the ram and broke its two horns; and there was no strength in the ram to stand before it; and it threw it to the ground and trampled it, and there was none delivering the ram from its hand. **8** And the male goat of the goats magnified itself exceedingly; and when it was mighty, the great horn was broken; and four conspicuous ***horns*** came up in its place, toward the four winds of the heavens. **9** And from one of them came out one horn from littleness, and it became exceedingly great toward the south and toward the east and toward the beauty. **10** And it became great up to the host of the heavens, and it caused some of the host and some of the stars to fall to the ground, and it trampled them. **11** And up to the Commander of the host it magnified itself; and from Him the continual ***offering*** was removed, and the place of His sanctuary was thrown down. **12** And a host will be given over against the continual ***offering*** through transgression; and it will throw truth to the ground, and it will act and prosper. **13** And I heard one holy one speaking, and one holy one said to the certain one who was speaking, "Until when ***will be*** the vision of the continual ***offering***, and the transgression that makes desolate, to give both holy place and host ***to*** trampling?" **14** And he said to me, "Until evening ***and*** morning, two thousand and three hundred; and ***the*** holy place will be vindicated."

Gabriel Explains the Vision

15 And it was, when I, Daniel, had seen the vision, that I sought understanding; and look, standing before me ***was one*** like the appearance of a man. **16** And I heard the voice of a man between ***the banks of*** Ulai, and he called and said, "Gabriel (Gavri'el), make this ***one*** understand the vision." **17** And he came beside my standing place; and when he came, I was terrified and fell on my face. And he said to me, "Understand, son of man, that the vision ***is*** for the time of

8:3 Dan 8:20; Dan 10:5; Num 24:2
8:4 Dan 8:7; Dan 5:30; Dan 7:5
8:5 Dan 8:21; Dan 8:8,21; Dan 11:3
8:7 Dan 11:11; Dan 7:7; Josh 8:20
8:8 Rev 7:1; Dan 7:2; Dan 5:20
8:9 Dan 11:16,41,45; Ps 48:2; Dan 7:8,20-26
8:10 Rev 12:4; Rev 6:13; Isa 14:13
8:11 Luke 21:24; Dan 11:31; Dan 12:11
8:12 Isa 59:14; Dan 11:28,36; Dan 11:31-35
8:13 Rev 11:2; Luke 21:24; Rev 6:10
8:14 Dan 7:25; Dan 12:7,11; Rev 11:2,3
8:15 Matt 24:15; Mark 13:14; 1 Pet 1:10,11
8:16 Luke 1:19; Luke 1:26; Dan 8:2
8:17 Rev 22:8; Dan 8:19; Rev 1:17

8:3 *the higher one was coming up last* Gabriel says the ram is Media and Persia (8:20). Media was the older power, but Persia came up later and became stronger when Cyrus took over Media about 550 B.C., the same idea as the bear raised on one side (7:5).
8:4 *it did according to its will, and it magnified itself* Persia pushed west to Lydia, north toward Armenia, and south into Egypt, but not east, where its homeland was. In Daniel a power that magnifies itself is a power God is about to bring down.
8:5 *the male goat of the goats was coming from the west* Greece, and the great horn is its first king (8:21), Alexander the Great. He crossed into Asia in 334 B.C. and broke Persia in about three years, so fast he seemed never to touch the ground. Daniel wrote this nearly two hundred years before Alexander was born.
8:7 *it struck the ram and broke its two horns* Alexander won at the Granicus (334 B.C.), Issus (333 B.C.) and Gaugamela (331 B.C.), and Darius III was killed by his own men. An empire that seemed unbeatable for two centuries was gone.
8:8 *when it was mighty, the great horn was broken* Alexander died in Babylon in 323 B.C., about thirty-two, at the height of his power. After years of fighting, four kingdoms emerged under Cassander, Lysimachus, Seleucus and Ptolemy, the leopard's four heads (7:6). Pride and power protect no one from God's timing (James 4:13-15).
8:9 *from one of them came out one horn from littleness* With nearly all Bible students, I believe this was Antiochus IV Epiphanes, a Seleucid king (175 to 164 B.C.). He was not the rightful heir and took power while the heir was away, then pushed south to Egypt, east, and into "the Beauty," the land of Israel (11:16). He is not the little horn of 7:8, who comes from Rome at the end. The two are alike by design, but not the same man.
8:10 *it caused some of the host and some of the stars to fall to the ground* Gabriel explains that he destroys "the people of the holy ones" (8:24). I believe the host and stars are God's faithful people, sometimes pictured as stars (Gen 15:5; Dan 12:3). Antiochus killed many Jews who would not give up God's Law. Some also see a spiritual battle behind it, as in chapter 10.
8:11 *from him the continual offering was removed* The commander of the host is God Himself, though some see the Son before His birth (8:25). The continual offering was the daily morning and evening sacrifice. Epiphanes means God manifest, and his coins called him a god. In 167 B.C. he outlawed the Jewish faith, stopped the sacrifices and set up an altar to Zeus in the temple. 1 Maccabees, a Jewish history not part of Scripture, says he also banned circumcision and burned copies of the Law.
8:12 *through transgression* Some see the horn's own sin, others the sin of unfaithful Jews. I lean toward the second. Many in Jerusalem, priests among them, were eagerly taking up Greek ways, and the high priesthood was bought and sold. God allowed the persecution as discipline. For a time the lie seems to win, but only for a time.
8:13 *Until when* The question every suffering believer has asked. It comforts me that even the angels care about the suffering of God's people and the dishonor done to His house.
8:14 *Until evening and morning, two thousand and three hundred* Some count 2,300 days, about six years and four months, from about 171 B.C., when the godly high priest Onias III was murdered, to 164 B.C. Others count 2,300 evening and morning offerings, 1,150 days, close to the time from the desecration in 167 B.C. to the rededication in 164 B.C. I lean toward the first, but faithful students hold both. In December 164 B.C. Judas Maccabeus cleansed the temple, remembered at Hanukkah, the Feast of Dedication Jesus attended (John 10:22-23).
8:16 *Gabriel, make this one understand the vision* The first angel named in the Bible. His name means God is my strength or mighty man of God. He returns in 9:21 and later announces the births of John and Jesus (Luke 1:19, 26). The voice with authority over him may be the Lord, but the text does not say.
8:17 *the vision is for the time of the end* "Son of man" here simply means human being, as with Ezekiel. How can a vision fulfilled in 167 B.C. be for the end? I believe God fulfilled it in Antiochus and used him as a pattern of the final Antichrist. Two centuries after Antiochus died, Jesus pointed to the abomination of desolation as still future (Matt 24:15). Some take "the end" here as only the end of Antiochus' persecution, a fair reading of these words alone, but verses 17-25 reach further, and Jesus' words settle it for me.

the end." **18** And when he spoke with me, I fell into a deep sleep on my face toward the ground; and he touched me and made me stand on my standing place. **19** And he said, "Look, I am making known to you what will be in the latter part of the indignation; for ***it is*** for the appointed time of the end. **20** The ram which you saw, the owner of the two horns, ***is*** the kings of Media (Maday) and Persia (Paras). **21** And the shaggy male goat ***is*** the king of Greece (Yavan); and the great horn which ***is*** between its eyes, it ***is*** the first king. **22** And the broken ***horn***, and four arose in its place: four kingdoms will arise from ***the*** nation, and not with its power. **23** And in the latter part of their reign, when the transgressors have completed ***it***, a king will arise, strong of face and understanding riddles. **24** And his power will be mighty, and not by his own power; and he will destroy wondrously, and he will prosper and act, and he will destroy mighty ones and ***the*** people of ***the*** holy ones. **25** And through his insight he will make deceit prosper by his hand, and in his heart he will magnify himself, and in ease he will destroy many; and he will stand against the Prince of princes, and without hand he will be broken. **26** And the vision of the evening and the morning which has been told, it ***is*** truth; and you, shut up the vision, for ***it is*** for many days." **27** And I, Daniel, was exhausted and was sick ***for*** days; and I arose and did the work of the king. And I was appalled at the vision, and there was none making ***it*** understood.

DANIEL 9

Daniel Reads Jeremiah

1 In year one of Darius (Daryavesh) son of Ahasuerus (Achashverosh), of the seed of Media (Maday), who had been made king over the kingdom of ***the*** Chaldeans (Kasdim)— **2** in year one of his reigning, I, Daniel (Daniyel), understood in the scrolls the number of the years ***about*** which the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah (Yirmeya) the prophet, to complete for the ruins of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) seventy years. **3** And I set my face to the Lord God to seek prayer and supplications, with fasting and sackcloth and ashes.

Daniel's Prayer of Confession

4 And I prayed to the LORD my God, and I confessed, and I said, "Please, O Lord, the great and awesome God, keeping the covenant and the steadfast love for those who love Him and for those who keep His commandments, **5** we have sinned, and we have committed iniquity; we have acted wickedly, and we have rebelled, and turned aside from Your commandments and from Your judgments. **6** And we have not listened to Your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings, our leaders, and our fathers, and to

8:18 Luke 9:32; Rev 1:17; Ezek 2:2
8:19 Rev 11:18; Dan 8:15-17; Hab 2:3
8:20 Dan 8:3; Dan 11:1,2
8:21 Dan 10:20; Dan 11:3; Dan 8:5-7
8:22 Dan 8:3; Dan 11:4
8:23 2 Thess 2:9; 2 Thess 2:10; 2 Thess 2:11
8:24 Rev 13:7; Dan 8:12; Rev 13:3-9
8:25 Rev 19:16; Rev 19:20; Dan 8:11
8:26 Rev 22:10; Dan 10:1; Dan 12:4,9
8:27 Dan 7:28; Hab 3:16; Dan 8:7
9:1 Dan 11:1; Dan 1:21; Dan 5:31
9:2 Matt 24:15; Mark 13:14; 2 Chr 36:21
9:3 Luke 2:37; Acts 13:2; Dan 6:10
9:4 James 1:12; James 2:5; 1 John 1:10
9:5 Ps 106:6; Dan 9:15; Isa 64:5-7
9:6 Matt 23:37; Acts 13:27; Acts 7:52

8:18 *he touched me and made me stand* One of the most faithful men in the Bible could not stand before an angel, as John fell before the glorified Christ (Rev 1:17). God reveals His plans not to crush us but to lift us up.
8:19 *the latter part of the indignation* God's anger, especially His discipline on Israel. "Appointed time" means God has fixed the date. The persecution under Antiochus had an appointed end, and so will the great tribulation under the Antichrist.
8:20 *the kings of Media and Persia* One of the clearest interpretations in all prophecy. It confirms the second kingdom is Medo-Persia, one animal with two horns. Scholars who date Daniel late try to split Media and Persia so the four kingdoms end with Greece, but this verse joins them.
8:21 *the shaggy male goat is the king of Greece* The Hebrew says Javan, the old name for the Greeks, and the first king is Alexander. Daniel was told the name of an empire two centuries before it ruled the East. If God knows the end from the beginning (Isa 46:9-10), there is nothing strange in Him naming Greece in advance.
8:23 *a king will arise, strong of face and understanding riddles* Bold-faced and shameless, clever with schemes. Antiochus rose late in the Seleucid line and took the throne by flattery and intrigue (11:21). He came when sin had filled its measure, as the Antichrist will rise when the world is ripe for him (2 Thess 2:3-12).
8:24 *not by his own power* With Antiochus, God permitted him and Satan drove him. With the Antichrist, the dragon gives the beast his power (Rev 13:2). Antiochus killed thousands in Jerusalem, and the Antichrist will make war on the saints (7:21). Same pattern, larger at the end.
8:25 *without hand he will be broken* He stands against the Prince of princes, God, and in the final fulfillment the Lord Jesus, King of kings (Rev 19:16). No army beat Antiochus. Ancient historians say he died of illness in Persia in 164 B.C. The Antichrist will be destroyed by Christ at His coming (2 Thess 2:8; Rev 19:20). Every enemy of God ends the same way.
8:26 *shut up the vision, for it is for many days* Preserve it and keep it safe, since it was not for Daniel's generation (12:4, 9). John was told the opposite, not to seal his book, because the time is near (Rev 22:10).
8:27 *I arose and did the work of the king* I love this detail. After seeing empires and the end of the age, Daniel went back to work. Prophecy did not make him useless for daily life. It made him faithful in it. He did not understand it all, and that is all right. God gives enough to trust Him.
9:1 *In year one of Darius son of Ahasuerus* About 539-538 B.C., just after Babylon fell. This is the Darius of 5:31 and chapter 6, and this Ahasuerus is not the king of Esther. Daniel ties his prayer to a real moment: Babylon had fallen and the end of the exile was in sight.
9:2 *I, Daniel, understood in the scrolls* Daniel was reading Jeremiah, who foretold seventy years of serving Babylon and a return afterward (Jer 25:11-12; 29:10). A man who received visions from angels still humbly studied what other prophets wrote. Counting from 605 B.C. brings us to about 536 B.C. and the first return (Ezra 1:1-4). Counting from the temple's fall in 586 B.C. to its rebuilding in 516 B.C. is also about seventy. Either way God kept His word.
9:2 *seventy years* The exile also gave the land the sabbath years Israel had ignored (Lev 25:1-7; 2 Chr 36:21). God counts in sevens, and He is about to give Daniel a much bigger set of sevens.
9:3 *with fasting and sackcloth and ashes* Daniel's response to prophecy was prayer. Why pray about what God already promised? God's promises are not a reason to stop praying. They are the reason to start. God said that after seventy years His people would seek Him with all their heart (Jer 29:12-13), and He promised to remember His covenant when scattered Israel confessed (Lev 26:40-42). Daniel prayed God's Word back to Him.
9:4 *keeping the covenant and the steadfast love* Daniel begins with who God is, not with his problem. Steadfast love is hesed, God's loyal, faithful love. That is a good order for our prayers too.
9:5 *we have sinned* No sin of Daniel is recorded in Scripture, yet he says "we," not they. He stands with his people and piles up words for sin because he will not make it sound smaller than it is.
9:6 *we have not listened to Your servants the prophets* God was not silent. Israel did not listen. Most of us do not need a new word from heaven nearly as much as we need to obey the one we already have.

all the people of the land. **7** To You, O Lord, ***belongs*** the righteousness, and to us the shame of face, as ***it is*** this day—to the men of Judah (Yehuda), and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to all Israel (Yisra'el), those near and those far, in all the lands where You have banished them, in their unfaithfulness ***with*** which they have been unfaithful against You. **8** O LORD, to us ***belongs*** the shame of face, to our kings, to our leaders, and to our fathers, in that we have sinned against You. **9** To the Lord our God ***belong*** the compassion and the forgivenesses, for we have rebelled against Him, **10** and we have not listened to the voice of the LORD our God, to walk in His laws which He set before us by the hand of His servants the prophets. **11** And all Israel have transgressed Your law, and turned aside to not listen to Your voice; and the curse and the oath which ***is*** written in the law of Moses (Moshe) the servant of God have poured out on us, for we have sinned against Him. **12** And He has carried out His word which He spoke against us and against our judges who judged us, by bringing on us a great calamity, which has not been done under all the heavens as it has been done in Jerusalem. **13** Just as ***it is*** written in the law of Moses, all this calamity has come on us; and we have not entreated the face of the LORD our God by turning back from our iniquity and by gaining insight into Your truth. **14** And the LORD kept watch over the calamity and brought it on us; for the LORD our God ***is*** righteous in all His deeds which He has done, and we have not listened to His voice. **15** And now, O Lord our God, who brought Your people out from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim) with a strong hand, and made for Yourself a name, as ***it is*** this day—we have sinned, we have acted wickedly. **16** O Lord, according to all Your righteousnesses, let Your anger and Your rage turn back, please, from Your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain; for because of our sins and because of the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people ***have become*** a reproach to all around us. **17** And now, hear, O our God, the prayer of Your servant and his supplications, and make Your face shine on Your sanctuary, which is desolate, for the sake of the Lord. **18** Incline, O my God, Your ear and hear; open Your eyes and see our desolations and the city on which Your name is called; for ***it is*** not on ***the basis of*** our righteousnesses ***that*** we are causing our supplications to fall before You, but on ***the basis of*** Your great compassion. **19** O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, give heed and act! Do not delay, for Your own sake, O my God, for Your name is called on Your city and on Your people."

Gabriel Arrives

20 And I ***was*** still speaking and praying and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and causing my supplication to fall before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God, **21** and I ***was*** still speaking in prayer, and the man Gabriel (Gavri'el), whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, wearied with weariness, ***was*** approaching me about the time of the evening grain offering. **22** And he gave understanding, and he spoke with me, and he said, "O Daniel, now I have come forth to give you insight ***in*** understanding. **23** At the beginning of your supplications a word went forth, and I have come to declare ***it***, for you ***are*** precious; and understand the word, and discern the appearance.

9:7 Ps 44:15; Jer 2:26,27; Jer 3:25
9:8 Dan 9:6,7; Jer 14:20; Lam 1:7,8,18
9:9 Ps 130:4,7; Jer 14:7; Eph 1:6-8
9:10 Dan 9:6; 2 Kgs 18:12; 2 Kgs 17:13
9:11 Rev 15:3; Isa 1:4-6; Jer 8:5-10
9:12 Matt 5:18; Ezek 5:9; Isa 44:26
9:13 John 6:45; Acts 3:19; Dan 9:11
9:14 Dan 9:7; Neh 9:33; Jer 44:27
9:15 Neh 9:10; Exod 6:1,6; Exod 32:11
9:16 Luke 11:47; Matt 4:5; Luke 11:48
9:17 Lam 5:18; Num 6:23-26; Ps 4:6
9:18 Isa 37:17; Jer 25:29; Jer 36:7
9:19 Acts 15:17; Luke 11:8; Amos 7:2
9:20 Acts 10:31; Ps 145:18; Isa 58:9
9:21 Luke 1:19; Dan 8:16; Dan 10:16
9:22 Dan 8:16; Dan 10:21; Zech 1:9,14
9:23 Matt 24:15; Dan 10:11,19; Luke 1:28

9:7 *To You, O Lord, belongs the righteousness, and to us the shame of face* Daniel does not argue that the exile was unfair. True confession starts by admitting that God is right.
9:8 *to our kings, to our leaders, and to our fathers* Leaders were not excused, and much of Israel's trouble came through its kings. Daniel came from the royal family or nobles (1:3), so this was personal.
9:9 *To the Lord our God belong the compassion and the forgivenesses* The turning point of the prayer and the whole gospel in one contrast. We bring the sin. He brings the mercy, not because we deserve it but in spite of the fact that we do not.
9:11 *the curse and the oath which is written in the law of Moses* Daniel has in mind Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28, where God warned that a broken covenant meant scattering and a desolate land. The exile was exactly what God had said would happen.
9:14 *the LORD kept watch over the calamity* God did not lose control while Babylon burned Jerusalem. He was watching over it the whole time, and the same God would now watch over the return.
9:15 *who brought Your people out from the land of Egypt with a strong hand* Daniel turns from confession to request and starts with the exodus. God had done it once to make a name for Himself, and Daniel asks Him to do it again. He keeps confessing even as he asks.
9:16 *Your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain* God's city, not Israel's. Jerusalem had become a joke to the nations, and Daniel cared because God's name was attached to it.
9:17 *make Your face shine on Your sanctuary, which is desolate* An echo of the priestly blessing (Num 6:24-26). The temple lay in ruins, and Daniel asked for God's favor on it "for the sake of the Lord," the key to the whole prayer.
9:18 *not on the basis of our righteousnesses* The heart of the prayer. Every believer comes to God this way, not with a list of good works but on God's mercy, now fully shown in Jesus Christ (Titus 3:5). If Daniel, of all people, did not lean on his own merits, neither should we.
9:19 *O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive!* A rush of short, urgent requests. This is a man pouring out his heart. God is not offended by urgent prayer when it rests on His glory and His promises.
9:20 *confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel* Now Daniel says "my sin." The closer a person walks with God, the more clearly he sees his own sin, and the less likely he is to look down on others.
9:21 *about the time of the evening grain offering* The Hebrew "wearied with weariness" is hard, and many read it as swift flight. Either way, the answer came while Daniel was still praying. There had been no temple for decades, yet Daniel still marked his day by its offerings. His heart was set on God's house, like a believer living faithfully in a world that is not his home.
9:23 *for you are precious* At the very start of his prayer, the answer went out (Isa 65:24). Precious means greatly loved and treasured by God (10:11, 19). "Understand the word" warns that what follows takes careful thought.

The Seventy Weeks

24 Seventy sevens have been decreed on your people and on
your holy city, to put an end to the transgression, and to
complete sin, and to atone for iniquity, and to bring in ever-
lasting righteousness, and to seal up vision and prophet, and
to anoint a holy of holies. **25** And you shall know and gain
insight: from the going forth of ***the*** word to restore and to
build Jerusalem until an anointed one, a prince, ***shall be***
seven sevens and sixty-two sevens; it will again be built,
plaza and moat, even in the distress of the times. **26** And
after the sixty-two sevens an anointed one will be cut off,
and ***there will be*** nothing for him; and the people of a prince
who is coming will destroy the city and the sanctuary; and its
end ***will be*** with the flood, and until ***the*** end ***there will be*** war;
desolations ***are*** determined. **27** And he will make a covenant
strong for the many ***for*** one seven; and ***in*** the middle of the
seven he will cause sacrifice and grain offering to cease; and
on a wing of abominations ***will be*** one who makes desolate,
even until a complete destruction, and what has been
decided will be poured out on the one who is desolate."

DANIEL 10

Daniel's Fast and the Man in Linen

1 In year three of Cyrus (Koresh) king of Persia (Paras) a
word was revealed to Daniel (Daniyel), whose name was
called Belteshazzar (Belteshatsar); and the word ***was*** truth,
and a great war; and he understood the word, and under-
standing ***was*** to him in the appearance. **2** In those days I,
Daniel, was mourning three sevens of days. **3** I did not eat
food of desirable things, and flesh and wine did not come
into my mouth, and I did not anoint myself at all, until three
sevens of days were completed. **4** And on day twenty-four of
the first month, I was beside the great river, that ***is*** Tigris
(Chideqel). **5** And I lifted up my eyes and saw, and look, a cer-
tain man clothed ***in*** linen, and his loins ***were*** girded with gold

9:24 Rom 3:21; Matt 11:13; Luke 24:44
9:25 Matt 24:15; Mark 13:14; Luke 1:70
9:26 Luke 21:24; Luke 13:35; Luke 18:31
9:27 Matt 24:15; Luke 21:20; Mark 13:14
10:1 Rev 19:9; 1 Pet 1:12; Dan 1:21
10:2 Neh 1:4; Ezra 9:4,5; Ps 42:9
10:3 Dan 6:18; Matt 6:17; Isa 24:6-11
10:4 Gen 2:14; Dan 8:2; Ezek 1:3
10:5 Rev 1:13; Rev 15:6; Rev 1:14

9:24 *Seventy sevens have been decreed on your people and on your holy city* Sevens, often called weeks, are units of seven. Daniel was thinking of seventy years, and Gabriel answers with seventy sevens of years, 490 years, decreed for Daniel's people, the Jews, and his city, Jerusalem. Israel already knew seven-year periods from the sabbath year (Lev 25:1-7).
9:24 *to put an end to the transgression* Six goals follow: end Israel's rebellion, deal with sin, atone for iniquity, bring in everlasting righteousness, fulfill what the prophets foretold, and anoint a most holy place or one, which many see as the temple of the Messiah's kingdom. Atonement was paid in full at the cross (Heb 9:26). But Israel's transgression is not yet ended, and righteousness does not yet fill the earth. That is a main reason I believe the seventieth week is still future. All six will be complete when Christ returns and Israel turns to Him (Zech 12:10; Rom 11:26-27).
9:25 *until an anointed one, a prince* The clock starts with a word to rebuild Jerusalem. "Anointed one" is mashiach, Messiah, and I believe this is one of the clearest uses of the word for the coming King. Seven sevens and sixty-two sevens make 483 years. The first 49 years cover the rebuilding "in the distress of the times," as Ezra and Nehemiah show (Neh 4).
9:25 *from the going forth of the word to restore and to build Jerusalem* Two decrees of Artaxerxes are most often proposed. From Ezra's commission in 457 B.C. (Ezra 7:11-26), 483 years reach about A.D. 27, which many see as Jesus' baptism. From Nehemiah's in 445/444 B.C. (Neh 2:1-8), counted in 360-day prophetic years, they reach about A.D. 32 or 33, the triumphal entry and the cross. Faithful scholars hold both. Either way, Daniel in the sixth century B.C. foretold Messiah's coming in the early first century A.D., exactly when Jesus came.
9:26 *an anointed one will be cut off, and there will be nothing for him* "Cut off" is used for being put to death (Isa 53:8). I believe this is the Messiah, killed and not receiving the kingdom then. Jesus came to His own, and His own did not receive Him (John 1:11).
9:26 *the people of a prince who is coming will destroy the city and the sanctuary* Fulfilled in A.D. 70, when Rome under Titus burned Jerusalem and the temple. Not the prince but his people, the Romans, so the coming prince will rise from the Roman world, which fits the little horn from the fourth beast (7:8). War and desolation describe Jerusalem's long history since. Notice the sixty-nine weeks end, the Messiah dies, the city falls forty years later, and the seventieth week has not yet begun. There is a gap.
9:27 *he will make a covenant strong for the many for one seven* The nearest "he" is the coming prince of verse 26. I believe this is the Antichrist, the little horn and the beast, making a seven-year covenant with "the many," most likely Israel. In the middle he stops the sacrifices, so worship will be restored in Jerusalem (Rev 11:1-2; 2 Thess 2:4), and he breaks his word. The hard phrase about abominations points to the abomination of desolation Jesus placed just before the great tribulation and His coming (Matt 24:15-30). His end is already decreed (Rev 19:20).
9:27 *in the middle of the seven* Many interpreters believe "he" is the Messiah, whose death after about three and a half years of ministry ended the meaning of the sacrifices, with no gap and the week fulfilled in the first century. I respect that view. I hold the futurist reading because the nearest "he" is the coming prince, a broken covenant does not fit Christ's everlasting one, Jesus placed the abomination in the future, and the goals of 9:24 are not all fulfilled for Israel. A long gap is possible: Jesus stopped reading Isaiah 61 mid-sentence (Luke 4:16-21).
9:27 *for one seven* I hold the pre-tribulation view. The seventy weeks are decreed for Israel and Jerusalem (9:24), and I believe the church will be taken to Christ before the seventieth week begins (1 Thess 4:16-17; Rev 3:10). This week is the seven-year Tribulation of Revelation 6-19, and its last half matches 7:25 and Revelation 13:5. Others hold post-tribulation, mid-tribulation or pre-wrath views. This is a difference among believers, not a test of faith, and every believer is called to be ready (Eph 6:13).
10:1 *In year three of Cyrus king of Persia* About 536 B.C. The first exiles had already gone home under Cyrus' decree (Ezra 1:1-4). Daniel, now well into his eighties, stayed in Babylon, whether because of age or because God had more for him there. The message is "truth, and a great war": it will come true, and it is about war. This time, unlike 8:27, he understood. God gives prophecy so we can know and trust Him.
10:2 *I, Daniel, was mourning three sevens of days* Three full weeks. The text does not say why, but the returned exiles faced fierce opposition, and the temple work stalled (Ezra 4:4-5). Daniel's grief was not despair. It was the grief of a man who loved what God loves.
10:3 *I did not eat food of desirable things* A partial fast without meat, wine or oil for his skin. This verse and 1:12 are where the idea of a Daniel fast comes from. The dates show his fast ran through Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the days that remember God's rescue from Egypt. He was asking God to rescue His people again.
10:4 *I was beside the great river, that is Tigris* Not the Euphrates that ran through Babylon, so Daniel was away from the capital. God often meets His people in ordinary places, and faithfulness in the quiet place often comes before a great word from God.
10:5 *a certain man clothed in linen* Linen was priestly clothing (Lev 16:4), also worn by heavenly messengers (Ezek 9:2; Rev 15:6), and gold speaks of royalty and glory. Some believe he is Christ appearing before His birth. Others believe he is a mighty angel, possibly Gabriel (8:16; 9:21).

of Uphaz (Ufaz). **6** And his body ***was*** like topaz, and his face like the appearance of lightning, and his eyes like torches of fire, and his arms and his feet like the look of burnished bronze, and the sound of his words like the sound of a multitude. **7** And I, Daniel, by myself saw the vision, and the men who were with me did not see the vision; but a great trembling fell on them, and they fled to hide themselves. **8** And I was left by myself, and I saw this great vision, and no strength remained in me, and my splendor was changed in me into ruin, and I retained no strength. **9** And I heard the sound of his words; and as I heard the sound of his words, I was in a deep sleep on my face, and my face ***was*** toward the ground.

The Messenger Explains His Delay

10 And look, a hand touched me, and it set me trembling on my knees and the palms of my hands. **11** And he said to me, "O Daniel, man of preciousness, understand the words which I am speaking to you, and stand on your standing place, for now I have been sent to you." And when he spoke this word with me, I stood up trembling. **12** And he said to me, "Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you gave your heart to understand and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come because of your words. **13** And the prince of the kingdom of Persia was standing opposite me twenty-one days; and look, Michael (Mikha'el), one of the chief princes, came to help me, and I remained there beside the kings of Persia. **14** And I have come to make you understand what will happen to your people at the end of the days, for ***there is*** still a vision for the days."

Daniel Strengthened

15 And when he spoke with me according to these words, I set my face toward the ground, and I was mute. **16** And look, ***one*** like the likeness of the sons of man ***was*** touching my lips; and I opened my mouth and spoke, and I said to the one standing opposite me, "O my lord, by the vision my pangs have turned on me, and I have retained no strength. **17** And how is the servant of this my lord able to speak with this my lord? And I—from now no strength remains in me, and no breath is left in me." **18** And he again touched me, like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me. **19** And he said, "Do not fear, O man of preciousness; peace ***be*** to you; be strong, and be strong!" And when he spoke with me, I strengthened myself, and I said, "Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me." **20** And he said, "Do you know why I have come to you? And now I will return to fight with the prince of Persia; and I am going forth, and look, the prince of Greece (Yavan) is coming. **21** But I will tell you what is inscribed in ***the*** writing of truth; and there is not one who shows himself strong with me against these, except Michael your prince.

10:6 Rev 19:12; Luke 9:29; Rev 1:13
10:7 Acts 9:7; Acts 22:9; Ezek 12:18
10:8 Rev 1:17; Dan 7:28; Hab 3:16
10:9 Luke 9:32; Rev 1:17; Dan 8:18
10:10 Jer 1:9; Rev 1:17; Dan 8:18
10:11 Dan 8:16,17; John 13:23; John 21:20
10:12 Matt 24:15; Acts 10:31; Dan 10:19
10:13 Jude 1:9; Rev 12:7; Eph 6:12
10:14 Matt 24:15; Acts 2:17; Heb 1:2
10:15 Luke 1:20; Ezek 24:27; Dan 10:9
10:16 Dan 8:15; Isa 6:7; Jer 1:9
10:17 Exod 24:10,11; Isa 6:1-5; Matt 22:43,44
10:18 Isa 35:3,4; Dan 10:10,16; Dan 8:18
10:19 John 14:27; Isa 35:4; Judg 6:23
10:20 Dan 10:13; Isa 37:36; Acts 12:23
10:21 Jude 1:9; Rev 12:7; Dan 10:13

10:6 *his eyes like torches of fire* The match with the glorified Jesus in Revelation 1:13-17 is very close: eyes of fire, feet like burnished bronze, a mighty voice, and a man falling as if dead. So I lean toward seeing this man as the Son of God before His birth, but I hold it loosely. The one who speaks from verse 10 on was held back and needed Michael's help (10:13), which is hard to picture of the Son. Many teachers, and I agree, see two figures here: the glorious man (Christ) and an angelic messenger (likely Gabriel). Others see one angel throughout.

10:7 *the men who were with me did not see the vision* Like Paul's companions on the Damascus road (Acts 9:7). God can reveal Himself to one person while those beside him sense only that something holy is happening.

10:8 *no strength remained in me* Not weak faith but the normal response to heavenly glory (Isa 6:5; Rev 1:17). We sometimes speak of God casually, as if He were a buddy. A right view of God always humbles us.

10:10 *a hand touched me* God lifts His servant step by step: to hands and knees here, to his feet in verse 11, to full strength in verse 19. He rarely takes us from the floor to full strength in one moment.

10:11 *O Daniel, man of preciousness* Greatly beloved (9:23). God's messenger calls an old man in exile one whom heaven treasures. Daniel stood up trembling. He obeyed while still shaking, a good picture of real faith.

10:12 *from the first day that you gave your heart to understand and to humble yourself* One of the most encouraging verses in Daniel. He set his heart to understand and humbled himself, and God heard on day one. A delay in the answer is not a delay in God hearing. If you have prayed for weeks or years, God heard you the first time.

10:13 *the prince of the kingdom of Persia was standing opposite me twenty-one days* No human king could block a messenger from heaven. I believe with most teachers this is a fallen angel, a demonic power working through the Persian Empire. Our struggle is against spiritual forces of wickedness (Eph 6:12), and Daniel 10 shows what that looks like.

10:13 *Michael, one of the chief princes* The only angel the Bible calls an archangel (Jude 9), the great prince who guards Israel (12:1) and fights the dragon (Rev 12:7). The Bible does not give a full map of the spirit world, and we should not build one from imagination. We learn enough: the battle is real, prayer matters in it, and God's side wins.

10:14 *what will happen to your people at the end of the days* A key to chapters 11-12. The vision is about Israel. Much of it was fulfilled in the centuries after Daniel in amazing detail, but it runs on to the Antichrist, the great tribulation and the resurrection, with a clear shift at 11:36.

10:16 *one like the likeness of the sons of man was touching my lips* Like Isaiah's lips touched by the coal and Jeremiah's mouth touched by the LORD (Isa 6:6-7; Jer 1:9). When God calls someone to receive or speak His word, He prepares their mouth. Daniel did not put on a brave face before heaven, and we do not have to either.

10:19 *be strong, and be strong* The strength came through the word as much as the touch. When we are weak and afraid, God still strengthens us through His Word, as He told Joshua to be strong and courageous (Josh 1:9).

10:20 *the prince of Greece is coming* Persia, then Greece, just as in 2:39 and 8:20-21. Behind each empire is a spiritual battle. When Persia fell to Alexander two centuries later, heaven was involved, as 2:21 says.

10:21 *what is inscribed in the writing of truth* God's plan for history, settled before it happens. Nothing in chapter 11 surprises God. Israel has a guardian in heaven, Michael, which sets up the promise of 12:1.

DANIEL 11

From Persia to Alexander the Great

1 And I, in year one of Darius (Daryavesh) the Mede, my standing ***was*** as a strengthener and as a stronghold for him. **2** And now I will tell you truth: look, three more kings will arise for Persia (Paras), and the fourth will gain great wealth, more than all; and according to his strength, by his wealth, he will rouse all ***against*** the kingdom of Greece (Yavan). **3** And a mighty king will arise, and he will rule a great dominion, and he will do according to his pleasure. **4** And as he arises, his kingdom will be broken and divided to the four winds of the heavens, and not to his posterity, and not according to his dominion with which he ruled; for his kingdom will be uprooted, and ***it will go*** to others besides these.

The Kings of the North and the South

5 And the king of the south will become strong, and one of his princes; and he will become strong over him and rule; his dominion ***will be*** a great dominion. **6** And at the end of years they will join together; and the daughter of the king of the south will come to the king of the north to make an agreement; and she will not retain the strength of the arm, and he will not stand, nor his arm; and she will be given up, she and those who brought her, and the one who fathered her, and the one who strengthened her in the times. **7** And ***one*** from a shoot of her roots will arise ***in*** his place, and he will come against the army and enter the stronghold of the king of the north, and he will act against them and prevail. **8** And also their gods with their molten images, with their vessels of desire, silver and gold, he will bring into captivity ***to*** Egypt (Mitsrayim); and for years he will stand away from the king of the north. **9** And he will come into the kingdom of the king of the south, and he will return to his own ground. **10** And his sons will stir themselves up and gather a multitude of great armies; and he will surely come and overflow and pass through; and he will again stir himself up, up to his stronghold. **11** And the king of the south will be enraged, and he will go out and fight with him, with the king of the north; and he will raise up a great multitude, and the multitude will be given into his hand. **12** And the multitude will be carried away, and his heart will be lifted up; and he will cause tens of thousands to fall, and he will not prevail. **13** And the king of the north will again raise up a multitude greater than the first; and at the end of the times, years, he will surely come with a great army and with much property. **14** And in those times many will arise against the king of the south; and the sons of the violent ones of your people will lift themselves up to fulfill ***the*** vision, and they will stumble. **15** And the king of the north will come and pour out a siege mound and capture a city of fortifications; and the arms of the south will not stand, and the people of his choice ones, and ***there will be*** no strength to stand. **16** And the one who comes against him will do according to his pleasure, and ***there will be*** no one standing before him; and he will stand in the land of the beauty, and complete destruction ***will be*** in his hand. **17** And

11:1 Dan 5:31; Dan 9:1; Dan 10:18
11:2 Dan 8:26; Dan 10:1,21; Ezra 4:5,6
11:3 Heb 2:4; Dan 11:16,36; Dan 7:6
11:4 Dan 8:8,22; Dan 7:8; Jer 12:15,17
11:5 Dan 11:8,9,11,14,25,40; Dan 11:3,4
11:6 Dan 11:13; Ezek 38:8,9; Job 38:15
11:7 Job 14:7; Isa 9:14; Isa 11:1
11:8 Isa 37:19; Isa 46:1,2; Jer 43:12,13
11:10 Dan 9:26; Jer 46:7,8; Jer 51:42
11:11 Dan 8:7; Dan 11:5,9; Dan 11:44
11:12 Dan 5:19,20,23; Dan 8:25; Deut 8:14
11:13 Dan 4:16; Dan 12:7; Dan 11:6,7
11:14 Acts 4:26; Acts 4:25-28; Rev 17:17
11:15 Jer 6:6; Ezek 17:17; Jer 5:10
11:16 Dan 8:9; Dan 11:3,36; Dan 11:41,45
11:17 Luke 9:51; 2 Kgs 12:17; Ezek 4:3,7

11:1 *in year one of Darius the Mede* This finishes the messenger's words from chapter 10. Chapter breaks were added much later. In 539 B.C. he stood to strengthen "him," either Darius, whom God moved to treat the Jews kindly, or Michael (10:21). Either way, heaven was at work behind the change of empires that let the Jews go home.

11:2 *three more kings will arise for Persia, and the fourth will gain great wealth* Most teachers name Cambyses, the false Smerdis, an impostor who briefly took the throne, and Darius I, and then the rich Xerxes I (486 to 465 B.C.), whom many identify with Ahasuerus of Esther. He invaded Greece in 480 B.C. and lost. Later Persian kings are skipped because that invasion is the thread to what follows. About 150 years later a Greek king came east to settle the score.

11:3 *a mighty king will arise* Alexander the Great, the four-winged leopard (7:6) and the charging goat (8:5-8, 21), who crushed Persia from 334 B.C. on and did as he pleased.

11:4 *his kingdom will be broken and divided to the four winds of the heavens, and not to his posterity* Alexander died in 323 B.C., and his half-brother and young son, his heirs, were murdered within fourteen years. Four kingdoms emerged (8:8, 22). From here the prophecy follows only the two that bordered Israel: Ptolemy's Egypt to the south and Seleucus' kingdom to the north.

11:5 *the king of the south will become strong, and one of his princes* Ptolemy I of Egypt, and Seleucus I, who for a time served as his general, then regained Babylon in 312 B.C. and built a larger realm reaching toward India. North and south are directions from Israel. The whole map is drawn with Jerusalem at the center (10:14).

11:6 *the daughter of the king of the south will come to the king of the north* About 252 B.C. Ptolemy II gave his daughter Berenice to the Seleucid Antiochus II, who put away his wife Laodice. He later went back to Laodice and died in 246 B.C., poisoned by her, ancient writers say. Berenice, her baby son and her attendants were murdered, and her father died that same year, just as the verse says.

11:7 *one from a shoot of her roots will arise in his place* Her brother Ptolemy III, king in 246 B.C., marched north to avenge her and won great victories. Ancient sources say he had Laodice put to death.

11:8 *their gods with their molten images* He carried home great plunder, including sacred images Persia had taken from Egypt long before, and Egypt named him Euergetes, Benefactor.

11:10 *his sons will stir themselves up* Seleucus III reigned briefly and was murdered. His brother Antiochus III, called the Great, took the throne in 223 B.C. and swept south through Syria and Israel toward Egypt.

11:12 *his heart will be lifted up* Ptolemy IV beat Antiochus at Raphia near Gaza in 217 B.C., but in pride made peace and went back to a life of ease. Pride often wastes a victory. The moment we think we have won, we stop depending on God.

11:14 *the sons of the violent ones of your people will lift themselves up to fulfill the vision* Philip V of Macedon joined Antiochus, and Egypt had unrest inside. These Jews likely sided with Antiochus, perhaps thinking they were helping God's plan along. God's plans do not need our violence, and they fell.

11:15 *capture a city of fortifications* Antiochus beat the Egyptian general Scopas at Panium near the sources of the Jordan about 200 B.C., then besieged him in Sidon until he surrendered.

11:16 *he will stand in the land of the beauty* About 198 B.C. Israel came under Seleucid rule. When giants fight, the small land in the middle pays the price.

11:17 *he will give him the daughter of women* Antiochus gave his daughter Cleopatra I, not the later famous Cleopatra, to Ptolemy V about 193 B.C. to control Egypt from inside. She sided with her husband. Clever plans cannot get around what God has written.

he will set his face to come with the power of all his kingdom, and upright ***terms*** with him, and he will act; and he will give him the daughter of women, to destroy it; and it will not stand, and it will not be for him. **18** And he will set his face to the coastlands and capture many; and a commander will put an end to his reproach for him; except ***that*** he will turn his reproach back on him. **19** And he will turn his face to the strongholds of his own land, and he will stumble and fall, and he will not be found. **20** And ***one*** will arise in his place who sends an oppressor through the splendor of a kingdom; and within a few days he will be broken, and not in anger and not in battle.

The Despised One

21 And a despised one will arise in his place, and they had not given to him the splendor of ***the*** kingdom; and he will come in quietness and seize ***the*** kingdom by intrigues. **22** And the arms of the flood will be swept away from before him and be broken, and also a prince of a covenant. **23** And from ***their*** joining together with him he will practice deceit, and he will rise up and become mighty with a small nation. **24** In quietness, and into the rich places of the province, he will come, and he will do what his fathers did not do, nor the fathers of his fathers: plunder and spoil and property he will scatter to them; and against fortifications he will plot his plots, and until a time. **25** And he will rouse his strength and his heart against the king of the south with a great army; and the king of the south will stir himself up for the battle with a great and exceedingly mighty army; and he will not stand, for they will plot plots against him. **26** And those who eat his delicacies will break him, and his army will overflow, and many slain will fall. **27** And the two of them, the kings—their heart ***will be*** for evil, and at one table they will speak falsehood; and it will not succeed, for the end ***is*** still for the appointed time. **28** And he will return ***to*** his own land with great property, and his heart ***will be*** against the holy covenant; and he will act, and return to his own land. **29** At the appointed time he will return and come into the south; and it will not be as the first and as the last. **30** And ships of Cyprus (Kiti) will come against him, and he will lose heart and turn back, and he will be indignant against the holy covenant, and he will act; and he will turn back and pay attention to those who forsake the holy covenant. **31** And arms from him will arise, and they will profane the sanctuary, the stronghold, and they will remove the continual ***offering***, and they will set up the abomination that makes desolate. **32** And those who act wickedly ***against*** the
covenant he will pollute with flatteries; and the people who know their God will show strength and act. **33** And those of the people who have insight will give understanding to the many; and they will stumble by sword and by flame, by cap-

11:18 Hos 12:14; Jer 2:10; Jer 31:10
11:19 Ps 37:36; Ezek 26:21; Job 20:8
11:20 Dan 11:7,21; Deut 15:2,3; 2 Kgs 23:35
11:21 Dan 11:7,20; Dan 7:8; Dan 8:9,23,25
11:22 Dan 11:10; Dan 9:26; Dan 8:10,11,25
11:23 Dan 8:25; Gen 34:13; Ps 52:2
11:24 Judg 9:4; Prov 17:8; Prov 19:6
11:25 Dan 11:2,10; Prov 15:18; Prov 28:25
11:26 John 13:18; Dan 11:10,22; 2 Sam 4:2-12
11:27 Ps 12:2; Ps 64:6; Hab 2:3
11:28 Dan 11:22,30-32; Dan 8:24; Acts 3:25
11:29 Dan 8:19; Dan 10:1; Isa 14:31
11:30 Gen 10:4; Num 24:24; Isa 23:1,12
11:31 Matt 24:15; Mark 13:14; Dan 12:11
11:32 Mic 5:7-9; Zech 9:13-16; Prov 19:5
11:33 Matt 20:23; Heb 11:36; Rev 2:13

11:18 *a commander will put an end to his reproach for him* Antiochus turned to the coastlands of Asia Minor and Greece, but the Roman Lucius Cornelius Scipio beat him at Magnesia in 190 B.C. Rome forced huge payments and took hostages, among them his son, the future Antiochus IV. Rome, the fourth kingdom, is quietly moving onto the stage.

11:19 *he will stumble and fall, and he will not be found* Short of money for Rome, Antiochus III was killed in 187 B.C. trying to rob a temple in Elymais. "The Great" fell and was found no more.

11:20 *one will arise in his place who sends an oppressor* Seleucus IV sent his official Heliodorus to take treasure from the Jerusalem temple, as 2 Maccabees 3 tells. He died suddenly in 175 B.C., "not in anger and not in battle," most likely murdered by Heliodorus.

11:21 *a despised one will arise in his place* Antiochus IV, who called himself Epiphanes, God manifest. Some mocked him as Epimanes, the madman. The rightful heir Demetrius was a hostage in Rome, and Antiochus took the throne by flattery and scheming. I believe he is the little horn of 8:9-12, 23-25, and a preview of the Antichrist, who will rise the same way, by intrigue and a promise of peace.

11:22 *also a prince of a covenant* Most likely the godly high priest Onias III, whom Antiochus removed in 175 B.C., selling the office to his brother Jason. Onias was murdered about 171 B.C. Some think of Ptolemy VI, who had a treaty with Antiochus, but this chapter uses "covenant" for God's covenant with Israel (11:28, 30, 32).

11:23 *he will practice deceit* He made and broke alliances at will. Even the high priesthood went to the highest bidder, as Menelaus soon outbid Jason (2 Maccabees 4:23-24).

11:24 *and until a time* He handed out plunder lavishly to buy loyalty (1 Maccabees 3:30). "Until a time" comes up again and again in this chapter. Evil men make big plans, but God sets the clock.

11:25 *he will rouse his strength and his heart against the king of the south* About 170-169 B.C. Antiochus invaded Egypt, ruled by his nephew Ptolemy VI, whose large army did not stand because of plots against him.

11:26 *those who eat his delicacies will break him* His own advisers, who ate at his table, betrayed him. Betrayal by those closest is one of the deepest wounds, and Jesus knew it too (John 13:18).

11:27 *at one table they will speak falsehood* Uncle and nephew each pretended friendship and lied. Neither plan worked, "for the end is still for the appointed time."

11:28 *his heart will be against the holy covenant* Coming home from Egypt in 169 B.C., he stripped the temple of the golden altar, the lampstand and other vessels (1 Maccabees 1:20-24).

11:30 *ships of Cyprus will come against him* The Hebrew is Kittim, first Cyprus, then the western lands across the sea, here Rome. In 168 B.C. the Roman envoy Popillius Laenas met him near Alexandria with the Senate's order to leave Egypt, drew a circle in the sand around him, and demanded an answer before he stepped out. Antiochus gave in. Humiliated, he turned his rage on Jerusalem in 167 B.C. and favored Jews who abandoned God's Law for Greek ways.

11:31 *the abomination that makes desolate* The darkest moment of the chapter. He outlawed Sabbath and circumcision, stopped the daily offering, ordered unclean sacrifices, and in December 167 B.C. set a pagan altar on God's altar and dedicated the temple to Zeus (1 Maccabees 1:44-54; 2 Maccabees 6:2). Two centuries later Jesus still spoke of the abomination as future (Matt 24:15). Antiochus fulfilled this verse but did not use it up. It previews what the Antichrist will do in the middle of the seventieth week (9:27; 12:11; 2 Thess 2:3-4).

11:32 *the people who know their God will show strength and act* The old priest Mattathias of Modein refused to sacrifice and fled to the hills, and his son Judas Maccabeus, the Hammer, led a revolt. In December 164 B.C. they cleansed and rededicated the temple, remembered at Hanukkah, the Feast of Dedication (John 10:22). One of my favorite verses in Daniel. Those who really know God, not just know about Him, are the ones who stand, and that strength is built in the ordinary days before.

11:33 *they will stumble by sword and by flame* Many faithful Jews chose death rather than break God's Law (2 Maccabees 6-7), and Hebrews seems to have such people in mind (Heb 11:35-38). Faithfulness did not spare them suffering. God sometimes rescues His people out of trouble and sometimes keeps them faithful through it. Both are His care.

tivity and by plunder, ***for*** days. **34** And when they stumble they will be helped ***with*** a little help; and many will join themselves to them with intrigues. **35** And some of those who have insight will stumble, to refine among them, and to purge, and to make white, until the time of ***the*** end; for ***it is*** still for the appointed time.

The King Who Exalts Himself

36 And the king will do according to his pleasure, and he will exalt himself and magnify himself above every god; and against the God of gods he will speak extraordinary things; and he will succeed until ***the*** indignation has been completed; for what has been decreed will be done. **37** And to the gods of his fathers he will not pay attention, and to the desire of women, and to any god he will not pay attention; for above all he will magnify himself. **38** And to a god of strongholds in his place he will give honor; and to a god whom his fathers did not know he will give honor with gold and with silver and with costly stone and with precious things. **39** And he will act against the fortifications of strongholds with a foreign god; whoever acknowledges ***him***, he will increase glory ***to him***, and he will make them rule over the many, and he will divide ground for a price. **40** And at the time of ***the*** end the king of the south will push against him, and the king of the north will storm against him with chariotry and with horsemen and with many ships; and he will come into lands and overflow and pass through. **41** And he will come into the land of the beauty, and many will stumble; and these will escape from his hand: Edom and Moab (Mo'av) and the chief of the sons of Ammon (Amon). **42** And he will stretch out his hand against lands, and the land of Egypt will not become an escape. **43** And he will rule over the treasures of the gold and the silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt; and Libyans and Cushites ***will be*** at his steps. **44** And reports from the east and from the north will dismay him; and he will go out in great rage to destroy and to devote many to destruction. **45** And he will plant the tents of his palace between ***the*** seas and the holy mountain of beauty; and he will come to his end, and ***there will be*** no helper for him.

DANIEL 12

Michael Arises and the Dead Awake

1 And at that time Michael (Mikha'el) will arise, the great prince who stands over the sons of your people; and there will be a time of distress such as has not been since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people will

11:34 2 Pet 2:1; 2 Pet 2:2; Matt 7:15
11:35 1 Pet 1:6; Matt 26:71; Matt 26:73
11:36 2 Thess 2:4; Rev 13:5-6; 2 Thess 2:3
11:37 Gen 3:16; Deut 5:21; Deut 21:11
11:38 1 Tim 4:1; Rev 13:12-17; Rev 17:1-5
11:39 Rev 18:9
11:40 Rev 19:19; Dan 11:35; Isa 5:28
11:41 Jer 48:47; Jer 49:6; Dan 11:45
11:42 Rev 11:8; Ezek 29:14; Zech 10:10,11
11:43 Acts 2:10; Jer 46:9,10; Exod 11:8
11:44 Rev 16:12; Rev 11:18; Dan 11:11,30
11:45 2 Thess 2:8; Rev 19:19; Rev 11:18
12:1 Matt 24:21; Mark 13:19; Rev 12:7

11:34 *they will be helped with a little help* Most likely the Maccabean revolt, real help but not the final rescue. As it succeeded, many joined for the wrong reasons. Every movement of God attracts some whose hearts are not in it.
11:35 *to refine among them, and to purge, and to make white, until the time of the end* Suffering in God's hands burns away what is false, like gold in a fire (1 Pet 1:6-7). "Until the time of the end" is the hinge of the chapter. The prophecy is about to leave Antiochus and look ahead.
11:36 *he will exalt himself and magnify himself above every god* I believe the prophecy now jumps to the future Antichrist. The setting is "the time of the end" (11:40), followed by a distress like none before and the resurrection (12:1-2), none of which happened in 164 B.C. Antiochus still worshiped Zeus, and verses 40-45 do not fit his life or death. And Scripture describes this king elsewhere (7:8, 25; 2 Thess 2:4; Rev 13:5-6). A near fulfillment becomes a picture of a far one, as in Isaiah 61:1-2 (Luke 4:18-21). His time is limited (7:25; 12:7).
11:37 *the desire of women* Debated. Some see the Messiah, the hope of every Jewish mother since Genesis 3:15, held in contempt by this ruler, which fits verse 36. Others see no regard for love, marriage or normal human ties, not from holiness but from a hunger for power. I lean toward the first, but hold it humbly. His only true love is himself.
11:38 *a god of strongholds* I take this to mean military power itself. He pours treasure into strength and war, and the world asks, who can make war with him (Rev 13:4)? His real faith is in force.
11:39 *he will divide ground for a price* Loyalty bought with power and land, much as no one can buy or sell without the beast's mark (Rev 13:16-17).
11:40 *at the time of the end the king of the south will push against him* Teachers differ on these last-days kings. Some see the Antichrist himself as the final king of the north. Others, and I lean this way, see him as a separate ruler attacked from south and north who defeats both. I would not pin these on particular modern nations. Many confident guesses have come and gone. The last days will be days of war, and the Antichrist will come out on top for a time.
11:41 *Edom and Moab and the chief of the sons of Ammon* Peoples east of the Jordan and the Dead Sea, in today's Jordan. Why they escape the text does not say. Some suggest a place of refuge, perhaps tied to the woman who flees to the wilderness (Rev 12:6, 14). That is possible, but it is a guess.
11:42 *the land of Egypt will not become an escape* Egypt was often the great southern power against the north. In the end it falls.
11:43 *Libyans and Cushites will be at his steps* Cush was the land south of Egypt. To follow at his steps means to submit or join him. His power looks unstoppable.
11:44 *reports from the east and from the north will dismay him* We are not told what they are. Some connect them with the kings from the east as the nations gather for Armageddon (Rev 16:12-16). That fits the timing, though Daniel does not spell it out.
11:45 *between the seas and the holy mountain of beauty* In the land of Israel, between the Mediterranean and Mount Zion. The nations gather against Jerusalem in the last day (Zech 14:2).
11:45 *he will come to his end, and there will be no helper for him* Daniel does not even describe the battle. The Lord Jesus will slay him with the breath of His mouth at His coming (2 Thess 2:8), and the beast will be thrown alive into the lake of fire (Rev 19:19-20). The man who magnified himself above every god meets the God of gods, and it is not a contest.
12:1 *at that time Michael will arise, the great prince who stands over the sons of your people* "At that time" ties this to the end of chapter 11, the days of the Antichrist in the second half of the seventieth week (9:27). Michael is Israel's prince (10:13, 21). In Revelation he throws the dragon down, and the dragon turns in fury on the woman and her children (Rev 12:7-17). I believe these describe the same moment from two sides.
12:1 *a time of distress such as has not been since there was a nation until that time* Jesus used nearly the same words for the great tribulation and tied it to the abomination of desolation (Matt 24:15, 21), as Daniel does in verse 11. This is the last half of the seven-year Tribulation.
12:1 *everyone who is found written in the scroll* The book of life (Phil 4:3; Rev 20:15). I hold the pre-tribulation view: the church is taken to Christ before this time begins. This verse speaks first of Daniel's people, Israel, with all who come to faith in the Tribulation. God keeps them through it and rescues them when Christ returns and gathers His elect (Matt 24:29-31; Dan 7:21-22). Others hold mid-tribulation, pre-wrath or post-tribulation views. Whatever your view, no one written in the scroll will be lost.

escape, everyone who is found written in the scroll. **2** And many of those who sleep in the ground of dust will awake, these to everlasting life, and these to reproaches, to everlasting abhorrence. **3** And those who have insight will shine like the brightness of the expanse, and those who make the many righteous like the stars forever and ever. **4** And you, O Daniel (Daniyel), shut up the words and seal the scroll until the time of ***the*** end; many will rove about, and knowledge will increase."

How Long Until the End?

5 And I, Daniel, saw, and look, two others ***were*** standing, one on this side at the bank of the stream, and one on that side at the bank of the stream. **6** And ***one*** said to the man clothed ***in*** linen, who ***was*** above the waters of the stream, "Until when ***is*** the end of the wonders?" **7** And I heard the man clothed ***in*** linen, who ***was*** above the waters of the stream, and he raised his right ***hand*** and his left ***hand*** to the heavens and swore by the One who lives forever that ***it will be*** for an appointed time, appointed times, and a half; and as the shattering of the hand of the holy people is finished, all these ***things*** will be finished. **8** And I heard, and I did not understand; and I said, "O my lord, what ***will be*** the latter end of these ***things***?" **9** And he said, "Go, Daniel, for the words ***are*** shut up and sealed until the time of ***the*** end. **10** Many will purge themselves and make themselves white and be refined; and the wicked will act wickedly, and none of the wicked will understand; and those who have insight will understand. **11** And from ***the*** time ***that*** the continual ***offering*** is removed and the abomination that makes desolate is set up, ***there will be*** one thousand two hundred and ninety days. **12** How blessed ***is*** the one who waits and reaches one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days. **13** And you, go to the end; and you will rest, and you will stand for your allotted portion at the end of the days."

12:2 John 5:28-29; Matt 25:46; Acts 24:15
12:3 Matt 13:43; Dan 11:33,35; Prov 4:18
12:4 Rev 22:10; Rev 10:4; Rev 5:1
12:5 Rev 5:1; Rev 14:1; Dan 10:4
12:6 1 Pet 1:12; Rev 6:10; Rev 19:14
12:7 Rev 10:5-7; Rev 12:14; Luke 21:24
12:8 Luke 18:34; John 12:16; 1 Pet 1:11
12:9 1 Pet 1:12; Rev 22:10; Dan 12:4
12:10 Rev 22:11; Dan 11:35; Hos 14:9
12:11 Matt 24:15; Mark 13:14; Rev 11:2
12:12 Rev 1:3; Rev 20:6; Rev 22:14
12:13 Rev 14:13; Zech 3:7; Luke 2:29,30

12:2 *many of those who sleep in the ground of dust will awake* One of the clearest statements of resurrection in the Old Testament (Isa 26:19; Job 19:25-27). Death is called sleep because for God it is not the end. Jesus taught the same two outcomes (John 5:28-29). Both are everlasting, and there is no second chance after death (Heb 9:27). "Many" likely means the great multitude of the dead, or focuses on Daniel's people then. Either way, Scripture shows all will be raised.

12:2 *these to everlasting life, and these to reproaches, to everlasting abhorrence* Daniel names both in one breath, but the New Testament shows more. Believers who have died are raised when Christ comes for His church (1 Thess 4:16), Tribulation martyrs when He returns to reign a thousand years (Rev 20:4-6), and the rest of the dead after the thousand years at the great white throne (Rev 20:11-15). This is the premillennial view I hold. Prophets often saw peaks that look close together from far off, with a valley between them seen only later.

12:3 *those who make the many righteous like the stars forever and ever* The wise of 11:33, 35, who taught others and stood firm. The world may forget them, and some died for their faith, but God will make them shine forever (Matt 13:43). You do not have to be a preacher. A parent teaching a child, a friend sharing the gospel, a believer quietly faithful at work: this verse is about them.

12:4 *shut up the words and seal the scroll until the time of the end* Sealing kept an important document safe and unchanged until the right time. Its full meaning would open as the end drew near. John was told the opposite, because by then the time was near (Rev 22:10).

12:4 *many will rove about, and knowledge will increase* Some see modern travel and the explosion of knowledge. Others, and I lean this way, see people searching back and forth through the Scriptures, with understanding of this prophecy growing as the end nears (compare Amos 8:12). Both may be true, but the second fits a sealed book whose meaning opens over time.

12:5 *two others were standing* One on each bank of the Tigris (10:4). The Law required two witnesses (Deut 19:15), and these may stand as witnesses to the oath of verse 7.

12:6 *Until when is the end of the wonders* The question every suffering believer asks, like the souls under the altar (Rev 6:10). The man in linen is the glorious figure of 10:5-6, whom I lean toward seeing as Christ before His birth, though some see a mighty angel. He stands above the river with authority over it.

12:7 *he raised his right hand and his left hand to the heavens* One raised hand made an oath. Both hands make it doubly solemn, like the angel who swears by Him who lives forever (Rev 10:5-6).

12:7 *an appointed time, appointed times, and a half* Three and a half years, the same as 7:25, forty-two months and 1,260 days (Rev 11:2-3; 12:6; 13:5), the second half of the seventieth week (9:27). "The hand" means power. Israel will come to the end of its own strength and then turn to the One they pierced (Zech 12:10), and all Israel will be saved (Rom 11:26). Sometimes God lets us reach the end of our strength so we will finally lean on His.

12:8 *I heard, and I did not understand* One of the greatest prophets who ever lived did not understand everything God showed him. If Daniel could say so, so can we. Holding some things humbly is not a lack of faith. It is honesty before God.

12:10 *Many will purge themselves and make themselves white and be refined* The same fire that purifies gold burns up straw. The Tribulation will make the righteous more righteous and the wicked more wicked (Rev 22:11). God gave Daniel and Revelation so that believers in those days will recognize the times and not be deceived (Matt 24:24-25).

12:11 *one thousand two hundred and ninety days* Thirty days more than the 1,260. This ties the abomination to the end, as Jesus did (Matt 24:15), though it had a preview under Antiochus (11:31). I expect a temple and sacrifices in Jerusalem before the end, stopped by the Antichrist at the midpoint (2 Thess 2:4; Rev 11:1-2). Scripture does not explain the thirty days. One common view is that they cover events right after Christ returns, such as cleansing the temple or judging the nations (Matt 25:31-46). Others think the count simply begins a little earlier.

12:12 *Blessed is the one who waits* Forty-five more days. Many believe the 1,335 days mark the full start of Christ's thousand-year kingdom, and the blessing is entering it. Others see the end of a time of restoration. Some apply these numbers to Antiochus, but his dates do not line up, and the day-for-a-year approach does not read prophecy plainly. The numbers help God's people know the season and endure it, not set a date (Matt 25:13). The one who endures to the end will be saved (Matt 24:13).

12:13 *you will rest, and you will stand for your allotted portion at the end of the days* The last verse is a personal word to Daniel. He served God about seventy years in a foreign land under four kings and two empires and never saw Jerusalem again. He would die, but his reward was secure, and he will rise at the end of the age. If you belong to God, you can go your way in peace, rest when your time comes, and rise to your inheritance. Daniel's story does not end in a grave, and neither does yours.

HOSEA

Introduction

Title

The book is named for its prophet, Hosea son of Beeri. His name means salvation, from the same Hebrew root as Joshua and Jesus. Hosea is the first of the twelve Minor Prophets, called minor because their books are shorter, not because their message matters less. In the Hebrew Bible the twelve were kept together on one scroll, called the Book of the Twelve.

Author and Date

The book opens with "The word of the LORD which came to Hosea son of Beeri" (1:1), and Jewish and Christian tradition have always held that Hosea wrote it or that his messages were written down under his direction. Some modern scholars think later editors added the verses about Judah or about future hope. I take the book at its word. It names Hosea, speaks in his voice in chapters 1 and 3, and its hope is woven into every part, not tacked on at the end.

Hosea dates his ministry by Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah of Judah and by Jeroboam II of Israel (1:1). Using Thiele's dates, which this series follows, Jeroboam II reigned about 793 to 753 B.C. and Hezekiah began about 715 B.C. So Hosea served from about 755 B.C. to about 710 B.C., some forty years. He preached before the fall of Samaria in 722 B.C. and most likely lived to see it.

Background and Setting

Hosea preached to Israel, the northern kingdom, in its last years. He often calls it Ephraim, after its largest tribe, or Samaria, after its capital. He also warns Judah not to follow Israel's sins (4:15). Hosea is the only writing prophet who came from the north and preached mainly to it.

When he began, Israel had never been richer. Jeroboam II had won back land (2 Kgs 14:25-28), trade was good, and the wealthy built fine houses. But the wealth was built on cheating the poor, and the people gave the credit for their grain and wine to Baal, the Canaanite god of rain and harvest (2:8). Worship went on at Bethel, Gilgal and the high places, with golden calves and sacred prostitution. After Jeroboam died, the kingdom fell apart: six kings in about twenty-five years, four of them murdered. Menahem paid tribute to Assyria, Pekah lost Galilee and Gilead about 732 B.C., and Hoshea turned to Egypt, until Assyria besieged Samaria for three years and it fell in 722 B.C. (2 Kgs 15-17).

God told Hosea to live out his message in his own home. He married Gomer, and she was unfaithful. He gave their children names that were sermons. When she had fallen so low that she had to be bought, God told him to love her again, and he paid the price to bring her home (3:1-2).

Themes

The theme of Hosea is God's faithful love for an unfaithful people. Israel had been joined to the LORD by covenant like a bride to her husband, and she ran after Baal like an unfaithful wife after lovers. Hosea names the sin plainly: lying, murder, drunkenness, idol worship, priests who do not teach, and kings who trust Assyria and Egypt instead of God. Judgment is coming, and it will be terrible. Yet again and again the book turns from judgment to hope, and it ends with God's call to come home: "I will heal their apostasy; I will love them freely" (14:4).

A few Hebrew words carry the book. Hesed is steadfast love, loyal covenant love that keeps its promises (4:1; 6:6). The knowledge of God means knowing Him personally and living in His ways (4:6). Prostitution and adultery are Hosea's words for idol worship. And shuv, return, is the word for turning back to God in repentance (6:1; 14:1).

Hosea also looks far ahead. After many days without a king or sacrifice (3:4), Israel will return to the LORD and to David their king "at the end of the days" (3:5). God has not given up on Israel, and the notes read these promises as still future for the nation, while every believer may taste the mercy they show.

Christ in Hosea

Matthew says that when Jesus came back from Egypt after Herod's death, it fulfilled the word "out of Egypt I called My son" (11:1; Matt 2:15). Jesus is the true Son who filled Israel's story to the full and obeyed where Israel failed. Jesus twice quoted "steadfast love I desire, and not sacrifice" to the Pharisees (6:6; Matt 9:13; 12:7). Paul and Peter use Hosea's words about Not My People becoming My people for God's mercy to the Gentiles (1:10; 2:23; Rom 9:25-26; 1 Pet 2:10). Paul takes up 13:14 in his chapter on the resurrection, where Christ has won the victory over death (1 Cor 15:55). "David their king" (3:5) is the Messiah, the Son of David. Many teachers also see Hosea buying back his wife as a picture of Christ redeeming His people. The New Testament does not name it as such, so I hold it as a picture.

Hard Passages

What did God mean by "a wife of prostitutions" (1:2)? Some believe Gomer was already immoral, others that she became unfaithful later and Hosea wrote looking back, and others that she came from a people given to idolatry. A few take the account as a vision, which the text does not support. The notes give the views and make God's faithful love the point.

Is the woman in chapter 3 Gomer? Most teachers, and this study, say yes. The notes name the other readings.

How can God punish the house of Jehu for the bloodshed God had commanded (1:4)? Jehu went beyond the command for his own power and did not walk in God's law (2 Kgs 10:30-31).

How does Matthew use 11:1? The notes explain that he shows Jesus filling up the pattern of Israel's exodus, not twisting the text.

What of the hard words about children and war (9:14, 16; 13:16)? They describe the horrors of the Assyrian conquest honestly, so that sin would be taken seriously. God does not approve cruelty, and He judged Assyria for it.

Is 13:14 a threat or a promise? The notes give both readings and show how Paul uses it for the resurrection.

Outline

I. Hosea's Marriage, a Picture of God and Israel (1:1-3:5)
  A. Hosea's wife and children (1:1-11)
  B. The unfaithful wife and the faithful Husband (2:1-23)
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II. Israel's Unfaithfulness (4:1-7:16)
  A. The LORD's case against Israel (4:1-19)
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III. Israel's Judgment (8:1-10:15)
  A. Sowing the wind, reaping the storm (8:1-14)
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IV. God's Love and Israel's Restoration (11:1-14:9)
  A. Out of Egypt I called My son (11:1-12)
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  D. Return, O Israel (14:1-9)

HOSEA

HOSEA 1

Hosea's Wife and Children

1 The word of the LORD which came to Hosea (Hoshea) son of Beeri in the days of Uzziah (Uziya), Jotham (Yotam), Ahaz (Achaz), ***and*** Hezekiah (Yechizqiya), kings of Judah (Yehuda), and in the days of Jeroboam (Yaravam) son of Joash (Yo'ash), king of Israel (Yisra'el). **2** The beginning of the LORD's speaking by Hosea. And the LORD said to Hosea, "Go, take for yourself a wife of prostitutions and children of prostitutions, for the land surely prostitutes itself ***away*** from after the LORD." **3** And he went and took Gomer daughter of Diblaim
(Divlayim), and she conceived and bore him a son. **4** And the LORD said to him, "Call his name Jezreel (Yizre'el), for yet a little ***while***, and I will visit the bloodshed of Jezreel on the house of Jehu (Yehu), and I will put an end to the kingdom of the house of Israel. **5** And it will be in that day that I will break the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel." **6** And she conceived again and bore a daughter. And He said to him, "Call her name No Mercy (Lo-Ruchama), for I will not again have compassion any more on the house of Israel, that I should in any way forgive them. **7** And the house of Judah I will have compassion on, and I will save them by the LORD their God; and I will not save them by bow and by sword and by battle, by horses and by horsemen." **8** And she weaned No Mercy, and she conceived and bore a son. **9** And He said, "Call his name Not My People (Lo-Ami), for you ***are*** not My people, and I will not be for you."

The Promise of Restoration

10 And the number of the sons of Israel will be like the sand of the sea, which will not be measured and will not be counted; and it will be in the place where it was said to them, "You ***are*** not My people," it will be said to them, "Sons of ***the*** living God." **11** And the sons of Judah and the sons of Israel will be gathered together, and they will appoint for themselves one head, and they will go up from the land; for great ***is*** the day of Jezreel.

1:1 Rom 9:25; John 10:35; Isa 1:1
1:2 Rom 9:25; Hos 3:1; Deut 31:16
1:3 Isa 8:1-3
1:4 John 1:42; 2 Kgs 10:7,8,10,11,17,29-31; Matt 1:21
1:5 Josh 17:16; Judg 6:33; Hos 2:18
1:6 Hos 2:23; 1 Pet 2:10; 2 Kgs 17:6,23-41
1:7 Matt 1:21; Matt 1:22; Matt 1:23
1:9 1 Pet 2:10; Luke 24:44; Rom 9:26
1:10 Rom 9:26; Rom 9:25; 1 Pet 2:9
1:11 Rom 11:26; Hos 3:5; Isa 11:12,13

1:1 *The word of the LORD which came to Hosea son of Beeri* Hosea did not make up his message. It came from God, and that is what makes a man a prophet: someone God speaks through, carrying His word whether people want it or not. Jeroboam son of Joash is Jeroboam II (about 793 to 753 B.C.). One likely reason Hosea names only him among Israel's kings is that the later ones came and went so fast, mostly by murder, while David's line in Judah was God's chosen line (3:5). Hosea preached about forty years to people who mostly did not listen.
1:2 *Go, take for yourself a wife of prostitutions* Israel was joined to the LORD by covenant at Sinai, like a bride to her husband (Jer 2:2). A covenant is a binding agreement sealed with promises. Going after Baal, the Canaanite god they thought gave rain and crops, was spiritual prostitution. Hosea's marriage would be a living sermon: the people would see in his home what they were doing to God.
1:2 *a wife of prostitutions* A hard passage read in several ways. Some believe Gomer was already immoral when Hosea married her. Others believe the phrase describes what she would become, written looking back. Others take it as a woman from a people given to idolatry. A few take the whole account as a vision or parable, but the text gives a real woman, a father's name, children and a weaning (1:8). Scripture does not settle the first three. It is plain that the marriage was real, Gomer was unfaithful, and Hosea kept loving her. The point is God's love for the unfaithful (Rom 5:8).
1:3 *she conceived and bore him a son* Hosea obeyed without argument or delay. The first son was "him," Hosea's. The next two births (1:6, 8) do not say "bore him," and some think those children may not have been his. The text does not say so plainly, but it fits "children of prostitutions" and chapter 2.
1:4 *Call his name Jezreel* Jezreel means God sows. It was a city and valley where Jehu killed Joram, Jezebel and Ahab's family about eighty years before (2 Kgs 9-10). God praised Jehu for ending Ahab's house (2 Kgs 10:30), but Jehu went far beyond the command for his own power and kept the golden calves (2 Kgs 10:31). God judges the heart as well as the deed.
1:4 *for yet a little while* Jehu's line ended when Zechariah, Jeroboam's son, was murdered after six months, about 753 B.C. (2 Kgs 15:8-12). In 722 B.C. Assyria took Samaria and the northern kingdom was never a kingdom again.
1:5 *I will break the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel* The bow is Israel's military strength. Where Jehu won his throne by the sword, Israel's sword would be broken.
1:6 *Call her name No Mercy* In Hebrew Lo-ruhamah, not pitied. The word is a parent's tender love for a child. Every time Hosea called his little girl's name, the town heard God's message. God's love had not failed. He had been patient for two hundred years since the kingdom split about 930 B.C. There comes a point when God gives people what they have chosen.
1:7 *I will not save them by bow and by sword* About 701 B.C. Assyria came against Jerusalem in Hezekiah's day, and the angel of the LORD struck their camp in one night (2 Kgs 19:35-36). God saved Judah without a single arrow from Judah's side. That is still how God saves: not by our strength, but by Himself.
1:9 *Call his name Not My People* In Hebrew Lo-ammi, the hardest name of all. At Sinai God said Israel would be His people (Exod 6:7). "I will not be for you" sounds like the reverse of the name "I am" (Exod 3:14). The three names move downward: judgment on a king's house, no more compassion, no more relationship. Sin moves that way if we do not turn back.
1:10 *the number of the sons of Israel will be like the sand of the sea* Without a break, hope breaks in, in the words God spoke to Abraham and Jacob (Gen 22:17; 32:12). Israel's sin could not cancel God's promise to Abraham.
1:10 *Sons of the living God* Paul uses this verse and 2:23 for the calling of Gentiles (Rom 9:24-26), and Peter for believers who were once not a people (1 Pet 2:10). If God can make "not My people" His own, He can do it for Gentiles who never were His. The principle of mercy is the same. That does not cancel the promise to Israel or hand it to someone else.
1:11 *they will appoint for themselves one head* Judah and Israel, split since about 930 B.C., will be one nation under one ruler, which has not yet happened in any full way (Ezek 37:15-24). Hosea names the head in 3:5, "David their king." I believe this is Jesus, the Son of David, reigning over a restored Israel when He returns. The church shares God's mercy, but His promises to Israel stand (Rom 11:26, 29). Some teachers read this as fulfilled in the church of Jews and Gentiles.
1:11 *great is the day of Jezreel* "Go up from the land" may mean coming up from the lands of exile or springing up like a crop. Either way it is new life. The name that meant judgment now means harvest. God will sow His people in their land again (2:23).

HOSEA 2

1 Say to your brothers, "My People (Ami)," and to your sisters, "Shown Compassion (Ruchama)."

The Unfaithful Wife

2 Contend with your mother, contend—for she ***is*** not My wife, and I ***am*** not her husband—and let her remove her prostitutions from her face, and her adulteries from between her breasts, **3** lest I strip her naked and set her ***out*** as ***on*** the day she was born, and make her like the wilderness, and set her like a land of dryness, and cause her to die with thirst. **4** And on her sons I will not have compassion, for they ***are*** sons of prostitutions. **5** For their mother has prostituted herself; she who conceived them has acted shamefully; for she said, "Let me go after my lovers, who give my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, my oil and my drinks." **6** Therefore look, I am about to hedge up your way with thorns, and I will wall up her wall, and her paths she will not find. **7** And she will pursue her lovers, and she will not overtake them; and she will seek them, and she will not find ***them***; and she will say, "Let me go and let me return to my first husband, for it was better for me then than now." **8** And she did not know that I gave her the grain and the new wine and the fresh oil, and I multiplied silver to her, and gold, ***which*** they made for the Baal. **9** Therefore I will return and take My grain in its time and My new wine in its appointed time, and I will snatch away My wool and My flax, to cover her nakedness. **10** And now I will uncover her lewdness before the eyes of her lovers, and no one will deliver her from My hand. **11** And I will put an end to all her rejoicing, her feast, her new moon, and her Sabbath, and every appointed feast of hers. **12** And I will lay waste her vine and her fig tree, of which she said, "They ***are*** wages for me, which my lovers gave me." And I will make them a thicket, and the living things of the field will eat them. **13** And I will visit on her the days of the Baals, when she burned ***incense*** to them, and she adorned herself ***with*** her ring and her jewelry, and went after her lovers; and Me she forgot, declares the LORD.

The LORD Wins His Bride Back

14 Therefore look, I am about to entice her, and I will lead her ***into*** the wilderness, and I will speak to her heart. **15** And I will give her her vineyards from there, and the valley of Achor (Akhor) for a door of hope; and she will answer there as ***in*** the days of her youth, and as ***in*** the day she came up from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim). **16** And it will be in that day, declares the LORD, ***that*** you will call ***Me*** "My Husband," and you will no longer call Me "My Baal." **17** And I will remove the names of the Baals from her mouth, and they will

2:1 Hos 2:23; Hos 1:9-11; Exod 19:5,6
2:2 Isa 50:1; Ezek 23:45; Hos 1:2
2:3 Rev 17:16; Isa 32:13,14; Jer 13:22,26
2:4 Hos 1:6; Jer 13:14; Ezek 8:18
2:5 Rev 17:5; Hos 3:1; Isa 1:21
2:6 Job 19:8; Job 3:23; Lam 3:7-9
2:7 Hos 5:13; Jer 2:2; Ezek 23:4
2:8 Rom 11:4; Isa 1:3; Ezek 16:16-19
2:9 Hos 2:3; Dan 11:13; Joel 2:14
2:10 Ezek 23:29; Hos 2:3; Isa 3:17
2:11 Jer 7:34; Isa 1:13,14; Jer 16:9
2:12 Isa 5:5; Isa 7:23; Hos 2:5
2:13 Hos 11:2; Judg 3:7; Hos 13:1
2:14 Rev 12:6,14; John 6:44; Mic 7:14-20
2:15 Acts 14:27; Jer 2:2; Ezek 28:26
2:16 Isa 54:5; Hos 2:7; Jer 3:14
2:17 Exod 23:13; Josh 23:7; Ps 16:4

2:1 *Say to your brothers, "My People,"* This finishes the hope of 1:10-11. Not My People becomes My People, and No Mercy becomes Shown Compassion. What sin took away, grace gives back.

2:2 *Contend with your mother* To contend is to bring a case at law. The mother is Israel as a nation, and the children are her people one by one, called to plead with her. It sounds like divorce, but God does not say be gone. He says, let her remove her prostitutions. He wants her back, and the goal of the lawsuit is repentance.

2:3 *lest I strip her naked* A husband was bound to clothe and feed his wife (Exod 21:10). To strip her meant taking back all he had given. God found Israel helpless in Egypt and gave her everything (Ezek 16:4-14). Now He warns of drought and famine, the very curses Moses foretold (Deut 28:23-24).

2:4 *on her sons I will not have compassion* Not punishing innocent children for a mother's sin. The sons are the people of Israel, who joined her in idol worship. Each generation chose the same sin.

2:5 *Let me go after my lovers, who give my bread and my water* The heart of Israel's sin. Baal was worshiped as the storm god who brought rain, and in a dry land rain meant life. Israel did not think it was leaving the LORD entirely. It wanted to cover every base. We may not bow to Baal, but whatever we trust to give what only God gives, money, a job, a person or a government, is our lover.

2:6 *I am about to hedge up your way with thorns* Judgment, but merciful judgment. A thorn hedge keeps a sheep from wandering off a cliff. God makes the road to sin hard so we will stop and turn back.

2:7 *let me return to my first husband, for it was better for me then than now* Like the prodigal who came to himself in a far country (Luke 15:17-18). It is not yet deep repentance. She comes back because she is hungry. But God often uses empty hands to turn our faces toward home. Have you ever been glad, looking back, that God blocked a road you wanted?

2:8 *she did not know that I gave her the grain and the new wine and the fresh oil* The land's three main crops, promised to an obedient Israel (Deut 7:13). She gave Baal the credit and even made God's silver and gold into idols. Every good gift comes from God (James 1:17). When we stop thanking God, we soon start thanking something else.

2:11 *her feast, her new moon, and her Sabbath* The north kept its own feasts set up by Jeroboam I (1 Kgs 12:32-33), mixed with Baal worship. A new moon was the monthly holy day at the start of each month, and the Sabbath the seventh-day rest God gave Israel. God does not protect religion without faithfulness.

2:13 *Me she forgot, declares the LORD* The saddest words in the passage. Israel burned incense and dressed up for the feasts. She did not stop being religious. She forgot the LORD. You can be very busy with religion and still forget God.

2:14 *I will lead her into the wilderness, and I will speak to her heart* The third "therefore" (2:6, 9) leads to love. God will woo her like a young man winning the woman he loves. "Speak to her heart" means to speak tenderly (Isa 40:2). The wilderness was where Israel first knew God after the exodus, alone with Him. Sometimes God leads us into a dry season so He can speak without the noise.

2:15 *the valley of Achor for a door of hope* Achor means trouble, the valley where Achan was stoned (Josh 7:24-26). God turns the place of shame into a doorway of hope. He takes the place of our worst failure and makes it the door to a new beginning. She will answer as she did when she sang at the sea (Exod 15).

2:16 *you will no longer call Me "My Baal."* Baal is also a common Hebrew word for master, owner or husband. Israel had mixed up the LORD and Baal so badly that they called the LORD by that name. In that day they will know Him not as a master to bargain with but as a husband who loves them.

no longer be remembered by their name. **18** And I will make for them a covenant in that day with the living things of the field and with the flying things of the heavens and the moving things of the ground; and bow and sword and battle I will break from the land, and I will make them lie down in security. **19** And I will betroth you to Me forever; and I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and in justice and in steadfast love and in compassion. **20** And I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness, and you will know the LORD. **21** And it will be in that day ***that*** I will answer, declares the LORD; I will answer the heavens, and they will answer the earth; **22** and the earth will answer the grain and the new wine and the fresh oil, and they will answer Jezreel (Yizre'el). **23** And I will sow her for Myself in the land, and I will have compassion on No Mercy (Lo-Ruchama), and I will say to Not My People (Lo-Ami), "You ***are*** My people," and he will say, "My God!"

HOSEA 3

Hosea Buys Back His Wife

1 And the LORD said to me, "Again, go, love a woman loved by a companion and committing adultery, like the love of the LORD ***for*** the sons of Israel (Yisra'el), and they are turning to other gods and loving raisin cakes." **2** And I bought her for myself for fifteen ***pieces of*** silver and approximately 6 bushels (a homer) of barley and approximately 3 bushels (a lethech) of barley. **3** And I said to her, "Many days you will dwell for me; you will not prostitute yourself, and you will not belong to a man; and I also ***will be*** toward you." **4** For many days the sons of Israel will dwell ***with*** no king, and no prince, and no sacrifice, and no pillar, and no ephod and teraphim. **5** Afterward the sons of Israel will return and seek the LORD their God and David their king; and they will ***come*** in dread to the LORD and to His goodness at the end of the days.

HOSEA 4

The LORD's Case Against Israel

1 Hear the word of the LORD, O sons of Israel (Yisra'el), for the LORD ***has*** a contention with the inhabitants of the land; for ***there is*** no truth, and no steadfast love, and no knowledge of God in the land. **2** Cursing and lying and murdering and stealing and committing adultery—they have broken out,

2:18 Ezek 34:25; Isa 2:4; Jer 23:6
2:19 Rev 19:7; Rev 19:8; 2 Cor 11:2
2:20 Matt 11:27; Luke 10:22; Heb 8:11
2:21 Zech 8:12; Isa 65:24; Zech 13:9
2:22 Hos 1:4,11
2:23 Rom 9:25; Rom 15:9; 1 Pet 2:9,10
3:1 Hos 1:2,3; Jer 3:1,20; Matt 26:50
3:2 Lev 27:16; Ezek 45:11; Gen 31:41
3:3 Deut 21:13
3:4 Judg 17:5; Gen 31:19; 2 Chr 15:2
3:5 Acts 15:16; Mark 11:10; John 1:49
4:1 Matt 21:33; Mic 6:2; Jer 4:22,28
4:2 Hos 6:9; Jer 6:7; Jer 7:6-10

2:18 *bow and sword and battle I will break from the land* Peace with the animals and an end to war reverse the curse of 2:12, like the wolf with the lamb (Isa 11:6-9). Israel has never known such peace. I believe it looks to Christ's kingdom on earth, when nation will not lift sword against nation (Isa 2:4).
2:19 *I will betroth you to Me forever* Betrothal was as binding as marriage. God speaks as if this were a new marriage with no past. He brings the bride price Himself: righteousness, justice, steadfast love (hesed), and compassion, the very word taken away in the name No Mercy.
2:20 *you will know the LORD* In Hosea, to know the LORD is the opposite of forgetting Him (2:13), a close, personal bond like husband and wife. Paul speaks of the church as a bride betrothed to Christ (2 Cor 11:2; Eph 5:25-27). These words are first for Israel, and I believe Israel will know them in full, but every believer can see Christ's love in them.
2:23 *I will sow her for Myself in the land* All three names of chapter 1 are reversed, and the covenant is restored in the simplest words: "You are My people," and "My God!" Paul and Peter use this for Gentiles brought in by mercy (Rom 9:25; 1 Pet 2:10), but it does not erase the promise to Israel. God will sow her in her own land, and I believe He will do so when Israel turns to Christ (Rom 11:25-27; Amos 9:15).
3:1 *Again, go, love a woman loved by a companion and committing adultery* "Again" ties this to chapter 1. Most teachers believe this is Gomer, who had left Hosea and fallen so low she had to be bought, and this study follows that view. A few think it is a different woman, since no name is given, and others that it retells the first marriage. All agree on the point: God loved Israel while she was still turning to other gods. His love does not wait for us to clean ourselves up (Rom 5:8).
3:1 *loving raisin cakes* Pressed cakes of dried grapes, a normal food in themselves (2 Sam 6:19), but here they seem part of the feasts of false gods. Israel loved the sweet treats of idol worship more than the God who loved her.
3:2 *I bought her for myself for fifteen pieces of silver* About nine bushels of barley in all. The text does not say how she came to need buying, perhaps sold for debt or kept by another man. Many add it up to about thirty shekels, the price of a slave (Exod 21:32), and the barley, food of the poor, may mean Hosea did not have enough silver. It is a picture of our redemption, bought back not with silver or gold but with the precious blood of Christ (1 Pet 1:18-19). The New Testament does not name Hosea as a picture of Christ, so I hold it as a picture.
3:3 *Many days you will dwell for me* Not straight back to things as they were. A long, quiet time of being set apart, with no other lovers and not yet full closeness. Hosea would wait for her too. Love that has been betrayed does not heal in a day.
3:4 *no king, and no prince, and no sacrifice, and no pillar, and no ephod and teraphim* A pillar was a sacred stone at false shrines, the ephod a priest's garment for seeking guidance, and teraphim household idols (Gen 31:19). Israel would lose the true and the false together. Israel lost its king in 722 B.C., Judah in 586 B.C., and no son of David has reigned since. The temple fell in A.D. 70, and there has been no sacrifice. After the exile the people never again turned to idols as their fathers had. For about two thousand years they have waited, like Gomer in Hosea's house.
3:5 *seek the LORD their God and David their king* David had been dead more than two hundred years. The prophets use his name for the Son of David who reigns forever (2 Sam 7:12-16; Jer 30:9; Ezek 37:24), and Mary's Son was given "the throne of David His father" (Luke 1:32). I believe this is Jesus. Some think David himself will be raised to rule under Christ. Either way, Christ is the King.
3:5 *they will come in dread to the LORD and to His goodness at the end of the days* Trembling, like a runaway child coming home unsure of his welcome and finding his father's arms open. I believe this looks to Christ's return, when Israel looks on Him whom they pierced (Zech 12:10) and all Israel is saved (Rom 11:25-26), and He reigns in His thousand-year kingdom (Rev 20:4-6). Some see it fulfilled in the return from Babylon or in the church, but Israel did not then seek "David their king." If God keeps loving Israel through such long waiting, He can keep loving you.
4:1 *the LORD has a contention with the inhabitants of the land* A covenant lawsuit in three charges. No truth: faithfulness to one's word. No steadfast love: hesed. No knowledge of God: in Hosea, knowing Him personally, as a husband knows his wife, and living in His ways. When these go, everything else falls apart.
4:2 *Cursing and lying and murdering and stealing and committing adultery* The Ten Commandments broken one after another (Exod 20:7, 13-16), while the feasts went on. "Bloodshed touches bloodshed," one murder after another, as in the years after Jeroboam II when king after king was killed.

and bloodshed touches bloodshed. **3** Therefore the land will mourn, and everyone who dwells in it will languish, with the living things of the field and with the flying things of the heavens; and also the fish of the sea will be taken away. **4** Only, let no man contend, and let no man reprove a man; and your people ***are*** like those who contend ***with*** a priest. **5** And you will stumble by day, and a prophet also will stumble with you by night; and I will destroy your mother. **6** My people have been destroyed for lack of the knowledge; because you have rejected the knowledge, I will reject you from serving as priest to Me; and you have forgotten the law of your God; I will forget your sons, I also. **7** As they increased, so they sinned against Me; their glory I will change into shame. **8** They eat the sin of My people, and to their iniquity they lift up its soul. **9** And it will be: like people, like priest; and I will visit on him his ways, and his deeds I will repay to him. **10** And they will eat and not be satisfied; they will prostitute themselves and not increase; for they have forsaken paying heed to the LORD.

Idolatry and Its Fruit

11 Prostitution and wine and new wine take away the heart. **12** My people inquires of its wood, and its staff declares to it; for a spirit of prostitutions has led ***them*** astray, and they have prostituted themselves from under their God. **13** On the tops of the mountains they sacrifice, and on the hills they burn ***incense***, under oak and poplar and terebinth, for its shade ***is*** good. Therefore your daughters prostitute themselves, and your brides commit adultery. **14** I will not visit on your daughters when they prostitute themselves, and on your brides when they commit adultery; for they ***themselves*** go aside with the prostitutes, and with the cult prostitutes they sacrifice; and a people ***that*** does not understand will be ruined. **15** Though you ***are*** prostituting yourself, O Israel, let Judah (Yehuda) not become guilty; and do not come to Gilgal, and do not go up ***to*** Beth-aven (Bet-Aven), and do not swear, "***As*** the LORD lives." **16** For like a stubborn heifer Israel is stubborn; now the LORD will pasture them like a lamb in a broad place. **17** Ephraim (Efrayim) ***is*** joined to idols; leave him alone. **18** Their drink has come to an end; they have surely prostituted themselves; her shields have loved, loved shame. **19** A wind has wrapped her up in its wings, and they will be ashamed because of their sacrifices.

HOSEA 5

Judgment on Priests, People and King

1 Hear this, priests, and pay attention, house of Israel (Yisra'el), and house of the king, give ear; for the judgment ***is*** for you, for you have been a trap at Mizpah (Mitspa) and a net spread out over Tabor (Tavor). **2** And rebels have made slaughter deep, and I ***am*** discipline to all of them. **3** I know Ephraim (Efrayim), and Israel is not hidden from Me; for now you have prostituted yourself, Ephraim; Israel has made

4:3 Zeph 1:3; Jer 4:27; Amos 5:16
4:4 Deut 17:12; Hos 4:17; Amos 5:13
4:5 Jer 15:8; Hos 2:2; Hos 9:7,8
4:6 Matt 15:8; Isa 5:13; Prov 19:2
4:7 Hos 13:6,14; 1 Sam 2:30; Mal 2:9
4:8 Lev 6:26; Isa 56:11; Mic 3:11
4:9 Isa 24:2; Jer 5:31; Isa 9:14-16
4:10 Mic 6:14; Lev 26:26; Hag 1:6
4:11 Prov 20:1; Isa 28:7; Luke 21:34
4:12 Heb 3:10; Jer 2:27; Hos 5:4
4:13 Isa 1:29; Jer 3:6,13; Ezek 6:13
4:14 1 Cor 6:16; Hos 4:1,5,6; Hos 4:17
4:15 Hos 9:15; Hos 12:11; Amos 4:4
4:16 Hos 11:7; 1 Sam 15:11; Jer 3:6,8,11
4:17 Hos 13:2; Hos 4:4; Ps 81:12
4:18 Mic 3:11; Deut 32:32,33; Isa 1:21,22
4:19 Isa 1:29; Jer 4:11,12; Jer 51:1
5:1 Hos 9:8; Hos 6:9; Hos 4:1,6,7
5:2 Hos 9:15; Isa 29:15; Hos 6:9
5:3 Amos 3:2; Heb 4:13; Rev 3:15

4:3 *the land will mourn* Sin does not stay inside the sinner. It harms the land, the beasts, the birds and even the fish. God made us to care for His creation (Gen 2:15), and creation groans waiting to be set free (Rom 8:20-22).
4:4 *let no man contend, and let no man reprove a man* Do not point fingers, because everyone is guilty. The people had become like those who defy the priest's ruling (Deut 17:12), arguing with God Himself. From here God turns to the priests, who stumble in the dark like everyone else.
4:6 *My people have been destroyed for lack of the knowledge* Often quoted to mean lack of education, but the knowledge here is the knowledge of God and His law. God speaks to the priests, whose job was to teach it (Lev 10:11; Mal 2:7). Jeroboam I had made priests who were not Levites (1 Kgs 12:31), and they ran the calf worship instead. What a priest forgets, his children never learn. This speaks to every pastor, teacher and parent. Are you reading God's Word? Are your children hearing it from you?
4:8 *They eat the sin of My people* Sin and sin offering are the same Hebrew word, and priests ate part of the sin offerings (Lev 6:26). The more the people sinned, the better the priests ate, so they longed for it. A terrible picture of religious leaders who profit from what they should be stopping.
4:11 *Prostitution and wine and new wine take away the heart* The heart in Hebrew is the center of thinking and choosing. Sexual sin and drunkenness dull the mind until a person cannot think straight about God or life.
4:12 *My people inquires of its wood, and its staff declares to it* They asked a stick for guidance, perhaps a carved idol or a rod for fortune-telling. The God who spoke to Moses face to face was traded for a piece of wood. Their unfaithfulness had become "a spirit," a mindset that drove them.
4:13 *On the tops of the mountains they sacrifice* The high places, hilltop and shady shrines God told Israel to tear down (Deut 12:2-3). Canaanite worship included ritual sex meant to make the land fertile. The fathers took part, and the daughters followed.
4:14 *I will not visit on your daughters* The men were worse, going off with cult prostitutes, women who served at pagan shrines. They held their daughters to a standard they did not keep. God refused the double standard. Without the knowledge of God, a people that does not understand comes to ruin.
4:15 *do not come to Gilgal, and do not go up to Beth-aven* A warning to Judah not to follow Israel. Gilgal, Israel's first camp in the land (Josh 4:19-20), had become a center of false worship (Amos 4:4). Beth-aven, house of wickedness, is Hosea's mocking name for Bethel, house of God, where Jeroboam set up a golden calf (1 Kgs 12:28-29). Swearing by the LORD at a calf shrine was a lie. God would not have His name mixed with idolatry.
4:16 *like a stubborn heifer Israel is stubborn* A young cow that will not take the yoke digs in and pulls the other way. A lamb alone in a wide field is not free but helpless among wolves. Israel wanted freedom from God and would get it, alone, in exile.
4:17 *Ephraim is joined to idols; leave him alone* Ephraim, the largest northern tribe, often stands for the whole nation. "Joined" is the bond of marriage. Some of the most sobering words in Scripture. Sometimes God gives people over to what they insist on choosing (Rom 1:24).
5:1 *the judgment is for you* Priests, people and royal house are all called. The words mean both that justice was their job and that judgment is coming on them. Mizpah in Gilead and Mount Tabor in Galilee were places of worship where the leaders set snares, like hunters for birds, drawing the people into idolatry.

itself unclean. **4** Their deeds do not permit ***them*** to return to their God, for a spirit of prostitution ***is*** in their midst, and the LORD they do not know. **5** And the pride of Israel testifies to his face, and Israel and Ephraim will stumble in their iniquity; Judah (Yehuda) also will stumble with them. **6** With their flocks and with their herds they will go to seek the LORD, and they will not find ***Him***; He has withdrawn from them. **7** They have dealt treacherously with the LORD, for they have begotten strange sons; now a new moon will devour them with their portions.

War on the Border

8 Blow a horn in Gibeah (Giva), a trumpet in Ramah (Rama); sound an alarm ***at*** Beth-aven (Bet-Aven): after you, Benjamin (Binyamin)! **9** Ephraim will become a waste in a day of rebuke; among the tribes of Israel I make known ***what is*** sure. **10** The princes of Judah have become like ***those who*** move a boundary; on them I will pour out My wrath like water. **11** Ephraim ***is*** oppressed, crushed ***in*** judgment, for he was determined ***to*** walk after a command. **12** And I ***am*** like the moth to Ephraim, and like rottenness to the house of Judah. **13** And Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah his wound; and Ephraim went to Assyria (Ashur), and he sent to King Jareb (Yarev). And he is not able to heal you, and the wound will not be cured from you. **14** For I ***am*** like the lion to Ephraim, and like the young lion to the house of Judah. I, I will tear and go; I will carry off, and there is no deliverer. **15** I will go; I will return to My place until they are held guilty and seek My face; in their distress they will seek Me earnestly.

HOSEA 6

Come, Let Us Return to the LORD

1 Come, and let us return to the LORD; for He has torn, and He will heal us; He has struck, and He will bind us up. **2** He will revive us after two days; on the third day He will raise us up, and we will live before Him. **3** And let us know, let us pursue to know the LORD; like dawn His going forth is established; and He will come to us like the rain, like spring rain ***that*** waters ***the*** land.

Love Like the Morning Mist

4 What will I do to you, Ephraim (Efrayim)? What will I do to you, Judah (Yehuda)? And your steadfast love ***is*** like a cloud of morning, and like the dew rising early, going ***away***. **5** Therefore I have hewn ***them*** by the prophets; I have killed them by the words of My mouth; and your judgments ***are***

5:4 John 8:55; Hos 4:12; 1 John 2:3,4
5:5 Hos 7:10; Amos 5:2; Ezek 23:31-35
5:6 Mic 6:6,7; Prov 1:28; Prov 15:8
5:7 Hos 6:7; Isa 48:8; Jer 3:20
5:8 Hos 9:9; Hos 4:15; Jer 4:5
5:9 Hos 9:11-17; Isa 46:10; Zech 1:6
5:10 Deut 19:14; Deut 27:17; Ps 32:6
5:11 Deut 28:33; Mic 6:16; 1 Kgs 12:26-33
5:12 Isa 51:8; Job 13:28; Isa 50:9
5:13 Hos 7:11; Hos 10:6; Hos 12:1
5:14 Ps 7:2; Mic 5:8; Hos 13:7,8
5:15 Ps 78:34; Jer 3:13; Jer 29:12-14
6:1 James 4:8; Deut 32:39; 1 Sam 2:6
6:2 1 Cor 15:4; Matt 20:19; Mark 8:31
6:3 2 Pet 1:19; Prov 2:1-5; Ps 72:6
6:4 2 Pet 2:17; Hos 11:8; Hos 13:3
6:5 Jer 23:29; Jer 1:10,18; Jer 5:14

5:4 *Their deeds do not permit them to return to their God* Sin becomes something that holds us. A habit of sin builds walls, and the longer we stay in it, the harder it is to turn back. Everyone who sins is a slave of sin, but the Son can set us free (John 8:34-36). Never think you can sin now and turn back easily later.
5:5 *the pride of Israel testifies to his face* Pride stands up in court like a witness against him, because it would not let them admit they were wrong. Judah is now named with Israel, following the north down the same path.
5:6 *they will not find Him; He has withdrawn from them* They brought many sacrifices, but God is not moved by the size of the offering when the heart is far from Him (Isa 1:11-15).
5:7 *they have begotten strange sons* Foreign, outside the covenant. Their children were raised as pagans because their parents had not taught them God's ways. The new moon, a monthly feast, may mean that within a month, at one of their own feasts, judgment will fall.
5:8 *Blow a horn in Gibeah, a trumpet in Ramah* Border towns in Benjamin between Judah and Israel, and the horn warned of an enemy. Many teachers fit this to the war of about 734 to 732 B.C., when Pekah of Israel and Rezin of Syria attacked Judah, Ahaz called in Assyria, and the border towns changed hands (2 Kgs 16:5-9; Isa 7).
5:10 *like those who move a boundary* Moving a neighbor's boundary stone was stealing land (Deut 19:14; 27:17). Judah's princes were grabbing land, perhaps from Israel in the war or from the poor at home.
5:12 *I am like the moth to Ephraim, and like rottenness to the house of Judah* A moth eats a garment quietly from inside until it falls apart. God's judgment does not always come like a storm. A nation, a church or a family can rot from within for years before anyone sees it.
5:13 *he sent to King Jareb* Not a known king's name but a title, something like the great king (10:6). Menahem and Hoshea paid Assyria tribute (2 Kgs 15:19-20; 17:3), and Ahaz sent the temple's silver and gold (2 Kgs 16:7-8). They went to the wrong doctor, and the power they ran to destroyed Israel. Doctors and counselors are God's gifts, but no one can heal what only God can heal.
5:14 *I am like the lion to Ephraim* Assyria was only the tool. The lion was the LORD, and no treaty could take the prey from His mouth.
5:15 *until they are held guilty and seek My face* The lion returns to his den and waits. God's goal was never to destroy them for good, but to bring them to own their sin and seek Him. "Earnestly" can mean early, eagerly. Many teachers also see Israel's long history here: God has withdrawn until, in the time of Jacob's trouble (Jer 30:7), Israel seeks Him. I believe that comes in the Tribulation, the seven years before Christ returns, when Israel turns to the One they pierced (Zech 12:10).
6:1 *let us return to the LORD* "Return" is shuv, the main Old Testament word for repentance: a change of direction, not just feeling sorry. Real repentance stops blaming Assyria or bad luck and owns that God did this because of our sin. The God who wounds is the God who heals (Deut 32:39). His discipline brings His children home (Heb 12:6).
6:2 *on the third day He will raise us up* In Hebrew poetry "after two days" then "the third day" means in a short time. God will not leave them long in their wounds. Many Christians from early times have also seen a hint of Jesus' resurrection "on the third day according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor 15:4). The New Testament never quotes this verse, so I hold it as a possible picture only. Israel's hope of being raised comes true because her Messiah was raised first (Rom 11:15).
6:3 *let us pursue to know the LORD* The cure is not more religion but knowing God, and knowing Him takes effort, the way a man in love pursues the woman he loves. His coming is as sure as sunrise. Israel had early rains in the fall and spring rains to ripen the crops. Israel looked to Baal for rain, and now says the LORD Himself is the rain. Verses 1-3 are a model prayer for anyone who has wandered. Are they sincere? The next verse makes us wonder.
6:4 *your steadfast love is like a cloud of morning* The voice of a grieving parent who has tried everything. Summer mists and dew are burned off by mid-morning. Israel's love showed up after a scare or at a feast and was gone by noon. Strong on Sunday, gone by Monday? God wants love that lasts.

light ***that*** goes forth. **6** For steadfast love I desire, and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings. **7** And they, like Adam, have overstepped ***the*** covenant; there they dealt treacherously with Me. **8** Gilead (Gilad) ***is*** a town of doers of wickedness, tracked with blood. **9** And as marauding bands wait for a man, ***so*** a company of priests murder ***on*** the way to Shechem (Shekhem); for they have done villainy. **10** In the house of Israel (Yisra'el) I have seen a horrible ***thing***; there ***is*** Ephraim's prostitution; Israel has made itself unclean. **11** Also, Judah, he has appointed a harvest for you, when I turn back the captivity of My people.

HOSEA 7

A Hot Oven

1 When I heal Israel (Yisra'el), and the iniquity of Ephraim (Efrayim) is revealed, and the evil deeds of Samaria (Shomron); for they practice falsehood, and a thief comes in, a marauding band raids in the street. **2** And they do not say to their heart ***that*** I remember all their evil; now their deeds have surrounded them; they are before My face. **3** By their evil they make ***the*** king glad, and by their lies, princes. **4** All of them ***are*** adulterers, like an oven burning from a baker; he ceases stirring ***it*** from kneading ***the*** dough until it is leavened. **5** ***On*** the day of our king, princes became sick ***with*** the heat from wine; he stretched out his hand with scorners. **6** For they have brought near their heart like the oven in their ambush; all the night their baker sleeps; ***in the*** morning it burns like a fire of flame. **7** All of them are hot like the oven, and they devour their judges; all their kings have fallen; there is none among them calling to Me.

A Silly Dove

8 Ephraim mixes himself among the peoples; Ephraim has become a cake not turned over. **9** Strangers have devoured his strength, and he does not know; also gray hair has scattered on him, and he does not know. **10** And the pride of Israel testifies to his face, and they have not returned to the LORD their God, and they have not sought Him for all this. **11** And Ephraim has become like a silly dove without heart; they have called to Egypt (Mitsrayim); they have gone to Assyria (Ashur). **12** As they go, I will spread My net over them; like the birds of the heavens I will bring them down; I will discipline them according to the report to their congregation. **13** Woe to them, for they have wandered from Me! Devastation to them, for they have transgressed against Me! And I, I would ransom them, and they have spoken lies against Me. **14** And they have not cried out to Me with their heart when they wail on their beds; for grain and new wine they assemble themselves; they turn aside against Me.

6:6 Matt 9:13; Matt 12:7; Mark 12:33
6:7 Hos 8:1; Hos 5:7; Job 31:33
6:8 Hos 12:11; Josh 21:38; Hos 5:1
6:9 Hos 7:1; Hos 5:1; Ezra 8:31
6:10 Hos 5:3; Jer 5:30,31; Jer 23:14
6:11 Joel 3:13; Jer 51:33; Job 42:10
7:1 Jer 51:9; Matt 23:37; Luke 13:34
7:2 Jer 14:10; Jer 2:19; Ps 90:8
7:3 Mic 7:3; Rom 1:32; Jer 28:1-4
7:4 Jer 9:2; Hos 4:2,12; Jer 5:7,8
7:5 Isa 28:1,7,8; Gen 40:20; Dan 5:1-4
7:6 Hos 7:4,7; 1 Sam 19:11-15; 2 Sam 13:28,29
7:7 2 Kgs 15:10,14,25,30; Hos 8:4; Hos 7:10,14
7:8 Rev 3:15; Ps 106:35; Hos 5:7,13
7:9 Hos 8:7; 2 Kgs 13:3-7,22; 2 Kgs 15:19
7:10 Hos 5:5; Isa 9:13; Amos 4:6-13
7:11 Hos 5:13; Hos 12:1; Hos 11:11
7:12 Rev 3:19; Ezek 12:13; Deut 28:15-68
7:13 Rev 8:13; Matt 23:14; Matt 23:15
7:14 Amos 2:8; Job 35:9,10; Jer 3:10

6:6 *For steadfast love I desire, and not sacrifice* One of the most important verses in the Old Testament. A burnt offering was an animal wholly burned on the altar. God had commanded sacrifice, but it was never the main thing. Notice "more than." He wanted the heart behind it (1 Sam 15:22; Mic 6:8). Jesus quoted this verse to Pharisees who had no mercy for sinners and who condemned His hungry disciples (Matt 9:13; 12:7). It is possible to go to church every week, give, serve and sing, and still not know God or love the people around us.
6:7 *like Adam, have overstepped the covenant* Read in more than one way. Some see Adam in the garden, given a good place and one command (Gen 2:16-17). Others note Adam was a town by the Jordan (Josh 3:16), which fits the word "there." It can also mean like men. Either way, Israel broke covenant.
6:9 *a company of priests murder on the way to Shechem* Shechem was a city of refuge (Josh 20:7) and a road for worshipers. The priests, who should have protected the traveler, lay in wait like bandits.
6:11 *He has appointed a harvest for you* A harvest of judgment, which came on Judah through Babylon in 586 B.C. Yet even here God speaks of turning back the captivity of His people. Judgment and restoration stand side by side in Hosea, because God's last word to His people is mercy.
7:1 *When I heal Israel, and the iniquity of Ephraim is revealed* Like a doctor who pulls back a bandage and finds the wound worse than he thought, every time God moved to heal, He found more sin. Samaria was the northern capital, built by Omri (1 Kgs 16:24). Lying, breaking in and robbing in the open street: crime was everywhere.
7:2 *they do not say to their heart that I remember all their evil* They lived as if God had a short memory. People still think that if nothing bad has happened, God did not see. God sees and remembers every sin not washed away by the blood of Christ (Heb 4:13).
7:4 *like an oven burning from a baker* A baker built a fire in a clay oven at night and let it smolder while the dough rose, then stirred it to a blaze in the morning. Their passion for sin and power burned the same way, quietly, then suddenly.
7:7 *all their kings have fallen; there is none among them calling to Me* This fits Israel's last years exactly. Shallum killed Zechariah, Menahem killed Shallum, Pekah killed Pekahiah, and Hoshea killed Pekah (2 Kgs 15:10, 14, 25, 30), four kings murdered in about twenty years. They tried everything except prayer.
7:8 *Ephraim has become a cake not turned over* Israel was to be set apart (Deut 7:6) but mixed in with the nations. Flat bread baked on hot stones had to be flipped. Forgotten, it was burned on one side and raw on the other. That was Israel, part LORD and part Baal. One side of our life can be given to God and the other untouched. No one can serve two masters (Matt 6:24).
7:9 *gray hair has scattered on him, and he does not know* Foreign tribute was draining Israel (2 Kgs 15:19-20), and the nation was growing old near its end without noticing, like a man who still thinks he can do what he did at twenty.
7:11 *like a silly dove without heart* A dove is easily frightened and flies straight into the trap. Israel kept switching between Egypt and Assyria. Hoshea paid Assyria, then secretly sent to So king of Egypt, and that brought the Assyrian army on Samaria (2 Kgs 17:3-6).
7:12 *I will spread My net over them* God is the bird catcher, and wherever they fly, they land in His net. Where do you fly when you are afraid? The silly dove flew everywhere but home.
7:13 *I, I would ransom them, and they have spoken lies against Me* Woe is a cry of grief, heard at a funeral. God was ready to buy them back as He did from Egypt, but they told lies about Him, perhaps that He could not help or did not care. What we believe about God can keep His help away.
7:14 *they have not cried out to Me with their heart when they wail on their beds* They cried for what they had lost, perhaps even cutting themselves like Baal's prophets (1 Kgs 18:28). Worldly grief only regrets losing things and produces death, while godly grief leads to repentance (2 Cor 7:10).

15 And I, I disciplined ***them***, I strengthened their arms, and against Me they plot evil. **16** They return, ***but*** not upward; they have become like a bow of deceit; their princes will fall by the sword from the indignation of their tongue; this ***will be*** their mockery in the land of Egypt.

HOSEA 8

Sowing the Wind, Reaping the Storm

1 To your mouth, a horn! Like the eagle over the house of the LORD, because they have overstepped My covenant, and against My law they have transgressed. **2** To Me they cry out, "My God, we know You, Israel (Yisra'el)!" **3** Israel has
rejected good; an enemy will pursue him. **4** They have made kings, and not from Me; they have made princes, and I did not know; their silver and their gold they have made for themselves ***into*** idols, so that it may be cut off. **5** He has rejected your calf, Samaria (Shomron); My anger has burned against them; until when will they not be capable of innocence? **6** For from Israel ***is*** even it; a craftsman made it, and it ***is*** not God; for the calf of Samaria will become fragments. **7** For they sow wind, and they will reap a storm-wind; standing grain, there is none to it; ***its*** growth will not produce flour; perhaps it will produce ***it***, ***and*** strangers will swallow it up. **8** Israel is swallowed up; now they are among the nations like a vessel; there is no pleasure in it. **9** For they have gone up ***to*** Assyria (Ashur), a wild donkey isolated by itself; Ephraim (Efrayim) has hired lovers. **10** Even though they hire among the nations, now I will gather them; and they have begun ***to be*** few from the burden of a king of princes. **11** For Ephraim has multiplied altars for sinning; they have become to him altars for sinning. **12** I write for him the many ***things*** of My law; they are regarded like a strange ***thing***. **13** ***As for*** the sacrifices of My gifts, they sacrifice flesh and they eat ***it***; the LORD does not accept them. Now He will remember their iniquity, and He will punish their sins; they will return ***to*** Egypt (Mitsrayim). **14** And Israel has forgotten his Maker and has built palaces, and Judah (Yehuda) has multiplied fortified cities; and I will send fire on his cities, and it will devour her fortresses.

HOSEA 9

The Days of Punishment Have Come

1 Do not rejoice, Israel (Yisra'el), to exultation like the peoples, for you have prostituted yourself away from your God; you have loved a prostitute's hire on all the threshing floors of grain. **2** Threshing floor and winepress will not feed them, and new wine will fail in her. **3** They will not dwell in the land of the LORD, and Ephraim (Efrayim) will return ***to*** Egypt (Mitsrayim), and in Assyria (Ashur) they will eat unclean ***food***. **4** They will not pour out wine to the LORD, and their

7:15 Nah 1:9; 2 Kgs 13:5,23; 2 Kgs 14:25-27
7:16 Ps 78:57; Hos 9:3,6; Ps 73:9
8:1 Heb 8:8; Heb 8:9; Heb 8:10
8:2 Matt 7:21; Mark 7:6; Titus 1:16
8:3 Ps 36:3; Ps 81:10,11; Amos 1:11
8:4 Hos 2:8; Hos 13:2; 2 Kgs 15:10-30
8:5 Hos 10:5; Jer 13:27; Isa 45:20
8:6 Ps 106:19,20; Ps 115:4-8; Ps 135:15-18
8:7 Prov 22:8; Job 4:8; Gal 6:7
8:8 Jer 22:28; Jer 51:34; 2 Kgs 17:1-6
8:9 Hos 5:13; Hos 7:11; Jer 2:24
8:10 Ezek 16:37; Isa 10:8; Ezek 26:7
8:11 Hos 12:11; Hos 10:1,2,8; Isa 10:10,11
8:12 Mark 7:13; Acts 17:20; Hos 4:6
8:13 Hos 9:9; Deut 28:68; Hos 5:6
8:14 Deut 32:18; Jer 17:27; Amos 2:5
9:1 Hos 10:5; Hos 4:12; Jer 44:17
9:2 Hos 2:9,12; Isa 24:7-12; Joel 1:3-7,9-13
9:3 Hos 8:13; Ezek 4:13; Lev 25:23
9:4 Hos 8:13; Jer 6:20; Deut 26:14

7:16 *They return, but not upward* They turned to Egypt, Assyria or Baal, but not to God. A warped bow sends the arrow wide however straight the archer aims. The Egypt they trusted would laugh when they fell.
8:1 *To your mouth, a horn!* Sound the alarm. The eagle or vulture circling is Assyria, coming down on the house of the LORD, here God's household, the people and land of Israel. Moses had warned of a nation swooping like an eagle on a covenant-breaking people (Deut 28:49).
8:2 *My God, we know You, Israel!* They knew His name and used it when scared, but there was no knowledge of God in the land (4:1). Many will say Lord, Lord, and hear, I never knew you (Matt 7:21-23).
8:4 *They have made kings, and not from Me* Since Jeroboam I, northern kings rose without God's choosing, and in Hosea's day by murder and plot (7:7). "I did not know" means God did not approve. David's line had God's promise (2 Sam 7:16), and Israel's kings had none.
8:5 *He has rejected your calf, Samaria* About 930 B.C. Jeroboam I set up golden calves at Bethel and Dan so the people would not go to Jerusalem, and he said, "Look, your gods, O Israel" (1 Kgs 12:28). Every king after him kept them. The calf of Samaria stands for the whole kingdom's worship.
8:6 *a craftsman made it, and it is not God* The plain truth about every idol. A man made it, so how could it be God (Isa 44:14-17)? Assyria would break it up and carry it off (10:5-6). Nothing we make with our hands, money or talent can save us.
8:7 *they sow wind, and they will reap a storm-wind* The heart of the chapter. A farmer reaps what he sows and more. Israel sowed empty worship, empty treaties and empty idols and would reap a destroying storm. Whatever a man sows he will also reap (Gal 6:7). Small compromises sown over years can come back as a storm.
8:8 *like a vessel; there is no pleasure in it* A cracked clay pot is thrown away. Israel tried so hard to be like the nations, and the nations would toss her aside.
8:9 *a wild donkey isolated by itself; Ephraim has hired lovers* Even a wild donkey keeps to its herd, but Israel went off alone to Assyria. A prostitute is usually paid, but Israel paid her lovers, sending tribute to buy Assyria's friendship (2 Kgs 15:19-20).
8:11 *Ephraim has multiplied altars for sinning* They thought more altars meant more worship and forgiveness. Each one became another place to sin, because they were not the altars God chose and the worship was mixed with idols (Deut 12:5-14).
8:12 *they are regarded like a strange thing* God had written His law out in detail, and they treated it as foreign. Many today have a Bible on the shelf and never open it. Is God's Word familiar to you, or strange?
8:13 *they will return to Egypt* Their sacrifices had become little more than barbecues, and God did not accept them. Going back to Egypt meant undoing the exodus (Deut 28:68). In Hosea, Egypt stands both for a real place some would flee to and for slavery again in Assyria (9:3; 11:5).
8:14 *Israel has forgotten his Maker and has built palaces* The word can also mean temples. Israel trusted buildings and Judah trusted walls. Assyria burned Israel's cities, Sennacherib took Judah's fortified cities in 701 B.C. (2 Kgs 18:13), and Babylon burned Jerusalem in 586 B.C. When we have much, it is easy to forget the One who gave it (Deut 8:11-14).
9:1 *you have loved a prostitute's hire on all the threshing floors of grain* A threshing floor was a flat, hard place where grain was beaten out at harvest. Israel celebrated "like the peoples," treating full floors as Baal's wages for their worship (2:12). What they thought Baal gave would fail them.
9:3 *They will not dwell in the land of the LORD* The land was God's, and Israel lived on it as His tenants (Lev 25:23). Egypt again stands for slavery (8:13). In Assyria they would have to eat food the Law called unclean, as Daniel faced in Babylon (Dan 1:8).
9:4 *they will be like bread of mourning to them* Food in a house of death was unclean (Num 19:14; Deut 26:14). In exile their food would feed the body but could not be offered to God.

sacrifices will not be pleasing to Him; ***they will be*** like bread of mourning to them; all who eat it will make themselves unclean; for their bread ***will be*** for their appetite; it will not come ***into*** the house of the LORD. **5** What will you do for a day of appointed feast, and for the day of the festival of the LORD? **6** For look, they have gone from devastation; Egypt will gather them; Memphis (Mof) will bury them; the treasure of their silver, nettles will possess them; thorns ***will be*** in their tents. **7** The days of punishment have come; the days of retribution have come; let Israel know! The prophet ***is*** a fool; the man of the spirit ***is*** mad, because of the greatness of your iniquity, and great ***is the*** hostility. **8** Ephraim ***is*** a watchman with my God; ***as for*** the prophet, a trap of a fowler ***is*** on all his ways; hostility ***is*** in the house of his God. **9** They have made ***it*** deep; they have acted corruptly as ***in*** the days of Gibeah (Giva); He will remember their iniquity; He will punish their sins.

Grapes in the Wilderness

10 Like grapes in the wilderness I found Israel; like early fruit on a fig tree at its beginning I saw your fathers. They came ***to*** Baal-peor (Ba'al-Pe'or), and they devoted themselves to the shame, and they became detestable things like their love. **11** Ephraim, like the bird their glory will fly away: without birth, and without womb, and without conception. **12** For even if they bring up their sons, I will bereave them of man; for also, woe to them when I depart from them! **13** Ephraim, just as I have seen ***it*** toward Tyre (Tsor), ***is*** planted in a pasture; and Ephraim ***is*** to bring out his sons to a killer. **14** Give to them, LORD—what will You give? Give to them a miscarrying womb and shriveling breasts. **15** All their evil ***is*** in Gilgal, for there I hated them; because of the wickedness of their deeds I will drive them out of My house; I will not again love them; all their princes ***are*** rebellious. **16** Ephraim has been struck; their root has dried up; they will not produce fruit; even if they give birth, I will put to death the precious ***ones*** of their womb. **17** My God will reject them, for they have not listened to Him, and they will be wanderers among the nations.

HOSEA 10

A Luxuriant Vine

1 Israel (Yisra'el) ***is*** a luxuriant vine; he produces fruit for himself; according to the abundance of his fruit he has multiplied altars; according to the goodness of his land they have made sacred pillars good. **2** Their heart is smooth; now they will be held guilty; He will break the neck of their altars; He will destroy their sacred pillars. **3** For now they will say, "We have no king, for we have not feared the LORD; and the king, what will he do for us?" **4** They have spoken words, swearing falsely, making a covenant; and judgment sprouts like poisonous weed on the furrows of a field. **5** For the heifers of Beth-aven (Bet-Aven) the inhabitants of Samaria (Shomron) will be afraid; for its people will mourn over it, and its pagan priests will tremble over it, over its glory, for it has gone into

9:5 Isa 10:3; Jer 5:31; Hos 2:11
9:6 Hos 10:8; Isa 5:6; Hos 9:3
9:7 1 Cor 14:23; Mic 7:4; Isa 10:3
9:8 Ezek 3:17; Hos 5:1; Isa 62:6
9:9 Hos 10:9; Hos 8:13; Isa 31:6
9:10 Hos 4:14; Jer 11:13; Jer 2:2,3
9:11 Hos 9:14; Deut 28:18,57; Gen 41:52
9:12 Hos 7:13; Deut 31:17; Deut 32:25
9:13 Ezek 26:1-28; Hos 9:16; Hos 10:14
9:14 Luke 23:29; Matt 24:19; Mark 13:17
9:15 Hos 4:15; Hos 12:11; Isa 1:23
9:16 Hos 9:11-13; Ezek 24:21; Job 18:16
9:17 Acts 3:23; John 7:35; John 20:28
10:1 John 15:4; John 15:5; Isa 5:1-7
10:2 1 Kgs 18:21; Mic 5:13; Zeph 1:5
10:3 John 19:15; Hos 10:7,15; Hos 13:11
10:4 Amos 5:7; Amos 6:12; 2 Kgs 17:3,4
10:5 Hos 8:5,6; Hos 9:11; Hos 4:15

9:7 *The prophet is a fool; the man of the spirit is mad* Likely the people's words about Hosea. "Man of the spirit" was a title for a prophet. Jeremiah was called mad (Jer 29:26), Festus said Paul was out of his mind (Acts 26:24), and some said Jesus had lost His senses (Mark 3:21). People who love their sin will hate the one who points it out.
9:8 *Ephraim is a watchman with my God* The prophet was God's watchman on the wall (Ezek 3:17). Wherever Hosea went, even in the place of worship, people set traps for him.
9:9 *as in the days of Gibeah* The town where a Levite's concubine was abused and killed, leading to a war that nearly wiped out Benjamin (Judg 19-21). People said nothing like it had happened since the exodus (Judg 19:30). Israel had sunk that low again.
9:10 *Like grapes in the wilderness I found Israel* Picture finding a vine of ripe grapes in a desert, or the first figs of the season (Isa 28:4). That was God's joy in Israel at the exodus.
9:10 *they became detestable things like their love* At Baal-peor, on the plains of Moab, Israel joined Baal worship and sexual sin (Num 25:1-3). "The shame" is Hosea's word for Baal. We become like what we love and worship (Ps 115:8). What do you love most? You will become like it.
9:11 *like the bird their glory will fly away* Ephraim's name comes from being fruitful (Gen 41:52), and its glory was its many people. They worshiped Baal to get children and would get fewer.
9:14 *Give to them a miscarrying womb and shriveling breasts* Hosea's prayer breaks off as though he cannot find words. He is not hoping for suffering. He knows war is coming on the young, and it would be kinder for children not to be born only to die by the sword. Jesus spoke of days when the barren would be called blessed (Luke 23:29). This is the prayer of a breaking heart.
9:15 *All their evil is in Gilgal* Israel's first camp in the land (Josh 4:19) and where Saul was made king (1 Sam 11:15), now a center of false worship (4:15; 12:11). God would put them out of His house, the land, like an unfaithful wife. "I will not again love them" speaks of withdrawn favor from that generation. It does not cancel His promise for Israel's future (11:8-9; 14:4).
9:16 *I will put to death the precious ones of their womb* A hard verse describing what the Assyrian invasion would do to the young. God says He will do it because He brings the judgment. Scripture does not hide how terrible judgment is, so that we take sin seriously and turn while there is time.
9:17 *they will be wanderers among the nations* Hosea says "my God." He still belonged to God, while they had cut themselves off. After 722 B.C. the north was scattered across Assyria (2 Kgs 17:6), as Moses warned (Deut 28:64). The Jewish people have often been wanderers since, but God will gather them again (11:10-11).
10:1 *Israel is a luxuriant vine; he produces fruit for himself* Israel the vine (Ps 80:8-11; Isa 5:1-7) was full of fruit under Jeroboam II, but the fruit was for himself. The richer they got, the more they spent on altars and sacred pillars, standing stones at shrines God said to tear down (Deut 12:3). Blessing often leads people away from God (Deut 8:12-14).
10:2 *Their heart is smooth* Divided or slippery, like a smooth stone that slides from your hand. They wanted God and Baal both. God would break the neck of their altars.
10:5 *For the heifers of Beth-aven the inhabitants of Samaria will be afraid* The calf at Bethel (4:15). The god they trusted to protect them was the thing they feared for, and its pagan priests would weep as it went into exile.

exile from it. **6** Also it will be carried to Assyria (Ashur) ***as*** tribute to King Jareb (Yarev); Ephraim (Efrayim) will receive shame, and Israel will be ashamed of its own counsel. **7** Samaria is destroyed; her king ***is*** like a twig on the face of waters. **8** And the high places of Aven, the sin of Israel, will be destroyed; thorn and thistle will go up over their altars; and they will say to the mountains, "Cover us!" and to the hills, "Fall on us!"

Break Up Your Fallow Ground

9 Since the days of Gibeah (Giva) you have sinned, Israel; there they have stood; will not battle overtake them in Gibeah against the sons of injustice? **10** When I desire, I will discipline them, and peoples will be gathered against them when they are bound to their two iniquities. **11** And Ephraim ***is*** a trained heifer ***that*** loves to thresh, and I, I passed over the goodness of her neck; I will harness Ephraim; Judah (Yehuda) will plow; Jacob (Ya'aqov) will harrow for himself. **12** Sow for yourselves for righteousness; reap according to steadfast love; break up for yourselves fallow ground; and ***it is*** time to seek the LORD, until He comes and rains righteousness for you. **13** You have plowed wickedness; you have reaped unrighteousness; you have eaten the fruit of lying, for you have trusted in your way, in the multitude of your mighty men. **14** And an uproar will arise among your people, and all your fortresses will be devastated, like Shalman's devastation of Beth-arbel (Bet-Arvel) in a day of battle; a mother was dashed in pieces with ***her*** sons. **15** Thus he has done to you, Bethel (Bet-El), because of the evil of your evil; at dawn the king of Israel will be utterly destroyed.

HOSEA 11

Out of Egypt I Called My Son

1 For Israel (Yisra'el) ***was*** a youth, and I loved him, and out of Egypt (Mitsrayim) I called My son. **2** They called to them; so they went from before them; to the Baals they sacrificed, and to the carved images they burned incense. **3** And I, I taught Ephraim (Efrayim) to walk, taking them on his arms; and they did not know that I healed them. **4** With cords of man I drew them, with ropes of love; and I was to them like ***those who*** lift a yoke on their jaws, and I bent down to him; I fed ***him***. **5** He will not return to the land of Egypt, and Assyria (Ashur), he ***will be*** his king, because they have refused to return. **6** And a sword will whirl in his cities, and it will put an end to his bars, and it will devour ***them*** because of their schemes. **7** And My people are hung up on apostasy from Me; and they call him to ***the*** height; together he will not exalt ***him***.

10:6 Hos 5:13; Isa 30:3; Dan 11:8
10:7 Hos 10:3,15; 1 Kgs 21:1; 2 Kgs 1:3
10:8 Luke 23:30; Rev 6:16; Hos 9:6
10:9 Hos 9:9; Judg 19:22-30; Judg 20:5,13,14
10:10 Ezek 5:13; Jer 16:16; Deut 28:63
10:11 Hos 4:16; Jer 50:11; Deut 25:4
10:12 2 Cor 9:10; Jer 4:3,4; Prov 11:18
10:13 Job 4:8; Gal 6:7,8; Ps 33:16
10:14 Hos 13:16; Isa 22:1-4; Isa 33:14
10:15 Hos 10:5; Amos 7:9-17; Rom 7:13
11:1 Matt 2:15; Acts 2:10; Exod 4:22
11:2 Hos 2:13; Jer 18:15; Isa 65:7
11:3 Deut 1:31; Jer 30:17; Exod 15:26
11:4 Lev 26:13; John 12:32; Song 1:4
11:5 Hos 7:16; Hos 8:13; Hos 9:3,6
11:6 Hos 13:16; Hos 10:14; Hos 10:6
11:7 Matt 23:37; Luke 13:34; Jer 8:5

10:6 *it will be carried to Assyria as tribute to King Jareb* The golden calf loaded on a cart as a gift to Assyria's king (5:13). A god that has to be carried cannot save itself. Isaiah mocks Babylon's gods on weary animals, while our God carries His people (Isa 46:1-4).
10:7 *her king is like a twig on the face of waters* A twig on a flooding river spins helplessly and is swept away, like Hoshea, Israel's last king (2 Kgs 17:4).
10:8 *they will say to the mountains, "Cover us!" and to the hills, "Fall on us!"* Aven, wickedness, is Bethel again. The terror would be so great people would rather be buried alive. Jesus used these words of Jerusalem's coming destruction (Luke 23:30), and in the Tribulation people cry to the mountains to hide them "from the wrath of the Lamb" (Rev 6:16). Hosea's words about Samaria look ahead to a greater day of the LORD.
10:11 *Ephraim is a trained heifer that loves to thresh* Threshing was easy work, walking in circles and eating as she went (Deut 25:4). God had spared her neck the yoke. Now the easy days were over, and plowing and harrowing under a yoke would come.
10:12 *break up for yourselves fallow ground* The heart of the chapter. Fallow ground is left unplowed until it is hard and weedy (Jer 4:3). It pictures a heart grown hard toward God. Breaking it is painful: confessing sin, turning from it, letting God's Word go deep. Sowing righteousness does not earn God's hesed, but the one who turns finds it waiting. Now is the time (2 Cor 6:2). Is there fallow ground in your heart?
10:12 *until He comes and rains righteousness for you* The farmer plows and plants but cannot make it rain. We cannot make ourselves righteous. We seek Him, and He gives it (Isa 45:8), as He does in Christ, who became our righteousness (1 Cor 1:30).
10:14 *like Shalman's devastation of Beth-arbel* We do not know for sure who or where. Many think Shalman is Shalmaneser V, who began the siege of Samaria (2 Kgs 17:3-5). Others think of a Moabite king named in an Assyrian record. Hosea's hearers knew it as a byword for horror, and he says plainly what war would mean.
10:15 *at dawn the king of Israel will be utterly destroyed* Bethel, house of God, where the calf stood, would be the cause of Israel's ruin. As fast as night gives way to morning, the king and the kingdom would be gone, and within a few years it happened.
11:1 *out of Egypt I called My son* Hosea looks back seven hundred years to the exodus, when God said, Israel is My firstborn son (Exod 4:22-23). God's love came first, not because Israel was great but because He chose to (Deut 7:7-8). Matthew says Jesus fulfilled this verse when He came back from Egypt after Herod's death (Matt 2:15). "Fulfill" is wider than a prediction coming true. It means filling a pattern to its full meaning. Israel was God's son by calling, and Jesus is His Son by nature.
11:1 *For Israel was a youth, and I loved him* Matthew traces the pattern. Israel passed through the sea, and Jesus was baptized and called the beloved Son (Matt 3:17). Israel failed forty years of testing in the wilderness, and Jesus did not fail forty days, answering from Deuteronomy (Matt 4:1-11). Hosea's own book points ahead to a new exodus under David's Son (3:5; 11:11). This does not mean Jesus replaces Israel. He is Israel's Messiah and will keep every promise to the nation (Rom 15:8). The whole Old Testament is one story about Him (Luke 24:27).
11:2 *They called to them; so they went from before them* The more the prophets called, the more Israel walked away, like a child who runs the other way every time his name is called. Some grow harder the more they hear God's call, so never put off answering Him.
11:3 *I, I taught Ephraim to walk, taking them on his arms* Picture a father holding a little boy's hands for his first steps and scooping him up when he falls. God carried Israel as a man carries his son (Deut 1:31). They did not know He healed them. How often has God protected us without our ever knowing?
11:4 *With cords of man I drew them, with ropes of love* God did not drive Israel with whips. He drew them gently. A kind farmer lifts the yoke off his ox at the end of the day, and God bent down to feed them, as with the manna (Exod 16). This is the God of the Old Testament, the same God Jesus showed us (John 14:9).

How Can I Give You Up?

8 How will I give you up, Ephraim? Will I deliver you up, Israel? How will I make you like Admah (Adma)? Will I set you like Zeboiim (Tsevoyim)? My heart is overturned within Me; together My compassions have grown warm. **9** I will not carry out the burning of My anger; I will not again destroy Ephraim; for I ***am*** God and not man, ***the*** Holy ***One*** in your midst, and I will not come in rage. **10** They will walk after the LORD; He will roar like a lion; for He will roar, and sons will tremble from the west. **11** They will tremble like a bird from Egypt, and like a dove from the land of Assyria; and I will cause them to dwell in their houses, declares the LORD. **12** Ephraim has surrounded Me with lying, and the house of Israel with deceit; and Judah (Yehuda) still roams with God, and with ***the*** Holy Ones ***he is*** faithful.

HOSEA 12

Jacob's Story and Ephraim's Sin

1 Ephraim (Efrayim) feeds ***on*** wind and pursues an east wind; all the day he multiplies lies and devastation; and they make a covenant with Assyria (Ashur), and oil is carried to Egypt (Mitsrayim). **2** And the LORD has a case with Judah (Yehuda), and ***is*** to punish Jacob (Ya'aqov) according to his ways; according to his deeds He will repay him. **3** In the womb he took his brother by the heel, and in his vigor he struggled with God. **4** And he struggled with ***the*** angel and prevailed; he wept and sought His favor; at Bethel (Bet-El) He found him, and there He spoke with us. **5** And the LORD, the God of armies, the LORD ***is*** His memorial. **6** And you, by your God you will return; keep steadfast love and justice, and wait for your God continually. **7** Canaan (Kena'an)! In his hand ***are*** scales of deceit; he loves to oppress. **8** And Ephraim has said, "Surely I have become rich; I have found wealth for myself; ***in*** all my toils they will not find in me iniquity that ***is*** sin." **9** And I ***am*** the LORD your God from the land of Egypt; again I will make you dwell in tents as ***in*** the days of an appointed feast. **10** And I have spoken to the prophets, and I, I multiplied vision, and by the hand of the prophets I give parables. **11** If Gilead (Gilad) ***is*** wickedness, surely they have become worthlessness; in Gilgal they have sacrificed bulls; also their altars ***are*** like heaps of stones on the furrows of a field.

11:8 Matt 23:37; Luke 22:61; Gen 14:8
11:9 Num 23:19; Jer 30:11; Isa 12:6
11:10 Isa 31:4; Jer 25:30; Joel 3:16
11:11 Isa 11:11; Isa 60:8; Zech 10:10
11:12 Rev 3:21; Hos 7:16; Hos 12:1,7
12:1 Jer 22:22; Hos 11:12; Hos 5:13
12:2 Hos 4:1; Mic 6:2; Jer 25:31
12:3 Gen 25:26; Gen 32:24-28; Rom 9:11
12:4 Gen 32:29; Gen 48:15; Exod 3:2-5
12:5 Exod 3:15; Gen 28:16; Gen 32:30
12:6 Mic 6:8; Hos 14:1; Joel 2:13
12:7 Prov 11:1; Ezek 16:3; Zech 14:21
12:8 Rev 3:17; Ps 62:10; Zech 11:5
12:9 Lev 23:40-43; Hos 13:4; Neh 8:15-17
12:10 Acts 2:17; 2 Kgs 17:13; Ezek 20:49
12:11 Hos 6:8; Hos 4:15; Hos 8:11

11:8 *How will I give you up, Ephraim?* One of the most moving passages in Scripture. Israel deserved judgment, and God stops, as if He cannot do it. Admah and Zeboiim were destroyed with Sodom (Gen 14:2; Deut 29:23). "Overturned" is the word for Sodom's overthrow (Gen 19:25). God overturned those cities, but with Israel His own heart is overturned (Jer 31:20). God does not change or swing with moods as we do, but He is not cold. He loves.

11:9 *for I am God and not man* A man betrayed this many times would walk away. God's love does not run out. He is the Holy One, wholly other, and part of His holiness is keeping His promises when we break ours. Judgment would come, but not total destruction. A remnant, a part kept by God, would remain. Have you thought you pushed God too far? He is not a man.

11:10 *He will roar like a lion* In 5:14 the lion tore. Here He roars to call His children home, and they come trembling from the west, the coastlands and islands.

11:11 *They will tremble like a bird from Egypt, and like a dove from the land of Assyria* The silly dove of 7:11 comes flying home. Most of the northern tribes never returned after the exile, and Israel has never been gathered from west, Egypt and Assyria together to live in peace (Isa 11:11-12). I believe this is still to come, when the Lord Jesus returns and gathers Israel to her land for His kingdom (Matt 24:31).

11:12 *Judah still roams with God, and with the Holy Ones he is faithful* In the Hebrew Bible this verse begins chapter 12. The line is hard. The SLB reads it as praise for Judah, still walking with God compared to Ephraim, while other translations read it as a charge that Judah too wanders. Since 12:2 brings a case against Judah, her faithfulness was not complete, but under kings like Uzziah and Hezekiah she had not fallen as far.

12:1 *Ephraim feeds on wind and pursues an east wind* The east wind blows hot and dry off the desert and withers crops. Ephraim made a treaty with Assyria while sending olive oil to Egypt, as Hoshea served Assyria and secretly turned to Egypt (2 Kgs 17:3-4). Playing both sides brought ruin.

12:3 *In the womb he took his brother by the heel* Jacob came out grasping Esau's heel (Gen 25:26). His name sounds like heel and came to mean one who grabs from behind, a cheat (Gen 27:36). He took the birthright and the blessing.

12:4 *he struggled with the angel and prevailed; he wept and sought His favor* At the Jabbok Jacob wrestled all night and was named Israel, and he said he had seen God face to face (Gen 32:28-30). Hosea calls the One he wrestled God and "the angel," and many teachers see the Angel of the LORD, the Son of God before His birth. Genesis says Jacob would not let go until blessed (Gen 32:26), and Hosea shows the tears. The grabber finally clung to God in weakness. That is how he prevailed, and his children could do the same.

12:4 *at Bethel He found him, and there He spoke with us* Where God met Jacob in the dream of the ladder and again on his return (Gen 28:10-19; 35:9-15). What God said to Jacob, He said to all his children. The irony is that Bethel now held the golden calf (10:15).

12:5 *the LORD, the God of armies, the LORD is His memorial* The commander of heaven's armies. "Memorial" is the name by which He is remembered (Exod 3:15). Israel called on Baal, and Hosea reminds them of the name of the God who met their father.

12:6 *keep steadfast love and justice, and wait for your God continually* Return to God by His help. Hesed toward God and others, justice for the weak, and waiting on God instead of grabbing for yourself (Mic 6:8). Waiting was hard for Jacob and is hard for us, but those who wait on the LORD gain strength (Isa 40:31).

12:7 *In his hand are scales of deceit* Canaan can also mean merchant, since Canaanites were known as traders (12:7 opens with the one word "Canaan!"). Ephraim had become like the people God drove out. A cheat kept a heavy weight for buying and a light one for selling, which the Law forbade (Deut 25:13-16; Amos 8:5).

12:8 *Surely I have become rich* Ephraim gave himself the credit and thought he was clean because the books balanced. Laodicea said the same and did not know it was poor and blind (Rev 3:17). Money can hide sin from others but not from God.

12:9 *again I will make you dwell in tents as in the days of an appointed feast* The Feast of Booths, when Israel lived a week in huts to remember the wilderness (Lev 23:42-43). God would take away their fine houses. It is judgment, but also a fresh start, back where Israel first knew Him (2:14).

12:11 *their altars are like heaps of stones on the furrows of a field* Gilead was known for violence (6:8) and Gilgal for false worship (9:15). Altars were as common as the stone piles a farmer clears to the field's edge, and just as worthless. In Hebrew Gilgal sounds like the word for heaps of stones.

12 And Jacob fled ***to*** the field of Syria (Aram), and Israel (Yisra'el) served for a wife, and for a wife he kept ***sheep***. **13** And by a prophet the LORD brought Israel up from Egypt, and by a prophet he was kept. **14** Ephraim has provoked ***Him*** to anger bitterly; and his blood He will leave on him, and his reproach his Lord will repay to him.

HOSEA 13

Ephraim's Fall

1 When Ephraim (Efrayim) spoke, ***there was*** trembling; he lifted ***himself*** up in Israel (Yisra'el); and he became guilty through Baal, and he died. **2** And now they increase to sin, and they have made for themselves a molten image from their silver, idols according to their skill, the work of craftsmen, all of it. Of them they are saying, "Sacrificers of man kiss calves!" **3** Therefore they will become like a cloud of morning, and like the dew rising early, going ***away***, like chaff storm-driven from a threshing floor, and like smoke from a window. **4** And I ***am*** the LORD your God from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim), and gods besides Me you do not know, and there is no savior except Me. **5** I, I knew you in the wilderness, in a land of droughts. **6** According to their pasture, and they were satisfied; they were satisfied, and their heart was exalted; therefore they forgot Me. **7** And I have become to them like a lion; like a leopard on a road I will watch. **8** I will meet them like a bear robbed of cubs, and I will tear the enclosure of their heart, and I will devour them there like a lion; the living thing of the field will rip them open.

The Ransom from Death

9 It has destroyed you, Israel, for ***you are*** against Me, against your help. **10** Where ***is*** your king now, that he may save you in all your cities, and your judges, of whom you said, "Give me a king and princes"? **11** I give you a king in My anger, and I take ***him*** away in My wrath. **12** The iniquity of Ephraim ***is*** bound up; his sin ***is*** stored up. **13** The pains of ***one*** giving birth will come to him; he ***is*** a son not wise, for ***at the*** time he will not stand at the breaking forth of sons. **14** From the hand of Sheol I will ransom them; from death I will redeem them. Where ***are*** your plagues, death? Where ***is*** your destruction, Sheol? Compassion will be hidden from My eyes. **15** For he is fruitful among brothers; an east wind will come, the wind of the LORD, coming up from the wilderness; and his fountain will dry up, and his spring will be dried up; it will

12:12 Gen 27:43; Gen 29:18-28; Gen 28:1-29
12:13 Acts 7:34; Acts 7:36; Exod 12:50,51
12:14 Ezek 18:13; Dan 11:18; 2 Kgs 17:7-18
13:1 Rom 11:4; Hos 11:2; 1 Sam 15:17
13:2 Hos 2:8; Isa 46:6; Jer 10:4
13:3 Hos 6:4; Ps 1:4; Ps 68:2
13:4 Hos 12:9; Isa 45:21,22; Exod 20:2
13:5 Deut 2:7; Deut 8:15; Deut 32:10
13:6 Deut 32:13-15; Hos 10:1; Deut 8:12-14
13:7 Hos 5:14; Jer 5:6; Lam 3:10
13:8 2 Sam 17:8; Prov 17:12; Amos 9:1-3
13:9 Jer 2:17,19; Deut 33:26; Hos 14:1
13:10 John 1:49; Acts 13:22; Hos 8:4
13:11 Acts 13:22; 1 Sam 10:19; Hos 10:3
13:12 Deut 32:34,35; Job 14:17; Rom 2:5
13:13 1 Thess 5:3; John 16:21; Isa 13:8
13:14 1 Cor 15:55; John 16:21; 1 Cor 15:54
13:15 Ezek 19:12; Ezek 17:10; Gen 41:52

12:12 *for a wife he kept sheep* Jacob ran to Syria and worked fourteen years as a shepherd for Rachel (Gen 28:5; 29:20, 30). The proud forefather was once a poor runaway and hired hand, which Ephraim, boasting of wealth, should remember.

12:13 *by a prophet the LORD brought Israel up from Egypt* Moses (Deut 34:10). Jacob "kept" sheep, and God "kept" Israel through a prophet, and now they rejected God's prophets (9:7-8). Moses foretold a prophet like himself (Deut 18:15), and Peter says it is Jesus (Acts 3:22-26).

13:1 *When Ephraim spoke, there was trembling* Ephraim was the strongest northern tribe, home of Joshua and of Jeroboam I (1 Kgs 11:26), and the others listened when it spoke. Its turn to Baal was the start of its death. In God's eyes it was already dead. Sin brings death (Rom 6:23), and it begins long before the funeral.

13:2 *Sacrificers of man kiss calves* Hard to translate. The SLB reads it as a mocking saying: those who sacrifice kiss the calf idols, a sign of worship (1 Kgs 19:18). Picture grown men bending to kiss a metal calf. Some read it as those who sacrifice human beings, child sacrifice, which some in Israel did (2 Kgs 17:17). Either way it shows how far they had fallen. Skill does not make a god (8:6).

13:3 *like smoke from a window* The words of 6:4 again: their love vanished like mist, and now they will too. Chaff is the husk blown away when grain is tossed. Houses had no chimneys, so smoke drifted out a window and was gone.

13:4 *there is no savior except Me* The first commandment again (Exod 20:2-3; Isa 43:11). The New Testament gives the title Savior to Jesus, and there is salvation in no other (Acts 4:12). If there is no savior but the LORD, and Jesus is the Savior, then Jesus is the LORD.

13:6 *they were satisfied, and their heart was exalted; therefore they forgot Me* The steps of a fall: fed, full, proud, forgetful, just as Moses warned (Deut 8:10-14). When we are hungry we pray, and when full we forget (Prov 30:8-9). Has comfort ever made you forget God?

13:8 *I will meet them like a bear robbed of cubs* The Shepherd becomes like the beasts that attack the flock: a leopard hidden by the path, a mother bear robbed of her cubs (2 Sam 17:8). The pictures are meant to frighten. God is not a tame God. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God (Heb 10:31).

13:10 *Where is your king now* Hoshea, the last king, was in an Assyrian prison (2 Kgs 17:4). Israel had demanded a king to be like the nations (1 Sam 8:5-7) and chosen its own (1 Kgs 12:20).

13:11 *I give you a king in My anger, and I take him away in My wrath* God gave Saul when asking for a king was a rejection of Him, and now He would take Israel's last king. The kings God allows can be judgment as much as gift.

13:13 *he will not stand at the breaking forth of sons* The picture turns: Ephraim is a baby who will not come out of the womb when it is time. The moment for new birth, to repent and live, had come, and he stayed where he was. Some things must happen at the right time or they are lost.

13:14 *From the hand of Sheol I will ransom them; from death I will redeem them* Sheol is the place of the dead. To ransom and redeem mean to set free by paying a price. Teachers read this two ways. Some read the first lines as questions with the answer no, with death called to bring its plagues and God's pity hidden this time, which fits the verses around it. Others, as the SLB reads, see a promise: God will free His people from death, taunt death as a defeated enemy, and not change His mind.

13:14 *Where are your plagues, death? Where is your destruction, Sheol?* Paul takes up these words for the resurrection of believers, "Where, O death, is your sting?" (1 Cor 15:55), using the Greek wording, where Hades is the Greek for Sheol. Whatever Hosea's first hearers understood, God's full purpose here is triumph. Jesus paid the ransom (Mark 10:45) and came out of death. I believe that when Christ comes for His church, the dead in Christ will be raised and the living changed in a moment (1 Cor 15:51-52; 1 Thess 4:16-17), and this verse will ring out in full.

plunder the treasury of every precious article. **16** Samaria (Shomron) will be held guilty, for she has rebelled against her God; they will fall by the sword; their infants will be dashed in pieces, and its pregnant women will be ripped open.

HOSEA 14

Return, O Israel

1 Return, Israel (Yisra'el), to the LORD your God, for you have stumbled in your iniquity. **2** Take words with you and return to the LORD; say to Him, "You will forgive all iniquity; and receive good, and let us pay bulls, our lips. **3** Assyria (Ashur) will not save us; on horses we will not ride; and we will not say again, 'Our gods,' to the work of our hands; for in You the fatherless is shown compassion." **4** I will heal their apostasy; I will love them freely, for My anger has turned away from him. **5** I will be like the dew to Israel; he will blossom like the lily, and he will strike his roots like Lebanon (Levanon). **6** His young shoots will go ***forth***, and his splendor will be like the olive tree, and his fragrance like Lebanon. **7** Those who dwell in his shade will return; they will make grain live, and they will blossom like the vine; his memorial ***will be*** like the wine of Lebanon. **8** Ephraim (Efrayim), what ***have*** I ***to do*** anymore with idols? I, I have answered, and I will watch over him; I ***am*** like a luxuriant cypress; from Me your fruit is found. **9** Who ***is*** wise, and let him understand these ***things***; discerning, and let him know them? For the ways of the LORD ***are*** upright, and the righteous walk in them, and transgressors stumble in them.

13:16 2 Kgs 8:12; 2 Kgs 15:16; Isa 13:16
14:1 Hos 6:1; Hos 12:6; 2 Chr 30:6-9
14:2 Heb 13:15; Matt 7:11; Luke 11:13
14:3 Ps 10:14; Ps 68:5; Ps 33:17
14:4 Matt 13:15; John 12:40; Isa 57:18
14:5 Isa 35:2; Matt 6:28; Deut 32:2
14:6 Ps 52:8; Ps 80:9-11; Ezek 17:5-8
14:7 Ps 91:1; Song 2:3; Isa 32:1,2
14:8 John 1:48; John 15:2; John 15:4
14:9 Luke 4:28; Acts 13:10; Acts 18:25

13:16 *their infants will be dashed in pieces* One of the hardest verses in the Bible. It describes what the Assyrians, known for cruelty, would do when Samaria fell, horrors Israelites had also done (2 Kgs 15:16; Amos 1:13). God does not approve cruelty to children. He hates innocent blood (Prov 6:16-17) and later judged Assyria for it (Nah 3:1, 19). When a people turns from God, He may let them fall into cruel hands, and the innocent suffer with the guilty. It should break our hearts and show what it cost Jesus to bear judgment. I believe little children who die are safe with God (2 Sam 12:23).

14:1 *Return, Israel, to the LORD your God* The call the whole book builds toward. After Baal, the calves, the murders and the lies, He is still "the LORD your God," waiting at the door. Iniquity is crookedness, sin that twists what is right. Israel fell by its own sin, not bad luck. As long as we blame others, we cannot come home.

14:2 *Take words with you and return to the LORD* Repentance is put into words. That is confession, saying to God what is true about our sin (1 John 1:9). God even gives the words, and the first is faith in His forgiveness: "all iniquity," not some. Instead of bulls He rejected (6:6), they offer their lips, a sacrifice of praise (Heb 13:15). Because Christ made the one sacrifice for sin (Heb 10:10-14), we bring thanks.

14:3 *Assyria will not save us; on horses we will not ride* Three false hopes named and given up: foreign kings, military might (Isa 31:1) and man-made gods. Repentance is also turning from what we trusted in place of God. What would you need to name and give up?

14:3 *in You the fatherless is shown compassion* "Shown compassion" echoes the name No Mercy (1:6). God is a father of the fatherless (Ps 68:5). No one is too alone or too lost to be loved by Him.

14:4 *I will heal their apostasy; I will love them freely* The key verse of the book. Israel went to Assyria for healing (5:13), but only God can heal. Their backsliding was a disease, and He will cure it at the root with a new heart (Jer 31:33; Ezek 36:26). "Freely" means as a gift, not wages. Israel loved for pay (2:12), and God loves for nothing (Rom 3:24). He does not say, fix yourself and then I will love you.

14:4 *My anger has turned away from him* How? The New Testament answers. God's anger against sin fell on His Son, the propitiation, the sacrifice that turns away wrath (Rom 3:25; 1 John 2:2).

14:5 *I will be like the dew to Israel* Summer has almost no rain, and the night dew keeps plants alive. Israel's love vanished like dew (6:4), and now God Himself will be the dew that never fails. Beauty above like the lily, and strength below like Lebanon's deep-rooted cedars.

14:7 *Those who dwell in his shade will return* Every picture of judgment is reversed: the wasted vine blossoms (2:12), the grain lives (8:7), the dried root goes deep (9:16). Israel has never yet been this fruitful, faithful people. I believe this looks to the day Israel returns to the LORD and David their king (3:5), when Christ reigns and all Israel is saved (Rom 11:26). Every believer who comes back to God can taste this new life now.

14:8 *Ephraim, what have I to do anymore with idols?* The SLB reads it as God speaking. It may also be Ephraim's own words, finally done with idols. Either way, the long affair with Baal is over.

14:8 *I am like a luxuriant cypress; from Me your fruit is found* An evergreen, never dry or bare. Many note this is the only place in the Old Testament where God compares Himself to a tree. Israel gave Baal the credit for its fruit, but every bit comes from God. Apart from Christ we can do nothing (John 15:5).

14:9 *the righteous walk in them, and transgressors stumble in them* The closing words of a wise teacher. Hosea is a book to be understood and lived. God's ways are upright, and the same road brings life to the righteous and a fall to rebels (Ps 1:6). Jesus is a precious cornerstone to believers and a stone of stumbling to the disobedient (1 Pet 2:6-8). Will you walk in God's ways or stumble over them?

JOEL

Introduction

Title

The book is named for its prophet, Joel son of Pethuel. His name means the LORD is God, a fitting name for a man sent to a land stripped bare and tempted to look elsewhere for rain and harvest. Joel is the second of the twelve Minor Prophets. It is a short book of three chapters, but it has one of the clearest messages in all the prophets, and Peter quoted it on the day the church was born.

Author and Date

The book opens, "The word of the LORD that came to Joel the son of Pethuel" (1:1), and that is all we know about him. He seems to have lived in or near Jerusalem, since he speaks often of Zion, the temple, the priests and the altar. Jewish and Christian tradition hold that Joel wrote the book. Some modern scholars think a later writer added the second half. I take it as one message from one prophet, since the day of the LORD and the locust army run all through it.

Joel names no king and gives no date, so good Bible teachers disagree. Many conservative scholars date him about 835 to 800 B.C., in the early years of King Joash, when the priest Jehoiada guided the boy king. That would explain why Joel speaks to elders and priests and never mentions a king, and the enemies he names (Tyre, Sidon, Philistia, Egypt and Edom) fit that early time. Others date him after the exile, about 500 to 400 B.C., when the temple stood but Judah had no king, and they read 3:1-2 as looking back on the exile. This study follows the early date, as the SLB introduction does, while holding it loosely. The meaning of the book does not change either way.

Background and Setting

Judah had been struck by a locust plague like nothing anyone alive had seen (1:2). Locusts are a kind of grasshopper that sometimes gather into enormous swarms that can strip a whole region of every green thing in hours. Wave after wave came (1:4). Drought followed, with wildfires in the pastures (1:19-20). The farmers were ruined, the animals starved, and the grain and drink offerings at the temple had to stop because there was nothing to offer (1:9, 13). God had warned through Moses that locusts would come if His people turned from Him (Deut 28:38), and Solomon had prayed about such a day when he dedicated the temple (2 Chr 7:13-14).

Joel spoke to the elders, the priests, the farmers, the drinkers of wine and "all inhabitants of the land" (1:2), and he told them to pass the story on to their children's children (1:3).

Themes

The theme of Joel is the day of the LORD and the call to return to God before it comes. The phrase appears five times (1:15; 2:1, 11, 31; 3:14). In the prophets the day of the LORD can mean a judgment God brings in history, like the locusts, and it also means the great and final day at the end of this age, when God judges the nations and sets up His kingdom. Joel moves from the first to the second. This study holds that the final day of the LORD includes the seven-year Tribulation and the return of Christ to judge and reign, and that the church will be taken up to be with Christ before that time of wrath begins (1 Thess 4:16-17; 5:9).

At the center of the book is the call to repent from the heart: "tear your heart and not your garments, and return to the LORD your God; for He is gracious and merciful" (2:13). When the people pray, the LORD answers with promise after promise. He will drive away the northern army, send the rain, and repay the years the locusts ate (2:25). Afterward He will pour out His Spirit on all flesh (2:28). Then He will gather the nations to the valley of decision, judge them for how they treated His people, and dwell in Zion forever (3:2, 14, 21). God has a future for Israel and Jerusalem.

Christ in Joel

On the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit came on the disciples in Jerusalem, Peter said, "this is that which has been spoken through the prophet Joel" (Acts 2:16), and he quoted Joel 2:28-32. The Spirit Joel promised was poured out because Jesus had died, risen and been exalted to the Father's right hand (Acts 2:32-33). Peter and Paul both apply Joel's promise that everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved to calling on the Lord Jesus (Acts 2:21, 36; Rom 10:9-13). The LORD of Joel 2:32 is Jesus. Joel's picture of the LORD judging the nations, treading the winepress and reigning in Zion looks ahead to the return of Christ as King (Rev 14:14-20; 19:11-16).

Hard Passages

When was Joel written? The early and later dates are both held by people who trust the Bible. The notes follow the early date loosely.

Who is the army of chapter 2? Some see the locusts pictured as an army, others a human army from the north pictured as locusts, and others the armies of the last days. Many join the first and third readings, and the notes name them all.

Was Joel 2:28-32 fulfilled at Pentecost? The notes give the view of this study: Pentecost was a true first fulfillment, as Peter said, and the signs in the sky and the rescue of Israel on Zion will be fulfilled in full at the end of the Tribulation. They also name the views that see it fully fulfilled in the church age or see Pentecost as only a sample.

Is the valley of decision (3:14) about people deciding for Christ? The notes explain that the decision there is God's verdict on the nations, which makes the call of 2:32 urgent today.

Outline

I. The Locust Plague and the Day of the LORD (1:1-2:17)
  A. A disaster to tell your children (1:1-12)
  B. A call to fast and pray (1:13-20)
  C. The army of the LORD (2:1-11)
  D. Return with all your heart (2:12-17)
II. The LORD's Answer, Now and in the Last Days (2:18-3:21)
  A. The LORD restores the land (2:18-27)
  B. The promise of the Spirit (2:28-32)
  C. The nations judged in the valley of Jehoshaphat (3:1-16)
  D. The LORD dwells in Zion (3:17-21)

JOEL

JOEL 1

The Locust Plague

1 The word of the LORD that came to Joel (Yo'el) the son of Pethuel (Petu'el). **2** Hear this, elders, and give ear, all inhabitants of the land! Has this happened in your days, or in the days of your fathers? **3** Concerning it recount to your sons, and your sons to their sons, and their sons to another generation. **4** The remainder of the cutting locust the swarming locust has eaten; and the remainder of the swarming locust the hopping locust has eaten; and the remainder of the hopping locust the destroying locust has eaten. **5** Wake up, drunkards, and weep, and wail, all drinkers of wine, over sweet wine, for it has been cut off from your mouth. **6** For a nation has come up against my land, mighty, and there is no number; its teeth ***are*** the teeth of a lion, and the fangs of a lioness ***are*** its. **7** It has made my vine into a waste, and my fig tree into splinters; it has stripped it completely bare and thrown ***it*** away; its branches have become white. **8** Wail like a virgin girded with sackcloth over the husband of her youth. **9** Grain offering and drink offering have been cut off from the house of the LORD; the priests, the ministers of the LORD, mourn. **10** ***The*** field is devastated; ***the*** ground mourns; for ***the*** grain is devastated, ***the*** new wine has dried up, ***the*** fresh oil languishes. **11** Be ashamed, farmers; wail, vinedressers, over wheat and over barley, for the harvest of ***the*** field has perished. **12** The vine has dried up, and the fig tree languishes; pomegranate, also palm, and apple tree, all the trees of the field have dried up; for joy has withered away from the sons of mankind.

A Call to Fast and Pray

13 Gird yourselves and lament, priests; wail, ministers of the altar; come, spend the night in sackcloth, ministers of my God; for grain offering and drink offering are withheld from the house of your God. **14** Sanctify a fast; call a solemn assembly; gather ***the*** elders, all the inhabitants of the land, ***to*** the house of the LORD your God, and cry out to the LORD. **15** Alas for the day! For the day of the LORD ***is*** near, and like devastation from the Almighty it will come. **16** Is not food cut off before our eyes, joy and rejoicing from the house of our God? **17** The seeds have shriveled under their clods; the storehouses are desolate; the granaries are torn down, for the grain has dried up. **18** How the beasts groan! The herds of cattle wander in confusion, for there is no pasture for

1:1 Acts 2:16; Jer 1:2; Ezek 1:3
1:2 Rev 2:7; Hos 5:1; Joel 2:2
1:3 Deut 6:7; Ps 78:3-8; Exod 10:1,2
1:4 Joel 2:25; Amos 4:9; Exod 10:4
1:5 Isa 24:7-11; James 5:1; Amos 6:3-7
1:6 Rev 9:8; Joel 2:2-11,25; Prov 30:25-27
1:7 Isa 5:6; Joel 1:12; Exod 10:15
1:8 Isa 22:12; Joel 1:13-15; Joel 2:12-14
1:9 Joel 2:14; Joel 2:17; Joel 1:13,16
1:10 Hos 4:3; Joel 1:5,12; Hos 9:2
1:11 Jer 14:3,4; Isa 17:11; Jer 9:12
1:12 Isa 16:10; Isa 24:11; Joel 1:10
1:13 Jer 4:8; Joel 1:8,9; Joel 2:17
1:14 Joel 2:15,16; Jonah 3:8; 2 Chr 20:3,4
1:15 2 Pet 3:10; Rev 4:8; Jer 30:7
1:16 Deut 12:6,7,11,12; Ps 43:4; Joel 1:5-9,13
1:17 Gen 23:16
1:18 Jer 12:4; Hos 4:3; Jer 14:5,6

1:1 *Joel the son of Pethuel* We know nothing else about Joel or his father. His name means the LORD is God, a sermon in itself in a land tempted to look to other gods for rain and harvest. In the disaster that follows, his name answers who is really in charge.
1:3 *recount to your sons, and your sons to their sons* Four generations were to hear it, because of what God was saying through it. Israel was always to pass down what God had done, in saving and in judgment (Exod 10:2; Ps 78:4-7). Faith that is not passed on dies in one generation.
1:4 *The remainder of the cutting locust the swarming locust has eaten* Four Hebrew words for locusts. They may be four kinds, four stages of one kind from young hopper to grown flier, or four waves of swarms. Either way, what one left the next ate. A swarm can cover many square miles, number in the billions and eat as much in a day as a city. Moses warned that the locust would consume a disobedient Israel's crops (Deut 28:38).
1:5 *Wake up, drunkards, and weep* Those who lived for their wine noticed first that it was gone. They were asleep, dulled by drink (Hos 4:11). Sometimes God takes away what we have been living for so that we will wake up and see Him.
1:6 *its teeth are the teeth of a lion* Joel calls the locusts a nation, an invading army too many to count. Each jaw is tiny, but together they tore through everything (compare Rev 9:7-8).
1:7 *It has made my vine into a waste, and my fig tree into splinters* God calls it "my land" and "my vine." The land was His (Lev 25:23). Every man under his own vine and fig tree was Israel's picture of peace and plenty (1 Kgs 4:25; Mic 4:4). The locusts ate even the bark, leaving branches bare and white.
1:8 *Wail like a virgin girded with sackcloth over the husband of her youth* A betrothed woman was counted a wife. Picture a young woman whose husband-to-be dies before the wedding. Sackcloth was rough goat's-hair cloth worn in mourning.
1:9 *Grain offering and drink offering have been cut off from the house of the LORD* Flour and oil, and wine poured at the altar, went with the daily morning and evening sacrifices (Exod 29:38-41). For Joel the worst of the disaster was not empty stomachs but broken worship, the daily link between God and His people cut.
1:12 *joy has withered away from the sons of mankind* Harvest was the happiest season, with singing in fields and vineyards (Isa 16:10). When what we enjoy is taken, where is our joy? Habakkuk learned to rejoice in the LORD with no fruit on the vines (Hab 3:17-18). Joy that rests on God cannot be eaten by locusts.
1:13 *spend the night in sackcloth, ministers of my God* The priests were to lead the mourning, not as a daytime show but all night on the hard floor before God. Their whole work was to offer these things, and they had none.
1:14 *Sanctify a fast; call a solemn assembly* To sanctify is to set apart as holy. A fast was going without food to humble oneself and seek God, and an assembly was a sacred gathering of all the people. Solomon prayed that when locusts came and the people turned, God would hear and forgive (1 Kgs 8:37-39; 2 Chr 7:13-14). When trouble comes to a family, church or nation, do we gather to pray, or only complain?
1:15 *the day of the LORD is near* The key to the book. The locusts were a sign of something worse. The day of the LORD is the time when God Himself steps in to judge sin. In Hebrew "devastation" (shod) plays on "the Almighty" (Shaddai), as in Isaiah 13:6. The plague was a small day of the LORD, a preview. Every disaster in this fallen world reminds us it will not go on forever and that God will judge it.
1:17 *The seeds have shriveled under their clods* A drought had come too. The seed dried up in the ground, and the barns stood empty and falling down.
1:18 *How the beasts groan!* Even the animals suffered for the sins of people. All creation groans, waiting to be set free (Rom 8:19-22).

them; also the flocks of sheep suffer punishment. **19** To You, LORD, I call, for fire has devoured the pastures of the wilderness, and a flame has set ablaze all the trees of the field. **20** Also the beasts of the field pant to You, for the channels of water have dried up, and fire has devoured the pastures of the wilderness.

JOEL 2

The Army of the LORD

1 Blow a ram's horn in Zion (Tsiyon), and sound an alarm on the mountain of My holiness! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the LORD ***is*** coming, for ***it is*** near: **2** a day of darkness and gloom, a day of cloud and thick darkness. Like dawn spread out over the mountains ***is*** a people numerous and mighty; like it ***there*** has not been from antiquity, and after it it will not recur until the years of generation and generation. **3** Before it fire has consumed, and after it a flame blazes. Like the garden of Eden ***is*** the land before it, and after it a wilderness of desolation; and also ***there*** has been no escape for it. **4** Like the appearance of horses ***is*** its appearance, and like horsemen, so they run. **5** Like the sound of chariots over the tops of the mountains they leap, like the sound of a flame of fire consuming stubble, like a mighty people arrayed for battle. **6** Before it peoples are in anguish; all faces have gathered a glow. **7** Like warriors they run; like men of war they go up a wall; and each goes on his ways, and they do not change their paths. **8** And each does not crowd his brother; they go, ***each*** man on his track; and through the weapons they fall, they do not break off. **9** In the city they rush about; on the wall they run; into the houses they go up; through the windows they come in like the thief. **10** Before it ***the*** earth trembles, ***the*** heavens shake; ***the*** sun and ***the*** moon have grown dark, and ***the*** stars have gathered in their brightness. **11** And the LORD gives forth His voice before His army, for His camp ***is*** very great; for mighty ***is the one*** doing His word; for the day of the LORD ***is*** great and very awesome, and who can endure it?

Return with All Your Heart

12 "And even now," declares the LORD, "return to Me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with wailing." **13** And tear your heart and not your garments, and return to the LORD your God; for He ***is*** gracious and merciful, slow to anger and great in steadfast love, and relenting over the harm. **14** Who knows? He may turn and relent, and leave behind Him a blessing, a grain offering and a drink offering for the LORD your God. **15** Blow a ram's horn in Zion; consecrate a fast; call a solemn assembly. **16** Gather ***the*** people; consecrate an assembly; assemble ***the*** elders; gather ***the*** children and those nursing at ***the*** breasts; let ***the*** bridegroom go out from his room, and ***the*** bride from her canopy.
17 Between the porch and the altar let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep, and let them say, "Have pity, O LORD, on Your people, and do not make Your inheritance a reproach, for nations to rule over them. Why should they say among the peoples, 'Where ***is*** their God?'"

1:19 Ps 50:15; Jer 9:10; Amos 7:4
1:20 Ps 104:21; 1 Kgs 17:7; Job 38:41
2:1 1 Thess 5:2; Acts 2:20; 2 Pet 3:10
2:2 Joel 1:6; Amos 5:18-20; Zeph 1:14,15
2:3 Isa 51:3; Gen 2:8; Zech 7:14
2:4 Rev 9:7
2:5 Rev 9:9; Isa 5:24; Isa 30:30
2:6 Nah 2:10; Isa 13:8; Jer 30:6
2:7 Prov 30:27; 2 Sam 1:23; 2 Sam 2:18,19
2:8 2 Chr 23:10; 2 Chr 32:5; Neh 4:17,23
2:9 Jer 9:21; John 10:1; Exod 10:6
2:10 Matt 24:29; Mark 13:24-25; Rev 6:12
2:11 Rev 6:17; Rev 18:8; Mal 3:2
2:12 Jer 4:1; Hos 12:6; Deut 4:29,30
2:13 Acts 3:19; James 5:11; Ps 34:18
2:14 Jonah 3:9; Hag 2:19; Joel 1:9,13,16
2:15 Joel 1:14; Joel 2:1; Num 10:3
2:16 Mark 10:13; 2 Chr 20:13; 1 Cor 7:5
2:17 Matt 23:35; Ezek 8:16; Ps 79:10

1:19 *To You, LORD, I call* Joel does what he told the people to do (1:14). In a long drought, dry grass burns easily, and wildfires sweep the land.
1:20 *the beasts of the field pant to You* Even the wild animals look to God (Ps 104:21; 42:1). How much more should we? Joel has no answer yet, but he ends where every hard time should end, in prayer. That is where hope begins.
2:1 *Blow a ram's horn in Zion* The ram's horn warned of an enemy (Hos 5:8). Zion is Jerusalem, and the mountain of His holiness is the temple mount.
2:2 *a day of darkness and gloom, a day of cloud and thick darkness* A swarm can be thick enough to blot out the sun, but these are also the words of God's coming at Sinai (Deut 4:11) and of the day of the LORD (Zeph 1:15). The army spreads fast and everywhere, like first light on the mountains.
2:3 *Like the garden of Eden is the land before it, and after it a wilderness of desolation* Wherever the army has been, the land looks burned. A paradise becomes a desert, and nothing escapes.
2:8 *through the weapons they fall, they do not break off* They keep their lines, and you cannot fight locusts with a sword. They come through the windows like a thief (2:9), and there is nowhere to hide.
2:9 *through the windows they come in like the thief* Who is this army? Some see the locusts of chapter 1 pictured as an army. Others see a human army such as Assyria or Babylon pictured as locusts, since verse 20 calls it "the northerner." Others see the armies of the last days. Many join the first and third: Joel starts with the locusts he saw and lets them point to a far greater day. Revelation uses locusts like horses, with lions' teeth and the sound of chariots, for a judgment in the Tribulation (Rev 9:3-11).
2:10 *the sun and the moon have grown dark* The picture is now bigger than locusts. Jesus used such words for the end of the Tribulation, just before His return (Matt 24:29).
2:11 *the LORD gives forth His voice before His army* The army is the LORD's. Locusts or nations only do what God sends them to do (2:25). "Who can endure it?" is the question every person must face, and only those who turn to Him for mercy can.
2:12 *even now* Perhaps the two most hopeful words in the book. The army is at the door, and God says it is not too late. He wants all the heart, not half (Hos 7:8). Fasting, weeping and wailing show that repentance feels the weight of sin.
2:13 *tear your heart and not your garments* People tore their clothes in grief (Gen 37:34), but anyone can tear a robe. God wants a broken spirit (Ps 51:17), not a show (Matt 6:16-18).
2:13 *He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and great in steadfast love* What God said of Himself to Moses (Exod 34:6). Gracious: He gives what we do not deserve. Merciful: He holds back what we do. Slow to anger: He gives time to turn. Relenting: He turns from threatened judgment when people repent, which Jonah knew and did not like (Jonah 4:2). If you fear God is only angry with you, read this verse again.
2:14 *Who knows? He may turn and relent* Repentance does not force God's hand. It throws us on His mercy, as the king of Nineveh did (Jonah 3:9). The blessing they hoped for was enough harvest to worship God again (1:9).
2:16 *let the bridegroom go out from his room, and the bride from her canopy* Everyone must come, even nursing babies, and even newlyweds whom the Law excused from war (Deut 24:5). Nothing mattered more.
2:17 *Between the porch and the altar let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep* Between the temple entrance and the altar of burnt offering, standing in the gap for the people. They appeal to God's own honor, as Moses did (Exod 32:11-12): do not let the nations ask, "Where is their God?"

The LORD Restores the Land

18 And the LORD became jealous for His land and had compassion on His people. **19** And the LORD answered and said to His people, "Look, I ***am*** sending to you the grain and the new wine and the fresh oil, and you will be satisfied with it; and I will not make you again a reproach among the nations. **20** And the northerner I will remove far from you, and I will drive it into a land of dryness and desolation, its face toward the eastern sea and its end toward the western sea; and its stench will go up, and let its foul smell go up, for it has done great ***things***." **21** Do not fear, O ground; be glad and rejoice, for the LORD has done great ***things***. **22** Do not fear, O animals of ***the*** field, for the pastures of ***the*** wilderness have sprouted, for ***the*** tree has borne its fruit; ***the*** fig tree and ***the*** vine have given their strength. **23** And sons of Zion, be glad and rejoice in the LORD your God, for He has given to you the early rain for righteousness, and He has brought down for you rain, ***the*** early rain and ***the*** spring rain, at the first. **24** And the threshing floors will be full ***of*** grain, and the vats will overflow ***with*** new wine and fresh oil. **25** And I will repay to you the years which the swarming locust has eaten, the hopping locust and the destroying locust and the cutting locust, My great army which I sent among you. **26** And you will surely eat and be satisfied, and you will praise the name of the LORD your God, who has dealt wondrously with you; and My people will not be ashamed forever. **27** And you will know that I ***am*** in the midst of Israel (Yisra'el), and I ***am*** the LORD your God, and ***there is*** none else; and My people will not be ashamed forever.

The Promise of the Spirit

28 And it will be afterward ***that*** I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters will prophesy; your old men will dream dreams; your young men will see visions. **29** And also on the ***male*** servants and on the female servants in those days I will pour out My Spirit. **30** And I will set wonders in the heavens and on the earth: blood and fire and columns of smoke. **31** The sun will be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD. **32** And it will be ***that*** everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will escape; for on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) ***there*** will be escape, just as the LORD has said, and among the survivors whom the LORD ***is*** calling.

JOEL 3

The Nations Judged

1 For look, in those days and at that time, when I turn back the captivity of Judah (Yehuda) and Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), **2** and I will gather all the nations and bring

2:18 Zech 1:14; Zech 8:2; Ps 103:13,17
2:19 Joel 1:10; Ezek 34:29; Mal 3:10-12
2:20 Zech 14:8; Deut 11:24; Exod 10:19
2:21 Isa 54:4; Zeph 3:16,17; Gen 15:1
2:22 Ps 65:12; Joel 1:18-20; Zech 8:12
2:23 Phil 3:1; Phil 4:4; Lev 26:4
2:24 Lev 26:10; Amos 9:13; Mal 3:10
2:25 Zech 10:6; Joel 1:4-7; Joel 2:2-11
2:26 Rom 9:33; Rom 10:11; 1 John 2:28
2:27 Rom 9:33; Joel 3:17; Lev 26:11,12
2:28 Acts 2:17; Acts 2:18; Acts 2:16
2:29 Luke 24:49; Acts 2:16; 1 Cor 12:13
2:30 Acts 2:19; Matt 24:29; Luke 21:25
2:31 Acts 2:19-20; Matt 24:29; Rev 6:12
2:32 Acts 2:21; Rom 10:13; Rom 11:26
3:1 Jer 30:3,18; Jer 16:15; 2 Chr 6:37,38
3:2 Rev 11:18; Isa 66:16; Zeph 3:8

2:18 *the LORD became jealous for His land and had compassion on His people* The turning point of the book. The people prayed, and God answered. Jealous here means a burning, protective love for what is His.

2:19 *I am sending to you the grain and the new wine and the fresh oil* What the locusts took, God gives back, and the shame before the nations is lifted.

2:20 *the northerner I will remove far from you* Toward the eastern sea, the Dead Sea, and the western sea, the Mediterranean. Swarms have been blown out to sea to die and wash up in stinking heaps. The enemy made itself great, but God would do greater things (2:21).

2:23 *He has given to you the early rain for righteousness* The fall and spring rains, given in right measure as a sign of His faithfulness, and the empty barns of 1:17 are full (2:24).

2:25 *I will repay to you the years which the swarming locust has eaten* One of the most loved promises in Joel. God does not pretend He had nothing to do with it. He sent "My great army," and He will restore. Many have years that feel eaten up by sin, foolish choices, suffering or others' sin against them. God does not always give back the same thing, but He can redeem those years (Rom 8:28).

2:27 *you will know that I am in the midst of Israel* The best gift is not the harvest but God Himself among His people. Twice He says, "My people will not be ashamed forever" (2:26).

2:28 *I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh* After the land is restored, a far greater gift, the Spirit poured like rain on dry ground (Isa 44:3). In the Old Testament the Spirit came on certain people for certain tasks. Moses wished all God's people were prophets (Num 11:29). "All flesh" means every kind: sons and daughters, old and young.

2:31 *The sun will be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood* Signs of world-shaking upheaval before God's final judgment, which Jesus placed at the end of the Tribulation just before His return (Matt 24:29-30), and John saw at the sixth seal (Rev 6:12).

2:32 *everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will escape* In the middle of terror there is a way out for anyone. To call on the LORD is to cry out to Him, trusting Him to save, and those who call are those He is calling. At Pentecost Peter quoted Joel 2:28-32, said "this is that" (Acts 2:16), and said the risen Jesus had poured out the Spirit (Acts 2:33). Paul applies the promise to the Lord Jesus (Rom 10:9-13). The LORD of Joel 2:32 is the Lord Jesus.

2:32 *on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be escape* Fulfilled at Pentecost? I believe yes and not yet. Yes: the Spirit Joel promised came and is given to every believer (Acts 2:39), and the last days began with Christ's first coming (Heb 1:2). Not yet in full: the sky did not darken, and the promise is to Israel on Zion, when God pours His Spirit on Israel brought home (Ezek 39:29; Zech 12:10). I believe the full fulfillment comes at the end of the Tribulation, when Israel calls on the Lord and Christ returns, with the church already taken to Him before that time of wrath (1 Thess 4:16-17; 5:9). Some see Joel fully fulfilled at Pentecost and the church age, and others see Pentecost as only a sample.

3:1 *when I turn back the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem* "In those days" ties this to 2:28-32 and the great day of the LORD. To turn back the captivity is to bring captives home and restore their fortunes. The return from Babylon in 538 B.C. did not bring the judgment of all nations, and millions of Jews have returned in our own time. I believe the full restoring comes when Christ returns.

3:2 *the valley of Jehoshaphat* Jehoshaphat means the LORD judges. The godly king of that name saw God win a battle without Judah fighting (2 Chr 20:20-26). The place is uncertain. Since the fourth century A.D. many have linked it with the Kidron Valley east of Jerusalem, and it may be the great valley formed when the Mount of Olives splits at the Lord's return (Zech 14:4).

3:2 *on account of My people and My inheritance Israel* After all Israel's sin, they are still God's people, and He has not forgotten "the one who disdains you I will curse" (Gen 12:3). The nations scattered His people and divided His land (Lev 25:23). Many connect this with the judgment of the nations by how they treated His brothers when the Son of Man comes in glory (Matt 25:31-46). I believe both describe Christ's return at the end of the Tribulation, before His kingdom begins.

them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat (Yehoshafat), and I will enter into judgment with them there on account of My people and My inheritance Israel (Yisra'el), whom they have scattered among the nations; and My land they have divided up. **3** And for My people they have cast a lot, and they have given the boy for the prostitute, and the girl they have sold for the wine, and they have drunk. **4** And also, what ***are*** you to Me, O Tyre (Tsor) and Sidon (Tsidon) and all the regions of Philistia (Peleshet)? ***Are*** you repaying a recompense to Me? Or ***are*** you dealing out to Me? Swiftly, quickly I will return your recompense on your head, **5** because My silver and My gold you have taken, and My good desirable things you have brought into your temples. **6** And the sons of Judah and the sons of Jerusalem you have sold to the sons of the Greeks, in order to remove them far from their territory. **7** Look, I ***am*** rousing them from the place where you sold them, and I will return your recompense on your head. **8** And I will sell your sons and your daughters into the hand of the sons of Judah, and they will sell them to the Sabeans (Sheva'i), to a distant nation; for the LORD has spoken.

The Valley of Decision

9 Proclaim this among the nations: consecrate war; rouse the warriors; let them draw near, let them go up, all the men of war. **10** Beat your plowshares into swords and your pruning knives into spears; let the weak say, "I ***am*** a warrior." **11** Hurry and come, all the nations from round about, and they will be gathered there. Bring down, O LORD, Your warriors. **12** Let the nations be roused and go up to the valley of Jehoshaphat, for there I will sit to judge all the nations from round about. **13** Send out ***the*** sickle, for ***the*** harvest has ripened; come, tread, for ***the*** winepress is full; the vats overflow, for their evil ***is*** great. **14** Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the LORD ***is*** near in the valley of decision. **15** ***The*** sun and ***the*** moon have grown dark, and ***the*** stars have gathered in their brightness. **16** And the LORD will roar from Zion (Tsiyon), and from Jerusalem He will give forth His voice, and ***the*** heavens and ***the*** earth will shake; and the LORD ***will be*** a refuge for His people and a stronghold for the sons of Israel.

The LORD Dwells in Zion

17 And you will know that I ***am*** the LORD your God, dwelling in Zion, the mountain of My holiness; and Jerusalem will be holiness, and strangers will not pass through it again. **18** And it will be in that day ***that*** the mountains will drip sweet wine, and the hills will flow ***with*** milk, and all the ravines of Judah will flow ***with*** water; and a spring will go out from the house of the LORD and will water the wadi of the Shittim (Shitim). **19** Egypt (Mitsrayim) will become a desolation, and Edom will become a wilderness of desolation, because of the violence of the sons of Judah, in that they shed innocent blood in their land. **20** And Judah will remain forever, and
Jerusalem to generation and generation. **21** And I will clear their blood ***that*** I have not cleared; and the LORD ***is*** dwelling in Zion.

3:3 Amos 2:6; Obad 1:11; Nah 3:10
3:4 Acts 9:4; Isa 34:8; Amos 1:6-10,12-14
3:5 2 Kgs 12:18; 2 Kgs 16:8; 2 Kgs 18:15,16
3:6 Ezek 27:13; Joel 3:3,8; Deut 28:32,68
3:7 Isa 43:5,6; Jer 23:8; Joel 3:4
3:8 Isa 60:14; Job 1:15; Deut 32:30
3:9 Isa 8:9,10; Jer 46:3,4; Ezek 38:7
3:10 Rev 19:19; Isa 2:4; Mic 4:3
3:11 Isa 13:3; Zeph 3:8; Joel 3:2
3:12 Rev 11:18; Joel 3:2,14; Ps 96:13
3:13 Mark 4:29; Rev 14:15-18; Rev 11:18
3:14 Acts 2:20; 2 Pet 3:10; Isa 34:2-8
3:15 Matt 24:29; Luke 21:25; Mark 13:24
3:16 Rom 11:26; Amos 1:2; Joel 2:10
3:17 Rom 11:26; Joel 2:27; Isa 52:1
3:18 Acts 3:19; Rev 21:6; Isa 30:25
3:19 Isa 19:1-15; Isa 11:15; Zech 10:10
3:20 Ezek 37:25; Amos 9:15; Isa 33:20
3:21 Rom 11:26; Isa 4:4; Ezek 36:25,29

3:3 *the girl they have sold for the wine* Soldiers cast lots for captives, and a child made in God's image was traded for a night with a prostitute or the price of a drink. God sees every one of those children. Human trafficking is not new, and neither is God's hatred of it.
3:6 *you have sold to the sons of the Greeks* They looted God's treasures for their own temples and sold Jewish captives across the sea so they could never come home (Amos 1:6, 9).
3:8 *they will sell them to the Sabeans, to a distant nation* Sheba in southern Arabia, as far from Tyre as Greece was from Judah. The punishment fits the crime. Alexander sold thousands of Tyre's people as slaves in 332 B.C., and Persia crushed Sidon about 345 B.C., but the full judgment of all nations waits for the day of the LORD.
3:10 *Beat your plowshares into swords and your pruning knives into spears* Isaiah and Micah reversed. In the kingdom the nations will beat swords into plowshares (Isa 2:4; Mic 4:3), but before that peace the nations will do the opposite for one last war, and even the weak will be called up.
3:12 *there I will sit to judge all the nations from round about* The nations think they are coming to fight, and they are coming to court. I believe this is the gathering at Armageddon at the end of the Tribulation (Rev 16:16; 19:19).
3:13 *Send out the sickle, for the harvest has ripened* The grain cut down and the grapes trampled in the winepress. John uses both pictures (Rev 14:15-19), and Christ Himself treads the winepress at His return (Rev 19:15). God waits because He is patient (2 Pet 3:9), but there comes a time when evil is full (Gen 15:16).
3:14 *Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision!* Often preached as people deciding for Christ. Everyone must decide, but the decision here is God's, His verdict, a sharp cutting. By then the nations' time to decide is past. That makes 2:32 all the more urgent today.
3:16 *the LORD will roar from Zion* Like a lion over its prey, the words Amos begins with (Amos 1:2), and the universe shakes (Heb 12:26). The same voice that terrifies His enemies is a refuge for His people. Where will you stand on that day?
3:17 *strangers will not pass through it again* Israel will finally know the LORD. Jerusalem has been trampled by Assyria, Babylon, Greece, Rome and others "until the times of the nations are fulfilled" (Luke 21:24). That day will end, and no foreign army will march through it again.
3:18 *a spring will go out from the house of the LORD* The stripped land overflows (Amos 9:13), and the dry streambeds of 1:20 run full. A wadi is a valley dry most of the year, and Shittim means acacias, perhaps a valley toward the Dead Sea. Ezekiel saw a river from the temple healing even the Dead Sea (Ezek 47:1-12), and living waters flow from Jerusalem (Zech 14:8). I believe it will be a real river when Christ reigns, and a picture of life from God's presence (Rev 22:1).
3:19 *because of the violence of the sons of Judah* Egypt and Edom, from Esau, Jacob's brother, stand for Israel's long-time enemies. The violence is that done to the sons of Judah, the innocent blood of God's people.
3:21 *the LORD is dwelling in Zion* "Clear their blood" may mean God avenges His people's innocent blood or cleanses them of their own guilt, and both are true of what He will do. The locusts came because God's people wandered, and the book ends with God at home among them, as Ezekiel ends with "The LORD Is There" (Ezek 48:35) and the Bible with God's tabernacle among men (Rev 21:3).

AMOS

Introduction

Title

The book is named for its prophet, Amos. His name means burden or one who carries a load, and that fits the heavy message he carried. Amos is the third of the twelve Minor Prophets, coming after Joel and before Obadiah. It is the book of a shepherd sent from Judah to the northern kingdom, and it has given the world one of its best known cries for justice: "let justice roll like the waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing wadi" (5:24).

Author and Date

The book opens, "The words of Amos, who was among the sheep-breeders from Tekoa" (1:1). Tekoa was a small town in the hills of Judah, south of Bethlehem. Amos tells the priest at Bethel that he was not a prophet by trade but "a herdsman and a tender of sycamores" (7:14). Jewish and Christian tradition hold that Amos wrote the book. Some modern scholars think later editors added the words about Judah (2:4-5) and the hopeful ending (9:11-15). I take the book at its word. Amos was a man of Judah, and every prophet in this part of the Bible shows that God's judgment is not His last word.

Amos preached "in the days of Uzziah king of Judah and in the days of Jeroboam son of Joash king of Israel, two years before the earthquake" (1:1). Uzziah reigned about 792 to 740 B.C. and Jeroboam II about 793 to 753 B.C., so Amos most likely preached about 760 B.C. The earthquake was remembered more than two hundred years later (Zech 14:5). His ministry may have been short, but his words were written down and kept.

Background and Setting

Israel had never had it so good. Assyria was weak for a time, Syria had been beaten, and Jeroboam II had won back the old borders "from Lebo-hamath to the sea of the Arabah" (2 Kgs 14:25). Trade boomed. The rich had winter houses and summer houses with ivory inlay (3:15). Worship was busy at Bethel, where Jeroboam I had set up a golden calf about 170 years before (1 Kgs 12:28-29), and at Gilgal, Dan and Beersheba.

But under the surface the nation was rotten. The rich cheated in the market, bribed the judges in the gate, and sold the poor for a pair of sandals (2:6; 8:4-6). It looked as if God was blessing Israel. Amos said God was about to judge her. About forty years later, in 722 B.C., Assyria took Samaria and carried Israel into exile.

Themes

God judges sin in every nation, and most of all in the people He chose. Amos begins with Israel's neighbors, who sinned against the law written on their hearts, then closes the circle on Judah and Israel (1:3-2:16). "Only you have I known from all the clans of the ground; therefore I will visit on you all your iniquities" (3:2). Privilege brings responsibility.

Worship without justice is empty. Justice means doing right by people, especially in court, with honest weights and protection for the weak. Righteousness means living rightly before God and others. God hated feasts held by people who crushed the needy (5:21-24). Justice and righteousness are the fruit of a right relationship with God, never the ground of it.

The day of the LORD is not a day for the wicked to look forward to. Israel thought it would be a day of victory over their enemies, but Amos said it would be "darkness and not light" (5:18). As in Joel, this study reads the day of the LORD as any time God steps into history to judge, and above all as the great day still ahead, which includes the Tribulation and Christ's return. The church will be taken up to be with Christ before that time of wrath (1 Thess 4:16-17; 5:9).

God's judgment is not His last word. He will "not utterly destroy the house of Jacob" (9:8). He will raise up the fallen booth of David and plant Israel in her land, never to be plucked up again (9:11-15).

Christ in Amos

At the council in Jerusalem, when the church had to decide whether Gentiles must become Jews to be saved, James quoted Amos 9:11-12. He said that God's taking a people for His name from the Gentiles agrees with the prophets, who spoke of the tent of David rebuilt and "all the Gentiles upon whom My name has been called" (Acts 15:14-17). Jesus is the Son of David, and God will give Him "the throne of David His father" (Luke 1:32). Stephen quoted Amos 5:25-27 to show Israel's long history of turning from God (Acts 7:42-43). And Amos's cry for justice is echoed by Jesus, who told the Pharisees they had neglected "the justice and the mercy and the faith" (Matt 23:23). The plumb line of God's Word shows that all of us lean, and our one hope is the One who took our sin on Himself (2 Cor 5:21).

Hard Passages

Does God change His mind? Twice "the LORD relented" at Amos's prayer (7:3, 6). The notes explain that God's character and purposes never change (Num 23:19), but His warnings are conditional (Jer 18:7-8), and He has chosen to work through the prayers of His people.

Does God send disaster? Amos says calamity does not happen in a city unless the LORD has done it (3:6), and chapter 4 lists famine, drought, locusts and plague that God sent so that Israel would return. The notes explain these as the covenant discipline warned of in the Law (Lev 26; Deut 28), and caution that not every hardship is punishment for a particular sin.

What about the harsh words against the wealthy women of Samaria (4:1) and against Amaziah's family (7:17)? The notes handle them plainly and briefly, as the horrors of conquest that rebellion would bring, not as God's delight.

Is the darkness at noon (8:9) a prophecy of the cross? The notes mention the darkness at the crucifixion as a picture only, since the New Testament does not call it a fulfillment.

How should we read the rebuilt booth of David (9:11-15)? James used it to show that Gentiles belong to the LORD as Gentiles. Some dispensational teachers see the rebuilding as after the church age, when Christ returns; others see it begun in Christ's resurrection with the full kingdom still ahead. Amillennial and covenant teachers see it fulfilled in the church. This study holds that the church does not replace Israel, and that the promise of the land will be kept in full when Christ returns

and reigns for a thousand years.

Outline

I. Judgment on the Nations and on Israel (1:1-2:16)
  A. The LORD roars from Zion (1:1-2)
  B. Damascus, Gaza, Tyre, Edom and Ammon (1:3-15)
  C. Moab, Judah and Israel (2:1-16)
II. Three Messages to Israel (3:1-6:14)
  A. The lion has roared (3:1-15)
  B. Yet you have not returned to Me (4:1-13)
  C. Seek the LORD and live (5:1-17)
  D. Woe to those who long for the day of the LORD (5:18-27)
  E. Woe to those at ease in Zion (6:1-14)
III. Five Visions (7:1-9:10)
  A. Locusts, fire and the plumb line (7:1-9)
  B. Amaziah and Amos (7:10-17)
  C. The basket of summer fruit (8:1-14)
  D. The Lord beside the altar (9:1-10)
IV. The Promise of Restoration (9:11-15)

AMOS

AMOS 1

The LORD Roars from Zion

1 The words of Amos, who was among the sheep-breeders
from Tekoa (Teqoa), which he saw concerning Israel
(Yisra'el) in the days of Uzziah (Uziya) king of Judah
(Yehuda) and in the days of Jeroboam (Yaravam) son of Joash
(Yo'ash) king of Israel, two years before the earthquake.
2 And he said, "The LORD will roar from Zion (Tsiyon), and
from Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) He will give forth His voice;
and the pastures of the shepherds will mourn, and the top of
the Carmel (Karmel) will wither."

Judgment on the Nations

3 Thus says the LORD, "For three transgressions of Damascus
(Dameseq), and for four, I will not revoke it, because they
threshed the Gilead (Gilad) with threshing sledges of iron.
4 And I will send a fire on the house of Hazael (Chaza'el), and
it will consume the fortresses of Ben-hadad. **5** And I will
break the bar of Damascus, and I will cut off ***the*** inhabitant
from the valley of Aven, and the one holding the scepter
from Beth-eden (Bet-Eden); and the people of Syria (Aram)
will go into exile to Kir (Qir)," says the LORD. **6** Thus says the
LORD, "For three transgressions of Gaza (Aza), and for four, I
will not revoke it, because they carried into exile a complete
exile, to deliver ***them*** up to Edom. **7** And I will send a fire on
the wall of Gaza, and it will consume its fortresses. **8** And I
will cut off ***the*** inhabitant from Ashdod, and the one holding
the scepter from Ashkelon (Ashqelon); and I will turn My
hand against Ekron (Eqron), and the remnant of the
Philistines will perish," says the Lord GOD. **9** Thus says the
LORD, "For three transgressions of Tyre (Tsor), and for four, I
will not revoke it, because they delivered up a complete exile
to Edom, and they did not remember the covenant of broth-
ers. **10** And I will send a fire on the wall of Tyre, and it will
consume its fortresses." **11** Thus says the LORD, "For three
transgressions of Edom, and for four, I will not revoke it,
because he pursued his brother with the sword and
destroyed his compassion, and his anger tore continually,
and his fury, he kept it perpetually. **12** And I will send a fire
on Teman, and it will consume the fortresses of Bozrah
(Botsra)." **13** Thus says the LORD, "For three transgressions
of the sons of Ammon (Amon), and for four, I will not revoke
it, because they ripped open the pregnant ***women*** of the
Gilead in order to enlarge their territory. **14** And I will kindle
a fire on the wall of Rabbah (Raba), and it will consume its
fortresses, with a shout on the day of battle, with a storm on
the day of a whirlwind. **15** And their king will go into exile,

1:1 Matt 1:8; Matt 1:9; Amos 7:14
1:2 Joel 3:16; Isa 42:13; Jer 25:30
1:3 Isa 8:4; Amos 1:6,9,11,13; Amos 2:1,4,6
1:4 Jer 49:27; Jer 17:27; 2 Kgs 8:7-15
1:5 2 Kgs 16:9; Amos 9:7; Jer 51:30
1:6 Acts 8:26; 2 Chr 28:18; Obad 1:11
1:7 2 Kgs 18:8; Jer 47:1; Deut 32:35,41-43
1:8 Ezek 25:16; Isa 14:29-31; Jer 47:4,5
1:9 Matt 11:22; Isa 23:1-18; 1 Kgs 9:11-14
1:10 Matt 11:22; Zech 9:4; Amos 1:4,7
1:11 Jer 49:7-22; Ezek 25:12-14; Num 20:14-21
1:12 Jer 49:7,20; Obad 1:9,10; Jer 49:13,22
1:13 Ezek 25:2-7; Hos 13:16; Jer 49:1-6
1:14 Deut 3:11; Jer 49:2; Amos 2:2
1:15 Jer 49:3

1:1 *who was among the sheep-breeders from Tekoa* Amos was not from a family of prophets or priests. He raised sheep in Tekoa, a hill town about ten miles south of Jerusalem at the edge of the wilderness, and tended sycamore figs (7:14). What made him a prophet was God's call, not training. He "saw" his words, a revelation from God, and he was a man of Judah sent to Israel. Uzziah (about 792 to 740 B.C.) and Jeroboam II (about 793 to 753 B.C.) ruled in the richest years since Solomon.

1:1 *two years before the earthquake* Everyone knew which earthquake, and more than two centuries later Zechariah still spoke of fleeing it in Uzziah's day (Zech 14:5). Amos had warned that God would shake the land (8:8; 9:1), and two years later He did, a sign that his words were true.

1:2 *The LORD will roar from Zion* A shepherd knew that a lion roars when it is about to attack (3:8; Joel 3:16). The roar comes from Jerusalem, where the temple stood, not from Bethel. When God roars, everything from the shepherds' pastures in the south to green Mount Carmel in the north dries up. That is the theme of the book.

1:3 *For three transgressions of Damascus, and for four, I will not revoke it* This pattern opens each of the eight messages in chapters 1-2. Three and then four is a Hebrew way of saying the sins have piled up past full. A transgression is a rebellion, a crossing of God's line, and God will not take back His judgment. Damascus was the capital of Syria. A threshing sledge was a heavy board studded with stones or iron teeth, dragged over grain. Syria did that to people in Gilead, as Elisha foretold of Hazael (2 Kgs 8:12; 10:32-33).

1:5 *the people of Syria will go into exile to Kir* The bar was the great beam that locked the city gate. About 732 B.C. Tiglath-pileser III took Damascus, carried its people to Kir and killed its king (2 Kgs 16:9). Kir was where the Syrians came from (9:7). God sent them back where they started.

1:6 *they carried into exile a complete exile, to deliver them up to Edom* Gaza was the southernmost of the five Philistine cities. They raided whole villages, men, women and children, and sold them to Edom as slaves. They hunted people to sell them. God has never looked away from human trafficking.

1:8 *the remnant of the Philistines will perish," says the Lord GOD* Ashdod, Ashkelon and Ekron are named, while Gath may already have fallen (6:2). Assyria and Babylon struck these cities until the Philistines disappeared from history. Lord GOD, Amos's favorite title, joins Adonai, master, with YHWH, God's name.

1:9 *they did not remember the covenant of brothers* Tyre, Phoenicia's great trading city, also traded in slaves (Joel 3:4-6). Its king Hiram had made a covenant with Solomon and called him "my brother" (1 Kgs 9:13; see 5:12). Tyre sold the people it had sworn to treat as brothers. Assyria, Nebuchadnezzar and finally Alexander in 332 B.C. brought it down. Breaking our word to someone who trusted us is a sin God sees.

1:11 *he pursued his brother with the sword and destroyed his compassion* Edom came from Esau, Jacob's twin, and God told Israel not to abhor an Edomite brother (Deut 23:7). Edom kept the old rivalry alive for centuries (Num 20:14-21). Anger kept "perpetually" does not stay small. It grows into cruelty (Matt 18:35). Obadiah takes up this sin. Teman and Bozrah were in Edom (1:12).

1:13 *they ripped open the pregnant women of the Gilead in order to enlarge their territory* Ammon came from Lot (Gen 19:38), with its capital at Rabbah, where Amman, Jordan, stands today. One of the cruelest acts named in the Bible: they killed mothers and unborn children so no one would grow up to claim the land. God names it so no one will think He does not see. The unborn child matters to God (Ps 139:13-16), and so does the mother.

1:15 *their king will go into exile, he and his officials together* Ammon fell under Assyria and Babylon and in time disappeared. None of these nations had the Law of Moses. God judged them for cruelty, slave trading, broken promises and murder, which they knew were wrong because God wrote His law on every heart (Rom 2:14-15).

he and his officials together," says the LORD.

AMOS 2

1 Thus says the LORD, "For three transgressions of Moab (Mo'av), and for four, I will not revoke it, because he burned the bones of the king of Edom to lime. **2** And I will send a fire on Moab, and it will consume the fortresses of the Kerioth (Qeriyot); and Moab will die in uproar, with a shout, with the sound of a ram's horn. **3** And I will cut off ***the*** judge from its midst, and all its officials I will kill with him," says the LORD.

Judgment on Judah and Israel

4 Thus says the LORD, "For three transgressions of Judah (Yehuda), and for four, I will not revoke it, because they have rejected the law of the LORD, and His statutes they have not kept; and their lies have led them astray, after which their fathers walked. **5** And I will send a fire on Judah, and it will consume the fortresses of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim)." **6** Thus says the LORD, "For three transgressions of Israel (Yisra'el), and for four, I will not revoke it, because they sold the righteous for silver, and the needy for a pair of sandals, **7** those who trample on the dust of the earth on the head of the poor, and the way of the humble they turn aside; and a man and his father go to the young woman, in order to profane the name of My holiness. **8** And on garments taken in pledge they stretch out beside every altar, and the wine of fines they drink ***in*** the house of their God. **9** And I, I destroyed the Amorite from before them, whose height ***was*** like the height of cedars, and he ***was*** strong like the oaks; and I destroyed his fruit from above and his roots from beneath. **10** And I, I brought you up from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim), and I led you in the wilderness forty years, to possess the land of the Amorite. **11** And I raised up some of your sons for prophets, and some of your young men for Nazirites. Is this not indeed ***so***, O sons of Israel?" declares the LORD. **12** "And you made the Nazirites drink wine, and the prophets you commanded, saying, 'You shall not prophesy.' **13** Look, I ***am*** making ***it*** totter under you, just as the cart totters that is full of cut grain for itself. **14** And refuge will perish from the swift, and the strong will not strengthen his power, and the warrior will not deliver his life; **15** and the one handling the bow will not stand, and the swift on his feet will not deliver ***himself***, and the rider of the horse will not deliver his life. **16** And the stout of heart among the warriors will flee naked in that day," declares the LORD.

AMOS 3

The Lion Has Roared

1 Hear this word which the LORD has spoken against you, O sons of Israel (Yisra'el), against the whole clan which I brought up from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim), saying:

2:1 Zeph 2:8,9; Isa 15:1-16; Jer 48:1-47
2:2 Jer 48:24,41; Amos 1:14; Isa 9:5
2:3 Num 24:17; Jer 48:7,25
2:4 Ezek 20:13,16,24; Hos 12:2; Isa 28:15
2:5 Hos 8:14; Jer 17:27; Jer 21:10
2:6 Joel 3:3,6; 2 Kgs 18:12; Amos 5:11,12
2:7 Rom 2:24; Amos 5:12; Mic 2:2,9
2:8 Amos 6:6; Exod 22:26,27; Deut 24:12-17
2:9 Job 18:16; Mal 4:1; Gen 15:16
2:10 Acts 7:42; Acts 13:18; Acts 13:17
2:11 Num 6:2; Judg 13:4-7; 1 Sam 3:20
2:13 Isa 1:14; Ps 78:40; Isa 7:13
2:14 Jer 9:23; Amos 9:1-3; Eccl 9:11
2:15 Ps 33:16,17
2:16 Jer 48:41; Judg 4:17; 2 Kgs 7:8-20
3:1 Amos 2:10; Jer 8:3; 2 Chr 20:15

2:1 *he burned the bones of the king of Edom to lime* Moab, also from Lot (Gen 19:37), burned an Edomite king's remains to white powder. Denying a man burial was the deepest insult. This was not even a crime against Israel. God's justice does not take sides by nation.

2:2 *Moab will die in uproar, with a shout, with the sound of a ram's horn* Kerioth was a city of Moab, perhaps a center of the worship of its god Chemosh. The ram's horn called to war. Moab fell under Assyria and Babylon and vanished as a nation.

2:4 *because they have rejected the law of the LORD* The crowd at Bethel would have cheered loudest at Judah, their rival. But the nations were judged for cruelty, and Judah for rejecting God's written Word. Judah had the Law, the temple, the priests and David's promises, and more light means more responsibility (Luke 12:48). Their "lies" were false gods that promise what they cannot give, handed down from father to son.

2:5 *I will send a fire on Judah* Fulfilled in 586 B.C., when Babylon burned Jerusalem and the temple (2 Kgs 25:9). We have the whole Bible, more light than Judah ever had. Do we treat it as God's Word, or set it aside for the ideas of our day?

2:6 *For three transgressions of Israel* The circle closes. Israel's neighbors stand on every side, and now God's finger points at the center. This was the message Amos was sent to give.

2:6 *they sold the righteous for silver, and the needy for a pair of sandals* The righteous here are the innocent. A poor man fell into debt, and the rich sold him as a slave, for silver or a debt as small as a pair of sandals, sometimes through bribed courts. The Law let a poor Israelite work off a debt, with strict limits, kindness and release (Lev 25:39-43; Deut 15:12-15). Israel threw away the limits and kept the profit.

2:7 *those who trample on the dust of the earth on the head of the poor* They begrudged the poor even the dust thrown on their heads in mourning, or, as many read it, trampled them into the dust. Father and son using the same girl, a servant or a shrine prostitute, was forbidden (Lev 18:7-8, 15) and dragged God's name through the mud.

2:8 *on garments taken in pledge they stretch out beside every altar* A poor man's cloak taken as a pledge had to be returned by sunset, since it was all he slept in (Exod 22:26-27). They lay on them at their feasts and drank wine paid as unjust fines at worship. God does not want worship paid for with the tears of the poor.

2:9 *I, I destroyed the Amorite from before them* Notice "I." The Amorites stand for all Canaan's peoples, the giants that frightened the spies (Num 13:28-33). God cut them down, fruit and root. He rescued Israel from slavery (2:10), and now they sold their own brothers into it.

2:11 *some of your young men for Nazirites* A prophet spoke God's word. A Nazirite took a vow to be set apart to God, with no wine, no haircut and no touching the dead (Num 6:1-21), as Samson and Samuel were from birth. God gave Israel men who spoke for Him and young people whose lives showed what it means to belong to Him.

2:12 *you made the Nazirites drink wine* They pressured the young until they broke their vows and silenced the prophets, words Amos would soon hear himself (7:12-13). Do we pressure young believers to give up their convictions, or quiet a preacher who tells us what we do not want to hear (2 Tim 4:3)?

2:13 *just as the cart totters that is full of cut grain* A cart piled high with sheaves creaks and sways. God will press down on Israel until it gives way. Some read it as God groaning under Israel's sins like an overloaded cart. Either way the weight has become too heavy.

2:16 *the stout of heart among the warriors will flee naked in that day* The runner, the strong man, the archer and the horseman, none will escape, and the bravest will throw off his armor and run. Israel was proud of Jeroboam's victories (2 Kgs 14:25-28), but no army stands when God is against it, as Samaria learned in 722 B.C. The crowd cheered seven judgments, and the eighth fell on them. They had sinned against greater light and greater love.

3:1 *against the whole clan which I brought up from the land of Egypt* All twelve tribes, north and south. The exodus made them one family, so what follows applies to Judah too.

2 "Only you have I known from all the clans of the ground;
therefore I will visit on you all your iniquities."
3 Do two walk together unless they have met by appointment?
4 Does a lion roar in the forest and ***there is*** no prey for it?
Does a young lion give forth its voice from its den unless it has caught ***something***?
5 Does a bird fall on a trap of the earth and ***there is*** no snare for it?
Does a trap go up from the ground and surely not catch ***anything***?
6 Is a ram's horn blown in a city and the people do not tremble?
Or is ***there*** calamity in a city and the LORD has not done ***it***?
7 For the Lord GOD does not do a thing unless He has revealed His secret counsel to His servants the prophets.
8 A lion has roared; who will not fear?
The Lord GOD has spoken; who will not prophesy?
9 Proclaim on the fortresses in Ashdod and on the fortresses in the land of Egypt, and say, "Gather yourselves on the mountains of Samaria (Shomron), and see the great tumults in its midst and the oppressions within it."
10 "And they do not know ***how*** to do uprightness," declares the LORD, "those who store up violence and devastation in their fortresses."
11 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD, "An adversary, and ***he is*** around the land!
And he will bring down your strength from you, and your fortresses will be plundered."
12 Thus says the LORD, "Just as the shepherd delivers from the mouth of the lion two legs or a piece of an ear, so the sons of Israel who dwell in Samaria will be delivered, with a corner of a bed and with silk of a couch."
13 "Hear and testify against the house of Jacob (Ya'aqov)," declares the Lord GOD, the God of armies.
14 "For on the day I visit the transgressions of Israel on it, then I will visit the altars of Bethel (Bet-El), and the horns of the altar will be cut off and will fall to the earth.
15 And I will strike the winter house along with the summer house; and the houses of ivory will perish, and many houses will be swept away," declares the LORD.

AMOS 4

Yet You Have Not Returned to Me

1 Hear this word, O cows of the Bashan who ***are*** on the mountain of Samaria (Shomron), who oppress ***the*** poor, who crush ***the*** needy, who say to their lords, "Bring, and let us drink!"
2 The Lord GOD has sworn by His holiness, "For look, days ***are*** coming on you, and one will carry you away with hooks, and the last of you with fishhooks.
3 And ***through*** breaches you will go out, each woman before her, and you will throw ***yourselves*** toward the Harmon," declares the LORD.
4 "Come

3:2 Exod 19:5,6; Deut 7:6; 1 Pet 4:17
3:3 2 Cor 6:14-16; Gen 17:1; Gen 5:22
3:4 Ps 104:21; Hos 11:10; Amos 3:8
3:5 Eccl 9:12; Jer 31:28; Dan 9:14
3:6 Isa 45:7; Zeph 1:16; Isa 14:24-27
3:7 Gen 18:17; John 15:15; Matt 13:35
3:8 Amos 3:4; Jer 20:9; Acts 4:20
3:9 Amos 4:1; Amos 6:1; Amos 1:8
3:10 Jer 4:22; Zeph 1:9; Ps 14:4
3:11 Amos 6:14; Amos 2:5; 2 Kgs 17:3-6
3:12 1 Sam 17:34-37; Isa 31:4; Amos 9:2,3
3:13 Deut 8:19; Deut 30:18,19; 2 Kgs 17:13,15
3:14 2 Kgs 23:15; Hos 10:5-8,14,15; Exod 32:34
3:15 Jer 36:22; Judg 3:20; 1 Kgs 22:39
4:1 Ps 22:12; Amos 6:1; Ezek 39:18
4:2 Ps 89:35; Jer 16:16; Amos 6:8
4:3 Ezek 12:5,12; 2 Kgs 25:4; 2 Kgs 7:7,8,15
4:4 Hos 4:15; Ezek 20:39; Matt 23:32

3:2 *Only you have I known from all the clans of the ground* God made and judges every nation, but "know" can mean to choose, love and enter a close bond. God chose Israel as His treasured possession out of love, not because it was greater (Exod 19:5-6; Deut 7:6-8).
3:2 *therefore I will visit on you all your iniquities* The surprise. Israel thought being chosen meant God was on their side however they lived. Amos says the opposite: privilege brings a higher standard. Every believer is chosen and known (2 Tim 2:19), but that is not permission to sin. Judgment begins at the house of God (1 Pet 4:17). God's judgment did not end His choice of Israel (9:11-15; Rom 11:29). He punishes because He has not let them go.
3:3 *Do two walk together unless they have met by appointment?* Seven questions, each with the answer no, showing nothing happens without a cause. Two people walking together in the wilderness had arranged to meet. The prophet has met with God.
3:5 *Does a bird fall on a trap of the earth and there is no snare for it?* A lion roars when it has caught prey, and a trap does not spring shut for nothing. A shepherd like Amos knew these things well.
3:6 *is there calamity in a city and the LORD has not done it?* The point the questions build to. Calamity here is disaster, war, famine or earthquake, not moral evil, as though God makes people sin. When disaster strikes God's people, He is saying something through it. Not every hardship is punishment for a particular sin (John 9:1-3), but Jesus used disasters to call everyone to repent (Luke 13:1-5). When hard times come, ask, Lord, is there something You want me to hear?
3:7 *He has revealed His secret counsel to His servants the prophets* God warned Noah, Abraham before Sodom (Gen 18:17), and Israel before the exile. He did not have to warn anyone, and He did because He wanted them to turn. In context this speaks of His judgments on His people, not every event in history. Today God has spoken His full word in His Son (Heb 1:1-2), written in Scripture. We need to listen to what He has already said.
3:8 *The Lord GOD has spoken; who will not prophesy?* Why Amos came from Tekoa to Bethel. When a lion roars you cannot help but fear, and when God speaks the prophet cannot keep quiet (Jer 20:9; Acts 4:20). Has God's Word ever gripped you like that?
3:10 *those who store up violence and devastation in their fortresses* They had sinned so long they forgot how to do right. They thought they were storing wealth. God says they stored up violence, and it would come back on them.
3:12 *two legs or a piece of an ear* A shepherd who lost another man's sheep to a wild beast brought back remains as proof so he would not have to pay (Exod 22:13). That was proof of death, not a rescue. The rich lounging on silk couches (6:4) would leave only a scrap of furniture. A remnant would survive, barely.
3:14 *the horns of the altar will be cut off* Bethel held the golden calf (1 Kgs 12:28-29). The horns at an altar's corners were grabbed by someone pleading for mercy (1 Kgs 1:50). With them cut off, there was nowhere to run. A century later Josiah tore down the altar at Bethel (2 Kgs 23:15).
3:15 *the houses of ivory will perish* The rich had winter and summer houses inlaid with carved ivory, like Ahab's in Samaria (1 Kgs 22:39), and many carved ivory pieces have been found there. Their religion at Bethel and their wealth in Samaria would fall the same day. Only God Himself is a safe place to stand.
4:1 *O cows of the Bashan who are on the mountain of Samaria* Bashan, east of the Sea of Galilee, was famous for fat cattle (Deut 32:14). Amos the herdsman uses the picture for Samaria's wealthy women, sleek and thinking only of the next meal. They may never have cheated anyone with their own hands, but their luxury was squeezed from the poor as they pushed their husbands for more. Amos spoke against the men too (2:6-8; 6:1-6). When our comfort depends on another's suffering, God sees it.
4:2 *The Lord GOD has sworn by His holiness* By His very nature, and there is nothing higher (Heb 6:13). Those who dragged wealth from the poor would be dragged off like fish. Ancient carvings show captives led on ropes, some with rings through the lip.
4:3 *through breaches you will go out* Holes smashed in the city wall, out single file. No one knows where the Harmon was, perhaps Mount Hermon on the road north. The God who watched their victims suffer for years with no defender is not cruel. He is just.
4:4 *Come to Bethel and transgress* Irony, like a priest's call to worship. Bethel had the calf, and Gilgal, Israel's first camp under Joshua (Josh 4:19-20), was full of holy memories but had become a center of false worship. Every trip was another sin. They outdid the Law, which asked a special tithe every third year (Deut 14:28), by tithing every three days.

to Bethel (Bet-El) and transgress; ***at*** the Gilgal multiply transgressing; and bring your sacrifices ***every*** morning, your tithes ***every*** three days. **5** And burn a thank offering from ***what is*** leavened, and proclaim freewill offerings, make ***them*** heard; for so you love ***to do***, O sons of Israel (Yisra'el)," declares the Lord GOD. **6** "And also I, I gave you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, and lack of bread in all your places; and you did not return to Me," declares the LORD. **7** "And also I, I withheld the rain from you when ***there were*** yet three months to the harvest; and I would send rain on one city, and on another city I would not send rain; one portion would be rained on, and the portion on which it would not rain would dry up. **8** And two ***or*** three cities staggered to one city to drink water, and they were not satisfied; and you did not return to Me," declares the LORD. **9** "I struck you with blight and with mildew; the multitude of your gardens and your vineyards and your fig trees and your olive trees the gnawing locust ate; and you did not return to Me," declares the LORD. **10** "I sent among you pestilence in the manner of Egypt (Mitsrayim); I killed your young men with the sword, along with the captivity of your horses; and I made the stench of your camp go up, even into your nostrils; and you did not return to Me," declares the LORD. **11** "I overthrew among you like God's overthrow of Sodom (Sedom) and Gomorrah (Amora), and you were like a firebrand snatched from the burning; and you did not return to Me," declares the LORD. **12** "Therefore thus I will do to you, O Israel; because I will do this to you, prepare to meet your God, O Israel." **13** For look, the ***One*** forming mountains and creating wind, and declaring to mankind what his thought ***is***, making dawn darkness, and treading on the high places of the earth, the LORD God of armies ***is*** His name.

AMOS 5

Seek the LORD and Live

1 Hear this word which I ***am*** lifting up against you, a lamentation, O house of Israel (Yisra'el): **2** "She has fallen; she will not again rise, the virgin of Israel; she has been abandoned on her ground; ***there is*** no one raising her up." **3** For thus says the Lord GOD, "The city going out ***with*** a thousand will have a hundred left, and the ***one*** going out ***with*** a hundred will have ten left, for the house of Israel." **4** For thus says the LORD to the house of Israel, "Seek Me and live. **5** And do not seek Bethel (Bet-El), and ***to*** the Gilgal do not go, and ***to*** Beersheba (Be'er-Sheva) do not cross over; for the Gilgal will surely go into exile, and Bethel will become trouble." **6** Seek the LORD and live, lest He rush like the fire ***on*** the house of Joseph (Yosef), and it consume, and ***there is*** no one quenching ***it*** for Bethel, **7** O those who turn justice into wormwood, and righteousness they have cast down to the earth! **8** The ***One*** making ***the*** Pleiades and Orion, and turning deep dark-

4:5 Lev 22:18-21; Ps 81:12; Lev 7:12,13
4:6 Hag 2:17; Jer 5:3; Lev 26:26
4:7 James 5:17; Jer 3:3; Isa 5:6
4:8 Amos 4:6,9-11; 1 Kgs 18:5; Hag 1:6
4:9 Deut 28:22; Hag 2:17; Joel 1:4
4:10 Lev 26:25; Joel 2:20; Jer 11:22
4:11 Jude 1:23; 2 Pet 2:6; Jude 1:7
4:12 1 Thess 5:4; 1 Thess 5:2-4; James 4:1-10
4:13 Amos 5:8; Mic 1:3; Amos 9:6

5:1 Ezek 19:1,14; Jer 7:29; Jer 9:10,17,20
5:2 Jer 14:17; Isa 37:22; Jer 18:13
5:3 Deut 4:27; Deut 28:62; Isa 1:9
5:4 2 Chr 15:2; Zeph 2:3; Isa 55:3
5:5 Amos 4:4; Amos 8:14; Hos 4:15
5:6 Amos 5:4; Mark 9:43-48; Ezek 33:11
5:7 Amos 6:12; Hos 10:4; Zeph 1:6
5:8 Matt 4:16; Amos 4:13; Job 9:9

4:5 *burn a thank offering from what is leavened* A thank offering was a peace offering to thank God for a blessing. Leaven could come with it but was never to be burned on the altar (Lev 2:11; 7:13). They broke the Law while showing off, and made sure everyone knew their gifts (Matt 6:2). "So you love to do": they loved religion, not God or neighbor. We can be busy in church and still have hearts far from God (5:4).

4:6 *you did not return to Me* God lists the troubles He had already sent, the warnings of His covenant (Lev 26:14-39; Deut 28:15-68), which Solomon prayed would turn the people back (1 Kgs 8:33-40). Clean teeth meant nothing to eat. Return is shuv, to turn around and come back. God was not trying to destroy them. He was trying to get their attention.

4:7 *I would send rain on one city, and on another city I would not send rain* The late spring rains filled out the grain. One field soaked and the next dry made plain it was no accident of weather. It was God pointing, This is My hand.

4:10 *I sent among you pestilence in the manner of Egypt* Egypt's plagues fell on Israel because Israel acted like Egypt (Deut 28:60). Before Jeroboam II, Syria left Israel only fifty horsemen and ten chariots (2 Kgs 13:7). The dead lay unburied in camp. God does not hide how awful war is.

4:11 *you were like a firebrand snatched from the burning* Some disaster reminded people of Sodom (Gen 19:24-25), and Israel was a charred stick pulled out just in time (Zech 3:2). Five times God called through famine, drought, disease, war and ruin, and five times they did not come home. In the Tribulation it will be the same (Rev 9:20-21; 16:9). Not every hardship is punishment, as Job shows. If you suffer, do not let anyone tell you it must be your fault. But hard times are a chance to ask, Lord, am I right with You?

4:12 *prepare to meet your God, O Israel* Among the most solemn words in the Bible. God had sent warnings, and now He would come Himself, and chapters 5-9 tell what that means. It is first a summons to court. Yet as long as there is time, there is time to get ready (5:4). Every one of us will meet God (Heb 9:27), as a Judge we ran from or a Father we came home to. The only way to be ready is to come now through Jesus Christ, who took our judgment on the cross (Rom 5:8-9; 2 Cor 5:21). Are you ready to meet your God?

4:13 *the LORD God of armies is His name* The first of three short hymns in Amos (5:8-9; 9:5-6). He made the solid mountains and the unseen wind, knows our thoughts (Ps 139:1-4), turns dawn to darkness and treads on the high places where Israel worshiped idols. Israel treated Him like a national mascot. That is why meeting Him is so serious, and peace with Him so great a gift.

5:1 *a lamentation, O house of Israel* A funeral song sung over the dead. Israel was rich and strong, and Amos sang at her funeral.

5:2 *She has fallen; she will not again rise, the virgin of Israel* A virgin because she had never been conquered in her own land. Only one soldier in ten would come home (5:3), and the northern kingdom never rose again, though this is not God's last word for Israel's people (9:11-15).

5:4 *Seek Me and live* Right after the funeral song comes the call to life. To seek God is to turn to Him and want Him more than anything. Moses promised that even in exile those who sought God with all their heart would find Him (Deut 4:29).

5:5 *do not seek Bethel, and to the Gilgal do not go, and to Beersheba do not cross over* Famous places of worship, even Beersheba far south in Judah. Israel sought places, and God wanted them to seek Him. In Hebrew, Gilgal sounds like "go into exile," and Bethel, house of God, would become nothing (Hos 4:15).

5:6 *lest He rush like the fire on the house of Joseph* The northern tribes, led by Joseph's sons Ephraim and Manasseh. Their shrine could not put out the fire. God's call is not seek a building or a ritual, but seek Me (Matt 11:28).

5:8 *The One making the Pleiades and Orion* Another hymn. The Pleiades is a small star cluster and Orion the great hunter of the winter sky. He rules every sunrise and sunset and lifts the sea into the clouds to pour it out as rain. Why here, in a message on corrupt courts? Those who twisted justice thought no one was watching. The Maker of the stars was.

ness into the morning, and the day He has darkened ***into*** night, the ***One*** calling to the waters of the sea and He pours them out on the face of the earth, the LORD ***is*** His name; **9** the ***One*** making devastation flash on ***the*** strong, and devastation will come on ***the*** fortification. **10** They hate the ***one*** reproving in the gate, and the ***one*** speaking blamelessly they abhor. **11** Therefore, because you trample on the poor, and a levy of grain you take from him, houses of hewn stone you have built, and you will not dwell in them; vineyards of delight you have planted, and you will not drink their wine. **12** For I know ***that*** your transgressions ***are*** many and your sins ***are*** mighty, ***you*** afflicting the righteous, taking a ransom; and the needy in the gate they turn aside. **13** Therefore the prudent ***one*** will be silent at that time, for it ***is*** an evil time. **14** Seek good and not evil, so that you may live; and so let the LORD God of armies be with you, just as you have said. **15** Hate evil and love good, and set up justice in the gate; perhaps the LORD God of armies will be gracious ***to*** the remnant of Joseph. **16** Therefore thus says the LORD God of armies, the Lord, "In all the squares ***there will be*** wailing, and in all the streets they will say, 'Alas! Alas!' And they will call ***the*** farmer to mourning, and wailing to those who know lamentation. **17** And in all the vineyards ***there will be*** wailing, for I will pass through your midst," says the LORD.

The Day of the LORD

18 Woe ***to*** those desiring the day of the LORD! Why ***would*** this, the day of the LORD, ***be*** for you? It ***is*** darkness and not light; **19** as when a man flees from before the lion, and the bear meets him; and he goes ***into*** the house and leans his hand on the wall, and the snake bites him. **20** ***Is*** not the day of the LORD darkness and not light, and gloom, and ***there is*** no brightness to it? **21** "I hate, I reject your feasts, and I will not smell your solemn assemblies. **22** For even if you offer up to Me burnt offerings and your grain offerings, I will not accept ***them***; and the peace offering of your fatlings I will not look at. **23** Remove from Me the noise of your songs, and the melody of your harps I will not listen to. **24** And let justice roll like the waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing wadi. **25** ***Did*** you bring near sacrifices and grain offering to Me in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel? **26** And you will lift up Sikkuth (Sikut) your king and Chiun (Kiyyun) your images, the star of your gods, which you made for yourselves. **27** And I will send you into exile beyond Damascus (Dameseq)," says the LORD; God of armies ***is*** His name.

5:9 2 Kgs 13:17,25; Jer 37:10; Heb 11:34
5:10 Rev 11:10; 1 Kgs 22:8; Isa 29:21
5:11 Rev 11:10; Mic 6:15; Deut 28:30,38,39
5:12 Amos 2:6,7,16; 1 Sam 8:3; Isa 1:23
5:13 Eph 5:16; Eccl 3:7; Mic 2:3
5:14 Josh 1:9; Phil 4:8,9; Mic 3:11
5:15 Rom 12:9; Joel 2:14; Ps 97:10
5:16 Jer 9:17-19; Jer 9:10,18-20; Amos 5:27
5:17 Exod 12:12,23; Isa 16:10; Jer 48:33
5:18 2 Pet 3:10; Joel 1:15; Joel 2:1,2,10,31
5:19 Isa 24:17,18; Jer 15:2,3; Jer 48:43,44
5:20 Matt 22:13; Isa 13:10; Job 3:4-6
5:21 Mark 12:33; Isa 1:11-16; Jer 6:20
5:22 Mark 12:33; Heb 10:5; Isa 66:3
5:23 Mark 12:33; Amos 6:5; Amos 8:3,10
5:24 Mic 6:8; Amos 5:7,14,15; Prov 21:3
5:25 Acts 7:42-43; Acts 13:18; Josh 24:14
5:26 Acts 13:18; 1 Kgs 11:33; 2 Kgs 23:12,13
5:27 2 Kgs 17:6; Acts 7:43; Amos 4:13

5:10 *They hate the one reproving in the gate* The city gate was the courthouse, where elders heard cases (Ruth 4:1-2). Anyone who spoke the truth there was hated.
5:11 *houses of hewn stone you have built, and you will not dwell in them* The rich took grain from poor farmers through high rents and unfair levies. What they stole to build would be taken from them, the very curse Moses warned of (Deut 28:30, 39).
5:13 *the prudent one will be silent at that time* When courts are this corrupt, a careful man may judge speaking up useless or dangerous. Others read it as a warning that when judgment comes, it will be too late for words.
5:14 *let the LORD God of armies be with you, just as you have said* Seeking God and seeking good go together. They said God is with us at every feast. If you want that to be true, seek good.
5:15 *perhaps the LORD God of armies will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph* Repentance is practical: hate the wrong we loved and put things right, here with honest courts. "Perhaps," because God owes no one mercy. A remnant is the faithful few left after judgment. The nation would fall, but God could still be gracious to those who turned.
5:17 *I will pass through your midst* The words of Passover night, when the LORD passed through Egypt (Exod 12:12) and passed over Israel. Now He would pass through Israel, because Israel had become like Egypt. Even the vineyards, places of harvest joy, would ring with grief.
5:18 *Woe to those desiring the day of the LORD!* The day of the LORD is when God steps into history to judge His enemies. Israel was sure it would be a great day for them and never imagined they might be His enemies. For people living in sin it is darkness, not light.
5:19 *he goes into the house and leans his hand on the wall, and the snake bites him* Escaping the lion only to meet a bear, he makes it home, leans on the wall to catch his breath, and a snake in a crack bites him. There will be no escape.
5:20 *Is not the day of the LORD darkness and not light* Said twice so no one can miss it. For Israel it came in 722 B.C. The prophets also look to the final day of the LORD, which I believe includes the Tribulation and Christ's return to judge (Joel 2:31; 2 Thess 1:7-10; Rev 6:16-17). People can chart the end times and still not be ready. God has not appointed us to wrath (1 Thess 5:9), and I believe the church will be caught up before the Tribulation begins (1 Thess 4:16-17). That is not a reason to be careless but to live ready.
5:21 *I hate, I reject your feasts* God commanded the feasts, Passover and Booths, and hates them as Israel kept them. "I will not smell" means He will not accept them, since a sacrifice was a pleasing aroma to Him (Gen 8:21).
5:22 *the peace offering of your fatlings I will not look at* A burnt offering was burned whole, given wholly to God. A grain offering was flour, oil and incense. A peace offering was shared in a meal before God, a sign of fellowship. God refused them all. They sang on the Sabbath and cheated on Monday (1 Sam 15:22).
5:24 *let justice roll like the waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing wadi* The heart of Amos. God does not want less worship but worship from lives right with Him and others. Justice is treating people rightly: honest courts, fair wages and prices, protection for the widow, orphan and poor. A wadi is a streambed that runs only in the rainy season. God wants a stream that never dries up, not a trickle when convenient. We are saved by grace through faith (Eph 2:8-9; Gen 15:6), but saving faith is never alone (James 2:17). Do our Sunday worship and our Monday lives fit together?
5:25 *Did you bring near sacrifices and grain offering to Me in the wilderness forty years* Israel did offer sacrifices then. Most likely God means that even then the heart of it was listening to His voice, not sacrifice (Jer 7:22-23).
5:26 *Sikkuth your king and Chiun your images* These seem to be star gods of Assyria and Babylon, often linked with the planet Saturn. Israel took up the gods of the empire that would destroy them. A god you make cannot save you.
5:27 *I will send you into exile beyond Damascus* Damascus was the farthest city most Israelites could picture, and they were taken past it to Assyria (2 Kgs 17:6). Stephen quoted these verses from the Greek translation, with other names for the gods and "beyond Babylon" (Acts 7:43), speaking of both exiles together.

AMOS 6

Woe to Those at Ease

1 Woe ***to*** those at ease in Zion (Tsiyon), and those trusting in the mountain of Samaria (Shomron), the notable ***ones*** of the first of the nations, and the house of Israel (Yisra'el) comes to them! **2** Pass over ***to*** Calneh (Kalne) and see, and go from there ***to*** Hamath the great (Chamat-Raba), and go down ***to*** Gath (Gat) of the Philistines. ***Are they*** better than these kingdoms? Or ***is*** their territory greater than your territory? **3** those putting off an evil day, and you have brought near a seat of violence; **4** those lying on beds of ivory, and sprawled out on their couches, and eating lambs from ***the*** flock and calves from the midst of ***the*** stall; **5** those improvising to the sound of the harp; like David they have devised for themselves instruments of song; **6** those drinking in bowls of wine, and ***with*** the best of oils they anoint ***themselves***; and they have not been grieved over the ruin of Joseph (Yosef). **7** Therefore now they will go into exile at the head of the exiles, and the revelry of those sprawled out will pass away. **8** The Lord GOD has sworn by Himself, declares the LORD God of armies, "I ***am*** loathing the pride of Jacob (Ya'aqov), and his fortresses I hate; and I will deliver up the city and its fullness." **9** And it will be, if ten men remain in one house, and they will die. **10** And his relative, even the one burning him, will lift him up to bring out ***the*** bones from the house, and he will say to the one who ***is*** in the innermost parts of the house, "***Is there*** still ***anyone*** with you?" And he will say, "None." And he will say, "Hush! For ***we are*** not to mention the name of the LORD." **11** For look, the LORD ***is*** commanding, and one will strike the great house ***into*** fragments and the small house ***into*** breaches. **12** Do horses run on the crag? Or does one plow with the oxen? For you have turned justice into poison and the fruit of righteousness into wormwood; **13** those rejoicing in Lo-debar (Lo-Devar), who say, "Have we not by our strength taken Karnaim (Qarnayim) for ourselves?" **14** "For look, I ***am*** raising up against you, O house of Israel," declares the LORD, the God of armies, "a nation, and they will oppress you from Lebo-hamath (Levo-Chamat) to the wadi of the Arabah (Arava)."

AMOS 7

Locusts, Fire and the Plumb Line

1 Thus the Lord GOD showed me, and look, ***He was*** forming locusts at the beginning of the coming up of the spring crop; and look, ***it was*** a spring crop after the mowings of the king. **2** And it was, when it had finished eating the vegetation of the land, that I said, "Lord GOD, please forgive! How will Jacob (Ya'aqov) stand? For he ***is*** small." **3** The LORD relented

6:1 Luke 6:25; Rev 14:4; Isa 32:9-11
6:2 Nah 3:8; Gen 10:10; 2 Kgs 18:34
6:3 Amos 9:10; Isa 56:12; Amos 5:18
6:4 James 5:5; Isa 5:11,12; Isa 22:13
6:5 Rev 18:22; Isa 5:12; Amos 5:23
6:6 Gen 49:22; Hos 3:1; 1 Tim 5:23
6:7 Amos 7:11; Amos 5:5,27; 1 Kgs 20:16-20
6:8 Heb 6:13; Jer 51:14; Amos 4:2
6:9 Amos 5:3; 1 Sam 2:33; Esth 5:11
6:10 Amos 8:3; 1 Sam 31:12; Amos 5:13
6:11 Amos 3:15; Isa 55:11; 2 Kgs 25:9
6:12 James 3:18; Amos 5:7,11,12; Hos 10:4,13
6:13 Luke 12:19,20; Isa 28:14,15; James 4:16
6:14 1 Kgs 8:65; Jer 5:15-17; 2 Kgs 15:29
7:1 Joel 1:4; Amos 8:1; Amos 4:9
7:2 Exod 10:15; Ezek 11:13; Isa 37:4
7:3 Deut 32:36; Hos 11:8; Jonah 3:10

6:1 *Woe to those at ease in Zion, and those trusting in the mountain of Samaria* The rich and powerful in both capitals. Being at ease is not a sin, since God gives rest. The sin is being careless about God and others because life is good. They thought they led the greatest nation on earth and enjoyed people coming to them for favors.
6:2 *Pass over to Calneh and see* Calneh and Hamath were cities in Syria, and Gath was Philistine. Amos may quote the leaders' boast that they were better than all, or warn that those cities were great and fell. Assyria took Calneh and Hamath within a few years (Isa 10:9), and Samaria was next.
6:3 *those putting off an evil day* They told themselves disaster was far off while their violent rule brought it closer. We tell ourselves there is plenty of time to get right with God, and our choices bring the day nearer.
6:4 *those lying on beds of ivory, and sprawled out on their couches* Most people sat on the floor to eat. These men lay limp on ivory couches (3:15), eating the best young animals fattened for the table, when ordinary people seldom ate meat.
6:5 *like David they have devised for themselves instruments of song* David made instruments to worship God (1 Chr 23:5). These men made music for their own pleasure and thought themselves artists like David.
6:6 *they have not been grieved over the ruin of Joseph* Wine by the bowlful, a word used for the large altar basins, and the finest perfumed oils. The real charge: the nation was rotting, the poor crushed, judgment coming, and they did not care. God gives us all things richly to enjoy (1 Tim 6:17). The rich man's sin was not his money but that he never saw Lazarus at his gate (Luke 16:19-31). Do we grieve over what grieves God?
6:8 *I am loathing the pride of Jacob* God swears by Himself, since there is no one greater (Heb 6:13). The pride of Jacob was its wealth, army and strong cities. God hates pride because it sets itself in His place (1 Pet 5:5).
6:10 *we are not to mention the name of the LORD* A picture of the siege of Samaria. Plague wipes out whole houses, and bodies are burned, done only when there were too many dead to bury. The lone survivor is told to hush, afraid that speaking God's name might bring more judgment. Those who used His name lightly at their feasts were now afraid to say it. Some read it as shame, not knowing how to call on Him. God shows the end of a life without Him while there is time to turn.
6:12 *Do horses run on the crag? Or does one plow with the oxen?* No one races horses on bare rock or plows it with oxen. That would be foolish. Israel turned justice, meant to heal, into poison. Sin is not only wrong. It goes against the way God made the world to work.
6:13 *those rejoicing in Lo-debar* Towns east of the Jordan Jeroboam II won back (2 Kgs 14:25). Lo-debar sounds like nothing, and Karnaim means horns, a picture of strength. They celebrated nothing and boasted "by our strength," when God gave those victories in mercy (2 Kgs 14:26-27). How often do we thank ourselves for what God has given?
6:14 *from Lebo-hamath to the wadi of the Arabah* From the northern border to the far south near the Dead Sea, exactly the borders Jeroboam II restored (2 Kgs 14:25). The nation is Assyria. Within about thirty years Tiglath-pileser III began taking the land, and in 722 B.C. Samaria fell.
7:1 *He was forming locusts* Forming is the word for a potter shaping clay, used of God forming Adam (Gen 2:7). The king seems to have taken the first cutting of hay as a tax. The later crop, after the spring rains, was what farmers lived on. Locusts then would leave nothing until the next year.
7:2 *Lord GOD, please forgive! How will Jacob stand? For he is small.* Amos prayed for the people who would soon reject him. He did not say Israel deserved better. He asked for forgiveness and pointed to their weakness. Israel thought itself great (6:1, 13), but before God it was small.
7:3 *The LORD relented concerning this.* God does not change His mind like a man who did not know what he would do (Num 23:19). But when He warns of judgment, His warnings carry an unspoken unless (Jer 18:7-8), and He has chosen to work through the prayers of His people (Exod 32:14). Prayer for others matters.

concerning this. "It will not be," said the LORD. **4** Thus the Lord GOD showed me, and look, the Lord GOD ***was*** calling to contend by fire, and it ate the great deep, and it ate the portion. **5** And I said, "Lord GOD, please cease! How will Jacob stand? For he ***is*** small." **6** The LORD relented concerning this. "This also will not be," said the Lord GOD. **7** Thus He showed me, and look, the Lord ***was*** standing on a plumb-line wall, and in His hand ***was*** a plumb line. **8** And the LORD said to me, "What ***are*** you seeing, Amos?" And I said, "A plumb line." And the Lord said, "Look, I ***am*** setting a plumb line in the midst of My people Israel (Yisra'el); I will not continue any longer to pass by it. **9** And the high places of Isaac (Yischaq) will be made desolate, and the sanctuaries of Israel will be laid waste, and I will rise against the house of Jeroboam (Yaravam) with the sword."

Amaziah and Amos

10 And Amaziah (Amatsya) the priest of Bethel (Bet-El) sent to Jeroboam king of Israel, saying, "Amos has conspired against you in the midst of the house of Israel; the land is not able to endure all his words. **11** For thus Amos has said, 'By the sword Jeroboam will die, and Israel will surely go into exile from upon its land.'" **12** And Amaziah said to Amos, "Seer, go, flee for yourself to the land of Judah (Yehuda), and eat bread there, and there you will prophesy. **13** And ***at*** Bethel you must not continue any longer to prophesy, for it ***is*** a sanctuary of a king, and it ***is*** a house of a kingdom." **14** And Amos answered and said to Amaziah, "I ***am*** not a prophet, and I ***am*** not a son of a prophet; but I ***am*** a herdsman and a tender of sycamores. **15** And the LORD took me from after the flock, and the LORD said to me, 'Go, prophesy to My people Israel.' **16** And now, hear the word of the LORD. You ***are*** saying, 'You must not prophesy against Israel, and you must not drip ***words*** against the house of Isaac.'

17 Therefore thus says the LORD: 'Your wife will be a prostitute in the city, and your sons and your daughters will fall by the sword, and your land will be divided by the measuring line; and you will die on an unclean land, and Israel will surely go into exile from upon its land.'"

AMOS 8

The Basket of Summer Fruit

1 Thus the Lord GOD showed me, and look, a basket of summer fruit. **2** And He said, "What ***are*** you seeing, Amos?" And I said, "A basket of summer fruit." And the LORD said to me, "The end has come to My people Israel (Yisra'el); I will not continue any longer to pass by it. **3** And the songs of ***the*** temple will wail in that day," declares the Lord GOD. "Many ***are*** the corpses; in every place one will throw ***them***. Hush!"

Cheating the Poor

4 Hear this, you who trample the needy, and to make the afflicted of the land cease, **5** saying, "When will the new

7:4 Amos 7:1,7; Isa 66:15,16; Rev 4:1
7:5 Ps 85:4; Amos 7:2; Isa 10:25
7:6 Judg 2:18; Judg 10:16; Ps 90:13
7:7 2 Kgs 21:13; 2 Sam 8:2; Isa 28:17
7:8 Amos 8:2; Lam 2:8; Jer 15:6
7:9 2 Kgs 15:8-10; Gen 46:1; Amos 3:14
7:10 Jer 38:4; 1 Kgs 12:31,32; 2 Kgs 14:23,24
7:11 2 Kgs 17:6; Jer 26:9; Jer 28:10,11
7:12 Matt 8:34; 1 Sam 9:9; 2 Chr 16:10
7:13 Amos 2:12; 1 Kgs 12:29,32; 1 Kgs 13:1
7:14 Amos 1:1; 2 Kgs 4:38; 1 Kgs 20:35
7:15 Acts 5:20; 2 Sam 7:8; Ezek 2:3,4
7:16 Ezek 20:46; Mic 2:6; Ezek 21:2
7:17 2 Kgs 17:6; Hos 9:3; Hos 4:13,14
8:1 Amos 7:1,4,7
8:2 Amos 7:8; Lam 4:18; Jer 1:11-14
8:3 Amos 5:23; Amos 6:9,10; Amos 8:10
8:4 Ps 14:4; Prov 30:14; Amos 5:11
8:5 Mic 6:10,11; Hos 12:7; 2 Kgs 4:23

7:4 *calling to contend by fire, and it ate the great deep* To contend is to bring a case in court. The fire was so fierce it dried up the deep, the waters under the earth (Gen 7:11), then began to eat the land, the portion God gave Israel. It may picture terrible drought and heat.
7:6 *This also will not be* Twice Amos stood in the gap, and twice God held back. God looked for a man "standing in the breach before Me for the land" (Ezek 22:30). Who are you standing in the gap for?
7:7 *in His hand was a plumb line* A plumb line is a cord with a weight that hangs perfectly straight. Builders used it to test a wall. A wall that leans will one day fall.
7:8 *I am setting a plumb line in the midst of My people Israel* God measured Israel against His own word, not against the nations or their own ideas of right, and they were crooked. To "pass by" means to overlook. Not anymore. This time Amos does not pray. God's plumb line is still His Word (2 Cor 10:12), and our one hope is the One who took our crookedness on Himself (2 Cor 5:21).
7:9 *I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword* Fulfilled when Jeroboam's son Zechariah was murdered after six months, about 753 B.C. (2 Kgs 15:8-10). The first two visions showed what God could do. The third showed why He must. His patience is great, but not endless.
7:10 *Amaziah the priest of Bethel* The chief priest at the king's shrine, not a priest of Aaron's line. Jeroboam I had appointed his own priests for the calf worship (1 Kgs 12:31). He called Amos a traitor, as if preaching against the king were plotting against him.
7:11 *By the sword Jeroboam will die* Amaziah twisted the words. Amos said God would rise against "the house of Jeroboam" (7:9). Jeroboam II died in peace (2 Kgs 14:29). Amaziah also left out that the word came from the LORD and that Amos had prayed for Israel. Opponents of God's message often twist it to discredit the messenger.
7:13 *it is a sanctuary of a king* Not God's sanctuary, the king's. Bethel's worship served the state. When a church becomes more loyal to a ruler or a party than to God, it has lost its way.
7:14 *I am not a prophet, and I am not a son of a prophet* A son of a prophet was a member of a prophetic band (2 Kgs 2:3-5). Amos was no professional. He was a herdsman and tended sycamore figs, humble work. He had his own living and did not need Bethel's money.
7:15 *the LORD took me from after the flock* As He took David "from after the flock" (2 Sam 7:8). Amos was at Bethel because God sent him. That is the only answer a servant of God needs when told to be quiet (Acts 5:29). Notice God still calls them "My people."
7:17 *you will die on an unclean land* A foreign land where the LORD was not worshiped. His family would suffer the common horrors of conquest. God was not delighting in this but telling Amaziah what his rebellion would bring. The words Amaziah reported as a lie came true in 722 B.C. (2 Kgs 17:6). It is a serious thing to silence God's Word.
8:2 *The end has come to My people Israel* A wordplay. Summer fruit is qayits, and end is qets. Ripe summer fruit must be eaten or it rots. Israel was ripe for judgment, and its time was up. The repeated words of 7:8 show God's mind was settled.
8:3 *Many are the corpses; in every place one will throw them. Hush!* The word for temple can also mean palace. Either way, songs turn to wailing. The dead would be too many to bury properly, and some griefs are too deep for words (6:10).
8:5 *When will the new moon pass, so that we may sell grain?* Trade stopped on holy days (Neh 13:15-22). These men kept the days outwardly but watched the clock, eager to get back to business. Their bodies were at worship, and their hearts were at the market.
8:5 *to make the ephah small and to make the shekel great* A small ephah gave the buyer less grain, and a heavy shekel weight made him pay more silver. The Law demanded honest measures (Lev 19:35-36; Deut 25:13-16). God cares how we do business (Luke 16:10).

moon pass, so that we may sell grain? And the Sabbath, so that we may open ***up*** wheat, to make the ephah small and to make the shekel great, and to make crooked balances of deceit, **6** to buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of sandals? And the refuse of the wheat we will sell." **7** The LORD has sworn by the pride of Jacob (Ya'aqov): "I will never forget any of their deeds. **8** Will not the land tremble on account of this, and everyone who dwells in it mourn? And all of it will rise like the Nile (Ye'or), and it will be tossed, and it will sink like the Nile of Egypt (Mitsrayim). **9** And it will be in that day," declares the Lord GOD, "and I will make the sun go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in a day of light. **10** And I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation; and I will bring up sackcloth on all loins, and baldness on every head; and I will make it like the mourning of an only ***son***, and its end like a bitter day.

A Famine of Hearing

11 Look, days ***are*** coming," declares the Lord GOD, "and I will send a famine in the land, not a famine for bread, and not a thirst for water, but for hearing the words of the LORD. **12** And they will stagger from sea to sea, and from ***the*** north and to ***the*** east; they will rove about to seek the word of the LORD, and they will not find ***it***. **13** In that day the beautiful virgins and the young men will faint from thirst. **14** Those who swear by the guilt of Samaria (Shomron), and say, '***As*** your god lives, Dan,' and, '***As*** the way of Beersheba (Be'er-Sheva) lives,' they will fall and will not rise again."

AMOS 9

No Escape from God

1 I saw the Lord standing on the altar, and He said, "Strike the capital, so that the thresholds may shake, and break them off on the head of all of them; and the last of them I will kill with the sword. No one fleeing of them will flee, and no escapee of them will escape. **2** If they dig into Sheol, from there My hand will take them; and if they go up ***to*** the heavens, from there I will bring them down. **3** And if they hide themselves on the top of Carmel (Karmel), from there I will search ***them*** out, and I will take them; and if they conceal themselves from before My eyes on the floor of the sea, from there I will command the serpent, and it will bite them. **4** And if they go into captivity before their enemies, from there I will command the sword, and it will kill them; and I will set My eye on them for evil and not for good." **5** And the Lord GOD of armies, who touches the earth, and it melts, and all who dwell in it mourn, and all of it rises like the Nile (Ye'or), and it sinks like the Nile of Egypt (Mitsrayim); **6** who builds His stairs in the heavens, and has founded His vault on the earth; who calls to the waters of the sea, and pours them out on the face of the earth: the LORD ***is*** His name. **7** "***Are*** you not like the sons of the Cushites to Me, sons of Israel (Yisra'el)?" declares the LORD. "Did I not bring up Israel from the land of Egypt, and the Philistines from Caphtor (Kaftor), and Syria (Aram) from Kir (Qir)? **8** Look, the eyes of the Lord GOD ***are*** on the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from

8:6 Amos 2:6; Amos 8:4; Lev 25:39-42
8:7 Amos 6:8; Hos 8:13; Hos 9:9
8:8 Amos 9:5; Hos 4:3; Ps 18:7
8:9 Matt 27:45; Mark 15:33; Luke 23:44
8:10 Luke 21:25; Jer 6:26; Zech 12:10
8:11 1 Sam 3:1; Ps 74:9; 1 Sam 28:6,15
8:12 Matt 24:24; Rom 11:8; 2 Tim 3:6,7
8:13 Hos 2:3; Lam 1:18; Deut 32:25
8:14 Acts 18:25; Deut 9:21; 1 Kgs 12:28,29,32

9:1 John 1:18; Ps 68:21; Isa 6:1
9:2 Jer 51:53; Obad 1:4; Ps 139:7-10
9:3 Jer 16:16; Job 34:22; Isa 27:1
9:4 Lev 26:33,36-39; Jer 44:11; Lev 17:10
9:5 Amos 8:8; Ps 46:6; Ps 144:5
9:6 Ps 104:3,13; Amos 5:8; Amos 4:13
9:7 Jer 47:4; Amos 1:5; Deut 2:23
9:8 Jer 30:11; Amos 9:4; Jer 44:27

8:6 *to buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of sandals* Ruined by these tricks, the poor had to sell themselves, and the same merchants bought them (2:6). They even sold the sweepings from the threshing floor, chaff and dirt mixed in, to those who could not afford better.
8:7 *I will never forget any of their deeds* God swore by His holiness (4:2) and by Himself (6:8). The pride of Jacob may be a title for God, the One Israel should have boasted in, or said with irony. Every cheated buyer God remembers. Sin is forgotten by God only through forgiveness (Jer 31:34).
8:9 *I will make the sun go down at noon* Darkness at midday pictures sudden disaster and the day of the LORD (5:18-20; Joel 2:31). Many note a total eclipse in 763 B.C. Some think of the darkness at the cross (Matt 27:45). The New Testament does not call it a fulfillment, but it is a fitting picture of judgment falling on God's own Son for us.
8:10 *like the mourning of an only son* There is no grief like losing an only child. Zechariah uses the same picture for Israel's mourning when they look on the One they pierced (Zech 12:10). The feasts the merchants could not wait to end would become funerals.
8:11 *not a famine for bread, and not a thirst for water, but for hearing the words of the LORD* The worst judgment of all: God would stop speaking. Israel told the prophets not to prophesy (2:12). After Malachi no prophet spoke for about four hundred years, until John. We have the whole Bible. The danger is not that God takes it away, but that it stays closed (Heb 3:7-8; Matt 4:4).
8:12 *they will rove about to seek the word of the LORD, and they will not find it* When disaster came they would want a prophet, and there would be none. Saul knew that silence: "the LORD did not answer him" (1 Sam 28:6).
8:14 *As your god lives, Dan* Dan in the far north had the second golden calf (1 Kgs 12:29), and the way of Beersheba was likely the pilgrimage road south (5:5). They swore by idols instead of the LORD. Those who trust in false gods fall with them.
9:1 *I saw the Lord standing on the altar* Most likely the altar at Bethel, where Amaziah told Amos not to prophesy (7:13). Now the Lord Himself stands there. The capital is the top of a pillar holding up the roof. Struck, the shrine collapses on the worshipers, and those who escape fall by the sword. There is nowhere to run (5:18-20).
9:2 *If they dig into Sheol, from there My hand will take them* Sheol, the place of the dead, is the deepest place, the heavens the highest. David said the same in Ps 139:8, and for him it was comfort. For people running from God it is terror. The only safe place to run is to Him.
9:3 *on the top of Carmel* Mount Carmel was thick with woods and caves. Even the floor of the sea is no hiding place. The serpent there is a sea creature that obeys its Maker. Jonah would try to flee and fail (Jonah 1:3).
9:6 *who builds His stairs in the heavens, and has founded His vault on the earth* The third hymn to the Creator (4:13; 5:8-9). The universe is His house, its upper rooms in heaven and its foundation on earth. He needs no army to bring a nation down. He only touches the earth.
9:7 *Are you not like the sons of the Cushites to Me, sons of Israel?* The Cushites lived far south along the upper Nile. God moved other nations too, the Philistines from Caphtor, likely Crete, and Syria from Kir (1:5). This does not cancel Israel's election (3:2; 9:8-15). The exodus was not a charm that made them safe in their sin.
9:8 *nevertheless, I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob* The turning point of the book. The sinful kingdom, the northern kingdom, would be destroyed in 722 B.C., but not the people. God had made promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and He keeps them.

upon the face of the ground; nevertheless, I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob (Ya'aqov)," declares the LORD.
9 "For look, I ***am*** commanding, and I will shake the house of Israel among all the nations, as ***grain*** is shaken in the sieve, and not a pebble will fall ***to the*** earth. **10** By the sword all the sinners of My people will die, who say, 'The calamity will not draw near and will not confront us.'

The Booth of David Rebuilt

11 In that day I will raise up the booth of David that is falling, and I will wall up their breaches, and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as ***in*** the days of old, **12** so that they may possess the remnant of Edom and all the nations on whom My name is called," declares the LORD who does this.
13 "Look, days ***are*** coming," declares the LORD, "and the plowman will come near the reaper, and the treader of grapes the sower of the seed; and the mountains will drip sweet wine, and all the hills will melt. **14** And I will turn back the captivity of My people Israel, and they will build desolated cities and dwell ***in them***, and they will plant vineyards and drink their wine, and they will make gardens and eat their fruit. **15** And I will plant them on their land, and they will not be plucked up again from upon their land which I have given to them," says the LORD your God.

9:9 Lev 26:33; Deut 28:64
9:10 Isa 33:14; Ezek 20:38; Ezek 34:16,17
9:11 Acts 15:16-17; Acts 15:15; Luke 1:69
9:12 Isa 43:7; Isa 11:14; Isa 14:1,2
9:13 Acts 3:19; Lev 26:5; Joel 3:18,20
9:14 Acts 3:19; Rom 11:26; Isa 61:4
9:15 Acts 3:19; Rom 11:26; Jer 24:6

9:9 *as grain is shaken in the sieve, and not a pebble will fall to the earth* Sifting separates. God would scatter Israel among the nations and in the scattering separate the true from the false, yet not one would be lost by accident. The Jewish people have been scattered for centuries yet never lost as a people.
9:11 *I will raise up the booth of David that is falling* Until now "that day" meant judgment (8:9). Now it means restoration. God promised David a house and throne forever (2 Sam 7:16), but by Amos's day his line was a hut about to collapse. The Messiah, the Son of David, rebuilds it, and God will give Him "the throne of David His father" (Luke 1:32).
9:12 *all the nations on whom My name is called* To have God's name called over you means to belong to Him. Edom, Israel's old enemy, stands first for the nations. Amos sees Gentile nations belonging to the LORD under David's Son. James quoted this at the Jerusalem council (Acts 15:16-17). See the hard passage in the introduction.
9:13 *the plowman will come near the reaper* The harvest so great that reapers are still at work when plowing begins. The land struck by drought, blight and locusts (4:6-9) will overflow, as Joel also promised (Joel 3:18).
9:14 *they will build desolated cities and dwell in them* The curse of 5:11 reversed. They will live in what they build and drink the wine of what they plant. God still calls them "My people Israel."
9:15 *they will not be plucked up again from upon their land which I have given to them* I believe Amos means what he says. The return from Babylon was real but partial, and the Jews were uprooted again in A.D. 70. The full restoration comes when Christ returns after the Tribulation and reigns a thousand years (Zech 14:4, 9; Rev 20:4-6). The church does not replace Israel, because "the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable" (Rom 11:29).

OBADIAH

Introduction

Title

The book is named for its prophet, Obadiah, whose name means servant of the LORD. It is the fourth of the twelve Minor Prophets, coming after Amos and before Jonah, and it is the shortest book in the Old Testament, one chapter of twenty-one verses. But it carries a quarrel as old as Genesis, between the twin brothers Jacob and Esau and the nations that came from them.

Author and Date

The book opens, "The vision of Obadiah" (1:1), and we know nothing more about the prophet. It was a common name. There are about a dozen Obadiahs in the Old Testament, among them the man over Ahab's palace who hid a hundred prophets (1 Kgs 18:3-4), but nothing ties any of them to this book. Jewish and Christian tradition hold that he wrote it.

Obadiah names no king, so good Bible teachers disagree on the date. Many conservative scholars, and the SLB introduction, place it soon after the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem in 586 B.C. Scripture says plainly that Edom cheered that day: "Remember, LORD, against the sons of Edom the day of Jerusalem" (Ps 137:7; see also Lam 4:21-22; Ezek 25:12-14), and Obadiah speaks of "the exiles of Jerusalem" (1:20). Others date it about 848 to 841 B.C., when Edom rebelled against King Jehoram and Philistines and Arabs plundered Jerusalem (2 Kgs 8:20-22; 2 Chr 21:16-17). This study follows the later date as the most likely. Obadiah 1-9 shares many words with Jeremiah 49:7-22. Either way, God gave the same message to two prophets.

Background and Setting

The Edomites lived in the mountains of Seir, south and east of the Dead Sea, a dry land of red cliffs and deep gorges. Their towns were perched where armies could hardly reach them, and they grew rich from the King's Highway, the trade road from Arabia to Damascus. The quarrel with Israel went back to Jacob and Esau (Gen 25:22-34; 27:41). Edom refused Israel passage on the way from Egypt (Num 20:14-21), was conquered by David, and rebelled again and again. Its final betrayal came when Jerusalem fell. It stood aside, gloated, looted, and caught the refugees to hand them over.

Obadiah's words came true. Arab peoples, chiefly the Nabateans, later pushed the Edomites out of their mountains into southern Judah, called Idumea. Herod the Great, who tried to kill the baby Jesus, was an Idumean. After the Romans destroyed Jerusalem in A.D. 70, the Edomites disappear from history.

Themes

Pride brings a fall. "The arrogance of your heart has deceived you" (1:3). Edom thought its mountains made it untouchable, but God says, "from there I will bring you down" (1:4).

God judges cruelty to His people, and standing by counts as joining in. "As you have done, it will be done to you" (1:15). God's promise to curse those who disdain Abraham's people (Gen 12:3) still stands.

The day of the LORD is near for all the nations. It came on Edom in history, and this study holds that the final day of the LORD includes the Tribulation and the return of Christ to judge the earth, with the church taken up to be with Him before that time of wrath (1 Thess 4:16-17; 5:9).

God keeps His promises to Israel. Mount Zion will be holy, the house of Jacob will possess its land, and "the kingship will be the LORD's" (1:21).

Christ in Obadiah

The New Testament does not quote Obadiah. But its last words look ahead to the day when heaven cries, "The kingdoms of the world have become those of our Lord and of His Christ" (Rev 11:15). The deliverers who go up on Mount Zion point to the great Deliverer, Jesus Christ, who will reign from Jerusalem when He returns (Zech 14:4, 9), and of whom Paul writes, "The One who delivers will come out of Zion" (Rom 11:26). Obadiah's warning against pride sounds again in the New Testament: "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble" (1 Pet 5:5). And the recompense Edom earned is the recompense Christ bore on the cross for everyone who trusts Him.

Hard Passages

When was Obadiah written? The notes follow the date soon after 586 B.C. and the introduction gives the earlier date fairly.

Is God being harsh in saying there will be no survivor to the house of Esau (1:18)? This judgment fell on a nation that kept choosing violence against its brother for centuries. It is not a word against any person today, for the gospel is offered to everyone, whatever nation they come from.

Who are the deliverers of verse 21, and when does the kingdom come? The notes read them as rulers God raises up in the restored kingdom, pointing to Christ's thousand-year reign from Zion with His people (Rev 20:4, 6). Some see a fulfillment in the Maccabees, and others see the kingdom only in the church.

Outline

I. Edom's Fall (1:1-9)
  A. Brought down from the heights (1:1-4)
  B. Plundered and betrayed (1:5-9)
II. Edom's Crimes against Its Brother (1:10-14)
III. The Day of the LORD and Israel's Rescue (1:15-21)
  A. As you have done (1:15-16)
  B. Deliverance on Mount Zion (1:17-21)

OBADIAH

OBADIAH 1

Edom Brought Down

1 The vision of Obadiah (Ovadya). Thus says the Lord GOD concerning Edom: We have heard a report from the LORD, and an envoy has been sent among the nations: "Arise, and let us arise against her for battle!" **2** Look, I have made you small among the nations; you ***are*** greatly despised. **3** The arrogance of your heart has deceived you, you who dwell in the clefts of ***the*** rock, ***in*** the height of his dwelling, who says in his heart, "Who will bring me down ***to the*** ground?" **4** If you soar high like the eagle, and if your nest ***is*** set among the stars, from there I will bring you down, declares the LORD. **5** If thieves came to you, if destroyers of ***the*** night (how you have been destroyed!), would they not steal ***only*** their fill? If grape gatherers came to you, would they not leave gleanings? **6** How Esau (Esav) has been searched out! His hidden treasures have been sought out! **7** To the border all the men of your covenant have sent you away; they have deceived you, they have prevailed against you, the men of your peace; ***the men of*** your bread will set a trap under you. There is no understanding in him. **8** Will it not ***be*** in that day, declares the LORD, and I will destroy the wise from Edom, and understanding from Mount Esau? **9** And your warriors will be dismayed, Teman, so that every man will be cut off from Mount Esau by slaughter.

Violence against a Brother

10 Because of the violence ***done to*** your brother Jacob (Ya'aqov), shame will cover you, and you will be cut off forever. **11** On the day of your standing aloof, on the day strangers took captive his wealth, and foreigners came ***into*** his gates and cast a lot over Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), you also ***were*** like one of them. **12** And do not look on the day of your brother, on the day of his misfortune; and do not rejoice over the sons of Judah (Yehuda) on the day of their perishing; and do not make your mouth big on the day of trouble. **13** Do not enter the gate of My people on the day of their disaster; do not look, you also, on his calamity on the day of his disaster; and do not stretch out ***your hand*** against his wealth on the day of his disaster. **14** And do not stand at the crossroads to cut off his fugitives; and do not hand over his survivors on the day of trouble.

The Day of the LORD

15 For the day of the LORD ***is*** near upon all the nations. As you have done, it will be done to you; your recompense will return on your own head. **16** For as you have drunk on My holy mountain, all the nations will drink continually; and they will drink and swallow, and they will be as ***though*** they had not been. **17** And on Mount Zion (Tsiyon) there will be deliverance, and it will be holy; and the house of Jacob will

1:1 Isa 63:1-6; Ezek 25:12-14; Amos 1:11,12
1:2 Num 24:18; Isa 23:9; 1 Sam 2:7,8
1:3 Isa 14:13-15; Isa 16:6; Prov 29:23
1:4 Hab 2:9; Isa 14:12-15; Job 20:6,7
1:5 Jer 49:9; Deut 24:21; Isa 17:6
1:6 Jer 49:10; Ps 139:1; Isa 10:13,14
1:7 John 13:18; Ps 41:9; Jer 30:14
1:8 Isa 29:14; Job 5:12-14; Ps 33:10
1:9 Gen 36:11; Amos 1:12; Jer 49:22
1:10 Amos 1:11; Num 20:14-21; Ps 137:7
1:11 Joel 3:3; Nah 3:10; Ps 137:7
1:12 Rev 11:10; Mic 4:11; Prov 17:5
1:13 2 Sam 16:12; Ps 22:17; Zech 1:15
1:14 Amos 1:6,9; Ps 31:8; Obad 1:12
1:15 Hab 2:8; Ezek 30:3; Ezek 35:15
1:16 Jer 49:12; Joel 3:17; Isa 51:22,23
1:17 Amos 9:11-15; Joel 2:32; Amos 9:8

1:1 *The vision of Obadiah* Obadiah, servant of the LORD, saw his message, revealed by God. The nations think they are making their own war plans against Edom, but the LORD has sent the call (Amos 6:14). Edom was the nation descended from Esau, Jacob's twin.
1:3 *The arrogance of your heart has deceived you* Pride is a liar, and the first person it fools is the proud person himself. Edom's land was a maze of red sandstone cliffs and canyons, and one city was named Sela, rock (2 Kgs 14:7). A few men could hold off an army there.
1:4 *if your nest is set among the stars, from there I will bring you down* No height is out of God's reach. "Before breaking is pride" (Prov 16:18). Where do we build our nests: money, career, our own cleverness? The only safe place is low, in humble trust before Him (1 Pet 5:5).
1:6 *His hidden treasures have been sought out* Edom grew rich from the King's Highway trade and hid its wealth in mountain caves. Every hiding place would be found (Amos 9:3).
1:7 *the men of your bread will set a trap under you* Those who ate at Edom's table would turn on it. Edom betrayed its brother, and its friends would betray it. Many see this fulfilled when the Nabateans, Arab traders, pushed the Edomites out of their land.
1:8 *I will destroy the wise from Edom* Edom was famous for wisdom. Eliphaz, the oldest of Job's friends, came from Teman (Job 2:11). But wisdom without God cannot save a nation, and when God judges, human wisdom and strength fail together.
1:10 *Because of the violence done to your brother Jacob* Esau and Jacob were twins (Gen 25:24-26), and God told Israel not to hate an Edomite, "for he is your brother" (Deut 23:7). Esau and Jacob made peace (Gen 33:4), but their descendants never did. Edom as a nation was cut off and vanished from history.
1:11 *On the day of your standing aloof* Foreigners cast lots to divide the city and its people (Joel 3:3), and Edom stood off and watched. God counts standing by as joining in. The priest and Levite only walked by (Luke 10:30-32). For one who knows to do good and does not do it, "to him it is sin" (James 4:17).
1:12 *do not look on the day of your brother* Eight warnings, each beginning "do not," as though God stood beside Edom that day. They trace Edom's sin from looking, to rejoicing (Prov 24:17), to mocking with a big mouth. Sin rarely starts with the worst act. It starts in the heart (James 1:15).
1:14 *do not stand at the crossroads to cut off his fugitives* Refugees ran for the roads south and east, and Edom was waiting to catch them and hand them over to death or slavery. Edom had its day against Jacob. Verse 15 says God's day is coming.
1:15 *As you have done, it will be done to you* The vision widens to all the nations. The day of the LORD came for Edom in history, and the final day includes the Tribulation and Christ's return to judge (Joel 3:12-14; Zech 14:1-9; Rev 19:11-16). God curses those who disdain Abraham's people (Gen 12:3). On the cross Jesus took the recompense our sins deserved.
1:16 *as you have drunk on My holy mountain* Either Edom and Babylon drank in celebration on Mount Zion, or Judah drank the cup of God's anger when Jerusalem fell. Either way, the cup of wrath now passes to all the nations (Jer 25:15-16; Rev 14:10).
1:17 *on Mount Zion there will be deliverance, and it will be holy* The great turn. Edom's mountain falls, but Zion is saved, as Joel said (Joel 2:32), and the house of Jacob gets back the land God promised to Abraham.

possess their possessions. **18** And the house of Jacob will be a fire, and the house of Joseph (Yosef) a flame, and the house of Esau for stubble; and they will burn among them and consume them, and there will be no survivor to the house of Esau, for the LORD has spoken. **19** And the Negeb (Negev) will possess Mount Esau, and the Shephelah the Philistines; and they will possess the field of Ephraim (Efrayim) and the field of Samaria (Shomron), and Benjamin (Binyamin) the Gilead (Gilad). **20** And the exiles of this host of the sons of Israel (Yisra'el) who ***are among the*** Canaanites as far as Zarephath (Tsarfat), and the exiles of Jerusalem who ***are*** in Sepharad (Sefarad), will possess the cities of the Negeb. **21** And deliverers will go up on Mount Zion to judge Mount Esau, and the kingship will be the LORD's.

1:18 Zech 12:6; Isa 10:17; Isa 5:24
1:19 Amos 9:12; Jer 32:44; Zeph 2:4-7
1:20 Luke 4:26; 1 Kgs 17:9,10; Jer 33:13
1:21 Dan 7:27; Ps 22:28; Zech 14:9

1:18 *the house of Jacob will be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame* Judah and the northern tribes, reunited, will be fire to Edom's stubble. That reunion has not yet happened in full. Ezekiel saw it too, two sticks made one under one king (Ezek 37:15-24).
1:20 *the exiles of Jerusalem who are in Sepharad* Zarephath was on the Phoenician coast, where Elijah stayed with a widow (1 Kgs 17:9). No one is sure where Sepharad was. Many think Sardis. Later Jewish tradition took it as Spain, so Jews from Spain are called Sephardic. From the farthest places God's people will come home.
1:21 *deliverers will go up on Mount Zion* Leaders God raises up to rescue, like the judges (Judg 3:9, 15). They point to Christ, the great Deliverer, reigning from Jerusalem with His people (Rev 20:4, 6; Rom 11:26).
1:21 *the kingship will be the LORD's* The point of the whole book. Edom thought it ruled its mountains. In the end the kingdom belongs to the LORD (Zech 14:9; Rev 11:15). This will happen on the earth when Christ returns and sets up His thousand-year kingdom. We need not take revenge (Rom 12:19). We need to be on the King's side.

JONAH

Introduction

Title

The book is named for its prophet, Jonah son of Amittai. His name means dove. Jonah is the fifth of the twelve Minor Prophets, coming after Obadiah and before Micah, and it is different from all the others. The other books are mostly the prophets' messages, with a little of their story. Jonah is mostly the prophet's story, with one short message: "Yet forty days, and Nineveh will be overturned" (3:4). And the story does not flatter the prophet.

Author and Date

The book does not name its writer. It speaks of Jonah in the third person, as Moses often wrote of himself. Jewish and Christian tradition have long held that Jonah wrote it, or that it came from his own account. Only Jonah could have known what he prayed inside the fish or what he said to God outside Nineveh. Some modern scholars date the book centuries later. I take it as the true account of Jonah's own experience, whoever set down the final words.

Jonah appears once more in the Old Testament. In the reign of Jeroboam II, God restored Israel's northern border "according to the word of the LORD, the God of Israel, which He spoke by the hand of His servant Jonah the son of Amittai, the prophet who was from Gath-hepher" (2 Kgs 14:25). Gath-hepher was a village in Galilee a few miles north of Nazareth (Josh 19:13). Jeroboam II reigned about 793 to 753 B.C., and most conservative scholars date Jonah's ministry about 785 to 760 B.C., making him an older contemporary of Amos and Hosea.

Background and Setting

Nineveh stood on the east bank of the Tigris River, across from modern Mosul in northern Iraq. It was one of the great royal cities of Assyria and later its capital. Assyria was the most feared empire of its day. Its kings boasted in their own records of burning cities, torturing enemies and deporting whole peoples. In Jonah's day Assyria went through a weak period, troubled by revolts, plagues and an eclipse of the sun in 763 B.C., which some think made the people more ready to hear a prophet. About forty years after Jonah, Assyria destroyed Samaria and carried Israel away (722 B.C.). More than a century after Jonah, Nahum announced Nineveh's end, and it fell in 612 B.C.

Jonah tells us why he ran. He was not afraid of the Assyrians. He knew God was gracious and would forgive them if they repented (4:2), and he did not want Israel's enemy spared.

Themes

God is sovereign over everything. He hurls the wind, appoints a great fish, a plant, a worm and a scorching wind, and controls even the lot (1:4, 7, 17; 4:6-8). In this book everything obeys God except, for a while, His prophet.

Salvation belongs to the LORD (2:9). It cannot be earned. Jonah was saved from the sea by God alone, and the same God saved pagan sailors and a cruel city when they turned to Him.

God's compassion reaches beyond Israel. He is "a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abundant in steadfast love" (4:2), even toward the enemies of His people. When a nation repents, He relents from the judgment He warned of (3:10; Jer 18:7-8).

The book searches our hearts. Jonah wanted mercy for himself and judgment for others. The book ends with God's question, "should I not have compassion on Nineveh, the great city" (4:11), and leaves every reader to answer it.

Christ in Jonah

Jesus Himself made the link. When asked for a sign, He said none would be given "except the sign of Jonah the prophet. For just as Jonah was in the belly of the sea monster three days and three nights, so the Son of Man will be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights" (Matt 12:39-40). Jonah's coming up alive pointed to Jesus' rising from the dead. Jesus also said the men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment and condemn those who would not repent, "and look, something greater than Jonah is here" (Matt 12:41). Jonah went down into the sea for his own disobedience. Jesus went down into death for ours. Jonah was an unwilling prophet who ran from God's mercy to the nations. Jesus is the willing Savior who brought that mercy to the whole world.

Hard Passages

Is Jonah history or a parable? Some readers treat the book as a parable, mainly because of the great fish. This study reads it as history. It is written as history about a real prophet, city and king, and Jesus spoke of Jonah in the fish and Nineveh's repentance as real events (Matt 12:40-41). Real people do not stand up at the judgment for repenting in a parable. If God raised Jesus from the dead, He could keep Jonah alive in a fish.

What kind of creature was the fish, and how was Jonah there three days and three nights? The Hebrew says only a great fish. The notes leave its kind open and explain that the Jews counted any part of a day as a day.

Did Jonah die in the fish? Most read his prayer of Sheol and the pit as a picture of being at death's door. Some teachers believe he died and was raised. The notes leave it open.

Did God change His mind about Nineveh? The notes explain that God's character never changes (Num 23:19), but His warnings carry an unspoken condition, and when Nineveh repented, He did just what He always said He would do (Jer 18:8).

Outline

I. Jonah Runs from God and Is Rescued (1:1-2:10)
  A. Jonah runs from God (1:1-3)
  B. The storm and the sailors (1:4-16)
  C. The great fish (1:17)
  D. Jonah's prayer from the fish (2:1-10)
II. Jonah Preaches and God Shows Mercy (3:1-4:11)
  A. Jonah's second call (3:1-4)
  B. Nineveh repents (3:5-10)
  C. Jonah's anger (4:1-5)
  D. The plant, the worm and God's question (4:6-11)

JONAH

JONAH 1

Jonah Runs from God

1 And the word of the LORD came to Jonah (Yona) the son of Amittai (Amitay), saying, **2** "Arise, go to Nineveh (Ninve), the great city, and call out against it, for their evil has come up before Me." **3** And Jonah arose to flee to Tarshish from before the LORD; and he went down ***to*** Joppa (Yafo), and he found a ship going ***to*** Tarshish; and he paid its fare, and he went down into it to go with them to Tarshish from before the LORD.

The Storm at Sea

4 And the LORD hurled a great wind to the sea, and there was a great storm on the sea, and the ship thought to be broken up. **5** And the sailors were afraid, and they cried out, each man to his god; and they hurled the vessels that ***were*** in the ship into the sea to lighten ***it*** from upon them. And Jonah had gone down into the innermost parts of the ship, and he had lain down, and he had fallen fast asleep. **6** And the chief of the sailors came near to him, and he said to him, "What ***is it*** to you, sleeper? Arise, call to your God; perhaps the God will give thought to us, and we will not perish." **7** And they said, each man to his neighbor, "Come, and let us cast lots, so that we may know on whose account this evil ***has come*** to us." And they cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah. **8** And they said to him, "Please tell us, on whose account ***has*** this evil ***come*** to us? What ***is*** your occupation? And from where do you come? What ***is*** your land? And from what people ***are*** you?" **9** And he said to them, "I ***am*** a Hebrew, and I fear the LORD, the God of the heavens, who made the sea and the dry land." **10** And the men feared a great fear, and they said to him, "What ***is*** this you have done?" For the men knew that he was fleeing from before the LORD, because he had told them. **11** And they said to him, "What shall we do to you, so that the sea may become calm from upon us?" For the sea was growing more and more stormy. **12** And he said to them, "Pick me up and hurl me into the sea, and the sea will become calm from upon you; for I know that on my account this great storm ***is*** upon you." **13** And the men rowed hard to bring ***it*** back to the dry land, and they were not able, for the sea was growing more and more stormy against them. **14** And they called to the LORD, and they said, "Please, LORD, please let us not perish for the life of this man, and do not put innocent blood on us; for You, LORD, have done as You pleased." **15** And they picked up Jonah and hurled him into the sea, and the sea stopped from its raging. **16** And the men feared the LORD ***with*** a great fear, and they sacrificed a sacrifice to the LORD, and they vowed vows.

The Great Fish

17 And the LORD appointed a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the inward parts of the fish three days and three nights.

1:1 Luke 11:32; Luke 11:29; Matt 12:39
1:2 Matt 10:18; Luke 11:32; Gen 10:11
1:3 Acts 9:36; Luke 11:32; Acts 27:14
1:4 Acts 27:13; Matt 8:26; Matt 8:27
1:5 Acts 27:14; Acts 27:18,19,38; 1 Kgs 18:26
1:6 Jonah 3:9; 2 Sam 12:22; Amos 5:15
1:7 Matt 27:35; Acts 1:26; Prov 16:33
1:8 Gen 47:3; 1 Sam 30:13; Josh 7:19
1:9 Rev 11:13; Phil 3:5; Rev 15:4
1:10 Mark 4:41; Jonah 1:3; Job 27:22
1:11 1 Sam 6:2,3; 2 Sam 21:1-6; 2 Sam 24:11-13
1:12 2 Sam 24:17; 1 Chr 21:17; John 11:50
1:13 Prov 21:30; Job 34:29
1:14 Deut 21:8; Ps 115:3; Ps 135:6
1:15 Matt 8:26; Ps 107:29; Luke 8:24
1:16 Mark 4:41; Gen 8:20; Ps 107:22
1:17 Matt 12:40; Matt 16:4; Luke 11:30

1:1 *Jonah the son of Amittai* The same prophet who told Jeroboam II that Israel's borders would be restored (2 Kgs 14:25). He was used to bringing good news to his own nation.
1:2 *go to Nineveh, the great city* Nineveh was a great city of Assyria, about 500 miles northeast of Israel, and Assyria was the cruelest power of the day. Its evil came up before God like the cry of Sodom (Gen 18:20-21). God judges Gentile nations too, but He sends a warning first. Why warn them, unless He was willing to show mercy?
1:3 *to flee to Tarshish from before the LORD* Nineveh was east. Tarshish, most likely Tartessus in Spain, was at the far west of the known world. Jonah knew he could not hide from God (1:9). He was running from his calling, and 4:2 tells why. Notice the word "down": to Joppa, into the ship, into its hold, into the sea. Running from God is always a downward road, and it costs. He "paid its fare."
1:4 *the LORD hurled a great wind to the sea* Jonah had his plans, but God has His. The same word hurled is used when the sailors throw the cargo and then Jonah into the sea. The ship itself seemed about to break apart.
1:5 *he had fallen fast asleep* While pagan sailors cried out each to his own god, the prophet of the true God slept. A heart running from God can grow dull even in great danger.
1:6 *What is it to you, sleeper? Arise, call to your God* The captain echoes God's command, "Arise" (1:2). A pagan had to tell a prophet to pray. How sad when unbelievers are more ready to pray than believers are.
1:7 *the lot fell on Jonah* Casting lots was like drawing straws. The sailors believed the storm was punishment for someone's sin. God controls even the lot (Prov 16:33).
1:9 *I fear the LORD, the God of the heavens, who made the sea and the dry land* A true confession, and an alarming one in a storm at sea. Hebrew was the name foreigners used for Israel. To fear the LORD means to honor and worship Him, yet Jonah was running from Him. His words were right, but his life did not match them.
1:12 *Pick me up and hurl me into the sea* Jonah does not offer to turn toward Nineveh. He would rather die than go there. Yet he owned his guilt and was willing to give his life so the sailors would live.
1:14 *do not put innocent blood on us; for You, LORD, have done as You pleased* Now they call on the LORD, not their own gods. They beg not to be held guilty, and they confess that He is in control. They were learning faith from a prophet who was running from God.
1:16 *the men feared the LORD with a great fear* Their fear changed, from the storm (1:5), to Jonah's God (1:10), to worship. Many teachers believe these sailors came to faith that day. Even while Jonah ran from his mission to the Gentiles, God was saving Gentiles through him. When Jesus calmed a storm, His disciples too "feared a great fear" (Mark 4:41). He is the same LORD.
1:17 *the LORD appointed a great fish to swallow Jonah* Appointed means prepared or assigned, used again of the plant, worm and wind in chapter 4. The Hebrew does not say whale. The fish was sent to save Jonah from drowning, and keeping him alive was a miracle. Jesus treated it as history, setting it beside His own burial (Matt 12:40). The Jews counted part of a day as a day (Esth 4:16; 5:1).

JONAH 2

Jonah's Prayer

1 And Jonah (Yona) prayed to the LORD his God from the
inward parts of the fish. **2** And he said, "I called out of my
distress to the LORD, and He answered me; from the belly of
Sheol I cried for help; You heard my voice. **3** And You threw
me ***into the*** deep, into the heart of ***the*** seas, and ***the*** current
surrounded me; all Your breakers and Your waves passed
over me. **4** And I said, 'I have been driven away from before
Your eyes; yet I will again look to Your holy temple.'
5 Waters encompassed me to ***the*** neck; ***the*** deep surrounded
me; weeds ***were*** wrapped around my head. **6** To the bases of
the mountains I went down; the earth, its bars ***were*** behind
me forever. And You brought up my life from the pit, LORD
my God. **7** When my soul fainted within me, I remembered
the LORD, and my prayer came to You, to Your holy temple.
8 Those who pay regard to vanities of emptiness abandon
their steadfast love. **9** And I, with a voice of thanksgiving,
will sacrifice to You; what I have vowed I will pay. Salvation
belongs to the LORD." **10** And the LORD said to the fish, and it
vomited out Jonah onto the dry land.

2:1 Ps 130:1,2; Job 13:15; 2 Chr 33:11-13
2:2 Matt 12:40; Ps 18:4-6; Ps 120:1
2:3 Matt 12:40; Ps 42:7; Lam 3:54
2:4 Ps 31:22; Ps 5:7; Jer 7:15
2:5 Ps 69:1,2; Lam 3:54; Ps 40:2
2:6 Acts 2:27; Ps 30:3,9; Ps 16:10
2:7 2 Chr 30:27; Ps 18:6; Ps 11:4
2:8 Ps 31:6; 2 Kgs 17:15; Jer 2:13
2:9 Ps 50:14,23; Ps 3:8; Hos 14:2

JONAH 3

Jonah Goes to Nineveh

1 And the word of the LORD came to Jonah (Yona) a second
time, saying, **2** "Arise, go to Nineveh (Ninve), the great city,
and call out to it the proclamation that I ***am*** speaking to
you." **3** And Jonah arose and went to Nineveh according to
the word of the LORD. And Nineveh was a great city to God, a
journey of three days. **4** And Jonah began to go into the city a
journey of one day, and he called out and said, "Yet forty
days, and Nineveh will be overturned."

Nineveh Repents

5 And the men of Nineveh believed in God, and they called a
fast, and they put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them
and to the least of them. **6** And the word reached the king of
Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he removed his
robe from upon him, and he covered ***himself with*** sackcloth,
and he sat on the ashes. **7** And he had ***it*** cried out, and he said
in Nineveh, by the decree of the king and his great ones, say-
ing, "Let man and livestock, the herd and the flock, not taste
anything; let them not graze, and let them not drink water.
8 And let them cover themselves ***with*** sackcloth, man and
livestock, and let them call to God with strength, and let
them turn back, each man from his evil way and from the

2:10 Luke 11:30; Jonah 1:17; Matt 8:8,9,26,27
3:1 John 21:15; John 21:16; John 21:17
3:2 Ezek 2:7; Jonah 1:2; Jer 1:17
3:3 Luke 11:30; Gen 22:3; Matt 21:28,29
3:4 Luke 11:29-30; Deut 18:22; Jer 18:7-10
3:5 Luke 11:32; Matt 12:41; 2 Chr 20:3
3:6 Matt 12:41; Luke 11:32; Esth 4:1-4
3:7 Matt 12:41; Luke 11:32; 2 Chr 20:3
3:8 Acts 3:19; Matt 12:41; Luke 11:32

2:1 *Jonah prayed to the LORD his God* He would not pray on the ship (1:6). Now, in the dark at the bottom of the sea, he prays. Sometimes God must bring us very low before we look up. And the LORD was still "his God." No place is so dark or so far that God cannot hear.
2:2 *from the belly of Sheol I cried for help* Jonah thanks God while still inside the fish. He was alive, so he knew God had saved him from drowning. Sheol is the place of the dead. Most read this as a picture of being at death's door, as in Ps 18:4-6. Some think Jonah actually died and was raised. Scripture does not settle it.
2:3 *all Your breakers and Your waves passed over me* The sailors threw him, but Jonah says, "You threw me." These words are from Ps 42:7. When Jonah was drowning, the Scriptures came back to him. Fill your mind with God's Word, and it will be there to help you pray.
2:4 *yet I will again look to Your holy temple* Jonah ran from before the LORD (1:3), and now he felt driven away. He got what he asked for, and it was terrible. Then he turned toward the temple, where God promised to hear prayer from a far land (1 Kgs 8:38-39, 48-49).
2:6 *You brought up my life from the pit, LORD my God* The bottom of the downward road. The roots of the mountains were pictured at the sea floor, and the earth's gates locked behind him. Jonah went down, and God brought him up. That is the story of everyone God saves (Ps 40:2; Eph 2:1-5).
2:8 *Those who pay regard to vanities of emptiness abandon their steadfast love* Vanities of emptiness are idols. Steadfast love is hesed, God's loyal covenant love. Those who cling to idols turn from the only One who could show them mercy. Jonah was right about idols, but he had not yet learned how far God's mercy would reach.
2:9 *Salvation belongs to the LORD* The high point of the book. Salvation cannot be earned or bought. "For by grace you have been saved through faith" (Eph 2:8). Jonah did not say salvation belongs to Israel. It belongs to the LORD, so He can give it to sailors, and to Nineveh too.
2:10 *it vomited out Jonah onto the dry land* God spoke, and the fish obeyed. In this book everything obeys God except, for a while, His prophet. Jonah came back as one rescued, not a hero. Jesus called this a sign of His own resurrection (Matt 12:40). He went down into death for our disobedience and rose "on the third day" (1 Cor 15:4).
3:1 *the word of the LORD came to Jonah a second time* Some of the most hopeful words in the Bible. Jonah ran, disobeyed and nearly died, and God came to him again. Jesus restored Peter after his denials and sent him out (John 21:15-17). If you have failed God, His word can still come to you a second time.
3:2 *call out to it the proclamation that I am speaking to you* God did not change the mission because Jonah disliked it. Jonah was to preach what God told him, nothing more and nothing less. A preacher's job is to give God's message, not his own.
3:3 *Nineveh was a great city to God, a journey of three days* It may simply mean an exceedingly great city, or that Nineveh mattered in God's eyes, as 4:11 shows. The three days may include greater Nineveh with its towns, or the time to go through its streets preaching. Either way, it was huge, and Jonah was one man.
3:4 *Yet forty days, and Nineveh will be overturned* Five words in Hebrew, with no offer of mercy. But a warning is itself an offer. Overturned is the word for Sodom's overthrow (Gen 19:25), but it can also mean turned around, changed. Jonah meant the first. God did the second.
3:5 *the men of Nineveh believed in God* They believed not only Jonah but God, the same words used of Abraham (Gen 15:6). Everyone fasted and wore sackcloth, signs of grief and humility. Jesus said "Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites" (Luke 11:30). A man brought back from the sea may have been part of the sign. In the end God opened their hearts.
3:8 *let them turn back, each man from his evil way and from the violence that is in their palms* True repentance is more than sackcloth. It is crying out to God and turning from sin. The king named the very sin Assyria was known for, violence done by their own hands. Even the animals were included, as was sometimes done in mourning in that region.

violence that ***is*** in their palms. **9** Who knows? God may turn back and relent, and turn back from the burning of His anger, and we will not perish." **10** And God saw their deeds, that they turned back from their evil way; and God relented concerning the evil which He had spoken of doing to them, and He did not do ***it***.

JONAH 4

Jonah's Anger

1 And it was evil to Jonah (Yona), a great evil, and he burned ***with anger***. **2** And he prayed to the LORD, and he said, "Please, LORD, was this not my word while I was still in my land? Therefore I hastened to flee to Tarshish; for I knew that You ***are*** a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abundant in steadfast love, and ***One who*** relents concerning the evil. **3** And now, LORD, please take my life from me, for my death ***is*** better than my life." **4** And the LORD said, "Do you do well to burn ***with anger***?" **5** And Jonah went out from the city, and he sat east of the city; and he made a booth for himself there, and he sat under it in the shade, until he would see what would be in the city.

The Plant and the Worm

6 And the LORD God appointed a plant, and it went up over Jonah to be a shade over his head, to deliver him from his evil. And Jonah rejoiced over the plant ***with*** a great joy. **7** And God appointed a worm when the dawn came up on the next day, and it struck the plant, and it withered. **8** And it was, when the sun rose, and God appointed a scorching east wind; and the sun struck on the head of Jonah, and he became faint; and he asked ***for*** his soul to die, and he said, "My death ***is*** better than my life." **9** And God said to Jonah, "Do you do well to burn ***with anger*** over the plant?" And he said, "I do well to burn ***with anger***, to death." **10** And the LORD said, "You had compassion on the plant, for which you did not toil, and which you did not make grow, which came into being in a night and perished in a night. **11** And I, should I not have compassion on Nineveh (Ninve), the great city, in which there are more than one hundred twenty thousand people who do not know ***the difference*** between their right hand and their left, and much livestock?"

3:9 Matt 12:41; Luke 11:32; 2 Sam 12:22
3:10 Luke 11:32; Matt 12:41; Jer 18:8
4:1 Luke 11:32; Jonah 4:9; Luke 15:28
4:2 Luke 11:32; Jonah 1:3; Exod 34:6,7
4:3 1 Cor 9:15; 1 Kgs 19:4; Eccl 7:1
4:4 Luke 11:32; Matt 20:15; Jonah 4:9
4:5 1 Kgs 19:9,13; Jonah 1:5; Isa 57:17
4:6 Jonah 1:17; Ps 103:10-14; Esth 5:9
4:7 Joel 1:12; Job 1:21; Ps 30:6,7
4:8 Rev 16:8; Ps 121:6; Jonah 4:3
4:9 Matt 26:38; Luke 11:32; Gen 4:5-14
4:10 1 Sam 20:31; Gen 17:12
4:11 Jonah 1:2; Matt 18:33; Luke 15:28-32

3:9 *Who knows? God may turn back and relent* The king did not presume on God's mercy. Joel used the same words (Joel 2:14). True repentance does not make demands. It throws itself on God's mercy. The people turn back from evil, hoping God will turn back from His anger.
3:10 *God relented concerning the evil which He had spoken of doing to them* God saw their deeds, not just their sackcloth. Evil here means disaster. God does not change (Num 23:19), but He has said that when a nation "turns back from its evil" (Jer 18:8), He will relent. Jonah was no false prophet. A warning that brings repentance has succeeded. More than a century later Nineveh returned to its cruelty, and Nahum announced its end.
3:10 *and He did not do it* No one is too far gone. God "is patient toward us, not wishing any to perish" (2 Pet 3:9). Jesus said the men of Nineveh will condemn those who heard Him and did not repent, for "something greater than Jonah is here" (Matt 12:41). We have heard more than Nineveh ever heard.
4:1 *it was evil to Jonah, a great evil* A play on the word evil. Nineveh turned from its evil, God turned from the evil He had threatened, and it was evil to Jonah. When our hearts are angry at what pleases God, we are out of step with Him.
4:2 *for I knew that You are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abundant in steadfast love* Now we know why Jonah ran. He knew God too well. These words echo God's self-description at Sinai (Exod 34:6). Compassionate is related to the word for womb. Every word is good news, and Jonah said it as a complaint. He wanted grace for Israel and judgment for Assyria, Israel's enemy.
4:2 *One who relents concerning the evil* Jonah is like the older brother in Jesus' parable, angry when the prodigal is welcomed home (Luke 15:25-32). It is one thing to love mercy for ourselves, another to rejoice when God shows it to someone who hurt us. God's mercy is never cheap. Its cost was paid at the cross (Rom 3:25-26).
4:3 *my death is better than my life* Elijah prayed like this under a broom tree (1 Kgs 19:4), but he was worn out from serving God. Jonah was angry because God was merciful. God does not answer with judgment, but with a question.
4:4 *Do you do well to burn with anger?* God does not shout. He asks Jonah to think. God is slow to anger with His prophet too. Jonah does not answer. He walks away.
4:6 *Jonah rejoiced over the plant with a great joy* Again God appointed (1:17). The plant, perhaps a castor-oil plant, gave real shade and delivered him from his discomfort or his bad mood. The only time Jonah is glad in the book is over a little shade. His heart was set on his own comfort.
4:10 *You had compassion on the plant, for which you did not toil* Jonah did not plant, water or tend it. It lived one night. Yet he grieved over it, or at least over what it did for him. God uses Jonah's own feelings to make His point.
4:11 *should I not have compassion on Nineveh, the great city* The book ends with God's question. If Jonah pitied a plant, how much more should God pity people He made? The 120,000 may be young children too young to tell right from left, or the whole people, ignorant of God's law. Jesus saw crowds "like sheep not having a shepherd" (Matt 9:36). God even cares for the livestock (Matt 10:29).
4:11 *much livestock* Why no answer? The question is for Israel, for us, and for Jonah. Perhaps the honest telling of his failures shows he learned. "For God so loved the world" (John 3:16). Is there a Nineveh in your life, a person you would rather see judged than saved? God asks, should I not have compassion?

MICAH

Introduction

Title

The book is named for its prophet, Micah. His name is a short form of Micaiah, which means Who is like the LORD? He plays on his own name at the end of the book: "Who is a God like You?" (7:18). Micah is the sixth of the twelve Minor Prophets, coming after Jonah and before Nahum. It is short, only seven chapters, but it holds two of the best known verses in the prophets: the promise of a Ruler from Bethlehem (5:2) and the summary of what God requires (6:8).

Author and Date

The book opens, "The word of the LORD which came to Micah the Morashtite" (1:1). Moresheth, also called Moresheth-gath (1:14), was a town in the Shephelah, the low hills between Judah's mountains and the Philistine plain, about twenty-five miles southwest of Jerusalem. Jewish and Christian tradition hold that Micah wrote the book. Many modern scholars think only chapters 1 to 3 come from him and that the hopeful sections and the mention of Babylon (4:10) were added later. I take the book as Micah's own. The prophets regularly joined warning and hope, and the God who named Cyrus through Isaiah (Isa 45:1) could name Babylon through Micah.

Micah preached "in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah" (1:1), most likely about 735 to 700 B.C., at the same time as Isaiah. He foretold Samaria's fall before it happened in 722 B.C. (1:6), and Jeremiah tells us he preached in the days of Hezekiah (Jer 26:18).

Background and Setting

In Micah's day Assyria was on the march. Tiglath-pileser III took much of Israel about 732 B.C., Samaria fell in 722 B.C., and in 701 B.C. Sennacherib invaded Judah, took its walled cities, besieged Lachish in Micah's own region, and surrounded Jerusalem until the angel of the LORD struck his army (2 Kgs 18:13-19:36). At home, Ahaz brought pagan altars into Jerusalem and "made his son pass through the fire" (2 Kgs 16:3). Hezekiah later led a great reform (2 Kgs 18:1-7).

Through all of it, the rich were seizing the land of small farmers, and the courts, priests and prophets were for sale (2:1-2; 3:11). Micah spoke "concerning Samaria and Jerusalem" (1:1), but most of all to Judah's leaders, the "heads of Jacob and rulers of the house of Israel" (3:1). A century later, elders saved Jeremiah's life by recalling that Hezekiah had heard Micah, feared the LORD, and seen Him relent (Jer 26:17-19).

Themes

God judges injustice and empty worship. Micah exposes leaders who "hate good and love evil" (3:2), judges who take bribes, and prophets who preach peace for pay. Being religious is no protection for those who use God's name to cover their sin (3:11).

God has told us what is good: "to do justice, and to love steadfast love, and to walk humbly with your God" (6:8). This is not how we are saved, since no one has done it perfectly. It is what a life made right with God by grace looks like.

Micah moves back and forth between judgment and hope. Zion will be plowed as a field (3:12), but in the last days the mountain of the LORD's house will be raised above all, the nations will learn His ways, and they will beat their swords into plowshares (4:1-4). This study reads that promise as the thousand-year reign of Christ after He returns, when Israel is gathered and the King rules from Zion.

God delights in mercy. He forgives iniquity, treads our sins underfoot and casts them into the depths of the sea (7:18-19). And He keeps the oath He swore to Abraham and Jacob (7:20).

Christ in Micah

Micah names the town where the Messiah would be born: "And you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you for Me One will go out to be ruler over Israel" (5:2). When the wise men came, the chief priests and scribes told Herod, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for thus it has been written through the prophet" (Matt 2:5). God used a Roman census to bring Joseph and Mary there (Luke 2:4). The same verse says this Ruler's "goings out are from of old, from the days of antiquity," which this study reads as the eternal existence of the Son, who did not begin at Bethlehem (John 1:1; 8:58). He will shepherd His flock in the strength of the LORD, and "this One will be peace" (5:4-5). He is also the One who breaks through before His people (2:13), and the forgiveness Micah praises in 7:18-19 rests on His cross (Rom 3:25-26).

Hard Passages

What does "from of old, from the days of antiquity" mean (5:2)? The Hebrew can mean ancient days or days of eternity. The notes read it as the eternal Son, and name the views that see His ancient roots in David's line or His work before His birth.

Who is the woman giving birth (5:3)? Some see Mary (Isa 7:14). Others see Israel in labor until she turns to her Messiah (4:9-10; Rev 12:1-5). The notes give both.

When will the kingdom of 4:1-5 come? Amillennial and postmillennial teachers see it in the church age as the gospel goes out from Jerusalem. This study holds that the full fulfillment comes when Christ reigns on the earth for a thousand years, since nations have not yet given up war and the church does not replace Israel.

Who is the Assyrian of 5:5-6? The notes read it as Micah's historical enemy, with 701 B.C. as a foretaste, and name the view that it also stands for the last enemy of God's people at the end of the age.

Does 6:8 teach salvation by works? No. The notes explain it as the fruit of a life made right by grace through faith (Gen 15:6; Eph 2:8-9).

Outline

I. Judgment on Samaria and Judah (1:1-2:13)
  A. The LORD comes down (1:1-7)
  B. Micah's lament over the towns (1:8-16)
  C. Woe to the land grabbers (2:1-11)
  D. The remnant gathered (2:12-13)
II. Corrupt Leaders and the Coming Kingdom (3:1-5:15)

A. Rulers, prophets and priests condemned (3:1-12)
B. The mountain of the LORD in the last days (4:1-8)
C. From labor pains to victory (4:9-13)
D. The Ruler from Bethlehem (5:1-6)
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III. The LORD's Case and Micah's Hope (6:1-7:20)
A. The LORD's case against His people (6:1-8)
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C. Micah's lament and trust (7:1-7)
D. Zion will rise (7:8-17)
E. Who is a God like You? (7:18-20)

MICAH

MICAH 1

The LORD Comes Down

1 The word of the LORD which came to Micah (Mikha) the Morashtite in the days of Jotham (Yotam), Ahaz (Achaz), ***and*** Hezekiah (Yechizqiya), kings of Judah (Yehuda), which he saw concerning Samaria (Shomron) and Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). **2** Hear, peoples, all of them; pay attention, earth, and what fills it; and let the Lord GOD be a witness against you, the Lord from His holy temple. **3** For look, the LORD ***is*** going forth from His place, and He will come down and tread on the high places of ***the*** earth. **4** And the mountains will melt under Him, and the valleys will split open, like wax before the fire, like waters poured down on a slope. **5** All this ***is*** for the transgression of Jacob (Ya'aqov), and for the sins of the house of Israel (Yisra'el). Who ***is*** the transgression of Jacob? ***Is it*** not Samaria? And who ***are*** the high places of Judah? ***Is it*** not Jerusalem? **6** And I will make Samaria into a heap of ruins of the field, into plantings of a vineyard; and I will pour down her stones into the valley, and I will uncover her foundations. **7** And all her carved images will be crushed, and all her hires will be burned with fire, and all her idols I will make a desolation; for from the hire of a prostitute she gathered ***them***, and to the hire of a prostitute they will return.

Micah's Lament

8 On account of this I will lament and wail; I will go barefoot and naked; I will make a lament like the jackals, and a mourning like the daughters of ***the*** ostrich. **9** For her wounds ***are*** incurable; for it has come to Judah; it has reached to the gate of my people, to Jerusalem. **10** In Gath (Gat) do not tell ***it***; do not weep at all; in Beth-le-aphrah (Bet-Le'afra) roll yourself ***in*** dust. **11** Pass on for yourselves, inhabitant of Shaphir (Shafir), ***in*** nakedness ***and*** shame; the inhabitant of Zaanan (Tsa'anan) has not come out; the lament of Beth-ezel (Bet-Ha'etsel) will take from you its standing place. **12** For the inhabitant of Maroth (Marot) waits anxiously for good, for evil has come down from the LORD to the gate of Jerusalem. **13** Harness the chariot to the steed, inhabitant of Lachish (Lakhish); she ***was*** the beginning of sin for the daughter of Zion (Tsiyon), for in you were found the transgressions of Israel. **14** Therefore you will give parting gifts to Moresheth-gath (Moreshet-Gat); the houses of Achzib (Akhziv) ***will become*** a deception to the kings of Israel. **15** Again I will bring the one who takes possession to you, inhabitant of Mareshah (Maresha); to Adullam (Adulam) the

1:1 Isa 1:1; Jer 26:18; Hos 1:1
1:2 Mark 7:14; Rev 2:7; Rev 2:11
1:3 Amos 4:13; Isa 26:21; Ps 115:3
1:4 Nah 1:5; Ps 97:5; Judg 5:4
1:5 Amos 8:14; 2 Kgs 17:7-23; 2 Chr 36:14-16
1:6 Ezek 13:14; Mic 3:12; 2 Kgs 19:25
1:7 Rev 18:9; Deut 23:18; Hos 8:6
1:8 Isa 22:4; Isa 20:2-4; Job 30:29
1:9 Isa 8:7,8; Mic 1:12; 2 Chr 32:1-23
1:10 2 Sam 1:20; Jer 6:26; Amos 5:13
1:11 Isa 20:4; Isa 16:2; Jer 48:6,9
1:12 Jer 14:19; Isa 59:9-11; Mic 1:9
1:13 2 Chr 32:9; Josh 15:39; 2 Kgs 18:13,14,17
1:14 Josh 15:44; 2 Kgs 16:8; 2 Sam 8:2
1:15 Josh 15:44; 1 Sam 22:1; Josh 15:35

1:1 *Micah the Morashtite in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah* Micah came from Moresheth in the low hills southwest of Jerusalem (1:14) and prophesied about 735 to 700 B.C. His word concerned both capitals, Samaria in the north and Jerusalem in the south. He names no king of Israel, for the northern kingdom's days were nearly over.
1:2 *let the Lord GOD be a witness against you, the Lord from His holy temple* Micah calls the whole world to listen, for what God does to His people is a lesson to every nation. God is not only Judge but witness, who has seen everything. The temple here may be His temple in heaven, from which He comes down.
1:3 *He will come down and tread on the high places of the earth* The LORD steps out of heaven and walks on the mountaintops (Amos 4:13). The high places were also the hilltop shrines of idol worship. God was coming to tread on them.
1:4 *the mountains will melt under Him* The language of the LORD's coming in power, as when Sinai shook (Exod 19:18). The prophets use such pictures for God's judgments in history. But when the Lord returns, His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives and it will split in two (Zech 14:4). His final coming will shake the earth in fact.
1:5 *Who is the transgression of Jacob? Is it not Samaria?* Micah points to the capitals. Even Jerusalem, the city of God's temple, had become a center of idol worship. Ahaz put a pagan altar in the temple courts (2 Kgs 16:10-16). Sin spreads from the top down. When the leaders go wrong, the nation follows.
1:6 *I will pour down her stones into the valley, and I will uncover her foundations* Samaria stood proudly on a hill. Assyria took it in 722 B.C., and it became rubble fit for planting vines. Archaeologists digging there have since uncovered its foundations.
1:7 *from the hire of a prostitute she gathered them* Her hires were gifts brought to her idols. Like Hosea (Hos 2:12; 9:1), Micah calls Israel's idolatry unfaithfulness to the LORD her husband. The gold and silver on her idols would be carried off by Assyrian soldiers to their own gods.
1:8 *I will go barefoot and naked* Stripped to a loincloth, like a captive or mourner, as Isaiah did in these years (Isa 20:2-4). Micah does not preach judgment coldly. Jesus wept over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41). Do we grieve over sin, our own and our nation's, or only point at it?
1:10 *In Gath do not tell it* Echoing David's lament over Saul, "Do not tell it in Gath" (2 Sam 1:20), so the enemy will not gloat. Now Micah laments over the towns of his own region, where Sennacherib's army marched. Almost every line plays on a town's name. Beth-le-aphrah means house of dust, and its people will roll in the dust.
1:12 *the inhabitant of Maroth waits anxiously for good* Maroth means bitterness. They hoped for good and got bitterness. The disaster was not merely Assyria's doing. It came down from the LORD.
1:13 *Harness the chariot to the steed, inhabitant of Lachish* Lachish was Judah's strongest fortress after Jerusalem, and steed sounds like Lachish: hitch up and run! Sennacherib took it and had the siege carved on his palace walls. Lachish may have been where the north's sins, perhaps trust in chariots, first came into Judah.
1:14 *you will give parting gifts to Moresheth-gath* Micah's own hometown. Parting gifts were given to a daughter leaving home to marry. Judah would say goodbye to it as it was handed to the enemy. Achzib sounds like deceptive, like a stream that dries up.
1:15 *to Adullam the glory of Israel will come* Adullam was the cave where David hid from Saul (1 Sam 22:1). Israel's leaders would hide in caves again. Mareshah sounds like possessor, and now a conqueror would possess it.

glory of Israel will come. **16** Make yourself bald and shear ***yourself*** for the sons of your delights; make your baldness large like the eagle, for they have gone into exile from you.

MICAH 2

Woe to the Land Grabbers

1 Woe ***to*** those who plan wickedness and do evil on their beds! In the light of the morning they do it, for ***it*** is in the power of their hand. **2** And they covet fields and seize ***them***, and houses, and take ***them***; and they oppress a man and his house, and a man and his inheritance. **3** Therefore thus says the LORD: "Look, I ***am*** planning against this family an evil from which you will not remove your necks, and you will not walk haughtily, for it ***will be*** an evil time. **4** In that day one will lift up a saying against you, and wail a wailing, 'It is done!' He will say, 'We are utterly devastated! He exchanges the portion of my people; how he removes ***it*** from me! To an apostate he apportions our fields.' **5** Therefore you will not have one who casts a measuring line by lot in the assembly of the LORD. **6** 'Do not drip ***words***,' they drip ***words***. 'They must not drip ***words*** about these things; reproaches will not be turned back.' **7** ***Is it*** said, house of Jacob (Ya'aqov), 'Is the Spirit of the LORD short? Or ***are*** these His deeds?' Do not My words do good with the one who walks uprightly? **8** And yesterday My people rose up as an enemy; from in front of the garment you strip off the robe from those who pass by securely, those returning from war. **9** The women of My people you drive out from the house of her delights; from upon her children you take away My glory forever. **10** Arise and go, for this ***is*** not the resting place; because it has become unclean, it will destroy, and the destruction ***will be*** grievous. **11** If a man walking ***in*** wind and falsehood lies, ***saying***, 'I will drip ***words*** to you of wine and of strong drink,' and he will be the one who drips ***words*** for this people.

The Remnant Gathered

12 I will surely gather Jacob, all of you; I will surely assemble the remnant of Israel (Yisra'el); together I will set it like sheep of a fold, like a flock in the midst of its pasture; they will make a commotion because of mankind. **13** The one who breaks through has gone up before them; they have broken through, and they have passed through the gate, and they have gone out by it; and their king has passed on before them, and the LORD ***is*** at their head."

MICAH 3

Leaders Condemned

1 And I said, "Hear, please, heads of Jacob (Ya'aqov) and rulers of the house of Israel (Yisra'el): ***Is it*** not for you to know justice? **2** ***You*** who hate good and love evil, who tear off their skin from upon them and their flesh from upon their

1:16 Isa 22:12; Job 1:20; Jer 7:29
2:1 Ps 36:4; Isa 32:7; Nah 1:11
2:2 Isa 5:8; Amos 8:4; Jer 22:17
2:3 Eph 5:16; Jer 8:3; Isa 2:11,12
2:4 Hab 2:6; Num 23:7,18; Jer 9:10,17-21
2:5 Deut 32:8; Josh 18:4,10; Ps 16:6
2:6 Amos 2:12; Isa 30:10; Jer 26:8,9,20-23
2:7 Rom 9:13; Ps 15:2; Ps 84:11
2:8 Ps 120:6,7; 2 Chr 28:5-8; Isa 9:21
2:9 Ezek 39:21; Hab 2:14; Mic 2:2
2:10 Heb 4:5; Deut 12:9; Ps 106:38
2:11 2 Pet 2:1; 2 Pet 2:2; 2 Pet 2:3
2:12 Mic 4:6,7; Jer 31:7-9; Ezek 36:37
2:13 Isa 52:12; Isa 42:7,13-16; Isa 45:1,2
3:1 Isa 1:10; Hos 5:1; Ps 82:1-5
3:2 Ezek 22:27; Ps 53:4; Ezek 34:3

1:16 *make your baldness large like the eagle* Shaving the head was a sign of mourning (Amos 8:10), and the eagle here is likely the griffon vulture with its bare head. Sin has consequences for families, towns and nations. Micah watched his hometown fall. Yet God takes no pleasure in judgment (Ezek 33:11), and that is why He warns first.

2:1 *Woe to those who plan wickedness and do evil on their beds!* Woe is a cry of grief over those headed for judgment. The bed should be a place to rest and meditate on God (Ps 4:4; 63:6). These men lay awake scheming, and in the morning did it because they could. Having the power to do something does not make it right.

2:2 *they covet fields and seize them* Coveting starts in the heart but rarely stays there (Exod 20:17). Each family's land was its God-given inheritance, meant to stay in the family (Lev 25:23). Naboth would not give up "the inheritance of my fathers" (1 Kgs 21:3). To take a family's land was to take its future (Isa 5:8).

2:3 *I am planning against this family an evil from which you will not remove your necks* They planned evil on their beds. God was planning too. The evil here is disaster, a yoke they could not shake off. Those who strutted would be bent low under a conqueror.

2:5 *you will not have one who casts a measuring line by lot in the assembly of the LORD* Joshua divided the land by line and by lot (Josh 14:1-2). When God's people divide the land again, these men will have no share. Those who stole an inheritance lose their own.

2:6 *Do not drip words* To drip words is to preach, words falling like rain (Amos 7:16). They told the true prophets to stop talking about judgment. People have always wanted preachers who do not mention sin. But a doctor who will not tell you about the disease cannot cure you.

2:7 *Do not My words do good with the one who walks uprightly?* The people were sure God's patience could not run out and that He would never do such things. God's word is not against everyone. It is good news to those who walk with Him. Only those who refuse to obey find it frightening.

2:8 *you strip off the robe from those who pass by securely* God's people had become an enemy to their own neighbors, robbing peaceful travelers, even men home from war. The Law said a poor man's cloak was to be returned by night (Exod 22:26-27). These men took it off his back.

2:9 *The women of My people you drive out from the house of her delights* They threw widows out of their homes and robbed children of their place in the land, which God calls "My glory." God defends widows and orphans (Deut 10:18; James 1:27), and He takes their harm personally.

2:10 *Arise and go, for this is not the resting place* God turns their words back on them. The land was meant to be Israel's rest (Deut 12:9), but their sin defiled it, and it would throw them out (Lev 18:28). This world is not our final rest either (Heb 4:9; 13:14).

2:11 *I will drip words to you of wine and of strong drink* The preacher the people wanted: full of wind and lies, promising good times. Paul warned of those who "heap up teachers for themselves, being tickled in the hearing" (2 Tim 4:3). Do we want truth, or a preacher who makes us feel good?

2:12 *I will surely assemble the remnant of Israel* Some think these are the false prophets' words, but in light of 4:6-7 and 7:18-20 most take it as God's own promise, as this study does. The remnant is the faithful few God keeps. The return from Babylon was a first fulfillment. All Jacob gathered under their King points to Israel's regathering when Christ returns (Isa 11:11-12; Ezek 37:21-22).

2:13 *The one who breaks through has gone up before them* Picture sheep penned in a fold, and someone breaking a gap in the wall so they pour out after him. The Breaker is their King and the LORD. Many Jewish and Christian teachers see the Messiah here. Christ breaks open the way through sin and death, and "he goes before them" (John 10:4). Whatever wall stands before you, He has broken through.

3:1 *Is it not for you to know justice?* The heads and rulers were the judges and officials of Judah, who carried the old names Jacob and Israel. Of all people they should have known what was right. Knowing justice means loving what is right and doing it.

bones, **3** and who have eaten the flesh of my people, and have stripped their skin from upon them, and have broken their bones in pieces, and have chopped ***them*** up as in the pot, and like flesh in the midst of a caldron. **4** Then they will cry out to the LORD, and He will not answer them; and He will hide His face from them at that time, because they have made their deeds evil." **5** Thus says the LORD concerning the prophets who lead My people astray, who bite with their teeth and proclaim, "Peace," and whoever does not put ***anything*** into their mouth, they consecrate war against him: **6** "Therefore ***it will be*** night to you, without vision, and it will grow dark to you, without divining; and the sun will go down on the prophets, and the day will be dark over them. **7** And the seers will be ashamed, and the diviners will be abashed, and they will cover over ***their*** mustache, all of them, for there is no answer of God." **8** But as for me, I am full of power with the Spirit of the LORD, and ***of*** justice and might, to declare to Jacob his transgression and to Israel his sin. **9** Hear this, please, heads of the house of Jacob and rulers of the house of Israel, who abhor justice and make crooked all that is straight, **10** who build Zion (Tsiyon) with blood and Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) with injustice. **11** Her heads judge for a bribe, and her priests teach for a price, and her prophets divine for silver; and they lean on the LORD, saying, "***Is*** not the LORD in our midst? Evil will not come upon us." **12** Therefore, on account of you, Zion will be plowed ***as*** a field, and Jerusalem will become heaps of ruins, and the mountain of the house ***will become*** high places of a forest.

MICAH 4

The Mountain of the LORD

1 And it will be at the end of the days ***that*** the mountain of the house of the LORD will be established at the head of the mountains, and it will be lifted up above the hills; and peoples will stream to it. **2** And many nations will come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD and to the house of the God of Jacob (Ya'aqov), and let Him teach us from His ways, and let us walk in His paths." For from Zion (Tsiyon) law will go out, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem (Yerushalayim). **3** And He will judge between many peoples, and He will decide for mighty nations even far away; and they will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning knives. Nation will not lift up a sword against nation, and they will not learn warfare again. **4** And they will dwell, each man under his vine and under his fig tree, and there will be none who terrifies; for the mouth of the LORD of armies has spoken. **5** For all the peoples walk, each man in the name of his god; and we will walk in the name of the LORD our God forever and ever. **6** In that day, declares the LORD, I will gather the limping one, and the banished one I will assemble, and ***the one*** whom I have

3:3 Ps 14:4; Ezek 11:3,6,7
3:4 Prov 1:28; Isa 1:15; Ps 18:41
3:5 2 Pet 2:1; Jer 14:14,15; Isa 9:15,16
3:6 Isa 8:20-22; Isa 29:10; Isa 59:10
3:7 Isa 44:25; Zech 13:4; Isa 47:12-14
3:8 1 Cor 2:12; Acts 7:55; Isa 58:1
3:9 Ps 58:1,2; Isa 1:23; Mic 3:1
3:10 Jer 22:13-17; Ezek 22:25-28; Hab 2:9-12
3:11 Matt 7:15; Isa 1:23; Jer 6:13
3:12 Jer 26:18; Ps 79:1; Mic 4:1,2
4:1 Acts 2:17; 2 Pet 3:3; Rom 11:26
4:2 Luke 24:47; Acts 10:32; Acts 13:46
4:3 Isa 2:4; Matt 25:31,32; 1 Sam 2:10
4:4 1 Kgs 4:25; Zech 3:10; Isa 1:20
4:5 Col 3:17; Zech 10:12; 2 Kgs 17:29,34
4:6 Zeph 3:19; Ps 147:2; Ezek 34:12,13

3:3 *have chopped them up as in the pot* Not cannibals, but leaders who treated the people like animals to be butchered, stripping them of land, money and dignity. God gives leaders in government, work, church and home to protect, not to feed on those under them (Ezek 34:2-3). Jesus is the good Shepherd who lays down His life (John 10:11).
3:4 *they will cry out to the LORD, and He will not answer them* They would not hear the poor, so God would not hear them (Prov 21:13). God hears every sincere cry of repentance (Joel 2:32), but these men wanted rescue, not repentance.
3:5 *who bite with their teeth and proclaim, "Peace,"* While they had something to chew on, they preached peace. If you did not pay, they declared holy war on you. Their message depended on the fee. They were selling God's word.
3:7 *they will cover over their mustache, all of them, for there is no answer of God* Divining, reading the future by omens, was forbidden (Deut 18:10-12). Covering the mouth was a sign of shame (Lev 13:45). Their visions would stop because God would not speak to them.
3:8 *I am full of power with the Spirit of the LORD* The false prophets were full of their own appetites. Micah was filled with the Spirit for power, a sense of justice, and courage, to tell God's people the truth about their sin. The same Spirit convicts the world "concerning sin" (John 16:8) and gives believers courage to speak the truth in love (Acts 1:8; Eph 4:15).
3:10 *who build Zion with blood and Jerusalem with injustice* Fine houses and public works were paid for by cheating workers, seizing land and condemning the innocent (Jer 22:13). Habakkuk cried woe on the one "who builds a city with blood" (Hab 2:12).
3:11 *Is not the LORD in our midst? Evil will not come upon us.* Judges, priests and prophets all sold their work (Deut 16:19; Mal 2:7), yet all leaned on the LORD, sure He would never let the city of His temple fall (Jer 7:4). It is possible to be very religious and very wrong. God's name is no cover for sin.
3:12 *Zion will be plowed as a field* No prophet before had said so plainly that Jerusalem and the temple would fall. It came true in 586 B.C. (2 Kgs 25:8-10; Lam 5:18). A century later elders quoted this verse to save Jeremiah's life (Jer 26:18-19). Hezekiah heard Micah and repented, and God held back the disaster for more than a century. God's warnings are not fate. And right after this, Micah turns to hope (4:1).
4:1 *the mountain of the house of the LORD will be established at the head of the mountains* At the end of the days, the days of the Messiah's kingdom (Hos 3:5), the very hill Micah said would become a forest (3:12) will be raised above all. It may be lifted in honor and in fact (Zech 14:10). Rivers flow down, but here the peoples stream up, drawn by the presence of the LORD.
4:2 *let Him teach us from His ways, and let us walk in His paths* The nations come no longer to attack (4:11) but to worship, to learn and to obey, as God always intended (Gen 12:3). Law here means teaching. The King will rule the world from Jerusalem. Isaiah gives the same vision almost word for word (Isa 2:2-4).
4:3 *they will beat their swords into plowshares* Joel saw the opposite before the last battle (Joel 3:10). Micah sees what comes after. No human organization can bring this about. The nations lay down their weapons only after the LORD Himself judges between them. Peace on earth comes when the Prince of Peace reigns (Isa 9:6-7).
4:4 *each man under his vine and under his fig tree* A picture of peace and plenty, as in Solomon's best days (1 Kgs 4:25). Every family will have its own land, the opposite of the land-grabbing of 2:2. In the kingdom the small farmer will be safe. This is not a dream. God has said it.
4:5 *we will walk in the name of the LORD our God forever and ever* Whatever others do, God's faithful will walk with Him now, without waiting for the kingdom to begin living by it. I believe 4:1-5 describes Christ's thousand-year reign after He returns (Rev 19:11-16; 20:1-6). Others see it in the church age as the gospel goes out from Jerusalem (Luke 24:47). That is a true first step, but nations have not given up war, and the church does not replace Israel.
4:6 *I will gather the limping one* God pictures His people as a flock, some lame, some driven off, some hurt by His own judgment. The God who scattered them will gather them, and He does not leave the weak behind.

harmed. **7** And I will make the limping one into a remnant,
and the one cast far off into a mighty nation; and the LORD
will reign over them in the mountain of Zion from now and
until forever. **8** And you, O tower of the flock (Migdal-Eder),
hill of the daughter of Zion, to you it will come; and the
former dominion will come, a kingdom for the daughter of
Jerusalem.

From Labor Pains to Victory

9 Now why do you shout a shout? Is there no king in you? Or
has your counselor perished, that anguish has taken hold of
you like ***a woman*** giving birth? **10** Writhe in pain and burst
forth, O daughter of Zion, like ***a woman*** giving birth; for now
you will go out from ***the*** town, and you will dwell in the open
country, and you will go to Babylon (Bavel). There you will be
delivered; there the LORD will redeem you from the hand of
your enemies. **11** And now many nations have been gathered
against you, who are saying, "Let her be polluted, and let our
eyes look on Zion." **12** And they do not know the thoughts of
the LORD, and they do not understand His counsel; for He has
gathered them like cut grain to the threshing floor. **13** Arise
and thresh, O daughter of Zion, for I will make your horn
iron, and I will make your hooves bronze; and you will crush
many peoples. And I will devote their unjust gain to the
LORD, and their wealth to the Lord of all the earth.

MICAH 5

The Ruler from Bethlehem

1 Now you will gash yourself, O daughter of troops; he has
laid a siege against us; with the rod they will strike the judge
of Israel (Yisra'el) on the cheek. **2** And you, O Bethlehem
(Bet-Lechem) Ephrathah (Efrata), ***too*** little to be among the
clans of Judah (Yehuda), from you for Me ***One*** will go out to
be ruler over Israel; and His goings out ***are*** from of old, from
the days of antiquity. **3** Therefore He will give them up until
the time ***that*** she who is giving birth has given birth; and the
rest of His brothers will return to the sons of Israel. **4** And He
will stand and shepherd in the strength of the LORD, in the
majesty of the name of the LORD His God; and they will
dwell, for now He will be great to the ends of ***the*** earth. **5** And
this ***One*** will be peace. Assyria (Ashur), when he comes into
our land, and when he treads on our citadels, then we will
raise against him seven shepherds and eight princes of
mankind. **6** And they will shepherd the land of Assyria with
the sword, and the land of Nimrod at its entrances; and He
will deliver ***us*** from Assyria when he comes into our land,
and when he treads within our territory.

The Remnant among the Nations

7 And the remnant of Jacob (Ya'aqov) will be in the midst of

4:7 Rom 11:5; Rom 11:26; Rev 14:1
4:8 John 12:15; Zech 9:10; Rev 22:5
4:9 1 Thess 5:3; Jer 8:19; Isa 13:8
4:10 John 16:20; John 16:21; 1 Thess 5:3
4:11 Obad 1:12; Isa 5:25-30; Mic 7:10
4:12 Isa 55:8; Jer 29:11; Rom 11:33,34
4:13 Dan 2:44; Isa 23:18; Isa 41:15,16
5:1 Luke 6:29; Lam 3:30; Job 16:10
5:2 Matt 2:1; Matt 2:6; Luke 2:4-7
5:3 Rom 9:27; Rev 12:2; Hos 11:8
5:4 Matt 2:6; Rom 9:27; Heb 8:1
5:5 Zech 9:10; Luke 2:14; Ps 72:7
5:6 Rom 9:27; Isa 14:25; Isa 14:2
5:7 Acts 15:17; Rom 9:27; Mic 5:3,8

4:7 *the LORD will reign over them in the mountain of Zion from now and until forever* The weakest become the core of a mighty nation. God chooses the weak to shame the strong (1 Cor 1:27). Of this King's kingdom "there will be no end" (Luke 1:33).
4:8 *O tower of the flock* Migdal-Eder, a watchtower near Bethlehem where Jacob camped after Rachel died (Gen 35:19-21). Here it stands for Jerusalem, watching over God's flock, to which David's former dominion will return. Near Bethlehem, shepherds keeping watch at night heard that the Christ was born (Luke 2:8-11).
4:10 *you will go to Babylon. There you will be delivered* A remarkable prophecy. In Micah's day Assyria ruled and Babylon was a lesser city. More than a century later Jerusalem's people went to Babylon (2 Kgs 25:11), and in 538 B.C. Cyrus let them go home (Ezra 1:1-4). Labor pains are real pain, but they lead to new life. To redeem is to set free by paying a price.
4:12 *He has gathered them like cut grain to the threshing floor* The nations think they gather to destroy Zion. God has gathered them to be judged. They do not know His thoughts. Neither do we always understand what He is doing in our troubles, but He is working His plan.
4:13 *Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion* Oxen threshed by trampling grain. Zion will be like an ox with iron horns and bronze hooves. A first taste came when God struck Sennacherib's army (2 Kgs 19:35), but many nations gathered and crushed points to the end of the age, when the LORD fights for Jerusalem (Joel 3:2, 12; Zech 12:2-9; 14:2-3).
5:1 *with the rod they will strike the judge of Israel on the cheek* Jerusalem is besieged, first by Assyria in 701 B.C., later by Babylon. A blow on the cheek was a great insult. Zedekiah was blinded and carried off in chains (2 Kgs 25:6-7). Many think of Jesus, struck by the soldiers (Matt 27:30), but the New Testament does not quote this verse, so I hold it as a picture.
5:2 *O Bethlehem Ephrathah, too little to be among the clans of Judah* Bethlehem, about five miles south of Jerusalem, was David's hometown (1 Sam 16:1). Ephrathah set it apart from a Bethlehem in Zebulun (Josh 19:15). It was too small to count. Jerusalem's judge is struck, but Bethlehem's Ruler is coming. The scribes named it to Herod, "In Bethlehem of Judea" (Matt 2:5-6).
5:2 *His goings out are from of old, from the days of antiquity* The phrase can mean ancient days or days of eternity. This study reads it as the eternal existence of the Son, who did not begin at Bethlehem (John 1:1; 8:58; 17:5). Isaiah called the child "Mighty God, Father of Eternity" (Isa 9:6). Others see His ancient roots in David's line, or His work before His birth as Creator.
5:2 *from you for Me One will go out to be ruler over Israel* The Ruler rules for God. Joseph lived in Nazareth, but a Roman census sent him to Bethlehem, "because of his being of the house and family of David" (Luke 2:4). Micah did not guess seven centuries ahead (Amos 3:7). God chooses small things. He can use your small life too.
5:3 *He will give them up until the time that she who is giving birth has given birth* Because the Ruler is coming but not yet, Israel is given up for a time. Some see the virgin of Isa 7:14. Others see Israel's long labor ending when she is reborn and turns to her Messiah (Isa 66:7-8; Rev 12:1-5). His brothers' return looks to Israel's regathering in the last days (Rom 11:25-26).
5:4 *He will stand and shepherd in the strength of the LORD* A Shepherd-King like David, steady and strong, who feeds and guards His flock and depends on the LORD (John 5:19; 10:11). His greatness reaches to the ends of the earth, as the angel said: "He will be great" (Luke 1:32).
5:5 *this One will be peace* He does not only bring peace. He is peace (Isa 9:6). "For He Himself is our peace" (Eph 2:14). Seven, then eight, means more than enough, like the three and four of Amos 1. Nimrod founded the first cities of Assyria and Babylon (Gen 10:8-12).
5:6 *He will deliver us from Assyria when he comes into our land* A taste came in 701 B.C. (2 Kgs 19:35), but full deliverance comes with the Ruler from Bethlehem. Many believe Assyria stands for the last enemy who invades the land at the end of the age, and some see the Antichrist in the Assyrian of Isaiah and Micah. Scripture does not settle that detail. No enemy will stand against the Ruler's people.
5:7 *like dew from the LORD, like showers on vegetation* Dew watered crops through the dry summer, quietly, from God alone. The remnant of Israel will bless the nations, as promised to Abraham (Gen 12:3). The Savior came from Israel, "because salvation is from the Jews" (John 4:22).

many peoples like dew from the LORD, like showers on vegetation, which does not look to a man, and does not wait for the sons of mankind. **8** And the remnant of Jacob will be among the nations, in the midst of many peoples, like a lion among the animals of ***the*** forest, like a young lion among flocks of sheep, which, if it passes through, tramples and tears, and there is none who delivers. **9** Let your hand be lifted up over your adversaries, and let all your enemies be cut off. **10** And it will be in that day, declares the LORD, ***that*** I will cut off your horses from your midst, and I will destroy your chariots. **11** And I will cut off the cities of your land, and I will tear down all your fortresses. **12** And I will cut off sorceries from your hand, and soothsayers will not be yours. **13** And I will cut off your carved images and your sacred pillars from your midst, and you will not bow down again to the work of your hands. **14** And I will pluck up your Asherah ***poles*** from your midst, and I will destroy your cities. **15** And I will do vengeance in anger and in rage on the nations that have not obeyed.

MICAH 6

The LORD's Case

1 Hear, please, what the LORD is saying: "Arise, contend with the mountains, and let the hills hear your voice." **2** Hear, O mountains, the case of the LORD, and ***you*** enduring ***ones***, foundations of ***the*** earth; for the LORD has a case with His people, and with Israel (Yisra'el) He will argue. **3** O My people, what have I done to you? And how have I wearied you? Testify against Me. **4** For I brought you up from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim), and from a house of slaves I ransomed you; and I sent before you Moses (Moshe), Aaron (Aharon), and Miriam (Miryam). **5** O My people, remember, please, what Balak (Balaq) king of Moab (Mo'av) planned, and what Balaam (Bilam) the son of Beor answered him, from Shittim (Shitim) to Gilgal, so as to know the righteous acts of the LORD. **6** With what shall I come to meet the LORD, ***and*** bow myself down to the God of ***the*** height? Shall I come to meet Him with burnt offerings, with calves, sons of a year? **7** Will the LORD take pleasure in thousands of rams, in tens of thousands of torrents of oil? Shall I give my firstborn ***for*** my transgression, the fruit of my belly ***for*** the sin of my soul? **8** He has told you, O man, what ***is*** good; and what does the LORD require from you but to do justice, and to love steadfast love, and to walk humbly with your God?

Cheating and Its Punishment

9 The voice of the LORD calls out to the city, and sound wisdom will see Your name: Hear, O tribe, and whoever appointed it. **10** Are there still ***in*** the house of the wicked treasures of wickedness, and the scant ephah ***that is***
accursed? **11** Shall I be pure with balances of wickedness, and with a bag of weights of deceit? **12** Whose rich ***ones*** are full of violence, and her inhabitants speak falsehood, and their

5:8 Rom 9:27; Mic 4:13; Zech 10:5
5:9 Isa 26:11; Ps 21:8; Ps 106:26
5:10 Zech 9:10; Hos 14:3; Ps 20:7,8
5:11 Isa 2:12-17; Ezek 38:11; Zech 4:6
5:12 Isa 2:6-8,18,20; Isa 8:19,20; Isa 27:9
5:13 Ezek 6:9; Isa 17:7,8; Ezek 36:25
5:15 Mic 5:8; Ps 149:7; 2 Thess 1:8
6:1 Heb 3:7; Mic 1:2; Deut 32:1
6:2 Hos 4:1; Hos 12:2; Isa 1:18
6:3 Jer 2:5,31; Isa 43:22,23; Ps 50:7
6:4 Acts 7:36; Acts 7:34; Acts 13:17
6:5 2 Pet 2:15; Jude 1:11; Rev 2:14
6:6 Matt 19:16; Luke 10:25; Mark 12:33
6:7 Mark 12:33; 2 Kgs 16:3; 1 Sam 15:22
6:8 Deut 10:12,13; 1 Sam 15:22; Matt 23:23
6:9 Zeph 3:2; Isa 30:27; Isa 10:5,6
6:10 Amos 3:10; Amos 8:5,6; Jer 5:26,27
6:11 Hos 12:7; Prov 16:11
6:12 Isa 1:23; Mic 2:1,2; Isa 5:7

5:8 *like a young lion among flocks of sheep* The remnant that blesses is also strong. God's people will be gentle as dew to those who receive them and strong as a lion against those who fight them.
5:10 *I will cut off your horses from your midst, and I will destroy your chariots* Now the "you" is God's people. Horses and chariots were the tanks of the ancient world. Kings were not to multiply horses (Deut 17:16). "These trust in chariotry and these in horses" (Ps 20:7), but God's people were to trust in Him.
5:13 *you will not bow down again to the work of your hands* God cleans house: no more trust in weapons, walls, sorcery (Deut 18:10-12), standing stones or Asherah poles. When Israel turns to the Lord, "He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob" (Rom 11:26). What would God need to cut off in your life?
5:15 *I will do vengeance in anger and in rage on the nations that have not obeyed* The day that purifies God's people judges the nations that refuse Him (Matt 25:31-32; Rev 19:15). The Ruler from Bethlehem is a Shepherd to those who come to Him and a Judge to those who will not.
6:2 *Hear, O mountains, the case of the LORD* To contend is to argue a case in court. The mountains have stood since the beginning and saw the exodus, Sinai and the entry into the land. Moses called heaven and earth as witnesses to the covenant (Deut 30:19; 32:1). Now they are called back to testify.
6:3 *O My people, what have I done to you? And how have I wearied you?* One of the most tender verses in the prophets. The Judge speaks like a hurt father. They are still His. They had no complaint, for God had never failed them. We drift not because He has wronged us but because our hearts wander. "For My yoke is easy" (Matt 11:30).
6:4 *from a house of slaves I ransomed you* To ransom is to pay a price to set someone free. Far from wearying them, God freed them, and He gave them Moses to lead, Aaron as priest and Miriam to lead in praise (Exod 15:20-21).
6:5 *from Shittim to Gilgal, so as to know the righteous acts of the LORD* Balak hired Balaam to curse Israel, and God turned every curse into blessing (Num 22-24; Deut 23:5). Shittim was the last camp east of the Jordan, Gilgal the first in the land (Josh 3:1; 4:19). Forgetfulness is the root of much sin. When we remember what God has done, we are thankful.
6:7 *Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression* The most terrible offer. Pagans sacrificed children, and Ahaz "made his son pass through the fire" (2 Kgs 16:3), which God forbade (Lev 18:21). Such questions treat God as a bargainer to be paid off. Religion without God never knows when it has done enough.
6:8 *He has told you, O man, what is good* The answer was not new (Deut 10:12-13). The people did not need new revelation. They needed to do what they already knew. "O man" speaks to every human being. Not rams, oil or children, but three things.
6:8 *to do justice, and to love steadfast love, and to walk humbly with your God* Justice treats people rightly. Steadfast love, hesed, gives more than is owed, as God does for us, and we are to love doing it. To walk humbly is to live in fellowship with God, knowing He is God and we are not (Gen 5:24). This is not how we are saved. No one has done it perfectly, and Micah ends with a God who forgives (7:18-19). It is what a life made right by grace looks like (Eph 2:8-9).
6:9 *sound wisdom will see Your name* God turns from the courtroom to Jerusalem itself. A wise person will listen and fear the LORD. The last line is hard in Hebrew. It may mean, Listen to the rod of punishment and the One who appointed it.
6:11 *with a bag of weights of deceit* Merchants kept two sets of weights, one for buying and one for selling (Amos 8:5). Could God call such a man innocent? Here is the opposite of verse 8: injustice, cruelty and pride.

tongue ***is*** deceit in their mouth. **13** And I also have made ***you*** sick ***by*** striking you, making ***you*** desolate because of your sins. **14** You will eat and not be satisfied, and your emptiness ***will be*** in your midst; and you will carry away and not bring ***it*** to safety, and what you bring to safety I will give to the sword. **15** You will sow and not reap; you will tread olives and not anoint yourself ***with*** oil, and new wine, and not drink wine. **16** And the statutes of Omri are kept, and every deed of the house of Ahab (Achav), and you have walked in their counsels, so that I may make you a horror, and her inhabitants a hissing; and you will bear the reproach of My people.

MICAH 7

Micah Waits for the LORD

1 Woe to me! For I have become like the gatherings of summer fruit, like the gleanings of the grape harvest; there is no cluster to eat; my soul craves an early fig. **2** The godly ***one*** has perished from the land, and upright ***one*** among mankind there is none; all of them lie in wait for blood; each man hunts his brother ***with*** a net. **3** On evil ***are*** both hands to do ***it*** well; the official asks, and the judge ***asks*** for the bribe; and the great ***man*** speaks the craving of his soul, he ***himself***, and they weave it. **4** The best of them ***is*** like a brier, the upright ***one is worse*** than a thorn hedge. The day of your watchmen, your punishment, has come; now will be their confusion. **5** Do not believe in a neighbor; do not trust in a close friend; from her who lies in your bosom guard the openings of your mouth. **6** For a son treats a father with contempt, a daughter rises up against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; the enemies of a man ***are*** the men of his own house. **7** And I, I will watch for the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me.

Zion Will Rise

8 Do not rejoice over me, O my enemy; when I have fallen, I will arise; when I sit in the darkness, the LORD ***is*** a light for me. **9** I will bear the indignation of the LORD, for I have sinned against Him, until He pleads my case and does justice for me. He will bring me out to the light; I will look on His righteousness. **10** And let my enemy see, and let shame cover her who says to me, "Where ***is*** He, the LORD your God?" My eyes will look on her; now she will become a trampling place, like the mud of the streets. **11** A day to build your walls! That day ***the*** boundary will be far away. **12** ***It is*** that day, and to you ***they*** will come, from Assyria (Ashur) and the cities of Egypt (Matsor), and from Egypt even to the River, and ***to*** sea from sea, and ***to*** mountain ***from*** the mountain. **13** And the land will become a desolation because of its inhabitants, from the fruit of their deeds. **14** Shepherd Your people with Your rod, the flock of Your inheritance, dwelling alone ***in*** a forest in the midst of a garden land; let them graze ***in*** Bashan and Gilead (Gilad) as ***in*** the days of antiquity. **15** As ***in*** the days of your coming out from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim), I will show him wonders. **16** Nations will see and be ashamed of all their might; they will put a hand on ***their*** mouth; their ears will be deaf. **17** They will lick dust like the serpent, like crawling things of ***the*** earth; they will quake out of their strongholds; to the LORD our God they will ***come*** in dread,

6:13 Lev 26:16; Deut 28:21,22; Job 33:19-22
6:14 Hos 4:10; Lev 26:26; Isa 65:13
6:15 Zeph 1:13; Jer 12:13; Amos 5:11
6:16 Jer 51:51; Jer 7:24; 1 Kgs 16:25-30
7:1 Isa 24:13; Isa 28:4; Hos 9:10
7:2 Rom 3:11; Rom 3:12; Ps 12:1
7:3 Mic 3:11; Prov 4:16,17; Jer 8:10
7:4 Isa 22:5; Ezek 2:6; 2 Sam 23:6,7
7:5 Matt 10:35; Jer 9:4; Ps 118:8,9
7:6 Matt 10:35-36; Matt 10:21; Luke 12:53
7:7 Luke 2:27; Ps 25:5; Ps 37:7
7:8 Matt 4:16; Rev 11:10; Isa 9:2
7:9 Luke 15:18; Rev 18:20; Ps 37:6
7:10 Rev 18:20; Joel 2:17; Zech 10:5
7:11 Neh 2:17; Neh 3:1-16; Neh 4:3,6
7:12 Isa 19:23-25; Isa 11:16; Hos 11:11
7:13 Luke 21:23; Isa 3:10,11; Jer 25:11
7:14 Matt 2:6; Mic 5:4; Ps 23:1-4
7:15 Acts 13:17; Isa 11:16; Ps 68:22
7:16 Rev 11:18; Acts 13:17; Isa 26:11
7:17 Rev 18:9; Rev 11:18; Isa 49:23

6:14 *You will eat and not be satisfied* The curses Moses warned of (Lev 26:26; Deut 28:38-40). They would do the work and never enjoy the harvest, as they had done to the poor. That is the emptiness of a life built on cheating. Only God satisfies (Isa 55:2).
6:16 *the statutes of Omri are kept, and every deed of the house of Ahab* Omri built Samaria. Ahab brought in Baal worship and had Naboth killed for his vineyard (1 Kgs 16:23-33; 21). Judah kept the statutes of Omri instead of the LORD's. God told them to walk humbly with Him, and they walked in the counsels of Ahab.
7:2 *The godly one has perished from the land* Godly comes from hesed, one who shows loyal love to God and others. Micah could find none. Elijah felt the same, though God had seven thousand left (1 Kgs 19:10, 18). People hunted one another like prey.
7:3 *the official asks, and the judge asks for the bribe* Skilled at evil with both hands. The powerful man names what he wants, and the paid officials weave the plan. Corruption was a team effort. Even the best of them would scratch you like a brier.
7:6 *the enemies of a man are the men of his own house* When a society turns from God, it falls apart even at home. Jesus used these words to warn that following Him would sometimes divide families (Matt 10:35-36). If that is you, you are not alone. No one who leaves family for His sake will lose out in the end (Mark 10:29-30).
7:7 *And I, I will watch for the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation* The turning point of the chapter. Micah cannot trust neighbor or family, but he can trust God. He watches like a watchman for the dawn. Waiting is not sitting idle. It is hoping while God has not yet acted, for "those who wait for the LORD will renew power" (Isa 40:31). He is not deaf.
7:8 *when I sit in the darkness, the LORD is a light for me* Zion speaks as one person. The enemy gloated over Jerusalem's fall (Obad 12), but Zion says, I have fallen, but I will get up. "The LORD is my light and my salvation" (Ps 27:1).
7:9 *I will bear the indignation of the LORD, for I have sinned against Him* Zion owns her sin and accepts God's discipline. That is real repentance. The God who brought the case against her (6:2) will one day take up her case. Live under His discipline honestly, patiently, sure that He will bring you into the light (Heb 12:10-11).
7:12 *from Egypt even to the River* The River is the Euphrates. From every direction they will come to Zion, whether Israel's scattered people coming home or the nations coming to worship (4:1-2). Both will happen in the kingdom (Isa 11:11-12; Zech 8:20-23).
7:14 *Shepherd Your people with Your rod, the flock of Your inheritance* A shepherd's rod guided and protected (Ps 23:4). Micah asks God to be Israel's Shepherd, as the Ruler from Bethlehem would be (5:4). Bashan and Gilead were rich pastures lost to Assyria in Micah's lifetime (2 Kgs 15:29).
7:15 *As in the days of your coming out from the land of Egypt, I will show him wonders* The prophets often speak of a new exodus when God gathers His people at the end of the age (Isa 11:15-16; Jer 23:7-8).
7:17 *They will lick dust like the serpent* Total defeat, echoing the curse on the serpent (Gen 3:14). The nations that mocked, "Where is He, the LORD your God?" (7:10), will come trembling to Him. Every knee will bow (Phil 2:10-11).

and they will be afraid of You.

Who Is a God like You?

18 Who ***is*** a God like You, forgiving iniquity and passing over transgression for the remnant of His inheritance? He does not hold on to His anger forever, for He delights in steadfast love. **19** He will again have compassion on us; He will subdue our iniquities; and You will cast all their sins into the depths of ***the*** sea. **20** You will give faithfulness to Jacob (Ya'aqov), steadfast love to Abraham (Avraham), which You swore to our fathers from the days of old.

7:18 Matt 9:6; Acts 3:19; Isa 43:25
7:19 Acts 3:19; Gal 3:18; Isa 38:17
7:20 Luke 1:72-73; Acts 3:25; Rom 11:26

7:18 *Who is a God like You, forgiving iniquity and passing over transgression* Micah's name means Who is like the LORD? He ends asking that question. No idol could forgive. To forgive is to lift up and carry away. These are the words of God's self-description, "forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin" (Exod 34:7). How can a holy God do this? He showed His justice at the cross, where Jesus paid (Rom 3:25-26).
7:18 *He does not hold on to His anger forever, for He delights in steadfast love* God is angry at sin, as the whole book shows, but mercy is His delight. "For a moment is in His anger, life is in His favor" (Ps 30:5).
7:19 *You will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea* To subdue is to tread underfoot. God breaks sin's power and forgives its guilt. All sins, thrown where no one can fish them out (Ps 103:12). Many believers keep diving to pull back what God has thrown away. If you have confessed and trusted Christ, "He is faithful and righteous so that He may forgive us" (1 John 1:9). Leave it there.
7:20 *You will give faithfulness to Jacob, steadfast love to Abraham* God swore to Abraham the land, a great nation and blessing for all families (Gen 12:1-3; 22:16-18; Heb 6:13). He will keep every promise to Israel, including the land, when Christ returns and Israel turns to Him (Rom 11:26-29). Through Abraham's Seed the blessing reaches the nations too (Gal 3:8, 16). Zechariah praised God for "the oath which He swore to Abraham our father" (Luke 1:73).

NAHUM

Introduction

Title

The book is named for its prophet, Nahum, whose name means comfort. It is the seventh of the twelve Minor Prophets, coming after Micah and before Habakkuk. Nahum and Jonah are the two books of the Bible addressed to Nineveh, the capital of Assyria. Nahum's message brought no comfort to Nineveh, but it brought great comfort to Judah, which had suffered under Assyria for generations.

Author and Date

The book calls its author "Nahum the Elkoshite" (1:1), and that is all we know about him. No one is sure where Elkosh was. Old traditions place it in Galilee, in southern Judah, or near Nineveh itself. Capernaum, whose name means village of Nahum, is sometimes linked with him, but that cannot be proved. Most scholars accept that Nahum wrote the book, and there is no good reason to separate the poem of chapter 1 from the rest.

Nahum speaks of the fall of Thebes in Egypt as already past (3:8-10). Assyria took Thebes in 663 B.C. He speaks of Nineveh's fall as still ahead, and Nineveh fell in 612 B.C. So the book was written between those dates. Many conservative scholars place it about 650 B.C., while Assyria was still "complete and thus many" (1:12). Others place it closer to 615 B.C., when Assyria was weakening.

Background and Setting

Assyria ruled from the Persian Gulf to Egypt. Nineveh stood on the east bank of the Tigris River, across from modern Mosul in Iraq, a great city of high walls, palaces, temples and canals. The Assyrian kings boasted in their own records of the cities they burned and the people they killed. Assyria had destroyed the northern kingdom of Israel in 722 B.C., and Judah had paid it tribute for years. King Manasseh was even taken captive by the commanders of the king of Assyria (2 Chr 33:11). About a century after Nineveh repented at Jonah's preaching, it had gone back to its cruelty.

Nahum's prophecy came true in 612 B.C., when the Babylonians and Medes besieged and took Nineveh. It was never rebuilt as a great city. Its ruins lay buried under mounds for centuries until archaeologists dug them out in the 1800s A.D. The last of the Assyrian army was crushed a few years later.

Themes

God is both patient and just. "The LORD is slow to anger and great in power, and He will certainly not leave the guilty unpunished" (1:3). These words come from God's own description of Himself at Sinai (Exod 34:6-7). Jonah shows the first half of that truth, His mercy to a city that repents. Nahum shows the second half, His justice on a city that returned to its evil. We need both books to see God as He really is.

God's jealousy and vengeance are not bad temper. They are His holy love for His people and His setting right of wrongs. Because He will repay, His people can leave vengeance in His hands (Rom 12:19).

The LORD rules over all nations, even the greatest. When He says, "Look, I am against you" (2:13; 3:5), no wall, river, army or treasure can save.

The LORD is a refuge for those who trust Him. "The LORD is good, a stronghold in a day of trouble; and He knows those who take refuge in Him" (1:7). The same power that terrifies His enemies shelters His people.

Christ in Nahum

Nahum pictures a runner on the mountains bringing the good news that the oppressor has fallen: "Look, on the mountains the feet of one who brings good news, who proclaims peace!" (1:15). Isaiah used the same picture (Isa 52:7), and Paul applies it to those who preach the gospel of Christ (Rom 10:15). The enemy that held us was not Assyria but sin and death, and Jesus defeated them at the cross and rose again. Nahum also shows how a holy God deals with guilt. He will not leave the guilty unpunished, and at the cross He punished sin fully in His Son, so that He can be just and still justify everyone who believes in Jesus (Rom 3:26). For all who take refuge in Him, God is a stronghold, and "no one will snatch them out of My hand" (John 10:28).

Hard Passages

How can a God of love be "avenging" and "a master of rage" (1:2)? The notes explain God's jealousy as holy, protective love and His vengeance as His setting right of wrongs, always paired with His patience.

Why does Nahum describe war so vividly (2:3-10; 3:1-3, 10)? The notes treat the battle scenes briefly. They frame them as Nineveh reaping what it had sown in its cruelty to others, and add that God sees every life taken by cruel men. On the suffering of children at Thebes, the notes add that God will one day end war, and that little children who die are safe with Him (2 Sam 12:23).

Do the racing chariots of 2:4 describe modern cars? Some once taught so. The notes set this aside as reading modern ideas into the text. Nahum was describing the war chariots in the battle for Nineveh.

Did a flood help destroy Nineveh (1:8; 2:6)? Ancient writers report that floodwaters broke down part of the wall during the siege. The notes state this generally, since the details are debated.

Outline

I. Who the LORD Is (1:1-15)
  A. The LORD avenges and is slow to anger (1:1-6)
  B. A stronghold for those who trust Him (1:7-8)
  C. Nineveh's end and Judah's freedom (1:9-15)
II. How Nineveh Will Fall (2:1-13)
  A. The attack on the city (2:1-10)
  B. The empty den of the lions (2:11-13)
III. Why Nineveh Will Fall (3:1-19)
  A. The city of blood (3:1-7)
  B. No better than Thebes (3:8-13)
  C. No escape and no healing (3:14-19)

NAHUM

NAHUM 1

The LORD Avenges

1 The oracle of Nineveh (Ninve). The book of the vision of Nahum (Nachum) the Elkoshite. **2** A jealous and avenging God ***is*** the LORD; avenging ***is*** the LORD, and a master of rage; avenging ***is*** the LORD on His adversaries, and He ***is*** keeping ***wrath*** for His enemies. **3** The LORD ***is*** slow to anger and great in power, and He will certainly not leave ***the guilty*** unpunished. The LORD, in ***the*** whirlwind and in ***the*** storm ***is*** His way, and cloud ***is*** the dust of His feet. **4** He rebukes the sea and makes it dry, and He dries up all the rivers; Bashan and Carmel (Karmel) wither, and the blossom of Lebanon (Levanon) withers. **5** Mountains quake because of Him, and the hills melt; and the earth rises up before Him, and the world and all who dwell in it. **6** Before His indignation who can stand? And who can rise up in the burning of His anger? His rage is poured out like fire, and the rocks are torn down by Him.

A Stronghold in Trouble

7 The LORD ***is*** good, a stronghold in a day of trouble; and He knows those who take refuge in Him. **8** And with a flood that passes over He will make a complete end of her place, and He will pursue His enemies ***into*** darkness.

Nineveh's End and Judah's Freedom

9 Whatever you plot against the LORD, He ***is*** making a complete end; trouble will not rise up twice. **10** For even ***like*** entangled thorns, and drunken like their drink, they will be consumed like stubble fully dry. **11** From you has come out one who plots evil against the LORD, a counselor of worthlessness. **12** Thus says the LORD: Though ***they are*** complete and thus many, even thus they will be cut down, and he will pass away. And I have afflicted you; I will not afflict you again. **13** And now I will break his yoke bar from upon you, and I will tear apart your fetters. **14** And the LORD has commanded concerning you: No ***one*** from your name will be sown again; from the house of your gods I will cut off carved image and molten image; I will make your grave, for you are contemptible. **15** Look, on the mountains the feet of one who brings good news, who proclaims peace! Celebrate your festivals, O Judah (Yehuda); pay your vows; for ***the*** worthless ***one*** will not again pass through you; all of him is cut off.

1:1 Zeph 2:13; Isa 13:1; Zech 9:1
1:2 Rom 12:19; Exod 20:5; Zech 8:2
1:3 Rom 12:19; Neh 9:17; Ps 147:5
1:4 Matt 8:26; Isa 33:9; Ps 106:9
1:5 Mic 1:4; 2 Sam 22:8; Jer 4:24
1:6 Rev 16:8; Mal 3:2; Jer 10:10
1:7 Matt 27:43; 1 Cor 8:3; 1 John 4:9
1:8 Luke 6:48; Isa 28:17; Amos 8:8
1:9 Acts 4:26; Ps 33:10; Nah 1:11
1:10 Mic 7:4; Mal 4:1; Nah 3:11
1:11 Nah 1:9; 2 Kgs 18:13,14,30; 2 Kgs 19:22-25
1:12 2 Kgs 19:35,37; Isa 10:32-34; Isa 14:24-27
1:13 Isa 9:4; Isa 10:27; Isa 14:25
1:14 Ps 109:13; Isa 46:1,2; 2 Kgs 19:37
1:15 Rom 10:15; Isa 52:7; Isa 40:9,10

1:1 *The oracle of Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite.* An oracle is a message from God, often of judgment. The word comes from a root meaning to lift or carry, a heavy word. Nahum's name means comfort. His message brought no comfort to Nineveh, Assyria's capital, but great comfort to Judah, whom Nineveh had crushed so long.
1:2 *A jealous and avenging God is the LORD* God's jealousy is not petty. It is the holy zeal of a husband for his wife (Exod 20:5; 34:14). Vengeance in the Bible means God sets things right. If He never acted, evil would win and its victims would not matter. That is why we need not avenge ourselves but "give place to the wrath" (Rom 12:19).
1:3 *The LORD is slow to anger and great in power, and He will certainly not leave the guilty unpunished* Both lines come from God's self-description at Sinai (Exod 34:6-7). He waited with Nineveh well over a century after Jonah. Patience is not weakness or approval. God's love and justice meet at the cross, where He punished sin in His Son so He could forgive all who believe (Rom 3:26). The clouds are the dust kicked up by His feet.
1:4 *He rebukes the sea and makes it dry* This recalls the Red Sea and the Jordan (Exod 14; Josh 3). Bashan's oaks, Carmel's fruit and Lebanon's cedars were the richest growth in the land. If they wither at His word, nothing can stand against Him.
1:6 *Before His indignation who can stand?* No one. Nineveh thought itself the strongest city on earth and could not stand before God a moment. Many today think God would never judge anyone. Nahum says He is holy and powerful, and the right response is to run to Him, as the next verse invites.
1:7 *The LORD is good, a stronghold in a day of trouble* After the thunder, this is where Nahum wants us to land. God's anger at cruelty flows from His goodness. A stronghold was a walled fortress where people fled from an enemy (Ps 46:1). He does not promise no trouble, but refuge in it (John 16:33).
1:7 *He knows those who take refuge in Him* Knows means more than facts. He knows them personally and watches over them. In the storm that swept Nineveh away, not one of His people was forgotten. God's power is a terror to those who fight Him and a fortress to those who hide in Him. Which is He to you? "No one will snatch them out of My hand" (John 10:28).
1:8 *with a flood that passes over He will make a complete end of her place* Nineveh stood on the Tigris with canals and rivers through and around it. Ancient writers report that during the siege of 612 B.C. floodwaters broke down part of the wall (2:6). For those who reject God to the end, there is no stronghold.
1:9 *trouble will not rise up twice* Plotting against Judah was plotting against the LORD. God would need no second blow. Nineveh fell in 612 B.C. and never rose again. Like tangled thorns, drunken men and dry stubble, it would go up all at once.
1:11 *a counselor of worthlessness* The Hebrew is belial, wickedness, later a name for Satan (2 Cor 6:15). Many think of Sennacherib, who mocked the LORD before Jerusalem (2 Kgs 18:13-35), or of the line of Assyrian kings as a whole.
1:12 *I have afflicted you; I will not afflict you again* Assyria at full strength would still be cut down. God is honest with Judah. Assyria had been His rod of discipline (Isa 10:5), but that time was ending. Babylon would come later for later sins, but Assyria's day was over.
1:13 *I will break his yoke bar from upon you* A yoke bar was the beam across an ox's neck, and fetters were a prisoner's chains. Judah had paid heavy tribute for years. Sin is a heavier yoke than Assyria ever was, and Jesus came to break it (Matt 11:28-30).
1:14 *I will make your grave, for you are contemptible* God speaks to the king of Assyria. His dynasty would end, and his idols, carved and cast, could not protect even their temples. The royal house of Assyria came to an end within a few years of Nineveh's fall.
1:15 *on the mountains the feet of one who brings good news, who proclaims peace* A runner on the ridge with news: Nineveh has fallen. Judah should keep its festivals and pay its vows. When God answers prayer, thank Him and keep your word. Isaiah used almost the same words (Isa 52:7), and Paul applies them to gospel preachers (Rom 10:15). Who brought the good news to you? Who might you tell?

NAHUM 2

The Attack on Nineveh

1 One who scatters has come up against your face. Guard the fortification; watch the road; strengthen ***your*** loins; make ***your*** strength very firm. **2** For the LORD will restore the majesty of Jacob (Ya'aqov) like the majesty of Israel
(Yisra'el); for those who lay waste have laid them waste, and they have ruined their branches. **3** The shield of his warriors ***is*** dyed red; the men of strength ***are*** clothed in scarlet; the chariotry ***is*** in ***the*** fire of steel on the day of his preparing, and the cypresses are made to quiver. **4** In the streets the chariotry drives madly; they rush back and forth in the open places; their appearance ***is*** like the torches; like the lightning flashes they run about. **5** He remembers his nobles; they stumble in their going; they hurry ***to*** her wall, and the covering is prepared. **6** The gates of the rivers are opened, and the palace melts away. **7** And it is fixed: she is uncovered, she is carried away; and her maidservants are moaning like the sound of doves, beating on their hearts. **8** And Nineveh (Ninve) ***has been*** like a pool of water from the days ***that*** she ***existed***; and they are fleeing. Stop! Stop! And there is none who turns back. **9** Plunder silver! Plunder gold! And there is no end to the supply, wealth from every desirable article. **10** Emptiness, and empty waste, and devastation! And ***the*** heart melts, and knees totter, and anguish ***is*** in all loins, and the faces of all of them gather paleness.

The Empty Den of the Lions

11 Where ***is*** the dwelling of the lions, and it ***was*** a pasture for the young lions, where the lion walked, the lioness, the lion's cub there, and there was none who terrified ***them***? **12** The lion tore enough for his cubs and strangled for his lionesses; and he filled his holes ***with*** prey, and his dens ***with*** torn flesh. **13** Look, I ***am*** against you, declares the LORD of armies, and I will burn her chariotry in smoke, and ***the*** sword will consume your young lions; and I will cut off your prey from the earth, and the voice of your messengers will not be heard again.

NAHUM 3

Woe to the City of Blood

1 Woe, city of blood! All of her ***is*** full of lying ***and*** plunder; prey does not depart. **2** The sound of a whip, and the sound of the rattling of a wheel, and a galloping horse, and a jolting chariot; **3** a horseman mounting, and the flame of a sword, and the flash of a spear, and a multitude of slain, and a weight of corpses; and there is no end to the bodies; they stumble over their bodies, **4** because of the multitude of the prostitutions of the prostitute, good in grace, mistress of sorceries, who sells nations by her prostitutions, and clans by her sorceries. **5** Look, I ***am*** against you, declares the LORD of armies, and I will uncover your skirts over your face, and I will show nations your nakedness, and kingdoms your shame. **6** And I will throw detestable things on you, and I will

2:1 Jer 51:20-23; Isa 14:6; Jer 25:9
2:2 Ps 80:12,13; Zeph 3:11; Isa 10:5-12
2:3 Isa 63:1-3; Zech 1:8; Zech 6:2
2:4 Jer 4:13; Nah 3:2,3; Isa 66:15
2:5 Jer 46:12; Isa 21:5; Jer 50:29
2:6 Isa 45:1,2; 2 Pet 3:10,11
2:7 Isa 38:14; Isa 59:11; Luke 23:27,48
2:8 Gen 10:11; Jer 51:13; Rev 17:1,15
2:9 Jer 51:56; Nah 2:12,13; 2 Chr 36:10
2:10 Ps 22:14; Joel 2:6; Isa 24:1
2:11 Isa 5:29; Jer 2:15; Nah 3:1
2:12 Jer 51:34; Ps 17:12; Isa 10:6-14
2:13 Nah 3:5; 2 Kgs 19:23; Ps 46:9
3:1 Ezek 24:6-9; Hab 2:12; Zeph 3:1-3
3:2 Jer 47:3; Nah 2:3,4; Judg 5:22
3:3 Hab 3:11; Isa 37:36; Ezek 39:4
3:4 Rev 18:23; Rev 18:9; Isa 47:9,12,13
3:5 Nah 2:13; Jer 13:22,26; Isa 47:2,3
3:6 Job 9:31; Mal 2:9; Jer 51:37

2:1 *One who scatters has come up against your face* In 612 B.C. Babylonians and Medes besieged and took Nineveh. The orders to guard the walls carry a sad irony. When God is against a city, no wall is high enough.
2:2 *the LORD will restore the majesty of Jacob like the majesty of Israel* Jacob and Israel likely stand for the whole nation. Assyria had stripped God's vine bare (Ps 80:8-16). Nineveh's fall was a small down payment on a greater promise, the gathering of all Israel under her King (Ezek 37:21-22; Rom 11:26).
2:3 *The shield of his warriors is dyed red* Shields covered with red leather and soldiers in scarlet looked like a wave of fire. The cypresses may be spears of cypress wood waved before the charge.
2:4 *In the streets the chariotry drives madly* Some once said this describes modern cars on a highway. Nahum was describing war chariots in the battle for Nineveh. Reading modern machines into the text is reading our ideas into Scripture. Let Nahum tell us what he saw.
2:6 *The gates of the rivers are opened, and the palace melts away* Gates in the walls let the Tigris and the Khosr River in and out. Whether by flood or by the enemy seizing the water gates, the city that trusted in its rivers was undone by them.
2:7 *she is uncovered, she is carried away* It is fixed, settled by God. She is likely the city, pictured as a woman led captive, though some see the queen or a goddess statue. The city that made others weep now weeps like moaning doves.
2:8 *Stop! Stop! And there is none who turns back* For centuries Nineveh was like a full pool, gathering people and wealth. Now it drains away. Officers shout for the people to stand, and everyone runs.
2:9 *Plunder silver! Plunder gold!* Nineveh grew rich robbing nations, and now its wealth was taken (Hab 2:8). Riches and walls protect no one when God acts. Jesus called the rich man with bigger barns a fool (Luke 12:16-21). What are we building our security on?
2:11 *Where is the dwelling of the lions* Assyrian kings pictured themselves as lions, hunted lions for sport and carved lion hunts on their palace walls. They filled their dens with the prey of other nations. Now Nahum stands at the empty den and asks, where is it?
2:13 *Look, I am against you, declares the LORD of armies* The Medes and Babylonians were only tools. If God is for us, who is against us (Rom 8:31)? Assyria's messengers once mocked the LORD outside Jerusalem (2 Kgs 18:17-35). Their voice falls silent, while the messenger of good news runs to Judah (1:15).
3:1 *Woe, city of blood!* Woe is a funeral cry. Assyria's kings boasted in their own records of cities destroyed and cruelty shown. It lied in treaties and robbed in wars.
3:3 *they stumble over their bodies* Nahum does not linger on the horror, and neither will we. Nineveh suffered what it had done to others. "For all who take a sword will perish by a sword" (Matt 26:52). God sees every life taken by cruel men and will hold them to account.
3:4 *who sells nations by her prostitutions, and clans by her sorceries* Nineveh lured small nations with promises of safety and trade, then enslaved them. Ahaz paid Assyria for help and Judah became its servant (2 Kgs 16:7-8). Sin still looks attractive, takes more than it gives, and ends in bondage. Sorceries were the magic arts common in Assyria.
3:5 *I will show nations your nakedness, and kingdoms your shame* A guilty woman publicly exposed was a way of disgracing someone in that culture. Nineveh's true character would be shown to the world. Sin can hide behind wealth and charm, but God will bring it to light (Luke 12:2-3). Bring it to Him now (1 John 1:9).

treat you with contempt, and I will make you like a spectacle.
7 And it will be ***that*** all who see you will flee from you and
say, "Nineveh (Ninve) is devastated; who will show sympathy
to her?" From where shall I seek comforters for you?

No Better than Thebes

8 Are you better than Thebes (No-Amon), who dwelt among
the canals, water all around her, whose rampart ***was the*** sea,
from ***the*** sea her wall? **9** Cush (Kush) ***was*** her strength, and
Egypt (Mitsrayim), and there was no end; Put and the
Libyans were your help. **10** Also she went to the exile; she
went into the captivity; also her infants were dashed in
pieces at the head of all the streets; and for her honored ***men***
they cast a lot, and all her great ***men*** were bound with the
fetters. **11** Also you will be drunk; you will be hidden; also
you will seek a stronghold from the enemy. **12** All your forti-
fications ***are*** fig trees with first-ripe fruit; if they are shaken,
they fall on the mouth of the eater. **13** Look, your people ***are***
women in your midst; to your enemies the gates of your land
have been opened wide; fire has consumed your bars.

No Escape for Nineveh

14 Draw for yourself water ***for the*** siege; strengthen your for-
tifications; go into the clay and trample on the mortar; take
hold of the brick mold. **15** There fire will consume you; ***the***
sword will cut you off; it will consume you like the young
locust. Make yourself many like the young locust; make your-
self many like the locust. **16** You have increased your traders
more than the stars of the heavens; the young locust strips
and flies away. **17** Your princes ***are*** like the locust, and your
officials like swarms of grasshoppers, which encamp in the
walls on a day of cold; the sun rises, and it flees away, and its
place is not known. Where ***are*** they? **18** Your shepherds
slumber, O king of Assyria (Ashur); your nobles settle down;
your people are scattered on the mountains, and there is
none who gathers ***them***. **19** There is no relief for your frac-
ture; your wound ***is*** severe. All who hear the report of you
clap a palm over you; for over whom has your evil not passed
continually?

3:7 Isa 51:19; Jer 15:5; Jer 51:9
3:8 Amos 6:2; Ezek 30:14-16; Ezek 31:2,3
3:9 Ezek 27:10; Ezek 30:5; Isa 20:5
3:10 Isa 20:4; Hos 13:16; Joel 3:3
3:11 Isa 49:26; Isa 2:10,19; Nah 1:10
3:12 Rev 6:13; Hab 1:10
3:13 Jer 51:30; Isa 19:16; Jer 50:37
3:14 Nah 2:1; 2 Chr 32:3,4,11; Isa 22:9-11
3:15 Joel 1:4; Nah 3:13; Nah 2:13
3:16 Gen 15:5; Gen 22:17; Neh 9:23
3:17 Rev 9:7
3:18 1 Kgs 22:17; Ps 76:5,6; Jer 50:18
3:19 Rev 18:20; Mic 1:9; Lam 2:15

3:7 *From where shall I seek comforters for you?* A play on Nahum's name, comfort. No one would mourn Nineveh. It had no friends left, only victims. The comfort of this book was for Judah.
3:8 *Are you better than Thebes* The great capital of southern Egypt on the Nile, near modern Luxor, defended by water like Nineveh, with Cush and Libya as allies. Assyria itself sacked it in 663 B.C. Nineveh, you did this to Thebes. Do you think you are safer?
3:10 *her infants were dashed in pieces at the head of all the streets* Scripture records the suffering of children in war plainly and with grief, never approval. It shows how terrible sin and war are. God will one day end war forever (Isa 2:4), and I believe little children who die are safe with God (2 Sam 12:23).
3:11 *you will seek a stronghold from the enemy* The LORD is a stronghold for those who trust Him (1:7). Nineveh would look for one and find none, and would stagger from the cup of God's judgment (Hab 2:16).
3:12 *fig trees with first-ripe fruit* The first figs are so ripe that a shake drops them into your mouth. Nineveh's forts would fall that easily.
3:13 *your people are women in your midst* Not an insult to women. In that day it meant soldiers who had lost the will and strength to fight. The bars were the heavy beams that locked the gates.
3:15 *There fire will consume you* Store water, make bricks, work hard. It will not help. Archaeologists found signs of the fire that burned Nineveh. The city had been like a locust swarm, and its merchants, like locusts, would strip and fly away.
3:17 *the sun rises, and it flees away, and its place is not known* On a cold day locusts settle in wall cracks. When it warms, they fly off and are gone. Nineveh's leaders would vanish the same way.
3:18 *Your shepherds slumber, O king of Assyria* Rulers dead or helpless, and a people like sheep without a shepherd. Within a few years the empire was gone, and the city was buried so completely that later travelers walked over its mounds without knowing it.
3:19 *over whom has your evil not passed continually?* Every nation clapped at the news. The book that began "slow to anger" ends with the fall of those who never turned. In Jonah the same city repented and was spared. The difference was not in God but in Nineveh's response. None of us is innocent, and none is beyond mercy in Christ.

HABAKKUK

Introduction

Title

The book is named for its prophet, Habakkuk. His name may come from a Hebrew word meaning to embrace, and some have said he held on to God in his struggle. Habakkuk is the eighth of the twelve Minor Prophets, coming after Nahum and before Zephaniah. Most prophets speak for God to the people.
Habakkuk speaks to God about the people, asks Him hard questions, and records His answers. The book moves from "How long, O LORD?" (1:2) to "I will exult in the LORD" (3:18).

Author and Date

The book calls its author "Habakkuk the prophet" (1:1; 3:1), and tells us nothing more. The musical notes in chapter 3 (3:1, 3, 19) have led some to think he served among the temple singers, which would make him a Levite, but Scripture does not say so. Later Jewish legends about him are not part of the Bible and cannot be trusted.

Habakkuk gives no date. God says He is raising up the Chaldeans to do a work so amazing that the people would not believe it (1:5-6), which fits the years just before Babylon took control of the region. Babylon helped destroy Nineveh in 612 B.C., and in 605 B.C. it defeated Egypt at Carchemish and took the first captives from Jerusalem, Daniel among them (Dan 1:1). The violence in Judah (1:2-4) fits the reign of Jehoiakim, who came to the throne in 609 B.C. So most conservative scholars date the book about 609 to 605 B.C. Some date it a little earlier.

Background and Setting

Judah had gone through great swings in a short time. Under Manasseh it sank into idolatry (2 Kgs 21). Under Josiah it turned back to God, and the Law was found and read (2 Kgs 22-23). But Josiah died at Megiddo in 609 B.C., and his son Jehoiakim undid much of his work. Jeremiah, preaching in the same years, says Jehoiakim built his palace by injustice, shed innocent blood and oppressed the poor (Jer 22:13-17).

Meanwhile Assyria was gone, Egypt was trying to take its place, and Babylon was rising. The Chaldeans were a people of southern Mesopotamia who came to rule Babylon. Under Nabopolassar and his son Nebuchadnezzar, they built an empire known for speed, power and cruelty (1:6-11). They would destroy Jerusalem and the temple in 586 B.C. and carry Judah into exile for seventy years (Jer 25:11).

Themes

Honest questions brought to God. Habakkuk does not hide his complaint or take it to others behind God's back. He brings it straight to the LORD and waits at his post for the answer (2:1). God is not offended by honest questions from a heart that trusts Him.

God rules the nations. He raises up Babylon to discipline Judah (1:6), but He holds Babylon fully responsible for its pride and cruelty, and five woes announce its fall (2:6-20). The proud man, "whose strength is his god" (1:11), will not stand.

The righteous live by faith. God's central answer is "the righteous will live by his faithfulness" (2:4). The righteous survive by trusting God, even when they cannot see everything worked out. Real faith keeps on trusting, and faithfulness is how it shows.

God's glory will fill the earth. Every proud empire falls, but "the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover over the sea" (2:14). This study holds that this will be fully true when Christ returns and reigns.

Joy in God alone. Even if every crop and flock fails, Habakkuk chooses to rejoice in "the God of my salvation" (3:18).

Christ in Habakkuk

Habakkuk 2:4 is quoted three times in the New Testament. Paul uses it to show that the gospel reveals a righteousness from God received by faith: "And the righteous one by faith will live" (Rom 1:17). He uses it again to show that no one is justified by keeping the Law (Gal 3:11). Hebrews uses it to call believers to keep trusting while they wait for Christ's return: "But the righteous will live by faith" (Heb 10:38), quoting 2:3 just before of "the One who is coming" (Heb 10:37). Paul also quoted 1:5 to warn his hearers not to scoff at God's greatest work, the death and resurrection of Jesus (Acts 13:40-41). Habakkuk's prayer, "in wrath remember to have compassion" (3:2), was answered most fully at the cross, where Jesus bore God's wrath so that we could receive mercy.

Hard Passages

Is it wrong to question God as Habakkuk does (1:2-4; 1:12-17)? The notes present his complaint as an honest prayer of faith, like the psalms of lament, brought to God and not away from Him.

How can a holy God use a more wicked nation to punish His people (1:13)? The notes do not claim to explain everything. They begin from what Habakkuk knew of God, and point to God's answer: He will judge Babylon too in His time, and the righteous live by faith until then.

Does 2:4 say "faith" or "faithfulness"? The SLB reads "by his faithfulness," from the Hebrew emunah. The New Testament, following the Greek Old Testament, reads "by faith." The notes explain these as root and fruit, not in conflict.

When will the earth be filled with God's glory (2:14)? The notes see the spread of the gospel now as a partial working, with the full fulfillment in Christ's thousand-year reign.

Outline

I. Habakkuk's Questions and God's Answers (1:1-2:20)
  A. First question: Why do You allow evil? (1:1-4)
  B. God's answer: the Chaldeans are coming (1:5-11)
  C. Second question: How can You use the wicked? (1:12-2:1)
  D. God's answer: the righteous will live by faith (2:2-5)
  E. Five woes on Babylon (2:6-20)
II. Habakkuk's Prayer and Song (3:1-19)
  A. In wrath remember mercy (3:1-2)
  B. The LORD comes in power (3:3-15)
  C. I will rejoice in the LORD (3:16-19)

HABAKKUK

HABAKKUK 1

How Long, O LORD?

1 The oracle which Habakkuk (Chavaquq) the prophet saw. **2** How long, O LORD, have I cried for help, and You do not hear? I cry out to You, "Violence!" and You do not save. **3** Why do You make me see wickedness, and ***why*** do You look at trouble? And devastation and violence ***are*** before me; and there is strife, and contention rises up. **4** Therefore ***the*** law grows numb, and justice never goes forth; for the wicked surrounds the righteous; therefore justice goes forth perverted.

The Chaldeans Are Coming

5 See among the nations, and look, and be astounded, be astonished; for ***I am*** working a work in your days ***that*** you will not believe if it is told. **6** For look, I am raising up the Chaldeans (Kasdim), the bitter and impetuous nation, which goes to the broad places of the earth to take possession of dwellings ***that are*** not its own. **7** It ***is*** terrifying and dreadful; from itself its justice and its dignity go forth. **8** And its horses are swifter than leopards, and keener than wolves of ***the*** evening; and its steeds paw ***the ground***, and its horsemen come from far away; they fly like an eagle hurrying to devour. **9** All of it comes for violence; the horde of their faces ***is*** eastward; and it gathers captives like the sand. **10** And it scoffs at kings, and rulers ***are*** laughter to it; it laughs at every fortress, and it heaps up dust and captures it. **11** Then he sweeps on ***like the*** wind and passes over, and he becomes guilty, this ***one*** whose strength ***is*** his god.

How Can a Holy God Use the Wicked?

12 Are You not from of old, O LORD my God, my Holy One? We will not die. O LORD, You have appointed him for judgment; and, O Rock, You have established him to reprove. **13** ***You are*** too pure of eyes to see evil, and You are not able to look at trouble; why do You look at the treacherous, ***and why*** are You silent when the wicked swallows up ***one*** more righteous than he? **14** And You have made mankind like the fish of the sea, like moving things ***that have*** no ruler over them. **15** He brings up all of them with a hook; he drags them away in his net and gathers them in his fishing net; therefore he rejoices and is glad. **16** Therefore he sacrifices to his net and burns incense to his fishing net; for by them his portion ***is*** fat, and his food ***is*** rich. **17** Will he therefore empty his net, and continually kill nations ***and*** not spare?

1:1 Nah 1:1; Isa 22:1
1:2 Jer 14:9; Ps 13:1,2; Ps 22:1,2
1:3 Ps 55:9-11; Ps 12:1,2; Ps 73:3-9
1:4 Ps 119:126; Job 21:7; Ezek 9:9
1:5 Acts 13:41; Acts 13:40; Isa 29:14
1:6 2 Kgs 24:2; Jer 5:15; Deut 28:49-52
1:7 Jer 39:5-9; Jer 52:9-11,25-27; Deut 5:19,27
1:8 Jer 4:13; Zeph 3:3; Deut 28:49
1:9 Hab 1:6; Hab 2:5-13; Deut 28:51,52
1:10 2 Chr 36:6,10; Isa 14:16; Jer 32:24
1:11 Dan 4:30-34; Dan 5:3,4,20
1:12 Acts 3:14; Deut 32:4,30,31; Deut 33:27
1:13 Ps 34:15,16; Jer 12:1,2; Ps 35:22
1:14 Prov 6:7
1:15 Matt 17:27; Jer 16:16; Amos 4:2
1:16 Hab 1:11; Deut 8:17; Isa 10:13-15
1:17 Hab 1:9,10; Hab 2:5-8,17; Isa 14:16,17

1:1 *The oracle which Habakkuk the prophet saw* An oracle is a weighty message from God, often of judgment (Nah 1:1). Habakkuk saw it, perceiving God's word like a vision. Unlike most prophets, he speaks first to God about the people, and then God answers.
1:2 *How long, O LORD, have I cried for help, and You do not hear?* Bold words, and Scripture includes them. David prayed, "How long, LORD?" (Ps 13:1), and Jesus cried out with Ps 22:1. God is not offended by honest questions from a heart that trusts Him. Habakkuk brings his complaint to God, not to friends behind God's back. That is the difference between the cry of faith and the complaint of unbelief.
1:3 *devastation and violence are before me* This was in Judah, among God's own people. Josiah's reforms had faded, and under Jehoiakim the powerful crushed the weak (Jer 22:13-17).
1:4 *the law grows numb, and justice never goes forth* God's Law had lost its grip. The courts gave no fair rulings, the few righteous were hemmed in, and what justice came out was bent. When we see evil win and our prayers seem unanswered, Habakkuk shows us what to do: tell God plainly, then wait for His answer.
1:5 *I am working a work in your days that you will not believe if it is told* Habakkuk thought God was doing nothing. God was already at work. When He seems silent, He is often working in ways we cannot yet see. Paul quoted this verse to warn hearers not to scoff at God's greatest work, the death and resurrection of Christ (Acts 13:40-41).
1:6 *I am raising up the Chaldeans, the bitter and impetuous nation* The Chaldeans ruled Babylon. Bitter means fierce, and impetuous means rushing recklessly ahead. Babylon's rise was no accident of history. God raised it. Its own justice and dignity came from itself. It answered to no one.
1:8 *its horses are swifter than leopards, and keener than wolves of the evening* Wolves hunting at dusk after a hungry day. The Babylonian army was famous for moving fast and striking hard, like an eagle swooping to devour.
1:9 *it gathers captives like the sand* Habakkuk complained of violence in Judah. God would answer it with a violent nation. Babylon carried Judah into exile in waves in 605, 597 and 586 B.C. Armies of the day heaped up earthen ramps against walls to take any fortress (1:10).
1:11 *this one whose strength is his god* The key to God's answer. Babylon would be God's tool but not innocent. It would worship its own power and become guilty. God uses even the wicked for His purposes, but He never approves their wickedness and holds them fully responsible (Isa 10:5-15).
1:12 *Are You not from of old, O LORD my God, my Holy One? We will not die.* Habakkuk holds to what he knows: God is eternal, his own God, and holy. Because of God's covenant, Judah would be judged, not wiped out. O Rock means solid and safe (Deut 32:4). When we do not understand what God is doing, start with what we know about Him.
1:13 *You are too pure of eyes to see evil* How could a holy God use a more wicked nation to punish a less wicked one? One of the hardest questions in the Bible. Habakkuk does not let go of God while he asks. The answer will not explain everything, but it will be enough: God will judge the proud, and the righteous live by faith until then (2:2-4).
1:15 *he drags them away in his net* To Babylon people were fish with no protector. Ancient carvings from that region show captives led by hooks or rings and a king holding enemies in a great net.
1:16 *he sacrifices to his net and burns incense to his fishing net* Babylon worshiped the tools of its success. We may not burn incense to a net, but we can worship our job, money, skills or strength, and give them the credit God deserves.
1:17 *Will he therefore empty his net, and continually kill nations and not spare?* Will this go on forever? The chapter leaves it hanging. We may ask God how long and why. What we must not do is stop trusting Him while we wait.

HABAKKUK 2

The Righteous Will Live by Faith

1 At my post I will stand, and I will station myself on the rampart, and I will watch to see what He will speak to me, and what I will answer concerning my complaint. **2** And the LORD answered me and said: Write a vision, and make ***it*** plain on the tablets, so that the one who reads it may run. **3** For the vision ***is*** still for the appointed time, and it pants toward the end, and it will not lie; if it lingers, wait for it; for it will certainly come; it will not be late. **4** Look, his soul is puffed up; it is not upright within him; and the righteous will live by his faithfulness. **5** And moreover, because the wine is treacherous, an arrogant man does not stay at home; he enlarges his appetite like Sheol, and he ***is*** like death and is not satisfied, and he gathers to himself all the nations and assembles to himself all the peoples.

Five Woes on Babylon

6 Will not all these take up a proverb against him, and a mocking song, riddles about him, and say, "Woe ***to*** him who increases what ***is*** not his (how long?) and who makes himself heavy ***with*** pledges!" **7** Will not those who bite you rise up suddenly, and those who make you tremble awake? And you will become plunder for them. **8** Because you have plundered many nations, all the rest of the peoples will plunder you, because of the blood of mankind and the violence ***done to the*** land, ***the*** town, and all who dwell in it. **9** Woe ***to*** him who gains evil unjust gain for his house, to set his nest on high, to deliver himself from the hand of evil! **10** You have planned shame for your house by cutting off many peoples, and you have sinned ***against*** your soul. **11** For a stone will cry out from the wall, and a rafter from the woodwork will answer it. **12** Woe ***to*** him who builds a city with blood and establishes a town by injustice! **13** Look, ***is it*** not from the LORD of armies that peoples labor only for fire, and nations weary themselves only for vanity? **14** For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover over ***the*** sea. **15** Woe ***to*** him who makes his neighbor drink, pouring out your rage, and even making ***him*** drunk, so as to look on their nakedness! **16** You are satisfied ***with*** shame more than glory. Drink, you also, and be counted uncircumcised! The cup of the right hand of the LORD will come around to you, and utter disgrace ***will be*** on your glory. **17** For the violence ***done to*** Lebanon (Levanon) will cover you, and the devastation of animals will terrify them, because of the blood of mankind and the violence ***done to the*** land, ***the*** town, and all who dwell in it. **18** What does a carved image profit, that its fashioner has carved it, a molten image and a teacher of falsehood? For the fashioner of its form trusts in it, to make mute idols. **19** Woe ***to*** him who says to the wood, "Wake up!" "Awake!" to a silent stone. Will it teach? Look, it ***is*** sheathed

2:1 Isa 21:8,11,12; Ps 85:8; Ps 73:16,17
2:2 Rev 14:13; Rev 21:5; Rev 19:9
2:3 Heb 10:37; Ps 27:14; Luke 2:25
2:4 Rom 1:17; Gal 3:11; Heb 10:38
2:5 Prov 27:20; Prov 20:1; Prov 23:29-33
2:6 Num 23:7,18; Jer 50:13; Mic 2:4
2:7 Prov 29:1; Isa 13:1-5,16-18; Isa 21:2-9
2:8 Rev 18:23; Rev 18:24; Isa 33:1,4
2:9 Jude 1:11; Acts 1:19; Jer 49:16
2:10 2 Kgs 9:26; Nah 1:14; 2 Kgs 10:7
2:11 Luke 19:40; Josh 24:27; Gen 4:10
2:12 Mic 3:10; Nah 3:1; Gen 4:11-17
2:13 Isa 50:11; Jer 51:58,64; Gen 11:6-9
2:14 Isa 11:9; Ps 22:27; Ps 72:19
2:15 Jer 51:7; Gen 9:22; Gen 19:32-35
2:16 Isa 47:3; Prov 3:35; Hos 4:7
2:17 Rev 18:24; Hab 2:8; Zech 11:1
2:18 Rev 9:20; Isa 42:17; Jer 10:8,14,15
2:19 Rev 9:20; Ps 135:17; Jer 10:4,9

2:1 *At my post I will stand* A watchman on the wall looked out for whoever was coming. Habakkuk waits for God's answer, ready to listen and even to be corrected. Many of us fill God's silence with our own answers. Prayer is also listening, often through His Word.
2:2 *Write a vision, and make it plain on the tablets, so that the one who reads it may run* Tablets were used for public notices. A reader could take it in at a glance, or a messenger could run with it. Either way, God wanted His answer plain and passed on.
2:3 *if it lingers, wait for it; for it will certainly come; it will not be late* The vision pants toward the end like a runner. Babylon fell about seventy years later, in 539 B.C. (Dan 5:30-31). Hebrews uses these words for Christ's return: "the One who is coming will come and will not delay" (Heb 10:37). He is not late.
2:4 *Look, his soul is puffed up; it is not upright within him* The proud man, the Babylonian whose strength is his god (1:11). He trusts in himself, is not right inside, and will not stand.
2:4 *the righteous will live by his faithfulness* The Hebrew emunah means firmness, steadiness, from the root of amen. The Greek and the New Testament render it by faith. Real faith keeps on trusting, and faithfulness is how it shows. Paul quotes it to show God's righteousness is a gift to all who believe (Rom 1:17) and that no one is justified by the Law (Gal 3:11). Hebrews uses it to urge believers to keep trusting (Heb 10:38).
2:5 *he enlarges his appetite like Sheol, and he is like death and is not satisfied* Wine promises what it does not keep, and so does pride. The grave always has room for one more, and Babylon swallowed nation after nation. Greed never says enough. "His life is not from his possessions" (Luke 12:15).
2:6 *Woe to him who increases what is not his and who makes himself heavy with pledges!* The first of five woes, sung by the nations Babylon crushed. Pledges were items held as security for a loan. Babylon was like a cruel lender loaded with what belonged to others.
2:8 *Because you have plundered many nations, all the rest of the peoples will plunder you* What a person sows, he reaps (Gal 6:7). Persia took Babylon in 539 B.C., and the city later fell into ruins.
2:9 *to set his nest on high, to deliver himself from the hand of evil* The second woe. Babylon wanted to be like an eagle nesting on a cliff, safe through wealth and walls. By destroying others, it destroyed itself. Sin always harms the sinner.
2:11 *a stone will cry out from the wall* The stones and beams of buildings paid for with stolen wealth cry out as witnesses. Nothing is hidden from God.
2:12 *Woe to him who builds a city with blood* The third woe. Babylon's buildings were raised by slave labor and plunder. Everything built by injustice is headed for the fire (Jer 51:58).
2:14 *the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover over the sea* Babylon wanted to fill the earth with its glory and failed. How full is the sea of water? Completely. Isaiah says the same of the Messiah's reign (Isa 11:9). The gospel goes out now, but this will be fully true when Christ returns and sets up His kingdom (Rev 11:15; 20:1-6). Every human empire falls.
2:15 *Woe to him who makes his neighbor drink* The fourth woe. Babylon made nations stagger under its power and then humiliated them.
2:16 *The cup of the right hand of the LORD will come around to you* The cup of the LORD pictures His judgment poured out on the nations (Jer 25:15). The cup Babylon passed to others comes back to it from God's own hand. It was filled with shame, not true glory.
2:18 *What does a carved image profit* The fifth woe, on idolatry. A man shapes something with his own hands and then trusts it to save him. It is a teacher of falsehood.
2:19 *there is no breath at all within it* Sheathed in gold and silver, with nothing inside, no life, voice or power. We still build idols of money, success, pleasure and our own plans. They cannot speak or save. "Flee from idolatry" (1 Cor 10:14).

in gold and silver, and there is no breath at all within it. **20** And the LORD ***is*** in His holy temple; hush before Him, all the earth!

HABAKKUK 3

Habakkuk's Prayer

1 A prayer of Habakkuk (Chavaquq) the prophet, on Shigionoth. **2** O LORD, I have heard Your report; I fear. O LORD, Your work, in the midst of ***the*** years revive it; in the midst of ***the*** years make ***it*** known; in wrath remember to have compassion.

The LORD Comes in Power

3 God comes from Teman, and the Holy One from the mountain of Paran. Selah. His splendor has covered the heavens, and His praise has filled the earth. **4** And ***His*** brightness is like the light; He has rays from His hand, and there ***is*** the hiding of His strength. **5** Before Him goes pestilence, and lightning goes out at His feet. **6** He stood and shook the earth; He looked and made nations jump; and the perpetual mountains were shattered; the everlasting hills bowed down; the everlasting ways ***are*** His. **7** Under affliction I saw the tents of Cushan (Kushan); the tent curtains of the land of Midian (Midyan) tremble. **8** Did ***it*** burn against the rivers, O LORD? Or ***was*** Your anger against the rivers, or Your fury against the sea, that You ride on Your horses, Your chariots ***of*** salvation? **9** Your bow is laid utterly bare; the oaths of ***the*** arrows ***were*** a word. Selah. You split the earth ***with*** rivers. **10** The mountains saw You; they writhe; a downpour of water passed over; the deep gave its voice; it lifted up its hands on high. **11** ***The*** sun ***and*** moon stood still in ***their*** lofty abode; at the light of Your arrows they go, at the brightness of the lightning flash of Your spear. **12** In indignation You march ***through the*** earth; in anger You thresh nations. **13** You went out for the salvation of Your people, for the salvation of Your anointed; You shattered the head out of the house of the wicked, laying bare ***the*** foundation to ***the*** neck. Selah. **14** You pierced with his own arrows the head of his warriors; they storm out to scatter me; their exultation ***is*** as if to devour the afflicted in secret. **15** You trod on the sea ***with*** Your horses, a heap of many waters.

I Will Rejoice in the LORD

16 I heard, and my belly trembled; at the sound my lips quivered; rottenness came into my bones, and in my place I tremble, that I will rest for the day of trouble, ***when he*** comes up against the people ***that*** will raid us. **17** Though the fig tree does not bud, and there is no produce on the vines, the yield of the olive fails, and the fields do not make food, the flock is cut off from the fold, and there are no cattle in the stalls, **18** and I, I will exult in the LORD; I will rejoice in the God of

2:20 Eph 2:21; Zech 2:13; Zeph 1:7
3:1 Ps 86:1-17; Ps 90:1-17; Ps 7:1-17
3:2 Ps 85:6; Hab 3:16; Ps 119:120
3:3 Rev 5:13; Rev 5:14; Deut 33:2
3:4 Job 26:14; Exod 13:21; Exod 14:20
3:5 Exod 12:29,30; Num 16:46-49; Num 14:12
3:6 Gen 49:26; Deut 33:15; Nah 1:5
3:7 Exod 15:14-16; Num 22:3,4; Josh 2:10
3:8 Ps 18:10; Ps 114:3,5; Isa 50:2
3:9 Ps 7:12,13; Ps 78:15,16; Ps 105:41
3:10 Ps 93:3; Heb 11:29; Ps 98:7,8
3:11 Ps 18:12-14; Ps 144:5,6; Isa 28:21
3:12 Jer 51:33; Mic 4:12,13; Num 21:23-35
3:13 Ps 110:6; Ps 105:15,26; Exod 14:13,14
3:14 Dan 11:40; Zech 9:14; Ps 10:8
3:15 Ps 77:19; Hab 3:8
3:16 Hab 3:2; Dan 10:8; Hab 1:5-11
3:17 Deut 28:15-18,30-41; Jer 14:2-8; Joel 1:10-13,16-18
3:18 Job 13:15; Ps 46:1-5; Isa 61:10

2:20 *the LORD is in His holy temple; hush before Him, all the earth!* The idols are silent because they are dead. The LORD is alive on His throne in heaven (Ps 11:4). When we truly see Him, our complaints and boasts fall away. This is not the silence of despair but of awe and trust (Ps 46:10).
3:1 *A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet, on Shigionoth* Shigionoth is a musical term of uncertain meaning, perhaps a song of strong feeling (compare the title of Ps 7). Selah and the note to the choirmaster (3:19) show it was sung in public worship. Habakkuk's honest wrestling, ending in trust, became worship for God's people.
3:2 *in wrath remember to have compassion* Habakkuk heard God's report and feared. He asks God to revive His great works in the middle of history, and to remember mercy while He judges. God showed the greatest mercy in His wrath against sin at the cross, where Jesus took what we deserved (Isa 53:5; 1 Pet 2:24). A good prayer for our nation, church and lives.
3:3 *God comes from Teman, and the Holy One from the mountain of Paran* Teman was in Edom, and Paran the wilderness between Sinai and Canaan. Habakkuk recalls God coming down at Sinai and leading Israel, as Moses did (Deut 33:2). Selah probably marks a pause or musical break.
3:6 *He stood and shook the earth; He looked and made nations jump* God had only to stand and look. The mountains, which seem to last forever, crumble before Him. Cushan was likely a people near Midian, and the desert tribes trembled when God led Israel through (Exod 15:14-16).
3:8 *Your chariots of salvation* When God split the Red Sea and stopped the Jordan, was He angry at the water? No. He was making a way for His people. He rides out as a warrior whose chariot brings salvation.
3:9 *the oaths of the arrows were a word* Hard to translate. The sense seems to be that God's arrows went out in keeping with His sworn word. He fights to keep His promises.
3:11 *The sun and moon stood still in their lofty abode* Recalling the day God made the sun and moon stand still for Joshua (Josh 10:12-14). God's arrows and spear, pictures of lightning, outshone them.
3:12 *in anger You thresh nations* Threshing beat grain from the husk. God marched through Canaan in judgment on nations that had filled the land with evil (Gen 15:16). His anger is never out of control. It is His holy response to sin.
3:13 *You went out for the salvation of Your people, for the salvation of Your anointed* Every picture of power in this chapter has one purpose, to save His people. Anointed is mashiach, from which comes Messiah. It may mean Israel's leader or the people, and points forward to Jesus Christ. Crushing the head of the wicked recalls Pharaoh, looks ahead to Babylon, and echoes Gen 3:15.
3:15 *You trod on the sea with Your horses, a heap of many waters* The poem ends where Israel's salvation began, at the Red Sea, when the waters stood up in a heap (Exod 15:8).
3:16 *I will rest for the day of trouble* Habakkuk's whole body shook at what he heard. Faith does not mean never feeling afraid. It means bringing our fear to God. He decides to wait quietly for the day of trouble, first Babylon's attack, then Babylon's fall. That is living by faith (2:4).
3:17 *Though the fig tree does not bud, and there is no produce on the vines* Figs, grapes, olives, grain, sheep and cattle were a farmer's food, income and future, and an invading army stripped them all. Habakkuk imagines losing everything. What would that be for us?
3:18 *I, I will exult in the LORD; I will rejoice in the God of my salvation* A deliberate choice. Habakkuk does not say he will feel happy about loss. His joy rests on God, who cannot be taken from him. His circumstances had not changed since "How long?" (1:2), but he had. Paul wrote from prison, "Rejoice in the Lord always" (Phil 4:4).

my salvation. **19** GOD the Lord ***is*** my strength, and He makes my feet like the does, and He makes me tread on my high places. To the choirmaster, on my stringed instruments.

3:19 2 Sam 22:34; Ps 18:33; Deut 32:13

3:19 *He makes my feet like the does, and He makes me tread on my high places* GOD the Lord joins God's name with the word for master. God is his strength. Deer climb steep rocky slopes without slipping (Ps 18:33). God does not always take us out of the rocky places, but He gives sure feet. The man who began with a complaint ends leading God's people in a song of faith.

ZEPHANIAH

Introduction

Title

The book is named for its prophet, Zephaniah. His name means the LORD hides or the LORD has treasured, a fitting name for a man who told the humble that they might be "hidden on the day of the anger of the LORD" (2:3). Zephaniah is the ninth of the twelve Minor Prophets, coming after Habakkuk and before Haggai. It is the last of the Minor Prophets written before the exile, and its great subject is the day of the LORD.

Author and Date

Zephaniah gives his family line back four generations: "son of Cushi, son of Gedaliah, son of Amariah, son of Hezekiah" (1:1). No other prophet does this. Most believe the reason is that the last name is King Hezekiah (about 715 to 686 B.C.). If so, Zephaniah was of royal blood and a distant relative of King Josiah, which may explain his close knowledge of the court and of Jerusalem (1:8-11). Scripture does not say so plainly, and some think this was another Hezekiah, but most accept it.

He preached "in the days of Josiah son of Amon, king of Judah" (1:1). Josiah reigned about 640 to 609 B.C. Zephaniah speaks of Baal worship, star worship and swearing by Milcom as still going on (1:4-5), and of Nineveh as still standing (2:13). So most conservative scholars place him about 640 to 625 B.C., before the great reform that followed the finding of the Book of the Law about 622 B.C. (2 Kgs 22-23). His preaching may have helped prepare the way for it.

Background and Setting

Manasseh had reigned longer than any king of Judah and filled the land, and even the temple, with idols (2 Kgs 21:1-9). His son Amon followed him for two years and was murdered. Josiah was crowned at eight years old. At sixteen he began to seek the God of David, and at twenty he began to clear the idols out of Judah (2 Chr 34:3). In his eighteenth year the Book of the Law was found in the temple, and he led the nation in a great return to the LORD.

But the reforms did not reach every heart. After Josiah died in 609 B.C., Judah fell back quickly, and in 586 B.C. Babylon destroyed Jerusalem, as Zephaniah had warned. Jeremiah began preaching in Josiah's thirteenth year (Jer 1:2), so the two prophets spoke in Jerusalem in some of the same years.

Themes

The day of the LORD is near. It is the time when the LORD acts openly in judgment and salvation, and everyone sees that He is God. "Near is the great day of the LORD, near and hurrying exceedingly" (1:14). It came on Judah in 586 B.C. Zephaniah also looks beyond it to a final day on "all the earth" (1:18; 3:8). This study holds that the final day of the LORD includes the seven-year Tribulation, which comes after Christ takes His church to be with Him (1 Thess 4:13-18; 5:9), and ends with His return in glory.

God judges idolatry, pride and indifference. Zephaniah condemns those who worship idols and those who simply "have not sought the LORD" (1:6), and those who think "The LORD will not do good, and He will not do harm" (1:12). He judges proud nations that say, "I am, and there is no one else besides me" (2:15).

Seek the LORD. "Seek the LORD, all the humble of the land," and "seek righteousness, seek humility" (2:3). God always keeps a humble remnant who take refuge in His name (3:12).

Judgment is not God's last word. He will give the peoples a purified lip to call on His name (3:9), gather His scattered people Israel, and live among them as King. "He will rejoice over you with joy; He will be silent in His love; He will be glad over you with a shout of joy" (3:17).

Christ in Zephaniah

Zephaniah promises that "The King of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst" (3:15). When Jesus rode into Jerusalem, the crowds cried, "Blessed is the One coming in the name of the Lord, the King of Israel!" (John 12:13), and Nathanael called Him the King of Israel (John 1:49). But His own nation as a whole did not receive Him, and the day Zephaniah describes, when Israel rejoices because its King is in its midst, is still ahead. It will come when Jesus returns, Israel looks on Him whom they pierced (Zech 12:10), and "all Israel will be saved" (Rom 11:26). Until then, the warning of the day of wrath drives us to the One who bore that wrath for us, so that all who trust Him are rescued "from the wrath to come" (1 Thess 1:10). And the God who sings over His people in 3:17 is the God who rejoices over everyone in Christ.

Hard Passages

What is the day of the LORD, and is it past or future? The notes give both the near fulfillment in 586 B.C. and the final day at the end of the age. They name the views that see it fulfilled only in 586 B.C. or A.D. 70, or only in the last judgment, and hold the pre-tribulation reading of the studies.

Why does 2:3 say "perhaps you will be hidden"? The notes explain it as the humble speech of those who do not presume on God's mercy, and note that even the righteous suffered in the fall of Jerusalem. For believers in Christ, there is "no condemnation" (Rom 8:1).

What is the purified lip of 3:9? The notes read it as cleansed speech and united worship among the nations, reversing Babel. Some think of one language in the kingdom.

What does "He will be silent in His love" mean (3:17)? The line is hard to translate. The notes give the main readings: a love too deep for words, a love that no longer recalls sin, or a love that quiets His people.

Outline

I. The Day of the LORD on Judah (1:1-18)
  A. Judgment on all the earth and on Judah (1:1-6)
  B. The LORD's sacrifice (1:7-13)
  C. The great day of the LORD (1:14-18)
II. Judgment on the Nations (2:1-3:8)
  A. Seek the LORD (2:1-3)
  B. Philistia, Moab and Ammon (2:4-11)
  C. Cush and Assyria (2:12-15)
  D. Woe to Jerusalem (3:1-7)

E. The nations gathered for judgment (3:8)
III. Jerusalem Restored (3:9-20)
A. A purified lip and a humble remnant (3:9-13)
B. The LORD rejoices over His people (3:14-20)

ZEPHANIAH

ZEPHANIAH 1

Judgment on Judah

1 The word of the LORD which came to Zephaniah (Tsefanya) son of Cushi (Kushi), son of Gedaliah (Gedalya), son of Amariah (Amarya), son of Hezekiah (Chizqiya), in the days of Josiah (Yoshiyahu) son of Amon, king of Judah (Yehuda). **2** I will utterly bring to an end everything from upon the face of the ground, declares the LORD. **3** I will bring to an end mankind and animal; I will bring to an end the flying things of the heavens and the fish of the sea, and the stumbling blocks with the wicked; and I will cut off mankind from upon the face of the ground, declares the LORD. **4** And I will stretch out My hand against Judah and against all the inhabitants of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim); and I will cut off from this place the remnant of Baal, the name of the pagan priests with the priests, **5** and those who bow down on the roofs to the host of the heavens, and those who bow down, those who swear to the LORD and those who swear by Milcom, **6** and those who have turned back from after the LORD, and who have not sought the LORD and have not inquired of Him.

The LORD's Sacrifice

7 Hush before the Lord GOD! For the day of the LORD ***is*** near; for the LORD has prepared a sacrifice; He has consecrated His invited ones. **8** And it will be, on the day of the sacrifice of the LORD, and I will punish the princes and the sons of the king and all who wear foreign clothing. **9** And I will punish everyone who leaps over the threshold on that day, those who fill the house of their lord ***with*** violence and deceit. **10** And it will be on that day, declares the LORD, the sound of a cry from the Fish Gate, and wailing from the Second Quarter, and a great crashing from the hills. **11** Wail, inhabitants of the Mortar, for all the people of Canaan (Kena'an) are destroyed; all those loaded with silver are cut off. **12** And it will be at that time, I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and I will punish the men who are thickening on their dregs, who are saying in their heart, "The LORD will not do good, and He will not do harm." **13** And their wealth will become plunder, and their houses a desolation; and they will build houses and not dwell ***in them***, and they will plant vineyards and not drink their wine.

The Great Day of the LORD

14 Near ***is*** the great day of the LORD, near and hurrying exceedingly. The sound of the day of the LORD; bitter, a warrior is shouting there. **15** A day of fury ***is*** that day, a day of trouble and distress, a day of devastation and desolation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of cloud and thick dark-

1:1 2 Chr 34:1-35; Jer 1:2; Ezek 1:3
1:2 2 Kgs 22:16,17; Mic 7:13; 2 Chr 36:21
1:3 Rev 2:14; Matt 13:41; Hos 4:3
1:4 Rom 11:4; Hos 10:5; 2 Kgs 23:4,5
1:5 Jer 19:13; 1 Kgs 11:33; 2 Kgs 23:12
1:6 John 6:66; Isa 1:4; Jer 2:13,17
1:7 Phil 4:5; 2 Pet 3:10; Rev 19:18
1:8 Isa 24:21; Isa 10:12; 2 Kgs 23:30-34
1:9 1 Sam 5:5; 1 Sam 2:15,16; 2 Kgs 5:20-27
1:10 2 Chr 33:14; Neh 3:3; 2 Kgs 22:14
1:11 James 5:1; Jer 4:8; Jer 25:34
1:12 Jer 48:11; Amos 6:1; Ezek 8:12
1:13 Amos 5:11; Mic 6:15; Deut 28:30,39,51
1:14 Acts 2:20; Rev 6:17; Zeph 1:7
1:15 Luke 21:23; Joel 2:2,11; Isa 22:5

1:1 *son of Hezekiah, in the days of Josiah son of Amon* Zephaniah traces his line back four generations. Most believe this is King Hezekiah, which would make the prophet of royal blood, a distant cousin of the king. Josiah reigned about 640 to 609 B.C., the last good king of Judah. The idols were still standing, so Zephaniah likely preached before the great reform of about 622 B.C.
1:2 *I will utterly bring to an end everything from upon the face of the ground* Startling words. The list of man, animal, bird and fish runs in the reverse order of creation (Gen 1), as if God will undo what man has spoiled.
1:3 *the stumbling blocks with the wicked* Most likely the idols, which made people fall into sin. These verses speak of the whole earth, looking past Jerusalem's fall to the final day of the LORD (1:18; 3:8). The prophets often see near and final judgment together, like two mountain peaks with a valley of many years between them.
1:4 *I will cut off from this place the remnant of Baal* God's own people would not escape. Judgment begins at the house of God (1 Pet 4:17). Baal was the Canaanite storm and fertility god. The remnant may mean what was left after Josiah began to clear out Baal worship, or that God would cut it off until nothing was left. The pagan priests served idols (2 Kgs 23:5).
1:5 *those who bow down on the roofs to the host of the heavens* People worshiped the sun, moon and stars from their flat roofs, and Manasseh built altars to them in the temple courts (2 Kgs 21:5). Others swore by the LORD and by Milcom, the Ammonite god, trying to keep God and their idol too.
1:6 *who have not sought the LORD and have not inquired of Him* This group bowed to no idol. They simply stopped following God and did not care. You do not have to bow to Baal to turn your back on God. You only have to stop seeking Him. Many today live as if He does not matter.
1:7 *the LORD has prepared a sacrifice; He has consecrated His invited ones* Hush, as in Hab 2:20. No more excuses. The day of the LORD is when God steps in openly to judge sin and save His people. Here the sacrifice is Judah itself, and the guests set apart are the enemy armies. Revelation uses a similar picture, "the supper of the great God" (Rev 19:17).
1:8 *I will punish the princes and the sons of the king and all who wear foreign clothing* Leaders are judged first. Josiah's sons and grandson who reigned after him did evil and ended as captives (2 Kgs 23:31-25:7). Foreign clothing showed a desire to be like the pagan nations, and some may have been worn in foreign worship.
1:10 *the sound of a cry from the Fish Gate, and wailing from the Second Quarter* A walk through Jerusalem on the day of judgment. The Fish Gate was on the north side, where enemies usually attacked. The Second Quarter was a newer district, where Huldah lived (2 Kgs 22:14).
1:11 *Wail, inhabitants of the Mortar, for all the people of Canaan are destroyed* The Mortar was likely a low, bowl-shaped market district. Canaan here means traders, since the Canaanites were famous for trade. The merchants with their bags of silver would lose everything first.
1:12 *the men who are thickening on their dregs* Wine left too long on its sediment grew thick and syrupy (Jer 48:11). These people had grown comfortable and settled in sin. They did not deny God existed. They thought He would never do anything, neither bless nor judge. God would search every dark corner with lamps.
1:14 *Near is the great day of the LORD, near and hurrying exceedingly* Zephaniah says near twice. It came true in part in 586 B.C., when Babylon broke the walls, burned the temple and took the people away. Even the strongest warrior would cry out in bitter fear.
1:15 *A day of fury is that day, a day of trouble and distress* The list tolls like a bell. The words reach beyond 586 B.C. to the final day of the LORD: "great tribulation" (Matt 24:21), "the great day of His wrath" (Rev 6:17), "a time of distress for Jacob" (Jer 30:7). I believe it includes the seven-year Tribulation and ends with Christ's return. Before it, Christ will take His church to be with Him (1 Thess 4:13-18; 5:9; Rev 3:10).

ness, **16** a day of trumpet and battle cry against the fortified cities and against the high corners. **17** And I will bring distress on mankind, and they will walk like the blind, for they have sinned against the LORD; and their blood will be poured out like dust, and their entrails like dung. **18** Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to deliver them on the day of the fury of the LORD; and in the fire of His jealousy all the earth will be consumed; for a complete end, surely a terrifying ***one***, He will make of all the inhabitants of the earth.

ZEPHANIAH 2

Seek the LORD

1 Assemble yourselves together, and assemble, O nation not ashamed, **2** before a decree gives birth (like chaff a day has passed), before the burning of the anger of the LORD comes upon you, before the day of the anger of the LORD comes upon you. **3** Seek the LORD, all the humble of the land, who have done His justice; seek righteousness, seek humility; perhaps you will be hidden on the day of the anger of the LORD.

Judgment on the Nations

4 For Gaza (Aza) will be abandoned, and Ashkelon (Ashqelon) ***will become*** a desolation; Ashdod, at noon they will drive her out, and Ekron (Eqron) will be uprooted. **5** Woe ***to*** the inhabitants of the region of the sea, the nation of ***the*** Kerethites! The word of the LORD ***is*** against you, O Canaan (Kena'an), land of ***the*** Philistines; and I will destroy you without an inhabitant. **6** And the region of the sea will be pastures, meadows of shepherds, and folds of sheep. **7** And the region will belong to the remnant of the house of Judah (Yehuda); on them they will graze; in the houses of Ashkelon in the evening they will lie down; for the LORD their God will visit them, and He will turn back their captivity. **8** I have heard the reproach of Moab (Mo'av) and the revilings of the sons of Ammon (Amon), who have reproached My people and have magnified themselves against their territory. **9** Therefore, ***as*** I live, declares the LORD of armies, the God of Israel (Yisra'el), surely Moab will be like Sodom (Sedom), and the sons of Ammon like Gomorrah (Amora), a possession of nettles and a pit of salt and a desolation forever. The remnant of My people will plunder them, and the rest of My nation will inherit them. **10** This ***will be*** to them in place of their pride, for they have reproached and have magnified themselves against the people of the LORD of armies. **11** The LORD ***will be*** awesome against them, for He will make lean all the gods of the earth; and they will bow down to Him, each one from his place, all the coastlands of the nations. **12** Also you, O Cushites, the slain of My sword ***are*** they. **13** And let Him stretch out His hand against the north, and let Him destroy Assyria (Ashur), and let Him make Nineveh (Ninve) a desolation, a dry place like the wilderness. **14** And herds will lie down in her midst, every living thing of a nation; both the desert owl and the hedgehog will lodge on her capitals; a voice will sing in the window; desolation ***will be*** on the

1:16 Isa 2:12-15; Isa 59:10; Jer 4:19,20
1:17 Acts 2:19; Ps 83:10; Deut 28:28,29
1:18 Acts 2:19; Zeph 3:8; Ezek 7:19
2:1 2 Chr 20:4; Joel 1:14; Neh 8:1
2:2 Acts 2:20; Isa 17:13; Hos 13:3
2:3 2 Pet 3:18; Ps 57:1; Ps 105:4
2:4 Zech 9:5-7; Amos 1:6-8; Jer 25:20
2:5 Ezek 25:16; Amos 3:1; Jer 47:7
2:6 Zeph 2:14,15; Isa 17:2; Ezek 25:5
2:7 Zeph 3:20; Obad 1:19; Exod 4:31
2:8 Jer 49:1; Amos 1:13; Jer 48:27-29
2:9 Rom 14:11; Luke 17:29; 2 Pet 2:6
2:10 Isa 16:6; Zeph 2:8; Jer 48:29
2:11 John 4:23; Ps 72:8-11,17; Gen 10:5
2:12 Isa 18:1-7; Isa 20:4,5; Ezek 30:4-9
2:13 Nah 3:7,15,18,19; Isa 10:12,16; Nah 1:1
2:14 Rev 18:2; Jer 22:14; Isa 13:19-22

1:16 *against the fortified cities and against the high corners* The high corners were the towers at the corners of city walls, the strongest points. They would not hold. Others read these verses as fulfilled only in 586 B.C. or A.D. 70, or of the last judgment with no Tribulation. The near day came as Zephaniah said, and the far day will come as surely.
1:18 *Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to deliver them* You cannot bribe God. His jealousy is His holy zeal for His glory and His people (Nah 1:2). Yet the next verses call the humble to seek Him (2:1-3), and the book ends with God singing over His people. The warning is meant to drive us to Him. Jesus bore God's wrath, and all who trust Him are saved from the wrath to come (1 Thess 1:10).
2:1 *Assemble yourselves together, and assemble, O nation not ashamed* Likely a call to a solemn assembly of repentance, as Joel gave (Joel 2:15-17). They had sinned openly and felt no shame, a dangerous place for any nation.
2:2 *before a decree gives birth* God's decree of judgment was like a baby about to be born. Zephaniah says before three times. The window was open but closing. "Look, now is a well-accepted time" (2 Cor 6:2).
2:3 *Seek the LORD, all the humble of the land* The key verse of the book. Not all had turned away. To seek the LORD is to turn to Him, pray and want Him above everything, the direction of a whole life. Righteousness and humility are the opposite of the pride and violence of chapter 1. "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness" (Matt 6:33).
2:3 *perhaps you will be hidden on the day of the anger of the LORD* Zephaniah means the LORD hides. Perhaps is the humble speech of those who do not presume on God. Even the righteous suffered in 586 B.C., as Jeremiah and Daniel did, but God watched over them. For believers in Christ there is no perhaps: "There is therefore now no condemnation" (Rom 8:1).
2:4 *Gaza will be abandoned, and Ashkelon will become a desolation* Zephaniah turns to the nations, beginning west with four Philistine cities. In Hebrew, Gaza sounds like abandoned and Ekron like uprooted. At noon may mean a surprise attack in the heat of the day, when armies usually rested.
2:7 *the LORD their God will visit them, and He will turn back their captivity* Before even saying Judah would go into exile, Zephaniah promises its return. Judgment was not the end. It began in 538 B.C., and the full fulfillment awaits the gathering of all Israel (3:20).
2:8 *I have heard the reproach of Moab and the revilings of the sons of Ammon* Lot's descendants (Gen 19:36-38) mocked God's people and tried to take their land. Mocking God's people is mocking God. Jesus asked Saul, "why are you persecuting Me?" (Acts 9:4).
2:9 *Moab will be like Sodom, and the sons of Ammon like Gomorrah* God swears by His own life. The cities He destroyed near their land in Abraham's day (Gen 19) are the picture. The Dead Sea region is still known for its salt pits. Pride was the root of their sin (2:10).
2:11 *He will make lean all the gods of the earth* To make lean is to starve. The idols will waste away with no worshipers. A first glimpse of chapter 3: all nations will bow to the LORD. It began when the gospel went to the Gentiles and will be complete when Christ reigns over the earth (Zech 14:9, 16).
2:12 *Also you, O Cushites, the slain of My sword are they* Cush lay south of Egypt, and its kings had ruled Egypt for a time. Nebuchadnezzar invaded Egypt about 568 B.C. (Ezek 30:4-5). But in 3:10 worshipers come from beyond Cush's rivers, and an Ethiopian official believed the gospel (Acts 8:26-39).
2:13 *let Him make Nineveh a desolation, a dry place like the wilderness* When Zephaniah spoke, Nineveh was capital of the mightiest empire on earth. In 612 B.C. it fell, as Nahum also said. Flocks would graze where palaces stood, and owls nest on fallen column tops.

threshold; for He has laid bare the cedarwork. **15** This ***is*** the jubilant city which dwells in security, which says in her heart, "I ***am***, and ***there is*** no one else besides me." How she has become a waste, a resting place for living things! Everyone who passes by her will hiss; he will shake his hand.

ZEPHANIAH 3

Woe to Jerusalem

1 Woe ***to*** the filthy and defiled ***one***, the oppressing city! **2** She has not listened to a voice; she has not accepted correction; in the LORD she has not trusted; to her God she has not drawn near. **3** Her princes in her midst ***are*** roaring lions; her judges ***are*** evening wolves; they do not reserve ***anything*** for the morning. **4** Her prophets ***are*** reckless, men of treachery; her priests have profaned ***what is*** holy; they have done violence to ***the*** law. **5** The LORD ***is*** righteous in her midst; He does not do injustice. In the morning, in the morning He gives His justice to the light; it is not lacking. And ***the*** unjust does not know shame. **6** I have cut off nations; their corners are desolate; I have devastated their streets, without one passing by; their cities have been laid waste, without a man, without an inhabitant. **7** I said, "Surely you will fear Me; you will accept correction; and her dwelling will not be cut off, all that I have appointed for her." Nevertheless they rose early; they corrupted all their deeds. **8** Therefore wait for Me, declares the LORD, for the day of My rising up for prey; for My judgment ***is*** to gather nations, to gather together kingdoms, to pour out on them My indignation, all the burning of My anger; for in the fire of My jealousy all the earth will be consumed.

A Purified People

9 For then I will turn to peoples a purified lip, for all of them to call on the name of the LORD, to serve Him ***with*** one shoulder. **10** From beyond the rivers of Cush (Kush) My worshipers, the daughter of My scattered ones, will bring My offering. **11** On that day you will not be ashamed because of all your deeds by which you have transgressed against Me; for then I will remove from your midst the exultant ones of your pride, and you will not continue to be haughty anymore on the mountain of My holiness. **12** And I will leave in your midst a people afflicted and poor, and they will take refuge in the name of the LORD. **13** The remnant of Israel (Yisra'el) will not do injustice, and they will not speak a lie, and a tongue of deceit will not be found in their mouth; for they will graze and lie down, and ***there will be*** no one who makes ***them*** tremble.

The LORD Rejoices over Zion

14 Shout for joy, O daughter of Zion (Tsiyon)! Shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all ***your*** heart, O daughter of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim)! **15** The LORD has removed your judgments; He has cleared away your enemy. The King of Israel, the LORD, ***is*** in your midst; you will not fear evil anymore. **16** On that day it will be said to Jerusalem, "Do not

2:15 Rev 18:7; Rev 18:8; Rev 18:9
3:1 Jer 6:6; Lev 1:16; Isa 5:7
3:2 Jer 5:3; Jer 7:23-28; Jer 22:21
3:3 Matt 7:15; Hab 1:8; Jer 5:6
3:4 Matt 7:15; 2 Pet 2:1; Ezek 22:26
3:5 Deut 32:4; Zeph 3:15,17; Ps 99:3,4
3:6 Isa 10:1-34; Isa 15:1-16; Isa 19:1-25
3:7 Hos 9:9; Zeph 3:2; Jer 36:3
3:8 Rev 19:19; Joel 3:2,9-16; Zeph 1:18
3:9 Acts 2:1; Rom 15:11; Isa 19:18
3:10 Ps 68:31; Isa 11:11; Isa 18:1,7-19
3:11 Rom 9:33; Isa 54:4; Isa 11:9
3:12 Luke 4:18; Isa 14:32; Zech 13:8,9
3:13 Rev 14:5; Rev 21:27; Rom 11:26
3:14 Matt 21:5; Rom 11:26; Isa 12:6
3:15 John 1:49; John 12:15; John 19:19
3:16 John 12:12; John 12:15; Rom 11:26

2:15 *I am, and there is no one else besides me* Nineveh spoke as if it were God. Only the LORD can truly say that (Isa 45:5, 21). That is the oldest sin there is. Every proud thing falls, and passersby hiss at the ruins. The humble who seek Him will be hidden.
3:2 *She has not listened to a voice; she has not accepted correction* Not listening, not accepting discipline, not trusting, not drawing near. Four marks of a heart drifting from God. Do any describe us? "Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you" (James 4:8).
3:3 *her judges are evening wolves; they do not reserve anything for the morning* Rulers who should have protected the people preyed on them like lions, and judges devoured everything like hungry wolves at night.
3:4 *Her prophets are reckless, men of treachery* False prophets told people what they wanted to hear (Jer 23:16-17), and priests treated holy things as common. Every group that should have led to God led away. Leaders in government, church and home will answer to God (James 3:1; Heb 13:17).
3:5 *The LORD is righteous in her midst; He does not do injustice* The corrupt leaders were in her midst, but so was the LORD, seeing everything. Judges often heard cases in the morning, and every morning God's justice was on display. Still the unjust felt no shame. That is how hard sin can make a heart.
3:7 *Nevertheless they rose early; they corrupted all their deeds* God hoped Jerusalem would learn from the nations He had brought down, such as the northern kingdom. They got up early, not to seek God, but to sin. Such things were written as warnings for us (1 Cor 10:11).
3:8 *My judgment is to gather nations, to gather together kingdoms* Far beyond Jerusalem. God will gather all nations for judgment (Joel 3:2; Zech 14:2-3), at the place Revelation calls Armageddon (Rev 16:14-16). I believe this points to the end of the Tribulation, when the nations gather against Israel and Christ returns to judge (Rev 19:11-21). The next words, "For then," show judgment is not His last word.
3:9 *I will turn to peoples a purified lip, for all of them to call on the name of the LORD* At Babel God confused the languages and scattered the peoples (Gen 11:9). Here He reverses Babel. Some think of one language in the kingdom, others of pure worship in many tongues. Pentecost gave a taste (Acts 2:5-11). Serving with one shoulder pictures people pulling together under one yoke. Today "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved" (Rom 10:13).
3:10 *From beyond the rivers of Cush My worshipers, the daughter of My scattered ones* Cush was the farthest land south that Judah knew (2:12). The scattered ones are most likely God's own people coming home with offerings from the ends of the earth, and it may include Gentile worshipers (Isa 66:20; Rev 7:9).
3:12 *a people afflicted and poor, and they will take refuge in the name of the LORD* The remnant, humble people who trust the LORD, as 2:3 called for. "Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth" (Matt 5:5).
3:13 *The remnant of Israel will not do injustice, and they will not speak a lie* What a change from the lions, wolves and liars of 3:3-4. Only God can make such a change, by giving a new heart (Ezek 36:26-27).
3:15 *The King of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst* Israel's kings had failed. Now the LORD Himself would be King among them. The crowds hailed Jesus as "the King of Israel" (John 12:13), but His nation as a whole did not receive Him (John 1:11). This day is still ahead, when He returns, Israel looks on Him whom they pierced (Zech 12:10), and all Israel is saved (Rom 11:26).

fear, O Zion; do not let your hands drop. **17** The LORD your God ***is*** in your midst, a warrior ***who*** will save. He will rejoice over you with joy; He will be silent in His love; He will be glad over you with a shout of joy." **18** Those grieving away from the appointed feast I will gather; they were from you, a burden upon her, a reproach. **19** Look, I ***am*** dealing with all who afflict you at that time; and I will save the lame, and the outcast I will gather together; and I will make them a praise and a name in all the earth ***where*** their shame ***was***. **20** At that time I will bring you, and at the time of My gathering you together; for I will make you a name and a praise among all the peoples of the earth when I turn back your captivities before your eyes, says the LORD.

3:17 Heb 7:25; Luke 1:71; John 12:15
3:18 Ps 42:2-4; Lam 1:4,7; Zeph 3:20
3:19 Rom 11:26; Rev 19:19; Mic 4:6,7
3:20 Jer 29:14; Joel 3:1; Ezek 34:16

3:17 *The LORD your God is in your midst, a warrior who will save* One of the most beautiful verses in the Old Testament. The warrior who marched out in judgment in chapter 1 now stands among His people as their champion. His power, terrifying to His enemies, is their protection.
3:17 *He will rejoice over you with joy; He will be silent in His love* God rejoices over His people like a bridegroom over his bride (Isa 62:5; Luke 15:7). Silent in His love may mean a love too deep for words, like a parent holding a sleeping child, or that He no longer brings up their sins. Then the silence breaks into song. Spoken first to Israel, it shows God's heart toward all who are in Christ. Our joy rests not on our goodness but on judgment removed (3:15).
3:19 *I will save the lame, and the outcast I will gather together* Like a shepherd gathering injured and scattered sheep (Mic 4:6). No one left behind. Those grieving because they could not keep the feasts in exile will be gathered home, and their shame turned to praise.
3:20 *when I turn back your captivities before your eyes* The return from Babylon was a real beginning, but most Jews stayed scattered. I believe the full gathering is still ahead, after the Tribulation, when Christ returns and sets up His kingdom, because "the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable" (Rom 11:29). Zephaniah began, "I will utterly bring to an end everything" (1:2). He ends, "I will bring you."

HAGGAI

Introduction

Title

The book is named for its prophet, Haggai. His name means festive or my feast, and some think he was born on a feast day. Haggai is the tenth of the twelve Minor Prophets and the first of the three written after the exile, with Zechariah and Malachi. It is the second shortest book in the Old Testament, four messages in two chapters, and its call is simple: put God first.

Author and Date

The book calls him "Haggai the prophet" (1:1), and Ezra names him twice with Zechariah (Ezra 5:1; 6:14). Nothing else is known of his family. Some have thought from 2:3 that he was an old man who had seen Solomon's temple, but the text does not say so. The book speaks of him in the third person, so it may be a record of his messages written by Haggai himself or by someone close to him at the time.

Haggai dates each message to the day, in "the second year of Darius the king" (1:1). This was Darius I of Persia (522 to 486 B.C.), and his second year was 520 B.C. The four messages came in the sixth month (1:1), the seventh month (2:1), and twice in the ninth month (2:10, 20), from late summer to December of that year.

Background and Setting

In 538 B.C. Cyrus of Persia let the Jews go home from Babylon to rebuild the temple (Ezra 1:1-4). About 536 B.C. they laid its foundation, and the old men who had seen Solomon's temple wept (Ezra 3:10-12). But enemies opposed the work, and it stopped (Ezra 4:4-5, 24). For sixteen years nothing more was built. Judah was a small, poor province of the Persian empire, Jerusalem was still largely in ruins, and harvests had failed. The people were not openly rebelling. They had simply decided the time was not right (1:2) and put God last.

Zerubbabel, the governor, was the grandson of King Jehoiachin, who was taken to Babylon in 597 B.C. (1 Chr 3:17-19; Matt 1:12). That made him heir of David's royal line, though he ruled only as a governor under Persia. Joshua the high priest is the man Ezra calls Jeshua (Ezra 3:2). After Haggai and Zechariah began to preach, the Persian governor questioned the work, Darius found Cyrus' decree in the royal archives, and the king ordered the temple finished at his own expense (Ezra 5-6). It was completed in 516 B.C. (Ezra 6:15).

Themes

Put God first. "Is it a time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, and this house is desolate?" (1:4). The people had time and money for themselves but not for God. Twice God says, "Set your heart on your ways" (1:5, 7).

God disciplines to bring His people back. Their poor harvests and wages that vanished "into a pierced bag" (1:6) were not bad luck. They were the covenant discipline the Law had warned of. Haggai does not teach that every hardship is punishment or that giving makes us rich, but that when we put God last, nothing truly satisfies.

God is with those who obey. When the people listened and feared the LORD, His word was simply "I am with you" (1:13). He stirred their spirits, told them three times to be strong, and promised, "My Spirit is standing in your midst; do not fear" (2:5).

Holiness does not spread by touch, but uncleanness does (2:10-14). Being near holy things does not make anyone holy.

God will shake the nations and keep His promise to David. The glory of the humble second temple would be greater than the first (2:9), and Zerubbabel would be like God's signet ring (2:23).

Christ in Haggai

God promised, "Great will be the glory of this house, the latter more than the former" (2:9). Solomon's temple had gold and cedar. The second temple had the Son of God in its courts. Jesus was brought there as a baby and called "glory of Your people Israel" (Luke 2:32), and He said, "One greater than the temple is here" (Matt 12:6). Some read "the desire of all the nations" (2:7) as the Messiah Himself. Hebrews quotes God's promise to shake heaven and earth "yet once more" to show that only His unshakable kingdom will remain (Heb 12:26-28). And Zerubbabel, chosen as God's signet ring after God had seemed to cast off his grandfather (Jer 22:24), stands in the line of Jesus (Matt 1:12-13; Luke 3:27). God kept David's line alive until the true King came, to whom He will give "the throne of David His father" (Luke 1:32).

Hard Passages

Do Haggai's failed harvests mean that money problems are always punishment for sin, or that giving to God brings riches (1:6-11; 2:19)? No. The notes explain these as covenant discipline for a specific people under the Law of Moses, and point to faithful sufferers like Job and Paul.

What is "the desire of all the nations" (2:7)? The notes give both readings fairly: a Person, the Messiah, as many older teachers held, or the treasures of the nations, which fits the plural verb and the silver and gold of 2:8. Either way it points to Christ.

How was the latter glory greater (2:9)? The notes see it fulfilled in Christ's presence in the second temple, with a final fulfillment when He reigns and the nations worship at Jerusalem.

How can God call Zerubbabel His signet ring after rejecting Jehoiachin (2:23; Jer 22:24, 30)? The notes explain the promise as kept through his line to Christ, not in Zerubbabel's own reign.

Outline

I. The Call to Rebuild (1:1-15)
  A. Not a time to build? (1:1-11)
  B. The people obey, and God is with them (1:12-15)
II. Encouragement for the Builders (2:1-23)
  A. The greater glory of the latter house (2:1-9)
  B. Blessing for a clean people (2:10-19)
  C. Zerubbabel the signet ring (2:20-23)

HAGGAI

HAGGAI 1

Set Your Heart on Your Ways

1 In the second year of Darius (Daryavesh) the king, in the sixth month, on the first day of the month, the word of the LORD came by the hand of Haggai (Chagay) the prophet to Zerubbabel (Zerubavel) son of Shealtiel (She'alti'el), governor of Judah (Yehuda), and to Joshua (Yehoshua) son of Jehozadak (Yehotsadaq), the high priest, saying, **2** "Thus says the LORD of armies, saying, 'This people has said, "***It is*** not a time to come, the time for the house of the LORD to be built."'" **3** And the word of the LORD came by the hand of Haggai the prophet, saying, **4** "***Is it*** a time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, and this house ***is*** desolate? **5** And now, thus says the LORD of armies: Set your heart on your ways. **6** You have sown much and brought in little; you have eaten, and there is no satisfaction; you have drunk, and there is no drunkenness; you have dressed, and there is no warmth for him; and he who earns wages earns wages into a pierced bag. **7** Thus says the LORD of armies: Set your heart on your ways. **8** Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house, and let Me take pleasure in it, and let Me be glorified, says the LORD. **9** You looked for much, and look, ***it came*** to little; and you brought ***it*** home, and I blew on it. Because of what? declares the LORD of armies. Because of My house which is desolate, while you run, each one to his own house. **10** Therefore over you the heavens have withheld dew, and the land has withheld its produce. **11** And I called for a drought on the land and on the mountains and on the grain and on the new wine and on the fresh oil and on what the ground brings forth, and on mankind and on livestock, and on all the toil of hands."

The People Obey

12 And Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel (Shalti'el), and Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and all the remnant of the people, listened to the voice of the LORD their God and to the words of Haggai the prophet, as the LORD their God had sent him; and the people feared before the LORD. **13** And Haggai, the messenger of the LORD, spoke by the message of the LORD to the people, saying, "I ***am*** with you, declares the LORD." **14** And the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and did work in the

1:1 Matt 1:12; Luke 3:27; Matt 1:13
1:2 Num 13:31; Neh 4:10; Eccl 9:10
1:3 Ezra 5:1; Zech 1:1
1:4 2 Sam 7:2; Ps 132:3-5; Matt 6:33
1:5 Lam 3:40; Hag 1:7; Ezek 18:28
1:6 Hag 2:16; Hag 1:9; Deut 28:38-40
1:7 Hag 1:5; Ps 119:59,60; Isa 28:10
1:8 Ps 132:13,14; Hag 2:7; 2 Chr 2:8-10
1:9 Hag 1:4; Hag 1:6; Isa 40:7
1:10 Lev 26:19; Deut 28:23,24; 1 Kgs 8:35
1:11 Hag 2:17; Deut 28:22; 1 Kgs 17:1
1:12 Matt 1:12; Hag 1:14; Isa 50:10
1:13 Mal 2:7; Isa 43:2; Rom 8:31
1:14 Matt 1:12; 2 Chr 36:22; Hag 1:1

1:1 *In the second year of Darius the king, in the sixth month, on the first day of the month* Darius I ruled Persia 522 to 486 B.C., so this was 520 B.C., in August or September. The new moon was a day of gathering for worship (Num 28:11). A prophet of Israel dates by a foreign king, for Judah had no king, but God had not stopped speaking.

1:1 *to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest* Zerubbabel was grandson of King Jehoiachin, of David's line (Matt 1:12). Joshua, called Jeshua in Ezra 3:2, was grandson of the last high priest before the exile (1 Chr 6:14-15). God spoke first to the civil and religious leaders, because the people would follow them.

1:2 *It is not a time to come, the time for the house of the LORD to be built* God's title, the LORD of armies, reminds a small, weak people who commands all the armies of heaven and earth. God calls them "this people," not My people. They had not refused to build. They said it was not the right time, perhaps because of enemies (Ezra 4:4-5), poor harvests or lack of money. Delay is one of the most common ways God's people disobey without ever saying no.

1:4 *Is it a time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, and this house is desolate?* Paneled walls or ceilings were a sign of comfort where wood was costly. Solomon had paneled the temple with cedar (1 Kgs 6:9). Now God's house was a ruin with weeds on its foundation. The problem was not nice homes. It was priorities. They had put God last.

1:5 *Set your heart on your ways* To set your heart on something is to think hard about it. Stop and look honestly at your life. Where is your time, money and energy going? Is God first, or is He getting what is left over?

1:6 *he who earns wages earns wages into a pierced bag* Plenty of seed, small harvest. Food but never enough. Wages gone as if the purse had holes. Moses had warned of this (Deut 28:38). Haggai does not teach that every money problem is punishment, or that giving makes us rich. Job and Paul were faithful and still suffered want (2 Cor 11:27). But when we put God last, nothing truly satisfies (Matt 6:33).

1:8 *Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house* Stone was at hand, much of it from the old temple. They needed timber from the hills. God did not need a house (1 Kgs 8:27), but the temple was where He chose to put His name. All our work for God is to please Him and give Him glory (1 Cor 10:31). He did not demand Solomon's grandeur. He said, go and build.

1:9 *while you run, each one to his own house* When they did bring in a harvest, God blew it away like chaff. They ran to their own affairs, but for God's house there was no hurry.

1:11 *I called for a drought on the land* Dew mattered for crops in Judah's dry summers. Grain, new wine and fresh oil were the three staples of every home. God was not cruel but kind, as a father disciplines a child he loves (Heb 12:6), making an empty way of life feel empty so they would turn back.

1:12 *listened to the voice of the LORD their God and to the words of Haggai the prophet* One of the best responses to a prophet in the Old Testament. Haggai preached once, and the leaders and all the remnant, the small group back from exile, obeyed. They took his words as God's words and feared the LORD with holy reverence (Prov 9:10). True repentance starts there.

1:13 *Haggai, the messenger of the LORD* The word messenger, malak, is used of angels and of the messenger of Mal 3:1. When the people turned, God did not lecture them again. He encouraged them: "I am with you." Their enemies and poverty remained, but God was with them, as Christ is with every believer "all the days" (Matt 28:20; Heb 13:5).

1:14 *the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel* To stir the spirit is to awaken fresh desire and energy. God stirred Cyrus to send them home (Ezra 1:1), and now He stirred His people to build (Phil 2:13). Notice "their God." In verse 2 they were "this people."

house of the LORD of armies, their God, **15** on the twenty-fourth day of the month, in the sixth ***month***, in the second year of Darius the king.

HAGGAI 2

The Greater Glory

1 In the seventh ***month***, on the twenty-first ***day*** of the month, the word of the LORD came by the hand of Haggai (Chagay) the prophet, saying, **2** "Say, please, to Zerubbabel (Zerubavel) son of Shealtiel (Shalti'el), governor of Judah (Yehuda), and to Joshua (Yehoshua) son of Jehozadak (Yehotsadaq), the high priest, and to the remnant of the people, saying, **3** 'Who ***is*** left among you who saw this house in its former glory? And how do you see it now? ***Is*** it not, like it ***is***, as nothing in your eyes? **4** And now be strong, O Zerubbabel, declares the LORD; and be strong, O Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest; and be strong, all people of the land, declares the LORD; and work, for I ***am*** with you, declares the LORD of armies, **5** ***according to*** the word that I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt (Mitsrayim); and My Spirit is standing in your midst; do not fear. **6** For thus says the LORD of armies: Yet once ***more***, it ***is*** a little ***while***, and I ***am*** shaking the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry ground. **7** And I will shake all the nations, and they will come, the desire of all the nations; and I will fill this house ***with*** glory, says the LORD of armies. **8** The silver ***is*** Mine, and the gold ***is*** Mine, declares the LORD of armies. **9** Great will be the glory of this house, the latter more than the former, says the LORD of armies; and in this place I will give peace, declares the LORD of armies.'"

Unclean Hands and a Promise of Blessing

10 On the twenty-fourth ***day*** of the ninth ***month***, in the second year of Darius (Daryavesh), the word of the LORD came to Haggai the prophet, saying, **11** "Thus says the LORD of armies: Ask, please, the priests ***for*** instruction, saying, **12** 'Look, ***if*** a man carries holy flesh in the corner of his garment, and he touches with his corner the bread or the cooked food or the wine or oil or any food, will it become holy?'" And the priests answered and said, "No." **13** And Haggai said, "If one unclean ***by*** a dead person touches any of these, will it become unclean?" And the priests answered and said, "It will become unclean." **14** And Haggai answered and said, "So ***is*** this people, and so ***is*** this nation before Me, declares the LORD, and so ***is*** all the work of their hands; and what they offer there, it ***is*** unclean. **15** And now, set your heart, please, from this day and upward: from before a stone was placed on a stone in the temple of the LORD, **16** from when they were, one came to a heap of twenty ***measures***, and there were ten; one came to the wine vat to draw off fifty ***measures from the*** winepress, and there were twenty. **17** I struck you with blight and with mildew and with hail, all the work of your hands; and you ***did*** not ***return*** to Me, declares

1:15 Hag 1:1; Hag 2:1,10,20
2:1 Hag 1:1; Hag 2:10,20; Hag 1:15
2:2 Matt 1:12; Hag 1:14; Ezra 1:8
2:3 Ezra 3:12; Zech 4:9,10; Ezek 7:20
2:4 1 Chr 28:20; Zech 8:9; Eph 6:10
2:5 Neh 9:20,30; Exod 29:45,46; Zech 8:13,15
2:6 Heb 12:26; Heb 12:27; Luke 21:25
2:7 Rom 15:9; Gal 3:8; Heb 12:26
2:8 Ps 50:10-12; Isa 60:13,17; Ps 24:1
2:9 John 14:27; Luke 24:44; Isa 9:6,7
2:10 Hag 1:1,15; Hag 2:1,20
2:11 Mal 2:7; Lev 10:10,11; Deut 33:10
2:12 Matt 23:19; Lev 6:27,29; Exod 29:37
2:13 Num 5:2,3; Num 9:6-10; Num 19:11-22
2:14 Prov 15:8; Prov 28:9; Isa 1:11-15
2:15 Hag 1:5,7; Ezra 3:10; Ezra 4:24
2:16 Hag 1:6,9-11; Prov 3:9,10; Zech 8:10-12
2:17 Deut 28:22; 1 Kgs 8:37; Hag 1:9

1:15 *on the twenty-fourth day of the month* Just over three weeks after Haggai's first message, likely spent gathering timber and clearing the site. They did not wait another sixteen years. Is there something God has been telling you to do while you say, not now?
2:1 *In the seventh month, on the twenty-first day of the month* October 520 B.C., the last day of the Feast of Booths (Lev 23:33-43). Solomon had dedicated the first temple at this feast (1 Kgs 8:2), so it was natural to compare the two houses. With poor harvests, there was little to celebrate.
2:3 *Is it not, like it is, as nothing in your eyes?* Solomon's temple had been destroyed sixty-six years before, and old men had wept when this foundation was laid (Ezra 3:12). Next to Solomon's gold and cedar, it looked plain. God says what they felt. Zechariah asked in these same months, "For who has despised the day of small things?" (Zech 4:10).
2:4 *be strong, all people of the land, declares the LORD; and work, for I am with you* Three times, be strong, as God told Joshua (Josh 1:6-9) and David told Solomon (1 Chr 28:20). The reason is not that the work looks good but that God is with them.
2:5 *My Spirit is standing in your midst; do not fear* God had covenanted at the exodus to dwell among His people (Exod 29:45-46), and His Spirit who led them then was still among them (Isa 63:11-14). The work would be done "by My Spirit" (Zech 4:6). His Spirit lives in every believer today (1 Cor 3:16).
2:6 *Yet once more, it is a little while, and I am shaking the heavens and the earth* God shook the earth once at Sinai (Exod 19:18). He would move the nations, Persia, Greece and Rome, before Christ came. Hebrews quotes this for the final shaking, "the removal of the things being shaken" (Heb 12:27), so that only God's unshakable kingdom remains.
2:7 *they will come, the desire of all the nations* Many older teachers read this as a Person, the Messiah whom all nations long for. Others note the plural verb and read the treasures of the nations, which fits the silver and gold of verse 8 and Isa 60:5. Either way it points to Christ. The glory that filled this house was not gold but Jesus, "glory of Your people Israel" (Luke 2:32). "One greater than the temple is here" (Matt 12:6).
2:8 *The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine* The people did not have Solomon's riches, but all the silver and gold in the world are God's. His work never depends on how much money His people have.
2:9 *Great will be the glory of this house, the latter more than the former* One house, with a former and a latter glory. Solomon's temple had gold. The second temple had the Son of God in its courts. Shalom is wholeness and peace with God, made by the blood of His cross (Col 1:20; Eph 2:14). Its fullest glory will come when Christ reigns and the nations worship at Jerusalem (Ezek 43:1-7; Zech 14:16).
2:11 *Ask, please, the priests for instruction* December 520 B.C., three months into the work. Priests taught what was holy and common, clean and unclean, that is, fit or unfit to come before God (Lev 10:10-11).
2:13 *If one unclean by a dead person touches any of these, will it become unclean?* Touching a dead body made a person unclean (Num 19:11-13), and that uncleanness did spread. A healthy person does not heal a sick one by touch, but a sick person can make a healthy one sick.
2:14 *So is this people, and so is this nation before Me* The altar stood and sacrifices went on (Ezra 3:3), but being near holy things did not make them holy. Years of neglect made all their work unclean, for "to listen is better than sacrifice" (1 Sam 15:22). Going to church does not make us holy. Only the blood of Jesus cleanses (1 John 1:7).
2:17 *I struck you with blight and with mildew and with hail* Blight was a scorching wind, and mildew turned grain yellow, covenant curses Moses warned of (Deut 28:22), in almost Amos's words (Amos 4:9). Saddest of all, they did not return to God, until Haggai came.

the LORD. **18** Set your heart, please, from this day and upward, from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth ***month***, from the day when the temple of the LORD was founded; set your heart: **19** ***Is*** the seed still in the granary? And as yet the vine and the fig tree and the pomegranate and the olive tree have not borne. From this day I will bless."

Zerubbabel the Signet Ring

20 And the word of the LORD came a second time to Haggai on the twenty-fourth ***day*** of the month, saying, **21** "Say to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, saying, 'I ***am*** shaking the heavens and the earth. **22** And I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the nations; and I will overthrow chariotry and its riders, and horses and their riders will go down, each one by the sword of his brother. **23** On that day, declares the LORD of armies, I will take you, O Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, My servant, declares the LORD, and I will make you like the signet ring; for I have chosen you, declares the LORD of armies.'"

2:18 Zech 8:9,12; Hag 2:15; Deut 32:29
2:19 Ps 128:1-5; Mal 3:10; Hab 3:17,18
2:21 Hag 1:1,14; Ezra 5:2; Zech 4:6-10
2:22 Mic 5:10; Judg 7:22; Zeph 3:8
2:23 Matt 12:18; Matt 1:12; Isa 43:10

2:18 *from the day when the temple of the LORD was founded* The foundation was laid years before (Ezra 3:10). Here it likely means the day the rebuilding was properly renewed.
2:19 *From this day I will bless* No harvest yet, the seed only just sown or still waiting, and the trees not yet bearing. God promised before there was any proof. That is how faith works. Not a promise of riches for giving, but God's heart: He is eager to bless those who turn to Him (Luke 15:20).
2:22 *I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms* Persia looked permanent. It was not. The horses and riders recall the Red Sea (Exod 15:1), and swords turned on brothers recall Gideon (Judg 7:22). This shaking reaches to the end of the age and the kingdom Daniel saw (Dan 2:44; Rev 11:15).
2:23 *I will make you like the signet ring; for I have chosen you* A signet ring sealed a king's documents with his full authority (Gen 41:42; Esth 8:2). God had said that even if Zerubbabel's grandfather "were a signet ring on My right hand" (Jer 22:24), He would pull him off. Now God puts the ring back on His hand. My servant was a title for David and the Messiah (Isa 42:1). Zerubbabel never became king, but he stands in Jesus' line (Matt 1:12-13; Luke 3:27), and God kept David's line until the true King came (Luke 1:32-33).

ZECHARIAH

Introduction

Title

The book is named for its prophet, Zechariah, whose name means the LORD remembers. It fits his message, for God had not forgotten His people. Zechariah is the eleventh of the twelve Minor Prophets, between Haggai and Malachi, and the longest of them. Many Bible teachers also call it the most Messianic of the twelve, because it says more about the coming King than any other.

Author and Date

The prophet names himself "Zechariah son of Berechiah, son of Iddo" (1:1). Ezra calls him "the son of Iddo" (Ezra 5:1; 6:14), naming him by his better known grandfather. Iddo was among the priests who came home from Babylon with Zerubbabel, and a generation later Zechariah was the head of Iddo's priestly family (Neh 12:4, 16). So, like Jeremiah and Ezekiel, he was both priest and prophet. He was likely young when he began (2:4) and may have been born in Babylon.

Zechariah dates his first messages by Darius I of Persia (522 to 486 B.C.). The call to return came in late 520 B.C. (1:1), two months after Haggai's first message. The eight night visions came in one night in early 519 B.C. (1:7), and the question about fasting in late 518 B.C. (7:1). Chapters 9 to 14 are not dated, and many conservative scholars believe he gave them later in life, perhaps after 480 B.C.

Many modern critical scholars assign chapters 9 to 14 to one or more later, unknown prophets, pointing to the change of style and the mention of Greece (9:13). The notes take the book as one work by one prophet. A change of subject and of age explains the change of style, Persia fought Greece in 490 and 480 B.C., and the same themes run through both halves. The New Testament quotes from both halves as Scripture.

Background and Setting

In 538 B.C. Cyrus let the Jews go home to rebuild the temple, and they laid its foundation about 536 B.C. Then opposition stopped the work for some sixteen years (Ezra 4:4-5, 24). In 520 B.C. Haggai and Zechariah stirred the people to build again (Ezra 5:1-2), and the temple was finished in 516 B.C. (Ezra 6:15). Zechariah lived to see his promise come true: "The hands of Zerubbabel have founded this house, and his hands will finish it" (4:9).

Judah was a small, poor province of Persia. Jerusalem had no walls, and they would not be rebuilt until Nehemiah came in 445 B.C. The people were few and their enemies many, and the great promises of the earlier prophets seemed far away. Many wondered if God was finished with them. Haggai was the practical preacher who told them to build. Zechariah was the visionary who lifted their eyes from the small stone walls in front of them to all that God would do, in their day and far beyond it.

The book uses many pictures: horses, horns, a measuring cord, a lampstand, a flying scroll, a woman in a basket and chariots. In the visions an angel explains them, so we read the pictures by the explanation the text gives and hold loosely the details it leaves unexplained. The prophecies about real people and events, the King on a donkey, the thirty pieces of silver, the pierced One and the Mount of Olives, the notes read as plainly as they are written.

Themes

Return to God. The book opens with the call, "Return to Me, declares the LORD of armies, that I may return to you" (1:3). The fathers did not listen, and God's words overtook them (1:4-6).

God is jealous for His people. "I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with great jealousy" (1:14). He will judge the nations that crushed them, "for he who touches you touches the pupil of his eye" (2:8), and He will come and dwell in their midst (2:10; 8:3).

God cleanses His people. Joshua's filthy garments are taken away (3:4), wickedness is carried off to Babylon (5:5-11), and in the last days "a fountain opened" will wash away sin and impurity (13:1).

God's work is done by His Spirit. "Not by strength and not by power, but by My Spirit" (4:6). No one should despise "the day of small things" (4:10).

Obedience matters more than ritual. When the people asked about their fasts, God called them to true judgment, steadfast love and compassion (7:9-10), and promised that the fasts would become feasts of joy (8:19).

The King is coming. He comes first lowly on a donkey (9:9), is rejected and priced at thirty pieces of silver (11:12-13), is pierced and mourned (12:10), and then returns to stand on the Mount of Olives. In the end "the LORD will be King over all the earth" (14:9), and even the bells of the horses will say, "Holiness to the LORD" (14:20).

Christ in Zechariah

The New Testament turns to Zechariah again and again in the last week of Jesus' life. He rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, and Matthew and John quote 9:9 (Matt 21:5; John 12:15). He was sold for thirty pieces of silver, and the money bought the potter's field (11:12-13; Matt 27:9-10). On the night of His arrest He quoted 13:7, "Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered" (Matt 26:31). When a soldier pierced His side, John wrote, "They will look on Him whom they pierced" (John 19:37; Zech 12:10).

Zechariah calls Him the Branch, the Man who will build the temple of the LORD and be "a priest on his throne" (6:12-13; 3:8). Jesus is our great High Priest now (Heb 4:14), and He will be King when He returns. The LORD whose feet stand on the Mount of Olives (14:4) is the same Jesus who went up from that mountain and will come back the same way (Acts 1:11-12). Some of Zechariah's words came true at His first coming. Others wait for His second.

Hard Passages

How should the night visions be read (1:7-6:8)? The notes follow the angel's explanations and give the main readings where the text leaves a detail open, such as the four horns, the two olive trees and the two mountains of bronze.

Who is the angel of the LORD (1:11-12; 3:1-5)? He speaks as

the LORD and forgives sin, yet speaks to the LORD. Many believe he is the Son of God before His birth, and the notes present that view.

Why does Zechariah act as a shepherd and break two staffs (11:4-17)? The notes read it as an acted parable of Israel rejecting their good Shepherd and receiving a worthless one. Many see that final worthless shepherd as the coming man of lawlessness (2 Thess 2:3-4).

When will Israel look on the One they pierced (12:10)? There was a first fulfillment at the cross and at Pentecost. The notes hold that the full fulfillment is still ahead, when Israel as a nation turns to Jesus at His return.

Are the wounds of 13:6 the wounds of Christ? The notes explain that the speaker is a false prophet hiding his past, and that the Shepherd of 13:7 is Christ.

When are the nations gathered against Jerusalem (12:1-9; 14:1-5)? Some see A.D. 70, and many amillennial teachers read these chapters as a picture of the church. The notes read them as future: the refining of the remnant in the Tribulation (13:8-9), the gathering of the nations at its end, and the visible return of Christ to the Mount of Olives with His holy ones, including the church, which will have been caught up to Him before the Tribulation.

Who are the nations that keep the Feast of Booths after Christ returns (14:16-19)? The notes take these verses as Christ's thousand-year reign on earth, when survivors of the nations go up year by year to worship the King at Jerusalem. There are still nations, years and the possibility of disobedience, so this is not yet the new heavens and earth (Rev 20:4-6; 21-22).

Outline

I. A Call to Return (1:1-6)
II. Eight Night Visions (1:7-6:8)
  A. The rider among the myrtles (1:7-17)
  B. Four horns and four craftsmen (1:18-21)
  C. The man with the measuring cord (2:1-13)
  D. Joshua the high priest cleansed (3:1-10)
  E. The lampstand and two olive trees (4:1-14)
  F. The flying scroll (5:1-4)
  G. The woman in the basket (5:5-11)
  H. The four chariots (6:1-8)
III. The Crowning of Joshua (6:9-15)
IV. Fasting and Future Joy (7:1-8:23)
  A. Obedience better than fasting (7:1-14)
  B. The LORD returns to Zion (8:1-23)
V. The Coming King and the Rejected Shepherd (9:1-11:17)
  A. Your King comes to you (9:1-17)
  B. The LORD gathers His people (10:1-12)
  C. The rejected Shepherd (11:1-17)
VI. The Final Victory of the LORD (12:1-14:21)
  A. Jerusalem saved and the pierced One mourned (12:1-14)
  B. A fountain for sin and the Shepherd struck (13:1-9)
  C. The LORD King over all the earth (14:1-21)

ZECHARIAH

ZECHARIAH 1

Return to Me

1 In the eighth month, in the second year of Darius
(Daryavesh), the word of the LORD came to Zechariah
(Zekharya) son of Berechiah (Berekhya), son of Iddo (Ido),
the prophet, saying, **2** "The LORD was angry with your
fathers ***with*** anger. **3** And you will say to them, 'Thus says the
LORD of armies: Return to Me, declares the LORD of armies,
that I may return to you, says the LORD of armies. **4** Do not
be like your fathers, to whom the former prophets pro-
claimed, saying, "Thus says the LORD of armies: Return,
please, from your evil ways and your evil deeds," and they
did not listen and did not pay attention to Me, declares the
LORD. **5** Your fathers, where ***are*** they? And the prophets, do
they live forever? **6** Surely My words and My statutes which I
commanded My servants the prophets, did they not overtake
your fathers? And they returned and said, "Just as the LORD
of armies planned to do to us, according to our ways and
according to our deeds, so He has done with us."'"

The Rider Among the Myrtles

7 On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, it ***is*** the
month of Shebat, in the second year of Darius, the word of
the LORD came to Zechariah son of Berechiah, son of Iddo,
the prophet, saying: **8** I saw ***in*** the night, and look, a man
riding on a red horse, and he ***was*** standing between the
myrtle trees that ***were*** in the ravine; and behind him ***were***
horses, red, sorrel, and white. **9** And I said, "What ***are*** these,
my lord?" And the angel who was speaking with me said to
me, "I will show you what these ***are***." **10** And the man who
was standing between the myrtle trees answered and said,
"These ***are those*** whom the LORD has sent to go about on the
earth." **11** And they answered the angel of the LORD who was
standing between the myrtle trees and said, "We have gone
about on the earth, and look, all the earth is sitting and at
rest." **12** And the angel of the LORD answered and said, "O
LORD of armies, until when will You not have compassion on
Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) and the cities of Judah (Yehuda),
with which You have been indignant these seventy years?"
13 And the LORD answered the angel who was speaking with
me ***with*** good words, comforting words. **14** And the angel
who was speaking with me said to me, "Proclaim, saying,
'Thus says the LORD of armies: I am jealous for Jerusalem and
for Zion (Tsiyon) ***with*** great jealousy. **15** And ***with*** great
anger I ***am*** angry with the nations that are at ease; for I was
angry a little, and they helped for evil. **16** Therefore thus
says the LORD: I have returned to Jerusalem with compas-
sion; My house will be built in her, declares the LORD of
armies, and a measuring line will be stretched out over

1:1 Matt 23:35; Luke 11:51; Neh 12:4,16
1:2 Matt 23:30; Acts 7:52; Jer 44:6
1:3 Mal 3:7; Isa 31:6; Deut 30:2-10
1:4 John 15:16; Acts 7:52; Ps 78:8
1:5 John 8:52; 2 Pet 3:2; 2 Pet 3:4
1:6 1 Thess 5:4; John 8:52; Lam 2:17
1:8 Rev 6:4; Rev 19:19; Rev 19:11
1:9 Rev 19:9; Rev 22:8; Rev 17:7
1:10 Zech 6:5-8; Zech 1:8,11; Zech 4:10
1:11 Zech 1:8,10; Zech 1:15; Ps 68:17
1:12 Ps 102:13; Zech 7:5; Jer 29:10
1:13 Isa 40:1,2; Jer 29:10; Zech 2:4-12
1:14 Joel 2:18; Zech 1:9,13; Zech 1:17
1:15 Rev 18:7; Zech 1:2,11; Isa 54:8
1:16 Zech 8:3; Zech 2:10,11; Zech 4:9

1:1 *In the eighth month, in the second year of Darius* October or November 520 B.C., between Haggai's second and third messages (Hag 2:1, 10). God sent two prophets at once to a small, discouraged people.
1:1 *Zechariah son of Berechiah, son of Iddo, the prophet* Zechariah means the LORD remembers, Berechiah the LORD blesses, and Iddo His appointed time. Together they make a little sermon, the message of the whole book. Zechariah came from a priestly family that returned from Babylon (Neh 12:4, 16). He was a priest called to be a prophet.
1:2 *The LORD was angry with your fathers with anger* Their grandparents saw Jerusalem burned in 586 B.C. Why? Because of their fathers' sin. The Hebrew repeats anger for force.
1:3 *Return to Me, declares the LORD of armies, that I may return to you* Three times in one verse God names Himself the LORD of armies, Commander of all the armies of heaven and earth. The people had come back to the land and begun the temple, but God wanted their hearts. To return is to repent, to turn from sin to God. When we turn back, we find He has been waiting (James 4:8; Luke 15:20).
1:6 *My words and My statutes which I commanded My servants the prophets, did they not overtake your fathers?* The fathers and the prophets were dead, but God's word outlived both and caught up with the runaways. In exile they confessed God had done just what He said (Dan 9:4-14; Lam 2:17). "My words will by no means pass away" (Matt 24:35). Listen now, not later.
1:7 *On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, it is the month of Shebat* February 519 B.C., exactly five months after the rebuilding began (Hag 1:15). That night God gave Zechariah eight visions, running from 1:7 to 6:8.
1:8 *a man riding on a red horse, and he was standing between the myrtle trees that were in the ravine* Myrtles are low, sweet-smelling evergreens of the valleys near Jerusalem. Many see a picture of Israel then: lowly and out of sight, but still green and alive. The horses behind him, red, sorrel (reddish brown) and white, are scouts, as the next verses show.
1:11 *all the earth is sitting and at rest* The man among the myrtles is the angel of the LORD, who in the Old Testament speaks as God and receives worship yet is distinct from the LORD (Gen 16:10-13; Exod 3:2-6). Many believe He is the Son of God appearing before His birth. The report sounds good but was not. Darius had crushed revolts, the proud nations were comfortable, and Jerusalem was still in ruins.
1:12 *until when will You not have compassion on Jerusalem and the cities of Judah* The angel of the LORD intercedes for Jerusalem. Jeremiah foretold seventy years (Jer 25:11-12; 29:10), and the temple, destroyed in 586 B.C., would be finished in 516 B.C. The angel is distinct from the LORD of armies yet speaks as God elsewhere, fitting the Son who is God and with God (John 1:1). Christ is "always living to intercede for them" (Heb 7:25).
1:14 *I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with great jealousy* Zion was the temple hill, often standing for the whole city and people. God's jealousy is not petty envy but the burning, protective love of a husband for his wife.
1:15 *I was angry a little, and they helped for evil* God used Babylon to discipline His people, but the nations went far beyond His purpose, cruel and proud (Isa 47:6). When God uses a wicked nation, He does not approve it. He uses it and then judges it for its own sin.
1:16 *My house will be built in her, declares the LORD of armies, and a measuring line will be stretched out over Jerusalem* God has returned, as He promised in verse 3. The temple was finished in 516 B.C. (Ezra 6:15), and the city was rebuilt under Nehemiah.

Jerusalem.' **17** Again proclaim, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of armies: My cities will again overflow with good, and the LORD will again comfort Zion and will again choose Jerusalem.'"

Four Horns and Four Craftsmen

18 And I lifted up my eyes and saw, and look, four horns. **19** And I said to the angel who was speaking with me, "What ***are*** these?" And he said to me, "These ***are*** the horns which have scattered Judah, Israel (Yisra'el), and Jerusalem."
20 And the LORD showed me four craftsmen. **21** And I said, "What ***are*** these coming to do?" And he said, saying, "These ***are*** the horns which scattered Judah, so that no man lifted up his head; and these have come to terrify them, to throw down the horns of the nations who lifted up a horn against the land of Judah to scatter it."

ZECHARIAH 2

The Man With the Measuring Cord

1 And I lifted up my eyes and saw, and look, a man, and in his hand a measuring cord. **2** And I said, "Where ***are*** you going?" And he said to me, "To measure Jerusalem (Yerushalayim), to see how much ***is*** her breadth and how much ***is*** her length." **3** And look, the angel who was speaking with me was going out, and another angel was going out to meet him. **4** And he said to him, "Run, speak to this young man, saying,
'Jerusalem will remain ***as*** open villages because of the multitude of mankind and livestock in her midst. **5** And I will be to her, declares the LORD, a wall of fire all around, and for glory I will be in her midst.'" **6** Up, up! And flee from the land of the north, declares the LORD; for like the four winds of the heavens I have spread you out, declares the LORD. **7** Up, O Zion (Tsiyon)! Escape, O inhabitant of the daughter of Babylon (Bavel). **8** For thus says the LORD of armies: After glory He has sent Me to the nations who plunder you, for he who touches you touches the pupil of his eye. **9** For look, I ***am*** about to wave My hand against them, and they will be plunder for their servants; and you will know that the LORD of armies has sent Me. **10** Shout for joy and rejoice, O daughter of Zion; for look, I ***am*** coming, and I will dwell in your midst, declares the LORD. **11** And many nations will join themselves to the LORD on that day, and they will become a people for Me; and I will dwell in your midst, and you will know that the LORD of armies has sent Me to you. **12** And the LORD will inherit Judah (Yehuda) ***as*** His portion on the holy ground, and He will again choose Jerusalem. **13** Hush, all flesh, before the LORD, for He has roused Himself from His holy dwelling place.

1:17 Isa 51:3,12; Zech 2:12; Isa 44:26
1:18 Josh 5:13; Zech 2:1; Zech 5:1,5,9
1:19 Rev 7:13; Rev 7:14; Zech 1:21
1:20 Zech 9:12-16; Zech 10:3-5; Zech 12:2-6
1:21 Zech 1:19; Ps 75:4,5; Dan 12:7
2:1 Zech 1:16; Ezek 40:3,5; Rev 11:1
2:2 John 16:5; Jer 31:39; Ezek 45:6
2:3 Zech 4:1,5; Zech 5:5; Zech 1:8,10,11
2:4 Zech 1:17; Zech 8:4,5; Zech 12:6
2:5 Isa 4:5; Zech 9:8; Isa 60:18,19
2:6 Matt 24:31; Mark 13:27; Ezek 17:21
2:7 Isa 48:20; Isa 52:11; Jer 51:6,45
2:8 Deut 32:10; John 15:21-23; Ps 17:8
2:9 John 12:15; Isa 19:16; Isa 14:2
2:10 John 12:15; 2 Cor 6:16; Zech 8:3
2:11 John 17:21; 1 Pet 2:9; John 17:23
2:12 Deut 32:9; Zech 1:17; Jer 10:16
2:13 Hab 2:20; Ps 68:5; Ps 46:10

1:17 *the LORD will again comfort Zion and will again choose Jerusalem* Again, three times. God chose Jerusalem long ago (Ps 132:13), and His choice still stands. There was a near fulfillment after the exile, but Jerusalem has been destroyed and rebuilt since. Its greatest days are still ahead, when Christ returns and reigns there (14:9-11).
1:18 *four horns* The second vision. A horn pictures strength, often a king or kingdom (Dan 7:24; 8:20-21). These scattered God's people. Some see Assyria, Egypt, Babylon and Medo-Persia, others Daniel's four empires (Dan 2; 7), others enemies from all four directions. Every power that scattered God's people is known to Him.
1:21 *these have come to terrify them, to throw down the horns of the nations* Craftsmen are skilled workers, smiths or carpenters, who know how to cut horns down. Judah was so crushed that no one could lift his head. For every horn God has a craftsman. Every kingdom of this world will fall before Christ's (Dan 2:44; Rev 11:15). Whatever stands against God's people will not stand forever.
2:1 *a man, and in his hand a measuring cord* The third vision. Builders used such a cord to mark out a city. God promised a measuring line over Jerusalem (1:16), and now Zechariah sees it. The man was going to measure by the old walls. God had something much bigger in mind.
2:4 *Jerusalem will remain as open villages because of the multitude of mankind and livestock in her midst* This young man may be Zechariah himself, or the man with the cord. Open villages had no walls. Jerusalem would be too full for any wall. In Zechariah's day the city was nearly empty, and Nehemiah had to ask people to move in (Neh 11:1-2).
2:5 *I will be to her, declares the LORD, a wall of fire all around, and for glory I will be in her midst* God Himself is her protection, as the pillar of fire stood between Israel and Egypt (Exod 14:19-20), and her glory within. This was true in part after the exile, but its fullness waits for the kingdom, when Jerusalem will "dwell in security" (14:11). Our real safety is the Lord Himself (Prov 18:10).
2:6 *flee from the land of the north* Babylon lay east, but its armies came in from the north along the Fertile Crescent (Jer 1:14). Many Jews had grown comfortable there and stayed. God scattered them to the four winds in judgment and now calls them home.
2:7 *Escape, O inhabitant of the daughter of Babylon* Babylon faced more judgment (Isa 48:20; Jer 51:6), and God's people belonged in Zion. It is easy to settle down and grow comfortable with the world. God calls His people to come out and be separate (2 Cor 6:17; Rev 18:4).
2:8 *he who touches you touches the pupil of his eye* The LORD of armies says "He has sent me," yet the One sent speaks the LORD's words. After glory is hard: perhaps sent to win glory by judging the nations, or sent after the glory of 2:5. The pupil is the most tender part of the body. To harm God's people is to poke God in the eye.
2:11 *many nations will join themselves to the LORD on that day, and they will become a people for Me* The LORD who dwells in Zion is also the One the LORD of armies has sent. Jesus is God the Son, sent by the Father. "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). Gentiles have joined the Lord through Him (Acts 15:14-17), but the full promise awaits His return, when nations worship in Jerusalem (8:20-23; 14:16; Rev 21:3). Israel is not set aside. The nations join, and He still dwells in Zion.
2:12 *the LORD will inherit Judah as His portion on the holy ground* Judah is the LORD's own share. Only here is the land called the holy ground, holy because the holy God dwells there. For the third time God says He will choose Jerusalem (1:17; 3:2).
2:13 *Hush, all flesh, before the LORD* When a king rises from his throne to act, the room goes silent. The nations were at ease (1:11). Now God was rising, and the whole world should be quiet before Him (Hab 2:20; Zeph 1:7; Ps 46:10).

ZECHARIAH 3

Joshua the High Priest and the Branch

1 And he showed me Joshua (Yehoshua) the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him. **2** And the LORD said to Satan, "The LORD rebuke you, O Satan! And the LORD who has chosen Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) rebuke you! ***Is*** this not a firebrand snatched from a fire?" **3** And Joshua was clothed ***with*** filthy garments, and ***he was*** standing before the angel. **4** And he answered and said to those who were standing before him, saying, "Remove the filthy garments from him." And he said to him, "See, I have taken your iniquity away from you, and ***I will*** clothe you ***with*** festal robes." **5** And I said, "Let them put a clean turban on his head." And they put the clean turban on his head and clothed him ***with*** garments; and the angel of the LORD ***was*** standing ***by***. **6** And the angel of the LORD solemnly charged Joshua, saying, **7** "Thus says the LORD of armies: If you will walk in My ways, and if you will keep My charge, then you also will judge My house and also keep My courts, and I will give you ***places of*** walking among these who are standing ***here***. **8** Hear, please, O Joshua the high priest, you and your companions who sit before you, for they ***are*** men of portent; for look, I ***am*** bringing My servant the Branch. **9** For look, the stone that I have set before Joshua: on one stone ***are*** seven eyes. Look, I ***am*** engraving its engraving, declares the LORD of armies, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day. **10** On that day, declares the LORD of armies, you will invite, each one his neighbor, to under a vine and to under a fig tree."

ZECHARIAH 4

The Lampstand and the Two Olive Trees

1 And the angel who was speaking with me returned and roused me, like a man who is roused from his sleep. **2** And he said to me, "What ***are*** you seeing?" And I said, "I see, and look, a lampstand of gold, all of it, and a bowl on its top, and its seven lamps on it, seven and seven pipes to the lamps which ***are*** on its top; **3** and two olive trees by it, one on the right of the bowl and one on its left." **4** And I answered and said to the angel who was speaking with me, saying, "What ***are*** these, my lord?" **5** And the angel who was speaking with me answered and said to me, "Do you not know what these

3:1 Luke 22:31; Acts 7:30; Rev 12:9
3:2 Jude 1:9; Jude 1:23; Rom 16:20
3:3 Matt 22:11; Matt 22:12; Isa 64:6
3:4 Matt 22:11; Ezek 36:25; Luke 1:19
3:5 Zech 6:11; Exod 29:6; Exod 28:2-4
3:6 Zech 3:1; Gen 22:15,16; Gen 28:13-17
3:7 Gen 26:5; Lev 8:35; Heb 12:22,23
3:8 Matt 12:18; Matt 21:42; Isa 11:1
3:9 Rom 9:33; Matt 21:42; Luke 20:17
3:10 John 1:48; 1 Kgs 4:25; Mic 4:4
4:1 Zech 1:9,13,19; Jer 31:26; Dan 8:18
4:2 Rev 4:5; Rev 1:12; Matt 5:15
4:3 Rev 11:4; Matt 25:4; Zech 4:11,12,14
4:4 Zech 1:9,19; Zech 6:4; Zech 4:12-14
4:5 Mark 4:13; 1 Cor 2:12; Zech 4:13

3:1 *Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him* The fourth vision. The high priest entered the Most Holy Place on the Day of Atonement for the whole nation (Lev 16), so Joshua stood for the people. Standing before meant both serving as priest and standing trial. Satan means adversary or accuser, with "the" in front, as in Job 1-2. He is "the accuser of our brothers" (Rev 12:10), and Joshua's clothes told the story.
3:2 *The LORD rebuke you, O Satan! And the LORD who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you!* The angel of the LORD speaks as the LORD and calls on the LORD, which many see as the Son with the Father (compare Jude 9). God silences the accuser not because Joshua was innocent, but because God had chosen Jerusalem. "Who will bring a charge against the elect of God?" (Rom 8:33).
3:2 *Is this not a firebrand snatched from a fire?* A burning stick pulled from the flames (Amos 4:11). Joshua and his people were scorched by the exile, but God pulled them out. Would He snatch them from the fire only to let Satan throw them back? Never.
3:3 *Joshua was clothed with filthy garments* The Hebrew word is strong, used of something soiled with human waste. A high priest was to wear holy garments of glory and beauty (Exod 28:2). That is how sin looks before a holy God. Even our righteous deeds are unclean before Him (Isa 64:6).
3:4 *See, I have taken your iniquity away from you, and I will clothe you with festal robes* Joshua did nothing. He did not wash his own clothes or promise to do better. God took the filth away and gave him feast-day robes. That is grace. Our sin was put on Christ, and His righteousness on us (2 Cor 5:21). "He has clothed me with garments of salvation" (Isa 61:10).
3:5 *Let them put a clean turban on his head* Zechariah could not stay quiet. The high priest's turban bore a gold plate engraved Holiness to the LORD (Exod 28:36-38), the sign he was set apart for God. The Judge stood by, approving it all.
3:7 *If you will walk in My ways, and if you will keep My charge* Grace first, then the call to obey. God does not say, obey and I will cleanse you. He cleanses, then says, walk with Me (Eph 2:8-10). Joshua would rule the temple and have access among those who stand in God's presence, as we have access to God's throne through Christ (Heb 4:16).
3:8 *I am bringing My servant the Branch* Joshua and his fellow priests were men of portent, living signs of what was to come. The Branch is a great name of the Messiah, a new shoot from the cut-down stump of David's family (Isa 11:1; Jer 23:5; 33:15). There was no king in Judah, but God would bring a living Branch. He is also the Servant who bears sin (Isa 52:13-53:12), Jesus, who came "to give His life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45).
3:9 *on one stone are seven eyes* Hard to explain. Some see a real temple stone (4:7). Many see the Messiah, often called a stone (Ps 118:22; 1 Pet 2:6), since the verse follows the Branch, but hold it loosely. Seven eyes mean full and perfect sight (4:10; Rev 5:6). God Himself engraves it, like the gold plate on the high priest's turban.
3:9 *I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day* Sacrifices repeated year after year could never take sin away (Heb 10:4, 11). Christ "offered one sacrifice for sins for all time" (Heb 10:12). Many see a second day too, as this study does: the day Israel as a nation turns to the One they pierced and a fountain is opened for sin (12:10; 13:1). The price was paid at the cross. The nation will receive it on the day of its turning.
3:10 *you will invite, each one his neighbor, to under a vine and to under a fig tree* A picture of peace and plenty, as in Solomon's days (1 Kgs 4:25) and Micah's kingdom (Mic 4:4). When sin is taken away, peace follows, with God and then with others. For Israel this will be fully kept in Christ's kingdom. Every believer now has "peace with God" (Rom 5:1).
4:2 *a lampstand of gold, all of it, and a bowl on its top, and its seven lamps on it* The tabernacle lampstand had seven lamps that priests filled and tended every evening and morning (Exod 25:31-40; 27:20-21). This one had a bowl on top as a reservoir and pipes to every lamp, likely seven to each. Oil flowed everywhere, keeping every lamp full. Israel was meant to be a light to the nations (Isa 42:6).
4:3 *two olive trees by it* The oil came straight from the trees. No one pressed olives, carried jars or filled lamps. The supply never ran out, and no human hand was needed.

are?" And I said, "No, my lord." **6** And he answered and said to me, saying, "This ***is*** the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel (Zerubavel), saying, 'Not by strength and not by power, but by My Spirit,' says the LORD of armies. **7** Who ***are*** you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel ***you will become*** level ground; and he will bring forth the top stone ***with*** shoutings of 'Grace, grace to it!'" **8** And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **9** "The hands of Zerubbabel have founded this house, and his hands will finish ***it***; and you will know that the LORD of armies has sent me to you. **10** For who has despised the day of small things? And they will rejoice and see the tin stone in the hand of Zerubbabel. These seven ***are*** the eyes of the LORD; they are roving through all the earth." **11** And I answered and said to him, "What ***are*** these two olive trees on the right of the lampstand and on its left?" **12** And I answered a second time and said to him, "What ***are*** the two clusters of the olive trees which ***are*** beside the two pipes of gold, which empty the gold from themselves?" **13** And he said to me, saying, "Do you not know what these ***are***?" And I said, "No, my lord." **14** And he said, "These ***are*** the two sons of the fresh oil who stand by the Lord of all the earth."

ZECHARIAH 5

The Flying Scroll

1 And I lifted up my eyes again and saw, and look, a flying scroll. **2** And he said to me, "What ***are*** you seeing?" And I said, "I ***am*** seeing a flying scroll; its length ***is*** approximately 30 feet (twenty cubits), and its breadth approximately 15 feet (ten cubits)." **3** And he said to me, "This ***is*** the curse that is going out over the face of all the land; for everyone who steals will be purged out from here according to it, and everyone who swears will be purged out from here according to it. **4** I will send it out, declares the LORD of armies, and it will enter into the house of the thief and into the house of the one who swears by My name falsely; and it will lodge in the midst of his house and consume it, both its timbers and its stones."

The Woman in the Basket

5 And the angel who was speaking with me went out and said to me, "Lift up, please, your eyes and see what this ***is*** that is going out." **6** And I said, "What ***is*** it?" And he said, "This ***is*** the ephah that is going out." And he said, "This ***is*** their eye in all the land." **7** And look, a round lid of lead was lifted up, and this ***was*** a woman sitting in the midst of the ephah. **8** And he said, "This ***is*** wickedness." And he threw her into the midst of the ephah, and he threw the stone of lead on its mouth. **9** And I lifted up my eyes and saw, and look, two women going out, and wind ***was*** in their wings; and they had wings like the wings of the stork; and they lifted up the ephah between the earth and the heavens. **10** And I said to the angel who was speaking with me, "Where ***are*** they taking

4:6 2 Chr 32:7,8; 1 Pet 1:12; Isa 11:2-4
4:7 Matt 21:21; Matt 21:42; Mark 12:10
4:9 Ezra 6:14,15; Ezra 5:16; Zech 6:12,13
4:10 Rev 5:6; 1 Pet 3:12; Zech 3:9
4:11 Zech 4:3; Rev 11:4
4:12 Matt 20:23; Rev 11:4; Hag 1:1
4:13 Zech 4:5; Heb 5:11,12
4:14 Rev 11:4; Dan 9:24-26; Exod 29:7
5:1 Rev 5:1; Rev 10:8; Rev 5:2
5:2 Zech 4:2; Jer 1:11-14; Amos 7:8
5:3 Luke 21:35; Gal 3:10; Gal 3:13
5:4 Lev 14:34-45; Job 18:15; Prov 3:33
5:5 Zech 1:9,14,19; Zech 2:3; Zech 4:5
5:6 Amos 8:5; Ezek 44:10,11
5:7 Rev 17:6; Rev 17:7; Isa 13:1
5:8 Gen 15:16; Matt 23:32; 1 Thess 2:16
5:9 Deut 28:49; Dan 9:26,27; Hos 8:1

4:6 *Not by strength and not by power, but by My Spirit* The word to Zerubbabel the builder. Strength often means an army or wealth, and power means human ability and effort. Judah had neither army nor treasury. The Spirit was the oil that never ran dry (Hag 2:5). He moved the Persian king (Ezra 6:1-12) and stirred the people (Hag 1:14). The LORD of armies says His work does not depend on armies.
4:6 *says the LORD of armies* This does not mean we sit still. Zerubbabel still had to build. It means we stop trusting our own strength. "Apart from Me you are not able to do anything" (John 15:5). The early church turned the world upside down not with armies or money but by the Spirit (1 Cor 2:4). Every believer has the Spirit (Rom 8:9). Are you leaning on your strength or His?
4:7 *Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you will become level ground* God speaks to the problem as if it were a person: enemies who stopped the work (Ezra 4), letters to the king, poverty and years of rubble. It would be flattened (Matt 17:20). The top stone was the last one laid. The people would shout, Grace, grace, not, Look what we did, but, Look what God's grace has done.
4:9 *The hands of Zerubbabel have founded this house, and his hands will finish it* He laid the foundation about 536 B.C. (Ezra 3:8-11). It sat for sixteen years. He finished it in 516 B.C. (Ezra 6:14-15), and everyone knew Zechariah was a true prophet.
4:10 *For who has despised the day of small things?* The second temple was smaller and plainer than Solomon's, and old men wept (Ezra 3:12; Hag 2:3). Small beginnings are not small to God. Israel began with one old couple, Jesus in a stable, the church in an upper room (Matt 13:31-32). The tin stone is most likely a plumb line in Zerubbabel's hand, proof the walls were going up. God's eyes rove through all the earth (2 Chr 16:9).
4:14 *These are the two sons of the fresh oil who stand by the Lord of all the earth* Anointed ones. Priests and kings were anointed with oil (Exod 29:7; 1 Sam 16:13). Joshua the priest and Zerubbabel of David's line were God's channels to keep His light burning. The two offices will unite in one Person, "a priest on his throne" (6:13). Revelation draws on this vision for the two witnesses of the Tribulation (Rev 11:3-4). Persia seemed to rule the earth, but the real Lord of all the earth was the One they served.
5:2 *I am seeing a flying scroll* Twenty by ten cubits, the size of a large billboard, when a normal scroll was perhaps a foot wide. Some note these are the measurements of the porch of Solomon's temple (1 Kgs 6:3), as if God's judgment goes out from His house. The angel does not explain the size. The point is plain: huge, open and impossible to miss.
5:3 *This is the curse that is going out over the face of all the land* At Sinai God set blessings and curses before Israel (Deut 28). Stealing and swearing falsely come from the two tables of the Ten Commandments (Exod 20:7, 15), sins against neighbor and against God, and may stand for the whole Law. Purged out means removed.
5:4 *it will lodge in the midst of his house and consume it, both its timbers and its stones* The curse comes down to the very house of the sinner and settles in, eating it from the inside. Thieves and liars may think they got away with it, but God's word finds them. Truth and honesty still matter (Eph 4:25, 28). "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us" (Gal 3:13).
5:6 *This is the ephah that is going out* The seventh vision. An ephah was a grain measure of about three-fifths of a bushel, and the basket that held it, a common market item where much sin showed up in false measures (Amos 8:5; Mic 6:10-11). "Their eye" means their appearance, what the people's lives looked like underneath. Some ancient translations read their iniquity.
5:8 *This is wickedness* The woman stands for wickedness itself. The Hebrew word is feminine, as wisdom is pictured as a woman in Prov 8-9. This is a picture of sin, not a statement about women. She seems to try to escape, and the angel slams the heavy lead lid. Wickedness must be shut up and held down, and only God can do it.

the ephah?" **11** And he said to me, "To build a house for her in the land of Shinar; and it will be prepared, and she will be set there on her base."

ZECHARIAH 6

The Four Chariots

1 And I returned, and I lifted up my eyes, and I saw, and look, four chariots going out from between the two mountains, and the mountains ***were*** mountains of bronze. **2** In the first chariot ***were*** red horses, and in the second chariot black horses, **3** and in the third chariot white horses, and in the fourth chariot dappled, strong horses. **4** And I answered and said to the angel who was speaking with me, "What ***are*** these, my lord?" **5** And the angel answered and said to me, "These ***are*** the four winds of the heavens, going out from presenting themselves before the Lord of all the earth. **6** The black horses which ***are*** in it ***are*** going out to the land of ***the*** north, and the white ***ones*** have gone out after them, and the dappled ***ones*** have gone out to the land of the south. **7** And the strong ***ones*** went out, and they sought to go to walk about on the earth." And he said, "Go, walk about on the earth." And they walked about on the earth. **8** And he cried out to me and spoke to me, saying, "See, those going out to the land of ***the*** north have caused my spirit to rest in the land of ***the*** north."

The Crowning of Joshua

9 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **10** "Take from the exiles, from Heldai (Chelday) and from Tobijah (Toviya) and from Jedaiah (Yedaya), who have come from Babylon (Bavel); and you yourself shall go on that day, and you shall go ***into the*** house of Josiah (Yoshiya) the son of Zephaniah (Tsefanya). **11** And you shall take silver and gold, and you shall make crowns, and you shall set ***them*** on the head of Joshua (Yehoshua) the son of Jehozadak
(Yehotsadaq), the high priest. **12** And you shall say to him, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of armies, saying: Look, a man, Branch ***is*** his name; and he will sprout up from his place, and he will build the temple of the LORD. **13** And he himself will build the temple of the LORD, and he himself will bear majesty, and he will sit and rule on his throne; and he will be a priest on his throne, and a counsel of peace will be between the two of them.' **14** And the crowns shall be for Helem (Chelem) and for Tobijah and for Jedaiah and for Hen (Chen) the son of Zephaniah, for a memorial in the temple of the LORD." **15** And far-off ***ones*** will come, and they will build in the temple of the LORD, and you will know that the LORD of armies has sent me to you. And ***this*** will be, if you will surely listen to the voice of the LORD your God.

5:11 Gen 11:2; Gen 10:10; Dan 1:2
6:1 Dan 8:22; Zech 5:1; Zech 1:18,19
6:2 Rev 6:2-5; Zech 1:8; Rev 12:3
6:3 Rev 6:2; Zech 1:8; Rev 6:8
6:4 Zech 1:9,19-21; Zech 5:5,6,10
6:5 Rev 7:1; Luke 1:19; Heb 1:7,14
6:6 Jer 1:14,15; Jer 4:6; Jer 6:1
6:7 Zech 1:10; Gen 13:17; 2 Chr 16:9
6:8 Ezek 5:13; Zech 1:15; Judg 8:3
6:9 Zech 1:1; Zech 7:1; Zech 8:1
6:10 Ezra 7:14-16; Ezra 8:26-30; Isa 66:20
6:11 Rev 19:12; Zech 3:1; Ps 21:3
6:12 Mark 15:29; Heb 8:3; John 19:5
6:13 Acts 10:43; Rev 19:12; Rev 19:15
6:14 Matt 26:13; Mark 14:9; Exod 12:14
6:15 Eph 2:21; Isa 60:10; Zech 3:7

5:11 *To build a house for her in the land of Shinar* Shinar is Babylon's old name, where men built Babel in pride (Gen 11:1-9) and Nebuchadnezzar put the temple vessels in his god's house (Dan 1:2). Wickedness is removed from God's land and set up like an idol where it is worshiped. The scroll judged sinners. The basket removes sin itself, as Christ "takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). Many link this with Babylon in Rev 17-18, but hold it loosely.

6:1 *four chariots going out from between the two mountains, and the mountains were mountains of bronze* The eighth vision. Chariots were the strongest weapon of an ancient army. The two mountains are not explained. Some think of Zion and the Mount of Olives, others of the two bronze pillars of Solomon's temple (1 Kgs 7:15-22). The chariots come from God's presence (6:5), strong and unshakable.

6:5 *These are the four winds of the heavens, going out from presenting themselves before the Lord of all the earth* Winds can also mean spirits. They may be winds as God's servants or angels, who are "ministering spirits, sent forth for service" (Heb 1:14; Ps 104:4). Like servants before a king, they received orders and went out. Persia ruled an empire, but God rules the whole earth.

6:6 *going out to the land of the north* The north is Babylon (2:6), and the south is Egypt, the two great powers that had troubled God's people for centuries. The red horses are not mentioned here, and Scripture does not say why.

6:8 *have caused my spirit to rest in the land of the north* Spirit here likely means God's anger (Judg 8:3). His anger against Babylon was satisfied. In chapter 1 the nations were at ease and God was angry. Now His anger rests because justice is done. The night visions end with God in control of the whole earth, giving the builders courage.

6:10 *Take from the exiles, from Heldai and from Tobijah and from Jedaiah, who have come from Babylon* The visions are over, and God gives an acted message. These men had just arrived, likely with gifts of silver and gold from the Jews still in Babylon. Zechariah was to go that very day to the house where they stayed.

6:11 *you shall make crowns, and you shall set them on the head of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest* Crowns may be one grand crown of several bands. A high priest wore a turban, not a crown. Kings came from Judah and David's family, priests from Levi, and the offices were kept apart. Uzziah was struck with leprosy for burning incense (2 Chr 26:16-21). Why crown a priest and not Zerubbabel? Because this was a sign.

6:12 *Look, a man, Branch is his name; and he will sprout up from his place* The Branch of 3:8, a real man. Joshua is not the Branch but the sign of Him. He sprouts from humble ground, "like the root from dry ground" (Isa 53:2), as Jesus grew up in little Nazareth (John 1:46).

6:12 *he will build the temple of the LORD* Said twice. Zerubbabel was building the temple then (4:9), but this reaches beyond 516 B.C. Christ is building His church, a holy temple of living stones (Eph 2:21; 1 Pet 2:5). In the fullest sense, I believe the Branch will build the temple of the LORD in Jerusalem in His kingdom (Ezek 40-48; Isa 2:2-3).

6:13 *he will be a priest on his throne* Majesty is royal splendor. One Man holds both offices. "You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek" (Ps 110:4), who was king and priest (Gen 14:18). Jesus is from Judah, yet our High Priest "who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty" (Heb 8:1). The counsel of peace may be between the two offices or between the Branch and the LORD. We have one Savior who takes away sin and rules our hearts. Is He both to you?

6:14 *for a memorial in the temple of the LORD* Helem seems another name for Heldai, and Hen, meaning grace, another name for Josiah. The crown was kept in the temple as a reminder of the coming Branch and of the faithful givers.

6:15 *far-off ones will come, and they will build in the temple of the LORD* First, distant Jews coming home to help. But Gentiles "who once were far off have become near by the blood of Christ" (Eph 2:13), and in the kingdom the nations will come (Isa 60:10). The coming of the Branch was certain, but whether that generation shared the blessing depended on listening to God. The same is true for us.

ZECHARIAH 7

Obedience Better Than Fasting

1 And it was in the fourth year of Darius (Daryavesh) the king ***that*** the word of the LORD came to Zechariah (Zekharya) on the fourth ***day*** of the ninth month, in Kislev. **2** And Bethel (Bet-El) sent Sharezer (Sharetser) and Regem-melech (Regem-Melekh) and his men to entreat the face of the LORD, **3** to say to the priests who ***belonged*** to the house of the LORD of armies, and to the prophets, saying, "Shall I weep in the fifth month, separating myself, as I have done these so many years?" **4** And the word of the LORD of armies came to me, saying, **5** "Say to all the people of the land and to the priests, saying, 'When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and in the seventh ***month***, even these seventy years, did you really fast for Me, ***for*** Me? **6** And when you eat and when you drink, ***are*** not you the ones eating, and you the ones drinking? **7** ***Is it*** not the words which the LORD proclaimed by the hand of the former prophets, when Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) was inhabited and at ease, and her cities around her, and the Negeb (Negev) and the Shephelah ***were*** inhabited?'" **8** And the word of the LORD came to Zechariah, saying, **9** "Thus says the LORD of armies, saying, 'Judge a judgment of truth, and do steadfast love and compassion, each man with his brother; **10** and do not oppress the widow and the fatherless, the sojourner and the poor; and do not devise in your heart evil, each man ***against*** his brother.' **11** And they refused to pay attention, and they gave a stubborn shoulder, and they made their ears heavy from hearing. **12** And they made their heart flint, from hearing the law and the words which the LORD of armies sent by His Spirit by the hand of the former prophets; and ***there*** was great wrath from the LORD of armies. **13** And it was ***that*** just as He called and they did not listen, so they would call and I would not listen," says the LORD of armies. **14** "And I swept them away by storm among all the nations whom they had not known, and the land was desolate behind them, without anyone passing through or returning; and they made the land of desire into a waste."

ZECHARIAH 8

The LORD Returns to Zion

1 And the word of the LORD of armies came, saying, **2** "Thus says the LORD of armies: 'I am jealous for Zion (Tsiyon) ***with*** great jealousy, and ***with*** great fury I am jealous for her.' **3** Thus says the LORD: 'I have returned to Zion, and I will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim); and Jerusalem will be called "the City of Truth," and the mountain of the LORD of armies, "the Mountain of Holiness."' **4** Thus says the LORD of armies: 'Old men and old women will again sit in the open squares of Jerusalem, and each man ***with*** his staff in his hand because of ***the*** abundance of days. **5** And the open squares of the city will be filled ***with*** boys and

7:1 Neh 1:1; Zech 1:1; Ezra 6:14,15
7:2 Zech 8:21; Jer 26:19; 1 Sam 13:12
7:3 Zech 8:19; Mal 2:7; James 4:8-10
7:4 Isa 10:16
7:5 Zech 1:12; Zech 7:3; Isa 1:11,12
7:6 1 Cor 11:20,21,26-29; Deut 12:7; Deut 14:26
7:7 Jer 17:26; Isa 1:16-20; Jer 7:5,23
7:9 Mic 6:8; Ezek 45:9; Matt 23:23
7:10 Mark 7:21; Ps 72:4; Jer 5:28
7:11 Acts 7:51; Matt 13:15; Neh 9:29
7:12 Matt 13:15; Acts 7:51; Acts 28:27
7:13 Luke 13:34; John 9:31; Prov 1:24-28
7:14 Deut 28:33,64; Deut 4:27; Jer 23:19
8:2 Zech 1:14-16; Ps 78:58,59; Isa 42:13,14
8:3 2 Cor 6:16; Zech 1:16; Zech 2:10,11
8:4 Heb 12:22; 1 Sam 2:31; Job 5:26
8:5 Jer 30:19,20; Zech 2:4; Ps 128:3,4

7:2 *Bethel sent Sharezer and Regem-melech and his men to entreat the face of the LORD* Bethel, about twelve miles north of Jerusalem, once held Jeroboam's golden calf (1 Kgs 12:28-29) and was resettled by returning exiles (Ezra 2:28). Some read Bethel-sharezer as one man's name. To entreat the face of the LORD is to seek His favor in prayer.
7:3 *Shall I weep in the fifth month, separating myself, as I have done these so many years?* In the fifth month Babylon burned the temple and city in 586 B.C. (2 Kgs 25:8-9). Ever since, the Jews had fasted that day. To fast is to go without food for a time to mourn, repent or seek God. If the temple was being rebuilt, why keep mourning? God's answer went deeper than the question.
7:5 *did you really fast for Me, for Me?* The answer was for all the people. The seventh-month fast remembered the murder of the governor Gedaliah (2 Kgs 25:25; Jer 41:1-3). For Me, for Me: they mourned the results of their sin but not the sin itself.
7:6 *are not you the ones eating, and you the ones drinking?* They feasted for themselves and fasted for themselves, and God was the center of neither. We can pray, give, fast and read the Bible for ourselves, to be seen or to check a box (Matt 6:16). God looks at the heart (1 Sam 16:7). When you worship, is it really for Him?
7:7 *Is it not the words which the LORD proclaimed by the hand of the former prophets* God sends them back to the old sermons. Isaiah had answered this before the exile: the fast God wants is to set the oppressed free (Isa 58:3-6). "For steadfast love I desire, and not sacrifice" (Hos 6:6). They did not need a new word. They needed to obey the old one.
7:9 *Judge a judgment of truth, and do steadfast love and compassion, each man with his brother* Be honest and fair in court and in every decision. Steadfast love is hesed, loyal covenant love, and compassion is tender mercy. God wants His people to treat one another as He treats them (Mic 6:8).
7:10 *do not oppress the widow and the fatherless, the sojourner and the poor* Four with no one to stand up for them: no husband, no father, no family or land, no money. God watches over them and judges those who exploit them (Exod 22:21-24; Deut 10:18). He looks at our hearts too. Do not even plan harm. True religion visits "orphans and widows in their tribulation" (James 1:27).
7:12 *they made their heart flint* Flint is among the hardest stones. They did this to themselves, one refusal at a time. The prophets spoke by God's Spirit, not their own ideas (2 Pet 1:21), so to reject them was to reject God.
7:13 *just as He called and they did not listen, so they would call and I would not listen* A sobering principle. There comes a time when it is too late (Prov 1:24-28). "Do not harden your hearts" (Heb 3:8).
7:14 *they made the land of desire into a waste* God scattered them like a whirlwind into strange lands. The good land everyone wanted became a wasteland through their sin. The real issue was not the calendar but the heart.
8:2 *I am jealous for Zion with great jealousy* The first of ten sayings in this chapter beginning Thus says the LORD. His jealousy is burning, protective love that will not share His people with idols (1:14).
8:3 *Jerusalem will be called "the City of Truth,"* God had left His temple in Ezekiel's day (Ezek 10:18-19; 11:23). Now He returns. The city of lies and false prophets will be called the City of Truth, and the Mountain of Holiness, set apart and pure. It was not so in Zechariah's day, when it rejected Jesus, or today. I believe this will be fully true when Christ returns and reigns there (14:9-11, 20-21).
8:4 *Old men and old women will again sit in the open squares of Jerusalem* The open squares near the gates were public meeting places. In war, the old and young die first (Lam 2:11, 21). Here the old live long and rest in the sun, as Isaiah describes the kingdom (Isa 65:20).
8:5 *boys and girls playing in its open squares* God promises not only a temple but ordinary joys, grandparents resting and children laughing without fear. He cares about the simple happiness of everyday life.

girls playing in its open squares.' **6** Thus says the LORD of armies: 'If it is too wonderful in the eyes of the remnant of this people in those days, will it also be too wonderful in My eyes?' declares the LORD of armies. **7** Thus says the LORD of armies: 'Look, I am saving My people from the land of ***the*** east and from the land of the setting of the sun; **8** and I will bring them, and they will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; and they will be My people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness.' **9** Thus says the LORD of armies: 'Let your hands be strong, you who are hearing in these days these words from the mouth of the prophets who ***were present*** on the day the house of the LORD of armies was founded, ***that*** the temple ***might*** be built. **10** For before those days ***there*** was no wage for man, and ***there*** was no wage for the animal; and for the one going out and for the one coming in ***there*** was no peace from the adversary; and I sent all men, each man against his neighbor. **11** And now I ***will*** not ***be*** to the remnant of this people as in the former days,' declares the LORD of armies. **12** 'For ***there will be*** the seed of peace: the vine will give its fruit, and the land will give its produce, and the heavens will give their dew; and I will cause the remnant of this people to inherit all these. **13** And it will be ***that*** just as you were a curse among the nations, O house of Judah (Yehuda) and house of Israel (Yisra'el), so I will save you, and you will be a blessing. Do not be afraid; let your hands be strong.' **14** For thus says the LORD of armies: 'Just as I planned to do harm to you when your fathers provoked Me to anger,' says the LORD of armies, 'and I did not relent, **15** so I have again planned in these days to do good to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. Do not be afraid. **16** These ***are*** the things that you shall do: speak truth, each man with his neighbor; judge truth and a judgment of peace in your gates; **17** and each man, do not devise in your heart the evil ***against*** his neighbor, and do not love an oath of falsehood; for all these ***are what*** I hate,' declares the LORD." **18** And the word of the LORD of armies came to me, saying, **19** "Thus says the LORD of armies: 'The fast of the fourth ***month*** and the fast of the fifth and the fast of the seventh and the fast of the tenth will become for the house of Judah joy and gladness and good appointed times; and love the truth and the peace.' **20** Thus says the LORD of armies: '***It will*** yet ***be*** that peoples will come, and the inhabitants of many cities; **21** and the inhabitants of one ***city*** will go to another, saying, "Let us surely go to entreat the face of the LORD and to seek the LORD of armies. Let me go, even I." **22** And many peoples and mighty nations will come to seek the LORD of armies in Jerusalem and to entreat the face of the LORD.' **23** Thus says the LORD of armies: 'In those days ten men from all the tongues of the nations will take hold, and they will take hold of the corner ***of the robe*** of a Jewish man, saying, "Let us go with you, for we have heard ***that*** God ***is*** with you."'"

ZECHARIAH 9

Judgment on Israel's Neighbors

1 The oracle of the word of the LORD ***is*** against the land of Hadrach (Chadrakh), and Damascus (Dameseq) ***is*** its resting place; for the eye of mankind and of all the tribes of Israel

8:6 Jer 32:17,27; Gen 18:14; Num 11:22,23
8:7 Isa 27:12,13; Isa 49:12; Ps 107:2,3
8:8 2 Cor 6:16; Rev 21:7; 2 Cor 6:17
8:9 1 Chr 22:13; Isa 35:4; Ezra 5:1,2
8:10 Hag 2:16-18; Isa 19:2; Amos 3:6
8:11 Isa 12:1; Hag 2:19; Zech 8:8,9
8:12 Lev 26:4,5; Gen 27:28; Deut 33:13,28
8:13 Zech 8:9; Jer 29:18; Jer 42:18
8:14 Jer 31:28; Ezek 24:14; Jer 4:28
8:15 Zech 8:13; Mic 7:18-20; Jer 29:11-14
8:16 Eph 4:25; Zech 7:9; Ps 15:2
8:17 Zech 7:10; Prov 3:29; Prov 6:16-19
8:19 Jer 39:2; Zech 7:5; Zech 8:16
8:20 Acts 3:19; Acts 15:17; Zech 2:11
8:21 Acts 3:19; Acts 15:17; Zech 7:2
8:22 Acts 3:19; Rev 3:9; Isa 25:7
8:23 Acts 15:17; Rev 3:9; 1 Cor 14:25
9:1 Jer 49:23-27; Amos 1:3-5; Isa 13:1

8:6 *will it also be too wonderful in My eyes?* Too wonderful means too hard to believe. The remnant looked at their little town and thought it could never happen. God asked Sarah's question, "Is anything too wonderful for the LORD?" (Gen 18:14; Jer 32:17). What promise seems too good to you?
8:8 *they will be My people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness* East and west mean everywhere. The heart of God's covenant with Israel (Exod 6:7; Jer 31:33). I believe it reaches to the end of the age, when God gathers Israel from all nations to their land (Ezek 36:24-28; Rom 11:26). Partial returns in history are signs that He is not finished.
8:13 *just as you were a curse among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so I will save you, and you will be a blessing* Nations used Judah's name in curses (Jer 24:9). God would turn it around, as He first promised Abraham: "in you all the families of the earth will be blessed" (Gen 12:3). He speaks of both houses. He has not forgotten the northern tribes.
8:15 *so I have again planned in these days to do good to Jerusalem* The God who kept His word in judgment will keep it in blessing. If He was faithful to His warnings, He will be faithful to His promises.
8:16 *speak truth, each man with his neighbor* Blessing does not mean living however we want. Paul quotes this (Eph 4:25). The gates were where the elders judged. Their rulings should be true and bring peace.
8:17 *for all these are what I hate* Scheming and lying under oath. The same standards as the former prophets (7:9-10). God's standards do not change. The City of Truth needs people of truth.
8:19 *The fast of the fourth month and the fast of the fifth and the fast of the seventh and the fast of the tenth will become for the house of Judah joy and gladness* At last the answer to Bethel (7:3). Four fasts marked the siege (2 Kgs 25:1), the broken walls (Jer 39:2), the burned temple and Gedaliah's murder. God would turn mourning into joy (Jer 31:13). Jesus said His disciples would fast after the Bridegroom was taken (Matt 9:15), but when He comes again, mourning turns to joy.
8:21 *Let us surely go to entreat the face of the LORD and to seek the LORD of armies. Let me go, even I.* One city will invite another, and no one will want to be left out (Isa 2:3; Mic 4:2).
8:22 *many peoples and mighty nations will come to seek the LORD of armies in Jerusalem* Jerusalem was a small town the nations ignored. This began when the gospel went out from Jerusalem (Luke 24:47; Acts 1:8). I believe the full picture is Christ's kingdom, when the nations go up year by year to worship the King (14:16).
8:23 *they will take hold of the corner of the robe of a Jewish man, saying, "Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you."* Ten men means many, from every language. The corner of the robe bore the tassels that reminded Israel of God's commands (Num 15:38-39). The Jewish people, long scorned, will be sought out because God is with them. "Salvation is from the Jews" (John 4:22). This is not the church replacing Israel, but God keeping His promise to Israel and blessing the nations through them (Rom 11:1-2, 25-29).
9:1 *The oracle of the word of the LORD is against the land of Hadrach, and Damascus is its resting place* An oracle is a weighty message, a burden. Chapters 9-11 are the first oracle and 12-14 the second (12:1). Hadrach was in northern Syria, and Damascus its capital, where God's word would settle in judgment. Either all eyes will turn to the LORD, or His eye is on all people. Nothing happens outside His sight.

(Yisra'el) ***is*** toward the LORD; **2** and also Hamath (Chamat), ***which*** borders on it; Tyre (Tsor) and Sidon (Tsidon), for she is very wise. **3** And Tyre built for herself a fortress, and she heaped up silver like the dust, and gold like the mud of ***the*** streets. **4** Look, the Lord will dispossess her, and He will strike her wealth in the sea, and she will be consumed by the fire. **5** Ashkelon (Ashqelon) will see ***it*** and be afraid, and Gaza (Aza), and she will writhe exceedingly, and Ekron (Eqron), for her confidence has been put to shame. And a king will perish from Gaza, and Ashkelon will not be inhabited. **6** And a mixed people will dwell in Ashdod, and I will cut off the pride of ***the*** Philistines. **7** And I will remove his blood from his mouth and his detestable things from between his teeth; and he also will be left for our God, and he will be like a chief in Judah (Yehuda), and Ekron like a Jebusite. **8** And I will encamp at My house ***as*** a guard, against the one passing through and against the one returning; and an oppressor will not pass over them again, for now I have seen with My eyes.

Your King Comes to You

9 Rejoice exceedingly, O daughter of Zion (Tsiyon)! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem (Yerushalayim)! Look, your King comes to you; He ***is*** righteous and saved, lowly and riding on a donkey, and on a colt, a son of female donkeys. **10** And I will cut off chariotry from Ephraim (Efrayim) and ***the*** horse from Jerusalem, and the bow of war will be cut off; and He will speak peace to the nations, and His rule ***will be*** from sea to sea, and from ***the*** River to the ends of ***the*** earth. **11** Also you, by the blood of your covenant I have set free your prisoners from a pit ***in*** which ***there is*** no water. **12** Return to the stronghold, O prisoners of the hope; even today ***I am*** declaring ***that*** I will restore double to you. **13** For I will bend Judah for Myself ***as*** a bow; I will fill ***it with*** Ephraim; and I will stir up your sons, O Zion, against your sons, O Greece (Yavan), and I will make you like the sword of a mighty man. **14** And the LORD will appear over them, and His arrow will go out like the lightning; and the Lord GOD will blow on the ram's horn, and He will go in the storm winds of ***the*** south. **15** The LORD of armies will defend them, and they will eat and subdue the stones of a sling; and they will drink ***and*** be loud as ***with*** wine, and they will be full like the bowl, like the corners of an altar. **16** And the LORD their God will save them on that day as the flock of His people; for ***they are*** the stones of a crown, lifting themselves up over His land. **17** For how ***great is*** His goodness, and how ***great is*** His beauty! Grain will make the young men flourish, and new wine the virgins.

9:2 Matt 11:22; Acts 27:3; Jer 49:23
9:3 Matt 11:22; Josh 19:29; Job 27:16
9:4 Ezek 28:18; Ezek 26:17; Prov 10:2
9:5 Acts 8:26; Rev 18:9; Isa 14:29-31
9:6 Amos 1:8; Eccl 2:18-21; Eccl 6:2
9:7 1 Sam 17:34-36; Ps 3:7; Ps 58:6
9:8 Isa 52:1; Isa 54:14; Isa 60:18
9:9 Matt 21:4-5; Matt 21:7; Mark 11:7
9:10 Rom 15:9; Matt 21:5; Luke 1:71
9:11 Matt 26:28; Mark 14:24; Heb 9:19
9:12 Lam 3:21,22; Job 42:10; Jer 51:10
9:13 Acts 20:2; Zech 10:3-7; Ps 45:3
9:14 Rev 14:2; Isa 21:1; Ps 18:14
9:15 Acts 2:18; Zech 10:5; Zech 12:6
9:16 Isa 62:3; Ps 100:3; Isa 40:10
9:17 Isa 33:17; Isa 62:8,9; Ps 31:19

9:2 *Tyre and Sidon, for she is very wise* The great Phoenician seaports, shrewd in trade. Worldly wisdom cannot save a city from God. The route from Syria down the coast to Philistia follows Alexander the Great, who took Damascus, destroyed Tyre and took Gaza in 333 and 332 B.C. That is a fair reading of the first fulfillment.
9:3 *she heaped up silver like the dust, and gold like the mud of the streets* Tyre stood partly on an island half a mile offshore, walled from the water. Nebuchadnezzar besieged it thirteen years without fully taking the island city. Its trade made it rich beyond measure (Ezek 27).
9:4 *He will strike her wealth in the sea, and she will be consumed by the fire* To dispossess is to take away her property and drive her out. Alexander built a causeway to the island, broke the walls after seven months and burned the city. Walls and wealth could not save her.
9:5 *a king will perish from Gaza, and Ashkelon will not be inhabited* When mighty Tyre fell, the Philistine cities trembled, their hope that Tyre would stop the invader gone. Gaza held out two months against Alexander, and its commander was put to death.
9:7 *he also will be left for our God, and he will be like a chief in Judah, and Ekron like a Jebusite* The blood and detestable things were meat with blood and food offered to idols (Lev 17:10-12). God would end their idolatry. Then a surprise: some Philistines would turn to the LORD. The Jebusites,
Jerusalem's old inhabitants, were absorbed into Israel (2 Sam 24:18-24). Even bitter enemies would be counted among God's people.
9:8 *I will encamp at My house as a guard* While armies marched along the coast, God guarded His house, and Jerusalem was not destroyed when Alexander passed. But it has been oppressed many times since. The full promise that no oppressor will pass over them again waits for Christ's kingdom (14:11).
9:9 *Look, your King comes to you; He is righteous and saved* Israel had no king since 586 B.C. Now their own King, the Son of David, is coming to Jerusalem. He is righteous, without sin (Jer 23:5). Saved can mean victorious, delivered by God, or bringing salvation. He comes with God's saving power.
9:9 *lowly and riding on a donkey, and on a colt, a son of female donkeys* Lowly means humble and gentle (Matt 11:29; Phil 2:8). A conqueror rode a war horse. A donkey was an animal of peace, ridden by early judges and kings (Judg 10:4; 1 Kgs 1:33). Donkey and colt is Hebrew poetry, saying it twice. Jesus fulfilled it exactly, and Matthew quotes it: "Look, your King comes to you, gentle and mounted on a donkey" (Matt 21:5; John 12:15). Many wanted a warrior against Rome. He came lowly, on His way to a cross. Have you welcomed Him as He really is?
9:10 *His rule will be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth* Ephraim and Jerusalem stand for all twelve tribes, who will lay down their weapons. The River is the Euphrates (Gen 15:18), and the words echo Ps 72:8. Verse 9 came true when Jesus rode into Jerusalem. Verse 10 has not yet. The prophets saw both comings like two peaks with a valley between (Isa 9:6-7). He will come again on a white horse (Rev 19:11-16) and speak peace to the nations (14:9).
9:11 *by the blood of your covenant I have set free your prisoners from a pit in which there is no water* At Sinai Moses sprinkled "the blood of the covenant" (Exod 24:8). A dry cistern served as a prison for Joseph and Jeremiah (Gen 37:24; Jer 38:6). Jesus said, "this is My blood, the blood of the new covenant" (Matt 26:28). By His blood prisoners of sin go free.
9:12 *Return to the stronghold, O prisoners of the hope* What a name. Still captives, but bound to a hope that cannot fail. The stronghold may be Jerusalem or God Himself. Double means a full, generous blessing (Isa 61:7).
9:13 *I will stir up your sons, O Zion, against your sons, O Greece* Judah the bow and Ephraim the arrow, north and south united in God's hand. Greece did not yet rule Israel. Later the Greek king Antiochus IV defiled the temple, and the Maccabees defeated his armies and cleansed it in 164 B.C. Many see that as the first fulfillment (Dan 8:21-25; 11:21-35).
9:16 *they are the stones of a crown, lifting themselves up over His land* God the Warrior is also God the Shepherd, saving His flock. His people are like jewels shining in a crown, precious to Him (Mal 3:17).
9:17 *how great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty!* Some read this of God's goodness and beauty, others of the land and people He blesses. Either way the chapter ends in wonder, with plenty for the young in the kingdom.

ZECHARIAH 10

The LORD Gathers His People

1 Ask rain from the LORD in the time of ***the*** latter rain; the LORD makes the storm clouds, and He will give them showers of rain, to each man vegetation in the field. **2** For the teraphim speak wickedness, and the diviners see falsehood, and they speak dreams of worthlessness; they comfort ***with*** futility. Therefore they have wandered like sheep; they are afflicted, for ***there is*** no shepherd. **3** My anger has burned against the shepherds, and on the male goats I will visit ***punishment***; for the LORD of armies has visited His flock, the house of Judah (Yehuda), and He will make them like His horse of majesty in the battle. **4** From him ***will come*** a cornerstone, from him a tent peg, from him a bow of war; from him every ruler will go out together. **5** And they will be like mighty men, treading in the mud of ***the*** streets in the battle; and they will fight, for the LORD ***is*** with them, and they will put to shame the riders of horses. **6** And I will make strong the house of Judah, and the house of Joseph (Yosef) I will save, and I will bring them back, for I have compassion on them; and they will be as ***though*** I had not rejected them; for I ***am*** the LORD their God, and I will answer them. **7** And Ephraim (Efrayim) will be like a mighty man, and their heart will be glad as ***with*** wine; and their sons will see ***it*** and be glad; let their heart rejoice in the LORD. **8** Let Me whistle for them and gather them, for I have ransomed them; and they will become many as they were many. **9** And I will sow them among the peoples, and in the far places they will remember Me; and they will live with their sons, and they will return. **10** And I will bring them back from the land of Egypt (Mitsrayim), and from Assyria (Ashur) I will gather them; and to the land of Gilead (Gilad) and Lebanon (Levanon) I will bring them, and ***room*** will not be found for them. **11** And He will pass through the sea ***of*** distress, and He will strike the waves in the sea, and all the depths of ***the*** Nile (Ye'or) will dry up; and the pride of Assyria will be brought down, and the scepter of Egypt will depart. **12** And I will make them strong in the LORD, and in His name they will walk about, declares the LORD.

ZECHARIAH 11

The Rejected Shepherd

1 Open your doors, O Lebanon (Levanon), and let fire devour among your cedars. **2** Wail, O cypress, for the cedar has fallen, because the majestic ***ones*** have been devastated. Wail, O oaks of Bashan, for the forest of the vintage has come down. **3** The sound of the wailing of the shepherds! For their splendor has been devastated. The sound of the roaring of young lions! For the pride of the Jordan (Yarden) has been devastated. **4** Thus says the LORD my God: "Shepherd the

10:1 Matt 7:7; Isa 30:23; Jer 14:22
10:2 Ezek 34:5,8; Hos 3:4; Matt 9:36
10:3 Ezek 34:16,17,20,21; Zeph 2:7; Zech 11:5-8,17
10:4 1 Pet 2:6; Rev 19:14; Rev 19:15
10:5 Hag 2:22; Ps 20:7; Zech 9:13
10:6 Zech 13:9; Zech 10:12; Jer 3:18
10:7 Acts 2:26; Phil 4:4; Acts 2:17
10:8 Matt 11:28; Isa 5:26; Isa 7:18
10:9 Acts 13:2; Acts 13:17; Acts 13:26
10:10 Hos 11:11; Mic 7:14; Zech 8:7
10:11 Rom 11:26; Ezek 30:13; Ps 66:10-12
10:12 Eph 6:10; Col 3:17; Mic 4:5
11:1 Jer 22:6,7,23; Luke 21:23,24; Zech 10:10
11:2 Isa 2:12-17; Isa 10:33,34; Ezek 31:2,3,17
11:3 Jer 50:44; Jer 25:34-36; Zech 11:8,15-17
11:4 John 21:16; Zech 11:7; Zech 14:5

10:1 *Ask rain from the LORD in the time of the latter rain* The early rain fell at planting in the fall, and the latter rain in March and April swelled the grain (Deut 11:14; James 5:7). The Canaanites credited Baal, their storm god. God says, ask Me. Jesus taught us to pray, "Give us today our daily bread" (Matt 6:11). Do you ask God for ordinary needs?
10:2 *they have wandered like sheep; they are afflicted, for there is no shepherd* Teraphim were household idols used for guidance (Gen 31:19; Judg 17:5), and diviners read omens, forbidden by the Law (Deut 18:10-12). Their comfort was worthless. Jesus saw crowds "like sheep not having a shepherd" (Matt 9:36). People still seek guidance from horoscopes and psychics. Only God's Word gives true guidance.
10:3 *My anger has burned against the shepherds, and on the male goats I will visit punishment* The shepherds were kings, princes, priests and false prophets. The male goats were the strong, pushy leaders (Ezek 34:17). God would care for the sheep Himself through one Shepherd, "My servant David" (Ezek 34:23), Jesus, "the good shepherd" (John 10:14). He turns wandering sheep into His horse of majesty in battle.
10:4 *From him will come a cornerstone, from him a tent peg, from him a bow of war* From Judah. A cornerstone holds the building in line, a tent peg holds firm and bears weight (Isa 22:23), and a bow wins battles. Many see the Messiah from Judah (Gen 49:10), "Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone" (Eph 2:20). Others read good leaders for Judah in general. Both fit, and the best Leader from Judah is Christ.
10:6 *the house of Joseph I will save* Joseph, or Ephraim, is the northern kingdom, taken by Assyria in 722 B.C., two centuries before. Many thought it gone for good. God would bring them back out of compassion, as though He had never rejected them. Ezekiel saw two sticks joined into one, Israel one nation under one King (Ezek 37:15-22). This has not yet happened in full. I believe it will when Christ returns.
10:8 *Let Me whistle for them and gather them, for I have ransomed them* A shepherd or beekeeper whistles and they come. God needs only to whistle. To ransom is to pay the price to set a captive free, as at the exodus. They would grow many as they did in Egypt (Exod 1:7).
10:9 *I will sow them among the peoples, and in the far places they will remember Me* God calls the scattering a sowing. Seed is scattered to grow. The Jewish people have survived as a people through nearly two thousand years of scattering, while many great ancient nations disappeared. God said they would.
10:10 *I will bring them back from the land of Egypt, and from Assyria I will gather them* The two old oppressors stand for all the lands of exile (Isa 11:11). Gilead and Lebanon mark the borders of the promised land. So many will return that there will not be room.
10:11 *He will pass through the sea of distress* The language of the exodus. Whatever sea of trouble stands between His people and home, He will strike it. The second exodus will be greater than the first (Jer 16:14-15).
10:12 *I will make them strong in the LORD, and in His name they will walk about* Their strength would not be their own but in the LORD, living under His authority. "Be empowered in the Lord" (Eph 6:10). Whatever God calls us to, He gives the strength to do.
11:1 *Open your doors, O Lebanon, and let fire devour among your cedars* Lebanon's cedars were the finest wood in the ancient world. If the mighty cedar falls, the smaller cypress is next, and the oaks of Bashan east of the Sea of Galilee. Trees in the prophets often stand for proud rulers and nations (Isa 10:33-34).
11:3 *the pride of the Jordan has been devastated* The thick growth along the Jordan where lions lived (Jer 49:19). Judgment sweeps the whole land. Many believe this describes what followed Israel's rejection of the Shepherd in this chapter, Rome's destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, which Jesus foretold (Luke 19:44). Others see a general picture of judgment on the land and its leaders.
11:4 *Shepherd the flock of the slaughter* God tells Zechariah to act as a shepherd, who feeds, leads and protects sheep. But this flock was marked for slaughter.

flock of the slaughter, **5** whose buyers kill them and are not held guilty, and ***each of*** their sellers says, 'Blessed ***be*** the LORD, and I have become rich!' And their shepherds do not have pity on them. **6** For I will no longer have pity on the inhabitants of the land," declares the LORD. "And look, I am handing over mankind, each man into the hand of his neighbor and into the hand of his king; and they will crush the land, and I will not deliver ***it*** from their hand." **7** And I shepherded the flock of the slaughter, therefore the afflicted of the flock. And I took for myself two staffs; one I called Favor, and one I called Union; and I shepherded the flock. **8** And I destroyed the three shepherds in one month; and my soul was impatient with them, and their soul also loathed me. **9** And I said, "I will not shepherd you. The dying one, let it die; and the one being destroyed, let it be destroyed; and those who are left, let them devour, each one the flesh of her neighbor." **10** And I took my staff Favor and cut it in pieces, to break my covenant which I had made with all the peoples. **11** And it was broken on that day; and so the afflicted of the flock who were watching me knew that it ***was*** the word of the LORD. **12** And I said to them, "If ***it is*** good in your eyes, give ***me*** my wage; and if not, refrain." And they weighed out my wage, thirty ***pieces of*** silver. **13** And the LORD said to me, "Throw it to the potter, the magnificent price at which I was priced by them." And I took the thirty ***pieces of*** silver and threw it ***into*** the house of the LORD, to the potter. **14** And I cut in pieces my second staff, Union, to break the brotherhood between Judah (Yehuda) and Israel (Yisra'el). **15** And the LORD said to me, "Take again for yourself the equipment of a foolish shepherd. **16** For look, I am raising up a shepherd in the land; those being destroyed he will not visit, the young he will not seek, and the broken he will not heal, the one standing he will not sustain; and the flesh of the fat he will devour, and their hooves he will tear off. **17** Woe ***to*** the worthless shepherd, who abandons the flock! A sword ***will be*** on his arm and on his right eye! His arm will surely wither, and his right eye will surely grow dim."

ZECHARIAH 12

Jerusalem Saved and the One They Pierced

1 The oracle of the word of the LORD concerning Israel (Yisra'el). Declares the LORD, who stretches out ***the*** heavens and founds ***the*** earth and forms the spirit of man within him: **2** "Look, I am making Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) a cup of reeling to all the peoples around; and also against Judah

11:5 Rev 3:17; Jer 50:7; Hos 12:8
11:6 Luke 21:23; Luke 21:24; Jer 13:14
11:7 Mark 12:37; Zech 11:4,11; Isa 11:4
11:8 Isa 49:7; Hos 5:7; Matt 23:34-36
11:9 Rev 22:11; Acts 28:28; Jer 43:11
11:10 Heb 8:9; Heb 8:10; Heb 8:11
11:11 Luke 4:18; Rom 11:8; Zeph 3:12
11:12 Matt 26:15; Matt 27:9; Luke 24:44
11:13 Matt 26:15; Matt 27:10; Acts 1:18,19
11:14 Isa 9:21; Zech 11:9; Isa 11:13
11:15 Isa 6:10-12; Jer 2:26,27; Lam 2:14
11:16 Jer 23:2,22; Ezek 34:2-6,16; Matt 23:2-4,13-29
11:17 Matt 23:16; Luke 11:43; Luke 11:44
12:1 Heb 1:10; Isa 42:5; Jer 51:15
12:2 Zech 14:14; Ps 75:8; Isa 51:17,22,23

11:5 *Blessed be the LORD, and I have become rich!* The buyers were foreign rulers. The sellers were Israel's own leaders, selling out their people for profit and blessing God for it. That is hypocrisy at its worst, using God's name to bless greed.
11:6 *each man into the hand of his neighbor and into the hand of his king* God's long patience would end. At Jesus' trial the chief priests said, "We have no king except Caesar" (John 19:15). Within forty years Caesar's armies crushed the land.
11:7 *one I called Favor, and one I called Union* Zechariah took special care of the afflicted of the flock, who would recognize his work (11:11). A shepherd carried a rod and staff (Ps 23:4). Favor means grace, God's protection. Union means bonds, the unity of His people. Jesus gave special care to the poor and outcast (Luke 4:18), and the common people heard Him gladly (Mark 12:37).
11:8 *I destroyed the three shepherds in one month* One of the hardest verses in the Old Testament, with dozens of suggested answers: three short-reigning kings, the offices of prophet, priest and king, or the priests, elders and scribes of Jesus' day. We do not know for sure. Then the tragedy: the flock loathed its good shepherd. "His own people did not receive Him" (John 1:11).
11:9 *I will not shepherd you* Because they rejected him, he gave them up to what they chose. In the Roman siege of A.D. 70 the people suffered famine and fought among themselves.
11:10 *I took my staff Favor and cut it in pieces, to break my covenant which I had made with all the peoples* God had in a sense held the nations back from destroying Israel. Now that protection was broken. The humble sheep who watched understood it was God's word, as Jesus' disciples understood when He said Jerusalem's house would be left desolate (Matt 23:37-38).
11:12 *they weighed out my wage, thirty pieces of silver* Pay me if I am worth it, he said. Money was weighed, and thirty shekels was about twelve ounces of silver, the price paid when an ox gored a slave to death (Exod 21:32). They valued their shepherd, and so their God, at the price of a dead slave. It would have been better to pay nothing.
11:13 *Throw it to the potter, the magnificent price at which I was priced by them* The shepherd's price is God's price: "I was priced." The magnificent price is bitter sarcasm. Throw it to the potter means it is fit only for a worker in cheap clay. Judas was paid "thirty silver coins" (Matt 26:15), threw them into the temple, and the priests "bought with them the field of the potter" (Matt 27:7). Every detail matches.
11:13 *I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw it into the house of the LORD, to the potter* Matthew credits Jeremiah (Matt 27:9). Most likely he combined two prophecies under the more important name, as Mark joined Malachi and Isaiah under Isaiah (Mark 1:2-3). Jeremiah visited the potter, spoke judgment in the valley of Hinnom where the potter's field lay, and bought a field (Jer 18:1-4; 19:1-11; 32:6-9). Others note Jeremiah sometimes stood first among the prophets. Matthew made no mistake.
11:14 *to break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel* After rejecting Jesus, the nation was torn by bitter factions even while Rome surrounded Jerusalem, and the city was "trampled by the nations" (Luke 21:24). But God promised to reunite Judah and Joseph (10:6; Ezek 37:15-22). What was broken when the Shepherd was rejected will be mended when He is received (12:10).
11:16 *the flesh of the fat he will devour, and their hooves he will tear off* Because they rejected the good shepherd, God would let them have a bad one who neglects every needy sheep and uses the flock for himself.
11:17 *Woe to the worthless shepherd, who abandons the flock!* The arm is his strength, the eye his understanding, and God will destroy both. Many believe this points to the final false shepherd, the man of lawlessness and the beast (2 Thess 2:3-4; Rev 13). "If another comes in his own name, him you will receive" (John 5:43). He will make and break a covenant with Israel (Dan 9:27), and Christ will destroy him at His coming (2 Thess 2:8). Whom are you following?
12:1 *The oracle of the word of the LORD concerning Israel* The second oracle (9:1). The God who stretched out the heavens and formed the human spirit can do what He promises, and can change hearts, as verse 10 will show.
12:2 *I am making Jerusalem a cup of reeling to all the peoples around* Strong drink that makes the drinker stagger. The nations who come against Jerusalem will stumble in confusion (Isa 51:17-23).

(Yehuda) it will be, in the siege against Jerusalem. **3** And it will be on that day ***that*** I will make Jerusalem a stone of burden for all the peoples; all who lift it will surely be gashed; and all the nations of the earth will be gathered against it. **4** On that day," declares the LORD, "I will strike every horse with bewilderment and its rider with madness; and over the house of Judah I will open My eyes, and every horse of the peoples I will strike with blindness. **5** And the chiefs of Judah will say in their heart, 'The inhabitants of Jerusalem ***are*** strength to me in the LORD of armies their God.' **6** On that day I will make the chiefs of Judah like a pot of fire among wood and like a torch of fire among sheaves; and they will devour, on the right and on the left, all the peoples around; and Jerusalem will again dwell in her place, in Jerusalem. **7** And the LORD will save the tents of Judah first, so that the splendor of the house of David and the splendor of the inhabitants of Jerusalem will not become great above Judah. **8** On that day the LORD will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and the one who stumbles among them on that day will be like David, and the house of David like God, like the angel of the LORD before them. **9** And it will be on that day ***that*** I will seek to destroy all the nations that are coming against Jerusalem. **10** And I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplications; and they will look to Me, ***to Him*** whom they have pierced; and they will mourn over Him like a mourning over the only ***son***, and ***they will*** show bitterness over Him as ***one*** shows bitterness over the firstborn. **11** On that day the mourning in Jerusalem will be great, like the mourning of Hadad-rimmon (Hadadrimon) in the plain of Megiddo (Megido). **12** And the land will mourn, clans ***by*** clans alone: the clan of the house of David alone, and their wives alone; the clan of the house of Nathan (Natan) alone, and their wives alone; **13** the clan of the house of Levi alone, and their wives alone; the clan of the Shimeites alone, and their wives alone; **14** all the clans that remain, clans ***by*** clans alone, and their wives alone."

ZECHARIAH 13

A Fountain for Sin

1 On that day there will be a fountain opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem

12:3 Rev 19:19; Matt 21:44; Zech 14:2,3,4,6,8,9,13
12:4 Deut 28:28; Isa 24:21; Zech 10:5
12:5 Ps 18:32,39; Isa 28:6; Judg 5:9
12:6 Rev 19:19; Obad 1:18; Zech 2:4,12
12:7 Zech 4:6; Zech 11:11; Isa 2:11-17
12:8 Acts 7:30; Rom 1:3; Rev 22:16
12:9 Zech 12:2; Isa 54:17; Hag 2:22
12:10 John 19:37; Rev 1:7; Acts 10:45
12:11 Rev 16:16; 2 Kgs 23:29; 2 Chr 35:24
12:12 Luke 3:31; Matt 24:30; Rev 1:7
12:13 Exod 6:16-26; Num 3:1-4; Mal 2:4-9
12:14 Prov 9:12
13:1 John 1:29; Acts 2:36; Ps 51:2,7

12:3 *I will make Jerusalem a stone of burden for all the peoples* A heavy stone, perhaps like those in ancient lifting contests. Whoever lifts it is hurt. Armies have come against Jerusalem many times, but never yet all the nations of the earth. I believe this describes the end of the Tribulation, when the nations gather at what the Bible calls Armageddon (Rev 16:14-16; 19:19; Joel 3:2; Zech 14:2). Even now a small city draws the whole world's attention.
12:4 *I will strike every horse with bewilderment and its rider with madness* Horses were an army's strength. God will throw the enemy into panic, as in Israel's old battles (Judg 7:22; 2 Chr 20:22-23). His eyes will be open over Judah while the enemy is blind.
12:6 *like a pot of fire among wood and like a torch of fire among sheaves* A pan of burning coals in a woodpile sets everything alight. God will make His people powerful against their enemies, and Jerusalem will again dwell in her place.
12:7 *the LORD will save the tents of Judah first* The country homes outside the walls are saved first, so that neither David's house nor Jerusalem can boast over the rest. God saves in a way that keeps everyone humble.
12:8 *the one who stumbles among them on that day will be like David, and the house of David like God, like the angel of the LORD before them* The weakest will be like the warrior who killed Goliath. The angel of God went before Israel at the exodus (Exod 14:19; 23:20). Many see a hint of the Son of David, who is God, leading His people.
12:9 *I will seek to destroy all the nations that are coming against Jerusalem* God sets Himself to destroy the armies gathered against His city. The LORD will go out and fight (14:3), as Christ returns to destroy the armies of the beast (Rev 19:11-21).
12:10 *I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplications* Grace is undeserved favor, and supplications are humble prayers for mercy. This may be the Holy Spirit (Ezek 39:29; Joel 2:28) or a new heart that receives grace and cries to God. Israel will not turn on its own. God will turn their hearts, as He promised: "I will give you a new heart" (Ezek 36:26).
12:10 *they will look to Me, to Him whom they have pierced* The LORD speaks. How can God, who is spirit, be pierced? Unless God became a man. A soldier "pierced His side with a spear" (John 19:34), and John quotes Zechariah: "They will look on Him whom they pierced" (John 19:37). Look to Me, then mourn over Him: the pierced One is the LORD yet distinct, fitting the Father and the Son.
12:10 *they will mourn over Him like a mourning over the only son* No grief is like losing an only son or firstborn heir (Amos 8:10). A first fulfillment came at the cross and at Pentecost, when hearers "were pierced in the heart" (Acts 2:37). The full fulfillment is ahead: "every eye will see Him, and those who pierced Him" (Rev 1:7; Matt 24:29-30). I believe Israel as a nation will turn to Jesus at the end of the Tribulation when He returns, and "so all Israel will be saved" (Rom 11:25-26).
12:11 *like the mourning of Hadad-rimmon in the plain of Megiddo* Most believe this is the mourning for Josiah, Judah's last good king, killed at Megiddo in 609 B.C. and lamented for generations (2 Chr 35:22-25). Hadad-rimmon was likely a place nearby. Some suggest a pagan god's yearly mourning, but Josiah fits much better. Josiah died for his own mistake. Jesus, the perfect King, died for His people's sins.
12:12 *the clan of the house of David alone, and their wives alone; the clan of the house of Nathan alone* National mourning, yet each family alone. Nathan was David's son, through whom Luke traces Jesus' line (Luke 3:31). Levi was the priestly tribe and Shimei Levi's grandson (Num 3:17-18). Those who led in rejecting Christ lead in mourning Him.
12:14 *all the clans that remain, clans by clans alone, and their wives alone* Even husbands and wives mourn apart. No one can repent for someone else. You cannot be saved by your family's or church's faith. "He was pierced for our transgressions" (Isa 53:5), and godly grief "produces repentance to salvation without regret" (2 Cor 7:10). Have you looked to Him? The answer to that grief is the fountain of 13:1.
13:1 *On that day there will be a fountain opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for impurity* The day of 12:10. A fountain keeps flowing and never runs dry. The Law's water of impurity cleansed only the outside, for a time (Num 19:9). This cleanses the heart (Ezek 36:25). It is the cleansing of Christ's death: "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). Opened at the cross, it has flowed ever since, and on that day the nation will be washed in it.
13:1 *for sin and for impurity* Sin is wrongdoing against God, and impurity the uncleanness it leaves. Notice the order: mourning over sin (12:10-14), then cleansing. God never leaves a repentant sinner in his tears. If you have grieved over your sin, come to the fountain (1 John 1:9).

(Yerushalayim), for sin and for impurity. **2** And it will be on that day, declares the LORD of armies, ***that*** I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, and they will no longer be remembered; and also the prophets and the spirit of uncleanness I will cause to pass away from the land. **3** And it will be ***that*** if a man still prophesies, then his father and his mother who bore him will say to him, "You shall not live, for you have spoken falsehood in the name of the LORD"; and his father and his mother who bore him will pierce him through when he prophesies. **4** And it will be on that day ***that*** the prophets will be ashamed, each man of his vision when he prophesies; and they will not put on a cloak of hair in order to deceive. **5** And he will say, "I ***am*** not a prophet; I ***am*** a man working ***the*** ground, for a man acquired me from my youth." **6** And ***one*** will say to him, "What ***are*** these wounds between your hands?" And he will say, "***Those*** which I was struck ***with in*** the house of those who love me."

The Shepherd Struck

7 O sword, awake against My shepherd, and against the man ***who is*** My associate, declares the LORD of armies. Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered; and I will turn My hand against the little ones. **8** And it will be in all the land, declares the LORD, ***that*** two parts in it will be cut off ***and*** perish, and the third will be left in it. **9** And I will bring the third into the fire, and I will refine them as ***one*** refines the silver, and I will test them as ***one*** tests the gold. It will call on My name, and I will answer it; I will say, "It ***is*** My people," and it will say, "The LORD ***is*** my God."

ZECHARIAH 14

The LORD Will Be King Over All the Earth

1 Look, a day is coming for the LORD, and your plunder will be divided in your midst. **2** And I will gather all the nations to Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) for the battle, and the city will be captured, and the houses will be plundered, and the women will be ravished; and half of the city will go out into the exile, and the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city. **3** And the LORD will go out and fight against those nations, as ***on*** the day of His fighting, on a day of battle. **4** And His feet will stand on that day on the Mount of Olives, which ***is*** before Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split from its middle toward the east and toward the west ***into*** a very great valley; and half of the mountain will move toward

13:2 1 John 4:1; 2 Pet 2:16; 1 John 4:2
13:3 Deut 13:6-11; Deut 18:20; Matt 10:37
13:4 2 Kgs 1:8; Isa 20:2; Matt 3:4
13:5 Amos 7:14; Acts 19:17-20
13:6 1 Kgs 18:28; Rev 13:16,17; Ps 22:16
13:7 Matt 26:31; Matt 26:56; Mark 14:27
13:8 Luke 21:23; Rom 9:29; Rom 11:2
13:9 Heb 8:10; Rev 21:7; Isa 48:10
14:1 Isa 13:6,9; Isa 2:12; Joel 2:31
14:2 Matt 23:37; Luke 13:35; Luke 21:23
14:3 Rev 11:18; Zech 2:8,9; Zech 10:4,5
14:4 Acts 1:11; Matt 21:1; Mark 11:1

13:2 *I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, and they will no longer be remembered* Idolatry was Israel's oldest sin, and even the names of the false gods will be forgotten. The prophets here are false prophets, and behind them the spirit of uncleanness, the devil's power in false religion (1 Kgs 22:22; 1 John 4:1-3). The last false prophet will deceive many (Rev 13:11-14), but when Christ reigns every false voice will be removed.
13:3 *his father and his mother who bore him will pierce him through when he prophesies* A hard verse. The Law said a false prophet who led people to other gods must die, sparing not even family (Deut 13:6-10; 18:20). Zechariah describes that law kept in a land made holy under the King. Israel once pierced the true Prophet (12:10). Now they pierce false ones. This is no command for us. In the church false teaching is answered with truth and discipline (Titus 3:10). The point is love for God above family (Matt 10:37).
13:4 *they will not put on a cloak of hair in order to deceive* A hairy cloak was a prophet's clothing, worn by Elijah and John the Baptist (2 Kgs 1:8; Matt 3:4). False prophets wore it to fool people. On that day they will be ashamed and deny it, claiming to be mere farmhands since youth.
13:6 *What are these wounds between your hands?* Many have read this as Jesus' nail wounds, and it has been used so in songs and sermons. But the speaker is the false prophet hiding his past (13:4-5). Pagan prophets cut themselves in their rituals (1 Kgs 18:28), and he makes up an excuse. Those who love me may even mean his idol lovers (Hos 2:7). Let the context lead. The next verse is clearly about Christ.
13:7 *O sword, awake against My shepherd, and against the man who is My associate* Not the worthless shepherd of 11:17, but God's own good Shepherd. Associate means a close companion, an equal, used of one's neighbor (Lev 6:2). A man and God's equal: only Jesus, fully man and fully God. "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30).
13:7 *Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered* God Himself sends the sword. "The LORD has caused to fall on Him the iniquity of all of us" (Isa 53:6). The cross was God's plan (Acts 2:23). Jesus quoted this the night He was arrested (Matt 26:31), and "all the disciples, having forsaken Him, fled" (Matt 26:56). Turning His hand against the little ones may mean judgment in the scattering or protection, gathering the lambs. After He rose, He gathered His disciples (Matt 28:7). He was struck in our place (John 10:11).
13:8 *two parts in it will be cut off and perish, and the third will be left in it* Some see the Roman war of A.D. 66-70. I believe it points to the Tribulation, "a time of distress for Jacob" (Jer 30:7; Matt 24:21). We should read it with sorrow, not curiosity. These are real people whom God loves.
13:9 *I will refine them as one refines the silver, and I will test them as one tests the gold* Fire does not destroy the metal but purifies it. God will use Israel's hardest days to bring out a believing remnant. "It is My people," and "The LORD is my God." The covenant is restored, reversing Hosea's Not My People (Hos 1:9; 2:23). This is the remnant who look on the pierced One and are washed (12:10; 13:1). Our faith too is "tested by fire" (1 Pet 1:7). God is refining, not destroying.
14:1 *a day is coming for the LORD, and your plunder will be divided in your midst* The day belongs to Him, when He acts openly in judgment and salvation (Joel 2:31). The enemy will divide Jerusalem's wealth inside its own walls.
14:2 *I will gather all the nations to Jerusalem for the battle* The gathering of 12:2-3, for judgment (Joel 3:2; Rev 16:14-16). I believe this is the end of the Tribulation, just before Christ returns. Some see A.D. 70, and many amillennial teachers read a picture of the church's struggle. This study reads it as future, because the Lord's feet stand on the Mount of Olives (14:4; Acts 1:11-12). The suffering of the city, the women and the exiles is told plainly. God is not praising what the armies do. He will judge them (14:12). Just when all seems lost (Matt 24:22), the LORD steps in.
14:3 *the LORD will go out and fight against those nations* God fought for Israel at the Red Sea (Exod 14:14), and He will fight openly for the last time. Heaven opens, and the rider on the white horse "in righteousness He judges and makes war" (Rev 19:11).
14:4 *His feet will stand on that day on the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east* Real feet on a real mountain, the ridge east of the city across the Kidron. How can the LORD have feet? God the Son became a man and still has a risen body. From Olivet He wept over Jerusalem and taught of His return (Luke 19:37-41; Matt 24:3). From there He ascended, and the angels said He "will come in the same manner" (Acts 1:11).
14:4 *the Mount of Olives will be split from its middle toward the east and toward the west into a very great valley* Half the mountain moves north and half south, in the great earthquake Revelation describes (Rev 16:18). I do not read this as only a picture. The angels said He would come back as He left, and Zechariah said where He would stand.

the north, and half of it toward the south. **5** And you will flee ***by*** the valley of My mountains, for the valley of ***the*** mountains will reach to Azal (Atsal); and you will flee just as you fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah (Uziya) king of Judah (Yehuda). And the LORD my God will come, ***and*** all holy ones with You. **6** And it will be on that day ***that*** there will not be light; splendid ***ones*** and congealing. **7** And it will be one day, it is known to the LORD, not day and not night; and it will be ***that*** at the time of evening there will be light. **8** And it will be on that day ***that*** living waters will go out from Jerusalem, half of them to the eastern sea and half of them to the western sea; in summer and in winter it will be. **9** And the LORD will be King over all the earth; on that day the LORD will be one, and His name one. **10** All the land will be changed like the Arabah (Arava), from Geba (Geva) to Rimmon (Rimon) south of Jerusalem; and she will be raised up and will dwell in her place, from the Gate of Benjamin (Binyamin) to the place of the first gate, to the Gate of the Corners, and ***from*** the Tower of Hananel (Chananel) to the winepresses of the king. **11** And they will dwell in her, and there will no longer be utter destruction, and Jerusalem will dwell in security. **12** And this will be the plague with which the LORD will strike all the peoples that have waged war against Jerusalem: ***He will*** make his flesh rot while he ***is*** standing on his feet, and his eyes will rot in their sockets, and his tongue will rot in their mouth. **13** And it will be on that day ***that*** a great panic from the LORD will be among them; and they will take hold, each man, ***of*** the hand of his neighbor, and his hand will rise against the hand of his neighbor. **14** And also Judah will fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the nations around will be gathered, gold and silver and garments in very great abundance. **15** And so will be the plague of the horse, the mule, the camel and the donkey, and all the livestock that will be in those camps, like this plague.

The Nations Worship the King

16 And it will be ***that*** everyone who is left of all the nations that came against Jerusalem will go up from year to year to bow down to the King, the LORD of armies, and to celebrate the Feast of Booths. **17** And it will be ***that*** whoever of the clans of the earth does not go up to Jerusalem to bow down to the King, the LORD of armies, the rain will not be on them. **18** And if the clan of Egypt (Mitsrayim) does not go up and does not come in, then not on them ***will the rain be***; ***on them*** will be the plague with which the LORD will strike the nations that do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths. **19** This will be ***the punishment for*** the sin of Egypt and ***the punishment for*** the sin of all the nations that do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths. **20** On that day there will be on the bells of the horses, "Holiness to the LORD"; and the pots in the house of the LORD will be like the bowls before the altar. **21** And every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah will be holiness to the LORD of armies; and all those who sacrifice

14:5 Jude 1:14; 1 Thess 3:13; Matt 24:27
14:6 Ps 97:10,11; Ps 112:4; Prov 4:18,19
14:7 1 Thess 5:2; Rev 22:5; Isa 30:26
14:8 John 7:38; Rev 22:1; Luke 24:47
14:9 Dan 7:27; Rev 11:15; Isa 2:2-4
14:10 Zech 12:6; 1 Kgs 15:22; Josh 15:32
14:11 Rev 22:3; Jer 23:5,6; Num 21:3
14:12 Rev 17:16; Rev 19:17; Rev 18:8
14:13 Rev 17:15; Rev 17:16; Zech 12:4
14:14 Isa 23:18; Zech 10:4,5; Zech 12:5-7
14:16 Luke 19:38; John 1:49; John 7:2
14:17 Jer 14:4,22; Isa 60:12; 1 Kgs 17:1
14:18 John 7:2; Deut 11:10,11
14:19 John 7:2; John 3:19
14:20 Col 3:17; Isa 23:18; 1 Cor 3:16,17
14:21 Rev 21:27; Rom 14:6,7; Ezek 44:9

14:5 *the LORD my God will come, and all holy ones with You* The new valley becomes an escape route. Azal is unknown today. The earthquake of Uzziah's day was so remembered that Amos dated his book by it (Amos 1:1). Zechariah turns to speak to God. Christ comes with the angels (Matt 25:31) and "with all His saints" (1 Thess 3:13). I believe that includes the church, caught up before the Tribulation (1 Thess 4:16-17) and now returning, "clothed in fine linen, white and pure" (Rev 19:14).
14:7 *at the time of evening there will be light* The Hebrew of verse 6 is hard, perhaps lights growing dim (Matt 24:29). A day unlike any other, known only to the LORD (Matt 24:36). When darkness should fall, light comes. That is how the day of the LORD ends for His people.
14:8 *living waters will go out from Jerusalem, half of them to the eastern sea and half of them to the western sea* Jerusalem has never had a river. This one flows to the Dead Sea and the Mediterranean all year, when most streams are dry. Ezekiel saw it turn the Dead Sea fresh (Ezek 47:1-12; Joel 3:18). This study reads it as a real river in the kingdom, and also a picture of Christ: "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink" (John 7:37).
14:9 *the LORD will be King over all the earth* The summit of the book. Today the nations rage (Ps 2:1-2), but the kingdoms of the world will become Christ's (Rev 11:15). He will rule the whole world from Jerusalem, and every knee will bow (Phil 2:10-11).
14:9 *the LORD will be one, and His name one* Echoing Israel's confession, "Hear, Israel: the LORD our God, the LORD is one" (Deut 6:4). No rival gods, no idols. His name alone will be honored.
14:10 *All the land will be changed like the Arabah, from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem* The Arabah is the low Jordan and Dead Sea valley. Geba was just north of Jerusalem and Rimmon in Judah's far south. The hills will be leveled and Jerusalem lifted up (Isa 2:2). The named gates and towers marked the old city's full length and breadth.
14:11 *there will no longer be utter destruction, and Jerusalem will dwell in security* Utter destruction is herem, something devoted wholly to destruction. The city so often besieged and destroyed will never be again.
14:12 *this will be the plague with which the LORD will strike all the peoples that have waged war against Jerusalem* Short and terrible. These armies came to destroy God's people and fight the returning King, and judgment is sudden and complete (Rev 19:21). We read it without pleasure. God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked (Ezek 33:11), but He is just.
14:13 *a great panic from the LORD will be among them* The soldiers turn on each other as in Gideon's day (Judg 7:22). In 14:1 the enemy divided Jerusalem's plunder. Now the nations' wealth is gathered in. The tables are turned.
14:16 *everyone who is left of all the nations that came against Jerusalem will go up from year to year to bow down to the King* What grace. Survivors of the attacking nations will worship the King. Booths was Israel's last and most joyful feast, remembering God's care in the wilderness (Lev 23:33-43). The Word "dwelt among us" (John 1:14), pitching His tent. This also shows the thousand-year kingdom is not yet the new heavens and earth (Rev 20:4-6; 21-22). There are still nations, years and the possibility of disobedience.
14:17 *the rain will not be on them* The King rules with justice. No rain means no harvest, fitting for those who refuse the harvest feast. Egypt, watered by the Nile, will not escape. People born in the kingdom will still need saving faith, and at the end many join Satan's last revolt (Rev 20:7-9). Only the new birth changes the heart.
14:20 *there will be on the bells of the horses, "Holiness to the LORD";* Once engraved only on the high priest's turban (Exod 28:36), now on the bells of work animals, and even the kitchen pots will be holy. The line between holy and common will be gone.
14:21 *there will no longer be a Canaanite in the house of the LORD of armies on that day* The word can mean trader, since Canaanites were known for trade. No unclean person and no one profiting from God's house (John 2:16). We need not wait. "Do all things to the glory of God" (1 Cor 10:31). Your work, kitchen and free time can be holiness to the Lord.

will come and take from them and boil in them. And there will no longer be a Canaanite in the house of the LORD of armies on that day.

MALACHI

Introduction

Title

The book is named for its prophet, Malachi, whose name means my messenger, fitting for a book that promises God's messenger (3:1). Malachi is the last of the twelve Minor Prophets and the last book of the Old Testament in our English Bibles. He was the last prophet God sent to Israel before John the Baptist. In the Hebrew Bible the book has three chapters, and our 4:1-6 is numbered 3:19-24 there.

Author and Date

The book names its prophet only as "Malachi" (1:1). Nothing else is known of him, not his father, his hometown or his tribe. Because the name means my messenger, some have thought it a title rather than a name, and an early Greek translation reads it as his messenger. But every other prophetic book opens with the prophet's name, and Jewish and Christian tradition has always taken Malachi as a real man. The notes take him so.

Malachi gives no date, but the setting points to Nehemiah's day. The temple was standing, with priests and sacrifices (1:7-10), and a governor ruled Judah under Persia (1:8). The sins Malachi names are the ones Nehemiah faced on his second visit: priests who defiled their office, marriages to women who served other gods, and tithes not brought to the storehouse (Neh 13:10-12, 23-29). Nehemiah went back to Artaxerxes in 433 B.C. and later returned (Neh 13:6-7), so most conservative scholars date Malachi about 433 to 420 B.C.

Background and Setting

About eighty years had passed since the temple was finished in 516 B.C. Ezra had taught the Law, Nehemiah had rebuilt the walls, and the people had made a solemn covenant to keep God's Law, marry within the faith and bring their tithes to God's house (Neh 10). But the zeal had cooled. The great promises of Haggai and Zechariah had not yet come true in the way the people hoped. Life was hard and harvests were poor (3:11). Disappointment turned into doubt, and doubt into carelessness. The people kept up the forms of religion, brought God their leftovers and wondered why He did not bless them.

Malachi speaks in a series of six disputes. God makes a statement, the people push back with a question, often "In what...?", and God answers. The disputes concern God's love (1:2-5), the priests' contempt for His name (1:6-2:9), broken faith in marriage (2:10-16), God's justice (2:17-3:5), robbing God (3:6-12), and harsh words against Him (3:13-4:3). It reads almost like a courtroom.

After Malachi no prophet spoke in Israel for about four hundred years. Those years were not empty. Persia fell to Alexander the Great, Greek rulers came and went, the Maccabees fought for the temple, and Rome took the land. The Scriptures were translated into Greek, and Jews with their synagogues were scattered through many lands. "When the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son" (Gal 4:4).

Themes

God's unchanging love. The book opens, "I have loved you, says the LORD" (1:2), before a word about sin. The key verse is "For I am the LORD; I have not changed; and you, sons of Jacob, have not come to an end" (3:6). Israel survived because God was faithful.

Honor God with your best. "A son honors a father, and a servant his master" (1:6). The priests brought blind, lame and sick animals and called God's service a weariness (1:8, 13), but God is "a great King" (1:14).

Faithful teachers. The priest was to keep knowledge, "for he is the messenger of the LORD of armies" (2:7). Those who handle God's Word carry a heavy charge.

Faithfulness in marriage. The LORD was witness between a man and "the wife of your youth" (2:14). Breaking faith with her was breaking faith with God.

Honest giving. "Will a man rob God?" (3:8). Holding back the tithe left the nation under the curse.

God sees and remembers. When others said it was futile to serve God, those who feared the LORD spoke together, and "a book of remembrance was written before Him" (3:16).

The coming day. God will send His messenger, then come suddenly to His temple as a refiner (3:1-3). The day will burn the wicked like stubble, but for those who fear His name "the sun of righteousness will rise, and healing is in its wings" (4:2). Before that day God will send Elijah (4:5).

Christ in Malachi

Malachi promised a messenger who would "clear a way before Me" (3:1). The Gospels show that he was John the Baptist (Matt 11:10; Mark 1:2; Luke 7:27), who came "in the spirit and power of Elijah" (Luke 1:17; Matt 11:14). The One whose way John prepared is the LORD Himself, and the Gospels say that One is Jesus. He is the Lord who came suddenly to His temple, presented there as a baby, teaching there and cleansing it (3:1; Luke 2:22-32; John 2:13-17). He is "the messenger of the covenant" (3:1), who brought the new covenant in His blood (Luke 22:20). He will come again as the Refiner who purifies His people (3:2-3). John's father called Him "the Sunrise from on high" (Luke 1:78), echoing the sun of righteousness who rises with healing (4:2). The Old Testament ends with a warning of a curse, and the New Testament answers it: "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us" (Gal 3:13).

Hard Passages

Why does God say, "Esau I hated" (1:3)? The notes explain Hebrew comparison language, in which love and hate mark a choice, and show that Malachi speaks of nations. They give the two main readings of Paul's use of it in Romans 9 and note that both see God's choice as pure grace.

When will God's name be great among the nations, with a pure offering in every place (1:11)? The notes give the two main readings, the worship of believers from every nation now and the worship of the coming kingdom, and see it begun in the gospel and completed when Christ reigns.

Does 2:16 say that God hates divorce? The notes give both main readings of this hard verse. They show that God's anger falls on the treachery and not on the one betrayed, that teachers differ on the exceptions Jesus and Paul gave, that the verse never requires anyone to stay in danger, and that there is forgiveness in Christ.

Are Christians bound to tithe, and does 3:10 promise wealth (3:8-12)? The notes give both views of the tithe fairly and explain that the promise of rain and harvest belonged to Israel under the covenant of Moses. It is not a formula for getting rich.

Who is the Elijah to come (4:5-6)? The notes show that John the Baptist fulfilled this in the spirit and power of Elijah, though not as Elijah in person (John 1:21). Since Jesus also spoke of Elijah as still to come (Matt 17:11), many believe there will be an Elijah ministry before Christ's return, in the Tribulation, and connect it with the two witnesses of Revelation 11.

Outline

I. God's Love for Israel (1:1-5)
II. The Priests Despise God's Name (1:6-2:9)
  A. Blemished offerings (1:6-14)
  B. The covenant with Levi (2:1-9)
III. Broken Faith in Marriage (2:10-16)
IV. The Messenger and the Refiner (2:17-3:5)
V. Robbing God (3:6-12)
VI. The Book of Remembrance and the Coming Day (3:13-4:6)
  A. Those who fear the LORD (3:13-18)
  B. The sun of righteousness (4:1-3)
  C. Remember Moses, and Elijah will come (4:4-6)

MALACHI

MALACHI 1

I Have Loved You

1 The oracle of the word of the LORD to Israel (Yisra'el) by the hand of Malachi (Malakhi). **2** I have loved you, says the LORD. And you say, "In what have You loved us?" ***Was*** not Esau (Esav) a brother to Jacob (Ya'aqov)? declares the LORD. And I loved Jacob, **3** and Esau I hated; and I made his mountains a waste, and his inheritance for jackals of ***the*** wilderness. **4** If Edom says, "We have been shattered, and we will return and build the ruins," thus says the LORD of armies: They will build, and I will tear down; and they will call them "Territory of Wickedness," and "The People with Whom the LORD Is Indignant Forever." **5** And your eyes will see, and you will say, "The LORD is great beyond the border of Israel!"

The Priests Despise God's Name

6 A son honors a father, and a servant his master. And if I ***am*** a father, where ***is*** My honor? And if I ***am*** a master, where ***is*** My fear? says the LORD of armies to you, O priests who despise My name. And you say, "In what have we despised Your name?" **7** ***You are*** bringing near defiled bread on My altar. And you say, "In what have we defiled You?" In your saying, "The table of the LORD, it ***is*** despised." **8** And when you bring near a blind ***animal*** to sacrifice, ***is it*** not evil? And when you bring near a lame and sick ***animal***, ***is it*** not evil? Bring it near, please, to your governor; will he be pleased with you, or will he lift up your face? says the LORD of armies. **9** And now, entreat, please, the face of God, that He may be gracious to us. From your hand this has been; will He lift up ***the*** faces of ***any*** of you? says the LORD of armies. **10** Who ***is there*** even among you that would shut the doors, so that you would not light My altar for nothing? I have no pleasure in you, says the LORD of armies, and I will not accept an offering from your hand. **11** For from the rising of ***the*** sun to its setting My name ***is*** great among the nations, and in every place incense ***is*** being burned, being brought near to My name, and a pure offering; for My name ***is*** great among the nations, says the LORD of armies. **12** And you are profaning it in your saying, "The table of the Lord, it ***is*** defiled, and its fruit, its food ***is*** despised." **13** And you say, "Look, what a weariness!" and you sniff at it, says the LORD of armies; and you bring the stolen ***animal*** and the lame and the sick; and you bring the offering! Shall I accept it from your hand? says the LORD. **14** And cursed ***is*** the deceiver, when ***there*** is in his flock a male, and he vows and sacrifices a blemished ***animal*** to the Lord; for I ***am*** a great King, says the LORD of armies, and My name ***is*** feared among the nations.

1:1 Isa 13:1; Hab 1:1; Zech 9:1
1:2 Rom 9:13; Rom 9:10; Matt 1:2
1:3 Jer 49:16-18; Joel 3:19; Gen 29:30,31
1:4 Mark 3:8; Isa 9:9,10; Ezek 25:14
1:5 Luke 10:23; Deut 4:3; Deut 11:7
1:6 1 Pet 1:17; Matt 19:19; Mark 7:10
1:7 1 Cor 10:21; Mal 1:12; 1 Sam 2:15-17
1:8 Deut 15:21; Lev 22:19-25; Mal 1:10,13
1:9 Jer 27:18; 2 Chr 30:27; Joel 1:13,14
1:10 Jer 6:20; Jer 8:10; Mic 3:11
1:11 Acts 15:17; Rom 15:9; Luke 21:24
1:12 Rom 2:24; Mal 1:6,8; Mal 2:8
1:13 Mic 6:3; 1 Sam 2:29; Isa 43:22
1:14 1 Tim 6:15; Matt 5:35; Rom 1:5

1:1 *The oracle of the word of the LORD to Israel by the hand of Malachi* An oracle is a weighty message, and the word carries the sense of a burden, as in Zechariah 9:1 and 12:1. Malachi means my messenger. Most of the returned exiles were from Judah, yet God still calls them Israel, the whole covenant people.

1:2 *I have loved you, says the LORD* Before one word about their sin, God tells them He loves them. All the rebuke that follows comes from that love, for "whom the Lord loves He disciplines" (Heb 12:6). Their doubting reply is the first of the questions that shape the book (1:6, 7; 2:14, 17; 3:7, 8, 13).

1:3 *and Esau I hated* Hebrew often uses love and hate to compare a choice. Leah "was hated" (Gen 29:31) means Jacob loved Rachel more (Gen 29:30), and Jesus calls a disciple to "hate his own father and mother" (Luke 14:26) by comparison with love for Him. God chose Jacob and not Esau to carry the promise (Gen 25:23). Malachi speaks of nations here, Edom's mountains and inheritance.

1:3 *and I made his mountains a waste, and his inheritance for jackals of the wilderness* Edom was the rugged country southeast of the Dead Sea. By Malachi's day it had been ravaged, likely by Arab tribes pushing in from the desert. Paul quotes 1:2-3, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated" (Rom 9:13), to show God's choice rests on mercy, made before the twins had done "anything good or evil" (Rom 9:11). Good teachers read Romans 9 either of individuals chosen for salvation or of nations and people chosen for a role in God's plan. Both agree it was pure grace (Deut 7:7).

1:4 *They will build, and I will tear down* Edom thought it could bounce back, but it never rose again as a nation in its own land. Many of its people moved into south Judah, later called Idumeans, and after the Roman wars of the first century A.D. they vanish from history. Edom had cheered when Jerusalem fell (Obad 10-14; Ps 137:7).

1:6 *O priests who despise My name* To despise is to treat as worthless. The priests, who served at His altar every day, should have honored His name most. Their reply shows they did not even see it. Coldness creeps in slowly.

1:7 *You are bringing near defiled bread on My altar* Bread means the food of the altar, the sacrifices. The table of the LORD is the altar. By their actions they said it did not matter, anything will do.

1:8 *when you bring near a blind animal to sacrifice, is it not evil?* The Law required animals without blemish (Lev 22:20-22; Deut 15:21). The priests accepted the worst of the flock and the best stayed home. They would never offer such a gift to the Persian governor. David would not offer "burnt offerings without cost" (2 Sam 24:24).

1:10 *Who is there even among you that would shut the doors* God would rather someone close the temple doors than keep up empty, insulting worship. "This people draws near to Me with their mouth" (Matt 15:8), but their heart is far away.

1:11 *from the rising of the sun to its setting My name is great among the nations* From east to west. The priests at God's own altar despise His name, but the nations will honor it. Many see this now in worship "in spirit and truth" (John 4:23) from every nation, with prayers like incense (Rev 5:8) and "a sacrifice of praise" (Heb 13:15). Others see it mainly in the coming kingdom (Zech 14:16). It began with the gospel and will be complete when Christ reigns.

1:14 *for I am a great King, says the LORD of armies* The chapter begins with God's love and ends with His greatness. Because He loves us we may come to Him, and because He is the great King we come with reverence and bring our best.

MALACHI 2

The Covenant With Levi

1 And now, to you ***is*** this commandment, O priests. **2** If you will not listen, and if you will not put ***it*** on ***your*** heart to give glory to My name, says the LORD of armies, and I will send the curse on you, and I will curse your blessings; and also I have cursed it, because you are not putting ***it*** on ***your*** heart. **3** Look, I am rebuking the seed for you, and I will scatter dung on your faces, the dung of your festivals; and one will carry you away to it. **4** And you will know that I have sent to you this commandment, for My covenant to be with Levi, says the LORD of armies. **5** My covenant was with him, the life and the peace, and I gave them to him ***for*** fear; and he feared Me, and before My name he was dismayed. **6** The law of truth was in his mouth, and injustice was not found on his lips; in peace and in uprightness he walked with Me, and many he turned back from iniquity. **7** For the lips of a priest shall keep knowledge, and they shall seek law from his mouth; for he ***is*** the messenger of the LORD of armies. **8** And you, you have turned aside from the way; you have caused many to stumble by the law; you have corrupted the covenant of Levi, says the LORD of armies. **9** And also I, I have made you despised and low before all the people, inasmuch as you are not keeping My ways, and ***are*** showing partiality in the law.

Faithless to the Wife of Your Youth

10 Is there not one father for all of us? Has not one God created us? Why do we deal treacherously, each man against his brother, to profane the covenant of our fathers? **11** Judah (Yehuda) has dealt treacherously, and an abomination has been done in Israel (Yisra'el) and in Jerusalem (Yerushalayim); for Judah has profaned the holiness of the LORD, which He loves, and has married the daughter of a foreign god. **12** May the LORD cut off, for the man who does it, the one who wakes and the one who answers, from the tents of Jacob (Ya'aqov), and the one who brings near an offering to the LORD of armies. **13** And this second ***thing*** you do: covering the altar of the LORD ***with*** tears, ***with*** weeping and groaning, because ***there is*** no longer turning to the offering, or taking ***it with*** favor from your hand. **14** And you say, "On account of what?" Because the LORD has testified between you and the wife of your youth, against whom you have dealt treacherously; and she ***is*** your companion and the wife of your covenant. **15** And did He not make one, and a remnant of spirit ***is*** His? And what ***is*** the one seeking? A seed of God. And you shall take heed in your spirit, and against the wife of your youth let none deal treacherously. **16** For he hates sending away, says the LORD, the God of Israel, and he covers his clothing ***with*** violence, says the LORD of armies. And you shall take heed in your spirit, and you shall not deal treacherously.

2:1 Mal 1:6; Jer 13:13; Lam 4:13
2:2 Luke 17:18; Rev 16:9; Rev 14:7
2:3 Nah 3:6; Joel 1:17; 1 Kgs 14:10
2:4 1 Kgs 22:25; Isa 26:11; Jer 28:9
2:5 Num 25:12,13; Num 3:45; Num 8:15
2:6 Acts 26:18; Jer 23:22; Dan 12:3
2:7 Lev 10:11; Jer 18:18; Deut 17:8-11
2:8 Rom 2:20; Jer 18:15; Ezek 44:10
2:9 Luke 20:45; Mark 7:9; 1 Tim 5:21
2:10 Acts 7:26; 1 Cor 6:7; 1 Cor 8:6
2:11 2 Cor 6:18; Ezra 9:1,2,12; Lev 18:24-30
2:12 Lev 18:29; Lev 20:3; Num 15:30,31
2:13 Heb 8:9; Deut 15:9; 1 Sam 1:9,10
2:14 Mal 3:5; Isa 54:6; Gen 31:50
2:15 Acts 3:25; Matt 19:4-6; Gen 1:27
2:16 Luke 16:18; Matt 19:8; Mark 10:11

2:2 *if you will not put it on your heart to give glory to My name* To take it seriously, a matter of the heart and not only the hands. Giving glory to God's name was the priests' whole work.
2:3 *I will scatter dung on your faces, the dung of your festivals* Deliberately shocking. The waste of sacrificed animals was carried outside the camp and burned (Exod 29:14; Lev 4:11-12). Those who treated the altar with contempt would be treated as refuse. The seed may be their grain crop or their offspring.
2:5 *My covenant was with him, the life and the peace* Moses blessed Levi to teach God's judgments and Law (Deut 33:8-11), and God gave Phinehas "My covenant of peace" (Num 25:12).
2:6 *The law of truth was in his mouth, and injustice was not found on his lips* The faithful priests of old taught truly, walked with God and turned many from sin. Every pastor, teacher and parent can pray to be like that.
2:7 *For the lips of a priest shall keep knowledge* The priest was to know and guard God's Word so people could learn from him. Ezra "had set his heart to seek the law of the LORD and to do it" (Ezra 7:10).
2:7 *for he is the messenger of the LORD of armies* Messenger is malak, the word in Malachi's name and in 3:1. Under the new covenant every believer belongs to "a holy priesthood" (1 Pet 2:5).
2:9 *showing partiality in the law* Favoritism, bending the rules for the rich and important. They despised God's name (1:6), so God made them despised. Believers must not hold the faith "with partiality" (James 2:1).
2:10 *Is there not one father for all of us?* The father may be Abraham or Jacob, or God Himself (Isa 63:16; 64:8). The next line suggests God. To deal treacherously means to break faith with someone who trusted you, the key word of 2:10-16, used five times.
2:11 *has married the daughter of a foreign god* A woman who served another god. The problem was faith, not race. Such marriages would "turn your son away from after Me" (Deut 7:4), as with Solomon (1 Kgs 11:4). Rahab and Ruth turned to the LORD and are in Jesus' line (Matt 1:5). Ezra and Nehemiah faced this too (Ezra 9-10; Neh 13:23-27). A believer should marry "only in the Lord" (1 Cor 7:39; 2 Cor 6:14).
2:14 *the LORD has testified between you and the wife of your youth* The woman a man married young and started life with. Many were divorcing older wives, perhaps for younger women or wealthy ones who served other gods (2:11), and a divorced woman was often left alone and poor. God was a witness to the vows. Marriage is a covenant before God (Prov 2:17). How husbands treat wives affects their prayers, "so that your prayers may not be cut off" (1 Pet 3:7).
2:15 *And did He not make one, and a remnant of spirit is his?* One of the hardest verses in the Old Testament to translate, and versions differ. Most likely God made husband and wife one, "one flesh" (Gen 2:24; Matt 19:6). He had the power of spirit to make many wives for Adam, but made one.
2:16 *For he hates sending away* Read two main ways. Many translations make God the subject: He hates divorce. Others describe the man who hates his wife and sends her away, covering his garment with violence. The SLB's small "he" leaves it open. Both say God takes the treacherous breaking of a marriage seriously. His anger is against the treachery, not the one betrayed. He is "near to the broken of heart" (Ps 34:18). Jesus and Paul spoke of exceptions (Matt 19:9; 1 Cor 7:15), and teachers differ on what they allow. This verse never requires anyone to stay in danger. There is forgiveness for those who caused a divorce (1 John 1:7; Rom 8:1).

The Messenger and the Refiner

17 You have wearied the LORD with your words. And you say, "In what have we wearied ***Him***?" In your saying, "Everyone who does evil ***is*** good in the eyes of the LORD, and in them He delights," or, "Where ***is*** the God of justice?"

MALACHI 3

1 Look, I am sending My messenger, and he will clear a way before Me; and suddenly the Lord whom you are seeking will come to His temple, and the messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight; look, He is coming, says the LORD of armies. **2** And who endures the day of His coming? And who ***is*** the one standing when He appears? For He ***is*** like the fire of a refiner and like the soap of launderers. **3** And He will sit ***as*** a refiner and purifier of silver; and He will purify the sons of Levi, and He will refine them like gold and like silver; and they will be to the LORD those bringing near an offering in righteousness. **4** And the offering of Judah (Yehuda) and Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) will be pleasing to the LORD, like the days of old and like former years. **5** And I will draw near to you for judgment, and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers and against the adulterers and against those who swear to falsehood, and against those who oppress the wages of the hired laborer, the widow and the fatherless, and those who thrust aside the sojourner; and they do not fear Me, says the LORD of armies.

Will a Man Rob God?

6 For I ***am*** the LORD; I have not changed; and you, sons of Jacob (Ya'aqov), have not come to an end. **7** From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from My statutes and have not kept ***them***. Return to Me, and let Me return to you, says the LORD of armies. And you say, "In what shall we return?" **8** Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing Me. And you say, "In what have we robbed You?" ***In*** the tithe and the contribution. **9** With the curse you are cursed, and Me you are robbing, the nation, all of it. **10** Bring all the tithe into the storehouse, and let ***there*** be food in My house; and test Me, please, by this, says the LORD of armies, if I will not open for you the windows of the heavens, and pour out for you blessing until ***there is*** not enough ***room***. **11** And I will rebuke the devourer for you, and it will not destroy for you the fruit of the ground, and the vine in the field will not be barren for you, says the LORD of armies. **12** And all the nations will call you blessed, for you will be a land of delight, says the LORD of armies.

The Book of Remembrance

13 Your words have been strong against Me, says the LORD. And you say, "What have we spoken together against You?" **14** You have said, "***It is*** futile to serve God; and what profit ***is it*** that we have kept His charge, and that we have walked mournfully before the LORD of armies? **15** And now we are calling the arrogant blessed; also those who do wickedness

2:17 Matt 25:44; 2 Pet 3:4; Isa 43:24
3:1 Matt 11:10; Mark 1:2; Luke 7:27
3:2 Rev 6:17; Acts 7:52; Matt 21:12
3:3 Acts 2:3; Isa 1:25; Dan 12:10
3:4 2 Chr 7:1-3,10-12; Isa 56:7; Jer 30:18-20
3:5 James 5:4; Luke 23:40; James 5:12
3:6 James 1:17; Rev 22:13; Num 23:19
3:7 Luke 11:48; Zech 1:3; Deut 31:20,27-29
3:8 Prov 3:9,10; Rom 13:7; Matt 22:21
3:9 Mal 2:2; Deut 28:15-19; Hag 1:6-11
3:10 Prov 3:9,10; Matt 6:33; 2 Cor 9:6-8
3:11 Amos 4:9; Amos 7:1-3; Hag 2:17
3:12 Luke 1:48; Isa 61:9; Jer 33:9
3:13 Jude 1:15; Mal 2:17; Exod 5:2
3:14 Jude 1:15; Isa 58:3; Zeph 1:12
3:15 Matt 4:7; Mal 4:1; Esth 5:10

2:17 *You have wearied the LORD with your words* God never grows weary in body (Isa 40:28), but cynical words try His patience. They saw the wicked prosper and said God must like them, or asked, "Where is the God of justice?" The psalmist envied "the peace of the wicked" (Ps 73:3) until he saw their end (Ps 73:17). An honest question is not wrong. God's answer comes at once: "Look, I am sending My messenger" (3:1).
3:1 *Look, I am sending My messenger, and he will clear a way before Me* My messenger is malakhi, the prophet's own name. A messenger went ahead of a traveling king to clear the road (Isa 40:3). Jesus said of John the Baptist, "this is he concerning whom it has been written" (Matt 11:10), and quoted this verse (Luke 7:27; Mark 1:2). Malachi says before Me, and the Gospels say before Your face. The LORD who comes is Jesus.
3:1 *suddenly the Lord whom you are seeking will come to His temple* The people asked where God was. Jesus was presented in the second temple as a baby (Luke 2:22-32), taught there and cleansed it, calling it "the house of My Father" (John 2:16). It was His temple because He was its Lord.
3:1 *the messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight* A second messenger, the Lord Himself. Jesus is "the mediator of a new covenant" (Heb 9:15), sealed in His blood (Luke 22:20).
3:2 *And who endures the day of His coming?* They wanted God to judge the wicked but forgot He would judge them too. A refiner melts metal to skim off its dross, and a launderer scrubbed cloth with strong soap. Both picture cleansing that is thorough, painful and good.
3:3 *He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver* A refiner sits by the fire and watches, knowing how much heat the metal needs. He begins with the priests who despised His name (1:6), for judgment begins "from the house of God" (1 Pet 4:17). Like Zechariah 9:9-10, this sees both comings together. John's preaching and the temple cleansing were a foretaste. The full refining is at Christ's second coming (Zech 13:9; Ezek 44:15). God still refines His people (1 Pet 1:7).
3:5 *I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers and against the adulterers* They asked for the God of justice (2:17), and here He is, against liars and those who cheat workers and oppress the widow, the fatherless and the foreigner. The root of it all: "they do not fear Me."
3:6 *For I am the LORD; I have not changed* His character, promises and purposes are always the same. "God is not a man, that He should lie" (Num 23:19). With Him "there is no variation or shadow of turning" (James 1:17), and "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Heb 13:8).
3:6 *sons of Jacob, have not come to an end* Israel was still here, not because they were faithful but because God was (Jer 31:35-36). "The gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable" (Rom 11:29), and He still has a future for Israel. Our security in Christ rests on His faithfulness too.
3:8 *In the tithe and the contribution* The tithe was a tenth of harvest and herds (Lev 27:30). It supported the Levites, who had no land (Num 18:21), and every third year a tithe fed Levites, foreigners, orphans and widows (Deut 14:28-29). The contribution was the priests' portion. When it was held back, the Levites left the temple to farm (Neh 13:10-12).
3:10 *Bring all the tithe into the storehouse* The temple storerooms where grain, wine and oil fed the Levites and priests (Neh 13:12-13). Bring all of it, not part.
3:10 *test Me, please, by this* The windows of the heavens send rain (Gen 7:11), a harvest too great to store. Believers differ on whether the tithe is required of Christians. Some point to Abraham's tenth before the Law (Gen 14:20). Others hold that the New Testament calls for generous, regular, cheerful giving without a fixed percentage (1 Cor 16:2; 2 Cor 9:7), and many still see a tenth as a good start. This was a promise to Israel about rain and harvest, not a formula for getting rich. "The love of money is a root of all the evils" (1 Tim 6:10). God does bless givers (2 Cor 9:8), though the blessing may be peace, provision and treasure in heaven (Phil 4:19).
3:14 *It is futile to serve God* They kept the rules and put on a sad face in fasting, did not get what they wanted, and decided serving God did not pay. Their religion was a business deal. We serve Him because He is God and He loves us.

have been built up; also they have tested God, and they have escaped." **16** Then those who fear the LORD spoke together, each man with his neighbor; and the LORD paid attention and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the LORD and for those who esteem His name. **17** And they will be Mine, says the LORD of armies, for the day that I am making, a treasured possession; and I will spare them, as a man spares his son who serves him. **18** And you will again see ***the difference*** between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve Him.

MALACHI 4

The Sun of Righteousness

1 For look, the day is coming, burning like the furnace; and all the arrogant and everyone who does wickedness will be stubble; and the day that is coming will set them ablaze, says the LORD of armies, so that it will not leave them root or branch. **2** And for you who fear My name the sun of righteousness will rise, and healing ***is*** in its wings; and you will go out and leap like calves of the stall. **3** And you will tread down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day that I am acting, says the LORD of armies.

Remember Moses, and Elijah Will Come

4 Remember the law of Moses (Moshe) My servant, which I commanded him at Horeb (Chorev) for all Israel (Yisra'el), statutes and judgments. **5** Look, I am sending to you Elijah (Eliya) the prophet before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD. **6** And he will turn back the heart of fathers to sons, and the heart of sons to their fathers, lest I come and strike the land ***with*** a devoted destruction.

3:16 Rev 20:12; Luke 2:38; John 1:40
3:17 2 Cor 6:18; Rev 20:12; John 17:10
3:18 Matt 25:32; Luke 1:50; Gen 18:25
4:1 Mal 3:2; 2 Pet 3:7; 2 Thess 1:8
4:2 Luke 1:78; Rev 11:18; Matt 23:37
4:3 Luke 24:44; Job 40:12; Isa 26:6
4:4 Matt 5:17; Matt 22:36; Luke 16:29
4:5 Luke 1:17; Matt 17:10-12; Mark 9:11-13
4:6 Luke 1:16; Rev 22:20; Mark 13:16

3:16 *a book of remembrance was written before Him* While others complained, a faithful remnant met and encouraged one another (Heb 10:24-25), and the LORD heard. Persian kings recorded those who served them for reward, as with Mordecai (Esth 2:21-23; 6:1-3). Scripture speaks of God's book elsewhere (Exod 32:32; Ps 56:8; Rev 20:12), and Jesus said, rejoice "that your names were written in the heavens" (Luke 10:20). Nothing done for Him is forgotten.

4:1 *the day is coming, burning like the furnace* The day of the LORD (Zech 14; Zeph 1). A furnace is a clay oven heated until it glows. They called the arrogant blessed (3:15), but the arrogant will be stubble, gone in a moment, no root below or branch above. "The chaff He will burn up with unquenchable fire" (Matt 3:12). I believe this comes in the judgments at the end of the Tribulation and Christ's return (Rev 19:11-21), and in the final judgment after the thousand years (Rev 20:11-15).

4:2 *for you who fear My name the sun of righteousness will rise* The day that burns the wicked brings sunrise for the faithful remnant of 3:16. The SLB prints sun with a small letter, as a picture, the light of God's righteousness breaking over a dark world. Many teachers from the early church on have seen Christ, and this study reads it so. John's father echoed Malachi: "the Sunrise from on high has visited us" (Luke 1:78). Jesus is "the light of the world" (John 8:12), "Jesus Christ the Righteous One" (1 John 2:1).

4:2 *and healing is in its wings* The wings are the sun's rays, spreading like a great bird's. The word can also mean the corners of a garment (Num 15:38), and many connect the woman who touched the fringe of Jesus' garment (Matt 9:20-22; 14:36), a lovely picture but not one the text spells out. He healed every disease (Matt 4:23; 8:17), above all sin, "by His wound there was healing for us" (Isa 53:5), and at His return He will heal fully (Rev 22:2).

4:4 *Remember the law of Moses My servant, which I commanded him at Horeb* Horeb is Sinai, about a thousand years earlier. Until the messenger came, they had what they needed. Malachi showed what happened when they forgot it. The Law pointed to Christ, "for he wrote concerning Me" (John 5:46; Gal 3:24). "The law was given through Moses; the grace and the truth came through Jesus Christ" (John 1:17). Moses and Elijah, the Law and the Prophets, later stood with Jesus (Matt 17:3).

4:5 *Look, I am sending to you Elijah the prophet* Elijah stood against Baal about 860 B.C. (1 Kgs 18) and was taken up without dying (2 Kgs 2:11). John came "in the spirit and power of Elijah" (Luke 1:17), dressed like him (Matt 3:4; 2 Kgs 1:8), and Jesus said, "he himself is Elijah, who is about to come" (Matt 11:14). Yet John said, "I am not" (John 1:21), for he was not Elijah in person.

4:5 *before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD* Jesus said both "Elijah indeed comes first, and will restore all things" (Matt 17:11) and "Elijah has already come" (Matt 17:12), speaking of John (Matt 17:13). Israel did not receive John or the King he announced. Many believe there will also be an Elijah ministry before the second coming, in the Tribulation, and connect it with the two witnesses who "have authority to shut heaven" (Rev 11:6; 1 Kgs 17:1). Some think one is Elijah himself, others that they come in his spirit. Scripture does not name them.

4:6 *he will turn back the heart of fathers to sons, and the heart of sons to their fathers* More than ending family quarrels. A whole generation turned back to God, so children share the faith of their fathers. John would "make ready for the Lord a people prepared" (Luke 1:17). The cure for broken homes (2:14-16) is hearts turned to God.

4:6 *lest I come and strike the land with a devoted destruction* Herem, something given over wholly to God for destruction, as Jericho (Josh 6:17). In synagogue reading verse 5 is often read again after verse 6, so as not to end on judgment. Four hundred years later Matthew opens with "Jesus, who is called Christ" (Matt 1:16). The Old Testament closes with a curse, the New with grace (Rev 22:21), because "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law" (Gal 3:13).

MATTHEW

Introduction

Title

The book is named for Matthew, the tax collector Jesus called to follow Him. It is the first book of the New Testament and the first of the four Gospels. The word gospel means good news. Matthew, Mark and Luke are called the Synoptic Gospels, from a word that means seen together, because they tell many of the same events in much the same order. Matthew is the Gospel of the King. He shows that Jesus is the Messiah, the promised Son of David who has the right to David's throne.

Author and Date

The book does not name its writer, but the early church agreed from the start that Matthew wrote it. Matthew, also called Levi, was a tax collector whom Jesus called (9:9; Mark 2:14) and who became one of the twelve apostles (10:3). Tax collectors worked for Rome and were hated by their own people, yet only this Gospel calls him "Matthew the tax collector" (10:3). He did not hide where he came from, and a man used to careful records wrote a carefully ordered book. Some modern scholars doubt that Matthew wrote it, mostly because they believe the writer used Mark. I take the early church's witness at its word. Matthew does not say when he wrote. Most who hold that he wrote it date it about A.D. 50 to 60, before the Romans destroyed the temple in A.D. 70. Jesus' words about the temple's fall (24:1-2) read like a prophecy still waiting to happen. Some suggest he wrote in Judea, others in Antioch of Syria (Acts 11:19-26).

Background and Setting

Matthew wrote mainly for Jewish readers. He does not stop to explain Jewish customs the way Mark does, he traces Jesus' line to Abraham and David, and he quotes the Old Testament more than any other Gospel writer. Again and again he says a thing happened "so that what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet might be fulfilled" (1:22). Yet Gentiles keep showing up with surprising faith: the wise men (2:1-12), a centurion (8:5-13), a Canaanite mother (15:21-28), and the centurion at the cross (27:54).

Jesus was born in Bethlehem and grew up in Nazareth in Galilee. Most of His ministry in Matthew takes place around the Sea of Galilee, with Capernaum as His home base, before He goes south to Jerusalem for the last week of His life. The land was under Rome. Herod the Great was king when Jesus was born; later his sons ruled parts of the land, and Judea was governed by Pontius Pilate. The Pharisees, Sadducees and scribes are explained in the notes where they first appear.

Themes

Jesus is the promised Messiah and King. The heart of the book is Peter's confession: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (16:16). The fulfillment sayings show that His birth, His home towns, His healing, His parables, His entry into Jerusalem and even His betrayal were all foretold. The God of Israel has kept His word.

Matthew speaks of "the kingdom of the heavens" more than thirty times. Mark and Luke say the kingdom of God in the same places, so the phrases mean the same thing; many Jews said heaven in place of God's name out of reverence. The kingdom is God's rule through His King. It drew near when the King came, it is entered now by repentance and faith, and it will come in full, visible form when Jesus returns and reigns on the earth for a thousand years (Rev 20:1-6). Israel's leaders rejected the King, but God has not cast off His people (Rom 11:25-29).

Matthew gathers Jesus' teaching into five long sermons: the Sermon on the Mount (5-7), the sending of the twelve (10), the parables of the kingdom (13), greatness and forgiveness (18), and the Olivet Discourse (24-25). Each ends with nearly the same words, "when Jesus had finished" (7:28).

Christ in Matthew

Jesus is the Son of David and the Son of Abraham (1:1), born of a virgin, and named Immanuel, "God with us" (1:23). He came to "save His people from their sins" (1:21), to fulfill the Law and the Prophets (5:17), and to "give His life as a ransom for many" (20:28). Israel's leaders rejected their King and handed Him to the Romans, but He rose with "All authority" in heaven and on earth (28:18), sent His followers to make disciples of all the nations, and promised to be with them to the end of the age. He will come again in power and great glory to sit on the throne of His glory (25:31).

Hard Passages

Why do Matthew's and Luke's family lines differ (1:1-17; Luke 3:23-38)? Many believe Matthew gives Joseph's legal, royal line and Luke gives Mary's; others see two lines of Joseph. The notes at 1:16 name both.

What does the exception clause allow (5:32; 19:9)? Good teachers differ on divorce and remarriage, and the notes name the main views without taking a hard side.

Who is the rock (16:18)? The notes give the Protestant reading, that the church is built on Christ as Peter confessed Him, and name the Roman Catholic view.

The Olivet Discourse (24-25) is read in the notes as looking mainly ahead to the future Tribulation and the Second Coming, after the church has been caught up to the Lord. The notes explain why the gathering of 24:31 and the one "taken" in 24:40-41 are not the rapture, name the three views of "this generation" (24:34), and name the views of "My brothers" (25:40).

Other hard places include the unforgivable sin (12:31-32), "until the Son of Man comes" (10:23), the coming in 16:28, Jeremiah named in 27:9, and the saints raised in 27:52-53. A few verses printed in the SLB, the end of the Lord's Prayer (6:13) and 17:21, 18:11 and 23:14, are missing from most older Greek copies; the notes say so where they appear.

Outline

I. The Birth of the King (1:1-2:23)
  A. The family line of Jesus (1:1-17)
  B. The virgin birth (1:18-25)
  C. The wise men and the flight to Egypt (2:1-23)
II. The King Prepares (3:1-4:25)
  A. John the Baptist and the baptism of Jesus (3:1-17)

B. Tested in the wilderness (4:1-11)
C. The ministry in Galilee begins (4:12-25)
III. The King's Teaching: The Sermon on the Mount (5:1-7:29)
A. The Beatitudes, salt and light (5:1-16)
B. Jesus and the Law (5:17-48)
C. Giving, prayer, fasting and treasure (6:1-34)
D. Judging, asking and the two roads (7:1-29)
IV. The King's Power and His Messengers (8:1-10:42)
A. Authority over sickness, storm and demons (8:1-34)
B. Authority to forgive and to call (9:1-38)
C. The twelve sent out (10:1-42)
V. The King Opposed (11:1-13:58)
A. John's question and Jesus' invitation (11:1-30)
B. Lord of the Sabbath and the leaders' rejection (12:1-50)
C. Parables of the kingdom (13:1-58)
VI. The King Trains His Disciples (14:1-18:35)
A. Feeding the crowds and walking on the water (14:1-15:39)
B. Peter's confession and the cross foretold (16:1-28)
C. The transfiguration (17:1-27)
D. Greatness and forgiveness (18:1-35)
VII. On the Road to Jerusalem (19:1-20:34)
A. Marriage, children and riches (19:1-30)
B. The last will be first (20:1-34)
VIII. The King in Jerusalem (21:1-25:46)
A. The King enters and cleanses the temple (21:1-22)
B. Questions in the temple (21:23-22:46)
C. Woes to the hypocrites (23:1-39)
D. The Olivet Discourse (24:1-25:46)
IX. The Death and Resurrection of the King (26:1-28:20)
A. The Last Supper and Gethsemane (26:1-56)
B. The trials (26:57-27:26)
C. The crucifixion and burial (27:27-66)
D. He is risen (28:1-20)

MATTHEW

MATTHEW 1

The Family Line of Jesus Christ

1 ***The*** book of ***the*** genealogy of Jesus (Iesous) Christ, son of David (Dabid), son of Abraham (Abraam). **2** Abraham fathered Isaac (Isaak), and Isaac fathered Jacob (Iakob), and Jacob fathered Judah (Ioudas) and his brothers. **3** And Judah fathered Perez (Phares) and Zerah (Zara) by Tamar (Thamar), and Perez fathered Hezron (Esrom), and Hezron fathered Aram. **4** And Aram fathered Amminadab (Aminadab), and Amminadab fathered Nahshon (Naasson), and Nahshon fathered Salmon. **5** And Salmon fathered Boaz (Booz) by Rahab (Hrachab), and Boaz fathered Obed by Ruth (Hrouth), and Obed fathered Jesse (Iessai). **6** And Jesse fathered David the king. And David the king fathered Solomon by the ***wife*** of Uriah (Ourias). **7** And Solomon fathered Rehoboam (Hroboam), and Rehoboam fathered Abijah (Abia), and Abijah fathered Asa. **8** And Asa fathered Jehoshaphat (Iosaphat), and Jehoshaphat fathered Jehoram (Ioram), and Jehoram fathered Uzziah (Ozias). **9** And Uzziah fathered Jotham (Ioatham), and Jotham fathered Ahaz (Achaz), and Ahaz fathered Hezekiah (Ezekias). **10** And Hezekiah fathered Manasseh (Manasses), and Manasseh fathered Amon, and Amon fathered Josiah (Iosias). **11** And Josiah fathered Jeconiah (Iechonias) and his brothers at ***the time of*** the deportation to Babylon. **12** And after the deportation to Babylon, Jeconiah fathered Shealtiel (Salathiel), and Shealtiel fathered Zerubbabel (Zorobabel). **13** And Zerubbabel fathered Abiud (Abioud), and Abiud fathered Eliakim (Eliakeim), and Eliakim fathered Azor. **14** And Azor fathered Zadok (Sadok), and Zadok fathered Akim (Acheim), and Akim fathered Eliud (Elioud). **15** And Eliud fathered Eleazar, and Eleazar fathered Matthan, and Matthan fathered Jacob. **16** And Jacob fathered Joseph (Ioseph), the husband of Mary (Maria), of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ. **17** So all the generations from Abraham to David ***are*** fourteen generations, and from David until the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon until the Christ fourteen generations.

The Birth of Jesus

18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was thus: for when His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found having ***a child*** in ***the*** womb from ***the*** Holy Spirit. **19** And Joseph her husband, being

1:1 Gen 22:18; Ps 132:11; Isa 11:1
1:2 Gen 25:26; 1 Chr 1:34; Gen 21:2
1:3 Gen 46:12; Gen 38:29; Ruth 4:18
1:4 1 Chr 2:10; Num 1:7; Num 2:3
1:5 Josh 2:1; Ruth 1:4; Ruth 1:16
1:6 1 Sam 17:12; 1 Sam 16:1; 2 Sam 12:24
1:7 1 Chr 3:10; 1 Kgs 11:43; 1 Kgs 14:31
1:8 1 Kgs 15:24; 1 Kgs 22:2; 2 Kgs 3:1
1:9 2 Kgs 15:7; 2 Kgs 15:32; 2 Kgs 18:1
1:10 1 Chr 3:13-14; 1 Kgs 13:2; 2 Kgs 20:21
1:11 Jer 27:20; 1 Chr 3:15-16; 2 Kgs 25:11
1:12 1 Chr 3:17; Ezra 3:2; 2 Kgs 25:27
1:13 Ezra 2:2; Ezra 3:2; Neh 7:7
1:14 Isa 11:1; Jer 22:30
1:15 Isa 11:1; Jer 22:30
1:16 Isa 11:1; Jer 22:30; Luke 3:23
1:18 Job 14:4; Gen 3:15; Luke 1:27-38
1:19 Deut 22:23; Deut 22:24; Deut 24:4

1:1 *The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ* A genealogy is a family line. For a Jewish reader it was proof of who a man was and what he had a right to. Jesus was His given name. Christ is a title, not a last name: Christos means anointed one, the same as the Hebrew Messiah. Israel was waiting for the Anointed One, the great King God had promised.
1:1 *son of David, son of Abraham* The two men God made His biggest promises to. In Abraham's seed all nations would be blessed (Gen 22:18), and a son of David would sit on his throne forever (2 Sam 7:12-16). From the first line Matthew tells us Jesus is the One both promises pointed to.
1:3 *by Tamar* Jewish family lines usually listed only men, but Matthew names four women before Mary: Tamar (Gen 38), Rahab the Canaanite (Josh 2), Ruth the Moabite (Deut 23:3), and Bathsheba. I believe he wants us to see grace. God built the line of His Son out of sinners and outsiders, Gentiles and Jews.
1:6 *by the wife of Uriah* Matthew does not even name Bathsheba. Calling her "the wife of Uriah" reminds us of David's sin (2 Sam 11). If God could work through that family, He can work through yours, and He can save you.
1:8 *Jehoram fathered Uzziah* Matthew skips three kings here: Ahaziah, Joash and Amaziah (2 Kgs 8:24; 12:21; 14:21). That was not a mistake. Jewish family lines often skipped generations, and "fathered" can mean was the ancestor of. Some of these kings were godly, like Hezekiah and Josiah, and many were wicked, like Manasseh, yet God kept His promise to David through all of them.
1:11 *the deportation to Babylon* The great disaster of Israel's history. In 586 B.C. Babylon destroyed Jerusalem and the temple and carried the people away. From that day no son of David sat on a throne in Jerusalem. The throne had been empty for almost six hundred years.
1:12 *Jeconiah fathered Shealtiel* Jeconiah was so wicked that God said none of his descendants would prosper on David's throne (Jer 22:30). Zerubbabel led the people back from Babylon and rebuilt the temple (Ezra 3:8). Most names after him appear nowhere else in the Bible and may come from Joseph's family records.
1:16 *Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus* All down the list the pattern is "fathered." Here it changes. In Greek "whom" is feminine: Jesus was born of Mary, not fathered by Joseph. Matthew is getting us ready for the virgin birth.
1:16 *who is called Christ* Luke's family line differs after David (Luke 3:23-38). Many believe Matthew gives Joseph's legal, royal line and Luke gives Mary's. Others believe both are Joseph's, one legal and one natural. Either way Jesus is a true son of David, with the legal right through Joseph and David's flesh and blood through Mary. Not being Joseph's natural son, He escaped the curse on Jeconiah.
1:17 *fourteen generations* Three groups: the rise of the nation to its king, the fall of the kingdom, and the coming of the true King. Why fourteen? Matthew does not say. Some note the Hebrew letters of David add up to fourteen, but we can't be sure. The list shows history moving toward a goal. God did not forget His promise.
1:18 *betrothed to Joseph* A betrothal was much stronger than an engagement today. It was a binding agreement, often lasting about a year. The couple were called husband and wife and only a divorce could end it, but they did not yet live together.
1:18 *she was found having a child in the womb from the Holy Spirit* Mary was a virgin. No man was the father; the Holy Spirit formed the body of Jesus in her womb (Luke 1:34-35). Jesus did not begin to exist there. As the Son of God He always existed (John 1:1-2). He took on a full human nature without ceasing to be God, so He could take our place without sin of His own.
1:19 *being righteous and not willing to make her a public example* Joseph knew the child was not his. The Law allowed even death for unfaithfulness during a betrothal (Deut 22:23-24), though that was rarely done then. He planned a quiet divorce before a few witnesses. Being righteous and being merciful go together.

righteous and not willing to make her a public example, purposed to send her away secretly. **20** And while he was pondering these things, look, an angel of ***the*** Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary ***as*** your wife, for that which has been conceived in her is from ***the*** Holy Spirit. **21** And she will bear a son, and you will call His name Jesus, for He Himself will save His people from their sins." **22** And all this has come to pass so that what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, **23** "Look, the virgin will have ***a child*** in ***the*** womb, and will bear a son, and they will call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us." **24** And Joseph, having been awakened from sleep, did as the angel of ***the*** Lord commanded him, and took his wife, **25** and he was not knowing her until she had brought forth her firstborn son; and he called His name Jesus.

MATTHEW 2

The Wise Men Worship the King

1 Now when Jesus (Iesous) had been born in Bethlehem (Bethleem) of Judea (Ioudaia) in ***the*** days of Herod (Herodes) the king, look, Magi from ***the*** east arrived in Jerusalem (Hierosolyma), **2** saying, "Where is the ***One*** who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star in the east, and have come to worship Him." **3** And having heard ***this***, Herod the king was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. **4** And having gathered together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he was inquiring of them where the Christ is born. **5** And they said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for thus it has been written through the prophet: **6** 'And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah (Iouda), are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will go forth ***One*** leading, who will shepherd My people Israel.'" **7** Then Herod, having secretly called the Magi, ascertained exactly from them the time of the appearing star. **8** And having sent them to Bethlehem, he said, "Having gone, search carefully for the child; and when you have found ***Him***, bring word back to me, so that I also, having come, may worship Him." **9** And having heard the king, they went away; and look, the star which they saw in the east was going before them, until, having come, it stood over where the child was. **10** And having seen

1:20 Judg 13:3; Isa 7:2; Isa 7:13
1:21 Acts 13:23,38,39; Gen 16:11; Ps 130:8
1:22 Ezra 1:1; Hos 1:7; Luke 24:44
1:23 Isa 7:14; Isa 9:6; Ps 46:7
1:24 Gen 7:5; Exod 40:19; 2 Kgs 5:11
1:25 Exod 13:2; 2 Sam 6:23; 1 Kgs 1:4
2:1 Mic 5:2; Gen 35:19; Judg 12:8
2:2 Num 24:17; Zech 9:9; Ps 2:6
2:3 Matt 8:29; Matt 23:37; 1 Kgs 18:17,18
2:4 Acts 23:9; Matt 21:15,23; Matt 26:3,47
2:5 Gen 35:19; Josh 19:15; Ruth 1:1
2:6 Mic 5:2; 2 Sam 5:2; Gen 49:10
2:7 Matt 26:3-5; Exod 1:10; 1 Sam 18:21
2:8 2 Sam 15:7; 2 Sam 17:14; 1 Kgs 19:2
2:9 Isa 60:3; Matt 2:2; Ps 25:12
2:10 Ps 67:4; Luke 2:10,20; Rom 15:9-13

1:20 *while he was pondering these things* Joseph did not rush, and God met him as he thought it through. "Joseph, son of David" reminds us he was in the royal line. He would have to live with the whispers of people who did not believe. Many of us are called to obey God when others don't understand.
1:21 *you will call His name Jesus* Naming the child was the father's job. By naming Him, Joseph adopted Jesus as his legal son and gave Him His place in David's line. Jesus is the Greek form of Yeshua, or Joshua, the Lord saves.
1:21 *He Himself will save His people from their sins* Many wanted a Messiah to save them from Rome. Jesus came to save them from something much worse. Our worst enemy is not a government or a person. It is our own sin, and only Jesus can save us from it.
1:22 *so that what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet might be fulfilled* The first of Matthew's fulfillment formulas. He uses words like these again and again to show his Jewish readers that Jesus is the One the Scriptures promised.
1:23 *Look, the virgin will have a child in the womb* From Isaiah 7:14, given to King Ahaz seven hundred years before. Some say the Hebrew word means only young woman, but the Jewish scholars who put Isaiah into Greek before Jesus chose parthenos, virgin, and Matthew uses it. Teachers differ on whether Isaiah's sign also had a near meaning in Ahaz's day, but its full meaning is the virgin birth.
1:23 *God with us* Jesus was not just a messenger from God. He was God Himself come to live among us. Matthew begins with "God with us" and ends with Jesus saying "I am with you all the days" (28:20).
1:24 *did as the angel of the Lord commanded him* Joseph never says a word in the whole Bible, but his actions say a great deal. He did not argue or ask for a second sign. He obeyed at once.
1:25 *he was not knowing her until she had brought forth her firstborn son* To know is the Bible's polite way of speaking of the union of husband and wife (Gen 4:1). Joseph kept Mary a virgin until Jesus was born. "Until" points to a normal marriage after that, and Matthew later names Jesus' brothers and sisters (13:55-56). Some churches teach Mary stayed a virgin all her life, but I believe the plain reading is that she and Joseph had other children.
2:1 *in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king* Bethlehem, about six miles south of Jerusalem, was David's hometown (1 Sam 16:1). Herod the Great was an Idumean, descended from Esau, made king by Rome. He rebuilt the temple on a grand scale, and he was cruel and jealous enough to kill a wife and several sons. He died about 4 B.C.; our calendar was worked out a few years off, and Jesus was most likely born a year or two before that.
2:1 *Magi from the east* Wise men, most likely from Persia or Babylon, who studied the stars and advised kings. Scripture does not say how many. Many Jews had lived in Babylon since the exile, Daniel had led the wise men there (Dan 2:48), and Balaam spoke of a star from Jacob (Num 24:17).
2:3 *Herod the king was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him* Herod was king of the Jews in Rome's eyes, and now someone asked about a King born to that throne. Jerusalem was troubled because it knew what Herod did when he felt threatened.
2:4 *the chief priests and scribes of the people* The chief priests were the leading priests in Jerusalem, including the high priest's family. The scribes were experts in the Law of Moses who copied, studied and taught it. Herod understood the Magi were asking about the Messiah.
2:6 *who will shepherd My people Israel* From Micah 5:2, joined with God's words about David (2 Sam 5:2). These men could quote chapter and verse, yet not one walked the short road to Bethlehem with the Magi. It is possible to know the right answers about Jesus and never come to Him.
2:8 *so that I also, having come, may worship Him* Herod planned to kill, not worship. People can use the language of faith to cover what they really want. God sees the heart.
2:9 *it stood over where the child was* Ordinary stars do not lead travelers and stop over one house. Some suggest a comet or a joining of planets, but those would not do this. I believe it was a special light God provided, like the pillar of fire in the wilderness (Exod 13:21).

the star, they rejoiced ***with*** exceedingly great joy. **11** And having come into the house, they saw the child with Mary (Maria) His mother, and having fallen down they worshiped Him; and having opened their treasures, they offered to Him gifts: gold and frankincense and myrrh. **12** And having been divinely warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they withdrew into their country by another way.

The Flight to Egypt

13 And when they had withdrawn, look, an angel of ***the*** Lord appears in a dream to Joseph (Ioseph), saying, "Having arisen, take the child and His mother, and flee into Egypt (Aigyptos), and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to seek the child to destroy Him." **14** And having arisen, he took the child and His mother by night and withdrew into Egypt, **15** and he was there until the death of Herod, so that what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, "Out of Egypt I called My Son." **16** Then Herod, having seen that he had been mocked by the Magi, was greatly enraged; and having sent forth, he killed all the boys who ***were*** in Bethlehem and in all its vicinity, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had ascertained exactly from the Magi. **17** Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah (Hieremias) the prophet, saying, **18** "A voice was heard in Ramah (Hrama), lamentation and weeping and great mourning, Rachel (Hrachel) weeping ***for*** her children; and she was not willing to be comforted, because they are no more."

The Return to Nazareth

19 And when Herod had died, look, an angel of ***the*** Lord appears in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, **20** saying, "Having arisen, take the child and His mother, and go into ***the*** land of Israel; for those seeking the life of the child have died." **21** And having arisen, he took the child and His mother and came into ***the*** land of Israel. **22** And having heard that Archelaus (Archelaos) reigns over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there; and having been divinely warned in a dream, he withdrew into the districts of Galilee (Galilaia), **23** and having come, he dwelt in a city called Nazareth, so that what was spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, that "He will be called a Nazarene."

MATTHEW 3

John the Baptist Prepares the Way

1 And in those days comes John (Ioannes) the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea (Ioudaia), **2** and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of the heavens has drawn near." **3** For this is the ***one*** who was spoken of by Isaiah (Hesaias) the prophet, saying, "***The*** voice of ***one*** crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of ***the*** Lord; make His paths

2:11 Isa 60:6; Ps 2:12; Ps 72:10,15
2:12 Matt 2:22; Matt 27:19; Matt 1:20
2:13 1 Kgs 11:17; Exod 1:22; Matt 1:20
2:14 1 Kgs 11:17; Matt 2:20,21; Matt 1:24
2:15 Hos 11:1; Exod 4:22; Num 24:8
2:16 Gen 39:17; 1 Sam 2:33; 1 Sam 19:17
2:18 Jer 31:15; Gen 35:16; Jer 4:31
2:19 Gen 28:12; Exod 2:23; Num 12:6
2:20 Exod 4:19; 1 Kgs 11:21; Exod 2:23
2:21 Gen 6:22; Heb 11:8
2:22 Luke 2:39; Gen 19:17-21; 1 Sam 16:2
2:23 Judg 13:5; John 1:45,46; John 18:5,7
3:1 Isa 40:3-6; Matt 11:11; Matt 16:14
3:2 Dan 2:44; Matt 4:17; Isa 56:1
3:3 Isa 40:3; Isa 57:14; Deut 4:12

2:11 *having come into the house, they saw the child* Now a house, not a stable, and a child, not a newborn. The Magi likely came months after the birth, which fits Herod killing boys up to two. The shepherds came the night He was born (Luke 2:8-16). They worshiped Him, not Mary His mother.
2:11 *gold and frankincense and myrrh* Costly gifts fit for a king. Many have seen gold for a king, frankincense (incense used in worship) for God, and myrrh (a burial spice) for the One who would die. Matthew does not explain them, so hold those meanings loosely. God may have used them to pay for the trip to Egypt.
2:12 *they withdrew into their country by another way* They obeyed God rather than the king. The first people in Matthew to worship Jesus were Gentiles. From the beginning He came for the nations too.
2:13 *take the child and His mother, and flee into Egypt* Matthew keeps saying "the child and His mother," careful not to call Joseph the father. Egypt was beyond Herod's reach and had many Jews. Joseph left "by night." God did not stop Herod's wickedness, but He kept His Son safe through one faithful man's obedience.
2:15 *Out of Egypt I called My Son* From Hosea 11:1, where God speaks of Israel, His son brought out in the exodus (Exod 4:22). Matthew shows a pattern. Jesus' life follows Israel's path: down to Egypt and out, through the waters, tested in the wilderness. Where Israel failed, Jesus obeyed. He is everything Israel was meant to be.
2:16 *he killed all the boys who were in Bethlehem and in all its vicinity* Bethlehem was small, and most teachers estimate a dozen or two boys died. No other ancient writer records it, but it fits Herod, who killed his own sons. Real families lost their little boys. Scripture does not hide that pain from us, and neither should we.
2:17 *Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet* Matthew changes his wording. He does not say this happened so that Scripture would be fulfilled. God did not cause Herod's evil, but He knew it would come.
2:18 *Rachel weeping for her children* From Jeremiah 31:15. Rachel, buried near Bethlehem (Gen 35:19), is pictured weeping as Judah was gathered at Ramah for exile. The next verses tell her to stop weeping (Jer 31:16-17), and the same chapter promises the new covenant (Jer 31:31). For anyone who has lost a child, God sees that grief. He wrote it into His Word.
2:20 *those seeking the life of the child have died* These words echo what God told Moses (Exod 4:19). Jesus is like Moses, the deliverer who escaped a king who killed baby boys (Exod 1:22). Herod could not stop God's plan.
2:22 *Archelaus reigns over Judea* Herod's kingdom was split among three sons. Archelaus was as cruel as his father, and Rome later removed him. So the family went north to Nazareth, the town Mary and Joseph had come from (Luke 2:4, 39).
2:23 *He will be called a Nazarene* No Old Testament verse has these words, and Matthew says "the prophets," summing up several. Nazareth was looked down on (John 1:46), and the prophets said the Messiah would be despised (Isa 53:3; Ps 22:6). Many also see a play on netzer, branch (Isa 11:1). Either way, the King grew up in a town people mocked.
3:1 *John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea* Not John the apostle. This John was the son of Zechariah the priest and Elizabeth, a relative of Jesus born about six months before Him (Luke 1:5-17, 36). The wilderness, the dry land west of the Dead Sea, was where God had met His people after the exodus. John made people leave their comforts to hear a hard message.
3:2 *Repent, for the kingdom of the heavens has drawn near* To repent is to turn around, a change of heart about sin and God that leads to a changed life, more than feeling sorry. Mark and Luke say "the kingdom of God" in the same places. It is God's rule through His promised King (Isa 9:6-7; Dan 2:44). It was near because the King was near. It is entered now by repentance and faith, and it comes in full, visible form on the earth when Jesus returns to reign (Rev 20:4-6).
3:3 *Prepare the way of the Lord* From Isaiah 40:3. Before a king traveled, workers leveled and straightened the road. John prepared hearts by calling them to repent. In Isaiah the One coming is the LORD, Israel's God, and John prepares the way for Jesus. Jesus is the Lord God come in the flesh.

straight.'" **4** And John himself had his garment of camel's hair, and a leather belt around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey. **5** Then Jerusalem (Hierosolyma) and all Judea and all the region around the Jordan (Iordanes) were going out to him, **6** and they were being baptized in the Jordan by him, confessing their sins. **7** And having seen many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "Brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? **8** Therefore produce fruits worthy of repentance; **9** and do not presume to say within yourselves, 'We have Abraham (Abraam) ***as*** father'; for I say to you that God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. **10** And already also the ax is laid at the root of the trees; therefore every tree not producing good fruit is cut down and is thrown into fire. **11** I indeed baptize you with water to repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry; He Himself will baptize you with ***the*** Holy Spirit and fire. **12** His winnowing fork ***is*** in His hand, and He will thoroughly clear His threshing floor and will gather His wheat into the barn; but the chaff He will burn up with unquenchable fire."

The Baptism of Jesus

13 Then Jesus (Iesous) comes from Galilee (Galilaia) to the Jordan, to John, to be baptized by him. **14** But John was hindering Him, saying, "I have need to be baptized by You, and do You come to me?" **15** And answering, Jesus said to him, "Permit ***it*** now; for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he permits Him. **16** And having been baptized, Jesus immediately went up from the water; and look, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming upon Him. **17** And look, a voice out of the heavens, saying, "This is My Son, the beloved, in whom I was well pleased."

MATTHEW 4

Jesus Tested in the Wilderness

1 Then Jesus (Iesous) was led up into the wilderness by the Spirit to be tempted by the devil. **2** And having fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry. **3** And having come, the ***one*** tempting said to Him, "If You are ***the*** Son of God, speak, so that these stones may become loaves."

3:4 2 Kgs 1:8; Lev 11:22; 1 Sam 14:25
3:5 1 Sam 14:25; Mark 1:5; Matt 4:25
3:6 Acts 19:18; Matt 3:11,13-16; Acts 1:5
3:7 Matt 12:34; Matt 23:33; 1 Thess 1:10
3:8 Acts 26:20; Eph 5:9; Gal 5:22,23
3:9 Ezek 33:24; Isa 41:8; Acts 13:26
3:10 Dan 4:14; John 15:6; John 15:2
3:11 Acts 1:5; Luke 3:16; Isa 4:4
3:12 Mal 4:1; Luke 3:17; Matt 13:30,43
3:13 Matt 2:22; Mark 1:9; Luke 3:21
3:14 Luke 1:43; John 13:6-8; John 1:16
3:15 John 4:34; John 8:29; John 13:7-9
3:16 Isa 11:2; Isa 42:1; Isa 61:1
3:17 Ps 2:7; Isa 42:1; Deut 4:12
4:1 Heb 2:18; Mark 1:12,13-15; Luke 4:1-13
4:2 Exod 34:28; 1 Kgs 19:8; Deut 9:9
4:3 Ps 78:17; 1 Thess 3:5; Job 1:9-12

3:4 *his garment of camel's hair, and a leather belt around his waist* That is how Scripture describes Elijah (2 Kgs 1:8), and Malachi promised Elijah would come before the day of the Lord (Mal 4:5-6). John came "in the spirit and power of Elijah" (Luke 1:17), though he was not Elijah back from the dead (John 1:21). Locusts were clean food (Lev 11:22), a poor man's diet. John did not live for comfort.
3:6 *they were being baptized in the Jordan by him, confessing their sins* No prophet had spoken in Israel for about four hundred years. To baptize is to dip or immerse. John called Jews to be baptized as if they were outsiders starting over. His baptism did not wash away sin. It was a public sign of repentance in readiness for the King, and confession went with it.
3:7 *the Pharisees and Sadducees* The Pharisees were strict keepers of the Law who added rules of their own, the traditions of the elders. The Sadducees were fewer but powerful, many of them wealthy priests who ran the temple. They accepted only the five books of Moses and denied the resurrection, angels and spirits (Acts 23:8).
3:7 *Brood of vipers* Like snakes fleeing ahead of a field fire, they wanted to escape God's judgment without changing their hearts. John saw through them.
3:8 *produce fruits worthy of repentance* A tree is known by its fruit, and real repentance shows in how we treat people, handle money and speak (Luke 3:10-14). The fruit does not make the tree alive. It shows that it is alive.
3:9 *We have Abraham as father* Many believed descent from Abraham kept them safe in the judgment. God could make children for Abraham out of the rocks on the riverbank. No one is saved by family, church or heritage. God has no grandchildren. Each of us must come to Him personally.
3:10 *the ax is laid at the root of the trees* The woodsman's ax rests against the tree, ready to swing. John warned of real judgment for those who refused to repent, and Jesus used the same picture (7:19).
3:11 *whose sandals I am not fit to carry* Carrying a master's sandals was the lowest servant's job. The greatest prophet of his day said he was not worthy even of that.
3:11 *He Himself will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire* The risen Christ poured out the Spirit at Pentecost (Acts 1:5; 2:1-4, 33). Some see the fire as the tongues of fire and the Spirit's cleansing. Others see judgment on those who refuse Him, since fire comes in the verses before and after. Both views have support. Jesus brings the Spirit to those who repent and judgment to those who will not.
3:12 *His winnowing fork is in His hand* The farmer tossed beaten grain into the air. The wind blew away the chaff and the wheat fell back.
"Unquenchable fire" cannot be put out, and Jesus spoke of hell this way (Mark 9:43). There are two destinies, and every person ends up in one of them.
3:14 *I have need to be baptized by You, and do You come to me* John knew Jesus had no sin to confess. John baptized sinners, and Jesus was not one.
3:15 *thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness* Jesus did all God required of a faithful Israelite. He stood with sinners in the water as He would later take their place on the cross (Isa 53:12). And it opened His public ministry (John 1:31-34). If the sinless Son obeyed in baptism, how much more should we? Repentance and faith come first; baptism is the obedient public step that follows.
3:16 *Jesus immediately went up from the water* These words fit well with baptism by immersion, going down into the water and coming up out of it.
3:16 *the Spirit of God descending like a dove* The Spirit did not become a bird. He came in a form like a dove. This was the anointing of the Anointed One (Isa 11:1-2; 61:1).
3:17 *This is My Son, the beloved, in whom I was well pleased* Echoes of Psalm 2:7, God's royal Son, and Isaiah 42:1, the Servant in whom He delights. All three Persons of the Trinity are here: the Son in the water, the Spirit like a dove, the Father speaking (28:19). Jesus had not yet preached or done a public miracle. His thirty quiet years pleased God, worth remembering when our own lives feel ordinary.
4:1 *led up into the wilderness by the Spirit to be tempted by the devil* Right after His baptism, the highest moment was followed by the hardest test. The Greek word can mean tempt or test: Satan tempted Jesus to sin, while God tested Him to prove Him the faithful Son. Devil means slanderer or accuser, a real fallen angel, not just a force of evil.
4:2 *having fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry* To fast is to go without food to seek God, as Moses did (Exod 34:28). Jesus was fully human and felt real hunger. The devil came when He was weakest. When we are tired, lonely or hurting, we should expect temptation and be ready for it.
4:3 *If You are the Son of God* The "if" carries the sense of since. Since You are the Son, use Your power for Yourself. The bread was not the problem. The devil wanted Jesus to act apart from the Father's will to meet His own need. Satan often tempts us to meet a real need in a wrong way.

4 But answering, He said, "It has been written: 'Man will not
live by bread alone, but by every word coming out through
the mouth of God.'" **5** Then the devil takes Him into the holy
city, and sets Him on the pinnacle of the temple, **6** and says
to Him, "If You are ***the*** Son of God, throw Yourself down; for
it has been written, 'He will give orders to His angels con-
cerning You, and on ***their*** hands they will bear You up, lest
You strike Your foot against a stone.'" **7** Jesus said to him,
"Again it has been written: 'You shall not test ***the*** Lord your
God.'" **8** Again the devil takes Him to an exceedingly high
mountain, and shows Him all the kingdoms of the world and
their glory, **9** and says to Him, "All these things I will give
You, if, falling down, You will worship me." **10** Then Jesus
says to him, "Go away, Satan; for it has been written: 'You
shall worship ***the*** Lord your God, and Him alone you shall
serve.'" **11** Then the devil leaves Him, and look, angels came
and were ministering to Him.

Jesus Begins to Preach in Galilee

12 And having heard that John (Ioannes) had been delivered
up, Jesus withdrew into Galilee (Galilaia). **13** And having left
Nazareth, having come, He dwelt in Capernaum
(Kapernaoum), which ***is*** by the sea, in ***the*** territory of Zebu-
lun (Zaboulon) and Naphtali (Nephthaleim), **14** so that what
was spoken through Isaiah (Hesaias) the prophet might be
fulfilled, saying, **15** "Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali,
the way of ***the*** sea, beyond the Jordan (Iordanes), Galilee of
the Gentiles: **16** the people sitting in darkness saw a great
light, and to those sitting in ***the*** region and shadow of death,
light has dawned on them." **17** From that time Jesus began to
preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of the heavens
has drawn near."

Jesus Calls Four Fishermen

18 And walking beside the Sea of Galilee, Jesus saw two
brothers, Simon who is called Peter (Petros) and Andrew
(Andreas) his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they
were fishers. **19** And He says to them, "Come after Me, and I
will make you fishers of men." **20** And immediately, having
left the nets, they followed Him. **21** And having gone on from
there, He saw two other brothers, James (Iakobos) the ***son*** of
Zebedee (Zebedaios) and John his brother, in the boat with
Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and He called
them. **22** And immediately, having left the boat and their
father, they followed Him.

Jesus Heals Many

23 And Jesus was going around all Galilee, teaching in their
synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and
healing every disease and every sickness among the people.

4:4 Deut 8:3; Luke 4:4,8,12; Exod 16:15
4:5 Neh 11:1; Neh 11:18; Dan 9:16
4:6 Ps 91:11-12; Job 1:10; Ps 34:7
4:7 Deut 6:16; Ps 78:18; Ps 78:41
4:8 Esth 1:4; Matt 16:26; 1 John 2:15,16
4:9 Ps 72:11; Jer 27:5; Ps 95:6
4:10 Deut 6:13; Deut 10:20; Josh 24:14
4:11 1 Kgs 19:6; Matt 26:53; Luke 22:43
4:12 Mark 1:14; Luke 3:20; Luke 4:14,31
4:13 Josh 19:10; Josh 19:32; Gen 30:8
4:14 Isa 9:1; 2 Kgs 19:2; Isa 9:2
4:15 Isa 9:1-2; Josh 20:7; Josh 21:32
4:16 Amos 5:8; Isa 60:1; Ps 107:10
4:17 Matt 3:2; Acts 2:38; Mark 1:14
4:18 Deut 3:17; John 1:40-42; Matt 15:29
4:19 Mark 1:17,18; Matt 16:24; John 12:26
4:20 1 Kgs 19:21; 1 Kgs 19:20; Matt 10:37
4:21 Matt 10:2; Matt 17:1; Matt 20:20,21
4:22 1 Kgs 19:20; Matt 10:37; Luke 14:26,33
4:23 Matt 9:35; Matt 13:54; Mark 1:21,39

4:4 *Man will not live by bread alone* Jesus answered as any believer can, with Scripture, from Deuteronomy 8:3, where God fed hungry Israel with manna. He would rather go hungry and obey than eat and disobey. How often do we let the needs of the body crowd out our time with God?
4:6 *for it has been written* The devil can quote the Bible. He takes Psalm 91:11-12 out of context. That psalm promises care to those who trust God, not to those who show off and dare Him to rescue them. A verse pulled from its setting can be made to say almost anything.
4:7 *You shall not test the Lord your God* From Deuteronomy 6:16, recalling Massah where Israel demanded water (Exod 17:7). Jesus used Scripture to explain Scripture. To test God here is to put ourselves in danger and demand that He prove Himself. Real faith does not need to stage a test.
4:9 *All these things I will give You, if, falling down, You will worship me* Jesus did not dispute that Satan had kingdoms to offer. He calls him "the ruler of this world" (John 12:31; 1 John 5:19). The Father had already promised the nations to His Son (Ps 2:8). Satan offered the crown without the cross. He still promises what God promised, faster and without suffering, if we bend a little. It is always a lie.
4:10 *Go away, Satan* Satan means adversary. All three answers come from Deuteronomy 6 to 8, the lessons of Israel's forty years. Israel, God's son, failed the test, and Jesus passed it. Some teachers believe He could have sinned but did not; others that as God He could not, though the temptation was real. Both agree He was tempted "without sin" (Heb 4:15).
4:11 *angels came and were ministering to Him* The devil left only "until an opportune time" (Luke 4:13), but he lost this battle (James 4:7). The angels did not come when Satan dared Jesus to jump. They came after He obeyed. God cares for His own in His time and His way.
4:12 *John had been delivered up* John was arrested for telling Herod Antipas, a son of Herod the Great who ruled Galilee, that he had no right to his brother's wife (14:3-4). Antipas also ruled Galilee, so Jesus was not running from danger. He went where the Father sent Him.
4:13 *He dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea* A fishing town on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee, a freshwater lake about thirteen miles long. It became His home base.
4:15 *Galilee of the Gentiles* From Isaiah 9:1-2. These northern tribes were the first overrun by Assyria, and many Gentiles had settled there. Jerusalem looked down on Galileans, yet the light came first where people least expected. The next verses promise a son given who will sit on David's throne forever (Isa 9:6-7).
4:17 *From that time Jesus began to preach* A turning point. The same words come again in 16:21, when He begins to show He must suffer and die. The message is the same today: turn from your sin and turn to God.
4:18 *Simon who is called Peter and Andrew his brother* They had met Jesus before. Andrew had followed John the Baptist and brought Simon to Jesus (John 1:35-42). Now Jesus called them to follow Him full time.
4:19 *I will make you fishers of men* Jesus spoke their language. Notice "I will make you." We do not make ourselves into soul winners. Jesus does it as we follow Him.
4:20 *having left the nets, they followed Him* They left their way of earning a living. Following Jesus always costs something, and it is always worth it.
4:22 *having left the boat and their father, they followed Him* Harder than leaving nets. The family had hired servants (Mark 1:20). This John later wrote a Gospel, three letters and Revelation. Jesus does not call everyone to leave home, but He calls everyone to put Him first (10:37).
4:23 *teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom* A synagogue was a local Jewish meeting place for prayer, Scripture reading and teaching, where any qualified man could be invited to teach. The healings were signs backing up the message, for the prophets said the blind would see and the lame leap when God's kingdom came (Isa 35:5-6). Matthew repeats this summary in 9:35.

24 And the report of Him went out into all Syria; and they brought to Him all who were ill, gripped by various diseases and torments, and those being demonized, and those being epileptic, and paralytics; and He healed them. **25** And great crowds followed Him from Galilee and Decapolis (Dekapolis) and Jerusalem (Hierosolyma) and Judea (Ioudaia) and beyond the Jordan.

MATTHEW 5

The Beatitudes

1 And having seen the crowds, He went up on the mountain; and when He had sat down, His disciples came to Him. **2** And having opened His mouth, He was teaching them, saying, **3** "Blessed ***are*** the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of the heavens. **4** Blessed ***are*** those who mourn, for they will be comforted. **5** Blessed ***are*** the meek, for they will inherit the earth. **6** Blessed ***are*** those who hunger and thirst ***for*** righteousness, for they will be filled. **7** Blessed ***are*** the merciful, for they will receive mercy. **8** Blessed ***are*** the pure in heart, for they will see God. **9** Blessed ***are*** the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God. **10** Blessed ***are*** those who have been persecuted on account of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of the heavens. **11** Blessed are you when they insult you, and persecute ***you***, and say every evil word against you, lying, on account of Me. **12** Rejoice and exult, for your reward ***is*** great in the heavens; for thus they persecuted the prophets who ***were*** before you.

Salt and Light

13 You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt becomes tasteless, with what will it be salted? It is no longer strong for anything, except to be thrown out and to be trampled by men. **14** You are the light of the world. A city lying on a mountain cannot be hidden. **15** Nor do they light a lamp and put it under the basket, but on the lampstand, and it shines for all who ***are*** in the house. **16** Thus let your light shine before men, so that they may see your good works and may glorify your Father who ***is*** in the heavens.

4:24 2 Sam 8:6; Esth 9:4; Luke 2:2
4:25 Luke 6:17,19; Mark 5:20; Mark 3:7
5:1 Matt 13:2; Matt 4:18-22; Matt 4:25
5:2 Matt 13:35; Luke 6:20-26; Acts 8:35
5:3 Isa 66:2; Prov 29:23; 2 Chr 7:14
5:4 Rev 21:4; Isa 61:2,3; 2 Cor 7:9,10
5:5 Ps 37:11; Num 12:3; Ps 37:9
5:6 John 4:14; Ps 107:9; John 6:27
5:7 Matt 6:14,15; 2 Sam 22:26; Eph 4:32
5:8 Ps 24:4; Heb 12:14; Ps 73:1
5:9 Heb 12:14; Luke 6:35; James 3:16-18
5:10 1 Pet 3:13,14; James 1:12; 2 Tim 3:11
5:11 1 Pet 4:14; Matt 24:9; 1 Pet 2:23
5:12 Gen 15:1; 1 Kgs 19:2; 1 Kgs 19:10
5:13 Col 4:6; Lev 2:13; Luke 14:34,35
5:14 Prov 4:18; Phil 2:15; John 12:36
5:15 Exod 25:37; Num 8:2; Exod 35:14
5:16 1 Pet 2:12; John 15:8; 1 John 1:5-7

4:24 *those being demonized, and those being epileptic* Demonized means under the control of demons, evil spirits who serve Satan. Matthew lists illness and demons side by side without mixing them up. Not every sickness comes from a demon. The word for epileptic is tied to the moon, which people then blamed for seizures. Jesus had power over all of it.
4:25 *Decapolis* Ten cities, a mostly Gentile region east and southeast of the Sea of Galilee. People came from Jewish and Gentile lands, setting the stage for the Sermon on the Mount.
5:1 *He went up on the mountain* Tradition points to a hillside near Capernaum. Many see a picture of Moses going up Sinai (Exod 19:3). Jesus, the greater Prophet like Moses (Deut 18:15), gives His people the true meaning of the Law. Jewish teachers sat to teach. A disciple is a learner who follows a teacher, and the sermon was spoken first to them, with the crowds listening in (7:28).
5:2 *having opened His mouth, He was teaching them* A Jewish way of saying something weighty is coming. Who is the sermon for? Some say rules for getting into heaven, some only a future kingdom age. Most teachers, including many who look for a future kingdom on earth, believe it speaks to every follower of Jesus today. It shows the character of those who belong to the King, lived out as He changes us by His Spirit.
5:3 *Blessed are the poor in spirit* Blessed means favored by God, happy in the deepest sense, not a passing feeling. The poor in spirit know they have nothing to offer God and come with empty hands, like a beggar. That is where the kingdom starts. The first and eighth blessings both say "theirs is the kingdom," so the whole list describes the people of the kingdom.
5:4 *Blessed are those who mourn* Not only grief over death, but mourning over sin, our own and the world's. God comforts them now with forgiveness and one day will wipe away every tear (Rev 21:4). If your heart is heavy over sin, God is at work in you.
5:5 *Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth* Meekness is strength under God's control, trusting Him instead of fighting for our rights (Num 12:3; Matt 11:29). From Psalm 37:11. The world thinks the pushy will get the earth. I believe this will be fulfilled to the letter when Jesus returns and reigns on the earth with His people (Rev 5:10).
5:6 *Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness* Jesus' people want to be right with God and live right as badly as a starving man wants food. That longing is a gift. God fills it with Christ's righteousness when we believe (Rom 3:22), keeps making us like Him, and fully satisfies it when we see Him.
5:7 *Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy* We do not earn mercy by showing it; we came with empty hands. But people who have received God's mercy become merciful, and one who refuses mercy shows he does not know God's (6:14-15; 18:23-35).
5:8 *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God* The heart is the center of a person: mind, will and feelings. The Pharisees worked at outward purity; Jesus looks inside. No sinner can see God and live (Exod 33:20), but those He makes pure will see Him face to face (1 John 3:2). God cleans the heart by faith (Acts 15:9).
5:9 *Blessed are the peacemakers* Not peace lovers, but peacemakers, who work to bring people to God through the gospel and then to each other. A son was like his father, and God made peace with us through His Son's blood (Col 1:20). Peacemaking shows the family likeness.
5:10 *Blessed are those who have been persecuted on account of righteousness* Not those who suffer for being rude or foolish, but for living for God. The list begins and ends with the kingdom. The world did not welcome the King, and it will not always welcome His people.
5:11 *lying, on account of Me* Now Jesus turns to "you." If what people say about us is true, it is correction, not persecution, and we should repent. Only God can ask people to suffer for His sake.
5:12 *your reward is great in the heavens* God sees what His people suffer and will reward them, and they stand with prophets like Jeremiah, thrown into a pit (Jer 38:6). Rewards are not salvation, but God promises to reward faithfulness. The apostles rejoiced to suffer shame for His name (Acts 5:41).
5:13 *You are the salt of the earth* Salt flavored food and kept meat from spoiling. Salt then was often mixed with other minerals, and when the salt washed out, what was left looked like salt but was useless. A believer who blends in so completely that no one can tell the difference has lost his saltiness.
5:14 *You are the light of the world* Jesus is "the light of the world" (John 8:12). We reflect His light, like the moon reflects the sun. Towns on hills could be seen for miles at night. If Christ lives in you, people will see it.
5:15 *Nor do they light a lamp and put it under the basket* The lamp was a small clay bowl of olive oil with a wick; the basket was a grain measure that would snuff it out. Most homes had one room. Our light shines first where we live. Fear, shame or wanting to fit in can make us cover it.
5:16 *may glorify your Father who is in the heavens* People see our works, but the glory goes to God. This does not contradict 6:1. The difference is motive: here God gets the glory, there we do.

Jesus Fulfills the Law

17 Do not think that I came to abolish the law or the
prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill. **18** For truly
I say to you, until the heaven and the earth pass away, one
iota or one stroke will by no means pass away from the law
until everything happens. **19** Whoever therefore breaks one
of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so,
will be called least in the kingdom of the heavens; but who-
ever does and teaches ***them***, this one will be called great in
the kingdom of the heavens. **20** For I say to you that unless
your righteousness abounds more than ***that*** of the scribes
and Pharisees, you will by no means enter into the kingdom
of the heavens.

Anger

21 You heard that it was said to the ancients, 'You shall not
murder'; and 'Whoever murders will be liable to the judg-
ment.' **22** But I say to you that everyone who is angry with
his brother without cause will be liable to the judgment; and
whoever says to his brother, 'Raca,' will be liable to the San-
hedrin; and whoever says, 'Fool,' will be liable to the
Gehenna of fire. **23** Therefore if you are offering your gift at
the altar, and there remember that your brother has some-
thing against you, **24** leave your gift there before the altar,
and go away; first be reconciled to your brother, and then,
having come, offer your gift. **25** Be agreeing with your
accuser quickly, while you are with him on the way, lest the
accuser deliver you to the judge, and the judge deliver you to
the officer, and you will be thrown into prison. **26** Truly I say
to you, you will by no means come out from there until you
pay the last quadrans.

Lust and Divorce

27 You heard that it was said to the ancients, 'You shall not
commit adultery.' **28** But I say to you that everyone who
looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adul-
tery with her in his heart. **29** And if your right eye causes you
to stumble, pluck it out and throw ***it*** from you; for it is better
for you that one of your members perish, and not ***that*** your
whole body be thrown into Gehenna. **30** And if your right
hand causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw ***it*** from you;
for it is better for you that one of your members perish, and
not ***that*** your whole body be thrown into Gehenna. **31** And it
was said, 'Whoever sends away his wife, let him give her a
certificate of divorce.' **32** But I say to you that whoever sends
away his wife, except for a matter of sexual immorality,
causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a
woman who has been sent away commits adultery.

5:17 Isa 42:21; Rom 8:4; Ps 40:7
5:18 Ps 119:89; Ps 102:26; Isa 51:6
5:19 Ps 119:128; Gen 26:5; Exod 24:12
5:20 Rom 10:2,3; Phil 3:9; John 3:3-5
5:21 Exod 20:13; Deut 5:17; Exod 21:12
5:22 Ps 25:3; Gen 4:6; 1 John 4:20,21
5:23 Matt 23:19; 1 Sam 15:22; Matt 8:4
5:24 Rom 12:17,18; James 5:16; 1 Cor 6:7,8
5:25 Job 22:21; Luke 12:58,59; Prov 25:8
5:26 Matt 18:34; Luke 12:59; 2 Thess 1:9
5:27 Exod 20:14; Deut 5:18; Deut 22:22-24
5:28 James 1:14,15; Job 31:1,9; Prov 6:25
5:29 Mark 9:43-48; Rom 6:6; Rom 8:13
5:30 Matt 11:6; Matt 13:21; Matt 16:23
5:31 Deut 24:1; Jer 3:1; Deut 24:2
5:32 Deut 24:2; Luke 16:18; Matt 5:28

5:17 *I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill* "The law or the prophets" means the whole Old Testament. Jesus kept the Law perfectly, did what its prophecies foretold, was what its sacrifices and feasts pictured, and showed what it really meant. The shadows gave way to the real thing (Heb 10:1). The Law was not thrown away. It was fulfilled in Christ.
5:18 *one iota or one stroke will by no means pass away from the law* "Truly" is the Hebrew amen, marking a solemn statement. The iota stands for the smallest Hebrew letter, yod, and the stroke for a tiny mark that sets one letter apart from another. Every word, letter and mark of Scripture matters.
5:19 *whoever does and teaches them, this one will be called great* Notice the order: does, then teaches. Breaking God's least commands does not shut one out, but he is "called least" there. Teachers will be judged more strictly (James 3:1). Living God's Word matters as much as explaining it.
5:20 *unless your righteousness abounds more than that of the scribes and Pharisees* A shock, for these men even tithed garden herbs (23:23). Their righteousness was outward and their own. Kingdom righteousness starts with Christ's righteousness given when we believe (Phil 3:9), then a changed heart that obeys from the inside out.
5:21 *You heard that it was said to the ancients* Six examples follow, each with "But I say to you." Jesus is not correcting the Law of Moses but the way it was taught, showing its true depth. The rabbis quoted other rabbis. Jesus spoke on His own authority. Teachers stopped at the act of murder (Exod 20:13).
5:22 *everyone who is angry with his brother without cause will be liable to the judgment* Murder starts with anger in the heart (1 John 3:15). "Without cause" is in the Greek copies the SLB follows but not in some of the oldest, and there is a right anger at sin (Eph 4:26). Jesus warns against angry contempt that wants to hurt.
5:22 *Raca* An Aramaic insult, empty-head. The Sanhedrin was the highest Jewish court, about seventy leaders in Jerusalem. Gehenna was the Valley of Hinnom outside Jerusalem, where kings once sacrificed children (Jer 7:31), a picture of the place of final judgment we call hell. Our words and the anger behind them are serious before God.
5:24 *first be reconciled to your brother* God cares more about broken relationships than religious activity. If you know you have hurt someone, do not wait for them to come to you. Go to them. Worship can wait. Reconciliation cannot.
5:26 *until you pay the last quadrans* The smallest Roman coin. A debtor could be jailed until he paid. Settle conflict quickly before it grows worse. And each of us is on the way to meet the Judge of all the earth. Make peace with God now, while there is time.
5:28 *everyone who looks at a woman to lust for her* Not noticing that someone is attractive, but looking in order to feed a forbidden desire. In our day of screens and pornography, this verse has never been more needed. If this is your battle, you are not beyond help. Confess it to God (1 John 1:9) and ask a trusted believer to help you fight it.
5:29 *if your right eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out* Jesus does not mean cutting off body parts; a blind man can still lust. The right eye and hand were the most valued. Whatever leads us into sin, even something that precious, must go: a phone, a service, a relationship, a habit. Sin is not something to play with.
5:31 *let him give her a certificate of divorce* From Deuteronomy 24:1-4. The certificate set a woman free to remarry and protected her from being thrown out with no rights. The school of Shammai allowed divorce only for serious sexual sin; Hillel's school, for almost any reason. Many men treated the certificate as a permission slip.
5:32 *except for a matter of sexual immorality* Porneia covers sexual sin of many kinds. Many teachers believe the innocent spouse may divorce and remarry. Others allow divorce but not remarriage. Others see only sin during betrothal. Paul adds an unbelieving spouse who leaves (1 Cor 7:15). God means marriage to last for life, and His grace reaches the divorced. If you are in danger at home, get help and get safe.

Oaths

33 Again, you heard that it was said to the ancients, 'You shall not swear falsely, but you shall pay your oaths to the Lord.' **34** But I say to you, not to swear at all: neither by heaven, because it is ***the*** throne of God; **35** nor by the earth, because it is ***the*** footstool of His feet; nor by Jerusalem (Hierosolyma), because it is ***the*** city of the great King. **36** Nor shall you swear by your head, because you are not able to make one hair white or black. **37** But let your word be 'Yes, yes,' 'No, no'; and what is more than these is from the evil ***one***.

Love for Enemies

38 You heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.' **39** But I say to you, not to resist the evil ***person***; but whoever will strike you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also. **40** And to the ***one*** wanting to sue you and to take your tunic, yield to him the cloak also. **41** And whoever compels you ***to go*** approximately 1,620 yards (one mile), go with him two. **42** Give to the ***one*** asking you, and do not turn away from the ***one*** wanting to borrow from you. **43** You heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' **44** But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those cursing you, do good to those hating you, and pray for those mistreating you and persecuting you, **45** so that you may be sons of your Father who ***is*** in ***the*** heavens; for He makes His sun rise on evil and good, and sends rain on righteous and unrighteous. **46** For if you love those loving you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? **47** And if you greet your brothers only, what more do you do? Do not even the tax collectors do so? **48** Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father who ***is*** in the heavens is perfect.

MATTHEW 6

Giving in Secret

1 Beware not to do your charity before men in order to be seen by them; otherwise indeed, you have no reward with your Father who ***is*** in the heavens. **2** Therefore whenever you do charity, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be glorified by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. **3** But when you are doing charity, do not

5:33 Lev 19:12; Num 30:2; Deut 23:23
5:34 Isa 66:1; James 5:12; Deut 23:21-23
5:35 Ps 48:2; Mal 1:14; Ps 99:5
5:36 Luke 12:25; Matt 23:16-21; Matt 6:27
5:37 James 5:12; Matt 13:19; 2 Cor 1:17-20
5:38 Exod 21:24; Lev 24:20; Deut 19:21
5:39 1 Cor 6:7; Prov 24:29; Isa 50:6
5:40 Luke 6:29; 1 Cor 6:7
5:41 Matt 27:32; Luke 23:26; Mark 15:21
5:42 Deut 15:7; Deut 15:8; Eccl 11:2
5:43 Lev 19:18; Deut 23:6; Matt 19:19
5:44 Luke 6:27,28,34,35; Rom 12:14,20,21; 1 Pet 3:9
5:45 Ps 145:9; Luke 6:35; Acts 14:17
5:46 Luke 6:32-35; Matt 6:1; 1 Pet 2:20-23
5:47 Matt 5:20; Luke 6:32; Luke 10:4,5
5:48 Lev 19:2; James 1:4; 1 Pet 1:15,16
6:1 Matt 23:5,14,28-30; Heb 6:10; John 12:43
6:2 Matt 6:5; Job 31:16-20; Ps 37:21
6:3 John 7:4; Matt 9:30; Mark 1:44

5:33 *you shall pay your oaths to the Lord* Summing up Leviticus 19:12 and Numbers 30:2. An oath called on God as witness. People swore by other things so they could break their promise later, keeping the letter of the Law while being dishonest.
5:34 *not to swear at all* Heaven, earth and Jerusalem all belong to God (Isa 66:1; Ps 48:2), so no promise leaves Him out. Some believers take this as no oaths at all. Most believe Jesus forbids careless, tricky oaths, not solemn ones in court, since God swore by Himself (Heb 6:13) and Jesus answered under oath (26:63-64). The main point is honesty.
5:36 *you are not able to make one hair white or black* Even your own head is in God's hands. Swearing by yourself is swearing by something that belongs to Him.
5:37 *let your word be 'Yes, yes,' 'No, no'* A believer should be so honest he never needs an oath to be believed (James 5:12). The need for oaths comes from a world of lies, and the father of lies is the devil (John 8:44).
5:38 *Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth* In the Law this was a rule for judges, making punishment fit the crime and limiting revenge (Exod 21:24; Lev 24:20). People had turned it into a personal right to get even.
5:39 *turn to him the other also* A blow to the right cheek was usually a backhanded slap, an insult more than an attack. Jesus speaks of personal insult, not of government, which God gave the sword (Rom 13:1-4). It does not mean staying in danger or abuse. It means we leave revenge to God (Rom 12:19).
5:40 *yield to him the cloak also* The tunic was the inner garment; the cloak was the outer one, also a blanket at night, and the Law protected a poor man's cloak (Exod 22:26-27). Paul used his rights at times (Acts 16:37). The point is that we do not live to protect our stuff and our pride.
5:41 *go with him two* A Roman soldier could force a Jew to carry his gear one Roman mile, a hated reminder of foreign rule, as Simon of Cyrene carried the cross (27:32). Serve gladly and go beyond what is required. That turns an enemy's demand into a chance to show Christ's love.
5:42 *Give to the one asking you* The Law told Israel to lend freely to the poor (Deut 15:7-8). Other Scripture guides us: the man who refuses to work should not eat (2 Thess 3:10), and feeding an addiction does not help. But our default should be to help, not to look for reasons not to.
5:43 *You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy* Leviticus 19:18 commands love for neighbor, but the Old Testament never says hate your enemy. Teachers narrowed "neighbor" to people like them and felt free to hate the rest. The Good Samaritan answers who our neighbor is (Luke 10:25-37).
5:44 *love your enemies* Agape is self-giving love that seeks another's good whether deserved or not, a choice shown in action. It blesses, does good and prays. Jesus prayed for the men who nailed Him (Luke 23:34). It is hard to stay bitter at someone you are praying for.
5:45 *He makes His sun rise on evil and good* We become God's children by faith (John 1:12), and loving enemies shows it, because that is what our Father does. Every sunrise and rain shower is His gift to a world that mostly ignores Him. Teachers call this common grace.
5:46 *Do not even the tax collectors do the same* Tax collectors were Jews who collected for Rome, often cheating, hated as traitors. Matthew had been one (9:9). Loving those who love you back is not special. Everyone does that.
5:48 *you shall be perfect, just as your Father who is in the heavens is perfect* Perfect means complete, mature, and here it is about love that reaches even enemies. None of us can do this alone, and the chapter sends us back to "Blessed are the poor in spirit" (5:3). Jesus kept this standard and gives His righteousness to all who believe. Then His Spirit grows this love in us.
6:1 *Beware not to do your charity before men in order to be seen by them* Charity here means acts of righteousness, especially giving to the poor. Jesus told us to let our light shine (5:16), so the question is why we do it. If our goal is to impress people, their opinion is the only reward we get.
6:2 *as the hypocrites do* We know of no custom of blowing real trumpets for gifts; it is like our saying someone blows his own horn. A hypocrite was a stage actor who wore a mask. "They have their reward in full" was written on receipts: paid in full. The account is closed, and nothing more is coming from God.
6:3 *do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing* Give so quietly that even you hardly notice it. Do not keep a running list of the good you have done.

let your left ***hand*** know what your right ***hand*** is doing, **4** so that your charity may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly.

How to Pray

5 And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the wide streets, so that they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you that they have their reward in full. **6** But you, when you pray, enter into your inner room, and having shut your door, pray to your Father who ***is*** in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. **7** And when praying, do not babble like the Gentiles; for they think that they will be heard in their many words. **8** Therefore do not be like them; for your Father knows what things you have need of before you ask Him. **9** Therefore you, pray in this way: 'Our Father who ***is*** in the heavens, let Your name be sanctified; **10** let Your kingdom come; let Your will come about, as in heaven, also on the earth. **11** Give us today our daily bread. **12** And forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors. **13** And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory into the ages. Amen.' **14** For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; **15** but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Fasting

16 And whenever you fast, do not be gloomy like the hypocrites; for they disfigure their faces so that they may appear to men ***to be*** fasting. Truly I say to you that they have their reward in full. **17** But you, when fasting, anoint your head and wash your face, **18** so that you may not appear to men ***to be*** fasting, but to your Father who ***is*** in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

Treasure in Heaven

19 Do not store up for yourselves treasures on the earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal; **20** but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do

6:4 Jer 17:10; Matt 6:6,18; Ps 44:21
6:5 Matt 6:2; Luke 18:10,11; Luke 18:1
6:6 Isa 26:20; 2 Kgs 4:33; Isa 65:24
6:7 1 Kgs 18:26; Eccl 5:2,3,7; Matt 26:39,42,44
6:8 Ps 145:18; Matt 6:32; Ps 38:9
6:9 2 Sam 7:26; 1 Chr 17:24; Isa 63:16
6:10 Ps 103:20; Ps 103:21; Isa 62:7
6:11 Prov 30:8; Exod 16:16-35; Gen 47:15
6:12 Mark 11:25,26; Eph 4:32; Exod 34:7
6:13 1 Chr 16:36; 1 Chr 29:11; Num 5:22
6:14 Eph 4:32; Mark 11:25,26; Matt 7:2
6:16 Isa 58:3-5; Matt 6:2,5; Ps 35:13
6:17 Ruth 3:3; 2 Sam 14:2; Eccl 9:8
6:18 Matt 6:4,6; 2 Cor 5:9; 2 Cor 10:18
6:19 Heb 13:5; James 5:1-3; Luke 12:21
6:20 Luke 12:33; Matt 19:21; Heb 11:26

6:4 *your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly* God saw the gift no one knows about. Some reward may come in this life, but most waits for the day Christ judges His people's works and gives rewards (2 Cor 5:10). That judgment is not about whether we are saved but about how we served.
6:5 *when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites* "When," not if. Jesus expects His followers to pray. Some made sure the hour of prayer caught them on a busy corner. They were talking to the crowd, not to God. Public prayer is not wrong (Acts 4:24). Praying for an audience is.
6:6 *enter into your inner room* The inner room was a storeroom, often the only room with a door. What we are when no one is watching is what we really are. Find a place to be alone with God, shut the door, and talk to Him. Time alone with God is never wasted.
6:7 *do not babble like the Gentiles* Pagans repeated their gods' names and phrases to wear the gods down, as Baal's prophets did (1 Kgs 18:26). Jesus prayed all night (Luke 6:12) and taught persistence (Luke 18:1-8). He is against empty words used like a magic formula. Prayer is talking with a Father, not working a machine.
6:8 *your Father knows what things you have need of before you ask Him* Then why pray? Prayer is not giving God information. It is a relationship. A loving father knows what his children need and still wants them to come and ask, and we learn to depend on Him and see His answers as gifts.
6:9 *pray in this way* A model for all our prayers (Luke 11:1). It can be prayed word for word, but "in this way" makes it a pattern.
6:9 *Our Father who is in the heavens, let Your name be sanctified* Jews of that day rarely addressed God as Father in prayer. Jesus invites us into His own close relationship, and it is "our" Father, a family. He is near, yet high above us. To sanctify is to set apart as holy. Our first request is not for ourselves but that God be honored.
6:10 *let Your kingdom come* The kingdom came near when Jesus came, but its fullness is future. Each time we pray this, we pray for the day Jesus returns, puts down every enemy and reigns on the earth (Rev 11:15; 20:4-6). We cannot honestly pray "Your will" for the world while refusing it in our own hearts.
6:11 *Give us today our daily bread* After three requests for God's glory come our needs, starting with food. God cares about ordinary needs. Like the manna, given one day at a time (Exod 16:4), we live in daily trust. Even with a full pantry, every meal is a gift.
6:12 *forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors* Sin is a debt we owe God and cannot pay (Luke 11:4 says sins). Our greatest need is forgiveness. Asking God to forgive us as we forgive others is a hard line to pray honestly, and Jesus explains it in verses 14-15.
6:13 *do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil* God tempts no one to sin (James 1:13), but He allows testing. This is the prayer of someone who knows his weakness. "The evil" can mean evil in general or the evil one, Satan. The Greek allows both, and we need rescue from both.
6:13 *For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory into the ages. Amen* The prayer ends with God's glory, echoing David (1 Chr 29:11). These words are in the Received Text the SLB follows, but most older Greek copies lack them, and many modern Bibles bracket or footnote them; Luke's version lacks them too. No teaching rests on them alone, and all they say is taught plainly elsewhere.
6:14 *if you forgive men their trespasses* Of all the lines, Jesus explains this one. We are forgiven by grace through faith (Eph 1:7), not by forgiving others. But a truly forgiven person becomes forgiving (18:23-35).
6:15 *neither will your Father forgive your trespasses* A heart that refuses to forgive shows it has not understood God's forgiveness. Forgiving does not mean pretending nothing happened, trusting someone still dangerous, or skipping a crime's consequences. It means letting go of the right to get even and leaving that person with God. It may be a long road. Ask God to help you take the first step.
6:16 *whenever you fast, do not be gloomy like the hypocrites* The Law required one fast a year, on the Day of Atonement (Lev 16:29), but Pharisees fasted twice a week (Luke 18:12). Some went unwashed with ashes on their faces so everyone would know.
6:17 *anoint your head and wash your face* People groomed their hair with olive oil. When you fast, look normal. Fasting is between you and God, a way of saying we want Him more than food. Jesus assumed His followers would fast. You might start by skipping one meal to pray.
6:19 *Do not store up for yourselves treasures on the earth* Wealth was kept in fine cloth that moths ate, in goods that rust and rot ruined, and in mud-walled houses thieves dug through. Owning things or saving is not sin. Jesus warns against building our lives around what is temporary.
6:20 *store up for yourselves treasures in heaven* We do it by using what God gives for His purposes: giving to His work, helping the poor, serving, telling people about Jesus (1 Tim 6:17-19). No crash, fire or thief can touch it. We cannot take our money with us, but we can send it ahead.

not break in nor steal; **21** for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. **22** The lamp of the body is the eye. Therefore if your eye is single, your whole body will be full of light; **23** but if your eye is evil, your whole body will be full of darkness. Therefore if the light that ***is*** in you is darkness, how great ***is*** the darkness! **24** No one is able to serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You are not able to serve God and wealth.

Do Not Worry

25 Because of this I say to you, do not be anxious for your life, what you will eat and what you will drink, nor for your body, what you will put on. Is not the life more than the food, and the body ***more*** than the clothing? **26** Look at the birds of the sky, that they do not sow, nor do they reap, nor do they gather into barns, and your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? **27** And which of you, being anxious, is able to add approximately 1.5 feet (one cubit) to his lifespan? **28** And why are you anxious about clothing? Observe the lilies of the field, how they grow: they do not labor, nor do they spin; **29** but I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory was clothed like one of these. **30** But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is ***here*** today and tomorrow is thrown into an oven, ***will He*** not much more ***clothe*** you, you of little faith? **31** Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or, 'What shall we drink?' or, 'What shall we wear?' **32** For the nations seek after all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. **33** But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. **34** Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious about its own things. Sufficient for the day ***is*** its trouble.

MATTHEW 7

Judging Others

1 Do not judge, so that you may not be judged. **2** For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with what measure you measure, it will be measured back to you. **3** And why do you look at the splinter that ***is*** in the eye of your brother, but the beam in your own eye you do not notice? **4** Or how will you say to your brother, 'Allow me to cast out the splinter from your eye,' and look, the beam ***is*** in your eye? **5** Hypocrite! First cast out the beam from your eye, and then you will see clearly to cast out the splinter from the eye of your brother. **6** Do not give what is holy to the dogs, nor

6:21 Col 3:1-3; Luke 12:34; Prov 4:23
6:22 Luke 11:34-36; 2 Cor 11:3; Acts 2:46
6:23 1 Cor 1:18-20; Rom 2:17-23; Isa 44:18-20
6:24 Luke 16:13; 1 John 2:15,16; James 4:4
6:25 Matt 6:31,34; Phil 4:6; 1 Pet 5:7
6:26 Ps 147:9; Job 38:41; Matt 10:29-31
6:27 Eccl 3:14; Luke 12:25,26; Matt 5:36
6:28 Matt 6:25,31; Luke 22:35,36; Luke 12:27
6:29 2 Chr 9:20; 1 Kgs 10:4; 1 Kgs 10:5
6:30 Matt 16:8; Matt 8:26; Matt 14:31
6:31 1 Pet 5:7; Matt 15:33; Ps 37:3
6:32 Ps 34:10; Matt 6:8; Luke 12:30
6:33 Matt 5:6; Luke 12:31; Ps 34:9
6:34 John 14:27; Exod 16:18-20; Lam 3:23
7:1 Luke 6:37; James 4:11,12; Rom 2:1,2
7:2 Mark 4:24; Luke 6:38; Judg 1:7
7:3 Gen 38:24; John 8:7-9; Gal 6:1
7:4 Gen 38:24
7:5 Gen 38:24; Luke 13:15; Ps 51:9-13
7:6 Prov 9:7,8; Prov 23:9; Acts 13:45-47

6:21 *where your treasure is, there your heart will be also* If you want to know what you really love, look where your money and time go. It works the other way too. Put your treasure into God's kingdom and your heart will follow.
6:22 *if your eye is single* The eye is a window letting light in. A single eye is focused and undivided, and the word was also used for being generous. Jesus is still talking about money.
6:23 *if your eye is evil* In Jewish speech an evil eye was greedy and stingy (Prov 28:22). If the very thing meant to guide you is dark, you walk in darkness and do not know it. Many have wandered from the faith through love of money (1 Tim 6:10).
6:24 *You are not able to serve God and wealth* A slave belonged to one master. Jesus does not say we should not serve both. He says we cannot. Money always promises security and always wants more. We will use money to serve God or end up using God to get money. Which one is your master?
6:25 *do not be anxious for your life* "Because of this" ties worry to serving wealth. If God is our master, He takes care of us. Anxious means pulled in different directions. If God gave you life and a body, can't you trust Him for food and clothing?
6:26 *Look at the birds of the sky* Birds work hard for food, but they do not worry. God is not their Father, but He is yours. If He cares for sparrows, He will care for His children (10:29-31).
6:27 *which of you, being anxious, is able* A cubit, about a foot and a half from elbow to fingertip, is used here for time. Worry does not add a moment to your life and often takes from it. It changes nothing about tomorrow but steals the joy and strength of today.
6:29 *not even Solomon in all his glory was clothed like one of these* The lilies were the spring wildflowers covering Galilee's hills. Solomon was the richest king Israel had (1 Kgs 10:4-7), yet a flower dressed by God outshines him.
6:30 *you of little faith* Dried grass and flowers fueled clay ovens, beautiful one day and burned the next. Jesus says it gently. At its root worry is a faith problem, forgetting how good and faithful our Father is.
6:32 *the nations seek after all these things* The nations are the Gentiles who do not know God. When believers are consumed by these worries, we live like people with no heavenly Father. But He knows what we need, and that should settle our hearts.
6:33 *seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness* The cure for worry is putting God first. This is not a promise of riches; Paul knew hunger while serving faithfully (Phil 4:11-12). It is a promise that our Father will give what we truly need while we seek Him.
6:34 *Sufficient for the day is its trouble* Most of what we worry about has not happened, and much never will. God gives grace for today, and when tomorrow comes His grace will be there too. We carry one day at a time, and not alone.
7:1 *Do not judge, so that you may not be judged* One of the most misused verses in the Bible. In this same chapter Jesus tells us to judge false prophets by their fruit (7:15-20), and elsewhere to "judge the righteous judgment" (John 7:24). He forbids the harsh, self-righteous spirit quick to condemn others and blind to its own faults. God alone knows the heart (James 4:12).
7:2 *with what measure you measure, it will be measured back to you* Like a merchant measuring grain: a stingy measure for others will be used on you, and God notices the standard we use (Rom 2:1). Before we criticize, ask how we would feel if that standard were used on us.
7:3 *the beam in your own eye you do not notice* A carpenter's son (13:55) pictures a man with a piece of lumber in his eye hunting for a speck in someone else's. The faults that bother us most in others are often our own.
7:5 *First cast out the beam from your eye* Jesus does not say never help your brother. Deal with your own sin first, then you will see clearly. Removing something from an eye takes a gentle hand. Restore a brother "in a spirit of gentleness" (Gal 6:1).
7:6 *Do not give what is holy to the dogs, nor throw your pearls before the pigs* Dogs were wild scavengers and pigs unclean animals, pictures of people who treat holy things with contempt. We are not to be harsh, but not foolish either. When people mock and attack the truth again and again, we keep praying for them but stop forcing holy things on them (10:14). That takes wisdom from God.

throw your pearls before the pigs, so that they do not trample them with their feet, and having turned, tear you to pieces.

Ask, Seek, Knock

7 Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. **8** For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. **9** Or what man is there of you who, if his son asks him ***for*** bread, will give him a stone? **10** And if he asks ***for*** a fish, will he give him a serpent? **11** If you then, being evil, know ***how*** to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who ***is*** in the heavens give good things to those who ask Him? **12** Therefore all things whatever you desire that men do to you, so you also do to them; for this is the law and the prophets.

Two Gates and Two Trees

13 Enter through the narrow gate; for wide ***is*** the gate and broad the way that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter through it. **14** Because narrow ***is*** the gate and constricted the way that leads to life, and few are those who find it. **15** And beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. **16** You will know them by their fruits. Do they gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles? **17** So every good tree produces good fruits, but the rotten tree produces evil fruits. **18** A good tree is not able to produce evil fruits, nor a rotten tree to produce good fruits. **19** Every tree not producing good fruit is cut down and thrown into fire. **20** So then, by their fruits you will know them. **21** Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter into the kingdom of the heavens, but the one who does the will of My Father who ***is*** in ***the*** heavens. **22** Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name do many mighty works?' **23** And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who work lawlessness.'

Two Builders

24 Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock. **25** And the rain came down, and the torrents came, and the winds blew, and they fell against that house; and it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock. **26** And everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not do them will be likened to a foolish man who built his

7:7 Matt 21:22; 1 John 3:22; John 15:7,16
7:8 Matt 15:22-28; Ps 81:10,16; John 2:2
7:9 Luke 11:11-13
7:11 Ps 103:11; Hos 14:2; Ps 103:13
7:12 Luke 6:31; Rom 13:8-10; Gal 5:13,14
7:13 Luke 13:24; Prov 16:25; Prov 7:27
7:14 Jer 6:16; Mark 8:34; Ps 139:24
7:15 Mic 3:11; Ezek 22:27; Jer 14:14
7:16 Gen 1:11; Luke 6:43-45; Matt 12:33
7:17 Ps 1:3; Ps 92:13; Jer 17:8
7:18 Gen 1:11; 1 John 3:9,10; Gal 5:17
7:19 Matt 3:10; Isa 5:5-7; Luke 3:9
7:20 Matt 7:16; Acts 5:38
7:21 Rom 2:13; James 1:22; Hos 8:2
7:22 Deut 5:10; Jer 23:14; Jer 23:17
7:23 Ps 6:8; Deut 5:10; Matt 25:41
7:24 Luke 6:47-49; Ps 27:5; Ps 40:2
7:25 Ps 27:5; Ps 40:2; Ps 92:15
7:26 Luke 6:49; James 2:20; Jer 8:9

7:7 *Ask, and it will be given to you* In Greek these keep going: keep asking, keep seeking, keep knocking. Asking speaks, seeking adds effort, knocking adds persistence. Right after the warning on judging, it also tells us where to get the wisdom we need.
7:8 *everyone who asks receives* God answers His children: sometimes yes, sometimes wait, sometimes no because He has something better. He answers when we ask according to His will (1 John 5:14-15). No one who keeps coming in honest prayer is turned away empty.
7:9 *if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone* Small round loaves could look like stones, and some Galilee fish looked like snakes. Would any father play such a cruel trick on a hungry child?
7:11 *If you then, being evil* Jesus does not flatter. Even the best fathers are sinners, yet they love to give good gifts. How much more our perfect Father, whose best gift is the Holy Spirit (Luke 11:13). If your father was cruel, absent or harsh, God is not like that. He is the Father you always needed.
7:12 *all things whatever you desire that men do to you, so you also do to them* The Golden Rule. Others in history said it in the negative: do not do what you would not want done. Jesus says it positively: go and do good. It sums up how the Old Testament teaches us to treat others (22:37-40). It does not save us, but a saved person will try to live it.
7:13 *wide is the gate and broad the way that leads to destruction* Jesus calls for a decision between two roads. The wide road has room for every belief and every sin, and most people are on it. Many today want to believe every road leads to God. Popularity is not proof of truth.
7:14 *narrow is the gate and constricted the way that leads to life* The gate is Jesus Himself (John 10:9; 14:6). Constricted means pressed in, hard. Following Him means turning from sin even when it costs. It must be found, but it is not hidden. Jesus stands at the gate inviting everyone in.
7:15 *in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves* A false prophet claims to speak for God but does not. They look gentle and godly and use the right words, but they hunger for money, power or followers. Peter and Paul warned they would come (Acts 20:29-30; 2 Pet 2:1-3). They are still with us.
7:16 *You will know them by their fruits* The fruit includes what a teacher teaches, whether it lines up with God's Word (Deut 13:1-4), and how he lives, whether with the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23) or greed and pride. Over time the fruit always shows.
7:18 *A good tree is not able to produce evil fruits* What a tree is inside determines what it grows. A bad tree cannot make itself good by gluing apples to its branches. It needs a new nature, which God gives when we are born again (2 Cor 5:17). Jesus speaks of the pattern of a life, not of a believer never sinning.
7:19 *Every tree not producing good fruit is cut down and thrown into fire* John the Baptist's very words (3:10). False teachers face judgment, and so does everyone whose life shows they never knew God.
7:21 *Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,'* Calling Jesus Lord with our lips is not enough. The Father's will is first that we believe in the Son (John 6:40), and real faith produces a changed life. Jesus calls God "My Father," and He is the One people will stand before.
7:22 *did we not prophesy in Your name* "That day" is the day of judgment, and "many" is not a small group. They pointed to impressive work done in Jesus' name, but not one pointed to what Jesus had done for them. They trusted their works, not the Savior.
7:23 *I never knew you; depart from Me, you who work lawlessness* Not that He knew them once and they lost it. He never knew them. To know in the Bible is a personal relationship (John 17:3). Jesus uses Psalm 6:8, David's words to his enemies, now spoken by the Son of David as Judge. The question is not how much you have done for Jesus, but whether you truly know Him.
7:24 *a wise man who built his house on the rock* From outside, two houses may look the same. The difference is the foundation. He dug deep (Luke 6:48), and what made him wise was that he heard and did. Many hear sermons every week. The wise put Jesus' words into practice.
7:25 *and it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock* Dry stream beds in Israel could become raging rivers. The storm hit the wise man too. Following Jesus does not keep us from storms. What matters is what we stand on when they come. A life built on Christ (1 Cor 10:4) stands through anything, including the final storm of judgment.

house on the sand. **27** And the rain came down, and the torrents came, and the winds blew, and they struck against that house; and it fell, and its fall was great." **28** And it came about, when Jesus (Iesous) had finished these words, the crowds were astonished at His teaching; **29** for He was teaching them as ***one*** having authority, and not as the scribes.

MATTHEW 8

A Leper and a Centurion's Servant

1 And when He had come down from the mountain, great crowds followed Him. **2** And look, a leper, having come, was worshiping Him, saying, "Lord, if You are willing, You are able to cleanse me." **3** And having stretched out ***His*** hand, Jesus (Iesous) touched him, saying, "I am willing; be cleansed." And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. **4** And Jesus says to him, "See ***that*** you tell no one; but go, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony to them." **5** And when Jesus had entered into Capernaum (Kapernaoum), a centurion came to Him, imploring Him **6** and saying, "Lord, my servant has been laid in the house paralyzed, terribly tormented." **7** And Jesus says to him, "I, having come, will heal him." **8** And the centurion, answering, said, "Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof; but only speak a word, and my servant will be healed. **9** For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under myself; and I say to this one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this,' and he does ***it***." **10** And Jesus, having heard, marveled and said to those following, "Truly I say to you, not even in Israel have I found such great faith. **11** And I say to you that many will come from east and west and will recline with Abraham (Abraam) and Isaac (Isaak) and Jacob (Iakob) in the kingdom of the heavens; **12** but the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into the outer darkness; there will be the weeping and the gnashing of the teeth." **13** And Jesus said to the centurion, "Go, and as you have believed, let it come about for you." And his servant was healed in that hour.

Many Healed at Peter's House

14 And Jesus, having come into the house of Peter (Petros), saw his mother-in-law lying ***in bed*** and feverish. **15** And He touched her hand, and the fever left her; and she arose and was serving them. **16** And when evening had come, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed; and He cast out the spirits with a word, and He healed all who were sick, **17** so that what was spoken through Isaiah (Hesaias) the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, "He Himself took our

7:27 Ezek 13:10; Job 1:19; Ezek 13:13
7:28 Mark 1:22; Mark 6:2; Ps 45:2
7:29 Heb 4:12,13; Matt 15:1-9; Matt 5:20,28,32,44
8:1 Matt 8:18; Matt 4:25; Matt 12:15
8:2 Lev 13:45; Lev 13:46; Matt 18:26
8:3 Ps 33:9; Luke 5:13; Gen 1:3
8:4 Lev 14:2-32; Matt 9:30; Mark 7:36
8:5 Luke 7:1; Matt 9:1; Matt 4:13
8:6 Matt 4:24; Job 31:13,14; Acts 10:7
8:7 Matt 9:18,19; Mark 5:23,24; Luke 7:6
8:8 Ps 107:20; Luke 7:6,7; Matt 3:11,14
8:9 Job 38:34,35; Ps 107:25-29; Ps 119:91
8:10 Matt 15:28; Mark 6:6; Luke 7:9
8:11 Isa 49:6; Gen 21:10; Isa 2:3
8:12 Matt 13:42,50; Matt 25:30; Luke 13:28
8:13 Eccl 9:7; Matt 8:4; Mark 7:29
8:14 Mark 1:29-31; Luke 4:38,39; 1 Cor 9:5
8:15 2 Kgs 13:21; Acts 19:11-13; Matt 8:3
8:16 Luke 4:40; Acts 19:13-16; Mark 1:32-34
8:17 Isa 53:4; 1 Pet 2:24; Matt 1:22

7:27 *and it fell, and its fall was great* The foolish man heard the same words and did not do them. Building on sand was quicker, and for a while the house looked fine. Jesus ends with a crash. The sermon is not ideas to admire but a call to build on Him. Which foundation are you building on?
7:28 *when Jesus had finished these words* The first of five times Matthew closes a great sermon this way (11:1; 13:53; 19:1; 26:1).
7:29 *as one having authority, and not as the scribes* The scribes quoted earlier rabbis. Jesus quoted only Scripture and said "But I say to you." He spoke as the Giver of the Law and the Judge of the last day. We cannot just admire Him as a good teacher. We bow to His authority or walk away from it.
8:1 *great crowds followed Him* Jesus taught with authority (7:29). Now Matthew shows that authority in ten miracles across chapters 8 and 9. Following in a crowd is not the same as following as a disciple.
8:2 *Lord, if You are willing, You are able to cleanse me* Leprosy in the Bible covered a range of skin diseases. A leper lived outside town, tore his clothes and cried "Unclean" (Lev 13:45-46), cut off from family and worship. He did not doubt Jesus' power. He wondered if Jesus would want to help someone like him.
8:3 *Jesus touched him* The man may not have felt a human touch in years. Touching a leper made a person unclean, but the uncleanness did not pass to Jesus. His cleanness passed to the leper. If you wonder whether Jesus is willing to cleanse you, He has answered: "I am willing."
8:4 *See that you tell no one* Likely so He would not be known only as a miracle worker, or pushed to be a political king before His time (John 6:15). This man did not obey (Mark 1:45). Leviticus 14 told a healed leper to be examined by the priest. Jesus kept the Law, and it was proof to the priests that God was at work.
8:5 *a centurion came to Him* A Roman officer over about a hundred men, a Gentile in the occupying army. Luke says he loved the Jewish people and built them a synagogue (Luke 7:4-5). Many masters saw servants as property, but he cared for his.
8:8 *Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof* This powerful officer was humble, perhaps knowing a Jew became unclean entering a Gentile home. "Only speak a word."
8:9 *I also am a man under authority* He took orders and gave orders, and they were obeyed. He saw that Jesus had authority over sickness the way he had over soldiers. Jesus did not need to be there. He only needed to give the order.
8:10 *not even in Israel have I found such great faith* Only twice do the Gospels say Jesus marveled: at this Gentile's faith and at His hometown's unbelief (Mark 6:6). Great faith is not about how much we know but how much we trust Jesus' word.
8:11 *will recline with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of the heavens* Guests reclined on couches at feasts. Jesus pictures the kingdom banquet the prophets foretold (Isa 25:6-9), with Gentiles from every direction.
8:12 *the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into the outer darkness* Those who assumed they were in because they were Abraham's children (3:9). This does not mean God is finished with Israel. A day is coming when all Israel will be saved (Rom 11:1, 25-29). But each person, Jew or Gentile, enters by faith. Gnashing is grinding the teeth in anguish. Jesus warned of hell more than anyone because He loved people.
8:13 *his servant was healed in that hour* From a distance, by His word. He works in our lives the same way today, through His Word and His Spirit.
8:14 *saw his mother-in-law lying in bed and feverish* Peter was married, and his wife later traveled with him (1 Cor 9:5).
8:15 *she arose and was serving them* No long recovery. Her first act was to serve. He heals us, and we serve. A leper, a Gentile's servant and a woman: all people the leaders kept at a distance, and Jesus came for all of them.
8:16 *He cast out the spirits with a word* It was the Sabbath (Mark 1:21, 32), which ended at sundown, when people could carry the sick. No rituals or formulas, just His word.
8:17 *He Himself took our infirmities and bore the diseases* From Isaiah 53:4, the suffering Servant who dies for His people. Sin brought sickness and death, and Jesus came to undo it all. Some believe healing is promised to every believer now because of the cross. Others believe the cross guarantees full healing but much waits for the resurrection, noting believers not healed (2 Tim 4:20). God still heals as He chooses, and one day completely (Rev 21:4).

infirmities and bore the diseases."

The Cost of Following

18 And Jesus, having seen great crowds around Him, commanded ***them*** to depart to the other side. **19** And one scribe, having come, said to Him, "Teacher, I will follow You wherever You go." **20** And Jesus says to him, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the sky ***have*** nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere that He may lay ***His*** head." **21** And another of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, allow me first to go and bury my father." **22** But Jesus said to him, "Follow Me, and leave the dead to bury their own dead."

Jesus Calms the Storm

23 And when He had gotten into the boat, His disciples followed Him. **24** And look, a great storm arose in the sea, so that the boat was being covered by the waves; but He Himself was sleeping. **25** And His disciples, having come, awoke Him, saying, "Lord, save us! We are perishing!" **26** And He says to them, "Why are you fearful, you of little faith?" Then, having arisen, He rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. **27** And the men marveled, saying, "What kind ***of man*** is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?"

Two Men Freed from Demons

28 And when He had come to the other side, into the region of the Gergesenes, two demon-possessed ***men*** met Him, coming out of the tombs, extremely violent, so that no one was able to pass by that way. **29** And look, they cried out, saying, "What ***is there*** to us and to You, Jesus, Son of God? Have You come here before ***the*** time to torment us?" **30** And there was a herd of many pigs feeding far off from them. **31** And the demons were begging Him, saying, "If You cast us out, allow us to go away into the herd of pigs." **32** And He said to them, "Go." And having come out, they went away into the herd of pigs; and look, the whole herd of pigs rushed down the steep bank into the sea, and died in the waters. **33** And those feeding ***them*** fled, and having gone away into the city, they reported everything, and the ***things*** about those who were demon-possessed. **34** And look, the whole city went out to meet Jesus; and having seen Him, they begged that He would depart from their region.

MATTHEW 9

A Paralyzed Man Forgiven and Healed

1 And having gotten into the boat, He crossed over and came to His own city. **2** And look, they were bringing to Him a paralytic, laid on a bed. And Jesus (Iesous), having seen their faith, said to the paralytic, "Take courage, child; your sins have been forgiven you." **3** And look, some of the scribes said within themselves, "This ***man*** blasphemes." **4** And Jesus, seeing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? **5** For which is easier, to say, 'The sins have been for-

8:18 Mark 4:35; Luke 8:22; John 6:15
8:19 2 Sam 15:21; Ezra 7:6; Mark 12:32-34
8:20 Ps 84:3; Ps 104:17; Dan 7:13
8:21 Gen 50:5; Luke 9:59-62; Lev 21:11,12
8:22 John 1:43; Eph 5:14; Matt 9:9
8:23 Mark 4:36; Matt 9:1; Luke 7:22
8:24 Luke 8:23; Jonah 1:4,5; Mark 4:37,38
8:25 Ps 10:1; Ps 44:22,23; Isa 51:9,10
8:26 Ps 89:9; Isa 50:2; Nah 1:4
8:27 2 Sam 22:16; Ps 89:9; Ps 148:8
8:28 Mark 5:1-20; Luke 8:26-39; Acts 10:38
8:29 2 Sam 16:10; 2 Sam 19:22; Judg 11:12
8:30 Lev 11:7; Deut 14:8; Isa 65:3,4
8:31 Mark 5:7,12; Luke 8:30-33; Rev 12:12
8:32 1 Kgs 22:22; Job 1:10-12; Job 2:3-6
8:33 Mark 5:14-16; Luke 8:34-36; Acts 19:15-17
8:34 Acts 16:39; Luke 5:8; 1 Kgs 17:18
9:1 Matt 4:13; Mark 5:21; Matt 7:6
9:2 Matt 9:22; Matt 4:24; Acts 19:12
9:3 Matt 26:65; Matt 7:29; Mark 2:6,7
9:4 Matt 12:25; Luke 6:8; Luke 11:17
9:5 John 5:8-14,17,18; Mark 2:9-12; Isa 35:5,6

8:19 *Teacher, I will follow You wherever You go* It sounded wonderful, a scribe offering to follow. But Jesus saw his heart and told him the cost.
8:20 *the Son of Man has nowhere that He may lay His head* Jesus' favorite title for Himself, from Daniel 7:13-14, where one like a son of man receives an everlasting kingdom. It speaks of His true humanity and His coming glory. Following Him may mean giving up comfort and security.
8:22 *leave the dead to bury their own dead* Likely the father was not yet dead, and the man meant to follow after he received his inheritance, perhaps years away. Let the spiritually dead handle such things. Jesus is not against caring for parents (15:3-6), but He will not take second place. Matthew does not say what either man decided, perhaps so we ask what we would do.
8:24 *but He Himself was sleeping* The Sea of Galilee lies about seven hundred feet below sea level, and cold air rushing down the hills can raise sudden storms. Seasoned fishermen were terrified. Jesus slept, truly human and tired, and at perfect peace in His Father's care.
8:25 *Lord, save us! We are perishing* At least they knew where to go. Short, desperate prayers are heard too.
8:26 *Why are you fearful, you of little faith* He spoke to the storm inside them first. Then He rebuked wind and sea as their Master, without praying for help. Waves usually roll on after a storm. This time came "a great calm."
8:27 *What kind of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him* The question Matthew wants every reader to ask. Only God stills the raging sea (Ps 89:9; 107:28-29). Jesus does not always calm our storms at once, but He is always in the boat.
8:28 *two demon-possessed men met Him, coming out of the tombs* East of the lake, mostly Gentile land. Mark and Luke name the area for other nearby towns, depending on the Greek copy. They mention one man, likely the one who spoke. If there were two, there was certainly one. Tombs were hillside caves, unclean under the Law.
8:29 *Have You come here before the time to torment us* The demons knew who He was (James 2:19). Knowing who Jesus is is not trusting Him. They knew judgment was coming (25:41; Rev 20:10). They did not expect Him so soon.
8:32 *the whole herd of pigs rushed down the steep bank into the sea* Jews did not raise unclean pigs; this was Gentile country, about two thousand of them (Mark 5:13). Scripture doesn't say why Jesus allowed it. Perhaps it showed how destructive demons are (John 10:10) and that the men were truly free. Two human lives were worth more to Jesus than a herd of pigs.
8:34 *they begged that He would depart from their region* They cared more about pigs and income than the freed men or the Lord who freed them. Many today would rather keep their lives as they are than let Him change everything. Jesus does not force Himself on anyone.
9:1 *came to His own city* Capernaum, His home (4:13). The Gadarenes asked Him to leave, so He went where people were waiting. He offers Himself but does not force Himself on anyone.
9:2 *Jesus, having seen their faith* The friends dug through the roof to lower him (Mark 2:3-4). Jesus saw their faith; our faith can bring others to Him. Everyone saw the man's legs as his problem. Jesus saw his sin. We may come to Jesus for many reasons, but our deepest need is forgiveness.
9:3 *This man blasphemes* To blaspheme is to speak against God or claim what belongs to Him alone. Only God can forgive sins against God (Isa 43:25). The scribes were right about that and wrong about Jesus. He was not a man claiming to be God. He was God who had become a man.
9:4 *Jesus, seeing their thoughts* They had said nothing aloud. Only God knows the heart (1 Kgs 8:39).
9:5 *which is easier* Anyone can say "The sins have been forgiven you," because no one can see it. Telling a paralyzed man to walk is tested at once. Jesus did the harder, visible thing to prove the unseen thing.

given you,' or to say, 'Arise and walk'? **6** But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on the earth to forgive sins"—then He says to the paralytic—"having arisen, take up your bed and go to your house." **7** And having arisen, he went away to his house. **8** And the crowds, having seen, marveled and glorified God, who had given such authority to men.

The Call of Matthew

9 And Jesus, passing on from there, saw a man sitting at the tax booth, named Matthew (Matthaios); and He says to him, "Follow Me." And having arisen, he followed Him. **10** And it came about, as He was reclining in the house, that look, many tax collectors and sinners, having come, were reclining with Jesus and His disciples. **11** And the Pharisees, having seen, said to His disciples, "Why does your Teacher eat with the tax collectors and sinners?" **12** And Jesus, having heard, said to them, "Those who are healthy have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. **13** But having gone, learn what it is: 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.' For I did not come to call ***the*** righteous, but sinners, to repentance."

A Question About Fasting

14 Then the disciples of John (Ioannes) come to Him, saying, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but Your disciples do not fast?" **15** And Jesus said to them, "Can the sons of the bridal chamber mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? But days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast. **16** And no one puts a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; for its filling takes away from the garment, and a worse tear comes about. **17** Nor do they put new wine into old wineskins; otherwise indeed, the wineskins burst, and the wine is poured out, and the wineskins will be destroyed; but they put new wine into fresh wineskins, and both are preserved together."

A Ruler's Daughter and a Woman Healed

18 While He was speaking these things to them, look, one ruler, having come, was worshiping Him, saying, "My daughter has just now died; but having come, lay Your hand on her, and she will live." **19** And Jesus, having arisen, followed him, and His disciples also. **20** And look, a woman suffering a flow of blood twelve years, having come up behind ***Him***, touched the fringe of His garment. **21** For she was saying within herself, "If only I touch His garment, I will be saved." **22** And Jesus, having turned around and having seen her, said, "Take courage, daughter; your faith has saved you." And the woman was saved from that hour. **23** And Jesus, having come into the house of the ruler and having seen the flute players and the crowd making a commotion, **24** says to them, "Go away, for the girl has not died, but is sleeping."

9:6 Isa 43:25; Mic 7:18; Mark 2:7,10
9:8 Matt 15:31; Luke 7:16; Luke 17:15
9:9 1 Kgs 19:20; Mark 2:14-17; Luke 5:27,28
9:10 Gen 13:13; Mark 2:15,16,17; Luke 5:29-32
9:11 Luke 5:30; Matt 11:19; Mark 2:16
9:12 2 Chr 16:12; Luke 5:31; Rev 3:17,18
9:13 Hos 6:6; Mark 2:17; Prov 21:3
9:14 Mark 2:18-22; Matt 6:16; Matt 11:18,19
9:15 John 3:29; Acts 14:23; Matt 25:1-10
9:16 Gen 33:14; Ps 125:3; Isa 40:11
9:17 Josh 9:4; Job 32:19; Ps 119:83
9:18 Luke 8:41-56; Mark 5:22-43; Matt 8:2
9:19 Matt 8:7; John 4:34; Acts 10:38
9:20 Num 15:38; Lev 15:25; Lev 15:26
9:21 Mark 5:26-33; Luke 8:45-47; Acts 19:12
9:22 Luke 7:50; Matt 9:2; Mark 10:52
9:23 2 Chr 35:25; Mark 5:35-38; Luke 8:49-51
9:24 Isa 53:3; Acts 20:10; John 11:4,11-13

9:6 *the Son of Man has authority on the earth to forgive sins* The Son of Man of Daniel 7:13-14 receives authority and an everlasting kingdom. The healing everyone could see proved the forgiveness no one could see. If He forgave this man, He can forgive you.
9:8 *glorified God, who had given such authority to men* The scribes were angry and the crowd praised God over the same miracle. The same work of God can soften one heart and harden another.
9:9 *a man sitting at the tax booth, named Matthew* The writer tells his own call in one verse. Mark and Luke call him Levi. Tax collectors worked for Rome or Herod, often cheated their own people, and were ranked with robbers. A fisherman could go back to his nets. Matthew could not go back to his booth. He does not even say what he gave up (Luke 5:28).
9:10 *many tax collectors and sinners, having come, were reclining with Jesus* Matthew threw a feast (Luke 5:29) and did what new believers often do: he invited his old friends to meet Jesus.
9:11 *Why does your Teacher eat with the tax collectors and sinners* Eating together meant acceptance and friendship. The Pharisees asked the disciples, not Jesus, trying to stir doubt.
9:12 *Those who are healthy have no need of a physician, but those who are sick* A doctor goes where the sick are. Jesus did not join their sin, but He went where they were and loved them. The Pharisees were sick too and did not know it. Do we spend time with people who need Jesus, or only with other Christians?
9:13 *I desire mercy, and not sacrifice* From Hosea 6:6. Go and learn was a rabbi's phrase to students: these experts needed to study their Bible again (1 Sam 15:22). "To repentance" is in the Greek copies the SLB follows. Jesus does not leave sinners as they are. He can help everyone except those who think they don't need Him.
9:14 *Why do we and the Pharisees fast often* John's disciples, their teacher in prison (4:12), lived strict lives like his. Likely an honest question, not an attack.
9:15 *as long as the bridegroom is with them* The "sons of the bridal chamber" were the groom's friends. A wedding feast could last a week, with no fasting. Jesus is the Bridegroom. "Taken away" is an early hint of a violent death. After His return to heaven His followers fasted again (Acts 13:2-3), as we long for Him to come back for us.
9:17 *they put new wine into fresh wineskins* New cloth shrinks and tears an old garment. Fermenting new wine bursts old, stiff skins. Jesus did not come to patch up man-made religion. The new covenant and the life of the kingdom need a new heart to hold them.
9:18 *one ruler, having come, was worshiping Him* Jairus, ruler of the synagogue, the man who oversaw its services (Mark 5:22). Mark says she was dying when he came and news of her death came on the way (Mark 5:23, 35). Matthew tells it shorter and gives the end result.
9:20 *a woman suffering a flow of blood twelve years* As long as Jairus' daughter had lived (Luke 8:42). The Law made her unclean and anyone she touched (Lev 15:25-27). She had spent all she had on doctors (Mark 5:26). The fringe was the tassel worn to recall God's commands (Num 15:38-39).
9:21 *If only I touch His garment, I will be saved* Saved here can mean healed or rescued. She came quietly from behind, likely ashamed and afraid of being noticed. But she believed.
9:22 *Take courage, daughter; your faith has saved you* Jesus would not let her slip away. She was not just healed but accepted, called "daughter." It was not the garment. Her faith, perhaps mixed with superstition, reached out to the right Person.
9:23 *the flute players and the crowd making a commotion* Even poor families hired professional mourners and flute players, so the house was full of loud wailing.
9:24 *the girl has not died, but is sleeping* She was dead, and they laughed. To Jesus death is like sleep, because He wakes the dead as easily as we wake a napper. The New Testament calls believers' death sleep for this reason (1 Thess 4:13-14).

And they were ridiculing Him. **25** But when the crowd had been put outside, having entered, He took hold of her hand, and the girl arose. **26** And this report went out into all that land.

Sight for the Blind and Speech for the Mute

27 And as Jesus was passing on from there, two blind ***men*** followed Him, crying out and saying, "Have mercy on us, Son of David (Dabid)!" **28** And when He had come into the house, the blind ***men*** came to Him; and Jesus says to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They say to Him, "Yes, Lord." **29** Then He touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith let it come about for you." **30** And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly warned them, saying, "See, let no one know." **31** But they, having gone out, made Him widely known in all that land. **32** And as they were going out, look, they brought to Him a mute man, demon-possessed. **33** And when the demon had been cast out, the mute ***man*** spoke. And the crowds marveled, saying, "Never has it been seen like this in Israel!" **34** But the Pharisees were saying, "By the ruler of the demons He casts out the demons."

The Harvest Is Plentiful

35 And Jesus was going around all the cities and the villages, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every sickness among the people. **36** And having seen the crowds, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and thrown down, like sheep not having a shepherd. **37** Then He says to His disciples, "The harvest indeed ***is*** plentiful, but the workers ***are*** few; **38** therefore implore the Lord of the harvest that He may send out workers into His harvest."

MATTHEW 10

The Twelve Sent Out

1 And having summoned His twelve disciples, He gave them authority over unclean spirits, so as to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every sickness. **2** And the names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter (Petros), and Andrew (Andreas) his brother; James (Iakobos) the ***son*** of Zebedee (Zebedaios), and John (Ioannes) his brother; **3** Philip (Philippos) and Bartholomew (Bartholomaios); Thomas and Matthew (Matthaios) the tax collector; James the ***son*** of Alphaeus (Alphaios), and Lebbaeus (Lebbaios), who was surnamed Thaddaeus (Thaddaios); **4** Simon the Cananite, and Judas (Ioudas) Iscariot (Iskariotes), the one who also handed Him over. **5** These twelve Jesus (Iesous) sent out, having instructed them, saying, "Do not go off into ***the*** way of ***the*** Gentiles, and do not enter into a city of ***the*** Samaritans; **6** but rather go to the lost

9:25 Mark 9:27; Acts 9:40,41; 2 Kgs 4:32-36
9:26 Matt 4:24; Mark 1:45; Matt 14:1,2
9:27 Isa 35:5; Matt 15:22; Matt 20:30
9:28 Matt 8:14; Matt 13:36; Matt 9:22
9:29 Mark 10:52; Matt 20:34; John 9:6,7
9:30 Matt 8:4; Luke 5:14; Ps 146:8
9:31 Mark 7:36; Mark 1:44,45
9:32 Isa 35:6; Matt 12:22,23; Luke 11:14
9:33 Isa 35:6; Matt 15:30,31; Exod 4:11,12
9:34 Luke 11:15; Mark 3:22; Matt 12:23,24
9:35 Matt 4:23,24; Luke 4:43,44; Acts 2:22
9:36 Num 27:17; Ezek 34:3; Ezek 34:5
9:37 Luke 10:2; John 4:35,36; 1 Cor 3:9
9:38 Jer 50:17; Mic 5:7; Luke 10:1,2
10:1 Mark 6:7-13; Mark 3:13,14; Luke 9:1-6
10:2 Matt 4:18; Acts 1:13; Matt 4:21
10:3 Mark 3:18; Acts 1:13; Matt 9:9
10:4 Matt 26:14,47; John 13:2,26-30; Luke 22:3,47
10:5 2 Kgs 17:29; Luke 9:2; John 20:21
10:6 Ezek 3:4; Jer 50:6,17; Acts 3:26

9:25 *He took hold of her hand, and the girl arose* He put out the mockers and took only the parents and three disciples in (Mark 5:37, 40). Touching the dead made one unclean, but His life flowed into her. One of three raisings before His own, with the widow's son (Luke 7:11-15) and Lazarus (John 11).
9:27 *Have mercy on us, Son of David* The first time in Matthew anyone uses this title for the Messiah, the King from David's line (2 Sam 7:12-16). When God came to save, the blind would see (Isa 35:5). These blind men saw who He was more clearly than many with perfect eyes.
9:28 *Do you believe that I am able to do this* He waited until they followed Him inside. Not whether He was willing but whether He was able. "Yes, Lord." Sometimes that is all we need to say.
9:29 *According to your faith let it come about for you* It was not the strength of their faith that healed them but the One they trusted.
9:30 *See, let no one know* Jesus did not want crowds coming for miracles or "Son of David" stirring a political revolt before His time. They spread the news anyway. It is possible to love Jesus and still go our own way instead of doing what He asks.
9:33 *Never has it been seen like this in Israel* Not every inability to speak comes from a demon, but this one did. In two chapters Jesus healed the leper, paralyzed, blind and mute, raised the dead and cast out demons, the signs the prophets tied to God's kingdom (Isa 35:5-6).
9:34 *By the ruler of the demons He casts out the demons* They could not deny the miracles, so they credited Satan. Jesus answers fully in 12:24-32. When people are determined not to believe, no evidence will do. The answer is a softened heart, which only God can give.
9:35 *teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom* Almost the same as 4:23. The two summaries are bookends around the King's words (5-7) and works (8-9). Jesus cared for the whole person, mind, soul and body.
9:36 *He was moved with compassion for them* The word comes from a person's insides. Jesus felt it deep within. Israel's leaders had failed as shepherds (Ezek 34:1-6), and Jesus is the Good Shepherd (John 10:11). When you look at crowds in your town, at work, or online, do you see people to avoid or sheep without a shepherd?
9:38 *implore the Lord of the harvest that He may send out workers* The people were ready. What was missing was workers. Jesus says pray first, not organize a program. In the next chapter He sends the same men He told to pray. When we pray for workers, we often find He is sending us.
10:1 *having summoned His twelve disciples, He gave them authority* Twelve, like the tribes of Israel. Jesus was forming the leadership of God's people, and He promised the twelve thrones judging Israel's tribes in His kingdom (19:28). The power was not their own. They were to do what He did (9:35), in His name.
10:2 *the names of the twelve apostles* An apostle is one sent, carrying the authority of the sender. The list comes in pairs, perhaps because they went two by two (Mark 6:7). Peter, often their spokesman, is always first, and Judas always last.
10:4 *Simon the Cananite* Not from Canaan. The name comes from a Hebrew word for zealous; Luke calls him the Zealot (Luke 6:15). Zealots wanted to drive out Rome by force. A tax collector and a Zealot would have been enemies, yet in Jesus they served side by side. The church is still meant to be like that.
10:4 *Judas Iscariot, the one who also handed Him over* Jesus chose him knowing what he would do (John 6:64, 70). Judas walked with Jesus three years and saw the miracles, yet never truly belonged to Him. Being close to Jesus is not the same as belonging to Him.
10:5 *do not enter into a city of the Samaritans* Samaritans, between Galilee and Judea, were partly Jewish by descent, mixed with peoples Assyria settled there. They had their own temple and version of the books of Moses, and the two peoples despised each other (John 4:9).
10:6 *go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel* God made His promises to Israel, and the King came first to His own (Rom 1:16). This limit was for this mission. After the resurrection He sent them to all nations (28:19; Acts 1:8). God's promises to Israel still stand (Rom 11:28-29).

sheep of ***the*** house of Israel. **7** And as you go, proclaim, saying, 'The kingdom of the heavens has drawn near.' **8** Heal those who are ailing, cleanse lepers, raise ***the*** dead, cast out demons. Freely you received; freely give. **9** Do not acquire gold, nor silver, nor copper for your belts, **10** nor a bag for ***the*** way, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor staffs; for the worker is worthy of his food. **11** And into whatever city or village you enter, inquire who in it is worthy, and remain there until you go out. **12** And when entering into the house, greet it. **13** And if indeed the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. **14** And whoever does not receive you nor hear your words, when going out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. **15** Truly I say to you, it will be more tolerable for ***the*** land of Sodom (Sodoma) and Gomorrah (Gomorra) in ***the*** day of judgment than for that city.

Persecution Ahead

16 Look, I send you out as sheep in ***the*** midst of wolves; therefore be shrewd as the serpents and innocent as the doves. **17** But beware of men; for they will hand you over to councils, and in their synagogues they will flog you; **18** and you will even be brought before governors and kings on account of Me, for a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. **19** But whenever they hand you over, do not be anxious how or what you will speak; for it will be given to you in that hour what you will speak; **20** for you are not the ones speaking, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you. **21** And brother will hand over brother to death, and father child; and children will rise up against parents and put them to death. **22** And you will be hated by all on account of My name; but the one who has endured to ***the*** end, he will be saved. **23** But whenever they persecute you in this city, flee into the other; for truly I say to you, you will by no means have completed the cities of Israel until the Son of Man comes. **24** A disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above his master. **25** ***It is*** sufficient for the disciple that he become like his teacher, and the slave like his master. If they called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more those of his household? **26** Therefore do not fear them; for nothing is concealed that will not be revealed, and hidden that will not be known. **27** What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear in the ear, proclaim on the housetops. **28** And do not fear those who kill the body but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is

10:7 Matt 3:2; Matt 4:17; Isa 61:1
10:8 Acts 3:6; Acts 5:12-15; Acts 20:33-35
10:9 Luke 22:35; Luke 9:3; Mark 6:8
10:10 Luke 10:7-12; Luke 3:11; 2 Tim 4:13
10:11 1 Kgs 17:9-24; Gen 19:1-3; Job 31:32
10:12 Luke 10:5,6; Acts 10:36; 2 Cor 5:20
10:13 Ps 35:13; Luke 10:6; 2 Cor 2:16
10:14 Acts 13:51; Acts 18:6; Neh 5:13
10:15 Ezek 16:48; Ezek 16:49; Ezek 16:53
10:16 Luke 10:3; Acts 20:29; 1 Cor 14:20
10:17 Mark 13:9,12; Matt 23:34; Luke 12:11
10:18 Exod 5:1; Deut 31:19; Ps 119:46
10:19 Mark 13:11-13; Matt 6:25,31,34; Exod 4:12,15
10:20 Acts 4:8; Luke 21:15; Acts 6:10
10:21 Mic 7:6; Mic 7:5,6; Matt 10:34-36
10:22 Matt 24:13; Mark 13:13; Matt 10:39
10:23 Acts 17:10,14; Acts 8:1; Matt 16:28
10:24 John 15:20; Luke 6:40; John 13:16
10:25 2 Kgs 1:2; Mark 3:22; Matt 9:34
10:26 Mark 4:22; Luke 8:17; 1 Cor 4:5
10:27 Acts 5:20,28; John 16:1,13,25,29; Matt 13:1-17,34,35
10:28 Eccl 8:12; Isa 8:12,13; 2 Kgs 17:36

10:8 *Freely you received; freely give* The signs of the kingdom went with the message and proved it came from God. They were not to charge for gifts they had not paid for (Acts 8:18-20). Everything we have from God we received freely, and we should give freely.
10:10 *the worker is worthy of his food* Money was carried in a fold of the belt. Travel light and trust God (Mark 6:8-9; Luke 9:3). Paul applies this to supporting those who preach (1 Tim 5:18; 1 Cor 9:14). These rules were for this short mission (Luke 22:35-36), but those who serve God should still depend on Him.
10:13 *let your peace come upon it* The greeting was shalom, a blessing of well-being. They were to stay in one welcoming home, not shop for better food. Our job is to offer Christ's peace. Whether people receive it is up to them.
10:14 *shake off the dust of your feet* Jews returning from Gentile lands shook off unclean dust. Doing it in a Jewish town warned that rejecting the King's messengers was rejecting the King (Acts 13:51).
10:15 *more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment* The cities destroyed by fire from heaven (Gen 19). A town that rejects Jesus will be judged more harshly because it had more light. The more truth we hear, the more we are responsible for.
10:16 *be shrewd as the serpents and innocent as the doves* Jesus does not promise an easy road. The serpent was known as careful and wise, the dove as gentle and harmless. Wisdom without innocence turns sly. Innocence without wisdom turns gullible. We need both.
10:17 *they will hand you over to councils* Here Jesus looks beyond this first trip. After the resurrection the apostles were beaten by the Sanhedrin (Acts 5:40), and Paul took thirty-nine lashes five times (2 Cor 11:24).
10:18 *brought before governors and kings on account of Me* Paul stood before Felix, Festus and Agrippa (Acts 24-26). What looked like defeat was an open door to tell rulers about Jesus.
10:20 *the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you* Before the Sanhedrin Peter spoke boldly, "having been filled with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 4:8). This is no excuse for preachers to skip preparing. It is a promise for believers on trial for their faith.
10:21 *brother will hand over brother to death* Faith in Christ can divide families, as it did in the early church and still does where becoming a Christian can cost a life. If your family has rejected you for Jesus, He knows that pain. His own brothers did not believe at first (John 7:5).
10:22 *the one who has endured to the end, he will be saved* Not hated for rudeness, but for His name (John 15:18). Some see endurance as the mark of true believers. Others see a warning that one can fall away. Others note the same words in 24:13 for those who live through the Tribulation and are delivered at His return. All agree we are saved by grace through faith, and real faith keeps going.
10:23 *until the Son of Man comes* Fleeing persecution is not cowardice and can spread the message (Acts 8:1-4). The twelve did not finish Israel's cities before the cross, so what did He mean? Some say the Transfiguration or the resurrection, some the judgment on Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Many dispensational teachers see the long witness to Israel that will still be going on when the Son of Man returns at the end of the Tribulation (24:14, 30).
10:25 *If they called the master of the house Beelzebul* A name for Satan, perhaps from Baal-zebub, a Philistine god (2 Kgs 1:2). They said it of Jesus (9:34), so His followers should not expect better. The goal of a disciple is to become like his teacher, including how the world treats Him.
10:26 *Therefore do not fear them* The first of three "do not fear" (10:26, 28, 31). Enemies may lie about believers now, but God will reveal everything. Truth will win.
10:27 *proclaim on the housetops* Houses had flat roofs, and announcements were made from them. The gospel is not a secret to keep but good news to proclaim.
10:28 *fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna* The worst a persecutor can do is kill the body, and for a believer death means being with the Lord (Phil 1:21-23). To fear God is to stand in awe of the holy Judge, the right respect of a creature for his Creator. The one who bows before God can stand before any man.

able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna. **29** Are not two sparrows sold for an assarion? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. **30** But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. **31** Therefore do not fear; you are worth more than many sparrows. **32** Therefore everyone who will confess in Me before men, I also will confess in him before My Father who ***is*** in ***the*** heavens. **33** But whoever denies Me before men, I also will deny him before My Father who ***is*** in ***the*** heavens.

The Cost and Reward of Discipleship

34 Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. **35** For I came to divide a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; **36** and the enemies of the man ***will be*** the members of his household. **37** The one who loves father or mother above Me is not worthy of Me; and the one who loves son or daughter above Me is not worthy of Me. **38** And whoever does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. **39** The one who has found his life will lose it, and the one who has lost his life on account of Me will find it. **40** The one who receives you receives Me, and the one who receives Me receives Him who sent Me. **41** The one who receives a prophet in ***the*** name of a prophet will receive a prophet's reward; and the one who receives a righteous ***man*** in ***the*** name of a righteous ***man*** will receive a righteous ***man's*** reward. **42** And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold ***water*** to drink in ***the*** name of a disciple, truly I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward."

MATTHEW 11

John the Baptist's Question

1 And it came about, when Jesus (Iesous) had finished commanding His twelve disciples, He departed from there to teach and to proclaim in their cities. **2** And John (Ioannes), having heard in the prison the works of the Christ, having sent two of his disciples, **3** said to Him, "Are You the One who is coming, or are we to look for another?" **4** And Jesus, answering, said to them, "Having gone, report to John the things that you hear and see: **5** ***the*** blind receive sight, and ***the*** lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and ***the*** deaf hear, ***the*** dead are raised, and ***the*** poor have the gospel preached ***to them***. **6** And blessed is he who is not caused to stumble in Me." **7** And as these were going away, Jesus began to speak to

10:29 Luke 12:6,7; Ps 104:27-30
10:30 1 Sam 14:45; 2 Sam 14:11; Luke 21:18
10:31 Matt 6:26; Matt 12:11,12; Ps 8:5
10:32 1 Sam 2:30; Jer 9:3; Rev 3:5
10:33 Jer 9:3; 2 Tim 2:12; Luke 9:26
10:34 Luke 12:49-53; Acts 13:45-50; John 7:40-52
10:35 Mic 7:6; Mic 7:5; Matt 10:21
10:36 Mic 7:6; Ps 55:13; Gen 3:15
10:37 Luke 14:26; Gen 22:12; Lev 10:3
10:38 Gen 22:12; Matt 16:24; Luke 14:27
10:39 Luke 17:33; John 12:25; Mark 8:35,36
10:40 Exod 16:8; 1 Sam 8:7; Matt 18:5
10:41 1 Kgs 17:9; 1 Kgs 17:10; 1 Kgs 17:11
10:42 Matt 25:40; Heb 6:10; Mark 9:41
11:1 Matt 28:20; John 15:10,14; Acts 1:2
11:2 Matt 14:3; Matt 4:12; Mark 6:17
11:3 Mic 5:2; Ps 2:12; Isa 35:5
11:4 Isa 35:5
11:5 Isa 35:4-6; Isa 29:18; Luke 4:18
11:6 Isa 8:14,15; Matt 24:10; Matt 26:31
11:7 Eph 4:14; James 1:6; Luke 7:24-30

10:29 *two sparrows sold for an assarion* Sparrows were the cheapest food, and an assarion a small copper coin. Five sold for two (Luke 12:6), the fifth thrown in free. Yet not one falls apart from your Father.
10:31 *you are worth more than many sparrows* God knows you down to the hairs of your head. This does not mean nothing bad will happen. Sparrows still fall. But never without the Father, and neither will you.
10:32 *everyone who will confess in Me before men* To confess is to agree openly and stand with someone. Jesus places Himself as the One who decides people's standing before God.
10:33 *whoever denies Me before men* Peter denied Jesus three times and was restored (John 21:15-19). Jesus speaks of a settled denial, a life that refuses to own Him. Peter wept bitterly (26:75). A real believer who stumbles comes back.
10:34 *I did not come to bring peace, but a sword* The Prince of Peace (Isa 9:6) gives peace with God (Rom 5:1) and will bring peace to the earth when He reigns. For now His coming divides people. The sword is not for fighting (26:52). It is a picture of division.
10:36 *the enemies of the man will be the members of his household* From Micah 7:6. Many believers know this pain, from being cut off by family to danger of death. We should never be the cause, but the most loving family members anyone has. Still, we must not deny Him to keep the peace.
10:37 *The one who loves father or mother above Me is not worthy of Me* Family is a great gift (Exod 20:12; 1 Tim 5:8), but it cannot take God's place. No mere man may claim first place above the people we love most. When Jesus is first, we love our families better, not less.
10:38 *whoever does not take his cross and follow after Me* The condemned man carried his own cross beam to execution. A man carrying a cross was going to die. Taking up our cross is not putting up with an annoying neighbor. It is dying to our own way, plans and pride, a life fully surrendered to Him.
10:39 *the one who has lost his life on account of Me will find it* A paradox: it sounds like a contradiction but is true. Hold on to your life for yourself and you lose it. Give it to Jesus and you find real life. Many who gave up everything for Him found He gave back far more.
10:40 *The one who receives you receives Me* To welcome an ambassador is to welcome his king. A great honor and responsibility for everyone who carries the gospel.
10:41 *will receive a prophet's reward* To welcome someone because he speaks for God is to share his reward, as the widow who fed Elijah shared his ministry (1 Kgs 17:8-16). If you pray for missionaries, give, or open your home to God's servants, God keeps careful records.
10:42 *only a cup of cold water to drink in the name of a disciple* "These little ones" are His humble disciples. After wolves, floggings and swords, Jesus ends gently. A cup of water is about the smallest gift there is, and not even that is overlooked.
11:1 *He departed from there to teach and to proclaim in their cities* The second "when Jesus had finished" (7:28). Jesus did not send the twelve out and sit back. A good leader does not ask others to do what he will not do himself.
11:3 *Are You the One who is coming, or are we to look for another* The Coming One meant the Messiah. Josephus says John was held at Machaerus, a fortress east of the Dead Sea. John had seen the Spirit descend (3:16-17) and preached the ax and the fire (3:10-12). Now he sat in a dungeon while Herod ruled, and Jesus was healing, not judging. He took his doubts to Jesus, the right thing to do with ours.
11:5 *the poor have the gospel preached to them* From Isaiah's kingdom promises (Isa 35:5-6; 61:1). The very signs were happening. The good news to the poor is the high point; the miracles pointed to the message. Jesus left out the "day of vengeance of our God" (Isa 61:2). He came first to save and will come again to judge. John saw both comings as one, and we know now they are centuries apart.
11:6 *blessed is he who is not caused to stumble in Me* To stumble is to fall away because Jesus does not do what we expected. Sometimes He heals, and sometimes He lets His servant stay in prison. John would soon die there (14:10). Jesus invited him to trust without understanding everything.
11:7 *A reed shaken by the wind* Reeds along the Jordan bent with every breeze. John never changed his message to please crowds or king. He was in a king's house now, in its dungeon, because he would not flatter that king. A moment of doubt did not change who he was.

the crowds concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to view? A reed shaken by ***the*** wind? **8** But what did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft garments? Look, those who wear soft ***things*** are in the houses of kings. **9** But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet. **10** For this is he concerning whom it has been written: 'Look, I send My messenger before Your face, who will prepare Your way before You.' **11** Truly I say to you, among those born of women there has not been raised ***one*** greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of the heavens is greater than he. **12** And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of the heavens suffers violence, and violent ***men*** seize it. **13** For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. **14** And if you are willing to receive ***it***, he himself is Elijah (Helias), who is about to come. **15** The one who has ears to hear, let him hear. **16** But to what will I compare this generation? It is like little children sitting in markets and calling to their companions, **17** and saying, 'We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge to you, and you did not mourn.' **18** For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon.' **19** The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look, a man ***who is*** a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' And wisdom was justified by her children."

Woes on Unrepentant Towns

20 Then He began to reproach the cities in which most of His mighty works had taken place, because they did not repent: **21** "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works that took place in you had taken place in Tyre (Tyros) and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. **22** But I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in ***the*** day of judgment than for you. **23** And you, Capernaum (Kapernaoum), who have been exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades; for if the mighty works that took place in you had taken place in Sodom (Sodoma), they would have remained until today. **24** But I say to you that it will be more tolerable for ***the*** land of Sodom in ***the*** day of judgment than for you."

Come to Me and Rest

25 At that time Jesus, answering, said, "I praise You, Father, Lord of the heaven and of the earth, because You hid these things from wise and understanding ***ones*** and revealed them to little children. **26** Yes, Father, for so it was well-pleasing

11:8 Matt 3:4; 2 Kgs 1:8; Isa 20:2
11:9 Matt 14:5; Matt 11:13,14; Matt 17:12,13
11:10 Mal 3:1; Mal 4:5; Isa 40:3
11:11 1 Sam 2:30; Job 15:14; 1 Cor 15:9
11:12 Luke 16:16; Luke 13:24; Phil 2:12
11:13 Dan 9:24; Mal 4:5; Matt 5:17,18
11:14 Mal 4:5; 1 Kgs 17:1; Matt 17:10-13
11:15 Ezek 3:27; Matt 13:9,43; Luke 8:8
11:16 Luke 7:31-35; Lam 2:13; Mark 4:30
11:17 Isa 28:9-13; 1 Cor 9:19-23; Matt 9:15,23
11:18 Matt 3:4; Luke 1:15; John 7:20
11:19 Luke 5:29,30; Luke 14:1; Matt 9:10,11
11:20 Luke 10:13-15; Ps 81:11-13; Isa 1:2-5
11:21 Jer 13:27; Isa 10:1; Mark 6:45
11:22 Isa 23:1; Jer 25:22; Jer 27:3
11:23 Isa 14:13-15; Gen 19:24; Gen 13:13
11:24 Lam 4:6; Gen 13:13; Gen 19:24
11:25 Dan 2:23; Matt 16:17; Ps 8:2
11:26 Job 33:13; Isa 46:10; Luke 10:21

11:10 *Look, I send My messenger before Your face* From Malachi 3:1. Other prophets spoke of the Messiah from a distance. John was the messenger right before Him, the only prophet who could point and say "Look, the Lamb of God" (John 1:29). In Malachi God speaks of sending His messenger before Him. Here the Father speaks to the Son, "before Your face." Jesus is the Lord whose way John prepared.

11:11 *yet the least in the kingdom of the heavens is greater than he* None greater than John because of his place as herald of the King. The least is not a better person, but more privileged. John did not live to see the cross, the resurrection and Pentecost. We stand on the other side of the cross. Never take that for granted.

11:12 *the kingdom of the heavens suffers violence, and violent men seize it* One of the hardest verses in Matthew. Some read it as the kingdom under attack by violent men like Herod, who had John in prison. Others read it as the kingdom pushing forward with force while determined people press in (Luke 16:16). Both ideas are true in Scripture.

11:13 *all the prophets and the law prophesied until John* The whole Old Testament pointed forward. With John the time of promise ended and fulfillment began.

11:14 *if you are willing to receive it, he himself is Elijah* Malachi promised Elijah before the day of the Lord (Mal 4:5). John denied being Elijah in person (John 1:21) but came in his spirit and power (Luke 1:17). Had Israel received the King, John would have fulfilled it completely. Many dispensational teachers expect a further fulfillment before Jesus returns, perhaps one of the two witnesses (Rev 11; Matt 17:11-12).

11:15 *The one who has ears to hear, let him hear* Jesus said this when He wanted people to stop and think. Everyone has ears, but not everyone listens.

11:17 *We played the flute for you, and you did not dance* Children in the square play wedding, and the others won't dance. They play funeral, and the others won't mourn. Nothing satisfied this generation, however God came to them.

11:18 *John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon.'* John was too strict for them, and Jesus too free. The problem was their hearts. They did not want to repent, so they found reasons to reject the messengers.

11:19 *a friend of tax collectors and sinners* Meant as a slur, but wonderful news. He is the Friend of sinners, including you and me. "Wisdom was justified by her children": God's wisdom in sending both John and Jesus is proven by the lives changed through them.

11:20 *because they did not repent* Many enjoyed the miracles. They did not reject Jesus openly. They just did not change. That is a quiet but deadly unbelief.

11:21 *Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida* Woe is a cry of grief and warning. Chorazin was two miles north of Capernaum, and no miracle there is recorded. Bethsaida was home to Peter, Andrew and Philip (John 1:44). Tyre and Sidon were proud Gentile coastal cities the prophets condemned (Ezek 26-28). Sackcloth was rough goat's hair cloth, worn with ashes in deep repentance.

11:22 *it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you* Greater light brings greater responsibility. There will be degrees of judgment according to the truth received and rejected (Luke 12:47-48).

11:23 *you, Capernaum, who have been exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades* Jesus' own town was lifted high by His living there. Hades is the place of the dead, often used for judgment, echoing the proud king of Babylon (Isa 14:13-15). These words were for respectable, religious towns. It is possible to grow so used to Jesus that we never turn to Him. Capernaum and Chorazin are ruins today.

11:25 *You hid these things from wise and understanding ones and revealed them to little children* After hard words, Jesus prays. The wise were proud religious leaders. The little children were humble people who knew their need. God hides the truth not from the educated but from the proud. The way in is to become like a child (18:3).

11:26 *Yes, Father, for so it was well-pleasing before You* Even when cities rejected Him, Jesus rested in His Father's plan. When people we love reject the gospel, we can pray the same way and trust God's wisdom.

before You. **27** All things were handed over to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, nor does anyone know the Father except the Son and ***he*** to whom the Son chooses to reveal ***Him***. **28** Come to Me, all who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. **29** Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. **30** For My yoke ***is*** easy, and My burden is light."

MATTHEW 12

Lord of the Sabbath

1 At that time Jesus (Iesous) went on the Sabbath through the grainfields; and His disciples were hungry, and they began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. **2** And the Pharisees, having seen, said to Him, "Look, Your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on a Sabbath." **3** But He said to them, "Have you not read what David (Dabid) did when he was hungry, he and those with him, **4** how he entered into the house of God and ate the loaves of the presentation, which it was not lawful for him to eat, nor for those with him, but for the priests alone? **5** Or have you not read in the law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath and are guiltless? **6** But I say to you that ***One*** greater than the temple is here. **7** But if you had known what this is, 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless. **8** For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath." **9** And having departed from there, He went into their synagogue. **10** And look, there was a man having a withered hand. And they asked Him, saying, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?"—so that they might accuse Him. **11** And He said to them, "What man will there be among you who will have one sheep, and if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will he not take hold of it and raise ***it*** up? **12** How much more valuable then is a man than a sheep? Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath." **13** Then He says to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he stretched ***it*** out, and it was restored healthy like the other. **14** And the Pharisees, having gone out, took counsel against Him, how they might destroy Him.

God's Chosen Servant

15 But Jesus, having known, withdrew from there. And great crowds followed Him, and He healed them all, **16** and He warned them that they should not make Him known, **17** so that what was spoken through Isaiah (Hesaias) the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, **18** "Look, My Servant whom I have

11:27 John 14:6-9; Matt 28:18; John 10:15
11:28 John 7:37; Gal 5:1; Isa 45:22
11:29 Jer 6:16; 1 John 2:6; Phil 2:7,8
11:30 1 John 5:3; John 16:33; Prov 3:17
12:1 Deut 23:25; Mark 2:23-28; Luke 6:1-5
12:2 Exod 20:9; Exod 31:15; Exod 35:2
12:3 1 Sam 21:3; 1 Sam 21:4-6; Lev 24:8
12:4 Lev 24:5; Lev 24:9; Lev 24:6
12:5 Num 28:9-10; Lev 24:8; Neh 13:17
12:6 Matt 12:41,42; 2 Chr 6:18; Mal 3:1
12:7 Hos 6:6; Lev 10:20; Ps 40:6
12:8 Matt 9:6; Mark 2:28; Luke 6:5
12:9 Luke 6:6-11; Mark 3:1-5
12:10 Luke 13:14; John 9:16; 1 Kgs 13:4-6
12:11 Luke 14:5; Exod 23:4,5; Deut 22:4
12:12 Matt 6:26; Luke 12:24; Mark 3:4
12:13 Luke 13:13; Acts 3:7,8
12:14 John 11:53,57; Matt 27:1; Mark 3:6
12:15 Matt 10:23; Matt 19:2; Luke 6:12
12:16 Isa 42:2; Matt 9:30; Matt 17:9
12:17 Isa 42:1; Isa 42:2; Isa 42:3
12:18 Isa 42:1-3; Isa 32:15; Isa 49:5

11:27 *no one knows the Son except the Father* All authority is handed to the Son (28:18). Father and Son know each other completely, as in John (John 10:15; 14:9). Only God can fully know God. Some stress God's sovereign choice to reveal Himself; others that the Son reveals the Father to all who come in humble faith. Both stand side by side here, and the next word is "Come."
11:28 *Come to Me, all who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest* Notice "all." Many were poor and worn out by work, and the Pharisees had piled on rules no one could keep (23:4). Many of us are worn out by guilt or trying to be good enough for God. Jesus does not just show the way to rest. He gives it. If you are tired today, this invitation is for you.
11:29 *I am gentle and humble in heart* A yoke joined two oxen to pull together, and rabbis spoke of the yoke of the Law. Coming to Jesus means becoming His disciple. This is the only place Jesus describes His own heart, gentle and humble, patient with our weakness. Rest for the soul echoes Jeremiah 6:16.
11:30 *My yoke is easy, and My burden is light* Not that following Him is always easy (chapter 10). The word means kind, well-fitted. A good carpenter shaped a yoke so it would not rub the neck raw. Yoked to Jesus, He takes the heavy end. His commands are not burdensome (1 John 5:3).
12:1 *His disciples were hungry, and they began to pluck heads of grain and to eat* The Sabbath was the seventh day, Saturday, set apart for rest (Exod 20:8-11). The disciples were not stealing; the Law let a hungry traveler pick grain by hand (Deut 23:25). The Pharisees' rules counted picking and rubbing grain as harvesting and threshing.
12:2 *Your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on a Sabbath* The Law itself did not say that. Their tradition did. Right after Jesus offered rest to the weary (11:28), we see the kind of rest the Pharisees offered.
12:4 *ate the loaves of the presentation* "Have you not read" was a sharp question to men proud of their reading. The twelve loaves set before the Lord each week were for priests alone (Lev 24:5-9), yet the priest gave them to hungry David (1 Sam 21:1-6). God's laws were for His people's good. If David could do this, how much more the Son of David?
12:5 *the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath and are guiltless* Priests worked harder on the Sabbath, offering its extra sacrifices (Num 28:9-10), because temple service came first.
12:6 *One greater than the temple is here* The temple was the holiest place in Israel, where God put His name. Only God could say He is greater. If priests could work in God's house, the disciples could serve the One greater than the house.
12:7 *I desire mercy and not sacrifice* Hosea 6:6 for the second time (9:13). The Pharisees knew the rules but not the heart of the God who gave them, so they condemned the guiltless.
12:8 *the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath* The Sabbath was God's day, and Jesus says it is His. He is not breaking God's law. He gave it. The real rest God offers is found in a Person, not a day (11:28; Heb 4:9-10).
12:10 *Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath* A synagogue was the local Jewish meeting place for prayer and Scripture on the Sabbath. Their teachers allowed help on the Sabbath only to save a life. They asked "so that they might accuse Him." It is sad when religious people see a hurting man only as a test case.
12:12 *How much more valuable then is a man than a sheep* They would pull a sheep from a pit on the Sabbath. Man is made in God's image. The Sabbath was never a day to stop doing good.
12:13 *Stretch out your hand* The one thing the man could not do. When Jesus commands, He gives the power to obey. By their rules He did no work. He only spoke.
12:14 *took counsel against Him, how they might destroy Him* A turning point. From here the leaders want Him dead. They called healing on the Sabbath sin but thought nothing of plotting murder on it.
12:16 *He warned them that they should not make Him known* His hour had not come, and He would go to the cross on the Father's timetable. Many wanted a political Messiah to fight Rome. Jesus would be a King who suffers before He reigns.
12:18 *Look, My Servant whom I have chosen* From Isaiah 42:1-4, echoing the Father's words at the baptism (3:17). A Gentile is anyone not Jewish. Early in His ministry, Matthew shows this Jewish King bringing hope to the whole world.

chosen, My Beloved in whom My soul has been well pleased; I will put My Spirit upon Him, and He will proclaim justice to the Gentiles. **19** He will not quarrel nor cry out, nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets. **20** A bruised reed He will not break, and a smoldering wick He will not quench, until He brings forth justice to victory. **21** And in His name ***the*** Gentiles will hope."

A House Divided

22 Then one who was demon-possessed, blind and mute, was brought to Him; and He healed him, so that the blind and mute ***man*** both spoke and saw. **23** And all the crowds were amazed and were saying, "This is not the Son of David, is it?" **24** But the Pharisees, having heard, said, "This ***man*** does not cast out the demons except by Beelzebul, ruler of the demons." **25** And Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is made desolate, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand. **26** And if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then will his kingdom stand? **27** And if I cast out the demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast ***them*** out? Because of this they will be your judges. **28** But if I cast out the demons by ***the*** Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. **29** Or how is anyone able to enter into the house of the strong ***man*** and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong ***man***? And then he will plunder his house. **30** The one who is not with Me is against Me, and the one who does not gather with Me scatters.

31 Because of this I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven to men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven to men. **32** And whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, neither in this age nor in the coming ***one***. **33** Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree rotten and its fruit rotten; for the tree is known by the fruit. **34** Offspring of vipers, how are you able to speak good things, being evil? For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks. **35** The good man out of the good treasure of the heart puts forth the good things, and the evil man out of the evil treasure puts forth evil things. **36** But I say to you that every careless word that men speak, they will give an account of it in ***the*** day of judgment. **37** For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."

The Sign of Jonah

38 Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, "Teacher, we wish to see a sign from You." **39** But He, answering, said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign; and a sign will not be given to it except the

12:19 John 18:36-38; 2 Tim 2:24,25; Matt 11:29
12:20 Isa 42:4; Ps 98:3; Isa 42:3,4
12:21 Isa 11:10; Rom 15:12,13; Eph 1:12,13
12:22 Isa 29:18; Isa 35:5,6; Acts 26:18
12:23 Matt 9:27; Matt 21:9; Matt 22:42,43
12:24 2 Kgs 1:2; Matt 9:34; Mark 3:22
12:25 Matt 9:4; Jer 17:10; Ps 139:2
12:26 Col 1:13; 1 John 5:19; John 12:31
12:27 Mark 9:38,39; Luke 9:49,50; Luke 11:19
12:28 Luke 11:20; Matt 12:18; Acts 10:38
12:29 Isa 53:12; Mark 3:27; Isa 49:24
12:30 Mark 9:40; Luke 11:23; Luke 9:50
12:31 Luke 12:10; Mark 3:28-30; Heb 6:4
12:32 Matt 11:19; Mark 3:29; John 7:12,52
12:33 Luke 6:43,44; Matt 7:16-20; Ezek 18:31
12:34 Luke 6:45; James 3:5-8; 1 Sam 24:13
12:35 Col 4:6; Matt 13:52; Prov 10:20,21
12:36 Eccl 12:14; Jude 1:14,15; Rom 2:16
12:37 Prov 13:3; James 2:21-25
12:38 1 Cor 1:22; Mark 8:11,12; John 2:18
12:39 2 Kgs 14:25; Jer 7:29; Jonah 1:1

12:20 *A bruised reed He will not break, and a smoldering wick He will not quench* A reed almost broken, a wick almost out. That describes many of us. Jesus does not throw away weak and worn-out people. If your faith is a flicker today, He will not snuff you out. He keeps on until justice wins, when He returns to reign.

12:23 *This is not the Son of David, is it* The wording expects a no, but they were starting to wonder about the Messiah's title (2 Sam 7:12-16), the very thing Matthew has shown since 1:1.

12:24 *by Beelzebul, ruler of the demons* They could not deny the miracle, so they attacked its source. Beelzebul, likely from the Philistine god Baal-zebub (2 Kgs 1:2), was a name of contempt for Satan. They saw God's plain work and called it the devil's. No evidence would change their minds.

12:26 *if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself* A man freed from a demon is the devil's loss, not his win. Their charge made no sense.

12:27 *by whom do your sons cast them out* Some of their own followers tried to drive out demons. The Pharisees judged Jesus by a rule they would never use on themselves.

12:28 *then the kingdom of God has come upon you* Jesus worked by the Spirit's power, so the kingdom had arrived in the Person of the King. To reject Him was to turn from the kingdom itself.

12:29 *unless he first binds the strong man* Satan is the strong man, the world his house, and captive people his goods. Each exorcism was Jesus carrying them off. At the cross He won the decisive victory (Col 2:15; Heb 2:14). Satan is active but defeated. No one is so bound that Jesus cannot set them free.

12:30 *The one who is not with Me is against Me* There is no neutral ground with Jesus. Am I helping gather people to Him, or driving them away?

12:31 *every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven to men* Blasphemy is speaking against God. Murder, adultery, cursing God can all be forgiven; Paul was a former blasphemer (1 Tim 1:13). The blasphemy against the Spirit, in context, was the Pharisees' settled, knowing rejection of the Spirit's plain witness to Jesus, calling it Satan's. Shut that door for good and there is no other way. Some limit it to Jesus' earthly days; others apply it to any final unbelief.

12:32 *whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him* His brothers did not believe at first (John 7:5) and Peter denied Him, yet both were forgiven. If you lie awake afraid you have committed this sin, your worry shows you have not. The Pharisees were not worried. They were hardened. Come to Jesus, and He will not turn you away (John 6:37).

12:33 *the tree is known by the fruit* Either Jesus is good and so is His work, or He is evil. They could not have it both ways. What we are inside will show up in what we do.

12:34 *out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks* John used "vipers" too (3:7). Words are a bucket lowered into a well: whatever is down there comes up. To change your words, let God change your heart.

12:36 *every careless word that men speak* Idle words, the kind we say without thinking. God hears every one of them, and we will answer for them on the day of judgment.

12:37 *by your words you will be justified* Justified means declared righteous, not guilty before God. We are not saved by talking right. Our words are evidence of the heart. A good verse to remember when tempted to gossip or cut someone down.

12:38 *we wish to see a sign from You* After the blind seeing, a withered hand restored and a demon cast out minutes before, they wanted a sign of their own choosing. They were not looking for evidence but for a way to say no.

12:39 *An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign* Adultery was the prophets' picture of unfaithfulness to God (Jer 3:8-9). God does not do tricks for skeptics.

sign of Jonah (Ionas) the prophet. **40** For just as Jonah was in the belly of the sea monster three days and three nights, so the Son of Man will be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights. **41** Ninevite men will stand up in the judgment with this generation and will condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and look, ***something*** greater than Jonah ***is*** here. **42** ***The*** queen of ***the*** south will rise up in the judgment with this generation and will condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and look, ***something*** greater than Solomon ***is*** here. **43** Now when the unclean spirit goes out from the man, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and does not find ***it***. **44** Then it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came out.' And having come, it finds ***it*** unoccupied, swept, and put in order. **45** Then it goes and takes with itself seven other spirits more evil than itself, and having entered, they dwell there; and the last ***state*** of that man becomes worse than the first. So it will be also with this evil generation."

Jesus' True Family

46 And while He was still speaking to the crowds, look, His mother and His brothers were standing outside, seeking to speak to Him. **47** And someone said to Him, "Look, Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, seeking to speak to You." **48** But He, answering, said to the one who told Him, "Who is My mother, and who are My brothers?" **49** And having stretched out His hand toward His disciples, He said, "Look, My mother and My brothers! **50** For whoever does the will of My Father who ***is*** in ***the*** heavens, he is My brother and sister and mother."

MATTHEW 13

The Parable of the Sower

1 And on that day Jesus (Iesous), having gone out from the house, was sitting beside the sea. **2** And great crowds were gathered together to Him, so that He, having stepped into the boat, sat down; and all the crowd was standing on the shore. **3** And He spoke many things to them in parables, saying, "Look, the sower went out to sow. **4** And while he was sowing, some fell along the road, and the birds came and devoured them. **5** And others fell on the rocky places, where they did not have much soil; and immediately they sprang up, because of not having depth of soil. **6** And the sun having risen, they were scorched; and because of not having root, they withered. **7** And others fell on the thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. **8** And others fell on the good soil and were giving fruit, some a hundredfold, and some sixty, and some thirty. **9** The ***one*** having ears to hear, let him hear." **10** And the disciples, having come, said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?" **11** And answering, He said to them, "Because to you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of the heavens, but to them it

12:40 Jonah 1:17; Ps 63:9; Jonah 2:2
12:41 Isa 54:17; Jonah 3:5; Jonah 3:6
12:42 1 Kgs 10:1; 2 Chr 9:1; 1 Kgs 5:12
12:43 Ps 63:1; Luke 11:24; Acts 8:13
12:44 1 Sam 19:10; Matt 12:29; Luke 11:21,22
12:45 Lev 13:20; 1 Sam 16:23; 1 Sam 19:10
12:46 Lev 21:11; Acts 1:14; Matt 13:55
12:47 Lev 21:11
12:48 Matt 10:37; Deut 33:9; Mark 3:32,33
12:49 Matt 28:7; Mark 3:34; John 17:8,9,20
12:50 John 15:14; Mark 3:35; Matt 7:20,21
13:1 Mark 2:13; Mark 4:1
13:2 Luke 5:3; Matt 4:25; Matt 15:30
13:3 Mark 4:2,13,33; Matt 13:10-13,34,35,53; Matt 22:1
13:4 Matt 13:18,19
13:5 Matt 13:20; Ezek 11:19; Ezek 36:26
13:6 Matt 13:21; James 1:11,12; Isa 49:10
13:7 Jer 4:3,4; Matt 13:22; Gen 3:18
13:8 Matt 13:23; Gen 26:12; Luke 8:15
13:9 Matt 11:15; Rev 2:7,11,17,29; Rev 3:6,13,22
13:10 Mark 4:10,33,34
13:11 1 Cor 2:9,10,14; 1 John 2:27; Matt 16:17

12:40 *so the Son of Man will be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights* Jonah came out alive after three days (Jonah 1:17; 2:10). The resurrection is the sign God gave the world (Rom 1:4). Jews counted any part of a day as a day, so this fits Friday to Sunday (compare Esth 4:16 with 5:1). Some teachers hold a Wednesday or Thursday crucifixion. Either way He rose on the third day (16:21).
12:41 *something greater than Jonah is here* Pagan Nineveh repented at a reluctant prophet's short message of doom (Jonah 3:5-10). Israel's leaders had the Son of God and refused.
12:42 *The queen of the south* The queen of Sheba, a Gentile, traveled far to hear Solomon (1 Kgs 10:1-10). Greater wisdom stood in their synagogue. Many of us have Bibles in every room. The more light God gives, the more we answer for.
12:44 *it finds it unoccupied, swept, and put in order* Many had cleaned up their outward lives at John's call, but would not let the King in. Reform without new life leaves the door open. An empty religious life without Christ is not safe. We need Jesus Himself living in us by His Spirit.
12:46 *His mother and His brothers were standing outside* They thought He had lost His senses (Mark 3:21, 31). His brothers were James, Joses, Simon and Jude (13:55). I believe they were Mary and Joseph's later sons (1:25). Roman Catholics read cousins, and the Eastern churches often sons of Joseph by an earlier marriage, but the word is the normal word for brothers. They believed after the resurrection (Acts 1:14).
12:50 *whoever does the will of My Father who is in the heavens, he is My brother and sister and mother* Jesus was not cold to Mary; from the cross He cared for her (John 19:26-27). The Father's will is first to believe in the One He sent (John 6:29). If your family has turned against you for your faith, in Christ you have brothers and sisters and a place at His table.
13:2 *having stepped into the boat, sat down* The same day He was accused of working for Satan (ch 12). Teachers sat to teach, and the water carried His voice. Jesus did not stop His Father's work because of opposition. He changed His method.
13:3 *He spoke many things to them in parables* A parable is a story from ordinary life set alongside a spiritual truth; parabole means something thrown alongside. Jesus had taught plainly; from here He speaks to the crowds mostly in parables (13:34). A farmer then walked his field throwing seed by hand.
13:4 *some fell along the road* Paths through fields were packed hard by feet. Seed lay on top, never went in, and the birds ate it.
13:5 *others fell on the rocky places* Not loose stones but a thin layer of soil over a rock shelf, common in Galilee. Shallow soil warmed fast, so it sprang up quickly, but roots could not go down, and the sun scorched it.
13:7 *others fell on the thorns* The ground looked plowed, but thorn roots were still in it. The grain did not die at once, but it never produced anything.
13:8 *some a hundredfold, and some sixty, and some thirty* A good harvest then might be ten times what was sown. A hundredfold was amazing. "Let him hear": this is not just a farming story. It is about them.
13:11 *to you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of the heavens* A mystery is a truth God kept hidden and now reveals (Rom 16:25-26). The prophets foresaw the King reigning on David's throne (Isa 9:6-7; Dan 2:44) but not clearly that He would be rejected, go away and come again, with a long age between. I call that the mystery form of the kingdom: God's rule spreading through the word while the King is in heaven. Its full, visible form comes when He returns (Rev 20:4-6).

has not been given. **12** For whoever has, to him will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. **13** Because of this I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. **14** And upon them is being fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah (Hesaias), which says, 'In hearing you will hear, and by no means understand; and seeing you will see, and by no means perceive. **15** For the heart of this people has grown dull, and with the ears they heard with difficulty, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with the eyes, and hear with the ears, and understand with the heart, and turn back, and I should heal them.' **16** But blessed ***are*** your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear. **17** For truly I say to you that many prophets and righteous ***men*** longed to see what you see, and did not see, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear. **18** You, therefore, hear the parable of the sower. **19** When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand, the evil ***one*** comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is the ***one*** sown along the road. **20** And the ***one*** sown on the rocky places, this is the ***one*** hearing the word and immediately receiving it with joy; **21** yet he has no root in himself, but is temporary; and when tribulation or persecution comes because of the word, immediately he is caused to stumble. **22** And the ***one*** sown among the thorns, this is the ***one*** hearing the word, and the care of this age and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. **23** And the ***one*** sown on the good soil, this is the ***one*** hearing the word and understanding, who indeed bears fruit and produces, some a hundredfold, and some sixty, and some thirty."

Wheat and Weeds, Mustard Seed and Leaven

24 Another parable He set before them, saying, "The kingdom of the heavens has been likened to a man who sowed good seed in his field. **25** But while the men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds in the midst of the wheat, and went away. **26** And when the blade sprouted and produced fruit, then the weeds also appeared. **27** And the slaves of the master of the house, having come, said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? From where then does it have the weeds?' **28** And he said to them, 'A man, an enemy, did this.' And the slaves said to him, 'Do you want us then, having gone away, to gather them up?' **29** But he said, 'No, lest while gathering up the weeds you uproot the wheat together with them. **30** Allow both to grow together until the harvest; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather up the weeds and bind them into bundles in order to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn."'" **31** Another parable He set before them, saying, "The kingdom of the heavens is like a grain of mustard, which a man, having taken, sowed in his field, **32** which indeed is smaller than all the seeds, but when it has grown, it is greater than the garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the sky come and nest in its branches." **33** Another parable He spoke to them: "The kingdom of the

13:12 Matt 25:29; Luke 8:18; Rev 2:5
13:13 Isa 42:20; Jer 5:21; Ezek 12:2
13:14 Isa 6:9-10; Ezek 12:2; Deut 29:4
13:15 Zech 7:11; Isa 44:20; Isa 57:18
13:16 Ps 135:16; Prov 20:12; Isa 18:3
13:17 John 8:56; Heb 11:13,39,40; 1 Pet 1:10-12
13:18 Matt 13:11,12; Mark 4:14-20
13:19 Prov 1:7; Prov 2:1; Prov 18:1
13:20 Ezek 33:31; Job 8:19; Ezek 33:32
13:21 Matt 11:6; Hos 6:4; Matt 13:6
13:22 2 Tim 4:10; 1 Tim 6:9,10; 1 Tim 6:17
13:23 Matt 13:8; Matt 12:33; Gal 5:22,23
13:24 Matt 25:1; Matt 13:33,44,45,47; Matt 20:1
13:25 1 Pet 5:8; Acts 20:30,31; Gal 2:4
13:26 Mark 4:26-29
13:27 2 Cor 5:18-20; Rom 16:17; 1 Cor 3:5-9
13:28 1 Cor 5:3-7; Luke 9:49-54; 2 Cor 2:6-11
13:30 Jer 51:33; Matt 3:12; Mal 3:18
13:31 Mark 4:30-32; Luke 13:18,19; Matt 13:24
13:32 Dan 4:12; Ezek 31:6; Ezek 17:23
13:33 Gen 18:6; Lev 23:17; Luke 13:21

13:12 *whoever has, to him will be given* The one who has received the truth with a willing heart gets more light. The one who turns away loses even what he had. Use the light God gives you, and He will give more.
13:13 *seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear* The parables did not keep honest seekers out. The crowd had seen the miracles, and their leaders called them Satan's work. Parables were mercy and judgment: to the hungry heart an invitation to ask more, to the hard heart just a story about seeds.
13:15 *the heart of this people has grown dull* From Isaiah 6:9-10. First the people closed their own eyes; then the hardening came. God does not harden a soft heart that wants Him. He confirms the choice of a heart that shut Him out. His desire was always "I should heal them."
13:17 *many prophets and righteous men longed to see what you see* The disciples were not smarter, just willing. The prophets searched to learn when these things would happen (1 Pet 1:10-12). We have the whole New Testament, more light than the prophets had. What are we doing with it?
13:19 *the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart* Jesus explains it, so we need not guess. The seed is God's message, the soils are hearts. The hard heart never lets the word in. Satan is active when the word is preached and would rather people forget it on the way to the car.
13:21 *he has no root in himself, but is temporary* Excited and quick at first, he quits when trouble comes because of the word. Every pastor has seen it. Real faith puts down roots and keeps going when following Jesus costs. Emotion is not bad, but it is not the same as faith.
13:22 *the care of this age and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word* Worry is the poor man's thorn, and love of riches the rich man's. Riches promise security and happiness and do not deliver. Our busy, full lives can choke the word without our noticing.
13:23 *this is the one hearing the word and understanding, who indeed bears fruit* Fruit is Christ's life showing in character (Gal 5:22-23), obedience and leading others to Him. The amounts differ. The difference was never the seed or the sower but the ground. What kind of ground is my heart?
13:25 *his enemy came and sowed weeds in the midst of the wheat* Most likely darnel, which looks almost exactly like young wheat until the heads appear. The enemy works at night, and his work is meant to look like the real thing.
13:28 *A man, an enemy, did this* We see evil mixed with good and want to clean it all out now. God has a different timetable.
13:30 *Allow both to grow together until the harvest* The roots were tangled, and pulling weeds would damage the wheat. This is not about church discipline (ch 18). The field is the world (13:38). God lets good and evil live side by side in this age and will sort it out in His time.
13:32 *becomes a tree, so that the birds of the sky come and nest in its branches* The mustard seed was the smallest a farmer commonly planted (17:20), yet grew ten feet tall or more. Many see the kingdom's amazing growth from a handful of fishermen. Others note that birds picture the evil one in this chapter (13:4, 19) and see outward Christianity growing larger than God intended, with all kinds of things nesting in it. Both teach something true.
13:33 *The kingdom of the heavens is like leaven* Leaven was old fermented dough mixed in to raise new dough, and this was a very large batch. Many read the gospel quietly changing the world or a life. Others note that leaven nearly always pictures sin or false teaching (16:6, 12; 1 Cor 5:6-8; Gal 5:9) and see corruption working into the professing church. I hold these with an open hand. Which is at work in us?

heavens is like leaven, which a woman, having taken, hid in approximately 21 quarts (three seahs) of flour until all was leavened." **34** All these things Jesus spoke to the crowds in parables, and without a parable He was not speaking to them, **35** so that what was spoken through the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, "I will open My mouth in parables; I will utter things hidden from ***the*** foundation of ***the*** world."

The Weeds Explained

36 Then, having dismissed the crowds, Jesus went into the house. And His disciples came to Him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field." **37** And answering, He said to them, "The ***one*** sowing the good seed is the Son of Man; **38** and the field is the world; and the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom; and the weeds are the sons of the evil ***one***; **39** and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; and the harvest is ***the*** consummation of the age; and the reapers are angels. **40** Therefore, just as the weeds are gathered up and burned with fire, so it will be at the consummation of this age. **41** The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather up out of His kingdom all the stumbling blocks and those who practice lawlessness, **42** and they will throw them into the furnace of the fire; there will be the weeping and the gnashing of the teeth. **43** Then the righteous will shine out like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. The ***one*** having ears to hear, let him hear.

Treasure, Pearl and Net

44 Again, the kingdom of the heavens is like treasure hidden in the field, which a man, having found, hid; and from his joy he goes and sells all that he has, and buys that field. **45** Again, the kingdom of the heavens is like a man, a merchant, seeking fine pearls, **46** who, having found one very precious pearl, having gone away, has sold all that he had and bought it. **47** Again, the kingdom of the heavens is like a dragnet cast into the sea and having gathered together ***fish*** of every kind, **48** which, when it was filled, having drawn ***it*** up on the shore and having sat down, they collected the good into vessels, but threw the bad out. **49** So it will be at the consummation of the age: the angels will go out and separate the evil from ***the*** midst of the righteous, **50** and they will throw them into the furnace of the fire; there will be the weeping and the gnashing of the teeth." **51** Jesus says to them, "Have you understood all these things?" They say to Him, "Yes, Lord." **52** And He said to them, "Because of this, every scribe having been discipled into the kingdom of the heavens is like a man, a master of a house, who brings out of his treasure ***things*** new and old."

Rejected at Nazareth

53 And it came about, when Jesus had finished these parables, He withdrew from there. **54** And having come into His hometown, He was teaching them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished and said, "From where ***did*** this ***man get*** this wisdom and the miracles? **55** Is this not the son of the

13:34 Ps 78:2; Mark 4:33,34; Matt 13:13
13:35 Ps 78:2; Amos 3:7; Ps 49:4
13:36 Matt 13:1; Matt 14:22; Matt 15:39
13:37 Acts 1:8; Matt 13:24,27; Matt 13:41
13:38 Gen 3:15; John 8:44; Acts 13:10
13:39 Matt 13:49; Matt 24:3; Joel 3:13
13:41 Zeph 1:3; Matt 24:31; Matt 18:7
13:42 Matt 13:50; Rev 20:10,14,15; Matt 8:12
13:43 Dan 12:3; Luke 12:32; Matt 25:34,36
13:44 Prov 2:2-5; Col 2:3; Prov 16:16
13:45 Matt 16:26; Matt 22:5; Prov 3:13-18
13:46 Prov 2:4; Eph 3:8; Col 2:3
13:47 Ezek 47:10; Matt 4:19; 1 John 4:1-6
13:48 Matt 13:30,40-43; Matt 3:12
13:49 Rev 20:12-15; Matt 13:39; 2 Thess 1:7-10
13:50 Rev 14:10,11; Matt 24:50,51; Luke 13:27,28
13:51 Ezek 47:6; Matt 13:11,19; Matt 15:17
13:52 Prov 15:7; Matt 23:34; 2 Tim 3:16,17
13:53 Mark 4:33-35
13:54 Matt 2:23; Luke 4:16-30; Mark 6:1,2
13:55 1 Sam 10:11; Mark 6:3; Luke 3:23

13:35 *I will open My mouth in parables* From Psalm 78:2, by Asaph, called a seer (2 Chr 29:30). "Things hidden from the foundation of the world" is the key. These were part of God's plan all along, not new ideas after Israel rejected Jesus.
13:36 *Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field* The right response to God's word. When you don't understand, don't walk away. Bring your question to the Lord (James 1:5).
13:38 *the field is the world* The world, not the church. The good seed are true believers and the weeds the sons of the evil one. Satan plants his own people right beside the wheat, looking like believers (7:15). That is still one of his favorite ways of working.
13:39 *the harvest is the consummation of the age* The end of this present age, with angels as reapers.
13:41 *they will gather up out of His kingdom all the stumbling blocks* A stumbling block is anything or anyone that causes others to fall into sin. This sorting happens when the Son of Man returns at the end of the age to set up His kingdom on earth (25:31-33, 41).
13:42 *the furnace of the fire* Jesus spoke about hell more than anyone in the Bible, not to scare people for fun, but because it is real and He did not want anyone to go there.
13:43 *the righteous will shine out like the sun in the kingdom of their Father* Echoing Daniel 12:3. Today wheat and weeds can look alike. One day the difference will be plain to all.
13:44 *the kingdom of the heavens is like treasure hidden in the field* With no banks, people buried valuables, and an owner's death could leave them hidden for years. When a person sees what Jesus is worth, giving up everything for Him is a joy, not a sad duty (Phil 3:7-8).
13:46 *having found one very precious pearl* The first man stumbled on treasure; this merchant was searching. Some find Christ without looking, others after years. Some teachers reverse these two parables: Jesus gave all to buy the field, the world, for its treasure, and His church as His pearl. That is also true of what He did. Many find the simpler reading fits the flow best.
13:48 *they collected the good into vessels, but threw the bad out* A dragnet, weighted below with floats above, gathered fish of every kind. The bad were unclean (Lev 11:9-12) or worthless. Several disciples had done this many times.
13:49 *the angels will go out and separate the evil from the midst of the righteous* The gospel net gathers all kinds, and not all are true. Jesus repeats the solemn words of the weeds parable. When He says something twice, listen. Our job is not to sort the fish but to cast the net and make sure we belong to Him.
13:51 *Have you understood all these things* They did not understand perfectly yet, but they grasped the main lesson and answered honestly. Jesus keeps teaching those who keep listening.
13:52 *who brings out of his treasure things new and old* A scribe trained in the Old Testament who becomes Jesus' disciple has the old treasure of the Law and Prophets and the new truths of the kingdom. That is what Matthew does in this Gospel. We read the Old Testament in the light of Christ.
13:54 *having come into His hometown* Nazareth (2:23). They could not deny His wisdom or power, but instead of asking whether He was the Messiah, they fixed on where He came from.
13:55 *Is this not the son of the carpenter* Tekton means a builder working in wood or stone, Joseph's trade and Jesus' (Mark 6:3). His brothers were Mary and Joseph's later sons. James led the Jerusalem church and wrote James (Acts 15:13; Gal 1:19), and Jude wrote Jude, both believing after the resurrection.

carpenter? ***Is*** not His mother called Mary (Maria), and His brothers James (Iakobos) and Joses (Ioses) and Simon and Jude (Ioudas)? **56** And His sisters, are they not all with us? From where then ***did*** this ***man get*** all these things?" **57** And they were caused to stumble in Him. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and in his house." **58** And He did not do many miracles there because of their unbelief.

MATTHEW 14

The Death of John the Baptist

1 At that time Herod (Herodes) the tetrarch heard the report about Jesus (Iesous), **2** and said to his servants, "This is John (Ioannes) the Baptist; he has been raised from the dead, and because of this the miraculous powers are at work in him." **3** For Herod, having seized John, bound him and put ***him*** in prison on account of Herodias, the wife of Philip (Philippos) his brother. **4** For John was saying to him, "It is not lawful for you to have her." **5** And wishing to kill him, he feared the crowd, because they were holding him as a prophet. **6** But when the birthday of Herod was being celebrated, the daughter of Herodias danced in the midst and pleased Herod, **7** whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatever she might ask. **8** And she, having been urged on by her mother, says, "Give me here on a platter the head of John the Baptist." **9** And the king was grieved, but on account of the oaths and those reclining at table with ***him***, he commanded ***it*** to be given. **10** And having sent, he beheaded John in the prison. **11** And his head was brought on a platter and was given to the girl, and she brought ***it*** to her mother. **12** And his disciples, having come, took up the body and buried it; and having come, they reported ***it*** to Jesus.

Five Thousand Fed

13 And Jesus, having heard, withdrew from there by boat to a desolate place by Himself. And the crowds, having heard, followed Him on foot from the cities. **14** And Jesus, having gone out, saw a great crowd, and was moved with compassion toward them, and healed their sick. **15** And evening having come, His disciples came to Him, saying, "The place is desolate, and the hour has already passed; dismiss the crowds, so that, having gone into the villages, they may buy food for themselves." **16** But Jesus said to them, "They have no need to go away; you give them ***something*** to eat." **17** And they say to Him, "We do not have ***anything*** here except five loaves and two fish." **18** And He said, "Bring them here to Me." **19** And having commanded the crowds to recline on the grass, and having taken the five loaves and the two fish, having looked up to heaven, He blessed; and having broken

13:57 Isa 53:3; Matt 11:6; Luke 4:24
13:58 Mark 6:5,6; Luke 4:25-29; Rom 11:20
14:1 Luke 3:1; Mark 8:15; Luke 9:7-9
14:2 Matt 16:14; Matt 11:11; Mark 8:28
14:3 Lev 18:16; Matt 4:12; Mark 6:17
14:4 Lev 18:16; 2 Chr 26:18; Lev 20:21
14:5 Matt 21:26,32; Mark 6:19,20; Mark 14:1,2
14:6 Gen 40:20; Mark 6:21-23; Esth 1:2-9
14:7 Esth 5:3,6; Esth 7:2
14:8 Prov 29:10; 2 Chr 22:2,3; Mark 6:24
14:9 Matt 14:1; Mark 6:14; Matt 14:5
14:10 Matt 17:12; Matt 21:35,36; Matt 22:3-6
14:11 Gen 49:7; Prov 27:4; Prov 29:10
14:12 Acts 8:2; Matt 27:58-61
14:13 Luke 9:10-17; Matt 10:23; Matt 12:15
14:14 Matt 9:36; Heb 4:15; Matt 15:32-39
14:15 Matt 15:23; Mark 6:35,36; Luke 9:12
14:16 2 Kgs 4:42-44; Job 31:16,17; Prov 11:24
14:17 Matt 15:33,34; Num 11:21-23; Mark 6:37,38
14:19 1 Sam 9:13; Luke 24:30; Acts 27:35

13:57 *A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown* They thought they knew Him because they knew His family. People who grew up around church can be the hardest to reach. Don't let familiarity with Jesus keep you from really knowing Him.
13:58 *He did not do many miracles there because of their unbelief* He did not lose His power; He healed a few (Mark 6:5). But He did not work miracles to entertain people who refused to believe. What might God want to do in our lives that we miss because we will not trust Him?
14:1 *Herod the tetrarch* Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great (2:16). A tetrarch ruled part of a kingdom. Rome divided the father's land, and Antipas ruled Galilee and Perea east of the Jordan. People called him king (14:9), though he was not.
14:2 *This is John the Baptist; he has been raised from the dead* His guilty conscience went to work. Herod had palaces and soldiers, but not peace.
14:3 *on account of Herodias, the wife of Philip his brother* Matthew looks back. Herod and Herodias, wife of his half-brother and also their niece, left their marriages to marry each other.
14:4 *It is not lawful for you to have her* The Law forbade marrying a living brother's wife (Lev 18:16; 20:21). John did not soften his message for a ruler, and it cost him his freedom. God's people are still called to speak the truth about marriage and sin, even to the powerful, and with love.
14:5 *he feared the crowd* Herod was moved by fear of opinion, not right and wrong. He also feared John and liked to hear him (Mark 6:20), a man pulled two ways. A divided heart eventually gives way to the stronger pull. Josephus says John was held at Machaerus east of the Dead Sea.
14:7 *he promised with an oath to give her whatever she might ask* Josephus names the girl Salome. Such a dance before drunken officials was no decent thing for a princess. Herod offered up to half his kingdom (Mark 6:23), showing off. A foolish promise made in a moment of pleasure can bring a lifetime of regret.
14:8 *having been urged on by her mother* Herodias had long hated John (Mark 6:19). She could not stand being told she was wrong, so she wanted the voice of conscience silenced forever. That is where bitterness can lead.
14:9 *on account of the oaths and those reclining at table with him* Herod was grieved but cared more about saving face. A wicked oath is better broken than kept. How often do we do wrong because we fear looking foolish before others?
14:10 *he beheaded John in the prison* No trial. The greatest of the prophets (11:11) died over a dance and a grudge. Faithfulness does not always bring earthly reward. But John is with the Lord, and Herod's story is the one that ended badly; Rome later removed him and sent him into exile.
14:12 *having come, they reported it to Jesus* The right place to take our grief. They could not undo it, but they knew where to go.
14:13 *withdrew from there by boat to a desolate place by Himself* John was His relative and forerunner, and Jesus grieved. Herod was curious about Him, and His hour had not come. The crowds followed on foot around the lake. Many know the feeling: you need rest, and people still need you.
14:14 *was moved with compassion toward them* The word comes from the inner parts of the body, a gut-level pity and love. In His own grief Jesus cared for others. He never sees a crowd as a crowd, only hurting people.
14:15 *dismiss the crowds* Not cruel, just practical. They measured the crowd against their supplies and left Jesus out of the math.
14:16 *you give them something to eat* They had a boy's lunch of barley loaves, the bread of the poor (John 6:9). Jesus often asks us to do what we cannot, so we learn to depend on what He can. They were right that they lacked enough, wrong to think that settled it.
14:18 *Bring them here to Me* Whatever we have, however small, belongs in Jesus' hands. In theirs it was a snack. In His it was a feast. What have you held back because it seems too small?
14:19 *He gave the loaves to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds* A Jewish meal blessing thanked God for the food. Jesus did not hand food to thousands Himself. He gave it to His disciples to pass on. That is still how He feeds the world with the Bread of Life.

them, He gave the loaves to the disciples, and the disciples ***gave them*** to the crowds. **20** And they all ate and were satisfied; and they took up what was left over of the fragments, twelve baskets full. **21** And those eating were about five thousand men, apart from women and children.

Jesus Walks on the Water

22 And immediately Jesus compelled His disciples to get into the boat and to go before Him to the other side, until He had dismissed the crowds. **23** And having dismissed the crowds, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. And evening having come, He was there alone. **24** But the boat was now in the midst of the sea, being tormented by the waves, for the wind was contrary. **25** And in ***the*** fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea. **26** And the disciples, having seen Him walking on the sea, were troubled, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out from fear. **27** But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Take courage; I am ***He***; do not be afraid." **28** And Peter (Petros), answering Him, said, "Lord, if ***it*** is You, command me to come to You on the waters." **29** And He said, "Come." And Peter, having gone down from the boat, walked on the waters to come to Jesus. **30** But seeing the strong wind, he was afraid; and having begun to sink, he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!" **31** And immediately Jesus, having stretched out the hand, took hold of him, and says to him, "***You*** of little faith, why did you doubt?" **32** And when they had stepped into the boat, the wind ceased. **33** And those in the boat, having come, worshiped Him, saying, "Truly You are ***the*** Son of God." **34** And having crossed over, they came into the land of Gennesaret. **35** And the men of that place, having recognized Him, sent into all that surrounding region and brought to Him all who were sick, **36** and they were begging Him that they might only touch the fringe of His garment; and as many as touched were made completely well.

MATTHEW 15

What Makes a Person Unclean

1 Then those from Jerusalem (Hierosolyma), scribes and Pharisees, come to Jesus (Iesous), saying, **2** "Why do Your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread." **3** And answering, He said to them, "Why do you also transgress the commandment of God on account of your tradition? **4** For God commanded, saying, 'Honor your father and mother,' and, 'The ***one*** speaking evil of father or mother, let him die by death.' **5** But you say, 'Whoever says to his father or mother, "Whatever you might have been profited by me ***is*** a gift,"

14:20 Luke 1:53; Luke 9:17; Matt 16:8-10
14:21 Acts 4:4,34; 2 Cor 9:8-11; Phil 4:19
14:22 Mark 6:45; Matt 15:39; Matt 13:36
14:23 Luke 6:12; Mark 6:46; John 6:15-17
14:24 Mark 6:48; John 6:18; Matt 8:24
14:25 Job 9:8; Matt 24:43; Luke 12:38
14:26 Job 4:14-16; Mark 6:49,50; Luke 1:11,12
14:27 Acts 23:11; Matt 9:2; John 16:33
14:28 Rom 12:3; Luke 22:31-34,49,50; Matt 19:27
14:29 Phil 4:13; Acts 3:16; Rom 4:19
14:30 2 Tim 4:16,17; Luke 22:54-61; John 18:25-27
14:31 Gen 22:14; 1 Pet 1:5; Matt 16:8
14:32 Ps 107:29,30; Mark 4:41; Mark 6:51
14:33 2 Kgs 19:17; Ps 2:7; John 1:49
14:34 Mark 6:53-56; Luke 5:1
14:35 Matt 4:24,25; Mark 1:28-34; Mark 2:1-12
14:36 Num 15:38; Num 15:39; Mark 3:10
15:1 Mark 7:1-13; Matt 5:20; Matt 23:2,15-28
15:2 Esth 3:3; Col 2:8,20-23; Mark 7:2,5
15:3 Esth 3:3; Matt 7:3-5; Mark 7:6-8,13
15:4 Exod 20:12; Exod 21:17; Lev 20:9
15:5 Matt 23:16-18; Amos 7:15-17; Mark 7:10-13

14:20 *twelve baskets full* They ate their fill, not a crumb each. Twelve doubting disciples, twelve baskets of leftovers. God often gives more than enough, and Jesus wasted nothing.
14:21 *about five thousand men, apart from women and children* Men were counted separately, so the crowd may have been fifteen or twenty thousand. The only miracle besides the resurrection in all four Gospels, recalling the manna (Exod 16). Jesus is the true Bread from heaven (John 6:35).
14:22 *Jesus compelled His disciples to get into the boat* The crowd wanted to make Him king by force (John 6:15), and the disciples might have been swept up in it. Sometimes Jesus sends us into a storm to keep us from something worse.
14:23 *He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray* After grief, a miracle, a refused crown and political danger, He answered it all with prayer. If the Son of God needed to pray, how much more do we?
14:24 *the boat was now in the midst of the sea, being tormented by the waves* They were in the storm because they obeyed. Storms do not always mean we are out of God's will. Sometimes they come right in the middle of it.
14:25 *in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea* About three to six in the morning, after rowing most of the night. The thing they feared was under His feet. In the Old Testament God is the One who treads the waves (Job 9:8).
14:26 *It is a ghost* Dark, exhausted and not expecting Him. Jesus often comes to us in a hard time and we do not recognize Him, thinking the trouble is the end of the story.
14:27 *Take courage; I am He; do not be afraid* He spoke at once. Ego eimi can mean it is I, but it also echoes the name God gave Moses, I AM (Exod 3:14). Who He is, is the reason not to fear.
14:28 *command me to come to You on the waters* Peter's "if" was not unbelief but a request for Jesus' word. He knew he could not walk on water by himself.
14:29 *Peter, having gone down from the boat, walked on the waters* One word from Jesus was enough, and for a few steps a fisherman did what only God can do. Real faith is not a feeling. It is stepping out on what Jesus has said.
14:30 *seeing the strong wind, he was afraid* Nothing changed but where Peter looked. Eyes on Jesus, he walked. Eyes on the storm, he sank. "Lord, save me!" When you are going under, you don't need fine words.
14:31 *You of little faith, why did you doubt* Jesus grabbed him first, then spoke, and gently. Peter had little faith, but he was the only one on the water. When we doubt, the problem is never Jesus. We have taken our eyes off Him.
14:33 *Truly You are the Son of God* The first time the disciples as a group say it. They worshiped, and He accepted it. A prophet never would (Acts 10:25-26). The right end to every storm is not just relief but worship.
14:34 *the land of Gennesaret* A fertile plain on the northwest shore, south of Capernaum. The lake was sometimes named for it (Luke 5:1).
14:36 *as many as touched were made completely well* They had likely heard of the woman healed this way (9:20-22). The fringe was the commanded tassel (Num 15:38-40). There was no magic in the cloth. The power was in Jesus, and He still makes people whole, body and soul.
15:2 *Why do Your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders* An official delegation from Jerusalem. The tradition was a body of rules passed down by word of mouth, a fence around the Law, later written in the Mishnah. The washing was about religious purity, not germs. The Law required such washings of priests in certain duties, never of everyone at every meal.
15:3 *Why do you also transgress the commandment of God on account of your tradition* They charged the disciples with breaking man's tradition; Jesus charged them with breaking God's command. Traditions can be helpful, but when one sets aside what God plainly says, it has to go.
15:4 *Honor your father and mother* The fifth commandment (Exod 20:12), with Exodus 21:17 showing how seriously God took it. Honoring parents includes caring for them when old and in need (1 Tim 5:4, 8).
15:5 *Whatever you might have been profited by me is a gift* Mark calls it Corban, dedicated to God (Mark 7:11). Once declared, the teachers said it could not help his parents, though often he could still use it himself.

6 and he shall by no means honor his father or his mother.' And you made void the commandment of God on account of your tradition. **7** Hypocrites! Rightly did Isaiah (Hesaias) prophesy concerning you, saying, **8** 'This people draws near to Me with their mouth, and with the lips honors Me, but their heart is far away from Me. **9** And in vain they worship Me, teaching ***as*** doctrines ***the*** precepts of men.'" **10** And having called the crowd to ***Him***, He said to them, "Hear and understand. **11** Not what enters into the mouth defiles the man, but what proceeds out of the mouth, this defiles the man." **12** Then His disciples, having come, said to Him, "Do You know that the Pharisees, having heard the word, were caused to stumble?" **13** And answering, He said, "Every plant which My heavenly Father did not plant will be rooted up. **14** Leave them; they are blind guides of ***the*** blind. And if a blind ***man*** leads a blind ***man***, both will fall into a pit." **15** And Peter (Petros), answering, said to Him, "Explain to us this parable." **16** And Jesus said, "Are you also still without understanding? **17** Do you not yet understand that everything entering into the mouth goes into the stomach and is cast out into the latrine? **18** But the things proceeding out of the mouth come out of the heart, and those defile the man. **19** For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, sexual immoralities, thefts, false testimonies, blasphemies. **20** These are the things defiling the man; but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile the man."

A Canaanite Mother's Faith

21 And having gone out from there, Jesus withdrew into the districts of Tyre (Tyros) and Sidon. **22** And look, a Canaanite woman from those regions, having come out, cried out to Him, saying, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David (Dabid)! My daughter is badly demonized." **23** But He did not answer her a word. And His disciples, having come, were asking Him, saying, "Dismiss her, because she is crying out after us." **24** And answering, He said, "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of ***the*** house of Israel." **25** But she, having come, was worshiping Him, saying, "Lord, help me!" **26** And answering, He said, "It is not good to take the bread of the children and to throw ***it*** to the little dogs." **27** And she said, "Yes, Lord; for even the little dogs eat from the crumbs falling from the table of their masters." **28** Then answering, Jesus said to her, "O woman, great ***is*** your faith! Let it be to you as you desire." And her daughter was healed from that hour.

Four Thousand Fed

29 And having departed from there, Jesus went along the Sea of Galilee (Galilaia), and having gone up on the mountain, He

15:6 Deut 27:16; Ps 119:126,139; 1 Tim 5:3,4,8,16
15:7 Isa 29:13; Matt 7:5; Matt 23:23-29
15:8 Isa 29:13; Jer 12:2; Ezek 33:31
15:9 Isa 1:13; Isa 1:14; Isa 45:19
15:10 1 Kgs 22:28; Isa 6:9; 2 Chr 18:27
15:11 Acts 10:14,15; Mark 7:15; Rom 14:14,17,20
15:12 Matt 17:27; 1 Kgs 22:13,14; 1 Cor 10:32,33
15:13 John 15:2,6; Isa 60:21; Matt 13:40,41
15:14 Isa 9:16; Luke 6:39; Hos 4:17
15:15 Matt 13:36; Mark 4:34; Mark 7:17
15:16 Matt 16:9,11; Matt 15:10; Mark 7:18
15:17 1 Cor 6:13; Matt 7:19,20; Luke 6:45
15:18 Matt 12:34; James 3:6-10; Matt 15:11
15:19 Jer 17:9; Gen 6:5; Gal 5:19-21
15:20 1 Cor 3:16,17; 1 Cor 6:9-11,18-20; Eph 5:3-6
15:21 Josh 19:28; Judg 1:31; Gen 49:13
15:22 Isa 30:18; Matt 9:27; Matt 17:15
15:23 Isa 30:18; Matt 14:15; Gen 42:7
15:24 Isa 49:5; Ezek 3:4; Matt 10:5,6
15:25 Isa 30:18; Matt 20:31; Gen 32:26
15:26 Phil 3:2; Rev 22:15; Matt 7:6
15:27 Job 40:4,5; Matt 8:8; Luke 15:18,19
15:28 Matt 8:10; Matt 8:13; Mark 5:34
15:29 Josh 12:3; Isa 9:1; Matt 4:18

15:6 *you made void the commandment of God on account of your tradition* To make void is to cancel. A man could leave his parents in need and feel religious about it. Some today are so busy at church they neglect their families. God never asks us to serve Him by breaking His word.
15:8 *their heart is far away from Me* From Isaiah 29:13. A hypocrite was a masked actor. Right words, careful rituals, far-off hearts. Worship from the lips only is empty, and putting man's rules on the level of God's word is dangerous ground.
15:11 *Not what enters into the mouth defiles the man* To defile is to make unclean, unfit to come before God. Real uncleanness comes from the inside out. This cut to the root of their whole system of outward purity.
15:12 *the Pharisees, having heard the word, were caused to stumble* The disciples were nervous about offending powerful men. Jesus was never rude for its own sake, but He would not soften the truth to keep important people happy.
15:14 *they are blind guides of the blind* Their man-made teaching would be uprooted. Following a false teacher is as dangerous as being one. Test what you hear by God's word, as the Bereans did (Acts 17:11).
15:16 *Are you also still without understanding* His patience was tested a little. Still, it is better to ask and look slow than to stay quiet and stay confused. We have the answer because Peter asked.
15:18 *the things proceeding out of the mouth come out of the heart* The heart is the center of the person. Food passes through the body without touching the heart. Mark adds that Jesus declared all foods clean (Mark 7:19). The food laws pointed to the need for purity; the Lawgiver shows where it must start.
15:19 *out of the heart come evil thoughts* The list starts with thoughts. Every sin begins in the mind. The rest follow the second half of the Ten Commandments. The heart is deceitful and desperately sick (Jer 17:9). No washing can fix it. God promised a new heart (Ezek 36:26), given when we trust Jesus and the Spirit makes us new (Titus 3:5).
15:21 *Jesus withdrew into the districts of Tyre and Sidon* Gentile cities on the coast north of Israel, in today's Lebanon. He wanted to stay hidden (Mark 7:24), perhaps for rest, but could not.
15:22 *a Canaanite woman* Matthew uses the old name of Israel's enemies on purpose. She was as far outside Israel as anyone. Yet she called Him "Lord, Son of David," knowing Him better than the scribes from Jerusalem. "Have mercy on me": her daughter's pain was her own.
15:23 *But He did not answer her a word* One of the hardest verses to read. He was not cruel; He was drawing out her faith. The disciples saw her as a bother. Sometimes God is silent when we pray. Silence is not the same as no. Keep praying.
15:24 *I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel* True of His earthly ministry, to keep God's promises to Abraham and David (10:5-6; Rom 15:8). The gospel went to the Jew first and also to the Greek (Rom 1:16). That order never shut the Gentiles out. They come in through Israel's Messiah.
15:25 *Lord, help me* She came closer and knelt. No argument, no claim of rights, just need. That is how we come to God.
15:26 *to throw it to the little dogs* The children are Israel. Jews sometimes insulted Gentiles as dogs, meaning wild street dogs, but Jesus used kunaria, little house dogs, pets. That softens it greatly. He left a door open and tested whether she would walk through it.
15:27 *even the little dogs eat from the crumbs falling from the table of their masters* She did not argue. She agreed and asked only for a crumb, believing a crumb of His power could heal her daughter from a distance. Humility, persistence and a big view of Jesus.
15:28 *O woman, great is your faith* Only two people in the Gospels are praised for great faith, both Gentiles: this woman and the centurion (8:10). The scribes had Scripture and temple and found fault. She had nothing and found mercy. When God makes us wait, He is often building something in us.

was sitting there. **30** And great crowds came to Him, having with them ***the*** lame, blind, mute, crippled, and many others; and they cast them down at the feet of Jesus, and He healed them, **31** so that the crowds marveled, seeing ***the*** mute speaking, ***the*** crippled whole, ***the*** lame walking, and ***the*** blind seeing; and they glorified the God of Israel. **32** And Jesus, having called His disciples to ***Him***, said, "I am moved with compassion toward the crowd, because they have already remained with Me three days and do not have anything that they may eat; and I am not willing to send them away hungry, lest they faint on the way." **33** And His disciples say to Him, "From where ***are*** so many loaves to us in a desolate place, so as to satisfy so great a crowd?" **34** And Jesus says to them, "How many loaves do you have?" And they said, "Seven, and a few small fish." **35** And He commanded the crowds to sit down on the ground. **36** And having taken the seven loaves and the fish, having given thanks, He broke ***them*** and gave ***them*** to His disciples, and the disciples ***gave them*** to the crowd. **37** And they all ate and were satisfied, and they took up what was left over of the fragments, seven large baskets full. **38** And those eating were four thousand men, apart from women and children. **39** And having dismissed the crowds, He stepped into the boat and came into the region of Magdala.

MATTHEW 16

The Leaven of the Pharisees

1 And the Pharisees and Sadducees, having come, testing ***Him***, asked Him to show them a sign from heaven. **2** And answering, He said to them, "When evening has come, you say, '***It will be*** fair weather, for the sky is red'; **3** and in the morning, '***There will be*** a storm today, for the sky is red, being overcast.' Hypocrites! You know how to discern the face of the sky, but the signs of the times you are not able ***to discern***. **4** An evil and adulterous generation seeks a sign, and a sign will not be given to it except the sign of Jonah (Ionas) the prophet." And having left them, He went away. **5** And His disciples, having come to the other side, forgot to take loaves. **6** And Jesus (Iesous) said to them, "Watch out and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees." **7** And they were reasoning among themselves, saying, "***It is*** because we did not take loaves." **8** But Jesus, having known ***it***, said to them, "Why do you reason among yourselves, ***you*** of little faith, because you did not take loaves? **9** Do you not yet understand, nor remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets you took up? **10** Nor the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many large baskets you took up? **11** How do you not understand that I did not speak to you concerning bread, to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees?" **12** Then they understood that He did not say to beware of the leaven of the bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

15:30 Ps 103:3; Matt 4:23,24; Matt 11:4,5
15:31 Gen 33:20; Exod 24:10; Isa 35:6
15:32 2 Kgs 4:42; Matt 9:36; Matt 14:14
15:33 Num 11:13; Num 11:21,22; 2 Kgs 4:42-44
15:34 Matt 16:9,10; Luke 24:41,42; John 21:9,10
15:35 Matt 14:19-21; Mark 6:39,40; Luke 9:14-16
15:36 Luke 22:19; Rom 14:6; John 6:11
15:37 Matt 15:33; Matt 14:20,21; Ps 107:9
15:39 Mark 8:10; Matt 14:22
16:1 Luke 11:16,53,54; Matt 16:6,11; Acts 4:1
16:2 Luke 12:54-56
16:3 1 Chr 12:32; Matt 7:5; Matt 15:7
16:4 Jonah 1:17; 2 Kgs 14:25; Jer 7:29
16:5 Matt 15:39; Mark 8:13,14
16:6 Luke 12:1; Mark 8:15; 1 Cor 5:6-8
16:7 Mark 8:16-18; Mark 9:10; Luke 9:46
16:8 Matt 6:30; Matt 14:31; Matt 8:26
16:9 Matt 14:17-21; Matt 15:16,17; Mark 7:18
16:10 Matt 15:34,38; Mark 8:5-9,17-21
16:11 Mark 4:40; Mark 8:21; Luke 12:56
16:12 Matt 15:4-9; Matt 23:13-28; Acts 23:8

15:30 *they cast them down at the feet of Jesus* Through the Decapolis (Mark 7:31), back to the lake. The word suggests laying them down quickly, one after another. Every need laid at His feet was met, a good picture of prayer.
15:31 *they glorified the God of Israel* Isaiah's signs (Isa 35:5-6). The phrase suggests many in the crowd were Gentiles, drawn to worship Israel's God at work.
15:32 *I am not willing to send them away hungry* After three days the food was gone and some had come far. Jesus cared about their bodies too. He taught us to pray for daily bread (6:11).
15:33 *From where are so many loaves to us in a desolate place* Hard to believe after the five thousand. But how often does God bring us through one trial and we panic at the next? It is good to remember, even write down, what God has done.
15:36 *having given thanks, He broke them and gave them to His disciples* The same pattern as chapter 14. Jesus takes what we have, gives thanks, breaks it, and gives it through our hands to others. He chose to use His disciples, and He still does.
15:37 *seven large baskets full* A different word from 14:20, baskets big enough to hold a man; Paul was let down from Damascus in one (Acts 9:25).
15:38 *four thousand men, apart from women and children* Not the same story told twice. The numbers differ, and Jesus speaks of both feedings (16:9-10). This one seems to be in a region with many Gentiles. Jesus is the Bread of Life for Jew and Gentile alike.
15:39 *came into the region of Magdala* On the west shore, likely Mary Magdalene's hometown. Many modern Bibles read Magadan from older Greek copies.
16:1 *the Pharisees and Sadducees, having come, testing Him* The two groups disagreed on almost everything. Opposing Jesus brought them together. They wanted something spectacular in the sky that could not be faked, not in faith but hoping He would fail.
16:3 *the signs of the times you are not able to discern* They could read a red evening or morning sky, but not prophecy fulfilled before their eyes (Isa 35:5-6; Matt 11:4-5). They could forecast weather but not recognize the Messiah. Some of the oldest Greek copies lack the red-sky words, and some modern Bibles bracket them. They fit Luke 12:54-56, and nothing rests on them alone.
16:4 *And having left them, He went away* The only sign is Jonah's, His death, burial and resurrection (12:39-40). A sad sentence. When people keep refusing the light, a time comes when He leaves them to their choice.
16:6 *beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees* Leaven is yeast, a little fermented dough that spreads through the whole batch, often a picture of sin or false teaching (1 Cor 5:6-8; Gal 5:9).
16:7 *It is because we did not take loaves* Their minds were on their stomachs; Jesus was talking about their souls. God tries to teach us something important while we worry about something small.
16:9 *Do you not yet understand, nor remember* Why worry about bread traveling with the One who makes bread from almost nothing? The problem was little faith. When we worry, look back at what He has already done.
16:12 *but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees* The Pharisees added man-made rules to God's word. The Sadducees took away from it, denied the supernatural, and cared most about power. One added, one subtracted, and both led people from Christ. Watch for anyone who adds to the gospel or waters it down.

Peter's Confession

13 And Jesus, having come into the districts of Caesarea (Kaisareia) of Philip (Philippos), was asking His disciples, saying, "Who do men say Me, the Son of Man, to be?" **14** And they said, "Some, John (Ioannes) the Baptist; and others, Elijah (Helias); and others, Jeremiah (Hieremias) or one of the prophets." **15** He says to them, "But you, who do you say Me to be?" **16** And Simon Peter (Petros), answering, said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." **17** And answering, Jesus said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah (Barionas), because flesh and blood did not reveal ***it*** to you, but My Father who ***is*** in the heavens. **18** And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and ***the*** gates of Hades will not prevail against it. **19** And I will give to you the keys of the kingdom of the heavens; and whatever you bind on the earth will have been bound in the heavens, and whatever you loose on the earth will have been loosed in the heavens." **20** Then He ordered His disciples that they should tell no one that He is Jesus the Christ.

Jesus Foretells His Death

21 From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that it is necessary for Him to go away to Jerusalem (Hierosolyma), and to suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and to be killed, and on the third day to be raised. **22** And Peter, having taken Him aside, began to rebuke Him, saying, "***God be*** merciful to You, Lord! This shall by no means be to You." **23** But He, having turned, said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me, for you are not minding the things of God, but the things of men." **24** Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and let him take up his cross, and let him follow Me. **25** For whoever desires to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life on account of Me will find it. **26** For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world but suffers the loss of his life? Or what will a man give ***as*** an exchange for his life? **27** For the Son of Man is about to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will repay each according to his conduct. **28** Truly I say to you, there are some of those standing

16:13 Luke 9:18-20; Matt 8:20; Dan 7:13
16:14 Mal 4:5; 1 Kgs 17:1; Matt 14:2
16:15 Luke 9:20; Matt 13:11; Mark 8:29
16:16 Deut 5:26; Dan 6:26; John 11:27
16:17 Gal 1:16; John 6:45; Gal 1:11,12,16
16:18 Job 38:17; Isa 38:10; Ps 9:13
16:19 Matt 18:18; Rev 1:18; Isa 22:22
16:20 Mark 8:30; Luke 9:21,36; Matt 17:9
16:21 2 Sam 1:2; Matt 17:22,23; Matt 27:63
16:22 Matt 16:16,17; Matt 26:51-53; Mark 8:32
16:23 1 Chr 21:1; Zech 3:1; Zech 3:2
16:24 Matt 10:38; Luke 14:27; 1 Pet 4:1,2
16:25 Matt 10:39; Rev 12:11; Mark 8:35
16:26 Job 27:8; Luke 12:20; Mark 8:36
16:27 Ps 62:12; Prov 24:12; Rom 2:6
16:28 Mark 9:1; Luke 9:27; John 8:52

16:13 *the districts of Caesarea of Philip* About twenty-five miles north of the lake at the foot of Mount Hermon, rebuilt by Philip the tetrarch and named for Caesar and himself. A Gentile city full of idols, with a shrine to Pan at a great rock cliff. There Jesus prepares them for the real question.
16:14 *Some, John the Baptist; and others, Elijah* Kind answers that put Him among great men of God (14:2; Mal 4:5), but all wrong, because each made Him only a man. Good teacher, prophet, wise man: it sounds respectful but falls far short.
16:15 *But you, who do you say Me to be* "You" is plural and emphatic. Not what your parents believed or your friends think. Your answer decides your eternity.
16:16 *You are the Christ, the Son of the living God* Christ is the Greek for Messiah, the Anointed King on David's throne. "Son of the living God" means Jesus shares God's very nature. In a city of dead stone idols, Peter confessed the living God's Son. This is the heart of the Christian faith.
16:17 *flesh and blood did not reveal it to you, but My Father who is in the heavens* Bar-Jonah is Aramaic for son of Jonah. Peter was not smarter. The Father opened his eyes, as He does for every believer (John 6:44; 1 Cor 12:3).
16:18 *on this rock I will build My church* Petros means a stone; petra a great rock or bedrock, and they stood near a massive rock wall. Roman Catholic teaching sees Peter as the first pope with authority passed to Rome's bishops. I don't believe the text teaches that. Most Protestants see the rock as Peter's confession of Christ. Others see Peter as the first to confess and preach Him (Acts 2). Either way the foundation is Christ (1 Cor 3:11; 1 Pet 2:4-8), and nothing here speaks of passing Peter's place on.
16:18 *the gates of Hades will not prevail against it* The first use of church in the New Testament, ekklesia, an assembly called out. "I will build" was still future; it began at Pentecost. It is His church, not a pastor's or a denomination's. City gates held a city's leaders and defenses. Death and darkness cannot stop it.
16:19 *I will give to you the keys of the kingdom of the heavens* Peter opened the door by preaching: to Jews at Pentecost (Acts 2:14-41), to Samaritans (Acts 8:14-17), to Gentiles at Cornelius' house (Acts 10:34-48). Binding and loosing meant forbidding and permitting. "Will have been bound": Peter declares what heaven has already decided. In 18:18 the church shares it. It is the authority of God's word faithfully taught, not one man making new rules.
16:20 *tell no one that He is Jesus the Christ* The crowds wanted a king to fight Rome and might force Him to be one (John 6:15). Even the disciples did not yet see that the Messiah must suffer. The time to proclaim it would come after the cross and the empty tomb.
16:21 *it is necessary for Him to go away to Jerusalem* A new stage. "Necessary" means God's plan, not an accident. Elders, chief priests and scribes made up the Sanhedrin, the ruling council. Every time Jesus spoke of His death, He spoke of His resurrection.
16:22 *Peter, having taken Him aside, began to rebuke Him* Peter pulled the Lord aside to correct Him. Like most Jews then, he believed the Messiah would win, not die. Good intentions can still stand in the way of God's plan.
16:23 *Get behind Me, Satan* Peter was not possessed, but his idea came from Satan, the wilderness offer of a crown without a cross (4:8-10). Minutes after being called a rock, he was a stone in the road. Any of us can go from speaking God's truth to the enemy's lies in one conversation. That should keep us humble.
16:24 *let him deny himself, and let him take up his cross, and let him follow Me* To deny yourself is to stop making yourself the center. A man carrying a cross was on his way to die. This is not how we are saved; we are saved by grace through faith. It is what a saved life looks like. What am I holding on to that Jesus asks me to lay down?
16:25 *whoever loses his life on account of Me will find it* It sounds backward but is true. The times we clutch our plans hardest are often our most anxious and empty. When we let go and trust the Lord, we find peace.
16:26 *if he gains the whole world but suffers the loss of his life* Own everything on earth and lose your soul, and you take none of it with you. Nothing can buy a lost soul back. It is worth more than the world, which is why Jesus gave His life to redeem it.
16:27 *He will repay each according to his conduct* The rejected One returns as Judge. For unbelievers, judgment for sin; for believers, reward for faithful service (2 Cor 5:10; Rev 22:12). Salvation is a gift, but how we live still matters. Nothing done for Jesus is wasted.
16:28 *until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom* He did not return in glory in their lifetime. Six days later Peter, James and John saw Him transfigured (17:1-8), and Peter tied that to His power and coming (2 Pet 1:16-18). It was a preview of the King in glory. Some apply this to the resurrection, Pentecost or A.D. 70, but many find the Transfiguration fits best.

here who will by no means taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom."

MATTHEW 17

The Transfiguration

1 And after six days Jesus (Iesous) takes Peter (Petros) and James (Iakobos) and John (Ioannes) his brother, and brings them up into a high mountain by themselves. **2** And He was transfigured before them, and His face shone like the sun, and His garments became white as the light. **3** And look, Moses and Elijah (Helias) appeared to them, talking with Him. **4** And Peter, answering, said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here. If You wish, let us make here three tents, one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah." **5** While he was still speaking, look, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and look, a voice out of the cloud, saying, "This is My Son, the beloved, in whom I was well pleased; listen to Him." **6** And having heard, the disciples fell on their face and were greatly afraid. **7** And Jesus, having come, touched them and said, "Get up, and do not be afraid." **8** And having lifted up their eyes, they saw no one except Jesus alone. **9** And as they were coming down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, "Tell the vision to no one until the Son of Man has risen from ***the*** dead." **10** And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?" **11** And Jesus, answering, said to them, "Elijah indeed comes first, and will restore all things. **12** But I say to you that Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him, but did to him whatever they wished. So also the Son of Man is about to suffer by them." **13** Then the disciples understood that He spoke to them concerning John the Baptist.

A Boy Healed

14 And when they had come to the crowd, a man came to Him, kneeling down to Him and saying, **15** "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is epileptic and suffers badly; for often he falls into the fire, and often into the water. **16** And I brought him to Your disciples, and they were not able to heal him." **17** And answering, Jesus said, "O unbelieving and perverted generation, how long will I be with you? How long will I bear with you? Bring him here to Me." **18** And Jesus rebuked him, and the demon went out from him, and the boy was healed from that hour. **19** Then the disciples, having come to Jesus privately, said, "Why were we not able to cast it out?" **20** And Jesus said to them, "Because of your unbelief. For truly I say to you, if you have faith like a grain of mustard, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move;

17:1 Luke 9:28-36; Matt 26:37; Mark 5:37
17:2 Exod 34:29; Exod 34:30; Exod 34:31
17:3 Deut 34:5; Deut 34:10; 1 Kgs 17:1
17:4 Exod 18:17; Exod 38:21; Mark 9:5,6
17:5 Deut 18:15; Isa 42:1; Exod 40:34
17:6 2 Pet 1:18; Lev 9:24; Judg 13:20,22
17:7 Dan 8:18; Dan 10:10,18; Dan 9:21
17:8 Mark 9:8; Luke 9:36; Acts 12:10,11
17:9 Mark 8:30; Matt 16:20; Mark 9:9,10
17:10 Mal 4:5-6; Matt 11:14; Matt 17:3,4
17:11 Luke 1:16,17; Acts 3:21; Mal 4:6
17:12 Matt 16:21; Acts 13:24-28; Isa 53:3-12
17:13 Matt 11:14
17:14 Mark 9:14-29; Luke 9:37-43; Mark 1:40
17:15 Matt 4:24; Matt 15:22; Mark 5:22,23
17:16 Matt 17:19,20; 2 Kgs 4:29-31; Luke 9:40
17:17 Exod 10:3; Num 14:11; Num 14:27
17:18 Matt 9:22; Matt 12:22; Mark 1:34
17:19 Mark 4:10; Mark 9:28
17:20 Mark 11:23; Luke 17:6; Matt 21:21

17:1 *after six days Jesus takes Peter and James and John his brother* Luke says about eight days (Luke 9:28), likely counting first and last. Jesus keeps His promise of 16:28. These three saw more: a raised girl (Mark 5:37), Gethsemane (26:37). Tradition names Mount Tabor; many think Mount Hermon, near Caesarea Philippi, more likely. Scripture doesn't say.
17:2 *He was transfigured before them* Metamorphoo, a change of form from the inside out. The glory came from within as the veil of His humanity was pulled back. Moses' face reflected glory (Exod 34:29-35). Jesus radiated it. John, who was there, wrote "we beheld His glory" (John 1:14).
17:3 *Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him* The Law and the Prophets, the whole Old Testament pointing to Him. They spoke of His departure in Jerusalem (Luke 9:31). God buried Moses (Deut 34:5-6) and took Elijah in a whirlwind (2 Kgs 2:11). God's people are alive with Him, and they can be recognized.
17:4 *let us make here three tents* Peter did not know what to say, being terrified (Mark 9:6). He put Jesus on the level of Moses and Elijah, and he wanted to stay on the mountain when Jesus was headed for the cross: glory without suffering again.
17:5 *This is My Son, the beloved, in whom I was well pleased; listen to Him* God interrupted Peter. The bright cloud was the cloud of glory that filled the tabernacle (Exod 40:34-38). The baptism words (3:17) gain "listen to Him," as Moses said of the coming Prophet (Deut 18:15). Moses and Elijah were servants; Jesus is the Son. Are we listening?
17:7 *Get up, and do not be afraid* Sinners fall down before the holy God (Isa 6:5; Rev 1:17). The One whose face blazed like the sun reached out and touched His frightened friends. For those who belong to Him, His touch takes the fear away.
17:8 *they saw no one except Jesus alone* The Law and Prophets did their work pointing to Him. When everything else fades, Jesus is still there.
17:9 *Tell the vision to no one until the Son of Man has risen from the dead* A story of glory would stir up crowds wanting a political king, and even the disciples did not yet understand He must die. Afterward Peter told it (2 Pet 1:16-18).
17:10 *Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first* Malachi promised Elijah before the day of the Lord (Mal 4:5-6). They had just seen him go. How could Jesus be the Messiah?
17:11 *Elijah indeed comes first, and will restore all things* Malachi's promise still has a future part. Many teachers believe Elijah, or one in his power, will come before the Lord returns, some seeing the two witnesses of Revelation 11:3-6, though they are not named. Some see John as the whole fulfillment, but I believe, as many pre-tribulation teachers do, that John fulfilled it in part.
17:12 *Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him* John came "in the spirit and power of Elijah" (Luke 1:17; Matt 11:14), though not Elijah in person (John 1:21). Had Israel received the King, John would have fulfilled Malachi. The forerunner's rejection previewed the King's. The prophecy will be fully fulfilled before His return.
17:15 *he is epileptic and suffers badly* From the mountain of glory into a valley of need. A demon was behind this (Mark 9:17-18; 17:18). The Bible tells sickness and demons apart (4:24), but here a demon was at work.
17:16 *they were not able to heal him* He went to Jesus' followers and they could not help. People still come to the church with real needs and leave disappointed. It should make us pray harder.
17:17 *O unbelieving and perverted generation* Spoken to all: crowd, arguing scribes (Mark 9:14) and disciples, who had been given power over demons (10:1, 8). Perverted means twisted. Yet He did not turn away. "Bring him here to Me." When others fail, Jesus does not.
17:18 *Jesus rebuked him, and the demon went out from him* No struggle or ritual. Every power of darkness must obey Him, and He is Lord over every power that troubles us today.
17:20 *if you have faith like a grain of mustard* The smallest seed they planted (13:31-32). They did not need great faith but real faith, even a little, in a great God. The power is in the One faith trusts. Moving a mountain was a saying for the impossible. Faith is not doing whatever we want but trusting God to do what He wills.

and nothing will be impossible for you. **21** But this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting."

Second Prediction and the Temple Tax

22 And while they were staying in Galilee (Galilaia), Jesus said to them, "The Son of Man is about to be delivered up into ***the*** hands of men, **23** and they will kill Him, and on the third day He will be raised." And they were greatly grieved. **24** And when they had come to Capernaum (Kapernaoum), those collecting the didrachmas came to Peter and said, "Does your Teacher not pay the didrachmas?" **25** He says, "Yes." And when he had entered into the house, Jesus anticipated him, saying, "What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth receive customs or tribute? From their sons or from the strangers?" **26** Peter says to Him, "From the strangers." Jesus said to him, "Then the sons are free. **27** But so that we may not cause them to stumble, having gone to the sea, cast a hook, and take the first fish that comes up; and having opened its mouth, you will find a stater. Having taken that, give ***it*** to them for Me and you."

MATTHEW 18

Who Is the Greatest?

1 In that hour the disciples came to Jesus (Iesous), saying, "Who then is greater in the kingdom of the heavens?" **2** And Jesus, having called a little child to ***Him***, set it in their midst, **3** and said, "Truly I say to you, unless you turn and become like the little children, you will by no means enter into the kingdom of the heavens. **4** Therefore whoever humbles himself like this little child, he is the greater in the kingdom of the heavens. **5** And whoever receives one such little child in My name receives Me. **6** But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it is better for him that a donkey millstone be hung on his neck, and that he be sunk in the depth of the sea. **7** Woe to the world because of the stumbling blocks! For it is necessary for the stumbling blocks to come, but woe to that man through whom the stumbling block comes! **8** And if your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut them off and throw ***them*** from you; it is good for you to enter into life lame or crippled, rather than having two hands or two feet to be thrown into the eternal fire. **9** And if your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out and throw ***it*** from you; it is good for you to enter into life one-eyed, rather than having two eyes to be thrown into the Gehenna of fire.

The Lost Sheep

10 See that you do not despise one of these little ones; for I say to you that their angels in ***the*** heavens continually see

17:21 Matt 12:45; 1 Kgs 17:20,21; Dan 9:3
17:22 Matt 16:21; Matt 20:17,18; Mark 8:31
17:23 Isa 53:10; Gen 22:4; Ps 22:23
17:24 Exod 30:13; Exod 38:26; Mark 9:33
17:25 1 Sam 17:25; 2 Chr 24:9; Ezra 4:13
17:27 Gen 1:28; Ps 8:8; Hab 1:15
18:1 Matt 20:20-28; Luke 9:46-48; Mark 9:33-37
18:2 Matt 19:13,14; 1 Kgs 3:7; Jer 1:7
18:3 1 Pet 2:2; Mark 10:14,15; 1 Cor 14:20
18:4 Matt 23:11,12; Ps 131:1,2; Isa 57:15
18:5 Matt 25:40,45; Gal 4:14; Matt 10:40-42
18:6 Mark 9:42; Ps 105:15; Rom 14:13-15,21
18:7 Luke 17:1; 1 Cor 11:19; Matt 26:24
18:8 Matt 5:29,30; Matt 25:41,46; Deut 13:6-8
18:9 Matt 19:17,23,24; Acts 14:22; Heb 4:11
18:10 Heb 1:14; Ps 91:11; Ps 34:7

17:21 *But this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting* They may have relied on past success as if the power were theirs. Some cases need deeper dependence on God. Most of the oldest Greek copies lack this verse, and many modern Bibles bracket or footnote it; the SLB follows the Received Text. Mark 9:29 speaks of prayer here, and no teaching rests on this verse alone (6:16-18; Acts 13:2-3).
17:22 *The Son of Man is about to be delivered up into the hands of men* The second announcement. The word is the one used for betrayal. Judas would hand Him over, but behind it was the Father's plan (Rom 8:32).
17:23 *And they were greatly grieved* They heard "they will kill Him" and stopped listening before "He will be raised." Grief can make us deaf to God's promises.
17:24 *Does your Teacher not pay the didrachmas* A two-drachma coin, about two days' wages, paid yearly by every Jewish man twenty and up for the temple, from the half-shekel of Exodus 30:13-16. Peter answered quickly without checking with Jesus.
17:26 *Then the sons are free* Jesus already knew what had happened. Kings tax subjects, not their own children. The tax was for God's house, and Jesus is God's Son, quietly claiming again to be Lord of the temple (12:6).
17:27 *so that we may not cause them to stumble* Jesus had the right not to pay but gave no needless offense. Sometimes we give up our rights for others (1 Cor 9:19). Not every hill is worth dying on.
17:27 *you will find a stater* A four-drachma coin, exactly the tax for two. Jesus knew which fish, where, and what was in its mouth. He is Lord over all creation, and "for Me and you" shows He provided for Peter's need along with His own.
18:1 *Who then is greater in the kingdom of the heavens* They had argued about it on the road (Mark 9:33-34), right after Jesus spoke of His death. We do the same, wanting to be noticed and in charge, even in church. That question has split many congregations.
18:3 *unless you turn and become like the little children* They asked who would be greatest; Jesus said they had to change even to get in. To turn is to repent. A child then had no status and could earn, demand or boast of nothing. That is how we come to God, receiving salvation as a gift (Eph 2:8-9). Childlike in trust, not childish.
18:4 *whoever humbles himself like this little child* The way up in God's kingdom is down. Jesus humbled Himself to the cross and God exalted Him (Phil 2:5-9). Humility is not thinking badly of yourself but thinking of yourself less.
18:5 *whoever receives one such little child in My name receives Me* Children could repay no one. Those who teach Sunday school, serve in the nursery, or welcome the least important person at church are receiving Jesus.
18:6 *whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble* Children, and every humble believer, especially the young and weak in faith. To make them stumble is to lead them into sin or drive them from Christ. A donkey millstone took an animal to turn. God takes the abuse or misleading of children and young believers very seriously, and so should His church.
18:7 *woe to that man through whom the stumbling block comes* In a fallen world offenses will come until Christ returns, but that never excuses the one who causes them. Is my life making it easier or harder for others to follow Jesus?
18:8 *if your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut them off* As in 5:29-30, a strong figure of speech; sin comes from the heart (15:19). Deal with sin ruthlessly: end a relationship, get rid of a device, change jobs, stay away from certain places.
18:9 *the Gehenna of fire* The Valley of Hinnom south of Jerusalem, where wicked kings burned children to false gods (2 Kgs 23:10; Jer 7:31), a picture of final judgment that Jesus also calls "the eternal fire." Better to lose anything in this life than your soul.
18:10 *their angels in the heavens continually see the face of My Father* To despise is to look down on. These little ones are so precious that angels stand ready in God's presence for them. Angels serve the heirs of salvation (Heb 1:14). Whether each believer has his own angel, Scripture doesn't clearly say.

the face of My Father who ***is*** in ***the*** heavens. **11** For the Son of Man came to save what is lost. **12** What do you think? If a certain man has a hundred sheep, and one of them goes astray, does he not, having left the ninety-nine, having gone on the mountains, seek the ***one*** going astray? **13** And if he happens to find it, truly I say to you that he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that have not gone astray. **14** So it is not ***the*** will before your Father who ***is*** in ***the*** heavens that one of these little ones should perish.

When a Brother Sins

15 And if your brother sins against you, go and reprove him between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. **16** But if he does not hear, take with you one or two more, so that by ***the*** mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. **17** And if he refuses to hear them, tell ***it*** to the church; and if he refuses to hear even the church, let him be to you as the Gentile and the tax collector. **18** Truly I say to you, whatever you bind on the earth will have been bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on the earth will have been loosed in heaven. **19** Again I say to you that if two of you agree on the earth concerning any matter that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father who ***is*** in ***the*** heavens. **20** For where two or three are gathered together in My name, there I am in ***the*** midst of them."

The Unforgiving Servant

21 Then Peter (Petros), having come, said to Him, "Lord, how often will my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?" **22** Jesus says to him, "I do not say to you up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven. **23** Because of this the kingdom of the heavens has been likened to a man, a king, who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. **24** And when he had begun to settle ***them***, one debtor of approximately 750,000 pounds (ten thousand talents) was brought to him. **25** But as he did not have ***anything*** to pay, his master commanded him to be sold, and his wife and the children and all that he had, and payment to be made. **26** Therefore the slave, having fallen down, was bowing down to him, saying, 'Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' **27** And the master of that slave, having been moved with compassion, released him and forgave him the debt. **28** But that slave, having gone out, found one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and having seized him, he was choking ***him***, saying, 'Pay me what you owe.'

29 Therefore his fellow slave, having fallen down at his feet, was begging him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' **30** But he was not willing, but having gone, he

18:11 Matt 9:12,13; Matt 10:6; Matt 15:24
18:12 Luke 15:4-7; Matt 21:28; Jer 50:6
18:13 Zeph 3:17; John 4:34-36; James 2:13
18:14 John 17:12; 2 Pet 3:9; Luke 12:32
18:15 Lev 19:17; Col 3:13; Lev 6:2-7
18:16 Deut 19:15; Num 35:30; Deut 17:6
18:17 2 Thess 3:6,14,15; 1 Cor 5:3-5,9-13; 3 John 1:9,10
18:18 Matt 16:19; John 20:23; 2 Cor 2:10
18:19 Dan 2:18; 1 John 5:14-16; Mark 11:24
18:20 Rev 21:3; 1 Cor 5:4; John 20:19,26
18:21 Luke 17:3,4; Matt 18:15
18:22 Gen 4:24; Col 3:13; Mark 11:25,26
18:23 Matt 13:24,31,33,44,45,47,52; Matt 3:2; Matt 25:1,14
18:24 1 Chr 29:7; Esth 3:9; Luke 7:41,42
18:25 Lev 25:39; 2 Kgs 4:1; Neh 5:5,8
18:26 Luke 7:43; Matt 18:29; Rom 10:3
18:27 Ps 145:8; Judg 10:16; Neh 9:17
18:28 Matt 20:2; Deut 15:2; Neh 5:7,10,11
18:29 Matt 18:26; Matt 6:12; Phlm 1:18,19
18:30 1 Kgs 21:27-29; 1 Kgs 22:27

18:11 *For the Son of Man came to save what is lost* If the Son came from heaven for the weak and helpless, how can we look down on them? Most of the oldest Greek copies lack this verse here, and many modern Bibles bracket or footnote it; the SLB follows the Received Text. Jesus says it in Luke 19:10 in all copies, and no teaching rests on this verse alone (1 Tim 1:15).

18:12 *does he not, having left the ninety-nine* The one in danger has his attention. In Luke the parable is about lost sinners (Luke 15:3-7). Here it is about believers who wander. If you have wandered from the Lord, He has not stopped looking for you.

18:14 *it is not the will before your Father who is in the heavens that one of these little ones should perish* God does not want any lost (2 Pet 3:9). The church should not shrug when someone strays. We go after them, as the next verses teach.

18:15 *go and reprove him between you and him alone* The first step of church discipline, done privately. Not telling friends, posting about it or complaining to the pastor first. To reprove is to bring a fault into the light, humbly and gently (Gal 6:1). The goal is never winning an argument but "you have gained your brother."

18:16 *by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established* From Deuteronomy 19:15. Witnesses help the brother see his sin and make sure the facts are right. Sometimes they find the complainer is at fault. The process protects everyone.

18:17 *let him be to you as the Gentile and the tax collector* Outsiders not welcomed at the table of fellowship (1 Cor 5:1-13; 2 Thess 3:14-15). Yet Jesus loved Gentiles and tax collectors and called them to repent, and Matthew was one. Even this last step aims to win him back, and on repentance he is welcomed gladly (2 Cor 2:6-8). Churches differ on how the final step is carried out.

18:18 *whatever you bind on the earth will have been bound in heaven* Given to Peter in 16:19, now to the church. Here it means declaring an unrepentant sinner guilty, or a repentant one forgiven. The church carries out what heaven has decided, so it must act carefully and only by Scripture.

18:19 *if two of you agree on the earth concerning any matter that they ask* God hears His people praying together, but in context these are likely the witnesses seeking wisdom about a brother's sin. Not a blank check. Prayer always says "let Your will come about" (6:10).

18:20 *where two or three are gathered together in My name, there I am in the midst of them* Even two or three dealing with hard matters act with His presence and authority. It also comforts small churches and home Bible studies. "In My name" means under His authority, for His purposes.

18:21 *Up to seven times* Some rabbis taught forgiving three times for the same offense. Peter doubled it and added one, the number of completeness, and probably expected praise.

18:22 *up to seventy times seven* That is 490; some read seventy-seven, echoing Lamech's revenge (Gen 4:24). By then you have stopped counting. Forgiving does not mean pretending the wrong did not happen or trusting at once. It means letting go of the debt and leaving justice to God (Rom 12:19).

18:24 *one debtor* The slaves were likely high officials. A talent was a great weight of silver, about six thousand denarii; a denarius was a day's wage, so a talent was about twenty years' pay. Ten thousand was the largest Greek number word, the talent the largest unit. It was a debt no one could ever pay.

18:25 *his master commanded him to be sold, and his wife and the children* The law of the day. Selling the family would not come close to covering it. That is us before God. We cannot work off, give off or make up for our sin.

18:27 *released him and forgave him the debt* He asked for time with an impossible promise. The master wiped out everything. That is grace. God does not offer a payment plan for sin. Through faith in Jesus He forgives the whole debt, because Jesus paid it (Col 2:13-14).

18:28 *owed him a hundred denarii* About four months' pay, real but tiny, roughly one six-hundred-thousandth of what he was forgiven. A free man minutes earlier, he was choking someone over pocket change.

18:30 *But he was not willing* The fellow slave begged with almost the same words, for a debt that could be repaid. We who are forgiven everything refuse to forgive much less. That is what makes an unforgiving spirit in a Christian so ugly.

threw him into prison until he should pay what was owed. **31** And his fellow slaves, having seen what had taken place, were greatly grieved; and having come, they explained to their master all that had taken place. **32** Then his master, having called him to ***him***, says to him, 'Evil slave, I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. **33** Was it not necessary for you also to have mercy on your fellow slave, as I also had mercy on you?' **34** And his master, having been angered, delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was owed to him. **35** So also My heavenly Father will do to you, unless you forgive, each his brother, from your hearts their trespasses."

MATTHEW 19

Marriage and Divorce

1 And it came about, when Jesus (Iesous) had finished these words, He withdrew from Galilee (Galilaia) and came into the region of Judea (Ioudaia) beyond the Jordan (Iordanes). **2** And great crowds followed Him, and He healed them there. **3** And the Pharisees came to Him, testing Him and saying to Him, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for every cause?" **4** And answering, He said to them, "Have you not read that He who made ***them*** from ***the*** beginning made them male and female, **5** and said, 'On account of this a man will leave his father and mother and will be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? **6** So then they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God joined together, let man not separate." **7** They say to Him, "Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to divorce her?" **8** He says to them, "Moses, in view of your hardness of heart, permitted you to divorce your wives; but from ***the*** beginning it has not been so. **9** And I say to you that whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and the ***one*** having married a divorced ***woman*** commits adultery." **10** His disciples say to Him, "If the case of the man with the wife is so, it is not better to marry." **11** And He said to them, "Not all receive this word, but ***those*** to whom it has been given. **12** For there are eunuchs who were born so from a mother's womb; and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men; and there are eunuchs who made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of the heavens. The ***one*** being able to receive ***it***, let him receive ***it***."

Jesus Blesses the Children

13 Then little children were brought to Him, so that He might lay His hands on them and pray; but the disciples

18:31 Ps 119:136,158; Jer 9:1; Mark 3:5
18:32 Matt 25:26; Luke 19:22; Rom 3:19
18:33 Col 3:13; Matt 5:44,45; Luke 6:35,36
18:34 Matt 5:25,26; Luke 12:58,59; 2 Thess 1:8,9
18:35 Luke 6:37,38; Matt 6:12,14,15; Matt 7:1,2
19:1 John 10:40; Mark 10:1
19:2 Matt 12:15; Matt 4:23-25; Matt 9:35,36
19:3 Mark 10:2; Heb 3:9; Matt 16:1
19:4 Gen 1:27; Gen 2:24; Gen 5:2
19:5 Gen 2:24; Gen 2:23; 1 Cor 6:16
19:6 Gen 2:24; Rom 7:2; Mark 10:9
19:7 Deut 24:1; Deut 24:2; Deut 24:3
19:8 2 Chr 24:3; Mal 2:16; Mal 2:13,14
19:9 Gen 20:3; Jer 3:1; Gen 2:24
19:10 Gen 2:18; Prov 5:15-19; Prov 18:22
19:11 1 Cor 7:2,7,9,17,35
19:12 Isa 56:3,4; 1 Cor 9:5,15; Isa 39:7
19:13 Matt 18:2-5; Gen 48:1,9-20; 1 Sam 1:24

18:31 *his fellow slaves, having seen what had taken place, were greatly grieved* An unforgiving spirit in God's family does not stay hidden. It hurts the whole household.
18:33 *Was it not necessary for you also to have mercy on your fellow slave* We forgive because we have been forgiven (Eph 4:32). If we understood how much we were forgiven, we could not hold a grudge. Our forgiveness of others shows how much we understand God's forgiveness of us.
18:34 *delivered him to the torturers* Jailers allowed to treat prisoners harshly. The debt could never be paid, so he would never get out. A frightening verse, and meant to be.
18:35 *unless you forgive, each his brother, from your hearts their trespasses* From the heart, not the lips. The slave was forgiven first, freely; we are saved by grace through faith alone. But mercy received makes us merciful. Some say this describes one never truly changed; others God's discipline of a believer who loses fellowship until he lets go. If there is someone you have not forgiven, let it go today.
19:1 *came into the region of Judea beyond the Jordan* The end of the fourth teaching section (7:28; 11:1; 13:53; 26:1). East of the Jordan was Perea, ruled by Herod Antipas. Jesus was going to Jerusalem for the last time, and with the cross ahead He kept healing.
19:3 *Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for every cause* A trap. Teachers argued over the "indecency" of Deuteronomy 24:1. Shammai's school said serious sexual sin; Hillel's, almost any reason, even spoiling dinner. Either answer would anger someone, and in Herod's territory John had died for speaking against Herod's remarriage (14:3-4).
19:4 *He who made them from the beginning made them male and female* Jesus went back past Moses to creation (Gen 1:27). For any question about marriage, start with God's original design. No culture or government invented marriage. God created it.
19:5 *the two will become one flesh* From Genesis 2:24, and Jesus says God said it. A man leaves his parents, for marriage makes a new family that comes first. He is joined, glued, to his wife. And they become one in body and life, the closest human bond there is.
19:6 *what God joined together, let man not separate* Marriage is not just a contract. God joins husband and wife, and no man may tear them apart. God's plan from the beginning was one man and one woman for life.
19:7 *Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce* Moses commanded no one to divorce (Deut 24:1-4). He regulated what was already happening. The certificate freed and protected the woman and kept men from taking back a wife who had married another.
19:8 *Moses, in view of your hardness of heart, permitted you* They said commanded; Jesus said permitted. Moses' law limited the damage sin caused. Divorce was never in God's original plan. God hates the tearing apart of what He joined (Mal 2:16).
19:9 *except for sexual immorality* Porneia covers sexual sin of many kinds. Many Protestants believe the innocent partner may divorce and remarry, and many add desertion (1 Cor 7:15). Others allow divorce but no remarriage, citing Mark 10:11-12 and Luke 16:18. Others limit it to betrothal (1:18-19) or forbidden unions. Rome holds a true marriage cannot be dissolved. All agree God's plan is lifelong faithfulness and Jesus set a far higher standard than easy divorce.
19:9 *commits adultery* If you have been through divorce, sinned against or sinning or both, it is not the unforgivable sin. Jesus offered the woman with five husbands living water (John 4:16-18). Bring it to Him, seek godly counsel from your pastor, and walk forward in obedience.
19:10 *it is not better to marry* Raised in a world of easy divorce, the disciples were shocked. Marriage is lifelong and not to be entered lightly.
19:11 *Not all receive this word, but those to whom it has been given* Most likely their statement that it is better not to marry. Lifelong singleness is God's gift to some (1 Cor 7:7).
19:12 *eunuchs who made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of the heavens* A eunuch could not father children. Some were born so; kings had some servants castrated. The third group means a willing choice to stay single and serve God with an undivided heart, like Paul (1 Cor 7:32-35), not harming the body. Jesus never married. The church should honor both marriage and singleness.
19:13 *but the disciples rebuked them* Parents brought children to respected teachers for blessing. The disciples thought Jesus too busy and had forgotten 18:1-5.

rebuked them. **14** But Jesus said, "Permit the little children,
and do not forbid them to come to Me; for of such is the king-
dom of the heavens." **15** And having laid His hands on them,
He departed from there.

The Rich Young Man

16 And look, one having come to Him said, "Good Teacher,
what good ***thing*** shall I do so that I may have eternal life?"
17 And He said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one ***is***
good except One, God. But if you desire to enter into life,
keep the commandments." **18** He says to Him, "Which ***ones***?"
And Jesus said, "'You shall not murder; you shall not commit
adultery; you shall not steal; you shall not bear false witness;
19 honor your father and mother; and you shall love your
neighbor as yourself.'" **20** The young man says to Him, "All
these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?"
21 Jesus said to him, "If you desire to be perfect, go, sell your
possessions and give to ***the*** poor, and you will have treasure
in heaven; and come, follow Me." **22** But the young man,
having heard the word, went away grieving; for he was ***one***
having much property. **23** And Jesus said to His disciples,
"Truly I say to you that a rich ***man*** will enter with difficulty
into the kingdom of the heavens. **24** And again I say to you, it
is easier for a camel to go through ***the*** eye of a needle than
for a rich ***man*** to enter into the kingdom of God." **25** And His
disciples, having heard, were exceedingly astonished, saying,
"Who then is able to be saved?" **26** And Jesus, having looked
at ***them***, said to them, "With men this is impossible, but with
God all things are possible." **27** Then Peter (Petros), answer-
ing, said to Him, "Look, we have left all things and followed
You; what then will there be for us?" **28** And Jesus said to
them, "Truly I say to you that you who have followed Me, in
the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on ***the*** throne of
His glory, you also will sit on twelve thrones, judging the
twelve tribes of Israel. **29** And everyone who has left houses
or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children
or fields for the sake of My name will receive a hundredfold,
and will inherit eternal life. **30** But many first will be last,
and last first."

MATTHEW 20

Laborers in the Vineyard

1 "For the kingdom of the heavens is like a man, a master of a
house, who went out early in the morning to hire workers for
his vineyard. **2** And having agreed with the workers for a
denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard. **3** And
having gone out about the third hour, he saw others standing

19:14 Gen 17:7; Matt 18:3; Luke 18:16,17
19:15 Isa 40:11; Mark 10:16; 1 Cor 7:14
19:16 Mic 6:6; Matt 25:46; John 3:15
19:17 Ps 52:1; Ezek 20:12; Lev 18:5
19:18 Exod 20:13-16; Deut 5:17-20; Exod 20:17
19:19 Exod 20:12; Lev 19:18; Deut 5:16
19:20 Phil 3:6; Mark 10:20; Luke 15:7,29
19:21 Gen 17:1; Prov 2:4; Mark 10:21
19:22 Ezek 33:31; Matt 13:22; Mark 10:22
19:23 Matt 13:22; Mark 10:23; Luke 18:24
19:24 Matt 19:26; Jer 13:23; Mark 10:24,25
19:25 Rom 11:5-7; Matt 24:22; Mark 13:20
19:26 Job 42:2; Jer 32:27; Luke 1:37
19:27 Phil 3:8; Luke 15:29; Matt 4:20-22
19:28 Exod 24:4; Isa 66:22; Rev 3:21
19:29 Luke 18:29,30; Luke 14:26; Phil 3:8
19:30 Luke 13:30; Matt 20:16; Mark 10:31
20:1 Isa 5:1; Isa 5:2; Matt 13:24,31,33,44,45,47
20:2 Matt 20:13; Exod 19:5,6; Deut 5:27-30
20:3 1 Tim 5:13; Mark 15:25; Acts 2:15

19:14 *Permit the little children, and do not forbid them to come to Me* Jesus was indignant (Mark 10:14). The kingdom belongs to the humble and trusting. Children are not the church of tomorrow but part of His concern today. Teach them His word, pray with them, and never treat them as a bother.
19:16 *what good thing shall I do so that I may have eternal life* Young (19:20), rich (19:22), a ruler (Luke 18:18): everything the world calls success, yet something was missing. He thought of salvation as something to achieve, as most people do.
19:17 *Why do you call Me good? No one is good except One, God* Not a denial that He is good or God, but a prompt: do you understand who I am? Then if only God is good, the young man was not. "Keep the commandments" uses the Law as God meant, a mirror showing our sin (Rom 3:20; Gal 3:24). Many modern Bibles, from older copies, read differently here.
19:19 *you shall love your neighbor as yourself* Jesus lists commands about others (Exod 20:12-16; Lev 19:18) and leaves out loving God first and not coveting, the very points He is about to test.
19:20 *What do I still lack* Outwardly he had lived clean. Yet his rule keeping had not given him peace with God. Many decent people feel that empty place. Being good enough never fills it.
19:21 *go, sell your possessions and give to the poor* Perfect means complete, lacking nothing. Jesus went straight to what ruled his heart. Not every Christian must sell everything; Zacchaeus gave half (Luke 19:8). But money was this man's god, breaking the first commandment and the love of neighbor. The real issue was "come, follow Me." What would be hardest for me to give up for Jesus?
19:22 *went away grieving; for he was one having much property* He came running (Mark 10:17) and left grieving, choosing treasure on earth over heaven. Jesus let him go and did not chase him with an easier offer. The gospel has no discount price.
19:23 *a rich man will enter with difficulty into the kingdom of the heavens* Riches make people feel they do not need God (1 Tim 6:17; Matt 13:22). Most of us are rich by the standards of most of history. This warning is for us.
19:24 *it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle* The largest animal in Israel through the smallest opening known. There is no ancient evidence for a gate called the Needle's Eye; the story comes from much later. Jesus meant it is humanly impossible.
19:25 *Who then is able to be saved* Many believed riches showed God's blessing. If the blessed rich cannot, who can? No one, if salvation depends on us.
19:26 *With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible* No one can save himself by goodness, commandments or giving things away. God can change any heart and loosen the grip of money. The young man asked what he could do. We cannot, but God can. Salvation is a gift received by faith (Eph 2:8-9).
19:27 *we have left all things and followed You; what then will there be for us* They did what the young man would not. An honest question, and Jesus answers with a promise.
19:28 *in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory* The new birth of the world when Jesus returns, sets up His kingdom and renews the earth (Acts 3:21; Rom 8:19-21), on David's promised throne (Luke 1:32-33). To judge is to rule. This only makes sense if God has a future for Israel. I believe the twelve tribes will be restored under their Messiah in the thousand-year kingdom (Rev 20:4-6; Rom 11:25-29).
19:29 *will receive a hundredfold, and will inherit eternal life* For everyone, beginning "now in this time" (Mark 10:30): a larger family in the church and homes opened among believers, then eternal life. No one gives up anything for Jesus and comes out behind.
19:30 *many first will be last, and last first* The young man seemed first and went away last; fishermen and a tax collector will sit on thrones. A warning to the disciples too, for Peter's question had self-interest in it. Jesus explains with a parable (20:1-16).
20:2 *having agreed with the workers for a denarius for the day* "For" ties this parable to 19:30. Day laborers waited in the marketplace at sunrise. A denarius was the normal, fair pay for a day's work. God's people are often His vineyard (Isa 5:1-7), and the owner stands for God.

in the marketplace idle, **4** and to those he said, 'You also go into the vineyard, and whatever may be right I will give you.' And they went away. **5** Again, having gone out about ***the*** sixth and ninth hour, he did likewise. **6** And about the eleventh hour, having gone out, he found others standing idle, and he says to them, 'Why have you stood here all the day idle?' **7** They say to him, 'Because no one hired us.' He says to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right you will receive.' **8** And evening having come, the master of the vineyard says to his foreman, 'Call the workers and pay them the wages, having begun from the last to the first.' **9** And those ***hired*** about the eleventh hour, having come, received each a denarius. **10** And the first, having come, thought that they would receive more; and they themselves also received each a denarius. **11** And having received ***it***, they were grumbling against the master of the house, **12** saying, 'These last worked one hour, and you made them equal to us, who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' **13** But he, answering, said to one of them, 'Friend, I do not wrong you. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? **14** Take what ***is*** yours and go. But I wish to give to this last ***one*** as also to you. **15** Or is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with what ***is*** mine? Is your eye evil because I am good?' **16** Thus the last will be first, and the first last; for many are called, but few chosen."

Third Prediction and a Mother's Request

17 And Jesus (Iesous), going up to Jerusalem (Hierosolyma), took the twelve disciples aside privately on the road, and He said to them, **18** "Look, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn Him to death, **19** and they will hand Him over to the Gentiles to mock and to flog and to crucify; and on the third day He will rise again." **20** Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee (Zebedaios) came to Him with her sons, worshiping and asking something from Him. **21** And He said to her, "What do you wish?" She says to Him, "Say that these two sons of mine may sit, one at Your right and one at ***Your*** left, in Your kingdom." **22** But Jesus, answering, said, "You do not know what you are asking for. Are you able to drink the cup which I am about to drink, and to be baptized ***with*** the baptism with which I am baptized?" They say to Him, "We are able." **23** And He says to them, "My cup you will indeed drink, and ***with*** the baptism with which I am baptized you will be baptized; but to sit at My right and at My left is not Mine to give, but ***it is for those*** for whom it has been prepared by My Father." **24** And the ten, having heard, were indignant about the two brothers. **25** But Jesus, having called them to ***Himself***, said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and the great ***ones*** exercise authority over them. **26** But it will not be so among you; but whoever wishes to become great among you, let him be your servant; **27** and whoever wishes to be first among

20:4 Matt 9:9; Matt 21:23-31; Luke 19:7-10
20:5 Matt 27:45; Mark 15:33,34; Luke 23:44-46
20:6 John 9:4; Eccl 9:10; Luke 23:40-43
20:7 Acts 4:16; Acts 17:30,31; Rom 10:14-17
20:8 Lev 19:13; Deut 24:15; Matt 13:39,40
20:9 Matt 20:2,6,7; Luke 23:40-43; Rom 4:3-6
20:11 Luke 5:30; Luke 15:2,28-30; Luke 19:7
20:12 Luke 14:10,11; Rom 3:22-24,30; Eph 3:6
20:13 Matt 22:12; Matt 26:50; Gen 18:25
20:14 Matt 6:2,6,16; 2 Kgs 10:16,30,31; Ezek 29:18-20
20:15 Deut 15:9; Job 7:1; Ezek 18:25
20:16 Matt 19:30; Mark 10:31; Luke 14:24
20:17 Mark 10:32-34; Luke 18:31-34; John 12:12
20:18 Ps 22:8; Ps 22:23; Ps 22:24
20:19 Isa 53:3; Hos 6:2; Ps 22:8
20:20 Matt 4:21; Matt 8:2; Matt 27:56
20:21 Esth 5:3; Ps 110:1; Ps 45:9
20:22 Isa 51:22; Isa 51:17; Jer 25:15
20:23 Ezek 23:32; Dan 11:33; Zech 4:12
20:24 1 Pet 5:5; Prov 13:10; Mark 10:41
20:25 Dan 2:37; Dan 2:38; Dan 2:39
20:26 Ezek 24:13; Mark 9:35; Mark 10:43,45
20:27 Mark 9:33-35; Luke 22:26; Matt 18:4

20:4 *whatever may be right I will give you* The Jewish day ran from sunrise, so the third, sixth and ninth hours were about 9, noon and 3. Idle here means without work, not lazy. These men set no wage. They trusted the owner to be fair, a picture of how we come to God.
20:7 *Because no one hired us* The eleventh hour was about 5 p.m., one hour of daylight left. God keeps calling right up to the last hour. Some serve Him seventy years; others come late in life, like the thief on the cross (Luke 23:42-43). He receives them all.
20:8 *having begun from the last to the first* The Law required paying a hired worker at day's end (Lev 19:13; Deut 24:15). Paying the last first was on purpose, so the first would see.
20:12 *you made them equal to us* They were not underpaid. They resented someone else treated as well as they were, like the older brother of Luke 15:25-32. When we compare what God gives us with what He gives others, we stop seeing grace and start keeping score.
20:15 *Is your eye evil because I am good* He called the grumbler "Friend," did him no wrong, and had the right to be generous. An evil eye meant a jealous, stingy heart (Deut 15:9). Salvation is not a wage. If we were all paid what we earned, none of us would want it (Rom 6:23).
20:16 *many are called, but few chosen* The parable sits between two forms of the same saying (19:30). The invitation goes out widely, but not all receive it humbly (22:14). The warning is for religious people who serve God in a spirit of bargaining and resent His mercy to sinners. This parable is about salvation itself; elsewhere God rewards faithful service differently (16:27; 1 Cor 3:8-14).
20:18 *the Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and scribes* The third and most detailed prediction (16:21; 17:22-23). Jerusalem sits high in the hills, so travelers went up. The chief priests were the leading priests, mostly Sadducees.
20:19 *they will hand Him over to the Gentiles to mock and to flog and to crucify* The leaders could not carry out a death sentence under Rome (John 18:31). Every detail came true in chapters 26-27. He was not caught off guard. He walked toward Jerusalem knowing it all, because He came to die for us.
20:21 *one at Your right and one at Your left, in Your kingdom* The two highest places beside a king. Comparing 27:56 with Mark 15:40, many think she was Salome, perhaps Mary's sister, but Scripture does not say plainly. The request came from the brothers (Mark 10:35). They believed in the King and His kingdom, but heard of suffering and thought of thrones.
20:22 *Are you able to drink the cup which I am about to drink* The cup often pictures what God pours out, many times His wrath against sin (Ps 75:8; Isa 51:17), the cup of Gethsemane (26:39). His baptism means being plunged under suffering. "We are able," they said, and within days they ran (26:56).
20:23 *My cup you will indeed drink* James was the first apostle martyred, by Herod Agrippa (Acts 12:1-2), and John was exiled to Patmos (Rev 1:9). They could not share His cup of wrath for sin, but they shared His sufferings. The Son submitted to the Father's plan for the seats of honor.
20:24 *the ten, having heard, were indignant about the two brothers* More likely angry the two asked first. They argued about greatness even at the Last Supper (Luke 22:24). It is easy to see pride in someone else and miss it in ourselves.
20:26 *whoever wishes to become great among you, let him be your servant* Among the Gentiles greatness means being on top. A slave belonged to another and had no rights. Pastors, elders and every believer are called to serve. If we want a title more than a towel, we have missed the point (John 13:12-15).

you, let him be your slave; **28** just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life ***as*** a ransom for many."

Two Blind Men at Jericho

29 And as they were going out from Jericho (Hiericho), a great crowd followed Him. **30** And look, two blind ***men*** sitting beside the road, having heard that Jesus is passing by, cried out, saying, "Have mercy on us, Lord, Son of David (Dabid)!" **31** And the crowd rebuked them, that they should be silent; but they were crying out all the more, saying, "Have mercy on us, Lord, Son of David!" **32** And Jesus, having stopped, called them and said, "What do you wish ***that*** I should do for you?" **33** They say to Him, "Lord, that our eyes may be opened." **34** And Jesus, having been moved with compassion, touched their eyes; and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed Him.

MATTHEW 21

The King Enters Jerusalem

1 And when they drew near to Jerusalem (Hierosolyma) and came to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus (Iesous) sent two disciples, **2** saying to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; having untied ***them***, bring ***them*** to Me. **3** And if anyone says anything to you, you will say, 'The Lord has need of them,' and immediately he will send them." **4** And all this has come to pass so that what was spoken through the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, **5** "Say to the daughter of Zion (Sion), 'Look, your King comes to you, gentle and mounted on a donkey, even a colt, ***the*** foal of a beast of burden.'" **6** And the disciples, having gone and having done just as Jesus commanded them, **7** brought the donkey and the colt, and put their garments on them, and they set ***Him*** on them. **8** And the very large crowd spread their own garments on the road; and others were cutting branches from the trees and spreading ***them*** on the road. **9** And the crowds, those going before and those following, were crying out, saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David (Dabid)! Blessed ***is*** the ***One*** coming in ***the*** name of ***the*** Lord! Hosanna in the highest!" **10** And when He had entered into Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, "Who is this?" **11** And the crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus, the ***One*** from Nazareth of Galilee (Galilaia)."

The Temple Cleansed

12 And Jesus entered into the temple of God and cast out all those selling and buying in the temple, and He overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those sell-

20:28 Luke 22:27; Heb 9:28; Titus 2:14
20:29 Mark 10:46-52; Luke 18:35-43
20:30 Matt 21:9; Matt 22:42; Matt 9:27-31
20:31 Matt 19:13; Matt 15:23; Matt 7:7,8
20:32 Ezek 36:37; Phil 4:6; Matt 20:21
20:33 Ps 119:18; Eph 1:17-19
20:34 Matt 9:36; Matt 14:14; Matt 15:32
21:1 Zech 14:4; Matt 24:3; Matt 26:30
21:2 John 2:5-8; Matt 26:18; Mark 11:2,3
21:3 1 Chr 29:14-16; Ps 24:1; Ps 50:10,11
21:4 Zech 9:9; Matt 1:22; John 19:36,37
21:5 Isa 62:11; Gen 49:10; 2 Sam 16:2
21:6 Exod 39:43; Exod 40:16; Gen 6:22
21:7 Zech 9:9; 2 Kgs 9:13; Mark 11:4-8
21:8 2 Kgs 9:13; John 12:13; Lev 23:40
21:9 Ps 118:26; Ps 118:25; 1 Sam 30:6
21:10 Ruth 1:19; Matt 2:3; 1 Sam 16:4
21:11 Deut 18:15; John 6:14; Luke 7:16
21:12 Lev 12:8; 2 Chr 29:16; Mal 3:2

20:28 *to give His life as a ransom for many* A key verse of the Gospel. The Son of Man of Daniel 7:13-14 came to serve. A ransom was the price to free a slave or prisoner, and the word for "for" carries the idea of taking someone's place. He died as our substitute, the Servant who "bore the sin of many" (Isa 53:12). "Many" does not limit His offer; it points to the great number His one death sets free (1 Tim 2:5-6).
20:29 *as they were going out from Jericho* About fifteen miles northeast of Jerusalem, crowded with Passover pilgrims. Mark names one man, Bartimaeus, and Luke places it on the way in (Mark 10:46; Luke 18:35). There were two Jerichos then, the old town and Herod's newer one, and Mark and Luke may focus on the better known man. The accounts do not contradict.
20:30 *Have mercy on us, Lord, Son of David* Blind men saw what Israel's leaders would not: the Messiah, the King from David's line (2 Sam 7:12-16), just before He rides into David's city. When the crowd tried to silence them, they shouted louder. When people try to keep you from Jesus, keep calling out.
20:32 *What do you wish that I should do for you* On His way to the cross, Jesus stopped for two beggars. He asked the brothers' mother the same question (20:21). They asked for position; these asked for mercy. He invites us to bring our needs (Phil 4:6).
20:34 *immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed Him* He felt for them and touched them. With new sight, they followed. Jesus does not open our eyes so we can go our own way, but so we can see Him and walk behind Him.
21:1 *came to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives* A village close to Bethany. The Mount of Olives rises across the Kidron Valley and looks down on the temple. The Lord's feet will stand on it when He comes to fight for Jerusalem (Zech 14:4), and Jesus ascended from it (Acts 1:9-12). He comes to the city from there now, and He will come again there.
21:3 *The Lord has need of them* Jesus knew what they would find. Whether the owner had arranged it or Jesus knew by divine knowledge, Scripture does not say. The owner gave them up to the true Owner of everything.
21:5 *Look, your King comes to you, gentle and mounted on a donkey* From Zechariah 9:9 with Isaiah 62:11. Conquerors rode war horses; a king coming in peace rode a donkey, as Solomon at his crowning (1 Kgs 1:33). Jesus now openly presents Himself as the Son of David. Matthew names the mother too, perhaps because an unridden colt (Mark 11:2) went calmer beside her.
21:7 *put their garments on them, and they set Him on them* Most likely on the garments laid on the colt, not riding two animals at once.
21:8 *the very large crowd spread their own garments on the road* A way of honoring a new king (2 Kgs 9:13). The branches were palms (John 12:13), so we call it Palm Sunday.
21:9 *Hosanna to the Son of David* Hosanna means save, we pray (Ps 118:25), and became a shout of praise. The next line is from Psalm 118:26, sung by pilgrims. They rightly called Him Messiah but wanted Rome thrown off at once. Within days the city cried "Let Him be crucified" (27:22). A crowd's praise is easy to win and easy to lose.
21:10 *all the city was stirred, saying, "Who is this?"* Stirred means shaken, the word used for the earthquake at the cross (27:51). He was the Prophet Moses promised (Deut 18:15), and far more. "Who is this?" is still the most important question anyone can ask, and Matthew wrote his book to answer it.
21:12 *cast out all those selling and buying in the temple* The Court of the Gentiles was the only place non-Jews could pray, and it had become a market. Changers charged fees to exchange coins for the temple tax, and sellers often overcharged for animals. Doves were the offering of the poor (Lev 12:8). This was the Lord of the temple cleaning His house. John 2:13-17 tells of an earlier cleansing.

ing the doves. **13** And He says to them, "It has been written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you have made it a den of robbers." **14** And blind and lame ***people*** came to Him in the temple, and He healed them. **15** But the chief priests and the scribes, having seen the wonders that He did, and the children crying out in the temple and saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David," were indignant, **16** and said to Him, "Do You hear what these are saying?" And Jesus says to them, "Yes; did you never read, 'Out of ***the*** mouth of infants and nursing ***ones*** You have prepared praise for Yourself'?" **17** And having left them, He went out of the city to Bethany (Bethania), and He spent the night there.

The Fig Tree Withers

18 And in the morning, returning into the city, He became hungry. **19** And having seen one fig tree by the road, He came to it and found nothing on it except leaves only. And He says to it, "Let no fruit come from you any longer, forever." And immediately the fig tree withered. **20** And the disciples, having seen ***it***, marveled, saying, "How did the fig tree wither immediately?" **21** And Jesus, answering, said to them, "Truly I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only will you do the ***thing*** of the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, 'Be taken up and be thrown into the sea,' it will happen. **22** And all things, as many as you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive."

Jesus' Authority Questioned

23 And when He had come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to Him as He was teaching, saying, "By what authority are You doing these things? And who gave You this authority?" **24** And Jesus, answering, said to them, "I also will ask you one word, which if you tell Me, I also will tell you by what authority I do these things. **25** The baptism of John (Ioannes), from where was it? From heaven or from men?" And they were reasoning among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?' **26** But if we say, 'From men,' we fear the crowd; for all hold John as a prophet." **27** And answering Jesus, they said, "We do not know." He also said to them, "Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things. **28** But what do you think? A man had two children, and having come to the first, he said, 'Child, go, work today in my vineyard.' **29** And answering, he said, 'I do not want to'; but afterward, having regretted ***it***, he went. **30** And having come to the second, he said likewise. And answering, he said, 'I ***will***, sir,' and he did not go. **31** Which of the two did the will of the father?" They say to Him, "The first." Jesus says to them, "Truly I say to you that the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going before you into the kingdom of God. **32** For John came to you in ***the*** way of righteousness, and you did not believe him; but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and you, having seen ***it***, did not regret ***it*** afterward so as to believe him.

The Wicked Tenants

33 Hear another parable. There was a certain man, a master of a house, who planted a vineyard, and placed a fence around it, and dug a winepress in it, and built a tower, and rented it out to farmers, and went abroad. **34** And when the season of the fruits drew near, he sent his slaves to the farm-

21:13 Isa 56:7; Jer 7:11; Luke 19:46
21:14 Isa 35:5; Isa 35:6; Matt 9:35
21:15 1 Kgs 1:41; Neh 12:43; Jer 26:7
21:16 Ps 8:2; Matt 11:25; Matt 12:3
21:17 Mark 11:11,19; John 11:1,18; Matt 16:4
21:18 Matt 4:2; Mark 11:12,13; Matt 12:1
21:19 Jer 8:13; Deut 20:19; Ps 1:3
21:20 Isa 40:6-8; Mark 11:20,21; James 1:10,11
21:21 Zech 4:7; Matt 17:20; James 1:6
21:22 Matt 7:7,11; John 15:7; John 16:24
21:23 Jer 26:9; Acts 4:7; Exod 2:14
21:24 Col 4:6; Matt 10:16; Luke 6:9
21:25 1 John 3:20; Matt 3:1-12; Matt 11:7-15
21:26 Mark 6:20; Matt 21:46; Matt 14:5
21:27 Matt 15:14; Matt 16:3; Matt 23:16-28
21:28 Matt 17:25; 1 Cor 10:15; Matt 22:17
21:29 Matt 21:31; Jer 44:16; Eph 4:17-19
21:30 Titus 1:16; Matt 23:3; Ezek 33:31
21:31 Luke 7:29,37-50; 2 Pet 3:9; Matt 7:21
21:32 2 Pet 2:21; Matt 21:25; Matt 11:18
21:33 Isa 5:1-2; Isa 1:10; Jer 19:3
21:34 2 Kgs 17:13,14-23; 2 Chr 36:15,16; Neh 9:29,30

21:13 *you have made it a den of robbers* Isaiah 56:7 says a house of prayer for all peoples, and the market filled the Gentiles' court. Jeremiah 7:11 called it the hideout of people who sinned all week and ran to the temple for safety. When religion becomes a business or a hiding place for people who will not change, the Lord is not pleased.
21:14 *blind and lame people came to Him in the temple, and He healed them* The traders thrown out, the hurting welcomed in. A saying once kept the blind and lame from the house (2 Sam 5:8). The Son of David brings them in and makes them whole.
21:16 *Out of the mouth of infants and nursing ones You have prepared praise for Yourself* The leaders were indignant at the miracles and the children's praise. In Psalm 8:2 that praise is given to God Himself. The experts missed what the children saw.
21:17 *He went out of the city to Bethany* About two miles east, home of Martha, Mary and Lazarus (John 11:1). Even in His hardest week, the Son of God valued the rest and company of close friends.
21:19 *found nothing on it except leaves only* Fully man, He was hungry. Fig trees put out small early figs with their leaves, so leaves promised fruit. His only miracle of judgment was an acted-out lesson. The fig tree can picture Israel (Jer 8:13; Hos 9:10), and He had found busy religion without fruit in the temple. A church or Christian can have all the leaves and no fruit.
21:21 *if you have faith and do not doubt* From the Mount of Olives the Dead Sea can be seen on a clear day. Moving a mountain was a saying for the seemingly impossible.
21:22 *all things, as many as you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive* Not a promise to get anything we want by believing hard. Scripture interprets Scripture: we ask according to His will (1 John 5:14-15), in His name (John 14:13), from a right heart (James 4:3). Then nothing is too hard for Him.
21:23 *By what authority are You doing these things* The elders were leading men who sat with chief priests and scribes on the Sanhedrin, the high council. "These things" meant the entry, the cleansing and His teaching. The temple was their territory.
21:25 *The baptism of John, from where was it* A common way to debate, not a dodge. John had pointed to Jesus as the Lamb of God (John 1:29-34), so his witness answered their question. They asked not what was true but what would happen to them.
21:27 *We do not know* The nation's teachers claimed they could not tell whether its most famous prophet was from God. People who refuse the light they have will not receive more.
21:30 *I will, sir,' and he did not go* One son said no and later went; the other said all the right words and never went. Which one pleases the father?
21:31 *the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going before you into the kingdom of God* Tax collectors were seen as traitors, prostitutes as the lowest of the low. They said no to God with their lives but believed John and turned. The leaders said yes with their mouths and would not. "Going before you" leaves the door open, but they must come the same way, through repentance and faith.
21:33 *planted a vineyard, and placed a fence around it* Every listener knew Isaiah's song of the vineyard, the house of Israel (Isa 5:1-7). God gave His people everything and expected fruit. The farmers are the leaders put in charge.

ers to receive his fruits. **35** And the farmers, having taken his slaves, beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. **36** Again he sent other slaves, more than the first, and they did to them likewise. **37** And afterward he sent to them his son, saying, 'They will respect my son.' **38** But the farmers, having seen the son, said among themselves, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him and take possession of his inheritance.' **39** And having taken him, they cast ***him*** out of the vineyard and killed ***him***. **40** Therefore, when the master of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those farmers?" **41** They say to Him, "Wretches! He will wretchedly destroy them, and he will rent out the vineyard to other farmers who will give him the fruits in their seasons." **42** Jesus says to them, "Did you never read in the Scriptures, '***The*** stone which those building rejected, this has become ***the*** head of ***the*** corner; this was from ***the*** Lord, and it is marvelous in our eyes'? **43** Because of this I say to you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and will be given to a nation producing its fruits. **44** And the ***one*** having fallen on this stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder." **45** And the chief priests and the Pharisees, having heard His parables, knew that He is speaking about them. **46** And seeking to lay hold of Him, they feared the crowds, since they were holding Him as a prophet.

MATTHEW 22

The Wedding Feast

1 And Jesus (Iesous), answering, spoke to them again in parables, saying, **2** "The kingdom of the heavens has been likened to a man, a king, who made a wedding feast for his son. **3** And he sent his slaves to call those having been called to the wedding feast, and they were not willing to come. **4** Again he sent other slaves, saying, 'Say to those having been called, "Look, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and the fattened ***animals are*** slaughtered, and all things ***are*** ready; come to the wedding feast."' **5** But they, having paid no attention, went away, the one to his own field, the other to his business; **6** and the rest, having seized his slaves, mistreated and killed ***them***. **7** And the king, having heard ***it***, was angry; and having sent his armies, he destroyed those murderers and burned their city. **8** Then he says to his slaves, 'The wedding feast is ready, but those having been called were not worthy. **9** Therefore go to the outlets of the roads, and as many as you find, call to the wedding feast.' **10** And those slaves, having gone out into the roads, gathered together all, as many as they found, both evil and good; and the wedding feast was filled with those reclining. **11** And the king, having

21:35 2 Chr 24:21; Heb 11:36,37; Matt 5:12
21:37 Matt 3:17; Mark 12:6; Luke 20:13
21:38 Gen 37:20; Matt 2:13-16; Matt 26:3,4
21:39 Acts 2:23; Matt 26:50,57; Mark 14:46-53
21:40 2 Sam 12:1; Mark 12:9; Luke 20:15,16
21:41 Isa 49:5; 2 Sam 12:1; Isa 5:7
21:42 Ps 118:22-23; Isa 28:16; Zech 3:8
21:43 Exod 19:6; Song 8:11; Matt 21:41
21:44 Isa 8:14-15; Dan 2:34-35; Luke 20:18
21:45 Matt 12:12; Luke 11:45; Luke 20:19
21:46 Matt 21:11; 2 Sam 12:7-13; Prov 9:7-9

22:1 Isa 25:6; Luke 14:16; Matt 9:15-17
22:2 Isa 25:6; Matt 13:24,31-33,44-47; Matt 25:1,14
22:3 2 Sam 14:29; Matt 3:2; Matt 10:6,7
22:4 Luke 10:1-16; Luke 24:46,47; Acts 1:8
22:5 Heb 2:3; Gen 19:14; Gen 25:34
22:6 Matt 5:10-12; Matt 10:12-18,22-25; Matt 21:35-39
22:7 Luke 19:27,42-44; Matt 21:40,41; Dan 9:26
22:8 Luke 20:35; Acts 13:46; Rev 3:4
22:9 Gen 29:22; Luke 14:21-24; Prov 1:20-23
22:10 Gen 29:22; Matt 13:38,47,48; Matt 25:1,2
22:11 Zech 3:3; 2 Kgs 10:22; Ps 45:13

21:35 *beat one, and killed another, and stoned another* The prophets God sent over centuries, many rejected and killed (2 Chr 24:20-21; 36:15-16; Heb 11:36-37). The owner sends again and again when he could have come in judgment. That is the patience of God.

21:37 *They will respect my son* Jesus plainly calls Himself the Son, sent after all the prophets, and tells them what they are about to do.

21:39 *they cast him out of the vineyard and killed him* They knew he was the heir and killed him anyway. Jesus was crucified outside the city gate (Heb 13:12).

21:41 *He will wretchedly destroy them* Like David before Nathan (2 Sam 12:1-7), they pronounced judgment on themselves. It came in A.D. 70, when Rome destroyed Jerusalem and the temple and the chief priests' rule ended.

21:42 *The stone which those building rejected, this has become the head of the corner* From Psalm 118:22-23, the psalm of the entry. The builders, Israel's leaders, threw Jesus aside, but God made Him the cornerstone that sets the line for every stone (Acts 4:11; 1 Pet 2:6-8). The resurrection is how God did it.

21:43 *the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and will be given to a nation producing its fruits* Spoken to the leaders of that generation (21:45). The nation is best taken as all who believe and bear kingdom fruit, in this age the church of believing Jews and Gentiles, "a holy nation" (1 Pet 2:9). God is not finished with Israel (Rom 11:1-2, 26; Matt 19:28). Some dispensational teachers see the nation as a future believing Israel.

21:44 *on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder* One can stumble over Christ now and be broken (Isa 8:14-15), or face the stone that falls in judgment, the stone of Daniel 2:34-35, 44-45 that crushes the world's kingdoms and fills the earth. Better to fall on it broken over sin and find mercy (Ps 51:17). A few Greek copies omit this verse, but most have it.

21:45 *knew that He is speaking about them* The Pharisees prided themselves on keeping the Law and traditions in every detail. Understanding was not their problem. Their hearts were. It is possible to understand God's Word clearly and still refuse to bow to it.

22:2 *a king, who made a wedding feast for his son* The third parable aimed at the leaders (21:45-46). A wedding feast pictures joy and fellowship: the Lord's feast for all peoples (Isa 25:6-8) and "the supper of the marriage of the Lamb" (Rev 19:9). The King is the Father, and the Son is Jesus.

22:3 *to call those having been called to the wedding feast, and they were not willing to come* A host sent one invitation ahead and another when the feast was ready. The guests stand for Israel, especially its leaders, invited for centuries through Law and prophets. To refuse a king's invitation to his son's wedding was a terrible insult.

22:4 *all things are ready; come to the wedding feast* The king kept inviting. The guests had to bring nothing, only come. That is the gospel. Jesus has done the work (Rev 22:17).

22:5 *the one to his own field, the other to his business* Farming and business were not wrong; they thought them more important than the king's invitation. Many today are lost not because they hate God but because they are too busy to care.

22:6 *mistreated and killed them* A picture of how God's messengers would be treated in Jerusalem (Acts 5:40; 7:58-60; 12:1-2).

22:7 *he destroyed those murderers and burned their city* A clear warning of A.D. 70, when Roman armies destroyed Jerusalem and burned the temple, as God once used Babylon (Jer 25:8-9). God is patient, but His patience has an end.

22:9 *go to the outlets of the roads* Where main roads leave the city and people gather. The gospel goes to all, Jew and Gentile, respectable and outcast (Rom 1:16), "both evil and good." No one is too far gone to be invited, and God's house will be full.

22:11 *a man not dressed in a wedding garment* Many think the king provided garments for guests pulled off the roads; whether or not that was the custom, the meaning is clear. It is the righteousness God provides (Isa 61:10; Rev 19:8). This man wanted the feast on his own terms, in his own clothes. We cannot come in the rags of our own goodness (Isa 64:6). We must be clothed in Christ (Gal 3:27; Phil 3:9).

come in to look at those reclining, saw there a man not dressed ***in*** a wedding garment, **12** and he says to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here not having a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. **13** Then the king said to the servants, 'Having bound his feet and hands, take him away and cast him out into the outer darkness; there will be the weeping and the gnashing of the teeth.' **14** For many are called, but few chosen."

Taxes to Caesar

15 Then the Pharisees, having gone, took counsel how they might trap Him in ***His*** word. **16** And they send to Him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that You are true and teach the way of God in truth, and You are not concerned about anyone; for You do not look at ***the*** face of men. **17** Tell us therefore, what do You think? Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar, or not?" **18** But Jesus, having known their malice, said, "Why do you test Me, hypocrites? **19** Show Me the coin of the tribute." And they brought to Him a denarius. **20** And He says to them, "Whose ***is*** this image and the inscription?" **21** They say to Him, "Caesar's." Then He says to them, "Therefore give back the things of Caesar to Caesar, and the things of God to God." **22** And having heard, they marveled; and having left Him, they went away.

A Question About the Resurrection

23 On that day Sadducees came to Him, those saying there is no resurrection, and they questioned Him, **24** saying,
"Teacher, Moses said, 'If anyone dies not having children, his brother shall marry his wife and shall raise up seed for his brother.' **25** Now there were with us seven brothers; and the first, having married, died, and not having seed, he left his wife to his brother. **26** Likewise also the second, and the third, until the seven. **27** And last of all the woman also died. **28** In the resurrection therefore, of which of the seven will she be wife? For all had her." **29** But Jesus, answering, said to them, "You are going astray, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God. **30** For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven. **31** But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying, **32** 'I am the God of Abraham (Abraam) and the God of Isaac (Isaak) and the God of Jacob (Iakob)'? God is not ***the*** God of ***the*** dead, but of ***the*** living." **33** And the crowds, having heard, were astonished at His teaching.

The Great Commandment

34 But the Pharisees, having heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, were gathered together at the same ***place***. **35** And one of them, a lawyer, questioned ***Him***, testing Him and saying, **36** "Teacher, which commandment ***is*** great in the law?"

22:12 2 Kgs 10:22; Zech 3:3; Matt 20:13
22:13 Ps 37:12; Ps 112:10; 1 Sam 2:9
22:14 Matt 7:13,14; Matt 20:16; Luke 13:23,24
22:15 Isa 29:21; Jer 18:18; Mark 12:13-17
22:16 2 Sam 14:14; Mark 3:6; Mark 8:15
22:17 Luke 2:1; Jer 42:2,3,20; Acts 28:22
22:18 Luke 5:22; John 2:25; John 8:6
22:19 Matt 18:28; Matt 20:2; Rev 6:6
22:20 Luke 20:24
22:21 Josh 7:11; Ezek 17:14; Dan 6:22
22:22 Matt 22:33,46; Matt 10:16; Prov 26:4,5
22:23 Matt 3:7; Acts 4:1; Mark 12:18-27
22:24 Deut 25:5-6; Gen 38:8; Gen 38:11
22:25 Gen 38:8; Ruth 1:5; Mark 12:19-23
22:27 Ruth 1:5
22:29 John 20:9; Isa 26:19; Dan 12:2,3
22:30 Ps 103:20; Mark 12:24,25; Luke 20:34-36
22:31 Matt 12:3,7; Matt 21:16,42; Matt 9:13
22:32 Exod 3:6; Exod 3:15; Gen 24:12
22:33 Matt 22:22; Matt 7:28,29; Mark 6:2
22:34 Mark 12:28; Matt 12:14; Matt 25:3-5
22:35 Luke 7:30; Luke 14:3; Luke 11:45,46,52
22:36 2 Kgs 23:3; Mal 4:4; Mark 12:28-33

22:12 *And he was speechless* He accepted the invitation outwardly but never received what the king offered, like one who wants heaven but has never repented or trusted Jesus. On that day there will be no excuse.
22:13 *cast him out into the outer darkness* The bright hall and the dark night (8:12; 25:30). Weeping is sorrow and regret, gnashing of teeth anguish and anger. Jesus spoke of hell because He did not want anyone to go there.
22:14 *For many are called, but few chosen* As in 20:16. The chosen answer the call and wear the garment the King provides. Some see God's choosing as the cause of faith; others see God choosing those He knew would believe. Both agree the call is real, each person must answer it, and the saved give God all the glory.
22:16 *they send to Him their disciples with the Herodians* Herodians supported Herod's family and the Roman rule that kept it in power. They and the Pharisees normally did not get along. Their flattery was true, but they did not mean a word of it.
22:17 *Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar, or not* Tribute was a tax paid straight to the emperor, hated as a sign of pagan rule. Yes would anger the people; no could be reported to Rome as rebellion.
22:19 *Show Me the coin of the tribute* A hypocrite was a masked actor. The coin likely bore Tiberius' image and a title calling him son of the divine Augustus. Jesus had to ask for one. His enemies had one in their pocket, right in the temple.
22:21 *give back the things of Caesar to Caesar, and the things of God to God* "Give back" means pay what is owed. Christians obey the government and pay taxes (Rom 13:1-7; 1 Pet 2:13-17). But Caesar is not God. The coin bore Caesar's image; we bear God's (Gen 1:27), so we give ourselves to Him. When government demands what is God's, "it is necessary to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).
22:23 *Sadducees came to Him, those saying there is no resurrection* Mostly wealthy priestly families who controlled the temple, including the high priest. They accepted only the books of Moses and denied resurrection, angels and spirits (Acts 23:8).
22:24 *his brother shall marry his wife and shall raise up seed for his brother* From Deuteronomy 25:5-6, which kept a family's name and land from being lost in Israel.
22:28 *In the resurrection therefore, of which of the seven will she be wife* They meant to make the resurrection look foolish by judging the life to come by the limits of this one. Many still argue that way.
22:29 *not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God* Two errors behind most false teaching today: not knowing what the Bible says, or putting limits on what God can do.
22:30 *they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven* Not that we become angels, but that we live forever and no longer need marriage to carry on the human family (Luke 20:35-36). Scripture does not say spouses will not know each other. I believe we will, with fuller love. And Jesus states plainly that angels are real.
22:32 *God is not the God of the dead, but of the living* From Exodus 3:6, in the books they accepted. God said I am, not I was, of men dead for centuries. They were alive to Him, and His covenant promises to them demand that they will be raised.
22:33 *the crowds, having heard, were astonished at His teaching* He showed them something in a verse they had read all their lives. That is what happens when the Author teaches His Book.
22:36 *which commandment is great in the law* A lawyer was an expert in the Law of Moses, not a courtroom attorney. The rabbis counted 613 commands and argued which were heavier.

37 And Jesus said to him, "'You shall love ***the*** Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' **38** This is ***the*** first and great commandment. **39** And ***the*** second ***is*** like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' **40** On these two commandments hang all the law and the Prophets."

David's Son and Lord

41 And the Pharisees having been gathered together, Jesus questioned them, **42** saying, "What do you think concerning the Christ? Whose son is He?" They say to Him, "Of David (Dabid)." **43** He says to them, "How then does David in ***the*** Spirit call Him Lord, saying, **44** 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right ***hand*** until I put Your enemies ***as*** a footstool of Your feet"'? **45** If then David calls Him Lord, how is He his son?" **46** And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor did anyone dare from that day to question Him any longer.

MATTHEW 23

Woes to the Scribes and Pharisees

1 Then Jesus (Iesous) spoke to the crowds and to His disciples, **2** saying, "The scribes and the Pharisees have sat down on the seat of Moses. **3** Therefore all things, as many as they tell you to keep, keep and do; but do not do according to their works; for they say and do not do. **4** For they tie up heavy and hard-to-bear burdens and lay ***them*** on the shoulders of men, but they are not willing to move them with their finger. **5** And they do all their works in order to be seen by men; and they broaden their phylacteries and enlarge the fringes of their garments. **6** And they love the place of honor at the banquets and the first seats in the synagogues, **7** and the greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, 'Rabbi, Rabbi.' **8** But you, do not be called 'Rabbi'; for One is your instructor, the Christ, and you are all brothers. **9** And do not call ***anyone*** on the earth your father; for One is your Father, the ***One*** in the heavens. **10** Nor be called instructors; for your instructor is One, the Christ. **11** But the greater of you shall be your servant. **12** And whoever will exalt himself will be humbled, and whoever will humble himself will be exalted. **13** But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of the heavens before men; for you yourselves do not enter, nor do you allow those entering

22:37 Deut 6:5; Deut 10:12; Deut 30:6
22:39 Lev 19:18; Matt 19:19; Gal 5:14
22:40 Ps 119:96; Mal 4:4; Matt 7:12
22:41 Mark 12:35-37; Luke 20:41-44; Matt 22:15,34
22:42 Isa 7:13; Isa 9:6; Isa 11:1
22:43 2 Sam 23:2; Ps 110:1; Rev 4:2
22:44 Ps 110:1; Ps 21:9; Acts 2:34,35
22:45 Ps 8:1; Ps 110:1; Rom 1:3,4
22:46 Job 32:15; Job 16:3; Job 32:16
23:1 Matt 15:10-20; Luke 12:1,57; Mark 7:14
23:2 Exod 18:13; Neh 8:1; Luke 20:46
23:3 2 Tim 3:5; Titus 1:16; Matt 15:2-9
23:4 Luke 11:46; Acts 15:10,28; Matt 11:28-30
23:5 Deut 6:8; Exod 13:9; Num 15:38
23:6 James 2:1-4; Matt 20:21; Prov 25:6,7
23:7 John 1:38,49; John 3:2,26; John 6:25
23:8 James 3:1; Matt 23:10; Matt 26:49
23:9 Mal 1:6; Job 32:21,22; Heb 12:9
23:11 Gal 5:13; Matt 20:26,27; Mark 10:43,44
23:12 Prov 29:23; 1 Pet 5:5; Luke 14:11
23:13 Luke 11:52; Zech 11:17; Acts 8:1

22:37 *You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind* From Deuteronomy 6:5, part of the Shema, named for its first word, hear (Deut 6:4), recited daily by devout Jews. God wants the whole person. Jesus skips rules about sacrifice or Sabbath and goes to the root of all of it.
22:39 *the second is like it* From Leviticus 19:18. Asked for one, He gave two, because they cannot be separated (1 John 4:20). "As yourself" is not a command to love ourselves first. It assumes we look after our own needs and calls us to care for our neighbor's good the same way.
22:40 *On these two commandments hang all the law and the Prophets* Like a door on its hinges (Rom 13:8-10). Who has kept these two for even one whole day? The Law shows perfect love and how far short we fall. Only Jesus kept it, and He gives His righteousness to all who trust Him (Rom 3:20-24).
22:42 *What do you think concerning the Christ? Whose son is He* "Of David" was the standard and right answer (2 Sam 7:12-16; Isa 11:1).
22:43 *How then does David in the Spirit call Him Lord* Jesus says David wrote this psalm and wrote it by the Holy Spirit, a strong statement about the inspiration of Scripture.
22:44 *The Lord said to my Lord* From Psalm 110:1. The first Lord is the Father, the second the Messiah. No father called his son lord. The Messiah is David's son by human birth and David's Lord as God the Son who existed before David (John 8:58). The New Testament quotes this verse more than any other to show Jesus seated at the Father's right hand (Acts 2:34-36; Heb 1:13). Every enemy will be put under His feet.
22:46 *nor did anyone dare from that day to question Him any longer* The best minds in Israel were silenced, and they would not answer the one question that mattered most. Who do you say Jesus is: a good teacher, or the Son of David who is David's Lord?
23:2 *The scribes and the Pharisees have sat down on the seat of Moses* The leaders silenced (22:46), Jesus warns the people about them. Most scribes were Pharisees. To sit on Moses' seat was to teach as the official interpreters of the Law, and some synagogues had a stone seat by that name.
23:3 *do not do according to their works; for they say and do not do* When they faithfully taught Moses, the people should obey, for God's Word does not lose authority because a hypocrite reads it. Jesus did not approve their traditions (15:3-9). Every teacher should tremble at this verse (James 3:1).
23:4 *they tie up heavy and hard-to-bear burdens* Like loading a pack animal until it can barely stand, they added rule upon rule, with dozens on Sabbath work alone, and would not lift a finger to help. False religion piles on burdens. Jesus lifts them (11:28).
23:5 *they broaden their phylacteries and enlarge the fringes of their garments* Phylacteries were small leather boxes of Scripture verses (Exod 13:1-16; Deut 6:4-9; 11:13-21) tied to forehead and arm in prayer, from a literal reading of Deuteronomy 6:8. The fringes were the commanded tassels (Num 15:37-40). God gave them to point people to Him. The Pharisees used them to point to themselves (6:1-18).
23:7 *to be called by men, 'Rabbi, Rabbi.'* Rabbi means my great one, my teacher. The best synagogue seats faced the people. Honoring a teacher is not wrong. The sin is loving the honor, wanting the title more than the work.
23:8 *One is your instructor, the Christ, and you are all brothers* No believer is to set himself up as master over others. Jesus is not forbidding every title; Paul was a teacher (1 Tim 2:7; Eph 4:11). No one should stand between believers and God or have his word put in place of Christ's.
23:9 *do not call anyone on the earth your father* The rabbis called great past teachers father. Jesus means a final spiritual authority, a place God alone holds. We honor earthly fathers (Exod 20:12), and Paul was a spiritual father through the gospel (1 Cor 4:15). Many use religious titles with no thought of putting a man in God's place, but the warning stands for us all.
23:10 *your instructor is One, the Christ* A guide who goes ahead and shows the way. Every pastor and teacher is only a fellow student pointing others to Him.
23:12 *whoever will exalt himself will be humbled* One of God's unchanging laws (Prov 29:23; James 4:6), shown when Jesus washed feet (20:26-27; John 13:4-15). The way up in God's kingdom is down.
23:13 *woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites* A woe is a cry of sorrow and solemn warning, the opposite of a blessing. Chapter 5 began with blessings on the humble; His public teaching ends with woes on the proud. They held the key of knowledge (Luke 11:52) and turned others away from the Messiah (John 9:22).

to go in. **14** Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour the houses of the widows, and for a pretext ***you*** pray at length; because of this you will receive greater judgment. **15** Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you go around the sea and the dry ***land*** to make one proselyte, and when he becomes ***one***, you make him a son of Gehenna twofold more than yourselves. **16** Woe to you, blind guides, who say, 'Whoever swears by the sanctuary, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the sanctuary is obligated.' **17** Fools and blind! For which is greater, the gold or the sanctuary that sanctifies the gold? **18** And, 'Whoever swears by the altar, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gift that ***is*** on it is obligated.' **19** Fools and blind! For which ***is*** greater, the gift or the altar that sanctifies the gift?
20 Therefore the ***one*** having sworn by the altar swears by it and by all the things on it. **21** And the ***one*** having sworn by the sanctuary swears by it and by the ***One*** dwelling in it. **22** And the ***one*** having sworn by heaven swears by the throne of God and by the ***One*** sitting on it. **23** Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe the mint and the dill and the cumin, and you have left aside the weightier ***matters*** of the law: the justice and the mercy and the faith. These it was necessary to do, and not to be leaving those aside. **24** Blind guides, who strain out the gnat but swallow the camel! **25** Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and of the dish, but inside they are full of plunder and self-indulgence. **26** Blind Pharisee! First cleanse the inside of the cup and of the dish, so that the outside of them may also become clean. **27** Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you resemble whitewashed tombs, which outside indeed appear beautiful, but inside are full of bones of ***the*** dead and of all uncleanness. **28** Thus you also outside indeed appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness. **29** Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous, **30** and you say, 'If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.' **31** So you bear witness to yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. **32** And you, fill up the measure of your fathers! **33** Serpents, offspring of vipers! How are you to escape from the judgment of Gehenna? **34** Because of this, look, I send to you prophets and wise ***men*** and scribes; and ***some*** of them you will kill and crucify, and ***some*** of them you will flog in your synagogues and persecute from city to city, **35** so that on you may come all righteous blood being poured out on the earth, from the blood of Abel the righteous to the blood of Zechariah (Zacharias), son of Berekiah (Barachias), whom

23:14 Exod 22:22; Exod 22:23; Exod 22:24
23:15 Isa 10:1; Jer 23:1; Ezek 13:3
23:16 Isa 5:20; Isa 10:1; Jer 23:1
23:17 Matt 23:19; Ps 94:8; Exod 30:26-29
23:19 Exod 29:37; Exod 30:29
23:21 1 Kgs 8:13,27; Ps 26:8; 2 Chr 6:2
23:22 Matt 5:34; Ps 11:4; Isa 66:1
23:23 Mic 6:8; Lev 27:30; Isa 5:20
23:24 Matt 19:24; Matt 15:2-6; Matt 27:6-8
23:25 Jer 23:1; Ezek 13:3; Hos 7:13
23:26 James 4:8; Matt 12:33; Isa 55:7
23:27 Num 19:16; Isa 10:1; Jer 23:1
23:28 Ezek 13:3; Matt 23:5; Luke 16:15
23:29 Isa 10:1; Jer 23:1; Ezek 13:3
23:30 2 Chr 36:15; Gen 34:14; 2 Kgs 21:16
23:31 Josh 24:22; Isa 9:16; Jer 26:15
23:32 Gen 15:16; Num 32:14; Isa 65:7
23:33 Isa 20:6; Matt 3:7; Matt 12:34
23:34 2 Chr 36:15; Prov 11:30; 2 Kgs 21:10
23:35 Zech 1:1; Gen 4:8; 2 Chr 24:20-21

23:14 *you devour the houses of the widows, and for a pretext you pray at length* The Law commanded care for widows (Exod 22:22-24). Some took their property while showing off long prayers. Using religion to cheat the helpless is among the worst sins. Most older Greek copies lack this verse in Matthew, though the Received Text has it and many modern Bibles bracket it. The same words stand in Mark 12:40 and Luke 20:47, so Jesus said them.
23:15 *to make one proselyte* A Gentile convert who was circumcised and took on the Law. They brought people into their system, not to God. A son of Gehenna is one who belongs in hell, named for Hinnom's valley of child sacrifice (2 Kgs 23:10). Converts often outdo their teachers. Zeal must be zeal for the truth.
23:16 *Woe to you, blind guides* A blind guide leads people into the ditch (15:14). Their oath rules let people make holy-sounding promises they never meant to keep.
23:17 *the sanctuary that sanctifies the gold* The gold was holy only because it was in God's house. Valuing it above the temple put everything upside down.
23:19 *the altar that sanctifies the gift* An offering was made holy by God's altar. Their rules showed they cared more about gold and gifts than about God.
23:22 *swears by the throne of God and by the One sitting on it* No promise goes unheard by God. Every oath touches Him, because everything belongs to Him. Let your yes mean yes (5:33-37).
23:23 *you tithe the mint and the dill and the cumin* A tithe is a tenth (Lev 27:30), and they counted every tenth leaf of their herbs while ignoring justice, mercy and faith (Mic 6:8). Jesus did not call tithing wrong. They should have done both. Many churchgoers are careful about outward details and careless about honesty, kindness and faith.
23:24 *who strain out the gnat but swallow the camel* They strained wine through cloth to remove unclean gnats (Lev 11:20-23), and the camel was the largest unclean animal (Lev 11:4). Picture picking a gnat from the cup and gulping a whole camel, hump and all.
23:26 *First cleanse the inside of the cup and of the dish* Their washing rules (Mark 7:3-4) kept the outside clean while the inside held greed and lack of self-control. Fixing only the outside is painting a rotten fence. Only God creates a clean heart (Ps 51:10).
23:27 *you resemble whitewashed tombs* Touching a grave made a Jew unclean seven days (Num 19:16). Before the feasts tombs were painted with white lime so pilgrims would not touch them, and around Passover they shone in the sun. Lawlessness is a strong word for men proud of keeping the Law. They kept its rules and broke its heart.
23:30 *we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets* By calling the murderers "our fathers," they admitted they were their sons, and they would prove it by killing the greatest Prophet. It is easy to honor God's messengers safely dead, harder to hear the ones speaking to us today.
23:32 *fill up the measure of your fathers* Their fathers filled the cup of guilt partway. These leaders would fill it to the top by killing the Son, and then judgment would fall (Gen 15:16; 1 Thess 2:15-16).
23:33 *How are you to escape from the judgment of Gehenna* John used the same words (3:7), and the serpent recalls the devil in the Garden (Gen 3:1). Not insult for sport but the truth about where their path ends. Love tells the truth even when it hurts.
23:34 *I send to you prophets and wise men and scribes* Jesus speaks as the Lord who sends prophets, which only God does. Stephen was stoned (Acts 7:58-60), James killed (Acts 12:2), and Paul, once the persecutor, was flogged and chased from city to city (2 Cor 11:24-26).
23:35 *from the blood of Abel the righteous to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berekiah* Abel was the first murder (Gen 4:8), and Chronicles, last in the Hebrew Bible, records Zechariah stoned in the temple court (2 Chr 24:20-22): first page to last. Chronicles calls him son of Jehoiada. Some think Jehoiada was his grandfather; others think Jesus meant the prophet Zechariah (Zech 1:1). Scripture does not settle it.

you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar. **36** Truly I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.

Lament over Jerusalem

37 Jerusalem (Hierousalem), Jerusalem, the ***one*** killing the prophets and stoning those sent to her! How often I was willing to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her own chicks under the wings, and you were not willing! **38** Look, your house is left to you desolate. **39** For I say to you, you will by no means see Me from now on until you say, 'Blessed ***is*** the ***One*** coming in ***the*** name of ***the*** Lord.'"

MATTHEW 24

Signs of the End of the Age

1 And Jesus (Iesous), having gone out, was going from the temple; and His disciples came to ***Him*** to point out to Him the buildings of the temple. **2** And Jesus said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, there will by no means be left here stone upon stone which will not be thrown down." **3** And as He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what ***is*** the sign of Your coming and of the consummation of the age?" **4** And Jesus, answering, said to them, "Watch out that no one leads you astray. **5** For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and they will lead many astray. **6** And you are going to hear of wars and reports of wars; see, do not be alarmed; for it is necessary for all things to take place, but the end is not yet. **7** For nation will rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there will be famines and pestilences and earthquakes in ***various*** places. **8** And all these ***are the*** beginning of birth pains. **9** Then they will hand you over to tribulation and will kill you; and you will be hated by all the nations on account of My name. **10** And then many will be caused to stumble, and they will hand over one another and will hate one another. **11** And many false prophets will rise up and will lead many astray. **12** And because lawlessness is

23:36 Jer 2:30; Jer 7:29; Jer 20:2
23:37 Ruth 2:12; Neh 9:26; Ps 63:7
23:38 Isa 64:10; Jer 7:9; Jer 7:10
23:39 Ps 118:26; Zech 12:10; Ezek 10:18
24:1 Matt 23:39; Mark 13:1,2; Luke 21:5,6
24:2 Luke 19:44; Dan 9:26,27; 1 Kgs 9:7,8
24:3 Matt 21:1; Acts 1:7; Mark 13:3,4
24:4 Jer 29:8; Mark 13:5,6,22; 2 Thess 2:3
24:5 Jer 23:25; Matt 24:11,24; Jer 14:14
24:6 Mark 13:7,8; Luke 21:9; Isa 8:12-14
24:7 Isa 19:2; 2 Chr 15:6; Joel 2:30,31
24:8 1 Thess 5:3; 1 Pet 4:17,18; Lev 26:18-29
24:9 John 15:19; John 16:2; Rev 2:10,13
24:10 Matt 11:6; Matt 13:21,57; Matt 26:31-34
24:11 Matt 7:15; Matt 24:5,24; Mark 13:22
24:12 Rev 2:4,5,10; James 4:1-4; Rev 3:15

23:36 *all these things will come upon this generation* About forty years later, in A.D. 70, Rome destroyed Jerusalem and burned the temple. The generation that rejected its King saw the judgment.
23:37 *the way a hen gathers her own chicks under the wings* The name repeated shows deep feeling (2 Sam 18:33), and Jesus wept over the city (Luke 19:41). A hen covers her chicks even at the cost of her life. "How often" is the God who called Israel all through its history. He was willing; they were not. God does not force anyone. He calls, and He weeps when people refuse.
23:38 *your house is left to you desolate* The temple, "My house" at the cleansing (21:13), is now "your house." He walks out of it for the last time (24:1), as Ezekiel saw the glory depart before Babylon came (Ezek 10:18-19; 11:23). When the Lord leaves, a building is only stones.
23:39 *until you say, 'Blessed is the One coming in the name of the Lord.'* Not never, but until. Israel will look on the One they pierced (Zech 12:10), and "all Israel will be saved" (Rom 11:26). I believe this will happen at the end of the Tribulation, when Jesus returns to the earth and Israel turns to Him. The city that rejected her King will one day welcome Him.
24:1 *His disciples came to Him to point out to Him the buildings of the temple* Jesus had just said "your house is left to you desolate" (23:38), and now He left it for the last time. Herod began rebuilding about 20 B.C., and work was still going on (John 2:20). Huge white stones and gold that shone in the sun made it look like it would stand forever.
24:2 *there will by no means be left here stone upon stone which will not be thrown down* About forty years later, in A.D. 70, the Roman army under Titus took Jerusalem after a long siege and burned and tore down the temple. Josephus, who lived through it, described it in his history of the Jewish war.
24:3 *what is the sign of Your coming and of the consummation of the age* Peter, James, John and Andrew asked (Mark 13:3) when the temple would fall, the sign of His coming, and the sign of the end, likely thinking all would happen together. Luke records more about the near event, the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 (Luke 21:20-24). I believe most of Matthew 24 looks ahead to the future Tribulation and the Second Coming. Parousia, coming, was used for a king's official visit to a city.
24:4 *Watch out that no one leads you astray* The first danger at the end is deception, not war (24:5, 11, 24). I believe the church will be caught up to meet the Lord before the Tribulation (1 Thess 4:16-17; 1 Cor 15:51-52; John 14:1-3), for God "did not appoint us for wrath" (1 Thess 5:9; Rev 3:10). Jesus speaks to Jewish disciples about Judea, the temple and the Sabbath (24:15-20), most directly to those who believe during the Tribulation, especially the remnant of Israel. Every believer can learn to stay awake and not be deceived.
24:5 *many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,'* False messiahs stirred crowds before A.D. 70 (Acts 5:36-37), and others have claimed new revelations since. Near the end there will be many. Anyone who says Christ has come back in secret, or that he is Christ, is a liar.
24:6 *see, do not be alarmed* Wars by themselves are not a sign the end has come. History is in God's hands and moves in His order. Fear and date setting have done a lot of damage in the church.
24:7 *nation will rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom* Whole nations and empires at war, with famines, pestilences (deadly spreading diseases) and earthquakes. These come in every generation, but here they come together and grow worse. John saw the same pattern in the first seals (Rev 6:1-8), and many teachers match 24:4-8 with the first part of the seven-year Tribulation.
24:8 *all these are the beginning of birth pains* Labor pains grow closer and stronger until the child is born (Isa 13:8; Jer 30:6-7). These troubles are not random. After the pain comes the kingdom.
24:9 *you will be hated by all the nations on account of My name* Tribulation means pressure, being crushed. The apostles knew it, and believers in many lands know it now, but in the Tribulation the hatred becomes worldwide, and a great number are killed for their faith (Rev 6:9-11; 7:9-14). The world hates the name of Jesus (John 15:18-21).
24:10 *many will be caused to stumble* Persecution exposes those who only went along on the outside, and some will betray family and friends (10:21). A faith never tested has not yet shown what it is made of.
24:11 *many false prophets will rise up* In the Tribulation a great false prophet will lead the world to worship the beast (Rev 13:11-14; 19:20), and many are out already (1 John 4:1). Test every message by the Word (Acts 17:11), however impressive the speaker.
24:12 *the love of the many will grow cold* Lawlessness is living as if there is no God to answer to. Surrounded by evil, hearts harden and stop being shocked, like a fire left without wood (2 Tim 3:1-5). Believers must keep their love warm (Rev 2:4-5).

multiplied, the love of the many will grow cold. **13** But the ***one*** having endured to ***the*** end, he will be saved. **14** And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a testimony to all the nations; and then the end will come.

The Great Tribulation

15 Therefore when you see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in ***the*** holy place (let the ***one*** reading understand), **16** then let those in Judea (Ioudaia) flee to the mountains; **17** let the ***one*** on the housetop not come down to take anything out of his house; **18** and let the ***one*** in the field not turn back to take his garments. **19** But woe to those who are pregnant and to those nursing in those days! **20** And pray that your flight may not happen in winter nor on a Sabbath. **21** For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not happened from ***the*** beginning of ***the*** world until now, nor by any means will happen. **22** And unless those days had been shortened, no flesh would have been saved; but because of the elect those days will be shortened. **23** Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here ***is*** the Christ,' or 'Here,' do not believe ***it***. **24** For false christs and false prophets will rise up, and they will give great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect. **25** Look, I have told you beforehand.

26 Therefore if they say to you, 'Look, he is in the wilderness,' do not go out; 'Look, in the inner rooms,' do not believe ***it***. **27** For just as the lightning comes out from ***the*** east and shines as far as ***the*** west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. **28** For wherever the carcass may be, there the vultures will be gathered together.

The Coming of the Son of Man

29 And immediately after the tribulation of those days, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. **30** And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming

24:13 Matt 10:22; Ps 119:33; Mark 13:13
24:14 Ezek 7:5; Ezek 7:1; Ezek 7:2
24:15 Dan 9:27; Dan 12:11; Dan 11:31
24:16 Isa 22:5; Jer 48:6; Jer 49:8
24:17 Deut 22:8; Gen 45:20; Josh 2:19
24:18 Jer 49:8
24:19 Deut 28:53-56; 2 Sam 4:4; 2 Kgs 15:16
24:20 Exod 16:29; Acts 1:12
24:21 Dan 12:1; Jer 30:7; Joel 2:2
24:22 Mark 13:20; Isa 65:8,9; Isa 6:13
24:23 Deut 13:1; Deut 13:2; Deut 13:3
24:24 Deut 13:1-3; Isa 9:15; Amos 8:12
24:25 Isa 44:7,8; Isa 46:10,11; Isa 48:5,6
24:26 Isa 40:3; Acts 21:38; Matt 3:1
24:27 Mal 4:5; Zech 14:5; Job 37:3
24:28 Luke 17:37; Deut 28:49; Job 39:27-30
24:29 Isa 13:10; Joel 3:15; Joel 2:10
24:30 Dan 7:13; Zech 12:10-12; Rev 1:7

24:13 *the one having endured to the end, he will be saved* Not saved by holding on long enough; salvation is by grace through faith (Eph 2:8-9). In the Tribulation setting, the end is the end of that trouble, and saved most likely means delivered, rescued (8:25), brought through to the coming King and His kingdom. Real faith keeps going because He keeps us (Phil 1:6). Endurance shows salvation is real; it does not earn it.

24:14 *this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth* The good news that the King is coming and people must repent and believe (3:2; 4:23). In the Tribulation God will use the 144,000 (Rev 7:1-8), the two witnesses (Rev 11:3) and an angel with "an eternal gospel" (Rev 14:6). His mercy offers salvation to the end. Every day we have is a day to share it.

24:15 *the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet* An abomination is an idol or false worship God hates, bringing ruin to His holy place (Dan 9:27; 11:31; 12:11). Antiochus IV set up an altar to Zeus about 167 B.C., but Jesus spoke of it as still future. Some see it fulfilled in A.D. 70. I believe the Antichrist, the final ruler opposed to Christ, will break his seven-year covenant with Israel at the midpoint and set himself up to be worshiped in a rebuilt temple (2 Thess 2:3-4; Rev 13:14-15).

24:16 *let those in Judea flee to the mountains* No time to waste. The rugged hills have caves and hiding places. The woman, a picture of Israel, flees to the wilderness where God protects her for three and a half years (Rev 12:6, 13-14). Judea, the holy place and the Sabbath: Jesus speaks of the land and people of Israel in the last days.

24:17 *let the one on the housetop not come down to take anything out of his house* Flat roofs were used like porches, often with outside stairs. A field worker left his cloak at the edge. A few seconds will matter. Things can be replaced. Lives cannot.

24:19 *woe to those who are pregnant and to those nursing in those days* A cry of pity, not a curse, for those who cannot run far. His compassion shows even as He describes history's darkest days.

24:20 *pray that your flight may not happen in winter nor on a Sabbath* Winter brings cold rain and flooded streams. On a Sabbath gates might be shut and travel limited, which fits a future time when Jewish worship is restored. God cares about the timing of our troubles, so pray about the details.

24:21 *then there will be great tribulation, such as has not happened from the beginning of the world until now* Worse than the flood, the Holocaust or any war. That is why I cannot see A.D. 70 as the complete fulfillment; worse has happened since. It is "a time of distress for Jacob" (Jer 30:7), yet "from it he will be saved" (Jer 30:7; Dan 12:1). Revelation 6-19 gives the details. The second half of the seven years is often called the Great Tribulation from this verse.

24:22 *because of the elect those days will be shortened* Saved here means kept alive. God has fixed the limit: 1,260 days, forty-two months (Dan 7:25; Rev 11:2-3; 12:6; 13:5). The elect are His chosen alive then, the believing remnant of Israel and all who come to faith in the Tribulation. His love shapes even the length of His judgments.

24:24 *they will give great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect* Not every miracle comes from God (2 Thess 2:9; Rev 13:13-14). Miracles alone prove nothing; the test is God's Word (Deut 13:1-4). "If possible" tells us the elect cannot finally be led astray. He warned us ahead of time.

24:26 *Look, he is in the wilderness* Some will claim a messiah hiding in the desert with an army, others a secret coming known to insiders. Do not go and look. His coming will not be secret.

24:27 *just as the lightning comes out from the east and shines as far as the west* Lightning needs no announcement. His return to the earth will be sudden, public and impossible to miss. "Every eye will see Him" (Rev 1:7).

24:28 *wherever the carcass may be, there the vultures will be gathered together* The word can mean vultures. Asked "Where, Lord?" (Luke 17:37), Jesus gives this saying: circling birds show where the carcass lies, and judgment will be plain wherever it is due. Compare the birds called to feast on the armies at His return (Rev 19:17-18, 21).

24:29 *immediately after the tribulation of those days* This dates the Second Coming: at the end of the Tribulation, not before or in the middle. I believe Scripture shows two stages. First He comes in the air for His church before the Tribulation (1 Thess 4:16-17). Then after it He comes with His saints to the earth to judge and reign (Zech 14:4-5; Jude 14; Rev 19:11-16). These verses describe the second. The prophets foretold the same signs in the sky (Isa 13:9-10; Joel 2:31), and I take them as real events.

24:30 *they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory* Scripture does not say what the sign will be; it may be His own glory across the sky. The tribes mourn in fear before their Judge, and Israel mourns in repentance over "Him whom they have pierced" (Zech 12:10-12) and is saved (Rom 11:26). Daniel 7:13-14 fulfilled. He will come "in the same manner" (Acts 1:11) as He left.

on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory. **31** And He will send His angels with a trumpet of great sound, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from ***the*** ends of ***the*** heavens to their ends.

The Lesson of the Fig Tree

32 Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender and puts forth the leaves, you know that the summer ***is*** near. **33** So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near, at ***the*** doors. **34** Truly I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away until all these things happen. **35** The heaven and the earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

No One Knows the Day or Hour

36 But concerning that day and the hour no one knows, not even the angels of the heavens, except My Father alone. **37** And just as the days of Noah (Noe) ***were***, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. **38** For just as in the days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, **39** and they did not know until the flood came and took all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. **40** Then two will be in the field; the one is taken and the one is left. **41** Two ***women will be*** grinding at the millhouse; one is taken and one is left. **42** Therefore keep watch, for you do not know in what hour your Lord comes. **43** But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what watch the thief comes, he would have kept watch and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. **44** Because of this you also be ready, for in an hour that you do not suppose, the Son of Man comes. **45** Who then is the faithful and wise slave whom his master has set over his household, to give them the food in season? **46** Blessed ***is*** that slave whom his master, having come, will find so doing. **47** Truly I say to you that he will set him over all his possessions. **48** But if that evil slave says in his heart, 'My master delays to come,' **49** and begins to beat the fellow slaves, and to eat and drink with those who are drunk, **50** the master of that slave will come on a day in which he does not expect ***him*** and at an hour which he does not know, **51** and will cut him in two and will appoint his

24:31 Isa 27:13; Deut 30:4; Zech 2:6
24:32 Luke 21:29,30; Mark 13:28,29
24:33 James 5:9; Ezek 7:2-14; Heb 10:37
24:34 Matt 16:28; Matt 23:36; Matt 12:45
24:35 Isa 40:8; 1 Pet 1:25; Num 23:19
24:36 Mark 13:32; Acts 1:7; 2 Pet 3:10
24:37 Gen 7:7; Gen 5:29; Gen 7:1
24:38 Gen 6:14; Gen 7:1; Gen 7:10
24:39 Judg 20:34; Gen 6:17; Gen 7:10
24:40 Luke 17:34-37; 2 Pet 2:5,7-9; 2 Chr 33:12-24
24:41 Exod 11:5; Isa 47:2
24:42 Matt 25:13; Luke 21:36; 1 Cor 16:13
24:43 Luke 12:39; Matt 20:11; Prov 7:19
24:44 Matt 25:10,13; Rev 19:7; Luke 12:40
24:45 2 Tim 2:2; Heb 3:5; 1 Cor 4:1,2
24:46 Rev 16:15; Matt 25:34; Luke 12:37,43
24:47 Matt 25:21,23; Dan 12:3; Luke 12:37,44
24:48 Isa 32:6; Deut 15:9; 2 Kgs 5:26
24:49 1 Kgs 16:9; Ps 125:5; 2 Pet 2:13,14
24:50 Eccl 8:7; Eccl 8:11; Isa 56:12
24:51 Matt 8:12; Job 20:29; Isa 33:14

24:31 *they will gather together His elect from the four winds* Some see the rapture here. I believe it is a different gathering. At the rapture the Lord Himself comes in the air and believers are caught up to meet Him (1 Thess 4:16-17). Here, after the Tribulation, angels gather the elect on the earth to the King, as the prophets foretold a great trumpet regathering Israel (Isa 27:12-13; Deut 30:3-4): the believing remnant of Israel and Tribulation believers entering His kingdom.

24:32 *learn the parable from the fig tree* Most trees in Israel stay green all winter, but the fig loses its leaves, and new leaves mean summer is near. Some see the fig tree as Israel and its return to the land in 1948 as a sign. That may be so, and Israel's return is remarkable, but Jesus' point here is simple: the signs tell you He is coming.

24:33 *when you see all these things, know that it is near, at the doors* All these things are the birth pains, the abomination and the great tribulation. Those who see them can know the King is right at the door.

24:34 *this generation will by no means pass away until all these things happen* Three main views. Some say the generation alive then, fulfilled in A.D. 70, but the Son of Man did not come on the clouds then. Some read genea as a race, the Jewish people preserved until all happens. Many take it as the generation that sees "all these things" (24:33), so the whole series happens within one lifetime. Good teachers hold each view. His words will not fail.

24:35 *My words will by no means pass away* Nothing seems more lasting than sky and earth, yet His words outlast creation. Isaiah 40:8 says this of God's word, and Jesus says it of His own. Only God could. Whatever the headlines say, every promise will be kept.

24:36 *concerning that day and the hour no one knows* Mark adds "nor the Son" (Mark 13:32). As man He chose not to use all His divine rights on His own (Phil 2:6-8), and the Father kept the timing in His own authority (Acts 1:7). Now glorified, I believe He knows. Every date setter has been wrong. Our job is not to calculate but to be ready.

24:38 *they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage* Not sins, but ordinary life carried on as if nothing would change. Noah preached righteousness for years (2 Pet 2:5), and they ignored him.

24:39 *until the flood came and took all away* Sudden and unexpected, it took them away in judgment, and only eight were spared. His coming will be like that for everyone not ready.

24:40 *the one is taken and the one is left* Many read this as the rapture, and some pre-tribulation teachers do. But in the verse before, the flood "took all away" in judgment, and Noah's family was left to live in a new world. In Luke "Where, Lord?" (Luke 17:37) is answered with the body and the vultures. I believe this is the Second Coming at the end of the Tribulation: unbelievers taken in judgment, believers left to enter Christ's kingdom on earth.

24:41 *Two women will be grinding at the millhouse* Two people at the same work side by side, one ready and one not. There will be no time then to get ready.

24:42 *keep watch, for you do not know in what hour your Lord comes* To watch is to stay awake like a guard on duty, not to keep calculating. Believers today wait for Christ to come for His church, "the blessed hope" (Titus 2:13), and live each day as if it might be the day.

24:43 *if the master of the house had known in what watch the thief comes* The night was divided into watches of about three hours. A thief sends no note. The day of the Lord comes "as a thief in the night" (1 Thess 5:2) on the unbelieving world, but it should not overtake believers, who are children of the light (1 Thess 5:4-5).

24:44 *you also be ready* Ready means right with God now, not planning to be someday. If Jesus came today, would you be ready to meet Him? If you are not sure, turn from your sin and trust Christ now. There may not be a later.

24:45 *the faithful and wise slave whom his master has set over his household* A trusted slave managed the household's daily needs. Pastors and teachers feed God's people with His Word (John 21:15-17; 1 Pet 5:2-4), and every believer has something to look after for the Master.

24:46 *Blessed is that slave whom his master, having come, will find so doing* He was not told the day, and he was faithful anyway. He is set over all his master's possessions. Faithfulness now leads to greater responsibility in the kingdom (25:21; Luke 19:17).

24:48 *My master delays to come* Said in his heart. Deciding the master is not coming soon, he abuses those under him and indulges himself. Scoffers will say "Where is the promise of His coming?" (2 Pet 3:3-4). What we believe about Christ's return shapes how we live.

24:51 *will cut him in two and will appoint his portion with the hypocrites* One of the harshest punishments of that time, a picture of being cut off completely. He was a servant on the outside but not in his heart, and he ends where hypocrites belong (8:12; 22:13). When the Master comes, what will He find us doing?

portion with the hypocrites; there will be the weeping and the gnashing of the teeth.

MATTHEW 25

The Ten Virgins

1 Then the kingdom of the heavens will be likened to ten virgins, who, having taken their lamps, went out to meet the bridegroom. **2** Now five of them were wise, and the ***other*** five ***were*** foolish. **3** Those who ***were*** foolish, having taken their lamps, did not take oil with themselves; **4** but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. **5** Now while the bridegroom was delaying, they all became drowsy and were sleeping. **6** And in the middle of ***the*** night there was a cry: 'Look, the bridegroom is coming! Go out to meet him!' **7** Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. **8** And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us ***some*** of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' **9** But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest there not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.' **10** And while they were going away to buy, the bridegroom came, and those ***who were*** ready went in with him to the wedding feast, and the door was shut. **11** And afterward the remaining virgins also come, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!' **12** But he, answering, said, 'Truly I say to you, I do not know you.' **13** Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.

The Talents

14 For ***it is*** just as a man going on a journey called his own slaves and handed over to them his possessions. **15** And to one he gave approximately 375 pounds (five talents), and to another approximately 150 pounds (two ***talents***), and to another approximately 75 pounds (one ***talent***), to each according to ***his*** own ability; and he went on the journey immediately. **16** Now the one who had received the five talents, having gone, traded with them and made another five talents. **17** Likewise also the one ***who had received*** the two, he also gained another two. **18** But the one who had received the one, having gone away, dug in the ground and hid the money of his master. **19** And after a long time the master of those slaves comes and settles accounts with them. **20** And the one who had received the five talents, having come, brought another five talents, saying, 'Master, you handed over five talents to me; look, I have gained another five talents in addition to them.' **21** And his master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave! You were faithful over a few things; I will set you over many things. Enter into the joy of your master.' **22** And the one who had received the two talents also, having come, said, 'Master, you handed over two talents to me; look, I have gained another two talents in

25:1 Matt 13:24,31,38,44,45,47; Luke 12:35,36; Rev 19:7
25:2 Jer 24:2; Matt 7:24-27; 1 Cor 10:1-5
25:3 Isa 48:1,2; Isa 58:2; Matt 23:25,26
25:4 Zech 4:2; Zech 4:3; John 3:34
25:5 Matt 25:19; Matt 24:48; Hab 2:3
25:6 Exod 11:4; Job 34:20; Matt 24:44
25:7 Luke 12:35; 2 Pet 3:14; Rev 2:4,5
25:8 Luke 12:35; Matt 3:9; Luke 16:24
25:9 Ps 49:7; Ezek 14:14; Jer 15:1
25:10 Gen 7:16; Luke 13:25; Rev 22:11
25:11 Matt 7:21-23; Heb 12:16,17
25:12 2 Tim 2:19; Luke 13:26-30; Ps 1:6
25:13 Matt 24:42-44; Mark 13:33-37; 1 Cor 16:13
25:14 Matt 21:33; Mark 13:34; Luke 19:12,13
25:15 Matt 18:24; Luke 12:48; Luke 19:13,14
25:16 2 Sam 7:1-3; 1 Chr 13:1-3; 1 Chr 22:1-26
25:17 Gen 18:19; 2 Sam 19:32; 1 Kgs 18:3,4
25:18 Prov 18:9; Prov 26:13-16; Hag 1:2-4
25:19 Matt 25:5; Matt 24:48; Matt 18:23,24
25:20 Luke 19:16,17; Acts 20:24; 1 Cor 15:10
25:21 Luke 16:10; Matt 25:23; John 12:26
25:22 Luke 19:18,19; Rom 12:6-8; 2 Cor 8:1-3,7,8,12

25:1 *ten virgins, who, having taken their lamps, went out to meet the bridegroom* "Then" ties this to His coming in chapter 24. The bridegroom went in the evening to bring his bride home in a joyful procession to the feast. Unmarried friends of the bride waited along the way with torches or small clay lamps that needed oil.
25:2 *five of them were wise, and the other five were foolish* On the outside all ten looked the same: lamps, waiting, invited.
25:4 *the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps* The wise prepared for a delay. The foolish had the look of readiness without the substance. Many see the oil as the Holy Spirit (Zech 4:1-6); others as real, living faith. Being in church, knowing the songs and carrying a Bible are not enough. You must have the real thing inside.
25:5 *while the bridegroom was delaying, they all became drowsy and were sleeping* All ten slept, and Jesus does not blame them. The wise were prepared even while they slept. The delay reminds us the Lord is patient, "not wishing any to perish" (2 Pet 3:9).
25:6 *in the middle of the night there was a cry* Midnight, the least expected hour. The time for getting ready was over. It was time to go.
25:9 *go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves* It sounds harsh, but it is the heart of the parable. You cannot borrow someone else's faith. A godly mother, a believing husband or a respected pastor cannot give you their relationship with God (Ezek 14:14).
25:10 *and the door was shut* Some of the most sobering words in the Bible. The Lord shut Noah in (Gen 7:16), and the door that kept them safe shut everyone else out. Today the door is still open. Jesus is the door (John 10:9). Go through Him while you can.
25:12 *Truly I say to you, I do not know you* Like 7:21-23. He knew who they were, but they had no real relationship with Him. They knew about Him, were around Him, said the right words, but did not belong to Him.
25:13 *Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour* Watching means being prepared at all times. In its setting this speaks of the Second Coming after the Tribulation, when those who only looked ready are shut out. I believe Christ will come for His church before the Tribulation, and that could be any moment. Are you ready? Not your family, not your church. You.
25:14 *handed over to them his possessions* Jesus would soon go back to heaven and leave His work with His servants. Our time, money, abilities, opportunities and the gospel itself belong to Him. We are managers, not owners (1 Cor 4:1-2).
25:15 *to each according to his own ability* A talent was a large weight of silver or gold, not a coin, and the SLB gives the weights in pounds. Even one was many years' wages, and our word talent for ability comes from this parable. God gives different gifts and amounts (Rom 12:6; 1 Pet 4:10), but no servant has been given nothing.
25:17 *he also gained another two* "Having gone": they put the money to work right away and both doubled it. God measures not how much we have but what we do with what He gave.
25:18 *dug in the ground and hid the money of his master* Burying money was a common way to keep it safe. He did not steal or waste it. He did nothing with it. One can avoid open sin and still be unfaithful by doing nothing for the Master. Every gift matters.
25:19 *after a long time the master of those slaves comes and settles accounts with them* His return would not be right away, and there will be a reckoning. For believers it is the judgment seat of Christ (2 Cor 5:10), not about whether we are saved but rewards for faithful service (1 Cor 3:11-15).
25:21 *Well done, good and faithful slave* He began "you handed over five talents to me," knowing it all came from the master. A fortune is called "a few things" beside what is coming in the kingdom. The reward is more responsibility and a share in his joy. Is there anything you want to hear more than "Well done" from Jesus?

addition to them.' **23** His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave! You were faithful over a few things; I will set you over many things. Enter into the joy of your master.' **24** And the one who had received the one talent also, having come, said, 'Master, I knew you, that you are a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering from where you did not scatter. **25** And having been afraid, having gone away, I hid your talent in the ground. Look, you have what ***is*** yours.' **26** And his master, answering, said to him, 'Wicked and lazy slave! You knew that I reap where I did not sow, and gather from where I did not scatter? **27** Therefore you ought to have put my money with the bankers, and having come, I would have received what ***is*** mine with interest. **28** Therefore take the talent from him, and give ***it*** to the one who has the ten talents. **29** For to everyone who has, ***it*** will be given, and he will have abundance; but from the one who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. **30** And cast out the worthless slave into the outer darkness; there will be the weeping and the gnashing of the teeth.'

The Judgment of the Nations

31 Now when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on ***the*** throne of His glory. **32** And all the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them from one another, just as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. **33** And He will set the sheep on His right, but the goats on ***the*** left. **34** Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from ***the*** foundation of ***the*** world. **35** For I was hungry and you gave Me ***something*** to eat; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; **36** naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.' **37** Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed ***You***, or thirsty and give ***You*** drink? **38** And when did we see You a stranger and take ***You*** in, or naked and clothe ***You***? **39** And when did we see You sick or in prison and come to You?' **40** And the King, answering, will say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did ***it*** to one of these My brothers, the least ***ones***, you did ***it*** to Me.' **41** Then He will also say to those on ***the*** left, 'Go from Me, you cursed, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels. **42** For I was hungry and you did not give Me ***anything*** to eat; I was thirsty and you did not give Me drink; **43** I was a stranger and you did not take Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick and in prison, and you did not visit Me.' **44** Then they themselves also will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?' **45** Then He will answer them, saying, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do ***it*** to one of the least of these,

25:23 Matt 25:21; Mark 14:8,9; Mark 12:41-44
25:24 Matt 7:21; Luke 6:46; Matt 20:12
25:25 2 Sam 6:9,10; Prov 26:13; Isa 57:11
25:26 Matt 18:32; Job 15:5,6
25:27 Luke 19:22,23; Rom 3:19; Jude 1:15
25:28 Luke 10:42; Luke 19:24
25:29 Matt 13:12; Mark 4:25; Luke 8:18
25:30 Matt 8:12; Matt 22:13; Heb 6:7,8
25:31 Dan 7:13; 1 Sam 2:10; 1 Kgs 22:19
25:32 Mal 3:18; Ezek 34:17; Ps 50:3
25:33 Ps 100:3; Ps 45:9; Ps 79:13
25:34 Ps 2:6; Ps 24:7; Zeph 3:15
25:35 Isa 58:7; Ezek 18:7,16; 1 John 3:16-19
25:36 Isa 58:7; James 1:27; James 5:14,15
25:37 1 Pet 5:5,6; Matt 6:3; 1 Chr 29:14
25:40 Prov 19:17; Matt 10:42; Prov 14:31
25:41 Lev 22:3; Deut 28:20; Isa 30:33
25:42 Matt 25:35; Matt 10:37,38; Matt 12:30
25:44 Mal 2:17; Prov 14:31; Eccl 8:12
25:45 Matt 25:40; Ps 105:15; Prov 14:31

25:23 *You were faithful over a few things; I will set you over many things* Word for word the same praise for less. God does not compare you to the person with five talents. He asks whether you were faithful with the two He gave you.
25:24 *I knew you, that you are a hard man* He blamed the master, who had just shown great generosity. He did not know him at all. His fear was not the healthy fear of the Lord but the kind that hides. When we see God wrongly, we serve Him wrongly, or not at all.
25:26 *Wicked and lazy slave* His own words condemned him. Even bankers' interest would have been better than nothing. He did nothing good with what was entrusted to him (James 4:17).
25:29 *to everyone who has, it will be given* As with hearing the Word (13:12), those who use what God gives receive more, and those who neglect it lose even what they have. Use it or lose it.
25:30 *cast out the worthless slave into the outer darkness* Final judgment (8:12; 22:13; 24:51). He was not a true servant who was a little less productive. He never truly knew or trusted his master. We are not saved by works, but one who belongs to Christ will serve Him (James 2:17-18).
25:31 *then He will sit on the throne of His glory* Not a parable, though it uses a shepherd picture. This is His return to the earth at the end of the Tribulation (24:29-31). The throne of glory is David's throne (Luke 1:32-33; Matt 19:28). The rejected Carpenter will sit as King and Judge.
25:32 *all the nations will be gathered before Him* Nations can mean Gentiles. This is the judgment of the nations' people alive on the earth at His return, not the great white throne after the thousand years (Rev 20:11-15; Joel 3:1-2). Many teachers read it as one general final judgment. Sheep and goats grazed together by day and were separated at night. Each is judged one by one.
25:34 *inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world* Now He is "the King," the goal of Matthew's whole Gospel. An inheritance is received by belonging to the family, not earned. These enter Christ's kingdom on earth alive in natural bodies and live in His thousand-year reign (Rev 20:4-6).
25:35 *I was hungry and you gave Me something to eat* Simple kindnesses: a meal, a drink, a coat, a visit. They were not saved by works; the kingdom was prepared for them before they did anything. Their works were the fruit of faith. In the Tribulation those who refuse the mark cannot buy or sell (Rev 13:16-17), and helping them will risk one's life. Only true believers would.
25:37 *Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You* They kept no record and did not help for reward. The Pharisees did works to be seen (23:5). These did not even remember theirs. Jesus remembered every one.
25:40 *to the extent that you did it to one of these My brothers, the least ones, you did it to Me* Many teachers see the Jewish people, His brothers by the flesh, hunted in the Tribulation (24:9, 16-22). Others see His followers (12:48-50; 28:10), including the messengers of 24:14. Some combine them. Either way, how people treat His own is how they treat Him (Acts 9:4). When we care for believers in need, we do it for the Lord.
25:41 *Go from Me, you cursed, into the eternal fire* The sheep hear "Come," the goats "Go from Me." Separation from Christ forever is the heart of hell. The fire was prepared for the devil and his angels, not for people, and God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked (Ezek 33:11). Those who side with the devil share his end.
25:43 *sick and in prison, and you did not visit Me* Not condemned for terrible crimes but for doing nothing for His people. Indifference to Jesus' people is indifference to Jesus.
25:44 *Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty* They seem to say they would have helped had they known. But they saw His people in need and decided they were not worth the risk.
25:45 *neither did you do it to Me* Jesus so identifies with His people that their need is His. Our faith is tested by what we do when one of the least needs help and no one is watching.

neither did you do ***it*** to Me.' **46** And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

MATTHEW 26

The Plot and the Anointing at Bethany

1 And it came about, when Jesus (Iesous) had finished all these words, He said to His disciples, **2** "You know that after two days the Passover takes place, and the Son of Man is handed over to be crucified." **3** Then the chief priests and the scribes and the elders of the people were gathered together into the courtyard of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas (Kaiaphas), **4** and they plotted together in order that they might seize Jesus by deceit and kill ***Him***. **5** But they were saying, "Not during the feast, so that a riot may not arise among the people." **6** Now when Jesus was in Bethany (Bethania), in ***the*** house of Simon the leper, **7** a woman came to Him having an alabaster flask of very costly fragrant oil, and she poured ***it*** on His head as He was reclining. **8** And having seen ***it***, His disciples became indignant, saying, "For what ***purpose is*** this waste? **9** For this fragrant oil could have been sold for much and given to ***the*** poor." **10** But Jesus, having known ***it***, said to them, "Why do you cause trouble for the woman? For she did a beautiful work toward Me. **11** For you always have the poor with you, but Me you do not always have. **12** For in pouring this fragrant oil on My body, she did ***it*** to prepare Me for burial. **13** Truly I say to you, wherever this gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what this ***woman*** did will also be spoken of for a memorial of her."

Judas Agrees to Betray Jesus

14 Then one of the twelve, the one called Judas (Ioudas) Iscariot (Iskariotes), having gone to the chief priests, **15** said, "What are you willing to give me, and I will hand Him over to you?" And they set for him thirty silver ***coins***. **16** And from that time he was seeking an opportunity that he might hand Him over.

The Last Supper

17 Now on the first ***day*** of the Unleavened ***Bread*** the disciples came to Jesus, saying to Him, "Where do You want us to prepare for You to eat the Passover?" **18** And He said, "Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, 'The Teacher says, "My time is near; with you I am keeping the Passover with My disciples."'" **19** And the disciples did as Jesus directed them, and they prepared the Passover. **20** Now evening having come, He was reclining with the twelve. **21** And while they were eating, He said, "Truly I say to you that one of you will hand Me over." **22** And being exceedingly grieved, each of them began to say to Him, "Surely it is not I, Lord?" **23** And He, answering, said, "The one who dipped the hand

25:46 Dan 12:2; John 5:29; Rom 6:23
26:1 Matt 19:1
26:2 Exod 12:11; Exod 34:25; Num 28:16
26:3 2 Kgs 23:4; Jer 19:1; John 11:47-53,57
26:4 Ps 2:2; Matt 23:33; Gen 3:1
26:5 Ps 76:10; Prov 19:21; Prov 21:30
26:6 Matt 21:17; John 12:1; Mark 14:3
26:7 John 12:2,3; Exod 30:23-33; Ps 133:2
26:8 1 Sam 17:28,29; Mark 14:4; Exod 5:17
26:9 Josh 7:20,21; 1 Sam 15:9,21; 2 Kgs 5:20
26:10 Job 13:7; Mark 14:6; Luke 7:44-50
26:11 Deut 15:11; Mark 14:7; John 12:8
26:12 2 Chr 16:14; Mark 14:8; Mark 16:1
26:13 Exod 12:14; Zech 6:14; Mark 14:9
26:14 Matt 10:4; Luke 22:3-6; John 13:2,30
26:15 Zech 11:12; Exod 21:32; Gen 37:26
26:16 2 Kgs 5:25; Mark 14:11; Luke 22:6
26:17 Exod 12:18; Exod 12:6; Lev 23:5
26:18 Exod 12:21; John 7:6,30; John 13:1
26:19 Exod 12:11; Exod 12:21; 2 Chr 35:11
26:20 Mark 14:17-21; John 13:21; Luke 22:14-16
26:21 John 13:21; John 6:70,71; Matt 26:2,14-16
26:22 Mark 14:19,20; Luke 22:23; John 13:22-25
26:23 Ps 41:9; John 13:18,26-28; Luke 22:21

25:46 *these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life* Some teach hell is not forever, that the lost cease to exist or all are finally saved. Jesus uses the same word, eternal, for both. If the life lasts forever, so does the punishment. I take Him at His word, and it breaks my heart. The Judge on the throne is the Jesus who died for sinners, and He still invites them to come (11:28).
26:1 *when Jesus had finished all these words* The last of five closings of His great teaching sections (7:28; 11:1; 13:53; 19:1). The teaching is over. Now comes the cross.
26:2 *after two days the Passover takes place, and the Son of Man is handed over to be crucified* Passover remembered the lamb's blood on the doorposts when the Lord struck Egypt's firstborn (Exod 12). Jesus would die as the true Passover Lamb (1 Cor 5:7). He was not caught in a plot. He named the day before the plotters met.
26:3 *the high priest, who was called Caiaphas* The highest religious leader in Israel and head of the Sanhedrin, about A.D. 18 to 36. He had said one man should die for the people (John 11:49-53).
26:5 *Not during the feast, so that a riot may not arise among the people* Jerusalem was packed with pilgrims who saw Jesus as a prophet. But God had other plans. He would die at the feast, as the Passover lambs were killed, just as He said.
26:6 *in the house of Simon the leper* Likely healed by Jesus, since an active leper could not host guests. John 12:1-8 tells the same event and names the woman Mary, sister of Martha and Lazarus.
26:7 *an alabaster flask of very costly fragrant oil* Alabaster was soft creamy stone carved into fine jars. The oil was worth about a year's wages (Mark 14:5). Guests reclined on cushions around a low table. Kings were anointed on the head, and whether she understood it or not, she anointed the King.
26:8 *For what purpose is this waste* Judas led the complaint, a thief who did not care about the poor (John 12:4-6). What looks like waste to the world is not waste when poured out on Jesus.
26:11 *you always have the poor with you, but Me you do not always have* Not a reason to neglect the poor (Deut 15:11). There is a time for special devotion to Him, and that time was running out.
26:12 *she did it to prepare Me for burial* Bodies were anointed with spices for burial, and His burial would be so rushed it could not be done properly (27:57-61; 28:1). She may have understood what the disciples kept missing.
26:13 *what this woman did will also be spoken of for a memorial of her* Here we are reading about her two thousand years later, in lands she never knew. The disciples called it waste; Jesus made it a memorial. He does not forget love shown to Him (Heb 6:10).
26:15 *they set for him thirty silver coins* Matthew sets Judas beside the woman: she gave a fortune, he sold Jesus for a little money. Thirty silver coins was the price of a slave gored by an ox (Exod 21:32), the shepherd's wage thrown to the potter (Zech 11:12-13). Judas loved money (John 12:6), and Satan entered him (Luke 22:3). Sin allowed to grow can lead us where we never imagined.
26:17 *on the first day of the Unleavened Bread* A seven-day feast beginning with Passover, when all leaven was removed from homes. The lambs were killed at the temple on the afternoon of Nisan 14 and eaten that evening (Exod 12:6-8; Lev 23:5-6). Preparing meant the lamb, unleavened bread, bitter herbs and wine.
26:18 *My time is near* A man carrying a water jar would lead them to an upper room (Mark 14:13-15). Jesus did not name him, perhaps so Judas would not know the place ahead. He walked straight toward His hour.
26:22 *Surely it is not I, Lord* They reclined on their left side, feet behind them. The Greek expects the answer no. They did not accuse each other; each looked at his own heart. When we hear a warning about sin, the right question is whether it is me.
26:23 *The one who dipped the hand with Me in the dish* Several shared one bowl of sauce. The betrayer was someone close, sharing His table, as Psalm 41:9 foretold (John 13:18).

with Me in the dish, this one will hand Me over. **24** The Son of Man indeed goes, just as it has been written concerning Him; but woe to that man through whom the Son of Man is handed over! It would have been good for him if that man had not been born." **25** And Judas, who was handing Him over, answering, said, "Surely it is not I, Rabbi?" He says to him, "You have said ***it***." **26** And while they were eating, Jesus, having taken the bread and having blessed ***it***, broke ***it***, and was giving ***it*** to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." **27** And having taken the cup and having given thanks, He gave ***it*** to them, saying, "Drink from it, all ***of*** you; **28** for this is My blood, the ***blood*** of the new covenant, which is being poured out for many for forgiveness of sins. **29** But I say to you that I will by no means drink from now on of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in the kingdom of My Father." **30** And having sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Peter's Denial Foretold

31 Then Jesus says to them, "All of you will be caused to stumble in Me during this night; for it has been written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.' **32** But after I have been raised, I will go before you into Galilee (Galilaia)." **33** And Peter (Petros), answering, said to Him, "Even if all will be caused to stumble in You, I will never be caused to stumble." **34** Jesus said to him, "Truly I say to you that during this night, before a rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." **35** Peter says to Him, "Even if it is necessary for me to die with You, I will by no means deny You." Likewise all the disciples also said.

Gethsemane

36 Then Jesus comes with them to a place called Gethsemane, and He says to the disciples, "Sit here while I, having gone away over there, pray." **37** And having taken along Peter and the two sons of Zebedee (Zebedaios), He began to be sorrowful and to be deeply distressed. **38** Then He says to them, "My soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain here and watch with Me." **39** And having gone forward a little, He fell on His face, praying and saying, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You ***will***." **40** And He comes to the disciples and finds them sleeping, and He says to Peter, "So, were you not able to watch with Me one hour? **41** Watch and pray, so that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed ***is*** willing,

26:24 Ps 109:6; Zech 12:10; Gen 22:9
26:25 Jer 26:15; Matt 26:64; Matt 27:11
26:26 Gen 14:18; Exod 12:8; Deut 8:4
26:27 Mark 14:23,24; Luke 22:20; Ps 116:13
26:28 Exod 24:7; Jer 31:31; Zech 9:11
26:29 Isa 25:6; Mark 14:25; Acts 10:41
26:30 Luke 22:39; Mark 14:26; Eph 5:19,20
26:31 Zech 13:7; Ezek 34:5; Isa 53:10
26:32 Luke 18:33,34; Mark 16:7; Matt 16:21
26:33 Prov 16:18; 1 Kgs 20:11; Luke 22:33
26:34 Prov 16:18; John 13:38; Luke 22:34
26:35 Prov 16:18; Matt 20:22,23; Prov 28:14
26:36 Luke 22:39-46; Matt 26:39,42; Ps 22:1,2
26:37 Matt 17:1; Mark 5:37; Matt 4:18,21
26:38 Ps 116:3; Isa 53:3; Isa 53:10
26:39 Gen 17:3; Num 14:5; Ezek 1:28
26:40 Matt 25:5; Matt 26:43; Matt 26:35
26:41 Matt 6:13; Matt 25:13; Mark 14:38

26:24 *woe to that man through whom the Son of Man is handed over* God's plan was written and would be carried out, and Judas was fully responsible. God's sovereignty never excuses man's sin (Acts 2:23). For Judas there would be no good ending.
26:25 *Surely it is not I, Rabbi* The others said Lord; Judas said Rabbi, teacher, acting innocent with the money already taken. "You have said it" meant yes. Jesus knew all and still let him sit at His table (John 13:30).
26:26 *Take, eat; this is My body* The unleavened bread pictured a sinless body, since leaven often pictures sin. Bread that had reminded Israel of the haste from Egypt now gained a new meaning: "which is being given for you; do this for My remembrance" (Luke 22:19).
26:27 *having taken the cup and having given thanks* Passover had several cups of wine. This was likely the third, the cup of blessing (1 Cor 10:16).
26:28 *this is My blood, the blood of the new covenant* A covenant is a binding agreement. Sinai was sealed with animal blood (Exod 24:8). Jeremiah promised a new covenant with Israel and Judah, sins remembered no more (Jer 31:31-34). "Poured out" is sacrifice language. The church shares now in its forgiveness, and God will still keep its promises to Israel when Christ returns (Rom 11:26-27). Some teachers say the church took Israel's place; I do not believe that.
26:28 *for forgiveness of sins* Many take "This is My body" as a picture, since He stood there in His body and also called Himself the door and the vine. Paul calls the Supper a remembrance and a proclamation "until He comes" (1 Cor 11:24-26). Roman Catholics hold the elements become His body and blood, Lutherans that He is truly present with them, and many Reformed that He is spiritually present. All should come with reverence, examining their hearts (1 Cor 11:27-29).
26:29 *until that day when I drink it new with you in the kingdom of My Father* In that night's sorrow He looks ahead. The Supper looks back to the cross and forward to eating with Him in His kingdom (Rev 19:9). Every time we take it, we remember He is coming back.
26:30 *having sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives* The meal ended with the second part of the Hallel, Psalms 115-118; Hallel means praise. Jesus sang "A stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner" (Ps 118:22) on the way to the cross. He sang praise on the night He was betrayed.
26:31 *I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered* From Zechariah 13:7. To stumble here is to desert Him in fear. In Zechariah the Lord Himself strikes the shepherd. The cross was God's plan (Isa 53:10).
26:32 *after I have been raised, I will go before you into Galilee* He knew they would fall and had already planned their restoration. That is grace.
26:33 *I will never be caused to stumble* Peter meant it, but he trusted his own strength and compared himself with others. "Let the one who thinks he stands watch, lest he fall" (1 Cor 10:12).
26:34 *before a rooster crows, you will deny Me three times* Not just stumble but deny knowing Him, three times before morning. All the others said the same as Peter. Pride says I would never (Prov 16:18). The safest place is dependence on the Lord.
26:36 *a place called Gethsemane* Oil press, an olive grove at the foot of the Mount of Olives across the Kidron, where Jesus often met with His disciples (John 18:1-2). Olives were crushed under great weight until the oil flowed, a fitting name. Before the cross, He prayed.
26:38 *My soul is very sorrowful, even to death* The three who saw His glory (17:1-2) would see His agony. Fully man, He felt real dread and grief (Heb 4:15). More than the pain, He was about to bear the world's sin and God's wrath, made "sin on our behalf" (2 Cor 5:21). In His darkest hour He wanted His friends close.
26:39 *let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will* Face down in humility. The cup is God's wrath against sin (Ps 75:8; Isa 51:17; Matt 20:22). It was not wrong to ask honestly, and He surrendered. The first Adam chose his own will in a garden; the last Adam chose the Father's (Rom 5:19). If there had been another way, the Father would not have sent His Son to the cross.
26:40 *were you not able to watch with Me one hour* Exhausted and sorrowful (Luke 22:45). Hours after promising to die with Him, Peter could not stay awake with Him.
26:41 *The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak* A great test was coming that night, and prayer was the way to be ready. Peter slept instead and fell. Every believer knows the struggle (Rom 7:18-25). The answer is not trying harder in our own strength, but watching, praying and leaning on God.

but the flesh ***is*** weak." **42** Again, for a second time, having gone away, He prayed, saying, "My Father, if this cup is not able to pass from Me unless I drink it, let Your will be done." **43** And having come, He finds them sleeping again, for their eyes had become heavy. **44** And having left them, having gone away again, He prayed a third time, saying the same word. **45** Then He comes to His disciples and says to them, "Are you sleeping for the rest ***of the time*** and taking your rest? Look, the hour has drawn near, and the Son of Man is handed over into ***the*** hands of sinners. **46** Rise, let us go. Look, the one handing Me over has drawn near."

Jesus Arrested

47 And while He was still speaking, look, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and elders of the people. **48** Now the one handing Him over gave them a sign, saying, "Whomever I kiss, it is He; seize Him." **49** And immediately, having come up to Jesus, he said, "Greetings, Rabbi," and kissed Him. **50** But Jesus said to him, "Friend, ***do that*** for which you are here." Then, having come up, they laid hands on Jesus and seized Him. **51** And look, one of those with Jesus, having stretched out the hand, drew his sword, and having struck the slave of the high priest, cut off his ear. **52** Then Jesus says to him, "Return your sword into its place; for all who take a sword will perish by a sword. **53** Or do you think that I am not able now to call upon My Father, and He will furnish Me more than twelve legions of angels? **54** How then would the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must come about this way?" **55** In that hour Jesus said to the crowds, "Did you come out as against a robber with swords and clubs to capture Me? Every day I was sitting with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize Me. **56** But all this has come about so that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled." Then all the disciples, having forsaken Him, fled.

Jesus Before the Council

57 And those who had seized Jesus led ***Him*** away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled. **58** And Peter was following Him from afar up to the courtyard of the high priest, and having entered inside, he was sitting with the attendants to see the outcome. **59** And the chief priests and the elders and the whole Sanhedrin were seeking false testimony against Jesus so that they might put Him to death, **60** and they did not find ***any***; even though many false witnesses came forward, they did not find ***any***. But at last two false witnesses, having come forward, **61** said, "This ***man*** was saying, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.'" **62** And the high priest, having stood up, said to Him, "Do You answer nothing? What are these testifying against You?" **63** But Jesus was silent. And the high priest, answering, said to Him, "I adjure You by the living God that You tell us whether You are the Christ, the Son of God." **64** Jesus says to him, "You have said ***it***. Never-

26:42 Ps 40:13; Ps 69:13; Ps 89:26
26:43 Prov 23:34; Luke 9:32; Jonah 1:6
26:44 2 Cor 12:8; Matt 6:7; Dan 9:17-19
26:45 John 13:1; Luke 22:53; John 17:1
26:46 John 14:31; 1 Sam 17:48; Luke 9:51
26:47 Matt 26:55; Acts 1:16; Mark 14:43
26:48 Prov 27:6; 2 Sam 3:27; 2 Sam 20:9,10
26:49 Prov 27:6; Matt 27:29,30; Mark 15:18
26:50 Matt 20:13; 2 Sam 16:17; Ps 41:9
26:51 Mark 14:47; 2 Cor 10:4; Matt 26:35
26:52 Gen 9:6; Rev 13:10; Rom 12:19
26:53 Matt 4:11; 2 Kgs 6:17; Dan 7:10
26:54 Ps 69:3; Ps 69:4; Ps 69:5
26:55 1 Sam 26:20; Mark 12:35; John 8:2
26:56 Zech 13:7; Dan 9:24; 1 Kgs 2:27
26:57 Ps 56:5,6; Mark 14:53,54; Luke 22:54,55
26:58 John 18:15,16,25
26:59 Deut 19:16; 1 Kgs 21:8; Ps 27:12
26:60 Deut 19:15; Ps 27:12; Dan 6:4,5
26:61 Deut 19:15; Matt 27:40; Isa 49:7
26:62 Matt 27:12-14; Mark 14:60; Luke 23:9
26:63 Isa 53:7; Lev 5:1; Matt 16:16
26:64 Dan 7:13; Ps 110:1; Matt 26:25

26:42 *let Your will be done* First He asked if the cup could pass; now He accepts that it cannot, in the very words He taught us to pray (6:10).
26:44 *He prayed a third time, saying the same word* Not the empty repetition He warned against (6:7), but a heart pressed to the limit. In great trouble it is right to keep coming back to the Father with the same need.
26:46 *Rise, let us go* The hour He spoke of so often had come (John 12:23, 27). He did not hide in the olive trees. After praying, He walked out to meet the betrayer. He laid down His life Himself (John 10:18).
26:47 *a great crowd with swords and clubs* "One of the Twelve" again. Roman soldiers and temple officers came too (John 18:3), with weapons and torches in the dark, to arrest a Man who had taught openly every day.
26:49 *Greetings, Rabbi," and kissed Him* A disciple's usual greeting of respect for his teacher, so soldiers could pick out the right man in the dark. The word can mean kissed warmly or again and again. He made the sign of love the sign of betrayal (Prov 27:6).
26:50 *Friend, do that for which you are here* Even now He called him Friend. He was not caught off guard. He was in control of His own arrest.
26:51 *cut off his ear* It was Peter, and the slave was Malchus (John 18:10). Jesus touched the ear and healed it (Luke 22:51), healing one of the men who came to take Him.
26:52 *all who take a sword will perish by a sword* His kingdom would not be won by swords (John 18:36). Peter fought a spiritual battle with physical weapons, a mistake the church has made many times. The gospel is not spread by force.
26:53 *more than twelve legions of angels* A legion was about six thousand soldiers, so over seventy thousand angels, when one angel once struck down 185,000 Assyrians (2 Kgs 19:35). He could have stopped it at any moment. He chose not to, because the Scriptures had to be fulfilled and we had to be saved.
26:55 *Every day I was sitting with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize Me* They treated Him like a dangerous criminal and came in the dark because they feared the people.
26:56 *all the disciples, having forsaken Him, fled* Numbered with transgressors (Isa 53:12), the sheep scattered (Zech 13:7), just as He said (26:31). Those who promised to die with Him ran into the night. Jesus went to the cross alone.
26:57 *led Him away to Caiaphas the high priest* First to Annas, Caiaphas' father-in-law and a former high priest (John 18:13), then to the council gathered in the middle of the night.
26:58 *Peter was following Him from afar* To his credit he came back, with John (John 18:15-16), but from afar, near Jesus without being seen with Him, sitting among the men who had arrested his Lord.
26:59 *seeking false testimony against Jesus* The Sanhedrin was the highest Jewish court, about seventy members and the high priest. The verdict was decided; they needed a reason. Later Jewish writings say capital trials were not to be held at night. The Law required witnesses who agreed (Deut 19:15), and the lies did not match (Mark 14:56).
26:61 *I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days* They twisted His words. He had said "Destroy this sanctuary" (John 2:19), and He spoke of His body, not the building in Jerusalem.
26:63 *But Jesus was silent* "He did not open His mouth; like the lamb that is brought to the slaughter" (Isa 53:7). Not weakness but the quiet strength of the Lamb. To adjure is to put under solemn oath before God, and asked directly who He was, He answered.
26:64 *you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power and coming on the clouds of heaven* "You have said it" means yes. He joined Psalm 110:1 and Daniel 7:13; "the Power" is a reverent word for God. You judge Me now, but one day I will judge you. Caiaphas will see Him again.

theless I say to you, from now on you will see the Son of Man sitting at ***the*** right ***hand*** of the Power and coming on the clouds of heaven." **65** Then the high priest tore his garments, saying, "He has blasphemed! What further need do we have of witnesses? Look, now you have heard His blasphemy. **66** What do you think?" And they, answering, said, "He is liable to death." **67** Then they spat into His face and struck Him with fists; and others slapped ***Him***, **68** saying, "Prophesy to us, Christ: who is the one who struck You?"

Peter Denies Jesus

69 Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard; and a servant girl came to him, saying, "You also were with Jesus the Galilean." **70** But he denied ***it*** before all, saying, "I do not know what you are saying." **71** And when he had gone out to the gateway, another ***servant girl*** saw him, and she says to those there, "This ***man*** also was with Jesus the Nazarene." **72** And again he denied with an oath, "I do not know the man." **73** And after a little while those who stood ***by***, having come up, said to Peter, "Truly you also are ***one*** of them, for even your speech makes you evident." **74** Then he began to curse and to swear, "I do not know the man!" And immediately a rooster crowed. **75** And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, who had said to him, "Before a rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." And having gone outside, he wept bitterly.

MATTHEW 27

The End of Judas

1 Now morning having come, all the chief priests and the elders of the people took counsel against Jesus (Iesous) so as to put Him to death. **2** And having bound Him, they led ***Him*** away and handed Him over to Pontius (Pontios) Pilate (Pilatos) the governor. **3** Then Judas (Ioudas), the one who handed Him over, having seen that He was condemned, having regretted ***it***, brought back the thirty silver ***coins*** to the chief priests and to the elders, **4** saying, "I sinned, having handed over innocent blood." But they said, "What ***is that*** to us? You will see ***to it***." **5** And having thrown down the silver ***coins*** in the temple, he withdrew, and having gone away, he hanged himself. **6** And the chief priests, having taken the silver ***coins***, said, "It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since it is ***the*** price of blood." **7** And having taken counsel, they bought with them the field of the potter for a burial place for the strangers. **8** Therefore that field was called "Field of Blood" until this day. **9** Then was fulfilled what was spoken through Jeremiah (Hieremias) the prophet, saying, "And they took the thirty silver ***coins***, the price of the One who had been priced, whom they priced from the sons of Israel, **10** and they gave them for the field of the potter, just

26:65 Matt 9:3; Lev 21:20; 2 Kgs 18:37
26:66 Lev 24:16; John 19:7; Lev 24:11-16
26:67 Isa 50:6; Isa 52:14; Isa 53:3
26:68 Mark 14:65; Luke 22:63-65; Matt 27:39-44
26:69 Matt 26:71; Matt 26:58; 1 Kgs 19:9,13
26:70 1 Cor 10:12; Rev 21:8; Matt 26:34,35,40-43,51,56,58
26:71 Gen 12:13; 1 Kgs 19:3; Dan 11:35
26:72 Matt 5:34-36; Exod 20:7; Isa 48:1
26:73 Dan 11:35; Judg 12:6; Luke 22:59,60
26:74 Num 5:21; Acts 23:12-14; 1 Cor 16:22
26:75 Isa 57:11; Zech 12:10; Matt 26:34
27:1 Jer 19:1; Mark 15:1; Luke 22:66
27:2 Matt 20:19; Acts 3:13; Gen 22:9
27:3 2 Cor 7:10; Matt 26:14-16,47-50; Mark 14:10,11,43-46
27:4 Gen 42:21,22; Exod 9:27; Exod 10:16,17
27:5 2 Sam 17:23; Job 2:9; Judg 9:54
27:6 Luke 6:7-9; Matt 23:24; John 18:28
27:8 Acts 1:19; Matt 28:15; Deut 34:6
27:9 Zech 11:12-13; Exod 21:32; Lev 27:2
27:10 Zech 11:13

26:65 *He has blasphemed* Tearing clothes showed grief or horror. Blasphemy is insulting God or claiming equality with Him. They were right that He claimed it. Their mistake was not believing Him. The Law demanded death for a blasphemer (Lev 24:16), and Israel's leaders condemned their Messiah for telling the truth.
26:67 *they spat into His face and struck Him with fists* Spitting in the face was among the worst insults (Num 12:14; Isa 50:6). Blindfolded (Mark 14:65), He was mocked as a prophet by men whose every name and thought He knew. The hands He made struck their Creator, and He took it for them.
26:70 *I do not know what you are saying* A servant girl, no real danger. The man who drew a sword hours before could not stand up to her. Fear does strange things. The first denial was a dodge.
26:72 *he denied with an oath, "I do not know the man."* He moved toward the gateway to slip out of sight. A Nazarene is a man from Nazareth. Now an oath, and he would not even say Jesus' name.
26:74 *he began to curse and to swear* Galileans had an accent Jerusalem could pick out. He called down curses on himself if he was lying, the worst denial of all. And the rooster crowed.
26:75 *having gone outside, he wept bitterly* The Lord turned and looked at him (Luke 22:61), with love and sorrow. Judas was sorry and took his own life (27:3-5). Peter wept and came back. Jesus had prayed for him (Luke 22:32), restored him (John 21:15-19), and at Pentecost three thousand were saved (Acts 2:41). If you have failed the Lord, even badly, run back to Him (2 Cor 7:10).
27:1 *took counsel against Jesus so as to put Him to death* The night trial was over, but the council met again at dawn to make its decision official (Luke 22:66-71). They had condemned Him, but under Roman rule only the governor could order an execution (John 18:31).
27:2 *handed Him over to Pontius Pilate the governor* Pilate governed Judea from about A.D. 26 to 36. He normally lived in Caesarea on the coast, but he came to Jerusalem during the feasts with extra soldiers to keep order.
27:3 *having regretted it, brought back the thirty silver coins* Maybe Judas never expected it to go this far. Scripture does not tell us. But when he saw the result, he was filled with regret.
27:4 *I sinned, having handed over innocent blood* Even the betrayer testified that Jesus was innocent. The priests answered coldly. They had used him, and now they threw him away. Sin always promises more than it gives, and those who lead us into it do not care what happens to us afterward.
27:5 *he hanged himself* Acts 1:18 adds that he fell headlong and his body burst open. Most likely he hanged himself, and later the body fell. Peter and Judas both failed Jesus that night, and both were sorry. But "the grief according to God produces repentance to salvation without regret, but the grief of the world produces death" (2 Cor 7:10). Peter came back to Jesus; Judas took his sin to the priests instead of the Savior. If you are struggling with dark thoughts, talk to someone today. No sin is too great for Jesus to forgive.
27:6 *It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since it is the price of blood* They had no problem paying for an innocent man's death, but they were careful about where the money went afterward. It is the same hypocrisy Jesus exposed in 23:23-24, straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel.
27:7 *a burial place for the strangers* Foreigners who died in Jerusalem with no family grave were buried there. Acts 1:19 tells us that in Aramaic, the local language, the field was called Akeldama, which means field of blood.
27:9 *Then was fulfilled what was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet* The words most closely match Zechariah 11:12-13, where the shepherd's wage of thirty pieces of silver is thrown to the potter. But Jeremiah also spoke of a potter (Jer 18:1-4), a broken jar in the Valley of Hinnom that would become a burial place (Jer 19:1-11), and buying a field with silver (Jer 32:6-9). Many teachers believe Matthew draws on both prophets and names the greater one. Others note that Jeremiah stood at the head of the scroll of the prophets in the Jewish order. Either way, even the price paid for Jesus had been foretold. The leaders of Israel valued their Messiah at the price of a slave.

as ***the*** Lord directed me."

Jesus Before Pilate

11 And Jesus stood before the governor; and the governor questioned Him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?" And Jesus said to him, "You say ***it***." **12** And while He was being accused by the chief priests and the elders, He answered nothing. **13** Then Pilate says to Him, "Do You not hear how many things they testify against You?" **14** And He did not answer him, not even to one word, so that the governor marveled greatly. **15** Now at ***the*** feast the governor had been accustomed to release to the crowd one prisoner, whom they were wanting. **16** And they were holding at that time a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. **17** Therefore, when they had been gathered together, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release to you: Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?" **18** For he knew that they had handed Him over because of envy. **19** Now while he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying, "***Let there be*** nothing between you and that righteous ***man***; for I suffered many things today in a dream because of Him." **20** But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds that they should ask for Barabbas, and destroy Jesus. **21** And the governor, answering, said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release to you?" And they said, "Barabbas." **22** Pilate says to them, "What then shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?" They all say to him, "Let Him be crucified!" **23** And the governor said, "Why, what evil did He do?" But they were crying out all the more, saying, "Let Him be crucified!" **24** And Pilate, having seen that he was gaining nothing, but rather a riot was arising, having taken water, washed ***his*** hands before the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this righteous ***One***; you will see ***to it***." **25** And all the people, answering, said, "His blood ***be*** on us and on our children." **26** Then he released Barabbas to them; but Jesus, having flogged ***Him***, he handed over so that He might be crucified.

The Soldiers Mock Jesus

27 Then the soldiers of the governor, having taken Jesus into the Praetorium, gathered the whole cohort to Him. **28** And having stripped Him, they put a scarlet cloak around Him. **29** And having twisted together a crown out of thorns, they put ***it*** on His head, and a reed in His right ***hand***; and having bowed the knee before Him, they were mocking Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" **30** And having spit on Him, they

27:11 Mark 15:2; Matt 26:25,64; 1 Tim 6:13
27:12 Isa 53:7; Matt 26:63; Matt 27:14
27:13 Matt 26:62; John 18:35; Acts 22:24
27:14 Ps 71:7; Isa 8:18; Zech 3:8
27:15 Matt 26:5; Mark 15:6,8; Luke 23:16,17
27:16 Mark 15:7; Luke 23:18,19,25; John 18:40
27:17 Josh 24:15; 1 Kgs 18:21; Mark 15:9-12
27:18 Prov 27:4; Gen 37:11; 1 Sam 18:7-11
27:19 Gen 20:3; 1 Pet 2:22; Gen 31:24,29
27:20 Mark 15:11; Acts 14:18,19; Acts 19:23-29
27:22 Ps 22:8; Isa 53:2; Isa 53:3
27:23 1 Sam 20:32; Gen 37:18,19; 1 Sam 19:3-15
27:24 Deut 21:7; Matt 27:4,9,54; Ps 26:6
27:25 Josh 2:19; Acts 5:28; Acts 7:52
27:26 Isa 53:5; Isa 50:6; John 19:1,16
27:27 John 18:28,33; Acts 10:1; Acts 23:35
27:28 Mark 15:17; Luke 23:11; John 19:2-5
27:29 Isa 53:3; Neh 4:1; Isa 52:14
27:30 Isa 52:14; Isa 53:3; Matt 26:67

27:11 *Are You the King of the Jews?* Before their council the charge was blasphemy, but Rome did not care about Jewish religious arguments. Before Pilate they accused Him of claiming to be a king, a rebel against Caesar (Luke 23:2). "You say it" was a yes. But He also explained that His kingdom is not of this world (John 18:36). He was not the kind of rebel Pilate needed to fear.

27:12 *He answered nothing* Pilate had seen many prisoners beg, argue, or curse. He had never seen anyone like this. Jesus was silent like a lamb before its shearers (Isa 53:7). He did not defend Himself, because He had come to die, and the lies answered themselves.

27:16 *a notorious prisoner called Barabbas* Barabbas had taken part in a rebellion in the city and had committed murder (Mark 15:7; Luke 23:19). He was exactly what the leaders falsely claimed Jesus was, a violent rebel against Rome. His name means son of the father. Releasing one prisoner at Passover, the feast of freedom, was a custom to win favor with the people.

27:18 *they had handed Him over because of envy* Pilate saw through the leaders. They were jealous of Jesus' hold on the people. Envy is a deadly sin. It led Cain to kill Abel, Joseph's brothers to sell him, and the leaders of Israel to hand over their Messiah.

27:19 *Let there be nothing between you and that righteous man* Only Matthew tells us this. The judgment seat was the raised platform where a Roman official gave legal rulings. God gave Pilate one more warning. He had his wife's message, his own judgment that Jesus was innocent, and the evidence of envy in the accusers. He had every reason to set Jesus free.

27:20 *persuaded the crowds that they should ask for Barabbas* This crowd at Pilate's palace may have been a different crowd from the one that welcomed Jesus a few days earlier, many of them likely followers of the leaders. Either way, they were easily moved.

27:21 *And they said, "Barabbas."* The guilty man went free, and the innocent Man died in his place. That is the gospel in one picture. We are Barabbas. Jesus took our place.

27:22 *What then shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?* That is a question every person must answer. You cannot stay neutral about Jesus. Pilate tried, and it did not work.

27:23 *Let Him be crucified!* No one answered Pilate's question, because there was no answer. Crucifixion was the Roman way of executing slaves, rebels, and the worst criminals: slow, shameful, and agonizing. The crowd wanted the worst death there was.

27:24 *washed his hands before the crowd* This was a public act to say, I am not responsible (compare Deut 21:7). But washing did not remove his guilt. Pilate had the power to release Jesus (John 19:10), and he gave in to protect his own position. Christians still confess that Jesus suffered under Pontius Pilate. No one can wash his hands of Jesus.

27:25 *His blood be on us and on our children* The crowd took responsibility for His death, and within forty years Jerusalem was destroyed. But this verse has been terribly misused to justify hatred of the Jewish people. That is wicked and has no place in a Christian heart. The crowd did not speak for every Jew in every generation. Gentiles drove in the nails, and my sin and yours put Jesus on the cross. Peter told Jerusalem to repent and their sins would be wiped away (Acts 3:15, 19). His blood cleanses all who trust in Him, Jew and Gentile alike (1 John 1:7).

27:26 *having flogged Him* Roman flogging was brutal. The prisoner was tied to a post and beaten with leather straps tied with bits of bone or metal. Some men died from it alone. Matthew does not dwell on the details. Isaiah tells us why He bore it: "by His wound there was healing for us" (Isa 53:5).

27:27 *the Praetorium, gathered the whole cohort to Him* The Praetorium was the governor's headquarters in Jerusalem. A cohort could number as many as six hundred men at full strength. The whole unit gathered around one beaten prisoner to make sport of Him.

27:29 *having twisted together a crown out of thorns* Thorns came into the world because of sin (Gen 3:17-18). Now the King who came to undo the curse wore the curse as His crown. The reed was a pretend scepter. Those soldiers knelt in mockery. One day every knee will bow to Him in truth (Phil 2:10-11).

27:30 *having spit on Him* They spat on the face of God and drove the thorns down with the reed. He endured it without a word of hatred. Peter, who saw it, wrote that when He was insulted He did not insult back, but entrusted Himself to the One who judges righteously (1 Pet 2:23).

took the reed and were striking ***Him*** on His head. **31** And when they had mocked Him, they took the cloak off Him, and put His garments on Him, and led Him away to crucify ***Him***.

The Crucifixion

32 Now going out, they found a man of Cyrene (Kyrene) named Simon; this ***man*** they compelled to carry His cross. **33** And having come to a place called Golgotha, which is called Place of a Skull, **34** they gave Him sour wine mixed with gall to drink; and having tasted ***it***, He was not willing to drink. **35** And having crucified Him, they divided His garments, casting lots, so that what was spoken by the prophet might be fulfilled: "They divided My garments among themselves, and for My clothing they cast lots." **36** And sitting down, they were guarding Him there. **37** And they put up over His head His accusation written: "THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS." **38** Then two robbers are crucified with Him, one on ***the*** right and one on ***the*** left. **39** And those passing by were blaspheming Him, wagging their heads **40** and saying, "You who destroy the temple and build ***it*** in three days, save Yourself! If You are ***the*** Son of God, come down from the cross!" **41** And likewise the chief priests also, mocking with the scribes and elders, were saying, **42** "He saved others; Himself He is not able to save. If He is ***the*** King of Israel, let Him come down now from the cross, and we will believe Him. **43** He has trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now, if He wants Him; for He said, 'I am ***the*** Son of God.'" **44** And the robbers who had been crucified with Him also were reviling Him with the same thing.

The Death of Jesus

45 Now from ***the*** sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until ***the*** ninth hour. **46** And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" That is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" **47** And some of those standing there, having heard, were saying, "This ***man*** is calling Elijah (Helias)." **48** And immediately one of them, having run and having taken a sponge, and having filled ***it*** with sour wine and having put ***it*** on a reed, was giving Him ***it*** to drink. **49** But the rest were saying, "Leave ***Him***; let us see whether Elijah is coming to save Him." **50** And Jesus, having cried out again

27:31 Isa 53:7; Matt 20:19; Matt 21:39
27:32 Mark 15:21; Luke 23:26; Acts 2:10
27:33 Mark 15:22; John 19:17; Luke 23:27-33
27:34 Ps 69:21; Matt 27:48; Mark 15:23
27:35 Ps 22:18; Ps 22:16; Esth 3:7
27:36 Matt 27:54; Mark 15:39,44
27:37 Ezra 4:6; Isa 44:6; Mark 15:26
27:38 Isa 53:12; Matt 27:44; Mark 15:27,28
27:39 Ps 22:6; Lam 2:15; Ps 22:7
27:40 Job 17:2; Matt 26:61; Matt 4:3,6
27:41 Job 13:9; Ps 22:12,13; Ps 35:26
27:42 2 Kgs 1:9; Ps 22:8; Isa 53:3
27:43 Ps 22:8; Ps 42:10; Isa 53:3
27:44 Isa 53:3; Matt 27:38; Job 30:7-9
27:45 Amos 8:9; Isa 50:3; Exod 10:21
27:46 Ps 22:1; Heb 5:7; Ps 71:11
27:47 Mal 4:5; 1 Kgs 17:1; Matt 11:14
27:48 Ps 69:21; Mal 4:5; Matt 27:34
27:49 1 Kgs 17:1; Mal 4:5
27:50 John 19:30; Mark 15:37; Luke 23:46

27:32 *a man of Cyrene named Simon* A condemned man usually carried the crossbeam himself, but Jesus had been so weakened that He could not carry it all the way. Cyrene was a city in North Africa, in what is now Libya, with a large Jewish community. Mark names Simon's sons, Alexander and Rufus (Mark 15:21), as if the church knew them. Many believe a man forced to carry the cross of Jesus came to take up his own cross and follow Him (16:24).
27:33 *Golgotha, which is called Place of a Skull* Golgotha is Aramaic. The Latin word for skull gives us Calvary. It was outside the city walls (John 19:20; Heb 13:12), near a road where many would pass. Rome wanted people to see.
27:34 *sour wine mixed with gall* Gall was a bitter substance; Mark says the wine was mixed with myrrh (Mark 15:23). The drink may have been meant to dull the pain (compare Ps 69:21). Jesus refused it. He chose to face the cross with a clear mind and drink the full cup the Father gave Him.
27:35 *having crucified Him* The Gospel writers do not describe the horror in detail, because their readers knew it. The nails were driven through wrists and feet, and a crucified man could breathe only by pushing himself up on them. Written about a thousand years before, the psalm says, "they pierced my hands and my feet" (Ps 22:16). The quotation of Psalm 22:18 in the second half of this verse is not in most older Greek copies of Matthew; the same words stand in John 19:24. As He died, His executioners gambled at His feet.
27:37 *His accusation written* Rome posted the crime of the condemned man. John tells us the sign was written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek (John 19:19-20). Pilate meant it as an insult to the Jewish leaders, but it told the whole world the truth: Israel's true King was dying there.
27:38 *two robbers are crucified with Him, one on the right and one on the left* "With transgressors He was numbered" (Isa 53:12). James and John had asked for the places at His right and left (20:21). On the cross those places were taken by two criminals, perhaps rebels like Barabbas.
27:39 *wagging their heads* The psalm foretold it: "All who see me mock at me; they open wide with the lip; they shake the head" (Ps 22:7). Their scorn fulfilled the very Scripture they claimed to defend.
27:40 *If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross!* They threw His own words back at Him, with the same temptation Satan used in the wilderness: "If You are the Son of God" (4:3). Jesus could have come down. He stayed because He was saving us. The nails did not hold Him there. His love did.
27:42 *He saved others; Himself He is not able to save* The most religious men in Israel meant it as a joke, but they spoke the deepest truth of the cross. He could not save Himself and save us at the same time. He chose us. They said they would believe if He came down. Three days later He came out of a tomb, and they still did not believe (28:11-15).
27:43 *He has trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now, if He wants Him* These are nearly the words of Psalm 22:8. The leaders who knew the Psalms by heart did not realize they were fulfilling one as they spoke.
27:44 *the robbers who had been crucified with Him also were reviling Him* At first both robbers mocked Him. Luke tells us one of them changed and believed, and Jesus promised him Paradise (Luke 23:39-43). He was saved in his last hours with nothing to offer but faith. It is never too late to turn to Jesus while you still have breath.
27:45 *darkness over all the land until the ninth hour* From noon until three in the afternoon, darkness covered the land. It could not have been an eclipse, because Passover fell at the full moon. It was an act of God. Darkness in Scripture often speaks of judgment, as in Egypt before the first Passover (Exod 10:21-23) and in Amos 8:9. I believe that during these hours the Father was pouring out His judgment against our sin on His Son.
27:46 *My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?* The opening words of Psalm 22, given in the language Jesus spoke. For all eternity the Father and Son had shared perfect fellowship. Now, bearing our sin, He was forsaken. God "made the One who did not know sin to be sin on our behalf" (2 Cor 5:21). He did not stop being God, and the Trinity was not broken, but He bore the full weight of judgment as our substitute. He was forsaken so that we never will be. Even here He says My God, and Psalm 22 ends in victory (Ps 22:27-31).
27:48 *having filled it with sour wine* This was the cheap sour wine the soldiers drank. Jesus had said, "I am thirsty" (John 19:28), so that Scripture would be fulfilled (Ps 69:21). The rest kept mocking to the end.
27:50 *yielded up the spirit* Crucified men usually died exhausted, barely able to breathe. Jesus cried out "with a loud voice." John tells us the cry: "It has been finished" (John 19:30). No one took His life from Him. He had said, "I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it again" (John 10:18). He died by His own choice, at the moment He chose.

with a loud voice, yielded up the spirit. **51** And look, the veil of the temple was torn into two from top to bottom, and the earth was shaken, and the rocks were split, **52** and the tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; **53** and having come out of the tombs after His resurrection, they entered into the holy city and appeared to many. **54** And the centurion and those with him keeping guard over Jesus, having seen the earthquake and the things that were happening, feared greatly, saying, "Truly this was God's Son." **55** And many women were there, looking on from afar, who had followed Jesus from Galilee (Galilaia), ministering to Him, **56** among whom was Mary (Maria) the Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James (Iakobos) and Joses (Ioses), and the mother of the sons of Zebedee (Zebedaios).

The Burial of Jesus

57 Now evening having come, a rich man from Arimathea (Arimathaia) came, named Joseph (Ioseph), who himself also had become a disciple to Jesus. **58** This ***man***, having gone to Pilate, asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be given up. **59** And Joseph, having taken the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, **60** and placed it in his new tomb, which he had cut in the rock; and having rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb, he went away. **61** And Mary the Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb.

The Guard at the Tomb

62 Now on the next day, which is after the Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees were gathered together to Pilate, **63** saying, "Sir, we have remembered that that deceiver said while ***He was*** still living, 'After three days I am raised.' **64** Therefore command the tomb to be made secure until the third day, lest His disciples, having come by night, steal Him away and say to the people, 'He was raised from the dead,' and the last deception will be worse than the first." **65** And Pilate said to them, "You have a guard; go, make ***it*** as secure as you know ***how***." **66** And having gone, they made the tomb secure, having sealed the stone, with the guard.

MATTHEW 28

He Is Risen

1 Now late on the Sabbath, as it was dawning toward ***the*** first ***day*** of ***the*** week, Mary (Maria) the Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. **2** And look, there was a great

27:51 Exod 26:31; Exod 40:21; Lev 16:2
27:52 1 Cor 15:20; Dan 12:2; John 5:25-29
27:53 Neh 11:1; Matt 4:5; Rev 11:2
27:54 Matt 27:36; Mark 15:39; Matt 8:5
27:55 Luke 8:2,3; Luke 23:27,28,48,49; John 19:25-27
27:56 John 19:25; Matt 28:1; Mark 15:47
27:57 Isa 53:9; John 19:38-42; Mark 15:42,43
27:58 Mark 15:44-46; Luke 23:52,53
27:60 Isa 22:16; Matt 27:66; Matt 28:2
27:62 Mark 15:42; John 19:14,42; Matt 26:17
27:63 Matt 16:21; Luke 9:22; Matt 17:23
27:64 Matt 28:13; Matt 12:45
27:65 Matt 28:11-15; Ps 76:10; Prov 21:30
27:66 Dan 6:17; 2 Tim 2:19
28:1 Matt 27:56,61; Mark 16:1,2; Luke 23:56
28:2 Acts 16:26; Matt 27:51-53; Rev 11:19

27:51 *the veil of the temple was torn into two from top to bottom* The great curtain separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place, where only the high priest went, once a year and never without blood (Heb 9:7). God tore it from heaven down. The way into His presence was open. We now enter "by the blood of Jesus" (Heb 10:19) through "a new and living way" (Heb 10:20). Any believer can come straight to God. The final sacrifice had been made.

27:52 *many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised* Only Matthew records this, and he means real bodies. Fallen asleep is the Bible's gentle way of speaking of a believer's death. The tombs opened at His death, but the saints came out "after His resurrection," because Christ must be the first to rise (1 Cor 15:20; Col 1:18). Whether they died again like Lazarus or were raised in glorified bodies and went to heaven with Jesus, Scripture does not say. What is certain is that His death defeated death, and graves opened to prove it.

27:54 *Truly this was God's Son* A centurion commanded about a hundred soldiers and had likely seen many crucifixions. This Gentile confessed what Israel's leaders would not. Matthew began with Gentile wise men worshiping the newborn King (2:1-2). Near the end, a Gentile soldier confesses Him. The gospel was already reaching the nations.

27:55 *many women were there, looking on from afar* The men had fled. The women stayed. They had supported Jesus from their own means (Luke 8:1-3), and though they could do nothing, they would not leave Him.

27:56 *the mother of the sons of Zebedee* Mary Magdalene came from Magdala on the Sea of Galilee; Jesus had freed her from seven demons (Luke 8:2). Zebedee's wife had once asked for her sons to sit at His right and left (20:20-21). Now she saw who was at His right and left. These women would be the first witnesses of the empty tomb.

27:57 *a rich man from Arimathea came, named Joseph* Sundown would bring the Sabbath, and the Law said a hanged body must not remain overnight (Deut 21:22-23). Joseph was a respected council member who had not agreed with their decision (Mark 15:43; Luke 23:50-51), and a secret disciple out of fear (John 19:38). When the twelve were hiding, a secret disciple became bold.

27:60 *placed it in his new tomb, which he had cut in the rock* Nicodemus helped with a large amount of spices (John 19:39-40). Rome usually left crucified bodies on the cross or threw them in a common grave. But Isaiah had said, "with a rich man in His deaths" (Isa 53:9), and God saw that His Son was buried with honor. A large round stone rolled in a groove to close the entrance. It took several strong men to move it.

27:61 *sitting opposite the tomb* These women saw exactly where He was laid. On Sunday morning they did not go to the wrong tomb. They watched Him die and watched Him buried, and God rewarded their faithfulness by making them the first to hear He had risen.

27:62 *on the next day, which is after the Preparation* The Preparation was Friday, the day to make ready for the Sabbath. So the chief priests and Pharisees went to Pilate on the Sabbath itself, a day they were strict about, because they were worried.

27:63 *After three days I am raised* Here is the irony. The enemies of Jesus remembered His promise to rise, while His own disciples seemed to have forgotten it.

27:64 *the last deception will be worse than the first* They thought they were preventing a hoax. In fact, they were making the evidence for the resurrection even stronger. Pilate told them to use the guard they had, which may mean their own temple guard or Roman soldiers.

27:66 *having sealed the stone, with the guard* The seal was likely a cord stretched across the stone and fixed with wax or clay, stamped with an official mark. Breaking it was a serious crime. A huge stone, an official seal, and armed guards: they did everything human power could do to keep Jesus in the grave. On the third day it was not enough.

28:1 *as it was dawning toward the first day of the week* The Sabbath ended at sundown Saturday, and the women came as first light broke on Sunday. Jesus had been in the tomb from Friday evening until Sunday, three days by the Jewish way of counting, where any part of a day counted as a day. He had said "on the third day" (16:21), and so it was. The women came with spices to anoint a body (Mark 16:1). No one expected a resurrection, so the disciples did not dream it up.

28:2 *rolled away the stone from the door, and was sitting on it* The earth shook at His death (27:51) and again at His resurrection. The stone was not rolled away to let Jesus out; the risen Jesus later came into a locked room (John 20:19). It was moved to let the witnesses in. The sealed and guarded stone became an angel's seat. Heaven was not worried about Rome's seal.

earthquake; for an angel of ***the*** Lord, having descended out of heaven, having come, rolled away the stone from the door, and was sitting on it. **3** And his appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. **4** And from the fear of him those keeping guard trembled and became as dead ***men***. **5** And the angel, answering, said to the women, "Do not fear, you; for I know that you seek Jesus (Iesous), who has been crucified. **6** He is not here; for He has been raised, just as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord was lying. **7** And having gone quickly, say to His disciples that He has been raised from the dead; and look, He goes before you into Galilee (Galilaia); there you will see Him. Look, I have told you." **8** And having gone out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, they ran to tell His disciples. **9** And as they were going to tell His disciples, look, Jesus met them, saying, "Greetings!" And having come up, they took hold of His feet and worshiped Him. **10** Then Jesus says to them, "Do not fear; go, tell My brothers that they should go into Galilee, and there they will see Me."

The Guards' Report

11 Now while they were going, look, some of the guard, having gone into the city, reported to the chief priests all the things that had happened. **12** And having been gathered together with the elders, and having taken counsel, they gave many silver ***coins*** to the soldiers, **13** saying, "Say that His disciples, having come by night, stole Him while we were sleeping. **14** And if this is heard by the governor, we will persuade him and keep you free from trouble." **15** And having taken the silver ***coins***, they did as they were instructed. And this word was spread abroad among ***the*** Jews until the present ***day***.

The Great Commission

16 And the eleven disciples went into Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had appointed them. **17** And having seen Him, they worshiped Him; but some doubted. **18** And Jesus, having come up, spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. **19** Therefore, having gone, make disciples of all the nations, baptizing

28:3 Dan 10:6; Judg 13:6; Mark 9:3
28:4 Rev 1:17; Matt 28:11; Matt 27:65,66
28:5 Heb 1:14; Isa 35:4; Isa 41:10,14
28:6 Matt 16:21; Matt 27:63; Matt 12:40
28:7 Matt 28:10; Matt 26:32; Mark 16:7,8,10,13
28:8 Ps 2:11; Ezra 3:12,13; Mark 16:8
28:9 2 Kgs 4:27; John 20:14-16; Matt 28:17
28:10 John 20:17; Rom 8:29; Matt 28:5
28:11 Matt 27:65,66; Matt 28:4
28:12 Matt 26:3,4; Matt 27:1,2,62-64; Ps 2:1-7
28:13 Matt 26:64
28:14 Acts 12:19
28:15 Matt 27:8; Matt 26:15; 1 Tim 6:10
28:16 Matt 26:32; Matt 28:7,10; Mark 16:14
28:17 Ps 2:12; Ps 45:11; Matt 28:9
28:18 1 Pet 3:22; John 3:35; Eph 1:20-22
28:19 Mark 16:15,16; Ps 96:3; Isa 66:19

28:4 *those keeping guard trembled and became as dead men* The angel shone with the glory Daniel saw (Dan 10:6). Trained soldiers posted to guard a dead man now looked like dead men, while the dead Man was alive. All the power of Rome could not keep Jesus in the grave.
28:5 *Do not fear, you* The guards had reason to fear. The women did not. They had come in love to seek Jesus, and those who seek Him have nothing to fear from heaven.
28:6 *He is not here; for He has been raised, just as He said* The greatest words ever spoken over a grave. The form of the words tells us God raised Him (Acts 2:24). Jesus had told His disciples again and again that He would die and rise the third day. If He kept that promise, He will keep every promise. The angel invited the women to look. Our faith is not a leap in the dark. It rests on facts that could be checked.
28:7 *say to His disciples that He has been raised from the dead* Women were the first sent with the news. In that culture their testimony was often not taken seriously in court, so no one making up the story would have chosen them. The Gospels tell it this way because that is what happened. Going before them into Galilee was the promise of 26:32. They had deserted Him, but He still called them His own.
28:8 *with fear and great joy* They were shaken and full of joy at once. That is a good description of meeting the living God. The proper response to the resurrection is to run and tell someone.
28:9 *they took hold of His feet and worshiped Him* He greeted them with the ordinary greeting of the day. This was no ghost or vision. He had a real body they could touch (Luke 24:39). And He accepted their worship. He had told Satan worship belongs to God alone (4:10). By receiving it, He showed He is God.
28:10 *tell My brothers* These were the men who had run away, and Peter had denied Him three times. Jesus did not call them cowards or traitors. He called them brothers. That is the grace of the risen Christ, who is not ashamed to call us brothers (Heb 2:11).
28:11 *reported to the chief priests all the things that had happened* The guards went to the chief priests, not to Pilate. That suggests they were the temple guard, or Roman soldiers placed under the priests for this task. Either way, they told the leaders the truth.
28:12 *they gave many silver coins to the soldiers* The men who paid Judas thirty silver coins to betray Jesus now paid the soldiers to lie about His resurrection. They did not deny the tomb was empty. They paid to cover it up.
28:13 *stole Him while we were sleeping* If the soldiers were asleep, how did they know who took the body? Would soldiers admit to sleeping on duty, which could bring death? And would the frightened disciples steal a body and then preach, suffer, and die for what they knew was a lie? People die for what they believe is true, not for what they know is false.
28:15 *this word was spread abroad among the Jews until the present day* The story was still told when Matthew wrote, and Justin Martyr in the second century says it was still being repeated. The enemies of Jesus never claimed the tomb still held His body. They admitted it was empty and tried to explain why.
28:16 *to the mountain where Jesus had appointed them* Eleven now, not twelve. Mountains matter in Matthew: the temptation (4:8), the Sermon (5:1), the transfiguration (17:1), the Olivet Discourse (24:3), and now the final commission. The disciples went where Jesus told them. Obedience is where seeing Jesus begins.
28:17 *but some doubted* Matthew did not polish the story. The word means to hesitate, to be of two minds. Some may not have been sure at first that it was Him. Some think this was the meeting with more than five hundred (1 Cor 15:6), which would explain the hesitation. If you struggle with doubt, you are not the first. Jesus did not send the doubters away. He came closer.
28:18 *All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth* Not some. All. Satan once offered Him the kingdoms of the world for a bow (4:8-9). Jesus went to the cross instead, and the Father has given Him all authority. He is the Son of Man of Daniel 7:14. We do not go into the world in our own authority but in His, and there is no nation, culture, or heart where He does not have the right to rule.
28:19 *make disciples of all the nations* This is the Great Commission. The main command is make disciples: learners and followers who have turned to Him in faith and are learning to obey. Having gone assumes His people will be going, at work, at home, and to the ends of the earth. The Twelve were once sent only to Israel (10:5-6). Now the door is open to every people, as God promised Abraham (Gen 12:3).
28:19 *baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit* Baptism is the public step of obedience for a new disciple, following repentance and faith. It does not save, but it shows outwardly what God has done inwardly (Rom 6:3-4). Notice "the name," singular. One name, three Persons. This is one of the clearest statements of the Trinity in the Bible. Jesus puts Himself right alongside the Father and the Spirit. No mere man could say that.

them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **20** teaching them to observe all things, as many as I commanded you; and look, I am with you all the days, until the consummation of the age." Amen.

28:20 Ps 46:7; 1 Kgs 1:36; 1 Chr 16:36

28:20 *teaching them to observe all things, as many as I commanded you* Disciple making does not end at baptism. It goes on for life. We teach new believers to keep and obey everything Jesus commanded, including the Sermon on the Mount, the call to forgive and serve, and the call to be ready for His return. All things. We do not get to pick our favorite parts.
28:20 *I am with you all the days, until the consummation of the age* Matthew began with Immanuel, God with us (1:23), and ends with I am with you. The whole Gospel is wrapped in that promise. All the days, good and bad. He goes with us by His Spirit and will never leave us (Heb 13:5), until the age ends and we see Him face to face. The King is risen. He has all authority. He has given us our orders. Now we go.

MARK

Introduction

Title

The book is named for John Mark, who wrote it. It is the second book of the New Testament and the shortest of the four Gospels. The word gospel means good news, and Mark uses it in his first line: "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (1:1). With Matthew and Luke it is one of the Synoptic Gospels, which see the life of Jesus together and tell many of the same events. Mark is the Gospel of action. He tells almost nothing of Jesus' birth, starts with John the Baptist, and moves fast. The word "immediately" appears more than forty times.

Author and Date

The book does not name its writer, but the early church agreed from the start that John Mark wrote it. John was his Hebrew name and Mark his Roman one. His mother's house in Jerusalem was a place where believers met to pray (Acts 12:12), and he was a cousin of Barnabas (Col 4:10). He turned back partway through the first missionary journey (Acts 13:13), and Paul refused to take him again (Acts 15:37-39). Yet Paul later called him "useful to me for ministry" (2 Tim 4:11), and Peter called him "Mark my son" (1 Pet 5:13). Mark is proof that a person who fails can be restored.

Early writers, among them Papias in the early second century, say Mark was Peter's interpreter and wrote down what Peter preached. The book is full of eyewitness details, and it tells Peter's failures plainly. Some modern scholars doubt the link to Peter, but I see no good reason to set aside what the early church said. Most date the book about A.D. 50 to 65, many in Rome in the 60s. Jesus' words about the temple's fall (13:1-2) read as still waiting to happen, so most place it before A.D. 70.

Background and Setting

Mark wrote mainly for Gentile readers, most likely believers in Rome. He explains Jewish customs (7:3-4), translates Aramaic words such as Talitha koumi (5:41) and Ephphatha (7:34), and uses Latin words familiar to Romans. He names Rufus, son of the man who carried Jesus' cross (15:21), as if readers knew him, and Paul greets a Rufus in Rome (Rom 16:13). After the great fire of A.D. 64, Nero blamed the Christians and put many to death. A book about a suffering Servant and a call to take up the cross (8:34-38) would have meant much to those readers.

The events take place in Israel under Rome, with Pontius Pilate governing Judea and Herod Antipas ruling Galilee. The first half centers on the Sea of Galilee, with Capernaum as Jesus' home base, and reaches into Gentile lands: the Decapolis, Tyre and Sidon, and Caesarea Philippi. The last part takes place in Jerusalem, where the chief priests, scribes and elders ruled through the Sanhedrin.

Themes

Mark shows Jesus as the Son of God and the Servant of the Lord. He has power over sickness, demons, wind and sea, and death, yet He did not come to be served. The theme of the book is in one verse: "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many" (10:45). The first half shows the Servant serving; the second half shows Him giving His life. More than a third of the book covers the last week.

Again and again Jesus tells demons, people He healed, and His disciples to keep quiet about who He is (1:34, 44; 3:12; 8:30). Teachers call this the messianic secret. Most people wanted a warrior king to drive out Rome, and no one could understand what kind of Messiah He is until they saw Him die and rise (9:9). After the resurrection the message is for the whole world (13:10; 16:15).

Mark also calls every reader to follow: to deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Jesus (8:34). The disciples are shown honestly, slow to understand and quick to fail, and restored by grace.

Christ in Mark

Mark's first line names Him the Son of God (1:1), and the Father says it from heaven at the baptism and on the mountain (1:11; 9:7). Yet for most of the book people ask, "Who then is this" (4:41). Peter confesses Him as the Christ (8:29), and at the cross a Roman centurion says, "Truly this man was God's Son" (15:39). It is the cross that shows who Jesus is. He is the Son of Man of Daniel 7, who gave His life as a ransom, rose on the third day, sat down at the right hand of God (16:19), and will come again "in clouds with great power and glory" (13:26).

Hard Passages

Why does Mark say "in the days of Abiathar" (2:26) when 1 Samuel 21 names Ahimelech? The notes explain it as a time marker using the better-known name.

What is the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (3:28-30)? The notes give the main views and assure the worried seeker.

Why do parables hide truth from some (4:11-12)? The notes explain hardening of hearts already closed.

What do Jesus' words on divorce mean (10:11-12)? Good teachers differ, and the notes name the main views without taking a hard side.

Mark 13 is read in the notes as looking ahead to the future Tribulation and the Second Coming, after Christ has come for His church. The abomination of 13:14 is taken as future, the gathering of 13:27 as distinct from the rapture, and "this generation" (13:30) is given its three main readings.

Several verses printed in the SLB are missing from most older Greek copies: 7:16, 9:44 and 9:46, 11:26, 15:28, and 16:9-20. The notes say so plainly where they appear. They are commented on as printed, and no teaching rests on them alone.

Outline

I. The Servant Prepared (1:1-13)
  A. John prepares the way (1:1-8)
  B. The baptism and testing of Jesus (1:9-13)
II. The Servant at Work in Galilee (1:14-7:37)
  A. Authority over demons and disease (1:14-45)
  B. Authority to forgive and Lord of the Sabbath (2:1-3:6)
  C. The twelve chosen and a house divided (3:7-35)
  D. Parables and the storm (4:1-41)
  E. Power over demons, disease and death (5:1-43)

F. Rejected at home, the twelve sent out, and five thousand fed (6:1-56)
G. Clean hearts and opened ears (7:1-37)
III. The Road to the Cross (8:1-10:52)
A. Four thousand fed and eyes opened (8:1-26)
B. Peter's confession and the cost of following (8:27-9:1)
C. The transfiguration and true greatness (9:2-50)
D. Marriage, riches and the Servant who gives His life (10:1-52)
IV. The Last Week in Jerusalem (11:1-15:47)
A. The King comes to Jerusalem (11:1-33)
B. Questions in the temple (12:1-44)
C. Signs of His coming (13:1-37)
D. The Last Supper, Gethsemane and the trial (14:1-72)
E. The crucifixion and burial (15:1-47)
V. The Risen Servant (16:1-20)
A. The empty tomb (16:1-8)
B. Appearances, commission and ascension (16:9-20)

MARK

MARK 1

John the Baptist Prepares the Way

1 ***The*** beginning of the gospel of Jesus (Iesous) Christ, ***the*** Son of God. **2** As it has been written in the prophets, "Look, I send My messenger before Your face, who will prepare Your way before You." **3** "***The*** voice of ***one*** crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of ***the*** Lord; make His paths straight.'" **4** John (Ioannes) came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for forgiveness of sins. **5** And all the region of Judea (Ioudaia) and the people of Jerusalem (Hierosolymites) were going out to him, and they were all being baptized by him in the Jordan (Iordanes) River, confessing their sins. **6** Now John was clothed ***in*** camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist, and eating locusts and wild honey. **7** And he was preaching, saying, "After me comes the ***One*** mightier than I, of whom I am not fit, having stooped down, to untie the strap of His sandals. **8** I indeed baptized you with water, but He Himself will baptize you with ***the*** Holy Spirit."

The Baptism and Testing of Jesus

9 And it came to pass in those days ***that*** Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee (Galilaia) and was baptized by John in the Jordan. **10** And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens being torn open, and the Spirit like a dove descending on Him. **11** And a voice came out of the heavens: "You are My Son, the beloved, in whom I was well pleased." **12** And immediately the Spirit drives Him out into the wilderness. **13** And He was there in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan; and He was with the wild animals, and the angels were ministering to Him.

Jesus Calls Four Fishermen

14 And after John was delivered up, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, **15** and saying, "The time has been fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has drawn near; repent and believe in the gospel." **16** Now walking beside the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew (Andreas) his brother casting a net into the sea; for they

1:1 Matt 14:33; Luke 1:2,3; Luke 2:10,11
1:2 Mal 3:1; Ps 40:7; Isa 40:3
1:3 Isa 40:3; Isa 40:4; Isa 40:5
1:4 Isa 40:3; Matt 3:1,2,6,11; Luke 3:2,3
1:5 Josh 7:19; Isa 40:3; Lev 26:40-42
1:6 2 Kgs 1:8; Lev 11:22; Zech 13:4
1:7 Acts 13:25; John 1:27; Matt 3:11,14
1:8 Acts 1:5; Joel 2:28; Acts 2:4,17
1:9 Matt 3:13-15; Luke 3:21
1:10 Isa 42:1; Luke 3:22; Matt 3:16
1:11 Ps 2:7; Isa 42:1; Matt 3:17
1:12 Matt 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-4
1:13 Deut 9:18; Exod 34:28; Heb 4:15
1:14 Matt 4:23; Matt 4:12; Isa 61:1-3
1:15 Dan 2:44; Gal 4:4; Eph 1:10
1:16 Matt 4:18-22; John 1:40-42; Luke 5:1,4-11

1:1 *The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God* This first verse is the title of the whole book. Gospel means good news; Mark is announcing news that changes everything. Jesus is the Greek form of Joshua, the Lord saves. Christ is a title, the Anointed One, the same as Messiah. Son of God tells us who He really is. Mark will spend sixteen chapters showing it, and a Roman soldier at the cross will say it out loud (15:39).

1:2 *Look, I send My messenger before Your face* Mark joins two prophets, Malachi 3:1 and Isaiah 40:3. The gospel did not come out of nowhere; God promised it centuries before. When a king was coming, a messenger went ahead so roads were repaired and the way cleared. John was that messenger. Notice "Your face" and "Your way": the Father speaks to the Son, and in Isaiah the way is the way of the LORD Himself. Jesus is that Lord.

1:4 *a baptism of repentance for forgiveness of sins* Repentance is a change of mind that leads to a change of direction. John's baptism was an outward sign that a person was turning from sin and getting ready for the Messiah. The water did not wash away sin. It showed sorrow for sin and a turning back to God.

1:5 *confessing their sins* Crowds came from all Judea and Jerusalem. That is where every real meeting with God begins. We cannot be ready for the Savior until we admit we need saving.

1:6 *clothed in camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist* John looked like Elijah, the hairy man with a leather belt (2 Kgs 1:8). Malachi promised Elijah would come before the day of the Lord (Mal 4:5), and Jesus said John came in that role (9:11-13). Locusts were clean food under the Law (Lev 11:22). John lived plainly, and his life said God's message mattered more than comfort.

1:7 *I am not fit, having stooped down, to untie the strap of His sandals* Untying sandals was the job of the lowest slave in a house. John was popular, yet he pointed away from himself. If the greatest prophet of his day felt that way about Jesus, how should we think of Him?

1:8 *He Himself will baptize you with the Holy Spirit* John could only point to the need for a clean heart. Jesus would give the Spirit Himself to live in His people. That promise came true at Pentecost (Acts 1:5; 2:1-4), and every believer receives the Spirit when he trusts in Christ (Eph 1:13).

1:9 *Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John* Nazareth was a small hill village no one expected much from (John 1:46). Jesus lived there quietly about thirty years (Luke 3:23). He had no sin to confess. He said it was fitting to fulfill all righteousness (Matt 3:15). I believe He was standing with the people He came to save. He stepped into the water with sinners because He came to carry their sin.

1:10 *He saw the heavens being torn open* The first "immediately" in Mark, and many more follow. Mark uses the same word for tearing when the temple veil is torn in two (15:38). At the start and at the end of Jesus' ministry, God tears something open to show He is coming near.

1:11 *You are My Son, the beloved, in whom I was well pleased* The whole Trinity at once: the Son in the water, the Spirit descending, the Father speaking. Jesus had not yet preached or done a miracle, and the Father was already pleased with Him. The words echo Psalm 2:7, about God's King, and Isaiah 42:1, about God's Servant. In one sentence the Father calls Jesus both King and Servant.

1:12 *the Spirit drives Him out into the wilderness* Drives is a strong word, the same Mark uses for casting out demons. Straight from the high point at the river, the Spirit sent Him into a hard test.

1:13 *He was with the wild animals, and the angels were ministering to Him* Mark tells the temptation in two verses (see Matt 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13) and adds the wild animals. Judea's wilderness was lonely and dangerous, yet the Father did not leave Him. Adam was tested in a garden with everything and fell. Jesus was tested in a wilderness with nothing and stood firm. Because He was tempted, He can help us when we are tempted (Heb 2:18).

1:14 *after John was delivered up* John was arrested and imprisoned by Herod, a story Mark tells in chapter 6. When John's voice was silenced, Jesus began preaching in Galilee, the region in the north around the Sea of Galilee.

1:15 *repent and believe in the gospel* God's clock had reached the hour He planned, and the King Himself stood in front of them. Repent means turn from sin; believe means trust. They are two sides of one coin. You cannot turn to Christ without turning from sin, and you cannot truly turn from sin without trusting Christ. That is still the message today.

were fishers. **17** And Jesus said to them, "Come after Me, and I will make you become fishers of men." **18** And immediately, having left their nets, they followed Him. **19** And having gone on from there a little, He saw James (Iakobos) the ***son*** of Zebedee (Zebedaios) and John his brother, and they ***were*** in the boat mending the nets. **20** And immediately He called them; and having left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, they went away after Him.

Authority over an Unclean Spirit

21 And they go into Capernaum (Kapernaoum); and immediately on the Sabbaths, having entered into the synagogue, He was teaching. **22** And they were astonished at His teaching; for He was teaching them as having authority, and not as the scribes. **23** And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, and he cried out, **24** saying, "Ha! What ***is there*** to us and to You, Jesus ***the*** Nazarene? Did You come to destroy us? I know You, who You are: the Holy ***One*** of God." **25** And Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silenced, and come out of him!" **26** And the unclean spirit, having thrown him into convulsions and having cried out with a loud voice, came out of him. **27** And they were all astonished, so as to question among themselves, saying, "What is this? What new teaching ***is*** this, that with authority He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him?" **28** Now the news of Him went out immediately into all the surrounding region of Galilee.

Many Healed at Peter's House

29 And immediately, having gone out of the synagogue, they came into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. **30** And the mother-in-law of Simon was lying down, feverish, and immediately they speak to Him about her. **31** And having come to ***her***, He raised her up, having taken hold of her hand; and the fever left her immediately, and she was ministering to them. **32** Now evening having come, when the sun set, they were bringing to Him all who were ill and those being demonized. **33** And the whole city was gathered at the door. **34** And He healed many who were ill with various diseases, and He cast out many demons; and He was not allowing the demons to speak, because they knew Him.

Preaching Throughout Galilee

35 And early, ***while it was*** very much night, having risen up, He went out and departed into a deserted place, and there He was praying. **36** And Simon and those with him pursued Him, **37** and having found Him, they say to Him, "Everyone is seeking You." **38** And He says to them, "Let us go into the neighboring towns, so that I may preach there also; for to this end I have come forth." **39** And He was preaching in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and casting out the demons.

1:17 Matt 4:19,20; Luke 5:10; Ezek 47:10
1:18 Mark 10:28-31; Matt 19:27-30; Luke 5:11
1:19 Mark 3:17; Mark 5:37; Mark 9:2
1:20 Mark 10:29; Deut 33:9; 1 Kgs 19:20
1:21 Matt 4:23; Mark 1:39; Mark 6:2
1:22 Matt 7:28,29; Jer 23:29; Matt 13:54
1:23 Mark 1:34; Mark 5:2; Mark 7:25
1:24 Ps 89:18; Acts 3:14; Matt 8:29
1:25 Mark 1:34; Mark 9:25; Mark 3:11,12
1:26 Mark 9:20,26; Luke 9:39,42; Luke 11:22
1:27 Luke 9:1; Mark 7:37; Matt 9:33
1:28 Mark 1:45; Mic 5:4; Matt 4:24
1:29 Luke 4:38,39; Matt 8:14,15; Luke 9:58
1:30 1 Cor 9:5; Mark 5:23; John 11:3
1:31 Acts 9:41; Mark 5:41; Mark 15:41
1:32 Matt 8:16; Luke 4:40; Mark 1:21
1:33 Mark 1:5; Acts 13:44
1:34 Mark 3:12; Luke 4:41; Acts 16:16-18
1:35 Luke 22:39-46; Eph 6:18; Phil 2:5
1:37 John 12:19; Mark 1:5; Zech 11:11
1:38 Luke 4:43; John 16:28; Isa 61:1-3
1:39 Matt 4:23; Mark 1:21; Luke 4:43,44

1:17 *I will make you become fishers of men* Simon and Andrew had met Jesus earlier (John 1:35-42); this was the call to leave everything. He spoke in words fishermen understood. Notice who does the work: "I will make you." We do not make ourselves fishers of men. Jesus does it as we follow Him.
1:18 *having left their nets, they followed Him* Their nets were their living, and they left them on the shore. Following Jesus always costs something.
1:20 *having left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants* Zebedee's business was big enough to hire workers. James and John left a good living and their own father. These four would be with Jesus from start to finish, and Peter, James and John would be His closest friends. It began on an ordinary workday. Jesus still calls people in the middle of ordinary days.
1:21 *having entered into the synagogue, He was teaching* Capernaum, a fishing town on the north shore of the lake, became His home base. A synagogue was a local meeting place where Jews gathered on the Sabbath to pray, read the Scriptures and hear them explained. Any qualified man could be asked to teach.
1:22 *He was teaching them as having authority, and not as the scribes* The scribes were the experts in the Law of Moses. They taught by quoting other teachers and the traditions of the elders. Jesus quoted no one. He did not tell them what others thought God meant. He told them what God meant, because He is God.
1:24 *I know You, who You are: the Holy One of God* An unclean spirit is a demon, an evil spirit serving Satan, and here it sat in the middle of worship. It knew exactly who Jesus was, and its question shows the demons knew their time was short.
1:25 *Be silenced, and come out of him!* No long talk, no chants or rituals, only two commands. He silenced a demon telling the truth because He would not accept praise from the enemy or let the people get the wrong idea about what kind of Messiah He was. We will see this pattern often in Mark.
1:27 *What new teaching is this, that with authority He commands even the unclean spirits* In one morning they saw authority in His teaching and authority over the spirits. They had never seen anything like Him, and the news spread fast through the region.
1:30 *the mother-in-law of Simon was lying down, feverish* Yes, Peter was married (1 Cor 9:5). "They speak to Him about her" is a good picture of prayer. When someone we love is hurting, we tell Jesus.
1:31 *she was ministering to them* The fever left at once, with no time needed to regain strength. Her first act after being healed was to serve. That is the right response. He serves us, and then we serve Him and others.
1:32 *Now evening having come, when the sun set* The Sabbath ended at sunset. Carrying burdens or traveling far was not allowed on the Sabbath, so the people waited for sundown. Then the whole town filled the street outside Peter's house.
1:34 *He was not allowing the demons to speak, because they knew Him* Jesus chose who would tell His story, and it would not be the forces of darkness.
1:35 *there He was praying* After a long day and late night, He rose in the dark to pray alone. Mark shows Jesus praying at three key moments: here, after feeding the five thousand (6:46), and in Gethsemane (14:32-39). The busier He got, the more He prayed. If the Son of God needed time alone with the Father, how much more do we?
1:38 *for to this end I have come forth* Peter thought Jesus should go back to the waiting crowds. But healing was good, and preaching was His main purpose. Jesus would not let a crowd's demands set His agenda. He let the Father's will set it.

A Leper Cleansed

40 And a leper comes to Him, imploring Him and kneeling down to Him and saying to Him, "If You are willing, You are able to cleanse me." **41** And Jesus, having been moved with compassion, having stretched out His hand, touched him and says to him, "I am willing; be cleansed." **42** And when He had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed. **43** And having sternly warned him, He immediately sent him away, **44** and He says to him, "See ***that*** you say nothing to anyone; but go, show yourself to the priest, and offer for your cleansing the things which Moses commanded, for a testimony to them." **45** But he, having gone out, began to preach much and to spread abroad the matter, so that He was no longer able to enter openly into a city, but He was outside in deserted places; and they were coming to Him from every direction.

MARK 2

A Paralyzed Man Forgiven and Healed

1 And again He entered into Capernaum (Kapernaoum) after ***some*** days, and it was heard that He is in ***the*** house. **2** And immediately many were gathered together, so that ***there was*** no longer room, not even the ***space*** at the door; and He was speaking the word to them. **3** And they come to Him, bringing a paralytic being carried by four. **4** And not being able to come near to Him because of the crowd, they removed the roof where He was; and having dug ***it*** out, they let down the mat on which the paralytic was lying. **5** Now Jesus (Iesous), having seen their faith, says to the paralytic, "Child, your sins have been forgiven you." **6** Now some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, **7** "Why does this ***man*** speak blasphemies thus? Who is able to forgive sins except One, God?" **8** And immediately Jesus, having known in His spirit that they are reasoning thus within themselves, said to them, "Why do you reason these things in your hearts? **9** Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, '***Your*** sins have been forgiven you,' or to say, 'Rise, and take up your mat and walk'? **10** But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on the earth to forgive sins" (He says to the paralytic), **11** "I say to you, rise, and take up your mat and go to your house." **12** And immediately he arose, and having taken up the mat, he went out before all, so that all were amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw ***it*** thus!"

The Call of Levi

13 And He went out again beside the sea; and all the crowd was coming to Him, and He was teaching them. **14** And passing by, He saw Levi (Leui) the ***son*** of Alphaeus (Alphaios) sitting at the tax booth, and He says to him, "Follow Me." And

1:40 Lev 14:2; Num 12:13; 2 Kgs 5:13
1:41 Gen 1:3; Matt 9:36; Mark 6:34
1:42 Lev 14:2; Mark 1:31; Mark 5:29
1:43 Matt 9:30; Mark 3:12; Mark 5:43
1:44 Lev 14:1; Lev 14:2; Lev 13:2
1:45 Matt 9:31; Ps 77:11; Luke 5:15
2:1 Matt 9:1; Luke 18:35-38; Mark 1:45
2:2 Mark 2:13; Mark 1:33,37,45; Mark 4:1,2
2:3 Luke 5:18-26; Matt 9:1,2-8
2:4 Luke 5:19; Deut 22:8
2:5 Matt 9:2; Matt 9:22; John 5:14
2:6 Luke 5:21,22; Mark 8:17; Matt 16:7,8
2:7 Isa 43:25; Luke 7:49; Mark 14:64
2:8 1 Chr 29:17; Matt 9:4; Luke 5:22
2:9 Matt 9:5; Luke 5:22-25
2:10 Dan 7:13; Dan 7:14; Matt 9:6-8
2:11 Mark 1:41; John 5:8-10; John 6:63
2:12 Matt 9:8; Matt 9:33; Luke 7:16
2:13 Matt 9:9; Matt 13:1; Mark 2:2
2:14 Mark 3:18; Luke 5:27; Matt 9:9

1:40 *If You are willing, You are able to cleanse me* Leprosy covered a range of skin diseases. A leper had to live outside the town and cry "Unclean" so people stayed away (Lev 13:45-46). He lost home, work and every human touch. This man did not doubt Jesus' power. He wondered if Jesus cared.
1:41 *having been moved with compassion, having stretched out His hand, touched him* No one had touched this man in who knows how long. Under the Law, touching a leper made a person unclean. But the uncleanness did not pass to Jesus; His cleanness passed to the leper. "I am willing; be cleansed." Jesus still says that to every sinner who comes to Him.
1:44 *go, show yourself to the priest* Leviticus 14 gave the steps: the priest examined a healed leper, declared him clean, and offerings were brought. That gave the man his life back and stood as a testimony to the priests that Someone had come who could cleanse lepers.
1:45 *began to preach much and to spread abroad the matter* Jesus knew that if word of His miracles spread, crowds would come for healing and not for the message. That is what happened. The man's excitement is easy to understand, but his disobedience made Jesus' work harder. It is always best to simply do what He says.
2:2 *He was speaking the word to them* Houses in Capernaum were small, often one main room, and this one, most likely Peter's (1:29), filled fast. People may have come for miracles, but Jesus gave them God's word first. Our greatest need is not a healed body but a right relationship with God, and that comes through His word.
2:4 *they removed the roof where He was* Flat roofs were wooden beams covered with branches and packed clay, with an outside stairway. Picture the dirt falling on the crowd and the sunlight pouring in. These friends did something messy and costly to get their friend to Jesus. Do we care that much about bringing people to Him?
2:5 *Child, your sins have been forgiven you* Faith can be seen; it shows up in what we do, and Jesus honored the faith of these friends. The man came for healing, and Jesus went to the deeper need first. Scripture does not say his illness came from a certain sin, but every one of us has the same deeper problem.
2:7 *Who is able to forgive sins except One, God?* Blasphemy means speaking against God or claiming what belongs to God alone; the Law punished it by death (Lev 24:16). The scribes were right on one point. Every sin is first against God (Ps 51:4), so only He can forgive sin as sin. Jesus was either a blasphemer or God. There is no middle ground.
2:8 *having known in His spirit* No one told Him what they were thinking. This is another quiet sign that He is more than a man.
2:9 *Which is easier* Saying "Your sins have been forgiven you" is easy, because no one can see whether it happened. Telling a paralyzed man to walk is harder, because everyone will know at once. Jesus would do what could be seen to prove what could not be seen.
2:10 *the Son of Man has authority on the earth to forgive sins* The first time Mark uses Jesus' favorite name for Himself. It comes from Daniel 7:13-14, where one like a son of man comes with the clouds and receives authority, glory and an endless kingdom. The title sounded humble but pointed to heaven's throne.
2:12 *We never saw it thus!* The mat that carried him was now carried by him. The healing proved the forgiveness was real. Jesus has authority to forgive sins, and He still uses it for anyone who comes to Him.
2:14 *Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax booth* Levi is Matthew, who wrote the first Gospel (Matt 9:9; 10:3). Tax collectors worked for Rome or Herod, collecting from their own people, and many took more than was owed. Capernaum sat on a trade road. To most Jews, Levi was a traitor and a thief. A fisherman could go back to fishing, but a tax collector who left his booth would not get it back. Levi gave up a lot of money and never regretted it.

having arisen, he followed Him. **15** And it came to pass, as He was reclining in his house, that many tax collectors and sinners were reclining with Jesus and His disciples; for there were many, and they followed Him. **16** And the scribes and the Pharisees, having seen Him eating with the tax collectors and sinners, were saying to His disciples, "Why ***is it*** that He eats and drinks with the tax collectors and sinners?" **17** And having heard, Jesus says to them, "Those who are strong have no need of a physician, but those who are ill. I did not come to call ***the*** righteous, but sinners to repentance."

A Question About Fasting

18 And the disciples of John (Ioannes) and those of the Pharisees were fasting. And they come and say to Him, "Why do the disciples of John and those of the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?" **19** And Jesus said to them, "The sons of the bridechamber are not able to fast while the bridegroom is with them, are they? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they are not able to fast. **20** But days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in those days. **21** And no one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; but if not, its new patch takes away from the old, and a worse tear comes about. **22** And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; but if not, the new wine bursts the wineskins, and the wine is poured out, and the wineskins will perish; but new wine must be put into new wineskins."

Lord of the Sabbath

23 And it came to pass ***that*** He was passing through the grainfields on the Sabbaths, and His disciples began to make ***their*** way, plucking the heads of grain. **24** And the Pharisees were saying to Him, "Look, why are they doing on the Sabbaths what is not lawful?" **25** And He Himself was saying to them, "Did you never read what David (Dabid) did when he had need and was hungry, he and those with him? **26** How he entered into the house of God in ***the days of*** Abiathar the high priest, and ate the loaves of the presentation, which it is not lawful to eat except for the priests, and he gave also to those who were with him?" **27** And He was saying to them, "The Sabbath was made for the sake of man, not man for the sake of the Sabbath. **28** So then the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."

MARK 3

A Withered Hand Healed

1 And He entered again into the synagogue, and there was a man there having a withered hand. **2** And they were watching Him closely, whether He will heal him on the Sabbaths, so that they might accuse Him. **3** And He says to the man having the withered hand, "Rise into the midst." **4** And He says to them, "Is it lawful on the Sabbaths to do good or to do

2:15 Luke 15:1; Matt 9:10,11; Matt 21:31,32
2:16 Isa 65:5; Luke 18:11; Luke 19:7,10
2:17 Luke 5:31,32; Matt 9:12,13; Luke 19:10
2:18 Matt 6:16,18; Luke 18:12; Matt 9:14-17
2:19 Gen 29:22; Judg 14:10,11; Matt 25:1-10
2:20 Isa 54:5; Ps 45:11; Song 3:11
2:21 Matt 9:16; Ps 103:13-15; Isa 57:16
2:22 Matt 9:17; Luke 5:37,38; Josh 9:4,13
2:23 Deut 23:25; Matt 12:1-8; Luke 6:1-5
2:24 Exod 20:10; Isa 56:4; Isa 56:6
2:25 1 Sam 21:3; 1 Sam 21:4; 1 Sam 21:5
2:26 2 Sam 8:17; Lev 24:5; 1 Sam 21:1
2:27 Deut 5:14; Isa 58:13; Exod 16:23
2:28 Exod 16:23; Exod 20:11; Rev 1:10
3:1 Matt 12:9-14; Luke 6:6-11; Mark 1:21
3:2 Luke 14:1; Ps 37:32; Luke 6:7
3:3 Isa 42:4; Dan 6:10; Luke 6:8
3:4 Luke 6:9; Mark 2:27,28; Hos 6:6

2:15 *many tax collectors and sinners were reclining with Jesus* Levi threw a feast (Luke 5:29) so his friends could meet Jesus. Sinners here meant people the religious leaders saw as outsiders, who did not keep the Law or the traditions.
2:16 *the scribes and the Pharisees* The Pharisees were a strict religious group who worked hard to keep the Law of Moses and the many traditions added to it, and they kept themselves separate from anyone they saw as unclean. In that culture, eating with someone meant you accepted him.
2:17 *I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance* Doctors go where the sick people are. Notice the word repentance. Jesus did not eat with sinners to approve their sin but to call them out of it. The Pharisees thought they were well. The difference between them and the tax collectors was not that one group needed Jesus, but that one group knew it.
2:18 *Why do the disciples of John and those of the Pharisees fast* Fasting is going without food for a time to seek God. The Law commanded only one fast a year, on the Day of Atonement (Lev 16:29), but the Pharisees fasted twice a week (Luke 18:12).
2:19 *The sons of the bridechamber are not able to fast while the bridegroom is with them* A Jewish wedding was a week-long celebration, and these were the groom's closest friends. Fasting at a wedding would be like coming to a party dressed for a funeral. Jesus' coming was a time of joy.
2:20 *when the bridegroom is taken away from them* Taken away points to a violent removal. This is the first hint of the cross in Mark. Jesus knew from the start where His road led. Many believers still fast as they pray and wait for His return.
2:22 *new wine must be put into new wineskins* New cloth shrinks and tears an old garment. Fermenting wine expands; a new goatskin stretches with it, but an old, stiff skin bursts. Jesus did not come to patch up the old religious system. What He brought needed a new container. God's grace in Christ is not an add-on to man-made religion. It calls for a whole new life.
2:24 *why are they doing on the Sabbaths what is not lawful?* The Sabbath was Saturday, set apart for rest (Exod 20:8-11). The Law let a hungry traveler pick grain by hand from a neighbor's field (Deut 23:25). But to the Pharisees, picking was harvesting and rubbing grain was threshing. The disciples were breaking the Pharisees' traditions, not God's Law.
2:26 *in the days of Abiathar the high priest* David, fleeing Saul, received the holy bread (1 Sam 21:1-6), the twelve loaves only priests could eat (Lev 24:5-9), and God did not condemn him. Mercy matters to God (Hos 6:6). The priest that day was Ahimelech, Abiathar's father. Abiathar was there and became the best-known high priest of David's reign, so the phrase can simply mark the time by the famous name.
2:27 *The Sabbath was made for the sake of man, not man for the sake of the Sabbath* God gave the Sabbath as a gift, a day of rest for people who needed it. The Pharisees had turned the gift into a burden, as if people existed to serve the rules.
2:28 *the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath* God gave the Sabbath, so only God could be its Lord. A Sabbath rest remains for God's people, entered by trusting Christ (Heb 4:9-10), and no one should judge us about Sabbath days (Col 2:16-17). Christians differ on keeping a day of rest today, but Jesus is Lord of our days and gives rest to all who come to Him (Matt 11:28).
3:2 *they were watching Him closely* Luke the doctor tells us it was the right hand (Luke 6:6), the one a working man needed most. The Pharisees were not there to worship. Their traditions allowed help on the Sabbath only when a life was in danger, and they hoped He would heal so they could accuse Him. It is a sad thing when people go to worship only to find fault.
3:4 *Is it lawful on the Sabbaths to do good or to do evil, to save a life or to kill?* He brought the man out where all could see. The question cut two ways. Jesus was about to give a man his hand back, while they sat in the synagogue planning to kill Him (3:6). Who was really breaking the Sabbath? They had no answer.

evil, to save a life or to kill?" But they were silent. **5** And having looked around at them with anger, being grieved at the hardness of their heart, He says to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he stretched ***it*** out, and his hand was restored sound as the other. **6** And the Pharisees, having gone out, immediately were holding counsel with the Herodians against Him, how they might destroy Him.

Crowds by the Sea

7 And Jesus (Iesous) withdrew with His disciples to the sea; and a great multitude from Galilee (Galilaia) followed Him, and from Judea (Ioudaia), **8** and from Jerusalem (Hierosolyma), and from Idumea (Idoumaia), and beyond the Jordan (Iordanes); and those around Tyre (Tyros) and Sidon, a great multitude, having heard how many things He was doing, came to Him. **9** And He spoke to His disciples that a small boat should wait on Him because of the crowd, so that they would not crush Him. **10** For He healed many, so that they were falling upon Him in order that they might touch Him, as many as had afflictions. **11** And the unclean spirits, whenever they saw Him, were falling down before Him and crying out, saying, "You are the Son of God." **12** And He was rebuking them much, so that they would not make Him known.

The Twelve Appointed

13 And He goes up on the mountain and summons those whom He Himself wanted; and they went to Him. **14** And He appointed twelve, so that they might be with Him, and so that He might send them out to preach, **15** and to have authority to heal the diseases and to cast out the demons. **16** And He put ***the*** name Peter (Petros) on Simon; **17** and James (Iakobos) the ***son*** of Zebedee (Zebedaios), and John (Ioannes) the brother of James, and He put on them ***the*** names Boanerges, which is, "Sons of thunder"; **18** and Andrew (Andreas), and Philip (Philippos), and Bartholomew (Bartholomaios), and Matthew (Matthaios), and Thomas, and James the ***son*** of Alphaeus (Alphaios), and Thaddaeus (Thaddaios), and Simon the Cananite, **19** and Judas (Ioudas) Iscariot (Iskariotes), who also delivered Him up. And they come into a house.

A House Divided

20 And a crowd comes together again, so that they are not able even to eat bread. **21** And those belonging to Him, having heard, went out to seize Him; for they were saying, "He is beside Himself." **22** And the scribes who had come down from Jerusalem were saying, "He has Beelzebul," and, "By the ruler of the demons He casts out the demons."

3:5 1 Kgs 13:6; Ps 95:10; Isa 44:18
3:6 Mark 12:13; Matt 22:16; Matt 12:14
3:7 Josh 20:7; Josh 21:32; Matt 4:25
3:8 Num 32:33; Josh 13:8; Josh 19:28
3:9 Mark 5:30; John 6:15
3:10 Mark 6:56; Matt 14:36; Acts 19:11,12
3:11 Matt 4:3,6; Mark 1:23,24; Luke 4:41
3:12 Matt 12:16; Mark 1:25,34; Acts 16:18
3:13 Matt 10:1-4; Luke 6:12-16
3:14 John 15:16; Acts 1:24,25; Gal 1:1,15-20
3:16 John 1:42; Mark 1:16; Matt 16:16-18
3:17 Mark 1:19,20; Mark 5:37; Mark 9:2
3:18 Acts 1:13; Mark 2:14; Matt 9:9
3:19 Matt 26:14-16,47; Matt 27:3-5; John 6:64,71
3:20 Mark 6:31; John 4:31-34; Mark 3:9
3:21 Acts 26:24; John 10:20; Mark 3:31
3:22 2 Kgs 1:2; Matt 15:1; Matt 9:34

3:5 *having looked around at them with anger, being grieved at the hardness of their heart* One of the few places the Gospels say Jesus was angry, and His anger was mixed with grief. Their hard hearts cared more about rules than a hurting man. That is righteous anger, aimed at sin and full of sorrow for the sinner. The man could not stretch out his hand by himself, but he obeyed. Jesus often asks what we cannot do, then gives the power as we obey.

3:6 *holding counsel with the Herodians against Him, how they might destroy Him* The Herodians were Jews who supported Herod's family and, through Herod, Roman rule. They and the Pharisees normally could not stand each other, but they agreed Jesus had to go. Only chapter 3, and the plot has begun. Jesus spent the Sabbath giving life; His enemies spent it planning death.

3:8 *from Idumea, and beyond the Jordan; and those around Tyre and Sidon* Galilee in the north, Judea and Jerusalem in the south, Idumea far south in old Edom, the land east of the river, and the Gentile coast to the northwest. People came from every direction, Jews and some Gentiles. In three chapters His name had spread through the whole land.

3:10 *as many as had afflictions* The word for afflictions is the word for a whip or scourge, a picture of the pain of sickness. When you are hurting and Someone can heal you, you push. But Jesus kept a boat ready and made room to teach. He would not become only a healer people used and then forgot.

3:12 *He was rebuking them much, so that they would not make Him known* Bible teachers call this the messianic secret. I see three plain reasons in Mark. He would not take His testimony from demons. Most people expected a warrior king to drive out Rome, and would try to make Him that kind of king (John 6:15). And no one could understand who the Messiah is until they saw Him die and rise (9:9). It was a matter of timing. After the resurrection, the secret is out, and every believer's job is to tell it.

3:13 *summons those whom He Himself wanted* The choice was His, and Luke tells us He spent the whole night before in prayer (Luke 6:12).

3:14 *so that they might be with Him, and so that He might send them out to preach* Being with Jesus comes first, and being sent comes second. We cannot give out what we have not first received by spending time with Him. Many of us want to skip straight to the work. Jesus starts with the walk. Twelve matches Israel's tribes, and in the future kingdom these men will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt 19:28). God will keep that promise to Israel.

3:16 *He put the name Peter on Simon* Peter means rock. When Jesus met him, Simon was anything but steady. Jesus named him for what He would make him.

3:17 *Boanerges, which is, "Sons of thunder"* Mark explains Aramaic words and Jewish customs, a sign he wrote for readers outside Israel. The name may have fit their temper; these two wanted to call down fire on a Samaritan village (Luke 9:54). Yet John became the apostle of love who wrote 1 John. Jesus can change anyone.

3:18 *Simon the Cananite* Not a man from Canaan; the word comes from an Aramaic word for zeal, and Luke calls him the Zealot (Luke 6:15). The Zealots wanted to throw off Rome by force. Matthew had worked for Rome; Simon had wanted to fight it. Jesus put them on the same team. Bartholomew is most likely Nathanael (John 1:45-49), and Thaddaeus is Luke's Judas of James (Luke 6:16).

3:19 *Judas Iscariot, who also delivered Him up* Mark tells the end of Judas' story right at the start. He was chosen, sent out, and saw every miracle, and he still betrayed Jesus. Being close to Jesus is not the same as belonging to Him.

3:21 *He is beside Himself* Those belonging to Him were His family (3:31). They thought He had lost His mind. Even His brothers did not believe in Him yet (John 7:5). If your family does not understand your following Jesus, you are in good company. And there is hope: after the resurrection His brothers believed (Acts 1:14), and James became a leader of the church in Jerusalem.

3:22 *He has Beelzebul* Official experts came down from Jerusalem. They could not deny the miracles, so they said His power came from hell. Beelzebul was a name for Satan, perhaps from an old name for a Philistine false god (2 Kgs 1:2).

23 And having summoned them, He was speaking to them in parables: "How is Satan able to cast out Satan? **24** And if a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom is not able to stand. **25** And if a house is divided against itself, that house is not able to stand. **26** And if Satan has risen up against himself and has been divided, he is not able to stand, but has an end. **27** No one is able, having entered into the house of the strong man, to plunder his goods unless he first binds the strong man; and then he will plunder his house. **28** Truly I say to you that all the sins will be forgiven to the sons of men, and the blasphemies, whatever they may blaspheme; **29** but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit does not have forgiveness to the age, but is liable to eternal judgment," **30** because they were saying, "He has an unclean spirit."

Jesus' True Family

31 Then His brothers and His mother come, and standing outside, they sent to Him, calling Him. **32** And a crowd was sitting around Him; and they said to Him, "Look, Your mother and Your brothers outside are seeking You." **33** And He answered them, saying, "Who is My mother, or My brothers?" **34** And having looked around at those sitting around Him in a circle, He says, "Look, My mother and My brothers! **35** For whoever does the will of God, he is My brother and My sister and mother."

MARK 4

The Parable of the Sower

1 And again He began to teach beside the sea. And a great crowd was gathered to Him, so that He, having climbed into a boat, sat in the sea; and all the crowd was by the sea on the land. **2** And He was teaching them many things in parables, and He was saying to them in His teaching, **3** "Listen! Look, the sower went out to sow. **4** And it came to pass, while sowing, some fell along the road, and the birds of the sky came and devoured it. **5** And other fell on the rocky ***ground***, where it did not have much soil; and immediately it sprang up because of not having depth of soil. **6** But the sun having risen, it was scorched; and because of not having root, it withered away. **7** And other fell among the thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it did not yield fruit. **8** And other fell into the good soil, and was yielding fruit, growing up and increasing, and was bearing, one thirty, and one sixty, and one a hundred." **9** And He was saying to them, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

The Sower Explained

10 Now when He was alone, those around Him with the twelve asked Him ***about*** the parable. **11** And He was saying to them, "To you it has been given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God; but to those who are outside, all things are

3:23 Matt 13:34; Ps 49:4; Matt 12:25-30
3:24 1 Cor 1:10-13; Judg 9:23-57; Judg 12:1-6
3:25 Gen 37:4; Gen 13:7,8; Ps 133:1
3:27 Matt 12:29; Isa 49:24-26; Isa 53:12
3:28 Matt 12:31,32; Luke 12:10; 1 John 5:16
3:29 Mark 12:40; Matt 25:46; 2 Thess 1:9
3:30 Mark 3:22; John 10:20
3:31 Luke 8:19-21; Matt 12:46-48
3:33 Mark 3:21; Mark 6:3; Deut 33:9
3:34 2 Chr 15:16; Song 4:9,10; Rom 8:29
3:35 Matt 7:21; 1 John 2:17; John 7:17

4:1 Mark 2:13; Luke 5:1-3; Luke 8:4-8
4:2 Mark 4:11,34; Mark 3:23; Matt 13:3,10,34,35
4:3 Ps 45:10; Isa 46:3; Isa 46:12
4:4 Gen 15:11; Matt 13:4,19; Mark 4:15
4:5 Ezek 36:26; Amos 6:12; Mark 4:16,17
4:6 James 1:11; Song 1:6; Isa 25:4
4:7 Jer 4:3; Gen 3:17,18; Mark 4:18,19
4:8 John 15:5; Mark 4:20; Col 1:6
4:9 Matt 11:15; Mark 7:14,16; Matt 13:9
4:10 Matt 13:10-17,36; Mark 4:34; Mark 7:17
4:11 Matt 11:25; 1 Tim 3:7; Col 4:5

3:24 *if a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom is not able to stand* Plain logic. If Satan cast out his own demons, he would be destroying his own work. Satan is evil, but he is not stupid. We know how true the picture is: a church divided by fighting or a family torn by bitterness cannot stand for long.
3:27 *unless he first binds the strong man* Satan is the strong man, and the people he holds captive are his goods. Jesus is the stronger One who has entered his house, tied him up, and is taking back what he stole. Every demon cast out proved the strong man had met his match. Jesus won in the wilderness (1:12-13) and once for all at the cross (Col 2:15; Heb 2:14).
3:28 *all the sins will be forgiven to the sons of men* Truly is amen. Jesus puts it first to stress that what follows is true and important. Here it opens a huge promise. There is no sin too big for God's forgiveness.
3:29 *whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit does not have forgiveness to the age* Verse 30 tells us what this was: they saw the plain work of the Spirit through Jesus and called it Satan's. They looked at the light and called it darkness, hardening themselves against the only One who leads to repentance. Some teachers limit it to Jesus' earthly days; others see any final unbelief. If you are worried you have committed it, you have not. Anyone who comes to Jesus He will not turn away (John 6:37).
3:31 *His brothers and His mother come* They came to take Him home (3:21). His brothers were James, Joses, Simon and Judas, and He had sisters (Matt 13:55-56). They were the sons of Joseph and Mary, born after Jesus (Matt 1:25). Some churches hold that Mary stayed a virgin all her life and that these were Joseph's sons by an earlier marriage or cousins.
3:35 *whoever does the will of God, he is My brother and My sister and mother* Jesus was not cruel to His family; He cared for His mother even from the cross (John 19:26-27). But there is a family closer than blood, and doing God's will begins with believing in the One He sent (John 6:29). If your own family has rejected you for Jesus, you have brothers, sisters and mothers in His family (10:29-30). And no one is a Christian by being raised in a Christian home. Mary's own sons had to come to faith like everyone else.
4:1 *having climbed into a boat, sat in the sea* Teachers in that day sat to teach. Near Capernaum the land slopes up from the water like a natural theater, and sound carries well across water. Jesus used what was at hand.
4:2 *He was teaching them many things in parables* A parable is a story from ordinary life laid beside a spiritual truth to explain it; the word means to throw alongside. Parables are easy to remember, but they make the listener think. Those who want the truth will dig for it. Those who do not care walk away with a nice story and nothing more.
4:4 *some fell along the road* A farmer often scattered seed by hand as he walked, sometimes plowing afterward, so seed went everywhere. Footpaths through the fields were packed hard, and the seed sat on top for the birds.
4:5 *other fell on the rocky ground* Not a field of loose stones but a shelf of limestone under thin soil, common in Galilee. The shallow soil warmed fast and the seed sprouted fast, but the roots hit rock, found no water, and the plants died in the heat.
4:7 *other fell among the thorns* The thorn roots were already hidden in the ground. They grew faster and taller, took the water, soil and light, and the good plant lived but bore no fruit.
4:8 *one thirty, and one sixty, and one a hundred* A normal harvest then might be far less. Jesus described a harvest beyond what any farmer expected.
4:9 *He who has ears to hear, let him hear* Everyone in the crowd had ears. Jesus meant another kind of hearing: listening with the heart and taking His words in.
4:11 *To you it has been given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God* In the Bible a mystery is a truth God kept hidden before and now reveals. The disciples were not smarter than the crowd. It was given to them.

done in parables, **12** so that seeing they may see and not perceive, and hearing they may hear and not understand, lest they should turn and the sins be forgiven them." **13** And He says to them, "Do you not know this parable? And how will you know all the parables? **14** The sower sows the word. **15** And these are the ***ones*** along the road where the word is sown; and when they hear, immediately Satan comes and takes away the word that has been sown in their hearts. **16** And these are likewise the ***ones*** being sown on the rocky ***places***, who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy; **17** and they do not have root in themselves, but are temporary; then, when tribulation or persecution comes because of the word, immediately they are caused to stumble. **18** And these are the ***ones*** being sown among the thorns, the ***ones*** hearing the word, **19** and the cares of this age, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires concerning the other things, entering in, choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. **20** And these are the ***ones*** having been sown on the good soil, who hear the word and receive ***it*** and bear fruit, one thirty, and one sixty, and one a hundred."

A Lamp on a Stand

21 And He was saying to them, "Does the lamp come so that it may be put under the basket or under the bed? ***Is it*** not so that it may be put on the lampstand? **22** For there is not anything hidden which will not be made manifest, nor did anything become secret except that it should come into the open. **23** If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear." **24** And He was saying to them, "Take heed what you hear. With what measure you measure, it will be measured to you; and it will be added to you who hear. **25** For whoever has, it will be given to him; and he who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him."

The Growing Seed and the Mustard Seed

26 And He was saying, "Thus is the kingdom of God: as if a man should cast the seed on the earth, **27** and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should sprout and grow, how, he himself does not know. **28** For the earth bears fruit by itself: first a blade, then a head, then full grain in the head. **29** But when the fruit permits, immediately he sends the sickle, because the harvest has come." **30** And He was saying, "To what shall we liken the kingdom of God? Or in what parable shall we compare it? **31** ***It is*** like a grain of mustard, which, when it is sown on the earth, is smaller than all the seeds that ***are*** on the earth; **32** and when it is sown, it grows up and becomes greater than all the garden plants, and produces great branches, so that the birds of the sky are able to nest under its shade." **33** And with many such parables He was speaking the word to them, as they were able to

4:12 Isa 6:9-10; Jer 5:21; Isa 44:18
4:13 Ezek 17:12; Zech 4:5; Rev 3:19
4:14 Mark 2:2; Mark 4:3; Isa 32:20
4:15 Gen 19:14; Job 1:6; Zech 3:1
4:16 Ezek 33:31; Ezek 33:32; Mark 6:20
4:17 Matt 12:31; Matt 11:6; 1 Thess 3:3-5
4:18 Mark 4:7; Jer 4:3; Matt 13:22
4:19 1 Tim 6:9,10,17; 2 Tim 4:10; 1 Pet 4:2,3
4:20 Mark 4:8; Matt 13:23; Luke 8:15
4:21 Matt 5:15; Luke 11:33; Luke 8:16
4:22 Luke 8:17; Acts 4:20; Ps 40:9,10
4:23 Mark 4:9; Matt 11:15; Rev 2:7,11,17,29
4:24 Jer 17:21; Matt 7:2; 2 Pet 2:1-3
4:25 Matt 13:12; Luke 8:18; Matt 25:28,29
4:26 John 4:36-38; 1 Pet 1:23-25; Matt 3:2
4:27 Eccl 8:17; Eccl 11:5; John 3:7,8
4:28 Mark 4:31,32; Phil 1:6,9-11; Gen 1:11,12
4:29 Joel 3:13; Job 5:26; 2 Tim 4:7,8
4:30 Lam 2:13; Matt 11:16; Luke 13:18,20,21
4:31 Ezek 17:23; Dan 2:35; Matt 13:31-33
4:32 Ezek 31:3; Dan 4:20; Ezek 31:6
4:33 John 16:12; Matt 13:34,35; 1 Cor 3:1,2

4:12 *so that seeing they may see and not perceive* Jesus quotes Isaiah 6:9-10, where Isaiah's preaching would harden already hard hearts. Parables reveal and hide at once. To an open heart, a parable opens the door wider. To a heart already closed, like the scribes of chapter 3, it becomes a closed door. God does not shut out seeking hearts, but when people keep rejecting the light, He may give them what they chose. Some teachers stress God's sovereign choice more strongly. The call to hear is still open.
4:13 *how will you know all the parables?* The parable of the sower is a key to the rest. Understand this one and you have a tool for the others.
4:14 *The sower sows the word* The seed is God's message, sown first by Jesus and then by all who share it. The sower and the seed never change. Only the soil changes. The difference is in the hearer.
4:15 *immediately Satan comes and takes away the word* The hard road is the heart that hears but never lets the word in. The devil is a thief, using distraction, pride, mockery or simple forgetting. Have you ever heard a sermon Sunday and remembered nothing by Monday? Do not let him take the seed.
4:17 *they do not have root in themselves, but are temporary* Quick to receive, quick to quit. Following Jesus is more than an exciting start. It takes a root that goes deep into Christ. Jesus never promised it would be easy; He said trouble would come because of the word.
4:19 *the cares of this age, and the deceitfulness of riches* Worries, riches that promise happiness and security and lie, and desires for anything we want more than God. None are big, open sins. They are ordinary life: bills, work, things we want. That is what makes them dangerous. They slowly choke the plant until it bears nothing. What are the thorns in your life?
4:20 *who hear the word and receive it and bear fruit* Real faith takes the word in, holds on, and lets it change the life. Not every plant bears the same, and God does not ask us to compare harvests. Teachers debate whether the rocky and thorny soils were ever truly saved: some see people who seemed to believe but never did, others believers who did not grow. Plainly, only the good soil bears fruit, and fruit is the mark of real life (John 15:8).
4:21 *Is it not so that it may be put on the lampstand?* A lamp was a small clay bowl of olive oil with a wick, set on a stand to light the room. The truth about Jesus was veiled for a time, but it was never meant to stay hidden. What we hear from Him in private we are meant to share in public.
4:24 *With what measure you measure, it will be measured to you* Be careful how you listen. The picture is a merchant measuring out grain. Give a little attention to God's word and you get a little. Give much, and God gives more, and more besides.
4:25 *he who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him* It sounds unfair until you think about learning anything. A person who uses what he knows learns more. One who ignores it loses even that. God's word works the same way. Use it or lose it.
4:27 *how, he himself does not know* Only Mark records this parable. A great comfort to anyone who shares the gospel. We plant and water, but God makes it grow (1 Cor 3:6-7). We cannot see what He is doing in a heart. Growth takes time and comes in stages. Be patient with new believers and with yourself.
4:29 *he sends the sickle, because the harvest has come* The harvest points to the end of the age, when God gathers His harvest and judges the world (Joel 3:13; Rev 14:15).
4:31 *smaller than all the seeds that are on the earth* It was the smallest seed farmers in Israel planted in their gardens, and people used it as a saying for something tiny. The kingdom started small: a carpenter from Nazareth and twelve ordinary men.
4:32 *the birds of the sky are able to nest under its shade* A mustard plant can stand ten feet tall. When Jesus returns to set up His kingdom on the earth, it will fill the world (Dan 2:35, 44). Some see the birds as evil settling into the church, since birds stood for Satan in verse 4. Others see the nations finding shelter, as in Ezekiel 17:23. Either way: small beginnings, huge results.

hear. **34** But without a parable He was not speaking to them; but privately He was explaining all things to His disciples.

Jesus Calms the Storm

35 And He says to them on that day, evening having come, "Let us pass over to the other side." **36** And having dismissed the crowd, they take Him along as He was in the boat; and other little boats also were with Him. **37** And a great storm of wind comes, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that it was already being filled. **38** And He Himself was on the stern, sleeping on the cushion. And they wake Him and say to Him, "Teacher, does it not concern You that we are perishing?" **39** And having been awakened, He rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Be quiet! Be silenced!" And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. **40** And He said to them, "Why are you so fearful? How ***is it that*** you do not have faith?" **41** And they feared a great fear, and they were saying to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?"

MARK 5

Legion Cast Out

1 And they came to the other side of the sea, into the region of the Gadarenes. **2** And when He had come out of the boat, immediately a man out of the tombs with an unclean spirit met Him, **3** who had ***his*** dwelling in the tombs; and no one was able to bind him, not even with chains, **4** because he had often been bound with shackles and chains, and the chains had been torn apart by him and the shackles shattered; and no one was strong ***enough*** to subdue him. **5** And always, night and day, he was in the mountains and in the tombs, crying out and cutting himself with stones. **6** Now having seen Jesus (Iesous) from afar, he ran and worshiped Him, **7** and having cried out with a loud voice, he said, "What ***is there*** to me and to You, Jesus, Son of God Most High? I adjure You by God, do not torment me." **8** For He was saying to him, "Come out, unclean spirit, out of the man!" **9** And He was asking him, "What ***is*** your name?" And he answered, saying, "Legion ***is*** my name, because we are many." **10** And he was begging Him much that He would not send them out of the region. **11** Now there was there near the mountains a great herd of pigs feeding. **12** And all the demons begged Him, saying, "Send us into the pigs, so that we may enter into them." **13** And immediately Jesus allowed them. And having gone out, the unclean spirits entered into the pigs; and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea (now they were about two thousand), and they were drowned in the sea. **14** And those feeding the pigs fled and reported ***it*** in the city and in the fields. And they went out to see what it is that has happened. **15** And

4:34 Mark 4:10; Matt 13:36-43; Matt 15:15-20
4:35 Matt 8:18; Luke 8:22; Matt 8:23
4:36 Mark 4:1; Mark 3:9
4:37 Job 1:19; Jonah 1:4; Ps 107:24
4:38 Job 8:6; 1 Pet 5:7; Heb 4:15
4:39 Ps 89:9; Ps 29:10; Ps 107:29
4:40 Isa 43:2; Matt 14:31; Luke 8:25
4:41 1 Sam 12:24; Ps 89:7; Jonah 1:16
5:1 Mark 4:35; Luke 8:26-39; Matt 8:28-34
5:2 Mark 1:23,26; Isa 65:4; Mark 5:8
5:3 Isa 65:4; Dan 4:32,33; Mark 9:18-22
5:4 James 3:7,8
5:5 Job 2:7,8; 1 Kgs 18:28; John 8:44
5:6 Luke 4:41; James 2:19; Ps 66:3
5:7 1 Kgs 17:18; Matt 8:29; Acts 16:17
5:8 Mark 1:25; Mark 9:25,26; Acts 16:18
5:9 Matt 26:53; Luke 8:30; Luke 11:21-26
5:10 Mark 5:13; Mark 3:22
5:11 Lev 11:7; Deut 14:8; Isa 65:4
5:12 2 Cor 2:11; 1 Pet 5:8; Job 1:10-12
5:13 1 Kgs 22:22; Job 1:12; Job 2:6
5:14 Matt 8:33; Luke 8:34
5:15 Col 1:13; 2 Tim 1:7; 1 Sam 6:20,21

4:34 *privately He was explaining all things to His disciples* He gave the crowd what they could take in. Those who stay close to Jesus get the explanation. If you want to understand His word, spend time with Him in it.
4:35 *Let us pass over to the other side* He did not say we are going halfway and then sinking. When Jesus tells you where you are going, you will get there. The other boats are a small eyewitness detail, the kind Peter would remember.
4:37 *a great storm of wind comes* The lake lies about 700 feet below sea level, ringed by hills. Cool air can rush down the valleys and hit the warm water without warning. Even fishermen like Peter feared these storms.
4:38 *sleeping on the cushion* The stern is the back of the boat. He was tired, and He slept; the Son of God was a true man. "Does it not concern You?" Have you ever prayed that? It can feel that way when the storm is loud and Jesus seems quiet. But His sleep was not a lack of care. It was perfect peace.
4:39 *Be quiet! Be silenced!* He spoke to the storm as He spoke to the demon (1:25). Even after wind stops, waves keep rolling, but the sea went flat at once. Only God rules the raging sea and stills its waves (Ps 89:9; 107:29). The disciples were watching the God of the Psalms sitting in their boat.
4:40 *How is it that you do not have faith?* They had seen Him heal and heard Him say they were crossing, and still they thought they would die. Faith does not mean we never feel fear. It means we trust the One in the boat with us. Storms come even when we are right where Jesus told us to be. The question is whether Jesus is bigger.
4:41 *Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?* Before, they feared the storm; now they feared the One who stopped it, the holy awe of God's presence. That is the question of the whole book. Mark answered it in his first verse, Peter will answer it in chapter 8, and each of us has to answer it too.
5:1 *into the region of the Gadarenes* The east side of the lake was mostly Gentile country, part of the Decapolis, ten Greek-style cities. Older Greek copies give the name as Gadarenes, Gerasenes or Gergesenes (compare Matt 8:28; Luke 8:26), likely a town and the wider district. The storm had not stopped Jesus. Someone on the other side needed Him.
5:3 *who had his dwelling in the tombs* Matthew mentions two men (Matt 8:28); Mark and Luke focus on the one who spoke. Tombs were caves cut in the hillside, to a Jew the most unclean place there was.
5:5 *crying out and cutting himself with stones* This is what Satan does to those he holds. He isolates them, torments them, and gets them to harm themselves. He never gives life, only takes it (John 10:10). Society had no answer but chains. Jesus had a better answer.
5:7 *Jesus, Son of God Most High* The demons did not doubt who He was. They feared Him; the demons believe and shudder (James 2:19). Knowing facts about Jesus is not the same as trusting Him. The tormentor now begged not to be tormented. The demons know their final end is coming (Rev 20:10).
5:9 *Legion is my name, because we are many* Jesus asked so the size of the problem would be clear to all. A Roman legion was several thousand soldiers. This man was troubled by a whole army of demons. Luke adds that they begged not to be sent into the abyss (Luke 8:31), a place of confinement for evil spirits.
5:12 *Send us into the pigs* Pigs were unclean under the Law (Lev 11:7), and no faithful Jew would raise them. This was Gentile country. The demons could go nowhere without His permission.
5:13 *the herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea* Why let the pigs be destroyed? Scripture does not give all His reasons. But the drowning proved the demons were real and had truly left the man, showed what they had wanted to do to him all along, and showed that one soul is worth more to Jesus than a whole herd of pigs.
5:15 *sitting and clothed and being of sound mind* The naked, screaming man sat calm, at the feet of Jesus (Luke 8:35). And the people were afraid.

they come to Jesus and see the ***one*** being demonized sitting and clothed and being of sound mind, the ***one*** having had the legion; and they were afraid. **16** And those having seen ***it*** related to them how it happened to the ***one*** being demonized, and concerning the pigs. **17** And they began to implore Him to depart from their region. **18** And when He had gotten into the boat, the ***one*** having been demonized was begging Him that he might be with Him. **19** But Jesus did not permit him, but says to him, "Go to your house, to your own ***people***, and report to them how much the Lord did for you, and ***how*** He had mercy on you." **20** And he departed and began to preach in the Decapolis (Dekapolis) how much Jesus did for him; and all were marveling.

Jairus' Daughter and a Woman Healed

21 And Jesus having crossed over again in the boat to the other side, a great crowd was gathered to Him; and He was beside the sea. **22** And look, one of the synagogue rulers comes, Jairus (Iaeiros) by name; and having seen Him, he falls at His feet, **23** and he was begging Him much, saying, "My little daughter is at the point of death; ***I ask*** that, having come, You may lay ***Your*** hands on her, so that she may be saved, and she will live." **24** And He departed with him. And a great crowd was following Him, and they were pressing in on Him. **25** And a certain woman, being with a flow of blood twelve years, **26** and having suffered much under many physicians, and having spent all that she had, and having benefited nothing, but rather having come to the worse, **27** having heard about Jesus, having come in the crowd behind, touched His garment. **28** For she was saying, "If I touch even His garments, I will be saved." **29** And immediately the fountain of her blood was dried up, and she knew in the body that she has been healed of the affliction. **30** And immediately Jesus, having known in Himself that power had gone forth out of Him, having turned around in the crowd, was saying, "Who touched My garments?" **31** And His disciples were saying to Him, "You see the crowd pressing in on You, and You say, 'Who touched Me?'" **32** And He was looking around to see her who had done this. **33** And the woman, having been afraid and trembling, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell down before Him and told Him all the truth. **34** And He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has saved you; go in peace, and be healthy from your affliction." **35** While He was still speaking, they come from the synagogue ruler, saying, "Your daughter died; why do you still trouble the Teacher?" **36** And Jesus, immediately having heard the word being spoken, says to the synagogue ruler, "Do not fear; only believe." **37** And He did not allow anyone to follow with Him except Peter (Petros) and James (Iakobos) and John (Ioannes) the brother of James. **38** And He comes to the house of the synagogue ruler, and He sees a commotion, and ***people*** weeping and wailing much. **39** And having entered, He says to them, "Why are you making a commotion

5:17 Job 21:15; Matt 8:34; Mark 5:7
5:18 Luke 8:38,39; Mark 5:7,17; Ps 116:12
5:19 Ps 66:16; Isa 38:9-20; Dan 4:1-3,37
5:20 Matt 4:25; Mark 7:31
5:21 Matt 9:1; Luke 8:40
5:22 Luke 13:14; Acts 13:15; Acts 18:8,17
5:23 Mark 16:18; Luke 4:40; Luke 13:13
5:24 Mark 5:31; Luke 7:6; Acts 10:38
5:25 Lev 15:25; Lev 15:26; Lev 15:27
5:26 Job 13:4; Jer 8:22; Jer 30:12,13
5:27 Acts 19:12; Acts 5:15; Mark 6:56
5:29 Lev 20:18; Mark 5:34; Mark 3:10
5:30 Luke 6:19; Luke 8:46; 1 Pet 2:9
5:31 Luke 8:45; Luke 9:12
5:33 Mark 4:41; Luke 1:12,29; Luke 8:47
5:34 1 Sam 1:17; Luke 8:48; Luke 7:50
5:35 John 11:28; Luke 8:49; John 5:25
5:36 Isa 37:6; Luke 8:50; Matt 9:28,29
5:37 Acts 9:40; Mark 9:2; Mark 14:33
5:38 Eccl 12:5; Jer 9:17-20; Matt 9:23,24
5:39 Acts 20:10; Dan 12:2; John 11:11-13

5:17 *they began to implore Him to depart from their region* Perhaps they feared His power, or cared more about their pigs and money than about a man made whole. It still happens. When Jesus starts to change things, it can cost us, and some would rather have their pigs than Jesus. He left. He does not force Himself on anyone.

5:19 *Go to your house, to your own people, and report to them how much the Lord did for you* The man wanted to stay close to the One who freed him, but Jesus gave him a job. Here He did not ask for silence. This was Gentile land, where no one was looking for a Jewish Messiah to make king, and Jesus was leaving. He left behind a witness.

5:20 *began to preach in the Decapolis how much Jesus did for him* Told to tell what the Lord did, he told what Jesus did. He understood they are the same. When Jesus returned to the region, crowds were waiting (7:31-37; 8:1-9). One changed man had prepared the way. You can start at home and tell your own people what the Lord has done for you.

5:22 *one of the synagogue rulers comes, Jairus by name* A synagogue ruler arranged the services and chose who would read and teach, an important man in town, and many religious leaders were already against Jesus. But when your child is dying, you do not care what the other leaders think.

5:25 *being with a flow of blood twelve years* The Law made her unclean, and anyone she touched (Lev 15:25-27). She could not go to the temple or join in worship. For twelve years she had been shut out.

5:26 *having suffered much under many physicians* Mark tells it plainly; Luke the doctor puts it more gently (Luke 8:43). Sick, broke, alone and out of hope. When we reach the end of every human answer, we often finally reach for Jesus.

5:28 *If I touch even His garments, I will be saved* She came from behind, not wanting to be seen, since by the Law she should not have been in that crowd at all. Saved here means made well, rescued. Twelve years of sickness ended in a moment, and she felt it in her body.

5:30 *Who touched My garments?* The disciples thought it a silly question with people bumping Him on every side. But Jesus knew the difference between a crowd pressing against Him and one person reaching out in faith. Many are near Jesus. Fewer reach out and touch Him by faith. He would not let her slip away.

5:33 *told Him all the truth* Not to embarrass her. I believe Jesus wanted her to have more than a healed body. He wanted her to know Him, to know her healing was not stolen, and He wanted the town to know she was clean.

5:34 *Daughter, your faith has saved you* The only person in the Gospels Jesus calls Daughter. For twelve years no one had touched her; now the Son of God calls her family. She came for healing and left with peace. Her faith did not heal her. Jesus did. Her faith was the hand that reached out to Him. A weak, trembling faith in a strong Savior is enough.

5:35 *Your daughter died; why do you still trouble the Teacher?* While Jesus stopped for the woman, Jairus' daughter died. The delay must have felt like it cost him everything.

5:36 *Do not fear; only believe* Jesus did not say, do not be sad. He said, do not let fear take over; keep trusting Me. Jairus had believed Jesus could heal a sick girl. Now he had to believe He could raise a dead one. Jesus is never late. His delays can be part of a greater plan (John 11:6, 21-27).

5:37 *except Peter and James and John* These three would also see the transfiguration (9:2) and be near Him in Gethsemane (14:33).

5:39 *The child did not die, but is sleeping* Families hired professional mourners to wail and play flutes (Matt 9:23). She really was dead, and everyone knew it. Jesus meant that, for Him, death is like sleep. Someone asleep will wake. That is how the New Testament speaks of believers who have died (1 Thess 4:13-14).

and weeping? The child did not die, but is sleeping." **40** And they were laughing at Him. But He, having put ***them*** all out, takes along the father of the child and the mother and those with Him, and enters in where the child was lying. **41** And having taken hold of the hand of the child, He says to her, "Talitha koumi," which is, being translated, "Little girl, I say to you, arise." **42** And immediately the little girl arose and was walking; for she was twelve years ***old***. And they were amazed with great amazement. **43** And He instructed them strictly that no one should know this, and He said ***that something*** should be given to her to eat.

MARK 6

Rejected at Nazareth

1 And He went out from there and came into His hometown, and His disciples follow Him. **2** And when ***the*** Sabbath came, He began to teach in the synagogue; and many hearing were astonished, saying, "From where ***are*** these things to this ***man***? And what ***is*** the wisdom that has been given to Him, that even such miracles are done through His hands? **3** Is this not the carpenter, the son of Mary (Maria), and brother of James (Iakobos) and Joses (Ioses) and Jude (Ioudas) and Simon? And are His sisters not here with us?" And they were caused to stumble in Him. **4** And Jesus (Iesous) was saying to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown, and among his relatives, and in his house." **5** And He was not able to do any miracle there, except that, having laid ***His*** hands on a few sick ***people***, He healed ***them***. **6** And He was marveling because of their unbelief. And He was going around the villages in a circle, teaching.

The Twelve Sent Out

7 And He summons the twelve, and He began to send them out two ***by*** two, and He was giving them authority over the unclean spirits. **8** And He instructed them that they should take nothing for the road except a staff only: no bag, no bread, no money in the belt, **9** but having sandals tied on, and not to put on two tunics. **10** And He was saying to them, "Wherever you enter into a house, remain there until you go out from there. **11** And as many as do not receive you nor hear you, departing from there, shake off the dust that ***is*** under your feet for a testimony to them. Truly I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Sodom (Sodoma) or Gomorrah (Gomorra) in ***the*** day of judgment than for that city." **12** And having gone out, they were preaching that ***people*** should repent. **13** And they were casting out many demons, and were anointing with oil many sick ***people***, and were healing

5:40 2 Kgs 4:33; Gen 19:14; Neh 2:19
5:41 Mark 1:31; John 5:28,29; Luke 7:14,15
5:42 Mark 1:27; Mark 4:41; Mark 6:51
5:43 Matt 8:4; Mark 1:43; Mark 3:12
6:1 Matt 13:54-4; Luke 4:16-30
6:2 Mark 1:21,22,39; Luke 4:15,31,32; John 6:42
6:3 Isa 53:2; Isa 53:3; Matt 12:46
6:4 John 4:44; Luke 4:24; Jer 11:21
6:5 Mark 9:23; Gen 19:22; Matt 13:58
6:6 Matt 9:35; Luke 13:22; Matt 8:10
6:7 Eccl 4:9; Eccl 4:10; Mark 3:13,14
6:8 Matt 10:9,10; Luke 10:4; Luke 22:35
6:9 Acts 12:8; Eph 6:15
6:10 Matt 10:11-13; Luke 9:4; Luke 10:7,8
6:11 Ezek 16:48; Ezek 16:49; Neh 5:13
6:12 Matt 4:17; Ezek 18:30; Matt 3:2,8
6:13 James 5:14,15; Luke 10:17; Mark 6:7

5:40 *they were laughing at Him* The mourners went from weeping to mocking in a moment. Jesus put them out and took only the parents and His three disciples. Unbelief had no place in that room.
5:41 *Talitha koumi* Touching a dead body made a person unclean (Num 19:11), but again Jesus touched the unclean and gave life. Mark keeps the very Aramaic words, the everyday language of the Jews then, and translates them. Peter heard them in that room and, I believe, never forgot them. They were gentle words, the kind a parent says to wake a child in the morning.
5:42 *she was twelve years old* The woman had been sick twelve years; this girl had lived twelve years. Both were given new life the same day.
5:43 *something should be given to her to eat* He wanted no miracle-seeking crowd to keep Him from His real work. And He thought of her being hungry. The Lord of life cares about the small things too. One day Jesus will speak and the dead in Christ will rise (1 Thess 4:16; John 5:28-29). Death does not have the last word. Jesus does.
6:2 *From where are these things to this man?* In Nazareth, likely in the synagogue He had attended all His life, they could not deny the wisdom or the miracles, but they could not figure out where they came from. Teachers differ on whether Luke 4:16-30 tells this same visit or an earlier one. Either way, Nazareth did not welcome Him.
6:3 *Is this not the carpenter, the son of Mary* The word means a builder or craftsman in wood and sometimes stone. They had seen Him make their tables and doors. Calling a man his mother's son was unusual; it may have been an insult whispering about His birth, or Joseph may have died. These brothers and sisters were Joseph and Mary's children born after Jesus. James and Jude would later believe and write the letters that bear their names.
6:3 *they were caused to stumble in Him* The word comes from skandalon, a trap or stumbling block. They tripped over His ordinary life. They thought they knew Him, so they missed Him. That can happen to people who grew up around church too.
6:4 *A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown* A well-known saying Jesus applied to Himself. Those closest to us often find it hardest to believe God works through us; they remember us as kids. If your family has brushed you off, Jesus felt it too. Keep living it out in front of them. His own brothers came around in the end.
6:5 *He was not able to do any miracle there* Jesus did not lose His power; He still healed a few. He would not force His works on people who refused to believe. His miracles pointed people to God, and Nazareth had decided not to look.
6:6 *He was marveling because of their unbelief* Only twice do the Gospels say Jesus marveled: at His hometown's unbelief, and at a Roman centurion's great faith (Luke 7:9). Which would Jesus marvel at in you? Rejection did not stop Him. He went on teaching in the villages.
6:7 *He began to send them out two by two* Chosen to be with Him and to be sent (3:14), now they went. The Law required two witnesses (Deut 19:15), and two can help, encourage and pray for each other (Eccl 4:9-10). Jesus never meant His people to serve alone. The power was His, shared with them for the work.
6:8 *no bag, no bread, no money in the belt* Men carried coins in a fold of the belt; a tunic was the long shirt under the cloak. They were to depend on God to provide through those who welcomed them. This was a short trip through Galilee; before the cross Jesus gave different instructions (Luke 22:35-36). The lesson stays: trust God to supply what you need for the work He gives.
6:11 *shake off the dust that is under your feet for a testimony to them* Jews coming back from Gentile lands sometimes shook off the dust so as not to bring anything unclean home. Doing it to a Jewish town was a strong warning: the responsibility is now yours. Sodom never heard the messengers of God's Son. The more light we receive, the more we are held responsible. This sentence about Sodom is in the Received Text the SLB follows but not in many older Greek copies of Mark; it stands in Matthew 10:15.
6:12 *they were preaching that people should repent* The heart of their message, the same as John's and Jesus' (1:4, 15).
6:13 *were anointing with oil many sick people* Oil was used as medicine (Luke 10:34) and was a sign of God's touch and blessing. James tells church elders to anoint the sick with oil and pray (James 5:14). The healing came from God, not the oil.

them.

The Death of John the Baptist

14 And King Herod (Herodes) heard ***of it***, for His name had become known; and he was saying, "John (Ioannes) the Baptizer was raised from ***the*** dead, and because of this the powers are at work in him." **15** Others were saying, "He is Elijah (Helias)"; and others were saying, "He is a prophet, or like one of the prophets." **16** But Herod, having heard, said, "Whom I beheaded, John, this is he; he himself was raised from ***the*** dead!" **17** For Herod himself, having sent, seized John and bound him in the prison because of Herodias, the wife of Philip (Philippos) his brother, because he had married her. **18** For John was saying to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have the wife of your brother." **19** And Herodias was holding ***it*** against him and was wanting to kill him, and she was not able; **20** for Herod was afraid of John, knowing him ***to be*** a righteous and holy man, and he was keeping him safe. And having heard him, he was doing many things, and he was hearing him gladly. **21** And an opportune day having come, when Herod on his birthday was making a dinner for his great men and the commanders of thousands and the leading ***men*** of Galilee (Galilaia), **22** and when the daughter of Herodias herself had entered and danced and pleased Herod and those reclining with ***him***, the king said to the girl, "Ask me whatever you wish, and I will give ***it*** to you." **23** And he swore to her, "Whatever you ask me, I will give you, up to half of my kingdom." **24** And having gone out, she said to her mother, "What shall I ask?" And she said, "The head of John the Baptist." **25** And having entered immediately with haste to the king, she asked, saying, "I desire that you give me at once on a platter the head of John the Baptist." **26** And the king, having become very sorrowful, because of the oaths and those reclining with ***him***, was not willing to refuse her. **27** And immediately the king, having sent an executioner, commanded his head to be brought. And having gone, he beheaded him in the prison, **28** and brought his head on a platter and gave it to the girl, and the girl gave it to her mother. **29** And having heard, his disciples came and took up his corpse and laid it in a tomb.

Five Thousand Fed

30 And the apostles are gathered together to Jesus, and they reported to Him all things, both what they had done and what they had taught. **31** And He said to them, "Come, you yourselves, privately into a deserted place and rest a little." For those coming and those going were many, and they were not even having opportunity to eat. **32** And they went away in the boat into a deserted place privately. **33** And the crowds saw them going, and many recognized Him, and on foot from all the cities they ran together there, and went ahead of them, and came together to Him. **34** And having gone out, Jesus saw a great crowd, and He was moved with compassion toward them, because they were like sheep not having a shepherd; and He began to teach them many things. **35** And the hour having already become late, His disciples, having come to Him, say, "The place is deserted, and the hour ***is*** already late. **36** Dismiss them, so that, having gone into the surrounding fields and villages, they may buy loaves for themselves; for they do not have what they may eat."

6:14 Luke 9:7-9; Matt 14:1,2; Luke 3:1
6:15 Mal 4:5; Matt 21:11; Mark 8:28
6:16 Gen 40:10,11; Ps 53:5; Matt 14:2
6:17 Lev 18:16; 1 Kgs 21:25; Matt 11:2
6:18 Lev 18:16; Lev 20:21; 1 Kgs 22:14
6:19 Gen 39:17-20; 1 Kgs 21:20; Eccl 7:9
6:20 Matt 21:26; Matt 14:5; Mark 4:16
6:21 Esth 2:18; Gen 40:20; Gen 27:41
6:22 Esth 1:10-12; Isa 3:16-26; Dan 5:2
6:23 Esth 5:3; Esth 7:2; 1 Sam 28:10
6:24 Gen 27:8-11; 2 Chr 22:3,4; Ezek 19:2,3
6:25 Prov 1:16; Rom 3:15; Num 7:13,19-89
6:26 Matt 14:9; Matt 27:3-5,24,25
6:27 Matt 14:10,11
6:29 1 Kgs 13:29,30; 2 Chr 24:16; Matt 14:12
6:30 Luke 9:10; Mark 6:7-13; Luke 10:17
6:31 Mark 1:45; Mark 3:7,20; Matt 14:13
6:32 Matt 14:13
6:33 Mark 6:54,55; Matt 15:29-31; John 6:2
6:34 Num 27:17; Jer 50:6; Matt 9:36
6:35 Matt 14:15-21; Luke 9:12-17; John 6:5-15
6:36 Matt 15:23; Mark 3:21; Mark 5:31

6:14 *King Herod heard of it* Herod Antipas, a son of Herod the Great, ruled Galilee and Perea for Rome. His real title was tetrarch, ruler of part of a kingdom, but people called him king.
6:16 *Whom I beheaded, John, this is he* People guessed John, Elijah, a prophet. Herod was sure. A guilty conscience will not stay quiet. Mark then goes back to tell what happened.
6:17 *because of Herodias, the wife of Philip his brother* Herod divorced his own wife to marry Herodias, who had been married to his half-brother. The Law forbade marrying a brother's wife while the brother lived (Lev 18:16; 20:21).
6:18 *It is not lawful for you to have the wife of your brother* John told Herod to his face. He did not soften the truth because Herod was powerful. He called sin what it was, and it cost him his freedom.
6:20 *he was hearing him gladly* Herod protected John, respected him and was moved by him, but would not give up his sin. Many are like him. They like a good preacher. But liking the truth is not the same as obeying it.
6:22 *the daughter of Herodias herself had entered and danced* A birthday dinner for the officials and commanders of Galilee. Most likely this was the kind of dance no respectable mother would allow her daughter to do before a room of drunken men. Herodias knew what she was doing.
6:23 *up to half of my kingdom* The rash promise of a proud man showing off before his guests. He had no kingdom to give; Rome did. But he wanted to look big.
6:25 *at once on a platter the head of John the Baptist* Herodias did not hesitate, and the girl hurried back to ask for it like a dish at the dinner.
6:26 *because of the oaths and those reclining with him* Herod was more afraid of looking weak before his guests than of killing a holy man. Pride and fear of people have led many to do what they knew was wrong. A foolish promise is better broken than kept when keeping it means sin.
6:29 *took up his corpse and laid it in a tomb* The greatest prophet of his day (Matt 11:11) died in a prison because of a dance and a drunken promise. To the world he lost; to heaven he finished his work. Mark tells it here because what happened to the forerunner points to what will happen to Jesus. Faithful servants often suffer, but no one who loses his life for Christ truly loses it (8:35).
6:30 *the apostles are gathered together to Jesus* The only time Mark calls them apostles, sent ones, as they returned from being sent.
6:31 *Come, you yourselves, privately into a deserted place and rest a little* They had no time even to eat. Jesus cares about our rest. Serving God does not mean running ourselves into the ground. If you are tired from serving, it is not unspiritual to stop and rest with Jesus.
6:34 *they were like sheep not having a shepherd* Their quiet day was gone, but His first response was compassion, not frustration. Sheep without a shepherd are lost, hungry and helpless (Num 27:17). Israel's leaders had failed to shepherd (Ezek 34:2-6). Jesus is the Good Shepherd (John 10:11), and what they needed most was the truth.

37 But answering, He said to them, "You give them ***something*** to eat." And they say to Him, "Having gone, shall we buy two hundred denarii ***worth*** of loaves and give them to eat?" **38** And He says to them, "How many loaves do you have? Go and see." And having found out, they say, "Five, and two fish." **39** And He commanded them to make all recline company ***by*** company on the green grass. **40** And they reclined group ***by*** group, by hundreds and by fifties. **41** And having taken the five loaves and the two fish, having looked up to heaven, He blessed, and broke the loaves, and was giving ***them*** to His disciples so that they might set ***them*** before them; and the two fish He divided among all. **42** And all ate and were satisfied. **43** And they took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces, and of the fish. **44** And those having eaten the loaves were about five thousand men.

Jesus Walks on the Water

45 And immediately He compelled His disciples to get into the boat and to go ahead to the other side, to Bethsaida, until He Himself should dismiss the crowd. **46** And having taken leave of them, He departed into the mountain to pray. **47** And evening having come, the boat was in ***the*** middle of the sea, and He Himself alone on the land. **48** And He saw them straining in the rowing, for the wind was contrary to them; and about ***the*** fourth watch of the night He comes to them, walking on the sea, and He was wanting to pass by them. **49** But having seen Him walking on the sea, they thought ***it*** to be a ghost, and cried out; **50** for all saw Him and were troubled. And immediately He spoke with them, and says to them, "Take courage; I am ***He***; do not fear." **51** And He went up to them into the boat, and the wind ceased. And they were exceedingly amazed in themselves beyond measure, and were marveling. **52** For they did not understand about the loaves, for their heart was hardened.

Healing at Gennesaret

53 And having crossed over, they came onto the land of Gennesaret and anchored. **54** And when they had come out of the boat, immediately, having recognized Him, **55** having run around all that surrounding region, they began to carry around on the mats those who were ill, wherever they were hearing that He is there. **56** And wherever He was entering, into villages or cities or fields, they were laying the ailing in the marketplaces, and were begging Him that they might touch even the fringe of His garment; and as many as were touching Him were being saved.

MARK 7

Tradition and the Commandment of God

1 And the Pharisees and some of the scribes, having come from Jerusalem (Hierosolyma), are gathered together to Him. **2** And having seen some of His disciples eating bread with defiled hands, that is, unwashed, they found fault. **3** For the Pharisees and all the Jews, unless they wash the hands with

6:37 2 Kgs 4:42-44; Num 11:13,21-23; Mark 8:2,3
6:38 Mark 8:5; Matt 15:34; Matt 14:17,18
6:39 1 Kgs 10:5; Esth 1:5,6; Matt 15:35
6:40 Luke 9:14,15
6:41 1 Sam 9:13; Matt 14:19; Mark 7:34
6:42 Mark 8:8,9; Deut 8:3; 2 Kgs 4:42-44
6:43 Mark 8:19,20
6:45 John 6:15-17,18-21; Matt 14:22-33; Mark 8:22
6:46 Mark 1:35; Matt 6:6; Matt 14:23
6:47 Matt 14:23; John 6:16,17
6:48 Job 9:8; Luke 12:38; Luke 24:28
6:49 Matt 14:25,26; Luke 24:37; Job 9:8
6:50 Matt 14:27; Isa 43:2; Luke 24:38-41
6:51 Mark 4:39; Ps 93:3,4; Ps 107:28-30
6:52 Mark 8:17,18,21; Mark 3:5; Mark 7:18
6:53 John 6:24; Matt 14:34-36; Luke 5:1
6:54 Ps 9:10; Phil 3:10
6:55 Matt 4:24; Mark 2:1-3; Mark 3:7-11
6:56 Num 15:38; Num 15:39; Matt 9:20
7:1 Mark 3:22; Matt 15:1; Luke 5:17
7:2 Matt 7:3-5; Acts 10:14,15,28; Dan 6:4,5
7:3 Gal 1:14; Col 2:8,21-23; Mark 7:7-10,13

6:37 *You give them something to eat* Sending them away sounded sensible. A denarius was a Roman silver coin, about a day's pay; two hundred was most of a year's wages, and there was no store out there anyway.
6:38 *How many loaves do you have? Go and see* He always starts with what we have. Five loaves and two fish, a boy's lunch (John 6:9). Not much, but enough in His hands.
6:39 *on the green grass* Peter's eye for detail. Green grass means spring, near Passover (John 6:4). Groups of hundreds and fifties recall how Moses organized Israel (Exod 18:21). One greater than Moses was about to feed His people in the wilderness, and He worked in order.
6:41 *having looked up to heaven, He blessed, and broke the loaves* He gave thanks first. The miracle happened in His hands as He broke and kept giving, and the disciples carried it to the people. That is still how He works: He provides, and His people carry it to others.
6:42 *all ate and were satisfied* No one got a crumb or a taste. They were full.
6:43 *twelve baskets full of broken pieces* More left over than they started with. Jesus gives more than enough.
6:44 *about five thousand men* The word means men; with women and children the crowd could have been far larger (Matt 14:21). Besides the resurrection, this is the only miracle in all four Gospels. Jesus later taught that He is the Bread of Life (John 6:35). He feeds more than our bodies.
6:45 *He compelled His disciples to get into the boat* The crowd wanted to make Him king by force (John 6:15). He would not be that kind of king and did not want His disciples caught up in it.
6:46 *He departed into the mountain to pray* After a day of great success, He went to be alone with the Father. When things go well we often forget to pray. Jesus did not.
6:48 *He saw them straining in the rowing* They could not see Him, but He saw them. The fourth watch was about 3 to 6 in the morning; they had fought the wind for hours. "Wanting to pass by them" recalls God passing by Moses and Elijah to show His glory (Exod 33:19-22; 1 Kgs 19:11). God alone walks on the waves of the sea (Job 9:8).
6:50 *Take courage; I am He; do not fear* I am He is ego eimi, I am, how God named Himself to Moses (Exod 3:14). Jesus was saying more than they understood that night. The God who calls Himself I AM stood on the water before them. He says the same to us in the night when the wind is against us.
6:52 *they did not understand about the loaves, for their heart was hardened* The One who made bread from five loaves could surely handle a storm, but they had not put it together. Mark is honest about the disciples, and Peter must have been honest about himself as he preached. Jesus did not give up on them, and He does not give up on us.
6:56 *that they might touch even the fringe of His garment* Gennesaret was a fertile plain on the northwest shore. The fringe was the tassel faithful Jews wore to remember God's commands (Num 15:38-39). Word of the woman in 5:27-29 had spread. Many came for healing; how many came for Him we do not know. But the door was open to all, and it still is.
7:1 *having come from Jerusalem* The second group sent from Jerusalem to watch Jesus (3:22). The leaders in the capital were keeping an eye on Him.
7:2 *eating bread with defiled hands, that is, unwashed* Mark explains the word for his readers. This was not about dirt or germs but about being ritually unclean, unfit for God by the standards of their religious rules.
7:3 *holding the tradition of the elders* Mark explains Jewish customs a Jewish reader would not need explained, a clear sign he wrote for Gentiles, most likely in Rome. "With the fist" may mean a cupped hand, rubbing fist in palm, or washing to the wrist; it was a ritual with set steps. The tradition was a large body of teaching passed down by word of mouth, meant to protect the Law, but treated as just as binding.

the fist, do not eat, holding the tradition of the elders; **4** and ***coming*** from ***the*** marketplace, unless they wash ***themselves***, they do not eat; and there are many other things which they received to hold: washings of cups and pitchers and copper vessels and couches. **5** Then the Pharisees and the scribes question Him, "Why do Your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat the bread with unwashed hands?" **6** And He, answering, said to them, "Well did Isaiah (Hesaias) prophesy concerning you hypocrites, as it has been written: 'This people honors Me with the lips, but their heart is far away from Me. **7** And in vain they worship Me, teaching ***as*** teachings the precepts of men.' **8** For having left the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men, washings of pitchers and cups; and many other such similar things you do." **9** And He was saying to them, "Well do you set aside the commandment of God, so that you may keep your tradition. **10** For Moses said, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'The ***one*** speaking evil of father or mother, let him die by death.' **11** But you say, 'If a man says to the father or to the mother, "Corban," that is, a gift, "***is*** whatever you might be profited from me,"' **12** and you no longer permit him to do anything for his father or for his mother, **13** making void the word of God by your tradition which you handed down; and many such similar things you do."

What Defiles a Person

14 And having called to ***Him*** all the crowd, He was saying to them, "Hear Me, all ***of you***, and understand: **15** There is nothing outside the man entering into him that is able to defile him; but the ***things*** going out from him, those are the ***things*** defiling the man. **16** If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear." **17** And when He entered into a house from the crowd, His disciples were asking Him concerning the parable. **18** And He says to them, "Are you yourselves also thus without understanding? Do you not perceive that everything from outside entering into the man is not able to defile him, **19** because it does not enter into his heart but into the belly, and goes out into the latrine, cleansing all the foods?" **20** And He was saying, "That which goes out of the man, that defiles the man. **21** For from within, out of the heart of men, go out the evil thoughts, adulteries, sexual immoralities, murders, **22** thefts, covetings, wickednesses, deceit, sensuality, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. **23** All these evil ***things*** go out from within and defile the man."

A Syrophoenician Mother's Faith

24 And having risen up from there, He went away into the

7:4 Heb 9:10; Isa 1:16; Jer 4:14
7:5 Matt 15:2; Mark 2:16-18; Acts 21:21,24
7:6 Isa 29:13; Ezek 33:31; Hos 8:2
7:7 Matt 6:7; Col 2:22; Matt 15:9
7:8 Mark 7:3,4; Isa 1:12
7:9 Deut 4:2; Ezra 7:11; Mal 2:9
7:10 Exod 20:12; Exod 21:17; Lev 20:9
7:11 Exod 21:17; Num 30:5; Prov 19:27
7:12 Gen 47:12; Prov 19:27; Prov 20:20
7:13 Hos 8:12; Jer 8:9; Mark 7:9
7:14 1 Kgs 18:21; 1 Kgs 22:28; Ps 49:1
7:15 Mark 7:18-20; Matt 12:34; Lev 11:42-47
7:16 Mark 4:9,23; Matt 11:15; Rev 2:7,11,17,29
7:17 Matt 15:15; Mark 4:10,34; Matt 13:10,36
7:18 Isa 28:9; Matt 15:16,17; Mark 4:13
7:19 1 Cor 6:13; Matt 15:17; Col 2:21,22
7:20 Mark 7:15; James 3:6; Ps 41:6
7:21 Jer 17:9; Jer 4:14; Gen 6:5
7:22 Jer 17:9; Matt 20:15; Deut 15:9
7:23 Mark 7:15,18; 1 Cor 3:17; Titus 1:15
7:24 Ezek 28:2; Gen 10:15; Gen 10:19

7:4 *washings of cups and pitchers and copper vessels and couches* The Law had washing rules for priests serving at the tabernacle (Exod 30:17-21). The tradition stretched them to every Jew at every meal, and to pots and even dining couches.
7:5 *Why do Your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders* They did not ask why His disciples broke God's Law, but why they broke tradition. That is the key to the passage. The Pharisees could no longer tell the difference between what God said and what men had added.
7:6 *This people honors Me with the lips, but their heart is far away from Me* A hypocrite was first a stage actor wearing a mask; these men played holy men. Jesus quotes Isaiah 29:13. Their words were right; their hearts were not. Worship built on man-made rules is empty. Do I honor God with my lips while my heart is somewhere else? It is easy to sing the songs and say the prayers and keep our hearts far from Him.
7:9 *Well do you set aside the commandment of God, so that you may keep your tradition* They had not just added to God's word; they had let go of it. Well is biting: you are very good at it. Traditions are not bad in themselves, and many churches have good ones. The danger comes when they become more important to us than God's word or let us get around it. Every tradition must be tested by Scripture.
7:10 *Honor your father and your mother* Moses gave the command (Exod 20:12; Deut 5:16) and a death penalty for cursing parents (Exod 21:17; Lev 20:9). Honoring parents includes caring for them when they are old and in need.
7:11 *Corban* A word Mark explains as a gift dedicated to God. A man could declare his property Corban, keep using it himself, and tell his parents it belonged to God. The scribes held that a vow must be kept and would not let him undo it, even to help his own mother and father.
7:13 *making void the word of God by your tradition* A religious-sounding word let a man walk away from his parents in need, and it was a pattern, not one slip. We still do it, claiming to be too busy at church to care for our family. A believer who will not provide for his household has denied the faith (1 Tim 5:8). God does not accept religious service in place of obeying His plain commands.
7:15 *the things going out from him, those are the things defiling the man* The Pharisees thought uncleanness worked from the outside in. Jesus said it works from the inside out. We like to blame our upbringing, our situation, other people. Those things can tempt us, but sin comes from inside us.
7:16 *If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear* A call to listen with the heart after words that turned the Pharisee system on its head (4:9, 23). Most older Greek copies of Mark lack this verse, and many modern Bibles bracket it, footnote it, or skip the number. The SLB follows the Received Text, which includes it. No teaching rests on it alone, and the same words stand in 4:9 and 4:23.
7:19 *cleansing all the foods* Food goes into the belly, not the heart, and passes out of the body. The phrase may describe the body's natural process, or it may be Mark's note that by saying this Jesus made all foods clean, as many modern Bibles take it. Either way, the food laws of Moses do not bind believers in Christ (Acts 10:9-16; Rom 14:14), good news for the Gentile believers in Rome.
7:21 *out of the heart of men, go out the evil thoughts* Evil thoughts come first, because every sin starts there. Then sins of action. Sexual immoralities is porneia, any sexual sin outside marriage between a man and a woman. Covetings is greedy wanting of what is not ours.
7:22 *deceit, sensuality, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness* Sins of attitude. Sensuality is throwing off all restraint, sin with no shame. An evil eye meant envy and stinginess. Foolishness in the Bible is not a lack of brains but living as if God does not matter.
7:23 *All these evil things go out from within and defile the man* No one can read this list without seeing himself. The heart is deceitful above all things (Jer 17:9), and water and rituals cannot wash it. We need a new heart, and God promises it in Christ (Ezek 36:26; 2 Cor 5:17). Jesus does not just clean up the outside. He changes us from within.
7:24 *He went away into the borders of Tyre and Sidon* Gentile cities on the Mediterranean coast north of Galilee, in what is now Lebanon, the farthest into Gentile land we see Jesus go. He may have wanted rest with His disciples, but His fame had gone ahead of Him.

borders of Tyre (Tyros) and Sidon. And having entered into the house, He was wanting no one to know ***it***, and He was not able to be hidden. **25** For a woman, having heard about Him, whose little daughter had an unclean spirit, having come, fell at His feet. **26** Now the woman was a Greek, a Syrophoenician by race; and she was asking Him that He would cast the demon out of her daughter. **27** But Jesus (Iesous) said to her, "Let the children first be satisfied; for it is not good to take the bread of the children and to cast ***it*** to the little dogs." **28** But she answered and says to Him, "Yes, Lord; for even the little dogs under the table eat from the crumbs of the little children." **29** And He said to her, "Because of this word, go; the demon has gone out of your daughter." **30** And having gone away to her house, she found the demon having gone out, and the daughter having been laid on the bed.

A Deaf Man Healed

31 And again, having gone out from the region of Tyre and Sidon, He came to the Sea of Galilee (Galilaia), through the midst of the region of Decapolis (Dekapolis). **32** And they bring to Him a deaf man who spoke with difficulty, and they implore Him that He would lay the hand on him. **33** And having taken him away from the crowd privately, He put His fingers into his ears, and having spit, He touched his tongue; **34** and having looked up to heaven, He sighed deeply, and He says to him, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened." **35** And immediately his ears were opened, and the bond of his tongue was loosed, and he was speaking correctly. **36** And He ordered them that they should tell no one; but as much as He Himself was ordering them, so much the more exceedingly they were proclaiming ***it***. **37** And they were astonished beyond measure, saying, "He has done all things well; He makes both the deaf to hear and the mute to speak."

MARK 8

Four Thousand Fed

1 In those days, the crowd being very great and not having anything they might eat, Jesus (Iesous), having called His disciples to ***Him***, says to them, **2** "I am moved with compassion on the crowd, because already three days they remain with Me, and they do not have anything they might eat. **3** And if I send them away hungry to their home, they will faint on the way; for some of them have come from far away." **4** And His disciples answered Him, "From where will anyone be able to satisfy these ***people*** with bread here in a desolate place?" **5** And He was asking them, "How many loaves do you have?" And they said, "Seven." **6** And He commanded the crowd to recline on the ground; and having taken the seven loaves, having given thanks, He broke ***them*** and was giving ***them*** to His disciples so that they might set ***them*** before ***them***; and they set ***them*** before the crowd. **7** And they had a few small fish; and having blessed ***them***, He said to set them also before ***them***. **8** And they ate and were satisfied; and they took up

7:25 Matt 15:22; Mark 9:17-23; Mark 1:40
7:26 Isa 49:12; Matt 15:22; Col 3:11
7:27 Matt 7:6; Matt 10:5; Matt 15:23-28
7:28 Ps 145:16; Isa 45:22; Isa 49:6
7:29 Isa 66:2; Isa 57:15,16; Matt 5:3
7:30 John 4:50-52; 1 John 3:8
7:31 Mark 5:20; Matt 4:25; Mark 7:24
7:32 Luke 11:14; Matt 9:32,33
7:33 Mark 8:23; Mark 5:40; 1 Kgs 17:19-22
7:34 Isa 35:5; Mark 6:41; Mark 8:12
7:35 Isa 35:5-6; Isa 32:3; Isa 32:4
7:36 Mark 1:44,45; Mark 3:12; Mark 5:43
7:37 Gen 1:31; Exod 4:10; Exod 4:11
8:1 Matt 15:32-39
8:2 Matt 9:36; Mark 6:34; Mic 7:19
8:3 Judg 8:4-6; 1 Sam 14:28-31; 1 Sam 30:10-12
8:4 Num 11:13; Mark 6:36,37,52; Num 11:21-23
8:5 Matt 14:15-17; Mark 6:38; Matt 15:34
8:6 Mark 6:39,40; Matt 14:18,19; Matt 15:35,36
8:7 Matt 14:19; Luke 24:41,42; John 21:5,8,9
8:8 Mark 8:19,20; Ps 107:8,9; Ps 145:16

7:26 *a Greek, a Syrophoenician by race* A Gentile, from the part of Phoenicia in the Roman province of Syria. Matthew calls her a Canaanite (Matt 15:22), of Israel's old enemies. Right after Jesus taught that uncleanness comes from the heart and not from food or race, a Gentile woman comes with a clean heart of faith.
7:27 *Let the children first be satisfied* The children were Israel, the bread the blessing of the Messiah's ministry. Jews sometimes called Gentiles dogs as an insult. But Jesus used the word for little dogs, house pets, and He said first. The gospel would go first to Israel and then to the Gentiles (Rom 1:16). He left the door open a crack, testing her faith to bring it out.
7:28 *even the little dogs under the table eat from the crumbs of the little children* She walked through that crack. She did not argue or take offense. She agreed: I am not one of the children, and I only ask a crumb. She knew she had no claim on Him and trusted only His goodness, and she knew one crumb from Jesus was enough to drive out a demon.
7:30 *she found the demon having gone out* He did not go or touch the girl. He spoke, and it was done miles away. This Gentile mother received what the leaders from Jerusalem never did, because she came humbly. God still gives grace to the humble (James 4:6).
7:31 *through the midst of the region of Decapolis* A long way around, north to Sidon then back to the lake, into the area where the freed man had told everyone what Jesus did (5:20). The people were ready.
7:33 *having taken him away from the crowd privately* A deaf man in a noisy crowd would not understand what was happening. Jesus spoke in a language he could understand, touch, showing him without words what He was about to do.
7:34 *He sighed deeply, and He says to him, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened."* He looked to heaven to show the power came from God. The sigh was a groan of grief over the brokenness sin has brought into the world (Rom 8:22). Mark keeps another Aramaic word for us.
7:35 *he was speaking correctly* He did not need months to learn to talk. Isaiah promised that in the Messiah's days the deaf would hear and the mute would shout for joy (Isa 35:5-6). Sin makes us deaf to God and unable to speak rightly of Him. Jesus opens our ears to His word and loosens our tongues to praise Him. Has He opened your ears?
7:36 *so much the more exceedingly they were proclaiming it* In Gentile land He had let the freed man tell (5:19). Here crowds were starting to see Him only as a wonder worker, and that was not the message He wanted spread.
7:37 *He has done all things well* The words echo God looking at His creation and finding it very good (Gen 1:31). The Creator was making things good again, doing just what the prophets said the Messiah would do. These Gentiles saw it more clearly than the leaders from Jerusalem.
8:2 *I am moved with compassion on the crowd* Still in the Decapolis (7:31), the crowd had been with Him three days, and whatever food they brought was gone. Jesus saw their need before anyone mentioned it. The Lord who teaches our souls also cares about our bodies. He knows when you are tired and hungry and running on empty.
8:4 *From where will anyone be able to satisfy these people with bread* They had seen Him feed five thousand not long before (6:35-44). But how often has God provided for you, and the next time a need comes you worry as if He never had? We forget quickly. That is why the Bible tells us to remember what the Lord has done (Ps 103:2).
8:6 *having given thanks, He broke them* The same pattern as before: thanks, breaking, giving, and again the disciples carried the food to the people.
8:8 *seven large baskets of leftovers* A different word from 6:43: baskets large enough to hold a man, like the one Paul was let down in over the wall of Damascus (Acts 9:25).

seven large baskets of leftovers of broken pieces. **9** Now those having eaten were about four thousand; and He sent them away. **10** And immediately, having embarked into the boat with His disciples, He came into the parts of Dalmanutha (Dalmanoutha).

The Leaven of the Pharisees

11 And the Pharisees went out and began to dispute with Him, seeking from Him a sign from heaven, testing Him. **12** And having sighed deeply in His spirit, He says, "Why does this generation seek a sign? Truly I say to you, no sign will be given to this generation." **13** And having left them, having embarked again into the boat, He went away to the other side. **14** And the disciples forgot to take loaves, and except for one loaf they did not have ***any*** with them in the boat. **15** And He was ordering them, saying, "Watch out, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod (Herodes)." **16** And they were reasoning with one another, saying, "***It is*** because we do not have loaves." **17** And Jesus, having known ***it***, says to them, "Why do you reason that you do not have loaves? Do you not yet perceive or understand? Do you still have your heart hardened? **18** Having eyes, do you not see? And having ears, do you not hear? And do you not remember? **19** When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you take up?" They say to Him, "Twelve." **20** "And when the seven for the four thousand, of how many large baskets ***did*** you take up fillings of broken pieces?" And they said, "Seven." **21** And He was saying to them, "How do you not understand?"

A Blind Man Healed at Bethsaida

22 And He comes to Bethsaida; and they bring to Him a blind ***man***, and they implore Him that He would touch him. **23** And having taken hold of the hand of the blind ***man***, He led him out of the village; and having spit on his eyes, having laid the hands on him, He was asking him if he sees anything. **24** And having looked up, he was saying, "I see the men like trees, walking." **25** Then again He laid the hands on his eyes, and made him look up; and he was restored, and he saw everyone clearly. **26** And He sent him away to his home, saying, "Do not enter into the village, nor tell ***it*** to anyone in the village."

Peter's Confession

27 And Jesus and His disciples went out into the villages of Caesarea (Kaisareia) of Philip (Philippos); and on the way He was questioning His disciples, saying to them, "Who do men say that I am?" **28** And they answered, "John (Ioannes) the Baptist; and others, Elijah (Helias); but others, one of the prophets." **29** And He Himself says to them, "But you, who do you say that I am?" And Peter (Petros), answering, says to

8:10 Matt 15:39
8:11 Deut 6:16; Matt 12:38; Luke 11:16
8:12 Mark 7:34; Mark 3:5; Mark 9:19
8:13 Ps 81:12; Jer 23:33; Hos 4:17
8:14 Matt 16:5
8:15 1 Cor 5:6-8; Mark 12:13; Matt 16:6,11,12
8:16 Matt 16:7,8; Luke 9:46; Luke 20:5
8:17 Isa 63:17; Mark 6:52; Mark 2:8
8:18 Jer 5:21; Ezek 12:2; Mark 4:12
8:19 Mark 6:38-44; Matt 14:17-21; Luke 9:12-17
8:20 Matt 15:34-38; Mark 8:1-9
8:21 Mark 6:52; Mark 8:12,17; Mark 9:19
8:22 Matt 11:21; Mark 6:45; Mark 2:3
8:23 Mark 7:33; Acts 9:8; Isa 51:18
8:24 Judg 9:36; Isa 29:18; Isa 32:3
8:25 Prov 4:18; Matt 13:12; Phil 1:6
8:26 Matt 8:4; Mark 5:43; Mark 7:36
8:27 Luke 9:18,19,20; Matt 16:13-20
8:28 Mal 4:5; Matt 14:2; John 1:21
8:29 John 6:69; John 11:27; Mark 4:11

8:9 *about four thousand* Some think this is the five thousand told twice. But the numbers of people, loaves and baskets differ, the place differs, and Jesus Himself speaks of two feedings (8:19-20). I take it as written. The first was for a mostly Jewish crowd in Galilee; this one was in Gentile country. Jesus is the Bread of Life for Jews and Gentiles alike.
8:10 *the parts of Dalmanutha* Scripture does not say exactly where it was. Matthew calls it Magadan (Matt 15:39). It was most likely on the west shore, back in Jewish territory.
8:11 *seeking from Him a sign from heaven, testing Him* He had healed, cast out demons, calmed a storm, raised a dead girl and fed thousands. They wanted a sign on their terms, something in the sky.
8:12 *no sign will be given to this generation* Their unbelief grieved Him. Matthew adds the one sign they would get, Jonah, His death and resurrection (Matt 12:39-40). More proof does not change a heart that has decided not to believe. If they will not listen to Moses and the prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead (Luke 16:31). The problem was not a lack of evidence. It was a hard heart.
8:13 *having left them* He did not stay to argue. There comes a point where Jesus leaves those who keep refusing Him. That should make every one of us take His word seriously while He is still speaking.
8:15 *beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod* Leaven is yeast, a little working through the whole lump, often a picture of sin or false teaching spreading quietly (1 Cor 5:6-8; Gal 5:9). The Pharisees' leaven was hypocrisy (Luke 12:1) and unbelief that demanded signs while rejecting God's Son. Herod's was worldliness and political power, a faith that bends to whatever keeps you comfortable.
8:16 *It is because we do not have loaves* They completely missed it and were still thinking about lunch.
8:18 *Having eyes, do you not see? And having ears, do you not hear?* These are the words used of the outsiders in 4:12 (compare Jer 5:21). Jesus was asking if His own disciples were becoming just as blind and deaf. The questions are for us too. Do we see what He has done? Do we remember?
8:21 *How do you not understand?* Twelve baskets, seven baskets. One loaf in the boat with Jesus is more than enough. They were worried about bread while sitting beside the One who made bread for thousands. They needed to understand who was with them. Mark leaves the question hanging, and the next story shows how their eyes would be opened.
8:23 *having taken hold of the hand of the blind man, He led him out of the village* Picture the Son of God holding a blind man's hand and walking him out of town. This is the only time in the Gospels that Jesus asks whether a healing has worked.
8:24 *I see the men like trees, walking* He saw, but blurry, and knew they were people only because they moved. He knew what trees looked like, so he may not have been born blind.
8:25 *he saw everyone clearly* Two stages, not because His power was weak. Many see a living picture of the disciples. They had begun to see who Jesus was, but their sight was blurry. Peter will see that He is the Christ but not yet what kind of Christ. They needed a second touch, and many of us do too. Jesus keeps touching our eyes until we see Him as He is.
8:27 *the villages of Caesarea of Philip* About twenty-five miles north of the lake at the foot of Mount Hermon, rebuilt by Herod Philip and named for Caesar and himself. Shrines to the Greek god Pan were cut into the cliffs. Among the idols, Jesus asked the most important question there is.
8:28 *John the Baptist; and others, Elijah* All compliments, and all short of the truth. Many today say Jesus was a good teacher or a prophet. That sounds nice, but it is not enough.
8:29 *But you, who do you say that I am?* In Greek, you comes first for stress. Peter answered for the group: the Christ, the Messiah, the King God promised. For eight chapters the question has built, and now a disciple says it. Mark, with Peter's preaching behind him, gives the shortest account (Matt 16:13-20); perhaps Peter did not care to tell the part that honored him. Not what your parents or church say: who do you say Jesus is?

Him, "You are the Christ." **30** And He warned them that they should tell no one concerning Him.

Jesus Foretells His Death

31 And He began to teach them that it is necessary ***for*** the Son of Man to suffer many things and to be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and to be killed, and after three days to rise again. **32** And He was speaking the word openly. And Peter, having taken Him aside, began to rebuke Him. **33** But He, having turned around and having seen His disciples, rebuked Peter, saying, "Go behind Me, Satan; for you are not minding the things of God, but the things of men."

Take Up Your Cross

34 And having called the crowd to ***Him*** with His disciples, He said to them, "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and let him take up his cross, and let him follow Me. **35** For whoever desires to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life on account of Me and the gospel, this ***one*** will save it. **36** For what will it profit a man, if he gains the whole world and forfeits his life? **37** Or what will a man give ***as*** an exchange for his life? **38** For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man also will be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."

MARK 9

1 And He was saying to them, "Truly I say to you that there are some of those standing here who will certainly not taste of death until they see the kingdom of God having come with power."

The Transfiguration

2 And after six days Jesus (Iesous) takes along Peter (Petros) and James (Iakobos) and John (Ioannes), and brings them up into a high mountain privately, alone. And He was transfigured before them; **3** and His garments became shining, exceedingly white like snow, such as a launderer on the earth is not able to whiten. **4** And Elijah (Helias) with Moses appeared to them, and they were talking with Jesus. **5** And Peter, answering, says to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles, one for You and one for Moses and one for Elijah." **6** For he did not know what he might say; for they were terrified. **7** And a cloud came overshadowing them, and a voice came out of the cloud, saying,

8:30 Matt 16:20; Luke 9:21; Mark 9:9
8:31 Hos 6:2; Jonah 1:17; Mark 10:33,34
8:32 John 16:25,29; Matt 16:22; Mark 4:38
8:33 Matt 4:10; Phil 3:19; 1 John 2:15
8:34 Num 14:24; 1 Kgs 14:8; Matt 10:38
8:35 2 Tim 1:8; Matt 10:39; Luke 17:33
8:36 Luke 9:25; Job 2:4; Ps 49:17
8:37 Ps 49:7,8; 1 Pet 1:18,19
8:38 Jer 9:3; Matt 26:64; Matt 16:27
9:1 Matt 25:31; Matt 16:28; Luke 9:27
9:2 Luke 9:28-36; Mark 5:37; Mark 14:33
9:3 Matt 28:3; Dan 7:9; Mal 3:2,3
9:4 Deut 34:5; 2 Kgs 2:11; Deut 34:6
9:5 Exod 33:17; Ps 62:2,3; Ps 84:10
9:6 Mark 16:5-8; Dan 10:15-19; Rev 1:17
9:7 Deut 18:15; Exod 40:34; Ps 97:2

8:30 *He warned them that they should tell no one concerning Him* They had the right title but the wrong picture, a Christ who would throw out Rome and reign in Jerusalem. They were not ready to preach it until they understood it.
8:31 *it is necessary for the Son of Man to suffer many things* Everything changes here; from now on He speaks again and again of the cross (9:31; 10:33-34). Necessary means God's plan. The elders, chief priests and scribes made up the Sanhedrin, the ruling council; God's leaders would reject God's Christ. After three days counts parts of days, Friday to Sunday; Matthew and Luke say on the third day (Matt 16:21). He never spoke of His death without His resurrection.
8:32 *Peter, having taken Him aside, began to rebuke Him* No more hints. Peter, who had just said the right thing, now did the wrong thing. He could not fit a suffering Messiah into his picture. Kings conquer. They do not die.
8:33 *Go behind Me, Satan* Peter was not Satan, but without knowing it he said what Satan said in the wilderness: take the crown without the cross (Matt 4:8-10). Go behind Me means get back in your place as a follower. A person can love Jesus and still think like the world. Good intentions without God's mind can still stand in the way of God's plan.
8:34 *let him deny himself, and let him take up his cross, and let him follow Me* For everyone, not only the twelve. Denying yourself is giving up the throne of your life, not just chocolate for a season. A man carrying a cross was on his way to die; Rome made the condemned carry the beam, and they had seen it. It means choosing His way even when it costs, and if need be dying for Him. And follow, daily (Luke 9:23).
8:35 *whoever loses his life on account of Me and the gospel, this one will save it* Hold on to your life for yourself and you lose it in the end. Let go of it for Jesus and you find real life, now and forever. Only Mark records "and the gospel." His readers in Rome would soon face Nero's persecution, and some would die for Christ. Jesus promised they would not lose in the end.
8:36 *what will it profit a man, if he gains the whole world and forfeits his life?* Picture a man who gets money, power, fame and pleasure, then dies and loses his soul. The word for life, psyche, also means soul.
8:37 *what will a man give as an exchange for his life?* Once the soul is lost, nothing can buy it back. Only Jesus could pay that price, and He did with His own life (10:45). What are you living for? Is it worth your soul?
8:38 *when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels* Adulterous means unfaithful to God, as Israel was called when it turned to idols (Hos 2:2-5). He is not coming next time as a suffering Servant but as King and Judge (Matt 25:31). I believe He will return visibly to the earth at the end of the Tribulation to set up His kingdom (Rev 19:11-16). Peter denied Him (14:66-72), yet was restored (John 21:15-19) and lived unashamed. There is grace for those who failed.
9:1 *until they see the kingdom of God having come with power* To taste death is a Hebrew way of saying to die. Many teachers believe the next verses answer this. Six days later three of these men saw Jesus in glory, a preview of the King as He will appear when He comes in power. Peter tied that mountain to the power and coming of our Lord (2 Pet 1:16-18). Others take it as the resurrection, Pentecost, or the judgment on Jerusalem in A.D. 70.
9:2 *He was transfigured before them* Mark rarely counts days, but here he does. The same three saw Jairus' daughter raised (5:37) and would be nearest in Gethsemane (14:33). The Greek is metamorphoo, to be changed in form. This was no light shining on Him from outside. The glory that was always His shone out from within.
9:3 *such as a launderer on the earth is not able to whiten* A homely detail for ordinary people. No soap on earth could do that. This was the glory of God.
9:4 *Elijah with Moses appeared to them* Moses gave the Law and Elijah stood for the prophets, the whole Old Testament bearing witness to Jesus. Both left this world unusually (Deut 34:5-6; 2 Kgs 2:11). They talked of His departure at Jerusalem (Luke 9:31); on the mountain of glory the subject was the cross. And they were alive and known by name centuries later. Those who die in the Lord are with Him.
9:5 *let us make three tabernacles* A tabernacle was a tent or booth like those of the Feast of Tabernacles. Perhaps Peter wanted the moment to last, or thought the kingdom had come. Mark, likely from Peter himself, says he did not know what to say. His mistake was putting Jesus on the level of Moses and Elijah, one tent each.
9:7 *This is My Son, the beloved; listen to Him* God's presence came in a cloud over the tabernacle (Exod 40:34-35). At the baptism the Father spoke to the Son (1:11); here He speaks to the disciples about Him. Moses promised a Prophet the people must listen to (Deut 18:15). Jesus is that Prophet and far more.

"This is My Son, the beloved; listen to Him." **8** And suddenly, having looked around, they no longer saw anyone except Jesus alone with themselves. **9** Now as they were coming down from the mountain, He ordered them that they should tell no one what they had seen, except when the Son of Man has risen out of ***the*** dead. **10** And they kept the word to themselves, questioning together what the rising out of ***the*** dead is. **11** And they were asking Him, saying, "Why do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?" **12** And He, answering, said to them, "Elijah indeed, having come first, restores all things; and how has it been written of the Son of Man that He should suffer many things and be treated with contempt? **13** But I say to you that Elijah also has come, and they did to him whatever they wished, just as it has been written of him."

A Boy Freed from a Spirit

14 And having come to the disciples, He saw a great crowd around them, and scribes disputing with them. **15** And immediately all the crowd, having seen Him, were greatly amazed, and running to ***Him***, they were greeting Him. **16** And He asked the scribes, "What are you disputing with them?" **17** And one out of the crowd, answering, said, "Teacher, I brought to You my son, having a mute spirit; **18** and wherever it seizes him, it throws him down; and he foams and grinds his teeth and is withering away. And I spoke to Your disciples that they might cast it out, and they were not able." **19** And He, answering him, says, "O unbelieving generation, until when will I be with you? Until when will I bear with you? Bring him to Me." **20** And they brought him to Him. And having seen Him, the spirit immediately convulsed him, and having fallen on the ground, he was rolling around, foaming. **21** And He asked his father, "How long a time is it since this has happened to him?" And he said, "From childhood. **22** And often it has cast him both into fire and into waters so that it might destroy him. But if You are able ***to do*** anything, help us, having compassion on us." **23** And Jesus said to him, "If you are able to believe, all things ***are*** possible to the ***one*** believing." **24** And immediately the father of the child, having cried out with tears, was saying, "I believe, Lord; help my unbelief." **25** Now Jesus, having seen that a crowd was running together, rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "Mute and deaf spirit, I command you, come out of him, and enter into him no more." **26** And having cried out and having convulsed him much, it came out; and he became like a dead ***man***, so that many said that he had died. **27** But Jesus, having taken hold of him by the hand, raised him up, and he arose. **28** And when He had entered into a house, His disciples were asking Him privately, "Why were we not able to cast it out?" **29** And He said to them, "This kind is able to come out by nothing except by prayer and fasting."

Second Prediction and True Greatness

30 And having gone out from there, they were passing

9:8 Luke 9:36; Luke 24:31; Acts 8:39,40
9:9 Mark 5:43; Matt 17:9; Mark 8:29,30
9:10 Gen 37:11; Luke 2:50,51; Luke 24:7,8
9:11 Mal 4:5-6; Mal 3:1; Matt 11:14
9:12 Isa 53:1; Ps 22:13; Ps 69:27
9:13 Matt 11:14; Matt 17:12,13; Luke 1:17
9:14 Matt 17:14-21; Luke 9:37; Mark 2:6
9:15 Exod 34:30; Mark 9:2,3
9:16 Mark 8:11; Luke 5:30-32
9:17 Mark 9:25; Luke 11:14; Mark 5:23
9:18 Acts 7:54; Mark 9:26; Matt 15:22
9:19 Num 14:11; Num 14:22; Num 14:27
9:20 Mark 1:26; Mark 9:18,26; Mark 5:3-5
9:21 Acts 9:33; Mark 5:25; Job 5:7
9:22 Matt 9:28; Mark 1:40-42; Matt 8:2,8,9
9:23 John 11:40; Matt 17:20; Mark 11:23
9:24 2 Tim 1:4; Luke 17:5; Eph 2:8
9:25 Acts 16:18; Mark 1:25-27; Mark 5:7,8
9:26 Mark 9:18,20; Mark 1:26; Exod 5:23
9:27 Mark 1:31,41; Mark 5:41; Mark 8:23
9:28 Mark 4:10,34; Matt 13:10,36; Matt 15:15
9:29 James 5:15; 2 Cor 12:8; Dan 9:3
9:30 Matt 27:22,23; Mark 6:31,32

9:8 *they no longer saw anyone except Jesus alone* Moses and Elijah were great servants, and they stepped away. Jesus is the One who stays. When everything else fades, He is the One we listen to.
9:9 *except when the Son of Man has risen out of the dead* Talk of a shining Messiah would only feed hopes of a king to throw out Rome. The glory would make sense only after the cross and the empty tomb.
9:10 *questioning together what the rising out of the dead is* Most Jews, apart from the Sadducees, believed in a resurrection at the end of the age. What they could not fit in was the Messiah dying and rising on His own before then.
9:11 *Why do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?* The scribes, experts in the Law, taught from Malachi 4:5 that Elijah would come before the day of the Lord, and the disciples had just seen him.
9:13 *Elijah also has come, and they did to him whatever they wished* He meant John, who came in the spirit and power of Elijah (Luke 1:17) and was killed by Herod (6:14-29). What they did to the forerunner they would do to the Messiah. Some teachers believe Elijah will also come again before Christ's return (Mal 4:5; Rev 11). Jesus' words leave room for both: John filled the role at His first coming, and the full restoring of all things still lies ahead.
9:14 *scribes disputing with them* From the mountaintop to the valley. The nine had failed, and the scribes were enjoying it. Jesus stepped right into the argument. He does not leave His disciples alone in their failure.
9:18 *he foams and grinds his teeth and is withering away* A mute spirit kept the boy from speaking. Some signs look like what we call seizures, and he may have had both, but Mark is clear a spirit was behind it. The twelve had cast out many demons before (6:13). Now they could not. Something was missing.
9:19 *O unbelieving generation* Spoken to all of them, scribes, crowd, father and disciples, by One just come from the Father's glory into a world of doubt. We hear sorrow, not only frustration. Yet in the same breath, "Bring him to Me." When others cannot help and we have run out of ideas, bring it to Jesus.
9:20 *the spirit immediately convulsed him* Evil often makes its loudest noise right before it is defeated.
9:22 *if You are able to do anything, help us, having compassion on us* From childhood: this dad had watched it for years, with fire and water. Help us. When a child suffers, the whole family suffers.
9:23 *all things are possible to the one believing* Jesus turned the father's words around. The question was not whether Jesus was able but whether the father would believe.
9:24 *I believe, Lord; help my unbelief* One of the most honest prayers in the Bible. He had faith mixed with doubt and brought both to Jesus without pretending. Jesus did not reject him. Faith is not how strong we feel but where we turn. A little faith placed in a great Savior is enough.
9:25 *come out of him, and enter into him no more* He did not chant or bargain. He commanded, and the spirit had to obey. Enter no more gave the father what he needed: the healing would last.
9:27 *Jesus, having taken hold of him by the hand, raised him up* The boy lay like a corpse. A small picture of what Jesus does for every sinner: He takes the hand of one who looks dead and raises him to life.
9:29 *This kind is able to come out by nothing except by prayer and fasting* The disciples may have thought the power was theirs to switch on. It comes from dependence on God. Prayer says, Lord, I cannot, but You can. Fasting sets food aside to seek Him more fully. The missing piece was not a formula but reliance on God. Our service grows weak when our prayer life grows thin. Many older Greek copies have only "by prayer"; the SLB follows the Received Text.

through Galilee (Galilaia), and He was not wanting anyone to know ***it***. **31** For He was teaching His disciples and was saying to them, "The Son of Man is being delivered into ***the*** hands of men, and they will kill Him; and having been killed, He will rise on the third day." **32** But they were not understanding the declaration, and they were afraid to ask Him. **33** And He came to Capernaum (Kapernaoum). And having been in the house, He was asking them, "What were you discussing among yourselves on the way?" **34** But they were silent; for on the way they had discussed with one another who ***was*** greater. **35** And having sat down, He called the twelve and says to them, "If anyone desires to be first, he will be last of all and servant of all." **36** And having taken a child, He set it in the midst of them; and having taken it in His arms, He said to them, **37** "Whoever receives one of such children in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me does not receive Me, but the ***One*** having sent Me."

Whoever Is Not Against Us

38 Now John answered Him, saying, "Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in Your name, who does not follow us; and we forbade him, because he does not follow us." **39** But Jesus said, "Do not forbid him; for there is no one who will do a mighty work in My name and will be able soon to speak evil of Me. **40** For whoever is not against us is for us. **41** For whoever gives you a cup of water to drink in My name because you are Christ's, truly I say to you, he will certainly not lose his reward.

Warnings Against Stumbling

42 And whoever causes one of these little ones believing in Me to stumble, it is better for him rather if a millstone is put around his neck and he has been cast into the sea. **43** And if your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter into life crippled than having the two hands to go away into Gehenna, into the unquenchable fire, **44** where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched. **45** And if your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter into life lame than having the two feet to be cast into Gehenna, into the unquenchable fire, **46** where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched. **47** And if your eye causes you to stumble, cast it out; it is better for you to enter into the kingdom of God one-eyed than having two eyes to be cast into the Gehenna of fire, **48** where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched. **49** For everyone will be salted with fire, and every sacrifice will be salted with salt. **50** Salt ***is*** good; but if the salt becomes unsalty, with what will you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and be at

9:31 Matt 16:21; Mark 9:12; Mark 8:31
9:32 Luke 2:50; Luke 18:34; Luke 9:45
9:33 Matt 17:24; Mark 2:8; Ps 139:1-4
9:34 Matt 18:1-5; Matt 20:21-24; Luke 9:46-48
9:35 Mark 10:42-45; Prov 13:10; Jer 45:5
9:36 Mark 10:16; Matt 18:2; Matt 19:14,15
9:37 Matt 18:3-5,10; Luke 10:16; Matt 10:40-42
9:38 Luke 9:49,50; Num 11:26-29; Luke 11:19
9:39 1 Cor 12:3; Mark 10:13,14; Phil 1:18
9:40 Matt 12:30; Luke 11:23
9:41 Matt 10:42; Gal 3:29; Matt 25:40
9:42 Matt 18:6,10; Luke 17:1,2; Rom 14:13
9:43 Isa 66:24; Matt 5:29,30; Matt 18:8,9
9:44 Mark 9:46,48; Isa 66:24; Isa 33:14
9:45 Mark 9:43,44
9:46 Luke 16:24-26
9:47 Mark 9:43; Gen 3:6; Job 31:1
9:48 Isa 66:24; Mark 9:44,46
9:49 Lev 2:13; Ezek 43:24
9:50 Col 4:6; Rom 12:18; Matt 5:13

9:31 *The Son of Man is being delivered into the hands of men* His Galilee ministry was ending, and He focused on the twelve. This is the second plain prediction (8:31).
9:32 *they were afraid to ask Him* Sometimes we do not ask because we are afraid of the answer.
9:34 *on the way they had discussed with one another who was greater* While He talked about a cross, they talked about crowns. Before we shake our heads, how often do we do the same? Pride is quick to show up, even among people who follow Jesus.
9:35 *he will be last of all and servant of all* He sat, as a teacher did for something important. He did not say wanting greatness is wrong. He showed the way to it. In God's kingdom the way up is down. The Servant was teaching His servants to be like Him (10:45).
9:37 *Whoever receives one of such children in My name receives Me* Children had no standing and could do nothing for you. To receive is to welcome and make room for. Welcoming the least for Jesus' sake welcomes Him and the Father who sent Him. How we treat people who can do nothing for us shows what we really think of Jesus.
9:38 *we forbade him, because he does not follow us* Notice us. The man was following Jesus, just not part of their group, and succeeding where they had failed.
9:40 *whoever is not against us is for us* Not everyone who serves Jesus will be in our group or do things our way. If they honor His name and preach the true gospel, they are not our enemies. This is not anything goes; Jesus warned of false prophets using His name (Matt 7:22-23). The test is whether they honor Him and His truth.
9:41 *he will certainly not lose his reward* A cup of water cost almost nothing but meant much in a hot, dry land. God notices small kindnesses done for His people. Nothing done for Him is wasted.
9:42 *it is better for him rather if a millstone is put around his neck* To cause to stumble is to trip someone into sin or away from faith. The little ones include children and any humble or young believer. A large millstone took a donkey to turn. Better to die than lead one of His children into sin. Those who abuse, mislead or corrupt others, especially children, need to hear this.
9:43 *if your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off* Not a call to cut off body parts. The problem is the heart (7:21-23). Deal with sin ruthlessly: whatever leads you into it, a habit, a friendship, a website, a place, cut it out. Gehenna is the Valley of Hinnom south of Jerusalem, where children were once burned to Molech (Jer 7:31). Jesus used it for hell, the place of final punishment.
9:44 *where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched* From the last verse of Isaiah (Isa 66:24), picturing punishment that does not end. Jesus spoke of hell more than anyone in the Bible, out of love, to warn us. Verses 44 and 46 are in the Received Text the SLB follows, but not in most older Greek copies, and many modern Bibles bracket or skip them. The same words stand in verse 48 in all copies, so nothing is lost, and no teaching rests on these two verses alone.
9:45 *if your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off* The foot takes us places. Some places lead straight into sin, and the answer is to stop going. Verse 46 repeats the words of verse 44.
9:47 *if your eye causes you to stumble, cast it out* The eye is often the first step into sin. David looked before he took (2 Sam 11:2), and a lustful look is adultery in the heart (Matt 5:28). Entering life (9:43, 45) is entering the kingdom of God; hell is being outside it forever. When Jesus repeats Isaiah's words a third time, we should listen.
9:49 *everyone will be salted with fire* One of the hardest verses in Mark. Every grain offering was salted (Lev 2:13); salt preserves, and fire tests and purifies (1 Pet 1:7). Many see the fiery trials that purify every believer as an offering to God (Rom 12:1). Others see the judgment on the unbeliever just described. Either way, following Jesus is costly, but the fire He allows in a believer's life purifies; it does not destroy.
9:50 *Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another* Salt from the Dead Sea area was mixed with other minerals; if the real salt washed out, what was left looked like salt but had no taste. The chapter began with an argument about greatness. Pride kills peace. Humble service keeps the salt in the salt.

peace with one another."

MARK 10

Marriage and Divorce

1 And having risen up from there, He comes into the region of Judea (Ioudaia) through the ***region*** beyond the Jordan (Iordanes). And crowds come together to Him again, and as He had been accustomed, He was again teaching them. **2** And the Pharisees, having come to ***Him***, asked Him if it is lawful for a husband to divorce a wife, testing Him. **3** And He, answering, said to them, "What did Moses command you?" **4** And they said, "Moses permitted to write a scroll of divorce and to divorce ***her***." **5** And Jesus (Iesous), answering, said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart he wrote this commandment for you. **6** But from ***the*** beginning of creation God made them male and female. **7** On account of this a man will leave his father and mother and will be joined to his wife, **8** and the two will be into one flesh; so that they are no longer two, but one flesh. **9** Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate." **10** And in the house His disciples again asked Him concerning the same ***matter***. **11** And He says to them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her. **12** And if a woman divorces her husband and is married to another, she commits adultery."

Jesus Blesses the Children

13 And they were bringing little children to Him so that He might touch them; but the disciples were rebuking those bringing ***them***. **14** But Jesus, having seen ***it***, was indignant and said to them, "Permit the little children to come to Me, and do not hinder them; for of such is the kingdom of God. **15** Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will certainly not enter into it." **16** And having taken them in His arms, laying the hands on them, He was blessing them.

The Rich Man

17 And as He was going out on ***the*** way, one having run up and having knelt before Him was asking Him, "Good Teacher, what should I do so that I may inherit eternal life?" **18** And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one ***is*** good

10:1 John 10:40; John 11:7; Matt 19:1-12
10:2 Matt 23:13; John 8:6; Mark 8:15
10:3 Isa 8:20; Luke 10:25; John 5:39
10:4 Deut 24:1; Deut 24:2; Deut 24:3
10:5 Matt 19:8; Neh 9:16,17,26; Acts 7:51
10:6 Gen 1:27; Gen 2:24; Gen 5:2
10:7 Gen 2:24; Eph 5:31; Matt 19:5,6
10:8 1 Cor 6:16; Eph 5:28
10:9 Rom 7:1-3; 1 Chr 7:10-13
10:10 Mark 4:10; Mark 9:28,33
10:11 Gen 2:24; Exod 20:14; Deut 24:1
10:12 Exod 20:14; Deut 24:1
10:13 Joel 2:16; Ezra 8:21; Matt 19:13-15
10:14 Gen 17:7; Gen 17:10; Num 14:31
10:15 Matt 18:3; Luke 18:17; John 3:3-6
10:16 Gen 48:14-16; Deut 28:3; Isa 40:11
10:17 Luke 18:18-30; Mark 1:40; Matt 19:16-30
10:18 Luke 18:19; 1 Sam 2:2; Matt 19:17

10:1 *as He had been accustomed, He was again teaching them* Beyond the Jordan, east of the river, was often called Perea; Galilean travelers often went that way to Jerusalem. Mark shows a man of action, but notice His habit: He taught. He never forgot their greatest need was the truth.

10:2 *if it is lawful for a husband to divorce a wife, testing Him* The rabbis argued over Deuteronomy 24:1. One school allowed divorce only for serious sexual sin; another for almost any reason, even a burned dinner. And Jesus was in Herod Antipas' territory, where John lost his head for speaking against Herod's marriage (6:17-18). Whatever He said, someone would be angry.

10:4 *Moses permitted to write a scroll of divorce* Notice their own word, permitted. Moses never commanded divorce. He put limits on a practice already happening (Deut 24:1-4). The written certificate protected the woman, proving she was free to marry again without being called an adulteress.

10:5 *Because of your hardness of heart he wrote this commandment for you* A concession to human failure, not God's plan. That the law allowed something does not mean God approved it. They wanted to know how far they could go; Jesus wanted them to see what God wanted from the start. Pride, selfishness and unwillingness to forgive still lie at the root of most broken marriages.

10:6 *from the beginning of creation God made them male and female* Jesus went back further than Moses, to Genesis 1:27 and 2:24. God designed marriage. It is not a human invention, and people do not get to redefine it. It is one man and one woman.

10:8 *the two will be into one flesh* Leaving parents forms a new family. Joined means stuck together like glue. One flesh is more than the physical union; it is two lives made one. When you tear apart one flesh, both people are hurt.

10:9 *what God has joined together, let man not separate* Marriage is not only a contract between two people. God Himself joins them. No one, husband, wife, judge or outsider, has the right to pull apart what He joined. If you are married, guard your marriage.

10:11 *commits adultery against her* Many thought adultery was only a sin against a husband. Jesus gave the wife equal dignity, and He spoke of a wife divorcing her husband, which Roman law allowed, a word for Mark's Roman readers. Matthew records the exception for sexual immorality (Matt 19:9), and Paul speaks of an unbelieving spouse who leaves (1 Cor 7:15). Some believe the innocent person may remarry in those cases; others allow no remarriage while the spouse lives. All agree the breaking of marriage was never God's plan.

10:12 *she commits adultery* If you have been through divorce, it is not the unforgivable sin. The same Jesus forgives every sinner who comes to Him. And these words never mean a person must stay where he or she is being abused. If you are in danger, get to safety and get help.

10:13 *the disciples were rebuking those bringing them* Jewish parents often brought children to a rabbi for a blessing. The disciples may have thought Jesus too busy or children unimportant, though they had just learned otherwise (9:36-37). We learn slowly, do we not?

10:14 *Permit the little children to come to Me, and do not hinder them* The only place Jesus is said to be indignant at His own disciples. The kingdom belongs to such as these. Never do anything that keeps a child from Jesus. Teach them, pray with them, bring them. Children's ministry is not babysitting. It is kingdom work.

10:15 *whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a little child* A child cannot earn or pay for a gift. He simply trusts and receives. We do not enter God's kingdom by being impressive or working our way in. We come with empty hands and receive it as a gift (Eph 2:8-9). The rich man next shows the opposite.

10:16 *having taken them in His arms* Only Mark tells us this. The parents wanted a touch; He gave a hug and a blessing. He is never too busy for the least of us.

10:17 *what should I do so that I may inherit eternal life?* He was young (Matt 19:20) and a ruler (Luke 18:18). He ran and knelt and asked the most important question there is. But what should I do shows he thought eternal life could be earned, one more thing to add to his wealth, position and reputation.

10:18 *No one is good except One, God* Jesus was not denying He is good or God. He was making the man think: if only God is good and you call Me good, do you know what you are saying? It also challenged the man's idea of his own goodness. There is none righteous, not even one (Rom 3:10).

except One, God. **19** You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery; do not murder; do not steal; do not bear false witness; do not defraud; honor your father and mother.'" **20** And he, answering, said to Him, "Teacher, all these I have kept from my youth." **21** And Jesus, having looked at him, loved him and said to him, "One ***thing*** you lack: go, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me, having taken up the cross." **22** But he, having become gloomy at the word, went away grieving; for he was ***one*** having many possessions. **23** And having looked around, Jesus says to His disciples, "How difficultly will those having riches enter into the kingdom of God!" **24** And the disciples were amazed at His words. But Jesus, answering again, says to them, "Children, how difficult it is for those having trusted in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! **25** It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of the needle than for a rich ***man*** to enter into the kingdom of God." **26** And they were exceedingly astonished, saying to themselves, "And who is able to be saved?" **27** And having looked at them, Jesus says, "With men ***it is*** impossible, but not with God; for all things are possible with God." **28** And Peter (Petros) began to say to Him, "Look, we left all and followed You." **29** And Jesus, answering, said, "Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands on account of Me and the gospel, **30** who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the coming age eternal life. **31** But many first will be last, and the last first."

Third Prediction

32 Now they were on the way, going up to Jerusalem (Hierosolyma), and Jesus was going on ahead of them; and they were amazed, and following, they were afraid. And having taken the twelve along again, He began to tell them the things about to happen to Him: **33** "Look, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and will deliver Him to the Gentiles; **34** and they will mock Him and will flog Him and will spit on Him and will kill Him; and on the third day He will rise again."

James and John's Request

35 And James (Iakobos) and John (Ioannes), the sons of Zebedee (Zebedaios), come up to Him, saying, "Teacher, we desire that You would do for us whatever we ask." **36** And He said to them, "What do you desire Me to do for you?" **37** And they said to Him, "Grant to us that we may sit, one at Your right and one at Your left, in Your glory." **38** But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup which I drink, and to be baptized ***with*** the bap-

10:19 Exod 20:12; Exod 20:13; Exod 20:14-16
10:20 Matt 19:20; Phil 3:6; Isa 58:2
10:21 Acts 2:45; Luke 12:33; Matt 19:21
10:22 Luke 12:15; 1 Tim 6:9,10; 1 John 2:15,16
10:23 Mark 3:5; Luke 18:24; 1 Cor 1:26
10:24 John 13:33; John 21:5; Ps 52:7
10:25 Jer 13:23; Matt 7:3-5; Matt 19:24,25
10:26 Mark 6:51; Mark 7:37; 2 Cor 11:23
10:27 Matt 19:26; Luke 1:37; Luke 18:27
10:28 Luke 14:33; Luke 18:28-30; Mark 1:16-20
10:29 Gen 12:1-3; Mark 8:35; Rev 2:3
10:30 Luke 18:30; 2 Cor 6:10; Phil 3:8
10:31 Matt 19:30; Matt 20:16; Luke 13:30
10:32 Matt 20:17-19; Luke 9:51; Luke 18:31-34
10:33 Matt 27:2; Mark 8:31; Matt 16:21
10:34 Isa 53:3; Hos 6:2; Ps 22:8
10:35 Matt 20:20-28; Mark 1:19,20; Mark 14:33
10:36 Mark 10:51; 1 Kgs 3:5-15; John 15:7
10:37 1 Kgs 22:19; Mark 16:19; Ps 45:9
10:38 Ps 75:8; Luke 12:50; Mark 14:36

10:19 *You know the commandments* The second half of the Ten Commandments, about how we treat others (Exod 20:12-16; Deut 5:16-20). Do not defraud may sum up the command not to covet, or point to cheating. Jesus did not list the commands about loving God first, and that was where the man's real problem lay.
10:20 *all these I have kept from my youth* On the outside he had lived a decent life. But the Law reaches the heart: anger is murder and lust is adultery in the heart (Matt 5:21-28). He measured himself by what others could see. Yet he knew something was missing, or why run to Jesus?
10:21 *Jesus, having looked at him, loved him* Only Mark tells us this. What came next was love telling the truth. His money was his god. Jesus does not ask every believer to sell everything; He asked this man because this idol stood between him and God. The real call was follow Me. Whatever holds first place in your heart instead of Jesus has to go.
10:22 *went away grieving; for he was one having many possessions* One of the saddest verses in the Bible. He came running to the right Person with the right question and walked away from eternal life rather than let go of what he could not keep. Jesus let him go. He does not force anyone to follow Him.
10:24 *how difficult it is for those having trusted in riches* Many Jews thought riches were a sign of God's blessing. Jesus said it again more tenderly: Children. The problem is not having money but trusting in it.
10:25 *easier for a camel to go through the eye of the needle* The largest animal in Israel and the smallest opening. Some say a small Jerusalem gate was called the Needle's Eye, but there is no good evidence for that. Jesus meant what He said. It is impossible.
10:27 *With men it is impossible, but not with God* No one, rich or poor, can save himself. Salvation is God's work from start to finish. He can change a heart that loves money into a heart that loves Him, as with Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10).
10:30 *a hundredfold now in this time* Following Jesus brings a family of brothers, sisters, mothers and children in the church, and homes open everywhere. Notice what He slipped into the list: with persecutions. He never promised an easy life. And in the coming age eternal life. The best is still ahead.
10:31 *many first will be last, and the last first* The rich man seemed first and walked away; fishermen and tax collectors seemed last. Do not judge anyone's standing with God by the outside, including your own.
10:32 *Jesus was going on ahead of them* Jerusalem sits high in the hills, so travelers went up to it. Picture Jesus walking out in front, set on the city where He would die. Jesus did not stumble into the cross. He walked straight toward it.
10:34 *they will mock Him and will flog Him and will spit on Him and will kill Him* The third and most detailed prediction (8:31; 9:31). The chief priests, mostly Sadducees, ran the temple. The leaders could not carry out a death sentence (John 18:31), so they would hand Him to the Romans. Every detail came true in chapters 14 and 15, and He never left out the third day.
10:35 *we desire that You would do for us whatever we ask* That is not how to pray. They wanted Jesus to sign a blank check.
10:37 *one at Your right and one at Your left, in Your glory* They believed He was King and the kingdom was coming; that was faith. But they wanted the top seats, and their mother came with them (Matt 20:20-21). He had just spoken of flogging and death, and they were thinking about power.
10:38 *Are you able to drink the cup which I drink* A cup often pictured God's judgment poured out (Ps 75:8; Isa 51:17), and He would pray about this cup in Gethsemane (14:36). Baptism here means being plunged under, overwhelmed by the judgment we deserved.

tism ***with*** which I am baptized?" **39** And they said to Him, "We are able." And Jesus said to them, "The cup which I drink you will indeed drink, and ***with*** the baptism ***with*** which I am baptized you will be baptized; **40** but to sit at My right and at My left is not Mine to give, but ***it is for those*** for whom it has been prepared." **41** And having heard ***it***, the ten began to be indignant about James and John. **42** But Jesus, having called them to ***Him***, says to them, "You know that those being accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and their great ***ones*** exercise authority over them. **43** But it will not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you will be your servant; **44** and whoever of you desires to become first will be slave of all. **45** For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life ***as*** a ransom for many."

Blind Bartimaeus

46 And they come to Jericho (Hiericho). And as He was going out from Jericho, and His disciples and a large crowd, a son of Timaeus (Timaios), Bartimaeus (Bartimaios) the blind ***man***, was sitting beside the road begging. **47** And having heard that it is Jesus the Nazarene, he began to cry out and to say, "Son of David (Dabid), Jesus, have mercy on me!" **48** And many were rebuking him that he should be silent; but he was crying out much more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" **49** And Jesus, having stopped, said for him to be called. And they call the blind ***man***, saying to him, "Take courage; rise, He calls you." **50** And he, having thrown off his cloak, having risen, came to Jesus. **51** And Jesus, answering, says to him, "What do you desire ***that*** I should do for you?" And the blind ***man*** said to Him, "Rabboni, that I may receive sight." **52** And Jesus said to him, "Go; your faith has saved you." And immediately he received sight and was following Jesus on the way.

MARK 11

The King Enters Jerusalem

1 And when they draw near to Jerusalem (Hierousalem), to Bethphage and Bethany (Bethania), toward the Mount of Olives, He sends two of His disciples **2** and says to them, "Go into the village opposite you; and immediately, entering into it, you will find a colt tied, on which no one of men has sat; having untied it, bring ***it***. **3** And if anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' say that the Lord has need of it, and immediately he will send it here." **4** And they went away and found the colt tied at the door outside on the street, and they untie it. **5** And some of those standing there were saying to them, "What are you doing, untying the colt?" **6** And they spoke to them just as Jesus (Iesous) had commanded; and

10:39 Acts 12:2; Rev 1:9; Mark 14:31
10:40 Matt 25:34; Matt 20:23; John 17:2,24
10:41 Prov 13:10; Rom 12:10; Phil 2:3
10:42 1 Pet 5:3; Luke 22:25; Matt 20:25
10:43 Matt 23:8-12; Mark 9:35; 1 Cor 9:19-23
10:45 Isa 53:11-12; Matt 20:28; Phil 2:5-8
10:46 Matt 20:29-34; Luke 18:35-43; John 9:8
10:47 Jer 23:5; Isa 9:7; Matt 9:27
10:48 Matt 19:13; Mark 5:35; Matt 20:31
10:49 John 11:28; Ps 86:15; Ps 145:8
10:50 Phil 3:7-9; Heb 12:1
10:51 Mark 10:36; 2 Chr 1:7; Matt 6:8
10:52 Matt 9:22,28-30; Mark 5:34; Luke 7:50
11:1 Zech 14:4; Matt 21:1-11; Luke 19:29-40
11:2 Matt 21:2,3; Luke 19:30,31
11:3 Ps 24:1; Acts 10:36; Acts 17:25
11:4 Matt 21:6,7; Matt 26:19; Luke 19:32-34

10:39 *The cup which I drink you will indeed drink* James was the first apostle killed for his faith (Acts 12:2), and John was sent to Patmos for the word of God (Rev 1:9). They could never drink the cup of wrath for sin. Only Jesus could. But they would share His sufferings. The seats in glory the Father has already settled; they are not given to those who push.
10:41 *the ten began to be indignant about James and John* Probably not because the two were proud, but because they asked first. Pride in one stirs up pride in others, and soon the whole group is fighting. That is how many church fights start.
10:42 *their great ones exercise authority over them* Under Rome they knew what worldly power looked like: being on top and making others serve you. It is still that way in governments, businesses, and sadly some churches.
10:43 *whoever desires to become great among you will be your servant* His people are to be different. Servant is diakonos, one who waits on tables, the source of deacon. Slave is doulos, one who belongs to another and lives to do his will. Do you want to be great? Ask how you can serve the people around you today.
10:45 *to give His life as a ransom for many* The key verse of Mark. The Son of Man all peoples will serve (Dan 7:14) came first to serve. A ransom was the price paid to free a slave or prisoner. We were slaves to sin under God's judgment and could not pay our way out. Jesus paid with His life, dying in our place, the Servant bearing the sins of many (Isa 53:11-12). Teachers discuss what for many tells us, but the plain point is that His one life was enough for a great multitude.
10:46 *Bartimaeus the blind man, was sitting beside the road begging* Jericho, about fifteen miles northeast of Jerusalem, was the last town before the steep climb, and Passover pilgrims crowded through. Mark gives his name, perhaps because the early church knew him. A blind man had few ways to live but begging where crowds passed.
10:47 *Son of David, Jesus, have mercy on me!* A title for the Messiah, the son promised David's throne forever (2 Sam 7:12-16). Blind Bartimaeus saw who Jesus was better than many with good eyes. It is the first public use of the title in Mark, and Jesus does not silence him. The time for hiding was almost over.
10:48 *he was crying out much more* When people try to keep you from Jesus, keep calling. He knew his need and who could meet it. That is the faith Jesus answers.
10:50 *having thrown off his cloak* Jesus, walking to the cross with the weight of the world on Him, stopped for one beggar. A beggar's cloak was everything, warmth at night and perhaps a cloth to catch coins. The rich man would not let go of his possessions. Bartimaeus let go of all he had.
10:51 *What do you desire that I should do for you?* The same question He asked James and John (10:36). They asked for power; he asked for mercy. Prayer is not telling God what He does not know but coming in trust and naming our need. Rabboni is a warm, respectful word, my teacher or my master.
10:52 *was following Jesus on the way* Saved can mean healed or saved from sin, and for Bartimaeus it meant both. His faith reached out to the One with power. The way led to Jerusalem and the cross. He is a picture of a true disciple: helpless, crying for mercy, throwing off everything, following Jesus.
11:1 *to Bethphage and Bethany, toward the Mount of Olives* The Mount of Olives is a ridge just east of Jerusalem, across the Kidron Valley from the temple. Bethany, on its far side about two miles from the city, was the home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus (John 11:1). The Lord's feet will stand on this mount when He comes to fight for Jerusalem (Zech 14:4). Jesus left this world from here (Acts 1:9-12), and He will return here.
11:2 *a colt tied, on which no one of men has sat* An animal never ridden was set apart for a sacred purpose (Num 19:2; 1 Sam 6:7).
11:3 *the Lord has need of it* Some think Jesus had arranged it with the owner; others that He simply knew, as with the upper room (14:13-16). Either way He was in full control. Nothing about the coming week caught Him by surprise. And when the disciples did just as He said, they found He had gone ahead of them.

they let them go. **7** And they brought the colt to Jesus and put their cloaks on it, and He sat on it. **8** And many spread their cloaks on the road, and others were cutting branches from the trees and were spreading ***them*** on the road. **9** And those going ahead and those following were crying out, saying, "Hosanna! Blessed ***is*** the ***One*** coming in ***the*** name of ***the*** Lord! **10** Blessed ***is*** the coming kingdom, in ***the*** name of ***the*** Lord, of our father David (Dabid)! Hosanna in the highest!" **11** And Jesus entered into Jerusalem and into the temple; and having looked around at all things, the hour already being late, He went out to Bethany with the twelve.

The Fig Tree and the Temple

12 And on the next day, when they had gone out from Bethany, He was hungry. **13** And having seen from far away a fig tree having leaves, He went ***to see*** if perhaps He would find anything on it. And having come to it, He found nothing except leaves; for it was not ***the*** season of figs. **14** And Jesus, answering, said to it, "May no one eat fruit from you anymore forever." And His disciples were listening. **15** And they come to Jerusalem. And Jesus, having entered into the temple, began to cast out those selling and buying in the temple, and He overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those selling the doves. **16** And He was not permitting anyone to carry a vessel through the temple. **17** And He was teaching, saying to them, "Has it not been written, 'My house will be called a house of prayer for all the nations'? But you made it a den of robbers." **18** And the scribes and the chief priests heard ***it***, and they were seeking how they might destroy Him; for they were afraid of Him, because all the crowd was astonished at His teaching. **19** And when evening came, He was going out of the city.

Faith, Prayer and Forgiveness

20 And passing by in the morning, they saw the fig tree dried up from ***the*** roots. **21** And having remembered, Peter (Petros) says to Him, "Rabbi, look, the fig tree which You cursed has been dried up." **22** And Jesus, answering, says to them, "Have faith of God. **23** For truly I say to you that whoever says to this mountain, 'Be taken up and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that the things he says happen, it will be ***done*** for him, whatever he says. **24** Because of this I say to you, all things whatever you ask, praying, believe that you receive ***them***, and it will be ***done*** for

11:7 Zech 9:9; 2 Kgs 9:13; Matt 21:4,5
11:8 2 Kgs 9:13; Lev 23:40
11:9 Ps 118:26; Ps 118:25; Matt 23:39
11:10 Ezek 37:24; Jer 33:15; Jer 33:26
11:11 Mal 3:1; Matt 21:10-16; Luke 19:41-45
11:12 Matt 21:18-22; Matt 4:2; Luke 4:2
11:13 Luke 13:6-9; Matt 21:19; Luke 10:31
11:14 Matt 21:19,33,44; Mark 11:20,21; Isa 5:5,6
11:15 Matt 21:12-16; Luke 19:45; John 2:13-17
11:17 Isa 56:7; Jer 7:11; 1 Kgs 8:42
11:18 Matt 7:28; Mark 12:12; Mark 3:6
11:19 Luke 21:37; Mark 11:11; John 12:36
11:20 Mark 11:14; Job 18:16,17; Job 20:5-7
11:21 Prov 3:33; Zech 5:3,4; Matt 25:41
11:22 Mark 9:23; Ps 62:8; John 14:1
11:23 Matt 17:20; John 15:7; John 14:13
11:24 Matt 21:22; 1 John 3:22; 1 John 5:14,15

11:7 *He sat on it* For over five hundred years Israel had the promise: "Look, your King comes to you" (Zech 9:9), humble and riding on a colt. Jesus was telling the city, as plainly as He could without words, that He was that King. A king on a war horse came to make war; a king on a donkey came in peace.
11:8 *many spread their cloaks on the road* That is how Israel once greeted a new king (2 Kgs 9:13). John tells us the branches were palms (John 12:13), which is why many churches call this day Palm Sunday.
11:9 *Hosanna! Blessed is the One coming in the name of the Lord!* Hosanna is Hebrew for save now, save, we pray, and it had become a shout of praise. The words come from Psalm 118:25-26, sung by pilgrims on the way to the feasts.
11:10 *Blessed is the coming kingdom, in the name of the Lord, of our father David!* They expected the kingdom promised to David right then, and many pictured a Messiah to throw out Rome. They were right that He is the King, but He had come first to die. Within a week some in the same city would shout "Crucify Him!" (15:13). Crowds are fickle. Real faith keeps following when the cheering stops.
11:11 *having looked around at all things* Like a landlord walking his property, noting what was wrong. He did not act that evening but came back the next day. Jesus never acts rashly. When He moves, it is on purpose.
11:13 *He found nothing except leaves; for it was not the season of figs* He was hungry; fully God and fully man, He got tired and hungry like we do. Why look for fruit out of season? In Israel fig trees put out small early fruit along with their leaves in spring, before the main crop, and people often ate them. A tree in full leaf promised something should be there. This tree made a show but had nothing to give.
11:14 *May no one eat fruit from you anymore forever* The only miracle of judgment in Mark. Jesus was not losing His temper at a tree but acting out a living parable, as the prophets often did. The fig tree pictured Israel (Jer 8:13; Hos 9:10). Mark wraps the tree around the temple cleansing so we read them together. The temple was full of religious leaves and no fruit. God is not impressed with leaves. He looks for fruit.
11:15 *He overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those selling the doves* This was the Court of the Gentiles, the only part of the temple where non-Jews could come and pray. Pilgrims needed animals and the right coin for the temple tax, and money changers often took a fat fee. Doves were the sacrifice the poor could afford (Lev 5:7). This was no quiet protest. The gentle Servant was also Lord of the temple, and He was angry.
11:16 *He was not permitting anyone to carry a vessel through the temple* People used the outer court as a shortcut, carrying their goods. Only Mark records this. How we treat the place and time of worship shows what we think of God. Our gatherings should be marked by reverence, not business as usual.
11:17 *My house will be called a house of prayer for all the nations* Jesus quotes Isaiah 56:7, and only Mark includes "for all the nations." God always meant His temple as a place where Gentiles could pray, and the trade had shut them out. A den of robbers (Jer 7:11) is where robbers hide after robbing. The leaders cheated in God's name and hid behind the temple. Jeremiah's warning came before the first temple fell, and Jesus' words came true in A.D. 70.
11:18 *they were seeking how they might destroy Him* The chief priests ran the temple and profited from the trade, and Jesus hit them where it hurt. They could not arrest Him before the astonished crowd, so they looked for another way. Each night that week He left the city, likely for Bethany or the Mount of Olives (Luke 21:37).
11:21 *the fig tree which You cursed has been dried up* Dead from the roots up, not just wilted. What Jesus says happens. Religion with leaves and no fruit will not last.
11:22 *Have faith of God* He did not explain the tree. He turned them to faith that has God as its object. The disciples were amazed at the power; Jesus pointed them to the One it came from. Our faith is only as good as the One we put it in.
11:23 *whoever says to this mountain, 'Be taken up and be cast into the sea,'* Likely standing on the Mount of Olives, where on a clear day you can see the Dead Sea. A mountain was a common Jewish picture of a problem impossible to move. Jesus is not teaching that we can make God do whatever we want if we believe hard enough. Faith is trust in God, not a force we use on Him. Praying in line with His will, no obstacle is too big for Him.
11:24 *believe that you receive them, and it will be done for you* A wonderful promise read with the rest of Scripture: we receive what we ask "according to His will" (1 John 5:14), and Jesus prayed, "not what I want, but what You want" (14:36). Believing prayer asks for what God wants to give and trusts Him for His way and time. Do you pray expecting an answer, or pray and go on worrying?

you. **25** And whenever you stand praying, forgive if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father who ***is*** in the heavens may also forgive you your trespasses. **26** But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father who ***is*** in the heavens forgive your trespasses."

Jesus' Authority Questioned

27 And they come again to Jerusalem. And as He is walking in the temple, the chief priests and the scribes and the elders come to Him, **28** and they say to Him, "By what authority are You doing these things? And who gave You this authority, that You should do these things?" **29** And Jesus, answering, said to them, "I also will ask you one word, and answer Me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things: **30** The baptism of John (Ioannes), was it from heaven or from men? Answer Me." **31** And they were reasoning with themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say, 'Why then did you not believe him?' **32** But if we say, 'From men'"—they were afraid of the people; for all were holding John, that he truly was a prophet. **33** And answering, they say to Jesus, "We do not know." And Jesus, answering, says to them, "Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things."

MARK 12

The Wicked Tenants

1 And He began to say to them in parables: "A man planted a vineyard, and put a fence around ***it***, and dug a wine vat, and built a tower; and he rented it out to farmers and went abroad. **2** And at the season he sent a slave to the farmers, so that he might receive from the farmers from the fruit of the vineyard. **3** And they, having taken him, beat ***him*** and sent ***him*** away empty. **4** And again he sent to them another slave; and having stoned that ***one***, they wounded ***him*** in the head and sent ***him*** away dishonored. **5** And again he sent another; and that ***one*** they killed; and many others, beating some and killing some. **6** Having yet therefore one son, his beloved, he sent him also to them last, saying, 'They will respect my son.' **7** But those farmers said to themselves, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.' **8** And having taken him, they killed ***him*** and cast ***him*** out of the vineyard. **9** What therefore will the master of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the farmers and give the vineyard to others. **10** Have you not even read this Scripture: 'A stone which those building rejected, this has become ***the*** head of ***the*** corner; **11** this was from ***the*** Lord, and it is mar-

11:25 Col 3:13; Matt 6:12,14,15; Luke 6:37
11:27 Matt 21:23-27; Luke 20:1-8; John 10:23
11:28 Exod 2:14; Num 16:3,13; Acts 7:27,28,38,39,51
11:29 Isa 52:13; Matt 21:24; Luke 20:3-8
11:30 Mark 1:1-11; Mark 9:13; Matt 3:1-17
11:31 Matt 11:7-14; Matt 21:25-27,31,32; John 1:15,29,34,36
11:32 Matt 14:5; Matt 21:46; Mark 6:20
11:33 Isa 1:3; Isa 6:9,10; Isa 29:9-14
12:1 Isa 5:1-2; Isa 5:3; Isa 5:4
12:2 Ps 1:3; Matt 21:34; Luke 20:10
12:3 2 Chr 24:20; 2 Chr 24:21; 2 Chr 36:16
12:5 Mark 9:13; Neh 9:30; Jer 7:25-28
12:6 Matt 3:17; Heb 1:1,2; Ps 2:7
12:7 Gen 37:20; Mark 12:12; Gen 3:15
12:8 Matt 21:33,39; Luke 20:15; Heb 13:11-13
12:9 Luke 19:27,41-44; Matt 21:43; Matt 21:40,41
12:10 Ps 118:22-23; Isa 28:16; Zech 4:7
12:11 Gen 24:50; Acts 3:12-16; Num 23:23

11:25 *forgive if you have anything against anyone* Jews often stood to pray. You cannot hold a grudge in one hand and reach out to God with the other. We do not earn God's forgiveness by forgiving, but a heart that has received mercy shows mercy. If you are struggling in prayer, ask whether there is someone you need to forgive.
11:26 *But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father who is in the heavens forgive your trespasses* The same truth the other way around: one who refuses to forgive has not understood God's forgiveness (Matt 18:21-35). The SLB follows the Received Text, which includes this verse. Most older Greek copies of Mark lack it, and many modern Bibles bracket or footnote it. Jesus says the same in Matthew 6:15 in all copies, so no teaching rests on this verse alone.
11:27 *the chief priests and the scribes and the elders* The three groups of the Sanhedrin, the ruling council of seventy and the high priest. This was an official challenge.
11:28 *By what authority are You doing these things?* They had not given Him the right to cleanse the temple. Say from God, and they could charge blasphemy; say from Himself, and they could dismiss Him.
11:30 *The baptism of John, was it from heaven or from men?* A question back was a common way rabbis debated, and it was no dodge. John had pointed to Jesus (1:7-8). If John's ministry came from God, so did Jesus' authority. Before judging Him they had to deal with what God had already said through John.
11:31 *Why then did you not believe him?* They never asked what was true, only what was safe. That is the mark of someone who does not want the truth. They feared the crowd more than God.
11:33 *We do not know* A lie, and a cowardly one, from the teachers of Israel about the most famous prophet of their day. Jesus would not give more light to those refusing the light they had. When people keep rejecting what God shows them, He may stop showing them more. For an honest heart the answer is plain: His authority is from heaven, because He is the Son of God.
12:1 *A man planted a vineyard* Told to the leaders who had just questioned His authority (11:27). Any Jew would think of Isaiah's song of the vineyard, "the house of Israel" (Isa 5:7), where God looked for good grapes and found wild ones. The owner did everything needed: a fence for protection, a vat to press grapes, a tower for a watchman. Absent landowners renting to tenant farmers for a share of the crop were common in Galilee.
12:5 *many others, beating some and killing some* The owner had a right to his share. The slaves are the prophets God sent again and again. Jeremiah was beaten and thrown in a pit; tradition says Isaiah was killed; Zechariah son of Jehoiada was stoned in the temple court (2 Chr 24:20-21). Any human landlord would have given up long before. This is God's long patience with His people.
12:6 *Having yet therefore one son, his beloved, he sent him also to them last* Beloved is the Father's word from heaven at the baptism and transfiguration (1:11; 9:7). Jesus was telling them plainly who He is. Last means no one would come after Him. God spoke through the prophets, and in these last days He has spoken in His Son (Heb 1:1-2). Jesus is God's final word.
12:7 *This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours* That is the heart of sin. People want God's gifts without God, to run their own lives and keep what belongs to Him.
12:8 *they killed him and cast him out of the vineyard* Jesus was telling these leaders what they were about to do. Within days they would hand Him over, and He would die outside the city walls (Heb 13:12).
12:9 *He will come and destroy the farmers and give the vineyard to others* Judgment fell on those who rejected the Son when Rome destroyed Jerusalem and the temple in A.D. 70, ending these leaders' rule. The others are new leaders over God's people, the apostles and the church built on the Son. This does not mean God has rejected Israel forever. A partial hardening lasts until the fullness of the Gentiles comes in, and "all Israel will be saved" (Rom 11:26). God's promises to Israel still stand.
12:10 *A stone which those building rejected, this has become the head of the corner* The experts in Scripture had not read it rightly. Psalm 118, the psalm the crowds sang (11:9), says the builders, Israel's leaders, threw the stone aside, but God made Him the most important stone in the building. They would kill the Son; God would raise Him. Peter preached this to the same council (Acts 4:10-11).

velous in our eyes'?" **12** And they were seeking to lay hold of Him, and they feared the crowd; for they knew that He had spoken the parable against them. And having left Him, they went away.

Taxes to Caesar

13 And they send to Him some of the Pharisees and of the Herodians, so that they might catch Him in a word. **14** And having come, they say to Him, "Teacher, we know that You are true and You do not care about anyone; for You do not look at ***the*** face of men, but You teach the way of God in truth. Is it lawful to give a poll tax to Caesar, or not? **15** Should we give, or should we not give?" But He, knowing their hypocrisy, said to them, "Why are you testing Me? Bring Me a denarius, so that I may see ***it***." **16** And they brought ***it***. And He says to them, "Whose ***is*** this image and the inscription?" And they said to Him, "Caesar's." **17** And Jesus (Iesous), answering, said to them, "Give back the things of Caesar to Caesar, and the things of God to God." And they marveled at Him.

A Question About the Resurrection

18 And Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, come to Him; and they asked Him, saying, **19** "Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if anyone's brother dies and leaves behind a wife and does not leave children, his brother should take his wife and raise up seed for his brother. **20** There were therefore seven brothers; and the first took a wife, and dying, he did not leave seed. **21** And the second took her and died, and neither did he leave seed; and the third likewise. **22** And the seven took her and did not leave seed. Last of all the woman also died. **23** In the resurrection, therefore, when they rise, of which of them will she be wife? For the seven had her ***as*** wife." **24** And Jesus, answering, said to them, "Is it not because of this that you are in error, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God? **25** For when they rise out of ***the*** dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels who ***are*** in the heavens. **26** But concerning the dead, that they are raised, have you not read in the book of Moses, how at the bush God spoke to him, saying, 'I ***am*** the God of Abraham (Abraam) and the God of Isaac (Isaak) and the God of Jacob (Iakob)'? **27** He is not the God of ***the*** dead, but God of ***the*** living. You therefore are greatly in error."

The Great Commandment

28 And one of the scribes, having come up, having heard them disputing, knowing that He had answered them well, asked Him, "Which is ***the*** first commandment of all?" **29** And Jesus answered him, "***The*** first of all the commandments ***is***: 'Hear, Israel: ***the*** Lord our God, ***the*** Lord is one; **30** and you shall love ***the*** Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.'

12:12 2 Sam 12:12; 2 Sam 12:13; 2 Sam 12:14
12:13 Luke 11:54; Luke 20:20-26; Mark 3:6
12:14 Deut 33:9; Ezra 4:12; Isa 50:7
12:15 Matt 22:18; Luke 20:23; John 2:24,25
12:16 Matt 22:19-22; Luke 20:24-26; 2 Tim 2:19
12:17 Rom 13:7; Prov 24:21; Matt 17:25-27
12:18 Matt 22:23-33; Acts 4:1,2; Luke 20:27-40
12:19 Gen 38:8; Deut 25:5-6; Ruth 4:5
12:20 Matt 22:25-28; Luke 20:29-33
12:24 Gen 18:14; John 20:9; Matt 22:29
12:25 Matt 22:30; Luke 20:35,36; 1 Cor 15:42-54
12:26 Exod 3:6; Gen 26:24; Gen 28:13
12:27 Rom 14:9; Rom 4:17; Heb 11:13-16
12:28 Matt 22:34-40; Matt 5:19; Matt 19:18
12:29 Deut 6:4; Mark 12:32,33; Luke 10:27
12:30 Deut 6:5; Deut 6:4; Deut 10:12

12:12 *they knew that He had spoken the parable against them* They understood exactly and still did not repent. They did what the parable said they would do. It is possible to understand the truth perfectly and still refuse it. Knowing about Jesus is not bowing to Him.
12:13 *so that they might catch Him in a word* A hunting picture, a snare. The Pharisees hated Roman rule; the Herodians backed Herod, who ruled with Rome's support. They agreed on nothing except getting rid of Jesus (3:6).
12:14 *Is it lawful to give a poll tax to Caesar, or not?* They began with flattery, every word true and none meant. Flattery is praise with a hook in it. The poll tax was paid by every person to Rome, and the Jews hated it. Say yes, and the crowd would see Him siding with Rome; say no, and the Herodians could report Him as a rebel. He asked for a denarius, the silver Roman coin used to pay the tax, about a day's wage, bearing the face of Tiberius Caesar and words calling him son of the divine Augustus.
12:17 *Give back the things of Caesar to Caesar, and the things of God to God* Caesar's image was on the coin, so give it back. Christians pay taxes and respect government (Rom 13:1-7). But what bears God's image? We do (Gen 1:27). Caesar can have the coin; God must have all of you. No government gets what belongs to God alone: our worship and final loyalty. The trap snapped shut on empty air.
12:18 *Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection* The only time Mark mentions them. A smaller party of wealthy, powerful Jews, many of them priests, who controlled the temple and high priesthood. They took only the five books of Moses as final authority and denied resurrection, angels and spirits (Acts 23:8).
12:19 *his brother should take his wife and raise up seed for his brother* Deuteronomy 25:5-6. The custom kept a dead man's family line and land alive; Ruth and Boaz show a related custom (Ruth 4). They started with Moses, thinking he was on their side.
12:23 *In the resurrection, therefore, when they rise, of which of them will she be wife?* They likely used this story often to embarrass the Pharisees. If life after death is just like this life, they reasoned, resurrection creates impossible problems, so there must not be one.
12:24 *not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God* Jesus did not mock them. He went to the root. They had read the Scriptures without understanding, and they limited God to what they could imagine. Most errors about the faith come from one or both. The answer is to know God's word and trust God's power.
12:25 *they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels* The resurrection life is not a copy of this one. Marriage is for this age; where there is no death, there is no need for new births. We do not become angels; we are like them in this. The verse does not say we will forget those we love. Believers will be with the Lord and with one another (1 Thess 4:17). And yes, angels are real.
12:26 *I am the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob* Jesus answered from Moses, the part of Scripture they accepted (Exod 3:6). The patriarchs had been dead for centuries, yet God said I am, not I was.
12:27 *He is not the God of the dead, but God of the living* God's covenant with them did not end at death. They are alive to Him and will be raised. Jesus built an argument on the tense of one verb, showing how much He trusted every word of Scripture. "Greatly in error": plain words, said in love.
12:28 *Which is the first commandment of all?* The rabbis counted 613 commands in the Law and debated which were heavier. Matthew calls the question a test (Matt 22:35), but Mark shows an honest man impressed with Jesus' answer.
12:29 *Hear, Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one* The Shema, from the Hebrew for hear, prayed by every Jew morning and evening (Deut 6:4-5). There is only one true God. This is the starting point.
12:30 *with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength* Heart, our inner life and choices. Soul, life itself. Mind, the way we think. Strength, all our energy and effort. God does not want part of us. He wants all of us. Loving God is not just a feeling. It is giving Him everything we are.

This ***is the*** first commandment. **31** And ***the*** second ***is*** like ***it***, this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." **32** And the scribe said to Him, "Well ***said***, Teacher; You have spoken in truth that God is one, and there is no other besides Him; **33** and to love Him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the soul and with all the strength, and to love the neighbor as oneself, is more than all the burnt offerings and the sacrifices." **34** And Jesus, having seen him, that he answered wisely, said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." And no one any longer was daring to question Him.

David's Son and Lord

35 And Jesus, answering, was saying, teaching in the temple, "How do the scribes say that the Christ is ***the*** son of David (Dabid)? **36** For David himself said by the Holy Spirit, 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right ***hand*** until I make Your enemies a footstool of Your feet."' **37** Therefore David himself calls Him Lord; and from where is He his son?" And the great crowd was listening to Him gladly.

Warnings and a Widow's Gift

38 And He was saying to them in His teaching, "Beware of the scribes who desire to walk around in robes, and greetings in the marketplaces, **39** and first seats in the synagogues and first places at the feasts, **40** who devour the houses of the widows, and for a pretext pray at length. These will receive greater judgment." **41** And Jesus, having sat down opposite the treasury, was watching how the crowd casts copper ***money*** into the treasury; and many rich ***people*** were casting in much. **42** And one poor widow, having come, cast in two lepta, which is a quadrans. **43** And having called His disciples to ***Him***, He says to them, "Truly I say to you that this poor widow has cast in more than all those having cast into the treasury; **44** for all cast in out of what is abounding to them, but she out of her poverty cast in all that she had, her whole livelihood."

MARK 13

Signs of the End

1 And as He is going out of the temple, one of His disciples says to Him, "Teacher, look, what stones and what buildings!" **2** And Jesus (Iesous), answering, said to him, "Do you see these great buildings? There will certainly not be left stone on stone which will certainly not be thrown down." **3** And as He is sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter (Petros) and James (Iakobos) and John (Ioannes) and Andrew (Andreas) were asking Him privately, **4** "Tell us, when will these things be? And what ***will be*** the sign when all these things are about to be accomplished?" **5** And Jesus, answering them, began to say, "Take heed lest

12:31 Lev 19:18; Rom 13:8,9; Gal 5:14
12:32 Deut 4:35; Deut 4:39; Isa 44:8
12:33 Lev 19:18; Deut 6:5; 1 Sam 15:22
12:34 Ps 85:9; Isa 56:6; Matt 22:46
12:35 Ps 110:1; Luke 20:41-44; Mark 11:27
12:36 Ps 110:1; 2 Sam 23:2; Neh 9:30
12:37 Ps 110:1; Zech 11:7; Rom 1:3,4
12:38 Luke 11:43; Matt 23:1-7; Luke 20:45-47
12:39 James 2:2,3
12:40 Ezek 22:25; Luke 20:47; Matt 6:7
12:41 John 8:20; 2 Kgs 12:9; Matt 27:6
12:43 Prov 19:22; 2 Cor 8:2,12; 2 Cor 9:6-8
12:44 Luke 8:43; Mark 14:8; 1 Chr 29:2-17
13:1 Matt 24:1,2; Luke 21:5-7; Ezek 7:20-22
13:2 1 Kgs 9:7,8; 2 Chr 7:20,21; Jer 26:18
13:3 Mark 4:34; Matt 24:3; Mark 1:16-19
13:4 Matt 24:3; Acts 1:6,7; Dan 12:6,8
13:5 Jer 29:8; Eph 5:6; Col 2:8

12:31 *You shall love your neighbor as yourself* Asked for one, He gave two (Lev 19:18). You cannot love God and hate the people He made (1 John 4:20). Every other command hangs on these. And none of us has kept them perfectly. Only Jesus has. That is why we need Him.
12:33 *is more than all the burnt offerings and the sacrifices* A brave thing to say in the temple with sacrifices going on all around, but the prophets said it long before (1 Sam 15:22; Hos 6:6). Rituals mean nothing without a heart that loves God and others.
12:34 *You are not far from the kingdom of God* A compliment and a warning. Not far is not the same as in. He knew love mattered more than ritual, but he still needed to come to the King Himself. Many today know the facts and agree with the teaching and have never turned to Jesus. Are you in, or only near? Every trap had failed.
12:36 *The Lord said to my Lord* Psalm 110:1, the Old Testament verse most quoted in the New. Jesus says David wrote it by the Holy Spirit; Scripture is inspired by God. No father in Israel would call his own son Lord.
12:37 *David himself calls Him Lord; and from where is He his son?* The Messiah is both: David's son, born in his line, and David's Lord, the eternal Son of God. Jesus is fully man and fully God.
12:38 *Beware of the scribes who desire to walk around in robes* Not every scribe; He had just praised one. Long flowing robes showed off status, and people bowed in the markets and called them Rabbi. The front seats in the synagogue faced the people.
12:40 *who devour the houses of the widows, and for a pretext pray at length* Some took advantage of widows who trusted them with their property, or lived off their gifts, and prayed long in public to look holy. The more you know, the more you answer for (James 3:1). Religious leaders who abuse the weak will face God.
12:41 *was watching how the crowd casts copper money into the treasury* Offering boxes stood in the Court of the Women, said to be shaped like trumpets, and thrown coins made noise. Jesus still sees what we give and how, not just the amount but the heart.
12:42 *two lepta, which is a quadrans* A lepton was the smallest Jewish coin; two made a quadrans, the smallest Roman coin, as Mark explains for Roman readers. Right after the warning about scribes devouring widows' houses, here is a widow giving to God anyway. She could have kept one coin. She gave both.
12:44 *she out of her poverty cast in all that she had, her whole livelihood* God measures a gift by what is left over. The rich gave from their extra and never missed it; she gave all she had to live on and trusted God. A small gift from a sacrificial heart means more to Him than a big one that costs nothing. In days Jesus would give His whole life. She is the last person He points to before leaving the temple for good.
13:1 *Teacher, look, what stones and what buildings!* Herod the Great began rebuilding the temple about 20 B.C., and work was still going on (John 2:20). Some stones weighed many tons, and the white stone and gold trim shone in the sun. The disciples were like tourists from the country. But Jesus had just watched a widow give everything to that temple while its leaders devoured widows' houses (12:40-44).
13:2 *There will certainly not be left stone on stone* About forty years later, in A.D. 70, the Roman army under Titus captured Jerusalem and burned the temple, and the Romans tore the buildings down, as the Jewish historian Josephus describes. What looks most solid can be gone in a day. Only God and His word last forever.
13:3 *as He is sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple* From the Mount of Olives you look straight across the Kidron Valley at the temple mount. The four who asked were the first four He called (1:16-20).
13:4 *when will these things be?* They asked when the temple would fall and what the sign would be. Matthew shows they also asked about His coming and the consummation of the age (Matt 24:3). In their minds these were one event. Jesus' answer covers both, and we must read carefully to see which part speaks of which.

anyone mislead you. **6** For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am ***He***,' and they will mislead many. **7** And when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed; for it must happen, but the end ***is*** not yet. **8** For nation will rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there will be earthquakes in various places, and there will be famines and disturbances. These ***are*** beginnings of birth pains. **9** But take heed to yourselves; for they will deliver you up to councils, and in synagogues you will be beaten, and before governors and kings you will be brought for My sake, for a testimony to them. **10** And to all the nations the gospel must first be preached. **11** And when they lead you, delivering ***you*** up, do not be anxious beforehand what you should speak, nor premeditate; but whatever is given to you in that hour, speak this; for you are not the ones speaking, but the Holy Spirit. **12** And brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father ***his*** child; and children will rise up against parents and will put them to death. **13** And you will be hated by all on account of My name; but the ***one*** having endured to ***the*** end, he will be saved.

The Abomination and the Great Tribulation

14 But when you see the abomination of the desolation, which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not (let the ***one*** reading understand), then let those in Judea (Ioudaia) flee to the mountains. **15** And let the ***one*** on the housetop not come down into the house, nor go in to take anything out of his house; **16** and let the ***one*** being in the field not turn back to the things behind to take his cloak. **17** But woe to those having ***a child*** in ***the*** womb and to those nursing in those days! **18** And pray that your flight may not happen in winter. **19** For those days will be tribulation such as has not happened like it from ***the*** beginning of creation which God created until now, and certainly will not happen. **20** And unless ***the*** Lord had shortened the days, no flesh would have been saved; but on account of the elect, whom He chose, He shortened the days. **21** And then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here ***is*** the Christ!' or 'Look, there!' do not believe ***it***. **22** For false christs and false prophets will rise up, and they will give signs and wonders so as to lead astray, if possi-

13:6 Jer 23:25; Mark 13:22; Jer 14:14
13:7 Luke 21:9-11; Matt 18:7; Acts 17:3
13:8 Isa 19:2; 2 Chr 15:6; Rev 6:4
13:9 Matt 10:17,18; Mark 13:5; John 16:2
13:10 Matt 24:14; Rom 10:18; Col 1:6,23
13:11 Luke 21:14,15; Acts 6:10,15; Matt 10:19,20
13:12 Matt 10:21; Luke 12:52,53; Ezek 38:21
13:13 John 15:18,19; Matt 10:22; Luke 6:22
13:14 Dan 9:27; Dan 12:11; Dan 11:31
13:15 Gen 19:15; Gen 19:22; Gen 19:26
13:16 Mal 4:6
13:17 Lam 4:4; Luke 23:29; Deut 28:56,57
13:19 Dan 12:1; Jer 30:7; Joel 2:2
13:20 Isa 65:8,9; Zech 13:8,9; Matt 24:22
13:21 Luke 17:23,24; Luke 21:8; Deut 13:1-3
13:22 Deut 13:1-3; Matt 24:24; Mark 13:6

13:6 *many will come in My name, saying, 'I am He,'* The first thing Jesus gave was a warning, not a date. He cared more about their faithfulness than their curiosity. False messiahs rose before A.D. 70 and in every century since, some claiming to be Jesus returned, others claiming a special word no one else has. They will fool many. The way to spot a counterfeit is to know the real thing, Jesus as Scripture shows Him.
13:7 *do not be alarmed; for it must happen, but the end is not yet* Wars will come. Jesus said not to panic. They are not the sign that the end has arrived.
13:8 *These are beginnings of birth pains* Labor pains come closer together and harder as the birth nears. These troubles are part of every age, but they will grow in strength as the end approaches and point to the great travail of the Tribulation. Every war and earthquake reminds us this broken world is not our home and Jesus is coming.
13:9 *they will deliver you up to councils, and in synagogues you will be beaten* The councils were local Jewish courts, and synagogues also held trials. Acts shows it coming true: Peter and John before the Sanhedrin (Acts 4), Paul beaten in synagogues and standing before Felix, Festus and Agrippa (Acts 24-26). Even persecution becomes a testimony to them.
13:10 *to all the nations the gospel must first be preached* God's plan from the start (Gen 12:3), and our job while we wait for Jesus. Even during the Tribulation God will send His gospel to every nation, tribe, tongue and people (Rev 14:6). He will not let the end come without warning the world.
13:11 *you are not the ones speaking, but the Holy Spirit* A promise for believers on trial for their faith, not for lazy preachers who will not study. Peter, who would deny Jesus, later stood before the council "filled with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 4:8) and spoke boldly.
13:13 *the one having endured to the end, he will be saved* The deepest pain of persecution often comes from family. Hated not for being difficult or unkind but for His name. We do not save ourselves by hanging on. Those who truly belong to Him will endure, because He keeps them. In the setting of the Tribulation it can also mean those who endure to the end of that time will be delivered when Christ returns. Endurance is the mark of real faith.
13:14 *the abomination of the desolation, which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet* An abomination is something God hates, here an idol set in His holy place, bringing ruin (Dan 9:27; 11:31; 12:11). Antiochus Epiphanes set up an altar to Zeus in the temple about 167 B.C., a preview, but Jesus spoke of it as still to come. I believe it belongs to the future Tribulation. A coming ruler will make a seven-year covenant and break it in the middle (Dan 9:27), and the man of lawlessness will take his seat in God's temple, displaying himself as God (2 Thess 2:3-4). Many believe this is the Antichrist. A.D. 70 (Luke 21:20-24) was a terrible judgment and a foretaste. Some teachers see this verse fulfilled wholly in A.D. 70, but I hold the future view.
13:15 *let the one on the housetop not come down into the house* Flat roofs were used for rest and work, often with outside stairs. Go straight down and run. Do not go back for anything.
13:16 *not turn back to the things behind to take his cloak* A field worker left his outer cloak at the edge of the field. Do not go back even for that. Lot's wife looked back (Gen 19:26). When God says flee, you flee.
13:18 *pray that your flight may not happen in winter* Jesus had tender pity for mothers who could not run fast. Winter brings rain, cold and flooded streams. Jesus cared about the practical details of His people's suffering. He knows what is coming, and He cares.
13:19 *tribulation such as has not happened like it from the beginning of creation* Worse than anything in all history and anything after. That is why I believe this cannot be only A.D. 70; worse has followed. Daniel ties such a time of distress to the end and the resurrection (Dan 12:1); Jeremiah calls it the time of Jacob's distress (Jer 30:7); Revelation 6-19 describes it. I believe Christ will come for His church before it begins: "God did not appoint us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation" (1 Thess 5:9; see 1 Thess 4:16-17; John 14:3). The discourse speaks to disciples as Jews in Israel, and in that day to those in Judea who come to faith during the Tribulation.
13:20 *on account of the elect, whom He chose, He shortened the days* Saved here means kept alive. Without God's limit no one would survive. The elect are those who belong to Him in the Tribulation, Israel and people from every nation who turn to Him then (Rev 7). Daniel and Revelation measure it: three and a half years, 1,260 days, forty-two months (Dan 7:25; Rev 11:2-3; 12:6). Even in history's darkest time, God is in control and watches over His own.
13:21 *Look, here is the Christ!* People will claim Christ has come in secret, in some hidden place. Do not believe it. His coming will be seen by all.
13:22 *they will give signs and wonders so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect* The false prophets will do real signs; one will make fire come down from heaven (Rev 13:13-14). Miracles alone do not prove something is from God (Deut 13:1-3). Test everything by God's word. "If possible" tells us God will keep His own. The elect will not be finally deceived.

ble, even the elect. **23** But you, take heed; look, I have foretold all things to you.

The Coming of the Son of Man

24 But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, **25** and the stars of heaven will be falling, and the powers that ***are*** in the heavens will be shaken. **26** And then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. **27** And then He will send His angels and will gather together His elect from the four winds, from ***the*** end of ***the*** earth to ***the*** end of heaven.

The Lesson of the Fig Tree

28 Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender and puts forth the leaves, you know that the summer is near. **29** So you also, when you see these things coming to pass, know that it is near, at ***the*** doors. **30** Truly I say to you that this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things happen. **31** The heaven and the earth will pass away, but My words will certainly not pass away.

Keep Watch

32 But concerning that day and the hour no one knows, not even the angels who ***are*** in heaven, nor the Son, except the Father. **33** Take heed, be alert and pray; for you do not know when the time is. **34** ***It is*** like a man away on a journey, having left his house and having given to his slaves the authority, and to each one his work; and he commanded the doorkeeper that he should keep watch. **35** Keep watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming, in the evening, or at midnight, or at the crowing of the rooster, or in the morning, **36** lest, having come suddenly, he find you sleeping. **37** And what I say to you, I say to all: keep watch!"

MARK 14

The Anointing at Bethany

1 Now the Passover and the ***Feast of*** Unleavened ***Bread*** were after two days. And the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how, having seized Him by deceit, they might kill ***Him***. **2** But they were saying, "Not during the feast, lest there

13:23 2 Pet 3:17; Mark 13:5,9,33; John 14:29
13:24 Isa 13:10; Ezek 32:7; Joel 2:10
13:25 Isa 34:4; Joel 2:31
13:26 Dan 7:13; Dan 7:12; Rev 1:7
13:27 Deut 30:4; Zech 2:6; Matt 24:31
13:28 Matt 24:32,33; Luke 21:29-31
13:29 James 5:9; Ezek 7:10-12; Ezek 12:25-28
13:30 Matt 24:34; Luke 21:32; Matt 16:28
13:31 Matt 5:18; Isa 51:6; Matt 24:35
13:32 Acts 1:7; Matt 24:36-42; Rev 3:3
13:33 Matt 25:13; Rom 13:11,12,14; Eph 6:18
13:34 John 10:3; Matt 25:14-30; 1 Cor 15:58
13:35 Matt 24:42,44; Mark 13:33
13:36 Matt 24:48-51; Luke 21:34; Rom 13:11-14
13:37 Mark 13:33,35; Luke 12:41-46
14:1 Lev 23:5; Deut 16:1; Num 28:16
14:2 Prov 19:21; Prov 21:30; Lam 3:27

13:23 *I have foretold all things to you* Prophecy is not given so we can argue about charts but so we stay faithful, watchful and calm when the world shakes. God is never surprised.
13:24 *after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened* Matthew says "immediately after the tribulation" (Matt 24:29). The words echo the prophets (Isa 13:10; Joel 2:31). I take them plainly. God will shake the heavens, and the lights of the sky will fail (Rev 6:12-14). The universe will announce that its Creator is about to appear.
13:26 *they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory* This is the Second Coming, in the words of Daniel 7:13. His first coming was quiet, a baby in a manger and a servant on a donkey. This one will be in power, and everyone will see it (Rev 1:7). Christ returns visibly to the earth at the end of the Tribulation as King of kings (Rev 19:11-16) and sets up His kingdom on the earth for a thousand years (Rev 20:4-6).
13:27 *He will send His angels and will gather together His elect from the four winds* The four winds means every direction. Some see the rapture here. I believe it is not. At the rapture the Lord Himself comes in the air for the church and believers are caught up to meet Him (1 Thess 4:16-17). Here, at the end of the Tribulation, angels gather the believing remnant of Israel and those who came to faith in the Tribulation to enter His kingdom. The prophets promised God would gather scattered Israel (Isa 11:12; Deut 30:3-4), and He has a future for that nation (Rom 11:25-29).
13:28 *learn the parable from the fig tree* Olive trees keep their leaves all year; the fig tree loses them in winter, and new leaves mean summer is close. Some teachers also see the fig tree as Israel and point to its rebirth as a nation in 1948, but Jesus' main point is simpler: when the signs begin, know that His coming is near, at the doors.
13:30 *this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things happen* One of the most debated verses. Many dispensational teachers take it as the generation that sees the signs; those alive when the abomination is set up will see the Lord return. Others read generation as race or kind, the Jewish people preserved until all is fulfilled. Others apply it to the disciples' own generation and A.D. 70. Good teachers hold each view.
13:31 *My words will certainly not pass away* Whatever we debate, this is certain. The universe will one day be gone, but every word Jesus spoke will stand. You can stake your life on it.
13:32 *no one knows, not even the angels who are in heaven, nor the Son, except the Father* As man, the Son set aside the independent use of some divine rights (Phil 2:6-8). He lived as a servant in full dependence on the Father and knew what the Father gave Him to know. Even after the resurrection He said the times were the Father's (Acts 1:7). Anyone who sets a date claims to know what Jesus said only the Father knows. Run from date setters.
13:33 *Take heed, be alert and pray* The right response to prophecy is not fear or speculation but watchfulness and prayer. Are you ready if Jesus came today? Is there anything you would want to make right first?
13:34 *to each one his work; and he commanded the doorkeeper that he should keep watch* Jesus is the man away on a journey, gone to the Father. We are not to sit and stare at the sky but to be busy with the work He gave us, ready to open the door the moment He comes. Each of us has a job in His house. Are you doing yours?
13:36 *having come suddenly, he find you sleeping* The four Roman watches ran from evening to dawn; He could come at any hour. The danger is not that Jesus will come too soon, but that we will be spiritually asleep: careless, distracted, living for ourselves. Suddenly fits the teaching that Christ's coming for His church could happen at any moment. Nothing has to happen first.
13:37 *what I say to you, I say to all: keep watch!* Spoken to four men on a hillside and meant for everyone who would ever follow Him. Not a timeline or a chart, but a command. In Gethsemane these same men were told to keep watch and fell asleep (14:34-41). Let us learn from them. Stay awake. Stay faithful. Jesus is coming.
14:1 *the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were after two days* Passover remembered the night the angel of death passed over the houses marked with the lamb's blood (Exod 12), and the seven-day Feast of Unleavened Bread followed. Jerusalem was packed with pilgrims. The leaders had already decided He must die; the only question was how.
14:2 *Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar of the people* They wanted to wait until the crowds went home. But God had His own timing. Jesus, "our Passover" (1 Cor 5:7), would die at the Passover, when the lambs were sacrificed.

be an uproar of the people." **3** And while He was in Bethany (Bethania) in the house of Simon the leper, as He was reclining, a woman came having an alabaster flask of perfume of pure nard, very costly; and having broken the alabaster flask, she poured ***it*** down on His head. **4** But there were some indignant among themselves and saying, "Why has this waste of the perfume happened? **5** For this could have been sold for more than three hundred denarii and given to the poor." And they were scolding her. **6** But Jesus (Iesous) said, "Leave her alone. Why are you causing her trouble? She did a good work toward Me. **7** For you always have the poor with you, and whenever you want, you are able to do good to them; but Me you do not always have. **8** What this ***woman*** had she did; she came beforehand to anoint My body for the burial. **9** Truly I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this ***woman*** did will also be spoken of for a memorial of her."

Judas Agrees to Betray Jesus

10 And Judas (Ioudas) Iscariot (Iskariotes), one of the twelve, went away to the chief priests in order that he might deliver Him up to them. **11** And having heard ***it***, they rejoiced and promised to give him money. And he was seeking how he might conveniently deliver Him up.

The Last Supper

12 And on the first day of the Unleavened ***Bread***, when they were sacrificing the Passover, His disciples say to Him, "Where do You want us, having gone, to prepare, so that You may eat the Passover?" **13** And He sends two of His disciples and says to them, "Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you; follow him. **14** And wherever he enters, say to the master of the house, 'The Teacher says, "Where is the guest room where I may eat the Passover with My disciples?"' **15** And he himself will show you a large upper room, furnished ***and*** ready; there prepare for us." **16** And His disciples went out and came into the city and found ***it*** just as He had said to them; and they prepared the Passover. **17** And evening having come, He comes with the twelve. **18** And as they were reclining and eating, Jesus said, "Truly I say to you that one of you will deliver Me up, the ***one*** eating with Me." **19** And they began to be grieved and to say to Him one by one, "Surely not I?" And another, "Surely not I?" **20** And answering, He said to them, "***It is*** one of the twelve, the ***one*** dipping with Me into the bowl. **21** The Son of Man indeed goes just as it has been written concerning Him; but woe to that man through whom the Son of Man is delivered up! It would have been good for him if that man had not been born." **22** And as they were eating, Jesus, having taken bread, having blessed, broke ***it*** and gave ***it*** to them and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." **23** And having taken the cup, having given thanks, He gave ***it*** to them, and they all drank

14:3 Luke 7:37,38; Matt 26:6,7; John 11:2
14:4 Eccl 5:6; John 12:4,5; Matt 26:8,9
14:5 John 13:29; Matt 18:28; John 6:7
14:6 Job 42:7; Isa 54:17; Job 42:8
14:7 Deut 15:11; Matt 26:11; Matt 25:35-45
14:8 1 Chr 28:2,3; 1 Chr 29:1-17; 2 Chr 31:20,21
14:9 Zech 6:14; Prov 31:31; Mark 16:15
14:10 Luke 22:3-6; John 13:2,30; Matt 26:14-16
14:11 Hos 7:3; Luke 22:5; 1 Kgs 21:20
14:12 Exod 12:6; Exod 12:8; Exod 12:18
14:13 Mark 11:2,3; Matt 8:9; Matt 26:18,19
14:14 Exod 12:21; Mark 10:17; Mark 11:3
14:15 Acts 1:13; 2 Chr 6:30; Ps 110:3
14:16 Exod 12:21; Luke 22:13,35; John 16:4
14:17 Luke 22:14; Matt 26:20
14:18 Ps 41:9; John 6:70; Matt 26:21
14:19 Matt 26:22; Luke 22:21-23; John 13:22
14:20 John 13:26; Mark 14:43; Matt 26:47
14:21 1 Kgs 14:6; 2 Chr 18:22; Ps 22:8
14:22 Matt 26:26-29; Mark 6:41; Luke 24:30
14:23 1 Cor 10:16; Luke 22:17; Rom 14:6

14:3 *an alabaster flask of perfume of pure nard, very costly* Simon may have been a leper Jesus healed, since no one with active leprosy could host a dinner. Nard came from a plant in the mountains of India. An alabaster flask was a long-necked jar of soft white stone. She broke it and gave all of it, not a few drops. John tells us she was Mary, sister of Martha and Lazarus (John 12:3).
14:5 *more than three hundred denarii* Close to a year's pay. Judas was among the critics (John 12:4-6). What they called waste, Jesus called worship. Those who do not love Jesus much will always think love for Him is wasteful.
14:6 *She did a good work toward Me* The word for good means beautiful. What she did was lovely to Him.
14:7 *you always have the poor with you* Jesus was not saying the poor do not matter; He echoed Deuteronomy 15:11, which tells Israel to open its hand to them. There would always be a chance to help the poor, but only days left to honor Jesus before the cross. Some opportunities come only once.
14:8 *she came beforehand to anoint My body for the burial* She gave what she had, and that is all God asks. Bodies were anointed after death; she did it before. Maybe she understood what the disciples did not, that He was really going to die.
14:9 *what this woman did will also be spoken of for a memorial of her* Two thousand years later we are telling her story. Jesus kept His word. Nothing done for Him out of love is ever forgotten.
14:10 *Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve* A woman gave a year's wages; one of His own went to sell Him. Iscariot probably means man of Kerioth, a town in Judea. Matthew tells of the thirty silver coins (Matt 26:15); John says he was a thief and that Satan entered him (John 12:6; 13:27). Money had been his god a long time, and the leaders now had a man on the inside.
14:12 *when they were sacrificing the Passover* The lambs were killed at the temple in the afternoon, and each group roasted its lamb to eat that night with unleavened bread, bitter herbs and wine. Thousands of pilgrims needed a room in the city. Mark is read here plainly as a Passover meal.
14:13 *a man carrying a jar of water will meet you* The two were Peter and John (Luke 22:8). Carrying water jars was usually women's work, so a man doing it would stand out.
14:15 *a large upper room, furnished and ready* He kept the place secret, perhaps so Judas could not lead the leaders there before the meal was over. They found it just as He said. Everything was going according to His plan.
14:18 *one of you will deliver Me up, the one eating with Me* Eating together meant friendship and trust, so betraying one you shared bread with was the worst treachery (Ps 41:9).
14:19 *Surely not I?* To their credit, none pointed at someone else. Each looked at his own heart. That is a good place to start when we hear a warning.
14:20 *the one dipping with Me into the bowl* They all dipped bread into a shared bowl. Jesus did not name Judas before everyone. Even now He gave him room to turn back.
14:21 *woe to that man through whom the Son of Man is delivered up* His death was God's plan, foretold in Scripture, yet that did not remove Judas' guilt. He chose freely and was responsible. Both are true: God is in control, and people are accountable. Better never born are among the most solemn words Jesus spoke about anyone.
14:22 *Take, eat; this is My body* Flat bread without yeast. The head of the house explained each part of the meal, and Jesus gave the bread a new meaning: His body about to be broken for them. As we take food in, we take Christ by faith. Here began the Lord's Supper, kept in remembrance of Him (1 Cor 11:24).

of it. **24** And He said to them, "This is My blood, the ***blood*** of the new covenant, which is being poured out for many. **25** Truly I say to you that I will certainly no longer drink of the produce of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

Peter's Denial Foretold

26 And having sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. **27** And Jesus says to them, "All of you will be caused to stumble in Me during this night; for it has been written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.' **28** But after I have been raised, I will go before you into Galilee (Galilaia)." **29** But Peter (Petros) said to Him, "Even if all will be caused to stumble, yet not I!" **30** And Jesus says to him, "Truly I say to you that today, in this night, before a rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times." **31** But he kept saying all the more emphatically, "If I must die with You, I will certainly not deny You!" And likewise they all were also saying.

Gethsemane

32 And they come to a place whose name ***is*** Gethsemane; and He says to His disciples, "Sit here while I pray." **33** And He takes along Peter and James (Iakobos) and John (Ioannes) with Him, and He began to be greatly alarmed and to be deeply distressed. **34** And He says to them, "My soul is very sorrowful, to ***the point of*** death. Remain here and keep watch." **35** And having gone forward a little, He fell on the ground and was praying that, if it is possible, the hour might pass from Him. **36** And He was saying, "Abba, Father, all things ***are*** possible for You; take this cup away from Me. But not what I want, but what You ***want***." **37** And He comes and finds them sleeping, and He says to Peter, "Simon, are you sleeping? Were you not able to keep watch one hour? **38** Keep watch and pray, so that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed ***is*** willing, but the flesh ***is*** weak." **39** And again having gone away, He prayed, saying the same word. **40** And having returned, He found them again sleeping, for their eyes were weighed down; and they did not know what they should answer Him. **41** And He comes the third time and says to them, "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? It is enough; the hour has come. Look, the Son of Man is delivered up into the hands of the

14:24 Exod 24:8; Zech 9:11; Jer 31:31
14:25 Ps 104:15; Matt 26:29; Luke 22:16-18,29,30
14:26 Matt 26:30; Luke 22:39; Ps 47:6,7
14:27 Zech 13:7; Matt 26:31; Luke 22:31,32
14:28 Mark 16:7; Matt 28:7,10,16; Matt 16:21
14:29 Matt 26:33-35; Luke 22:33,34; John 13:36-38
14:30 Gen 1:13; Mark 14:66-72; Gen 1:5,8,13,19,23
14:31 2 Kgs 8:13; Job 40:4,5; Ps 30:6
14:32 Mark 14:36,39; Matt 26:36-46; Luke 22:39
14:33 Isa 53:10; Ps 42:5; Mark 5:37
14:34 Isa 53:12; Ps 88:3; Ps 116:3
14:35 Deut 9:18; 1 Kgs 18:42; Heb 5:7
14:36 Jer 32:27; Gal 4:6; John 5:30
14:37 Mark 14:40,41; Luke 9:31,32; Luke 22:45,46
14:38 Matt 26:41; Luke 22:40,46; Rom 7:18-25
14:39 Matt 6:7; Matt 26:42-44; Luke 18:1
14:40 Gen 44:16; Exod 34:29; Mark 9:33,34
14:41 Mark 9:31; Mark 7:9; Judg 10:14

14:24 *This is My blood, the blood of the new covenant* A covenant is a binding agreement. Moses sprinkled the blood of the covenant at Sinai (Exod 24:8), and Jeremiah promised a new covenant written on hearts, with sins remembered no more (Jer 31:31-34). The lamb's blood saved Israel from death; Christ's blood saves us from sin and judgment. For many points back to 10:45.

14:24 *which is being poured out for many* Christians understand these words differently: Roman Catholics teach the bread and wine become Christ's body and blood, Lutherans that He is present in, with and under them, many Reformed a spiritual presence, and many Baptist and Bible churches that they are pictures, as He called Himself the door and the vine. Plainly, the Supper is a remembrance and a proclamation: we "proclaim the death of the Lord until He comes" (1 Cor 11:26). Come with reverence and an examined heart.

14:24 *the blood of the new covenant* Jeremiah says the new covenant is made "with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah" (Jer 31:31). Some teachers say the church has taken Israel's place in it. I believe the church shares now in its forgiveness through His blood, while God will still keep every promise of it to the nation of Israel when Christ returns (Rom 11:26-27).

14:25 *until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God* Not goodbye forever. He looked past the cross to the kingdom, certain of His resurrection and return. He will eat and drink with His people again at the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev 19:9). At the table we look back to the cross and forward to that day.

14:26 *having sung a hymn* At Passover Jews sang the Hallel, Psalms 113 to 118, likely finishing as they left. Psalm 118 holds the rejected stone (118:22) and "This is the day which the LORD has made" (Ps 118:24). Think of Jesus singing praise on His way to Gethsemane and the cross.

14:27 *I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered* From Zechariah 13:7. Notice who strikes: God Himself. The cross was not only men's work but God's plan to punish sin in His Son (Isa 53:10).

14:28 *after I have been raised, I will go before you into Galilee* Before they had even failed, He promised a reunion. He would not abandon them after they abandoned Him. That is grace.

14:30 *before a rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times* Peter meant his boast and loved Jesus, but he trusted his own strength. Only Mark mentions two crowings, a detail Peter would remember. Every one of them was sure. Self-confidence is not faith. "Let the one who thinks he stands watch, lest he fall" (1 Cor 10:12).

14:32 *a place whose name is Gethsemane* Gethsemane means oil press, an olive grove on the slope of the Mount of Olives where olives were crushed for oil. That night Jesus would be pressed under the weight of what was coming. In the greatest crisis of His life, He prayed. How much more do we need to?

14:33 *He began to be greatly alarmed and to be deeply distressed* The three who saw His glory on the mountain now saw His agony in the garden. Mark uses strong words. Jesus was overwhelmed.

14:34 *My soul is very sorrowful, to the point of death* Fully human, He felt real grief and dread. Many have faced death bravely, but Jesus was about to bear the sin of the world and God's wrath against it (2 Cor 5:21). No one has ever faced anything like that. He wanted His friends near.

14:36 *Abba, Father* Abba is the Aramaic word a child used for his father, a word of close, loving trust, and only Mark keeps it here. The cup was God's wrath against sin (Isa 51:17). The greatest act of surrender in history: He told the Father honestly what He felt, then gave His will to the Father's. We can pray that way. The cup did not pass, because there was no other way for us to be saved.

14:37 *Simon, are you sleeping?* His old name, not Peter, the rock. A few hours earlier Peter promised to die with Him. Now he could not stay awake.

14:38 *The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak* The inner man who loves God may be willing, but human weakness gives out. The answer is to watch and pray. Peter slept instead of praying, and within hours he fell. Prayerlessness always comes before a fall.

14:40 *they did not know what they should answer Him* He prayed the same word again, and it is not wrong to bring the same request more than once (Luke 18:1). Exhausted and full of sorrow (Luke 22:45), they had no excuse. We have all been embarrassed by our weakness before the Lord.

14:41 *the hour has come* Three times He prayed and three times they slept; soon Peter would deny Him three times. The time for prayer was over and the time to act had come.

sinners. **42** Rise up, let us go. Look, the ***one*** delivering Me up has drawn near."

Jesus Arrested

43 And immediately, while He was still speaking, Judas comes up, being one of the twelve, and with him a great crowd with swords and clubs from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. **44** Now the ***one*** delivering Him up had given them a signal, saying, "Whomever I kiss, He is ***the one***; seize Him and lead ***Him*** away securely." **45** And having come, immediately having gone up to Him, he says, "Rabbi, Rabbi!" And he kissed Him warmly. **46** And they laid their hands on Him and seized Him. **47** But a certain one of those standing by, having drawn the sword, struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his ear. **48** And answering, Jesus said to them, "Did you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs, to arrest Me? **49** Every day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize Me; but ***it is*** so that the Scriptures may be fulfilled." **50** And having left Him, they all fled. **51** And one certain young man was following Him, having thrown a linen cloth around ***his*** naked ***body***; and the young men seize him. **52** But having left behind the linen cloth, he fled from them naked.

Jesus Before the Council

53 And they led Jesus away to the high priest; and all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes come together to him. **54** And Peter followed Him from a distance, as far as inside into the courtyard of the high priest; and he was sitting with the officers and warming himself at the fire. **55** And the chief priests and the whole council were seeking testimony against Jesus to put Him to death, and they were not finding ***any***. **56** For many were bearing false testimony against Him, and the testimonies were not alike. **57** And some, having risen up, were bearing false testimony against Him, saying, **58** "We heard Him saying, 'I will destroy this temple made with hands, and in three days I will build another not made with hands.'" **59** And not even so was their testimony alike. **60** And the high priest, having stood up in the midst, questioned Jesus, saying, "Do You not answer anything? What are these testifying against You?" **61** But He was silent and did not answer anything. Again the high priest was questioning Him and says to Him, "Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed ***One***?" **62** And Jesus said, "I am; and you will see the Son of Man sitting at ***the*** right ***hand*** of the Power and coming with the clouds of heaven." **63** And the high priest, having torn his tunics, says, "What further need do we have of witnesses? **64** You heard the blasphemy. How does it appear to you?" And they all condemned Him to be deserving of death. **65** And some began to spit on Him and to cover His

14:42 Matt 26:46; John 18:1,2
14:43 Matt 26:47; Acts 1:16; Luke 22:47,48
14:44 Prov 27:6; Exod 12:13; Josh 2:12
14:45 Mark 12:14; Isa 1:3; Mal 1:6
14:46 Judg 16:21; Lam 4:20; John 18:12
14:47 Matt 26:51-54; Luke 22:49-51; John 18:10,11
14:48 1 Sam 24:14; 1 Sam 26:18; Matt 26:55
14:49 Isa 53:12; Mark 12:35; John 8:2,12
14:50 Mark 14:27; Ps 38:11; John 16:32
14:52 Gen 39:12; Mark 13:14-16; Job 2:4
14:53 Matt 26:57-68; Isa 53:7; Luke 22:54-62
14:54 John 18:18,25; Mark 14:29-31,38; 1 Sam 13:7
14:55 1 Kgs 21:10,13; Ps 27:12; Ps 35:11
14:57 Matt 26:60,61; Mark 15:29; Jer 26:8,9,18
14:58 Dan 2:45; Acts 7:48; 2 Cor 5:1
14:60 Mark 15:3-5; Matt 26:62,63; John 19:9,10
14:61 Isa 53:7; Ps 119:12; Dan 7:13
14:62 Ps 110:1; Dan 7:13; Dan 7:14
14:63 Isa 36:22; Jer 36:23,24; Acts 14:13,14
14:64 Lev 24:16; 1 Kgs 21:9-13; Matt 26:65,66
14:65 Isa 50:6; Num 12:14; Isa 53:3

14:42 *Rise up, let us go* He did not run or hide. He walked toward His betrayer. After the agony of prayer came the calm of surrender. He went to the cross on purpose.
14:43 *a great crowd with swords and clubs* One of the twelve, again, and it still stings. Roman soldiers and temple police came too (John 18:3, 12), armed at night as if for a dangerous rebel. Jesus had nothing in His hands.
14:45 *he kissed Him warmly* In the dark the crowd needed a signal, and a kiss was how a disciple greeted his teacher. The word means kissed over and over, with a show of affection. Judas used a sign of love to betray the One who loved him. The kisses of an enemy are deceitful (Prov 27:6). Betrayal hurts most from someone close.
14:47 *cut off his ear* The Son of God let Himself be taken; He could have called legions of angels (Matt 26:53). John names Peter and the slave Malchus (John 18:10), and Luke tells us Jesus healed the ear (Luke 22:51). Peter could not stay awake to pray but was ready to fight. That was not the battle Jesus came for. His kingdom does not advance by the sword.
14:49 *it is so that the Scriptures may be fulfilled* Robber can mean rebel or bandit. They had every chance to take Him openly in the temple but came at night, afraid of the people and of the truth. Even this was God's plan; He was counted with the transgressors (Isa 53:12).
14:50 *having left Him, they all fled* Just as He said (14:27). Those who promised to die with Him ran into the night. Fear has made all of us run at some point. But Jesus would restore them. He came to save failures, and that includes you and me.
14:51 *one certain young man was following Him* Only Mark tells this. Many teachers believe it may have been Mark himself. The church met at his mother's house in Jerusalem (Acts 12:12), and some think the Supper was there, so he may have thrown on a linen cloth and followed, like a writer quietly signing his work. We cannot be sure. Either way, everyone deserted Jesus. He went to the cross alone.
14:53 *they led Jesus away to the high priest* Caiaphas, with his father-in-law Annas involved (John 18:13, 24). The Sanhedrin of about seventy plus the high priest met at night, against their own rules for capital trials.
14:54 *Peter followed Him from a distance* He deserves credit for coming back. But he followed at a distance and sat warming himself with the temple guards, close to Jesus' enemies and far from Jesus. That is a dangerous place for a believer.
14:55 *seeking testimony against Jesus to put Him to death* They had the verdict and were looking for evidence. That is not justice.
14:56 *the testimonies were not alike* A death sentence required two or three witnesses who agreed (Deut 17:6). Even liars could find nothing true to say against the sinless Son of God.
14:58 *I will destroy this temple made with hands* He had said, "Destroy this sanctuary" (John 2:19), and spoke of His body. Enemies of truth often take a real word and bend it into a lie. Even so their case fell apart.
14:61 *Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?* Like a lamb led to slaughter He did not open His mouth (Isa 53:7) against lies. The Blessed One was a way of saying God without speaking His name, and the high priest asked under oath (Matt 26:63).
14:62 *I am; and you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power* He stayed quiet against lies but would not stay quiet about the truth. Ego eimi echoes God's name, I AM (Exod 3:14). He joined Psalm 110:1 and Daniel 7:13; the Power means God. Today you judge Me; one day you will see Me seated at God's right hand, coming to judge. Everyone who rejects Jesus will one day stand before Him.
14:64 *You heard the blasphemy* The high priest tore his tunics in a show of horror, but this was what he wanted. Blasphemy is claiming what belongs only to God. If Jesus were not who He said, it would have been. But He told the truth, and the council condemned its own Messiah for it.
14:65 *some began to spit on Him and to cover His face* Spitting in the face was the worst insult (Num 12:14), foretold of the Servant (Isa 50:6). They mocked Him as a false prophet at the very moment His prophecy about Peter was coming true in the courtyard below.

face and to beat Him with fists and to say to Him,
"Prophesy!" And the officers were striking Him with slaps.

Peter Denies Jesus

66 And while Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant girls of the high priest comes, **67** and having seen Peter warming himself, having looked at him, she says, "You also were with the Nazarene, Jesus." **68** But he denied ***it***, saying, "I do not know nor understand what you are saying." And he went out outside into the forecourt, and a rooster crowed. **69** And the servant girl, having seen him, began again to say to those standing by, "This ***man*** is of them." **70** But again he was denying ***it***. And after a little ***while*** again those standing by were saying to Peter, "Truly you are of them; for you are also a Galilean, and your speech is like ***theirs***." **71** But he began to curse and to swear, "I do not know this man of whom you speak!" **72** And a second time a rooster crowed. And Peter remembered the word that Jesus had said to him, "Before a rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times." And having broken down, he was weeping.

MARK 15

Jesus Before Pilate

1 And immediately, in the morning, the chief priests, having held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council, having bound Jesus (Iesous), led ***Him*** away and delivered ***Him*** to Pilate (Pilatos). **2** And Pilate questioned Him, "Are You the King of the Jews?" And answering, He said to him, "You say ***it***." **3** And the chief priests were accusing Him of many things, but He Himself answered nothing. **4** And Pilate again questioned Him, saying, "Do You not answer anything? See how many things they testify against You!" **5** But Jesus no longer answered anything, so that Pilate was amazed. **6** Now at ***the*** feast he was releasing to them one prisoner, whomever they were requesting. **7** And there was the ***one*** called Barabbas, bound with the fellow rebels who had committed murder in the insurrection. **8** And the crowd, having cried out, began to ask ***him to do*** just as he was always doing for them. **9** But Pilate answered them, saying, "Do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?" **10** For he knew that the chief priests had delivered Him up because of envy. **11** But the chief priests stirred up the crowd, so that he would rather release Barabbas to them. **12** And Pilate,
answering, again said to them, "What then do you want me to do ***to Him*** whom you call King of the Jews?" **13** And they again cried out, "Crucify Him!" **14** And Pilate was saying to them, "Why, what evil has He done?" But they cried out all the more, "Crucify Him!" **15** And Pilate, wishing to do what ***was*** satisfying to the crowd, released Barabbas to them; and having flogged Jesus, he delivered ***Him*** up so that He might be crucified.

14:66 Mark 14:54; Matt 26:58,69,70; Luke 22:55-57
14:67 Mark 10:47; Matt 2:23; Matt 21:11
14:68 Mark 14:29-31; John 13:36-38; 2 Tim 2:12,13
14:69 John 18:17; Mark 14:38; Luke 22:58
14:70 Acts 2:7; Matt 26:73,74; Luke 22:59,60
14:71 2 Kgs 8:12-15; 2 Kgs 10:32; Jer 17:9
14:72 Jer 31:20; Mark 14:30,68; Matt 26:34,74
15:1 Matt 27:1,2; Luke 22:66; Luke 23:1,2-5
15:2 Matt 2:2; Matt 27:11; 1 Tim 6:13
15:3 Isa 53:7; Matt 27:12; Luke 23:2-5
15:4 John 19:10; Matt 26:62; Matt 27:13
15:5 Isa 53:7; John 19:9; Ps 71:7
15:6 John 18:39,40; Matt 26:2,5; Matt 27:15
15:7 Matt 27:16; Luke 23:18,19,25
15:9 Matt 27:17-21; John 18:39; John 19:4,5,14-16
15:10 Gen 4:4-6; Gen 37:11; 1 Sam 18:8,9
15:11 Acts 3:14; Hos 5:1; Matt 27:20
15:12 Zech 9:9; Jer 23:6; Matt 27:22,23
15:14 Isa 53:3; Isa 53:9; Matt 27:4,19,24,54
15:15 Matt 27:26; John 19:1,16; Mark 10:34

14:68 *I do not know nor understand what you are saying* Not a soldier or a priest, but a servant girl. Peter, who drew a sword against a crowd, folded before her. Fear makes us weak in strange places. He slipped away from the firelight, and the first rooster crowed, a warning he did not hear.
14:70 *for you are also a Galilean, and your speech is like theirs* Galileans had an accent. He could deny Jesus with words, but his speech gave him away. Our lives should show that we have been with Jesus (Acts 4:13).
14:71 *he began to curse and to swear* He called down a curse on himself if lying and took an oath, and would not even say Jesus' name, only this man. This was Peter at his lowest, how far a believer can fall trusting his own strength and not watching and praying.
14:72 *having broken down, he was weeping* The Lord turned and looked at him (Luke 22:61). Judas was sorry too and took his own life (Matt 27:3-5); Peter wept and came back. The difference is not how bad the sin was but where they went with it (2 Cor 7:10). If Mark wrote what Peter preached, Peter told this story on himself again and again, so others would see the grace that restored him (John 21:15-19). If you have failed Jesus, your story is not over. Come back to Him.
15:1 *having bound Jesus, led Him away and delivered Him to Pilate* They met again at dawn to make the sentence official, since by their own rules a capital case had to be decided in daylight. Pilate governed Judea from about A.D. 26 to 36, and under Rome only he could carry out a death sentence (John 18:31). Delivered to the Gentiles, just as Jesus said (10:33).
15:2 *Are You the King of the Jews?* Pilate would not care about blasphemy, so they brought a political charge: a king was a threat to Caesar. Jesus did not deny it. He is the King. But His kingdom is not of this world (John 18:36). He was not leading a revolt. He was going to die for His people.
15:5 *Jesus no longer answered anything, so that Pilate was amazed* The charges included misleading the nation and forbidding taxes to Caesar (Luke 23:2), a lie (12:17), yet He did not argue. Prisoners usually begged or shouted their innocence. Jesus was not helpless. He was willing, silent like a sheep before its shearers (Isa 53:7). Pilate had never seen anyone like Him.
15:7 *the one called Barabbas, bound with the fellow rebels* The Passover release was a gesture to keep the people happy. Barabbas was a rebel against Rome and a murderer. Pilate may have thought he had a way out. Surely they would choose Jesus over a killer.
15:10 *he knew that the chief priests had delivered Him up because of envy* Pilate could see this was not about crimes. The chief priests were jealous of Jesus' popularity and power. Envy can make religious people do terrible things. It put Jesus on the cross.
15:11 *the chief priests stirred up the crowd* Many who praised Jesus earlier may not have been there that early, and those who were were easily swayed. A crowd can be pushed almost anywhere by the right voices. Think for yourself in the light of God's word, and do not just go along with the noise.
15:14 *Why, what evil has He done?* The right question, and no one could answer it; Pilate himself found no guilt in Him (John 18:38). When the facts are against a crowd, it often just gets louder. Crucifixion was Rome's cruelest death, for slaves, rebels and the worst criminals, slow, public and shameful.
15:15 *wishing to do what was satisfying to the crowd, released Barabbas to them* Pilate knew Jesus was innocent but cared more about peace and his job than justice. Flogging with leather straps tipped with bone or metal tore skin and muscle, and some men died from it. Barabbas was guilty and walked free; Jesus was innocent and died in his place. We are Barabbas. Jesus took our place.

The Soldiers Mock Jesus

16 And the soldiers led Him away inside the courtyard, which is ***the*** Praetorium, and they call together the whole cohort. **17** And they clothe Him ***in*** purple, and having woven a crown of thorns, they put ***it*** on Him. **18** And they began to salute Him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" **19** And they were striking His head with a reed and were spitting on Him, and bending the knees, they were worshiping Him. **20** And when they had mocked Him, they took the purple off Him and put His own garments on Him. And they lead Him out so that they may crucify Him.

The Crucifixion

21 And they compel a certain ***man*** passing by, Simon, a Cyrenian, coming from ***the*** country, the father of Alexander (Alexandros) and Rufus (Hrouphos), to carry His cross. **22** And they bring Him to ***the*** place Golgotha, which is, being translated, Place of a Skull. **23** And they were giving Him wine mixed with myrrh to drink; but He did not take ***it***. **24** And having crucified Him, they were dividing His garments, casting a lot for them, who should take what. **25** Now it was ***the*** third hour, and they crucified Him. **26** And the inscription of His accusation was written: "THE KING OF THE JEWS." **27** And with Him they crucify two robbers, one at ***His*** right and one at His left. **28** And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "And He was reckoned with ***the*** lawless." **29** And those passing by were blaspheming Him, shaking their heads and saying, "Aha! You who destroy the temple and build ***it*** in three days, **30** save Yourself and come down from the cross!" **31** Likewise also the chief priests, mocking with one another along with the scribes, were saying, "He saved others; Himself He is not able to save. **32** Let the Christ, the King of Israel, come down now from the cross, so that we may see and believe." And those crucified with Him were reproaching Him.

The Death of Jesus

33 And when ***the*** sixth hour had come, darkness came over

15:16 John 18:28; John 19:9; Matt 27:27
15:17 Luke 23:11; Matt 27:28-30; John 19:2-5
15:18 Mark 15:29-32; Gen 37:10,20; Matt 27:42,43
15:19 Job 13:9; Isa 53:3; Isa 53:4
15:20 Matt 27:31; John 19:16
15:21 Matt 27:32; Luke 23:26; Rom 16:13
15:22 Matt 27:33-44; Luke 23:27-33; John 19:17-27
15:23 Matt 27:34; Luke 23:36; John 19:28-30
15:24 Ps 22:18; Isa 53:4; Ps 22:17
15:25 Mark 15:33; John 19:14; Matt 27:45
15:26 Matt 27:37; Deut 23:5; Ps 76:10
15:27 Isa 53:12; Matt 27:38; Luke 23:32,33
15:28 Isa 53:12; Luke 22:37; Heb 12:2
15:29 Lam 2:15; Ps 22:7; Ps 22:8
15:31 Ps 2:1-4; Ps 22:16,17; Matt 27:41-43
15:32 Isa 44:6; Zeph 3:15; Zech 9:9
15:33 Amos 8:9; Matt 27:45; Mark 15:25

15:16 *the Praetorium, and they call together the whole cohort* The governor's headquarters; Mark explains the Latin word for Roman readers. A cohort could be several hundred soldiers, gathered not to guard Him but for sport.

15:17 *they clothe Him in purple, and having woven a crown of thorns* Purple was the color of kings because the dye was so costly; they likely used an old soldier's cloak. Thorns came with the curse on the ground because of sin (Gen 3:18). Jesus wore a crown of them as He went to bear the curse for us (Gal 3:13).

15:19 *bending the knees, they were worshiping Him* They mimicked the greeting given Caesar, with a reed for a scepter. The worship was a joke to them. But one day every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord (Phil 2:10-11). Those soldiers will bow too.

15:20 *they lead Him out so that they may crucify Him* They put His own clothes back on Him, the clothes they would soon gamble for. Executions took place outside the walls (Heb 13:12), and the condemned was marched through the streets with the crossbeam as a warning.

15:21 *Simon, a Cyrenian, coming from the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus* Too weak from the flogging, Jesus could carry it no farther, and Roman soldiers could force anyone to carry a load. Cyrene was in North Africa, in what is now Libya, with a large Jewish community; Simon was likely a Passover pilgrim. Mark names his sons as if readers knew them. Paul greets a Rufus in Rome (Rom 16:13) who may be the same man. The day Simon was forced to carry a cross may have been the day his family came to know the One who died on it.

15:22 *Golgotha, which is, being translated, Place of a Skull* Aramaic; the Latin for skull gives us Calvary. Scripture does not say why it had the name, perhaps a skull-shaped hill or a place of execution. It was just outside the wall by a road where many passed (John 19:20).

15:23 *wine mixed with myrrh* Myrrh was a bitter resin that, mixed with wine, dulled pain; some think the women of Jerusalem provided it out of mercy. He refused it. He would face the cross fully awake and drink the Father's cup with nothing to dull it.

15:24 *having crucified Him* Mark does not describe the nails; his readers knew. The executioners got the victim's clothes, as Psalm 22:18 foretold a thousand years before. While Jesus died for the world, men gambled for His clothes.

15:25 *it was the third hour, and they crucified Him* Jews counted from sunrise, so about nine in the morning. John puts Pilate's judgment about the sixth hour (John 19:14). Some think John used the Roman count from midnight; others note that time was spoken of in rough three-hour blocks. Mark's timeline is clear: crucified at nine, darkness at noon, death at three.

15:26 *THE KING OF THE JEWS* Rome posted the crime of the condemned. John says it was in Hebrew, Latin and Greek (John 19:20). Pilate meant it to mock the Jews, and the chief priests hated it (John 19:21). But the charge was the truth. He is the King.

15:27 *one at His right and one at His left* Likely rebels like Barabbas. Days before, James and John asked for those places in His glory (10:37). Now two criminals held them. This was His glory: dying for sinners.

15:28 *And He was reckoned with the lawless* Isaiah 53:12. The sinless One was counted with sinners, so the guilty could take His place among the righteous (2 Cor 5:21). The SLB follows the Received Text, which includes this verse. Most older Greek copies of Mark lack it, and many modern Bibles bracket or footnote it. Jesus Himself quoted the same words the night before (Luke 22:37), so the truth stands either way, and no teaching rests on this verse alone.

15:29 *shaking their heads* A sign of scorn foretold in Psalm 22:7. They twisted His words again (14:58). In truth He was building a new temple right then. His body was being destroyed, and in three days He would raise it up (John 2:19-21).

15:31 *He saved others; Himself He is not able to save* Without meaning to, they spoke the deepest truth of the cross. He could not save Himself and save us at the same time. It was not nails that held Him there. It was love.

15:32 *so that we may see and believe* They would not have believed. They had seen miracles and still plotted. In three days He did something greater than come down from a cross; He came up out of a grave, and most still did not believe. At first both robbers mocked, but one later turned and was promised paradise (Luke 23:39-43). It is never too late while there is breath.

15:33 *darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour* Noon to three in the afternoon. Not an eclipse; Passover came at full moon, when a solar eclipse cannot happen. Darkness often goes with judgment, as over Egypt before the first Passover (Exod 10:22) and in Amos 8:9. For three hours the Son bore God's judgment against sin, and the world went dark.

the whole land until ***the*** ninth hour. **34** And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eloi, Eloi, lamma sabachthani?" which is, being translated, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" **35** And some of those standing by, having heard, were saying, "Look, He is calling Elijah (Helias)." **36** And one, having run and having filled a sponge with sour wine, and having put ***it*** on a reed, was giving Him to drink, saying, "Leave ***Him*** alone; let us see whether Elijah comes to take Him down." **37** But Jesus, having uttered a loud cry, expired. **38** And the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. **39** And the centurion who stood by opposite Him, having seen that He, having cried out thus, expired, said, "Truly this man was God's Son." **40** And there were also women looking on from a distance, among whom were also Mary (Maria) the Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James (Iakobos) the Less and of Joses (Ioses), and Salome, **41** who also, when He was in Galilee (Galilaia), were following Him and ministering to Him, and many other ***women*** who had come up with Him to Jerusalem (Hierosolyma).

The Burial of Jesus

42 And evening having already come, since it was ***the*** Preparation, which is the day before the Sabbath, **43** Joseph (Ioseph) of Arimathea (Arimathaia), a prominent council member, who himself also was waiting for the kingdom of God, came ***and***, having taken courage, went in to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. **44** And Pilate wondered if He had already died; and having summoned the centurion, he questioned him whether He had died long ago. **45** And having learned ***it*** from the centurion, he granted the body to Joseph. **46** And having bought a linen cloth and having taken Him down, he wrapped ***Him*** in the linen cloth and laid Him in a tomb which had been cut out of rock; and he rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. **47** And Mary the Magdalene and Mary ***the mother*** of Joses were watching where He is laid.

MARK 16

He Is Risen

1 And when the Sabbath had passed, Mary (Maria) the Magdalene and Mary the ***mother*** of James (Iakobos) and Salome bought spices so that, having come, they might anoint Him. **2** And very early on the first ***day*** of the week, they come to the tomb, the sun having risen. **3** And they were saying among themselves, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the door of the tomb?" **4** And having looked up, they see that the stone has been rolled away; for it was extremely large.

15:34 Ps 22:1; Ps 89:26; Luke 23:46
15:35 Mark 9:11-13; Matt 17:11-13; Matt 27:47-49
15:36 Ps 69:21; Mark 15:23; Luke 23:36
15:37 John 19:30; Matt 27:50; Luke 23:46
15:38 Exod 26:31; Lev 16:2; Exod 26:33
15:39 Luke 23:47,48; Matt 27:43,54; Mark 15:44
15:40 Ps 38:11; Matt 27:55,56; Luke 23:49
15:41 Luke 8:2,3; Matt 27:56
15:42 Matt 27:57,62; Luke 23:50-54; John 19:38
15:43 Luke 2:25,38; Luke 23:51; Mark 10:23-27
15:44 John 19:31-37
15:45 Matt 27:58; John 19:38
15:46 Isa 53:9; Isa 22:16; Mark 16:3,4
15:47 Mark 15:40; Mark 16:1; Matt 27:61
16:1 Mark 15:40,47; John 19:31; John 19:25
16:2 Matt 28:1; Luke 24:1; John 20:1
16:3 Mark 15:46,47; Matt 27:60-66
16:4 Luke 24:2; John 20:1; Matt 28:2-4

15:34 *My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?* The only saying from the cross in Mark, Psalm 22:1 in Aramaic. For all eternity Father and Son had perfect fellowship. On the cross the Father turned away, because the Son bore our sins (2 Cor 5:21). He was forsaken so we never will be, cut off so we could be brought near. We will never fully understand it. Yet He still said My God, and Psalm 22 ends in praise and the nations turning to the Lord (Ps 22:27-31).
15:36 *having filled a sponge with sour wine* Eloi sounded like Elijah, whom many believed came to help the righteous in trouble. The sour wine was a cheap vinegar soldiers and workers drank (Ps 69:21). The mockery went on. They did not understand that the One on the cross was greater than Elijah.
15:37 *having uttered a loud cry, expired* Crucified men usually died too weak to speak. Jesus cried out with a loud voice and gave up His life when He chose. His word was "It has been finished" (John 19:30). "No one takes it away from Me, but I lay it down from Myself" (John 10:18).
15:38 *the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom* The thick curtain shut off the Most Holy Place, where only the high priest went, once a year with blood (Lev 16). No man tore it. God did, from above. The way into His presence is open through the death of His Son (Heb 10:19-20). You do not need a priest or a temple. You need Jesus.
15:39 *Truly this man was God's Son* A centurion commanded about a hundred soldiers and had seen many men die on crosses, but none like this. Mark opened with "the Son of God" (1:1). The Father and demons said it, but this is the first human in Mark to say it aloud, and he is a Roman Gentile at the foot of the cross. It is the cross that shows who Jesus is.
15:40 *women looking on from a distance* The men had fled; the women stayed. Mary Magdalene came from Magdala on the lake, freed from seven demons (Luke 8:2). Salome was likely the mother of James and John (compare Matt 27:56).
15:41 *were following Him and ministering to Him* They had supported Him from their own means (Luke 8:3) and stayed faithful when it was dangerous and heartbreaking. God made them the first witnesses of the resurrection. Never think your quiet faithfulness goes unseen.
15:43 *having taken courage, went in to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus* The Preparation was Friday, before the Sabbath began at sundown, and a hanged body must not stay up overnight (Deut 21:22-23). Joseph sat on the Sanhedrin but had not agreed with its decision (Luke 23:50-51), a secret disciple out of fear (John 19:38). Now he risked his reputation and his seat. The cross made a secret disciple brave.
15:45 *having learned it from the centurion* Crucified men often lived a day or more, so Pilate wondered at six hours. A Roman officer who knew death confirmed it. Some claim Jesus only fainted and revived in the tomb. Mark shuts that idea down. Jesus truly died, so His resurrection was real.
15:46 *laid Him in a tomb which had been cut out of rock* Nicodemus brought spices (John 19:39-40); it was Joseph's own new tomb (Matt 27:60), as Isaiah said He would be with a rich man in His death (Isa 53:9). A large round stone rolled in a groove sealed the entrance, and it took several men to move it (16:3).
15:47 *were watching where He is laid* They would not go to the wrong tomb on Sunday. Mark shows witnesses at every step: they saw Him die, saw Him buried, and would see the empty tomb. His enemies thought it was over. But the first day of the week was coming.
16:1 *bought spices so that, having come, they might anoint Him* The Sabbath ended at sundown Saturday, and the shops opened again. They came to care for a dead body, not to see a risen Lord, though He had told them again and again. Their love was real. Their faith had not yet caught up with His promises.
16:2 *very early on the first day of the week* Sunday. This is why Christians have gathered on Sunday from the earliest days (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor 16:2). Every Sunday celebrates the resurrection.
16:3 *Who will roll away the stone for us from the door of the tomb?* Too heavy for them, and they went anyway. They did not have all the answers, but they kept walking toward Jesus. Often the problems we worry about on the way are already solved by the time we get there.
16:4 *the stone has been rolled away; for it was extremely large* Not to let Jesus out; He was already gone. It was rolled back, by an angel (Matt 28:2), to let the witnesses in. No small group of grieving women could have moved it.

5 And having entered into the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right, clothed in a white robe; and they were greatly alarmed. **6** And he says to them, "Do not be greatly alarmed. You are seeking Jesus (Iesous) the Nazarene, the ***One*** who has been crucified. He has been raised; He is not here. See the place where they laid Him. **7** But go, tell His disciples and Peter (Petros) that He is going before you into Galilee (Galilaia); there you will see Him, just as He said to you." **8** And having gone out quickly, they fled from the tomb; and trembling and astonishment held them. And they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

Appearances of the Risen Lord

9 Now having risen early on ***the*** first ***day*** of the week, He appeared first to Mary the Magdalene, from whom He had cast out seven demons. **10** She, having gone, reported ***it*** to those who had been with Him, ***who were*** mourning and weeping. **11** And they, having heard that He is alive and was seen by her, disbelieved. **12** And after these things He was manifested in another form to two of them as they were walking, going into ***the*** country. **13** And they, having gone away, reported ***it*** to the rest; they did not believe even them.

The Commission and the Ascension

14 Afterward He was manifested to the eleven as they were reclining, and He reproached their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who had seen Him raised. **15** And He said to them, "Having gone into all the world, preach the gospel to all the creation. **16** The ***one*** having believed and having been baptized will be saved; but the ***one*** having disbelieved will be condemned. **17** And these signs will accompany those having believed: in My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; **18** they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will certainly not hurt them; they will lay hands on ***the*** sick, and they will be well." **19** So then the Lord, after speaking to them, was taken up into heaven and sat down at ***the*** right ***hand*** of God. **20** And they, having gone out, preached everywhere, the Lord working with ***them*** and confirming the word through the accompanying signs. Amen.

16:5 John 20:11,12; Matt 28:3; Luke 24:3
16:6 Deut 20:3; 2 Kgs 6:16; Matt 14:26,27
16:7 Mark 14:28; Matt 26:32; Matt 28:7
16:8 Matt 28:8; Luke 24:9-11,22-24; Mark 16:5,6
16:9 Acts 20:7; 1 Cor 16:2; Mark 15:40,47
16:10 Mark 14:72; Matt 9:15; Matt 24:30
16:11 Luke 24:11,23-35; Mark 16:13,14; Mark 9:19
16:12 Luke 24:13-32
16:13 Luke 24:33-35; Luke 16:31; John 20:8,25
16:14 Luke 24:36-43; 1 Cor 15:5; Matt 11:20
16:15 Matt 28:19; Mark 13:10; Luke 24:47,48
16:16 Rom 10:9; John 3:18,19,36; Acts 2:38,41
16:17 1 Cor 12:10,28,30; Acts 5:16; Acts 16:18
16:18 Luke 10:19; James 5:14,15; Acts 28:3-6
16:19 Ps 110:1; 1 Pet 3:22; Heb 1:3
16:20 Acts 5:12; Acts 14:3,8-10; Heb 2:4

16:5 *a young man sitting on the right, clothed in a white robe* The robe and message show he was an angel, as Matthew and Luke make clear (Matt 28:2-5; Luke 24:4, 23); angels often appear as men. Greatly alarmed is the word Mark used for Jesus in Gethsemane (14:33).

16:6 *He has been raised; He is not here* The greatest words ever spoken at a grave. Jesus the Nazarene, the crucified One: the One who died is the One who rose, raised by God (Acts 2:24). The empty place was right in front of them. If Christ has not been raised, our faith is worthless and we are still in our sins (1 Cor 15:17). But He has been raised. Death is not the end for those who belong to Him.

16:7 *tell His disciples and Peter* Only Mark records "and Peter." The man who denied Him three times may have thought he was no longer a disciple, but Jesus sent a message with his name on it. If Mark wrote Peter's preaching, Peter must have told this with tears. Just as He said (14:28). If you have failed Him, He still puts your name in His invitation.

16:8 *they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid* Holy fear, the awe of meeting God's power face to face. They did not stop to talk on the road; Matthew says they ran "with fear and great joy" (Matt 28:8) to tell the disciples. Fear and joy, trembling and wonder, all at once, are normal when God does something this big.

16:9 *He appeared first to Mary the Magdalene, from whom He had cast out seven demons* A woman's testimony was often not accepted in court, so no one inventing the story would choose her. She was freed from great darkness and loved much, and He called her by name at the tomb (John 20:11-18). Good news for anyone who thinks his past is too much for Jesus. Verses 9 to 20 are in the Received Text the SLB follows and have been read in churches for centuries, but the two oldest complete Greek copies of Mark end at verse 8, and some copies have a shorter ending. Many modern Bibles bracket them or add a note, and Bible-believing scholars differ on whether Mark wrote them. Nearly all they say is taught elsewhere, and no teaching rests on them alone. They are commented on here as printed.

16:11 *having heard that He is alive and was seen by her, disbelieved* Grieving as if all hope had died, they thought her words nonsense (Luke 24:11). These were not gullible men. They had to be convinced, which makes their later boldness, even to death, all the more powerful.

16:12 *He was manifested in another form to two of them* The road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35). They did not know Him at first. His resurrection body was real but glorified, changed in ways we do not fully understand.

16:13 *they did not believe even them* Three witnesses now, and still unbelief. It is stubborn. Sometimes it takes Jesus Himself to break through.

16:14 *He reproached their unbelief and hardness of heart* They had His promises and the witness of Mary and the two, and still refused. Hardness of heart is not a lack of evidence but an unwillingness to accept it. Jesus loved them too much to leave them there.

16:15 *preach the gospel to all the creation* Mark's form of the Great Commission (compare Matt 28:19), for every people and place. He rebuked their unbelief, then sent them out. He did not wait for them to be perfect. He still uses doubting, failing people. Where is your all the world? It may start across the street or across the table.

16:16 *the one having disbelieved will be condemned* Some read this as requiring baptism for salvation. But it is the one who disbelieved, not the one unbaptized, who is condemned. In the early church believers were baptized right away (Acts 2:41; 8:36-38), the public step of obedience. Salvation is by grace through faith alone (Eph 2:8-9); the thief on the cross was never baptized (Luke 23:43). Repent and believe, then obey the Lord in baptism.

16:17 *these signs will accompany those having believed* A sign is a miracle pointing beyond itself, showing the message was from God. Acts shows demons cast out in His name (Acts 16:18) and believers speaking languages they never learned (Acts 2:4-11). The power was never in the disciples. It was in His name.

16:18 *they will take up serpents* On Malta a viper bit Paul as he gathered sticks, and he shook it off unharmed (Acts 28:3-6); he laid hands on the sick there and they were healed (Acts 28:8-9). He was not looking for a snake. It found him while he served. This is protection in the dangers of ministry, never a test. We must not put the Lord God to the test (Matt 4:7). People have died handling snakes or drinking poison to prove their faith. That is testing God, the very thing Jesus refused. Whether such signs continue today, good teachers differ (Heb 2:3-4), but all agree God can heal and we should pray for the sick (James 5:14-15).

16:19 *was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God* The Servant who was crucified is now the Lord. He was taken up from the Mount of Olives, with the promise He will return the same way (Acts 1:9-11). The right hand is the place of highest honor, fulfilling Psalm 110:1 (12:36; 14:62). He sat down because His work of paying for sin was finished (Heb 10:12). He lives to pray for us (Rom 8:34), and He will come again.

16:20 *the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs* The scared men behind locked doors preached everywhere because they had seen Jesus alive. He was in heaven, yet working with them; He did not send them alone (Matt 28:20). The signs served the word. Amen means so be it. Mark ends as he began, with the gospel going out, and it goes on today through everyone who believes it and tells it.

LUKE

Introduction

Title

The book is named for Luke, who wrote it. It is the third book of the New Testament and the longest of the four Gospels. The word gospel means good news. With Matthew and Mark it is one of the Synoptic Gospels, from a word that means seen together, because they tell many of the same events in much the same order. Matthew shows Jesus as the King promised to Israel and Mark as the Servant who gave His life. Luke shows Him as the Son of Man, fully God and fully human, the Savior of every kind of person. Luke is the first of two books. Acts, which calls this Gospel "The first account" (Acts 1:1), carries the story on from the ascension.

Author and Date

The book does not name its writer, but the early church agreed from the start that Luke wrote it, and he also wrote Acts. Both are written to Theophilus (1:3; Acts 1:1). Luke was a doctor and Paul's close friend, "the beloved physician" (Col 4:14), and near the end of Paul's life he wrote, "Luke alone is with me" (2 Tim 4:11). In parts of Acts Luke slips from they to we (Acts 16:10; 20:5 to 21:18; 27:1 to 28:16), showing he traveled with Paul. Paul names his Jewish co-workers first and Luke with the others (Col 4:10-14), so most teachers believe Luke was a Gentile, the only Gentile writer of a book of the Bible. Some modern scholars doubt that Paul's companion wrote these books. I take the early church's witness at its word.

Luke was not one of the twelve. He tells us he "followed all things carefully from the first" (1:3), drawing on eyewitnesses, perhaps during Paul's two years in prison at Caesarea (Acts 24:27). Acts ends with Paul under house arrest in Rome about A.D. 62, and the Gospel came before Acts, so many date it about A.D. 60 to 62. Many other scholars date it after A.D. 70 because Jesus speaks of Jerusalem surrounded by armies (21:20). I believe Jesus foretold that fall, so the prophecy does not require a later date. Scripture does not tell us where Luke wrote.

Background and Setting

Luke writes to "most excellent Theophilus" (1:3), a title he also gives Roman governors (Acts 23:26; 26:25), so Theophilus was likely a man of rank who had already been taught the faith. Luke wants him to "come to know the certainty concerning the words in which you were instructed" (1:4). Behind Theophilus stands a wider Gentile audience. Luke explains Jewish places and customs, traces Jesus' line back to Adam (3:38), and shows that the good news is for all the nations (2:32; 24:47).

Luke sets his story in real history and dates events by emperors, governors and high priests (2:1-2; 3:1-2). Jesus was born in Bethlehem while Herod the Great was king under Rome and grew up in Nazareth in Galilee. Augustus and then Tiberius were emperors. Herod Antipas, who put John the Baptist to death, ruled Galilee, and Pontius Pilate governed Judea. Luke follows Jesus' ministry in Galilee, then the long journey south that begins when "He Himself set His face steadfastly to go to Jerusalem" (9:51), and then the last week, the cross and the resurrection in and around the city. About half of the book is found only in Luke, including the birth of John, the shepherds, the good Samaritan, the lost son, Zacchaeus, the thief on the cross, and the walk to Emmaus.

Themes

The key verse is Jesus' word at the house of Zacchaeus: "for the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which has been lost" (19:10). Luke shows Jesus as the Savior of all kinds of people. He gives special attention to the poor (1:52-53; 4:18; 6:20), to women, who appear more often here than in any other Gospel (8:1-3; 10:38-42), to lepers, tax collectors and sinners (5:27-32; 15:1-2), and to Samaritans and Gentiles (10:30-37; 17:11-19). Again and again God goes looking for the lost, and heaven rejoices when one is found (15:7, 10).

Luke loves to show Jesus praying: at His baptism (3:21), before choosing the twelve (6:12), before Peter's confession (9:18), on the mountain (9:28-29), in the garden (22:41-44), and on the cross (23:34, 46). He points to the Holy Spirit, who fills John, Elizabeth and Zechariah, comes upon Mary, and leads Jesus in power (4:1, 14). And there is great joy in Luke, from the angels' "great joy as good news" (2:10) to the disciples praising God in the temple (24:52-53).

Luke also keeps God's promises to Israel in view. Gabriel tells Mary that God will give her Son "the throne of David His father" and that "of His kingdom there will be no end" (1:32-33). Jerusalem would be trampled by the nations, but only "until the times of the nations are fulfilled" (21:24).

Christ in Luke

Luke presents Jesus as the Son of God, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin (1:35), and as the Son of Man, traced back to Adam (3:38), the perfect man for all humanity. He is the Savior, Christ the Lord, born in the city of David (2:11), the anointed One of Isaiah 61 who brings good news to the poor (4:18). He is the Son of Man who must suffer, be rejected and rise on the third day (9:22), who set His face to go to Jerusalem, wept over the city, died between two criminals praying for His enemies, and rose bodily, eating fish before His disciples (24:39-43). After His resurrection He opened the Scriptures and showed that Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms all speak of Him (24:27, 44). He was carried up into heaven while blessing His people (24:51), and He will come again "in a cloud with power and great glory" (21:27).

Hard Passages

How does the census under Quirinius (2:2) fit the reign of Herod? The notes give the common answers and trust that Luke got it right.

Why does Luke's family line differ from Matthew's (3:23-38)? The notes give the two main views: Mary's line, or Joseph's natural line joined to his legal line.

What do Jesus' words on divorce mean (16:18)? Good teachers differ, and the notes name the main views without taking a hard side. The notes also give both views on whether the rich man and Lazarus (16:19-31) is a parable or a true account, while stating plainly what it teaches about life after death.

Luke 17:22-37 and 21:25-36 are read as looking ahead to

Christ's visible return to the earth after the future Tribulation, after He has come for His church. The one taken in 17:34-36 is taken in judgment, as in the days of Noah and Lot. Luke 21:20-24 is read as the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, distinct from the future abomination of desolation in Matthew and Mark. "This generation" (21:32) is given its three main readings.

Several verses printed in the SLB are missing from most or many older Greek copies: 17:36, 22:43-44 and 23:17, along with shorter phrases at 9:54-56 and in the Lord's Prayer (11:2-4). The notes say so plainly where they appear. They are commented on as printed, and no teaching rests on them alone.

Outline

I. The Births of John and Jesus (1:1-2:52)
- A. Luke's purpose (1:1-4)
- B. John's birth foretold (1:5-25)
- C. Jesus' birth foretold (1:26-56)
- D. The birth of John (1:57-80)
- E. The birth of Jesus (2:1-20)
- F. Jesus presented and the boy in the temple (2:21-52)

II. Ready for His Work (3:1-4:13)
- A. The ministry of John (3:1-20)
- B. The baptism and family line of Jesus (3:21-38)
- C. Tested in the wilderness (4:1-13)

III. The Ministry in Galilee (4:14-9:50)
- A. Rejected at Nazareth, power at Capernaum (4:14-44)
- B. Disciples called and a friend of sinners (5:1-39)
- C. Lord of the Sabbath and the Sermon on the Plain (6:1-49)
- D. Great faith and great love (7:1-50)
- E. Seeds, storms and a daughter raised (8:1-56)
- F. Who is this Jesus (9:1-50)

IV. On the Road to Jerusalem (9:51-19:27)
- A. The cost of following and the seventy sent (9:51-10:24)
- B. The good Samaritan and Mary and Martha (10:25-42)
- C. Teaching on prayer and woes on the Pharisees (11:1-54)
- D. Treasure in heaven and ready servants (12:1-59)
- E. Repentance, the narrow door and Jerusalem (13:1-35)
- F. The great banquet and the cost of following (14:1-35)
- G. Lost and found (15:1-32)
- H. Faithful with money and the rich man and Lazarus (16:1-31)
- I. Faith, thanks and the coming kingdom (17:1-37)
- J. Prayer, humility and the road through Jericho (18:1-19:27)

V. The Son of Man in Jerusalem (19:28-21:38)
- A. The King enters and weeps over the city (19:28-48)
- B. Questions in the temple (20:1-21:4)
- C. The signs of the end (21:5-38)

VI. The Cross and the Empty Tomb (22:1-24:53)
- A. The Last Supper and the arrest (22:1-71)
- B. The trials, the crucifixion and the burial (23:1-56)
- C. The resurrection and the ascension (24:1-53)

LUKE

LUKE 1

Luke's Purpose in Writing

1 Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative concerning the things that have been fulfilled among us, **2** just as those who from ***the*** beginning became eyewitnesses and servants of the word delivered ***them*** to us, **3** it seemed good to me also, having followed all things carefully from the first, to write to you in order, most excellent Theophilus (Theophilos), **4** so that you may come to know the certainty concerning the words in which you were instructed.

The Birth of John Foretold

5 There was in the days of Herod (Herodes), the king of Judea (Ioudaia), a certain priest named Zechariah (Zacharias), of ***the*** division of Abijah (Abia); and his wife ***was*** of the daughters of Aaron, and her name ***was*** Elizabeth (Elisabet). **6** Now they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. **7** And there was no child to them, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were advanced in their days. **8** Now it came to pass, while he was serving as priest in the order of his division before God, **9** according to the custom of the priesthood, it fell to him by lot to burn incense, having entered into the temple of the Lord. **10** And all the multitude of the people were praying outside at the hour of the incense. **11** Then an angel of ***the*** Lord appeared to him, standing on ***the*** right of the altar of the incense. **12** And Zechariah was troubled, having seen ***him***, and fear fell upon him. **13** But the angel said to him, "Do not fear, Zechariah, because your petition has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear a son to you, and you will call his name John (Ioannes). **14** And he will be joy to you and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. **15** For he will be great before the Lord, and he shall certainly not drink wine and strong drink, and he will be filled with ***the*** Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb. **16** And he will turn many of the sons of Israel to ***the*** Lord their God. **17** And he himself will go before Him in ***the*** spirit and power of Elijah (Helias), to turn ***the*** hearts of fathers to children, and ***the*** disobedient to ***the*** understanding of ***the*** righteous, to make

1:1 Acts 1:1-3; John 20:31; 2 Pet 1:16-19
1:2 John 15:27; Heb 2:3; Mark 1:1
1:3 Ps 50:21; Prov 22:21; Acts 1:1
1:4 Prov 22:21; John 20:31; 2 Pet 1:15,16
1:5 1 Chr 24:10; 1 Chr 24:19; Neh 12:4
1:6 Gen 7:1; Gen 17:1; Job 1:1,8
1:7 Gen 18:11; Heb 11:11; Gen 25:21
1:8 1 Chr 24:19; 2 Chr 8:14; 2 Chr 31:2,19
1:9 2 Chr 26:16; Ps 141:2; Exod 30:7,8
1:10 Ps 141:2; Lev 16:17; Rev 8:3
1:11 Judg 13:3; Judg 6:12; Exod 40:26,27
1:12 Judg 6:22; Judg 13:22; Luke 2:9,10
1:13 Judg 13:3; Gen 17:19; Gen 16:11
1:14 Luke 1:58; Gen 21:6; Prov 15:20
1:15 Judg 13:4; Num 6:2; Num 6:3
1:16 Mal 4:6; Luke 1:76; Isa 40:3-5
1:17 Mal 4:5-6; Ps 78:8; 1 Kgs 17:1

1:1 *many have undertaken to compile a narrative* Luke opens with a long, careful sentence like a learned Greek writer. He was not the first to write; many believe Mark was one of those accounts. He calls them "the things that have been fulfilled among us." The life of Jesus is God keeping His promises.
1:2 *eyewitnesses and servants of the word* The facts came from people who saw Jesus with their own eyes and spent their lives serving His message. The Christian faith does not rest on visions or private feelings but on events that happened before witnesses.
1:3 *having followed all things carefully from the first, to write to you in order, most excellent Theophilus* Luke did his homework. In order means an organized account, not always exact time order. Theophilus means loved by God, and "most excellent" was a title for men of high rank, used also of the governors Felix and Festus (Acts 23:26; 26:25).
1:4 *so that you may come to know the certainty* Theophilus had been taught about Jesus, and Luke wanted him to be sure. God does not ask us to believe with our eyes closed. He has given us a record we can trust. If you have ever had doubts, Luke wrote this book with you in mind.
1:5 *in the days of Herod, the king of Judea* Herod the Great ruled under Rome from about 37 B.C. to about 4 B.C., a great builder and a cruel man who later killed the boys of Bethlehem (Matt 2:16). The thousands of priests, all from Aaron, were divided by David into twenty-four divisions, each serving a week about twice a year (1 Chr 24:1-19); Abijah's was the eighth. A priest marrying a priest's daughter was counted a special blessing.
1:6 *they were both righteous before God* Not sinless, but living real faith and obedience. They took God's word seriously, offered the sacrifices the Law required, and showed no pattern of open sin.
1:7 *there was no child to them, because Elizabeth was barren* Childlessness was a deep sorrow and often a public shame, assumed to show God's displeasure. Luke tells us it was not so here. Sometimes faithful people carry long sorrows that are not because of their sin. God sees you, as He saw Elizabeth. Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, Hannah and Samson's mother were barren too, and each child was part of God's plan.
1:9 *it fell to him by lot to burn incense* Priests cast lots for who would burn incense on the golden altar in the Holy Place. With so many priests, a man might do it once in his life, and many never did. This was the high point of Zechariah's service.
1:10 *all the multitude of the people were praying outside at the hour of the incense* Rising incense pictured prayer going up to God (Ps 141:2; Rev 8:3-4). Luke's Gospel begins with people praying in the temple and ends the same way (24:53).
1:11 *an angel of the Lord appeared to him* For about four hundred years, since Malachi, there had been no new word from God to Israel. In the middle of an ordinary day of service, heaven broke the silence.
1:12 *fear fell upon him* The normal response to an angel in the Bible. Angels are not chubby babies on greeting cards but mighty servants of God.
1:13 *your petition has been heard* Most likely the prayer for a son he and Elizabeth may have given up on, and perhaps his priestly prayer for Israel's redemption. God was about to answer both. John means the Lord is gracious. God Himself named the child, and the name told what God was doing.
1:15 *he will be great before the Lord* John would never be rich or powerful by the world's standards. He wore camel's hair and lived in the wilderness. But he was great in God's eyes, the only greatness that lasts. No wine was like the vow of a Nazirite set apart to God (Num 6:1-4). The Spirit was at work in him before birth, as we see in 1:41.
1:16 *he will turn many of the sons of Israel to the Lord their God* That was John's job: to call God's people back to Him. Joy, promised in 1:14, is one of Luke's favorite themes, and it starts here.
1:17 *in the spirit and power of Elijah* The angel points to the last words of the Old Testament (Mal 4:5-6). John was not Elijah back from heaven (John 1:21), but he came with Elijah's spirit and power, and Jesus said he filled that role for those willing to receive it (Matt 11:14). He goes before the Lord God of Israel, and the One who came after him was Jesus. Some believe John was the whole fulfillment. I believe, with many pre-tribulation teachers, that he fulfilled it in part, since Jesus said, "Elijah indeed comes first, and will restore all things" (Matt 17:11).

ready for ***the*** Lord a people prepared." **18** And Zechariah said to the angel, "By what will I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife ***is*** advanced in her days." **19** And answering, the angel said to him, "I am Gabriel, the one standing before God, and I was sent to speak to you and to announce these ***things*** to you as good news. **20** And look, you will be silent and not able to speak until the day that these ***things*** happen, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their season." **21** And the people were waiting for Zechariah, and they were marveling at his delaying in the temple. **22** And having come out, he was not able to speak to them; and they recognized that he had seen a vision in the temple. And he himself was making signs to them and was remaining mute. **23** And it came to pass, when the days of his service were fulfilled, he departed to his house. **24** Now after these days Elizabeth his wife conceived, and she was hiding herself five months, saying, **25** "Thus the Lord has done to me in ***the*** days in which He looked upon ***me*** to take away my disgrace among men."

The Birth of Jesus Foretold

26 Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee (Galilaia) whose name ***was*** Nazareth, **27** to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name ***was*** Joseph (Ioseph), of ***the*** house of David (Dabid); and the name of the virgin ***was*** Mary (Maria). **28** And having come in to her, the angel said, "Greetings, you who have been favored! The Lord ***is*** with you; blessed ***are*** you among women." **29** And she, having seen ***him***, was greatly troubled at his word, and she was pondering what kind ***of*** greeting this might be. **30** And the angel said to her, "Do not fear, Mary, for you have found favor with God. **31** And look, you will conceive in ***the*** womb and will bear a son, and you will call His name Jesus (Iesous). **32** He will be great and will be called Son of ***the*** Most High; and ***the*** Lord God will give Him the throne of David His father, **33** and He will reign over the house of Jacob (Iakob) to the ages, and of His kingdom there will be no end." **34** Then Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I do not know a man?" **35** And answering, the angel said to her, "***The*** Holy Spirit will come upon you, and ***the*** power of ***the*** Most High will overshadow you; therefore also the holy ***One*** being born of you will be called Son of God. **36** And look, Elizabeth your relative, she also has conceived a son in her old age; and this is

1:18 Gen 15:8; Gen 17:17; Luke 1:34
1:19 Dan 8:16; Dan 9:21; Zech 6:5
1:20 Ezek 3:26; Ezek 24:27; Exod 4:11
1:21 Num 6:24; Num 6:25; Num 6:26
1:22 Num 12:6; Ezek 3:26; John 13:24
1:23 1 Chr 9:25; 2 Kgs 11:7; 2 Kgs 11:5-7
1:24 2 Kgs 4:17
1:25 Isa 4:1; Gen 29:32; Judg 11:37
1:26 Dan 8:16; Matt 2:23; John 7:41
1:27 Isa 7:14; Matt 1:18,21,23; Jer 31:22
1:28 Judg 6:12; Luke 1:30; Acts 18:10
1:29 Luke 1:12; Acts 10:4; Mark 6:49,50
1:30 Luke 1:13; Rom 8:31; Luke 12:32
1:31 Isa 7:14; Gen 16:11; Judg 13:3
1:32 Isa 9:6; Ps 132:11; Isa 16:5
1:33 Dan 2:44; Num 24:17; Ezek 37:25
1:34 1 Sam 16:2; Judg 13:8-12; Acts 9:6
1:35 Isa 7:14; Dan 3:25; Luke 1:27,31
1:36 Gen 21:2; Judg 13:3

1:18 *By what will I know this?* He looked at the facts of nature, and they said it could not happen. Standing in God's temple talking with an angel, he still doubted. How often do we pray and then doubt when God says yes?
1:19 *I am Gabriel, the one standing before God* One of only two holy angels named in the Bible, with Michael. He told Daniel of the coming Messiah about five hundred years earlier (Dan 8:16; 9:21-27), and now he announced the time had come. To announce as good news is the first appearance of the gospel idea in Luke.
1:20 *you will be silent and not able to speak* A sign, a discipline and a mercy, reminding him every day for months that God's word is true. God's word does not fail because we doubt it. It will come to pass in its season.
1:22 *he was not able to speak to them* Burning incense did not take long, and the people began to wonder. He was meant to give the priestly blessing (Num 6:24-26) and could not. Then he went home to the hill country and waited. God's plan does not always unfold in a flash.
1:24 *she was hiding herself five months* Scripture does not say why. Perhaps she wanted to be sure, or wanted time alone with God to give thanks.
1:25 *to take away my disgrace among men* For years she carried the shame of being childless. Now God had looked upon her. She saw this child as a personal gift from a God who saw her pain. He sees ours too.
1:26 *the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee whose name was Nazareth* The sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy. Nazareth was a small village people looked down on (John 1:46). The first announcement came in the temple to an old priest; the second came in a little town to a young woman. God chose the humble place.
1:27 *a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David* Betrothal was a legal contract, usually about a year, ended only by divorce; the couple were called husband and wife but did not yet live together. Mary was likely in her teens. Luke calls her a virgin twice in one verse, Isaiah's word for the mother of the promised Son (Isa 7:14). Joseph's line matters for what Gabriel says next.
1:28 *Greetings, you who have been favored!* The Greek kecharitomene means one on whom grace has been poured out. It points to what God gave her, not what she earned, and not a store of grace she gives to others. Roman Catholic teaching reads full of grace and ties it to the Immaculate Conception. Mary was chosen by grace, as every believer is.
1:29 *she was pondering what kind of greeting this might be* She was troubled more by the greeting than by the angel. She did not think of herself as anyone special.
1:31 *you will call His name Jesus* God was not angry; He had chosen her for the greatest privilege any woman has had. Jesus is the Greek form of Yeshua or Joshua, the Lord saves, for He would save His people from their sins (Matt 1:21). Seven hundred years earlier Isaiah wrote, "Look, the virgin is pregnant and bearing a son" (Isa 7:14), and Mary's Son fulfills it (Matt 1:22-23).
1:32 *the Lord God will give Him the throne of David His father* John would be great before the Lord; Jesus is simply great, with no limit, the Son of the Most High, the Son of God. God promised David a descendant on his throne forever (2 Sam 7:12-16; Isa 9:6-7). Through Mary, Jesus was David's true descendant; through Joseph, his legal heir.
1:33 *He will reign over the house of Jacob to the ages* I take these words at face value. The house of Jacob is Israel, and Jesus will reign over Israel from David's throne forever. He was rejected at His first coming, but the promise is not canceled. When He returns He will reign on the earth for a thousand years (Rev 20:1-6), and His kingdom goes on into eternity. God has not replaced Israel (Rom 11:25-29). Gabriel's words will be fulfilled to the letter.
1:34 *How will this be, since I do not know a man?* To know is the Bible's way of speaking of sexual relations (Gen 4:1). Zechariah wanted proof. Mary did not doubt it would happen; she asked how. That is why Gabriel rebuked him and simply answered her.
1:35 *the power of the Most High will overshadow you* No human father. God by His Spirit would create life in Mary's womb. Overshadow is used of the glory cloud over the tabernacle (Exod 40:34-35) and at the transfiguration (9:34). The virgin conception means Jesus is truly human, born of a woman, and truly God, the Son of God, and born without the sin nature passed down from Adam.
1:36 *Elizabeth your relative, she also has conceived a son in her old age* A sign Mary did not ask for. The Bible does not say how they were related. If God could give a son to an old, barren woman, He could do what He promised Mary.

the sixth month for her who is called barren. **37** For with God no declaration will be impossible." **38** Then Mary said, "Look, the slave of ***the*** Lord; may it happen to me according to your declaration." And the angel departed from her.

Mary Visits Elizabeth

39 Then Mary, having risen up in these days, went into the hill country with haste to a city of Judah (Iouda), **40** and she entered into the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. **41** And it came to pass, as Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with ***the*** Holy Spirit, **42** and she cried out with a loud voice and said, "Blessed ***are*** you among women, and blessed ***is*** the fruit of your womb! **43** And from where ***is*** this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? **44** For look, as the voice of your greeting came into my ears, the baby leaped in exultation in my womb. **45** And blessed ***is*** she who believed, that there will be a fulfillment for the things spoken to her from ***the*** Lord."

Mary's Song

46 And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, **47** and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior, **48** because He has looked upon the lowliness of His slave; for look, from now on all the generations will call me blessed. **49** For the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy ***is*** His name. **50** And His mercy ***is*** to generations of generations, to those who fear Him. **51** He has worked strength with His arm; He has scattered ***the*** proud in ***the*** thought of their heart. **52** He has brought down rulers from thrones and has exalted ***the*** lowly. **53** ***Those*** who hunger He has filled with good ***things***, and ***those*** who are rich He has sent away empty. **54** He has helped Israel His servant, to remember mercy, **55** just as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham (Abraam) and to his seed to the age." **56** And Mary remained with her about three months, and returned to her house.

The Birth of John the Baptist

57 Now for Elizabeth the time was fulfilled for her to give birth, and she bore a son. **58** And the neighbors and her relatives heard that ***the*** Lord had magnified His mercy with her, and they were rejoicing with her. **59** And it came to pass on the eighth day, they came to circumcise the child, and they were calling him by the name of his father, Zechariah. **60** And answering, his mother said, "No, but he will be called John." **61** And they said to her, "There is no one among your relatives who is called by this name." **62** And they were

1:37 Matt 19:26; Gen 18:14; Jer 32:17,27
1:38 Ps 116:16; Rom 4:20,21; 2 Sam 7:25-29
1:39 Josh 20:7; Josh 10:40; Josh 15:48-59
1:41 Luke 1:67; Acts 4:8; Luke 1:15,44
1:42 Judg 5:24; Ps 72:18; Luke 1:28,48
1:43 John 20:28; 1 Sam 25:41; Ps 110:1
1:45 1 Kgs 17:16; 2 Kgs 4:5; 2 Kgs 22:14
1:46 1 Sam 2:1; Ps 34:2,3; Ps 35:9
1:47 Isa 45:21; 1 Sam 2:1; Ps 106:21
1:48 Mal 3:12; Gen 30:13; 1 Sam 2:8
1:49 Ps 111:9; Ps 126:2; Isa 57:15
1:50 Ps 103:17; Ps 85:9; Ps 103:11
1:51 Ps 89:10; Ps 98:1; Isa 52:10
1:52 Isa 26:6; Ps 107:40,41; Ezek 17:24
1:53 Ps 107:9; Luke 6:21; Ps 107:8,9
1:54 Ps 98:3; Mic 7:20; Isa 44:21
1:55 Ps 105:6; Gen 12:3; Exod 32:13
1:57 Gen 21:2; Num 23:19; Gen 21:3
1:58 Isa 66:9; Ruth 4:16; Ruth 4:17
1:59 Gen 17:12; Lev 12:3; Gen 21:3
1:60 Isa 8:3; Luke 1:13; 2 Sam 12:25

1:37 *For with God no declaration will be impossible* Declaration is rhema, a spoken word. Nothing God says will fail (compare Gen 18:14). When God speaks, it happens, as true for us as for Mary.
1:38 *Look, the slave of the Lord; may it happen to me according to your declaration* One of the great statements of faith in the Bible. An unmarried, betrothed girl found pregnant faced shame and gossip; Joseph might divorce her (Matt 1:19), and by the Law she could have faced death. She said yes anyway. When God shows us His will, the right answer is the same.
1:39 *went into the hill country with haste to a city of Judah* Luke does not name the town, a trip of several days, eighty miles or more. She went to see the sign and to be with the one woman who might understand.
1:41 *the baby leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit* Not a normal kick; it was for joy (1:44). The promise of 1:15 came true, and before birth John was pointing to Jesus. Luke calls John a baby in the womb, the same word he uses for Jesus in the manger (2:12, 16). God sees the unborn child as a person.
1:42 *Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!* Mary had told her nothing yet. The Holy Spirit showed Elizabeth what had happened.
1:43 *the mother of my Lord* An older woman and a priest's wife humbled herself before a girl from Nazareth, and called a child perhaps only days or weeks conceived my Lord.
1:45 *blessed is she who believed* This is why Mary is blessed. Zechariah did not believe and was struck silent; Mary believed. When a woman blessed the womb that bore Him, Jesus said those who hear God's word and keep it are blessed (11:27-28). Mary is honored because she heard and trusted.
1:46 *My soul magnifies the Lord* Called the Magnificat, from the Latin for magnifies. To magnify the Lord is to make Him great in our eyes and others'. The song is full of the Old Testament and sounds much like Hannah's (1 Sam 2:1-10). Mary knew her Bible.
1:47 *my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior* Only sinners need a Savior. Mary was a godly young woman, but she knew she needed saving like the rest of us.
1:48 *from now on all the generations will call me blessed* Every generation has, and we should not be shy to. She was chosen, believed, and shows faith and humility. Yet Scripture never tells us to pray to Mary or ask her to go to God for us, though Roman Catholic and Orthodox Christians do. She called God her Savior and told the servants at Cana, "Whatever He says to you, do it" (John 2:5). The best way to honor her is to trust her Son.
1:50 *His mercy is to generations of generations, to those who fear Him* She did not boast in herself but praised the Mighty One. To fear God is to stand in awe, take Him seriously, and trust and obey. His mercy reaches every generation that fears Him, including ours (Ps 103:17).
1:52 *He has brought down rulers from thrones and has exalted the lowly* God turns the world's order upside down. Mary speaks as if it already happened, because when God sets out to do something, it is as good as done.
1:53 *those who are rich He has sent away empty* A theme all through Luke: "Blessed are the poor" and woe to the rich (6:20, 24). God is not against people for having money. He is against pride and the self-sufficiency that says I do not need God. The hungry who come to Him are filled.
1:55 *to Abraham and to his seed to the age* God promised Abraham that in his seed all nations would be blessed (Gen 12:3; 22:18). The birth of Jesus was God remembering. Because the promise was made forever, it still stands for Abraham's descendants today.
1:56 *Mary remained with her about three months* About the time of Elizabeth's delivery; Luke does not say whether Mary stayed for the birth. Then she went home to face Joseph and the town. God spoke to Joseph in a dream (Matt 1:18-25).
1:58 *they were rejoicing with her* God kept His word to the day, and many rejoiced as Gabriel said (1:14). When God answers a long, painful prayer, it is right for those around us to rejoice with us (Rom 12:15).
1:59 *on the eighth day, they came to circumcise the child* The sign of the covenant commanded to Abraham (Gen 17:12), and a common time to name a child. Sons were often named for father or grandfather.
1:61 *There is no one among your relatives who is called by this name* Zechariah had surely written down for Elizabeth what the angel said. This child would not fit anyone's expectations. He belonged to God.

making signs to his father, what he would want him to be called. **63** And having asked for a writing tablet, he wrote, saying, "John is his name." And they all marveled. **64** Then his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue, and he was speaking, blessing God. **65** And fear came upon all those dwelling around them; and in all the hill country of Judea all these declarations were being talked about. **66** And all who heard laid ***them*** up in their heart, saying, "What then will this child be?" And ***the*** hand of ***the*** Lord was with him.

Zechariah's Prophecy

67 And Zechariah his father was filled with ***the*** Holy Spirit and prophesied, saying, **68** "Blessed ***be the*** Lord, the God of Israel, because He has visited and has worked redemption for His people, **69** and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of David His servant, **70** just as He spoke through ***the*** mouth of His holy prophets, those from ***the*** age:
71 salvation from our enemies and from ***the*** hand of all those who hate us, **72** to work mercy with our fathers and to remember His holy covenant, **73** ***the*** oath which He swore to Abraham our father, **74** to grant to us, without fear, having been delivered from ***the*** hand of our enemies, to serve Him **75** in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life. **76** And you, child, will be called a prophet of ***the*** Most High; for you will go before ***the*** face of ***the*** Lord to prepare His ways, **77** to give knowledge of salvation to His people in ***the*** forgiveness of their sins, **78** because of ***the*** tender mercy of our God, in which ***the*** Sunrise from on high has visited us, **79** to shine upon those sitting in darkness and ***the*** shadow of death, to direct our feet into ***the*** way of peace." **80** And the child was growing and was being strengthened in spirit, and he was in the deserts until ***the*** day of his public appearance to Israel.

LUKE 2

The Birth of Jesus

1 Now it came to pass in those days, a decree went out from Caesar Augustus (Augoustos) for all the world to be registered. **2** This registration first took place while Quirinius (Kyrenios) was governing Syria. **3** And all were going to be registered, each to ***his*** own city. **4** And Joseph (Ioseph) also went up from Galilee (Galilaia), out of ***the*** city of Nazareth, to Judea (Ioudaia), to ***the*** city of David (Dabid) which is called Bethlehem (Bethleem), because of his being of ***the*** house and family of David, **5** to register with Mary (Maria), who was betrothed to him, ***his*** wife, being pregnant. **6** And it came to

1:63 Luke 1:13,60; Isa 30:8; Prov 3:3
1:64 Luke 1:20; Exod 4:15,16; Ezek 33:22
1:65 Luke 1:39; Luke 7:16; Acts 2:43
1:66 1 Kgs 18:46; Acts 11:21; Luke 2:19,51
1:67 Joel 2:28; Luke 1:15,41; Num 11:25
1:68 Ps 106:48; Ps 41:13; Ps 111:9
1:69 Ps 18:2; Ps 132:17; 2 Sam 7:26
1:70 Gen 12:3; Dan 9:24; Num 4:27
1:71 Ps 106:10; Ezek 34:28; 2 Sam 22:3
1:72 Mic 7:20; Lev 26:42; Ps 106:45
1:73 Deut 7:12; Ps 105:9; Jer 11:5
1:74 Josh 22:5; 1 Sam 12:10; Jer 23:6
1:75 Eph 4:24; Eph 2:10; Titus 2:11-14
1:76 Mal 3:1; Isa 40:3; Ps 87:5
1:77 Luke 3:3,6; Mark 1:3,4; John 1:7-9,15-17,29,34
1:78 Mal 4:2; Isa 9:2; Col 3:12
1:79 Isa 9:2; Ps 107:10; Matt 4:16
1:80 Luke 2:40,52; Matt 3:1; Luke 1:15
2:1 Luke 3:1; Matt 24:14; Acts 11:28
2:2 Luke 3:1; Acts 5:37; Acts 13:7
2:4 Mic 5:2; 1 Sam 16:1; Gen 35:19
2:5 Deut 22:22-27; Matt 1:18,19
2:6 Mic 5:2; Ps 33:11; Prov 19:21

1:63 *John is his name* They made signs to him, so he may have been deaf as well as mute; the word in 1:22 can mean either or both. He did not write the name would be John but that it is. God had settled it, and months of silence had taught him to believe.
1:64 *he was speaking, blessing God* His first words after nine months of silence were praise. He had doubted, God disciplined him, and now he worshiped.
1:66 *What then will this child be?* They would find out about thirty years later in the wilderness. God's hand on a life is the greatest blessing a child can have. Parents, that is the best thing we can pray for our children.
1:68 *He has visited and has worked redemption for His people* Zechariah's song is called the Benedictus, from the Latin for Blessed, a prophecy given by the Spirit. Jesus was not yet born, but he speaks as if redemption had come. Redemption means setting free by paying a price.
1:69 *a horn of salvation for us in the house of David His servant* A horn pictures strength, like a strong animal's horns, so this is a mighty Savior (Ps 18:2). Zechariah was a Levite, so this is not his son John but Mary's Son, the Son of David.
1:74 *having been delivered from the hand of our enemies, to serve Him* God saves us so we can serve Him, set free from sin, death and the devil to live holy lives without fear. Many expected only freedom from Rome. These words speak of real enemies, and I believe God will fully deliver Israel from all its enemies when Jesus returns to reign. But the heart of it is spiritual.
1:76 *you, child, will be called a prophet of the Most High* The first prophet in Israel in four hundred years, going before the face of the Lord (Isa 40:3; Mal 3:1). Again, the One John goes before is the Lord. Jesus is the Lord.
1:77 *in the forgiveness of their sins* Our greatest enemy is not Rome or any earthly power but our own sin. Real salvation starts with forgiveness. John would point people to the One who takes sins away (John 1:29).
1:78 *the Sunrise from on high has visited us* Salvation comes from God's tender mercy, not our deserving. Sunrise means the dawn. Malachi spoke of the sun of righteousness rising with healing (Mal 4:2). Jesus is the dawn after a long night.
1:79 *to shine upon those sitting in darkness and the shadow of death* The people in darkness see a great light (Isa 9:2). Without Christ people sit in darkness under the shadow of death. Jesus brings light and guides us into peace with God.
1:80 *he was in the deserts until the day of his public appearance to Israel* Thirty years in one verse, in the dry wilderness of Judea near the Dead Sea. Some suggest contact with the Qumran community there, but that is only a guess. God prepared him in quiet, out of sight. God often prepares His servants in hidden places before He uses them in public.
2:1 *a decree went out from Caesar Augustus for all the world to be registered* Augustus, the first Roman emperor (27 B.C. to A.D. 14), liked to be called the bringer of peace and even a savior. A registration was a census for taxes, and all the world means the Roman world. Augustus thought he ran the world, but God was using him to bring His Son to the right town at the right time (Prov 21:1).
2:2 *while Quirinius was governing Syria* Josephus tells of a census under Quirinius about A.D. 6, ten years after Herod died, yet Jesus was born in Herod's days (1:5). Some note the word for first can mean before. Others point to evidence Quirinius held an earlier post in Syria. Others suggest a census begun under Herod and finished under Quirinius. Luke knew of the later census (Acts 5:37) and calls this one first. I believe Luke got it right, even if we cannot be sure which answer is correct.
2:4 *to the city of David which is called Bethlehem* People went to the town of their family line, fitting Jewish records kept by tribe and clan. About ninety miles, several days on foot. Bethlehem, six miles south of
Jerusalem, was David's hometown (1 Sam 16:1). Micah said the ruler of Israel would come from there, one whose goings out are "from the days of antiquity" (Mic 5:2). Mary lived in Nazareth. God moved an empire to keep His word.
2:5 *who was betrothed to him, his wife, being pregnant* Legally married, but Joseph did not have relations with her until after Jesus was born (Matt 1:24-25).

pass, while they were there, the days were fulfilled for her to
give birth. **7** And she gave birth to her son, the firstborn, and
she wrapped Him in swaddling cloths and laid Him in the
manger, because there was no place for them in the lodging
place.

Shepherds and Angels

8 And ***there*** were shepherds in the same region living out in
the fields and keeping watches of the night over their flock.
9 And look, an angel of ***the*** Lord stood by them, and ***the*** glory
of ***the*** Lord shone around them, and they feared a great fear.
10 And the angel said to them, "Do not fear; for look, I
announce to you great joy as good news, which will be to all
the people. **11** For there has been born to you today a Savior,
who is Christ ***the*** Lord, in ***the*** city of David. **12** And this ***is*** the
sign to you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths,
lying in the manger." **13** And suddenly ***there*** was with the
angel a multitude of ***the*** heavenly army, praising God and
saying, **14** "Glory in ***the*** highest to God, and on earth peace,
among men good will!" **15** And it came to pass, as the angels
departed from them into heaven, and the men, the shep-
herds, said to one another, "Let us go over now to Bethlehem
and see this declaration that has happened, which the Lord
has made known to us." **16** And they came, having hurried,
and found both Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the
manger. **17** And having seen ***Him***, they made known widely
the declaration which had been spoken to them concerning
this child. **18** And all those who heard marveled concerning
the things spoken by the shepherds to them. **19** But Mary
was treasuring up all these declarations, pondering ***them*** in
her heart. **20** And the shepherds returned, glorifying and
praising God for all ***the things*** which they had heard and
seen, just as it was spoken to them.

Jesus Presented in the Temple

21 And when eight days were fulfilled for circumcising the
child, then His name was called Jesus (Iesous), the ***name***
called by the angel before He was conceived in the womb.
22 And when the days of her purification were fulfilled
according to the law of Moses, they brought Him up to
Jerusalem (Hierosolyma) to present ***Him*** to the Lord, **23** just
as it has been written in ***the*** law of ***the*** Lord, "Every male
opening a womb shall be called holy to the Lord," **24** and to
give a sacrifice according to what has been said in ***the*** law of
the Lord, "A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."
25 And look, ***there*** was a man in Jerusalem (Hierousalem)

2:7 Isa 7:14; Isa 53:2; Exod 4:24
2:8 Gen 31:39; Ezek 34:8; 1 Sam 17:34
2:9 Exod 16:7; Exod 16:10; Exod 40:34
2:10 Isa 52:7; Isa 40:9; Isa 61:1
2:11 1 Kgs 11:39; Isa 43:11; Isa 9:6
2:12 Isa 53:1,2; Ps 22:6; Exod 3:12
2:13 1 Kgs 22:19; Rev 5:11; Gen 28:12
2:14 Luke 1:79; Col 1:20; Luke 19:38
2:15 Luke 24:51; 2 Kgs 2:1,11; 1 Pet 3:22
2:16 Luke 2:7,12; Luke 19:32; Luke 1:39
2:17 Mal 3:16; Luke 2:38; Luke 8:39
2:18 Luke 2:33,47; Luke 1:65,66; Luke 4:36
2:19 Gen 37:11; 1 Sam 21:12; Ps 119:11
2:20 Ps 22:23; Acts 11:18; Luke 18:43
2:21 Lev 12:3; Gen 17:12; Gen 21:4
2:22 Lev 12:1; Lev 12:4-6; Lev 12:2
2:23 Exod 13:2; Exod 13:12; Num 3:13
2:24 Lev 12:8; Lev 12:6; Lev 12:2
2:25 Isa 25:9; Isa 40:1; Num 11:25

2:7 *she gave birth to her son, the firstborn* Firstborn means her first child, not her only one; the Gospels later speak of His brothers and sisters (8:19-21; Mark 6:3). Swaddling cloths were snug strips every mother in Israel used. The Son of God was cared for like any other baby.

2:7 *laid Him in the manger, because there was no place for them in the lodging place* A manger is a feeding trough, so He was born where animals were kept: a stable, perhaps a cave as was common near Bethlehem, or the lower room of a house. Lodging place can mean an inn or a guest room; Luke uses it for the upper room (22:11). The Creator was born in a place meant for animals. He "emptied Himself, having taken the form of a slave" (Phil 2:7). From the beginning, Jesus came low.

2:8 *shepherds in the same region living out in the fields* Shepherds were poor, often away from home, kept by their work from the rules about washing and the Sabbath, and not always trusted. God sent His angels to them first. David had shepherded these fields, and the baby would call Himself the Good Shepherd (John 10:11). We do not know the date of His birth; December 25 was set centuries later. What matters is that He came.

2:9 *the glory of the Lord shone around them* The bright, visible presence of God that Israel had seen over the tabernacle and temple now shone on a hillside over shepherds. No wonder they were terrified.

2:10 *great joy as good news, which will be to all the people* The gospel in one sentence. The news is good, it brings great joy, and it is for everyone.

2:11 *a Savior, who is Christ the Lord, in the city of David* Savior, to rescue us from sin and death. Christ, the Anointed One, the promised King. Lord, the title the Greek Old Testament uses for God's name. People called Augustus savior and lord; the real Savior and Lord was just born in Bethlehem. And born to you: for shepherds, the poor, sinners, and you.

2:12 *you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in the manger* Swaddling cloths were normal. A manger was not; no one laid a newborn in a feeding trough. The sign of the Savior's coming was humility.

2:14 *Glory in the highest to God, and on earth peace, among men good will!* Picture the sky filling with an army of heaven, come not to fight but to worship. His birth brings glory to God and peace to men, first peace with God (Rom 5:1). Without Jesus we are at war with God because of our sin. The SLB follows the text reading good will toward men; other copies read peace among men with whom He is pleased. Both say the peace comes from God's favor, not our goodness.

2:16 *found both Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger* They did not argue or wait; they believed and went. Everything was just as the angel said. When God tells us something, we will always find it true.

2:17 *they made known widely the declaration* The first to tell others about Jesus were shepherds with no training or standing, but they had seen Him. A witness tells what he has seen and heard. Many marveled (2:18), but Luke does not say they all believed. Many marvel at Jesus and go on with their lives.

2:19 *Mary was treasuring up all these declarations, pondering them in her heart* She did not understand everything at once but stored it up for years, and Luke may have heard these memories from Mary herself. When God does something in our lives, we should not rush past it.

2:20 *the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God* Their jobs did not change, but they did. Meeting Jesus does not always change our work, but it changes how we do it and fills us with praise.

2:21 *when eight days were fulfilled for circumcising the child* In obedience to the Law (Gen 17:12; Lev 12:3), like John (1:59). He was "born under law" (Gal 4:4) and kept it perfectly from His first week, to redeem those who could not. His parents obeyed God in naming Him.

2:22 *when the days of her purification were fulfilled* After a son's birth a mother waited forty days and offered a sacrifice to be ceremonially clean (Lev 12:1-8), not because having a baby was sin but as part of the ceremonial law teaching holiness. Every firstborn son belonged to God, a reminder of the firstborn spared at the first Passover (Exod 13:2, 12-15), and was bought back for five shekels (Num 18:15-16).

2:24 *A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons* The Law asked a lamb and a bird, or two birds from a family too poor for a lamb (Lev 12:8). Mary and Joseph were poor. The Lamb of God was presented in the temple, and His parents could not afford a lamb.

2:25 *waiting for the consolation of Israel* The comfort God promised when the Messiah came (Isa 40:1-2). Simeon was one of a faithful few still watching, and the promise that he would see the Christ before death suggests he was old. Notice how much the Spirit is at work in these chapters: John, Elizabeth, Zechariah, Mary, and now Simeon.

whose name ***was*** Simeon (Symeon), and this man ***was*** righteous and devout, waiting for ***the*** consolation of Israel; and ***the*** Holy Spirit was upon him. **26** And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit ***that he would*** not see death before he should see the Christ of ***the*** Lord. **27** And he came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, for them to do according to the custom of the law concerning Him, **28** and he himself received Him into his arms and blessed God and said, **29** "Now You are releasing Your slave, Master, according to Your declaration, in peace, **30** because my eyes have seen Your salvation, **31** which You have prepared before ***the*** face of all the peoples, **32** a light for revelation of ***the*** Gentiles, and glory of Your people Israel." **33** And Joseph and His mother were marveling at the things being spoken concerning Him. **34** And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary His mother, "Look, this ***One*** is appointed for ***the*** falling and rising up of many in Israel, and for a sign spoken against **35** (and a sword will go through your own soul also), so that ***the*** thoughts from many hearts may be revealed."

Anna the Prophetess

36 And there was Anna, a prophetess, a daughter of Phanuel (Phanouel), of ***the*** tribe of Asher (Aser). She ***was*** advanced in many days, having lived with a husband seven years from her virginity, **37** and she ***was*** a widow of about eighty-four years, who did not depart from the temple, serving with fastings and petitions night and day. **38** And she, having come up at that very hour, was giving praise in response to the Lord, and she was speaking concerning Him to all those waiting for redemption in Jerusalem. **39** And when they had performed all the things according to the law of ***the*** Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth. **40** And the child was growing and was being strengthened in spirit, being filled with wisdom; and ***the*** grace of God was upon Him.

The Boy Jesus in the Temple

41 And His parents were going every year to Jerusalem at the feast of the Passover. **42** And when He was twelve years ***old***, they having gone up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast, **43** and having completed the days, as they were returning, the boy Jesus remained behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and His mother did not know ***it***. **44** But having supposed Him to be in the caravan, they went a day's journey, and they were seeking Him among the relatives and among the acquaintances. **45** And not having found Him, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking Him. **46** And it came to pass, after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in ***the*** midst of the teachers, both hearing them and questioning them. **47** And all those hearing Him were amazed at His understanding and answers. **48** And having seen Him, they were astonished; and His mother said to Him, "Child, why did

2:26 Ps 25:14; Ps 89:48; Isa 61:1
2:27 Mic 7:7; Mal 3:1; Acts 10:19
2:28 Ps 105:2; Isa 25:9; Mark 9:36
2:29 Gen 15:15; Ps 37:37; Isa 57:1,2
2:30 Isa 52:10; Luke 3:6; Luke 2:10,11
2:31 Ps 98:2,3; Ps 96:1-3,10-13; Ps 97:6-8
2:32 Isa 49:6; Isa 42:6; Isa 60:1-3,19
2:33 Luke 2:48; Luke 1:65,66; Isa 8:18
2:34 Gen 47:7; Exod 39:43; Lev 9:22
2:35 Deut 8:2; John 19:25; Luke 16:14,15
2:36 Gen 30:13; Exod 15:20; Judg 4:4
2:37 Ps 22:2; Ps 27:4; Num 30:9
2:38 Isa 8:17; Mal 3:16; Luke 2:25
2:39 2 Chr 34:14; Luke 2:4; Luke 2:21-24
2:40 Isa 11:2; Isa 53:2; Luke 2:52
2:41 Deut 16:1; Lev 23:5; Num 28:16
2:43 2 Chr 30:21-23; 2 Chr 25:17
2:44 Ps 42:4; Ps 122:1-4; Isa 2:3
2:46 Luke 5:17; Isa 49:1,2; Isa 50:4
2:47 Matt 7:28; Mark 1:22; John 7:15,46

2:28 *he himself received Him into his arms and blessed God* On just the right day the Spirit led him among thousands to the one Child. He saw no royal robes or army, only a poor couple and a baby, and he knew he held God's salvation.
2:29 *Now You are releasing Your slave, Master, according to Your declaration, in peace* Called the Nunc Dimittis, from the Latin now You release. Like a watchman finished with his watch and allowed to go home, he was ready to die, because he had seen what God promised. Salvation is not just a plan. It is a Person, and to see Jesus is to see God's salvation.
2:32 *a light for revelation of the Gentiles, and glory of Your people Israel* Simeon knew Isaiah's Servant, a light to the nations (Isa 42:6; 49:6). Gentiles are all who are not Jews. This baby was for the whole world, and also Israel's glory. Jesus is not a Savior for Gentiles in place of Israel. He is Israel's own Messiah and the light of the nations too.
2:33 *Joseph and His mother were marveling* Each new word still amazed them. Luke is careful: Joseph by name, Mary His mother. Joseph was His legal father and raised Him, but Jesus had no human father.
2:34 *appointed for the falling and rising up of many in Israel* Jesus would divide people, some falling by rejecting Him and some rising by believing, the stone some stumble over and others build on (Isa 8:14; 28:16). He would be opposed and crucified, and how a person responds to Him shows what is in his heart.
2:35 *a sword will go through your own soul also* A word for Mary alone. About thirty-three years later she would stand at the cross and watch her Son die (John 19:25). What mother could bear that? Mary did, and she stayed.
2:36 *Anna, a prophetess, a daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher* A prophetess speaks God's message. Asher was a northern tribe scattered by Assyria about seven hundred years earlier, but some families kept their records.
2:37 *a widow of about eighty-four years, who did not depart from the temple* The Greek can mean she was eighty-four or had been a widow eighty-four years, which would make her over a hundred. She gave her long years alone to fasting and prayer. Widows were among the poorest and most overlooked, and God saw her and let her see His Son.
2:38 *she was speaking concerning Him to all those waiting for redemption in Jerusalem* Like Simeon she came at just the right moment, and she made sure the faithful who waited knew He had come. Luke loves to pair a man and a woman: Zechariah and Mary, Simeon and Anna. Both were witnesses from the beginning.
2:39 *they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth* Luke skips the wise men, the flight to Egypt and Herod's killing of the children (Matt 2), which came before the family settled in Nazareth. Each Gospel writer chose what to include for his purpose.
2:40 *the child was growing and was being strengthened in spirit, being filled with wisdom* Fully God and fully human, He grew in body and wisdom. Scripture gives no stories of childhood miracles; the so-called lost gospels that tell them were written much later and are not Scripture.
2:41 *His parents were going every year to Jerusalem at the feast of the Passover* The Law called men to appear three times a year (Deut 16:16), but many who lived far away went only at Passover, which remembered the lamb's blood saving the firstborn in Egypt. Joseph and Mary were faithful in worship and brought their family. In later Jewish custom a boy took on the duties of the Law at about thirteen, so at twelve Jesus was near that age.
2:44 *having supposed Him to be in the caravan* Not careless parenting. Families traveled in large caravans of relatives and neighbors, and a boy of twelve would be with cousins or friends. Any parent who has lost a child for a few minutes knows their fear.
2:46 *sitting in the midst of the teachers, both hearing them and questioning them* Three days likely means a day out, a day back, and a day searching. The rabbis often taught in the temple courts. He was not lecturing but listening and asking like a good student, yet His grasp of God's word went far beyond His years.
2:48 *Your father and I, being in anguish, were seeking You* She spoke as any mother would, and rightly called Joseph His father, the man who raised Him and stood as father in law and in the town.

You do thus to us? Look, Your father and I, being in anguish, were seeking You." **49** And He said to them, "Why ***is it*** that you were seeking Me? Did you not know that I must be in the ***things*** of My Father?" **50** And they themselves did not understand the declaration which He spoke to them. **51** And He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and He was being subject to them. And His mother was keeping all these declarations in her heart. **52** And Jesus was advancing in wisdom and stature and favor with God and men.

LUKE 3

The Preaching of John the Baptist

1 Now in ***the*** fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius (Tiberios) Caesar, while Pontius (Pontios) Pilate (Pilatos) was governing Judea (Ioudaia), and Herod (Herodes) was tetrarch of Galilee (Galilaia), and Philip (Philippos) his brother was tetrarch of Iturea and ***the*** region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene, **2** in the time of ***the*** high priests Annas and Caiaphas (Kaiaphas), a declaration of God came upon John (Ioannes) the son of Zechariah (Zacharias) in the wilderness. **3** And he went into all the surrounding region of the Jordan (Iordanes), proclaiming a baptism of repentance for forgiveness of sins, **4** as it has been written in ***the*** book of ***the*** words of Isaiah (Hesaias) the prophet, saying, "***The*** voice of ***one*** crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of ***the*** Lord; make His paths straight. **5** Every valley will be filled, and every mountain and hill will be made low; and the crooked ***places*** will become straight, and the rough ***roads*** smooth ways; **6** and all flesh will see the salvation of God.'" **7** Therefore he was saying to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, "Offspring of vipers, who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? **8** Therefore produce fruits worthy of repentance, and do not begin to say within yourselves, 'We have Abraham (Abraam) ***as*** father.' For I say to you that God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. **9** And already also the ax is laid at the root of the trees; therefore every tree not producing good fruit is cut down and thrown into ***the*** fire." **10** And the crowds were asking him, saying, "What then shall we do?" **11** And answering, he says to them, "The one having two tunics, let him share with the one not having ***any***; and the one having food, let him do likewise." **12** And tax collectors also came to be baptized, and they said to him, "Teacher, what shall we do?" **13** And he said to them, "Collect nothing more than what has been

2:49 Mal 3:1; Ps 40:8; John 4:34
2:50 Luke 18:34; Luke 9:45
2:51 Luke 2:19; Mark 6:3; Gen 37:11
2:52 Luke 2:40; 1 Sam 2:26; Luke 1:80
3:1 Luke 2:1; Acts 4:27; Luke 3:19
3:2 Acts 4:6; Jonah 1:1; Mic 1:1
3:3 Luke 1:77; Matt 3:5; Mark 1:4,5
3:4 Isa 40:3-5; Isa 57:14; Isa 62:10
3:5 Isa 42:16; Isa 45:2; Isa 49:11
3:6 Isa 52:10; Isa 49:6; Ps 27:1
3:7 Matt 23:33; 1 Thess 1:10; Gen 3:15
3:8 Ezek 33:24; Acts 26:20; Isa 1:16-18
3:9 Dan 4:14; Matt 7:19; Luke 13:7,9
3:10 Acts 2:37; Acts 16:30; Luke 3:8
3:11 Luke 18:22; Dan 4:27; 1 Tim 6:18
3:12 Luke 7:29; Luke 15:1,2; Luke 18:13
3:13 Luke 19:8; Ps 18:23; Prov 28:13

2:49 *Did you not know that I must be in the things of My Father?* The first recorded words of Jesus. The Greek can mean in My Father's house or about My Father's business; both are true. Mary spoke of His father, and He gently answered that His Father is God. At twelve He knew who He was. Notice must, which runs through Luke to the cross (9:22; 24:7, 26). Even Mary and Joseph did not fully understand.
2:51 *He was being subject to them* As remarkable as the temple scene. The Son of God went home and obeyed His parents, keeping the fifth commandment perfectly, and lived about eighteen more quiet years in Nazareth as a carpenter (Mark 6:3). Mary kept holding on to what she did not yet understand.
2:52 *Jesus was advancing in wisdom and stature and favor with God and men* Mentally, physically, spiritually and socially. He skipped no part of being human: baby, boy, teenager, young man. He can sympathize with our weaknesses, tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin (Heb 4:15). Whatever stage of life you are in, Jesus has been there.
3:1 *in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar* Tiberius followed Augustus in A.D. 14 after sharing some power with him, so this falls about A.D. 26 to 29. Pilate governed Judea about A.D. 26 to 36. Herod Antipas, a son of Herod the Great, was tetrarch, ruler of part of a kingdom, over Galilee; Philip ruled to the northeast and Lysanias in Abilene, northwest of Damascus. This is history, rooted in real time and place.
3:2 *in the time of the high priests Annas and Caiaphas* The Law had one high priest at a time. Rome removed Annas about A.D. 15, and his sons and son-in-law Caiaphas held the office after him, but the Jews still saw Annas as the real high priest (John 18:13; Acts 4:6). After all those powerful names, God's word came not to the emperor or the high priest but to a man in the desert. That is how God often works.
3:3 *proclaiming a baptism of repentance for forgiveness of sins* To repent is to change your mind about sin and God and turn around, a turning of the whole life, more than feeling sorry. Baptism means to dip or immerse. John's baptism was a sign of repentance and readiness for the Messiah. Jews had washings already, and later writings speak of Gentile converts being immersed, though we cannot be sure how early. John told Jews they too must come as sinners. The water did not wash away sin. Christian baptism likewise does not save; it is the believer's public step after repentance and faith.
3:4 *Prepare the way of the Lord; make His paths straight* Isaiah 40:3-5. Before a king's visit, workers filled low places, cut down high places, and straightened curves. John was the road crew for hearts. The proud must be brought low and the humble lifted, and crooked hearts made straight. That is what repentance does.
3:6 *all flesh will see the salvation of God* Luke quotes one line further than Matthew and Mark, and it fits his whole Gospel. Salvation is for all flesh, every kind of person.
3:7 *Offspring of vipers, who warned you to flee from the coming wrath?* When a field burned, snakes fled the fire. Many came only to escape judgment, not because they had turned from sin, and Pharisees and Sadducees were among them (Matt 3:7). God's wrath against sin is real. A preacher who never warns of judgment is not preaching the whole truth. But the warning is mercy, to send people running to the One who saves.
3:8 *We have Abraham as father* Real repentance shows in a changed life; you can tell a tree by its fruit. Many thought descent from Abraham guaranteed a place in God's kingdom. In Hebrew children (banim) and stones (abanim) may make a play on words. Being born into a believing family is a great gift, but it does not make you a child of God. Each person must repent and believe.
3:9 *already also the ax is laid at the root of the trees* Not hanging on the wall, but set against the tree, ready to swing. Judgment was near, and there was no time to wait.
3:10 *What then shall we do?* The right question when God's word cuts to the heart.
3:11 *The one having two tunics, let him share* A tunic was the shirt worn next to the skin, and most people had one or two. John did not tell them to live in the desert like him but to love their neighbor in plain, everyday ways. Repentance changes how we treat people in need.
3:13 *Collect nothing more than what has been appointed to you* Tax collectors bid for the right to collect in an area, charged more than the tax, and kept the difference; many got rich cheating their own people and were hated as traitors and thieves. John did not tell them to quit but to work honestly. Repentance does not always mean changing careers, but it does mean changing how we work.

appointed to you." **14** And those serving as soldiers were also asking him, saying, "And what shall we ourselves do?" And he said to them, "Extort from no one, nor accuse falsely, and be content with your wages."

John Points to the Christ

15 Now as the people were expecting, and all were reasoning in their hearts concerning John, whether he himself might be the Christ, **16** John answered, saying to all, "I indeed baptize you with water; but the ***One*** mightier than I is coming, of whom I am not worthy to untie the strap of His sandals. He Himself will baptize you with ***the*** Holy Spirit and fire, **17** whose winnowing fork ***is*** in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean His threshing floor and will gather the wheat into His barn; but the chaff He will burn up with unquenchable fire." **18** So then, exhorting many other things also, he was preaching the gospel to the people. **19** But Herod the tetrarch, being reproved by him concerning Herodias the wife of Philip his brother, and concerning all ***the*** evils which Herod had done, **20** added this also to all, and he locked up John in the prison.

The Baptism of Jesus

21 Now it came to pass, when all the people were baptized, Jesus (Iesous) also having been baptized and praying, the heaven was opened, **22** and the Holy Spirit descended in a bodily form as a dove upon Him, and a voice came out of heaven, saying, "You are My Son, the beloved; in You I was well pleased."

The Family Line of Jesus

23 And Jesus Himself, when beginning, was about thirty years ***old***, being, as was supposed, son of Joseph (Ioseph), the ***son*** of Heli, **24** the ***son*** of Matthat, the ***son*** of Levi (Leui), the ***son*** of Melchi, the ***son*** of Janna (Ianna), the ***son*** of Joseph, **25** the ***son*** of Mattathias, the ***son*** of Amos, the ***son*** of Nahum (Naoum), the ***son*** of Esli, the ***son*** of Naggai (Nangai), **26** the ***son*** of Maath, the ***son*** of Mattathias, the ***son*** of Semei, the ***son*** of Joseph, the ***son*** of Judah (Ioudas), **27** the ***son*** of Joanna (Ioannas), the ***son*** of Rhesa (Hresa), the ***son*** of Zerubbabel (Zorobabel), the ***son*** of Salathiel, the ***son*** of Neri, **28** the ***son*** of Melchi, the ***son*** of Addi, the ***son*** of Cosam (Kosam), the ***son*** of Elmodam, the ***son*** of Er, **29** the ***son*** of Jose (Iose), the ***son*** of Eliezer, the ***son*** of Jorim (Ioreim), the ***son*** of Matthat, the ***son*** of Levi, **30** the ***son*** of Simeon (Symeon), the ***son*** of Judah, the ***son*** of Joseph, the ***son*** of Jonan (Ionan), the ***son*** of Eliakim (Eliakeim), **31** the ***son*** of Melea (Meleas), the ***son*** of Menam, the ***son*** of Mattatha, the ***son*** of Nathan, the ***son*** of David (Dabid), **32** the ***son*** of Jesse (Iessai), the ***son*** of Obed, the ***son*** of Boaz (Booz), the ***son*** of Salmon, the ***son*** of Nahshon (Naasson), **33** the ***son*** of Amminadab (Aminadab), the ***son*** of Aram, the ***son*** of Hezron (Esrom), the ***son*** of Perez (Phares),

3:14 Exod 23:1; Phil 4:11; Exod 20:16
3:15 John 10:24; John 1:19-28; John 3:28,29
3:16 John 1:26,33; Acts 1:5; Matt 3:11
3:17 Matt 13:30; Jer 15:7; Matt 3:12
3:18 John 1:15,29,34; John 3:29-36; Acts 2:40
3:19 Lev 18:16; Mark 6:17,18; Prov 9:7,8
3:20 Luke 13:31-34; 2 Kgs 21:16; 2 Kgs 24:4
3:21 John 1:32-34; Matt 3:13-15; Mark 1:9
3:22 Ps 2:7; Isa 42:1; 2 Pet 1:17,18
3:23 Num 4:3; Gen 41:46; 2 Sam 5:4
3:27 Ezra 3:2; Hag 1:1
3:31 1 Chr 3:5; 2 Sam 5:14; 1 Chr 14:4
3:32 1 Chr 2:10; Num 1:7; Num 2:3
3:33 Gen 38:29; Gen 46:12; Num 26:20

3:14 *Extort from no one, nor accuse falsely, and be content with your wages* Perhaps Jewish soldiers of Herod Antipas or guards for the tax collectors, poorly paid and quick to bully people for money. He did not tell them to leave the army but not to use power to take what is not theirs. Be content with your wages is a good word for every worker. Greed and complaining are not the fruit of a changed heart.
3:15 *whether he himself might be the Christ* The people were waiting for the Messiah, and John preached with such power that some thought he might be the One.
3:16 *He Himself will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire* John, the greatest prophet, was not worthy to do a lowly slave's job for Jesus. Jesus would give the Spirit, beginning at Pentecost with tongues "as of fire" (Acts 2:3). Some see the fire as the Spirit purifying believers; others as judgment on those who reject Christ, since unquenchable fire follows; some see both, the Spirit for those who repent and judgment for those who do not.
3:17 *whose winnowing fork is in His hand* Farmers tossed grain in the air with a wooden fork; the wind blew away the light chaff, and the wheat fell back to the floor. A picture of final judgment: the Messiah will separate true from false, gathering His own and burning the chaff with fire that does not go out. John did not soften it. But the One holding the fork is the One who came to save.
3:18 *he was preaching the gospel to the people* Luke calls this hard preaching good news. The warning drives us to the Savior. You cannot see how good the good news is until you know how bad the bad news is.
3:19 *being reproved by him concerning Herodias the wife of Philip his brother* Herod Antipas divorced his wife to marry his half-brother's wife, which the Law forbade while the brother lived (Lev 18:16). John told him it was not lawful (Matt 14:4). Powerful or not, sin was sin.
3:20 *he locked up John in the prison* Later he would have John beheaded (9:9; Mark 6:17-29). Luke tells of the arrest here to finish John's story, though in time it came a little later. Speaking truth to the powerful can cost much. John paid the price.
3:21 *Jesus also having been baptized and praying, the heaven was opened* He had no sin to repent of, but it was fitting to fulfill all righteousness (Matt 3:14-15). He stood with sinners from the start. Only Luke tells us He was praying, the first of many turning points in Luke where Jesus prays.
3:22 *the Holy Spirit descended in a bodily form as a dove upon Him* Something people could see. The Spirit anointed Him for His public ministry (Acts 10:38). Son baptized, Spirit descending, Father speaking: one God in three Persons. The words echo Psalm 2:7 and Isaiah 42:1, King and Servant. Before a single miracle, the Father was well pleased with Him.
3:23 *being, as was supposed, son of Joseph, the son of Heli* About thirty: the age priests began (Num 4:3), Joseph entered Pharaoh's service (Gen 41:46), and David became king (2 Sam 5:4). People supposed Him Joseph's son; Joseph was His legal, not natural, father. Matthew names Joseph's father Jacob (Matt 1:16). Many believe Luke gives Mary's line, Heli being her father and Joseph his son-in-law, since women were not usually listed. Others, following the early writer Julius Africanus, see Joseph's natural line joined to the legal line by a levirate marriage (Deut 25:5-6). Faithful teachers hold both.
3:27 *the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Salathiel* Most names here are found nowhere else, ordinary people only God knows, each a link in the chain to Jesus. Zerubbabel, who led the return from Babylon and rebuilt the temple (Ezra 3:8), and Salathiel appear in Matthew too (Matt 1:12). They may be the same men where the lines crossed, or different men with the same names. Scripture does not say.
3:31 *the son of Nathan, the son of David* Matthew traces the line through Solomon, Luke through Nathan, another son of David and Bathsheba (1 Chr 3:5). God cursed King Jeconiah of Solomon's line, saying none of his offspring would sit on David's throne (Jer 22:30), and Joseph came from that line (Matt 1:11-12). If Luke's line is Mary's, Jesus is David's son by blood through Nathan without the curse, and the legal heir through Joseph. God's plan covered every detail.
3:33 *the son of Perez, the son of Judah* Jesse, Obed and Boaz, who married Ruth the Moabite and was David's great-grandfather (Ruth 4:18-22). Judah was the royal tribe (Gen 49:10). Then Jacob, Isaac and Abraham, to whom God promised that all nations would be blessed in his seed (Gen 22:18). Matthew starts with Abraham. Luke goes further.

the ***son*** of Judah, **34** the ***son*** of Jacob (Iakob), the ***son*** of Isaac (Isaak), the ***son*** of Abraham, the ***son*** of Terah (Thara), the ***son*** of Nahor (Nachor), **35** the ***son*** of Serug (Sarouch), the ***son*** of Reu (Hragau), the ***son*** of Peleg (Phalek), the ***son*** of Eber, the ***son*** of Sala, **36** the ***son*** of Cainan (Kainan), the ***son*** of Arphaxad, the ***son*** of Shem (Sem), the ***son*** of Noah (Noe), the ***son*** of Lamech, **37** the ***son*** of Methuselah (Mathousala), the ***son*** of Enoch (Henoch), the ***son*** of Jared (Iared), the ***son*** of Mahalalel (Maleleel), the ***son*** of Cainan, **38** the ***son*** of Enosh (Enos), the ***son*** of Seth, the ***son*** of Adam, the ***son*** of God.

LUKE 4

Jesus Tested in the Wilderness

1 Now Jesus (Iesous), full of ***the*** Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan (Iordanes), and He was led in the Spirit into the wilderness, **2** being tempted forty days by the devil. And He ate nothing in those days; and when they had ended, afterward He was hungry. **3** And the devil said to Him, "If You are ***the*** Son of God, speak to this stone that it may become bread." **4** And Jesus answered him, saying, "It has been written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every declaration of God.'" **5** And the devil, having led Him up into a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. **6** And the devil said to Him, "To You I will give all this authority and their glory, because it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. **7** You therefore, if You worship before me, all will be Yours." **8** And answering, Jesus said to him, "Get behind Me, Satan; for it has been written, 'You shall worship ***the*** Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.'" **9** And he led Him to Jerusalem (Hierousalem) and set Him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here. **10** For it has been written, 'He will command His angels concerning You, to guard You,' **11** and, 'On ***their*** hands they will lift You up, lest You strike Your foot against a stone.'" **12** And answering, Jesus said to him, "It has been said, 'You shall not test ***the*** Lord your God.'" **13** And having finished every temptation, the devil departed from Him until an opportune time.

Rejected at Nazareth

14 And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee (Galilaia), and news went out through all the surrounding region concerning Him. **15** And He Himself was teaching in

3:34 Gen 21:3; Gen 25:26; Josh 24:2
3:35 Gen 10:24; Gen 10:25; 1 Chr 1:25
3:36 Gen 6:8; Gen 6:22; Gen 7:13
3:37 1 Chr 1:2; 1 Chr 1:3; Gen 5:6-28
3:38 Gen 4:25; Gen 4:26; Gen 5:1
4:1 Matt 4:1-11; Mark 1:12,13; Luke 4:14,18
4:2 1 Kgs 19:8; Exod 34:28; Deut 9:9,18,25
4:3 Luke 3:22; Matt 4:3
4:4 Deut 8:3; Eph 6:17; Luke 4:8,10
4:5 Ps 73:19; Mark 4:8,9; 1 Cor 7:31
4:6 John 12:31; John 14:30; Eph 2:2
4:7 Isa 45:14; Luke 8:28; Luke 17:16
4:8 Deut 6:13; Deut 10:20; 1 Sam 7:3
4:9 Matt 4:5; Luke 4:3; Job 2:6
4:10 Ps 91:11-12; Luke 4:3,8; 2 Cor 11:14
4:12 Deut 6:16; Exod 17:2; Ps 95:9
4:13 John 14:30; Heb 4:15; Matt 4:11
4:14 Matt 4:12; Mark 1:14; John 4:43
4:15 Matt 4:23; Matt 9:8; Luke 13:10

3:36 *the son of Cainan, the son of Arphaxad* This Cainan does not appear in the Hebrew of Genesis 11:12, but he does in the Greek translation of the Old Testament many used in Luke's day. Teachers explain it differently, and it does not change the point of the list.
3:38 *the son of Adam, the son of God* Adam is called son of God because God created him directly. Jesus is the Son of God in a far greater sense, the eternal Son become man. Matthew, writing mainly to Jews, shows Him son of Abraham and David; Luke shows Him son of Adam, related to every human being, "the last Adam" (1 Cor 15:45). The list sits between the Father's "You are My Son" and the devil's "If You are the Son of God." Adam failed when tempted. Jesus will not.
4:1 *He was led in the Spirit into the wilderness* The testing was no accident. The Father allowed it and the Spirit led Him into it. Being full of the Spirit does not keep us from hard places; sometimes the Spirit leads us right into them.
4:2 *being tempted forty days by the devil* The devil is a real being, a fallen angel leading the rebellion against God. Satan means adversary; devil means slanderer. Forty days recalls Israel's forty years of testing (Deut 8:2), and all three answers come from Deuteronomy 6 to 8. Where Israel failed, Jesus succeeded. He was a real man and was hungry, and the devil came hardest then. He often comes at us when we are tired, hungry or alone.
4:3 *If You are the Son of God, speak to this stone that it may become bread* If carries the sense of since; the Father had just called Him Son (3:22). Making bread was not wrong in itself; He later fed five thousand. But this meant using His power for Himself at the devil's word instead of trusting the Father to provide.
4:4 *Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every declaration of God* Deuteronomy 8:3: God fed Israel manna to teach that life comes from His word. Jesus would rather stay hungry and obey. He fought not with argument or a show of power but with Scripture, "the sword of the Spirit" (Eph 6:17). If Jesus needed it, how much more do we?
4:6 *it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish* The devil showed Him every nation's glory at once in some kind of vision. His claim was partly true. Jesus calls him "the ruler of this world" (John 12:31); since Adam's sin the world system lies under his influence (1 John 5:19). But he is a liar (John 8:44), and God has the final say over the kingdoms (Dan 4:17).
4:7 *if You worship before me, all will be Yours* The crown without the cross. Jesus will one day rule all the world's kingdoms (Rev 11:15), but the way runs through the cross. The devil offered a shortcut: bow once.
4:8 *You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve* Deuteronomy 6:13. Worship belongs to God alone. Most of us are offered smaller deals: bend a little, compromise a little, get what you want faster. But anything we put in God's place becomes what we worship.
4:9 *set Him on the pinnacle of the temple* A high corner of the temple above the Kidron Valley. Luke puts this test last, Matthew second (Matt 4:5-10), perhaps because Luke's whole Gospel moves toward Jerusalem, where Jesus wins the final victory.
4:10 *He will command His angels concerning You, to guard You* Now the devil quotes Psalm 91:11-12, leaving out "in all your ways" (Ps 91:11), the ways of obedience, and twisting a promise of care into a temptation to test God. The devil knows the Bible and will use it when it suits him. We must know it well enough to see when it is twisted.
4:12 *You shall not test the Lord your God* Deuteronomy 6:16. To jump and demand that God catch Him would be forcing God to prove Himself. That is not faith but presumption. Real faith trusts and obeys. It does not try to make God perform on our terms.
4:13 *the devil departed from Him until an opportune time* Resist the devil and he will flee (James 4:7), but only for a time. He came back through the leaders, through Peter (Matt 16:22-23), through Judas (22:3), and in the garden and at the cross. The tests touched the body, power and glory, and pride, "the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boasting of life" (1 John 2:16). He was tempted in all things yet without sin (Heb 4:15), so He can help us.
4:15 *being glorified by all* He went in full of the Spirit and came back to Galilee in His power. A synagogue was a local meeting place for reading Scripture, prayer and teaching. Luke skips about a year of early ministry that John records (John 1-4). Everyone was praising Him. That is about to change.

their synagogues, being glorified by all. **16** And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and according to His custom He entered on the day of the Sabbath into the synagogue, and He stood up to read. **17** And ***the*** scroll of the prophet Isaiah (Hesaias) was given to Him. And having unrolled the scroll, He found the place where it was written, **18** "***The*** Spirit of ***the*** Lord ***is*** upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to ***the*** poor; He has sent Me to heal the broken in heart, to proclaim release to captives and recovery of sight to ***the*** blind, to send away ***the*** oppressed in release, **19** to proclaim ***the*** acceptable year of ***the*** Lord." **20** And having rolled up the scroll, having given ***it*** back to the attendant, He sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him. **21** Then He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your ears." **22** And all were bearing witness to Him and were marveling at the words of grace which were proceeding out of His mouth, and they were saying, "Is this not the son of Joseph (Ioseph)?" **23** And He said to them, "Surely you will say to Me this proverb, 'Physician, heal Yourself! As many ***things*** as we have heard having happened in Capernaum (Kapernaoum), do also here in Your hometown.'" **24** And He said, "Truly I say to you, no prophet is acceptable in his hometown. **25** But in truth I say to you, many widows were in the days of Elijah (Helias) in Israel, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when a great famine came upon all the land; **26** and to none of them was Elijah sent, except to Zarephath (Sarepta) of Sidon, to a woman, a widow. **27** And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha (Elissaios) the prophet; and none of them was cleansed except Naaman (Neeman) the Syrian." **28** And all in the synagogue were filled with rage, hearing these ***things***. **29** And having risen up, they cast Him out of the city, and they led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city had been built, to throw Him down. **30** But He Himself, having passed through ***the*** midst of them, was going away.

Authority over an Unclean Spirit

31 And He went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and He was teaching them on the Sabbaths. **32** And they were astonished at His teaching, because His word was with authority. **33** And in the synagogue there was a man having a spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice, **34** saying, "Ha! What ***is there*** to us and to You, Jesus ***the*** Nazarene? Did You come to destroy us? I know You, who You are: the Holy ***One*** of God." **35** And Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silenced, and come out of him!" And the demon, having thrown him into the midst, came out from him, having hurt

4:16 Luke 2:39,51; Matt 2:23; Acts 17:2
4:17 Isa 61:1; Neh 13:1; Acts 13:15,27
4:18 Isa 61:1-2; Ps 146:7; Isa 42:16
4:19 Lev 25:8; Lev 25:50; Lev 25:9
4:20 Isa 42:7; Luke 4:17; John 8:2
4:21 Isa 42:7; Luke 10:23,24; Matt 13:14
4:22 Ps 45:2; Prov 10:32; Ps 141:6
4:23 Matt 4:13,23; Mark 6:1; Luke 6:42
4:24 Matt 13:57; Mark 6:4,5; Acts 22:3,18-22
4:25 1 Kgs 17:1; 1 Kgs 18:1; 2 Sam 24:13
4:26 1 Kgs 17:9; 1 Kgs 17:1; 1 Kgs 17:10
4:27 2 Kgs 5:1; 1 Kgs 19:19; 2 Kgs 5:14
4:28 Hos 14:9; Luke 6:11; Luke 11:53,54
4:29 2 Chr 25:12; John 8:37,40,59; John 15:24,25
4:30 John 10:39; John 8:59; John 18:6,7
4:31 Matt 4:13; Mark 1:21; Matt 10:23
4:32 Luke 4:36; Matt 7:28,29; Jer 23:28,29
4:33 Mark 1:23
4:34 Mark 1:24,34; Matt 8:29; James 2:19
4:35 Luke 4:39,41; Matt 8:26; Ps 50:16

4:16 *according to His custom He entered on the day of the Sabbath into the synagogue* The Son of God made a habit of gathering with God's people to hear His word read, though the teachers knew far less than He did. If Jesus needed that habit, so do we. A reading came from the Law and from the Prophets, and a visiting teacher stood to read and sat to teach. Books were long scrolls, and Jesus chose the passage, what we call Isaiah 61.
4:18 *The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me* Messiah means Anointed One, and He had just been anointed at the Jordan. Good news to the poor, both the materially poor and those who know they have nothing to offer God; healing for shattered hearts; release for those bound by sin and Satan; sight for blind eyes, physical and spiritual; freedom for the crushed. The SLB includes "to heal the broken in heart," from the Received Text, though some older copies lack it.
4:19 *to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord* The Year of Jubilee, when debts were canceled, slaves freed, and land returned every fiftieth year (Lev 25:8-13). Jesus brings the great Jubilee. And He stopped mid-sentence, before "a day of vengeance of our God" (Isa 61:2). His first coming brought favor; the day of vengeance comes with His Second Coming (Rev 19:11-16). Between the comma and the next phrase lies this whole age of grace. Today is still the acceptable year. Today is the day to come to Him.
4:21 *Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your ears* He sat to teach, and every eye was fixed on Him. The heart of the sermon: I am the One Isaiah wrote about. The Messiah is not coming someday. He is standing in front of you.
4:22 *Is this not the son of Joseph?* At first they liked His words of grace. Then they could not get past the carpenter's son who grew up down the street. Many today think they already know who Jesus is and never really listen to what He says.
4:24 *no prophet is acceptable in his hometown* They had heard of miracles in Capernaum and wanted a show, not a Savior. Those who watched someone grow up often have the hardest time seeing God at work in him. His own brothers did not believe until after the resurrection (John 7:5; Acts 1:14).
4:26 *except to Zarephath of Sidon, to a woman, a widow* In Elijah's famine, among many widows in Israel, God sent His prophet to feed a Gentile widow (1 Kgs 17:8-16) in Sidon, the home region of wicked Jezebel.
4:27 *none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian* A Gentile commander of Israel's enemy, healed when he obeyed Elisha (2 Kgs 5:1-14). When Israel turned from God, God showed grace to Gentiles who believed. Nazareth thought it had a right to His miracles. God's grace is owed to no one. It goes to those who receive it in faith, Jew or Gentile.
4:28 *all in the synagogue were filled with rage* Minutes before they marveled at His words of grace. Now they were furious that despised Gentiles had received what they refused. Pride hates grace when grace goes to the wrong people.
4:29 *they led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city had been built, to throw Him down* Nazareth sits on a hill with drops nearby. They would kill Him on the Sabbath, straight from the synagogue, a picture of the end, when His own people would lead Him out of the city to die.
4:30 *having passed through the midst of them, was going away* Luke does not say how. No one could touch Him, because His time had not come (John 7:30). No one could take His life until He chose to lay it down (John 10:18).
4:32 *His word was with authority* Capernaum, a fishing town on the north shore below the hills of Nazareth, became His home base (Matt 4:13). Most teachers quoted other rabbis. Jesus did not need to. He spoke as the One who gave the Law.
4:33 *a man having a spirit of an unclean demon* Demons are fallen angels who followed Satan, called unclean because they are wicked and defile those they control. This man was at worship. Evil can be present even in religious places.
4:34 *I know You, who You are: the Holy One of God* The demon knew Jesus better than Nazareth did, and knew He came to destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8). But knowing who Jesus is saves no one. The demons believe and shudder (James 2:19).
4:35 *having hurt him in nothing* Jesus would not let the enemy announce Him. No rituals or special words, only a command the demon had to obey. Luke the doctor notes the man was unhurt; the demon's last show of power could not harm him. Authority is the right to command and power the ability to carry it out, and Jesus has both.

him in nothing. **36** And astonishment came upon all, and they were speaking to one another, saying, "What ***is*** this word, that with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits, and they come out?" **37** And a report concerning Him was going out into every place of the surrounding region.

Many Healed at Capernaum

38 Then, having risen up from the synagogue, He entered into the house of Simon. And the mother-in-law of Simon was gripped with a great fever, and they asked Him concerning her. **39** And standing over her, He rebuked the fever, and it left her; and immediately, having arisen, she was serving them. **40** Now when the sun was setting, all who had ***any*** ailing with various diseases brought them to Him; and He, laying His hands on each one of them, healed them. **41** And demons also were coming out from many, crying out and saying, "You are the Christ, the Son of God!" And rebuking ***them***, He was not allowing them to speak, because they knew Him to be the Christ. **42** Now when day came, having gone out, He went into a deserted place; and the crowds were seeking Him, and they came up to Him and were holding Him back, so that He would not go away from them. **43** But He said to them, "To the other cities also I must announce the kingdom of God as good news, because for this I have been sent." **44** And He was preaching in the synagogues of Galilee.

LUKE 5

The Catch of Fish and the First Disciples

1 Now it came to pass, while the crowd was pressing upon Him to hear the word of God, and He Himself was standing by the lake of Gennesaret, **2** and He saw two boats standing by the lake; but the fishermen, having gone out from them, washed the nets. **3** Then, having gotten into one of the boats, which was Simon's, He asked him to put out a little from the land. And having sat down, He was teaching the crowds from the boat. **4** And when He had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, "Put out into the deep, and let down your nets for a catch." **5** And answering, Simon said to Him, "Master, having toiled through the whole night, we took nothing; but at Your declaration I will let down the net." **6** And having done this, they enclosed a great multitude of fish, and their net was breaking. **7** And they signaled to the partners in the other boat to come ***and*** help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they were sinking. **8** Now Simon Peter (Petros), having seen ***it***, fell at the knees of Jesus (Iesous), saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, Lord." **9** For astonishment seized him and all those with him at the catch of the fish which they had taken; **10** and likewise also James (Iakobos) and John (Ioannes), sons of Zebedee (Zebedaios), who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not fear; from now on you will be catching men." **11** And having brought the boats to land, having left all, they followed Him.

4:36 Luke 4:32; Matt 9:33; Matt 12:22,23
4:37 Luke 4:14; Matt 9:26; Isa 52:13
4:38 Matt 8:14,15; Mark 1:29-31; 1 Cor 9:5
4:39 Luke 4:35; Luke 8:24; Luke 8:2,3
4:40 Matt 8:16,17; Mark 1:32-34; Luke 7:21-23
4:41 Mark 3:11; Acts 16:17,18; Luke 4:34,35
4:42 Luke 6:12; Mark 1:35; John 4:34
4:43 Mark 1:14,15,38,39; John 9:4; Acts 10:38
4:44 Isa 9:1; Matt 4:23; Mark 1:39
5:1 Matt 4:18-22; Mark 1:16-20; Num 34:11
5:2 Mark 1:19; Matt 4:21
5:3 Matt 4:18; John 1:41,42; Matt 13:1,2
5:4 John 21:6; Matt 17:27
5:5 John 2:5; John 15:14; Ezek 37:11,12
5:6 1 Cor 15:58; 2 Kgs 4:3-7; Eccl 11:6
5:7 Gal 6:2; Phil 4:3; Exod 23:5
5:8 Isa 6:5; Job 42:5; Job 42:6
5:9 Luke 4:32,36; Ps 8:6,8; Mark 9:6
5:10 Matt 4:19; Matt 13:47; Mark 1:17
5:11 Matt 4:20; Matt 19:27; Luke 18:28-30

4:38 *the mother-in-law of Simon was gripped with a great fever* Simon Peter, named before his call in chapter 5. Peter was married. Luke the doctor notes it was a great fever, a high one.
4:39 *He rebuked the fever, and it left her* He spoke to the fever as to the demon; sickness and demons both bow to His word. No recovery time: she got up and served. He lifts us up, and we serve.
4:40 *He, laying His hands on each one of them, healed them* The Jewish day ran sunset to sunset, and Sabbath rules kept people from carrying the sick until sundown. Then they came in crowds. Each one: Jesus did not wave over the crowd but touched every person. He never treats people as a crowd. And He would not let demons announce who He was.
4:43 *To the other cities also I must announce the kingdom of God as good news* Nazareth tried to throw Him out; Capernaum tried to hold Him in. He had slipped away to pray (Mark 1:35). The kingdom of God is God's rule through His King. Healing showed His power and compassion, but the message mattered most. Must again: He knew why He was sent and would not be pulled away, even by good things.
4:44 *He was preaching in the synagogues of Galilee* Some Greek copies read Judea, perhaps meaning the whole land of the Jews; the SLB reads Galilee, which fits the context. Either way He kept moving, town after town, preaching the kingdom.
5:3 *having gotten into one of the boats, which was Simon's* By the lake of Gennesaret, the Sea of Galilee, the fishermen had fished all night and were cleaning their nets. The water carried His voice to the crowd. Peter had met Jesus before (John 1:40-42) and seen his mother-in-law healed (4:38-39). Jesus often starts small. He asks for what we have and uses it.
5:4 *Put out into the deep, and let down your nets for a catch* Fishermen on this lake worked at night in shallow water when fish came up to feed, not in deep water at midday. Jesus was a carpenter; Peter was the expert.
5:5 *at Your declaration I will let down the net* Master means one in charge, an overseer. Peter was tired and knew there were no fish, but he obeyed. That is faith: obeying Jesus even against our experience and feelings. Many of us have toiled all night and caught nothing. Will we let down the net again because He said so?
5:7 *they came and filled both the boats, so that they were sinking* More than the nets could hold. When Jesus blesses, He often gives more than we can hold.
5:8 *Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, Lord* Not a shout of joy over the money. Seeing who Jesus was showed Peter who he was, and Master became Lord. Isaiah cried woe (Isa 6:5); Job repented in dust and ashes (Job 42:5-6). The closer we come to the holiness of Jesus, the more clearly we see our sin. That is the beginning of grace.
5:10 *from now on you will be catching men* James and John were Simon's partners, and these three would be Jesus' closest friends. Peter asked Jesus to go; Jesus gave him a new job instead. The word means to catch alive. Fishermen catch fish to kill them; Peter would catch men to give them life. When we confess our sin, Jesus does not push us away. He forgives and gives us a purpose.
5:11 *having left all, they followed Him* Boats, nets and the biggest catch of their lives, left on the shore. Not because Jesus needed them, but because they had found something worth far more. Jesus does not call every believer to leave his job, but He calls every believer to put Him first.

A Leper Cleansed

12 And it came to pass, while He was in one of the cities, and look, a man full of leprosy; and having seen Jesus, having fallen on ***his*** face, he begged Him, saying, "Lord, if You are willing, You are able to cleanse me." **13** And having stretched out His hand, He touched him, saying, "I am willing; be cleansed." And immediately the leprosy departed from him. **14** And He Himself ordered him to tell no one, "But having gone, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing just as Moses commanded, for a testimony to them." **15** But the word concerning Him was spreading still more; and great crowds were coming together to hear and to be healed by Him from their sicknesses. **16** But He Himself was withdrawing in the deserts and praying.

A Paralyzed Man Forgiven and Healed

17 And it came to pass on one of the days, and He Himself was teaching; and there were sitting ***there*** Pharisees and teachers of the law who had come out of every village of Galilee (Galilaia) and Judea (Ioudaia) and Jerusalem (Hierousalem); and ***the*** power of ***the*** Lord was ***present*** for healing them. **18** And look, men carrying on a bed a man who was paralyzed, and they were seeking to bring him in and to place ***him*** before Him. **19** And not having found by what ***way*** they might bring him in because of the crowd, having gone up on the housetop, they let him down through the tiles with the cot into the midst before Jesus. **20** And having seen their faith, He said to him, "Man, your sins have been forgiven you." **21** And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, "Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who is able to forgive sins except God alone?" **22** But Jesus, having recognized their reasonings, answering, said to them, "Why are you reasoning in your hearts? **23** Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins have been forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise and walk'? **24** But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on the earth to forgive sins" (He said to the paralyzed ***man***), "I say to you, arise, and having taken up your cot, go to your house." **25** And immediately, having stood up before them, having taken up ***that*** on which he was lying, he departed to his house, glorifying God. **26** And amazement seized all, and they were glorifying God, and they were filled with fear, saying, "We have seen remarkable things today."

The Call of Levi

27 And after these things He went out and saw a tax collector named Levi (Leui) sitting at the tax booth, and He said to him, "Follow Me." **28** And having left all, having arisen, he followed Him. **29** And Levi made a great banquet for Him in his house; and there was a great crowd of tax collectors and

5:12 Matt 8:2-4; Luke 17:12; Luke 17:16
5:13 Gen 1:3,9; Ps 33:9; 2 Kgs 5:10,14
5:14 Matt 8:4; Matt 9:30; Matt 12:16
5:15 Matt 9:26; Mark 1:28,45; Matt 15:30,31
5:16 Matt 14:23; Luke 6:12; Mark 1:35,36
5:17 Luke 6:19; Luke 8:46; Matt 15:1
5:18 Matt 9:2-8; Mark 2:3-12; John 5:5,6
5:19 Mark 2:4; Deut 22:8; Matt 10:27
5:20 Luke 7:48; Acts 14:9; Matt 9:2
5:21 Isa 43:25; Luke 7:49; Mark 2:6,7
5:22 Jer 13:22; Ps 139:2; Isa 66:18
5:23 Matt 9:5; Mark 2:9
5:24 Dan 7:13; Isa 53:11; Matt 16:13
5:25 Luke 5:13; Gen 1:3; Ps 33:9
5:26 Matt 9:8; Luke 7:16; Matt 12:23
5:27 Mark 2:13,14; Matt 9:9-13; Matt 10:3
5:28 Luke 5:11; Luke 9:59-62; 1 Kgs 19:19-21
5:29 John 12:2; Matt 9:10; Mark 2:15

5:12 *a man full of leprosy* Luke the doctor notes the disease was advanced. Leprosy covered serious skin diseases; a leper tore his clothes, cried "Unclean!" and lived alone (Lev 13:45-46), cut off from worship and family, and many thought it God's punishment. He did not doubt Jesus' power, only whether He would want to help someone like him. Many still wonder that.

5:13 *He touched him, saying, "I am willing; be cleansed."* He could have healed with a word. This man may not have felt a human touch in years. Touching a leper made one unclean, but Jesus did not become unclean; the leper became clean. That is His answer to all who wonder if He is willing. When Jesus heals, He needs no time.

5:14 *show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing just as Moses commanded* He did not want to be known only as a miracle worker; the man did not obey, and the crowds grew (Mark 1:45). Leviticus 14 gave the steps: examination, declaration and sacrifices. Jesus kept the Law and sent the man as living proof that God was at work.

5:16 *He Himself was withdrawing in the deserts and praying* The more the crowds pressed in, the more He pulled away to pray, and the Greek shows it was His habit. He did not let a busy schedule crowd out the Father. The busier we get, the more we need to pray, not less.

5:17 *Pharisees and teachers of the law* Luke's first mention of the Pharisees, strict keepers of the Law and of many rules added by their teachers; many were sincere, and many became proud and judged others. Teachers of the law, or scribes, copied and explained the Law. They came from everywhere, even Jerusalem, to check out the new teacher, and God's power to heal was at work in that room.

5:19 *they let him down through the tiles with the cot into the midst before Jesus* Roofs were flat with outside stairs, and this one may have been tiled. They tore it open to get their friend to Jesus. Do we care enough to bring friends to Jesus even when it is hard? Some will never come unless someone carries them.

5:20 *Man, your sins have been forgiven you* Jesus saw the faith of the friends, and likely the man's, shown in action. The man came to be healed, and Jesus went to the deeper need. This does not mean a certain sin caused the illness. A paralyzed body is terrible, but a soul without forgiveness is worse.

5:21 *Who is able to forgive sins except God alone?* Blasphemy is speaking against God or claiming what belongs only to Him. They were right: only God forgives sins (Isa 43:25). If you wrong me, I can forgive what you did to me, but sin is ultimately against God. Either Jesus was a blasphemer or He was God. There is no middle ground.

5:23 *Which is easier* They said nothing aloud, and He knew their thoughts. Saying sins are forgiven is easy to say because no one can see it. Saying get up and walk will be tested at once. Doing either takes the power of God.

5:24 *the Son of Man has authority on the earth to forgive sins* The first time in Luke Jesus calls Himself the Son of Man, His favorite title, from Daniel 7:13-14, where one like a son of man receives an everlasting kingdom. It speaks of His true humanity and His heavenly glory and authority. He did the harder, visible thing to prove the invisible one. The healing proved the forgiveness was real.

5:26 *We have seen remarkable things today* He walked out carrying the mat that carried him, praising God. Remarkable is paradoxa, things against all expectation.

5:27 *a tax collector named Levi sitting at the tax booth* Levi is Matthew, who wrote the first Gospel (Matt 9:9; Mark 2:14). Tax collectors worked for Rome, often cheated their own people, and were treated as traitors. Capernaum lay on a trade road, so Levi likely collected tolls on passing goods. With two words Jesus called the most hated man in town.

5:28 *having left all, having arisen, he followed Him* Fishermen could go back to fishing; once Levi left his booth, someone else would take it. He gave up much money and gained far more. His careful records may be one reason his Gospel is so ordered. God uses who we were, once we follow Him.

5:29 *Levi made a great banquet for Him in his house* His first act was a party so his friends could meet Jesus, people never welcome in a Pharisee's home. A good pattern for any new believer. Guests reclined on couches at a low table, leaning on one elbow.

others who were reclining with them. **30** And their scribes and the Pharisees were grumbling at His disciples, saying, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?" **31** And answering, Jesus said to them, "Those who are healthy have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. **32** I have not come to call righteous ***ones*** but sinners to repentance."

A Question About Fasting

33 And they said to Him, "Why do the disciples of John fast often and make petitions, likewise also those of the Pharisees, but Yours eat and drink?" **34** And He said to them, "Can you make the sons of the bridechamber fast while the bridegroom is with them? **35** But days will come, and when the bridegroom is taken away from them, then they will fast in those days." **36** And He was also speaking a parable to them: "No one puts a patch of a new garment on an old garment; otherwise, the new also tears ***it***, and the patch that ***is*** from the new does not match the old. **37** And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the new wine will burst the wineskins, and it will be spilled out, and the wineskins will be destroyed. **38** But new wine must be put into new wineskins, and both are preserved together. **39** And no one having drunk old ***wine*** immediately desires new; for he says, 'The old is better.'"

LUKE 6

Lord of the Sabbath

1 Now it came to pass on a second-first Sabbath ***that*** He was passing through the grainfields, and His disciples were plucking and eating the heads of grain, rubbing ***them*** with their hands. **2** And some of the Pharisees said to them, "Why are you doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbaths?" **3** And answering, Jesus (Iesous) said to them, "Have you not even read this, what David (Dabid) did when he was hungry, he and those who were with him, **4** how he entered into the house of God, and took the loaves of the presentation and ate, and gave also to those with him, which it is not lawful to eat except only for the priests?" **5** And He was saying to them, "The Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath."

A Withered Hand Restored

6 And it came to pass also on another Sabbath ***that*** He entered into the synagogue and was teaching; and a man was there, and his right hand was withered. **7** And the scribes and the Pharisees were watching Him closely, whether He would heal on the Sabbath, so that they might find an accusation against Him. **8** But He Himself knew their thoughts, and He said to the man who had the withered hand, "Rise and stand

5:30 Luke 5:17,21; Luke 7:29,30,34,39; Luke 15:1,2
5:31 Mark 2:17; Matt 9:12,13; Jer 8:22
5:32 Luke 15:7,10; Luke 24:47; Acts 3:19,26
5:33 Isa 58:3; Luke 18:12; Matt 9:14-17
5:34 John 3:29; Judg 14:10,11; Song 2:6,7
5:35 Luke 24:17-21; Dan 9:26; Zech 13:7
5:36 Matt 9:16,17; Mark 2:21,22; Lev 19:19
5:37 Josh 9:4,13; Ps 119:83
5:38 Heb 8:8-13; Ezek 36:26; 2 Cor 5:17
5:39 Jer 6:16; Mark 7:7-13; Rom 4:11,12
6:1 Deut 23:25; Lev 23:15; Lev 23:11
6:2 Deut 23:25; Matt 12:2; Luke 6:7-9
6:3 1 Sam 21:3; 1 Sam 21:4; 1 Sam 21:6
6:4 Lev 24:5; Lev 24:9; Lev 24:6
6:5 Jer 17:22; Mark 2:27; Mark 9:7
6:6 Matt 12:9-14; Mark 3:1-6; Matt 4:23
6:7 Mark 3:2; Luke 11:53,54; Luke 20:20
6:8 Luke 5:22; 1 Chr 28:9; 1 Chr 29:17

5:30 *Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?* Eating with someone meant accepting him as a friend. The Pharisees thought Jesus was dirtying Himself. They grumbled to the disciples, not to Jesus.
5:32 *I have not come to call righteous ones but sinners to repentance* Luke the doctor records the saying; a doctor does not avoid the sick. The Pharisees were not righteous; no one is (Rom 3:10). Those who think they are will never come, because they think they need nothing. Only the sick go to the doctor. And to repentance: He loved sinners too much to leave them as they were. He called them to turn and follow, as Levi did.
5:34 *the sons of the bridechamber* Fasting is going without food to seek God. The Law required one fast a year, but many Pharisees fasted twice a week (18:12). The sons of the bridechamber were the groom's closest friends, like groomsmen. A Jewish wedding lasted a week, and no one fasted there. John called Jesus the bridegroom (John 3:29). While He was with them, it was a time of joy.
5:35 *when the bridegroom is taken away from them* The first hint in Luke that He would be taken by force, speaking of His death. His followers did fast later (Acts 13:2-3; 14:23), and fasting is right for believers as we wait for the Bridegroom to return for His bride.
5:36 *No one puts a patch of a new garment on an old garment* A parable is a short story from everyday life teaching a spiritual truth. Cutting a new coat to patch an old one ruins the new and does not match the old. Jesus did not come to patch up the old religious system with a few improvements. He came to bring something new.
5:38 *new wine must be put into new wineskins* Fermenting wine expands. A new skin stretches; an old, dry one bursts. The new wine is the life of grace and forgiveness; the old skins were the Pharisees' rigid rules. It needs a new heart. God's Law was not bad, and Jesus came to fulfill it (Matt 5:17), but the man-made system could not hold the joy and freedom He brings.
5:39 *The old is better* Only Luke records this. People used to the old way do not want to change, even when the new comes from God. Many would rather keep the religion they know than receive new life. Do not let comfort with the old way keep you from what God is doing.
6:1 *on a second-first Sabbath* This unusual phrase is in the Received Greek Text that the SLB follows. Most older Greek copies simply say on a Sabbath. No one is sure what second-first means; some think it was the first Sabbath after the second day of Passover, others the first Sabbath of the second month or of a cycle. It does not change the meaning of the story.
6:2 *Why are you doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbaths* The problem was the day. The teachers had added many rules defining work on the Sabbath. To them picking grain was harvesting and rubbing it was threshing. The disciples were breaking the Pharisees' rules, not God's Law. Picking grain by hand from a neighbor's field was allowed (Deut 23:25).
6:4 *took the loaves of the presentation and ate* When David fled from Saul, the priest gave his hungry men the holy bread (1 Sam 21:1-6): twelve loaves set before the Lord each week, which only priests were allowed to eat (Lev 24:5-9). Human need came before a ceremonial rule, and God did not condemn David. How much more could the disciples of David's greater Son pick grain on the Sabbath? God's laws were given for our good, not to keep us hungry.
6:5 *The Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath* A bold claim. God gave the Sabbath, and to be Lord over it is to claim to be God. Jesus was not breaking the Sabbath; He had the right to say what it was for. The One who made the day of rest gives true rest (Matt 11:28; Heb 4:9-10).
6:7 *so that they might find an accusation against Him* The man's right hand, likely his working hand, was withered. They did not care about the man; they were using him as bait. Their rules allowed help on the Sabbath only if life was in danger, and a withered hand could wait. In a house of worship on a holy day they were looking for a reason to accuse the Son of God.
6:8 *He Himself knew their thoughts* They had said nothing, but Jesus knew. He called the man into the middle of the room where everyone could see. He was not afraid of the Pharisees, and He would not leave a hurting man in the corner.

in the midst." And having risen, he stood. **9** Then Jesus said to them, "I will ask you something: Is it lawful on the Sabbaths to do good or to do evil, to save a life or to destroy ***it***?" **10** And having looked around on them all, He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he did so, and his hand was restored sound as the other. **11** But they themselves were filled with rage, and were discussing with one another what they might do to Jesus.

The Twelve Chosen

12 And it came to pass in those days ***that*** He went out to the mountain to pray, and He was spending the whole night in prayer to God. **13** And when it became day, He called His disciples to ***Him***, and having chosen twelve from them, whom He also named apostles: **14** Simon, whom He also named Peter (Petros), and Andrew (Andreas) his brother, James (Iakobos) and John (Ioannes), Philip (Philippos) and Bartholomew (Bartholomaios), **15** Matthew (Matthaios) and Thomas, James the ***son*** of Alphaeus (Alphaios), and Simon, the one called Zealot, **16** Judas (Ioudas) of James, and Judas Iscariot (Iskariotes), who also became ***the*** betrayer.

Blessings and Woes

17 And having come down with them, He stood on a level place, and a crowd of His disciples and a great multitude of the people from all Judea (Ioudaia) and Jerusalem (Hierousalem) and the seacoast of Tyre (Tyros) and Sidon, who came to hear Him and to be healed of their diseases, **18** and those who were troubled by unclean spirits; and they were being healed. **19** And all the crowd was seeking to touch Him, because power was going out from Him and was healing all. **20** And He, having lifted up His eyes toward His disciples, was saying, "Blessed ***are*** the poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. **21** Blessed ***are*** those who hunger now, for you will be filled. Blessed ***are*** those who weep now, for you will laugh. **22** Blessed are you when men hate you, and when they exclude you and insult ***you*** and cast out your name as evil, on account of the Son of Man. **23** Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, for look, your reward ***is*** great in heaven; for according to these things their fathers were doing to the prophets. **24** But woe to you who are rich, for you have your comfort in full. **25** Woe to you who have been filled, for you will hunger. Woe to you who laugh now, for you will mourn and weep. **26** Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for according to these things their fathers were doing to the false prophets.

6:9 Luke 14:3; Matt 12:12,13; Mark 3:4
6:10 1 Kgs 13:6; Mark 3:5; Exod 4:6,7
6:11 Acts 5:33; Luke 4:28; Ps 2:1,2
6:12 Heb 5:7; Matt 14:23-25; Ps 55:15-17
6:13 1 Kgs 18:21; Mark 3:13-19; Mark 6:7
6:14 Acts 1:13; Matt 4:18; Matt 4:21
6:15 Matt 9:9; Mark 3:18; Acts 1:13
6:16 John 14:22; Matt 10:3; Mark 3:18
6:17 Matt 11:21; Matt 4:23-25; Matt 12:15
6:18 Matt 15:22; Matt 17:15; Acts 5:16
6:19 Matt 14:36; Matt 9:20,21; Mark 3:10
6:20 James 2:5; 2 Cor 6:10; James 1:9,10
6:21 Isa 65:14; Matt 5:6; Matt 5:4
6:22 Matt 10:22; Matt 5:10-12; John 16:2
6:23 2 Chr 36:16; 2 Sam 6:16; 1 Kgs 19:10
6:24 Matt 6:2,5,16; Ps 49:6,7,16-19; Luke 12:15-21
6:25 Eccl 3:4; Amos 6:1; Isa 65:13
6:26 Isa 30:10; 1 Kgs 22:13; 1 Kgs 22:24

6:9 *to save a life or to destroy it* Jesus turned the question on them. The real question was whether it was right to do good on God's day. Refusing to do good when you can is a kind of evil. And notice the irony: Jesus wanted to save a life on the Sabbath, while they were planning, on the Sabbath, how to destroy His.

6:10 *Stretch out your hand* The man could not do that, but when Jesus gives a command He gives the power to obey it. Jesus did not touch him or pray; He did nothing anyone could call work. He spoke, the man obeyed, and he was healed.

6:11 *they themselves were filled with rage* They had just seen a crippled hand made whole, and they were furious. Mark says they began to plot with the Herodians (Mark 3:6). When hearts are set against God, even miracles only make them angrier.

6:12 *He was spending the whole night in prayer to God* Jesus was about to choose the twelve men He would train and send out, and before He chose, He prayed all night. How often do we make big decisions without praying at all? If the Son of God needed to seek His Father, we need to far more.

6:13 *having chosen twelve from them, whom He also named apostles* A disciple is a student or follower; Jesus had many. An apostle is one who is sent, a messenger with the authority of the one who sent him. The number matches the twelve tribes, and the twelve will sit on thrones judging the tribes of Israel in His kingdom (22:30).

6:14 *Simon, whom He also named Peter* Peter means rock. Peter, Andrew, James and John were fishermen. Bartholomew is likely the man John calls Nathanael (John 1:45). These were ordinary men, not religious leaders, and none was perfect. God uses ordinary people.

6:15 *Simon, the one called Zealot* The Zealots wanted to overthrow Rome, by force if necessary. Matthew, the former tax collector, had worked for Rome; Simon had wanted to fight it. Jesus put them side by side. Only Jesus can bring people like that together. Judas of James is likely the Thaddaeus of Matthew and Mark.

6:16 *Judas Iscariot, who also became the betrayer* Even after a whole night of prayer, Jesus chose Judas. He knew what Judas would do (John 6:64, 70), and Scripture fulfilled its purpose through him.

6:17 *He stood on a level place* So this is often called the Sermon on the Plain. Matthew records the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5 to 7) with many of the same teachings. Teachers differ: a level place could be a flat area on a mountainside, so they may be one sermon, or Jesus taught the same truths on more than one occasion. Either way, the teaching is the same. The crowd came even from the Gentile cities of Tyre and Sidon.

6:20 *Blessed are the poor, for yours is the kingdom of God* Blessed means truly well off in God's eyes, not just cheerful. Matthew records "the poor in spirit" (Matt 5:3); both are true. Jesus spoke especially to disciples who had left everything. Being poor saves no one, but wealth often makes people feel they do not need God, and God has a special care for the poor who trust Him.

6:21 *Blessed are those who hunger now, for you will be filled* Notice the word now. Jesus compares this life with the life to come. His followers may hunger and weep now, but a day is coming when they will be filled and laugh, when God Himself will wipe away every tear (Rev 21:4).

6:22 *on account of the Son of Man* This is not a blessing for people disliked because they are rude. It is for those who suffer because they belong to Jesus. To exclude means to cut off, as a Jew could be put out of the synagogue for following Jesus (John 9:22).

6:23 *Rejoice in that day and leap for joy* How can anyone rejoice when insulted? Because they are in good company. God's people, like the prophets before them, have always been treated this way, and God has always rewarded them.

6:24 *you have your comfort in full* Woe is a cry of sorrow and warning, the opposite of blessed. It is not a sin to have money; Abraham and Job were rich. But those who live for this world have been paid in full, like a receipt. They have already received everything they will ever get. Those who laugh now without a thought of God will one day weep.

6:26 *Woe to you when all men speak well of you* If everyone likes you, it may be because you tell them only what they want to hear. Israel's false prophets were popular because they said all was well (Jer 6:14). We should not try to be disliked, but we must not please everyone at the cost of the truth.

Love Your Enemies

27 But I say to you who are hearing: love your enemies, do
good to those who hate you, **28** bless those who curse you,
and pray for those who mistreat you. **29** To the one who
strikes you on the cheek, offer also the other; and from the
one who takes away your cloak, do not withhold also the
tunic. **30** And give to everyone who asks you; and from the
one who takes away what ***is*** yours, do not ask ***it*** back. **31** And
just as you desire that men do to you, you also do to them
likewise. **32** And if you love those who love you, what credit
is ***there*** to you? For even the sinners love those who love
them. **33** And if you do good to those who do good to you,
what credit is ***there*** to you? For even the sinners do the same.
34 And if you lend ***to those*** from whom you expect to receive
back, what credit is ***there*** to you? For even the sinners lend
to sinners, so that they may receive back the same amount.
35 But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting
nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you
will be sons of the Most High, for He Himself is kind to the
ungrateful and evil. **36** Therefore be merciful, just as your
Father also is merciful.

Do Not Judge

37 Do not judge, and you will certainly not be judged; do not
condemn, and you will certainly not be condemned; release,
and you will be released. **38** Give, and it will be given to you;
good measure, pressed down and shaken together and run-
ning over, they will give into your lap. For with the same
measure with which you measure, it will be measured back
to you." **39** And He spoke a parable to them: "A blind ***man*** is
not able to lead a blind ***man***, is he? Will they not both fall
into a pit? **40** A disciple is not above his teacher, but every-
one who is fully trained will be like his teacher. **41** And why
do you look at the splinter that ***is*** in your brother's eye, but
the beam that ***is*** in your own eye you do not notice? **42** Or
how are you able to say to your brother, 'Brother, allow ***that*** I
cast out the splinter that ***is*** in your eye,' you yourself not
seeing the beam in your eye? Hypocrite, first cast out the
beam from your eye, and then you will see clearly to cast out
the splinter that ***is*** in your brother's eye.

A Tree and Its Fruit

43 For there is no good tree producing bad fruit, nor a bad
tree producing good fruit. **44** For each tree is known by ***its***
own fruit. For they do not gather figs from thorns, nor do
they harvest a grape cluster from a bramble bush. **45** The
good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth
what ***is*** good, and the evil man out of the evil treasure of his
heart brings forth what ***is*** evil; for out of the overflow of the
heart his mouth speaks.

6:27 Luke 6:35; 1 Thess 5:15; Rom 12:17-21
6:28 1 Kgs 13:6; 1 Pet 3:9; Luke 23:34
6:29 Lam 3:30; Isa 50:6; 2 Chr 18:23
6:30 Deut 15:7-10; Prov 21:26; Acts 20:35
6:31 Matt 7:12; Matt 22:39; Gal 5:14
6:32 Matt 5:46,47; 1 Pet 2:19,20
6:34 Matt 5:42; Luke 14:12-14; Deut 15:8-11
6:35 Matt 5:44,45; John 13:35; Ps 112:5
6:36 Matt 5:48; Eph 5:1,2; Eph 4:31
6:37 Rom 14:3,4,10-16; Mark 11:25,26; Col 3:13
6:38 2 Cor 9:6-8; Mark 4:24; Matt 7:2
6:39 Matt 15:14; 2 Tim 3:13; Isa 9:16
6:40 John 13:16; John 15:20; Matt 10:24,25
6:41 John 8:7,40-44; James 1:24; Matt 7:3-5
6:42 Luke 13:15; Matt 23:13-15; Acts 8:21
6:43 Jer 2:21; Isa 61:3; Matt 3:10
6:44 James 3:12; Gal 5:19-23; Titus 2:11-13
6:45 Eph 4:29; Matt 12:34-37; John 7:38

6:27 *love your enemies, do good to those who hate you* One of the hardest teachings in the Bible. This love (agape) chooses to seek another's good whether he deserves it or not. It is practical: doing good, speaking blessing, praying. That is how God loved us; while we were enemies we were reconciled to Him (Rom 5:10). This does not mean letting people go on hurting us or others. It means refusing to hate and leaving judgment to God (Rom 12:17-21).

6:29 *offer also the other* A slap on the cheek was more insult than attack. Do not strike back or take revenge. Jesus is not teaching that we never protect the weak or that governments never punish crime (Rom 13:1-4). The cloak was the outer coat and the tunic the shirt beneath it; do not cling to things so tightly that you fight over them. People matter more than possessions.

6:30 *give to everyone who asks you* Jesus calls us to be open-handed. This does not mean funding a drunk's next bottle; if a man will not work, he should not eat (2 Thess 3:10). Giving wisely is still giving, but our first instinct should be generosity, not suspicion. Our things belong to God anyway.

6:31 *just as you desire that men do to you, you also do to them likewise* The Golden Rule. Many before Jesus taught the negative form: do not do to others what you would not want done to you. Jesus put it in positive form. It is not enough to avoid hurting people; we must actively do for them the good we would want.

6:35 *you will be sons of the Most High, for He Himself is kind to the ungrateful and evil* Anyone can love his friends; even sinners do that. Sons show the family likeness. God sends sun and rain on everyone (Matt 5:45); every breath an unbeliever takes is a gift of His kindness. This is not how we become God's children, which is by faith in Christ (John 1:12). It is how His children show they belong to Him.

6:37 *Do not judge, and you will certainly not be judged* Many quote this to say no one may call anything sin. In this same sermon Jesus tells us to recognize bad fruit (6:43-45), and Scripture calls us to judge between right and wrong (John 7:24; 1 Cor 5:12). He warns against a harsh, condemning spirit like the Pharisees'. We are no one's final judge (James 4:12). To release is to forgive, to let go of a debt (Matt 6:14-15).

6:38 *good measure, pressed down and shaken together and running over, they will give into your lap* A generous grain seller fills the measure, presses it, shakes it to settle, and fills it until it spills over. The fold of a long robe at the waist served as a pocket. This is a principle, not a promise that giving money will make you rich. God repays mercy, forgiveness and generosity in His way and time, in this life or the next.

6:39 *A blind man is not able to lead a blind man, is he* A spiritually blind teacher cannot lead others to the truth; Jesus later called the Pharisees blind guides (Matt 15:14). Be careful whom you follow, and careful about leading when you cannot see clearly yourself.

6:40 *everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher* A student becomes like the one who teaches him. Follow a blind teacher and you end up blind. Follow Jesus and you become like Him, the goal of the Christian life (Rom 8:29).

6:42 *Hypocrite, first cast out the beam from your eye* Picture a man with a beam in his eye squinting at a speck in his brother's. A hypocrite was a masked actor on a stage. Jesus does not say never help your brother with his speck. Deal with your own sin first; then you will see clearly to help him with humility (Gal 6:1).

6:45 *for out of the overflow of the heart his mouth speaks* A tree is known by its fruit, and over time a life shows what a person is. The heart is the inner person, where we think, feel and choose, and what is stored there comes out. Listen to what you talk about and you will know what you love. To change what comes out of your mouth, let God change your heart.

The Two Builders

46 And why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I
say? **47** Everyone who comes to Me and hears My words and
does them, I will show you whom he is like: **48** he is like a
man building a house, who dug and went deep and laid a
foundation on the rock; and when a flood came, the river
burst against that house and was not able to shake it, for it
had been founded on the rock. **49** But the one who heard and
did not do is like a man who built a house on the ground
without a foundation, against which the river burst, and
immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great."

LUKE 7

The Faith of a Centurion

1 Now when He had completed all His declarations in the
hearing of the people, He entered into Capernaum
(Kapernaoum). **2** And a certain centurion's slave, being sick,
was about to die, who was highly valued by him. **3** And
having heard about Jesus (Iesous), he sent to Him elders of
the Jews, asking Him that, having come, He would save his
slave. **4** And having come to Jesus, they were begging Him
earnestly, saying, "He is worthy for whom He will grant this,
5 for he loves our nation, and he himself built the synagogue
for us." **6** And Jesus was going with them. And when He was
already not far distant from the house, the centurion sent
friends to Him, saying to Him, "Lord, do not be troubled, for I
am not worthy that You should come in under my roof.
7 Therefore neither did I count myself worthy to come to
You; but say ***it*** with a word, and my servant will be healed.
8 For I also am a man placed under authority, having soldiers
under myself; and I say to this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to
another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my slave, 'Do this,'
and he does ***it***." **9** And having heard these things, Jesus mar-
veled at him, and having turned to the crowd that was fol-
lowing Him, He said, "I say to you, not even in Israel did I
find such great faith." **10** And those who had been sent,
having returned to the house, found the ailing slave in good
health.

A Widow's Son Raised at Nain

11 And it came to pass on the next ***day that*** He was going into
a city called Nain, and many of His disciples were going with
Him, and a great crowd. **12** And as He drew near to the gate
of the city, then look, one who had died was being carried
out, an only son of his mother, and she was a widow; and a
considerable crowd of the city was with her. **13** And having
seen her, the Lord felt compassion for her and said to her,
"Do not weep." **14** And having come up, He touched the bier,

6:46 Mal 1:6; Matt 7:21-23; Luke 13:25-27
6:47 Isa 55:3; James 1:22-25; Matt 7:24,25
6:48 Ps 62:2; Deut 32:15; Deut 32:18
6:49 Prov 28:18; Luke 6:46; Luke 8:5-7
7:1 Matt 8:5-13; Matt 7:28,29
7:2 Luke 23:47; Matt 27:54; Acts 10:1
7:3 Matt 8:5; Luke 8:41; Luke 9:38
7:4 Rev 3:4; Luke 7:6,7; Luke 20:35
7:5 1 Kgs 5:1; 2 Chr 2:11,12; Gal 5:6
7:6 Luke 8:49; Matt 20:28; Mark 5:24
7:7 Ps 107:20; Luke 4:36; Luke 5:13
7:8 Acts 22:25,26; Acts 23:17,23,26; Acts 24:23
7:9 Matt 8:10; Matt 15:28; Ps 147:19,20
7:10 Matt 8:13; Matt 15:28; Mark 9:23
7:11 Acts 10:38
7:12 1 Kgs 17:12; 2 Kgs 4:20; Judg 11:34
7:13 Judg 10:16; Jer 31:20; Heb 4:15
7:14 1 Kgs 17:21; 2 Kgs 4:35; Luke 8:54,55

6:46 *why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say* A master is someone you obey. To call Jesus Lord and ignore what He says makes no sense. Many say the right words about Jesus; the question is whether we do what He says.
6:48 *dug and went deep and laid a foundation on the rock* Three steps: come, hear, do. Digging to bedrock is slow, hard work, and a builder in Israel might be tempted by a dry, flat riverbed. When the flood came, the house on the rock stood. When life's storms come, and they will, the life built on obedience to Jesus will stand.
6:49 *the one who heard and did not do* Both men heard. The difference was what they did, and the houses may have looked alike until the storm. The storm is the trials of life and also the final judgment. Knowing the right answers is not enough; a faith that never obeys is no real faith (James 2:17). The only safe foundation is Jesus and His word (1 Cor 3:11).
7:1 *He entered into Capernaum* The sermon had just ended with a call to hear Jesus' words and do them. Now Luke shows a man who took Jesus at His word.
7:2 *a certain centurion's slave* A centurion was a Roman officer over about a hundred soldiers, a Gentile and part of the force that kept the Jews under Rome. "Highly valued" can mean precious or dear. Many masters saw slaves as property; this man cared about his slave as a person.
7:3 *he sent to Him elders of the Jews* The respected older men who led the town. Perhaps he knew a Jewish teacher might not want to deal directly with a Gentile. Matthew tells it briefly as if he came himself (Matt 8:5-13). It was normal to say a man did what he did through his messengers, as we say a president signed a treaty his ambassador signed. Luke gives the fuller picture.
7:5 *he himself built the synagogue for us* Unusual words from Jewish elders about a Roman soldier. He was likely a God-fearer, a Gentile who worshiped Israel's God without becoming a Jew. The elders said, "He is worthy." Watch what he says about himself.
7:6 *I am not worthy that You should come in under my roof* The elders said he was worthy; he said he was not. A Jew who entered a Gentile's house was counted unclean by the rules of that day, and he may not have wanted to put Jesus in that position. More than that, he knew who Jesus was and who he was before Him. That is humility.
7:7 *say it with a word, and my servant will be healed* He believed Jesus did not need to be there. A word from Him was enough.
7:8 *I also am a man placed under authority* He took orders from above and gave orders below, and he did not need to be present to see them carried out. He saw that Jesus had that kind of authority over sickness. Great faith is not a feeling; it is trusting that Jesus' word has power.
7:9 *Jesus marveled at him* Here Jesus marvels at a Gentile's faith; in Mark 6:6 He marvels at His hometown's unbelief. Israel had the Law, the prophets and the promises, yet a Roman soldier understood Jesus better than most. All through Luke the good news is for Gentiles too, and sometimes they receive it more readily than those who grew up with it.
7:10 *found the ailing slave in good health* Jesus did not go in or touch the man. His authority does not depend on distance. He can work in our lives today, by the same word, from heaven.
7:11 *a city called Nain* A small town about six miles southeast of Nazareth, named only here in the Bible.
7:12 *an only son of his mother, and she was a widow* Two crowds met at the gate: one following the Lord of life, the other following a dead body. The dead were buried the same day, outside the town. She had lost her husband and now her only son. A widow with no son had no one to support or protect her. She lost her family, her future and her living at once.
7:13 *the Lord felt compassion for her* Luke calls Jesus "the Lord" here in the story itself. Compassion is a love felt deep inside that hurts with someone. No one asked Him, and no one showed faith; He saw her pain and was moved. From anyone else, "Do not weep" would be cruel. From Jesus it was a promise.
7:14 *He touched the bier* An open frame for carrying the wrapped body. Touching anything connected with the dead made a Jew unclean (Num 19:11), but Jesus' touch did not make Him unclean; it made the dead alive. Unlike Elijah and Elisha (1 Kgs 17:20-22; 2 Kgs 4:33-35), He did not pray first. He spoke on His own authority to a dead man as if he could hear, because to Jesus he could.

and those carrying ***it*** stood still. And He said, "Young man, I say to you, arise." **15** And the dead ***man*** sat up and began to speak, and He gave him to his mother. **16** And fear seized all, and they were glorifying God, saying, "A great prophet has been raised up among us!" and, "God has visited His people!" **17** And this word concerning Him went out in all Judea (Ioudaia) and in all the surrounding region.

Messengers from John the Baptist

18 And the disciples of John (Ioannes) reported to him concerning all these things. **19** And having called to ***him*** a certain two of his disciples, John sent ***them*** to Jesus, saying, "Are You the ***One*** who is coming, or are we to look for another?" **20** And having come to Him, the men said, "John the Baptist has sent us to You, saying, 'Are You the ***One*** who is coming, or are we to look for another?'" **21** And in that same hour He healed many of diseases and afflictions and evil spirits, and to many ***who were*** blind He granted sight. **22** And answering, Jesus said to them, "Having gone, report to John what you have seen and heard: that ***the*** blind receive sight, ***the*** lame walk, lepers are cleansed, ***the*** deaf hear, ***the*** dead are raised, ***the*** poor have the gospel preached ***to them***. **23** And blessed is whoever is not caused to stumble in Me."

Jesus Speaks of John

24 And when the messengers of John had departed, He began to speak to the crowds concerning John: "What have you gone out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by ***the*** wind? **25** But what have you gone out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Look, those who are in splendid clothing and living in luxury are in the royal palaces. **26** But what have you gone out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet. **27** This is he concerning whom it has been written: 'Look, I send My messenger before Your face, who will prepare Your way before You.' **28** For I say to you, among those born of women there is no greater prophet than John the Baptist; but the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he." **29** And all the people, having heard, and the tax collectors, justified God, having been baptized ***with*** the baptism of John. **30** But the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected the counsel of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him. **31** And the Lord said, "To what then shall I liken the men of this generation, and to what are they like? **32** They are like little children who sit in a marketplace and call to one another and say, 'We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge for you, and you did not weep.' **33** For John the Baptist has come neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, 'He has a demon.' **34** The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look, a man, a glutton and a wine drinker, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' **35** And wisdom was justified by all her children."

7:15 1 Kgs 17:23; 2 Kgs 4:32-37; 2 Kgs 13:21
7:16 Matt 9:8; Luke 7:39; Luke 1:68
7:17 Luke 7:14; Matt 4:24; Matt 9:31
7:18 Matt 11:2-6; John 3:26
7:19 Mic 5:2; Luke 10:1; John 4:25
7:21 Mark 3:10; 1 Kgs 8:37; Ps 90:7-9
7:22 Isa 35:5-6; Isa 29:18; Luke 4:18
7:23 Isa 35:5; Isa 8:14,15; Luke 2:34
7:24 Luke 1:80; Luke 3:2; Eph 4:14
7:25 2 Kgs 1:8; Isa 59:17; Matt 3:4
7:26 Mal 3:1; Luke 1:76; Luke 20:6
7:27 Mal 3:1; Mal 4:5; Mal 4:6
7:28 Matt 11:11; Luke 1:14,15; Luke 3:16
7:29 Luke 3:12; Luke 7:35; Judg 1:7
7:30 Ps 107:11; Luke 13:34; Jer 8:8
7:31 Matt 11:16-19; Lam 2:13; Mark 4:30
7:32 Matt 11:16-19; Prov 17:16; Isa 28:9-13
7:33 Luke 1:15; Mark 1:6; Jer 16:8-10
7:34 Luke 15:2; Luke 7:36; Luke 5:29
7:35 Luke 7:29; Prov 8:32-36; Prov 17:16

7:15 *He gave him to his mother* The man sat up and talked. These are the words used of Elijah giving back the widow's son (1 Kgs 17:23). Jesus did it for her, not for show. With Jairus' daughter (8:49-56) and Lazarus (John 11), it previews the day He will raise the dead, and every believer to a body that never dies (John 5:28-29; 1 Cor 15:51-52).
7:16 *God has visited His people* They were more right than they knew. Elijah raised a widow's son at Zarephath, and Elisha a mother's only son at Shunem, just across the valley from Nain (2 Kgs 4:8-37). Jesus was more than a prophet. In Him God Himself had come, as Zechariah sang (1:68).
7:19 *Are You the One who is coming, or are we to look for another* The One who is coming meant the Messiah. John was in prison (3:20). He had baptized Jesus and heard the Father's voice, but he had preached an ax at the root and fire for the chaff (3:9, 17), and Jesus was healing and eating with sinners while John sat in Herod's prison. Even great men of faith can doubt when they suffer. John took his doubt to Jesus.
7:21 *in that same hour He healed many* Jesus did not answer at once with words. He let John's messengers watch Him work.
7:22 *the blind receive sight, the lame walk* Every item comes from Isaiah's promises of the Messiah and His kingdom (Isa 35:5-6; 61:1). John knew his Bible and would understand. The judgment he preached is still coming; Jesus stopped reading Isaiah 61 before the day of vengeance (4:19). It will come when Jesus returns. First He came with mercy.
7:23 *blessed is whoever is not caused to stumble in Me* To stumble is to be offended, to trip over Jesus and fall away because He did not do what we expected. Jesus gently tells John, and us, to trust Him even when we do not understand His timing.
7:24 *A reed shaken by the wind* Jesus praised John so no one would think less of him for his question. Reeds along the Jordan bent with every breeze; John stood firm against kings. He wore camel's hair and did not live for comfort. Now he was in one of Herod's strongholds, but in its prison.
7:26 *and more than a prophet* John was himself the subject of prophecy. Jesus quotes Malachi 3:1: John was the messenger going before the Lord. Other prophets spoke of the Messiah from far away; John saw Him and pointed to Him.
7:28 *the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he* John was the last and greatest of the Old Testament prophets, and he will be in the kingdom. Jesus speaks of privilege and position. John died before the cross, the resurrection and Pentecost. The humblest believer after the cross knows more of God's plan and enjoys the full blessings of the new covenant. That should make us grateful and want to live up to what we have.
7:29 *justified God* Declared that God was right. The ordinary people and tax collectors had repented and been baptized, agreeing with God's verdict on their sin.
7:30 *rejected the counsel of God for themselves* Lawyers were experts in the Law of Moses, the same as scribes. God had a plan for them, but they would not admit they needed to repent. Notice "for themselves": when we reject God's counsel, we only hurt ourselves.
7:32 *like little children who sit in a marketplace* Picture children in the town square. One group plays wedding, and the others will not dance; they play funeral, and the others will not mourn. Nothing pleases them.
7:34 *a friend of tax collectors and sinners* Strict John, they said, had a demon; Jesus, who went to dinners, they called a glutton, one who overeats, and a wine drinker. Neither charge was true. But one part of the insult was true and is the best news in the world. People who do not want God's message always find an excuse to reject the messenger. The problem is the heart.
7:35 *wisdom was justified by all her children* God's wisdom is proven right by those who receive it. The changed lives of the tax collectors and sinners who believed are the proof. You can tell wisdom by what it produces.

A Sinful Woman Forgiven

36 And one of the Pharisees was asking Him that He would eat with him; and having entered into the house of the Pharisee, He reclined ***at the table***. **37** And look, a woman who was a sinner in the city, having learned that He was reclining ***at the table*** in the house of the Pharisee, having brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, **38** and having stood behind ***Him*** at His feet, weeping, she began to wet His feet with her tears, and she was wiping ***them*** with the hairs of her head, and was kissing His feet and anointing ***them*** with the fragrant oil. **39** And having seen ***this***, the Pharisee who had invited Him spoke within himself, saying, "This ***man***, if He were a prophet, would know who and what sort of woman ***this is*** who is touching Him, that she is a sinner." **40** And answering, Jesus said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." And he says, "Teacher, say ***it***." **41** "There were two debtors to a certain creditor: the one was owing five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. **42** And when they had nothing to pay, he graciously forgave both. Which of them therefore, tell ***Me***, will love him more?" **43** And answering, Simon said, "I suppose that ***it is he*** to whom he graciously forgave the more." And He said to him, "You have judged rightly." **44** And having turned to the woman, He said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered into your house; you did not give water for My feet; but she wet My feet with her tears and wiped ***them*** with the hairs of her head. **45** You did not give Me a kiss; but she, from ***the time*** I came in, has not ceased kissing My feet. **46** You did not anoint My head with oil; but she anointed My feet with fragrant oil. **47** For this reason I say to you, her sins, which are many, have been forgiven, for she loved much; but he to whom little is forgiven loves little." **48** And He said to her, "Your sins have been forgiven." **49** And those reclining ***at the table*** with ***Him*** began to say within themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?" **50** And He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

LUKE 8

Women Who Served Him

1 And it came to pass soon afterward ***that*** He Himself was traveling throughout every city and village, proclaiming and preaching the gospel ***of*** the kingdom of God; and the twelve ***were*** with Him, **2** and certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary (Maria), the one called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, **3** and Joanna (Ioanna), wife of Chuza (Chouzas), a steward of Herod (Herodes), and Susanna (Sousanna), and many others, who were ministering to Him from their possessions.

7:36 Mark 14:3-9; Luke 11:37; Luke 14:1
7:37 1 Tim 1:9,15; 1 Pet 4:18; Luke 7:34,39
7:38 Zech 12:10; Ps 6:6-8; Ps 126:5,6
7:39 Luke 7:16; Mark 7:21; Luke 15:2,28-30
7:40 Luke 5:22,31; Luke 6:8; John 16:19,30
7:41 Matt 18:28; Luke 11:4; Luke 13:4
7:42 Ps 51:1; Isa 44:22; Jer 31:33
7:43 Luke 7:47; 1 Cor 15:9,10; 2 Cor 5:14,15
7:44 1 Tim 5:10; Gen 19:2; Judg 19:21
7:45 2 Sam 15:5; 2 Sam 19:39; Rom 16:16
7:46 Ps 23:5; Eccl 9:8; Dan 10:3
7:47 1 John 4:19; Isa 1:18; Isa 55:7
7:48 Matt 9:2; Mark 2:5
7:49 Luke 5:20,21; Matt 9:3; Mark 2:7
7:50 Mark 5:34; Matt 9:22; Luke 18:42
8:1 Isa 61:3; Matt 4:23; Luke 4:43,44
8:2 Matt 27:55,56; Mark 15:40,41; Mark 16:9
8:3 Luke 24:10; Luke 9:7-9; John 4:46-53

7:36 *He reclined at the table* The Pharisee was Simon (7:40). Not every Pharisee was hostile, though this one did not show Jesus much honor. At a formal dinner guests lay on low couches, leaning on the left elbow with feet stretched out behind, so a woman could stand behind Jesus at His feet.
7:37 *a woman who was a sinner in the city* Luke does not name her sin; many assume prostitution, but the text does not say so. Later tradition called her Mary Magdalene, without evidence in Scripture; Luke introduces Mary Magdalene as someone new in 8:2. This is also a different event from Mary of Bethany's anointing in Jesus' last week (John 12:1-8). People could enter a dinner's courtyard to hear a visiting teacher. Alabaster was a soft, beautiful stone, and the oil was costly.
7:38 *she was wiping them with the hairs of her head* She did not plan to cry; it poured out of her. A respectable woman did not let her hair down in public, and she did not care. Everything she did showed love, sorrow for sin and gratitude.
7:39 *This man, if He were a prophet, would know* Simon thought it silently. A real prophet would know she was a sinner, and a holy man would not let her touch him. Simon was wrong on both counts. Jesus knew who she was, and He knew what Simon was thinking, which proved He was a prophet after all.
7:41 *the one was owing five hundred denarii, and the other fifty* A denarius was about a day's wage. Five hundred was more than a year and a half of work; fifty, less than two months. Neither could pay, and both were forgiven freely.
7:43 *You have judged rightly* Simon answered carefully, as if he sensed a trap. He had just judged himself.
7:44 *Do you see this woman* Simon saw a category, a problem. Jesus asked him to really see her. A good host had a servant wash a guest's dusty feet, greeted him with a kiss, and put a little oil on his head. Simon did none of it. The sinful woman honored Jesus more than the religious man who invited Him.
7:47 *her sins, which are many, have been forgiven, for she loved much* Jesus is not saying she earned forgiveness by loving. The story makes the order clear: the one forgiven more loved more. Love is the result of forgiveness, the proof she had already been forgiven, and verse 50 says her faith saved her. Simon was not a smaller sinner; he did not know how much he needed forgiveness.
7:48 *Your sins have been forgiven* Jesus said it to her directly, in front of everyone. Everyone in that room had looked down on her. Now the Son of God declared her clean.
7:49 *Who is this who even forgives sins* The same question the scribes asked (5:21), and the right one. Only God can forgive sins. Luke leaves it for us to answer.
7:50 *Your faith has saved you; go in peace* Not her tears, perfume or love, but trusting Jesus saved her. By grace we are saved through faith, the gift of God (Eph 2:8). She came in carrying shame and left with the peace of a heart made right with God. Jesus still does that for anyone who comes to Him in faith.
8:1 *proclaiming and preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God* Jesus did not wait for people to come to Him. He walked from village to village through Galilee. The twelve learned by watching Him; He trained them by bringing them along, not just by teaching them in a classroom.
8:2 *Mary, the one called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out* Only Luke tells us about these women. Few rabbis had women among their followers, and many would not teach women the Law; Jesus welcomed them. Magdalene means from Magdala, on the western shore of the lake. Mary stood near the cross (John 19:25) and was the first to see the risen Lord (John 20:11-18). Nothing in Scripture says she had been a prostitute. That idea came from later tradition.
8:3 *ministering to Him from their possessions* A steward managed a household or estate; Chuza served Herod Antipas, who imprisoned John, so the good news had reached Herod's household. Joanna would be at the empty tomb (24:10). The Son of God, who made everything, let Himself be supported by the gifts of women He had healed, and God recorded their names.

The Parable of the Sower

4 And when a great crowd was coming together, and those
from each city were coming to Him, He spoke by a parable:
5 "The sower went out to sow his seed. And in his sowing,
some fell along the road, and it was trampled down, and the
birds of the heaven devoured it. **6** And other fell on the rock,
and having sprung up, it withered, because of not having
moisture. **7** And other fell in ***the*** midst of the thorns, and the
thorns, having sprung up with ***it***, choked it. **8** And other fell
on the good soil, and having sprung up, it produced fruit a
hundredfold." Saying these things, He was calling out, "The
one who has ears to hear, let him hear." **9** And His disciples
were asking Him, saying, "What might this parable be?"
10 And He said, "To you it has been given to know the mys-
teries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest ***it is*** in parables,
so that seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not
understand. **11** Now this is the parable: the seed is the word
of God. **12** And those along the road are those who hear; then
the devil comes and takes away the word from their heart, so
that they may not, having believed, be saved. **13** And those
on the rock ***are*** those who, when they hear, receive the word
with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a time, and
in a time of testing fall away. **14** And that which fell into the
thorns, these are those who have heard, and going along, are
choked by cares and riches and pleasures of life, and do not
bring ***fruit*** to maturity. **15** And that in the good soil, these
are those who, having heard the word in a noble and good
heart, hold ***it*** fast and bear fruit with perseverance.

A Lamp on a Lampstand

16 Now no one, having lit a lamp, covers it with a vessel or
puts ***it*** under a bed; but he puts ***it*** on a lampstand, so that
those who enter may see the light. **17** For nothing is hidden
that will not become manifest, nor ***is anything*** secret that
will not be known and come into the open. **18** Therefore
watch how you hear; for whoever has, to him it will be given;
and whoever does not have, even what he seems to have will
be taken away from him."

Jesus' True Family

19 And His mother and brothers came to Him, and they were
not able to get to Him because of the crowd. **20** And it was
reported to Him, ***some*** saying, "Your mother and Your broth-
ers are standing outside, wanting to see You." **21** But answer-
ing, He said to them, "My mother and My brothers are these
who hear the word of God and do it."

Jesus Calms the Storm

22 And it came to pass on one of the days ***that*** He Himself got
into a boat, and His disciples, and He said to them, "Let us go

8:4 Matt 13:2; Mark 4:1
8:5 James 1:23,24; Luke 8:11; Matt 13:3,4,18,19,24-26,37
8:6 Jer 5:3; Luke 8:13; Mark 4:5,6,16
8:7 Jer 4:3; Luke 8:14; Luke 21:34
8:8 Matt 11:15; Gen 26:12; Rev 2:7,11
8:9 Matt 13:10,18,36; Mark 4:10,34; Hos 6:3
8:10 Isa 6:9; Mark 4:11; Matt 11:25
8:11 Matt 13:19; Mark 4:14-20; James 1:21
8:12 2 Thess 2:9-14; Rev 12:9; Luke 8:5
8:13 Isa 58:2; Ezek 33:32; Mark 6:20
8:14 Matt 13:22; Mark 4:19; 1 Tim 6:9,10,17
8:15 Col 1:6,10; Heb 10:36; Deut 30:6
8:16 Luke 11:33; Mark 4:21,22; Matt 5:15,16
8:17 Matt 10:26; Luke 12:2,3; Eccl 12:14
8:18 Matt 13:12; Luke 19:26; Matt 25:29
8:19 Matt 12:46-50; Mark 3:21,31-35
8:20 Matt 13:55,56; Mark 6:3; John 7:3-6
8:21 John 13:17; James 1:22; Luke 11:27,28
8:22 Matt 8:18,23-27; Mark 4:35-41; John 6:1

8:5 *some fell along the road* A large crowd held many kinds of hearers, and this parable is about them. A farmer threw seed by hand, and some landed where he did not intend. Paths through the fields were packed hard by feet, so the seed could not sink in.

8:6 *other fell on the rock* Much of Galilee has limestone just under the soil. Seed there sprouted fast in the warm, thin soil, but the roots could not reach water. Among thorns, the weeds grew faster and choked the good seed.

8:8 *it produced fruit a hundredfold* A hundred times what was sown, an amazing harvest. Everyone had ears, but not everyone was really listening. Jesus called out loudly for them to pay attention, because this story was about them.

8:10 *To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God* A mystery is not a puzzle for clever people but a truth God kept hidden and now reveals. It was given to the disciples. Quoting Isaiah 6:9-10, Jesus shows that parables open the truth to those who want it and invite them to ask, while hiding it from those who have already rejected Him. God does not force His truth on people who do not want it.

8:11 *the seed is the word of God* The seed is always good, and the sower is the same. The difference is in the soil. When God's word bears no fruit, the problem is never the word but the heart.

8:12 *then the devil comes and takes away the word from their heart* The hard path is a hard heart; the word never sinks in. People hear a sermon and forget it before they reach the car. Notice the devil's goal, that they may not believe and be saved. He knows the word is how people come to faith, so he works hard to take it away.

8:13 *who believe for a time, and in a time of testing fall away* The shallow heart responds quickly with joy, but when following Jesus costs friends, comfort or reputation, it walks away. Teachers differ on whether these were ever truly saved. Many say their faith was never real saving faith, because true faith endures (1 John 2:19); others see real believers who stop following. Either way, a quick, emotional response is not a rooted faith.

8:14 *are choked by cares and riches and pleasures of life* The crowded heart. Worries, money and the good times of this life are not always sinful, but they crowd out God's word slowly, like weeds in a garden. I think this is the soil most of us need to watch. We do not usually walk away from Jesus all at once. We just get busy.

8:15 *hold it fast and bear fruit with perseverance* The good soil is a heart God has prepared. It hears, keeps hold of the word, and bears fruit with steady endurance. Fruit takes a season to grow. Over the long haul, through hard times and good, a true believer's life shows the fruit of God's word.

8:17 *nothing is hidden that will not become manifest* No one lights a lamp to hide it; the truth Jesus gives is meant to be shared. The mysteries hidden for a time would be made known. One day everything will come into the open, even what is hidden in our hearts (1 Cor 4:5). That is both a promise and a warning.

8:18 *Therefore watch how you hear* This is the point of everything since verse 4. The one who receives the word and acts on it will be given more understanding. The one who ignores it will lose even the little he thought he had. Truth we hear and do not obey slips away.

8:19 *His mother and brothers came to Him* These were Mary and the sons she had with Joseph after Jesus was born. They had come thinking He was out of His mind (Mark 3:21, 31), and His brothers did not yet believe (John 7:5). After the resurrection they did, and James led the Jerusalem church (Acts 15:13). Catholic and Orthodox teaching holds that Mary stayed a virgin and calls these cousins or Joseph's sons by an earlier marriage. Read plainly, with Matthew 1:25 and Mark 6:3, they are His half-brothers.

8:21 *My mother and My brothers are these who hear the word of God and do it* Jesus was not cold to His family; from the cross He cared for His mother (John 19:26-27). But there is a family closer than blood. This ties back to the parable: if you hear and obey, you are as close to Jesus as His own mother and brothers.

over to the other side of the lake." And they set out. **23** And as they were sailing, He fell asleep. And a storm of wind came down onto the lake, and they were being swamped and were in danger. **24** And having come to ***Him***, they woke Him, saying, "Master, Master, we are perishing!" And having arisen, He rebuked the wind and the raging of the water; and they ceased, and a calm came. **25** And He said to them, "Where is your faith?" And having become afraid, they marveled, saying to one another, "Who then is this, that He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey Him?"

Legion Cast Out

26 And they sailed down to the region of the Gadarenes, which is opposite Galilee (Galilaia). **27** And when He had gone out onto the land, a certain man out of the city met Him, who had demons for a long time, and was not wearing a garment, and was not staying in a house, but in the tombs. **28** And having seen Jesus (Iesous), and having cried out, he fell down before Him, and with a loud voice said, "What ***is there*** to me and to You, Jesus, Son of God Most High? I beg You, do not torment me!" **29** For He had commanded the unclean spirit to come out from the man. For many times it had seized him, and he was bound with chains and shackles, being kept under guard; and breaking the bonds, he was driven by the demon into the deserted places. **30** And Jesus asked him, saying, "What is your name?" And he said, "Legion," because many demons had entered into him. **31** And they were begging Him that He would not command them to depart into the abyss. **32** Now there was a herd of many pigs feeding there on the mountain; and they were begging Him that He would allow them to enter into those. And He allowed them. **33** And the demons, having gone out from the man, entered into the pigs, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and was drowned. **34** And those feeding ***them***, having seen what had happened, fled, and having gone, reported ***it*** in the city and in the fields. **35** And they went out to see what had happened, and they came to Jesus and found the man from whom the demons had gone out sitting, clothed and being of sound mind, at the feet of Jesus; and they were afraid. **36** And those also who had seen ***it*** reported to them how the one who had been demon-possessed was saved. **37** And all the multitude of the surrounding region of the Gadarenes asked Him to depart from them, because they were seized with great fear. And He, having gotten into the boat, returned. **38** And the man from whom the demons had gone out was begging Him to be with Him; but Jesus sent him away, saying, **39** "Return to your house, and relate how much God has done for you." And he departed through all the city, proclaiming how much Jesus had done for him.

Jairus' Daughter and a Woman Healed

40 And it came to pass, when Jesus returned, ***that*** the crowd

8:23 Ps 44:23; Isa 51:9,10; Heb 4:15
8:24 2 Cor 1:9,10; Ps 65:7; Ps 69:1,2
8:25 Luke 12:28; Matt 6:30; Matt 8:26
8:26 Matt 8:28-34; Mark 5:1-20
8:27 Mark 5:2-5; 1 Sam 19:24; Num 19:16
8:28 1 Kgs 17:18; Matt 8:29; Luke 4:33-36
8:29 Mark 5:8; Acts 19:12-16; Luke 9:39,42
8:30 Matt 26:53; Mark 5:9; Luke 8:2
8:31 Luke 8:28; Job 1:11; Job 2:5
8:32 Isa 65:4; Lev 11:7; Isa 66:3
8:33 John 8:44; 1 Pet 5:8; Rev 9:11
8:34 Matt 8:33; Matt 28:11; Mark 5:14
8:35 2 Kgs 4:38; Luke 10:39; Ps 51:10
8:37 Job 21:15; Acts 16:39; Luke 5:8
8:38 Deut 10:20; Ps 107:32; Mark 5:18
8:39 Deut 10:21; Ps 66:16; Ps 126:2,3
8:40 Matt 9:1; Mark 5:21; Luke 5:1

8:23 *He fell asleep* He had said they were going to the other side, not that they would drown halfway. Jesus was fully man and got tired after a long day of teaching. The lake sits about seven hundred feet below sea level among hills, and cold air rushing down the valleys can stir a sudden, violent storm. These fishermen knew it could kill them.
8:24 *He rebuked the wind and the raging of the water* They woke Him in a panic, but at least they went to the right person. He rebuked the storm as He rebuked fever and demons, as their Master. Usually waves roll on for hours after a storm. This time wind and water stopped at once.
8:25 *Where is your faith* Jesus did not say they had none. He asked where it was. They forgot it in the storm, though He had said they were going across and He was in the boat. They were more afraid after the calm, for only God stills the roaring of the seas (Ps 65:7; 107:29). Who is this? That is the question Luke wants every reader to answer.
8:26 *the region of the Gadarenes* The east side of the lake, in the mostly Gentile Decapolis, the ten cities. Different Greek copies name the region from different nearby towns, Gadara, Gerasa or Gergesa, all pointing to the same area.
8:27 *a certain man out of the city met Him, who had demons* Matthew mentions two men (Matt 8:28); Luke and Mark focus on one, likely the one who spoke. If there were two, there was certainly one. Tombs were caves in the hillsides, unclean places under the Law. Naked, homeless, living among the dead: this is what Satan does. He promises freedom and gives bondage.
8:28 *Jesus, Son of God Most High* The demons could not stay away and were forced to bow. Most High was a title Gentiles often used for Israel's God. They did not doubt His power. They knew He was their judge and begged for mercy.
8:29 *he was bound with chains and shackles* Jesus had already ordered the spirit out, and it cried out in fear. The townspeople had tried chains, and nothing worked. Human power could not set him free. Only Jesus could.
8:30 *Legion* A Roman legion was several thousand soldiers. Jesus did not need the name to have power over them. Asking showed everyone how great the bondage was, and how great the victory would be.
8:31 *that He would not command them to depart into the abyss* The bottomless pit, where some fallen spirits are kept locked up (2 Pet 2:4; Jude 6). Satan himself will be thrown into it for a thousand years (Rev 20:1-3). The demons knew it was real and that Jesus had authority to send them there.
8:33 *the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and was drowned* Jews did not raise unclean pigs; this was Gentile country. Scripture does not say directly why Jesus allowed this. It showed how many demons there were and how destructive they are. It gave the man visible proof they were gone. And it showed that one soul is worth more to Jesus than a whole herd of pigs.
8:35 *sitting, clothed and being of sound mind, at the feet of Jesus* What a change: once running wild, now sitting; once naked, now clothed; once out of his mind, now of sound mind. At Jesus' feet is the place of a disciple. That is a picture of what Jesus does for every person He saves. They should have rejoiced. Instead they were afraid.
8:37 *asked Him to depart from them* Luke says the man was saved, not only healed. Yet the people feared a power they could not control, and they had lost a costly herd. They cared more for pigs and comfort than for a man set free. Many still would rather keep their lives as they are than let Jesus change everything. Jesus does not force Himself on people. They asked Him to leave, and He left.
8:39 *relate how much God has done for you* The town begged Jesus to leave; the man begged to go with Him. Jesus said no but gave him a mission where Jesus had been sent away. Told to say what God had done, he told what Jesus had done; he understood they were the same. Sometimes the hardest and best mission field is your own house.

received Him; for they were all looking for Him. **41** And look, a man came whose name ***was*** Jairus (Iaeiros), and he was a ruler of the synagogue; and having fallen at the feet of Jesus, he was begging Him to come into his house, **42** because he had an only daughter, about twelve years ***old***, and she was dying. And as He was going, the crowds were pressing around Him. **43** And a woman, having a flow of blood for twelve years, who, having spent all her living on physicians, was not able to be healed by anyone, **44** having come up behind ***Him***, touched the fringe of His cloak; and immediately the flow of her blood stopped. **45** And Jesus said, "Who ***is*** the one who touched Me?" And when all were denying ***it***, Peter (Petros) and those with him said, "Master, the crowds are surrounding You and pressing in ***on You***, and You say, 'Who ***is*** the one who touched Me?'" **46** But Jesus said, "Someone touched Me, for I knew ***that*** power had gone out from Me." **47** And the woman, having seen that she was not hidden, came trembling, and having fallen down before Him, she declared to Him before all the people for what cause she had touched Him, and how she was healed immediately. **48** And He said to her, "Take courage, daughter; your faith has saved you. Go in peace." **49** While He was still speaking, someone comes from the ***house of the*** synagogue ruler, saying to him, "Your daughter has died; do not trouble the Teacher." **50** But Jesus, having heard, answered him, saying, "Do not fear; only believe, and she will be saved." **51** And having come into the house, He did not allow anyone to go in except Peter and James (Iakobos) and John (Ioannes), and the father of the child and the mother. **52** Now all were weeping and mourning for her. But He said, "Do not weep; she did not die, but sleeps." **53** And they were laughing at Him, knowing that she had died. **54** And He, having put ***them*** all outside and having taken hold of her hand, called out, saying, "Child, arise." **55** And her spirit returned, and she rose up immediately; and He directed ***that something*** be given to her to eat. **56** And her parents were amazed; but He instructed them to tell no one what had happened.

LUKE 9

The Twelve Sent Out

1 And having called together His twelve disciples, He gave them power and authority over all the demons and to heal diseases. **2** And He sent them to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal those who were sick. **3** And He said to them, "Take nothing for the journey, neither staffs nor bag nor bread nor money; nor have two tunics apiece. **4** And into whatever house you enter, remain there, and go out from

8:41 Mark 5:22-43; Luke 13:14; Acts 13:15
8:42 Zech 12:10; Luke 7:12; Luke 8:45
8:43 Lev 15:25; Lev 15:26; Lev 15:27
8:44 Num 15:38; Deut 22:12; Luke 7:38
8:45 Luke 9:13; Mark 5:30-32
8:46 Luke 6:19; 1 Pet 2:9
8:47 Mark 5:33; 1 Cor 2:3; 2 Cor 7:15
8:48 Exod 4:18; 1 Sam 1:17; 2 Kgs 5:19
8:49 Luke 7:6; Luke 8:41-43; Matt 9:23-26
8:50 Mark 5:36; John 11:25,40; Luke 8:48
8:51 1 Kgs 17:19-23; 2 Kgs 4:4-6,34-36; Isa 42:2
8:52 John 11:4,11-13; Gen 23:2; Gen 27:34,35
8:53 Isa 53:3; 2 Chr 30:10; Luke 16:14
8:54 Mark 1:31; John 11:43; Luke 8:51
8:55 John 11:44; 1 Kgs 17:21-23; Luke 24:41-43
8:56 Matt 8:4; Luke 5:14; Matt 9:30
9:1 Mark 6:7-13; Acts 3:16; Acts 4:30
9:2 Matt 10:7,8; Luke 10:1,9,11; Matt 3:2
9:3 Josh 9:11; Luke 22:35; Luke 10:4-12
9:4 Luke 10:5-8; Matt 10:11; Mark 6:10

8:41 *he was a ruler of the synagogue* A leader who arranged the services and cared for the building, an important man. Many synagogue leaders were turning against Jesus, but Jairus did not care what anyone thought. He fell at Jesus' feet before the whole crowd. Desperate need makes us humble.
8:43 *a flow of blood for twelve years* The daughter had lived twelve years; this woman had suffered twelve. Such bleeding made her unclean all the time, and anyone she touched became unclean (Lev 15:25-27). She was shut out of temple and synagogue and cut off from family and community. Luke the doctor notes plainly that physicians could not help her. Some older Greek copies leave out those words, but Mark says the same (Mark 5:26).
8:44 *touched the fringe of His cloak* Likely the tassel Jewish men wore on the corners of the outer garment (Num 15:38-39). She was not supposed to touch anyone, so she came from behind, hoping no one would notice. Twelve years of suffering ended in a moment.
8:46 *Someone touched Me, for I knew that power had gone out from Me* There is a difference between bumping into Jesus and touching Him in faith. Many were close to Him; only one reached out in faith. Many today are around Jesus, at church and in Christian homes, but have never reached out to Him for themselves.
8:47 *she declared to Him before all the people* Jesus did not call her forward to shame her. For twelve years she had been unclean and hidden. Now the whole town heard she was healed, so her return to the community would be complete.
8:48 *Take courage, daughter; your faith has saved you* The only person Jesus addresses as daughter in the Gospels. Cut off from everyone, she was welcomed into His family. He spoke the same words as to the sinful woman (7:50). She came for a cure. She left with a Savior.
8:49 *Your daughter has died; do not trouble the Teacher* Jairus had waited while Jesus stopped, and now it seemed too late. Sometimes God's delays feel like disasters. But Jesus is never too late.
8:50 *Do not fear; only believe* Jesus spoke at once, before fear could take over. Fear and faith pull in opposite directions. Jairus had just seen a woman healed by faith; now he must believe when it looked hopeless.
8:51 *except Peter and James and John* His three closest disciples, who would also see the transfiguration (9:28) and be near Him in the garden (Mark 14:33). No crowd and no show, just a quiet room and a grieving family.
8:52 *she did not die, but sleeps* Families often hired professional mourners. "Her spirit returned" (8:55) shows she had truly died. For Jesus, death is like sleep, something He wakes a person from, as with Lazarus (John 11:11-14). Paul calls believers' death falling asleep (1 Thess 4:13-14). For those who belong to Jesus, morning is coming. The mourners' laughter showed they knew death but not the Lord of life.
8:55 *her spirit returned, and she rose up immediately* Again Jesus touched the dead and was not made unclean. When a person dies the spirit leaves the body (James 2:26), and Jesus called it back. The order to feed her is the kind of detail a doctor notices. She was really alive in a real body, and Jesus cares about the ordinary needs of those He loves.
8:56 *He instructed them to tell no one what had happened* The town would find out, but Jesus did not want crowds chasing miracles. He wanted people to come for who He is. In this stretch He showed authority over nature, demons, disease and death. His question in the boat is ours too: "Where is your faith?"
9:2 *He sent them to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal* Jesus gave them power, the ability, and authority, the right. Preaching comes first, and healing goes with it. The miracles were not the main message; they backed it up, showing the King had come. These twelve are now called apostles (9:10), sent ones.
9:3 *Take nothing for the journey* A short, urgent mission. They were to travel light, trust God to provide through those who welcomed them, and stay in one house without shopping around for better lodging. Later Jesus told them to take a purse and a bag (22:35-36), but the principle stands: we go where He sends and trust Him to supply.

there. **5** And as many as do not receive you, going out from that city, shake off even the dust from your feet as a testimony against them." **6** And going out, they were passing through the villages, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere.

Herod Is Perplexed

7 Now Herod (Herodes) the tetrarch heard of all the things being done by Him, and he was perplexed, because it was being said by some that John (Ioannes) had been raised from ***the*** dead, **8** and by some that Elijah (Helias) had appeared, and by others that a prophet, one of the ancients, had risen. **9** And Herod said, "John I beheaded; but who is this concerning whom I hear such things?" And he was seeking to see Him.

Five Thousand Fed

10 And having returned, the apostles related to Him all that they had done. And having taken them, He withdrew privately into a deserted place of a city called Bethsaida. **11** But the crowds, having learned ***it***, followed Him; and having received them, He was speaking to them concerning the kingdom of God, and those who had need of healing He was healing. **12** And the day began to decline; and having come, the twelve said to Him, "Dismiss the crowd, so that, having gone into the surrounding villages and the countryside, they may lodge and find provisions; for here we are in a deserted place." **13** But He said to them, "You give them ***something*** to eat." And they said, "We have no more than five loaves and two fish, unless perhaps, having gone, we buy food for all this people." **14** For they were about five thousand men. And He said to His disciples, "Make them recline in groups of fifty each." **15** And they did so, and made all recline. **16** And having taken the five loaves and the two fish, having looked up to heaven, He blessed them and broke ***them***, and He was giving ***them*** to the disciples to set before the crowd. **17** And they ate and were all satisfied; and what was left over by them was taken up, twelve baskets of fragments.

Peter's Confession

18 And it came to pass, as He was praying alone, the disciples were with Him, and He questioned them, saying, "Who do the crowds say that I am?" **19** And answering, they said, "John the Baptist, and others Elijah, and others that a prophet, one of the ancients, has risen." **20** And He said to them, "But you, who do you say that I am?" And answering, Peter (Petros) said, "The Christ of God." **21** And having strictly warned them, He instructed ***them*** to tell this to no one, **22** having said, "It is necessary for the Son of Man to suffer many things, and to be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and to be killed, and on the third day to be raised."

9:5 Acts 13:51; Acts 18:6; Neh 5:13
9:6 Luke 9:1,2; Mark 6:12,13; Mark 16:20
9:7 Matt 14:1-12; Mark 6:14-28; Job 18:11,12
9:8 Luke 9:19; John 1:21; Matt 17:10
9:9 Luke 23:8; Luke 13:31,32
9:10 Matt 11:21; Luke 10:17; Zech 1:10
9:11 Matt 14:14; Mark 6:33,34; Rom 10:14,17
9:12 Matt 15:23,32; Matt 14:15-21; Mark 6:35,36-44
9:13 2 Kgs 4:42,43; Matt 14:16,17; Mark 6:37,38
9:14 Mark 6:39,40; Mark 8:6; 1 Cor 14:40
9:16 Matt 14:19; Mark 7:34; Luke 24:30
9:17 2 Kgs 4:44; Ps 37:16; Prov 13:25
9:18 Luke 11:1; Matt 16:13,14; Luke 22:39-41
9:19 Mal 4:5; Luke 9:7,8; Matt 14:2
9:20 John 11:27; Matt 5:47; Matt 16:15
9:21 Matt 16:20; Matt 17:9; Mark 8:31
9:22 Luke 24:7,26; Luke 18:31-34; Gen 3:15

9:5 *shake off even the dust from your feet as a testimony against them* Jews returning from Gentile lands sometimes shook off the dust so as not to carry unclean soil into Israel. Here the apostles do it to Jewish towns that reject the King. It was a warning: you have heard, and you are responsible for what you did with it.
9:6 *preaching the gospel and healing everywhere* The gospel is the good news that God's promised King had come. Ordinary fishermen and a tax collector were doing the work of the kingdom, because Jesus had sent them.
9:9 *John I beheaded; but who is this* Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great, ruled Galilee and Perea under Rome. Luke told of John's imprisonment (3:19-20); now we learn Herod had him killed. A guilty conscience does not rest easy. Herod finally saw Jesus on the day of the cross, and Jesus would not say a word to him (23:8-9). Curiosity is not faith.
9:10 *He withdrew privately into a deserted place of a city called Bethsaida* A town on the north shore of the lake. Mark says Jesus wanted them to rest awhile (Mark 6:31). After a season of hard work it is right to come away with Jesus, tell Him about it, and rest. Busy people in ministry burn out when they skip this step.
9:11 *having received them* The quiet time was over before it started, yet Jesus welcomed those who interrupted His rest. He never sees a needy person as an annoyance. Many of us do not respond that way when our plans change. This verse shows a better way.
9:13 *You give them something to eat* Sending the crowd away sounded sensible. Jesus asked the impossible to show them their own lack so they would look to Him. They counted and came up short, and that is often where God begins. When we admit we do not have enough, we are ready to see what He can do with the little we bring.
9:14 *about five thousand men* Only the men were counted; with women and children the crowd could have been two or three times as large. Groups of fifty made it orderly and easy to serve. God is not a God of confusion (1 Cor 14:33). The disciples obeyed before they saw how it would work.
9:16 *having looked up to heaven, He blessed them and broke them* He gave thanks as every Jewish head of a home did before a meal. Then He kept giving to the disciples, and they kept setting it before the people. The bread multiplied in His hands.
9:17 *twelve baskets of fragments* One for each apostle. God provides more than enough. Besides the resurrection, this is the only miracle told in all four Gospels (John 6:1-14). The next day Jesus said, "I am the bread of life" (John 6:35). The One who fed the crowd is Himself the bread our souls need.
9:18 *as He was praying alone* Luke is the Gospel of prayer. Before this important question Jesus had been talking with His Father.
9:19 *John the Baptist, and others Elijah* The crowds put Jesus with the great men of God. But a great prophet is not enough. Many today call Jesus a good teacher or a prophet, and that is a long way from the truth.
9:20 *The Christ of God* Christ is the Greek form of Messiah, the anointed one, the promised King from David's line whom God anointed and sent. Matthew gives a longer account (Matt 16:13-20). This is the most important question you will ever answer: not what your parents believe or your church teaches, but who you say Jesus is.
9:21 *He instructed them to tell this to no one* Most people expected a Messiah who would drive out Rome and set up an earthly kingdom at once. Announcing Him then would have stirred the wrong kind of excitement.
9:22 *It is necessary for the Son of Man to suffer many things* Son of Man was Jesus' favorite name for Himself, from Daniel 7:13-14, where one like a son of man receives an everlasting kingdom. The elders, chief priests and scribes made up the Sanhedrin, the ruling council. Scribes copied and taught the Law. "It is necessary": the cross was not an accident but God's plan for our salvation.

The Cost of Following

23 And He was saying to all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. **24** For whoever desires to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life on account of Me, this one will save it. **25** For what is a man profited, having gained the whole world, but having lost or forfeited himself? **26** For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His glory and the ***glory*** of the Father and of the holy angels. **27** But I say to you truly, there are some of those standing here who will certainly not taste death until they see the kingdom of God."

The Transfiguration

28 And it came to pass about eight days after these words, and having taken Peter and John and James (Iakobos), He went up on the mountain to pray. **29** And it came to pass, as He was praying, the appearance of His face ***became*** different, and His clothing ***became*** white, flashing like lightning. **30** And look, two men were talking with Him, who were Moses and Elijah, **31** who, having appeared in glory, were speaking of His departure which He was about to fulfill in Jerusalem (Hierousalem). **32** But Peter and those with him were weighed down with sleep; and having become fully awake, they saw His glory and the two men standing with Him. **33** And it came to pass, as they were departing from Him, Peter said to Jesus (Iesous), "Master, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tents, one for You and one for Moses and one for Elijah," not knowing what he was saying. **34** And while he was saying these things, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were afraid as those entered into the cloud. **35** And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My Son, the Beloved; listen to Him." **36** And when the voice came, Jesus was found alone. And they were silent and told no one in those days anything of what they had seen.

A Boy Set Free

37 And it came to pass on the next day, when they had come down from the mountain, a great crowd met Him. **38** And look, a man from the crowd cried out, saying, "Teacher, I beg You, look upon my son, for he is my only ***child***. **39** And look, a spirit seizes him, and suddenly he cries out, and it convulses him with foaming, and with difficulty it departs from him, bruising him. **40** And I begged Your disciples that they might cast it out, and they were not able." **41** And answering, Jesus said, "O unbelieving and perverted generation, until when will I be with you and bear with you? Bring your son here." **42** And while he was still approaching, the demon threw him down and convulsed ***him***. But Jesus rebuked the unclean

9:23 Matt 10:38,39; Mark 8:34-38; Luke 14:26,27
9:24 Luke 17:33; Acts 20:23,24; Heb 11:35
9:25 Luke 12:19-21; Luke 4:5-7; Luke 16:24,25
9:26 Matt 10:32,33; 2 Tim 2:12; Luke 12:8,9
9:27 Matt 16:28; John 21:22,23; Heb 2:9
9:28 Matt 17:1-13; Mark 9:2-13; Luke 8:51
9:29 Dan 10:6; Exod 34:29-35; Isa 33:17
9:30 1 Kgs 17:1; Mal 4:5; Heb 3:3-6
9:31 2 Cor 3:18; Phil 3:21; Col 3:4
9:32 Dan 8:18; Dan 10:9; Exod 33:21
9:33 Ps 73:28; 1 Kgs 17:1; Ps 4:7
9:34 Exod 14:19; Judg 13:22; Exod 14:20
9:35 Deut 18:15; Matt 3:17; Luke 3:22
9:36 Matt 17:9; Eccl 3:7; Mark 9:6,10
9:37 Matt 17:14-21; Mark 9:14-29
9:38 Luke 7:12; Luke 8:41,42; Matt 15:22
9:39 Luke 4:35; Luke 8:29; Mark 5:4,5
9:40 Luke 9:1; Luke 10:17-19; 2 Kgs 4:31
9:41 John 20:27; Deut 32:5; John 14:9
9:42 Luke 7:15; Luke 9:39; Mark 1:26,27

9:23 *take up his cross daily* To deny yourself is to stop putting your own wishes first. A man carrying a cross was on his way to die; everyone knew that. Only Luke records "daily." Every morning we lay down our way and pick up His. Salvation is a free gift (Eph 2:8-9), but following Him costs everything we are.
9:24 *whoever loses his life on account of Me, this one will save it* It sounds backward but is true. The one who holds on to his life, living for himself, loses what matters most. The one who gives his life to Jesus finds real life, now and forever.
9:25 *having gained the whole world, but having lost or forfeited himself* Owning everything in the world and losing your own soul is a terrible trade. Jesus asks us to do the math.
9:26 *when He comes in His glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels* To be ashamed of Jesus is to hide that we belong to Him for fear of what others think. This points to His return to the earth in power at the end of the Tribulation (Matt 24:30; Rev 19:11-16). How foolish to be ashamed now of the One every knee will bow to then (Phil 2:10-11).
9:27 *some of those standing here who will certainly not taste death until they see the kingdom of God* The next event gives the best answer. Eight days later three disciples saw Jesus in His kingdom glory on the mountain. Peter called himself an eyewitness of His majesty on the holy mountain (2 Pet 1:16-18). The transfiguration was a preview of the coming kingdom.
9:28 *about eight days after these words* Matthew and Mark say six days; Luke says about eight, likely counting the first and last days. There is no conflict. The mountain is not named; many think Mount Hermon near Caesarea Philippi, others Mount Tabor. Again Jesus went up to pray, and the glory came while He prayed.
9:29 *His clothing became white, flashing like lightning* The transfiguration, from a word meaning changed in form. Jesus did not borrow light from somewhere else. The glory that was always His as the Son shone through for a moment (John 1:14). The three saw who Jesus really is.
9:30 *Moses and Elijah* The lawgiver and the great prophet, standing for the Law and the Prophets, the whole Old Testament, which pointed to Jesus.
9:31 *speaking of His departure which He was about to fulfill in Jerusalem* Only Luke tells us the subject. Departure is the word exodus, a way out. Moses led Israel out of slavery in Egypt. Jesus would lead His people out of slavery to sin through His death, resurrection and ascension. On the mountain of glory, the subject was the cross.
9:33 *not knowing what he was saying* The three had been weighed down with sleep, as they would be in Gethsemane (22:45). Peter may have wanted to make the moment last. But putting Jesus on the level of Moses and Elijah was a mistake. He is far above them.
9:34 *a cloud came and overshadowed them* God showed His presence in a cloud at Sinai and in the tabernacle (Exod 24:15-16; 40:34). The disciples were rightly afraid.
9:35 *This is My Son, the Beloved; listen to Him* This answers Peter's three tents. Moses and Elijah were servants; Jesus is the Son. Moses foretold a Prophet like himself whom Israel must hear (Deut 18:15), and God points to Him. The Father's command for us is the same: listen to Him.
9:36 *Jesus was found alone* Moses and Elijah were gone; Jesus remains, and everything in the Bible points to Him. Jesus told them to keep quiet until He rose (Mark 9:9). They would not understand until after the cross and the empty tomb.
9:38 *for he is my only child* Luke the doctor likes to note an only child (7:12; 8:42). He felt the weight of a parent's pain.
9:40 *they were not able* The spirit threw the boy into fits with foaming at the mouth. Days earlier the disciples had been given authority over demons (9:1), and now they failed. From the mountain of glory, Jesus came down into a valley of need and failure.
9:41 *O unbelieving and perverted generation* Perverted means twisted out of shape. Jesus speaks to the whole generation, His disciples included, whose failure came from lack of faith (Matt 17:19-20). Weary of their unbelief, He did not walk away: "Bring your son here." When others fail us, Jesus does not.
9:42 *gave him back to his father* The enemy did his worst one last time. I love this phrase. Jesus handed the boy back to his dad, whole.

spirit, and healed the boy, and gave him back to his father.

True Greatness

43 And they were all astonished at the majesty of God. But while all were marveling at all the things which Jesus did, He said to His disciples, **44** "You, put these words into your ears; for the Son of Man is about to be delivered into ***the*** hands of men." **45** But they did not understand this declaration, and it was veiled from them so that they might not perceive it; and they were afraid to ask Him concerning this declaration. **46** And a reasoning came in among them, this: who of them might be greater. **47** And Jesus, having seen the reasoning of their heart, having taken hold of a child, stood him beside Himself, **48** and He said to them, "Whoever receives this child in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me receives Him who sent Me. For the one who is least among you all, this one will be great." **49** And answering, John said, "Master, we saw someone casting out demons in Your name, and we forbade him, because he does not follow with us." **50** And Jesus said to him, "Do not forbid ***him***; for whoever is not against us is for us."

Rejected by a Samaritan Village

51 And it came to pass, when the days of His being taken up were being fulfilled, that He Himself set His face steadfastly to go to Jerusalem. **52** And He sent messengers before His face. And having gone, they entered into a village of ***the*** Samaritans so as to make ready for Him. **53** And they did not receive Him, because His face was going toward Jerusalem. **54** And having seen ***it***, His disciples James and John said, "Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, as Elijah also did?" **55** But having turned, He rebuked them, and said, "You do not know of what kind of spirit you are. **56** For the Son of Man did not come to destroy ***the*** lives of men, but to save ***them***." And they went to another village.

The Cost of Following Jesus

57 And it came to pass, as they were going along the road, someone said to Him, "I will follow You wherever You go, Lord." **58** And Jesus said to him, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the heaven ***have*** nests, but the Son of Man does not have ***a place*** where He may lay His head." **59** And He said to another, "Follow Me." But he said, "Lord, allow me, having gone away, first to bury my father." **60** And Jesus said to him, "Leave the dead to bury their own dead; but you, having gone, declare the kingdom of God." **61** And another also said, "I will follow You, Lord; but first allow me to bid farewell to those at my house." **62** And Jesus said to him, "No one having put his hand on ***the*** plow and looking at the things behind is fit for the kingdom of God."

9:43 Luke 4:36; Luke 5:9,26; Luke 8:25
9:44 Luke 9:22; Luke 1:66; Luke 2:19,51
9:45 Luke 18:34; Luke 2:50; John 12:16,34
9:46 Matt 18:1-5; Mark 9:33-37; Matt 20:20-22
9:47 Luke 5:22; Luke 7:39,40; Ps 139:2,23
9:48 Luke 10:16; Matt 10:40-42; John 13:20
9:49 Mark 9:38-40; Num 11:27-29; 3 John 1:9,10
9:50 Luke 11:23; Matt 12:30; Phil 1:15-18
9:51 Gen 31:21; 2 Kgs 2:2; 2 Kgs 12:17
9:52 2 Kgs 17:24; Mal 3:1; Gen 32:3
9:53 Gen 31:21; 2 Kgs 12:17; 2 Chr 32:2
9:54 2 Kgs 1:10; 2 Kgs 10:16; 2 Kgs 1:12
9:55 1 Sam 24:4-7; 1 Sam 26:8-11; 2 Sam 19:22
9:56 Matt 20:28; John 3:17; Rom 12:21
9:57 Exod 19:8; Matt 8:19,20; John 13:37
9:58 James 2:5; Luke 14:26-33; Luke 18:22,23
9:59 Matt 6:33; Matt 4:19-22; Matt 9:9
9:60 John 21:15-17; 2 Tim 2:3,4; Luke 15:32
9:61 1 Kgs 19:20; Luke 14:18-20,26; Deut 33:9
9:62 Heb 10:38; 2 Pet 2:20-22; Luke 17:31,32

9:43 *they were all astonished at the majesty of God* The people saw the work of God Himself. In Jesus, God's own greatness was on display.
9:44 *the Son of Man is about to be delivered into the hands of men* Jesus said it again while the crowd was cheering, because popularity can make us forget the cross.
9:45 *they were afraid to ask Him concerning this declaration* They could not fit a suffering Messiah into their thinking. Sometimes we do not ask God hard questions because we fear the answer. They would understand after His resurrection, when He opened their minds (24:45).
9:48 *the one who is least among you all, this one will be great* Right after Jesus spoke of His death, they argued about rank. A child had no rank in that world. To welcome a child for Jesus' sake, with nothing to gain, is to welcome Jesus and the Father who sent Him. In God's kingdom, the way up is down.
9:49 *because he does not follow with us* Notice "with us." The man was not wrong; he was not in their group.
9:50 *whoever is not against us is for us* The man was really working in Jesus' name, and demons were really going out. Later Jesus said that the one not with Him is against Him (11:23). Both are true. Toward Jesus Himself there is no neutral ground. But we should not oppose someone who truly serves Christ just because he is not in our church or group.
9:51 *He Himself set His face steadfastly to go to Jerusalem* A turning point in Luke. Being taken up points to His death, resurrection and ascension (Acts 1:2, 11). To set your face is to make up your mind and not turn back, like the Servant who set His face like flint (Isa 50:7). Jesus knew what waited and went anyway, for us. The journey runs to 19:28, and much of chapters 10 to 18 is found only in Luke.
9:52 *a village of the Samaritans* Part Jewish and part Gentile, descended from Israelites who mixed with foreign peoples after Assyria conquered the north. They had once had a temple on Mount Gerizim and still worshiped there. Jews and Samaritans had hated each other for centuries (John 4:9). Since He was heading to the temple in Jerusalem, the village would not welcome Him.
9:54 *do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, as Elijah also did* They were thinking of Elijah calling fire on a wicked king's soldiers (2 Kgs 1:10-12). Jesus called these brothers Sons of Thunder (Mark 3:17), and we can see why. The words "as Elijah also did" are in the Received Greek Text the SLB follows; many older Greek copies lack them.
9:55 *You do not know of what kind of spirit you are* They wanted judgment, but this first time He came to save. Judgment will come at His return. John later went to Samaria and saw Samaritans receive the Spirit (Acts 8:14-17), changed from a man who wanted fire to fall to one who prayed for them. These words and the start of 9:56 are not in many older Greek copies, but no teaching rests on them alone; Jesus says the same in 19:10 and John 3:17.
9:58 *the Son of Man does not have a place where He may lay His head* The first man's offer sounds wonderful. Jesus wanted him to know what he was signing up for. The Creator of the world had no home of His own on this journey. Following Him does not promise comfort. Before you say "wherever," count the cost.
9:60 *Leave the dead to bury their own dead* Burying a parent was a sacred duty. Many teachers think the father was not yet dead, and the man meant to follow later once family matters were settled; others think the father had just died. Either way, let the spiritually dead take care of this world's things. The kingdom comes first.
9:62 *No one having put his hand on the plow and looking at the things behind* Elijah let Elisha say farewell (1 Kgs 19:19-21); Jesus asks more. A plowman had to keep his eyes ahead or the furrow went crooked. Notice "first" in both of the last two men. Jesus will not be second to anything. What do you need to stop looking back at, so you can follow Him with your whole heart?

LUKE 10

The Seventy Sent Out

1 Now after these things the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to come. **2** Then He was saying to them, "The harvest ***is*** indeed plentiful, but the workers ***are*** few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest that He send out workers into His harvest. **3** Go; look, I send you out as lambs in ***the*** midst of wolves. **4** Do not carry a purse, nor a bag, nor sandals; and greet no one on the road. **5** And into whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace to this house.' **6** And if indeed the son of peace is there, your peace will rest upon him; but if not, it will return to you. **7** And remain in that same house, eating and drinking the things ***supplied*** by them; for the worker is worthy of his wages. Do not move from house to house. **8** And into whatever city you enter, and they receive you, eat the things set before you, **9** and heal the sick in it, and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has drawn near to you.' **10** But into whatever city you enter and they do not receive you, having gone out into its streets, say, **11** 'Even the dust of your city which has clung to us we wipe off against you; yet know this, that the kingdom of God has drawn near to you.' **12** And I say to you that it will be more tolerable in that day for Sodom (Sodoma) than for that city.

Woes on Unrepentant Towns

13 Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles that took place in you had taken place in Tyre (Tyros) and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. **14** But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the judgment than for you. **15** And you, Capernaum (Kapernaoum), who have been exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades. **16** The one who hears you hears Me, and the one who rejects you rejects Me; and the one who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me."

The Seventy Return with Joy

17 And the seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name." **18** And He said to them, "I was watching Satan fall like lightning out of heaven. **19** Look, I give you the authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy,

10:1 Num 11:16; Luke 9:52; Matt 10:1-4
10:2 Matt 9:36; 1 Tim 4:10,15,16; 1 Cor 3:6-9
10:3 Matt 10:16,22; Ezek 2:3-6; John 15:20
10:4 Luke 22:35; Luke 9:3-6; Matt 10:9,10
10:5 Isa 57:19; Gen 43:23; Judg 19:20
10:6 2 Thess 3:16; Ps 35:13; 2 Cor 2:15,16
10:7 Luke 9:4; Mark 6:10; Acts 16:15,34,40
10:8 1 Cor 10:27; Luke 10:10; Luke 9:48
10:9 Matt 3:2; Acts 28:7-10; Luke 10:11
10:10 Luke 9:5; Matt 10:14; Acts 18:6
10:11 Luke 10:9; Deut 30:11-14; Acts 13:26,40,46
10:12 Lam 4:6; Ezek 16:48; Ezek 16:49
10:13 Isa 23:1; Isa 23:2; Isa 23:4
10:14 Luke 12:47,48; John 15:22-25; Rom 2:1,27
10:15 Isa 14:13-15; Matt 4:13; Matt 11:23
10:16 Num 14:11; Exod 16:8; 1 Sam 8:7
10:17 Luke 10:1,9; Luke 9:1; Rom 16:20
10:18 Isa 14:12; Rev 9:1; John 12:31
10:19 Ps 91:13; Mark 16:18; Acts 28:5

10:1 *the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two* Only Luke tells of this wider mission ahead of Jesus. A matter was confirmed by two witnesses (Deut 19:15), and two could encourage, pray with and hold each other accountable. Moses had seventy elders (Num 11:16), and Genesis 10 lists about seventy nations, but Scripture does not say why Jesus chose that number. Some old Greek copies read seventy-two; it makes no difference to the meaning.

10:2 *pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest that He send out workers* Ripe grain does not wait. People are ready to hear, and too few will go and tell them. Before they go, they pray, and they pray for more workers. The harvest is the Lord's, and He sends. Have you ever prayed for God to send workers, and then realized He was sending you?

10:3 *as lambs in the midst of wolves* Lambs cannot defend themselves. Jesus did not hide the danger. Long Eastern greetings on the road would waste time on an urgent mission. Some would welcome them, and some would turn on them.

10:6 *if indeed the son of peace is there* Peace (shalom) meant wholeness and well-being from God. The son of peace is the person open to God's peace and ready for the message. If no one was, the blessing returned to them. They lost nothing by being turned away.

10:7 *the worker is worthy of his wages* They were to accept the hospitality given, gratefully, without moving around for a nicer place. Paul quotes these words and calls them Scripture (1 Tim 5:18). Those who give their lives to preaching should be supported by those they serve (1 Cor 9:14), and the worker must not be greedy or picky.

10:9 *The kingdom of God has drawn near to you* Eating what was set before them would matter more as the gospel moved into Gentile lands. The healings showed the kingdom's power and the message explained it. The kingdom had come near because the King was coming right behind them.

10:12 *more tolerable in that day for Sodom than for that city* Even a town that rejected them heard that the kingdom had come near. God destroyed wicked Sodom with fire (Gen 19), yet a town that rejects Jesus faces worse. The greater the light, the greater the responsibility. Sodom never saw the Son of God or heard His messengers.

10:13 *Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida* Towns near the north end of the lake, close to many of His miracles. Tyre and Sidon were Gentile coastal cities known for pride and idolatry (Ezek 28). Sackcloth was rough mourning cloth, and ashes on the head showed grief over sin. God knows not only what people do but what they would have done, and judgment will match what each knew.

10:15 *And you, Capernaum, who have been exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades* Capernaum, Jesus' home base (Matt 4:13), was honored above every town because the Son of God lived there. But honor saves no one; only faith does. Hades is the place of the dead, here the lowest depth. Today Capernaum and Chorazin are empty ruins, and even Bethsaida's site is debated.

10:16 *The one who hears you hears Me* Those who listened to the messengers were listening to Jesus, and those who turned them away turned away Jesus and the Father. When we faithfully share His word, people who reject it are rejecting Him, not us. That should make us both humble and bold.

10:17 *even the demons are subject to us in Your name* They came back thrilled. They knew the power was not their own. The name of Jesus stands for His person and authority. Demons do not fear us. They fear Him.

10:18 *I was watching Satan fall like lightning out of heaven* Teachers give a few answers. Some see Satan's first fall when he rebelled before man was made (Isa 14:12-15 is often read so). Others see the seventy's mission as a defeat that showed his kingdom breaking. Others look ahead to his being thrown down during the Tribulation (Rev 12:7-10). The plain point is that his power is not equal to God's, and his fall is as sure and sudden as lightning.

10:19 *the authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions* Real dangers on Israel's roads, and pictures of evil powers (Gen 3:15; Ps 91:13). This promise was for their mission, not a command to handle snakes. Paul survived a viper's bite (Acts 28:3-6) but did not go looking for one. No power of the enemy can separate God's people from Him (Rom 8:38-39).

and nothing will by any means injure you. **20** Yet do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you; but rather rejoice that your names were written in the heavens." **21** In that same hour Jesus (Iesous) rejoiced greatly in the spirit and said, "I praise You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You hid these things from ***the*** wise and intelligent and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for so it became well-pleasing before You." **22** "All things were delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son, and he to whom the Son wills to reveal ***Him***." **23** And having turned to the disciples privately, He said, "Blessed ***are*** the eyes that see what you see. **24** For I say to you that many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, and did not see ***it***, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear ***it***."

The Good Samaritan

25 And look, a certain lawyer stood up, testing Him and saying, "Teacher, having done what will I inherit eternal life?" **26** And He said to him, "What has been written in the law? How do you read?" **27** And answering, he said, "'You shall love ***the*** Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind,' and 'your neighbor as yourself.'" **28** And He said to him, "You have answered correctly; do this, and you will live." **29** But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" **30** And having taken ***it*** up, Jesus said, "A certain man was going down from Jerusalem (Hierousalem) to Jericho (Hiericho), and he fell among robbers, who, having both stripped him and inflicted wounds, went away, having left ***him*** half dead as he was. **31** And by chance a certain priest was going down on that road, and having seen him, he passed by on the opposite side. **32** And likewise a Levite also, having been at the place, having come and seen ***him***, passed by on the opposite side. **33** But a certain Samaritan, journeying, came to him, and having seen him, he felt compassion, **34** and having approached, he bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and having put him on his own animal, he brought him to an inn and took care of him. **35** And on the next day, having gone out, having taken out two denarii, he gave ***them*** to the innkeeper and said to him, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, I, when I return, will repay you.' **36** Which therefore of these three seems to you to have become a neighbor to the one who fell among the robbers?" **37** And he said, "The one who showed mercy toward him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go, and you do likewise."

10:20 Dan 12:1; Isa 4:3; Jer 17:13
10:21 Isa 66:1; Ps 8:2; Gen 14:19
10:22 Job 37:23; Prov 30:4; Isa 40:13
10:23 Mal 1:5; Matt 13:16,17
10:24 John 8:56; Heb 11:13,39; 1 Pet 1:10,11
10:25 Mic 6:6; Luke 18:18; Luke 7:30
10:26 Neh 13:1; Isa 8:20; Rom 3:19
10:27 Lev 19:18; Deut 6:5; Deut 30:6
10:28 Lev 18:5; Ezek 20:11,13,21; Matt 19:17
10:29 Luke 16:15; Luke 18:9-11; Lev 19:34
10:30 Josh 18:21; 2 Kgs 6:23; Ps 88:4
10:31 Eccl 9:11; Jer 5:31; Hos 5:1
10:32 Ps 109:25; Prov 27:10; Acts 18:17
10:33 Prov 27:10; Exod 2:6; 1 Kgs 8:50
10:34 Exod 23:4,5; Prov 24:17,18; Matt 5:43-45
10:35 Matt 20:2; Rom 16:23; Luke 14:13
10:36 Luke 7:42; Matt 17:25; Matt 21:28-31
10:37 1 John 3:16-18,23,24; Mic 6:8; Matt 23:23

10:20 *rejoice that your names were written in the heavens* A gentle correction. Power in ministry is exciting, but it is not the main thing. The greatest gift is what God has done for us. A name written in heaven means belonging to His people (Phil 4:3; Rev 21:27). Success comes and goes; that cannot be erased. If you know Christ, this is your deepest joy on good days and bad.
10:21 *You hid these things from the wise and intelligent and revealed them to little children* Luke speaks much of joy and of the Holy Spirit, and here they meet. The wise are those who think they know it all, like many of the scribes. The little children are the humble who know their need, like these ordinary followers. God does not reveal Himself to the proud, and Jesus rejoiced in His Father's plan.
10:22 *no one knows who the Son is except the Father* This sounds like John's Gospel. Jesus claims a relationship with the Father no one else has. We cannot reach God by our own wisdom. He shows Himself to us, and He does that only in the Son (John 1:18; 14:6).
10:24 *many prophets and kings desired to see what you see* Isaiah, David and Daniel wrote of the Messiah but did not see Him. The prophets searched for the time and Person their words pointed to (1 Pet 1:10-12). These disciples lived in the fulfillment. We have the full written word telling us who Jesus is, and that is a great blessing.
10:25 *having done what will I inherit eternal life* A lawyer here was an expert in the Law of Moses, like a scribe. A good question with a wrong motive: he was testing Jesus. And he wants to know what to do. He thought of eternal life as something to earn.
10:27 *You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart* Jesus sent him back to the Scriptures he claimed to know, and he answered well from Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18. Jesus named these the two greatest commandments (Matt 22:37-40). Love for God comes first, with every part of us, and love for others flows out of it.
10:28 *do this, and you will live* Jesus was not teaching that we earn eternal life. He showed the law's standard so the man could see how far short he fell. No one but Jesus has loved God and neighbor perfectly every moment. The law shows us our sin (Rom 3:20) and drives us to a Savior. If you try to be saved by doing, the standard is perfection. That is why we need grace.
10:29 *desiring to justify himself* To make himself look right. Many Jews counted only fellow Jews as neighbors, not Gentiles or Samaritans. If he could narrow the circle, he could say he had kept the law. We do the same when we decide whom we must love and whom we need not.
10:30 *he fell among robbers* The road from Jerusalem to Jericho drops about 3,300 feet in some fifteen miles of rocky desert, known for robbers hiding in caves. Jesus does not say who the man was. Stripped and unconscious, no one could tell if he was Jew or Gentile, rich or poor. He was a human being in need.
10:31 *he passed by on the opposite side* A priest offered sacrifices at the temple, and the Levites, from the tribe of Levi, assisted the priests. If anyone should have helped, they should. Jesus does not say why they did not. Some suggest fear of touching a dead body (Num 19:11), others fear of robbers. They knew the law of love and walked away. Religion without love is empty.
10:33 *But a certain Samaritan, journeying, came to him* The shock of the story. Jews and Samaritans despised each other, and the lawyer would never expect a Samaritan to be the good one. All three saw him. The difference was in what they felt and did. Compassion is pity that moves you to act.
10:34 *he bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine* The others moved away; he moved closer. Oil soothed and wine cleaned the wounds, a detail Luke the doctor would like. He walked so the hurt man could ride, and stayed through the night. Real love costs time, comfort and money.
10:35 *whatever more you spend, I, when I return, will repay you* A denarius was a day's wage; two would pay for some days of lodging and care. He gave freely, promised more, and took full responsibility for a stranger, maybe even an enemy.
10:37 *Go, and you do likewise* Jesus turned the question around: not who deserves my love, but whether I will show love to whoever is in front of me. The lawyer could not bring himself to say "the Samaritan." Many have seen Jesus in the Samaritan, coming to us half dead in sin and paying the cost to heal us. That is a true picture of what He did, but the main point is the command. The old reading that makes every detail stand for something is not the point. Who has God put on your road this week?

Mary and Martha

38 And it came to pass, as they were going, that He entered into a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha received Him into her house. **39** And she had a sister called Mary (Maria), who also, having sat down beside the feet of Jesus, was listening to His word. **40** But Martha was distracted about much serving; and having come up, she said, "Lord, does it not concern You that my sister has left me alone to serve? Tell her therefore that she help me." **41** And answering, Jesus said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things; **42** but there is need of one ***thing***; and Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her."

LUKE 11

Teach Us to Pray

1 And it came to pass, while He was in a certain place praying, when He ceased, one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray, just as John (Ioannes) also taught his disciples." **2** Then He said to them, "When you pray, say: 'Our Father who ***is*** in the heavens, let Your name be sanctified; let Your kingdom come; let Your will be done, as in heaven, also on the earth. **3** Give us each day our daily bread. **4** And forgive us our sins, for we ourselves also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil.'"

Ask, Seek, Knock

5 And He said to them, "Which of you will have a friend, and will go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves, **6** since a friend of mine has come to me from a journey, and I have nothing that I will set before him'; **7** and that one, answering from within, says, 'Do not cause me trouble; the door has already been shut, and my children are with me in the bed; I am not able, having risen, to give to you'? **8** I say to you, even if he will not give to him, having risen, because of his being his friend, yet because of his shamelessness, having risen, he will give him as many as he needs. **9** And I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. **10** For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. **11** Now which of you ***who is*** the father, ***if*** the son will ask for bread, will give him a stone? And if a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? **12** Or also if he asks for an egg, will he give

10:38 John 11:1-5; John 12:1-3; Luke 8:2,3
10:39 Luke 8:35; Prov 8:34; Acts 22:3
10:40 Luke 12:29; John 6:27; Matt 14:15
10:41 Phil 4:6; Matt 6:25-34; Mark 4:19
10:42 Ps 27:4; John 5:24; John 10:27,28
11:1 Luke 22:39-45; Luke 9:18,28; Ps 10:17
11:2 1 Kgs 8:43; Isa 63:16; Eccl 5:2
11:3 Exod 16:4; Prov 30:8; Matt 6:11,34
11:4 Matt 6:12; Matt 26:41; Matt 18:35
11:5 Luke 18:1-8
11:7 Luke 13:25; Luke 7:6; Gal 6:17
11:8 Luke 18:1-8; Matt 15:22-28; Col 4:12
11:9 Mark 11:24; John 16:23,24; Matt 21:22
11:10 James 5:11; Luke 18:1; Ps 31:22
11:11 Isa 49:15; Matt 7:9
11:12 Luke 10:19; Ezek 2:6; Rev 9:10

10:38 *a certain woman named Martha received Him into her house* The village was Bethany near Jerusalem, home of Martha, Mary and Lazarus (John 11:1). Welcoming Jesus was good. The story moves from loving your neighbor to loving God by listening to Him.
10:39 *having sat down beside the feet of Jesus, was listening to His word* The place of a student (Acts 22:3). It was unusual for a woman to sit as a rabbi's student, and Jesus welcomed her. Luke often shows His respect for women as disciples (8:1-3).
10:40 *Martha was distracted about much serving* Distracted means dragged in many directions. A meal for thirteen or more guests is a lot of work. She is upset with Mary and with Jesus too: "does it not concern You?" When we are stressed and overloaded, we can start to think God does not care.
10:42 *Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her* Saying Martha's name twice shows tender care, not anger. The one thing is to be with Jesus and hear His word. Jesus never says Martha's work was wrong, but serving that pulls us away from Him becomes a burden. The meal would be forgotten; what Mary received would last forever. Many of us are so busy working for Him that we spend little time with Him. Sit at His feet today.
11:1 *Lord, teach us to pray* The disciples had watched Jesus pray many times and saw the place prayer had in His life. The Gospels never say they asked Him to teach them to preach or work miracles. They asked Him to teach them to pray. Prayer does not come naturally. It has to be learned.
11:2 *Our Father who is in the heavens* The Jews knew God as the Father of their nation (Isa 63:16), but Jesus invites His followers to speak to Him as children to a loving father, a right that belongs to those who have trusted Christ (John 1:12; Gal 4:6). To sanctify is to set apart as holy; God's name stands for who He is. The first request is not for ourselves but that God be honored.
11:2 *let Your kingdom come* We pray for the day Christ returns to reign on the earth, and for His rule in hearts now. In heaven His will is done gladly and fully, and we ask for that here, starting with ourselves.
11:3 *Give us each day our daily bread* Bread stands for everything we need to live, asked a day at a time, as Israel received manna daily (Exod 16:4). Even with a full pantry, pray this. Every meal and paycheck is His gift, and asking keeps us humble and thankful.
11:4 *forgive us our sins, for we ourselves also forgive everyone who is indebted to us* Sin is a debt we owe God. We do not earn His forgiveness by forgiving, but a heart that holds grudges shows it has not understood how much it has been forgiven (Matt 18:21-35).
11:4 *do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil* God tempts no one to sin (James 1:13). This humbly asks Him to keep us from trials where we would fall and to rescue us in the test. Evil can mean evil in general or the evil one; we need help against both. Luke's form is shorter than Matthew's (Matt 6:9-13). The SLB's Received Text includes several phrases here that many older Greek copies of Luke lack, but every one is in Matthew, so nothing is lost. This is a pattern, not a magic formula (Matt 6:7).
11:6 *I have nothing that I will set before him* Travelers often walked in the cool of evening, and hospitality was a sacred duty. Having nothing to serve a guest was a real shame. A poor family in a one-room house slept together on mats; getting up meant waking everyone.
11:8 *because of his shamelessness* Boldness, not giving up, not caring about looking pushy. God is not a grumpy neighbor to be worn down. This argues from the lesser to the greater. If a tired neighbor gives to bold asking, how much more will our Father, who never sleeps (Ps 121:4), hear His children. Keep praying, boldly.
11:9 *ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock* The verbs carry the idea of keeping on, and each is stronger than the last: asking with words, seeking with effort, knocking until the door opens. This is not a blank check. Some ask with wrong motives (James 4:3), and we must ask by His will (1 John 5:14). God answers yes, wait, or with something better.
11:11 *if the son will ask for bread, will give him a stone* A small round loaf could look like a stone, a fish like a serpent, a curled scorpion like an egg. No father would play such a cruel trick on a hungry child. Even a poor father wants to give good things.

him a scorpion? **13** If you then, being evil, know ***how*** to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the Father who ***is*** from heaven give ***the*** Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"

A House Divided

14 And He was casting out a demon, and it was mute. And it came to pass, the demon having gone out, the mute ***man*** spoke; and the crowds marveled. **15** But some of them said, "By Beelzebul, the ruler of the demons, He casts out the demons." **16** And others, testing ***Him***, were seeking from Him a sign from heaven. **17** But He, knowing their thoughts, said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is made desolate, and a house against a house falls. **18** And if Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand?
Because you say that I cast out the demons by Beelzebul. **19** And if I cast out the demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast ***them*** out? Because of this they will be your judges. **20** But if I cast out the demons by ***the*** finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. **21** When the strong ***man***, fully armed, guards his own courtyard, his possessions are in peace; **22** but when one stronger than he, having come upon ***him***, overcomes him, he takes away his full armor in which he had trusted, and divides his spoils. **23** The one who is not with Me is against Me, and the one who does not gather with Me scatters.

The Return of an Unclean Spirit

24 When the unclean spirit goes out from the man, it passes through waterless places seeking rest; and not finding ***any***, it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came out.' **25** And having come, it finds ***it*** swept and put in order. **26** Then it goes and takes seven other spirits more evil than itself, and having entered, they dwell there; and the last ***state*** of that man becomes worse than the first." **27** And it came to pass, while He was saying these things, a certain woman from the crowd, having lifted up ***her*** voice, said to Him, "Blessed ***is*** the womb that bore You, and ***the*** breasts at which You nursed!" **28** But He said, "Rather, blessed ***are*** those who hear the word of God and keep it!"

The Sign of Jonah

29 And while the crowds were gathering together, He began to say, "This generation is evil; it seeks a sign, and a sign will not be given to it except the sign of Jonah (Ionas) the prophet. **30** For just as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so also the Son of Man will be to this generation. **31** ***The*** queen of ***the*** south will rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation and will condemn them, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and look, ***something*** greater than Solomon ***is*** here. **32** ***The*** men of Nineveh will stand up in the judgment with this generation and will condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and look, ***something*** greater than Jonah ***is*** here.

11:13 Matt 7:11; Hos 14:2; John 4:10
11:14 Matt 9:32,33; Matt 12:22,23; Mark 7:32-37
11:15 2 Kgs 1:2; Matt 9:34; Matt 12:24-30
11:16 Matt 12:38,39; Matt 16:1-4; Mark 8:11,12
11:17 Matt 9:4; Matt 12:25; Mark 3:23-26
11:18 Matt 12:26; Luke 11:15; Matt 12:31-34
11:19 Luke 9:49; Matt 12:27,28; Luke 11:31,32
11:20 Exod 8:19; Exod 31:18; Deut 9:10
11:21 Mark 3:27; Matt 12:29
11:22 Jer 31:11; Isa 49:24,25; Isa 53:12
11:23 Matt 12:30; Luke 9:50; Rev 3:15,16
11:24 Ps 63:1; Job 1:7; Job 2:2
11:25 Ps 81:11,12; Matt 12:44,45; 2 Thess 2:9-12
11:26 1 Sam 16:23; 1 Sam 19:10; John 5:14
11:27 1 Sam 1:23; Job 29:11; Prov 7:4
11:28 Luke 6:47,48; Luke 8:21; Isa 48:17,18
11:29 Jonah 3:4; Jonah 1:1; Luke 12:1
11:30 Jonah 1:17; Jonah 2:10; Jonah 1:1
11:31 2 Chr 9:1; 1 Kgs 10:1; Isa 54:17
11:32 Jonah 3:5; Jonah 1:2; Jonah 4:9

11:13 *how much more will the Father who is from heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him* Compared with God, even the best father is evil. Matthew says the Father gives good things (Matt 7:11); Luke names the greatest gift. Before Pentecost the disciples were to ask for the Spirit. Now every believer receives Him at the moment of faith (Rom 8:9; Eph 1:13), and we can still ask God to fill and lead us day by day (Eph 5:18).
11:14 *it was mute* The demon kept the man from speaking. No one doubted something amazing had happened. The question was what it meant.
11:15 *By Beelzebul, the ruler of the demons* A name for Satan, possibly from Baal-zebub, a Philistine god (2 Kgs 1:2). They could not deny the miracle, so they attacked its source. Others wanted a sign from heaven after watching a man set free. Hearts set against Jesus never have enough evidence. The problem is not the mind but the will.
11:18 *if Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand* It would be like a general shooting his own soldiers. Satan is evil, but not foolish. If Jesus was destroying the devil's work, He could not be working for the devil.
11:19 *by whom do your sons cast them out* Some Jewish exorcists tried to cast out demons (Acts 19:13), and no one accused them of working by Satan. Their own people showed how unfair the charge was.
11:20 *by the finger of God* When Pharaoh's magicians could not copy Moses' signs, they called it the finger of God (Exod 8:19). Matthew says the Spirit of God (Matt 12:28). If Jesus drove out demons by God's own power, the King was here and His kingdom had broken in.
11:22 *when one stronger than he, having come upon him, overcomes him* The strong man is Satan, holding people captive. Jesus is the stronger one who sets the captives free, and every demon cast out showed it. At the cross He disarmed the powers of darkness (Col 2:15). Satan is still active but defeated, and his end is sure (Rev 20:10).
11:23 *The one who is not with Me is against Me* In 9:50 Jesus told His disciples not to forbid a man serving in His name. Here He tells the crowd no one can be neutral about Him. You are either gathering with Him or scattering. Which is it for you?
11:25 *it finds it swept and put in order* Clean but empty. Getting rid of evil is not enough; a life must be filled with God. Reform without new birth leaves a person open to worse things. Many in Israel were glad to see demons driven out but would not receive the One who drove them out, like anyone who cleans up the outside but never gives his heart to Christ.
11:28 *blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it* The woman's praise of His mother was sincere. Jesus was not putting Mary down; she was blessed (1:42, 48), most of all because she believed God's word (1:38, 45). He turns from a family tie to what anyone can have. The greatest blessing is to hear God's word and obey it.
11:29 *except the sign of Jonah the prophet* They had seen many signs and wanted one on their terms. Jonah came to Nineveh as one brought back, in effect, from death after three days in the fish (Matt 12:40). Jesus' resurrection after three days would be the great sign. Jonah warned Nineveh, and they repented. Jesus warned Israel. Would they?
11:31 *The queen of the south* The queen of Sheba, from southern Arabia (1 Kgs 10:1-13), a Gentile who traveled far to hear Solomon's wisdom. These people had the wisdom of God standing in their streets and would not listen. Her example will testify against them at the judgment.
11:32 *something greater than Jonah is here* Nineveh, capital of cruel Assyria, repented when Jonah preached (Jonah 3:5-10). If pagans repented at less, how much more should God's people repent at the preaching of His Son? The same warning applies to anyone who has heard the gospel many times.

The Lamp of the Body

33 Now no one, having lit a lamp, puts ***it*** in a hidden place, nor under the basket, but on the lampstand, so that those who enter may see the light. **34** The lamp of the body is the eye. Therefore when your eye is clear, your whole body also is full of light; but when it is evil, your body also ***is*** full of darkness. **35** Watch out therefore lest the light that ***is*** in you is darkness. **36** If therefore your whole body ***is*** full of light, not having any part dark, the whole will be full of light, as when the lamp by ***its*** shining gives you light."

Woes to the Pharisees and Lawyers

37 And while He was speaking, a certain Pharisee was asking Him to dine with him; and having gone in, He reclined. **38** And the Pharisee, having seen ***it***, marveled that He did not first wash before the dinner. **39** Then the Lord said to him, "Now you Pharisees cleanse the outside of the cup and of the dish, but your inside is full of plundering and wickedness. **40** Fools! Did not the One who made the outside make the inside also? **41** But give ***as*** alms the things that are within, and look, all things are clean to you. **42** But woe to you Pharisees, because you tithe the mint and the rue and every herb, and you pass by justice and the love of God. These things you ought to have done, and not to leave those ***undone***. **43** Woe to you Pharisees, because you love the first seat in the synagogues and the greetings in the marketplaces. **44** Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you are like the unmarked tombs, and the men who walk over ***them*** do not know ***it***." **45** And answering, one of the lawyers says to Him, "Teacher, saying these things You insult us also." **46** And He said, "Woe to you lawyers also! Because you load men ***with*** burdens hard to bear, and you yourselves do not touch the burdens with one of your fingers. **47** Woe to you, because you build the tombs of the prophets, and your fathers killed them. **48** So you bear witness and consent to the works of your fathers; because they indeed killed them, and you build their tombs. **49** Because of this also the wisdom of God said, 'I will send to them prophets and apostles, and ***some*** of them they will kill and persecute, **50** so that the blood of all the prophets, which is being shed from ***the*** foundation of ***the*** world, may be required of this generation, **51** from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah (Zacharias), who perished between the altar and the house.' Yes, I say to you, it will be required of this generation. **52** Woe to you lawyers, because you have taken away the key of knowledge. You yourselves did not enter, and you hindered those who were entering." **53** And as He was saying these things to them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to press ***Him*** hard and to provoke

11:33 Luke 8:16,17; Matt 5:15; Mark 4:21,22
11:34 Matt 6:22,23; 2 Cor 11:3; Ps 119:18
11:35 Prov 16:25; 2 Pet 1:9; Prov 26:12
11:36 Ps 119:97-105; Prov 2:1-11; Prov 4:18,19
11:37 Luke 7:36; Luke 14:1; 1 Cor 9:19-23
11:38 Matt 15:2,3; Mark 7:2-5; John 3:25
11:39 Ezek 23:36; Titus 1:15; Gen 6:5
11:40 Luke 12:20; 1 Cor 15:36; Luke 24:25
11:41 Luke 12:33; Luke 16:9; Titus 1:15
11:42 Luke 18:12; Mic 6:8; Deut 10:12,13
11:43 Isa 10:1; Jer 23:1; Ezek 13:3
11:44 Num 19:16; Isa 10:1; Jer 23:1
11:45 Jer 6:10; 1 Kgs 22:8; Jer 20:8
11:46 Isa 10:1; Jer 23:1; Ezek 13:3
11:47 2 Chr 24:19; Isa 10:1; Jer 23:1
11:48 2 Chr 36:16; Ezek 18:19; Num 32:14
11:49 Lam 4:13; 1 Cor 1:30; Col 2:3
11:50 Gen 9:5; Num 35:33; 2 Kgs 24:4
11:51 Gen 4:8; 2 Chr 24:20-21; Jer 7:28
11:52 Isa 10:1; Jer 23:1; Ezek 13:3
11:53 Jer 20:10; Ps 22:12,13; Isa 9:12

11:33 *no one, having lit a lamp, puts it in a hidden place* God has not hidden the light. In Jesus He has put it where everyone can see. The problem is not a lack of light.
11:34 *The lamp of the body is the eye* A clear eye is healthy and focused; an evil eye is diseased, and in the Bible it can picture a greedy, stingy heart. The problem was not the light but their eyes. How we look at Jesus decides whether we live in light or darkness.
11:35 *Watch out therefore lest the light that is in you is darkness* A person can think he sees clearly while he is in the dark, as the Pharisees did (John 9:40-41). Jesus wants every corner of our lives open to His light. Ask the Lord to show you any area you have kept from Him.
11:38 *He did not first wash before the dinner* Not about clean hands but a ceremony. Pharisees, a strict group who kept the Law and many added traditions, washed hands in a set way before meals as a ritual of purity (Mark 7:3-4). The Law of Moses did not require it.
11:39 *you Pharisees cleanse the outside of the cup and of the dish* Who would wash the outside of a cup and leave the inside dirty? They looked clean, but their hearts were full of plundering, grabbing what belongs to others. God made the whole person, inside and out. Outward religion cannot cover an unclean heart.
11:41 *give as alms the things that are within* Alms are gifts to the poor. Some read this as give from the heart, give yourself; others as give what is inside the cup and dish, your food and goods, to the poor instead of grabbing for yourself. Either way, the cure for a greedy heart is generous love.
11:42 *you tithe the mint and the rue and every herb, and you pass by justice and the love of God* The Law required a tenth of grain, wine, oil and produce (Deut 14:22-23), and they even tithed garden herbs. Careful with tiny things, careless with big things. Jesus does not call tithing wrong; it was not enough. Small things done right do not make up for neglecting justice and love.
11:43 *you love the first seat in the synagogues* The first seats faced the people, where everyone could see you, and religious leaders were greeted with honored titles. Their religion was about their image. Do we serve to be seen, or to please God?
11:44 *you are like the unmarked tombs* A hypocrite was a masked actor. Touching a grave made a person unclean for seven days (Num 19:16), so tombs were marked white. People passed the Pharisees thinking them holy and were made unclean without knowing it. Instead of leading people to God, they spread spiritual death.
11:46 *you load men with burdens hard to bear* Most of the Pharisees' rules came from the lawyers' teaching, and Jesus did not back down. They piled rules on the people, excused themselves, and gave no help to the crushed. His yoke is easy and His burden light (Matt 11:28-30).
11:47 *you build the tombs of the prophets, and your fathers killed them* It sounds like honor, but it showed they were like their fathers. They honored dead prophets while rejecting their living word, and they were about to kill the greatest Prophet of all. Honoring God's servants means listening to God's message.
11:49 *I will send to them prophets and apostles* God had planned and said that His messengers would be sent and rejected.
11:51 *from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah* Abel was the first murdered (Gen 4:8); Zechariah was stoned in the temple court (2 Chr 24:20-22). Chronicles is the last book of the Hebrew Bible, so this spans the Old Testament first to last. The generation that rejected God's own Son would bear the weight of all that rejection. That judgment fell when Jerusalem was destroyed in A.D. 70.
11:52 *you have taken away the key of knowledge* The true understanding of God's word, which opens the door to knowing Him. The teachers of Scripture buried it under tradition, did not go in, and kept others out. A teacher who twists God's word blocks the way for others.

Him to speak about many things, **54** lying in wait for Him and seeking to catch something out of His mouth, so that they might accuse Him.

LUKE 12

Whom to Fear

1 In these ***circumstances***, when the myriads of the crowd had gathered together, so as to trample on one another, He began to say to His disciples first, "Be on guard for yourselves against the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. **2** Now nothing is covered up that will not be revealed, and ***nothing is*** hidden that will not be known. **3** Therefore whatever you have said in the darkness will be heard in the light, and what you have spoken into the ear in the inner rooms will be proclaimed on the housetops. **4** Now I say to you, My friends, do not fear those who kill the body, and after these things do not have anything more to do. **5** But I will show you whom you should fear: fear the One who, after the killing, has authority to cast into Gehenna. Yes, I say to you, fear Him. **6** Are not five sparrows sold for two assaria? And not one of them is forgotten before God. **7** But even the hairs of your head have all been numbered. Therefore do not fear; you are more valuable than many sparrows. **8** Now I say to you, everyone who confesses Me before men, the Son of Man also will confess him before the angels of God; **9** but the one who has denied Me before men will be denied before the angels of God. **10** And everyone who will speak a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but to the one who has blasphemed against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven. **11** And when they bring you before the synagogues and the rulers and the authorities, do not be anxious how or what you should answer in defense, or what you should say; **12** for the Holy Spirit will teach you in that same hour what you must say."

The Rich Fool

13 Then someone from the crowd said to Him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me." **14** But He said to him, "Man, who appointed Me a judge or divider over you?" **15** And He said to them, "Watch out and guard yourselves from covetousness, because even when anyone has abundance, his life is not from his possessions." **16** Then He spoke a parable to them, saying, "The land of a certain rich man produced abundantly. **17** And he was reasoning within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, because I do not have ***a place*** where I will store my fruits?' **18** And he said, 'This I will do: I will tear down my barns and build greater ***ones***, and I

11:54 Mark 12:13; Matt 22:15,18,35; Ps 37:32,33
12:1 James 3:17; 1 Cor 5:7,8; 1 Pet 2:1
12:2 Luke 8:17; Mark 4:22; Eccl 12:14
12:3 Job 24:15; Dan 2:22; Matt 10:27
12:4 Isa 51:7; Jer 26:14; Isa 8:12
12:5 Exod 1:17; Job 37:24; Ps 89:7
12:6 Matt 10:29; Luke 12:24,27; Ps 50:10,11
12:7 1 Sam 14:45; Matt 6:26; Luke 21:18
12:8 1 Sam 2:30; Matt 10:32,33; Rom 10:9,10
12:9 Mark 8:38; 2 Tim 2:12; Luke 9:26
12:10 Matt 12:31,32; 1 John 5:16; 1 Tim 1:13
12:11 Matt 10:17-20; Matt 23:34; Acts 4:5-7
12:12 Luke 21:15; Acts 4:8; Exod 4:11
12:13 1 Tim 6:5; Luke 6:45; Ezek 33:31
12:14 Exod 2:14; Rom 2:1,3; Rom 9:20
12:15 Ps 37:16; Heb 13:5; 1 Tim 6:6-8
12:16 Gen 26:12-14; Gen 41:47-49; Job 12:6
12:17 Luke 12:22,29; Luke 10:25; Luke 16:3
12:18 Luke 12:21; Luke 18:4,6; Ps 17:14

11:54 *seeking to catch something out of His mouth* From now on they were openly hostile, hunting, not seeking truth. The road to the cross becomes plain. Yet Jesus would not soften His words to save Himself. He loved them enough to tell the truth. Do we love people enough to do the same, gently and honestly?

12:1 *Be on guard for yourselves against the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy* A myriad is ten thousand, so this was a huge, uncounted crowd, Jesus at the height of His popularity. Yet He spoke to His disciples first. A little yeast works through the whole lump. Hypocrisy starts small, a bit of putting on a show, and spreads through a life and a church. Having just left a Pharisee's table (11:37-54), Jesus warns His own not to catch the disease.

12:3 *will be proclaimed on the housetops* Hypocrisy is foolish because it cannot last. People called out news from Israel's flat roofs. What we whisper in secret will one day be announced, for God will judge the secrets of men (Rom 2:16). Live today as if every word and deed will be made public, because one day it will.

12:5 *fear the One who, after the killing, has authority to cast into Gehenna* Jesus says a hard thing as a friend: men can kill the body, and that is all. Gehenna, Jesus' word for hell, was the Valley of Hinnom south of Jerusalem, where children had once been burned to false gods (Jer 7:31). It became a picture of final punishment. The One to fear is God. This fear is not terror that drives us from Him but deep respect that keeps us faithful when men threaten us.

12:6 *Are not five sparrows sold for two assaria* An assarion was a small copper coin, about a sixteenth of a day's wage, and sparrows were the poor man's food. Matthew says two for one assarion (Matt 10:29). Here five sell for two, so the fifth was thrown in free. Even that one is not forgotten by God.

12:7 *even the hairs of your head have all been numbered* God knows you that closely. Here are both sides of the fear of God. Fear Him, and you need fear nothing else, because He cares for you.

12:8 *everyone who confesses Me before men* To confess Jesus is to say openly that you belong to Him. When we own Him before people, He will own us before heaven.

12:9 *the one who has denied Me before men will be denied before the angels of God* This speaks of a settled refusal to own Christ. Peter denied Jesus in a moment of fear and was restored (22:61-62; John 21:15-19), so there is hope for the believer who fails and repents. But a life that never confesses Christ shows a heart that never belonged to Him.

12:10 *to the one who has blasphemed against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven* Blasphemy is insulting or slandering God. Many misunderstood Jesus, even His brothers (John 7:5), and later repented. Blasphemy against the Spirit is calling the Spirit's work through Jesus Satan's work (11:15), a settled, knowing rejection of His witness to Christ. The Spirit brings people to repentance, so finally rejecting Him shuts the only door. Some hold it could be done only while Jesus was on earth; others say it is any final, hardened unbelief. If you worry that you have committed it, that worry is good evidence you have not.

12:12 *the Holy Spirit will teach you in that same hour what you must say* Jesus told His followers they would be put on trial. Acts shows it again and again: Peter and John before the Sanhedrin (Acts 4:8-13), Stephen (Acts 6:10), Paul before kings (Acts 26). This does not excuse us from studying God's word. It is a promise for the moment of trial. The Spirit will not leave us on our own.

12:14 *who appointed Me a judge or divider over you* Rabbis were often asked to settle inheritance disputes; the oldest son got a double share (Deut 21:17). Jesus did not come to sort out family property. He came to deal with the heart. The man had heard Jesus speak of eternal matters, and all he could think about was his money.

12:15 *his life is not from his possessions* Covetousness is the craving for more that never gets satisfied, and Paul calls it idolatry (Col 3:5). Advertising tells us every day that the next purchase will make us happy. It never does. You can have plenty and still be empty.

12:17 *What shall I do, because I do not have a place where I will store my fruits* A good harvest was not wrong; God sends rain and sun, and the man did not steal. But listen to him: I, my and me over and over. He never mentions God or anyone else. His whole world is himself.

will store there all my produce and my goods. **19** And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; rest, eat, drink, be merry."' **20** But God said to him, 'Fool! This night they are demanding your soul from you; and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' **21** So ***is*** the one who treasures up for himself and is not rich toward God."

Do Not Be Anxious

22 And He said to His disciples, "Because of this I say to you, do not be anxious for your life, what you will eat, nor for the body, what you will put on. **23** The life is more than the food, and the body ***more*** than the clothing. **24** Consider the ravens, that they neither sow nor reap; they have no storeroom nor barn, and God feeds them. How much more valuable are you than the birds! **25** And which of you, being anxious, is able to add to his lifespan approximately 1.5 feet (one cubit)? **26** If then you are not able ***to do*** even the least, why are you anxious about the rest? **27** Consider the lilies, how they grow: they do not labor nor do they spin; but I say to you, not even Solomon in all his glory was clothed like one of these. **28** But if God so clothes the grass in the field, which is ***here*** today and tomorrow is thrown into ***the*** furnace, how much more you, ***you*** of little faith! **29** And you, do not seek what you will eat or what you will drink, and do not be unsettled. **30** For the nations of the world seek all these things; and your Father knows that you need these things. **31** But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things will be added to you. **32** Do not fear, little flock, because your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom. **33** Sell your possessions and give alms; make for yourselves purses that do not grow old, an unfailing treasure in the heavens, where a thief does not come near nor a moth destroys. **34** For where your treasure is, there your heart also will be.

Ready for the Master's Return

35 Let your waists be girded and the lamps burning; **36** and you ***be*** like men who are waiting for their master, when he will return from the wedding feasts, so that when he has come and knocked, they may immediately open to him. **37** Blessed ***are*** those slaves whom the master, having come, will find watching. Truly I say to you that he will gird himself and have them recline ***at table***, and having come up, he will serve them. **38** And if he comes in the second watch, and comes in the third watch, and finds ***them*** so, blessed are those slaves. **39** But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what hour the thief is coming, he would have watched and would not have allowed his house to be broken

12:19 Eccl 2:24; Eccl 6:2; Isa 56:12
12:20 Ps 73:19; Job 36:20; Ps 14:1
12:21 Ps 62:10; Prov 13:7; Jer 51:13
12:22 1 Sam 9:5; Phil 4:6; Heb 13:5
12:23 Job 1:12; Job 2:4,6; Prov 13:8
12:24 Ps 147:9; Lev 11:15; Job 38:41
12:25 Matt 5:36; Luke 19:3; Matt 6:27
12:26 Ps 39:6; Eccl 7:13; Luke 12:29
12:27 1 Kgs 10:1; 2 Chr 9:1; 1 Kgs 10:2
12:28 Matt 14:31; 1 Pet 1:24; Luke 8:25
12:29 Luke 22:35; Matt 6:31; Luke 12:22
12:30 Matt 6:32; Eph 4:17; 1 Pet 4:2-4
12:31 1 Tim 4:8; 1 Kgs 3:11-13; Matt 6:33
12:32 Isa 40:11; Heb 12:28; Eph 1:5-9
12:33 Matt 19:21; Luke 18:22; Acts 2:45
12:34 Matt 6:21; Col 3:1-3; Phil 3:20
12:35 Eph 6:14; 1 Pet 1:13; Matt 25:1,4-10
12:36 Rev 3:20; Luke 2:25-30; Gen 49:18
12:37 Rev 14:13; John 13:4,5; Luke 12:43
12:38 Matt 25:6; 1 Thess 5:4,5
12:39 Matt 24:43,44; 2 Pet 3:10; Rev 3:3

12:19 *Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years* His plan was to keep it all. He thought he had many years and that goods could satisfy a soul. He was wrong on both counts (James 4:13-15).
12:20 *Fool! This night they are demanding your soul from you* In the Bible a fool lives as if there is no God (Ps 14:1). This man was a success by the world's standards and a fool by God's. His life was a loan, and it was being called in. He planned for many years and had one night. Have you ever noticed that a hearse never pulls a trailer?
12:21 *is not rich toward God* The problem was not that he was rich but that he was rich only for himself. To be rich toward God is to know Him, trust Him, and use what He gives for His kingdom and for others (1 Tim 6:17-19).
12:22 *do not be anxious for your life* Jesus turns to His disciples, many of them poor. The rich man's problem was greed; the poor man's temptation is worry. Both put trust in things instead of God. God gave you life. Will He not also give what you need to live?
12:24 *Consider the ravens* Unclean birds under the Law (Lev 11:15), with no barns at all, yet God feeds them (Ps 147:9). This does not mean we should not work; birds work hard for their food. It means we should not worry. Do your work, and trust God with the outcome.
12:25 *approximately 1.5 feet* The SLB gives the cubit, the length from elbow to fingertip, as its modern measure. Here it pictures adding even a little time to your life. Worry cannot do it. It changes nothing except us, for the worse, stealing today's strength and doing nothing about tomorrow's trouble.
12:27 *not even Solomon in all his glory was clothed like one of these* Spinning was making thread. The wildflowers of Galilee do nothing for their beauty, yet outshine Israel's richest king.
12:28 *how much more you, you of little faith* Dry grass fueled ovens. If God dresses what lasts a day so beautifully, He will clothe His children. Worry is a faith problem. It forgets who our Father is.
12:30 *your Father knows that you need these things* Unsettled pictures a ship tossed on the waves. The nations are those who do not know God, so it is natural for them to chase food and clothes. We have a Father who knows our needs before we ask (Matt 6:8).
12:31 *seek the kingdom of God, and all these things will be added to you* This is the answer to worry. Put God's rule first in your choices, time and money, and He will take care of the rest. It is a promise not of riches but of provision: everything we need to do His will.
12:32 *Do not fear, little flock* A tender verse. His followers are small and weak, like sheep, and the world may not think much of them. But it was the Father's joy to give them the kingdom. If He has promised you His kingdom, why worry about the price of groceries? The greater gift guarantees the lesser.
12:33 *Sell your possessions and give alms* Jesus told one rich ruler to sell everything because money was his god (18:22). The Jerusalem church sold property to help the needy (Acts 2:44-45), but Peter said it was voluntary (Acts 5:4). Hold your things loosely and be generous. Money given for God's work becomes treasure no thief can steal and no moth can eat.
12:34 *where your treasure is, there your heart also will be* Your heart follows your money. If you want to know what you love, look at your bank statement. If you want to love God more, start putting your treasure into His work.
12:35 *Let your waists be girded and the lamps burning* Now Jesus turns to readiness for His return. Men tucked their long robes into a belt to work or travel. Burning lamps meant staying awake at night, ready.
12:36 *when he will return from the wedding feasts* A wedding feast could last for days, and no one knew when the master would get home. Good servants stayed up so they could open the moment he knocked.
12:37 *he will gird himself and have them recline at table, and having come up, he will serve them* No master in that day served his slaves, yet Jesus, the Master, will. He did it once when He washed His disciples' feet (John 13:4-5), and He will reward His faithful servants beyond anything they imagine.
12:38 *if he comes in the second watch, and comes in the third watch* Counting four watches as the Romans did, these were the dead of night, about nine to three. Even if He comes late, blessed are those He finds ready.

into. **40** You also therefore be ready, because the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect." **41** Then Peter (Petros) said to Him, "Lord, are You speaking this parable to us, or also to all?" **42** And the Lord said, "Who then is the faithful and wise manager whom the master will set over his household servants, to give ***them*** the measure of grain in season? **43** Blessed ***is*** that slave whom his master, having come, will find doing so. **44** In truth I say to you that he will set him over all his possessions. **45** But if that slave says in his heart, 'My master delays to come,' and begins to beat the male servants and the female servants, and to eat and to drink and to get drunk, **46** the master of that slave will come on a day that he does not expect and at an hour that he does not know, and will cut him in two and will assign his portion with the unfaithful. **47** And that slave who knew the will of his master and did not prepare nor do according to his will, will be beaten ***with*** many ***blows***; **48** but the one who did not know, and did things worthy of blows, will be beaten ***with*** few. And everyone to whom much was given, much will be required from him; and to whom they entrusted much, they will ask of him all the more.

Not Peace but Division

49 I came to cast fire into the earth, and what do I wish, if it has already been kindled? **50** But I have a baptism to be baptized ***with***, and how I am distressed until it is accomplished! **51** Do you think that I have come to give peace on the earth? No, I say to you, but rather division. **52** For from now on there will be five in one house divided, three against two and two against three. **53** Father will be divided against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law."

Reading the Times

54 And He was also saying to the crowds, "When you see the cloud rising from ***the*** west, immediately you say, 'A rainstorm is coming,' and so it happens. **55** And when ***you see*** a south wind blowing, you say, 'There will be scorching heat,' and it happens. **56** Hypocrites! You know ***how*** to discern the appearance of the sky and of the earth, but how is it that you do not discern this time? **57** And why, even of yourselves, do you not judge what is righteous? **58** For as you are going with your adversary before a ruler, on the way give effort to be released from him, lest he drag you to the judge, and the judge hand you over to the officer, and the officer throw you into prison. **59** I say to you, you will certainly not come out from there until you have paid even the last lepton."

12:40 Luke 21:34-36; Matt 24:42,44; Matt 25:13
12:41 Mark 13:37; Mark 14:37; 1 Pet 4:7
12:42 Matt 24:45,46; Luke 19:15-19; Matt 25:20-23
12:43 Isa 56:2
12:44 Luke 22:29,30; Luke 19:17-19; Dan 12:2,3
12:45 1 Kgs 22:27; Isa 56:11; Isa 56:12
12:46 Job 20:29; Prov 7:19; Isa 56:12
12:47 Dan 5:22; James 4:17; John 9:41
12:48 Lev 5:17; Num 15:29; Gen 39:8
12:49 Mal 4:1; Joel 2:30,31; Mal 3:2,3
12:50 John 19:30; Matt 20:17-22; Mark 10:32-38
12:51 Matt 10:34-36; Luke 12:49; Zech 11:7,8,10,11,14
12:52 Mic 7:6; Acts 14:1-4; Acts 28:24
12:53 Mic 7:6; Zech 13:2-6; Matt 10:21,22
12:54 1 Kgs 18:44,45; Matt 16:2-4
12:55 Job 37:17
12:56 Matt 16:3; Matt 24:32,33; 1 Chr 12:32
12:57 Deut 32:29; Matt 15:10-14; Matt 21:21,32
12:58 Matt 5:23-26; Matt 18:30; Prov 25:8,9
12:59 Mark 12:42; Matt 18:34; Luke 16:26

12:40 *the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect* No thief announces his hour. Being ready means being right with God and living faithfully now, not planning to get serious later. In context Jesus speaks of His coming as Son of Man to set up His kingdom, when He returns visibly at the end of the Tribulation (Matt 24:29-31; Rev 19:11-16). Scripture also teaches that before the Tribulation He will come for His church (John 14:1-3; 1 Thess 4:13-18). No signs must come first, and no one knows the day. Are you ready to meet Him today?
12:41 *are You speaking this parable to us, or also to all* Jesus does not answer directly. His next parable speaks to anyone given responsibility in God's house, especially leaders, while the call to be ready is for all.
12:42 *the faithful and wise manager* A slave put in charge of the others, seeing they got their food on time. The picture fits pastors and teachers who feed God's people His word (1 Pet 5:2-4), and every believer given something to look after for God.
12:44 *he will set him over all his possessions* The blessing goes to the one found doing his job when the master arrives. Faithfulness now leads to greater responsibility in His kingdom (19:17).
12:45 *My master delays to come* This slave decided the master was not coming soon, so he could do as he pleased. Peter warned of scoffers who mock the promise of His coming (2 Pet 3:3-4).
12:46 *will cut him in two and will assign his portion with the unfaithful* A picture of severe punishment. His place is with those who never truly believed. His behavior showed he never belonged to the master at all.
12:47 *will be beaten with many blows* There are degrees of punishment. God is just, and those who knew more will be held more responsible.
12:48 *everyone to whom much was given, much will be required from him* One of Luke's most quoted verses, and a sobering one. Most of us have Bibles in our homes, churches on our streets and teaching at our fingertips. Much has been given to us. What are we doing with it?
12:49 *I came to cast fire into the earth* Fire often pictures judgment and purifying; John said Jesus would baptize with the Spirit and fire (3:16). His coming forces people to decide, and that decision divides and refines.
12:50 *I have a baptism to be baptized with* His death, being plunged into suffering and God's judgment against sin on the cross (Mark 10:38). He felt its weight walking toward Jerusalem, pressed in until it was done. He did not look forward to the pain but to finishing the work.
12:51 *Do you think that I have come to give peace on the earth* He is the Prince of Peace (Isa 9:6). He gives peace with God to those who trust Him (Rom 5:1) and will bring peace to the earth when He reigns. But His first coming divides, because some receive Him and some reject Him.
12:53 *Father will be divided against son* Jesus echoes Micah 7:6. Many believers know this pain when one person in a family comes to Christ. Jesus does not want division for its own sake, but He is worth following even when it costs our family's approval.
12:56 *how is it that you do not discern this time* Clouds off the sea meant rain and a south wind off the desert meant heat. They could predict the weather but could not see the Messiah standing before them, with miracles, fulfilled prophecies and the preaching of John and Jesus. They could judge what was right for themselves if willing. Many today know everything about sports, stocks or politics but will not think about their own souls.
12:59 *until you have paid even the last lepton* Settle on the way to court before you reach the judge, or you pay to the lepton, the smallest copper coin; you would pay every last cent. The picture is our case before God. We are guilty and on the road to judgment. Now is the time to be reconciled, while still on the way. After death it is too late (Heb 9:27; 2 Cor 6:2).

LUKE 13

Repent or Perish

1 Now some were present at that very time, reporting to Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate (Pilatos) had mixed with their sacrifices. **2** And answering, Jesus (Iesous) said to them, "Do you think that these Galileans were sinners beyond all the Galileans, because they have suffered such things? **3** No, I say to you; but unless you repent, you will all perish likewise. **4** Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, do you think that these were debtors beyond all the men who dwell in Jerusalem (Hierousalem)? **5** No, I say to you; but unless you repent, you will all perish likewise."

The Barren Fig Tree

6 Then He was speaking this parable: "A certain ***man*** had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and did not find ***any***. **7** Then he said to the vinedresser, 'Look, ***for*** three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree and do not find ***any***. Cut it down; why does it even use up the ground?' **8** And answering, he says to him, 'Sir, leave it this year also, until I dig around it and put in manure; **9** and if indeed it bears fruit—but if not, in the future you will cut it down.'"

A Bent Woman Healed on the Sabbath

10 Now He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. **11** And look, ***there*** was a woman having a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and she was bent over and was not able to straighten up completely. **12** And having seen her, Jesus called ***her*** to ***Him*** and said to her, "Woman, you have been released from your infirmity." **13** And He laid ***His*** hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and she was glorifying God. **14** But answering, the ruler of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, was saying to the crowd, "There are six days in which ***one*** must work; therefore coming on these, be healed, and not on the day of the Sabbath." **15** Then the Lord answered him and said, "Hypocrite! Does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or ***his*** donkey from the stall, and having led ***it*** away, give ***it*** drink? **16** And this ***woman***, being a daughter of Abraham (Abraam), whom Satan has bound, look, ten and eight years, was it not necessary ***for her*** to be untied from this bond on the day of the Sabbath?" **17** And as He was saying these things, all those who were opposed to Him were being put to shame; and all the crowd was rejoicing at all the glorious things that were being done by Him.

The Mustard Seed and the Leaven

18 Then He was saying, "To what is the kingdom of God like?

13:1 Acts 5:37; Lam 2:20; Ezek 9:5-7
13:2 John 9:2; Acts 28:4; Luke 13:4
13:3 Matt 3:2,10-12; Matt 12:45; Luke 13:5
13:4 John 9:7,11; Neh 3:15; Luke 11:4
13:5 Luke 13:3; Ezek 18:30; Isa 28:10-13
13:6 Isa 5:1; Isa 5:2; Isa 5:3
13:7 Lev 19:23; Dan 4:14; Isa 5:2
13:8 Josh 7:7; Exod 32:11-13,30-32; Exod 34:9
13:9 Deut 20:19; Dan 3:15; Dan 4:14
13:10 Luke 4:15,16,44
13:11 Ps 146:8; Luke 13:16; Luke 8:2
13:12 Ps 146:8; Luke 6:8-10; Ps 107:20
13:13 Ps 146:8; Luke 18:43; Ps 103:1-5
13:14 Exod 20:9; Lev 23:3; Exod 16:26
13:15 Exod 35:2; Luke 14:5; Acts 13:9,10
13:16 Luke 19:9; Luke 3:8; John 8:44
13:17 Isa 45:24; Isa 66:5; Ps 132:18
13:18 Luke 13:20; Luke 7:31; Lam 2:13

13:1 *the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices* Pontius Pilate governed Judea from about A.D. 26 to 36 and was known for harshness and contempt for Jewish feelings. His soldiers killed Galileans offering sacrifices in the temple area. No other ancient writer records this event, but it fits what we know of him. The reporters may have wanted Jesus to speak against Rome, or thought the victims must have done something terrible.

13:3 *unless you repent, you will all perish likewise* Many believed great suffering meant great sin, like Job's friends (Job 4:7) and the disciples (John 9:2). Jesus does not explain the tragedy; He turns it into a warning. The question is not why they died but whether you are ready to die. To repent is to change your mind about sin and God and turn from sin to Him.

13:4 *those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell* Siloam was in the south part of Jerusalem, with a pool of that name (John 9:7). Debtors means sinners who owe God. One tragedy came from a cruel ruler, the other from a falling building, and the dead were no worse than anyone else. When we hear of a disaster, the right response is not to judge the victims but to examine our own hearts.

13:7 *for three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree and do not find any* Fig trees grew in vineyards, and vine and fig both picture Israel (Hos 9:10; Isa 5:1-7). A young fig takes time to bear, but three years of nothing meant something was wrong. It used up the ground and gave nothing back. Jesus' ministry had run about three years, though that link should not be pressed. God had looked for the fruit of repentance in Israel and had not found it.

13:8 *leave it this year also, until I dig around it and put in manure* The vinedresser asked one more year to loosen the soil and fertilize it, giving the tree every chance. This pictures God's patience and its limit (2 Pet 3:9). For Israel, judgment came in A.D. 70 when Rome destroyed Jerusalem and the temple. For each of us a day will come when it is too late. Do not mistake His patience for approval.

13:11 *a woman having a spirit of infirmity eighteen years* Luke's last scene of Jesus teaching in a synagogue. Infirmity is weakness or disease. Luke the doctor notes she could not stand straight at all; for eighteen years she looked at the ground. Her trouble came from a spirit, and Jesus says Satan had bound her (13:16). Not every illness comes from a demon, but hers did.

13:13 *immediately she was made straight, and she was glorifying God* She did not ask; Jesus noticed her and called her. After eighteen years she stood up and looked people in the eye, and the first thing she did was praise God. Jesus sees the people others overlook, bent over by burdens no one notices. He sees you too.

13:14 *indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath* The synagogue ruler did not dare speak to Jesus, so he scolded the crowd. The Law never called healing work; that came from rabbinic tradition. A woman was free after eighteen years, and all he could see was a broken rule. When our religion makes us angry about someone else's blessing, something is badly wrong.

13:15 *Does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey* Even the strict rabbis let a farmer lead his animals to water on the Sabbath. They would not let an animal go thirsty one day.

13:16 *this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound* A Jewish woman, one of God's covenant people. If you can untie an animal, how much more should she be untied from Satan's chains? God gave the Sabbath for rest and blessing (Mark 2:27), so it was the perfect day for her freedom.

13:17 *all those who were opposed to Him were being put to shame* The leaders were embarrassed and the people glad. Again and again, those with the most to lose opposed Him most, and those with the most need received Him gladly.

And to what will I compare it? **19** It is like a grain of mustard, which a man, having taken, cast into his own garden; and it grew and became a great tree, and the birds of the sky nested in its branches." **20** And again He said, "To what will I compare the kingdom of God? **21** It is like leaven, which a woman, having taken, hid in approximately 21 quarts (three seahs) of flour until all was leavened."

The Narrow Door

22 And He was going through towns and villages, teaching and making ***His*** way toward Jerusalem. **23** Then someone said to Him, "Lord, are those who are being saved few?" And He said to them, **24** "Strive to enter through the narrow gate; for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able. **25** From whenever the master of the house has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and to knock at the door, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us,' and answering, he will say to you, 'I do not know you, where you are from,' **26** then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in your presence, and you taught in our streets.' **27** And he will say, 'I say to you, I do not know you, where you are from. Depart from me, all ***you*** workers of unrighteousness.' **28** There will be the weeping and the gnashing of the teeth there, when you see Abraham and Isaac (Isaak) and Jacob (Iakob) and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but yourselves being cast outside. **29** And they will come from east and west, and from north and south, and will recline in the kingdom of God. **30** And look, there are last who will be first, and there are first who will be last."

Jesus Grieves over Jerusalem

31 On that same day certain Pharisees came, saying to Him, "Go out and proceed from here, because Herod (Herodes) wants to kill You." **32** And He said to them, "Having gone, say to this fox, 'Look, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and on the third ***day*** I am perfected.' **33** But I must proceed today and tomorrow and the ***day*** following, because it is not possible for a prophet to perish outside of Jerusalem. **34** Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the ***one*** killing the prophets and stoning those sent to her! How often I was willing to gather your children together, the way a hen ***gathers*** her own brood under ***her*** wings, and you were not willing! **35** Look, your house is left to you desolate. And truly I say to you that you will by no means see Me until ***the time*** comes when you say, 'Blessed ***is*** the ***One*** coming in ***the*** name of ***the*** Lord.'"

13:19 Ezek 31:6; Dan 4:12; Dan 4:21
13:21 Matt 13:33; 1 Cor 5:6; Job 17:9
13:22 Luke 9:51; Mark 6:6; Luke 4:43,44
13:23 Matt 7:14; Matt 19:25; Matt 20:16
13:24 2 Pet 1:10; Prov 21:25; Luke 21:36
13:25 Matt 25:10; Luke 13:27; Luke 6:46
13:26 Isa 58:2; 2 Tim 3:5; Titus 1:16
13:27 Ps 6:8; Ps 119:115; Matt 25:41
13:28 Ps 112:10; Gen 27:34; Isa 1:15
13:29 Gen 28:14; Isa 49:6; Isa 66:18
13:30 Matt 19:30; Matt 20:16; Mark 10:31
13:31 Neh 6:10; Neh 6:11; Jer 36:19
13:32 Gen 22:4; Heb 2:10; Heb 5:9
13:33 John 4:34; John 9:4; John 11:54
13:34 Ruth 2:12; Isa 30:15; 2 Chr 24:21
13:35 Ps 118:26; Isa 5:5; Isa 52:7

13:19 *It is like a grain of mustard* The tiny seed grows to ten feet or more in a season. The kingdom began with Jesus and a few followers in a corner of the empire and would grow beyond imagining. Many see the birds as people of all nations sheltering in it (Ezek 17:23; Dan 4:12). Others note birds earlier picture the evil one (8:5, 12) and see Christendom growing large and giving room to evil. Either way, the point is surprising growth from a tiny beginning.
13:21 *It is like leaven* Three seahs, the SLB's twenty-one quarts, could make bread for a hundred people. Many see the gospel quietly working through the world and a life, changing everything from inside. Others note leaven nearly always pictures sin, as in 12:1, and read a warning of false teaching spreading through the professing church. Good teachers hold both. Both agree that something small and hidden ends up affecting the whole.
13:22 *making His way toward Jerusalem* Luke reminds us where Jesus is headed (9:51). Every step brought Him closer to the cross, and He used every stop to teach.
13:24 *Strive to enter through the narrow gate* Many believed nearly all Israel would be saved as Abraham's children, but Jesus made the question personal. Strive (agonizomai, our agonize) means to struggle hard like an athlete. Salvation is a free gift (Eph 2:8-9), not earned by effort, but we must seriously enter, turning from sin and trusting Christ, not assume we are fine. The gate is narrow because there is one way, through Jesus (John 10:9; 14:6). Many want in on their own terms, or wait too long.
13:25 *I do not know you, where you are from* The door is open today, and one day it will close: for each person at death, for the world when the Lord comes in judgment. It is not enough to know about Jesus. He must know you as one of His own (John 10:14).
13:26 *We ate and drank in your presence, and you taught in our streets* They saw Him and heard Him, and may have gone to church every Sunday. But being near Jesus is not belonging to Him.
13:27 *Depart from me, all you workers of unrighteousness* Words from Psalm 6:8. A lifetime around the things of God will not save a person who never truly turned to Him (Matt 7:21-23).
13:28 *when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God* Weeping is sorrow; gnashing of teeth is anger and anguish, the misery of those shut out forever. Those sure they were in as Abraham's children will see Abraham inside and themselves outside. Being born into a religious family saves no one (3:8).
13:29 *they will come from east and west, and from north and south* People of every nation coming to faith and sitting at the kingdom feast with Abraham, as Isaiah foresaw (Isa 49:6; 25:6-8). Luke loves to show the gospel is for all people.
13:30 *there are last who will be first* Religious leaders and Israel, with every advantage, could end up last; Gentiles, sinners and outcasts, first. God does not rank people as we do. Pride keeps people out. Humble faith brings people in.
13:31 *Herod wants to kill You* Herod Antipas ruled Galilee and Perea and had killed John. Not all Pharisees opposed Jesus (Acts 5:34; John 3:1-2), and some may have meant to help. Others may have wanted Him out of their area or on to Jerusalem. Scripture does not tell us their motive.
13:32 *say to this fox* A fox pictured a sly, destructive person, sometimes a small and insignificant one. Jesus was not afraid. Today, tomorrow and the third day mean a short time with a set end. He would finish His work on His Father's schedule, not Herod's. "I am perfected" means I reach My goal, the cross and resurrection.
13:33 *it is not possible for a prophet to perish outside of Jerusalem* A sad irony: the holy city was where God's prophets were most often rejected and killed. Notice "must." Jesus was not running from Herod. He was going toward Jerusalem on purpose, for us.
13:34 *the way a hen gathers her own brood under her wings* Repeating the name is a cry of grief. Jerusalem's history was one of rejecting God's messengers (2 Chr 36:15-16). A hen spreads her wings over her chicks against danger. Look at the two wills: "I was willing" and "you were not willing." God does not force anyone to come. His heart breaks over those who refuse Him (19:41).
13:35 *Blessed is the One coming in the name of the Lord* Their house, the temple, city or nation, would be left desolate, abandoned; Rome destroyed it in A.D. 70. The words are from Psalm 118:26, and crowds shouted them at the entry (19:38). The deeper fulfillment is future. Israel as a nation will turn to Jesus as Messiah and welcome Him. They will look on the One they pierced and mourn (Zech 12:10), and Paul says all Israel will be saved (Rom 11:26). God is not finished with Israel.

LUKE 14

A Man Healed at a Pharisee's House

1 And it came to pass, when He went into the house of one of the rulers of the Pharisees on a Sabbath to eat bread, that they were watching Him closely. **2** And look, a certain man with dropsy was before Him. **3** And answering, Jesus (Iesous) spoke to the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?" **4** But they were silent. And having taken hold ***of him***, He healed him and released ***him***. **5** And answering them, He said, "Which of you, ***whose*** donkey or ox falls into a pit, will not also immediately pull it up on the day of the Sabbath?" **6** And they were not able to reply to Him regarding these things.

The Lowest Seat

7 Then He was speaking a parable to those who had been invited, noticing how they were choosing the first places, saying to them, **8** "When you are invited by someone to wedding feasts, do not recline in the first place, lest someone more honored than you has been invited by him, **9** and having come, the one who invited you and him will say to you, 'Give ***your*** place to this ***man***,' and then you will begin with shame to occupy the last place. **10** But when you are invited, having gone, recline in the last place, so that when the one who has invited you comes, he may say to you, 'Friend, come up higher.' Then you will have glory before those who recline with you. **11** For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted." **12** And He was also saying to the one who had invited Him, "When you make a dinner or a supper, do not call your friends nor your brothers nor your relatives nor rich neighbors, lest they also invite you in return and it becomes a repayment to you. **13** But when you make a reception, call ***the*** poor, ***the*** crippled, ***the*** lame, ***the*** blind; **14** and you will be blessed, because they do not have ***anything*** to repay you; for it will be repaid to you in the resurrection of the righteous."

The Great Banquet

15 Then one of those reclining with ***Him***, having heard these things, said to Him, "Blessed ***is he*** who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!" **16** But He said to him, "A certain man made a great supper and invited many; **17** and at the hour of the supper he sent his slave to say to those who had been invited, 'Come, because all things are now ready.' **18** And they all began with one ***accord*** to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a field, and I have need to go out and see it; I ask you, have me excused.' **19** And another said,

14:1 Luke 11:37; Mark 3:2; Luke 20:20
14:3 Matt 12:10; Luke 11:44,45; Luke 6:9
14:4 Matt 21:25-27; Matt 22:46
14:5 Luke 13:15; Exod 23:4,5; Dan 4:24
14:6 Luke 13:17; Luke 20:26,40; Luke 21:15
14:7 Luke 11:43; Matt 23:6; 3 John 1:9
14:8 Prov 25:6; Esth 2:18
14:9 Prov 11:2; Esth 6:6-12; Prov 3:35
14:10 Prov 25:6-7; 1 Sam 15:17; Prov 15:33
14:11 Isa 2:17; Isa 2:11; Luke 18:14
14:12 James 2:1-6; Luke 6:32-36; Matt 5:46
14:13 Luke 14:21; Neh 8:10,12; Luke 11:41
14:14 Acts 24:15; Prov 19:17; Matt 6:4
14:15 Rev 19:9; Luke 13:29; Luke 22:30
14:16 Matt 22:2-14; Isa 55:1-7; Rev 22:17
14:17 Prov 9:5; Matt 10:1-4; Luke 3:4-6
14:18 Isa 28:12,13; Luke 17:26-31; 1 Tim 6:9,10

14:1 *they were watching Him closely* A ruler of the Pharisees was a leading man among them, perhaps on the Sanhedrin. A Sabbath meal was cooked the day before, and guests were invited after the synagogue service. They were spying, waiting for Him to break a rule. Jesus knew it and went anyway. He never refused to eat with anyone, tax collector or Pharisee. Each needed what He came to give.

14:2 *a certain man with dropsy* An old word for swelling from fluid building up in the body, today called edema, often a sign of heart or kidney failure. Only Luke the doctor records this healing. He may have been planted to trap Jesus; Scripture does not say.

14:4 *they were silent* The Law said nothing against healing on the Sabbath; their traditions did. Saying yes broke their rules; saying no looked heartless before a suffering man. Jesus did not wait for their permission. He took hold of him, healed him and sent him home.

14:5 *whose donkey or ox falls into a pit* A farmer would not leave his animal in a well to die until sundown. If an animal is worth rescuing on the Sabbath, how much more a man made in God's image? Their rules made them care more about property than people. We should ask whether our church habits ever do the same.

14:7 *how they were choosing the first places* Guests reclined on couches around a low table, and places nearest the host were the places of honor. While they were watching Him, He was watching them push for the best seats.

14:9 *then you will begin with shame to occupy the last place* Picture the walk of shame from the head table to the back of the room, with everyone watching, since the other good places are gone. Pride sets us up for humiliation (Prov 25:6-7).

14:10 *recline in the last place* This is not a clever strategy for getting honor in the end. True humility does not take the low seat hoping to be moved up. It takes it because it does not need the high one, and leaves the honor to God.

14:11 *everyone who exalts himself will be humbled* A law of God's kingdom that Jesus says more than once (18:14; Matt 23:12). God opposes the proud and gives grace to the humble (James 4:6). Jesus humbled Himself to death on a cross, and God highly exalted Him (Phil 2:8-9). If the Son of God took the lowest place, how can we fight over the best seats, in church or anywhere?

14:12 *lest they also invite you in return and it becomes a repayment to you* It is no sin to have family and friends to dinner; Jesus uses strong contrast. I invite you, you invite me, and we keep score. That is trading favors. It is not love but business.

14:13 *call the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind* People often left out; some religious groups even kept the crippled and blind out of their meetings. Jesus says invite them in.

14:14 *it will be repaid to you in the resurrection of the righteous* When we give to those who cannot pay us back, God Himself repays. The resurrection of the righteous is the raising of believers, when God rewards His people (John 5:28-29; Rev 20:4-6). Kindness that seems wasted now is never wasted in God's eyes. Who could you invite who cannot pay you back?

14:15 *Blessed is he who will eat bread in the kingdom of God* The Jews looked for a great banquet when Messiah came (Isa 25:6). It sounded pious, but the man assumed he would be at that table. Jesus answers with a parable that asks, will you really be there?

14:17 *Come, because all things are now ready* Invitations went out ahead, guests accepted, and when the meal was ready a servant called them. Refusing at the last minute was a serious insult. The master is God; the first guests are Israel, especially its leaders, told for centuries by the prophets that the feast was coming. Now the Messiah had come, and everything was ready.

14:18 *they all began with one accord to make excuses* Who buys a field without seeing it first? And it would be there tomorrow. Excuses for not coming to God usually sound reasonable but do not hold up. The real reason is that we do not want to come.

14:19 *I have bought five yoke of oxen* Five pairs meant a big farm and a wealthy man, and no one buys ten oxen without trying them. His business came first. Many today will not come to Christ or serve Him because work and possessions fill all their time and attention.

'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to test them; I ask you, have me excused.' **20** And another said, 'I have married a wife, and because of this I am not able to come.' **21** And having come, that slave reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house, having become angry, said to his slave, 'Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor and crippled and lame and blind.' **22** And the slave said, 'Master, it has been done as you commanded, and there is still room.' **23** And the master said to the slave, 'Go out into the roads and hedges and compel ***them*** to come in, so that my house may be filled. **24** For I say to you that not one of those men who were invited will taste my supper.'"

The Cost of Being a Disciple

25 Now great crowds were going along with Him; and having turned, He said to them, **26** "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, and yes, even his own life, he is not able to be My disciple. **27** And whoever does not carry his cross and come after Me is not able to be My disciple. **28** For which of you, wanting to build a tower, does not first, having sat down, count the cost, whether he has the ***means*** for completion? **29** Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see ***it*** may begin to mock him, **30** saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.' **31** Or what king, going to engage another king in war, does not, having sat down, first consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet the one coming against him with twenty thousand? **32** And if not, while he is still far away, having sent a delegation, he asks the ***terms*** for peace. **33** So therefore everyone of you who does not renounce all his own possessions is not able to be My disciple. **34** Salt ***is*** good; but if the salt becomes tasteless, with what will it be seasoned? **35** It is fit neither for soil nor for ***the*** manure heap; they cast it out. The one who has ears to hear, let him hear."

LUKE 15

The Lost Sheep

1 Now all the tax collectors and the sinners were drawing near to Him to hear Him. **2** And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling, saying, "This ***man*** receives sinners and eats with them." **3** Then He spoke this parable to them, saying,

14:20 Deut 24:5; Luke 14:26-28; Luke 18:29,30
14:21 Luke 14:13; John 9:39; Luke 9:10
14:22 Acts 1:1-9; Ps 103:6; Ps 130:7
14:23 Acts 13:47,48; Ps 98:3; Isa 11:10
14:24 Matt 21:43; Acts 13:46; Prov 1:24-32
14:25 Luke 12:1; John 6:24-27
14:26 Matt 10:37; John 12:25; Gen 29:30
14:27 Matt 10:38; Luke 9:23-25; Mark 8:34-37
14:28 Prov 24:27; Luke 14:33; Matt 8:20
14:30 Matt 7:27; Matt 27:3-8; Acts 1:18,19
14:31 Judg 7:3; 2 Kgs 18:21; 2 Kgs 18:22
14:32 Luke 12:58; 1 Kgs 20:31-34; 2 Kgs 10:4,5
14:33 Phil 3:7,8; Luke 5:11,28; 1 John 2:15,16
14:34 Matt 5:13; Col 4:6; Mark 9:49,50
14:35 Matt 11:15; John 15:6; Luke 8:8
15:1 Matt 9:10-13; Luke 5:29-32; Luke 13:30
15:2 Matt 9:11; Luke 19:7; Luke 5:30

14:20 *I have married a wife* A new husband got a year off from military service (Deut 24:5), but not from a dinner, and he did not even ask to be excused. Marriage is God's gift, but good things become a problem when they keep us from God. Possessions, work and family: none are bad, and none are worth missing the feast.
14:21 *bring in here the poor and crippled and lame and blind* The same people Jesus told the host to invite (14:13). In His ministry they picture Israel's outcasts, the tax collectors and sinners coming to Jesus while the leaders refused. Those who thought they did not need the invitation missed it. Those who knew they did not deserve it came in.
14:23 *Go out into the roads and hedges and compel them to come in* There is always room for one more. The roads and hedges were country lanes outside the city, where travelers and vagrants were found. Many see the Gentiles invited here (Acts 13:46-48). Compel does not mean force. A poor stranger would politely refuse a rich man's invitation as too good to be real, so the servant had to urge and insist. Church leaders in past centuries misused this verse to justify forced conversion. We compel with love and urgency, never with force.
14:24 *not one of those men who were invited will taste my supper* God's invitation is gracious, but not endless. The guest who spoke of eating bread in the kingdom needed to hear this. Being invited is not the same as coming. Have you accepted God's invitation, or are you still making excuses?
14:25 *great crowds were going along with Him* Jesus was not impressed by numbers. He turned and spoke words that would thin the crowd. He wanted followers who knew what they were getting into.
14:26 *does not hate his own father and mother* One of His hardest sayings. Scripture tells us to honor parents (Exod 20:12) and love our wives as Christ loved the church (Eph 5:25). Hebrew speech used love and hate to show which comes first (Gen 29:30-31), and Matthew's form is loving father or mother more than Jesus (Matt 10:37). Our love for Him must be so great that by comparison every other love looks like hate. When family and Christ pull different ways, Christ wins.
14:27 *whoever does not carry his cross and come after Me* A man carrying a cross was walking to his death (9:23). To carry your cross is to die to your own way, plans and pride, and follow Jesus whatever it costs. Each has his own: rejection by family, a career or habit given up, for some prison or death. Jesus does not ask us to carry His cross. He carried that for us.
14:28 *wanting to build a tower, does not first, having sat down, count the cost* A watchtower in a vineyard or a farm building. A half-built house with weeds around it draws mockery. Do not start following Jesus lightly and then quit. Think it through. The Christian life is not a sprint but a lifetime of building.
14:31 *whether he is able with ten thousand to meet the one coming against him with twenty thousand* A wise king does not rush into a battle he cannot win; outnumbered, he seeks terms for peace. Some see a further lesson: we are the weaker king, and God is coming with overwhelming power, so seek peace with Him while there is time. The main point is the same: think before you commit. Following Jesus costs everything, and it is worth it.
14:33 *everyone of you who does not renounce all his own possessions* To renounce is to say goodbye to, to let go. Jesus did not ask Zacchaeus to give away everything (19:8-9), but every disciple gives up ownership of everything. It all belongs to Jesus, and we are only managers. He does not want a corner of your life. He wants all of it.
14:35 *they cast it out* Salt flavored food and kept meat from spoiling; Dead Sea salt mixed with other minerals could wash out and leave something that only looked like salt. A disciple who will not pay the cost is like salt without taste: he looks like a follower but makes no difference. Is your life making any difference for Christ in the world around you?
15:1 *all the tax collectors and the sinners were drawing near to Him to hear Him* Tax collectors gathered Rome's taxes, often overcharging and keeping the extra (3:12-13), and most Jews saw them as traitors and thieves. Sinners were people living openly immoral lives or ignoring the Pharisees' rules. Jesus told them the truth about their sin, and also about God's love and forgiveness. These were the ones with ears to hear (14:35).
15:2 *This man receives sinners and eats with them* Grumbling is the word for Israel complaining in the wilderness (Exod 16:2), and "this man" was said with contempt. Sharing a meal meant acceptance, and the Pharisees would not even touch a sinner. They meant it as an insult, but they spoke the gospel without knowing it. If Jesus did not receive sinners, none of us would have hope.
15:3 *He spoke this parable to them* One parable in three stories, each raising the stakes: one sheep of a hundred, one coin of ten, one son of two. All three answer the complaint of verse 2. Why does Jesus receive sinners? Because God loves to find the lost.

4 "What man of you, having a hundred sheep and having lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that has been lost until he finds it? **5** And having found ***it***, he lays ***it*** on his shoulders, rejoicing. **6** And having come into the house, he calls together the friends and the neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, because I have found my sheep that had been lost!' **7** I say to you that in the same way there will be joy in heaven over one sinner who repents, rather than over ninety-nine righteous ***ones*** who have no need of repentance.

The Lost Coin

8 Or what woman, having ten drachmas, if she loses one drachma, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and seek carefully until she finds ***it***? **9** And having found ***it***, she calls together the friends and the neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me, because I have found the drachma that I lost!' **10** In the same way, I say to you, there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

The Lost Son

11 Then He said, "A certain man had two sons. **12** And the younger of them said to the father, 'Father, give me the portion of the property that falls ***to me***.' And he divided the livelihood between them. **13** And not many days after, the younger son, having gathered all together, went away into a distant country, and there he squandered his property, living recklessly. **14** But when he had spent everything, a severe famine arose throughout that country, and he began to be in need. **15** And having gone, he joined himself to one of the citizens of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed pigs. **16** And he was longing to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, and no one was giving ***anything*** to him. **17** But having come to himself, he said, 'How many hired servants of my father have an abundance of bread, but I am perishing with hunger! **18** Having risen up, I will go to my father and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, **19** and I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants."' **20** And having risen up, he went to his own father. But while he was still far distant, his father saw him and was moved with compassion, and having run, he fell on his neck and kissed him. **21** Then the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer

15:4 Ezek 34:16; Ezek 34:11; Ezek 34:12
15:5 Eph 2:3-6; Isa 46:3,4; Isa 53:10,11
15:6 Isa 66:10; Jer 50:6; Luke 2:13,14
15:7 Luke 5:32; Luke 15:32; Matt 18:13
15:8 Ezek 34:12; Luke 19:10; John 10:16
15:9 Luke 15:6,7
15:10 2 Cor 7:10; Ezek 33:11; Acts 10:3-5
15:11 Matt 21:23-31
15:12 Deut 21:17; Mark 12:44; Deut 21:16,17
15:13 Luke 16:1,19; 2 Chr 33:1-10; Job 21:13-15
15:14 2 Chr 33:11; Ezek 16:27; Hos 2:9-14
15:15 Lev 11:7; Titus 3:3; Luke 15:13
15:16 Lam 4:5; Rom 6:19-21; Ps 142:4
15:17 Ezek 18:28; Eph 5:14; Acts 26:11-19
15:18 Mic 7:9; Ps 116:3-7; Matt 6:9,14
15:19 Luke 5:8; Luke 7:6,7; Gen 32:10
15:20 Gen 46:29; Gen 33:4; Ps 103:13
15:21 2 Sam 12:13; Luke 15:18,19; Ps 51:4

15:4 *does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that has been lost until he finds it* Sheep wander, have no sense of direction, and are in real danger from wild animals and cliffs. A good shepherd does not settle for the ninety-nine. "Until he finds it": he does not give up. God is the Shepherd who seeks His lost sheep (Ezek 34:11-16), and Jesus is that Shepherd (John 10:11).

15:5 *he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing* He does not scold or make it walk. A frightened, exhausted sheep would often lie down and refuse to move. We cannot find our own way back to God. Jesus comes where we are, lifts us up and carries us home, with joy, not with a sigh. His joy is too big to keep to himself, and even lost, it was still "my sheep."

15:7 *ninety-nine righteous ones who have no need of repentance* Heaven throws a party when a sinner repents. No one is truly righteous on his own (Rom 3:10, 23). Jesus speaks with gentle irony of the Pharisees, who thought themselves righteous and saw no need to repent (18:9). There is no joy in heaven over people who think they are fine without God.

15:8 *having ten drachmas, if she loses one drachma* A Greek silver coin worth about a day's wage, perhaps a poor woman's life savings; some think the coins were part of a headdress given at marriage. Windowless houses with dirt floors could swallow a coin in dust and straw. Luke often pairs a story of a man with one of a woman, and here the seeking God is pictured by a woman searching her house.

15:10 *there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents* Joy in the angels' presence. The angels surely rejoice, but the One whose joy fills heaven is God. When you came to Christ, the God of the universe rejoiced over you.

15:12 *Father, give me the portion of the property that falls to me* The story is about a father and two sons, and the father is the main character. The older son got a double share (Deut 21:17), so his part was a third. An inheritance normally came at the father's death. To ask now was like wishing his father dead, wanting his money and not him. Yet the father let him go. God does not force anyone to love Him. He lets us choose our way, even when it will hurt us.

15:13 *there he squandered his property, living recklessly* He turned his share into cash and went as far from his father as he could. To squander is to scatter like seed in the wind; reckless living is wild, with no thought for tomorrow. His brother says it was with prostitutes (15:30). Sin always promises freedom and never tells you the bill comes due.

15:14 *a severe famine arose throughout that country* His money ran out at the worst time, and the friends who helped spend it were gone. God sometimes lets us hit bottom, not because He is cruel, but because sometimes it is the only way we will look up.

15:16 *he was longing to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating* For a Jew this was as low as he could go: working for a Gentile, feeding unclean animals (Lev 11:7). The pods were likely carob, used for feed, and he envied the pigs. The son who wanted freedom became a slave. Sin takes you further than you wanted to go, keeps you longer than you wanted to stay, and costs more than you wanted to pay.

15:17 *having come to himself* I love this phrase. It is as if he woke up after being out of his mind. Sin is a kind of insanity, and repentance is coming to your senses. Even the day laborers, the lowest workers, had plenty in his father's house. He began to remember what kind of man his father was.

15:19 *make me like one of your hired servants* He owns that his sin was against God, heaven being a reverent word for Him, and against his father, with no excuses. He planned to work off his debt and thought a job was the best he could hope for. Many think they must earn their way back to God. They do not yet know the father's heart.

15:20 *while he was still far distant, his father saw him and was moved with compassion* Repentance is not just feeling bad; it is getting up and going home. The father saw him far off because he had been watching the road. An older man of standing did not run, hitching up his robe, but this father ran and kissed him before the son could say a word. God does not wait with crossed arms for us to clean up. He runs to meet us.

15:21 *I am no longer worthy to be called your son* He begins the practiced speech, but the father does not let him reach the part about the hired servant. Confession is needed, and when we confess, God forgives and cleanses us (1 John 1:9). We come back not as hired hands but as sons and daughters.

worthy to be called your son.' **22** But the father said to his slaves, 'Bring out the best robe and clothe him, and give a ring for his hand and sandals for ***his*** feet; **23** and having brought the fattened calf, kill ***it***, and having eaten, let us be merry; **24** because this son of mine was dead and came to life again, and he was lost and was found.' And they began to be merry.

The Older Brother

25 Now his elder son was in a field; and as he was coming, he drew near to the house ***and*** heard music and dancing. **26** And having called one of the servants to ***him***, he was inquiring what these things might be. **27** And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf, because he has received him back in good health.' **28** But he became angry and was not willing to go in. Therefore his father, having come out, was pleading with him. **29** But answering, he said to the father, 'Look, so many years I have been serving you, and I never transgressed a commandment of yours, and to me you never gave a young goat, so that I might be merry with my friends; **30** but when this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him.' **31** And he said to him, 'Child, you are always with me, and all that ***is*** mine is yours. **32** But it was necessary to be merry and to rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and came to life again, and was lost and was found.'"

LUKE 16

The Shrewd Manager

1 And He was also saying to His disciples, "There was a certain rich man who had a manager, and this ***man*** was accused to him as squandering his possessions. **2** And having called him, he said to him, 'What ***is*** this I hear about you? Give the account of your management, for you will not be able to manage any longer.' **3** Then the manager said within himself, 'What shall I do, because my master is taking away the management from me? I am not able to dig; I am ashamed to beg. **4** I know what I will do, so that when I have been removed from the management, they may receive me into their houses.' **5** And having called to ***him*** each one of the debtors of his own master, he was saying to the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' **6** And he said, 'Approximately 600 gallons (a hundred baths) of oil.' And he said to him, 'Take your bill, and having sat down quickly, write fifty.' **7** Then he said to another, 'And you, how much do you owe?' And he said, 'Approximately 600 bushels (a hundred kors) of wheat.' And

15:22 Isa 61:10; Gen 41:42; Zech 3:3-5
15:23 Isa 25:6; Gen 18:7; Ps 63:5
15:24 Luke 15:32; Eph 2:1,5; Eph 5:14
15:25 Luke 15:11,12; Luke 7:32; Exod 15:20
15:27 Luke 15:30; Acts 9:17; Acts 22:13
15:28 1 Sam 18:8; Jonah 4:1-3; Gen 4:5-7
15:29 Jer 35:16; Luke 17:10; Luke 18:9,11,12,20,21
15:30 Luke 15:32; Luke 18:11; Exod 32:7,11
15:31 Luke 19:22,23; Matt 20:13-16; Mark 7:27,28
15:32 Luke 15:24; Eph 2:1-10; Luke 7:34
16:1 Luke 15:13,30; Luke 12:42; Matt 18:23,24
16:2 Gen 3:9-11; Gen 4:9,10; Gen 18:20,21
16:3 Luke 18:4; Esth 6:6; Luke 12:17
16:4 Prov 30:9; Jer 4:22; James 3:15
16:5 Luke 7:41,42; Matt 18:24
16:6 Ezra 7:22; Ezek 45:14; Luke 16:9,12
16:7 Ezra 7:22; Luke 20:9,12; Song 8:11,12

15:22 *Bring out the best robe and clothe him, and give a ring for his hand and sandals for his feet* The best robe, likely the father's own, covered the rags of the far country. The ring may have been a signet carrying the family's authority. Sandals marked a free man; slaves went barefoot. He came home smelling of pigs and was dressed as an honored son. That is grace. God clothes us in His righteousness (Isa 61:10; 2 Cor 5:21) and restores us to the family.

15:24 *this son of mine was dead and came to life again, and he was lost and was found* The fattened calf, saved for the biggest celebration, would feed the village. Dead and alive, lost and found, is the language of salvation; we were dead in sins and God made us alive with Christ (Eph 2:1, 4-5). Notice they "began" to be merry. The story is not over.

15:26 *he was inquiring what these things might be* The older son had been working, as always. He did not go in to see but stood outside asking a servant, a stranger in his own father's house. The servant's news was simple: your brother is home and safe.

15:28 *he became angry and was not willing to go in* Here is the point of the chapter. The older brother is the Pharisees and scribes of verse 2, angry that Jesus welcomed sinners. The father went out to the younger son on the road, and now goes out to the older one in the yard, pleading. God is as patient with proud religious people as with wild sinners. Both need to come in.

15:29 *so many years I have been serving you, and I never transgressed a commandment of yours* Serving here is the word for slaving. He saw himself as a slave earning his keep, not a son enjoying his father's love, just as the Pharisees saw themselves. A young goat was worth far less than a calf, and he wanted to celebrate with his friends, not his father. He was as far from his father's heart as his brother had been, without ever leaving the farm.

15:30 *this son of yours* He will not say my brother. He brings up prostitutes, something no one had mentioned. Self-righteousness keeps score, remembers other people's sins in detail, and is angry when grace goes to the undeserving, forgetting that grace is never deserved.

15:31 *Child, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours* The father answers gently with a word of affection. The older son never had to earn anything; it was his already, and he could have had a party any day. Many in church have served for years but never really enjoyed God as a loving Father.

15:32 *this brother of yours was dead and came to life again* The father gently corrects him: this is your brother. And the story ends without telling us whether he went in, left open on purpose, because the Pharisees were standing there. Which son are you? Maybe you need to come home from the far country. Maybe you have always been in the house and need to come in to the joy. The Father is pleading with you to come.

16:1 *this man was accused to him as squandering his possessions* A manager or steward ran his master's business, handling money, rents and deals in his name, often for a landowner who lived far away. Squandering is the word used of the younger son (15:13). Right after the prodigal comes another man who wasted what was not his.

16:2 *Give the account of your management* He was fired on the spot and had to turn in the books. Every one of us is a manager in this sense. Our time, money, talents and lives belong to God, and each will give an account to Him (Rom 14:12). The question is whether we will be ready when we are called in.

16:4 *I know what I will do* Too weak to dig and too proud to beg, he used his last hours in the job to make friends who would owe him a favor. He was thinking ahead. That is the one thing about him Jesus will point to.

16:6 *Approximately 600 gallons of oil* A hundred baths, roughly the oil from a large olive grove, cut in half. The next debt, a hundred kors or about six hundred bushels of wheat, was cut to eighty. Scripture does not say whether he cut his own commission, the interest, or simply cheated his master; teachers suggest all three. Jesus calls him "the manager of unrighteousness," so he was not honest either way.

he says to him, 'Take your bill and write eighty.' **8** And the master praised the manager of unrighteousness because he had acted shrewdly; because the sons of this age are more shrewd than the sons of the light in their own generation. **9** And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by the wealth of unrighteousness, so that when you fail, they may receive you into the eternal tents. **10** The one ***who is*** faithful in very little is faithful also in much; and the one ***who is*** unrighteous in very little is unrighteous also in much. **11** If therefore you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true ***riches***? **12** And if you have not been faithful in that which ***is*** another's, who will give you that which ***is*** your own? **13** No household servant is able to serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You are not able to serve God and wealth."

The Law and the Kingdom

14 Now the Pharisees also, being lovers of money, were hearing all these things, and they were ridiculing Him. **15** And He said to them, "You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts; because that which ***is*** exalted among men is an abomination before God. **16** The law and the prophets ***were*** until John (Ioannes); from that time the kingdom of God is announced as good news, and everyone forces his way into it. **17** But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one stroke of the law to fall. **18** Everyone who sends away his wife and marries another commits adultery; and everyone who marries her who has been sent away from a husband commits adultery.

The Rich Man and Lazarus

19 Now there was a certain rich man, and he was clothed in purple and fine linen, making merry in splendor every day. **20** And there was a certain poor man named Lazarus (Lazaros), who had been laid at his gate, covered with sores, **21** and desiring to be fed with the crumbs that were falling from the table of the rich man; but even the dogs, coming,

16:8 Gen 3:1; Exod 1:10; 2 Sam 13:3
16:9 Eccl 12:4; Eccl 12:5; Matt 19:21
16:10 Matt 25:21; Eccl 5:13; Luke 19:17
16:11 Luke 12:33; Luke 18:22; Prov 8:18,19
16:12 Luke 19:13-26; 1 Chr 29:14-16; Job 1:21
16:13 1 John 2:15,16; Matt 6:24; James 4:4
16:14 Isa 53:3; Prov 14:2; Luke 23:35
16:15 1 Sam 16:7; Prov 16:5; 1 Pet 3:4
16:16 Matt 11:9-14; Matt 3:2; Luke 16:29,31
16:17 Ps 102:25; Isa 51:6; Ps 102:26
16:18 Deut 24:1; Mal 2:16; Matt 19:9
16:19 Esth 8:15; Ezek 16:13; Ezek 27:7
16:20 Acts 3:2; Luke 18:35-43; 1 Sam 2:8
16:21 Matt 15:27; 1 Cor 4:11; 2 Cor 11:27

16:8 *the master praised the manager of unrighteousness because he had acted shrewdly* The verse that puzzles people. The master praised not his dishonesty but his shrewdness, his sharp thinking ahead. Sons of this age live only for this world; sons of the light are God's people (Eph 5:8; 1 Thess 5:5). Worldly people often plan more carefully for their next few years than believers do for eternity. How much thought do we give to what will last forever?

16:9 *make friends for yourselves by the wealth of unrighteousness* Money belongs to this fallen world and so easily leads to sin. It is not evil in itself, but it is dangerous. When you fail means when you die and money can no longer help. Use it now for God's work and people in need, so there will be people in the eternal tents to welcome you. We do not buy our way into heaven, which is by grace through faith alone, but we can make an eternal difference.

16:10 *The one who is faithful in very little is faithful also in much* Character shows in small things. A man who cheats on small things will cheat on big ones. How do you handle the cashier's mistake, your time card, your tax return? God watches the small things, because they show who we really are.

16:11 *who will entrust to you the true riches* Money is the least of God's gifts. The true riches are knowing God, serving Him and eternal reward. Everything on earth is God's, only borrowed, and faithfulness with it leads to an inheritance that is ours forever (1 Pet 1:4). If we cannot be trusted with money, why would He trust us with more?

16:13 *You are not able to serve God and wealth* A slave could not belong to two owners demanding full loyalty. Older Bibles say mammon, from an Aramaic word for wealth. Money can become a master, telling us what to do and what to love. You can use money to serve God, but you cannot serve both. Look at where your time, thoughts and worries go, and you will know your master.

16:14 *being lovers of money* Ridiculing means turning up the nose, sneering. Many believed wealth showed God's approval, so they laughed at Jesus' teaching. The love of money, not money itself, is a root of all kinds of evil (1 Tim 6:10). We can be faithful in church and still be in love with money.

16:15 *that which is exalted among men is an abomination before God* They could fool people, but not God (1 Sam 16:7). An abomination is something God finds disgusting. What the world praises, wealth, pride, status, self-made success, God often hates, because it comes from a heart that does not need Him. Be careful what you admire and chase.

16:16 *everyone forces his way into it* The Law and the Prophets, the Old Testament, looked ahead to the King, and John was the last of those prophets, pointing to Jesus. Some read this phrase of people pressing eagerly into the kingdom, like the tax collectors and sinners. Others read it of people trying to seize the kingdom on their own terms, which no one can do. Either way, the kingdom calls for wholehearted response, not casual interest.

16:17 *than for one stroke of the law to fall* A stroke is the tiny hook that tells one Hebrew letter from another. The kingdom does not throw out God's law; every word will stand until fulfilled (Matt 5:17-18). Jesus was not loose with the Law. He was stricter than the Pharisees, because He went to its heart.

16:18 *Everyone who sends away his wife and marries another commits adultery* Some rabbis allowed divorce for almost any reason. Jesus says marriage is a lifelong bond. Perhaps it appears here because the Pharisees broke the Law by easy divorce as by love of money. Luke, like Mark (Mark 10:11-12), gives no exception; Matthew records one for sexual immorality (Matt 19:9), and Paul speaks of an unbelieving spouse who leaves (1 Cor 7:15). Many believe the innocent spouse may divorce and remarry after unfaithfulness or desertion; others allow separation but not remarriage while the former spouse lives; others limit Matthew's exception to betrothal or unlawful marriages. All agree God's plan is one man and one woman for life. Divorce is not the unforgivable sin; there is forgiveness and a new start in Christ.

16:19 *clothed in purple and fine linen, making merry in splendor every day* Purple dye from shellfish was worn by kings and the very wealthy, and fine linen made the best undergarments. He dressed like royalty and partied every day. He is not named; the tradition calling him Dives just uses the Latin for rich man. Jesus now shows the money-loving Pharisees where such a life ends.

16:21 *even the dogs, coming, were licking his sores* Lazarus, the only person named in any of Jesus' stories (from Eleazar, God helps; not the Lazarus of John 11), was laid there, likely unable to walk. The wealthy wiped their hands on bread and tossed it under the table, and Lazarus would have been glad for the scraps. These were wild, unclean street dogs, and they paid him more attention than the rich man did. His sin was not being rich. He lived in luxury with a dying man at his door and did nothing. He did not even see him.

were licking his sores. **22** And it came to pass that the poor man died and was carried away by the angels into the bosom of Abraham (Abraam); and the rich man also died and was buried. **23** And in Hades, having lifted up his eyes, being in torments, he sees Abraham from afar, and Lazarus in his bosom. **24** And he, having called out, said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me and send Lazarus, so that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in anguish in this flame.' **25** But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that you received your good things in your lifetime, and Lazarus likewise the bad things; but now he is comforted, and you are in anguish. **26** And besides all these things, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who want to cross over from here to you may not be able, nor may those from there pass over to us.' **27** And he said, 'Then I ask you, father, that you send him to the house of my father— **28** for I have five brothers—so that he may testify thoroughly to them, lest they also come into this place of torment.' **29** Abraham says to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.' **30** And he said, 'No, father Abraham; but if someone goes to them from ***the*** dead, they will repent.' **31** But he said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded if someone rises from ***the*** dead.'"

LUKE 17

Stumbling Blocks, Forgiveness and Faith

1 And He said to the disciples, "It is impossible that the stumbling blocks should not come, but woe ***to him*** through whom they come! **2** It is better for him if a donkey's millstone is hung around his neck and he has been thrown into the sea, than that he should cause one of these little ones to stumble. **3** Take heed to yourselves. Now if your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. **4** And if he sins against you seven times in the day, and seven times in the day returns to you, saying, 'I repent,' you will forgive him." **5** And the apostles said to the Lord, "Add faith to us!" **6** And the Lord said, "If you had faith like a grain of mustard, you would say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted, and be planted in the sea,' and it would obey you.

Unworthy Servants

7 Now which of you, having a slave plowing or shepherding, who will say to him when he has come in out of the field, 'Having come immediately, recline ***at table***'? **8** But will he

16:22 John 13:23; Rev 14:13; Ps 49:6-12,16-19
16:23 Isa 14:9; Ps 9:17; Luke 16:28
16:24 Luke 16:30; Matt 25:41; Luke 3:8
16:25 Luke 6:24; Ps 17:14; 1 John 2:15
16:26 Matt 25:46; 1 Sam 25:36; Ps 49:14
16:28 Ps 49:12,13
16:29 Mal 4:4; Acts 15:21; Luke 16:16
16:30 Isa 8:20; Rev 16:9-11; Luke 13:3,5
16:31 2 Sam 12:1; 2 Chr 20:20; Isa 8:20

17:1 Matt 18:7; 1 Cor 11:19; Rom 16:17
17:2 Mark 9:42; Matt 18:3-5,10,14; Matt 26:24
17:3 Exod 34:12; Deut 4:23; 2 Chr 19:7
17:4 Matt 18:21,22,35; 1 Cor 13:4-7; Eph 4:31,32
17:5 Mark 9:24; Heb 12:2; 2 Thess 1:3
17:6 Matt 17:20,21; Matt 21:21; Mark 9:23
17:7 Luke 13:15; Luke 14:5; Matt 12:11
17:8 Luke 12:37; Gen 43:16; 2 Sam 12:20

16:22 *was carried away by the angels into the bosom of Abraham* Lazarus probably had no funeral, but angels came for him. Abraham's bosom is the place of honor beside him at a feast (John 13:23), the Jews' phrase for the rest of the righteous dead. No one is saved by being poor; Abraham was very rich. His name, God helps, may point to a man who trusted God when no one else would help. The rich man's grand funeral is all he got.
16:23 *in Hades, having lifted up his eyes, being in torments* Hades is the place of the dead, like Sheol. Many teachers believe that before the cross it had two parts, comfort for the righteous, Abraham's bosom or paradise (23:43), and torment for the wicked, and that at His ascension Christ brought the righteous dead to heaven (Eph 4:8-10), so believers now go straight to the Lord (2 Cor 5:8). Others read it simply: Lazarus is with God and the rich man in punishment, seen across a great distance. Scripture gives no map.
16:24 *I am in anguish in this flame* He still treats Lazarus as an errand boy. He calls Abraham father, but being born into God's people did not save him (3:8). He sees, speaks, remembers and feels pain. This is not sleep or being wiped out. It is real, conscious suffering.
16:25 *Child, remember that you received your good things in your lifetime* No cruelty in Abraham's voice, but the answer is no. Memory goes with us after death. He chose to have his good things now, living for himself, and the tables are turned (6:24).
16:26 *between us and you a great chasm has been fixed* Fixed means set and permanent. After death there is no second chance. Destiny is settled: no purgatory to work our way up, no crossing over. It is appointed for men to die once, and after this judgment (Heb 9:27). Now is the time to be sure.
16:29 *They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them* The rich man still thought something more than God's word was needed for his brothers. The Law commanded care for the poor (Deut 15:7-11), and the prophets thundered against the rich who ignored the needy (Amos 6:4-7). We have even more, the whole Bible, which is able to lead us to salvation (2 Tim 3:15).
16:31 *neither will they be persuaded if someone rises from the dead* Faith comes from hearing God's word (Rom 10:17), not from signs. It came true: Jesus rose and most leaders still would not believe, and when He raised the real Lazarus, the chief priests planned to kill him too (John 12:9-11). Parable or true account? Many say parable, since it opens like 16:1; others note Lazarus and Abraham are named. Either way, Jesus teaches nothing false: we exist after death fully aware, there are two fixed destinies, and God's word is enough to warn us. Will you listen while you still have time?
17:2 *than that he should cause one of these little ones to stumble* Stumbling blocks, things that trip people into sin, are certain in a fallen world, but woe, sorrow and judgment together, to the one who brings them. A donkey's millstone was the great upper stone turned by an animal. Drowning with one would be better than what waits for the one who trips up a little one. That may mean children, and in context new or weak believers like the tax collectors and sinners coming to Jesus (15:1-2). God takes it personally.
17:3 *if your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him* Watch yourself first. Then do not ignore sin or stew in silence; going to the person is part of love (Matt 18:15). When he owns it and turns from it, we must forgive, not hold it over him or keep a record, as God treats us when we confess (1 John 1:9).
17:4 *seven times in the day* By the fourth time most of us would say he does not mean it. Seven is not a limit but every time (Matt 18:21-22). We forgive because we have come back to God over the same sins again and again. Forgiving does not mean trusting a person with everything at once or removing consequences. It means letting go of the debt and not taking revenge.
17:5 *Add faith to us* The apostles asked, not because of a hard miracle, but because of the command to forgive. They knew they could not do it on their own. When God's commands look too big, the answer is not to lower them but to ask Him for more faith.
17:6 *you would say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted, and be planted in the sea,' and it would obey you* The size of your faith is not the main thing; the size of your God is. The mulberry was known for deep roots, and a tree in the sea is a picture of the impossible. Here one deep-rooted thing to be pulled up is bitterness toward someone who wronged us. This is not a promise to order nature for our wishes. Faith trusts God and does His will.

not say to him, 'Prepare what I may dine on, and having girded yourself, serve me until I eat and drink; and after these things you will eat and drink'? **9** Does he have thanks for that slave because he did the things commanded him? I think not. **10** So you also, when you have done all the things commanded you, say, 'We are unworthy slaves, for we have done what we were obligated to do.'"

Ten Lepers Cleansed

11 And it came to pass, in His going to Jerusalem (Hierousalem), that He was passing through the midst of Samaria (Samareia) and Galilee (Galilaia). **12** And as He was entering into a certain village, ten leprous men met Him, who stood far off. **13** And they lifted up ***their*** voice, saying, "Jesus (Iesous), Master, have mercy on us!" **14** And having seen ***them***, He said to them, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And it came to pass, in their going, they were cleansed. **15** And one of them, having seen that he was healed, turned back, glorifying God with a loud voice, **16** and he fell on ***his*** face at His feet, giving thanks to Him; and he was a Samaritan. **17** And answering, Jesus said, "Were not the ten cleansed? But the nine, where ***are they***? **18** Were none found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?" **19** And He said to him, "Rise up and go; your faith has saved you."

The Coming of the Kingdom

20 Now having been asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God is coming, He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God does not come with careful observation; **21** nor will they say, 'Look, here!' or, 'Look, there!' For look, the kingdom of God is within you." **22** And He said to the disciples, "Days will come when you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see ***it***. **23** And they will say to you, 'Look, here!' or, 'Look, there!' Do not go away, nor pursue ***them***. **24** For just as the lightning that flashes out of the ***one part*** under heaven shines to the ***other part*** under heaven, so also will the Son of Man be in His day. **25** But first He must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation. **26** And just as it came to pass in the days of Noah (Noe), so also will it be in the days of the Son of Man: **27** they were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying, they were being given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came and destroyed all. **28** Likewise

17:10 Job 35:6,7; Ps 16:2,3; Isa 6:5
17:11 Luke 9:51,52; John 4:4
17:12 Lev 13:45; Lev 13:46; Luke 5:12
17:13 Luke 18:38,39; Matt 9:27; Matt 15:22
17:14 Lev 14:1; Lev 14:2; Lev 14:3
17:15 Luke 17:17,18; Ps 103:1-4; Ps 107:20-22
17:16 Gen 17:3; Dan 2:46; John 5:23
17:17 Gen 3:9; Ps 106:13; John 8:7-10
17:18 Mal 2:2; Ps 106:13; Ps 29:1,2
17:19 Matt 9:22; Luke 18:42; Mark 5:34
17:20 Luke 19:11; Luke 17:23,24; Luke 16:16
17:21 Rom 14:17; Matt 12:28; Luke 10:9-11
17:22 Luke 5:35; Matt 9:15; Luke 13:35
17:23 Luke 21:8; Luke 17:21; Matt 24:23-26
17:24 Matt 24:27; Zech 9:14; Mal 3:1,2
17:25 Matt 16:21; Luke 9:22; Mark 8:31
17:26 Gen 7:7; Gen 7:23; Gen 5:29
17:27 Gen 5:29; Gen 6:14; Gen 6:17
17:28 Gen 19:5; Gen 19:6; Gen 19:9

17:9 *Does he have thanks for that slave because he did the things commanded him* A slave on a small farm might plow all day and then cook for his master. He earned no special reward by doing his job. Jesus is not teaching how masters should treat workers but using that day's customs to teach about God.

17:10 *We are unworthy slaves, for we have done what we were obligated to do* Perhaps the apostles thought great faith would put God in their debt. Even our best obedience does not; we owe Him everything already. This guards against pride. Yet the wonder of grace is that this same Lord will gird Himself and serve His faithful servants at His table (12:37). We do not earn it. He gives it.

17:11 *He was passing through the midst of Samaria and Galilee* Jesus is still on His way to Jerusalem to die (9:51), along the border between Galilee and Samaria. Samaritans descended from Israelites who mixed with foreign peoples after Assyria conquered the north (2 Kgs 17:24-41) and worshiped on their own mountain (John 4:20). Both peoples might be found on a border road.

17:12 *ten leprous men met Him, who stood far off* Leprosy covered serious skin diseases. The Law said a leper was unclean, lived outside the camp, cried out "Unclean," and kept away (Lev 13:45-46). They called Jesus Master and asked not for money but for mercy, the right prayer for every sinner. Sickness had broken down the wall between Jew and Samaritan. These men were together because no one else would have them.

17:14 *in their going, they were cleansed* A priest examined a healed leper and declared him clean (Lev 14:1-32). Jesus sent them while their skin was still sick. They took Him at His word, and on the way they were healed. Sometimes God asks us to step out in obedience before we see the answer.

17:16 *and he was a Samaritan* The loud voice that cried for mercy now shouted praise, and he came close, as he now could, and bowed at Jesus' feet. The one the Jews looked down on was the only one who came back. The outsider often sees what the insider misses (10:33).

17:17 *But the nine, where are they* You can hear the sorrow in the three questions. Maybe the nine were eager to see the priests and meant to come back later; Scripture does not say. A foreigner gave God glory. How often are we like the nine, praying hard in trouble and forgetting to thank Him? A heart turning from God does not give thanks (Rom 1:21).

17:19 *your faith has saved you* All ten were cleansed in body. To this one Jesus said more. Saved can mean made well, and it means rescued, the words spoken to the forgiven woman (7:50). Many believe he received a right relationship with God. The nine got a gift. The one got the Giver.

17:20 *The kingdom of God does not come with careful observation* Like most Jews, the Pharisees expected a Messiah who would defeat Rome and rule from Jerusalem, so they asked when. Careful observation means watching for signs to chart, like watching the sky to set a calendar. The kingdom would not come the way they expected.

17:21 *the kingdom of God is within you* The Greek entos can mean within or among. Some take it as printed: God's rule begins in the heart that submits to the King. Others note He was speaking to Pharisees who rejected Him and read it as in your midst: the King was standing before them doing the kingdom's works (11:20). Either way, they scanned the horizon and missed the King. You can study prophecy charts and never bow to Jesus. This does not mean the kingdom will never come on earth; the next verses speak of a day still to come.

17:22 *you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man* Son of Man, from Daniel 7:13-14, was Jesus' favorite title. He was with them now but going away, and hard days would come when they longed to have Him back even for a day. That is the cry of every suffering believer.

17:23 *Do not go away, nor pursue them* People who long for something badly are easy to fool. False teachers will say Christ has appeared in some secret place. Through history many have claimed it. Jesus warned us ahead of time not to chase them.

17:24 *just as the lightning that flashes out of the one part under heaven* Lightning does not happen in a back room. When Jesus returns to the earth in glory, no one will need to be told. It will be sudden, visible and impossible to miss.

17:25 *But first He must suffer many things* Before the glory comes the cross (9:22). He was not going to Jerusalem to set up His kingdom in glory but to suffer and die. "Must": the cross was God's plan. There is no crown without the cross, for Him or His people.

17:27 *until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came and destroyed all* Eating, drinking and marrying are not wrong. People lived as if that was all there was, though Noah warned them (2 Pet 2:5). Jesus treats the flood as real history, and so should we. The world before His coming will be the same: busy, comfortable and careless about God.

also, as it came to pass in the days of Lot: they were eating, they were drinking, they were buying, they were selling, they were planting, they were building; **29** but on the day that Lot went out from Sodom (Sodoma), it rained fire and sulfur from heaven and destroyed all. **30** According to these things it will be in the day the Son of Man is revealed. **31** In that day, the one who will be on the housetop, and his goods in the house, let him not come down to take them away; and the one in the field likewise, let him not turn back to the things behind. **32** Remember the wife of Lot. **33** Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses it will preserve it alive. **34** I say to you, in this night there will be two ***men*** on one bed: the one will be taken, and the other will be left. **35** Two ***women*** will be grinding at the same ***place***: the one will be taken, and the other will be left. **36** Two ***men*** will be in the field: the one will be taken, and the other will be left." **37** And answering, they say to Him, "Where, Lord?" And He said to them, "Where the body ***is***, there the vultures will be gathered together."

LUKE 18

The Persistent Widow

1 And He was also speaking a parable to them about its being necessary always to pray and not to lose heart, **2** saying, "There was a certain judge in a certain city, not fearing God and not respecting man. **3** Now there was a widow in that city, and she was coming to him, saying, 'Avenge me of my adversary.' **4** And he was not willing for a time; but after these things he said within himself, 'Even if I do not fear God and do not respect man, **5** yet because this widow causes me trouble, I will avenge her, so that she may not wear me out by continually coming.'" **6** And the Lord said, "Hear what the judge of unrighteousness says. **7** And will God by no means execute the avenging of His elect, those crying out to Him day and night, and being patient toward them? **8** I say to you that He will execute the avenging of them with speed. Nevertheless, the Son of Man, having come, will He find the faith on the earth?"

The Pharisee and the Tax Collector

9 And He also spoke this parable to some who had trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and were despising the

17:29 Isa 13:19; Zeph 2:9; Deut 29:23
17:30 Matt 24:3,27-31; 2 Thess 1:7; 1 Pet 1:13
17:31 Gen 19:17; Jer 45:5; Mark 13:14-16
17:32 Gen 19:26; Deut 24:9; Heb 10:38,39
17:33 Matt 10:39; John 12:25; Mark 8:35-37
17:34 Matt 24:40,41; Matt 24:25; Ezek 9:4-6
17:35 Exod 11:5; Judg 16:21
17:37 Matt 24:28; Job 39:29,30; Dan 9:26,27

18:1 Col 4:2,12; 1 Thess 5:17; Rom 12:12
18:2 2 Chr 19:6; 2 Chr 19:7; Luke 18:4
18:3 Ps 68:5; Isa 1:17,21-23; Deut 27:19
18:4 Luke 12:17; Luke 16:3; Heb 4:12,13
18:5 Luke 11:8; Judg 16:16; 2 Sam 13:24-27
18:7 Rev 6:10; Ps 88:1; Jer 20:11-13
18:8 Heb 10:23-26; Matt 24:9-13,24; 2 Pet 2:3
18:9 Isa 65:5; Luke 16:15; Prov 30:12

17:29 *it rained fire and sulfur from heaven and destroyed all* In Sodom (Gen 18 to 19) business was good and building was booming. Sulfur, or brimstone, burns with great heat. The fire fell the very day Lot left. God waited until His man was out.
17:30 *in the day the Son of Man is revealed* Revealed means unveiled to all. In both examples God's people were removed or kept safe, and then judgment came suddenly. I believe Christ will come for His church before the seven-year Tribulation (1 Thess 4:16-17; John 14:1-3), and at its end return to the earth in power to judge and reign (Rev 19:11-16). The day described here, visible like lightning, is that return to the earth. But the warning fits every age. God's patience is real, and it has an end.
17:31 *the one who will be on the housetop* Flat roofs were reached by an outside stair. Do not go in for your things. Matthew uses these words of fleeing when the abomination of desolation is set up (Matt 24:15-18). Here the point is the heart. When the Lord comes, possessions will not matter, and a heart tied to stuff will want to turn back.
17:32 *Remember the wife of Lot* One of the shortest and most serious verses in the Bible. Led out by an angel's hand and told not to look back, she looked and became a pillar of salt (Gen 19:16, 26). She was out of Sodom, but Sodom was not out of her. You can be very close to rescue and still be lost because you love the world more than God.
17:33 *whoever loses it will preserve it alive* Clinging to comfort, things and our own way loses everything in the end (9:24). Lot's wife held on to her old life and lost it. What are you holding on to?
17:34 *the one will be taken, and the other will be left* Night in one place and morning grinding in another: His coming will be worldwide and at one moment. Many read this as the rapture, and some pre-tribulation teachers do. But in Noah's and Lot's days those taken were destroyed, and those left lived on, and in verse 37 the answer to where is vultures over a body. Two can share a bed or work and one be ready and the other not. So I believe this is the Second Coming at the end of the Tribulation: those taken go to judgment, and those left enter Christ's kingdom on earth.
17:36 *Two men will be in the field: the one will be taken, and the other will be left* The same lesson as the two before. This verse follows the Received Greek Text; most older Greek copies of Luke do not have it here. The same words are in Matthew 24:40, so we know Jesus said them, and no teaching rests on this verse alone.
17:37 *Where the body is, there the vultures will be gathered together* Vultures circling show what lies below. The answer is grim on purpose: those taken are taken to death and judgment. Revelation pictures the birds gathered to the flesh of the armies that fight Christ at His return (Rev 19:17-21). No one will hide from it. The only safe place is in Christ, before that day comes.
18:1 *always to pray and not to lose heart* Luke gives the point before the parable, which helps us read it rightly. To lose heart is to grow tired and quit when the answer is slow. Always does not mean words every minute but a constant habit of life (1 Thess 5:17). Coming right after Jesus' words on His coming (17:22-37), it shows that prayer keeps us from giving up while we wait.
18:3 *Avenge me of my adversary* The judge was moved neither by conscience nor shame, though Israel's judges were to fear God (Deut 16:18-20). A widow had almost no power, no husband to speak for her and often no money for a bribe, and God repeatedly shows His care for widows and anger at those who use them (Exod 22:22-24; Ps 68:5). Her adversary was likely an opponent in a legal matter, perhaps after her land or little money. She asked for justice.
18:5 *so that she may not wear me out by continually coming* The phrase comes from a word for hitting under the eye, giving a black eye. The judge is half joking but worn down. He acts not from kindness but to be rid of her.
18:7 *will God by no means execute the avenging of His elect* God is not like the judge; He is his opposite. If a wicked judge finally gives a stranger justice, how much more will God do right for His chosen ones, who may come to Him day and night. Being patient toward them may mean He is patient with them as they wait, or that He seems slow. His delay is never because He does not care.
18:8 *will He find the faith on the earth* When God's time comes He acts quickly. He will set all things right, and His people's prayers for justice will be fully answered when Christ returns to judge (Rev 6:9-11; 19:1-2). Then the searching question: will He find this persistent, trusting faith when He comes? Are we praying and holding on, or have we lost heart?
18:9 *some who had trusted in themselves that they were righteous* Again the point comes first. This is for people who think they meet God's standard on their own and look down on everyone else. You cannot trust in yourself and in God's mercy at the same time.

rest: **10** "Two men went up into the temple to pray, the one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. **11** The Pharisee, having stood, was praying these things to himself: 'God, I thank You that I am not like the rest of men, swindlers, unrighteous, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. **12** I fast twice in the week; I tithe all things, as many as I acquire.' **13** And the tax collector, having stood far off, was not willing to lift up even ***his*** eyes to heaven, but was striking his breast, saying, 'God, be propitious to me, the sinner!' **14** I say to you, this one went down to his house justified rather than that one; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted."

Jesus Blesses the Children

15 And they were also bringing the infants to Him, that He might touch them; but having seen ***it***, the disciples rebuked them. **16** But Jesus (Iesous), having called them to ***Himself***, said, "Permit the little children to come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God. **17** Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter into it."

The Rich Ruler

18 And a certain ruler asked Him, saying, "Good Teacher, having done what will I inherit eternal life?" **19** And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one ***is*** good except One, God. **20** You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery,' 'Do not murder,' 'Do not steal,' 'Do not bear false witness,' 'Honor your father and your mother.'" **21** And he said, "All these I have kept from my youth." **22** And having heard these things, Jesus said to him, "Yet one thing is lacking to you: sell all things, as many as you have, and distribute to ***the*** poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." **23** And having heard these things, he became very sorrowful, for he was extremely rich. **24** And having seen him become very sorrowful, Jesus said, "With what difficulty those having riches will enter into the kingdom of God! **25** For it is easier for a camel to enter through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." **26** And those who heard said, "And

18:10 Isa 65:5; Acts 3:1; Luke 1:9,10
18:11 Isa 65:5; Matt 6:5; Mark 11:25
18:12 Isa 65:5; Luke 11:42; Matt 9:14
18:13 Ps 51:17; Ezra 9:6; Luke 23:48
18:14 Ps 51:17; Luke 14:11; Luke 16:15
18:15 Matt 19:13-15; Mark 10:13-16; 1 Sam 1:24
18:16 Jer 32:39; Deut 31:12; Acts 2:39
18:17 Mark 10:15; 1 Pet 1:14; Ps 131:1,2
18:18 Mark 10:17-31; Matt 19:16-30; Luke 6:46
18:19 James 1:17; Luke 1:35; Luke 11:13
18:20 Exod 20:12; Exod 20:13; Exod 20:14-16
18:21 Phil 3:6; Luke 18:11,12; Luke 15:7,29
18:22 Luke 10:42; Luke 12:33; Luke 16:9
18:23 Ezek 33:31; Luke 8:14; Luke 12:15
18:24 Prov 11:28; Mark 6:26; 2 Cor 7:9,10
18:25 Matt 23:24
18:26 Luke 13:23

18:10 *the one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector* People went up to the temple on its hill, and there were set times of prayer each day. The Pharisee was the model of strict religion; the tax collector worked for Rome and was seen as a traitor and thief. Everyone listening expected the Pharisee to be the hero.

18:11 *God, I thank You that I am not like the rest of men* Standing was a normal posture for prayer, but he prayed "to himself," about himself, no higher than the ceiling. He asks for nothing and confesses nothing. He compares himself with the worst people he can think of and points at the tax collector. God does not grade on a curve. The standard is His holiness, not the person next to us.

18:12 *I fast twice in the week; I tithe all things* The Law required one fast a year, on the Day of Atonement (Lev 16:29-31); strict Pharisees fasted Mondays and Thursdays. He tithed even small things. These were good things, but he used them as his ticket to God, showing his good works like a bank balance. He went far beyond the Law and still did not know he needed mercy.

18:13 *God, be propitious to me, the sinner* He stood far off, would not look up, and beat his chest in grief over sin. Propitious means merciful because the wrath against sin has been satisfied, tied to the sacrifice whose blood was sprinkled on the mercy seat on the Day of Atonement (Lev 16:14-15). "The sinner": he thought only of his own sin. Today we know the answer. Jesus is the propitiation, the sacrifice that turns away God's wrath for all who trust Him (Rom 3:25; 1 John 2:2).

18:14 *this one went down to his house justified rather than that one* Justified is declared righteous by God, not for what we have done but because He forgives. This is the heart of the gospel. The man who brought nothing but his sin went home right with God; the one with a long list did not (Rom 3:28; Eph 2:8-9). Pride keeps us from God, and humility is the door (14:11). Most of us have a little Pharisee in us. Come with nothing but a cry for mercy.

18:15 *the disciples rebuked them* Parents commonly asked a respected teacher to lay hands on their children and pray. The disciples thought Jesus too busy and important for babies. The Pharisee looked down on the tax collector; now the disciples look down on children. Pride shows up in many ways.

18:16 *Permit the little children to come to Me* Jesus was indignant with the disciples (Mark 10:14) and called the children to Him. In a world where children had little value, He had time for them. No one is too small to come. Children are not sinless, but they are dependent. They cannot earn anything and do not try; they simply receive.

18:17 *whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child* A child receives a gift with open hands and does not try to pay for it. The Pharisee came as a successful adult with achievements; the tax collector came empty-handed like a child. That is the only way in. Children matter to Jesus, and teaching them about Him is one of the most important things we can do (2 Tim 3:15).

18:18 *Good Teacher, having done what will I inherit eternal life* Matthew says he was young (Matt 19:20); Luke says a ruler, likely a synagogue leader or council member. Eternal life is life with God that never ends and begins now for those who know Him (John 17:3). "Having done what": he wanted to know what was left on his list.

18:19 *Why do you call Me good? No one is good except One, God* Jesus is not denying He is good or God. If only God is truly good and you call Me good, do you know who you are talking to? It also corrects the man's idea of goodness. If only God is good, no man is good enough to earn eternal life.

18:21 *All these I have kept from my youth* Jesus listed the commandments about others (Exod 20:12-16), and the man meant it; he had lived a respectable life. But Jesus left out coveting (Exod 20:17) and having no other gods. He was about to show him where his heart was.

18:22 *Yet one thing is lacking to you* Not everyone must sell everything; Zacchaeus gave half and salvation came to his house (19:8-9). Jesus put His finger on what ruled this man's heart. Money was his god. The heart of the call is "come, follow Me." Eternal life is found not in doing more but in following Jesus. What are you holding on to?

18:23 *he became very sorrowful, for he was extremely rich* Sad, but unchanged. Jesus looked at him and loved him (Mark 10:21). One of the saddest scenes in the Gospels: he ran to the right Person with the right question and left without eternal life because he loved his money more.

18:25 *easier for a camel to enter through the eye of a needle* The largest animal and the smallest opening: a picture of the impossible on purpose. The story of a small Jerusalem gate called the Needle's Eye has no good evidence and misses the point. It cannot be done by human effort. Riches make people feel safe and in control, as if they do not need God (1 Tim 6:17).

who is able to be saved?" **27** But He said, "The things impossible with men are possible with God." **28** And Peter (Petros) said, "Look, we have left all and followed You." **29** And He said to them, "Truly I say to you that there is no one who has left house or parents or brothers or wife or children for the sake of the kingdom of God, **30** who will not receive back many times more in this time, and in the age that is coming, eternal life."

Jesus Foretells His Death Again

31 And having taken the twelve aside, He said to them, "Look, we are going up to Jerusalem (Hierosolyma), and all the things written through the prophets about the Son of Man will be accomplished. **32** For He will be delivered up to the Gentiles, and will be mocked, and will be insulted, and will be spit upon, **33** and having flogged ***Him***, they will kill Him; and on the third day He will rise again." **34** And they understood none of these things, and this declaration was hidden from them, and they were not knowing the things being said.

A Blind Beggar Receives Sight

35 And it came to pass, in His drawing near to Jericho (Hiericho), a certain blind man was sitting beside the road, begging. **36** And having heard a crowd passing through, he was inquiring what this might be. **37** And they told him that Jesus the Nazarene is passing by. **38** And he called out, saying, "Jesus, Son of David (Dabid), have mercy on me!" **39** And those going before were rebuking him, that he should be silent; but he was crying out much more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" **40** And having stopped, Jesus commanded him to be brought to Him; and when he had drawn near, He asked him, **41** saying, "What do you want Me to do for you?" And he said, "Lord, that I may receive sight." **42** And Jesus said to him, "Receive sight; your faith has saved you." **43** And immediately he received sight, and was following Him, glorifying God. And all the people, having seen ***it***, gave praise to God.

LUKE 19

Zacchaeus

1 And having entered, He was passing through Jericho (Hiericho). **2** And look, ***there was*** a man called by name Zacchaeus (Zakchaios); and he was a chief tax collector, and this ***one*** was rich. **3** And he was seeking to see Jesus (Iesous), who He is, and he was not able because of the crowd, because he

18:27 Jer 32:17; Matt 19:26; Luke 1:37
18:28 Luke 5:11; Mark 10:28; Matt 4:19-22
18:29 Matt 19:28-30; Mark 10:29-31; Luke 14:26-28
18:30 Job 42:10; Luke 12:31,32; Ps 37:16
18:31 Dan 9:26; Ps 22:27; Ps 69:27
18:32 Luke 23:11,35; Luke 23:1,11; Matt 27:2
18:33 Luke 24:7,21; Matt 27:63; 1 Cor 15:3,4
18:34 Dan 12:8; Luke 9:45; Mark 9:32
18:35 John 9:8; Matt 20:29,30; Mark 10:46,47
18:36 Luke 15:26; Matt 21:10,11
18:37 Matt 2:23; Mark 2:1-3; John 12:35,36
18:38 Isa 9:6; Jer 23:5; Isa 9:7
18:39 Luke 18:15; Luke 8:49; Luke 11:52
18:40 Matt 20:31-34; Mark 10:48-52
18:41 1 Kgs 3:5-15; Matt 20:21,22; Rom 8:25
18:42 Luke 7:50; Luke 8:48; Luke 17:19
18:43 Ps 107:32; Ps 30:2; Ps 146:8
19:1 Josh 2:1; Josh 6:1; 1 Kgs 16:34
19:2 Luke 18:24-27; 2 Chr 17:5,6
19:3 John 12:21; Luke 9:7-9; Luke 23:8

18:27 *The things impossible with men are possible with God* Many saw wealth as God's blessing, so the hearers were stunned. No one can save himself, rich or poor. But God can open a rich man's hand and a proud man's eyes, and in the next chapter a rich tax collector is saved (19:1-10). What God commands, He makes possible by grace.
18:28 *we have left all and followed You* Unlike the ruler, they had left boats, nets and a tax booth (5:11, 28). Peter was really asking, what will we get?
18:30 *many times more in this time, and in the age that is coming, eternal life* Jesus does not scold Peter. No sacrifice for Him is wasted. Many times more is not more money but a new family, brothers, sisters and mothers in the faith all over the world (Mark 10:30), as many missionaries can testify. The age to come follows Christ's return. What we give up is small next to what He gives.
18:31 *all the things written through the prophets about the Son of Man will be accomplished* The third plain prediction of His death (9:22, 44), told privately. Psalm 22, Isaiah 53, Daniel 9:26 and Zechariah 12:10 spoke of the Messiah's suffering. The cross was not a surprise to God but the plan written long before.
18:33 *having flogged Him, they will kill Him; and on the third day He will rise again* Handed to the Gentiles, the Romans under Pilate. A Roman scourge had leather straps with bone or metal tied in, and some men died from it. Every detail happened as He said (22:63-65; 23:11, 36; John 19:1). He never spoke of His death without His resurrection.
18:34 *they understood none of these things* Luke says it three ways. They still expected the Messiah to defeat Rome at once, and a dying Messiah did not fit. Only after the resurrection did their eyes open (24:25-27, 45). Sometimes our own ideas about God keep us from hearing what He plainly says.
18:35 *a certain blind man was sitting beside the road, begging* Jericho lay about fifteen miles northeast of Jerusalem in the Jordan Valley, on the pilgrims' route from Galilee. Mark names him Bartimaeus and says Jesus was leaving Jericho (Mark 10:46); Matthew mentions two men (Matt 20:29-30). There were two Jerichos, the old city and Herod's newer one nearby, so Jesus could be leaving one and approaching the other, and Mark and Luke focus on the better-known man. They do not contradict each other.
18:38 *Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me* Jesus would never pass through Jericho again. The crowd said the Nazarene, from Nazareth; the blind man named the Messiah, the son promised David's throne forever (2 Sam 7:12-16; Isa 9:6-7). A blind beggar saw what the twelve struggled to see. Like the tax collector and the lepers, he asked for mercy.
18:39 *he was crying out much more* Those in front told him not to make a scene. He would not be stopped. Like the widow (18:1-8), he knew what he needed and who could give it.
18:41 *What do you want Me to do for you* The crowd wanted him quiet; Jesus stopped everything for one blind beggar. He knew, but asked him to say it. God wants us to bring our needs plainly. He called Him Lord and had no doubt He could do it.
18:42 *Receive sight; your faith has saved you* The words spoken to the Samaritan leper (17:19) and the woman who touched His garment (8:48). Faith did not heal by its own power; it reached out to Jesus, and Jesus healed. Isaiah foretold the blind seeing when Messiah came (Isa 35:5), and the Son of David proved who He was.
18:43 *was following Him, glorifying God* The first face he saw was Jesus', and the first thing he did was follow Him to Jerusalem. The rich ruler had everything and went away sad. The beggar had nothing and followed, praising God. When God changes one life, others praise Him too.
19:2 *he was a chief tax collector, and this one was rich* Jericho was a rich city of palms and balsam groves on a major trade road, a good place to collect taxes. Zacchaeus means pure or righteous, not how anyone described him. Rome sold the right to collect taxes, collectors added their own fees, and a chief collector took a cut from the men under him. He was rich from cheating his own people, who saw him as a traitor.
19:3 *he was seeking to see Jesus, who He is* Perhaps he had heard Jesus ate with tax collectors (5:29-30; 15:1-2) or about Levi leaving his booth (5:27-28). Scripture does not tell us all that was in his heart. He was short, and no one was going to make room for Zacchaeus.

was small in stature. **4** And having run ahead in front, he went up into a sycamore-fig tree so that he might see Him, for He was about to pass through by that ***way***. **5** And as He came to the place, Jesus, having looked up, saw him and said to him, "Zacchaeus, having hurried, come down; for today I must stay in your house." **6** And having hurried, he came down and received Him, rejoicing. **7** And having seen ***it***, all were grumbling, saying, "He has gone in to lodge with a sinful man." **8** And Zacchaeus, having stood, said to the Lord, "Look, Lord, the half of my possessions I give to the poor; and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore fourfold." **9** And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham (Abraam); **10** for the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which has been lost."

The Parable of the Minas

11 Now while they were hearing these things, having added, He spoke a parable, because of His being near Jerusalem (Hierousalem), and because they were thinking that the kingdom of God was about to appear immediately.
12 Therefore He said, "A certain man of noble birth went to a distant country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. **13** And having called ten of his own slaves, he gave them approximately 12.5 pounds (ten minas) and said to them, 'Do business until I come.' **14** But his citizens were hating him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We do not want this ***man*** to reign over us.' **15** And it came to pass, in his returning, having received the kingdom, that he said for these slaves to whom he gave the money to be called to him, so that he might know who had gained what by doing business. **16** And the first came up, saying, 'Master, your mina has gained ten minas more.' **17** And he said to him, 'Well done, good slave! Because you were faithful in a very little, be ***one*** having authority over ten cities.' **18** And the second came, saying, 'Master, your mina has made five minas.' **19** And he said also to this one, 'And you, be over five cities.' **20** And another came, saying, 'Master, look, your mina, which I was keeping laid away in a cloth; **21** for I was afraid of you, because you are a harsh man: you take up what you did not lay down, and you reap what you did not sow.' **22** And he says to him, 'Out of your mouth I will judge you, evil slave. You knew that I am a harsh man, taking up what I

19:4 1 Kgs 10:27; 1 Chr 27:28; Isa 9:10
19:5 Gen 19:1; Gen 19:2; Rev 3:20
19:6 Luke 2:16; Gen 18:6,7; Ps 119:59,60
19:7 Luke 15:2; Luke 7:34,39; Luke 18:9-14
19:8 Exod 22:1; Lev 6:1; Num 5:7
19:9 Gal 3:7,14,29; Luke 13:16; Rom 4:11,12,16
19:10 Ezek 34:16; 1 Tim 1:13-16; Luke 15:4-7,32
19:11 Luke 17:20; Acts 1:6; 2 Thess 2:1-3
19:12 Dan 7:14; Matt 25:14-30; Mark 13:34-37
19:13 Matt 25:14; John 12:26; 2 Pet 1:1
19:14 Luke 19:27; 1 Sam 8:7; Ps 2:1-3
19:15 Ps 2:4-6; Luke 12:48; Luke 16:2-13
19:16 1 Chr 29:14-16; 1 Cor 15:10; 2 Tim 4:7,8
19:17 Luke 16:10; Matt 25:21; 1 Cor 4:5
19:18 Matt 13:23; Mark 4:20; 2 Cor 8:12
19:19 Isa 3:10; 1 Cor 3:8; 1 Cor 15:41,42,58
19:20 Luke 19:13; Luke 3:9; Luke 6:46
19:21 Exod 20:19,20; 1 Sam 12:20; Matt 25:24,25
19:22 2 Sam 1:16; Eccl 10:12; Matt 22:12

19:4 *he went up into a sycamore-fig tree* A sturdy tree with low, wide branches. Grown men of rank did not run or climb trees in public. Zacchaeus did not care what anyone thought. He went to where Jesus would be.
19:5 *today I must stay in your house* Zacchaeus was looking for Jesus, but Jesus was looking for Zacchaeus. He stopped under that tree and called him by name; no one had to tell Him. "I must": it was His Father's plan. Of all the people in Jericho, He chose to stay with the most hated man in town.
19:6 *received Him, rejoicing* No waiting and no excuses. Luke loves to show joy when the lost are found (15:7, 10, 32).
19:7 *He has gone in to lodge with a sinful man* The cheering crowd now complained, as the Pharisees had (15:2). Staying in a man's home meant accepting him. The crowd saw a sinner; Jesus saw a man He came to save. Are we more like Jesus or that crowd when we see people far from God?
19:8 *if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore fourfold* No one told him to say this, and Jesus gave him no rules first. He had met Jesus, and his heart was changed. The Law required restoring fraud plus a fifth (Lev 6:1-5; Num 5:6-7); fourfold was the penalty for stealing a sheep (Exod 22:1). He treated his cheating like the worst theft. Unlike the rich ruler, he opened his hands (18:27). He did this not to be saved but because Jesus had come to him. When Jesus comes into a house, the money changes too.
19:9 *Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham* Today: salvation came the day he received Jesus. A Jew by birth whom the crowd had written off, he was a true son of Abraham by faith, for the children of Abraham are those who believe (Gal 3:7). The man everyone threw away belonged to God's family.
19:10 *for the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which has been lost* The key verse of Luke's Gospel, telling why Jesus came. He seeks, like the shepherd and the woman with the lamp (15:4-10), and stopped under a tree for one man. He saves, rescuing the lost by giving His life on the cross days later. Every one of us is lost until Christ finds us (Rom 3:23). No one is too lost for Jesus. If He could save Zacchaeus, He can save you.
19:11 *they were thinking that the kingdom of God was about to appear immediately* Jerusalem was about fifteen miles away, and the crowds and disciples expected Jesus to take David's throne there at once. This parable corrects that. The kingdom would come, but first the King would go away, and later return.
19:12 *A certain man of noble birth went to a distant country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return* A would-be ruler had to receive his kingdom from the emperor in Rome. After Herod the Great died, his son Archelaus did just that, and Jews sent a delegation after him to protest; Josephus tells of it, and Archelaus had a palace in Jericho. The nobleman is Jesus, the distant country heaven. He went to the Father and will come back to reign (Acts 1:9-11; Dan 7:13-14).
19:13 *Do business until I come* A mina was about a hundred days' wages, a fair sum but not a fortune, and each got one. While our Lord is away we are to put the gospel, our time, gifts and lives to work, not sit and wait. Unlike the talents in Matthew 25:14-30, where the amounts differ, here each gets the same and the faithful earn different results.
19:14 *We do not want this man to reign over us* A picture of the nation's leaders rejecting Jesus; days later they would claim no king but Caesar (John 19:15). It also pictures everyone who will not let Jesus rule his life. Many are glad to have Jesus as a helper. Far fewer want Him as King.
19:15 *in his returning, having received the kingdom* The King's return is certain, and He will call His servants to account. Every believer will give account at the judgment seat of Christ (2 Cor 5:10). That is not about whether we are saved, which was settled at the cross, but about rewards for faithful service.
19:17 *Because you were faithful in a very little, be one having authority over ten cities* "Your mina": he knew it was not his; he was managing it. The master calls a mina a very little. What we have now is small next to what He will give, and the reward for faithfulness is more responsibility. His faithful servants will reign with Him (2 Tim 2:12; Rev 20:4-6).
19:19 *be over five cities* The second slave is not scolded but rewarded in proportion. Reward in the kingdom is real, and not the same for everyone, but every faithful servant is rewarded.
19:21 *for I was afraid of you, because you are a harsh man* He wrapped the mina in a cloth and did nothing, then blamed the master. His words showed he did not know or love his master.

did not lay down and reaping what I did not sow. **23** And why did you not give my money to the bank, and I, having come, would have collected it with interest?' **24** And he said to those standing by, 'Take the mina from him and give ***it*** to the one having the ten minas.' **25** And they said to him, 'Master, he has ten minas!' **26** 'For I say to you that to everyone who has, ***more*** will be given; but from the one who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. **27** But those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring ***them*** here and slay ***them*** before me.'"

The King Enters Jerusalem

28 And having said these things, He was going on ahead, going up to Jerusalem (Hierosolyma). **29** And it came to pass, as He drew near to Bethphage and Bethany (Bethania), toward the mount that is called ***the Mount*** of Olives, He sent two of His disciples, **30** saying, "Go into the village opposite, in which, entering, you will find a colt tied, on which no one of men has ever yet sat; having untied it, bring ***it***. **31** And if anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying ***it***?' thus you will say to him, 'Because the Lord has need of it.'" **32** And having departed, those who had been sent found ***it*** just as He had said to them. **33** And as they were untying the colt, its masters said to them, "Why are you untying the colt?" **34** And they said, "The Lord has need of it." **35** And they led it to Jesus, and having cast their own garments on the colt, they put Jesus on ***it***. **36** And as He was going, they were spreading their garments on the road. **37** And as He was drawing near, already at the descent of the Mount of Olives, all the multitude of the disciples began, rejoicing, to praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen, **38** saying, "Blessed ***is*** the King coming in ***the*** name of ***the*** Lord! Peace in heaven, and glory in ***the*** highest!" **39** And some of the Pharisees from the crowd said to Him, "Teacher, rebuke Your disciples." **40** And answering, He said to them, "I say to you that if these should be silent, the stones will cry out."

Jesus Weeps over the City

41 And as He drew near, having seen the city, He wept over it, **42** saying, "If you had known, even you, indeed in this your day, the things for your peace! But now they were hidden from your eyes. **43** For days will come upon you, and your enemies will cast up a barricade around you, and will surround you, and will hem you in on every side, **44** and will level you to the ground, and your children within you; and

19:23 Exod 22:25; Exod 22:26; Rom 2:4,5
19:24 Gen 23:11; Luke 12:20; Luke 16:2
19:25 Luke 16:2; 2 Sam 7:19; Isa 55:8,9
19:26 Matt 13:12; Luke 8:18; 2 John 1:8
19:27 Luke 19:14,42-44; Num 14:36,37; Num 16:30-35
19:28 Luke 9:51; Luke 12:50; Luke 18:31
19:29 Zech 14:4; Acts 1:12; Matt 21:1-11
19:30 Luke 22:8-13; 1 Sam 10:2-9; John 14:29
19:31 Ps 24:1; Ps 50:10-12; Matt 21:2,3
19:34 Zech 9:9; John 10:35; John 12:16
19:35 Zech 9:9; 2 Kgs 9:13; Matt 21:7
19:36 2 Kgs 9:13; Matt 21:8
19:37 Luke 19:20; Mark 13:3; Mark 14:26
19:38 Ps 118:26; Zech 9:9; 1 Kgs 1:25
19:39 John 12:10,19; Acts 4:1,2,16-18; James 4:5
19:40 Hab 2:11; Isa 55:12; Ps 96:11
19:41 Isa 15:5; Isa 22:4; Isa 53:3
19:42 Isa 15:5; Deut 32:29; Matt 13:14,15
19:43 Isa 15:5; Luke 21:20-24; Deut 28:49-58
19:44 Isa 15:5; 1 Pet 2:12; Luke 21:6

19:23 *why did you not give my money to the bank* The master takes him at his word: if you thought me harsh, you should have worked harder. Even the least effort would have earned interest. He was faithful in nothing. The problem was not ability but lack of love and trust. Many teachers believe he pictures someone who claims the King but never truly knew Him; others see a believer who loses reward.

19:26 *to everyone who has, more will be given* The bystanders thought it unfair to give more to the one with ten. But this is a law of the kingdom. The one who uses what God gives receives more; the one who will not use it loses even that, true of gifts, opportunities and the truth we hear (8:18). Use it or lose it.

19:27 *those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them* When Christ returns to reign, those who refused Him will face His judgment (2 Thess 1:7-9; Rev 19:15). He is the Savior who seeks the lost and the King who will judge His enemies. The kingdom was not appearing immediately. The King would go, His servants work, and He return to reward and judge. We live in that time of waiting now.

19:28 *He was going on ahead, going up to Jerusalem* Jesus led the way while the disciples followed amazed and afraid (Mark 10:32). The road climbs about 3,300 feet in some fifteen miles of dry, rocky hills. He knew what waited at the top.

19:30 *you will find a colt tied, on which no one of men has ever yet sat* Bethany, home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus, lay about two miles east of the city, with Bethphage nearby; the Mount of Olives is the ridge across the Kidron Valley from the temple. The colt was a donkey's (Matt 21:2-5). An animal never used was fit for a holy purpose (Num 19:2; 1 Sam 6:7).

19:31 *Because the Lord has need of it* Jesus knew where the colt was and what would be said. He was not swept along by events; He planned every detail.

19:34 *The Lord has need of it* Everything happened as He said, and that answer was enough. Perhaps the owners knew Him. When the Lord needs something we have, the right answer is to let it go.

19:35 *they put Jesus on it* Cloaks made a saddle, and cloaks spread on the road welcomed a king (2 Kgs 9:13). Zechariah foretold the King coming humble on a donkey's colt (Zech 9:9). Kings rode horses to war; a king coming in peace might ride a donkey. Jesus declared Himself the promised King, coming in humility and peace.

19:37 *at the descent of the Mount of Olives* From the top the whole city comes into view, the temple shining in the sun, and the crowd of disciples burst into praise for the mighty works they had seen.

19:38 *Blessed is the King coming in the name of the Lord* From Psalm 118:26, sung at the feasts; Luke includes the word King. They openly called Jesus the Messiah, and their words echo the angels' song at His birth (2:14). He had often told people to keep quiet about who He was. Now He let them shout it.

19:40 *if these should be silent, the stones will cry out* The Pharisees may have feared Rome would see rebellion, or simply did not believe. The praise was right because it was true. If people kept silent, creation itself would shout it.

19:41 *having seen the city, He wept over it* The crowd cheered; Jesus sobbed, a stronger word than at Lazarus' tomb (John 11:35). He knew the city would reject Him in days and be destroyed in about forty years. He takes no pleasure in judgment, nor does God in the death of the wicked (Ezek 33:11). His tears show God's heart toward those who turn Him away.

19:42 *the things for your peace* Jerusalem's name has often been tied to shalom. Peace rode into the city on a colt, and they did not recognize Him. Having rejected Him again and again, their eyes were closed (John 12:37-40). A person or nation that keeps refusing God's truth can come to where it no longer sees it.

19:43 *your enemies will cast up a barricade around you* A siege wall of earth and stakes so no one could get in or out.

19:44 *they will not leave a stone upon a stone in you* Exactly what happened in A.D. 70. Titus' army walled in and starved Jerusalem, killed many thousands, burned the temple and tore down much of the city, as Josephus, who was there with the Romans, recorded. A visitation is God coming near, to bless or judge. He walked their streets in His Son, and they did not know Him (John 1:11). God is not finished with Israel; their hardening is partial until the fullness of the Gentiles, and then all Israel will be saved (Rom 11:25-26). Is God visiting you now? Do not let the time pass.

they will not leave a stone upon a stone in you, because you did not know the time of your visitation."

Jesus Cleanses the Temple

45 And having entered into the temple, He began to cast out those selling in it and buying, **46** saying to them, "It has been written, 'My house is a house of prayer,' but you have made it a den of robbers." **47** And He was teaching daily in the temple; but the chief priests and the scribes were seeking to destroy Him, and the foremost of the people, **48** and they were not finding what they might do, for all the people were hanging on Him, listening.

LUKE 20

The Authority of Jesus Questioned

1 And it came to pass on one of those days, as He was teaching the people in the temple and preaching the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes with the elders came up, **2** and they spoke to Him, saying, "Tell us, by what authority do You do these things? Or who is the one who gave You this authority?" **3** And answering, He said to them, "I also will ask you one thing, and tell Me: **4** The baptism of John (Ioannes), was it from heaven or from men?" **5** And they reasoned among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say, 'Why then did you not believe him?' **6** But if we say, 'From men,' all the people will stone us, for they are persuaded that John is a prophet." **7** And they answered that they did not know from where ***it was***. **8** And Jesus (Iesous) said to them, "Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things."

The Wicked Farmers

9 And He began to speak this parable to the people: "A certain man planted a vineyard, and leased it to farmers, and went abroad for a long time. **10** And in season he sent a slave to the farmers, that they should give him from the fruit of the vineyard; but the farmers, having beaten him, sent him away empty. **11** And he proceeded to send another slave; but they, having beaten that one also and having dishonored ***him***, sent ***him*** away empty. **12** And he proceeded to send a third; and they, having wounded this one also, cast ***him*** out. **13** And the master of the vineyard said, 'What shall I do? I will send my son, the beloved; perhaps having seen him, they will respect ***him***.' **14** But having seen him, the farmers were reasoning among themselves, saying, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him, so that the inheritance may become ours.' **15** And having cast him out outside the vineyard, they killed ***him***. What therefore will the master of the vineyard do to

19:45 Jer 7:11; Matt 21:12,13; Mark 11:15-17
19:46 Isa 56:7; Jer 7:11; Ps 93:5
19:47 Neh 8:13; Mal 3:1; Mark 11:18
19:48 Neh 8:3; Neh 8:13; Luke 20:19,20
20:1 Luke 19:47,48; Mark 11:27; John 18:20
20:2 John 2:18; Matt 21:23-27; Mark 11:28-33
20:3 Luke 22:68; Matt 15:2,3; Col 4:6
20:4 Luke 15:18; Luke 7:28-35; Matt 11:7-19
20:5 John 1:15-18,30,34; John 3:26,36; John 5:33-35
20:6 Matt 21:26,46; Matt 26:5; Mark 12:12
20:7 Isa 6:9,10; Isa 26:11; Isa 29:9-12,14
20:8 Luke 22:68; Job 5:12,13; Prov 26:4,5
20:9 Isa 5:1-2; Isa 5:3; Isa 5:4
20:10 2 Chr 36:15; Neh 9:26; 2 Chr 36:16
20:11 Matt 23:30-37; Acts 7:52; 1 Thess 2:2
20:13 Matt 3:17; John 3:16,17,35,36; Jer 36:3,7
20:14 Gen 37:20; Rom 8:17; Heb 1:2
20:15 Heb 13:12; Matt 21:37-40; Mark 12:6-9

19:46 *My house is a house of prayer, but you have made it a den of robbers* In the Court of the Gentiles merchants sold sacrifices and changed money for the temple tax, turning the one place Gentiles could pray into a crooked market. Jesus joins Isaiah 56:7 and Jeremiah 7:11. A den is a robbers' hideout: they cheated people and hid behind religion. John tells of a cleansing at the start of His ministry (John 2:13-17), and most teachers believe there were two. What would He find in our churches, or in our bodies, His temple (1 Cor 6:19)?

19:47 *the chief priests and the scribes were seeking to destroy Him* Jesus taught openly in the temple courts every day that week. The chief priests came largely from the high priest's families, and the scribes taught the Law. With the city's leading men, they wanted Him dead.

19:48 *all the people were hanging on Him, listening* Hanging on every word like a rope. The leaders feared the people and could not arrest Him in the open. In chapter 22 they would find another way in Judas.

20:1 *the chief priests and the scribes with the elders came up* The last week before the cross, the day after He drove the sellers out (19:45-46). Together these groups made up the Sanhedrin, the ruling council: chief priests who led the temple, scribes expert in the Law, and elders, the nation's leading men. This was an official challenge.

20:2 *by what authority do You do these things* Clearing the temple, teaching, healing and letting crowds call Him King. He had no license from them and had not trained under their rabbis. In their eyes He had no right to any of it.

20:4 *The baptism of John, was it from heaven or from men* Not a dodge but the answer, if they were honest. From heaven meant from God. John had pointed to Jesus as the One coming after him (3:16). If John's ministry came from God, his witness about Jesus was true, and they had their answer.

20:6 *all the people will stone us, for they are persuaded that John is a prophet* They did not ask what was true but what was safe to say. They had not believed John or repented (7:30), and the people still honored him. They were trapped between the truth they would not accept and the crowd they feared.

20:7 *they answered that they did not know from where it was* The men whose job was to judge true and false prophets said they did not know. It was not honest. It is possible to say I don't know when the real problem is I won't.

20:8 *Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things* Jesus would not play their game. Those who refuse the light they have will not be given more.

20:9 *A certain man planted a vineyard, and leased it to farmers* Listeners would think of Isaiah 5:1-7, where Israel is God's vineyard that gave only wild grapes. The owner is God, the vineyard Israel, the farmers the leaders who should tend it. Renting land to tenants who paid with part of the harvest was common.

20:10 *the farmers, having beaten him, sent him away empty* At harvest the owner sent a servant for his share, then another, then a third. The slaves stand for the prophets God sent again and again, many mocked, beaten, imprisoned or killed (2 Chr 36:15-16; Neh 9:26; Heb 11:36-38). Jeremiah was thrown into a pit; Zechariah was stoned in the temple court. God was patient.

20:13 *I will send my son, the beloved* Nearly the Father's words from heaven at Jesus' baptism (3:22). Jesus is telling the leaders who He is: not one more servant but the owner's Son. After all they had done, the owner still sent the one he loved most. That is the love of God (John 3:16).

20:14 *This is the heir; come, let us kill him* The heir receives the property. They killed him not by mistake but because of who he was. That was the leaders' plan already (19:47). Jesus' claims threatened their power, and they wanted to keep the nation for themselves.

20:15 *having cast him out outside the vineyard, they killed him* Jesus was crucified outside Jerusalem's walls (John 19:17; Heb 13:12). He describes His own death days before it happened.

them? **16** He will come and destroy these farmers, and will give the vineyard to others." And having heard ***it***, they said, "May it not be!" **17** But having looked at them, He said, "What then is this that is written: 'The stone which the builders rejected, this has become ***the*** head of ***the*** corner'? **18** Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will crush him to powder." **19** And the chief priests and the scribes sought to lay ***their*** hands on Him in that hour, and they feared the people; for they perceived that He had spoken this parable against them.

Tribute to Caesar

20 And having watched ***Him***, they sent spies, pretending themselves to be righteous, that they might take hold of His word, so as to deliver Him to the rule and to the authority of the governor. **21** And they questioned Him, saying, "Teacher, we know that You speak and teach rightly, and You do not show partiality, but You teach the way of God in truth. **22** Is it lawful for us to give tribute to Caesar, or not?" **23** But having perceived their craftiness, He said to them, "Why are you testing Me? **24** Show Me a denarius. Whose image and inscription does it have?" And answering, they said, "Caesar's." **25** And He said to them, "Then give back the things of Caesar to Caesar, and the things of God to God." **26** And they were not able to take hold of His declaration before the people; and having marveled at His answer, they became silent.

The Sadducees and the Resurrection

27 And some of the Sadducees, those who deny that there is a resurrection, having approached, questioned Him, **28** saying, "Teacher, Moses wrote to us that if anyone's brother dies having a wife, and he dies childless, his brother should take the wife and raise up seed for his brother. **29** Therefore there were seven brothers; and the first, having taken a wife, died childless. **30** And the second took the wife, and this one died childless. **31** And the third took her, and likewise also the seven; and they did not leave children, and they died. **32** And last of all the woman also died. **33** Therefore in the resurrection, of which of them does she become wife? For the seven had her as wife." **34** And answering, Jesus said to them, "The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage; **35** but those who have been considered worthy to obtain that age and the resurrection from ***the*** dead neither marry nor are given in marriage; **36** for neither are they able to die any more, for they are like angels, and they are sons of God,

20:16 Luke 19:27; Matt 21:41; Acts 13:46
20:17 Ps 118:22; Isa 28:16; Zech 3:9
20:18 Isa 8:14-15; Dan 2:34; Dan 2:35
20:19 Luke 19:47,48; Luke 20:14; Matt 21:45,46
20:20 2 Sam 14:2; Ps 37:32; Ps 81:15
20:21 Job 34:19; Matt 22:16; 1 Thess 2:4,5
20:22 Ezra 4:13; Deut 17:15; Ezra 9:7
20:23 Ps 95:9; 1 Kgs 14:6; 1 Cor 3:19
20:24 Matt 18:28; Matt 20:2; Luke 20:22
20:25 Matt 22:21; Prov 24:21; Matt 17:27
20:26 Luke 20:20,39,40; Job 5:12,13; Prov 26:4,5
20:27 Matt 16:1,6,12; Matt 22:23-33; Mark 12:18-27
20:28 Gen 38:8; Deut 25:5-6; Gen 38:11
20:29 Lev 20:20; Jer 22:30
20:32 Judg 2:10; Eccl 1:4; Eccl 9:5
20:33 Matt 22:24-28; Mark 12:19-23
20:34 Luke 16:8; Luke 17:27; 1 Cor 7:2-16
20:35 2 Thess 1:5; Dan 12:2,3; Acts 5:41
20:36 Matt 22:30; Rev 21:4; Isa 25:8

20:16 *He will come and destroy these farmers, and will give the vineyard to others* The leaders who killed the Son would be judged, as in A.D. 70 when Jerusalem and the temple fell and the priestly rulers lost their place. The people were horrified. The judgment falls on the wicked tenants, not on the vineyard. God gave the care of His work to the apostles, who were Jews, and the church grown from their preaching. This does not mean the church has replaced Israel. God has not rejected His people (Rom 11:2), and all Israel will be saved (Rom 11:26).

20:17 *The stone which the builders rejected, this has become the head of the corner* Jesus looked them in the eye and quoted Psalm 118:22, the psalm the crowd had sung (19:38). The builders, Israel's leaders, said this stone did not fit and threw Him away. God made Him the head of the corner, the main stone that holds the building together and sets every line straight. Peter preached this verse to the Sanhedrin (Acts 4:11).

20:18 *Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces* Two ways to meet this stone. To fall on it is stumbling over Christ and being broken (Isa 8:14-15); some take it as coming to Him broken in repentance. To have it fall on you is final judgment, like the stone cut without hands that crushes the world's kingdoms and fills the earth (Dan 2:34-35, 44-45), Christ at His return. No one stays neutral. We are broken before Him now or crushed by Him later.

20:19 *they perceived that He had spoken this parable against them* They knew they were the farmers. Instead of repenting they wanted to seize Him on the spot, just as the farmers did. Only fear of the crowd held them back.

20:20 *they sent spies, pretending themselves to be righteous* They acted like honest men with a sincere question. If Jesus said something against Rome, Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor, would deal with Him.

20:21 *You do not show partiality* Flattery: everything they said was true, and they did not mean a word. Flattery is praise with a hook in it.

20:22 *Is it lawful for us to give tribute to Caesar, or not* Tribute was the tax paid directly to Rome, and Caesar was the emperor's title. Yes would make Jesus a traitor in many Jewish eyes; no would make Him a rebel to report to Pilate. There seemed to be no safe answer.

20:24 *Show Me a denarius. Whose image and inscription does it have* A silver coin worth about a day's wage, used for the tribute, bearing the emperor's head and words calling him son of the divine Augustus. Jesus had to ask them for one. They were carrying Caesar's coin in their own pockets, in the temple.

20:25 *give back the things of Caesar to Caesar, and the things of God to God* The coin bore Caesar's image, so give it back. Believers should pay taxes and respect government (Rom 13:1-7; 1 Pet 2:13-17). But what bears God's image? We do (Gen 1:27). Caesar can have his coins; God wants all of you. Government has a real but limited place. God's claim covers everything, including Caesar.

20:26 *having marveled at His answer, they became silent* The trap failed before everyone, and they had nothing for Pilate. Even so, days later they would lie that He forbade the tribute (23:2).

20:27 *the Sadducees, those who deny that there is a resurrection* A priestly party, many wealthy, who controlled the temple. They took the books of Moses as their main authority and denied the resurrection of the body, angels and spirits (Acts 23:8). This is their only appearance in Luke.

20:28 *his brother should take the wife and raise up seed for his brother* The law of Deuteronomy 25:5-10. If a man died without a son, his brother married the widow, and the first son carried on the dead man's name and inheritance. Ruth and Boaz show this kind of family care (Ruth 4:5-10).

20:33 *in the resurrection, of which of them does she become wife* A story made up to make the resurrection look silly, probably used against Pharisees for years. If there is a resurrection, they meant, heaven would be a mess.

20:35 *neither marry nor are given in marriage* Marriage is God's good gift for this age. In the age to come people will not marry. The Sadducees' mistake was thinking the next life would be just like this one. Scripture does not give all the details, but those who love each other in Christ will be together with the Lord (1 Thess 4:17).

20:36 *for they are like angels* In this life marriage carries on the race because people die. In the resurrection no one dies. People never become angels; they are like angels in not dying and not marrying, which also answered men who denied angels. Sons of the resurrection share in it, in bodies that will never die (1 Cor 15:42-44, 53-54).

being sons of the resurrection. **37** But that the dead are raised, even Moses showed at the bush, when he calls ***the*** Lord 'the God of Abraham (Abraam) and the God of Isaac (Isaak) and the God of Jacob (Iakob).' **38** Now He is not God of ***the*** dead, but of ***the*** living; for all live to Him." **39** And answering, some of the scribes said, "Teacher, You have spoken well." **40** And they no longer dared to question Him ***about*** anything.

David's Son and David's Lord

41 And He said to them, "How do they say the Christ is ***the*** son of David (Dabid)? **42** And David himself says in ***the*** book of Psalms, 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right ***hand***, **43** until I place Your enemies ***as*** a footstool of Your feet."' **44** Therefore David calls Him Lord, and how is He his son?" **45** And while all the people were listening, He said to His disciples, **46** "Beware of the scribes, who desire to walk around in long robes, and love greetings in the marketplaces and first seats in the synagogues and first places at the banquets, **47** who devour the houses of widows, and for a pretense pray at length. These will receive greater judgment."

LUKE 21

The Widow's Offering

1 And having looked up, He saw the ones casting their gifts into the treasury, rich ***men***. **2** And He saw also a certain poor widow casting in there two lepta. **3** And He said, "Truly I say to you that this poor widow has cast in more than all; **4** for all these out of what was abounding to them cast into the gifts of God, but she out of her poverty cast in all the livelihood that she had."

Signs Before the End

5 And as some were speaking about the temple, that it had been adorned with beautiful stones and consecrated gifts, He said, **6** "***As for*** these things which you are looking at, days will come in which a stone will not be left upon a stone that will not be thrown down." **7** And they asked Him, saying, "Teacher, when then will these things be? And what ***will be*** the sign when these things are about to take place?" **8** And He said, "See that you are not led astray; for many will come in My name, saying, 'I am ***He***,' and, 'The time has drawn

20:37 Exod 3:6; Exod 3:15; Gen 28:13
20:38 Ps 22:23; Ps 22:24; Ps 22:25
20:39 Matt 22:34-40; Mark 12:28-34; Acts 23:9
20:40 Matt 22:46; Mark 12:34; Prov 26:5
20:41 Isa 9:6; Jer 23:5; Jer 33:15
20:42 Ps 110:1; 2 Sam 23:1; Acts 2:34,35
20:43 Luke 19:27; Ps 2:1-9; Ps 21:8-12
20:44 Isa 7:14; Rev 22:16; Luke 1:31-35
20:45 Mal 2:9; Matt 15:10; Matt 23:1
20:46 Luke 11:43; Luke 14:7; Luke 12:1
20:47 Mark 12:40; Isa 10:2; Jer 7:6-10
21:1 Mark 12:41-44; John 8:20; Matt 27:6
21:2 Mark 12:42
21:3 Luke 4:25; Luke 9:27; Luke 12:44
21:4 Luke 8:43; Luke 15:12; Acts 2:44,45
21:5 Matt 24:1,2; Mark 13:1,2; John 2:20
21:6 Luke 19:44-48; 1 Kgs 9:7-9; 2 Chr 7:20-22
21:7 Acts 1:6,7; Luke 21:32; Dan 12:6,8
21:8 Eph 5:6; 2 Thess 2:3,9-11; 1 John 4:1

20:37 *the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob* Jesus answered from Moses, the Scripture they valued most. At the bush God named Himself this centuries after those men died (Exod 3:6).
20:38 *He is not God of the dead, but of the living; for all live to Him* Not I was their God, but I am. They were still alive to God, and since His covenant was with them as whole people, He would raise their bodies too. Death does not end a person's relationship with God. Believers we have lost are not gone. They are alive to God.
20:40 *they no longer dared to question Him about anything* The scribes who praised Him were likely Pharisees, glad to see the Sadducees silenced. Every trap had failed. From here on the leaders would use force.
20:41 *How do they say the Christ is the son of David* Now Jesus asks. Christ means anointed one, Messiah, and all agreed He would descend from David. Jesus does not deny it (18:38). He wants them to see the Messiah is more than David's son.
20:42 *The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at My right hand* Psalm 110:1, the Old Testament verse most quoted in the New. The first Lord is God's name, Yahweh; the second is adoni, my master. The right hand was the place of honor and power beside a king, and conquered enemies were made to bow under a king's feet.
20:44 *Therefore David calls Him Lord, and how is He his son* A father did not call his son lord. The Messiah is both: David's son by human birth (Rom 1:3) and David's Lord as the eternal Son of God. Only Jesus fits. He sat down at God's right hand (Acts 2:34-36; Heb 1:13) and waits until His enemies are made His footstool. One day He will come back and reign.
20:46 *who desire to walk around in long robes* He spoke to the disciples loud enough for all to hear. Robes that showed importance, bows and titles in the market, front seats facing the people, places beside the host: every one is about being seen. Jesus is not against good clothes or greetings, but against a heart that lives for people's praise.
20:47 *who devour the houses of widows, and for a pretense pray at length* Some scribes used their position to eat up the property of the most helpless, perhaps by fees for legal help, managing estates for themselves, or living off gifts, and covered it with long prayers for show. The more we claim to serve God, the more we answer for (James 3:1). Are we serving people or using them? Praying to be heard by God or seen by men?
21:1 *He saw the ones casting their gifts into the treasury, rich men* Jesus sat across from the treasury and watched (Mark 12:41). In the Court of the Women stood thirteen trumpet-shaped offering boxes, and a big gift of many coins made a lot of noise. Jesus watches what we give. He is not counting the amount. He is looking at the heart.
21:2 *a certain poor widow casting in there two lepta* The lepton was the smallest copper coin in use, a tiny part of a day's wage. A widow likely had no one to support her. Jesus had just warned of scribes who devour widows' houses (20:47), and here is one with almost nothing left.
21:4 *she out of her poverty cast in all the livelihood that she had* The rich gave from their extra and went home to dinner as usual. She could have kept one coin and gave both. God measures giving not by the amount but by what it costs and what we keep back. She trusted God to care for her. This is not a command to give away all we have, but is our giving a sacrifice, or only what we will never miss? God loves a cheerful giver (2 Cor 9:7).
21:6 *a stone will not be left upon a stone that will not be thrown down* Herod the Great began rebuilding the temple about 20 B.C., and work still went on (John 2:20): huge white stones, gold, and gifts on display like a golden vine at the entrance. It came true in A.D. 70, when Titus' army captured Jerusalem and burned and pulled down the temple, within about forty years. Buildings, however grand, do not last. Only what is built on Christ lasts forever (1 Cor 3:11-15).
21:7 *when then will these things be* They asked about the temple's destruction, and Matthew adds the sign of His coming and the end of the age (Matt 24:3); they likely thought it would all happen at once. Luke records more of the near event, the fall of Jerusalem (21:20-24), and Jesus also looks to His coming in glory (21:25-28). I believe Christ will come for His church before the seven-year Tribulation (1 Thess 4:16-17; 5:9) and return visibly to the earth after it (Rev 19:11-16). Jesus speaks here to Jewish disciples about Jerusalem and Israel. Some came true in A.D. 70 and some looks to the future Tribulation and His Second Coming, but all of it calls every believer to be faithful and watchful.
21:8 *See that you are not led astray* His first concern was not a timeline but protecting them from being fooled. Some would claim to be Messiah, others to know the time. Before A.D. 70 several men stirred crowds with promises of freedom (Acts 5:36-37), and many more have since. The real Christ will need no one to point Him out (17:23-24).

near.' Therefore do not go after them. **9** And when you hear of wars and disorders, do not be terrified; for these things must take place first, but the end ***is*** not immediately." **10** Then He was saying to them, "Nation will rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. **11** And there will be both great earthquakes in various places, and famines and pestilences; and there will be both fearful sights and great signs from heaven. **12** But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and will persecute ***you***, delivering ***you*** up to synagogues and prisons, being brought before kings and governors on account of My name. **13** And it will turn out for you as a testimony. **14** Therefore settle ***it*** in your hearts not to prepare beforehand to make a defense; **15** for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all those opposing you will not be able to contradict nor resist. **16** And you will be delivered up even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends, and they will put ***some*** of you to death. **17** And you will be hated by all because of My name. **18** And a hair of your head will by no means perish. **19** By your endurance acquire your souls.

The Fall of Jerusalem Foretold

20 And when you see Jerusalem (Hierousalem) being encircled by encampments, then know that her desolation has drawn near. **21** Then let those in Judea (Ioudaia) flee to the mountains, and let those in her midst depart out, and let those in the countryside not enter into her; **22** for these are days of avenging, that all the things that are written may be fulfilled. **23** But woe to those who have ***a child*** in ***the*** womb and to those who are nursing in those days! For there will be great distress upon the land and wrath on this people. **24** And they will fall by ***the*** edge of ***the*** sword, and will be led captive into all the nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled by ***the*** nations until ***the*** times of ***the*** nations are fulfilled.

The Coming of the Son of Man

25 And there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth distress of nations in perplexity, ***the*** sea and ***the***

21:9 Matt 24:6-8; Mark 13:7,8; Isa 51:12,13
21:10 Isa 19:2; 2 Chr 15:5,6; Mark 13:8
21:11 Luke 21:25-27; Matt 24:29,30
21:12 Acts 8:3; Luke 11:49-51; Matt 10:16-25
21:13 Phil 1:28; 1 Thess 3:3,4; 2 Thess 1:5
21:14 Luke 12:11,12; Mark 13:11; Matt 10:19,20
21:15 Jer 1:9; Eph 6:19; Col 4:3,4
21:16 Rev 6:9; Jer 9:4; Jer 12:6
21:17 John 15:21; John 15:19; Luke 6:22
21:18 Matt 10:30; Luke 12:7; 1 Sam 14:45
21:19 Rom 5:3; Heb 10:36; Rom 2:7
21:20 Dan 9:27; Luke 19:43; Luke 21:7
21:21 Luke 17:31-33; Gen 19:17,26; Exod 9:20,21
21:22 Lev 26:17; Lev 26:18; Lev 26:19
21:23 Num 33:56; Deut 28:52; Deut 29:28
21:24 Isa 63:18; Dan 12:7; Dan 8:13
21:25 Isa 13:10; Isa 24:23; Isa 51:15

21:9 *when you hear of wars and disorders, do not be terrified* Disorders are uprisings and riots. Jesus does not want His people living in panic. Wars and unrest are part of a fallen world and do not mean the end has come. God is not surprised, and the end will come in His time.

21:11 *great earthquakes in various places, and famines and pestilences* A pestilence is a deadly, widespread disease. These happen in every generation, but Jesus describes a time when they come together and grow worse. John saw war, famine, death and signs in the sky as the seals were opened (Rev 6:1-17). Many teachers believe these verses match the first part of the seven-year Tribulation, the beginning of birth pains (Matt 24:8).

21:12 *But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you* Before the wars and signs, the disciples themselves would suffer. A synagogue also served as a local court where a person could be judged and beaten. Acts records it: Peter and John before the Sanhedrin (Acts 4:1-3), James killed by Herod (Acts 12:1-2), Paul beaten in synagogues and standing before Felix, Festus and Agrippa (Acts 24 to 26). It would turn out as a testimony; Paul in chains preached to Agrippa (Acts 26), and the worst the world does becomes a pulpit. Believers in many countries still face this.

21:15 *I will give you a mouth and wisdom* To settle it is to make up your mind ahead of time not to worry about what to say. Jesus Himself would give the words, as Stephen's enemies could not withstand his wisdom (Acts 6:10). This is no excuse not to study; it is a promise for believers on trial. Standing before people who hate Christ, you need not fear running out of words.

21:16 *you will be delivered up even by parents and brothers* One of the hardest things Jesus said. Persecution can come from inside the family. In many places today a person who comes to Christ from another religion is cut off, reported or even killed by his own family. The world hates believers not for kindness but for His name (John 15:18-21).

21:18 *a hair of your head will by no means perish* Jesus just said some would be killed, so this is no promise that no believer will be hurt. Nothing can touch their real life. Their bodies may die, but they cannot be lost; even their hairs are counted (12:7), and God will raise them whole. Nothing that belongs to Christ will be lost in the end.

21:19 *By your endurance acquire your souls* Endurance is patient staying power under pressure, and to acquire your souls is to gain your true life. We do not save ourselves by enduring; salvation is a gift through faith. But real faith keeps going, and endurance is the mark of a faith that is real.

21:20 *when you see Jerusalem being encircled by encampments, then know that her desolation has drawn near* Encampments are army camps; desolation is ruin and emptiness. Matthew and Mark speak here of the abomination of desolation (Matt 24:15; Mark 13:14), but Luke gives another part of Jesus' answer. The Jews rebelled in A.D. 66; Roman armies surrounded the city and then pulled back, and many Christians left. In A.D. 70 Titus walled it in and took it after months of starvation. I believe Luke 21:20-24 speaks of that fall. The abomination in Matthew and Mark points ahead to the future Antichrist (Dan 9:27; 2 Thess 2:3-4). A.D. 70 was real judgment and a picture of greater trouble still to come. Some teachers see Daniel 9:27 fulfilled in A.D. 70; I read it as future.

21:21 *let those in Judea flee to the mountains* Normally people ran into a walled city when an army came. Jesus says the opposite: get out, head for the hills. The early historian Eusebius tells that Jerusalem's Christians remembered a warning and fled before the fall, many to Pella across the Jordan. They obeyed Jesus, and their lives were spared.

21:22 *these are days of avenging* God's just judgment. The prophets warned that a people who broke God's covenant would be besieged and scattered (Lev 26:31-33; Deut 28:49-64; Dan 9:26). Jesus had wept because the city did not know the time of its visitation (19:41-44).

21:23 *woe to those who have a child in the womb and to those who are nursing* A cry of pity, not a curse, for women who could not run or travel far. The siege was one of the most terrible in history. Josephus, who was with the Roman army, describes terrible hunger and many thousands of deaths. Jesus saw it coming, and His heart broke for those who would suffer it.

21:24 *Jerusalem will be trampled by the nations until the times of the nations are fulfilled* Many were killed and thousands taken as slaves, and within a few generations the Jews were scattered across the world. Nations is often translated Gentiles. Trampled means under foreign control, as Jerusalem was from A.D. 70 under one Gentile power after another. The times of the nations is the long period of Gentile rule over Jerusalem, begun when Babylon took it in 586 B.C. (Dan 2:36-45). But "until": it will end. Many teachers believe it ends when Christ returns, destroys the last Gentile world power, and reigns from Jerusalem (Dan 2:44; Zech 14:4, 9). God still has a future for Jerusalem and Israel (Rom 11:25-29).

21:25 *there will be signs in sun and moon and stars* Now Jesus looks past the fall of Jerusalem and the times of the nations to the end of the age. Matthew places these signs right after the tribulation of those days (Matt 24:29), and the prophets foretold them for the day of the Lord (Isa 13:9-10; Joel 2:30-31). I take them as real events in the heavens. Perplexity is being at a loss with nowhere to turn, as the whole world falls into confusion and nature into upheaval.

surge roaring, **26** men fainting from fear and expectation of the things coming on the inhabited earth; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. **27** And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. **28** Now when these things begin to take place, straighten up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

The Lesson of the Fig Tree

29 And He spoke a parable to them: "See the fig tree and all the trees. **30** When they already put forth ***leaves***, seeing ***it***, you know of yourselves that the summer is already near. **31** So also you, when you see these things taking place, know that the kingdom of God is near. **32** Truly I say to you that this generation will by no means pass away until all take place. **33** The heaven and the earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

Keep Watch

34 Now take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and cares of life, and that day come upon you suddenly. **35** For as a snare it will come upon all those sitting on the face of all the earth. **36** Therefore keep watch at every season, praying that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that are about to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man." **37** Now during the days He was teaching in the temple, and during the nights, going out, He was lodging on the mount that is called ***the Mount*** of Olives. **38** And all the people were coming early in the morning to Him in the temple to hear Him.

LUKE 22

Judas Agrees to Betray Jesus

1 Now the Feast of Unleavened ***Bread***, which is called Passover, was drawing near. **2** And the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how they might do away with Him, for they were afraid of the people. **3** Then Satan entered into Judas (Ioudas), the one surnamed Iscariot (Iskariotes), being of the number of the twelve. **4** And having gone away, he talked with the chief priests and the captains ***about*** how he

21:26 Gen 1:14; Job 9:7; Ps 46:2
21:27 Dan 7:13; Mal 4:6; Matt 26:64
21:28 Eph 4:30; Isa 12:1-3; Isa 25:8,9
21:29 Matt 24:32-35; Mark 13:28-30
21:31 Luke 12:51-57; Matt 16:1-4; Heb 10:37
21:32 Matt 24:34; Mark 13:30; Luke 11:50,51
21:33 Isa 40:8; Matt 5:18; Ps 102:26
21:34 Deut 11:16; Mark 4:19; Luke 12:45
21:35 1 Sam 30:16; Zech 5:3; Rev 16:15
21:36 Jer 40:10; 1 Pet 5:8; 1 Cor 16:13
21:37 Zech 14:4; Luke 22:39; Matt 21:17
21:38 John 8:1,2
22:1 Exod 12:6; Lev 23:5; Exod 12:7
22:2 John 11:47-53,57; Luke 19:47,48; Luke 20:19
22:3 Mark 14:10,11; John 13:2,27; Acts 5:3
22:4 Matt 26:14; Mark 14:10,11

21:26 *the powers of the heavens will be shaken* People will faint from terror at what is coming. God, who made the heavens, will shake them (Hag 2:6; Heb 12:26-27). Things people thought could never move will move.
21:27 *then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory* The Second Coming of Christ to the earth. Daniel saw one like a son of man coming with the clouds to receive an everlasting kingdom (Dan 7:13-14). He will come back as He went (Acts 1:11), and every eye will see Him (Rev 1:7). He came first in humility on a donkey. He will come again as King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev 19:16).
21:28 *straighten up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near* Redemption is being set free by payment of a price. Christ paid it at the cross; here it is the final deliverance His coming brings. While the world faints with fear, God's people look up. Spoken first to Jewish disciples, it speaks most directly to those who come to faith during the Tribulation, but believers today share the same blessed hope (Titus 2:13).
21:30 *you know of yourselves that the summer is already near* The fig and many trees lose their leaves in winter, and new leaves mean summer is near. As leaves tell of summer, the signs tell those who see them that the kingdom Christ will set up on earth is close. Luke's "and all the trees" shows the main point is a simple picture from nature anyone could understand.
21:32 *this generation will by no means pass away until all take place* One of the most debated verses. Some say the people alive then, fulfilled in A.D. 70, but the Son of Man did not come in glory then, nor did the signs in the heavens, so this view must treat much as figures of speech. Some say genea can mean a race, and Jesus promises the Jewish people will survive until all is done; God has indeed preserved them. Others say the generation that sees these signs begin will see the end. Good teachers hold each view. What matters most is the next verse.
21:33 *The heaven and the earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away* Nothing seems more permanent than sky and ground, yet His words will outlast them. Only God could speak this way of His own words (Isa 40:8). Every promise He made will be kept and every warning will come true. We can build our lives on what He said.
21:34 *lest your hearts be weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and cares of life* Jesus turns from what will happen to how we should live. Dissipation is wild living and its dull aftermath. Notice that the cares of life sit right beside drunkenness. Ordinary worry can weigh the heart down as much as wild living, and a heavy heart is not watching for the Lord. A sleepy, distracted heart will be caught off guard.
21:35 *as a snare it will come upon all those sitting on the face of all the earth* A trap that snaps shut without warning. That day will come on the whole world that way, and no one on earth will be outside its reach.
21:36 *praying that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that are about to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man* Keep watch at every season, not only when the news is frightening, and pray. Many pre-tribulation teachers see here the hope of being kept out of the Tribulation altogether, like the promise to Philadelphia to be kept from the hour of testing coming on the whole world (Rev 3:10). Others read it as watching and praying so as not to be swept away by judgment but to stand approved when He comes. Either way, the goal is to stand before Him unashamed (1 John 2:28). Counted worthy is not earned; it describes the watchful, praying life that shows a person belongs to Christ.
21:37 *He was lodging on the mount that is called the Mount of Olives* Bethany lay on the far side of the mount, and Gethsemane on its slope (22:39). The people rose early to hear Him while the leaders wanted Him dead. In His last days before the cross Jesus did not hide. He taught God's word, prayed and stayed faithful, and that is how He calls us to wait for His coming: faithful in His word, watchful in prayer, and ready.
22:1 *the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which is called Passover* Passover remembered the night the angel of death passed over houses marked with a lamb's blood (Exod 12:1-13). Seven days of bread without yeast followed, recalling how quickly Israel left Egypt (Exod 12:14-20), and the whole week was called Passover. Jerusalem was packed with pilgrims.
22:2 *seeking how they might do away with Him, for they were afraid of the people* They had already decided to kill Him (19:47). The only question was how, without starting a riot during the feast.
22:3 *Then Satan entered into Judas* Iscariot likely means man of Kerioth, a town in Judea. Judas had walked with Jesus three years, seen the miracles and heard the teaching, yet his heart never truly belonged to Him. He was a thief who stole from the money bag (John 12:6). Satan did not force his way into a heart devoted to Christ. Judas had been opening the door through his love of money. It is possible to be close to Jesus outside and far from Him inside.

might deliver Him up to them. **5** And they rejoiced, and they agreed to give him money. **6** And he promised, and was seeking an opportunity to deliver Him up to them apart from a crowd.

The Passover Prepared

7 Then the day of Unleavened ***Bread*** came, on which it was necessary ***for*** the Passover to be sacrificed. **8** And He sent Peter (Petros) and John (Ioannes), saying, "Having gone, prepare the Passover for us, so that we may eat." **9** And they said to Him, "Where do You want us to prepare ***it***?" **10** And He said to them, "Look, when you have entered into the city, a man carrying a pitcher of water will meet you; follow him into the house where he enters. **11** And you will say to the master of the house, 'The Teacher says to you, "Where is the guest room where I may eat the Passover with My disciples?"' **12** And he will show you a large upper room, furnished; prepare there." **13** And having gone, they found ***it*** just as He had said to them; and they prepared the Passover.

The Lord's Supper

14 And when the hour came, He reclined ***at table***, and the twelve apostles with Him. **15** And He said to them, "With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. **16** For I say to you that I will certainly no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." **17** And having received a cup, having given thanks, He said, "Take this and divide ***it*** among yourselves. **18** For I say to you that I will certainly not drink of the produce of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." **19** And having taken bread, having given thanks, He broke ***it*** and gave ***it*** to them, saying, "This is My body, which is being given for you; do this for My remembrance." **20** And likewise the cup after dining, saying, "This cup ***is*** the new covenant in My blood, which is being poured out for you. **21** But look, the hand of the one delivering Me up ***is*** with Me on the table. **22** And indeed the Son of Man goes according to what has been determined; but woe to that man through whom He is delivered up!" **23** And they began to question among themselves which of them then it might be who was about to do this.

Who Is the Greatest

24 And there was also a dispute among them, which of them is thought to be greater. **25** And He said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those exer-

22:5 Zech 11:12,13; Matt 26:15-16; Matt 27:3-5
22:6 Matt 26:5; Mark 14:2
22:7 Exod 12:21; Exod 23:15; Lev 23:5
22:8 Exod 12:21; Num 28:16; Deut 16:2
22:10 Exod 12:21; 1 Sam 10:4; Luke 19:29-40
22:11 Exod 12:21; John 11:28; Luke 19:31,34
22:12 Acts 1:13; John 2:25; John 21:17
22:13 Exod 12:21; John 2:5; Heb 11:8
22:14 Matt 26:20; Mark 14:17; Deut 16:6,7
22:15 Deut 16:2; Luke 12:50; John 13:1
22:16 Luke 14:15; Rev 19:9; Luke 22:30
22:17 Deut 8:10; Ps 23:5; Ps 116:13
22:18 Matt 26:29; Luke 22:16; Mark 14:23
22:19 Ps 111:4; 1 Cor 11:23-29; 1 Cor 10:16
22:20 Exod 24:8; Jer 31:31; Zech 9:11
22:21 Ps 41:9; Job 19:19; Mic 7:5,6
22:22 Acts 2:23; Luke 24:25-27,46; Gen 3:15
22:23 Matt 26:22; Mark 14:19; John 13:22-25
22:24 Luke 9:46; Mark 9:34; Matt 20:20-24
22:25 Matt 20:25-28; Mark 10:41-45

22:5 *they agreed to give him money* The captains led the temple guard, a Jewish police force run by the priests. The leaders were glad that one of His own would help them. The price was thirty pieces of silver (Matt 26:15), the price of a slave (Exod 21:32). Judas watched for a quiet time away from the crowds. He knew where Jesus went to pray.

22:8 *prepare the Passover for us* That afternoon thousands of lambs were killed at the temple. Preparing meant getting a lamb, having it sacrificed, roasting it, and setting out unleavened bread, bitter herbs, wine and the rest. It was a lot of work.

22:10 *a man carrying a pitcher of water will meet you* Carrying water jars was usually women's work, so the man would stand out. An upper room was built on the roof, and furnished means set with couches and tables. The secret plan kept Judas from bringing guards to the meal. Some think it was the home of John Mark's family (Acts 12:12); Scripture does not say.

22:13 *they found it just as He had said to them* Again it happened exactly as Jesus said (19:32). He was not a victim of events. He was in control of every detail of His last night.

22:14 *when the hour came, He reclined at table* Guests lay on couches around a low table, leaning on the left elbow. The hour was evening, and also the hour the Father had set for Him to die (John 13:1).

22:15 *With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer* A strong way of saying, I have longed for this with all My heart. On the night before He died, His heart was set on being with His disciples. He loves His people and wants our company.

22:16 *until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God* The Passover lamb pointed to Him; Christ is our Passover sacrificed for us (1 Cor 5:7). The meal will be fulfilled when His people sit at His table in His kingdom (Rev 19:9). Jesus looks past the cross to celebrating with His people there.

22:18 *I will certainly not drink of the produce of the vine until the kingdom of God comes* Luke mentions a cup early in the meal and another after it (22:20). The produce of the vine is wine. This is a promise as much as a farewell. He will drink it with us again.

22:19 *This is My body, which is being given for you; do this for My remembrance* Unleavened bread recalled Israel's hurried exit from Egypt. Jesus gave it new meaning: His body offered on the cross the next day in our place. He gave His church a meal to remember Him by. Every time believers eat the bread together, we look back to the cross.

22:20 *This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is being poured out for you* A covenant is a binding agreement. Sinai's covenant was sealed with animal blood (Exod 24:8); through Jeremiah God promised a new covenant with Israel and Judah, writing His law on their hearts and remembering their sins no more (Jer 31:31-34). Many believe Jesus spoke in a picture, as when He called Himself the door; the Supper is a remembrance that proclaims His death until He comes (1 Cor 11:26). Catholics teach the elements become His body and blood, Lutherans that He is truly present with them, many Reformed that He is spiritually present. Come with reverence (1 Cor 11:27-29). The church shares now in the covenant's forgiveness, and God will still keep every word of it with Israel and Judah when Christ returns (Rom 11:27).

22:21 *the hand of the one delivering Me up is with Me on the table* Judas had shared the bread, as Psalm 41:9 foretold of a close friend lifting up his heel.

22:22 *the Son of Man goes according to what has been determined; but woe to that man* Both truths stand side by side. God determined that Jesus would die for sinners (Acts 2:23), yet Judas was fully responsible. God's plan excuses no one's sin. Judas was not a puppet. He chose money over his Master.

22:23 *which of them then it might be who was about to do this* No one pointed at Judas; he hid his heart well. Each man wondered about himself, which is healthy. Any of us can fall if we are not walking close to the Lord (1 Cor 10:12).

22:24 *which of them is thought to be greater* Minutes after He spoke of giving His body and blood, they argued about rank, as before (9:46). Pride is stubborn and shows up even at the Lord's Table. How often have we done the same?

22:25 *those exercising authority over them are called benefactors* A benefactor is a patron who does good for others. Rulers loved the title, some putting it on coins, while ruling with a heavy hand. In the world, power is used to be served, and the powerful want credit for it.

cising authority over them are called benefactors. **26** But you, not so; but the greater among you, let him become as the younger, and the one leading as the one serving. **27** For who ***is*** greater, the one reclining ***at table*** or the one serving? ***Is it*** not the one reclining? But I am in your midst as the One serving. **28** And you are those who have remained with Me in My trials. **29** And I appoint to you, just as My Father appointed to Me, a kingdom, **30** so that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and may sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

Peter's Denial Foretold

31 And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon, look, Satan has asked for you, to sift ***you*** like wheat. **32** But I begged for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers." **33** And he said to Him, "Lord, with You I am ready to go both to prison and to death." **34** And He said, "I tell you, Peter, a rooster will certainly not crow today before you deny three times that you know Me." **35** And He said to them, "When I sent you without purse and bag and sandals, did you lack anything?" And they said, "Nothing." **36** Then He said to them, "But now, the one who has a purse, let him take ***it***, likewise also a bag; and the one who does not have ***one***, let him sell his cloak and buy a sword. **37** For I say to you that this which has been written must still be accomplished in Me: 'And He was counted with lawless ***ones***.' For also the things concerning Me have an end." **38** And they said, "Lord, look, here ***are*** two swords." And He said to them, "It is enough."

Jesus Prays on the Mount of Olives

39 And having gone out, He went according to the custom to the Mount of Olives; and His disciples also followed Him. **40** And having come to the place, He said to them, "Pray not to enter into temptation." **41** And He was drawn away from them about a stone's throw, and having knelt down, He was praying, **42** saying, "Father, if You are willing, remove this cup from Me; yet not My will, but Yours be done." **43** And an angel from heaven appeared to Him, strengthening Him. **44** And being in agony, He was praying more earnestly; and His sweat became like thick drops of blood falling down upon

22:26 Luke 9:48; 1 Pet 5:3; Matt 18:3-5
22:27 2 Kgs 3:11; Isa 49:7; Matt 20:28
22:28 Heb 2:18; Heb 4:15; Matt 19:28,29
22:29 2 Tim 2:12; Matt 25:34; Luke 12:32
22:30 Exod 24:4; Matt 19:28; Luke 14:15
22:31 Job 1:6; Zech 3:1; 1 Chr 21:1
22:32 John 21:15-17; Zech 3:2-4; John 14:19
22:33 Matt 26:33-35,40,41; Mark 14:29,31,37,38; 2 Kgs 8:12,13
22:34 Matt 26:34,74; Mark 14:30,71,72; John 13:38
22:35 Luke 9:3; Luke 10:4; Matt 10:9,10
22:36 Matt 10:22-25; John 15:20; John 16:33
22:37 Isa 53:12; John 10:35; John 19:28-30
22:38 Matt 26:52-54; John 18:36; 2 Cor 10:3,4
22:39 Josh 12:6; Luke 21:37; John 18:1,2
22:40 Matt 6:13; Luke 22:46; Eph 6:18,19
22:41 Matt 26:39; Mark 14:35
22:42 Isa 51:17; Jer 25:15; Matt 20:22
22:43 Ps 91:11,12; Matt 26:53; Heb 1:6,14
22:44 Lam 1:12; Heb 5:7; Gen 32:24-28

22:26 *But you, not so* Jesus turns the world's idea of greatness upside down. The youngest got the lowest jobs, yet the greatest should act like the youngest and the leader like a servant. Leadership in the church is not position or titles but service.
22:27 *I am in your midst as the One serving* The Lord of glory was among them as a servant. At this same meal He washed their feet (John 13:1-17), and the next day He gave His life as a ransom (Mark 10:45). If our Lord took the place of a servant, no job is beneath us.
22:30 *sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel* For all their faults, they had stayed with Him when many walked away (John 6:66-69). The Father gave the kingdom to the Son, and the Son shares it with His faithful followers. When Christ returns and reigns, the apostles will rule over Israel's twelve tribes under Him (Matt 19:28), one more sign that God has a future for the nation. They argued about greatness; the real honor is ahead, given by Him, not grabbed.
22:31 *Satan has asked for you, to sift you like wheat* Saying Simon twice shows how serious this was. Sifting shakes grain hard so the chaff is left. As with Job, Satan had to ask permission (Job 1:6-12) and cannot touch God's people beyond what God allows. The first "you" is plural in Greek; Satan wanted them all.
22:32 *But I begged for you, that your faith may not fail* Now "you" is singular. Jesus prayed for Peter by name, and He still intercedes for His people (Heb 7:25). He did not pray that Peter would not fall, for he fell that night, but that his faith would not fail. His courage failed; his faith did not. Jesus already gave him a job for afterward, and his letters show a man made humble and gentle (1 Pet 5:5-10).
22:33 *with You I am ready to go both to prison and to death* Peter meant it. He did later go to prison for Jesus (Acts 12:3-5), and church history says he died for Him. But that night he trusted in himself.
22:34 *a rooster will certainly not crow today* The Jewish day began at sunset, so before the night was over. The moment we think we could never fall is the moment we are closest to falling.
22:36 *let him sell his cloak and buy a sword* Before, God cared for them through those who welcomed them (9:3; 10:4). Things were changing. After Jesus was gone they would face a hostile world and need to provide for themselves. Some believe the sword is a picture of dangerous days ahead, and "It is enough" ends talk they did not understand. Others believe He meant a real sword for self-defense on the road, never for the gospel. Either way, hours later He told Peter to stop (22:51; Matt 26:52). His kingdom does not advance by the sword (John 18:36).
22:37 *And He was counted with lawless ones* From Isaiah 53:12, the chapter of the suffering Servant who carries the sins of many. The next day He was crucified between two criminals (23:32-33). The Holy One was counted with the lawless so that lawbreakers like us could be counted righteous.
22:38 *It is enough* Two swords against Rome and the temple guard would not go far. Many hear sadness here. They still did not understand His battle.
22:39 *He went according to the custom to the Mount of Olives* He prayed there every night that week (21:37), in Gethsemane, oil press, a garden of olive trees (Matt 26:36). Judas knew the custom (John 18:2). Jesus did not hide. He went where He knew Judas would find Him.
22:40 *Pray not to enter into temptation* A test that could make them fall. Their best defense was prayer before the soldiers came. We usually lose battles with temptation long before it comes, because we did not pray when we had the chance.
22:42 *Father, if You are willing, remove this cup from Me; yet not My will, but Yours be done* Men usually stood to pray; He knelt, and Matthew says He fell on His face (Matt 26:39). The cup often pictures God's wrath against sin (Ps 75:8; Isa 51:17; Jer 25:15). He was not just afraid of death, which many have faced bravely. He would drink God's anger against the world's sin, made sin who knew no sin (2 Cor 5:21). Here is His real human will and His perfect obedience. That is the most important prayer anyone can pray.
22:43 *an angel from heaven appeared to Him, strengthening Him* The Father did not take the cup away but gave strength to drink it. Often God does not remove our trial; He gives strength to go through it (2 Cor 12:9). This verse and the next follow the Received Greek Text. Some of the oldest Greek copies lack them, while other very early copies have them and second-century writers knew them. No teaching rests on them alone; all the Gospels show His anguish of soul (Mark 14:33-34; Heb 5:7).
22:44 *His sweat became like thick drops of blood falling down upon the ground* Agony is the deepest anguish of soul, and the angel's strength helped Him pray harder. Luke the doctor says "like." Some take it as sweat falling in heavy drops as blood drips from a wound; others note that under extreme stress tiny vessels can break and mix blood with sweat, a rare condition doctors describe. We will never know what it cost our Savior to say yes to the cross.

the ground. **45** And having risen up from the prayer, having come to His disciples, He found them sleeping from the sorrow, **46** and He said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Having risen up, pray, so that you may not enter into temptation."

Jesus Arrested

47 And while He was still speaking, look, a crowd, and the one called Judas, one of the twelve, was going before them, and he drew near to Jesus (Iesous) to kiss Him. **48** And Jesus said to him, "Judas, are you delivering up the Son of Man with a kiss?" **49** And those around Him, having seen what was going to be, said to Him, "Lord, shall we strike with a sword?" **50** And a certain one of them struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his right ear. **51** And answering, Jesus said, "Allow as far as this." And having touched his ear, He healed him. **52** And Jesus said to those who had come against Him, chief priests and captains of the temple and elders, "Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs? **53** While I was with you every day in the temple, you did not stretch out your hands against Me. But this is your hour, and the power of the darkness."

Peter Denies Jesus

54 And having seized Him, they led ***Him*** away and brought Him into the house of the high priest. And Peter was following at a distance. **55** And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the courtyard and had sat down together, Peter was sitting in the midst of them. **56** And a certain servant girl, having seen him sitting by the light and having looked intently at him, said, "This one also was with Him." **57** But he denied Him, saying, "Woman, I do not know Him." **58** And after a little ***while*** another, having seen him, said, "You also are of them." But Peter said, "Man, I am not." **59** And about one hour having passed, a certain other ***man*** was strongly affirming, saying, "In truth this one also was with Him, for he also is a Galilean." **60** But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are saying." And immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. **61** And having turned, the Lord looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said to him, "Before a rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." **62** And having gone outside, Peter wept bitterly.

Jesus Before the Council

63 And the men who were holding Jesus were mocking Him, beating ***Him***. **64** And having blindfolded Him, they were striking His face, and they were questioning Him, saying, "Prophesy! Who is it who struck You?" **65** And many other

22:45 Matt 26:40,43; Mark 14:37,40,41
22:46 Luke 22:40; Luke 21:34-36; Prov 6:4-11
22:47 Matt 26:45-47; Mark 14:41-43; John 18:2-9
22:48 2 Sam 20:9,10; Ps 55:21; Prov 27:6
22:50 John 18:10,11; Matt 26:51-54; Mark 14:47
22:51 Rom 12:21; John 17:12; John 18:8,9
22:52 Luke 22:4; Matt 26:55; Mark 14:48,49
22:53 John 12:27; Eph 6:12; Acts 26:18
22:54 Matt 26:57,58; Mark 14:53,54; John 18:12-17,24
22:55 Luke 22:44; Matt 26:69; Mark 14:66
22:56 Matt 26:69; Mark 14:6,17,66-68; John 18:17
22:57 Luke 22:33,34; Luke 12:9; Matt 10:33
22:58 Matt 26:71,72; Mark 14:69,70; John 18:25
22:59 Matt 26:73,74; Mark 14:69,70; John 18:26,27
22:60 Luke 22:34; Matt 26:74,75; Mark 14:71,72
22:61 Hos 11:8; Isa 57:16; Jer 31:20
22:62 Matt 26:75; Ps 38:18; Ps 126:5,6
22:63 Isa 50:6; Isa 53:3; John 18:22
22:64 Judg 16:21,25
22:65 Luke 12:10; Matt 12:31,32; Acts 26:11

22:45 *He found them sleeping from the sorrow* Only Luke says why: grief had worn them out. Jesus repeats His warning without harsh scolding. They had a short time and were sleeping it away. In minutes every one of them would run.
22:47 *he drew near to Jesus to kiss Him* "One of the twelve": that is the sad heart of it. The crowd included Roman soldiers and temple officers (John 18:3). A kiss was the normal greeting of disciple to teacher, and Judas had made it the signal (Mark 14:44). The sign of love became the sign of betrayal.
22:48 *Judas, are you delivering up the Son of Man with a kiss* Jesus called him by name, one more chance to see what he was doing. He spoke to him as a man, not a monster. Betraying love with a sign of love is especially evil.
22:50 *struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his right ear* It was Peter, and the slave was Malchus (John 18:10). Peter was probably aiming for his head, keeping his promise to fight to the death. But it was the wrong fight.
22:51 *having touched his ear, He healed him* Only Luke the doctor tells this. Jesus' last healing before the cross was for a man who came to arrest Him. He loved His enemies as He had taught (6:27-28), and He kept Peter from arrest for assault. Even while betrayed, He cared for others.
22:52 *Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs* He was no armed rebel. They could have taken Him any day in the temple. They came at night because they feared the people and were ashamed of what they were doing.
22:53 *But this is your hour, and the power of the darkness* Darkness means Satan and the forces of evil. God let darkness have its hour, but only an hour, and nothing beyond what He allowed. In three days it would be defeated.
22:54 *brought Him into the house of the high priest. And Peter was following at a distance* Caiaphas was high priest that year, son-in-law of Annas who held the office before him; Jesus was taken first to Annas (John 18:13, 24). The high priest led the Sanhedrin. Peter was brave enough to follow and afraid enough to stay back. Following Jesus at a distance is a dangerous place to be.
22:55 *Peter was sitting in the midst of them* Early spring nights in Jerusalem can be cold. In the open courtyard Peter sat with the servants and guards by the fire, trying to blend in with those who had arrested his Lord.
22:57 *Woman, I do not know Him* The firelight showed his face. Hours before, he was ready for prison and death. Now a servant girl frightened him into denying he knew Jesus, and each lie made the next easier.
22:59 *for he also is a Galilean* His accent gave him away (Matt 26:73); Galileans spoke in a way Jerusalem recognized. Mark says he began to curse and swear (Mark 14:71). The rooster crowed while the words were still in his mouth.
22:61 *the Lord looked at Peter* Only Luke tells this. Jesus must have been where He could see the courtyard, perhaps being led from one place to another, and their eyes met. Luke does not say what was in that look, but Jesus had already prayed for him (22:32). It was surely the look of a friend who knew and loved him anyway.
22:62 *Peter wept bitterly* Real repentance makes no excuses and blames no one. Judas and Peter both failed that night. Judas was sorry and took his own life (Matt 27:3-5); Peter wept and came back. There is sorrow that leads to repentance and sorrow that leads to death (2 Cor 7:10). Jesus restored Peter, and he strengthened his brothers (John 21:15-19; Acts 2:14-41). If you have failed the Lord, even badly, come back. He knew, He prayed for you, and He is ready to restore you.
22:64 *Prophesy! Who is it who struck You* They mocked Him as a prophet, though that night He foretold Peter's denial and the rooster had just proved Him right.
22:65 *many other things they were saying against Him, blaspheming* To blaspheme is to speak against God, and they insulted the Son of God to His face. Isaiah foretold the Servant giving His back to strikers and not hiding His face from insult (Isa 50:6). Peter, who watched that night, wrote that He did not revile in return (1 Pet 2:23).

things they were saying against Him, blaspheming. **66** And when it became day, the body of elders of the people was gathered together, both chief priests and scribes, and they led Him up into their own council, **67** saying, "If You are the Christ, tell us." And He said to them, "If I tell you, you will certainly not believe; **68** and if I also ask ***you***, you will certainly not answer Me, nor release ***Me***. **69** From now on the Son of Man will be sitting at ***the*** right ***hand*** of the power of God." **70** And they all said, "Are You then the Son of God?" And He said to them, "You say that I am." **71** And they said, "What further need of testimony do we have? For we ourselves have heard ***it*** from His mouth."

LUKE 23

Jesus Before Pilate and Herod

1 And the whole multitude of them, having risen up, led Him to Pilate (Pilatos). **2** And they began to accuse Him, saying, "We found this ***man*** misleading the nation and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying Himself to be Christ, a king." **3** And Pilate questioned Him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?" And answering him, He said, "You say ***it***." **4** And Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, "I find no guilt in this man." **5** But they were insisting, saying, "He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea (Ioudaia), having begun from Galilee (Galilaia) as far as here." **6** And Pilate, having heard ***of*** Galilee, asked whether the man is a Galilean. **7** And having learned that He is from the jurisdiction of Herod (Herodes), he sent Him up to Herod, he also himself being in Jerusalem (Hierosolyma) in these days. **8** And Herod, having seen Jesus (Iesous), was exceedingly glad; for he had been wishing for a long ***time*** to see Him, because of hearing many things about Him, and he was hoping to see some sign done by Him. **9** And he was questioning Him with many words, but He answered him nothing. **10** And the chief priests and the scribes stood vehemently accusing Him. **11** And Herod with his troops, having treated Him with contempt and having mocked ***Him***, having put splendid apparel on Him, sent Him back to Pilate. **12** And both Pilate and Herod became friends with one another on that same day; for they had previously been at enmity between themselves.

Barabbas Released, Jesus Condemned

13 And Pilate, having called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people, **14** said to them, "You brought this man to me as one turning away the people; and look, I, having examined ***Him*** before you, found in this man no guilt ***in the things*** of which you are accusing Him; **15** but neither ***did*** Herod, for I sent you up to him; and look, nothing worthy of death has been done by Him. **16** Therefore, having chas-

22:66 Matt 27:1; Mark 15:1; Acts 22:5
22:67 Jer 38:15; Matt 11:3-5; Matt 26:63-68
22:68 Luke 20:3-7,41-44
22:69 Ps 110:1; Dan 7:13; Dan 7:14
22:70 Luke 23:3; Matt 26:64; Mark 15:2
22:71 Matt 26:65,66; Mark 14:63,64
23:1 Luke 22:66; Matt 27:1,2,11-14; Mark 15:1-5
23:2 John 19:12; Acts 17:6,7; Zech 11:8
23:3 Ezra 4:12; 1 Tim 6:13; Mark 15:2
23:4 John 18:38; Mark 15:14; 1 Pet 2:22
23:5 Mark 1:14; John 1:43; John 2:11
23:6 Luke 13:1; Acts 5:37
23:7 Luke 3:1; Luke 13:31
23:8 Matt 14:1; Mark 6:14; Luke 9:7-9
23:9 Isa 53:7; Matt 27:14; Luke 13:32
23:10 Luke 23:2,5,14,15; Luke 11:53; Acts 24:5
23:11 Isa 53:3; Mark 9:12; Acts 4:27,28
23:12 Acts 4:27; Ps 83:4-6; Matt 16:1
23:13 Matt 27:21-23; Mark 15:14; John 18:38
23:14 Luke 23:1,2,5; Luke 23:4; Dan 6:4
23:16 Isa 53:5; Matt 27:26; Mark 15:15

22:66 *they led Him up into their own council* The Sanhedrin, about seventy men and the high priest. Matthew and Mark tell of a night trial. Custom expected a death sentence by day, so at dawn they met again to make it official.
22:67 *If You are the Christ, tell us* Christ means the Anointed One, the Messiah. It was not an honest question; their minds were made up. He had already asked them questions they would not answer (20:3-8, 41-44).
22:69 *the Son of Man will be sitting at the right hand of the power of God* Jesus joins Daniel's Son of Man who receives an everlasting kingdom (Dan 7:13-14) with Psalm 110:1, which He had just asked them about (20:42-43). They were not really His judges; He would soon be seated as theirs. The prisoner on trial was the King of heaven.
22:70 *You say that I am* They understood His claim, and this was a way of saying yes. Jesus was condemned not for any wrong but for telling the truth about who He is.
22:71 *we ourselves have heard it from His mouth* To them it was blasphemy worthy of death (Lev 24:16). If the claim was true, and it was, the blasphemy was theirs. Either it is true and we must bow to Him, or the council was right. There is no middle ground.
23:1 *led Him to Pilate* The council condemned Jesus at dawn (22:66-71), but under Rome they could not execute anyone without the governor (John 18:31). Pontius Pilate governed Judea about A.D. 26 to 36, living in Caesarea and coming to Jerusalem at feasts with extra soldiers. Ancient writers call him harsh and stubborn, and Luke mentioned his killing of Galileans at their sacrifices (13:1).
23:2 *forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying Himself to be Christ, a king* Before their council the charge was blasphemy (22:70-71), but a Roman governor would not care about a Jewish religious argument, so they made it political. Every charge was twisted. Jesus called the nation to repent, not astray. He said to pay Caesar (20:25). He was the Christ, the King, but not one who would lead a revolt.
23:3 *Are You the King of the Jews* Pilate must have looked at this beaten, bound, lonely man and wondered how He could be a king. "You say it" was a careful yes. Jesus explained that His kingdom is not of this world (John 18:33-38). He was a King, but no threat to Rome in the way they claimed.
23:4 *I find no guilt in this man* The first of three times Pilate declares Jesus innocent (23:4, 14, 22). Luke wants us to see it. Jesus did not die guilty of anything. The Roman judge himself said so. He died as the innocent One in the place of the guilty.
23:7 *he sent Him up to Herod* Naming Galilee, known for rebels, was meant to make Pilate nervous, but it gave him a way out. Jurisdiction is the area of a ruler's legal authority. Herod Antipas ruled Galilee, had beheaded John (9:7-9), and was in Jerusalem for Passover. Pilate wanted to pass the problem to someone else. No one can hand off the decision about Jesus.
23:8 *he was hoping to see some sign done by Him* Herod had long been curious (9:9). He wanted a show, like a king calling for a magician. He was looking for entertainment, not truth. Many today are curious about Jesus but have no interest in bowing to Him.
23:9 *He answered him nothing* This was the man who silenced John, God's voice to him. Now the Word of God stood before him silent. When a person keeps refusing God's truth, a time can come when God stops speaking. The Servant was silent like a sheep before its shearers (Isa 53:7), while the priests kept shouting their charges.
23:11 *having put splendid apparel on Him* Contempt is treating someone as worthless. Herod's soldiers mocked Jesus as a joke king in a bright robe and sent Him back. That day old enemies Herod and Pilate became friends over Him, as Peter saw in Psalm 2 (Acts 4:25-28). Herod found nothing to charge Him with either.
23:16 *having chastised Him, I will release Him* A governor and a king had both found nothing worthy of death. To have Him whipped as a warning, hoping a beating would satisfy the crowd. Think how unjust that is: innocent, so whip Him. Pilate cared more about keeping the peace than about justice.

tised Him, I will release ***Him***." **17** Now he had a necessity to release one to them at ***every*** feast. **18** But they cried out all together, saying, "Take away this ***man***, and release to us Barabbas"— **19** who had been cast into prison on account of a certain insurrection that had occurred in the city, and murder. **20** Pilate therefore called out again, wishing to release Jesus. **21** But they were crying out, saying, "Crucify, crucify Him!" **22** And a third ***time*** he said to them, "For what evil has this ***man*** done? I found no guilt ***deserving*** of death in Him. Therefore, having chastised Him, I will release ***Him***." **23** But they were insistent with loud voices, asking for Him to be crucified; and their voices and ***those*** of the chief priests were prevailing. **24** And Pilate gave sentence that their demand be done. **25** And he released to them the one who had been cast into the prison on account of insurrection and murder, whom they were asking for; but Jesus he delivered up to their will.

The Road to the Cross

26 And as they led Him away, having laid hold of Simon, a certain Cyrenian coming from the country, they put the cross on him to carry ***it*** behind Jesus. **27** And a great multitude of the people was following Him, and of women who also were mourning and lamenting Him. **28** And having turned to them, Jesus said, "Daughters of Jerusalem (Hierousalem), do not weep for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. **29** For look, days are coming in which they will say, 'Blessed ***are*** the barren, and the wombs that did not bear, and the breasts that did not nurse.' **30** Then they will begin to say to the mountains, 'Fall on us,' and to the hills, 'Cover us.' **31** For if they do these things in the green tree, what may happen in the dry?"

The Crucifixion

32 And two others also, criminals, were being led with Him to be put to death. **33** And when they went away to the place which is called Skull, there they crucified Him and the criminals, one on ***the*** right and one on ***the*** left. **34** And Jesus was saying, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." And dividing His garments, they cast a lot. **35** And the people stood watching. And the rulers also with them were sneering, saying, "He saved others; let Him save

23:17 Matt 27:15; Mark 15:6; John 18:39
23:18 Acts 3:14; Acts 21:36; Acts 22:22
23:19 Acts 3:14; Luke 23:2,5
23:20 Matt 14:8,9; Matt 27:19; Mark 15:15
23:21 Isa 53:3; Luke 23:23; Matt 27:22-25
23:22 Isa 53:3; Luke 23:14,20; 1 Pet 1:19
23:23 Isa 53:3; Luke 23:5; Ps 22:12,13
23:24 Exod 23:2; Matt 27:26; Mark 15:15
23:25 Luke 23:2,5; John 18:40; 1 Sam 12:13
23:26 Matt 27:32-44; Mark 15:21-32; John 19:16
23:27 Luke 23:55; Luke 8:2; Matt 27:55
23:28 Song 1:5; Song 2:7; Song 3:5,10
23:29 Matt 24:19; Hos 13:16; Luke 21:23,24
23:30 Hos 10:8; Isa 2:19; Rev 6:16
23:31 John 15:6; Prov 11:31; Jer 25:29
23:32 Isa 53:12; Matt 27:38; Mark 15:27,28
23:33 Zech 12:10; Matt 27:33,34; Mark 15:22,23
23:34 Ps 22:18; Matt 5:44; Isa 53:12
23:35 Isa 42:1; Isa 49:7; Isa 53:3

23:17 *he had a necessity to release one to them at every feast* At Passover, the feast of Israel's freedom from slavery, the governor released one prisoner (Matt 27:15; Mark 15:6), and Pilate hoped they would choose Jesus. This verse follows the Received Greek Text; most older Greek copies of Luke do not have it. The custom is in Matthew, Mark and John (John 18:39), so the fact is not in doubt, and no teaching rests on this verse alone.

23:19 *on account of a certain insurrection that had occurred in the city, and murder* An insurrection is an armed uprising. They accused Jesus of rebellion He never stirred, then asked for a man who really had led one and killed. Barabbas was guilty and went free; Jesus was innocent and died in his place. That is the gospel in one picture. Each of us is Barabbas.

23:21 *Crucify, crucify Him* Rome's death for slaves, rebels and the worst criminals: nailed or tied to a cross and left to hang, often for hours or days, slow, public and shameful. Anyone hanged on a tree was under God's curse (Deut 21:22-23). They wanted Him to die the most shameful death there was.

23:24 *Pilate gave sentence that their demand be done* A third time Pilate asked what evil He had done, and no one could answer, but the shouting of a crowd beat the judgment of a judge. He had power to release Jesus (John 19:10) and knew He was innocent, but they threatened that he would be no friend of Caesar (John 19:12). Afraid for his position, he gave in. Every time we go along with the crowd against what we know is right, we stand where Pilate stood.

23:25 *but Jesus he delivered up to their will* The murderer released, Jesus handed over. Luke skips the flogging and thorns (Matt 27:26-31; John 19:1-3) and moves to the road to the cross. Guilt for His death has been laid on the Jewish people as a whole and used to justify hatred and violence. That is wicked and has no place in a Christian's heart. Gentile governor and Jewish leaders took part together (Acts 4:27), and in the deepest sense my sin and yours put Him there (Isa 53:5-6).

23:26 *they put the cross on him to carry it behind Jesus* A condemned man usually carried the crossbeam, but Jesus, beaten, flogged and sleepless, was too weak. Cyrene was in North Africa, in today's Libya, home to many Jews. Mark calls Simon the father of Alexander and Rufus (Mark 15:21), men known to the church, and some think the Rufus of Romans 16:13 was his son, though we cannot be sure. "Behind Jesus" is a picture of every disciple (9:23).

23:28 *Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for Me* Not everyone wanted Jesus dead, and only Luke tells of these mourning women. On the way to His death He thought of others, of the judgment on the city He had wept over (19:41-44).

23:29 *Blessed are the barren* Children were among God's greatest blessings and barrenness a deep sorrow. A time was coming so terrible that it would seem better never to have had children than to watch them suffer.

23:30 *to the mountains, 'Fall on us,' and to the hills, 'Cover us.'* From Hosea 10:8: people so desperate they wish the mountains would bury them. It came true in the siege of A.D. 70, and Revelation uses the same words for the terror of the coming day of God's wrath (Rev 6:16).

23:31 *if they do these things in the green tree, what may happen in the dry* A green tree is full of life and hard to burn; a dry one catches easily. If Rome did this to an innocent man, what would it do to a guilty, rebellious nation ripe for judgment? Some also hear God's judgment: if He let this happen to His innocent Son, how much worse for those who reject Him?

23:33 *the place which is called Skull* Jesus was counted with lawless ones, as He said (22:37; Isa 53:12). In Aramaic Golgotha, in Latin Calvaria, our Calvary. It was outside the wall near a busy road (John 19:17, 20; Heb 13:12). Why it was called Skull is not known, perhaps a skull-shaped hill or a place of execution. Luke does not describe the nails; his readers knew what crucifixion meant. Jesus was placed in the middle, as if the worst of the three.

23:34 *Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing* Was saying can mean He kept saying it, while the nails went in. Them includes the soldiers and the leaders and crowd who did not fully understand they were crucifying the Lord of glory (Acts 3:17; 1 Cor 2:8). Ignorance did not make them innocent; that is why they needed forgiveness. God answered: at Pentecost thousands in Jerusalem were forgiven (Acts 2:36-41), even priests (Acts 6:7). Stephen prayed the same way (Acts 7:60). If Jesus could pray this from a cross, He can give you grace to forgive.

23:35 *He saved others; let Him save Himself* The soldiers cast lots for His garments, as Psalm 22:18 foretold. To sneer is to turn up the nose in scorn. Without knowing it they spoke the truth. He would not save Himself because He was saving others. He could have come down. He stayed because He loved us.

Himself, if this is the Christ, the Chosen ***One*** of God." **36** And the soldiers also were mocking Him, coming near, and offering sour wine to Him, **37** and saying, "If You are the King of the Jews, save Yourself!" **38** And there was also an inscription written over Him in Greek and Latin and Hebrew letters: "This is the King of the Jews."

The Two Criminals

39 And one of the criminals who had been hanged was blaspheming Him, saying, "If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us!" **40** But the other, answering, was rebuking him, saying, "Do you not even fear God, since you are under the same judgment? **41** And we indeed justly, for we are receiving ***things*** worthy of what we did; but this ***man*** did nothing wrong." **42** And he was saying to Jesus, "Remember me, Lord, when You come in Your kingdom." **43** And Jesus said to him, "Truly I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise."

The Death of Jesus

44 And it was about ***the*** sixth hour, and darkness came over all the land until ***the*** ninth hour. **45** And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was torn in the middle. **46** And having called out with a loud voice, Jesus said, "Father, into Your hands I will commit My spirit." And having said these things, He expired. **47** And the centurion, having seen what had taken place, glorified God, saying, "Certainly this man was righteous." **48** And all the crowds who had come together to this spectacle, seeing the things that had taken place, were returning, beating their breasts. **49** And all His acquaintances stood at a distance, and women who had followed with Him from Galilee, watching these things.

The Burial of Jesus

50 And look, a man named Joseph (Ioseph), being a council member, a good and righteous man— **51** this ***man*** had not consented to their counsel and deed—from Arimathea (Arimathaia), a city of the Jews, who also himself was waiting for the kingdom of God; **52** this ***man***, having gone to Pilate, asked for the body of Jesus. **53** And having taken it down, he wrapped it in a linen cloth, and placed it in a rock-hewn

23:36 Ps 69:21; Luke 23:11; Matt 27:29,30,34,48
23:38 Luke 23:3; Matt 27:11,37; Mark 15:18,26,32
23:39 Matt 27:44; Mark 15:32; Luke 17:34-36
23:40 Job 1:8; Mal 3:5; Eph 5:11
23:41 Josh 7:19,20; Ezra 9:13; Luke 15:18,19
23:42 Ps 106:4; Neh 13:31; Lam 5:1
23:43 Ps 50:15; Rev 2:7; Isa 55:7
23:44 Amos 8:9; Exod 10:21; Exod 10:22
23:45 2 Chr 3:14; Exod 26:31; Lev 16:12
23:46 Ps 31:5; John 19:30; Acts 7:59
23:47 Mark 15:39; Matt 27:54; Luke 23:41
23:48 Luke 18:13; Jer 31:19; Acts 2:37
23:49 Luke 8:2; Ps 38:11; Matt 27:55,56,61
23:50 Mark 15:42-45; Matt 27:57,58; John 19:38
23:51 Luke 2:25,38; Mark 15:43; Gen 37:21,22
23:52 John 19:38-42
23:53 Isa 53:9; Matt 27:59,60; Mark 15:46

23:36 *offering sour wine to Him* Cheap, vinegar-like soldiers' wine, as Psalm 69:21 foretold. To them a real king had power and an army. They could not imagine a King whose greatest act of power was to lay down His life.
23:38 *This is the King of the Jews* Rome posted the crime above the victim's head. In Greek, the empire's common tongue, Latin, Rome's, and Hebrew, the Jews', everyone could read it. The chief priests wanted it changed, and Pilate refused (John 19:21-22). He meant it as mockery or a jab at the leaders. God made it a proclamation to the world. It was true.
23:39 *If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us* He did not want a Savior from sin but a way off the cross. At first both criminals mocked (Matt 27:44), but something changed in one of them.
23:41 *we indeed justly, for we are receiving things worthy of what we did* Having heard Jesus pray for His enemies, this man now feared God. Real repentance: no excuses, no blame. I deserve this, and this man did nothing wrong. He saw what Pilate saw, and more.
23:42 *Remember me, Lord, when You come in Your kingdom* One of the greatest statements of faith in the Bible. He saw a beaten, mocked, dying man under a sign calling Him king, and called Him Lord. He believed Jesus would have a kingdom and that death would not be His end. The disciples had run away; a dying thief believed. He asked only to be remembered, knowing he had nothing to offer.
23:43 *today you will be with Me in Paradise* Today, not someday; with Me, not just remembered. Paradise first meant a park or garden, used of Eden, and in Jesus' day of the place of blessing for the righteous dead (2 Cor 12:2-4; Rev 2:7). Some believe it was then the place of comfort called Abraham's bosom (16:22), its saints led to heaven after the resurrection (Eph 4:8-10); others that it was heaven itself. Moving the comma to read "I say to you today" goes against the plain sense. A believer who dies goes at once to be with the Lord (2 Cor 5:8; Phil 1:23).
23:43 *Truly I say to you* This man could not be baptized, join a church, do good works or make up for his past. He could only turn to Jesus in faith, and that was enough. Salvation is by grace through faith in Christ alone; baptism and good works follow for those who have time. It is never too late while there is breath. And it is a warning not to wait. Only one thief turned.
23:44 *darkness came over all the land until the ninth hour* Counting from sunrise, about noon to three in the afternoon. Passover fell at the full moon, when no eclipse of the sun can happen. It was an act of God, and darkness often goes with His judgment (Exod 10:21-23; Amos 8:9). In those hours Jesus bore the judgment for our sins, and at the end cried out that God had forsaken Him (Matt 27:46).
23:45 *the veil of the temple was torn in the middle* The thick curtain before the most holy place, where only the high priest went once a year with blood (Lev 16:2; Heb 9:7). It said God is holy and sinners cannot come near. God tore it from top to bottom (Matt 27:51). Now anyone who trusts Jesus can come boldly to God by His blood (Heb 10:19-22). We need no priest or curtain between us and God.
23:46 *Father, into Your hands I will commit My spirit* From Psalm 31:5, perhaps a common bedtime prayer, with "Father" added. The crucified usually grew too weak to speak, but He cried with a loud voice. He laid down His life when He chose (John 10:18). Expired means breathed His last, a real death. Our spirits too are safe in our Father's hands (Acts 7:59).
23:47 *Certainly this man was righteous* A centurion commanded about a hundred soldiers and oversaw the crucifixion. He had seen many men die, never like this. Matthew and Mark add that he called Him God's Son (Mark 15:39). After Pilate, Herod and the thief, a Roman soldier declared Him innocent and glorified God, a preview of the many Gentiles who would believe through the cross.
23:48 *were returning, beating their breasts* They came for a spectacle and went home grieving like the tax collector (18:13), shaken by the darkness and the way He died. Some may have repented at Pentecost.
23:49 *women who had followed with Him from Galilee, watching these things* His acquaintances watched from far off. The women who had supported Him from their means (8:1-3) stayed to the end. Luke notes them because they will be the first witnesses of the empty tomb.
23:50 *a man named Joseph, being a council member, a good and righteous man* A prominent member of the Sanhedrin (Mark 15:43) who had not voted for its plan, and a secret disciple for fear (John 19:38). Like Simeon and Anna (2:25, 38), he was waiting for God's promises.
23:52 *having gone to Pilate, asked for the body of Jesus* This took courage. Asking for the body of a man executed as a rebel king could cost his seat and good name. Rome often left bodies on the cross or threw them in a common grave. When it mattered most, this quiet believer came forward while most of the twelve hid.
23:53 *placed it in a rock-hewn tomb, where no one had yet been laid* A burial cave cut from solid rock, the kind only the wealthy could afford. It was Joseph's own new tomb (Matt 27:57-60), and Nicodemus helped (John 19:39-40). Isaiah foretold the Servant's grave with a rich man (Isa 53:9). A new tomb meant no confusion later about whose body was missing.

tomb, where no one had yet been laid. **54** And it was ***the*** day of Preparation, and ***the*** Sabbath was dawning. **55** And the women also, who had come with Him out of Galilee, having followed after, saw the tomb and how His body was laid. **56** And having returned, they prepared spices and ointments. And on the Sabbath they indeed rested according to the commandment.

LUKE 24

He Is Risen

1 But on the first ***day*** of the week, at deep dawn, they came to the tomb, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain ***others*** with them. **2** And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb. **3** And having entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus (Iesous). **4** And it came to pass, while they were perplexed about this, that look, two men stood by them in flashing garments. **5** And as they became terrified and were bowing the face to the ground, they said to them, "Why do you seek the living ***One*** among the dead? **6** He is not here, but He has been raised. Remember how He spoke to you while He was still in Galilee (Galilaia), **7** saying that the Son of Man must be delivered up into ***the*** hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and on the third day rise." **8** And they remembered His declarations, **9** and having returned from the tomb, they reported all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. **10** Now it was Mary (Maria) the Magdalene and Joanna (Ioanna) and Mary of James (Iakobos), and the other women with them, who were telling these things to the apostles. **11** And their declarations appeared before them like nonsense, and they were not believing them. **12** But Peter (Petros), having risen up, ran to the tomb; and having stooped down, he sees the linen strips lying alone; and he went away to his ***home***, wondering at what had come to pass.

The Road to Emmaus

13 And look, two of them were going on that same day to a village distant approximately 7 miles (sixty stadia) from Jerusalem (Hierousalem), whose name ***is*** Emmaus (Emmaous). **14** And they were talking with one another about all these things that had taken place. **15** And it came to pass, while they were talking and reasoning, that Jesus Himself, having drawn near, was walking along with them. **16** But their eyes were being held, so as not to recognize Him. **17** And He said to them, "What ***are*** these words which you are exchanging with one another while walking, and you are

23:54 Matt 27:62; John 19:14,31,42
23:55 Luke 23:49; Luke 8:2; Matt 27:61
23:56 Exod 20:8-10; Exod 31:14; Exod 35:2
24:1 John 20:1,2; Luke 24:10; Matt 28:1
24:2 Matt 27:60-66; Matt 28:2; Mark 15:46,47
24:3 Luke 24:23; John 20:6,7; Matt 16:5
24:4 Mark 16:5; Acts 1:10; Gen 18:2
24:5 Luke 1:12,13,29; Dan 8:17,18; Dan 10:7-12,16,19
24:6 Luke 9:22; Matt 17:22,23; Luke 24:44-46
24:8 John 2:19-22; John 12:16; John 14:26
24:9 Luke 24:22-24; Matt 28:7,8; Mark 16:7,8,10
24:10 Luke 8:2,3; Mark 15:40,41; Mark 16:9-11
24:11 Luke 24:25; Gen 19:14; 2 Kgs 7:2
24:12 John 20:3-10
24:13 Luke 24:18; Mark 16:12,13
24:14 Luke 6:45; Deut 6:7; Mal 3:6
24:15 Luke 24:36; Matt 18:20; John 14:18,19
24:16 Ps 105:2; Mal 3:16; John 20:14
24:17 Ezek 9:4-6; John 16:6,20-22

23:54 *it was the day of Preparation, and the Sabbath was dawning* Friday, when everything was readied for the Sabbath, which began at sundown. Jesus died about three, so Joseph had little time.
23:56 *they prepared spices and ointments* The women knew exactly which tomb it was. The spices were a last act of love, to honor the dead and cover the smell of decay. They expected a body, not a resurrection. They kept the Sabbath (Exod 20:8-10) and waited through the darkest day of their lives. But Sunday was coming.
24:1 *on the first day of the week, at deep dawn, they came to the tomb* Sunday, very early, as soon as the Sabbath allowed. They came with spices for a body, not expecting to see Him alive, and there were more women than Luke names. Because He rose on this day, the early church gathered on it (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor 16:2). Every Sunday reminds us of the empty tomb.
24:2 *they found the stone rolled away from the tomb* A large round stone rolled in a groove across the entrance took several men to move, and the women had wondered who would do it (Mark 16:3). Inside they did not find the body of "the Lord Jesus," Luke's first use of the full title. It was not rolled away to let Jesus out; He did not need that (John 20:19). It was rolled away to let the witnesses in.
24:4 *two men stood by them in flashing garments* Perplexed is at a loss. They were angels (24:23; John 20:12), their clothes shining like lightning. Matthew and Mark mention the one who spoke (Mark 16:5). If there were two, there was certainly one.
24:5 *Why do you seek the living One among the dead* They bowed in fear and awe. One of the great questions of the Bible. A tomb is for the dead, and Jesus is the living One. Many still look for Him among the dead, admiring a great teacher from a history book. He is not a dead hero. He is alive.
24:6 *He is not here, but He has been raised* The most important words ever spoken at a grave. God raised Him bodily, never to die again (Rom 6:9). "Must": it was God's plan, and should not have been a surprise. The women had been with Him in Galilee (8:1-3) and heard Him foretell it more than once (9:22, 44; 18:31-33).
24:8 *they remembered His declarations* Suddenly His words made sense. God often brings His word back to mind at the right moment (John 14:26), one reason to fill our hearts with it now.
24:10 *it was Mary the Magdalene and Joanna and Mary of James* Mary of Magdala had been freed of seven demons (8:2); Joanna was the wife of Herod's steward (8:3); Mary of James was likely James' mother. The eleven are the twelve without Judas. A woman's word counted for little in court, and no one inventing a story would make women the first witnesses. Naming them shows Luke tells what really happened, and how God honors those the world overlooks.
24:11 *their declarations appeared before them like nonsense* A word for the wild talk of someone in a fever. The disciples were not gullible men who made up a story. They did not expect a resurrection and refused to believe it at first. It took real evidence to change their minds, and then they were willing to die for what they had seen.
24:12 *he sees the linen strips lying alone* Peter had to see for himself, and John ran with him (John 20:3-8). Thieves would not unwrap a body and leave the cloths. Peter went home wondering. That day the Lord appeared to him personally (24:34; 1 Cor 15:5). After three denials, we know Jesus restored him.
24:13 *a village distant approximately 7 miles from Jerusalem, whose name is Emmaus* Its site is not known for sure. These two were not of the eleven but the wider group of disciples. One was Cleopas (24:18). Some think the other was his wife, but Scripture does not say.
24:15 *Jesus Himself, having drawn near, was walking along with them* They were going over the cross, the burial and the women's report. Jesus came to two sad, confused disciples on a dusty road. He did not wait for them to come to Him.
24:16 *their eyes were being held, so as not to recognize Him* God kept them from knowing Him for a time. Jesus wanted them to understand His death and resurrection from the Scriptures first. Faith must rest on the word of God.
24:17 *What are these words which you are exchanging with one another while walking, and you are sad* Jesus knew the answer and asked so they would pour out their hearts. He knows what troubles us and still invites us to tell Him. Their faces showed they had lost all hope.

sad?" **18** And answering, the one whose name ***was*** Cleopas (Kleopas) said to Him, "Are You alone sojourning in
Jerusalem, and did not know the things that have come to pass in it in these days?" **19** And He said to them, "What things?" And they said to Him, "The things concerning Jesus the Nazarene, who was a man, a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, **20** and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him up to a judgment of death, and crucified Him. **21** But we were hoping that it is He who is about to redeem Israel. But indeed, with all these things, this is the third day today since these things came to pass. **22** But also certain women from among us amazed us, having been at the tomb early; **23** and not having found His body, they came, saying that they had also seen a vision of angels, who say that He is living. **24** And some of those with us went to the tomb and found ***it*** so, just as the women also said; but Him they did not see." **25** And He said to them, "O foolish ***ones*** and slow in heart to believe in all that the prophets spoke! **26** Was it not necessary ***for*** the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?" **27** And having begun from Moses and from all the prophets, He was explaining to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. **28** And they drew near to the village where they were going, and He made as though to be going farther. **29** And they urged Him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, for it is toward evening, and the day has declined." And He went in to stay with them. **30** And it came to pass, as He reclined ***at table*** with them, having taken the bread, He blessed ***it***, and having broken ***it***, He was giving ***it*** to them. **31** And their eyes were opened, and they recognized Him; and He vanished from them. **32** And they said to one another, "Was not our heart burning within us while He was speaking to us on the road, and while He was opening the Scriptures to us?" **33** And having risen up that same hour, they returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those with them gathered together, **34** saying, "The Lord has truly been raised, and He has appeared to Simon." **35** And they were relating the things on the road, and how He was made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

Jesus Appears to the Disciples

36 And as they were saying these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them and says to them, "Peace to you." **37** But having been startled and having become terrified, they were thinking ***that they were*** seeing a spirit. **38** And He said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do doubts come up

24:18 Ps 105:2; Mal 3:16; John 19:25
24:19 Ps 105:2; Mal 3:16; Matt 21:11
24:20 Ps 105:2; Mal 3:16; Luke 22:66-71
24:21 Luke 1:68; Luke 2:38; Ps 130:8
24:22 Matt 28:7,8; Mark 16:9,10; John 20:1,2,18
24:24 Ps 105:2; Mal 3:16; Luke 24:12
24:25 Mark 8:17,18; Mark 9:19; Mark 16:14
24:26 Heb 9:22,23; Luke 24:46; Isa 53:1-12
24:27 Deut 18:15; Isa 7:14; Zech 9:9
24:28 Gen 19:2; Gen 19:3; Ruth 1:15
24:29 2 Kgs 4:8; Judg 19:9; Ps 105:2
24:30 Matt 14:19; Luke 24:35; Luke 9:16
24:31 Ps 105:2; Mal 3:16; Luke 24:16
24:32 Ps 39:3; Jer 20:9; Luke 24:45
24:33 John 20:19-26
24:34 1 Cor 15:5; Luke 22:54-62; Mark 16:7
24:35 Mark 16:12,13
24:36 Gen 43:23; Mark 16:14; John 14:27
24:37 Job 4:14-16; Luke 16:30; 1 Sam 28:13
24:38 Heb 4:13; Jer 4:14; Dan 4:5,19

24:18 *Are You alone sojourning in Jerusalem* A sojourner is a short-term visitor. Everyone was talking about the crucifixion. The irony is that Cleopas was asking the one Person who knew those events better than anyone alive.
24:19 *a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people* Jesus let them tell it. They believed Him a great prophet, proven by miracles and teaching, and they said plainly that their own leaders had handed Him over to die.
24:21 *But we were hoping that it is He who is about to redeem Israel* Some of the saddest words in the Bible, hope in the past tense. To redeem Israel meant to set the nation free, likely from Rome. Their hope was right but too small. He came to redeem Israel and the world by dying for sin, and He will still redeem Israel as a nation when He comes again (Rom 11:26). They mention the third day without seeing what it meant.
24:24 *but Him they did not see* They had all the facts: an empty tomb, angels saying He lived, others checking and finding it so. But they could not put it together, while He walked right beside them.
24:25 *O foolish ones and slow in heart to believe in all that the prophets spoke* Foolish means without understanding. They believed the prophets about a glorious King but not all they spoke, including His suffering. We too can pick the parts of Scripture we like. We need to believe all of it.
24:26 *Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory* The cross was not a failure of God's plan; it was the plan. The order all through Scripture is suffering, then glory (1 Pet 1:10-11).
24:27 *He was explaining to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself* What a Bible study! Moses means the first five books. We are not told which passages, but think of the seed of the woman (Gen 3:15), the ram in Isaac's place (Gen 22:8, 13), the Passover lamb (Exod 12), the bronze serpent (Num 21:8-9; John 3:14), the prophet like Moses (Deut 18:15), the pierced Servant (Isa 53), the King on a donkey (Zech 9:9), the One they pierced (Zech 12:10), and the Son of Man on the clouds (Dan 7:13-14). The whole Bible is about Jesus. Look for Him on every page.
24:29 *Stay with us, for it is toward evening* He acted as if He would go on and did not force Himself on them. Night roads were not safe, and their hearts were stirred though they did not know why. Jesus still waits to be invited in (Rev 3:20).
24:30 *having taken the bread, He blessed it, and having broken it, He was giving it to them* The guest took the host's place and did what He did at the feeding of the five thousand (9:16) and the Last Supper (22:19).
24:31 *their eyes were opened, and they recognized Him; and He vanished from them* Maybe it was the way He broke the bread, or the nail wounds in His hands. Scripture does not say, but God opened their eyes. His resurrection body was real but not bound by the limits our bodies have now.
24:32 *Was not our heart burning within us* Looking back, their hearts had been on fire the whole time He taught. God's word is not dry and dead. When the Spirit shows us Christ in it, our hearts burn. If your heart feels cold, spend time in His word and ask Him to open it to you.
24:34 *The Lord has truly been raised, and He has appeared to Simon* They had walked seven miles and walked back at night, unable to keep the news. Before they could tell it, they heard the others'. Paul lists this appearance first (1 Cor 15:5). Peter, who denied Him, was the first apostle to see Him alive. That is grace.
24:35 *how He was made known to them in the breaking of the bread* Two groups had seen Him in two places, and the witnesses were adding up. The breaking of the bread became a name for believers' shared meals and the Lord's Supper (Acts 2:42, 46). Each time we break bread in His name, we remember He is alive and with us.
24:36 *Peace to you* The doors were locked in fear (John 20:19), and He was suddenly there. Shalom was the normal greeting, but that night it meant far more. To men who had run away, His first word was not a rebuke but peace. Through His death He made peace between God and sinners (Rom 5:1; Col 1:20).

in your hearts? **39** See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones, just as you see Me having." **40** And having said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. **41** And while they were still disbelieving for joy and wondering, He said to them, "Do you have anything to eat here?" **42** And they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and ***some*** from a honeycomb. **43** And having taken ***it***, He ate ***it*** before them.

The Commission and the Promise

44 And He said to them, "These ***are*** the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all the things which are written concerning Me in the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms must be fulfilled." **45** Then He opened their mind to understand the Scriptures, **46** and He said to them, "Thus it has been written, and thus it was necessary ***for*** the Christ to suffer and to rise out from ***the*** dead on the third day, **47** and repentance and forgiveness of sins to be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. **48** And you are witnesses of these things. **49** And look, I am sending the promise of My Father upon you; but you, remain in the city of Jerusalem until you are clothed with power from on high."

The Ascension

50 And He led them out as far as Bethany (Bethania), and having lifted up His hands, He blessed them. **51** And it came to pass, while He was blessing them, He parted from them and was being carried up into heaven. **52** And having worshiped Him, they returned to Jerusalem with great joy, **53** and they were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.

24:39 1 John 1:1; John 20:20,25,27; Num 16:22
24:41 John 21:5,10-13; Gen 45:26-28; Job 9:16
24:42 Ps 105:2
24:43 Gen 18:8; Acts 10:41
24:44 Ps 22:1; Zech 12:10; Lev 16:2
24:45 Ps 119:18; Ps 119:12; Acts 16:14
24:46 Ps 22:9; Isa 49:6; Isa 53:5
24:47 Mal 1:11; Gen 12:3; Dan 9:24
24:48 Acts 1:8,22; Acts 2:32; Acts 5:32
24:49 Isa 32:15; Joel 2:28; Josh 6:10
24:50 Lev 9:22; Acts 1:12; Mark 11:1
24:51 2 Kgs 2:11; Mark 16:19; John 20:17
24:52 Ps 45:11; Ps 105:2; Matt 28:9,17
24:53 Mark 16:20; Acts 2:46,47; Acts 5:41,42

24:39 *a spirit does not have flesh and bones, just as you see Me having* They thought they saw a spirit; people who expect a resurrection do not react this way. Jesus was patient with their fear and gave evidence: nail wounds to see and a body to touch. Some say His resurrection was only spiritual while His body stayed in the grave. Jesus says no. The same body that was crucified was raised, changed and glorified, never to die again, and it is the pattern for ours (Phil 3:21).
24:40 *He showed them His hands and His feet* He still bears those wounds. John saw Him in heaven as a Lamb standing as though slain (Rev 5:6). The scars of the cross are His forever.
24:43 *He ate it before them* Disbelieving for joy, they found it too good to be true. A spirit does not eat fish. Peter later preached that the apostles ate and drank with Him after He rose (Acts 10:41). The words "some from a honeycomb" in 24:42 follow the Received Greek Text and are lacking in many older Greek copies.
24:44 *in the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms* The Jews divided the Old Testament into the Law, the Prophets and the Writings, and the Psalms, first and largest of the Writings, can stand for that part. Every part speaks of Him, and it must be fulfilled. God's word cannot fail.
24:45 *Then He opened their mind to understand the Scriptures* They had heard the Scriptures all their lives without understanding until He opened their minds. Reading the Bible is not only a matter of brains. We need the Spirit's help (1 Cor 2:12-14), so we pray before we study for eyes to see wonderful things in His word (Ps 119:18).
24:47 *repentance and forgiveness of sins to be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem* The suffering and rising on the third day were written beforehand (Ps 16:10; Isa 53:5-12; Hos 6:2). Luke's form of the Great Commission. Repentance turns from sin to God; forgiveness sends sins away. In His name means on His authority and through faith in Him, to every people on earth. The city that crucified Him heard the offer first, and Acts shows it spreading to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8). We cannot leave out sin and still preach the gospel Jesus gave.
24:48 *you are witnesses of these things* A witness tells what he has seen and heard, and Acts is the story of these witnesses (Acts 1:22; 2:32). We are not eyewitnesses, but we have their testimony in Scripture and the experience of a changed life. Every believer is called to tell others what Jesus has done.
24:49 *until you are clothed with power from on high* The promise of the Father is the Holy Spirit, promised by the prophets (Joel 2:28-29; Ezek 36:26-27) and by John (3:16). Clothed means covered as with a garment. They were not to preach in their own strength but wait. Ten days after the ascension, at Pentecost, the Spirit came in power (Acts 2:1-4). God's work can only be done by God's power.
24:50 *having lifted up His hands, He blessed them* Bethany lay on the Mount of Olives' eastern slope (Acts 1:12), at the end of the forty days Luke describes in Acts 1:3. Lifting the hands to bless was a priest's act (Lev 9:22). Our great High Priest lifted His nail-scarred hands over His people. The last thing they saw Him do on earth was bless them.
24:51 *He parted from them and was being carried up into heaven* The ascension, bodily, a cloud taking Him from sight (Acts 1:9). In a sense He has never stopped blessing; He prays for His people at the Father's right hand (Rom 8:34; Heb 7:25). This same Jesus will come as they saw Him go (Acts 1:11). I believe He will first come for His church (John 14:2-3; 1 Thess 4:16-17), and after the Tribulation return to the Mount of Olives in power and glory to reign (Zech 14:4; Rev 19:11-16).
24:52 *having worshiped Him, they returned to Jerusalem with great joy* Faithful Jews worshiped only God, and they now knew who Jesus was. Their Lord had left, yet they were full of joy because He was alive, Lord, had blessed them, and promised His Spirit and His return. Luke began with great joy at His birth (2:10) and ends with great joy.
24:53 *they were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen* Luke began in the temple with Zechariah's incense (1:8-9) and ends there with praise. They waited for the promise with praise, as God's people should, and Acts picks up the story here. Amen means it is true. Jesus lived, died, rose and went up to heaven, and He is coming again.

JOHN

Introduction

Title

The book is named for its writer, John. It is the fourth and last of the Gospels. The word gospel means good news, and each Gospel tells the good news of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Matthew, Mark and Luke are often called the Synoptic Gospels, from a word meaning seeing together, because they tell many of the same events in much the same order. John is different. Most of what he records is not found in the other three. He does not tell of Jesus' birth, baptism, temptation or parables. He opens before the creation of the world and tells us who Jesus is: the eternal Word of God who became a man.

Author and Date

The book never names its author. It calls him "the disciple whom Jesus was loving" and says he was an eyewitness who wrote these things (21:20-24). The early church held that this disciple is John the apostle, the son of Zebedee and brother of James, a fisherman from Galilee and one of the three closest to Jesus, along with Peter and James. He also wrote the three letters of John and Revelation. I hold this traditional view. The writer knows the land, the feasts and the customs of the Jews, gives small details only an eyewitness would remember, and never once names himself, though he names nearly everyone else.

Early church tradition places John in Ephesus, in the Roman province of Asia, in the later years of his life, and most believe he wrote his Gospel there. He wrote after the other three Gospels, most likely about A.D. 80 to 95. Some scholars date it earlier, before the Romans destroyed Jerusalem and the temple in A.D. 70.

Background and Setting

John covers the public ministry of Jesus, which lasted about three years. We know this because John mentions at least three Passovers (2:13; 6:4; 11:55). Much of the action takes place in Jerusalem at the Jewish feasts: Passover, Booths and Dedication. John slows down dramatically for the last week of Jesus' life. Chapters 13 to 17 cover a single evening in the upper room and on the way to the garden.

When John writes "the Jews," he usually means the religious leaders in Jerusalem who opposed Jesus, not the Jewish people as a whole. John himself was Jewish, as were Jesus and every one of the disciples. We meet the Pharisees, a strict party careful about the Law and the traditions built around it; the chief priests, mostly Sadducees, who controlled the temple; and the Sanhedrin, the ruling council. Judea was under Roman rule, and only the Romans could carry out the death penalty (18:31). John explains Hebrew words and Jewish customs for his readers, which tells us he wrote for people across the Roman world.

Themes

John tells us his purpose plainly: "these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name" (20:31). I often call John the believing Gospel. He uses the word "believe" nearly a hundred times, more than Matthew, Mark and Luke put together. For John, faith is something you do. You believe in Jesus, trust Him, and keep on trusting Him.

John never calls Jesus' miracles miracles. He calls them signs, because a sign points beyond itself. Most teachers count seven in Jesus' public ministry: water into wine (2:1-11), the official's son (4:46-54), the man at Bethesda (5:1-18), the five thousand fed (6:1-14), walking on the water (6:16-21), the man born blind (9:1-41) and Lazarus raised (11:1-44). The greatest sign of all is His own resurrection.

Other key words run through the book: life, light and darkness, truth, witness, the world, the hour, and remain. John shows us how to be saved (3:16), how the Holy Spirit works in believers (14-16), and how to love one another as Jesus loved us (13:34-35).

Christ in John

From the first verse John tells us Jesus is God: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (1:1). Then "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (1:14). He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (1:29), the only begotten Son (3:16), and the One who existed before Abraham: "before Abraham came into being, I am" (8:58), taking God's name from the burning bush (Exod 3:14).

Jesus joins "I am" to seven pictures of what He is to us: the bread of life (6:35), the light of the world (8:12), the door (10:7), the good shepherd (10:11), the resurrection and the life (11:25), the way and the truth and the life (14:6), and the true vine (15:1). The book closes its main story with Thomas looking at the risen Jesus and saying, "My Lord and my God" (20:28). Jesus accepted it, because it was true.

Hard Passages

Two passages printed in the SLB are missing from the earliest Greek copies we have: the angel stirring the water at Bethesda (5:3b-4) and the woman caught in adultery (7:53-8:11). The notes comment on both as printed and explain why many Bibles mark them. No teaching of the faith rests on them alone.

What does "born of water and the Spirit" mean (3:5)? The notes give the main views and explain the reading from Ezekiel 36:25-27.

How do God's drawing and man's coming fit together (6:37, 44; 12:39-40)? What does it mean to eat His flesh and drink His blood (6:53-58)? The notes name the main views. Can a true believer be lost (5:24; 10:28-29; 15:6)? Good teachers land on both sides, and the notes leave it open while holding out the comfort Jesus meant to give.

Who may forgive or retain sins (20:23)? The notes explain it as the church's authority to declare forgiveness through the gospel. Is "I am coming again and will receive you to Myself" (14:3) the Rapture? I believe it is, and the notes name the other view. How does John's timing of the Passover and the sixth hour fit the other Gospels (18:28; 19:14)? The notes give the common explanations.

Outline

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JOHN

JOHN 1

The Word Became Flesh

1 In ***the*** beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2** He was in ***the*** beginning with God. **3** All things came into being through Him, and without Him not even one ***thing*** came into being that has come into being. **4** In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. **5** And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not grasp it. **6** There came a man sent from God; his name ***was*** John (Ioannes). **7** He came for testimony, that he might testify concerning the Light, that all might believe through him. **8** He was not the Light, but ***came*** that he might testify concerning the Light. **9** ***That*** was the true Light, which enlightens every man coming into the world. **10** He was in the world, and the world came into being through Him, and the world did not know Him. **11** He came to His own ***things***, and His own ***people*** did not receive Him. **12** But as many as received Him, to them He gave authority to become children of God, to those who believe in His name, **13** who were born not of bloods, nor of ***the*** will of ***the*** flesh, nor of ***the*** will of a man, but of God. **14** And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of an only begotten from ***the*** Father, full of grace and truth. **15** John testifies concerning Him and has cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'The ***One*** coming after me has come to be ahead of me, because He was before me.'" **16** And from His fullness we all have received, and grace for grace. **17** For the law was given through Moses; the grace and the truth came through Jesus (Iesous) Christ. **18** No one has ever seen God; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has

1:1 Gen 1:1; 1 John 1:1,2; John 17:5
1:2 Gen 1:1
1:3 Gen 1:26; Gen 1:1; Col 1:16,17
1:4 John 8:12; John 11:25; John 14:6
1:5 John 3:19,20; 1 Cor 2:14; John 12:36-40
1:6 John 3:28; Mal 3:1; John 1:33
1:7 Acts 19:4; John 1:19,26,27,32-34,36; John 3:26-36
1:8 John 1:20; John 3:28; Acts 19:4
1:9 1 John 2:8; Isa 49:6; John 12:46
1:10 Gen 16:13; Isa 53:2; Isa 53:3
1:11 Isa 53:2; Isa 49:4; Isa 53:3
1:12 Gal 3:26; 1 John 3:1; Rom 8:14
1:13 James 1:18; 1 John 3:9; 1 Pet 1:3,23
1:14 Isa 40:5; 1 Tim 3:16; Gal 4:4
1:15 Mic 5:2; Matt 3:11,13-17; John 3:26-36
1:16 Col 1:19; Rom 5:2,17,20; Eph 4:7-12
1:17 Deut 5:1; Deut 4:44; Deut 33:4
1:18 Gen 16:13; Prov 8:30; Col 1:15

1:1 *In the beginning was the Word* These words take us straight back to Genesis 1:1. Before anything was created, the Word already was. He did not come into being at some point. The Greek word is logos, a word or message, the way a hidden thought is made known. In the same way Jesus is how God makes Himself known to us.
1:1 *the Word was God* John tells us three things: the Word existed in the beginning, He was with God as a distinct person, and He was God, sharing the very nature of God. Some say it should read that the Word was a god, but that reading does not hold up. It would make John, a Jew who believed in one God (Deut 6:4), teach two gods. Thomas will call the risen Jesus "My Lord and my God" (20:28), and Jesus accepts it.
1:3 *All things came into being through Him* John says it two ways so there is no loophole. If Jesus made everything that was made, then He Himself was not made. He is the Creator, not part of the creation (Col 1:16-17; Heb 1:2).
1:4 *In Him was life, and the life was the light of men* Not only the life God breathed into Adam, but the eternal life that runs all through this Gospel. Light lets us see what is true. Jesus shows us who God is, and He shows us who we really are.
1:5 *the darkness did not grasp it* The word can mean to understand, and it can mean to overpower or seize. Both fit. The darkness of this world did not understand Jesus, and for all its trying it could not put Him out. Even the cross did not put out the Light.
1:6 *There came a man sent from God; his name was John* This is John the Baptist, not the apostle who wrote this book. The Word was; John came. Whenever this Gospel uses the name John for someone in the story, it means the Baptist. The writer never names himself.
1:7 *that all might believe through him* A witness tells what he has seen and heard, and "testify" is a key word in this Gospel. John the Baptist pointed people to Jesus so they would believe in Jesus, not in John. That is the goal of the whole book (20:31).
1:8 *He was not the Light* Jesus said no one born of women was greater than John (Matt 11:11), yet some were following John as if he were the Messiah, and his followers were still around years later (Acts 19:1-4). John was the signpost, not the destination.
1:9 *which enlightens every man coming into the world* Jesus is the true Light among many false ones. This does not mean every person is saved. The Light is offered to everyone, and every person will stand in that Light one way or another, either drawn to Him or exposed by Him (3:19-21).
1:10 *the world did not know Him* The Creator came into His own creation, and it did not recognize Him. In John, "the world" usually means mankind in rebellion against God.
1:11 *His own people did not receive Him* The first "His own" means His own home or property, the second His own people, Israel. He came to the nation God had prepared for Him through the promises, the prophets and the temple, and as a whole they did not receive Him. That rejection runs through this Gospel until the cross.
1:12 *authority to become children of God* The good news in a single verse. We are all created by God, but we become His children by receiving His Son, which John explains as believing in His name. To believe in His name is to trust all His name stands for: who He is and what He has done.
1:13 *not of bloods, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of a man, but of God* The new birth does not come from family line, human desire or someone else's decision. You cannot inherit salvation from your parents. God does the work of making us new, as Jesus will tell Nicodemus in chapter 3.
1:14 *the Word became flesh* The most amazing thing of all. God did not only appear to be human. He became a real man with a real body who got hungry, tired and thirsty. He did not stop being God. He added humanity to His deity.
1:14 *dwelt among us* The word means He pitched His tent among us, a reminder of the tabernacle where God's glory lived among Israel (Exod 40:34). "Only begotten" means one of a kind. He came "full of grace and truth," giving us what we do not deserve and telling us what we need to hear.
1:15 *He was before me* John was born about six months before Jesus (Luke 1:26, 36) and began preaching first. Yet he says Jesus outranks him because Jesus existed before He was ever born in Bethlehem.
1:16 *grace for grace* Like waves on the shore: one wave of God's kindness rolls in, and before it is gone another comes behind it. Christ never runs short, and we never use Him up.
1:17 *the law was given through Moses; the grace and the truth came through Jesus Christ* The Law was good and holy and showed Israel what God required, but it could not give the power to keep it. Grace and truth came in full through Jesus. This is the first time John uses the name Jesus Christ. The Word now has a name.
1:18 *No one has ever seen God* No one has seen God in all His glory and lived (Exod 33:20). The word for "made Him known" gives us our word exegesis. Jesus explains the Father. If you want to know what God is like, look at Jesus. "In the bosom of the Father" is the closest, most loving relationship there is.

made ***Him*** known.

The Witness of John the Baptist

19 And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem (Hierosolyma) that they might ask him, "Who are you?" **20** And he confessed and did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ." **21** And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah (Helias)?" And he says, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" And he answered, "No." **22** Therefore they said to him, "Who are you, that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?" **23** He said, "I ***am*** a voice of ***one*** crying in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of ***the*** Lord,' as Isaiah (Hesaias) the prophet said." **24** And those who had been sent were from the Pharisees. **25** And they asked him and said to him, "Why then do you baptize, if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" **26** John answered them, saying, "I baptize with water, but in ***the*** midst of you One has stood whom you do not know. **27** He is the ***One*** coming after me, who has come to be ahead of me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie." **28** These things took place in Bethabara across the Jordan (Iordanes), where John was baptizing. **29** On the next day John sees Jesus coming to him, and says, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! **30** This is He of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who has come to be ahead of me, because He was before me.' **31** And I did not know Him; but that He might be revealed to Israel, for this reason I came baptizing with the water." **32** And John testified, saying, "I have beheld the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven, and He remained upon Him. **33** And I did not know Him; but the ***One*** who sent me to baptize with water, He said to me, 'Upon whomever you see the Spirit descending and remaining on Him, this is the ***One*** who baptizes with ***the*** Holy Spirit.' **34** And I have seen and have testified that this is the Son of God."

The First Disciples

35 On the next day again John was standing, and two of his disciples, **36** and looking at Jesus as He walked, he says, "Look, the Lamb of God!" **37** And the two disciples heard him speaking, and they followed Jesus. **38** Then Jesus, having turned and having beheld them following, says to them, "What are you seeking?" And they said to Him, "Rabbi" (which is to say, being interpreted, Teacher), "where are You staying?" **39** He says to them, "Come and see." They went and saw where He was staying, and they stayed with Him that day. Now ***the*** hour was about ***the*** tenth. **40** Andrew (Andreas), the brother of Simon Peter (Petros), was one of

1:19 Deut 17:9; Deut 24:8; John 10:24
1:20 John 3:28-36; Mark 1:7,8; Matt 3:11,12
1:21 Deut 18:15; Mal 4:5; Deut 18:16
1:22 2 Sam 24:13
1:23 Isa 40:3; Ezra 1:1; Isa 40:4
1:24 Luke 16:14; John 3:1,2; John 7:47-49
1:25 Deut 18:15; 1 Kgs 17:1; Mal 4:5
1:26 Matt 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16
1:27 Deut 25:9; John 1:15,30; Matt 3:11
1:28 Judg 7:24; Josh 22:11; John 10:40
1:29 Isa 53:7; Exod 12:3; Gen 22:7
1:30 John 1:15,27; Luke 3:16
1:31 Luke 1:17,76-79; John 1:33; John 1:7
1:32 Isa 11:2; Isa 42:1; Matt 3:16
1:33 Isa 11:2; Isa 42:1; Matt 3:11,14
1:34 Matt 4:3,6; Ps 2:7; Ps 89:26,27
1:35 John 3:25,26; Mal 3:16
1:36 Gen 22:8; Exod 12:3; Lev 4:32
1:37 Rom 10:17; John 1:43; John 4:39-42
1:38 Ruth 1:16; Gen 37:15; John 1:49
1:39 Luke 24:29; John 1:46; Matt 11:28-30
1:40 Mal 3:16; Matt 4:18; Matt 10:2

1:19 *the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem* When John writes "the Jews," he usually means the religious leaders who opposed Jesus, not the Jewish people as a whole. John himself was Jewish, as were Jesus and every one of the disciples. Levites were the tribe of Levi, who served at the temple.
1:20 *I am not the Christ* Christ is the Greek form of the Hebrew Messiah. Both mean Anointed One, God's promised King. John could have taken the attention. He did the opposite.
1:21 *Are you Elijah?* Malachi 4:5 promised Elijah before the great day of the Lord. John would come "in the spirit and power of Elijah" (Luke 1:17), and Jesus said he filled that role for those willing to accept it (Matt 11:14). He was not Elijah come back in person, so he answered honestly. "The prophet" is the prophet like Moses (Deut 18:15), and that Prophet is Jesus (Acts 3:22).
1:23 *I am a voice of one crying in the wilderness* John answered with Isaiah 40:3. Before a king traveled, workers went ahead to fill holes and straighten the road. John prepared hearts for the King by calling people to repent, and he claimed no title for himself, only a voice.
1:24 *from the Pharisees* The Pharisees were a strict religious party, careful about the Law and the traditions built around it. They will become some of Jesus' strongest opponents in this Gospel.
1:25 *Why then do you baptize* Many scholars believe Jews already baptized Gentiles who converted. John was baptizing Jews, telling them they needed to repent and be cleansed just like outsiders. By what authority?
1:27 *the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie* Untying sandals was the lowest job a servant could do. John knew exactly who he was and who he was not.
1:28 *Bethabara across the Jordan* Many Greek copies read Bethany here. Either way the place was on the east side of the river, not the Bethany near Jerusalem where Lazarus lived (11:1).
1:29 *Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world* Every Jew listening would think of the temple lambs and the Passover lamb whose blood saved Israel in Egypt (Exod 12). Isaiah 53:7 pictured the Messiah as a lamb led to slaughter. Jesus is the sacrifice all those lambs pointed to, and not for Israel only but for the world. The same Lamb stands at the throne in Revelation 5.
1:31 *I did not know Him* John and Jesus were relatives (Luke 1:36), so he likely knew Him as a man. He did not know Him as the Messiah until God showed him. The whole point of his baptizing was that the Messiah would be revealed to Israel.
1:32 *He remained upon Him* The other Gospels tell this at Jesus' baptism (Matt 3:16-17). In the Old Testament the Spirit came on prophets and kings for a time. On Jesus the Spirit remained.
1:33 *this is the One who baptizes with the Holy Spirit* John could put people in water. Only Jesus can put the Holy Spirit inside a person. That promise was fulfilled at Pentecost, the feast fifty days after Passover (Acts 2), and is fulfilled every time someone believes (Acts 2:38-39).
1:34 *this is the Son of God* The high point of John's testimony, and the very thing this Gospel was written to convince us of (20:31).
1:36 *Look, the Lamb of God!* John knew that if he pointed his own disciples to Jesus, they would leave him. He did it anyway. A faithful teacher points his students past himself.
1:38 *What are you seeking?* Jesus' first words in this Gospel are a question, and it is still a good one for each of us. Their answer, "where are You staying," shows they wanted time with Him, not a quick word in passing. John translates Rabbi for readers outside Israel.
1:39 *Come and see* Jesus did not hand them an argument. He invited them to spend time with Him. The tenth hour was most likely about four in the afternoon, counting from sunrise as the Jews did. It is the kind of detail an eyewitness remembers.
1:40 *one of the two who heard from John and followed Him* The other is not named. Many believe he was John himself, the writer, who never names himself and later calls himself "the disciple whom Jesus was loving" (21:20).

the two who heard from John and followed Him. **41** He first finds his own brother Simon and says to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is, being translated, the Christ). **42** And he led him to Jesus. Now Jesus, having looked at him, said, "You are Simon the son of Jonah (Ionas); you will be called Cephas (Kephas)" (which is translated, Peter). **43** On the next day Jesus wanted to go forth into Galilee (Galilaia), and He finds Philip (Philippos), and says to him, "Follow Me." **44** Now Philip was from Bethsaida, from the city of Andrew and Peter. **45** Philip finds Nathanael and says to him, "We have found ***Him*** of whom Moses wrote in the law, and the prophets: Jesus the son of Joseph (Ioseph), the ***one*** from Nazareth." **46** And Nathanael said to him, "Can any good thing be out of Nazareth?" Philip says to him, "Come and see." **47** Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him, and He says concerning him, "Look, truly an Israelite, in whom there is no deceit!" **48** Nathanael says to Him, "From where do You know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, while you were under the fig tree, I saw you." **49** Nathanael answered and says to Him, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel!" **50** Jesus answered and said to him, "Because I said to you, 'I saw you underneath the fig tree,' do you believe? You will see greater things than these." **51** And He says to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, from now on you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

JOHN 2

Water Turned into Wine

1 And on the third day a wedding took place in Cana (Kana) of Galilee (Galilaia), and the mother of Jesus (Iesous) was there. **2** Now Jesus also was invited, and His disciples, to the wedding. **3** And when ***the*** wine ran out, the mother of Jesus says to Him, "They have no wine." **4** Jesus says to her, "What ***is that*** to Me and to you, woman? My hour has not yet come." **5** His mother says to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do ***it***." **6** Now there were six stone water jars standing there according to the purification of the Jews, holding approximately 20 or 30 gallons (two or three metretes) apiece. **7** Jesus says to them, "Fill the water jars with water." And they filled them up to ***the*** brim. **8** And He says to them, "Draw out now, and carry ***it*** to the master of the feast." And they carried ***it***. **9** Now when the master of the feast tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it was from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the

1:41 John 4:25; John 4:28,29; John 1:36,37,45
1:42 Gen 17:5; Hos 1:4; Mal 3:16
1:43 Isa 65:1; Matt 4:18-21; Matt 9:9
1:44 John 12:21; Matt 11:21; Matt 10:3
1:45 Isa 53:2; Luke 24:27,44; Deut 31:9
1:46 John 7:41,42,52; John 4:29; 1 Thess 5:21
1:47 Ps 32:2; Gen 27:36; 1 Sam 12:24
1:48 Isa 65:24; Gen 32:27; Song 8:5
1:49 Zech 9:9; Hos 3:5; Zeph 3:15
1:50 John 20:29; Luke 1:45; John 11:40
1:51 Gen 28:12; Ezek 1:1; Dan 7:9
2:1 John 4:46; John 21:2; John 1:43
2:2 Matt 12:19; Luke 7:34-38; 1 Cor 7:39
2:3 Ps 104:15; Eccl 10:19; Matt 26:28
2:4 2 Sam 16:10; 2 Sam 19:22; 1 Kgs 17:18
2:5 John 15:14; Gen 6:22; Judg 13:14
2:6 John 3:25; Heb 9:10,19; Mark 7:2-5
2:7 John 2:3,5; Num 21:6-9; Josh 6:3-5
2:8 Prov 3:5,6; Eccl 9:6; Rom 13:7
2:9 Exod 7:20; Judg 14:10; Isa 55:1

1:41 *We have found the Messiah* The first thing Andrew did was find his brother. He did not wait until he understood everything. Every time Andrew appears in this Gospel he is bringing someone to Jesus (6:8-9; 12:22).
1:42 *you will be called Cephas* Cephas is Aramaic for rock, and Peter is the Greek form. Simon was anything but a rock yet, impulsive and up and down. Jesus named him for who He would make him to be. He sees not only who we are but who we will become in Him.
1:43 *Follow Me* This time Jesus did the finding. Everything about being a disciple is packed into these two words.
1:44 *Bethsaida* A fishing town on the north shore of the Sea of Galilee. God often uses ordinary ties, neighbors and family, to spread the good news.
1:45 *Him of whom Moses wrote in the law, and the prophets* The whole Old Testament points to Jesus. Philip called Him "the son of Joseph" because that is how people knew Him. He did not yet understand the full truth about Jesus' birth, but he knew enough to bring his friend.
1:46 *Can any good thing be out of Nazareth?* Nazareth was a small, unimportant village. Philip did not argue. He gave the best answer to an honest skeptic: "Come and see." Introduce people to Jesus and let Him do the rest.
1:47 *truly an Israelite, in whom there is no deceit* Jacob, the father of Israel, was known for his deceit (Gen 27:35-36). Nathanael said what he thought, even about Nazareth, and Jesus respected it.
1:48 *while you were under the fig tree, I saw you* A fig tree was a common place for shade, rest and prayer. Whatever Nathanael was doing or praying there, Jesus knew. He knows us just as well.
1:49 *You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel* From doubter to believer in one conversation. Honest seekers who come and see find that Jesus is more than they expected.
1:51 *the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man* "Truly, truly" marks something very important. Jacob dreamed of a ladder from earth to heaven with angels going up and down (Gen 28:12). Jesus is that ladder, the connection between God and man. Son of Man was His favorite name for Himself, from Daniel 7:13-14, where one like a son of man receives an everlasting kingdom.
2:1 *on the third day a wedding took place in Cana of Galilee* Most likely three days after Jesus called Philip and Nathanael. Cana was a small village a few miles from Nazareth, and Nathanael's hometown (21:2). Weddings could last several days, and the groom's family hosted the guests. John never names Mary. She is always "the mother of Jesus" or "His mother."
2:2 *Jesus also was invited* Jesus' first sign happened at a wedding party. He was not a grim, joyless figure. He went to weddings, ate with people and cared about ordinary life.
2:3 *They have no wine* In a culture built on hospitality, running out of wine was an embarrassment the family would carry for years. Mary did not tell Jesus what to do. She simply told Him what was wrong. That is a good pattern for our prayers.
2:4 *What is that to Me and to you, woman?* "Woman" was a respectful address in that day. Jesus used it from the cross when He put His mother into John's care (19:26). Still, He was gently setting a boundary. His mission would be directed by His Father, not by His family.
2:4 *My hour has not yet come* A phrase that runs through this Gospel (7:30; 8:20). His hour is the time of His death, resurrection and return to the Father, and in 12:23 He says, "The hour has come." Everything Jesus did was on His Father's schedule.
2:5 *Whatever He says to you, do it* The last words of Mary recorded in the Bible, and still good advice for every believer.
2:6 *six stone water jars* Each held twenty to thirty gallons, well over a hundred gallons in all. They held water for the ceremonial washings of hands and dishes by tradition (Mark 7:3-4). By that tradition stone did not become unclean the way clay did. Jesus was about to take the water of religious ritual and turn it into something far better.
2:7 *they filled them up to the brim* No room was left for anything to be added. No one could say later that the servants slipped something in.
2:8 *carry it to the master of the feast* The servants knew they had poured plain water. It took faith to carry it to the man in charge. Sometimes Jesus asks us to take a step before we see how it will work out. People who obey Him often see what He is doing when others miss it (2:9).

master of the feast calls the bridegroom **10** and says to him, "Every man sets out the good wine first, and when they have drunk freely, then the inferior; you have kept the good wine until now." **11** This beginning of the signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and He revealed His glory, and His disciples believed in Him. **12** After this He went down to Capernaum (Kapernaoum), He and His mother and His brothers and His disciples, and they stayed there not many days.

Jesus Cleanses the Temple

13 And the Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem (Hierosolyma). **14** And He found in the temple those selling oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers sitting. **15** And having made a whip of cords, He drove all out of the temple, both the sheep and the oxen; and He poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned the tables. **16** And to those selling the doves He said, "Take these things from here; do not make the house of My Father a house of trade." **17** And His disciples remembered that it is written, "The zeal of Your house has consumed Me." **18** Therefore the Jews answered and said to Him, "What sign do You show us, that You do these things?" **19** Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this sanctuary, and in three days I will raise it up." **20** Therefore the Jews said, "In forty and six years this sanctuary was built, and You will raise it up in three days?" **21** But He was speaking concerning the sanctuary of His body. **22** Therefore when He was raised from ***the*** dead, His disciples remembered that He was saying this to them, and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken. **23** Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, at the feast, many believed in His name, beholding His signs which He was doing. **24** But Jesus Himself was not entrusting Himself to them, because He knew all ***men***, **25** and because He had no need that anyone should testify concerning man; for He Himself knew what was in man.

JOHN 3

Jesus and Nicodemus

1 Now there was a man of the Pharisees, Nicodemus

2:10 Prov 9:16; Song 5:1; Prov 9:4
2:11 Deut 5:24; Isa 40:5; John 1:14
2:12 Matt 12:46; Matt 4:13; John 7:3-5
2:13 Deut 16:1; Num 28:16; Exod 12:11
2:14 Mark 11:15; Luke 19:45,46; Deut 14:23-26
2:15 John 18:6; Zech 4:6; 2 Cor 10:4
2:16 Matt 21:13; Luke 2:49; Isa 56:5-11
2:17 Ps 69:9; 2 Kgs 19:31; Ps 26:8
2:18 John 6:30; Matt 12:38-42; Matt 16:1-4
2:19 1 Chr 17:12; Matt 27:40; Mark 15:29
2:20 1 Kgs 6:1; 1 Kgs 6:38; 1 Chr 17:12
2:21 1 Cor 6:19; John 1:14; Col 2:9
2:22 John 12:16; John 14:26; John 2:17
2:23 Deut 16:7; John 3:2; John 6:14
2:24 John 6:15; John 5:42; John 6:64
2:25 Deut 8:2
3:1 John 3:10; John 7:47-49

2:10 *you have kept the good wine until now* A host normally served the best wine first and the cheaper wine once guests would not notice. This was better than anything served earlier, and far more than the party needed. When Jesus provides, He does not give second best. It is "grace for grace" (1:16).
2:11 *This beginning of the signs* John never calls Jesus' miracles miracles. He calls them signs, because a sign points beyond itself. This one "revealed His glory." Most teachers count seven signs in the first half of this Gospel. The disciples already believed enough to follow Him, and now their faith grew deeper. That is what the signs are for (20:30-31).
2:12 *His mother and His brothers* Capernaum, on the north shore of the Sea of Galilee, became His home base in Galilee. His brothers were sons born to Mary and Joseph after Jesus. They did not believe in Him yet (7:5), but after the resurrection they did (Acts 1:14), and His brother James became a leader of the church in Jerusalem.
2:13 *the Passover of the Jews was near* The yearly feast remembering how the blood of a lamb on the doorposts protected Israel's families in Egypt (Exod 12). John mentions at least three Passovers in Jesus' ministry (2:13; 6:4; 11:55), which is why we say His public ministry lasted about three years.
2:14 *those selling oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers* The Court of the Gentiles was meant to be a place where non-Jews could pray. It was full of animals, noise and business. Travelers needed animals for sacrifice and the coins accepted for the temple tax, but those services had taken over the one place Gentiles could worship, and many believe the prices took advantage of worshipers.
2:15 *having made a whip of cords* Jesus took time to make the whip. This was not a loss of temper but holy anger on purpose. Some picture Jesus as only gentle and mild, but He also stood up for His Father's honor. Love and holiness go together.
2:16 *do not make the house of My Father a house of trade* Doves were the sacrifice the poor could afford (Lev 5:7; Luke 2:24), and He told those sellers to take them away. "My Father" is a claim to a unique relationship with God. It was His Father's house, and He had every right to clean it.
2:17 *The zeal of Your house has consumed Me* From Psalm 69:9. Zeal is a burning passion. Jesus' love for God's house put Him on a collision course with the temple leaders that ended at the cross.
2:18 *What sign do You show us* They did not argue that the temple should be a market. They challenged His authority. He had just given a sign by cleansing the temple, as the prophets said the Lord would (Mal 3:1-3). They wanted a show.
2:19 *Destroy this sanctuary, and in three days I will raise it up* They would destroy, and He would raise. They would put Him to death, and He would rise again. At His trial false witnesses twisted these words into a threat against the temple (Mark 14:57-58).
2:20 *In forty and six years this sanctuary was built* Herod the Great had begun rebuilding and enlarging the temple decades earlier, and work was still going on. Three days sounded crazy to them.
2:21 *the sanctuary of His body* The temple was where God lived among His people, and now God lived among them in the body of Jesus (1:14). The stone temple was a picture and Jesus is the reality. The Romans destroyed the stone temple in A.D. 70. The temple of His body was destroyed on the cross and raised three days later, never to die again.
2:22 *they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken* After the resurrection it all came together. Some things God says to us only make sense later. God's written Word and Jesus' own words carry the same authority.
2:23 *many believed in His name, beholding His signs* It sounds wonderful, but the next verses show their belief was not the real thing. They believed in the miracles more than in the Man.
2:24 *Jesus Himself was not entrusting Himself to them* "Entrust" is the same Greek word as "believed" in verse 23. They believed in Him, but He did not believe in them. He knew who followed for the show and who would stay when things got hard (6:66).
2:25 *He Himself knew what was in man* We cannot impress Him and we cannot fool Him. The good news is that the One who knows us best is also the One who loves us most. The next chapter shows what He does with a heart that is honestly searching.
3:1 *Nicodemus was his name, a ruler of the Jews* A Pharisee and a member of the Sanhedrin, the ruling council of the Jewish people. Jesus calls him "the teacher of Israel" (3:10). If anyone could earn his way into God's kingdom by religion and good behavior, it was Nicodemus. Each time we meet him again he is a little bolder for Jesus (7:50-51; 19:39).

(Nikodemos) ***was*** his name, a ruler of the Jews. **2** He came to Jesus (Iesous) by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You have come from God ***as*** a teacher; for no one is able to do these signs that You do unless God is with him." **3** Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless someone is born from above, he is not able to see the kingdom of God." **4** Nicodemus says to Him, "How is a man able to be born when he is old? Is he able to enter a second time into the womb of his mother and be born?" **5** Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless someone is born of water and ***the*** Spirit, he is not able to enter into the kingdom of God. **6** That which has been born of the flesh is flesh, and that which has been born of the Spirit is spirit. **7** Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.' **8** The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from and where it goes; so is everyone who has been born of the Spirit." **9** Nicodemus answered and said to Him, "How are these things able to come about?" **10** Jesus answered and said to him, "You are the teacher of Israel, and you do not know these things? **11** Truly, truly, I say to you, what we know we speak, and what we have seen we testify, and you do not receive our testimony. **12** If I have told you the earthly ***things*** and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you the heavenly ***things***? **13** And no one has gone up into heaven except the ***One*** who came down out of heaven, the Son of Man who is in heaven. **14** And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, **15** so that everyone who believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. **16** For God so loved the world, that He gave His Son, the only begotten, so that everyone who believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. **17** For God did not send His Son into the world that He might judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. **18** The one who believes in Him is not judged; but the one who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. **19** And this is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light; for their

3:2 Acts 2:22; Acts 10:38; John 3:26
3:3 John 3:5,6; 1 John 3:9; John 1:13
3:4 John 4:11,12; 1 Cor 2:14; John 6:53,60
3:5 Ezek 36:25-27; Eph 5:26; Acts 2:38
3:6 Gal 5:16-21,24; Ezek 36:26,27; Job 14:4
3:7 John 3:3; Eph 4:22-24; John 5:28
3:8 1 Cor 2:11; Eccl 11:4,5; 1 Cor 12:11
3:9 John 6:52,60; Luke 1:34; Isa 42:16
3:10 Isa 9:16; Jer 8:8,9; Matt 22:29
3:11 John 1:18; John 7:16; John 12:49
3:12 1 Cor 3:1,2; Heb 5:11; 1 Pet 2:1-3
3:13 Prov 30:4; John 1:18; Acts 2:34
3:14 Num 21:7; 2 Kgs 18:4; Num 21:8-9
3:15 Num 21:9; Isa 11:10; John 6:40,47
3:16 Rom 5:8; 1 John 4:9,10,19; Rom 8:32
3:17 Isa 53:10; Isa 53:12; 1 John 4:14
3:18 Mark 16:16; Rom 8:1,34; John 5:24
3:19 John 1:4,9-11; John 8:12; John 9:39-41

3:2 *He came to Jesus by night* Maybe he feared what the other leaders would think, or maybe he wanted a quiet talk away from the crowds. Either way, he came. The "we" shows other leaders thought the same. He was right as far as he went, but "a teacher" from God was not nearly enough. Jesus is far more than a good teacher.
3:3 *unless someone is born from above* The Greek word can mean from above or again, and both are true. The new birth is a second birth, and it comes from God. Nicodemus had spent his life studying and keeping the Law. Jesus told him none of that was enough. He needed to start over completely.
3:4 *How is a man able to be born when he is old?* Nicodemus was a teacher and knew Jesus was using a figure of speech. I think he was saying, How can a man my age start all over? I can't undo my whole life. Many of us have asked that question.
3:5 *born of water and the Spirit* Some take water as physical birth, some as baptism. I believe the best reading is what Nicodemus should already have known. In Ezekiel 36:25-27 God promised to sprinkle clean water on His people to cleanse them, give them a new heart, and put His Spirit within them. To be born again is to be cleansed from sin and made new by the Spirit. Baptism pictures this cleansing, but it is the Spirit's cleansing and new life that saves, not the water itself.
3:6 *That which has been born of the flesh is flesh* Like produces like. Our good works, religious background and best efforts are all flesh. They cannot make a dead spirit come alive. Only God can do that.
3:7 *You must be born from above* The "you" is plural. This is not a message only for Nicodemus or for really bad sinners. The most religious man in the room needed it, and so do we. The prophets had already promised it, so it should not have been a shock.
3:8 *The wind blows where it wishes* In both Greek and Hebrew the same word can mean wind or spirit. You cannot see or control the wind, but you can hear it and see what it does. We cannot explain exactly how God makes a person new, but we can see the results in a changed life.
3:10 *You are the teacher of Israel, and you do not know these things?* A gentle rebuke. He knew Ezekiel and the prophets, yet did not recognize what they promised when it stood in front of him. It is possible to know a lot about the Bible and still miss its main point.
3:11 *what we know we speak, and what we have seen we testify* Jesus speaks as an eyewitness of heaven, not passing on someone's opinion. The "we" may include His disciples or John the Baptist. The sad part is the end: they would not take His word for it.
3:12 *the earthly things* The new birth happens here on earth in real lives. If Nicodemus could not believe that, how could he believe the deeper truths about the Father, the Son and God's eternal plan?
3:13 *the One who came down out of heaven* No human being has gone up to heaven and come back to report. Jesus came down from there. He is not guessing about God. He knows Him.
3:14 *as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness* In Numbers 21:4-9 God sent poisonous snakes among complaining Israel. When they repented, Moses lifted a bronze snake on a pole, and anyone bitten could look and live. They did not earn it or fix themselves. They only looked in faith. "Lifted up" is the first of three sayings about the cross (8:28; 12:32-34). Sin has poisoned every one of us, and the cure is to look to Jesus and believe.
3:16 *For God so loved the world* The whole gospel in one sentence. "So" means in this way: God's love is shown by what He did. He loved the whole rebellious human race, and love gives. He did not send an angel. He gave His only begotten Son.
3:16 *everyone who believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life* "Everyone" means you. Believing is more than agreeing with facts. It is putting your whole weight on Him, the way you trust a chair to hold you. There are only two outcomes. Perishing is eternal separation from God. Eternal life is knowing God and Jesus Christ whom He sent (17:3). It begins the moment you believe and never ends.
3:17 *that the world might be saved through Him* The world was already lost and did not need a judge to tell it so. It needed a Savior. Jesus will come again as Judge (5:22, 27; Rev 19:11), but His first coming was a rescue mission.
3:18 *The one who believes in Him is not judged* His case is settled. The one who does not believe "has been judged already," not because God is eager to condemn, but because he has turned down the only way to be saved. Rejecting the cure leaves a person with the disease.
3:19 *men loved the darkness rather than the Light* Jesus names the deepest reason people turn away: not weak evidence, but a love for darkness. Honest questions deserve honest answers, and Jesus welcomes them (20:27).

works were evil. **20** For everyone who practices wicked ***things*** hates the Light and does not come to the Light, so that his works may not be exposed. **21** But the one who does the truth comes to the Light, that his works may be revealed, that they have been done in God."

He Must Increase

22 After these things Jesus and His disciples came into the Judean land, and there He was staying with them and was baptizing. **23** Now John (Ioannes) also was baptizing in Aenon (Ainon) near Salim (Saleim), because there were many waters there; and they were coming and were being baptized. **24** For John had not yet been cast into the prison. **25** Then a debate arose from the disciples of John with Jews about purification. **26** And they came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, He who was with you across the Jordan (Iordanes), to whom you have testified, look, He is baptizing, and all are coming to Him." **27** John answered and said, "A man is able to receive nothing unless it has been given to him from heaven. **28** You yourselves testify to me that I said, 'I am not the Christ,' but, 'I am sent before Him.' **29** The one who has the bride is ***the*** bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and listens to him, rejoices with joy because of the voice of the bridegroom. Therefore this joy of mine has been fulfilled. **30** He must increase, but I ***must*** decrease. **31** The ***One*** coming from above is above all. The one who is from the earth is from the earth and speaks from the earth. The ***One*** coming from heaven is above all. **32** And what He has seen and heard, this He testifies, and no one receives His testimony. **33** The one who has received His testimony has set his seal that God is true. **34** For He whom God sent speaks the words of God; for God does not give the Spirit by measure. **35** The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand. **36** The one who believes in the Son has eternal life; but the one who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him."

JOHN 4

The Woman at the Well

1 Therefore when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus (Iesous) makes and baptizes more disciples than John (Ioannes) **2** (although Jesus Himself was not baptizing, but His disciples), **3** He left Judea (Ioudaia) and went away again into Galilee (Galilaia). **4** Now it was necessary for Him to pass through Samaria (Samareia). **5** Therefore He comes to a city of Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob (Iakob) gave to Joseph (Ioseph) his son.

3:20 John 7:7; 1 Kgs 22:8; Job 24:13-17
3:21 Ps 139:23,24; 1 John 1:6; 2 Pet 1:5-10
3:22 John 3:26; John 2:13; John 7:3
3:23 Gen 33:18; 1 Sam 9:4; Jer 51:13
3:24 Matt 4:12; Matt 14:3; Mark 6:17
3:25 John 2:6; Matt 3:11; Mark 7:2-5,8
3:26 John 1:7,15,26-36; James 3:14-18; John 12:19
3:27 1 Cor 4:7; James 1:17; Matt 21:25
3:28 John 1:20,25,27; John 1:23; Mal 3:1
3:29 Song 5:1; Ps 45:9; Isa 62:4
3:30 Col 1:18; Ps 72:17-19; Isa 9:7
3:31 John 8:23; John 6:33; Matt 28:18
3:32 John 3:11; John 1:11; John 8:26
3:33 Rom 3:3,4; Rom 4:18-21; 2 Cor 1:18
3:34 John 3:17; Rom 8:2; John 5:26
3:35 John 5:20,22; Matt 28:18; John 17:2
3:36 John 3:15,16; John 5:24; John 1:12
4:1 John 3:22,26; 2 Cor 4:5; James 2:1
4:2 Acts 10:48; 1 Cor 1:13-17
4:3 John 10:40; John 11:54; Matt 10:23
4:4 1 Kgs 13:32; 1 Kgs 16:24; Matt 10:5,6
4:5 Josh 24:32; Gen 33:19; Gen 33:18

3:20 *so that his works may not be exposed* Turn on the light in a dirty kitchen at night and watch the cockroaches scatter. People who do evil hate the light because it shows what they really are.
3:21 *the one who does the truth comes to the Light* Honest people are not afraid to have their lives examined. Whatever good is in their lives was worked in them by God. This may be a gentle invitation to Nicodemus, who came in the dark. By the end of this Gospel he steps into the light (19:39).
3:22 *was baptizing* Jesus Himself did not baptize. His disciples did it under His authority (4:2).
3:23 *there were many waters there* The exact place of Aenon near Salim is uncertain today. The reason John gives tells us he baptized people in enough water to need a good supply.
3:24 *John had not yet been cast into the prison* The other Gospels begin Jesus' ministry in Galilee after the Baptist's arrest (Mark 1:14). This tells readers the events of John 1 to 3 came earlier.
3:26 *He is baptizing, and all are coming to Him* You can hear the jealousy. They felt their teacher was losing his crowd. In ministry and in life it is easy to start competing instead of cooperating.
3:27 *A man is able to receive nothing unless it has been given to him from heaven* If people were going to Jesus, God was sending them. John did not see Jesus' success as his loss. Our gifts, opportunities and influence all come from God.
3:29 *the friend of the bridegroom* Like a best man, who helped arrange the wedding and then stepped back, thrilled to hear the groom's voice with his bride. Scripture pictures God's people as a bride and Jesus as the Bridegroom (Rev 19:7; 21:2). John was happy just to be the friend who brought them together.
3:30 *He must increase, but I must decrease* One of the best mottos a Christian could have. It is not thinking poorly of ourselves but thinking more about Jesus. The more He fills our lives, the less room there is for pride. These words sum up John the Baptist's whole life.
3:31 *The One coming from above is above all* Scholars debate whether verses 31-36 are still the Baptist speaking or the apostle adding his own comments. The message is the same. Every human messenger, even one as great as John, is "from the earth." Jesus speaks from heaven's point of view.
3:33 *has set his seal that God is true* A seal on a document was like a signature: I stand behind this. When we believe Jesus we put our signature on God's truthfulness. Refusing to believe Him calls God a liar (1 John 5:10).
3:34 *God does not give the Spirit by measure* The prophets received the Spirit for certain tasks and times. Jesus has the fullness of the Spirit without limit. That is why we can trust every word He says.
3:35 *has given all things into His hand* Jesus is not a junior partner in God's plan. All authority belongs to Him (Matt 28:18). Salvation, judgment and the future of the world are in His hand.
3:36 *the wrath of God remains on him* The believer "has" eternal life now, as a present possession. John sets believing against not obeying, because refusing to trust the Son is refusing God's command. God's wrath is not an out-of-control temper but His settled, holy opposition to sin. Apart from Christ it is already on us, and the only way out from under it is to believe in the Son.
4:2 *although Jesus Himself was not baptizing, but His disciples* I believe John adds this so no one could brag about being baptized by Jesus personally, the same kind of problem Paul met in Corinth (1 Cor 1:13-17).
4:3 *He left Judea* Not out of fear of the Pharisees. His hour had not yet come (2:4; 7:30), and He worked on His Father's timetable, not theirs.
4:4 *it was necessary for Him to pass through Samaria* Samaria lay between Judea and Galilee, but many Jews took the longer road east of the Jordan to avoid it. The Greek word dei, it is necessary, is the word John uses for what God has planned (3:14, 30). I believe Jesus had to go because there was a woman, and a whole town, His Father had sent Him to reach.
4:5 *the plot of ground that Jacob gave to Joseph his son* Sychar was near old Shechem, by the land Jacob bought and gave to Joseph (Gen 33:18-19; 48:22), where Joseph's bones were buried (Josh 24:32). The Samaritans were proud of this holy ground.

6 Now the spring of Jacob was there. Therefore Jesus, having
been wearied from the journey, was sitting thus at the
spring. ***The*** hour was about ***the*** sixth. **7** A woman comes out
of Samaria to draw water. Jesus says to her, "Give Me ***some-***
thing to drink." **8** For His disciples had gone away into the
city that they might buy food. **9** Therefore the Samaritan
woman says to Him, "How do You, being a Jew, ask ***something***
to drink from me, being a Samaritan woman?" For Jews do
not associate with Samaritans. **10** Jesus answered and said to
her, "If you had known the gift of God, and who it is who says
to you, 'Give Me ***something*** to drink,' you would have asked
Him, and He would have given you living water." **11** The
woman says to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and
the well is deep. From where then do You have the living
water? **12** Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave
us the well, and drank of it himself, and his sons and his live-
stock?" **13** Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who
drinks of this water will thirst again; **14** but whoever drinks
of the water that I will give him will certainly never thirst;
but the water that I will give him will become in him a spring
of water welling up into eternal life." **15** The woman says to
Him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I may not thirst nor
come here to draw." **16** Jesus says to her, "Go, call your hus-
band, and come here." **17** The woman answered and said, "I
do not have a husband." Jesus says to her, "You have spoken
well, 'I do not have a husband'; **18** for you have had five hus-
bands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband;
this you have spoken truly." **19** The woman says to Him, "Sir,
I perceive that You are a prophet. **20** Our fathers worshiped
on this mountain, and you say that in Jerusalem
(Hierosolyma) is the place where it is necessary to worship."
21 Jesus says to her, "Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming
when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you
worship the Father. **22** You worship what you do not know;
we worship what we know, because salvation is from the
Jews. **23** But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true
worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for
the Father also seeks such ***people*** worshiping Him. **24** God ***is***
spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit
and truth." **25** The woman says to Him, "I know that Messiah
is coming, who is called Christ; when He comes, He will tell
us all things." **26** Jesus says to her, "I am ***He***, the ***One*** speaking
to you."

4:6 Matt 4:2; Matt 8:24; Heb 2:17
4:7 Gen 24:43; Gen 24:13; Gen 24:17
4:8 John 6:5-7; Luke 9:13
4:9 Neh 4:1; 2 Kgs 17:29; 2 Kgs 17:36
4:10 Jer 2:13; Isa 43:20; Isa 55:6
4:11 John 3:4; 1 Cor 2:14
4:12 John 8:53; Isa 53:2,3; Matt 12:42
4:13 John 6:27,49; Isa 65:13,14; Luke 16:24
4:14 John 6:35,58; Isa 58:11; Isa 49:10
4:15 Rom 8:5; John 6:26,34; John 17:2,3
4:16 John 4:18; John 1:42,47,48; John 2:24,25
4:18 Gen 20:3; Gen 34:2,7,8,31; Num 5:29
4:19 Luke 7:39; John 6:14; John 9:17
4:20 Gen 33:18; Judg 9:6; 2 Chr 6:6
4:21 Ezek 20:3; Exod 20:24; Isa 27:13
4:22 Isa 2:3; Rom 9:4,5; Ps 147:19
4:23 Josh 24:14; 1 Sam 12:24; Ps 147:11
4:24 2 Cor 3:17; Josh 24:14; 1 Sam 7:3
4:25 Deut 18:15; John 4:29,39; John 4:42
4:26 Rom 10:20,21; Matt 20:15; Matt 26:63,64

4:6 *having been wearied from the journey* The Word who made all things (1:3) got tired feet and sat down. Jesus is fully God and fully man, and He knows what it is to be worn out (Heb 4:15). The sixth hour was most likely about noon, the hottest part of the day. Women usually drew water in groups in the cool hours, so a woman coming alone at noon may have been avoiding the others.
4:7 *Give Me something to drink* He starts not with a sermon but with a simple human need. Sometimes the best way to open a door is to let someone help you. The disciples were in town, so they were alone at the well.
4:9 *Jews do not associate with Samaritans* A Jewish man would not normally speak to a Samaritan woman in public, much less drink from her jar. The Samaritans came from the people Assyria settled in the north after 722 B.C., who mixed with the Israelites left there (2 Kgs 17). The hatred ran deep on both sides and had built for centuries.
4:10 *He would have given you living water* She thinks He is the one in need, but she is, and He holds the gift. Living water was fresh, running spring water, not water standing in a cistern. God calls Himself "a spring of living water" (Jer 2:13). Jesus is offering her life from God Himself.
4:12 *Are You greater than our father Jacob* The way she asks expects the answer no. The irony is that the answer is yes. Jacob gave a well. Jesus gives eternal life.
4:13 *Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again* True of everything this world offers: money, pleasure, approval. They satisfy for a while, and then the thirst comes back.
4:14 *a spring of water welling up into eternal life* The water Jesus gives does not run dry. Later John tells us this living water is the Holy Spirit, given to those who believe (7:37-39). When we come to Christ we are not just given a drink. We are given a spring.
4:15 *give me this water, so that I may not thirst nor come here to draw* Many people are like this with Jesus. They want help with everyday problems but have not yet seen their real need.
4:16 *Go, call your husband* Jesus is not unkind. He puts His finger on the place she hurts most. Before a person can receive living water, he has to admit he is thirsty, and that means being honest about sin.
4:18 *you have had five husbands* We are not told why her marriages ended: death, divorce, or both. A woman could not easily divorce her husband then, so she may have been sent away more than once. Jesus does not shame her and twice says she has spoken truly. He knows the worst about us and still offers living water. That is grace.
4:20 *Our fathers worshiped on this mountain* Mount Gerizim, in plain view of the well, where the Samaritans worshiped. Their temple there had been destroyed by a Jewish ruler more than a century before. When the Lord gets close to a sore spot, it is easier to argue about churches than to deal with sin.
4:21 *neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem* A time was coming when the place would not matter. Through Jesus' death and resurrection the way to God was opened to every believer anywhere. The temple in Jerusalem was destroyed in A.D. 70.
4:22 *salvation is from the Jews* The Samaritans accepted only the five books of Moses, so they worshiped with a partial picture of God. God's promises, the Scriptures and the Messiah came through Israel (Rom 9:4-5). It was not about Jews being better people but about the line God chose to bring the Savior.
4:24 *God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth* God cannot be boxed into a building or a mountain, so worship must come from the inside, not only from ritual. It must also line up with who God really is, as shown in His Word and in Jesus, the truth (14:6). Spirit without truth turns into feelings with no anchor. Truth without spirit turns into cold, dead religion. And the Father is seeking such worshipers (4:23).
4:25 *I know that Messiah is coming* The Samaritans expected a prophet like Moses (Deut 18:15) who would explain everything. She may be thinking, This is over my head.
4:26 *I am He, the One speaking to you* In Greek simply ego eimi, I am. It is the first time in this Gospel Jesus openly says He is the Messiah, and He says it to a Samaritan woman with a broken past, not to the leaders in Jerusalem. That tells us a lot about the heart of our Savior.

The Fields Are White for Harvest

27 And at this His disciples came, and they marveled that He was speaking with a woman; yet no one said, "What do You seek?" or, "Why do You speak with her?" **28** Then the woman left her water jar and went away into the city and says to the men, **29** "Come, see a man who told me all things that I did. This is not the Christ, ***is it***?" **30** Therefore they went forth out of the city and were coming to Him. **31** Now in the meantime the disciples were asking Him, saying, "Rabbi, eat." **32** But He said to them, "I have food to eat that you do not know." **33** Therefore the disciples were saying to one another, "Has anyone brought Him ***something*** to eat?" **34** Jesus says to them, "My food is that I may do the will of Him who sent Me, and may finish His work. **35** Do you not say, 'It is yet four months, and the harvest comes'? Look, I say to you, lift up your eyes and see the fields, that they are white for harvest already. **36** And the one who reaps receives a reward and gathers fruit into eternal life, so that both the one who sows and the one who reaps may rejoice together. **37** For in this the saying is true, 'One is the one who sows, and another the one who reaps.' **38** I sent you to reap that for which you have not toiled; others have toiled, and you have entered into their labor." **39** Now from that city many of the Samaritans believed in Him because of the word of the woman testifying, "He told me all things that I did."

40 Therefore when the Samaritans came to Him, they were asking Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days. **41** And many more believed because of His word, **42** and they were saying to the woman, "No longer do we believe because of your speech; for we ourselves have heard, and we know that this is truly the Savior of the world, the Christ."

The Official's Son Healed

43 Now after the two days He went forth from there and went away into Galilee. **44** For Jesus Himself testified that a prophet has no honor in ***his*** own hometown. **45** Therefore when He came into Galilee, the Galileans received Him, having seen all things that He had done in Jerusalem at the feast; for they themselves also had gone to the feast. **46** Therefore Jesus came again to Cana (Kana) of Galilee, where He had made the water wine. And there was a certain royal official whose son was sick in Capernaum (Kapernaoum). **47** He, having heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, went to Him and was asking Him that He would come down and heal his son; for he was about to die. **48** Therefore Jesus said to him, "Unless you see signs and wonders, you will certainly not believe." **49** The royal official says to Him, "Sir, come down before my child dies." **50** Jesus says to him, "Go; your son lives." And the man believed the word that Jesus said to him, and he was going. **51** And as he was already going down, his servants met him and reported, saying, "Your boy lives." **52** Therefore he inquired from them the hour in which he got better. And they said to him,

4:27 Luke 7:39; John 4:9
4:28 John 4:7; Matt 28:8; Mark 16:8-10
4:29 John 4:17,18,25; John 1:41-49; 1 Cor 14:24,25
4:30 Isa 60:8; Matt 2:1-3; Matt 8:11,12
4:31 Gen 24:33; Acts 16:30-34
4:32 Job 23:12; Ps 119:103; John 4:34
4:33 Matt 16:6-11; Luke 9:45
4:34 Ps 40:8; Isa 61:1; John 19:30
4:35 Isa 60:4; Matt 9:37,38; John 4:30
4:36 Rom 1:13; Prov 11:30; Dan 12:3
4:37 Mic 6:15; Judg 6:3; Luke 19:21
4:38 John 1:7; Matt 11:8-13; Acts 2:41
4:39 John 4:29,42; John 10:41,42; John 11:45
4:40 Gen 32:26; Prov 4:13; Song 3:4
4:41 Acts 1:8; Acts 8:12,25; Acts 15:3
4:42 Isa 45:15; 1 John 4:14; John 1:29
4:43 Matt 15:21-24; Mark 7:27,28; Rom 15:8
4:44 Matt 13:57; Mark 6:4; Luke 4:24
4:45 John 3:2; Matt 4:23,24; Luke 8:40
4:46 John 2:1-11; John 21:2; Josh 19:28
4:47 Mark 2:1-3; Mark 6:55,56; Mark 10:47
4:48 John 20:29; 1 Cor 1:22; John 4:41,42
4:49 Ps 40:17; Ps 88:10-12; Mark 5:23,35,36
4:50 Eccl 9:7; Matt 8:13; Luke 17:14
4:51 1 Kgs 17:23

4:27 *they marveled that He was speaking with a woman* Jewish teachers were warned against talking much with women, and a rabbi alone with a woman in public would raise eyebrows. The disciples were learning that Jesus did not follow man's rules about who was worth His time.
4:28 *the woman left her water jar* She came for water and forgot all about it. She went back to the town she had been avoiding.
4:29 *Come, see a man who told me all things that I did* She had no training. She told what Jesus did for her and invited people to see for themselves. That is what a witness does. Her careful question made them curious, and it worked.
4:32 *I have food to eat that you do not know* The disciples hear only the physical side, just as the woman did with the water. John often shows people misunderstanding Jesus this way.
4:34 *My food is that I may do the will of Him who sent Me* Doing the Father's will fed Him more than any meal. He had been tired and thirsty. After reaching this woman He was so refreshed He did not want lunch. When we serve God, He gives strength we did not have before.
4:35 *the fields, that they are white for harvest already* The grain harvest was still four months off. I believe Jesus may have pointed to the Samaritans already coming toward Him across those fields. People were ready to receive the gospel, and the disciples had not noticed.
4:37 *One is the one who sows, and another the one who reaps* The disciples were about to reap where the prophets, John the Baptist and now this woman had labored. We may plant seeds we never see grow or reap where someone else planted. The work is God's, and the joy is shared (1 Cor 3:6-8).
4:39 *many of the Samaritans believed in Him because of the word of the woman* The person the town looked down on led them to the Messiah. God loves to use the people the world overlooks.
4:40 *He stayed there two days* A Jewish teacher staying as a guest in a Samaritan town was unheard of.
4:42 *we ourselves have heard* Someone else's testimony can bring us to Jesus, but our faith has to become our own. "The Savior of the world," and from Samaritans. They saw what many in Israel missed (3:16; 1 John 4:14).
4:44 *a prophet has no honor in his own hometown* Teachers disagree whether His hometown here means Judea, where He was born, or Galilee, where He grew up. Either way, the people who think they know Jesus best are often the slowest to receive Him.
4:45 *having seen all things that He had done in Jerusalem at the feast* Their welcome rested on miracles (2:23). That kind of faith is shallow, as the next verses show.
4:46 *a certain royal official whose son was sick in Capernaum* Probably an officer of Herod Antipas, ruler of Galilee. Capernaum was about a day's walk from Cana. Rank and power could not help his dying son.
4:48 *Unless you see signs and wonders, you will certainly not believe* The "you" is plural. Jesus speaks to the Galilean crowd as much as to the man. They wanted a show. He wanted faith. Faith that depends on miracles will always need another one.
4:49 *come down before my child dies* He believes Jesus can heal but thinks Jesus must be there in person.
4:50 *the man believed the word that Jesus said to him* Jesus did not go. He only said, "Your son lives." The man walked home on nothing but a promise. That is real faith, and it is what we are asked to do every day: take God at His word before we see the result.
4:52 *Yesterday at the seventh hour* Most likely about one in the afternoon.

"Yesterday at ***the*** seventh hour the fever left him."
53 Therefore the father knew that ***it was*** at that hour in which Jesus said to him, "Your son lives." And he himself believed, and his whole household. **54** This again ***is the*** second sign ***that*** Jesus did, having come out of Judea into Galilee.

JOHN 5

The Healing at Bethesda

1 After these things there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus (Iesous) went up to Jerusalem (Hierosolyma). **2** Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep ***Gate*** a pool, which is called in Hebrew Bethesda, having five porches. **3** In these were lying a great multitude of those who were sick, blind, lame, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. **4** For an angel was going down at a season into the pool and was stirring the water; whoever then stepped in first after the stirring of the water was becoming well of whatever disease he was being held ***by***. **5** Now a certain man was there, having thirty and eight years in his infirmity. **6** Jesus, having seen him lying ***there***, and having known that he had already ***been so*** a long time, says to him, "Do you want to become well?" **7** The one who was sick answered Him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred; but while I am coming, another goes down before me." **8** Jesus says to him, "Rise, take up your mat and walk." **9** And immediately the man became well, and took up his mat and was walking. Now it was ***the*** Sabbath on that day. **10** Therefore the Jews were saying to the one who had been healed, "It is ***the*** Sabbath; it is not lawful for you to take up the mat." **11** He answered them, "The ***One*** who made me well, that One said to me, 'Take up your mat and walk.'" **12** Therefore they asked him, "Who is the man who said to you, 'Take up your mat and walk'?" **13** But the one who had been healed did not know who it was; for Jesus had slipped away, a crowd being in the place. **14** After these things Jesus finds him in the temple and said to him, "Look, you have become well; sin no more, so that something worse may not happen to you." **15** The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well. **16** And because of this the Jews were persecuting Jesus and were seeking to kill Him, because He was doing these things on ***the*** Sabbath. **17** But Jesus answered them, "My Father is working until now, and I am working." **18** Therefore because of this the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal to God.

4:53 Acts 18:8; Ps 33:9; Ps 107:20
4:54 John 2:1-11
5:1 Exod 23:14-17; Exod 34:23; Lev 23:2-4
5:2 Neh 3:1; Neh 12:39; Neh 3:32
5:3 Matt 15:30; Luke 7:22; Mark 3:1-4
5:4 Ps 119:60; Prov 6:4; Prov 8:17
5:5 Mark 9:21; John 5:14; John 9:1,21
5:6 Heb 4:13,15; John 21:17; Ps 142:3
5:7 Deut 32:36; Ps 142:4; 1 Cor 9:24
5:8 Matt 9:6; Luke 5:24; Mark 2:11
5:9 Jer 17:21; John 9:14; John 5:14
5:10 Jer 17:21; Neh 13:15; Exod 20:8
5:11 Jer 17:21; John 9:16; Mark 2:9-11
5:12 Jer 17:21; Judg 6:29; 1 Sam 14:38
5:13 Luke 24:31; John 14:9; John 8:59
5:14 John 8:11; Lev 26:23,24,27; Ps 118:18
5:15 John 4:29; John 9:11,12; Mark 1:45
5:16 Exod 35:2; John 15:20; Acts 9:4,5
5:17 Gen 2:2; John 14:10; John 9:4
5:18 John 5:23; John 10:30,33; Zech 13:7

4:53 *he himself believed, and his whole household* It was the very hour Jesus spoke. Distance means nothing to Jesus. His faith grew from trusting a promise to full belief, and it spread to his family.
4:54 *the second sign* Also in Cana. This sign shows Jesus is Lord over sickness and over distance, and His word has the power of life.
5:1 *a feast of the Jews* John does not say which feast. Teachers have guessed Passover, Pentecost, Booths and Purim, but no one knows. Jesus went up as a faithful Jewish man, keeping the feasts God gave Israel.
5:2 *Bethesda, having five porches* Usually understood to mean house of mercy. Critics once said John made the place up. Then in the late 1800s a pool was found near the Church of St. Anne in Jerusalem, and later digs uncovered two pools side by side with a wall between. Colonnades on four sides and one across the middle make five. God's Word holds up.
5:4 *an angel was going down at a season into the pool* The earliest Greek copies we have do not include the end of verse 3 and all of verse 4, so many modern Bibles put these words in a footnote. The SLB prints them. No teaching here depends on them, because the man says the same thing in verse 7. Only the fastest could be helped, so those who needed it most never had a chance. Jesus did not wait for the water at all.
5:5 *thirty and eight years in his infirmity* Longer than many people then lived. Some teachers note Israel wandered thirty-eight years after Kadesh (Deut 2:14). Whether John meant that or not, this man had been stuck a very long time with no way out on his own.
5:6 *Do you want to become well?* Out of the whole crowd Jesus went to one man. After thirty-eight years a person can lose all hope, and being sick can become who you are. Getting well would mean a new life with new duties. Jesus asks us the same about our sin and brokenness.
5:7 *I have no man to put me into the pool* He looks to the water and to other people. He does not see that the One who can heal him is standing in front of him. Many still look for help from every place except Jesus.
5:8 *Rise, take up your mat and walk* Jesus bypasses the pool. The mat was a light pallet that could be rolled up. Each of the three commands would have been impossible a second earlier.
5:9 *immediately the man became well* No recovery time. Jesus did not ask him for faith first. This healing was pure grace to a man who did not even know who Jesus was. "It was the Sabbath" sets up the rest of the chapter.
5:10 *It is the Sabbath; it is not lawful for you to take up the mat* The Law commanded rest (Exod 20:8-11), and Jeremiah warned against carrying loads through the gates (Jer 17:21-22). But teachers had added a mountain of rules about what counted as work, and carrying a sleeping mat was on their list. They cared more about their rules than about a man made whole.
5:12 *Who is the man who said to you* They did not ask who healed him but who told him to carry his mat. They wanted someone to blame.
5:14 *sin no more, so that something worse may not happen to you* Jesus went looking for him. Not every sickness comes from a person's own sin (9:1-3), but sin has consequences, and something worse than thirty-eight years of illness is facing God's judgment. Jesus cared about his body, and even more about his soul.
5:15 *told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well* Some think he was turning Jesus in, others that he was answering their question or giving Jesus the credit. John does not say. He never shows the bold faith of the blind man in chapter 9.
5:16 *the Jews were persecuting Jesus* In John "the Jews" usually means the religious leaders in Jerusalem who opposed Jesus. Jesus, His disciples and John were all Jewish. "Persecuting" is ongoing in the Greek. It became a pattern that led to the cross.
5:17 *My Father is working until now, and I am working* God rested on the seventh day (Gen 2:2-3), but He never stopped holding the world together. Babies are born and the sun rises on the Sabbath. Jesus says He does what His Father does with the same right. "My Father," not our Father, claims a relationship with God no one else has.
5:18 *calling God His own Father, making Himself equal to God* Some say Jesus never claimed to be God. His enemies heard the claim clearly and wanted Him dead for it. Jesus never corrected them. He goes on to explain His equality with the Father more fully.

The Authority of the Son

19 Therefore Jesus answered and said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son is able to do nothing of Himself, unless ***it is*** something He sees the Father doing; for whatever He does, these things the Son also does likewise. **20** For the Father loves the Son and shows Him all things that He Himself does; and He will show Him greater works than these, so that you may marvel. **21** For as the Father raises up the dead and gives life, so also the Son gives life to whom He wishes. **22** For the Father does not judge anyone, but has given all the judgment to the Son, **23** so that all may honor the Son even as they honor the Father. The one who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him. **24** Truly, truly, I say to you, the one who hears My word and believes Him who sent Me has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life. **25** Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who have heard will live. **26** For as the Father has life in Himself, so He gave also to the Son to have life in Himself, **27** and He gave Him authority also to execute judgment, because He is Son of Man. **28** Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, **29** and will come forth, those who have done the good ***things*** to a resurrection of life, and those who have practiced the wicked ***things*** to a resurrection of judgment.

Witnesses to Jesus

30 I am able to do nothing of Myself. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My will but the will of the Father who sent Me. **31** If I testify concerning Myself, My testimony is not true. **32** There is another who testifies concerning Me, and I know that the testimony which He testifies concerning Me is true. **33** You have sent to John (Ioannes), and he has testified to the truth. **34** But I do not receive the testimony from man, but I say these things so that you may be saved. **35** He was the burning and shining lamp, and you were willing to rejoice for an hour in his light. **36** But I have the testimony greater than that of John; for the works which the Father gave Me that I may complete them, the very works that I do, testify concerning Me that the Father has sent Me. **37** And the Father who sent Me, He Himself has testified concerning Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time nor seen His form. **38** And you do not have His word abiding in you, because whom He sent, Him you do not believe. **39** You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and these are they that

5:19 John 8:28; John 12:49; John 14:10,20
5:20 Prov 8:30; Isa 49:5; John 3:35
5:21 Deut 32:39; John 11:25,43,44; Luke 7:14,15
5:22 John 5:27; Acts 10:42; Acts 17:31
5:23 Ps 2:12; Exod 15:2; Isa 49:5
5:24 Isa 49:5; Isa 55:3; 1 John 3:14
5:25 John 4:23; Luke 15:24,32; Rev 3:1
5:26 John 1:4; Jer 10:10; Exod 3:14
5:27 Dan 7:13-14; Isa 49:5; John 5:22
5:28 Dan 12:2; Rev 20:12; 1 Thess 4:14-17
5:29 Rom 2:6-10; Dan 12:2,3; Acts 24:15
5:30 John 5:19; John 4:34; John 6:38
5:31 John 8:13,14,54; Prov 27:2; Rev 3:14
5:32 John 5:36,37; John 1:33; John 8:17,18
5:33 John 1:6-8,15-18,29-34; John 3:26-36; John 1:19-27
5:34 John 20:31; John 5:41; John 8:54
5:35 2 Pet 1:19; Matt 21:26; John 1:7,8
5:36 John 10:25,37,38; John 15:24; 1 John 5:9,11,12
5:37 Jer 13:11; John 8:18; Matt 3:17
5:38 Isa 53:2; Isa 53:3; 1 John 2:14
5:39 Deut 32:47; Deut 17:18; Dan 12:2

5:19 *the Son is able to do nothing of Himself* "Truly, truly" is amen, amen in Greek: this is the solemn truth. This is not weakness but perfect unity. The Son never acts apart from the Father, and whatever the Father does, the Son does too. Only someone one with God can do everything God does.
5:20 *He will show Him greater works than these* If they marveled that a lame man walked, wait until they see the dead raised (11:43-44) and Jesus Himself rise from the grave.
5:21 *the Son gives life to whom He wishes* In the Old Testament only God gives life to the dead (Deut 32:39; 1 Sam 2:6). Jesus is not borrowing power. He gives life by His own choice.
5:23 *so that all may honor the Son even as they honor the Father* If Jesus were only a good teacher, this would be blasphemy. He is God the Son. No one can claim to love God while rejecting Jesus. You cannot have the Father without the Son (1 John 2:23).
5:24 *has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life* Notice the tenses. He has eternal life now, and he has passed from death to life. When we trust Jesus, God moves us from the column of the dead to the column of the living. Our hope rests on the word of Jesus, not on how good we were this week. Christians differ on whether one who later turns away was ever saved or can be lost (10:28; Heb 3:12-14; 6:4-6), but all agree the one who believes has eternal life right now.
5:25 *the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who have heard will live* "And now is" means it is happening already. These dead are spiritually dead in sin (Eph 2:1). Every time someone hears His voice through His Word and believes, this verse comes true again.
5:26 *so He gave also to the Son to have life in Himself* The Father gets life from no one. He is its source. You and I have borrowed life. Jesus has life in Himself, just like the Father, which is why He could say, "I am the resurrection and the life" (11:25).
5:27 *because He is Son of Man* From Daniel 7:13-14, where one like a son of man receives everlasting dominion. Because Jesus became a man and lived as one of us, He is the perfect Judge. No one will be able to say He does not know what it is like to be human.
5:28 *all who are in the tombs will hear His voice* From the spiritual resurrection now to the bodily resurrection still to come. Every person who ever lived will be raised. No one simply disappears.
5:29 *to a resurrection of life, and those who have practiced the wicked things to a resurrection of judgment* Good deeds are the fruit that shows real faith, not the root that earns it (5:24; Eph 2:8-10; James 2:17-18). The "hour" is a period, as in verse 25. Revelation 20:4-6 shows the two resurrections separated by the thousand years. I believe Christ first comes for His church before the Tribulation, raising the dead in Christ (1 Thess 4:16), returns to earth at its end, and raises the rest of the dead to judgment after the thousand years.
5:30 *My judgment is righteous* A human judge can be swayed by bias, bribes or his own interests. Jesus never will be. That should comfort believers and warn everyone else.
5:31 *If I testify concerning Myself, My testimony is not true* The Law required two or three witnesses (Deut 19:15). Jesus plays by their rules and calls witnesses. The "another" in verse 32 is, I believe, the Father Himself (5:37).
5:34 *I say these things so that you may be saved* John the Baptist had told their messengers plainly who Jesus was (1:19, 29-34). Even while they plot to kill Him, Jesus is trying to save them.
5:35 *He was the burning and shining lamp* A lamp carries the light but is not the Light (1:8). They enjoyed the excitement of a new prophet for a while, but when John pointed them to Jesus, many did not follow.
5:36 *the very works that I do, testify concerning Me* Every miracle was the Father's signature on Jesus' claims (10:25, 37-38).
5:37 *the Father who sent Me, He Himself has testified concerning Me* Out loud at Jesus' baptism (Matt 3:17), and through His Word. They did not believe the One He sent, which shows His word did not live in them. A person who truly knows God's Word will recognize God's Son.
5:39 *You search the Scriptures* They memorized the Scriptures and argued over every word, and thought the study itself gave eternal life. The Bible is not the goal. Jesus is. The Scriptures all point to Him (Luke 24:27, 44).

testify concerning Me; **40** and you are not willing to come to Me so that you may have life. **41** I do not receive glory from men; **42** but I know you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves. **43** I have come in the name of My Father, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive. **44** How are you able to believe, receiving glory from one another, and you do not seek the glory that ***is*** from the only God? **45** Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father; there is ***one*** who accuses you, Moses, in whom you have hoped. **46** For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote concerning Me. **47** But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"

JOHN 6

Feeding the Five Thousand

1 After these things Jesus (Iesous) went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee (Galilaia), of Tiberias. **2** And a great crowd was following Him, because they were seeing His signs which He was doing on those who were sick. **3** And Jesus went up on the mountain, and there He was sitting with His disciples. **4** Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was near. **5** Therefore Jesus, having lifted up the eyes and having seen that a great crowd is coming to Him, says to Philip (Philippos), "From where will we buy loaves, that these may eat?" **6** Now He was saying this testing him, for He Himself knew what He was about to do. **7** Philip answered Him, "Two hundred denarii ***worth*** of loaves are not sufficient for them, that each of them may receive a little." **8** One of His disciples, Andrew (Andreas), the brother of Simon Peter (Petros), says to Him, **9** "There is one little boy here who has five barley loaves and two small fish; but these, what are they for so many?" **10** And Jesus said, "Make the men recline." Now there was much grass in the place. Therefore the men reclined, in number about five thousand. **11** And Jesus took the loaves, and having given thanks He distributed ***them*** to the disciples, and the disciples to those reclining; likewise also of the small fish, as much as they were wanting. **12** And when they were filled, He says to His disciples, "Gather together the fragments that are left over, so that nothing may be lost." **13** Therefore they gathered ***them*** together and filled twelve baskets of fragments from the five barley loaves, which were left over to those having eaten.

14 Therefore the men, having seen the sign which Jesus had done, were saying, "This is truly the Prophet who is coming into the world." **15** Therefore Jesus, having known that they are about to come and seize Him, that they may make Him king, withdrew again to the mountain, Himself alone.

5:40 Isa 50:2; Ps 81:11; Jer 13:11
5:41 1 Thess 2:6; John 5:34; John 7:18
5:42 John 2:25; 1 John 3:17; John 1:47-49
5:43 Ezek 3:7; John 10:25; John 8:28,29
5:44 1 Pet 1:7; John 3:20; John 8:43
5:45 Ps 103:7; Mal 4:4; Rom 3:19,20
5:46 Deut 18:15; Deut 18:18; Num 21:8
5:47 Luke 16:29,31
6:1 Josh 12:3; Luke 9:10-12,13-17; Matt 4:18
6:2 Matt 4:24,25; Matt 12:15; Matt 8:1
6:3 John 6:15; Luke 9:28; Matt 14:23
6:4 Deut 16:1; Lev 23:5; Exod 12:11
6:5 John 4:35; Matt 14:14,15; Mark 6:34,35
6:6 Gen 22:1; Deut 8:2,16; Deut 13:3
6:7 Mark 6:37; Num 11:21,22; 2 Kgs 4:43
6:8 John 1:40-44; Matt 4:18
6:9 2 Kgs 4:42-44; Matt 14:17; Matt 16:9
6:10 Matt 14:18,19; Matt 15:35,36; Mark 6:39-41
6:11 John 6:23; 1 Thess 5:18; 1 Sam 9:13
6:12 Neh 8:10; Ruth 2:18; 2 Kgs 4:43
6:13 1 Kgs 7:15; Ruth 2:18; 1 Kgs 7:16
6:14 Deut 18:15; Deut 18:18; Deut 18:16
6:15 Isa 3:6; John 18:36; John 7:3,4

5:40 *you are not willing to come to Me* Their problem was not a lack of evidence but their will. That is still the problem for many today.
5:42 *you do not have the love of God in yourselves* You can be very religious and still not love God.
5:43 *if another comes in his own name, him you will receive* Israel later followed false messiahs. The best known was Simon bar Kokhba, who led a revolt against Rome around A.D. 132 and was hailed by some as Messiah. It ended in disaster. I believe this also points to the final deceiver, the antichrist, whom the world will welcome (2 Thess 2:3-4, 9-10; Rev 13).
5:44 *receiving glory from one another* When you care most about what people think, it is very hard to stand up for Jesus. Pride and faith pull in opposite directions.
5:45 *there is one who accuses you, Moses, in whom you have hoped* The very Moses they trusted would condemn them.
5:46 *he wrote concerning Me* God promised a prophet like Moses (Deut 18:15-18). The Passover lamb, the bronze serpent (3:14), the manna and the sacrifices all pointed to Jesus. If they had believed Moses, they would have believed Him.
6:1 *the Sea of Galilee, of Tiberias* The lake was also named for Tiberias, the city Herod Antipas built on its western shore and named for the emperor Tiberius. John made sure readers across the Roman world would know the place.
6:2 *because they were seeing His signs* People can follow Jesus for what He does for them without ever trusting Him for who He is. Do I follow Jesus for His gifts, or for Himself?
6:4 *the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was near* The second Passover in John (2:13; 11:55). Passover remembered how God brought Israel out of Egypt and fed them in the wilderness. Moses, manna and the wilderness all come up later in this chapter.
6:6 *testing him, for He Himself knew what He was about to do* Philip was from nearby Bethsaida (1:44). God sometimes asks questions so we will discover what is in our own hearts. Would Philip look at the size of the problem or at the One in front of him?
6:7 *Two hundred denarii* A denarius was about a day's wage (Matt 20:2), so this was roughly eight months of pay. Philip was right about the math and wrong about the situation. He forgot who was asking.
6:9 *five barley loaves and two small fish* Andrew is again bringing someone to Jesus (1:40-42; 12:22). Barley bread was the cheap bread of the poor. Jesus could have made bread from nothing, but He chose to start with one boy's lunch. He still takes what we bring, our time, skills, money and even weakness, and multiplies it. Never think what you have is too small to give Him.
6:10 *in number about five thousand* The grass shows it was spring, near Passover (6:4). Mark says they sat in groups of hundreds and fifties (Mark 6:40). With women and children (Matt 14:21), the crowd could easily have been more than double.
6:11 *having given thanks* He thanked the Father for what He had before it was enough. Then He gave "as much as they were wanting." Everyone ate their fill. Our God is not stingy.
6:12 *so that nothing may be lost* The One who could make bread from nothing did not waste what He made. Gratitude includes being a good steward of what God gives.
6:13 *filled twelve baskets of fragments* One for each of the twelve, the men who had wondered how there could be enough. God wanted them to see it with their eyes and carry it with their hands.
6:14 *This is truly the Prophet who is coming into the world* They were thinking of the prophet like Moses (Deut 18:15-18). Moses fed Israel manna in the wilderness, and here was someone feeding them bread in the wilderness. They were right that He was the Prophet and wrong about what kind of Savior He came to be.
6:15 *that they may make Him king* They wanted a king who would fill their stomachs and throw off Rome. He is King, but He would not be crowned on man's terms or timing. His path to the throne went through the cross. He went up to pray (Matt 14:23).

Jesus Walks on the Water

16 And when evening came, His disciples went down to the sea, **17** and having embarked into the boat, they were going over the sea to Capernaum (Kapernaoum). And darkness had already come, and Jesus had not come to them, **18** and the sea, a great wind blowing, was being stirred up.
19 Therefore, having rowed approximately three to three and a half miles (twenty-five or thirty stadia), they see Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat, and they were afraid. **20** But He says to them, "I am ***He***; do not be afraid." **21** Then they were willing to receive Him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going.

I Am the Bread of Life

22 On the next day the crowd which was standing on the other side of the sea, having seen that no other small boat was there except one, that into which His disciples had embarked, and that Jesus had not gone in with His disciples into the small boat, but His disciples went away alone, **23** but other small boats came from Tiberias near the place where they ate the bread, the Lord having given thanks, **24** when therefore the crowd saw that Jesus is not there, nor His disciples, they themselves also embarked into the boats and came to Capernaum, seeking Jesus. **25** And having found Him on the other side of the sea, they said to Him, "Rabbi, when did You come here?" **26** Jesus answered them and said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were satisfied. **27** Do not work ***for*** the food which perishes, but ***for*** the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you; for the Father, God, sealed Him." **28** Therefore they said to Him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?" **29** Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent." **30** Therefore they said to Him, "What sign then do You do, that we may see and believe You? What do You work? **31** Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, even as it is written, 'He gave them bread out of heaven to eat.'" **32** Therefore Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, Moses has not given you the bread out of heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread out of heaven. **33** For the bread of God is the ***One*** coming down out of heaven and giving life to the world."
34 Therefore they said to Him, "Sir, always give us this bread." **35** And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. The ***one*** coming to Me will certainly not hunger, and the ***one*** believing in Me will certainly not thirst at any time. **36** But I said to you that you have also seen Me, and you do not believe. **37** All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the ***one*** coming to Me I will certainly not cast out. **38** For I have come down out of heaven, not that I may do My own

6:17 Mark 6:45; John 6:24,25; John 2:12
6:18 Ps 107:25; Ps 135:7; Matt 14:24
6:19 Mark 6:47,48; Job 9:8; Ps 93:4
6:20 Isa 41:10; Isa 44:8; Isa 41:14
6:21 Song 3:4; Mark 6:51; Ps 24:7-10
6:22 Matt 14:22; Mark 6:45; John 6:16,17
6:23 Deut 8:10; John 6:11,12
6:24 John 6:17,23; John 7:11; John 18:4,5
6:25 John 1:38,39
6:26 James 4:3,4; Ps 78:37; Ps 106:12-14
6:27 Isa 42:1; Isa 11:2; Isa 55:2
6:28 Deut 5:27; Jer 42:3-6,20; Mic 6:7,8
6:29 Ps 2:12; 1 John 3:23; Heb 5:9
6:30 Isa 5:19; John 12:37; John 2:18
6:31 Neh 9:15; Ps 78:24; Ps 105:40
6:32 Exod 16:8; Exod 16:15; Neh 9:15
6:33 Neh 9:15; Ps 78:24; Ps 105:40
6:34 Neh 9:15; John 4:15; John 6:26
6:35 Isa 55:2; Isa 55:3; John 6:41,48-58
6:36 John 6:26,30,40,64; John 12:37; John 15:24
6:37 Isa 55:3; John 6:39,45; John 17:2,6,8,9,11,24
6:38 Gen 18:21; Exod 3:8; John 4:34

6:17 *darkness had already come, and Jesus had not come to them* Jesus had sent them ahead (Mark 6:45). Many of us have been in that boat, doing what Jesus told us, in the dark, wondering where He is.
6:18 *a great wind blowing* The lake sits low among hills, and winds can rush down on it quickly. They were in trouble while obeying, not because they disobeyed. Storms are not always a sign we are out of God's will.
6:19 *they see Jesus walking on the sea* John states it plainly as fact. The Creator who made the sea walked on top of it. The One who multiplied bread on the hillside ruled the water at night.
6:20 *I am He; do not be afraid* In Greek ego eimi, I am, the phrase of His "I am" sayings and an echo of God's name in Exodus 3:14. Knowing who He is drives out fear.
6:21 *immediately the boat was at the land* Perhaps another miracle, or simply how quickly the trip ended. Either way, when Jesus is in the boat we arrive where He is taking us.
6:23 *the place where they ate the bread, the Lord having given thanks* John remembers the thanksgiving as much as the bread. These verses explain how the crowd crossed the lake to find Him.
6:25 *Rabbi, when did You come here?* Jesus never answers how He crossed the lake. He goes straight to the question they should have asked.
6:26 *because you ate of the loaves and were satisfied* A sign points beyond itself. They looked at the sign and saw only lunch.
6:27 *Do not work for the food which perishes* Not a call to quit our jobs (2 Thess 3:10), but a question of what we live for. Bread spoils, and the life Jesus gives lasts forever. A seal marked something as genuine and approved. The Father has put His stamp of approval on Jesus.
6:29 *This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent* They were thinking of a list. Jesus gave one work. One of the clearest verses on how a person is made right with God: salvation is received by trusting Jesus, not earned by good deeds (Eph 2:8-9). Faith is not a work that earns favor. It is receiving what God offers.
6:31 *Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness* The crowd that ate miracle bread the day before now asks for a sign (Ps 78:24; Exod 16:4). Moses fed their fathers forty years, and Jesus one meal. Unbelief always wants one more sign.
6:32 *My Father gives you the true bread out of heaven* It was God, not Moses, who gave the manna, and the manna was a picture pointing ahead. Manna fed one nation for a time. Jesus gives life to the whole world forever (6:33).
6:34 *Sir, always give us this bread* Like the woman at the well (4:15), they wanted the gift and did not see that the gift was Jesus Himself.
6:35 *I am the bread of life* The first of seven "I am" sayings with a picture. Bread was eaten at every meal. Jesus is not an extra in life but its most basic need. Coming to Him and believing in Him are the same thing. He does not point us to a program or a set of rules. He points to Himself. He truly sustains spiritual life the way bread sustains the body.
6:36 *you have also seen Me, and you do not believe* Seeing is not believing. Many know a great deal about Jesus and have never trusted Him.
6:37 *the one coming to Me I will certainly not cast out* Two truths side by side. God is in charge of salvation and His plan will not fail. And no one who truly comes will be turned away. "Certainly not" is a strong double negative: I will never throw you out. I do not claim to understand how both fit together. Jesus said both in the same breath. Our job is to come and to invite others.
6:38 *not that I may do My own will, but the will of the One who sent Me* His heavenly origin and His perfect obedience. There is no competition inside the Godhead. The Son delights to do the Father's will.

will, but the will of the ***One*** who sent Me. **39** And this is the will of the Father who sent Me, that all which He has given Me, I may lose none of it, but may raise it up on the last day. **40** Now this is the will of the ***One*** who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day."

The Living Bread from Heaven

41 Therefore the Jews were grumbling about Him, because He said, "I am the bread which came down out of heaven." **42** And they were saying, "Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph (Ioseph), whose father and mother we know? How then does this ***one*** say, 'I have come down out of heaven'?"

43 Therefore Jesus answered and said to them, "Do not grumble with one another. **44** No one is able to come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him, and I will raise him up on the last day. **45** It is written in the Prophets, 'And they will all be taught of God.' Therefore everyone who has heard from the Father and has learned comes to Me. **46** Not that anyone has seen the Father, except the ***One*** who is from God; He has seen the Father. **47** Truly, truly, I say to you, the ***one*** believing in Me has eternal life. **48** I am the bread of life. **49** Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. **50** This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, that anyone may eat of it and not die. **51** I am the living bread which came down out of heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread also which I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." **52** Therefore the Jews were arguing with one another, saying, "How is this ***man*** able to give us ***His*** flesh to eat?" **53** Therefore Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you do not have life in yourselves. **54** The ***one*** feeding on My flesh and drinking My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. **55** For My flesh is truly food, and My blood is truly drink. **56** The ***one*** feeding on My flesh and drinking My blood abides in Me, and I in him. **57** Even as the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, also the ***one*** feeding on Me, even that ***one*** will live because of Me. **58** This is the bread which came down out of heaven; not as your fathers ate the manna and died; the ***one*** feeding on this bread will live forever." **59** He said these things in a synagogue, teaching in Capernaum.

Many Disciples Turn Away

60 Therefore many of His disciples, having heard, said, "This word is hard; who is able to hear it?" **61** But Jesus, knowing in Himself that His disciples are grumbling about this, said to

6:39 John 17:12; John 18:9; Matt 18:14
6:40 Isa 45:21; Isa 53:2; Isa 45:22
6:41 Exod 16:8; John 6:33,48,51,58; John 6:43,52,60,66
6:42 Luke 4:22; John 7:27; Matt 13:55,56
6:43 John 6:64; Heb 4:13; John 16:19
6:44 John 6:65; Isa 55:3; Matt 11:25-27
6:45 Isa 54:13; Jer 31:33; 1 Sam 10:12
6:46 John 1:18; John 7:29; John 5:37
6:47 John 5:24; John 3:16,18,36; Rom 5:9,10
6:48 Ps 105:40; John 6:33-35,41,51; 1 Cor 10:16,17
6:49 Exod 16:35; Ps 78:24; Num 26:65
6:50 John 6:33,42,51; John 6:58; John 3:13
6:51 Luke 22:19; Eph 5:2,25; John 3:13
6:52 John 9:16; John 10:19; John 6:41
6:53 1 John 5:12; Matt 26:26-28; John 15:4
6:54 John 6:39,40,47; Phil 3:7-10; John 6:27,40,63
6:55 John 6:32; John 1:9,47; John 8:31,36
6:56 Isa 55:2; 1 John 3:24; John 15:4,5
6:57 Isa 55:2; John 5:26; Gal 2:20
6:58 Exod 16:35; Ps 78:24; John 6:32,34,41,47-51
6:59 John 6:24; John 18:20; Ps 40:9,10
6:60 John 6:66; John 8:31; John 6:41,42
6:61 John 6:64; John 2:24,25; John 21:17

6:39 *I may lose none of it, but may raise it up on the last day* Jesus promises resurrection on the last day four times in this chapter (6:39, 40, 44, 54). Eternal life begins when we believe and is completed at the bodily resurrection. I believe He comes for His church before the Tribulation and raises the dead in Christ (1 Thess 4:16-17; 1 Cor 15:51-52). Every believer can stand on the main point: Jesus will not lose one of His own.

6:40 *everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have eternal life* The Father's will has two sides: Jesus keeps all the Father gives Him (6:39), and everyone who looks to the Son and believes has life.

6:42 *Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph* They grumbled as their fathers grumbled about the manna (Exod 16:2, 8). They knew Mary and Joseph, but they did not know His Father.

6:44 *No one is able to come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him* Left to ourselves none of us would come. Some believe God draws only those He has chosen and His drawing always succeeds. Others point to 12:32, "will draw all men to Myself," and believe a person can resist. I take it as it stands: no one comes on his own strength, and anyone who comes has been drawn by God. That makes us humble about our salvation and bold in sharing the gospel.

6:45 *And they will all be taught of God* From Isaiah 54:13. The drawing is not forced. It happens through hearing and learning. God draws people by His Word.

6:46 *He has seen the Father* Jesus is not one more teacher who learned about God. He came from the Father's presence (1:18; 14:9).

6:47 *the one believing in Me has eternal life* Not will have someday, or might have if he does enough, but has, right now.

6:49 *Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died* Manna kept them alive for a while, but they all died. Physical death still comes to those who eat the bread of life, but eternal death, separation from God, has no claim on them.

6:51 *the bread also which I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world* Jesus points to the cross. The bread of life is not only His teaching. It is His death in our place, offered to all.

6:52 *How is this man able to give us His flesh to eat?* They took Him in the crudest physical sense, the same mistake Nicodemus made (3:4) and the woman at the well (4:11).

6:53 *unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood* Drinking blood was forbidden by the Law (Lev 17:10-14), so His words forced hearers to think. Coming and believing satisfy (6:35), the believer has eternal life (6:47), and the one who eats His flesh has eternal life (6:54). The promise is the same, so the meaning is the same: to receive Him by faith, taking in His death for us as our only life.

6:54 *The one feeding on My flesh and drinking My blood has eternal life* Many see a link to the Lord's Supper, which pictures His body given and blood shed. But it had not yet been given, and He spoke to unbelievers. Some churches teach the bread and wine become His actual body and blood. I do not believe the text teaches that. Jesus speaks of living faith in His sacrifice, which the Supper later pictured and proclaimed (1 Cor 11:26).

6:55 *My flesh is truly food, and My blood is truly drink* Everything else we feed on, money, success, approval, pleasure, leaves us hungry again.

6:56 *abides in Me, and I in him* To abide is to stay, remain, make your home. The Greek word meno becomes one of John's great words, rendered "remain" in chapter 15. Faith is not a one-time snack but an ongoing relationship.

6:57 *the one feeding on Me, even that one will live because of Me* Our spiritual life depends on Him as His earthly mission depended on the Father. We were never meant to live the Christian life on our own power.

6:59 *in a synagogue, teaching in Capernaum* A synagogue was a local Jewish meeting place for prayer and the reading of Scripture. This was public teaching in Jesus' home base in Galilee (Matt 4:13).

6:60 *This word is hard; who is able to hear it?* The wider group of followers, not only the twelve. Hard means harsh, hard to accept. Their problem was less with their heads than with their hearts.

them, "Does this cause you to stumble? **62** ***What*** then if you see the Son of Man ascending where He was before? **63** The Spirit is the ***One*** giving life; the flesh profits nothing. The words which I speak to you are spirit and are life. **64** But there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus knew from ***the*** beginning who they are who do not believe, and who it is who will betray Him. **65** And He was saying, "Because of this I have said to you that no one is able to come to Me unless it has been granted to him from My Father." **66** From this ***time*** many of His disciples went away back and were no longer walking with Him. **67** Therefore Jesus said to the twelve, "You do not also want to go away, do you?" **68** Therefore Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom will we go? You have words of eternal life. **69** And we have believed and have known that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." **70** Jesus answered them, "Did I not choose you, the twelve? And of you one is a devil." **71** Now He was speaking of Judas (Ioudas) Iscariot (Iskariotes), ***son*** of Simon; for he was about to betray Him, being one of the twelve.

JOHN 7

Jesus' Brothers Do Not Believe

1 And after these things Jesus (Iesous) was walking in Galilee (Galilaia); for He was not wanting to walk in Judea (Ioudaia), because the Jews were seeking to kill Him. **2** Now the feast of the Jews, the ***Feast of*** Booths, was near. **3** Therefore His brothers said to Him, "Depart from here and go into Judea, so that Your disciples also may see Your works which You are doing. **4** For no one does anything in secret and himself seeks to be in public. If You do these things, show Yourself to the world." **5** For not even His brothers were believing in Him. **6** Therefore Jesus says to them, "My time is not yet here, but your time is always ready. **7** The world is not able to hate you, but it hates Me, because I testify concerning it that its works are evil. **8** You go up to this feast; I am not yet going up to this feast, because My time has not yet been fulfilled." **9** Now having said these things to them, He remained in Galilee. **10** But when His brothers had gone up, then He Himself also went up to the feast, not openly, but as in secret. **11** Therefore the Jews were seeking Him at the feast and were saying, "Where is that ***One***?" **12** And there was much grumbling about Him among the crowds. Some were saying, "He is good"; but others were saying, "No, but He deceives the crowd." **13** However, no one was speaking publicly about Him because of the fear of the Jews.

6:62 John 3:13; Mark 16:19; Luke 24:51
6:63 John 6:68; 1 Cor 15:45; Deut 32:47
6:64 John 10:26; John 13:10,18-21; Rom 8:29
6:65 John 6:37,44,45; Eph 2:8,9; 2 Tim 2:25
6:66 Zeph 1:6; John 6:60; 1 John 2:19
6:67 Josh 24:15-22; Ruth 1:11-18; 2 Sam 15:19,20
6:68 Ps 62:5; John 5:24,39,40; Ps 73:25
6:69 Mark 8:29; Luke 9:20; John 11:27
6:70 John 17:12; John 13:2,21,27; John 6:64
6:71 Matt 26:14-16; Ps 109:6-8; Acts 1:16-20
7:1 John 4:3,54; John 7:19,25; John 5:16-18
7:2 Zech 14:16; Deut 16:13; Lev 23:34
7:3 Gen 37:8; Matt 12:46,47; John 7:5
7:4 John 18:20; Prov 18:1,2; Matt 23:5
7:5 Mark 3:21; John 1:11-13; Mic 7:5,6
7:6 John 7:8,30; John 2:4; John 13:1
7:7 Mal 3:5; Exod 20:5; John 15:18,19,23-25
7:8 John 7:6,30; John 8:20,30; John 11:6,7
7:10 Amos 5:13; Ps 26:8; Ps 40:8
7:11 John 11:56
7:12 John 9:16; John 7:32; John 7:47,52
7:13 John 9:22,34; John 19:38; John 20:19

6:62 *the Son of Man ascending where He was before* If they stumbled that He came down from heaven, what would they do when they saw Him go back up? His ascension (Acts 1:9-11) would prove where He came from.
6:63 *The Spirit is the One giving life; the flesh profits nothing* A key to the chapter. Jesus Himself says His words about eating are not about physical eating. His words are how we feed on Him. When we take in His Word and trust it, the Spirit gives life.
6:64 *Jesus knew from the beginning* Nothing caught Jesus by surprise, not even Judas. When people turn away, God's plan has not failed.
6:65 *unless it has been granted to him from My Father* Coming to Christ is a gift. If you have come, thank God. You did not figure it out on your own.
6:66 *many of His disciples went away back* The day before they wanted to make Him king. Jesus did not chase them or water down His message. Large crowds are not always a sign of true faith. People still leave when He does not give what they want or when He speaks of sin, the cross or surrender. Hard words from Jesus are still words of life.
6:67 *You do not also want to go away, do you?* The Greek expects the answer no, yet Jesus let them answer for themselves. Faith that is forced is not faith.
6:68 *Lord, to whom will we go? You have words of eternal life* One of the finest confessions in the Bible. Peter did not claim to understand everything. He knew there was nowhere else to go.
6:69 *You are the Christ, the Son of the living God* Believing comes first, and with it a settled knowing. The same confession as Caesarea Philippi (Matt 16:16). Some Greek copies read "the Holy One of God" (Mark 1:24) here. Either way, Peter knew who Jesus was.
6:70 *of you one is a devil* Judas saw the miracles, ate the bread and heard every word, yet his heart was not with Jesus. Being close to Jesus on the outside is not the same as belonging to Him on the inside.
7:1 *the Jews were seeking to kill Him* The religious leaders in Judea (5:18). Jesus was not afraid, but He was not reckless either. The time for His death had not yet come.
7:2 *the Feast of Booths* Also called Tabernacles, Sukkot in Hebrew, one of three feasts when Jewish men were to go up to Jerusalem (Deut 16:16). It came in the fall after harvest. For seven days the people lived in shelters of branches to remember God's care in the wilderness (Lev 23:33-43). It was a happy, crowded, noisy celebration.
7:4 *show Yourself to the world* Advice from a campaign manager. They may have been mocking Him or wanting a name for the family. Jesus did not come to impress people but to do His Father's will. These brothers were sons of Mary and Joseph born after Jesus: James, Joses, Simon and Jude (Matt 13:55).
7:5 *not even His brothers were believing in Him* Those who grew up in the same house and watched His sinless life did not believe. If your family does not yet believe, Jesus understands that pain. After the resurrection He appeared to James (1 Cor 15:7), the brothers prayed with the believers (Acts 1:14), and James and Jude wrote books of the Bible. Do not give up on your family.
7:6 *My time is not yet here, but your time is always ready* His brothers' lives were not on a divine mission, and the world had no reason to hate them. His time pointed to His death and glory, the "hour" John mentions again and again (2:4; 8:20; 12:23; 13:1).
7:7 *it hates Me, because I testify concerning it that its works are evil* When the light shines, those who love darkness do not thank it (3:19-20). Jesus warned His followers the world would hate them for the same reason (15:18-19).
7:8 *I am not yet going up to this feast* A few days later He went. He was refusing to go their way, as a public show at their urging. Some ancient copies leave out "yet," but either way Jesus did not lie. He went quietly, on the Father's timing (7:10).
7:12 *He is good* No one said He was ordinary. But a merely good man does not claim to be the bread from heaven or one with God. Jesus is either who He said He is, or He is not good at all. The middle ground does not exist.

Teaching at the Feast of Booths

14 Now the feast being already in its middle, Jesus went up into the temple and was teaching. **15** And the Jews were marveling, saying, "How does this ***man*** know letters, not having learned?" **16** Jesus answered them and said, "My teaching is not Mine, but ***that*** of the ***One*** who sent Me. **17** If anyone wills to do His will, he will know concerning the teaching, whether it is from God or I speak from Myself. **18** The ***one*** speaking from himself seeks his own glory; but the ***One*** seeking the glory of the ***One*** who sent Him, He is true, and unrighteousness is not in Him. **19** Has not Moses given you the law? And none of you does the law. Why do you seek to kill Me?" **20** The crowd answered and said, "You have a demon! Who seeks to kill You?" **21** Jesus answered and said to them, "I did one work, and you all marvel. **22** Because of this Moses has given you circumcision (not that it is from Moses, but from the fathers), and on a Sabbath you circumcise a man. **23** If a man receives circumcision on a Sabbath so that the law of Moses may not be broken, are you angry with Me because I made an entire man healthy on a Sabbath? **24** Do not judge according to appearance, but judge the righteous judgment." **25** Therefore some of the people of Jerusalem (Hierosolymites) were saying, "Is this not He whom they seek to kill? **26** And look, He speaks publicly, and they say nothing to Him. Can it be that the rulers truly have recognized that this is truly the Christ? **27** But we know where this ***man*** is from; but the Christ, whenever He comes, no one knows where He is from." **28** Therefore Jesus cried out in the temple, teaching and saying, "You both know Me and know where I am from; and I have not come of Myself, but the ***One*** who sent Me is true, whom you do not know. **29** But I know Him, because I am from Him, and He sent Me." **30** Therefore they were seeking to seize Him; and no one laid ***his*** hand on Him, because His hour had not yet come. **31** And many out of the crowd believed in Him, and were saying, "The Christ, when He comes, will not do more signs than these which this ***man*** has done, will He?" **32** The Pharisees heard the crowd grumbling these things about Him, and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers that they might seize Him.

33 Therefore Jesus said to them, "Yet a little time I am with you, and I go to the ***One*** who sent Me. **34** You will seek Me and will not find ***Me***; and where I am, you are not able to come." **35** Therefore the Jews said among themselves, "Where is this ***man*** about to go that we will not find Him? Is He about to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks and to teach the Greeks? **36** What is this word that He said, 'You will seek Me and will not find ***Me***; and where I am, you are not able to come'?"

7:14 Luke 19:47; John 7:2,37; Num 29:12,13,17,20,23-40
7:15 John 7:46; Luke 2:47; Matt 13:54
7:16 Isa 50:4; Isa 59:21; John 3:11,31
7:17 John 8:31,32,43,47; Phil 3:15,16; Ps 119:10,101,102
7:18 John 5:41; 1 Cor 10:31-33; John 8:49,50
7:19 Exod 24:2; Deut 33:4; Ps 2:1
7:20 John 10:20; John 8:48,52; Mark 3:21,22,30
7:21 John 5:9-11
7:22 Lev 12:3; Gen 17:10; Gen 17:11
7:23 Gen 17:12; Matt 12:5; John 5:8,9,14-16
7:24 Deut 16:18; Isa 11:3,4; John 8:15
7:25 John 7:10,11
7:26 John 7:48; Ps 40:9,10; Ps 71:15,16
7:27 John 6:42; Mic 5:2; Matt 13:54-57
7:28 Jer 9:6; Jer 31:34; Isa 45:19
7:29 John 8:55; John 1:18; John 10:15
7:30 John 8:20; John 7:6,8,44-46; John 7:19,32
7:31 John 12:42; Matt 12:23; John 2:23,24
7:32 John 11:47,48; John 12:19; Matt 12:23,24
7:33 John 16:5,16-22; John 12:35,36; John 13:1,3,33
7:34 John 8:21-24; John 13:33-36; John 14:3,6
7:35 Isa 11:10; Hos 9:17; James 1:1
7:36 John 7:34; John 3:4,9; John 6:41,52,60

7:14 *Jesus went up into the temple and was teaching* Halfway through the feast He taught openly in the busiest place in Jerusalem, in the busiest week of the year, under the noses of men who wanted to kill Him.
7:15 *How does this man know letters, not having learned?* Jesus never studied under a famous rabbi, yet knew the Scriptures better than all of them. They could not deny His knowledge, so they questioned His credentials.
7:16 *My teaching is not Mine, but that of the One who sent Me* His teacher was the Father. He never claimed to invent something new.
7:17 *If anyone wills to do His will, he will know concerning the teaching* Many want proof before they will obey. Jesus says it often works the other way. When we are unwilling to obey in some area, the Bible can seem unclear there. When we become willing, the lights come on. God does not hide His truth from honest hearts.
7:18 *The one speaking from himself seeks his own glory* A good test of a teacher still: whose glory is he after? A preacher who keeps pointing to himself should make us careful.
7:19 *Why do you seek to kill Me?* They boasted in Moses and the Law, yet planned to break "You shall not murder" (Exod 20:13).
7:20 *You have a demon!* Many pilgrims did not know about the plot and thought Him paranoid. The leaders knew exactly what He meant and said nothing.
7:21 *I did one work, and you all marvel* The healing at Bethesda on the Sabbath (5:1-16), which set off their plans to kill Him (5:16-18).
7:23 *I made an entire man healthy on a Sabbath* Circumcision on the eighth day (Lev 12:3), going back to Abraham (Gen 17:10-12), was done even on a Sabbath. So they already agreed some work on the Sabbath was right. If one part of a man could be treated to keep the Law, why not make the whole man well? The Sabbath was given for rest and restoration (Mark 2:27).
7:24 *Do not judge according to appearance, but judge the righteous judgment* Often misused. Jesus does not forbid all judging. He calls us to judge rightly, by God's standards and not by surface appearance or tradition. They saw work. Righteous judgment would have seen a crippled man restored by God.
7:26 *Can it be that the rulers truly have recognized that this is truly the Christ?* People in Jerusalem knew of the plot and wondered whether the leaders had secretly decided He was the Messiah, the Anointed King God promised.
7:27 *we know where this man is from* Some believed no one would know where the Messiah came from. They thought they knew His story, a carpenter's son from Nazareth. In truth they did not know where He came from at all. He came from heaven.
7:29 *I know Him, because I am from Him, and He sent Me* He "cried out" so all in the temple courts could hear. A bold claim: Israel's leaders did not know God, and He did.
7:30 *no one laid his hand on Him, because His hour had not yet come* No mob, soldier or plot could touch Him until the moment the Father set. When it came, He gave up His life willingly (10:18).
7:31 *many out of the crowd believed in Him* No Messiah could do more signs than these. That is why John wrote the signs down (20:31).
7:32 *the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers* The chief priests were mostly Sadducees, who controlled the temple and often clashed with the Pharisees. Their shared hatred of Jesus brought them together.
7:34 *You will seek Me and will not find Me* He spoke of His death, resurrection and return to the Father. There is a warning too. A day comes when the opportunity to believe is over. Today is the day to come (2 Cor 6:2).
7:35 *the Dispersion among the Greeks* The Dispersion, diaspora in Greek, meant Jews scattered among the Gentile nations. They said it with scorn, but it came true. Through the apostles His message would go to the scattered Jews and to the Greeks (Acts 1:8).

Rivers of Living Water

37 Now on the last day, the great ***day*** of the feast, Jesus was standing, and He cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. **38** The ***one*** believing in Me, even as the Scripture said, 'Rivers of living water will flow out of his belly.'" **39** Now He said this concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him were about to receive; for ***the*** Holy Spirit was not yet ***given***, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

Division Among the People

40 Therefore many out of the crowd, having heard the word, were saying, "This is truly the Prophet." **41** Others were saying, "This is the Christ." But others were saying, "For surely the Christ does not come out of Galilee? **42** Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes out of the seed of David (Dabid), and from Bethlehem (Bethleem), the village where David was?" **43** Therefore a division occurred in the crowd because of Him. **44** Now some of them were wanting to seize Him, but no one laid ***his*** hands on Him. **45** Therefore the officers came to the chief priests and Pharisees, and those ***men*** said to them, "Why did you not bring Him?" **46** The officers answered, "Never did a man speak like this, as this man ***speaks***." **47** Therefore the Pharisees answered them, "You have not also been deceived, have you? **48** Has anyone of the rulers believed in Him, or of the Pharisees? **49** But this crowd which does not know the law, they are accursed."

50 Nicodemus (Nikodemos) says to them (the ***one*** who came to Him by night, being one of them), **51** "Our law does not judge the man unless it first hears from him and knows what he does, does it?" **52** They answered and said to him, "You are not also from Galilee, are you? Search and see that out of Galilee a prophet has not arisen." **53** And each one went to his house.

JOHN 8

The Woman Caught in Adultery

1 But Jesus (Iesous) went to the Mount of Olives. **2** Now early in the morning He came again into the temple, and all the people were coming to Him; and having sat down, He was teaching them. **3** And the scribes and the Pharisees bring to Him a woman caught in adultery, and having set her in ***the*** midst, **4** they say to Him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act, committing adultery. **5** Now in the law Moses commanded us that such ***women*** be stoned. You therefore, what do You say?" **6** Now they were saying this testing Him, that they might have ***grounds*** to accuse Him. But Jesus, having stooped down, was writing with the finger on the

7:37 Isa 55:1; Ps 42:2; Isa 12:3
7:38 Isa 58:11; Isa 44:3; Isa 12:3
7:39 Joel 2:28; Isa 44:3; Prov 1:23
7:41 John 7:52; John 1:46; John 7:31
7:42 Mic 5:2; Ps 132:11; Jer 23:5
7:43 John 9:16; John 10:19; John 7:12
7:44 John 7:30; Acts 23:11; John 8:20
7:45 John 7:32; Acts 5:21-27
7:46 Luke 4:22; John 7:26; Matt 7:29
7:47 John 7:12; John 9:27-34; 2 Kgs 18:29,32
7:48 John 12:42; John 7:26,50; 1 Cor 1:20,22-28
7:49 James 3:13-18; John 9:34,40; Isa 5:21
7:50 John 19:39; John 3:1,2
7:51 Deut 1:17; Prov 18:13; Deut 17:8-11
7:52 Isa 9:1; Isa 9:2; John 7:41
7:53 Job 5:12,13; Ps 33:10; Ps 76:5,10
8:1 Matt 21:1; Mark 11:1; Luke 19:37
8:2 Matt 26:55; Luke 4:20; Luke 21:37
8:5 Lev 20:10; Ezek 23:47; Deut 22:22-24
8:6 Jer 17:13; Dan 5:5; Matt 19:3

7:37 *If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink* Each morning of the feast a priest drew water from the Pool of Siloam in a golden pitcher, carried it up in a joyful procession, and poured it at the altar, a prayer for rain and a reminder of the water from the rock. Teachers disagree whether "the last day" is the seventh or eighth day. Jesus stood, though teachers usually sat, and cried out, I am the One the water points to. "If anyone" leaves no thirsty person out.

7:38 *Rivers of living water will flow out of his belly* No single Old Testament verse says these words. Jesus seems to sum up promises of water and the Spirit poured on God's people (Isa 44:3; 58:11; Ezek 47:1-12; Zech 14:8). A believer is not a pond that only collects but a river that flows. The fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23) blesses the people around him.

7:39 *the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified* The Spirit was at work in the Old Testament, but He had not yet been poured out to live in every believer. That happened at Pentecost, after Jesus died, rose and returned to the Father (Acts 2:1-4, 33).

7:40 *This is truly the Prophet* The prophet like Moses (Deut 18:15-18). Others said, "This is the Christ." Both were moving the right way. Jesus is both.

7:42 *the Christ comes out of the seed of David, and from Bethlehem* They were right about the Scriptures (2 Sam 7:12-13; Mic 5:2) and wrong about Jesus. He was born in Bethlehem of David's line (Matt 1:1; 2:1; Luke 2:4-7). They never checked. Many still reject Jesus on assumptions they never test.

7:43 *a division occurred in the crowd because of Him* Jesus still divides people. You cannot stay in the middle with Him forever.

7:46 *Never did a man speak like this, as this man speaks* Hired men under orders went to arrest Jesus, and His words arrested them. He spoke with authority, not like the scribes (Matt 7:28-29). People who come to argue with His words often find His words arguing with them (Heb 4:12).

7:48 *Has anyone of the rulers believed in Him, or of the Pharisees?* The experts don't believe, so neither should you. They scorned the crowd as accursed. Pride blinded the men who claimed to know the Law best to the One the Law pointed to.

7:51 *Our law does not judge the man unless it first hears from him* The Law required a fair hearing (Deut 1:16-17). Here was one of the rulers, the man who came by night (3:1-2), taking a small, brave step. At the cross he takes a much bigger one (19:39).

7:52 *out of Galilee a prophet has not arisen* Simply wrong. Jonah came from Gath-hepher (2 Kgs 14:25) in Zebulun in Galilee (Josh 19:13), and Isaiah 9:1-2 promised a great light in Galilee of the Gentiles, fulfilled in Jesus (Matt 4:13-16). In their anger they ignored their own Scriptures.

7:53 *each one went to his house* This begins the account of the woman caught in adultery (7:53-8:11). Many Bibles mark it with a note because the earliest copies of John we have do not contain it. I include and teach it, because I believe it is a true account of Jesus and fits all we know of Him. More at 8:1.

8:1 *But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives* The earliest and most reliable Greek copies we have do not contain 7:53-8:11, and some later copies place it elsewhere, after John 7:36 or Luke 21:38. That is why most modern Bibles mark it. Many scholars believe it is a true event passed down and later placed here. I teach it because it fits all we know of Jesus and contradicts nothing in Scripture. The Mount of Olives lay east of the city, where Jesus often spent the night (Luke 21:37).

8:3 *the scribes and the Pharisees bring to Him a woman caught in adultery* Scribes were experts in the Law of Moses. Standing her in the middle was cruel humiliation. Her sin was real, but they cared nothing for her soul. And where was the man? The Law called for both to die (Lev 20:10; Deut 22:22). Bringing only her shows this was never about justice.

8:5 *You therefore, what do You say?* A trap. Let her go, and He set aside Moses. Stone her, and He lost His name for mercy and crossed Rome, which did not let the Jews carry out death sentences (18:31). Either answer looked like a loss.

8:6 *was writing with the finger on the ground* People have guessed for centuries: the accusers' sins, or Jeremiah 17:13 about those written in the earth. Scripture does not tell us. If it mattered, John would have said. What matters is what He said next.

ground, not making as though ***He heard***. **7** But as they were continuing asking Him, having straightened up He said to them, "The sinless ***one*** among you, let him first cast the stone at her." **8** And again having stooped down, He was writing on the ground. **9** And those having heard, and being convicted by the conscience, were going out one by one, having begun from the older ones until the last; and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in ***the*** midst. **10** Then Jesus, having straightened up and having seen no one except the woman, said to her, "Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?" **11** And she said, "No one, Sir." And Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you; go, and sin no more."

I Am the Light of the World

12 Therefore again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. The ***one*** following Me will certainly not walk in the darkness, but will have the light of life." **13** Therefore the Pharisees said to Him, "You testify concerning Yourself; Your testimony is not true." **14** Jesus answered and said to them, "Even if I testify concerning Myself, My testimony is true, because I know from where I came and where I am going; but you do not know from where I come and where I am going. **15** You judge according to the flesh; I judge no one. **16** And even if I do judge, My judgment is true, because I am not alone, but I and the Father who sent Me. **17** And also in your law it has been written that the testimony of two men is true. **18** I am the ***One*** testifying concerning Myself, and the Father who sent Me testifies concerning Me." **19** Therefore they were saying to Him, "Where is Your Father?" Jesus answered, "You know neither Me nor My Father. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also." **20** Jesus spoke these words in the treasury, teaching in the temple; and no one seized Him, because His hour had not yet come. **21** Therefore Jesus said to them again, "I am going away, and you will seek Me, and you will die in your sin. Where I am going, you are not able to come." **22** Therefore the Jews were saying, "He will not kill Himself, will He, because He says, 'Where I am going, you are not able to come'?" **23** And He said to them, "You are from below; I am from above. You are from this world; I am not from this world. **24** Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am ***He***, you will die in your sins." **25** Therefore they were saying to Him, "Who are You?" And Jesus said to them, "***I am*** what I have also been speaking to you from the beginning. **26** I have many things to speak and to judge concerning you; but the ***One*** who sent Me is true, and the things which I heard from Him, these I say to the world." **27** They did not understand that He was speaking to them ***about*** the Father. **28** Therefore Jesus said to them, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am ***He***, and I do nothing from Myself, but even as My Father taught Me, these things I speak. **29** And the ***One*** who sent Me is with Me; the Father has not left Me alone, because I always do the things pleasing to Him." **30** As He was speaking these things, many believed in Him.

8:7 Deut 17:6; Deut 13:9; Rom 2:1-3,21-25
8:9 Gen 42:21,22; 1 Kgs 17:18; Eccl 7:22
8:10 Isa 41:11,12
8:11 John 5:14; John 3:17; John 8:15
8:12 John 9:5; Isa 9:2; Isa 60:1
8:13 John 5:31-47
8:14 John 13:3; John 16:28; John 8:42
8:15 John 7:24; 1 Sam 16:7; John 12:47
8:16 John 8:29; John 16:32; John 5:22-30
8:17 Deut 17:6; 1 Kgs 21:10; Deut 19:15
8:18 Deut 17:6; John 14:6; Heb 2:4
8:19 Jer 22:16; Jer 24:7; John 16:3
8:20 1 Chr 9:26; Jer 26:9; Mark 12:41,43
8:21 John 7:34; John 8:24; John 13:33
8:22 Isa 22:14; John 8:48,52; John 7:20
8:23 1 John 2:15,16; John 17:14,16; John 1:14
8:24 Deut 32:39; Ezek 28:10; Ezek 33:9
8:25 John 1:19,22; John 10:24; John 19:9
8:26 John 15:15; John 7:28; John 8:40
8:27 Isa 6:9; John 8:43,47; Isa 42:18-20
8:28 John 5:19,30; John 3:14; Rom 1:4
8:29 Isa 42:1; Isa 50:4; Isa 49:5
8:30 John 7:31; John 2:23; John 6:14

8:7 *The sinless one among you, let him first cast the stone at her* The witnesses were to throw the first stones (Deut 17:7). Jesus did not set aside the Law. He turned the spotlight around. This does not mean sin should never be judged or courts never punish wrongdoing. It means the guilty should not use God's Law as a weapon while hiding their own sin.
8:9 *having begun from the older ones* I think the older men left first because they had lived long enough to know their own hearts. Conviction did its work.
8:11 *Neither do I condemn you; go, and sin no more* The only One without sin, who had the right to throw a stone, chose not to. Grace came first, then the call to a changed life. He did not excuse her sin or call it something else. Forgiveness is never permission to keep going. It is the power to walk away from sin.
8:12 *I am the light of the world* At the Feast of Booths great lamps were lit in the temple courts, and their light was said to be seen all over Jerusalem. Against that backdrop Jesus spoke the second "I am" saying (6:35). Light shows the way and exposes what is hidden (1:4). The promise is for the one who follows. Admiring the light is not enough. We have to walk in it.
8:14 *I know from where I came and where I am going* He came from the Father and was returning to Him. They knew neither. You cannot judge a witness when you do not know who He is.
8:15 *You judge according to the flesh; I judge no one* They judged by outward appearance and human standards. Judging was not the purpose of His first coming (3:17), but when He judges, He and the Father are never apart in it.
8:17 *the testimony of two men is true* The Law required two or three witnesses (Deut 17:6; 19:15). Jesus had two: Himself and the Father, who testified through His works and the Scriptures (5:36-39). Watch the words "I am" in this chapter. They build toward verse 58.
8:19 *Where is Your Father?* They thought of an earthly father, and may have been taking a jab at talk about His birth. To know Jesus is to know God (14:9).
8:20 *in the treasury* The area of the offering boxes, in the middle of the leaders' own ground. God's timetable, not the plans of men, decided when Jesus would go to the cross.
8:21 *you will die in your sin* One of the most serious warnings in this Gospel. Rejecting Jesus is not a small mistake.
8:23 *You are from below; I am from above* He was not a good teacher who rose up from among men. He came down from heaven (3:13, 31).
8:24 *unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins* "He" is not in the Greek. Word for word, unless you believe that I am. It points back to God's name at the burning bush, "I AM WHO I AM" (Exod 3:14). Believing in Jesus means believing He is who He says He is. There is no other way out of our sins.
8:27 *They did not understand that He was speaking to them about the Father* They heard the words but missed the meaning.
8:28 *When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He* The cross (3:14; 12:32-33). At the cross some confessed who He was (Matt 27:54), and after the resurrection thousands in Jerusalem believed (Acts 2:41). The Son is equal with the Father, yet He chose to submit to Him.
8:29 *I always do the things pleasing to Him* No other person in history could honestly say that. His sinless life is why He could be the perfect sacrifice for our sins.
8:30 *many believed in Him* Even in a hostile crowd, God's Word did its work. A hard crowd does not mean a wasted message.

The Truth Will Set You Free

31 Therefore Jesus was saying to the Jews who had believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are truly My disciples, **32** and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." **33** They answered Him, "We are seed of Abraham (Abraam), and we have never been enslaved to anyone. How do You say, 'You will become free'?" **34** Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you that everyone who does sin is a slave of sin. **35** Now the slave does not abide in the house forever; the son abides forever. **36** Therefore if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. **37** I know that you are seed of Abraham; but you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you. **38** I speak what I have seen with My Father; and you therefore do what you have seen with your father." **39** They answered and said to Him, "Our father is Abraham." Jesus says to them, "If you were children of Abraham, you would be doing the works of Abraham. **40** But now you seek to kill Me, a man who has spoken to you the truth which I heard from God; Abraham did not do this. **41** You are doing the works of your father." Therefore they said to Him, "We have not been born of sexual immorality; we have one Father: God." **42** Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I came forth from God and am here; for I have not even come of Myself, but He sent Me. **43** Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to hear My word. **44** You are of ***your*** father, the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from ***the*** beginning, and he has not stood in the truth, because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks the lie, he speaks from his own ***things***, for he is a liar and the father of it. **45** But because I speak the truth, you do not believe Me. **46** Which of you convicts Me concerning sin? And if I speak ***the*** truth, why do you not believe Me? **47** The ***one*** who is of God hears the words of God; because of this you do not hear, because you are not of God."

Before Abraham Came into Being, I Am

48 Therefore the Jews answered and said to Him, "Do we not rightly say that You are a Samaritan and have a demon?" **49** Jesus answered, "I do not have a demon; but I honor My Father, and you dishonor Me. **50** But I do not seek My glory; there is the ***One*** seeking and judging. **51** Truly, truly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word, he will certainly never see death." **52** Therefore the Jews said to Him, "Now we know that You have a demon. Abraham died, and the prophets, and You say, 'If anyone keeps My word, he will certainly never taste death.' **53** You are not greater than our father Abraham, who died, are You? And the prophets died. Whom do You make Yourself ***out to be***?" **54** Jesus answered, "If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing; it is My Father who glorifies Me, of whom you say that He is your God. **55** And you have not known Him, but I know Him; and if I say that I do not know Him, I will be a liar like you. But I know Him and I keep His word. **56** Abraham your father exulted that he might see My

8:31 1 Sam 12:14; Ps 119:45; 2 Tim 3:14
8:32 John 8:36; Rom 8:2,15; Ps 119:45
8:33 Isa 41:8; Ezek 33:24; John 8:39
8:34 2 Pet 2:19; Titus 3:3; Prov 5:22
8:35 Gen 21:10; Ezek 46:17; Matt 21:41-43
8:36 Gal 5:1; Rom 8:2; 2 Cor 3:17
8:37 Isa 41:8; John 7:1,19,25; 1 Cor 2:14
8:38 John 5:19,30; John 8:41,44; John 3:32
8:39 Isa 41:8; Ezek 33:24; Gal 3:7,29
8:40 Ps 37:32; Isa 41:8; Isa 48:2
8:41 Isa 64:8; Deut 32:5; Isa 63:16
8:42 Mal 1:6; Mal 3:2; John 17:8,25
8:43 Jer 6:10; Isa 6:9; Isa 56:11
8:44 Gen 3:15; Rev 12:9; Gen 3:1
8:45 2 Tim 4:3,4; John 3:19,20; John 7:7
8:46 Heb 4:15; John 8:7; John 14:30
8:47 John 1:12,13; John 6:45,46,65; John 8:37,43,45
8:48 Isa 53:3; John 7:20; John 8:52
8:49 Isa 49:3; 1 Sam 2:30; Prov 26:4,5
8:50 John 5:41; John 7:18; John 5:20-23,45
8:51 John 5:24; John 11:25,26; John 3:15,16
8:52 Zech 1:5; Zech 1:6; John 8:48
8:53 John 4:12; John 8:58; John 10:29,30
8:54 Isa 66:5; Ps 2:8; Isa 41:10
8:55 Jer 4:22; Jer 9:3; Hos 5:4
8:56 Gen 22:18; Gen 17:17; Gen 17:19

8:31 *If you abide in My word, you are truly My disciples* To abide is to remain, to continue. A real disciple does not agree with Jesus for an afternoon. He stays in His Word for life. Within minutes many in this group were arguing with Him, which shows how shallow their faith was.
8:32 *the truth will set you free* Often carved on university buildings as if it were about education. In context the truth is Jesus Himself (14:6) and His Word, and the freedom is freedom from sin. No book learning can do that.
8:33 *we have never been enslaved to anyone* They had been slaves in Egypt and captives in Babylon, and were under Rome at that moment. Pride has a short memory. They trusted their family line to make them right with God.
8:34 *everyone who does sin is a slave of sin* "Truly" is amen, so be it, it is true. Sin is not only something we do. It is a master that owns us until someone sets us free.
8:36 *if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed* A slave had no lasting place in a household and could be sold. A son belonged to the family forever (8:35). The Son has authority to free slaves and bring them into the family. No government or law can give that freedom.
8:39 *If you were children of Abraham, you would be doing the works of Abraham* Abraham believed God and welcomed His messengers (Gen 15:6; 18:1-8). They were trying to kill the One who told them God's truth. Being Abraham's child is about faith, not only family (Gal 3:7).
8:41 *We have not been born of sexual immorality* Perhaps a dig at Jesus, since rumors about His birth had likely followed Him.
8:42 *If God were your Father, you would love Me* A child of God recognizes the Son of God. Their hatred proved they did not belong to the Father.
8:43 *you are not able to hear My word* His words were not too hard. Their hearts would not receive them.
8:44 *You are of your father, the devil* Some of the strongest words Jesus spoke. The devil brought death to mankind in the Garden (Gen 3), and lying is his nature. Jesus was not speaking of the Jewish people as a whole. He and all His first disciples were Jewish. He spoke to men trying to kill Him at that moment. Anyone of any background who rejects God's truth for lies follows the same father.
8:46 *Which of you convicts Me concerning sin?* They did not believe Him because He told the truth. His enemies watched Him closely for three years and could not point to one sin.
8:47 *The one who is of God hears the words of God* A simple test for any of us. Do we hear God's Word and receive it, or argue with it?
8:48 *You are a Samaritan and have a demon* Out of arguments, they turned to insults. To them a Samaritan meant a half-breed and a heretic. When people cannot answer the truth, they often attack the one who speaks it.
8:51 *he will certainly never see death* Not that believers never die physically. They will never face death as God's final judgment, the second death (Rev 20:6, 14). For the believer, physical death is a doorway into His presence.
8:53 *You are not greater than our father Abraham* The answer is yes. That is exactly what He was claiming.
8:55 *I know Him and I keep His word* If He pretended not to know the Father, He would be a liar like them.
8:56 *Abraham your father exulted that he might see My day* Abraham looked ahead by faith to the promise that in his offspring all nations would be blessed (Gen 22:18). The patriarchs saw the promises from afar (Heb 11:13).

day, and he saw ***it*** and rejoiced." **57** Therefore the Jews said to Him, "You do not yet have fifty years, and have You seen Abraham?" **58** Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham came into being, I am." **59** Therefore they took up stones that they might cast ***them*** at Him; but Jesus was hidden and went out of the temple, passing through the midst of them, and so He was passing by.

JOHN 9

A Man Born Blind Receives Sight

1 And passing by, He saw a man blind from birth. **2** And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Rabbi, who sinned, this ***man*** or his parents, that he should be born blind?" **3** Jesus (Iesous) answered, "Neither this ***man*** sinned, nor his parents; but ***it was*** so that the works of God might be revealed in him. **4** I must work the works of the ***One*** who sent Me while it is day; night is coming, when no one is able to work. **5** While I am in the world, I am ***the*** light of the world." **6** Having said these things, He spat on the ground and made clay from the spittle, and He smeared the clay on the eyes of the blind ***man***. **7** And He said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which is translated, Sent). Therefore he went away and washed, and came seeing. **8** Therefore the neighbors and those who were seeing him before, that he was blind, were saying, "Is this not the ***one*** who sits and begs?" **9** Others were saying, "It is he"; others, "He is like him." He was saying, "I am ***he***."

10 Therefore they were saying to him, "How were your eyes opened?" **11** He answered and said, "A man who is called Jesus made clay and smeared my eyes and said to me, 'Go to the pool of Siloam and wash.' And having gone away and having washed, I received sight." **12** Therefore they said to him, "Where is that ***One***?" He says, "I do not know."

The Pharisees Investigate

13 They bring him who once ***was*** blind to the Pharisees. **14** Now it was a Sabbath when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes. **15** Therefore again the Pharisees also were asking him how he had received sight. And he said to them, "He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and I see."
16 Therefore some of the Pharisees were saying, "This man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath." Others were saying, "How is a sinful man able to do such signs?" And there was a division among them. **17** They say to the blind ***man*** again, "What do you say concerning Him, that He opened your eyes?" And he said, "He is a prophet."
18 Therefore the Jews did not believe concerning him that he had been blind and had received sight, until they called the parents of him who had received sight. **19** And they asked them, saying, "Is this your son, of whom you say that he was born blind? How then does he now see?" **20** His parents answered them and said, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; **21** but how he now sees we do not know, or who opened his eyes we do not know. He is of age;

8:58 Exod 3:14; Exod 6:3; John 17:5,24
8:59 Lev 24:16; John 11:8; John 10:30-33
9:2 John 9:34; Matt 16:14
9:3 John 11:4,40; Job 22:5-30; Job 42:7
9:4 John 12:35; Eph 5:16; Eccl 9:10
9:5 John 8:12; John 1:4-9; John 3:19-21
9:6 Isa 35:5; Mark 7:33; Mark 8:23
9:7 Isa 8:6; 2 Kgs 5:10; Isa 35:5
9:8 1 Sam 21:11; Ruth 1:19; 1 Sam 10:11
9:10 John 9:15,21,26; John 3:9; Eccl 11:5
9:11 John 9:6,7,27; Jer 36:17
9:12 John 5:11-13; John 7:11; Exod 2:18-20
9:13 John 8:3-8; John 11:46,47,57; John 12:19,42
9:14 Ps 146:8; John 5:9,16; John 7:21-23
9:15 Jer 36:17; John 9:10,11,26,27
9:16 John 10:19; John 3:2; John 7:12,43
9:17 John 4:19; John 6:14; Luke 24:19
9:18 John 5:44; John 12:37-40; Gen 19:14
9:19 John 9:8,9; Acts 3:10; Acts 4:14

8:57 *You do not yet have fifty years* Jesus was about thirty when He began (Luke 3:23), and Abraham lived some two thousand years before. They thought they had caught Him in an absurd claim.
8:58 *before Abraham came into being, I am* Not I was, but I am. Abraham came into being at a point in time. Jesus simply is, always has been and always will be. This is God's name from Exodus 3:14. Some groups teach Jesus was a created being, a lesser god. This verse will not allow it. Jesus did not claim to be old. He claimed to be eternal.
8:59 *they took up stones that they might cast them at Him* They understood exactly what He claimed. A blasphemer was to be stoned (Lev 24:16). Either Jesus was guilty of blasphemy, or He told the truth and He is God. There is no middle ground.
9:1 *He saw a man blind from birth* The blind man could not see Jesus, but Jesus saw him. He did not ask for help. That is a picture of grace: God comes looking for us before we look for Him. Giving sight to eyes that had never worked was something no one had ever heard of (9:32).
9:2 *who sinned, this man or his parents* Many then believed every illness was punishment for a specific sin, even sin before birth. Job's friends made the same mistake.
9:3 *that the works of God might be revealed in him* Sickness and death came into the world through sin in general (Gen 3; Rom 5:12), and sometimes a sin brings its own consequences. But we should never assume a person suffers because of what he did. Some of the strongest testimonies of God's goodness come from people who walked the hardest roads.
9:4 *night is coming, when no one is able to work* Day was His earthly ministry, and night His arrest and cross. He sent His disciples, and us, to carry on the work (20:21). Each of us has limited time to serve God in this life. We should not waste it.
9:5 *I am the light of the world* He repeats 8:12 and is about to show it. The healing is a living picture of the spiritual sight He gives everyone who believes.
9:6 *He spat on the ground and made clay* He healed others with only a word, and Scripture does not say why He did it this way. Some see Genesis 2:7, where God formed man from the dust. It gave the man something to feel and do, and it set up the conflict, because to the leaders making clay on the Sabbath was work.
9:7 *Go, wash in the pool of Siloam* Siloam means Sent, and Jesus is the One sent by the Father. The man walked across the city with mud on his eyes, still blind, and had to obey before he could see. Faith often looks like that. In 2004 workers repairing a sewer line uncovered the steps of a large pool from Jesus' day, identified as the pool of Siloam.
9:9 *He is like him* The change was so great people could not be sure it was the same man. When Jesus truly changes a life, people notice.
9:11 *A man who is called Jesus* He told his story simply. Watch his understanding grow: "a man" (9:11), "a prophet" (9:17), "from God" (9:33), and at last "Lord," whom he worships (9:38).
9:14 *it was a Sabbath when Jesus made the clay* The religious teachers' long list of what counted as work included kneading, which is what you do to make clay, and healing unless a life was in danger. Jesus did not break God's Law (Exod 20:8-11). He broke the man-made rules piled on top of it.
9:16 *How is a sinful man able to do such signs?* The first group started with their conclusion and threw out the evidence. The second at least let the evidence make them think. If we come to Jesus with our minds made up, we will miss what is in front of us.
9:17 *He is a prophet* Prophets like Elijah and Elisha did great miracles by God's power. Whoever opened his eyes was sent from God.
9:18 *until they called the parents* If they could prove he was a different man or never truly blind, the problem would go away.
9:21 *he is of age* A grown man, old enough to give legal testimony for himself.

ask him; he will speak concerning himself." **22** His parents said these things because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed together that if anyone confessed Him ***to be*** Christ, he would be put out of the synagogue. **23** Because of this his parents said, "He is of age; ask him." **24** Therefore a second time they called the man who was blind, and said to him, "Give glory to God; we know that this man is a sinner." **25** Then he answered and said, "Whether He is a sinner, I do not know; one ***thing*** I know, that being blind, now I see." **26** And they said to him again, "What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?" **27** He answered them, "I told you already, and you did not hear. Why do you want to hear ***it*** again? You do not also want to become His disciples, do you?" **28** Therefore they reviled him and said, "You are a disciple of that ***One***, but we are disciples of Moses. **29** We know that God has spoken to Moses; but this ***man***, we do not know where He is from." **30** The man answered and said to them, "For in this is an amazing ***thing***, that you do not know where He is from, and He opened my eyes. **31** Now we know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is God-fearing and does His will, He hears him. **32** Since the age ***began*** it has not been heard that anyone opened ***the*** eyes of one born blind. **33** If this ***man*** were not from God, He would not be able to do anything." **34** They answered and said to him, "You were entirely born in sins, and you teach us?" And they cast him out.

Spiritual Blindness

35 Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him, He said to him, "Do you believe in the Son of God?" **36** He answered and said, "Who is He, Sir, that I may believe in Him?" **37** And Jesus said to him, "You have both seen Him, and the ***One*** speaking with you is He." **38** And he said, "I believe, Lord." And he worshiped Him. **39** And Jesus said, "For judgment I came into this world, that those not seeing may see, and those seeing may become blind." **40** And those of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these things, and they said to Him, "We are not also blind, are we?" **41** Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would not have sin; but now you say, 'We see.' Therefore your sin remains."

JOHN 10

The Door and the Good Shepherd

1 "Truly, truly, I say to you, the ***one*** not entering through the door into the fold of the sheep, but climbing up from elsewhere, that ***one*** is a thief and a robber. **2** But the ***one*** entering through the door is ***the*** shepherd of the sheep. **3** To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calls

9:22 John 7:13; John 16:2; Luke 6:22
9:24 Josh 7:19; John 9:16; John 5:23
9:25 John 9:30; John 5:11; 1 John 5:10
9:27 John 9:10-15; Luke 22:67
9:28 Rom 2:17; John 9:34; John 7:47-52
9:29 Num 12:2; Num 16:28; Deut 34:10
9:30 Isa 35:5; 1 Sam 25:11; Ps 146:8
9:31 Prov 15:29; Ps 145:19; Zech 7:13
9:32 Ps 146:8; Isa 64:4; Job 20:4
9:33 John 9:16; John 3:2; Acts 5:38,39
9:34 John 9:2; John 9:22; Job 25:4
9:35 1 John 5:13; John 10:36; John 5:14
9:36 John 1:38; Prov 30:3,4; Song 5:9
9:37 Ps 25:14; John 4:26; John 7:17
9:38 Ps 2:12; Ps 45:11; Matt 14:33
9:39 John 3:19; John 8:12; John 12:46
9:40 Matt 15:12-14; Rev 3:17; John 9:34
9:41 Isa 5:21; John 15:22-24; 1 John 1:8-10
10:1 1 John 4:1; Heb 5:4; John 10:8,10
10:2 Acts 20:28; John 10:7,9; John 10:11,12,14
10:3 John 10:14,27; Isa 53:10-12; 1 Cor 16:9

9:22 *he would be put out of the synagogue* The synagogue was the center of Jewish community life. Being put out could cut a person off from friends, worship and even work. Fear is powerful, but it is sad to see parents too afraid to stand with their son on the greatest day of his life. Following Jesus may cost us our place among people (16:2). Will we confess Him anyway?
9:24 *Give glory to God* A solemn way of saying, tell the truth before God (Josh 7:19). They put him under oath and told him the answer they wanted.
9:25 *one thing I know, that being blind, now I see* He did not try to win a debate with the experts. He told what happened to him. No one can argue you out of what Jesus has done in your life. John Newton put these words into his hymn Amazing Grace.
9:27 *You do not also want to become His disciples, do you?* A beggar who had never read a book was teasing the most powerful religious leaders in the city. The more they pushed, the bolder he became.
9:29 *this man, we do not know where He is from* In 7:27 the crowd said they did know. Now, when it suits them, the leaders say they do not. They set Moses against Jesus, but Moses wrote about Jesus (5:46). You cannot truly follow Moses and reject the One he pointed to.
9:31 *God does not hear sinners* A common belief, close to Psalm 66:18 and Proverbs 15:29: God does not answer those living in open rebellion. These are the words of a new believer, not a doctrine Jesus taught. God does hear the sinner who turns to Him. The tax collector prayed, "God, be propitious to me, the sinner" (Luke 18:13), and went home justified.
9:32 *it has not been heard that anyone opened the eyes of one born blind* No such case is recorded in the Old Testament. The prophets spoke of the eyes of the blind opened as a sign of God's coming salvation (Isa 35:5). The man was living proof of it.
9:34 *You were entirely born in sins* Now they admit he was born blind, the very thing they refused to believe. They put him out of the synagogue. When people cannot answer the truth, they try to silence it.
9:35 *having found him* The leaders threw him out, and Jesus took him in. When you are rejected for His sake, He will find you. Some Greek copies read "Son of Man," His favorite name for Himself (Dan 7:13-14). Either way, Jesus asked for his faith.
9:37 *You have both seen Him* He was healed after he went away to wash, so this may be the first time he laid eyes on the man who healed him. The first face he looked for was the face of the Son of God.
9:38 *I believe, Lord. And he worshiped Him* When people tried to worship apostles or angels, they refused (Acts 10:25-26; Rev 19:10; 22:8-9). Jesus accepted it, because He is God.
9:39 *For judgment I came into this world* In 3:17 He said He did not come to judge. Both are true. His purpose was to save, but His coming divides people. Those who admit they are blind receive sight. Those who think they see end up blinder than before.
9:41 *now you say, 'We see.' Therefore your sin remains* If they admitted their blindness, they could be healed and forgiven. Claiming to see, they shut the door on the only One who could help. Pride is the most dangerous blindness, because the person who has it does not know it.
10:1 *the one not entering through the door into the fold of the sheep* A sheepfold was usually a stone pen with one opening, where sheep were kept safe at night. Anyone who climbed the wall was there to take, not to care. Jesus is speaking to the Pharisees who had just thrown the healed man out (9:34). They had climbed into authority over God's people without coming God's way, and they did not love the sheep.
10:3 *he calls his own sheep by name* Several flocks often shared a fold overnight, and in the morning each shepherd called and only his own sheep came. The Good Shepherd does not see a crowd. He sees you and calls you personally, as He had just done with the blind man (9:35).

his own sheep by name and leads them out. **4** And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, because they know his voice. **5** But a stranger they will certainly not follow, but they will flee from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers." **6** Jesus (Iesous) spoke this figure of speech to them, but they did not know what the things were which He was speaking to them. **7** Therefore Jesus said to them again, "Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. **8** All, as many as came before Me, are thieves and robbers; but the sheep did not hear them. **9** I am the door. If anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and he will go in and will go out and will find pasture. **10** The thief does not come except that he may steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and may have ***it*** abundantly. **11** I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. **12** But the hired man, and not being a shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, sees the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf snatches them and scatters the sheep. **13** Now the hired man flees because he is a hired man and is not concerned about the sheep. **14** I am the good shepherd; and I know My own, and I am known by My own, **15** even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. **16** And I have other sheep which are not of this fold; those also I must bring, and they will hear My voice, and there will be one flock, one shepherd. **17** Because of this the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life, so that I may take it again. **18** No one takes it away from Me, but I lay it down from Myself. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it again. This commandment I received from My Father." **19** Therefore a division occurred again among the Jews because of these words. **20** And many of them were saying, "He has a demon and is insane. Why do you listen to Him?" **21** Others were saying, "These declarations are not ***those*** of one being demonized. A demon is not able to open ***the*** eyes of ***the*** blind, is it?"

I and the Father Are One

22 Now the ***Feast of*** Dedication took place in Jerusalem (Hierosolyma), and it was winter, **23** and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the porch of Solomon. **24** Therefore the Jews surrounded Him and were saying to Him, "How long do You hold our soul in suspense? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly." **25** Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you do not believe. The works which I do in the name of My Father, these testify concerning Me. **26** But you do not believe, for you are not of My sheep, even as I said to you. **27** My sheep

10:4 John 12:26; Deut 1:30; 1 Cor 11:1
10:5 1 John 4:5,6; 1 Kgs 22:7; Prov 19:27
10:6 Ps 82:5; Ps 106:7; Prov 28:5
10:7 John 14:6; Eph 2:18; John 10:1,9
10:8 Ezek 34:2; Ezek 22:25-28; John 10:1
10:9 John 14:6; John 10:1,7; Eph 2:18
10:10 Luke 19:10; John 12:47; John 3:17
10:11 Isa 40:11; Ps 23:1; Ezek 34:11
10:12 2 Pet 2:3; Isa 56:10-12; Ezek 34:2-6
10:13 John 12:6; Acts 18:17; Phil 2:20
10:14 John 10:27; Ps 1:6; 2 Tim 2:19
10:15 Matt 11:27; John 10:11,17; John 15:13
10:16 Isa 56:8; 1 Pet 2:25; John 11:52
10:17 Heb 2:9; Isa 53:7-12; John 3:25
10:18 Isa 53:10; Heb 2:9,14,15; John 14:31
10:19 John 9:16; John 7:40-43; Matt 10:34,35
10:20 2 Kgs 9:11; John 7:20; Mark 3:21
10:21 Ps 146:8; Isa 35:5; Exod 4:11
10:23 2 Chr 8:12; Acts 3:11; Acts 5:12
10:24 1 Kgs 18:21; Matt 11:3; John 1:19
10:25 John 5:17-43; John 8:12,24,58; John 10:32,38
10:26 John 8:47; John 10:4,27; Rom 11:7,8
10:27 Isa 55:3; Isa 66:22; Jer 32:40

10:4 *the sheep follow him, because they know his voice* An Eastern shepherd walked ahead of his sheep rather than driving them. A stranger could use the same words, but the voice was wrong (10:5). The more time we spend with our Shepherd in His Word, the more a false teacher, even one using Bible words, will sound off to us. You learn a voice by hearing it often.
10:6 *this figure of speech* The Greek paroimia, an illustration. The Pharisees missed it completely. They had eyes but could not see, the point Jesus made in 9:39-41.
10:7 *I am the door of the sheep* The third "I am" saying. In the field a shepherd often lay down across the opening of the pen at night. Nothing got in or out without passing him. He was the door.
10:8 *All, as many as came before Me, are thieves and robbers* Not the prophets, who pointed to Him, but those who claimed to be the way to God while leading people away from Him: false messiahs and self-serving leaders.
10:9 *If anyone enters through Me, he will be saved* One of the plainest statements of salvation in the Bible. "If anyone" opens the invitation to all. Going in and out to pasture pictures the life that follows: safety, freedom, and food to grow. Jesus did not say He is one of many doors (14:6).
10:10 *I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly* The thief, finally Satan and every leader who serves himself at the flock's expense, comes to destroy. The Greek perissos means overflowing, more than enough. Not a promise of money or ease. Jesus Himself was poor and was crucified. Abundant life is life with God, full of meaning, forgiveness and peace, beginning now and never ending.
10:11 *I am the good shepherd* The fourth "I am" saying. "Good" is kalos, noble, beautiful, the model shepherd. A hired shepherd might fight off a wolf, but no one expected him to die for the flock. In the Old Testament the LORD is Israel's Shepherd (Ps 23:1; Ezek 34:11-16), and Jesus steps into that role.
10:12 *the hired man* He works for a paycheck and runs when danger comes, because the sheep are not his. A warning to anyone in ministry. The sheep belong to Christ, and those of us who teach will answer to Him for how we treat them.
10:14 *I know My own, and I am known by My own* A relationship, not just a job, compared to the closest one there is, the Father and the Son (10:15). The cross was not an accident that caught Him by surprise. He went to it on purpose, for us.
10:16 *I have other sheep which are not of this fold* The fold was Israel. The other sheep are the Gentiles, most of us reading this. "One flock, one shepherd" is the church, Jew and Gentile together under one Lord (Eph 2:14), ending in a multitude from every nation (Rev 7:9).
10:18 *No one takes it away from Me, but I lay it down from Myself* Not Judas, the high priest, Pilate or the soldiers. Only God has authority over life and death. Scripture says the Father raised Him (Acts 2:24), the Spirit was at work (Rom 8:11), and here the Son takes His life up again. All three Persons of the one God, the Trinity, were at work in the resurrection.
10:21 *A demon is not able to open the eyes of the blind, is it?* Again His words divide the crowd (7:43; 9:16). No one stays neutral about Him for long, and the works He did are the evidence that settles it.
10:22 *the Feast of Dedication* Today's Hanukkah, the Feast of Lights. It celebrates the rededication of the temple in about 164 B.C., after the Maccabees drove out Antiochus IV Epiphanes, who had defiled it with pagan sacrifices. Daniel foretold this ruler (Dan 8; 11), and many teachers see him as a forerunner of the antichrist to come.
10:23 *the porch of Solomon* A covered walkway along the east side of the temple courts, where the early church later met (Acts 3:11; 5:12). Jesus, the true temple (2:19-21), walked there at the feast of its cleansing.
10:24 *If You are the Christ, tell us plainly* Not an honest question. They wanted words to accuse Him to the Romans or to stone Him for blasphemy.
10:26 *you are not of My sheep* He had told them by His words and works. Unbelief is not usually a head problem. It is a heart problem.
10:27 *My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me* A simple picture of a true believer: they hear, He knows them, they follow.

hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. **28** And I give them eternal life, and they will certainly never perish, and no one will snatch them out of My hand. **29** My Father, who has given ***them*** to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch ***them*** out of the hand of My Father. **30** I and the Father are one." **31** Therefore the Jews again took up stones so that they might stone Him. **32** Jesus answered them, "Many good works I have shown you from My Father. Because of which work of them do you stone Me?" **33** The Jews answered Him, saying, "For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a man, make Yourself God." **34** Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in your law, 'I said, you are gods'? **35** If He called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture is not able to be broken), **36** do you say of ***Him*** whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, 'You blaspheme,' because I said, 'I am ***the*** Son of God'? **37** If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; **38** but if I do, even if you do not believe Me, believe the works, so that you may know and believe that the Father ***is*** in Me, and I in Him." **39** Therefore they were seeking again to seize Him, and He went out of their hand. **40** And He went away again beyond the Jordan (Iordanes) to the place where John (Ioannes) was baptizing at first, and He stayed there. **41** And many came to Him and were saying, "John indeed did no sign, but all things, as many as John said about this ***man***, were true." **42** And many believed in Him there.

JOHN 11

Lazarus Dies

1 Now ***there*** was a certain ***man*** being sick, Lazarus (Lazaros) of Bethany (Bethania), of the village of Mary (Maria) and Martha her sister. **2** Now Mary was the ***one*** who anointed the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. **3** Therefore the sisters sent to Him, saying, "Lord, look, ***he*** whom You love dearly is sick." **4** And having heard ***it***, Jesus (Iesous) said, "This sickness is not to death, but for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it." **5** Now Jesus was loving Martha and her sister and Lazarus. **6** Therefore when He heard that he was sick, then He indeed remained two days in the place where He was. **7** Then after this He says to the disciples, "Let us go into Judea (Ioudaia) again." **8** The disciples say to Him, "Rabbi, just now the Jews were seeking to stone You, and You are going there again?" **9** Jesus answered, "Are there not

10:28 Ps 37:28; John 6:37,39,40; John 17:2
10:29 Exod 18:11; Isa 43:11; Isa 45:22
10:30 Matt 28:19; Titus 2:13; John 1:1,2
10:31 John 8:59; John 5:18; Acts 7:52,58,59
10:32 John 10:25,37; John 5:19,20,36; Matt 11:5
10:33 John 5:18; John 10:30; 1 Kgs 21:10
10:34 Ps 82:6; Ps 138:1; Ps 82:1,6,7
10:35 Gen 15:1; 1 Sam 15:1; 2 Sam 7:5
10:36 Isa 11:2; Isa 42:1; Isa 49:6
10:37 John 15:24; John 10:25,32; John 5:31
10:38 Num 14:11; John 3:2; John 5:36
10:39 John 7:30,44; John 8:59; John 10:31
10:40 John 1:28; John 3:26; John 7:1
10:41 John 1:29,33,34; John 3:26; Matt 4:23-25
10:42 John 2:23; John 4:39,41; John 8:30
11:1 Matt 21:17; John 11:3,6; Gen 48:1
11:2 John 12:3; Mark 14:3; Matt 26:6,7
11:3 John 11:1,5; John 13:23; Gen 22:2
11:4 John 11:40; John 9:3; John 13:31,32
11:5 John 15:9-13; John 16:27; John 17:26
11:6 Isa 30:18; Isa 55:8,9; Gen 22:14
11:7 John 10:40-42; Luke 9:51; Acts 15:36
11:8 John 10:31,39; Matt 16:21-23; Ps 11:1-3
11:9 Jer 31:9; Prov 3:23; Job 33:28

10:28 *no one will snatch them out of My hand* The believer's safety rests on the Shepherd, not on the sheep. Some believe these words teach that a true believer can never be lost. Others note the promise is for sheep who keep hearing and following, and believe a person can choose to leave (Heb 3:12-14). Good people land on both sides. No one should miss the comfort: no outside power, not Satan, people or circumstances, can take His sheep from Him.
10:29 *no one is able to snatch them out of the hand of My Father* A second hand. The sheep are held in the Son's hand and the Father's (6:37-39). This is double protection from the only One who has all power.
10:30 *I and the Father are one* Among the strongest claims to deity Jesus made. The Greek hen is neuter: not one Person, since He speaks to and about the Father throughout, but one in nature and essence, power and purpose. Some say He only meant He agreed with God. The men standing there did not take it that way (10:31).
10:31 *the Jews again took up stones* As in 8:59. Stoning was the Law's penalty for blasphemy (Lev 24:16). If He had only meant God and I agree, no one would have reached for a rock.
10:33 *You, being a man, make Yourself God* They were right about what He claimed and wrong about who He was. Jesus did not make Himself God. He is God, who became a man (1:1, 14).
10:34 *I said, you are gods* From Psalm 82:6, where God calls Israel's judges elohim, gods, because they stood in God's place to judge, though they would die like men. Jesus reasons from lesser to greater. If Scripture calls mere judges gods, how is it blasphemy for the One the Father set apart and sent to say, "I am the Son of God" (10:36)? He is not claiming to be a lesser god. Their charge fails by their own Bible.
10:35 *the Scripture is not able to be broken* Jesus built His argument on one word in one psalm and said Scripture cannot be set aside or proven wrong. If that was His view of God's Word, it should be ours.
10:38 *believe the works* Do not take My word for it. Look at what I do. God never asks for blind faith. He gives evidence and asks us to trust Him on the basis of what He has shown.
10:39 *He went out of their hand* As before (7:30, 44; 8:59). No one could lay a hand on Him until the Father's time.
10:41 *John indeed did no sign, but all things, as many as John said about this man, were true* Back where His ministry began (1:28). John never did a miracle, but he told the truth about Jesus, and years later people still came to faith because of it. We may never do anything spectacular, but God can use our witness long after we are gone.
11:1 *Lazarus of Bethany, of the village of Mary and Martha her sister* We meet this family in Luke 10:38-42, Martha busy serving and Mary at Jesus' feet. Lazarus is a Greek form of Eleazar, God has helped, a fitting name for a man God was about to help in the most amazing way. John points ahead to Mary's anointing in chapter 12.
11:3 *he whom You love dearly is sick* They do not ask Him to come or tell Him what to do. They bring the need and trust His love. That is a good model for prayer. Their confidence was in His love, not in their own worthiness.
11:4 *This sickness is not to death, but for the glory of God* Lazarus did die, but death would not be the final word. As with the man born blind (9:3), God sometimes allows suffering for reasons we cannot see in the moment. That does not mean He does not care.
11:6 *then He indeed remained two days in the place where He was* Jesus loved them (11:5), and so He waited. Coming at once, He would have healed a sick man. By waiting He raised a dead man and showed His power over death itself. God's delays are not God's denials. Not every prayer for healing is answered this way, and Lazarus died again someday, but for those who belong to Him death is not the last word (11:25).
11:8 *just now the Jews were seeking to stone You* The last time near Jerusalem they tried to stone Him (10:31). The disciples were thinking of safety. Jesus was thinking of His Father's plan and His friend.
11:9 *Are there not twelve hours in the day?* Jesus walked in the light of the Father's will, and nothing could happen to Him before His time. When we walk in God's light, we need not be ruled by fear.

twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. **10** But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him." **11** He said these things, and after this He says to them, "Lazarus our friend has fallen asleep; but I go so that I may wake him." **12** Therefore His disciples said, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover." **13** Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that He was speaking of the rest of sleep. **14** Then therefore Jesus said to them plainly, "Lazarus died. **15** And I rejoice for your sake that I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him." **16** Therefore Thomas, who is called Didymus (Didymos), said to the fellow disciples, "Let us also go, so that we may die with Him."

I Am the Resurrection and the Life

17 Therefore having come, Jesus found that he had already been four days in the tomb. **18** Now Bethany was near Jerusalem (Hierosolyma), approximately 1.7 miles (fifteen stadia) away. **19** And many of the Jews had come to those around Martha and Mary, so that they might console them concerning their brother. **20** Therefore Martha, when she heard that Jesus was coming, met Him; but Mary was sitting in the house. **21** Then Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. **22** But even now I know that whatever You may ask God, God will give You." **23** Jesus says to her, "Your brother will rise again."

24 Martha says to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." **25** Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The ***one*** believing in Me, even if he dies, will live, **26** and everyone living and believing in Me will certainly never die. Do you believe this?" **27** She says to Him, "Yes, Lord; I have believed that You are the Christ, the Son of God, the ***One*** coming into the world."

Jesus Wept

28 And having said these things, she went away and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, "The Teacher is here and calls you." **29** She, when she heard, rises quickly and comes to Him. **30** Now Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was in the place where Martha met Him. **31** Then the Jews who were with her in the house and consoling her, having seen Mary, that she rose up quickly and went out, followed her, saying, "She is going to the tomb so that she may weep there." **32** Therefore Mary, when she came where Jesus was, having seen Him, fell at His feet, saying to Him, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died."

33 Therefore when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come with her weeping, He was deeply moved in the spirit and troubled Himself. **34** And He said, "Where have you

11:10 Jer 13:16; Ps 27:2; Eccl 2:14
11:11 Deut 31:16; Dan 12:2; Mark 5:39
11:14 John 10:24; John 16:25,29
11:15 Exod 4:5; 2 Tim 2:10; John 11:35,36
11:16 John 21:2; Matt 10:3; Mark 3:18
11:17 John 11:39; John 2:19; Hos 6:2
11:18 John 6:19; Luke 24:13; Rev 14:20
11:19 Job 2:11; 1 Thess 5:11; Gen 37:35
11:20 John 11:30; Matt 25:1,6; Acts 10:25
11:21 John 11:32,37; John 4:47-49; 1 Kgs 17:18
11:22 John 9:31; John 11:41,42; Mark 9:23
11:23 Dan 12:2; John 11:43,44
11:24 Dan 12:2; Hos 6:2; John 5:28,29
11:25 1 Thess 4:14; John 1:4; John 3:36
11:26 John 10:28; John 14:10; John 3:15-18
11:27 Matt 16:16; John 6:14; Mal 3:1
11:28 John 13:13; John 11:20; John 1:41,45
11:29 Ps 27:8; Prov 15:23; Song 3:1-4
11:31 Gen 37:35; 2 Sam 12:16-18; 1 Cor 2:15
11:32 John 11:21,37; Luke 5:8; Luke 8:41
11:33 John 11:38; John 12:27; Mark 3:5
11:34 John 1:39; John 20:2; Matt 28:6

11:11 *Lazarus our friend has fallen asleep* The Bible often calls a believer's death sleep (Acts 7:60; 1 Thess 4:13-14). That does not mean the soul is unconscious. To be absent from the body is to be at home with the Lord (2 Cor 5:8). It means death is temporary, and the body will be raised. For Jesus, waking Lazarus from death was as easy as waking a friend from a nap.

11:15 *I rejoice for your sake that I was not there, so that you may believe* Not glad His friends grieved, but glad for what the disciples would see. In a few weeks they would watch Him die, and they needed to know He had power over the grave.

11:16 *Let us also go, so that we may die with Him* Didymus means twin. Thomas is remembered as doubting Thomas (20:25), but here he is loyal and brave, ready to follow Jesus even at the cost of his life. Let's give him credit for that.

11:17 *he had already been four days in the tomb* Burial usually took place the same day. Four days meant no question he was truly dead, and decay had begun (11:39). Jesus let it become humanly hopeless so only God could get the glory.

11:19 *many of the Jews had come to those around Martha and Mary* Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem. Mourning lasted several days, and friends came to sit with the family. God arranged a crowd of witnesses.

11:20 *Martha, when she heard that Jesus was coming, met Him; but Mary was sitting in the house* Each acts as we would expect from Luke 10. Neither is wrong. God made people differently, and He meets each of us where we are.

11:21 *Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died* Faith and hurt together. She believed He could have healed him and may have wondered why He did not come. We can bring Him our questions and our if-only moments. Faith and grief can live in the same heart.

11:24 *he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day* Many Jews, especially Pharisees, believed in a future resurrection (Dan 12:2). Martha had good theology but expected nothing that day. Jesus will raise His people on the last day (6:39-40). I believe the dead in Christ rise when He comes for His church before the Tribulation (1 Thess 4:16-17). But the resurrection is not only an event. It is a Person.

11:25 *I am the resurrection and the life* The fifth "I am" saying. Not I will bring the resurrection, but I am it. The believer will live even if he dies, for his body will be raised. And everyone who lives and believes will never die, for the soul will never be separated from God (11:26). Death for a believer is a doorway into the Lord's presence.

11:26 *Do you believe this?* He asks you the same question today, and how you answer it shapes everything else.

11:27 *You are the Christ, the Son of God, the One coming into the world* One of the great confessions of the Bible, and exactly John's purpose for writing (20:31). Martha, the busy, practical sister, gets it right. Faith does not belong only to the quiet types.

11:28 *The Teacher is here and calls you* Said secretly, probably because of the danger with so many visitors from Jerusalem. When Jesus calls, the right response is to go to Him right away.

11:31 *She is going to the tomb so that she may weep there* Without knowing it, the mourners followed her straight to Jesus and the greatest miracle they would ever see.

11:32 *fell at His feet* Where we usually find Mary (Luke 10:39; 12:3). She says the same words as Martha. Jesus answered Martha with teaching. He answers Mary with tears. He gives each of us what we need.

11:33 *He was deeply moved in the spirit and troubled Himself* The Greek embrimaomai is strong and can include anger or indignation. Not at Mary. I believe He was moved by the grief before Him and stirred against death itself, the enemy sin brought into God's good world. Death was never part of God's original design.

11:34 *Lord, come and see* The words of chapter 1 (1:39, 46). Now the mourners invite Jesus to come and see their sorrow.

laid him?" They say to Him, "Lord, come and see." **35** Jesus wept. **36** Therefore the Jews were saying, "Look how He was loving him dearly!" **37** But some of them said, "Was not this ***man***, who opened the eyes of the blind ***man***, able to cause that this ***man*** also should not die?"

Lazarus Raised

38 Therefore Jesus, again being deeply moved in Himself, comes to the tomb. Now it was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. **39** Jesus says, "Take away the stone." The sister of the ***one*** who had died, Martha, says to Him, "Lord, already he stinks, for he is four days ***dead***." **40** Jesus says to her, "Did I not say to you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?" **41** Therefore they took away the stone where the ***one*** who had died was laid. And Jesus lifted ***His*** eyes upward and said, "Father, I thank You that You heard Me. **42** And I knew that You always hear Me; but because of the crowd standing around I said ***it***, so that they may believe that You sent Me." **43** And having said these things, He cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" **44** And the ***one*** who had died came out, bound feet and hands with linen strips, and his face had been bound around with a cloth. Jesus says to them, "Unbind him and allow ***him*** to go."

The Plot to Kill Jesus

45 Therefore many of the Jews who had come to Mary and had seen what Jesus did believed in Him. **46** But some of them went away to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus did. **47** Therefore the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and were saying, "What are we doing? For this man does many signs. **48** If we let Him alone like this, all will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation." **49** But a certain one of them, Caiaphas (Kaiaphas), being high priest of that year, said to them, "You know nothing, **50** nor do you consider that it is profitable for us that one man die for the people, and not the whole nation perish." **51** Now this he did not say from himself, but being high priest of that year he prophesied that Jesus was about to die for the nation, **52** and not for the nation only, but that He might also gather together into one the children of God who have been scattered. **53** Therefore from that day they took counsel together that they might kill Him. **54** Therefore Jesus was no longer walking publicly among the Jews, but went away from there into the region near the wilderness, to a city called Ephraim, and there He stayed with His disciples. **55** Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went up to Jerusalem out of the region before the Passover, so that they might purify themselves. **56** Therefore they were seeking Jesus and were saying among one another, standing in the temple, "What does it seem to

11:35 Isa 53:3; Gen 43:30; Gen 23:2
11:36 John 14:21-23; John 21:15-17; 2 Cor 8:8,9
11:37 Isa 35:5; John 9:6; Ps 78:19,20
11:38 Matt 27:60,66; John 11:33; Isa 22:16
11:39 John 11:17; Mark 16:3; Gen 3:19
11:40 John 11:4; John 11:23-26; Exod 16:7
11:41 Ps 89:26; John 17:1; Matt 11:25
11:42 Exod 4:5; 1 Kgs 9:3; 2 Kgs 19:20
11:43 Neh 9:4; 1 Kgs 17:21,22; 2 Kgs 4:33-36
11:44 John 11:25,26; John 5:21,25; John 10:30
11:45 John 11:19,31; John 2:23; John 10:41
11:46 John 9:13; John 5:15,16; John 12:37
11:47 Matt 26:3; John 12:19; Ps 2:2-4
11:48 Acts 5:28,38-40; John 1:7; Luke 8:12
11:49 John 18:13,14; Prov 26:12; Luke 3:2
11:50 John 18:14; Luke 24:46; John 11:48
11:51 Exod 28:30; 1 Sam 23:9; Judg 20:27,28
11:52 John 10:16; Isa 49:6; 1 John 2:2
11:53 Neh 4:16; Neh 13:21; Ps 113:2
11:54 2 Sam 13:23; John 7:1; John 7:4,10,13
11:55 2 Chr 30:17; Exod 12:11; Num 9:6
11:56 John 7:11; John 11:7; John 11:8

11:35 *Jesus wept* The shortest verse in most English Bibles, and one of the deepest. The word means to shed tears quietly, not the loud wailing around Him. He knew He would raise Lazarus, yet He truly feels our pain. He came close enough to cry with us (Heb 4:15). If you are grieving today, Jesus weeps with you.

11:37 *Was not this man, who opened the eyes of the blind man, able to cause that this man also should not die?* The same question as the sisters', but from doubt instead of faith. There will always be people who look at Jesus' love and find fault.

11:38 *it was a cave, and a stone was lying against it* A typical family tomb. The body lay on a shelf inside, and the stone kept out animals and robbers. It would not stand there long.

11:39 *Take away the stone* Jesus could have moved it with a word but gave the people something to do. God often asks us to do the part we can before He does the part only He can. Martha's objection proves beyond doubt that Lazarus was dead. Jesus was not reviving a man who fainted.

11:40 *if you believe, you will see the glory of God* Martha's facts were correct. Faith is not ignoring the facts. It is trusting that God is bigger than the facts.

11:41 *Father, I thank You that You heard Me* He thanked the Father before anything happened. He prayed aloud for the crowd's sake, so they would know the Father sent Him (11:42). His miracles always pointed back to the One who sent Him. We too can thank God in faith before we see the answer.

11:43 *Lazarus, come out!* He called His friend by name, as the Good Shepherd calls His sheep (10:3). Death has no choice but to obey the voice of the Son of God. Lazarus was a preview of the hour when all in the tombs will hear His voice (5:28-29).

11:44 *Unbind him and allow him to go* Again the people had a job. Only Jesus gives new life to the spiritually dead (Eph 2:1, 5), but He invites us to help new believers get free of the grave clothes of their old life. Lazarus was restored to this life and would die again. Jesus rose never to die again (Rom 6:9).

11:46 *some of them went away to the Pharisees* Standing before a man raised from the dead, some still did not believe. As Jesus said, "neither will they be persuaded if someone rises from the dead" (Luke 16:31). Miracles alone do not change a heart that has decided against God.

11:48 *the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation* The council, the Sanhedrin, did not deny the signs. Their place meant the temple and their own power. They feared losing it more than they cared whether Jesus told the truth. What they feared came anyway: Rome destroyed the temple and Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

11:49 *Caiaphas, being high priest of that year* High priest from about A.D. 18 to 36. "That year" means that one fateful year. His plan was cold political calculation: remove the problem for the good of the country.

11:51 *he prophesied that Jesus was about to die for the nation* Caiaphas meant, sacrifice Jesus to save ourselves. God meant, Jesus will die in the people's place to save them. And not for Israel only, but to gather God's scattered children into one (11:52), the "other sheep" of 10:16. God can use even the words of wicked men for His purpose.

11:53 *from that day they took counsel together that they might kill Him* The raising of Lazarus hardened their hearts. This is the turning point of John's Gospel. From here the road leads straight to the cross.

11:54 *a city called Ephraim* Jesus was not running from the cross. His hour had to come at Passover, and He would not let them take Him a moment early.

11:55 *so that they might purify themselves* The third Passover in John (2:13; 6:4) and the last of Jesus' life. Pilgrims came early for the purification rites (Num 9:6-10). They were careful to be ceremonially clean while their leaders planned murder.

you? That He will certainly not come to the feast?" **57** Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a command that if anyone knew where He was, he should report ***it***, so that they might seize Him.

JOHN 12

Mary Anoints Jesus

1 Therefore six days before the Passover Jesus (Iesous) came to Bethany (Bethania), where Lazarus (Lazaros) was, who had died, whom He raised out from ***the*** dead. **2** Therefore they made a supper for Him there, and Martha was serving, and Lazarus was one of those reclining ***at table*** with Him. **3** Therefore Mary (Maria), having taken approximately 12 ounces (a litra) of fragrant oil of pure nard, very costly, anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped His feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil. **4** Therefore Judas (Ioudas) Iscariot (Iskariotes), ***son*** of Simon, one of His disciples, who was about to betray Him, says, **5** "Why was this fragrant oil not sold for three hundred denarii and given to ***the*** poor?" **6** Now he said this, not because he was concerned about the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the money bag, and was carrying off what was being put into ***it***. **7** Therefore Jesus said, "Leave her alone; she has kept it for the day of My burial. **8** For the poor you always have with you, but Me you do not always have." **9** Therefore a great crowd of the Jews knew that He was there; and they came, not because of Jesus only, but so that they might also see Lazarus, whom He had raised out from ***the*** dead. **10** But the chief priests took counsel that they might kill Lazarus also, **11** because on account of him many of the Jews were going away and were believing in Jesus.

The King Comes to Jerusalem

12 On the next day a great crowd that had come to the feast, having heard that Jesus was coming into Jerusalem (Hierosolyma), **13** took the branches of the palm trees and went out to meet Him, and were crying out, "Hosanna! Blessed ***is*** the ***One*** coming in ***the*** name of ***the*** Lord, the King of Israel!" **14** And Jesus, having found a young donkey, sat on it, even as it is written: **15** "Do not fear, daughter of Zion (Sion); look, your King comes, sitting on a colt of a donkey." **16** Now His disciples did not know these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written about Him, and ***that*** they had done these things to Him. **17** Therefore the crowd which was with Him when He called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him out from ***the*** dead was testifying. **18** Because of this the crowd also met Him, because it heard that He had done this sign. **19** Therefore the Pharisees said among themselves, "You see that you gain nothing. Look, the world has gone after Him."

11:57 John 5:16-18; John 8:59; John 9:22
12:1 Matt 21:17; John 11:55; John 11:1,44
12:2 Luke 10:38-42; Luke 22:27; Song 4:16
12:3 John 11:2,28,32; Luke 7:37,38,46; Matt 26:6,7-13
12:4 Matt 10:4; John 6:70,71; John 13:2,26
12:5 Exod 5:8,17; Amos 8:5; Mal 1:10-13
12:6 John 13:29; John 10:13; Ps 14:1
12:7 Ps 109:31; Zech 3:2; Matt 26:10
12:8 Deut 15:11; Mark 14:7; Matt 26:11
12:9 John 11:43-45; Acts 3:10,11; Acts 4:14
12:10 Gen 4:4-10; Luke 16:31; John 11:47-53,57
12:11 John 12:18; John 11:45,48; John 15:18-25
12:12 Exod 12:3; Zeph 3:16; John 11:55,56
12:13 Ps 118:26; Ps 118:25; Isa 44:6
12:14 Zech 9:9; Matt 21:1-7; Mark 11:1-7
12:15 Zech 9:9; 2 Sam 16:2; Isa 40:9
12:16 Dan 12:8; John 7:39; John 2:22
12:17 John 12:9; John 11:31,45,46; Ps 145:6,7
12:19 John 3:26; Ps 22:27; John 11:47-50

11:57 *if anyone knew where He was, he should report it* Jesus had become a wanted man. The Lamb of God (1:29) would come to Jerusalem at the feast of the lamb.
12:1 *six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany* Less than two miles from Jerusalem on the Mount of Olives. The raising of Lazarus is the backdrop for this chapter. It drew the crowds and pushed the leaders to plan His death (11:53). Jesus, the Lamb of God (1:29), is about to die at the feast of the lamb (Exod 12).
12:2 *Lazarus was one of those reclining at table with Him* People ate lying on low couches, leaning on one elbow, feet stretched away from the table. A man dead and buried four days was eating and talking. He did not have to preach a sermon. His life was the testimony.
12:3 *anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped His feet with her hair* Nard was a costly perfume from a plant grown in India. A respectable woman did not let her hair down in public, and washing feet was the lowest servant's job. Mary held nothing back. The fragrance filled the house. Real worship cannot be hidden and affects everyone around it. Each time we see Mary, she is at His feet (Luke 10:39; 11:32).
12:5 *three hundred denarii* A denarius was about a day's wage, so this was close to a year's pay. Judas' complaint sounds reasonable, even godly. Sin often dresses itself in good-sounding words.
12:6 *because he was a thief* The only place in the Gospels that tells us this. Judas kept the money bag and stole from it. He spent about three years with Jesus, saw the miracles and heard the teaching, yet his heart never changed. Being close to Jesus is not the same as belonging to Him.
12:7 *she has kept it for the day of My burial* Bodies were anointed with spices for burial. Whether Mary fully understood or not, Jesus accepts her gift as preparation for His death.
12:8 *the poor you always have with you* Sometimes misused as an excuse to ignore the poor. Jesus echoes Deuteronomy 15:11, which commands generosity to the poor. His point is timing. There would always be chances to help the poor, but He was going to the cross. Worship of Him comes first, and true worship leads us to care for the poor.
12:9 *so that they might also see Lazarus* Curiosity brought many of them, but curiosity alone does not save anyone.
12:10 *the chief priests took counsel that they might kill Lazarus also* They could not deny the miracle, so they planned to get rid of the evidence. A changed life is one of the strongest witnesses for Christ, and it can bring opposition (15:18).
12:13 *Hosanna! Blessed is the One coming in the name of the Lord* Palm branches were a sign of victory and national hope, the day many churches remember as Palm Sunday. Hosanna means save now, from Psalm 118:25-26, a psalm sung at the great feasts. "The King of Israel" hailed Him as Messiah. They were right about who He was. Most were wrong about what kind of King. Many wanted a king to throw off Rome. He came first to deal with sin.
12:15 *your King comes, sitting on a colt of a donkey* Fulfilling Zechariah 9:9 (Matt 21:1-7). A conquering king rode a war horse, and a king coming in peace rode a donkey. In Revelation 19:11 Jesus returns on a white horse. The first time He came to save. Next time He comes to judge and reign. It is the same King.
12:16 *His disciples did not know these things at first* Only after His death, resurrection and return to the Father did they see the Scriptures were written about Him. Understanding often comes later as the Spirit brings God's Word to mind (14:26). If you do not understand everything the first time, you are in good company.
12:18 *it heard that He had done this sign* Eyewitnesses of Lazarus' raising kept telling others. This sign pointed to Jesus as the resurrection and the life (11:25).
12:19 *Look, the world has gone after Him* Meant as an exaggeration, but true. In the next verse people from outside Israel come looking for Him.

The Grain of Wheat

20 Now there were certain Greeks among those coming up so
that they might worship at the feast. **21** Therefore these
came to Philip (Philippos), who was from Bethsaida of Galilee
(Galilaia), and were asking him, saying, "Sir, we want to see
Jesus." **22** Philip comes and tells Andrew (Andreas), and
again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus. **23** And Jesus answered
them, saying, "The hour has come that the Son of Man may
be glorified. **24** Truly, truly, I say to you, unless the grain of
wheat, having fallen into the ground, dies, it remains alone;
but if it dies, it bears much fruit. **25** The ***one*** loving his life
will lose it, and the ***one*** hating his life in this world will keep
it to eternal life. **26** If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me;
and where I am, there My servant also will be. And if anyone
serves Me, the Father will honor him. **27** Now My soul has
been troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save Me from
this hour'? But because of this I came to this hour. **28** Father,
glorify Your name." Therefore a voice came out of heaven: "I
have both glorified ***it***, and I will glorify ***it*** again."
29 Therefore the crowd that stood ***there*** and heard ***it*** was
saying that thunder had occurred. Others were saying, "An
angel has spoken to Him." **30** Jesus answered and said, "This
voice has come not because of Me, but because of you.
31 Now is ***the*** judgment of this world; now the ruler of this
world will be cast out. **32** And I, if I am lifted up from the
earth, will draw all ***men*** to Myself." **33** Now He was saying
this, signifying by what kind of death He was about to die.
34 The crowd answered Him, "We have heard from the law
that the Christ remains forever; and how do You say, 'The
Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this Son of Man?"
35 Therefore Jesus said to them, "Yet a little while the light is
with you. Walk while you have the light, so that darkness
may not overtake you; and the ***one*** walking in the darkness
does not know where he is going. **36** While you have the
light, believe in the light, so that you may become sons of
light." Jesus spoke these things, and having gone away, He
was hidden from them.

Unbelief and Belief

37 But though He had done so many signs before them, they
were not believing in Him, **38** so that the word of Isaiah
(Hesaias) the prophet might be fulfilled, which he said:
"Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the
arm of ***the*** Lord been revealed?" **39** Because of this they were
not able to believe, because Isaiah said again: **40** "He has
blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, so that they
may not see with the eyes and understand with the heart,

12:20 John 7:35; Mark 7:26; Acts 17:4
12:21 John 1:43-47; John 6:5-7; John 14:8,9
12:22 John 1:40,41; John 6:8; Matt 10:5
12:23 John 13:31,32; John 17:1-5,9,10; Isa 49:5,6
12:24 1 Cor 15:36-38; Heb 2:9,10; Ps 72:16
12:25 Matt 10:39; Matt 16:25; Mark 8:35
12:26 1 Sam 2:30; Num 14:24; Num 32:11
12:27 John 13:21; Matt 26:38,39,42; Luke 22:44,53
12:28 Matt 3:17; Matt 17:5; 2 Pet 1:17
12:29 Exod 19:16; Exod 20:18; Ezek 10:5
12:30 John 11:15,42; 2 Cor 8:9; John 5:34
12:31 2 Cor 4:4; John 14:30; Eph 6:12
12:32 Song 1:4; Isa 49:6; Isa 60:3
12:33 John 18:32; John 21:19
12:34 Isa 9:7; Ps 89:36; Dan 7:13
12:35 Isa 59:10; John 16:16; John 7:33
12:36 John 8:59; Luke 16:8; Eph 5:8
12:37 John 1:11; John 11:42; John 15:24
12:38 Isa 53:1; 2 Chr 32:20; Isa 51:9
12:39 Isa 6:10; John 5:44; John 6:44
12:40 Isa 6:9-10; Ps 147:3; Isa 29:10

12:21 *Sir, we want to see Jesus* Probably Gentiles who worshiped Israel's God without becoming full converts. Philip had a Greek name and came from a town near Gentile areas. This request should be the prayer of everyone who opens the Bible or walks into a church. We come to see Jesus, not a preacher or a building.

12:22 *Philip comes and tells Andrew* Each time we see Andrew he is bringing someone to Jesus (1:41-42; 6:8-9). Not everyone is called to preach to crowds, but every believer can do what Andrew did.

12:23 *The hour has come that the Son of Man may be glorified* Until now His hour had not come (2:4; 7:30; 8:20). Gentiles seeking Him signaled the time to die for the whole world. To Jesus, glory meant the cross first, then the resurrection, then His return to the Father. The cross was not defeat but the clearest display of God's glory.

12:24 *unless the grain of wheat, having fallen into the ground, dies, it remains alone* A seed in the bag stays alone. Only buried does it bear a harvest. Because He died and rose, there is a great harvest from every nation (Rev 7:9). John alone doubles the "Truly," amen, marking something very important and certain.

12:25 *the one hating his life in this world will keep it to eternal life* Not despising ourselves, but loving Jesus so much more that our comfort and plans look small beside Him (Luke 14:26). Those who hold this life as all there is lose what really matters.

12:26 *where I am, there My servant also will be* For Him the path led to the cross, then glory. The world may never notice your service, but the Father does, and He will honor you.

12:27 *Now My soul has been troubled* Fully God and fully man, He felt the weight of what was coming, John's look at the struggle the other Gospels show in Gethsemane. He did not drift into the cross. He came for it, knowing exactly what it would cost.

12:28 *Father, glorify Your name* The heart of His whole life. The Father answered aloud, as at the baptism (Matt 3:17) and the Transfiguration (Matt 17:5). He glorified His name through Jesus' life and signs and would again through His death and resurrection.

12:29 *thunder had occurred* People can hear the same thing and reach very different conclusions. Closed hearts often explain away what God is doing. The voice came for their sake (12:30), a chance to believe.

12:31 *now the ruler of this world will be cast out* At the cross sin was exposed, and Satan, which looked like his victory, was defeated. Christ disarmed the rulers and authorities and triumphed over them (Col 2:15). Satan is still active (1 Pet 5:8), but his defeat was settled, and his end is the lake of fire (Rev 20:10).

12:32 *if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself* "Lifted up" pointed to crucifixion (12:33; 3:14; 8:28). "All men" does not mean every person will be saved (3:18, 36). It means all kinds of people, Jew and Greek, from every nation. The Greeks who came asking were the first fruits.

12:34 *the Christ remains forever* From passages like Psalm 89:36 and Isaiah 9:7. They had half the picture. The Old Testament taught both a suffering Servant (Isa 53) and a reigning King. The same Messiah does both. He died and rose, and He does remain forever.

12:35 *Walk while you have the light* Jesus, the Light (8:12), would be with them only a little longer. The time to respond to Him is limited.

12:36 *sons of light* In Hebrew thinking a son of something shares its nature. Then Jesus hid Himself. His public teaching to the crowds was finished, a sad and serious moment.

12:37 *though He had done so many signs before them, they were not believing in Him* John sums up the public ministry. People who do not want to believe will find a reason not to, no matter what they see (Luke 16:31).

12:38 *Lord, who has believed our report?* From Isaiah 53:1, the great chapter of the suffering Servant. The rejection of Jesus did not surprise God. It was foretold.

12:40 *He has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart* From Isaiah 6:10. They had seen sign after sign and kept refusing. Their hearts were hardened over time by their own choice, and God then confirmed the choice they had made. God said He would harden Pharaoh's heart (Exod 4:21), and Pharaoh hardened his own (Exod 8:15). Every time we push God's truth away, it gets easier the next time (Heb 3:15).

and turn, and I should heal them." **41** Isaiah said these things when he saw His glory, and he spoke concerning Him. **42** Nevertheless, even of the rulers many believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing ***Him***, so that they might not be put out of the synagogue. **43** For they loved the glory of men more than the glory of God. **44** Then Jesus cried out and said, "The ***one*** believing in Me does not believe in Me, but in the ***One*** who sent Me. **45** And the ***one*** seeing Me sees the ***One*** who sent Me. **46** I have come ***as*** a light into the world, so that everyone believing in Me may not remain in the darkness. **47** And if anyone hears My declarations and does not believe, I do not judge him; for I did not come that I might judge the world, but that I might save the world. **48** The ***one*** rejecting Me and not receiving My declarations has the ***one*** judging him: the word which I spoke, that will judge him on the last day. **49** For I did not speak from Myself, but the Father who sent Me, He gave Me a commandment, what I should say and what I should speak. **50** And I know that His commandment is eternal life. Therefore the things which I speak, even as the Father has said to Me, so I speak."

JOHN 13

Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet

1 Now before the feast of the Passover, Jesus (Iesous), knowing that His hour had come that He should depart out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who ***were*** in the world, He loved them to ***the*** end. **2** And supper having come, the devil having already put into the heart of Judas (Ioudas) Iscariot (Iskariotes), ***son*** of Simon, that he should betray Him, **3** Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He came forth from God and is going to God, **4** rises from the supper and lays aside ***His*** garments, and having taken a towel, He girded Himself. **5** After that He pours water into the basin and began to wash the feet of the disciples and to wipe ***them*** with the towel with which He was girded. **6** Then He comes to Simon Peter (Petros), and that ***one*** says to Him, "Lord, do You wash my feet?" **7** Jesus answered and said to him, "What I do you do not know now, but you will know after these things." **8** Peter says to Him, "You will certainly never wash my feet." Jesus answered him, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with Me." **9** Simon Peter says to Him, "Lord, not my feet only, but also the hands and the head." **10** Jesus says to him, "The ***one*** who has bathed has no need except to wash the feet, but is wholly clean; and you are clean, but not all." **11** For He knew the ***one*** betraying Him; because of this He said, "You are not all clean." **12** So when He had washed their feet and taken His garments and reclined again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have

12:41 Isa 6:1; Isa 6:2; Exod 33:21
12:42 Prov 29:25; Isa 66:5; John 7:13
12:43 1 Sam 2:30; John 5:41,44; Matt 23:5-7
12:44 Isa 55:2; Isa 55:3; Matt 10:40
12:45 2 Cor 4:6; Heb 1:3; John 15:24
12:46 John 8:12; John 12:35,36; John 3:19
12:47 John 3:17; John 5:45; John 8:15,16,26
12:48 1 Sam 8:7; Deut 31:19; Luke 10:16
12:49 John 17:8; John 8:26,42; John 14:10
12:50 John 17:3; John 6:63,68; John 20:31
13:1 John 13:34; John 12:23; John 13:3
13:2 Acts 5:3; John 13:4,26; John 6:70
13:3 John 8:42; John 3:35; John 17:2
13:4 Luke 12:37; Luke 22:27; Luke 17:7
13:5 1 Sam 25:41; 2 Kgs 3:11; Gen 18:4
13:6 John 1:27; Matt 3:11-14; Luke 5:8
13:7 John 12:16; John 13:10-12; John 14:26
13:8 1 Cor 6:11; Titus 3:5; Matt 16:22
13:9 Ps 51:2,7; Ps 26:6; Jer 4:14
13:10 John 15:3; 2 Cor 7:1; 2 Cor 5:17,21
13:11 John 2:25; John 13:18,21,26; John 6:64-71
13:12 Gen 43:24; John 13:7; Ezek 24:19,24

12:41 *Isaiah said these things when he saw His glory* In Isaiah 6 the prophet saw the Lord on a throne, high and lifted up. John says it was the glory of Jesus. Jesus is the LORD of the Old Testament, fully God.
12:43 *they loved the glory of men more than the glory of God* Many rulers believed but kept quiet for fear of being put out of the synagogue (9:22). That temptation meets us at work, with family and with friends. Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea later stepped forward at the cross (19:38-39). Fear does not have to have the last word.
12:45 *the one seeing Me sees the One who sent Me* His last public call in this Gospel. You cannot separate the Son from the Father. No one can say he believes in God while rejecting Jesus (14:9).
12:46 *so that everyone believing in Me may not remain in the darkness* In John darkness stands for sin, ignorance of God and separation from Him. Everyone starts there. No one has to stay.
12:48 *the word which I spoke, that will judge him on the last day* His first coming was to save (3:17), but the message refused will stand as evidence. I believe the dead in Christ are raised when He comes for His church before the Tribulation (1 Thess 4:16-17), He returns as Judge and King at its end (Rev 19:11-16), and the rest of the dead are judged after the thousand years (Rev 20:5, 11-15). "The last day" takes in that whole closing work of judgment.
12:50 *His commandment is eternal life* Everything Jesus said came from the Father, whose message is eternal life. Rejecting His words is rejecting the Father's offer of life. From chapter 13 on He is alone with His disciples, preparing them for the cross.
13:1 *He loved them to the end* John describes His death as a departure to the Father, not an ending. "To the end" can mean to the end of His life or to the uttermost, completely. Both are true. His love did not run out when things got hard, and everything in chapters 13 to 17 flows from it.
13:2 *the devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot* Satan worked on a heart already open to him. Judas was a thief (12:6). Small sins left alone can grow into great ones. Do not give the devil an opportunity (Eph 4:27).
13:3 *knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands* Before John tells what Jesus did, he tells what Jesus knew. He did not wash feet because He thought little of Himself, but because He was completely secure in who He was. People who know who they are in God are free to serve.
13:5 *began to wash the feet of the disciples* Dusty roads and sandals made this a dirty job for the lowest servant. That same night the disciples argued over who was greatest (Luke 22:24), and none had picked up the towel. The hands that made the universe (1:3) washed the feet of fishermen, a tax collector and the man about to betray Him (Phil 2:6-8).
13:6 *Lord, do You wash my feet?* In the Greek "You" and "my" sit side by side for emphasis. It felt backward to Peter.
13:7 *What I do you do not know now, but you will know after these things* Some of what God does in our lives makes no sense in the moment. Looking back we often see His purpose. Until then, we trust Him.
13:8 *Unless I wash you, you have no part with Me* Peter's refusal sounds humble but was pride, telling Jesus what He could do. Now Jesus speaks of more than feet. Unless He cleanses us from sin, we have no share in Him. No one can clean himself up enough to come to God. We must let Jesus do the washing. That is grace.
13:9 *not my feet only, but also the hands and the head* Peter swings to the other extreme. He was all in, even when he did not fully understand.
13:10 *The one who has bathed has no need except to wash the feet* A guest bathed at home and only needed his feet washed on arrival. When a person trusts Jesus he is washed clean once for all. As we walk through this world we pick up the dirt of daily sin. We do not need to be saved again. We need to confess and be cleansed (1 John 1:9), which keeps our fellowship with God close.
13:11 *You are not all clean* Judas had his feet washed by Jesus, but his heart was never washed. He went through the motions without the reality.

done to you? **13** You call Me 'the Teacher' and 'the Lord,' and you say rightly, for I am. **14** If therefore I, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. **15** For I gave you an example, so that even as I did to you, you also may do. **16** Truly, truly, I say to you, a slave is not greater than his master, nor ***is*** a messenger greater than the ***one*** who sent him. **17** If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them. **18** I do not speak concerning all of you; I know whom I chose; but ***it is*** so that the Scripture may be fulfilled, 'The ***one*** feeding on the bread with Me lifted up his heel against Me.' **19** From now on I am telling you before it happens, so that when it happens you may believe that I am ***He***. **20** Truly, truly, I say to you, the ***one*** receiving whomever I send receives Me; and the ***one*** receiving Me receives the ***One*** who sent Me."

Jesus Foretells His Betrayal

21 Having said these things, Jesus was troubled in the spirit, and testified and said, "Truly, truly, I say to you that one of you will betray Me." **22** Therefore the disciples were looking at one another, being at a loss about whom He was speaking. **23** Now there was reclining in the bosom of Jesus one of His disciples, whom Jesus was loving. **24** Therefore Simon Peter motions to this ***one*** to ask who it might be about whom He was speaking. **25** And that ***one***, having fallen on the breast of Jesus, says to Him, "Lord, who is it?" **26** Jesus answers, "It is that ***one*** to whom I shall give ***it***, having dipped the morsel." And having dipped the morsel, He gives ***it*** to Judas Iscariot, ***son*** of Simon. **27** And after the morsel, then Satan entered into that ***one***. Therefore Jesus says to him, "What you are doing, do more quickly." **28** But no one of those reclining knew for what ***purpose*** He said this to him. **29** For some were thinking, since Judas had the money bag, that Jesus is saying to him, "Buy what we have need of for the feast," or that he should give something to the poor. **30** Therefore having received the morsel, that ***one*** went out immediately. And it was night.

A New Commandment

31 Therefore when he had gone out, Jesus says, "Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in Him. **32** If God has been glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and He will glorify Him immediately. **33** Little children, yet a little while I am with you. You will seek Me, and even as I said to the Jews, 'Where I am going, you are not able to come,' I also say to you now. **34** A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. **35** By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love among one

13:13 1 Cor 12:3; Phil 2:11; John 11:28
13:14 1 Pet 5:5; Luke 22:26,27; Matt 20:26-28
13:15 Matt 11:29; Rom 15:5; Eph 5:2
13:16 John 15:20; Luke 6:40; Matt 10:24,25
13:17 Matt 7:24,25; Ezek 36:27; Gal 5:6
13:18 Ps 41:9; Jer 7:10; Jer 41:1
13:19 Isa 43:10; Isa 41:23; Isa 48:5
13:20 Luke 10:16; Mark 9:37; Luke 9:48
13:21 Matt 26:21; John 12:27; Mark 14:18
13:22 Gen 42:1; Luke 22:23; Matt 26:22
13:23 John 19:26; John 20:2; John 21:7,24
13:24 Luke 1:22; Luke 5:7; Acts 12:17
13:25 Gen 44:4-12; Esth 7:5
13:26 Matt 26:23; John 13:30; Mark 14:19,20
13:27 Luke 22:3; John 13:2; Ps 109:6
13:29 John 12:5; Acts 20:34,35; Gal 2:10
13:30 Prov 4:16; Isa 59:7; Rom 3:15
13:31 Isa 49:5; John 7:39; John 14:13
13:32 Isa 53:10; Isa 53:11; Isa 53:12
13:33 1 John 2:1; John 7:33; Gal 4:19
13:34 Lev 19:18; Eph 5:2; 1 Pet 1:22
13:35 1 John 4:20,21; 1 John 3:10-14; John 17:21

13:13 *You call Me 'the Teacher' and 'the Lord,' and you say rightly, for I am* Jesus gave up none of His authority by serving. Serving others does not make us less. It makes us more like Jesus.
13:14 *you also ought to wash one another's feet* Some churches practice foot washing as an ordinance, and it can be a meaningful reminder. The main point is the attitude: humble, practical service, even when it is dirty, unseen and unthanked. Is there a towel job I have been avoiding because I think it is beneath me?
13:15 *I gave you an example* A pattern to copy. Jesus did not only tell us to serve. He showed us how.
13:16 *nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him* "Messenger" translates the word from which we get apostle, one sent. If the Master served, no follower is too important to serve.
13:17 *blessed are you if you do them* Knowing is not enough. The blessing comes in the doing (James 1:22). Many of us know far more of the Bible than we practice. I include myself.
13:18 *The one feeding on the bread with Me lifted up his heel against Me* From Psalm 41:9, David's words about a trusted friend who turned on him. Sharing bread was a sign of friendship, and lifting the heel pictured a violent kick. Jesus said it would be fulfilled in Judas.
13:19 *so that when it happens you may believe that I am He* In the Greek simply ego eimi, I am (Exod 3:14). Jesus announced the betrayal in advance so that it would become evidence that He is God.
13:20 *the one receiving Me receives the One who sent Me* Even with a betrayer at the table, Jesus assures the rest that their mission is real.
13:21 *Jesus was troubled in the spirit* He was not a stone. Betrayal by a friend hurt Him deeply.
13:22 *being at a loss about whom He was speaking* Not one pointed at Judas. He had hidden his heart for three years. Each asked, Surely not I (Matt 26:22).
13:23 *one of His disciples, whom Jesus was loving* Reclining next to Jesus, near His chest. The first use of this phrase. Tradition, and I believe the Gospel itself, point to John the apostle, the author (21:20-24). He did not call himself the one who loved Jesus, which could fail, but the one Jesus loved, which never does.
13:26 *having dipped the morsel, He gives it to Judas Iscariot* For a host to hand a guest a dipped piece of bread was a sign of honor and friendship. It was one last offer of love. Judas took the bread but did not turn back.
13:27 *then Satan entered into that one* Judas had opened the door again and again, and now he gave himself over completely. Jesus was in control even of the timing of His betrayal. He laid His life down (10:18).
13:29 *that he should give something to the poor* Jesus and His disciples had a habit of giving to the poor. And again, Judas hid what was inside him well.
13:30 *And it was night* Night outside, and night in Judas' soul. He walked away from the Light of the world (8:12) into the dark. One of the saddest sentences in the Bible.
13:31 *Now the Son of Man has been glorified* The betrayal was set in motion, and the cross hours away. Through it the Father would be glorified in the Son, and the Father would glorify the Son by raising Him, "immediately" (13:32), that very weekend.
13:33 *Little children* The Greek teknia is a tender word for little ones. John, who heard it, uses it over and over in his first letter (1 John 2:1, 12). Where Jesus is going they cannot come, not yet.
13:34 *A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another* Leviticus 19:18 already said to love your neighbor. What is new is the measure: "even as I have loved you." He had just washed their feet, and within hours He would give His life. It is a love that serves and sacrifices.
13:35 *By this all will know that you are My disciples* The mark of a Christian is not a bumper sticker or how much Bible we know. It is love for other believers. The world watches how Christians treat each other, when we fight and gossip and when we love as Jesus loved.

another." **36** Simon Peter says to Him, "Lord, where are You going?" Jesus answered him, "Where I am going, you are not able to follow Me now; but you will follow Me afterward." **37** Peter says to Him, "Lord, why am I not able to follow You now? I will lay down my life for You." **38** Jesus answered him, "Will you lay down your life for Me? Truly, truly, I say to you, the rooster will certainly not crow until you have denied Me three times."

JOHN 14

The Way, the Truth, and the Life

1 "Let your heart not be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. **2** In the house of My Father are many dwelling places; but if not, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. **3** And if I go and prepare a place for you, I am coming again and will receive you to Myself, so that where I am, you also may be. **4** And where I am going you know, and the way you know." **5** Thomas says to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how are we able to know the way?" **6** Jesus (Iesous) says to him, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. **7** If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him." **8** Philip (Philippos) says to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." **9** Jesus says to him, "Have I been with you so long a time, and you have not known Me, Philip? The ***one*** who has seen Me has seen the Father; and how do you say, 'Show us the Father'? **10** Do you not believe that I ***am*** in the Father and the Father is in Me? The declarations which I speak to you I do not speak from Myself; but the Father who remains in Me, He does the works. **11** Believe Me that I ***am*** in the Father and the Father in Me; but if not, believe Me because of the works themselves. **12** Truly, truly, I say to you, the ***one*** believing in Me, the works which I do, that ***one*** also will do; and greater than these he will do, because I am going to My Father. **13** And whatever you ask in My name, this I will do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. **14** If you ask anything in My name, I will do ***it***.

The Promise of the Helper

15 If you love Me, keep My commandments. **16** And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, so that He may remain with you forever, **17** the Spirit of truth, whom the world is not able to receive, because it does not see Him nor know Him; but you know Him, because He remains with

13:36 2 Pet 1:14; John 13:33; John 21:18,19,22
13:37 John 21:15; Matt 26:31-35; Mark 14:27-31
13:38 Prov 16:18; Mark 14:30,66-72; Prov 28:26
14:1 John 14:27,28; Isa 12:2,3; Isa 26:3
14:2 Heb 13:14; 2 Cor 5:1; Rev 21:2
14:3 John 12:26; John 14:18-23,28; Acts 1:11
14:4 John 10:9; John 14:2,28; John 13:3
14:5 John 20:25-28; John 15:12; Mark 8:17,18
14:6 John 10:9; Acts 4:12; Eph 2:18
14:7 John 8:19; Luke 10:22; Col 1:15-17
14:8 Exod 33:18; John 1:43-46; John 6:5-7
14:9 John 12:45; Col 1:15; Heb 1:3
14:10 John 5:19; Col 2:9; Acts 10:38
14:11 John 5:36; John 10:25,32,38; Acts 2:22
14:12 Matt 21:21; Mark 16:17; Luke 10:17-19
14:13 Matt 7:7; John 15:7,16; Mark 11:24
14:15 1 John 2:3-5; 1 John 5:2,3; 1 John 4:19,20
14:16 John 15:26; 1 John 2:1; John 16:7-15
14:17 Ps 25:14; Isa 11:2; 1 John 2:27

13:36 *you will follow Me afterward* Peter skipped the command to love and asked about leaving. He would follow later, in his own death (21:18-19) and into heaven.
13:37 *I will lay down my life for You* I believe Peter meant every word. He even drew a sword in the garden (18:10). But he trusted his own strength, and our own strength will fail us.
13:38 *the rooster will certainly not crow until you have denied Me three times* It happened that night (18:15-27). But the risen Jesus restored Peter, asking three times, "Do you love Me" (21:15-17). Failure is not final with Jesus, and His promise that Peter would follow Him came true.
14:1 *Let your heart not be troubled* Said the night before His death, while His own soul was troubled (12:27; 13:21). He was thinking of them. The cure for a troubled heart is faith, and He sets believing in Himself beside believing in God. No mere man could say that.
14:2 *In the house of My Father are many dwelling places* Older Bibles said mansions. The Greek word means a place to stay or remain. The point is not luxury but belonging. If heaven were not real He would have told them. His going to the cross, the grave and back to the Father is what makes our place possible.
14:3 *I am coming again and will receive you to Myself* A clear promise that He returns in person (Acts 1:11). I hold the pre-tribulation view and see this as the Rapture, when Jesus comes for His church and takes us to be with Him before the Tribulation (1 Thess 4:16-17). Others believe He comes once, after the Tribulation. Do not miss the heart of it. The best part of heaven is not the place but the Person: "where I am, you also may be."
14:5 *how are we able to know the way?* Thomas said aloud what the others were probably thinking. If you do not understand something, ask. His honest question led to one of the greatest things Jesus ever said.
14:6 *I am the way and the truth and the life* The sixth "I am" saying. He does not only know or teach the way. He is the way, the truth and the life. "No one comes to the Father except through Me" is among the most unpopular verses today, but if another way existed, the cross would not have been necessary (Acts 4:12). This is not narrow-mindedness but love. When there is only one way out of a burning building, the kindest thing is to point people to it.
14:7 *If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also* Every time they looked at Jesus for three years, they were looking at the Father.
14:8 *show us the Father, and it is enough for us* Philip wanted a vision like Moses asked for (Exod 33:18). Many still say, if God would only show Himself, then I would believe.
14:9 *The one who has seen Me has seen the Father* Not the same Person, for they are distinct, but Jesus is the exact picture of the Father (Heb 1:3; Col 1:15). If you want to know what God is like, look at how Jesus treated sinners, touched lepers, wept at a grave and washed feet.
14:10 *the Father who remains in Me, He does the works* Perfect unity. Everything Jesus said and did came out of that union.
14:11 *believe Me because of the works themselves* The signs were evidence. God does not ask for blind faith (20:30-31).
14:12 *greater than these he will do, because I am going to My Father* Greater in reach, not in power. Jesus stayed in a small area. After He sent the Spirit, His followers carried the gospel to the world, and about three thousand were saved at Pentecost alone (Acts 2:41). The greatest work is a soul brought from death to life.
14:13 *whatever you ask in My name, this I will do* Not a blank check or a magic phrase tacked onto a prayer. To ask in someone's name is to ask by his authority and in line with his character and will (1 John 5:14). The purpose is that the Father be glorified in the Son.
14:15 *If you love Me, keep My commandments* Love for Jesus shows up in obedience. We do not obey to earn His love. We obey because we already have it.
14:16 *He will give you another Helper* The Greek parakletos is one called alongside to help: counselor, advocate, comforter. "Another" means another of the same kind. The Spirit is just like Jesus. Jesus walked beside them three years. The Spirit would remain forever.
14:17 *He remains with you and will be in you* Before Pentecost the Spirit was with them through Jesus. After it He would live in them, as He lives in every believer today (Rom 8:9; 1 Cor 6:19). He teaches, reminds, testifies and guides (14:26; 15:26; 16:13). The Holy Spirit is a Person, not a force.

you and will be in you. **18** I will not leave you orphans; I am coming to you. **19** Yet a little while and the world no longer sees Me, but you see Me; because I live, you also will live. **20** In that day you will know that I ***am*** in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. **21** The ***one*** having My commandments and keeping them, that ***one*** is the ***one*** loving Me; and the ***one*** loving Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him." **22** Judas (Ioudas), not the Iscariot (Iskariotes), says to Him, "Lord, what has happened that You are about to manifest Yourself to us and not to the world?" **23** Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and will make a dwelling place with him. **24** The ***one*** not loving Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father's who sent Me. **25** These things I have spoken to you while remaining with you. **26** But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things and will remind you of all things that I said to you. **27** Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let your heart not be troubled, nor let it be afraid. **28** You heard that I said to you, 'I am going away, and I am coming to you.' If you loved Me, you would have rejoiced because I said, 'I am going to the Father,' because My Father is greater than I. **29** And now I have told you before it happens, so that when it happens you may believe. **30** I will no longer speak much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me; **31** but so that the world may know that I love the Father, and even as the Father commanded Me, so I do. Rise, let us go from here.

JOHN 15

The True Vine

1 I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. **2** Every branch in Me not bearing fruit, He takes it away; and every ***branch*** bearing fruit, He prunes it, so that it may bear more fruit. **3** Already you are clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. **4** Remain in Me, and I in you. Even as the branch is not able to bear fruit from itself unless it remains in the vine, so neither ***can*** you unless you remain in Me. **5** I am the vine; you ***are*** the branches. The ***one*** remaining in Me and I in him, this ***one*** bears much fruit; for apart

14:18 John 14:3,28; Matt 18:20; Matt 28:20
14:19 John 7:33; John 16:16,22; Heb 7:25
14:20 John 15:5-7; Gal 2:20; John 14:10
14:21 John 14:15,23,24; 1 John 2:5; 1 John 5:3
14:22 Josh 22:5; Ps 25:14; Luke 6:16
14:23 Deut 5:10; Judg 13:23; Ps 91:14
14:24 John 7:16,28; John 14:15,21-23; Matt 25:41-46
14:25 John 14:29; John 13:19; John 15:11
14:26 John 15:26; John 14:16; John 16:7
14:27 Phil 4:7; John 16:33; Isa 9:6
14:28 Isa 49:5; Isa 53:11; Isa 49:6
14:29 John 13:19; John 16:4-30,31; Matt 24:24,25
14:30 Rev 12:9; John 12:31; 1 John 5:19
14:31 John 10:18; Phil 2:8; John 4:34
15:1 Ps 80:8; Isa 5:1; Jer 2:21
15:2 Hos 14:8; Matt 3:10; Matt 15:13
15:3 Eph 5:26; Isa 30:17; John 13:10
15:4 Ezek 15:2; Hos 14:8; Isa 27:10
15:5 Phil 4:13,17; Prov 11:30; 2 Pet 1:2-18

14:18 *I will not leave you orphans; I am coming to you* An orphan has no one to care for him. He would come after the resurrection, through the Spirit, and again at the end of the age. All three are true.
14:19 *because I live, you also will live* After the resurrection He showed Himself only to His followers (Acts 10:40-41). His resurrection guarantees ours. Death has no final claim on anyone who belongs to Him.
14:20 *you in Me, and I in you* Union with Christ. A believer does not only agree with Jesus' teaching. He is joined to Him.
14:21 *I will love him and will manifest Myself to him* As we obey, we come to know Jesus more deeply. Obedience opens the door to closer fellowship.
14:22 *Judas, not the Iscariot* Probably the one called Thaddaeus in Matthew and Mark, and Judas son of James in Luke 6:16. Many expected the Messiah to show Himself openly in power.
14:23 *We will come to him and will make a dwelling place with him* The same word as the dwelling places of verse 2. Jesus prepares a place for us in the Father's house, and meanwhile the Father and the Son make their home in us, with the Spirit (14:16-17).
14:24 *the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father's who sent Me* To reject Jesus is to reject God.
14:26 *He will teach you all things and will remind you of all things that I said to you* A key verse for how we got the New Testament. The Spirit helped the apostles remember and understand, which is how John could record these talks years later, and one reason we can trust the Gospels. The same Spirit teaches believers today as we read God's Word, though He does not add new Scripture to it.
14:27 *Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you* Shalom was the common greeting and farewell, but His peace is deep, settled peace with God. The world's peace depends on everything going well. His holds when everything falls apart, and He said this hours before His arrest. We choose whether to let fear rule or to trust Him.
14:28 *My Father is greater than I* Some use this to deny that Jesus is fully God. He is equal with the Father in nature (1:1; 10:30). In becoming a man He took a humble position and submitted to the Father's will (Phil 2:6-8). The Father was greater in position, not in nature. They thought of their loss. He wanted them to think of His return to glory (17:5).
14:29 *so that when it happens you may believe* Fulfilled prophecy builds faith.
14:30 *he has nothing in Me* Satan was about to move through Judas and the soldiers, but he had no claim on Jesus, no foothold, no sin to point to. Jesus went to the cross because He chose to.
14:31 *Rise, let us go from here* His obedience was an act of love for the Father. It seems they left the upper room here, and chapters 15 to 17 may have been spoken on the way to Gethsemane (18:1). Jesus went out to meet what was coming.
15:1 *I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser* The last of the seven "I am" sayings. In the Old Testament Israel was God's vine or vineyard (Ps 80:8-16; Isa 5:1-7), and again and again it failed to bear the fruit God sought. Jesus is the vine that does what Israel could not. The Father owns and tends the vineyard. Jesus is not a plant, but the picture points to something real: our spiritual life comes from Him alone.
15:2 *every branch bearing fruit, He prunes it, so that it may bear more fruit* Pruning looks harsh. Good wood is cut away, but a vine left alone grows long and leafy with little fruit. The hard seasons, losses and correction we go through are often His pruning shears. They hurt, but they are not punishment. They are the work of a Father who wants more fruit from us.
15:3 *Already you are clean because of the word which I have spoken to you* "Prune" and "clean" come from the same Greek root. Through the word they heard and believed, they had been through the first and most important pruning. Judas had left (13:30), and those who remained were truly His (13:10).
15:4 *Remain in Me, and I in you* The key word of the chapter, meno, to remain, stay, dwell (older Bibles say abide). To remain in Christ is to keep trusting, listening and living close to Him day after day, and He lives in us. A branch cut off cannot bear one grape no matter how hard it tries. Fruit is not manufactured by willpower. It grows when we stay connected to the vine.
15:5 *apart from Me you are not able to do anything* Not that an unbeliever cannot build a house, but nothing of eternal value comes from us apart from Christ. Serving God in our own strength wears us out. The fruit is a changed character, "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control" (Gal 5:22-23), along with obedience, answered prayer and people coming to Christ.

from Me you are not able to do anything. **6** Unless someone
remains in Me, he is thrown out as the branch and is dried
up; and they gather them and throw ***them*** into ***the*** fire, and
they are burned. **7** If you remain in Me, and My declarations
remain in you, you will ask whatever you wish, and it will
happen for you. **8** In this My Father is glorified, that you bear
much fruit; and you will become My disciples. **9** Even as the
Father loved Me, I also loved you; remain in My love. **10** If
you keep My commandments, you will remain in My love,
even as I have kept the commandments of My Father and
remain in His love. **11** These things I have spoken to you so
that My joy may remain in you, and your joy may be full.
12 This is My commandment, that you love one another even
as I loved you. **13** Greater love than this no one has, that one
lay down his life for his friends. **14** You are My friends if you
do whatever I command you. **15** No longer do I call you
slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing;
but I have called you friends, because all things which I
heard from My Father I have made known to you. **16** You did
not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you, so that
you may go and bear fruit, and your fruit may remain, so
that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give
you. **17** These things I command you, so that you love one
another.

The World's Hatred

18 If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me
before you. **19** If you were of the world, the world would love
its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you
out of the world, because of this the world hates you.
20 Remember the word which I said to you, 'A slave is not
greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will
persecute you also; if they kept My word, they will keep
yours also. **21** But all these things they will do to you on
account of My name, because they do not know the ***One*** who
sent Me. **22** If I had not come and spoken to them, they
would not have sin; but now they have no excuse for their
sin. **23** The ***one*** hating Me hates My Father also. **24** If I had
not done among them the works which no other ***one*** has
done, they would not have sin; but now they have both seen
and hated both Me and My Father. **25** But ***this is*** so that the
word written in their law may be fulfilled, 'They hated Me

15:6 Ezek 15:3; Ezek 19:12; Ps 80:15
15:7 John 14:13; Ps 37:4; 1 John 5:14
15:8 John 8:31; Matt 5:16; 2 Cor 9:10-15
15:9 1 Kgs 2:4; John 17:23,26; John 15:11
15:10 John 14:15,21; 2 Pet 2:21; 1 Thess 4:1
15:11 Isa 62:4; John 17:13; John 16:24,33
15:12 John 13:34; 1 Pet 4:8; 1 John 4:21
15:13 John 10:11,15; Eph 5:2; Song 2:4
15:14 Deut 28:1; 1 Kgs 13:9; Matt 12:50
15:15 Gen 18:17; Gen 18:18; Gen 18:19
15:16 Isa 49:1; Zech 1:4; Isa 49:2
15:17 John 15:12; 1 John 3:14-17; 1 Pet 2:17
15:18 Exod 20:5; 2 Kgs 19:28; John 7:7
15:19 John 15:16; 1 John 4:4,5; John 17:14-16
15:20 Ezek 3:7; 1 Sam 8:7; John 13:16
15:21 1 Sam 8:7; Ezek 3:7; John 16:3
15:22 Ezek 33:31; Ezek 3:7; John 9:41
15:23 Exod 20:5; 2 Kgs 19:28; Isa 37:29
15:24 Exod 20:5; Deut 5:9; Num 14:11
15:25 Ps 35:19; Ps 69:4; Ps 109:3

15:6 *Unless someone remains in Me, he is thrown out as the branch* Christians read this three ways: a true believer can lose salvation; a believer whose life produced nothing loses reward, not salvation (1 Cor 3:12-15); or it describes those who seemed attached but never truly were. I will not settle that debate here. Judas shows how serious it is. He walked with Jesus three years and did not remain in Him. The proof of a living branch is fruit.
15:7 *you will ask whatever you wish, and it will happen for you* When Christ's words live in us, they shape what we want, and our prayers line up with His will. This is not a blank check but the natural result of a life so joined to Jesus that His desires have become ours.
15:8 *In this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit* A farmer is honored by a good harvest, and God by His people growing, changing and serving. Fruit is how we show, and keep showing, that we are His disciples (Matt 7:20).
15:9 *Even as the Father loved Me, I also loved you* The measure of His love for us is the perfect, eternal love between the Father and the Son. We do not earn it, but we can stay in it and enjoy it, as a child stays close to a loving parent.
15:10 *If you keep My commandments, you will remain in My love* Not earning salvation but staying close. A disobedient child is still his father's child, but closeness is lost until it is made right. Jesus kept His Father's commandments and lived every moment in His love.
15:11 *so that My joy may remain in you, and your joy may be full* Said the night before the cross. His joy did not depend on circumstances but on His relationship with the Father, and He offers that joy to us. The Christian life is not meant to be grim duty.
15:13 *Greater love than this no one has, that one lay down his life for his friends* Within hours He did exactly that. We honor the soldier who falls on a grenade for his friends. Jesus went further. He died for us "while we were still sinners" (Rom 5:8).
15:14 *You are My friends if you do whatever I command you* We do not become His friends by obeying. This describes what His friends look like.
15:15 *but I have called you friends* A slave follows orders without being told the reasons. Jesus shared with them all He heard from the Father. Abraham was called the friend of God (Isa 41:8; James 2:23), and now every follower is offered that friendship. We still serve, as the apostles called themselves bond-servants (Rom 1:1), but as friends who know His heart.
15:16 *You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you* A student usually picked his rabbi. Jesus did it the other way and called His disciples (Mark 1:16-20). He chose them to bear fruit that lasts into eternity. To pray in His name is to pray as His representatives, for His purposes, trusting His authority.
15:17 *so that you love one another* He closes where He began (15:12). This command ties everything else together.
15:18 *If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before you* The tone changes from love to hatred. In John, the world, kosmos, often means people organized in rebellion against God. When a believer is mocked for following Christ, it is really about the One he follows.
15:19 *I chose you out of the world* We still live, work and raise families here, but our loyalty and citizenship are elsewhere (Phil 3:20). When someone stops living by the world's values, it notices and often pushes back.
15:20 *If they persecuted Me, they will persecute you also* Both warning and encouragement (13:16). We will face opposition, but some will hear and believe, just as some believed Jesus.
15:21 *they do not know the One who sent Me* The root is spiritual blindness. Paul was one of these before he met Jesus (1 Tim 1:13).
15:22 *now they have no excuse for their sin* Not that they would have been sinless. His coming removed every excuse. The more light we have, the more responsible we are for what we do with it.
15:23 *The one hating Me hates My Father also* There is no neutral ground. Many say they believe in God but have no use for Jesus. According to Jesus that is not possible (10:30).
15:24 *the works which no other one has done* A man born blind given sight, a man four days dead raised. Those who saw and still hated Him had seen the evidence and rejected both the Son and the Father.
15:25 *They hated Me without cause* From the Psalms (Ps 35:19; 69:4). "Their law" means the Hebrew Scriptures broadly. The leaders who prided themselves on the Scriptures fulfilled them without knowing it.

without cause.' **26** But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes forth from the Father, He will testify concerning Me. **27** And you also testify, because you are with Me from ***the*** beginning.

JOHN 16

The Work of the Holy Spirit

1 These things I have spoken to you so that you may not be caused to stumble. **2** They will make you ***ones*** put out of the synagogue; but an hour is coming that everyone who has killed you may think ***that he is*** offering service to God. **3** And these things they will do to you, because they did not know the Father, nor Me. **4** But these things I have spoken to you so that when the hour comes, you may remember them, that I said ***them*** to you. Now these things I did not say to you from ***the*** beginning, because I was with you. **5** But now I am going away to the ***One*** who sent Me, and none of you asks Me, 'Where are You going?' **6** But because I have spoken these things to you, grief has filled your heart. **7** But I say the truth to you: it is profitable for you that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. **8** And having come, He will convict the world concerning sin and concerning righteousness and concerning judgment: **9** concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; **10** and concerning righteousness, because I am going away to My Father, and you no longer see Me; **11** and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged. **12** I still have many things to say to you, but you are not able to bear ***them*** now. **13** But when He comes, the Spirit of truth, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak from Himself, but whatever He hears He will speak, and He will declare to you the things ***that are*** coming. **14** He will glorify Me, because He will take from what ***is*** Mine and will declare ***it*** to you. **15** All things, as many as the Father has, are Mine; because of this I said that He will take from what ***is*** Mine and will declare ***it*** to you.

Grief Turned to Joy

16 A little ***while***, and you do not see Me; and again a little ***while***, and you will see Me, because I am going away to the Father." **17** Therefore ***some*** of His disciples said to one another, "What is this that He says to us, 'A little ***while***, and you do not see Me; and again a little ***while***, and you will see Me'; and, 'Because I am going away to the Father'?"

18 Therefore they were saying, "What is this that He says, 'the little ***while***'? We do not know what He is speaking."

15:26 Isa 43:10; John 21:24; 1 John 1:1,2
15:27 Isa 43:10; John 21:24; 1 John 1:1,2
16:1 Matt 13:21,57; Matt 26:31-33; Rom 14:21
16:2 Isa 66:5; Num 23:4; 2 Sam 21:2
16:3 Exod 5:2; 1 Sam 2:12; 1 Sam 22:23
16:4 Isa 41:22; Isa 41:23; Ezek 24:24
16:5 Zech 2:2; John 13:36; John 7:33
16:6 John 14:1,27,28; John 16:20-22; John 20:11-15
16:7 John 15:26; John 14:16,17,26; Rom 8:28
16:8 Jude 1:15; Zech 12:10; Acts 2:37
16:9 Isa 51:4; John 8:23,24,42-47; John 12:47,48
16:10 Isa 45:24; Isa 51:4; Jer 23:5,6
16:11 John 12:31; Col 2:15; Heb 2:14
16:12 Mark 4:33; John 14:30; John 15:15
16:13 John 14:26; John 14:17; 1 Cor 2:10-13
16:14 Zech 12:10; 1 John 4:13,14; Acts 2:32-36
16:15 John 3:35; John 10:29,30; John 13:3
16:16 John 20:19-29; John 21:1-23; Acts 1:3
16:17 Mark 9:10,32; John 16:1,5,19; John 12:16
16:18 Ps 73:16; Matt 16:9-11; Luke 24:25

15:26 *the Spirit of truth who goes forth from the Father, He will testify concerning Me* He comes from the Father, and the Son sends Him, one of the places Scripture shows the Father, Son and Spirit working together. The Spirit never points to Himself. He always points to Christ.
15:27 *you also testify, because you are with Me from the beginning* The Spirit's witness and the apostles' eyewitness record work together, which is what we have in the New Testament. Every believer carries that testimony to those around us.
16:1 *so that you may not be caused to stumble* The Greek word pictures a trap that trips someone up. Persecution that comes by surprise can shake faith. Persecution predicted ahead of time can strengthen it, because it proves Jesus knew what was coming.
16:2 *everyone who has killed you may think that he is offering service to God* Being put out of the synagogue cost a Jewish believer community, friends, and sometimes family and work (9:22). Saul of Tarsus approved Stephen's stoning and hunted Christians, sure he was doing God's will (Acts 8:1; 26:9-11). Religious zeal without the truth is dangerous.
16:3 *because they did not know the Father, nor Me* They may be very religious, but they do not know God. It is possible to be sincere and still be sincerely wrong.
16:4 *because I was with you* While He was present, the world's anger landed on Him, and He protected them. Now He was leaving, and they needed to be ready. Remembering that He told them would anchor their faith.
16:5 *none of you asks Me, 'Where are You going?'* Peter asked in 13:36 and Thomas in 14:5, but their questions were about what His leaving meant for them. None asked about the Father and the glory waiting for Him. They were so focused on their loss that they missed the big picture.
16:7 *it is profitable for you that I go away* In His body Jesus could be in one place at a time. The Spirit lives in every believer, everywhere, all the time. Jesus had to finish His work, die, rise and return to the Father before sending Him at Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4, 33). The Helper had been beside them three years, and "another Helper" (14:16) would never leave.
16:8 *He will convict the world* The Greek elencho means to expose, to prove wrong, to bring into the light so it cannot be denied, what a prosecutor does when he lays out the evidence.
16:9 *concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me* Not murder or theft, though those are real sins. The root sin is unbelief. The one who rejects Christ rejects the only remedy for sin (3:18). No preacher can make a person see his own sin. When someone feels that weight and knows he needs a Savior, that is the Spirit at work.
16:10 *concerning righteousness, because I am going away to My Father* The world judged Jesus a criminal and put Him to death. The Father raised Him and took Him into heaven. That was God's verdict. True righteousness is found not in our goodness but in Christ alone.
16:11 *the ruler of this world has been judged* Satan (12:31; 14:30) was defeated at the cross, where he seemed to win. If he is judged, all who follow him will be. The Spirit warns that judgment is real and coming (Rev 20:10-15).
16:12 *you are not able to bear them now* A good teacher knows how much a student can take in. Jesus did not hold back the truth. He was pacing it.
16:13 *He will guide you into all the truth* A guide does not make up the road. He leads along one already there. Given first to the apostles, this was fulfilled as the Spirit helped them remember (14:26) and write the New Testament, including the prophecy of Revelation. In a secondary way He still helps believers understand the Scriptures He inspired, and He never leads anyone to a "truth" that contradicts the written Word.
16:14 *He will glorify Me* A simple test for any teaching that claims to be of the Spirit: does it lift up Jesus? The true Holy Spirit always points to Christ.
16:15 *All things, as many as the Father has, are Mine* No mere man or prophet could say this. The Father, the Son and the Spirit work together as one God.
16:16 *A little while, and you do not see Me* Within hours He would be arrested, crucified and buried, and three days later He would appear to them. I believe this refers first to His death and resurrection. It may also look ahead to His return, when all His people will see Him (Rev 1:7).
16:18 *We do not know what He is speaking* The apostles who walked with Him daily did not always understand Him either. It is all right to admit we do not understand a passage. Keep asking and listening.

19 Therefore Jesus (Iesous) knew that they were wanting to ask Him, and He said to them, "Are you seeking among one another concerning this, that I said, 'A little ***while***, and you do not see Me; and again a little ***while***, and you will see Me'? **20** Truly, truly, I say to you that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; and you will be grieved, but your grief will become joy. **21** The woman, when she is giving birth, has grief, because her hour has come; but when she has brought forth the child, she no longer remembers the tribulation, because of the joy that a man has been born into the world. **22** And you therefore now indeed have grief; but I will see you again, and your heart will rejoice, and no one takes your joy from you. **23** And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Truly, truly, I say to you that whatever you ask the Father in My name, He will give you. **24** Until now you have asked nothing in My name; ask, and you will receive, so that your joy may be made full. **25** These things I have spoken to you in figurative sayings; ***but*** an hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figurative sayings, but I will tell you plainly concerning the Father. **26** In that day you will ask in My name; and I do not say to you that I will ask the Father for you; **27** for the Father Himself loves you dearly, because you have loved Me dearly and have believed that I came forth from God. **28** I came forth from the Father and have come into the world; again, I leave the world and go to the Father." **29** His disciples say to Him, "Look, now You are speaking plainly, and You say no figurative saying. **30** Now we know that You know all things, and have no need that anyone ask You; by this we believe that You came forth from God." **31** Jesus answered them, "Do you now believe?

32 Look, an hour is coming, and has now come, that you will be scattered, each to ***his*** own ***things***, and will leave Me alone; and ***yet*** I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. **33** These things I have spoken to you so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but take courage, I have overcome the world."

JOHN 17

Jesus Prays for Himself

1 These things Jesus (Iesous) spoke, and He lifted up His eyes to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, so that Your Son also may glorify You, **2** even as You gave Him authority over all flesh, so that all that You have given Him, He may give to them eternal life. **3** And this is the eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You sent. **4** I glorified You on the earth; I finished the work which You have given Me that I should do ***it.*** **5** And now You, Father, glorify Me with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.

16:19 John 16:30; John 2:24,25; John 21:17
16:20 Ps 30:5; Ps 97:11; Ps 126:5
16:21 Jer 30:6; Gen 3:16; Gen 21:6
16:22 John 16:6,20; 1 Pet 1:8; Acts 13:52
16:23 1 John 5:14-16; Isa 65:24; Matt 21:22
16:24 Matt 7:7,8; John 15:11; James 4:2,3
16:25 Ps 49:4; John 16:12,16,17; Ps 78:2
16:26 John 14:16; John 17:9,19,24; Rom 8:34
16:27 Deut 7:13; Ps 91:14; John 14:21,23
16:28 John 8:14; John 13:1,3; John 16:5,16
16:30 John 21:17; John 16:17; John 5:20
16:31 John 13:38; Luke 9:44,45
16:32 Zech 13:7; Ps 91:15; Isa 50:7
16:33 John 14:27; 1 John 4:4; Ps 85:8
17:1 John 13:31,32; Ps 121:2; Phil 2:9-11
17:2 Ps 2:12; John 6:37,39; John 17:24
17:3 1 John 5:20; 1 John 5:11,20; John 17:25
17:4 1 Sam 2:30; Ps 2:8; Isa 49:3
17:5 1 Sam 2:30; Ps 2:8; John 1:1-3

16:20 *your grief will become joy* His enemies celebrated at the cross while His followers hid behind locked doors (20:19). The grief would be turned into joy. The very cross that caused it became the source of their greatest joy.
16:21 *she no longer remembers the tribulation* Labor pain is real and serves a purpose, and the joy that follows is greater.
16:22 *no one takes your joy from you* These frightened men later faced beatings, prison and death with joy (Acts 5:41). The resurrection changed everything for them.
16:23 *whatever you ask the Father in My name, He will give you* After the resurrection and the coming of the Spirit they would go straight to the Father in prayer, on the basis of who Jesus is and what He has done. Until now they had never prayed in His name (16:24). Prayer is one of God's ways of filling our lives with joy.
16:25 *I will tell you plainly concerning the Father* The vine, the shepherd and the woman in labor were figures. After the resurrection He opened their minds to the Scriptures (Luke 24:45), and the Spirit taught them.
16:27 *the Father Himself loves you dearly* Some picture an angry, reluctant Father with Jesus pleading to calm Him. That is not the picture Jesus gives. The Father loved the world enough to send His Son (3:16). Jesus does intercede for us (Rom 8:34; Heb 7:25), but not to win over an unwilling Father. They are of one heart toward us.
16:28 *I came forth from the Father and have come into the world* One verse sums up His whole story: His life before His birth, His coming as a man, His death and resurrection, and His ascension. Only God could truthfully say this.
16:31 *Do you now believe?* Their faith was real, but Jesus knew how fragile it was about to prove.
16:32 *you will be scattered* Fulfilling Zechariah 13:7, quoted that night (Matt 26:31). Every one of them ran. Yet the Father was with Him. On the cross He cried, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me" (Matt 27:46), bearing the full weight of our sin and its judgment, a separation we cannot fully understand, for a short time and for us.
16:33 *In the world you will have tribulation; but take courage, I have overcome the world* In Him peace, in the world thlipsis, pressure and affliction. Jesus never promised an easy life, and many believers face severe persecution today. This is ordinary trouble, not the coming Tribulation, from which I believe the church will be taken before it begins. Trouble is normal for a Christian, not a sign God has left us. He has already overcome.
17:1 *Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, so that Your Son also may glorify You* He lifted His eyes, as in 11:41, and called God simply Father, six times in this prayer. The hour of His death, resurrection and return to the Father had come (12:23). Even here the goal is the Father's glory. In John the cross is not defeat but the place where God's love and justice are shown most clearly.
17:2 *all that You have given Him* A phrase that runs through this prayer (17:2, 6, 9, 24; 18:9). Salvation starts with God. Those who come to Jesus are the Father's gift to the Son, and He treasures them.
17:3 *this is the eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You sent* Eternal life is more than living forever. Its heart is knowing God, not facts about Him but a close, personal relationship. If you know Him, it has already started. Jesus places Himself beside the only true God, against the false gods of the world.
17:4 *I finished the work which You have given Me* He speaks as if the cross were done, so certain was He. Before the next sunset He would cry, "It has been finished" (19:30). He did everything the Father asked, with nothing left undone.
17:5 *the glory which I had with You before the world was* One of the clearest statements that Jesus existed before Bethlehem (1:1). He set aside the outward display of that glory (Phil 2:6-8) but never stopped being God. God will not give His glory to another (Isa 42:8), yet Jesus shares it. No created being, not even the highest angel, could pray this.

Jesus Prays for His Disciples

6 I revealed Your name to the men whom You have given Me
out of the world. They were Yours, and You have given them
to Me, and they have kept Your word. **7** Now they have
known that all things, as many as You have given Me, are
from You; **8** for the declarations which You have given Me I
have given to them; and they received ***them***, and knew truly
that I came forth from You, and they believed that You sent
Me. **9** I am asking concerning them; I am not asking concern-
ing the world, but concerning those whom You have given
Me, because they are Yours. **10** And all Mine are Yours, and
Yours ***are*** Mine; and I have been glorified in them. **11** And I
am no longer in the world, and ***yet*** these are in the world,
and I am coming to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your
name, those whom You have given Me, so that they may be
one, even as We ***are***. **12** When I was with them in the world, I
was keeping them in Your name; those whom You have given
Me I guarded, and none of them perished except the son of
destruction, so that the Scripture might be fulfilled. **13** But
now I am coming to You; and these things I speak in the
world, so that they may have My joy made full in them. **14** I
have given them Your word; and the world hated them,
because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the
world. **15** I do not ask that You take them out of the world,
but that You keep them from the evil. **16** They are not of the
world, even as I am not of the world. **17** Sanctify them in
Your truth; Your word is truth. **18** Even as You sent Me into
the world, I also sent them into the world. **19** And on behalf
of them I sanctify Myself, so that they themselves also may
be sanctified in truth.

Jesus Prays for All Believers

20 And I do not ask concerning these only, but also concern-
ing those who will believe in Me through their word, **21** that
they all may be one, even as You, Father, ***are*** in Me and I in
You, that they also may be one in Us, so that the world may
believe that You sent Me. **22** And the glory which You have
given Me I have given to them, so that they may be one, even
as We are one: **23** I in them and You in Me, so that they may
be perfected into one, and so that the world may know that
You sent Me and loved them, even as You loved Me.
24 Father, those whom You have given Me, I desire that
where I am, they also may be with Me, so that they may see
My glory which You gave Me; because You loved Me before
the foundation of ***the*** world. **25** Righteous Father, and the
world did not know You, but I knew You, and these knew
that You sent Me; **26** and I made Your name known to them,
and will make ***it*** known, so that the love with which You
loved Me may be in them, and I in them."

17:6 Jer 22:16; Jer 31:34; John 17:26
17:7 John 7:16,17; John 14:7-10,20; John 16:27-30
17:8 Isa 59:21; John 17:14; John 16:27,30
17:9 Luke 22:32; John 14:16; John 16:26,27
17:10 Mal 3:17; 2 Thess 1:10,12; 1 Pet 2:9
17:11 John 17:21,22; John 13:1,3; Eph 4:4
17:12 Ps 89:22; John 18:9; John 6:37,39,40
17:13 Neh 8:10; John 15:11; John 3:29
17:14 Ps 17:14; John 15:18-21; John 17:16
17:15 Ps 121:7; 1 Chr 4:10; Luke 11:4
17:17 Ps 119:160; John 15:3; Eph 5:26
17:18 Isa 61:1; Ezek 20:12; John 20:21
17:19 Num 8:17; Heb 2:11; John 10:36
17:20 Acts 2:41; John 17:6-11; Eph 4:11
17:21 Jer 32:39; Ps 133:1; Ezek 37:23
17:22 2 Cor 3:18; John 14:20; 1 John 1:3
17:23 Zech 2:11; 1 John 3:1; Col 3:14
17:24 John 12:26; John 17:5; 2 Cor 3:18
17:25 Isa 45:21; Zech 2:11; John 17:11
17:26 Isa 60:9; John 17:6; John 15:9

17:6 *I revealed Your name* A name stands for a person's whole character. Jesus showed them who God really is. "They have kept Your word" is generous of men who would run within hours. He looked at their hearts.
17:8 *they received them, and knew truly that I came forth from You* The word given, the word received, the word believed. That is how faith worked for the disciples and how it works for us as we read the Scriptures.
17:9 *I am not asking concerning the world* Not that He does not care for the world. He died for it (3:16). This part of the prayer asks what only believers can receive: to be kept, made holy and united. He prays for the world indirectly in verses 21 and 23.
17:10 *Yours are Mine* Any believer can say to God, all that is mine is Yours. No mere man could say, all that is Yours is mine. Jesus says both.
17:11 *Holy Father, keep them in Your name* The only place in the Bible God is called Holy Father. His disciples would stay behind in a hostile world. The goal of the keeping is unity, "even as We are."
17:12 *none of them perished except the son of destruction* One marked for ruin, Judas, whose betrayal fulfilled Scripture (Ps 41:9; 13:18). Some see him as never truly given to Jesus, others as a warning that a disciple can turn away. He was a thief (12:6), Jesus knew from the start (6:64, 70-71), Judas chose his path, and God used even that for His plan. Paul uses the same phrase for the man of lawlessness, the antichrist (2 Thess 2:3).
17:13 *so that they may have My joy made full in them* He prayed aloud so they would hear Him pray for them to the Father. This prayer is written down for us too.
17:14 *the world hated them, because they are not of the world* Receiving God's word changes a person and sets him apart, and the world can tell the difference.
17:15 *I do not ask that You take them out of the world, but that You keep them from the evil* God's plan is to protect His people in the middle of trouble, not to remove them from it. We are left here on purpose, as witnesses. This is about everyday life, not the coming Tribulation. Revelation 3:10, a main verse behind the pre-tribulation view, promises to keep the church from that hour of testing. Until He comes for us (14:3), He keeps us safe from the evil one.
17:17 *Sanctify them in Your truth; Your word is truth* To sanctify is to set apart for God, to make holy, and God does it through His word. Not contains truth, but is truth. When many believe truth is whatever you want, this is a rock to stand on. There is no shortcut around the Bible to holiness.
17:18 *I also sent them into the world* We are saved out of the world and sent back into it with a mission (20:21).
17:19 *I sanctify Myself* He was already perfectly holy. Here it means setting Himself apart for His task, the cross. His sacrifice makes our holiness possible.
17:20 *also concerning those who will believe in Me through their word* If you have believed through the apostles' message in the New Testament, Jesus prayed for you that night, long before you were born.
17:21 *that they all may be one* Not one big church organization, and not pretending we agree on everything, but a unity of life, believers living in the Father and the Son and so joined to one another. When Christians love and stand together, the world sees something it cannot explain apart from God. When we fight and divide, it sees nothing different from itself.
17:23 *and loved them, even as You loved Me* God loves believers as much as He loves His own Son. It is almost too much to take in, but Jesus said it.
17:24 *I desire that where I am, they also may be with Me* His great desire for us and our future hope: to be with Him and see His glory (Rev 1:12-16). The Father and the Son shared perfect love before anything was made. God did not create us because He was lonely, but to share in a love that existed forever.
17:25 *Righteous Father, and the world did not know You* Only two groups here: those who know God through Jesus and those who do not.
17:26 *so that the love with which You loved Me may be in them* The prayer ends with the love that always existed between the Father and the Son, now poured into the hearts of all who believe.

JOHN 18

The Arrest in the Garden

1 Having said these things, Jesus (Iesous) went out with His disciples beyond the winter brook of Kidron (Kedros), where there was a garden, into which He Himself entered, and His disciples. **2** Now Judas (Ioudas) also, who was delivering Him up, knew the place, because Jesus was often gathered together there with His disciples. **3** Therefore Judas, having received the cohort and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, comes there with lanterns and torches and weapons. **4** Therefore Jesus, knowing all the things that were coming upon Him, having gone out, said to them, "Whom are you seeking?" **5** They answered Him, "Jesus the Nazarene." Jesus says to them, "I am ***He***." And Judas also, who was delivering Him up, was standing with them. **6** Therefore when He said to them, "I am ***He***," they went backward and fell to the ground. **7** Therefore He questioned them again, "Whom are you seeking?" And they said, "Jesus the Nazarene." **8** Jesus answered, "I told you that I am ***He***. Therefore if you are seeking Me, allow these to go away," **9** so that the word might be fulfilled which He spoke, "Those whom You have given Me, I lost not one of them." **10** Then Simon Peter (Petros), having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's slave and cut off his right ear. Now the slave's name was Malchus (Malchos). **11** Therefore Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword into the sheath. The cup which the Father has given Me, shall I not drink it?"

Before Annas and Peter's Denials

12 Then the cohort and the commander and the officers of the Jews seized Jesus and bound Him, **13** and led Him away to Annas first; for he was father-in-law of Caiaphas (Kaiaphas), who was high priest that year. **14** Now Caiaphas was the ***one*** who gave counsel to the Jews that it is profitable for one man to perish on behalf of the people. **15** Now Simon Peter was following Jesus, and another disciple. And that disciple was known to the high priest, and he entered with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest; **16** but Peter was standing at the door outside. Therefore the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to the doorkeeper, and brought Peter in. **17** Therefore the servant girl, the doorkeeper, says to Peter, "You are not also ***one*** of the disciples of this man, are you?" He says, "I am not." **18** Now the slaves and the officers were standing ***there***, having made a fire of coals, because it was cold, and they were warming themselves; and Peter was standing with them and warming himself. **19** Then the high priest questioned Jesus concerning His

18:1 2 Sam 15:23; 1 Kgs 15:13; 2 Kgs 23:6
18:2 Luke 21:37; Luke 22:39; Mark 11:11,12
18:3 John 18:12; Luke 22:47-53; Acts 1:16
18:4 John 13:1; John 10:17,18; John 19:28
18:5 John 1:46; John 19:19; Matt 2:23
18:6 Ps 70:2,3; 2 Kgs 1:9-15; Ps 27:2
18:8 Isa 53:6; Eph 5:25; John 10:28
18:9 John 17:12
18:10 John 18:26; Matt 26:51-54; Mark 14:30,47
18:11 Ps 75:8; Ezek 23:31; Gen 22:7
18:12 Judg 16:21; John 18:3; Matt 26:57
18:13 John 18:24; Luke 3:2; Matt 26:57
18:14 John 11:49-52
18:15 Mark 14:54; Luke 22:54; Matt 26:58-68
18:17 Matt 26:69,70; Mark 14:66-68; Luke 22:54,56,57
18:18 Mark 14:54; John 18:25; Luke 22:55,56
18:19 Luke 11:53,54; Luke 20:20

18:1 *beyond the winter brook of Kidron, where there was a garden* The Kidron runs along the east side of Jerusalem below the Mount of Olives. Matthew and Mark name the garden Gethsemane, oil press, probably an olive grove (Matt 26:36). Long before, David crossed the same brook weeping, betrayed by a trusted counselor (2 Sam 15:23, 31). Now the Son of David crosses it, about to be betrayed by a trusted friend.

18:2 *Judas also, who was delivering Him up, knew the place* Jesus did not hide. He went where He knew Judas would find Him. Judas used a place of prayer and fellowship as the place of betrayal.

18:3 *the cohort and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees* A Roman cohort at full strength numbered several hundred soldiers. We do not know how many came, but it was a large armed force, with the temple police. Passover fell at the full moon, yet they brought torches, perhaps expecting a man who would hide. The Light of the World walked right up to them.

18:4 *Jesus, knowing all the things that were coming upon Him, having gone out* He did not wait to be found. "No one takes it away from Me" (10:18). Here we see it happen.

18:5 *I am He* In Greek ego eimi, I am, the words of 8:58 and the name God revealed to Moses (Exod 3:14). And Judas, who had eaten with Him hours before, stood with His enemies.

18:6 *they went backward and fell to the ground* Only John records it. Armed men were knocked flat by two Greek words. He could have walked away or called more than twelve legions of angels (Matt 26:53). Jesus was not arrested because He was weak, but because He was willing.

18:8 *if you are seeking Me, allow these to go away* Even while arrested He protected His disciples. The Good Shepherd stood between the wolves and His flock (10:11).

18:9 *Those whom You have given Me, I lost not one of them* As He said in 6:39 and 17:12. He kept them physically safe that night, and many see a picture of how He keeps their souls. Christians who differ on eternal security agree that no outside power can take His sheep from Him (10:28-29).

18:10 *struck the high priest's slave and cut off his right ear* Only John names Peter and Malchus. John knew the high priest's household (18:15). Luke the physician says Jesus healed the ear (Luke 22:51). Peter had promised to die for Him (13:37), but he fought the wrong battle with the wrong weapon.

18:11 *The cup which the Father has given Me, shall I not drink it?* In the Old Testament a cup often pictures God's judgment on sin (Isa 51:17; Jer 25:15). In the garden He prayed for it to pass if possible (Matt 26:39). Now He has fully accepted it. The cross was a cup the Father gave Him, and He chose to drink it for us.

18:12 *seized Jesus and bound Him* The One who holds the universe together (Col 1:17) let Himself be tied with ropes by men He created.

18:13 *led Him away to Annas first* Annas had been high priest until the Romans removed him. Several of his sons later held the office, and now his son-in-law Caiaphas. Many still saw Annas as the real power behind the priesthood, so this was an informal questioning before the official trial.

18:14 *it is profitable for one man to perish on behalf of the people* Caiaphas' cold calculation (11:49-52), which God used as prophecy. Jesus would truly die as a substitute.

18:15 *another disciple. And that disciple was known to the high priest* John never names himself. Many believe, and I agree, that this was John. At least Peter and John did not run as far as the others.

18:17 *You are not also one of the disciples of this man, are you?* The question expected the answer no, and Peter took the easy way out. Hours earlier he swore to die for Jesus and drew a sword against a cohort. It is often easier to be brave in a big moment than to stand firm when a quiet question catches us off guard.

18:18 *having made a fire of coals* Peter warmed himself with the men who arrested his Lord. The Greek word for this charcoal fire appears only here and in 21:9. By one fire Peter denied Jesus three times. By another the risen Jesus asked him three times, "Do you love Me." God has a way of meeting us back at the place of our failure.

disciples and concerning His teaching. **20** Jesus answered him, "I spoke openly to the world; I always taught in the synagogue and in the temple, where the Jews always come together, and in secret I spoke nothing. **21** Why do you question Me? Question those who have heard what I spoke to them; look, these know what I said." **22** And when He had said these things, one of the officers standing by gave Jesus a slap, saying, "Do You answer the high priest like this?" **23** Jesus answered him, "If I spoke wrongly, testify concerning the wrong; but if rightly, why do you strike Me?" **24** Therefore Annas sent Him bound to Caiaphas the high priest. **25** Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. Therefore they said to him, "You are not also ***one*** of His disciples, are you?" He denied ***it*** and said, "I am not." **26** One of the slaves of the high priest, being a relative ***of the one*** whose ear Peter cut off, says, "Did I not see you in the garden with Him?" **27** Therefore Peter denied again, and immediately a rooster crowed.

Jesus Before Pilate

28 Then they lead Jesus from Caiaphas into the Praetorium; now it was early; and they themselves did not enter into the Praetorium, so that they might not be defiled, but so that they might eat the Passover. **29** Therefore Pilate (Pilatos) went out to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?" **30** They answered and said to him, "If this ***man*** were not an evildoer, we would not have delivered Him up to you." **31** Therefore Pilate said to them, "You take Him, and judge Him according to your law." Therefore the Jews said to him, "It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death," **32** so that the word of Jesus might be fulfilled which He spoke, signifying by what death He was about to die. **33** Therefore Pilate entered into the Praetorium again, and called Jesus and said to Him, "Are You the King of the Jews?" **34** Jesus answered him, "Are you saying this from yourself, or did others say ***it*** to you concerning Me?" **35** Pilate answered, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your nation and the chief priests delivered You up to me; what did You do?" **36** Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My officers would be fighting, so that I might not be delivered up to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here." **37** Therefore Pilate said to Him, "So You are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, that I may testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice." **38** Pilate says to Him, "What is truth?" And having said this, he went out again to the Jews, and says to them, "I find no cause in Him. **39** But you have a custom that I release one to you at the Passover; do you wish therefore ***that*** I release to you the King of the Jews?" **40** Then they all cried out again, saying, "Not this one, but Barabbas!" Now

18:20 Isa 45:19; Matt 4:23; Isa 48:16
18:21 Matt 26:59,60; Mark 14:55-59; Luke 22:67
18:22 Job 16:10; Job 30:10-12; Isa 50:5-7
18:23 2 Cor 10:1; 1 Pet 2:20-23
18:24 John 18:13; Matt 26:57
18:25 Mark 14:37,38,67; Luke 22:56; Matt 26:69,71
18:26 Prov 12:19; Matt 26:73; Mark 14:70,71
18:27 John 13:38; Matt 26:34,74,75; Mark 14:30,68,71,72
18:28 Deut 16:2; 2 Chr 35:8; 2 Chr 35:17
18:29 Matt 27:23; Acts 23:28-30; Acts 25:16
18:30 John 19:12; Mark 15:3; Luke 20:19-26
18:31 John 19:6,7; Acts 25:18-20; John 19:15
18:32 Matt 20:19; Matt 26:2; John 3:14
18:33 Ps 2:6; Jer 23:5; Zeph 3:15
18:35 Ezra 4:12; Neh 4:2; Acts 18:14-16
18:36 John 6:15; Luke 17:20,21; Rom 14:17
18:37 1 John 4:6; John 8:14; John 8:47
18:38 John 19:4,6,21,22; Luke 23:4,14-16; Acts 17:19,20,32
18:39 Matt 27:15-18; Mark 15:6,8; Luke 23:17,20
18:40 Mark 15:7,15; Matt 27:16,26; Luke 23:18,19,25

18:20 *I spoke openly to the world* No secret teaching for an inner circle. Be careful of any teacher who says the real truth is only for those on the inside.
18:21 *Question those who have heard what I spoke to them* A case was to rest on witnesses (Deut 19:15), not on forcing the accused to testify against himself. This hearing was improper.
18:23 *if rightly, why do you strike Me?* Calm, righteous dignity. Turning the other cheek (Matt 5:39) does not mean we may never speak up about wrong. It means we do not take revenge.
18:24 *Annas sent Him bound to Caiaphas the high priest* Matthew and Mark describe that trial: false witnesses, the high priest's demand, and Jesus' confession that He is the Christ, the Son of God (Matt 26:57-68; Mark 14:53-65).
18:25 *He denied it and said, "I am not."* Inside, Jesus says "I am" and stands firm. Outside, Peter says "I am not" and falls.
18:27 *immediately a rooster crowed* Just as Jesus said (13:38). The Lord looked at Peter, and Peter wept bitterly (Luke 22:61-62). John leaves the failure in the open, but Peter would be restored (21:15-19), preach boldly and give his life for Jesus. Failure does not have to be final.
18:28 *so that they might not be defiled, but so that they might eat the Passover* The Praetorium was the Roman governor's headquarters. Entering a Gentile's house would make them unclean, yet they were arranging the murder of an innocent man, straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel (Matt 23:24). The other Gospels call the Last Supper a Passover meal. Some explain this as the meals and sacrifices of the week-long feast, others as different calendars. Either way, the Lamb of God (1:29) died at Passover.
18:29 *What accusation do you bring against this man?* Pontius Pilate governed Judea about ten years. Every proper trial starts with a charge.
18:30 *If this man were not an evildoer, we would not have delivered Him up to you* Trust us, He's guilty. They had no charge that would hold up in a Roman court.
18:31 *It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death* They did not want a trial but an execution, and under Rome only the Romans could carry out the death penalty.
18:32 *signifying by what death He was about to die* The Jewish method would have been stoning. Handed to the Romans, Jesus was crucified, lifted up, exactly as He said (12:32). Even the political details were in God's hands.
18:33 *Are You the King of the Jews?* The leaders accused Him of claiming to be Christ, a King (Luke 23:2). To a Roman governor anyone claiming to be king was a possible rebel against Caesar.
18:34 *Are you saying this from yourself* What kind of king did Pilate have in mind, a political rebel, or who Jesus really is?
18:35 *Your nation and the chief priests delivered You up to me* He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him (1:11).
18:36 *My kingdom is not of this world* Its source and authority come from heaven, not armies or politics. If it did not, His servants would fight, as Peter tried. This does not mean His kingdom has nothing to do with the earth. The day is coming when "the kingdoms of the world have become those of our Lord and of His Christ" (Rev 11:15), and He will reign on earth a thousand years (Rev 20:4-6). He will establish it Himself, not His followers with swords.
18:37 *For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world* "Born" speaks of His birth as a man, "come into the world" of where He came from before it. Pilate thought he was judging Jesus, but Jesus was inviting Pilate to hear the truth (10:27).
18:38 *What is truth?* We do not know if Pilate sneered, sighed or longed. He did not wait for an answer and walked out on the One who is the truth (14:6). Many still ask Pilate's question and walk away before the answer comes. "I find no cause in Him" is the first of three times he says it (19:4, 6). The Lamb was without blemish.
18:40 *Now Barabbas was a robber* Mark says he took part in an uprising and committed murder (Mark 15:7). Barabbas means son of the father. A guilty murderer goes free, and the innocent Son of the Father takes his place. We are Barabbas. We deserved the cross, and Jesus died in our place.

Barabbas was a robber.

JOHN 19

Condemned to Die

1 Then therefore Pilate (Pilatos) took Jesus (Iesous) and flogged ***Him***. **2** And the soldiers, having woven a crown of thorns, put ***it*** on His head, and threw a purple robe around Him; **3** and they were saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they were giving Him slaps. **4** Therefore Pilate went outside again and says to them, "Look, I am bringing Him out to you, so that you may know that I find no cause in Him." **5** Therefore Jesus went outside, wearing the thorny crown and the purple robe. And he says to them, "Look, the man!" **6** Therefore when the chief priests and the officers saw Him, they cried out, saying, "Crucify, crucify!" Pilate says to them, "You take Him and crucify ***Him***; for I find no cause in Him." **7** The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to our law He ought to die, because He made Himself Son of God." **8** Therefore when Pilate heard this word, he was more afraid, **9** and he entered into the Praetorium again and says to Jesus, "Where are You from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. **10** Therefore Pilate says to Him, "Do You not speak to me? Do You not know that I have authority to crucify You, and I have authority to release You?" **11** Jesus answered, "You would have no authority against Me at all, unless it had been given to you from above; because of this, the one who delivers Me up to you has greater sin." **12** From this Pilate was seeking to release Him; but the Jews were crying out, saying, "If you release this ***man***, you are not a friend of Caesar; everyone who makes himself a king speaks against Caesar." **13** Therefore Pilate, having heard this word, brought Jesus outside, and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called ***the*** Pavement (Lithostrotos), and in Hebrew, Gabbatha. **14** Now it was ***the*** Preparation of the Passover, and ***it was*** about the sixth hour. And he says to the Jews, "Look, your King!" **15** But they cried out, "Take ***Him*** away, take ***Him*** away, crucify Him!" Pilate says to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king except Caesar." **16** Then therefore he delivered Him up to them so that He might be crucified. Now they took Jesus and led ***Him*** away.

The Crucifixion

17 And bearing His cross, He went out to the ***place*** called Place of a Skull, which is called in Hebrew Golgotha,
18 where they crucified Him, and with Him two others, on this side and on that side, and Jesus in the middle. **19** And Pilate also wrote a title and put ***it*** on the cross. And it was written, "Jesus the Nazarene, the King of the Jews."

19:1 Isa 53:5; Isa 50:6; Luke 23:16,23
19:2 Isa 53:3; John 19:5; Ps 22:6
19:3 Matt 27:29; Matt 26:49; Luke 1:28
19:4 John 18:38; John 19:6; Matt 27:4,19,24,54
19:5 Isa 7:14; Judg 8:26; Ps 52:7
19:6 John 18:31; John 19:15; Matt 27:22
19:7 Lev 24:16; Isa 53:4; Dan 3:25
19:8 Dan 6:14; John 19:13; Acts 14:11-19
19:9 Isa 53:7; John 8:14; John 9:29,30
19:10 Eccl 3:14; John 18:39; Dan 3:14,15
19:11 Exod 9:14; Dan 4:17; Rom 13:1
19:12 Jer 38:5; Jer 38:19; John 18:33-36
19:13 John 19:8; Prov 29:25; Isa 51:12,13
19:14 Ezra 4:14; Jer 38:5; Matt 27:62
19:15 Ps 149:2; Isa 49:7; Isa 53:2
19:16 Job 16:11; Dan 6:16; Mic 5:2
19:17 Lev 16:21; Luke 23:33; Gen 22:6
19:18 Isa 53:12; John 18:32; Ps 22:16
19:19 Ps 149:2; Zeph 3:15; Matt 27:37

19:1 *Pilate took Jesus and flogged Him* Pilate had found no guilt (18:38) and seems to have hoped a brutal beating would satisfy the crowd. The Roman scourge had several leather straps, often weighted with bone or metal, that tore the back. Men sometimes died from it before reaching a cross. Every stripe on His back was for you and me (Isa 53:5).
19:2 *having woven a crown of thorns, put it on His head, and threw a purple robe around Him* Purple was the costly color of kings. They mocked the One through whom all things were made (1:1-3). The hands that made the thorn bush were struck by men He created, and He took it in silence.
19:5 *Look, the man!* I believe Pilate meant, does this beaten man look like a threat to anyone? He was trying to win pity. But Jesus is the Man, the one perfect human being, the second Adam (Rom 5:12-19). The world was looking at its Creator and did not recognize Him (1:10).
19:6 *Crucify, crucify!* The priests led the cry. For the third time Pilate found no guilt (18:38; 19:4), yet he did not set Jesus free.
19:7 *He made Himself Son of God* The real charge comes out, the law against blasphemy (Lev 24:16). They understood exactly what He claimed: equality with God (5:18; 10:30-33). If false, He was a blasphemer. If true, they were condemning their own God.
19:9 *Where are You from?* Romans were superstitious about sons of the gods, and Pilate's wife had warned him (Matt 27:19). He wanted to know if Jesus was more than a man. Pilate had already brushed off the truth (18:38), and Jesus was silent before His accusers as Isaiah foretold (Isa 53:7).
19:10 *I have authority to crucify You, and I have authority to release You* This is how the world thinks: whoever holds the keys, the money or the soldiers is in charge.
19:11 *unless it had been given to you from above* Pilate's authority was real but borrowed. God rules over every ruler (Rom 13:1; Dan 4:17). The one who delivered Jesus up is most likely Caiaphas (11:49-53; 18:24, 28), though some say Judas. Pilate was guilty, but the one who knew the Scriptures and rejected the Messiah had greater guilt. The more light we have, the more we are accountable.
19:12 *you are not a friend of Caesar* A title of honor for loyal officials. They threatened to report Pilate to Rome for freeing a so-called king. His career meant more to him than justice.
19:13 *The Pavement, and in Hebrew, Gabbatha* The judgment seat was where a governor gave his verdict. Both names, Greek and the everyday Aramaic, show John writing as an eyewitness about real places.
19:14 *it was about the sixth hour* Many believe Jesus was sentenced on the very day the Passover lambs were prepared, others take it as the Friday of Passover week (18:28). Either way, "our Passover was sacrificed for us: Christ" (1 Cor 5:7). Mark 15:25 says the third hour. Some think John counted from midnight, others that both writers rounded to blocks of the day. The Gospels agree He was condemned in the morning and died that afternoon, the day before the Sabbath.
19:15 *We have no king except Caesar* For centuries Israel confessed the LORD as King (Judg 8:23; 1 Sam 8:7). Now the men who led worship in God's temple chose a pagan emperor over their Messiah. When we reject Jesus, we always end up bowing to some other king.
19:16 *he delivered Him up to them so that He might be crucified* Pilate knew Jesus was innocent and condemned Him anyway. Millions still confess in the Apostles' Creed that Jesus suffered under Pontius Pilate. He tried to stay neutral and found out you cannot.
19:17 *bearing His cross* Condemned men carried their crossbeam. Along the way Simon of Cyrene was made to carry it (Mark 15:21), most likely because Jesus was too weak after the scourging. Calvary comes from the Latin for skull. The place was outside the walls, as the sin offering was burned outside the camp (Lev 16:27; Heb 13:11-12).
19:18 *where they crucified Him, and with Him two others* His first readers had seen crosses along Roman roads. It was Rome's most shameful and painful death, often slow over many hours. Placed between criminals, He was numbered with transgressors (Isa 53:12). The sinless One died among sinners, right where He came to rescue us.

20 Therefore many of the Jews read this title, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, in Greek, in Latin. **21** Therefore the chief priests of the Jews were saying to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but that He said, 'I am King of the Jews.'" **22** Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have written." **23** Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments and made four parts, to each soldier a part, and also the tunic. Now the tunic was seamless, woven from the top throughout the whole. **24** Therefore they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but let us cast lots for it ***to see*** whose it will be," so that the Scripture might be fulfilled which says, "They divided My garments among themselves, and for My clothing they cast a lot." Therefore the soldiers indeed did these things. **25** But by the cross of Jesus were standing His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary (Maria) of Clopas (Klopas), and Mary the Magdalene. **26** Therefore Jesus, having seen ***His*** mother, and the disciple whom He was loving standing by, says to His mother, "Woman, look, your son!" **27** Then He says to the disciple, "Look, your mother!" And from that hour the disciple took her into his own ***home***. **28** After this, Jesus, knowing that all things have now been finished, so that the Scripture might be accomplished, says, "I am thirsty." **29** Therefore a vessel full of sour wine was set ***there***; and they, having filled a sponge with sour wine and having put ***it*** around hyssop, brought ***it*** to His mouth. **30** Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It has been finished." And having bowed ***His*** head, He delivered up the spirit.

His Side Pierced

31 Therefore the Jews, since it was ***the*** Preparation, so that the bodies might not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for the day of that Sabbath was a great ***one***), asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and ***that*** they might be taken away. **32** Therefore the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first, and of the other who had been crucified with Him. **33** But having come to Jesus, when they saw Him already dead, they did not break His legs; **34** but one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. **35** And the ***one*** who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and that one knows that he says true ***things***, so that you may believe. **36** For these things took place so that the Scripture might be fulfilled, "A bone of His will not be broken." **37** And again another Scripture says, "They will look on ***Him*** whom they pierced."

The Burial of Jesus

38 Now after these things Joseph (Ioseph) from Arimathea

19:20 John 19:13; John 5:2; Acts 21:40
19:21 Ps 149:2
19:22 John 19:12; Ps 65:7; Ps 76:10
19:23 1 Kgs 12:15; Ps 22:18; Luke 23:34
19:24 Ps 22:18; 2 Chr 10:15; John 19:28,36,37
19:25 Luke 23:49; Matt 27:55,56; Mark 15:40,41
19:26 John 13:23; John 2:4; John 20:2
19:27 Matt 12:48-50; 1 Tim 5:2-4; John 16:32
19:28 Ps 69:21; Ps 22:15; John 19:30
19:29 Num 19:18; Exod 12:22; Luke 23:36
19:30 John 17:4; Mark 15:37; Phil 2:8
19:31 Deut 21:22; Deut 21:23; Lev 23:10
19:32 Eccl 3:14; John 19:18; Luke 23:39-43
19:33 Eccl 3:14
19:34 1 John 5:6,8; Ezek 36:25; Zech 13:1
19:35 John 21:24; 1 John 1:1-3; Acts 10:39
19:36 Exod 12:46; Num 9:12; Ps 34:20
19:37 Zech 12:10; Ps 22:16; Ps 22:17
19:38 Matt 27:57-60; Mark 15:42-46; Luke 23:50

19:20 *it was written in Hebrew, in Greek, in Latin* Rome posted the crime of the condemned. Hebrew for the Jews, Latin for Rome's government, Greek for the common people of the east. Jerusalem was packed with pilgrims. Without meaning to, Pilate preached a short sermon to the world: Jesus is King over all people.

19:22 *What I have written, I have written* Perhaps Pilate's way of getting back at them for forcing his hand. Whatever his reason, God kept the truth nailed above His Son's head.

19:23 *the tunic was seamless, woven from the top throughout the whole* Executioners got the victim's clothes. The tunic, worn next to the skin, was one piece, so they cast lots rather than tear it.

19:24 *They divided My garments among themselves* From Psalm 22:18, written by David about a thousand years earlier. That psalm opens with the cry Jesus made from the cross (Ps 22:1; Matt 27:46) and describes pierced hands and feet and mocking crowds. The soldiers had never read it. They were gambling, and did exactly what God said would be done.

19:25 *by the cross of Jesus were standing His mother* The disciples had scattered (16:32), but these women stayed near a Roman cross with soldiers all around. It may be three women or four. I lean toward four, with "His mother's sister" possibly Salome, mother of James and John (Mark 15:40; Matt 27:56), but the text does not say for certain.

19:26 *Woman, look, your son!* Dying, Jesus cared for His mother. "Woman" was respectful (2:4). His brothers did not yet believe (7:5), so He gave Mary to John, who shared her faith. Caring for our parents is part of following Christ (Exod 20:12; 1 Tim 5:4, 8).

19:28 *I am thirsty* Fully aware at every moment, He fulfilled Scripture (Ps 69:21; 22:15). The One who offered living water (4:10-14) and promised that those who come to Him will never thirst (6:35) thirsted Himself. He took our thirst so we could drink freely.

19:29 *having put it around hyssop* Sour wine was the cheap, vinegary drink of soldiers and workers. Hyssop was the plant Israel used to put the Passover lamb's blood on their doorposts (Exod 12:22). John quietly shows Jesus as the true Passover Lamb.

19:30 *It has been finished* One Greek word, tetelestai, it has been completed. Not a defeated man saying I'm finished, but a winner saying it is done. The work the Father gave Him was complete (4:34; 17:4), and the payment for sin was made in full. Nothing more needs to be added, not by us, any priest or any good works (Heb 10:12-14). He bowed His head and gave up His spirit when His work was done, not a moment before (10:17-18).

19:31 *the day of that Sabbath was a great one* The Sabbath of Passover week. A hanged body was not to remain overnight (Deut 21:22-23). A crucified man had to push up with his legs to breathe, so breaking them brought death quickly. They were careful about rules on the very day they demanded the death of the Son of God.

19:33 *when they saw Him already dead, they did not break His legs* Roman soldiers saw death every day and knew a dead man when they saw one. Jesus did not faint on the cross, as some skeptics claim. He died.

19:34 *immediately blood and water came out* Doctors have offered different medical explanations, and I will not try to settle them. John saw it, and it proves Jesus truly died. Some also see a picture of cleansing and forgiveness (1 John 5:6-8). John's main point is plain: the Son of God really died, and He died for us.

19:35 *the one who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true* John steps in as a witness under oath. He was there and wrote it "so that you may believe," the purpose of the whole book (20:31). This is eyewitness testimony, not legend.

19:36 *A bone of His will not be broken* No bone of the Passover lamb was to be broken (Exod 12:46; Num 9:12), and Psalm 34:20 says the LORD keeps all the righteous man's bones. The men beside Him had their legs broken. He did not.

19:37 *They will look on Him whom they pierced* From Zechariah 12:10. Years later John wrote that when Jesus comes with the clouds, "every eye will see Him, and those who pierced Him" (Rev 1:7). The One pierced on the cross is the One coming again.

19:38 *Joseph from Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but concealed because of the fear of the Jews* A rich council member (Matt 27:57; Mark 15:43). When the cause looked lost, he stepped forward and tied his name to a condemned man. Sometimes the cross does what nothing else could.

(Arimathaia), being a disciple of Jesus, but concealed because of the fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate gave permission. Therefore he came and took away the body of Jesus. **39** And Nicodemus (Nikodemos) also came, the ***one*** who at the first had come to Jesus by night, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, approximately 75 pounds (about a hundred litras).
40 Therefore they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, even as it is ***the*** custom among the Jews to prepare for burial. **41** Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. **42** Therefore there, because of the Preparation of the Jews, since the tomb was near, they laid Jesus.

JOHN 20

The Empty Tomb

1 Now on the first ***day*** of the week Mary (Maria) the Magdalene comes early to the tomb, it still being dark, and she sees the stone taken away from the tomb. **2** Therefore she runs and comes to Simon Peter (Petros) and to the other disciple whom Jesus (Iesous) was loving dearly, and says to them, "They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him." **3** Therefore Peter went out, and the other disciple, and they were coming to the tomb. **4** Now the two were running together; and the other disciple ran ahead more quickly than Peter and came first to the tomb; **5** and having stooped down, he sees the linen cloths lying ***there***; however, he did not enter. **6** Then Simon Peter comes, following him, and he entered into the tomb; and he sees the linen cloths lying ***there***, **7** and the face cloth which had been on His head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded up in one place by itself. **8** Then therefore the other disciple also, who had come first to the tomb, entered, and he saw and believed. **9** For they did not yet know the Scripture, that He must rise out from ***the*** dead. **10** Therefore the disciples went away again to their own ***homes***.

Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene

11 But Mary was standing at the tomb outside, weeping. Therefore as she was weeping, she stooped down ***and looked*** into the tomb, **12** and she sees two angels in white sitting, one at the head and one at the feet, where the body of Jesus had been lying. **13** And they say to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She says to them, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him." **14** And having said these things, she turned backward, and she sees Jesus standing ***there***, and she did not know that it was Jesus. **15** Jesus says to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" She, thinking that He was the gardener, says to Him, "Sir, if You have carried Him off, tell me where You have laid Him, and I will take Him away."

19:39 Song 4:14; Ps 45:8; Prov 7:17
19:40 John 11:44; John 20:5-7; Acts 5:6
19:41 Isa 53:9; Luke 23:53; John 20:15
19:42 Isa 53:9; John 19:14,31; Ps 22:15
20:1 Matt 27:60,64-66; Mark 15:46; Luke 24:1-10
20:2 John 13:23; John 19:26; John 21:7,20,24
20:3 Luke 24:12
20:4 2 Sam 18:23; Lev 13:30; 2 Cor 8:12
20:5 John 19:40; John 11:44
20:6 John 6:67-69; John 18:17,25-27; John 21:7,15-17
20:7 John 11:44
20:8 John 20:25,29; John 1:50
20:9 Ps 16:10; Isa 26:19; Isa 53:10
20:10 John 7:53; John 16:32
20:12 Dan 7:9; Mark 16:5,6; Luke 24:3-7,22,23
20:13 1 Sam 1:8; Ps 43:3; Eccl 3:4
20:14 Matt 28:9; Mark 16:9; John 21:4
20:15 Song 3:2; Song 6:1; Gen 37:15

19:39 *And Nicodemus also came* The man who came by night (3:1-2) and spoke up before the council (7:50-51). About seventy-five pounds of spices was an enormous amount, a burial fit for a king. Both men had been afraid, and both came forward at the cross. If you have been a quiet, secret believer, it is not too late to stand up for Jesus.
19:40 *even as it is the custom among the Jews to prepare for burial* The Jews did not embalm as the Egyptians did. The spices covered the smell and showed love and honor.
19:41 *a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid* Joseph's own tomb (Matt 27:60), fulfilling Isaiah 53:9 that the Servant would be with a rich man in His death. Sin began in a garden, Eden, and our rescue reached its turning point in a garden. The tomb was new and empty, and very soon it would be empty again.
20:1 *on the first day of the week Mary the Magdalene comes early to the tomb* Sunday. Buried Friday before sundown, Jesus lay in the tomb through the Sabbath and rose early Sunday. That is why Christians from the earliest days have gathered on the first day, the Lord's Day (Acts 20:7; Rev 1:10). Jesus had cast seven demons out of Mary (Luke 8:2). She stood at the cross (19:25), and now she was first at the tomb. Other women came too (Mark 16:1).
20:2 *They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb* Her first thought was that the body was stolen. Nobody was expecting a resurrection. The disciples did not make up a story they wanted to be true. They were grieving, confused and hiding. Only the facts changed their minds.
20:4 *the other disciple ran ahead more quickly than Peter* It adds nothing to the doctrine, but it is exactly what a man remembers sixty years later: I beat Peter to the tomb.
20:5 *however, he did not enter* Stunned, perhaps, or hesitating out of respect, or because touching a grave made a Jew unclean (Num 19:16). The text does not say.
20:7 *the face cloth which had been on His head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded up in one place by itself* Grave robbers do not unwrap a body and leave the cloths neatly behind. Linen soaked in about seventy-five pounds of spices (19:39) would have stuck to the body, and a thief would have taken it wrappings and all. No one stole Jesus. He left them behind.
20:8 *he saw and believed* He did not see Jesus yet. He saw the empty tomb and the grave clothes and put it together. John is the first in this Gospel to believe in the resurrection, on the evidence before him.
20:9 *they did not yet know the Scripture, that He must rise out from the dead* The Old Testament spoke of it (Ps 16:10; Isa 53:10-12), and Jesus told them many times (Mark 8:31; 2:19-22). Only afterward did the pieces fall into place (Luke 24:25-27, 44-46). God is patient with slow learners.
20:11 *Mary was standing at the tomb outside, weeping* She stayed after the men left. She did not understand, but she did not leave. Sometimes faithfulness simply means staying close to Jesus when you are confused and hurting.
20:12 *one at the head and one at the feet* Some see the mercy seat on the ark, with a cherub at each end, where the blood of atonement was sprinkled (Exod 25:17-22). John does not say so, and I hold it loosely, but the place where Jesus lay had become the meeting place of God's mercy.
20:13 *Woman, why are you weeping?* The best news in history was in front of her, but she was so wrapped in grief she did not even seem startled by angels. Grief can blind us to what God is doing.
20:14 *she did not know that it was Jesus* Tears, early light, and no expectation of seeing Him alive. Others also did not know Him at first (Luke 24:16; 21:4). His risen body was real and physical, but it seems changed in some way.
20:15 *thinking that He was the gardener* The tomb was in a garden (19:41). She was ready to carry a grown man's body by herself. That is love.

16 Jesus says to her, "Mary!" She, having turned, says to Him, "Rabbouni!" which is to say, "Teacher!" **17** Jesus says to her, "Do not touch Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and ***to*** My God and your God.'" **18** Mary the Magdalene comes, announcing to the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and ***that*** He had said these things to her.

Jesus Appears to the Disciples

19 Therefore, it being evening on that day, the first ***day*** of the week, and the doors having been shut where the disciples were assembled because of the fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and says to them, "Peace to you." **20** And having said this, He showed them His hands and side. Therefore the disciples rejoiced, having seen the Lord. **21** Therefore Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you; even as the Father has sent Me, I also send you." **22** And having said this, He breathed on ***them***, and says to them, "Receive ***the*** Holy Spirit. **23** If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain ***the sins*** of any, they have been retained."

Jesus and Thomas

24 But Thomas, one of the twelve, who is called Didymus (Didymos), was not with them when Jesus came.
25 Therefore the other disciples were saying to him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the mark of the nails, and put my finger into the mark of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will certainly not believe." **26** And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus comes, the doors having been shut, and He stood in the midst and said, "Peace to you." **27** Then He says to Thomas, "Bring your finger here, and see My hands; and bring your hand, and put ***it*** into My side; and do not be unbelieving, but believing." **28** And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" **29** Jesus says to him, "Because you have seen Me, Thomas, you have believed. Blessed ***are*** those who have not seen and have believed."

Why This Book Was Written

30 Therefore Jesus indeed also did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; **31** but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

20:16 John 10:3; John 1:38,49; Gen 22:1,11
20:17 Gen 17:7; Ps 22:22; Ps 89:26
20:18 Luke 24:10; Matt 28:10; Mark 16:10-13
20:19 Gen 43:23; Judg 6:23; Isa 57:19
20:20 John 16:22; John 20:27; 1 John 1:1
20:21 Gen 43:23; Isa 48:16; Isa 63:3
20:22 Gen 2:7; Acts 2:4,38; Acts 8:15
20:23 Matt 16:19; Matt 18:18; Acts 10:43
20:24 John 11:16; John 14:5; John 21:2
20:25 Ps 22:16; Mark 16:11; John 20:14-20
20:26 Gen 43:23; Judg 6:23; John 20:19
20:27 Gen 45:12; Exod 4:5; Ps 22:16
20:28 Ps 45:11; Isa 25:9; Josh 5:14
20:29 1 Pet 1:8; 2 Cor 5:7; Heb 11:1,27,39
20:30 John 21:25; Luke 1:3,4; Rom 15:4
20:31 Exod 4:5; Eccl 12:12; Isa 43:10

20:16 *Mary!* One word and she knew Him. Rabbouni is a warmer, more personal form of Rabbi. The Good Shepherd calls His own sheep by name (10:3). The risen Lord knows your name too.
20:17 *Do not touch Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father* The word means to cling to. She had lost Him once and did not want to let go. Things were different now. He would return to the Father and send the Spirit, and be with all His people everywhere (14:16-18; 16:7). For the first time He calls the disciples brothers. Yet He says "My Father and your Father," not our Father. He is Son by nature, and we become children by adoption through faith (1:12; Rom 8:15).
20:18 *Mary the Magdalene comes, announcing to the disciples that she had seen the Lord* The first to announce the resurrection. A woman's testimony carried little weight then. No one making up this story would have chosen a woman, once demon-possessed, as the first witness. The Gospels record it because it happened.
20:19 *Peace to you* Behind shut doors for fear of the leaders, they expected to be next. Locked doors did not stop Him. These men had abandoned Him, and Peter had denied Him three times. He came not with a rebuke but with shalom, keeping His promise (14:27).
20:20 *He showed them His hands and side* Not a ghost or a vision, but the same body that was crucified, now raised and glorified. He even ate fish before them (Luke 24:39-43). Their grief was turned into joy, as He promised (16:20-22).
20:21 *even as the Father has sent Me, I also send you* Peace is not only to keep but to carry to others (17:18). If you belong to Christ, you have been sent to your family, workplace and neighborhood.
20:22 *He breathed on them, and says to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit."* As God breathed the breath of life into Adam (Gen 2:7), the risen Lord breathes new life into His people. Some see this as only a promise of Pentecost, others as the full giving of the Spirit with Pentecost a later outpouring of power. I believe He gave the Spirit in a real way that night as a first gift and foretaste, with the full outpouring for their mission at Pentecost (Acts 1:8).
20:23 *If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them* Badly misused, so read it carefully. Only God forgives sins (Mark 2:7). Sent with His message and His Spirit (20:21-22), they can say with full authority to one who repents and believes, your sins are forgiven, and to one who rejects the gospel, your sins remain. "They have been retained" points to a matter already settled in heaven. The disciples declare what God has done. This belongs to the whole church as it carries the gospel, not to a special class of priests.
20:24 *Thomas, one of the Twelve, who is called Didymus, was not with them* We do not know why he was missing, but he missed seeing the risen Lord with the others. A warning about staying away from the gathering of believers (Heb 10:25).
20:25 *Unless I see in His hands the mark of the nails* Calling him doubting Thomas is a little unfair. The others did not believe Mary until they saw Him (Luke 24:11). Thomas was honest about his doubt and brave (11:16). He wanted the truth, and Jesus did not turn him away.
20:26 *after eight days* The next Sunday. The risen Lord met with His people on the first day of the week two Sundays in a row.
20:27 *Bring your finger here, and see My hands* Jesus had not been in the room when Thomas spoke, but He knew every word. He knows our doubts too. He does not scold honest seekers. He meets them where they are and calls them to faith.
20:28 *My Lord and my God!* The Bible does not say he ever touched the wounds. Seeing was enough. John began, "the Word was God" (1:1), and near the end a disciple calls the risen Jesus God, the clearest confession of His deity in the Gospels. A good man or prophet would have corrected him (Acts 14:11-15; Rev 19:10). Jesus did not, because it was true.
20:29 *Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed* Jesus was speaking of you and me. We have the written testimony of those who were there. "Not having seen Him, you love" (1 Pet 1:8). If you have trusted Christ on His Word, that blessing is yours.
20:31 *these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God* John's purpose for the whole book. What to believe: that Jesus is the Messiah and the Son of God. How: by believing, a word used here far more than in the other Gospels, meaning trust and full reliance on Him. The result: life in His name, eternal life that starts now and never ends (3:16; 5:24; 17:3). Have you believed?

JOHN 21

Breakfast by the Sea

1 After these things Jesus (Iesous) revealed Himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias; and He revealed ***Himself*** in this way. **2** There were together Simon Peter (Petros), and Thomas who is called Didymus (Didymos), and Nathanael from Cana (Kana) of Galilee (Galilaia), and the ***sons*** of Zebedee (Zebedaios), and two others of His disciples. **3** Simon Peter says to them, "I am going to fish." They say to him, "We also are coming with you." They went out and immediately went up into the boat; and in that night they caught nothing. **4** Now when morning had already come, Jesus stood on the shore; however, the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. **5** Therefore Jesus says to them, "Children, you do not have any fish, do you?" They answered Him, "No." **6** And He said to them, "Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find ***some***." Therefore they cast, and they were no longer able to haul it in because of the multitude of the fish. **7** Therefore that disciple whom Jesus was loving says to Peter, "It is the Lord!" Therefore Simon Peter, having heard that it was the Lord, tied on the outer garment, for he was naked, and cast himself into the sea. **8** But the other disciples came in the little boat, for they were not far from the land, but approximately 300 feet (two hundred cubits) away, dragging the net of fish. **9** Therefore when they got out onto the land, they see a fire of coals lying ***there***, and fish lying on ***it***, and bread. **10** Jesus says to them, "Bring ***some*** of the fish which you have now caught." **11** Simon Peter went up and drew the net onto the land, full of large fish, a hundred and fifty-three; and although there were so many, the net was not torn. **12** Jesus says to them, "Come, have breakfast." But none of the disciples was daring to question Him, "Who are You?" knowing that it was the Lord. **13** Therefore Jesus comes and takes the bread and gives ***it*** to them, and the fish likewise. **14** This ***was*** now a third ***time*** Jesus was revealed to His disciples, having been raised out from ***the*** dead.

Jesus Restores Peter

15 Therefore when they had had breakfast, Jesus says to Simon Peter, "Simon ***son*** of Jonah (Ionas), do you love Me more than these?" He says to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You dearly." He says to him, "Feed My lambs." **16** He says to him again, a second time, "Simon ***son*** of Jonah, do you love Me?" He says to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You dearly." He says to him, "Shepherd My sheep." **17** He says to him the third time, "Simon ***son*** of Jonah, do you love Me dearly?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me dearly?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You dearly."

21:1 John 6:1,23; John 20:19-29; Matt 26:32
21:2 John 1:45-51; John 4:46; John 20:28
21:3 Luke 5:5; 2 Kgs 6:1-7; Matt 4:18-20
21:4 John 20:14; Luke 24:15,16,31; Mark 16:12
21:5 Ps 37:3; Phil 4:11-13,19; 1 John 2:13,18
21:6 Luke 5:4-7; John 2:5; Acts 2:41
21:7 John 13:23; John 21:20,24; John 19:26
21:8 Deut 3:11
21:9 1 Kgs 19:5,6; Matt 4:11; Mark 8:3
21:10 Mal 3:10
21:11 Luke 5:6-8; Acts 2:41
21:12 Acts 10:41; John 4:27; John 16:19
21:13 Luke 24:42,43; Acts 10:41
21:14 John 20:19,26
21:15 2 Sam 7:20; Josh 22:5; 2 Sam 7:7
21:16 Zech 13:7; Josh 22:5; 2 Sam 7:7
21:17 1 Kgs 17:18; 1 Chr 29:17; Gen 29:25

21:1 *Jesus revealed Himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias* Some time after the Jerusalem appearances the disciples went north to Galilee, as He told them (Matt 28:7, 10). The risen Jesus was not always visibly with them. He appeared at different times over forty days (Acts 1:3).
21:2 *Thomas who is called Didymus, and Nathanael from Cana of Galilee* The doubter of chapter 20 is now in the fellowship. Nathanael was promised he would see "greater things" (1:50), and he was about to see some. The sons of Zebedee are James and John.
21:3 *I am going to fish* Some think Peter was quitting and going back to his old life, others that he was waiting for Jesus' next word and needed to eat. The text does not tell us his heart. Night was the usual time to fish. Experienced men in familiar water came up empty. Without Him we can do nothing (15:5).
21:4 *the disciples did not know that it was Jesus* They were about a hundred yards out in early light and not looking for Him. As with Mary (20:14), He was there before they knew Him.
21:5 *Children, you do not have any fish, do you?* A friendly word, something like lads. Sometimes the Lord asks questions so we will admit we have come up empty on our own.
21:6 *Cast the net on the right side of the boat* In Luke 5:1-11 another night of empty nets ended in a huge catch, the day Jesus first called Peter to be a fisher of men. Now, after Peter's failure, Jesus repeats the miracle, as if to say, let's start over, Peter.
21:7 *It is the Lord!* John recognized Him first, as he first believed at the tomb (20:8). Peter acted first. He had denied the Lord three times, yet he did not hide from Him. He swam straight to Him. If you have failed Jesus, do not run from Him. Run to Him.
21:9 *they see a fire of coals lying there, and fish lying on it, and bread* Jesus made breakfast before they arrived. The only other charcoal fire in the New Testament is the one where Peter denied Him (18:18). I do not think that is an accident. Jesus would heal those memories in the same kind of setting where Peter fell.
21:10 *Bring some of the fish which you have now caught* He already had fish on the fire. He gives us everything, and then lets us share in His work.
21:11 *full of large fish, a hundred and fifty-three* People have looked for hidden meanings in 153 for centuries. I take it plainly. Fishermen count their catch, and John remembered a huge haul. The unbroken net reminds us that what Jesus provides, He also preserves.
21:12 *Come, have breakfast* One of the most tender invitations in the Bible. The Lord of glory cooked breakfast for tired fishermen. Something about Him seemed different, yet they had no doubt it was Him.
21:13 *takes the bread and gives it to them, and the fish likewise* As when He fed the five thousand by this same sea (6:11). He is still the Bread of Life (6:35) and feeds His people with His own hands.
21:14 *This was now a third time Jesus was revealed to His disciples* The third appearance to the group (20:19, 26). He also appeared to individuals, and to more than five hundred at once (1 Cor 15:5-8). The resurrection was seen many times, by many people.
21:15 *Simon son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?* Not Peter but his old name (1:42), perhaps a gentle reminder of how far he had fallen. "These" may mean the boats and nets, or the other disciples. I lean toward the second. Peter had boasted that even if all fell away, he would not (Matt 26:33). Now he answers humbly and compares himself to no one.
21:16 *Shepherd My sheep* To lead, guard and feed. Jesus, the Good Shepherd (10:11), made Peter an under-shepherd. Peter never forgot it. He told elders to "shepherd the flock of God" (1 Pet 5:2) and pointed to "the Chief Shepherd" (1 Pet 5:4).
21:17 *Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time* Three denials, three confessions. Peter could no longer trust his own boasting, only that Jesus saw his heart. Jesus first asks with agapao and Peter answers with phileo, and the third time Jesus uses phileo. Some see a lowering to Peter's level, while others note John uses both words for the same love (3:35; 5:20). At most it shows Jesus' gentleness. The main point is the threefold restoration.

Jesus says to him, "Feed My sheep. **18** Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were younger, you were dressing yourself and walking where you wanted; but when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and bring ***you*** where you do not want." **19** Now this He said, signifying by what death he would glorify God. And having said this, He says to him, "Follow Me."

The Disciple Whom Jesus Loved

20 Peter, having turned around, sees the disciple whom Jesus was loving following, who also had reclined at the supper on His chest and said, "Lord, who is the one who is delivering You up?" **21** Having seen him, Peter says to Jesus, "Lord, and what ***about*** this one?" **22** Jesus says to him, "If I want him to remain until I come, what ***is that*** to you? You follow Me." **23** Therefore this saying went out among the brothers, that that disciple does not die; and Jesus did not say to him that he does not die, but, "If I want him to remain until I come, what ***is that*** to you?" **24** This is the disciple who is testifying concerning these things and who wrote these things; and we know that his testimony is true. **25** And there are also many other things, as many as Jesus did, which, if they were written one by one, I suppose not even the world itself would have room for the books being written. Amen.

21:18 John 13:36; Acts 12:3,4; Acts 21:11
21:19 Num 14:24; Song 8:6; 2 Pet 1:14
21:20 John 21:7,24; John 20:2; John 13:23-26
21:21 Acts 1:6,7; Matt 24:3,4; Luke 13:23,24
21:22 1 Cor 4:5; Rev 2:25; Mark 9:1
21:23 Job 33:13; Deut 29:29; Job 28:28
21:24 John 19:35; 3 John 1:12; 1 John 1:1,2
21:25 Ps 40:5; Eccl 12:12; Ps 71:15

21:18 *you will stretch out your hands* A phrase people used for crucifixion. Jesus was telling Peter how he would die.
21:19 *signifying by what death he would glorify God* By the time John wrote, Peter had died. Early tradition says he was crucified in Rome under Nero, and a later tradition adds that he asked to be crucified upside down, a detail we cannot confirm. Peter knew his death was coming (2 Pet 1:14). "Follow Me" were the first words Jesus said to many disciples (1:43; Mark 1:17). Following Jesus is something we do every day.
21:21 *Lord, and what about this one?* Told of his own hard death, Peter's first thought was, what about John? We all compare our road to someone else's.
21:22 *If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow Me* God has a different plan for each servant. Our job is not to compare but to follow. Jesus spoke plainly of His return in person: first for His church (14:3), then to the earth in power and glory (Rev 19:11-16).
21:23 *Jesus did not say to him that he does not die* A rumor said John would not die before Jesus returned. He corrects it carefully: it was a what if, not a promise. John lived long and wrote Revelation late in life, but he did die. Read what prophecy actually says, not what people assume. No one knows the day or the hour (Matt 24:36).
21:24 *This is the disciple who is testifying concerning these things and who wrote these things* John names himself the author, the beloved disciple who was there. "We know" may be the believers or elders around him adding their confirmation. This Gospel is the testimony of one who walked with Jesus.
21:25 *not even the world itself would have room for the books being written* A wonderful exaggeration. John gave a small selection, chosen with care so we would believe (20:31). There is far more to Jesus than any book can hold, and we will spend eternity getting to know Him.

ACTS

Introduction

Title

Many Bibles call this book The Acts of the Apostles. A better name might be The Acts of the Holy Spirit, because the Spirit is the One doing the work from start to finish. The apostles preach, travel and suffer, but it is the Spirit who gives them power, opens doors and closes them. Acts is the fifth book of the New Testament. It comes right after the four Gospels and picks up where they end, with Jesus risen from the dead, and it sets the stage for the letters that follow.

Author and Date

Acts does not name its author, but it opens by pointing back to "the first account" written to the same man, Theophilus (1:1; Luke 1:1-4). The early church agreed that both books were written by Luke, the beloved physician who traveled with Paul (Col 4:14). In several places Luke switches from "they" to "we" (16:10-17; 20:5-21:18; 27:1-28:16), which tells us he was there for those parts of the story.

Theophilus means friend of God. Luke calls him "most excellent" (Luke 1:3), a title used for high officials, so he may have been a Roman of some rank. Many conservative scholars date Acts around A.D. 60 to 62, because the book ends with Paul still under house arrest in Rome and says nothing about his death or the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Most other scholars date it later, usually A.D. 80 to 90. I hold the earlier date, about A.D. 62. If Paul had already been put to death, or the temple had already fallen, it is hard to believe Luke would leave either one out.

Background and Setting

Acts covers about thirty years, from Jesus' ascension (around A.D. 30 to 33) to Paul's two years under house arrest in Rome (around A.D. 60 to 62). The church begins as a group of Jewish believers in Jerusalem, worshiping at the temple and meeting in homes. Judea was under Roman rule, with Roman governors in Caesarea and Herod's family ruling parts of the land. The Sanhedrin, the Jewish ruling council led by the high priest, opposed the apostles from the start.

As the Gospel spread, it moved into the wider Roman world, held together by Roman roads, Roman law and the Greek language. Jews lived in nearly every city, and their synagogues gave Paul his first hearing wherever he went. Gentiles who worshiped Israel's God, called God-fearers, were often the first to believe. Paul made three missionary journeys (about A.D. 46 to 48, 49 to 52, and 53 to 57), then was arrested in Jerusalem, held two years in Caesarea, and sent to Rome as a prisoner (about A.D. 59 to 60).

Themes

Jesus gave the outline of the whole book in one verse: "you will be witnesses to Me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the uttermost part of the earth" (1:8). The church starts in Jerusalem (chs. 1-7), spreads through Judea and Samaria (chs. 8-12), and then reaches the Gentile world, ending with Paul preaching in Rome (chs. 13-28).

The Holy Spirit is mentioned more than fifty times. He fills believers and gives them boldness (2:4; 4:31), sends out missionaries (13:2-4), guides where they go and where they do not go (16:6-7), and helps the church settle hard questions (15:28). He brings each new group into the one church: Jews at Pentecost, Samaritans (8:17), Gentiles (10:44-45), and the disciples of John at Ephesus (19:6).

The message is the same for Jew and Gentile: salvation by grace through faith in Jesus, with nothing added (15:11). The Gospel grows through preaching, prayer and suffering, and nothing can stop it, not prison, not mobs, not shipwreck. Acts also has two main characters whose stories line up in ways that are hard to miss. Peter, the apostle to the Jews, and Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, both heal a man lame from birth (3:1-10; 14:8-10), both are set free from prison (12:6-11; 16:25-26), both face down a sorcerer (8:18-24; 13:6-12), and both raise the dead (9:36-41; 20:9-12). God used the same Spirit and the same message through two very different men.

Christ in Acts

Acts is not really the story of Peter or Paul. It is the story of the risen Jesus building His church by His Spirit, continuing all that He "began both to do and to teach" (1:1). The apostles preach Christ crucified and raised (2:32-36), and "there is not salvation in any other" (4:12). Jesus stands at God's right hand to receive Stephen (7:56), meets Saul on the Damascus road (9:5), and stands by Paul in the barracks at night (23:11). He is the Righteous One the prophets foretold (7:52), the judge of the living and the dead (10:42), and the Lord of all (10:36). He will come again in the same way the disciples watched Him go (1:11).

Hard Passages

Some events in Acts happened once, at turning points in God's plan, while others show a pattern we are meant to follow. Part of studying Acts well is asking which is which. The notes take these questions up as they come: why the Spirit came after a delay in Samaria and Ephesus (8:14-17; 19:1-7), whether tongues and other sign gifts continue today (2:4; 10:46), how baptism relates to forgiveness (2:38; 22:16), and how God's choosing and our believing fit together (13:48).

Stephen's sermon raises questions of numbers and burial places (7:4, 14-16). The accounts of Paul's conversion differ on what the men with him heard (9:7; 22:9). Some readers wonder whether Paul compromised by circumcising Timothy and joining a vow in the temple (16:3; 21:26), or disobeyed the Spirit by going to Jerusalem (21:4). Where good teachers disagree, the notes name the views. A few verses found in the SLB, as in the King James Version, are missing from the earliest manuscripts (8:37; 15:34; 24:6-8; 28:29), and the notes point these out.

Outline

I. The Church in Jerusalem (1:1-7:60)
  A. Waiting for the Spirit (1:1-26)
  B. Pentecost and the first church (2:1-47)
  C. Healing, preaching and arrest (3:1-4:37)
  D. Ananias and Sapphira; the apostles on trial (5:1-42)

E. The seven chosen; Stephen's witness and death (6:1-7:60)
II. The Church in Judea and Samaria (8:1-12:25)
A. Philip in Samaria and on the desert road (8:1-40)
B. The conversion of Saul (9:1-31)
C. Peter, Cornelius and the Gentiles (9:32-11:18)
D. The church at Antioch (11:19-30)
E. Herod's persecution and Peter set free (12:1-25)
III. The Church to the Uttermost Part of the Earth (13:1-28:31)
A. Paul's first journey (13:1-14:28)
B. The Jerusalem council (15:1-35)
C. Paul's second journey (15:36-18:22)
D. Paul's third journey (18:23-21:16)
E. Paul arrested in Jerusalem (21:17-23:35)
F. Paul before governors and a king (24:1-26:32)
G. The voyage to Rome and Paul in Rome (27:1-28:31)

ACTS

ACTS 1

The Promise of the Spirit

1 The first account indeed I composed, O Theophilus
(Theophilos), concerning all things which Jesus (Iesous)
began both to do and to teach, **2** until ***the*** day when, having
given orders through ***the*** Holy Spirit to the apostles whom
He had chosen, He was taken up; **3** to whom He also pre-
sented Himself alive after His suffering by many clear proofs,
appearing to them during forty days and speaking the things
concerning the kingdom of God. **4** And being assembled
together with them, He instructed them not to depart from
Jerusalem (Hierosolyma), but to await the promise of the
Father, "which," ***He said,*** "you heard from Me; **5** for John
(Ioannes) indeed baptized with water, but you will be bap-
tized with ***the*** Holy Spirit not many days after these." **6** So
then those who had come together were asking Him, saying,
"Lord, are You at this time restoring the kingdom to Israel?"
7 And He said to them, "It is not yours to know times or sea-
sons which the Father has set by His own authority. **8** But
you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon
you; and you will be witnesses to Me both in Jerusalem
(Hierousalem) and in all Judea (Ioudaia) and Samaria
(Samareia), and to ***the*** uttermost part of the earth." **9** And
having said these things, while they were looking, He was
taken up, and a cloud received Him from their eyes. **10** And
as they were looking intently into heaven as He was going,
then look, two men stood by them in white clothing, **11** who
also said, "Galilean men, why do you stand looking into
heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into
heaven, will come in the same manner as you watched Him
going into heaven."

Matthias Chosen

12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from ***the*** mount called
Olivet (Elaion), which is near Jerusalem, being a Sabbath's
journey ***away***. **13** And when they had entered, they went up
into the upper room where they were staying: both Peter
(Petros) and James (Iakobos) and John and Andrew
(Andreas), Philip (Philippos) and Thomas, Bartholomew
(Bartholomaios) and Matthew (Matthaios), James ***son*** of
Alphaeus (Alphaios) and Simon the Zealot, and Judas (Ioudas)
son of James. **14** These all were steadfastly continuing with
one accord in prayer and supplication, with ***the*** women and
Mary (Maria) the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.

1:1 Luke 1:3; Matt 11:5; Matt 4:23,24
1:2 Acts 1:9; John 13:18; John 20:21
1:3 1 Cor 15:5-7; Acts 13:31; Matt 28:9,16
1:4 Luke 24:49; John 14:16,26-28; Acts 2:33
1:5 Matt 3:11; Luke 3:16; Acts 11:15
1:6 Isa 9:6; Jer 23:5; Amos 9:11
1:7 Matt 24:36; Mark 13:32; Mark 10:40
1:8 Acts 4:33; Rom 15:19; Mark 16:15
1:9 Dan 7:13; Isa 19:1; Acts 1:2
1:10 2 Kgs 2:12; Luke 24:4; John 20:12
1:11 Dan 7:13; Zech 14:4; Acts 2:7
1:12 Luke 24:52; Matt 21:1; Luke 24:50
1:13 Acts 20:8; Luke 22:12; Matt 10:2-4
1:14 Acts 6:4; Eph 6:18; Acts 2:1,42,46

1:1 *The first account indeed I composed, O Theophilus* Luke wrote this book and his Gospel, "the first account," to the same man. Theophilus means friend of God or loved by God. He may have been a Roman official, since Luke calls him "most excellent" (Luke 1:3), or a new believer. Luke's Gospel told what Jesus "began" to do and teach. Acts tells what He kept on doing through His Spirit and His church.

1:2 *the apostles whom He had chosen* An apostle is one sent with the authority of the one who sent him. These men did not pick themselves. Jesus chose and trained them for about three years. Even the Son of God did His earthly work in the power of the Spirit. How much more do we need Him?

1:3 *by many clear proofs, appearing to them during forty days* Real and physical proofs. He ate with them and let them touch Him (Luke 24:39-43), and He appeared to more than five hundred at once (1 Cor 15:6). The resurrection was a fact seen by many witnesses. Forty is often a time of testing or preparing in Scripture. In His last days He spoke of the kingdom of God.

1:5 *you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days after these* The promise of the Father (Luke 24:49; John 14-16) came about ten days later at Pentecost. Sometimes God's first instruction is to wait. We cannot do His work without His power, and His timing is always right.

1:6 *Lord, are You at this time restoring the kingdom to Israel?* A fair question. The prophets promised God would restore the kingdom to Israel with the Messiah on David's throne (Isa 9:6-7; Jer 23:5-6; Amos 9:11). Some teach the disciples were confused and God is finished with Israel. I don't believe that. Jesus does not deny there will be a kingdom for Israel. He only says the timing is not theirs to know.

1:7 *It is not yours to know times or seasons* As in Matthew 24:36, no one knows the day or the hour. People have set dates for Christ's return again and again, and every one has been wrong. Our job is not to calculate. Our job is the next verse.

1:8 *you will be witnesses to Me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the uttermost part of the earth* The outline of the book: Jerusalem (chapters 1-7), Judea and Samaria (8-12), the ends of the earth (13-28). A witness tells what he has seen and heard. The Greek martus later gave us martyr, because so many of these witnesses died for their testimony. Being a witness is who we are, not only what we do. The power is the Spirit's, the message is Jesus, and the field is the world, starting where we live.

1:9 *He was taken up, and a cloud received Him from their eyes* The Ascension, near Bethany on the Mount of Olives as He blessed them (Luke 24:50-51). He went up bodily, in the body they had touched. A cloud often shows God's glory (Luke 9:34-35). He now sits at the Father's right hand and speaks to Him for us (Heb 7:25).

1:11 *This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same manner* The two men were angels, as at the tomb (Luke 24:4). He left bodily, visibly and in the clouds, and He will return the same way (Rev 1:7; 19:11). His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives (Zech 14:4). I believe this is His Second Coming to the earth at the end of the Tribulation, and that before it He comes for His church (1 Thess 4:16-17). The angels' point is plain: don't stand looking up. He is coming back, so get to work.

1:12 *a Sabbath's journey away* Jewish teachers limited Sabbath walking to about two thousand cubits, a little over half a mile. Luke means the Mount of Olives is close to the city. They went back "with great joy" (Luke 24:52), sure He was alive and had kept every promise.

1:13 *the upper room where they were staying* We don't know whose house it was, perhaps the room of the Last Supper or the home of Mary, John Mark's mother (12:12). Simon the Zealot may have once belonged to the Zealots, Jewish nationalists who wanted to overthrow Rome by force, and Matthew had collected taxes for Rome. In Christ, men who would have been enemies became brothers.

1:14 *with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers* The last time Mary is named in the Bible, and she is praying with the church. His brothers, the later sons of Mary and Joseph, did not believe during His ministry (John 7:5). The risen Jesus appeared to James (1 Cor 15:7). James later led the Jerusalem church and wrote James, and Jude wrote Jude. Nothing convinces a skeptic like meeting the risen Lord.

15 And in these days Peter, having stood up in the midst of the disciples, said (and the crowd of names together was about a hundred and twenty), **16** "Men, brothers, it was necessary for this Scripture to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit foretold through ***the*** mouth of David (Dabid) concerning Judas, who became guide to those who arrested Jesus; **17** for he was numbered with us and obtained the lot of this ministry. **18** (Now this man indeed acquired a field out of the wages of unrighteousness, and having fallen headlong, he burst open in the middle, and all his intestines gushed out. **19** And it became known to all those dwelling in Jerusalem, so that that field was called in their own language Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood.) **20** For it has been written in ***the*** book of Psalms, 'Let his homestead become desolate, and let there not be one dwelling in it,' and, 'May another take his office.' **21** Therefore it is necessary, of the men who accompanied us during all the time in which the Lord Jesus went in and went out among us, **22** beginning from the baptism of John until the day in which He was taken up from us, ***for*** one of these to become a witness with us of His resurrection." **23** And they put forward two: Joseph (Ioseph) called Barsabbas (Barsabas), who was surnamed Justus (Ioustos), and Matthias. **24** And having prayed, they said, "You, Lord, knower of the hearts of all, show which one of these two You have chosen **25** to take the lot of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas turned aside to go to ***his*** own place." **26** And they gave their lots, and the lot fell on Matthias, and he was counted together with the eleven apostles.

ACTS 2

The Holy Spirit Comes at Pentecost

1 And when the day of Pentecost was being fulfilled, they were all with one accord together. **2** And suddenly ***there*** came out of heaven a sound as of a rushing violent wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. **3** And ***there*** appeared to them tongues being distributed, as of fire, and it sat upon each one of them. **4** And they were all filled with ***the*** Holy Spirit, and began to speak in other tongues, just as the Spirit was giving them to speak forth. **5** Now ***there*** were Jews dwelling in Jerusalem (Hierousalem), devout men from every nation of those under heaven. **6** And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together and was confounded, because each one was hearing them speaking in his own language. **7** And they were all amazed and were marveling, saying to one another, "Look, are not all these who are speaking Galileans? **8** And how do we hear, each in our own language in which we were born? **9** Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and those inhabiting Mesopotamia, both Judea (Ioudaia) and Cappadocia (Kappadokia), Pontus (Pontos) and Asia, **10** both Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt (Aigyptos) and the parts of Libya (Libye) that ***are*** around Cyrene (Kyrene),

1:15 1 Cor 15:6; Ps 32:5,6; Ps 51:9-13
1:16 Ps 41:9; 2 Sam 23:2; Ps 55:12-15
1:17 Acts 1:25; John 6:70,71; Acts 20:24
1:18 Matt 27:3-10; Num 22:7,17; Josh 7:21-26
1:19 2 Sam 18:18; 2 Chr 20:26; Ps 55:15
1:20 Ps 69:25; Ps 109:8; Ps 55:15
1:21 John 15:27; Num 27:17; Deut 31:2
1:22 Acts 1:2,9; Acts 1:8; Acts 4:33
1:23 Lev 16:8; Acts 15:22
1:24 1 Sam 16:7; Acts 15:8; Jer 17:10
1:25 John 6:70,71; Acts 1:16-21; Ps 109:7
1:26 Lev 16:8; Jonah 1:7; Prov 16:33
2:1 Lev 23:15; Deut 16:9; Zeph 3:9
2:2 1 Kgs 19:11; Ps 18:10; Ezek 37:9
2:3 Jer 23:29; Mal 3:2; Mal 3:3
2:4 Jer 6:11; Ezek 3:11; Num 11:26
2:5 Acts 8:2; Luke 2:25; Acts 2:1
2:6 Acts 3:11; 1 Cor 16:9; 2 Cor 2:12
2:7 Acts 2:12; Acts 1:11; Acts 3:10
2:9 Gen 24:10; Deut 23:4; Judg 3:8
2:10 Gen 12:10; Isa 19:23; Ezek 30:5

1:15 *Peter, having stood up in the midst of the disciples* The same Peter who denied Jesus three times. Jesus restored him (John 21:15-19), and now he leads.
1:17 *he was numbered with us and obtained the lot of this ministry* A man can be close to Jesus, hear His teaching, see His miracles and still not belong to Him. Being near the things of God is not the same as knowing God.
1:19 *Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood* Aramaic, the everyday language of the Jews then. Matthew 27:3-8 says Judas hanged himself and the priests bought the field with the money he threw back, so in a real sense it was his purchase. Many believe he hanged himself and then the rope or branch gave way. Scripture gives two views of the same terrible end.
1:20 *May another take his office* From Psalm 69:25 and 109:8, David's words about those who betrayed him, fulfilled in the one who betrayed the Son of David. God's plan was not ruined by one man's sin.
1:22 *for one of these to become a witness with us of His resurrection* The twelve held a unique office as eyewitnesses of His life and resurrection, the foundation of the church (Eph 2:20). Their names are on the foundations of the New Jerusalem (Rev 21:14). No one today can meet these qualifications.
1:23 *Joseph called Barsabbas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias* The only place either is named in Scripture. Both followed Jesus for years without being mentioned. God sees faithful people the world never hears about.
1:24 *show which one of these two You have chosen* They did not ask God to bless their choice. They asked Him to show His. Judas "turned aside to go to his own place" (1:25), a quiet but heavy phrase. He chose his own way and went where it led (John 17:12).
1:26 *the lot fell on Matthias* Casting lots was a way in the Old Testament to let God decide (Lev 16:8; Prov 16:33), not gambling but trusting Him with the result after obeying all they knew. It is the last time lots decide a matter in the Bible. After Pentecost believers are led by the Spirit within. Some ask whether they should have waited for Paul, but Scripture never says they were wrong. Matthias "was counted together with the eleven apostles."
2:1 *when the day of Pentecost was being fulfilled* One of three feasts when Jewish men came to Jerusalem (Deut 16:16), called the Feast of Weeks (Lev 23:15-21). Pentecost comes from the Greek for fiftieth, fifty days after Passover. It was a harvest feast, when the first loaves of the wheat harvest were offered. Jesus died at Passover as the Passover Lamb (1 Cor 5:7), and the Spirit came at the feast of firstfruits with the first great harvest of souls.
2:2 *a sound as of a rushing violent wind* Luke is careful: a sound like wind, and tongues "as of fire" (2:3). In Hebrew and Greek the same word can mean breath, wind or spirit (John 3:8). Fire often shows God's presence, as at the burning bush. John said Jesus would baptize "with the Holy Spirit and fire" (Luke 3:16).
2:3 *it sat upon each one of them* Not on the apostles only but on every believer in the room.
2:4 *began to speak in other tongues* A tongue here is a language, as the next verses make plain. What Jesus promised (1:5) had come. The Spirit who came on certain people for certain tasks in the Old Testament now lived in every believer. From this day the church is the dwelling place of God's Spirit (1 Cor 3:16; 6:19).
2:5 *devout men from every nation of those under heaven* Jews by birth and converts, many born in other lands where earlier exiles and trade had scattered them, who spoke those languages. God had gathered an international crowd for this exact day.
2:7 *are not all these who are speaking Galileans?* Galileans were seen as plain country people with a strong accent (Matt 26:73). These were real human languages, understood by people who spoke them from birth. The miracle was in the speaking.

and the visiting Romans, both Jews and proselytes,
11 Cretans and Arabs, we hear them speaking in our own tongues the great things of God." **12** And they were all amazed and were perplexed, saying one to another, "What would this mean?" **13** But others, mocking, were saying, "They are filled with new wine."

Peter's Sermon

14 But Peter (Petros), having stood up with the eleven, lifted up his voice and spoke forth to them, "Jewish men and all you who inhabit Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give ear to my declarations. **15** For these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is ***the*** third hour of the day; **16** but this is that which has been spoken through the prophet Joel (Ioel): **17** 'And it will be in the last days, says God, I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters will prophesy, and your young men will see visions, and your old men will dream dreams; **18** and even upon My male slaves and upon My female slaves in those days I will pour out of My Spirit, and they will prophesy. **19** And I will give wonders in heaven above and signs on the earth below: blood and fire and vapor of smoke. **20** The sun will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, before the great and glorious day of ***the*** Lord comes. **21** And it will be ***that*** everyone who calls upon the name of ***the*** Lord will be saved.'

22 Israelite men, hear these words: Jesus (Iesous) the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves also know, **23** this ***One***, delivered up by the determined plan and foreknowledge of God, you took, and through lawless hands, having crucified ***Him***, you killed; **24** whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible ***for*** Him to be held by it. **25** For David (Dabid) says concerning Him, 'I was foreseeing the Lord before me continually, because He is at my right ***hand***, that I may not be shaken. **26** Because of this my heart was glad and my tongue rejoiced, and moreover my flesh also will dwell in hope; **27** because You will not abandon my soul to Hades, nor will You give Your Holy One to see decay. **28** You have made known to me paths of life; You will fill me with joy in Your presence.' **29** Men, brothers, it is permitted to speak with boldness to you concerning the patriarch David, that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is among us to this day. **30** Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn to him with an oath that out of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit upon his throne, **31** having foreseen ***this***, he spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left to Hades, nor did His flesh see decay. **32** This Jesus God has raised up, of which we all are wit-

2:11 2 Chr 17:11; 2 Chr 26:7; Gen 11:7
2:12 Acts 10:17; Acts 17:20; Luke 15:26
2:13 Acts 2:15; 1 Sam 1:14; Job 32:19
2:14 Isa 51:4; Acts 1:26; Isa 52:8
2:15 1 Sam 1:15; Matt 20:3; 1 Thess 5:5-8
2:16 Joel 2:28; Joel 1:1; Joel 2:29
2:17 Joel 2:28; Isa 44:3; Gen 49:1
2:18 Joel 2:28-29; Num 11:25; Isa 32:15
2:19 Joel 2:30; Joel 2:31; Gen 1:14
2:20 Joel 2:1; Joel 3:14; Mal 4:5
2:21 Joel 2:32; Gen 4:26; Gen 12:8
2:22 John 3:2; John 14:10,11; Matt 12:28
2:23 Gen 50:20; Dan 4:35; 1 Kgs 16:7
2:24 Isa 53:10; Acts 2:32; 1 Cor 6:14
2:25 Ps 16:8-11; Ps 62:6; Ps 109:31
2:26 Zech 10:7; Ps 16:9; Ps 30:11
2:27 Ps 86:13; Jonah 2:6; Ps 49:9
2:28 Ps 21:6; Ps 17:15; Prov 2:19
2:29 1 Kgs 2:10; Neh 3:16; 2 Chr 24:16
2:30 Ps 132:11; 2 Sam 7:12-13; 2 Sam 7:14
2:31 Ps 16:10; Acts 2:27; Acts 13:35
2:32 Acts 2:24; Acts 1:8,22; Acts 3:15

2:11 *we hear them speaking in our own tongues the great things of God* The list runs from the east, through Judea and Asia Minor, to Egypt, Rome, Crete and Arabia. A proselyte was a Gentile who had converted to Judaism, been circumcised and taken up the Law. At Babel God confused man's language and scattered the nations for their pride (Gen 11:1-9). At Pentecost He gave languages to gather people to Himself. Babel divided. Pentecost united, and the end is a crowd from every nation and tongue before the throne (Rev 7:9).
2:13 *They are filled with new wine* When God moves, some ask honest questions and some mock what they do not understand. We should not be surprised when that happens today.
2:14 *Peter, having stood up with the eleven, lifted up his voice* Seven weeks earlier he was too afraid to admit to a servant girl that he knew Jesus. Now he preaches Christ boldly before thousands. That is what the Holy Spirit does in a person.
2:15 *it is the third hour of the day* Hours were counted from sunrise, so about nine in the morning. On a feast day devout Jews would not eat or drink until after the morning time of prayer.
2:17 *I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh* From Joel 2:28-32. In the Old Testament the Spirit came on a few: prophets, priests, kings and judges. Moses wished all the Lord's people were prophets (Num 11:29), and at Pentecost that wish came true, for every believer regardless of age, sex or standing. The last days began at Pentecost and run until Christ returns (Heb 1:1-2; 1 John 2:18). We are living in them now.
2:20 *The sun will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood* Some of Joel's words were fulfilled that day. The sun did not go dark that morning. I believe these signs are still future. Jesus named them before His return (Matt 24:29-30), and John saw them at the sixth seal (Rev 6:12). Pentecost began Joel's prophecy, and the day of the Lord, God's judgment in the Tribulation and at Christ's return, will finish it. Some teachers say they were fulfilled at the cross (Luke 23:44-45) or in A.D. 70.
2:21 *everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved* Paul quotes it in Romans 10:13. That is the heart of Peter's message and of ours.
2:22 *a man attested to you by God by miracles and wonders and signs* These things happened among them, "just as you yourselves also know." Peter did not ask them to believe something that happened far away.
2:23 *delivered up by the determined plan and foreknowledge of God* The cross was not an accident. God planned it before the foundation of the world (1 Pet 1:20). Yet the men who did it were guilty. God is in full control, and people are fully responsible for what they choose. We may not fully explain how both are true, but the Bible teaches both. "Lawless hands" means men without the Law, the Roman soldiers.
2:24 *whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death* The turning point of every sermon in Acts: men killed Jesus, but God raised Him. Death could not keep the Author of life (3:15). He had no sin of His own, so death had no claim on Him.
2:27 *You will not abandon my soul to Hades, nor will You give Your Holy One to see decay* From Psalm 16:8-11. Hades is the Greek for the place of the dead, Sheol in Hebrew. Peter builds his case from the Bible his hearers already believed, as a lawyer builds a case in court.
2:29 *his tomb is among us to this day* David could not have meant only himself. He died, his body decayed, and all Jerusalem knew where his tomb was.
2:30 *He would raise up the Christ to sit upon his throne* God's oath to David (2 Sam 7:12-16; Ps 132:11). Christ translates the Hebrew Messiah, Anointed One. Jesus' body was not left in the grave and never decayed (2:31).
2:32 *of which we all are witnesses* The believers had seen the risen Jesus. They were living proof.

nesses. **33** Therefore, having been exalted by the right ***hand*** of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured out this which you now see and hear. **34** For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says, 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right ***hand***, **35** until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet."' **36** Therefore let all ***the*** house of Israel know assuredly that God has made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified."

The First Church

37 And having heard ***this***, they were pierced in the heart, and they said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "What shall we do, men, brothers?" **38** And Peter said to them, "Repent, and let each one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for forgiveness of sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. **39** For the promise is to you and to your children and to all those far off, as many as ***the*** Lord our God will call to Himself." **40** And with many other words he was testifying and exhorting, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation." **41** So then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and ***there*** were added on that day about three thousand souls. **42** And they were steadfastly continuing in the teaching of the apostles and in the fellowship, and in the breaking of the bread and in the prayers. **43** And fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles. **44** And all those believing were together and had all things in common; **45** and they were selling the possessions and the goods and dividing them to all, as anyone had need. **46** And every day, steadfastly continuing with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were partaking of food with gladness and simplicity of heart, **47** praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to the church every day those who were being saved.

ACTS 3

A Lame Man Healed

1 Now Peter (Petros) and John (Ioannes) were going up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth ***hour***. **2** And a certain man, being lame from his mother's womb, was being carried, whom they were placing every day at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful (Horaios), to ask alms from those going into the temple; **3** who, having seen Peter and John about to enter into the temple, was asking alms. **4** And Peter, having looked intently at him, with

2:33 Ps 118:16; Joel 2:28; Acts 1:4
2:34 Ps 110:1; Ps 18:50; Ps 110:2
2:35 Josh 10:24; Ps 21:8; Isa 60:14
2:36 Jer 2:4; Jer 9:26; Jer 31:31
2:37 Ps 45:5; Luke 3:10; Acts 5:33
2:38 Luke 24:47; Acts 22:16; Acts 8:12,16
2:39 Gen 17:7; Ps 115:14; Gen 17:8
2:40 Deut 32:5; Matt 17:17; Acts 15:32
2:41 Acts 2:37; Acts 2:47; Acts 4:4
2:42 Acts 20:7,11; Acts 1:14; Heb 10:25
2:43 Acts 5:11,13; Esth 8:17; Jer 33:9
2:44 Acts 4:32; 1 John 3:16-18; Acts 6:1-3
2:45 Acts 4:34-37; Acts 11:29; 1 Tim 6:18,19
2:46 Acts 5:42; Acts 20:7; Luke 24:53
2:47 Acts 11:24; Luke 2:52; Rom 14:18
3:1 Ps 55:17; Acts 4:13; Acts 2:46
3:2 2 Chr 23:5; Acts 14:8; Luke 16:20
3:4 Acts 14:9,10; Luke 4:20; Acts 3:12

2:33 *He has poured out this which you now see and hear* The sound, the fire and the languages proved Jesus is alive and reigning. The Spirit's coming is the evidence of the Son's ascension.
2:34 *The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand* From Psalm 110:1. Jesus used it to show the Messiah is David's Lord, not only his son (Luke 20:41-44). He is seated and waiting for His enemies to be put under His feet. He rides out to defeat them (Rev 19), and the last enemy destroyed is death (1 Cor 15:25-26).
2:36 *God has made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified* Lord means He is God, with full authority. Christ means He is the promised King of Israel. God reversed their verdict. Peter does not soften it, because they could not be saved until they saw their sin.
2:37 *they were pierced in the heart* The Spirit convicted them (John 16:8). Real conviction does not stop at feeling bad. It asks, what do I do now? Peter's sermon was not clever. It was true, full of Scripture and about Jesus. That is the preaching the Spirit uses.
2:38 *Repent, and let each one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for forgiveness of sins* To repent is to change your mind and turn around. Being baptized in Jesus' name meant openly siding with the man the city had just crucified. This verse plainly links repentance and baptism with forgiveness, and Christians read it differently. In Acts forgiveness comes through faith (10:43; 13:38-39; 16:31), and in Acts 10 the Spirit came before baptism. I believe salvation is by grace through faith in Christ alone (Eph 2:8-9), and baptism is the first step of obedience that follows, not optional, but the believer's response to grace, not what earns it.
2:39 *to all those far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself* Their children, people far away, and the Gentiles (Eph 2:13, 17). God calls, and people respond. The promise reaches to us today.
2:40 *Be saved from this perverse generation* Perverse means crooked, the word used of Israel in Deuteronomy 32:5. Salvation is personal. Each had to step out for himself.
2:41 *there were added on that day about three thousand souls* First they received the word, then they were baptized. Three thousand from one sermon by a fisherman. At Sinai about three thousand died over the golden calf (Exod 32:28). At Pentecost about three thousand were given life. The letter kills, but the Spirit gives life (2 Cor 3:6).
2:42 *in the teaching of the apostles and in the fellowship, and in the breaking of the bread and in the prayers* The apostles' teaching, which we have in the New Testament. Fellowship, koinonia, sharing life together. The breaking of bread, likely both shared meals and the Lord's Supper (1 Cor 11:23-26). Prayer together, often and on purpose. This is still the pattern of a healthy church.
2:43 *many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles* A holy fear came on the people. The miracles confirmed the apostles' message (Heb 2:3-4). Christians differ on whether the sign gifts continue the same way: some believe they ended with the apostles, some that they continue, and many hold a middle view that God still heals when He chooses while the apostles held a unique place. All agree God has not changed and still answers prayer.
2:44 *had all things in common* Voluntary love, not force, as Peter tells Ananias (5:4). Many new believers had come for the feast and stayed to learn, so the needs were real. When God's Spirit fills people, they see their things as tools to bless others.
2:46 *steadfastly continuing with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house* They did not leave Judaism. Jesus is the Messiah the temple pointed to. Big gatherings and small gatherings both mattered.
2:47 *the Lord was adding to the church every day those who were being saved* The church grows because God saves people. Our part is to be faithful in the things of verse 42, love one another and tell others about Jesus.
3:1 *at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour* About three in the afternoon, the time of the evening sacrifice. Peter and John had been fishing partners (Luke 5:10) and were sent together to prepare the Passover (Luke 22:8). Being filled with the Spirit did not make the apostles careless about prayer. It made them more faithful.
3:2 *the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful* He was more than forty years old (4:22) and had never walked a step. People coming to worship were often thinking of giving to the poor, as the Law commanded (Deut 15:7-11). Scripture does not say which gate this was. Many believe it was the large bronze gate on the east side leading into the Court of the Women.

John, said, "Look at us." **5** And he was giving heed to them, expecting to receive something from them. **6** But Peter said, "Silver and gold I do not have; but what I have, this I give to you. In the name of Jesus (Iesous) Christ the Nazarene, rise up and walk." **7** And having taken him by the right hand, he raised him up; and immediately his feet and ankles were strengthened. **8** And leaping up, he stood and was walking, and he entered with them into the temple, walking and leaping and praising God. **9** And all the people saw him walking and praising God. **10** And they were recognizing him, that this was the one who sat for alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

Peter Preaches in Solomon's Portico

11 Now as the lame man who had been healed was holding on to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the porch called Solomon's, greatly amazed. **12** And Peter, having seen ***it***, answered the people, "Israelite men, why do you marvel at this? Or why do you look intently at us, as if by our own power or godliness we had made him walk? **13** The God of Abraham (Abraam) and of Isaac (Isaak) and of Jacob (Iakob), the God of our fathers, has glorified His servant Jesus, whom you delivered up and denied in the presence of Pilate (Pilatos), when he had decided to release ***Him***. **14** But you denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a man, a murderer, to be granted to you, **15** and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised up from ***the*** dead, of which we are witnesses. **16** And on the faith of His name, this ***man*** whom you see and know, His name has strengthened; and the faith which ***is*** through Him has given him this complete soundness before you all. **17** And now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as also your rulers ***did***. **18** But God has thus fulfilled the things which He foretold through ***the*** mouth of all His prophets, ***that*** the Christ ***would*** suffer. **19** Repent therefore and turn again, so that your sins may be blotted out, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, **20** and He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, **21** whom heaven must indeed receive until ***the*** times of restoration of all things, of which God spoke through ***the*** mouth of all His holy prophets from ***the*** age. **22** For Moses indeed said to the fathers, '***The*** Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers; Him you shall listen to in all things, whatever He may speak to you. **23** And it will be ***that*** every soul which does not listen to that prophet will be utterly destroyed from among the people.' **24** And indeed all the prophets from Samuel (Samouel) and those in succession, as many as have spoken, also foretold these days. **25** You are sons of the

3:6 Acts 3:16; Acts 9:34; Acts 4:10
3:7 Isa 35:6; Acts 9:41; Mark 1:31
3:8 Isa 35:6; Acts 14:10; Luke 6:23
3:9 Acts 14:11; Mark 2:11,12; Luke 13:17
3:10 Acts 3:2; Acts 4:14-16,21,22; John 9:3,18-21
3:11 Acts 5:12; Luke 8:38; John 10:23
3:12 2 Cor 3:5; Acts 14:11-15; John 3:27,28
3:13 Exod 3:6; Ps 105:6; 1 Chr 29:18
3:14 Isa 57:15; Hab 1:12; Mark 1:24
3:15 Acts 2:24,32; Acts 2:32; John 5:26
3:16 Acts 3:6; Matt 21:21,22; Acts 16:18
3:17 Acts 13:27; Luke 23:34; John 16:3
3:18 Ps 22:21; Ps 69:5; Acts 26:22,23
3:19 Isa 43:25; Ps 103:12; Isa 51:11
3:20 Acts 17:31; Matt 16:27; Matt 24:3,30-36
3:21 Job 14:12; Acts 1:11; Luke 1:70
3:22 Deut 18:15; Num 12:7; Deut 18:16
3:23 Deut 18:19; Lev 23:29; Lev 26:14
3:24 1 Sam 3:20; 1 Sam 3:1; Ps 99:6
3:25 Gen 12:3; Gen 22:18; Gen 17:19

3:5 *expecting to receive something from them* He expected a few coins. We often come to God asking small things, and He has something far greater in mind (Eph 3:20).
3:6 *Silver and gold I do not have; but what I have, this I give to you* In the name of Jesus means by His authority, as His representative. A name in Scripture stands for the person. Many churches today have plenty of silver and gold. Do we still have what Peter had? Money can feed a man for a day. Only Jesus can change his life forever.
3:7 *immediately his feet and ankles were strengthened* Luke the doctor (Col 4:14) notes exactly what was healed. A man who had never walked did not need to learn how. He leaped. In the days of the Messiah "the lame will leap like the deer" (Isa 35:6). And he praised God (3:8).
3:10 *they were recognizing him* Everyone in the city had walked past him. A changed life is hard to argue with.
3:11 *in the porch called Solomon's* A long covered walkway of columns on the east side of the temple court, where Jesus taught (John 10:23) and the believers met (5:12). The healed man clung to the men who brought him the name of Jesus.
3:12 *as if by our own power or godliness we had made him walk* Peter could have built a following around himself. He turned every eye to Jesus, as Paul and Barnabas did at Lystra (14:14-15). That is the mark of a true servant of God.
3:13 *has glorified His servant Jesus* This is the God Israel always worshiped. Faith in Jesus was the fulfillment of the old promises, not a new religion. "Servant" points to Isaiah 52:13-53:12, where the Servant suffers for the people's sins and is then lifted up. Pilate wanted to release Him (Luke 23:13-22).
3:15 *you killed the Author of life* They asked for Barabbas, a man who took life (Luke 23:18-19), and killed the One who gives it. Author can also be translated Prince. Jesus is the source of all life (John 1:4), and death could not hold Him.
3:16 *the faith which is through Him* Faith is not a power we make up. It is trust placed in Jesus, and the power is in the One trusted. A little faith in a great Savior does great things.
3:17 *I know that you acted in ignorance* Jesus prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34). Ignorance did not make them innocent, but it left room for mercy, as Paul found (1 Tim 1:13).
3:18 *that the Christ would suffer* God used even their sin to fulfill what the prophets foretold. The cross was always His plan.
3:19 *so that your sins may be blotted out* To repent is to change your mind, and to turn again is to come back to God. Ink on papyrus could be sponged off and wax tablets smoothed over, as if nothing had been written (Isa 43:25; Ps 103:12). The record is gone. "Times of refreshing" are rest and new life, like cool water on a hot day.
3:21 *whom heaven must indeed receive until the times of restoration of all things* Jesus is in heaven until the appointed time, and then He returns to restore all things as the prophets promised: Israel gathered, the Messiah reigning from Jerusalem, the earth at peace (Isa 2:2-4; 11:1-10; Ezek 37:21-28; Amos 9:11-15). Peter ties His return to Israel turning to Him, as Paul does (Rom 11:25-27). I believe this comes when Jesus returns at the end of the Tribulation to set up His kingdom on earth (Rev 20). Amillennial teachers read it as the new heavens and earth with no special future for Israel.
3:22 *The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me* From Deuteronomy 18:15-19. The Jews were waiting for this Prophet (John 1:21; 6:14). Like Moses, Jesus delivered His people, spoke God's words and brought a covenant, but He is far greater (Heb 3:1-6). To refuse to listen to Jesus is to refuse God (3:23).
3:24 *all the prophets from Samuel* Samuel anointed David, and God's promise to David pointed to the Messiah (2 Sam 7:12-16). The whole Old Testament points to Him (Luke 24:27, 44).
3:25 *in your seed all the families of the earth will be blessed* The promise to Abraham (Gen 12:3; 22:18). The seed is finally Christ (Gal 3:16). Israel received the promise first, and through Jesus the blessing goes to every nation (1:8).

prophets and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying to Abraham, 'And in your seed all the families of the earth will be blessed.' **26** To you first, God, having raised up His servant Jesus, sent Him, blessing you in turning away each ***of you*** from your wickednesses."

ACTS 4

Peter and John Before the Council

1 And while they were speaking to the people, the priests and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them, **2** being greatly disturbed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus (Iesous) the resurrection from ***the*** dead. **3** And they laid hands on them and put ***them*** in custody until the next day, for it was already evening. **4** But many of those who had heard the word believed; and the number of the men became about five thousand. **5** And it came to pass on the next day ***that*** their rulers and elders and scribes were gathered together in Jerusalem (Hierousalem), **6** and Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas (Kaiaphas) and John (Ioannes) and Alexander (Alexandros), and as many as were of high-priestly descent. **7** And having placed them in the midst, they were inquiring, "In what power or in what name did you do this?" **8** Then Peter (Petros), having been filled with ***the*** Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders of Israel, **9** if we today are being examined concerning a good deed ***done*** to a sick man, by what ***means*** this ***man*** has been saved, **10** let it be known to you all and to all the people of Israel, that in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised from ***the*** dead, in Him this ***man*** stands before you sound. **11** This is the stone which was treated with contempt by you, the builders, which has become ***the*** head of ***the*** corner. **12** And ***there*** is not salvation in any other; for neither is ***there*** another name under heaven which has been given among men by which we must be saved." **13** Now seeing the boldness of Peter and John, and having perceived that they were unlettered and ordinary men, they were marveling; and they were recognizing them, that they had been with Jesus. **14** And seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, they had nothing to say against ***it***. **15** But having commanded them to go outside the Council, they conferred with one another, **16** saying, "What shall we do to these men? For indeed, that a notable sign has come to pass through them ***is*** evident to all those inhabiting Jerusalem, and we are not able to deny ***it***. **17** But so that it may not spread further among the people, let us threaten them with a threat to speak no longer in this name to any man." **18** And having called them, they commanded them not to speak at all nor to teach in the name of Jesus. **19** But Peter and John answering said to them,

"Whether it is righteous before God to listen to you rather than to God, you judge; **20** for we are not able not to speak the things which we have seen and heard." **21** And having further threatened ***them***, they let them go, finding nothing ***as to*** how they might punish them, on account of the people, because all were glorifying God for what had happened.

3:26 Jer 33:8; 2 Sam 6:18; Ps 67:7
4:1 Neh 8:13; Luke 22:4; Acts 5:24,26
4:2 Acts 17:18,31,32; 1 Thess 4:13,14; Acts 5:17
4:3 Acts 5:18; Acts 6:12; Acts 8:3
4:4 Acts 2:41; Acts 28:24; 2 Cor 2:14-17
4:5 Jer 20:3; Acts 4:8; Acts 5:20,21
4:6 Luke 3:2; John 11:49; John 18:13,14,24
4:7 Matt 21:23; Exod 2:14; Mark 11:28
4:8 Acts 2:4; Acts 4:31; Acts 7:55
4:9 Acts 3:7; John 7:23; John 10:32
4:10 Dan 3:18; Ps 107:32; Acts 3:6,13-16
4:11 Ps 118:22; Ps 118:23; Isa 28:16
4:12 Rev 20:15; John 14:6; Isa 43:11
4:13 Matt 11:25; John 7:15,49; 1 Cor 1:27
4:14 Acts 4:10; Acts 3:8-12; Acts 4:16,21
4:15 Acts 5:34-42; Acts 26:30-32
4:16 John 11:47,48; John 12:18; Dan 8:5,8
4:17 Acts 5:39; Ps 2:1-4; Dan 2:34,35
4:18 Acts 5:40; Acts 1:8; Acts 5:20
4:19 Acts 5:29; 1 Tim 2:3; Exod 1:17
4:20 Acts 22:15; Jer 20:9; Ezek 3:11,14-21
4:21 Acts 5:26; Matt 21:46; Luke 20:6,19

3:26 *To you first* Israel had the first chance to receive the Messiah (Rom 1:16). The greatest blessing is not money or even a healed body, but being turned from our sin and back to God, and it is still offered to all.
4:1 *the captain of the temple and the Sadducees* The captain kept order in the temple, second in rank to the high priest. The Sadducees, mostly wealthy priestly families, controlled the temple, held the five books of Moses above the rest of Scripture, and denied the resurrection, angels and spirits (23:8). Every time the apostles said God raised Him, they were saying the Sadducees were wrong.
4:3 *for it was already evening* They went up about three in the afternoon (3:1). Later Jewish law forbade trials at night, and it was likely already the custom. Jesus had warned this would happen (Luke 21:12).
4:4 *the number of the men became about five thousand* They could lock up the messengers but not the message (2 Tim 2:9). Luke's word means men, so with women and children the number was likely much larger. Weeks earlier there were about 120.
4:6 *Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas* The Sanhedrin, the Jewish high council of about seventy members led by the high priest, ruled on religious and many civil matters under Rome. Scribes were experts in the Law. Annas, father-in-law of Caiaphas (John 18:13), had been high priest and still held great power. This was the group that condemned Jesus weeks before.
4:7 *In what power or in what name did you do this?* They did not deny the miracle. The man stood right there (4:14). Without knowing it, they gave Peter the perfect opening.
4:8 *Peter, having been filled with the Holy Spirit* Jesus promised the Spirit would give words before rulers (Luke 12:11-12). Peter told the most powerful men in the nation that they killed the Messiah and God overruled them. Weeks before, he was afraid of a servant girl.
4:11 *This is the stone which was treated with contempt by you, the builders* From Psalm 118:22. A cornerstone lined up the whole building. The leaders, who were to build up God's people, threw Jesus away as useless, and God made Him the foundation. Jesus applied this verse to them (Luke 20:17), and Peter used it again (1 Pet 2:7).
4:12 *there is not salvation in any other* One of the clearest verses on salvation. Not religion, good works or another teacher, but Jesus only (John 14:6). The door is narrow because there is one Savior, and wide open because anyone from any nation may come. If there is only one cure for a deadly disease, the loving thing is to tell everyone where to find it.
4:13 *they had been with Jesus* "Unlettered and ordinary" does not mean they could not read. They had never studied under the rabbis. Their boldness and knowledge of Scripture pointed to one thing: they had spent time with Jesus. People should be able to say the same about us.
4:16 *we are not able to deny it* They could not deny the miracle and still would not believe. Their problem was not evidence but their hearts (Luke 16:31). So they tried to stop the message.
4:19 *Whether it is righteous before God to listen to you rather than to God, you judge* We are to respect those in authority (Rom 13:1-7; 1 Pet 2:13-17), but when men command us to disobey God, we must obey God. This is not rebellion but faithfulness. They did not riot. They refused to be silent and accepted what came next.
4:20 *we are not able not to speak the things which we have seen and heard* They had seen the risen Jesus. How could they keep quiet?

22 For the man on whom this sign of healing had taken place was more than forty years old.

The Believers Pray for Boldness

23 And having been let go, they came to ***their*** own ***people*** and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said to them. **24** And having heard ***it***, they lifted up ***their*** voice to God with one accord and said, "Master, You ***are*** the God who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that ***is*** in them, **25** who through ***the*** mouth of Your servant David (Dabid) said, 'Why did ***the*** nations rage, and ***the*** peoples devise vain things? **26** The kings of the earth took ***their*** stand, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord and against His Christ.' **27** For truly there were gathered together against Your holy servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod (Herodes) and Pontius (Pontios) Pilate (Pilatos), with ***the*** nations and ***the*** peoples of Israel, **28** to do whatever Your hand and Your plan determined beforehand to happen. **29** And now, Lord, look upon their threats, and grant to Your slaves to speak Your word with all boldness, **30** in that You stretch out Your hand for healing, and signs and wonders take place through the name of Your holy servant Jesus." **31** And when they had prayed, the place in which they were assembled was shaken; and they were all filled with ***the*** Holy Spirit, and were speaking the word of God with boldness.

All Things in Common

32 And of the multitude of those who had believed, the heart and the soul was one; and not one was saying that anything of his possessions was his own, but all things were common to them. **33** And with great power the apostles were giving the testimony of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. **34** For neither was anyone needy among them; for as many as were owners of lands or houses, selling ***them***, were bringing the proceeds of the things being sold **35** and were laying ***them*** at the feet of the apostles; and distribution was being made to each, as anyone had need. **36** And Joses (Ioses), who was surnamed Barnabas by the apostles (which is, being translated, Son of Encouragement), a Levite, a Cypriot by birth, **37** having a field, sold ***it*** and brought the money and laid ***it*** at the feet of the apostles.

ACTS 5

Ananias and Sapphira

1 But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira (Sappheire) his wife, sold a property, **2** and kept back ***some*** of the proceeds, his wife also being aware ***of it***, and having brought a certain portion, he laid ***it*** at the feet of the apostles. **3** But Peter (Petros) said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart ***for*** you to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back ***some*** of the proceeds of the land? **4** While it remained, did it not remain yours? And having been sold, was it not in your own authority? Why ***is it*** that you put this deed in your

4:22 Acts 9:33; Acts 3:2; Matt 9:20
4:23 Acts 12:11,12; Acts 1:13,14; Acts 2:44-46
4:24 Neh 9:6; Exod 20:11; Acts 16:25
4:25 Ps 2:1-2; Ps 2:3; Acts 1:16
4:26 Ps 83:2; Josh 9:2; Neh 4:9
4:27 Ps 2:2; Job 15:14; Isa 49:7
4:28 Acts 2:23; Isa 46:10; Gen 50:20
4:29 Acts 4:13,31; Acts 9:27; Acts 14:3
4:30 Acts 3:6,16; Exod 6:6; Deut 4:34
4:31 Acts 2:4; Acts 2:2; Isa 65:24
4:32 1 Cor 1:10; Eph 4:2-6; 2 Cor 13:11
4:33 Acts 1:8,22; John 1:16; Acts 4:30
4:34 Acts 2:45; Deut 2:7; Ps 34:9,10
4:35 Acts 5:2; Acts 2:45; Acts 3:6
4:36 1 Cor 9:6; Acts 12:25; Gal 2:1,9,13
4:37 Acts 4:34,35; Acts 5:1,2; Matt 19:29
5:1 Lev 10:1-3; Josh 6:1; Matt 13:47,48
5:2 Josh 7:11,12; 2 Kgs 5:21-25; Mal 1:14
5:3 1 Chr 21:1; Acts 5:9; John 13:2,27
5:4 Josh 7:25; 1 Kgs 14:6; Job 15:12

4:22 *more than forty years old* Lame his whole life, known by everyone, and now walking. The leaders feared the people more than God.
4:24 *Master, You are the God who made the heaven and the earth* Their first stop was their own people, and their first act was prayer. Master means the one with absolute authority. When we face threats, the first thing to remember is how big our God is.
4:25 *Why did the nations rage, and the peoples devise vain things?* They prayed Scripture, Psalm 2:1-2. When we don't know how to pray, we can pray God's own words back to Him. The psalm goes on to show God laughing at those who plot against His King.
4:27 *both Herod and Pontius Pilate* Herod Antipas, ruler of Galilee, mocked Jesus at His trial (Luke 23:6-12). Jews and Gentiles, rulers and crowds joined against Him.
4:28 *to do whatever Your hand and Your plan determined beforehand to happen* As in 2:23, they did what they wanted and were guilty, and yet God was in control. If God ruled at the cross, He ruled over the threats the believers now faced.
4:29 *grant to Your slaves to speak Your word with all boldness* Bond-servants who belonged fully to their Master. They did not ask God to remove the threats or punish their enemies. They asked for boldness to keep doing what they were told to stop, a model for persecuted believers today.
4:31 *they were all filled with the Holy Spirit* God answered exactly what they asked. These believers were filled at Pentecost and filled again here. I believe the Spirit comes to live in a believer once, when he believes (Eph 1:13), but we need to be filled again and again as we face new challenges and yield to Him (Eph 5:18). In Acts the result is always bold witness.
4:32 *the heart and the soul was one* Not a law or system but love (2:44-45). They still owned things but did not hold on to them. Unity comes not from agreeing on everything but from belonging to the same Lord.
4:33 *with great power the apostles were giving the testimony of the resurrection* The center of their message. "Great grace," God's undeserved favor, was on them all. Power in the message and grace in the people go together.
4:34 *neither was anyone needy among them* God told Israel obedience would leave no poor among them (Deut 15:4). It came true not by law but by love. Laying gifts at the apostles' feet trusted them to give fairly and gave to God, not for display. The next chapter shows what happens when someone gives to be seen.
4:36 *Barnabas by the apostles (which is, being translated, Son of Encouragement), a Levite, a Cypriot by birth* Levites served at the temple and were given no tribal land (Num 18:20-24), though by this time some owned property. Barnabas lived up to his name. He stood up for Saul (9:27), encouraged the church at Antioch (11:22-24) and traveled with Paul. Every church needs a Barnabas, and every one of us can be one.
5:1 *a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a property* The opening "But" sets this couple beside Barnabas (4:36-37). He gave everything from a sold field. They brought part as if it were the whole.
5:2 *his wife also being aware of it* Not one person's sudden slip but a plan the two agreed on. The sin was not keeping some money but pretending to give it all so they would look as generous as Barnabas.
5:3 *to lie to the Holy Spirit* Set beside verse 4, "You have not lied to men but to God," this shows the Holy Spirit is not a force or influence. He is God.
5:4 *While it remained, did it not remain yours?* Giving was free and voluntary. Ananias could have kept every penny and been honest. God judged the lie, not the size of the gift.

heart? You have not lied to men but to God." **5** And Ananias, hearing these words, having fallen down, breathed his last. And great fear came upon all those who heard these things. **6** And the younger ***men***, having arisen, wrapped him up, and having carried ***him*** out, they buried ***him***. **7** And it came to pass, after an interval of about three hours, ***that*** his wife came in, not knowing what had come to pass. **8** And Peter answered her, "Tell me whether you sold the land for so much." And she said, "Yes, for so much." **9** Then Peter said to her, "Why ***is it*** that it was agreed together by you to test the Spirit of ***the*** Lord? Look, the feet of those who buried your husband ***are*** at the door, and they will carry you out." **10** And immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed her last; and the young men, having come in, found her dead, and having carried ***her*** out, they buried ***her*** beside her husband. **11** And great fear came upon the whole church and upon all those who heard these things.

Signs and Wonders

12 And through the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were taking place among the people; and they were all with one accord in the porch of Solomon. **13** And of the rest no one was daring to join them, but the people were magnifying them; **14** and all the more were believers in the Lord being added, multitudes both of men and women, **15** so that they were even bringing out the sick throughout the streets and placing ***them*** on beds and mats, so that when Peter came, at least the shadow might overshadow some of them. **16** And the multitude also from the surrounding cities was coming together into Jerusalem (Hierousalem), bringing sick ***people*** and those being tormented by unclean spirits, who were all being healed.

The Apostles Arrested and Freed

17 But the high priest, having risen up, and all those with him, which is the sect of the Sadducees, were filled with jealousy, **18** and they laid their hands on the apostles and put them in public custody. **19** But an angel of ***the*** Lord during the night opened the doors of the prison, and having brought them out, said, **20** "Go, and standing, speak in the temple to the people all the declarations of this life." **21** And having heard ***this***, they entered into the temple at dawn and were teaching. Now the high priest having come, and those with him, they called together the Council, even all the senate of the sons of Israel, and sent to the prison house for them to be brought. **22** But the officers having come did not find them in the prison; and having returned, they reported, **23** saying, "We found the prison house indeed shut with all security and the guards standing outside before the doors; but having opened ***them***, we found no one inside." **24** Now when the priest and the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these words, they were perplexed concerning them, ***as to*** what this might become. **25** And a certain one, having come, reported to them, saying, "Look, the men whom you put in the prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people." **26** Then the captain, having gone with the officers, brought them, not with force, for they were afraid of the people, lest they be stoned. **27** And having brought them, they set ***them*** in the Council. And the high priest questioned them, **28** saying, "Did we not command you with a command

5:5 Gen 25:8; Lev 10:2; Acts 5:10,11
5:6 John 19:40; Lev 10:4-6; Deut 21:23
5:9 Exod 17:2; 1 Kgs 14:6; Acts 5:3,4
5:11 Acts 5:5; Acts 19:17; Ps 89:7
5:12 Acts 3:11; Acts 4:30,33; Acts 14:3,8-10
5:13 Acts 2:47; Acts 4:21; Acts 5:5
5:14 Acts 2:41,47; Acts 4:4; Acts 6:7
5:15 Matt 14:36; Acts 19:11,12; Matt 9:21
5:16 Mark 16:17,18; Matt 4:24; Matt 8:16
5:17 Acts 7:9; Acts 13:45; Acts 17:5
5:18 Acts 4:3; Luke 21:12; Acts 8:3
5:19 Ps 34:7; Acts 16:26; Ps 105:17-20
5:20 Exod 24:3; Jer 22:1; Jer 17:19
5:21 John 8:2; Luke 21:37,38; Acts 5:17,24
5:23 Acts 5:19; Ps 2:4; Ps 33:10
5:24 Acts 4:1; Acts 5:26; Luke 22:4,52
5:26 Acts 5:13; Matt 14:5; Matt 21:26
5:27 Acts 4:7; Acts 6:12; Acts 22:30
5:28 Acts 7:52; Matt 27:25; Acts 4:10,11

5:5 *having fallen down, breathed his last* Peter did not curse him. God acted. The "great fear" is not panic but deep respect for God's holiness. Why so severe when people lie in church every day? I believe because this was the beginning of the church. As God judged Achan when Israel entered the land (Josh 7) and Nadab and Abihu when the priesthood began (Lev 10:1-2), He showed at the start that He will not be mocked. He does not usually judge that quickly today, but His holiness has not changed.
5:9 *to test the Spirit of the Lord* Peter gave Sapphira a chance to tell the truth, and she stood by the lie. To test the Spirit is to push Him to see how far you can go. Scripture does not say whether they were true believers. Some see believers taken home early as discipline (1 Cor 11:30), others hearts never changed. Luke does not settle it, and neither should we too quickly.
5:11 *great fear came upon the whole church* The Greek ekklesia means an assembly, a gathering of people called together, and it comes from words meaning called out. God's people are called out by Him, and He has just shown how pure He wants them to be. He is looking for people who are honest with Him and with each other, not people who look spiritual on Sunday.
5:12 *many signs and wonders* Signs point beyond themselves, and wonders cause awe. They confirmed the apostles' message came from Jesus. Solomon's porch is where Peter preached after healing the lame man (3:11).
5:13 *of the rest no one was daring to join them* After Ananias and Sapphira no one joined casually. People respected the believers but knew this was not something to play with.
5:14 *multitudes both of men and women* Fear of God did not stop the growth. It purified the church. Luke names women, full members of God's family from the start.
5:15 *at least the shadow might overshadow some of them* The text says the people hoped for this, not that Peter's shadow had power of its own. The power was always God's.
5:16 *the multitude also from the surrounding cities* The gospel begins to spread out from Jerusalem, as Jesus said (1:8).
5:17 *the sect of the Sadducees, were filled with jealousy* They controlled the temple and denied the resurrection and angels (23:8). Every sermon about the risen Jesus attacked their beliefs and drew the crowds away. This time they arrested all the apostles.
5:19 *an angel of the Lord during the night opened the doors of the prison* A rescue by an angel, for a party that did not believe angels existed. God's timing speaks for itself.
5:20 *speak in the temple to the people all the declarations of this life* Not run and hide, but go right back. The gospel is not only ideas. It is life itself, eternal life in Jesus (John 14:6).
5:21 *all the senate of the sons of Israel* The Sanhedrin, the ruling council led by the high priest, the highest Jewish court of the day.
5:23 *the guards standing outside before the doors* No one broke out. Locked doors and guards at their posts, and God simply took them out.
5:26 *they were afraid of the people, lest they be stoned* The leaders worried more about the crowd than about God. When we care more about what people think than what God thinks, we make bad decisions every time.
5:28 *you intend to bring upon us the blood of this man* The high priest will not say the name of Jesus. Before Pilate the crowd cried that His blood be on them (Matt 27:25). Now the leaders felt the guilt pressing in.

not to teach in this name? And look, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you intend to bring upon us the blood of this man." **29** But Peter and the apostles answering said, "It is necessary to obey God rather than men. **30** The God of our fathers raised up Jesus (Iesous), whom you put to death, having hanged ***Him*** on a tree. **31** Him God exalted by His right ***hand as*** Prince and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. **32** And we are His witnesses of these declarations, and also the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those obeying Him."

Gamaliel's Advice

33 And having heard ***this***, they were furious, and were taking counsel to kill them. **34** But a certain ***one***, having stood up in the Council, a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law honored by all the people, commanded ***them*** to put the apostles outside for a short while. **35** And he said to them, "Israelite men, take heed to yourselves concerning these men, what you are about to do. **36** For before these days Theudas rose up, saying that he himself was somebody, to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves; who was killed, and all, as many as were persuaded by him, were dispersed and came to nothing. **37** After this man, Judas (Ioudas) the Galilean rose up in the days of the registration, and drew away many people after him; he also perished, and all, as many as were persuaded by him, were scattered. **38** And now I say to you, withdraw from these men and let them alone; for if this plan or this work is from men, it will be overthrown; **39** but if it is from God, you are not able to overthrow it, lest you even be found fighting against God." **40** And they were persuaded by him; and having called in the apostles ***and*** having beaten ***them***, they commanded ***them*** not to speak in the name of Jesus, and released them. **41** So then they were departing from ***the*** presence of the Council, rejoicing that they had been counted worthy to be dishonored for His name. **42** And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching the gospel ***that*** Jesus ***is*** the Christ.

ACTS 6

The Seven Chosen

1 Now in these days, when the disciples were multiplying, there arose a grumbling of the Hellenists against the Hebrews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily ministry. **2** And the twelve, having called near the multitude of the disciples, said, "It is not pleasing ***for*** us, having left the word of God, to serve tables. **3** Therefore, brothers, select from among you seven men being well attested, full of ***the*** Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we will appoint over this need; **4** but we will steadfastly continue in prayer and in the ministry of the word." **5** And the word was pleasing before all the multitude; and they chose Stephen (Stephanos), a man

5:29 Dan 6:10; Acts 4:19; Mark 7:7-9
5:30 1 Chr 12:17; Ezra 7:27; Acts 10:39
5:31 Isa 9:6; Zech 12:10; Isa 43:3
5:32 Heb 2:3; John 15:26; Acts 2:4,38,39
5:33 Acts 2:37; Acts 7:54; Acts 22:22
5:34 Acts 22:3; Luke 2:46; Luke 5:17
5:35 Acts 19:36; Acts 22:26; Jer 26:19
5:36 Acts 8:9; Acts 21:38; Matt 24:24
5:37 Luke 2:1; Luke 13:1; Job 20:5-9
5:38 Ezra 6:7; Lam 3:37; Matt 15:13
5:39 Acts 7:51; Isa 46:10; Matt 16:18
5:40 Matt 10:17; Mark 13:9; Prov 12:10
5:41 1 Pet 4:13-16; James 1:2; Matt 5:10-12
5:42 Acts 2:46; Acts 20:20; Acts 5:20,21
6:1 Acts 4:35; Acts 6:7; Acts 2:41,47
6:2 Deut 1:9-14; Exod 18:17-26; Num 11:11-13
6:3 Deut 1:13; James 3:17,18; Acts 9:30
6:4 Acts 1:14; Acts 2:42; Acts 20:19-31
6:5 Acts 11:24; Acts 6:3,8,10; Acts 21:8

5:29 *It is necessary to obey God rather than men* The heart of the chapter. We respect and obey authority (Rom 13:1-7; 1 Pet 2:13-17), but when a human authority commands us to disobey God, our first loyalty is to Him.
5:30 *having hanged Him on a tree* Pointing to the curse on one hanged on a tree (Deut 21:23; Gal 3:13). Even to the men who condemned Jesus, Peter offers forgiveness.
5:31 *as Prince and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins* God exalted the One they killed. Even repentance is His gift.
5:32 *the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those obeying Him* The Spirit confirms the apostles' eyewitness testimony. Obeying here means the obedience that comes from believing (Rom 1:5), not works that earn the Spirit.
5:33 *they were furious* The Greek pictures being sawn in two. They could not contain their rage.
5:34 *a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law honored by all the people* Pharisees were strict about the Law and its traditions and, unlike the Sadducees, believed in the resurrection and angels. Gamaliel was among the most honored rabbis of his day, and Paul studied under him (22:3).
5:37 *Judas the Galilean rose up in the days of the registration* The registration was Rome's census for taxes, and Judas led a revolt against it. Movements built around a man fall apart when the man is gone. Josephus writes of a Theudas and of Judas. His Theudas seems to come some years after this speech, so many scholars believe Gamaliel meant an earlier man. It was a common name, and Luke has proven a careful historian again and again.
5:39 *if it is from God, you are not able to overthrow it* Wise advice, but not faith. Gamaliel waited and saw. History has answered. Two thousand years later the church is on every continent, and every empire that tried to stamp it out has failed (Matt 16:18).
5:40 *having beaten them* A brutal flogging. The Law limited it to forty lashes (Deut 25:3), and the custom was to stop at thirty-nine (2 Cor 11:24).
5:41 *rejoicing that they had been counted worthy to be dishonored for His name* They did not complain or pity themselves. They counted it an honor, as Jesus said (Matt 5:11-12; John 15:20). It is the spirit of the faithful who "did not love their life until death" (Rev 12:11).
5:42 *in the temple and from house to house* The orders changed nothing. They preached Jesus as the Messiah in public and in homes, large gatherings and small. Our faith is meant to be lived in public and around our own kitchen tables.
6:1 *there arose a grumbling of the Hellenists against the Hebrews* Growth brings new problems. The Hellenists were Jews raised outside the land who mainly spoke Greek; many had moved back to Jerusalem later in life. The Hebrews were Jews from the land who spoke Aramaic. Their widows depended on the church's daily care, and the Greek-speaking widows were being missed.
6:2 *It is not pleasing for us, having left the word of God, to serve tables* The apostles were not saying that serving food was beneath them. Jesus Himself washed His disciples' feet (John 13:1-15). God had given them a specific job, and if they spent all their time running a food program, the teaching of God's Word would suffer.
6:3 *full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom* Even a job handing out food required spiritual men. In God's eyes there is no such thing as unspiritual work in His church. The church chose the men, and the apostles appointed them.
6:4 *we will steadfastly continue in prayer and in the ministry of the word* Prayer comes first in the list. Leaders who stop praying and studying the Word soon have nothing to give. Every church needs both the ministry of the word and the ministry of practical care.
6:5 *Nicolas, a proselyte of Antioch* All seven have Greek names, which suggests the church gave the problem to men from the group that had been overlooked. Nicolas was a proselyte, a Gentile who had converted to Judaism. So even before the Gospel went to the Gentiles in chapter 10, a man born a Gentile was helping lead the church. Philip appears again in chapter 8.

full of faith and of ***the*** Holy Spirit, and Philip (Philippos) and Prochorus (Prochoros) and Nicanor (Nikanor) and Timon and Parmenas and Nicolas (Nikolaos), a proselyte of Antioch, **6** whom they set before the apostles; and having prayed, they laid hands on them. **7** And the word of God was increasing, and the number of the disciples in Jerusalem (Hierousalem) was being multiplied exceedingly, and a great crowd of the priests were becoming obedient to the faith.

Stephen Seized

8 And Stephen, full of faith and power, was doing great wonders and signs among the people. **9** But certain ones arose of those from the synagogue which is called of the Freedmen, and of the Cyrenians and of the Alexandrians, and of those from Cilicia (Kilikia) and Asia, disputing with Stephen. **10** And they were not able to withstand the wisdom and the Spirit by which he was speaking. **11** Then they secretly induced men, saying, "We have heard him speaking blasphemous declarations against Moses and God." **12** And they stirred up the people and the elders and the scribes, and having come upon ***him***, they seized him and brought ***him*** to the Council. **13** And they set up false witnesses, saying, "This man does not stop speaking blasphemous declarations against this holy place and the law; **14** for we have heard him saying that this Jesus (Iesous) the Nazarene will overthrow this place and will change the customs which Moses delivered to us." **15** And all those sitting in the Council, having looked intently at him, saw his face as ***the*** face of an angel.

ACTS 7

Stephen's Defense: Abraham and Joseph

1 And the high priest said, "Are these things then so?" **2** And he said, "Men, brothers and fathers, listen. The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham (Abraam) when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran (Charran), **3** and said to him, 'Go out from your land and from your kindred, and come into a land which I will show you.' **4** Then, having gone out from ***the*** land of ***the*** Chaldeans, he dwelt in Haran; and from there, after his father died, He removed him into this land in which you now dwell. **5** And He did not give him an inheritance in it, not even a foot's length; and He promised to give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when he had no child. **6** And God spoke thus: that his seed will be a sojourner in a foreign land, and they will enslave it and mistreat ***it*** four hundred years. **7** 'And the nation to which they will be in slavery I will judge,' said God, 'and after these things they will come out and serve Me in this place.' **8** And He gave him a covenant of circumcision; and thus he fathered Isaac (Isaak) and circumcised him on the eighth day, and Isaac ***fathered*** Jacob (Iakob), and Jacob the twelve

6:6 Num 27:18; Acts 1:24; Acts 8:17
6:7 Acts 12:24; Acts 19:20; Col 1:6
6:8 Acts 6:3,5,10,15; 1 Tim 3:13; Acts 4:29,30
6:9 Acts 15:23,41; Acts 22:3; Acts 23:34
6:10 Luke 21:15; Acts 5:39; Acts 7:51
6:11 Lev 24:16; Lev 24:11; Matt 26:59,60
6:12 Prov 15:18; Acts 13:50; Acts 14:2
6:13 Acts 6:11; Ps 27:12; Ps 35:11
6:14 Dan 9:26; Acts 25:8; Isa 66:1-6
6:15 Exod 34:29; Exod 34:30; Exod 34:31
7:1 Acts 6:13,14; Matt 26:61,62; Mark 14:58-60
7:2 Gen 11:31; Ps 29:3; Gen 15:7
7:3 Gen 12:1; Gen 15:7; Gen 11:31
7:4 Gen 12:4; Gen 11:31-32; Gen 11:28
7:5 Gen 12:7; Gen 17:8; Gen 23:4
7:6 Gen 15:13; Exod 12:40; Gal 3:17
7:7 Gen 15:14; Exod 3:12; Gen 15:13
7:8 Gen 17:9; Gen 35:23; Gen 25:21

6:6 *they laid hands on them* Laying on hands showed that the church set these men apart for the work and stood behind them. The seven are often called the first deacons, since the Greek word for serving is the root of "deacon," though Luke does not use that title here.
6:7 *a great crowd of the priests were becoming obedient to the faith* Handling the problem well sped the church up. These were most likely ordinary priests who offered the daily sacrifices. Now they were coming to believe that Jesus was the final sacrifice, offered once for all (Heb 10:11-14).
6:8 *Stephen, full of faith and power* Stephen was chosen to wait on tables, but God was not finished with him. Faithfulness in small things often leads to greater things (Luke 16:10). Do not despise the job God has given you today.
6:9 *the synagogue which is called of the Freedmen* The Freedmen were most likely Jews who had once been slaves, or whose parents had been, and had been set free. Cyrene and Alexandria were in North Africa; Cilicia and Asia were Roman regions in what is now Turkey. Paul was from Tarsus, the main city of Cilicia, so it is possible, though not certain, that young Saul was among Stephen's opponents.
6:10 *they were not able to withstand the wisdom and the Spirit by which he was speaking* Jesus had promised His followers a mouth and wisdom their enemies could not resist (Luke 21:15). Stephen's words did not come from training alone. The Spirit was speaking through him.
6:11 *We have heard him speaking blasphemous declarations against Moses and God* When they could not win the argument, they changed tactics. Blasphemy means speaking against God in a way that dishonors Him, and it was a capital crime under the Law (Lev 24:16).
6:12 *they stirred up the people* Until now the common people had been on the apostles' side (2:47; 5:13). This is the first time the crowd turns against the believers. The same pattern of false charges was used against Jesus (Matt 26:59-61).
6:14 *this Jesus the Nazarene will overthrow this place* Like most good lies, this one twisted a little truth. Jesus did predict that the temple would be destroyed (Matt 24:1-2), and the Romans burned it in A.D. 70. He also said He would raise up "this sanctuary" (John 2:19) in three days, but He was speaking of His body (John 2:19-21). Stephen probably taught that Jesus was greater than the temple and the Law.
6:15 *saw his face as the face of an angel* Scripture does not explain exactly what they saw. It may have been a calm look in a hostile room, or a real glow like Moses' face after he had been with God (Exod 34:29-35). They accused Stephen of speaking against Moses, and God gave him a face like Moses'.
7:1 *Are these things then so* The question meant, did you say these things about the temple and the Law, or not? This was most likely Caiaphas, who presided over Jesus' trial (Matt 26:57). Stephen stood before the same men, facing the same kind of false charges Jesus faced.
7:2 *The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia* Stephen opens respectfully and starts at the beginning of Israel's story. His first point answers the temple charge: God met Abraham in a pagan land, far from Israel, long before there was any temple. God's presence has never been locked inside one building.
7:4 *having gone out from the land of the Chaldeans, he dwelt in Haran* Genesis 12:1 records the call in Haran, but Genesis 15:7 and Nehemiah 9:7 both say God brought Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldeans. It seems God called Abraham first in Ur and then again in Haran.
7:5 *He did not give him an inheritance in it, not even a foot's length* Abraham lived his whole life in the Promised Land as a stranger, trusting God for what he could not see (Heb 11:8-10). God promised the land to a man with no child, and He kept both promises.
7:6 *four hundred years* The number comes from Genesis 15:13-14. Exodus 12:40 gives the time in Egypt as 430 years. Stephen, like Genesis 15:13, uses the rounded number.
7:8 *He gave him a covenant of circumcision* Circumcision was the physical sign that a man belonged to God's covenant people (Gen 17:9-14). The twelve patriarchs were the fathers of Israel's tribes. Stephen is showing the Council that he knows and honors their history. He is not speaking against Moses or the fathers.

patriarchs. **9** And the patriarchs, having become jealous of Joseph (Ioseph), sold ***him*** into Egypt (Aigyptos); and God was with him, **10** and rescued him out of all his tribulations, and gave him favor and wisdom before Pharaoh king of Egypt; and he appointed him ruler over Egypt and all his house. **11** Now a famine came upon all the land of Egypt and Canaan (Chanaan), and great tribulation; and our fathers were not finding sustenance. **12** But Jacob, having heard that there was grain in Egypt, sent out our fathers the first ***time***; **13** and at the second ***time*** Joseph was made known to his brothers, and Joseph's family became evident to Pharaoh. **14** And Joseph, having sent, called for Jacob his father and all his kindred, seventy-five souls in all. **15** And Jacob went down into Egypt, and he died, he and our fathers; **16** and they were carried over into Shechem (Sychem) and were placed in the tomb which Abraham bought for a sum of silver from the sons of Hamor (Emmor) of Shechem.

Stephen's Defense: Moses

17 But as the time of the promise which God had sworn to Abraham was drawing near, the people increased and multiplied in Egypt, **18** until another king arose who did not know Joseph. **19** This ***man***, having dealt treacherously with our race, mistreated our fathers, making ***them*** expose their infants so that they would not be kept alive. **20** At that time Moses was born, and he was beautiful to God; and he was brought up three months in the house of his father. **21** And when he had been exposed, the daughter of Pharaoh took him up and brought him up for herself as a son. **22** And Moses was instructed in all ***the*** wisdom of ***the*** Egyptians, and he was mighty in words and in deeds. **23** And when a time of forty years was being fulfilled for him, it came into his heart to visit his brothers, the sons of Israel. **24** And having seen a certain one being wronged, he defended ***him*** and carried out vengeance for the one being oppressed, having struck down the Egyptian. **25** And he was supposing ***that*** his brothers understood that God through his hand is giving them salvation; but they did not understand. **26** And on the following day he appeared to them as they were quarreling, and urged them to peace, saying, 'Men, you are brothers; why do you wrong one another?' **27** But the one wronging the neighbor pushed him away, saying, 'Who appointed you ruler and judge over us? **28** Do you want to kill me in the same way you killed the Egyptian yesterday?' **29** And Moses fled at this word, and became a sojourner in ***the*** land of Midian (Madiam), where he fathered two sons. **30** And when forty years had been fulfilled, an angel of ***the*** Lord appeared to him in the wilderness of Mount Sinai (Sina), in a flame of fire of a bush. **31** And Moses, having seen ***it***, marveled at the sight; and as he was approaching to look closely, ***there*** came a voice of ***the*** Lord to him: **32** 'I ***am*** the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.' And Moses, having become terrified, was not daring to look closely. **33** And the Lord said to him, 'Take off the sandal of your feet, for the place in which you stand is holy ground. **34** Having seen, I have seen the mistreatment of My people who ***are*** in Egypt, and I have heard their groaning, and I have come down to deliver them; and now come, I will send you to Egypt.' **35** This Moses, whom they denied, saying, 'Who appointed you ruler and judge?', this one God sent ***as*** ruler and redeemer by the hand of the angel who appeared to him

7:9 Gen 39:2; Gen 45:4; Ps 105:17
7:10 Gen 45:8; Gen 44:18; Gen 41:41
7:11 Gen 41:54; Gen 42:5; Gen 47:13
7:12 Gen 42:1-2; Gen 43:2; Gen 42:3
7:13 Gen 45:1; Gen 46:31; Gen 45:16
7:14 Gen 46:26; Exod 1:5; Gen 45:9
7:15 Gen 49:33; Gen 46:3; Num 20:15
7:16 Josh 24:32; Gen 23:16; Gen 50:13
7:17 Exod 1:7; Exod 1:20; Gen 46:3
7:18 Exod 1:8
7:19 Exod 1:9; Exod 1:10; Exod 1:22
7:20 Exod 2:2; Exod 2:3; Exod 2:4
7:21 Exod 2:2; Exod 2:5; Exod 2:10
7:22 Exod 2:10; Exod 2:11; Exod 4:10
7:23 Exod 2:11-12; Exod 35:21; Exod 35:29
7:24 Acts 7:28; John 18:10,11,25-27
7:25 Ps 106:7; Exod 2:12; Acts 14:27
7:26 Exod 2:13; Gen 13:8; Exod 2:12
7:27 Exod 2:14; Acts 7:35,39; Luke 12:14
7:29 Exod 2:14; Exod 4:19; Exod 18:2
7:30 Exod 3:2; Exod 3:1; Gen 16:7
7:31 Exod 3:3-4; Gen 16:10; Exod 3:2
7:32 Exod 3:6; Gen 28:13; Gen 50:24
7:33 Exod 3:5; Josh 5:15; Gen 16:10
7:34 Exod 3:7-10; Exod 2:23; Exod 6:5
7:35 Exod 2:14; Exod 33:12; 1 Sam 12:8

7:9 *the patriarchs, having become jealous of Joseph, sold him into Egypt* Here is the pattern Stephen will keep returning to: God sends a deliverer, and his own people reject him. Joseph's brothers rejected him, but God used him to save the family that betrayed him. Jesus was rejected by His own people (John 1:11), and God used it to bring salvation to the world.

7:14 *seventy-five souls in all* Genesis 46:27 and Exodus 1:5 in our Hebrew-based Bibles say seventy. The Greek translation of the Old Testament, the Septuagint, says seventy-five there, counting some of Joseph's descendants. Stephen, likely a Greek-speaking Jew, used the number from the Greek version his listeners knew. Both are correct counts made in different ways.

7:16 *the tomb which Abraham bought for a sum of silver from the sons of Hamor of Shechem* Abraham bought the cave at Machpelah near Hebron (Gen 23), while Jacob bought land at Shechem from the sons of Hamor (Gen 33:19), where Joseph was buried (Josh 24:32). Stephen appears to sum up both burial places in one sentence; teachers offer several explanations. His point is that Israel's fathers were buried in the land, waiting for God's promise, and Shechem was in Samaria, a region the Council looked down on.

7:19 *making them expose their infants so that they would not be kept alive* Stephen draws on Exodus 1:8-22. Again God's people were living outside the Promised Land in a pagan nation, and God was still at work among them, keeping His promise to Abraham right on schedule.

7:22 *Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians* Egypt was one of the most advanced nations in the world. God placed Moses in Pharaoh's own house so he would be ready to lead (Exod 2:1-10). Stephen is plainly honoring Moses, answering the charge that he spoke against him.

7:25 *he was supposing that his brothers understood that God through his hand is giving them salvation; but they did not understand* Here is the pattern again. God sent a deliverer, and Israel did not recognize him (Exod 2:11-12). Stephen's listeners would soon realize he was not only talking about Moses.

7:27 *Who appointed you ruler and judge over us* The man God had chosen to deliver Israel was pushed away by the very people he came to help. He fled to Midian, east of Egypt (Exod 2:15-22), and spent the next forty years in the wilderness.

7:33 *the place in which you stand is holy ground* Stephen is retelling Exodus 3. He had been accused of speaking against "this holy place" (6:13). Now he points out that God called a patch of desert holy ground. Wherever God shows up is holy. God is not bound to a building in Jerusalem.

7:35 *This Moses, whom they denied* The man they rejected is the man God sent as ruler and redeemer. The Council knew how the story went. What they did not see was that they were repeating it. Jesus was rejected by His people, and God made Him "both Lord and Christ" (2:36).

in the bush. **36** This one led them out, having done wonders and signs in ***the*** land of Egypt and in ***the*** Red Sea and in the wilderness forty years. **37** This is the Moses who said to the sons of Israel, '***The*** Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers; Him you shall listen to.' **38** This is the one who was in the assembly in the wilderness with the angel who was speaking to him on Mount Sinai, and with our fathers; who received living oracles to give to us; **39** to whom our fathers were not willing to become obedient, but they pushed ***him*** away, and in their hearts they turned back to Egypt, **40** saying to Aaron, 'Make us gods who will go before us; for this Moses who brought us out from ***the*** land of Egypt, we do not know what has happened to him.' **41** And they made a calf in those days, and offered a sacrifice to the idol, and were rejoicing in the works of their hands. **42** But God turned and delivered them up to serve the host of heaven, just as it has been written in ***the*** book of the prophets: 'Did you offer Me slain beasts and sacrifices forty years in the wilderness, O house of Israel? **43** And you took up the tabernacle of Moloch and the star of your god Remphan, the figures which you made to worship them; and I will remove you beyond Babylon.'

Stephen's Defense: The Tabernacle and the Temple

44 The tabernacle of the testimony was among our fathers in the wilderness, just as He who spoke to Moses commanded ***him*** to make it according to the figure which he had seen; **45** which also our fathers, having received ***it*** in turn, brought in with Joshua (Iesous) in the taking possession of the nations, whom God drove out from ***the*** face of our fathers, until the days of David (Dabid); **46** who found favor before God and asked to find a dwelling place for the God of Jacob. **47** But Solomon built Him a house. **48** But the Most High does not dwell in temples made with hands, just as the prophet says: **49** 'Heaven ***is*** My throne, and the earth ***is*** a footstool for My feet. What kind of house will you build for Me, says ***the*** Lord, or what ***is*** the place of My rest? **50** Did not My hand make all these things?' **51** You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and in ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers ***did***, you also ***do***. **52** Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold concerning the coming of the Righteous One, of whom you have now become betrayers and murderers, **53** you who received the law by ordinances of angels, and did not keep ***it***."

The Stoning of Stephen

54 And hearing these things, they were furious in their hearts, and were gnashing their teeth at him. **55** But he, being full of ***the*** Holy Spirit, having looked intently into heaven, saw ***the*** glory of God, and Jesus (Iesous) standing at

7:36 Exod 12:41; Exod 33:1; Exod 14:27
7:37 Deut 18:15; Exod 17:7; Deut 18:16
7:38 Neh 9:13; Exod 19:2; Exod 19:11
7:39 Num 14:3; Exod 16:3; Num 11:5
7:40 Exod 32:1; Exod 32:23; Ps 103:7
7:41 Ps 106:19; Exod 32:4; Exod 32:6
7:42 Amos 5:25-27; Jer 19:13; Ezek 20:39
7:43 Lev 18:21; Lev 20:3; Lev 20:5
7:44 Exod 25:40; Exod 38:21; Exod 26:30
7:45 Ps 44:2; Josh 3:6; Josh 23:9
7:46 2 Sam 7:1; 2 Sam 7:2; Ps 132:5
7:47 1 Kgs 5:1; 1 Kgs 7:13; 2 Chr 2:1
7:48 Isa 66:1-2; 1 Kgs 8:27; Deut 32:8
7:49 Ps 11:4; Jer 23:24; 1 Kgs 22:19
7:50 Isa 45:7; Isa 45:12; Jer 10:11
7:51 Lev 26:41; Deut 10:16; Exod 33:5
7:52 1 Kgs 19:10; 2 Chr 36:16; 1 Kgs 19:14
7:53 Ezek 20:21; Gal 3:19; Heb 2:2
7:54 Job 16:9; Ps 35:16; Ps 112:10
7:55 Mic 3:8; Ps 109:31; Isa 6:1

7:37 *The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers* Moses' promise comes from Deuteronomy 18:15, and Peter applied it to Jesus (3:22-23). Moses himself pointed forward to Someone greater. When Stephen preached Jesus, he was doing exactly what Moses told Israel to do: listen to the Prophet God would raise up.
7:38 *in the assembly in the wilderness* The word for "assembly" is ekklesia, the same Greek word translated "church" elsewhere, meaning a called-out gathering. Israel was God's called-out people in the wilderness. Moses received "living oracles," God's Law that gives life to those who obey it. Stephen has no quarrel with the Law.
7:41 *they made a calf in those days* Stephen points to Exodus 32. The ones who truly broke the Law of Moses were Israel's own fathers, who worshiped a golden calf while God was handing Moses the Law.
7:42 *God turned and delivered them up to serve the host of heaven* The host of heaven means the sun, moon, and stars. When people keep choosing idols, God eventually gives them over to what they have chosen (Rom 1:24-28).
7:43 *the tabernacle of Moloch and the star of your god Remphan* Stephen quotes Amos 5:25-27. While Israel went through the motions of worship, they carried along the tent of Moloch, a Canaanite god tied to child sacrifice, and Remphan, a star god. Amos says "beyond Damascus" (Amos 5:27), warning the northern kingdom taken to Assyria; Stephen says "beyond Babylon," where Judah was later taken. He seems to sum up Israel's whole exile in one phrase.
7:44 *The tabernacle of the testimony was among our fathers in the wilderness* Now Stephen answers the temple charge directly. The tabernacle was a portable tent built by the pattern God showed Moses (Exod 25:8-9, 40). It was God's idea, and it moved with the people.
7:47 *But Solomon built Him a house* David's request is in 2 Samuel 7:1-2, and Solomon's building is in 1 Kings 6. From Abraham to Solomon is around a thousand years, and Israel worshiped God that whole time without a temple. God was with His people all along.
7:48 *the Most High does not dwell in temples made with hands* Stephen is not speaking against the temple. Even Solomon admitted that heaven itself cannot contain God, much less a house (1 Kgs 8:27). The Council had made an idol of the building, trusting the temple more than the God of the temple. Today God's Spirit dwells in His people (1 Cor 3:16; 6:19).
7:49 *Heaven is My throne, and the earth is a footstool for My feet* Stephen quotes Isaiah 66:1-2. Jesus, the true dwelling place of God with man (John 1:14), had stood among them, and they rejected Him. In the New Jerusalem there will be no temple at all, because the Lord God and the Lamb are its temple (Rev 21:22).
7:51 *You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and in ears* Stiff-necked means stubborn, like an ox that will not bend its neck to the yoke. God used that word of Israel after the golden calf (Exod 33:5). Uncircumcised in heart means having the outward sign of the covenant without the inner reality (Deut 10:16; Jer 9:26).
7:52 *the coming of the Righteous One* The Righteous One is Jesus. Stephen was not condemning the Jewish people as a whole. He was a Jew, and thousands of Jews had already believed. He was calling out the leaders in front of him, as the prophets did. God has not given up on Israel (Rom 11:1-2, 25-27).
7:53 *you who received the law by ordinances of angels, and did not keep it* On angels in the giving of the Law, see Galatians 3:19 and Hebrews 2:2. The men accusing Stephen of breaking the Law were the true lawbreakers.
7:54 *gnashing their teeth at him* Gnashing teeth is a picture of raw rage. The Council had heard enough, and they knew the story Stephen told was about them.

the right ***hand*** of God; **56** and he said, "Look, I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at ***the*** right ***hand*** of God." **57** And having cried out with a loud voice, they stopped their ears and rushed upon him with one accord; **58** and having cast ***him*** out of the city, they were stoning ***him***. And the witnesses laid aside their garments at the feet of a young man called Saul (Saulos). **59** And they were stoning Stephen (Stephanos) as he was calling upon ***the Lord*** and saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." **60** And having knelt down, he cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." And having said this, he fell asleep.

ACTS 8

The Church Scattered

1 And Saul (Saulos) was consenting to his killing. And on that day a great persecution arose against the church which ***was*** in Jerusalem (Hierosolyma); and all were scattered throughout the regions of Judea (Ioudaia) and Samaria (Samareia), except the apostles. **2** And devout men buried Stephen (Stephanos), and made great lamentation over him. **3** But Saul was ravaging the church, entering house after house; and dragging off men and women, he was delivering ***them*** to prison.

Philip in Samaria

4 Therefore those who had been scattered went about preaching the word ***as*** the gospel. **5** And Philip (Philippos), having gone down to a city of Samaria, was proclaiming the Christ to them. **6** And the crowds with one accord were giving heed to the things being spoken by Philip, in their hearing and seeing the signs which he was doing. **7** For from many of those having unclean spirits, they were coming out, crying with a loud voice; and many who had been paralyzed and lame were healed. **8** And ***there*** was great joy in that city.

Simon the Sorcerer

9 Now a certain man named Simon was formerly in the city practicing sorcery and amazing the nation of Samaria, saying that he himself was someone great, **10** to whom they all were giving heed, from small to great, saying, "This ***man*** is the great power of God." **11** And they were giving heed to him because for a long time he had amazed them with the magic arts. **12** But when they believed Philip preaching the gospel, the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus (Iesous) Christ, they were being baptized, both men and

7:56 Dan 7:13; Dan 7:14; Matt 3:16
7:57 Acts 7:54; Acts 21:27-31; Acts 23:27
7:58 Lev 24:14; Deut 17:7; Acts 8:1
7:59 Acts 9:14,21; Ps 31:5; Luke 23:46
7:60 Neh 9:4; Matt 5:44; Acts 9:40
8:1 Acts 7:58; Acts 22:20; Acts 5:33,40
8:2 Acts 2:5; Acts 10:2; Luke 2:25
8:3 1 Cor 15:9; Gal 1:13; Phil 3:6
8:4 Acts 11:19; Acts 14:2-7; Matt 10:23
8:5 1 Kgs 16:24; Acts 6:5; Acts 21:8
8:6 Acts 13:44; 2 Chr 30:12; Matt 20:15,16
8:7 Acts 5:16; Matt 10:1; Mark 16:17,18
8:8 Isa 9:3; Acts 13:48,52; Ps 96:10-12
8:9 Deut 18:10; Deut 18:11; Deut 18:12
8:10 2 Cor 11:19; Eph 4:14; 2 Pet 2:2
8:11 Gal 3:1; Isa 8:19; Isa 44:25
8:12 Acts 2:38,41; Acts 1:3; Matt 28:19

7:56 *the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God* Son of Man was Jesus' favorite name for Himself, from Daniel 7:13-14. Outside the Gospels this is the only place someone calls Him "the Son of Man." Jesus had told this Council they would see the Son of Man at the right hand of power (Matt 26:64). Usually He is seated there (Ps 110:1; Heb 1:3). Many believe He stood to welcome His first martyr home; others see Him standing as Stephen's witness and advocate. I find both encouraging.
7:58 *having cast him out of the city, they were stoning him* The Law required that blasphemers be stoned outside the camp (Lev 24:14). Under Roman rule the Jewish leaders could not carry out an execution on their own (John 18:31), so this looks less like a legal sentence and more like a mob that lost control.
7:58 *a young man called Saul* This is our first meeting with the man who would become the apostle Paul. The witnesses threw the first stones (Deut 17:7), and Saul watched their coats and approved (8:1; 22:20). He had no idea the Jesus Stephen saw in heaven would meet him on the road to Damascus.
7:59 *Lord Jesus, receive my spirit* On the cross Jesus said, "Father, into Your hands I will commit My spirit" (Luke 23:46). Stephen prays the same prayer to Jesus. He knew Jesus is God, and that to be absent from the body is to be at home with the Lord (2 Cor 5:8).
7:60 *Lord, do not hold this sin against them* Stephen sounds like his Savior, who prayed for those who crucified Him (Luke 23:34). That is what it looks like to be filled with the Spirit. His last words were forgiveness, not anger.
7:60 *he fell asleep* Scripture often calls a believer's death sleep (1 Thess 4:13-16). It does not mean the soul goes unconscious; Jesus received Stephen's spirit. The body rests until Christ comes for His church and "the dead in Christ will rise first" (1 Thess 4:16). Stephen's name means crown, and Jesus promises "the crown of life" (Rev 2:10) to those faithful until death.
8:1 *Saul was consenting to his killing* The young man holding the coats was not just standing by. He approved, and later he confessed it with deep regret (22:20; 1 Tim 1:13).
8:1 *all were scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles* Jesus said His followers would be witnesses in Jerusalem, then "in all Judea and Samaria" (1:8). The church had been slow to leave Jerusalem, and God used persecution to move them out. Scripture does not say why the apostles stayed. They may have felt called to keep leading there, or the persecution may have fallen mostly on Hellenistic believers like Stephen.
8:2 *made great lamentation over him* Stephen died with heaven opened before him, and still the believers grieved deeply. We grieve, but not as those who have no hope (1 Thess 4:13). Burying a man the Council had just stoned also took courage.
8:3 *Saul was ravaging the church* The word was used of a wild animal tearing its prey. Paul later said he persecuted the Way to the death (22:4). He did it believing he was serving God (Phil 3:6). A person can be sincere and sincerely wrong. Yet God was about to make the worst persecutor of the church its greatest missionary. Nobody is beyond the reach of God's grace.
8:4 *those who had been scattered went about preaching the word as the gospel* One of my favorite verses in Acts. The enemy meant persecution to stamp out the church, and God used it to scatter seed across the land. The preachers here were not apostles but ordinary believers. Every one of them was a witness, and that is still God's plan for us.
8:5 *Philip, having gone down to a city of Samaria* This is Philip of the seven (6:5), later called "Philip the evangelist" (21:8). The Samaritans were a mixed people descended from Israelites and the foreigners Assyria settled in the land after 722 B.C. (2 Kgs 17:24-41). They accepted only the five books of Moses and worshiped on Mount Gerizim (John 4:20). For a Jewish believer to preach Christ there crossed a line most Jews would never cross.
8:8 *there was great joy in that city* The miracles confirmed the message, as they had for the apostles. Jesus had already sown seed in Samaria at the well, and many Samaritans believed then (John 4:39-42). Philip was reaping a harvest Jesus had planted. Wherever the Gospel takes hold, joy follows.
8:9 *practicing sorcery and amazing the nation of Samaria* Sorcery means using occult powers or tricks to amaze people. Scripture is clear that it is sin (Deut 18:10-12; Gal 5:20), and sorcerers are listed among those outside God's kingdom (Rev 21:8; 22:15). Simon had a hold on the whole city, but Philip's message was about to break it.
8:12 *when they believed Philip preaching the gospel* Notice the order. They believed first, then they were baptized. Baptism is the believer's public step of obedience after putting faith in Jesus.

women. **13** And Simon himself also believed; and having been baptized, he was steadfastly continuing with Philip; and observing miracles and signs being done, he was amazed. **14** Now the apostles in Jerusalem, having heard that Samaria has received the word of God, sent Peter (Petros) and John (Ioannes) to them, **15** who, having come down, prayed for them that they might receive ***the*** Holy Spirit. **16** For He had not yet fallen upon any of them; but they had only been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. **17** Then they were laying their hands on them, and they were receiving ***the*** Holy Spirit. **18** And Simon, having seen that through the laying on of the hands of the apostles the Holy Spirit is given, offered them money, **19** saying, "Give me also this authority, so that on whomever I lay my hands, he may receive ***the*** Holy Spirit." **20** But Peter said to him, "May your silver be with you for destruction, because you thought to acquire the gift of God through money! **21** You have neither part nor lot in this matter, for your heart is not right before God.
22 Therefore repent of this wickedness of yours, and pray earnestly to God, if perhaps the intent of your heart will be forgiven you. **23** For I see you being in ***the*** gall of bitterness and ***the*** bond of unrighteousness." **24** And answering, Simon said, "You yourselves pray earnestly to the Lord on my behalf, so that nothing of what you have spoken may come upon me." **25** So they, having solemnly testified and having spoken the word of the Lord, returned to Jerusalem (Hierousalem), and they preached the gospel to many villages of the Samaritans.

Philip and the Ethiopian

26 And an angel of ***the*** Lord spoke to Philip, saying, "Rise up and go toward ***the*** south, on the road which goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." This is desert. **27** And having risen up, he went. And look, a man, an Ethiopian, a eunuch, a court official of Candace the queen of ***the*** Ethiopians, who was over all her treasure, who had come to Jerusalem to worship, **28** and he was returning, and sitting in his chariot he was reading the prophet Isaiah (Hesaias). **29** And the Spirit said to Philip, "Go near and be joined to this chariot." **30** And having run up, Philip heard him reading Isaiah the prophet, and said, "Do you indeed understand what you are reading?" **31** And he said, "For how could I be able, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip, having come up, to sit with him. **32** Now the passage of the Scripture which he was reading was this: "As a sheep He was led to slaughter, and as a lamb before the one shearing it ***is*** silent, so He does not open His mouth. **33** In His humiliation His judgment was taken away; and who will describe His generation? For His life is taken

8:13 Acts 8:21; Ps 78:35-37; Ps 106:12,13
8:14 Acts 8:1; 1 Thess 3:2; 1 Thess 2:13
8:15 Acts 2:38; Matt 18:19; John 14:13,14
8:16 Acts 2:38; Matt 28:19; Acts 19:2
8:17 Acts 6:6; Acts 9:17; Acts 19:6
8:18 2 Kgs 5:15,16; 2 Kgs 8:9; Ezek 13:19
8:19 Luke 14:7-11; Acts 8:9-11,17; Matt 18:1-3
8:20 Dan 5:17; Acts 2:38; Matt 10:8
8:21 Josh 22:25; Ezek 14:3; Rev 20:6
8:22 Dan 4:27; Acts 2:38; Acts 3:19
8:23 Prov 5:22; Heb 12:15; John 8:34
8:24 Exod 8:8; Num 21:7; Exod 10:17
8:25 Acts 1:8; Acts 18:5; Acts 20:21
8:26 Josh 15:47; 2 Kgs 1:3; Isa 60:1
8:27 Ps 87:4; Isa 56:3; Jer 38:7
8:28 Isa 1:1; Isa 18:7; Isa 56:3
8:29 Deut 30:13; Acts 10:19; Acts 11:12
8:30 Neh 8:8; Ps 119:32; Eccl 9:10
8:31 2 Kgs 5:26; Judg 14:14; 1 Kgs 20:33
8:32 Isa 53:7-8; Jer 51:40; 1 Pet 2:21-24
8:33 Job 27:2; Job 34:5; Ps 22:30

8:13 *Simon himself also believed* Was Simon truly saved? Peter will say his heart is not right before God (8:21-23). Many teachers believe Simon's faith was only on the surface, a belief in the miracles rather than in Christ, like those Jesus did not entrust Himself to (John 2:23-25). Others believe he was a true but immature believer who fell into serious sin. I lean toward the first view, but Luke does not tell us how Simon's story ended.
8:16 *He had not yet fallen upon any of them* This is unusual. Normally a person receives the Spirit the moment he believes (Rom 8:9; Eph 1:13). I believe God was doing something special at a turning point. Jews and Samaritans had been enemies with rival places of worship. By waiting for Peter and John, God showed that the Samaritans were part of the one church, with the same Spirit, under the same apostles.
8:17 *they were laying their hands on them, and they were receiving the Holy Spirit* Jesus gave Peter "the keys of the kingdom" (Matt 16:19), and Peter is present when each new group comes in: Jews (ch. 2), Samaritans here, and Gentiles (ch. 10). Some see this passage as a pattern for a second experience of the Spirit after salvation. Others, like me, see a one-time event confirming that a new group had come in. This same John once wanted fire on a Samaritan village (Luke 9:51-56).
8:18 *offered them money* Simon saw something outward happen, perhaps signs like those at Pentecost. He wanted to buy God's power and use it as he had used his magic, to impress people and make money. His name gives us the word simony, the buying or selling of church offices or spiritual things.
8:20 *you thought to acquire the gift of God through money* God's gifts cannot be bought. Salvation itself is "not from yourselves; the gift is of God" (Eph 2:8), freely given by grace and never earned.
8:22 *if perhaps the intent of your heart will be forgiven you* The "if perhaps" does not mean God might refuse a truly repentant heart. It shows how serious Simon's sin was and that it would take true repentance, not just words.
8:23 *in the gall of bitterness and the bond of unrighteousness* Gall was a bitter, poisonous plant. Simon was poisoned inside and still a slave to sin. It was a hard thing to say to a man just baptized, but it was the truth he needed.
8:24 *You yourselves pray earnestly to the Lord on my behalf* Simon seems more worried about consequences than about his sin. He does not pray himself, and he does not say he is sorry. Some early writers told stories about him, but they come from outside the Bible, and I will not build anything on them.
8:25 *they preached the gospel to many villages of the Samaritans* Two Jewish apostles who once might have gone around Samaria to avoid it were now going village to village with the Good News.
8:26 *This is desert* Gaza was an old Philistine city near the coast in the southwest. Philip was in the middle of a revival, and God told him to leave for a lonely desert road. It did not make sense, but Philip went. Sometimes God moves us away from the excitement to reach one person, and that one person matters to God.
8:27 *a eunuch, a court official of Candace the queen of the Ethiopians* Biblical Ethiopia was the kingdom of Kush, south of Egypt, in what is now Sudan. Candace was the title of the ruling queen mother, as Pharaoh was a title. Under the Law a eunuch could not enter the assembly (Deut 23:1), but God promised eunuchs who held His covenant a name better than sons and daughters (Isa 56:3-5). That day had come.
8:28 *he was reading the prophet Isaiah* This man had traveled more than a thousand miles to worship in Jerusalem. He was hungry for God, and God sent Philip to meet him. People usually read aloud in those days, which is how Philip heard him.
8:31 *For how could I be able, unless someone guides me* I love the humility of this powerful official. He did not pretend to understand what he did not. That is the right heart for studying God's Word. We need the Spirit to open our eyes, and God often uses other believers to help us (Eph 4:11-12).
8:32 *As a sheep He was led to slaughter* The passage is Isaiah 53:7-8, written about seven hundred years before Jesus; the Great Isaiah Scroll from the Dead Sea Scrolls, copied over a century before Him, contains all of chapter 53. It describes His suffering in detail. Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29).

away from the earth." **34** And answering Philip, the eunuch said, "I beg you, concerning whom does the prophet say this? Concerning himself, or concerning some other ***man***?" **35** And Philip, having opened his mouth and having begun from this Scripture, preached Jesus ***as*** the gospel to him. **36** And as they were going along the road, they came upon some water; and the eunuch says, "Look, water! What hinders me from being baptized?" **37** And Philip said, "If you believe from all your heart, it is permitted." And answering, he said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." **38** And he commanded the chariot to stop; and they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. **39** And when they came up out of the water, ***the*** Spirit of ***the*** Lord snatched Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him any longer; for he was going on his way rejoicing. **40** But Philip was found at Azotus (Azotos); and passing through, he was preaching the gospel to all the cities until he came to Caesarea (Kaisareia).

ACTS 9

The Conversion of Saul

1 But Saul (Saulos), still breathing out threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, having gone to the high priest, **2** requested from him letters to Damascus (Damaskos), to the synagogues, so that if he found any being of the Way, both men and women, he might bring ***them*** bound to Jerusalem (Hierousalem). **3** And as he was traveling, it came about ***that*** he was drawing near to Damascus; and suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. **4** And having fallen on the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, "Saul (Saoul), Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" **5** And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" And the Lord said, "I am Jesus (Iesous), whom you are persecuting. ***It is*** hard for you to kick against goads." **6** And trembling and astonished, he said, "Lord, what do You want me to do?" And the Lord ***said*** to him, "Rise up and enter into the city, and it will be told to you what you must do." **7** And the men who were traveling with him stood speechless, hearing indeed the voice but seeing no one. **8** And Saul rose up from the ground, and with his eyes opened, he was seeing no one; and leading him by the hand, they brought ***him*** into Damascus. **9** And he was three days without seeing, and he neither ate nor drank.

Ananias Sent to Saul

10 Now ***there*** was a certain disciple in Damascus named Ananias; and the Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." And he said, "Look, I ***am here***, Lord." **11** And the Lord ***said*** to him, "Having risen up, go to the street which is called Straight (Euthys), and seek in the house of Judas (Ioudas) ***one*** named

8:34 Isa 56:3; Matt 2:2-4; Matt 13:36
8:35 Acts 18:28; Luke 24:27,44-47; Matt 5:2
8:36 Isa 56:3; Acts 10:47; Ezek 36:25
8:37 Isa 56:3; Jer 29:13; Ezek 44:5
8:38 Jer 38:7; John 4:1; John 3:22,23
8:39 1 Kgs 18:12; 2 Kgs 2:16; Ezek 37:1
8:40 Acts 10:1; Acts 21:8; Acts 23:23,33
9:1 Acts 8:3; Acts 9:11-13,19-21; Acts 26:9-11
9:2 Gen 14:15; 1 Kgs 11:24; 1 Kgs 19:15
9:3 1 Kgs 19:15; 1 Cor 15:8; Acts 22:6
9:4 2 Sam 3:8; Isa 37:29; Joel 3:4
9:5 1 Sam 3:4-10; 1 Tim 1:13; Acts 26:9
9:6 Acts 16:29; Acts 24:25,26; 1 Sam 28:5
9:7 Dan 10:7; Acts 22:9; Acts 26:13,14
9:8 Acts 22:11; Acts 9:18; Acts 13:11
9:9 Esth 4:16; Acts 9:11,12; 2 Chr 33:12,13,18,19
9:10 Acts 22:12; Acts 10:3,17-20; Gen 22:1
9:11 Acts 21:39; Acts 22:3; Acts 9:30

8:34 *concerning whom does the prophet say this* The right question, and the one many Jewish readers have asked about Isaiah 53.
8:35 *having begun from this Scripture, preached Jesus as the gospel to him* Philip did not have to look far to find Jesus. He is the center of all Scripture (Luke 24:27).
8:37 *If you believe from all your heart, it is permitted* The SLB includes verse 37, as the King James Version does. Most modern translations leave it out or footnote it, because it is not in the earliest manuscripts of Acts. Either way, it fits the rest of Acts: faith comes first, then baptism as the believer's public confession.
8:38 *they both went down into the water* Many believers see "went down into the water" and "came up out of the water" as pointing to immersion, a picture of burial and new life with Christ (Rom 6:3-4). Other Christians baptize by pouring or sprinkling. What matters most is that this man believed in Jesus and obeyed Him.
8:39 *he was going on his way rejoicing* He had come looking for God and went home with Jesus in his heart. Tradition says he carried the Gospel home, but Scripture does not tell us. The Gospel was moving toward the ends of the earth (1:8).
8:40 *Philip was found at Azotus* Azotus was the old Philistine city of Ashdod, about twenty miles north of Gaza. Caesarea was a large port built by Herod the Great and the Roman capital of the province. About twenty years later Paul stays at Philip's house there (21:8-9). Whether God sends us to many or to one, the job is the same: tell them about Jesus.
9:1 *still breathing out threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord* Luke picks up where he left Saul in 8:3. This was not a passing anger. It was a settled mission.
9:2 *if he found any being of the Way* Damascus was a major city in Syria, about 150 miles northeast of Jerusalem, with a large Jewish population. Believers were already there, which shows how fast the Gospel spread after the scattering (8:4). The Way is one of the earliest names for the Christian faith (19:9, 23; 24:14), fitting for those who follow the One who called Himself "the way" (John 14:6).
9:3 *a light from heaven flashed around him* Paul later tells us it was about noon and the light was brighter than the sun (22:6; 26:13).
9:4 *Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me* Saul had never laid a hand on Jesus. He was arresting men and women in the church. But Jesus is so joined to His people that what is done to them is done to Him (Matt 25:40). If you belong to Christ, you never suffer alone. He takes it personally.
9:5 *I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting* Saul had been sure Jesus was a false teacher, dead and buried. Now he learned that Jesus was alive and speaking from heaven. A goad was a pointed stick for driving oxen; kicking against it only hurt the ox.
9:6 *it will be told to you what you must do* Jesus did not give Saul the whole plan. That is often how God leads us. He gives the next step, not the whole map. The man used to being in charge now had to obey and wait.
9:7 *hearing indeed the voice but seeing no one* God made sure there were witnesses that something real happened, but the message was for Saul. Later Paul says they did not hear the voice of the One speaking (22:9). The common explanation is that they heard a sound but did not see Jesus or understand the words.
9:9 *he was three days without seeing* The proud Pharisee who marched toward Damascus with letters of authority had to be led in by the hand. Everything he had believed about Jesus was wrong. God sometimes has to stop us in our tracks before He can rebuild us. Those three days were a time of quiet, and he spent them praying (9:11).
9:10 *a certain disciple in Damascus named Ananias* Not the Ananias of chapter 5. Paul later describes him as a devout man by the standard of the Law, well spoken of by all the Jews in the city (22:12).
9:11 *the street which is called Straight* Straight Street was a main road running east to west through Damascus. Tarsus was a leading city of Cilicia, in the southeast of modern Turkey. God was working on both ends, preparing Saul and Ananias at the same time.

Saul, of Tarsus (Tarseus); for look, he is praying, **12** and he saw in a vision a man named Ananias having come in and having put a hand on him, so that he may see again." **13** But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many concerning this man, how many evils he did to Your saints in Jerusalem; **14** and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all those calling on Your name." **15** But the Lord said to him, "Go, for this ***man*** is a vessel of choice to Me, to carry My name before Gentiles and kings and ***the*** sons of Israel. **16** For I will show him how many things he must suffer for the sake of My name." **17** And Ananias went away and entered into the house; and having laid his hands on him, he said, "Saul, brother, the Lord has sent me, Jesus, who appeared to you on the road by which you were coming, so that you may see again and be filled with ***the*** Holy Spirit." **18** And immediately ***something*** like scales fell from his eyes, and he saw again at once; and having risen up, he was baptized;

Saul Preaches in Damascus

19 and having taken food, he regained strength. And Saul was with the disciples in Damascus some days. **20** And immediately in the synagogues he was proclaiming the Christ, that He is the Son of God. **21** And all those hearing were amazed and were saying, "Is this not the one who ravaged those calling on this name in Jerusalem, and had come here for this, that he might bring them bound to the chief priests?" **22** But Saul was being empowered all the more, and was confounding the Jews who dwell in Damascus, proving that this ***One*** is the Christ. **23** Now when many days were being fulfilled, the Jews plotted together to kill him; **24** but their plot became known to Saul. And they were watching the gates both by day and by night, so that they might kill him; **25** but the disciples, having taken him by night, let him down through the wall, having lowered ***him*** in a basket.

Saul in Jerusalem

26 And having arrived in Jerusalem, Saul was trying to be joined to the disciples; and all were afraid of him, not believing that he is a disciple. **27** But Barnabas, having taken hold of him, brought ***him*** to the apostles, and related to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had spoken boldly in the name of Jesus. **28** And he was with them, coming in and going out in Jerusalem, **29** and speaking boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, he was both speaking and debating with the Hellenists; but they were attempting to kill him. **30** But the brothers, having learned ***of it***, brought him down to Caesarea (Kaisareia) and sent him away to Tarsus (Tarsos). **31** So then the churches throughout all Judea (Ioudaia) and Galilee (Galilaia) and Samaria (Samareia) had peace, being built up; and going on in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, they were multiplied.

Aeneas Healed

32 And it came about ***that*** Peter (Petros), passing through all ***places***, came down also to the saints who dwell in Lydda.

9:12 Acts 9:10,17,18
9:13 Acts 8:3; Acts 9:1; Exod 4:13-19
9:14 Acts 9:21; Acts 7:59; Acts 22:16
9:15 Jer 1:7; Isa 60:9; Eph 3:7,8
9:16 Acts 21:11; 2 Cor 11:23-27; John 15:20
9:17 Acts 6:6; Acts 8:17; Acts 2:4
9:18 Acts 2:38,41; Acts 22:16; 2 Cor 3:14
9:19 1 Sam 10:11; 1 Sam 10:12; Acts 26:20
9:20 Acts 9:27,28; Gal 1:23,24; Ps 2:7,12
9:21 1 Sam 10:11; 1 Sam 19:24; Acts 8:3
9:22 Gen 49:24; Acts 18:5; Isa 40:29
9:23 Acts 9:16; Acts 13:50; Acts 14:2,19
9:24 Judg 16:2; Ps 37:32; Judg 16:3
9:25 Josh 2:15; 1 Sam 19:11; 1 Sam 19:12
9:26 Acts 26:20; Acts 22:17; Gal 1:17-19
9:27 Acts 4:36; Gal 1:18,19; Acts 4:13,29
9:28 Ps 121:8; Acts 1:21; Num 27:16,17
9:29 Acts 6:1; 2 Cor 11:26; Acts 9:20-22,27
9:30 Acts 8:40; Acts 9:11; Acts 11:25
9:31 Job 28:28; Ps 111:10; Prov 8:13
9:32 Acts 9:13,41; Acts 1:8; Acts 8:14,25

9:13 *how many evils he did to Your saints in Jerusalem* Ananias was not arguing out of pride. He was afraid and told the Lord exactly how he felt. God is not offended when we bring Him our honest fears. Saints means holy ones. In the Bible a saint is not a super-Christian but every person who belongs to God.
9:15 *this man is a vessel of choice to Me* Everything the Lord said came true. Paul carried Christ's name to Gentiles all over the Roman world, stood before governors and King Agrippa (chs. 24-26), and as a rule went to the Jews first wherever there was a synagogue.
9:16 *how many things he must suffer for the sake of My name* The man who caused so much suffering would now suffer for the same name: beatings, stoning, shipwreck, hunger, and danger everywhere (2 Cor 11:23-28). Following Jesus is not a promise of an easy life. It is a promise that He will be with us through all of it.
9:17 *Saul, brother* Days earlier Saul was coming to drag Ananias off in chains. Now Ananias welcomes him as family. The Gospel turns enemies into brothers. Ananias was not an apostle but an ordinary disciple. God can use any believer who is willing to obey. Saul's three days of waiting were unusual, and Luke does not present them as a pattern for every believer.
9:18 *having risen up, he was baptized* Saul met the risen Lord and believed, then was baptized right away as his public step of obedience. Later Ananias tells him to "wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (22:16); the washing is tied to calling on the Lord in faith.
9:20 *he was proclaiming the Christ, that He is the Son of God* Saul wasted no time. The very first thing he preached was the truth he had fought against.
9:22 *proving that this One is the Christ* Christ is the Greek word that translates the Hebrew Messiah; both mean Anointed One. Saul knew the Old Testament deeply. Now that his eyes were opened he could see Jesus on every page, and he used those Scriptures to show that Jesus was the promised Messiah.
9:23 *when many days were being fulfilled* Paul tells us that after his conversion he went into Arabia, returned to Damascus, and three years later went up to Jerusalem (Gal 1:17-18). The many days likely cover that time.
9:25 *having lowered him in a basket* Paul mentions this escape in 2 Corinthians 11:32-33. The hunter had become the hunted. The man who arrived with letters of authority left hidden in a basket.
9:26 *all were afraid of him* Can you blame them? They had seen what he did to Stephen and to their families.
9:27 *But Barnabas, having taken hold of him, brought him to the apostles* We met Barnabas in 4:36, the "Son of Encouragement," and he lived up to his name. Every church needs a Barnabas, someone willing to take a risk on a new believer and vouch for him. Who in your life might need you to be that person?
9:29 *debating with the Hellenists; but they were attempting to kill him* The Greek-speaking Jews were the same group that argued with Stephen and had him killed (6:9). Now Saul stood where Stephen once stood. The brothers sent him through the seaport of Caesarea home to Tarsus, and he drops out of the story until Barnabas goes looking for him (11:25).
9:31 *the churches throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace* A beautiful summary. The church had peace but did not get lazy. It kept walking in the fear of the Lord and leaning on the Spirit, and peace and growth came together. Judea and Samaria, just as Jesus said (1:8). The fiercest persecutor had become a preacher.

33 And there he found a certain man named Aeneas (Aineas), lying on a mat for eight years, who was paralyzed. **34** And Peter said to him, "Aeneas, Jesus the Christ heals you; rise up and make ***your bed*** for yourself." And immediately he rose up. **35** And all those dwelling in Lydda and Sharon (Saron) saw him, who turned to the Lord.

Dorcas Raised

36 Now in Joppa (Ioppe) ***there*** was a certain female disciple named Tabitha, which translated is called Dorcas (Dorkas); she was full of good works and charitable deeds which she was doing. **37** And it came about in those days ***that*** she became sick and died; and having washed ***her***, they laid her in an upper room. **38** And Lydda being near to Joppa, the disciples, having heard that Peter is in it, sent two men to him, imploring ***him*** not to delay to come through to them. **39** And Peter, having risen up, went with them; whom, having arrived, they brought up into the upper room; and all the widows stood beside him weeping and showing tunics and garments, as many as Dorcas was making while she was with them. **40** But Peter, having put them all outside and having bent the knees, prayed; and having turned to the body, he said, "Tabitha, rise up." And she opened her eyes, and having seen Peter, she sat up. **41** And having given her ***his*** hand, he raised her up; and having called the saints and the widows, he presented her living. **42** And it became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed on the Lord. **43** And it came about ***that*** he stayed many days in Joppa with a certain Simon, a tanner.

ACTS 10

Cornelius' Vision

1 Now ***there*** was a certain man in Caesarea (Kaisareia) named Cornelius (Kornelios), a centurion of the cohort called Italian, **2** devout and fearing God with all his household, both doing many charitable deeds for the people and praying to God continually. **3** He saw clearly in a vision, about ***the*** ninth hour of the day, an angel of God coming in to him and saying to him, "Cornelius!" **4** And he, having looked intently at him and having become afraid, said, "What is it, lord?" And he said to him, "Your prayers and your charitable deeds went up as a memorial before God. **5** And now send men to Joppa (Ioppe), and summon Simon, who is called Peter (Petros). **6** He is lodging with a certain Simon, a tanner, whose house is by ***the*** sea. He will tell you what you must do." **7** And when the angel who was speaking to Cornelius had departed, having called two of his household servants and a devout soldier of those steadfastly attending him, **8** and having related all things to them, he sent them to Joppa.

Peter's Vision

9 Now on the next day, as those ***men*** were journeying and drawing near to the city, Peter went up on the housetop to pray, about ***the*** sixth hour. **10** And he became very hungry and was wanting to eat; but while they were preparing, a trance fell upon him, **11** and he sees heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending upon him like a great sheet, bound by four corners and being let down upon the earth, **12** in which were all the four-footed animals of the earth and the wild beasts and the creeping things and the birds of heaven.

9:33 Acts 3:2; Acts 4:22; Acts 14:8
9:34 Acts 3:6,12,16; Acts 4:10; Acts 16:18
9:35 1 Chr 5:16; Acts 11:21; Acts 9:42
9:36 2 Chr 2:16; Ezra 3:7; Jonah 1:3
9:37 1 Kgs 17:19; Isa 38:1; Acts 1:13
9:38 Acts 9:32,36; 2 Kgs 4:28-30
9:39 Prov 10:7; 1 Thess 4:13; Prov 31:30,31
9:40 2 Kgs 4:35; Acts 7:60; Matt 9:25
9:41 Acts 6:1; Acts 3:7; Mark 1:31
9:42 Acts 9:35; John 12:11,44; Acts 11:21
9:43 Josh 19:46; Acts 10:6,32
10:1 Acts 8:40; Acts 27:1,31,43; Acts 21:8
10:2 Acts 13:16,26; Acts 10:7,22; Acts 10:35
10:3 Acts 3:1; Acts 5:19; Job 4:15,16
10:4 Heb 6:10; Luke 1:12,29; Acts 9:5,6
10:5 Ezra 3:7; Acts 10:32; Acts 9:38
10:6 Acts 9:43; Acts 9:6; Acts 11:13,14
10:7 Gen 24:1-10,52; Judg 7:10; 1 Sam 14:6,7
10:8 Josh 19:46; Acts 10:33; Acts 26:19
10:9 Zeph 1:5; Ps 55:17; 1 Sam 9:25
10:10 Acts 22:17; Matt 4:2; Matt 12:1-3
10:11 John 1:51; Rom 16:25,26; Acts 7:56
10:12 Gen 7:8,9; Isa 11:6-9; Isa 65:25

9:34 *Aeneas, Jesus the Christ heals you* Lydda was about twenty-five miles northwest of Jerusalem toward the coast. Peter took no credit; he made clear who was doing the healing.
9:35 *who turned to the Lord* Sharon was the fertile coastal plain nearby. The miracle was not the goal. People turning to the Lord was the goal, and that is always the purpose of God's mighty works in Acts.
9:36 *Tabitha, which translated is called Dorcas* Joppa was a seaport on the Mediterranean (modern Jaffa, part of Tel Aviv). Both names mean gazelle. She was known for what she did for others. Lydda was only about ten to twelve miles away, and the believers had hope because of what God did there.
9:39 *showing tunics and garments, as many as Dorcas was making* What a picture of a life well spent. Her legacy was not money or fame. It was clothing that kept poor widows warm.
9:40 *having put them all outside and having bent the knees, prayed* Peter did what he had watched Jesus do with Jairus' daughter (Mark 5:40-41). And he prayed first. The power belonged to God, not to Peter.
9:43 *a certain Simon, a tanner* A detail easy to skip. A tanner worked with the skins of dead animals, and touching them made a person ceremonially unclean (Lev 11:39-40), so many Jews looked down on tanners. God was already loosening Peter's old ideas of clean and unclean. Chapter 10 takes that lesson much further.
10:1 *a centurion of the cohort called Italian* Caesarea, built by Herod the Great and named for Caesar Augustus, was the Roman capital of the province and full of soldiers. A centurion commanded about a hundred men; a cohort was a larger unit of several hundred.
10:2 *devout and fearing God with all his household* Men like Cornelius were often called God-fearers. They worshiped the God of Israel and followed much of His teaching but had not become full converts through circumcision. Cornelius was a sincere seeker, but he still needed to hear about Jesus to be saved (11:14).
10:3 *about the ninth hour of the day* About three in the afternoon, the regular hour of afternoon prayer at the temple (3:1).
10:4 *Your prayers and your charitable deeds went up as a memorial before God* In other words, God had noticed. He sees the seeking heart.
10:6 *He will tell you what you must do* The angel did not preach the Gospel to Cornelius. God gave that job to a man. Angels can point the way, but God has chosen to carry the message of salvation through believers like you and me.
10:8 *he sent them to Joppa* Cornelius did not wait. Joppa was about thirty miles south along the coast. When God speaks, the right response is to obey quickly.
10:9 *Peter went up on the housetop to pray, about the sixth hour* About noon. Flat roofs made a quiet place to rest and pray. While Cornelius' men were on the road, God was preparing Peter's heart. God often works on both sides of a meeting, as He did with Saul and Ananias.

13 And a voice came to him, "Having risen up, Peter, kill and
eat." **14** But Peter said, "By no means, Lord; for I have never
eaten anything common or unclean." **15** And a voice ***came***
again a second time to him, "What God has cleansed, you
must not call common." **16** And this happened three times;
and the vessel was taken up again into heaven. **17** Now while
Peter was perplexed in himself as to what the vision which
he had seen might be, then look, the men who had been sent
from Cornelius, having inquired for the house of Simon,
stood at the gateway. **18** And having called out, they were
asking whether Simon, who is called Peter, is lodging here.
19 And while Peter was pondering over the vision, the Spirit
said to him, "Look, three men are seeking you. **20** But having
risen up, go down and go with them, doubting nothing,
because I have sent them." **21** And Peter, having gone down
to the men who had been sent from Cornelius to him, said,
"Look, I am ***he*** whom you seek. What ***is*** the cause for which
you are here?" **22** And they said, "Cornelius, a centurion, a
righteous man and one fearing God, and well testified to by
the whole nation of the Jews, was divinely instructed by a
holy angel to summon you to his house and to hear declara-
tions from you."

Peter in Cornelius' House

23 So having invited them in, he lodged ***them***. And on the
next day Peter went out with them, and some of the brothers
from Joppa went with him. **24** And on the next day they
entered into Caesarea. And Cornelius was expecting them,
having called together his relatives and close friends. **25** And
as it came about ***that*** Peter entered, Cornelius, having met
him, fell at his feet and worshiped ***him***. **26** But Peter raised
him up, saying, "Rise up; I myself also am a man." **27** And
talking with him, he entered, and he finds many gathered
together. **28** And he said to them, "You yourselves know how
unlawful it is for a Jewish man to be joined to or to come
near to a foreigner; and to me God has shown to call no man
common or unclean. **29** Therefore also I came without objec-
tion, having been summoned. So I ask, for what reason did
you summon me?" **30** And Cornelius said, "Four days ago
until this hour I was fasting, and at the ninth hour praying in
my house; and look, a man stood before me in bright cloth-
ing, **31** and he says, 'Cornelius, your prayer was heard, and
your charitable deeds were remembered before God. **32** Send
therefore to Joppa and call for Simon, who is called Peter. He
is lodging in ***the*** house of Simon, a tanner, by ***the*** sea; who,
having come, will speak to you.' **33** So at once I sent to you,
and you did well, having come. Now therefore we are all
present before God to hear all the things commanded you by
God."

The Gospel to the Gentiles

34 And Peter, having opened his mouth, said, "In truth I
grasp that God is not one who shows partiality, **35** but in
every nation the one fearing Him and working righteousness
is acceptable to Him. **36** The word which He sent to the sons
of Israel, preaching peace ***as*** the gospel through Jesus
(Iesous) Christ (He is Lord of all), **37** you yourselves know:
the declaration which came throughout all Judea (Ioudaia),
having begun from Galilee (Galilaia) after the baptism which
John (Ioannes) proclaimed: **38** Jesus who ***was*** from Nazareth,

10:13 Acts 10:10; Jer 35:2-5; John 4:31-34
10:14 Ezek 4:14; Lev 20:25; Gen 19:18
10:15 Titus 1:15; Matt 15:11; 1 Cor 10:25
10:16 Gen 41:32; John 21:17; 2 Cor 13:1
10:17 Acts 2:12; Acts 5:24; Acts 25:20
10:18 Acts 10:5,6; Acts 11:11
10:19 Acts 8:29; Acts 11:12; Acts 13:2
10:20 Acts 15:7; Acts 8:26; Acts 9:15
10:21 John 1:38,39; John 18:4-8; Acts 10:29
10:22 Acts 11:14; Acts 24:15; Hos 14:9
10:23 Acts 10:45; Acts 11:12; Gen 19:2,3
10:24 Isa 2:3; Mic 4:2; Zech 3:10
10:25 Matt 8:2; Rev 19:10; Acts 14:11-13
10:26 Rev 19:10; Acts 14:14,15; Isa 42:8
10:27 Acts 10:24; 2 Cor 2:12; Acts 14:27
10:28 John 4:9,27; John 18:28; Acts 11:2,3
10:29 Acts 10:19,20; Ps 119:60; 1 Pet 3:15
10:30 Acts 10:3; Acts 1:10; Acts 10:7-9,23,24
10:31 Isa 38:5; Dan 10:12; 1 Kgs 9:3
10:32 2 Chr 2:16; Isa 65:24; Mic 4:2
10:33 Deut 5:25; Deut 5:26; Deut 5:27
10:34 Job 34:19; 2 Chr 19:7; Deut 10:17
10:35 Ps 85:9; Prov 14:2; Isa 56:6
10:36 Matt 28:18; Acts 2:36; Rev 17:14
10:37 Acts 2:22; Acts 26:26; Acts 28:22
10:38 Isa 61:1; Isa 11:2; Isa 42:1

10:13 *Having risen up, Peter, kill and eat* For a faithful Jew this was shocking. The Law divided animals into clean and unclean (Lev 11), and this sheet held both kinds mixed together. Peter later learned the vision was mainly about people (10:28), though it also fits the setting aside of the food laws for believers (Mark 7:19; Rom 14:14).
10:14 *By no means, Lord* The answer contradicts itself. You cannot really say "Lord" and "no" in the same breath. Yet how often do we do the same thing?
10:16 *this happened three times* Peter had denied the Lord three times, and three times the Lord asked, "Do you love Me?" (John 21:15-17). Now God repeats this lesson three times. God is patient with us when we are slow to understand.
10:20 *because I have sent them* The Holy Spirit speaks and directs as a Person. He is not just a force. He is God, and He was leading this whole event.
10:23 *having invited them in, he lodged them* A Jew giving a room to Gentiles was a big step. The lesson of the vision was already sinking in. Six brothers from Joppa went along (11:12) and would serve as witnesses to what God was about to do.
10:24 *having called together his relatives and close friends* Cornelius was so sure God would speak that he filled his house with people to hear it. When we know the Gospel is coming, we should bring others along.
10:26 *Rise up; I myself also am a man* Peter refused worship that belongs only to God. Even an angel refuses John's worship and tells him to worship God (Rev 19:10; 22:8-9). No servant of God, however great, should receive worship.
10:28 *how unlawful it is for a Jewish man to be joined to or to come near to a foreigner* The Law of Moses did not forbid a Jew to visit a Gentile. That rule came from Jewish tradition built up to keep people away from anything unclean. Peter now understood that the vision was not only about food. It was about people.
10:33 *we are all present before God to hear all the things commanded you by God* What a wonderful attitude. They were gathered before God, not just before Peter, and Cornelius wanted to hear everything, not just the parts he liked. Every time we open God's Word, that should be our posture too.
10:34 *God is not one who shows partiality* God does not favor one race or nation over another when it comes to salvation.
10:35 *in every nation the one fearing Him and working righteousness is acceptable to Him* This does not mean a person can be saved by being good enough apart from Jesus. If that were true, Cornelius would not have needed Peter. God gladly receives people from every nation who seek Him, and He makes sure they hear the truth about His Son.
10:36 *He is Lord of all* Not just Lord of the Jews. Lord of everyone, including the Romans in that room. These Gentiles had likely heard rumors about Jesus. Now they heard the truth from a man who walked with Him.
10:38 *God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power* Peter gives a short summary of Jesus' life: anointed by God, doing good, healing all oppressed by the devil, because God was with Him.

how God anointed Him with ***the*** Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all those being oppressed by the devil, because God was with Him. **39** And we are witnesses of all things which He did, both in the region of the Jews and in Jerusalem (Hierousalem); whom they killed, having hanged ***Him*** on a tree. **40** This ***One*** God raised up on the third day, and gave Him to become manifest, **41** not to all the people, but to witnesses chosen beforehand by God, to us, who ate and drank with Him after He rose out of ***the*** dead. **42** And He commanded us to proclaim to the people and to solemnly testify that He is the One appointed by God ***as*** judge of ***the*** living and ***the*** dead. **43** To Him all the prophets bear witness, that through His name everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins." **44** While Peter was still speaking these declarations, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those hearing the word. **45** And the believers of ***the*** circumcision, as many as had come with Peter, were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit has been poured out even upon the Gentiles. **46** For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and magnifying God. Then Peter answered, **47** "Can anyone hinder the water, so that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Spirit just as we also ***have***?" **48** And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to remain some days.

ACTS 11

Peter Explains to the Church

1 Now the apostles and the brothers who were throughout Judea (Ioudaia) heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God. **2** And when Peter (Petros) went up to Jerusalem (Hierosolyma), those of ***the*** circumcision were contending with him, **3** saying, "You went in to men having uncircumcision and ate with them!" **4** But Peter, having begun, was explaining ***it*** to them in order, saying, **5** "I was in ***the*** city of Joppa (Ioppe) praying, and in a trance I saw a vision: a certain vessel descending like a great sheet, being let down by four corners out of heaven; and it came as far as me. **6** Having looked intently into it, I was observing ***it***, and I saw the four-footed animals of the earth and the wild beasts and the creeping things and the birds of heaven. **7** And I heard a voice saying to me, 'Having risen up, Peter, kill and eat.' **8** But I said, 'By no means, Lord; for anything common or unclean has never entered into my mouth.' **9** But a voice answered me a second time out of heaven, 'What God has cleansed, you must not call common.' **10** And this happened three times, and all was drawn up again into heaven. **11** And look, immediately three men stood at the house in which I was, having been sent from Caesarea (Kaisareia) to me. **12** And the Spirit told me to go with them, doubting nothing. And these six brothers also went with me, and we entered into the house of the man. **13** And he related to us how he had seen the angel standing in his house and saying to him, 'Send men to Joppa and summon Simon, who is called Peter, **14** who will speak declarations to you by which you will be saved, you and all your household.' **15** And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, even as also upon us at

10:39 Luke 24:48; Acts 10:41; Acts 1:8,22
10:40 Acts 13:30,31; Acts 17:31; Matt 28:1,2
10:41 Acts 10:39; John 14:17,22; John 21:13
10:42 1 Pet 4:5; Acts 17:31; 2 Tim 4:1,8
10:43 Mal 4:2; Zech 6:13; Isa 53:11
10:44 Ezek 11:5; Joel 2:28; Acts 11:15
10:45 Isa 44:3; Joel 2:28; Zech 12:10
10:46 Acts 2:4,11; Acts 19:6; 1 Cor 14:20-25
10:47 Acts 8:12,36; Acts 11:15-17; Acts 15:8,9
10:48 Acts 2:38; Acts 8:16; 1 Cor 1:13-17
11:1 Acts 8:14,15; Gal 1:17-22; Acts 10:34-38
11:2 Acts 10:9,45; Acts 15:1,5; Acts 21:20-23
11:3 Luke 15:2; Acts 10:23,28,48; 1 Cor 5:11
11:4 Luke 1:3; Acts 14:27; Josh 22:21-31
11:5 Acts 10:9-18; Acts 22:17; 2 Cor 12:1-3
11:6 Acts 3:4; Luke 4:20
11:8 Rom 14:14; Mark 7:2; Lev 10:10
11:9 Acts 15:9; Heb 9:13,14; Acts 10:28,34,35
11:10 Num 24:10; John 13:38; John 21:17
11:11 Acts 9:10-12; Acts 10:17,18; Exod 4:14,27
11:12 Acts 8:29; Acts 10:23,45; Acts 16:6,7
11:13 Acts 10:3-6,22,30-32; Acts 12:11; Acts 9:43
11:14 Acts 16:15,31; Acts 16:31; Acts 10:6,22,32,33,43
11:15 Acts 10:34-44; Acts 19:6; Acts 2:2-12

10:39 *having hanged Him on a tree* The phrase connects to Deuteronomy 21:23 and Galatians 3:13. Jesus took the curse that belonged to us.
10:41 *who ate and drank with Him after He rose out of the dead* That detail matters. The risen Jesus was not a ghost or a vision. He had a real body that could eat a meal (Luke 24:39-43).
10:42 *the One appointed by God as judge of the living and the dead* Every person who has ever lived will stand before Him one day (John 5:22; Rev 20:11-12).
10:43 *everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins* The heart of the message. Not everyone who is Jewish, and not everyone who has done enough good works. Forgiveness comes through faith in Jesus. It is the same Gospel for Jew and Gentile, and the same Gospel for us today.
10:44 *the Holy Spirit fell upon all those hearing the word* Peter never got to the end of his sermon. Peter later calls this "the same gift" the apostles received at Pentecost (11:17).
10:46 *they were hearing them speaking in tongues and magnifying God* As God gave the Spirit with a visible sign to the Jews in chapter 2, and it seems to the Samaritans in chapter 8, He now does the same for the Gentiles. I believe God did this so no one could argue that Gentile believers were second-class members of the church. He confirmed it before six Jewish witnesses. Believers differ on whether tongues continue today.
10:47 *Can anyone hinder the water* If God had already accepted them, who could keep them out? They believed and received the Spirit, and baptism came afterward. They were saved by faith, and baptism followed as their act of obedience.
10:48 *Then they asked him to remain some days* Peter, who once would not eat with Gentiles, now stayed in a Gentile home. The wall between Jew and Gentile was coming down (Eph 2:14).
11:2 *those of the circumcision were contending with him* You would think this news would bring celebration. These were Jewish believers who felt the Law of Moses, including circumcision, still had to be kept. We will meet this group again in chapter 15.
11:3 *You went in to men having uncircumcision and ate with them* What bothered them was not so much that Peter preached to Gentiles as that he ate with them. Sharing a meal was a sign of fellowship and acceptance. Sometimes religious people are more upset about who sits at the table than about whether people are being saved.
11:4 *was explaining it to them in order* Peter did not get defensive, and he did not pull rank as the leading apostle. He answered to the church and simply told what God had done. When other believers question us, we do not need to argue or attack. Luke tells this story twice because it is so important.
11:12 *these six brothers also went with me* Peter had brought witnesses, and they were standing with him in Jerusalem.
11:14 *who will speak declarations to you by which you will be saved* Cornelius was a good, devout, generous man who prayed to God. But he still needed to hear about Jesus to be saved. Being religious is not the same as being saved. Salvation comes through hearing and believing the Gospel (Rom 10:14-17).
11:15 *even as also upon us at the beginning* At the beginning means Pentecost. The word of the Lord Peter remembered is recorded in 1:5.

the beginning. **16** And I remembered the declaration of ***the*** Lord, how He was saying, 'John (Ioannes) indeed baptized with water, but you will be baptized with ***the*** Holy Spirit.' **17** If then God gave them the same gift as also to us, having believed on the Lord Jesus (Iesous) Christ, who was I ***to be*** able to hinder God?" **18** And having heard these things, they became silent, and they were glorifying God, saying, "Then God has given to the Gentiles also the repentance to life."

The Church at Antioch

19 So then those who had been scattered from the tribulation that came about over Stephen (Stephanos) passed through as far as Phoenicia (Phoinike) and Cyprus (Kypros) and Antioch (Antiocheia), speaking the word to no one except to Jews only. **20** But ***there*** were some of them, men, Cypriots and Cyrenians, who, having entered into Antioch, were speaking to the Hellenists, preaching the Lord Jesus ***as*** the gospel. **21** And ***the*** hand of ***the*** Lord was with them, and a great number, having believed, turned to the Lord. **22** And the word concerning them was heard in the ears of the church which ***was*** in Jerusalem, and they sent out Barnabas to go through as far as Antioch; **23** who, having come and having seen the grace of God, rejoiced, and was exhorting all with purpose of heart to remain with the Lord. **24** For he was a good man, and full of ***the*** Holy Spirit and of faith. And a large crowd was added to the Lord. **25** And Barnabas went out to Tarsus (Tarsos) to seek Saul (Saulos); **26** and having found him, he brought him to Antioch. And it came about ***that*** for a whole year they were gathered together in the church and taught a large crowd; and the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch. **27** Now in these days prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. **28** And one of them named Agabus (Agabos), having risen up, signified through the Spirit that a great famine was going to be over all the inhabited earth; which also came about under Claudius (Klaudios) Caesar. **29** And the disciples, according as anyone was prospering, each of them determined to send for ministry to the brothers dwelling in Judea; **30** which they also did, having sent ***it*** to the elders by ***the*** hand of Barnabas and Saul.

ACTS 12

James Killed and Peter Imprisoned

1 Now about that time Herod (Herodes) the king put forth his hands to mistreat some of those from the church. **2** And he killed James (Iakobos) the brother of John (Ioannes) with a sword. **3** And having seen that it is pleasing to the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter (Petros) also. (Now ***those*** were the

11:16 Acts 1:5; Mark 1:8; John 14:26
11:17 Acts 10:47; Matt 20:14,15; Acts 11:15
11:18 2 Cor 7:10; Rom 10:12,13; Acts 5:31
11:19 Acts 15:3; Acts 21:2; Acts 4:36
11:20 Acts 13:1; Matt 27:32; Acts 2:10
11:21 Isa 59:1; 2 Kgs 3:15; Luke 1:66
11:22 Acts 11:1; Acts 8:14; Acts 15:2
11:23 Acts 13:43; Col 1:6; Acts 14:22
11:24 2 Sam 18:27; Acts 5:14; Acts 11:21
11:25 Acts 9:11,27,30; Acts 21:39
11:26 Acts 26:28; Acts 13:1,2; Acts 14:23,27
11:27 Acts 13:1; 1 Cor 12:28; Acts 2:17
11:28 Gen 41:30; 2 Kgs 8:1; Gen 41:45
11:29 Neh 5:8; Deut 15:11; Ezra 2:69
11:30 Exod 3:16; Acts 14:23; Acts 12:25
12:1 Matt 24:9; Luke 22:53; Matt 10:17,18
12:2 Matt 20:23; Heb 11:37; Matt 4:21,22
12:3 Acts 24:27; Exod 23:15; Acts 25:9

11:17 *who was I to be able to hinder God* If God accepted them, Peter had no right to reject them. The gift came to those who believed. Faith is the key that opens the door, for Jew and Gentile alike.
11:18 *Then God has given to the Gentiles also the repentance to life* The leaders of the Jerusalem church agreed that Gentiles could be saved without first becoming Jews. Repentance is something we do, turning from sin to God, yet here it is also a gift from God. Both are true. God opens the door and draws us, and we must walk through it.
11:19 *as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch* Luke takes us back to the persecution after Stephen's death (8:1-4). Phoenicia was the coast north of Israel, in modern Lebanon; Cyprus is an island in the Mediterranean.
11:20 *Cypriots and Cyrenians* Cyrene was in North Africa, in modern Libya. These men were not apostles; their names are not even recorded. The SLB reads "Hellenists," which can mean Greek-speaking Jews, while many manuscripts read "Greeks." The contrast with "Jews only" in verse 19 shows that Gentiles were now hearing the Gospel.
11:21 *a great number, having believed, turned to the Lord* Faith and repentance go together. What Satan meant for harm, God used for good, as Joseph told his brothers (Gen 50:20). Antioch was one of the largest cities in the empire, a trading center known for loose morals and pagan temples. If the Gospel could take root there, it could take root anywhere, and Antioch became the church that sent Paul out on all three journeys.
11:22 *they sent out Barnabas* A wise choice. Barnabas was from Cyprus (4:36), so he understood people who had grown up among Gentiles.
11:23 *having seen the grace of God, rejoiced* Barnabas did not look for problems. He looked for God at work, and he found it.
11:24 *he was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith* That is about the best thing anyone could say about a believer.
11:25 *Barnabas went out to Tarsus to seek Saul* Some years had passed since Saul was sent home (9:30). Barnabas could have kept the leadership in Antioch for himself. Instead he went and found the man God had called to the Gentiles.
11:26 *the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch* The word means those who belong to Christ. It may have started as a nickname from outsiders, but it stuck. It is used only three times in the New Testament (11:26; 26:28; 1 Pet 4:16). When people saw these believers, they thought of Christ. Can people tell by how you live whose you are?
11:28 *a great famine was going to be over all the inhabited earth* Claudius was emperor from A.D. 41 to 54. Early church prophets gave messages from the Spirit, sometimes about the future and often for strengthening (1 Cor 14:3), always to be tested (1 Thess 5:20-21). This prophecy was specific and came true, the test of a true prophet (Deut 18:22). Josephus describes a severe famine in Judea in the mid to late A.D. 40s.
11:29 *according as anyone was prospering* The disciples did not just hear the prophecy and worry. They acted. They gave according to what they had. Nobody was forced, and nobody was left out.
11:30 *having sent it to the elders* The first mention of elders in the church in Acts, the spiritual leaders who cared for and oversaw a local church. A mostly Gentile church sends help to a Jewish church that shortly before questioned whether Gentiles could be saved. Love crosses the lines people draw.
12:1 *Herod the king put forth his hands to mistreat some of those from the church* This is Herod Agrippa I, grandson of Herod the Great (Matt 2). Rome gave him rule over Judea from about A.D. 41 until his death in A.D. 44, and he worked hard to keep the Jewish leaders happy. "About that time" ties these events loosely to the famine relief of 11:27-30.
12:2 *he killed James the brother of John with a sword* James was one of the three closest to Jesus and the first apostle to die for his faith. Jesus had told James and John they would drink His cup (Mark 10:38-39). It can feel strange that God rescued Peter but let James die, and Scripture does not tell us why. Whether God delivers us from death or through death, He is still good and still in control.
12:3 *having seen that it is pleasing to the Jews* Herod was a politician. He did what made him popular. The days of Unleavened Bread were the week-long feast after the Passover, when Jerusalem was full of pilgrims.

days of Unleavened ***Bread***.) **4** Whom also, having seized ***him***, he put in prison, having delivered ***him*** to four squads of four soldiers to guard him, intending after the Passover to bring him out to the people. **5** So Peter was being kept in the prison; but fervent prayer was being made by the church to God for him.

Peter Set Free

6 And when Herod was about to bring him out, on that night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains; and guards before the door were keeping the prison. **7** And look, an angel of ***the*** Lord stood by, and a light shone in the cell; and having struck the side of Peter, he raised him up, saying, "Rise up quickly." And his chains fell off from his hands. **8** And the angel said to him, "Gird yourself and put on your sandals." And he did so. And he says to him, "Put your cloak around yourself and follow me." **9** And having gone out, he was following him; and he did not know that what was happening through the angel is true, but he was thinking he was seeing a vision. **10** And having passed through a first guard and a second, they came to the iron gate that leads into the city, which was opened to them by itself; and having gone out, they went on through one street, and immediately the angel departed from him. **11** And Peter, having come to himself, said, "Now I know truly that ***the*** Lord has sent out His angel and delivered me out of ***the*** hand of Herod and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews." **12** And having realized ***this***, he came to the house of Mary (Maria), the mother of John who is called Mark (Markos), where many were gathered together and praying. **13** And when Peter knocked at the door of the gateway, a servant girl named Rhoda (Hrode) came to answer. **14** And having recognized the voice of Peter, from joy she did not open the gateway, but having run in, she reported that Peter was standing before the gateway. **15** And they said to her, "You are raving." But she was insisting that it was so. And they were saying, "It is his angel." **16** But Peter was continuing to knock; and having opened ***it***, they saw him and were amazed. **17** And having motioned to them with his hand to be silent, he related to them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, "Report these things to James and to the brothers." And having gone out, he went to another place. **18** Now when day came, ***there*** was no small disturbance among the soldiers ***over*** what then had become ***of*** Peter. **19** And Herod, having searched for him and not having found ***him***, having examined the guards, commanded ***them*** to be led away. And having gone down from Judea (Ioudaia) to Caesarea (Kaisareia), he was staying ***there***.

The Death of Herod

20 Now Herod was furiously angry with ***the*** Tyrians and Sidonians; and with one accord they came to him, and having persuaded Blastus (Blastos), who ***was*** over the bedchamber of the king, they were asking for peace, because their region was nourished from the royal ***land***. **21** And on an appointed day Herod, having put on royal apparel and having sat on the judgment seat, was delivering a public address to them. **22** And the populace was crying out, "***The*** voice of a god and

12:4 Num 28:16; Luke 21:12; Prov 19:21
12:5 Matt 18:19; 2 Cor 1:11; Acts 12:12
12:6 Acts 21:33; Matt 28:4; Gen 22:14
12:7 1 Kgs 19:7; Ps 34:7; 2 Kgs 1:3
12:8 2 Kgs 1:3; Ps 76:10
12:9 Gen 45:26; Exod 34:29; 2 Kgs 1:3
12:10 Isa 45:1; 2 Kgs 1:3; Ps 68:6
12:11 Dan 3:28; Dan 6:22; Gen 15:13
12:12 Acts 12:5; Acts 12:25; Col 4:10
12:13 Acts 12:16; Luke 13:25
12:14 Luke 24:41; Matt 28:8
12:15 Matt 18:10; Job 9:16; Mark 16:11,14
12:17 Acts 21:40; Acts 13:16; Acts 19:33
12:18 Acts 5:22-25; Acts 16:27; Acts 19:23
12:19 1 Sam 23:14; Ps 37:32,33; Jer 36:26
12:20 Ezra 3:7; 1 Kgs 5:11; Ezek 27:17
12:22 Acts 14:10-13; Ps 12:2; Dan 6:7

12:4 *four squads of four soldiers* Sixteen men took turns watching one fisherman. Herod may have heard that Peter had escaped from prison before (5:19), and he was not taking chances.
12:5 *but fervent prayer was being made by the church to God for him* Look at the word "but." On one side were a king, a prison, and sixteen soldiers. On the other was a church on its knees. They had already lost James, and they prayed in earnest. When we face something too big for us, prayer is not the last resort. It is the first and best thing we can do.
12:6 *Peter was sleeping between two soldiers* Peter likely faced execution the next morning, and he was sound asleep. That is the peace of God that goes beyond understanding (Phil 4:7). Peter may also have remembered that Jesus told him he would one day be old (John 21:18).
12:8 *Gird yourself and put on your sandals* God did the impossible part and removed the chains. He left the possible part to Peter, who still had to get dressed and walk.
12:9 *he was thinking he was seeing a vision* Peter had seen a vision on a rooftop in Joppa not long before, so it is easy to see why he thought this was another one.
12:11 *Now I know truly that the Lord has sent out His angel* This was not luck or a careless guard. It was the Lord. When God delivers us, we should be quick to give Him the credit.
12:12 *the house of Mary, the mother of John who is called Mark* It was the middle of the night, and they were still praying. John Mark would later travel with Barnabas and Saul, and he was Barnabas' cousin (Col 4:10).
12:14 *from joy she did not open the gateway* A small, human moment. Peter had just walked through an iron gate that opened by itself, and now he was stuck outside a gate a joyful servant girl forgot to open.
12:15 *It is his angel* Some Jews of the time believed each person had a guardian angel who might appear in his likeness. Jesus spoke of little ones whose angels see the Father's face (Matt 18:10). Scripture does not tell us much more, and we should not build too much on it.
12:16 *they saw him and were amazed* They prayed for Peter's release, and when God answered, they could not believe it. How often do we pray without really expecting God to answer? Yet God answered them anyway. He is faithful even when our faith is weak.
12:17 *Report these things to James and to the brothers* Not the apostle James who had just been killed, but James the brother of Jesus (Gal 1:19). He did not believe during Jesus' ministry (John 7:5), but the risen Lord appeared to him (1 Cor 15:7). He became a leader of the Jerusalem church (15:13; 21:18) and wrote the letter of James. Luke does not say where Peter went, and after chapter 15 Peter drops out of Acts.
12:19 *commanded them to be led away* Under Roman practice, a guard who lost a prisoner could face the prisoner's punishment. Herod took innocent lives to cover his embarrassment. His kingdom ran on fear and blame. God's kingdom runs on grace, where the only innocent Man who ever lived paid the price for us.
12:20 *their region was nourished from the royal land* Tyre and Sidon were Phoenician ports north of Israel. Blastus was the trusted official over the king's private rooms. These cities had depended on Israel for food since Solomon sent wheat and oil to Hiram (1 Kgs 5:11).
12:22 *The voice of a god and not of a man* Herod accepted their praise and did not correct them. Compare Peter, who said, "I myself also am a man" (10:26), and Paul and Barnabas, who tore their robes when people tried to worship them (14:14-15).

not of a man!" **23** And immediately an angel of ***the*** Lord struck him, because he did not give the glory to God; and having become eaten by worms, he breathed his last. **24** But the word of God was growing and being multiplied. **25** And Barnabas and Saul (Saulos) returned from Jerusalem (Hierousalem), having fulfilled the ministry, having taken along with ***them*** also John, who was called Mark.

ACTS 13

Barnabas and Saul Sent Out

1 Now ***there*** were in Antioch (Antiocheia), in the church that was ***there***, some prophets and teachers: both Barnabas and Simeon (Symeon) who was called Niger, and Lucius (Loukios) the Cyrenian, and Manaen, foster brother of Herod (Herodes) the tetrarch, and Saul (Saulos). **2** And as they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart now for Me both Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." **3** Then, having fasted and having prayed and having laid their hands on them, they sent ***them*** away.

On Cyprus

4 So these, having been sent out by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia (Seleukeia), and from there they sailed to Cyprus (Kypros). **5** And having arrived in Salamis, they were proclaiming the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews; and they also had John (Ioannes) ***as*** an assistant. **6** And having passed through the island as far as Paphos, they found a certain magician, a Jewish false prophet, whose name ***was*** Bar-Jesus (Bariesous), **7** who was with the proconsul Sergius (Sergios) Paulus (Paulos), an intelligent man. This ***man***, having called for Barnabas and Saul, sought to hear the word of God. **8** But Elymas the magician (for so his name is translated) was opposing them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith. **9** But Saul, who ***is*** also Paul (Paulos), having been filled with ***the*** Holy Spirit, and having looked intently at him, **10** said, "O full of all deceit and all villainy, son of ***the*** devil, enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease perverting the straight ways of ***the*** Lord? **11** And now look, ***the*** hand of the Lord ***is*** upon you, and you will be blind, not seeing the sun for a season." And immediately a mist and darkness fell upon him, and going about, he was seeking ***people*** to lead ***him*** by the hand. **12** Then the proconsul, having seen what had happened, believed, being astonished at the teaching of the Lord.

Paul's Sermon at Pisidian Antioch

13 And having set sail from Paphos, those around Paul came to Perga (Perge) of Pamphylia; but John, having departed from them, returned to Jerusalem (Hierosolyma). **14** And they, having passed through from Perga, came to Antioch of Pisidia; and having gone into the synagogue on the Sabbath

12:23 2 Sam 24:16; 2 Kgs 19:35; 2 Chr 21:18
12:24 Acts 6:7; Acts 19:20; Acts 5:39
12:25 Acts 12:12; Acts 11:29,30; Acts 15:37
13:1 Acts 11:22-24; Acts 4:36; Rom 12:6,7
13:2 Deut 10:8; 1 Chr 16:4; Dan 9:3
13:3 Num 27:23; Num 8:10; Acts 6:6
13:4 Acts 4:36; Acts 20:23; Acts 11:19
13:5 Acts 13:14,46; Acts 14:1; Acts 18:4
13:6 Acts 8:9-11; Acts 19:18,19; Exod 22:18
13:7 Acts 13:12; Acts 19:38; Acts 18:12
13:8 Acts 13:6; 2 Tim 3:8; Acts 9:36
13:9 Acts 4:8,31; Acts 2:4; Acts 7:55
13:10 Hos 14:9; 2 Chr 17:6; Matt 13:38
13:11 Exod 9:3; 1 Sam 5:6; 1 Sam 5:9
13:12 Acts 13:7; Acts 28:7; Acts 19:7
13:13 Acts 2:10; Acts 14:24,25; Acts 27:5
13:14 Acts 16:13; Acts 13:5; Acts 17:2

12:23 *because he did not give the glory to God* God will not share His glory with anyone (Isa 42:8). An angel set Peter free; now an angel strikes the king who persecuted him. Josephus also records Herod Agrippa's sudden death at Caesarea during a festival after the crowd hailed him as a god. Palace, robes, and crowd could not keep him alive one more day. Real security is found only in belonging to the Lord.
12:24 *the word of God was growing and being multiplied* At the start of the chapter Herod was killing apostles. At the end Herod is dead and God's word is still spreading. Every ruler who has tried to stop God's word has failed.
12:25 *Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, having fulfilled the ministry* The ministry was the famine relief of 11:30. This sets the stage for chapter 13, when the church in Antioch sends Barnabas and Saul out on the first missionary journey.
13:1 *some prophets and teachers* Antioch in Syria had become the second home base of the Gospel (11:19-26). The list tells a story. Barnabas was a Levite from Cyprus. Niger is Latin for black, which may mean Simeon came from Africa. Lucius was from Cyrene in North Africa. Manaen was raised with Herod Antipas, who beheaded John the Baptist. Saul was a former Pharisee. God built this leadership from very different men, and the Gospel held them together.
13:2 *as they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said* They were not planning a mission strategy; they were worshiping. God often gives direction to people already busy seeking Him. "Set apart now for Me" shows the Spirit speaking as a Person. He may have spoken through one of the prophets. Saul had been told years earlier he would go to the Gentiles (9:15).
13:3 *having laid their hands on them, they sent them away* This did not give them a new gift or make them apostles. It showed that the whole church stood behind them and sent them in God's name. Missionaries are not lone rangers. They are sent by a praying church that keeps praying after they leave.
13:4 *having been sent out by the Holy Spirit* The church sent them, and the Spirit sent them; both are true. Seleucia was Antioch's port, and Cyprus was Barnabas' home island.
13:5 *they were proclaiming the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews* Salamis lay on Cyprus' east coast. Preaching first in the synagogues became Paul's usual pattern (17:2), to the Jew first and also to the Greek (Rom 1:16). John was John Mark, Barnabas' cousin (Col 4:10).
13:6 *a certain magician, a Jewish false prophet, whose name was Bar-Jesus* Paphos was the seat of Roman government on Cyprus. Bar-Jesus means son of Joshua. Satan does not sit still when someone with influence is about to hear the Gospel.
13:7 *the proconsul Sergius Paulus, an intelligent man* A proconsul was the Roman governor of a province, and this one wanted to hear the word of God.
13:9 *Saul, who is also Paul* The first time Luke calls him Paul. Saul was his Hebrew name, after Israel's first king; Paul was his Roman name. From now on, as he moves into the Gentile world, Luke uses Paul.
13:11 *you will be blind, not seeing the sun for a season* Strong words, but Elymas was deliberately twisting "the straight ways of the Lord" (13:10). The blindness was for a season. It was judgment with mercy in it. Paul himself had been struck blind, and that blindness led to his salvation.
13:12 *being astonished at the teaching of the Lord* The sign got his attention, but the message won him. God may use many things to open a door, but people are saved by hearing and believing the Gospel. At the start of the journey a high Roman official comes to faith. The Gospel was for governors too.
13:13 *John, having departed from them, returned to Jerusalem* Now it is "those around Paul"; Paul has taken the lead. Scripture does not say why Mark left. Paul saw it as desertion (15:38). Yet years later he called Mark "useful to me for ministry" (2 Tim 4:11). Failure does not have to be final.
13:14 *Antioch of Pisidia* A different Antioch, north of Perga up in the mountains of Asia Minor.

day, they sat down. **15** And after the reading of the law and of the prophets, the synagogue rulers sent to them, saying, "Men, brothers, if ***there*** is among you a word of exhortation for the people, speak." **16** And Paul, having risen up and having motioned with his hand, said, "Men, Israelites, and you who fear God, listen. **17** The God of this people Israel chose our fathers and exalted the people during the sojourn in ***the*** land of Egypt (Aigyptos), and with an uplifted arm He brought them out of it. **18** And for a time of about forty years He put up with their ways in the wilderness. **19** And having destroyed seven nations in ***the*** land of Canaan (Chanaan), He divided their land to them by lot. **20** And after these things, for about four hundred and fifty years, He gave ***them*** judges until Samuel (Samouel) the prophet. **21** And afterward they asked for a king, and God gave them Saul (Saoul) son of Kish (Kis), a man of ***the*** tribe of Benjamin (Beniamin), for forty years. **22** And having removed him, He raised up David (Dabid) for them as king, to whom also He said, having testified, 'I have found David the ***son*** of Jesse (Iessai), a man according to My heart, who will do all My wishes.' **23** From the seed of this ***man***, according to promise, God raised up for Israel a Savior, Jesus (Iesous), **24** John having first proclaimed, before ***the*** face of His coming, a baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. **25** And as John was fulfilling his course, he was saying, 'Whom do you suppose me to be? I am not ***He***. But look, He is coming after me, the sandal of whose feet I am not worthy to untie.' **26** Men, brothers, sons of ***the*** family of Abraham (Abraam), and those among you who fear God, to you the word of this salvation was sent. **27** For those dwelling in Jerusalem (Hierousalem) and their rulers, not having known this ***One*** and the voices of the prophets which are read every Sabbath, having judged ***Him***, fulfilled ***them***. **28** And having found no cause of death, they asked Pilate (Pilatos) that He be killed. **29** And when they had finished all the things written about Him, having taken ***Him*** down from the tree, they laid ***Him*** in a tomb. **30** But God raised Him out of ***the*** dead, **31** who appeared for many days to those who came up with Him from Galilee (Galilaia) to Jerusalem, who are His witnesses to the people. **32** And we preach to you the promise made to the fathers ***as*** the gospel, **33** that God has fulfilled this to us their children, having raised up Jesus, as it has also been written in the second psalm, 'You are My Son; today I have begotten You.' **34** And that He raised Him up out of ***the*** dead, no longer about to return to corruption, He has spoken thus: 'I will give you the holy ***things*** of David, the sure ***things***.' **35** Therefore He also says in another ***psalm***, 'You will not give Your Holy One to see corruption.' **36** For David, having served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep and was added to his fathers and saw corruption; **37** but He whom God raised up did not see corruption. **38** Therefore let it be known to you, men, brothers, that through this ***One*** forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you; **39** and from all things from which you were not able to be justified by the law of Moses, by this ***One*** everyone who believes is justified. **40** Beware therefore, lest what has been spoken in the prophets come upon you:

13:15 Exod 24:7; Deut 31:11; 2 Chr 17:9
13:16 Ps 135:20; Acts 12:17; Acts 13:26
13:17 Ps 105:23; Deut 4:37; Gen 12:1
13:18 Deut 9:7; Deut 1:31; Exod 16:2
13:19 Deut 7:1; Josh 14:1; Gen 12:5
13:20 Judg 2:16; 1 Sam 3:20; Judg 3:10
13:21 1 Sam 10:1; 1 Sam 11:15; 1 Sam 12:12
13:22 1 Sam 13:14; Ps 89:20; 1 Sam 16:1
13:23 2 Sam 7:12; Isa 43:11; Isa 45:21
13:24 Acts 1:22; Acts 10:37; Acts 19:3,4
13:25 Mal 3:1; Matt 3:11; Acts 20:24
13:26 2 Chr 20:7; Ps 105:6; Isa 41:8
13:27 Neh 8:3; Dan 9:6; Acts 3:17
13:28 Acts 3:13,14; Matt 27:19,22-25; Mark 15:13-15
13:29 Luke 23:53; Luke 24:44; Matt 27:57-60
13:30 Acts 2:24,32; Matt 28:6; Acts 3:13,15,26
13:31 Luke 24:48; Acts 1:3,11; Matt 28:16
13:32 Acts 26:6; Rom 4:13; Jer 23:5
13:33 Ps 2:7; Heb 5:5; Heb 1:5,6
13:34 Isa 55:3; Ps 89:19; Jer 33:15
13:35 Ps 16:10; Acts 2:27-31; Ps 49:9
13:36 1 Kgs 2:10; 1 Chr 13:2; 1 Chr 15:12
13:37 Acts 13:30; Acts 2:24
13:38 Ezek 36:32; Dan 3:18; Lev 25:9
13:39 Isa 53:11; Gal 2:16; Rom 8:3
13:40 Hab 1:5; Mal 3:2; Mal 4:1

13:15 *after the reading of the law and of the prophets* A synagogue service included readings from the Law and the Prophets. Afterward the synagogue rulers could invite a visiting teacher to speak. God opened a door, and Paul walked through it.

13:16 *Men, Israelites, and you who fear God, listen* Paul speaks to Jews and to God-fearers, Gentiles who worshiped Israel's God without fully converting. He starts with their own history, and his point is simple: from the beginning it was God who acted. Israel's history is the story of His grace.

13:20 *for about four hundred and fifty years, He gave them judges until Samuel the prophet* The SLB, like the King James Version, ties the number to the period of the judges. Other translations place the 450 years before the judges, covering the time from Egypt to the conquest. Paul says "about," and his point is God's faithfulness through every age.

13:22 *a man according to My heart, who will do all My wishes* Paul, whose Hebrew name was Saul and who was also from Benjamin (Phil 3:5), mentions King Saul before David. The words recall 1 Samuel 13:14.

13:23 *From the seed of this man, according to promise, God raised up for Israel a Savior, Jesus* Paul's main point. Everything in Israel's history was leading to the Savior from David's line.

13:25 *the sandal of whose feet I am not worthy to untie* John's followers had spread beyond Judea (19:1-7), so some may have heard of him. The greatest prophet of that generation pointed away from himself to Jesus. That is the job of every believer.

13:27 *not having known this One and the voices of the prophets which are read every Sabbath* The irony: the rulers did not understand the prophets they heard every week, and in condemning Jesus they fulfilled those very prophecies. "The tree" in verse 29 recalls Deuteronomy 21:23.

13:30 *But God raised Him out of the dead* Those few words change everything. Men did their worst, and God overturned it.

13:31 *who appeared for many days* The resurrection was not a private vision. It was seen by many people over many days (1 Cor 15:3-8). Our faith rests on something that happened in history.

13:33 *You are My Son; today I have begotten You* Paul applies Psalm 2:7 to the resurrection. Jesus did not become God's Son then; He has always been the Son. The resurrection publicly declared who He was (Rom 1:4).

13:34 *no longer about to return to corruption* Lazarus was raised, but he died again. Jesus rose never to die again. The quotations come from Isaiah 55:3 and Psalm 16:10, the psalm Peter used at Pentecost (2:25-31). The blessings promised to David are sure because David's greater Son lives forever.

13:36 *having served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep* David's body decayed, so Psalm 16 could not have been about David himself. And a lesson: we cannot serve every generation, but we can serve ours. God has placed each of us in this time on purpose.

13:39 *by this One everyone who believes is justified* The heart of the sermon. Justified means declared right with God. The Law could show sin but never remove it. Faith in Jesus does what the Law never could, the truth Paul later spells out in Romans and Galatians. Salvation is by grace, through faith, in Christ alone.

41 'See, you scoffers, and marvel, and perish; for I am working a work in your days, a work in which you will by no means believe, even if anyone declares ***it*** to you.'"

Turning to the Gentiles

42 And as ***they*** were going out from the synagogue of the Jews, the Gentiles were begging that these declarations be spoken to them on the next Sabbath. **43** And when the synagogue had been dismissed, many of the Jews and of the worshiping proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas, who, speaking to them, were persuading them to continue in the grace of God. **44** And on the coming Sabbath almost the whole city was gathered together to hear the word of God. **45** But the Jews, having seen the crowds, were filled with jealousy, and were contradicting the things spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. **46** And Paul and Barnabas, having spoken boldly, said, "It was necessary for the word of God to be spoken to you first; but since you thrust it away and judge yourselves not worthy of eternal life, look, we are turning to the Gentiles. **47** For thus the Lord has commanded us: 'I have set you for a light of ***the*** Gentiles, that you should be for salvation to ***the*** uttermost part of the earth.'" **48** And the Gentiles, hearing ***this***, were rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord; and as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed. **49** And the word of the Lord was being carried through all the region. **50** But the Jews incited the worshiping and prominent women and the leading ***men*** of the city, and stirred up a persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them from their district. **51** But they, having shaken off the dust of their feet against them, went to Iconium (Ikonion). **52** And the disciples were being filled with joy and ***the*** Holy Spirit.

ACTS 14

Iconium

1 Now it came about in Iconium (Ikonion) ***that*** they entered together into the synagogue of the Jews and spoke in this way, so that a great multitude both of Jews and of Greeks believed. **2** But the unbelieving Jews stirred up and made the souls of the Gentiles evil against the brothers. **3** So then they stayed a long time, speaking boldly in the Lord, who was bearing witness to the word of His grace, and granting signs and wonders to be done through their hands. **4** But the multitude of the city was divided; and some were with the Jews, and some with the apostles. **5** And when ***there*** came about a rush both of the Gentiles and of Jews with their rulers to mistreat and to stone them, **6** having become aware ***of it***, they fled to the cities of Lycaonia (Lykaonia), Lystra and Derbe, and the surrounding region; **7** and there they were preaching the gospel.

Lystra and Derbe

8 And a certain man in Lystra, powerless in the feet, was sit-

13:41 Hab 1:5; Num 11:20; Jer 4:9
13:42 Acts 10:33; Acts 28:28; Ezek 3:6
13:43 Acts 11:23; Acts 6:5; Acts 14:22
13:44 Isa 60:4; Gen 49:10; Ps 110:3
13:45 Acts 18:6; Jude 1:10; Acts 5:17
13:46 Exod 32:9; Isa 2:3; Ezek 18:31
13:47 Isa 49:6; Isa 42:6; Isa 45:22
13:48 Isa 2:3; Rom 15:9-12; John 10:16,26,27
13:49 Acts 6:7; Acts 9:42; Acts 12:24
13:50 Acts 14:2,19; Acts 13:45; Acts 17:13
13:51 Matt 10:14; Acts 18:6; Mark 6:11
13:52 Acts 2:4; Matt 5:12; 1 Thess 1:6
14:1 Acts 18:4; Acts 13:51; Acts 13:46
14:2 Acts 14:19; Acts 13:45,50; 1 Thess 2:15,16
14:3 Heb 2:4; Acts 4:29,30; Eph 6:18-20
14:4 Acts 28:24; Acts 14:14; Mic 7:6
14:5 Acts 4:25-29; Acts 17:5; Ps 2:1-3
14:6 Matt 10:23; 2 Tim 3:11; Acts 14:20,21
14:7 Acts 14:21; Acts 8:4; Acts 11:19
14:8 Acts 3:2; Acts 4:9; John 5:3,7

13:41 *See, you scoffers, and marvel, and perish* From Habakkuk 1:5, where God warned of judgment by the Babylonians that His people would not believe. A sermon full of good news still ends with a call to respond. The message that saves those who believe stands as a warning to those who refuse it.
13:43 *persuading them to continue in the grace of God* Proselytes were Gentiles fully converted to Judaism. Paul and Barnabas did not tell them to try harder at the Law. They told them to keep resting in what God had freely given.
13:45 *the Jews, having seen the crowds, were filled with jealousy* Sometimes religious people are the first to oppose the Gospel, especially when it reaches people they consider outsiders. Jealousy blinds us. We should be glad whenever anyone comes to hear about Jesus.
13:46 *you thrust it away and judge yourselves not worthy of eternal life* The word went to the Jews first because of God's plan and His faithfulness to His promises. The hearers judged themselves; God did not shut them out. The turning was local. In the very next city Paul goes straight back to the synagogue (14:1).
13:47 *I have set you for a light of the Gentiles* In Isaiah 49:6 God speaks to His Servant, the Messiah. Paul applies it to himself and Barnabas because they carry the Messiah's light. Reaching the Gentiles was God's plan all along, written in Israel's own Scriptures (1:8).
13:48 *as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed* God appointed people to eternal life, and they believed. Two verses earlier, those who refused judged themselves unworthy. Scripture holds both truths side by side: God is sovereign in salvation, and people are responsible for their response. I do not believe we have to choose one and throw out the other.
13:50 *the worshiping and prominent women* Likely Gentile women who worshiped at the synagogue and were married to powerful men. Opposition is not a sign of failure. Often it is a sign the message is getting through.
13:51 *having shaken off the dust of their feet against them* Jesus told His disciples to do this when a town refused them (Luke 9:5; 10:11). It meant they had done their part and the responsibility now belonged to the hearers.
13:52 *the disciples were being filled with joy and the Holy Spirit* Their teachers were gone and persecution had come, yet they were full of joy. That joy did not come from circumstances. It came from the Spirit living in them.
14:1 *they entered together into the synagogue of the Jews and spoke in this way* Iconium was about ninety miles east of Pisidian Antioch, and Paul and Barnabas went to the synagogue first as usual. God uses the message, but He also uses how we deliver it. They spoke with conviction and clarity, and a great multitude believed.
14:2 *made the souls of the Gentiles evil against the brothers* Unbelief is rarely content to stay quiet. It often works to pull others away too.
14:3 *So then they stayed a long time* Opposition did not drive them out right away; it made them dig in. The message comes first, and the miracles confirm it. Signs were God's stamp on the Gospel His servants preached (Heb 2:3-4).
14:4 *some were with the Jews, and some with the apostles* One of only two places where Barnabas is called an apostle (also 14:14). The word means one who is sent. He was not one of the twelve, but the Spirit and the church had sent him (13:2-4). The Gospel still divides people, as Jesus said it would (Luke 12:51).
14:6 *they fled to the cities of Lycaonia, Lystra and Derbe* Fleeing was not cowardice. Jesus told His followers to flee to the next city when persecuted (Matt 10:23). There is a time to stand and a time to move on. When they arrived, they kept preaching. They changed their location, not their message.
14:8 *being lame from the womb of his mother, who had never walked* Luke stacks up the details so there is no doubt about this man's condition. The healing echoes Peter's healing of the lame man in chapter 3. The same Spirit was at work through Paul as through Peter.

ting, being lame from ***the*** womb of his mother, who had never walked. **9** This ***man*** was hearing Paul (Paulos) speaking; who, having looked intently at him and having seen that he has faith to be saved, **10** said with a loud voice, "Stand upright on your feet!" And he was leaping up and was walking. **11** And the crowds, having seen what Paul did, lifted up their voice in Lycaonian, saying, "The gods, having become like men, have come down to us!" **12** And they were calling Barnabas Zeus, and Paul Hermes, because he was the leading speaker. **13** And the priest of the Zeus who is before their city, having brought bulls and wreaths to the gates, was wanting to sacrifice with the crowds. **14** But the apostles Barnabas and Paul, having heard ***it***, having torn their garments, sprang into the crowd, crying out **15** and saying, "Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men of like nature with you, preaching the gospel to you, to turn from these futile things to the living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all the things in them, **16** who in the generations gone by allowed all the nations to go in their ways. **17** And yet He did not leave Himself without witness, doing good, giving us rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." **18** And saying these things, they scarcely restrained the crowds from sacrificing to them. **19** But Jews arrived from Antioch (Antiocheia) and Iconium, and having persuaded the crowds and having stoned Paul, they were dragging ***him*** outside the city, having supposed him to have died. **20** But when the disciples had surrounded him, having risen up, he entered into the city. And on the next day he went out with Barnabas to Derbe.

Return to Antioch

21 And having preached the gospel ***to*** that city and having made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and Iconium and Antioch, **22** strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting ***them*** to continue in the faith, and ***saying*** that through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God. **23** And having appointed elders for them in every church, having prayed with fastings, they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed. **24** And having passed through Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia. **25** And having spoken the word in Perga (Perge), they went down to Attalia (Attaleia). **26** And from there they sailed to Antioch, from where they had been committed to the grace of God for the work which they had fulfilled. **27** And having arrived and having gathered the church together, they reported all that God had done with them, and that He had opened to the Gen-

14:9 Acts 3:4; Matt 8:10; Matt 9:22,28,29
14:10 Isa 35:6; Acts 3:6-8; Acts 9:33,34
14:11 Acts 8:10; Acts 28:6; Acts 12:22
14:12 Acts 19:35
14:13 Dan 2:46; Acts 10:25
14:14 Acts 14:4; Matt 26:65; 1 Cor 9:5,6
14:15 Exod 20:11; Ps 33:6; Ps 146:6
14:16 Acts 17:30; Ps 81:12; Ps 147:20
14:17 Job 5:10; Deut 11:14; Rom 1:19,20
14:18 Gen 11:6; Gen 19:9; Exod 32:21-23
14:19 2 Cor 11:25; 2 Tim 3:11; Acts 13:45,50,51
14:20 Acts 14:6; Acts 20:9-12; 2 Cor 1:9,10
14:21 Acts 14:1,6,8,19; Matt 28:19; Acts 13:14,51
14:22 2 Tim 3:12; 1 Pet 5:10; Col 1:23
14:23 Titus 1:5; Acts 11:30; Acts 20:17
14:24 Acts 13:13,14; Acts 15:38
14:26 Acts 15:40; Acts 11:19,26; Acts 13:1
14:27 Exod 18:1; Hos 2:15; 1 Cor 16:9

14:9 *having seen that he has faith to be saved* Scripture does not say how Paul saw it, in the man's face or by the Spirit's showing. The word for saved is also used for being made well, so it likely means both. Faith came from hearing (Rom 10:17).
14:10 *he was leaping up and was walking* A man who had never walked did not need to learn how. God gave him the strength and the skill in the same moment.
14:11 *The gods, having become like men, have come down to us* They spoke in their own language, so at first Paul and Barnabas did not know what was happening. An old story from this region told of Zeus and Hermes visiting in disguise and being turned away by all but one poor couple. The people of Lystra may not have wanted to make the same mistake twice.
14:12 *they were calling Barnabas Zeus, and Paul Hermes, because he was the leading speaker* Zeus was the chief of the Greek gods, and Hermes was their messenger.
14:13 *was wanting to sacrifice with the crowds* Imagine how this would tempt a man who wanted fame. A true servant of God refuses glory that belongs only to Him. Herod accepted that kind of praise, and it cost him his life (12:21-23).
14:14 *having torn their garments* A Jewish sign of grief and horror at blasphemy. They did not want worship.
14:15 *to turn from these futile things to the living God, who made the heaven and the earth* With pagans Paul does not start with Moses and the prophets, as in the synagogue. He starts with creation, something they can see every day. Idols are futile things; the Creator is the living God.
14:16 *allowed all the nations to go in their ways* This does not mean God approved of their idolatry. He was patient and held back His full judgment (17:30).
14:17 *He did not leave Himself without witness* Every harvest and every meal was a message from the one true God. Creation shows God's power and nature so clearly that people are without excuse (Rom 1:20). Creation cannot save anyone, but it points to the God who can.
14:18 *they scarcely restrained the crowds from sacrificing to them* Old beliefs do not let go easily. It took more than one sermon to turn a city from idols. We should not be discouraged when the people we share with do not change overnight.
14:19 *having stoned Paul, they were dragging him outside the city* Antioch was more than a hundred miles away. The same people who wanted to worship Paul now stoned him. How quickly a crowd can turn. Never build your life on people's praise. Paul later remembered, "once I was stoned" (2 Cor 11:25), and he bore "the marks of the Lord Jesus" (Gal 6:17).
14:20 *having risen up, he entered into the city* Scripture does not say whether Paul had died and was raised, or was left for dead and revived. Either way, it was the hand of God. He walked back into the city that had tried to kill him. Among those disciples may have been young Timothy, whose home was Lystra (16:1).
14:22 *through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God* The shortest way home ran through Tarsus. Instead they went back through the cities where they had been attacked, to strengthen the new disciples. These tribulations are the ordinary hardships every believer faces in this life. Paul never promised an easy life, but he promised a sure one. Hardship is not a sign that God has left us.
14:23 *having appointed elders for them in every church* Elders would shepherd and teach the new believers after the missionaries left (Titus 1:5; 1 Pet 5:1-3). There was more than one in each church, and they were appointed with prayer and fasting, as Paul and Barnabas had been sent (13:3). The missionaries could not stay to protect these churches, but they knew who could.
14:26 *from where they had been committed to the grace of God for the work which they had fulfilled* Perga had only been passed through before (13:13); Attalia was its port. The journey had lasted perhaps two years and covered well over a thousand miles by land and sea.
14:27 *they reported all that God had done with them* They did not tell what they had done for God, but what God had done with them. The church that sent them in prayer deserved to hear how God answered. Missionary reports still build the faith of the church.

tiles a door of faith. **28** And they stayed there no little time with the disciples.

ACTS 15

The Jerusalem Council

1 And certain ones, having come down from Judea (Ioudaia), were teaching the brothers, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses (Moyses), you are not able to be saved." **2** So when no small dissension and debate had come about for Paul (Paulos) and Barnabas with them, they appointed Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them to go up to the apostles and elders, to Jerusalem (Hierousalem), about this question. **3** So then, having been sent forward by the church, they were passing through Phoenicia (Phoinike) and Samaria (Samareia), relating in detail the conversion of the Gentiles; and they were bringing great joy to all the brothers. **4** And having arrived in Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they reported all that God had done with them. **5** But some of those from the sect of the Pharisees who had believed rose up, saying, "It is necessary to circumcise them, and to command ***them*** to keep the law of Moses." **6** And the apostles and the elders were gathered together to see about this matter. **7** And when ***there*** had been much debate, Peter (Petros), having risen up, said to them, "Men, brothers, you know that from early days God chose among us for the Gentiles to hear through my mouth the word of the gospel and to believe. **8** And God, the knower of hearts, bore witness to them, having given them the Holy Spirit, even as also to us; **9** and He made no distinction between us and them, having purified their hearts by faith. **10** Now therefore, why are you testing God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? **11** But through the grace of ***the*** Lord Jesus (Iesous) Christ we believe ***that we*** are saved in the same manner as they also." **12** And all the multitude kept silent, and they were listening to Barnabas and Paul relating how many signs and wonders God had done among the Gentiles through them. **13** And after they were silent, James (Iakobos) answered, saying, "Men, brothers, hear me. **14** Simeon (Symeon) has related how God first visited to take out of ***the*** Gentiles a people for His name. **15** And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it has been written: **16** 'After these things I will return, and I will rebuild the tent of David (Dabid) which has fallen, and I will rebuild its ruins, and I will set it upright, **17** so that the remnant of men may seek out the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom My name has been called upon them, says ***the*** Lord, who does all these things.' **18** Known from eternity to

14:28 Acts 11:26; Acts 15:35
15:1 Gen 17:10; Gen 17:11; Gen 17:12
15:2 Acts 15:22,27; Acts 15:4,22,23; Acts 15:6,23
15:3 Acts 14:27; Acts 21:5; Rom 15:24
15:4 Acts 14:27; Acts 21:17; Acts 18:27
15:5 Acts 15:1,24; Acts 21:20; Acts 26:5,6
15:6 Acts 15:25; Acts 6:2; Acts 21:18
15:7 Acts 15:2,39; Gal 2:7-9; Rom 10:17,18
15:8 Acts 1:24; Acts 14:3; Acts 2:4
15:9 Eph 3:6; 1 Pet 1:22; Acts 14:1,27
15:10 Matt 23:4; Isa 7:12; Gal 5:1
15:11 Rom 3:24; 2 Cor 13:14; Titus 3:4-7
15:12 Acts 14:27; Acts 15:4; Acts 21:19
15:13 Acts 12:17; 1 Cor 14:30-33; James 1:19
15:14 2 Pet 1:1; Isa 43:21; Acts 15:7-9
15:15 Amos 9:11; Acts 13:47; Rom 15:8-12
15:16 Amos 9:11-12; Jer 12:15; 2 Sam 7:11
15:17 Zech 8:20; Gen 22:18; Isa 11:10
15:18 Acts 17:26; Num 23:19; Isa 41:22,23

14:28 *they stayed there no little time with the disciples* A time to rest and be refreshed. But trouble was coming: men from Judea would soon teach that Gentile believers had to be circumcised to be saved. Many scholars believe Paul wrote Galatians, to these very churches, during this time.

15:1 *Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you are not able to be saved* Circumcision was the sign of God's covenant with Abraham (Gen 17:10-14). These men were not saying Gentiles should not believe in Jesus. They were saying faith in Jesus was not enough. Any message that says Jesus plus something is no longer the Gospel. Paul called it a different gospel (Gal 1:6-9).

15:2 *no small dissension and debate* This was not a minor disagreement about style. The heart of the Gospel was at stake, and Paul would not give an inch (Gal 2:5). The church solved it not by splitting but by going together to the leaders and seeking God's answer as one body.

15:3 *they were bringing great joy to all the brothers* The churches of Phoenicia and Samaria were planted by believers scattered after Stephen's death (8:1-5; 11:19). They knew what it was to be outsiders welcomed by grace, and they rejoiced that Gentiles were being saved.

15:5 *some of those from the sect of the Pharisees who had believed* The Pharisees were the strict party known for careful keeping of the Law and the traditions. These men had truly believed. They loved God's Law and could not yet see how it fit with God's grace.

15:6 *to see about this matter* A good model. When the church faces a hard question, its leaders should come together, take time, listen, and look carefully at what God has said and done. They did not vote on feelings or tradition.

15:7 *God chose among us for the Gentiles to hear through my mouth the word of the gospel* The council let everyone speak. Peter means Cornelius (ch. 10). Peter, the apostle to the Jews, was the first one God sent to the Gentiles. He had seen it with his own eyes.

15:9 *having purified their hearts by faith* God had already answered the question. Cornelius' household received the Spirit, as the Jewish believers had, before anyone baptized or circumcised them (10:44-48). If God accepted them by faith alone, who were they to require more?

15:10 *a yoke upon the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear* A yoke was the wooden frame placed on oxen to pull a load. No Jew had ever kept the Law perfectly. If the Law could not save the Jews, why load it on the Gentiles? Jesus offers a yoke that is easy and light (Matt 11:28-30).

15:11 *we believe that we are saved in the same manner as they also* Peter turns it around: we Jews are saved the same way the Gentiles are, by grace. No one has an advantage, and no one adds anything. Everyone who is saved, from Abraham to today, is saved by grace through faith (Eph 2:8-9). Peter's last words in Acts are a fitting final word.

15:12 *they were listening to Barnabas and Paul* Barnabas is named first; Jerusalem had known and trusted him for years (4:36-37; 9:27). Sometimes the best thing a heated meeting can do is stop talking and listen to what God has been doing.

15:13 *James answered* James the brother of Jesus (Gal 1:19), not the apostle killed by Herod (12:2). He had become a leading elder of the Jerusalem church.

15:14 *to take out of the Gentiles a people for His name* James calls Peter by his Hebrew name, Simeon. Israel had always been called God's people. Now God was also gathering a people for His name from the nations.

15:16 *I will rebuild the tent of David which has fallen* James quotes Amos 9:11-12, which comes after judgment and ends with Israel restored to its land (Amos 9:14-15). I believe James is saying the Gentiles coming to God fits the plan the prophets saw. The rebuilding began with the resurrection of David's Son and will be completed when He returns to reign. God's work among the Gentiles does not cancel His promises to Israel.

15:18 *Known from eternity to God are all His works* Taking in the Gentiles was no surprise to God. He promised Abraham that all the families of the earth would be blessed through him (Gen 12:3). What was new to the Jerusalem church was very old to God.

God are all His works. **19** Therefore I judge not to trouble those from among the Gentiles who are turning to God, **20** but to write to them to abstain from the pollutions of the idols and the sexual immorality and the strangled ***thing*** and the blood. **21** For Moses from generations of old has in every city those who proclaim him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath."

The Council's Letter

22 Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders with the whole church to send men chosen from among them to Antioch (Antiocheia) with Paul and Barnabas: Judas (Ioudas) called Barsabbas (Barsabas), and Silas, leading men among the brothers, **23** having written through their hand these things: "The apostles and the elders and the brothers, to the brothers from among the Gentiles throughout Antioch and Syria and Cilicia (Kilikia): Greetings. **24** Since we have heard that some who went out from us have troubled you with words, unsettling your souls, saying ***that you must*** be circumcised and keep the law, to whom we gave no instructions, **25** it seemed good to us, having become of one accord, to send chosen men to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, **26** men who have handed over their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. **27** We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, and they themselves ***are*** reporting the same things through word ***of mouth***. **28** For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay upon you no greater burden except these necessary things: **29** to abstain from things sacrificed to idols and blood and what ***is*** strangled and sexual immorality. Keeping yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell." **30** So then they, having been sent off, came to Antioch; and having gathered the multitude together, they delivered the letter. **31** And having read ***it***, they rejoiced at the encouragement. **32** And Judas and Silas, being prophets also themselves, exhorted the brothers with many words and strengthened ***them***. **33** And having spent a time ***there***, they were sent away in peace from the brothers to the apostles. **34** But it seemed good to Silas to remain there. **35** But Paul and Barnabas were staying in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord ***as*** the gospel, with many others also.

Paul and Barnabas Part Ways

36 And after some days Paul said to Barnabas, "Having turned back now, let us visit our brothers in every city in which we proclaimed the word of the Lord, ***to see*** how they are." **37** And Barnabas determined to take along John (Ioannes), who is called Mark (Markos). **38** But Paul was thinking ***it*** fitting not to take along this ***one***, who had withdrawn from them from Pamphylia and had not gone with them to the work. **39** So ***there*** came about a sharp disagree-

15:19 Acts 15:10,24,28; Gal 1:7-10; Isa 55:7
15:20 Gen 9:4; Lev 17:10; Lev 17:11
15:21 Neh 8:1; Lev 23:3; Neh 13:1
15:22 Acts 15:27; 1 Pet 5:12; Acts 1:23
15:23 Jer 29:1; Acts 23:26; James 1:1
15:24 Jer 23:16; Acts 15:1,9,10; Titus 1:10,11
15:25 Acts 1:14; 2 Pet 3:15; Matt 11:26
15:26 Acts 14:19; Acts 13:50; Judg 5:18
15:27 2 John 1:12; 3 John 1:13
15:28 John 16:13; Rev 2:24; 1 Cor 7:25,40
15:29 Acts 15:20; Acts 21:25; 1 Cor 10:18-20
15:30 Acts 6:2; Acts 21:22; Acts 16:4
15:31 Acts 15:1,10; Acts 16:5; Gal 2:4,5
15:32 Acts 11:23,27; Acts 13:1; Acts 14:22
15:33 Gen 26:29; Exod 4:18; 1 Cor 16:11
15:34 Acts 11:25,26; Acts 18:27; 1 Cor 16:12
15:35 Acts 13:1; Acts 14:28; Acts 28:31
15:36 Esth 2:11; Acts 13:4,13,14,51; Acts 14:1,6,21,24,25
15:37 Acts 12:12,25; Acts 13:5,13; Col 4:10
15:38 Acts 13:13; Ps 78:9; Prov 25:19
15:39 Acts 4:36; Acts 6:1; Rom 7:18-21

15:19 *not to trouble those from among the Gentiles who are turning to God* Do not make it harder for people to come to God than God Himself has made it. James was not ruling alone. He summed up what the council had heard, and the rest agreed (15:22, 25).

15:20 *to abstain from the pollutions of the idols and the sexual immorality and the strangled thing and the blood* Not conditions for salvation, which the council had just settled is by grace. Three concerned food especially offensive to Jews (Lev 17:10-14); sexual immorality was common in pagan temple worship. These guidelines helped Jewish and Gentile believers share the same table. Unlike the food rules, the ban on sexual immorality binds every believer in every age (1 Cor 6:18; 1 Thess 4:3).

15:21 *Moses from generations of old has in every city those who proclaim him* James' reason is practical. Jewish communities were everywhere, and careless offense would hurt the Gospel's witness among them. Freedom in Christ should be used in love, not in a way that makes a brother stumble (1 Cor 8:9-13; Rom 14:13-21).

15:22 *Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas* Sending trusted men in person meant no one could say Paul and Barnabas had twisted the decision. Silas becomes Paul's partner on the second journey (15:40); his Roman name was Silvanus (1 Thess 1:1).

15:24 *some who went out from us have troubled you with words* The church admitted the problem came from its own people. That kind of honesty is rare and needed in the church today.

15:26 *men who have handed over their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ* The letter settled a doctrinal question and publicly honored the men who had been attacked over it. Unity in the truth and love for the people go together.

15:28 *it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us* One of the most remarkable phrases in Acts. The council knew the Spirit had led them through Peter's testimony, the reports of God's work, and the words of Scripture. The close of the letter is not a threat but a loving word from one family to another.

15:31 *they rejoiced at the encouragement* Gentile believers who had been told they were not really saved now heard from Jerusalem that they were brothers, fully accepted by grace. The truth of the Gospel always brings joy and freedom.

15:32 *being prophets also themselves, exhorted the brothers with many words and strengthened them* New Testament prophets spoke to build up, encourage, and comfort (1 Cor 14:3). Encouragement is a gift the church never outgrows.

15:34 *But it seemed good to Silas to remain there* The SLB includes verse 34, as the King James Version does. Most modern translations leave it out or footnote it, since the earliest manuscripts lack it; many believe a copyist added it to explain how Silas was in Antioch in verse 40. Either way, Paul found him when he needed a partner.

15:35 *with many others also* Antioch now had many teachers and no longer depended on one or two men. Healthy ministry raises up other leaders. It may have been in this period that Paul confronted Peter in Antioch for pulling back from eating with Gentiles (Gal 2:11-14).

15:36 *let us visit our brothers in every city* Paul had a shepherd's heart, not only an evangelist's. He wanted to know the churches were growing, not only that they had been started. This begins the second missionary journey.

15:38 *who had withdrawn from them from Pamphylia* Both men had a point. Barnabas, the Son of Encouragement, wanted to give his cousin a second chance. Paul remembered Perga (13:13) and the hardships ahead; he had been stoned in Lystra and needed partners he could count on.

15:39 *there came about a sharp disagreement* Luke does not hide it. Two godly men who had risked their lives together could not agree, and Scripture does not say who was right. I believe God used both. The Gospel now went out in two directions, and Mark grew into a faithful servant. Paul later spoke warmly of Mark (Col 4:10; 2 Tim 4:11) and named Barnabas alongside himself (1 Cor 9:6). The break was real but not permanent.

ment, so that they were separated from one another, and Barnabas, having taken Mark, sailed away to Cyprus (Kypros). **40** But Paul, having chosen Silas, went out, having been committed by the brothers to the grace of God. **41** And he was passing through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.

ACTS 16

Timothy Joins Paul

1 And he came to Derbe and Lystra. And look, a certain disciple was there named Timothy (Timotheos), ***the*** son of a certain believing Jewish woman, but of a Greek father, **2** who was well attested by the brothers in Lystra and Iconium (Ikonion). **3** Paul (Paulos) wanted this ***one*** to go out with him, and having taken ***him***, he circumcised him because of the Jews who were in those places; for they all knew his father, that he was a Greek. **4** And as they were traveling through the cities, they were delivering to them the decrees to keep, which had been decided by the apostles and the elders who ***were*** in Jerusalem (Hierousalem). **5** So then the churches were being strengthened in the faith and were increasing in number every day.

The Macedonian Call

6 And having passed through Phrygia and the Galatian region, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia, **7** having come to Mysia, they were attempting to go toward Bithynia, and the Spirit did not allow them. **8** And having passed by Mysia, they came down to Troas. **9** And a vision appeared to Paul during the night: a certain Macedonian man was standing, pleading with him and saying, "Having crossed over into Macedonia (Makedonia), help us!" **10** And when he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go out to Macedonia, concluding that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel to them.

Lydia Believes

11 So having set sail from Troas, we ran a straight course to Samothrace (Samothrake), and on the following ***day*** to Neapolis, **12** and from there to Philippi (Philippoi), which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia, a colony. And we were in this city, staying some days. **13** And on the Sabbath day we went outside the city by a river, where it was customary ***for*** prayer to be; and having sat down, we were speaking to the women who had come together. **14** And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple of ***the*** city of Thyatira (Thyateira), worshiping God, was listening; whose heart the Lord opened to pay attention to the things being spoken by Paul. **15** And when she had been baptized, and her household, she pleaded ***with us***, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, having entered into my house,

15:40 Acts 15:22,32; Acts 14:26; Acts 16:1-3
15:41 Acts 15:23; Acts 15:32; Acts 18:18
16:1 Acts 14:6,21; Acts 17:14; Acts 18:5
16:2 Acts 6:3; 1 Tim 3:7; 1 Tim 5:10,25
16:3 Gal 2:3,8; Acts 15:37,40; Acts 15:20
16:4 Acts 15:6,28,29
16:5 Acts 9:31; Acts 2:47; Acts 6:7
16:6 Acts 18:23; 1 Pet 1:1; Gal 1:2
16:7 1 Pet 1:1
16:8 2 Cor 2:12; 2 Tim 4:13; Acts 16:11
16:9 Acts 18:5; Acts 19:21; Rom 15:26
16:10 Acts 10:29; Acts 26:13; Ps 119:60
16:12 Phil 1:1; 1 Thess 2:2; Acts 20:6
16:13 Acts 13:14,42; Acts 17:2; Acts 18:4
16:14 Neh 8:3; Luke 24:45; Acts 18:7
16:15 1 Sam 28:23; 2 Kgs 4:8; Prov 7:21

15:40 *Paul, having chosen Silas, went out* Silas was a respected Jerusalem leader who could confirm the council's letter, and a Roman citizen like Paul (16:37). Disagreements are painful, but they do not stop God's work. Grace carried both teams forward.
16:1 *a certain disciple was there named Timothy* Lystra is where Paul had been stoned and left for dead, and he went back anyway. Timothy's mother was Eunice and his grandmother Lois, both women of faith (2 Tim 1:5).
16:2 *who was well attested by the brothers in Lystra and Iconium* Before Paul chose him, the local church already knew his character. That is still a good pattern for choosing leaders.
16:3 *he circumcised him because of the Jews who were in those places* Had Paul not just won the argument that circumcision is not required? Yes, but that ruling was about salvation. Timothy had a Jewish mother, and an uncircumcised son of a Jewish mother would have closed synagogue doors before Paul opened his mouth. Paul gave up a freedom for the Gospel's sake (1 Cor 9:20). With Titus, where salvation itself was the issue, he refused (Gal 2:3).
16:4 *the decrees to keep, which had been decided by the apostles and the elders* The decisions of the Jerusalem Council (15:23-29).
16:5 *the churches were being strengthened in the faith and were increasing in number every day* Sound teaching and growth go together. The Gentile believers knew they were fully accepted without the Law of Moses, and that joy was contagious. A church that understands grace grows.
16:6 *having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia* Asia was the Roman province in the west of modern Turkey, where Ephesus was. Scripture does not say how the Spirit stopped them, whether by a prophetic word, an illness, or circumstances. A closed door from God is as much guidance as an open one.
16:7 *the Spirit did not allow them* Paul was not sitting still waiting for directions. He was moving, and God steered him as he moved. It is easier to steer a car that is rolling than one that is parked. Many Bibles read the Spirit of Jesus here; the SLB follows manuscripts that say only the Spirit. Scripture calls Him "the Spirit of Christ" (Rom 8:9).
16:9 *Having crossed over into Macedonia, help us* Macedonia was a region in northern Greece, so the Gospel was about to enter Europe for the first time. People rarely know that what they need most is Jesus, but God knows.
16:10 *immediately we sought to go out to Macedonia* Suddenly the story says "we." Most scholars believe this is where Luke joined Paul's team. These "we" sections return later, and they mean we are reading an eyewitness account.
16:11 *we ran a straight course to Samothrace* Samothrace is an island, and Neapolis was the port for Philippi. The trip took two days; going the other way later took five (20:6). God gave the wind at their backs when He was sending them.
16:12 *a leading city of the district of Macedonia, a colony* A colony was settled by retired Roman soldiers and treated as a little piece of Rome. Its citizens had Roman rights and were proud of it. That detail matters later in the chapter.
16:13 *where it was customary for prayer to be* This suggests Philippi had no synagogue. Jewish tradition required ten Jewish men to form one, so a small group might gather by the water instead. Paul had seen a man in his vision, but the first people he met in Europe were women at a prayer meeting. God's call does not always look the way we expect.
16:14 *whose heart the Lord opened to pay attention to the things being spoken by Paul* Thyatira, in Asia, was known for its dyes and later had one of the seven churches (Rev 2:18-29). Purple cloth was expensive, worn by the wealthy. Lydia was a Gentile who worshiped Israel's God. Paul spoke, Lydia listened, and God opened her heart. Both are true at once. We share faithfully and trust God to do what only He can do.
16:15 *when she had been baptized, and her household* A household included family and servants, and the text does not give their ages. I believe the pattern in Acts is that people heard, believed, and then were baptized. Lydia's faith showed itself at once in hospitality, and her house became the meeting place of the church in Philippi (16:40).

remain." And she prevailed upon us.

Paul and Silas in Prison

16 Now it came about, as we were going to ***the place of*** prayer, ***that*** a certain slave girl having a spirit of Python met us, who was bringing much profit to her masters by fortune-telling. **17** She, having followed after Paul and us, was crying out, saying, "These men are slaves of the Most High God, who proclaim to us a way of salvation." **18** And this she was doing for many days. But Paul, having been greatly annoyed and having turned, said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus (Iesous) Christ to come out from her." And it came out that very hour. **19** But her masters, having seen that the hope of their profit had gone out, having taken hold of Paul and Silas, dragged ***them*** into the marketplace before the rulers. **20** And having brought them to the magistrates, they said, "These men, being Jews, are greatly disturbing our city, **21** and they proclaim customs which are not lawful for us to accept or to practice, being Romans." **22** And the crowd rose up together against them, and the magistrates, having torn off their garments, were commanding ***them*** to beat ***them*** with rods. **23** And having laid many blows on them, they threw ***them*** into prison, having charged the jailer to keep them securely; **24** who, having received such a charge, threw them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.

The Philippian Jailer

25 Now about midnight Paul and Silas, praying, were singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. **26** And suddenly ***there*** came about a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison house were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened, and the chains of all were loosed. **27** And the jailer, having become awake and having seen the doors of the prison opened, having drawn a sword, was about to kill himself, supposing the prisoners to have escaped. **28** But Paul called out with a loud voice, saying, "Do no harm to yourself, for we are all here!" **29** And having asked for lights, he rushed in, and having become terrified, he fell down before Paul and Silas. **30** And having brought them outside, he said, "Sirs, what must I do that I may be saved?" **31** And they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household." **32** And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all those in his house. **33** And having taken them in that hour of the night, he washed ***them*** from the blows; and he was baptized, he and all his ***people***, immediately. **34** And having brought them up into his house, he set a table ***before them***, and he rejoiced with ***his*** whole household, having believed in God. **35** And when day had come, the magistrates sent the rod-bearers, saying, "Release those men." **36** And the jailer reported these words to Paul: "The magistrates have sent that you may be released. Now therefore, having gone out, go

16:16 1 Sam 28:7; Num 22:6; Dan 5:11
16:17 Dan 3:26; Gen 14:18; Ps 57:2
16:18 Mark 16:17; Luke 10:17-19; Acts 14:13-15
16:19 Acts 21:30; Acts 19:24-27; 1 Tim 6:10
16:20 Ezra 4:12; Dan 3:8; Acts 28:22
16:21 Acts 26:3; Jer 10:3
16:22 1 Thess 2:2; 2 Cor 6:5; 2 Cor 11:23-25
16:23 Acts 5:18; Acts 8:3; Acts 9:2
16:24 Job 33:11; Job 13:27; Jer 29:26
16:25 Ps 119:62; Ps 77:6; James 1:2
16:26 Acts 4:31; Acts 12:7,10; Acts 5:19
16:27 Acts 16:23,24; Judg 9:54; 1 Sam 31:4,5
16:28 Lev 19:18; Ps 7:4; Ps 35:14
16:29 Acts 9:5,6; Acts 24:25; Ps 99:1
16:30 Acts 2:37; Acts 22:10; Acts 16:17
16:31 Acts 2:38,39; Isa 45:22; John 1:12
16:32 Acts 10:33-43; Mark 16:15; Eph 3:8
16:33 Acts 16:15; 1 Cor 1:16; Acts 16:23
16:34 Acts 2:46; Luke 5:29; Luke 19:6
16:35 Acts 4:21; Acts 5:40; Ps 76:10
16:36 Acts 15:33; Exod 4:18; Judg 18:6

16:16 *a certain slave girl having a spirit of Python* In Greek stories Python was the serpent tied to the oracle at Delphi, so the name was used for fortune-telling spirits.
16:17 *These men are slaves of the Most High God* What she said was true. So why did Paul stop her? The source was a demon. Satan sometimes mixes truth into his work so people will trust the messenger. Jesus also silenced demons who announced who He was (Mark 1:34).
16:18 *I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out from her* Paul had no power of his own. The authority was in the name of Jesus Christ.
16:19 *having seen that the hope of their profit had gone out* A girl had been set free from a demon, and all the owners could see was lost income. When the Gospel touches someone's wallet, opposition often follows, as in Ephesus (ch. 19).
16:21 *being Romans* Their charges said nothing about money. They played on pride and prejudice in a Roman colony quick to turn on outsiders.
16:22 *were commanding them to beat them with rods* A Roman punishment carried out by officers called lictors. Paul was beaten with rods three times (2 Cor 11:25).
16:24 *threw them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks* The darkest, most secure part of the jail. The stocks held their legs apart, painful on top of the beating. There was no trial and no chance to defend themselves.
16:25 *about midnight Paul and Silas, praying, were singing hymns to God* Bleeding, in the dark, feet locked down, and they worshiped. One of my favorite verses in Acts. Praise is not only for when life is good. God was still worthy in a prison cell. People are always watching how believers handle suffering, and the prisoners were listening.
16:26 *the chains of all were loosed* Normal earthquakes do not unfasten chains. God did this.
16:27 *was about to kill himself, supposing the prisoners to have escaped* A guard who lost his prisoners could face their penalty, and he would rather die by his own hand than in shame.
16:28 *Do no harm to yourself, for we are all here* Scripture does not say why the prisoners did not run. Perhaps they were stunned, or after the hymns they sensed God at work. Paul cared more about the jailer's life than his own freedom.
16:30 *Sirs, what must I do that I may be saved* The most important question anyone can ask. He may have heard the slave girl's cry about "a way of salvation" (16:17) for days, and he had heard the hymns at midnight. Hours earlier he locked these men in stocks. Now he was on his knees before them.
16:31 *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household* The Gospel in one sentence. Not do these works, not keep the Law. Salvation is by grace through faith in Christ alone (Eph 2:8-9). "Your household" does not mean his faith would save his family automatically. The same offer was open to each of them, and each heard the word and believed (16:32-34).
16:33 *he washed them from the blows; and he was baptized, he and all his people, immediately* They heard the word, believed, and were baptized. Baptism followed faith. The hands that locked Paul in stocks were now washing his wounds. That is what new life in Christ looks like.
16:35 *Release those men* Perhaps the earthquake scared the magistrates, or they thought a beating and a night in jail were enough for two troublemakers.

in peace." **37** But Paul said to them, "Having beaten us publicly, uncondemned, men who are Romans, they threw ***us*** into prison; and now are they throwing us out secretly? No indeed! But having come themselves, let them bring us out." **38** And the rod-bearers reported these declarations to the magistrates, and they were afraid, having heard that they were Romans. **39** And having come, they pleaded with them, and having brought ***them*** out, they were asking ***them*** to go out from the city. **40** And having gone out of the prison, they went in to Lydia; and having seen the brothers, they encouraged them and went out.

ACTS 17

Thessalonica

1 And having traveled through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica (Thessalonike), where the synagogue of the Jews was. **2** And according to the custom of Paul (Paulos), he went in to them, and for three Sabbaths he was reasoning with them from the Scriptures, **3** opening and setting forth that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from ***the*** dead, and that this is the Christ, Jesus (Iesous), whom I proclaim to you. **4** And some of them were persuaded and joined themselves to Paul and to Silas, and of the worshiping Greeks a great multitude, and of the leading women not a few. **5** But the unbelieving Jews, having become jealous, and having taken certain wicked men of the marketplace loiterers, and having gathered a crowd, were setting the city in an uproar; and having come upon the house of Jason (Iason), they were seeking to bring them to the populace. **6** But not having found them, they were dragging Jason and certain brothers before the city authorities, shouting, "These who have upset the inhabited earth have come here also, **7** whom Jason has received; and these all act contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying ***that*** another is king, Jesus." **8** And they troubled the crowd and the city authorities, who were hearing these things. **9** And having taken the security from Jason and the rest, they released them.

Berea

10 And the brothers immediately sent away both Paul and Silas during the night to Berea (Beroia), who, having arrived, went into the synagogue of the Jews. **11** Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, who received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures every day ***to see*** if these things might be so. **12** So then many of them believed, and of the prominent Greek women and of men not a few. **13** But when the Jews from Thessalonica learned that the word of God was proclaimed by Paul in Berea also, they came there also, stirring up the crowds. **14** And then immediately the brothers sent Paul away to go as toward the sea; but both Silas and Timothy (Timotheos) were remaining there. **15** And those conducting Paul brought him as far as Athens (Athenai); and having received a command for Silas

16:37 Acts 22:25-28; Acts 16:20-24; Ps 58:1,2
16:38 Acts 22:29; Matt 14:5; Matt 21:46
16:39 Matt 8:34; Mark 5:17; Exod 11:8
16:40 Acts 16:14; Acts 4:23; Acts 12:12-17
17:1 Phil 4:16; 1 Thess 1:1; Acts 20:4
17:2 Acts 9:20; Luke 4:16; Acts 17:10,17
17:3 Acts 9:22; Acts 18:28; Acts 2:16-36
17:4 Zech 2:11; Acts 17:12; Acts 15:22,27,32,40
17:5 Judg 9:4; Judg 11:3; Ps 83:2
17:6 Acts 24:5; Acts 28:22; Acts 6:12,13
17:7 Luke 23:2; Acts 16:21; John 19:12
17:8 Matt 2:3; John 11:48
17:10 Acts 17:13; Acts 20:4; Acts 9:25
17:11 Job 23:12; Ps 119:97; Ps 119:100
17:12 Acts 13:50; Acts 17:2-4; Acts 13:46
17:13 Acts 17:5; Matt 23:13; 1 Thess 2:14-16
17:14 Acts 17:10; Matt 10:23; Acts 9:25,30
17:15 Acts 18:1; 1 Thess 3:1; Acts 18:5

16:37 *Having beaten us publicly, uncondemned, men who are Romans* Roman citizens could not be beaten without a trial. Scripture does not say why Paul did not say so the day before; he may have been shouted down. This was not wounded pride. If the city leaders publicly admitted their wrong, the brand-new church would be safer after the missionaries left.
16:40 *having seen the brothers, they encouraged them and went out* The men who had just been beaten were the ones doing the encouraging. The story shifts back to "they"; Luke seems to have stayed behind in Philippi.
17:1 *they came to Thessalonica, where the synagogue of the Jews was* They traveled the Via Egnatia, the great Roman road across Macedonia. Thessalonica, about a hundred miles from Philippi, was the provincial capital and an important port. From a strong church in a major city the Gospel could spread through the region, and from Thessalonica "the word of the Lord has sounded forth" (1 Thess 1:8).
17:2 *for three Sabbaths he was reasoning with them from the Scriptures* Going to the synagogue first was Paul's custom. He was not just telling stories; he was proving his case from the Old Testament.
17:3 *it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead* Many Jews expected a conquering king, not a suffering servant, so Paul showed them passages like Isaiah 53 and Psalm 16, as Jesus did on the Emmaus road (Luke 24:25-27). When we share our faith, we should let the Scriptures do the talking.
17:4 *of the worshiping Greeks a great multitude* Most of this church were Gentiles who had turned to God from idols (1 Thess 1:9). Paul's letters suggest he stayed longer than three weeks, working at his trade and receiving gifts from Philippi more than once (Phil 4:16; 1 Thess 2:9). The three Sabbaths may describe his time in the synagogue.
17:6 *These who have upset the inhabited earth have come here also* The King James has them say the believers turned the world upside down. They meant it as an insult, but it was a great compliment. A handful of believers with no army and no money were changing the Roman world. I pray the same could be said of the church today.
17:7 *saying that another is king, Jesus* A dangerous charge in a city that owed much to Rome. It twisted the truth, but it was not entirely wrong. Jesus is King, and Paul's letters to this church are full of His return (1 Thess 4:13-18; 2 Thess 2). His kingdom does not come by rebellion, but one day every ruler will answer to Him (Rev 19:16). We obey earthly authorities (Rom 13:1), but our first loyalty belongs to Jesus.
17:9 *having taken the security from Jason and the rest* Likely a bond or sum of money, a promise that Paul would leave and there would be no more trouble. Jason paid a price for opening his home. Paul later wrote that Satan hindered his return (1 Thess 2:18), and this pledge may be part of what kept him away.
17:10 *went into the synagogue of the Jews* Berea was about fifty miles southwest. Fresh from a riot, Paul went right back to preaching. He did not let opposition stop him.
17:11 *examining the Scriptures every day to see if these things might be so* One of the best verses in the Bible on how we should study. The Bereans were open but not gullible. They checked even an apostle against God's Word, every day. We should do the same with any pastor or teacher today, including me. Open your Bible and check what you hear.
17:12 *So then many of them believed* Honest study of the Scriptures leads to faith. God's Word holds up when we test it. Faith does not require us to turn off our minds.
17:13 *they came there also, stirring up the crowds* They traveled about fifty miles just to stop Paul. Opposition to the Gospel can be very determined. Paul was the main target, so he left, and Silas and Timothy stayed to strengthen the new believers.
17:15 *those conducting Paul brought him as far as Athens* A long journey south. Timothy did come to Athens, and Paul then sent him back to strengthen the Thessalonians (1 Thess 3:1-2).

and Timothy that they should come to him as quickly as possible, they departed.

Paul in Athens

16 Now while Paul was waiting for them in Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he was seeing the city full of idols. **17** So then he was reasoning in the synagogue with the Jews and with those worshiping, and in the marketplace every day with those who happened to be there. **18** And some of the Epicurean and of the Stoic philosophers were conversing with him. And some were saying, "What would this seed-picker want to say?" And others, "He seems to be a proclaimer of foreign deities," because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection ***as*** the gospel to them. **19** And having taken hold of him, they brought ***him*** to Mars' Hill (Areios pagos), saying, "Are we able to know what this new teaching ***is*** which is spoken by you? **20** For you are bringing some strange things to our ears; therefore we want to know what these things might mean." **21** Now all ***the*** Athenians and the visiting foreigners were spending their time in nothing other than to tell something and to hear ***something*** newer.

Paul on Mars' Hill

22 And Paul, having stood in ***the*** midst of Mars' Hill, said, "Men, Athenians, I see you as very religious in all things. **23** For passing through and observing your objects of worship, I found also an altar on which had been inscribed, 'TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.' Whom therefore you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you. **24** The God who made the world and all things in it, He, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands, **25** nor is He served by hands of men, as needing anything, He Himself giving to all life and breath and all things. **26** And He made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, having determined ***the*** times appointed beforehand and the boundaries of their dwelling, **27** to seek the Lord, if perhaps they might feel for Him and find ***Him***; and yet He is not far from each one of us. **28** For in Him we live and move and are, as also some of the poets among you have said, 'For we are also His offspring.' **29** Therefore, being offspring of God, we ought not to think the Divine to be like gold or silver or stone, an engraving of ***the*** art and imagination of man. **30** So then God, having overlooked the times of ignorance, now commands all men everywhere to repent, **31** because He has set a day in which He is about to judge the inhabited earth in righteousness by a man whom He has appointed, having provided assurance to all, having raised Him from ***the*** dead." **32** And having heard of a resurrection of ***the*** dead, some were mocking, but others said, "We will hear you again concerning this." **33** And so Paul went out

17:16 Exod 32:19,20; Num 25:6-11; 1 Kgs 19:10,14
17:17 Acts 17:2-4; Acts 14:1-4; Acts 8:2
17:18 Rom 1:22; 1 Cor 1:20,21; Col 2:8
17:19 Acts 17:22; Mark 1:27; Acts 24:24
17:20 Hos 8:12; 1 Pet 4:4; Matt 19:23-25
17:21 2 Tim 2:16,17; Eph 5:16; Col 4:5
17:22 Acts 25:19; Acts 17:16; Acts 19:35
17:23 1 Chr 28:9; John 4:22; 2 Thess 2:4
17:24 Isa 66:1; Gen 14:19; Gen 14:22
17:25 Job 34:14; Job 22:2; Job 35:6,7
17:26 Gen 9:19; Deut 32:8; Gen 10:32
17:27 Acts 14:17; Rom 1:20; Jer 23:23,24
17:28 Deut 30:20; Job 12:10; Heb 1:3
17:29 Ps 94:7-9; Ps 106:20; Ps 115:4-8
17:30 Acts 14:16; Luke 24:47; Titus 2:11,12
17:31 Ps 96:13; Matt 25:31-46; 2 Pet 3:7
17:32 Acts 17:18; Acts 2:13; Acts 26:8,24,25

17:16 *his spirit was provoked within him as he was seeing the city full of idols* Athens was the cultural center of the Greek world, with famous temples, statues, and schools of philosophy. Paul saw what visitors missed: people worshiping false gods. When we look at our cities, do we see only buildings and culture, or people who need Jesus?
17:17 *in the marketplace every day with those who happened to be there* The agora was the center of public life, where people bought, sold, and argued about ideas. Paul went where the people were. That is still how the Gospel spreads best.
17:18 *some of the Epicurean and of the Stoic philosophers* Epicureans taught that the gods, if they existed, were far off and uninterested, and that the goal was a calm life free from pain and fear. Stoics taught that a divine reason runs through everything and the wise accept whatever happens without strong emotion. A seed-picker was a bird pecking seeds, then a man picking up scraps of ideas. Some think they took Resurrection, Anastasis in Greek, for a goddess.
17:19 *they brought him to Mars' Hill* Areopagus means hill of Ares, the Greek god of war, whom the Romans called Mars. The name also meant the council that met there, which oversaw matters of religion and teaching.
17:21 *to tell something and to hear something newer* A dry comment from Luke. They loved ideas the way some people love the latest news. But curiosity is not the same as seeking the truth.
17:22 *I see you as very religious in all things* Paul was neither flattering nor mocking them. He was starting where they were.
17:23 *TO AN UNKNOWN GOD* The Athenians were so worried about missing a god that they built an altar to one they did not know. Paul did not start with the Old Testament, which they did not know. He found a point of contact in their own culture and led them from there to the true God.
17:24 *does not dwell in temples made with hands* Imagine saying that within sight of the Parthenon and the great temples of Athens.
17:25 *He Himself giving to all life and breath and all things* The Athenians brought gifts as if their gods needed them. The true God needs nothing from us. Every breath is His gift. We do not keep God alive; He keeps us alive.
17:26 *He made from one blood every nation of men* From one man, Adam. The Athenians looked down on outsiders as barbarians, but every person comes from the same ancestor. There is one human race.
17:27 *if perhaps they might feel for Him and find Him* The picture is someone feeling around in the dark. But God is not hiding. He placed us where we are so we might look for Him.
17:28 *For we are also His offspring* Paul quoted their own poets to show that even their writers sensed people come from God. Quoting a pagan poet did not mean agreeing with everything he believed. Paul took a line that was true and used it to point to the God of the Bible.
17:29 *we ought not to think the Divine to be like gold or silver or stone* It makes no sense for the children to make the Father. Living people cannot come from lifeless statues made by men.
17:30 *having overlooked the times of ignorance, now commands all men everywhere to repent* This does not mean God excused sin or that ignorant people are automatically saved; creation leaves all without excuse (Rom 1:18-20). God was patient and had not yet brought final judgment. Now that the truth is known, He commands all people everywhere to repent.
17:31 *by a man whom He has appointed, having provided assurance to all, having raised Him from the dead* The Man is Jesus. The resurrection is God's guarantee that judgment is coming. The same Jesus who rose will judge the living and the dead (10:42; Rev 20:11-15).
17:32 *some were mocking* Greek thinking generally looked down on the body and hoped to be free of it after death, not to get it back. A man rising from the grave sounded foolish (1 Cor 1:23). The resurrection is always the dividing line. Without it, Christianity is just another philosophy (1 Cor 15:14).

from ***the*** midst of them. **34** But some men, having joined themselves to him, believed, among whom also ***were*** Dionysius (Dionysios) the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

ACTS 18

Corinth

1 Now after these things, Paul (Paulos), having departed from Athens (Athenai), came to Corinth (Korinthos). **2** And having found a certain Jew named Aquila (Akylas), of Pontus (Pontikos) by birth, who had recently come from Italy (Italia), and Priscilla (Priskilla) his wife, because Claudius (Klaudios) had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome (Hrome), he came to them; **3** and because he was of the same trade, he was staying with them and was working; for they were tentmakers by trade. **4** And he was reasoning in the synagogue every Sabbath, and was persuading both Jews and Greeks. **5** And when both Silas and Timothy (Timotheos) came down from Macedonia (Makedonia), Paul was pressed in the spirit, solemnly testifying to the Jews ***that*** Jesus (Iesous) ***is*** the Christ. **6** But when they were opposing and blaspheming, having shaken out the garments, he said to them, "Your blood ***be*** upon your head; I ***am*** clean. From now on I will go to the Gentiles." **7** And having moved from there, he came to ***the*** house of a certain ***man*** named Justus (Ioustos), who worshiped God, whose house was adjoining the synagogue. **8** And Crispus (Krispos), the synagogue ruler, believed in the Lord with all his household; and many of the Corinthians, hearing, were believing and were being baptized. **9** And the Lord said to Paul in the night through a vision, "Do not fear, but keep speaking, and do not be silent; **10** because I am with you, and no one will set upon you to harm you; because I have many people in this city." **11** And he stayed a year and six months, teaching among them the word of God.

Paul Before Gallio

12 But when Gallio (Gallion) was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews with one accord rose up against Paul and led him to the judgment seat, **13** saying, "This ***man*** persuades men to worship God contrary to the law." **14** But when Paul was about to open ***his*** mouth, Gallio said to the Jews, "If indeed then it were some wrong or wicked crime, O Jews, according to reason I would have borne with you. **15** But if it is a question about a word and names and the law among you, you will see ***to it*** yourselves; for I do not want to be a judge of these things." **16** And he drove them from the judgment seat.

17:34 Acts 17:19; Acts 17:4; Acts 13:48
18:1 Acts 19:1; 1 Cor 1:2; 2 Cor 1:1,23
18:2 1 Cor 16:19; 2 Tim 4:19; Acts 11:28
18:3 1 Cor 4:12; 1 Thess 2:9; Acts 20:34,35
18:4 Acts 13:14-52; Acts 17:1-3,11,17; Acts 19:8
18:5 Acts 18:28; Acts 17:3; Jer 6:11
18:6 Ezek 33:4,8,9; 2 Sam 1:16; Ezek 18:13
18:7 Acts 16:14; Col 4:11; Acts 10:2,22
18:8 Acts 8:12,35-38; Acts 18:17; Acts 13:15
18:9 Deut 3:2; Judg 7:9; Acts 27:23-25
18:10 Exod 4:12; Matt 28:20; 2 Cor 12:9
18:11 Acts 14:3; Acts 19:10; Acts 20:31
18:12 Acts 13:7,12; Acts 18:27; Rom 15:26
18:13 Acts 18:4; Acts 6:13; Acts 21:28
18:14 Acts 21:39,40; Acts 26:1,2; Luke 21:12-15
18:15 Acts 23:29; Acts 25:11,19; 1 Tim 6:4
18:16 Ps 76:10; Rom 13:3,4; Rev 12:16

17:34 *Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris* Some say Paul's sermon in Athens failed because no large church appears there. I disagree. People believed, including a member of the city's leading council. Our job is to be faithful. The results belong to God.

18:1 *Paul, having departed from Athens, came to Corinth* Corinth, about fifty miles west of Athens, sat on a narrow strip of land between two seas with a port on each side. It was the capital of Achaia, wealthy, crowded, and so known for immorality that its name became a word for loose living. Paul came "in weakness and in fear and in much trembling" (1 Cor 2:3). God often does His greatest work through people who feel weak.

18:2 *because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome* Pontus was on the southern coast of the Black Sea. The Roman historian Suetonius mentions this expulsion, which most date to about A.D. 49, and ties it to disturbances among the Jews, possibly over preaching about Christ. God used an emperor's order to bring Aquila and Priscilla to Corinth right when Paul needed friends. Luke never mentions their conversion, so they may have been believers already.

18:3 *they were tentmakers by trade* The word may also mean leatherworkers. Jewish teachers were expected to learn a trade. Paul worked so he would not burden the churches and no one could say he preached for money (1 Cor 9:12-15; 2 Thess 3:8). He taught that preachers have a right to support (1 Cor 9:14) but chose to give it up. There is no shame in a minister working a regular job.

18:5 *Paul was pressed in the spirit, solemnly testifying to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ* Silas and Timothy seem to have brought a gift from Macedonia (2 Cor 11:9; Phil 4:15), so Paul could stop making tents and preach full time. Many Bibles follow manuscripts that say Paul gave himself fully to the word. Timothy's good report about the Thessalonians led Paul to write 1 Thessalonians from Corinth (1 Thess 3:6).

18:6 *Your blood be upon your head; I am clean* Shaking out his garments meant, I am done here, and I am not responsible for what you do with this. It echoes the watchman of Ezekiel 33, who is free of guilt if the people refuse his warning. This was a decision about Corinth, not a final rejection of the Jewish people. In the next city Paul went to the synagogue first (18:19).

18:7 *whose house was adjoining the synagogue* Titius Justus lived right next door to the synagogue. That must have made for some uncomfortable Sabbaths.

18:8 *Crispus, the synagogue ruler, believed in the Lord with all his household* Something remarkable: the synagogue leader himself believed, and Paul baptized him personally (1 Cor 1:14). Again the order: they heard, believed, and were baptized.

18:9 *Do not fear, but keep speaking, and do not be silent* Even Paul got afraid. He had been beaten in Philippi, chased from Thessalonica and Berea, and mocked in Athens. Jesus met him in that fear.

18:10 *I have many people in this city* Many of them had not yet believed, yet Jesus already called them His. God knew who would respond, and He sent Paul to preach so they could hear and believe. God's knowledge does not make our preaching unnecessary. It is the reason we can preach with confidence.

18:11 *he stayed a year and six months* One of Paul's longest stays anywhere. The Corinthian church had many problems, as his letters show, but it was a real church, and it grew. Some believe Paul wrote 2 Thessalonians during this time.

18:12 *when Gallio was proconsul of Achaia* Gallio was the brother of the philosopher Seneca. An inscription found at Delphi dates his governorship to about A.D. 51 or 52, one of the most helpful dates we have for Paul's life.

18:13 *This man persuades men to worship God contrary to the law* They likely meant that Paul's teaching was not the Jewish religion, which Rome allowed, but something new outside it.

18:15 *if it is a question about a word and names and the law among you, you will see to it yourselves* Gallio treated the Christian faith as a dispute inside Judaism, which Rome protected. That ruling may have given the Gospel room to spread for years. God kept His promise of verse 10. No one harmed Paul.

17 Then all the Greeks, having seized Sosthenes the synagogue ruler, were beating ***him*** before the judgment seat. And none of these things was a concern to Gallio.

Return to Antioch

18 And Paul, having remained yet many days, having taken leave of the brothers, was sailing away to Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila, having shaved the head in Cenchrea (Kenchreai), for he had a vow. **19** And he came to Ephesus (Ephesos) and left them there; but he himself, having entered into the synagogue, reasoned with the Jews. **20** And when they were asking ***him*** to remain a longer time with them, he did not consent, **21** but took leave of them, having said, "I must by all means keep the coming feast in Jerusalem (Hierosolyma); but I will return to you again, God willing." And he set sail from Ephesus. **22** And having landed at Caesarea (Kaisareia), having gone up and having greeted the church, he went down to Antioch (Antiocheia).

Apollos

23 And having spent some time ***there***, he went out, passing through the Galatian region and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples. **24** Now a certain Jew named Apollos, an Alexandrian by birth, an eloquent man, came to Ephesus, being mighty in the Scriptures. **25** This ***man*** had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he was speaking and teaching accurately the things concerning the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John (Ioannes). **26** And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. And having heard him, Aquila and Priscilla took him aside and expounded to him the way of God more accurately. **27** And when he was wanting to pass through into Achaia, the brothers, having encouraged ***him***, wrote to the disciples to welcome him; who, having arrived, greatly helped those who had believed through the grace. **28** For he was powerfully refuting the Jews publicly, showing through the Scriptures Jesus to be the Christ.

ACTS 19

Paul in Ephesus

1 And it came about, while Apollos was in Corinth (Korinthos), ***that*** Paul (Paulos), having passed through the upper parts, came to Ephesus (Ephesos); and having found certain disciples, **2** he said to them, "Did you receive ***the*** Holy Spirit, having believed?" And they said to him, "But we did not even hear whether ***there*** is a Holy Spirit." **3** And he said to them, "Into what then were you baptized?" And they said, "Into the baptism of John (Ioannes)." **4** And Paul said, "John indeed baptized ***with*** a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe in the One coming after him, that is, in the Christ, Jesus (Iesous)." **5** And having heard ***this***,

18:17 1 Cor 1:1; Acts 17:32; Amos 6:6
18:18 Acts 21:24; Rom 16:1; 1 Cor 9:20
18:19 Acts 18:24; Acts 19:1,17,26; Acts 20:16
18:20 Acts 20:16; Acts 21:13,14; Mark 1:37,38
18:21 1 Cor 4:19; James 4:15; Acts 20:16
18:22 Acts 8:40; Acts 10:1,24; Acts 11:11
18:23 Acts 16:6; Acts 14:22; Acts 15:32,41
18:24 1 Cor 1:12; 1 Cor 4:6; 1 Cor 16:12
18:25 Gen 18:19; Judg 2:22; 1 Sam 12:23
18:26 Acts 14:3; Isa 58:1; Eph 6:19,20
18:27 Acts 9:27; Rom 16:1,2; 1 Cor 16:3
18:28 Acts 18:5,25; Acts 9:22; Acts 17:3
19:1 1 Cor 1:12; 1 Cor 16:12; 1 Cor 3:4-7
19:2 John 7:39; Acts 19:5; Acts 2:17,38,39
19:3 Acts 18:25; Matt 28:19; 1 Cor 12:13
19:4 Acts 1:5; Acts 11:16; Acts 13:23-25
19:5 Acts 8:12,16; Acts 2:38; 1 Cor 10:2

18:17 *having seized Sosthenes the synagogue ruler, were beating him before the judgment seat* The judgment seat was the bema, a raised platform whose remains can still be seen in Corinth. A Sosthenes is later called "Sosthenes the brother" (1 Cor 1:1). If it is the same man, God turned a beaten synagogue leader into Paul's fellow worker.
18:18 *having shaved the head in Cenchrea, for he had a vow* Cenchrea was Corinth's eastern port. This was likely a Nazirite-type vow (Num 6), perhaps of thanks for God's protection. The Law could not save anyone, but a Jewish believer was still free to keep Jewish customs as devotion, as long as he did not trust in them for salvation.
18:19 *he himself, having entered into the synagogue, reasoned with the Jews* Ephesus was the leading city of the province of Asia, where the Spirit had earlier stopped Paul from preaching (16:6). Now the door was opening.
18:21 *but I will return to you again, God willing* Paul made plans but held them loosely under God's will (James 4:13-15). God did will it, and Paul came back for more than two years (ch. 19). The SLB, like the King James Version, includes the words about keeping the coming feast in Jerusalem; most modern translations leave them out, since the earliest manuscripts lack them.
18:22 *having gone up and having greeted the church, he went down to Antioch* Going up usually means up to Jerusalem in the hills. Antioch was the church that had sent him out. This ends the second missionary journey, about A.D. 52.
18:23 *strengthening all the disciples* The third missionary journey begins. Paul never forgot the churches he planted. Starting churches matters, but so does strengthening them. Every church needs someone who cares enough to come back.
18:24 *an eloquent man, came to Ephesus, being mighty in the Scriptures* Alexandria in Egypt was a great center of learning with a large Jewish community. Apollos knew the Old Testament well.
18:25 *knowing only the baptism of John* Apollos seems to have known that John pointed to Jesus as Messiah, and he preached that faithfully. What he lacked was fuller teaching about what came after, likely including Pentecost, the coming of the Spirit, and baptism in Jesus' name.
18:26 *Aquila and Priscilla took him aside and expounded to him the way of God more accurately* They did not correct him in public or embarrass him. And Apollos, gifted as he was, was humble enough to learn from a tentmaking couple. Priscilla is named first, as she often is. God uses husbands and wives who serve Him together.
18:27 *who, having arrived, greatly helped those who had believed through the grace* Salvation from first to last is God's gift (Eph 2:8). In Achaia, at Corinth, Apollos built on Paul's work. "I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing it to grow" (1 Cor 3:6). They were not rivals. Each did the job God gave him.
19:1 *Paul, having passed through the upper parts, came to Ephesus* The upper parts were the inland region of Asia Minor; this was the return Paul promised "God willing" (18:21). Ephesus was one of the largest cities in the empire, a major port, and home of the temple of Artemis. Jesus later addressed His first letter in Revelation to this church (Rev 2:1-7).
19:2 *Did you receive the Holy Spirit, having believed* Paul expected the Spirit to be given when a person believes, and something seemed missing. Their answer likely does not mean they had never heard of the Spirit, since John promised Jesus would baptize with Him (Luke 3:16). It likely means they had not heard that the Spirit had been poured out.
19:4 *John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance* John's baptism looked forward and prepared people for the Messiah. These men had stopped there. Like Apollos they were sincere but incomplete, though unlike him they do not seem to have known clearly about Jesus.
19:5 *they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus* They heard, believed, and then were baptized. I believe John's baptism and Christian baptism were different: one a sign of repentance in preparation, the other the believer's public step of faith in the Savior who has come. "Into the name" means by His authority and into belonging to Him, not that only this phrase may be spoken; Jesus gave the words in Matthew 28:19.

they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. **6** And when Paul had laid the hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they were speaking in tongues and prophesying. **7** And all the men were about twelve. **8** And having entered into the synagogue, he was speaking boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading ***them of*** the things concerning the kingdom of God. **9** But when some were being hardened and were disbelieving, speaking evil of the Way before the multitude, having withdrawn from them, he separated the disciples, reasoning every day in the lecture hall of a certain Tyrannus (Tyrannos). **10** And this continued for two years, so that all those dwelling in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.

The Sons of Sceva

11 And God was doing miracles of no ordinary ***kind*** through the hands of Paul, **12** so that even handkerchiefs or aprons were carried from his skin to the sick, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out from them. **13** But some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists attempted to name the name of the Lord Jesus over those having the evil spirits, saying, "We adjure you by Jesus, whom Paul proclaims." **14** And ***there*** were some, seven sons of Sceva (Skeuas), a Jewish high priest, who were doing this. **15** But the evil spirit, answering, said, "Jesus I know, and Paul I am acquainted with; but you, who are you?" **16** And the man in whom the evil spirit was, leaping on them and having overpowered them, prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. **17** And this became known to all, both Jews and Greeks, who were dwelling in Ephesus; and fear fell upon them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was being magnified. **18** And many of those who had believed were coming, confessing and declaring their practices. **19** And many of those who had practiced the magic arts, having brought the books together, were burning ***them*** before all; and they counted up their prices and found ***it to be*** fifty thousand ***pieces*** of silver. **20** Thus with might the word of the Lord was growing and prevailing.

The Riot at Ephesus

21 Now when these things were fulfilled, Paul purposed in the spirit, having passed through Macedonia (Makedonia) and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem (Hierousalem), having said, "After I have been there, I must also see Rome (Hrome)." **22** And having sent into Macedonia two of those ministering to him, Timothy (Timotheos) and Erastus (Erastos), he himself stayed for a time in Asia. **23** And about that time ***there*** came about no small disturbance concerning the Way. **24** For a certain ***man*** named Demetrius (Demetrios), a silversmith, making silver shrines of Artemis, was bringing no little business to the craftsmen; **25** having gathered these together, and also the workmen in such things, he said, "Men, you

19:6 Acts 2:4; Acts 6:6; Acts 8:17-19
19:8 Acts 1:3; Acts 28:23; Acts 13:14,46
19:9 Acts 19:23; Acts 9:2; Acts 14:4
19:10 Acts 16:6; 2 Tim 1:15; Acts 18:11
19:11 Acts 5:12; Rom 15:18,19; Acts 16:18
19:12 Acts 5:15; 2 Kgs 4:29-31; 2 Kgs 13:20,21
19:13 1 Kgs 22:16; 2 Chr 18:15; Matt 12:27
19:15 Acts 16:17,18; Gen 3:1-5; 1 Kgs 22:21-23
19:16 Mark 5:3,4,15; Luke 8:29,35
19:17 Acts 5:5,11,13; 2 Thess 1:12; Acts 2:43
19:18 Matt 3:6; Lev 16:21; Lev 26:40
19:19 Acts 8:9-11; Acts 13:6,8; Exod 7:11,22
19:20 Acts 6:7; Acts 12:24; Isa 55:11
19:21 Lam 3:37; Acts 20:22; Acts 20:16,22
19:22 Rom 16:23; 2 Tim 4:20; Acts 16:9,10
19:23 Acts 19:9; Acts 9:2; 2 Cor 1:8-10
19:24 Acts 16:16; Acts 19:27,28,34,35; Isa 56:11,12
19:25 Acts 16:19; Hos 4:8; Hos 12:7,8

19:6 *the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they were speaking in tongues and prophesying* I believe this was one of the special moments when God confirmed that a new group was brought into the one church: Jews (ch. 2), Samaritans (ch. 8), Gentiles (ch. 10), and here followers of John. I believe the tongues were real languages, as at Pentecost (2:6-11). Whether tongues continue today is a question believers disagree on, and it is not a matter of salvation.
19:7 *all the men were about twelve* A rough number, and I do not think we should read too much into it. What matters is that these men moved from an incomplete faith to a full faith in Jesus.
19:8 *the things concerning the kingdom of God* Three months was a long time in one synagogue; they had invited him back (18:20). The kingdom of God is God's rule through Jesus the King, present now in believers' lives and coming in fullness when Jesus returns to reign on the earth (Rev 11:15; 20:4-6).
19:9 *in the lecture hall of a certain Tyrannus* The Way was an early name for the faith (9:2; 24:14). Tyrannus may have been a teacher who owned the hall. Some ancient manuscripts add that Paul taught there from the fifth hour to the tenth, about eleven to four, during the midday rest. If so, Paul worked at his trade in the morning and taught in the heat of the day.
19:10 *all those dwelling in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus* People came to Ephesus from all over the province, heard the Gospel, and took it home, and Paul's coworkers went out. Epaphras seems to have brought it to Colossae (Col 1:7). Most likely the other churches of Revelation 2 and 3 began in this time. Training believers to carry the message is how a whole region is reached.
19:12 *even handkerchiefs or aprons were carried from his skin to the sick* Likely the sweat-rags and work aprons from his tentmaking. Ephesus was a center of magic, and God showed His power was greater. The power was not in the cloth or in Paul. I would be careful with ministries that sell "anointed" cloths. Scripture records what God did here but never tells us to make a practice of it, much less sell it.
19:14 *seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish high priest* Sceva may have been from a priestly family, or he gave himself the title to impress people. His sons treated the name of Jesus like a magic formula. They did not know Jesus; they only knew His name worked for Paul.
19:15 *Jesus I know, and Paul I am acquainted with; but you, who are you* A serious warning. The demon did not know these men, because they did not belong to Jesus. His name is not a spell. Saying the right words without a real relationship with Christ is empty (Matt 7:21-23).
19:17 *the name of the Lord Jesus was being magnified* The failed exorcism did more for the Gospel than any success could have. Jesus is not a tool to be used. He is Lord, to be respected and obeyed.
19:18 *many of those who had believed were coming, confessing and declaring their practices* These people had already believed, but some were still holding on to old ways in secret. Now they brought them into the light.
19:19 *fifty thousand pieces of silver* A silver coin was about a day's wage, so this was a huge sum. They burned the books rather than sell them, so no one else would be harmed. Real repentance costs something. Is there anything we know we should get rid of but keep because of its value?
19:20 *with might the word of the Lord was growing and prevailing* One of Luke's summary statements marking the Gospel's progress (6:7; 9:31; 12:24). In a city soaked in magic and idolatry, God's Word won out.
19:21 *After I have been there, I must also see Rome* Purposed in the spirit may mean Paul's own spirit or the Holy Spirit's guidance. From here on, Paul is headed to Jerusalem and then Rome, carrying a gift from the Gentile churches to the poor believers in Jerusalem (Rom 15:25-26; 1 Cor 16:1-4). He did reach Rome, though as a prisoner.
19:22 *he himself stayed for a time in Asia* During this stay Paul wrote 1 Corinthians, saying a great door had opened to him and many were opposing (1 Cor 16:8-10). The next scene shows both were true.
19:24 *making silver shrines of Artemis* Likely small models of her temple sold to worshipers and visitors. Artemis, whom the Romans called Diana, was worshiped all over Asia, and her temple was counted among the seven wonders of the ancient world. As in Philippi (16:19), the Gospel touched people's money, and trouble followed.

know that from this business is our prosperity. **26** And you see and hear that not only of Ephesus but of almost all Asia, this Paul, having persuaded ***them***, has turned away a considerable crowd, saying that those made through hands are not gods. **27** And not only is this trade of ours in danger of coming into disrepute, but also the temple of the great goddess Artemis ***is in danger of*** being reckoned as nothing, and also her magnificence is about to be brought down, whom all Asia and the inhabited earth worship." **28** And having heard ***this*** and having become full of rage, they were crying out, saying, "Great ***is*** Artemis of ***the*** Ephesians!" **29** And the whole city was filled with confusion; and they rushed with one accord into the theater, having seized Gaius (Gaios) and Aristarchus (Aristarchos), Macedonians, traveling companions of Paul. **30** And when Paul was wanting to go in to the populace, the disciples were not allowing him. **31** And some of the Asiarchs also, being friends to him, having sent to him, were urging ***him*** not to venture himself into the theater. **32** So then some were crying out one thing and some another; for the assembly was confused, and the majority did not know for what reason they had come together. **33** And they put forward Alexander (Alexandros) out of the crowd, the Jews pushing him forward. And Alexander, having motioned with the hand, was wanting to make a defense to the populace. **34** But having recognized that he is a Jew, one voice arose from all, crying out for about two hours, "Great ***is*** Artemis of ***the*** Ephesians!" **35** And the town clerk, having quieted the crowd, says, "Men, Ephesians, for what man is there who does not know that the city of ***the*** Ephesians is temple-keeper of the great goddess Artemis and of the ***thing*** fallen from heaven? **36** Therefore, these things being undeniable, it is necessary for you to be quieted and to do nothing rash. **37** For you have brought these men, ***who are*** neither temple robbers nor blasphemers of your goddess. **38** If then Demetrius and the craftsmen with him have a matter against anyone, court days are held, and there are proconsuls; let them bring charges against one another. **39** But if you are seeking anything concerning other matters, it will be settled in the lawful assembly. **40** For indeed we are in danger of being accused of insurrection concerning today, there being no cause ***for it***, concerning which we will not be able to give an account of this commotion." **41** And having said these things, he dismissed the assembly.

ACTS 20

Through Macedonia and Greece

1 And after the uproar had ceased, Paul (Paulos), having called the disciples to himself and having said farewell, went out to go to Macedonia (Makedonia). **2** And having passed through those districts and having exhorted them with many words, he came to Greece (Hellas). **3** And having spent three months ***there***, when a plot was made against him by the Jews as he was about to set sail for Syria, ***there*** came about a decision to return through Macedonia. **4** And ***there*** accompanied him as far as Asia Sopater (Sopatros), a Berean; and of ***the*** Thessalonians, Aristarchus (Aristarchos) and Secundus (Sekoundos); and Gaius (Gaios) of Derbe (Derbaios); and Timothy (Timotheos); and Asians, Tychicus (Tychikos) and

19:26 Acts 17:29; Isa 44:10-20; 1 Cor 8:4
19:27 Acts 19:21; Zeph 2:11; 1 Tim 6:5
19:28 Acts 7:54; Acts 16:19-24; Acts 21:28-31
19:29 Acts 20:4; Acts 27:2; Col 4:10
19:30 Acts 14:14-18; Acts 17:22-31; Acts 21:39
19:31 Acts 19:10; Acts 16:6; Prov 16:7
19:32 Acts 21:34; Acts 19:29; Acts 19:40
19:33 Acts 12:17; 1 Tim 1:20; 2 Tim 4:14
19:34 Acts 19:28; Acts 19:26; Acts 16:20
19:35 Job 12:9; Eph 2:12; Acts 19:26
19:36 Acts 5:35-39; Prov 14:29; Prov 25:8
19:37 Acts 25:8; 1 Cor 10:32; 2 Cor 6:3
19:38 Acts 18:14; Deut 17:8; 1 Cor 6:1
19:40 Acts 17:5-8; Acts 20:1; Acts 21:31,38
19:41 Prov 15:1,2; Eccl 9:17; Ps 65:7
20:1 Acts 19:21; Acts 19:23-41; Acts 20:10,37
20:2 Zech 9:13; Acts 20:6; Acts 16:12
20:3 Acts 20:19; Acts 9:23,24; Acts 25:3
20:4 Acts 19:29; Acts 16:1; Eph 6:21

19:26 *saying that those made through hands are not gods* Demetrius' complaint is a great testimony to how far the Gospel had spread. Even Paul's enemies admitted it.
19:27 *but also the temple of the great goddess Artemis is in danger of being reckoned as nothing* Demetrius wrapped his concern about money in religious and civic pride. He talked about the goddess, but his first concern was profit.
19:29 *they rushed with one accord into the theater* The theater's ruins still stand, and most estimates say it seated about 25,000. It was the natural place for a large public gathering.
19:31 *some of the Asiarchs also, being friends to him* Asiarchs were wealthy leading men of the province tied to its public life and festivals. Paul was ready to face the mob, but wise friends held him back. It is good to have people who will tell us no. Some of the most powerful men in Asia were Paul's friends; the Gospel had reached every level of society.
19:32 *the majority did not know for what reason they had come together* That is how mobs work.
19:33 *they put forward Alexander out of the crowd, the Jews pushing him forward* The Jews probably wanted to show they were not part of Paul's group. But to the crowd, Jews and Christians were the same, since both refused idols. Whether this is Alexander the coppersmith (2 Tim 4:14), Scripture does not say, and the name was common.
19:35 *the thing fallen from heaven* The town clerk was the city's chief official and its link with the Roman authorities. The thing fallen from heaven was likely a meteorite or a stone believed to have fallen from the sky.
19:37 *who are neither temple robbers nor blasphemers of your goddess* A good testimony to how Paul preached. He taught the emptiness of idols, but he had not mocked the people's goddess. We can speak the truth plainly without attacking people.
19:39 *it will be settled in the lawful assembly* The regular meeting of the city's citizens. A mob in the theater was not the way to do it.
19:41 *he dismissed the assembly* Rome did not tolerate riots, and a disorderly city could lose freedoms. God used a city official to protect His church, as He used Gallio (18:14-16). The Lord does not always remove opposition, but He keeps His people. He will build His church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it (Matt 16:18).
20:2 *having exhorted them with many words, he came to Greece* Macedonia held the churches of Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea (chs. 16-17). Luke covers months in a few words. Paul was not just starting churches; he went back to strengthen them. Greece here most likely means Corinth, where he had spent a year and a half (18:11).
20:3 *when a plot was made against him by the Jews as he was about to set sail for Syria* Most scholars believe Paul wrote Romans during these three months, around A.D. 57, as he prepared to take a gift to Jerusalem (Rom 15:25-26). A ship full of pilgrims would have been an easy place to kill a man and throw him overboard, so Paul went back the long way, by land.
20:4 *there accompanied him as far as Asia* Many believe these men represented the churches carrying the offering to Jerusalem (1 Cor 16:1-4; 2 Cor 8:19-21). Paul was careful with money and made sure trusted men from the churches were with him so no one could accuse him of stealing.

Trophimus (Trophimos). **5** These, having gone ahead, were waiting for us in Troas. **6** But we sailed away from Philippi (Philippoi) after the days of Unleavened ***Bread***, and came to them at Troas within five days, where we stayed seven days.

Eutychus Raised

7 And on the first ***day*** of the week, the disciples having been gathered together to break bread, Paul was reasoning with them, being about to depart on the next day, and he prolonged ***his*** speech until midnight. **8** And ***there*** were many lamps in the upper room where they were gathered together. **9** And a certain young man named Eutychus (Eutychos) was sitting at the window, being overcome by deep sleep as Paul reasoned longer; having been overcome by the sleep, he fell down from the third story and was picked up dead. **10** But Paul, having gone down, fell upon him, and having embraced ***him***, said, "Do not be alarmed, for his life is in him." **11** And having gone up and having broken bread and having eaten, and having talked a long while until daybreak, so he departed. **12** And they brought the boy alive, and were comforted not a little.

From Troas to Miletus

13 But we, having gone ahead to the ship, set sail for Assos, intending to take Paul on board from there; for so he had arranged, intending himself to go on foot. **14** And when he met us at Assos, having taken him on board, we came to Mitylene. **15** And having sailed from there, on the following ***day*** we arrived opposite Chios; and on the next ***day*** we put in at Samos, and having stayed at Trogyllium (Trogyllion), on the following ***day*** we came to Miletus (Miletos). **16** For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus (Ephesos), so that it might not happen to him to spend time in Asia; for he was hurrying, if it were possible for him, to be in Jerusalem (Hierosolyma) on the day of Pentecost.

Farewell to the Ephesian Elders

17 And from Miletus, having sent to Ephesus, he called for the elders of the church. **18** And when they had come to him, he said to them, "You know from the first day on which I set foot in Asia how I was with you the whole time, **19** serving the Lord with all humility, and many tears, and trials that happened to me through the plots of the Jews; **20** how I held back nothing of the things that were profitable, from declaring ***them*** to you and teaching you publicly and from house to house, **21** solemnly testifying both to Jews and to Greeks repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus (Iesous) Christ. **22** And now look, I, bound in the spirit, am going to Jerusalem (Hierousalem), not knowing the things that will happen to me in it, **23** except that the Holy Spirit solemnly testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me. **24** But I make account of nothing, nor do I hold my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to solemnly testify ***to*** the gospel of the grace of God.

20:5 Acts 16:8,11; 2 Cor 2:12; 2 Tim 4:13
20:6 Exod 12:14; Exod 23:15; Exod 34:18
20:7 Acts 20:11; 1 Cor 16:2; Rev 1:10
20:8 Acts 1:13; Luke 22:12
20:9 Jonah 1:5,6; Matt 26:40,41; Mark 13:36
20:10 1 Kgs 17:21; 2 Kgs 4:34; Mark 5:39
20:11 Acts 20:7,9
20:12 Isa 40:1; 2 Cor 1:4; Eph 6:22
20:13 Mark 1:35; Mark 6:31-33,46
20:15 Acts 20:17; 2 Tim 4:20
20:16 Acts 19:21; Acts 2:1; 1 Cor 16:8
20:17 Acts 11:30; Acts 20:28; Acts 14:23
20:18 Acts 18:19; Acts 19:1,10; 2 Cor 1:12
20:19 Acts 20:3; Rom 12:11; Col 3:24
20:20 Acts 20:27,31; Acts 20:31; Acts 5:42
20:21 Acts 2:38; Acts 20:24; 1 John 5:11-13
20:22 Acts 19:21; Acts 21:11-14; Luke 9:51
20:23 Acts 9:16; Acts 21:4,11; Acts 14:22
20:24 Acts 21:13; 2 Cor 4:1,8,9,16-18; Acts 1:17

20:5 *were waiting for us in Troas* The word "us" means Luke is back. The last "we" passage ended in Philippi (16:16-17), and it picks up again in Philippi, so it seems Luke stayed there several years and now rejoins Paul. Unleavened Bread was the week right after Passover.

20:7 *on the first day of the week, the disciples having been gathered together to break bread* One of the clearest early signs that Christians met on Sunday, the day Jesus rose (Luke 24:1; 1 Cor 16:2). Breaking bread most likely means the Lord's Supper shared with a meal. Paul had much to say and little time. If you have ever felt a sermon was too long, you are in good company.

20:9 *he fell down from the third story and was picked up dead* The many oil lamps made the crowded room warm and smoky. Luke was a physician (Col 4:14), and he was there. He does not say Eutychus looked dead or was knocked out. He says he was dead, and I take Luke at his word.

20:10 *Do not be alarmed, for his life is in him* Paul fell on him and embraced him as Elijah and Elisha did when God raised a child through them (1 Kgs 17:21; 2 Kgs 4:34). Some read these words to mean he was never really dead, but I believe Paul is saying God has just given the boy his life back.

20:12 *they brought the boy alive, and were comforted not a little* No panic and no big show. God had worked, and the church went right on worshiping. God cares about one sleepy young man in a window, and He cares about you too.

20:13 *intending himself to go on foot* Paul walked to Assos, about twenty miles. Scripture does not say why; perhaps he wanted time alone to pray before what waited in Jerusalem.

20:15 *on the following day we came to Miletus* Luke gives each day down the coast like a ship's log. That is the kind of detail an eyewitness remembers, and one reason we can trust Acts as real history.

20:16 *to be in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost* Stopping in Ephesus would have held him up for days. Pentecost came fifty days after Passover, when Jews from everywhere filled Jerusalem, and it was the day the Spirit came (2:1-4). Paul wanted to arrive with the Gentile churches' offering, a picture of Jews and Gentiles made one in Christ.

20:17 *he called for the elders of the church* Miletus was about thirty miles south of Ephesus. Elders were mature believers chosen to lead and care for a local church (14:23).

20:19 *serving the Lord with all humility, and many tears* They had watched Paul from the first day. His ministry was not done from a stage but up close, where people could see his life. That is still the best kind of ministry.

20:20 *teaching you publicly and from house to house* In the synagogue and the hall of Tyrannus (19:8-9), and in people's homes.

20:21 *repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ* The same message for Jews and Greeks, the Gospel in one line. Repentance is turning from sin to God; faith is trusting Jesus to save you. They go together like two sides of one coin.

20:22 *I, bound in the spirit, am going to Jerusalem* Paul felt a strong inner pull from God, as if already tied to this journey.

20:23 *chains and tribulations await me* Paul knew he was walking toward suffering, and he went anyway. He was not careless with his life. He was obedient with it.

20:24 *so that I may finish my course with joy* One of my favorite verses in Acts. Paul had one goal: to finish the race and ministry Jesus gave him. Near the end he wrote, "I have finished the race, I have kept the faith" (2 Tim 4:7). What is the course God has given you? Are you running it?

25 And now look, I know that you all, among whom I went about proclaiming the kingdom of God, will no longer see my face. **26** Therefore I testify to you on this day that I ***am*** clean from the blood of all. **27** For I did not hold back from declaring to you all the counsel of God. **28** Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has placed you ***as*** overseers, to shepherd the church of God, which He purchased through His own blood. **29** For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; **30** and from among your own selves men will rise up, speaking perverted things, to draw away the disciples after them. **31** Therefore be watchful, remembering that for three years, night and day, I did not cease admonishing each one with tears. **32** And now, brothers, I commit you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build ***you*** up and to give you an inheritance among all those who have been sanctified. **33** I coveted no one's silver or gold or clothing. **34** You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my needs and to those who were with me. **35** In all things I showed you that by laboring thus it is necessary to help those who are weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" **36** And having said these things, having bowed his knees, he prayed with them all. **37** And ***there*** came about much weeping among all, and having fallen upon the neck of Paul, they were kissing him, **38** sorrowing most of all over the word which he had spoken, that they would no longer see his face. And they were accompanying him to the ship.

ACTS 21

On to Jerusalem

1 And it happened, when we had set sail, having been drawn away from them, having run a straight course, we came to Cos (Kos), and on the next ***day*** to Rhodes (Hrodos), and from there to Patara. **2** And having found a ship crossing over to Phoenicia (Phoinike), having gone on board, we set sail. **3** And having sighted Cyprus (Kypros) and having left it on the left, we were sailing to Syria, and we landed at Tyre (Tyros); for there the ship was unloading the cargo. **4** And having found disciples, we remained there seven days; they were telling Paul (Paulos) through the Spirit not to go up to Jerusalem (Hierousalem). **5** And when it happened that we had completed the days, having gone out, we were journeying, all of them accompanying us with wives and children as far as outside the city; and having bowed the knees on the shore, we prayed. **6** And having greeted one another, we went on board the ship, and they returned to ***their*** own ***homes***. **7** And we, having completed the voyage from Tyre, arrived at Ptolemais; and having greeted the brothers, we stayed one day with them. **8** And on the next day, having gone out, we, those around Paul, came to Caesarea (Kaisareia); and having entered into the house of Philip (Philippos) the evangelist, who was of the seven, we stayed

20:25 Acts 28:31; Acts 20:38; Rom 15:23
20:26 Ezek 33:2; Ezek 33:8; Ezek 33:3
20:27 Gen 40:19; Ezek 33:7; Ezek 33:8
20:28 Isa 40:11; 1 Pet 5:2,3; Mic 7:14
20:29 Matt 7:15; John 10:12; Zeph 3:3
20:30 2 Tim 4:3,4; 1 John 2:19; 1 Tim 1:19,20
20:31 Heb 13:17; Acts 19:8,10; Col 1:28
20:32 Col 1:12; Col 3:24; Heb 9:15
20:33 1 Cor 9:12,15,18; 2 Cor 11:9; 2 Cor 7:2
20:34 Acts 18:3; 1 Cor 4:12; 1 Thess 2:9
20:35 2 Cor 9:6-12; Prov 19:17; Luke 14:12-14
20:36 Acts 21:5; Luke 22:41; Acts 7:60
20:37 2 Tim 1:4; 1 Sam 20:41; 2 Sam 15:30
20:38 Gen 18:16; Gen 43:3; Acts 15:3
21:1 Acts 20:37,38; 1 Sam 20:41,42; 1 Thess 2:17
21:2 Acts 27:6; Jonah 1:3; Acts 15:3
21:3 Judg 10:6; 2 Sam 8:6; Ps 45:12
21:4 Isa 23:18; Acts 19:1; Matt 10:11
21:5 Acts 20:36; Acts 15:3; Acts 20:38
21:6 John 19:27; 2 Cor 2:13; John 1:11
21:7 Acts 21:19; Acts 18:22; Acts 25:13
21:8 Acts 6:5; Eph 4:11; 2 Tim 4:5

20:25 *will no longer see my face* Paul expected not to see them again. Some believe he later returned to the area after his first Roman imprisonment (1 Tim 1:3; 2 Tim 4:20), so this may have been his expectation rather than a prophecy.
20:26 *I am clean from the blood of all* This goes back to the watchman of Ezekiel 33:1-9. Paul had warned them faithfully.
20:27 *I did not hold back from declaring to you all the counsel of God* All of God's plan and truth, not just the easy parts. A good teacher does not pick only the verses people like to hear.
20:28 *take heed to yourselves and to all the flock* The heart of the speech. A leader who does not guard his own walk with God cannot protect anyone else. Elders (20:17), overseers, and shepherds describe one office from three angles: maturity, responsibility, and care (1 Pet 5:1-2; Titus 1:5-7).
20:28 *which He purchased through His own blood* The church is God's, not theirs. Paul speaks of God shedding His own blood, which is only true because Jesus is God in the flesh. Every church member, even the hard ones, was bought at that price.
20:29 *savage wolves will come in among you* False teaching comes from outside and from inside, even from among the elders (20:30). It happened. Paul later left Timothy in Ephesus to stop strange doctrines (1 Tim 1:3-7), and decades later Jesus praised this church for testing false apostles but said they had left their first love (Rev 2:1-7).
20:31 *for three years, night and day, I did not cease admonishing each one with tears* That is a shepherd's heart.
20:32 *I commit you to God and to the word of His grace* Paul did not leave them to their own strength. Sanctified means set apart for God. Teachers and pastors come and go. God and His Word remain.
20:34 *these hands ministered to my needs* In Ephesus, as in Corinth, Paul likely supported himself as a tentmaker (18:3), as an example so they would work hard to help the weak.
20:35 *It is more blessed to give than to receive* This saying of Jesus is not found in the four Gospels. The apostles passed along teachings of Jesus that were remembered and treasured (John 21:25), and the Holy Spirit made sure this one was written down for us.
20:37 *there came about much weeping among all* Grown men, church leaders, crying openly over a brother they love. The early church was not just an organization. It was a family. Do we love our brothers and sisters in Christ like this?
21:3 *we landed at Tyre* Patara was on the southern coast of Asia Minor, and Phoenicia the coast north of Israel. Luke writes like an eyewitness because he was one; the "we" tells us he was on board.
21:4 *they were telling Paul through the Spirit not to go up to Jerusalem* The church in Tyre may have come from the believers scattered after Stephen's death (11:19). Was Paul disobeying the Spirit? I do not believe so. The Spirit had told Paul that chains awaited him (20:23), and he went "bound in the spirit" (20:22). The Spirit showed these believers what was coming, and out of love they concluded he should not go. The warning came from God; the advice came from people who loved him.
21:5 *having bowed the knees on the shore, we prayed* Whole families kneeling in the sand to pray for a man they had known only seven days. The love of Christ makes strangers into family very quickly.
21:8 *the house of Philip the evangelist, who was of the seven* We last saw Philip in chapter 8, where he preached in Samaria, led the Ethiopian to Christ, and settled in Caesarea (8:40). About twenty years have passed, and he is still faithful, still called the evangelist, still serving.

with him. **9** And this ***man*** had four daughters, virgins, prophesying. **10** And as we were remaining several days, a certain prophet named Agabus (Agabos) came down from Judea (Ioudaia). **11** And having come to us and having taken the belt of Paul, having bound both his ***own*** hands and feet, he said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit: 'The man whose belt this is, the Jews in Jerusalem (Hierousalem) will bind in this way, and they will deliver ***him*** into ***the*** hands of Gentiles.'" **12** And when we heard these things, both we and those of that place were begging him not to go up to Jerusalem. **13** And Paul answered, "What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus (Iesous)." **14** And when he was not persuaded, we fell silent, having said, "Let the will of the Lord be done." **15** And after these days, having packed up ***our baggage***, we were going up to Jerusalem. **16** And ***some*** of the disciples from Caesarea also went with us, bringing ***us*** to a certain Mnason, a Cypriot, an early disciple, with whom we might lodge.

Paul Visits James

17 And when we had arrived at Jerusalem, the brothers received us gladly. **18** And on the following ***day*** Paul was going in with us to James (Iakobos), and all the elders arrived. **19** And having greeted them, he was relating one by one each of ***the things*** which God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry. **20** And having heard, they were glorifying the Lord. And they said to him, "You see, brother, how many myriads of Jews there are who have believed, and all are zealous for the law. **21** And they have been informed about you, that you teach all the Jews who are among the Gentiles apostasy from Moses, telling them not to circumcise the children nor to walk in the customs. **22** What then is it? Certainly a multitude must come together; for they will hear that you have come. **23** Therefore do this which we tell you: There are with us four men having a vow on themselves. **24** Having taken these, be purified with them and spend on them, so that they may shave the head; and all may know that ***the things*** of which they have been informed about you are nothing, but ***that*** you yourself also walk in line, keeping the law. **25** And concerning the Gentiles who have believed, we wrote, having judged that they should keep no such thing, except that they keep themselves from both what ***is*** sacrificed to idols and blood and what ***is*** strangled and sexual immorality." **26** Then Paul, having taken the men, on the following day, having been purified with them, was entering into the temple, declaring the fulfillment of the days of the purification, until the offering was offered for each one of them.

Paul Seized in the Temple

27 And when the seven days were about to be completed, the Jews from Asia, having seen him in the temple, were stirring up all the crowd, and they laid the hands on him, **28** crying out, "Men, Israelites, help! This is the man who is teaching all ***men*** everywhere against the people and the law and this place; and besides, he has also brought Greeks into the

21:9 Acts 2:17; Exod 15:20; Joel 2:28
21:10 Acts 11:28; Acts 21:4,7; Acts 20:16
21:11 Jer 13:1; 1 Kgs 22:11; Jer 13:2
21:12 Matt 16:21-23; Acts 21:4; Acts 20:22
21:13 Acts 20:24; Phil 2:17; Rom 8:35-37
21:14 Luke 22:42; Matt 26:39,42; Matt 6:10
21:15 Acts 18:22; Acts 25:1,6,9
21:16 Acts 21:8; Acts 10:24,48; Acts 21:3
21:17 Acts 15:4; Rom 15:7; Heb 13:1,2
21:18 Acts 15:13; Matt 10:2; Gal 1:19
21:19 Acts 14:27; Acts 1:17; Rom 15:18,19
21:20 Acts 22:3; Rom 10:2; Gal 1:14
21:21 1 Cor 9:19-21; Gal 6:12-15; Acts 6:13,14
21:22 Acts 15:12,22; Acts 19:32
21:23 Num 6:2; Num 6:3; Num 6:4
21:24 Num 6:5; Num 6:9; Num 6:13
21:25 Acts 15:20,29
21:26 Num 6:13; Num 6:14; 1 Sam 21:7
21:27 Acts 24:18; Acts 26:21; Acts 13:50
21:28 Jer 7:4; Num 16:41; Josh 10:4

21:9 *four daughters, virgins, prophesying* Luke does not record what they said. Their gift shows that women were given prophecy in the early church, as Joel foretold and Peter preached at Pentecost (2:17-18).
21:11 *having bound both his own hands and feet* We met Agabus in 11:28. Old Testament prophets sometimes acted out their messages (Isa 20:2-4; Jer 13:1-11; Ezek 4:1-3), a picture no one would forget. It happened just so: Paul was seized by Jews and was a Roman prisoner for years.
21:12 *both we and those of that place were begging him not to go up to Jerusalem* Even Luke, the writer of this book, was pleading.
21:13 *I am ready not only to be bound but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus* Full of love and full of steel. Jesus "set His face steadfastly to go to Jerusalem" (Luke 9:51), knowing what waited for Him. Paul followed his Lord on that same road.
21:14 *Let the will of the Lord be done* The right place for any believer to land. They did not stop loving Paul; they handed it over to God, echoing Jesus' prayer in the garden (Luke 22:42). When we cannot change the situation or see the outcome, we can still pray this prayer.
21:16 *a certain Mnason, a Cypriot, an early disciple* Jerusalem was about sixty miles from Caesarea. Mnason may have been one of the very first believers. Paul was traveling with Gentile men, and not every Jewish believer would have been comfortable hosting them. Mnason was. Hospitality is a simple gift, but it mattered here.
21:18 *Paul was going in with us to James, and all the elders arrived* James is the brother of Jesus, leader of the Jerusalem church (12:17; 15:13; Gal 1:19). This is very likely when Paul handed over the offering from the Gentile churches (24:17; Rom 15:25-27).
21:19 *each of the things which God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry* It was what God had done. Paul was the tool, not the hero.
21:20 *how many myriads of Jews there are who have believed, and all are zealous for the law* Myriads means tens of thousands. Many Jewish believers still kept the Law and its customs as part of their life as Jews.
21:21 *that you teach all the Jews who are among the Gentiles apostasy from Moses* The rumor was false. Paul taught that Gentiles did not need to become Jews to be saved (15:1-11; Gal 5:2-6). He never told Jews to stop being Jews, and he had Timothy circumcised (16:1-3). Rumors spread fast and hurt deeply, then and now.
21:24 *be purified with them and spend on them, so that they may shave the head* Most likely a Nazirite vow (Num 6:1-21): no haircut or wine for a set time, then shaving the head and offering sacrifices. Paying for their offerings was costly and would show that Paul still respected the Law and his people. He had made a similar vow himself (18:18).
21:25 *concerning the Gentiles who have believed, we wrote* This was not about Gentile believers. The Jerusalem Council's decision still stood (15:19-29).
21:26 *having been purified with them, was entering into the temple* Was Paul compromising? I do not believe so. To the Jews he became as a Jew, to win Jews (1 Cor 9:19-23). Keeping a Jewish custom was not wrong in itself. Teaching that it was needed for salvation would have been, and Paul never did. He gave up his own freedom to keep peace and open doors for the Gospel.
21:28 *he has also brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy place* The Jews from Asia were likely from Ephesus, where Paul had been opposed (19:9; 20:19).

temple and has defiled this holy place." **29** For they had previously seen Trophimus (Trophimos) the Ephesian in the city with him, whom they were supposing that Paul had brought into the temple. **30** And the whole city was stirred, and there was a running together of the people; and having laid hold of Paul, they were dragging him outside the temple, and immediately the doors were shut. **31** And as they were seeking to kill him, a report came up to the commander of the cohort that all Jerusalem was in confusion, **32** who at once, having taken soldiers and centurions, ran down upon them; and they, having seen the commander and the soldiers, stopped beating Paul. **33** Then the commander, having drawn near, laid hold of him and commanded ***him*** to be bound with two chains; and he was inquiring who he might be and what he had done. **34** And some were shouting one thing, others another, in the crowd; and not being able to know the certainty because of the uproar, he commanded him to be brought into the barracks. **35** And when he came onto the stairs, it happened that he was carried by the soldiers because of the violence of the crowd; **36** for the multitude of the people was following, crying out, "Away with him!" **37** And as Paul was about to be brought into the barracks, he says to the commander, "Is it permitted for me to say something to you?" And he said, "Do you know Greek? **38** Are you not then the Egyptian who before these days stirred up a revolt and led out into the wilderness the four thousand men of the Assassins?" **39** And Paul said, "I am indeed a man, a Jew, of Tarsus (Tarseus) in Cilicia (Kilikia), a citizen of no insignificant city; and I beg you, allow me to speak to the people." **40** And when he had permitted ***him***, Paul, having stood on the stairs, motioned with the hand to the people; and when ***there*** had been a great silence, he addressed ***them*** in the Hebrew language, saying,

ACTS 22

Paul's Defense to the Crowd

1 "Men, brothers and fathers, hear my defense to you now." **2** And having heard that he was addressing them in the Hebrew language, they became even more quiet. And he says, **3** "I am indeed a Jewish man, born in Tarsus (Tarsos) of Cilicia (Kilikia), but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, instructed according to the strictness of the ancestral law, being zealous for God, just as you all are today, **4** who persecuted this Way to the point of death, binding and delivering both men and women into prisons, **5** as also the high priest bears witness to me, and all the council of elders; from whom also, having received letters to the brothers, I was journeying to Damascus (Damaskos) to bring also those who were there bound to Jerusalem (Hierousalem), so that they might be punished. **6** And it happened to me, as I was journeying and drawing near to Damascus, about noon, suddenly out of heaven a great light flashed around me. **7** And I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, 'Saul (Saoul), Saul, why are you persecuting Me?' **8** And I answered, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said to me, 'I am Jesus (Iesous) the Nazarene, whom you are persecuting.'

21:29 Acts 20:4; 2 Tim 4:20
21:30 Acts 26:21; Acts 19:29; Matt 2:3
21:31 Acts 22:22; Acts 26:9,10; John 16:2
21:32 Acts 23:27; Acts 23:23,24; Acts 5:40
21:33 Acts 21:11; Acts 12:6; Acts 20:23
21:34 Acts 19:32; Acts 23:10,16; Acts 21:37
21:35 Gen 6:11,12; Ps 55:9; Ps 58:2
21:36 Acts 22:22; Luke 23:18; John 19:15
21:37 Acts 21:19; Acts 19:30; Matt 10:18-20
21:38 Acts 5:36,37; Matt 5:11; 1 Cor 4:13
21:39 Acts 9:11,30; Acts 22:3; Acts 6:9
21:40 Acts 12:17; Acts 22:2; Acts 26:14
22:1 Acts 7:2; Acts 13:26; Acts 23:1,6
22:2 Acts 21:40
22:3 Deut 33:3; Num 25:13; Acts 9:11,30
22:4 Acts 22:19,20; Acts 8:1-4; Acts 26:9-11
22:5 Luke 22:66; Acts 9:1,2,14; Acts 5:21
22:6 Gen 14:15; Gen 15:2; 2 Sam 8:6
22:7 Isa 43:22; Jer 2:5; Isa 43:23
22:8 Acts 3:6; Acts 4:10; Acts 6:14

21:29 *Trophimus the Ephesian* A Gentile from Ephesus (20:4). They jumped to a conclusion, and it nearly cost Paul his life. A stone barrier separated the Court of the Gentiles from the inner courts, and archaeologists have found its warning signs. Christ "broke down the middle wall of the barrier" (Eph 2:14). In the temple that wall still stood. In Christ it was gone.
21:30 *immediately the doors were shut* The doors of God's house were shut, and the man carrying the message of God's Messiah was outside them, a picture of what much of Israel did with the Gospel. But God has not rejected His people, and a day is coming when Israel will turn to Christ (Rom 11:1, 25-27).
21:31 *a report came up to the commander of the cohort* The cohort of several hundred soldiers was stationed in the Fortress of Antonia at the northwest corner of the temple area, watching the courts from above during the feasts. God used a pagan Roman officer to save His servant's life.
21:33 *commanded him to be bound with two chains* Probably chained between two soldiers. Agabus' prophecy had come true (21:11).
21:36 *Away with him* The same cry the crowd shouted about Jesus before Pilate (Luke 23:18; John 19:15). A servant is not greater than his master, and if they persecuted Him, they would persecute His followers (John 15:20).
21:38 *Are you not then the Egyptian* The commander was surprised to hear Greek. The Assassins were Jewish rebels who hid short daggers in their clothes and killed people in crowds. Josephus also writes of an Egyptian false prophet who led a following to the Mount of Olives and escaped when the Romans drove them off. The commander thought he finally had him.
21:39 *a citizen of no insignificant city* Tarsus was a well-known center of learning. Paul was no desert rebel. Then he asked to speak to the crowd that had just been beating him. He was not looking for escape but for an opportunity to tell them about Jesus.
21:40 *he addressed them in the Hebrew language* Most likely Aramaic, the everyday language of the Jews in that region. Speaking their language told the crowd, I am one of you. Bruised, chained, and surrounded by soldiers, Paul was about to preach.
22:1 *Men, brothers and fathers, hear my defense to you now* The same words Stephen used before the Council (7:2). Paul was there that day, and now he stands where Stephen stood.
22:2 *they became even more quiet* Most likely Aramaic. Paul was not a foreigner speaking down to them but one of their own. Meet people where they are, in words they understand.
22:3 *brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel* Gamaliel was one of the most respected teachers of the Law (5:34). "Zealous for God, just as you all are today" was not an insult. Paul was saying, I know how you feel, because I felt the same. Zeal for God is good, but zeal without knowledge can lead people far from Him (Rom 10:2).
22:4 *who persecuted this Way to the point of death* Paul admits his past openly. Our testimony is stronger when we are honest about who we were before Christ.
22:6 *about noon, suddenly out of heaven a great light flashed around me* At noon the sun is brightest, and this light outshone it (26:13).
22:8 *I am Jesus the Nazarene, whom you are persecuting* Jesus did not say My followers. He said Me. When someone attacks the church, he attacks Jesus Himself, because believers are His body.

9 And those who were with me indeed beheld the light and became terrified, but they did not hear the voice of the One speaking to me. **10** And I said, 'What shall I do, Lord?' And the Lord said to me, 'Having risen up, go into Damascus, and there it will be told to you concerning all things which have been appointed for you to do.' **11** And as I was not seeing because of the glory of that light, being led by the hand by those who were with me, I came into Damascus. **12** And a certain Ananias, a pious man according to the law, being borne witness to by all the Jews who dwelt ***there***, **13** having come to me and having stood by ***me***, said to me, 'Saul, brother, look up.' And at that same hour I looked up at him. **14** And he said, 'The God of our fathers has designated you to know His will, and to see the Righteous One, and to hear a voice out of His mouth; **15** for you will be a witness for Him to all men of what you have seen and heard. **16** And now why do you delay? Having risen up, be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.' **17** And it happened to me, having returned to Jerusalem, and while I was praying in the temple, that I came into a trance, **18** and saw Him saying to me, 'Hurry, and go out quickly from Jerusalem, because they will not receive your testimony about Me.' **19** And I said, 'Lord, they themselves know that I was imprisoning and beating throughout the synagogues those who believe on You. **20** And when the blood of Stephen (Stephanos) Your witness was being poured out, I myself also was standing by and consenting to his killing, and guarding the garments of those who were killing him.' **21** And He said to me, 'Go, for I will send you far away to Gentiles.'"

Paul the Roman Citizen

22 And they were listening to him up to this word, and they lifted up their voice, saying, "Away from the earth with such a ***one***! For it is not fitting for him to live." **23** And as they were shouting and flinging off the garments and throwing dust into the air, **24** the commander ordered him to be brought into the barracks, having said that he should be examined with scourges, so that he might know for what cause they were crying out against him like this. **25** And as they stretched him out with the straps, Paul (Paulos) said to the centurion who was standing by, "Is it lawful for you to scourge a man ***who is*** a Roman and uncondemned?" **26** And having heard ***this***, the centurion, having gone to the commander, reported ***it***, saying, "See what you are about to do; for this man is a Roman." **27** And the commander, having come near, said to him, "Tell me, are you a Roman?" And he said, "Yes." **28** And the commander answered, "I acquired this citizenship with a great sum." But Paul said, "But I was even born ***so***." **29** Therefore immediately those who were about to examine him departed from him; and the comman-

22:9 Acts 9:7; Dan 10:7; John 12:29,30
22:10 Acts 16:30; Ps 25:8,9; Ps 143:8-10
22:11 Acts 9:8,9; Acts 13:11; Isa 42:16
22:12 Acts 10:22; Acts 6:3; Acts 9:10-18
22:13 Acts 9:17; Phlm 1:16
22:14 1 Chr 12:17; Ezra 7:27; Acts 26:16
22:15 Acts 23:11; Acts 4:20; Acts 1:8,22
22:16 1 Chr 22:19; Acts 2:38; 1 Cor 6:11
22:17 2 Cor 12:1-4; Acts 9:26-28; Gal 1:18
22:18 Ezek 3:7; Matt 10:14,23; Luke 21:21
22:19 Acts 22:4; Matt 10:17; Acts 8:3
22:20 Acts 7:58; Acts 8:1; Rev 2:13
22:21 Acts 9:15; Acts 13:2,46,47; Acts 18:6
22:22 Acts 25:24; Acts 21:36; Acts 7:54-57
22:23 Acts 7:53; Acts 26:11; Eccl 10:3
22:24 Acts 23:10,27; Acts 21:31,32; Acts 16:22,23,37
22:25 Acts 16:37; Acts 10:1; Acts 23:17
22:26 Acts 22:29; Acts 23:27
22:29 Acts 22:24; Heb 11:35; Acts 16:38,39

22:9 *they did not hear the voice of the One speaking to me* In 9:7 the men heard the voice but saw no one. This is not a contradiction. They heard a sound but did not understand the words. The same Greek word can mean to hear or to understand, as we say I hear you. Something similar happened when the Father spoke and some thought it had thundered (John 12:28-29).
22:10 *What shall I do, Lord* The question of a man who has just surrendered.
22:11 *being led by the hand by those who were with me* The proud Pharisee who rode out to arrest others had to be led like a child. God sometimes has to bring us low before He can lift us up.
22:12 *a pious man according to the law, being borne witness to by all the Jews who dwelt there* Paul wants this Jewish crowd to know that the man God sent him was a faithful, respected Jew, not a rebel against Moses.
22:13 *Saul, brother, look up* The first face Paul saw as a believer was the face of a man who called him brother.
22:14 *The God of our fathers has designated you* The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, whom this crowd worshiped. Following Jesus is not leaving the God of Israel; it is following Him. The Righteous One is a name for the Messiah (3:14; 7:52).
22:15 *you will be a witness for Him to all men of what you have seen and heard* Every believer is a witness. We tell others what Jesus has done for us.
22:16 *be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord* Some read this to mean baptism itself washes away sin. I believe the key words are "calling on the name of the Lord." Whoever calls on His name will be saved (2:21; Rom 10:13), and everyone who believes receives forgiveness through His name (10:43). Baptism is the outward picture of that inward washing. Still, "why do you delay?" Baptism is the first step of obedience and should not be put off.
22:17 *while I was praying in the temple* About three years after his conversion (Gal 1:18). The crowd had just accused him of defiling the temple (21:28). Paul tells them he prayed there and the Lord met him there. He loved God's house as much as they did.
22:20 *I myself also was standing by and consenting to his killing* Paul thought his past would make his witness convincing. Surely if a man like him had changed, they would want to know why (7:58; 8:1). But God knew their hearts better than Paul did.
22:21 *I will send you far away to Gentiles* God's plan from the start (9:15), and the word that set the crowd off.
22:22 *Away from the earth with such a one* That God would welcome Gentiles without first making them Jews was more than they could take. Yet God promised Abraham that all the families of the earth would be blessed through him (Gen 12:3), and the Servant would be "for a light of the nations" (Isa 49:6). It was God's plan all along.
22:23 *flinging off the garments and throwing dust into the air* Signs of rage and of rejecting what they had heard.
22:24 *that he should be examined with scourges* The commander did not understand Aramaic and likely had no idea what set off the uproar. Roman scourging used leather straps with bits of bone or metal and could cripple or kill, far worse than the synagogue's thirty-nine lashes (2 Cor 11:24). Jesus received it before His crucifixion (John 19:1).
22:25 *Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who is a Roman and uncondemned* Roman law forbade scourging a citizen, much more one not tried. A Christian may use the protection of the law, as Paul did in Philippi (16:37). He was willing to suffer for Christ, but he did not seek suffering when God gave him a lawful way to avoid it.
22:28 *But I was even born so* Paul's father must have been a citizen, though Scripture does not say how the family gained it. We cannot buy our way into God's kingdom either. We are "born from above" (John 3:3), and "our citizenship exists in the heavens" (Phil 3:20).
22:29 *the commander also was afraid, having learned that he was a Roman* He had already broken the law by chaining a citizen. God was using Paul's citizenship to protect him and move him toward Rome. Paul would carry Christ's name before kings (9:15), and the road to those kings had just opened.

der also was afraid, having learned that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him.

Paul Before the Council

30 And on the next day, wanting to know the certainty, why he was being accused by the Jews, he released him from the chains and commanded the chief priests and all their Council to come; and having brought Paul down, he set ***him*** before them.

ACTS 23

1 And Paul (Paulos), having looked intently at the Council, said, "Men, brothers, I have lived as a citizen in all good conscience toward God until this day." **2** And the high priest Ananias commanded those standing by him to strike his mouth. **3** Then Paul said to him, "God is about to strike you, whitewashed wall! And do you sit judging me according to the law, and, acting contrary to the law, command me to be struck?" **4** And those standing by said, "Do you revile the high priest of God?" **5** And Paul said, "I did not know, brothers, that he is high priest; for it has been written, 'You shall not speak evil of a ruler of your people.'" **6** And Paul, having known that the one part was of Sadducees and the other of Pharisees, cried out in the Council, "Men, brothers, I am a Pharisee, a son of a Pharisee; concerning ***the*** hope and resurrection of ***the*** dead I am being judged." **7** And when he had said this, a dissension arose between the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and the multitude was divided. **8** For Sadducees indeed say that there is no resurrection, nor angel, nor spirit; but Pharisees confess both. **9** And a great clamor arose; and the scribes of the party of the Pharisees, having risen up, were contending, saying, "We find no evil in this man; and if a spirit has spoken to him, or an angel, let us not fight against God." **10** And when much dissension had arisen, the commander, having feared that Paul would be torn apart by them, commanded the troop, having gone down, to take him by force out of their midst and to bring ***him*** into the barracks. **11** And on the following night the Lord, having stood by him, said, "Take courage, Paul; for as you have solemnly testified the things about Me at Jerusalem (Hierousalem), so you must also testify at Rome (Hrome)."

The Plot to Kill Paul

12 And when it had become day, certain of the Jews, having formed a conspiracy, bound themselves under a curse, saying that they would neither eat nor drink until they had killed Paul. **13** And there were more than forty who had formed this sworn plot; **14** who, having come to the chief priests and the elders, said, "We have bound ourselves under a curse with a curse, to taste nothing until we have killed Paul. **15** Now therefore you, with the Council, notify the commander, so that tomorrow he may bring him down to you, as ***though you were*** about to determine the things about him more accurately; and we, before he draws near, are ready to do away with him." **16** But the son of Paul's sister, having heard of the ambush, having come and having entered into

22:30 Acts 23:28; Acts 21:11,33; Acts 26:29
23:1 Acts 24:16; 2 Tim 1:3; 2 Cor 1:12
23:2 Acts 24:1; John 18:22; 1 Kgs 22:24
23:3 Deut 25:1; Lev 19:15; Deut 25:2
23:5 Exod 22:28; Exod 34:29; 2 Sam 19:6
23:6 Acts 24:15,21; Acts 26:5; Phil 3:5
23:7 Acts 14:4; Ps 55:9; Matt 10:34
23:8 Matt 22:23; Luke 20:27; Mark 12:18
23:9 Ps 35:1; Jer 26:16; Acts 22:7,17,18
23:10 Ps 55:9; Jer 26:24; Acts 22:24
23:11 Isa 46:10; Jer 15:19; Acts 18:9
23:12 1 Sam 14:24; Ps 31:13; Deut 23:23
23:13 John 16:2; 2 Sam 15:12,31
23:14 Jer 8:12; Ps 52:1,2; Isa 3:9
23:15 Ps 37:32,33; Isa 59:7; Acts 25:3
23:16 Job 5:13; Prov 21:30; Lam 3:37

22:30 *commanded the chief priests and all their Council to come* The Council, the Sanhedrin, was the highest Jewish ruling body, about seventy elders, chief priests, and scribes. Paul had once worked for these men. Now he stood before them as the accused.

23:1 *I have lived as a citizen in all good conscience toward God until this day* Many of the Council would have known Paul from years before. He speaks to them as brothers, not as a prisoner begging mercy. He is not claiming he never sinned; he called himself the foremost of sinners (1 Tim 1:15). He means he always acted on what he believed God wanted, and now his conscience is clean because Christ has forgiven him.

23:2 *the high priest Ananias commanded those standing by him to strike his mouth* Not the Ananias of Damascus (22:12). This Ananias was high priest about A.D. 47 to 59, and Josephus describes him as greedy and violent. Jesus was also struck in the face before the high priest (John 18:22).

23:3 *God is about to strike you, whitewashed wall* A whitewashed wall looks clean outside but may be cracked underneath. Ezekiel used the picture for false prophets (Ezek 13:10-15), and Jesus called the Pharisees "whitewashed tombs" (Matt 23:27). Ananias sat to judge by the Law and broke it by ordering a man struck before he was found guilty (Lev 19:15; Deut 25:1-2). He was killed by Jewish rebels around A.D. 66; whether Paul spoke as a prophet or in anger, Scripture does not say.

23:5 *You shall not speak evil of a ruler of your people* From Exodus 22:28. Why did Paul not know? Some think he had poor eyesight (Gal 4:15; 6:11). Others note he had been away for years, and the high priest may not have been in his robes. Others hear irony. As soon as he learned who it was, Paul submitted to God's Word. Mistreatment does not give us permission to sin in return, and when we get it wrong, we should own it quickly.

23:6 *concerning the hope and resurrection of the dead I am being judged* The Sadducees were the wealthy priestly party that controlled the temple, gave first place to the five books of Moses, and denied the resurrection. The Pharisees believed in it. Some say Paul was just being clever. I believe he went straight to the heart of his message. The whole Gospel rests on the resurrection of Jesus (1 Cor 15:14-17).

23:8 *Sadducees indeed say that there is no resurrection, nor angel, nor spirit* Jesus had told the Sadducees they were mistaken because they did not understand the Scriptures or the power of God (Matt 22:23-33).

23:9 *We find no evil in this man* These Pharisees still did not accept Jesus as Messiah, but they defended Paul because he agreed with them about the resurrection. God can use even the disagreements of His opponents to protect His people.

23:10 *to take him by force out of their midst* For the second time in two days Roman soldiers rescued Paul from his own people.

23:11 *Take courage, Paul* One of the most tender moments in Acts. Beaten, chained, and alone, Paul may have wondered if coming to Jerusalem was right. Jesus did not send a message; He came Himself and stood by him. He did not scold Paul but said he had witnessed faithfully, and He promised Rome (19:21; Rom 1:10-13). From that night on no plot and no storm could stop Paul until the promise came true.

23:12 *bound themselves under a curse* They called down a curse on themselves if they failed. Such zeal aimed the wrong way is sad. Jesus warned that those who killed His disciples would think they were "offering service to God" (John 16:2). Scripture does not say what became of the forty or their oath.

23:15 *before he draws near, are ready to do away with him* The men who claimed to guard God's Law went along with murder, though the Law says, "You shall not murder" (Exod 20:13). When people reject the truth, they often break the very rules they claim to defend.

23:16 *the son of Paul's sister, having heard of the ambush* The only mention of Paul's sister or her son. Forty men made a secret plan, and God had one young man in the right place to hear it. God's hand works in ordinary details.

the barracks, reported ***it*** to Paul. **17** And Paul, having called one of the centurions to ***him***, said, "Take this young man to the commander, for he has something to report to him." **18** So he, having taken him, brought ***him*** to the commander and says, "The prisoner Paul, having called me to ***him***, asked ***me*** to bring this young man to you, since he has something to say to you." **19** And the commander, having taken hold of his hand and having withdrawn in private, was inquiring, "What is it that you have to report to me?" **20** And he said, "The Jews have agreed to ask you that tomorrow you bring Paul down into the Council, as ***though they were*** about to inquire something more accurately about him. **21** Therefore do not be persuaded by them; for more than forty men of them are lying in wait for him, who have bound themselves under a curse neither to eat nor to drink until they have done away with him; and now they are ready, awaiting the promise from you." **22** So then the commander dismissed the young man, having instructed ***him*** to tell no one "that you have reported these things to me."

Paul Sent to Felix

23 And having called to ***him*** a certain two of the centurions, he said, "Prepare two hundred soldiers so that they may go as far as Caesarea (Kaisareia), and seventy horsemen and two hundred spearmen, from ***the*** third hour of the night." **24** And ***he said*** to provide mounts, so that, having set Paul on ***them***, they might bring ***him*** safely to Felix (Phelix) the governor, **25** having written a letter containing this form: **26** "Claudius (Klaudios) Lysias, to the most excellent governor Felix: greeting. **27** This man, having been seized by the Jews and being about to be done away with by them, having come upon ***them*** with the troop, I rescued him, having learned that he is a Roman. **28** And wanting to know the charge for which they were accusing him, I brought him down to their Council; **29** whom I found being accused concerning questions of their law, but having no accusation worthy of death or of chains. **30** And when it was disclosed to me that a plot against the man was about to be ***carried out*** by the Jews, I sent ***him*** to you at once, having instructed the accusers also to say before you the things against him. Farewell." **31** So then the soldiers, according to what had been ordered them, having taken up Paul, brought ***him*** through the night to Antipatris. **32** And on the next day, having let the horsemen go with him, they returned to the barracks; **33** who, having entered into Caesarea and having delivered the letter to the governor, also presented Paul to him. **34** And the governor, having read ***it***, and having asked from what province he was, and having learned that ***he was*** from Cilicia (Kilikia), **35** said, "I will hear you fully when your accusers also have arrived." And he commanded him to be kept under guard in the Praetorium of Herod (Herodes).

ACTS 24

Paul Before Felix

1 And after five days the high priest Ananias came down with the elders and a certain orator, Tertullus (Tertyllos), who informed the governor against Paul (Paulos). **2** And when he had been called, Tertullus began to accuse ***him***, saying, "Since we are attaining much peace through you, and excellent accomplishments are being done for this nation through your foresight, **3** we accept ***it*** both in every way and everywhere, most excellent Felix (Phelix), with all thankfulness. **4** But in order that I may not hinder you any further, I beg you to hear us briefly in your kindness. **5** For having found this man a plague and one stirring up dissension among all

23:17 Acts 23:23; Acts 22:26; Prov 22:3
23:18 Eph 3:1; Acts 16:25; Acts 27:1
23:19 Jer 31:32; Mark 8:23; Mark 9:27
23:20 Ps 12:2; Dan 6:5-12; Acts 23:15
23:21 Josh 8:4; Acts 23:12-14; Exod 23:2
23:22 Josh 2:14; Mark 1:44
23:23 Matt 14:25; Luke 12:38
23:24 Acts 23:26,33-35; Acts 25:14; Neh 2:12
23:26 Acts 15:23; Acts 24:3; Acts 26:25
23:27 Acts 22:25-29; Acts 23:10; Acts 21:31-33
23:28 Acts 22:30
23:29 Acts 18:15; Acts 26:31; Acts 23:6-9
23:30 Acts 25:5,6; Acts 15:29; 2 Cor 13:11
23:31 Acts 23:23,24; Luke 7:8; 2 Tim 2:3,4
23:33 Acts 28:16
23:34 Acts 21:39; Acts 25:1; Esth 1:1
23:35 Acts 23:30; Acts 25:16; Matt 27:27
24:1 Acts 23:2,30,35; Acts 24:11; Acts 25:2
24:2 Acts 24:26,27; Ps 10:3; Ps 12:2,3
24:3 Acts 23:26; Acts 26:25; Luke 1:3
24:4 Heb 11:32
24:5 Ezra 4:12; Neh 6:6; Acts 28:22

23:19 *having taken hold of his hand and having withdrawn in private* The word for young man could mean a teenager or someone in his early twenties. The commander's gentle way suggests he was quite young.
23:23 *Prepare two hundred soldiers* The third hour of the night was about nine in the evening. About 470 men protected one prisoner from forty. Jesus had promised Paul Rome, and now the Roman army itself was carrying him there. God can use anything and anyone to keep His promises.
23:26 *Claudius Lysias, to the most excellent governor Felix* Felix governed Judea from Caesarea; most date his term to about A.D. 52 to 59. We learn the commander's name for the first time.
23:27 *I rescued him, having learned that he is a Roman* Not quite what happened. Lysias learned Paul was a Roman after chaining him and nearly scourging him (22:25-29), and he left that out. People tell stories in ways that make themselves look best. God's Word tells the whole truth, even when it flatters no one.
23:29 *having no accusation worthy of death or of chains* Lysias is the first of several Roman officials who declare Paul innocent (25:25; 26:31-32). Like the charges against Jesus (Luke 23:4, 14-15, 22), these were about religion, not crime.
23:31 *brought him through the night to Antipatris* Roughly forty miles from Jerusalem, well away from the danger.
23:34 *having learned that he was from Cilicia* Felix asked to see whether the case was his to hear. Cilicia was under Roman rule, so it was.
23:35 *in the Praetorium of Herod* A palace built by Herod the Great, now the governor's headquarters. Paul would stay in Caesarea two years (24:27). God never wastes time. Paul would speak before a governor, another governor, and a king, as Jesus' promise was kept step by step.
24:1 *a certain orator, Tertullus* The elders were leaders who sat on the Sanhedrin. Tertullus was a trained speaker who knew how to argue in a Roman court. The leaders brought a professional, which shows how badly they wanted Paul silenced.
24:2 *Since we are attaining much peace through you* Flattery was the normal way to open before a Roman official, but this was far from the truth. Felix, governor from about A.D. 52 to 59, was a freed slave who rose through his brother's influence at court and put down unrest with harsh force; Josephus says the people hated him. Flattery is the tool of people without the truth on their side. Paul is respectful but never flatters.
24:5 *having found this man a plague and one stirring up dissension among all the Jews throughout the world* A plague meant a troublemaker who spreads disease wherever he goes. Stirring up dissension was a serious political charge, since Rome cared most about keeping order. A sect is a group split from a larger body; the Nazarenes were followers of Jesus of Nazareth. The charges were built to sound dangerous to a Roman governor.

the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes, **6** who also attempted to profane the temple, whom also we seized and wanted to judge according to our own law. **7** But Lysias the commander, having come up, took ***him*** away out of our hands with great violence, **8** having commanded his accusers to come to you; from whom you yourself, having examined ***him***, will be able to know concerning all these things of which we accuse him." **9** And the Jews also agreed, declaring that these things were so. **10** And Paul answered, the governor having nodded to him to speak, "Knowing that for many years you have been a judge to this nation, I more cheerfully make my defense ***in*** the things concerning myself, **11** since you are able to know that it is not more than twelve days for me since I went up to worship in Jerusalem (Hierousalem). **12** And neither in the temple did they find me reasoning with anyone or making an uprising of a crowd, nor in the synagogues, nor throughout the city; **13** nor are they able to prove the things of which they now accuse me. **14** But I confess this to you, that according to the Way which they call a sect, so I serve the God of ***my*** fathers, believing all things that are according to the law and that have been written in the Prophets, **15** having a hope toward God, which these themselves also await, that there is about to be a resurrection of ***the*** dead, both of ***the*** righteous and of ***the*** unrighteous. **16** And in this I myself strive always to have a conscience without offense toward God and men. **17** And after several years I came to bring alms to my nation, and offerings, **18** in which they found me purified in the temple, not with a crowd nor with tumult, ***but*** certain Jews from Asia, **19** who ought to be present before you and to accuse, if they should have anything against me. **20** Or let these themselves say if they found any wrongdoing in me when I stood before the Council, **21** other than concerning this one utterance which I cried out, standing among them: 'Concerning ***the*** resurrection of ***the*** dead I am being judged by you today.'"

Felix Puts Paul Off

22 And having heard these things, Felix, knowing more accurately the things concerning the Way, put them off, having said, "When Lysias the commander comes down, I will determine the things concerning you." **23** And he ordered the centurion that Paul be kept, and that he have relief, and to forbid none of his own ***people*** to serve or to come to him. **24** And after some days, Felix, having arrived with Drusilla (Drousilla) his wife, who was a Jewish woman, sent for Paul

24:6 Acts 24:12; Acts 19:37; Acts 21:27-29
24:7 Acts 21:31-33; Acts 23:23-32; Prov 4:16
24:8 Acts 23:30,35; Acts 25:5,15,16
24:9 Acts 6:11-13; Ps 4:2; Ps 62:3,4
24:10 Acts 12:17; Acts 13:16; Acts 19:33
24:11 Acts 24:1; Acts 21:18,27; Acts 22:30
24:12 Acts 25:8; Acts 28:17; Acts 24:5
24:13 Acts 25:7; 1 Pet 3:16
24:14 Exod 3:15; 1 Chr 29:18; Mic 4:2
24:15 Dan 12:2; John 5:28,29; 1 Thess 4:14-16
24:16 Acts 23:1; 1 Tim 1:5,19; Rom 2:15
24:17 Isa 60:5; Gal 2:10; Acts 11:29,30
24:18 Acts 21:26-30; Acts 26:21
24:19 Acts 23:30; Acts 25:16
24:21 Acts 23:6; Acts 4:2; Acts 26:6-8
24:22 Acts 24:10,24; Acts 26:3; Acts 18:20
24:23 Acts 27:3; Acts 28:16,31; Acts 24:26
24:24 Acts 20:21; Gal 2:16,20; Acts 26:22

24:6 *who also attempted to profane the temple* The charge goes back to the false rumor that Paul brought a Gentile into the temple courts (21:28-29). None of it was true.
24:7 *But Lysias the commander, having come up, took him away out of our hands with great violence* The SLB includes the words from the end of verse 6 through the start of verse 8, as the King James Version does; most modern translations leave them out or footnote them, since the earliest manuscripts lack them. If original, they twist the facts again. There was no fair trial. A mob was beating Paul, and Lysias rescued him (21:30-32).
24:9 *the Jews also agreed, declaring that these things were so* A crowd agreeing does not make something true. In Acts the Gospel was often attacked with the same accusations repeated without proof (17:6-7; 21:21). Our job is to answer with the facts and a clean conscience, as Paul does next.
24:10 *I more cheerfully make my defense* No flattery, only respect: Felix's long experience meant he could understand the case. And Paul is cheerful, a prisoner on trial for his life, because the Lord had promised he would testify in Rome (23:11). This trial was not the end of the story.
24:11 *it is not more than twelve days for me since I went up to worship in Jerusalem* He came to worship, not to start a riot. Twelve days, much of it in Roman custody, was not much time to stir up a nation, and the facts were easy to check.
24:13 *nor are they able to prove the things of which they now accuse me* In a Roman court the accuser had to bring evidence. Tertullus gave a speech but no proof. Paul does not attack his accusers; he shows their case is empty. When falsely accused, we can stay calm and stick to what is true.
24:14 *so I serve the God of my fathers, believing all things that are according to the law and that have been written in the Prophets* Following Jesus is not a new religion that turned its back on Israel. Paul serves the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and believes all the Law and Prophets. The Christian faith is the fulfillment of what God promised Israel. Jesus is the Messiah the Old Testament pointed to.
24:15 *a resurrection of the dead, both of the righteous and of the unrighteous* Every person will be raised, some to life and some to judgment (John 5:28-29; Dan 12:2). I believe believers who have died are raised when Christ comes for His church (1 Thess 4:16), Tribulation martyrs when He returns to reign (Rev 20:4-6), and the rest of the dead after the thousand years for judgment (Rev 20:5, 11-15). Paul does not give the timing here, but everyone will face God.
24:16 *to have a conscience without offense toward God and men* Belief in the resurrection was not just doctrine to Paul. It shaped how he lived every day (23:1; 2 Cor 5:10). If we really believe we will give an account to God, it will change how we treat others, how we work, and what we say.
24:17 *I came to bring alms to my nation, and offerings* The collection from the Gentile churches for the poor believers in Jerusalem (Rom 15:25-27; 1 Cor 16:1-4; 2 Cor 8-9), mentioned only here in Acts. The man accused of being a plague had come carrying money for the poor.
24:19 *who ought to be present before you and to accuse* The Jews from Asia, where Ephesus was, started the riot (21:27). They were the real witnesses, and Roman law took an absent accuser seriously. The people who started it all had disappeared.
24:21 *Concerning the resurrection of the dead I am being judged by you today* The only thing the Council could point to was the sentence Paul cried out (23:6). That was the real issue all along. The whole Christian message rests on God raising Jesus from the dead (1 Cor 15:14, 17).
24:22 *Felix, knowing more accurately the things concerning the Way, put them off* Felix knew more about the Christians than the leaders realized, perhaps through his Jewish wife or from years governing a land where the church was growing. He knew Paul was innocent. Scripture never says Lysias came. It was a way to avoid a decision that would anger the leaders.
24:23 *to forbid none of his own people to serve or to come to him* Friends could bring food and visit. Luke was likely nearby during these two years, and many believe he gathered eyewitness accounts for his Gospel and Acts then (Luke 1:1-3). God was at work while Paul sat in custody.
24:24 *Drusilla his wife, who was a Jewish woman* The youngest daughter of Herod Agrippa I, who killed James and died struck by an angel (12:1-2, 20-23), and sister of Agrippa II (chs. 25-26). Josephus says she left her first husband to marry Felix.

and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. **25** And as he was reasoning about righteousness and self-control and the judgment that is about to be, Felix, having become frightened, answered, "For the present, go; and having found an opportunity, I will call for you." **26** And at the same time he was also hoping that money would be given to him by Paul, so that he might release him; therefore also, sending for him more often, he was conversing with him. **27** But when two years had been completed, Felix received a successor, Porcius (Porkios) Festus (Phestos); and wishing to lay up favors with the Jews, Felix left Paul bound.

ACTS 25

Paul Appeals to Caesar

1 Festus (Phestos) therefore, having arrived in the province, after three days went up to Jerusalem (Hierosolyma) from Caesarea (Kaisareia). **2** And the high priest and the chief men of the Jews informed him against Paul (Paulos), and they were begging him, **3** asking a favor against him, that he would summon him to Jerusalem (Hierousalem), forming an ambush to do away with him on the way. **4** So then Festus answered that Paul was being kept at Caesarea, and that he himself was about to set out shortly. **5** "Therefore," he says, "let those among you who are in authority, having gone down with ***me***, if there is anything amiss in this man, accuse him." **6** And having spent more than ten days among them, having gone down to Caesarea, on the next day, having sat on the judgment seat, he commanded Paul to be brought. **7** And when he had arrived, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood around ***him***, bringing many and weighty charges against Paul, which they were not able to prove, **8** while he was making his defense, "Neither against the law of the Jews, nor against the temple, nor against Caesar have I sinned in anything." **9** But Festus, wishing to lay up a favor with the Jews, answering Paul, said, "Are you willing, having gone up to Jerusalem, to be judged there concerning these things before me?" **10** And Paul said, "I am standing before the judgment seat of Caesar, where I must be judged. To ***the*** Jews I have done no wrong, as you also know very well. **11** For if indeed I am doing wrong and have done anything worthy of death, I do not refuse to die; but if there is nothing ***in the things*** of which these accuse me, no one can hand me over to them as a favor. I appeal to Caesar!" **12** Then Festus, having conferred with the council, answered, "You have appealed to Caesar; to Caesar you will go!"

Festus Consults Agrippa

13 And when some days had passed, Agrippa (Agrippas) the king and Bernice (Bernike) arrived at Caesarea to greet Fes-

24:25 Gal 5:23; 2 Pet 1:6; Acts 10:42
24:26 Acts 24:2,3; Exod 23:8; Deut 16:19
24:27 Acts 25:9,14; Acts 25:1; Acts 12:3
25:1 Acts 23:34; Acts 25:5; Acts 18:22
25:2 Acts 25:15; Acts 24:1; Job 31:31
25:3 Acts 9:2; 1 Sam 23:19-21; Jer 38:4
25:5 Ps 7:3; Ps 7:4; Ps 7:5
25:6 Acts 25:10,17; Matt 27:19; Acts 18:12-17
25:7 Ezra 4:6; Neh 6:8; Acts 24:5,6,13
25:8 Jer 37:18; Acts 28:17,21; Acts 25:10
25:9 Acts 24:27; Acts 12:3; Acts 25:3,20
25:10 Acts 16:37,38; Acts 22:25-28; Acts 25:25
25:11 Gen 40:15; Acts 26:32; Acts 28:19
25:12 Acts 25:21; Acts 19:21; Acts 23:11
25:13 Acts 25:22,23; Acts 26:1,27,28; 1 Sam 13:10

24:25 *righteousness and self-control and the judgment that is about to be* Paul did not water down the message for a harsh ruler who had taken another man's wife. Felix was frightened, but fear is not repentance. One of the saddest verses in Acts: he heard the truth, felt its weight, and chose to wait. Scripture never says he found that time. "Now is a day of salvation" (2 Cor 6:2). If God is speaking to you today, do not put Him off.

24:26 *he was also hoping that money would be given to him by Paul* Bribes for releasing prisoners were against Roman law but common among corrupt officials. Felix may have heard of the large gift Paul brought (24:17). He heard the Gospel many times, listening for money, not truth. It is possible to sit under God's Word again and again and never let it change you.

24:27 *wishing to lay up favors with the Jews, Felix left Paul bound* Paul's custody in Caesarea likely ran from about A.D. 57 to 59; Josephus says Felix was recalled after trouble between Jews and Gentiles in Caesarea. Paul's freedom was traded for a politician's popularity. But the promise of Rome still stood (23:11). God's timing is not ours, but He is never late.

25:1 *Festus therefore, having arrived in the province* A wise new governor would meet the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem right away. Festus ruled from about A.D. 59 until he died in office about two years later. History remembers him as fairer than Felix, but even a fair man can be tempted to please the crowd.

25:3 *forming an ambush to do away with him on the way* Two years had not cooled their hatred. Before, forty plotters asked the chief priests for help (23:12-15); now the chief priests themselves ask for the ambush. Sin that is not dealt with grows.

25:5 *let those among you who are in authority, having gone down with me* Festus wanted to handle the case the proper Roman way, in his own court. He did not know about the ambush, but God did. We may never know how many times God has quietly closed a door that would have led us into harm.

25:6 *having sat on the judgment seat* When a Roman official sat on this raised platform, court was in session. Felix let the case sit for two years. Festus dealt with it the day after he returned.

25:7 *many and weighty charges against Paul, which they were not able to prove* As before Felix (24:13). Two years later they still had no evidence, only volume. A lie does not become true because it is repeated loudly for a long time.

25:8 *Neither against the law of the Jews, nor against the temple, nor against Caesar have I sinned in anything* Caesar was the emperor's title; the emperor then was Nero. The three cover every charge. The Law and the temple were religious charges. Caesar was the political one that could get Paul executed. He denied them all with a clear conscience.

25:9 *Festus, wishing to lay up a favor with the Jews* New in office, Festus needed the leaders' goodwill. In Jerusalem Paul would be on his enemies' ground, with the ambush waiting. It is the temptation that pulled at Felix (24:27) and Pilate (Luke 23:23-24): treating justice as a favor traded for popularity.

25:10 *I am standing before the judgment seat of Caesar, where I must be judged* Not pride or stubbornness. A Roman court was the right place for a Roman citizen, and Jerusalem meant almost certain death. Paul was ready to die for Christ (21:13), but he would not throw his life away when God had said he would testify in Rome.

25:11 *I appeal to Caesar* Every citizen could appeal to the emperor, and the governor then had to send him to Rome. Paul was not running from suffering. He used the law God had put in place to carry him where God wanted him. It is not unspiritual to use legal rights to protect ourselves and the Gospel's work, as Paul did in Philippi (16:37) and Jerusalem (22:25).

25:12 *You have appealed to Caesar; to Caesar you will go* The council was the governor's legal advisors. These words fulfilled Jesus' promise (23:11) and God's first word about Paul, that he would carry His name before Gentiles and kings (9:15). No plan of man can overturn a promise of God.

25:13 *Agrippa the king and Bernice* Herod Agrippa II, son of the Agrippa of chapter 12 and great-grandson of Herod the Great (Matt 2:16). Rome let him rule territory north and east of Galilee, and he could appoint the high priest. He knew the Jewish faith well. Bernice was his sister and Drusilla's (24:24). The most powerful Jewish ruler of the day was about to hear the Gospel.

tus. **14** And as they were staying there many days, Festus laid before the king the things concerning Paul, saying, "There is a certain man left by Felix (Phelix) a prisoner, **15** about whom, when I was in Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews informed ***me***, asking for judgment against him; **16** to whom I answered that it is not ***the*** custom with Romans to hand over any man to destruction as a favor before the one being accused has the accusers face to face and receives an opportunity for defense concerning the charge. **17** Therefore, when they had come together here, I, having made no delay, on the next ***day***, having sat on the judgment seat, commanded the man to be brought;
18 concerning whom the accusers, having stood up, were bringing no charge of ***the things*** which I was suspecting, **19** but they had certain questions against him concerning ***their*** own religion, and concerning a certain Jesus (Iesous) who had died, whom Paul was asserting to be alive. **20** And being at a loss concerning the inquiry about this, I was asking whether he would be willing to go to Jerusalem and there to be judged concerning these things. **21** But when Paul appealed to be kept for the decision of the Emperor, I commanded him to be kept until I might send him to Caesar." **22** And Agrippa said to Festus, "I myself also was wishing to hear the man." "Tomorrow," he says, "you will hear him." **23** Therefore on the next day, when Agrippa and Bernice had come with great pomp and had entered into the audience hall with both the commanders and the men who were of prominence in the city, and Festus had commanded, Paul was brought in. **24** And Festus says, "King Agrippa, and all you men who are present with us, you see this one, concerning whom all the multitude of the Jews petitioned me, both in Jerusalem and here, crying out that he must not live any longer. **25** But I, having found that he had done nothing worthy of death, and since he himself also appealed to the Emperor, determined to send him; **26** concerning whom I have nothing definite to write to ***my*** lord. Therefore I have brought him before you all, and especially before you, King Agrippa, so that, the examination having taken place, I may have something to write. **27** For it seems unreasonable to me, sending a prisoner, not also to indicate the charges against him."

ACTS 26

Paul's Defense Before Agrippa

1 And Agrippa (Agrippas) said to Paul (Paulos), "It is permitted for you to speak for yourself." Then Paul, having stretched out the hand, was making his defense:
2 "Concerning all the things of which I am accused by Jews, King Agrippa, I have considered myself fortunate, being about to make my defense before you today, **3** especially knowing you to be an expert in all the customs and also questions among ***the*** Jews. Therefore I beg you to hear me patiently. **4** So then, my manner of life from youth, which was from the beginning among my nation in Jerusalem (Hierosolyma), all the Jews know, **5** knowing me beforehand from the first, if they are willing to testify, that according to the strictest sect of our religion I lived ***as*** a Pharisee. **6** And now I stand being judged for the hope of the promise made by God to the fathers, **7** to which our twelve tribes, serving with earnestness night and day, hope to attain; concerning

25:14 Acts 24:27
25:15 Acts 25:1-3; Esth 3:9; Luke 18:3-5
25:16 Acts 25:4,5; John 7:51; Acts 26:1
25:19 Acts 18:15,19; Acts 23:29; Acts 25:7
25:21 Acts 25:10; Acts 26:32; 2 Tim 4:16
25:22 Acts 9:15; Isa 52:15; Matt 10:18
25:23 Esth 1:4; Isa 5:14; Ezek 7:24
25:24 Acts 22:22; Acts 25:2,3,7; Luke 23:21-23
25:25 Deut 21:22; Acts 23:9,29; Luke 23:4,14
25:26 Acts 26:2,3
25:27 Prov 18:13; John 7:51
26:1 Acts 25:16; Prov 18:13,17; John 7:51
26:3 Acts 6:14; Acts 26:26; Acts 21:21
26:4 2 Tim 3:10; Acts 22:3
26:5 Acts 23:6; Acts 24:5,14; Acts 22:5
26:6 Gen 22:18; 2 Sam 7:12; 2 Sam 7:13
26:7 James 1:1; Ezra 6:17; Matt 19:28

25:16 *before the one being accused has the accusers face to face* One of the best things about Roman law. Scripture affirms the same principle: a matter is settled by witnesses, not rumor (Deut 19:15; John 7:51).
25:19 *a certain Jesus who had died, whom Paul was asserting to be alive* The whole Christian faith seen from the outside. To Festus it was a strange argument about a dead man. To Paul it was everything. Either Paul was wrong, or Jesus is alive today and Lord of all. There is no middle ground, and every person must decide.
25:21 *when Paul appealed to be kept for the decision of the Emperor* Festus was at a loss, and in retelling he left out his real reason for suggesting Jerusalem, the favor to the Jews (25:9). Emperor translates Augustus, the title first given to Caesar Augustus and used by each emperor after him.
25:22 *I myself also was wishing to hear the man* Agrippa's great-uncle Herod Antipas had long wanted to see Jesus, hoping for a miracle (Luke 23:8). Agrippa may have been curious too, but God would use it. Jesus said His followers would be brought before kings and governors as a testimony (Luke 21:12-13).
25:23 *when Agrippa and Bernice had come with great pomp* Royal robes and display on one side, a prisoner in chains on the other. Yet the man in chains had the true riches. The pomp of that day is long gone, but Paul's words are still changing lives. Caesarea had five cohorts, so five commanders may have been there.
25:25 *having found that he had done nothing worthy of death* The third Roman official to say Paul is innocent, after Lysias (23:29) and Felix (24:22-23). Like Jesus before Pilate (Luke 23:4, 14, 22), Paul was declared innocent again and again and still kept in chains.
25:27 *it seems unreasonable to me, sending a prisoner, not also to indicate the charges against him* A governor sending a prisoner to Caesar had to explain the charges, and Festus had none. It was worse than unreasonable; it was unjust to hold an innocent man at all. But God used even Festus' confusion to bring the Gospel before a king.
26:1 *having stretched out the hand, was making his defense* The way a public speaker began. Even in chains, Paul is not a beaten man pleading for mercy. He is an ambassador for Christ (Eph 6:20).
26:3 *knowing you to be an expert in all the customs and also questions among the Jews* Unlike Tertullus with Felix, this is not flattery but simply true. Festus did not understand the case, but Agrippa did. Paul could talk about the Law, the Prophets, and the Messiah with a man who knew what those words meant. This is the longest of Paul's defense speeches.
26:5 *according to the strictest sect of our religion I lived as a Pharisee* The Pharisees kept the Law in every detail along with their teachers' traditions, and they believed in angels and the resurrection. Paul was no outsider or rebel. He came from the most devoted part of Judaism.
26:6 *I stand being judged for the hope of the promise made by God to the fathers* The promise of the Messiah, and with Him the resurrection and the kingdom (Gen 22:18; 2 Sam 7:12-16; Dan 12:2). Paul's message is that it has come true in Jesus. The irony is painful: the people who should have welcomed the promise put Paul on trial for announcing it.
26:7 *our twelve tribes, serving with earnestness night and day* Paul still sees Israel as God's people with a promise that has not been canceled (Rom 11:1-2, 29). God is not finished with Israel.

which hope I am accused by the Jews, King Agrippa. **8** Why is it judged incredible with you if God raises ***the*** dead? **9** So then I myself thought to myself that I must do many things contrary to the name of Jesus (Iesous) the Nazarene,
10 which I also did in Jerusalem; and I locked up many of the saints in prisons, having received the authority from the chief priests; and when they were being done away with, I cast ***my*** vote against ***them***. **11** And punishing them often throughout all the synagogues, I was compelling ***them*** to blaspheme; and being exceedingly enraged against them, I was persecuting ***them*** even as far as to foreign cities. **12** In which ***pursuits*** also, journeying to Damascus (Damaskos) with authority and commission from the chief priests, **13** at midday on the road, O king, I saw a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining around me and those journeying with me. **14** And when we had all fallen down to the ground, I heard a voice speaking to me and saying in the Hebrew language, 'Saul (Saoul), Saul, why are you persecuting Me? ***It is*** hard for you to kick against goads.' **15** And I said, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. **16** But rise up and stand on your feet; for to this ***end*** I have appeared to you, to designate you an attendant and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things in which I will appear to you, **17** rescuing you from the people and from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, **18** to open their eyes and to turn ***them*** from darkness to light and from the authority of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith which ***is*** in Me.' **19** Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, **20** but I was declaring, first to those in Damascus and in Jerusalem, and to all the region of Judea (Ioudaia), and to the Gentiles, to repent and to turn to God, doing works worthy of repentance. **21** Because of these things the Jews, having seized me in the temple, were attempting to kill ***me***. **22** Therefore, having obtained the help that ***is*** from God, to this day I stand, testifying both to small and to great, saying nothing besides the things which both the prophets and Moses said were about to happen: **23** that the Christ ***is*** subject to suffering, that, first out of ***the*** resurrection of ***the*** dead, He is about to proclaim light to the people and to the Gentiles."

Festus and Agrippa Answer

24 And as he was saying these things in his defense, Festus (Phestos) said with a loud voice, "You are insane, Paul! Much learning is turning you to insanity." **25** But he says, "I am not insane, most excellent Festus, but I utter declarations of truth and soberness. **26** For the king knows about these things, to whom also I speak with boldness; for I am not persuaded that any of these things escapes his notice, not one;

26:8 Acts 4:2; Acts 10:40-42; Acts 13:30,31
26:9 1 Tim 1:13; Acts 22:8; John 16:2,3
26:10 Acts 9:13,26; Acts 22:4,19,20; Acts 7:58
26:11 Acts 22:19; Matt 10:17; Acts 13:45
26:12 Acts 9:1,2; Acts 22:5; Acts 26:10
26:13 Matt 17:2; Acts 9:3; Acts 22:6
26:14 Acts 21:40; Acts 22:2; Acts 9:4,5
26:15 Exod 16:8; Matt 25:40,45; John 15:20,21
26:16 Ezek 2:1; Acts 22:14,15; Acts 9:6-9
26:17 Acts 9:15; Rom 11:13; 1 Tim 2:7
26:18 Isa 42:7; 1 Pet 2:9,25; Acts 20:32
26:19 Acts 26:2,26,27; Exod 4:13,14; Isa 50:5
26:20 Acts 3:19; Matt 3:8; Acts 2:38
26:21 Acts 21:30,31; Acts 22:22; Acts 23:12-15
26:22 2 Kgs 23:2; 2 Chr 15:13; Ps 115:13
26:23 Isa 42:6; Ps 22:15; Rev 1:5
26:24 Mark 3:21; 1 Cor 4:10; Acts 17:32
26:25 Acts 23:26; Acts 24:3; John 8:49
26:26 Ps 119:46; Dan 3:27; Acts 2:1-12

26:8 *Why is it judged incredible with you if God raises the dead* A fair question. If God created life, why would it be hard for Him to give it back? The resurrection only seems impossible if we leave God out. Once we believe God exists and has power over His creation, the empty tomb makes perfect sense.
26:10 *I cast my vote against them* Some take this to mean Paul sat on the Sanhedrin; others think he simply gave his full approval, as at Stephen's death (8:1). Scripture does not settle it, and it is not the point. Paul was guilty.
26:11 *I was compelling them to blaspheme* To speak against Jesus. Telling the truth about our past is part of a real testimony, because it shows how great God's grace is (1 Tim 1:13-16).
26:13 *a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun* The glory of the risen Christ outshone the noon sun, like the face of Jesus in John's vision, shining like the sun in its strength (Rev 1:16).
26:14 *It is hard for you to kick against goads* A goad was a pointed stick for driving oxen; a stubborn ox that kicked back only hurt itself. The SLB has these words at 9:5 too, as the King James Version does. By fighting Jesus, Paul was only wounding himself. God may already have been pressing on his conscience, perhaps through Stephen's death. Fighting against God never works.
26:15 *I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting* Jesus is so joined to His people that what is done to them is done to Him. The church is His body (1 Cor 12:27). That should comfort every suffering believer and make us careful how we treat other Christians.
26:16 *to designate you an attendant and a witness* An attendant serves his Master; a witness tells what he has seen. The Lord did appear to Paul again and again (18:9; 22:17-18; 23:11; 2 Cor 12:1-4). Every believer is a witness in a sense (1:8).
26:18 *to open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light and from the authority of Satan to God* One of the clearest descriptions of salvation in Acts. People without Christ are blind and under Satan's power (2 Cor 4:4). The Gospel opens their eyes, they turn to God, and He forgives and gives them a place in His family, all by faith in Jesus, not by works or the Law (Eph 2:8-9).
26:19 *I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision* Paul obeyed, and the order of his preaching matches the pattern Jesus gave (1:8).
26:20 *doing works worthy of repentance* Repentance is a change of mind and heart that turns from sin to God. Good deeds do not save us, but they are the fruit that shows the change is real (Eph 2:10; James 2:17-18). John the Baptist preached the same (Luke 3:8).
26:21 *the Jews, having seized me in the temple, were attempting to kill me* Paul was no criminal. He obeyed a vision from heaven and preached to Gentiles as well as Jews, and that was what his accusers could not stand (22:21-22).
26:22 *having obtained the help that is from God, to this day I stand* That is how he was still standing.
26:23 *that the Christ is subject to suffering, that, first out of the resurrection of the dead* Three points. The Messiah would suffer (Isa 53). He would be the first to rise, not to die again but in a glorified body (1 Cor 15:20). And He would proclaim light to Israel and the Gentiles (Isa 49:6). Jesus said the same after He rose (Luke 24:44-47).
26:24 *Much learning is turning you to insanity* To a Roman, a man rising from the dead was nonsense, and Festus thought Paul's books had gone to his head. The Gospel still sounds like foolishness to many (1 Cor 1:18, 23). That should not surprise or stop us.
26:25 *I utter declarations of truth and soberness* Paul answers calmly, giving the governor his proper title. Our faith is not blind. It rests on real events before many witnesses (1 Cor 15:3-8).
26:26 *this has not been done in a corner* Jesus taught in public and was crucified outside Jerusalem at a major feast. The empty tomb was talked about all over the city, and thousands believed there. Christianity is not built on hidden visions or secret knowledge, but on public facts.

for this has not been done in a corner. **27** King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you believe." **28** And Agrippa said to Paul, "In a little you are persuading me to become a Christian." **29** And Paul said, "I would pray to God that, both in a little and in much, not only you but also all who hear me today might become such as I also am, except for these chains." **30** And when he had said these things, the king rose up, and the governor, and Bernice (Bernike), and those sitting with them; **31** and having withdrawn, they were speaking to one another, saying, "This man is doing nothing worthy of death or of chains." **32** And Agrippa said to Festus, "This man could have been released if he had not appealed to Caesar."

ACTS 27

Paul Sails for Rome

1 And when it was determined that we should sail away to Italy (Italia), they were delivering both Paul (Paulos) and certain other prisoners to a centurion named Julius (Ioulios), of the Augustan cohort. **2** And having boarded an Adramyttian ship, being about to sail to the places along Asia, we set sail, Aristarchus (Aristarchos), a Macedonian of Thessalonica (Thessalonike), being with us. **3** And on the next ***day*** we landed at Sidon; and Julius, having treated Paul kindly, allowed ***him***, having gone to ***his*** friends, to receive care. **4** And from there, having set sail, we sailed under Cyprus (Kypros), because the winds were contrary. **5** And having sailed across the sea along Cilicia (Kilikia) and Pamphylia, we came down to Myra of Lycia (Lykia). **6** And there the centurion, having found an Alexandrian ship sailing to Italy, put us on board it. **7** And sailing slowly for many days, and having arrived with difficulty off Cnidus (Knidos), the wind not permitting us ***to go on***, we sailed under Crete (Krete) off Salmone; **8** and coasting along it with difficulty, we came to a certain place called Fair Havens (Kaloi Limenes), near which was a city, Lasea (Lasaia). **9** And when considerable time had passed, and the voyage was already dangerous because the Fast also had already gone by, Paul was admonishing ***them***, **10** saying to them, "Men, I perceive that the voyage is about to be with damage and much loss, not only of the cargo and of the ship but also of our lives." **11** But the centurion was persuaded by the pilot and the ship owner rather than by the things spoken by Paul. **12** And because the harbor was not suitable for wintering, the majority reached a decision to set sail from there also, if somehow they might be able, having arrived at Phenice (Phoinix), to winter ***there***, a harbor of Crete looking toward ***the*** southwest and toward ***the*** northwest.

The Storm

13 And when a south wind blew gently, having thought that they had obtained ***their*** purpose, having weighed ***anchor***,

26:27 Acts 26:22,23
26:28 Acts 24:25; Ezek 33:31; Matt 10:18
26:29 1 Cor 7:7; Exod 16:3; Num 11:29
26:30 Acts 18:15; Acts 28:22
26:31 Acts 23:9,29; Acts 25:25; Acts 28:18
26:32 Acts 28:18; Acts 25:11,12,25
27:1 Acts 25:25; Acts 25:12,25; Acts 10:1
27:2 Acts 21:1; Luke 8:22; Acts 20:15,16
27:3 Gen 10:15; Gen 49:13; Isa 23:2
27:4 Acts 4:36; Acts 11:19,20; Acts 13:4
27:5 Acts 6:9; Acts 13:13; Acts 15:23,41
27:6 Acts 28:11; Acts 6:9; Acts 18:24
27:7 Acts 27:12,13,21; Acts 2:11; Titus 1:5,12
27:9 Lev 16:29; Lev 23:27-29; Num 29:7
27:10 Gen 41:16-25,38,39; 2 Kgs 6:9,10; Ps 25:14
27:11 Acts 27:21; Exod 9:20,21; 2 Kgs 6:10
27:12 Ps 107:30; Acts 27:8
27:13 Job 37:17; Ps 78:26; Song 4:16

26:27 *King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets* A hard question. No would cost him standing with the people he ruled; yes would let Paul show him that the Prophets pointed to Jesus. Paul is no longer giving a speech. He is calling a man to decide.
26:28 *In a little you are persuading me to become a Christian* The King James has Agrippa say he is almost persuaded, as if he were close to believing. Most modern translations take it as a brush-off, maybe sarcastic: do you think you can make me a Christian so quickly? Either way, Agrippa did not believe that day. Being close is not the same as coming to Christ.
26:29 *might become such as I also am, except for these chains* The prisoner wishes the king, the governor, and the leading men could have what he has. Not his chains, but his Savior. Paul cared more about their souls than his own freedom.
26:31 *This man is doing nothing worthy of death or of chains* Declared innocent again, by a king and a governor together. Luke wanted Theophilus and any Roman official reading Acts to know that the Christian faith was not a crime against Rome.
26:32 *This man could have been released if he had not appealed to Caesar* It sounds like Paul made a mistake. He did not. Jesus had said he would testify in Rome (23:11), and the appeal was the road God used. What looks like a wrong turn can be God moving us exactly where He wants us (Rom 8:28).
27:1 *a centurion named Julius, of the Augustan cohort* The "we" tells us Luke is back. The "we" sections (16:10-17; 20:5-21:18; 27:1-28:16) are what he saw firsthand. A centurion commanded about a hundred soldiers.
27:2 *Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica, being with us* Adramyttium was a port on the northwest coast of Asia Minor. Aristarchus had been seized in the Ephesus riot (19:29; 20:4), and Paul later calls him "my fellow prisoner" (Col 4:10). God gave Paul faithful friends for the journey.
27:3 *Julius, having treated Paul kindly* Sidon was a port north of Caesarea. This is the first sign of something seen all through the chapter: Paul's character won him favor even with the officer guarding him (Prov 16:7).
27:4 *we sailed under Cyprus, because the winds were contrary* On the side of the island sheltered from the wind. Summer and fall winds there blow mostly from the west and northwest, making the westward trip toward Rome slow and hard. Myra was on the southern coast of what is now Turkey.
27:6 *an Alexandrian ship sailing to Italy* Alexandria in Egypt was Rome's main source of grain, and big grain ships made the run regularly, often stopping at Myra. This one carried wheat (27:38).
27:8 *a certain place called Fair Havens* Cnidus was at the southwest tip of Asia Minor, Salmone the cape at Crete's eastern end, and Fair Havens on Crete's south coast. Real places in order, with real sailing conditions. This is history written by someone who was there.
27:9 *the Fast also had already gone by* The Day of Atonement, the one fast the Law commanded (Lev 16:29-31), in late September or early October. Open-sea sailing became risky after mid-September and mostly stopped from about November until spring.
27:10 *the voyage is about to be with damage and much loss* Not a guess. Paul was an experienced traveler who had already been shipwrecked three times (2 Cor 11:25).
27:11 *the centurion was persuaded by the pilot and the ship owner rather than by the things spoken by Paul* Reasonable from a human point of view. They were the professionals, and Paul was a prisoner and a preacher.
27:12 *the majority reached a decision to set sail from there also* Phenice was a better harbor farther west on Crete. The majority voted, and the majority was wrong. Popular opinion and expert advice are not always right. When God gives wisdom through one of His people, it is foolish to ignore it.
27:13 *when a south wind blew gently, having thought that they had obtained their purpose* How often we assume a choice was right because things look good. A soft breeze is not the same as God's approval.

they were coasting along Crete closer ***to shore***. **14** But not long after, a tempestuous wind, which is called Euroclydon (Euroklydon), rushed down from it. **15** And when the ship was caught and was not able to face the wind, having given way ***to it***, we were being driven along. **16** And having run under a certain small island called Clauda (Klaude), we were able with difficulty to get control of the lifeboat; **17** which having hoisted up, they were using supports, undergirding the ship; and fearing that they might fall into the Syrtis, having lowered the gear, they were driven along in this way. **18** And as we were being violently storm-tossed, on the next ***day*** they were making a jettison; **19** and on the third ***day*** we cast out with our own hands the tackle of the ship. **20** And when neither sun nor stars were appearing for many days, and no small tempest was pressing on ***us***, from then on all hope that we would be saved was being taken away. **21** And when there had been long abstinence from food, then Paul, having stood up in their midst, said, "You ought indeed, O men, having obeyed me, not to have set sail from Crete, and to have avoided this damage and loss. **22** And now I urge you to take courage; for there will be no loss of life among you, except of the ship. **23** For there stood by me this night an angel of the God whose I am and whom I serve, **24** saying, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must stand before Caesar; and look, God has granted you all those who are sailing with you.' **25** Therefore take courage, men; for I believe God that it will be so, in the way in which it has been told to me. **26** But we must fall upon a certain island."

The Shipwreck

27 And when the fourteenth night had come, as we were being driven about in the Adriatic ***Sea*** (Adrias), about the middle of the night the sailors were sensing that some land was drawing near to them. **28** And having taken soundings, they found approximately 120 feet (twenty fathoms); and having gone a little farther and having taken soundings again, they found approximately 90 feet (fifteen fathoms). **29** And fearing lest perhaps we might fall into rocky places, having cast four anchors out of the stern, they were praying for day to come. **30** And as the sailors were seeking to flee out of the ship, and had lowered the lifeboat into the sea under pretense as though they were about to cast out anchors from the bow, **31** Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, "Unless these remain in the ship, you yourselves cannot be saved." **32** Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the lifeboat and let it fall away. **33** And until day was about to come, Paul was urging all to partake of food, saying, "Today ***is the*** fourteenth day ***that***, watching, you continue without food, having taken nothing. **34** Therefore I urge you to take food; for this is for your preservation; for not a hair will fall from the head of any of you." **35** And having said these things and having taken bread, he gave thanks to God before all, and having broken ***it***, he began to eat. **36** And all, having

27:14 Ps 107:25; Jonah 1:3; Exod 14:22
27:15 Acts 27:27; James 3:4
27:17 Acts 27:29,41
27:18 Jonah 1:5; Ps 107:27; Matt 16:26
27:19 Job 2:4; Jonah 1:5; Mark 8:35-37
27:20 Eph 2:12; Exod 10:21-23; Ps 105:28
27:21 Gen 42:22; Acts 27:33-35; Ps 107:5,6
27:22 Acts 27:25,36; Acts 23:11; 1 Sam 30:6
27:23 Acts 5:19; Acts 23:11; Dan 6:22
27:24 Gen 18:26; Acts 23:11; Gen 15:1
27:25 Rom 4:20,21; Acts 27:11,21; Num 23:19
27:26 Acts 28:1
27:27 Acts 27:30; 1 Kgs 9:27; Jonah 1:6
27:29 Acts 27:17,41; Heb 6:19; Deut 28:67
27:30 Acts 27:16,32
27:31 2 Thess 2:13,14; Acts 27:11,21,42,43; Ps 91:11,12
27:32 Luke 16:8; Phil 3:7-9
27:34 Matt 10:30; 1 Kgs 1:52; Mark 8:2,3
27:35 Matt 15:36; Acts 2:46,47; 1 Sam 9:13
27:36 Ps 27:14; 2 Cor 1:4-6

27:14 *a tempestuous wind, which is called Euroclydon* The name joins the Greek words for the east wind and a wave, a wind that churns the sea. Many Bibles call it Euraquilo, a northeaster. It came down off Crete's mountains, and the easy sail became a fight for their lives.
27:16 *we were able with difficulty to get control of the lifeboat* The small boat towed behind had probably filled with water. Luke says "we," so he may have been pulling on the ropes himself.
27:17 *undergirding the ship* They passed ropes or cables around the hull to hold the timbers together. The Syrtis were the dreaded sandbanks off North Africa. Lowering the gear slowed the ship so it would not race.
27:19 *we cast out with our own hands the tackle of the ship* Everyone was working, passengers too. Storms force us to let go of things we thought were important. What looked valuable in calm weather goes overboard when lives are at stake.
27:20 *all hope that we would be saved was being taken away* Sailors steered by the sun and stars, and without them they were lost. This may be the lowest point in Acts; even Luke had given up. If you are in a place where you cannot see light, keep reading. God is about to speak into the darkness.
27:21 *You ought indeed, O men, having obeyed me, not to have set sail from Crete* Not I told you so, to look good. Paul reminds them he spoke the truth before, so they will believe what he says next.
27:22 *there will be no loss of life among you, except of the ship* A change from 27:10. God had not changed. He had answered prayer and revealed His plan, as the next verses show.
27:23 *an angel of the God whose I am and whom I serve* Paul makes sure these pagan sailors know which God he means: not one of theirs, but the one true God, to whom Paul belongs.
27:24 *God has granted you all those who are sailing with you* God's promise (23:11) still stood; Paul could not die in this storm. "Granted" suggests Paul had been praying for them. Because of one faithful man the whole ship was spared. God sometimes shows mercy to many for the sake of His people (Gen 18:26).
27:25 *for I believe God that it will be so* That is faith. Paul could not see the shore, and the storm still raged, but he believed God would do what He said. God did not promise an easy rescue. The ship would be lost, but they would live. Sometimes God does not take us around the storm but through it, and He keeps us all the way.
27:27 *as we were being driven about in the Adriatic Sea* The name then covered the open sea between Greece, Italy, and Sicily. The sailors may have heard waves breaking on a shore.
27:29 *they were praying for day to come* Soundings measured depth with a weighted line; a fathom is about six feet, so the water was getting shallow fast. Some translations say they wished for daybreak. Either way, they longed for light.
27:31 *Unless these remain in the ship, you yourselves cannot be saved* The sailors meant to save themselves and leave everyone else. If God had promised all would live, why did it matter? His promise did not cancel human responsibility. He promised the outcome and used the sailors' skill to bring it about. God's sovereignty and our obedience work together (Phil 2:12-13).
27:34 *not a hair will fall from the head of any of you* Echoing Jesus' promise to care for His followers (Luke 21:18). Faith in God's promise does not mean ignoring common sense. They needed strength to reach shore.
27:35 *he gave thanks to God before all* A prisoner on a sinking ship, before soldiers, sailors, and prisoners, thanking God for bread. A simple act and a powerful testimony, and everyone took courage. It was an ordinary meal, not the Lord's Supper, but the words echo Jesus taking bread and giving thanks (Luke 22:19).

become encouraged, also took food themselves. **37** And we were, all the souls in the ship, two hundred seventy-six. **38** And having been satisfied with food, they were lightening the ship, throwing out the wheat into the sea. **39** And when it became day, they were not recognizing the land; but they were noticing a certain bay having a shore, onto which they determined, if they could, to drive the ship. **40** And having cut away the anchors, they were leaving ***them*** in the sea, at the same time having loosened the ropes of the rudders; and having hoisted the foresail to the blowing ***wind***, they were making for the shore. **41** But having fallen into a place between two seas, they ran the vessel aground; and the bow, having stuck fast, remained immovable, but the stern was being broken up by the violence of the waves. **42** And the soldiers' plan was that they should kill the prisoners, lest anyone, having swum away, should escape. **43** But the centurion, wishing to bring Paul safely through, kept them from ***their*** purpose, and commanded those able to swim, having thrown ***themselves overboard*** first, to go out onto the land, **44** and the rest, some on planks and some on things from the ship. And so it happened that all were brought safely to the land.

ACTS 28

Paul on Malta

1 And having been saved, then they recognized that the island is called Malta (Melite). **2** And the natives were showing us no ordinary kindness; for having kindled a fire, they received all of us because of the rain that had set in and because of the cold. **3** But when Paul (Paulos) had gathered a quantity of sticks and laid ***them*** on the fire, a viper, having come out from the heat, fastened on his hand. **4** And when the natives saw the creature hanging from his hand, they were saying to one another, "Surely this man is a murderer, whom, though he has been saved from the sea, Justice has not permitted to live." **5** He then, having shaken off the creature into the fire, suffered no harm. **6** But they were expecting him to be about to swell up or suddenly fall down dead. But when they had been expecting ***it*** for a long while and saw nothing amiss happening to him, changing their minds, they were saying that he was a god. **7** Now in the ***parts*** around that place were lands belonging to the leading ***man*** of the island, named Publius (Poplios), who, having received us, entertained ***us*** hospitably three days. **8** And it came about ***that*** the father of Publius was lying down, oppressed with fevers and dysentery, to whom Paul, having gone in and having prayed, having laid his hands on him, healed him. **9** So when this had happened, the rest also who had infirmities in the island were coming and were being healed; **10** who also honored us with many honors, and when we were setting sail, they put on ***board*** the things for the need.

27:37 Acts 2:41; Acts 7:14; Rom 13:1
27:38 Jonah 1:5; Acts 27:18,19; Job 2:4
27:40 Acts 27:29,30; Isa 33:23
27:41 Ezek 27:26,34; Acts 27:17,26-29; 2 Cor 11:25
27:42 Ps 74:20; Prov 12:10; Eccl 9:3
27:43 Acts 27:3,11,31; Acts 23:10,24; Prov 16:7
27:44 Acts 27:22,24; Ps 107:28-30; Amos 9:9
28:1 Acts 27:26,44
28:2 Acts 28:4; Rom 1:14; 1 Cor 14:11
28:3 Job 20:16; Isa 30:6; Isa 41:24
28:4 Luke 13:2,4; Matt 23:35; Gen 3:1
28:5 Mark 16:18; Luke 10:19; Num 21:6-9
28:6 Acts 12:22; Acts 14:11-13; Matt 21:9
28:7 Acts 13:7; Acts 18:12; Acts 23:24
28:8 Acts 9:40; Mark 6:5; Matt 9:18
28:9 Acts 5:12,15; Matt 4:24; Mark 6:54-56
28:10 Matt 15:5,6; 1 Thess 2:6; 1 Tim 5:3,4,17,18

27:37 *two hundred seventy-six* A large ship. Luke gives the exact count so we know every one survived. Some ancient manuscripts have a different number, but 276 is the SLB reading and that of most translations.
27:38 *throwing out the wheat into the sea* So the ship would ride as high as possible and come closer to shore before grounding.
27:40 *having loosened the ropes of the rudders* The rudders were large steering oars on each side of the stern; the foresail was a small sail at the front.
27:41 *the stern was being broken up by the violence of the waves* A place between two seas was likely a sandbar or reef where currents met. The ship was lost just as Paul said (27:22). Everything God told him came true, even the hard part.
27:42 *the soldiers' plan was that they should kill the prisoners* A soldier who let a prisoner escape could suffer the prisoner's penalty (12:19; 16:27).
27:43 *the centurion, wishing to bring Paul safely through* Paul had won Julius' respect. For the second time in the chapter, many lives were spared because of one man.
27:44 *all were brought safely to the land* Not one of the 276 was lost. The ship and cargo were gone, but the promise of God held. The God who kept Paul is the same God who keeps you. He may not save the ship, but He will keep every promise He has made.
28:1 *the island is called Malta* A small island about sixty miles south of Sicily, right on the route from the east to Rome. Most scholars accept that this is the Malta we know, and St. Paul's Bay on its northeast coast has long been pointed to as the place of the wreck.
28:2 *the natives were showing us no ordinary kindness* Luke's word was used for anyone who did not speak Greek; it does not mean wild or uncivilized. They welcomed 276 shipwrecked strangers. God has placed a sense of right and compassion in every person (Rom 2:14-15). These islanders showed mercy to strangers, and God was about to show mercy to them.
28:3 *when Paul had gathered a quantity of sticks* The man whose word had saved everyone on the ship was out gathering firewood. Real leaders serve (Mark 10:43-45).
28:4 *Justice has not permitted to live* To the islanders Justice was a goddess who punished wrongdoers. They assumed bad things happen only to bad people, as many still do. Jesus corrected that idea (John 9:1-3; Luke 13:1-5). Suffering is not always a sign that someone has done wrong.
28:5 *having shaken off the creature into the fire, suffered no harm* Jesus promised His messengers "authority to tread upon serpents" (Luke 10:19). This was God's protection on His servant, not an invitation to go looking for snakes to prove faith. The snake attacked Paul while he was serving. Malta has no venomous snakes today, but island wildlife can change over two thousand years, and the islanders fully expected him to die.
28:6 *changing their minds, they were saying that he was a god* At Lystra the crowd went the other way, from god to stoning (14:11-19). One minute a murderer, the next a god. Paul was neither. He was a servant of the living God. We should not be shaken by what people say about us, good or bad.
28:7 *the leading man of the island, named Publius* "Leading man" was the real title of Malta's chief official under Rome, another sign of how careful a historian Luke was.
28:8 *oppressed with fevers and dysentery* Luke the physician (Col 4:14) describes the illness plainly. Paul prayed first, knowing the power came from God, then laid hands on him. The kindness Publius showed was returned many times over.
28:9 *the rest also who had infirmities in the island were coming and were being healed* Luke does not say whether a church began on Malta, but it is hard to imagine Paul healing people for three months without telling them about the One who healed them.
28:10 *they put on board the things for the need* People who had lost everything in the wreck left fully supplied. Paul probably wrote during this imprisonment that God will supply all our needs (Phil 4:19). He had seen it on Malta.

Paul Arrives in Rome

11 And after three months we set sail in an Alexandrian ship which had wintered at the island, with a figurehead, ***the*** Dioscuri. **12** And having put in at Syracuse (Syrakousai), we stayed three days, **13** from where, having gone around, we arrived at Rhegium (Hregion). And after one day, when a south wind came up, on the second day we came to Puteoli (Potioloi), **14** where, having found brothers, we were urged to stay with them seven days. And so we came to Rome (Hrome). **15** And from there the brothers, having heard the things concerning us, came out to meet us as far as Forum of Appius (Appiou Phoron) and Three Taverns (Treis Tabernai); and when Paul saw them, having given thanks to God, he took courage. **16** And when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the camp commander; but Paul was permitted to stay by himself with the soldier who was guarding him.

Paul Preaches in Rome

17 And it came about after three days ***that*** Paul called together those who were the leading men of the Jews. And when they had come together, he was saying to them, "Men, brothers, I, though I had done nothing against the people or the ancestral customs, was delivered a prisoner from Jerusalem (Hierosolyma) into the hands of the Romans, **18** who, having examined me, were wanting to release ***me***, because no ground for death existed in me. **19** But when the Jews were objecting, I was compelled to appeal to Caesar, not as though I had anything of which to accuse my nation. **20** For this reason, therefore, I have called for you, to see ***you*** and to speak with ***you***; for because of the hope of Israel I have this chain around ***me***." **21** And they said to him, "We neither received letters concerning you from Judea (Ioudaia), nor did any of the brothers, having arrived, report or speak anything evil concerning you. **22** But we consider it fitting to hear from you what you think; for concerning this sect, indeed, it is known to us that everywhere it is spoken against." **23** And having appointed him a day, many more came to him at the lodging, to whom he was expounding, solemnly testifying to the kingdom of God, and persuading them ***of*** the things concerning Jesus (Iesous), both from the law of Moses and the prophets, from morning until evening. **24** And some were persuaded by the things being spoken, but some were disbelieving. **25** And being in disagreement with one another, they were departing after Paul had spoken one declaration: "Rightly the Holy Spirit spoke through Isaiah (Hesaias) the prophet to our fathers, **26** saying, 'Go to this people and say, "In hearing you will hear and you will certainly not understand, and seeing you will see and you will certainly not perceive; **27** for the heart of this people has been made dull, and with the ears they heard with difficulty, and their eyes they have closed; lest they should see with the eyes, and hear with the ears, and understand with the heart, and turn, and I

28:11 Acts 27:6; Acts 6:9; Isa 45:20
28:13 Acts 27:13
28:14 Acts 9:42,43; Acts 19:1; Acts 21:4,7,8
28:15 2 Chr 15:8; Gal 4:14; Acts 10:25
28:16 Acts 27:3,31,43; Acts 24:23; Acts 2:10
28:17 Acts 25:8,10; Acts 24:10-16; Acts 23:1-11
28:18 Acts 26:31; Acts 22:24,25,30; Acts 24:10,22
28:19 Acts 26:32; Acts 25:10-12,21,25; Rom 12:19-21
28:20 Acts 23:6; Acts 26:6,7; Acts 26:29
28:21 Exod 11:7; Isa 41:11; Isa 50:8
28:22 1 Pet 2:12; 1 Pet 3:16; Acts 16:20,21
28:23 2 Chr 17:9; Neh 8:3; Neh 8:8
28:24 Acts 14:4; Acts 17:4,5; Acts 13:48-50
28:25 Neh 9:30; Matt 15:7; Mark 7:6
28:26 Isa 6:9-10; Isa 42:19; Ezek 12:2
28:27 Exod 8:32; Deut 29:4; Deut 30:14

28:11 *with a figurehead, the Dioscuri* Three months meant early spring, when sailing resumed. The Dioscuri were the twins Castor and Pollux, believed to protect sailors. Luke names them only to identify the ship. Paul's safety depended not on carvings on a boat but on the God who had brought them through the storm.
28:13 *on the second day we came to Puteoli* Syracuse was Sicily's chief city, Rhegium on the toe of Italy. A south wind was right for going north. Puteoli was a major port on the Bay of Naples, about 140 miles from Rome by foot.
28:14 *And so we came to Rome* The brothers were fellow believers, and Julius again allowed the stay. After years of waiting, false charges, prison, and shipwreck, Paul arrived. He had wanted to visit Rome for years (19:21; Rom 1:10-13). He did not arrive the way he planned, but exactly as God promised.
28:15 *when Paul saw them, having given thanks to God, he took courage* The Forum of Appius was about forty miles from Rome, Three Taverns about thirty. Paul had written to these believers about three years before, and they walked for days to greet him. Even Paul needed encouragement. Never underestimate what it means to show up for a brother or sister in Christ.
28:16 *Paul was permitted to stay by himself with the soldier who was guarding him* He was likely chained to his guard (28:20), and soldiers taking turns meant a steady stream of Romans spent hours with Paul. His imprisonment became known throughout the praetorian guard and helped the Gospel spread (Phil 1:12-14). God turned Paul's chains into a pulpit.
28:17 *Paul called together those who were the leading men of the Jews* Even in Rome his pattern is the same: to the Jews first (13:46; Rom 1:16). He calls them brothers. He is not an enemy of Israel.
28:19 *not as though I had anything of which to accuse my nation* Paul had not come to get even with the Jewish leaders. He still loved his people (Rom 9:1-3).
28:20 *because of the hope of Israel I have this chain around me* The same hope he spoke of before Agrippa (26:6-7): the promised Messiah, the resurrection, and the kingdom promised to the fathers. Paul was a prisoner because he believed God kept His promise to Israel by sending Jesus.
28:21 *We neither received letters concerning you from Judea* Paul's ship sailed late and wintered on Malta, so messengers from Jerusalem may not have arrived before him. Or the Jerusalem leaders may have judged their case too weak to press in Rome.
28:22 *concerning this sect, indeed, it is known to us that everywhere it is spoken against* About ten years earlier Claudius had ordered Jews out of Rome (18:2), and Suetonius ties it to disturbances over one he called Chrestus, which many take as a garbled reference to Christ. The faith was already being argued about in the capital.
28:23 *persuading them of the things concerning Jesus, both from the law of Moses and the prophets, from morning until evening* An all-day Bible study. Paul did what Jesus did on the Emmaus road (Luke 24:27). From Genesis on, the Old Testament points to Jesus.
28:24 *some were persuaded by the things being spoken, but some were disbelieving* The same message and evidence, with two different results, from Jerusalem to Rome. No one can decide for someone else. Our job is to share the truth clearly and lovingly. The results belong to God.
28:25 *Rightly the Holy Spirit spoke through Isaiah the prophet* Paul believed Scripture is the very word of God, given through human writers (2 Tim 3:16; 2 Pet 1:21).
28:27 *and turn, and I should heal them* From Isaiah 6:9-10, which Jesus also quoted (Matt 13:14-15; John 12:39-41). The problem was never that God's message was unclear, but hearts that would not receive it. The saddest line is the last: if they turned, God would heal them. The door was open.

should heal them."' **28** Therefore let it be known to you that the salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles; they also will hear." **29** And when he had said these things, the Jews went away, having much discussion among themselves. **30** And Paul stayed two whole years in ***his*** own rented house, and was welcoming all who were coming in to him,
31 proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, unhindered.

28:28 Ps 98:2; Isa 52:10; Lam 3:26
28:29 Acts 28:25; Matt 10:34-36; Luke 12:51
28:31 Acts 28:23; Matt 4:23; Acts 4:29,31

28:28 *the salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles; they also will hear* The third time Paul says this (13:46; 18:6). It does not mean God has given up on Israel. In this very chapter Paul called them brothers and wore his chain for the hope of Israel. Israel's hardening is partial and temporary, "and so all Israel will be saved" (Rom 11:25-26). I believe that day is still ahead, when Christ returns.
28:29 *the Jews went away, having much discussion among themselves* The SLB includes this verse, as the King James Version does. Most modern translations leave it out or footnote it, since the earliest manuscripts lack it. It adds nothing new to 28:25.
28:30 *Paul stayed two whole years in his own rented house* Still a prisoner, but with an open door. Many believe he wrote Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon in these years, letters that mention his chains and greet Luke, Aristarchus, Mark, and Timothy.
28:31 *with all boldness, unhindered* Paul was chained, but "the word of God has not been bound" (2 Tim 2:9). Luke does not tell how the trial ended. Many believe Paul was released, preached again, wrote 1 Timothy and Titus, was arrested again, and wrote 2 Timothy (2 Tim 4:6-8). Tradition says he was beheaded under Nero around A.D. 64 to 67. Acts was never only Paul's story. It is the risen Jesus building His church by His Spirit, and the last word in Greek means unhindered. Nothing has stopped it since.

ROMANS

Introduction

Title

The letter is named for the people who first received it, the believers "in Rome, beloved of God, called saints" (1:7). Romans is the sixth book of the New Testament and the first of Paul's letters in our Bibles. It is placed first, not because it was written first, but because it is his longest and fullest explanation of the gospel. If you want to know what the good news of Jesus Christ is, why we need it, and how it changes a life, Romans is the place to go.

Author and Date

Paul tells us in the very first verse that he wrote it (1:1). He dictated the letter to a helper named Tertius, who adds his own greeting near the end (16:22). Paul most likely wrote from Corinth, in Greece, near the end of his third missionary journey, around A.D. 56 or 57 (Acts 20:2-3). He was about to carry a gift from the Gentile churches to the poor believers in Jerusalem (15:25-26), and after that he hoped to visit Rome on his way to Spain (15:24, 28). Phoebe, a servant of the church at Cenchrea, the port of Corinth, most likely carried the letter to Rome (16:1-2).

Background and Setting

Paul had not started the church in Rome and had never visited it. We do not know who first brought the gospel there; perhaps Jews from Rome who heard Peter at Pentecost (Acts 2:10) carried it home. The church met in homes (16:5) and was made up of both Jewish and Gentile believers, and that mix explains much of what Paul says. Some years before, the emperor Claudius had forced the Jews out of Rome (Acts 18:2). By the time Paul wrote, Jewish believers such as Priscilla and Aquila were back in Rome (16:3).

The Jewish believers needed to hear that keeping the Law of Moses could never make them right with God. The Gentile believers needed to hear that God had not thrown away His people Israel, and that they had no reason to look down on their Jewish brothers and sisters. Paul wrote to strengthen them in the gospel (1:11-15), to prepare for his visit and gain their help for the mission to Spain (15:22-24), and to urge Jews and Gentiles to receive one another, as Christ had received them both (15:7).

Themes

If Romans could be boiled down to two verses, it would be these: the gospel "is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, both to the Jew first and to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith" (1:16-17). God shows us a righteousness that comes from Him, not from us, and it is received by faith from start to finish.

Paul starts with the bad news, because you will never want a Savior until you know you need one. Gentile and Jew alike stand guilty, "for all sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (3:23). Then he gives the good news: we are "justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (3:24). Justification is God's verdict that declares a guilty sinner right in His sight, the moment he believes. From there Paul shows how the gospel frees us from sin's power and gives us life by the Spirit (chs. 6-8), how God has not forgotten Israel (chs. 9-11), and how the gospel changes the way we live (chs. 12-15). Key verses include 1:16, 3:23-24, 5:8, 6:23, 8:28 and 12:1-2.

Many believers share their faith using a handful of verses from this letter, often called the Roman Road: all have sinned (3:23), sin's wage is death but God offers a gift (6:23), Christ died for us while we were still sinners (5:8), we receive Him by believing and confessing Him as Lord (10:9-10), anyone who calls on Him will be saved (10:13), and there is no condemnation for those in Christ (8:1).

Christ in Romans

Christ is the center of every part of the letter. He is the Son of David according to the flesh and declared the Son of God by the resurrection (1:3-4). In Him the righteousness of God is revealed, for God set Him forth "as a propitiation through faith in His blood" (3:25), so that God is both righteous and the One who justifies the believer (3:26). He is the second Adam, whose one act of obedience brings life where Adam's one sin brought death (5:12-21). He was handed over for our sins and raised for our justification (4:25). Because He died, rose, and intercedes for us, nothing "will be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (8:39). He is the root of Jesse on whom the Gentiles hope (15:12), and the Deliverer who "will come out of Zion" (11:26) to turn Israel back to God.

Hard Passages

Romans raises some of the deepest questions in the Bible. The notes name the views where godly teachers disagree. How God's choosing and our believing fit together (8:28-30; 9:6-24) is answered differently by the Reformed and Arminian views; both agree that God is sovereign, that every person is responsible to repent and believe, that salvation is all of grace, and that the gospel must go to everyone. Paul himself ends the subject not with a debate but in worship (11:33).

The notes also take up whether believers can lose their salvation (8:38-39; 11:22), who the "I" of 7:14-25 is, how "all sinned" in Adam (5:12), what "all Israel will be saved" means (11:26), and how Paul and James fit together on faith and works (3:28). On Israel, I hold the future restoration view. A part of Israel has been hardened "until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in" (11:25), and at the end of the age the nation will turn to Jesus as Messiah, because "the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable" (11:29). The church has not replaced Israel. A few readings in the SLB follow the Received Text where the earliest manuscripts differ (8:1; 16:24), and the notes point these out.

Outline

I. Introduction (1:1-17)
  A. Paul's greeting (1:1-7)
  B. Paul's plans to visit Rome (1:8-15)
  C. The theme: the power of God for salvation (1:16-17)
II. Sin: The Whole World Is Guilty (1:18-3:20)
  A. The guilt of the Gentile world (1:18-32)
  B. The guilt of the moral and religious person, including the

Jew (2:1-3:8)
C. All have sinned (3:9-20)
III. Salvation: Made Right with God by Faith (3:21-5:21)
A. Righteousness from God through faith in Christ (3:21-31)
B. Abraham, our example of faith (4:1-25)
C. Peace with God, and Christ the last Adam (5:1-21)
IV. Sanctification: Growing in Holiness (6:1-8:39)
A. Dead to sin, alive to God (6:1-23)
B. The Law and the struggle with sin (7:1-25)
C. Life in the Spirit and the security of the believer (8:1-39)
V. Sovereignty: God's Plan for Israel (9:1-11:36)
A. God's choice in the past (9:1-33)
B. Israel's rejection in the present (10:1-21)
C. Israel's restoration in the future (11:1-36)
VI. Service: Living Out the Gospel (12:1-15:13)
A. A living sacrifice and life in the body of Christ (12:1-21)
B. Government, love, and the coming day (13:1-14)
C. The weak and the strong (14:1-15:13)
VII. Conclusion (15:14-16:27)
A. Paul's ministry and travel plans (15:14-33)
B. Greetings, warnings, and praise (16:1-27)

ROMANS

ROMANS 1

Greeting

1 Paul (Paulos), a slave of Jesus (Iesous) Christ, a called apostle, set apart for ***the*** gospel of God, **2** which He promised beforehand through His prophets in holy Scriptures,
3 concerning His Son, who came from ***the*** seed of David (Dabid) according to ***the*** flesh, **4** who was declared Son of God in power according to ***the*** Spirit of holiness by ***the*** resurrection of ***the*** dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, **5** through whom we received grace and apostleship for obedience of faith among all the Gentiles on behalf of His name, **6** among whom you also are, called of Jesus Christ; **7** to all who are in Rome (Hrome), beloved of God, called saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and ***the*** Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul's Longing to Visit Rome

8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is being proclaimed in the whole world. **9** For God is my witness, whom I serve in my spirit in the gospel of His Son, how unceasingly I make mention of you always in my prayers, **10** imploring, if somehow now at last I will be prospered by the will of God to come to you. **11** For I long to see you, that I may impart some spiritual gift to you, for you to be established; **12** and that is, to be encouraged together among you through the faith among one another, both yours and mine. **13** Now I do not want you to be ignorant, brothers, that many times I purposed to come to you, and was hindered until the present, so that I might have some fruit among you also, even as also among the other Gentiles. **14** Both to Greeks and to non-Greeks, both to wise and to foolish, I am a debtor; **15** so ***there is*** eagerness on my part to preach the gospel also to you who are in Rome.

The Power of God for Salvation

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is ***the*** power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, both to ***the*** Jew first and to ***the*** Greek. **17** For in it ***the*** righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith, even as it has been

1:1 Rom 15:16; Acts 9:15; 1 Cor 1:1
1:2 Titus 1:2; Rom 3:21; Rom 3:2
1:3 Jer 23:5; Ps 2:7; Isa 9:6
1:4 Ps 2:7; Ps 51:11; 1 Pet 1:11
1:5 Mal 1:11; Mal 1:14; Acts 6:7
1:6 Rev 17:14; Heb 3:1; 2 Pet 1:10
1:7 Col 1:2; Jude 1:1; Eph 1:2
1:8 Rom 16:19; Rom 6:17; Eph 3:21
1:9 2 Tim 1:3; Rom 9:1; 2 Cor 1:23
1:10 Acts 18:21; Rom 15:22-24,30-32; Phil 4:6
1:11 Rom 15:23,32; Rom 15:29; Acts 8:15-19
1:12 Acts 11:23; 1 Thess 3:7-10; 3 John 1:3,4
1:13 Acts 19:21; Phil 4:17; Rom 11:25
1:14 Col 3:11; Rom 8:12; Rom 13:8
1:15 Rom 12:18; 1 Kgs 8:18; Mark 14:8
1:16 Mark 8:38; 2 Tim 1:8,12,16; Ps 40:9,10
1:17 Hab 2:4; Gal 3:11; Rom 3:21

1:1 *Paul, a slave of Jesus Christ, a called apostle, set apart for the gospel of God* Paul introduces himself three ways. A slave, or bond-servant, belongs completely to his master. An apostle is sent by Jesus with His authority. Set apart means his whole life was given to one message. This is the man who once hunted Christians (Acts 9:1-2). If God could turn Saul the persecutor into Paul the apostle, there is no one He cannot reach.
1:2 *which He promised beforehand through His prophets in holy Scriptures* The gospel was not Paul's new idea. God promised it long before; Isaiah 53, for example, describes a servant who would suffer for the sins of others. Paul quotes the Old Testament again and again in Romans to show God has worked one plan from the beginning.
1:3 *who came from the seed of David according to the flesh* The gospel is about a Person, God's Son. Jesus is fully human, from David's line, as God promised David a descendant who would reign forever (2 Sam 7:12-16).
1:4 *who was declared Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by the resurrection of the dead* Jesus is also fully God. The resurrection did not make Him the Son of God; He always was. It declared it openly. God put His stamp of approval on all Jesus said and did by raising Him from the grave.
1:5 *for obedience of faith among all the Gentiles* Paul joins the two, and obedience grows out of real faith. Real faith is never just facts we agree with; it changes how we live. The first half of Romans shows we are saved by faith, and the second half shows how that faith works out in obedience.
1:6 *called of Jesus Christ* So are you, if you belong to Him. God's call is personal.
1:7 *beloved of God, called saints* A saint is not a super-Christian in a stained-glass window. Every believer is a saint, someone set apart for God. The word describes who they are in Christ, not how perfect they are. Paul always puts grace before peace. We cannot have peace with God until we have received His grace.
1:8 *your faith is being proclaimed in the whole world* Rome was the capital, and news traveled from there everywhere. What a testimony, to have your faith talked about across the world for the right reasons.
1:9 *how unceasingly I make mention of you always in my prayers* Paul had never met most of them, yet he carried them in prayer. We can pray faithfully for missionaries and churches we may never visit.
1:10 *if somehow now at last I will be prospered by the will of God to come to you* Paul did get to Rome, but as a prisoner in chains (Acts 28:16, 20). God answered his prayer, just not on Paul's terms. Sometimes God says yes in a way we would never have chosen.
1:12 *to be encouraged together among you through the faith among one another, both yours and mine* In the same breath that he offers a gift, Paul says he wants to be encouraged by them. He did not see himself as the expert coming to fix everyone. Every Christian has something to give and something to receive.
1:13 *many times I purposed to come to you, and was hindered until the present* His work in other places had kept him away (15:22). Fruit means people coming to faith and growing in it.
1:14 *Both to Greeks and to non-Greeks, both to wise and to foolish, I am a debtor* Why would Paul owe them anything? Jesus had given him the gospel to pass on. When someone hands you a treasure meant for others, you owe it to them. Every believer carries that same debt.
1:16 *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ* Verses 16 and 17 are the theme of the whole letter. In Rome, a city of power and philosophy, a message about a crucified Jewish teacher sounded weak and foolish (1 Cor 1:23). Paul says it is the power of God itself, the power that saves.
1:16 *to everyone who believes, both to the Jew first and to the Greek* Salvation is not limited to one nation or class. "To the Jew first" reminds us that God made His promises to Israel first and Jesus came first to the Jewish people. But the door is open to every non-Jew as well.
1:17 *the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith* The right standing with God that God Himself gives. We could never earn it; we receive it by faith. From faith to faith means by faith from start to finish. We begin, continue, and finish by faith.
1:17 *And the righteous by faith will live* From Habakkuk 2:4. This verse changed history. When Martin Luther understood that God's righteousness is a gift received by faith, not a standard reached by effort, he later wrote that he felt born again and entered paradise through open gates (Preface to his Latin Writings, 1545). That understanding helped spark the Reformation.

written, "And the righteous by faith will live."

God's Wrath Against Sin

18 For ***the*** wrath of God is revealed from heaven upon all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, **19** because what is known of God is manifest in them; for God manifested ***it*** to them. **20** For His invisible ***things***, from ***the*** creation of ***the*** world, being understood by the things made, are clearly seen, both His eternal power and divinity, for them to be without excuse;
21 because, having known God, they did not glorify ***Him*** as God or give thanks, but were made futile in their reasonings, and their senseless heart was darkened. **22** Claiming to be wise, they were made foolish, **23** and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into a likeness of an image of corruptible man and of birds and of four-footed ***animals*** and of creeping things. **24** Therefore God also gave them up in the desires of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, **25** who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creation rather than the ***One*** who created ***it***, who is blessed to the ages. Amen. **26** Because of this God gave them up to passions of dishonor; for even their females exchanged the natural use for the ***use*** contrary to nature, **27** and likewise also the males, having left the natural use of the female, were inflamed in their desire toward one another, males with males committing the indecency, and receiving in themselves the recompense of their error which was fitting. **28** And even as they did not approve of having God in ***their*** knowledge, God gave them up to an unapproved mind, to do the things that are not proper, **29** having been filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, malice; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malignity; gossips, **30** slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, **31** senseless, untrustworthy, without natural affection,
implacable, unmerciful; **32** who, having known the righteous decree of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, not only do them but also approve of those who practice ***them***.

ROMANS 2

God's Righteous Judgment

1 Therefore you are without excuse, O man, everyone who judges; for in that in which you judge the other, you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things. **2** And we know that the judgment of God is according to

1:18 2 Chr 34:21; 2 Thess 2:10; 1 Tim 4:1,2
1:19 Ps 19:1; Acts 14:16; Acts 17:23-30
1:20 Ps 19:1; Isa 40:26; 1 Tim 1:17
1:21 Ps 10:4; Ps 106:29; Isa 44:18
1:22 Isa 44:18; Jer 10:14; 1 Cor 1:19-21
1:23 Ps 106:20; Deut 4:16-18; Isa 44:18
1:24 Eph 4:18; Rom 6:12; 1 Thess 4:4
1:25 Ps 72:19; Isa 44:20; Rom 9:5
1:26 Jude 1:7,10; Gen 19:5; Lev 18:22-28
1:27 Rom 1:23,24
1:28 Jer 9:6; 2 Thess 2:10-12; Titus 1:16
1:29 2 Cor 12:20; Rom 3:10; Prov 16:28
1:30 2 Tim 3:2; Prov 25:23; Rom 8:7,8
1:31 2 Tim 3:3; Rom 1:20,21; Rom 3:11
1:32 Rom 6:21; Rom 1:18,21; Rom 2:1-5,21-23
2:1 Rom 2:3; 2 Sam 12:5-7; Luke 6:37
2:2 Ps 9:4,7,8; Jer 12:1; Zeph 3:5

1:18 *the wrath of God is revealed from heaven* Before the good news, Paul shows us the bad news. "For" ties it to verse 17: the gospel is needed because God's wrath is real. It is not a lost temper but His steady, holy opposition to all evil. If He were not angry at sin, He would not be good.
1:18 *who suppress the truth in unrighteousness* They hold it down, like a beach ball underwater. It keeps trying to come up, and they keep pushing it back down.
1:20 *His invisible things, from the creation of the world, being understood by the things made, are clearly seen* Creation points to its Creator. The stars, the ocean, a newborn baby, the design of a single cell all show His eternal power and divinity (Ps 19:1). Creation does not tell us about Jesus or the cross, but it tells us enough to know He exists and that we owe Him honor.
1:20 *for them to be without excuse* No one can say, I never had a clue. The problem is not lack of evidence. It is not wanting what the evidence points to.
1:21 *they did not glorify Him as God or give thanks* Where the slide begins: refusing to give God His place and refusing to be thankful. Ingratitude may seem small, but Paul puts it at the start of humanity's downward spiral. When we stop thanking God, our thinking becomes futile and our hearts grow dark.
1:23 *changed the glory of the incorruptible God into a likeness of an image of corruptible man* Bowing to a statue of a bird sounds strange to us, but idolatry is still everywhere. Money, success, pleasure, a relationship, or ourselves can take God's place. We are made to worship. If we will not worship God, we will worship something else.
1:24 *Therefore God also gave them up* The phrase appears three times (1:24, 26, 28). It is a frightening form of wrath: God removed His restraining hand and let people have what they wanted. Sometimes His judgment is simply letting us go our own way and live with the results.
1:25 *who exchanged the truth of God for the lie* Every sin begins as a lie we choose to believe, that something other than God will satisfy us or that God is holding out on us, the lie of Eden (Gen 3:4-5). Even here Paul breaks into praise. The Creator "is blessed to the ages."
1:26 *exchanged the natural use for the use contrary to nature* The second "gave them up" describes homosexual behavior, by women and men, as against God's design from the beginning (Gen 1:27; 2:24). Paul is not singling out one group as worse than everyone else. It is one clear example of rejecting the Creator's design, and gossip, arrogance, and disobedience to parents follow in the same list (1:29-31).
1:27 *receiving in themselves the recompense of their error which was fitting* Sin carries consequences built into it. We hold to what God's Word says without softening it, and we speak it with compassion, because we were all lost. The gospel is good news for every sinner who turns to Christ, including those who struggle with same-sex desire. Some in Corinth had come out of these sins and were washed and made righteous in Jesus' name (1 Cor 6:9-11).
1:28 *God gave them up to an unapproved mind* The deepest step. A play on words: they did not approve of having God in their knowledge, so He gave them a mind itself unapproved. Keep refusing the truth, and eventually we lose the ability to think straight about right and wrong.
1:29 *having been filled with all unrighteousness* Read the list slowly and honestly. Some sins we call shocking, like murder. Others we excuse every day, like gossip and pride. God puts them side by side. None of us can read this list and say, that is them, not me.
1:32 *not only do them but also approve of those who practice them* The bottom of the slide. It is one thing to fall into sin and feel ashamed. It is another to celebrate sin and applaud it. A culture that reaches that point calls wrong right. But Romans 1 is not the end. The darker the background, the brighter the good news of 3:21-26 shines.
2:1 *Therefore you are without excuse, O man, everyone who judges* The same word Paul used of the pagan world (1:20), now applied to the one who judges others while doing the same things. This does not mean Christians can never call sin what it is; Paul just did that for a chapter. The problem is condemning others while excusing ourselves, seeing the speck and missing the log (Matt 7:3-5). The sins that bother us most in others are often the ones we struggle with.

truth upon those who practice such things. **3** And do you suppose this, O man, you who judge those who practice such things and do them, that you will escape the judgment of God? **4** Or do you despise the riches of His kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance? **5** But according to your hardness and unrepentant heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in ***the*** day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, **6** who will render to each according to his works: **7** to those who by endurance in good work seek glory and honor and incorruptibility, eternal life; **8** but to those ***who are*** of selfish ambition and who disobey the truth but obey unrighteousness, fury and wrath, **9** tribulation and distress upon every soul of man who carries out the evil, both of ***the*** Jew first and of ***the*** Greek; **10** but glory and honor and peace to everyone who works the good, both to ***the*** Jew first and to ***the*** Greek. **11** For there is no partiality with God. **12** For as many as sinned without law will also perish without law; and as many as sinned in law will be judged through law; **13** for not the hearers of the law ***are*** righteous with God, but the doers of the law will be justified. **14** For when Gentiles who do not have law by nature do the things of the law, these, not having law, are a law to themselves, **15** who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness with ***them***, and the thoughts between one another accusing or even defending ***them***, **16** in ***the*** day when God will judge the secrets of men according to my gospel through Jesus (Iesous) Christ.

The Jew and the Law

17 Look, you are called a Jew, and you rely on the law, and you boast in God, **18** and you know the will, and you approve the things that excel, being instructed out of the law, **19** and you are confident that you yourself are a guide of ***the*** blind, a light of those in darkness, **20** an instructor of ***the*** foolish, a teacher of infants, having the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law; **21** you then who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach not to steal, do you steal? **22** You who say not to commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? **23** You who boast in law, through the transgression of the law do you dishonor God? **24** For "the name of God is blasphemed among

2:3 Luke 12:14; Rom 1:32; 2 Sam 10:3
2:4 Isa 26:10; 2 Pet 3:9,15; Rom 3:25
2:5 Deut 32:34; Heb 3:13,15; James 5:3
2:6 Ps 62:12; Prov 24:12; Job 34:11
2:7 Luke 8:15; 2 Tim 1:10; 1 Cor 15:53,54
2:8 Prov 13:10; 1 Cor 11:16; 1 Tim 6:3,4
2:9 1 Pet 4:17; Rom 1:16; Rom 9:24
2:10 Isa 32:17; Rom 2:7; 1 Pet 1:7
2:11 Acts 10:34; Deut 10:17; Gal 2:6
2:12 Gal 2:16-19; Gal 3:10,22; Rom 2:14,15
2:13 James 1:22-25; Rom 2:25; 1 John 3:7
2:14 Rom 2:12; Ps 147:19,20; Acts 17:30
2:15 Gen 20:5; Rom 1:18,19; Rom 9:1
2:16 Gen 18:25; Ps 96:13; Ps 98:9
2:17 Jer 7:8; Jer 7:9; Jer 7:10
2:18 Deut 4:8; Jer 2:8; Jer 8:8
2:19 Matt 15:14; 1 Cor 4:10; Rev 3:17,18
2:20 Ps 19:8; Mal 2:8; 2 Tim 3:5
2:21 Matt 23:3-12; Ps 50:16-21; Luke 12:47
2:22 Jer 7:9; Jer 7:10; Mal 3:8
2:23 Rom 2:17; Rom 3:2; Rom 9:4
2:24 Isa 52:5; Ezek 36:20; Ezek 36:22

2:3 *that you will escape the judgment of God* God's judgment is "according to truth" (2:2), based on what really happened, not appearances. Being a critic of sin does not make anyone innocent of it.
2:4 *the kindness of God leads you to repentance* Some take God's patience for granted, assuming judgment will never come. His kindness has a purpose. Repentance is a real turning, a change of mind about sin and God that shows up in a change of direction, not just feeling sorry. If you are breathing today, God is still giving you time (2 Pet 3:9). Do not waste it.
2:5 *you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath* A hard, unrepentant heart is making deposits into an account that will one day be paid out in full. The day of wrath is the coming judgment, which Revelation shows at the Great White Throne, the final judgment of the unsaved (Rev 20:11-15).
2:6 *who will render to each according to his works* From Psalm 62:12 and Proverbs 24:12. Jesus says He comes with His reward to give to each according to his work (Rev 22:12).
2:7 *to those who by endurance in good work seek glory and honor and incorruptibility, eternal life* Is Paul saying people can earn eternal life? No; chapter 3 proves no one is justified by works. He describes two directions a life can take: one looking to God for what only God can give, the other living for self. Good works do not save, but they show a heart God has changed. Many good teachers instead read this as the Law's standard in theory, which no one meets (3:10-12). Either way, no one stands on his own record.
2:9 *both of the Jew first and of the Greek* "The Jew first" appeared about salvation (1:16), and now about judgment. Greater privilege brings greater responsibility. Anyone who grew up hearing the gospel will answer for more.
2:11 *For there is no partiality with God* Family background, church membership, reputation, and money change nothing. No one can buy his way in, and no one is shut out because of who he is.
2:12 *as many as sinned without law will also perish without law* God judges each person fairly, by the light he had. What about someone who never heard of Jesus? I do not claim to know every detail of how God will deal with each person. God will be perfectly fair, but everyone has sinned against the light he had, which is why Paul was so eager to preach everywhere (1:14-15). The best answer to that question is to go and tell them, and to support those who do.
2:13 *not the hearers of the law are righteous with God, but the doers of the law will be justified* Hearing the Law every Sabbath made no one right with God. Only doing it would, and that is the problem: no one does it perfectly. Be doers of the word and not hearers only (James 1:22).
2:15 *who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness* Every culture knows murder, stealing, and betrayal are wrong. The conscience is an inner witness that accuses or defends us. But no one has fully lived up even to his own conscience. It does not save anyone; it shows everyone knows enough to be guilty.
2:16 *in the day when God will judge the secrets of men* Not just what we did, but our thoughts and motives (1 Cor 4:5). The Judge will be Christ Jesus (John 5:22). That should make us tremble, and it should comfort us. The One who will judge us is the One who died for us.
2:17 *you are called a Jew, and you rely on the law, and you boast in God* Paul speaks to his own people and lists what they were proud of. Much of it was true and good. God gave Israel His Law and called them to be a light to the nations (Isa 42:6).
2:20 *having the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law* The problem was not the privilege but trusting in it instead of God, as if having the Law were the same as keeping it. Read this as a mirror. Many of us have Bibles and know the right answers. Does what you know match how you live?
2:21 *you then who teach another, do you not teach yourself* It is easy to teach what we do not practice. Every parent, pastor, and Bible study leader should feel the weight of these questions. People are watching how we live, not just listening.
2:22 *You who abhor idols, do you rob temples* Some who would never worship an idol may have profited from stolen idols or temple goods. Their outward hatred of idolatry did not stop their greed. They broke the very Law they bragged about.
2:24 *the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you* Paul quotes Isaiah 52:5 from the Greek Old Testament his readers used (Ezek 36:20-22). When God's people live like hypocrites, the world blames God. Our lives bring either honor or shame to His name.

the Gentiles because of you," even as it has been written.
25 For circumcision indeed profits if you practice ***the*** law;
but if you are a transgressor of ***the*** law, your circumcision
has become uncircumcision. **26** If therefore the uncircumci-
sion keeps the righteous decrees of the law, will not his
uncircumcision be reckoned for circumcision? **27** And the
uncircumcision by nature, fulfilling the law, will judge you
who, through letter and circumcision, ***are*** a transgressor of
law. **28** For he is not a Jew who ***is one*** outwardly, nor is cir-
cumcision that which ***is*** outward in flesh; **29** but he ***is*** a Jew
who ***is one*** inwardly, and circumcision ***is*** of ***the*** heart, in
spirit, not in letter; whose praise ***is*** not from men but from
God.

ROMANS 3

God Is Faithful

1 What then ***is*** the advantage of the Jew? Or what ***is*** the
profit of circumcision? **2** Much in every way. For first,
indeed, ***it is*** that they were entrusted with the oracles of God.
3 For what if some disbelieved? Will their unbelief nullify the
faithfulness of God? **4** May it not be! But let God be true, and
every man a liar, even as it has been written, "That You may
be justified in Your words, and may overcome when You are
judged." **5** But if our unrighteousness demonstrates the
righteousness of God, what will we say? Is God unrighteous
who inflicts the wrath? I speak according to man. **6** May it
not be! Otherwise how will God judge the world? **7** For if the
truth of God abounded in my lie to His glory, why am I also
still judged as a sinner? **8** And ***why*** not, even as we are slan-
dered and even as some affirm that we say, "Let us do the
evil things that the good things may come"? Their judgment
is just.

All Have Sinned

9 What then? Are we better? Not at all; for we have previ-
ously charged both Jews and Greeks that all are under sin,
10 even as it has been written, "There is not a righteous ***one***,
not even one; **11** there is none who understands; there is
none who seeks out God; **12** all turned aside; together they
were made worthless; there is none who practices kindness;
there is not so much as one; **13** their throat ***is*** an opened
grave; with their tongues they were practicing deceit; ***the***
venom of asps ***is*** under their lips; **14** whose mouth is full of
cursing and bitterness; **15** their feet ***are*** swift to shed blood;
16 ruin and misery ***are*** in their ways; **17** and a way of peace

2:25 Jer 4:4; Rom 2:28,29; Rom 4:11,12
2:26 Jer 8:8; 1 Cor 7:18,19; Col 2:11
2:27 Matt 12:41,42; 2 Cor 3:6; Rom 8:4
2:28 Deut 10:16; Deut 30:6; Gal 6:15
2:29 Deut 30:6; Deut 10:16; 1 Sam 16:7
3:1 Rom 2:25-29; Gen 25:32; Eccl 6:8,11
3:2 Acts 7:38; Rom 9:4; Neh 9:13,14
3:3 Heb 4:2; 2 Tim 2:13; Rom 9:6
3:4 Ps 51:4; Ps 116:11; Job 40:8
3:5 Gen 18:25; Job 8:3; Job 34:10
3:6 Ps 9:8; Ps 96:13; Ps 98:9
3:7 2 Kgs 8:10-15; Matt 26:34,69-75; Rom 9:19,20
3:8 Rom 6:1,15; Matt 5:11; 1 Pet 3:16,17
3:9 Rom 6:15; Rom 3:5; Rom 11:7
3:10 Ps 14:1-3; Ps 53:1-3; Job 25:4
3:11 Mic 7:2; Ps 14:2-4; Ps 53:2,4
3:12 Eccl 7:20; Exod 32:8; Mic 7:2
3:13 Ps 5:9; Ps 140:3; Deut 32:33
3:14 Ps 10:7; Ps 59:12; Ps 109:17,18
3:15 Isa 59:7-8; Prov 1:16; Prov 6:18
3:17 Isa 59:8; Rom 5:1; Luke 1:79

2:25 *your circumcision has become uncircumcision* Circumcision was the sign of the covenant with Abraham (Gen 17:10-11), and some believed it guaranteed their place with God. If you break the Law, the outward sign means nothing, like wearing a wedding ring while living unfaithfully.
2:26 *will not his uncircumcision be reckoned for circumcision* If a Gentile keeps what the Law truly requires, God counts him as His own. Many understand Paul to mean Gentile believers whose hearts the Spirit has changed (2:29); others take it as a hypothetical, as in 2:7. Either way, no one is saved by his own record.
2:27 *will judge you* That Gentile will stand as a witness against the one who had every advantage and still broke the Law. What matters to God is not the outward mark but the obedience of the heart.
2:28 *he is not a Jew who is one outwardly* The high point of the chapter. Moses told Israel to circumcise their hearts (Deut 10:16), and God promised to do it so they would love Him (Deut 30:6).
2:29 *circumcision is of the heart, in spirit, not in letter* Paul is not saying the Jewish people no longer matter or that the church has taken Israel's place. Next he says the Jew's advantage is "much in every way" (3:2), and chapters 9 to 11 show God's plan for Israel. Outward religion alone cannot make anyone right with God. Baptism, church, and communion are good gifts, but none can replace a heart that belongs to God (1 Sam 16:7).
3:1 *What then is the advantage of the Jew* Paul knew his readers would push back. If being Jewish and circumcised guarantees no one a place with God, what was the point?
3:2 *they were entrusted with the oracles of God* The advantage is great. God entrusted Israel with His very words. The Old Testament came to us through Israel, through Moses, David, Isaiah, and the prophets, and the Jewish people carefully preserved it for centuries. Every Christian who reads the Bible owes them a debt. More privileges follow in 9:4-5.
3:3 *Will their unbelief nullify the faithfulness of God* God keeps His promises even when His people do not keep theirs. People fail. God never does.
3:4 *May it not be* Paul's strongest no, used again and again in Romans to reject a wrong idea completely. Paul echoes the psalmist, "Every man is a liar" (Ps 116:11), and Paul then quotes David's prayer after his sin with Bathsheba (Ps 51:4). When God judges sin, He is always in the right. Our faithfulness rises and falls; His does not (2 Tim 2:13).
3:5 *Is God unrighteous who inflicts the wrath* The objection: if my sin makes God's goodness look better, is He unfair to punish it? Paul repeats the kind of twisted reasoning people use.
3:6 *Otherwise how will God judge the world* If God could not punish sin, He could not judge the world at all, and even the objector agrees He will. The argument falls apart.
3:8 *Let us do the evil things that the good things may come* Some accused Paul of teaching this because he preached salvation by grace, not by the Law. He will answer fully in 6:1-2. If you preach grace the way Paul did, someone will accuse you of making sin cheap. If no one ever raises that question, you may not be preaching grace as freely as Paul did.
3:9 *all are under sin* Jews are not better off than Gentiles before God. Under sin means under its power and penalty, like a prisoner under a guard.
3:10 *There is not a righteous one, not even one* Paul gathers Old Testament verses, mostly from the Psalms (Ps 14:1-3; 53:1-3). The verdict is complete. People do kind and generous things, but Paul means goodness in God's eyes, a life from a heart fully devoted to Him and lived for His glory. By that standard, no one measures up.
3:11 *there is none who seeks out God* When anyone does seek God, it is because God sought him first. No one can come to Jesus unless the Father draws him (John 6:44).
3:12 *together they were made worthless* Like fruit gone bad. Everyone has turned aside.
3:13 *their throat is an opened grave* From the heart to the body, starting with the mouth (Ps 5:9; 140:3; 10:7). The mouth speaks out of what fills the heart (Matt 12:34). How many of us have said things we wish we could take back?
3:15 *their feet are swift to shed blood* People rush to violence and leave ruin behind; they have never known the way of peace (Isa 59:7-8). Read the news any day and you will see these verses played out.

they did not know; **18** there is no fear of God before their eyes." **19** Now we know that whatever the law says, it speaks to those in the law, so that every mouth may be stopped and all the world may become accountable to God. **20** Because by works of law no flesh will be justified before Him; for through law ***is*** knowledge of sin.

Righteousness Through Faith

21 But now apart from law ***the*** righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets, **22** and ***the*** righteousness of God through faith of Jesus (Iesous) Christ ***is*** to all and upon all who believe; for there is no distinction; **23** for all sinned and fall short of the glory of God, **24** being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that ***is*** in Christ Jesus, **25** whom God set forth ***as*** a propitiation through faith in His blood, for a demonstration of His righteousness because of the passing over of the sins that had previously occurred, in the forbearance of God; **26** for the demonstration of His righteousness at the present time, for Him to be righteous and the ***One*** justifying the ***one who is*** of faith of Jesus. **27** Where then ***is*** the boasting? It was excluded. Through what law? Of works? No, but through ***the*** law of faith. **28** Therefore we reckon a man to be justified by faith apart from works of law. **29** Or ***is*** God of Jews only? And ***is He*** not also of Gentiles? Yes, also of Gentiles, **30** since indeed God ***is*** one, who will justify ***the*** circumcision by faith and ***the*** uncircumcision through the faith. **31** Do we then nullify law through the faith? May it not be! But we establish law.

ROMANS 4

Abraham Justified by Faith

1 What then will we say that Abraham (Abraam) our father has found according to ***the*** flesh? **2** For if Abraham was justified by works, he has a boast, but not before God. **3** For what does the Scripture say? "And Abraham believed God, and it

3:18 Ps 36:1; Gen 20:11; Prov 8:13
3:19 Ezek 16:63; 1 Sam 2:9; Gen 6:5
3:20 Ps 143:2; Gal 2:16,19; Exod 34:7
3:21 Isa 51:8; Dan 9:24; Gen 15:6
3:22 Ps 53:1; Rom 10:12; Gal 3:28
3:23 Eccl 7:20; 1 John 1:8-10; Rom 3:9,19
3:24 Col 1:14; Rom 4:16; Titus 3:5-7
3:25 Lev 16:15; Lev 16:14; 1 John 4:10
3:26 Isa 45:21; Isa 53:5; Acts 13:38,39
3:27 Rom 4:2; 1 Cor 1:29-31; Rom 2:17,23
3:28 Rom 3:20-22,26; Rom 4:5; Rom 5:1
3:29 Zech 2:11; Rom 1:16; Rom 9:24-26
3:30 Gal 3:8,20,28; Rom 3:28; Rom 4:11,12
3:31 Matt 5:17; Gal 2:21; Rom 8:4
4:1 Isa 51:2; Rom 4:16; Rom 7:7
4:2 Gen 20:9; Josh 24:2; Gen 20:10
4:3 Gen 15:6; Ps 106:31; Isa 51:2

3:18 *there is no fear of God before their eyes* From Psalm 36:1, the root of all the rest. When people stop fearing God, the deep respect and awe of Him as holy Judge, nothing is left to hold back sin.

3:19 *so that every mouth may be stopped and all the world may become accountable to God* Picture a courtroom where the defendant has run out of arguments and stands silent. That is where the whole world stands before God. No excuses left.

3:20 *by works of law no flesh will be justified before Him* No one keeps the Law perfectly. Justified means declared righteous by God, like a judge announcing not guilty. It is a legal word about our standing before Him, not about feeling better or slowly becoming better. The Law is a mirror. It shows the dirt, but you cannot wash your face with a mirror. Only Christ can meet the need.

3:21 *But now apart from law the righteousness of God has been manifested* But now: two of the most beautiful words in the Bible. After three chapters of bad news, the good news breaks through. It is not a new plan; the Law and Prophets pointed to it all along (Gen 15:6; Hab 2:4).

3:22 *through faith of Jesus Christ is to all and upon all who believe* Faith earns nothing; it receives what God gives. The SLB keeps the Greek wording, which can mean faith in Jesus Christ, our trust in Him, or the faithfulness of Jesus Christ, His own obedience. Both are true. "There is no distinction" here means no difference in our need; in 10:12 it means no difference in God's offer.

3:23 *for all sinned and fall short of the glory of God* This levels every one of us, the pastor and the prisoner, the kind neighbor and the criminal. Fall short is present tense, our ongoing condition. Picture people jumping a canyon: some jump farther, but no one reaches the other side. We were made to reflect God's glory (Gen 1:27), and sin has smeared that image in all of us.

3:24 *being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus* The same "all" who sinned can be declared righteous freely, as a gift. Grace is undeserved favor; a gift you earn is a paycheck. Redemption means buying back, like paying to free a slave, and recalls Israel redeemed from Egypt. Jesus paid the price with His own blood (1 Pet 1:18-19).

3:25 *whom God set forth as a propitiation through faith in His blood* A sacrifice that satisfies God's righteous anger and turns it away. The word is the one used for the mercy seat on the Ark (Heb 9:5), sprinkled with blood on the Day of Atonement (Lev 16:14-15). Jesus is our mercy seat, set forth on the cross for all to see. The wrath of 1:18 fell on Him.

3:25 *because of the passing over of the sins that had previously occurred, in the forbearance of God* Animal sacrifices could never take away sin (Heb 10:4). God let those sins go because He was looking ahead to the cross. Abraham, Moses, and David were forgiven on credit, you could say, and Jesus paid the bill.

3:26 *for Him to be righteous and the One justifying the one who is of faith of Jesus* The biggest question in the Bible: how can a holy God forgive the guilty and stay just? At the cross He punished sin fully and offers forgiveness freely. This is the great exchange: Jesus took our sin, and God credits His righteousness to us when we believe (2 Cor 5:21). Theologians call this imputation, and chapter 4 explains it with Abraham.

3:27 *Where then is the boasting? It was excluded* If salvation is a gift received by faith, no one can brag. In heaven no one will say, I made it because I was better. Every voice will praise Jesus.

3:28 *we reckon a man to be justified by faith apart from works of law* Justification by faith alone, the truth the Reformers recovered. Works do not add to Christ's work; they follow as fruit (Eph 2:8-10). James says "a man is justified by works and not by faith only" (James 2:24), answering a faith that never shows itself in life. Paul says works can never earn our standing. Both agree saving faith is never alone.

3:30 *since indeed God is one* If salvation came through the Law it would belong mostly to the Jews. Because it comes by faith, it is open to all. One God saves Jew and Gentile the same way. At the foot of the cross the ground is level.

3:31 *Do we then nullify law through the faith? May it not be! But we establish law* The gospel takes the Law seriously. The Law said sin must be punished, and at the cross it was. The Law pointed to a Savior, and Jesus came. By the Spirit, believers live out what the Law was always about, loving God and others (8:4; 13:8-10).

4:1 *What then will we say that Abraham our father has found according to the flesh* Paul asks as a good teacher does, speaking as a Jew to Jewish readers. Did Abraham earn his right standing with God, or receive it?

4:2 *he has a boast, but not before God* If works had justified Abraham, people might have admired him. But no one stands before a holy God and boasts. Whatever good Abraham did, it never put God in his debt. Justified is the courtroom word of chapter 3, God's verdict that we are in right standing with Him.

4:3 *And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him for righteousness* From Genesis 15:6. An old man with no children believed God's promise of descendants like the stars. Reckoned is an accounting word, to put something on someone's account. God placed righteousness on Abraham's account when he trusted Him. For the believer it is Christ's righteousness (2 Cor 5:21). This was before Isaac was offered and before Abraham was circumcised.

was reckoned to him for righteousness." **4** Now to the one who works, the wage is not reckoned according to grace but according to debt; **5** but to the one who does not work but believes on the ***One*** who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned for righteousness, **6** just as David (Dabid) also speaks of the blessedness of the man to whom God reckons righteousness apart from works: **7** "Blessed ***are those*** whose lawless deeds were forgiven, and whose sins were covered; **8** blessed ***is the*** man to whom ***the*** Lord will by no means reckon sin." **9** ***Is*** this blessedness then upon the circumcision, or also upon the uncircumcision? For we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. **10** How then was it reckoned? When he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision. **11** And he received a sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which ***he had*** in the uncircumcision, for him to be father of all who believe through uncircumcision, for the righteousness to be reckoned to them also, **12** and father of circumcision to those who are not of circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of the faith which our father Abraham ***had*** in the uncircumcision.

The Promise Through Faith

13 For the promise to Abraham or to his seed, that he would be heir of the world, ***was*** not through law, but through ***the*** righteousness of faith. **14** For if those of law ***are*** heirs, faith has been made empty and the promise has been nullified. **15** For the law brings about wrath; for where there is no law, neither ***is there*** transgression. **16** Because of this ***it is*** of faith, so that ***it may be*** according to grace, for the promise to be sure to all the seed, not to that ***which is*** of the law only, but also to that ***which is*** of the faith of Abraham, who is father of us all, **17** even as it has been written, "A father of many nations I have made you," before God whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls the things that are not as ***though they*** are; **18** who against hope believed in hope, for him to become father of many nations according to what had been spoken, "So will your seed be." **19** And not having become weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already having become dead, being about a hundred years old, and the deadness of the womb of Sarah (Sarra); **20** yet with respect to the promise of God he did not waver in unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, having given glory to God, **21** and having been fully convinced that what He has promised He is able also to do. **22** Therefore also it was reck-

4:4 Rom 11:6,35; Rom 9:32; Matt 20:1-16
4:5 Gen 15:6; Prov 17:15; Rom 3:22
4:6 Ps 32:1-2; Isa 54:17; Jer 33:16
4:7 Ps 32:1,2; Ps 130:3,4; Isa 40:1,2
4:8 Isa 53:10-12; 2 Cor 5:19-20; Phlm 1:18,19
4:9 Gen 17:23; Rom 3:29,30; Rom 9:23,24
4:10 Gen 15:6; Gen 16:3; Gen 15:5,6,16
4:11 Gen 17:10; Gen 17:11; Rom 3:22
4:12 Gen 17:23; Ps 47:9; Isa 41:8
4:13 Gen 12:3; Gen 17:5; Isa 41:8
4:14 Rom 4:16; Gal 2:21; Gal 3:18-24
4:15 Rom 5:13,20,21; 1 Cor 15:56; Gal 3:10,19
4:16 Isa 51:2; Gen 17:4; Rom 9:8
4:17 Gen 17:5; Gen 17:4; 1 Cor 1:28
4:18 Gen 15:5; Ruth 1:11; Gen 15:6
4:19 Gen 17:17; Gen 18:11; Gen 18:12
4:20 Isa 35:4; Gen 15:6; Gen 17:17
4:21 Gen 15:6; Gen 18:14; Heb 11:19
4:22 Gen 15:6; Rom 4:3,6

4:4 *the wage is not reckoned according to grace but according to debt* A paycheck is not a favor; you earned it, and your boss owes it. If salvation worked that way, God would owe us. But God owes no one anything.
4:5 *believes on the One who justifies the ungodly* Not those who cleaned themselves up first, but the ungodly. That should set every one of us free. We do not work so God will accept us; He accepts us by grace, and then we work because we are accepted. Works are the fruit of salvation, not the root. Faith is not another work; it is the empty hand that receives the gift (Eph 2:8-9).
4:6 *just as David also speaks* A second witness, as the Law required (Deut 19:15). Abraham lived before the Law, David under it, and both tell the same story.
4:7 *Blessed are those whose lawless deeds were forgiven, and whose sins were covered* Psalm 32:1-2, which many believe David wrote after his sin with Bathsheba and Uriah's murder (2 Sam 11-12). Three pictures: the debt canceled, the sins covered from God's sight, and sin not charged to his account.
4:8 *blessed is the man to whom the Lord will by no means reckon sin* The other side of justification. God not only credits righteousness to us; He refuses to count our sin against us. If God could forgive David, He can forgive you.
4:10 *Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision* Abraham was declared righteous in Genesis 15 and circumcised in Genesis 17, at least thirteen or fourteen years later: about 85 when he took Hagar (Gen 16:3), 86 at Ishmael's birth (16:16), and 99 at his circumcision (17:24). When God declared him righteous, Abraham was for all practical purposes a Gentile who believed God.
4:11 *a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had in the uncircumcision* A sign points to something, and a seal confirms it. Circumcision did not make Abraham righteous; it marked a righteousness he already had by faith. Many trust an outward sign today, baptism as a child, growing up in church, or communion. These are good gifts, but they point to faith and cannot take its place.
4:12 *who also walk in the steps of the faith which our father Abraham had* Abraham is father of one family from two groups: Gentiles who believe and Jews who believe. Being born Jewish was never enough by itself. What counts is walking in Abraham's faith.
4:13 *that he would be heir of the world* God promised Abraham land, a great nation, and blessing for all families of the earth (Gen 12:1-3). In the end Abraham and his true children will inherit the earth (Matt 5:5; Rev 21:1-7). That promise came about 430 years before the Law (Gal 3:17), through the righteousness of faith.
4:15 *the law brings about wrath* If the inheritance depended on keeping the Law, the promise would be worthless, since no one keeps it. Where there is no law there is no transgression does not mean people without the Law have no sin. The written Law turns sin into open lawbreaking and makes guilt plain. It points out the problem but cannot fix it.
4:16 *it is of faith, so that it may be according to grace, for the promise to be sure to all the seed* If salvation depended on us, it would never be secure. Because it rests on God's grace received by faith, the promise is sure. Your salvation does not rest on how well you performed this week, but on what God promised and Christ did.
4:17 *who gives life to the dead and calls the things that are not as though they are* From Genesis 17:5, where Abram became Abraham, father of many. God said "I have made you" when Isaac was not yet born. When God says it, it is as good as done. Abraham's faith was not in his own ability but in the God who creates from nothing and raised Jesus.
4:18 *who against hope believed in hope* Every natural reason for hope was gone, but Abraham held on to God's word, "So will your seed be" (Gen 15:5).
4:19 *he did not consider his own body, already having become dead* Abraham, about a hundred, and Sarah past childbearing, fixed their hope on God's promise. Many Greek copies leave out "not," and many Bibles say he did face the facts of his body. Both make the same point: faith looks reality in the eye and trusts that God is bigger. Abraham laughed (Gen 17:17) and tried to help God with Hagar (Gen 16), but over his life his trust held.
4:20 *was strengthened in faith, having given glory to God* Faith grows as we keep looking at the One who promised rather than our circumstances. Faith honors God, because it says, You will do what You said.
4:21 *having been fully convinced that what He has promised He is able also to do* A good definition of faith.
4:22 *Therefore also it was reckoned to him for righteousness* Paul repeats Genesis 15:6 to tie the argument together.

oned to him for righteousness. **23** Now it was not written on account of him alone that it was reckoned to him, **24** but also on account of us, to whom it is about to be reckoned, to those who believe on the ***One*** who raised Jesus (Iesous) our Lord from ***the*** dead, **25** who was delivered over because of our trespasses, and was raised because of our justification.

ROMANS 5

Peace with God

1 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus (Iesous) Christ, **2** through whom also we have had access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we boast in hope of the glory of God. **3** And not only ***this***, but we also boast in the tribulations, knowing that the tribulation produces endurance, **4** and the endurance, proven character; and the proven character, hope; **5** and the hope does not put ***us*** to shame, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts through ***the*** Holy Spirit who was given to us. **6** For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for ***the*** ungodly. **7** For scarcely will anyone die for a righteous ***man***; for perhaps for the good ***man*** someone even dares to die. **8** But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. **9** Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we will be saved from the wrath through Him. **10** For if, being enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we will be saved by His life. **11** And not only ***this***, but also ***we are*** boasting in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

Death in Adam, Life in Christ

12 Because of this, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death passed to all men, because all sinned; **13** for until law sin was in the world, but sin is not charged ***to account*** when there is no law. **14** Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the trans-

4:23 Rom 15:4; 1 Cor 10:6,11; 2 Tim 3:16,17
4:24 Isa 53:11; Acts 2:24; 1 Pet 1:21
4:25 Gen 15:6; Eph 5:2; 1 John 4:9,10
5:1 Isa 32:17; Isa 27:5; Rom 15:13,33
5:2 Eph 2:18; Eph 3:12; 1 Cor 15:1
5:3 James 1:2,3,12; 2 Cor 12:9,10; Luke 6:22,23
5:4 James 1:12; Ps 42:4,5; 2 Cor 1:4-6
5:5 Phil 1:20; Job 27:8; 2 Tim 1:12
5:6 Rom 5:8; Eph 2:1-5; Col 2:13
5:7 Ps 112:5; John 15:13; 1 John 3:16
5:8 John 15:13; 1 Pet 3:18; 1 John 3:16
5:9 Isa 53:5; 1 Thess 1:10; Rom 1:18
5:10 2 Cor 5:18,19,21; Rom 8:32; Eph 2:16
5:11 2 Cor 5:18,19; Isa 61:10; Phil 4:4
5:12 Gen 2:17; Gen 3:6; Ps 51:5
5:13 Rom 4:15; 1 Cor 15:56; Gen 4:7-11
5:14 Gen 5:5; Rom 5:17,21; Gen 4:8

4:24 *but also on account of us* These words were written for our sake, to show how God saves. Abraham believed God could bring life from a body as good as dead. We believe in the God who raised Jesus. It is the same faith in the same God. Abraham looked forward to the promise; we look back at its fulfillment.
4:25 *who was delivered over because of our trespasses, and was raised because of our justification* Possibly an early statement of faith. Jesus was handed over to death for our sins, and His resurrection is God's announcement that the payment was accepted. Some read it as raised to bring about our justification, others as raised because it had been secured. Both fit Scripture. The empty tomb is the proof.
5:1 *having been justified by faith, we have peace with God* Therefore points back to chapters 3 and 4. Not only the peace of God (Phil 4:7) but peace with God. Before Christ we were at war with Him, His enemies (5:10). Now the war is over and God is for us. This peace is not a feeling that comes and goes but a fact about where we stand, through Jesus, not through how well we are doing.
5:2 *we have had access by faith into this grace in which we stand* Access pictures being brought into a king's presence. Jesus brings us in, and we do not just visit; we stand there and live in grace. Biblical hope is not wishful thinking but confident expectation of what God has promised: sharing His glory when Jesus returns and we are made like Him (1 John 3:2).
5:3 *we also boast in the tribulations* Not enjoying suffering or looking for it, but rejoicing in it because we know what God is doing through it. Endurance is the ability to keep going under a heavy load.
5:4 *and the endurance, proven character; and the proven character, hope* Proven character is faith tested and found real, like metal through the fire. Each time God carries us through, our confidence in Him grows. I do not claim suffering is easy or always makes sense at the time, but the hard seasons are often where we grow most (James 1:2-4).
5:5 *the love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us* Our hope will not leave us ashamed in the end. The first plain statement in Romans that every believer has been given the Spirit; chapter 8 says much more. God did not just tell us He loves us. He poured His love in until it overflows.
5:6 *at the right time Christ died for the ungodly* We were weak and could not save ourselves. When the fullness of time came, God sent His Son (Gal 4:4), not too early or too late, to die for people who did not deserve it.
5:7 *for perhaps for the good man someone even dares to die* We honor soldiers, police officers, and firefighters who give their lives for others, and we should. But even such sacrifice is usually for people we see as worth saving.
5:8 *while we were still sinners, Christ died for us* God did not wait for us to get better or to love Him first. While we were still in rebellion, Christ died for us. If you ever wonder whether God really loves you, do not look at your circumstances. Look at the cross.
5:9 *we will be saved from the wrath through Him* From the greater to the lesser: if God did the hardest thing, He will finish the job. His wrath against sin will be poured out fully on the day of judgment, shown in detail in Revelation (Rev 6:16-17; 14:10; 19:15). The believer need not fear that day. Jesus took God's wrath in our place, so there is none left for us.
5:10 *being enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son* Reconciled means a broken relationship restored, enemies made friends, even family. If Christ's death brought us to God, His resurrection life will surely keep us. He always lives to intercede for us (Heb 7:25).
5:11 *we are boasting in God through our Lord Jesus Christ* Paul cannot stop. The greatest gift of salvation is not just escaping punishment, or even heaven. It is God Himself, to know, enjoy, and be with forever.
5:12 *just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin* Paul goes back to Eden. God told Adam he would die if he ate (Gen 2:17). He disobeyed, and spiritual and physical death followed. "Just as" begins a comparison that Paul breaks off to explain and then finishes in verse 18.
5:12 *and so death passed to all men, because all sinned* Godly Christians read this in different ways. I believe when Adam sinned, all humanity sinned in him as its head and representative, and "the many were constituted sinners" (5:19). So we are born with a sinful nature (Ps 51:5). We do not become sinners when we first sin; we sin because we are sinners. Others read it as every person following Adam's example. That is true too (3:23), but Paul's argument points to the effect of Adam's one sin.
5:13 *sin is not charged to account when there is no law* Sin was in the world before Moses, but without a written law it was not counted as specific law-breaking in the same way. Still people died.
5:14 *death reigned from Adam until Moses* They had not broken a direct command as Adam did, yet they died, because of Adam's sin and the nature they inherited. Death proves all humanity is caught up in Adam's fall, though I believe little children who die are safe with God.
5:14 *who is a type of the One to come* A type is an Old Testament person or event that points ahead to something greater. Each man is the head of a race, and what he did affects everyone joined to him. Paul calls Jesus "the last Adam" (1 Cor 15:45).

gression of Adam, who is a type of the ***One*** to come. **15** But not as the trespass, so also ***is*** the gift. For if by the trespass of the one the many died, much more the grace of God and the free gift in grace, which ***is*** of the one man Jesus Christ, abounded to the many. **16** And the bestowal ***is*** not as through one who sinned; for the judgment ***came*** from one to condemnation, but the gift ***came*** from many trespasses to a righteous verdict. **17** For if by the trespass of the one death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the free gift of righteousness will reign in life through the one, Jesus Christ. **18** So then, as through one trespass ***it came*** to all men for condemnation, so also through one righteous act ***it came*** to all men for justification of life. **19** For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were constituted sinners, so also through the obedience of the one the many will be constituted righteous. **20** Now law came in alongside, so that the trespass might increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, **21** so that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

ROMANS 6

Dead to Sin, Alive to God

1 What then will we say? Will we continue in sin so that grace may abound? **2** May it not be! We who died to sin, how will we still live in it? **3** Or are you unaware that as many ***of us*** as were baptized into Christ Jesus (Iesous) were baptized into His death? **4** Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, so that just as Christ was raised out of ***the*** dead through the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in newness of life. **5** For if we have become united with the likeness of His death, certainly we will also be ***united with the likeness*** of the resurrection, **6** knowing this, that our old man was crucified with ***Him***, so that the body of sin might be rendered powerless, that we no longer be enslaved to sin. **7** For the one who has died has been justified from sin. **8** Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with Him, **9** knowing that Christ, having been raised out of ***the*** dead, no longer dies; death no longer rules

5:15 Rom 6:23; Rom 5:12,18; Eph 2:8
5:16 Acts 13:38,39; Gen 3:6-19; Gal 3:10
5:17 Rom 5:12; Gen 3:6,19; 1 Cor 15:21,22,49
5:18 Rom 5:12,15,19; Acts 13:39; 1 Cor 15:22
5:19 Isa 53:11; 2 Cor 5:21; Eph 1:6
5:20 Rom 6:1; Ps 25:11; Titus 3:3-7
5:21 Rom 5:14; John 1:16,17; Titus 2:11
6:1 Ezra 9:14; Gal 5:13; Rom 6:15
6:2 1 Pet 2:24; Col 3:3; Rom 7:4
6:3 Matt 28:19; Gal 3:27; 1 Cor 12:13
6:4 Col 3:10; Rom 7:6; 1 Pet 3:21
6:5 Phil 3:10,11; Rom 6:8-12; Eph 2:5,6
6:6 Gal 2:20; Eph 4:22; Gal 5:24
6:7 1 Pet 4:1; Rom 7:2,4; Col 3:1-3
6:8 Rom 6:3-5; 2 Cor 4:10-14; 2 Tim 2:11,12
6:9 Isa 53:10; Rev 1:18; Rom 6:14

5:15 *But not as the trespass, so also is the gift* Adam and Christ are not equal opposites. Grace is not just strong enough to cancel what Adam did. It overflowed "much more."
5:16 *the gift came from many trespasses to a righteous verdict* Condemnation is the guilty verdict, the opposite of justification. One sin brought ruin. Christ's work answered the sins of every generation and brought a verdict of righteous.
5:17 *those who receive the abundance of grace and of the free gift of righteousness will reign in life* Not only does life reign; believers reign with Christ (2 Tim 2:12; Rev 20:6; 22:5), from subjects of death to kings with Him. The gift must be received. Grace is offered to all but becomes ours by faith.
5:18 *through one righteous act it came to all men for justification of life* Paul finishes the sentence of verse 12. Does "all men" mean everyone will be saved? No. Romans makes clear people must believe (1:16; 3:22; 10:9-13), and verse 17 says "those who receive." Christ's work is for all people, Jew and Gentile, and all who are in Christ are justified, as all in Adam are condemned.
5:19 *through the obedience of the one the many will be constituted righteous* Jesus lived the perfect obedience Adam failed to live and we have failed to live, all the way to the cross (Phil 2:8). His obedience is counted as ours. By birth we are all in Adam; by new birth through faith we can be in Christ. Which man are you connected to?
5:20 *so that the trespass might increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more* The Law did not create sin but exposed it. A sign that says Wet Paint, Do Not Touch shows how much people want to touch. However deep sin goes, grace goes deeper. No one has sinned too much for God's grace.
5:21 *so also grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life* Two kings. Sin reigned and its kingdom ended in death. Grace reigns through righteousness, because Jesus paid in full. Someone will ask, then should we keep sinning? Paul answers in chapter 6.
6:1 *Will we continue in sin so that grace may abound* Paul raises the objection himself. Some accused him of teaching this (3:8), and there have always been people who treat grace as a license to live however they want.
6:2 *We who died to sin, how will we still live in it* Not that sin died, or that we no longer feel its pull, but that we died to it. Our relationship to sin has changed at the root. A dead man does not answer when his old boss calls. Sin still calls, but we are no longer under its rule.
6:3 *as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death* Early believers were baptized soon after they believed (Acts 2:41; 8:36-38; 16:33), so every reader remembered that day. Baptized into Christ means joined to Him, and so joined to His death. I believe Paul means water baptism picturing what happened inwardly when we believed; some teachers believe he means only Spirit baptism (1 Cor 12:13). The two belong together: the visible picture and the reality.
6:3 *baptized into His death* Does baptism itself save? I do not believe it does. Paul has shown for three chapters that we are justified by faith, and circumcision was a sign of faith Abraham already had (4:11). Baptism follows faith as obedience and public testimony, and every believer should be baptized (Matt 28:19). It is the picture, not the power. The thief on the cross had Jesus' promise of Paradise that day (Luke 23:43).
6:4 *we were buried with Him through baptism into death* Baptism pictures a funeral and a resurrection: down into the water, buried with Christ; up out of it, raised to walk in newness of life. That is why many churches immerse. Whatever the practice, the old life is over and a new one has started (2 Cor 5:17).
6:5 *if we have become united with the likeness of His death* The picture is two things growing together, like a branch grafted into a tree. Joined with Christ in His death, we share His resurrection now in new life and fully when our bodies are raised at His return (1 Cor 15:51-53).
6:6 *our old man was crucified with Him* The old man is who we were in Adam, ruled by sin, put to death with Jesus. "I have been crucified with Christ" (Gal 2:20).
6:6 *so that the body of sin might be rendered powerless, that we no longer be enslaved to sin* Rendered powerless means put out of business. The body is not evil; the body as a tool ruled by sin has lost its power. Before Christ we had no choice. Now the chains are broken. We still can sin, and we do, but we no longer have to.
6:7 *the one who has died has been justified from sin* The same legal word as chapters 3 to 5, though many Bibles say freed. A dead man cannot be arrested, taxed, or ordered around. Death ends all claims, and sin has no legal claim on one who died with Christ.
6:8 *if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with Him* Our union with Christ goes both ways, in His death and in His life, now and forever.
6:9 *death no longer rules over Him* Lazarus was raised and died again. Jesus rose with a glorified body, never to die again. "I was dead, and look, I am living to the ages of the ages" (Rev 1:18). Because we are in Him, death will not have the last word over us either.

over Him. **10** For ***the death*** that He died, He died to sin once for all; but ***the life*** that He lives, He lives to God. **11** So you also, consider yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but living to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. **12** Therefore let sin not reign in your mortal body, so that you obey it in its desires; **13** nor present your members ***as*** instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as ***those*** living out of ***the*** dead, and your members ***as*** instruments of righteousness to God. **14** For sin will not rule over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

Slaves of Righteousness

15 What then? Will we sin because we are not under law but under grace? May it not be! **16** Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves ***as*** slaves for obedience, you are slaves ***of the one*** whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness? **17** But thanks ***be*** to God that you were slaves of sin, but you obeyed from ***the*** heart the form of teaching to which you were handed over. **18** And having been set free from sin, you were enslaved to righteousness. **19** I speak in human ***terms***
because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members ***as*** slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, leading to lawlessness, so now present your members ***as*** slaves to righteousness, leading to sanctification. **20** For when you were slaves of sin, you were free ***in regard*** to righteousness. **21** What fruit therefore were you having then in the ***things*** of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those ***things is*** death. **22** But now, having been set free from sin and having been enslaved to God, you have your fruit leading to sanctification, and the end, eternal life. **23** For the wages of sin ***is*** death, but the gift of God ***is*** eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

ROMANS 7

Released from the Law

1 Or are you unaware, brothers (for I speak to those who know law), that the law rules over the man for as long a time as he lives? **2** For the married woman has been bound by law to the living husband; but if the husband dies, she has been released from the law of the husband. **3** So then, while the husband lives, she will be called an adulteress if she becomes another man's; but if the husband dies, she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress, having become another man's. **4** So, my brothers, you also were put to death to the

6:10 2 Cor 5:21; 1 Pet 3:18; 1 Pet 4:6
6:11 Rom 6:13; Col 3:3-5; 1 Cor 6:20
6:12 Rom 6:16; Ps 19:13; Ps 119:133
6:13 Rom 7:5,23; Rom 12:1; Col 3:5
6:14 Rom 8:2; Gal 5:18; Rom 6:12
6:15 Titus 2:11-14; Rom 6:1,2; Eph 2:8-10
6:16 John 8:34; Josh 24:15; Matt 6:24
6:17 2 Tim 1:13; Rom 1:8; Heb 5:9
6:18 John 8:32,36; Gal 5:1; 1 Pet 2:16
6:19 Rom 3:5; Rom 6:13,17; Gal 3:15
6:20 Rom 6:16,17; John 8:34
6:21 Rom 1:32; Rom 7:5; Rom 6:23
6:22 1 Pet 2:16; John 8:32; Rom 8:2
6:23 Rom 5:12; James 1:15; Rom 2:7
7:1 Rom 6:3; Rom 9:3; Rom 10:1
7:2 Num 30:8; Num 30:9; Gen 2:23,24
7:3 Num 5:27; Num 5:28; Num 5:29
7:4 Isa 54:5; Rom 8:2; Rom 7:6

6:10 *He died to sin once for all* Jesus never sinned. He died to deal with sin, to pay its penalty and break its power, once, never to be repeated (Heb 9:26-28; 10:10).
6:11 *consider yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but living to God in Christ Jesus our Lord* The first command in Romans. Up to now Paul has told what God has done; now what to do about it. Consider is the accounting word of chapter 4, to count something true because it is true. When temptation comes, you can say, That is not who I am anymore. What God says is more real than what you feel.
6:12 *let sin not reign in your mortal body* Sin is a king who wants his throne back. It has no right to rule, but it will try, and the mortal body is where the fight takes place. What God has done is complete. Living it out takes daily choices.
6:13 *present yourselves to God as those living out of the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God* Members are eyes, hands, feet, tongue, and mind, each a tool or even a weapon. Eyes can look at what pulls us into sin or read God's Word. The tongue can tear down or build up. Every day we decide whose tools our bodies will be. You were dead; now you are alive. Live like it.
6:14 *sin will not rule over you, for you are not under law but under grace* A promise. The Law told people what to do but gave no power to do it. Grace forgives us and changes us. Under grace does not mean no moral standard. It means a new rule, God's favor and His Spirit working in us, not a system of earning His approval.
6:15 *Will we sin because we are not under law but under grace* The objection again in a new form: is it okay to sin now and then? The answer again is no.
6:16 *you are slaves of the one whom you obey* Much of Rome's population was enslaved, so everyone understood the picture. There are only two masters, sin leading to death and obedience leading to righteousness. The world says freedom means doing whatever we want. The Bible says that makes us slaves of sin.
6:17 *you obeyed from the heart the form of teaching to which you were handed over* Not outward rule-keeping but obedience from the heart. They were handed over to the teaching, as a slave to a new master. God put them under the shaping power of His truth.
6:18 *having been set free from sin, you were enslaved to righteousness* Real freedom is not freedom from all masters but freedom to serve the right One.
6:19 *present your members as slaves to righteousness, leading to sanctification* Human terms: serving God is not cruel as human slavery often was, but the picture helps. Sin always grows. Sanctification is being set apart for God and made more like Jesus. Justification happens in a moment; sanctification is lifelong. Holiness grows the same way sin does, one choice at a time.
6:21 *What fruit therefore were you having then in the things of which you are now ashamed* Many can look back on the damage: broken relationships, guilt, addiction, wasted years. Sin promises much and pays very little, and the end is death.
6:22 *having been enslaved to God, you have your fruit leading to sanctification, and the end, eternal life* But now, as in 3:21. Freed from sin and enslaved to God, the fruit is a holy, changed life, and the end is eternal life.
6:23 *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord* Wages are earned; a gift is received. Sin pays its workers in full: physical death and eternal separation from God. Eternal life cannot be earned. It is God's free gift found only in Christ. If you have never received it, turn from sin and trust Jesus, who died for you and rose again. If you have, live as one set free.
7:1 *for I speak to those who know law* Most likely the Jewish believers in Rome, though many Gentile believers knew the Old Testament well too. A simple principle everyone accepts: a law has authority over a person only while he lives.
7:2 *if the husband dies, she has been released from the law of the husband* While her husband lives she is bound to him; after his death she is free to marry again with a clear conscience. Paul is not giving a full teaching on marriage and divorce. He uses a picture to make one point: death ends a legal obligation.
7:4 *you also were put to death to the law through the body of Christ* When Jesus died, all who belong to Him died with Him (6:3-6), freed from the Law as a way of being made right with God. We were set free to belong to the risen Jesus, like a bride to her husband, so that we may bear fruit to God. Freedom from the Law is never freedom to live as we please.

law through the body of Christ, for you to become another's, the One who was raised out of ***the*** dead, so that we may bear fruit to God. **5** For when we were in the flesh, the passions of sins, which ***were*** through the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit to death. **6** But now we have been released from the law, that having died in which we were held fast, so that we serve in newness of ***the*** Spirit and not in oldness of ***the*** letter.

The Law and Sin

7 What then will we say? ***Is*** the law sin? May it not be! But I did not know sin except through law; for I also had not known covetousness except that the law was saying, "You shall not covet." **8** But sin, having taken an occasion through the commandment, worked out in me all covetousness; for apart from law sin ***is*** dead. **9** And I was once alive apart from law; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died; **10** and the commandment, which ***was*** for life, this was found by me ***to be*** for death; **11** for sin, having taken an occasion through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed ***me***. **12** So the law indeed ***is*** holy, and the commandment ***is*** holy and righteous and good.

The Struggle with Sin

13 Then has that which ***is*** good become death to me? May it not be! But sin, so that it might be shown ***to be*** sin, through that which ***is*** good ***was*** working out death to me, so that sin through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure. **14** For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am fleshly, sold under sin. **15** For what I work out, I do not understand; for what I want, this I do not practice, but what I hate, this I do. **16** But if what I do not want, this I do, I agree with the law that ***it is*** good. **17** But now ***it is*** no longer I ***who*** work it out, but the sin dwelling in me. **18** For I know that good does not dwell in me, that is, in my flesh; for to want is present with me, but to work out the good I do not find. **19** For the good that I want, I do not do; but the evil that I do not want, this I practice. **20** But if what I do not want, this I do, ***it is*** no longer I ***who*** work it out, but the sin dwelling in me. **21** I find then the law, that for me, the one wanting to do the good, evil is present with me. **22** For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man, **23** but I see another law in my members, waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin which is in my members.

7:5 Rom 6:13,19; Rom 6:21; Rom 8:8,9
7:6 Ezek 36:26; Rom 6:4,11,19,22; Rom 7:4
7:7 Exod 20:17; Rom 3:20; Deut 5:21
7:8 Rom 7:11,13,17; Rom 4:15; 1 Cor 15:56
7:9 Matt 19:20; Luke 10:25-29; Luke 15:29
7:10 Lev 18:5; Rom 10:5; Ezek 20:11,13,21
7:11 Rom 7:8,13; Heb 3:13; Isa 44:20
7:12 1 Tim 1:8; Rom 7:14; Rom 3:31
7:13 Rom 7:8-11; James 1:13-15; Rom 8:3
7:14 1 Kgs 21:20,25; 2 Kgs 17:17; Isa 50:1
7:15 Gal 5:17; Rom 14:22; Nah 1:7
7:16 Rom 7:12,14,22; Ps 119:127,128
7:17 Rom 7:20; Rom 4:7,8; Phil 3:8,9
7:18 John 3:6; Gen 6:5; Gen 8:21
7:21 Rom 7:23; Rom 8:2; Rom 6:12,14
7:22 Ps 1:2; Ps 40:8; Ps 119:24
7:23 Gal 5:17; James 4:1; 1 Pet 2:11

7:5 *the passions of sins, which were through the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit to death* In the flesh describes life before Christ, when the old sinful nature was in control. The Law did not create sin, but it stirred it up, and that life could bear only death.
7:6 *so that we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter* But now, as in 3:21 and 6:22. The letter is the written code on stone that told us what to do but gave no power. The Spirit lives in the believer and changes us from inside, as God promised: His law on our hearts and His Spirit within us (Jer 31:33; Ezek 36:26-27).
7:7 *Is the law sin? May it not be* The Law is not the bad guy; it showed us our sin. Paul picks the tenth commandment (Exod 20:17). Most commands deal with outward acts, but coveting happens in the heart. A person could keep every outward rule and still be full of wrong desire.
7:8 *sin, having taken an occasion through the commandment, worked out in me all covetousness* Sin is pictured as an enemy using the command as a base to launch its attack. Tell someone not to do something, and he suddenly wants to do it more. Apart from law sin is dead means it lies quiet and unrecognized until the Law exposes it.
7:9 *I was once alive apart from law; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died* Paul may mean his childhood before he understood the commands, or he may speak for Israel before Sinai. Either way, when the command came home to him, he saw he stood guilty before God.
7:10 *the commandment, which was for life* God gave the Law as a good path (Lev 18:5). Because of sin, what was meant for life showed Paul that he was spiritually dead.
7:11 *sin, having taken an occasion through the commandment, deceived me* Sin always deceives. It promised Eve she would be like God (Gen 3:4-5), and it promises us satisfaction and freedom. It delivers death.
7:12 *the law indeed is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good* The Law came from God and reflects His character. We should never speak badly of it. The problem was never the Law. The problem is us.
7:13 *so that sin through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure* It was sin, not the good command, that killed Paul. Think of an X-ray. It does not cause the broken bone but shows the break so it can be treated. The Law shows how broken we are so we will run to the only One who can heal us.
7:14 *the law is spiritual, but I am fleshly, sold under sin* Paul shifts to the present tense. Who is the "I" of 7:14-25? Some believe Paul describes himself before salvation, or anyone under the Law without the Spirit: "sold under sin" seems hard to fit with 6:18, and the Spirit is not named until chapter 8. Others believe he describes himself as a mature believer: the present tense continues, this man delights in God's Law (7:22), which the fleshly mind cannot do (8:7), and before salvation Paul thought himself blameless (Phil 3:6).
7:14 *sold under sin* I lean toward the second view: the ongoing struggle every believer has with the flesh until our bodies are redeemed (8:23; Gal 5:17; 1 John 1:8). Paul is not saying sin wins every battle. He is honest about the war. I respect believers who hold the other view. Either way, Romans 7 is not the end of the story. Romans 8 is.
7:15 *for what I want, this I do not practice, but what I hate, this I do* If you have ever promised God you would never do something again and then done it, you know what Paul means.
7:16 *I agree with the law that it is good* Hating the wrong he does shows Paul's heart is on God's side even when his actions fall short.
7:17 *it is no longer I who work it out, but the sin dwelling in me* Not an excuse; he has already owned it (7:15). His truest self, the one who loves God, is not the one who wants to sin. Sin is like an unwelcome tenant. It has been evicted from the throne but has not yet moved out of the building.
7:18 *good does not dwell in me, that is, in my flesh* Paul is careful. The Spirit lives in every believer, so he does not say nothing good is in him at all, only in his flesh, his fallen nature. In his own strength he cannot carry out what he wants.
7:20 *it is no longer I who work it out, but the sin dwelling in me* Paul repeats himself, perhaps on purpose. In the middle of a struggle we tend to go around in circles.
7:21 *for me, the one wanting to do the good, evil is present with me* Almost a rule he can count on. Some of the hardest temptations come right when we are trying hardest to serve God.
7:22 *For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man* In the deepest part of who he is, Paul joyfully agrees with God's Law.
7:23 *waging war against the law of my mind* Another power is at work in his body, trying to drag him back into sin's prison. This is a real battle, which is why we put on the full armor of God (Eph 6:10-18).

24 Wretched man I ***am***! Who will deliver me out of the body of this death? **25** I thank God through Jesus (Iesous) Christ our Lord! So then I myself with the mind indeed serve ***the*** law of God, but with the flesh ***the*** law of sin.

ROMANS 8

Life in the Spirit

1 ***There is*** therefore now no condemnation to those in Christ Jesus (Iesous), who do not walk according to ***the*** flesh but according to ***the*** Spirit. **2** For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and of death. **3** For the inability of the law, in that it was weak through the flesh: God, having sent His own Son in ***the*** likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, **4** so that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to ***the*** flesh but according to ***the*** Spirit. **5** For those who are according to ***the*** flesh set ***their*** minds on the things of the flesh, but those ***who are*** according to ***the*** Spirit, the things of the Spirit. **6** For the mindset of the flesh ***is*** death, but the mindset of the Spirit ***is*** life and peace, **7** because the mindset of the flesh ***is*** hostility toward God; for it is not subject to the law of God, for neither can it ***be***. **8** And those who are in ***the*** flesh are not able to please God. **9** But you are not in ***the*** flesh but in ***the*** Spirit, if indeed ***the*** Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have ***the*** Spirit of Christ, this one is not His. **10** And if Christ ***is*** in you, the body indeed ***is*** dead because of sin, but the Spirit ***is*** life because of righteousness. **11** And if the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus out of ***the*** dead dwells in you, the One who raised Christ out of ***the*** dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit dwelling in you. **12** So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to ***the*** flesh; **13** for if you live according to ***the*** flesh, you are about to die; but if by ***the*** Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. **14** For as many as are led by ***the*** Spirit of God, these are sons of God. **15** For you did not receive a spirit of slavery again to fear, but you received ***the*** Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father!" **16** The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, **17** and if children, also heirs: heirs indeed of God, and fellow heirs of Christ, if indeed we suffer with ***Him*** so that we

7:24 Rom 6:6; Luke 4:18; Titus 2:14
7:25 Gal 5:17-24; 1 Cor 15:57; Rom 6:14,17
8:1 2 Cor 5:17; Gal 3:13; John 3:18,19
8:2 Rom 6:18,22; John 8:36; 1 Cor 15:45
8:3 Acts 13:39; Heb 7:18,19; 2 Cor 5:21
8:4 Gen 6:3; Gal 5:22-24; Heb 12:23
8:5 John 3:6; 1 Cor 2:14; Gen 6:3
8:6 Gen 6:3; Gal 6:8; Rom 6:21,23
8:7 James 4:4; 1 Cor 2:14; Eph 4:18,19
8:8 Heb 11:5,6; Rom 7:5; Phil 4:18
8:9 Gal 4:6; 1 Cor 3:16; 2 Tim 1:14
8:10 Eph 3:17; John 17:23; Col 1:27
8:11 Rom 8:9; Rom 8:2; 2 Cor 4:11
8:12 Rom 6:2-15; 1 Cor 6:19,20; 1 Pet 4:2,3
8:13 Ezek 18:31; Gal 6:8; 1 Cor 9:27
8:14 Gal 3:26; Ps 143:10; Isa 48:16,17
8:15 1 Cor 2:12; Heb 2:15; 2 Tim 1:7
8:16 2 Cor 1:22; 2 Cor 5:5; 1 John 4:13
8:17 Gal 4:7; Gal 3:29; Titus 3:7

7:24 *Who will deliver me out of the body of this death* A cry of despair, and the right question. Not what will set me free, a better plan or stronger will, but who. Some think of an ancient punishment that tied a dead body to a living prisoner. I cannot say Paul had that in mind, but the picture fits.
7:25 *I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord* Jesus has freed us from sin's penalty by His death, frees us more and more from its power by His Spirit, and will free us from its presence when He returns. Until then the battle goes on. If you hate your sin and long to do right, God is at work in you. Do not try to win this war in your own strength. Look to Jesus.
8:1 *There is therefore now no condemnation to those in Christ Jesus* If you remember one verse from Romans, this would be a good one. Condemnation is a courtroom word, the guilty verdict and its sentence. We all deserved it (3:23; 6:23), but for those joined to Christ by faith the verdict is reversed. Now, not someday or after we clean up. When Satan reminds you of your past, this verse is your answer.
8:1 *who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit* Many Greek copies end the verse at "Christ Jesus," but the same words appear in verse 4. The line does not make our safety depend on our walk. It describes the people who are in Christ.
8:2 *the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and of death* Law here means a ruling power. The power that held us captive in chapter 7 is overcome by the greater power of the Spirit bringing Christ's life into us. Gravity is still real, but an airplane's engines carry it above it.
8:3 *God, having sent His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh* The Law was not bad but weak through the flesh. It could show what was right but not give power to do it. So God sent His Son, fully human yet without sin (Heb 4:15; 2 Cor 5:21). On the cross God condemned sin in the flesh. The condemnation we deserved fell on Jesus, so none is left for us.
8:4 *so that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us* First because Christ's righteousness is credited to us, and then as it is worked out in us when we walk according to the Spirit (13:8-10).
8:5 *those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh* Two kinds of people and two directions of life, not one bad day or one good day.
8:6 *the mindset of the Spirit is life and peace* Many search for peace in all the wrong places. Paul tells us where real peace is found.
8:7 *the mindset of the flesh is hostility toward God* Without the Spirit a person is at war with God and cannot submit to His Law. No amount of religious effort can please God when it comes from a heart that has not been made new (8:8).
8:9 *if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, this one is not His* Paul reminds the believers who they are. If the Spirit lives in you, you belong to the Spirit, not the flesh. And a clear test: every true believer has the Holy Spirit.
8:10 *the body indeed is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness* Our bodies still die because of sin, but if Christ is in you, you are made alive by God because of the righteousness He has given.
8:11 *will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit dwelling in you* Our bodies will not stay dead. The same Spirit who raised Jesus lives in every believer and will raise us at Christ's return (1 Cor 15:51-53; 1 Thess 4:16-17).
8:12 *we are debtors, not to the flesh* We owe the flesh nothing.
8:13 *if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live* Paul does not say, try harder and you will beat sin, nor sit back and do nothing. We do the fighting, but in the Spirit's strength. It is a daily choice to say no to what we know is wrong and to ask God for help, again and again.
8:14 *as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God* The mark of God's children. Here the Spirit's leading is first of all away from sin and toward holiness.
8:15 *you received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry out, Abba, Father* The old life was ruled by fear. In Rome adoption gave a brand-new legal standing and full rights to the father's inheritance. Abba is Aramaic for father, used in the family by children young and grown, full of closeness and trust. Jesus prayed this way in Gethsemane (Mark 14:36). Now we can call the holy God our Father.
8:16 *The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God* One way God gives assurance. The Spirit confirms deep inside, you belong to God. It is not a passing feeling; it rests on God's promises in His Word.
8:17 *heirs indeed of God, and fellow heirs of Christ* Everything that belongs to Jesus, we will share with Him (Rev 21:7). But the path to glory runs through suffering. Jesus suffered before He was glorified, and His followers will face hardship too.

may also be glorified with ***Him***.

Future Glory

18 For I consider that the sufferings of the present time ***are*** not worthy ***to be compared*** with the glory about to be revealed to us. **19** For the eager expectation of the creation eagerly awaits the revelation of the sons of God. **20** For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of the One who subjected ***it***, in hope **21** that the creation itself also will be set free from the slavery of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. **22** For we know that the whole creation groans together and suffers birth pains together until now. **23** And not only ***this***, but also we ourselves, having the firstfruits of the Spirit, we ourselves also groan within ourselves, eagerly awaiting ***the*** adoption as sons, the redemption of our body. **24** For in hope we were saved; but hope that is seen is not hope; for what anyone sees, why does he also hope for ***it***? **25** But if we hope for what we do not see, through perseverance we eagerly await ***it***. **26** And likewise the Spirit also helps our weaknesses; for what we should pray as is necessary, we do not know, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with inexpressible groanings. **27** And the One who searches the hearts knows what the mindset of the Spirit ***is***, because He intercedes for ***the*** saints according to God. **28** And we know that to those who love God all things work together for good, to those who are called according to ***His*** purpose. **29** For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined ***to be*** conformed to the image of His Son, for Him to be ***the*** firstborn among many brothers; **30** and those whom He predestined, these He also called; and those whom He called, these He also justified; and those whom He justified, these He also glorified.

Nothing Can Separate Us

31 What then will we say to these things? If God ***is*** for us, who ***is*** against us? **32** He who indeed did not spare His own Son, but handed Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things? **33** Who will bring a charge against ***the*** elect of God? God ***is*** the One who justifies; **34** who ***is*** the one who condemns? Christ ***is*** the One who died, and rather also was raised, who is also at ***the*** right ***hand*** of God, who also intercedes for us. **35** Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? **36** Just as

8:18 1 Pet 4:13; 2 Cor 4:17,18; Acts 20:24
8:19 2 Pet 3:11-13; Mal 3:17,18; Rom 8:23
8:20 Gen 3:17; Gen 3:18; Gen 3:19
8:21 Gen 3:17; 2 Pet 3:13; Rev 22:3-5
8:22 Gen 3:17; Jer 12:11; Mark 16:15
8:23 Eph 1:14; Rom 7:24; Rom 8:19,25
8:24 1 Thess 5:8; Heb 11:1; 2 Cor 5:7
8:25 1 Thess 1:3; Rom 12:12; Col 1:11
8:26 Eph 6:18; Matt 10:20; Gal 4:6
8:27 Ps 7:9; Rom 8:34; 1 Chr 28:9
8:28 1 Pet 5:10; Gen 50:20; Rom 8:35-39
8:29 Eph 1:4; Jer 1:5; 1 Pet 1:20
8:30 1 Cor 6:11; Rom 9:23,24; Heb 9:15
8:31 Ps 118:6; Jer 1:19; 1 John 4:4
8:32 Ps 84:11; Isa 53:10; Job 34:29
8:33 Isa 50:8; Rev 12:10,11; Rom 8:1
8:34 Ps 109:31; Heb 7:25; Mark 16:19
8:35 John 16:33; Rom 5:3-5; 1 Pet 4:12-14
8:36 Ps 44:22; Isa 53:7; Jer 12:3

8:18 *the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory about to be revealed to us* Paul was beaten, stoned, shipwrecked, and imprisoned (2 Cor 11:23-27), and still says it is not worth comparing. If you are suffering now, your pain is real and God sees it. This verse invites us to look past today.
8:19 *the eager expectation of the creation eagerly awaits the revelation of the sons of God* Creation pictured on tiptoe. Believers look like everyone else now, but when Jesus returns His people will be revealed in glory.
8:20 *the creation was subjected to futility* When Adam sinned, God cursed the ground (Gen 3:17-19), and nature has been marked by decay and death. Creation did not choose it. God subjected it, but in hope.
8:21 *the creation itself also will be set free from the slavery of corruption* John sees a new heaven and earth, and God says, "Look, I make all things new" (Rev 21:5), with no more curse (Rev 22:3). God will not throw away His creation. He will rescue it and restore it.
8:22 *the whole creation groans together and suffers birth pains together until now* A hopeful picture. Labor pains are real, but not pointless; new life is on the way. Jesus used the same picture (Matt 24:8).
8:23 *having the firstfruits of the Spirit* The first part of the harvest promised the rest (Lev 23:10). The Spirit in us is God's guarantee of all He has promised.
8:23 *eagerly awaiting the adoption as sons, the redemption of our body* We are adopted already (8:15), but full adoption comes when our bodies are raised and made new at Christ's return. We are God's children but have not yet received all that comes with it.
8:24 *For in hope we were saved* Biblical hope is not wishful thinking but confident expectation based on God's promise, so we wait with perseverance, not giving up when things get hard (8:25).
8:26 *the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with inexpressible groanings* Have you ever been so burdened you did not know what to pray? When we have no words, the Spirit prays for us.
8:27 *He intercedes for the saints according to God* The Father, who searches hearts, knows what the Spirit prays, and the Spirit always prays according to God's will. Even when our prayers are weak or confused, the prayers that reach the Father for us are perfect.
8:28 *to those who love God all things work together for good* One of the most loved and most misunderstood verses. It does not say all things are good. Cancer and betrayal are not good. It says God is at work in every one of them for those who love Him. Joseph could tell his brothers, "you planned evil against me; God planned it for good" (Gen 50:20). The good is defined next: being conformed to the image of His Son. God's goal is not always our comfort, but that we become like Jesus.
8:29 *those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son* The golden chain: foreknew, predestined, called, justified, glorified, and no link breaks. Predestine means to decide the destination ahead of time, here likeness to Christ. Faithful Christians hold different views. The Reformed view reads foreknew as God setting His love on people beforehand, as "Only you have I known" (Amos 3:2), choosing them by grace alone. The Arminian view reads it as God knowing ahead who would freely believe and predestining them to be like His Son.
8:30 *and those whom He justified, these He also glorified* Glorified is past tense though still future for us, because it is so certain in God's mind. Glorified means our final, resurrected, sinless state when Jesus returns. Both views agree on far more than they disagree. Paul gave this chain for comfort, not argument. God has been at work in you from before time began, and He will finish what He started (Phil 1:6).
8:31 *If God is for us, who is against us* Plenty of things are against us, but none can win against a God who is for us.
8:32 *He who indeed did not spare His own Son* From the greater to the lesser. If God did not hold back Jesus, will He hold back anything else we truly need?
8:33 *Who will bring a charge against the elect of God? God is the One who justifies* Back in the courtroom. Satan is "the accuser of our brothers" (Rev 12:10), but the Judge Himself has declared us righteous.
8:34 *who also intercedes for us* The only One with the right to condemn is Jesus, the Judge of all. But He died, was raised, sits at God's right hand, and is "always living to intercede" (Heb 7:25) for us. The One who could condemn us is praying for us.
8:35 *Who will separate us from the love of Christ* Paul faced most of these himself (2 Cor 11:23-27). None of them can cut a believer off from Christ's love.
8:36 *we were regarded as sheep of slaughter* From Psalm 44:22. God's people have always suffered. Suffering is not a sign that God has stopped loving us.

it has been written, "For Your sake we are being put to death all the day; we were regarded as sheep of slaughter." **37** But in all these ***things*** we more than conquer through the One who loved us. **38** For I have been persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, **39** nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God which ***is*** in Christ Jesus our Lord.

ROMANS 9

Paul's Sorrow for Israel

1 I speak ***the*** truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience bearing witness with me in ***the*** Holy Spirit, **2** that I have great grief and unceasing anguish in my heart. **3** For I myself was wishing to be accursed from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to ***the*** flesh, **4** who are Israelites, whose ***is*** the adoption as sons, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service, and the promises; **5** whose ***are*** the fathers, and from whom ***is*** the Christ according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed to the ages. Amen.

God's Sovereign Choice

6 But ***it is*** not as though the word of God has failed. For not all who ***are*** of Israel, these ***are*** Israel; **7** nor because they are seed of Abraham (Abraam) ***are they*** all children, but, "In Isaac (Isaak) seed will be called for you." **8** That is, the children of the flesh, these ***are*** not children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as seed. **9** For this ***is*** the word of promise: "At this time I will come, and there will be a son to Sarah (Sarra)." **10** And not only ***this***, but also Rebekah (Hrebekka), having conceived by one, Isaac our father; **11** for ***the children*** not yet having been born, nor having done anything good or evil, so that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of the ***One*** calling, **12** it was said to her, "The greater will serve the lesser." **13** Just as it has been written, "Jacob (Iakob) I loved, but Esau I hated." **14** What then will we say? ***Is there*** unrighteousness with God? May it not be! **15** For He says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whomever I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I have compassion." **16** So then ***it is*** not of the one who wants nor of the one who runs, but of God who

8:37 Deut 20:4; Ps 4:8; Isa 49:25
8:38 Job 13:15; John 10:28; 1 Pet 3:22
8:39 Ps 36:11; Prov 25:3; Song 8:7
9:1 Gal 1:20; 1 Tim 2:7; Rom 1:9
9:2 Ps 119:136; Jer 13:17; Ezek 9:4
9:3 Exod 32:32; Gal 1:8; Deut 21:23
9:4 Exod 4:22; Eph 2:12; Ps 147:19
9:5 Deut 27:15; 1 Kgs 1:36; 1 Chr 16:36
9:6 Gal 6:16; Rom 2:28,29; Num 23:19
9:7 Gen 21:12; Gen 17:19; Gen 21:3
9:8 Gen 18:10; Gen 21:12; Rom 4:11-16
9:9 Gen 18:10; Gen 18:14; Gen 17:21
9:10 Gen 25:21; Gen 22:23; Gen 25:22
9:11 Gen 25:23; Mal 1:2; Rom 4:17
9:12 Gen 25:23; Gen 25:22; Mal 1:2
9:13 Mal 1:2-3; Gen 29:31; Deut 21:15
9:14 2 Chr 19:7; Deut 32:4; Job 8:3
9:15 Exod 33:19; Isa 27:11; Isa 30:18
9:16 Exod 33:19; Rom 9:11; Isa 65:1

8:37 *in all these things we more than conquer through the One who loved us* In them, not away from them. God does not always remove the trouble, but He makes us more than conquerors in the middle of it.
8:39 *nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord* Paul names everything in life and death, time and space, and the spirit world, and then anything he missed. Jesus said, "no one will snatch them out of My hand" (John 10:28). Some hold eternal security: God keeps those He saves, and one who falls away completely never truly belonged. Others hold that nothing outside us can separate us, but a believer can turn away by persistent unbelief. Both agree our security rests on God, and the warnings are serious (11:20-22).
9:1 *I speak the truth in Christ, I am not lying* Three witnesses: in Christ, not lying, and a conscience guided by the Spirit. Some accused Paul of turning his back on his own people, and he wants them to know the truth.
9:2 *I have great grief and unceasing anguish in my heart* When we talk about people who reject the gospel, we should never sound proud or careless. We should sound like Paul, heartbroken.
9:3 *I myself was wishing to be accursed from Christ for the sake of my brothers* Accursed is anathema, devoted to destruction. Paul knew it could not happen (8:39), but it shows the depth of his love. Moses prayed something similar after the golden calf (Exod 32:32). Both reflect Jesus, who did become a curse for us (Gal 3:13). Do you love lost people this much? I fall short here, but I want to grow.
9:4 *whose is the adoption as sons, and the glory, and the covenants* God called Israel His son (Exod 4:22). The glory was His visible presence in the tabernacle and temple. The covenants were His binding promises to Abraham, Moses, and David. Israel also received the Law, the worship, and the promises of the Messiah.
9:5 *from whom is the Christ according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed to the ages* The greatest privilege: Jesus was born a Jew. The most natural reading is that Paul calls Jesus God. Some translations punctuate it differently, but the SLB follows the plain flow of the Greek. Jesus is fully man, born of Israel, and fully God, over all.
9:6 *it is not as though the word of God has failed. For not all who are of Israel, these are Israel* The main point of the chapter. Being born into Israel never automatically made someone part of the believing Israel. There has always been a faithful remnant within the nation. This does not mean the church replaced Israel. Paul is not speaking of Gentiles here but drawing a line inside Israel, between Jews who believe and Jews who do not.
9:7 *In Isaac seed will be called for you* Abraham had more than one son, but the promised line came through Isaac (Gen 21:12), born to Sarah when she was far too old (Gen 18:10). From the beginning God's family was built on His promise, not just physical birth.
9:11 *the children not yet having been born, nor having done anything good or evil* A stronger example: twins, same parents, same pregnancy. Before birth God said, "The greater will serve the lesser" (9:12; Gen 25:23), so that His purpose according to election might stand, not of works but of the One calling.
9:13 *Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated* From Malachi 1:2-3. In Hebrew speech, love and hate side by side often mean choose and not choose, or prefer and put second, as when Jesus said His followers must "hate" their families (Luke 14:26). Malachi also spoke of the nations from these two men, Israel and Edom.
9:13 *Jacob I loved* The Reformed view: God chose individuals for salvation before birth by His good pleasure alone, not by foreseen faith, stressing "not of works but of the One calling." The Arminian view: Paul speaks mainly of choosing a line to carry the promise and of nations, and where salvation is in view God chose those He foreknew would believe (8:29; 1 Pet 1:1-2). Both hold salvation is all of grace and God is not unfair.
9:14 *Is there unrighteousness with God? May it not be* Whatever we conclude about this chapter, we must start here. God is never unjust.
9:15 *I will have mercy on whomever I have mercy* From Exodus 33:19. Mercy by definition is not deserved; if God owed it, it would be payment. Justice would give each of us what our sin deserves. Mercy freely holds back what we deserve and gives what we do not.
9:16 *it is not of the one who wants nor of the one who runs, but of God who has mercy* Salvation does not start with our wanting or running. It starts with God. Whatever view we hold, every believer can say, I am saved because God was merciful to me.

has mercy. **17** For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very ***purpose*** I raised you up, so that I might show My power in you, and so that My name might be proclaimed in all the earth." **18** So then He has mercy on whom He wants, and He hardens whom He wants. **19** You will say to me then, "Why does He still find fault? For who has resisted His will?" **20** Rather, O man, who are you, the one answering back to God? Will the thing formed say to the One who formed ***it***, "Why did You make me like this?" **21** Or does the potter not have authority over the clay, out of the same lump to make one vessel for honor, and another for dishonor? **22** And if God, wanting to show the wrath and to make known His power, endured with much patience vessels of wrath fitted for destruction, **23** and so that He might make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory, **24** whom He also called, ***even*** us, not only out of ***the*** Jews but also out of ***the*** Gentiles? **25** As He also says in Hosea (Hosee), "I will call that which ***was*** not My people 'My people,' and her who ***was*** not loved 'loved.' **26** And it will be ***that*** in the place where it was said to them, 'You ***are*** not My people,' there they will be called sons of ***the*** living God." **27** And Isaiah (Hesaias) cries out concerning Israel: "Though the number of the sons of Israel be as the sand of the sea, the remnant will be saved; **28** for ***He is*** completing a word and cutting ***it*** short in righteousness, because the Lord will perform a word cut short upon the earth." **29** And just as Isaiah has foretold: "Unless ***the*** Lord of armies had left us a seed, we would have become as Sodom (Sodoma), and we would have been made like Gomorrah (Gomorra)."

Israel's Unbelief

30 What then will we say? That Gentiles, who were not pursuing righteousness, laid hold of righteousness, but a righteousness which ***is*** by faith; **31** but Israel, pursuing a law of righteousness, did not attain to ***the*** law of righteousness. **32** Why? Because ***they pursued it*** not by faith, but as by works of law; for they stumbled over the stone of stumbling, **33** just as it has been written, "Look, I lay in Zion (Sion) a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense, and everyone who believes on Him will not be put to shame."

ROMANS 10

Righteousness by Faith for All

1 Brothers, the desire of my heart and the supplication to

9:17 Exod 9:16; Exod 10:1; Exod 14:17
9:18 Exod 4:21; Rom 9:15,16; Josh 11:20
9:19 Job 9:12; Job 33:12; Ps 115:3
9:20 Isa 29:16; Isa 45:9; Job 33:13
9:21 Isa 64:8; Jer 18:3; Jer 18:4
9:22 Exod 9:16; Prov 16:4; Jude 1:4
9:23 Rom 2:4; 1 Pet 1:2-5; Rom 5:20,21
9:24 Rom 8:28-30; 1 Cor 1:9; Heb 3:1
9:25 Hos 2:23; Hos 1:1; Isa 65:1
9:26 Hos 1:10; Isa 43:6; Hos 1:9
9:27 Isa 10:22-23; Isa 10:20; Hos 1:10
9:28 Ps 65:5; Isa 30:12; Dan 9:26
9:29 Isa 1:9; Isa 13:19; Jer 50:40
9:30 Prov 15:9; Prov 21:21; Phil 3:9
9:31 Ps 69:27; Rom 11:7; Rom 10:2-4
9:32 Isa 8:14; Isa 8:15; Ezek 3:20
9:33 Isa 28:16; Joel 2:26; Isa 45:17
10:1 1 Cor 9:20-22; Rom 9:1-3; 1 Sam 15:11,35

9:17 *For this very purpose I raised you up* From Exodus 9:16. God put Pharaoh on Egypt's throne at that moment so His power and name would be known in all the earth, and it worked. Canaan still talked of it forty years later (Josh 2:9-10), and the Philistines centuries later (1 Sam 4:8).
9:18 *He hardens whom He wants* God announced He would harden Pharaoh's heart (Exod 4:21; 7:3), and Pharaoh hardened his own heart (Exod 8:15, 32). Both are true. Calvinists stress God's sovereign will; Arminians stress that God's hardening confirmed the path Pharaoh chose. Both agree Pharaoh was guilty and God was right.
9:19 *Why does He still find fault? For who has resisted His will* If God is in control, how can He blame anyone? People still ask it today. It is a fair question, and Paul takes it seriously.
9:20 *who are you, the one answering back to God* Paul's first answer is a reminder of who we are talking to. He does not forbid hard questions; the Psalms are full of them. He warns against putting God on trial. A child asking his father why is different from a child telling his father he has no right to be in charge.
9:21 *does the potter not have authority over the clay* The picture comes from the prophets (Isa 29:16; 45:9; Jer 18:1-6). Arminians point to Jeremiah 18, where the potter turns from judgment when a nation repents. Calvinists answer that Paul's wording echoes Isaiah, where the stress is on the potter's right.
9:22 *endured with much patience vessels of wrath fitted for destruction* God put up with Pharaoh, rebellious Israel, and a sinful world for a long time, patience meant to lead to repentance (2:4). Paul says God prepared the vessels of mercy beforehand, but he does not say who fitted the vessels of wrath. Calvinists see God's active choice in both; Arminians see a careful difference, as if those vessels prepared themselves by their sin.
9:24 *whom He also called, even us, not only out of the Jews but also out of the Gentiles* A turning point: God's people now include believing Jews and Gentiles together. I do not claim to have this all figured out. God is completely sovereign, people are truly responsible (ch. 10), salvation is all grace, and the invitation is real (10:13). If you worry whether you are chosen, call on Him. Whoever comes to Jesus He "will certainly not cast out" (John 6:37).
9:25 *I will call that which was not My people My people* From Hosea 2:23 and 1:10, first spoken of the rebellious northern tribes whom God promised to bring back. Paul applies the principle to the Gentiles. The God who restores Israel can call people who were never His and make them sons of the living God.
9:27 *the remnant will be saved* From Isaiah 10:22-23. A remnant is a small part left from a larger whole. Even in Isaiah's day most of the nation was unfaithful, but God always kept a believing remnant. Paul's day followed the same pattern.
9:29 *Unless the Lord of armies had left us a seed, we would have become as Sodom* From Isaiah 1:9. Lord of armies translates the Hebrew Sabaoth, the Lord who commands the armies of heaven. Sodom and Gomorrah were wiped out (Gen 19). Israel was spared only by God's mercy in keeping a remnant, a sign of grace, not merit.
9:30 *Gentiles, who were not pursuing righteousness, laid hold of righteousness, but a righteousness which is by faith* The emphasis shifts from God's choice to human response. Gentiles who were not even trying heard the good news, believed, and were declared right with God.
9:32 *Because they pursued it not by faith, but as by works of law* Many in Israel were sincere and devoted but ran down the wrong road, trying to earn right standing. It is possible to attend every service and follow every rule and still miss God, trusting in what we do instead of what Christ has done.
9:33 *Look, I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense* Paul joins Isaiah 28:16 and 8:14. The stone is Jesus, laid in Zion as the foundation. For those who trust Him He is sure; for those who refuse, a stone they trip over (1 Pet 2:6-8). The chapter that began with God's choice ends with a call to believe. Both truths sit side by side.
10:1 *the desire of my heart and the supplication to God on behalf of Israel is for salvation* After the hardest words about Israel's unbelief, Paul opens his heart. His belief in God's sovereignty did not stop him praying; it drove him to pray. Whatever you believe about election, it should never stop you praying for the lost or sharing the gospel with them.

God on behalf of Israel is for salvation. **2** For I bear witness about them that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. **3** For being unaware of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish ***their*** own righteousness, they did not submit to the righteousness of God. **4** For Christ ***is the*** end of law for righteousness to everyone who believes. **5** For Moses writes ***of*** the righteousness which ***is*** of the law, that "The man who has done these things will live in them." **6** But the righteousness of faith speaks thus: "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" that is, to bring Christ down; **7** or, "Who will descend into the abyss?" that is, to bring Christ up out of ***the*** dead. **8** But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart"; that is, the word of faith which we proclaim: **9** that if you confess with your mouth Lord Jesus (Iesous), and believe in your heart that God raised Him out of ***the*** dead, you will be saved; **10** for with ***the*** heart it is believed for righteousness, and with ***the*** mouth it is confessed for salvation. **11** For the Scripture says, "Everyone who believes on Him will not be put to shame." **12** For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord of all ***is*** rich toward all who call on Him. **13** For "everyone who calls on the name of ***the*** Lord will be saved."

How Will They Hear?

14 How then will they call on ***Him*** in whom they did not believe? And how will they believe ***in Him*** of whom they did not hear? And how will they hear without one proclaiming? **15** And how will they proclaim unless they are sent? Just as it has been written, "How beautiful ***are*** the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, of those who preach the gospel of good things!" **16** But not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah (Hesaias) says, "Lord, who has believed our report?" **17** So faith ***is*** from report, and report through ***the*** word of God. **18** But I say, did they not hear? Rather, "Their sound has gone out into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the

10:2 Acts 21:20,28; Phil 1:9; Phil 3:6
10:3 Luke 16:15; Rom 1:17; Phil 3:9
10:4 Gal 3:24; Rom 8:3,4; Heb 9:7-14
10:5 Lev 18:5; Neh 9:29; Ezek 20:11,13,21
10:6 Deut 30:12-13; Deut 30:11; Deut 30:14
10:7 Heb 13:20; Rom 4:25; 1 Pet 3:18,22
10:8 Deut 30:14; Rom 1:16,17; 1 Tim 4:6
10:9 Luke 12:8; Phil 2:11; 1 John 4:2,3
10:10 Heb 3:12; Phil 3:9; Luke 8:15
10:11 Isa 28:16; Isa 49:23; Ps 2:12
10:12 Ps 86:5; Ps 145:18; Isa 55:6
10:13 Joel 2:32; Acts 2:21; Gen 4:26
10:14 1 Kgs 8:42; 1 Kgs 8:43; Isa 52:7
10:15 Isa 52:7; Nah 1:15; Isa 61:1
10:16 Isa 53:1; Rom 3:3; Heb 4:2
10:17 Mic 4:2; Rom 1:16; Mark 4:24
10:18 Ps 19:4; Ps 22:27; Ps 98:3

10:2 *they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge* Paul knew it firsthand; his zeal once made him a persecutor (Phil 3:6; Acts 22:3-4). They were sincere, but sincerely wrong. You can be passionate about God and still miss Him. Sincerity does not save. Truth matters.
10:3 *seeking to establish their own righteousness, they did not submit to the righteousness of God* They did not understand that God offers His righteousness as a gift, so they tried to build their own. Receiving it takes humility, admitting our best falls short (3:23). Pride would rather earn it. Faith is willing to receive it.
10:4 *Christ is the end of law for righteousness to everyone who believes* End can mean the goal, the place the sacrifices, priesthood, and whole Law pointed, and the finish, the stopping point of the Law as a way to become right with God. Both fit. And it is for everyone who believes, a phrase that keeps coming in this chapter.
10:5 *The man who has done these things will live in them* The way of the Law (Lev 18:5). On paper it is true: perfect keeping would bring life. But no one except Jesus has done it, and stumbling in one point makes one guilty of all (James 2:10). Paul was blameless by the outward standard (Phil 3:6), but no one has kept it from the heart, which is what God looks at.
10:6 *Who will ascend into heaven? that is, to bring Christ down* Paul draws on Deuteronomy 30:11-14, where Moses said God's word was not too far away. Faith need not bring Christ down; He already came and lived among us.
10:7 *Who will descend into the abyss? that is, to bring Christ up out of the dead* Christ has already risen. We do not have to make some great journey or do some great work to reach God. God has already done the reaching. The work is finished.
10:8 *The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart* Salvation is not far away. The word of faith, the gospel about Jesus, is right here, and anyone anywhere can respond to it.
10:9 *if you confess with your mouth Lord Jesus* Confess means to say the same thing, to agree openly. Caesar was honored as lord, and within a few generations Christians were pressed to say Caesar is Lord. To say Jesus is Lord put Him above Caesar and self. For a Jew, Lord was the word the Greek Old Testament used for God Himself.
10:9 *and believe in your heart that God raised Him out of the dead, you will be saved* More than agreeing with a fact: trusting the risen Jesus with your whole self. The resurrection proves God accepted Christ's sacrifice (4:25); without it faith is useless (1 Cor 15:17). This is not a magic formula of words in order. It describes real faith, believed inside and spoken outside, and the promise is certain.
10:10 *with the heart it is believed for righteousness, and with the mouth it is confessed for salvation* With the heart one believes and is justified, declared right with God. With the mouth one confesses, the outward expression of salvation. A faith never willing to name Jesus before others should make us examine ourselves (Matt 10:32-33).
10:11 *Everyone who believes on Him will not be put to shame* Isaiah 28:16 again, with the weight on everyone. Your past and your background do not disqualify you.
10:12 *the same Lord of all is rich toward all who call on Him* Earlier no distinction because all have sinned (3:22-23); now because the same Lord is generous to all. We are equally lost and equally welcome. There is one way of salvation for Jew and Gentile.
10:13 *everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved* From Joel 2:32, quoted at Pentecost (Acts 2:21). In Joel, the LORD is the God of Israel, and Paul applies it to Jesus, another strong statement that Jesus is God. If you call on the Lord Jesus, trusting Him to save you, He will. If you never have, you can today, right where you are.
10:14 *how will they hear without one proclaiming* A chain of questions, each leading back to the one before. This is why missions and evangelism exist. God's normal way is people telling people. The one proclaiming is not only a pastor in a pulpit but anyone who announces the message. Every believer is sent to someone.
10:15 *How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace* From Isaiah 52:7, a messenger running across the mountains to tell Jerusalem the exile is over. Dusty, tired feet are not usually called beautiful, but to those waiting for good news they were the most beautiful sight in the world. When you share Jesus, God sees your feet as beautiful too.
10:16 *Lord, who has believed our report* Hearing is not accepting. The words open Isaiah 53 (Isa 53:1), the Suffering Servant chapter that describes Jesus' death centuries before. Even then Isaiah knew many would not believe.
10:17 *So faith is from report, and report through the word of God* Faith does not come out of thin air. It comes from hearing the message God has spoken. If you want your faith to grow, spend time in God's Word. If you want someone to come to faith, they need to hear it.
10:18 *Their sound has gone out into all the earth* From Psalm 19:4, where creation speaks of God to the world. Paul uses it to show the gospel had spread widely, often in the synagogues themselves, as Acts shows. Israel's problem was not lack of information.

inhabited world." **19** But I say, did Israel not know? First Moses says, "I will provoke you to jealousy by ***what is*** not a nation; by a nation without understanding I will anger you." **20** And Isaiah is very bold and says, "I was found by those not seeking Me; I became manifest to those not inquiring after Me." **21** But to Israel He says, "All the day I stretched out My hands to a people disobeying and contradicting."

ROMANS 11

The Remnant of Israel

1 I say then, did God reject His people? May it not be! For I also am an Israelite, of ***the*** seed of Abraham (Abraam), of ***the*** tribe of Benjamin (Beniamin). **2** God did not reject His people whom He foreknew. Or do you not know what the Scripture says in Elijah (Helias), how he pleads with God against Israel, saying, **3** "Lord, they have killed Your prophets, and they have torn down Your altars, and I alone was left, and they are seeking my life"? **4** But what does the divine answer say to him? "I have left for Myself seven thousand men who did not bow ***the*** knee to Baal." **5** So then also in the present time there has come to be a remnant according to ***the*** election of grace. **6** And if by grace, ***it is*** no longer from works; otherwise grace no longer becomes grace. But if from works, it is no longer grace; otherwise the work is no longer work. **7** What then? What Israel is seeking after, this it did not obtain, but the election obtained ***it***, and the rest were hardened, **8** just as it has been written, "God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes not to see and ears not to hear, until this day." **9** And David (Dabid) says, "Let their table become a snare and a trap and an offense and a retribution to them; **10** let their eyes be darkened so as not to see, and bend their back continually."

The Olive Tree

11 I say then, did they stumble so that they might fall? May it not be! But by their trespass salvation ***has come*** to the Gentiles, to provoke them to jealousy. **12** But if their trespass ***is the*** riches of ***the*** world, and their failure ***the*** riches of ***the*** Gentiles, how much more their fullness? **13** For I am speaking to you, the Gentiles. Inasmuch indeed as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I glorify my ministry, **14** if somehow I might provoke to jealousy my flesh and save some of them. **15** For if their rejection ***is the*** reconciliation of ***the*** world, what ***will*** the acceptance ***be*** but life out of ***the*** dead? **16** And if the firstfruit ***is*** holy, also the lump; and if the root ***is*** holy, also the

10:19 Deut 32:21; Isa 44:18; Isa 44:19
10:20 Isa 65:1; 2 Chr 15:4; Isa 55:5
10:21 Isa 65:2; Jer 35:15; 1 Sam 8:7
11:1 2 Chr 15:2; Jer 33:26; 1 Sam 12:22
11:2 1 Kgs 19:10; Gen 44:15; Exod 32:1
11:3 1 Kgs 19:14; 1 Kgs 18:13; 1 Kgs 18:30
11:4 1 Kgs 19:18; Num 25:3; Deut 4:3
11:5 2 Kgs 19:31; Ezra 9:8; Isa 6:13
11:6 Rom 3:27,28; Rom 4:4,5; Rom 5:20,21
11:7 Deut 29:4; Rom 9:18; 2 Cor 3:14
11:8 Deut 29:4; Isa 29:10; Jer 5:21
11:9 Ps 69:22-23; Isa 8:13; Deut 29:4
11:10 Exod 4:21; Deut 28:66; Deut 28:67
11:11 Deut 32:21; Isa 8:14; Ezek 18:23,32
11:12 Rom 11:25; Rom 11:15,33; Rom 9:23
11:13 Acts 9:15; Rom 15:16-19; Acts 13:2
11:14 1 Cor 7:16; Rom 9:3; 1 Tim 4:16
11:15 Rom 11:1,2,11,12; Rom 5:10; Dan 9:24
11:16 Num 15:17; Num 15:20-21; Num 15:18

10:19 *I will provoke you to jealousy by what is not a nation* From Deuteronomy 32:21. The Gentiles had no Law, prophets, or covenants, and God warned He would use outsiders to provoke Israel. In chapter 11 this jealousy becomes a word of hope.
10:20 *I was found by those not seeking Me* Isaiah 65:1. The Gentiles were not looking for Israel's God, and many worshiped idols, yet God revealed Himself to them. God came looking for people who were not looking for Him. If you are a believer, that is your story too.
10:21 *All the day I stretched out My hands to a people disobeying and contradicting* Isaiah 65:2. A father with arms open wide all day, waiting for his children to come home. Israel's rejection was not because God was unwilling. Jesus wept over Jerusalem, wanting to gather her as a hen gathers her chicks (Matt 23:37). God's arms are still open, to Israel and to every reader.
11:1 *did God reject His people? May it not be* Paul's first evidence is himself, an Israelite of Abraham's seed and Benjamin's tribe. If God had thrown away the Jewish people, Paul would be lost too. The church has not replaced Israel, and the whole chapter shows God's promises to the Jewish people still stand.
11:2 *God did not reject His people whom He foreknew* God chose Israel knowing exactly what they would be like, stubbornness and all. He did not choose them by mistake, and He will not drop them now.
11:3 *I alone was left, and they are seeking my life* After his victory on Mount Carmel, Elijah fled from Jezebel, discouraged, thinking he was the last faithful one in Israel (1 Kgs 19).
11:4 *I have left for Myself seven thousand men who did not bow the knee to Baal* Have you ever felt like the only one at work, at school, or in your family trying to follow God? Elijah could not see the seven thousand, but God could. You are probably not as alone as you feel.
11:5 *a remnant according to the election of grace* In Paul's day thousands of Jews believed in Jesus, and the first church in Jerusalem was Jewish (Acts 2:41; 21:20). That remnant exists because of grace.
11:6 *if by grace, it is no longer from works; otherwise grace no longer becomes grace* Grace and earning cannot be mixed. Add something we must do to earn it, and it stops being a gift. That is true for Israel's remnant and for every one of us.
11:7 *the election obtained it, and the rest were hardened* The nation sought righteousness by works and did not find it. Hardened means unresponsive, unable to see or feel the truth.
11:8 *God gave them a spirit of stupor* From Deuteronomy 29:4 and Isaiah 29:10. This hardening is a judgment, and Israel is held responsible for their unbelief (10:21). But it is not the end of the story.
11:9 *Let their table become a snare and a trap* From Psalm 69:22-23. The place of blessing became a trap. The good gifts God gave Israel, the Law, temple, and heritage, became what they trusted instead of God.
11:11 *did they stumble so that they might fall? May it not be* Stumbling is not falling flat for good. Through their trespass salvation came to the Gentiles, as Acts shows again and again (Acts 13:46; 18:6; 28:28), and God's purpose was to make Israel jealous for their own Messiah. Does my life make Jewish people jealous for Jesus? Sadly, church history includes shameful acts against Jewish people done in Christ's name, the very opposite of this.
11:12 *how much more their fullness* Paul looks ahead to Israel's failure reversed. If God brought so much blessing through Israel's stumbling, imagine what He will do when they turn back to Him.
11:14 *if somehow I might provoke to jealousy my flesh and save some of them* Paul took his calling to the Gentiles seriously (Acts 9:15), but even that work had a Jewish goal. He never stopped loving his people.
11:15 *what will the acceptance be but life out of the dead* Some see a great spiritual revival in the world. Others see the resurrection that comes when Jesus returns in glory (Dan 12:2; Rev 20:4). I believe the church will be caught up before the Tribulation (1 Thess 4:16-17), so this would be the raising of Old Testament believers and Tribulation saints at His Second Coming. I lean toward this view, because 11:25-27 ties Israel's salvation to the coming of the Deliverer.
11:16 *if the firstfruit is holy, also the lump; and if the root is holy, also the branches* The first piece of dough offered to God made the whole batch holy (Num 15:17-21). The firstfruit and root most likely mean the patriarchs, with whom God made His covenant. Because the root is holy, God still has a claim on the nation that came from it.

branches. **17** But if some of the branches were broken off,
and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them
and became a fellow partaker of the root and of the richness
of the olive tree, **18** do not boast over the branches. But if
you boast, ***it is*** not you ***who*** support the root, but the root
supports you. **19** You will say then, "The branches were
broken off so that I might be grafted in." **20** Well ***said***. By
unbelief they were broken off, but you stand by faith. Do not
think high ***things***, but fear. **21** For if God did not spare the
branches according to nature, ***take heed*** lest perhaps He may
not spare you either. **22** Look then ***at the*** kindness and severity of God: toward those who fell, severity; but toward you,
kindness, if you continue in the kindness; otherwise you also
will be cut off. **23** And they also, if they ***do*** not continue in
unbelief, will be grafted in; for God is able to graft them in
again. **24** For if you were cut out of the olive tree ***that is*** wild
according to nature, and contrary to nature were grafted
into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, who
are according to nature, be grafted into ***their*** own olive tree?

All Israel Will Be Saved

25 For I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, of this
mystery, so that you may not be wise in yourselves, that a
hardening in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of
the Gentiles has come in; **26** and so all Israel will be saved,
just as it has been written, "The One who delivers will come
out of Zion (Sion), and He will turn away ungodliness from
Jacob (Iakob); **27** and this ***is*** the covenant from Me to them,
when I take away their sins." **28** As regards the gospel, ***they
are*** enemies on account of you; but as regards the election,
they are beloved on account of the fathers. **29** For the gifts
and the calling of God ***are*** irrevocable. **30** For just as you also
once were disobedient to God, but now were shown mercy by
the disobedience of these, **31** so these also now were disobedient, so that by your mercy they also may be shown mercy.
32 For God has shut up all in disobedience, so that He may
have mercy on all.

Praise to God

33 O depth of riches and of wisdom and of knowledge of God!
How unsearchable ***are*** His judgments and untraceable His
ways! **34** For who has known ***the*** mind of ***the*** Lord? Or who
has become His counselor? **35** Or who has first given to Him,

11:17 Jer 11:16; Eph 2:11-13; Eph 3:6
11:18 Rom 11:20; Rom 3:27; 1 Kgs 20:11
11:19 Rom 11:11,12,17,23,24
11:20 2 Cor 1:24; Rom 12:16; 1 Cor 10:12
11:21 Rom 8:32; 2 Pet 2:4-9; Rom 11:17,19
11:22 1 Cor 15:2; Heb 3:6,14; John 15:2
11:23 2 Cor 3:16; Zech 12:10; Matt 23:39
11:24 Rom 11:17,18,30
11:25 Luke 21:24; Rom 12:16; Rom 16:25
11:26 Isa 59:20; Jer 31:31; Hos 3:5
11:27 Isa 27:9; Isa 59:21; Jer 31:31
11:28 Lev 26:40; Lev 26:41; Jer 11:15
11:29 Num 23:19; Mal 3:6; Hos 13:14
11:30 Col 3:7; 1 Cor 6:9-11; Eph 2:1,2,12,13,19-21
11:31 Rom 10:16; Rom 11:15,25
11:32 Rom 3:9,22; Gal 3:22; John 1:7
11:33 Ps 92:5; Ps 104:24; Job 5:9
11:34 Isa 40:13; Isa 40:28; 1 Cor 2:16
11:35 Job 41:11; Job 35:7; Job 34:13

11:17 *you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them* The olive tree was a symbol of Israel (Jer 11:16). Unbelieving branches were broken off, and Gentile believers were grafted in to share the root and richness, the blessings promised to Abraham. Gentiles are grafted into Israel's tree. They do not get a new tree. The church is not a replacement for Israel.
11:18 *it is not you who support the root, but the root supports you* Gentile believers have no reason to look down on the Jewish people. Our salvation rests on promises God made to Israel. Our Bible came through Israel. Our Savior is a Jew.
11:20 *By unbelief they were broken off, but you stand by faith. Do not think high things, but fear* True, but be careful. Nobody stands by birth or goodness; everyone stands by faith alone. This is healthy fear, humble respect for God, who did not spare the natural branches (11:21).
11:22 *Look then at the kindness and severity of God* A God with only kindness would not be holy; with only severity He would leave us without hope. The God of the Bible is both.
11:22 *if you continue in the kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off* Those holding eternal security say the truly saved will continue because God keeps them (John 10:28-29; Phil 1:6), the warning is one means He uses, and one who falls away completely shows his faith was never real (1 John 2:19). Those holding conditional security say a believer can turn away by persistent unbelief (Heb 6:4-6; 10:26-29). Both agree the warning is real, grace is no license for pride, and God is faithful.
11:23 *God is able to graft them in again* Great hope for the Jewish people. The door is not shut. Any Jewish person who turns to Jesus is grafted back into his own tree.
11:24 *how much more will these, who are according to nature, be grafted into their own olive tree* Farmers graft a cultivated branch onto wild stock, not the reverse. God did something contrary to nature in grafting wild Gentiles into Israel's tree. It is far easier for Him to put the natural branches back.
11:25 *a hardening in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in* A mystery is a truth once hidden and now made known, told so Gentiles would not think God had moved on. The hardening is partial, there is always a remnant; temporary, it lasts until; and it has an end, when every Gentile God intends to save has come in. Jerusalem is trampled "until the times of the nations are fulfilled" (Luke 21:24).
11:26 *and so all Israel will be saved* Views: a future national turning of the Jewish people to Jesus near the end of this age; all the elect, Jews and Gentiles, the church; or the believing Jewish remnant through history. Some hold that the church replaced Israel, which I do not. I believe the first fits best. In chapters 9-11 Israel means the Jewish people, verse 25 just contrasted Israel with Gentiles, and "until" points to a future change.
11:26 *The One who delivers will come out of Zion* From Isaiah 59:20-21 and 27:9. I understand the Deliverer to be Jesus at His Second Coming. When He returns in glory after the Tribulation, the Jewish people will look on the One they pierced and mourn for Him (Zech 12:10; Rev 1:7), and turn to Him.
11:27 *when I take away their sins* The New Covenant of Jeremiah 31:31-34, where God promises to forgive Israel's sin and remember it no more.
11:28 *as regards the election, they are beloved on account of the fathers* Many oppose the gospel, and their unbelief opened the door to the Gentiles. But God made unbreakable promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and He still loves their descendants because of them.
11:29 *For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable* They cannot be taken back. If God could cancel His promises to Israel, how could we trust His promises to us? Because He keeps His word to Israel, we know He will keep it to us. That answers the question that began in chapter 9.
11:31 *so that by your mercy they also may be shown mercy* Gentiles once disobedient received mercy through Israel's disobedience, and Israel will receive mercy through the mercy shown Gentiles. God weaves even rebellion into His plan of mercy.
11:32 *God has shut up all in disobedience, so that He may have mercy on all* Not that every person will be saved; salvation comes through faith. God has put Jews and Gentiles on the same level, so both receive salvation the same way, as a gift.
11:33 *O depth of riches and of wisdom and of knowledge of God* After eleven chapters Paul bursts into praise. God is greater than all his explanations. We will not answer every question about chapters 9-11, and that is okay. We can rest in a God wiser than we are.
11:35 *who has first given to Him, and it will be repaid to him* Paul draws on Isaiah 40:13 and Job 41:11. No one has advised God or put Him in debt. Everything we have, including salvation, is a gift.

and it will be repaid to him? **36** For from Him and through Him and to Him ***are*** all things. To Him ***be*** the glory to the ages. Amen.

ROMANS 12

A Living Sacrifice

1 Therefore I exhort you, brothers, through the compassions of God, to present your bodies ***as*** a living, holy sacrifice, well-pleasing to God, your reasonable service. **2** And do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God ***is***, the good and well-pleasing and perfect ***will***.

Gifts in the Body

3 For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to be high-minded beyond what it is necessary to think, but to think so as to be sober-minded, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith. **4** For just as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function, **5** so we, the many, are one body in Christ, and each one members of one another. **6** And having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: whether prophecy, according to the proportion of the faith; **7** or ministry, in the ministry; or the one who teaches, in the teaching; **8** or the one who exhorts, in the exhortation; the one who gives, in generosity; the one who leads, in diligence; the one who shows mercy, in cheerfulness.

Marks of True Love

9 ***Let*** love ***be*** without hypocrisy. Abhorring the evil, clinging to the good; **10** in brotherly love devoted to one another, in honor preferring one another; **11** in diligence not lazy, in spirit fervent, serving the Lord; **12** in hope rejoicing, in tribulation enduring, in prayer continuing steadfastly;
13 sharing in the needs of the saints, pursuing hospitality.
14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.
15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep, **16** thinking the same ***thing*** toward one another, not thinking high ***things***, but going along with the lowly. Do not be wise in yourselves. **17** Repaying no one evil for evil, taking

11:36 1 Chr 29:11; Dan 4:34; Job 34:13
12:1 1 Pet 2:5; Rom 6:13,16,19; Heb 13:15,16
12:2 1 Pet 1:14,18; 2 Cor 5:17; Col 3:10
12:3 Phil 2:3-8; 1 Pet 4:11; Gal 6:3
12:4 1 Cor 12:4,12,27; Eph 4:15,16
12:5 1 Cor 10:17; Eph 4:25; Col 2:19
12:6 1 Pet 4:10,11; Rom 12:3; Rom 1:11
12:7 Acts 13:1; Eph 4:11; Isa 21:8
12:8 2 Cor 9:7; 1 Cor 12:28; 1 Tim 5:17
12:9 1 Tim 1:5; 1 Pet 4:8; Ps 34:14
12:10 John 13:34,35; Heb 13:1; 1 Pet 2:17
12:11 Acts 18:25; Heb 6:10,11; 1 Pet 4:8
12:12 Heb 10:36; Rom 15:13; Ps 16:9-11
12:13 2 Cor 9:1,12; Heb 6:10; Heb 13:16
12:14 Matt 5:44; Luke 6:28; 1 Thess 5:15
12:15 Isa 66:10; 1 Cor 12:26; Heb 13:3
12:16 Prov 3:7; 1 Pet 3:8; Rom 15:5
12:17 Prov 20:22; 1 Thess 5:15; 2 Cor 8:20,21

11:36 *For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things* God is the source of all things, holds them together, and is their goal. The right response to His plan is not argument. It is worship.
12:1 *Therefore I exhort you, brothers, through the compassions of God* When you see a therefore, ask what it is there for. Here it is there for eleven chapters. Paul does not threaten us into obedience. He reminds us how much mercy we have been shown and asks us to respond.
12:1 *to present your bodies as a living, holy sacrifice, well-pleasing to God, your reasonable service* An Old Testament sacrifice was killed on the altar. God asks for one that stays alive: our hands, eyes, time, and energy, given every day. An old saying goes that the trouble with a living sacrifice is that it keeps crawling off the altar, so this is a daily choice. The word can mean reasonable or spiritual. Worship is not only Sunday music. How you work, treat your family, and spend money on Monday is worship too.
12:2 *do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind* Do not let the world press you into its mold. Transformed is metamorphoo, as a caterpillar becomes a butterfly, the word used of Jesus' Transfiguration (Matt 17:2). What we put into our minds shapes who we become. The world teaches us all day through screens, music, and conversation. To think God's way, fill your mind with God's truth.
12:2 *so that you may prove what the will of God is* Prove means test and find it to be what it is, good, well-pleasing, and perfect. Many believers worry about finding God's will. A life given to God and a mind renewed by Him will recognize it. God is not hiding it from us.
12:3 *not to be high-minded beyond what it is necessary to think, but to think so as to be sober-minded* Paul's first word about church life is about pride. Not thinking poorly of yourself, but seeing yourself honestly. Whatever faith and gifts we have, God allotted them, which leaves no room for boasting (1 Cor 4:7).
12:5 *we, the many, are one body in Christ, and each one members of one another* As in 1 Corinthians 12, the eye does not try to be the hand. We belong to Christ and to each other. No Christian was meant to live the faith alone.
12:6 *having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us* Seven gifts are named: prophecy, ministry, teaching, exhorting (encouraging and urging on), giving, leading, and mercy. The list is not complete (1 Cor 12; Eph 4). Every believer has something to offer.
12:8 *the one who gives, in generosity; the one who leads, in diligence; the one who shows mercy, in cheerfulness* How we serve matters as much as whether we serve. Mercy with cheerfulness, not a sigh. If you do not know your gift, start serving. Many discover their gifts by doing what needs doing and seeing where God blesses it, and others often see our gifts before we do.
12:9 *Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhorring the evil, clinging to the good* Hypocrisy comes from a word for an actor wearing a mask. Christian love is real, not an act, and it has a backbone. Love does not approve of everything. It hates whatever harms the people it loves and holds tightly to what is good.
12:10 *in brotherly love devoted to one another, in honor preferring one another* Family love. Imagine a church where everyone competed to honor someone else instead of looking for honor for himself.
12:11 *in spirit fervent, serving the Lord* Fervent means boiling, on fire. Some see the Holy Spirit here, others our own spirit. Either way, a heart warm toward God, not lukewarm (Rev 3:15-16).
12:12 *in hope rejoicing, in tribulation enduring, in prayer continuing steadfastly* Three that belong together. We rejoice because we know how the story ends, endure because hard times will come, and keep praying because we cannot do the first two in our own strength.
12:13 *sharing in the needs of the saints, pursuing hospitality* Love gets practical. Traveling believers depended on hospitality. Today a meal, a spare room, or a ride can be one of the clearest ways to show Christ's love.
12:14 *Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse* Jesus' own teaching (Matt 5:44; Luke 6:28). Ask God to do them good. This goes against our nature and is only possible by the Spirit's power.
12:15 *Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep* Sometimes weeping with someone is easier than rejoicing, because envy creeps in. Love is glad when others are glad. When someone hurts, the best thing is often to sit and weep with them, not explain their pain away.
12:16 *going along with the lowly. Do not be wise in yourselves* Living in harmony does not mean agreeing on everything. Spend time with the overlooked, as Jesus did. The person who thinks he knows it all has stopped learning (Prov 3:7).
12:17 *Repaying no one evil for evil* No exceptions. Live so even unbelievers can see our conduct is honorable.

thought beforehand for good ***things*** before all men; **18** if possible, so far as ***it is*** from you, being at peace with all men; **19** not avenging yourselves, beloved, but give place to the wrath; for it has been written, "Vengeance ***is*** Mine, I will repay," says ***the*** Lord. **20** Therefore if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him drink; for in doing this you will heap coals of fire on his head. **21** Do not be overcome by the evil, but overcome the evil with the good.

ROMANS 13

Submission to Authorities

1 Let every soul be subject to the higher authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist have been appointed by God. **2** So the one who sets himself against the authority has resisted the ordinance of God; and those who have resisted will receive judgment on themselves. **3** For the rulers are not a terror to the good works, but to the evil. And do you want not to fear the authority? Do the good, and you will have praise from it; **4** for he is a servant of God to you for the good. But if you do the evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is a servant of God, an avenger for wrath to the one who practices the evil. **5** Therefore ***it is*** necessary to be subject, not only because of the wrath, but also because of the conscience. **6** For because of this you also pay taxes; for they are ministers of God, continuing steadfastly in this very thing. **7** Therefore render to all ***what is*** owed: the tax to whom the tax ***is owed***, the revenue to whom the revenue, the fear to whom the fear, the honor to whom the honor.

Love Fulfills the Law

8 Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves the other has fulfilled ***the*** law. **9** For the ***commandments***, "You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness, You shall not covet," and if ***there is*** any other commandment, it is summed up in this word, in the ***saying***, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." **10** Love does not work evil to the neighbor; therefore love ***is the*** fulfillment of ***the*** law.

The Day Is Near

11 And this, knowing the time, that ***it is*** already ***the*** hour for us to be awakened out of sleep; for now our salvation ***is***

12:18 Mark 9:50; Gal 5:22; Rom 14:17,19
12:19 Deut 32:35; Prov 24:29; Prov 20:22
12:20 Prov 25:21-22; Exod 23:4; Song 8:6
12:21 Gen 50:21; 1 Sam 24:17; 1 Sam 25:21
13:1 Dan 2:21; Titus 3:1; 1 Pet 2:13-17
13:2 Titus 3:1; 1 Pet 2:13; Jer 23:8-17
13:3 Deut 25:1; Prov 14:35; Prov 20:2
13:4 Gen 9:6; 2 Chr 19:6; Rom 12:19
13:5 Eccl 8:2; 1 Pet 2:19; 1 Sam 24:5,6
13:6 Matt 17:24-27; Matt 22:17-21; Mark 12:14-17
13:7 Luke 20:25; Lev 19:3; 1 Sam 12:18
13:8 Rom 13:10; Matt 7:12; Gal 5:14
13:9 Exod 20:13-17; Lev 19:18; Deut 5:17-21
13:10 Ps 15:3; Rom 13:8; 1 Cor 13:4-7
13:11 Prov 6:9; Eph 5:14; 1 Cor 15:34

12:18 *if possible, so far as it is from you, being at peace with all men* Some people will not be at peace no matter what you do. You control only your part. Make sure the problem is not on your side. Living at peace never means staying in danger or keeping silent about abuse. You can bless someone from a safe distance, and reporting a crime is not revenge (13:4).
12:19 *Vengeance is Mine, I will repay* From Deuteronomy 32:35. Give place to the wrath means leave room for God to act. Evil matters so much that God Himself will deal with it, perfectly. We can let go of revenge because we trust the Judge (Rev 19:2; 20:12).
12:20 *you will heap coals of fire on his head* From Proverbs 25:21-22. Some believe kindness will bring heavier judgment if he refuses to repent. Most believe it will make him burn with shame that may lead to repentance; some point to an Egyptian custom of carrying a pan of coals on the head to show sorrow. The second fits verse 21 best. The goal is to win the enemy, not punish him.
12:21 *overcome the evil with the good* Pay back evil with evil and evil has won, making us like the one who hurt us. Answer it with good and we overcome it. Jesus met the worst evil the world could do with the greatest good it has ever seen.
13:1 *Let every soul be subject to the higher authorities* No one is left out; Christians are not above the law of the land. Government is God's idea to keep order in a fallen world. This does not mean every ruler is good, but that no one holds power unless God allows it (Dan 2:21; John 19:11). The emperor then was Nero, who would later turn on the Christians, and tradition says Paul was executed under him. Paul was writing about Rome.
13:2 *the one who sets himself against the authority has resisted the ordinance of God* The judgment is most likely the government's own penalty, though resisting also displeases God. Must we obey no matter what? No. When the state commands sin or forbids what God commands, we obey God: "It is necessary to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29), as Daniel prayed (Dan 6:10) and the midwives spared the boys (Exod 1:17, 20-21).
13:2 *those who have resisted will receive judgment on themselves* Even then, those believers did not riot or take up arms. They disobeyed openly and accepted the consequences. The rule is submission; the exception is narrow. Disliking a law or leader is not the same as being commanded to sin.
13:3 *the rulers are not a terror to the good works, but to the evil* Government is meant to restrain evil, not good. If you do what is right, you usually have nothing to fear from the authorities.
13:4 *he does not bear the sword in vain* The sword stood for the power to punish, even with death. God gave government the right to use force to restrain evil and protect the innocent. Individuals are not to take revenge (12:19), but God has given the state the job of punishing crime. A Christian forgives personally, and the courts still carry out justice.
13:5 *not only because of the wrath, but also because of the conscience* Two reasons: we do not want to be punished, and better, we know God set up authority. A believer obeys the law even when no officer is watching.
13:6 *For because of this you also pay taxes* Taxes support the work God gave rulers. Jesus said to give Caesar what belongs to Caesar (Matt 22:21). Nobody enjoys taxes, but a Christian pays them honestly.
13:7 *the fear to whom the fear, the honor to whom the honor* Tax was a direct tax on people and land; revenue a tax on goods; fear is respect for authority; honor is esteem for those in office. We can disagree with a leader's policies and still speak of him with respect (1 Pet 2:17), even one we did not vote for.
13:8 *Owe no one anything, except to love one another* Some say this forbids all borrowing, but the point is broader. Pay what you owe and do not leave debts hanging. One debt is never paid off: love. Love is not a way around the Law; it is what the Law aimed at all along.
13:9 *You shall love your neighbor as yourself* Paul quotes the commandments about how we treat others (Exod 20:13-17), all summed up in Leviticus 19:18, as Jesus taught (Matt 22:39-40). If you love your neighbor, you will not take his wife, kill him, steal from him, lie about him, or want what is his. Love keeps the commandments without needing a list.
13:10 *love is the fulfillment of the law* Love never harms, and this is the love the Spirit produces in us (5:5; Gal 5:22).
13:11 *now our salvation is nearer than when we believed* We were saved when we believed, the past. We are being made holy, the present. One day we will be fully saved, body and all, when Jesus returns (8:23), the future. Every day brings us one day closer to Christ's return. It is the hour to wake up.

nearer than when we believed. **12** The night has advanced, and the day has drawn near. Therefore let us cast off the works of the darkness, and let us put on the armor of the light. **13** Let us walk properly, as in ***the*** day, not in revelings and drunkennesses, not in sexual immoralities and sensualities, not in strife and jealousy. **14** But put on the Lord Jesus (Iesous) Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, for ***its*** desires.

ROMANS 14

Do Not Judge One Another

1 Now receive the one who is weak in the faith, not for disputes over reasonings. **2** One believes ***he may*** eat all things, but the one who is weak eats vegetables. **3** Let not the one who eats despise the one who does not eat, and let not the one who does not eat judge the one who eats; for God has received him. **4** Who are you, the one judging another's servant? To ***his*** own master he stands or falls. And he will be made to stand, for God is able to make him stand. **5** One judges ***one*** day above ***another*** day, but another judges every day ***alike***. Let each be fully assured in ***his*** own mind. **6** The one who regards the day regards ***it*** to ***the*** Lord, and the one who does not regard the day does not regard ***it*** to ***the*** Lord. The one who eats eats to ***the*** Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and the one who does not eat does not eat to ***the*** Lord, and he gives thanks to God. **7** For none of us lives to himself, and none dies to himself. **8** For if we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore whether we live or we die, we are the Lord's. **9** For to this ***end*** Christ both died and rose up and lived again, so that He might rule over both ***the*** dead and ***the*** living. **10** But you, why do you judge your brother? Or you also, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. **11** For it has been written, "***As*** I live, says ***the*** Lord, every knee will bow to Me, and every tongue will confess to God." **12** So then each of us will give an account concerning himself to God.

Do Not Make Your Brother Stumble

13 Therefore let us no longer judge one another, but rather judge this: not to put a stumbling block or an offense before the brother. **14** I know and have been persuaded in ***the*** Lord Jesus (Iesous) that nothing ***is*** unclean of itself, except to the one who counts anything to be unclean, to that one ***it is***

13:12 Job 24:14; Job 24:15; Job 24:16
13:13 Isa 22:12; Isa 2:5; Isa 22:13
13:14 Gal 3:27; Eph 4:24; 1 Pet 2:11
14:1 Rom 15:1,7; 1 Cor 9:22; Rom 15:7
14:2 Rom 14:14; 1 Tim 4:4; Gen 9:3
14:3 Rom 14:10,15,21; Luke 18:9; Rom 14:13
14:4 Rom 9:20; 1 Cor 4:4,5; James 4:11,12
14:5 Gal 4:9,10; Col 2:16,17; Rom 14:14,23
14:6 1 Cor 10:30,31; Matt 14:19; Matt 15:36
14:7 2 Cor 5:15; 1 Thess 5:10; 1 Pet 4:2
14:8 John 21:19; Acts 13:36; Acts 20:24
14:9 Rev 1:18; Matt 28:18; Luke 24:26
14:10 2 Cor 5:10; Rom 2:16; 1 Cor 4:5
14:11 Isa 45:23; Isa 45:22; Num 14:21
14:12 1 Pet 4:5; Matt 12:36; Luke 16:2
14:13 Lev 19:14; Ezek 14:3; Deut 22:8
14:14 1 Cor 8:7,10; Rom 14:2,20; Acts 10:28

13:12 *The night has advanced, and the day has drawn near* The night is this present evil age; the day is when Christ returns, every eye seeing Him (Rev 1:7), who promised, "I am coming quickly" (Rev 22:20). Why still waiting two thousand years later? A thousand years is like a day to the Lord, and He is patient, not wanting anyone to perish (2 Pet 3:8-9). Each generation should live as if He could come in its lifetime.
13:12 *let us cast off the works of the darkness, and let us put on the armor of the light* Take them off like dirty clothes. The Christian life is a battle, and we need to be dressed for it (Eph 6:11-17).
13:13 *not in strife and jealousy* People do their worst things in the dark. Three pairs: wild partying, sexual sin and lack of self-control, and fighting and envy. We sometimes treat the respectable sins as less serious. God does not.
13:14 *But put on the Lord Jesus Christ* We put on Christ once when we came to faith (Gal 3:27), and we do it every day by living like Him and drawing on His strength. In A.D. 386 young Augustine, struggling with lust and despair, heard a child chanting, take up and read. He opened Paul's letters to these verses and later wrote that light flooded his heart and the darkness of doubt vanished (Confessions 8.12).
13:14 *make no provision for the flesh, for its desires* To make provision is to plan ahead. Do not make it easy to sin. If something tempts you, do not keep it within reach, do not plan your weekend around it, and do not leave the door open.
14:1 *receive the one who is weak in the faith, not for disputes over reasonings* Not someone who doubts that Jesus saves, but a believer whose conscience is not yet free in areas God does not forbid. Do not bring him in to argue him out of his convictions. Reasonings are matters of opinion where sincere believers differ, not the core of the gospel, where Paul gave no room (Gal 1:8-9).
14:2 *the one who is weak eats vegetables* Meat in Rome's markets had often been offered to idols and was not prepared by Jewish food laws. Some believers, especially Jewish believers, avoided meat altogether to be safe (Dan 1:8, 12).
14:3 *Let not the one who eats despise the one who does not eat* The strong are tempted to look down on the weak as narrow; the weak are tempted to judge the strong as worldly. Paul speaks to both. If God has received someone, who are we to reject him?
14:4 *To his own master he stands or falls* A servant answered to his own master, not the neighbors. Every believer is the Lord's servant, and God is able to make him stand.
14:5 *Let each be fully assured in his own mind* Most likely the Sabbath and feast days of the Law. Paul does not settle the question. For Gentile believers it is a matter of conscience; the days were a shadow, and the substance belongs to Christ (Col 2:16-17). Convictions about Sunday, the Saturday Sabbath, Christmas, and Easter should not divide us.
14:6 *The one who regards the day regards it to the Lord* Both the one who eats and the one who abstains give thanks and try to please God. When we see that, it is much harder to look down on each other.
14:8 *whether we live or we die, we are the Lord's* A believer never leaves the Lord's hands, not even in death. And since each believer belongs to the Lord, it is the Lord's job to evaluate him, not mine.
14:9 *so that He might rule over both the dead and the living* By His death and resurrection Jesus earned the right to rule all His people, living and dead. He is Lord of all.
14:10 *we will all stand before the judgment seat of Christ* Not the judgment of whether a believer is saved, which was settled at the cross (8:1), but the day believers give account of how they lived and are rewarded (2 Cor 5:10; 1 Cor 3:12-15). We will be too busy giving our own account that day to give anyone else's.
14:11 *every knee will bow to Me, and every tongue will confess to God* From Isaiah 45:23, which Paul applies to Jesus (Phil 2:10-11). Every person will one day bow before Him. The only question is whether we bow now in faith or later in judgment.
14:12 *each of us will give an account concerning himself to God* Concerning himself, not his brother. I will answer for my life, and you for yours.
14:13 *not to put a stumbling block or an offense before the brother* Instead of judging others, make a judgment about yourself. The question shifts from am I free to do this, to will this hurt my brother?
14:14 *nothing is unclean of itself, except to the one who counts anything to be unclean* Jesus taught that food cannot make a person unclean, "cleansing all the foods" (Mark 7:19), and Peter learned it in a vision (Acts 10:15). Paul stands with the strong. But one who believes a thing is wrong and does it anyway goes against his conscience, and that is sin for him.

unclean. **15** And if your brother is grieved because of food, you are no longer walking according to love. Do not destroy with your food that one for whom Christ died. **16** Therefore do not let your good be slandered. **17** For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in ***the*** Holy Spirit. **18** For the one who serves Christ in these things ***is*** well-pleasing to God and approved by men. **19** So then let us pursue the things of peace and the things of building up one another. **20** Do not tear down the work of God for the sake of food. All things indeed ***are*** clean, but ***it is*** evil for the man who eats with stumbling. **21** ***It is*** good not to eat meat nor to drink wine nor ***to do anything*** by which your brother stumbles or is offended or is weak. **22** Do you have faith? Have ***it*** to yourself before God. Blessed ***is*** the one who does not judge himself in what he approves. **23** But the one who doubts has been condemned if he eats, because ***it is*** not of faith; and everything that ***is*** not of faith is sin.

ROMANS 15

Receive One Another

1 Now we who ***are*** strong ought to bear the weaknesses of the weak, and not to please ourselves. **2** For let each of us please ***his*** neighbor for ***his*** good, toward edification. **3** For even Christ did not please Himself; but just as it has been written, "The reproaches of those reproaching You fell on Me." **4** For whatever things were written beforehand were written beforehand for our instruction, so that through the endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we may have the hope. **5** Now may the God of endurance and encouragement give you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus (Iesous), **6** so that with one accord, with one mouth, you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. **7** Therefore receive one another, just as Christ also received us, to ***the*** glory of God. **8** Now I say ***that*** Jesus Christ has become a servant of ***the*** circumcision on behalf of ***the*** truth of God, in order to confirm the promises of the fathers, **9** and ***that*** the Gentiles glorify God for ***His*** mercy; just as it has been written, "Because of this I will praise You among ***the*** Gentiles, and I will sing praise to Your name." **10** And again it says, "Rejoice, Gentiles, with His peo-

14:15 Gal 5:13; Phil 2:2-4; 1 Cor 8:11
14:16 Rom 12:17; 1 Cor 10:29,30; 2 Cor 8:20,21
14:17 Rom 15:13; Matt 6:33; 1 Cor 8:8
14:18 2 Cor 8:21; Rom 16:18; Rom 14:4
14:19 Ps 34:14; Rom 15:2; Rom 12:18
14:20 Rom 14:14; Acts 10:15; Titus 1:15
14:21 1 Cor 8:13; Rom 14:13; Rom 14:17
14:22 1 John 3:21; Rom 14:2,5,14,23; Gal 6:1
14:23 1 Cor 11:29-31; Rom 13:2; 1 Cor 8:7
15:1 Rom 14:1; Gal 6:1,2; 1 Thess 5:14
15:2 1 Cor 10:24,33; Rom 14:19; 1 Cor 9:19-22
15:3 Ps 69:9; Ps 31:11; John 5:30
15:4 1 Cor 10:11; 2 Tim 3:16,17; Rom 4:23,24
15:5 Ezek 11:19; Rom 12:16; 1 Pet 3:8
15:6 John 20:17; 2 Cor 11:31; Eph 1:3
15:7 John 13:34; Rom 14:1-3; Matt 10:40
15:8 Matt 15:24; 2 Cor 1:20; John 1:11
15:9 2 Sam 22:50; Ps 18:49; 1 Kgs 8:35
15:10 Deut 32:43; Isa 11:10; Isa 66:10

14:15 *Do not destroy with your food that one for whom Christ died* Love limits liberty. Christ gave His life for that brother; can I not give up a meal for him? Destroy likely means serious damage to his faith, leading him to act against his conscience and drift from the Lord.
14:16 *do not let your good be slandered* Freedom is good, but used carelessly it may be spoken of as evil and bring reproach on the gospel.
14:17 *the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit* Food is not what the kingdom is about. When we fight over side issues, we lose sight of the main thing.
14:18 *well-pleasing to God and approved by men* Even unbelievers respect a Christian who is gracious and not argumentative.
14:19 *let us pursue the things of peace and the things of building up one another* Peace does not happen by accident; we have to chase it. Before speaking in a disagreement, ask: will this build my brother up or tear him down?
14:20 *Do not tear down the work of God for the sake of food* The work of God is your fellow believer, someone God is building. It makes no sense to knock that down over a plate of food.
14:21 *It is good not to eat meat nor to drink wine nor to do anything by which your brother stumbles* A mature believer is not the one who uses every freedom he has, but the one who can give one up out of love.
14:22 *Do you have faith? Have it to yourself before God* Enjoy your freedom privately before God; there is no need to parade it before those it will hurt. Blessed is the one with a clear conscience about what he does.
14:23 *everything that is not of faith is sin* One who doubts and eats anyway is condemned, not to hell, but by his own conscience. If you are not sure something is right and do it anyway, you sin, even if the thing is not wrong in itself. When in doubt, do not.
15:1 *we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of the weak* Paul counts himself among the strong, those whose faith is free about food and days. But strength is not a license; it is a load to carry. The strong are to bear with the scruples of weaker believers, not shrug them off, and not live to please themselves.
15:2 *let each of us please his neighbor for his good, toward edification* This is not people-pleasing for the sake of popularity. It is seeking what is truly good for a brother, what builds him up in the faith. The question is not what I may do, but what will help him grow.
15:3 *The reproaches of those reproaching You fell on Me* Christ is the great example. He did not live to please Himself. Paul quotes Psalm 69:9, where the righteous sufferer bears the insults aimed at God. Jesus took on Himself the reproach meant for the Father. If He gave up so much for us, we can give up a plate of meat for a brother.
15:4 *whatever things were written beforehand were written beforehand for our instruction* Paul has just quoted a psalm, and now he tells us why. The Old Testament was not only for Israel long ago; it was written for us too. Through its endurance and encouragement we have hope. We should never neglect the Old Testament.
15:5 *the God of endurance and encouragement* The endurance and encouragement we find in the Scriptures come from God Himself. Paul prays that He would give the Roman believers to be of the same mind with one another, not identical opinions on every matter, but one heart that follows Christ Jesus.
15:6 *with one accord, with one mouth, you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ* The goal of unity is worship. Picture a choir with many voices singing one song. Jewish and Gentile believers, weak and strong, were to praise God together with one mouth.
15:7 *receive one another, just as Christ also received us* Paul sums up chapters 14 and 15. How did Christ receive us? While we were still sinners (5:8), with all our faults. If He welcomed us like that, we can welcome one another. And when we do, it brings glory to God.
15:8 *Jesus Christ has become a servant of the circumcision on behalf of the truth of God* Jesus came first as a servant to Israel, the circumcision. He was born a Jew and ministered mainly to Jews (Matt 15:24). He did this to show that God is true to His word and to confirm the promises He made to the fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
15:9 *the Gentiles glorify God for His mercy* Israel received promises; the Gentiles had none (Eph 2:12). They come in purely by mercy. Paul quotes Psalm 18:49, where David praises God among the Gentiles. He now strings together four Old Testament texts to show that God always meant the nations to praise Him.
15:10 *Rejoice, Gentiles, with His people* This is from Deuteronomy 32:43, the Song of Moses. Note the word "with." The Gentiles rejoice together with Israel, not in place of Israel. God has not traded Israel for the church; He has brought the nations in to share the blessing.

ple." **11** And again, "Praise the Lord, all the Gentiles, and extol Him, all the peoples." **12** And again Isaiah (Hesaias) says, "There will be the root of Jesse (Iessai), and the ***One*** rising to rule Gentiles; on Him Gentiles will hope." **13** Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you abound in the hope in ***the*** power of ***the*** Holy Spirit.

Paul the Minister to the Gentiles

14 Now I myself also have been persuaded concerning you, my brothers, that you yourselves also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another. **15** But I wrote to you more boldly, brothers, in part, as reminding you, because of the grace that was given to me by God, **16** for me to be a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, serving the gospel of God as a priest, so that the offering of the Gentiles may become acceptable, sanctified in ***the*** Holy Spirit. **17** Therefore I have boasting in Christ Jesus ***in*** the things pertaining to God. **18** For I will not dare to speak anything of what Christ did not accomplish through me for ***the*** obedience of ***the*** Gentiles, by word and deed, **19** in ***the*** power of signs and wonders, in ***the*** power of ***the*** Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem (Hierousalem) and around as far as Illyricum (Illyrikon) I have fully proclaimed the gospel of Christ; **20** and so, aspiring to preach the gospel not where Christ was named, so that I may not build on another's foundation, **21** but just as it has been written, "Those to whom it was not announced concerning Him will see, and those who have not heard will understand."

Paul's Plans to Visit Rome

22 Therefore I also was being hindered many ***times*** from coming to you. **23** But now, no longer having a place in these regions, and having a longing to come to you for many years, **24** whenever I go to Spain (Spania), I will come to you. For I hope, while passing through, to see you, and to be sent forward there by you, if first I am filled with you in part. **25** But now I am going to Jerusalem, ministering to the saints. **26** For Macedonia (Makedonia) and Achaia were pleased to make a certain contribution for the poor of the saints who ***are*** in Jerusalem. **27** For they were pleased, and they are their debtors. For if the Gentiles shared in their spiritual ***things***, they ought also to minister to them in the fleshly ***things***. **28** Therefore, having finished this and having sealed this fruit to them, I will go away through you into Spain. **29** And I know that, coming to you, I will come in ***the*** fullness

15:11 Ps 117:1; Ps 66:8; Ps 96:1
15:12 Isa 11:10; Isa 11:1; Gen 49:10
15:13 Isa 55:12; Num 6:26; 1 Sam 1:18
15:14 2 Pet 1:12; 1 John 2:21; 1 Cor 8:1,7,10
15:15 Num 18:7; Rom 12:3,6; Rom 1:5
15:16 Isa 66:20; Phil 2:17; Rom 11:13
15:17 Heb 5:1; Rom 4:2; 2 Cor 2:14-16
15:18 Acts 21:19; Rom 1:5; Prov 25:14
15:19 2 Cor 12:12; 1 Cor 12:4-11; Gal 3:5
15:20 Isa 52:15; 2 Cor 10:13-16; 1 Cor 3:9-15
15:21 Isa 52:15; Isa 66:19; Isa 65:1
15:22 Rom 1:13; 1 Thess 2:17,18
15:23 Rom 15:32; Rom 1:10-12; 1 Thess 3:10
15:24 Prov 25:17; Rom 15:28; Acts 15:3
15:25 Acts 24:17; Acts 19:21; Acts 18:21
15:26 Acts 11:27-30; 2 Cor 8:1-9; Gal 6:6-10
15:27 1 Cor 9:11; Gal 6:6; Rom 11:17
15:28 Rom 15:24; Phil 4:17; Col 1:6
15:29 Ps 16:11; Eph 4:13; Ezek 34:26

15:11 *Praise the Lord, all the Gentiles, and extol Him, all the peoples* Paul quotes Psalm 117:1, the shortest psalm, and one of the clearest calls for every nation to praise the Lord.
15:12 *There will be the root of Jesse, and the One rising to rule Gentiles* The last quote is from Isaiah 11:10. Jesse was David's father, and the Root of Jesse is the Messiah from David's line (Rev 22:16). He will rule the nations, and they will hope in Him. Paul has quoted the Law, the Psalms and the Prophets, and all three agree.
15:13 *the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing* The word "hope" links this verse to the one before. God is the source of hope, and He fills us with joy and peace as we keep trusting Him. This is not something we work up. We abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.
15:14 *able also to admonish one another* Paul has spoken firmly, but he is not scolding. He is confident the Roman believers are full of goodness and knowledge, and able to counsel and correct one another. A healthy church does not leave all the admonishing to the pastor.
15:16 *serving the gospel of God as a priest, so that the offering of the Gentiles may become acceptable* Paul pictures his ministry as priestly service. A priest brought offerings to God; Paul brings the Gentiles themselves, saved through the gospel, as an offering to God. They are acceptable because they are sanctified, set apart, by the Holy Spirit.
15:18 *what Christ did not accomplish through me for the obedience of the Gentiles* Paul's only boast is in what Christ did through him. He will not speak of anything else. The aim of his work was the obedience of the Gentiles, the obedience that comes from faith (1:5), brought about by both word and deed.
15:19 *from Jerusalem and around as far as Illyricum I have fully proclaimed the gospel of Christ* God backed Paul's preaching with signs and wonders (Acts 14:3; 19:11-12). Illyricum lay on the Adriatic coast, roughly modern Albania and the former Yugoslavia. "Fully proclaimed" does not mean every person heard; it means Paul had planted churches in the key cities, and they could carry the gospel to the regions around them.
15:20 *aspiring to preach the gospel not where Christ was named* Paul was a pioneer. His ambition was to preach where no one had yet heard of Christ, so he would not build on another man's foundation. Today there are still thousands of people groups with little or no gospel witness.
15:21 *Those to whom it was not announced concerning Him will see* Paul finds his calling in Isaiah 52:15, from the passage about the Suffering Servant. Those who had never been told about Him would see and understand. That is what happens when the gospel reaches the unreached.
15:22 *I also was being hindered many times from coming to you* This is why Paul had not yet visited Rome. The work of planting churches in new places kept him busy. He was not avoiding them.
15:24 *whenever I go to Spain, I will come to you* Now that the eastern regions had churches, Paul looked west, to Spain at the far edge of the Roman world. He planned to visit Rome on the way and hoped the church there would help send him on, much as a home church sends out missionaries today.
15:26 *a certain contribution for the poor of the saints who are in Jerusalem* But first Paul had to go to Jerusalem. The believers in Macedonia and Achaia, northern and southern Greece, had gathered a gift for the poor believers there, who had suffered from famine and persecution. Paul spent years gathering this offering (1 Cor 16:1-4; 2 Cor 8-9).
15:27 *if the Gentiles shared in their spiritual things, they ought also to minister to them in the fleshly things* The Greek churches were glad to give, and Paul says they owed it. The gospel came to the Gentiles through the Jewish people. Sharing material blessings in return was right, and the gift showed that Jewish and Gentile believers really are one family.
15:28 *having sealed this fruit to them, I will go away through you into Spain* To seal the fruit means to deliver the gift safely. Paul did reach Rome, but not as he planned. He was arrested in Jerusalem, held two years, and sent to Rome as a prisoner (Acts 21-28). Whether he ever reached Spain we do not know for sure; some early church writers suggest he did, after his first imprisonment.
15:29 *I will come in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ* Paul was confident that his visit would bring blessing. God answered his desire to see Rome, but in His own way. Sometimes He does the same with us.

of ***the*** blessing of the gospel of Christ. **30** Now I exhort you, brothers, through our Lord Jesus Christ and through the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in the prayers for me to God, **31** so that I may be delivered from those who are disobedient in Judea (Ioudaia), and that my service which ***is*** for Jerusalem may become acceptable to the saints, **32** so that I may come to you in joy through ***the*** will of God, and may be refreshed together with you. **33** Now the God of peace ***be*** with you all. Amen.

ROMANS 16

Personal Greetings

1 Now I commend to you Phoebe (Phoibe) our sister, who is a servant of the church that ***is*** in Cenchrea (Kenchreai), **2** that you may receive her in ***the*** Lord worthily of the saints, and may stand by her in whatever matter she may have need of you; for she herself also has been a patroness of many, and of me myself. **3** Greet Priscilla (Priskilla) and Aquila (Akylas), my fellow workers in Christ Jesus (Iesous), **4** who laid down their own neck for my life, to whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles; **5** and the church at their house. Greet Epaenetus (Epainetos), my beloved, who is a firstfruit of Achaia for Christ. **6** Greet Mary (Maria), who toiled much for us. **7** Greet Andronicus (Andronikos) and Junia (Iounia), my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me. **8** Greet Amplias, my beloved in ***the*** Lord. **9** Greet Urbanus (Ourbanos), our fellow worker in Christ, and Stachys, my beloved. **10** Greet Apelles, the approved ***one*** in Christ. Greet those of the ***household*** of Aristobulus (Aristoboulos). **11** Greet Herodion, my kinsman. Greet those of the ***household*** of Narcissus (Narkissos) who are in ***the*** Lord. **12** Greet Tryphena (Tryphaina) and Tryphosa, who toil in ***the*** Lord. Greet Persis the beloved, who toiled much in ***the*** Lord. **13** Greet Rufus (Hrouphos), the chosen ***one*** in ***the*** Lord, and his mother and mine. **14** Greet Asyncritus (Asynkritos), Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brothers with them. **15** Greet Philologus (Philologos) and Julia (Ioulia), Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints with them. **16** Greet one another with a holy kiss. The churches of Christ greet you.

Final Warnings and Greetings

17 Now I exhort you, brothers, to watch out for those causing the divisions and the stumbling blocks contrary to the teach-

15:30 Col 4:12; 2 Cor 1:11; 2 Cor 12:10
15:31 2 Thess 3:2; 2 Cor 8:4; Rom 15:25
15:32 Acts 18:21; 1 Cor 16:18; 2 Cor 7:13
15:33 2 Cor 13:11; Rom 16:20; Phil 4:9
16:1 2 Cor 3:1; Acts 18:18; Matt 12:50
16:2 Phil 2:29; Rom 15:7; Matt 10:40-42
16:3 Acts 18:2-17,26; 1 Cor 16:19; 2 Tim 4:19
16:4 Rom 5:7; John 15:13; Phil 2:30
16:5 1 Cor 16:19; Col 4:15; Phlm 1:2
16:6 Rom 16:12; Matt 27:55; 1 Tim 5:10
16:7 Rom 16:11,21; Col 4:10; Phlm 1:23
16:8 Rom 16:5; Phil 4:1; 1 John 3:14
16:9 Rom 16:2,3,21
16:10 Rom 14:18; Deut 8:2; 2 Cor 8:22
16:12 Matt 9:38; 1 Cor 15:10,58; 1 Cor 16:16
16:13 Mark 15:21; Matt 20:16; John 15:16
16:14 Rom 8:29; Col 1:2; Heb 3:1
16:15 Rom 16:2; Rom 1:7; Isa 60:21
16:16 1 Cor 16:20; 2 Cor 13:12; 1 Thess 5:26
16:17 2 Thess 3:6,14; 1 Tim 6:3-5; Jude 1:19

15:30 *to strive together with me in the prayers for me to God* The word means to struggle or wrestle, like an athlete. Prayer is real work. Even the great apostle needed other people's prayers, and he asked for them.
15:31 *so that I may be delivered from those who are disobedient in Judea* Paul made two requests: rescue from unbelieving Jews who saw him as a traitor, and that his gift would be welcomed by Jewish believers still wary of him. A mob nearly killed him, but Roman soldiers rescued him (Acts 21:30-32). The brothers welcomed him (Acts 21:17), though many were still suspicious. God answered, though not as anyone expected.
15:33 *Now the God of peace be with you all* Paul has called God the God of endurance and encouragement (15:5) and the God of hope (15:13). Now He is the God of peace. In a church with tension between weak and strong, Jew and Gentile, that was exactly the God they needed.
16:1 *Phoebe our sister, who is a servant of the church that is in Cenchrea* Cenchrea was the port just east of Corinth, where Paul most likely wrote Romans, and most scholars believe Phoebe carried this letter to Rome. The word for servant is diakonos, also translated "deacon" elsewhere (Phil 1:1). Some believe Phoebe held the office of deacon; others believe Paul is simply describing her faithful service. Either way, Paul honors her.
16:2 *she herself also has been a patroness of many, and of me myself* A patroness was someone who used her means to support others. Phoebe had helped many, Paul included, so he asks the Romans to receive her worthily of the saints and stand by her in whatever she needs.
16:3 *Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus* They were Jewish believers forced to leave Rome when the emperor Claudius expelled the Jews (Acts 18:2). Paul met them in Corinth and made tents with them. By now they were back in Rome, among his closest friends.
16:4 *who laid down their own neck for my life* They risked their lives for Paul, perhaps during the riot in Ephesus (Acts 19). We do not know the details, but all the Gentile churches were thankful.
16:5 *the church at their house* The early church had no church buildings; believers met in homes. Epaenetus was a firstfruit of Achaia, one of the first believers in southern Greece. Paul never forgot him.
16:6 *Greet Mary, who toiled much for us* That is all we know about her. Paul noticed her labor, and so did God (Heb 6:10).
16:7 *who are of note among the apostles* Andronicus and Junia were fellow Jews, once jailed for Christ, and believers before Paul. Some take this phrase to mean they were well known to the apostles; others, that they were counted among the apostles in a broader sense, as traveling missionaries, not members of the Twelve. The SLB reads Junia, a woman's name, as many do, which would likely make them a husband and wife team; some read Junias, a man's name. Godly scholars land in different places on both questions. Paul clearly held them in high regard.
16:9 *Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and Stachys, my beloved* Ampliatus, Urbanus and Stachys were common names among slaves and freed slaves in Rome. In the church, a slave could be called "my beloved" by an apostle (Gal 3:28).
16:11 *those of the household of Narcissus who are in the Lord* Like the household of Aristobulus (16:10), this probably means servants or slaves. Narcissus may have been a powerful freedman who served the emperor Claudius. The gospel had reached into the homes of the powerful.
16:12 *Greet Tryphena and Tryphosa, who toil in the Lord* They may have been sisters, possibly twins. They and Persis are praised for hard work in the Lord. Women were deeply involved in the ministry of the early church.
16:13 *Greet Rufus, the chosen one in the Lord, and his mother and mine* Mark, likely writing for the church in Rome, names Simon of Cyrene, who carried Jesus' cross, as "the father of Alexander and Rufus" (Mark 15:21), as if his readers knew Rufus. This may be the same man. Rufus' mother had cared for Paul like a mother.
16:15 *all the saints with them* Paul greets two more groups (16:14-15), probably two more house churches, each with the believers gathered there.
16:16 *Greet one another with a holy kiss* A kiss on the cheek was a family greeting in that culture. Today it might be a handshake or a hug. The point is real affection between believers.
16:17 *watch out for those causing the divisions and the stumbling blocks contrary to the teaching which you learned* A sudden, serious warning. This differs from chapter 14. There Paul told believers to accept each other over disputable matters; here he warns about people who teach against the gospel itself. On secondary matters, we show grace. On the gospel, we stand firm.

ing which you learned, and turn away from them. **18** For such ***men*** do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and through smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the guileless. **19** For your obedience has reached to all; therefore I rejoice over you. But I want you to be wise indeed toward the good, and innocent toward the evil. **20** Now the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet quickly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ ***be*** with you. Amen. **21** Timothy (Timotheos), my fellow worker, and
Lucius (Loukios) and Jason (Iason) and Sosipater (Sosipatros), my kinsmen, greet you. **22** I, Tertius (Tertios), who wrote the letter, greet you in ***the*** Lord. **23** Gaius (Gaios), my host and ***host*** of the whole church, greets you. Erastus (Erastos), the steward of the city, greets you, and Quartus (Kouartos) the brother. **24** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ ***be*** with you all. Amen.

Doxology

25 Now to Him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to ***the*** revelation of ***the*** mystery kept secret in eternal times, **26** but now made manifest, and through prophetic Scriptures,
according to ***the*** commandment of the eternal God, made known to all the Gentiles for obedience of faith, **27** to ***the*** only wise God, through Jesus Christ, ***be*** the glory to the ages. Amen.

16:18 Mic 3:5; Phil 3:19; Col 2:4
16:19 Matt 10:16; 1 Cor 14:20; Rom 1:8
16:20 Gen 3:15; Ps 91:13; Zech 3:2
16:21 Acts 20:4; Acts 13:1; Acts 17:5
16:22 Gal 6:11; Rom 16:8; Col 3:17
16:23 1 Cor 1:14; Acts 19:22; 3 John 1:1-6
16:24 Rom 16:20; 1 Thess 5:28
16:25 Dan 2:22; Isa 52:15; Rom 2:16
16:26 Deut 26:18; Ps 18:43; Isa 48:6
16:27 Rom 11:36; 1 Tim 1:17; Rev 7:10-12

16:18 *through smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the guileless* Such teachers serve their own belly, their own appetites, not Christ. False teaching rarely sounds false. That is why we need to know God's Word well.
16:19 *wise indeed toward the good, and innocent toward the evil* Become an expert in what is good, and stay a beginner when it comes to evil.
16:20 *the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet quickly* This echoes Genesis 3:15, the first promise of the gospel, where the woman's seed would bruise the serpent's head. One day Satan will be thrown into the lake of fire forever (Rev 20:10). Believers share in that victory: under your feet.
16:21 *Timothy, my fellow worker, and Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my kinsmen* Timothy was like a son to Paul (Phil 2:22). The other three were fellow Jews. Jason may be the man who hosted Paul in Thessalonica (Acts 17:5-9).
16:22 *I, Tertius, who wrote the letter, greet you in the Lord* Paul dictated Romans, and Tertius wrote it down, adding his own greeting.
16:23 *Erastus, the steward of the city, greets you* Gaius was Paul's host in Corinth, and the whole church met in his home. A stone inscription found in Corinth names an Erastus who paid for paving a public square in return for his office as a city official. Many believe it is the same man.
16:24 *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all* This repeats the blessing of 16:20. Most modern Bibles put it in a footnote because it is missing from the earliest manuscripts, but the SLB follows the Received Text, which includes it. It is a fitting prayer either way.
16:25 *according to the revelation of the mystery kept secret in eternal times* Paul ends with praise. God is able to strengthen you, to keep you standing (14:4). In the Bible a mystery is not a puzzle but a truth God kept hidden and has now revealed: His plan to save Jews and Gentiles alike through faith in Christ and make them one people (Eph 3:4-6).
16:26 *made known to all the Gentiles for obedience of faith* The prophets hinted at it; now it is made known to the nations. "Obedience of faith" is the phrase Paul used at the very start (1:5). Faith that is real leads to obedience. Paul has come full circle.
16:27 *to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be the glory to the ages* Sixteen chapters about sin, grace, faith, the Spirit, Israel and Christian living all lead here: glory to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ.

1 CORINTHIANS

Introduction

Title

The letter takes its name from its first readers, "the church of God which is in Corinth" (1:2). It is the first of two letters to Corinth in our Bibles, though Paul and the church wrote to each other more than twice. Paul mentions an earlier letter that has not been kept for us (5:9), and the church had written to him with questions (7:1).

Author and Date

The letter opens with "Paul, a called apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes the brother" (1:1), and Paul closes it in his own hand (16:21). Sosthenes may be the synagogue ruler who was beaten in Corinth (Acts 18:17), now a believer, though Scripture does not say for sure. Some modern scholars doubt that Paul wrote a few of the letters that carry his name, but almost no one, old or new, doubts that he wrote this one. I take the letter at its word, as the church always has.

Paul wrote from Ephesus, near the end of his stay of about three years there on his third missionary journey: "I will remain in Ephesus until Pentecost" (16:8; Acts 19:10; 20:31). Most scholars date the letter about A.D. 55, a few years after the church began.

Background and Setting

Corinth sat on the narrow isthmus joining southern Greece to the mainland, with a port on each side. Goods moved across the isthmus rather than around the dangerous southern seas, and that made the city rich. The Romans destroyed the old Greek city in 146 B.C., and Julius Caesar rebuilt it as a Roman colony in 44 B.C. By Paul's day it was the capital of the province of Achaia, a busy city of traders, sailors, soldiers and freed slaves. It hosted the Isthmian Games every two years. Temples and idols were everywhere, and Corinth had a name for wealth, pride and sexual looseness.

Paul came to Corinth about A.D. 50 on his second journey, worked as a tentmaker with Aquila and Priscilla, and preached a year and six months (Acts 18:1-11). Crispus the synagogue ruler believed, with many others. The Roman governor Gallio threw out the case the Jewish leaders brought against Paul (Acts 18:12-17). Apollos later taught there (Acts 18:24-28). The church was mostly Gentile, mostly ordinary people, some of them slaves (1:26; 7:21; 12:2). After Paul left, reports came from Chloe's household (1:11), three men from the church visited him (16:17), and the church sent a letter of questions. 1 Corinthians answers both the reports and the letter. The church lived in Corinth, and too much of Corinth lived in the church.

Themes

The church in Corinth was "not lacking in any gift" (1:7), but it was proud, divided and confused about how a believer should live. Paul does not answer with a list of rules. Again and again he brings them back to the cross: "For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God" (1:18).

From there he works through one problem after another: division over leaders, open sexual sin, lawsuits between believers, marriage and singleness, food offered to idols, disorder at the Lord's Supper, the use of spiritual gifts, and doubts about the resurrection. The words "now concerning" mark the questions from their letter (7:1; 8:1; 12:1; 16:1). In the middle stands chapter 13: love is the more excellent way, and without it every gift is nothing. Near the end stands chapter 15, the fullest teaching in the Bible on the resurrection of the body. The body matters to God because it belongs to Him (6:19-20) and because He will raise it. Paul's last charge sums up the letter: "Let everything of yours be done in love" (16:14).

Christ in 1 Corinthians

Christ crucified is "the power of God and the wisdom of God" (1:24), and He "became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption" (1:30). He is the only foundation (3:11), our Passover lamb sacrificed for us (5:7), the one Lord through whom are all things (8:6), and the Rock who went with Israel in the wilderness (10:4). The Lord's Supper proclaims His death "until He comes" (11:26). He is the firstfruits of the resurrection (15:20), the last Adam who gives life (15:45), and the One through whom God "gives us the victory" over death (15:57). At His coming for His church, the dead will be raised and the living changed "in the blink of an eye" (15:52).

Hard Passages

Several passages in this letter are places where good Bible teachers disagree, and the notes give the main views without taking a hard side: what it means to "deliver such a one to Satan" (5:5); the case of a believer deserted by an unbelieving spouse (7:15); head coverings in worship (11:2-16); whether the sign gifts such as tongues and prophecy continue today, and what "the perfect" is (12-14; 13:10); women keeping silent in the churches (14:34-35); and baptism for the dead (15:29). The notes on the Lord's Supper (10:16; 11:23-29) present it as the remembrance and proclamation Jesus commanded and name the other views in a sentence.

Chapter 6 speaks of lawsuits and of sexual sin, including relations between men (6:9-11). The notes state plainly what the text says, and they also say what it never means: it is never a reason to keep a crime such as abuse from the authorities, and no sinner is beyond the washing Paul describes in 6:11. Chapter 7's teaching on marriage never requires anyone to stay in danger. The notes on 15:23 and 15:51-52 read Christ's coming for His church as the rapture before the Tribulation, with the other views named.

Outline

Greeting and Thanksgiving (1:1-9)
I. Divisions and the Wisdom of the Cross (1:10-4:21)
  A. Division over leaders (1:10-17)
  B. Christ crucified, the wisdom of God (1:18-31)
  C. The Spirit reveals God's wisdom (2:1-16)
  D. God's field and God's building (3:1-23)
  E. Faithful servants of Christ (4:1-21)
II. Sin in the Church and the Body for the Lord (5:1-6:20)

A. Open immorality and church discipline (5:1-13)
B. Lawsuits between believers (6:1-11)
C. The body is the Lord's (6:12-20)
III. Answers to the Church's Questions (7:1-11:1)
A. Marriage, singleness and divorce (7:1-24)
B. The unmarried and widows (7:25-40)
C. Food offered to idols: love builds up (8:1-13)
D. Paul gives up his rights (9:1-27)
E. Lessons from Israel and the Lord's table (10:1-11:1)
IV. Order and Love in Worship (11:2-14:40)
A. Head coverings (11:2-16)
B. The Lord's Supper (11:17-34)
C. One body, many gifts (12:1-31)
D. The way of love (13:1-13)
E. Prophecy, tongues and order (14:1-40)
V. The Resurrection (15:1-58)
A. The gospel and the witnesses (15:1-11)
B. If Christ is not raised (15:12-34)
C. The resurrection body (15:35-58)
VI. The Collection and Final Words (16:1-24)

1 CORINTHIANS

1 CORINTHIANS 1

Greeting

1 Paul (Paulos), a called apostle of Jesus (Iesous) Christ through ***the*** will of God, and Sosthenes the brother, **2** to the church of God which is in Corinth (Korinthos), to ***those*** sanctified in Christ Jesus, called saints, together with all those who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, both theirs and ours: **3** Grace to you and peace from God our Father and ***the*** Lord Jesus Christ.

Thanksgiving for God's Grace

4 I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given to you in Christ Jesus, **5** that in everything you were enriched in Him, in all speech and all knowledge, **6** just as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you, **7** so that you are not lacking in any gift, eagerly awaiting the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, **8** who will also confirm you to ***the*** end, blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. **9** God ***is*** faithful, through whom you were called into ***the*** fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Divisions in the Church

10 Now I exhort you, brothers, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and there be no divisions among you, but you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment. **11** For it was made clear to me concerning you, my brothers, by those of Chloe, that there are quarrels among you. **12** Now I mean this, that each of you says, "I indeed am of Paul," and "I of Apollos," and "I of Cephas (Kephas)," and "I of Christ." **13** Has Christ been divided? Paul was not crucified for you, was he? Or were you baptized into the name of Paul? **14** I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus (Krispos) and Gaius (Gaios), **15** so that no one may say that I baptized into my name. **16** Now I also baptized the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized any other.

1:1 Rom 1:1; 2 Cor 1:1; Eph 1:1
1:2 Rom 1:7; Acts 18:1,8-11; 1 Cor 1:30
1:3 Rom 1:7; 2 Cor 1:2; Eph 1:2
1:4 Rom 1:8; John 14:14,16,26; John 15:26
1:5 2 Cor 9:11; 2 Cor 8:7; 1 Cor 12:8,10
1:6 2 Tim 1:8; Rev 1:2,9; 1 Tim 2:6
1:7 Phil 3:20; 2 Pet 3:12; Rom 8:19
1:8 1 Thess 3:13; Phil 1:6,10; 1 Thess 5:23,24
1:9 2 Thess 3:3; Deut 7:9; Isa 49:7
1:10 Phil 2:1-4; Eph 4:1; Phil 1:27
1:11 1 Cor 3:3; 1 Cor 11:18; Gen 27:42
1:12 John 1:42; 1 Cor 7:29; 1 Cor 15:50
1:13 Acts 2:38; Eph 4:5; Matt 28:19
1:14 Acts 18:8; Rom 16:23; 1 Cor 1:4
1:15 John 3:28,29; John 7:18; 2 Cor 11:2
1:16 1 Cor 16:15,17; Acts 16:15,33

1:1 *a called apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God* An apostle is one sent by the risen Lord Himself to lay the foundation of the church. Paul did not appoint himself. Some in Corinth would question his authority (4:3; 9:1-3), so he makes it plain from the first line.
1:1 *Sosthenes the brother* A synagogue ruler named Sosthenes was beaten in Corinth when the Jews brought Paul to court (Acts 18:17). Many believe this is the same man, now a believer. Scripture doesn't say for sure, but if so, what a picture of God's grace.
1:2 *to the church of God which is in Corinth* Not Paul's church or Apollos' church, but God's. That alone answers much of chapter 1. To be "sanctified" is to be set apart for God, and every believer is a saint because he is "in Christ Jesus," not because he earned it. Paul will rebuke these believers for many sins, yet he still calls them saints. Our standing comes first, and it is the reason we are called to live holy lives.
1:3 *Grace to you and peace* Grace is God's undeserved favor, and peace is the rest that comes when we are right with Him. Grace always comes first. Paul names "God our Father" and "the Lord Jesus Christ" side by side as the source. No mere man could stand in that place.
1:4 *I thank my God always concerning you* This church was divided, proud and tolerating open sin, yet Paul thanks God for them and means it. He thanks God not for their behavior but for His grace given to them. It is easier to correct someone when you can honestly see God's grace in his life.
1:5 *in everything you were enriched in Him, in all speech and all knowledge* Speech and knowledge were the very things the Corinthians were proud of (8:1; 13:1-2). Paul says plainly they came from God. The changed lives and gifts in Corinth were proof that "the testimony of Christ," the gospel Paul preached, was true (1:6).
1:7 *not lacking in any gift* Their problem was not a lack of gifts but a lack of love and maturity. Gifts are not a sign of spiritual maturity, as chapters 12 to 14 will show. "The revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ" is His coming, when He will be seen as He is. The early church lived looking for Him, and that hope is meant to shape how we live (1 John 3:2-3; 1 Cor 15:51-52).
1:8 *blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ* Blameless does not mean they were sinless now. It means no charge will stand against them on that day, because they are in Christ. The One who began His work in them would finish it (Phil 1:6). Correction is coming, but it does not mean God has given up on them.
1:9 *God is faithful* Our security does not rest on our faithfulness but on His. Fellowship means sharing life together. If we are all called into fellowship with the same Son, how can we be divided against each other?
1:10 *there be no divisions among you* The word is schismata, from which we get schism, used of a tear in cloth. "Made complete" was used of mending nets. Paul wants the torn church mended. This does not mean agreement on every small matter (chapter 8 allows room for conscience), but they must not split into camps.
1:11 *by those of Chloe* Most likely members of Chloe's household, perhaps family or servants, who had traveled to Ephesus and told Paul what was happening. Scripture does not say who Chloe was. Paul names his source. He does not pass along anonymous gossip.
1:12 *I indeed am of Paul* Cephas is the Aramaic name for Peter. Some boasted in Paul who founded the church, some in Apollos the gifted speaker from Alexandria (Acts 18:24-28), some in Peter. "I of Christ" sounds right, but it seems even Christ's name was used as a badge to look down on others. None of these leaders asked for a fan club (3:6; 16:12). The problem was the people's pride.
1:13 *Has Christ been divided?* Three sharp questions, and each points to Christ. Christ has one body that cannot be cut up and handed out to groups. Only He was crucified for them, and they were baptized in His name because they belong to Him. No pastor or teacher, however gifted, can take His place.
1:14 *Crispus and Gaius* Crispus was the synagogue ruler who believed with his household (Acts 18:8). Gaius is likely the man who later hosted Paul and the church in Corinth (Rom 16:23). Paul is glad he baptized few, so no one could form a party around him.
1:16 *I do not know whether I baptized any other* The Holy Spirit inspired what Paul wrote, but that did not mean Paul was handed a list of every person he had baptized years before. He writes like a real man, remembering as he goes. Stephanas was among the first believers in that region (16:15).

17 For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel; not in wisdom of speech, so that the cross of Christ may not be made empty.

Christ the Power and Wisdom of God

18 For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is ***the*** power of God. **19** For it has been written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the intelligence of the intelligent I will set aside." **20** Where ***is the*** wise ***man***? Where ***is the*** scribe? Where ***is the*** debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? **21** For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through the wisdom did not know God, God was pleased through the foolishness of the proclamation to save those who believe. **22** Since both Jews ask for a sign and Greeks seek wisdom, **23** but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews indeed a stumbling block, but to Greeks foolishness, **24** but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ ***the*** power of God and ***the*** wisdom of God. **25** Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. **26** For consider your calling, brothers, that ***there are*** not many wise according to ***the*** flesh, not many powerful, not many of noble birth. **27** But God chose the foolish things of the world, so that He might put the wise to shame; and God chose the weak things of the world, so that He might put the strong things to shame; **28** and God chose the lowborn things of the world and the despised things, and the things that are not, so that He might bring to nothing the things that are, **29** so that no flesh may boast before Him. **30** But from Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, **31** so that, just as it has been written, "The one who boasts, let him boast in ***the*** Lord."

1 CORINTHIANS 2

Paul's Preaching in Weakness

1 And I, having come to you, brothers, came not according to excellence of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. **2** For I decided not to know anything among you except Jesus (Iesous) Christ, and Him crucified.

1:17 1 Cor 2:1,4,13; John 4:2; 2 Pet 1:16
1:18 1 Cor 2:14; 1 Cor 1:23,24; 2 Cor 4:3
1:19 Isa 29:14; Jer 8:9; Job 5:12
1:20 Job 12:17; Isa 33:18; Isa 44:25
1:21 Dan 2:20; Isa 29:14; Isa 47:10
1:22 Acts 17:18-21; Matt 12:38,39; Matt 16:1-4
1:23 1 Cor 2:14; 1 Pet 2:8; 1 Cor 2:2
1:24 1 Kgs 3:28; 1 Cor 1:30; Col 2:3
1:25 1 Cor 1:18,27-29; Rom 11:33-36; Exod 13:17
1:26 1 Cor 1:20; 1 Cor 3:18-20; James 2:5
1:27 Ps 8:2; Isa 29:14,19; Matt 11:25
1:28 Rom 4:17; Job 34:19,20,24; 1 Cor 2:6
1:29 Eph 2:9; 1 Cor 4:7; Jer 9:23
1:30 Isa 45:24; Ps 64:10; Eccl 2:26
1:31 Jer 9:24; Jer 9:23; Ps 105:3
2:1 1 Cor 1:17; 1 Cor 2:4,13; Exod 4:10
2:2 Gal 6:14; Phil 3:8-10; 1 Cor 1:22-25

1:17 *Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel* Paul is not saying baptism doesn't matter. Jesus commanded it (Matt 28:19). But baptism is the believer's obedient public step after faith. It does not save. Paul also refused to win people with polished speech. Faith that rests on a speaker's skill rests on the speaker. The power is in the message of the cross.

1:18 *the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing* The key verse of the chapter. Crucifixion was the most shameful death in the ancient world, used for slaves and rebels. There are only two groups here, the perishing and those being saved, and how a person responds to the cross shows which group he is in. The gospel is not only about God's power. It is His power at work (Rom 1:16).

1:19 *I will destroy the wisdom of the wise* From Isaiah 29:14. Judah's leaders trusted their clever plans and political deals instead of God, and God said He would bring their wisdom to nothing. The cross does the same. The smartest people cannot reason their way to God.

1:20 *Where is the scribe?* The wise man may be the Greek philosopher, the scribe a Jewish expert in the Law of Moses, the debater the skilled arguer. With all their learning, the wise men of that age did not recognize God's Son. They crucified Him (2:8).

1:21 *the foolishness of the proclamation to save those who believe* It is not foolish preaching that saves. It is the message preached, which the world calls foolish. Salvation is not for the clever or well educated but for anyone who believes. A child and a professor come to God the same way.

1:22 *Jews ask for a sign and Greeks seek wisdom* The Jews wanted proof by power (Matt 12:38; John 6:30), the Greeks proof by reason (Acts 17:21). People today still want God to come to them on their terms, by a miracle or by an argument.

1:23 *we preach Christ crucified* Paul did not change the message to fit what people wanted. To the Jews it was a skandalon, a stumbling block, since the Law said a man hanged on a tree was under God's curse (Deut 21:23; Gal 3:13). To the Greeks it was foolish to worship a man who died like a criminal.

1:24 *Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God* The Jews wanted power and find in the crucified Christ power to forgive sin and give new life. The Greeks wanted wisdom and find God's plan to save sinners and still be just (Rom 3:26). "Those who are called" are the same people as "those who believe" (1:21). God's call and our faith go together.

1:25 *the weakness of God is stronger than men* Paul speaks from the world's point of view. The cross looked like defeat, and Rome and the Jewish leaders thought they had won. Three days later the tomb was empty. God's "weakness" broke the power of sin and death.

1:26 *not many wise according to the flesh* Most of the church were ordinary people, some of them slaves (7:21). Paul says not many, not none: Crispus and Erastus the city treasurer had position (Rom 16:23). But God did not build His church on such people. God loves to use nobodies.

1:27 *But God chose the foolish things of the world* "God chose" comes three times in verses 27-28. The world saw nothing in the Corinthian church, while God saw His chosen people. He turns the world's ranking upside down, as He did with a shepherd boy like David, fishermen like Peter and a persecutor like Paul.

1:29 *so that no flesh may boast before Him* The reason behind verses 26-28. If God saved only the smartest or strongest or best, we could boast. He saves by grace, through a cross the world calls foolish, and no one will stand before God and claim he earned it.

1:30 *wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption* God put them in Christ; they did not put themselves there. In Christ is everything we need. Righteousness: God declares us right with Him because of Christ, which is called justification. Sanctification: He sets us apart and makes us holy. Redemption: He bought us out of slavery to sin, and one day will redeem our bodies too (Rom 8:23).

1:31 *The one who boasts, let him boast in the Lord* Paul sums up Jeremiah 9:23-24, where the wise, strong and rich are told not to boast in themselves but in knowing the Lord. The Corinthians boasted in men (1:12). The safest boast points away from ourselves to Jesus Christ and His cross.

2:1 *not according to excellence of speech or of wisdom* Paul first came to Corinth about A.D. 50 (Acts 18:1). Corinth loved speakers. Traveling teachers called sophists gave dazzling speeches for pay. Paul chose not to compete. He came as a witness, not a performer, passing on God's own testimony about His Son.

2:2 *except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified* A choice Paul made after reasoning with the philosophers in Athens (Acts 17:16-34). He taught the Corinthians a year and a half (Acts 18:11), so this does not mean he taught nothing else. Everything flowed from the cross and led back to it. That is still the test of good preaching.

3 And I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. **4** And my word and my preaching ***were*** not in persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of ***the*** Spirit and of power, **5** so that your faith may not be in ***the*** wisdom of men, but in ***the*** power of God.

Wisdom Revealed by the Spirit

6 But we speak wisdom among the mature, but wisdom not of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are being brought to nothing. **7** But we speak ***the*** wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden ***wisdom***, which God predestined before the ages for our glory, **8** which none of the rulers of this age has known; for if they had known ***it***, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. **9** But just as it has been written, "Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, and which have not come up into ***the*** heart of man, things which God has prepared for those who love Him." **10** But God revealed ***them*** to us through His Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. **11** For who among men knows the things of the man except the spirit of the man which ***is*** in him? So also no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. **12** Now we did not receive the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who ***is*** from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, **13** which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in ***words*** taught by ***the*** Holy Spirit, comparing spiritual ***things*** with spiritual ***things***. **14** But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he is not able to know ***them***, because they are spiritually examined. **15** But he who ***is*** spiritual indeed examines all things, but he himself is examined by no one. **16** For who has known ***the*** mind of ***the*** Lord, who will instruct Him? But we have ***the*** mind of Christ.

1 CORINTHIANS 3

God's Field and God's Building

1 And I, brothers, was not able to speak to you as to spiritual ***men***, but as to fleshly ***men***, as to infants in Christ. **2** I gave you milk to drink, and not solid food; for you were not yet able,

2:3 2 Cor 13:4; 1 Cor 4:10-13; Acts 20:18,19
2:4 1 Cor 1:17; Rom 15:19; 1 Cor 4:20
2:5 2 Cor 4:7; 2 Cor 6:7; 1 Cor 1:17
2:6 Heb 5:14; 1 Cor 1:28; James 3:15
2:7 Rom 16:25,26; Eph 3:4-9; Ps 78:2
2:8 Ps 24:9; Ps 24:10; Acts 7:2
2:9 Isa 64:4; Ps 31:19; Isa 65:17
2:10 Job 12:22; Dan 2:22; Eph 3:3,5
2:11 Prov 14:10; Dan 2:22; Jer 17:9
2:12 Num 11:17; Mic 3:8; Zech 4:5
2:13 1 Cor 1:17; 1 Cor 2:4; 1 Pet 1:12
2:14 1 Cor 1:18,23; Matt 13:11-17; Rom 8:5-8
2:15 1 Cor 3:1; Gal 6:1; 1 Cor 14:37
2:16 Isa 40:13; Job 36:23; Isa 40:14
3:1 1 Cor 2:14; 1 Cor 2:6,15; Rom 7:14
3:2 John 16:12; 1 Pet 2:2; Heb 5:11,12

2:3 *in weakness and in fear and in much trembling* Paul had just been run out of Philippi, Thessalonica and Berea and laughed at in Athens. In Corinth the Lord told him, "Do not fear, but keep speaking, and do not be silent" (Acts 18:9). Being afraid is not a sin. Paul felt fear and kept going, and God's power works best through people who know they are weak (2 Cor 12:9).
2:4 *in demonstration of the Spirit and of power* The word for demonstration was used in court for clear proof. The proof of Paul's message was what the Spirit did: sinners made new (6:11). Some take it to include the miracles God did through Paul (2 Cor 12:12; Rom 15:19). Either way the power was God's.
2:5 *so that your faith may not be in the wisdom of men* Faith won by a brilliant speech rests on a man, and the next brilliant speaker might talk it away. The Corinthians boasted in human leaders, but their faith was never meant to rest on any of them, Paul included.
2:6 *we speak wisdom among the mature* The gospel is not for simple minds only. Its depths are grasped by those who have grown in the faith, and in 3:1-2 Paul says the Corinthians had not. "The rulers of this age" are the world's powerful people. Some also see the powers of darkness behind them (Eph 6:12). Their power is passing away.
2:7 *the wisdom of God in a mystery* A mystery in the Bible is a truth God kept hidden and has now made known: His plan to save the world through His crucified Son. God planned it "before the ages." The cross did not catch Him by surprise, and its goal is that His people share Christ's glory (Rom 8:30).
2:8 *they would not have crucified the Lord of glory* Pilate, Herod and the high priests thought they were in control, but the cross was the very thing that defeated sin, death and Satan (Col 2:15). In the Old Testament glory belongs to God alone (Isa 42:8). The Man who died on the cross was God the Son.
2:9 *Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard* Drawn from Isaiah 64:4, perhaps with Isaiah 65:17. The verse is often used of heaven, and what God has prepared there is beyond imagining. In context Paul means more: no human mind could have discovered God's plan of salvation. People did not figure out the cross. God revealed it (2:10).
2:10 *the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God* Paul speaks first of the apostles and prophets, to whom God gave His truth to write down (Eph 3:5), though every believer shares in the Spirit's help. The Spirit searches, knows and teaches. He is not a force. Only God can know the depths of God, so this verse shows the Spirit is a divine Person.
2:11 *no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God* Only you know your own heart. If we cannot know another person's thoughts, we could never know God's unless He shows us. That is why we need the Spirit to understand the Bible.
2:12 *not receive the spirit of the world* The spirit of the world is the way the world thinks. Every believer has received the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:9), so that we may know what God has "freely given": forgiveness, adoption, eternal life and all that is ours in Christ (1:30).
2:13 *in words taught by the Holy Spirit* The Spirit guided not only the apostles' ideas but their words, a strong statement about the inspiration of Scripture (2 Tim 3:16; 2 Pet 1:21). "Comparing spiritual things with spiritual things" may mean explaining spiritual truths in spiritual words, or explaining them to spiritual people.
2:14 *a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God* The natural man is the person without the Spirit, not born again (Jude 19). He may be smart, but on his own he cannot know spiritual truth. That is why arguing someone into the kingdom doesn't work by itself. We share the gospel and pray, because only the Spirit opens blind eyes (2 Cor 4:4-6).
2:15 *he himself is examined by no one* Not that believers are above correction; Paul is about to correct the Corinthians sharply. The natural man cannot judge the spiritual man rightly, because he does not understand where the believer's life comes from. The world is not the final judge. God is (4:3-4).
2:16 *But we have the mind of Christ* Paul quotes Isaiah 40:13: no one can give God advice. Yet in the Scriptures the Spirit gave and in the Spirit who lives in us, God has shared His thoughts. That doesn't mean we know everything. Having the mind of Christ is a gift. Thinking with it takes growth.
3:1 *as to fleshly men, as to infants in Christ* A third kind of person: believers who have the Spirit but live like those who don't. The flesh is our fallen nature that still pulls toward sin. Paul still calls them "brothers." Being a baby is fine when you are newly born. The problem is when years go by and you are still a baby.
3:2 *I gave you milk to drink, and not solid food* When they were new, Paul fed them the basics, and that was right. Years later they prided themselves on knowledge but were still on milk (Heb 5:12-14). Spiritual age is not measured by how long we have been saved but by how much we have grown.

but even now you are not yet able, **3** for you are still fleshly. For where ***there is*** jealousy and strife and dissensions among you, are you not fleshly, and walking according to man? **4** For whenever someone says, "I indeed am of Paul (Paulos)," and another, "I ***am*** of Apollos," are you not fleshly? **5** Who then is Paul, and who ***is*** Apollos, but servants through whom you believed, even as the Lord gave to each? **6** I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing ***it*** to grow. **7** So neither is the one who plants anything, nor the one who waters, but God who causes ***it*** to grow. **8** Now the one who plants and the one who waters are one; and each will receive ***his*** own reward according to ***his*** own labor. **9** For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building.

The One Foundation

10 According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid a foundation, and another builds on ***it***. But let each one take heed how he builds on ***it***. **11** For no one is able to lay another foundation besides the ***one*** being laid, which is Jesus (Iesous) the Christ. **12** Now if anyone builds on this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, **13** the work of each will become manifest; for the day will make ***it*** clear, because it is revealed in fire; and the fire will test the work of each, of what sort it is. **14** If the work of anyone which he built on ***it*** remains, he will receive a reward. **15** If the work of anyone is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

The Temple of God

16 Do you not know that you are a temple of God, and ***that*** the Spirit of God dwells in you? **17** If anyone destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him; for the temple of God is holy, which you are. **18** Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you thinks ***that he*** is wise in this age, let him become foolish, so that he may become wise. **19** For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it has been written, "***He is*** the ***One*** catching the wise in their craftiness"; **20** and

3:3 1 Cor 11:18; 1 Cor 1:11; James 3:16
3:4 1 Cor 1:12; 1 Cor 4:6
3:5 2 Cor 3:6; 1 Cor 3:10; 1 Cor 3:7
3:6 Isa 61:11; Acts 18:4-11; 1 Cor 3:9,10
3:7 John 15:5; Gal 6:3; 1 Cor 13:2
3:8 Rom 2:6; John 4:36-38; Ps 62:12
3:9 2 Cor 6:1; 1 Pet 2:5; 1 Cor 3:16
3:10 Prov 12:8; Rom 12:3; Rom 15:20
3:11 Isa 28:16; Eph 2:20; Matt 16:18
3:12 Ps 19:10; Ps 119:72; Prov 8:10
3:13 1 Cor 4:5; Rev 20:12; 1 Pet 1:7
3:14 1 Cor 3:8; 1 Cor 4:5; Matt 25:21-23
3:15 Jude 1:23; 1 Cor 3:12,13; Rev 3:18
3:16 Ezek 36:27; 2 Cor 6:16; Eph 2:21,22
3:17 1 Cor 6:18-20; Ezek 7:22; Ezek 23:38,39
3:18 Gal 6:3,7; Isa 5:21; 1 Cor 6:9
3:19 Job 5:13; Isa 29:14; Esth 7:10
3:20 Ps 94:11; Jer 8:8; Jer 9:23

3:3 *where there is jealousy and strife and dissensions among you* They thought gifts and knowledge proved they were mature. Paul points to how they treated one another. Jealousy and quarreling are works of the flesh (Gal 5:19-21), and "walking according to man" means living like any unbeliever. The test of maturity is not how much we know but whether we love.
3:4 *are you not fleshly?* Paul does not defend his own group. He rebukes those loyal to him as much as the others. A godly leader wants people following Christ, not himself (11:1).
3:5 *servants through whom you believed* The word is diakonoi, from which we get deacon, someone who waits on others. Paul and Apollos were the means, not the source. No servant should be made a celebrity, and none should be despised.
3:6 *I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing it to grow* Paul planted the church in Corinth. Apollos came later and strengthened the believers (Acts 18:27-28). No farmer can make a seed sprout. Preachers sow and water, but only God gives spiritual life and growth.
3:7 *but God who causes it to grow* This humbles every pastor and also frees him. We plant and water faithfully and leave the results to God. Church members should thank God for their leaders but not give them the glory that belongs to Him.
3:8 *each will receive his own reward according to his own labor* Paul and Apollos were not rivals but one team. God rewards not by fame or results but by the faithful work each one did. The quiet servant no one notices will not be forgotten by God.
3:9 *you are God's field, God's building* "God's" comes three times. The workers, the field and the building all belong to Him. "God's fellow workers" most likely means workers together under God, though some read it as working with God. Either way, it is a privilege to share in His work.
3:10 *as a wise master builder I have laid a foundation* A master builder planned the project and laid the foundation. Paul did that when he first preached Christ in Corinth, and he gives the credit to grace. "Let each one take heed how he builds" speaks first to teachers and leaders, but every believer builds something with his life.
3:11 *no one is able to lay another foundation* The only foundation for the church and the Christian life is Jesus Christ Himself. A church built on a personality, program, tradition or political cause is not on the true foundation, and a life built on anything else will not stand (Matt 7:24-27). Verses 12-15 are not about the foundation but what we build on it.
3:12 *gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw* Costly, lasting materials that survive fire, and cheap ones that burn. In context Paul means the work of building the church, especially teaching. Teaching true to Christ and done for His glory is gold. Shallow, worldly or self-serving work is straw. In a wider sense these are the works, motives and service of every believer.
3:13 *the day will make it clear, because it is revealed in fire* The day of the Lord's coming, when each believer stands before Him at "the judgment seat of Christ" (2 Cor 5:10). The fire is a picture of God's searching judgment. It tests "of what sort" the work is, not how much. A small work done for His glory may outlast a big work done for show (4:5).
3:14 *he will receive a reward* Scripture speaks of crowns and rewards for faithful believers (9:25; 2 Tim 4:8; James 1:12; 1 Pet 5:4; Rev 22:12). The judgment seat of Christ is not about whether a believer is saved. Salvation is a gift received by faith (Eph 2:8-9). The judgment seat is about rewards for how we served Christ after we were saved.
3:15 *but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire* A believer can lose rewards, but his salvation is not in question. He is like a man who escapes a burning house with his life but loses everything inside. Some use this verse to teach purgatory, but the fire tests the work, not the person, and it happens on "the day," not in a long process after death. Christ paid for our sins in full.
3:16 *you are a temple of God* The "you" is plural: the church as a whole. In a city full of temples to false gods, Paul says the church is God's temple, the inner holy place where He lives by His Spirit. In 6:19 he applies the same picture to each believer's body.
3:17 *If anyone destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him* The word can also mean ruin or corrupt. Many believe Paul warns false teachers who were never truly saved. Others see God's severe discipline on believers who harm His church, as in 11:30. Either way, it is a fearful thing to damage God's people. Gossip and division are not small things to God.
3:18 *let him become foolish, so that he may become wise* To become truly wise a person must be willing to look foolish to the world by accepting the message of the cross: admitting he cannot save himself and needs a crucified Savior. Pride says it already knows. Humility asks the Lord to teach it.
3:19 *He is the One catching the wise in their craftiness* From Job 5:13. God catches clever people in their own traps. Haman built gallows for Mordecai and was hanged on them himself (Esth 7:10). Human cleverness can never outwit God.
3:20 *The Lord knows the reasonings of the wise, that they are futile* From Psalm 94:11. This doesn't mean all learning is bad; Paul was highly educated. Human reasoning that shuts God out ends in emptiness, and God has already passed judgment on it.

again, "***The*** Lord knows the reasonings of the wise, that they are futile." **21** So then let no one boast in men. For all things are yours, **22** whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas (Kephas), or ***the*** world or life or death, or things present or things to come, all are yours, **23** and you ***are*** Christ's, and Christ ***is*** God's.

1 CORINTHIANS 4

Faithful Stewards

1 So let a man regard us as attendants of Christ and stewards of ***the*** mysteries of God. **2** Now moreover, it is required in stewards that one be found faithful. **3** But to me it is a very small thing that I should be examined by you or by a human day; indeed, I do not even examine myself. **4** For I am conscious of nothing against myself, yet I am not justified by this; but the ***One*** who examines me is ***the*** Lord. **5** So then do not judge anything before ***the*** time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of the darkness and make manifest the purposes of the hearts; and then the praise will come to each from God.

Fools for Christ

6 Now these things, brothers, I have figuratively applied to myself and Apollos on account of you, so that in us you may learn not to think beyond what has been written, so that you may not be puffed up, one on behalf of the one against the other. **7** For who makes you different? And what do you have which you did not receive? And if you did indeed receive ***it***, why do you boast as if not having received ***it***? **8** Already you are satiated; already you became rich; apart from us you reigned; and I wish indeed that you did reign, so that we also might reign with you. **9** For I think that God has exhibited us the apostles last, as condemned to death; because we have become a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men. **10** We ***are*** fools on account of Christ, but you ***are*** wise in Christ; we ***are*** weak, but you ***are*** strong; you ***are*** honored, but we ***are*** without honor. **11** Up to the present hour we both hunger and thirst, and are poorly clothed, and are struck with fists, and wander homeless, **12** and we toil, working with ***our*** own hands. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure; **13** being slandered, we entreat. We have become as ***the*** scum of the world, ***the*** refuse of all things, until now.

3:21 Jer 9:23; Jer 9:24; 1 Cor 4:6
3:22 1 Cor 3:5-8; 1 Cor 9:19-22; 2 Cor 4:5
3:23 Gal 3:29; 2 Cor 10:7; 1 Cor 11:3
4:1 Titus 1:7; 1 Pet 4:10; Rom 16:25
4:2 Matt 25:21,23; Luke 12:42; 1 Cor 4:17
4:3 1 Cor 2:15; 1 Sam 16:7; John 7:24
4:4 Ps 143:2; 1 John 3:20,21; Ps 130:3
4:5 Dan 2:22; Rom 2:1,16; 1 Cor 3:13
4:6 Gen 16:4; 1 Cor 1:12; 1 Cor 13:4
4:7 John 3:27; Rom 12:6; 1 Pet 4:10
4:8 1 Cor 1:5; Gal 6:3; Rom 12:15
4:9 Jer 20:7; Lam 3:14; Rom 8:36
4:10 Isa 53:3; 1 Cor 2:3,14; Acts 17:18,32
4:11 Rom 8:35; 2 Cor 11:23-25; Phil 4:12
4:12 1 Pet 3:9; Acts 18:3; Luke 6:28
4:13 Lam 3:45; Acts 22:22

3:21 *let no one boast in men. For all things are yours* Where chapters 1 to 3 have been heading. The Corinthians said they belonged to Paul or Apollos. Paul turns it around: the leaders belong to you, given by God as servants. Why shrink yourself to one leader's fan club when God has given you everything?
3:22 *or the world or life or death, or things present or things to come* Everything serves the believer. The world, because one day we will reign with Christ (6:2). Life, because we live it for Him. Even death, the doorway to being with Christ (Phil 1:21). Nothing is outside God's care for His people (Rom 8:38-39).
3:23 *and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's* All things belong to the believer, but the believer belongs to Christ (6:19-20). "Christ is God's" does not make Him less than God; He is "the Lord of glory" (2:8). It speaks of the Son's willing place in the plan of salvation (John 6:38; 15:28). The chain ends in God, with no place for boasting in men.
4:1 *attendants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God* The word for attendants was used of any servant carrying out his master's orders. A steward was a household manager, often a slave, put in charge of goods he did not own. Paul was trusted with God's revealed truth (2:7) to hand out faithfully, not to change.
4:2 *it is required in stewards that one be found faithful* Not popular, gifted or successful by the world's measure, but faithful. That frees anyone who serves God. You may not be the best speaker or have the largest ministry. God asks whether you were faithful with what He gave you (Matt 25:21).
4:3 *I do not even examine myself* "A human day" means a human court, set against the day of the Lord. The Corinthians' verdict on Paul carried little weight with him, and he did not trust even his own verdict on himself. This is humility. Only God sees the heart truly.
4:4 *yet I am not justified by this* Paul's conscience was clear, but that did not prove him innocent. Our consciences are not perfect, and we can be blind to our own faults. We should not live for people's praise or blame, nor rest on our own opinion of ourselves. The Lord's verdict is the one that matters.
4:5 *do not judge anything before the time, until the Lord comes* Paul is not forbidding all judgment; in 5:12 he tells the church to judge a sinning member. He means judging hidden motives and the final worth of someone's service. That waits for the judgment seat of Christ (3:13-15). Notice the word "praise." The Lord will find something to praise in each faithful servant.
4:6 *not to think beyond what has been written* Most likely, do not go beyond Scripture, especially the Old Testament verses on pride and wisdom Paul has quoted (1:19, 31; 3:19-20). "Puffed up" means swelled with pride like a bellows full of air. Paul uses the word six times in this letter, more than any other New Testament book.
4:7 *what do you have which you did not receive?* Three questions that cut through pride. If you differ from others, God made the difference. Every gift, ability and even our salvation was given. Imagine a man bragging about a present someone else bought him. Ask these questions whenever you are tempted to look down on someone.
4:8 *Already you are satiated; already you became rich* Irony. The Corinthians lived as if the kingdom had already come and they were reigning as kings. Believers will reign with Christ when He returns and sets up His kingdom (2 Tim 2:12; Rev 20:4-6). If the kingdom had truly come, the apostles would be reigning too, not suffering.
4:9 *as condemned to death* In a Roman victory parade the captives condemned to die in the arena came last. That is how Paul saw the apostles. The word for spectacle is the root of our word theater: men in an arena, watched by the world and by angels.
4:10 *We are fools on account of Christ, but you are wise in Christ* The Corinthians wanted a faith that made them look good in their city. The apostles had given that up. Which path looks more like Jesus, who was crucified in weakness (2 Cor 13:4) and despised (Isa 53:3)? Following Him does not usually make us popular.
4:11 *Up to the present hour we both hunger and thirst* Not ancient history but Paul's life as he wrote: hungry, poorly dressed, beaten, homeless.
4:12 *working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless* In Corinth Paul made tents to support himself (Acts 18:3). Greeks often looked down on manual labor, but Paul worked so as not to burden anyone (9:12). Blessing those who curse us is how Jesus taught us to respond (Luke 6:28).
4:13 *the scum of the world, the refuse of all things* Both words mean the filth scraped off a dirty pot or swept off a floor, and were also used of the lowest people in society. That is how the world saw the men God used to turn it upside down. When you are mistreated for Christ, you walk where the apostles walked, and Jesus before them.

A Father's Warning

14 I do not write these things to shame you, but as my
beloved children I admonish ***you***. **15** For if you have ten
thousand guardians in Christ, yet ***you do*** not ***have*** many
fathers; for in Christ Jesus (Iesous) through the gospel I begot
you. **16** Therefore I exhort you, become imitators of me.
17 Because of this I sent Timothy (Timotheos) to you, who is
my beloved and faithful child in ***the*** Lord, who will remind
you of my ways which ***are*** in Christ, just as I teach every-
where in every church. **18** Now some were puffed up, as
though I were not coming to you. **19** But I will come to you
quickly, if the Lord wills, and I will know, not the word of
those who are puffed up, but the power. **20** For the kingdom
of God ***is*** not in word but in power. **21** What do you want?
Shall I come to you with a rod, or in love and a spirit of gen-
tleness?

1 CORINTHIANS 5

Sin in the Church

1 Sexual immorality is actually reported among you, and
such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Gen-
tiles, so that someone has the wife of ***his*** father. **2** And you
are puffed up, and did not rather mourn, so that the one who
did this deed might be removed out of your midst. **3** For I
indeed, as being absent in body but present in spirit, have
already judged, as being present, the one who has so com-
mitted this, **4** in the name of our Lord Jesus (Iesous) Christ,
when you and my spirit are gathered together, with the
power of our Lord Jesus Christ, **5** to deliver such a one to
Satan for ***the*** destruction of the flesh, so that the spirit may
be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. **6** Your boasting ***is*** not
good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole
lump? **7** Therefore cleanse out the old leaven, so that you
may be a new lump, just as you are unleavened. For also our
Passover was sacrificed for us: Christ. **8** So then let us cele-
brate the feast, not with old leaven, nor with ***the*** leaven of
malice and wickedness, but with ***the*** unleavened ***bread*** of sin-
cerity and truth.

Judging Those Inside

9 I wrote to you in the letter not to associate with sexually

4:14 1 Thess 2:11; 1 Cor 9:15; 2 Cor 7:3
4:15 Gal 4:19; 2 Tim 4:3; 1 Cor 3:6,10
4:16 2 Thess 3:9; 1 Cor 11:1; Phil 3:17
4:17 1 Cor 7:17; 1 Cor 16:10; 1 Tim 1:2
4:18 1 Cor 4:6-8; 1 Cor 5:2
4:19 Acts 19:21; Acts 18:21; 1 Cor 14:5
4:20 1 Cor 2:4; 2 Cor 10:4,5; 1 Thess 1:5
4:21 2 Cor 13:2; 2 Cor 12:20,21; 1 Thess 2:7
5:1 Lev 18:8; Deut 22:30; Deut 27:20
5:2 2 Cor 7:7,9-11; 1 Cor 4:6-8,18; Num 25:6
5:3 Col 2:5; 1 Thess 2:17; 2 Cor 10:1,11
5:4 John 20:23; 2 Cor 13:3,10; Matt 16:19
5:5 Job 2:6; 1 Tim 1:20; 1 Cor 11:32
5:6 Gal 5:9; James 4:16; 1 Cor 5:2
5:7 Exod 12:15; Exod 12:21; Exod 12:27
5:8 Exod 12:15; Deut 16:3; Matt 16:6,12
5:9 Eph 5:11; 2 Thess 3:14; 2 Cor 6:14,17

4:14 *as my beloved children I admonish you* The irony was sharp, but his heart is soft. To admonish is to warn and correct, as a good father does, neither ignoring wrong nor crushing the child. Speak the truth plainly, but with love as the motive and their good as the goal.
4:15 *if you have ten thousand guardians in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers* A guardian was a trusted household slave who walked the children to school and kept them in line, but he was not their father. Paul first brought them the gospel, and through it they were born again. That is why he could speak so plainly.
4:16 *become imitators of me* Not his gifts or success, but the humble, suffering way of the cross he just described (4:9-13). He adds the key in 11:1, "even as I also am of Christ." Every parent, pastor and teacher should be able to say something like this, not because we are perfect, but because we follow Jesus.
4:17 *I sent Timothy to you* Timothy had helped plant the church in Corinth (Acts 18:5), and Paul calls him his child, as a father raises a son. Paul taught the same gospel and way of life "in every church." Timothy may have arrived after this letter did (16:10).
4:18 *as though I were not coming to you* With Paul away and Timothy sent instead, some said he would never show up, and they made themselves big. When the teacher leaves the room, some students take over. God sees.
4:19 *if the Lord wills* Paul put his plans under the Lord's will (James 4:13-15), and they did change later (2 Cor 1:15-2:1). When he came he would test whether the proud talkers had any real spiritual power behind their words.
4:20 *the kingdom of God is not in word but in power* The kingdom of God is His rule. It shows itself in God's power changing lives, not in clever speech. Words matter, but empty talk without God's power is not the kingdom. The real proof is power that turns proud people into humble servants.
4:21 *with a rod, or in love and a spirit of gentleness?* The rod was used by a father or guardian to discipline a child. Paul would deal firmly with the problems if he had to, but would rather come gently. The choice was theirs, and it leads straight into the sin of chapter 5.
5:1 *someone has the wife of his father* Porneia is a broad word for any sexual sin outside marriage between a man and a woman. This was most likely the man's stepmother, and "has" suggests an ongoing relationship. The Law forbade it (Lev 18:8; Deut 22:30), and Roman law did too. Paul does not mention disciplining the woman, which suggests she was not a believer.
5:2 *And you are puffed up, and did not rather mourn* The shocking part. The church knew, and instead of grieving they were proud, perhaps of how open-minded they were. Sin among God's people should break our hearts like a death, and grief should lead to action.
5:3 *have already judged* This is not the judging of hidden motives forbidden in 4:5. It was open sin, known to everyone, with no repentance. The church does not judge hearts, but it is responsible to deal with open, ongoing sin among its members, as Jesus taught (Matt 18:15-17).
5:4 *when you and my spirit are gathered together* Not one man's private decision but the whole church acting together, by Christ's authority and with Christ present (Matt 18:20). Discipline is never a pastor settling a grudge. It must be done prayerfully and carefully, never in anger or in a hurry.
5:5 *to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh* Most likely putting the man out of the church's fellowship, back into the world, Satan's domain (1 John 5:19; 1 Tim 1:20). "The destruction of the flesh" is read two ways: the breaking of his sinful nature as he hits bottom, or physical suffering, even death, as God's discipline (11:30). The goal is plain: "so that the spirit may be saved." Discipline aims to rescue, not to get rid of someone.
5:6 *a little leaven leavens the whole lump* Leaven was usually a piece of old fermented dough kept from an earlier batch. In Scripture it often pictures sin or false teaching spreading (Matt 16:6; Gal 5:9). Sin tolerated in a church does not stay small. It tells everyone else that sin doesn't matter.
5:7 *our Passover was sacrificed for us: Christ* Before Passover a Jewish family removed every bit of leaven from the house (Exod 12:15-20). "Just as you are unleavened": in Christ believers are already clean and new, so become what you are. The lamb's blood on the doorposts kept judgment from the house (Exod 12:13). Jesus is our Passover Lamb, who died at Passover time (John 1:29; 1 Pet 1:19).
5:8 *the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth* The Christian life is like an unending Feast of Unleavened Bread. Malice is ill will, wickedness is evil in action, and both belong to the old life. Sincerity was used of something held up to the sunlight and found clean.
5:9 *I wrote to you in the letter* An earlier letter to Corinth that we do not have. The Corinthians had misunderstood or twisted it. Not every letter an apostle wrote was meant to become Scripture. God kept the ones He wanted us to have.

immoral ***persons***; **10** and not at all ***meaning*** the sexually immoral of this world, or the covetous, or swindlers, or idolaters, since then you ought to go out of the world. **11** But now I wrote to you not to associate ***with him***, if anyone named a brother is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler; with such a one not even to eat. **12** For what ***is it*** to me to judge those outside also? Do you not judge those inside? **13** But those outside God will judge. And you will remove the evil ***man*** from among yourselves.

1 CORINTHIANS 6

Lawsuits Among Believers

1 Does anyone of you, having a matter against the other, dare to go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints? **2** Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world is judged by you, are you unworthy of the smallest cases? **3** Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more then the things of this life? **4** So if you indeed have cases ***concerning*** things of this life, those who are despised in the church, these do you seat ***as judges***? **5** I say ***this*** to your shame. Thus is ***there*** not a wise ***man*** among you, not even one, who will be able to decide between his brother ***and brother***? **6** But brother goes to law with brother, and this before unbelievers! **7** Already indeed then it is altogether a defeat in you, that you have lawsuits with one another. Why do you not rather suffer wrong? Why are you not rather defrauded? **8** But you yourselves do wrong and defraud, and these ***things to*** brothers!

Such Were Some of You

9 Or do you not know that unrighteous ***ones*** will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither sexually immoral ***persons***, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate ***men***, nor men who lie with males, **10** nor thieves, nor greedy ***persons***, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. **11** And such were some ***of you***; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus (Iesous) and by the Spirit of our God.

5:10 1 Cor 10:27; 1 Cor 1:20; John 8:23
5:11 2 Thess 3:6,14; Matt 18:17; Rom 16:17
5:12 Mark 4:11; Col 4:5; Luke 12:14
5:13 Deut 17:7; Deut 13:5; Deut 21:21
6:1 Acts 18:14,15; Acts 19:38; Matt 18:15-17
6:2 Dan 7:22; Matt 19:28; Luke 22:30
6:3 Luke 8:14; Matt 25:41; Jude 1:6
6:4 1 Cor 5:12; Acts 6:2-4
6:5 2 Chr 11:4; 1 Cor 4:14; 1 Cor 15:34
6:6 Gen 13:7; 1 Cor 6:1,7; Gen 45:24
6:7 Exod 2:13; Mal 2:10; Prov 20:22
6:8 1 Thess 4:6; Lev 19:13; Mic 2:2
6:9 Lev 18:22; Gen 19:5; 1 Tim 1:9
6:10 1 Cor 5:11; Ps 50:17,18; Isa 1:23
6:11 1 Cor 1:2,30; Acts 22:16; Eph 5:26

5:10 *since then you ought to go out of the world* Paul never meant avoiding all unbelievers who sin. Believers must work, shop and live beside the greedy, the cheats and idol worshipers, and we are sent to them with the gospel (Matt 28:19-20). Jesus ate with sinners (Luke 15:1-2). We cannot reach people we refuse to be near.
5:11 *if anyone named a brother* The danger is the one who calls himself a believer and goes on in open, unrepentant sin. Greed and abusive words stand beside sexual sin on the list. Eating together meant acceptance, and some think the Lord's Supper is in view too. This is a loving refusal to pretend, meant to lead to forgiveness when he repents (2 Cor 2:6-8; 2 Thess 3:14-15).
5:12 *Do you not judge those inside?* Many churches get this backward, quick to condemn the world and slow to deal with sin among themselves. Be patient and loving with the lost. Hold those who claim Christ's name to His standard (1 Pet 4:17).
5:13 *you will remove the evil man from among yourselves* A phrase repeated in Deuteronomy (Deut 17:7; 22:21-24). God will judge the world. Discipline must be humble and loving, after private steps (Matt 18:15-17; Gal 6:1), never a tool to control people or silence concerns, and never a substitute for reporting abuse to the authorities. Many believe this man is the one Paul later asked the church to forgive (2 Cor 2:5-11). If so, the discipline worked.
6:1 *dare to go to law before the unrighteous* "Dare" shows Paul's shock. Greeks loved lawsuits, almost as a public sport, and Roman courts often favored people with money and status. "The unrighteous" does not mean every judge was corrupt but that they were not believers. God's family was airing its private quarrels before the unbelieving world.
6:2 *the saints will judge the world* Believers will share in Christ's rule when He comes (Dan 7:22, 27; Matt 19:28; Rev 20:4-6). If God will trust them with that, surely they can settle a small dispute between two church members.
6:3 *we will judge angels* Most likely the fallen angels who rebelled with Satan (2 Pet 2:4; Jude 6). Scripture does not say exactly what this will look like, and we should not go beyond it. When we keep eternity in view, our quarrels shrink to their real size.
6:4 *those who are despised in the church, these do you seat as judges?* Read two ways. As a question: are you setting unbelieving judges, whom the church has no reason to respect, over believers? Or as an ironic command: even the least in the church could handle these cases. Either way, taking them to unbelievers made no sense.
6:5 *Thus is there not a wise man among you* For all their boasting about wisdom, could they not find one person to settle a dispute? The church needs practical, godly wisdom that helps two believers make peace, and mature believers who can sit down with both sides.
6:6 *brother goes to law with brother, and this before unbelievers* The church preached love and forgiveness, then its members fought in public court over money. Jesus said the world would know His disciples by their love (John 13:35). When believers fight in public, the name of Christ is shamed.
6:7 *Why do you not rather suffer wrong?* Whoever won in court, the church had already lost. Hard teaching: better to be wronged, even cheated, than to take a brother to court (Matt 5:39-40). Sometimes the most Christlike thing is to let it go and trust God to make it right.
6:8 *But you yourselves do wrong and defraud* Some were doing the cheating, and to their own brothers. Paul speaks of civil disputes such as money, property and business, not crimes. God has given governments the job of punishing evil (Rom 13:1-4). Abuse, assault or theft should be reported to the authorities, and this passage must never be used to silence victims.
6:9 *unrighteous ones will not inherit the kingdom of God* "Do not be deceived": some in Corinth said what you do with your body doesn't matter. "Effeminate men" and "men who lie with males" translate malakoi and arsenokoitai. The second is formed from the words the Greek Old Testament uses in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13. Together they name sexual relations between men as sin.
6:10 *nor thieves, nor greedy persons, nor drunkards* Greed, drunkenness and a cruel tongue sit on the same list, so no one can read it and feel superior. Paul is not saying a believer who once fell is lost. He describes lives marked by these sins without repentance, which show a person does not belong to Christ (1 John 3:9-10).
6:11 *And such were some of you* Perhaps the most hopeful words in the chapter: who they were, not who they are now. Washed (Titus 3:5), set apart, and justified, which is God's legal verdict that a believing sinner is right with Him. Father, Son and Spirit were all at work. No sin is beyond God's grace. Temptation is not the same as sin, and a believer fighting old desires should be loved, helped and pointed to Christ, not shamed.

Glorify God in Your Body

12 All things are lawful for me, but not all things are profitable; all things are lawful for me, but I will not be mastered by anything. **13** Foods ***are*** for the belly, and the belly for foods; but God will bring to nothing both it and them. And the body ***is*** not for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. **14** And God both raised up the Lord and will raise us up through His power. **15** Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Then having taken the members of the Christ, shall I make ***them*** members of a prostitute? May it not be! **16** Or do you not know that the one who is joined to the prostitute is one body ***with her***? For "the two," He says, "will become one flesh." **17** But the one who is joined to the Lord is one spirit ***with Him***. **18** Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man may do is outside the body, but the one who commits sexual immorality sins against ***his*** own body. **19** Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit ***who is*** in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? **20** For you were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

1 CORINTHIANS 7

Marriage

1 Now concerning the things about which you wrote to me: ***it is*** good for a man not to touch a woman. **2** But because of sexual immoralities, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. **3** Let the husband render to the wife the goodwill due ***her***, and likewise also the wife to the husband. **4** The wife does not have authority over ***her*** own body, but the husband ***does***; and likewise also the husband does not have authority over ***his*** own body, but the wife ***does***. **5** Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by mutual agreement for a time, that you may devote yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. **6** But I say this by way of concession, not by way of command. **7** For I wish all men to be even as I myself ***am***. But each has ***his*** own gift from God, one in this way, and

6:12 1 Cor 10:23; 1 Cor 9:27; Rom 14:14
6:13 Matt 15:17,20; 1 Cor 6:15,19; 1 Cor 3:16
6:14 Acts 2:24; Eph 1:19,20; John 6:39,40
6:15 Rom 12:5; 1 Cor 12:27; Eph 4:12,15,16
6:16 Gen 2:24; Gen 38:15; Gen 38:24
6:17 Deut 13:4; Isa 56:3; John 17:21-23
6:18 Gen 39:12; Gen 39:10; Judg 16:5
6:19 1 Cor 3:16; 2 Cor 6:16; 1 Pet 2:5
6:20 1 Cor 7:23; Rom 12:1; 1 Pet 1:18
7:1 1 Cor 7:8,26,27,37,38; Gen 20:6; Matt 19:10,11
7:2 Gen 2:24; 1 Cor 7:9; Prov 19:14
7:3 Exod 21:10; 1 Pet 3:7
7:4 Hos 3:3; Matt 19:9; Mark 10:11,12
7:5 Exod 19:15; 1 Sam 21:4,5; Joel 2:16
7:6 2 Cor 8:8; 1 Cor 7:12,25; 2 Cor 11:17
7:7 1 Cor 9:5,15; Matt 19:11,12; 1 Cor 12:11

6:12 *All things are lawful for me* Most likely a Corinthian slogan, perhaps twisting Paul's own teaching on freedom from the Law. Paul gives two limits: is it profitable, and is it taking control of me? Many things start as a choice and become a chain: drink, drugs, pornography, gambling, even food or a phone.
6:13 *the body is not for sexual immorality, but for the Lord* "Foods are for the belly" was likely another slogan: the body will pass away, so feed every appetite. Paul says our bodies belong to the Lord, and "the Lord for the body." He cares for them, gave His own body for them, and will raise them.
6:14 *will raise us up through His power* Why the body matters. It will not stay dead. The resurrection is not only souls going to heaven but bodies raised and made new (Phil 3:21), the subject of chapter 15. So what we do with our bodies now matters to Him.
6:15 *shall I make them members of a prostitute? May it not be!* Believers' bodies are Christ's members, the parts He uses for His work. Prostitution was common in Corinth, as in most port cities. Joining a body that belongs to Christ to a prostitute is like dragging Christ into that sin. "May it not be" is Paul's strongest no.
6:16 *will become one flesh* Sex is never only physical. It joins two people whether they intend it or not. Paul says "He says" of Genesis 2:24, for God is the One speaking there. God designed sex for the lifelong union of husband and wife.
6:17 *the one who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him* A union deeper even than marriage. The Spirit unites us to Christ, so sexual sin brings a body that is one with Him into a shameful union. We cannot be joined to the Lord and to sin at the same time without great harm.
6:18 *Flee sexual immorality* Don't reason with it. Run, as Joseph left his coat in her hand (Gen 39:12). That may mean not going certain places, not being alone with certain people, or putting filters on a phone or computer. Sexual sin uses the body itself to break the union it was made for, and often leaves deep scars.
6:19 *your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit* In 3:16 the church was God's temple. Here it is each believer's body, for the Spirit lives in every believer (Rom 8:9). Our culture says your body belongs to you alone. Scripture says it belongs to God, and that covers purity and how we care for and use our bodies.
6:20 *you were bought with a price* Corinth saw slaves bought and sold every day. Jesus paid for our freedom with His own blood (1 Pet 1:18-19). The words "and in your spirit, which are God's" are in the Received Greek Text the SLB follows but not in most older Greek copies. Either way, the whole person belongs to God.
7:1 *it is good for a man not to touch a woman* "Now concerning" marks topics from the Corinthians' letter (7:25; 8:1; 12:1; 16:1). To touch a woman was a polite way of speaking of sexual relations. Many believe this line is a Corinthian saying Paul quotes and answers; others read it as Paul's own words that singleness is good. Some in Corinth said even married couples should give up sex. Paul will not let anyone call marriage second-class.
7:2 *let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband* One man and one woman, each belonging to the other, God's plan from creation (Gen 2:24). Paul is answering one question here. Marriage is far more than a guard against sin (Eph 5:22-33), but it is not less.
7:3 *the goodwill due her* The marriage relationship, including sexual relations, owed by each spouse to the other. In a world where men often had rights and women only duties, Paul gives both the same duties and rights. In Christ marriage is a partnership of mutual giving.
7:4 *The wife does not have authority over her own body* In marriage we have given ourselves to each other, and it works both ways. This is mutual self-giving, never a right to force or demand. Love "does not seek its own" (13:5). Any use of this verse to excuse abuse twists it into the opposite of what Paul meant.
7:5 *Do not deprive one another* One exception with three conditions: by mutual agreement, for a time, and for prayer. Then come together again. Paul is realistic. Satan looks for weak spots, and a cold marriage is one of them.
7:6 *by way of concession, not by way of command* Most likely the time apart in verse 5. Some take it as the instruction to marry in verse 2. Either way, Paul will not make rules where God has given freedom, and neither should we.
7:7 *each has his own gift from God* Paul was single as he wrote, never married or widowed. Scripture doesn't say which. Singleness is a gift, and so is marriage (Matt 19:11-12). A single believer's life is not on hold, and a married one has not settled for less.

another in that way. **8** But I say to the unmarried and to the
widows, it is good for them if they remain even as I ***am***. **9** But
if they do not have self-control, let them marry; for it is
better to marry than to burn.

Divorce and Separation

10 And to those who have married I give charge, not I, but
the Lord: a wife is not to be separated from ***her*** husband
11 (but if she is indeed separated, let her remain unmarried
or be reconciled to ***her*** husband), and a husband is not to
send away ***his*** wife. **12** But to the rest I say, not the Lord: if
any brother has an unbelieving wife, and she consents to
dwell with him, let him not send her away. **13** And a woman
who has an unbelieving husband, and he consents to dwell
with her, let her not send him away. **14** For the unbelieving
husband has been sanctified in the wife, and the unbelieving
wife has been sanctified in the husband; otherwise your chil-
dren are unclean, but now they are holy. **15** But if the unbe-
liever separates himself, let him separate himself; the
brother or the sister has not been enslaved in such ***cases***; but
God has called us in peace. **16** For how do you know, wife,
whether you will save ***your*** husband? Or how do you know,
husband, whether you will save ***your*** wife?

Remain in Your Calling

17 Only, as God has assigned to each, as the Lord has called
each, so let him walk. And so I prescribe in all the churches.
18 Was anyone called having been circumcised? Let him not
become uncircumcised. Was anyone called in uncircumci-
sion? Let him not be circumcised. **19** Circumcision is nothing,
and uncircumcision is nothing, but ***what matters is*** keeping
the commandments of God. **20** Let each remain in this, in the
calling in which he was called. **21** Were you called ***as*** a slave?
Let it not concern you; but if you are indeed able to become
free, rather make use ***of it***. **22** For the one who was called in
the Lord ***as*** a slave is a freedman of ***the*** Lord; likewise also the
one who was called ***as*** free is a slave of Christ. **23** You were
bought with a price; do not become slaves of men.
24 Brothers, let each remain with God in that in which he
was called.

7:8 1 Cor 7:26,27,32,34,35
7:9 1 Cor 7:2,28,36,39; 1 Tim 5:11,14
7:10 Matt 5:32; Luke 16:18; Mal 2:14-16
7:11 Deut 22:19; Jer 3:1; Deut 24:1
7:12 Deut 24:1; Deut 24:5; 2 Cor 11:17
7:14 Titus 1:15; Mal 2:15,16; 1 Cor 6:15-17
7:15 Rom 14:19; Matt 12:50; James 2:15
7:16 1 Cor 9:22; Prov 11:30; Luke 15:10
7:17 1 Cor 4:17; 2 Cor 11:28; Rom 12:3-8
7:18 Acts 15:1,5,19,24,28; Gal 5:1-3; Col 3:11
7:19 Gen 17:10; Gal 5:6; Gal 6:15
7:20 1 Cor 7:17,21-23; Luke 3:10-14; Prov 27:8
7:21 1 Cor 12:13; Gal 3:28; Col 3:11
7:22 1 Pet 2:16; Phlm 1:16; Luke 1:74,75
7:23 1 Cor 6:20; Lev 25:42; Acts 20:28
7:24 1 Cor 7:17,20; 1 Cor 10:31; Gen 5:22-24

7:8 *it is good for them if they remain even as I am* Good, not commanded and not better in every case. Paul affirms both singleness and marriage. A single believer is not a half-person. Jesus was never married, and He was the most complete man who ever lived.
7:9 *it is better to marry than to burn* To burn with desire. If someone struggles deeply with desire, marriage is God's good answer, and there is no shame in it. God made us with these desires and made marriage the right place for them.
7:10 *not I, but the Lord* Paul passes on what Jesus taught on earth (Matt 19:3-9; Mark 10:2-12). The word for separated was used of divorce in the Greek world, where either spouse could simply walk away. God's plan is marriage for life (Matt 19:6).
7:11 *let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband* If believers separate, two choices: stay unmarried or be reconciled, and keep that door open. This does not tell anyone to stay where they or their children are in danger. If you are being abused, getting to safety is not a sin. Reach out to your pastor, trusted believers and the authorities.
7:12 *But to the rest I say, not the Lord* Not less inspired, but a case Jesus did not address on earth: a spouse who came to faith while the other did not. Paul gives the answer as an apostle guided by the Spirit (7:40; 14:37). If the unbelieving spouse is willing to stay, the believer must not leave.
7:13 *let her not send him away* A Roman wife was expected to follow her husband's religion, so a Christian wife of a pagan was in a hard spot. Paul tells her to stay if he is willing (1 Pet 3:1-2). This is for people already married, not permission to marry an unbeliever (7:39).
7:14 *the unbelieving husband has been sanctified in the wife* Not saved, since verse 16 says he may yet be saved, but set apart in a special way, living in a home where God is at work and the gospel is lived daily. The children too are set apart under God's care, though each must come to faith for himself.
7:15 *the brother or the sister has not been enslaved in such cases* If an unbelieving spouse leaves, let him go. Teachers read the words not enslaved two ways. Many say the believer is free from the bond and may remarry (compare 7:39; Matt 19:9). Others say he is not bound to fight to keep the marriage but is still not free to remarry (7:11). Both agree the deserted believer is not to blame. If you have been left, God has not left you. Seek a godly pastor's counsel.
7:16 *how do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband?* Read as hope (stay, you may win your spouse) or as release (you cannot be sure holding on will save him). Either way, only God saves. Never stop praying. Many unbelieving spouses have come to Christ through the quiet faith of a husband or wife.
7:17 *as the Lord has called each, so let him walk* God calls you where you are. Some changes are needed, like leaving sin behind, but marriage, job and background are usually not things you must throw away to follow Christ. Paul taught this "in all the churches."
7:18 *Let him not become uncircumcised* Some Jewish men tried to undo circumcision by surgery to avoid mockery at the baths and games. A Gentile believer did not need to become a Jew either, an error Paul fought hard (Gal 5:2-6; Acts 15:1-11).
7:19 *Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing* Startling words from a Jew, since circumcision was the covenant sign given to Abraham (Gen 17:10-11). In Christ it does not make anyone right with God. What God wants is a heart that loves and obeys Him, "faith working through love" (Gal 5:6), not an outward mark.
7:20 *in the calling in which he was called* The life situation a person was in when God called him to salvation. Said three times (7:17, 20, 24). You may change jobs or marry, but you need not change your outward situation to be a good Christian. A believing plumber does not have to become a pastor to serve God.
7:21 *Were you called as a slave? Let it not concern you* Roman slavery was common and not based on race; people became slaves through war, debt, birth or crime, and many were freed in time. Most read the rest as take your freedom if you can; some read it as make good use of your present state. Paul is not calling slavery good. A slave's standing before God is not lower than anyone's.
7:22 *is a freedman of the Lord* A freedman was a former slave set free. In Christ the slave is free from sin and death, and the free man is Christ's slave. Both stand equal before God (Gal 3:28). These verses were misused to keep people in chains, but Paul names "enslavers" among the lawless (1 Tim 1:10). Today they speak to our work: boss or newest employee, we serve Christ.
7:23 *do not become slaves of men* Christ bought every believer (6:20). Some in that day sold themselves into slavery to escape debt. More widely, don't become a slave to people's opinions or to anyone who would take Christ's place. You belong to Him.
7:24 *let each remain with God* The third time, now with the key words "with God." Married or single, rich or poor, God is with you there. Contentment does not come from changing our circumstances but from knowing God is with us in them.

The Unmarried and Widows

25 Now concerning the virgins, I do not have a command of ***the*** Lord; but I give judgment as one who has received mercy from ***the*** Lord to be trustworthy. **26** I think then that this is good because of the present necessity, that ***it is*** good for a man to be thus. **27** Have you been bound to a wife? Do not seek release. Have you been released from a wife? Do not seek a wife. **28** But if you do marry, you have not sinned; and if the virgin marries, she has not sinned. But such will have tribulation in the flesh, and I am sparing you. **29** But this I say, brothers: the time has been shortened, so that from now on even those who have wives may be as ***though*** not having ***them***, **30** and those who weep as ***though*** not weeping, and those who rejoice as ***though*** not rejoicing, and those who buy as ***though*** not possessing, **31** and those who use this world as ***though*** not using ***it*** to the full; for the form of this world is passing away. **32** But I want you to be without anxiety. The unmarried ***man*** is anxious for the things of the Lord, how he will please the Lord; **33** but the one who has married is anxious for the things of the world, how he will please ***his*** wife. **34** The wife and the virgin have been divided. The unmarried woman is anxious for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit; but the one who has married is anxious for the things of the world, how she will please ***her*** husband. **35** And this I say for your own benefit, not that I may cast a noose on you, but for what ***is*** seemly and devoted to the Lord without distraction. **36** But if anyone thinks he is behaving improperly toward his virgin, if she is past ***her*** prime, and so it ought to be, let him do what he wishes; he does not sin; let them marry. **37** But he who stands firm in his heart, not having necessity, but has authority over his own will, and has judged this in his heart, to keep his own virgin, does well. **38** So then also the one who gives ***her*** in marriage does well, but the one who does not give ***her*** in marriage does better. **39** A wife has been bound by law for as long a time as her husband lives; but if her husband falls asleep, she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in ***the*** Lord. **40** But she is more blessed if she remains thus, according to my judgment; and I think that I also have ***the*** Spirit of God.

1 CORINTHIANS 8

Food Offered to Idols

1 Now concerning the idol sacrifices, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. **2** And if anyone thinks that he knows anything, he has not yet known anything as it is necessary to know; **3** but if

7:25 1 Cor 7:6,10,12,40; 1 Cor 4:2; 1 Cor 7:28,34,36-38
7:26 1 Cor 7:1,8,28,35-38; Luke 21:23; Jer 16:2-4
7:27 1 Cor 7:12-14,20
7:28 Heb 13:4; 1 Cor 7:26,32-34; 2 Cor 1:23
7:29 Rom 13:11,12; Ps 39:4-7; 1 John 2:17
7:30 Ps 30:5; Ps 126:5,6; Eccl 3:4
7:31 1 John 2:17; 1 Cor 9:18; Ps 39:6
7:32 1 Tim 5:5; Ps 55:22; Phil 4:6
7:33 Neh 5:1-5; Luke 12:22; 1 Thess 4:11,12
7:34 Luke 2:36,37; 1 Cor 6:20; Rom 6:13
7:35 1 Cor 7:2,5-9,28,36; Matt 19:12; Eph 5:3
7:36 1 Sam 2:33; 1 Cor 7:9,37
7:38 Heb 13:4; 1 Cor 7:1,8,26,32-34,37; 1 Cor 7:2
7:39 Rom 7:2,3; 1 Cor 7:10,15; 2 Cor 6:14-16
7:40 1 Cor 7:1,8,26,35; 1 Cor 7:25; 1 Cor 9:1-3
8:1 Rom 14:3,10; Rev 2:14,20; Isa 5:21
8:2 Gal 6:3; 1 Tim 6:3,4; Prov 26:12
8:3 Rev 3:8,9,15,16; Nah 1:7; Gal 4:9

7:25 *Now concerning the virgins* Young people never married, especially young women engaged or of age to marry. Jesus gave no direct teaching on this, so Paul gives his judgment as one made trustworthy by the Lord's mercy. The Spirit included it in Scripture, but Paul is careful to call it advice.
7:26 *because of the present necessity* The word means distress. Perhaps a particular crisis in Corinth such as famine or persecution, or the general distress of this fallen age as believers wait for the Lord. It was a hard time to start a family. This is advice for that situation, not a rule that all should stay single.
7:28 *But if you do marry, you have not sinned* Paul shuts down any teaching that marriage is sin, and later warns of false teachers who forbid it (1 Tim 4:1-3). Married life brings its own troubles, more to care for and more to lose in hard times. Paul wants to spare them extra pain.
7:29 *the time has been shortened* The word was used of a sail being taken in. The early church lived expecting Jesus at any moment, and so should we (Titus 2:13). Husbands are not to ignore their wives (7:3-5), but marriage belongs to this age (Matt 22:30) and must not become the most important thing in life.
7:31 *the form of this world is passing away* The word for form was used of the scenery in a play. Our sorrows and joys are real but not the end, and we may own and use things but should hold them loosely. Am I living for what is passing, or for what will last?
7:32 *The unmarried man is anxious for the things of the Lord* Anxious here means caring, in a good sense. A single person can go where God sends and give time freely, as Paul did, traveling the world for the gospel with no family to worry about.
7:34 *The wife and the virgin have been divided* A married person rightly cares for a spouse (Eph 5:25), so attention is divided. Paul is not saying married people are less spiritual. Pleasing your spouse is part of serving God. Marriage simply brings more responsibilities.
7:35 *not that I may cast a noose on you* A noose caught animals or tied someone up. Paul is not trapping anyone with rules. The goal is devotion to the Lord "without distraction," for some single and for others married. What distracts you from devotion to the Lord?
7:36 *let him do what he wishes; he does not sin; let them marry* Verses 36-38 are hard. One view: a father and his unmarried daughter, since fathers arranged marriages ("gives her in marriage," 7:38). The other: an engaged man and his betrothed ("let them marry"). Either way, marriage is not sin.
7:37 *he who stands firm in his heart* The decision to keep his virgin unmarried must be firm, freely made and under control. Paul wants no one pressured into singleness, and no one pressured into marriage.
7:38 *does better* Both choices are good. "Better" means better suited to the present distress and undistracted service, not more holy, for marriage is a gift (7:7, 28, 36). The right choice is the one God leads you to.
7:39 *only in the Lord* Marriage is for life. Death is called sleep for the believer because it is not the end (1 Thess 4:13-14), and a widow is free to remarry, but only a believer (2 Cor 6:14). Marrying someone who does not share your faith invites division at the deepest level of your life.
7:40 *I think that I also have the Spirit of God* Not doubt, but a gentle jab at those who claimed to be spiritual and questioned Paul. Elsewhere he advises younger widows to remarry (1 Tim 5:14). This counsel is given by an apostle with the Spirit and is God's Word to us.
8:1 *Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up* Idol sacrifices were mostly meat offered to a pagan god: part burned, part to the priests, part eaten at temple meals or sold in the market. In Corinth it was hard to buy meat or go to a dinner party without facing the question. "We all have knowledge" was probably a Corinthian saying. Paul is not against knowledge, only knowledge without love.
8:2 *he has not yet known anything as it is necessary to know* The person who thinks he has it all figured out shows he doesn't. Real knowledge of God makes a person humble. Knowing the Bible well while being harsh with everyone has missed the point.
8:3 *this one has been known by Him* What matters most is not what we know about God but that He knows us, loving us and owning us as His (Gal 4:9; 2 Tim 2:19). The Christian life begins with God's love for us, and love for Him shows itself in love for others (1 John 4:20-21).

anyone loves God, this one has been known by Him.
4 Therefore concerning the eating of the idol sacrifices, we know that an idol ***is*** nothing in ***the*** world, and that ***there is*** no other God except one. **5** For even if indeed there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on the earth, as there are many gods and many lords, **6** yet to us ***there is*** one God, the Father, from whom ***are*** all things, and we for Him; and one Lord, Jesus (Iesous) Christ, through whom ***are*** all things, and we through Him. **7** But this knowledge ***is*** not in all ***men***; and some, with conscience of the idol until now, eat ***food*** as an idol sacrifice, and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. **8** But food does not commend us to God; for neither if we eat do we have more, nor if we do not eat do we lack. **9** But watch, lest somehow this right of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak. **10** For if anyone sees you, the one having knowledge, reclining in an idol's temple, will not his conscience, since he is weak, be built up to eat the idol sacrifices? **11** And the brother who is weak will perish by your knowledge, for whom Christ died. **12** And thus sinning against the brothers and striking their conscience while it is weak, you sin against Christ. **13** Therefore, if food causes my brother to stumble, I will never eat meat to the age, so that I may not cause my brother to stumble.

1 CORINTHIANS 9

Paul's Rights as an Apostle

1 Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus (Iesous) Christ our Lord? Are you not my work in ***the*** Lord? **2** If to others I am not an apostle, yet at least to you I am; for you are the seal of my apostleship in ***the*** Lord. **3** My defense to those who examine me is this: **4** Do we not have a right to eat and to drink? **5** Do we not have a right to take along a sister ***as*** a wife, as also the other apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas (Kephas)? **6** Or ***is it*** only I and Barnabas ***who*** do not have a right to not work? **7** Who at any time serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat of its fruit? Or who shepherds a flock and does not eat of the milk of the flock? **8** Do I speak these things according to man? Or does not the law also say these

8:4 Deut 6:4; Ps 115:4; Ps 115:5
8:5 2 Thess 2:4; Deut 10:17; Jer 2:11,28
8:6 John 1:3; 1 Cor 8:4; Mal 2:10
8:7 Rom 14:14,23; 1 Cor 8:9,10; 1 Cor 10:28,29
8:8 Rom 14:17; 1 Cor 6:13; Col 2:20-23
8:9 Gal 5:13; Rom 14:20,21; 1 Cor 10:24,29
8:10 1 Cor 8:1,2; 1 Cor 10:20,21; Num 25:2
8:11 Rom 14:15,20,21; 1 Cor 8:13; 1 Cor 10:33
8:12 Gen 20:9; Gen 42:22; Exod 32:21
8:13 Rom 14:21; 1 Cor 13:5; 2 Cor 11:29
9:1 Acts 9:3,5,17; 1 Cor 3:6; 1 Cor 9:19
9:2 John 6:27; 2 Cor 3:1-3; 2 Cor 12:12
9:3 Acts 22:1; Acts 25:16; Phil 1:7,17
9:4 1 Thess 2:6; 2 Thess 3:8,9; 1 Cor 9:7-14
9:5 Matt 8:14; John 1:42; Acts 1:14
9:6 Acts 4:36; Acts 13:1,2,50; Acts 18:3
9:7 Prov 27:18; Deut 20:6; 1 Tim 1:18
9:8 1 Cor 7:40; Rom 6:19; 1 Thess 2:13

8:4 *an idol is nothing in the world* Paul agrees with the strong believers' facts. An idol is wood, stone or metal shaped by hands (Isa 44:9-20; Ps 115:4-8), and there is one God (Deut 6:4). Food offered to an idol is still just food.
8:5 *so-called gods* Corinth worshiped gods of sky, sea, love, war and harvest, and emperors were called lords and gods. They are not true gods, but people serve them, and in 10:20 Paul adds that demons stand behind idols. The idol is nothing, but idol worship is not harmless.
8:6 *one God, the Father, from whom are all things* One of the great statements of the faith. Paul takes Israel's confession that God is one and includes Jesus in it. The Father is the source; Jesus is the "one Lord" through whom all things were made (John 1:3; Col 1:16). "Lord" was the word the Greek Old Testament used for God's holy name. Jesus is not a second god. He shares fully in the one God's identity and work.
8:7 *their conscience, being weak, is defiled* Some had worshiped idols for years, and eating that food still felt like idol worship. The conscience is our God-given sense of right and wrong. A weak conscience is not a sinful one but one not yet fully taught. Going against it harms a person even when the thing itself is not wrong (Rom 14:23).
8:8 *food does not commend us to God* This cuts both ways. The strong are not more spiritual for eating, nor the weak for refusing. What defiles is what comes out of the heart (Mark 7:18-23). Since food doesn't matter to God, the strong should be willing to give it up for a brother.
8:9 *lest somehow this right of yours become a stumbling block* A right is not a duty to use it. A stumbling block trips a person into sin. Love asks not only whether I am free to do something, but how it will affect my brother.
8:10 *reclining in an idol's temple* Temples had dining rooms for banquets, weddings and birthday parties. "Built up" is irony: the strong said their knowledge would build up the weak, and it would, but in the wrong direction. In 10:14-22 Paul goes further and calls meals tied to idol worship wrong in themselves.
8:11 *the brother who is weak will perish by your knowledge, for whom Christ died* Perish here means ruined or destroyed. Paul is no longer weighing a menu but a soul. Teachers differ on how far the word goes, whether ruin of his faith and walk or a fall back into idolatry. If Christ loved him enough to die for him, can't we give up a meal?
8:12 *you sin against Christ* Striking is wounding. Christ is so joined to His people that what we do to them we do to Him, as He told Saul, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" (Acts 9:4).
8:13 *I will never eat meat to the age* To the age means forever. Paul cared more for his brother than his rights, as chapter 9 shows. This does not let weaker believers control everyone by their opinions. Paul speaks of leading someone into sin, not annoying him. But love sets limits on our freedom.
9:1 *Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?* Four questions that each expect yes. An apostle had to be a witness of the risen Lord (Acts 1:21-22), and Paul saw Him on the Damascus road (Acts 9:3-6; 15:8). The church in Corinth itself was proof of his calling (Acts 18:1-11).
9:2 *you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord* A seal pressed into wax showed a document was real and who owned it. The changed lives in Corinth were God's stamp on Paul's ministry. The best proof of a ministry is not a title or a diploma but the fruit God brings through it.
9:3 *My defense to those who examine me* The word is apologia, a legal answer in court, from which we get apologetics. Some were putting Paul on trial in their minds. His defense becomes his lesson: what giving up rights for others looks like.
9:4 *Do we not have a right to eat and to drink?* The same word for right as in 8:9. The strong talked about their rights, so Paul tells them about his: to have food and drink supplied by the church he served.
9:5 *the brothers of the Lord and Cephas* Peter had a wife (Matt 8:14-15). The Lord's brothers were James, Joses, Simon and Judas (Matt 13:55), the later sons of Mary and Joseph, who did not believe at first (John 7:5) but came to faith after the resurrection. Their wives traveled with them in ministry. Paul had the same right but did not use it (7:7-8).
9:6 *only I and Barnabas* Barnabas was Paul's partner on his first journey (Acts 13-14). Both paid their own way. In Corinth Paul made tents with Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 18:3). They had the same right as everyone else and chose not to use it.
9:7 *Who plants a vineyard and does not eat of its fruit?* Soldier, farmer, shepherd: no army makes soldiers buy their own food. Each is a picture of ministry. The church is God's field (3:9) and His flock (Acts 20:28), and the one who serves them has a right to live from that work.

things? **9** For in the law of Moses it has been written, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it threshes." Is it for the oxen ***that*** God cares? **10** Or does He say ***it*** entirely because of us? For it was written because of us, that the one who plows ought to plow in hope, and the one who threshes in hope ***ought*** to partake of his hope. **11** If we sowed spiritual things among you, ***is it*** a great thing if we will reap your fleshly things? **12** If others partake of ***this*** right over you, ***do*** we not more? But we did not use this right, but we bear all things, so that we may not give any hindrance to the gospel of the Christ. **13** Do you not know that those who work ***at*** the holy things eat of the temple, ***and*** those who attend at the altar share with the altar? **14** So also the Lord prescribed for those who proclaim the gospel to live from the gospel.

All Things to All Men

15 But I have used none of these things; and I have not written these things that it may be done thus to me; for ***it is*** better for me to die than that anyone should make my boasting empty. **16** For if I preach the gospel, there is no boasting for me; for necessity is laid on me; and woe is me if I do not preach the gospel! **17** For if I do this willingly, I have a reward; but if unwillingly, I have been entrusted with a stewardship. **18** What then is my reward? That, preaching the gospel, I may offer the gospel of the Christ without charge, so as not to make full use of my right in the gospel. **19** For being free from all ***men***, I made myself a slave to all, so that I may gain the more. **20** And to the Jews I became as a Jew, so that I may gain Jews; to those under law as under law, so that I may gain those under law; **21** to those without law as without law (not being without law to God, but within law to Christ), so that I may gain those without law. **22** To the weak I became as weak, so that I may gain the weak. I have become all things to all ***men***, so that by all means I may save some. **23** And this I do because of the gospel, so that I may become a fellow partaker of it.

Run to Win

24 Do you not know that those who run in a stadium all run, but one receives the prize? So run, that you may obtain ***it***. **25** And everyone who competes exercises self-control in all things. They then ***do it*** that they may receive a perishable crown, but we an imperishable. **26** Therefore I run thus, not

9:9 Deut 25:4; Deut 5:14; Deut 22:1
9:10 Neh 5:14; Isa 28:28; 2 Tim 2:6
9:11 2 Kgs 5:13; Num 5:9; 2 Kgs 5:26
9:12 Num 5:9; Num 18:31; Num 35:2
9:13 Lev 6:26; Num 18:8; Num 5:9
9:14 Matt 10:10; 1 Cor 9:4; Luke 10:7
9:15 Num 16:15; Neh 5:14; Jonah 4:3
9:16 Jer 20:9; Rom 1:14; Acts 4:20
9:17 Gal 2:7; 1 Cor 3:8,14; 1 Cor 4:1
9:18 1 Cor 7:31; 1 Cor 9:6,7; 1 Cor 10:33
9:19 Matt 18:15; Gal 5:13; 1 Pet 3:1
9:20 Acts 16:3; Acts 21:20-26; Gal 5:18
9:21 Rom 2:12,14; Gal 3:2; Matt 5:17-20
9:22 1 Cor 10:33; Rom 15:1; Rom 11:14
9:23 Mark 8:35; 2 Tim 2:10; 1 Cor 9:12
9:24 1 Cor 9:26; Heb 12:1; Phil 3:14
9:25 1 Tim 6:12; James 1:12; Rev 2:10
9:26 Phil 1:21; 2 Tim 1:12; 2 Pet 1:10

9:9 *You shall not muzzle an ox while it threshes* From Deuteronomy 25:4. An ox walked in circles over the grain on the threshing floor, often pulling a heavy sled, and God said let it eat as it works. Paul is not saying God does not care for animals (Matt 10:29). The command teaches a wider principle about every worker.
9:10 *the one who plows ought to plow in hope* If God cares that an ox is fed while it works, how much more the people who labor in His kingdom. The Old Testament still teaches us today (10:11; Rom 15:4).
9:11 *is it a great thing if we will reap your fleshly things?* Fleshly things here are material things like food and money, not something bad. Which is worth more, eternal life or a meal? The one taught the Word should share good things with his teacher (Gal 6:6).
9:12 *so that we may not give any hindrance to the gospel of the Christ* The heart of the chapter. Paul had the right and laid it down. The word for hindrance was used of something cutting in to block the way. In a city of traveling teachers who charged for wisdom, no one would say Paul preached for money. It cost him (4:11-12). What rights might God ask you to lay down?
9:13 *those who attend at the altar share with the altar* Under the Law the priests received part of the sacrifices and the Levites received the tithes (Num 18:8-20; Deut 18:1-5). Providing for those who serve was God's own plan.
9:14 *the Lord prescribed for those who proclaim the gospel to live from the gospel* Jesus Himself said the worker is worthy of his wages (Luke 10:7; Matt 10:10; 1 Tim 5:18). Common sense, the Law, the temple and the words of Jesus agree. Churches today should care well for those who teach them.
9:15 *it is better for me to die than that anyone should make my boasting empty* His boasting was the joy of giving the gospel at no cost. Paul did at times accept gifts from other churches such as Philippi (Phil 4:15-16; 2 Cor 11:8-9), but he would not take support from the church he was serving in Corinth.
9:16 *woe is me if I do not preach the gospel!* Paul did not volunteer. Jesus met him and sent him (Acts 26:16-18). Like Jeremiah's fire shut up in his bones (Jer 20:9), he could not keep quiet. Every believer has a part in making Christ known (Matt 28:19-20). Do we feel any of that weight?
9:17 *I have been entrusted with a stewardship* A steward was not paid extra for doing his duty. Preaching was Paul's duty. What he could do willingly, above duty, he explains next.
9:18 *I may offer the gospel of the Christ without charge* Paul's reward was the joy of giving the gospel away. A right is something you may use, not something you must use. Freely we have received, so freely we give (Matt 10:8).
9:19 *I made myself a slave to all, so that I may gain the more* Paul was under no one's control, yet chose to put everyone's needs ahead of his own. "Gain" comes five times in verses 19-22, a word for winning people to Christ. His freedom was for others, the lesson of chapter 8.
9:20 *to the Jews I became as a Jew* Among Jews Paul kept Jewish customs to avoid needless offense. He had Timothy circumcised (Acts 16:3) and joined a temple vow (Acts 21:20-26). He never said anyone must keep the Law to be saved (Gal 2:16). He laid aside freedom only where the gospel's truth was not touched.
9:21 *to those without law as without law* Among Gentiles he ate with them and lived as one of them. Freedom from the Law of Moses never meant lawlessness. Paul lived under Christ's authority and the law of love (Gal 6:2), and grace is never a license to sin (Rom 6:1-2).
9:22 *I have become all things to all men, so that by all means I may save some* The weak are the tender consciences of chapter 8. This verse is twisted to mean a believer may do anything to fit in. Paul never sinned to reach sinners. He changed customs, diet and comforts, never the message. Only God saves, but He uses people, and some will believe.
9:23 *so that I may become a fellow partaker of it* Everything Paul gave up was for the gospel. He wanted to share its blessings with those he won. There is a joy in seeing someone come to Christ that cannot be had any other way.
9:24 *those who run in a stadium all run, but one receives the prize* Corinth hosted the Isthmian Games every two years near the city. Paul is not saying only one believer is saved. He calls us to run with an athlete's effort. Don't just jog along in the Christian life. Run to win.
9:25 *a perishable crown, but we an imperishable* Athletes trained for months, saying no to many good things. The prize was a wreath of leaves that crumbled within days. Believers run for crowns that never fade (2 Tim 4:8; James 1:12; 1 Pet 5:4). If an athlete disciplines himself for a wreath, how much more should we?
9:26 *not as beating the air* Paul knew where the finish line was, and his blows landed. Many believers stay busy but never fight the right battle. Is your effort going into things that count for eternity?

as uncertainly; thus I box, not as beating ***the*** air; **27** but I strike my body and bring ***it*** into slavery, lest somehow, having preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.

1 CORINTHIANS 10

Warnings From Israel

1 Now I do not want you to be ignorant, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, **2** and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, **3** and all ate the same spiritual food, **4** and all drank the same spiritual drink; for they were drinking from a spiritual rock that followed ***them***, and the rock was the Christ. **5** But with most of them God was not well pleased; for they were laid low in the wilderness. **6** Now these things became examples for us, so that we would not be desirers of evil things, as they also desired. **7** And do not become idolaters, as some of them ***were***; as it has been written, "The people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play." **8** Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them committed sexual immorality, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell. **9** Nor let us put the Christ to the test, as some of them also tested ***Him***, and were destroyed by the serpents. **10** Nor grumble, as some of them also grumbled, and were destroyed by the destroyer. **11** Now all these things happened to them ***as*** examples, and they were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the ages came. **12** Therefore let the one who thinks he stands watch, lest he fall. **13** No temptation has taken you except what is human; and God ***is*** faithful, who will not let you be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way out, so that you may be able to endure ***it***.

The Lord's Table

14 Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry. **15** I speak as to

9:27 1 Cor 8:13; Rom 8:13; 2 Cor 13:5,6
10:1 Exod 13:21; Exod 14:22; Exod 14:21
10:2 Exod 14:31; Josh 4:14; 1 Cor 1:13-16
10:3 Exod 16:4; Deut 8:3; Neh 9:15,20
10:4 Exod 17:6; Num 20:11; Ps 78:20
10:5 Num 14:29; Num 14:30; Heb 3:17
10:6 Num 11:4; Num 11:34; Num 11:33
10:7 Exod 32:6; Deut 9:12; Exod 32:7
10:8 Num 25:1; Num 25:9; Exod 32:28
10:9 Num 21:5; Exod 17:2; Deut 6:16
10:10 Exod 12:23; Num 16:41; Num 14:2
10:11 Rom 15:4; 1 Cor 9:10; Phil 4:5
10:12 Prov 16:18; Gen 9:21; Rom 11:20
10:13 Dan 3:17; 2 Tim 4:18; 2 Pet 2:9
10:14 1 Cor 10:7,20,21; 1 John 5:21; Rom 12:19
10:15 1 Cor 8:1; 1 Thess 5:21; 1 Cor 4:10

9:27 *I strike my body and bring it into slavery* A boxing word for a blow under the eye, used as a figure. Paul took firm control of his body's desires. "Disqualified" was used of an athlete rejected from the contest. Many believe Paul means losing his reward and usefulness, since the context is prizes. Others believe one who preaches but does not live the gospel shows he was never saved. Either way, we must live what we teach.
10:1 *our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea* Paul calls Israel "our fathers" even to a mostly Gentile church, for in Christ they joined the same family of faith (Gal 3:7). The cloud led Israel by day (Exod 13:21), and God parted the Red Sea (Exod 14:21-22). "All" comes five times in verses 1-4. Every Israelite received these blessings.
10:2 *all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea* To baptize is to dip or immerse, with the idea of being joined to someone. Passing under the cloud and through the sea joined Israel to Moses as leader. An outward sign of belonging does not keep a person safe if the heart turns away. Israel had the sign, but many lacked faith (Heb 3:19).
10:4 *the rock was the Christ* The manna (Exod 16:4) and the water from the rock (Exod 17:6; Num 20:11) were spiritual because they came from God in a supernatural way. The Old Testament calls God the Rock of Israel (Deut 32:4). The One who cared for Israel in the wilderness was Christ, the Son of God, before He came in the flesh. Some later Jewish teachers told of a rock that rolled along behind Israel. Paul points to the Person behind the water.
10:5 *they were laid low in the wilderness* Of the adults who left Egypt, only Joshua and Caleb entered the land (Num 14:29-30). Laid low pictures bodies scattered across the sand. They all had the same blessings, but most never reached the goal. Israel started well and did not finish (9:24-27).
10:6 *these things became examples for us* The word is typos, a pattern or model. Paul starts with desire, because sin begins in the heart. Israel craved Egypt's meat and despised the manna, and the place was named graves of craving (Num 11:4-6, 33-34). Wanting what God has not given is where many falls begin.
10:7 *The people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play* From Exodus 32:6, the golden calf. Israel ate and drank at an idol feast, and it led to judgment. That hit close to home in Corinth, where the question was meals at idol temples. Play points to the revelry that went with idol worship.
10:8 *in one day twenty-three thousand fell* At Baal-peor Israel joined Moab's sexual sin and idol worship (Num 25:1-9). Numbers gives twenty-four thousand as the total. Many believe Paul gives the deaths "in one day" while Numbers includes the leaders executed (Num 25:4-5); others note both are round numbers. There is no real contradiction.
10:9 *Nor let us put the Christ to the test* Numbers 21:4-9: the people spoke against God, serpents came, and whoever looked at the bronze serpent lived, a picture Jesus applied to His cross (John 3:14-15). To test God is to see how far we can go before He acts. Most Greek copies, with the Received Text, read "the Christ"; a few read the Lord.
10:10 *Nor grumble* Perhaps Korah's rebellion and the plague that followed (Num 16:41-49), or the grumbling after the spies' report (Num 14). The destroyer is likely the angel of judgment, as in Egypt (Exod 12:23). Complaining says God is not good to us, and Paul sets it beside idolatry and immorality (Phil 2:14).
10:11 *they were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the ages came* These events really happened, and God had them written to warn us. We live after the cross, with more light than Israel had, so more reason to obey and less excuse when we don't. The Old Testament was written for us (Rom 15:4).
10:12 *let the one who thinks he stands watch, lest he fall* Aimed at the strong who thought they could attend idol feasts safely. The person most likely to fall is the one who thinks he can't (Prov 16:18). The safest believer is the humble one who knows his weakness and leans on the Lord.
10:13 *God is faithful, who will not let you be tempted beyond what you are able* Your temptations are not unique, whatever Satan says. God sets the limits and provides a way out: to run, as Joseph did (Gen 39:12), to pray, to call a believing friend, to turn off the screen or leave the room. The verse does not promise an easy life. It promises we never have to sin, and there is forgiveness when we confess (1 John 1:9).
10:14 *flee from idolatry* One way out is simply to run, as with sexual sin (6:18). Don't see how close you can get. Paul calls them "my beloved." Idolatry is anything we put in God's place: money, pleasure, success, even people (1 John 5:21).
10:15 *judge for yourselves what I say* The Corinthians were proud of their wisdom, so Paul asks them to use it. Good teaching invites people to think and to check it against Scripture, as the Bereans did (Acts 17:11).

sensible ***men***; judge for yourselves what I say. **16** The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of the Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a sharing in the body of the Christ? **17** Because ***there is*** one bread, we who are many are one body; for we all partake of the one bread. **18** Look at Israel according to ***the*** flesh: are not those who eat the sacrifices sharers in the altar? **19** What then do I say? That an idol is anything, or that an idol sacrifice is anything? **20** But ***I say*** that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons and not to God; and I do not want you to become sharers with the demons. **21** You are not able to drink ***the*** cup of ***the*** Lord and ***the*** cup of demons; you are not able to partake of ***the*** table of ***the*** Lord and of ***the*** table of demons. **22** Or do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than He?

Do All to the Glory of God

23 All things are lawful for me, but not all things are profitable; all things are lawful for me, but not all things build up. **24** Let no one seek his own ***good***, but each that of the other. **25** Eat everything that is sold in the meat market, asking no questions because of conscience; **26** for "the earth ***is*** the Lord's, and its fullness." **27** And if any of the unbelievers invites you and you want to go, eat everything that is set before you, asking no questions because of conscience. **28** But if anyone says to you, "This is an idol sacrifice," do not eat, because of that one who informed ***you***, and because of conscience; for "the earth ***is*** the Lord's, and its fullness." **29** Now I say conscience, not your own, but that of the other; for why is my freedom judged by another's conscience? **30** And if I partake with thanks, why am I slandered for that for which I give thanks? **31** Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all things to the glory of God. **32** Become without offense both to Jews and to Greeks and to the church of God, **33** even as I also please all ***men*** in all things, not seeking my own benefit, but that of the many, that they may be saved.

1 CORINTHIANS 11

1 Become imitators of me, even as I also ***am*** of Christ.

Head Coverings in Worship

2 Now I praise you, brothers, that you have remembered me in all things, and you hold firmly the traditions, even as I

10:16 Matt 26:26-28; Acts 2:42,46; Luke 22:19,20
10:17 Rom 12:5; 1 Cor 12:12,27; Gal 3:26-28
10:18 Lev 7:15; Rom 4:1,12; Rom 9:3-8
10:19 Deut 32:17; 1 Cor 8:4; 1 Cor 1:28
10:20 Deut 32:17; Rev 9:20; Deut 32:16,17
10:21 Mal 1:7; Matt 6:24; 1 Kgs 18:21
10:22 Deut 32:21; Exod 20:5; Jer 7:19
10:23 1 Cor 6:12; 1 Cor 8:9; Eph 4:29
10:24 1 Cor 10:33; 1 Cor 13:5; Phil 2:4,5,21
10:25 1 Cor 8:7; Rom 14:14; 1 Tim 4:4
10:26 Ps 24:1; Ps 50:12; Exod 19:5
10:27 1 Cor 5:9-11; Luke 5:29,30; Luke 15:23
10:28 Ps 24:1; 1 Cor 8:10-13; Rom 14:15
10:29 1 Cor 10:32; 1 Cor 8:9-13; Rom 14:15-21
10:30 Rom 14:6; 1 Tim 4:3,4
10:31 Col 3:17,23; 1 Pet 4:11; Luke 11:41
10:32 Acts 20:28; 1 Cor 8:13; Rom 14:13
10:33 1 Cor 10:24; 1 Cor 9:19-23; Rom 15:2,3
11:1 1 Cor 4:16; Phil 3:17; 1 Thess 1:6
11:2 2 Thess 2:15; 1 Cor 4:17; 1 Cor 11:17,22

10:16 *is it not a sharing in the blood of the Christ?* The cup of blessing was a Passover cup over which thanks was said, given new meaning at the Last Supper (11:25). Sharing is koinonia, fellowship or participation. Scripture plainly shows the Supper as a remembrance Jesus commanded and a proclamation of His death (11:24-26). Catholic and Orthodox, Lutheran, Reformed and memorial views differ on how Christ is present. Paul's point: the meal joins us to the Lord, so we cannot also join ourselves to idols.
10:17 *there is one bread, we who are many are one body* A single loaf was broken and shared. How can people who share one loaf split into parties (1:10-13)? The Supper pictures the unity chapter 12 will teach.
10:18 *are not those who eat the sacrifices sharers in the altar?* In many offerings part was burned, part went to the priest and part was eaten by the worshiper (Lev 7:15; Deut 12:17-18). Eating was fellowship with the God of that altar, not a neutral act.
10:20 *they sacrifice to demons and not to God* The idol is nothing (8:4), but something stands behind it. Demons, fallen angels who serve Satan, use false religion to draw people from the true God, as Moses said (Deut 32:17). Going to an idol feast meant sitting in fellowship with the forces of darkness.
10:21 *the table of the Lord and of the table of demons* The Lord's Supper and the idol feast cannot go together. You cannot be loyal to Christ and share in worship that belongs to His enemies (Matt 6:24).
10:22 *do we provoke the Lord to jealousy?* God's jealousy is not petty. It is the right love of a husband who will not share his wife with another (Exod 20:5; Deut 32:21; Isa 42:8). The strong were proud of their strength, but playing with idols tests God's patience, as Israel did.
10:23 *not all things build up* Paul agrees in part with the slogan (6:12): believers are free from the Law's food rules. Mature believers ask not only what is allowed, but what will help others and build up the church.
10:24 *Let no one seek his own good, but each that of the other* The rule of love behind chapters 8 to 10. Jesus did not please Himself (Rom 15:3) but came to serve (Mark 10:45). The world says look out for number one. Christ says look out for others (Phil 2:4).
10:25 *Eat everything that is sold in the meat market* Much market meat came from temple sacrifices. A believer may buy and eat it without asking. Quoting Psalm 24:1, Paul says "the earth is the Lord's, and its fullness." In the market it is just food, received with thanks (1 Tim 4:4-5).
10:27 *if any of the unbelievers invites you and you want to go* Paul assumes believers will have friendships and share meals with unbelievers. Eat what is served without making a scene. Jesus ate with sinners (Luke 15:1-2), and a shared table can open the door to sharing Christ.
10:28 *This is an idol sacrifice* If someone points it out, whether a troubled weaker believer or an unbeliever watching to see if the Christian will honor the gods, eating would look like approval of idol worship. The Received Text the SLB follows repeats Psalm 24:1 here; many older Greek copies do not.
10:29 *not your own, but that of the other* The believer's own conscience is clear, but he gives up eating for the other's sake. The questions that follow voice the strong believer's objection. Our liberty is real but not worth damaging someone's faith or our witness (Rom 14:16).
10:31 *do all things to the glory of God* The principle that settles the question. Eating and drinking are ordinary, and no part of life is too small to honor God. Ask, Can I do this for the glory of God? That one question settles a lot of gray areas.
10:32 *both to Jews and to Greeks and to the church of God* Three groups: Israel, the Gentiles, and the church of Jew and Gentile together in Christ. This is one reason many teachers keep Israel and the church distinct in God's plan. The church does not replace Israel, and God still has a future for that nation (Rom 11:25-29).
10:33 *not seeking my own benefit, but that of the many, that they may be saved* Not a people pleaser who changed his message (Gal 1:10), but one who gave up comfort and rights so nothing in his conduct stood between people and the gospel. That is the goal behind chapters 8 to 10.
11:1 *Become imitators of me, even as I also am of Christ* This belongs with 10:33. Bold words, but with a limit: follow me as I follow Christ. Every believer should be able to say something like this to a newer believer. Who is watching your walk, and where would they end up if they followed you?
11:2 *you hold firmly the traditions, even as I delivered them to you* The teaching handed down by the apostles (2 Thess 2:15), such as the gospel (15:3) and the Lord's Supper (11:23), not human traditions added to God's Word (Mark 7:8). We have that apostolic teaching written in the New Testament.

delivered ***them*** to you. **3** But I want you to know that the head of every man is the Christ, and ***the*** head of a woman ***is*** the man, and ***the*** head of Christ ***is*** God. **4** Every man praying or prophesying, having ***something*** down over ***his*** head, dishonors his head. **5** But every woman praying or prophesying with the head uncovered dishonors her own head; for it is one and the same ***as*** the ***woman*** having been shaved. **6** For if a woman does not cover herself, let her also be shorn; but if ***it is*** shameful for a woman to be shorn or to be shaved, let her cover herself. **7** For a man indeed ought not to cover the head, being ***the*** image and glory of God; but the woman is ***the*** glory of man. **8** For man is not from woman, but woman from man; **9** for indeed man was not created because of the woman, but woman because of the man. **10** Because of this the woman ought to have authority on the head, because of the angels. **11** Nevertheless, neither ***is*** woman without man, nor man without woman, in ***the*** Lord. **12** For just as the woman ***is*** from the man, so also the man ***is*** through the woman; but all things ***are*** from God. **13** Judge among yourselves: is it fitting for a woman to pray to God uncovered? **14** Or does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor to him, **15** but if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her? For her long hair has been given to her instead of a covering. **16** But if anyone seems to be contentious, we have no such custom, nor ***do*** the churches of God.

Abuses at the Lord's Supper

17 But in instructing ***you in*** this, I do not praise ***you***, because you come together not for the better but for the worse. **18** For first indeed, when you come together in the church, I hear ***that*** divisions exist among you, and in part I believe ***it***. **19** For there must also be factions among you, so that those who are approved may become evident among you.

20 Therefore, when you come together in the same place, it is not to eat ***the*** Lord's supper; **21** for in the eating each one takes ***his*** own supper beforehand, and one is hungry, and another is drunk. **22** What! Do you not have houses in which to eat and to drink? Or do you despise the church of God and put to shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise ***you***.

11:3 Gen 3:16; Col 1:18; 1 Cor 3:23
11:4 2 Sam 15:30; 1 Cor 11:14; 1 Cor 12:10,28
11:5 Luke 2:36; Deut 21:12; Acts 21:9
11:6 Deut 22:5; Num 5:18
11:7 Gen 1:26; Gen 1:27; Prov 12:4
11:8 Gen 2:21-22; Gen 2:18; 1 Tim 2:13
11:9 Gen 2:18
11:10 Gen 24:64,65; Gen 20:16; Matt 18:10
11:11 Gal 3:28; 1 Cor 7:10-14; 1 Cor 12:12-22
11:12 Rom 11:36; 1 Cor 8:6; Prov 16:4
11:13 Luke 12:57; 1 Cor 10:15; John 7:24
11:14 2 Sam 14:26; 1 Cor 14:35
11:16 1 Cor 7:17; 1 Tim 6:3,4; 1 Thess 2:14
11:17 1 Cor 11:2,22; 1 Pet 2:14; 1 Cor 14:23,26
11:18 1 Cor 3:3; 1 Cor 1:10-12; 1 Cor 5:1
11:19 1 John 2:19; Luke 17:1; Deut 13:3
11:21 Jude 1:12; 2 Pet 2:13; 1 Cor 11:23-25
11:22 1 Cor 10:32; Acts 20:28; Prov 17:5

11:3 *the head of a woman is the man, and the head of Christ is God* Most teachers read head as authority and leadership (Eph 1:22; 5:23). Others read it as source, as the head of a river, pointing to verse 8. Many see both. Christ has a head too, yet He is fully God (John 1:1; 10:30). So headship does not mean lesser worth. Man and woman are equal before God (Gal 3:28), and Paul still speaks of an order between them.

11:4 *Every man praying or prophesying, having something down over his head, dishonors his head* Prophesying is speaking a message from God to the people (14:3). Head may mean his own head or Christ, his spiritual head, and Paul seems to play on both. In that setting a covered head in worship sent a message that did not fit a man's place under Christ.

11:5 *every woman praying or prophesying with the head uncovered* Paul assumes women prayed and prophesied in the meetings and tells them how: with the head covered. A shaved head on a woman was a sign of deep shame in that culture. For how this fits with 14:34-35, see the notes there.

11:6 *let her cover herself* Paul reasons from what everyone in Corinth agreed was shameful. If a shorn or shaved head disgraced a woman, they should see that an uncovered head in worship sent a similar message.

11:7 *being the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of man* Women are fully made in God's image (Gen 1:27). Paul speaks of glory, who brings honor to whom. A good wife brings honor to her husband (Prov 12:4; 31:23). In worship, God's glory should be on display, not human glory.

11:9 *woman because of the man* God formed Adam first and then Eve from his side (Gen 2:18, 21-22). "Helper" in Genesis does not mean less important; the same Hebrew word is used of God (Ps 33:20). The order goes back before the fall, which is why many teachers say the principle is not only Corinthian culture.

11:10 *the woman ought to have authority on the head, because of the angels* One of the hardest verses in the New Testament. Most likely a sign of authority, the covering: either a sign she is under her husband's authority, or a sign of her own authority to pray and prophesy. "Because of the angels" most often means angels watch the church's worship (Eph 3:10; 1 Pet 1:12). Others see angels as examples of glad service. Scripture does not explain more, so hold views humbly.

11:11 *neither is woman without man, nor man without woman, in the Lord* Paul guards against taking verses 7-10 too far. The first woman came from man, but every man since is born of a woman, and all come from God. Headship is never a license to look down on women or treat them harshly.

11:13 *is it fitting for a woman to pray to God uncovered?* Fitting means proper in that setting. Many teachers therefore see the covering as a custom of that time and place, while the principle behind it, honoring God's order and not shaming one's head, holds for every age.

11:15 *her long hair has been given to her instead of a covering* Nature likely means the natural sense people share. Some believe long hair is the covering Paul means, so no other is needed. Others see the hair as a natural picture pointing to a cloth covering in worship. Either way, God built a difference between men and women into creation, and worship should honor it.

11:16 *we have no such custom, nor do the churches of God* No custom of women praying uncovered, or no custom of arguing over it. The main applications today: a covering is required; the covering was a custom and the lasting principle is God's order and the difference between men and women; long hair is the covering; or headship is mutual partnership. Godly believers hold each view. All agree that worship should glorify God and that men and women are equal in worth and need each other.

11:17 *you come together not for the better but for the worse* The gathering of God's people is meant to build them up (14:26). It is possible to attend church every week and leave worse than we came if our hearts are wrong toward God and each other.

11:18 *I hear that divisions exist among you, and in part I believe it* Not the leader parties of chapters 1-4, but rich against poor. Paul is fair; he does not assume every report is true.

11:19 *so that those who are approved may become evident among you* Divisions are not good, but when they happen they show who is truly faithful. Trouble in a church reveals hearts. The approved are those tested and proven genuine.

11:21 *one is hungry, and another is drunk* The Lord's Supper was often part of a shared meal, sometimes called a love feast (Jude 12). Many believe the wealthy came early and ate their own food and wine, while poor believers and slaves came after work and found nothing left. That was not the Lord's Supper but their own.

11:22 *put to shame those who have nothing* Feasting in front of the hungry showed contempt for the church. Christ died for rich and poor alike, and at His table we are equal. A church that makes some feel second-class at the Lord's table has missed the cross (James 2:1-4).

The Lord's Supper

23 For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus (Iesous), in the night in which He was being betrayed, took bread; **24** and having given thanks, He broke ***it*** and said, "Take, eat; this is My body, which is being broken for you; do this in My remembrance."
25 Likewise also ***He took*** the cup after having supped, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink ***it***, in My remembrance." **26** For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until He comes. **27** Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. **28** But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. **29** For the one who eats and drinks unworthily eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord. **30** Because of this many among you ***are*** weak and sick, and many sleep. **31** For if we were judging ourselves, we would not be judged. **32** But being judged by ***the*** Lord, we are disciplined, so that we may not be condemned with the world. **33** So then, my brothers, when you come together to eat, wait for one another. **34** And if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, so that you may not come together for judgment. And the rest I will set in order whenever I come.

1 CORINTHIANS 12

Spiritual Gifts

1 Now concerning spiritual ***gifts***, brothers, I do not want you to be ignorant. **2** You know that you were Gentiles, carried away to the mute idols, however you were led. **3** Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by ***the*** Spirit of God says, "Jesus (Iesous) ***is*** accursed," and no one is able to say, "Jesus ***is*** Lord," except by ***the*** Holy Spirit. **4** Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; **5** and there are varieties of services, and the same Lord; **6** and there are varieties of workings, but it is the same God who works all things in all. **7** But to each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for

11:23 1 Cor 15:3; Matt 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24
11:24 1 Cor 5:7,8; Ps 22:26,29; Prov 9:5
11:25 Exod 24:8; Jer 31:31; Luke 22:20
11:26 1 Cor 4:5; John 14:3; John 21:22
11:27 John 6:51,63,64; Num 9:10,13; 1 Cor 10:21
11:28 2 Cor 13:5; Gal 6:4; Ps 26:2-7
11:29 Rom 13:2; James 3:1; 1 Cor 11:24,27
11:30 1 Cor 11:32; Exod 15:26; Num 20:12,24
11:31 1 John 1:9; Ps 32:3-5; 1 Cor 11:28
11:32 Heb 12:5-11; Ps 118:18; 1 Cor 11:30
11:34 1 Cor 11:21,22; 1 Cor 4:19; 1 Cor 7:17
12:1 1 Cor 12:4-11; 1 Cor 14:1-18,37; Eph 4:11
12:2 1 Thess 1:9; 1 Pet 4:3; Ps 115:5,7
12:3 1 John 4:2,3; John 13:13; 1 Cor 8:6
12:4 Heb 2:4; Rom 12:4-6; Eph 4:4
12:5 1 Cor 12:28,29; Rom 12:6-8; Eph 4:11,12
12:6 1 Cor 15:28; Col 3:11; 1 Cor 12:11
12:7 Rom 12:6-8; Eph 4:7-12; 1 Pet 4:10,11

11:23 *I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you* Paul did not invent this teaching; it came from the Lord, directly or through the other apostles. Jesus gave this meal the night of His betrayal, at the Passover (Matt 26:17-30; Luke 22:7-20). Most scholars date 1 Corinthians before the Gospels, making this the earliest written account of the Supper.
11:24 *do this in My remembrance* Eucharisteo is to give thanks, so some churches call this meal the Eucharist. "Being broken" is in the Received Text the SLB follows; many older copies simply say "for you." Not a bone of His was broken (John 19:36); the breaking points to His body given up in death. Jesus commanded this meal. We remember a living Savior who died and rose again.
11:25 *This cup is the new covenant in My blood* A covenant is a binding agreement. Jeremiah promised a new covenant of hearts written on and sins forgiven (Jer 31:31-34). Sinai was sealed with animal blood (Exod 24:8). The new covenant is sealed with Jesus' blood (Heb 9:15). God made it "with the house of Israel" (Jer 31:31). I believe the church shares now in its forgiveness through Jesus' blood, and God will still keep its promises to the nation of Israel when Christ returns (Rom 11:26-27).
11:26 *you proclaim the death of the Lord until He comes* A sermon without words. The meal looks back to the cross, around at the body sharing one loaf (10:17), and forward to Jesus coming for His church (John 14:3). He will drink it new with us in His Father's kingdom (Matt 26:29).
11:27 *whoever eats this bread or drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily* Some stay away because they feel unworthy, but none of us is worthy; that is why Jesus died. Unworthily describes the way we take it: in Corinth, like a party, drunk and shaming the poor. Taking it carelessly treats lightly the sacrifice He made.
11:28 *let a man examine himself, and so let him eat* Examine means to test, as metal was tested to see if it was genuine. Is there unconfessed sin or a grudge? The point is not to stay away but to confess, make things right (Matt 5:23-24), and then come to the table.
11:29 *not discerning the body of the Lord* Two main readings: recognizing that the bread stands for the Lord's body given on the cross, or recognizing the church as His body (10:17; 12:27). In Corinth both failures were happening, and both readings fit.
11:30 *many among you are weak and sick, and many sleep* God was disciplining the church, even with death. Sleep is the New Testament's gentle word for believers' death (15:6, 18; 1 Thess 4:13). Not every sickness is discipline for sin (John 9:2-3), but this shows it can be. Ask God if He wants to show you anything, without assuming the worst.
11:31 *if we were judging ourselves, we would not be judged* God's mercy gives us the chance to deal with our sin ourselves. It is far better to humble ourselves before Him than to wait for Him to humble us (James 4:10).
11:32 *so that we may not be condemned with the world* When God judges His children, it is discipline, the word for training a child, not condemnation (Heb 12:5-11; Rom 8:1). Even those in Corinth who died under His discipline were believers, asleep in Christ.
11:33 *wait for one another* A simple fix: wait until everyone arrives, and share. The hungry should eat at home. The church meal is about fellowship with the Lord and each other. Other matters would wait for Paul's visit (4:19; 16:5).
12:1 *Now concerning spiritual gifts* A new question from their letter. The Greek pneumatikon means things of the Spirit; the SLB supplies "gifts" from the context. The Corinthians were excited about spiritual things, but excitement is not understanding (Rom 10:2).
12:2 *carried away to the mute idols* Before Christ they were dragged off like prisoners by idols that could not speak. In Corinth's temples worshipers sometimes fell into ecstatic states and spoke strange words. A powerful spiritual experience does not prove it comes from God (10:20). Experiences must be tested.
12:3 *no one is able to say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit* Anyone can say the words. Paul means a true confession from the heart (Rom 10:9). So every true believer has the Spirit, and there are no second-class Christians. The test for any gift or experience: does it point people to Jesus as Lord? The Spirit glorifies Him (John 16:14).
12:4 *varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit* "Varieties" three times, "same" three times: variety in what is given, unity in who gives. The Spirit, the Lord Jesus and God the Father work together in the church. The word is charismata, gifts of grace, from which we get charismatic. They are given, not earned.
12:7 *to each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good* Every believer has at least one gift, and gifts are given to help others, not for our glory. The Corinthians used theirs to show off. A gift is a tool God puts in our hands to build up His church.

the common good. **8** For to one is given through the Spirit a word of wisdom, and to another a word of knowledge according to the same Spirit; **9** and to a different one faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit; **10** and to another workings of miracles, and to another prophecy, and to another distinguishing of spirits, and to a different one kinds of tongues, and to another interpretation of tongues. **11** But the one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each individually as He wills.

One Body, Many Members

12 For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the one body, being many, are one body, so also ***is*** the Christ. **13** For indeed by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free; and we were all made to drink into one Spirit. **14** For indeed the body is not one member, but many. **15** If the foot says, "Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body," it is not for this ***reason*** not of the body. **16** And if the ear says, "Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body," it is not for this ***reason*** not of the body. **17** If the whole body ***were*** an eye, where ***would*** the hearing ***be***? If the whole ***were*** hearing, where ***would*** the smelling ***be***? **18** But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He willed. **19** And if they all were one member, where ***would*** the body ***be***? **20** But now ***there are*** indeed many members, but one body. **21** And the eye is not able to say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; or again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." **22** But much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary; **23** and those ***members*** of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we put more abundant honor; and our unpresentable ***members*** have more abundant presentability, **24** but our presentable ***members*** have no need. But God has blended the body together, having given more abundant honor to the ***member*** that lacks, **25** so that there may be no division in the body, but ***that*** the members may have the same care for one another. **26** And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with ***it***; if one member is glorified, all the members rejoice with ***it***. **27** Now you are ***the*** body of Christ, and mem-

12:8 2 Cor 8:7; 1 Cor 1:5,30; 1 Cor 2:6-10
12:9 2 Cor 4:13; 1 Cor 13:2; Matt 17:19,20
12:10 Mark 16:17,20; 1 John 4:1; 1 Cor 12:28,29
12:11 1 Cor 12:4; 2 Cor 10:13; Heb 2:4
12:12 1 Cor 12:27; 1 Cor 10:17; Col 2:19
12:13 Col 3:11; John 7:37-39; Matt 3:11
12:14 1 Cor 12:12,19,27,28; Eph 4:25
12:15 Judg 9:8-15; 2 Kgs 14:9
12:16 Rom 12:3,10; Phil 2:3
12:17 1 Cor 12:21,29; 1 Sam 9:9; Ps 94:9
12:18 1 Cor 12:11; Rom 12:3; 1 Cor 3:5
12:21 Num 10:31,32; 1 Sam 25:32; Ezra 10:1-5
12:22 Eccl 9:14,15; Prov 14:28; Eccl 4:9-12
12:23 Gen 3:7,21
12:24 Gen 2:25; Gen 3:11
12:25 1 Cor 1:10-12; 1 Cor 3:3; John 17:21-26
12:26 Rom 12:15; Heb 13:3; 2 Cor 11:28,29
12:27 Rom 12:5; Eph 1:23; Eph 4:12

12:8 *a word of wisdom, and to another a word of knowledge* Likely the ability to apply God's truth wisely to real situations, and the ability to understand and explain it. Some see the word of knowledge as special revelation of facts not otherwise known. Scripture names these gifts without defining them in detail, so we should be humble.
12:9 *faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healings* Every believer has saving faith, so this is a special confidence that God will do great things in a situation (13:2). The apostles healed as a sign their message was from God (Acts 3:6-8; 5:15-16; 19:11-12). God still heals in answer to prayer (James 5:14-15).
12:10 *distinguishing of spirits, and to a different one kinds of tongues* Miracles include acts like Elymas struck blind (Acts 13:11). Prophecy builds up, encourages and comforts (14:3). Distinguishing spirits tells whether a message comes from God, the human spirit or a demon (1 John 4:1). Tongues is speaking a language not learned. At Pentecost they were real human languages (Acts 2:4-11). Some believe Corinth's tongues were the same; others that they could include a heavenly or prayer language (13:1; 14:2).
12:11 *distributing to each individually as He wills* The Spirit is a Person with a will, and He chooses the gifts, so there is no room for envy or pride. Do all the gifts continue today? Cessationists believe the sign gifts confirmed the apostles' message and ended with them (Eph 2:20; Heb 2:3-4). Continuationists believe all continue until "the perfect comes" (13:10). Many stand in between. All agree no gift adds to Scripture, every gift must be tested by it, and love matters most.
12:12 *so also is the Christ* Not so also is the church, though that is what he means. The church is so joined to Jesus that Paul calls it by His name (Acts 9:4; Col 1:18).
12:13 *by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body* At the moment a person believes, the Spirit places him into Christ's body. Many take this as true of every believer at salvation, not a second experience. Pentecostal and charismatic teachers agree that every believer is placed in the body but also speak of a later filling or baptism for power (Acts 1:8). The body breaks down walls between Jew and Gentile, slave and free (John 7:37-39).
12:14 *the body is not one member, but many* A church where everyone has the same gift would be like a body that is all mouth. Our differences are part of God's design. The one who serves differently is not a threat to the body but a gift to it.
12:15 *Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body* For believers who feel their gift does not matter. Maybe you can't preach or sing. Feeling unimportant does not make you unimportant, and comparing yourself to others only makes you miserable. The body needs you where God put you.
12:17 *If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be?* A giant eyeball that cannot hear or smell. Those who wanted everyone to speak in tongues were asking for a body that is all tongue.
12:18 *God has set the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He willed* The answer to both the proud and the discouraged. God did not make a mistake with your gifts or your church. Instead of wishing for someone else's gift, ask how He wants you to use yours.
12:20 *many members, but one body* Stress only unity and we try to make everyone the same; stress only variety and we split apart. A healthy church celebrates its differences and guards its unity.
12:21 *I have no need of you* Now the visible parts look down on the others. The eye cannot pick anything up without the hand. The gifted preacher needs the faithful one who prays, and the leader needs the one who sets up chairs.
12:22 *those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary* Heart, lungs and liver are hidden, but we cannot live without them. The one who prays daily, visits the sick or teaches children may seem less important than the person on the platform, but the church could not survive without them.
12:24 *God has blended the body together* We cover and care for the less presentable parts. Blended means mixed like ingredients. God lifts up the humble (Matt 20:16), and we should honor those the world overlooks.
12:25 *that the members may have the same care for one another* The Corinthians were full of divisions (1:10; 11:18). In a healthy body there are no favorites, rich over poor or gifted over plain.
12:26 *if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it* Stub your toe and the whole body feels it. Weep with those who weep (Rom 12:15). Rejoicing when another is honored is often harder. Can you celebrate when God blesses someone else?
12:27 *Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually* True of every local church. You are not just someone who attends but a member of a living thing through which Christ lives His life in the world.

bers individually. **28** And God has set some in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, kinds of tongues. **29** ***Are*** all apostles? ***Are*** all prophets? ***Are*** all teachers? ***Are*** all ***workers of*** miracles? **30** Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? **31** But earnestly desire the better gifts. And yet I show you a way beyond comparison.

1 CORINTHIANS 13

The Way of Love

1 If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. **2** And if I have prophecy, and know all the mysteries and all the knowledge, and if I have all the faith so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. **3** And if I give away all my possessions to feed ***others***, and if I deliver up my body that I may be burned, but do not have love, I am profited nothing. **4** Love is patient, is kind; love is not envious; love does not boast, is not puffed up, **5** does not behave improperly, does not seek its own things, is not provoked, does not count the evil, **6** does not rejoice over unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; **7** bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. **8** Love never fails; but whether ***there are*** prophecies, they will be done away; whether tongues, they will cease; whether knowledge, it will be done away. **9** For we know in part and we prophesy in part; **10** but when the perfect comes, then that which ***is*** in part will be done away. **11** When I was a child, I was speaking as a child, I was thinking as a child, I was reasoning as a child; but when I became a man, I did away with the things of the child. **12** For now we see through a mirror in an enigma, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will fully know, even as I also have been fully known. **13** But now faith, hope, love remain, these three; but the greatest of these ***is*** love.

12:28 Eph 4:11-13; Heb 13:17,24; Rom 12:6-8
12:29 1 Cor 12:4-11,14-20
12:31 1 Cor 13:1-13; Matt 5:6; 1 Cor 8:1
13:1 1 Tim 1:5; 1 Pet 4:8; 2 Pet 2:18
13:2 Matt 17:20; Matt 21:21; 1 Cor 16:22
13:3 James 2:14-17; Heb 13:9; Matt 6:1-4
13:4 1 Pet 4:8; Prov 10:12; Col 3:12
13:5 1 Cor 10:24,33; 1 John 3:16,17; James 1:19
13:6 Prov 24:17; 2 John 1:4; Prov 14:9
13:7 1 Pet 4:8; 1 Cor 13:4; 2 Tim 2:3-10,24
13:8 Acts 19:6; Heb 8:13; Acts 2:4
13:9 1 Cor 13:12; 1 Cor 8:2; 1 Cor 2:9
13:10 Rev 21:22,23; Rev 22:4,5; 1 Cor 13:12
13:11 1 Cor 14:20; 1 Cor 3:1,2; Gal 4:1
13:12 2 Cor 3:18; 1 John 3:2; Phil 3:12
13:13 1 Cor 16:14; 1 Cor 13:1-8; 1 John 4:7-18

12:28 *first apostles, second prophets, third teachers* The first three lay the foundation and build the church with the Word (Eph 2:20). Helps means aid to those in need. Administrations comes from the word for the one who steers a ship. Tongues, which the Corinthians prized most, comes last, a gentle correction of what matters most.
12:30 *Do all speak in tongues?* Each question expects the answer no. Not every believer has every gift. Some teach that every believer should speak in tongues as a sign of the Spirit's filling, but these verses show the gift is given to some and not others (12:11). No one should be made to feel less spiritual for lacking a particular gift.
12:31 *earnestly desire the better gifts* The gifts that do the most good, such as prophecy over tongues (14:1-5). Then Paul shows something greater than any gift, the way of love. Chapter 13 is not a break from the subject of gifts. It is the heart of it.
13:1 *sounding brass or a clanging cymbal* Paul starts with tongues, the gift Corinth prized most, and imagines every human language and even angels' speech. Without love it is noise. Sounding brass may be a gong, or the bronze vessels some theaters used to carry sound; clanging cymbals were used in pagan worship. Paul says "I," applying it to himself first.
13:2 *but do not have love, I am nothing* Prophecy, all mysteries, all knowledge, mountain-moving faith (Matt 17:20): imagine being the greatest Bible teacher who ever lived. Without love Paul does not say he has nothing. He says "I am nothing." The strong in Corinth were proud of their knowledge (8:1).
13:3 *I am profited nothing* Even giving everything to the poor or dying as a martyr can be done for show, pride or stubbornness (Matt 6:1-4). God looks at the heart. Why do you serve: for applause, for duty, or out of love? The Received Text the SLB follows reads "that I may be burned"; some older copies read that I may boast.
13:4 *Love is patient, is kind* Paul does not define love. He shows what it does; most of these words are verbs. Patient means long-tempered, putting up with people without striking back (2 Pet 3:9). Kindness reaches out to them. Love does not resent others' gifts or brag. "Puffed up," used of the Corinthians again and again (4:6, 18; 5:2; 8:1), is the opposite of love.
13:5 *does not seek its own things, is not provoked, does not count the evil* Love has good manners, unlike Corinth at the Lord's table (11:21-22). It puts others first (10:24, 33). It has a long fuse. "Count" is a bookkeeping word: love keeps no record of wrongs, as God keeps no list of our forgiven sins (Ps 103:12). Many marriages and friendships would heal if we stopped keeping score.
13:6 *does not rejoice over unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth* Love takes no pleasure in sin or in gossip about someone's fall (Prov 24:17). Love is not just being nice. Corinth tolerated open sin and called it openness (5:1-2). Love speaks the truth, but in love (Eph 4:15).
13:7 *bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things* Bears can mean covers: love does not broadcast others' faults (1 Pet 4:8). Believes all things is not gullible but gives the benefit of the doubt. Put your own name in verses 4-7 and it humbles us. Put Jesus' name there; only He has loved perfectly, and His love grows in us as we walk with Him (Gal 5:22).
13:8 *Love never fails* It never collapses or comes to an end. God is love (1 John 4:8). The gifts Corinth was proud of are temporary. Teachers disagree on when tongues and prophecy end, in the first century or at Christ's return. Prophecy and knowledge "will be done away," while tongues "will cease"; some see meaning in the difference, and others do not. All agree the gifts are temporary and love is eternal.
13:9 *we know in part and we prophesy in part* Our knowledge of God is real but partial, like pieces of a puzzle. No one knows everything about God. Hold firmly to what He made plain and be gracious where good believers disagree.
13:10 *when the perfect comes* Perfect means complete, the end goal. Three main views: Christ's return and the eternal state, when we see Him face to face (13:12), so the gifts continue until then; the completed New Testament, so prophecy and tongues ended with the last book; or the maturity of the church, sometimes linked to the end of the apostolic age. Each has thoughtful supporters.
13:11 *when I became a man, I did away with the things of the child* Our present state with its partial gifts is like childhood compared to what is coming. There is a gentle rebuke too: the Corinthians were acting like children over who had the best gift (3:1; 14:20). Love is the mark of maturity.
13:12 *now we see through a mirror in an enigma, but then face to face* Corinth was known for bronze work, and metal mirrors gave a dim image. Enigma is a riddle. We see God truly in His Word but not fully. One day we will see Him as He is (1 John 3:2). Many see "face to face" as pointing to Christ's return. Either way, our best day of knowing God is still ahead.
13:13 *but the greatest of these is love* Faith trusts God, hope looks to His promises, love gives itself for others. One day faith becomes sight and hope is fulfilled, but love goes on forever. It is God's own nature (1 John 4:16) and the greatest command (Matt 22:37-40). Would people describe you as gifted, or as loving?

1 CORINTHIANS 14

Prophecy and Tongues

1 Pursue love, and earnestly desire spiritual ***gifts***, but especially that you may prophesy. **2** For the one who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men, but to God; for no one hears ***him***, but in ***the*** spirit he speaks mysteries. **3** But the one who prophesies speaks to men edification and exhortation and consolation. **4** The one who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but the one who prophesies edifies ***the*** church. **5** Now I want you all to speak in tongues, but rather that you may prophesy; for greater ***is*** the one who prophesies than the one who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets, so that the church may receive edification. **6** But now, brothers, if I come to you speaking in tongues, what will I profit you, unless I speak to you either in revelation, or in knowledge, or in prophecy, or in teaching? **7** Yet ***even*** lifeless things giving a sound, whether flute or harp, if they do not give a distinction in the tones, how will it be known what is piped or what is harped? **8** For indeed, if a trumpet gives an indistinct sound, who will prepare himself for battle? **9** So also you, unless you give speech that is clear through the tongue, how will what is spoken be known? For you will be speaking into ***the*** air. **10** There are, it may be, so many kinds of sounds in ***the*** world, and none ***of them is*** without sound. **11** If then I do not know the power of the sound, I will be a foreigner to the one who speaks, and the one who speaks ***will be*** a foreigner to me. **12** So also you, since you are zealous for spiritual ***gifts***, seek that you may abound for the edification of the church. **13** Therefore let the one who speaks in a tongue pray that he may interpret. **14** For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful. **15** What then is it? I will pray with the spirit, but I will also pray with the mind; I will sing praise with the spirit, but I will also sing praise with the mind. **16** Otherwise, if you bless with the spirit, how will the one who fills the place of the uninstructed say the "Amen" at your thanksgiving, since he does not know what you say? **17** For you indeed give thanks well, but the other is not edified. **18** I thank my God, speaking in tongues more than you all; **19** but in ***the*** church I want to speak five words through my mind, so that I may instruct others also, rather than ten thousand words in a tongue. **20** Brothers, do not be children in ***your*** thinking; but in evil be infants, and in ***your*** thinking be mature. **21** In the law it has been written, "By other tongues and by other lips I will speak to this people, and not

14:1 1 Cor 12:1,31; Heb 12:14; Prov 15:9
14:2 1 Cor 13:2; Acts 10:46; Acts 19:6
14:3 Eph 6:22; 1 Tim 4:13; 2 Tim 4:2
14:5 1 Cor 12:10,30; 1 Cor 12:28-30; 1 Cor 13:4
14:6 Eph 1:17; 1 Cor 10:33; 1 Cor 12:7
14:7 1 Cor 13:1; Num 10:2-10; Matt 11:17
14:8 Num 10:9; Josh 6:4-20; Judg 7:16-18
14:9 1 Cor 9:26
14:11 Ezek 33:3; Acts 28:2,4; 1 Cor 14:21
14:12 1 Cor 14:1; 1 Cor 12:7,31; Titus 2:14
14:13 1 Cor 14:27,28; 1 Cor 12:10,30; Mark 11:24
14:14 1 Cor 14:2,15,16,19
14:15 Col 3:16; Eph 6:18; John 4:23,24
14:16 1 Chr 16:36; Ps 106:48; Deut 27:15
14:17 1 Cor 14:4,6
14:18 1 Cor 1:4-6; 1 Cor 4:7
14:19 1 Cor 14:4,21,22
14:20 Rom 16:19; 1 Pet 2:2; Ps 119:99
14:21 Isa 28:11-12; Ezek 33:3; John 10:34

14:1 *Pursue love, and earnestly desire spiritual gifts* Ties chapters 12 to 14 together. Pursue means chase. Love is the goal, and love wants the gifts that help others most, especially prophecy, because it builds up the whole church.
14:2 *the one who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men, but to God* "Hears" means understands. People hear sounds but cannot follow the meaning, so what is said stays hidden. Paul does not call it evil but limited. In a church meeting the goal is to build up others too.
14:3 *edification and exhortation and consolation* Prophecy speaks to people in words they understand. Edification is building up like a house, exhortation urges people to act, consolation comforts the hurting. A good test for any message spoken in church today.
14:4 *edifies himself, but the one who prophesies edifies the church* Building yourself up is good, but in the meeting the goal is the whole body. The question is not what I get out of church but how I can help someone else. Love "does not seek its own things" (13:5).
14:5 *I want you all to speak in tongues, but rather that you may prophesy* Some read it as a real wish, others as a way of speaking like 7:7, since not all would (12:30). Tongues with interpretation can build up the church as prophecy does. The problem is tongues no one understands.
14:6 *what will I profit you* Paul, the most gifted man in the church, knew only clear words build up hearers: revelation, knowledge, prophecy or teaching. Before you share something in church, ask whether others can understand it and be helped.
14:8 *if a trumpet gives an indistinct sound, who will prepare himself for battle?* The army trumpet gave signals to attack or retreat. The church is in a spiritual battle (Eph 6:12) and needs clear signals from God's Word. A vague sermon is a trumpet with an uncertain sound.
14:9 *you will be speaking into the air* Here tongue means the one in your mouth. Words that reach no one accomplish nothing, like a boxer beating the air (9:26).
14:11 *I will be a foreigner to the one who speaks* Barbaros was the Greeks' word for anyone who did not speak Greek; other languages sounded like bar bar bar to them. Uninterpreted tongues made fellow believers feel like strangers.
14:12 *seek that you may abound for the edification of the church* Paul does not crush their zeal; he redirects it. The test of maturity is not how many or how dramatic your gifts are, but how much you build up others.
14:13 *pray that he may interpret* Paul does not shut down tongues but asks that the gift be used to build up the body. A believer can pray for a gift that would serve the church better.
14:14 *my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful* Some take "my spirit" as his own inner spirit, others as the Spirit's gift working through him. Either way the mind is left out, and God wants to be worshiped with the mind too (Matt 22:37).
14:15 *I will pray with the spirit, but I will also pray with the mind* Both, not one or the other. Some churches lean toward feeling with little thought, others toward thinking with little warmth. Paul wants both. God wants all of us.
14:16 *say the "Amen" at your thanksgiving* The uninstructed are likely visitors or believers without the gift. Amen is Hebrew for so be it, said aloud to agree with a prayer. A prayer in church is meant to be shared, one others can agree with and be built up by.
14:18 *speaking in tongues more than you all* Paul was not against tongues because he lacked the gift. He had it more than any of them and thanked God for it, so his counsel carries great weight.
14:19 *five words through my mind* Ten thousand was the largest number the Greeks had a single word for. A few words of clear teaching outweigh endless uninterpreted tongues. Clarity serves love.
14:20 *in evil be infants, and in your thinking be mature* The Corinthians acted like children fascinated by noise and show. Be like children in trust and humility (Matt 18:3), knowing as little of evil as possible, but grown up in understanding.
14:21 *By other tongues and by other lips I will speak to this people* From Isaiah 28:11-12; "the law" here means the Old Testament as a whole. Israel refused God's prophets, so God warned He would speak through Assyrian invaders whose language they could not understand, a sign of judgment on unbelief.

even so will they listen to Me, says ***the*** Lord." **22** So then tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe, but to the unbelievers; but prophecy ***is*** not to the unbelievers, but to those who believe. **23** Therefore if the whole church comes together in the same place and all speak in tongues, and uninstructed ***men*** or unbelievers come in, will they not say that you are mad? **24** But if all prophesy, and some unbeliever or uninstructed ***man*** comes in, he is convicted by all, he is examined by all; **25** and thus the secrets of his heart become manifest; and thus, having fallen on ***his*** face, he will worship God, declaring that God is truly among you.

Order in Worship

26 What then is it, brothers? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification. **27** If anyone speaks in a tongue, ***let it be*** by two, or at the most three, and in turn; and let one interpret. **28** But if there is no interpreter, let him be silent in ***the*** church; and let him speak to himself and to God. **29** And let two or three prophets speak, and let the others discern. **30** But if ***something*** is revealed to another who is sitting ***by***, let the first be silent. **31** For you are all able to prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all may be exhorted. **32** And ***the*** spirits of prophets are subject to prophets; **33** for God is not ***a God*** of disorder but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints. **34** Let your women be silent in the churches; for it has not been permitted to them to speak, but ***they are*** to be subject, as the law also says. **35** And if they want to learn anything, let them ask ***their*** own husbands at home; for it is shameful for women to speak in ***the*** church. **36** Or did the word of God go out from you? Or did it come to you only? **37** If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are commandments of the Lord. **38** But if anyone is ignorant, let him be ignorant. **39** So, brothers, earnestly desire to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues. **40** Let all things be done properly and in order.

1 CORINTHIANS 15

The Gospel and the Risen Christ

1 Now I make known to you, brothers, the gospel which I

14:22 Mark 16:17; Acts 2:6-12,32-36; 1 Tim 1:9
14:23 Hos 9:7; Ezek 33:3; Acts 2:13
14:24 Heb 4:12,13; Acts 2:37; 1 Cor 2:15
14:25 Isa 45:14; Zech 8:23; Gen 44:14
14:26 Rom 14:19; 1 Cor 12:7; 1 Thess 5:11
14:29 1 Cor 12:10; 1 Thess 5:19-21; 1 John 4:1-3
14:30 1 Thess 5:19,20; 1 Cor 14:6,26; Job 32:11,15-20
14:31 1 Cor 14:3,19,35; Prov 1:5; Prov 9:9
14:32 1 Sam 10:10; 1 Sam 19:19; 1 Sam 10:11
14:33 James 3:17,18; 1 Cor 7:15; 2 Thess 3:16
14:34 Esth 1:18; Esth 1:19; Esth 1:20
14:35 Eph 5:25-27; 1 Pet 3:7; 1 Cor 11:6,14
14:36 Isa 2:3; Mic 4:1,2; Zech 14:8
14:37 1 John 4:6; 2 Cor 10:7,12; 1 Cor 8:2
14:38 Hos 4:17; Matt 7:6; Matt 15:14
14:39 1 Cor 12:31; 1 Cor 14:1,3,5,24,25; 1 Thess 5:20
14:40 Col 2:5; Titus 1:5; 1 Cor 14:26-33
15:1 Rom 5:2; Gal 1:6-12; 2 Cor 1:24

14:22 *tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe, but to the unbelievers* In Isaiah the sign was judgment on those who refused to hear. At Pentecost tongues were a sign to unbelieving Jews in Jerusalem (Acts 2:5-12). Verses 22-25 are hard to fit together. Most take Paul to mean uninterpreted tongues confirm unbelievers in unbelief, while prophecy builds up believers and can convict unbelievers too.

14:23 *will they not say that you are mad?* A visitor hears everyone speaking languages he cannot understand and thinks they have lost their minds. Our worship should help outsiders see Christ, not drive them away.

14:25 *declaring that God is truly among you* Clear truth convicts the visitor, shows him his sin and exposes his heart (Heb 4:12). He falls down and worships. When God's Word is spoken clearly, the Spirit uses it to draw people to Christ.

14:26 *Let all things be done for edification* Many took part: a psalm, a teaching, a tongue, a revelation. Worship is not a show by a few while everyone watches. Each member has something to give (12:7), and every part should build up the church.

14:27 *by two, or at the most three, and in turn; and let one interpret* Clear limits, one at a time, with interpretation. Speaking in tongues is under the speaker's control. The Spirit of God does not produce chaos.

14:28 *let him be silent in the church; and let him speak to himself and to God* With no interpreter, he can pray quietly but not address the church. If using a gift a certain way would not help others, love holds it back.

14:29 *let two or three prophets speak, and let the others discern* Prophecy was never accepted blindly but tested against the apostles' teaching (1 Thess 5:20-21; 1 John 4:1). Today we test every message by the written Word. No one who claims to speak for God is above being checked by Scripture.

14:31 *so that all may learn and all may be exhorted* No one should hog the floor. Paul's rules are not meant to stifle the Spirit but to make room for Him to speak through many in an orderly way.

14:32 *the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets* In Corinth's pagan religions a god was thought to take over a person against his will. The Holy Spirit does not work that way. Self-control is His fruit (Gal 5:23). Anyone who says the Spirit made him do it misunderstands Him.

14:33 *God is not a God of disorder but of peace* Worship should reflect God's character, seen in the order of creation. The Corinthians were part of a larger family of churches. The Greek allows "as in all the churches of the saints" to end verse 33 or begin verse 34.

14:34 *Let your women be silent in the churches* Paul plainly tells women to be silent in the meetings and in submission, "as the law also says," likely the order of creation (11:8-9). Yet 11:5 assumes women prayed and prophesied. Main readings: complete silence in the meeting; no part in weighing prophecies (14:29), which would place a woman in authority over the men's teaching; stopping disruptive questions (14:35); or a local Corinthian problem.

14:35 *let them ask their own husbands at home* Paul assumes women want to learn and encourages it, uncommon in that world. A few scholars, noting some copies place verses 34-35 after verse 40, think they were added later, but they are in every known Greek copy, and we take them as Paul's words. All agree men and women are equal before God (Gal 3:28), women prayed and prophesied (11:5; Acts 21:9), and meetings should be orderly. Study it with 1 Timothy 2:11-15.

14:36 *did the word of God go out from you?* The gospel came to Corinth from Jerusalem through the apostles. They acted as if they could set their own rules. No church may set aside Scripture because its culture thinks differently.

14:37 *the things which I write to you are commandments of the Lord* A truly spiritual person recognizes the apostles' authority. The Spirit who inspired Scripture never contradicts it, so a claimed word from God that does is not from Him.

14:38 *let him be ignorant* Paul will argue no further with one who refuses. Many older copies read that he is not recognized; the SLB follows the Received Text. Rejecting God's Word is a choice with consequences.

14:39 *earnestly desire to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues* Those who believe the sign gifts continue take this as a command for today. Those who believe they ended take it as a command for the church while they were active. Both agree the gifts were not worthless in Paul's day, and all must be done in love and order.

14:40 *Let all things be done properly and in order* Properly means fitting and decent. In order is a military word for soldiers in their ranks. Order is not the opposite of the Spirit but His work, for He is the Spirit of the God of peace.

15:1 *the gospel which I preached to you* Gospel means good news. Paul brings nothing new but goes back to the foundation, because their doubts about the resurrection struck at its heart. The gospel is not only how we begin the Christian life. It is the ground "in which you also have stood."

preached to you, which you also received, in which you also have stood, **2** through which you also are being saved, in what word I preached ***it*** to you, if you hold ***it*** fast, unless you believed in vain. **3** For I delivered to you among ***the*** first ***things*** what I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, **4** and that He was buried, and that He has been raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, **5** and that He appeared to Cephas (Kephas), then to the twelve. **6** After that He appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, of whom the greater part remain until now, but some also have fallen asleep. **7** After that He appeared to James (Iakobos), then to all the apostles. **8** And last of all, as to the untimely birth, He appeared also to me. **9** For I am the least of the apostles, who am not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. **10** But by ***the*** grace of God I am what I am, and His grace which ***was*** toward me did not become empty, but I toiled more abundantly than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God which ***was*** with me. **11** Whether then I or they, so we preach, and so you believed.

If Christ Is Not Raised

12 Now if Christ is preached, that He has been raised from ***the*** dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of ***the*** dead? **13** But if there is no resurrection of ***the*** dead, neither has Christ been raised. **14** And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching ***is*** empty, and your faith also ***is*** empty. **15** And we are also found ***to be*** false witnesses of God, because we testified against God that He raised the Christ, whom He did not raise if indeed then ***the*** dead are not raised. **16** For if ***the*** dead are not raised, neither has Christ been raised. **17** And if Christ has not been raised, your faith ***is*** futile; you are still in your sins. **18** Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. **19** If in this life we have hoped in Christ only, we are more pitiable than all men.

Christ the Firstfruits

20 But now Christ has been raised from ***the*** dead; He became ***the*** firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. **21** For since

15:2 Heb 3:6,14; 1 Cor 1:18,21; Rom 1:16
15:3 Isa 53:5-6; Ps 69:15; Ps 69:16
15:4 Hos 6:2; Ps 16:10; Gen 22:4
15:5 Mark 16:14; 1 Cor 1:12; Acts 10:41
15:6 Isa 59:21; Matt 28:10,16,17; Mark 16:7
15:7 Luke 24:50; Acts 1:2-12
15:8 1 Cor 9:1; Acts 26:16; Acts 9:3-5,17
15:9 Judg 6:15; Acts 8:3; 2 Cor 12:11
15:10 2 Cor 3:5; Gal 2:8; Phil 2:13
15:11 1 Cor 15:3,4; 1 Cor 2:2
15:12 Acts 26:8; 2 Thess 2:17
15:13 1 Thess 4:14; 1 Cor 15:20; John 11:25,26
15:14 James 2:20; 1 Cor 15:2,17; Ps 73:13
15:15 Acts 2:24,32; Exod 23:3; Job 13:7-10
15:17 Rom 4:25; 1 Pet 1:3,21; Heb 10:4-12
15:18 Rev 14:13; 1 Cor 15:6; 1 Thess 4:13,14
15:19 2 Tim 3:12; 1 Cor 6:3,4; 1 Pet 1:21
15:20 Lev 23:10; 1 Pet 1:3; 1 Cor 15:23
15:21 John 11:25; Rom 6:23; Rom 5:12-17

15:2 *if you hold it fast, unless you believed in vain* Salvation has a past, present and future (Eph 2:8; Rom 13:11). This does not mean we hang on by our own strength. True faith keeps holding to the gospel. Teachers differ on how warnings like this fit with believers' security, but all agree real faith continues. If there is no resurrection, believing was in vain (15:14-17).
15:3 *that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures* Of first importance, the center of the faith. He really died, and He died for our sins, in our place, taking the punishment we deserved. That is substitution. The Old Testament foretold it (Isa 53:5-6). The cross was God's plan from the beginning.
15:4 *He has been raised on the third day according to the Scriptures* The burial proves He really died (Matt 27:57-60). The tense means He was raised and remains raised. Jonah pictured the third day (Matt 12:40), and God's Holy One would not see decay (Ps 16:10; Acts 2:27-31). Some hear an echo of Hosea 6:2, but there Israel speaks of its own revival. I believe those words still belong to Israel and will come true when the nation returns to the Lord.
15:5 *He appeared to Cephas, then to the Twelve* Jesus appeared to Peter alone on the day He rose (Luke 24:34), a tender meeting after Peter's denial. The Twelve was the name for the apostles even with Judas gone (John 20:19-24). These were eyewitnesses still living who could be questioned.
15:6 *more than five hundred brothers at one time* Perhaps in Galilee (Matt 28:10, 16), though Scripture does not say. Writing about A.D. 55, Paul is saying most are still alive, so go ask them. A man does not invite people to check his story unless he is sure. For believers, death is "fallen asleep," because they will wake.
15:7 *He appeared to James* The brother of Jesus, who did not believe during His ministry (John 7:5) but became a leader in Jerusalem (Acts 15:13; Gal 1:19) and wrote the letter of James. What else would convince a man that his own brother was the Son of God? "All the apostles" may cover the forty days before the ascension (Acts 1:3-9).
15:8 *as to the untimely birth, He appeared also to me* Paul saw the risen Lord on the Damascus road after the ascension (Acts 9:3-6). Untimely birth can mean a baby born too early. Paul may mean he was born into the apostles abruptly, after the others, or he may be using a word his enemies called him.
15:9 *because I persecuted the church of God* Paul hunted believers and agreed to their deaths (Acts 8:3; 22:4; 26:10). He did not live in guilt, knowing he was forgiven, but he never lost the wonder of grace (1 Tim 1:15).
15:10 *by the grace of God I am what I am* Grace is God's kindness to those who deserve the opposite. It did not make Paul lazy; he worked harder than anyone. Grace and effort are not enemies. We work hard and give God the credit (Phil 2:12-13).
15:11 *so we preach, and so you believed* The Corinthians split over Paul, Apollos and Peter (1:12), but all preached the same death and resurrection. Truth does not change. We believe today the same gospel the apostles preached.
15:12 *how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?* Many Greeks thought the body worthless and only the soul lived on; others thought nothing survived death; some may have said the resurrection was spiritual and past (2 Tim 2:18). You cannot believe Christ rose and say the dead cannot rise.
15:14 *then our preaching is empty, and your faith also is empty* Paul walks through what follows if Jesus stayed in the grave. Empty means hollow. Christianity is not just a set of morals. It stands or falls on a historical event.
15:15 *we are also found to be false witnesses of God* The apostles would be liars about God Himself. People may die for a lie they believe is true, but the apostles were in a position to know. Men do not die for what they know is a lie.
15:17 *you are still in your sins* The resurrection proves God accepted Christ's death as payment for sin. He was raised because of our justification (Rom 4:25), our being declared righteous before God. If Jesus is still dead, we are still guilty. Everything depends on the empty tomb.
15:18 *those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished* No reunion, and every Christian funeral a hopeless goodbye. But we grieve, not as those who have no hope (1 Thess 4:13).
15:19 *we are more pitiable than all men* The apostles gave up homes, safety and often their lives. If there were no resurrection they were fools. Because our hope reaches beyond the grave, believers can suffer and even die with joy.
15:20 *But now Christ has been raised from the dead* After seven terrible ifs, two great words: but now. The firstfruits were the first part of the harvest brought to God, a promise the rest was coming (Lev 23:10-11). Many point out that Jesus rose on the day the firstfruits were waved. His resurrection is God's promise that all who belong to Him will be raised.

through a man ***came*** death, through a man also ***came the*** resurrection of ***the*** dead. **22** For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. **23** But each in his own order: Christ ***the*** firstfruits, after that those of Christ at His coming, **24** then the end, when He delivers up the kingdom to the God and Father, when He brings to nothing all rule and all authority and power. **25** For He must reign until He has put all the enemies under His feet. **26** ***The*** last enemy is brought to nothing: death. **27** For He put all things in subjection under His feet. But when He says that all things have been put in subjection, ***it is*** evident that the ***One*** who put all things in subjection to Him ***is*** excepted. **28** And when all things have been put in subjection to Him, then the Son Himself also will be put in subjection to the ***One*** who put all things in subjection to Him, so that God may be all things in all.

29 Otherwise, what will those do who are baptized for the dead, if ***the*** dead are not raised at all? Why then are they baptized for the dead? **30** Why are we also in danger every hour? **31** I die every day, by your boasting which I have in Christ Jesus (Iesous) our Lord. **32** If according to man I fought wild beasts in Ephesus (Ephesos), what ***is*** the profit to me? If ***the*** dead are not raised, let us eat and let us drink, for tomorrow we die. **33** Do not be misled: bad associations corrupt good morals. **34** Sober up righteously, and do not sin; for some have ignorance of God. I say to your shame.

The Resurrection Body

35 But someone will say, "How are the dead raised? And with what kind of body do they come?" **36** Fool! What you yourself sow is not made alive unless it dies. **37** And what you sow, you do not sow the body that will be, but bare grain, if it should happen ***to be*** of wheat or of some one of the rest. **38** But God gives it a body just as He willed, and to each of the seeds its own body. **39** Not all flesh ***is*** the same flesh, but ***there is*** one flesh of men, and another flesh of beasts, and another of fish, and another of birds. **40** And ***there are*** heavenly bodies and earthly bodies; but the glory of the heavenly ***is*** one, and the ***glory*** of the earthly ***is*** another. **41** ***There is*** one glory of ***the*** sun, and another glory of ***the*** moon, and another glory of ***the*** stars; for star differs from star in glory. **42** So also ***is*** the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption;

15:22 Gen 2:17; Gen 5:5; Rom 5:12-21
15:23 1 Cor 15:20; Isa 26:19; 1 Thess 4:15-17
15:24 Dan 7:14,27; Matt 28:18; Isa 9:7
15:25 Ps 110:1; Matt 22:44; Ps 2:6-10
15:26 2 Tim 1:10; Rev 20:14; Rev 21:4
15:27 Ps 8:6; Ps 18:39; Matt 28:18
15:28 Phil 3:21; 1 Cor 3:23; 1 Cor 11:3
15:29 1 Cor 15:16,32; Rom 6:3,4; Matt 20:22
15:30 Rom 8:36-39; 2 Cor 4:7-12; 2 Cor 6:9
15:31 Rom 8:36; 1 Thess 2:19; 2 Cor 4:10,11
15:32 Isa 22:13; Isa 56:12; Luke 12:19
15:33 Prov 13:20; Matt 24:4,11,24; 1 Cor 5:6
15:34 Rom 13:11; 1 Cor 6:5; John 5:14
15:35 Ps 73:11; Ezek 37:3,11; Job 11:12
15:36 John 12:24; Luke 12:20; Luke 24:25
15:38 1 Cor 3:7; Gen 1:11,12; Ps 104:14
15:39 Gen 1:20-26
15:41 Gen 1:14; Deut 4:19; Job 31:26
15:42 Dan 12:3; Matt 13:43; Rom 8:21

15:22 *as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive* Death came through Adam (Gen 2:17; 3:19), resurrection through Christ (Rom 5:12-21). Paul is not saying every person will be saved. All who belong to Christ will be raised to life with Him. Unbelievers will also be raised, but to judgment (John 5:28-29).

15:23 *after that those of Christ at His coming* Order was used for ranks of soldiers. Christ first, then His people. I believe this coming has two stages. Christ comes for His church before the seven-year Tribulation, raising the dead in Christ and changing living believers (15:51-52; 1 Thess 4:16-17). At the end of the Tribulation He returns visibly, and believers who died in that time are raised to reign with Him (Rev 20:4-6). Those who see one event read this as one resurrection at the end.

15:24 *then the end, when He delivers up the kingdom to the God and Father* Paul does not say how long between His coming and the end. Revelation 20 tells of Christ's thousand-year reign on earth, at the close of which every enemy is put down. This does not mean Christ stops ruling (Luke 1:33). His work of conquest is finished, and the kingdom passes into the eternal state.

15:25 *He must reign until He has put all the enemies under His feet* From Psalm 110:1. As I read Scripture, this reign reaches its full form in the thousand-year kingdom, when Christ rules on earth after He returns (Rev 20:1-6; Zech 14:9). Others see His present reign from heaven. Either way, every enemy will be under His feet.

15:26 *The last enemy is brought to nothing: death* Death was not part of God's good creation. It came through sin (Rom 5:12). Death and Hades will be thrown into the lake of fire (Rev 20:14), and there will be no more death (Rev 21:4).

15:27 *He put all things in subjection under His feet* From Psalm 8:6. Man lost much of his rule over creation through sin, and Jesus, the perfect Man, fulfills it (Heb 2:6-9). The Father, who does the subjecting, is not under the Son.

15:28 *so that God may be all things in all* The Son is fully God (John 1:1; Col 2:9). This speaks of His role. As He willingly obeyed the Father on earth (John 6:38), He will willingly honor the Father when His work is done (11:3). History ends with no rival, no rebellion, no sin.

15:29 *who are baptized for the dead* One of the hardest verses in the Bible. Main views: some in Corinth were baptized on behalf of dead believers, which Paul mentions ("those," not "we") without approving; people were baptized because of the testimony of believers who died; new believers filled the ranks of the dead like soldiers; or baptism with a view to one's own body's resurrection. No other Scripture teaches baptism for the dead, and no one can believe for someone else (Eph 2:8-9).

15:31 *I die every day* Paul faced death daily: beaten, stoned, shipwrecked, hunted (2 Cor 11:23-27). "By your boasting" is a strong oath: as surely as I boast in you. A man does not live like that for a lie.

15:32 *I fought wild beasts in Ephesus* Paul wrote from Ephesus (16:8). Some think he faced animals in the arena, but he was a Roman citizen and Acts does not mention it, so most see a figure for violent enemies (Acts 19:23-41). "Let us eat and let us drink" quotes Isaiah 22:13, where Jerusalem partied instead of repenting. What we believe about the future shapes how we live now.

15:33 *bad associations corrupt good morals* A well-known line from the Greek poet Menander. Wrong ideas lead to wrong living. This does not mean avoiding unbelievers (5:10), but being careful who shapes our beliefs and habits.

15:34 *Sober up righteously, and do not sin* Wake up like someone coming out of drunkenness. "Ignorance of God" may mean some in the church who did not truly know Him, or unbelievers around them whom the church had failed to reach. Either way, it was shameful.

15:35 *with what kind of body do they come?* How can a body that rotted or burned be raised? Honest questions people still ask. God already shows the answer every spring.

15:36 *What you yourself sow is not made alive unless it dies* A seed must be buried and die before it grows (John 12:24). The answer was right in front of them. The death of a believer's body is not the end. It is planting.

15:38 *God gives it a body just as He willed* You plant a bare seed, not a full stalk. A wheat seed becomes wheat, not an oak. Our resurrection bodies will be connected to the bodies we have now, yet far greater.

15:41 *star differs from star in glory* God made fish for water and birds for sky, and sun, moon and stars each with its own glory. He is not limited to one kind of body. The God who made the stars can raise the dead.

15:42 *It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption* The first of four contrasts. Our bodies age, sicken and decay, and a believer's burial is a sowing. The raised body will never grow old, get sick or die again.

it is raised in incorruption. **43** It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. **44** It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. **45** So also it has been written, "The first man, Adam, became a living soul"; the last Adam ***became*** a life-giving spirit. **46** However, the spiritual ***is*** not first, but the natural, after that the spiritual. **47** The first man ***is*** from ***the*** earth, made of dust; the second man ***is*** the Lord from heaven. **48** As ***is*** the ***one*** made of dust, such also ***are*** those made of dust; and as ***is*** the heavenly ***One***, such also ***are*** the heavenly ***ones***. **49** And just as we have borne the image of the ***one*** made of dust, we will also bear the image of the heavenly ***One***.

Victory Over Death

50 Now this I say, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit ***the*** kingdom of God, nor does corruption inherit incorruption. **51** Look, I tell you a mystery: we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, **52** in an instant, in ***the*** blink of an eye, at the last trumpet; for ***the*** trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we will be changed. **53** For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. **54** And when this corruptible puts on incorruption, and this mortal puts on immortality, then the word that has been written will come to pass: "Death has been swallowed up in victory." **55** "Where, O death, ***is*** your sting? Where, O Hades, ***is*** your victory?" **56** Now the sting of death ***is*** sin, and the power of sin ***is*** the law. **57** But thanks ***be*** to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. **58** Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not empty in ***the*** Lord.

1 CORINTHIANS 16

The Collection for the Saints

1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I directed the churches of Galatia, so you also do. **2** On every first ***day*** of ***the*** week let each of you put aside by himself, storing up whatever he may be prospered, so that when I come there may not be collections then. **3** And when I arrive, whomever

15:43 Matt 22:29,30; Mark 12:24,25; Phil 3:10
15:44 Luke 24:31; John 20:19,26
15:45 Gen 2:7; Job 33:4; Rom 8:2,10,11
15:46 Rom 6:6; Eph 4:22-24; Col 3:9,10
15:47 Gen 2:7; Gen 3:19; Ps 10:18
15:48 Phil 3:20,21; 1 Cor 15:21,22; Gen 5:3
15:49 Gen 5:3; Rom 8:29; Matt 13:43
15:50 Matt 16:17; Gal 5:16; Eph 4:17
15:51 Phil 3:21; 1 Thess 4:14-17; 1 Cor 2:7
15:52 Matt 24:31; John 5:25; Isa 27:13
15:53 2 Cor 5:2-4; 1 John 3:2; Rom 13:12-14
15:54 Isa 25:8; 2 Sam 17:16; Isa 59:21
15:55 Hos 13:14; Ps 89:48; Ps 49:8-15
15:56 Rom 4:15; Rom 7:5-13; Gal 3:10-13
15:57 2 Cor 2:14; Rom 8:37; 1 John 5:4,5
15:58 Gal 6:9; 2 Chr 15:7; Heb 6:10
16:1 Acts 24:17; Rom 15:25,26; 2 Cor 8:1-9
16:2 Acts 20:7; Rev 1:10; 2 Cor 9:3-5
16:3 1 Cor 4:19-21; 1 Cor 11:34; Acts 6:1-6

15:43 *It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power* Death is a humbling sight, but the raised body will share the glory of Jesus' body (Phil 3:21). The disabled will walk. The weak will be strong.
15:44 *it is raised a spiritual body* Not a body made of spirit like a ghost. Jesus' risen body could be touched, and He ate (Luke 24:39-43). A real body, ruled and filled by the Holy Spirit and fit for eternity.
15:45 *the last Adam became a life-giving spirit* Paul quotes Genesis 2:7. Adam headed the old race, and through him came death. Jesus heads a new humanity, and through Him comes life. Adam received life. Jesus gives it (John 5:21).
15:46 *the spiritual is not first, but the natural* Some in Corinth may have thought they were already fully spiritual. The spiritual body comes later. Our salvation is not complete until our bodies are raised (Rom 8:23).
15:47 *the second man is the Lord from heaven* Adam came from dust and returned to dust (Gen 2:7; 3:19). Jesus came from heaven and begins a new humanity. The Received Text the SLB follows has "the Lord" here; many older copies read only "from heaven."
15:49 *we will also bear the image of the heavenly One* Now we look like Adam: we tire, sicken and die. One day we will have bodies like His glorious body (Rom 8:29; 1 John 3:2).
15:50 *flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God* Our present mortal nature cannot enter God's eternal kingdom as it is. The body is not bad; God made it. But it is corrupted by sin and death, so we must be changed.
15:51 *we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed* A mystery is a truth God kept hidden and has now revealed (Rom 16:25). Some believers will be alive when Christ comes for His church, and all, living and dead, will be changed. This is the rapture, from the Latin word for being caught up in 1 Thessalonians 4:17. I believe it takes place before the seven-year Tribulation (John 14:1-3; 1 Thess 5:9). The Tribulation follows, and then Christ returns visibly to the earth at its end.
15:52 *in an instant, in the blink of an eye, at the last trumpet* Instant is atomos, from which we get atom, a moment too small to cut. This is the trumpet of God in 1 Thessalonians 4:16 that calls the church home, not the seventh trumpet of judgment in Revelation 11:15. A trumpet called soldiers to break camp, and last can mean the final call for the church in this age. Some link it to Matthew 24:31 or Revelation 11 and place the rapture later, but this passage gives a sudden change with no signs.
15:53 *this mortal must put on immortality* Like putting on clothes. "This" body that dies is the one changed and raised. God transforms our bodies rather than making new ones from nothing.
15:54 *Death has been swallowed up in victory* From Isaiah 25:8. Death has swallowed every generation since Adam. At the resurrection death itself is swallowed up. Jesus won this when He rose, and that day completes it for all who belong to Him.
15:55 *Where, O death, is your sting?* From Hosea 13:14, a taunt at a defeated enemy. Death's stinger has been pulled. A bee without its stinger may buzz, but it cannot hurt you. The Received Text has "O Hades" in the second line; many older copies repeat death.
15:56 *the power of sin is the law* Death is sin's penalty (Rom 6:23). The Law is good, but it shows our sin and condemns us (Rom 7:7-11). It cannot save. It shows we need a Savior.
15:57 *thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ* Jesus paid for our sin, met the Law's demands and rose, defeating death. God gives the victory as a gift received by faith, and there is no other way. If you have not trusted Christ, you can trust Him today.
15:58 *your toil is not empty in the Lord* Because the resurrection is true, nothing done for Christ is wasted. Steadfast is settled; immovable is unshaken by false teaching or hard times. Every prayer, kindness and word of witness counts for eternity (Heb 6:10). Keep going.
16:1 *the collection for the saints* The poor believers in Jerusalem, some of whom may have lost work or family support when they came to Christ, after famine in Judea (Acts 11:27-30). The collection mattered greatly to Paul (Rom 15:25-27; 2 Cor 8-9). It let Gentile believers show love to the Jewish believers who first brought them the gospel, proof that they were one body.
16:2 *On every first day of the week* A pattern for giving: regular, on Sunday when the church gathered on the day Jesus rose (Acts 20:7); by "each of you," not only the wealthy; set aside on purpose; in proportion to what God has given. Teachers differ on whether the tithe is the pattern for believers today. Planned giving is better than pressured giving.
16:3 *these I will send to carry your gift to Jerusalem* Paul did not handle the money himself. Trusted men chosen by the church carried it, to avoid even the appearance of wrong (2 Cor 8:20-21). Church money should be handled by more than one trusted person, with openness. "Gift" is charis, grace. Giving is an act of grace.

you approve through letters, these I will send to carry your gift to Jerusalem (Hierousalem). **4** And if it is fitting for me also to go, they will go with me.

Plans and Requests

5 Now I will come to you when I pass through Macedonia (Makedonia), for I am passing through Macedonia; **6** and with you perhaps I will stay, or even spend the winter, so that you may send me forward wherever I go. **7** For I do not want to see you now in passing; but I hope to remain some time with you, if the Lord permits. **8** But I will remain in Ephesus (Ephesos) until Pentecost; **9** for a great and effective door has opened to me, and many ***are*** opposing. **10** Now if Timothy (Timotheos) comes, see that he is with you without fear; for he works the work of ***the*** Lord, as I also ***do***. **11** Therefore let no one despise him. But send him forward in peace, so that he may come to me; for I am expecting him with the brothers. **12** Now concerning Apollos the brother, I exhorted him much that he come to you with the brothers, and ***there*** was not at all a will that he come now; but he will come when he has opportunity.

Final Words and Greetings

13 Watch, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strengthened. **14** Let everything of yours be done in love. **15** Now I exhort you, brothers (you know the household of Stephanas, that it is ***the*** firstfruits of Achaia, and they have appointed themselves for service to the saints), **16** that you also be subject to such ***ones***, and to everyone who works together and toils. **17** And I rejoice at the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus (Phourtounatos) and Achaicus (Achaikos), because these filled up your lack; **18** for they refreshed my spirit and yours. Therefore recognize such ***ones***. **19** The churches of Asia greet you. Aquila (Akylas) and Priscilla (Priskilla) greet you heartily in ***the*** Lord, with the church at their house. **20** All the brothers greet you. Greet one another with a holy kiss. **21** The greeting of Paul (Paulos) ***is*** with my hand. **22** If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus (Iesous) Christ, let him be accursed. Maran atha. **23** The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ ***be*** with you. **24** My love ***be*** with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.

16:4 Rom 15:25; 2 Cor 8:4,19
16:5 Acts 19:21; Acts 20:1-3; 2 Cor 1:15-17
16:6 Acts 15:3; Rom 15:24; Acts 27:12
16:7 Acts 18:21; 1 Cor 4:19; Prov 19:21
16:8 Acts 2:1; 1 Cor 15:32; Exod 23:16
16:9 Acts 14:27; 2 Cor 2:12; Col 4:3
16:10 1 Cor 15:58; 1 Cor 4:17; 1 Thess 3:2
16:11 1 Tim 4:12; Acts 15:33; Titus 2:15
16:12 1 Cor 1:12; 1 Cor 3:5,22; Acts 18:24-28
16:13 Eph 6:10; Eph 6:13-17; Gal 5:1
16:14 Gal 5:13,14,22; John 13:34,35; 1 Cor 8:1
16:15 1 Cor 1:16; Rom 16:5; 1 Pet 4:10
16:16 1 Thess 5:12; Heb 13:17; Eph 5:21
16:17 2 Cor 11:9; Phil 2:30; Phlm 1:13
16:18 1 Thess 5:12; Rom 15:32; Prov 25:13,25
16:19 Acts 18:2,18,26; Acts 19:10; 1 Pet 1:1
16:20 Rom 16:16,21,23; Phil 4:22; Phlm 1:23,24
16:21 Gal 6:11; Col 4:18; 2 Thess 3:17
16:22 Rom 9:3; 1 John 4:19; Eph 6:24
16:23 Rom 16:20,24
16:24 1 Cor 16:14; 1 Cor 4:14,15; 2 Cor 11:11

16:4 *they will go with me* Paul did go in the end (Acts 20-21; Rom 15:25), and the trip led to his arrest. He put the church's trust and the gospel's good name ahead of his own role.
16:5 *when I pass through Macedonia* Macedonia was northern Greece, with Philippi, Thessalonica and Berea. Corinth was in Achaia to the south. Paul made the trip (Acts 20:1-3), though plans changed, and some criticized him for it (2 Cor 1:15-17).
16:6 *or even spend the winter* Sea travel stopped in winter because of storms. To "send me forward" was to supply him for the next journey. Paul took no support for his preaching in Corinth (9:15) but let them help him on his way, part of the church's work (3 John 6-8).
16:7 *if the Lord permits* Paul wanted time to deal with the problems in person (11:34), and he held his plans loosely (James 4:13-15). "If the Lord wills" is not a phrase to tack on but an attitude of trust.
16:8 *I will remain in Ephesus until Pentecost* Paul wrote from Ephesus, probably in spring. Pentecost was the feast fifty days after Passover. He spent about three years there (Acts 20:31).
16:9 *a great and effective door has opened to me, and many are opposing* All Asia heard the word (Acts 19:10), and enemies came with the open door. Opposition is not always a sign we are in the wrong place. Sometimes it means God is at work. Paul stayed because of the door.
16:10 *see that he is with you without fear* Timothy may have been timid (2 Tim 1:7), and the Corinthians could be a hard group. He did the same work as Paul and deserved the same respect. Churches should encourage young leaders, not make them afraid.
16:11 *let no one despise him* Paul later told Timothy not to let anyone despise his youth (1 Tim 4:12). Do you encourage the younger believers and leaders in your church, or dismiss them?
16:12 *Now concerning Apollos the brother* Some had made Apollos head of a party (1:12; Acts 18:24-28). He did not want to go then, perhaps to avoid stirring that spirit. Paul calls him "the brother." There was no rivalry between them (3:5-9). The divisions were the church's doing.
16:13 *Watch, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strengthened* Four commands like a commander's orders. Watch like a guard for false teaching and temptation. Hold your ground on the gospel and the resurrection (15:1, 58). Act like men means be brave and mature, a call to the whole church. Be strong in the Lord's power (Eph 6:10).
16:14 *Let everything of yours be done in love* This balances the strong commands and sums up the letter. Divisions, lawsuits, pride in knowledge and gifts, and the Lord's Supper problems all came down to a lack of love. Is there an area where you are strong but not loving?
16:15 *the firstfruits of Achaia* Stephanas' household was among the first believers in Achaia, baptized by Paul (1:16). They appointed themselves to serve. No one forced them. Leadership in the church is earned by service, not talent or social position, and quiet servants deserve honor (16:16).
16:17 *Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus* They traveled from Corinth to Ephesus and may have brought the church's letter (7:1). They refreshed Paul. Some people in a church are refreshers. Recognize them, and ask whose spirit you could refresh this week.
16:19 *Aquila and Priscilla greet you heartily in the Lord, with the church at their house* Asia was the Roman province with Ephesus as its main city. This tentmaking couple worked with Paul in Corinth and taught Apollos in Ephesus (Acts 18:1-3, 26). The early church met in homes. A church is not a building but the people of God.
16:20 *Greet one another with a holy kiss* A kiss on the cheek was a common greeting among family and close friends, holy because it was a sign of Christian love (Rom 16:16; 1 Thess 5:26). Today a handshake or hug may do the same. Believers who had been divided should welcome one another as family.
16:21 *The greeting of Paul is with my hand* Paul usually dictated (Rom 16:22) and wrote the last lines himself, a personal touch and a mark the letter was truly his, since false letters were going around (2 Thess 2:2; 3:17).
16:22 *let him be accursed. Maran atha* Anathema means set apart for God's judgment (12:3). Not loving the Lord Jesus means rejecting the One who gave His life for us. Maran atha is Aramaic, the language Jesus spoke, meaning Our Lord, come! or Our Lord has come. Many take it as a prayer like Revelation 22:20. He is coming for His church, and we should live ready.
16:23 *The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you* Paul began with grace (1:3) and ends with it. Every correction in between is wrapped in grace. However badly we have failed, God's grace is greater (Rom 5:20).
16:24 *My love be with you all in Christ Jesus* Paul's last word is love, for the whole church, even those who criticized him. It flowed from Christ's love for him. That kind of love can hold a divided church together.

2 CORINTHIANS

Introduction

Title

The letter takes its name from its first readers, "the church of God which is in Corinth, with all the saints who are in all Achaia" (1:1). It is the second letter to Corinth in our Bibles, but not the second Paul wrote them. He had written an earlier letter (1 Cor 5:9), then 1 Corinthians, and then a hard letter "through many tears" (2:4) before this one.

Author and Date

The letter opens with "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Timothy the brother" (1:1), and Paul names himself again in 10:1. The early church accepted it as Paul's, and even scholars who doubt some of the letters bearing his name almost all agree he wrote this one. Their questions are not about the author but about whether it was first one letter or several. Every Greek copy we have holds all thirteen chapters together, and I read it as it has come down to us, as one book.

Paul wrote from Macedonia after Titus met him there with good news (2:13; 7:5-7), perhaps from Philippi. Most scholars date it about A.D. 56, roughly a year after 1 Corinthians and before Romans.

Background and Setting

Corinth was the rich, proud capital of Achaia, a Roman colony full of trade, temples and people from all over the empire. Its people loved wisdom, fine speech and impressive speakers, which helps explain why some looked down on Paul (10:10). Paul had founded the church about A.D. 50 (Acts 18:1-18).

After 1 Corinthians, things got harder. Paul made a short visit that went badly, the painful visit (2:1; 12:14; 13:1). He then wrote a severe letter with many tears (2:4; 7:8). Bible teachers disagree on what that letter was: many think a letter God did not preserve, some think 1 Corinthians, others think chapters 10 to 13. Titus seems to have carried it. Paul waited anxiously at Troas, went on to Macedonia, and there Titus came with the news that most of the church had repented (2:12-13; 7:5-16).

Meanwhile men had come to Corinth with letters of commendation (3:1). They were Jewish (11:22), called themselves apostles, boasted of their speaking and experiences, took the church's money and lorded it over them (11:20), and mocked Paul as weak. Paul calls them "false apostles, deceitful workers" (11:13) who preached "another Jesus" and "a different gospel" (11:4).

Themes

This is Paul's most personal letter. We learn more about Paul as a man here than anywhere else: his sufferings, fears, tears, love for the churches, and a "thorn in the flesh" God would not take away (12:7). The heart of the letter is the Lord's answer to his prayer: "My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is perfected in weakness" (12:9).

In chapters 1 to 7 Paul explains his ministry and pours out his heart. God is the "God of all comfort" (1:3). The new covenant of the Spirit is far more glorious than the old covenant of the letter (chapter 3). We carry the treasure of the gospel in clay jars (4:7). Every believer will stand before the judgment seat of Christ (5:10). Anyone in Christ is a new creation, and God has given us the ministry of reconciliation (5:17-21). Godly sorrow leads to repentance (7:10). In chapters 8 and 9 he urges them to finish their gift for the poor in Jerusalem, for giving is a grace and "God loves a cheerful giver" (9:7). In chapters 10 to 13 he defends his apostleship against the false apostles, boasting not in strength but in weakness, so that he will not have to deal harshly with them when he comes (13:10).

Christ in 2 Corinthians

Every promise of God finds its yes in Christ (1:20). The glory of God shines "in the face of Jesus Christ" (4:6), who is "the image of God" (4:4). His love compels us, for He died for all and rose (5:14-15). God "made the One who did not know sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (5:21). Though He was rich, "for your sake He became poor" (8:9). He is God's "indescribable free gift" (9:15). He "was crucified out of weakness, yet He lives by the power of God" (13:4), and that is the pattern of Paul's whole ministry.

Hard Passages

Several questions are open among good Bible teachers, and the notes give the main views: what the severe letter was (2:4); who the offender was whom the church disciplined and then forgave (2:5-11); what "naked" and the "building from God" mean in 5:1-4; who the "most eminent apostles" were (11:5; 12:11); what Paul's thorn in the flesh was (12:7); and whether signs and wonders continue today (12:12). The notes on 5:14-15 name both views on the extent of Christ's death, and the note on 13:5 gives both views on testing whether we are in the faith.

The notes read 5:10 as the judgment seat of Christ for believers' rewards, not for salvation, which was settled at the cross. They read the new covenant promises of chapter 3 as shared now by the church while still to be kept for the nation of Israel (3:16). They answer the misuse of 8:9 and 9:6 to promise believers wealth, and they speak plainly to anyone hurt by leaders like those of 11:20.

Outline

Greeting (1:1-2)
I. Paul's Ministry and His Heart for the Church (1:3-7:16)
  A. The God of all comfort (1:3-11)
  B. Paul's change of plans (1:12-2:4)
  C. Forgive the repentant offender (2:5-11)
  D. The fragrance of Christ (2:12-17)
  E. Ministers of a new covenant (3:1-18)
  F. Treasure in clay jars (4:1-18)
  G. Our heavenly dwelling and the judgment seat (5:1-10)
  H. The ministry of reconciliation (5:11-21)
  I. Now is the day of salvation (6:1-13)
  J. Be separate from idols (6:14-7:1)
  K. Godly sorrow and Titus' good news (7:2-16)
II. The Collection for the Saints in Jerusalem (8:1-9:15)

A. The grace of giving (8:1-15)
B. Titus and the brothers (8:16-24)
C. God loves a cheerful giver (9:1-15)

III. Paul Defends His Apostleship (10:1-13:14)
A. Weapons not of the flesh (10:1-18)
B. Paul and the false apostles (11:1-15)
C. Paul's sufferings (11:16-33)
D. Visions and the thorn in the flesh (12:1-10)
E. Paul's concern for the church (12:11-21)
F. Final warnings and blessing (13:1-14)

2 CORINTHIANS

2 CORINTHIANS 1

Greeting

1 Paul (Paulos), an apostle of Jesus (Iesous) Christ through ***the*** will of God, and Timothy (Timotheos) the brother, to the church of God which is in Corinth (Korinthos), with all the saints who are in all Achaia: **2** Grace to you and peace from God our Father and ***the*** Lord Jesus Christ.

The God of All Comfort

3 Blessed ***be*** the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassions and God of all comfort, **4** who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those in every affliction through the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God; **5** because just as the sufferings of the Christ abound toward us, so also our comfort abounds through Christ. **6** And whether we are afflicted, ***it is*** for your comfort and salvation, which is at work in ***the*** endurance of the same sufferings which we also suffer; or whether we are comforted, ***it is*** for your comfort and salvation; **7** and our hope for you ***is*** firm, knowing that as you are partners of the sufferings, so also of the comfort. **8** For we do not want you to be ignorant, brothers, concerning our affliction which happened to us in Asia, that we were weighed down excessively, beyond ***our*** power, so that we despaired even of living. **9** But we ourselves have had the sentence of death in ourselves, so that we would not be trusting in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead, **10** who delivered us from so great a death, and does deliver, in whom we have hoped that He will also still deliver ***us***, **11** you also joining in helping for us by your petition, so that thanks may be given by many persons on our behalf for the gift toward us through many.

Paul's Change of Plans

12 For our boasting is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and sincerity of God, not in fleshly wisdom but in ***the*** grace of God, we conducted ourselves in the world, and more abundantly toward you. **13** For we write no other things to you than what you read or also understand; and I hope that you will understand even to ***the*** end, **14** just as you also understood us in part, that we are your boast, just as you also ***are*** ours in the day of the Lord Jesus. **15** And in this confidence I was intending to come to you before, so that you might have a second grace, **16** and to pass through you into Macedonia (Makedonia), and again from Macedonia to come to you, and by you to be sent forward to Judea (Ioudaia).

1:1 2 Tim 1:1; Eph 1:1; 1 Tim 1:1
1:2 Rom 1:7; 1 Chr 12:18; 2 Sam 15:20
1:3 1 Chr 29:10; Eph 1:3; 1 Pet 1:3
1:4 Isa 66:13; 2 Cor 7:6,7; Heb 12:12
1:5 Col 1:24; Phil 3:10; 2 Cor 4:10,11
1:6 2 Tim 2:10; 2 Cor 1:4; 2 Cor 4:15-18
1:7 Rom 8:17,18; 1 Cor 10:13; 2 Cor 1:14
1:8 1 Cor 15:32; 2 Cor 4:7-12; Acts 19:23-35
1:9 2 Cor 3:5; Rom 4:17-25; 2 Cor 4:7
1:10 1 Sam 7:12; 1 Sam 17:37; Job 5:17-22
1:11 Phil 1:19; 2 Cor 4:15; Acts 12:5
1:12 2 Cor 2:17; Job 23:10-12; Acts 24:16
1:13 2 Cor 4:2; 2 Cor 5:11; 2 Cor 13:6
1:14 1 Cor 1:8; 2 Cor 2:5; 2 Cor 5:12
1:15 1 Cor 4:19; Rom 1:11; Rom 15:29
1:16 1 Cor 16:5-7; Acts 19:21,22; Acts 21:5

1:1 *an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God* False teachers in Corinth would claim to be apostles and say Paul was not (11:5, 13), so he names his calling at once. Timothy had helped start the church (Acts 18:5). Achaia was southern Greece, with Corinth its chief city. Every believer is a saint, one set apart for God.
1:2 *Grace to you and peace* Grace is God's favor we could never earn, and peace is what it brings, peace with God and the peace of God. Paul names the Father and the Son side by side as the one source of every blessing. A Jewish man would never do that with a mere man.
1:3 *the Father of compassions and God of all comfort* Compassions are tender mercies, a father's pity for a hurting child. The word for comfort is paraklesis, to come alongside and strengthen, from the same family as the word Jesus used for the Holy Spirit, the Helper (John 14:16). There is no kind of pain God cannot comfort.
1:4 *who comforts us in all our affliction* Affliction is pressure, being squeezed and crushed. God does not promise to keep us out of it but to comfort us in it, and His comfort is meant to flow through us. The one who has walked through cancer, the loss of a child or a broken marriage and found God faithful can sit with another in that place as no one else can.
1:5 *the sufferings of the Christ abound toward us* Not that our suffering adds to the cross; His saving work is finished. Those who walk with Christ share the world's hostility toward Him (John 15:18-20). But the comfort keeps pace with the suffering, and it comes through Christ.
1:6 *which is at work in the endurance of the same sufferings* Everything that happens to Paul, hard or good, God uses for others. Endurance is bearing up under a load without giving up. God's comfort does not always remove the load. Often it gives strength to keep carrying it. If you suffer for Christ, the comfort is coming too (1:7).
1:8 *so that we despaired even of living* Asia was the Roman province where Ephesus was. Scripture does not say what happened: perhaps the riot in Ephesus (Acts 19:23-41), a severe illness, imprisonment or fierce persecution. Paul thought he would die. Mature believers are not people who never feel crushed, but people who know where to turn when they are.
1:9 *not be trusting in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead* Paul felt like a man already condemned. God sometimes lets us reach the end of our strength so we stop leaning on it. If He can raise the dead, there is nothing He cannot do for us.
1:10 *who delivered us from so great a death, and does deliver* Past, present and future. Paul's hope rests on what God has already done. Looking back at how God carried you gives reason to trust Him now, and for the believer even death cannot hold us.
1:11 *you also joining in helping for us by your petition* A petition is a prayer that asks. Paul believed their prayers really helped. God uses His people's prayers to do His work, and when many pray, many give thanks when the answer comes.
1:12 *in simplicity and sincerity of God, not in fleshly wisdom* Paul begins answering his critics. His conscience was clear. Simplicity is singleness of heart, no hidden motives. Sincerity is purity with nothing fake mixed in. Fleshly wisdom is the clever, self-serving way the world works an angle.
1:13 *we write no other things to you than what you read or also understand* Some said Paul's letters had hidden meanings. There is nothing between the lines. He hopes that on "the day of the Lord Jesus," when Christ comes for His people, they will be proud of each other before Him (1:14).
1:15 *so that you might have a second grace* Paul had planned two visits, on the way to Macedonia and back, before sailing to Judea with the gift for Jerusalem. Earlier he said he would come after Macedonia (1 Cor 16:5-7). The changes made some think he could not make up his mind.

17 Therefore, when purposing this, did I then use the fickleness? Or what I purpose, do I purpose according to ***the*** flesh, so that with me there may be the "Yes, yes" and the "No, no"? **18** But God ***is*** faithful, that our word to you was not Yes and No. **19** For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you through us, through me and Silvanus (Silouanos) and Timothy, was not Yes and No, but in Him it has been Yes. **20** For as many as ***are the*** promises of God, in Him ***is*** the Yes, and in Him the Amen, to God for glory through us. **21** Now the ***One*** who establishes us with you into Christ and anointed us ***is*** God, **22** who also sealed us and gave the pledge of the Spirit in our hearts. **23** But I call on God as witness upon my soul, that to spare you I came no longer to Corinth. **24** Not that we lord it over your faith, but we are fellow workers of your joy; for by faith you have stood.

2 CORINTHIANS 2

1 But I judged this for myself, not to come to you again in grief. **2** For if I grieve you, then who is the ***one*** who makes me glad, except the ***one*** who is grieved by me? **3** And I wrote this very thing to you, so that when I come I may not have grief from those from whom I ought to rejoice, having confidence in you all that my joy is ***the joy*** of you all. **4** For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you through many tears, not that you might be grieved, but that you might know the love which I have more abundantly toward you.

Forgive the Offender

5 But if anyone has grieved, he has not grieved me, but in part, so that I may not burden you all. **6** Sufficient for such a one ***is*** this punishment which ***is*** by the majority, **7** so that on the contrary you ***should*** rather forgive and comfort ***him***, lest somehow such a one be swallowed up by more abundant grief. **8** Therefore I exhort you to confirm love toward him. **9** For to this end I also wrote, so that I might know your proof, whether you are obedient in all things. **10** Now to whom you forgive anything, I also ***forgive***; for I also, if I have forgiven anything, to whom I have forgiven ***it***, ***have done so*** for your sake in ***the*** presence of Christ, **11** so that we may not be taken advantage of by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his schemes.

The Fragrance of Christ

12 Now when I came to Troas for the gospel of the Christ,

1:17 2 Cor 10:2,3; Matt 5:37; Judg 9:4
1:18 2 Cor 1:23; 2 Cor 11:31; John 7:28
1:19 Heb 13:8; Acts 18:5; Ps 2:7
1:20 Isa 65:16; Jer 28:6; Rev 3:14
1:21 1 John 2:20,27; 2 Cor 5:5; Ps 37:23,24
1:22 2 Cor 5:5; Eph 4:30; Eph 1:13,14
1:23 Rom 1:9; Gal 1:20; 1 Cor 4:21
1:24 1 Pet 5:3; Rom 11:20; 1 Cor 15:1
2:1 2 Cor 1:23; 2 Cor 12:20,21; 2 Cor 13:10
2:2 2 Cor 1:14; 2 Cor 11:29; Rom 12:15
2:3 Gal 5:10; 2 Cor 8:22; Phlm 1:21
2:4 Prov 27:6; Lev 19:17,18; Ps 119:136
2:5 Gal 4:12; Prov 17:25; 1 Cor 5:1-5,12,13
2:6 1 Cor 5:4,5; 2 Cor 13:10; 1 Tim 5:20
2:7 Eph 4:32; Gal 6:1,2; Col 3:13
2:8 Jude 1:22,23; Gal 5:13; Gal 6:1,2,10
2:9 2 Cor 10:6; Phil 2:22; 2 Cor 7:12-15
2:10 1 Cor 5:4; John 20:23; 2 Cor 5:20
2:11 1 Chr 21:1; Job 2:3; Zech 3:1
2:12 Acts 16:8; Acts 14:27; 1 Cor 16:9

1:17 *did I then use the fickleness?* Fickle means unreliable. To plan "according to the flesh" is to say whatever is easy and change it when it suits you. Plans sometimes must change, but that does not make a man a liar. What matters is why.
1:19 *was not Yes and No, but in Him it has been Yes* Silvanus is Silas (Acts 18:5). If the Jesus they preached is completely reliable, how could His messengers be careless with their word? A faithful message calls for faithful messengers.
1:20 *in Him is the Yes, and in Him the Amen* One of the great verses of the Bible. Every promise God made, to Abraham, to David, to Israel and to us, finds its yes in Jesus. Amen means so be it, it is true. When we say Amen we agree with God's yes. Is there a promise you have been doubting?
1:22 *who also sealed us and gave the pledge of the Spirit in our hearts* God establishes us in Christ, anoints us as kings and priests were set apart with oil, seals us as His own, and gives the Spirit as a pledge, a down payment promising the rest. Our security rests on what God has done, not on how strong we feel.
1:23 *to spare you I came no longer to Corinth* A solemn oath. Coming then would have meant discipline and another painful visit (2:1). He waited to give them time to set things right. Sometimes love waits.
1:24 *Not that we lord it over your faith, but we are fellow workers of your joy* To lord it over is to rule harshly. Paul had authority but did not use it to control their faith. A leader's job is not to control people but to help them stand on their own feet with Christ.
2:1 *not to come to you again in grief* "Again" shows Paul had already made one grieving visit, often called the painful visit. Acts does not record it, but this verse with 12:14 and 13:1-2 shows it happened after 1 Corinthians. He changed his plans (1:15-23) not to avoid hard things but to deal with them a better way.
2:2 *who is the one who makes me glad, except the one who is grieved by me?* Paul's joy was tied up with the Corinthians. A good pastor does not enjoy confronting sin, as a good parent does not enjoy discipline. Love sometimes has to wound, but it never takes pleasure in it.
2:3 *I wrote this very thing to you* Instead of a second painful visit, a letter, so they could deal with the problem before he came. Paul believed the best about them even while they grieved him.
2:4 *I wrote to you through many tears* Anguish is distress pressing from every side. He wrote weeping, and the hard letter was a love letter (Prov 27:6). Teachers are not sure which letter this was: many think a separate letter we no longer have, others 1 Corinthians itself. Scripture does not say.
2:5 *if anyone has grieved, he has not grieved me, but in part* Paul does not name the man. Sin in a church is never only a private matter between two people. Some think he was the immoral man of 1 Corinthians 5:1-5. Many think he insulted Paul during the painful visit, which fits "the one having suffered wrong" (7:12). Scripture does not say for sure.
2:6 *Sufficient for such a one is this punishment which is by the majority* Church discipline is the loving correction of a member who keeps on in sin (Matt 18:15-17). Its goal is not to crush but to bring back, and when that is reached it should stop. Some churches never discipline. Others never stop.
2:7 *you should rather forgive and comfort him* The man had repented. To forgive is to let go of the debt. There is a sorrow that heals and a sorrow that drowns, and a church that disciplines but will not forgive is cruel. Is there someone who has said they are sorry whom you still keep at a distance?
2:8 *confirm love toward him* To confirm is to show it openly, as official as the discipline was. Forgiveness only whispered is not enough. Make your love plain in word and action.
2:9 *whether you are obedient in all things* The hard letter was a test. They disciplined the man. Would they be as obedient in forgiving him? It is often easier to be strict than merciful. God asks for both.
2:10 *in the presence of Christ* Paul stands with the church and will not let his own hurt stand in the way. We forgive as people forgiven much (Eph 4:32). Standing before Christ, our grudges look very small.
2:11 *we are not ignorant of his schemes* Satan is a real enemy with real plans. He had tried to ruin the church by unchecked sin. Now he could drown a repentant man in grief and make the church harsh. An unforgiving spirit is one of his favorite tools.

and a door had been opened to me in ***the*** Lord, **13** I have had no rest in my spirit, at my not finding Titus (Titos) my brother; but taking leave of them, I went out to Macedonia (Makedonia). **14** But thanks ***be*** to God, who always leads us in triumph in the Christ, and makes manifest through us the scent of the knowledge of Him in every place. **15** For we are a sweet aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, **16** to the one a scent of death to death, and to the other a scent of life to life. And who ***is*** sufficient for these things? **17** For we are not like the many, peddling the word of God; but as from sincerity, but as from God, in the sight of God we speak in Christ.

2 CORINTHIANS 3

Ministers of a New Covenant

1 Are we beginning again to commend ourselves? Or do we need, like some, commendatory letters to you or commendatory ***ones*** from you? **2** You are our letter, inscribed in our hearts, known and read by all men, **3** being made manifest that you are a letter of Christ ministered by us, inscribed not with ink but with ***the*** Spirit of ***the*** living God, not on tablets of stone but on fleshy tablets of heart. **4** And such confidence we have through the Christ toward God; **5** not that we are sufficient from ourselves to reckon anything as from ourselves, but our sufficiency ***is*** from God, **6** who also made us sufficient ***as*** ministers of a new covenant, not of ***the*** letter but of ***the*** Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit makes alive.

The Greater Glory

7 Now if the ministry of death, in letters engraved in stones, came about in glory, so that the sons of Israel were not able to look intently into the face of Moses because of the glory of his face, which was being brought to nothing, **8** how will the ministry of the Spirit not be more in glory? **9** For if the ministry of condemnation ***was*** glory, much more does the ministry of righteousness abound in glory. **10** For even what has been glorified has not been glorified in this respect, because of the surpassing glory. **11** For if what is being brought to nothing ***was*** through glory, much more what remains ***is*** in glory. **12** Therefore, having such hope, we use much boldness, **13** and not as Moses was putting a veil over his own face, so that the sons of Israel would not look intently into

2:13 2 Cor 7:5,6; 2 Cor 12:18; 2 Cor 8:6,16,23
2:14 Ps 148:14; 2 Cor 9:15; Rom 8:37
2:15 Lev 1:9; 1 Cor 1:18; Ezek 20:41
2:16 Luke 2:34; John 9:39; 2 Cor 3:5,6
2:17 2 Cor 4:2; 2 Cor 1:12; 2 Cor 11:13-15
3:1 2 Cor 5:12; 2 Cor 12:11,19; Acts 18:27
3:2 1 Cor 9:1,2; Rom 1:8; 1 Thess 1:8
3:3 Jer 31:33; Ezek 11:19; Prov 3:3
3:4 2 Cor 2:14; Phil 1:6; Exod 18:19
3:5 1 Cor 15:10; 2 Cor 12:9; Phil 4:13
3:6 Jer 31:31; John 6:63; Rom 7:6
3:7 Exod 24:12; Exod 31:18; Exod 32:15
3:8 2 Cor 3:6,17; 2 Cor 11:4; Isa 11:2
3:9 Heb 12:18-21; Rom 3:21,22; 2 Cor 3:6,7
3:10 Job 25:5; Isa 24:23; Hag 2:3,7-9
3:11 Rom 5:20,21; Heb 7:21-25; Heb 8:13
3:12 2 Cor 7:4; Acts 4:13,29-31; 1 Thess 2:2
3:13 Exod 34:33-35; Exod 34:29; Isa 25:7

2:13 *I have had no rest in my spirit, at my not finding Titus my brother* Troas was a port across the sea from Macedonia, and an open door means people ready to listen. Titus had likely carried the hard letter, and Paul was so burdened for news that he left the open door to find him. The story resumes in 7:5-7.
2:14 *who always leads us in triumph in the Christ* A Roman triumph was a victory parade: the general in front, his soldiers and captives behind, incense filling the streets. God is the conquering general. Some see Paul as one of God's captives, conquered by grace, others as a soldier sharing the victory. In Christ, God is always winning, even when Paul is restless.
2:15 *we are a sweet aroma of Christ to God* Offerings on the altar were a pleasing aroma to the Lord (Lev 1:9), and lives of faith are like that. The fragrance is the same everywhere. Not everyone receives it the same way.
2:16 *to the one a scent of death to death, and to the other a scent of life to life* In the triumph the incense meant victory for the soldiers and death for the captives at the end of the line. The gospel reminds those who refuse it of judgment and is the smell of life to those who receive it. Who is sufficient? No one on his own. Our sufficiency is from God (3:5).
2:17 *not like the many, peddling the word of God* A peddler was a street seller, often one who watered his wine for profit. Many treated God's Word as a product to sell. Paul spoke as a man who knew God was watching. Anyone who uses God's Word mainly for money or his own name is a peddler.
3:1 *Or do we need, like some, commendatory letters to you or commendatory ones from you?* Traveling believers often carried letters of introduction from their home church (Acts 18:27; Rom 16:1-2), a good practice. The false teachers came waving theirs and implied Paul had none. Did he really need a letter to introduce himself to his own spiritual children?
3:2 *You are our letter, inscribed in our hearts, known and read by all men* The church itself was living proof of Paul's ministry. Idol worshipers had become believers in Jesus. If people read your life like a letter, what would it tell them about Christ?
3:3 *not on tablets of stone but on fleshy tablets of heart* Christ is the author and Paul the carrier. At Sinai God wrote on stone (Exod 31:18). He promised to write His law on hearts (Jer 31:33) and give a heart of flesh and His Spirit (Ezek 36:26-27). Those promises were given to Israel. I believe the church shares now in their forgiveness and new heart through the Spirit, and God will keep every one of them to the nation of Israel when Christ returns (Rom 11:26-27).
3:5 *our sufficiency is from God* The answer to "who is sufficient for these things?" (2:16). Paul takes credit for nothing. You do not have to be enough. God is enough.
3:6 *the letter kills, but the Spirit makes alive* A covenant is a binding agreement. The old covenant was the Law given through Moses at Sinai. The new covenant was promised in Jeremiah 31:31-34 and made with Jesus' blood (Luke 22:20). This is not a call to look for hidden meanings instead of reading the Bible plainly. The letter is the Law on stone, holy and good (Rom 7:12), but it can only command and condemn. The Spirit gives new life.
3:7 *the ministry of death, in letters engraved in stones, came about in glory* The Law shows God's holy standard, and since we have all broken it, it shows we deserve death (Rom 6:23). Yet it came with real glory. Moses' face shone so that Israel could not look at it (Exod 34:29-35). That glory was fading.
3:8 *how will the ministry of the Spirit not be more in glory?* From the lesser to the greater. Under the old covenant the Spirit came on certain people for certain tasks. Under the new He makes His home in every believer (Rom 8:9).
3:9 *the ministry of righteousness abound in glory* Condemnation is the sentence of guilt, all the Law could give. Through faith in Christ God declares us righteous. That is justification (Rom 3:21-26). Which would you rather receive?
3:10 *because of the surpassing glory* A flashlight is bright at night but barely seen at noon in the desert. The old covenant's glory was real but outshined. It was temporary; the new covenant remains (3:11).
3:12 *we use much boldness* Hope in the Bible is not a maybe but sure confidence in what God has promised. Boldness is plain, open speech. The message is sure, so it needs no dressing up.
3:13 *not as Moses was putting a veil over his own face* Moses veiled his face after speaking to the people (Exod 34:33-35), and Paul says it kept them from watching the glory fade, a picture of the old covenant itself. Paul keeps nothing veiled.

the end of what was being brought to nothing. **14** But their minds were hardened. For until today the same veil remains at the reading of the old covenant, not being lifted, which is being brought to nothing in Christ. **15** But until today, when Moses is read, a veil lies over their heart. **16** But whenever ***it*** turns to ***the*** Lord, the veil is taken away. **17** Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of ***the*** Lord ***is***, there ***is*** freedom. **18** And we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of ***the*** Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from ***the*** Lord, ***the*** Spirit.

2 CORINTHIANS 4

Treasure in Clay Jars

1 Because of this, having this ministry, just as we were shown mercy, we do not lose heart; **2** but we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor falsifying the word of God, but by the manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every conscience of men before God. **3** And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled among those who are perishing, **4** in whom the god of this age has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, so that the illumination of the gospel of the glory of the Christ, who is ***the*** image of God, would not shine forth on them. **5** For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus (Iesous) ***as*** Lord, and ourselves your slaves for the sake of Jesus. **6** For ***it is*** God who said ***for*** light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts for the illumination of the knowledge of the glory of God in ***the*** face of Jesus Christ. **7** But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power may be of God and not from us: **8** being afflicted in every ***way*** but not hemmed in, being perplexed but not despairing, **9** being persecuted but not forsaken, being struck down but not perishing, **10** always carrying around in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be made manifest in our body. **11** For we who live are always being delivered to death for the sake of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be made manifest in our mortal flesh. **12** So then death is at work in us, but life in you.

3:14 Isa 25:7; Exod 34:33; 2 Cor 4:3,4
3:15 Exod 34:33; Isa 25:7; Acts 13:27-29
3:16 Exod 34:34; Isa 25:7; Exod 34:33
3:17 Isa 61:1; Rom 8:2,15,16; Gal 4:6
3:18 2 Cor 4:4,6; Eph 4:22-24; Rom 12:2
4:1 2 Thess 3:13; Gal 6:9; 2 Cor 3:6,12
4:2 2 Cor 2:17; 2 Cor 5:11; 1 Cor 4:5
4:3 2 Cor 3:14; 1 Cor 1:18; Rom 2:16
4:4 John 12:40; 2 Cor 4:6; 2 Cor 3:14
4:5 1 Cor 1:23; 2 Cor 1:24; Matt 3:11
4:6 Gen 1:3; Isa 60:2; 2 Pet 1:19
4:7 2 Cor 5:1; 2 Cor 3:5,6; Lam 4:2
4:8 2 Cor 7:5; Ps 56:2,3; Rom 8:35-37
4:9 Heb 13:5; Ps 9:10; Ps 22:1
4:10 2 Tim 2:11; 2 Cor 1:5,9; Gal 6:17
4:11 Ps 44:22; Rom 8:36; 2 Cor 5:4
4:12 2 Cor 13:9; 1 Cor 4:10; 1 John 3:16

3:14 *the same veil remains at the reading of the old covenant* Paul speaks of his own people. Many read the Law but did not see where it pointed. The veil is removed only in Christ. He says this with sorrow, not contempt (Rom 9:1-5).

3:15 *when Moses is read, a veil lies over their heart* Moses means his books, read every Sabbath in the synagogue (Acts 15:21). The veil has moved from Moses' face to their heart. The Law points to Christ (Luke 24:27, 44). The problem is a heart not yet open, true of every person until God opens the eyes (4:4-6).

3:16 *whenever it turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away* Moses removed his veil whenever he went in to the Lord (Exod 34:34). True for any Jewish person who turns to Jesus the Messiah, and a promise for the nation. The hardening is partial until the full number of Gentiles comes in, then all Israel will be saved (Rom 11:25-27). The church has not replaced Israel. The nation will look on Him whom they pierced (Zech 12:10).

3:17 *Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom* Paul is not confusing the Persons of the Godhead. The Lord we turn to meets us by His Spirit, and many also see here that the Spirit is fully God. Freedom from the veil, the Law's condemnation and slavery to sin, not freedom to sin (Gal 5:1, 13).

3:18 *are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory* Only Moses went in to see God's glory. Now every believer does, seen in Jesus' face (4:6) and His Word, though still as in a mirror (1 Cor 13:12). Transformed is the word for Jesus' transfiguration (Matt 17:2). This is sanctification. We change not by trying harder but by looking at Jesus as the Spirit works. Moses' glory faded. Ours grows.

4:1 *just as we were shown mercy, we do not lose heart* This ministry is the new covenant of chapter 3, received by mercy. Paul never forgot he once persecuted the church (1 Tim 1:12-16). He had every reason to quit, attacked by the very church he started. When your calling comes from God's mercy, you keep going.

4:2 *not walking in craftiness nor falsifying the word of God* To renounce is to turn away for good. Craftiness is clever scheming. To falsify is to twist or water down the Word, mixing in error to please. Paul laid the truth out in the open and let consciences judge. We need no gimmicks or pressure, only plain truth lived honestly.

4:3 *it is veiled among those who are perishing* Why doesn't everyone believe? The gospel is not unclear. Hearts that refuse it cannot see it.

4:4 *the god of this age has blinded the minds of the unbelieving* Satan, "the ruler of this world" (John 12:31; 1 John 5:19). He is not truly a god or equal to God, but many serve him as if he were. He does not mind if people are religious or busy, as long as they do not see Jesus clearly. He is "the image of God." To see Him is to see the Father (John 14:9; Col 1:15). Only God can open blind eyes, so we pray.

4:5 *we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord* The false teachers talked about their gifts, letters and experiences. Paul refused to make himself the message and called himself their slave for Jesus' sake. The best preachers point away from themselves and serve people rather than using them.

4:6 *God who said for light to shine out of darkness* God spoke light into being on the first day (Gen 1:3). Every conversion is a new creation: He shines into a dark heart, as He did with light from heaven on the Damascus road (Acts 9:3-5). Never give up praying for someone you love.

4:7 *we have this treasure in earthen vessels* The treasure is the gospel. Earthen vessels were cheap clay jars that cracked and chipped. If the jar were gold, people would admire the jar. Plain clay shows the power is God's. Your weakness is the very place His power shows best.

4:8 *being afflicted in every way but not hemmed in, being perplexed but not despairing* Afflicted is squeezed from every side; hemmed in is trapped with no way out. Paul often did not know what to do next but never ran out of hope, because it rested on God and not his own answers.

4:9 *being persecuted but not forsaken, being struck down but not perishing* Hunted from city to city, never abandoned (Heb 13:5). Knocked down, once by real stones (Acts 14:19), but never knocked out. The Christian life is not about never falling but about the God who keeps raising us up.

4:10 *carrying around in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus* Paul faced daily the same hatred that led Jesus to the cross. When people saw him suffer and keep going with joy, they saw the risen Jesus at work. Our trials can be a window through which others see Christ.

4:11 *so that the life of Jesus may also be made manifest in our mortal flesh* Mortal means subject to death. God does not wait until we are strong to show His life through us. He does it in our weakness, now.

4:12 *death is at work in us, but life in you* Paul's suffering brought the Corinthians eternal life. That is the pattern of the cross, followed by every believer who serves at a cost. What are you willing to give up so someone else might live in Christ?

The Inner Man Renewed

13 But having the same spirit of faith, according to what has
been written, "I believed, therefore I spoke," we also believe,
therefore we also speak, **14** knowing that the ***One*** who raised
the Lord Jesus will also raise us through Jesus and will
present ***us*** with you. **15** For all things ***are*** for your sake, so
that the grace, having increased through the more ***people***,
may make the thanksgiving abound to the glory of God.
16 Therefore we do not lose heart; but even if our outer man
is being brought to decay, yet the inner ***man*** is being
renewed day by day. **17** For the momentary lightness of our
affliction is producing for us, excessively to excess, an eternal weight of glory, **18** while we look not at the things being
seen but at the things not being seen; for the things being
seen ***are*** temporary, but the things not being seen ***are*** eternal.

2 CORINTHIANS 5

Our Heavenly Dwelling

1 For we know that if our earthly house of the tent is
destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made
with hands, eternal in the heavens. **2** For indeed in this we
groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling which ***is*** from
heaven, **3** if indeed, having been clothed, we will not be
found naked. **4** For indeed we who are in the tent groan,
being burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but
to be clothed, so that the mortal may be swallowed up by life.
5 Now the One having prepared us for this very thing ***is*** God,
who also has given to us the pledge of the Spirit. **6** Therefore,
being always confident and knowing that, while being at
home in the body, we are absent from the Lord, **7** for we walk
through faith, not through sight, **8** we are confident, and we
are pleased rather to be absent out of the body and to be at
home with the Lord. **9** Therefore we also are ambitious,
whether being at home or being absent, to be well-pleasing
to Him. **10** For it is necessary for all of us to be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may
receive back the things ***done*** through the body, according to
what he did, whether good or evil.

The Ministry of Reconciliation

11 Knowing therefore the fear of the Lord, we persuade men,
but we have been made manifest to God; and I hope also to

4:13 Ps 116:10; 2 Cor 3:12; 1 Cor 12:9
4:14 1 Thess 4:14; Eph 5:27; Jude 1:24
4:15 Dan 2:30; Rom 8:28; 2 Cor 1:11
4:16 Ps 51:10; Isa 40:31; Col 3:10
4:17 Rom 8:18,34,37; 1 Pet 5:10; Isa 54:7
4:18 2 Cor 5:7; Heb 11:1,25-27; Rom 8:24,25
5:1 2 Pet 1:13,14; 1 John 3:2,14,19; 2 Cor 4:7
5:2 Rom 8:23; 1 Cor 15:53,54; Rom 7:24
5:3 Gen 3:7-11; Exod 32:25; Rev 3:18
5:4 1 Cor 15:53,54; 2 Pet 1:13; Isa 25:8
5:5 Isa 29:23; 2 Cor 1:22; Rom 8:23
5:6 Heb 11:13; Phil 3:20,21; 2 Cor 5:8
5:7 2 Cor 4:18; Rom 8:24,25; 1 Cor 13:12
5:8 2 Pet 3:11,12; 2 Cor 5:6; 2 Cor 12:2,3
5:9 Heb 4:11; 2 Pet 3:14; John 6:27
5:10 Eccl 12:14; Eph 6:8; 1 Cor 4:5
5:11 Heb 10:31; Jude 1:23; Job 31:23

4:13 *I believed, therefore I spoke* From Psalm 116:10, a psalmist near death who trusted God and said so. Real faith cannot keep quiet. If we believe the gospel is true and people are perishing without it, we will speak.
4:14 *the One who raised the Lord Jesus will also raise us through Jesus* The resurrection of Jesus is a fact of history, and God will raise all who belong to Him (1 Cor 15:20-23; 1 Thess 4:14). When the Lord comes for His church, Paul and the Corinthians will stand together before Him (1 Thess 4:16-17). Death is not the last word.
4:15 *may make the thanksgiving abound to the glory of God* As grace reaches more people, more give thanks, and God is glorified. Our suffering, service and salvation all point there.
4:16 *the inner man is being renewed day by day* The outer man is the body, and every gray hair and ache reminds us it is wearing out. The inner man, our life with God, can grow stronger. Some of the most spiritually alive people are old saints in failing bodies.
4:17 *an eternal weight of glory* Read 11:23-28 and it is hard to call Paul's suffering light. It is light only on the scale beside glory, heavy beyond measure and lasting forever. "Producing" means suffering is not wasted. That does not make pain easy, but it makes it meaningful.
4:18 *the things being seen are temporary, but the things not being seen are eternal* House, car, bank account, even our bodies will pass away. God, His Word, His kingdom and people's souls last forever. A believer who keeps looking at the eternal can make it through almost anything temporary.
5:1 *if our earthly house of the tent is destroyed, we have a building from God* Our body is a tent, temporary and easily taken down, and Paul was a tentmaker (Acts 18:3). The building God makes is permanent. Many believe it is the resurrection body, like Jesus' glorious body (Phil 3:21); others think of our heavenly dwelling more broadly. It is so certain Paul says "we have" it.
5:2 *in this we groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling which is from heaven* To groan is to sigh under a burden of sickness, pain, aging and sin (Rom 8:23). Paul mixes a house and clothes, picturing the new body put on like a coat. A believer's groaning is homesickness for a better home.
5:3 *we will not be found naked* Naked means without a body. Greeks often saw the body as a prison to escape, but God made us body and soul. Many believe Paul means the time between death and resurrection, and that he would rather be alive and changed when Christ comes. Others think naked means found without Christ at the judgment. Either way, our hope is a new body, not floating as a spirit forever.
5:4 *so that the mortal may be swallowed up by life* Paul is not wishing to be rid of his body but to have something better. Everything in us that can die will be swallowed up by life, as a wave swallows a footprint (1 Cor 15:54). Life wins.
5:5 *the pledge of the Spirit* Our future body has been God's plan all along. The pledge is a down payment (1:22). If you have the Spirit, God has already started paying on His promise, and He finishes what He starts.
5:7 *we walk through faith, not through sight* While in the body we are away from home, not yet with the Lord face to face. Faith is not believing without reason but trusting the word of the One who has proven faithful, until faith becomes sight.
5:8 *to be absent out of the body and to be at home with the Lord* One of the most comforting verses for believers facing death and for those who have lost a believing loved one. No long sleep of the soul, no waiting room: the believer goes straight into Christ's presence (Phil 1:23). The body rests until the resurrection, but the person is with the Lord. If your loved one knew Jesus, they are home.
5:9 *we also are ambitious* Ambition depends on what you reach for. Paul's one great ambition was to please the Lord, alive or with Him. What is yours: money, comfort, success, being liked, or pleasing Jesus?
5:10 *the judgment seat of Christ* The bema was the raised platform where a judge heard cases or an official handed out prizes at the games. Paul stood before Gallio's bema in Corinth (Acts 18:12). "All of us" means believers. This does not decide heaven, settled at the cross (Rom 8:1; John 5:24). Believers' lives are shown for what they were, and Christ gives rewards (1 Cor 3:11-15). I believe the Lord comes for His church before the Tribulation (1 Thess 4:16-17; 5:9), and many place this judgment in heaven after that, before believers return with Him (Rev 19:11-14).
5:11 *Knowing therefore the fear of the Lord, we persuade men* The fear of the Lord is reverent awe for the holy God to whom we give account, the respect of a servant who wants to please his Master. It moved Paul to reason with people and urge them to believe.

have been made manifest in your consciences. **12** For we are not again commending ourselves to you, but giving you an occasion of boasting on our behalf, so that you may have ***an answer*** toward those boasting in appearance and not in heart. **13** For if we were beside ourselves, ***it was*** for God; or if we are of sound mind, ***it is*** for you. **14** For the love of Christ compels us, having concluded this: that if One died for all, then all died; **15** and He died for all, so that those who live may no longer live to themselves, but to the One who died for them and was raised. **16** Therefore from now ***on*** we know no one according to ***the*** flesh; and even if we have known Christ according to ***the*** flesh, yet now we no longer know ***Him so***. **17** Therefore if anyone ***is*** in Christ, ***he is*** a new creation; the old things have passed away; look, all things have become new. **18** And all things ***are*** from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Jesus (Iesous) Christ and gave to us the ministry of reconciliation, **19** that is, that God was in Christ reconciling ***the*** world to Himself, not reckoning their trespasses to them, and having placed in us the word of reconciliation. **20** Therefore on behalf of Christ we are ambassadors, as though God were urging through us; we implore ***you*** on behalf of Christ: be reconciled to God. **21** For He made the One who did not know sin ***to be*** sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

2 CORINTHIANS 6

Now Is the Day of Salvation

1 And working together, we also urge you not to receive the grace of God in vain. **2** For He says, "In an acceptable time I listened to you, and in a day of salvation I helped you." Look, now ***is*** a well-accepted time; look, now ***is*** a day of salvation. **3** ***We are*** giving no cause of stumbling in anything, so that the ministry may not be blamed, **4** but in everything commending ourselves as servants of God: in much endurance, in afflictions, in hardships, in distresses, **5** in beatings, in imprisonments, in riots, in labors, in sleeplessness, in fastings, **6** in purity, in knowledge, in patience, in kindness, in ***the*** Holy Spirit, in genuine love, **7** in ***the*** word of truth, in ***the*** power of God, through the weapons of righteousness of the right ***hand*** and left, **8** through glory and dishonor, through

5:12 2 Cor 3:1; 2 Cor 1:14; 2 Cor 11:12-16
5:13 2 Cor 11:1,16,17; 2 Cor 12:6,11; Acts 26:24,25
5:14 Matt 10:37,38; 1 Pet 1:8; Heb 6:10
5:15 Rom 14:7,8; Col 3:1; 1 Pet 1:14,15
5:16 Phil 3:7,8; Gal 5:6; Col 3:11
5:17 Ezek 36:26; Isa 43:18,19; Ps 51:10
5:18 Col 1:20,21; 1 John 2:2; John 3:16,27
5:19 Matt 1:23; 1 Tim 3:16; 1 John 4:10
5:20 Eph 6:20; 2 Cor 6:1; Luke 14:23
5:21 Isa 53:4; 1 Pet 3:18; 1 Pet 2:22-24
6:1 1 Cor 3:9; Heb 12:15,25; 1 Pet 4:10
6:2 Isa 49:8; Isa 61:2; Ezek 16:8
6:3 Rom 14:13; 1 Cor 9:12,22; Matt 17:27
6:4 2 Cor 3:6; 1 Cor 3:5; 2 Cor 12:12
6:5 2 Cor 11:23-25; Acts 17:5; Acts 19:23-34
6:6 2 Cor 11:6; Rom 12:9; 1 Thess 2:10
6:7 Ps 119:43; 2 Cor 4:2; Eph 1:13
6:8 Rom 3:8; Matt 27:63; Acts 4:21

5:12 *those boasting in appearance and not in heart* Paul gives loyal believers an answer for his critics. The false teachers cared for polished speech, letters and outward show. God looks at the heart (1 Sam 16:7), and so should we.
5:13 *if we were beside ourselves, it was for God* Some called Paul crazy, as they did Jesus (Mark 3:21) and as Festus did Paul (Acts 26:24). If he seems out of his mind, that is between him and God. Either way, all he does is for God and others.
5:14 *For the love of Christ compels us* Christ's love for us, which also stirs our love for Him, presses Paul forward like banks driving a river. "If One died for all, then all died": His death counts as ours. Some believe Christ died for every person, making salvation available to all who believe; others that "all" means all who are in Christ. Both agree only believers receive the benefit, and the gospel must be offered to everyone.
5:15 *no longer live to themselves, but to the One who died for them* Christ did not die only so we could go to heaven but so we would stop living for ourselves. The center moves to Him, and that changes how we spend money, time and words. Who are you living for today?
5:16 *we know no one according to the flesh* Judging by looks, money, background or status. Before conversion Paul judged Jesus that way: a crucified carpenter could not be the Messiah. Now he knows Him as risen Lord, and every person is someone Christ died for.
5:17 *if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation* Not improved or cleaned up, but made new, as God did at creation. The old guilt, slavery to sin and standing before God have passed away. Believers still struggle (Gal 5:17), but with a new heart, a new Master and a new future. Your past does not define you. Christ does.
5:18 *who reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ* To reconcile is to bring enemies back together. The problem was on our side; we rebelled (Rom 5:10). God took the first step, made peace through Jesus, and makes His reconciled people His messengers.
5:19 *not reckoning their trespasses to them* "The world" shows how wide the offer is. To reckon is to put on someone's account. A trespass is a step across God's line. God did not count our sins against us because He counted them against Christ (5:21), and He has trusted us with this message.
5:20 *we are ambassadors* An ambassador speaks for his king in a foreign land, not his own message. Our home is in heaven (Phil 3:20). When we share the gospel, God Himself pleads through our voice: "be reconciled to God." He does not force people. He pleads with them. Have you been reconciled to God?
5:21 *He made the One who did not know sin to be sin on our behalf* Jesus never sinned (Heb 4:15; 1 Pet 2:22). On the cross God laid our sin on Him and treated Him as the sinner. He did not become a sinner but took the punishment our sins deserved (Isa 53:6). We receive His righteousness, credited to our account, which is called imputation. Our sin went to Him. His righteousness comes to us. That is the heart of the gospel.
6:1 *not to receive the grace of God in vain* Paul works together with God in the ministry of reconciliation (5:18-20). In vain means empty, without result. Some listened to false teachers preaching another gospel (11:4); others lived as if grace made no difference. Grace is meant to save us and change us (Titus 2:11-12).
6:2 *now is a day of salvation* From Isaiah 49:8, God's words to His Servant the Messiah, promising salvation to Israel and the nations. That day has come in Christ. No one is promised tomorrow. If you have never trusted Christ, today is the day.
6:3 *We are giving no cause of stumbling in anything* People judge the message by the messenger. When a Christian leader falls into scandal, many blame the gospel itself. Paul guarded his life so no one could call the ministry a fraud.
6:4 *commending ourselves as servants of God: in much endurance* The false teachers commended themselves with letters. Paul's proof is endurance under nine hardships in three groups: troubles in general, troubles men brought (beatings and jail in Philippi, Acts 16:22-24; riots, Acts 14:19; 19:29), and troubles accepted for the work. Distresses are tight places with no way out.
6:6 *in the Holy Spirit, in genuine love* Purity is moral cleanness and right motives, patience is slowness to anger with difficult people. All of it came from the Spirit, and Paul's love was not an act.
6:7 *the weapons of righteousness of the right hand and left* A soldier held his sword in the right hand and shield in the left. Paul's weapons attacked error and defended truth, never lies, flattery or manipulation (10:4).
6:8 *as deceivers and yet true* Praised and insulted, Paul served the same either way. If we only serve when we are praised, we are serving ourselves.

bad report and good report; as deceivers and ***yet*** true; **9** as being unknown and ***yet*** being well known; as dying, and look, we live; as being disciplined and ***yet*** not being put to death; **10** as being sorrowful, but always rejoicing; as poor, but making many rich; as having nothing, and ***yet*** possessing all things.

Open Your Hearts

11 Our mouth has been opened to you, Corinthians; our heart has been widened. **12** You are not restricted in us, but you are restricted in your affections. **13** Now ***in*** the same recompense (I speak as to children), you also be widened.

Do Not Be Unequally Yoked

14 Do not become unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership ***have*** righteousness and lawlessness? And what fellowship ***has*** light with darkness? **15** And what harmony ***has*** Christ with Belial? Or what part ***has*** a believer with an unbeliever? **16** And what agreement ***has the*** temple of God with idols? For you are a temple of ***the*** living God, just as God said, "I will dwell in them and walk among ***them***, and I will be their God, and they will be a people to Me." **17** "Therefore come out from ***the*** midst of them and be separate," says ***the*** Lord, "and do not touch an unclean ***thing***, and I will receive you, **18** and I will be to you for a Father, and you will be to Me for sons and daughters," says ***the*** Lord Almighty.

2 CORINTHIANS 7

1 Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in ***the*** fear of God.

Paul's Joy at the Church's Repentance

2 Make room for us; we wronged no one, we corrupted no one, we exploited no one. **3** I do not speak for condemnation; for I have said before that you are in our hearts, to die together and to live together. **4** Great ***is*** my boldness toward you; great ***is*** my boasting on your behalf; I have been filled with comfort; I overabound with joy in all our affliction. **5** For indeed, when we came into Macedonia (Makedonia), our flesh had no rest, but in every ***way*** we were being afflicted: outside ***were*** conflicts, within ***were*** fears. **6** But the One comforting the lowly, God, comforted us by the coming of Titus (Titos); **7** and not only by his coming, but also by the comfort with which he was comforted over you, reporting to us your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me, so that I

6:9 Ps 118:18; 1 Cor 4:9; 2 Cor 4:10,11
6:10 2 Cor 8:9; John 16:22; Phil 4:4
6:11 2 Cor 12:15; Ps 119:32; Gal 3:1
6:12 Mic 2:7; Eccl 6:9; Job 36:16
6:13 1 Cor 4:14,15; Gal 4:19; 1 Thess 2:11
6:14 1 Cor 15:33; Deut 22:10; Gen 24:3
6:15 1 Sam 5:2-4; 1 Kgs 18:21; 1 Cor 10:20,21
6:16 Lev 26:12; Ezek 37:27; Exod 29:45
6:17 Isa 52:11; Num 16:26; Jer 51:6
6:18 2 Sam 7:14; 1 Chr 17:13; Isa 43:6
7:1 1 Thess 4:7; Prov 8:13; 1 Pet 2:11
7:2 Acts 20:33; 2 Cor 11:16; Matt 10:14,40
7:3 2 Cor 6:11,12; 2 Cor 7:12; 2 Cor 2:4,5
7:4 2 Cor 3:12; 2 Cor 1:4; Phil 2:17
7:5 2 Cor 2:13; Deut 32:25; 2 Cor 1:16,17
7:6 Isa 57:15; Isa 49:13; 2 Cor 1:3,4
7:7 Acts 11:23; Rom 1:12; Col 2:5

6:9 *as dying, and look, we live* A nobody to the world but known to God. Again and again God kept him alive (1:8-10; 11:23). Every trial was measured by God's hand (Ps 118:18).
6:10 *as being sorrowful, but always rejoicing* Paul wept over the churches and over Israel (Rom 9:2), yet joy never left. Happiness depends on what is happening; joy depends on who God is. He owned almost nothing, yet in Christ had everything (1 Cor 3:21-23). A believer with nothing but Christ is richer than a man with everything but Christ.
6:11 *Our mouth has been opened to you, Corinthians* Paul rarely names his readers like this. He has held nothing back, and his heart has room for all of them, even those who hurt him.
6:12 *you are restricted in your affections* Restricted is squeezed into a narrow space. Affections are the deep feelings of the heart. Some had pulled back their love after listening to his critics. When we let others turn us against someone who loves us, our own hearts shrink.
6:13 *you also be widened* A fair exchange: I opened my heart, now open yours. Paul speaks as their spiritual father (1 Cor 4:15). Love grows when it is returned.
6:14 *Do not become unequally yoked with unbelievers* A yoke joined two animals to pull together. The Law forbade plowing with an ox and a donkey (Deut 22:10). In context Paul calls the church to stop joining hands with people and practices that oppose Christ, amid Corinth's idols and false teachers. Most apply it first to marriage (1 Cor 7:39). Many extend it to binding partnerships that force compromise; others keep it to marriage and false religion. It does not forbid friendship with unbelievers (1 Cor 5:9-10), nor tell a believer already married to an unbeliever to leave (1 Cor 7:12-14).
6:15 *what harmony has Christ with Belial?* Five questions, each answered none. Belial means worthlessness and became a Jewish name for Satan. At the deepest level, in what they love and serve, believer and unbeliever do not share the same Lord.
6:16 *you are a temple of the living God* An idol in God's temple was one of Israel's worst sins (2 Kgs 21:4-7). God lives in His people by His Spirit (1 Cor 3:16; 6:19). Paul quotes Leviticus 26:12 and Ezekiel 37:27. In Ezekiel the promise is to Israel regathered to its land (Ezek 37:21-28). Paul does not move it to the church but shows God already lives among His people now. An idol is anything we love, trust or serve more than God.
6:17 *come out from the midst of them and be separate* From Isaiah 52:11, God's call to leave Babylon and its idols. To be separate is not to live in a bubble but to be set apart for God in belief, love and action. "I will receive you": separation is coming home to Someone.
6:18 *you will be to Me for sons and daughters* Echoing God's promise to David (2 Sam 7:14) and Isaiah 43:6. Every believer, man or woman, is God's child. We do not separate from the world to earn His love but because we already belong to a Father who loves us.
7:1 *let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of flesh and spirit* The promises are those of 6:16-18. Sins of the flesh are outward, like immorality and drunkenness; sins of the spirit are inward, like pride, bitterness and envy. Only Christ's blood cleanses guilt (1 John 1:7), but we must turn from what defiles. Perfecting holiness is a lifelong work, done in reverent fear of the holy God who lives among us.
7:2 *we wronged no one, we corrupted no one, we exploited no one* "Make room for us" repeats 6:13. To corrupt is to ruin someone's faith; to exploit is to take advantage, often for money. The false teachers did all three (11:20). Can we say the same about how we have treated others?
7:3 *you are in our hearts, to die together and to live together* Paul is not trying to make them feel guilty. These are words of lifelong commitment, as between best friends or husband and wife. That is how a true pastor loves his people.
7:4 *I overabound with joy in all our affliction* His troubles had not gone away, but God gave joy in the middle of them, and he is about to say why.
7:5 *outside were conflicts, within were fears* The story of 2:12-13 resumes. Opposition outside, worry about Corinth inside. Being a strong believer does not mean never feeling afraid. It means bringing those fears to God.
7:6 *the One comforting the lowly, God, comforted us by the coming of Titus* The lowly are those brought down by trouble (Isa 49:13). Paul received no vision. A friend walked through the door. God often comforts us through people. Whom might He send you to this week?
7:7 *your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me* Titus came back encouraged. They missed Paul, were sorry for the pain they caused, and now stood up for him. All Paul's fears turned to joy.

rejoiced the more. **8** For even if I grieved you with the letter, I do not regret ***it***; even if I was regretting ***it*** (for I see that that letter grieved you, even if for an hour), **9** now I rejoice, not that you were grieved, but that you were grieved to repentance; for you were grieved according to God, so that you might suffer loss in nothing from us. **10** For the grief according to God produces repentance to salvation without regret, but the grief of the world produces death. **11** For look, this very thing, your having been grieved according to God, how much earnestness it has produced in you, yes, ***what*** defense, yes, ***what*** indignation, yes, ***what*** fear, yes, ***what*** longing, yes, ***what*** zeal, yes, ***what*** vindication! In everything you have proved yourselves to be pure in the matter. **12** So even if I wrote to you, ***it was*** not for the sake of the one having done wrong, nor for the sake of the one having suffered wrong, but for the sake of our earnestness on your behalf being made manifest to you before God. **13** Because of this we have been comforted in your comfort; and we rejoiced still more abundantly at the joy of Titus, because his spirit has been refreshed by all of you. **14** For if I have boasted anything to him about you, I was not put to shame; but as we spoke all things to you in truth, so also our boasting to Titus became truth. **15** And his affections are more abundantly toward you, as he remembers the obedience of all of you, how you received him with fear and trembling. **16** I rejoice therefore that in everything I am confident in you.

2 CORINTHIANS 8

The Grace of Giving

1 Now we make known to you, brothers, the grace of God which has been given among the churches of Macedonia (Makedonia), **2** that in much testing of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded to the riches of their generosity. **3** For according to ***their*** ability, I testify, and beyond ***their*** ability, ***they gave*** of their own accord, **4** with much appeal begging us to receive the grace and the fellowship of the ministry to the saints. **5** And not as we had hoped, but they first gave themselves to the Lord, and to us through ***the*** will of God, **6** so that we urged Titus (Titos) that, just as he had begun before, so he would also complete this grace also among you. **7** But just as you abound in everything, in faith and speech and knowledge and all earnestness and in the love from you in us, ***see*** that you abound in this grace also. **8** I do not speak as a command, but through the earnestness of others also proving the genuine-

7:8 2 Cor 7:6,11; 2 Cor 2:2-11; Lam 3:32
7:9 Acts 20:21; 2 Cor 13:8-10; 2 Cor 7:6,7,10
7:10 Acts 11:18; 2 Sam 12:13; 1 Kgs 8:47-50
7:11 2 Cor 7:7; 2 Cor 7:9; Isa 66:2
7:12 2 Cor 2:9; 1 Cor 5:1; 2 Cor 11:11,28
7:13 Rom 15:32; 2 Cor 2:3; Rom 12:15
7:14 2 Cor 7:4; 2 Cor 8:24; 2 Cor 9:2-4
7:15 Phil 2:12; 2 Cor 2:9; 2 Cor 6:12
7:16 2 Thess 3:4; Phlm 1:8,21

8:1 Acts 16:9; Acts 11:23; Col 1:29
8:2 James 2:5; 1 Thess 1:6; 1 Thess 2:14
8:3 1 Cor 16:2; Exod 35:5,21,22,29; 1 Chr 29:5,6,9,13-17
8:4 Acts 24:17; 1 Cor 16:3,4; 2 Cor 9:1,12-14
8:5 Isa 56:6; Jer 50:5; 2 Cor 5:14,15
8:6 2 Cor 12:18; 2 Cor 8:16,17; 2 Cor 8:4,19
8:7 2 Cor 9:8; 1 Cor 1:5; Rom 15:14
8:8 1 Cor 7:6,12,25; 2 Cor 8:10; 2 Cor 9:7

7:8 *even if I grieved you with the letter, I do not regret it* The hard letter of 2:3-4. For a time Paul wished he had not sent it, as anyone lies awake after saying something hard to someone he loves. But the grief lasted only "for an hour" and led somewhere good.
7:9 *grieved to repentance* Paul rejoiced not in their pain but in what it produced. Repentance is a change of mind that leads to a change of direction. Their sorrow was "according to God," grief over how sin offended Him, not only over the trouble it caused.
7:10 *the grief according to God produces repentance to salvation without regret* One of the most important verses on repentance. Godly sorrow sees sin as God sees it and turns to Him. Worldly sorrow grieves over being caught or over consequences, brings tears but no change, and leads to death. Peter wept, turned back and was restored (Luke 22:62; John 21:15-19). Judas felt remorse but did not turn to the Lord (Matt 27:3-5). Where is your sorrow leading you?
7:11 *how much earnestness it has produced in you* Seven fruits of godly sorrow: taking it seriously, eagerness to set things right, anger at the sin, holy fear, longing to be restored, zeal, and seeing justice done. Real repentance does not just feel sorry. It acts.
7:12 *nor for the sake of the one having suffered wrong* The offender of 2:5-8 and the one he wronged, perhaps Paul himself. Paul wrote not mainly to punish or defend but so they would see, before God, how deeply he cared for them.
7:13 *his spirit has been refreshed by all of you* Titus may have gone worried about his welcome. To refresh is to give rest and new strength. When a church treats God's servants well, it brings joy to everyone.
7:14 *our boasting to Titus became truth* Paul had told Titus the church would come through and was not put to shame. It is good to believe the best about people and speak well of them.
7:15 *how you received him with fear and trembling* Not terror of Titus, but humble seriousness, knowing he came with an apostle's authority and they had done wrong. They listened and obeyed rather than making excuses.
7:16 *in everything I am confident in you* The crisis is over, and trust restored clears the way for chapters 8 and 9. Repentance and forgiveness clear the way for working together again.
8:1 *the grace of God which has been given among the churches of Macedonia* Macedonia's churches included Philippi, Thessalonica and Berea (Acts 16:12; 17:1, 10). Paul calls their giving God's grace, a word that runs through these two chapters. A generous heart is evidence of God at work.
8:2 *their deep poverty abounded to the riches of their generosity* They were suffering for their faith (1 Thess 1:6; 2:14) and in rock-bottom poverty, yet joy and poverty together produced rich generosity. Generosity does not depend on how much you have but on what has hold of your heart.
8:3 *beyond their ability, they gave of their own accord* Paul saw it himself. No one forced or begged them. Grace giving is not a tax or a fee but a free gift from a heart God has touched.
8:4 *begging us to receive the grace and the fellowship of the ministry to the saints* They begged Paul to let them give, perhaps because he hesitated at their poverty. Fellowship is koinonia, sharing. The saints are the poor believers in Jerusalem (Rom 15:26). Do you see giving as a burden or a privilege?
8:5 *they first gave themselves to the Lord* The secret of their giving. When a person has given his whole life to the Lord, giving money is no longer a hard question. If I have given myself to God, my money will follow.
8:6 *so he would also complete this grace also among you* Titus had begun gathering the gift in Corinth. Good intentions are not enough. God wants us to follow through.
8:7 *see that you abound in this grace also* Corinth abounded in faith, speech and knowledge (1 Cor 1:5) but could still be weak in giving. If we are growing in Christ, our generosity should be growing too.
8:8 *I do not speak as a command* Paul could have ordered an amount and chose not to. Love that is real shows in action (1 John 3:17-18). Paul never mentions the tithe in chapters 8-9 or sets a percentage. Some see the tithe as a good starting guide, since Abraham gave a tenth before the Law (Gen 14:20); others see it as part of the Law, with believers giving as each purposes (9:7). The passage plainly teaches willing, generous, proportionate giving.

ness of your love. **9** For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus (Iesous) Christ, that for your sake He became poor, being rich, so that you by His poverty might become rich. **10** And I give an opinion in this, for this is profitable for you, who began before, a year ago, not only to do but also to will. **11** But now also complete the doing, so that, just as ***there was*** the readiness of the willing, so also ***there may be*** the completing out of what ***you*** have. **12** For if the readiness is present, ***it is*** well-accepted according to what anyone may have, not according to what he does not have. **13** For ***it is*** not that ***there should be*** rest for others and affliction for you, **14** but by equality: at the present time your surplus ***is*** for their need, so that their surplus also may be for your need, so that there may be equality; **15** just as it has been written, "He who ***gathered*** much did not have excess, and he who ***gathered*** little did not lack."

Titus and the Brothers Sent

16 But thanks ***be*** to God, who gives the same earnestness for you into the heart of Titus; **17** for he indeed accepted the appeal, but being more earnest, he went out to you of his own accord. **18** And we sent with him the brother whose praise in the gospel ***is*** through all the churches; **19** and not only ***this***, but he was also chosen by the churches ***as*** our fellow traveler with this grace which is being ministered by us for the glory of the Lord Himself and ***for*** your readiness, **20** avoiding this, that anyone should blame us in this bounty which is being ministered by us, **21** providing good ***things*** not only before ***the*** Lord but also before men. **22** And we sent with them our brother, whom we have often proved in many things to be earnest, but now much more earnest by ***his*** great confidence which ***is*** toward you. **23** Whether about Titus, ***he is*** my partner and fellow worker for you; or our brothers, ***they are*** apostles of ***the*** churches, ***the*** glory of Christ. **24** Therefore show to them, even before the face of the churches, the proof of your love and of our boasting about you.

2 CORINTHIANS 9

The Gift Made Ready

1 For concerning the ministry to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you; **2** for I know your readiness, about which I boast of you to ***the*** Macedonians, that Achaia has been prepared since a year ago; and the zeal from you has stirred up the majority. **3** But I have sent the brothers, so that our boasting about you might not be made empty in this matter, so that, just as I was saying, you may be prepared; **4** lest perhaps, if Macedonians come with me and find you

8:9 Matt 20:28; Rom 5:8,20,21; Phil 2:6
8:10 1 Cor 7:25,40; 2 Cor 9:2; Prov 19:17
8:12 2 Cor 9:7; Mark 12:42-44; Luke 16:10
8:13 Acts 4:34; Rom 15:26,27
8:15 Exod 16:18; Luke 22:35
8:16 Ezra 7:27; 1 Chr 29:13; Rev 17:17
8:17 2 Cor 8:6; Heb 13:22; 2 Cor 8:8,10
8:18 2 Cor 12:18; Rom 16:4
8:19 1 Cor 16:3,4; 2 Cor 4:15; 2 Cor 8:1-4
8:20 2 Cor 11:12; Matt 10:16; Rom 14:16
8:21 Rom 12:17; Phil 4:8; 1 Pet 2:12
8:22 Phil 2:20-22
8:23 Phil 2:25; Phlm 1:17; 2 Cor 8:6,16
8:24 2 Cor 7:14; 2 Cor 8:8; 2 Cor 9:2-4
9:1 Gen 27:42; 1 Sam 20:23; 2 Kgs 22:18
9:2 2 Cor 8:10; 2 Cor 8:8,10,19; 2 Cor 8:24
9:3 2 Cor 8:6,17-24; 2 Cor 7:14; 1 Cor 16:1-4
9:4 2 Cor 9:2; 2 Cor 8:1-5; 2 Cor 8:24

8:9 *for your sake He became poor, being rich* The greatest reason to give. The Son shared the Father's glory (John 17:5), yet was laid in a feeding trough (Luke 2:7), had no place to lay His head (Matt 8:20), and was buried in a borrowed tomb, so that we might be rich in forgiveness and eternal life. Some use this verse to promise believers wealth, but Paul was often poor (6:10; 11:27). The riches are spiritual riches in Christ.
8:10 *who began before, a year ago* Corinth was first to start (1 Cor 16:1-2), but the trouble in the church seems to have stalled the gift. Paul gives advice, not a command.
8:11 *now also complete the doing* Many are quick to say yes and slow to follow through. Make your willingness real. The measure is "out of what you have."
8:12 *it is well-accepted according to what anyone may have, not according to what he does not have* God looks first at the willing heart and measures a gift by what it costs the giver. The poor widow's two coins were more than all the rich gave (Mark 12:41-44). God does not expect you to give what you do not have.
8:13 *not that there should be rest for others and affliction for you* Grace giving does not mean giving so much your family goes hungry or bills go unpaid. A believer must provide for his household (1 Tim 5:8). Generous, not reckless.
8:14 *so that there may be equality* Not everyone having exactly the same, or government forcing it, but believers freely helping one another. When one part of the body has more, it helps the part that has less. The church is a family.
8:15 *He who gathered much did not have excess, and he who gathered little did not lack* From Exodus 16:18. With the manna, everyone had just what he needed. God provides for His children, often through His people sharing.
8:17 *he went out to you of his own accord* God put the care for Corinth in Titus's heart. Paul asked, but Titus would have gone anyway, the best kind of servant.
8:18 *the brother whose praise in the gospel is through all the churches* Paul does not name him. Some early writers suggested Luke; others suggest Barnabas, Silas, Apollos or one of the men of Acts 20:4. We do not know, and it matters less than his good name.
8:19 *chosen by the churches as our fellow traveler with this grace* The churches, not Paul, chose him, on purpose. Gentiles helping Jewish believers showed the world Christ had made them one family (Eph 2:14), for the Lord's glory.
8:21 *providing good things not only before the Lord but also before men* Whenever money is involved, people ask questions, and Paul's critics already doubted him (12:16-18). More than one person handled the money, and the churches chose its carriers. Never let one person handle church money alone. Keep good records and be open about how gifts are used.
8:22 *whom we have often proved in many things to be earnest* A third, unnamed brother, tested many times. Faithfulness in small things had prepared him for a larger task (Luke 16:10).
8:23 *they are apostles of the churches, the glory of Christ* Apostle here is used in its general sense of a messenger sent by the churches, not one chosen by Christ like the Twelve or Paul. Their faithful lives brought honor to Jesus. What a thing to be said of anyone.
8:24 *the proof of your love and of our boasting about you* Other churches would hear how Corinth received these messengers. Love is proven by what we do. What does your giving say about your love for Christ and His people?
9:1 *it is superfluous for me to write to you* Superfluous means more than needed. Paul is tactful, reminding friends of something they already care about. Helping believers in need is called a ministry, a service to God.
9:2 *the zeal from you has stirred up the majority* Corinth's early eagerness inspired Macedonia, and now Macedonia's example inspires Corinth (8:1-5). Our faithfulness can stir others, and theirs can stir us (Heb 10:24). Achaia was Corinth's province.
9:3 *so that, just as I was saying, you may be prepared* Good intentions can fade, and the church's trouble had slowed things. Wise leaders do not just hope things get done. They make plans to help people follow through.
9:4 *lest perhaps, if Macedonians come with me and find you unprepared* Paul is gentle, even a little playful: we would be ashamed, not to mention you. Our follow-through should match our promises.

unprepared, we (that we may not say you) be put to shame in this confidence of boasting. **5** Therefore I considered ***it*** necessary to urge the brothers that they go ahead to you and arrange beforehand your previously announced blessing, that this be ready thus, as a blessing and not as covetousness.

God Loves a Cheerful Giver

6 Now this ***I say***: he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows with blessings will also reap with blessings. **7** Each ***one should give*** just as he purposes in the heart, not out of grief or out of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. **8** And God ***is*** able to make all grace abound to you, so that, always having all sufficiency in everything, you may abound to every good work; **9** just as it has been written, "He scattered, he gave to the poor; his righteousness remains to the age." **10** Now may He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the produce of your righteousness, **11** ***you*** being enriched in everything for all generosity, which produces through us thanksgiving to God. **12** For the ministry of this service not only is fully supplying the needs of the saints, but is also abounding through many thanksgivings to God, **13** ***while*** through the proof of this ministry ***they are*** glorifying God for the submission of your confession to the gospel of Christ, and ***for*** the generosity of the fellowship toward them and toward all, **14** and by their supplication for you, longing for you because of the surpassing grace of God upon you. **15** Now thanks ***be*** to God for His indescribable free gift!

2 CORINTHIANS 10

Paul's Authority

1 Now I myself, Paul (Paulos), urge you through the meekness and gentleness of Christ, I who in appearance ***am*** humble among you, but being absent am confident toward you; **2** and I implore ***you*** that, being present, I may not be confident with the confidence with which I reckon to be daring against some who reckon us as walking according to ***the*** flesh. **3** For walking in flesh, we do not wage war according to ***the*** flesh; **4** for the weapons of our warfare ***are*** not fleshly, but powerful to God for ***the*** demolition of
strongholds, **5** demolishing reasonings and every high thing lifting itself up against the knowledge of God, and taking every thought captive into the obedience of Christ, **6** and having ***it*** in readiness to avenge all disobedience, when your

9:5 Gen 33:11; 1 Sam 25:27; 2 Cor 8:6
9:6 Prov 22:9; Luke 6:38; Prov 11:18,24
9:7 2 Cor 8:12; Exod 25:2; 1 Chr 29:17
9:8 Prov 10:22; Mal 3:10; Phil 4:18
9:9 Ps 112:9; Prov 22:9; Prov 28:27
9:10 Isa 55:10; Hos 10:12; Gen 47:19
9:11 2 Cor 1:11; 1 Tim 6:17,18; 2 Cor 8:2,3
9:12 2 Cor 9:1; 2 Cor 8:4; 2 Cor 8:14,15
9:13 Matt 5:16; Ps 50:23; John 15:8
9:14 2 Cor 1:11; Ezra 6:8-10; Ps 41:1,2
9:15 2 Cor 2:14; Eph 5:20; John 3:16
10:1 Matt 11:29; 2 Cor 10:10; Gal 5:2
10:2 2 Cor 13:2,10; 2 Cor 11:9-13; 2 Cor 12:13-19
10:3 1 Pet 4:1,2; 2 Tim 2:3,4; Rom 8:13
10:4 Jer 1:10; 2 Cor 6:7; 2 Cor 13:3,4
10:5 Matt 15:19; Rom 7:23; Rom 1:21
10:6 2 Cor 2:9; 2 Cor 7:15; Num 16:26-30

9:5 *as a blessing and not as covetousness* Covetousness is greed. Gathering early let the gift come from generous hearts rather than be squeezed out under last-minute pressure, which feels more like a tax than a blessing.
9:6 *he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly* Giving feels like loss, as a farmer throws good seed on the ground, but the seed grows. The harvest is God's grace and supply (9:8), righteousness (9:10) and thanksgiving to God (9:12), with treasure in heaven (Matt 6:19-21). Some say giving money guarantees getting rich. Paul does not. When God supplies material things, it is so we can keep giving (9:8, 11).
9:7 *for God loves a cheerful giver* Each one gives, not only the rich. Giving is purposed ahead of time, between the believer and God, not a reaction to an emotional appeal, and Paul sets no amount. Not with regret or under force. Cheerful is hilaros, glad. God gave His Son freely, and when we give with joy, we look like our Father.
9:8 *God is able to make all grace abound to you* All grace, always, all sufficiency, everything, every good work. The generous giver will have enough for his needs and to keep doing good. God gives to us so He can give through us.
9:9 *He scattered, he gave to the poor* From Psalm 112:9, the righteous man who fears the Lord. He scatters like a sower rather than hoarding, and what he gives for God's sake lasts.
9:10 *He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food* Echoing Isaiah 55:10. God gives both seed to plant and bread to eat, and as we keep giving, the fruit of our godly lives keeps growing.
9:11 *being enriched in everything for all generosity* The world says get rich to enjoy it. God says I will give you enough to share it. The gift passes from God to us to others and back to God as praise. We are a channel, not a reservoir.
9:12 *the ministry of this service* The word is leitourgia, often used of priestly service in the temple. Giving is worship. It met real needs in Jerusalem and caused many to thank God.
9:13 *the submission of your confession to the gospel of Christ* Confession is what you say you believe, submission your obedience to it. Many Jewish believers were unsure of Gentile believers. A Gentile gift to Jewish saints showed Christ's love crossing the old dividing wall (Eph 2:14).
9:14 *by their supplication for you* Corinth would give money, and Jerusalem would give earnest prayer. Believers who had never met would come to love one another. Generous giving knits hearts together across distance and background.
9:15 *thanks be to God for His indescribable free gift* After two chapters on giving, Paul bursts into praise for God's gift of His Son (John 3:16) and all that comes with Him (Rom 8:32). Every gift we give is a small echo of this one. Have you thanked God today for it?
10:1 *through the meekness and gentleness of Christ* "I myself, Paul": attacked personally, he answers personally. Meekness is not weakness but strength under control. Jesus was gentle and humble in heart (Matt 11:29), yet drove the money changers from the temple. The rest of the verse quotes his critics, who called him timid in person and bold only in letters, a coward.
10:2 *some who reckon us as walking according to the flesh* The false teachers accused Paul of worldly motives such as selfishness, fear or love of money. He begs the church to set things right so he need not be severe in person, but he will be if forced.
10:3 *we do not wage war according to the flesh* Paul is human like everyone else, but he refuses the world's methods: power, money, pressure, manipulation, smear campaigns and clever speech. Believers should not fight their battles by the flesh's rules.
10:4 *the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly* The Christian life is a real spiritual battle (Eph 6:12). The weapons are truth, righteousness, the gospel, faith, the Word of God and prayer (Eph 6:13-18), mighty because God works through them. A stronghold was a high-walled fortress. Pride, false religion and long-believed lies wall people in, and no human argument breaks those walls, but God's truth carried in prayer can.
10:5 *taking every thought captive into the obedience of Christ* Strongholds are reasonings and proud ideas raised like towers against the knowledge of God. A winning army takes prisoners. What thoughts run loose in your mind: fear, lust, bitterness, worry, pride? Capture each one, hold it up to God's Word, and make it obey Christ.
10:6 *when your obedience has been fulfilled* Paul would discipline the unrepentant rebels, but only after the church as a whole had come back. He would not punish the whole church for the sins of a few.

obedience has been fulfilled. **7** You are looking at the things according to appearance. If anyone is persuaded in himself ***that he*** is Christ's, let him reckon this again from himself, that just as he ***is*** Christ's, so also we ***are*** Christ's. **8** For even if I boast somewhat more abundantly concerning our authority, which the Lord gave to us for building ***you*** up and not for your demolition, I will not be ashamed, **9** so that I may not seem as if to terrify you through the letters. **10** For "the letters," he says, "***are*** weighty and strong, but the presence of the body ***is*** weak, and the speech ***is*** despised." **11** Let such a one reckon this, that such as we are in word through letters when absent, such ***we are*** also in deed when present.

Boasting in the Lord

12 For we do not dare to classify or compare ourselves with some of those commending themselves; but they, measuring themselves by themselves and comparing themselves with themselves, do not understand. **13** But we will not boast to the things beyond measure, but according to the measure of the sphere which God assigned to us, a measure to reach even as far as you. **14** For we are not overextending ourselves, as ***though*** not reaching to you; for we came even as far as you in the gospel of Christ, **15** not boasting to the things beyond measure in others' labors, but having hope, as your faith increases, to be enlarged among you according to our sphere, to abundance, **16** so as to preach the gospel in the ***regions*** beyond you, not to boast in another's sphere in the things ***made*** ready. **17** But "he who boasts, let him boast in ***the*** Lord." **18** For not he who commends himself, that one is approved, but ***he*** whom the Lord commends.

2 CORINTHIANS 11

Paul and the False Apostles

1 I wish you were bearing with me a little in the foolishness; but indeed you are bearing with me. **2** For I am jealous for you with ***the*** jealousy of God; for I betrothed you to one husband, to present a pure virgin to Christ. **3** But I am afraid lest perhaps, as the serpent deceived Eve (Eua) by his craftiness, so your thoughts may be corrupted from the simplicity that ***is*** toward Christ. **4** For if indeed the one coming preaches another Jesus (Iesous) whom we did not preach, or you receive a different spirit which you did not receive, or a different gospel which you did not accept, you would bear ***with it*** well. **5** For I reckon ***that I*** have fallen short in nothing of

10:7 1 Sam 16:7; 2 Cor 5:12; John 7:24
10:8 2 Cor 13:2,3,8,10; 2 Cor 1:24; Gal 1:1
10:9 1 Cor 4:5,19-21
10:10 1 Cor 1:17,21; Gal 4:13,14; 2 Cor 11:6
10:11 2 Cor 12:20; 2 Cor 13:2,3,10; 1 Cor 4:19,20
10:12 2 Cor 3:1; Prov 27:2; Prov 26:12
10:13 Rom 15:20; Prov 25:14; Matt 25:15
10:14 1 Cor 4:15; 2 Cor 3:1-3; Rom 15:18,19
10:15 Rom 15:20; 2 Cor 10:13
10:16 Rom 15:24-28
10:17 Jer 9:24; Jer 9:23,24; Ps 106:5
10:18 2 Cor 10:12; Rom 2:29; 1 Cor 4:5
11:1 2 Cor 11:4; 2 Cor 5:13; 2 Cor 11:16,17,19,21
11:2 Hos 2:19,20; Isa 54:5; John 3:29
11:3 Gen 3:13; Gen 3:4; Gen 3:1
11:4 Acts 4:12; 1 Tim 2:5; 1 Cor 12:4-11
11:5 2 Cor 12:11,12; 1 Cor 15:10; Gal 2:6-9

10:7 *You are looking at the things according to appearance* Corinth was impressed by the false teachers' polish and judged Paul by plain looks and simple speech. Whatever they claimed of belonging to Christ, Paul could claim too. Do not judge by appearance (John 7:24).
10:8 *for building you up and not for your demolition* Paul's apostolic authority was real, given by the risen Lord, but its purpose was to build up. The false teachers used theirs to enslave and exploit (11:20). That is the test of spiritual leadership.
10:10 *the presence of the body is weak, and the speech is despised* "He" is likely a leader of the false teachers. Corinth loved great public speakers, and Paul refused to impress with fancy words (1 Cor 2:1-5). A later writing describes him as short and plain looking, though we cannot be sure. The gospel never depended on his looks or voice.
10:11 *such we are also in deed when present* Integrity means being the same near or far, seen or unseen. Are we the same in private as in public, online as in person, at church as at home?
10:12 *measuring themselves by themselves and comparing themselves with themselves* Irony: Paul would not dare rank himself with these self-praising men. Make your own measuring stick and you always measure up. Comparing ourselves with others leads to pride or despair, and neither is from God. The only true measure is His.
10:13 *according to the measure of the sphere which God assigned to us* A sphere is a field of work. God gave Paul the Gentiles (Gal 2:7-9), and Corinth was inside that field. The false teachers moved into a church someone else planted and acted as if it were theirs.
10:14 *we came even as far as you in the gospel of Christ* Paul brought the gospel to Corinth first (Acts 18:1-11; 1 Cor 3:6, 10). He is stating a fact, not bragging.
10:15 *not boasting to the things beyond measure in others' labors* The false teachers took credit for what God did through Paul. Paul hoped the church's growing faith would free him to move on. A healthy church becomes a launching point for reaching others.
10:16 *to preach the gospel in the regions beyond you* Paul's heart was for those who had never heard, as far as Rome and Spain (Rom 15:20-24). He broke new ground rather than taking credit in another's field. Every church should have a heart for the regions beyond.
10:17 *he who boasts, let him boast in the Lord* From Jeremiah 9:24, also quoted in 1 Corinthians 1:31. Not in wisdom, strength or riches, but in knowing the Lord. If God has done anything good through us, the credit is His.
10:18 *not he who commends himself, that one is approved, but he whom the Lord commends* Approved means tested and found genuine. Before His judgment seat (5:10), followers and impressive looks will not matter, only whether the Lord says well done (Matt 25:21).
11:1 *bearing with me a little in the foolishness* Paul is about to talk about his own credentials, which he finds foolish. Boasting is not the way of Christ, but to win back a church led astray by boasters, he uses their method for a moment while showing how empty it is.
11:2 *I betrothed you to one husband, to present a pure virgin to Christ* Godly jealousy guards what belongs to someone we love, as God is jealous for His people (Exod 34:14). In Jewish custom betrothal was a binding promise, with the wedding later, and a father guarded his betrothed daughter. Through his preaching Paul promised them to Christ. The church is His bride (Eph 5:25-27; Rev 19:7-8).
11:3 *as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness* The serpent came with clever questions and half-truths, twisting God's Word just enough (Gen 3:1-6). Simplicity is single-hearted devotion. False teaching usually comes as something added, more complicated or impressive, slowly pulling the heart from Christ alone. Beware of any teaching that leaves you with less of Jesus.
11:4 *preaches another Jesus whom we did not preach* They used His name, but with a different spirit and a different gospel, and the Corinthians bore it easily (Gal 1:8). Many groups use the name of Jesus but mean someone other than the eternal Son of God who died for our sins and rose bodily. Ask, which Jesus?
11:5 *the most eminent apostles* Or super-apostles. Many believe Paul speaks with irony of the false teachers themselves; others think he means the Twelve, whom the false teachers may have claimed to represent. Either way, Paul was no second-rate apostle.

the most eminent apostles. **6** But even if ***I am*** unskilled in speech, yet not in knowledge; but in every ***way we have*** been made manifest to you in all things. **7** Or did I commit a sin in humbling myself so that you might be exalted, because I preached the gospel of God to you freely? **8** I robbed other churches, having received support for the ministry to you; **9** and being present with you and having been in need, I did not burden anyone; for the brothers who came from Macedonia (Makedonia) fully supplied my need; and in everything I kept myself unburdensome to you, and I will keep ***myself so***. **10** ***The*** truth of Christ is in me, that this boasting will not be stopped as to me in the regions of Achaia. **11** Why? Because I do not love you? God knows! **12** But what I do, I will also do, so that I may cut off the occasion of those desiring an occasion, so that in what they boast they may be found just as we also ***are***. **13** For such ***are*** false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. **14** And ***it is*** no marvel, for Satan himself disguises himself as an angel of light. **15** Therefore ***it is*** no great ***thing*** if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.

Paul's Sufferings

16 Again I say, let no one think me to be a fool; but if otherwise, receive me even as a fool, so that I also may boast a little. **17** What I am speaking, I am not speaking according to ***the*** Lord, but as in foolishness, in this confidence of boasting. **18** Since many boast according to the flesh, I also will boast. **19** For you gladly bear with fools, being wise ***yourselves***! **20** For you bear ***it*** if anyone enslaves you, if anyone devours ***you***, if anyone takes ***from you***, if anyone lifts himself up, if anyone strikes you in the face. **21** I speak as concerning dishonor, as though we were weak. But in whatever anyone is daring (I speak in foolishness), I also am daring. **22** Are they Hebrews? I also. Are they Israelites? I also. Are they ***the*** seed of Abraham (Abraam)? I also. **23** Are they servants of Christ? (I speak as being out of my mind) I ***am*** more: in labors more abundantly, in beatings exceedingly, in imprisonments more abundantly, in deaths often. **24** From ***the*** Jews five times I received forty ***lashes*** minus one. **25** Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked;

11:6 Eph 3:4; 1 Cor 1:17,21; 2 Cor 4:2
11:7 2 Cor 12:13; 2 Cor 10:1; Acts 18:1-3
11:8 Phil 4:14-16
11:9 1 Thess 2:6; 2 Cor 12:13; 1 Thess 2:9
11:10 Rom 9:1; Rom 1:9; Acts 18:12,27
11:11 2 Cor 12:15; 2 Cor 6:11,12; 2 Cor 7:3
11:12 1 Cor 9:12; 2 Cor 11:9; 2 Cor 1:17
11:13 Rev 2:2,9,20; Gal 1:7; Gal 2:4
11:14 Gen 3:5; Gal 1:8; 2 Cor 11:3
11:15 2 Kgs 5:13; Phil 3:19; 2 Cor 3:9
11:16 2 Cor 11:1,19; 2 Cor 12:6,11; 2 Cor 11:21-23
11:17 2 Cor 9:4; 1 Cor 7:6,12; Phil 3:3-6
11:18 2 Cor 11:12,21-23; 2 Cor 10:12-18; Jer 9:23,24
11:19 1 Cor 4:10; 1 Cor 8:1; 1 Cor 10:15
11:20 Gal 2:4; Gal 4:3,9,25; Gal 5:1,10
11:21 2 Cor 10:1,2,10; 2 Cor 11:17,23; 2 Cor 13:10
11:22 Exod 3:18; Exod 5:3; Exod 7:16
11:23 2 Cor 6:4; 1 Cor 15:10; 2 Cor 3:6
11:24 Deut 25:3; Deut 25:2,3; Matt 10:17
11:25 Deut 25:3; Acts 16:22,23,33,37; Acts 22:24

11:6 *even if I am unskilled in speech, yet not in knowledge* Unskilled means an amateur. Paul was not trained in the speaking style Greeks admired (1 Cor 2:1-4), but God revealed the gospel to him (Gal 1:11-12). A plain speaker with the truth is far better than a gifted speaker with error.
11:7 *because I preached the gospel of God to you freely?* Paul worked as a tentmaker rather than take Corinth's money (Acts 18:3). In Greek culture a teacher who did not charge was often thought worthless. With irony he asks if serving them free was a sin.
11:8 *I robbed other churches* Strong words for effect: poorer churches supported him while he served Corinth. He had the right to support (1 Cor 9:14) but gave it up there so no one could say he preached for money.
11:9 *the brothers who came from Macedonia fully supplied my need* When Silas and Timothy came, they brought gifts (Acts 18:5; Phil 4:15-16). Paul would keep serving Corinth without pay and give his critics nothing to grab.
11:11 *Because I do not love you? God knows!* Sometimes love gives, and sometimes it refuses to take. Our motives can be misunderstood, but God knows our hearts.
11:12 *so that I may cut off the occasion of those desiring an occasion* The false teachers wanted to say Paul was in it for money like them. If they were really his equals, let them serve without pay. They never would.
11:13 *false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ* Disguising means putting on a costume. Jesus warned of wolves in sheep's clothing (Matt 7:15). Test every teacher by the Word (1 John 4:1; Acts 17:11): what he teaches about Jesus and the gospel (11:4), whether he serves people or uses them (11:20), whether he points to Christ or himself (4:5).
11:14 *Satan himself disguises himself as an angel of light* Satan rarely shows up looking evil. He offered Eve wisdom (Gen 3:5) and quoted Scripture to Jesus (Matt 4:6). The most dangerous lies sound spiritual, reasonable and attractive. Many false religions began with a claimed message from an angel. Judge not by how bright the messenger looks but by God's Word.
11:15 *whose end will be according to their works* His servants talk about righteousness but serve the father of lies (John 8:44). Their disguise will not fool God (2 Pet 2:1-3). That should make every teacher tremble to handle God's Word rightly.
11:17 *I am not speaking according to the Lord, but as in foolishness* Not that these verses are uninspired, but that self-boasting is not how Jesus acted. Paul knowingly plays a fool's part to win them back.
11:18 *many boast according to the flesh* Bragging about background, family, education, achievements and spiritual experiences. Paul meets them on their ground, but his boasting ends in weakness.
11:19 *you gladly bear with fools, being wise yourselves!* Irony. The Corinthians thought themselves wise (1 Cor 4:10), yet gladly put up with foolish boasters, so surely they can bear Paul a few minutes.
11:20 *if anyone strikes you in the face* The false teachers enslaved, devoured, took advantage, lifted themselves up and treated the believers with contempt, maybe real violence. People sometimes follow and even defend leaders who abuse them. False shepherds feed on the flock (Ezek 34:2-4). If a leader has hurt you, that is not what Christ intends. He is the Good Shepherd who lays down His life (John 10:11).
11:21 *as though we were weak* Irony: Paul was too weak to treat them that way. Now he begins his foolish boast.
11:22 *Are they Hebrews? I also* Hebrews kept the language and customs; Israelites were the covenant people descended from Jacob; Abraham's seed were heirs of the promises. Paul was all three (Phil 3:5). He never stopped loving his people. He simply refused to trust his heritage for salvation.
11:23 *in labors more abundantly, in beatings exceedingly, in imprisonments more abundantly* Paul's proof is not successes or visions but sufferings. Acts records only one imprisonment before this letter (Acts 16:23), so there were others we do not know.
11:24 *five times I received forty lashes minus one* The Law allowed up to forty lashes (Deut 25:3), and thirty-nine were given to avoid going over by mistake. A brutal whipping from synagogue leaders five times, none recorded in Acts.
11:25 *once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked* Beating with rods was Roman punishment (Acts 16:22-23). The stoning was at Lystra, where he was left for dead (Acts 14:19). All three shipwrecks came before the one in Acts 27. These men who mocked Paul as weak had suffered nothing like this.

a night and a day I have spent in the deep; **26** in journeys
often, in dangers of rivers, in dangers of robbers, in dangers
from ***my own*** race, in dangers from ***the*** Gentiles, in dangers
in ***the*** city, in dangers in ***the*** wilderness, in dangers in ***the*** sea,
in dangers among false brothers; **27** in labor and toil, in
sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in
cold and nakedness; **28** besides the things outside, ***there is***
the pressure on me daily, the care for all the churches.
29 Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is caused to stum-
ble, and I do not burn? **30** If it is necessary to boast, I will
boast of the things of my weakness. **31** The God and Father of
our Lord Jesus Christ, He who is blessed to the ages, knows
that I am not lying. **32** In Damascus (Damaskos) the governor
of Aretas the king was guarding the city of the Damascenes
(Damaskenoi), wishing to seize me; **33** and through a window
in a basket I was let down through the wall, and I escaped his
hands.

2 CORINTHIANS 12

Visions and the Thorn in the Flesh

1 Indeed it is not profitable for me to boast; for I will come to
visions and revelations of ***the*** Lord. **2** I know a man in Christ
fourteen years ago (whether in ***the*** body I do not know, or
out of the body I do not know; God knows), such a one caught
up to ***the*** third heaven. **3** And I know such a man (whether in
the body or outside the body I do not know; God knows),
4 that he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpress-
ible words, which it is not permitted for a man to speak. **5** On
behalf of such a one I will boast, but on behalf of myself I will
not boast, except in my weaknesses. **6** For if I desire to boast,
I will not be a fool, for I will speak ***the*** truth; but I refrain, lest
anyone reckon to me beyond what he sees me ***to be*** or hears
from me. **7** And so that I might not be exalted above measure
by the surpassing greatness of the revelations, there was
given to me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan, so
that he might buffet me, so that I might not be exalted above
measure. **8** Concerning this I begged the Lord three times
that it might depart from me. **9** And He has said to me, "My
grace is sufficient for you, for My power is perfected in weak-
ness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast in my weak-
nesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.
10 Therefore I take pleasure in weaknesses, in insults, in
hardships, in persecutions, in distresses, on behalf of Christ;

11:26 Acts 14:5,19; Acts 13:50; Acts 25:3
11:27 2 Cor 6:5; 1 Thess 2:9; 2 Thess 3:8
11:28 Acts 15:36,40,41; Acts 18:23; Acts 20:2,18-35
11:29 1 Cor 8:13; 1 Cor 9:22; 2 Cor 2:4,5
11:30 2 Cor 12:5-10; 2 Cor 11:16-18; 2 Cor 12:1,11
11:31 Rom 9:5; John 10:30; Eph 1:3
11:32 Jer 49:23; 2 Cor 11:26; Acts 9:24,25
11:33 Josh 2:18; 1 Sam 19:12; Josh 2:15
12:1 Gal 1:12; Gal 2:2; 2 Cor 12:7
12:2 2 Cor 11:11; Acts 22:17; 1 Thess 4:17
12:4 Luke 23:43; Rev 2:7; Ezek 31:9
12:5 2 Cor 12:9,10; 2 Cor 11:30
12:6 2 Cor 11:16; 2 Cor 10:8; 1 Cor 3:5,9,10
12:7 Num 33:55; Job 2:7; Job 1:12
12:8 2 Sam 12:16-18; 1 Sam 15:11; Heb 5:7
12:9 Phil 4:13; Isa 40:29; Eph 3:16
12:10 Rom 5:3; 2 Cor 13:4,9; James 1:2

11:26 *in dangers among false brothers* Travel, mostly on foot, through flooding rivers, bandit country, Jewish and Gentile opposition (Acts 9:23; 14:19; 16:19-24; 19:23-41), city mobs, wilderness and sea. Perhaps worst was betrayal from within.
11:27 *in cold and nakedness* Hard work, sleepless nights, hunger, and fastings that may mean going without because there was no food. Next time we complain about a hard day, read this verse.
11:28 *the care for all the churches* An inward weight beyond the outward sufferings: every report of false teaching, division or persecution from Galatia to Asia. It is often heavier than any outward hardship. Pray for your pastor and leaders.
11:29 *Who is weak, and I am not weak?* Paul felt his people's struggles as his own, and burned with grief and anger when someone was led into sin. A true shepherd does not shrug when a sheep stumbles.
11:30 *I will boast of the things of my weakness* The turning point. The false teachers boasted in strength. Paul boasts in what showed his weakness, because there God's power was seen (4:7; 12:9). That is the way of the cross.
11:31 *knows that I am not lying* His list was so extreme some might think he made it up, and enemies called him a liar (6:8). God saw everything, and that was enough.
11:33 *through a window in a basket I was let down through the wall* Aretas was king of the Nabateans, an Arab kingdom; most identify him as Aretas IV, who ruled until about A.D. 40 (Acts 9:23-25). Roman soldiers won high honor for being first over an enemy wall. Paul was first down the wall, fleeing in a basket. He ends his boast with a humiliating escape on purpose.
12:1 *I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord* Boasting does nothing for the kingdom, but the false teachers bragged of spiritual experiences. A vision is something seen by God's power; a revelation is something God makes known. Paul had many (Acts 16:9; 18:9; 22:17-18; 27:23).
12:2 *I know a man in Christ fourteen years ago, such a one caught up to the third heaven* Paul speaks of himself as someone else, uncomfortable boasting, though verse 7 shows he is the man. About A.D. 42, during his quiet years in Tarsus and Syria-Cilicia (Acts 9:30; Gal 1:21). He kept quiet fourteen years. Jews often spoke of the sky, the heavens of sun and stars, and the third heaven where God dwells. He honestly did not know if he was in the body or not.
12:4 *he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words* Paradise is a Persian word for a garden or park, the dwelling of God where the righteous are with Him (Luke 23:43; Rev 2:7), the same place as the third heaven. Paul gives no tour of heaven. Many books today describe trips to heaven in detail. The man who really went said almost nothing.
12:5 *on behalf of myself I will not boast, except in my weaknesses* The experience was God's gift, not Paul's achievement. Spiritual experiences can be real gifts, but never a reason for pride.
12:6 *lest anyone reckon to me beyond what he sees me to be or hears from me* Paul holds back so people judge him by his life and teaching, not his visions. A wise rule for judging any teacher: does the life and teaching match God's Word?
12:7 *there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan* The word can mean a sharp stake or splinter. To buffet is to strike again and again. Satan meant it for harm; God meant it to keep Paul humble, as He allowed Satan to test Job (Job 1:12). Satan is never outside God's control. Paul does not name it. Many think of illness, perhaps eye trouble (Gal 4:13-15; 6:11), malaria or effects of beatings. Others think of persecution, since Israel's enemies were thorns in their sides (Num 33:55), or a spiritual struggle. Unnamed, every suffering believer can find himself in Paul's story.
12:8 *I begged the Lord three times that it might depart from me* God said no. That did not mean Paul lacked faith or had hidden sin. God had a better plan. Jesus also prayed three times in the garden and submitted to the Father (Matt 26:39-44). It is right to ask God to take away our pain, and right to trust Him when He does not.
12:9 *My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is perfected in weakness* The Lord gave something better than removal: grace that is enough every day. Perfected means brought to its full purpose. When we are weak, it is plain the strength is His. "Rest upon me" pictures Christ's power spread over him like a tent. Is there a weakness God has not removed? His grace is enough for you too.
12:10 *for when I am weak, then I am strong* Paul does not enjoy pain for its own sake but because it opens the door to Christ's power. A paradox sounds impossible but is true. This is the message of 2 Corinthians in one sentence.

for when I am weak, then I am strong.

Paul's Concern for the Church

11 I have become a fool in boasting; you compelled me. For I ought to have been commended by you; for in nothing did I fall short of the most eminent apostles, even if I am nothing. **12** Indeed the signs of the apostle were performed among you in all endurance, in signs and wonders and miracles. **13** For what is it in which you were made inferior to the rest of the churches, except that I myself did not burden you? Forgive me this wrong! **14** Look, a third time I am ready to come to you, and I will not burden you; for I do not seek what is yours, but you. For the children ought not to store up for the parents, but the parents for the children. **15** And I will most gladly spend and be utterly spent for your souls, even if, loving you more abundantly, I am loved less. **16** But be it so, I did not burden you; but being crafty, I caught you by deceit. **17** Did I exploit you through any of those whom I have sent to you? **18** I urged Titus (Titos), and I sent the brother with ***him***. Did Titus exploit you? Did we not walk in the same spirit? Not in the same steps? **19** Again, do you think that we are defending ourselves to you? We speak before God in Christ; but all things, beloved, ***are*** for your building up. **20** For I fear lest perhaps, having come, I may find you not such as I wish, and I may be found by you such as you do not wish; lest perhaps ***there be*** strifes, jealousies, outbursts of anger, rivalries, slanders, whisperings, arrogances, disorders; **21** lest, when I come again, my God may humble me before you, and I may mourn ***over*** many of those who have sinned before and have not repented of the impurity and sexual immorality and sensuality which they practiced.

2 CORINTHIANS 13

Final Warnings

1 This third ***time*** I am coming to you. "By ***the*** mouth of two or three witnesses every word will be established." **2** I have said before and I say beforehand, as being present the second time, and being absent now I write to those who have sinned before and to all the rest, that if I come again I will not spare ***anyone***, **3** since you seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, who is not weak toward you but is powerful among you. **4** For indeed, if He was crucified out of weakness, yet He lives by ***the*** power of God. For indeed we also are weak in Him, but we will live with Him by ***the*** power of God toward you. **5** Test yourselves ***to see*** whether you are in the faith; prove yourselves. Or do you not recognize yourselves, that Jesus (Iesous) Christ is in you, unless indeed you are unapproved?

12:11 2 Cor 11:5; 2 Cor 11:1,16,17; 2 Cor 1:6
12:12 Rom 15:18,19; 2 Cor 4:2; 2 Cor 6:4-10
12:13 1 Cor 9:6,12,15-18; 2 Cor 11:7; 2 Cor 11:8,9
12:14 Prov 19:14; 2 Cor 1:15; 1 Cor 10:33
12:15 1 Thess 2:8; Phil 2:17; 2 Cor 1:6,14
12:16 2 Cor 12:13; 2 Cor 11:9,10; 2 Cor 1:12
12:17 2 Kgs 5:26; 2 Kgs 5:16,20-27; 1 Cor 4:17
12:18 2 Cor 8:6,18; Rom 4:12; 2 Cor 2:12,13
12:19 Rom 9:1; 2 Cor 10:8; 1 Cor 14:26
12:20 1 Cor 1:11; Rom 1:29; Gal 5:15,19-21
12:21 2 Cor 13:2; 1 Cor 5:1,9-11; Gal 5:19
13:1 Deut 19:15; Num 35:30; Deut 17:6
13:2 Jer 1:13; 2 Cor 1:23; 2 Cor 10:1,2,8-11
13:3 Matt 10:20; 2 Cor 12:12; 2 Cor 10:8-10
13:4 1 Pet 3:18; Rom 6:4,9,10; 1 Cor 2:3
13:5 1 Cor 11:28,31; Ps 26:2; Lam 3:40

12:11 *I have become a fool in boasting; you compelled me* The Corinthians, who knew him, should have defended him. In himself he is nothing, but by grace he was behind no apostle (11:5).
12:12 *the signs of the apostle were performed among you* Signs point beyond themselves, wonders amaze, miracles are works of power (Acts 14:3; 19:11-12), done with endurance, not show. Some believe sign gifts belonged especially to the apostles and the founding of the church. Others believe God still works such miracles through His people. Both agree that the marks of a true servant include sound teaching and a godly life, not only signs.
12:13 *Forgive me this wrong!* Irony. His only "wrong" was not taking their money, which the false teachers twisted into a reason to look down on him.
12:14 *a third time I am ready to come to you* He came once to found the church (Acts 18) and once on the painful visit (2:1). "I do not seek what is yours, but you." Parents save for children, not the reverse. A true minister is not after what people have but after their souls.
12:15 *even if, loving you more abundantly, I am loved less* One of the saddest lines in the letter. Paul would be poured out completely for them and keep loving when love was not returned, as Jesus loved His own to the end (John 13:1).
12:16 *being crafty, I caught you by deceit* Another twisted charge: he did not take money himself but would skim the Jerusalem collection through his helpers.
12:18 *Did Titus exploit you?* The Corinthians knew Titus had not cheated them. Paul's helpers reflected his character. Look at the people a leader sends out. Do they show the same integrity?
12:19 *all things, beloved, are for your building up* It might seem Paul spent four chapters protecting his reputation. He speaks before God, and it was for their good. Rejecting Paul meant rejecting the true gospel he preached.
12:20 *strifes, jealousies, outbursts of anger, rivalries, slanders, whisperings* Sins of tongue and heart that tear a church apart. Rivalries are selfish ambitions; slanders are open attacks, whisperings gossip behind backs; disorders are chaos. These are as deadly to a church as any outward scandal.
12:21 *have not repented of the impurity and sexual immorality and sensuality* Sensuality is shameless indulgence with no self-control. Paul would mourn over them as for the dead. A true shepherd's heart breaks over sin in the church, and he longs for repentance while there is time.
13:1 *By the mouth of two or three witnesses every word will be established* From Deuteronomy 19:15; no one was convicted on one witness, and Jesus applied the rule in the church (Matt 18:16). Paul will act on proof, not rumors. Some think his three visits or repeated warnings are themselves the witnesses. Church discipline must be done with justice, not gossip.
13:2 *if I come again I will not spare anyone* Warned in person and now in writing, they cannot say they were not told. Paul stayed away to spare them (1:23), but patience has a limit. God's patience is meant to lead us to repentance, not make us careless (Rom 2:4).
13:3 *since you seek a proof of Christ speaking in me* They doubted Paul's apostleship, comparing him with bold boasters. Proof was already among them: they were saved through his preaching and saw the signs of an apostle (12:12).
13:4 *if He was crucified out of weakness, yet He lives by the power of God* Jesus let men arrest, beat and crucify Him, and it looked like defeat. He lives by God's power. Paul shares the pattern: weak in himself, powerful in the risen Christ. God's power shows itself through weakness, as at the cross and the empty tomb.
13:5 *Test yourselves to see whether you are in the faith* They had put Paul on trial; now he turns it around. Testing is examining whether something is genuine, as gold is tested. Every true believer has Christ in him by the Spirit (Rom 8:9-10). Unapproved means not genuine, like a fake coin. This is not a call to live in constant fear but to an honest look: real faith, the Spirit's fruit, love for God and hatred of sin. Some read it as a call to confirm genuine faith (1 John 2:19), others as a warning to continue. If you find no real faith, turn to Him today (John 6:37).

6 But I hope that you will know that we are not unapproved.
7 Now I pray to God that you do no evil, not so that we may
appear approved, but so that you may do what is good,
though we may be as unapproved. **8** For we cannot ***do*** any-
thing against the truth, but for the truth. **9** For we rejoice
when we are weak and you are strong; and this also we pray
for, your perfection. **10** Because of this I write these things
while absent, so that when present I may not deal severely,
according to the authority which the Lord gave me for build-
ing up and not for demolition.

Final Greetings

11 Finally, brothers, rejoice, be perfected, be comforted,
think the same ***thing***, be at peace; and the God of love and
peace will be with you. **12** Greet one another with a holy kiss.
13 All the saints greet you. **14** The grace of the Lord Jesus
Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy
Spirit ***be*** with you all. Amen.

13:6 2 Cor 13:3,4,10; 2 Cor 12:20
13:7 Phil 1:9-11; 1 Thess 5:23; 2 Tim 4:18
13:8 2 Cor 13:10; 2 Cor 10:8; Num 16:28-35
13:9 1 Thess 3:10; 1 Cor 4:10; 2 Cor 11:30
13:10 2 Cor 10:8; 2 Cor 2:3; Titus 1:13
13:11 Rom 15:33; Rom 12:16,18; Mark 9:50
13:12 Rom 16:16; 1 Cor 16:20; 1 Pet 5:14
13:13 Rom 16:16,21-23; Phil 4:21,22; Phlm 1:23,24
13:14 Rom 16:20,24; Rom 5:5; Jude 1:21

13:6 *we are not unapproved* If they found Christ in themselves, they had to admit Paul was genuine, since they came to Christ through him (3:2-3).
13:7 *not so that we may appear approved, but so that you may do what is good* If they repented, Paul would not need to show his power, and some might say he never proved himself. He does not care. A good leader cares more about his people's holiness than his own reputation.
13:8 *we cannot do anything against the truth, but for the truth* Paul's authority works only in line with truth. He could not punish the repentant or act unfairly to protect himself. A leader who uses his position to cover up wrong or punish the innocent has stepped outside his authority.
13:9 *this also we pray for, your perfection* The word means restored, put back in order, used of setting bones and mending nets (Mark 1:19). Paul gladly looks weak if they are strong.
13:10 *so that when present I may not deal severely* This explains the whole letter, especially chapters 10-13. He wrote strongly now so he would not have to act strongly later. Discipline is meant to restore, as God disciplines His children (Heb 12:10-11). He wounds to heal.
13:11 *rejoice, be perfected, be comforted, think the same thing, be at peace* Five short commands: joy in Christ after all the trouble, restoration, God's comfort (chapter 1), one mind, and an end to quarrels. Only here is God called "the God of love and peace."
13:12 *Greet one another with a holy kiss* A kiss on the cheek was a common greeting among family and close friends, holy because pure and sincere. A warm handshake or hug often does the same today. Some Bibles number verses 12-13 as one verse, so the numbering differs.
13:14 *The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit* One of the most beautiful blessings in the Bible and one of the clearest places naming Father, Son and Spirit side by side, three Persons who are one God. Grace seen at the cross (8:9), the Father's love (John 3:16), and the partnership the Spirit creates. After thirteen chapters of tears, defense and warning, the last word is grace, for all of them.

GALATIANS

Introduction

Title

The letter is named for its readers, "the churches of Galatia" (1:2). It is written to a group of churches spread across a region, not to one city or one person. Many Bible teachers have called it the Magna Carta of Christian freedom, because it sets believers free from the idea that we must earn God's favor by keeping rules. It is the only letter of Paul with no word of thanks for its readers at the start. He goes straight from his greeting to his astonishment that they were turning away so quickly (1:6). The gospel itself was at stake.

Author and Date

The letter opens with "Paul, an apostle" (1:1), names him again in 5:2, and closes with lines in his own hand in "large letters" (6:11). Paul was a Jew from Tarsus, trained as a Pharisee, who persecuted the church until the risen Jesus met him on the Damascus road (1:13-16; Acts 9:1-19). Almost no one, even among scholars who doubt some of Paul's other letters, questions that he wrote Galatians. I take it at its word, as the early church did.

Bible teachers give two main dates. Many who hold the south Galatia view date it about A.D. 49, after the first missionary journey and before the Jerusalem council of Acts 15. If so, Galatians may be Paul's first letter, which would explain why he never mentions the council's decision. Others date it about A.D. 53 to 57, during or after his long stay in Ephesus, and note how close its teaching is to Romans. Scripture does not say plainly where he wrote. The closing note in the SLB that it was written from Rome was added by later copyists.

Background and Setting

The readers were mostly Gentiles (4:8; 5:2; 6:12). Paul had preached to them himself, and they had received him "as an angel of God" (4:14). Bible teachers hold two views on which churches these were. The south Galatia view takes them as Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe, planted on the first journey (Acts 13:14 to 14:23), since the Roman province of Galatia reached that far south. The north Galatia view takes them as churches among the ethnic Galatians, a Celtic people farther north, perhaps visited in Acts 16:6 and 18:23.

After Paul left, other teachers came. They are often called Judaizers, from Paul's word in 2:14, which means to live like a Jew. They claimed to believe in Jesus but taught that Gentile believers had to be circumcised and keep the Law of Moses, with its special days (4:10; 5:2-4; 6:12-13). They also attacked Paul, saying he was not a true apostle and had his message second hand. Paul calls their message "a different gospel" (1:6) and answers them point by point.

In chapters 1 and 2 Paul lists his visits to Jerusalem to show his gospel did not come from the other apostles. The first, three years after his conversion (1:18), matches Acts 9:26-30. The second, "after fourteen years" (2:1), is harder to place. Some take it as the famine visit of Acts 11:27-30, which fits the early date. Others take it as the council of Acts 15, which fits the later date.

Themes

The heart of the letter is 2:16: "a man is not justified by works of law except through faith of Jesus Christ." To be justified is to be declared righteous by God, and it comes by faith in Christ, never by works of the Law (2:16; 3:11). Adding anything to the gospel turns it into another gospel, and Paul calls a curse on anyone who preaches one (1:6-9).

Paul defends his calling as an apostle, which came straight from Jesus Christ (1:1, 12). He shows from Abraham that God has always justified by faith (3:6-9), and that the Law, given 430 years after the promise, could not cancel it (3:17). The Law had a real purpose. It exposed sin and guarded God's people like a child-guardian until Christ came (3:19, 24). Now believers are sons and heirs, not slaves (4:7).

Freedom in Christ is not freedom to sin. It is freedom to walk by the Spirit and serve one another in love (5:13, 16). The Spirit, not the Law, produces the fruit that pleases God (5:22-23). None of this means God is finished with Israel. Paul's teaching on Abraham's seed and "the Israel of God" (6:16) does not move Israel's promises to the church.

Christ in Galatians

Christ "gave Himself for our sins, so that He might deliver us out of the present evil age" (1:4). Paul lives by faith in the Son of God, "who loved me and gave Himself up for me" (2:20). "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us" (3:13), and He is the one Seed of Abraham to whom the promises were made (3:16). In the fullness of time God sent His Son, "born of a woman, born under law" (4:4), to redeem those under the Law and make them sons. Paul boasts in nothing "except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ" (6:14).

Hard Passages

The second visit to Jerusalem (2:1-10) is placed in two ways, as above. Peter's withdrawal at Antioch (2:11-14) shows that even an apostle could act against what he believed, and that no leader is above correction by the Word of God. "A mediator is not of one, but God is one" (3:20) has many explanations. "Baptized into Christ" (3:27) is read as Spirit baptism or water baptism, but in either case baptism follows faith and does not save. Galatians 3:28 is about equal standing in Christ, and teachers differ on how far it reaches into roles in home and church. "You fell away from grace" (5:4) is read differently by those with different views on eternal security. The allegory of Hagar and Sarah (4:21-31) is Paul's own, which gives us no license to allegorize Scripture freely. The notes name the main views on these.

Outline

I. Paul's Gospel Came From God (1:1-2:21)
- A. Greeting (1:1-5)
- B. No other gospel (1:6-10)
- C. Paul's call came from Christ (1:11-24)
- D. Paul's gospel accepted in Jerusalem (2:1-10)
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GALATIANS

GALATIANS 1

Greeting

1 Paul (Paulos), an apostle—not from men, nor through a man, but through Jesus (Iesous) Christ and God ***the*** Father, the ***One*** who raised Him out from ***the*** dead— **2** and all the brothers with me, to the churches of Galatia: **3** Grace to you and peace from God ***the*** Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, **4** who gave Himself for our sins, so that He might deliver us out of the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, **5** to whom ***be*** the glory to the ages of the ages. Amen.

No Other Gospel

6 I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting from the ***One*** who called you in ***the*** grace of Christ, to a different gospel, **7** which is not another, except ***that*** there are some who are troubling you and wanting to distort the gospel of Christ. **8** But even if we, or an angel out of heaven, should preach the gospel to you contrary to what we preached to you, let him be accursed. **9** As we have said before, even now I say again: if anyone is preaching the gospel to you contrary to what you received, let him be accursed. **10** For am I now persuading men, or God? Or am I seeking to please men? For if I were still pleasing men, I would not be a slave of Christ.

Paul Called by God

11 Now I make known to you, brothers, the gospel which was preached by me, that it is not according to man. **12** For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught ***it***, but through a revelation of Jesus Christ. **13** For you heard of my former way of life in Judaism, that beyond measure I was persecuting the church of God and was destroying it; **14** and I was advancing in Judaism beyond many contemporaries in my nation, being more abundantly a zealot for my ancestral traditions. **15** But when God was pleased, who set me apart from my mother's womb and called ***me*** through His grace, **16** to reveal His Son in me, so that I might preach Him ***as the gospel*** among the Gentiles, immediately I did not confer with flesh and blood, **17** nor did I go up to Jerusalem (Hierosolyma) to the apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia, and again I returned to Damascus (Damaskos).

1:1 Gal 1:11,12,17; 1 Cor 1:1; Acts 9:6,15,16
1:2 Phil 4:21; 1 Cor 16:1; Phil 2:22
1:3 1 Cor 1:3; 2 Thess 1:2; Rom 1:7-15
1:4 Gal 2:20; Matt 20:28; Rom 12:2
1:5 Ps 41:13; Ps 72:19; Rom 11:36
1:6 2 Cor 11:4; Ps 106:13; Isa 29:13
1:7 Gal 5:10,12; 2 Cor 11:13; Rom 16:17,18
1:8 1 Cor 16:22; 2 Cor 11:13,14; Rom 9:3
1:9 Rev 22:18,19; Deut 4:2; Deut 12:32
1:10 1 Thess 2:4; Acts 5:29; James 4:4
1:11 1 Cor 2:9,10; 1 Cor 11:23; Gal 1:1
1:13 Acts 26:4,5; Acts 22:3-5; Acts 26:9-11
1:14 Acts 22:3; Acts 26:5,9; Phil 3:4-6
1:15 Isa 49:1; Jer 1:5; Acts 9:15
1:16 Matt 16:17; Acts 9:15; 1 Cor 2:9-13
1:17 Acts 9:20-25; 2 Cor 11:32,33

1:1 *not from men, nor through a man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father* Paul defends his authority in his first words. An apostle is one sent with the authority of the sender. No group of men chose him, and no man passed the office to him. He sets Jesus beside the Father and against mere men. The risen Jesus called him on the Damascus road (Acts 9:3-6).
1:2 *to the churches of Galatia* Several congregations across a region, either in the south of the Roman province or in the north among the Galatian people (see the Introduction). Paul does not call them saints or thank God for them, as in other letters. The coldness is on purpose. Something was badly wrong.
1:3 *Grace to you and peace* In this letter grace is the whole issue. Grace plus works is no longer grace (Rom 11:6). Peace with God comes from knowing we are accepted because of what Christ has done (Rom 5:1).
1:4 *who gave Himself for our sins, so that He might deliver us out of the present evil age* The gospel in one sentence. No one took His life; He gave it (John 10:18), in our place. This age is one in which sin and Satan hold sway (2 Cor 4:4), and Christ died to rescue us out of it, by the Father's will. If His death was enough to deliver us, what can circumcision or Law-keeping add?
1:5 *to whom be the glory to the ages of the ages* Paul cannot speak of the cross without praise. If we could save ourselves even a little, we would get some credit. A test of any message called the gospel: does it give all the glory to God, or leave man room to boast?
1:6 *I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting* Where other letters give thanks, Paul is shocked. Deserting was used of a soldier leaving his post, and they were in the middle of it. To turn from the gospel of grace is to turn from God who called them. The false teachers did not deny Jesus. They added to Him, and Jesus plus the Law is a different gospel.
1:7 *wanting to distort the gospel of Christ* There are not two gospels. Troubling means unsettling, and false teaching always leaves God's people shaken. To distort is to twist into the opposite. Add works to grace and good news becomes bad news. They taught obedience not as the fruit of salvation but as the way to be saved (Acts 15:1).
1:8 *or an angel out of heaven* Accursed is anathema, set apart for God's judgment. Paul includes himself: the message matters more than the messenger (2 Cor 11:14). He says it twice (1:9) because souls are at stake. No preacher has the right to add to or take from the good news.
1:10 *if I were still pleasing men, I would not be a slave of Christ* The false teachers seem to have said Paul dropped circumcision to make the gospel easier. His curse in verses 8-9 hardly sounds like a man-pleaser. A slave belongs wholly to his master. We can fear what people think or serve Christ, but not both.
1:12 *but through a revelation of Jesus Christ* Paul begins a defense running through chapter 2. A revelation is an unveiling. He knew the church's preaching before and hated it. The risen Jesus showed him its meaning: the crucified Jesus is Lord, and sinners are made right with God by grace through faith in Him.
1:13 *beyond measure I was persecuting the church of God* Judaism here means the Jewish religion of Paul's day with its strict Law-keeping and traditions. He dragged believers to prison (Acts 8:3) and approved Stephen's death (Acts 8:1). No one talked Paul into the gospel. If God could save him, He can save anyone (1 Tim 1:15-16).
1:14 *more abundantly a zealot for my ancestral traditions* A rising star trained under Gamaliel (Acts 22:3), a Pharisee of the strict party (Phil 3:5-6). If anyone could earn righteousness by the Law, it was Paul. He tried that road with all his strength, and it led him to fight against God.
1:15 *But when God was pleased, who set me apart from my mother's womb* Paul did not find God. God found him. The words echo Jeremiah 1:5 and the Servant in Isaiah 49:1. He was called while persecuting the church. That is grace, favor given to one who deserved the opposite.
1:16 *to reveal His Son in me* Either an inner revelation in Paul's heart or God showing His Son through Paul to others, and both were true (1 Cor 15:8). The strict Pharisee who would not eat with Gentiles became their apostle. Flesh and blood means human beings. He sought no man's approval.
1:17 *I went away into Arabia* Most likely the Nabatean kingdom east and south of Damascus. Scripture does not say whether he went to be alone with God and the Scriptures or to preach. It fits the "many days" (Acts 9:23).

18 Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to get acquainted with Peter (Petros), and I remained with him fifteen days. **19** But I did not see another of the apostles, except James (Iakobos), the brother of the Lord. **20** Now ***as for*** what I write to you, look, before God, I am not lying. **21** Then I went into the regions of Syria and of Cilicia (Kilikia). **22** And I was unknown by face to the churches of Judea (Ioudaia) which ***are*** in Christ; **23** but they were only hearing that the ***one*** once persecuting us is now preaching ***as the gospel*** the faith which he once was destroying. **24** And they were glorifying God in me.

GALATIANS 2

Paul Accepted by the Apostles

1 Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem (Hierosolyma) with Barnabas, having taken along Titus (Titos) also. **2** And I went up according to a revelation, and I set before them the gospel which I proclaim among the Gentiles, but privately to those who were esteemed, lest somehow I should be running, or had run, in vain. **3** But not even Titus, who ***was*** with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised; **4** but because of the false brothers secretly brought in, who came in by stealth to spy out our freedom which we have in Christ Jesus (Iesous), so that they might enslave us; **5** to whom not even for an hour did we yield in subjection, so that the truth of the gospel might continue with you. **6** But from those who were esteemed to be something—whatever they once were makes no difference to me; God does not receive ***the*** face of a man—for those who were esteemed conferred nothing to me; **7** but on the contrary, having seen that I have been entrusted with the gospel of the uncircumcision, even as Peter (Petros) ***with that*** of the circumcision— **8** for He who worked in Peter for ***the*** apostleship of the circumcision worked also in me toward the Gentiles— **9** and having known the grace that was given to me, James (Iakobos) and Cephas (Kephas) and John (Ioannes), those who were esteemed to be pillars, gave to me and to Barnabas right ***hands*** of fellowship, so that we ***should go*** to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcision; **10** only that we should remember the poor, the very thing which I also was eager to do.

Paul Opposes Peter

11 But when Peter came to Antioch (Antiocheia), I opposed

1:18 Acts 9:26-29; Acts 22:17,18
1:19 Matt 13:55; Mark 6:3; 1 Cor 9:5
1:20 Rom 9:1; 2 Cor 11:10,11,31
1:21 Acts 9:30; Acts 6:9; Acts 11:25,26
1:22 1 Thess 2:14; Rom 16:7; Acts 9:31
1:23 Acts 9:13,20,26; 1 Cor 15:8-10; 1 Tim 1:13-16
1:24 Acts 11:18; 2 Cor 9:13; Num 23:23
2:1 Gal 2:13; Gal 2:3; Titus 1:4
2:2 Phil 2:16; Gal 2:9; Acts 15:4,12
2:3 Acts 16:3; Gal 5:2-6; 1 Cor 9:20,21
2:4 Jude 1:4; Gal 5:1,13; Acts 15:1,24
2:5 Gal 2:14; Gal 3:1,2; Gal 4:16
2:6 2 Cor 12:11; Gal 6:3; Acts 10:34
2:7 1 Thess 2:4; Gal 1:16; Gal 2:9
2:8 Acts 1:8; Acts 2:14-41; Acts 3:12-26
2:9 Rev 3:12; Rom 12:3,5,6; Gal 2:2,6,12-14
2:10 Acts 24:17; Heb 13:16; Acts 11:29,30
2:11 1 Tim 5:20; Acts 15:30-35; Gal 2:5

1:18 *after three years I went up to Jerusalem to get acquainted with Peter* The visit of Acts 9:26-30, likely three years from his conversion. The Greek word gives us history: to visit in order to get to know someone. Fifteen days is not long enough to be trained as an apostle. His gospel did not come from Jerusalem.
1:19 *James, the brother of the Lord* Not one of the Twelve but the brother of Jesus, a son of Joseph and Mary born after Jesus (Matt 1:25; 13:55-56). He did not believe during Jesus' ministry (John 7:5), but the risen Lord appeared to him (1 Cor 15:7). He led the church in Jerusalem (Acts 15:13) and wrote the letter of James.
1:20 *before God, I am not lying* Like an oath. His enemies must have said the Jerusalem leaders trained him and he changed their message. He calls God as witness.
1:21 *the regions of Syria and of Cilicia* The believers sent Paul to Tarsus, the main city of Cilicia, for his safety (Acts 9:29-30). Later Barnabas brought him to Antioch in Syria (Acts 11:25-26). Hundreds of miles from Jerusalem, he preached the gospel he had received from Christ.
1:23 *the one once persecuting us is now preaching as the gospel the faith which he once was destroying* Judea's believers had never seen his face, so he could not have been their student. The very churches the false teachers claimed to speak for rejoiced over him.
1:24 *they were glorifying God in me* They praised God, not Paul. When God saves someone with a dark past, give God the glory.
2:1 *after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas* Counted from his conversion or from the visit of 1:18. Some see the famine relief visit (Acts 11:27-30), fitting an early date for the letter; others the Jerusalem council (Acts 15), with the same people and question. The point is the same either way. Titus was a Gentile believer and later trusted helper (2 Cor 8:23; Titus 1:4).
2:2 *I went up according to a revelation* God led him, perhaps through Agabus' prophecy (Acts 11:28); he was not summoned for inspection. Paul was not unsure of his gospel, but rejection could split the church into Jewish and Gentile churches and tear his work apart. He wanted unity built on truth.
2:3 *not even Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised* Circumcision was the covenant sign given to Abraham (Gen 17:10-14). Titus, a believing Gentile accepted uncircumcised in Jerusalem, settled the question. Paul later circumcised Timothy, whose mother was Jewish, to open doors among Jews (Acts 16:3), not to make him right with God.
2:4 *to spy out our freedom which we have in Christ Jesus, so that they might enslave us* False brothers claimed to be believers but slipped in like spies. Freedom becomes a main theme of the letter (5:1, 13): freedom from the Law as a way to be right with God. Legalism always watches, measures and lays burdens God never gave.
2:5 *so that the truth of the gospel might continue with you* Not for an hour. Giving in on Titus would have told every Gentile that faith in Christ is not enough. Paul often gave way for peace (1 Cor 9:19-22), but when someone adds a requirement for salvation, love for people means guarding the truth that saves them.
2:6 *God does not receive the face of a man* To receive the face is to show favor because of who someone is. The pillars were real apostles, some of whom walked with Jesus, but that did not make their word outrank Paul's (Acts 10:34). They added nothing to his gospel.
2:7 *I have been entrusted with the gospel of the uncircumcision* Not two gospels (1:7) but two fields of work: Paul to the Gentiles, Peter to the Jews, one message. They saw the same God working through both men (2:8). The fruit proved the calling.
2:9 *gave to me and to Barnabas right hands of fellowship* Cephas is Aramaic for Peter; both names mean rock. Pillars hold up a building. This James is the Lord's brother (1:19); James the brother of John had been killed by Herod (Acts 12:2). A handshake meant partnership. They divided the work, not the faith.
2:10 *only that we should remember the poor* Judea's believers were often very poor, hit by famine (Acts 11:28-29). For years Paul gathered an offering for them (Rom 15:25-27; 1 Cor 16:1-3; 2 Cor 8-9). The true gospel never makes us careless about people in need. Grace that saves us opens our hands.
2:11 *I opposed him to his face, because he was condemned* Antioch in Syria was Paul's home church, with many Gentile believers (Acts 11:19-26). Peter had preached at Pentecost and opened the door to Gentiles at Cornelius' house (Acts 10), yet his own actions stood against him. No leader is above correction by God's Word. Paul did not go behind his back.

him to ***his*** face, because he was condemned. **12** For before certain ones came from James, he was eating with the Gentiles; but when they came, he was drawing back and separating himself, fearing those of ***the*** circumcision. **13** And the rest of the Jews also joined in hypocrisy with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy. **14** But when I saw that they were not walking straight according to the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before all, "If you, being a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, why do you compel the Gentiles to Judaize?"

Justified by Faith

15 We ***are*** Jews by nature and not sinners of ***the*** Gentiles, **16** knowing that a man is not justified by works of law except through faith of Jesus Christ, even we believed in Christ Jesus, so that we might be justified by faith of Christ and not by works of law; because by works of law no flesh will be justified. **17** But if, seeking to be justified in Christ, we ourselves also have been found sinners, ***is*** Christ then a minister of sin? May it not be! **18** For if I build again these ***things*** which I tore down, I prove myself a transgressor. **19** For I through law died to law, so that I might live to God. **20** I have been crucified with Christ; and I live—no longer I, but Christ lives in me; and what I now live in ***the*** flesh, I live in faith, that of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me. **21** I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness ***is*** through law, then Christ died for nothing.

GALATIANS 3

By Faith or by Works of Law?

1 O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you, not to obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus (Iesous) Christ was publicly portrayed among you ***as*** crucified? **2** This only I want to learn from you: did you receive the Spirit by works of law, or by hearing of faith? **3** Are you so foolish? Having begun in ***the*** Spirit, are you now being perfected in ***the*** flesh? **4** Did you suffer so many things in vain? If indeed ***it was*** even in vain. **5** Therefore the ***One*** supplying the Spirit to you and working miracles among you—***is it*** by works of law, or by hearing of faith?

2:12 Acts 10:28; Luke 15:2; Gal 2:9
2:13 1 Cor 5:6; 1 Cor 15:33; Eph 4:14
2:14 Gal 2:5; Acts 10:28; Ps 84:11
2:15 Eph 2:3; Titus 3:3; Rom 3:9
2:16 Ps 143:2; Phil 3:9; Rom 3:19,20,27,28
2:17 Rom 6:1,2; Rom 11:7; 1 John 3:5
2:18 Gal 4:9-12; Gal 2:4,5,12-16,21; Gal 5:11
2:19 Rom 7:4,6,9; Rom 6:2,11,14; 2 Cor 5:15
2:20 Rom 6:4-6; Gal 5:24; 2 Cor 4:10,11
2:21 Gal 3:21; Gal 5:2-4; Gal 2:16
3:1 Heb 5:9; Gal 3:3; Deut 32:6
3:2 Acts 2:38; Acts 15:8; Acts 19:2-6
3:3 Gal 5:4-8; Gal 4:7-10; Gal 6:12-14
3:4 Heb 10:32-39; 2 John 1:8; Ezek 18:24
3:5 Gal 3:2; 1 Cor 1:4,5; Acts 14:3,9,10

2:12 *he was drawing back and separating himself, fearing those of the circumcision* Jewish custom kept many from eating with Gentiles, but God had shown Peter not to call any man unclean (Acts 10:28). The tense suggests he pulled back little by little. Scripture does not say whether James sent these men or they only claimed his name. The Peter who denied Jesus out of fear (Matt 26:69-75) gave in to fear again.
2:13 *even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy* Hypocrisy is playing a part, acting against what one believes. Leaders always take others with them. Barnabas, who first stood up for Paul (Acts 9:27), was swept along. Two tables told the Gentiles they were second class unless they lived like Jews.
2:14 *why do you compel the Gentiles to Judaize?* Paul saw past the meals to the message. Public sin that led many astray called for public correction. To Judaize is to live as a Jew. Peter was asking of them what he had set aside. Later he stood with Paul (Acts 15:7-11) and called him "our beloved brother Paul" (2 Pet 3:15).
2:15 *We are Jews by nature and not sinners of the Gentiles* It is unclear where the speech to Peter ends; the thought runs straight on. Jews called Gentiles sinners because they lacked the Law. If even Jews with every advantage had to come to Christ by faith, how could anyone think the Law was the way?
2:16 *a man is not justified by works of law except through faith of Jesus Christ* The key verse of the letter. To be justified is to be declared righteous by God the Judge, not guilty because of Christ. Works of law are doing what the Law of Moses commands. Three times no, three times faith, ending with words from Psalm 143:2. The SLB's "faith of Jesus Christ" is a literal rendering. Most read faith in Christ, as "we believed in Christ Jesus" shows; some read Christ's faithfulness.
2:17 *is Christ then a minister of sin? May it not be!* Coming to Christ shows the Jew he is a sinner like the Gentiles, but Christ is not the cause of sin. He came to set sinners free from it. "May it not be" is Paul's strongest no. Grace never gives permission to sin (Rom 6:1-2).
2:18 *if I build again these things which I tore down, I prove myself a transgressor* The false teachers said leaving the Law makes a man a sinner. Paul says rebuilding it after coming to Christ, as Peter did, is the real transgression. It admits we were wrong to trust Christ alone.
2:19 *I through law died to law, so that I might live to God* The Law showed Paul his sin and sentenced him to death (Rom 7:9-11), and in Christ, who died under its curse (3:13), the sentence was carried out. A dead man has no more obligations under the law. The goal is not lawlessness but life for God.
2:20 *I have been crucified with Christ* One of the best-loved verses in the Bible. Every believer was joined to Jesus in His death (Rom 6:6). The proud Pharisee died with Christ, and Christ now lives in him by the Spirit. "In the flesh" here simply means in this earthly body. Paul lives daily trusting "the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me." He takes the cross personally, and so may you.
2:21 *if righteousness is through law, then Christ died for nothing* To set aside grace is to treat it as worthless, which adding the Law does. If we could be right with God by the Law, Jesus' death was a waste. He died because there was no other way. Every message that adds our works says the cross was not enough.
3:1 *Who has bewitched you* Foolish here means without understanding, not thinking things through. To bewitch is to cast a spell that clouds the mind. That is how strange their turn seemed to Paul, because he had preached the cross so plainly that it was as if they had seen it with their own eyes.
3:1 *publicly portrayed* The word was used for a public notice posted for all to read. Christ crucified had been set before them in full view. How could anyone who had seen the cross that clearly think it needed help from the Law?
3:2 *did you receive the Spirit by works of law, or by hearing of faith* One question settles it. These Gentiles had never kept the Law of Moses. They heard the gospel, believed it, and received the Holy Spirit. Every believer receives the Spirit at the moment of faith (Eph 1:13; Rom 8:9). Hearing of faith means hearing the message and believing it.
3:3 *Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being perfected in the flesh* To be perfected is to be brought to completion. The false teachers said faith is a good start but the Law finishes the job. The flesh here is human effort. If the Spirit began the work, the Spirit will finish it (Phil 1:6). We grow the same way we began, by faith.
3:4 *Did you suffer so many things in vain* In south Galatia Paul was driven out and stoned at Lystra, and the new believers shared that trouble (Acts 14:2, 5, 19, 22). Some read suffer more widely as experience, all they had gone through with God. Either way, turning back would waste it. Paul still holds out hope that it was not in vain.
3:5 *the One supplying the Spirit to you and working miracles among you* Paul asks again, now about the present. God was still giving His Spirit and doing mighty works among them, and He had done so before the false teachers ever arrived. It was because they believed, not because they kept the Law.

The Faith of Abraham

6 Just as Abraham (Abraam) believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness. **7** Know then that those ***who are*** of faith, these are sons of Abraham. **8** And the Scripture, having foreseen that God justifies the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham: "In you all the nations will be blessed." **9** So then those ***who are*** of faith are blessed with the believing Abraham. **10** For as many as are of works of law are under a curse; for it has been written, "Cursed ***is*** everyone who does not continue in all the ***things*** written in the book of the law, to do them." **11** Now that no one is justified by law before God ***is*** evident, because "The righteous by faith will live." **12** And the law is not of faith; rather, "The man who has done them will live in them." **13** Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us—for it has been written, "Cursed ***is*** everyone who hangs on a tree"— **14** so that the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through the faith.

The Law and the Promise

15 Brothers, I speak according to man: even a man's covenant, once ratified, no one sets aside or adds to. **16** Now to Abraham the promises were spoken, and to his seed. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to your seed," who is Christ. **17** Now this I say: a covenant confirmed beforehand by God toward Christ, the law, which came four hundred and thirty years afterward, does not annul, so as to nullify the promise. **18** For if the inheritance ***is*** by law, ***it is*** no longer by promise; but God has granted ***it*** to Abraham through promise.

Why Then the Law?

19 Why then the law? It was added because of transgressions, until the seed should come to whom it has been promised, having been ordained through angels in ***the*** hand of a mediator. **20** Now a mediator is not of one, but God is one. **21** ***Is*** the law then against the promises of God? May it not be! For if a law had been given which was able to give life, righteousness

3:6 Gen 15:6; Rom 4:3-6,9,10,21,22; James 2:23
3:7 Ps 100:3; Gen 15:6; Gal 3:26-29
3:8 Gen 12:3; Gen 18:18; Gen 22:18
3:9 Gen 24:1; Ps 24:5; Isa 51:2
3:10 Deut 27:26; Jer 11:3; Deut 29:20
3:11 Hab 2:4; Ps 143:2; 2 Chr 33:8
3:12 Lev 18:5; Neh 9:29; Jer 11:3
3:13 Deut 21:23; 2 Kgs 22:19; Esth 7:10
3:14 Isa 41:8; Isa 44:3; Isa 51:2
3:15 Isa 8:20; Jer 32:40; Dan 9:27
3:16 Gen 13:15; Gen 17:8; Gen 12:7
3:17 Gen 15:13; Exod 12:40-41; Job 40:8
3:18 Ps 105:6; Ps 105:42; Gen 21:10
3:19 Lev 15:32; Deut 9:25; Deut 33:2
3:20 Exod 24:3; 1 Tim 2:5; Job 9:33
3:21 Rom 7:7-13; Gal 2:17; Rom 3:20

3:6 *Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness* This is Genesis 15:6. To reckon means to credit to someone's account. Abraham had no righteousness of his own to offer. He believed God's promise, and God credited righteousness to him. This happened years before his circumcision in Genesis 17 (Rom 4:9-12), and centuries before the Law.
3:7 *those who are of faith, these are sons of Abraham* To be a son of someone often means to follow in his steps. Those who believe God as Abraham did are his spiritual children, Jew or Gentile. This does not mean God is finished with Abraham's physical descendants, the nation of Israel (Rom 11:1, 25-29).
3:8 *In you all the nations will be blessed* God's promise in Genesis 12:3 and 18:18. Nations is the same word often translated Gentiles. Scripture is spoken of as seeing and preaching because what Scripture says, God says. From the start God meant to bless every nation through Abraham, and by faith. That is the gospel in seed form.
3:9 *the believing Abraham* The false teachers would have said Abraham the circumcised. Paul names faith as the main thing about him. His obedience was real (Gen 22; James 2:21-23), but it flowed from his faith and did not earn his standing. Believers share his blessing, which verse 14 names: righteousness and the promised Spirit.
3:10 *as many as are of works of law are under a curse* Paul quotes Deuteronomy 27:26. Look at the words all and continue. The Law demands perfect obedience, all the time. Break one command and you are guilty (James 2:10). Anyone who stands before God on his own Law-keeping chooses a standard he has already failed.
3:11 *The righteous by faith will live* Habakkuk 2:4, spoken when Babylon was about to sweep over Judah. Some read it as the one righteous by faith will live, others as the righteous will live by faith. Both are true and both fit Paul's point. Righteousness and life have always come by faith.
3:12 *the law is not of faith* The Law is not bad, but it works on a different principle. Faith trusts God to do what we cannot. The Law says do this and live, quoting Leviticus 18:5. If anyone kept it perfectly, he would live. The problem is us. That way is closed to sinners, and only faith remains.
3:13 *Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law* To redeem is to buy back by paying a price, as a slave was bought out of slavery. Paul quotes Deuteronomy 21:23. The body of an executed man hung on a tree was a sign he was under God's curse. On the cross Jesus took the curse we deserved (1 Pet 2:24). The innocent One took the place of the guilty.
3:14 *so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through the faith* Two purposes, each starting with so that. Abraham's blessing reaches the Gentiles in Christ, and we receive the promised Spirit, the gift the prophets foretold (Joel 2:28; Ezek 36:26-27). Paul comes back to verse 2. The Spirit comes through faith.
3:15 *even a man's covenant, once ratified, no one sets aside or adds to* The Greek word can also mean a will. Once a will is signed and made official, no one can cancel it or add terms. If that holds among men, how much more with God. The false teachers wanted to add the Law as a new condition to God's covenant with Abraham.
3:16 *who is Christ* Paul knew seed can mean many descendants, and he uses it that way in verse 29. But the promise points finally to one Seed, reaching back to Genesis 3:15. Every promise finds its yes in Him (2 Cor 1:20). God also promised the land of Canaan to Abraham's seed as an everlasting possession (Gen 13:15; 17:8). Some teachers take those promises to pass to Christ and the church in a spiritual way. I believe Christ is the one Seed through whom every promise is kept, including the land promised to the nation of Israel, which He will give them when He reigns.
3:17 *four hundred and thirty years afterward* The Law came at Sinai long after the promise (Exod 12:40-41). Bible teachers count these years in slightly different ways, from the promise to Abraham or from its last confirmation to Jacob. Paul's point does not depend on the count. A later agreement cannot cancel an earlier one or add conditions to it.
3:18 *God has granted it to Abraham through promise* An inheritance is received as a gift, not earned. If it must be earned by the Law, it is a wage, not a promise. Granted means given freely in grace. Eternal life is not a paycheck (Rom 6:23). Because it rests on God's promise and not our Law-keeping, it is sure.
3:19 *It was added because of transgressions* A transgression is stepping over a line. The Law drew the line clearly so sin could be seen for what it is (Rom 3:20; 7:7). It was temporary, until Christ came. Angels had a part in giving it (Deut 33:2; Acts 7:53; Heb 2:2), and Moses was the mediator. The promise came straight from God.
3:20 *a mediator is not of one, but God is one* One of the hardest verses in Galatians, with many explanations. The plainest seems to be this. A mediator stands between two parties, and at Sinai the blessing depended on Israel keeping its part (Exod 24:3, 7). With Abraham, God acted alone, passing between the pieces while Abraham slept (Gen 15:12, 17). The promise rests on God, and He cannot fail.
3:21 *if a law had been given which was able to give life* The Law and the promise come from the same God and are not enemies. But the Law could tell us what is right without giving power to do it. It could show we were dead in sin but could not raise us (Rom 8:3). Only the Spirit gives life (2 Cor 3:6).

would indeed have been by law. **22** But the Scripture shut up all ***things*** under sin, so that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. **23** But before the faith came, we were being held in custody under law, having been shut up for the faith which was about to be revealed. **24** So then the law has become our child-guardian to Christ, so that we might be justified by faith. **25** But the faith having come, we are no longer under a child-guardian. **26** For you are all sons of God through the faith in Christ Jesus. **27** For as many ***of you*** as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. **28** There is not Jew nor Greek, there is not slave nor free, there is not male and female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. **29** And if you ***are*** Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to promise.

GALATIANS 4

Sons and Heirs

1 Now I say, as long as the heir is a child, he differs in nothing from a slave, being lord of all, **2** but he is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father. **3** So also we, when we were children, were enslaved under the elements of the world. **4** But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under law, **5** so that He might redeem those under law, so that we might receive the adoption as sons. **6** And because you are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" **7** So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, also an heir of God through Christ.

Paul's Concern for the Galatians

8 But at that time indeed, not knowing God, you were slaves to those which by nature are not gods. **9** But now, having known God, or rather having been known by God, how do you turn again to the weak and poor elements, to which you desire to be slaves again anew? **10** You observe days and

3:22 Rom 11:32; Heb 9:15; Rom 3:9-20,23
3:23 Gal 3:19,24,25; Gal 4:1-4; Heb 12:2
3:24 Gal 2:16; Rom 10:4; Col 2:17
3:25 Rom 6:14; Rom 7:4; Heb 10:15-18
3:26 2 Cor 6:18; Eph 1:5; 1 John 3:1,2
3:27 Rom 13:14; Acts 2:38; Rom 6:3,4
3:28 Col 3:11; 1 Cor 12:12; Gal 5:6
3:29 Gen 21:10; Gen 17:4; Gen 21:11
4:1 Gal 4:23,29; Gen 24:2,3; 2 Kgs 10:1,2
4:3 Gal 4:9,25,31; Gal 2:4; Col 2:8,20
4:4 Gen 3:15; Mark 1:15; John 1:14
4:5 Eph 1:5; Gal 3:26; John 1:12
4:6 Rom 8:15-17; Rom 5:5; Rom 8:9,15
4:7 Gal 3:29; Rom 8:16,17; Gal 3:26
4:8 1 Cor 1:21; 1 Thess 4:5; 2 Thess 1:8
4:9 1 Cor 8:3; Gal 3:3; Rom 8:3
4:10 Rom 14:5; Col 2:16,17; Lev 23:1-44

3:22 *the Scripture shut up all things under sin* Picture a prison with every door locked. Scripture declared the whole world guilty, Jew and Gentile (Rom 3:9-19, 23). God shut every other door so the only way out would be faith in Christ. When we see we are locked up with no way to free ourselves, we are ready to look to Jesus.
3:23 *before the faith came* The faith here means the time of faith in Christ, which arrived in history when He came. Until then the Law held Israel under guard, kept them separate from the nations, and kept them for the faith about to be revealed.
3:24 *child-guardian* The Greek word is paidagogos. In wealthy homes this trusted servant, often a slave, took charge of a boy from about six until he was grown. He walked him to school and corrected him. He was not the teacher or the father, and his job was temporary. The Law led us to Christ by showing our need.
3:26 *you are all sons of God* When the boy grew up, the guardian's job was done (3:25). In the Roman world a son who came of age received the full rights of the family. Sons here is not about being male. It is the full standing of an heir, and every believer, man or woman, has it.
3:27 *as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ* To put on is to clothe yourself. Some take baptized into Christ as the Spirit placing every believer into Christ at faith (1 Cor 12:13). Others take it as water baptism, the public step showing that one belongs to Christ. Paul has just shown we are justified by faith, so baptism here is not a work that saves. Water baptism follows faith and pictures the union faith receives.
3:28 *you are all one in Christ Jesus* Later Jewish writings record a morning blessing thanking God for not being made a Gentile, a woman, or in some versions a slave. Many believe that attitude was common in Paul's day. In context Paul means how we become sons and heirs. Every believer comes the same way and has the same standing. This does not erase the differences (Eph 5:22-33; Rom 11). Some believe it opens every role in home and church equally to men and women. Others believe Scripture gives different roles with equal worth. Both agree it is first about our oneness.
3:29 *heirs according to promise* If you belong to Christ, the one Seed, you are part of Abraham's seed because you are in Him. Gentiles did not need to become Jews to be heirs. They needed Christ. This does not mean the church has replaced Israel. God's promises to the nation still stand (Rom 11:28-29).
4:1 *as long as the heir is a child, he differs in nothing from a slave* Paul goes back to the picture of 3:24. A young boy who will one day own his father's estate owns it all on paper, but as a child he cannot make his own choices, any more than a slave can. Guardians cared for the child and stewards managed his property until the day the father set (4:2).
4:3 *the elements of the world* The word was used for the letters of the alphabet, the first basic things learned, and for the basic parts the world was thought to be made of. Some take it as basic religious rules, the ABCs of religion, Jewish and pagan. Others take it as the spiritual powers pagans believed ruled the world and their festivals. Either way, life under them was slavery.
4:4 *when the fullness of the time came* God is never late. Jesus came at the time God set, as the father set the day for his son. Roman roads and peace, the Greek language, and synagogues scattered among the nations made the world ready. The Son existed before He was sent. Born of a woman means fully human, and born under law means a Jew under the Law of Moses, which He kept perfectly.
4:5 *so that we might receive the adoption as sons* Jesus kept the Law and then died under its curse in our place (3:13). In the Roman world an adopted son had the same rights as a son by birth, took the family name, and could inherit. Redemption sets us free. Adoption gives us a home.
4:6 *God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!"* God sent forth His Son (4:4), and now His Spirit. The Trinity is at work in our salvation. Abba is the Aramaic word a child used at home, and Jesus prayed it in the garden (Mark 14:36). We do not come to God like a frightened slave but like a child to a loving Father (Rom 8:15-16).
4:7 *you are no longer a slave, but a son* The you is singular here. Paul speaks to each reader. God's heirs will share in all He has prepared, eternal life and a place in His kingdom (Rom 8:17; 1 Pet 1:4). We are heirs only through Christ, not by anything we have done. Why trade that for the life of a slave?
4:8 *those which by nature are not gods* The Galatians had served idols of wood and stone that had no power to save. Behind the idols were demons (1 Cor 10:19-20), and serving them was slavery. Every person apart from Christ serves something that cannot satisfy or save.
4:9 *having known God, or rather having been known by God* Paul corrects himself. The deeper truth is that God took the first step. To be known by God is to be loved and chosen as His own. The elements are weak because they cannot save and poor because they have nothing to give. The Law was not idolatry, but using it to earn God's favor would put them back in chains.
4:10 *You observe days and months and seasons and years* Days likely means the Sabbath, months the new moons, seasons the yearly feasts like Passover, years the sabbath years. God gave these to Israel and they pointed to Christ (Col 2:16-17). The problem was keeping them to be right with God. Believers have freedom here (Rom 14:5-6), but a holy day must never be made a condition of salvation.

months and seasons and years. **11** I fear for you, lest somehow I have toiled for you in vain. **12** Become as I ***am***, because I also ***have become*** as you ***are***, brothers, I implore you. You wronged me in nothing. **13** And you know that because of weakness of the flesh I preached the gospel to you at the first; **14** and my trial in my flesh you did not despise nor spit out, but as an angel of God you received me, as Christ Jesus (Iesous). **15** What then was your blessedness? For I testify to you that, if possible, having gouged out your eyes, you would have given ***them*** to me. **16** So have I become your enemy, speaking truth to you? **17** They are zealous for you, not well; but they want to exclude you, so that you may be zealous for them. **18** But ***it is*** good to be zealously sought in a good ***thing*** always, and not only in my being present with you, **19** my little children, for whom I am again in labor until Christ is formed in you, **20** and I was wishing to be present with you now and to change my tone, because I am perplexed about you.

Hagar and Sarah

21 Tell me, you who want to be under law, do you not hear the law? **22** For it has been written that Abraham (Abraam) had two sons, one of the slave woman and one of the free ***woman***. **23** But the ***one*** of the slave woman has been born according to ***the*** flesh, and the ***one*** of the free ***woman*** through the promise. **24** These things are spoken allegorically; for these are the two covenants: one indeed from Mount Sinai (Sina), bearing ***children*** for slavery, which is Hagar (Agar). **25** For the ***name*** Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and she corresponds to the present Jerusalem (Hierousalem); and she is a slave with her children. **26** But the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all. **27** For it has been written, "Rejoice, barren woman, you who do not bear; break forth and cry out, you who are not in labor; because many ***are*** the children of the desolate ***woman***, more than of her who has the husband." **28** Now, brothers,

4:11 1 Thess 3:5; Gal 2:2; Gal 4:20
4:12 Gen 34:15; 1 Kgs 22:4; 2 Cor 2:5
4:13 1 Cor 2:3; 2 Cor 12:7-10; 2 Cor 10:10
4:14 1 Sam 29:9; Matt 10:40; 1 Thess 2:13
4:15 Gal 3:14; Gal 5:22; Gal 6:4
4:16 Ps 141:5; Prov 9:8; John 7:7
4:17 Rom 16:18; 2 Pet 2:3,18; Gal 6:12,13
4:18 Titus 2:14; Rev 3:19; Phil 1:27
4:19 Rom 8:29; 1 Cor 4:14; Phlm 1:10,19
4:20 1 Thess 2:17,18; 1 Cor 4:19-21; 1 Thess 3:9
4:21 Gal 4:9; Gal 3:10,23,24; Rom 7:5,6
4:22 Gen 16:15; Gen 16:2; Gen 21:10
4:23 Gen 18:10; Gen 18:11; Gen 18:12
4:24 Gen 21:9; Gen 16:15; Gen 16:3
4:25 Deut 33:2; Judg 5:5; Ps 68:8
4:26 Mic 4:1; Isa 2:2; Song 1:5
4:27 Isa 54:1; Ruth 1:11; Ruth 4:14
4:28 Gen 17:19; Gen 21:6; Gen 21:10

4:11 *lest somehow I have toiled for you in vain* To toil is to work until worn out. Paul was not a hired preacher who moved on and forgot. His fear is honest. Every pastor and parent knows it. When someone we love drifts from the truth, it hurts, and it should.
4:12 *Become as I am, because I also have become as you are* Among the Galatians Paul set aside his Jewish customs and lived free from the Law (1 Cor 9:21). He wants them free like him. They had treated him well at first, so this is not about hurt feelings. It is about the truth of the gospel, and he pleads in love, not anger.
4:13 *because of weakness of the flesh I preached the gospel to you at the first* It seems an illness held Paul in Galatia, and he used the time to preach. Scripture does not name it. Some suggest eye trouble (4:15; 6:11), others malaria or the effects of his stoning at Lystra (Acts 14:19), and some link it to his thorn in the flesh (2 Cor 12:7). We don't know. God worked through his weakness (2 Cor 12:9).
4:14 *you did not despise nor spit out* Whatever the illness was, it was hard to look at. People sometimes spat to ward off evil at the sight of sickness. The Galatians did not turn away. They received him as a messenger from heaven, even as Christ Himself (Matt 10:40). Now those same people were treating him as an enemy.
4:15 *having gouged out your eyes, you would have given them to me* Their blessedness was their first joy, and when people turn from grace to rules, joy is often the first thing to go. Some take the eyes as a sign Paul's illness was in his eyes. Others see a way of speaking, since the eyes were the most precious part. Either way, their love had been deep.
4:16 *have I become your enemy, speaking truth to you* Paul and his message had not changed. The friend who tells us what we need to hear is often treated as a foe, and the flatterer as a friend (Prov 27:6). A true friend speaks the truth in love (Eph 4:15).
4:17 *They are zealous for you, not well* The false teachers paid them much attention, but their motives were not good. They wanted to shut the Galatians out of the fellowship of grace, and perhaps from Paul, so they would depend on them. False teachers want people devoted to themselves. A true servant points people to Christ (2 Cor 4:5).
4:18 *it is good to be zealously sought in a good thing always* Zeal is good when its cause is good. Paul may mean he was glad for others to care for them while he was away, or that they should be zealous for the good always, not only when he was watching. Zeal alone is not enough. Paul once used his zeal to persecute the church (1:14; Phil 3:6).
4:19 *I am again in labor until Christ is formed in you* Paul pictures himself as a mother giving birth, feeling the pain all over again. His goal is that the life of Christ take shape in them, so they look like Jesus (Rom 8:29). A letter cannot carry a tone of voice, so he wishes he were there (4:20).
4:21 *do you not hear the law* Law is used two ways here. First it is the Law of Moses as a way of life, then the books of Moses, which include Genesis. If you want to live under the Law, Paul says, at least listen to what it says about freedom and slavery.
4:22 *Abraham had two sons* The story is in Genesis 16 and 21. Hagar, Sarah's Egyptian slave, bore Ishmael the natural way, when Abraham and Sarah tried to get the promised son by their own plan (Gen 16:1-4). Isaac was born long past Sarah's age because God kept His promise (Gen 18:10-14; 21:1-2). One came by human effort, the other by God's power.
4:24 *These things are spoken allegorically* An allegory is a story where people or things stand for something else. Paul treats Abraham's sons as real history that also gives a picture. Writing by the Spirit, he tells us plainly he is using a picture. That gives us no license to make every story an allegory of our own. We read Scripture plainly unless the text itself tells us otherwise. The Sinai covenant of the Law produces slaves.
4:25 *she corresponds to the present Jerusalem* Sinai was in Arabia, where Ishmael's descendants lived. Some link the name Hagar to an Arabic word for rock, though that is not certain. Paul means Jerusalem as the center of Judaism in his day, seeking righteousness by the Law. He is not saying God has rejected the Jewish people. He longed for their salvation (Rom 9:1-5; 10:1) and taught that God has a future for Israel (Rom 11:25-29).
4:26 *the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all* The heavenly city of God (Heb 12:22), the city Abraham looked for (Heb 11:10), which one day will come down out of heaven (Rev 21:2). Every believer, Jew or Gentile, belongs to it now (Phil 3:20). Hagar, Sinai and the present Jerusalem picture the way of Law and slavery. Sarah and the Jerusalem above picture promise and freedom.
4:27 *Rejoice, barren woman, you who do not bear* Isaiah 54:1. There the barren woman was Jerusalem in exile, promised more children than ever. Paul sees a picture of Sarah, barren for years and then mother of a great people, and of the family of promise growing from every nation. Isaiah's promise still belongs to Jerusalem, and God will keep it when He gathers her children (Isa 54:7). Paul does not move it to the church.
4:28 *like Isaac, we are children of promise* Isaac was a miracle child. Every believer is born again by God's power through His promise (John 1:12-13; 1 Pet 1:23). That gives confidence, because God's promise does not fail, and humility, because Isaac did not make himself, and neither did we.

like Isaac (Isaak), we are children of promise. **29** But just as at that time the ***one*** born according to ***the*** flesh was persecuting the ***one born*** according to Spirit, so also now. **30** But what does the Scripture say? "Cast out the slave woman and her son; for the son of the slave woman shall certainly not inherit with the son of the free ***woman***." **31** Then, brothers, we are not children of a slave woman, but of the free ***woman***.

GALATIANS 5

Stand Firm in Freedom

1 In the freedom with which Christ set us free, stand firm therefore, and do not be entangled again in a yoke of slavery. **2** Look, I Paul (Paulos) say to you that if you are circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing. **3** And I testify again to every man who is circumcised that he is a debtor to do the whole law. **4** You were severed from Christ, you who are being justified by law; you fell away from grace. **5** For we by ***the*** Spirit, by faith, eagerly await ***the*** hope of righteousness. **6** For in Christ Jesus (Iesous) neither circumcision has any strength, nor uncircumcision, but faith working through love. **7** You were running well; who hindered you, not to obey the truth? **8** The persuasion ***is*** not from the ***One*** who calls you. **9** A little leaven leavens the whole lump. **10** I am confident regarding you in ***the*** Lord that you will think nothing other; but the ***one*** who troubles you will bear the judgment, whoever he may be. **11** But I, brothers, if I still proclaim circumcision, why am I still persecuted? Then the stumbling block of the cross has been abolished. **12** I wish that those who are upsetting you would even emasculate themselves!

Called to Freedom

13 For you were called to freedom, brothers; only ***do*** not ***use*** the freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love

4:29 Gen 21:9; Gen 21:10; Gal 5:11
4:30 Gen 21:10; Gen 17:16; Gen 21:11
4:31 Gal 5:1,13; John 1:12,13; John 8:36
5:1 2 Cor 3:17; Gal 5:13; John 8:32-36
5:2 Gal 2:3-5; Acts 15:1,24; Rom 9:31,32
5:3 Gal 3:10; Eph 4:17; James 2:10,11
5:4 Gal 2:21; 2 Pet 2:20-22; Gal 5:2
5:5 Gen 49:18; Ps 62:5; Ps 130:5
5:6 Matt 25:31-40; 1 Thess 1:3; James 2:14-26
5:7 1 Cor 9:24; Gal 3:1; 1 Pet 1:22
5:8 Gal 1:6
5:9 1 Cor 15:33; Mark 8:15; Luke 12:1
5:10 2 Cor 2:3; Gal 1:7; Gal 5:12
5:11 Gal 4:29; Gal 6:12,17; Gal 2:3
5:12 Gal 5:10; Gal 1:8,9; Gen 17:14
5:13 1 Cor 9:19; 1 Pet 2:16; 1 Cor 8:9

4:29 *the one born according to the flesh was persecuting the one born according to Spirit* Ishmael mocked Isaac at the feast for his weaning (Gen 21:9). In Paul's day those who trusted the Law persecuted those who trusted the promise (Acts 13:45, 50; 14:2, 19). Those who trust their own goodness still often look down on those who rest in grace.
4:30 *Cast out the slave woman and her son* Sarah's words in Genesis 21:10, which God told Abraham to heed (Gen 21:12). The way of Law and the way of promise cannot live in the same house. For the Galatians this meant making no room for the false teaching in their churches.
4:31 *we are not children of a slave woman, but of the free woman* The sum of the allegory. Believers are children of Sarah, not Hagar, free and not slaves. When we remember who we are in Christ, we will not want to go back to chains, the warning of 5:1.
5:1 *In the freedom with which Christ set us free, stand firm therefore* This verse is the hinge of the letter, summing up chapters 3 and 4 and opening 5 and 6. Freedom was the whole point. To stand firm is to hold your ground like a soldier. A yoke was the frame laid on an ox's neck. Peter called the Law a yoke no one could bear (Acts 15:10), while Jesus offers a yoke that is easy and light (Matt 11:29-30).
5:2 *if you are circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing* Circumcision is not evil in itself. Paul had Timothy circumcised for his ministry among Jews (Acts 16:3). Paul means Gentile believers taking it in order to be right with God. Christ is everything or nothing. You cannot rest half on Christ and half on your own works.
5:3 *he is a debtor to do the whole law* The false teachers may have made circumcision sound like one small step. But the Law is one whole. Whoever takes it as a way to be right with God owes perfect obedience to every command for life (3:10; James 2:10). No one can pay that debt. That is why we need Christ, who paid it for us.
5:4 *you fell away from grace* Severed means cut off, made of no effect. Those seeking to be justified by the Law have stepped off the ground of grace onto works. Bible teachers disagree on what this means for eternal security. Some believe a true believer can turn away and be lost. Others believe those in view never truly rested in Christ, or that Paul means falling from grace as the way of righteousness, not losing salvation. I leave that open here. Grace and Law-keeping cannot be mixed as ways to be justified.
5:5 *eagerly await the hope of righteousness* We are already declared righteous by faith (2:16), but a day is coming when that righteousness will be complete and on full display, when we see Christ and are made like Him (1 John 3:2). Biblical hope is not a maybe. It is a sure thing not yet happened, and we wait with joy, not anxiety.
5:6 *faith working through love* Neither circumcision nor its lack has power to make anyone right with God. This phrase answers the question of faith and works. We are saved by faith alone, but saving faith is never alone. It shows itself in love. Paul and James agree (James 2:17-18). Works do not earn salvation. Real faith produces them.
5:7 *You were running well; who hindered you* Paul often pictures the Christian life as a race (1 Cor 9:24; 2 Tim 4:7). Hindered was used for cutting in on a runner or breaking up a road. Notice the truth is something to obey, not only believe. Is anyone cutting in on my race?
5:8 *The persuasion is not from the One who calls you* God called them by grace (1:6). Any message that pulls us from that grace, however convincing, does not come from Him. False teaching can sound wise and godly, so we test everything by God's Word (1 John 4:1; Acts 17:11).
5:9 *A little leaven leavens the whole lump* Leaven is yeast. In Scripture it often pictures sin or false teaching that spreads (Matt 16:6, 12; 1 Cor 5:6-8). The teachers may have been few and their rule may have sounded small, but it would spread through the whole church. False doctrine about the gospel is never harmless.
5:10 *the one who troubles you will bear the judgment, whoever he may be* Paul's confidence is in the Lord, not in the Galatians. He may mean a leader of the false teachers or each of them. Notice the balance. Paul is gentle with those led astray and firm with those leading them. We should be patient with confused believers but not soft on those who twist the gospel.
5:11 *if I still proclaim circumcision, why am I still persecuted* The false teachers seem to have claimed Paul preached circumcision when it suited him, perhaps pointing to Timothy. If he did, his opponents would leave him alone. The cross offends human pride because it says we can do nothing to save ourselves (1 Cor 1:23). Add circumcision and the offense is gone, but so is the gospel.
5:12 *would even emasculate themselves* Hard words, and meant to be. If they think cutting the flesh makes them holy, let them go all the way. In Galatia the priests of the goddess Cybele castrated themselves in worship, and the Galatians would have known it. Circumcision used to earn God's favor is no better than pagan cutting. There is a right anger at those who harm the flock.
5:13 *do not use the freedom as an opportunity for the flesh* Now the other danger: freedom taken as license. Opportunity was used for a base of operations from which an army attacks. The flesh is our fallen nature that still wants to sin. Here is the surprise. We are set free from the Law to become slaves of love. Christian freedom is freedom to serve others.

be slaves to one another. **14** For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, in this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." **15** But if you bite and devour one another, watch out lest you be consumed by one another.

Walk by the Spirit

16 But I say, walk by ***the*** Spirit, and you will certainly not carry out ***the*** desire of ***the*** flesh. **17** For the flesh desires against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are opposed to one another, so that the things which you wish, these you may not do. **18** But if you are led by ***the*** Spirit, you are not under law. **19** Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are adultery, sexual immorality, impurity, debauchery, **20** idolatry, sorcery, hostilities, strifes, jealousies, outbursts of rage, rivalries, dissensions, factions, **21** envyings, murders, drunkennesses, revelries, and the ***things*** like these, which I tell you beforehand, just as I also said before, that those who practice such things will not inherit ***the*** kingdom of God. **22** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, **23** gentleness, self-control; against such ***things*** there is no law. **24** And those of Christ crucified the flesh with the passions and the desires. **25** If we live by ***the*** Spirit, by ***the*** Spirit let us also walk in line. **26** Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

GALATIANS 6

Bear One Another's Burdens

1 Brothers, if a man is even caught in some trespass, you who ***are*** spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, watching yourself, lest you also be tempted. **2** Bear one another's burdens, and thus fulfill the law of Christ. **3** For if

5:14 Lev 19:18; Lev 19:34; Matt 7:12
5:15 2 Sam 2:26; 2 Sam 2:27; 1 Cor 3:3
5:16 Gen 6:3; Ezek 36:27; Gal 5:19-21
5:17 Gen 6:3; Ps 51:3; Ps 51:4
5:18 Rom 6:14,15; Gal 5:16,25; Ps 25:4,5,8,9
5:19 1 Cor 6:9,10; 1 Pet 4:2; Matt 15:18,19
5:20 Deut 18:10; 1 Sam 15:23; Acts 8:9-11
5:21 Rom 13:13; 1 Cor 6:9,10; 1 Cor 5:11
5:22 Col 3:12-17; 1 Cor 13:4-7; Eph 5:9
5:23 1 Tim 1:9; Acts 24:25; Titus 1:8
5:24 Rom 6:6; Rom 8:13; Rom 13:14
5:25 Gal 5:16; John 6:63; Rom 8:2,10
5:26 Luke 14:10; 1 Cor 3:7; Phil 2:1-3
6:1 Rom 15:1; Gen 9:22; Gen 9:23
6:2 Rom 15:1; Deut 1:12; 1 Thess 5:14
6:3 1 Cor 3:18; 2 Cor 12:11; 1 Cor 8:2

5:14 *You shall love your neighbor as yourself* Leviticus 19:18, the second great command (Matt 22:37-40). Love does what the Law aimed at all along, for love does not murder, steal, or commit adultery against a neighbor (Rom 13:8-10). The Law could command love but could not produce it. The Spirit does.

5:15 *if you bite and devour one another* Paul pictures wild animals fighting until they destroy each other. Legalism often stirs up such fights, as people measure, judge and tear each other down. Biting words and gossip can tear a church apart faster than anything outside it.

5:16 *walk by the Spirit, and you will certainly not carry out the desire of the flesh* Paul's answer to the flesh is not more rules but the Holy Spirit. To walk is to live day by day, depending on Him and obeying what He shows us in God's Word. The desire will still be there, but we need not give in. The way to win is not to stare at our sin and try harder, but to keep in step with the Spirit.

5:17 *so that the things which you wish, these you may not do* Before Christ we felt little fight. Now the Spirit pulls one way and the flesh the other. Some read this phrase as the flesh keeping us from the good we want (Rom 7:15-19). Others read it as the Spirit keeping us from the evil the flesh wants. Both are true in a believer's life, and the battle itself is a sign the Spirit is at work.

5:18 *if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law* The Spirit leads as a shepherd leads sheep or a father his son (Rom 8:14). The Law is not over us as master or judge, yet the Spirit leads us into the very righteousness it described. The false teachers feared people would run wild without the Law. The Law worked from the outside. The Spirit changes us from the inside.

5:19 *the works of the flesh are evident* First, sins of sexual life. Adultery is a married person's sin with someone other than the spouse. Sexual immorality is porneia, every kind of sexual sin outside marriage between husband and wife. Impurity is moral uncleanness. Debauchery is shameless sin out in the open. God made sex a good gift for marriage (Gen 2:24; Heb 13:4), and the flesh twists it.

5:20 *idolatry, sorcery* Sorcery is pharmakeia, which gives us pharmacy, used for magic that often involved drugs and potions. Then comes a long list of sins that tear people apart: hatred, quarrels, resentment, flashes of temper, selfish ambition, divisions, and factions formed around opinions. The sins of tongue and temper are as much works of the flesh as the sins of the bed.

5:21 *those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God* The list ends with excess, drunkenness and wild parties, and the things like these, so it is not complete. Practice speaks of a settled way of life. A believer can fall into any of these, and God forgives when we confess (1 John 1:9). But a life marked by them, with no sorrow and no change, shows a person does not belong to God's kingdom (1 Cor 6:9-11).

5:22 *the fruit of the Spirit* The flesh produces works, the Spirit fruit. Fruit grows from a living thing. And it is fruit, not fruits, one harvest with many sides. Love is the self-giving love God showed in Christ. Joy is gladness in God that does not depend on circumstances. Peace is rest with God and others. Patience is slowness to anger. Kindness is a good heart, goodness is doing good when it is hard, and faithfulness is being trustworthy.

5:23 *gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law* Gentleness is strength under control. Jesus was gentle (Matt 11:29) but never weak. Self-control is mastery over desires, the opposite of the sins of excess. No one breaks God's Law by being too loving. The whole list is a portrait of Jesus, His character growing in us as we stay close to Him (John 15:4-5).

5:24 *those of Christ crucified the flesh with the passions and the desires* When we came to Christ, we turned from the old way and said no to the flesh. It is still around, but it no longer rules us (Rom 6:6, 11-14). Crucifixion was a slow death, and the flesh does not die easily. But its sentence is passed. Each day we treat it as dead and do not feed it (Rom 13:14).

5:25 *by the Spirit let us also walk in line* Every believer has life by the Spirit (John 3:5-6). Walk in line is a different word from walk in verse 16. It was used for soldiers marching in rank, keeping step behind a leader, not running ahead and not falling behind. We are alive by the Spirit, so let us walk like it.

5:26 *Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another* Conceit is empty pride. It shows two ways: provoking those we look down on, and envying those we look up to. Both are signs of the flesh, even in people who think they are very spiritual. Those who walk by the Spirit have nothing to prove, because they rest in what Christ has done.

6:1 *you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness* A trespass is a false step off the path, and caught may mean caught in the act or overtaken before he saw it coming. The spiritual are those who walk by the Spirit (5:16, 25), not those who think themselves better. Restore was used for setting a broken bone or mending a net. The goal is to make him whole, not to punish. No one is above falling, and pride is how we fall next.

6:2 *Bear one another's burdens, and thus fulfill the law of Christ* A burden is a weight too heavy to carry alone: a sin someone is fighting, a loss, a sickness. The false teachers wanted the Law of Moses. Believers have the law of Christ, to love one another as He loved us (John 13:34). He carried the heaviest burden when He bore our sins. When we carry each other's loads, we do what He did.

6:3 *if anyone thinks himself to be something, being nothing, he deceives himself* This is why some will not stoop to help. Apart from God's grace we are nothing. Pride also keeps us from letting others carry our burdens, when we would rather sink than admit a need. Christ's way is humility in helping and in being helped.

anyone thinks ***himself*** to be something, being nothing, he deceives himself. **4** But let each test his own work, and then he will have the boast in regard to himself alone, and not in regard to the other. **5** For each will bear ***his*** own load. **6** And let the ***one*** being taught the word share with the ***one*** teaching in all good things. **7** Do not be led astray; God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. **8** For the ***one*** sowing to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the ***one*** sowing to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. **9** And let us not lose heart in doing the good, for in ***its*** own time we will reap, not fainting. **10** So then, as we have opportunity, let us work the good toward all, and especially toward those of the household of the faith.

Boasting in the Cross

11 See with what large letters I have written to you with my own hand. **12** As many as want to make a good showing in ***the*** flesh, these compel you to be circumcised, only so that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. **13** For not even those who are circumcised themselves keep ***the*** law, but they want you to be circumcised so that they may boast in your flesh. **14** But for me, may it not be to boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus (Iesous) Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. **15** For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision avails anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. **16** And as many as will walk in line by this rule, peace ***be*** upon them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God. **17** From now on let no one cause me troubles; for I bear on my body the marks of the Lord Jesus. **18** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ ***be*** with your spirit, brothers. Amen.

6:4 2 Cor 13:5; 1 Cor 11:28; 1 John 3:19-22
6:5 Jer 23:36; Jer 31:30; Jer 32:19
6:6 Matt 10:10; Rom 15:27; 1 Tim 5:17,18
6:7 2 Cor 9:6; Hos 10:12; Rom 2:6-10
6:8 Isa 17:11; James 3:18; Rom 8:13
6:9 1 Cor 15:58; 2 Thess 3:13; Isa 40:30,31
6:10 Heb 13:16; Eph 2:19; John 12:35
6:11 1 Cor 16:21-23; Rom 16:22
6:12 Gen 17:10; Gal 5:11; Acts 15:1,5
6:13 Matt 23:3,15,23; Rom 2:17-24; Rom 3:9-19
6:14 Phil 3:3,7,8; Rom 6:6; Job 31:24,25
6:15 2 Cor 5:17; Gal 5:6; 1 Cor 7:19
6:16 Ps 125:5; Phil 3:3; Rom 9:6-8
6:17 2 Cor 1:5; Gal 5:11; 2 Cor 4:10
6:18 Rom 16:20,24; 2 Tim 4:22; Phlm 1:25

6:4 *let each test his own work* To test is to examine like gold in a fire. Instead of looking at others, each should look honestly at his own life and rejoice in what God has done there. Comparing ourselves with those who struggle is not the test. Comparison leads to pride or envy, the two sins of 5:26.
6:5 *each will bear his own load* This does not contradict verse 2. The burden there is a crushing weight. The load here was the pack each traveler or soldier carried himself. Each of us is responsible for his own walk and will give an account to God (Rom 14:12). Believers will stand before the judgment seat of Christ, not to be judged for salvation, but to receive what is due for what we have done (2 Cor 5:10).
6:6 *let the one being taught the word share with the one teaching in all good things* To share is to have fellowship, giving a part of what you have. This includes money but also prayer, encouragement and help (1 Cor 9:11, 14; 1 Tim 5:17-18). The false teachers may have been drawing support away from the true teachers.
6:7 *whatever a man sows, this he will also reap* To mock God is to treat Him with contempt, as if one could ignore Him and get away with it. Plant corn and you get corn. You reap more than you sow, and later than you sow. This is not about earning salvation but about the kind of life we are growing.
6:8 *the one sowing to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life* To sow to the flesh is to spend our time, money and strength feeding sinful desires, and the harvest is decay and ruin. To sow to the Spirit is to invest in His Word, prayer, worship, fellowship and service. Eternal life is God's gift received by faith (Rom 6:23). Here it is the full and final harvest of a Spirit-led life when Christ returns.
6:9 *in its own time we will reap, not fainting* Doing good is tiring when no one thanks or notices. A farmer does not dig up his seeds every morning. Some harvest comes in this life and some only before the Lord, but it is certain. God does not forget good done in His name (Heb 6:10).
6:10 *especially toward those of the household of the faith* Chances to do good do not last forever. We do good to all, since our neighbor is anyone in need (Luke 10:29-37). But the church is a family, and as a man cares for his own household first (1 Tim 5:8), believers have a special duty to each other. That care shows the world God's love (John 13:35).
6:11 *See with what large letters I have written to you with my own hand* Paul usually dictated (Rom 16:22) and then wrote a few lines himself to show the letter was his (2 Thess 3:17). Some think the large letters came from poor eyesight (4:13-15), others that he wrote large to underline his point, and some that he wrote the whole letter himself. Scripture does not say.
6:12 *only so that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ* Paul exposes their motives. Circumcised Gentile converts would be something to show off. Those who preached the cross alone were persecuted, but if their converts kept the Law, they could avoid trouble. They chose the easy road over the truth.
6:13 *so that they may boast in your flesh* The false teachers did not keep the whole Law either (3:10; 5:3). They picked parts like circumcision and ignored the rest. The Galatians were numbers to them. It is easy for any ministry to care more about numbers and show than souls. Paul wanted Christ formed in people (4:19).
6:14 *may it not be to boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ* The cross was the most shameful death in Paul's world, kept for slaves and criminals. No one bragged about a cross. Paul saw it as the place where God's love and power were shown most clearly (1 Cor 1:18). The world here is life apart from God. At the cross it lost its hold on Paul, and he lost his interest in its approval.
6:15 *but a new creation* As in 5:6, the outward mark counts for nothing. God does not improve the old person. He makes a new one (2 Cor 5:17), a work from the inside out (John 3:3-7). That is why rules can never save. We need to be made new, and only God can do it.
6:16 *and upon the Israel of God* The rule is what Paul just said, and walk in line is the word of 5:25. Bible teachers read the Israel of God more than one way. Many dispensational teachers take it as Jewish believers in Jesus, singled out because the false teachers claimed to speak for Israel, and elsewhere Paul uses Israel for the Jewish people, even for a believing remnant within it (Rom 9:6; 11:5, 26). Others take it as the whole church, and some as a prayer for the nation. Whichever reading one takes, the church has not replaced Israel (Rom 11:25-29).
6:17 *I bear on my body the marks of the Lord Jesus* The word is stigmata, used for the brand burned into a slave's skin to show his owner. Paul's marks were scars from beatings and stoning (Acts 14:19; 2 Cor 11:23-27). The false teachers wanted the mark of circumcision on the Galatians. Paul bore the marks that showed he belonged to Jesus.
6:18 *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers* The letter began with grace (1:3) and ends with it, the whole message of Galatians. In Greek, brothers is the last word before the amen. For all his hard words, Paul still sees them as family. We tell straying believers the truth, but we never stop calling them brothers and sisters. The closing note that the letter was written from Rome was added by later copyists and is not part of the letter.

EPHESIANS

Introduction

Title

The letter takes its name from its first readers, "the saints who are in Ephesus" (1:1). A few of the oldest Greek copies leave out the words "in Ephesus." For that reason many believe it was a circular letter, read first in Ephesus and then passed around to other churches in the province of Asia. Either way, the readers were mostly Gentile believers (2:11; 3:1).

Author and Date

The letter names Paul as its author twice (1:1; 3:1), and the early church accepted it as his without question. Many modern scholars, though not all, think a follower of Paul wrote it in his name after his death, pointing to its long sentences, some words Paul does not use elsewhere, and its likeness to Colossians. I take the letter at its word. It names Paul, speaks of his chains as a present fact (3:1; 4:1; 6:20) and asks for prayer for his preaching (6:19-20).

Paul wrote as a prisoner, most likely from Rome during his house arrest, about A.D. 60 to 62 (Acts 28:16, 30). Tychicus carried the letter (6:21-22), along with Colossians (Col 4:7-9) and most likely Philemon. Paul wrote Ephesians and Colossians at about the same time to churches in the same region, which explains why they share so many themes and phrases.

Background and Setting

Ephesus was one of the largest cities in the Roman province of Asia, on the west coast of what is now Turkey. It was a busy port and trade center, home to the great temple of the goddess Artemis, one of the wonders of the ancient world. The city was full of idol worship and magic. Paul spent about three years there on his third missionary journey (Acts 19:1-20; 20:31). When people came to Christ, many burned their books of magic in public (Acts 19:19). Paul later met the Ephesian elders at Miletus and warned them that false teachers would come (Acts 20:17-38).

Themes

Paul does not write to fix one big problem, as he does in Galatians or 1 Corinthians. He writes to show believers how rich they are in Christ, to show that Jews and Gentiles are now one body in Him, and to call them to live in a way that fits that calling.

The letter falls into two halves. Chapters 1 to 3 teach what God has done: He chose us, adopted us, redeemed us, forgave us, sealed us with His Spirit, made us alive with Christ, and broke down the wall between Jew and Gentile. Chapters 4 to 6 show how we live because of it: in unity, in purity, in the light, filled with the Spirit, in the home and at work, and armored for spiritual battle. The hinge is 4:1, "walk worthily of the calling."

The phrase "in Christ" and phrases like it run all through the letter. Every blessing God gives comes through our union with His Son. The church is His body (1:23), His temple (2:21) and His bride (5:25-32).

Christ in Ephesians

Every spiritual blessing is "in Christ" (1:3). God's plan for history is "to sum up all things in Christ" (1:10). The risen Christ is seated far above every power (1:20-21) and is head over all things to the church, His body (1:22-23). He is our peace, who broke down the middle wall (2:14), the cornerstone of God's temple (2:20), the conquering King who gives gifts to His people (4:8), and the Husband who loved the church and gave Himself up for her (5:25).

Hard Passages

Does God's choosing in 1:4-5 mean He chose specific people by His will alone, or that He chose in Christ all He knew would believe? Bible teachers have long disagreed, and the notes name both views without settling the question.

Can a believer lose the salvation sealed by the Spirit (1:13-14; 4:30)? The notes name both views and leave the question open.

What are "the lower parts of the earth" in 4:9? Three main views are given in the notes.

Do apostles and prophets continue today (2:20; 4:11)? The notes leave this open, while noting that all agree no one today adds to Scripture.

How should the commands to wives and husbands (5:22-33) and to slaves and masters (6:5-9) be read today? The notes explain what these verses teach and what they never mean: submission never means following a husband into sin or putting up with abuse, and Paul's words to slaves were never a blessing on slavery.

Outline

Greeting (1:1-2)
I. What God Has Done for Us in Christ (1:3-3:21)
  A. Praise for every spiritual blessing (1:3-14)
  B. Prayer that believers would know God's power (1:15-23)
  C. Made alive by grace (2:1-10)
  D. Jews and Gentiles made one (2:11-22)
  E. The mystery revealed to Paul (3:1-13)
  F. Prayer for strength and love (3:14-21)
II. How We Live Because of It (4:1-6:24)
  A. Walk in unity (4:1-16)
  B. Walk in newness of life (4:17-32)
  C. Walk in love and light (5:1-14)
  D. Walk in wisdom, filled with the Spirit (5:15-21)
  E. Wives and husbands (5:22-33)
  F. Children and parents, slaves and masters (6:1-9)
  G. The armor of God (6:10-20)
  H. Closing words (6:21-24)

EPHESIANS

EPHESIANS 1

Greeting

1 Paul (Paulos), an apostle of Jesus (Iesous) Christ through ***the*** will of God, to the saints who are in Ephesus (Ephesos) and faithful in Christ Jesus: **2** Grace to you and peace from God our Father and ***the*** Lord Jesus Christ.

Every Spiritual Blessing in Christ

3 Blessed ***be*** the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly ***places*** in Christ, **4** just as He chose us in Him before ***the*** foundation of ***the*** world, ***for*** us to be holy and blameless before Him in love, **5** having predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, **6** to ***the*** praise of ***the*** glory of His grace, in which He graced us in the Beloved, **7** in whom we have the redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of the trespasses, according to the riches of His grace, **8** which He made abound toward us in all wisdom and understanding, **9** having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Him, **10** for ***the*** administration of the fullness of the times, to sum up all things in Christ, both the ***things*** in the heavens and the ***things*** on the earth, in Him, **11** in whom also we were allotted, having been predestined according to ***the*** purpose of the ***One*** who works all things according to the counsel of His will, **12** for us to be to ***the*** praise of His glory, those who had first hoped in Christ; **13** in whom you also, having heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation—in whom also having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, **14** who is ***the*** pledge of our inheritance, for ***the*** redemption of the acquired possession, to ***the*** praise of His glory.

Paul's Prayer for Wisdom

15 Because of this I also, having heard of the faith among you in the Lord Jesus and the love toward all the saints, **16** do not cease giving thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers, **17** that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father

1:1 Col 1:2; 2 Cor 1:1; 1 Cor 1:1
1:2 Rom 1:7; 2 Cor 1:2; Gal 1:3
1:3 2 Cor 1:3; 1 Pet 1:3; Gen 14:19
1:4 2 Tim 1:9; Rom 8:28,30,33; Isa 42:1
1:5 Eph 1:11; Rom 8:29,30; 1 John 3:1
1:6 Matt 3:17; Col 1:13; Isa 43:21
1:7 Rom 3:24; Col 1:14; Acts 20:28
1:8 Rom 5:15,20,21; Eph 1:11; Eph 3:10
1:9 Job 23:13; Job 23:14; Ps 25:14
1:10 Col 1:20; Job 23:13; Mic 4:2
1:11 Isa 5:19; 1 Pet 1:4; Eph 1:14
1:12 Eph 1:6,14; 2 Thess 2:13; Matt 12:18-21
1:13 Ps 119:43; Eph 4:30; 2 Cor 1:22
1:14 2 Cor 1:22; Eph 4:30; 2 Cor 5:5
1:15 Phlm 1:5; Col 1:3,4; Gal 5:6
1:16 Rom 1:8,9; 1 Thess 5:17; Col 1:3
1:17 Isa 11:2; Prov 2:5; 2 Pet 1:3

1:1 *an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God* An apostle is one sent with the authority of the one who sent him. Paul did not choose this job. Jesus met him on the Damascus road and called him (Acts 9:3-6, 15; 26:15-18).
1:1 *to the saints* In the Bible every believer is a saint, one set apart for God. If you belong to Jesus, God calls you a saint today. Some of the oldest Greek copies leave out "in Ephesus," one reason many think this letter was passed around to several churches.
1:2 *Grace to you and peace* Grace is God's favor we did not earn, and peace is what comes because of it. Grace always comes first. Paul puts "God our Father" and "the Lord Jesus Christ" side by side as one source. A Jewish man like Paul would never do that with a mere man. He knew Jesus is God.
1:3 *every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ* Paul starts with worship before he gives a single command. Not some blessings, every one. They belong to the spiritual world where Christ reigns, so nothing on earth can take them away, and they all come through our union with Christ. "In Christ" and phrases like it run all through this chapter (2 Pet 1:3).
1:4 *He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world* Before God made the first star, He had His people in mind, and the goal was that we would be "holy and blameless before Him." Teachers have long disagreed on how God's choosing works. Some say He chose specific people by His will alone. Others say He chose in Christ all He knew would believe (Rom 8:29; 1 Pet 1:1-2). I leave that question open here. Both sides agree salvation is God's work from start to finish and every person is called to repent and believe (Acts 17:30).
1:5 *having predestined us for adoption as sons* To predestine is to decide ahead of time. In the Roman world an adopted son had all the rights of a natural-born son, took the father's name and shared his inheritance. God did it because He wanted to, "according to the good pleasure of His will."
1:6 *to the praise of the glory of His grace* Our salvation is meant to make God look good, not us. "The Beloved" is Jesus, the Son the Father loves (Matt 3:17).
1:7 *the redemption through His blood* Redemption is buying back by paying a price, as when a slave was set free. We were slaves to sin, and Jesus paid with His own blood (1 Pet 1:18-19). A trespass is a false step off God's path, and every one is forgiven out of "the riches of His grace," which never run out.
1:9 *the mystery of His will* In the Bible a mystery is not a puzzle. It is a truth God kept hidden in the past and has now made known to His people.
1:10 *to sum up all things in Christ* Right now the world is broken and divided. History is going somewhere: every rebel power will be put down and all creation brought together under one head, Jesus Christ. That day comes when He returns visibly to reign (Rev 11:15; 19:11-16). "The fullness of the times" points to God's perfect timing.
1:11 *we were allotted* The word can mean we were made God's own portion, or we were given an inheritance. Both are true in Scripture. God "works all things according to the counsel of His will." Nothing catches Him by surprise (Rom 8:28).
1:12 *those who had first hoped in Christ* Most likely Paul and the Jewish believers who believed first. In verse 13 he turns to "you also," the Gentile readers, laying the ground for chapter 2.
1:13 *you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise* Three steps: they heard the gospel, believed, and were sealed. Every believer receives the Spirit the moment he believes, not later as a reward (Rom 8:9). A seal marked ownership and protection, like a king's ring pressed into hot wax.
1:14 *the pledge of our inheritance* A pledge is a down payment that promises the rest is coming. The Spirit in us now is God's guarantee of all He promised, including the redemption of our bodies when Jesus comes for His church (Rom 8:23; 1 Thess 4:16-17). Teachers disagree on whether a true believer can lose salvation (compare Heb 6:4-6). I leave that open here. This verse plainly means for God's people to rest in His mark and His promise.
1:15 *the faith among you in the Lord Jesus and the love toward all the saints* Real faith in Christ shows itself in love for other believers (1 John 4:20), and Paul praises them for loving all the saints, not just the ones like them.
1:17 *a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him* Paul did not pray for easier lives. He prayed they would know God better. We already have every spiritual blessing (1:3), but many believers live like paupers when they are rich in Christ.

of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, **18** the eyes of your understanding having been enlightened, for you to know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints ***are***, **19** and what ***is*** the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of the might of His strength, **20** which He worked in Christ, having raised Him out from ***the*** dead, and seated ***Him*** at His right ***hand*** in the heavenly ***places***, **21** far above every principality and authority and power and lordship, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the coming ***one***. **22** And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him ***as*** head over all things to the church, **23** which is His body, the fullness of the ***One*** who fills all things in all.

EPHESIANS 2

Made Alive by Grace

1 And you, being dead in the trespasses and the sins, **2** in which you once walked according to the age of this world, according to the ruler of the authority of the air, of the spirit that ***is*** now working in the sons of disobedience, **3** among whom we also all once lived in the desires of our flesh, doing the wishes of the flesh and of the thoughts, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. **4** But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, **5** even us, being dead in the trespasses, He made alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), **6** and raised ***us*** up together and seated ***us*** together in the heavenly ***places*** in Christ Jesus (Iesous), **7** in order that He might show in the coming ages the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. **8** For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this ***is*** not from yourselves; the gift ***is*** of God, **9** not from works, so that no one may boast. **10** For we are His workmanship, having been created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we may walk in them.

One New Man in Christ

11 Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in ***the*** flesh, who are called "Uncircumcision" by what is called "Circumcision" in ***the*** flesh, made by hands, **12** that you were at that time apart from Christ, having been alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of the promise, not having hope and without God in the world. **13** But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off

1:18 Acts 26:18; Esth 1:4; Eph 4:4
1:19 Col 2:12; Eph 3:7,20; 2 Cor 4:7
1:20 Ps 110:1; Job 25:2; Isa 30:18
1:21 Col 2:10; Col 1:15,16; Heb 1:4
1:22 Ps 8:6; Isa 30:18; Isa 40:10
1:23 Col 1:18,24; 1 Cor 12:12-27; Eph 5:23-32
2:1 Col 2:13; Eph 2:5,6; Eph 4:18
2:2 Eph 6:12; 1 Cor 6:11; John 12:31
2:3 Titus 3:3; Gal 2:15,16; Ps 51:5
2:4 1 Pet 1:3; Eph 2:7; Eph 1:7
2:5 Eph 2:1; Acts 15:11; Eph 2:8
2:6 Eph 1:3; Col 3:1-3; Rom 6:4,5
2:7 Titus 3:4; Eph 2:4; Isa 60:15
2:8 Eph 2:5; Rom 3:22-26; James 1:16-18
2:9 2 Tim 1:9; Rom 11:6; 1 Cor 1:29-31
2:10 Col 1:10; Phil 2:13; 2 Cor 5:17
2:11 Col 2:11; Gen 17:10; Col 2:13
2:12 Isa 14:1; Col 1:21; Gal 4:8
2:13 Isa 57:19; Ps 148:14; Isa 14:1

1:18 *the eyes of your understanding* Many Greek copies read "heart." In the Bible the heart is the center of the whole person: mind, will and feelings. Biblical hope is a sure promise not yet arrived, not a wish. And God counts His people as His own riches.
1:19 *the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe* Paul piles up words for power. It is the power that raised Jesus from the dead, the greatest display of power in history, and it is at work for every believer.
1:20 *seated Him at His right hand* The place of honor and authority (Ps 110:1). Jesus is not only alive. He reigns.
1:21 *far above every principality and authority and power and lordship* These were names for ranks of spiritual powers, good and evil. Ephesus lived in fear of spirits and magic (Acts 19:18-19). Whatever powers exist, Jesus is far above them all, now and "in the coming one."
1:22 *He put all things under His feet* From Psalm 8:6. God gave man rule over creation and man lost it through sin. Jesus, the perfect Man, has won it back.
1:23 *which is His body, the fullness of the One who fills all things in all* A body carries out what the head wants. Christ fills all things, yet He makes His church the place where His life and presence are shown. The church is the living body of the risen Christ, far more than a building or a club.
2:1 *you being dead in the trespasses and the sins* Not sick, not weak. Dead. A dead man cannot help himself or move toward God. A trespass is a false step, and a sin is missing God's mark. You cannot see how good the good news is until you see how bad the bad news is.
2:2 *the ruler of the authority of the air* Satan, whom Jesus called "the ruler of this world" (John 12:31). Three forces ruled us before Christ: the way of the world, the devil, and our own flesh (2:3). Paul includes himself: "we also all once lived" this way.
2:3 *by nature children of wrath* We were born with a sinful nature, and by that nature we stood under God's wrath, His holy, settled opposition to evil. It is nothing like a human temper. No one is born good enough to stand before God on his own.
2:4 *But God* Two words change everything. God is rich in mercy, holding back the punishment we deserve, and He acted out of great love.
2:5 *He made alive together with Christ* A dead man needs more than advice. He needs life, and only God can give it. The power that raised Jesus (1:19-20) raised us. Paul cannot wait to say it: "by grace you have been saved."
2:6 *seated us together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus* Jesus was raised and seated (1:20), and believers are raised and seated with Him. Our bodies are on earth, but our position is with Christ.
2:7 *in the coming ages* Forever God will point to His people and show what His kindness in Christ can do. Every saved sinner is a trophy of His grace.
2:8 *For by grace you have been saved through faith* Maybe the clearest verse in the Bible on how a person is saved. Grace is God's undeserved favor. Faith is trusting God and receiving what He offers. "This" points to the whole thing, being saved by grace through faith, and all of it "is of God."
2:9 *not from works, so that no one may boast* If we could earn heaven, we would have something to brag about. No one in heaven will say, I made it because I was good. Every voice will praise Jesus (Rev 5:9-12).
2:10 *we are His workmanship* The Greek word poiema means something made, and gives us our word "poem." Verses 8-9 say we are not saved by good works. Verse 10 says we are saved for them. Good works are the fruit of salvation, not the root (2 Cor 5:17; James 2:17).
2:11 *Uncircumcision* A put-down Jews used for Gentiles. Circumcision was the covenant sign given to Abraham (Gen 17:10-11), but Paul notes it was only "in the flesh, made by hands," an outward mark, not a changed heart.
2:12 *not having hope and without God in the world* Five things the Gentiles lacked: no Messiah, no place in Israel, no claim on the covenant promises, no hope and no God. Ephesus had many gods but did not know the true one. That describes every person outside Christ today.
2:13 *by the blood of Christ* "But now" turns things around, just as "But God" did in verse 4. Not by becoming Jewish or keeping the Law, but by the death of Jesus. Isaiah 57:19 spoke of peace to the far and the near.

have become near by the blood of Christ. **14** For He Himself is our peace, who made both one and broke down the middle wall of the barrier, **15** having abolished the hostility in His flesh, the law of the commandments in ordinances, so that He might create the two in Himself into one new man, making peace, **16** and might reconcile both in one body to God through the cross, having killed the hostility by it. **17** And having come, He preached the gospel, peace to you, the ones far off, and to the ones near. **18** For through Him we both have the access by one Spirit to the Father. **19** So then you are no longer strangers and resident aliens, but fellow citizens of the saints and members of the household of God, **20** having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being ***the*** cornerstone, **21** in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in ***the*** Lord, **22** in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in ***the*** Spirit.

EPHESIANS 3

The Mystery Revealed

1 For this reason I, Paul (Paulos), the prisoner of Christ Jesus (Iesous) for you Gentiles, **2** if indeed you have heard of the stewardship of the grace of God which was given to me for you, **3** that by revelation He made known to me the mystery, even as I wrote before in brief, **4** by which, reading ***it***, you are able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, **5** which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in ***the*** Spirit: **6** ***that*** the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body and fellow partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel, **7** of which I became a servant according to the gift of the grace of God given to me according to the working of His power. **8** To me, the less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach the gospel among the Gentiles, the unsearchable riches of Christ, **9** and to enlighten all ***as to*** what ***is*** the fellowship of the mystery which has been hidden from the ages in God, who created all things through Jesus Christ, **10** so that now the manifold wisdom of God may be made known to the rulers and to the authorities in the heavenly ***places*** through the church, **11** according to ***the*** purpose of the ages which He accom-

2:14 Gal 3:28; Col 3:11; Mic 5:5
2:15 Col 2:14,20; Col 3:10; Heb 10:19-22
2:16 2 Cor 5:18-21; Rom 5:10; Rom 6:6
2:17 Isa 57:19; Acts 10:36; Ps 148:14
2:18 Zech 12:10; Deut 4:7; Eph 3:12
2:19 Gal 6:10; Phil 3:20; Eph 3:6
2:20 Isa 28:16; Ps 118:22; Gen 49:24
2:21 Hab 2:20; Zech 6:12; Zech 6:15
2:22 Deut 12:5; Ps 132:5; Ps 132:14
3:1 Eph 4:1; Col 1:24; Eph 6:20
3:2 2 Tim 1:11; Eph 4:7; Rom 1:5
3:3 Eph 3:9; Rom 16:25; Acts 22:17,21
3:4 2 Cor 11:6; 1 Cor 4:1; Col 4:3
3:5 Isa 55:5; Dan 2:22; 2 Pet 3:2
3:6 Rom 8:15-17; Gal 3:14; Eph 2:13-22
3:7 Eph 1:19; Eph 3:20; Eph 3:2
3:8 1 Sam 9:21; 1 Kgs 10:23; Prov 8:18
3:9 Col 1:26; Matt 13:35; Rom 16:25
3:10 1 Pet 1:12; Eph 1:21; Eph 1:3
3:11 2 Tim 1:9; Eph 1:4,9,11; Isa 14:24-27

2:14 *He Himself is our peace* Jesus does not only make peace. He is our peace.
2:14 *the middle wall of the barrier* The temple in Jerusalem had a real wall between the Court of the Gentiles and the inner courts. Josephus records warning signs on it saying Gentiles who went farther would be put to death (Antiquities 15.417; Jewish War 5.193-194), and one of those stones was found in 1871. Jesus tore down the spiritual wall that stone wall stood for.
2:15 *the law of the commandments in ordinances* The Law of Moses as a system that set Israel apart: food laws, feast days, circumcision and sacrifices. Jesus fulfilled the Law (Matt 5:17), and its ceremonies no longer divide God's people. God's moral standard did not change. Paul quotes the fifth commandment in 6:2-3.
2:15 *one new man* Not Gentiles turned into Jews, or Jews into Gentiles, but something new: one body in Christ.
2:16 *reconcile both in one body to God through the cross* To reconcile is to bring enemies back together. Our biggest problem was that we were enemies of God (Rom 5:10). The cross dealt with that first, and then we could be made right with one another.
2:18 *the access by one Spirit to the Father* The whole Trinity is here, one God in three Persons. The Son opens the way, the Spirit brings us in and the Father welcomes us. Once only the high priest entered the Most Holy Place, once a year. Now every believer may come at any time (Heb 10:19-22).
2:19 *fellow citizens of the saints* God has no first-class and second-class children. This does not mean God has thrown away Israel (Rom 11:1-2, 25-29). His promises to Israel still stand, and I believe He has a future for the nation. Believing Gentiles now stand beside believing Jews on the same footing, through the same Messiah.
2:20 *the foundation of the apostles and prophets* Most likely the New Testament apostles and prophets (3:5; 4:11). Their teaching, now written in Scripture, is the foundation every generation builds on.
2:20 *Jesus Christ Himself being the cornerstone* The first stone laid, which every other stone lined up with (Isa 28:16; Ps 118:22; 1 Pet 2:6-7). A church that lines up with anything else is crooked.
2:21 *a holy temple in the Lord* God's presence once lived in the tabernacle and the temple. Now He lives in His people, each believer (1 Cor 6:19) and the church together. The building is still going up, one stone at a time.
3:1 *the prisoner of Christ Jesus* Paul was chained to a Roman guard, but he saw himself as the Lord's prisoner. He was arrested because a crowd thought he had brought Trophimus, a Gentile from Ephesus, into the temple (Acts 21:27-29). Verses 2-13 are a long side note, and the prayer picks up again in verse 14.
3:2 *the stewardship of the grace of God* A steward managed an estate for its owner and answered for it. God gave Paul the job of carrying His grace to the Gentiles.
3:3 *by revelation* Paul did not invent this, and no man taught it to him (Gal 1:11-12).
3:5 *was not made known to the sons of men* The Old Testament said the nations would be blessed through Abraham (Gen 12:3; Isa 49:6). What it did not show was how: Gentiles coming in on equal terms, without becoming Jews, as one body with Jewish believers.
3:6 *fellow heirs and fellow members of the body and fellow partakers* Three words that share a Greek prefix meaning "together with." All of it comes "through the gospel," not through the Law or circumcision. This does not cancel God's promises to the nation of Israel (Rom 11).
3:7 *I became a servant* Paul the Pharisee once hunted down Christians (Acts 8:3; 1 Tim 1:13). God took the church's greatest enemy and made him its greatest missionary. If God can use Paul, He can use you.
3:8 *the less than the least of all the saints* Lower than "the least of the apostles" (1 Cor 15:9). This is not false humility. Paul never got over the fact that God saved a man like him. "Unsearchable" riches are too deep to measure.
3:10 *the manifold wisdom of God* God uses the church to teach angels, good and evil (1:21; 6:12). Manifold means many-sided, like a jewel catching the light. When former enemies sit together at the Lord's table, the angels see something new (1 Pet 1:12). Nothing about the church is an afterthought.

plished in Christ Jesus our Lord, **12** in whom we have the boldness and the access in confidence through the faith of Him. **13** Therefore I ask ***you*** not to lose heart in my tribulations for you, which is your glory.

Paul's Prayer for Strength

14 For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, **15** from whom every family in ***the*** heavens and on earth is named, **16** that He may grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, **17** ***for*** Christ to dwell through faith in your hearts, having been rooted and
founded in love, **18** so that you may be fully able to grasp with all the saints what ***is*** the breadth and length and depth and height, **19** and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled to all the fullness of God. **20** Now to Him who is able to do above all things, far more abundantly than what we ask or think, according to the power that is working in us, **21** to Him ***be*** the glory in the church in Christ Jesus to all the generations of the age of the ages. Amen.

EPHESIANS 4

Walk in Unity

1 I, therefore, the prisoner in ***the*** Lord, exhort you to walk worthily of the calling with which you were called, **2** with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, **3** being diligent to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace: **4** one body and one Spirit, even as you also were called in one hope of your calling; **5** one Lord, one faith, one baptism; **6** one God and Father of all, who ***is*** over all and through all and in you all. **7** But to each one of us the grace was given according to the measure of the gift of Christ. **8** Therefore it says, "Having ascended on high, He took captivity captive, and He gave gifts to men." **9** Now "He ascended," what is it except that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? **10** The One who descended is Himself also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, so that He might fill all things. **11** And He Himself gave some ***as*** apostles, and some ***as*** prophets, and some ***as*** evangelists, and some ***as*** shepherds and teachers, **12** for the equipping of the saints for ***the*** work of ministry, for ***the*** building up of the

3:12 Job 31:37; Eph 2:18; Heb 4:14-16
3:13 Eph 3:1; Col 1:24; Isa 40:30,31
3:14 Eph 1:16-19; Acts 21:5; 1 Kgs 8:54
3:15 Eph 1:10,21; Phil 2:9-11; Rev 5:8-14
3:16 Col 1:11; Phil 4:13; Isa 40:29-31
3:17 Col 2:7; Gal 2:20; Col 1:23
3:18 Ps 103:11,12,17; Gal 2:20; Job 11:7-9
3:19 Eph 1:23; Col 1:10; Col 2:9,10
3:20 Rom 4:21; Jude 1:24; 1 Cor 2:9
3:21 Ps 72:19; Rom 11:36; Isa 64:4
4:1 Col 1:10; Phil 1:27; 1 Thess 2:12
4:2 Num 12:3; Col 3:12,13; 1 Cor 13:7
4:3 Ps 133:1; John 17:21-23; 1 Cor 1:10
4:4 1 Cor 12:4-11; Rom 12:4,5; Eph 2:18,22
4:5 1 Cor 8:6; 1 Pet 3:21; Rom 3:30
4:6 Rom 11:36; Mal 2:10; 1 Cor 12:6
4:7 Rom 12:3; 1 Pet 4:10; Matt 25:15
4:8 Ps 68:18; Esth 2:18; Col 2:15
4:9 Ps 63:9; Ps 139:15; Gen 11:5
4:10 Ps 8:1; Ps 148:13; Heb 4:14
4:11 Isa 30:20; Jer 3:15; 1 Cor 12:28
4:12 Exod 28:32; Eph 4:16,29; Rom 15:14,29

3:12 *the boldness and the access in confidence* Coming before a king uncalled could cost your life (Esth 4:11). Through faith in Jesus we may come to the King of the universe any time, not because we are good enough but because He is.
3:13 *not to lose heart* They might have thought that if God's great apostle was in prison, the gospel was losing. Paul says his sufferings are "your glory." His chains were part of God's plan, not a failure of it.
3:14 *I bow my knees* Jews usually prayed standing (Mark 11:25), so kneeling showed deep feeling.
3:15 *from whom every family in the heavens and on earth is named* A play on words: Father is pater and family is patria. Every family God has made takes its name from Him.
3:16 *the inner man* Our spirit, the real person inside. Our bodies wear out, but the inner man can be renewed day by day (2 Cor 4:16). God gives "according to the riches of His glory," in proportion to His riches, not as a rich man tossing a coin.
3:17 *for Christ to dwell through faith in your hearts* Christ already lives in every believer. "Dwell" means to settle down and be at home. Paul prays that Jesus would be at home in every room of their lives, not a guest in the front room.
3:18 *the breadth and length and depth and height* Wide enough for every person, long enough to last forever, high enough to lift us to heaven, deep enough to reach the worst sinner.
3:19 *the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge* We can know it truly but never fully. "Filled to all the fullness of God" does not mean we become God. It means He fills us more and more with Himself.
3:20 *far more abundantly than what we ask or think* We can ask big things and imagine bigger ones. God is able to do far more, by the same resurrection power at work in us (1:19-20).
3:21 *to Him be the glory in the church* The church exists to bring glory to God. "Amen" means so be it. It closes the first half of the letter.
4:1 *walk worthily of the calling* "Therefore" points back to chapters 1-3. "Worthily" was a word for scales in balance. Our life should match our calling. We do not walk worthy to be saved. We walk worthy because we are.
4:2 *with all humility and gentleness, with patience* Humility is thinking rightly about ourselves (Rom 12:3), a trait the Greeks and Romans did not prize until Jesus showed it (Phil 2:5-8). Gentleness is strength under control, as with Moses (Num 12:3). Patience puts up with people for a long time. Love bears with others' faults because Christ bears with ours.
4:3 *being diligent to keep the unity of the Spirit* We do not create unity. The Spirit already made us one (2:14-18). Our job is to guard it, and that takes effort. I have seen more churches hurt by gossip and hard feelings than by false teaching.
4:4 *one body and one Spirit* Seven "ones" every true believer shares. "One faith" is the body of truth handed down by the apostles (Jude 3). "One baptism" is most likely water baptism, the public step every believer takes. Where these seven are shared, we should work hard to stay together.
4:8 *Having ascended on high* From Psalm 68:18, God going up in victory like a conquering king. A king who won came home leading captives and handing out spoils. Jesus went up in victory over sin, death and Satan, and gives gifts to His people. The psalm says "received" and Paul says "gave." A conquering king does both.
4:9 *the lower parts of the earth* Three main views: His coming to earth at His birth, His burial, or His going to the place of the dead (1 Pet 3:18-20). Each has good support, and I won't press one. The One who came down lowest went up "far above all the heavens" (Phil 2:5-11).
4:11 *some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as shepherds and teachers* These gifts are people. Apostles were sent directly by the risen Christ and had seen Him (1 Cor 9:1). Evangelists carry the gospel to new places (Acts 21:8). Shepherds and teachers, or pastors, care for and teach a local church, and Paul's Greek ties the two together. Teachers disagree on whether apostles and prophets continue today. I leave that open, as in my Acts study. All agree no one today adds to Scripture.
4:12 *for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry* The pastor's job is not to do all the ministry while everyone watches. He equips the saints, and the saints do the work. "Equipping" was used for setting a bone or mending a net. If you are on the sidelines, the body is missing something only you can give.

body of Christ, **13** until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a complete man, to ***the*** measure of ***the*** stature of the fullness of Christ, **14** so that we may no longer be infants, being tossed by waves and carried about by every wind of teaching, in the trickery of men, in craftiness with a view to the scheming of error; **15** but speaking the truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the head, Christ, **16** from whom the whole body, being joined together and held together through every joint of the supply, according to ***the*** working in ***the*** measure of each individual part, makes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

Put Off the Old, Put On the New

17 This therefore I say and testify in ***the*** Lord: you ***are*** no longer to walk as the rest of the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, **18** darkened in the understanding, being alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart, **19** who, having become callous, gave themselves over to sensuality for ***the*** practice of every impurity with greediness. **20** But you did not learn Christ this way, **21** if indeed you heard Him and were taught in Him, as truth is in Jesus (Iesous): **22** ***that*** you put off, concerning the former way of life, the old man, which is being corrupted according to the desires of deceit, **23** and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, **24** and put on the new man, which according to God was created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. **25** Therefore, having put off the falsehood, speak truth each one with his neighbor, because we are members of one another. **26** Be angry, and do not sin; let the sun not set on your anger, **27** nor give place to the devil. **28** Let the one who steals no longer steal, but rather let him labor, working with the hands what is good, so that he may have ***something*** to share with the one who has need. **29** Let no rotten word go out of your mouth, but whatever ***is*** good for building up of the need, so that it may give grace to those who hear. **30** And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you were sealed for ***the*** day of redemption. **31** Let all bitterness and rage and wrath and clamor and slander be removed from you, along with all malice. **32** And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, even as God also in Christ forgave you.

EPHESIANS 5

Walk in Love and Light

1 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, **2** and walk in love, even as Christ also loved us and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for an aroma of fra-

4:13 Col 1:28; Eph 4:3,5; Eph 1:23
4:14 Heb 13:9; 1 Cor 14:20; James 1:6
4:15 Eph 4:25; 1 John 3:18; Eph 1:22
4:16 Col 2:19; John 15:5; Eph 4:12
4:17 Eph 2:1-3; Col 2:4; 1 Pet 4:3,4
4:18 Eph 2:12; Rom 1:21-23,28; 1 Thess 4:5
4:19 1 Tim 4:2; Rom 1:24-26; Rev 18:3
4:20 Titus 2:11-14; John 6:45; Rom 6:1,2
4:21 Eph 1:13; 1 John 5:10-12,20; Matt 17:5
4:22 Heb 12:1; James 1:21; Rom 6:6
4:23 Rom 12:2; Rom 8:6; Ezek 36:26
4:24 Col 3:10-14; Eph 2:10; 2 Cor 5:17
4:25 Zech 8:16; Jer 9:4; Jer 9:5
4:26 Ps 4:4; Ps 37:8; James 1:19
4:27 James 4:7; 1 Pet 5:8; Eph 6:11,16
4:28 Exod 20:15,17; 1 Thess 4:11,12; 1 Tim 6:18
4:29 Col 4:6; Prov 12:13; 1 Thess 5:11
4:30 Isa 63:10; Gen 6:6; 1 Thess 5:19
4:31 Col 3:8,19; Eccl 7:9; 1 Pet 2:1
4:32 Col 3:12,13; 2 Cor 2:10; 1 Pet 3:8,9
5:1 1 Pet 1:15,16; Col 3:12; Eph 4:32
5:2 Gen 8:21; Lev 1:9; John 13:34

4:13 *the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ* The standard for the church is Jesus Himself. We will not reach it fully in this life, but we keep growing until we see Him (1 John 3:2).
4:14 *being tossed by waves* Immature believers are like a small boat pushed around by every new teaching. Some teachers know exactly what they are doing. The best protection is to know the truth so well that the counterfeit stands out.
4:15 *speaking the truth in love* Truth without love is harsh. Love without truth is empty. Verse 16 pictures a healthy body where every part does its work and the whole grows in love.
4:17 *the futility of their mind* "Gentiles" here means unbelievers living without God. Their ignorance is not innocent. It flows from a hardened heart (4:18; Rom 1:21).
4:19 *having become callous* Their conscience is seared numb (1 Tim 4:2). Sensuality is sin done openly without shame, and greed always wants more. Sin never satisfies. It leaves a person hungrier.
4:20 *you did not learn Christ this way* Not learning about Christ, but learning Christ Himself. Jesus does not only tell the truth. He is the truth (John 14:6).
4:22 *put off, concerning the former way of life, the old man* Like taking off dirty clothes. The old man is who we were before Christ. Sin always lies. It promises pleasure and pays out death.
4:23 *be renewed in the spirit of your mind* Change starts in the mind (Rom 12:2). We cannot keep thinking the old way and live a new way. God renews us as we fill our minds with His Word.
4:24 *put on the new man* Believers have already put off the old and put on the new (Col 3:9-10). Here Paul says to keep living that way, day after day.
4:25 *speak truth each one with his neighbor* Quoting Zechariah 8:16. Lying to another believer is like your hand lying to your foot. A body that cannot trust its own members cannot work.
4:26 *Be angry, and do not sin* Psalm 4:4 in the Greek Old Testament the early church used. Not all anger is sin. Jesus looked on hard hearts with anger (Mark 3:5). But anger is like fire. Deal with it before the sun goes down, even if that means bringing it to God that night. Settled, simmering wrath is the kind to put away (4:31).
4:27 *place to the devil* A foothold. Anger left to sit hands Satan a key to your life. Many broken marriages and split churches started there.
4:28 *so that he may have something to share with the one who has need* The gospel does more than stop sin. It puts the opposite in its place. The taker becomes a giver.
4:29 *Let no rotten word go out of your mouth* The word was used for rotten fruit or spoiled fish: cursing, gossip, put-downs and crude jokes. Before you speak, ask two questions. Will this build up, and will it give grace?
4:30 *Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God* Only a person can be grieved, so the Spirit is a Person, not a force. He is grieved by the very sins listed around this verse. He is God's seal on us until our redemption is complete, when Jesus comes for His church and our bodies are raised or changed (Rom 8:23; 1 Cor 15:51-52).
4:31 *bitterness and rage and wrath and clamor and slander* These often come as a chain. Bitterness hides inside, boils over into rage and wrath, gets loud, turns to slander and ends in malice. Stop it at the start.
4:32 *even as God also in Christ forgave you* We forgive because we have been forgiven (Matt 18:21-35). Forgiving does not mean what they did was right, and trust may take time to rebuild. It never means a crime should not be reported or that you must stay where you are being hurt. It means you release the debt and leave it with God.
5:1 *Be imitators of God* The Greek word gives us "mimic." Children copy their parents, and we are to copy our Father.
5:2 *walk in love, even as Christ also loved us and gave Himself up for us* Real love gives itself away. Some Old Testament offerings were a pleasing aroma to the Lord (Lev 1:9). The death of Jesus was the perfect sacrifice that fully pleased the Father.

grance. **3** But sexual immorality and all impurity or greediness, let it not even be named among you, as is proper for saints; **4** and filthiness and foolish talk or coarse joking, the ***things*** not fitting, but rather thanksgiving. **5** For you know this, that every sexually immoral person or impure person or greedy person, who is an idolater, has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. **6** Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes on the sons of disobedience. **7** Therefore do not be partakers with them; **8** for you were once darkness, but now ***you are*** light in ***the*** Lord. Walk as children of light **9** (for the fruit of the Spirit ***is*** in all goodness and righteousness and truth), **10** discerning what is well-pleasing to the Lord. **11** And do not have fellowship with the unfruitful works of the darkness, but rather even expose ***them***. **12** For it is shameful even to speak ***of*** the things being done by them in secret. **13** But all things, being exposed by the light, are made visible; for everything that is made visible is light.
14 Therefore it says, "Awake, you who are sleeping, and rise up from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."

Walk in Wisdom

15 Therefore see carefully how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, **16** redeeming the time, because the days are evil. **17** Because of this do not be foolish, but understanding what the will of the Lord ***is***. **18** And do not be drunk with wine, in which is debauchery, but be filled with ***the*** Spirit,
19 speaking to each other with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, **20** giving thanks always for all things in ***the*** name of our Lord Jesus (Iesous) Christ to the God and Father, **21** submitting yourselves to one another in ***the*** fear of God.

Wives and Husbands

22 Wives, submit yourselves to ***your*** own husbands, as to the Lord. **23** For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ ***is*** head of the church, and He Himself is Savior of the body. **24** But as the church is subjected to Christ, so also the wives ***are*** to ***their*** own husbands in everything. **25** Husbands, love your own wives, even as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, **26** so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed ***her*** by the washing of water by ***the*** word,

5:3 Col 3:5; Eph 5:5; Gal 5:19-21
5:4 Eph 4:29; Col 3:8; James 3:4-8
5:5 Gal 5:21; 1 Cor 6:9,10; Col 3:5
5:6 Rom 1:18; Matt 24:4,24; Col 3:6
5:7 Eph 5:11; Num 16:26; Ps 50:18
5:8 John 8:12; Acts 26:18; 1 Pet 2:9
5:9 Rom 15:14; Eph 6:14; Gal 5:22,23
5:10 Rom 12:1,2; Heb 12:28; 1 Sam 17:39
5:11 Rom 13:12; 1 Tim 5:20; 2 Thess 3:6,14
5:12 Eph 5:3; 1 Pet 4:3; Rom 2:16
5:13 John 3:20,21; Hos 2:10; Lam 2:14
5:14 Isa 60:1; Isa 26:19; Isa 52:1
5:15 Col 4:5; Prov 15:21; Phil 1:27
5:16 Amos 5:13; Eccl 12:1; Ps 37:19
5:17 Jer 4:22; Ps 111:10; Job 28:28
5:18 Prov 23:29; Isa 5:11; Gen 9:21
5:19 Ps 147:7; Ps 95:2; Ps 105:2
5:20 Job 1:21; Col 3:17; 1 Thess 5:18
5:21 Neh 5:9; Neh 5:15; Phil 2:3
5:22 Col 3:18-25; Gen 3:16; 1 Pet 3:1-6
5:23 1 Cor 11:3-10; Col 1:18; Eph 1:22,23
5:24 Eph 5:33; Exod 23:13; Col 3:20,22
5:25 Col 3:19; 1 Pet 3:7; Eph 5:28
5:26 Isa 54:5; 1 Cor 6:11; Titus 2:14

5:3 *let it not even be named among you* Sexual immorality is any sexual sin outside marriage between a husband and wife. These sins should be so far from the church that no one could rightly link them with believers.
5:4 *but rather thanksgiving* Paul is not against laughter. He is against humor that drags sin into the room. A thankful mouth crowds out the filth.
5:5 *has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God* Paul means people whose whole lives are marked by these sins without repentance, not a believer who stumbles and gets back up (1 Cor 6:9-11). It is a real warning. If you hate your sin and keep running back to Jesus, that sorrow is a sign of His Spirit at work in you (1 John 1:9). Greed is idolatry because it puts something in God's place.
5:6 *Let no one deceive you with empty words* Some said what you do with your body does not matter. Paul calls that empty talk (Col 3:6).
5:7 *do not be partakers with them* Jesus ate with sinners. We can be friends with people without being partners in their sin.
5:8 *you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord* Not in darkness but darkness itself, and now light itself. Our nature has changed (Matt 5:14; John 8:12). Like the moon, we shine by reflecting Jesus.
5:9 *the fruit of the Spirit* Many Greek copies read "the fruit of the light," which fits this passage. Either way it is God at work in us.
5:11 *rather even expose them* First by living in the light, since darkness does not argue with light. At times it also means speaking up, gently and humbly (Gal 6:1). Verse 12 reminds us to expose darkness, not dwell on it.
5:14 *Awake, you who are sleeping* Scripture does not say where this saying came from. Many think it was an early Christian hymn built on passages like Isaiah 60:1.
5:16 *redeeming the time* Buying up the opportunity, like a merchant grabbing a bargain before it is gone. The days are evil, and if we drift, we drift the wrong way.
5:17 *understanding what the will of the Lord is* Most of God's will is already written plainly in Scripture. Do what you already know He wants, and He will lead you in the rest.
5:18 *do not be drunk with wine* The Bible does not forbid all wine, but it plainly forbids drunkenness (Prov 23:29-35; Gal 5:21).
5:18 *be filled with the Spirit* A command, plural and ongoing: keep on being filled. Every believer has the Spirit from salvation (1:13). Being filled is letting Him lead and control us day by day. Wine takes away self-control. The Spirit gives it (Gal 5:22-23).
5:19 *psalms and hymns and spiritual songs* The first sign of a Spirit-filled life is worship. Church music is believers teaching and encouraging one another (Col 3:16).
5:20 *giving thanks always for all things* Written from prison. We do not thank God for evil itself, but we can thank Him in every situation because He works all things for good (Rom 8:28).
5:21 *submitting yourselves to one another in the fear of God* Many Greek copies read "the fear of Christ." A Spirit-filled believer puts others first. This verse opens the section on marriage, family and work.
5:22 *Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands, as to the Lord* Paul speaks to wives directly and does not tell husbands to make them submit. Submission is about role, not worth. Jesus is equal with the Father yet came to do His will (Phil 2:6-8; John 6:38). It never means following a husband into sin (Acts 5:29), and it never means putting up with abuse. A husband who abuses his wife is breaking verses 25-29, and the church should stand with her. Some teachers see a lasting pattern of loving leadership here. Others note that verse 22 borrows its verb from verse 21 and read it through mutual submission. I teach its plain meaning and encourage you to study it prayerfully.
5:23 *the husband is head of the wife* Headship in Scripture means loving leadership and responsibility, not being a boss or a tyrant.
5:25 *Husbands, love your own wives, even as Christ also loved the church* The culture told husbands to rule. Paul tells them to love, and the standard is the cross. A husband lays down his life for his wife every day: his time, comfort, rights and preferences. A wife loved like that will rarely find submission a burden.
5:26 *the washing of water by the word* Many see the cleansing God's Word brings (John 15:3; 17:17). Some also see baptism. Either way, God uses His Word to make His people clean.

27 so that He might present her to Himself, the church glorious, not having spot or wrinkle or any of such things, but that she might be holy and blameless. **28** So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself. **29** For no one ever hated his own flesh, but he nourishes and cherishes it, even as also the Lord ***does*** the church, **30** because we are members of His body, from His flesh and from His bones. **31** "Because of this a man will leave his father and mother and will be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." **32** This mystery is great, but I speak with reference to Christ and to the church. **33** Nevertheless, you also, each one individually, let each so love his own wife as himself, and the wife ***must see*** that she fears the husband.

EPHESIANS 6

Children and Parents

1 Children, obey your parents in ***the*** Lord, for this is right. **2** "Honor your father and mother" (which is ***the*** first commandment with a promise), **3** "so that it may be well with you, and you will be long-lived on the earth." **4** And fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in ***the*** discipline and admonition of ***the*** Lord.

Slaves and Masters

5 Slaves, obey the masters according to ***the*** flesh with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ, **6** not by way of eye-service as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from ***the*** soul, **7** with good will rendering service as to the Lord and not to men, **8** knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free. **9** And masters, do the same things to them, giving up the threatening, knowing that your own Lord also is in ***the*** heavens, and there is no partiality with Him.

The Armor of God

10 Finally, my brothers, be empowered in ***the*** Lord and in the strength of His might. **11** Put on the full armor of God so that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil, **12** because our wrestling is not against blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world rulers of the darkness of this age, against the spiritual ***forces*** of evil in the heavenly ***places***. **13** Because of this take up the full armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all things, to stand. **14** Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, **15** and having shod the feet

5:27 Isa 54:5; 2 Cor 11:2; Col 1:22,28
5:28 Eph 5:31,33; Gen 2:21-24; Matt 19:5
5:29 Prov 11:17; Eccl 4:5; Isa 40:11
5:30 Gen 2:23; 1 Cor 6:15; Eph 1:23
5:31 Gen 2:24; Matt 19:5; Mark 10:7,8
5:32 2 Cor 11:2; Col 2:2; Isa 54:5
5:33 Eph 5:25,28,29; Col 3:19; Esth 1:20
6:1 Prov 6:20; Prov 23:22; Prov 1:8
6:2 Exod 20:12; Deut 5:16; Deut 27:16
6:3 Deut 6:18; Deut 22:7; Deut 4:40
6:4 Col 3:21; Prov 19:18; Deut 6:7,20-24
6:5 1 Pet 2:18-21; Mal 1:6; Col 3:17-24
6:6 Col 3:22; 1 Thess 2:4; Phil 2:12
6:7 Eph 6:5,6; Gen 31:6,38-40; 2 Kgs 5:2,3,13
6:8 Col 3:24; Col 3:11; Matt 16:27
6:9 Job 31:14; Acts 10:34; Job 31:13-15
6:10 Eph 1:19; 1 Cor 16:13; Phil 4:13
6:11 2 Cor 10:4; Rom 13:12; Eph 6:13
6:12 Col 1:13; Eph 2:2; 1 Cor 9:25-27
6:13 Eph 6:11-17; 2 Cor 10:4; Eccl 12:1
6:14 Isa 59:17; Isa 11:5; Luke 12:35
6:15 Isa 52:7; Rom 10:15; 2 Cor 5:18-21

5:27 *not having spot or wrinkle* A bride carefully prepared for her wedding. One day Jesus will present His church holy and blameless (Rev 19:7-8).
5:29 *nourishes and cherishes* To nourish is to feed and help grow. To cherish is to keep warm. This is how Christ treats His church.
5:31 *the two will become one flesh* Genesis 2:24. A man's first loyalty changes, and he is joined to his wife like two things glued together. Jesus used this verse to show God means marriage to last (Matt 19:4-6).
5:32 *This mystery is great* From the beginning God designed marriage as a picture of Christ and the church. Every Christian marriage is meant to preach a small sermon about Jesus and His bride.
5:33 *let each so love his own wife as himself* Each command goes to one person. The husband answers for his love and the wife for her respect, even when the other falls short. That is about ordinary failures, not abuse, which should be brought into the light (5:11).
6:1 *Children, obey your parents in the Lord* Children were in the room when this letter was read. "In the Lord" sets a limit: no child obeys a command to sin, and no child must keep quiet about being hurt. If an adult is harming you, tell a teacher, a pastor or another adult you trust.
6:2 *Honor your father and mother* The fifth commandment (Exod 20:12; Deut 5:16). Obeying is for childhood. Honor lasts for life (1 Tim 5:4). Honoring parents who hurt you does not mean pretending it did not happen or putting yourself back in harm's way.
6:3 *you will be long-lived on the earth* The promise was given to Israel about the land. Paul applies it widely as a principle, not a guarantee that every obedient child will live to old age.
6:4 *do not provoke your children to anger* A Roman father had near-total power over his children. Paul tells fathers not to be harsh, unfair or never pleased (Col 3:21), and to raise children who know and love God. That job belongs to fathers first. A mother raising children alone carries a double load, and God sees it.
6:5 *Slaves, obey the masters according to the flesh* Many in the church were slaves. Roman slavery came through war, debt or birth and differed from race-based American slavery, but it was still one person owning another, and often cruel. Paul tells slave and master they answer to the same Lord, which cuts against the whole idea of owning a person (Phlm 16; 1 Cor 7:21). These verses were later misused in America to defend slavery, while other Christians reading the same Bible fought to end it. Today they speak to anyone who works for someone else.
6:6 *not by way of eye-service as men-pleasers* Like a worker who only works hard when the boss is watching. Your real boss is Jesus, and He sees and rewards every bit of good work (6:8).
6:9 *giving up the threatening* Masters could beat or even kill slaves, so this was a big change. The master on earth answers to a Master in heaven who shows no partiality. Every boss today should remember it.
6:10 *be empowered in the Lord and in the strength of His might* The same words for strength Paul used in 1:19 for the power that raised Jesus. We fight with His power, not ours.
6:11 *Put on the full armor of God* All of it, not the pieces we like. God provides it, and we put it on. The goal is to "stand." Christ has already won (Col 2:15). We hold the ground He has won.
6:12 *our wrestling is not against blood and flesh* The people who oppose us are not the real enemy. Behind them are ranks of evil spirits under Satan. We fight the devil and pray for the people (2 Tim 2:25-26). That never excuses anyone, and it never means ignoring abuse or crime.
6:13 *in the evil day* Some days are worse than others: strong temptation, great loss, flooding doubt. Put the armor on before that day comes.
6:14 *having girded your loins with truth* Paul was likely chained to a Roman soldier (Acts 28:16, 20), but these pictures come first from Isaiah 59:17, where the Lord Himself puts on armor. The soldier's belt held everything in place. A lying Christian is a soldier with his belt undone.
6:14 *the breastplate of righteousness* It covered the heart. Our righteousness before God comes from Christ alone (Phil 3:9), and living rightly protects the heart.
6:15 *the readiness of the gospel of peace* Roman sandals had nails in the soles like cleats. Peace with God gives firm footing (Rom 5:1) and makes us ready to carry that peace to others (Isa 52:7).

with the readiness of the gospel of peace; **16** above all,
having taken up the shield of faith, with which you will be
able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one; **17** and
take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit,
which is ***the*** word of God, **18** through all prayer and supplication, praying at every time in ***the*** Spirit, and for this very
purpose watching with all perseverance and supplication for
all the saints, **19** and for me, that a word may be given to me
in the opening of my mouth, with boldness to make known
the mystery of the gospel, **20** for which I am an ambassador
in a chain, so that in it I may speak boldly, as it is necessary
for me to speak.

Closing Words

21 But so that you also may know the things concerning me,
what I am doing, Tychicus (Tychikos), the beloved brother
and faithful servant in ***the*** Lord, will make all things known
to you, **22** whom I have sent to you for this very ***purpose***, that
you may know the things concerning us, and that he may
encourage your hearts. **23** Peace to the brothers, and love
with faith, from God ***the*** Father and ***the*** Lord Jesus (Iesous)
Christ. **24** The grace ***be*** with all those who love our Lord Jesus
Christ in incorruptibility. Amen.

6:16 1 Pet 5:8,9; 1 John 5:4,5; Gen 15:1
6:17 Isa 59:17; Heb 4:12; 1 Thess 5:8
6:18 1 Thess 5:17; Col 4:2; Phil 4:6
6:19 Col 4:3; 1 Thess 5:25; 2 Thess 3:1
6:20 2 Cor 5:20; Acts 28:20; Eph 3:1
6:21 Acts 20:4; 2 Tim 4:12; Titus 3:12
6:22 Col 4:7,8; Phil 2:19,25; 1 Thess 3:2
6:23 Gen 43:23; 1 Chr 12:18; Ps 122:8
6:24 Matt 22:37; 2 Cor 13:14; Col 4:18

6:16 *the shield of faith* The Roman shield was about four feet tall. The flaming arrows are Satan's lies, doubts, temptations and accusations. Faith answers with what God has said, and it stops all of them.
6:17 *the helmet of salvation* It guards the mind. Paul also calls it "the hope of salvation" (1 Thess 5:8).
6:17 *the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God* The only weapon for attack, a short sword for close combat. Jesus answered Satan three times with Scripture (Matt 4:1-11). We can only use the sword if we know it, one of the best reasons I know to read and memorize God's Word.
6:18 *praying at every time in the Spirit* All prayer, every time, all perseverance, all the saints. Prayer is how a soldier stays in touch with his commander, never a last resort (Rom 8:26).
6:20 *an ambassador in a chain* Ambassadors were supposed to be protected, not chained. Paul did not ask to be freed. He asked for boldness to speak.
6:21 *Tychicus* A trusted helper from the province of Asia (Acts 20:4). He carried this letter and Colossians (Col 4:7-8). God used a faithful helper we know little about to carry two books of the Bible.
6:24 *in incorruptibility* A love that does not decay or fade. The mark of a true believer is not perfection but an enduring love for Jesus.

PHILIPPIANS

Introduction

Title

The letter is named for its readers, "all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi" (1:1). It is one of four letters Paul wrote under arrest, often called the Prison Letters, with Ephesians, Colossians and Philemon. Of the four it is the most personal. Paul writes to old friends who had stood with him from the first day they heard the gospel (1:5).

Author and Date

The letter opens with "Paul and Timothy, slaves of Jesus Christ" (1:1). Timothy was with Paul and well known in Philippi, but Paul speaks all through the letter and speaks of Timothy as "he" (2:19-23). The early church accepted Paul as author without question, and almost all modern scholars agree. Some think our Philippians joins two or three letters because of the sharp turn at 3:2. I take it as one letter, as the church has always received it. A friend writing from prison may change subjects when a danger comes to mind, and the same themes run from first chapter to last.

Paul was in chains (1:7, 13, 17). He mentions the praetorium (1:13) and greets them from "Caesar's household" (4:22). Most Bible teachers believe he wrote from Rome during his house arrest, about A.D. 61 to 62 (Acts 28:16, 30). Some suggest an imprisonment in Ephesus a few years earlier, and others Caesarea (Acts 23:33-35; 24:27). Paul expected a decision on his case soon and hoped to visit them again (1:25-26; 2:23-24).

Background and Setting

Philippi was in Macedonia, in what is now northern Greece, named for Philip II, the father of Alexander the Great. After a famous battle near the city in 42 B.C., Rome made it a colony and settled many retired soldiers there. A Roman colony was a small piece of Rome set down in another land. Its people were Roman citizens and proud of it, which helps explain Paul's words about living as citizens (1:27) and "our citizenship exists in the heavens" (3:20).

It was the first church Paul planted in Europe, on his second journey, after the vision of the man of Macedonia (Acts 16:9). There was no synagogue, so Paul met women praying by the river. The Lord opened Lydia's heart, and she and her household were baptized. Paul cast an evil spirit out of a slave girl, and her masters had Paul and Silas beaten and jailed. At midnight they sang hymns, an earthquake shook the prison open, and the jailer and his household believed (Acts 16:13-34).

The Philippians gave to Paul again and again (4:15-16; 2 Cor 8:1-5). Hearing he was in prison, they sent a gift with Epaphroditus (4:18), who fell sick and nearly died (2:27). Now well, he went home, most likely carrying this letter.

Themes

The key word is joy. In the SLB, joy and rejoice appear sixteen times in four short chapters, written by a prisoner chained to a soldier and not knowing whether he would live or die. Paul's joy came from Christ, not his circumstances: "For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (1:21).

Paul thanks them for their partnership in the gospel and their gift (1:5; 4:10-18) and tells them his chains have spread the gospel (1:12-14). He calls them to unity and humility, with Jesus as the great example (2:1-11; 4:2-3). He warns against those who demanded circumcision (3:2-11) and those who lived for their appetites (3:18-19). He counts everything loss to know Christ and presses on toward the goal (3:8-14), waiting for the Savior from heaven (3:20-21). He teaches them to pray instead of worrying, to fill their minds with what is good, and to be content in every circumstance through Christ who strengthens (4:6-13).

Christ in Philippians

Philippians holds one of the greatest passages in the Bible about who Jesus is. "Existing in the form of God," He "emptied Himself, having taken the form of a slave," and "humbled Himself, having become obedient as far as death, even death of a cross" (2:6-8). God has highly exalted Him, "so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow" (2:10). Knowing Him is worth more than everything (3:8). From heaven "we eagerly await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform the body of our humiliation" (3:20-21), and He gives strength for every circumstance (4:13).

Hard Passages

What Christ emptied Himself of (2:7) has been much discussed. He did not stop being God. He added a full human nature and laid aside His glory and privileges. "Work out your own salvation" (2:12) does not mean earning salvation, for God is the One working in us (2:13). Philippians 1:6 is read differently by those with different views on eternal security. Being "with Christ" at death (1:23) shows that believers who die are with the Lord, aware, while their bodies await the resurrection (3:21). "If somehow I may attain to the resurrection of the dead" (3:11) expresses longing, not doubt. The notes name the main views on these.

Outline

I. Joy in Christ (1:1-30)
  A. Greeting (1:1-2)
  B. Thanksgiving and prayer (1:3-11)
  C. Paul's chains advance the gospel (1:12-18)
  D. To live is Christ (1:19-26)
  E. Live worthy of the gospel (1:27-30)
II. The Mind of Christ (2:1-30)
  A. A call to unity and humility (2:1-4)
  B. The humility and exaltation of Christ (2:5-11)
  C. Shine as lights (2:12-18)
  D. Timothy and Epaphroditus (2:19-30)
III. Knowing Christ (3:1-21)
  A. No confidence in the flesh (3:1-11)
  B. Pressing on toward the goal (3:12-16)
  C. Citizens of heaven (3:17-21)
IV. The Peace of God (4:1-23)
  A. Stand firm and rejoice (4:1-9)
  B. Contentment and thanks for the gift (4:10-20)
  C. Final greetings (4:21-23)

PHILIPPIANS

PHILIPPIANS 1

Greeting

1 Paul (Paulos) and Timothy (Timotheos), slaves of Jesus (Iesous) Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi (Philippoi), with ***the*** overseers and deacons: **2** Grace to you and peace from God our Father and ***the*** Lord Jesus Christ.

Thanksgiving and Prayer

3 I thank my God at all the remembrance of you, **4** always in every supplication of mine for you all, making the supplication with joy, **5** for your partnership in the gospel from ***the*** first day until now, **6** being confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will complete ***it*** until ***the*** day of Jesus Christ; **7** even as it is right for me to think this about you all, because I have you in the heart, both in my chains and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all being fellow partakers of grace with me. **8** For God is my witness, how I long for you all in ***the*** affection of Jesus Christ. **9** And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and all discernment, **10** so that you may approve the things that are excellent, so that you may be pure and without offense for ***the*** day of Christ, **11** having been filled with fruits of righteousness, which ***are*** through Jesus Christ, to ***the*** glory and praise of God.

Paul's Chains Advance the Gospel

12 Now I want you to know, brothers, that the things concerning me have come rather to ***the*** advancement of the gospel, **13** so that my chains in Christ have become clearly known in the whole praetorium and to all the rest, **14** and most of the brothers in ***the*** Lord, having become confident by my chains, dare more abundantly to speak the word without fear. **15** Some indeed even from envy and strife, but some also from goodwill, preach Christ. **16** Those indeed out of selfish ambition proclaim Christ, not purely, supposing to

1:1 2 Cor 1:1; 1 Tim 3:8,10,12,13; 1 Tim 3:1,2
1:2 Rom 1:7; 2 Cor 1:2; 1 Pet 1:2
1:3 1 Cor 1:4; 2 Tim 1:3; Rom 1:8,9
1:4 Rom 1:9; Luke 15:7,10; Phil 1:9-11
1:5 Phil 1:7; Phil 4:14; Phlm 1:17
1:6 1 Thess 5:23,24; Phil 2:13; Eph 4:12
1:7 2 Cor 7:3; Acts 20:23; Eph 3:1
1:8 Rom 1:9; Rom 9:1; Phil 4:1
1:9 1 Thess 3:12; Col 1:9; 2 Pet 1:5,6
1:10 1 Thess 3:13; 1 Thess 5:23; Rom 12:2,9
1:11 Col 1:6,10; Heb 12:11; John 15:8
1:12 Rom 8:28,37; 2 Tim 2:9; Acts 28:1-31
1:13 Acts 20:23,24; Acts 21:11-13; Acts 26:29,31
1:14 Eph 6:19,20; Phil 4:1; Col 4:7
1:15 Phil 2:3; Rom 16:17,18; 2 Cor 1:19
1:16 Phil 1:10; 2 Cor 2:17; 2 Cor 4:1,2

1:1 *Paul and Timothy, slaves of Jesus Christ* In other letters Paul calls himself an apostle. Here, writing to friends, he takes the lowest title there is. A Roman slave belonged completely to his master. A saint is not a special class of Christian but anyone set apart for God, and he greets them all, since he will soon address division (4:2-3). Overseers, also called elders and shepherds (Acts 20:17, 28), lead and shepherd the church. Deacons serve its practical needs.
1:2 *Grace to you and peace* Grace is God's favor we did not earn. Peace is what comes because of it: peace with God and the peace of God in our hearts (4:7). Grace always comes first. Paul sets God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ side by side as one source, for Jesus is God, as he will say plainly in chapter 2.
1:4 *making the supplication with joy* Every thought of these people led Paul to thanks, which the Corinthians and Galatians did not always give him. This is the letter's first mention of joy. Supplication is humble, earnest asking. Paul was in chains, yet his prayers were full of joy. Joy does not wait for good circumstances.
1:5 *your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now* Partnership is koinonia: fellowship, sharing, having something in common. They prayed, gave, and spread the gospel. The first day takes us back to Acts 16, when Lydia opened her home to Paul. For more than ten years this church had stood with him.
1:6 *He who began a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ* God began the work of saving them and making them like His Son, and God will bring it to its goal. The day of Jesus Christ is the day He comes for His church (1 Thess 4:16-17), when even our bodies will be changed (3:21). Many read this as a promise that God keeps every true believer to the end (John 10:28-29; Rom 8:38-39). Others believe a person can still turn away (Heb 6:4-6). All agree our hope rests on a faithful God who finishes what He starts.
1:7 *in the defense and confirmation of the gospel* Paul's confidence was not a guess. He had seen their faith for years. Defense is apologia, a legal defense in court. Paul was preparing to defend himself and the gospel before Rome. In standing with him they were fellow partakers of grace. He did not see them as a project. He had them in his heart.
1:8 *how I long for you all in the affection of Jesus Christ* Paul calls God to testify. The word for affection points to the deepest feelings of the heart. Paul loved them with the very love of Jesus, which does not come naturally but from Christ living in us.
1:9 *that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and all discernment* They were already a loving church, so Paul prays their love will overflow. Love without knowledge can be foolish and call anything kindness. Discernment is seeing clearly, telling right from wrong and good from best.
1:10 *so that you may approve the things that are excellent* Approve was used for testing metals to see if they were genuine. Love that knows God's Word chooses what is best, not merely what is acceptable. Without offense means not stumbling and not causing others to stumble. Living with the day of Christ in view changes how we live today.
1:11 *having been filled with fruits of righteousness, which are through Jesus Christ* This is the good fruit of a life made right with God. It comes through Jesus, for apart from Him we can do nothing (John 15:5). Its purpose is the glory and praise of God, not to make us look good.
1:12 *the things concerning me have come rather to the advancement of the gospel* Advancement was used for army engineers cutting a road ahead of the troops. Paul's arrest looked like a roadblock, and God turned it into a road. Paul had long wanted to go to Rome (Rom 1:13-15), though perhaps not in chains. When things go wrong, do we ask what God might be doing through it?
1:13 *my chains in Christ have become clearly known in the whole praetorium* The praetorium was the imperial guard, or the headquarters where they served. Under house arrest Paul was chained to a soldier (Acts 28:16, 20). The guards likely took turns, so one after another spent hours hearing him pray and teach. Soon all knew he was no criminal but in chains because of Jesus.
1:14 *dare more abundantly to speak the word without fear* Paul's arrest did not frighten the believers. They saw God's faithfulness and the gospel spreading, and they grew bolder. When one believer stands firm under pressure, others find courage too.
1:15 *Some indeed even from envy and strife* Two groups preached in Rome. Some preached out of selfish ambition, the spirit of a man running for office (1:16). Paul does not say their message was wrong, only their motives. Others preached out of love (1:17). Envy can be found even among those who serve Christ, so we should ask why we serve.

add affliction to my chains; **17** but those out of love, knowing that I am appointed for ***the*** defense of the gospel. **18** What then? Only ***that*** in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed; and in this I rejoice, yes, and I will rejoice.

To Live Is Christ

19 For I know that this will turn out for me to salvation through your supplication and ***the*** supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, **20** according to my earnest expectation and hope, that in nothing I will be ashamed, but in all boldness, as always, also now Christ will be magnified in my body, whether through life or through death. **21** For to me, to live ***is*** Christ, and to die ***is*** gain. **22** But if to live in ***the*** flesh, this ***is*** fruit of work for me; and what I will choose, I do not make known. **23** For I am hard-pressed between the two, having the desire to depart and to be with Christ, ***which is*** very much better; **24** but to remain in the flesh ***is*** more necessary for your sake. **25** And being confident of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy of the faith, **26** so that your boasting may abound in Christ Jesus in me through my coming to you again.

Live Worthy of the Gospel

27 Only conduct yourselves as citizens worthily of the gospel of Christ, so that whether having come and seen you or being absent, I may hear the things concerning you, that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one soul striving together for the faith of the gospel, **28** and not being frightened in anything by those who oppose, which is to them indeed a demonstration of destruction, but to you of salvation, and this from God. **29** For to you it was granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer on behalf of Him, **30** having the same conflict such as you saw in me and now hear ***to be*** in me.

PHILIPPIANS 2

Unity Through Humility

1 If ***there is*** therefore any encouragement in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of ***the*** Spirit, if any affections and compassions, **2** fulfill my joy, so that you may think the same ***thing***, having the same love, united in soul, thinking the one ***thing***, **3** ***doing*** nothing according to selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility considering one another

1:17 Phil 1:7; Rom 1:13-17; 1 Cor 9:16,17
1:18 1 Cor 15:11; Mark 9:38-40; Rom 3:9
1:19 Job 13:16; 2 Cor 1:11; Rom 8:28
1:20 Rom 8:19; 1 Cor 6:20; Isa 45:17
1:21 Phil 1:23; Rom 8:35-39; 2 Cor 5:1,6,8
1:22 Col 2:1; Phil 1:24; 2 Cor 10:3
1:23 Isa 57:2; 2 Cor 5:8; 2 Tim 4:6
1:24 John 16:7; Phil 1:22,25,26; Acts 20:29-31
1:25 Phil 2:24; Acts 20:25; Rom 15:13
1:26 2 Cor 1:14; 2 Cor 5:12; Phil 2:16-18
1:27 Num 14:9; Eph 4:1; Jude 1:3
1:28 Matt 10:28; 2 Tim 1:7,8; 2 Thess 1:5,6
1:29 Acts 5:41; Rom 5:3; James 1:2
1:30 Acts 16:19-40; 1 Thess 2:2; Rom 8:35-37
2:1 Col 3:12; 2 Cor 13:14; Ps 133:1
2:2 Rom 12:16; 1 Cor 1:10; 1 Pet 3:8,9
2:3 Rom 12:10; Eph 4:2; Eph 5:21

1:18 *whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed; and in this I rejoice* Paul did not care who got the credit, only that Jesus was preached. This works only because the message was true. To those who preach a different gospel Paul is very hard (Gal 1:8-9). Here the gospel was right and only the motives wrong, and he left those to God.
1:19 *this will turn out for me to salvation* Paul was already saved. Some take salvation here as release from prison. Others take it as the good outcome of his whole life before God, whether he lives or dies, which the next verse fits. God would work through their prayers and the supply of the Spirit.
1:20 *Christ will be magnified in my body, whether through life or through death* Earnest expectation pictures a man stretching his neck to see what is coming. Paul's hope was not first to be released but that he would not be ashamed or back away from the truth. To magnify is to make great in the eyes of others.
1:21 *For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain* The key verse of the letter. For Paul life was not career, comfort, or even ministry. Life was Jesus. What would honestly fill in that blank for us? Only one who can say to live is Christ can say to die is gain. Death cannot take from him the One he loves most.
1:22 *what I will choose, I do not make known* To live in the flesh here means simply to go on living in this body, which would mean more fruitful work. Both choices are good, and the choice was really God's, but Paul shows us his heart.
1:23 *having the desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is very much better* Hard-pressed pictures a man squeezed from both sides. Depart was used for a ship lifting anchor or soldiers striking camp. A believer who dies does not fall into a long, unaware sleep. He goes to be with the Lord, aware and at home (2 Cor 5:8), while the body waits for the resurrection. If you have lost a loved one who knew Jesus, they are with Christ, and that is very much better.
1:24 *to remain in the flesh is more necessary for your sake* Paul's own desire was to go to Jesus, but the Philippians still needed him, so he puts their need ahead of his wish. This is the mind of Christ he will describe in 2:4.
1:25 *I know that I will remain and continue with you all* Paul seems to have sensed God would keep him alive for now. Many Bible teachers believe he was released, traveled again and wrote 1 Timothy and Titus, then was arrested again and wrote 2 Timothy. Progress is the same word as advancement in 1:12. He wanted them to move forward and find more joy in the faith.
1:27 *conduct yourselves as citizens worthily of the gospel of Christ* The word comes from the Greek for a city and its citizens. Philippi was a Roman colony proud of its citizenship. Paul tells them to live as citizens of a greater kingdom (3:20). Striving together is a word for athletes or soldiers working as a team. The Christian life is not a solo sport.
1:28 *not being frightened in anything by those who oppose* The church had enemies from its founding (Acts 16:19-24). Their calm courage would be a sign: to their enemies a warning that those who fight God's people are on the losing side, and to believers evidence of salvation from God.
1:29 *not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer on behalf of Him* Granted comes from the word for grace. It means given as a gift. Faith is a gift, and so is suffering for Christ. It is not a sign God has left us but a privilege that shows we belong to Him. The apostles left the council rejoicing that they had been counted worthy to suffer (Acts 5:41).
1:30 *having the same conflict such as you saw in me* Conflict is agon, which gives us agony, used for a hard struggle in the games or in battle. They had seen Paul and Silas beaten and jailed in their city (Acts 16:22-24) and now heard of his chains in Rome. They were not alone. The Lord who carried Paul would carry them.
2:1 *If there is therefore any encouragement in Christ* In Greek these four ifs are not doubts. Each has the sense of since. Every believer has received strength in Christ, the comfort of God's love, the shared life of the one Spirit in each of us, and God's tender mercy. If you have received all this from God, how can you hold back from your brothers and sisters?
2:2 *fulfill my joy, so that you may think the same thing* Paul already had joy in them (1:4). Seeing them united would make it full. This does not mean agreeing on every detail. It means one mindset, a heart set on Christ and His gospel. A church can differ on small things and still be of one mind on what matters most.
2:3 *in humility considering one another as surpassing yourselves* Selfish ambition is the word of 1:17. Vain conceit is empty glory, hungry for praise. The Greek and Roman world saw humility as weakness, the attitude of a slave, and Jesus turned that upside down. Humility does not mean thinking badly of yourself. It means thinking of yourself less and of others more.

as surpassing yourselves; **4** do not look at your own ***things***, each one, but also the ***things*** of others, each one.

The Mind of Christ

5 For let this be thought in you which ***was*** also in Christ Jesus (Iesous), **6** who, existing in ***the*** form of God, did not consider being equal with God a thing to be grasped, **7** but emptied Himself, having taken ***the*** form of a slave, having come to be in ***the*** likeness of men; **8** and having been found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself, having become obedient as far as death, even death of a cross. **9** Therefore God also highly exalted Him and granted to Him a name, the ***one*** above every name, **10** so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of ***those*** in heaven and ***those*** on earth and ***those*** under the earth, **11** and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ ***is*** Lord, to ***the*** glory of God ***the*** Father.

Shine as Lights in the World

12 So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; **13** for God is the ***One*** who is working in you both to will and to work for the sake of ***His*** good pleasure. **14** Do all things without grumblings and disputes, **15** so that you may become blameless and innocent, children of God unblemished in ***the*** midst of a crooked and perverted generation, among whom you shine as lights in ***the*** world, **16** holding forth ***the*** word of life, for a boast to me for ***the*** day of Christ, that I did not run in vain nor toil in vain. **17** But if I am even being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I rejoice and rejoice together with you all. **18** And ***in*** the same ***way*** you also, rejoice and rejoice together with me.

Timothy and Epaphroditus

19 But I hope in ***the*** Lord Jesus to send Timothy (Timotheos) to you soon, so that I also may be encouraged, having come to know the ***things*** concerning you. **20** For I have no one of

2:4 1 Cor 10:24,32,33; 2 Kgs 7:9; Rom 15:1
2:5 Matt 11:29; 1 Pet 2:21; 1 John 2:6
2:6 Heb 1:3,6,8; John 5:18,23; 2 Cor 4:4
2:7 Isa 53:11; 2 Cor 8:9; Matt 20:28
2:8 Deut 21:23; Isa 53:12; Heb 12:2
2:9 Isa 52:13; Isa 53:12; Gen 41:41
2:10 Isa 45:23; Gen 41:43; Gen 41:41
2:11 Gen 41:41; John 13:13; Rom 14:9,11
2:12 2 Pet 1:5-10; 1 Cor 15:58; Luke 13:23,24
2:13 Isa 26:12; Heb 13:21; Ps 119:35
2:14 Exod 16:7; 1 Pet 4:9; Exod 16:8
2:15 Deut 32:5; Matt 5:14-16; Matt 5:45,48
2:16 2 Cor 1:14; Gal 2:2; Ps 71:17
2:17 Num 15:5; 2 Tim 4:6; 2 Cor 12:15
2:18 James 1:2-4; Phil 3:1; Phil 4:4
2:19 Phil 1:1; 1 Cor 4:17; 1 Thess 3:2,6
2:20 Phil 2:2,22; Ps 55:13; Prov 31:29

2:4 *but also the things of others* Notice the word also. We may care for our own needs, but not only our own. Most church fights come from people looking only at their own things. Paul is about to show us the One who looked at our needs instead of His own rights.

2:5 *let this be thought in you which was also in Christ Jesus* Teachers call this the mind of Christ. Verses 6 to 11 are among the greatest words in the Bible about who Jesus is, and many scholars think they may have been an early hymn because of their short, balanced lines. Paul gives this deep truth to change how we treat one another.

2:6 *existing in the form of God, did not consider being equal with God a thing to be grasped* Form is morphe, the true nature of a thing, not only its appearance. Jesus did not just look like God. He was and is God, and existing tells us He always was (John 1:1). Since He already had equality, the sense is not something to grab but something to cling to or use for His own advantage. Adam reached to be like God (Gen 3:5). Jesus was God and did not cling to it.

2:7 *but emptied Himself, having taken the form of a slave* Some have taught that Jesus gave up being God or part of His divine nature. Paul does not say that, and it does not fit Scripture. In Him all the fullness of Deity dwells bodily (Col 2:9), and on earth He forgave sins and accepted worship. He emptied Himself by adding, not subtracting. He took on a full human nature, laid aside the glory He had with the Father (John 17:5), and chose not to use His rights and power for His own comfort. Teachers differ on the details, but He became fully man while remaining fully God (John 1:14).

2:8 *He humbled Himself, having become obedient as far as death, even death of a cross* Becoming a man was a giant step down, but Jesus kept going down. Crucifixion was the most shameful death in the Roman world, used for slaves and rebels, and a man hanged on a tree was under God's curse (Deut 21:23; Gal 3:13). If He humbled Himself that far for us, how can we refuse to humble ourselves before a brother or sister?

2:9 *God also highly exalted Him and granted to Him a name, the one above every name* Because He humbled Himself, God raised Him to the highest place, at His right hand (Eph 1:20-21). A name stands for the person and his position. Many teachers believe the name is Lord (2:11), the title the Greek Old Testament used for the name of God. The way up in God's kingdom is down (Luke 14:11).

2:10 *at the name of Jesus every knee should bow* Paul draws from Isaiah 45:23, where every knee bows to God alone. Paul gives that honor to Jesus, one more clear proof that Jesus is God. Those in heaven are angels, those on earth the living, and those under the earth the dead, and many include fallen angels and demons.

2:11 *every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord* This does not mean all will be saved (Matt 25:46; Rev 20:15). Some will bow in worship and love. Others will bow because they must, admitting at last what they refused to believe. Every person will bow one day. The question is whether we bow to Him now, willingly, as Lord and Savior.

2:12 *work out your own salvation with fear and trembling* Not earning salvation. God began the work (1:6), and righteousness comes through faith (3:9). Work out means to carry something through to its full result, like working a field. You do not work for your salvation. You work it out. Your is plural, so this is also the church's life together. Fear and trembling is deep respect for God and seriousness about sin, not terror.

2:13 *God is the One who is working in you both to will and to work* Working gives us our word energy. God changes our desires so we want what pleases Him, and He gives the power to do it. We do the working out. God does the working in. You are not left to grow on your own strength.

2:14 *Do all things without grumblings and disputes* Grumbling is the low muttering of a complaining heart. Paul likely had Israel in the wilderness in mind, grumbling again and again after God rescued them (Exod 16:2-8; Num 14:1-4; 1 Cor 10:10). A grumbling spirit can poison a whole church and says something about how we see God.

2:15 *you shine as lights in the world* Blameless means no one can rightly point a finger. Innocent means pure, unmixed. Unblemished was used for animals fit to offer to God. Crooked and perverted come from Moses' song about rebellious Israel (Deut 32:5). Lights is a word for stars in a dark sky. We do not shine by hiding from the world but in the middle of it.

2:16 *holding forth the word of life* Some Bibles read holding fast, keeping a firm grip. The SLB says holding forth, like holding out a torch. Both are true. When Jesus comes for His church, Paul wants to see the fruit of his running and labor standing firm.

2:17 *if I am even being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith* A drink offering was wine poured on or beside a sacrifice as its finishing touch (Num 15:1-10; 28:7). Paul sees their faith as the main sacrifice and his own life, perhaps his death, as the offering poured on it. That is humility. He used the same picture near the end (2 Tim 4:6), and still he rejoices.

2:18 *rejoice and rejoice together with me* Do not grieve over my chains, Paul says. Rejoice with me. Joy here is a command. We can choose to rejoice, because our joy rests on Christ, not on how things are going.

2:19 *I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon* Timothy and Epaphroditus are living examples of the mind of Christ. Paul's plans are in the Lord. He makes plans but holds them loosely (James 4:13-15).

like soul, who will genuinely care for the ***things*** concerning you; **21** for they all are seeking their own ***things***, not the ***things*** of Christ Jesus. **22** But you know his proven worth, that as a child ***with*** a father, he served with me for the gospel. **23** Therefore I hope indeed to send him immediately, whenever I see the ***things*** concerning me; **24** but I have been persuaded in ***the*** Lord that I myself also will come soon. **25** But I considered ***it*** necessary to send to you Epaphroditus (Epaphroditos), my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, but your messenger and minister of my need; **26** since he was longing for you all and was deeply distressed, because you heard that he was sick. **27** And indeed he was sick, near to death; but God had mercy on him, and not on him only but also on me, so that I would not have sorrow upon sorrow. **28** Therefore I sent him all the more eagerly, so that, having seen him again, you may rejoice, and I may be less sorrowful. **29** Receive him therefore in ***the*** Lord with all joy, and hold such ***men*** in honor, **30** because for the sake of the work of Christ he came near as far as death, having risked his life, so that he might fill up your lack of service toward me.

PHILIPPIANS 3

No Confidence in the Flesh

1 Finally, my brothers, rejoice in ***the*** Lord. To write the same ***things*** to you ***is*** indeed not troublesome to me, but for you ***it is*** safe. **2** Watch out for the dogs, watch out for the evil workers, watch out for the mutilation; **3** for we are the circumcision, who worship God in ***the*** Spirit and boast in Christ Jesus (Iesous) and have not put confidence in ***the*** flesh, **4** although I myself have confidence even in ***the*** flesh. If any other ***man*** thinks to have confidence in ***the*** flesh, I more: **5** in circumcision eight days old, of ***the*** nation of Israel, of ***the*** tribe of Benjamin (Beniamin), a Hebrew of Hebrews; according to ***the*** law, a Pharisee; **6** according to zeal, persecuting the church; according to ***the*** righteousness which ***is*** in ***the*** law, having become blameless. **7** But whatever things were gain to me,

2:21 1 Cor 10:24,33; 1 Cor 13:5; Phil 2:4
2:22 1 Cor 4:17; 1 Tim 1:2,18; 2 Cor 2:9
2:23 1 Sam 22:3
2:24 Phlm 1:22; Phil 2:19; Phil 1:25,26
2:25 Phil 4:18; Phlm 1:1; Phil 4:3
2:26 Rom 12:15; Phil 1:3,8; Phil 4:1
2:27 Phil 2:30; 2 Kgs 20:1; Ps 107:18
2:28 Phil 2:26; Gen 45:27,28; Gen 46:29,30
2:29 1 Cor 16:18; Rom 16:2; 1 Tim 5:17
2:30 1 Cor 16:17; Acts 20:24; Phil 4:10,18
3:1 Ps 32:11; Isa 41:16; Isa 61:10
3:2 Gal 5:15; 2 Cor 11:13; Isa 56:10,11
3:3 Deut 10:16; Col 2:11; Deut 30:6
3:4 2 Cor 11:18-22
3:5 Gen 14:13; Gen 40:15; Gen 41:12
3:6 2 Kgs 10:16; Acts 8:3; Gal 1:13,14
3:7 Prov 13:8; Prov 23:23; Matt 16:26

2:21 *they all are seeking their own things, not the things of Christ Jesus* Timothy was of like soul with Paul and would genuinely care for them (2:20). Paul likely means the men available to send, not every believer in Rome. This is the opposite of 2:4. Which kind of person are you?
2:22 *as a child with a father, he served with me for the gospel* They had known Timothy since the church began (Acts 16:1-3; 17:14-15). Proven worth is character tested and found true, like metal in the fire. Paul calls him his true child in the faith (1 Tim 1:2), and he says Timothy served with him, not him.
2:24 *I have been persuaded in the Lord that I myself also will come soon* Paul was waiting to learn how his trial would go, and then he would send Timothy (2:23). He expected release and a visit, and his confidence is in the Lord.
2:25 *Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, but your messenger* Epaphroditus brought their gift (4:18). Paul gives him five titles: brother, sharing one Father; fellow worker, one work; fellow soldier, one battle; messenger, apostolos used in its plain sense of one sent by the church; and minister of Paul's need. He appears only in this letter, yet Paul honors him like a hero. God sees the service the world never notices.
2:26 *was deeply distressed, because you heard that he was sick* He was not upset about being sick but that they were worried. He thought of others even while suffering. Deeply distressed is the strong word used of Jesus in Gethsemane (Matt 26:37).
2:27 *he was sick, near to death; but God had mercy on him* Faithful believers get sick in the middle of God's work, and sickness is not always a sign of sin or weak faith. Paul does not say he healed him but that God had mercy. Healing is in God's hands. Paul left Trophimus sick at Miletus (2 Tim 4:20). And Paul admits losing his friend would have brought sorrow upon sorrow. Grief is not a lack of faith.
2:28 *I sent him all the more eagerly* Paul did not keep him though he needed him. Some might have wondered why Epaphroditus came home early, so Paul makes sure no one thinks he failed. Paul himself sent him.
2:29 *hold such men in honor* Welcome him with joy and honor. Who should we honor in the church? Not the most popular or gifted, but people like Epaphroditus who serve faithfully and risk everything for Christ.
2:30 *having risked his life* The word was used for a gambler who throws the dice and bets everything. Paul uses the words as far as death, which he used of Jesus in 2:8. Epaphroditus followed his Lord. Their lack of service is no criticism. They could not all come to Rome, so he did in person what they all wanted to do.
3:1 *Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord* Finally can mean as for the rest, and Paul still has two chapters to go. Circumstances change, but the Lord does not. A good teacher repeats the important things. We do not always need new truth. We need to be reminded of old truth (2 Pet 1:12-13).
3:2 *Watch out for the dogs, watch out for the evil workers, watch out for the mutilation* Most Bible teachers believe these were Judaizers, Jewish teachers claiming to follow Jesus who said Gentiles must be circumcised and keep the Law to be saved (Acts 15:1-2; Gal 5:2-4). Some see Jews outside the church. Paul turns their words around. Jews sometimes called Gentiles dogs. Paul says they are the dogs. Circumcision is peritome, and Paul calls theirs katatome, a hacking or cutting down.
3:3 *we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit and boast in Christ Jesus* Three marks of God's true people: Spirit worship, not ritual (John 4:23-24), confidence in Christ, and none in the flesh, our family line, religious works and moral effort. Circumcision always pointed to the heart (Deut 10:16; 30:6; Rom 2:28-29). This does not mean God has cast off Israel, who still has a future (Rom 11). Paul answers one question: how is anyone made right with God?
3:4 *If any other man thinks to have confidence in the flesh, I more* Paul is not trusting his record or bragging. He is setting up his point. If his record could not save him, no one's can.
3:5 *in circumcision eight days old, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin* He was circumcised on the eighth day as the Law commanded (Lev 12:3), not as an adult convert. Benjamin was the tribe of King Saul, whose name Paul shared, and it stayed loyal to David's house when the kingdom split. A Hebrew of Hebrews means raised in the Hebrew language and ways. The Pharisees were the strictest group in Judaism, and Paul trained under Gamaliel (Acts 22:3).
3:6 *according to zeal, persecuting the church* Paul dragged Christians to prison (Acts 8:3; 26:9-11), thinking he served God. A person can be sincere and sincerely wrong. Blameless does not mean sinless. By the outward standards people could see, no one could point to a rule he broke. Yet the command against coveting exposed his heart (Rom 7:7-11).
3:7 *these I have considered loss because of Christ* The language of business. Paul thought his credentials were profit. When he met Jesus on the Damascus road (Acts 9:1-6), he moved every one into the loss column. As long as he trusted himself, he could not trust Jesus.

these I have considered loss because of Christ. **8** But indeed, rather, I also consider all things to be loss because of the surpassing ***worth*** of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, because of whom I was made to suffer the loss of all things, and I consider ***them*** to be rubbish, so that I may gain Christ **9** and may be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which ***is*** from ***the*** law, but that which ***is*** through faith of Christ, the righteousness from God on the basis of faith; **10** to know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, **11** if somehow I may attain to the resurrection of the dead.

Pressing On Toward the Goal

12 Not that I have already received ***it*** or have already been perfected, but I pursue, if indeed I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. **13** Brothers, I ***do*** not count myself to have laid hold ***of it***; but one ***thing I do***: forgetting the ***things*** behind and reaching forward to the ***things*** ahead, **14** I pursue toward ***the*** goal for the prize of the upward calling of God in Christ Jesus. **15** Therefore, as many as ***are*** perfect, let us think this; and if you think anything differently, God will reveal even this to you; **16** nevertheless, to what we have attained, ***let us*** walk by the same rule, ***let us*** think the same ***thing***.

Our Citizenship Is in Heaven

17 Be fellow imitators of me, brothers, and observe those who walk thus, just as you have us ***for*** a pattern. **18** For many walk, ***about*** whom I often was telling you, and now tell ***you*** even weeping, ***that they are*** the enemies of the cross of Christ, **19** whose end ***is*** destruction, whose god ***is*** the belly, and the glory ***is*** in their shame, who think ***on*** the earthly ***things***. **20** For our citizenship exists in ***the*** heavens, from which also we eagerly await a Savior, ***the*** Lord Jesus Christ, **21** who will transform the body of our humiliation, so that it may become conformed to the body of His glory, according to the working of His being able even to subject all things to Himself.

PHILIPPIANS 4

Stand Firm and Rejoice

1 So then, my brothers, beloved and longed for, my joy and

3:8 Isa 53:11; Ps 73:25; Prov 8:11
3:9 Isa 45:24; Isa 53:6; Jer 23:6
3:10 Rom 8:17,29; Phil 3:8; Rom 6:3-5
3:11 Luke 20:35,36; Acts 26:7; 2 Thess 2:3
3:12 1 Tim 6:11; Hos 6:3; 1 Cor 13:10
3:13 Luke 9:62; Heb 12:1,2; Heb 6:1
3:14 1 Pet 5:10; Rev 3:21; 2 Cor 4:17,18
3:15 Gal 5:10; 1 Cor 2:6; Prov 2:3-6
3:16 Gal 6:16; Rev 3:3; Col 2:6
3:17 Phil 4:9; 1 Cor 4:16; 1 Pet 5:3
3:18 Isa 8:11; Gal 2:14; Eph 4:17
3:19 Rom 16:18; 2 Pet 2:3; Rom 8:5-7
3:20 Eph 2:19; Col 3:1-3; Heb 12:22
3:21 Col 3:4; 1 Cor 15:42-44,48-54; 1 John 3:2
4:1 Phil 1:27; 1 Cor 16:13; Phil 1:8

3:8 *I consider them to be rubbish, so that I may gain Christ* Not only his record but all things. Notice the word my in Christ Jesus my Lord. Paul knew Him personally. He lost standing, career and comfort (2 Cor 11:23-27). Rubbish was used for garbage, scraps thrown to dogs, even dung. Like the man who sold all to buy the field (Matt 13:44), Paul traded everything for Jesus and counted himself the winner.
3:9 *not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith of Christ* Our best record is not good enough for a holy God (Isa 64:6). Here are two kinds of righteousness, one earned by the Law, the other from God received by faith. This is justification, God declaring a guilty sinner righteous because of Christ (Rom 3:21-26). Faith of Christ is usually read as faith in Christ, but some read it as Christ's faithfulness. Both are true, and the verse ends on the basis of faith.
3:10 *to know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings* After more than twenty-five years Paul still wanted to know Jesus more, as a close friend. The power that raised Him works in believers (Eph 1:19-20). Our sufferings do not pay for sin, but suffering for Him brings us to know Him more deeply. Conformed to His death means dying to self and being ready to die for Him.
3:11 *if somehow I may attain to the resurrection of the dead* The if expresses longing and humility, not doubt, since Paul has just said he is in Christ. The phrase can be read as a resurrection out from among the dead. Believers will be raised first, when Jesus comes for His church (1 Thess 4:16), before the rest of the dead (Rev 20:5-6). Some read it more generally of the resurrection of all believers.
3:12 *I pursue, if indeed I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus* One of the most honest verses in the Bible. The great apostle says he has not arrived. Pursue was used of a hunter or a runner. Jesus took hold of Paul on the Damascus road for a purpose, and now Paul chases that purpose. We run after Him because He first took hold of us.
3:13 *forgetting the things behind and reaching forward to the things ahead* If Paul had not arrived, none of us have. One thing I do: one aim. Paul put behind him both his religious record and his forgiven sins as a persecutor. To forget is not to lose memory but to let the past no longer control us. Reaching forward pictures a runner leaning toward the line.
3:14 *the prize of the upward calling of God in Christ Jesus* The upward calling is God's call to come up, to be with Him and like Christ. Paul is not running to earn salvation, settled when he believed (3:9). He runs to finish well and receive the reward given faithful servants at the judgment seat of Christ (1 Cor 9:24-27; 2 Cor 5:10; 2 Tim 4:7-8).
3:15 *as many as are perfect, let us think this* Here perfect means mature, not having arrived (3:12). The mature are the ones who know they have not arrived and keep pressing on. Paul taught the truth and trusted God to correct those who did not yet see clearly.
3:16 *to what we have attained, let us walk by the same rule* While we wait for God to show us more, we live up to what we already know. The word was used for marching in line. Believers keep in step with each other.
3:17 *Be fellow imitators of me* Not pride, since he has just said he is not perfect. Follow me as I follow Christ (1 Cor 11:1). We all need examples to watch, and we are all an example to someone. Who is watching your walk?
3:18 *the enemies of the cross of Christ* A second danger, not the law-keepers of 3:2 but people claiming to be Christians who lived for themselves. They wanted Christ without the cross that calls us to die to self (Luke 9:23). Paul warns even weeping. We should warn with tears, not pride.
3:19 *whose god is the belly, and the glory is in their shame* Their road leads to ruin. Their appetites ruled them, the belly standing for every fleshly desire. They bragged of what should have shamed them, as our culture often does. Their minds were set on this world only (Col 3:2).
3:20 *our citizenship exists in the heavens, from which also we eagerly await a Savior* Philippi's people were proud citizens of Rome though they lived far from it. Believers are citizens of a greater city, their names written in heaven (Luke 10:20). We wait for Someone. This is the rapture, from a Latin word for caught up (1 Thess 4:16-17). I believe it comes before the seven-year Tribulation, because God has not appointed us to wrath (1 Thess 5:9; John 14:1-3). After the Tribulation He will return visibly with His saints to set up His kingdom (Rev 19:11-16; 20:1-6).
3:21 *who will transform the body of our humiliation* Our bodies tire, sicken, age and die. When Jesus comes for His church, He will change them to be like His resurrection body, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye (1 Cor 15:51-52), and we will be like Him (1 John 3:2). The power that will bring all things under Him will do it. If you are suffering in your body, it is not the end of the story.
4:1 *my joy and crown, in this way stand firm in the Lord* Paul calls them beloved twice in one verse. The crown is not a king's crown but the wreath given a winner at the games. They were his prize, proof his work was not in vain (2:16). In this way means as chapter 3 described: pressing on, living as citizens of heaven, and waiting for our Savior, in the Lord's strength.

crown, in this way stand firm in ***the*** Lord, beloved. **2** I exhort Euodia and I exhort Syntyche to think the same ***thing*** in ***the*** Lord. **3** And I ask you also, true yokefellow, help these ***women***, who contended together with me in the gospel, with Clement (Klemes) also and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names ***are*** in ***the*** book of life. **4** Rejoice in ***the*** Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. **5** Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord ***is*** near. **6** Be anxious about nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God; **7** and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus (Iesous). **8** Finally, brothers, whatever things are true, whatever ***things are*** honorable, whatever ***things are*** righteous, whatever ***things are*** pure, whatever ***things are*** lovely, whatever ***things are*** of good report, if ***there is*** any excellence and if any praise, ponder these things. **9** The things which you also learned and received and heard and saw in me, practice these things; and the God of peace will be with you.

Content in Every Circumstance

10 But I rejoiced in ***the*** Lord greatly that now at last you have revived the thinking on my behalf; in which you were also thinking, but you lacked opportunity. **11** Not that I speak according to lack; for I have learned to be content in whatever ***circumstances*** I am. **12** I also know ***how*** to be humbled; I also know ***how*** to abound; in everything and in all things I have been initiated, both to be filled and to hunger, both to abound and to be in lack. **13** I have strength ***for*** all things in the ***One*** who strengthens me, Christ. **14** Nevertheless you did well, having had fellowship in my affliction. **15** And you yourselves also know, Philippians, that in ***the*** beginning of the gospel, when I went out from Macedonia (Makedonia), no church had fellowship with me in ***the*** account of giving and receiving except you only; **16** for even in Thessalonica (Thessalonike) you sent to me both once and twice for my need. **17** Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that increases to your account. **18** But I have all things in full and

4:2 Heb 12:14; 1 Thess 5:13; 1 Pet 3:8-11
4:3 Ps 69:28; Dan 12:1; Luke 10:20
4:4 Phil 3:1; Rom 12:12; Ps 32:11
4:5 Ezek 30:3; Zeph 1:7; James 5:8,9
4:6 Matt 6:25-33; Prov 3:5,6; 1 Pet 5:7
4:7 Isa 26:3; John 14:27; Col 3:15
4:8 James 3:17; Rom 12:9-21; 1 Tim 4:12
4:9 Phil 3:17; Phil 4:7; Rom 15:33
4:10 2 Cor 11:9; 2 Cor 7:6,7; Gal 6:10
4:11 1 Tim 6:6-9; Matt 6:31-34; Heb 13:5,6
4:12 2 Cor 12:7-10; 2 Cor 6:4-10; Matt 11:29
4:13 Isa 41:10; 2 Cor 12:9,10; Col 1:11
4:14 Phil 1:7; Heb 13:16; 1 Kgs 8:18
4:15 2 Cor 11:8-12; 2 Kgs 5:16,20; 2 Cor 12:11-15
4:16 1 Thess 2:9; 1 Thess 2:18
4:17 Titus 3:14; Heb 6:10; Phil 4:11
4:18 Lev 1:9; Phil 4:12; Heb 13:16

4:2 *I exhort Euodia and I exhort Syntyche to think the same thing in the Lord* Two women had a falling out serious enough to reach Paul in Rome. We are not told what it was about. Paul takes no sides. He exhorts each one separately and equally, with the words of 2:2, calling both back to the mind of Christ.
4:3 *true yokefellow, help these women* A yokefellow pulls in the same yoke, like two oxen. We do not know who he was. Some suggest Epaphroditus, Luke or a church leader. Others think Syzygus was his real name and he lived up to it. Paul honors these women, who strove side by side with him in the gospel like athletes (1:27). The book of life is God's record of those who belong to Him (Rev 20:15; 21:27).
4:4 *Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice* The theme of the whole letter, said twice. Paul was in chains and two friends were fighting. We cannot always rejoice in our circumstances, but we can always rejoice in the Lord, because He does not change. Happiness depends on what happens. Joy depends on Who holds us. And it is a command, so joy is something we can choose.
4:5 *Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is near* Gentleness is hard to put in one word: fair, reasonable, patient, willing to yield when it is right. The Lord is near can be taken two ways, and both are true. He is near in His presence (Ps 145:18), and near in His coming, since He could come for His church at any moment (3:20). Either way, we need not fight for our rights.
4:6 *Be anxious about nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving* Anxious means pulled in different directions, a divided mind (Matt 6:25-34). Paul tells us what to do instead. Nothing is too big or too small to bring to God, and we bring it with thanks for what He has already done. Anxiety can also be a medical condition. This verse is an invitation, not a scolding, and getting help from a doctor or counselor is not a lack of faith.
4:7 *the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts* Paul does not promise God will give all we ask. He promises peace. Sometimes God changes our circumstances, and sometimes He changes us in the middle of them. A believer can be at peace in a hospital bed or a prison cell. Guard is a military word, a sentry at the gate.
4:8 *whatever things are true, whatever things are honorable* What we think about shapes who we become. True things match reality and God's Word, not lies or rumors. Honorable things deserve respect, and pure things are not stained by sin. Ponder means to count up, to let the mind dwell. This is the cure for the anxious mind. We do not just push bad thoughts out. We fill our minds with good ones. Does what we watch and read pass this test?
4:9 *the God of peace will be with you* Thinking right must lead to living right. They had learned Paul's teaching and seen it in his life. In 4:7 they had the peace of God. Here they have the God of peace Himself.
4:10 *now at last you have revived the thinking on my behalf* Revived was used for a plant blooming again in spring. Paul thanks them for their gift without making them feel guilty. They had not stopped caring. They had lacked a way to help.
4:11 *I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am* Paul is not hinting for more. Contentment is learned. It comes naturally to no one. Greek philosophers used the word for a man who needed nothing outside himself. Paul was content because Christ was enough. That does not mean never working to change things, but our peace does not depend on getting what we want.
4:12 *I also know how to be humbled; I also know how to abound* Paul had plenty and had gone hungry and cold (2 Cor 11:27). Initiated was used for being let in on a secret. Plenty has its own danger, making us proud and forgetful of God (Deut 8:11-14). Paul learned to handle both.
4:13 *I have strength for all things in the One who strengthens me, Christ* One of the most quoted and misused verses. It is not a promise to win the game or get the job. In context all things means plenty and want, comfort and chains. It is a verse about contentment. Strengthens means to pour power into. Paul's strength was borrowed, given day by day (2 Cor 12:9-10). That is a bigger promise. Whatever we face, Christ gives strength to stay faithful.
4:14 *you did well, having had fellowship in my affliction* Paul does not want to sound ungrateful. Fellowship is koinonia again (1:5). When we give to support someone serving Christ, we share in their work.
4:15 *no church had fellowship with me in the account of giving and receiving except you only* Business words again, like a ledger. When Paul left Macedonia, only they supported him, sending help to Thessalonica more than once (4:16; Acts 17:1) and later to Corinth (2 Cor 11:9). This church was not rich. The Macedonians gave out of deep poverty (2 Cor 8:1-5).
4:17 *I seek the fruit that increases to your account* Paul cared more about the givers than the gift. The picture is interest building in an account. This is not a promise that giving makes us rich, but that God sees and rewards faithful giving (Matt 6:19-21; 2 Cor 9:6-8).
4:18 *an aroma of fragrance, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God* Paul writes like a receipt: paid in full. The smoke of offerings rose as a pleasing aroma to the Lord (Lev 1:9). Their gift to Paul was really a gift to God. Giving to support God's work is worship.

abound; I have been filled, having received from Epaphroditus (Epaphroditos) the ***things*** from you, an aroma of fragrance, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God. **19** And my God will fill every need of yours according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus. **20** Now to our God and Father ***be*** the glory to the ages of the ages. Amen.

4:19 2 Cor 9:8-11; Ps 23:1; Ps 84:11
4:20 Ps 72:19; Rom 11:36; Ps 115:1
4:21 Gal 1:2; Rom 16:3-16; Phil 1:1

Final Greetings

21 Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brothers with me greet you. **22** All the saints greet you, and especially those of Caesar's household. **23** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ ***be*** with you all. Amen.

4:22 2 Cor 13:13; Phil 1:13; Rom 16:16
4:23 Rom 16:20,24; 2 Cor 13:14

4:19 *my God will fill every need of yours according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus* This follows their generous giving. They filled Paul's need, and God will fill theirs, the same word as I have been filled in 4:18. Every need, not every want. According to His riches, not merely out of them, in a way that matches how rich He is.
4:20 *to our God and Father be the glory to the ages of the ages* Paul cannot speak of God's riches without breaking into praise. To the ages of the ages means forever and ever. In 4:19 it was my God. Now it is our God.
4:22 *especially those of Caesar's household* Caesar's household meant not just the emperor's family but the many slaves, freedmen and officials serving his palace and government. If Paul wrote from Rome, as most believe, the gospel had reached into Nero's household. Paul's chains carried the gospel to the center of the empire.
4:23 *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all* Paul ends as he began, with grace (1:2). Everything in the letter flows from it. The closing note in many Greek copies, that it was written from Rome and sent by Epaphroditus, was added later by copyists but agrees with the letter (2:25; 4:18, 22).

COLOSSIANS

Introduction

Title

The letter is named for its readers, "the saints in Colosse and faithful brothers in Christ" (1:2). It is one of the four Prison Letters, with Ephesians, Philippians and Philemon. Colossians and Ephesians are often called twin letters. Paul wrote them at about the same time, sent them with the same man, and many of their themes and phrases match. Ephesians puts the spotlight on the church, the body of Christ. Colossians puts the spotlight on Christ, the head of the body.

Author and Date

The letter opens with "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Timothy the brother" (1:1). It speaks in Paul's voice (1:23) and he signs it with his own hand (4:18). The early church accepted Paul as author. Some modern scholars think a follower wrote it after his death, pointing to its style and its high teaching about Christ. I take the letter at its word. It names Paul three times, speaks of his chains, and closes with real people, most of whom appear in Philemon, a letter almost no one doubts. Its teaching about Christ matches letters no one questions (1 Cor 8:6; Phil 2:5-11).

Paul wrote as a prisoner (4:3, 10, 18), most likely from Rome during his house arrest, about A.D. 60 to 62 (Acts 28:16, 30-31). A few suggest Ephesus or Caesarea, but Rome fits best with the visitors he received and the people around him. He wrote Colossians, Ephesians and Philemon at about the same time.

Background and Setting

Colosse sat in the Lycus River valley in the Roman province of Asia, in western Turkey, roughly a hundred miles east of Ephesus, with Laodicea about ten miles away and Hierapolis a little farther. It had once been an important town known for wool and cloth, but by Paul's day it had grown small. Many teachers call it the least important town Paul ever wrote to. A strong earthquake hit the valley in the early 60s A.D.

Paul had never been there (2:1). Epaphras, a man of Colosse, had brought them the gospel (1:7; 4:12), most likely after coming to faith during Paul's years in Ephesus (Acts 19:10). He came to Paul in Rome with news, good and bad, and prayed hard for the churches of the valley (4:12-13). Most of the readers were Gentiles (1:21; 2:13).

A false teaching had come in. Paul answers it mostly in 2:8-23. It was "philosophy and empty deceit" and "the tradition of men" (2:8). It had Jewish parts: circumcision, food laws, feasts, new moons and Sabbaths (2:11, 16). It claimed humility, the worship of angels, and visions (2:18), and it set harsh rules for the body (2:21). It seems to have treated Christ as one step toward God rather than God Himself. Some see an early form of Gnosticism, some a Jewish mysticism of visions and angels, and many a local mix. Paul's answer fits every teaching that says Jesus is not enough.

Tychicus carried the letter (4:7-8), and with him went Onesimus, the runaway slave of Philemon, now a believer (4:9). When the letter was read aloud in Colosse, Onesimus was in the room, and maybe Philemon too.

Themes

The theme is that Christ is supreme and that He is enough. "For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Deity bodily, and you have been filled in Him" (2:9-10). Believers need no secret knowledge, for in Christ "all the treasures of wisdom and of knowledge are hidden" (2:3). They need no rules about food and days, which were "a shadow of the things coming, but the body is of Christ" (2:17). They need no angels as go-betweens, for Christ is head over every ruler and authority (2:10, 15).

Like Ephesians, the letter moves from teaching to living. Because believers have been raised with Christ, they set their minds on things above (3:1-2), put to death the old sins and put on the new man (3:5-14), and let the word of Christ dwell in them richly (3:16). The new life reaches the home and the workplace (3:18-4:1), prayer and witness to outsiders (4:2-6), and faithful friends who serve together (4:7-17).

Christ in Colossians

Colossians holds one of the greatest passages about Jesus in the Bible (1:15-20). He "is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation," and "in Him all things were created" and "in Him all things hold together" (1:15-17). He is "the head of the body, the church," the "firstborn from the dead, so that in all things He Himself may come to hold first place" (1:18). Through Him God made "peace through the blood of His cross" (1:20). He blotted out our record of debt, "having nailed it to the cross," and triumphed over the powers (2:14-15). He is "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (1:27), and one day we will be revealed with Him in glory (3:4).

Hard Passages

"Firstborn of all creation" (1:15) speaks of rank, not of Christ being created, as the next verse shows. "Reconcile all things" (1:20) does not teach that all will be saved (3:6). "If indeed you continue in the faith" (1:23) is read differently by those with different views on eternal security. Filling up "the things lacking of the afflictions of Christ" (1:24) cannot mean His death was not enough. Baptism in 2:12 is read here as following faith, while others link it to circumcision and infant baptism. Teachers hold several views of the Sabbath today (2:16-17). The commands to wives and husbands (3:18-19) and to slaves and masters (3:22-4:1) are treated as in Ephesians. The notes name the main views.

Outline

I. Who Christ Is and What He Has Done (1:1-2:23)
  A. Greeting (1:1-2)
  B. Thanksgiving for the Colossians (1:3-8)
  C. Paul's prayer for them (1:9-14)
  D. Christ above all (1:15-23)
  E. Paul's ministry for the church (1:24-2:5)
  F. Complete in Christ (2:6-15)
  G. Freedom from human rules (2:16-23)
II. Living the New Life in Christ (3:1-4:18)
  A. Set your minds on things above (3:1-4)
  B. Put off the old, put on the new (3:5-17)

C. The Christian household (3:18-4:1)
D. Prayer and wise speech (4:2-6)
E. Faithful friends and final greetings (4:7-18)

COLOSSIANS

COLOSSIANS 1

Greeting

1 Paul (Paulos), an apostle of Jesus (Iesous) Christ through ***the*** will of God, and Timothy (Timotheos) the brother, **2** to the saints in Colosse (Kolossai) and faithful brothers in Christ: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and ***the*** Lord Jesus Christ.

Thanksgiving for the Colossians

3 We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, **4** having heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love toward all the saints, **5** because of the hope which is laid up for you in the heavens, which you heard of before in the word of the truth of the gospel, **6** which is present among you, just as also in all the world, and is bearing fruit, just as also among you, from the day you heard and came to know the grace of God in truth; **7** just as you also learned from Epaphras our beloved fellow slave, who is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf, **8** who also made known to us your love in ***the*** Spirit.

Paul's Prayer for the Church

9 Because of this we also, from the day we heard, do not cease praying for you and asking that you may be filled ***with*** the full knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, **10** ***for*** you to walk worthily of the Lord for all pleasing, bearing fruit in every good work and growing into the full knowledge of God; **11** being strengthened with all power according to the might of His glory, for all endurance and patience with joy; **12** giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us for the share of the inheritance of the saints in the light, **13** who rescued us out of the authority of the darkness and transferred ***us*** into the kingdom of the Son of His love, **14** in whom we have the redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins;

1:1 2 Cor 1:1; 1 Cor 1:1; Phil 1:1
1:2 Rom 1:7; Eph 1:1; Ps 16:3
1:3 1 Thess 1:2; Eph 1:15; Rom 1:8,9
1:4 Eph 1:15; 1 Thess 1:3; Gal 5:6
1:5 Eph 1:13; 2 Tim 4:8; Acts 23:6
1:6 John 15:16; Col 1:23; Ps 98:3
1:7 Col 4:12; Phlm 1:23; Heb 2:17
1:8 Rom 15:30; Col 1:4; Rom 5:5
1:9 Col 4:5; James 3:17; 2 Thess 1:11
1:10 Eph 4:1; 1 John 3:22; Heb 13:21
1:11 Eph 3:16; Phil 4:13; Rom 5:3-5
1:12 Acts 20:32; Eph 1:11,18; Acts 26:18
1:13 Acts 26:18; 1 Pet 2:9; 1 Thess 2:12
1:14 Eph 1:7; Rom 3:24,25; Acts 13:38,39

1:1 *an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God* An apostle is one sent, carrying the authority of the sender. Paul had never met these believers, so he tells them why to listen. The risen Jesus called him (Acts 9:15). He calls Timothy, his young helper (Phil 2:19-22), not an apostle but the brother, a title every believer shares.
1:2 *to the saints in Colosse and faithful brothers in Christ* Every believer is a saint, set apart for God. These lived in a small town most of the empire had never heard of, but God knew each by name. They were in Colosse and in Christ at the same time. We live at a real address on earth, but our true life is in Christ. Grace always comes before peace.
1:3 *We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you* Paul was in chains, yet his first thought was thanks. He thanks God, not the Colossians, because faith and love are God's work. He prayed for people he had never seen. Missionaries, persecuted believers and far churches all need our prayers.
1:4 *your faith in Christ Jesus and the love toward all the saints* Faith looks up to Christ, love reaches out to His people, and they go together (1 John 4:20). Faith is only as good as the One it rests on. The false teachers wanted to add other things to trust. Paul reminds them their faith was already in the right place.
1:5 *the hope which is laid up for you in the heavens* Biblical hope is a sure promise not yet arrived, stored safe in heaven where no thief or false teacher can touch it (1 Pet 1:4). Faith, love and hope appear together as in 1 Corinthians 13:13 and 1 Thessalonians 1:3, and hope fuels the other two. Paul points them back to the truth they first heard.
1:6 *is bearing fruit, just as also among you* The gospel is alive. It bears fruit in changed lives and spreads, and it was already moving across the empire. It was not a small local idea but the message God was using everywhere. Notice grace. The gospel is not what we must do to reach God but what God has done to reach us.
1:7 *Epaphras our beloved fellow slave, who is a faithful minister of Christ* Epaphras brought the gospel to Colosse. What they learned from him was right, and they needed no new teacher. Fellow slave uses doulos. Both men belonged to Jesus. Though he came because of a problem, he first told Paul of their love in the Spirit (1:8), a good example for any leader.
1:9 *that you may be filled with the full knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding* The false teachers offered special knowledge to a few. Paul prays for full knowledge of God's will for all. God does not hide His will. He has made it known in His Word and gives wisdom by His Spirit. Paul does not ask first for health or an easy life. What do we usually pray for others?
1:10 *for you to walk worthily of the Lord for all pleasing* Knowledge is meant to change how we live. To walk worthily is to live in a way that fits who the Lord is. Bearing fruit and growing in knowledge feed each other. As we obey what we know, we know God better. A Christian who is not growing is not standing still. He is drifting.
1:11 *for all endurance and patience with joy* The power is God's, measured by His glory, not our weakness. We might expect it to be for great works. Endurance holds up under hard circumstances, and patience holds back with hard people. Sometimes the greatest display of God's power in a believer is quiet, steady, joyful faithfulness.
1:12 *who has qualified us for the share of the inheritance of the saints in the light* To qualify is to make fit. None of us were fit for heaven on our own. The false teachers said they were not yet qualified and needed more rules and visions. Paul says the Father already qualified them. As each tribe received its share of the land by lot (Josh 14:1-2), each believer has a share in His kingdom.
1:13 *who rescued us out of the authority of the darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son of His love* A rescue and a move. We lived under the rule of sin and Satan (Eph 2:1-2) and could not free ourselves. Transferred was used for conquering kings moving a whole people to another land. Both verbs are past. If you belong to Jesus, it has already happened.
1:14 *in whom we have the redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins* A slave was redeemed when someone paid the price to free him. Jesus paid with His own blood (1 Pet 1:18-19). Forgiveness means God sends our sins away. Every believer has it now. The false teachers' rules could not take away one sin.

The Supremacy of Christ

15 who is ***the*** image of the invisible God, ***the*** firstborn of all creation; **16** because in Him all things were created, the ***things*** in the heavens and the ***things*** on the earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or lordships or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through Him and for Him. **17** And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. **18** And He is the head of the body, the church; who is ***the*** beginning, ***the*** firstborn from the dead, so that in all things He Himself may come to hold first place;
19 because in Him all the fullness was pleased to dwell, **20** and through Him to reconcile all things to Him, having made peace through the blood of His cross, through Him, whether the ***things*** on the earth or the ***things*** in the heavens.

Reconciled to God

21 And you, once being alienated and enemies in mind in the evil works, yet now He has reconciled **22** in the body of His flesh through the death, to present you holy and without blemish and beyond reproach before Him, **23** if indeed you continue in the faith, founded and steadfast and not being moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached in all the creation which ***is*** under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister.

Paul's Ministry for the Church

24 Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in turn the ***things*** lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His body, which is the church, **25** of which I became a minister according to the stewardship of God which was given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God, **26** the mystery which has been hidden from the ages and from the generations, but now was made manifest to His saints, **27** to whom God willed to make known what ***is*** the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, who is Christ in you, the hope of glory; **28** whom we proclaim, admonishing every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, so that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus; **29** for which I also

1:15 Heb 1:3; John 14:9; 2 Cor 4:4,6
1:16 Rom 11:36; John 1:3; 1 Cor 8:6
1:17 1 Chr 16:30; 1 Cor 8:6; John 8:58
1:18 Rev 1:5,18; Acts 26:23; 1 Cor 15:20-23
1:19 John 1:16; Col 2:3,9; Col 3:11
1:20 Isa 9:6; Eph 1:10; 2 Cor 5:18
1:21 Titus 3:3-7; Rom 5:9,10; Eph 2:1,2,12,19
1:22 Eph 5:27; Rom 7:4; Eph 1:4
1:23 Col 1:5; Matt 24:13; Heb 3:6,14
1:24 2 Tim 1:8; Rom 5:3; 2 Cor 7:4
1:25 Eph 3:2; Col 1:23; 1 Thess 3:2
1:26 Luke 8:10; 1 Cor 2:7; Ps 25:14
1:27 Rom 8:10; Esth 1:4; Ps 16:10
1:28 Jer 6:10; Eph 4:11; Eph 5:27
1:29 1 Cor 15:10; Col 2:1; Eph 1:19

1:15 *who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation* Verses 15 to 20 may be an early hymn or confession, and every line lifts Jesus higher. No one can see the Father (John 1:18), but in Jesus the invisible God is made visible, the exact likeness because He is God (Heb 1:3; John 14:9). Some use firstborn to teach Jesus was created. In Scripture it often speaks of rank and heirship. God called Israel His firstborn (Exod 4:22) and made David, the youngest son, His firstborn (Ps 89:27). The next verse shows He made creation.
1:16 *in Him all things were created* Jesus is not created. He is the Creator (John 1:3), and so He is God. Thrones, lordships, rulers and authorities were words for ranks of angels and spiritual powers. The false teachers seem to have honored angels (2:18), but every angel was made by Jesus. Why worship a creature? You were made by Him and for Him.
1:17 *He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together* He did not begin in Bethlehem. He has always been (John 1:1-2; 8:58). He did not make the world and step back. He upholds all things now (Heb 1:3). Every star stays in place and your heart keeps beating because He keeps it so. The hands that hold the universe together were nailed to a cross for you.
1:18 *He is the head of the body, the church* A body takes its life and direction from its head. The church belongs to Christ, not to a pastor or a board. He is the firstborn from the dead, the first to rise never to die again, the first of a great harvest (1 Cor 15:20-23). He is first in creation and new creation. Is He first in your life, or one priority among many?
1:19 *in Him all the fullness was pleased to dwell* Most Bibles add God here, and 2:9 makes the sense clear. Fullness may have been the false teachers' word for spiritual powers between God and man. Paul puts it all in Jesus. He is not partly divine. Dwell means to live there to stay. We find God completely in Jesus.
1:20 *having made peace through the blood of His cross* To reconcile is to bring two warring sides together. Peace with God was made by blood, not rules or visions. This does not mean all will be saved. The letter speaks of God's wrath on the disobedient (3:6), and Jesus spoke of eternal punishment (Matt 25:46). God will bring all creation back under Christ's rule. Those who receive Him are reconciled as friends, and those who refuse Him will one day bow to Him as Lord (Phil 2:10-11).
1:21 *once being alienated and enemies in mind in the evil works* Alienated means cut off, strangers to God. Enemies in mind means our thinking was against Him, and it showed in our deeds. Sin starts in how we think about God.
1:22 *in the body of His flesh through the death, to present you holy and without blemish* Jesus made peace in a real human body that really died. Some false teachers said the body was evil and God would never take real flesh. Paul says our salvation was won in Jesus' flesh. On the last day God will see every believer holy, spotless, with no charge left, because Jesus paid.
1:23 *if indeed you continue in the faith* Those truly reconciled will continue, founded and steadfast. Some believe God keeps every true believer to the end, and continuing proves faith was real (1 John 2:19). Others believe one who believed can turn away and be lost. I leave that open here. The call is plain: keep holding to Christ. All the creation means the gospel had spread across the known world. The man writing once tried to destroy the church.
1:24 *fill up in turn the things lacking of the afflictions of Christ* A hard phrase. It cannot mean Christ's death was not enough, for He made peace through His blood (1:20) and we have forgiveness in Him (1:14). Many believe Christ still suffers when His people suffer (Acts 9:4). Others believe Paul means the sufferings the church must go through in carrying the gospel, which Christ gives His servants to share. Either way, Paul counted it an honor.
1:25 *according to the stewardship of God which was given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God* A steward ran his master's house without owning it. Paul's charge was for Gentiles like the Colossians. To fulfill the word is to make it fully known, holding nothing back. The goal is not to say what people want to hear but to give them the whole Word of God.
1:26 *the mystery which has been hidden from the ages and from the generations* A biblical mystery is not a puzzle for a few but truth God hid in past ages and has now made known. The false teachers offered secrets for an inner circle. God's mystery is made manifest to every believer. Nothing in God's plan is kept from the ordinary Christian.
1:27 *Christ in you, the hope of glory* The Old Testament said the Gentiles would be blessed through Abraham's seed (Gen 12:3). It did not make plain that God would live in Gentile believers and make them one body with Jewish believers on equal terms (Eph 3:6). Not Christ near you, but in you, and so you have the sure promise of sharing His glory (3:4; Rom 8:18).
1:28 *whom we proclaim, admonishing every man and teaching every man* The message is a Person, not a system or philosophy. Admonishing warns of danger. Teaching explains the truth. Both are needed. Every man appears three times, against the false teachers' inner circle. Perfect means mature. Paul wanted people not only saved but grown up in Christ.
1:29 *striving according to His working which works in me in power* Toil means work to the point of exhaustion, and striving gives us agony, used for athletes straining. Yet the power came from God. We do not sit back, and we do not work in our own strength. We work hard and rely on His power while we do (Phil 2:12-13).

toil, striving according to His working which works in me in power.

COLOSSIANS 2

1 For I want you to know how great a struggle I have concerning you and those in Laodicea (Laodikeia), and as many as have not seen my face in ***the*** flesh, **2** so that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, and to all ***the*** riches of the full assurance of understanding, to ***the*** full knowledge of the mystery of the God and Father and of Christ, **3** in whom all the treasures of wisdom and of knowledge are hidden. **4** And I say this so that no one may delude you with persuasive speech. **5** For even if I am absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in the spirit, rejoicing and seeing your order and the firmness of your faith in Christ.

Complete in Christ

6 Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus (Iesous) the Lord, walk in Him, **7** having been rooted and being built up in Him and being established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving. **8** Watch out that no one will be the ***one*** who takes you captive through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, and not according to Christ; **9** for in Him dwells all the fullness of the Deity bodily, **10** and you have been filled in Him, who is the head of every ruler and authority; **11** in whom also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the stripping off of the body of the sins of the flesh, in the circumcision of Christ, **12** having been buried with Him in the baptism, in which also you were raised with ***Him*** through the faith of the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. **13** And you, being dead in the trespasses and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all the trespasses, **14** having blotted out the handwriting against us in the decrees, which was opposed to us; and He has taken it out of the midst, having nailed it to the cross; **15** having stripped off the rulers and

2:1 Phil 1:30; Col 4:12; Rev 1:11
2:2 Col 4:8; Col 3:14; Col 1:27
2:3 Rom 11:33; 1 Cor 1:24,30; Eph 1:8
2:4 Rom 16:18,19; Eph 5:6; Col 2:8,18
2:5 1 Pet 5:9; 1 Cor 14:40; 1 Thess 2:17
2:6 Mic 4:2; 1 Thess 4:1; 1 John 2:6
2:7 Eph 3:17; Eph 2:20-22; Col 1:23
2:8 1 Tim 6:20; Eph 5:6; Col 2:20
2:9 Col 1:19; John 1:14; Exod 15:2
2:10 Col 1:16-18; Eph 1:20-23; Phil 2:9-11
2:11 Deut 30:6; Jer 4:4; Gen 17:10
2:12 Rom 6:3; Eph 4:5; 1 Pet 3:21
2:13 Eph 2:1,5,6; 1 John 1:7-9; Ezek 37:1-10
2:14 Heb 7:18; Eph 2:14-16; Heb 10:8,9
2:15 Eph 4:8; Heb 2:14; Isa 53:12

2:1 *how great a struggle I have concerning you and those in Laodicea* Struggle is the word of 1:29, a hard contest. In prison Paul could not go to them, so he fought for them in prayer, for Colosse, for Laodicea about ten miles away, and for many who had never seen his face. Real love for the church does not stop at the people we know.
2:2 *being knit together in love* False teaching tears churches apart, and love ties them together. Paul wants them encouraged, united and sure of what they believe, so they are not shaken by every new teacher. The mystery is Christ Himself (1:27). The more we know Him, the less room there is for error.
2:3 *in whom all the treasures of wisdom and of knowledge are hidden* The false teachers claimed secret knowledge. Paul says all the treasures are in Christ. Hidden means stored up like treasure in a safe place, open to all who come to Christ and keep digging into His Word. You need no secret teacher or new revelation. You need to know Jesus better.
2:4 *so that no one may delude you with persuasive speech* To delude is to trick by false reasoning. False teaching rarely sounds false. It sounds wise, spiritual and deep. The test is not how persuasive the speaker is but whether the teaching matches what God has said and keeps Christ at the center.
2:5 *seeing your order and the firmness of your faith in Christ* Both are army words: soldiers standing in ranks and a solid line that does not break. Chained to Roman soldiers, Paul may have had that picture before him daily. He praises them first and then warns, a good way to correct anyone.
2:6 *as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, walk in Him* With verse 7 this is the heart of the letter. They received Christ by faith as a gift of grace, and that is how they keep walking. They received a Person who is Lord, trusted as Savior and obeyed as Lord. We do not start by grace and finish by rules and effort (Gal 3:3).
2:7 *having been rooted and being built up in Him* Rooted like a tree, built up like a house on a solid foundation, established firm and settled. The first is already done, and the others keep going. Just as you were taught points back to Epaphras. A thankful heart is one of the best guards against false teaching, for a grateful person is not out looking for something more.
2:8 *Watch out that no one will be the one who takes you captive through philosophy and empty deceit* The picture is a kidnapper or raider carrying off spoils. Paul is not against careful thinking but against a system that leaves out Christ. Some read the elementary principles of the world as the ABCs of religion before Christ (Gal 4:3, 9). Others read them as spiritual powers thought to rule the world. Either way, the test is whether it is according to Christ.
2:9 *in Him dwells all the fullness of the Deity bodily* One of the clearest verses on who Jesus is. Deity is all that makes God who He is, and all of it lives in Jesus. Bodily means He took a real human body and still has it, fully God and fully man forever. Dwells is present tense, true now as He sits at the Father's right hand. He is not one of many paths but God come in the flesh (John 1:14).
2:10 *you have been filled in Him* A play on words. All the fullness is in Christ, and you are filled in Him. Many Bibles say complete. In Christ you lack nothing you need for life with God, no special experience or higher level. He is head over every spiritual power. Why look to the servants when we have the Master?
2:11 *circumcised with a circumcision made without hands* The false teachers may have told Gentiles they needed circumcision (Gen 17:10-14). Paul says they have the real thing, done by God. It deals with the whole sinful nature, the circumcision of the heart (Deut 30:6; Jer 4:4). Some read the circumcision of Christ as what Christ does in us, others as His own death. Both point to His work, not ours.
2:12 *having been buried with Him in the baptism, in which also you were raised with Him* Baptism pictures our death, burial and rising with Christ (Rom 6:3-4). We were raised through faith in God's working. The water does not save. Baptism is the obedient public step after trusting Christ. Some link verses 11 and 12 and baptize infants of believing parents, as Israel circumcised its boys. Others, and this study, read it as baptism that follows faith. Both agree salvation is by grace through faith.
2:13 *He made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all the trespasses* We were not sick but dead, and a dead man cannot help himself. As Gentiles they were outside God's covenant people. God raised us with Christ (Eph 2:4-5) and forgave all our trespasses, past, present and future. In Christ there is no sin left on your account for God to punish (Rom 8:1).
2:14 *having blotted out the handwriting against us in the decrees* The handwriting was a written note of debt, an IOU signed in one's own hand. God's Law shows what we owe, and every sin adds to the bill. Ink then could be washed off, and God wiped the page clean. A crucified man's charge was sometimes nailed above him (John 19:19). God nailed our whole record of debt to the cross, paid in full.
2:15 *having triumphed over them in it* These are the evil spiritual powers that held us captive (Eph 6:12). Satan's greatest weapon against us was our guilt, and Jesus took it away. A Roman triumph was a parade where a victorious general led defeated enemies through the streets. What looked like Satan's victory was his defeat. Believers need not fear the powers of darkness.

the authorities, He made a public display ***of them*** openly, having triumphed over them in it.

Free From Human Rules

16 Therefore let no one judge you in food or in drink or in respect of a feast or a new moon or Sabbaths, **17** which are a shadow of the ***things*** coming, but the body ***is*** of Christ. **18** Let no one defraud you of the prize, delighting in humility and ***the*** worship of the angels, intruding into ***things*** which he has not seen, in vain being puffed up by the mind of his flesh, **19** and not holding fast the head, from whom all the body, being supplied and knit together through the joints and ligaments, grows ***with*** the growth of God. **20** Therefore if you died with Christ from the elementary principles of the world, why, as if living in ***the*** world, do you submit to decrees, **21** "Do not handle, nor taste, nor touch," **22** which are all for decay with the using up, according to the commandments and teachings of men? **23** These things indeed have a reputation of wisdom in self-made worship and humility and severe treatment of ***the*** body, not in any honor, toward ***the*** indulgence of the flesh.

COLOSSIANS 3

Set Your Minds on Things Above

1 If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things above, where Christ is, sitting at ***the*** right ***hand*** of God. **2** Set ***your*** minds on the things above, not the things on the earth. **3** For you have died, and your life has been hidden with Christ in God. **4** When Christ, our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.

Put Off the Old Man

5 Therefore put to death your members which ***are*** on the earth: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and the covetousness, which is idolatry, **6** because of which things the wrath of God is coming on the sons of disobedience, **7** in which you also once walked, when you were living

2:16 1 Chr 23:31; Neh 10:33; Ezek 45:17
2:17 Heb 10:1; Heb 8:5; John 1:17
2:18 Col 2:23; Col 2:8; 1 Tim 1:7
2:19 Eph 4:15,16; Job 19:9-12; Col 2:6-9
2:20 Gal 4:3,9-12; Col 2:8; Col 2:14,16
2:21 2 Cor 6:17; 1 Tim 4:3; Gen 3:3
2:22 Isa 29:13; Titus 1:14; 1 Cor 6:13
2:23 1 Tim 4:3,8; Gen 3:5,6; Matt 23:27,28

3:1 Rom 8:6; Ps 110:1; Matt 6:20,33
3:2 1 Chr 22:19; Matt 16:23; 1 John 2:15-17
3:3 Col 2:20; Rom 6:2; Gal 2:20
3:4 Deut 30:20; Isa 25:9; 1 John 3:2
3:5 Rom 8:13; Gal 5:19-21; Rom 6:13
3:6 Eph 5:6; Rom 1:18; Rev 22:15
3:7 Eph 2:2; 1 Cor 6:11; Titus 3:3

2:16 *let no one judge you in food or in drink or in respect of a feast or a new moon or Sabbaths* Someone was saying the Colossians must keep food laws and holy days to be right with God. The list follows the Old Testament pattern of yearly feasts, monthly new moons and weekly Sabbaths (1 Chr 23:31; Hos 2:11). These were part of the Law given Israel, not the measure of a believer's standing. Romans 14:5-6 gives the same freedom.

2:17 *which are a shadow of the things coming, but the body is of Christ* A shadow is real but not the thing itself. When the person comes around the corner, you stop staring at his shadow. Jesus is our true rest (Matt 11:28; Heb 4:9-10). Good teachers disagree on the Sabbath today. Many believe it is fulfilled in Christ and most churches gather on Sunday. Others keep Sunday as the Christian Sabbath. Others hold the seventh day still binding. No one should judge another's standing with God by it.

2:18 *Let no one defraud you of the prize, delighting in humility and the worship of the angels* Defraud was used for an umpire who disqualifies an athlete, but the Father has qualified them (1:12). Their humility was a show that was really pride. Some read worship of the angels as praying to angels as go-betweens. Others read it as claiming in visions to join the angels' worship. Either way it took eyes off Christ, and angels refuse worship (Rev 22:8-9). Their visions came from a proud, fleshly mind.

2:19 *not holding fast the head* Letting go of Christ cuts one off from the source of life, however spiritual it looks. The body gets all it needs from the head, and each part passes it along. Real growth comes from God, through staying connected to Jesus and His people, not from rules or visions.

2:20 *if you died with Christ from the elementary principles of the world* If here means since. Our death with Christ cut us off from trying to please God by rules (Rom 7:4). It is like a man freed from prison who keeps going back to his cell each night. Chapter 3 is full of commands, so believers are not without rules. We are not made right or holy by human rules.

2:21 *Do not handle, nor taste, nor touch* The list grows stricter as it goes. Such things perish as they are used, and what goes into the mouth does not make a man unclean (Mark 7:18-19). They are teachings of men (Isa 29:13; Matt 15:9). Religion built on man-made rules can look very serious and still miss God.

2:23 *have a reputation of wisdom in self-made worship and humility and severe treatment of the body* They look good: worship people invent, false humility, harsh fasting and denial of the body. The last phrase is hard in Greek, but the point is clear. These rules have no real value against the flesh. You can keep every outward rule with a proud, lustful heart. Rules change what we do for a while. Only Christ changes who we are.

3:1 *seek the things above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God* If again means since. Being raised with Christ (2:12) is a present fact for every believer. To seek is to make something our aim. Our risen Lord sits in the place of honor and authority (Ps 110:1), and our hearts should go where He is. The false teachers looked down at rules about food and days. Paul tells believers to look up.

3:2 *Set your minds on the things above* Verse 1 is what we seek, and this is how we think. What fills your mind when you are not busy? Paul is not telling us to ignore jobs and families, for the rest of the chapter is about home and work. He tells us to see it all from heaven's point of view. A mind set on things above does more earthly good, not less.

3:3 *your life has been hidden with Christ in God* The old life ruled by sin died with Christ (Rom 6:6-7). Hidden means safe, kept where no one can take it (John 10:28-29). It also means unseen. People see an ordinary person paying bills. They do not see one united to the risen Lord of heaven. One day it will be seen.

3:4 *When Christ, our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory* Christ is not part of our life. He is our life. I believe He will first come for His church before the seven-year Tribulation and catch up His people to meet Him in the air (1 Thess 4:16-17; John 14:1-3). At the end of the Tribulation He will return visibly to the earth with His people (Rev 19:11-14; Jude 14). Then the world will see Him in glory, and His people with Him. Why live for things that will be gone?

3:5 *put to death your members which are on the earth* Because we died with Christ, sin is an enemy to be killed, not a pet to be fed. Members are the body's parts used as tools for sin. Sexual immorality is any sexual sin outside marriage between husband and wife. Covetousness is always wanting more, and it is idolatry because whatever we crave more than God has become our god. Paul does not say manage these sins. He says put them to death.

3:6 *the wrath of God is coming on the sons of disobedience* God's wrath is His holy anger against sin, the right response of a holy God to evil. Believers will not face it, because Jesus took it for us (Rom 5:9; 1 Thess 5:9). That is no reason to take sin lightly. Why play with the very things that sent Jesus to the cross?

3:7 *in which you also once walked* Many of these Gentiles had lived in sexual sin and idol worship, as most of their world did. Notice once. Paul does not pretend their past did not happen, nor let them stay there. Your past is a place you came from, not the place you live.

in them. **8** But now you also, put off all ***these*** things: anger, rage, malice, slander, foul language out of your mouth. **9** Do not lie to one another, having put off the old man with his practices, **10** and having put on the new ***man***, who is being renewed in knowledge according to ***the*** image of the One who created him, **11** where there is not Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free, but Christ ***is*** all and in all.

Put On the New Man

12 Therefore, as ***the*** elect of God, holy and beloved, put on hearts of compassions, kindness, humility, gentleness,
patience, **13** bearing with one another and forgiving each other, if anyone has a complaint against anyone; just as Christ also forgave you, so also you. **14** And above all these things ***put on*** love, which is ***the*** bond of perfection. **15** And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which you also were called in one body; and be thankful. **16** Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, in all wisdom teaching and admonishing yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your heart to the Lord. **17** And everything, whatever you do in word or in deed, ***do*** all in ***the*** name of ***the*** Lord Jesus (Iesous), giving thanks to the God and Father through Him.

The Christian Household

18 Wives, subject yourselves to ***your*** own husbands, as is fitting in ***the*** Lord. **19** Husbands, love ***your*** wives, and do not be harsh toward them. **20** Children, obey ***your*** parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord. **21** Fathers, do not provoke your children, so that they may not become discouraged. **22** Slaves, obey in all things ***your*** masters according to ***the*** flesh, not with eye-services, as men-pleasers, but

3:8 Eph 4:29; Eph 4:22; Prov 29:22
3:9 Eph 4:22; Eph 4:25; Lev 19:11
3:10 Eph 4:23; Gen 1:26; Eph 2:10,15
3:11 Rom 10:12; 1 Cor 12:13; Gal 5:6
3:12 Eph 4:2,32; 2 Pet 1:5-8; 1 John 4:19
3:13 Eph 4:32; Mark 11:25; Rom 15:1,2
3:14 Eph 4:3; Eph 5:2; 1 Pet 4:8
3:15 John 14:27; Phil 4:6; 1 Thess 5:18
3:16 Ps 119:11; Deut 6:6; Ps 32:7
3:17 1 Cor 10:31; Prov 3:6; Col 3:23
3:18 Eph 5:22-24,33; 1 Cor 11:3; 1 Pet 3:1-6
3:19 1 Pet 3:7; Eph 5:25,28,29,33; Gen 2:23,24
3:20 Exod 20:12; Eph 6:1-3; Eph 5:24
3:21 Eph 6:4; Ps 103:13; Prov 3:12
3:22 Col 3:20; Luke 6:46; Eph 6:5-7

3:8 *anger, rage, malice, slander, foul language out of your mouth* Put off like dirty clothes. Verse 5 named mostly sins of the body. This list is sins of the temper and tongue. Anger is settled and smoldering, rage a sudden blowup, malice wanting to hurt, slander tearing down a name. Churches often watch hard for the first list and go easy on this one. God does not.
3:9 *Do not lie to one another, having put off the old man with his practices* A church cannot be one body without trust (Eph 4:25), and that includes the small lies that make us look better. The old man is who we were in Adam, ruled by sin. That self was put off like old clothes, and lying belongs to the old wardrobe.
3:10 *the new man, who is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of the One who created him* Renewing is ongoing. God gave us a new nature and keeps shaping us. He made man in His image (Gen 1:27), sin marred it, and in Christ He is restoring it, making us like His Son (Rom 8:29). The knowledge here is true knowledge of God, not the false teachers' secret knowledge.
3:11 *barbarian, Scythian, slave, free, but Christ is all and in all* Every wall of the ancient world is named: race, religion, culture and rank. A barbarian was anyone who did not speak Greek, and the Scythians, from north of the Black Sea, were seen as the lowest of the low. The differences do not vanish, but none decides our place in God's family. If you look down on any group of people, this verse is for you.
3:12 *as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on hearts of compassions* Before the new clothes, Paul reminds them who they are: chosen, set apart and loved. We do not live this way to become God's people but because we are. Compassion is deep pity for the hurting, gentleness strength under control, patience putting up with people long without blowing up. Each is how Jesus treated people (Rom 13:14).
3:13 *just as Christ also forgave you, so also you* Paul is a realist. Someone will have a complaint. Bearing with is putting up with faults, and forgiving is letting go of a real wrong. Christ forgave freely, fully, and while we did not deserve it. Forgiving does not pretend it did not happen or always restore trust right away. It gives up our right to get even and leaves it with God.
3:14 *put on love, which is the bond of perfection* Love is like the belt that holds the other clothes in place. Without it, compassion becomes pity, kindness a show, and humility a pose. Perfection is maturity. The false teachers said it came by secret knowledge and harsh rules. Paul says it comes by love (1 Cor 13:1-3).
3:15 *let the peace of God rule in your hearts* Rule was used for an umpire making the call. When we are unsure or tempers rise, God's peace should make the call. Many older Greek copies read Christ instead of God, with the same meaning. This peace is meant to rule between believers in one body. Paul keeps coming back to thanks (1:3, 12; 2:7; 3:17; 4:2). A thankful heart is hard to stir into a fight.
3:16 *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly* To dwell is to live at home. God's Word should not be a Sunday visitor but at home in us, filling every room. Every believer has a part in teaching and warning. Psalms are the Old Testament songs, hymns are songs of praise, and spiritual songs are others prompted by the Spirit. Singing is not filler before the sermon. It is to the Lord, and it starts in the heart.
3:17 *whatever you do in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus* No part of the day is outside the Lord's reach. To act in His name is to act as His servant, in a way that fits who He is. If you cannot do something in Jesus' name and thank God for it, that is a good sign you should not do it.
3:18 *Wives, subject yourselves to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord* The same household pattern appears in Ephesians 5:22-6:9. Paul speaks to wives directly, as a choice in their own walk, and does not tell husbands to make them submit. Submission is about role, not worth. Jesus is equal with the Father yet came to do His will (John 6:38). As is fitting in the Lord sets a limit. It never means following a husband into sin (Acts 5:29) or putting up with abuse. If you are being hurt or afraid at home, tell a pastor or a believer you trust and get to a safe place. Teachers differ on how this is lived out.
3:19 *Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh toward them* The culture expected husbands to rule. Paul tells them to love with agape, the self-giving love of Christ for the church (Eph 5:25). Harsh means bitter or sharp, irritated, cold or cruel with words. Husbands, does your wife feel loved, or managed?
3:20 *Children, obey your parents in all things* Paul speaks to children directly, so they were in the church when this was read aloud, and they matter to God. In all things assumes parents who are not asking a child to sin. When a child obeys, God is pleased, which gives small acts of obedience a big meaning.
3:21 *Fathers, do not provoke your children, so that they may not become discouraged* Roman fathers had near total power, and Paul limits it. To provoke is to push a child until he gives up, by harshness, unfairness, constant criticism or never being pleased. A discouraged child stops trying because he thinks he can never measure up. Our job is to train children, not crush them.
3:22 *Slaves, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh* Many in the church were slaves. Roman slavery came through war, debt or birth and differed from race-based American slavery, but it was still one person owning another, and often cruel. Onesimus was on his way home to Colosse (4:9). Paul tells slave and master they answer to the same Lord (4:1), which cuts against owning a person (Phlm 16; 1 Cor 7:21). These verses were later misused in America to defend slavery, while other Christians reading the same Bible fought to end it. Eyeservice is working hard only when the boss is watching.

in sincerity of heart, fearing God. **23** And everything, whatever you do, work from ***the*** soul, as to the Lord and not to men, **24** knowing that from ***the*** Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ. **25** But the one doing wrong will receive back what he did wrong, and there is no partiality.

COLOSSIANS 4

1 Masters, grant to the slaves what ***is*** righteous and fair, knowing that you also have a Master in ***the*** heavens.

Prayer and Wise Speech

2 Continue steadfastly in prayer, keeping watch in it with thanksgiving, **3** praying at the same time also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ, on account of which I also have been bound, **4** so that I may make it manifest, as I must speak. **5** Walk in wisdom toward those outside, redeeming the time. **6** ***Let*** your word ***be*** always in grace, seasoned with salt, to know how you must answer each one.

Final Greetings

7 Tychicus (Tychikos), the beloved brother and faithful servant and fellow slave in ***the*** Lord, will make known to you all the things concerning me, **8** whom I sent to you for this very ***purpose***, that he may know the things concerning you, and ***that*** he may encourage your hearts, **9** with Onesimus (Onesimos), the faithful and beloved brother, who is ***one*** of you. They will make known to you all the things here. **10** Aristarchus (Aristarchos), my fellow prisoner, greets you, and Mark (Markos), the cousin of Barnabas (concerning whom you received commands: if he comes to you, welcome him), **11** and Jesus (Iesous), who is called Justus (Ioustos). These, who are of ***the*** circumcision, ***are*** the only fellow workers for the kingdom of God who have become a comfort to me. **12** Epaphras, who ***is one*** of you, a slave of Christ, greets you, always struggling for you in the prayers, so that you may stand mature and complete in all ***the*** will of God. **13** For I bear witness to him that he has much zeal for you and for those in Laodicea (Laodikeia) and those in Hierapolis.

3:23 Col 3:17; Eph 6:6,7; Eccl 9:10
3:24 Eph 6:8; 1 Cor 7:22; Col 2:18
3:25 Acts 10:34; Rom 2:11; 1 Thess 4:6
4:1 Eph 6:8,9-20; Lev 25:39-43; Matt 24:48-51
4:2 1 Thess 5:17,18; Luke 18:1; Eph 6:18
4:3 Eph 6:19; Rev 3:7,8; Phil 1:7,13,14
4:4 2 Cor 4:1-4; Eph 6:20; Matt 10:26,27
4:5 Eph 5:15-17; 1 Thess 4:12; James 3:13,17
4:6 1 Pet 3:15; Eph 4:29; Mark 9:50
4:7 Acts 20:4; 2 Tim 4:12; Eph 6:21-23
4:8 Eph 6:22; Col 2:2; 1 Cor 4:17
4:9 Phlm 1:10-19; Col 4:7
4:10 Acts 19:29; Acts 20:4; Acts 27:2
4:11 Acts 11:2; Acts 10:45; Rom 4:12
4:12 Col 1:7; Phlm 1:23; Rom 15:30
4:13 Col 2:1; Rom 10:2; 2 Cor 8:3

3:23 *work from the soul, as to the Lord and not to men* From the soul means with the whole heart. A slave with a hard master could sweep the floor for Jesus. Today this applies to anyone who works for someone else. Your boss may never notice. Jesus always does.
3:24 *from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance* Under Roman law a slave as a rule owned nothing and had no right to inherit. Paul promises Christian slaves an inheritance from the Lord. You may wear a company name tag, but you serve the Lord Christ, and He will reward your work at the judgment seat of Christ (2 Cor 5:10).
3:25 *the one doing wrong will receive back what he did wrong, and there is no partiality* The warning cuts both ways: the slave who cheated and the master who mistreated would both answer to God. God judges the boss by no softer standard than the worker. No one gets away with wrong because of rank, and no one is overlooked for being low.
4:1 *Masters, grant to the slaves what is righteous and fair* This belongs with chapter 3. A master could beat, sell or even kill a slave with little to fear from the law, yet Paul says slaves have a claim on what is right and fair. The same Greek word names both masters. The earthly master is himself a slave of the Lord in heaven and will answer to Him. Philemon of Colosse would hear this read with his own slave Onesimus in the room (4:9).
4:2 *Continue steadfastly in prayer, keeping watch in it with thanksgiving* To continue steadfastly is to keep at it and not give up (Luke 18:1). To watch is to stay awake and alert, as the disciples failed to do in the garden (Matt 26:40-41). Prayer without thanks soon becomes a list of complaints. Remembering what God has done gives faith for what we ask.
4:3 *that God may open to us a door for the word* Even the apostle needed the prayers of a small church he had never visited. He did not ask first for release, though he hoped for it (Phlm 22). He asked for openings to speak of Christ, which only God can give (1 Cor 16:9; Acts 14:27). He was bound for preaching Christ and asked for more chances to preach.
4:4 *so that I may make it manifest, as I must speak* Paul also asks for clarity. The best open door is wasted if the message is muddled. Lord, give me the chance, and then help me say it clearly. If Paul needed prayer to speak clearly, so do we.
4:5 *Walk in wisdom toward those outside, redeeming the time* Those outside are people who do not know Christ, and they are watching how believers live (1 Pet 2:12). To redeem was used for buying up goods at the market while they lasted. Opportunities to show and share Christ come and go (Eph 5:16). Is there someone you have been meaning to talk to about Jesus?
4:6 *Let your word be always in grace, seasoned with salt* Gracious speech is kind and full of the grace we received. Salt gave flavor and kept food from spoiling, so such speech is neither dull nor rotten. Not everyone needs the same answer. Some hurt, some are angry, some mock. Listen first, then answer with gentleness and respect (1 Pet 3:15).
4:7 *Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful servant and fellow slave in the Lord* Tychicus, from the province of Asia (Acts 20:4), carried this letter and Ephesians (Eph 6:21-22). He was not famous, but he could be trusted to carry the mail, tell the news, and encourage the church. Faithful people like him are the backbone of God's work. A person can encourage in a way a letter cannot (4:8).
4:9 *with Onesimus, the faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you* A quiet but powerful line. Onesimus was Philemon's runaway slave. He had left Colosse a slave who wronged his master and was coming back a brother in Christ. Paul gives him the words he used for Tychicus and calls him one of you, not a slave or a runaway. The church had to decide how to welcome him. The letter to Philemon tells more.
4:10 *Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, greets you, and Mark, the cousin of Barnabas* Aristarchus of Thessalonica was dragged into the Ephesus riot and sailed with Paul to Rome (Acts 19:29; 20:4; 27:2). Some think he shared the imprisonment by choice. Mark, who wrote the Gospel, had left Paul on the first journey, and Paul and Barnabas split over him (Acts 13:13; 15:37-39). Now he is at Paul's side, later useful for ministry (2 Tim 4:11). Failure does not have to be the end of the story.
4:11 *These, who are of the circumcision, are the only fellow workers* Jesus was a common Jewish name, the Greek form of Joshua, and this man went by Justus. These three Jewish believers stood with Paul when many of his own people turned against him (Phil 1:15-17). Comfort is the word that gave a medical term for something soothing. A loyal friend in a hard time is a gift from God.
4:12 *always struggling for you in the prayers, so that you may stand mature and complete* Epaphras planted the church (1:7) and came to Rome. Struggling is the hard-contest word of 1:29 and 2:1. He wrestled in prayer that they would grow up, stand firm against false teaching, and be fully sure of God's will. That is how a faithful pastor prays.
4:13 *he has much zeal for you and for those in Laodicea and those in Hierapolis* The SLB reads zeal. Many older Greek copies read a word meaning hard labor or even pain. Either way, his prayers for the three churches of the Lycus valley cost him. Far from home, he could not fix the problems by being there, so he prayed. Prayer is often not the least we can do but the most.

14 Luke (Loukas), the beloved physician, greets you, and Demas. **15** Greet the brothers in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the church in his house. **16** And when the letter has been read among you, cause that it also be read in the church of the Laodiceans, and that you also read the ***letter*** from Laodicea. **17** And say to Archippus (Archippos), "Take heed to the ministry that you received in ***the*** Lord, that you may fulfill it." **18** The greeting by my own hand, of Paul (Paulos). Remember my chains. Grace ***be*** with you. Amen.

4:14 Phlm 1:24; 2 Tim 4:10; 2 Tim 4:11
4:15 Rom 16:5; 1 Cor 16:9; Phlm 1:2
4:16 1 Thess 5:27
4:17 Num 27:19; Phlm 1:2; Lev 10:3
4:18 Heb 13:3; 1 Cor 16:21; 1 Tim 6:21

4:14 *Luke, the beloved physician, greets you, and Demas* Luke wrote the Gospel and Acts and was with Paul in Rome. Since Paul just named his Jewish companions, most see Luke as a Gentile. Demas is named with no comment. Later Paul wrote that he had deserted him (2 Tim 4:10). A man can stand next to an apostle and still drift away.
4:15 *Nymphas, and the church in his house* Churches had no buildings and met in homes, as at Philemon's house (Phlm 2). A church is the people of God gathered around Jesus. The SLB reads Nymphas and his house. Some Greek copies read Nympha, a woman, and her house, and many modern Bibles follow them. Either way, a believer opened a home for God's people.
4:16 *that you also read the letter from Laodicea* Paul's letters were read aloud and shared, meant for the whole church then and now. Teachers hold three views of the letter from Laodicea: a lost letter of Paul, our Ephesians as a circular letter reaching Colosse by way of Laodicea, or Philemon. A later Epistle to the Laodiceans, pieced together from Paul's phrases, is not accepted as his. God has given us every word He meant us to have.
4:17 *Take heed to the ministry that you received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it* Archippus is called our fellow soldier in Philemon 2. He may have been of Philemon's household, perhaps his son, and may have led the church while Epaphras was away. Scripture does not say. Every believer has received some ministry, seen or unseen. Are you fulfilling yours?
4:18 *Remember my chains* Paul dictated and signed with his own hand to prove the letter was his (2 Thess 3:17). The chain on his wrist may have dragged across the page as he wrote. He began with grace (1:2) and ends with it. The false teachers offered rules. Paul leaves us the grace of God in Christ. The closing note naming Rome, Tychicus and Onesimus was added by later copyists.

1 THESSALONIANS

Introduction

Title

The letter is named for its readers, "the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (1:1). It is the first of two letters Paul wrote to the believers in Thessalonica, and many Bible teachers believe it is the earliest letter he wrote. It gives us a picture of what Paul taught a brand new church in its first months.

Author and Date

The letter opens with "Paul and Silvanus and Timothy" (1:1). Silvanus is the man Luke calls Silas (Acts 15:40), and Timothy joined them at Lystra (Acts 16:1-3). Paul is the main voice, and more than once he speaks for himself alone (2:18; 3:5; 5:27). The early church accepted Paul as author, and almost all scholars today agree. I take the letter at its word, as the church always has.

From Berea Paul went to Athens and, worried about the Thessalonians, sent Timothy back to them (3:1-2). Paul went on to Corinth, where Silas and Timothy rejoined him (Acts 18:5), and Timothy's good report (3:6) led to this letter. Paul stayed in Corinth a year and six months, partly while Gallio governed Achaia (Acts 18:11-12), and an old inscription found at Delphi helps date Gallio's time to about A.D. 51 to 52. So most scholars date the letter about A.D. 51, from Corinth. The closing note in the SLB that it was written from Athens was added by later copyists.

Background and Setting

Thessalonica was the capital of the Roman province of Macedonia, in northern Greece. It had a good harbor, and the great Roman road, the Via Egnatia, ran through it, so it was busy with travelers, sailors and merchants. Rome made it a free city with its own leaders (Acts 17:6). It is still there today as Thessaloniki. News from such a city traveled fast, and so did the gospel (1:8).

Paul, Silas and Timothy came there on the second journey, after being beaten and jailed in Philippi (Acts 16:22-24; 2:2). For three Sabbaths Paul reasoned in the synagogue that the Christ had to suffer and rise and that Jesus is the Christ (Acts 17:2-3). Some Jews believed, with many Greeks and leading women. Then a mob attacked Jason's house and charged the believers with saying "another is king, Jesus" (Acts 17:7), and Paul and Silas were sent away by night (Acts 17:10). Paul may have stayed longer than three weeks, for he worked night and day (2:9) and Philippi sent him help more than once (Phil 4:16). Still, he left a church of brand new believers, mostly former idol worshipers (1:9), facing hard opposition.

Themes

Paul's summary of their story holds the whole letter. They "turned to God from the idols to serve a living and true God, and to await His Son from the heavens" (1:9-10). Paul thanks God for their faith, love and hope (1:3). He answers false charges by reminding them how he lived among them, gentle as a mother and faithful as a father (2:1-12). He encourages them to stand firm under persecution (3:1-5) and calls them to sexual purity, brotherly love and honest work (4:1-12).

Every chapter ends by looking to the coming of the Lord Jesus (1:10; 2:19; 3:13; 4:13-18; 5:23). Believers had died, and the others feared they would miss His coming. Paul answers with the clearest teaching in the Bible on what many call the rapture, when the dead in Christ will rise first and living believers will be caught up with them "to meet the Lord in the air" (4:17). Then he turns to the day of the Lord, which will come like a thief on an unbelieving world, but "God did not appoint us for wrath" (5:9). This study takes the view that the catching up comes before the Tribulation, and that the hope of His coming is meant to comfort us, make us holy, and keep us working and loving while we wait.

Christ in 1 Thessalonians

Jesus is the Son of God whom He "raised out of the dead," the One "who is delivering us from the wrath that is coming" (1:10). He "died for us, so that whether we keep watch or sleep, we may live together with Him" (5:10). Paul names the Father and the Son together as one source of grace and as acting as one (1:1; 3:11). "The Lord Himself will descend from heaven" for His people (4:16), and He will come again "with all His saints" (3:13). "And so we will always be with the Lord" (4:17).

Hard Passages

Paul's strong words about the Jews who opposed the gospel (2:14-16) are about those of his own day, not every Jewish person, and God's promises to Israel still stand (Rom 11:25-29). "Possess his own vessel" (4:4) is read as one's own body or as a wife. The catching away of 4:17 is placed before, in the middle of, or after the Tribulation by different teachers, and the notes give the reasons this study holds the pre-tribulation view. "The day of the Lord" (5:2) and "not appoint us for wrath" (5:9) are read in that frame. Whether the gift of prophecy continues (5:20) is left open. The notes name the main views.

Outline

I. Looking Back on How the Church Began (1:1-3:13)
  A. Greeting (1:1)
  B. Thanks for a model church (1:2-10)
  C. Paul's ministry among them (2:1-12)
  D. The word received in suffering (2:13-16)
  E. Paul's longing to see them (2:17-20)
  F. Timothy sent and his good report (3:1-10)
  G. Paul's prayer for them (3:11-13)
II. How to Live Until the Lord Comes (4:1-5:28)
  A. A life that pleases God (4:1-8)
  B. Brotherly love and honest work (4:9-12)
  C. The coming of the Lord for His people (4:13-18)
  D. The day of the Lord (5:1-11)
  E. Life together in the church (5:12-22)
  F. Closing prayer and greetings (5:23-28)

1 THESSALONIANS

1 THESSALONIANS 1

Greeting

1 Paul (Paulos) and Silvanus (Silouanos) and Timothy
(Timotheos), to the church of ***the*** Thessalonians in God ***the*** Father and ***the*** Lord Jesus (Iesous) Christ: grace to you and peace from God our Father and ***the*** Lord Jesus Christ.

A Model Church

2 We give thanks to God always concerning you all, making mention of you in our prayers, **3** unceasingly remembering your work of faith and labor of love and endurance of hope of our Lord Jesus Christ, before our God and Father,
4 knowing, brothers beloved by God, your election, **5** because our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in ***the*** Holy Spirit and in much full assurance, just as you know what sort ***of men*** we became among you for your sake. **6** And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much tribulation with joy of ***the*** Holy Spirit, **7** so that you became examples to all who believe in Macedonia (Makedonia) and Achaia. **8** For from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith toward God has gone out, so that we have no need to say anything. **9** For they themselves report concerning us what sort of entrance we had to you, and how you turned to God from the idols to serve a living and true God, **10** and to await His Son from the heavens, whom He raised out of ***the*** dead, Jesus, who is delivering us from the wrath that is coming.

1 THESSALONIANS 2

Paul's Ministry in Thessalonica

1 For you yourselves know, brothers, our entrance to you, that it has not been in vain; **2** but even after having previously suffered and having been mistreated, just as you know, in Philippi (Philippoi), we had boldness in our God to speak

1:1 2 Thess 1:1; Rom 1:7; Acts 18:5
1:2 Rom 1:8,9; 1 Cor 1:4; Eph 1:15,16
1:3 1 Cor 13:13; Gal 5:6; Rev 2:19
1:4 2 Thess 2:13; 2 Pet 1:10; Titus 3:4,5
1:5 2 Thess 2:14; 1 Pet 1:12; Col 2:2
1:6 Acts 13:52; 1 Cor 11:1; Gal 5:22
1:7 Titus 2:7; 1 Tim 4:12; 1 Pet 5:3
1:8 Isa 2:3; Rom 1:8; 2 Thess 3:1
1:9 1 Tim 4:10; 1 Cor 12:2; Gal 4:8,9
1:10 1 Thess 5:9; Matt 3:7; Acts 2:24
2:1 Hab 2:13; 1 Thess 2:13; 1 Thess 1:3-10
2:2 Acts 4:13,20,31; 2 Tim 1:12; Acts 17:2,3

1:1 *Paul and Silvanus and Timothy* Silvanus is the Roman form of Silas, who was beaten and jailed with Paul at Philippi (Acts 16:19-25), and Timothy joined them on this journey (Acts 16:1-3). All three had preached in Thessalonica. Paul does not call himself an apostle here, for these believers trusted him. A church is an assembly of people, not a building. Paul sets the Father and the Son side by side as the one source of grace and peace.
1:2 *We give thanks to God always concerning you all* Paul thanks God, not the Thessalonians, because what he sees is God's work, and he thanks Him for all of them, not only the easy ones to love. From Corinth the three men kept praying for the church they had left. When did you last thank God for the people of your church by name?
1:3 *your work of faith and labor of love and endurance of hope* Faith, love and hope appear together often (1 Cor 13:13; Col 1:4-5; 5:8). Here Paul shows what each produces. Faith produces work, for faith that never works is not real (James 2:17-18). Labor is hard, tiring work, and love is willing to wear itself out. Endurance is staying under a heavy load. Their hope was Jesus Himself and His coming.
1:4 *brothers beloved by God, your election* These former idol worshipers were now loved by the living God. Election is God's choosing, and Paul knew it by the evidence in verse 5. Some believe God chose people based only on His will and grace. Others believe He chose in Christ all He foreknew would believe (Rom 8:29; 1 Pet 1:1-2). Both agree salvation is God's work and all are called to repent (Acts 17:30). God's love comes first, and a changed life is the evidence.
1:5 *our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit* The Spirit was opening hearts as Paul preached. Power may include miracles (Rom 15:18-19), but above all it is God's power to save (Rom 1:16). Full assurance can mean Paul's confidence or the hearers' conviction, and both were true. The messengers' lives matched the message. People listen to our words and watch our lives.
1:6 *having received the word in much tribulation with joy of the Holy Spirit* They followed Paul as he followed Christ (1 Cor 11:1). Tribulation here is pressure and trouble, the ordinary suffering of believers in this world (John 16:33), not the future seven-year Tribulation. The riot of Acts 17:5-9 shows what believing cost them. With the trouble came joy from the Spirit. A believer can have hard times and deep joy at once.
1:7 *so that you became examples to all who believe in Macedonia and Achaia* Macedonia and Achaia covered most of Greece, north and south. Example was used for a mark pressed in like a stamp. After only a few months, these believers were already a pattern for older churches. You need not be a believer for many years to be an example, only faithful where God has put you.
1:8 *from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth* The word was used for a trumpet blast or rolling thunder. Thessalonica sat on a major Roman road with a busy harbor, and travelers carried the news. When Paul reached new towns, people already knew. Changed lives had done the talking. Our words still matter (Rom 10:14), but a changed life opens doors for them.
1:9 *how you turned to God from the idols to serve a living and true God* They turned to God, and so turned from idols. Repentance is a change of mind that leads to a change of direction. They did not add Jesus to their gods. In Thessalonica idol worship was tied to family, trade guilds and festivals, so turning cost friends, business and standing. Anything we love, trust or serve more than God is an idol (1 John 5:21).
1:10 *to await His Son from the heavens* They turned, served and waited. In a few weeks they learned Jesus is coming from heaven (Acts 1:9-11). God's wrath is His settled judgment on a world that rejects Him, both the final judgment (Rev 20:11-15) and the wrath poured out in the Tribulation (Rev 6-19). I believe Jesus delivers His church from both, taking it out before the Tribulation's wrath falls (5:9). Deliver means to snatch out of danger. Some read this wrath as final judgment only, and some believe the church will be kept within the Tribulation. But we are waiting for Christ, not the Antichrist.
2:1 *our entrance to you, that it has not been in vain* Paul says you know again and again in this chapter (2:1, 2, 5, 9, 10, 11). He asks them to remember what they saw. His visit was short and ended in a riot, but it was not empty. A church was born. God judges a work not by how long it lasted or how smoothly it went, but by what He did through it.
2:2 *having previously suffered and having been mistreated, just as you know, in Philippi* At Philippi Paul and Silas were stripped, beaten with rods and put in stocks (Acts 16:19-24), illegal treatment for a Roman citizen (Acts 16:37). Most of us would have slowed down or softened the message. Paul's boldness came in our God, and the message was God's gospel. We can ask for the same boldness (Acts 4:29-31).

to you the gospel of God amid much conflict. **3** For our exhortation ***is*** not from error, nor from impurity, nor in deceit; **4** but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God, who examines our hearts. **5** For neither did we at any time come with a word of flattery, just as you know, nor with a pretext for greed; God ***is*** witness; **6** nor seeking glory from men, neither from you nor from others, ***though*** being able to be weighty as apostles of Christ. **7** But we were gentle in your midst, as a nursing mother would cherish her own children. **8** So, longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own souls, because you have become beloved to us. **9** For you remember, brothers, our labor and toil; for working night and day so as not to burden any of you, we proclaimed to you the gospel of God. **10** You ***are*** witnesses, and God, how devoutly and righteously and blamelessly we were toward you who believe; **11** just as you know how each one of you, as a father his own children, ***we were*** exhorting you and encouraging and testifying, **12** that you should walk worthily of God, who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

The Word Received in Suffering

13 Because of this we also give thanks to God unceasingly, that having received ***the*** word of hearing from us, ***the word*** of God, you accepted ***it*** not ***as the*** word of men, but just as it truly is, ***the*** word of God, which also works in you who believe. **14** For you, brothers, became imitators of the churches of God that are in Judea (Ioudaia) in Christ Jesus (Iesous), because you also suffered the same things from ***your*** own countrymen, just as they also ***did*** from the Jews, **15** who both killed the Lord Jesus and ***their*** own prophets, and drove us out, and ***are*** not pleasing God, and ***are*** opposed to all men, **16** forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved, so as to fill up their sins always; but the wrath has come upon them to ***the*** end.

Paul's Longing to See Them

17 But we, brothers, having been orphaned from you for ***the*** time of an hour, in face, not in heart, were more abundantly

2:3 2 Cor 2:17; 2 Cor 4:2,5; 1 Thess 2:5,6,11
2:4 Gal 1:10; Gal 2:7; Rom 8:27
2:5 Acts 20:33; Rom 1:9; 2 Cor 12:17
2:6 John 5:41,44; Gal 1:10; 1 Thess 2:9
2:7 1 Thess 2:11; 2 Tim 2:24,25; Isa 66:13
2:8 2 Cor 12:15; 1 John 3:16; Phil 2:17
2:9 Acts 18:3; 2 Cor 11:9; 2 Thess 3:7-9
2:10 1 Thess 1:5; 2 Cor 1:12; Acts 20:18,26,33,34
2:11 1 Cor 4:14,15; 1 Thess 4:1; 2 Tim 4:1
2:12 Eph 4:1; 1 John 2:6; 1 Thess 5:24
2:13 Heb 4:12; Rom 10:17; Gal 4:14
2:14 1 Thess 3:4; Gal 1:22; Heb 10:33,34
2:15 Matt 5:12; Acts 2:23; Acts 7:52
2:16 Gen 15:16; 2 Kgs 22:17; Isa 5:25
2:17 Gen 48:11; 2 Kgs 5:26; Col 2:5

2:3 *our exhortation is not from error, nor from impurity, nor in deceit* Paul answers the charges against him. Some traveling teachers of that day used religion as cover for greed or sexual sin. Deceit was the word for bait on a hook. Paul did not trick people into the kingdom. He told the truth plainly.
2:4 *approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel* Approved means tested and found genuine, like metal in a fire. The gospel is not ours to change. We are stewards of what belongs to another (1 Cor 4:1-2). It is easy to say what people want to hear, but God tests our hearts. If we aim to please God, we are free from the fear of what people think (Gal 1:10).
2:5 *neither did we at any time come with a word of flattery* Flattery is dishonest praise used to get something. A pretext is a mask or cover story. On flattery Paul says you know, for they heard his words. On greed he says God is witness, for only God sees the heart. People still use Jesus' name to get rich. Look at the message, and look at the life.
2:6 *though being able to be weighty as apostles of Christ* To be weighty is to throw one's weight around, or to be a financial burden. As apostles they had the right to support and respect (1 Cor 9:4-14) and chose not to press it. Real authority in the church does not need to show off.
2:7 *we were gentle in your midst, as a nursing mother would cherish her own children* A nursing mother gives, not to get. Cherish means to warm, like a bird over its young. We picture Paul as stern, and he could be firm, but here he was gentle. Some Greek copies read infants instead of gentle. The SLB reads gentle, and the point is the same. Paul came as one who served.
2:8 *to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own souls* Paul did not deliver a message and leave. He gave his time, energy and heart, because they had become beloved to him. The gospel is a message, but it travels best through people who love one another.
2:9 *working night and day so as not to burden any of you* Paul was a tentmaker (Acts 18:3), likely working from before sunrise into the evening and teaching in between. He had the right to support (1 Cor 9:14) but set it aside so no one could say he was in it for money and so he would not burden a poor church under pressure. He returns to this in 2 Thessalonians 3:7-9. Work is not beneath the gospel.
2:10 *how devoutly and righteously and blamelessly we were toward you who believe* Two witnesses: the Thessalonians saw his life, and God saw his heart. Devoutly is holy toward God, righteously right toward people. Blameless does not mean sinless but that no one had a fair charge against him. God asks this of every believer, and especially of leaders (1 Tim 3:2, 7).
2:11 *as a father his own children* Gentle like a mother (2:7), Paul also led like a father, urging, comforting and solemnly testifying, with each one, not only a crowd. To walk worthily of God is to live in a way that fits who He is (2:12). We do not earn His call. He called us, and we live like it. His kingdom is present in believers and also the future kingdom Christ will set up on the earth (Rev 20:4-6).
2:13 *you accepted it not as the word of men, but just as it truly is, the word of God* One of the clearest statements of what the apostles' message was. It came through a man but was God's word, as are the Scriptures they wrote (2 Tim 3:16-17; 2 Pet 3:15-16). God's Word is not dead ink. It works in believers (Heb 4:12). Do we receive the Bible as good advice, or as the word of God?
2:14 *imitators of the churches of God that are in Judea* The first Jewish believers had suffered from their own people (Acts 8:1-3), and Paul had been one of the persecutors (Gal 1:13). The Thessalonians, mostly Gentiles, suffered from their own countrymen, with the synagogue starting it and the city joining (Acts 17:5). Suffering for Christ joined them to a long line of believers.
2:15 *who both killed the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and drove us out* Some of Paul's strongest words about his own people, and he had been driven out of Thessalonica by night (Acts 17:10). Paul was a Jew (Phil 3:5), as were Jesus, the apostles and the first church, and thousands of Jews believed (Acts 2:41; 21:20). He means those of his day fighting the gospel's spread to the Gentiles, not every Jewish person and not Jewish people today. His heart's desire was their salvation (Rom 9:1-5; 10:1). These verses have been twisted to excuse hatred of Jewish people, a terrible sin. No one who loves a Jewish Savior can hate His people.
2:16 *the wrath has come upon them to the end* Filling up sins pictures sin reaching its full measure before judgment (Gen 15:16). Some see a judgment already begun, the hardening of Romans 11:7-10. Others see Paul treating the coming fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 as so certain he speaks of it as done. To the end can mean fully, or at last. This is not God's final word about Israel. The hardening lasts until the fullness of the Gentiles comes in, and all Israel will be saved (Rom 11:25-26).
2:17 *having been orphaned from you for the time of an hour, in face, not in heart* Orphaned is a striking word, a parent who lost his children. Paul's enemies may have said he did not care. He could hardly stand being away, and leaving had not been his choice, for the believers sent him off by night (Acts 17:10).

eager to see your face with great desire. **18** Therefore we wanted to come to you, I Paul (Paulos) indeed, both once and twice, and Satan hindered us. **19** For what ***is*** our hope or joy or crown of boasting? Or ***is it*** not even you, before our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? **20** For you are our glory and joy.

1 THESSALONIANS 3

Timothy's Good Report

1 Therefore, no longer enduring ***it***, we thought it good to be left behind in Athens (Athenai) alone, **2** and we sent Timothy (Timotheos), our brother and servant of God and our fellow worker in the gospel of Christ, to strengthen you and to encourage you concerning your faith, **3** that no one be shaken by these tribulations; for you yourselves know that we are appointed for this. **4** For indeed, when we were with you, we were telling you beforehand that we were about to be afflicted, just as it also came to pass, and you know. **5** Because of this I also, no longer enduring ***it***, sent to know your faith, lest somehow the one who tempts had tempted you, and our labor should be in vain. **6** But now, Timothy having come to us from you and having brought us good news of your faith and love, and that you always have a good remembrance of us, longing to see us, just as we also ***long to see*** you, **7** because of this we were encouraged, brothers, over you in all our tribulation and distress through your faith; **8** for now we live, if you stand firm in ***the*** Lord. **9** For what thanksgiving are we able to render to God concerning you, for all the joy ***with*** which we rejoice because of you before our God, **10** night and day praying most exceedingly to see your face and to complete the things lacking in your faith?

Paul's Prayer for the Church

11 Now may our God and Father Himself and our Lord Jesus (Iesous) Christ direct our way to you; **12** and may the Lord make you increase and abound in love toward one another

2:18 Job 33:14; Zech 3:1; Rom 15:22
2:19 Phil 4:1; Phil 2:16; 2 Cor 1:14
2:20 Prov 17:6; 1 Cor 11:7
3:1 Acts 17:15; 1 Thess 3:5; 1 Thess 2:17
3:2 Acts 14:22,23; Eph 6:21; Phil 1:25
3:3 Acts 14:22; Acts 9:16; Acts 21:13
3:4 1 Thess 2:2,14; Acts 20:24; John 16:1-3
3:5 Matt 4:3; James 1:13,14; Phil 2:16
3:6 1 Cor 11:2; Prov 25:25; 1 Thess 1:3
3:7 2 Cor 1:4; 2 Cor 7:6,7,13; 2 John 1:4
3:8 1 Cor 16:13; Col 1:23; Acts 11:23
3:9 2 Cor 9:15; 1 Thess 1:2,3; 2 Sam 7:18-20
3:10 2 Tim 1:3; 2 Cor 13:9,11; Rom 1:10
3:11 2 Thess 2:16; 1 Thess 3:13; Prov 3:5,6
3:12 Phil 1:9; 1 Thess 4:9,10; 2 Thess 1:3

2:18 *we wanted to come to you, I Paul indeed, both once and twice, and Satan hindered us* Hindered was used for breaking up a road so an army could not pass. Scripture does not say what Satan used, perhaps Jason's pledge (Acts 17:9) or ongoing danger. Satan is real and works against the gospel, and Paul names him. Not every closed door is Satan's, for God closed doors too (Acts 16:6-7). Satan kept Paul out but could not stop the letter or the church.

2:19 *before our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming* What will Paul bring that day? Not money or fame but people. Coming is parousia, presence or arrival, used for a king's visit to a city (3:13; 4:15; 5:23). The crown is the victor's wreath. At the judgment seat of Christ believers receive rewards for faithful service, not a verdict on salvation, which the cross settled (2 Cor 5:10; 1 Cor 3:12-15). Pre-tribulation teachers place it after Christ comes for His church and before He returns with His saints. Who will be your joy that day?

2:20 *you are our glory and joy* Not only on that day, but now. A man in it for himself would never write like this. Paul answers the charge that he did not care by opening his heart. Real leaders find their joy in the growth of the people they serve (3 John 4).

3:1 *we thought it good to be left behind in Athens alone* No longer enduring means Paul could not hold in his worry any longer, as a roof holds out rain. Athens was the great city of learning and full of idols (Acts 17:16), a hard place to be alone. Paul gave up the company he wanted so the Thessalonians could have the help they needed.

3:2 *we sent Timothy, our brother and servant of God and our fellow worker* Three titles for a young man (1 Tim 4:12), so the church would receive him with the respect it gave Paul. To strengthen is to set firmly in place, like a support under a wall. To encourage is to come alongside and urge on. New believers need both. Is there a newer believer you could strengthen this week?

3:3 *that no one be shaken by these tribulations; for you yourselves know that we are appointed for this* Shaken was used for a dog wagging its tail, then for being charmed away from what one believes. Trouble for believers is no accident (John 16:33; Acts 14:22). These are the ordinary troubles God's people face in every age because the world hates Christ (John 15:18-20), not the future seven-year Tribulation. God appoints His people to suffer for Christ at times. He does not appoint us to His wrath (5:9).

3:4 *we were telling you beforehand that we were about to be afflicted* Paul did not sell the gospel with promises of an easy life. Some are told their problems will vanish if they come to Jesus, and when trouble comes they think God failed. Jesus said to count the cost (Luke 14:27-28). Because Paul warned them, the trouble confirmed his teaching.

3:5 *lest somehow the one who tempts had tempted you* The tempter is Satan (Matt 4:3), who had already hindered Paul (2:18). He uses pressure to make believers doubt God and give up, like a roaring lion seeking prey (1 Pet 5:8). But Paul's fear was not the end of the story.

3:6 *Timothy having come to us from you and having brought us good news of your faith and love* Silas and Timothy caught up with Paul in Corinth (Acts 18:5). Brought good news is the word usually used for preaching the gospel. To Paul, hearing they stood firm was like hearing the gospel again. His enemies had not turned the church against him. They longed to see him.

3:7 *we were encouraged, brothers, over you in all our tribulation and distress through your faith* In Corinth Paul worked with his hands and faced opposition (Acts 18:6). He sent Timothy to encourage them, and their faith encouraged him. You never know who is being strengthened by your faithfulness in hard times.

3:8 *for now we live, if you stand firm in the Lord* The worry had felt like death, and now Paul can breathe again. To stand firm is to hold one's ground like a soldier, and we stand in the Lord, not by our strength. The if is a reminder, not a doubt. Pastors and teachers know what Paul felt here.

3:9 *what thanksgiving are we able to render to God concerning you* Paul cannot find enough thanks, and he gives it to God, because their standing firm was God's work. It is easy to share bad news about people. Paul shows the joy of sharing good news and turning it into praise.

3:10 *to complete the things lacking in your faith* Most exceedingly means beyond all measure. Their faith was real but new, and Paul had not had time to teach everything. Complete was used for mending nets and setting broken bones. One gap was what happens to believers who die before the Lord comes, which Paul fills in chapter 4. Every believer has things lacking. That is a reason to keep growing in God's Word.

3:11 *may our God and Father Himself and our Lord Jesus Christ direct our way to you* Paul names the Father and the Son together with a singular verb for direct, thinking of them acting as one. This is one of many places showing Jesus is God, equal with the Father. Paul asked God to clear the road Satan had blocked, and years later he did return to Macedonia (Acts 20:1-2).

3:12 *may the Lord make you increase and abound in love toward one another and toward all* To abound is to overflow. Love goes to fellow believers and to all, even persecutors (Matt 5:44). That love does not come naturally, which is why Paul prays for it. He asks nothing he is not already doing.

and toward all, just as we also ***do*** toward you, **13** so as to strengthen your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.

1 THESSALONIANS 4

A Life That Pleases God

1 Finally then, brothers, we ask you and exhort ***you*** in ***the*** Lord Jesus (Iesous), just as you received from us how you must walk and please God, that you abound more. **2** For you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus. **3** For this is ***the*** will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; **4** that each of you know ***how*** to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, **5** not in ***the*** passion of lust, just as also the Gentiles who do not know God; **6** that no one go beyond and take advantage of his brother in the matter, because the Lord ***is*** an avenger concerning all these things, just as we also told you before and solemnly testified. **7** For God did not call us to impurity, but in sanctification. **8** So then, the one who rejects ***this*** does not reject man but God, who also gave His Holy Spirit to us.

Brotherly Love and Honest Work

9 Now concerning brotherly love, you have no need ***for me*** to write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another; **10** for indeed you do it toward all the brothers who ***are*** in all Macedonia (Makedonia). But we exhort you, brothers, to abound more, **11** and to aspire to live quietly and to attend to your own ***affairs*** and to work with your own hands, just as we commanded you, **12** so that you may walk properly toward those outside and may have need of nothing.

The Coming of the Lord

13 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brothers, concerning those who have fallen asleep, so that you may not grieve, just as also the rest who have no hope. **14** For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, so also God will bring with

3:13 Zech 14:5; 1 Thess 5:23; Col 1:22
4:1 Col 1:10; 2 Thess 1:3; Phil 1:9
4:2 Ezek 3:17; Matt 28:20; 1 Cor 9:21
4:3 1 Pet 4:2; 1 Thess 5:23; Eph 5:17
4:4 1 Pet 3:7; Rom 12:1; 1 Cor 6:15,18-20
4:5 Gal 4:8; 2 Thess 1:8; Rom 1:24,26
4:6 Rom 12:19; Eph 4:28; Exod 20:15,17
4:7 Lev 11:44; Eph 1:4; 1 Thess 2:3
4:8 Luke 10:16; 1 John 3:24; 1 Sam 8:7
4:9 1 John 3:11,14-19,23; Rom 12:10; Heb 13:1
4:10 1 Thess 3:12; 1 Thess 1:7; 2 Thess 1:3
4:11 Eph 4:28; 1 Pet 3:4; Eccl 4:6
4:12 Mark 4:11; Col 4:5; Rom 13:13
4:13 Gen 50:1; 2 Pet 3:4; Eph 2:12
4:14 Rom 8:11; 2 Cor 4:13,14; Rev 1:18

3:13 *at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints* As love grows, hearts are made steady and lives more holy. Blameless means no fair charge against us, and one day nothing held against us because of Christ (Col 1:22). Saints means holy ones. Some take it as angels (Zech 14:5; Matt 25:31), and many as believers, or both. In the pre-tribulation view this is Christ's return to the earth at the end of the Tribulation with His people (Jude 14; Rev 19:14). They come with Him because He came for them first at the rapture (4:13-18). He comes for His saints before the Tribulation and with them at its end.

4:1 *how you must walk and please God, that you abound more* Finally here means now then, as for the rest. Paul is not scolding. They had received his teaching and begun to live it, and he urges them to grow more. We do not live holy lives to earn God's love. We live to please the One who saved us, as a loved child wants to make his father glad.

4:2 *what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus* Instructions was used for orders passed down the line in an army. In Thessalonica sexual freedom was normal, and many would have called Paul's teaching extreme. These were not his opinions but the Lord's commands. When God's Word speaks, it is not up to us to vote on it.

4:3 *this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality* People ask what God's will is for their lives. Here is a clear answer. Sanctification is being made holy, set apart for God and like Christ, begun at faith and continuing for life. Porneia covers every sexual act outside marriage between a man and a woman. To abstain is to keep away completely, not to see how close we can get. Sexual sin was everywhere then, often part of pagan worship, and God gives power to obey.

4:4 *that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor* Many take vessel as one's own body (2 Cor 4:7), learning to control it. Others take it as a wife (1 Pet 3:7), taken in holiness rather than lust. Both lead to the same place. The pagan world, not knowing a holy God, was driven by lust (4:5). Believers know Him (1 Cor 6:18-20). Self-control is learned. If you have struggled, do not give up. Ask God for help, and get help from mature believers you trust.

4:6 *that no one go beyond and take advantage of his brother in the matter* To go beyond is to cross a line, and to take advantage is to grab more than is yours. Sexual sin always wrongs someone, taking what belongs to God or to a spouse, present or future. Some read the matter as business dealings, but most see Paul still speaking of sexual sin. People may hide it from others, but not from God, who brings justice.

4:7 *God did not call us to impurity, but in sanctification* God did not call us to stay as we were. Remember this when temptation comes. You were not saved to live like that anymore. We are to be holy because the God who called us is holy (1 Pet 1:15-16).

4:8 *the one who rejects this does not reject man but God, who also gave His Holy Spirit to us* Some may have brushed off Paul's teaching as one man's opinion. To reject it is to reject God. The Spirit who lives in every believer is called Holy, and sexual sin drags Him into it (1 Cor 6:19). But He also gives power to live pure lives (Gal 5:16).

4:9 *you yourselves are taught by God to love one another* Brotherly love is philadelphia, the love of God's family for each other. The Spirit had planted it in their hearts. Love for one another is the mark of Christ's followers (John 13:34-35). If we have no love for other believers, that is a warning sign to take seriously (1 John 3:14).

4:10 *toward all the brothers who are in all Macedonia* Their love reached other cities, perhaps welcoming travelers, helping the needy, or sending gifts. It went somewhere. Paul praises them, then asks for more. There is no point where we have loved enough.

4:11 *to aspire to live quietly and to attend to your own affairs and to work with your own hands* A play on words: be ambitious to be quiet. Mind your own business. Greeks looked down on hand labor, but Paul did it himself (2:9). Some in the church seem to have stopped working, perhaps because the Lord's coming seemed so near, or to live off others. Paul deals with it more strongly in 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15. Waiting for Jesus never means quitting our jobs (Luke 12:42-43).

4:12 *that you may walk properly toward those outside and may have need of nothing* Those outside are unbelievers, and the way we work is a witness. A lazy or nosy believer brings shame on Christ. One who works can care for his family and have something to give (Eph 4:28). Love is shown in quiet faithfulness and honest work.

4:13 *concerning those who have fallen asleep, so that you may not grieve, just as also the rest who have no hope* Believers had died since Paul left, and the others feared they would miss the Lord's coming. Jesus called Lazarus's death sleep (John 11:11). Sleep is something you wake from. The picture is of the body in the grave. The soul is at home with the Lord (2 Cor 5:8; Phil 1:23). Paul does not forbid grief, for Jesus wept (John 11:35). We grieve with hope. If you have lost someone who knew the Lord, these verses are for you.

4:14 *so also God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep through Jesus* If means since. Paul says Jesus died, not that He fell asleep. He faced the full weight of death and judgment for us, so for the believer death has become sleep. Our resurrection is tied to His (1 Cor 15:20-23). When He comes, the souls of believers who died come with Him, and then their bodies are raised and joined to them (4:16).

Him those who have fallen asleep through Jesus. **15** For this we say to you in ***the*** word of ***the*** Lord, that we who are living, who remain until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have fallen asleep; **16** because the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout of command, with ***the*** voice of an archangel and with ***the*** trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first; **17** then we who are living, who remain, will be caught away together with them in ***the*** clouds to meet the Lord in ***the*** air; and so we will always be with ***the*** Lord. **18** Therefore encourage one another with these words.

1 THESSALONIANS 5

The Day of the Lord

1 Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need ***that anything*** be written to you; **2** for you yourselves know accurately that the day of ***the*** Lord comes in this way, as a thief in ***the*** night. **3** For when they say, "Peace and security," then sudden destruction comes upon them, as the labor pain ***upon*** the pregnant woman, and they will by no means escape. **4** But you, brothers, are not in darkness, so that the day would overtake you like a thief; **5** you are all sons of light and sons of day; we are not of night nor of darkness. **6** So then let us not sleep, as the rest also ***do***, but let us keep watch and be sober. **7** For those who sleep sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. **8** But we, being of ***the*** day, let us be sober, having put on ***the*** breastplate of faith and love, and ***as*** a helmet ***the*** hope of salvation;

4:15 1 Kgs 20:35; 1 Kgs 13:1; 1 Kgs 13:9
4:16 Rev 1:7; Num 10:10; Matt 24:30,31
4:17 Rev 11:12; 1 Cor 15:52; John 14:3
4:18 1 Thess 5:11,14; Heb 10:24,25; Luke 21:28
5:1 Acts 1:7; 1 Thess 4:9; Matt 24:3,36
5:2 Jer 23:20; Josh 8:3; Josh 8:14
5:3 Deut 29:19; Jer 13:21; Jer 22:23
5:4 Zech 1:6; 2 Sam 4:5; Amos 4:12
5:5 Luke 16:8; Eph 5:8; Acts 26:18
5:6 1 Pet 1:13; Luke 22:46; Rom 13:11-14
5:7 2 Pet 2:13; Acts 2:15; Rom 13:13
5:8 Isa 59:17; 1 Thess 5:5; Eph 6:11,13-18

4:15 *we who are living, who remain until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have fallen asleep* In the word of the Lord may mean a saying of Jesus passed on or a direct revelation to Paul (Gal 1:11-12). By no means is a strong double negative. Living believers will have no advantage. Paul includes himself among those who might be alive, neither promising nor ruling out that Jesus would come in his lifetime. This is imminence: it could happen at any moment, with no event that must come first. I believe this is one strong reason for placing the rapture before the Tribulation. Paul gives no signs, only a call to be ready.
4:16 *the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout of command, with the voice of an archangel and with the trumpet of God* Not an angel but the Lord Himself, keeping His promise (John 14:3). The shout was an officer's command to troops, the word of authority that once called Lazarus out (John 11:43). The only archangel named is Michael (Jude 9). Trumpets gathered God's people (Num 10:1-10). This is the last trumpet of 1 Corinthians 15:52, which calls the church home, not the judgment trumpets of Revelation 8-11. The dead in Christ go first, raised incorruptible.
4:17 *will be caught away together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air* Caught away is harpazo, to seize suddenly and carry off (Acts 8:39; Rev 12:5). The Latin rendering came from rapio, which gives us rapture. There is a reunion, and Jesus meets His people in the air without coming all the way down. Some note that meet was used for a party going out to welcome a visitor and escort him back, and they make the rapture and the Second Coming one event after the Tribulation. Others place it in the middle, or just before the worst of God's wrath. I respect them, but I believe it comes before the seven-year Tribulation. Jesus said He would take us to His Father's house (John 14:2-3). Paul gives no signs first (4:15). God did not appoint us for wrath (5:9). Jesus promised to keep the church from the hour of testing coming on the whole world (Rev 3:10). And Paul's comfort is to look up, not to prepare for the Tribulation. At its end Christ returns visibly with His saints (3:13; Rev 19:11-16) to set up His thousand-year kingdom (Rev 20:1-6). Above all, we will always be with the Lord.
4:18 *Therefore encourage one another with these words* Paul wrote this not to start arguments or make charts but to comfort. Picture a believer at the grave of a husband or child. The Lord is coming, the dead in Christ will rise first, we will be caught away together, and we will always be with Him. Read these words at a funeral, a hospital bed, or on a hard night. If you do not know Jesus yet, today is the day (2 Cor 6:2).
5:1 *Now concerning the times and the seasons* Times speaks of how long, seasons of the right moment or the character of an era, the same two words Jesus used in Acts 1:7. Paul had taught this already. In 4:13-18 he taught what they did not know. Now concerning marks a new subject, as in 4:9, something they did know. I believe this matters. The rapture and the day of the Lord are related, but they are not the same event.
5:2 *the day of the Lord comes in this way, as a thief in the night* The prophets used this phrase for the time when God steps into history to judge sin and set things right, a day of darkness, fury and distress (Amos 5:18; Zeph 1:15; Joel 2:31). In the pre-tribulation view this study follows, its future sense includes the seven-year Tribulation, Christ's return at its end, and the kingdom that follows. It begins with judgment and ends with blessing. A thief sends no letter ahead (Matt 24:43; 2 Pet 3:10). Others see it as the single day of Christ's return at the end.
5:3 *when they say, "Peace and security," then sudden destruction comes upon them* Notice they and them. This is the unbelieving world, feeling safe without God. Some scholars think the words may echo Roman slogans about the peace the empire brought. Destruction is not ceasing to exist but ruin. A pregnant woman knows the baby is coming but not the hour, and once labor starts it cannot be stopped (Matt 24:8). There will be no way out for those who reject God.
5:4 *But you, brothers, are not in darkness, so that the day would overtake you like a thief* They becomes you. Two reasons the day will not overtake believers. We know it is coming and what it will be like. And I believe Scripture teaches the church will not be on the earth when it begins, for Jesus comes for His church first (4:16-17). A thief only surprises those who are not ready.
5:5 *you are all sons of light and sons of day* To be a son of something is to be marked by it and belong to it. Jesus is the light of the world (John 8:12) who brought us out of darkness (Col 1:13; 1 Pet 2:9). You are all means every believer, not only the mature. Paul includes himself. We are people of the day, so the day of the Lord is not a day of wrath for us.
5:6 *let us not sleep, as the rest also do, but let us keep watch and be sober* This sleep is a different word from the sleep of death in 4:13-15. It means spiritual carelessness. Keep watch is a guard on night duty, and sober is clear-headed, not drunk on the world's pleasures or worries. Hope in the Lord's coming is meant to keep us awake. Are you living as though Jesus could come today?
5:7 *those who sleep sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night* Plain facts made into a picture. Spiritual sleep and drunkenness belong to the night, the world that does not know God. It makes sense for the world to live that way, but not for us. The night is far gone and the day is near (Rom 13:11-14).
5:8 *having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation* Paul uses armor again, as in Ephesians 6:13-17, and Isaiah pictured the Lord with a helmet of salvation (Isa 59:17). The breastplate guarded the heart, and faith and love guard ours. The helmet guarded the head, and hope guards the mind. We are saved from sin's penalty, but part of salvation is still ahead, new bodies free from sin (Rom 8:23-24; 13:11). Faith, love and hope again (1:3).

9 because God did not appoint us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus (Iesous) Christ, **10** who died for us, so that whether we keep watch or sleep, we may live together with Him. **11** Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing.

Life Together in the Church

12 But we ask you, brothers, to know those who labor among you and lead you in ***the*** Lord and admonish you, **13** and to esteem them most exceedingly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves. **14** Now we exhort you, brothers: admonish the disorderly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient toward all. **15** See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always pursue what ***is*** good, both toward one another and toward all. **16** Rejoice always. **17** Pray unceasingly. **18** In everything give thanks; for this ***is the*** will of God in Christ Jesus toward you. **19** Do not quench the Spirit. **20** Do not despise prophecies. **21** Test all things; hold fast the good. **22** Abstain from every form of evil.

Closing Prayer and Greetings

23 Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved whole, blamelessly, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. **24** Faithful ***is*** the One who calls you, who also will do ***it***. **25** Brothers, pray for us. **26** Greet all the brothers with a holy

5:9 1 Thess 1:10; 2 Thess 2:13,14; 1 Thess 3:3
5:10 Rom 14:8,9; 2 Cor 5:15,21; Matt 20:28
5:11 Heb 10:25; Heb 3:13; 1 Thess 4:18
5:12 1 Cor 16:16; 1 Cor 16:18; Heb 13:7,17
5:13 Mark 9:50; John 13:34,35; Ps 133:1
5:14 2 Tim 4:2; Rom 14:1; Heb 12:12
5:15 1 Pet 3:9; Gal 6:10; 1 Pet 2:22,23
5:16 Phil 4:4; Rom 12:12; Matt 5:12
5:17 Rom 12:12; Col 4:2; Luke 18:1
5:18 Eph 5:20; Phil 4:6; Col 3:17
5:19 Eph 4:30; Acts 7:51; Ps 51:11
5:20 1 Cor 11:4; 1 Cor 14:1,3-6,22-25,29-32,37-39; 1 Thess 4:8
5:21 1 John 4:1; Rom 12:2; Luke 12:57
5:22 Phil 4:8; 1 Cor 10:31-33; Rom 12:17
5:23 Heb 4:12; 1 Thess 3:13; Jude 1:24
5:24 1 Cor 1:9; 2 Thess 3:3; Num 23:19
5:25 Col 4:3; Rom 15:30; 2 Cor 1:11
5:26 Rom 16:16; 1 Cor 16:20

5:9 *God did not appoint us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ* One of the most important verses in the letter. To appoint is to set someone for a purpose. In context the wrath includes the day of the Lord's sudden destruction (5:2-3) as well as final judgment (1:10). The Tribulation is the time of God's wrath on the earth (Rev 6:16-17; 15:1). I believe this is one of the strongest reasons to place the rapture before it. Some teachers believe God will protect believers through it, as Israel in Goshen, or that the wrath is only final judgment. Those are honest views. But Paul does not say God keeps us safe in the middle of His wrath. He says He did not appoint us for it. Our rescue is through Jesus, not because we are better.

5:10 *who died for us, so that whether we keep watch or sleep, we may live together with Him* Jesus took the wrath we deserved. Most teachers read keep watch or sleep as alive or dead when He comes, back to the comfort of 4:13-18. Some read it as spiritually alert or careless, so that even the less watchful will be with Him. Either way, it rests on His death for us. The goal is not only escaping wrath but being with Jesus forever.

5:11 *encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing* Almost the same as 4:18. The truth of the Lord's coming is meant to encourage. To build up is to build a house piece by piece. We need not wait for the pastor. Every believer can do this.

5:12 *to know those who labor among you and lead you in the Lord and admonish you* Leaders work to weariness, stand in front as guides under the Lord, and warn and correct. These were probably the elders appointed to shepherd the flock (Acts 14:23). To know them is to recognize and appreciate them and give their work the respect it deserves.

5:13 *to esteem them most exceedingly in love because of their work* Most exceedingly is the strong word of 3:10, and it is real affection, not grudging respect. It is because of the work God gave them, for they keep watch over souls and will give an account (Heb 13:17). Do you pray for and thank your leaders? Many church fights begin between leaders and members.

5:14 *admonish the disorderly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient toward all* These commands are for the whole church. Disorderly was used for a soldier out of rank, here likely the idle who would not work (4:11; 2 Thess 3:6-11), who need warning. The fainthearted, perhaps grieving or worried about the day of the Lord, need comfort, not scolding. The weak in faith, conscience or body need support. Not everyone needs the same thing, but all of us need patience (1 Cor 13:4).

5:15 *See that no one repays anyone evil for evil* Under persecution it would be natural to strike back. Jesus taught otherwise (Matt 5:38-45; Rom 12:17). Pursue was a hunting word. We chase chances to do good, even to those who treat us badly. We can, because the Lord is the avenger (4:6; 2 Thess 1:6-7). We need not settle the score.

5:16 *Rejoice always* Some of the shortest verses in the Bible and some of the hardest to live. Our joy rests on the Lord, who never changes (Phil 4:4), and these believers had already received the word with joy in trouble (1:6).

5:17 *Pray unceasingly* Not every minute on our knees, but an attitude of prayer, talking with God through the day and turning every worry and joy into prayer (Phil 4:6).

5:18 *In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus toward you* In everything, not for everything. We do not thank God for evil, but in every situation we can thank Him, because He is with us and works all things for good for those who love Him (Rom 8:28). People want to know God's will. Here it is in plain words: rejoice, pray, give thanks.

5:19 *Do not quench the Spirit* To quench is to put out a fire, and the Spirit is often pictured as fire (Acts 2:3). We can dampen His work in us and our churches by ignoring Him, resisting Him, or living in sin.

5:20 *Do not despise prophecies* To despise is to treat as worthless. Before the New Testament was finished, God gave some the gift of prophecy, a message from God to the church (1 Cor 14:3), and some may have grown suspicious after false claims about the day of the Lord (2 Thess 2:2). Some believe the gift ended when the New Testament was complete, and this now calls us to honor the preaching of the written Word. Others believe it continues and should be welcomed and tested. Both agree on the next verse.

5:21 *Test all things; hold fast the good* Test as a metal worker tests gold. Paul does not say believe everything or reject everything. Test it by the Scriptures (Acts 17:11) and by whether it honors Jesus as Lord (1 John 4:1-3). What passes, hold tight.

5:22 *Abstain from every form of evil* Form can mean every kind or every appearance of evil. Either way, keep far away. Abstain is the word of 4:3. Holiness is not only doing good but staying away from evil.

5:23 *may your spirit and soul and body be preserved whole, blamelessly, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ* In the end God makes us holy. He is the God of peace who makes peace with us through Christ. Some believe spirit, soul and body show three parts of a person. Others see soul and spirit as two ways of naming the inner person, so Paul means the whole person. For the fifth time Paul looks to the Lord's coming (1:10; 2:19; 3:13; 4:15-17), when we will be like Him (1 John 3:2).

5:24 *Faithful is the One who calls you, who also will do it* We might think we could never do all this chapter asks. Look at God. He called you, and He will finish what He started (Phil 1:6). Our hope rests not on how strong we are but on how faithful He is.

5:25 *Brothers, pray for us* The great apostle asks brand new believers for prayer. The gospel work depends on prayer (Eph 6:18-20; 2 Thess 3:1-2). Paul prayed for them all through the letter, and prayer goes both ways in the body of Christ.

5:26 *Greet all the brothers with a holy kiss* A kiss on the cheek was the normal greeting among family and close friends, like a handshake or hug today (Rom 16:16; 1 Cor 16:20). Holy means pure, a sign of family love. All the brothers means rich and poor, Jew and Gentile, slave and free. The custom may differ in our culture, but welcome every believer as family.

kiss. **27** I charge you by the Lord ***that*** the letter be read to all the holy brothers. **28** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ ***be*** with you. Amen.

5:27 Col 4:16; 1 Thess 2:11; Num 27:23

5:28 Rom 16:20,24; 2 Thess 3:18; Rom 1:7

5:27 *I charge you by the Lord that the letter be read to all the holy brothers* To charge by the Lord is to place under oath before God. Most could not read and copies were few, so letters were read aloud in church. Paul knew this letter carried the Lord's authority, to be read like the Scriptures. Do you make time to hear and read God's Word?

5:28 *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you* Paul began with grace (1:1) and ends with it. Every command, warning and hope rests on it. We are saved by grace, grow by grace, and will be kept by grace until He comes. The closing note that the letter was written from Athens was added by later copyists. Timothy reached Paul in Corinth (3:6; Acts 18:5).

2 THESSALONIANS

Introduction

Title

The letter is named for its readers, "the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (1:1). It is Paul's second letter to that church, written only a few months after the first. It is short, but it holds some of the most important teaching in the New Testament about the day of the Lord and "the man of sin" (2:3), the one many Bible teachers call the Antichrist.

Author and Date

Like the first letter, this one opens with "Paul and Silvanus and Timothy" (1:1), and Paul closes it with a greeting in his own hand, "which is a sign in every letter" (3:17). The early church accepted it as Paul's. Some modern scholars think a later follower wrote it, pointing to its likeness to 1 Thessalonians, a cooler tone, and its teaching that certain events must come before the day of the Lord. But a letter to the same church by the same men a few months later would naturally sound like the first, and the two do not disagree. The first says the day will come suddenly on the unbelieving world. The second says it has not come yet and tells what will mark it. I take the letter at its word, as the church always has.

Silvanus and Timothy are still with Paul (1:1), and Acts shows the three together in Corinth (Acts 18:5) and not again afterward. So most scholars date the letter from Corinth about A.D. 51 or 52. A few think 2 Thessalonians came first, but "our letter" (2:15) seems to point back to the first, and most hold to the order in our Bibles. The closing note in the SLB that it was written from Athens was added by later copyists.

Background and Setting

These were the same young believers, mostly Gentiles who had turned from idols, still suffering for their faith (1:4). The persecution had grown worse. Someone had shaken them, by a spirit, a word, or a letter claiming to be from Paul, with the message that the day of the Lord had already come (2:2). If that were true, it would seem they had missed the Lord's coming for His people and were living in the time of God's wrath. No wonder they were troubled. And the problem of idle believers Paul mentioned before (1 Thess 4:11-12; 5:14) had grown worse.

Themes

Paul writes to comfort, to correct, and to command. In chapter 1 he promises that God sees their suffering and will repay those who afflict His people "at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of His power" (1:7). In chapter 2 he shows that the day of the Lord cannot have come, because "the apostasy" must come first and the man of sin must be revealed (2:3), and he is held back until the one restraining is taken out of the way (2:6-7). In chapter 3 he asks for prayer, commands the church to keep away from believers who refuse to work, and tells the rest, "do not grow weary doing good" (3:13). Through it all his message is, "stand firm and hold fast the traditions which you were taught" (2:15).

Chapter 2 is one of the hardest passages in Paul's letters, and teachers read it many ways. This study reads it plainly with Daniel 7, 9 and 11, Matthew 24, and Revelation. I believe the church will be caught up to meet the Lord before the seven-year Tribulation begins (1 Thess 4:16-17), that the man of sin will be revealed after the restrainer is taken out of the way, and that Christ will destroy him when He returns visibly to the earth at the end of the Tribulation (2:8; Rev 19:11-21). Where other good teachers see these things differently, the notes give their views fairly.

Christ in 2 Thessalonians

The Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, judging those who do not obey the gospel (1:7-8), and He will come "to be glorified in His saints and to be marveled at among all those who believe" (1:10). The lawless one, with all his false signs, will fall when "the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and will abolish by the appearing of His coming" (2:8). Believers are called "for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2:14). He is "the Lord of peace" (3:16), named with the Father as the One who loved us and gave us "eternal comfort and good hope in grace" (2:16).

Hard Passages

"Eternal destruction" (1:9) is read as everlasting ruin away from the Lord's presence, though some teach that the lost will cease to exist. "The apostasy" (2:3) is read by most as a great departure from the faith, and by some as the departure of the church. "The temple of God" (2:4) is read here as a future temple in Jerusalem. The restrainer (2:6-7) is read as the Holy Spirit working through the church, removed in that role at the rapture, while others name the Roman Empire, human government, or others. The "working of delusion" (2:11) raises the question of whether those who rejected the gospel before the rapture can still believe. The notes name the main views.

Outline

I. Comfort for a Suffering Church (1:1-12)
  A. Greeting (1:1-2)
  B. Thanks for growing faith and love (1:3-4)
  C. God's righteous judgment at Christ's revelation (1:5-10)
  D. Paul's prayer for them (1:11-12)
II. Correction About the Day of the Lord (2:1-17)
  A. Do not be shaken (2:1-2)
  B. The apostasy and the man of sin (2:3-5)
  C. The restrainer and the lawless one (2:6-12)
  D. Chosen for glory: stand firm (2:13-17)
III. Commands for Daily Life (3:1-18)
  A. Pray for us (3:1-5)
  B. Warning against idleness (3:6-15)
  C. Closing blessing (3:16-18)

2 THESSALONIANS

2 THESSALONIANS 1

Greeting

1 Paul (Paulos) and Silvanus (Silouanos) and Timothy
(Timotheos), to the church of ***the*** Thessalonians in God our
Father and ***the*** Lord Jesus (Iesous) Christ: **2** Grace to you and
peace from God our Father and ***the*** Lord Jesus Christ.

Thanksgiving and God's Righteous Judgment

3 We ought to give thanks to God always concerning you,
brothers, just as it is fitting, because your faith is increasing
exceedingly, and the love of each one of you all toward one
another is abounding, **4** so that we ourselves boast in you in
the churches of God for your endurance and faith in all your
persecutions and the afflictions which you are bearing,
5 ***which is*** evidence of the righteous judgment of God, for you
to be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you
also suffer, **6** since ***it is*** righteous with God to repay affliction
to those afflicting you, **7** and to you who are being afflicted,
rest with us at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven
with ***the*** angels of His power, **8** in flaming fire, inflicting
vengeance on those not knowing God and on those not obey-
ing the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, **9** who will pay ***the***
penalty, eternal destruction away from ***the*** face of the Lord
and from the glory of His strength, **10** when He comes to be
glorified in His saints and to be marveled at among all those
who believe, because our testimony to you was believed, in
that day.

Paul's Prayer for the Church

11 For which we also pray always concerning you, that our
God may count you worthy of the calling and may fulfill
every good pleasure of goodness and work of faith with
power, **12** so that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be
glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of
our God and ***the*** Lord Jesus Christ.

1:1 2 Cor 1:19; 1 Thess 1:1-10
1:2 Rom 1:7; 1 Cor 1:3,8
1:3 2 Thess 2:13; 1 Thess 4:1,9,10; Rom 1:8
1:4 1 Thess 2:14; 1 Thess 2:19; 2 Cor 7:14
1:5 Phil 1:28; Rev 19:2; Luke 20:35
1:6 Rev 6:10; Deut 32:41-43; Ps 74:22,23
1:7 Isa 61:2; Isa 66:15; Rev 14:13
1:8 Isa 61:2; Isa 66:15; Exod 19:18
1:9 Isa 2:21; Isa 2:10; Isa 2:19
1:10 John 17:10; Isa 49:3; Ps 89:7
1:11 Isa 55:7; 2 Thess 1:5; 1 Thess 1:3
1:12 Isa 66:5; Isa 11:10; 2 Thess 1:10

1:1 *to the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father* The greeting is almost word for word the first letter's, from the same three men to the same church. One small change: God the Father has become God our Father. For a church under persecution, that was a good place to start. Whatever their neighbors did, they belonged to God's family. Again Jesus stands with the Father, not below Him.

1:2 *grace to you and peace* Never a throwaway line. Grace is God's undeserved favor, and peace is the wholeness and rest of being right with God. Persecuted believers need both, grace to stand and peace in their hearts when everything around them is in an uproar.

1:3 *your faith is increasing exceedingly, and the love of each one of you all toward one another is abounding* Ought means we owe it. Giving thanks for them was simply right. Paul had prayed for their faith and love (1 Thess 3:10, 12), and God answered both. Hope is missing from the list this time, and some think that is because their hope had been shaken by the false teaching Paul answers in chapter 2.

1:4 *for your endurance and faith in all your persecutions and the afflictions which you are bearing* Paul did not boast of himself, but he gladly boasted of God's work in them, likely to the new church in Corinth. Bearing means they were still under it. Endurance does not mean we never feel the weight but that we keep going under it, trusting God the whole way.

1:5 *evidence of the righteous judgment of God, for you to be counted worthy of the kingdom of God* Their endurance showed God at work and pointed to the day He will judge rightly. This is not earning the kingdom (Eph 2:8-9). Counted worthy means shown to belong to it. The world rejected them because they were Christ's, and God never would. The kingdom here is Christ's coming reign on the earth (Rev 20:4-6; Matt 5:10).

1:6 *it is righteous with God to repay affliction to those afflicting you* This is justice, not bitter revenge. A judge who let evil go would not be good. Vengeance belongs to God (Rom 12:19; Deut 32:35), which is why believers need not take it (1 Thess 5:15). Their neighbors seemed to be getting away with it. They would not. God sees, and God will judge.

1:7 *rest with us at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of His power* Rest means relief, like a bowstring released. Revelation is apokalupsis, an unveiling. Jesus, hidden now from the world, will be shown to all, with His mighty angels (Matt 25:31). Some say this shows the church on earth until then, so the rapture comes after the Tribulation. In the pre-tribulation reading, the dead in Christ and those caught away are already with Him, and this is the day their rest is shown publicly as He comes with His saints (1 Thess 3:13) and the persecutors receive justice. Paul's focus is the certainty that God will set things right.

1:8 *in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those not knowing God and on those not obeying the gospel* Fire shows God's holy presence and judgment (Exod 3:2; 19:18), and Jesus returns as Judge (Rev 19:11-12). Those not knowing God turned from what He shows all people in creation and conscience (Rom 1:18-21). The gospel is a call to repent and believe, and to refuse it is to disobey God. The dividing line is what people do with Jesus.

1:9 *eternal destruction away from the face of the Lord and from the glory of His strength* Among the most solemn words in the Bible. Eternal means it does not end, as in eternal punishment beside eternal life (Matt 25:46). Destruction is ruin, the loss of all good, and most teachers through history have read it that way, though some teach the lost will cease to exist. The worst is being shut out from God, the source of every good gift (James 1:17). God does not want anyone to face it (2 Pet 3:9). If you have never turned to Jesus, do not put it off.

1:10 *when He comes to be glorified in His saints* For the lost that day is judgment. For believers it is glory. His saints come with Him, changed and glorified (1 Thess 3:13; Jude 14), and the world will see His greatness in what He made of them. We will marvel at Him and see Him as He is (1 John 3:2). The Thessalonians will share it because they believed Paul's message.

1:11 *that our God may count you worthy of the calling* God called them to His kingdom and glory (1 Thess 2:12), and Paul prays their lives would fit that calling, not to earn salvation. He asks God to complete every good desire and work of faith with His power. We want to do good and often fall short, so we ask God to finish what we cannot.

1:12 *so that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you in Him* A name stands for who a person is. Their lives were to show what Jesus is like. As they honor Him, they share His glory, for what happens to Him happens to those united with Him. It is all grace. The Greek can also be read as one Person, our God and Lord, Jesus Christ, as in Titus 2:13.

2 THESSALONIANS 2

The Day of the Lord Has Not Come

1 Now we ask you, brothers, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus (Iesous) Christ and our gathering together to Him, **2** that you not be quickly shaken from the mind nor be troubled, neither through a spirit nor through a word nor through a letter as if through us, as that the day of Christ has come. **3** Let no one deceive you in any way; because ***it will not come*** unless the apostasy comes first and the man of sin is revealed, the son of destruction, **4** who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he sits down in the temple of God as God, displaying himself that he is God. **5** Do you not remember that while still being with you I was telling you these things?

The Restrainer and the Lawless One

6 And now you know that which is restraining, for him to be revealed in his own time. **7** For the mystery of lawlessness is already working; only the one restraining now ***will restrain*** until he is out of the midst. **8** And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and will abolish by the appearing of His coming, **9** ***the one*** whose coming is according to the working of Satan in every power and signs and wonders of falsehood, **10** and in every deceit of unrighteousness in those who are perishing, because they did not receive the love of the truth so that

2:1 Mark 13:27; 1 Thess 4:14-16; Matt 24:31
2:2 1 John 4:1,2; Mark 13:7; Isa 7:2
2:3 Dan 11:36; Eph 5:6; Dan 7:25
2:4 Ezek 28:2; Isa 14:13-14; Dan 11:36
2:5 Matt 16:9; Mark 8:18; Luke 24:6,7
2:6 2 Thess 2:3,8
2:7 1 John 2:18; Rev 17:5,7; 1 John 4:3
2:8 Isa 11:4; Dan 7:26; Dan 11:45
2:9 Dan 8:23; Matt 24:24; Rev 18:23
2:10 Dan 8:23; 1 Cor 1:18; Prov 1:7

2:1 *concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him* Paul begins his correction by pointing them to their hope. Coming is parousia, the word of 1 Thessalonians 4:15. Gathering together appears elsewhere only in Hebrews 10:25. In the pre-tribulation reading this study follows, it is the event of 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, when the dead in Christ rise and living believers are caught away to meet the Lord. The false teaching had shaken that very hope. Some teachers read both phrases of the Second Coming at the end of the Tribulation.

2:2 *as that the day of Christ has come* Shaken was used for a ship torn from its anchor, and troubled means alarmed (Matt 24:6). A spirit is likely a claimed prophecy, a word a teaching or report, and a letter perhaps one forged in Paul's name. If it does not match the apostles' teaching, reject it (Gal 1:8). The SLB follows the Received Text in reading the day of Christ, where most older copies read the day of the Lord. Both mean the time of God's judgment (1 Thess 5:1-11). Has come means already here. Their persecution may have made them think God's wrath had begun. If they had been taught the church goes through the Tribulation, such news might have made them brace themselves. It upset their whole hope because Paul had taught that the Lord comes for His church before the day of wrath (1 Thess 4:16-17; 5:9).

2:3 *unless the apostasy comes first and the man of sin is revealed, the son of destruction* Two things must come first. Apostasia means a departure, a standing away. Its only other use is for apostasy from Moses (Acts 21:21), so most teachers, including most who hold a pre-tribulation rapture, read it as a great turning from the faith at the end (1 Tim 4:1; 2 Tim 4:3; Matt 24:12). Some pre-tribulation teachers take it as the departure of the church at the rapture, and a few English Bibles of the 1500s read departing. Either way, the day had not come. The man of sin is a real man. Many older copies read man of lawlessness, the same thing, since sin is lawlessness (1 John 3:4). Many see him in Daniel's little horn and coming ruler (Dan 7:8; 9:26-27; 11:36) and the beast of Revelation 13, the antichrist (1 John 2:18). Son of destruction was said of Judas (John 17:12). His end is settled (Rev 19:20).

2:4 *so that he sits down in the temple of God as God, displaying himself that he is God* He sets himself above every god, true or false (Dan 11:36). The word is the sanctuary, the inner holy place. Read plainly with Daniel and Jesus, this points to a future temple in Jerusalem. The one who breaks the covenant stops the sacrifices in the middle of the seven years (Dan 9:27), and the abomination of desolation stands in the holy place (Matt 24:15; Rev 13:12-15). That is the midpoint of the Tribulation. Some read the temple as the church or as a figure, and others as first-century events like Caligula's attempt to set up his statue or the fall of the temple in A.D. 70. But no one then fulfilled all this, and the Lord did not destroy him at His coming (2:8). Satan has always wanted worship (Isa 14:13-14; Matt 4:8-9), but his time will be short.

2:5 *while still being with you I was telling you these things* A gentle rebuke. The tense means more than once. In a few weeks with brand new believers, Paul did not think prophecy too hard or unimportant to teach. Some say it only confuses or divides. God put it in His Word for our comfort and protection. Had they remembered, they would not have been shaken.

2:6 *now you know that which is restraining, for him to be revealed in his own time* To restrain is to hold back or keep in check. They knew what it was. We piece it together. Here the word is neuter, and in verse 7 masculine, so the restrainer is spoken of as a thing and a person. I believe this fits the Holy Spirit best. The Greek word for Spirit is neuter, yet He is a Person, and Jesus speaks of Him both ways (John 16:13). The man of sin will not come a day early. Even God's greatest enemy is under His control.

2:7 *only the one restraining now will restrain until he is out of the midst* Lawlessness is already at work behind the scenes (1 John 4:3; Eph 2:2), but it is held back. Only God is strong enough. I believe the restrainer is the Holy Spirit working through the church, the salt and light of the world (John 16:8; Matt 5:13-14). When the church is caught away, that restraining work through it is removed. The Spirit does not leave the world, for He is everywhere, and a great multitude will be saved in the Tribulation (Rev 7:9). Others name the Roman Empire and its law, as many in the early church did, human government (Rom 13:1-4), the preaching of the gospel, Paul himself, or Michael (Dan 12:1). But Rome fell long ago and the man of sin has not come. The church was still here, so the day of the Lord had not come.

2:8 *whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and will abolish by the appearing of His coming* Paul tells his end before his career. The Messiah slays the wicked with the breath of His lips (Isa 11:4), and the sword from His mouth ends the beast's reign (Rev 19:15, 20). Abolish means bring to nothing. The appearing is epiphaneia, a shining forth, joined to parousia. When Jesus returns visibly at the end of the Tribulation, the shining of His presence is enough. Parousia covers both stages of His coming, for His church in 2:1 and in judgment here, and context shows which. Those who see one coming read both as one event. The most powerful evil man in history will fall with one breath from Jesus.

2:9 *whose coming is according to the working of Satan in every power and signs and wonders of falsehood* He has a counterfeit parousia, with Satan behind him (Rev 13:2, 4). These are the words used of Jesus' miracles (Acts 2:22), copied. False christs will do great signs to lead astray (Matt 24:24), and the false prophet will call fire from heaven (Rev 13:13). Real supernatural works or clever tricks, they serve a lie. A miracle alone does not prove something is from God (1 John 4:1).

2:10 *because they did not receive the love of the truth so that they might be saved* Not that they never had a chance, but that they did not love the truth when it was offered. Jesus is the truth (John 14:6), and to refuse to love the truth is to refuse Him. It is not enough to know about it. Those who do not love the truth become open to every lie. So that they might be saved shows God's heart.

they might be saved. **11** And because of this God will send them a working of delusion, so that they believe the falsehood, **12** in order that all may be judged who did not believe the truth but delighted in unrighteousness.

Chosen for Glory

13 But we ought to give thanks to God always concerning you, brothers beloved by ***the*** Lord, because God chose you from ***the*** beginning for salvation in sanctification of ***the*** Spirit and faith in ***the*** truth, **14** to which He called you through our gospel, for ***the*** obtaining of ***the*** glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. **15** So then, brothers, stand firm and hold fast the traditions which you were taught, whether through word or through our letter. **16** Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God and our Father, who loved us and gave ***us*** eternal comfort and good hope in grace, **17** comfort your hearts and strengthen you in every good word and work.

2 THESSALONIANS 3

Pray for Us

1 Finally, brothers, pray concerning us, that the word of the Lord may run and be glorified, just as also with you, **2** and that we may be delivered from perverse and evil men; for not all ***have*** the faith. **3** But the Lord is faithful, who will strengthen you and guard ***you*** from the evil. **4** And we are confident in ***the*** Lord concerning you, that the things which we command you, you both are doing and will do. **5** And may the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the endurance of Christ.

Warning Against Idleness

6 Now we command you, brothers, in ***the*** name of our Lord Jesus (Iesous) Christ, to withdraw from every brother walking disorderly and not according to the tradition which he received from us. **7** For you yourselves know how it is necessary to imitate us, because we were not disorderly among

2:11 Dan 8:23; Ezek 14:9; Ps 81:11,12
2:12 Rom 1:32; Rom 2:8; Deut 32:35
2:13 2 Tim 1:9; 1 Thess 1:4; 2 Thess 1:3
2:14 1 Thess 2:12; 1 Pet 5:10; 1 Thess 1:5
2:15 1 Cor 11:2; 1 Cor 16:13; 2 Thess 3:6
2:16 John 3:16; 1 Thess 3:11; 1 Pet 1:3-5
2:17 2 Thess 3:3; 1 Thess 3:2,13; 2 Cor 1:3-6
3:1 Ps 147:15; Eph 6:19,20; Col 4:3
3:2 Rom 15:31; Deut 32:20; 2 Cor 4:3,4
3:3 1 Cor 1:9; 2 Tim 4:18; 1 Cor 10:13
3:4 2 Cor 2:3; Phlm 1:21; 2 Thess 3:6,12
3:5 1 Chr 29:18; 1 Kgs 8:58; Ps 119:5,36
3:6 1 Cor 5:4; 1 Thess 5:14; Rom 16:17
3:7 2 Thess 3:9; 1 Cor 4:16; 1 Cor 11:1

2:11 *God will send them a working of delusion, so that they believe the falsehood* A hard verse. God cannot lie (Titus 1:2), but when people keep rejecting the truth, He gives them over to what they chose, as in Romans 1:24, 26, 28 and with Pharaoh (Exod 8:15, 32; 9:12). The falsehood is likely the great lie that the man of sin is God (2:4), the serpent's old lie (Gen 3:5). Some believe those who clearly heard and rejected the gospel before the rapture will not believe afterward. Others read it more generally. Many will come to Christ in the Tribulation (Rev 7:9-14). Rejecting the truth hardens the heart. Today is the day of salvation (2 Cor 6:2).

2:12 *who did not believe the truth but delighted in unrighteousness* Unbelief is not only a matter of the mind but of what the heart loves (John 3:19-20). People are not forced into sin. They take pleasure in it. No one will be condemned who did not choose to reject the truth, and no one who comes to Jesus will be turned away (John 6:37).

2:13 *God chose you from the beginning for salvation in sanctification of the Spirit and faith in the truth* After the perishing, a change of tone. These are beloved by the Lord. The SLB reads from the beginning with the Received Text, and some copies read as firstfruits. Teachers differ on how God's choosing works, as in 1 Thessalonians 1:4 (1 Pet 1:2). The Spirit sets us apart, and we believe the truth. The perishing did not believe it. These did.

2:14 *to which He called you through our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ* God's choosing in eternity became His calling in time, through the preaching of the gospel (Rom 10:14-17). Obtaining is the word of 1 Thessalonians 5:9. The call leads not to wrath but to glory (Rom 8:30; Col 3:4). The lawless one's followers share his destruction. Christ's share His glory.

2:15 *stand firm and hold fast the traditions which you were taught, whether through word or through our letter* Traditions means what is handed down, here the apostles' teaching, the same whether spoken or written in the first letter. Today we have it in the New Testament. Protestant teachers hold that Scripture is now the only sure and final rule. The Catholic and Orthodox churches also look to church tradition alongside Scripture. The standard is what the apostles taught. Hold fast to it and you will not be shaken.

2:16 *may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God and our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope in grace* Jesus is named first here, and in Greek loved and gave are singular, as direct was in 1 Thessalonians 3:11. The Father and the Son act as one. The comfort never runs out, and the hope will not let us down, the hope of His coming and our gathering to Him (2:1). Shaken hearts need comfort, and a settled heart leads to steady work and true words (2:17). Our hope is not meant to make us stare at the sky.

3:1 *that the word of the Lord may run and be glorified, just as also with you* Paul had prayed for them (2:16-17), and now asks the same of them. His first request is not comfort or safety but that God's Word would run like a runner in a race (Ps 147:15) and be honored as it changes lives. It had run in Thessalonica (1 Thess 1:6; 2:13), and Paul wanted the same in Corinth. When you pray for missionaries and pastors, pray first for the Word to run.

3:2 *that we may be delivered from perverse and evil men; for not all have the faith* Perverse means twisted, and evil actively harmful. Paul faced such men in Corinth (Acts 18:6, 12-13). Not everyone receives the gospel, and some fight it. Paul asked for deliverance but kept preaching, and the Lord told him not to fear (Acts 18:9-10).

3:3 *But the Lord is faithful, who will strengthen you and guard you from the evil* Not all have faith, but the Lord is faithful, and the two words go together in Greek. To guard is to stand watch like a soldier. From the evil can also be read from the evil one, Satan (Matt 6:13; John 17:15). He hindered Paul and tempts believers, but he cannot snatch them out of the Lord's hand (John 10:28-29).

3:4 *we are confident in the Lord concerning you* Paul's confidence is in the Lord, not their strength. It also prepares them for hard commands about idle members. He starts with trust, not scolding. When we must correct someone, it helps to let them know first that we believe in what God is doing in them.

3:5 *may the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the endurance of Christ* Direct means to clear a straight road, the word of 1 Thessalonians 3:11. The love of God can mean His love for us or ours for Him, and both belong together (1 John 4:19). The endurance of Christ can mean the endurance He showed in suffering or patient waiting for His return. A heart directed there can face persecution, false teaching and hard work without giving up.

3:6 *to withdraw from every brother walking disorderly* The strongest language of the letter, with Christ's full authority. To withdraw is to pull back from close fellowship. Disorderly is the word of 1 Thessalonians 5:14, a soldier who breaks rank, here believers who refused to work. He is still called a brother. The goal is to bring him back. They knew better, for Paul had taught them (1 Thess 4:11-12).

3:7 *you yourselves know how it is necessary to imitate us* The Christian life is learned by watching others as well as by words (1 Thess 1:6; 2:9). Paul and his team did not break rank or wait for others to support them. Could you tell younger believers to follow your example? It is what God calls every believer toward (1 Cor 11:1; Phil 3:17).

you, **8** nor did we eat bread from anyone without payment, but in labor and toil, working night and day so as not to be a burden to any of you; **9** not that we do not have authority, but that we might give ourselves ***as*** an example to you, so that you imitate us. **10** For even when we were with you, we were commanding you this, that if anyone is not willing to work, neither let him eat. **11** For we hear ***that*** some are walking among you disorderly, not working at all, but being busybodies. **12** Now to such we command and exhort through our Lord Jesus Christ, that working with quietness they may eat their own bread. **13** But you, brothers, do not grow weary doing good. **14** And if anyone does not obey our word through the letter, take note of this ***one***, and do not associate with him, so that he may be ashamed. **15** And do not regard ***him*** as an enemy, but admonish ***him*** as a brother.

Closing Blessing

16 Now may the Lord of peace Himself give you peace continually in every way. The Lord ***be*** with you all. **17** The greeting by my own hand, of Paul (Paulos), which is a sign in every letter; thus I write. **18** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ ***be*** with you all. Amen.

3:8 Neh 5:14; Acts 18:3; 1 Thess 2:9
3:9 1 Cor 9:4-14; 2 Thess 3:7; 1 Thess 2:6
3:10 Gen 3:19; Prov 13:4; Prov 20:4
3:11 1 Tim 5:13; 1 Pet 4:15; 1 Thess 4:11
3:12 1 Thess 4:11; Eph 4:28; 2 Thess 3:8
3:13 Gal 6:9,10; 1 Thess 4:1; Luke 18:1
3:14 2 Thess 3:6; Titus 3:10; Ps 83:16
3:15 Gal 6:1; 1 Thess 5:14; Matt 18:15
3:16 Ruth 2:4; 1 Sam 20:13; Rom 15:33
3:17 1 Cor 16:21; Col 4:18; 2 Thess 1:5
3:18 Rom 16:20,24

3:8 *nor did we eat bread from anyone without payment* To eat bread is to make a living. Paul paid his own way as a tentmaker (Acts 18:3), working early to late so no one had to support him (1 Thess 2:9). He gratefully received gifts from Philippi (Phil 4:16) but did not demand them.
3:9 *not that we do not have authority, but that we might give ourselves as an example to you* Paul had the right to support. The worker is worthy of his food (Matt 10:10), and those who preach the gospel may live from it (1 Cor 9:14). Churches should support their pastors and missionaries. Paul set his right aside to give a living example against idleness. Christ gave up His rights for us (Phil 2:5-8), and love is willing to do the same.
3:10 *if anyone is not willing to work, neither let him eat* Notice not willing. Paul does not mean those who cannot work through sickness, age, disability or lack of a job. The church is called to care for them (Acts 20:35; Gal 6:10; 1 Tim 5:3-16). Some think the idle believed the Lord's coming was so near that work was pointless. Others think they were living off richer believers, as many then lived off wealthy patrons. Either way, get back to work. God gave Adam work before sin came (Gen 2:15).
3:11 *not working at all, but being busybodies* Only some, not the whole church. A play on words: not busy, but busybodies, meddling in others' lives. When we have nothing useful to do, we find something harmful. The sluggard is told to consider the ant (Prov 6:6), and gossip and laziness often travel together (1 Tim 5:13).
3:12 *that working with quietness they may eat their own bread* Paul both commands with authority and pleads as a fellow believer under the same Lord. Work, do it quietly without meddling, and eat food you have earned, as he said before (1 Thess 4:11). There is dignity in honest work.
3:13 *do not grow weary doing good* Now to the rest of the church, who may have been tired of supporting people who would not work and tempted to stop giving even to the truly needy. Keep doing good (Gal 6:9). If you have been taken advantage of or no one notices, the Lord does, and He will reward you (Heb 6:10).
3:14 *take note of this one, and do not associate with him, so that he may be ashamed* To take note is to mark him. Associate means close fellowship, the word of 1 Corinthians 5:9-11. The purpose is not punishment but to bring him to his senses. Shame that leads to repentance is good. This is church discipline, and its goal is always restoration (Matt 18:15-17; Gal 6:1).
3:15 *do not regard him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother* This balances the verse before. Discipline can easily turn proud and cold. Keep warning him as family, and the door stays open. The goal is to win your brother back (Matt 18:15).
3:16 *may the Lord of peace Himself give you peace continually in every way* Paul calls Jesus the Lord of peace, beside the God of peace (1 Thess 5:23). They had persecution, false teaching and idle members, and Paul prays for peace all the time and in every situation. Real peace is not the absence of trouble but the presence of the Lord (John 16:33). You all includes the idle ones just corrected.
3:17 *The greeting by my own hand, of Paul, which is a sign in every letter* Paul dictated (Rom 16:22) and wrote the greeting himself (1 Cor 16:21; Col 4:18). Someone may have sent a letter as if from him (2:2), so his handwriting proved this one genuine. The church was careful to receive only what truly came from the apostles, and we can trust the New Testament we have.
3:18 *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all* Almost the ending of the first letter (1 Thess 5:28), with all added: the strong and weak, the workers and the idle. Grace began the letter (1:2) and ends it, and grace is what we need until we see Him. The closing note that it was written from Athens was added by later copyists.

1 TIMOTHY

Introduction

Title

The letter is named for the man it is written to, "Timothy, my genuine child in faith" (1:2). It is the first of the three Pastoral Letters, with 2 Timothy and Titus, which Paul wrote to guide the men he had left in charge of churches. Paul tells us why he wrote. He hoped to come soon, but if he was delayed, he wanted Timothy to know "how one must conduct oneself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth" (3:15).

Author and Date

The letter opens with "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ" (1:1), and the early church accepted all three Pastoral Letters as his. Many modern scholars think a follower wrote them after his death, pointing to differences in words and style, a church order they think came later, and events that do not fit into Acts. I take the letter at its word. It speaks of Paul's own past as a persecutor (1:12-16), names real people (1:20), and gives personal advice no forger would think to add, like a little wine for Timothy's stomach (5:23). A change of subject and readers explains a change of words.

Acts ends with Paul under house arrest in Rome (Acts 28:30-31). Many teachers, going back to the early church, believe he was released, traveled again, and was later arrested a second time and put to death in Rome. The travels in the Pastoral Letters (1:3; Titus 1:5; 3:12) fit best between the two imprisonments. Paul wrote after leaving Timothy in Ephesus and going on to Macedonia, most likely about A.D. 62 to 64. The closing note in the SLB naming Laodicea was added by later copyists.

Background and Setting

Timothy was from Lystra in Galatia, the son of a Jewish believing mother and a Greek father (Acts 16:1-3). His grandmother Lois and mother Eunice taught him the Scriptures from childhood (2 Tim 1:5; 3:15). Paul took him along on the second journey, and he became one of Paul's closest helpers. He was still fairly young (4:12), and he seems to have been a little timid and often sick (5:23; 2 Tim 1:7).

Ephesus was a great city of the province of Asia, on the west coast of what is now Turkey, home to the famous temple of Artemis. Paul had spent about three years there (Acts 19:1-20; 20:31). Saying goodbye to its elders, he warned that wolves would come in and men would rise up among them speaking twisted things (Acts 20:29-30). By the time of this letter, that warning had come true. False teachers in the church were spreading myths and endless genealogies, forbidding marriage and foods, and treating godliness as a way to get rich (1:3-7; 4:1-3; 6:5).

Themes

Paul writes to stop the false teachers (1:3-7), to give the pattern for prayer, worship and church leadership (chapters 2 and 3), to guide Timothy in caring for the different groups in the church, widows, elders, slaves and the rich (chapters 5 and 6), and to strengthen Timothy himself to stay faithful (4:12-16; 6:11-14).

Sound, healthy teaching produces "love out of a pure heart and a good conscience and sincere faith" (1:5), while false teaching breeds arguments and pride. The church is God's household, and its leaders must be above reproach in life and home (3:1-13). Godliness takes training like an athlete's (4:7-8). "Godliness with contentment is great gain," but "the love of money is a root of all the evils" (6:6, 10). All through it, Paul tells Timothy to watch his life and his teaching (4:16), guard the deposit of the gospel (6:20), and "fight the good fight of the faith" (6:12).

Christ in 1 Timothy

"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," and Paul calls himself the foremost of them (1:15). There is "one mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (2:5), "who gave Himself as a ransom for all" (2:6). The mystery of godliness is Christ: "God was manifested in flesh, was justified in spirit, was seen by angels, was proclaimed among the Gentiles, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory" (3:16). Before Pontius Pilate He "testified the good confession" (6:13), and His appearing will be shown in God's own time (6:14-15).

Hard Passages

The roles of women in the church (2:11-15) are read differently by godly teachers, some as a lasting limit on women teaching or exercising authority over men in the church, others as a word to a local problem in Ephesus. "Saved through the childbearing" (2:15) has three main readings. "The husband of one wife" (3:2, 12) is read several ways. "Women likewise" (3:11) may mean deacons' wives or women deacons. "Savior of all men, especially of believers" (4:10) does not teach that all will be saved. The slavery passage (6:1-2) is treated as in Ephesians. The notes name the main views and take no side where good teachers differ.

Outline

I. Sound Teaching and the Church at Worship (1:1-3:16)
- A. Greeting (1:1-2)
- B. Warning against false teachers (1:3-11)
- C. Paul's thanks for God's mercy (1:12-17)
- D. Fight the good fight (1:18-20)
- E. Prayer for all people (2:1-7)
- F. Men and women in worship (2:8-15)
- G. Qualifications for overseers (3:1-7)
- H. Qualifications for deacons (3:8-13)
- I. The household of God (3:14-16)

II. A Good Servant and the Household of God (4:1-6:21)
- A. A warning about apostasy (4:1-5)
- B. Train yourself for godliness (4:6-16)
- C. Caring for the family of God and for widows (5:1-16)
- D. Honoring and correcting elders (5:17-25)
- E. Slaves and masters (6:1-2)
- F. False teachers and the love of money (6:3-10)
- G. Charge to the man of God (6:11-16)
- H. Charge to the rich and final word (6:17-21)

1 TIMOTHY

1 TIMOTHY 1

Greeting

1 Paul (Paulos), an apostle of Jesus (Iesous) Christ according to ***the*** command of God our Savior and ***the*** Lord Jesus Christ our hope, **2** to Timothy (Timotheos), ***my*** genuine child in faith: Grace, mercy, peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.

Warning Against False Teachers

3 Just as I urged you to remain in Ephesus (Ephesos), ***as I was*** going into Macedonia (Makedonia), so that you might charge some not to teach different doctrine, **4** nor to give heed to myths and endless genealogies, which bring about questionings rather than ***the*** building up of God which ***is*** in faith. **5** Now the goal of the charge is love out of a pure heart and a good conscience and sincere faith, **6** from which some, having missed the mark, have turned aside to empty talk, **7** desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they are saying nor about what things they confidently assert. **8** Now we know that the law ***is*** good, if one uses it lawfully, **9** knowing this, that law is not laid down for a righteous ***one***, but for ***the*** lawless and insubordinate, for ***the*** ungodly and sinners, for ***the*** unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, **10** for ***the*** sexually immoral, for men who lie with males, for enslavers, for liars, for perjurers, and if anything else is opposed to the sound teaching, **11** according to the gospel of the glory of the blessed God, with which I was entrusted.

Thanks for God's Mercy

12 And I have thanks for the One who strengthened me, Christ Jesus our Lord, that He considered me faithful, appointing ***me*** to ***the*** ministry, **13** though formerly being a blasphemer and a persecutor and an insolent man; but I was shown mercy, because being ignorant I did ***it*** in unbelief; **14** and the grace of our Lord abounded beyond measure,

1:1 Ps 106:21; Isa 43:3; Isa 43:11
1:2 2 Tim 1:2; Titus 1:4; Acts 16:1-3
1:3 1 Tim 6:3,10,17; Gal 1:6,7; Titus 1:9-11
1:4 1 Tim 4:7; Titus 3:9; Titus 1:14
1:5 2 Tim 2:22; 2 Tim 1:5; 1 Tim 1:19
1:6 Titus 1:10; 1 Tim 6:4,5,20; 2 Tim 2:23,24
1:7 2 Pet 2:12; Rom 1:22; 1 Tim 6:4
1:8 Rom 7:12,13,16; Ps 19:7-10; Ps 119:96-105,127,128
1:9 Gal 5:23; 1 Pet 4:18; Heb 12:16
1:10 Exod 21:16; Lev 18:22; 2 Tim 4:3
1:11 Gal 2:7; 2 Cor 4:4,6; 1 Tim 6:15
1:12 Phil 4:13; 2 Tim 4:17; 2 Cor 12:9,10
1:13 Acts 8:3; John 9:39-41; Acts 3:17
1:14 2 Tim 1:13; 1 Pet 1:3; Acts 15:11

1:1 *according to the command of God our Savior and the Lord Jesus Christ our hope* An apostle is one sent with the sender's authority. Timothy knew Paul well, but this letter would be read to the church in Ephesus, where some taught against Paul's gospel, so everyone needed to know these instructions came from the Lord. God our Savior is a title Paul uses often in these three letters. Our hope is not a wish but a Person coming back for us.

1:2 *to Timothy, my genuine child in faith: Grace, mercy, peace* Genuine was used for a child born in lawful marriage. Timothy was Paul's true son in the faith (Phil 2:22). To his usual greeting Paul adds mercy, as in 2 Timothy. Grace is favor we did not earn, mercy is God withholding the punishment we did earn, and peace follows both. A young pastor in a hard city needs all three.

1:3 *so that you might charge some not to teach different doctrine* This trip to Macedonia is not in Acts, one reason many believe Paul was released from his first Roman imprisonment and traveled again. To charge is to give an order like a commander. Different doctrine is teaching of a different kind from the apostles'. The false teachers were in the church, perhaps elders, as Paul had warned (Acts 20:29-30). Error often starts on the inside.

1:4 *nor to give heed to myths and endless genealogies* We do not know exactly what these were. Many think they were Jewish legends spun from Old Testament family lists (Titus 1:14). Others think they were early forms of what was later called Gnosticism, secret knowledge about spiritual beings. Either way, they stirred up questions and arguments but built no one up. Some teaching today makes people curious and argumentative without making them more like Jesus.

1:5 *the goal of the charge is love out of a pure heart and a good conscience and sincere faith* Sound teaching is not cold. It aims at changed hearts. A pure heart is cleansed by God and set on Him (Matt 5:8). A good conscience is clean because we are not hiding sin. Sincere faith is faith without a mask. When the result of teaching is arguing and pride, something is wrong with the teaching.

1:6 *from which some, having missed the mark, have turned aside to empty talk* The picture is an archer whose arrow misses the target. Their teaching sounded deep but was hollow. If our teaching does not lead people toward love and a pure heart, we have turned aside too, however clever it sounds.

1:7 *desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they are saying* They wanted the title and respect. The Law is the Law of Moses. They were sure of themselves and wrong. One can speak with great confidence about the Bible and not understand it. Confidence is not the same as truth.

1:8 *the law is good, if one uses it lawfully* Paul is not against the Law, which is holy, righteous and good (Rom 7:12). A tool used wrongly can do harm. The false teachers used it for speculation, or perhaps as a ladder to climb up to God. That is not what it was given for.

1:9 *law is not laid down for a righteous one, but for the lawless and insubordinate* The Law shows sin for what it is and holds back evil. One made right with God by faith does not live under it as his way to God. Paul's list follows the Ten Commandments: first sins against God, then against parents, life, marriage, property and truth. Enslavers (1:10) were those who kidnapped people to sell them, stealing a human being (Exod 21:16). Sound means healthy. Sin is spiritual sickness.

1:11 *according to the gospel of the glory of the blessed God, with which I was entrusted* The Law shows we need a Savior, and the gospel tells us who He is. Blessed means happy, full of joy in Himself. God is not a gloomy judge looking for reasons to punish. The gospel was handed to Paul like a treasure to guard.

1:12 *He considered me faithful, appointing me to the ministry* Paul never spoke of his ministry without thanking Jesus for it. Jesus did not wait until Paul earned it. He chose a man fighting against Him and trusted him with the work. Everyone who serves the Lord does it because He put us there and strengthens us.

1:13 *though formerly being a blasphemer and a persecutor and an insolent man* A blasphemer spoke against God, a persecutor hunted believers and voted for their deaths (Acts 8:3; 26:9-11), and an insolent man was violent and proud. Ignorance did not make Paul innocent, but he sinned without understanding who Jesus was, not with open eyes. God had mercy on him in his blindness, as Jesus prayed for those who crucified Him (Luke 23:34).

1:14 *the grace of our Lord abounded beyond measure* Overflowing, too much to measure. Paul's sin was great, but grace was greater (Rom 5:20). Grace turned his unbelief to faith and his hatred to love for the people he had hunted. Grace does not only forgive us. It changes us.

with faith and love which ***are*** in Christ Jesus. **15** Faithful ***is*** the word and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am foremost. **16** But because of this I was shown mercy, that in me, ***the*** foremost, Jesus Christ might display all ***His*** patience as a pattern for those who were going to believe on Him for eternal life. **17** Now to the King of the ages, incorruptible, invisible, only wise God, ***be*** honor and glory to the ages of the ages. Amen.

Fight the Good Fight

18 This charge I commit to you, child Timothy, according to the prophecies that went before concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare, **19** holding faith and a good conscience, which some, having thrust away, have suffered shipwreck concerning the faith, **20** among whom are Hymenaeus (Hymenaios) and Alexander (Alexandros), whom I handed over to Satan, so that they may be disciplined not to blaspheme.

1 TIMOTHY 2

Prayer for All People

1 I exhort, therefore, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercessions, ***and*** thanksgivings be made on behalf of all men, **2** for kings and all those who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. **3** For this ***is*** good and acceptable before God our Savior, **4** who desires all men to be saved and to come to ***the*** full knowledge of ***the*** truth. **5** For ***there is*** one God, and one mediator of God and men, ***the*** man Christ Jesus (Iesous), **6** who gave Himself ***as*** a ransom for all, the testimony in ***its*** own times, **7** for which I was appointed a herald and an apostle (I am speaking ***the*** truth in Christ, I am not lying), a teacher of ***the*** Gentiles in faith and truth.

Men and Women in Worship

8 I desire, therefore, the men to pray in every place, lifting

1:15 John 3:16,17,36; Mark 2:17; 1 Tim 1:13
1:16 2 Chr 33:13; 1 Tim 1:13; Eph 2:7
1:17 Ps 10:16; Ps 41:13; Ps 45:1
1:18 1 Tim 4:14; 2 Tim 4:1-3; 1 Tim 1:2
1:19 1 Tim 3:9; 1 Tim 1:5; 2 Pet 2:1-3,12-22
1:20 2 Tim 2:17; 1 Cor 5:4,5; 1 Cor 11:32
2:1 Gen 18:29; Gen 18:30; Gen 18:31
2:2 Ezra 6:10; Jer 29:7; Rom 13:1-7
2:3 Isa 45:21; 1 Tim 1:1; 1 Tim 5:4
2:4 Ezek 33:11; Ezek 18:23,32; 2 Pet 3:9
2:5 Gal 3:20; 1 Cor 8:6; Isa 44:6
2:6 Isa 53:12; Matt 20:28; 1 Cor 1:6
2:7 2 Tim 1:11; Acts 9:15; Eph 3:7,8
2:8 Ps 28:2; Ps 134:2; 1 Tim 5:14

1:15 *Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am foremost* The first of five faithful sayings in these letters (3:1; 4:9; 2 Tim 2:11; Titus 3:8), short sayings the church knew, each stamped true. Came into the world means He existed before His birth. He came not only to teach or set an example but to save sinners. Paul says I am, not I was. The closer he walked with Jesus, the more he saw his sin. If you think you are too far gone, remember Paul.

1:16 *that in me, the foremost, Jesus Christ might display all His patience as a pattern* Paul's life was a display case of God's patience in the worst sinner. Pattern means an artist's first sketch before the full painting. Paul's salvation was the sketch of what God would do for countless others. No one still living is beyond His reach.

1:17 *Now to the King of the ages, incorruptible, invisible, only wise God* A doxology, a short word of praise. He rules every age past and to come. He cannot decay or die. No one has seen Him in full glory (John 1:18). There is no other God and no wisdom like His. Good doctrine should always lead us to praise.

1:18 *according to the prophecies that went before concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare* The charge is the work of verse 3. Likely when Timothy was set apart, God spoke through prophets about him (4:14). Scripture does not say what they said. Ministry is a war, not against people but against error, sin and the devil (Eph 6:12).

1:19 *holding faith and a good conscience, which some, having thrust away, have suffered shipwreck concerning the faith* Faith likely means both trust in Christ and the truth believed, and a good conscience is living it with nothing hidden. A ship hits the rocks and breaks apart. When a person keeps doing what he knows is wrong, his beliefs soon drift. Many who leave the faith did not start with doubts but with sin they would not give up.

1:20 *Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I handed over to Satan* Hymenaeus taught that the resurrection had already happened (2 Tim 2:17-18). An Alexander appears in 2 Timothy 4:14, perhaps the same man. Handing over to Satan was putting someone out of the church's fellowship into the world where Satan rules (1 Cor 5:5). Some think it may have involved physical affliction. The goal was to teach them to stop blaspheming and bring them home.

2:1 *that petitions, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made on behalf of all men* Therefore ties this to chapter 1. The first weapon against false teaching is prayer, and first of all can mean first in importance. Petitions come from a sense of need, prayers is the general word, intercessions are for others, and thanksgivings are gratitude. The church should pray every way it can, for everyone, perhaps correcting false teachers who thought only a select few could know God.

2:2 *for kings and all those who are in authority* The emperor was most likely Nero, who would later persecute Christians. Paul still says pray for him. A peaceful land gives the church room to live godly lives and spread the gospel. Praying for leaders is not agreeing with all they do. Do you pray for those who lead your city and country, even the ones you did not vote for?

2:4 *who desires all men to be saved and to come to the full knowledge of the truth* Praying for all pleases God our Savior (2:3), for this is His heart toward the lost (Ezek 33:11; 2 Pet 3:9). No one is saved apart from the truth of the gospel. Some read all men as every person without exception. Others read it as all kinds of people, kings and commoners, Jews and Gentiles. Both agree the church must pray for and preach to everyone.

2:5 *one mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus* One God means He is God of Jews and Gentiles alike (Rom 3:29-30). A mediator stands between two parties to bring them together. Jesus is fully God, so He can reach God, and fully man, so He can reach us. He was not an angel who only looked human. No priest, saint, angel or church can stand between you and God. Jesus is enough, and the only way (John 14:6; Acts 4:12).

2:6 *who gave Himself as a ransom for all* A ransom is the price paid to free a captive. Jesus gave not money but Himself, taking our place (Mark 10:45). For all shows the reach of His work and the offer that goes to all. His death came at the time God planned (Gal 4:4), and now the testimony goes out in God's timing.

2:7 *I was appointed a herald and an apostle, a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth* A herald went ahead of a king to announce his message in public. The one Mediator gave Himself for all, so God sent a man to tell all, especially the Gentiles (Gal 2:7-9). Paul adds an oath, "I am speaking the truth in Christ, I am not lying," aimed at those in the church who doubted his calling.

2:8 *the men to pray in every place, lifting up holy hands without anger and disputing* In every place likely means every gathering of believers around Ephesus. Lifting the hands was a common way to pray (Ps 28:2; 134:2), but the point is that the hands are holy, from clean lives. The men seem to have been arguing, likely over the false teaching. You cannot lift holy hands while angry with your brother (Matt 5:23-24).

up holy hands without anger and disputing; **9** likewise also
the women to adorn themselves in respectable apparel with
modesty and self-control, not with braided hair or gold or
pearls or costly clothing, **10** but, which is fitting for women
professing reverence for God, through good works. **11** Let a
woman learn in quietness in all submission; **12** but I do not
permit a woman to teach, nor to exercise authority over a
man, but to be in quietness. **13** For Adam was formed first,
then Eve (Eua); **14** and Adam was not deceived, but the
woman, having been deceived, has come into transgression;
15 but she will be saved through the childbearing, if they
remain in faith and love and sanctification with self-control.

1 TIMOTHY 3

Qualifications for Overseers

1 Faithful ***is*** the word: if anyone aspires to ***the*** office of overseer, he desires a good work. **2** Therefore the overseer must
be above reproach, ***the*** husband of one wife, sober,
self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, **3** not
given to wine, not a striker, not greedy for shameful gain,
but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money,
4 managing ***his*** own household well, having children in submission with all dignity **5** (but if one does not know how to
manage ***his*** own household, how will he take care of ***the***
church of God?), **6** not a new convert, lest, having been
puffed up, he fall into ***the*** judgment of the devil. **7** And he
must also have a good testimony from those outside, so that
he may not fall into reproach and ***the*** snare of the devil.

2:9 Prov 31:22; 1 Pet 3:3-5; Isa 3:16
2:10 Acts 9:36,39; 1 Pet 3:3-5; 2 Pet 3:11
2:11 1 Cor 14:34,35; Gen 3:16; Esth 1:20
2:13 Gen 2:7; 1 Cor 11:8,9; Gen 1:27
2:14 Gen 3:6; Gen 3:13; Gen 3:4
2:15 Gen 3:15; Gen 3:16; 1 Tim 1:5
3:1 Acts 20:28; 1 Tim 1:15; 1 Pet 5:2
3:2 Rom 12:13; 2 Tim 2:24; Titus 1:6-9
3:3 Titus 1:7; 1 Tim 3:8; Titus 3:2
3:4 1 Tim 3:12; Titus 1:6; Gen 18:19
3:5 1 Sam 3:13; 1 Tim 3:15; 1 Sam 2:29,30
3:6 1 Cor 3:1; Heb 5:12,13; 1 Pet 2:2
3:7 2 Cor 8:21; 2 Tim 2:26; 1 Cor 10:32

2:9 *to adorn themselves in respectable apparel with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair or gold or pearls* Wealthy Roman women piled their hair high, woven with gold and jewels, to show off wealth and draw the eye. Paul is not listing forbidden hairstyles. A believing woman should not dress to put her wealth or body on display (1 Pet 3:3-4). Modesty is not calling attention to oneself.

2:10 *which is fitting for women professing reverence for God, through good works* A woman who claims to worship God shows it best by how she serves others. This applies to all of us. What do people notice first about you, what you wear and own, or how you treat people? Clothes wear out. Good works for the Lord last forever.

2:11 *Let a woman learn in quietness in all submission* Paul commands that women learn, no small thing when many women were not taught the Scriptures and some rabbis would not teach them. Quietness is a settled spirit, a different word from the silence of 1 Corinthians 14:34 and the same root as the quiet life of verse 2. Submission is under the order God set in the church. All agree this lifts women up as learners. They differ on how far the quietness reaches.

2:12 *I do not permit a woman to teach, nor to exercise authority over a man* That is what the text plainly says. Exercise authority is authentein, a rare word found only here in the New Testament. Many believe this applies to all churches in all times, reserving the office of pastor or elder and the teaching of the gathered church for qualified men, while women serve in many ways, including teaching women and children (Titus 2:3-4). Some draw the line only at the office of elder. Others believe Paul addressed a local problem in Ephesus, where some women were drawn in by false teachers (5:13-15; 2 Tim 3:6-7), and read authentein as seizing or domineering authority. All agree men and women are equal in worth (Gal 3:28), and women in Scripture prayed, prophesied and spread the gospel (Acts 18:26; Rom 16:1-3). Each church must study this with 1 Corinthians 11 and 14 and apply it with a clear conscience.

2:13 *For Adam was formed first, then Eve* Paul's reason points not to the culture of Ephesus but to creation before the fall (Gen 2:7, 21-22). Those who see verse 12 as for all times see this as the key. Those who see it as local reply that Paul uses Adam and Eve as an example to correct women being led astray. In the Lord man and woman depend on each other (1 Cor 11:11-12).

2:14 *Adam was not deceived, but the woman, having been deceived, has come into transgression* The serpent deceived Eve (Gen 3:1-6, 13). Adam sinned with open eyes, and Paul lays the blame for sin entering the world on him (Rom 5:12). Some see God's order reversed in the garden. Others see a picture of women in Ephesus deceived by false teachers. Paul is not saying women are less intelligent or more sinful than men.

2:15 *she will be saved through the childbearing, if they remain in faith and love and sanctification with self-control* One of the hardest verses in Paul. It cannot mean earning salvation by having children, for Jesus is the only Mediator and we are saved by grace through faith (Eph 2:8-9), and many godly women never have children. Some see the childbearing as the birth of Christ, the promised Seed (Gen 3:15). Others read saved as kept safe through childbirth, the pain that came with the fall (Gen 3:16). Others see a woman working out her salvation in her God-given calling. What is plain is the condition: real faith keeps going.

3:1 *if anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a good work* The second faithful saying. Overseer is episkopos, which some older Bibles render bishop. The same men are called elders, for their maturity, and shepherds or pastors, for their work (Acts 20:17, 28; Titus 1:5-7; 1 Pet 5:1-2). It is good to want it, but it is a good work, not a high position, a hard job. A man should want it to serve God's people, not for a title.

3:2 *the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife* Above reproach heads the list. It means no open, ongoing sin others can fairly point to, not sinlessness. The Greek reads a one-woman man. Some read it as ruling out polygamy, some as ruling out divorce and remarriage, some as faithful to his wife whatever his past before Christ, and a few as requiring marriage. Most agree a married overseer must be fully faithful to his wife. Hospitable is a lover of strangers. Able to teach is the one skill on the list, to explain and defend God's Word (Titus 1:9).

3:3 *not given to wine, not a striker, not greedy for shameful gain* Not a drinker, not quick with his fists, not using the ministry to make money. He must be gentle and willing to yield, not a lover of a fight or of money. A man who loves money will bend the truth to keep the giving up. A shepherd who is gentle and content can tell people the truth.

3:4 *managing his own household well, having children in submission with all dignity* A man's home is the testing ground for his leadership. With all dignity likely describes how he leads, with respect and not harshness. Take care of the church (3:5) is the word used of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:34-35). Leading a church is caring for people, and a man who has not led his own small family with love will not lead God's larger one well.

3:6 *not a new convert, lest, having been puffed up, he fall into the judgment of the devil* New convert means newly planted. Pride is the danger of a new believer given a high place too soon. The judgment of the devil is most likely the judgment the devil fell into through pride. A gifted new believer may look ready, but character takes time. Churches should not rush people into leadership because they are talented or well known.

3:7 *he must also have a good testimony from those outside* Neighbors, coworkers, business partners. Does he pay his bills, keep his word, work honestly? A leader with a bad name in town gives the devil a trap to bring shame on Christ. The life a man lives outside the church matters as much as what he does inside it.

Qualifications for Deacons

8 Deacons likewise ***must be*** dignified, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy for shameful gain, **9** holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience. **10** And let these also be tested first; then let them serve, being blameless. **11** Women likewise ***must be*** dignified, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. **12** Let deacons be husbands of one wife, managing ***their*** children and ***their*** own households well. **13** For those who have served well acquire for themselves a good standing and great boldness in ***the*** faith which ***is*** in Christ Jesus (Iesous).

The Household of God

14 These things I am writing to you, hoping to come to you sooner; **15** but if I delay, ***I write*** so that you may know how ***one*** must conduct oneself in ***the*** household of God, which is ***the*** church of ***the*** living God, ***the*** pillar and foundation of the truth. **16** And confessedly great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in flesh, was justified in spirit, was seen by angels, was proclaimed among ***the*** Gentiles, was believed on in ***the*** world, was taken up in glory.

1 TIMOTHY 4

A Warning About Apostasy

1 But the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and teachings of demons, **2** in ***the*** hypocrisy of liars, having been seared ***in*** their own conscience, **3** forbidding to marry, ***and commanding*** to abstain from foods which God created for receiving with thanksgiving by those who are faithful and have come to know the truth. **4** For every creature of God ***is*** good, and nothing ***is*** to be rejected, being received with thanksgiving; **5** for it is sanctified through ***the*** word of God and prayer.

Train Yourself for Godliness

6 Laying these things before the brothers, you will be a good servant of Jesus (Iesous) Christ, being nourished in the words of the faith and of the good teaching which you have closely

3:8 Phil 1:1; Acts 6:3-6; Ps 12:2
3:9 1 Tim 1:5,19; 1 Tim 3:16; 2 John 1:9,10
3:10 1 Tim 5:22; 1 Tim 3:6; 1 John 4:1
3:11 Titus 2:3; 2 Tim 3:3; 1 Tim 3:2
3:12 1 Tim 3:2,4,5
3:13 Matt 25:21; Luke 16:10-12; Luke 19:17
3:14 1 Tim 4:13; 1 Cor 11:34; 1 Cor 16:5-7
3:15 Deut 5:26; 1 Sam 17:26; 1 Sam 17:36
3:16 Heb 1:3; Rom 16:25; Luke 24:4
4:1 2 Tim 3:1-9; 2 Pet 3:3; 2 Thess 2:3
4:2 Eph 4:19; Rom 16:18; 1 Kgs 13:18
4:3 Rom 14:6; Heb 13:4; Gen 9:3
4:4 Gen 1:31; Acts 21:25; Rom 14:14,20
4:5 1 Tim 4:3; Luke 11:41; 1 Cor 7:14
4:6 Col 4:7; Col 3:16; 1 Tim 1:10

3:8 *Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued* Deacon means servant. Many see the beginning of the work in the seven who cared for widows so the apostles could give themselves to prayer and the Word (Acts 6:1-6). Double-tongued is saying one thing to one person and another to the next. A deacon hears much in many homes, and he often handled the church's money and gifts to the poor, so honesty was a must.
3:9 *holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience* A mystery is a truth once hidden and now revealed, here the gospel summed up in verse 16. A deacon need not be a preacher, but he must hold sound doctrine firmly, and his life must match it. A man who believes rightly but lives a double life is not fit to serve, however practical his gifts.
3:10 *let these also be tested first; then let them serve, being blameless* Also shows overseers were tested too. This is not a formal exam but a time of watching to see if character is real. Blameless means much the same as above reproach. Good churches take their time choosing leaders.
3:11 *Women likewise must be dignified, not slanderers* The Greek word means women and can also mean wives. Some see the wives of deacons, who would work beside them. Others see women who served as deacons, pointing to Phoebe, a diakonos of the church at Cenchrea (Rom 16:1), and to likewise, which also began the deacons' list. Slanderers is diabolos, the word for the devil, the great slanderer. Gossip is the devil's work.
3:12 *Let deacons be husbands of one wife, managing their children and their own households well* The same standards for home and marriage apply to deacons, with the same range of readings as in verse 2. No man must have a perfect family, for every family has struggles, but he must be faithful and caring in the home God gave him.
3:13 *those who have served well acquire for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith* Good standing likely means respect in the church and approval before God. Boldness is confidence in speaking of the faith and in drawing near to God. Faithful service in small things strengthens faith. God sees and honors it (Matt 25:21). Many of the most faithful saints serve quietly behind the scenes.
3:15 *how one must conduct oneself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth* Paul hoped to come soon (3:14) but put this in writing, and God kept it for every church. This is the key verse of the letter. The church is God's family, belongs to the living God, and like a pillar holds up the truth for all to see and like a foundation keeps it steady. When a church stops teaching the truth, it stops doing its God-given job.
3:16 *God was manifested in flesh* Confessedly means beyond all doubt. The six lines may be an early hymn. The eternal Son became a man (John 1:1, 14), was shown righteous by the Spirit, above all in His resurrection (Rom 1:4), was watched by angels, preached to the nations, believed on, and taken up to reign (Acts 1:9-11). The SLB follows the Received Text in reading God. Most older copies read who, meaning Christ. No teaching rests on this verse alone. Jesus is plainly called God elsewhere (John 1:1; 20:28; Titus 2:13).
4:1 *in later times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and teachings of demons* The Spirit had spoken plainly, through prophets, through Jesus (Matt 24:10-12), and through men like Paul (Acts 20:29-30). The later times began with Christ's first coming and run until He comes again (Heb 1:2), and it will grow worse near the end (2 Tim 3:1-5). Behind false teaching is a real enemy who feeds people lies dressed up as religion (2 Cor 11:13-15).
4:2 *in the hypocrisy of liars, having been seared in their own conscience* A hypocrite was an actor wearing a mask. Seared is a hot iron on skin. A brand marked a slave as his master's, and burned skin goes numb. Both fit. When a person keeps saying no to the truth, his conscience hardens until he can lie without feeling it. Listen to your conscience while it is still tender.
4:3 *forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods* They called marriage and sex unholy and set rules about what the godly may eat. It looked spiritual, but Paul says it comes from demons, because it treats God's good gifts as evil. God created marriage (Gen 2:24), Jesus blessed it (John 2:1-11), and the food laws were fulfilled in Christ (Mark 7:19; Col 2:16-17).
4:4 *every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be rejected, being received with thanksgiving* God called all He made very good (Gen 1:31). Sin spoiled the world but did not turn His gifts into evil. Some believers choose not to eat certain things or to stay single for the Lord, and that is fine (1 Cor 7:7; Rom 14:6). The error is making that choice a rule for everyone and calling it holiness.
4:5 *it is sanctified through the word of God and prayer* To sanctify is to set apart for God. His Word declares His gifts good, and our prayer of thanks receives them from His hand. This is a good reason to pray before meals, not to make food holy by magic words but to thank God for His gift.
4:6 *you will be a good servant of Jesus Christ, being nourished in the words of the faith* Timothy was to lay these truths before the church like a meal before a family. Servant is the word for deacon. To feed others he must first feed himself. A pastor not fed by God's Word soon has nothing to give, and that is true of every parent, teacher and group leader.

followed. **7** But refuse the profane and old-womanish myths,
and train yourself for godliness; **8** for bodily training is profitable for a little, but godliness is profitable for all things,
holding promise of the life that ***is*** now and of that which is coming. **9** Faithful ***is*** the word and worthy of all acceptance. **10** For toward this we also toil and are reproached, because
we have hoped in ***the*** living God, who is ***the*** Savior of all men,
especially of believers. **11** Command these things and teach ***them***. **12** Let no one despise your youth, but be a pattern for the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. **13** Until I come, give heed to the reading, to the exhortation, to the teaching. **14** Do not neglect the gift in you, which was given to you through prophecy with ***the*** laying on of the hands of the council of elders. **15** Ponder these things; be in them, so that your progress may be evident in all. **16** Give heed to yourself and to the teaching; continue in them; for doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.

1 TIMOTHY 5

Caring for the Family of God

1 Do not rebuke an older man, but exhort ***him*** as a father,
younger men as brothers, **2** older women as mothers,
younger women as sisters, in all purity.

Caring for Widows

3 Honor widows who are truly widows. **4** But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them learn first to show godliness ***toward their*** own household and to give recompense to ***their*** parents; for this is good and acceptable before God. **5** Now she who ***is*** truly a widow and left alone has hoped in God and continues in the petitions and the prayers night and day; **6** but she who lives in self-indulgence has died while living. **7** And command these things, so that they may be

4:7 1 Tim 1:4; 2 Tim 2:16,23; Titus 3:9
4:8 Matt 6:33; 1 Tim 6:6; Job 5:19-26
4:9 1 Tim 1:15
4:10 Isa 45:21; 1 Tim 2:4,6; 1 John 2:2
4:11 1 Tim 6:2; 2 Tim 4:2; Titus 2:15
4:12 Titus 2:7; 2 Tim 2:22; 1 Pet 5:3
4:13 1 Tim 3:14,15; Deut 17:19; Josh 1:8
4:14 2 Tim 1:6; 1 Tim 1:18; Acts 6:6
4:15 Matt 5:16; Josh 1:8; Ps 1:2
4:16 Titus 2:7,15; Titus 1:9; Ezek 33:7-9
5:1 Lev 19:32; 1 Pet 5:5,6; 1 Tim 5:19,20
5:2 1 Tim 4:12; Matt 12:50; John 19:26,27
5:3 Exod 20:12; Deut 14:29; Deut 10:18
5:4 Matt 15:4-6; John 19:26,27; Mark 7:11-13
5:5 1 Tim 5:3; Luke 2:37; 1 Cor 7:32
5:6 James 5:5; Rev 3:1; Luke 15:24,32
5:7 1 Tim 4:11; Titus 2:15; 1 Tim 1:3

4:7 *refuse the profane and old-womanish myths, and train yourself for godliness* Profane means common, empty of anything holy. Old-womanish was a common saying for silly tales told to children. Paul is not insulting older women but calling the teaching childish nonsense. Train gives us gymnasium. Godliness takes discipline: the Word, prayer, worship, serving, saying no to sin. Grace saves us and also trains us (Titus 2:11-12).
4:8 *bodily training is profitable for a little, but godliness is profitable for all things* Paul is not against exercise, but it helps only for this life and only for a while. Godliness makes us better spouses, parents, workers and friends now, and it lasts into eternity. How much time do we spend on our bodies and hobbies, and how much training for godliness?
4:10 *who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers* The third faithful saying (4:9) may point back to verse 8 or forward to this verse. Toil is work until worn out. This cannot mean all will be saved, for those who reject Christ are lost (John 3:36). Some say God preserves and cares for every life and saves believers eternally. Others say Christ's death is enough for all and offered to all but saves those who believe. Either way, God is a saving God and the gospel is for everyone.
4:11 *Command these things and teach them* Not suggestions. Timothy was to command with apostolic authority and to explain so people understood. Commands without teaching can feel harsh. Teaching without commands can become a discussion that goes nowhere.
4:12 *Let no one despise your youth, but be a pattern for the believers* Timothy's age is not given, but after more than ten years with Paul (Acts 16:1-3) he was likely in his thirties, young for a leader correcting older men. He answers not by arguing but by living, in speech, conduct, love, spirit, faith and purity, especially toward women (5:2). Young believers, you need not wait to be an example.
4:13 *give heed to the reading, to the exhortation, to the teaching* The three main parts of a church meeting. The reading is the public reading of Scripture, as in the synagogue, when few owned a copy. Exhortation is preaching that calls people to act on it. Teaching explains what it means. A church that does these three is doing what God asks.
4:14 *Do not neglect the gift in you, which was given to you through prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the council of elders* Likely the gift of preaching and teaching, which could be neglected and grow weak. When Timothy was set apart, God spoke through prophets (1:18) and the elders laid hands on him, showing the church recognized God's call and stood behind him. Paul's hands were on him too (2 Tim 1:6). Your gifts came from God for a reason. Use them.
4:15 *so that your progress may be evident in all* Ponder means to think deeply, to care for and practice. Be in them means give yourself wholly. Progress was used of an army cutting a path forward. Timothy need not be perfect, but the church should see him growing. Can others see you growing?
4:16 *Give heed to yourself and to the teaching* The whole job in one line, his life and his doctrine. Many leaders fell watching one and ignoring the other. Paul does not mean Timothy saves himself by works. By keeping on in the truth he would persevere, and God would use his faithful teaching to bring others to salvation and keep them in it.
5:1 *Do not rebuke an older man, but exhort him as a father, younger men as brothers* Timothy had to correct people older than himself. He was to do it as a godly son speaks to his father, with respect, appealing rather than scolding. Exhort means to come alongside and urge. Younger men are equals, not subordinates. Younger women are to be treated as sisters, in all purity, with no hint of anything improper (5:2). The church is not a company or a club. It is a family.
5:3 *Honor widows who are truly widows* A widow then often had no government help and no way to earn a living. God's people were commanded to care for widows (Deut 14:28-29), and the church did from the start (Acts 6:1). Honor here includes support. But not every woman who lost her husband needed the church's help.
5:4 *let them learn first to show godliness toward their own household and to give recompense to their parents* Caring for an aging parent is godliness, not just a nice thing. Our parents cared for us when we could not, and when they need help it is our turn. This keeps the command to honor father and mother. The church should not have to do what a family can.
5:5 *she who is truly a widow and left alone has hoped in God* With no family to lean on, she trusts the Lord and prays night and day, like Anna in the temple (Luke 2:36-37). A godly widow can have a great ministry of prayer. The church should never think of such women as a burden. They often hold a church up.
5:6 *she who lives in self-indulgence has died while living* She lives for luxury and ease. She is breathing but spiritually dead. The church's gifts would only feed her self-indulgence. The words apply to anyone. A life spent chasing pleasure looks full outside and is empty inside.
5:7 *command these things, so that they may be above reproach* The same idea as for overseers (3:2). How a church handles money and care for the needy is watched by outsiders. If families neglected parents, or gifts went to women living for pleasure, Christ's name would be dragged through the mud.

above reproach. **8** But if anyone does not provide for ***his*** own, and especially for ***those of his*** household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. **9** Let a widow be enrolled ***who is*** not less than sixty years ***old***, having been ***the*** wife of one husband, **10** being borne witness to for good works: if she has brought up children, if she has shown hospitality to strangers, if she has washed ***the*** feet of saints, if she has relieved those being afflicted, if she has followed after every good work. **11** But refuse younger widows; for when they grow wanton against Christ, they desire to marry, **12** having judgment, because they have set aside ***their*** first faith. **13** And at the same time they also learn ***to be*** idle, going around the houses; and not only idle, but also gossips and busybodies, speaking the things ***they*** ought not. **14** I desire, therefore, younger ***women*** to marry, to bear children, to manage the household, to give no occasion to the one who opposes ***us*** for reviling; **15** for already some have turned aside after Satan. **16** If any believing man or believing woman has widows, let ***that one*** relieve them, and let the church not be burdened, so that it may relieve those who ***are*** truly widows.

Honoring Elders

17 Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who toil in word and teaching. **18** For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it is threshing," and, "The worker ***is*** worthy of his wages." **19** Do not receive an accusation against an elder except on ***the evidence of*** two or three witnesses. **20** Rebuke those who sin before all, so that the rest also may have fear. **21** I solemnly testify before God and ***the*** Lord Jesus (Iesous) Christ and the elect angels, that you keep these things without prejudice, doing nothing out of partiality. **22** Lay hands on no one quickly, nor share in sins of others; keep yourself pure. **23** No longer drink water ***only***, but use a little wine because of your stomach and your frequent ailments. **24** The sins of some men are evident beforehand, going before ***them*** to judgment; but for some they also follow after. **25** Likewise also the good

5:8 Gen 30:30; Isa 58:7; 2 Cor 12:14
5:9 1 Tim 3:2,12; 1 Tim 5:3,4; 1 Tim 5:11,14
5:10 Gen 18:4; 1 Tim 6:18; Titus 3:8
5:11 1 Tim 5:14; 1 Tim 5:9,14; Deut 32:15
5:12 James 3:1; 1 Pet 4:17; Gal 1:6
5:13 Prov 31:27; Prov 20:19; 1 Pet 4:15
5:14 Titus 2:5; 1 Tim 6:1; 1 Tim 4:3
5:15 2 Pet 2:2,20-22; Jude 1:4,5; Phil 3:18,19
5:16 1 Tim 5:3,5; 1 Tim 5:4,8
5:17 Rom 12:8; Phil 2:29; Heb 13:7,17,24
5:18 Deut 25:4; Lev 19:13; Deut 24:14
5:19 Deut 19:15; Deut 17:6; Deut 19:18
5:20 Deut 19:20; Lev 19:17; Deut 21:21
5:21 Ps 107:43; Mal 2:9; Exod 6:13
5:22 Eph 5:11; 1 Tim 4:14; Acts 6:6
5:23 Ps 104:15; 1 Tim 3:3; Prov 31:4-7
5:24 Acts 8:18; 2 Tim 4:10; Acts 1:16-20
5:25 Luke 11:33; 1 Tim 3:7; Matt 5:16

5:8 *if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever* Among the strongest words in the letter. Even many unbelievers care for their families and know it is right. A professing Christian who neglects parents, wife or children falls below the people around him. Faith shows up in how we care for those closest to us.

5:9 *Let a widow be enrolled who is not less than sixty years old, having been the wife of one husband* The church seems to have kept a list of widows it supported, who may also have served by praying, visiting and helping. Sixty was past the age most women then remarried. Wife of one husband most take as a faithful wife. Washing the feet of saints (5:10) was a servant's humble work. A woman who served others all her life was to be served when alone.

5:11 *But refuse younger widows; for when they grow wanton against Christ, they desire to marry* Not refuse help, but refuse the list, which seems to have included a pledge to serve Christ without remarrying. A young widow might make it in grief and later, naturally, want a husband. Most read the first faith she sets aside (5:12) as that pledge. Some read it as falling from faith by marrying an unbeliever. Paul does not want young women making a vow they will likely break.

5:13 *they also learn to be idle, going around the houses* With nothing but time, idleness opens the door to gossip and meddling. Paul says the same of idle men (2 Thess 3:11). When we have too much free time and no purpose, our mouths often get us into trouble. Honest work is a gift from God.

5:14 *I desire, therefore, younger women to marry, to bear children, to manage the household* The normal path then for a young widow, giving her a home, a family and a place to serve. Manage the household means to rule the house. A wife and mother had real authority and real work. The one who opposes may be an enemy of the church or Satan himself (5:15). A godly home shuts the critic's mouth.

5:15 *for already some have turned aside after Satan* It had already happened, perhaps by falling in with the false teachers (2 Tim 3:6) or into immoral lives. Paul's rules come from care, not unkindness. Rules in the church that look strict are often there because someone got hurt before.

5:16 *let the church not be burdened, so that it may relieve those who are truly widows* A church has only so much money. When families do their part, the church can do much more for those with no one. When we take care of our own, we free the church to care for those who have nobody else.

5:17 *Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who toil in word and teaching* Many believe double honor means both respect and pay, as the next verse shows. Toil is work to weariness. Good preaching takes hours of study and prayer. A church should not expect its pastor to give all his time to the Word and leave him struggling to feed his family.

5:18 *You shall not muzzle an ox while it is threshing* The ox treading grain could eat some of it (Deut 25:4), the verse Paul used in 1 Corinthians 9:9. The second saying is Jesus' words in Luke 10:7. Many teachers believe Paul calls both the Scripture, already placing Jesus' teaching beside the Old Testament as God's Word.

5:19 *Do not receive an accusation against an elder except on the evidence of two or three witnesses* From the Law (Deut 19:15) and Jesus (Matt 18:16). Leaders are easy targets, and a pastor who corrects people makes enemies. If every rumor were treated as true, no leader could last. But this is no shield for real sin. Churches must take real reports seriously, especially of abuse, and also protect leaders from gossip and lies.

5:20 *Rebuke those who sin before all, so that the rest also may have fear* Most likely elders shown by witnesses to be sinning and continuing in it. A leader's sin hurts the whole church, so it is dealt with openly, and other leaders take sin seriously. A church that hides its leaders' sins to protect its name ends up losing both its name and its people.

5:21 *before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels, that you keep these things without prejudice* Paul calls heaven as witness. The elect angels did not fall with Satan and watch the church (1 Cor 4:9; Eph 3:10). Prejudice is judging before the facts. Partiality is favoring someone for who they are, a friend or big giver. Every church needs leaders who judge fairly.

5:22 *Lay hands on no one quickly, nor share in sins of others; keep yourself pure* Laying on of hands set elders apart (4:14). Watch a man's life first, as with deacons (3:10). If Timothy put an unfit man in charge, he would share the blame when that man fell. The best way to prevent a scandal is to be careful who is put in charge.

5:23 *use a little wine because of your stomach and your frequent ailments* A personal note, one mark of a real letter. Timothy seems to have drunk only water, perhaps to set an example (3:3; 5:22), but water then often made people sick. A little is no permission to drink much. Many believers choose not to drink at all, a wise choice especially for those who have struggled with alcohol. Keeping pure does not mean neglecting your health.

5:24 *The sins of some men are evident beforehand, going before them to judgment* This ties back to choosing elders. Some sins are open, and others come to light later. Good works too, plain or quiet, will come out in time (5:25). The lesson is patience. Nothing is hidden from God, and one day all will be made known (1 Cor 4:5).

works are evident beforehand, and those that are otherwise are not able to be concealed.

1 TIMOTHY 6

Slaves and Masters

1 Let as many as are slaves under a yoke regard ***their*** own masters worthy of all honor, so that the name of God and the teaching may not be blasphemed. **2** And those who have believing masters, let them not despise ***them*** because they are brothers, but rather let them serve ***them***, because those who partake of the benefit are believers and beloved. Teach and exhort these things.

False Teaching and the Love of Money

3 If anyone teaches different doctrine and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus (Iesous) Christ, and with the teaching according to godliness, **4** he has been puffed up, understanding nothing, but being sick about controversies and disputes about words, out of which come envy, strife, blasphemies, evil suspicions, **5** useless wranglings of men corrupted in mind and deprived of the truth, supposing godliness to be a means of gain. Withdraw from such. **6** But godliness with contentment is great gain. **7** For we brought nothing into the world, ***and it is*** evident that neither are we able to carry anything out. **8** But having sustenance and coverings, with these we will be content. **9** But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires, which plunge men into ruin and destruction. **10** For the love of money is a root of all the evils, which some, stretching after ***it***, have been led astray from the faith and have pierced themselves with many pains.

Fight the Good Fight of the Faith

11 But you, O man of God, flee these things, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, meekness. **12** Fight the good fight of the faith; lay hold of eternal life, to which you were also called, and you confessed the good confession before many witnesses. **13** I charge you before God, who gives life to all things, and Christ Jesus, who testified the good confession before Pontius (Pontios) Pilate (Pilatos), **14** that you keep the commandment without stain, above reproach, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ,

6:1 Titus 2:5,8,10; Isa 52:5; Rom 2:24
6:2 1 Tim 4:11; Gen 16:4,5; Col 4:1
6:3 1 Tim 1:3,6; 1 Tim 1:10; Titus 1:1
6:4 1 Tim 3:6; 1 Tim 1:7; 2 Tim 3:4
6:5 2 Tim 3:8; Titus 1:11; 2 Pet 2:3,15
6:6 Heb 13:5; 1 Tim 4:8; Prov 16:8
6:7 Job 1:21; Eccl 5:15; Ps 49:17
6:8 Matt 6:11,25-33; Gen 28:20; Gen 48:15
6:9 Prov 15:27; 1 Tim 3:7; Matt 13:22
6:10 Mic 3:11; Deut 16:19; Prov 1:19
6:11 1 Kgs 17:18; 2 Tim 2:22; 2 Tim 3:17
6:12 1 Tim 1:18; 1 Cor 9:25,26; Eph 6:10-18
6:13 1 Tim 5:21; Matt 27:11; John 18:36,37
6:14 1 Chr 28:9,10,20; 1 Tim 6:20; 1 Tim 4:11-16

6:1 *Let as many as are slaves under a yoke regard their own masters worthy of all honor* Many in the church were slaves. Roman slavery came through war, debt or birth and differed from race-based American slavery, but it was still one person owning another, and often cruel. A yoke was the bar on an ox's neck, and Paul does not pretend it was easy. He wants their lives to make the gospel look good. These verses were later misused in America to defend slavery, while other Christians reading the same Bible fought to end it. Paul listed enslavers among the lawless (1:10) and told slaves to take freedom if they could (1 Cor 7:21).

6:2 *those who have believing masters, let them not despise them because they are brothers* A slave with a Christian master might think equality in Christ meant he need not work as hard. Paul says serve all the more, for the work blesses a beloved brother. Today this applies to anyone who works for someone else. A Christian boss is a reason to work harder, and whoever your boss is, you serve Christ (Eph 6:7).

6:3 *does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ* Sound means healthy, and these are Jesus' own words. The test of any teaching is whether it agrees with Jesus and His apostles. True doctrine leads to godliness. If a teaching makes people proud, greedy or quarrelsome, it is not from God, however spiritual it sounds.

6:4 *he has been puffed up, understanding nothing, but being sick about controversies and disputes about words* Proud, yet knowing nothing. Sound teaching is healthy, and he is sick with a craving for arguments. Its fruit is envy, strife, slander and suspicion. A church full of arguing is a sign something has gone wrong.

6:5 *supposing godliness to be a means of gain. Withdraw from such* They used religion to make money, and some still promise health and wealth to anyone who gives enough. Paul's answer is short. Get away from them.

6:6 *But godliness with contentment is great gain* Paul turns their words around. Contentment is being satisfied with what God gives. Greek thinkers used the word for a man with enough within himself. For the believer it comes from having Christ (Phil 4:11-13). A godly life and a content heart are richer than a millionaire who always wants more.

6:7 *we brought nothing into the world, and it is evident that neither are we able to carry anything out* We come with empty hands and leave the same way (Job 1:21; Eccl 5:15). Why give our lives to chasing what we cannot keep? The only treasures we carry into eternity are stored up in heaven (Matt 6:19-21).

6:8 *having sustenance and coverings, with these we will be content* Food and clothing, perhaps shelter too. This is no rule that Christians must be poor, for Paul speaks to the rich in verses 17-19. It is a call to measure life by what we need, not by what we want or others have. Do we thank God for what we have?

6:9 *those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare* The problem is not having money but setting the heart on getting rich. That desire tempts us to do wrong and traps us before we know it. Plunge pictures a man pulled under and drowned. Many have lost marriages, health, honesty and faith in the chase.

6:10 *the love of money is a root of all the evils* Paul does not say money is evil, but loving it. It is a root of many kinds of evil, not the only root of every sin. Stretching after it pictures a man reaching to grab, wandering from the faith as he reaches, and wounding himself. Does money have too much hold on my heart?

6:11 *But you, O man of God, flee these things, and pursue righteousness* Man of God was a title for Moses, Elijah and the prophets, one who belongs to God and speaks for Him. Paul says what to run from and what to run toward. Meekness is strength under control. The Christian life is always running from sin and toward Christ.

6:12 *Fight the good fight of the faith; lay hold of eternal life* Fight gives us agony, an athlete's hard contest. Timothy had eternal life, and Paul tells him to grab hold of it daily. The good confession likely points to his baptism or his setting apart, when he confessed that Jesus is Lord. Remember the day you first confessed Christ, and live up to it.

6:13 *Christ Jesus, who testified the good confession before Pontius Pilate* God gives life to all things, so Timothy need not fear death. Before the governor who sentenced Him, knowing what was coming, Jesus did not back down but said He was a king come to testify to the truth (John 18:36-37). That is the example when pressure comes.

6:14 *that you keep the commandment without stain, above reproach, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ* The commandment is likely the whole charge of this letter, the gospel and the life that fits it. Our faithfulness has an end point. One day Jesus will come for His church (1 Thess 4:16-17), and every believer will give account of how we served (2 Cor 5:10). Some apply this word for appearing to His visible return at the end of the Tribulation.

15 which He will display in ***His*** own times, the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of those who reign as kings and Lord of those who rule as lords, **16** who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no one of men has seen or is able to see, to whom ***be*** honor and eternal dominion. Amen.

Charge to the Rich

17 Charge those who are rich in the present age not to be high-minded nor to have set ***their*** hope on ***the*** uncertainty of riches, but in the living God, who provides us all things richly for enjoyment, **18** to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous, ready to share, **19** storing up for themselves a good foundation for the future, so that they may lay hold of eternal life. **20** O Timothy (Timotheos), guard the deposit, turning aside from the profane empty babblings and contradictions of the falsely called knowledge, **21** which some, professing, have missed the mark concerning the faith. The grace ***be*** with you. Amen.

6:15 Ps 47:2; Jer 10:10; Jer 46:18
6:16 Exod 33:20; 1 Tim 1:17; John 1:18
6:17 Rom 11:20; Mark 10:24; Ps 62:10
6:18 Heb 13:16; 1 Tim 5:10; Rom 12:8,13
6:19 1 Tim 6:12; Matt 6:19-21; Luke 16:9
6:20 Rom 3:2; 2 Tim 3:14; Col 2:8,18
6:21 2 Tim 2:18; 1 Tim 6:10; 1 Tim 1:6,19

6:15 *the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of those who reign as kings and Lord of those who rule as lords* God has set the day and will show it when He chooses (Acts 1:7). There is only one Sovereign, and every earthly ruler is under Him. Revelation gives Jesus this title at His return to reign (Rev 19:16). Roman emperors claimed to be lords and even gods. They answer to Him.
6:16 *who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light* Only God has life in Himself that never began and cannot end. His glory is so bright no sinner could come near and live (Exod 33:20). We know Him through His Son (John 1:18). When we see how great God is, our fears and our money look very small.
6:17 *to have set their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but in the living God, who provides us all things richly for enjoyment* Riches belong to the present age and do not last into the next. High-minded is thinking oneself better for having more. Money can be gone in a day. God is not against enjoying His gifts. He gives them to enjoy, but wants us to trust the Giver. By the standards of most of the world, many of us are the rich.
6:18 *to be rich in good works, to be generous, ready to share* A play on rich. Be richer in good works than in money. Ready to share is a heart quick to see a need and meet it. God blesses some with more so they can bless others. Money in a generous believer's hands becomes a tool for God's kingdom.
6:19 *storing up for themselves a good foundation for the future, so that they may lay hold of eternal life* By giving, the rich store treasure in heaven, a foundation that will not crumble (Matt 6:20). This is not buying eternal life, which is a free gift. A person who gives freely shows a heart set on eternity and grabs hold of the life that really is life.
6:20 *O Timothy, guard the deposit* You can hear Paul's heart. A deposit was something valuable left for safekeeping. It is the gospel God gave Paul and Paul gave Timothy, not to be changed, added to or lost. Knowledge is gnosis. A movement called Gnosticism later grew up claiming secret knowledge for a few. Paul says it is falsely so called, empty noise.
6:21 *which some, professing, have missed the mark concerning the faith. The grace be with you* Paul ends where he began (1:6), with a final warning. In the Received Text the you is singular, a last word to Timothy. Many older copies have the plural, for the whole church. Either way his last word is grace, for everything Timothy had to do he could only do by grace. The closing note that the letter was written from Laodicea was added by later copyists.

2 TIMOTHY

Introduction

Title

The letter is named for the man it is written to, Timothy, Paul's "beloved child" (1:2). It is the second of the three Pastoral Letters, with 1 Timothy and Titus, and most Bible teachers believe it is the last letter Paul ever wrote. It is a different kind of letter from 1 Timothy. It is not mainly about how to run a church. It is a father's last words to his son, written from a Roman prison by a man who knew he would soon be put to death.

Author and Date

The letter opens with "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ" (1:1). As with 1 Timothy, the early church received it as Paul's, and many modern scholars doubt it for the same reasons of style and setting. I take the letter at its word. It is the most personal of all Paul's letters, full of names, memories, tears, and small requests: bring my cloak, bring the books, come before winter (4:13, 21). Those are the marks of a real man writing in a real prison.

Paul wrote from Rome (1:17). The early church remembered that he was put to death there under the emperor Nero, who persecuted Christians after the great fire of Rome in A.D. 64. Most who hold that Paul wrote it date the letter about A.D. 66 to 67, from his second imprisonment, shortly before his death.

Background and Setting

Many Bible teachers, going back to the early church, believe Paul was released from the house arrest described at the end of Acts, traveled and preached for a few more years, and was then arrested again. This second imprisonment was very different from the first. In Acts 28 Paul lived in his own rented house and welcomed visitors. Now he is chained like a criminal (1:16; 2:9), friends had to search hard to find him (1:17), and he has already had a first hearing in court where no one stood with him (4:16). Most of his friends have left him, the cell is cold, and he expects to die (4:6).

Timothy was likely still leading the church in Ephesus or nearby. Paul reminds him of the faith of his grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice (1:5), of the day Paul laid hands on him (1:6), and of the persecutions Timothy saw Paul endure in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra (3:11). Timothy seems to have been timid at times, and Paul writes to stir him up and strengthen him, and to call him to come quickly (4:9, 21).

Themes

Paul is passing the torch. He urges Timothy not to be ashamed of the gospel or of Paul His prisoner (1:8), for "God has not given us a spirit of cowardice, but of power and of love and of self-control" (1:7). Timothy must suffer hardship as a good soldier, and hand the truth on: "commit these to faithful men, who will be sufficient to teach others also" (2:2). He must be "a worker not needing to be ashamed, cutting straight the word of truth" (2:15).

Difficult times are coming, when people will have a form of godliness without its power and will heap up teachers who tell them what they want to hear (3:1-5; 4:3-4). The answer is Scripture. "Every Scripture is God-breathed and profitable" (3:16), able to make a person wise for salvation and fully equipped for every good work. So Timothy must preach the word, in season and out of season (4:2). Paul ends looking back on his life and ahead to his reward: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith" (4:7).

Christ in 2 Timothy

Christ Jesus "abolished death and brought life and incorruptibility to light through the gospel" (1:10). Paul calls Timothy to "remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, of the seed of David" (2:8), the risen King who keeps His promises. Even when we are faithless, He remains faithful (2:13). He stood by Paul when everyone else left (4:17). And He is the righteous Judge who will give the crown of righteousness to all who have loved His appearing (4:8). For His church that appearing is the blessed hope, when He comes for His own, and after the Tribulation He will return to the earth and reign in His kingdom (4:1).

Hard Passages

What Paul's "deposit" is (1:12) can be read two ways. Some have used the prayer for Onesiphorus (1:16-18) to support prayers for the dead, though the text does not say he had died. The warning "if we deny Him, He also will deny us" (2:12) is read in three main ways. Jannes and Jambres (3:8) are named from Jewish tradition, not from Exodus. "The mouth of a lion" (4:17) has several readings. The notes name the main views.

Outline

I. Strength for the Struggle (1:1-2:26)
  A. Greeting and thanks for Timothy's faith (1:1-7)
  B. Do not be ashamed of the gospel (1:8-14)
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2 TIMOTHY

2 TIMOTHY 1

Greeting and Thanksgiving

1 Paul (Paulos), an apostle of Jesus (Iesous) Christ through ***the*** will of God, according to ***the*** promise of life which ***is*** in Christ Jesus, **2** to Timothy (Timotheos), ***my*** beloved child: Grace, mercy, peace from God ***the*** Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. **3** I have thanks to God, whom I serve from ***my*** forefathers with a pure conscience, as I have unceasing remembrance of you in my petitions night and day, **4** longing to see you, having remembered your tears, so that I may be filled with joy, **5** taking remembrance of the sincere faith in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice (Eunike), and I have been persuaded that ***it is*** also in you. **6** For which reason I remind you to rekindle the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. **7** For God has not given us a spirit of cowardice, but of power and of love and of self-control.

Do Not Be Ashamed

8 Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but suffer hardship together for the gospel according to ***the*** power of God, **9** who saved us and called ***us*** with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to ***His*** own purpose and grace, which was given to us in Christ Jesus before eternal times, **10** but has now been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who abolished death and brought life and incorruptibility to light through the gospel, **11** for which I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher of ***the*** Gentiles. **12** For which reason I also suffer these things; but I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I have been persuaded that He is able to guard my deposit for that day. **13** Hold the pattern of sound words which you heard from me, in faith and love which ***are*** in Christ Jesus. **14** Guard the

1:1 2 Cor 1:1; John 6:40,54; Eph 3:6
1:2 1 Tim 1:2; Rom 1:7; Rom 12:19
1:3 Rom 1:8; Acts 24:14; Acts 23:1
1:4 2 Tim 4:9,21; Phil 1:8; 1 Thess 2:17-20
1:5 1 Tim 1:5; Acts 16:1; 1 Tim 4:6
1:6 1 Tim 4:14; 1 Pet 4:10,11; 2 Pet 3:1
1:7 Rom 8:15; 1 John 4:18; Acts 1:8
1:8 Mark 8:38; 2 Tim 4:5; 2 Tim 2:9
1:9 Rom 16:25; Titus 3:4,5; Titus 1:2
1:10 Isa 43:3; Isa 45:15; Isa 45:21
1:11 1 Tim 2:7; Acts 9:15; Eph 3:7,8
1:12 2 Tim 1:8; 1 Pet 4:19; Nah 1:7
1:13 Titus 1:9; 2 Tim 3:14; 2 Tim 2:2
1:14 1 Tim 6:20; Rom 8:13; 2 Tim 2:2

1:1 *according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus* Paul is in chains and about to die, yet he does not doubt his calling, which God gave and a prison cell could not change. Writing from death row, the first thing he mentions is life. The life Jesus promises is not ended by an executioner. Whatever you face today, the promise of life in Christ is still true.
1:2 *to Timothy, my beloved child* In 1 Timothy it was my genuine child. Here it is beloved. This letter is warmer and more personal, written to the young man Paul loved like a son, knowing it may be the last time. Grace, mercy and peace again, and Timothy would need all three.
1:3 *whom I serve from my forefathers with a pure conscience* Paul served the God of his Jewish ancestors. Faith in Christ was not a new religion but the fulfillment of the faith of Abraham, Moses and David (Acts 24:14). Condemned as a criminal, he had nothing to hide before God. He could no longer preach in the marketplace, but he could pray for Timothy night and day. Who is praying for you like that, and for whom are you praying?
1:4 *longing to see you, having remembered your tears* They likely parted in tears, perhaps at Paul's arrest. The great apostle admits he missed his friend. Paul was not a cold man who cared only about doctrine. There is no shame in weeping or longing for company. Jesus wanted His friends near in His hour of sorrow (Matt 26:38).
1:5 *the sincere faith in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice* Sincere means without a mask. Timothy's father was a Greek and, as far as we know, not a believer (Acts 16:1). His Jewish mother and grandmother trusted God, later trusted Christ, and taught him the Scriptures from childhood (3:15). They are not famous, but their faith shaped a great leader. If you are raising or teaching children, your quiet faithfulness matters more than you know.
1:6 *to rekindle the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands* A fire burned low, with coals that need stirring into flame. The elders laid hands on him too (1 Tim 4:14). Timothy had not lost the gift. Hard times, criticism and fear make us pull back. We do not need a new gift. We need to use the one God gave.
1:7 *God has not given us a spirit of cowardice, but of power and of love and of self-control* Timothy seems to have been timid by nature (1 Cor 16:10). Fear does not come from God. By His Spirit He gives power to do what He calls us to, love that drives out fear (1 John 4:18), and self-control, a sound mind that thinks clearly under pressure. You are not left to face hard things in your own strength.
1:8 *do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner* The gospel is about a crucified Jew from Galilee, and to Romans the cross was the most shameful death. It took courage to call Him Lord, and to stand by a chained criminal. Paul is Christ's prisoner, not Nero's. He asks Timothy to suffer not in his own strength but by the power of God.
1:9 *who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace* God rescues us and calls us to a holy life. We are not saved because we were good enough but because God purposed it and gave grace we did not deserve (Eph 2:8-9; Titus 3:5). Before eternal times means before the world began. Our salvation was no afterthought.
1:10 *who abolished death and brought life and incorruptibility to light through the gospel* What God planned before time, He showed when Jesus came. Appearing here is His first coming, and elsewhere His coming again (4:1, 8). He did not stop believers from dying, but He broke death's power (1 Cor 15:54-57; Heb 2:14-15). Incorruptibility is life that cannot decay. Waiting for execution, Paul could write this in peace.
1:11 *I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher of the Gentiles* Almost as in 1 Timothy 2:7. A herald announced the king's message in public, an apostle was sent with authority, and a teacher explained. We are not apostles, but every believer passes the message on, in a pulpit, a classroom, a kitchen or a workplace.
1:12 *I know whom I have believed, and I have been persuaded that He is able to guard my deposit for that day* Not what but whom. Paul's confidence was in a Person he knew. A deposit is something valuable left for safekeeping. Some read it as Paul's life and soul entrusted to Christ, others as the gospel Christ entrusted to Paul, which Christ would guard after Paul died. Both are true. That day is when Christ comes and rewards His servants (4:8).
1:13 *Hold the pattern of sound words which you heard from me, in faith and love* A pattern is a model, like an architect's drawing. Sound doctrine alone is not enough, for a man can hold right words with a cold heart. Truth without love is harsh, and love without truth is empty. Jesus was full of both (John 1:14).
1:14 *Guard the good deposit through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us* In verse 12 Christ guards what is entrusted to Him. Here Timothy guards what was entrusted to him, the gospel. He does not do it alone. The Spirit who lives in every believer gives understanding and strength. We keep the faith not by cleverness or courage but by depending on Him.

good deposit through ***the*** Holy Spirit who dwells in us.

Deserted and Refreshed

15 You know this, that all those in Asia turned away from me, among whom are Phygelus (Phygellos) and Hermogenes. **16** May the Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus (Onesiphoros), because he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chain, **17** but having been in Rome (Hrome), he sought me very diligently and found ***me***. **18** May the Lord grant to him to find mercy from ***the*** Lord in that day. And how much he served in Ephesus (Ephesos), you know very well.

2 TIMOTHY 2

Strong in Grace

1 You therefore, my child, be strong in the grace which ***is*** in Christ Jesus (Iesous), **2** and the things which you heard from me through many witnesses, commit these to faithful men, who will be sufficient to teach others also. **3** You therefore suffer hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. **4** No one serving as a soldier entangles himself in the affairs of life, so that he may please the one who enlisted ***him***. **5** And also if anyone competes, he is not crowned unless he competes lawfully. **6** The farmer who toils must be first to partake of the fruits. **7** Consider what I am saying; for may the Lord give you understanding in all things. **8** Remember Jesus Christ, raised from ***the*** dead, of ***the*** seed of David (Dabid), according to my gospel, **9** in which I suffer hardship even to chains as an evildoer; but the word of God has not been bound. **10** Because of this I endure all things for the sake of the elect, so that they also may obtain the salvation which ***is*** in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. **11** Faithful ***is*** the word: for if we died with ***Him***, we will also live with ***Him***; **12** if we endure, we will also reign with ***Him***; if we deny ***Him***, He also will deny us; **13** if we are faithless, He remains faithful; He is not able to deny Himself.

1:15 Phil 2:21; 2 Tim 4:10,16; Acts 19:10,27,31
1:16 Ruth 1:8; 2 Tim 4:19; Phlm 1:7,20
1:17 Acts 28:30,31
1:18 Ruth 1:8; Ruth 2:12; Heb 6:10
2:1 Eph 6:10; 2 Tim 1:7; 1 Cor 16:13
2:2 2 Tim 1:13; 1 Tim 6:12; 1 Tim 1:18
2:3 2 Tim 1:8; 2 Tim 4:5; James 1:12
2:4 Luke 8:14; 2 Tim 4:10; 2 Pet 2:20
2:5 1 Cor 9:24-27; James 1:12; Luke 13:24
2:6 Heb 10:36; Isa 28:24-26; Matt 9:37,38
2:7 1 Chr 22:12; Gen 41:38,39; 1 John 5:20
2:8 Matt 1:1; Rom 2:16; Acts 2:24
2:9 2 Tim 1:8,12,16; Acts 28:31; Phil 1:7
2:10 Col 1:24; 2 Cor 1:6; 2 Cor 4:17
2:11 1 Tim 1:15; 1 Thess 5:10; Rom 6:5,8
2:12 Matt 10:33; Rom 8:17; Rev 20:4,6
2:13 Rom 3:3; Num 23:19; 2 Thess 3:3

1:15 *all those in Asia turned away from me, among whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes* Asia is the province around Ephesus. When Paul was arrested, the believers there pulled away, likely from fear, and all probably means those who could have helped. We know nothing else of these two, remembered only for turning away when Paul needed them. How will you be remembered?

1:16 *he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chain* The opposite picture. Refresh means to cool, to give fresh air, and Onesiphorus brought new life into Paul's dark cell. Rome was huge, and being seen with a condemned prisoner was dangerous, but he searched diligently until he found him (1:17). That is what love looks like.

1:18 *May the Lord grant to him to find mercy from the Lord in that day* As he showed mercy, may he find mercy when Christ judges and rewards His people. Paul greets his household (1:16; 4:19), and some think he had died. Some have used this verse to support prayers for the dead, but the text does not say he had died, and that is too much weight for one verse. He had served faithfully in Ephesus too.

2:1 *be strong in the grace which is in Christ Jesus* Therefore points back to chapter 1. Many turned away, but Onesiphorus stood firm, and Timothy must too. The Greek means to keep on being made strong. Grace is not only how we are saved but the power by which we live and serve. When we feel weak, His power is made perfect in weakness (2 Cor 12:9).

2:2 *commit these to faithful men, who will be sufficient to teach others also* Paul, Timothy, faithful men, and others: four generations in one verse. Paul is about to die and knows the gospel will not survive because of one great leader but as believers train other believers. Commit is the idea of the deposit in chapter 1. Who taught you the faith, and to whom are you passing it on?

2:3 *suffer hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ* The first of three pictures. A Roman soldier marched for miles, carried heavy gear, slept on the ground and faced death. Paul promises no easy road. A good soldier does not complain or run. If our Commander suffered for us, we should not be surprised when serving Him costs us.

2:4 *No one serving as a soldier entangles himself in the affairs of life* A soldier on duty cannot run a business on the side. His focus is his mission and pleasing his commander. Paul made tents himself, so he does not forbid jobs or families. He warns against getting so wrapped up in this life that we forget whom we serve.

2:5 *he is not crowned unless he competes lawfully* In the Greek games the winner was crowned with a wreath of leaves, but one who cut corners lost the prize however fast he ran. We serve God His way, with no shortcuts around holiness or truth. Paul returns to the crown in 4:8. God rewards faithfulness on His terms.

2:6 *The farmer who toils must be first to partake of the fruits* Farming is slow work: plow, plant, weed and wait. Hard work in God's service will bear fruit even if it takes long, and the one who labors in the Word should be supported by it (1 Tim 5:17-18). A soldier must be focused, an athlete disciplined, a farmer patient. Every believer needs all three.

2:7 *Consider what I am saying; for may the Lord give you understanding in all things* Paul leaves the pictures for Timothy to think through. God's Word is meant to be pondered, not skimmed. We read, study and think, and God opens our minds by His Spirit. Bible study is both work and prayer.

2:8 *Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, of the seed of David* When ministry gets hard, remember Jesus. He suffered and died but did not stay dead, so suffering is not the end of the story for His followers. He was a real man in David's royal line, the King God promised would reign forever (2 Sam 7:12-16).

2:9 *I suffer hardship even to chains as an evildoer; but the word of God has not been bound* Evildoer is the word used for the criminals crucified with Jesus (Luke 23:32). Rome could lock up the preacher but not the message. Paul's prison letters have been read for nearly two thousand years. Whatever limits you face, illness, age or prison, God's Word is not limited.

2:10 *I endure all things for the sake of the elect* Paul knew God would save His people and that He uses the preaching of the gospel to do it, so he would suffer anything to get the message out. Teachers who differ on how election works agree that God's choosing never makes evangelism unnecessary. It gives confidence that our preaching is not in vain.

2:11 *if we died with Him, we will also live with Him* The fourth faithful saying, and verses 11 to 13 may be an early hymn. At faith we were joined to Christ's death, and our old self died with Him (Rom 6:3-8). So we will share His resurrection life. For Paul in a cell awaiting execution, this was not theory. Death would bring him into life with Christ.

2:12 *if we endure, we will also reign with Him; if we deny Him, He also will deny us* Those who keep going will reign with Christ in His kingdom on the earth (Rev 20:4-6; 2:26-27). Jesus gave the same warning about denial (Matt 10:33). Some believe it describes people never truly saved. Others believe a believer can turn away and be lost. Others believe it means losing reward and the honor of reigning, not salvation. It is a serious warning. Peter denied the Lord three times and was restored (John 21:15-19). A moment of weakness is not a settled denial.

2:13 *if we are faithless, He remains faithful; He is not able to deny Himself* The pattern breaks. God's faithfulness does not depend on ours. Faithless here may mean weak in trust. God cannot lie (Titus 1:2) or go back on His word. Our hold on Him may be weak, but His hold on us rests on who He is.

A Worker Approved

14 Remind ***them*** of these things, solemnly charging ***them*** before the Lord not to quarrel about words, ***which is*** profitable for nothing, to the ruin of those who hear. **15** Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker not needing to be ashamed, cutting straight the word of truth. **16** But avoid the profane empty babblings; for they will advance to more ungodliness, **17** and their word will spread like gangrene; among whom are Hymenaeus (Hymenaios) and Philetus (Philetos), **18** who have missed the mark concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection has already taken place, and they are overturning the faith of some. **19** Nevertheless, the firm foundation of God stands, having this seal: "***The*** Lord knew those who are His," and, "Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from unrighteousness." **20** Now in a great house there are not only golden and silver vessels, but also wooden and earthen ***ones***, and some for honor and some for dishonor. **21** If therefore anyone cleanses himself from these, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful to the Master, prepared for every good work. **22** And flee youthful desires, and pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. **23** And refuse foolish and uninstructed controversies, knowing that they breed quarrels. **24** And a slave of ***the*** Lord must not quarrel, but be gentle toward all, able to teach, patient when wronged, **25** in meekness disciplining those who oppose, if perhaps God may give them repentance to ***the*** full knowledge of ***the*** truth, **26** and they may return to soberness out of the snare of the devil, having been captured by him for the will of that one.

2 TIMOTHY 3

Difficult Times

1 But know this, that in ***the*** last days difficult times will be present. **2** For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, **3** unloving, irreconcilable, slanderers,

2:14 2 Tim 4:1; 1 Tim 5:21; Rom 14:1
2:15 2 Pet 1:10,15; 2 Cor 5:9; 2 Cor 10:18
2:16 Titus 3:9; 1 Tim 6:20; Ezra 10:10
2:17 1 Tim 1:20; Nah 3:15; James 5:3
2:18 1 Cor 15:12; 1 Tim 1:19; Matt 22:29
2:19 Num 16:5; John 10:14; 1 Cor 8:3
2:20 1 Tim 3:15; 1 Pet 2:5; Lam 4:2
2:21 2 Tim 3:17; Eph 2:10; Ps 119:9
2:22 Gen 39:12; 1 Cor 6:18; 1 Tim 6:11
2:23 Titus 3:9; 2 Tim 2:14,16; 1 Tim 4:7
2:24 Titus 3:2; 1 Tim 3:2,3; Titus 1:7
2:25 1 Tim 2:4; Gal 6:1; Acts 8:22
2:26 1 Tim 3:7; Isa 49:25,26; Ps 124:7
3:1 1 Tim 4:1; 2 Pet 3:3; 2 Tim 4:3
3:2 Jude 1:16; Phil 2:21; Ps 10:3
3:3 Rom 1:31; 1 Tim 3:11; Matt 10:21

2:14 *not to quarrel about words, which is profitable for nothing, to the ruin of those who hear* The false teachers loved fights over fine points that had nothing to do with godly living. Ruin gives us catastrophe, an overturning. Some arguments about the Bible matter greatly, but many are people wanting to win. Will this help anyone love God more?
2:15 *Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker not needing to be ashamed, cutting straight the word of truth* A good motto for every Bible student. Approved means tested and found true, like a coin weighed. A sloppy workman is ashamed when the boss inspects. Cutting straight pictures cutting a straight road or furrow. The teacher handles God's Word carefully and accurately, not twisting it, drawing out what the text says.
2:16 *avoid the profane empty babblings; for they will advance to more ungodliness* Profane means empty of the holy, and babblings sound important but have nothing in them. The false teachers thought they were going deeper. Paul says they were advancing into ungodliness. Wrong belief leads to wrong living, so Timothy must not give these ideas a platform.
2:17 *their word will spread like gangrene; among whom are Hymenaeus and Philetus* Gangrene is rotting flesh that spreads and kills healthy tissue. Hymenaeus was named in 1 Timothy 1:20, and it seems he had not repented. They likely taught that the resurrection was only spiritual and already past at conversion (2:18), with no bodily resurrection. Christ rose bodily, and so will we (1 Cor 15:12-20). False teaching does real harm to real people.
2:19 *the firm foundation of God stands, having this seal* False teachers come and go, but God's foundation, likely His true church built on Christ, is not shaken. The seal is like an inscription on a foundation stone, with two sides. The first echoes Numbers 16:5 at Korah's rebellion. God knows His own, and no false teacher can snatch them. The second calls those who name Christ to turn from sin. God's knowing gives security, and turning from sin gives evidence.
2:20 *in a great house there are not only golden and silver vessels, but also wooden and earthen ones* A wealthy home had fine gold and silver dishes for guests and plain wood and clay ones for everyday and dirty work. The great house is likely the visible church, where true believers and false teachers are mixed for a time.
2:21 *he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful to the Master* Cleansing himself from these most likely means from the dishonorable vessels, the false teachers and their sin. God does not need gold vessels. He needs clean ones. Useful to the Master is one of the best things ever said of a believer. Is your life clean enough for Him to pick up and use?
2:22 *flee youthful desires, and pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace* Youthful desires include sexual temptation and also pride, impatience, love of arguments and wanting to be noticed. Do not stand and fight. Flee, as Joseph did (Gen 39:12). Then run toward the good, with others who call on the Lord from a pure heart. We are not meant to fight temptation alone.
2:23 *refuse foolish and uninstructed controversies, knowing that they breed quarrels* Foolish means senseless, and uninstructed means ignorant. A wise leader learns to tell a real question that deserves an answer from a debate that only causes trouble. Sometimes the godly thing is to refuse the bait.
2:24 *a slave of the Lord must not quarrel, but be gentle toward all, able to teach, patient when wronged* The Master does not want His slave fighting. Able to teach is the overseer's quality (1 Tim 3:2). A servant of God will be wronged, even by fellow believers, and must bear it without bitterness. These are the marks of one who has been with Jesus.
2:25 *in meekness disciplining those who oppose, if perhaps God may give them repentance* Correction is still needed, but with meekness, strength under control. Repentance is a change of mind that leads to a change of life, and God gives it. We speak the truth gently, and God changes hearts. The devil had trapped them like drunk men in a snare (2:26). They thought they were free thinkers. Our goal is not to win an argument but to see them set free.
3:1 *in the last days difficult times will be present* The last days began with Christ's first coming and the pouring out of the Spirit, and we have lived in them ever since. The New Testament also says the end of this age will see a great falling away. "Difficult times" means hard, dangerous seasons, dangerous to the soul. Paul warns Timothy so he will not be surprised, and he expects Timothy to face such men himself (3:5).
3:2 *lovers of self, lovers of money* The list begins with love of self, and that may be the root of all the rest. Love of money comes right after; the two go hand in hand. Boastful people brag with their mouths, and arrogant people look down on others in their hearts. Disobedience to parents marks a society that has lost respect for authority.
3:3 *unloving, irreconcilable, slanderers* Unloving means without the natural affection family members have for each other. Irreconcilable describes people who will not make peace or keep their word. Slanderers translates diabolos, the word used for the devil. "Without love of good" goes past doing evil to hating what is good. This is what people become when they turn from God (Rom 1:28-32).

without self-control, savage, without love of good, **4** traitors, reckless, puffed up, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, **5** having a form of godliness, but having denied its power. And turn away from these. **6** For out of these are those who sneak into the households and take captive the weak women burdened with sins, being led away by various desires, **7** always learning and never being able to come to a knowledge of ***the*** truth. **8** Now in the way that Jannes (Iannes) and Jambres (Iambres) opposed Moses (Moyses), so also these oppose the truth, men depraved in mind, disqualified concerning the faith. **9** But they will not advance further; for their folly will be plain to all, as that of those ***two*** also became.

Hold to the Scriptures

10 But you have closely followed my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, **11** persecutions, sufferings, such as happened to me in Antioch (Antiocheia), in Iconium (Ikonion), in Lystra. What persecutions I endured! And out of ***them*** all the Lord delivered me. **12** And indeed all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus (Iesous) will be persecuted. **13** But evil men and impostors will advance to the worse, deceiving and being deceived. **14** But you, abide in the things which you learned and were assured of, knowing from whom you learned ***them***, **15** and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which ***is*** in Christ Jesus. **16** Every Scripture ***is*** God-breathed and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training which ***is*** in righteousness, **17** so that the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work.

3:4 Phil 3:18,19; 2 Pet 2:10-22; Jude 1:8,9
3:5 Matt 23:27,28; Rom 2:20-24; Isa 29:13
3:6 Jude 1:4; Titus 1:11; Titus 3:3
3:7 Isa 30:10,11; 2 Tim 2:25; 2 Tim 4:3,4
3:8 Exod 7:11; Exod 9:11; 1 Tim 6:5
3:9 Exod 9:11; Exod 8:18; Exod 8:19
3:10 Phil 2:22; 1 Tim 4:6; 1 Tim 6:11
3:11 Ps 34:19; Acts 13:45,50,51; 2 Cor 11:23-28
3:12 Acts 14:22; 1 Pet 2:20,21; 1 Pet 4:12-16
3:13 2 Pet 2:20; 2 Tim 3:8; 1 Tim 4:1
3:14 2 Tim 1:13; 1 Thess 2:13; 2 Tim 2:2
3:15 2 Tim 1:5; 2 Pet 1:20,21; Prov 8:17
3:16 Rom 15:4; Heb 4:12; 2 Pet 1:19-21
3:17 Exod 35:29; Deut 33:1; Josh 14:6

3:4 *lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God* The list began with love and comes back to it. What we love most is what rules us. God is not against pleasure; He gives us all things richly to enjoy (1 Tim 6:17). The trouble comes when pleasure takes His place. Your calendar and your bank account will tell you what you love most.

3:5 *having a form of godliness, but having denied its power* These people are religious. They may attend church and use the right words, but it is only an outward shape, a shell. Real godliness has power to break sin's hold and make people more like Jesus. Like the leaders who honored God with their lips while their hearts were far from Him, they have the look of faith without its life. Timothy was to turn away from them.

3:6 *sneak into the households and take captive the weak women burdened with sins* The false teachers crept in quietly, like thieves. Paul is not saying all women are weak. He describes certain women in Ephesus, burdened with guilt and pulled by their own desires, who were easy targets. A person carrying unconfessed sin looks for relief, and false teachers offer it in the wrong places. The cure is real forgiveness in Christ.

3:7 *always learning and never being able to come to a knowledge of the truth* How can a person keep learning and never arrive? When the goal is curiosity and not obedience, information without change. This is a danger for any of us who love to study. Bible knowledge that does not lead us to know and obey Christ only puffs us up.

3:8 *Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses* The Old Testament does not name Pharaoh's magicians, who copied some of Moses' signs (Exod 7:11, 22). Jewish tradition named two of them Jannes and Jambres, and Paul, writing under the Holy Spirit, uses those names as the names of real men. Like them, the false teachers could imitate God's work for a while. Disqualified means tested and found worthless, like a coin that fails the test.

3:9 *they will not advance further; for their folly will be plain to all* God sets a limit. Pharaoh's magicians failed at the gnats and confessed it was the finger of God (Exod 8:18-19), and later could not even stand before Moses because of the boils (Exod 9:11). False teachers may seem to succeed for a time, but God will expose them. Truth outlasts error, and God is still on His throne.

3:10 *But you have closely followed my teaching, conduct, purpose* "But you" sets Timothy apart from the false teachers. He had walked with Paul for years and seen his life up close. Teaching comes first in the list, but it is not alone: conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love and endurance follow. The false teachers had words without a life to match. Paul had both, and that is the kind of teacher worth following.

3:11 *in Antioch, in Iconium, in Lystra* These cities were in Timothy's home region, and Lystra was his hometown (Acts 16:1-2). On the first journey Paul was driven out of Antioch, threatened in Iconium, and stoned and left for dead at Lystra (Acts 14:19). Paul did not escape suffering, but the Lord brought him through every time. Deliverance does not always mean avoiding pain; it means He carries us through and brings us safely home (4:18).

3:12 *all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted* Few of us want to claim this promise, but Jesus said the same: if they persecuted Him, they will persecute us. The word "all" means every believer, not only apostles. For some today persecution means prison or death; for others it means being mocked, left out, or passed over at work. When it comes, it is not strange. It is part of following Jesus.

3:13 *evil men and impostors will advance to the worse, deceiving and being deceived* An impostor is a fake, a con man; the word was used for sorcerers who deceived with tricks. Such men think they are making progress, but they are going downhill. The deceiver ends up deceived himself. This is one reason the world does not simply get better on its own. Without God, people go from bad to worse.

3:14 *abide in the things which you learned and were assured of, knowing from whom you learned them* Again "but you." While others drift, Timothy must stay put. He did not need new teaching; he needed to keep holding what he had learned. He knew who had taught him, his grandmother Lois, his mother Eunice, and Paul, and he had seen their faithful lives. The character of those who taught us the faith is one of God's gifts.

3:15 *from childhood you have known the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus* The sacred writings are the Old Testament, learned at the knee of his mother and grandmother. They point to Christ (Luke 24:27), showing our sin, God's holiness, and His promise of a Savior. Read with faith in Jesus, they make a person wise for salvation. Parents and grandparents, read the Bible to your children. God's Word plants seeds even in small hearts.

3:16 *Every Scripture is God-breathed and profitable* One of the most important verses in the Bible about the Bible. God-breathed (theopneustos) means Scripture came out of God's own mouth. God did not merely bless what men wrote; He breathed it out. The writers used their own words and styles, but the Holy Spirit carried them along so that what they wrote was exactly what God wanted (2 Pet 1:20-21). Think of a road: teaching shows us the road, reproof tells us when we have left it, correction gets us back on it, and training in righteousness keeps us on it.

3:17 *so that the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work* Fully equipped was used of a ship fitted out for a voyage with everything it needs. Scripture equips us for every good work, not some. The Bible is enough. We need no new revelations or secret knowledge like the false teachers offered. If we want to be ready for what God calls us to do, we must be in His Word.

2 TIMOTHY 4

Preach the Word

1 I solemnly testify therefore before God and the Lord Jesus (Iesous) Christ, who is about to judge ***the*** living and ***the*** dead, according to His appearing and His kingdom: **2** preach the word; be ready in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all patience and instruction. **3** For there will be a time when they will not endure sound teaching, but according to ***their*** own desires they will heap up teachers for themselves, being tickled ***in*** the hearing; **4** and they will on the one hand turn away the hearing from the truth, but will be turned aside to the myths. **5** But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do ***the*** work of an evangelist, fully carry out your ministry.

Finishing the Race

6 For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. **7** I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. **8** From now on ***there*** is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me in that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved His appearing.

Personal Words and Greetings

9 Be diligent to come to me quickly; **10** for Demas has deserted me, having loved the present age, and has gone to Thessalonica (Thessalonike); Crescens (Kreskes) to Galatia, Titus (Titos) to Dalmatia. **11** Luke (Loukas) alone is with me. Take Mark (Markos) and bring ***him*** with you, for he is useful to me for ministry. **12** But Tychicus (Tychikos) I have sent to Ephesus (Ephesos). **13** When you come, bring the cloak that I

4:1 Acts 10:42; 1 Tim 5:21; 2 Tim 2:14
4:2 Titus 2:15; Titus 1:13; 1 Tim 4:13
4:3 2 Tim 3:1-6; Jer 6:16,17; 2 Pet 2:1-3
4:4 1 Tim 1:4; Zech 7:11; Acts 7:57
4:5 2 Tim 1:8; 2 Tim 2:3,10; Acts 21:8
4:6 Num 15:5; Phil 2:17; Phil 1:23
4:7 1 Tim 6:12; Acts 20:24; 1 Cor 9:24-27
4:8 Gen 18:25; Num 4:30; Judg 11:27
4:9 2 Tim 1:4; 2 Tim 4:21
4:10 Phlm 1:24; 2 Tim 1:15; Acts 16:6
4:11 Acts 12:12,25; 2 Tim 1:15; Col 4:14
4:12 Acts 20:4; Eph 6:21; Col 4:7
4:13 Acts 16:8,11; 1 Cor 4:11; 2 Cor 11:27

4:1 *who is about to judge the living and the dead, according to His appearing and His kingdom* Paul gives his final charge as in a courtroom, with God and Christ as witnesses. Every person who has ever lived will stand before Christ. Jesus will appear. For His church that appearing is the blessed hope, when He comes for His own (Titus 2:13; 1 Thess 4:16-17). After the Tribulation He will return visibly to the earth and set up His kingdom, reigning a thousand years (Rev 19:11-16; 20:1-6). Timothy was to serve with that future in front of him.

4:2 *preach the word; be ready in season, out of season* This is the heart of the charge: not opinions, stories, or self-help, but God's Word, announced publicly like a herald. Preach when it is welcome and when it is not. To reprove is to show people their error and convince them; to rebuke is to warn sharply; to exhort is to encourage and urge on. Patience, because people change slowly; instruction, because they need teaching, not just scolding.

4:3 *they will not endure sound teaching, but according to their own desires they will heap up teachers for themselves, being tickled in the hearing* A time will come when people in the church cannot stand healthy doctrine. They will gather a pile of teachers who say what their itching ears want, with nothing about sin, judgment, or repentance. The hearers drive this. When people want comfortable lies, someone will always sell them. With more teachers available than ever, we must test what we hear by God's Word.

4:4 *turn away the hearing from the truth, but will be turned aside to the myths* First they turn their ears from the truth by choice; then they are turned aside. A person who rejects the truth does not stay neutral. He is carried off into error, whether old legends like those in Ephesus or modern ideas that promise what the gospel does not. When people stop listening to God, they will believe almost anything.

4:5 *But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist* "But you" again (3:10, 14). Whatever others do, Timothy must stay clear-headed. Faithful ministry will cost him. Even as a pastor guarding a church, he must keep telling the good news to those who have not heard. "Fully carry out your ministry" means finish the job and do not quit halfway. That charge is for every one of us, in home, church, or work.

4:6 *I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come* Paul is about to die. A drink offering of wine was poured on the altar with the sacrifices (Num 15:1-10), and Paul sees his death as an offering poured out to God (Phil 2:17). Departure was used of a ship pulling up anchor or a soldier taking down his tent. Death is not the end but leaving one place for another: away from the body, at home with the Lord (2 Cor 5:8).

4:7 *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith* Paul looks back on about thirty years of ministry. Like a wrestler, he had struggled hard through beatings, stonings, shipwreck, and prison (2 Cor 11:23-28). Like a runner, he kept going to the end. Like a guard keeping a treasure, he held on to the gospel and handed it on unchanged. Could you say these words if your life ended today? It is not too late to start living so that you can.

4:8 *the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me in that day* The crown was the wreath given the winner in the Greek games. Bible teachers read it either as a crown rewarding a righteous life or as a crown that is righteousness itself, made perfect at the end. Rome judged Paul unfairly, but the Lord is a righteous Judge who will reward His servants at the judgment seat of Christ (2 Cor 5:10). That judgment is about rewards for service, not salvation, and "that day" is the day Christ comes for His own.

4:8 *to all who have loved His appearing* The crown is not only for apostles but for every believer who longs for Jesus to come. Do you love His appearing? People who truly long for Christ's coming live differently today (1 John 3:2-3).

4:9 *Be diligent to come to me quickly* The letter turns personal. The apostle who had faced mobs and storms did not want to face death alone. That is not weakness; it is being human. He says it again in 4:21. We do not know whether Timothy reached Rome in time. A visit, a call, or a letter to someone dying or lonely can mean more than we know.

4:10 *Demas has deserted me, having loved the present age* Demas had been Paul's fellow worker in his first imprisonment (Col 4:14; Phlm 24). He did not leave because of a false teacher. He left because he loved this world's comfort and safety more than Christ's appearing (compare 4:8). That is a warning to us all. Crescens and Titus had not deserted; they had gone on missions. Dalmatia lay on the eastern coast of the Adriatic Sea.

4:11 *Take Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry* Luke, the doctor who wrote the Gospel and Acts, stayed faithful to the end. Years before, Mark left Paul and Barnabas on the first journey, and Paul's refusal to take him again split the two men (Acts 13:13; 15:37-39). Now Mark is useful to him. Mark had grown, and Paul had forgiven. This is the Mark who wrote the Gospel. If you have failed in the past, God is not done with you.

4:12 *Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus* Tychicus was a trusted helper who carried the letters to the Ephesians and Colossians (Eph 6:21-22; Col 4:7-8). Paul may have sent him to take Timothy's place while Timothy traveled, and possibly to carry this letter. Even near death Paul made sure the churches were cared for. A good leader plans for the work to go on without him.

4:13 *bring the cloak that I left in Troas with Carpus, and the books, especially the parchments* Winter was coming and the cell would be cold. The great apostle needed a coat. The books were likely scrolls, and the parchments, written on costly, lasting animal skin, may have been copies of the Old Testament, though we cannot be sure. Facing death, Paul still wanted to read and study. How much more do we need to keep studying God's Word?

left in Troas with Carpus (Karpos), and the books, especially the parchments. **14** Alexander (Alexandros) the coppersmith showed me much evil; may the Lord repay him according to his deeds. **15** You also beware of him, for he has exceedingly opposed our words. **16** At my first defense no one stood with me, but all deserted me; may it not be charged to them. **17** But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me, so that through me the proclamation might be fully carried out, and all the Gentiles might hear; and I was delivered out of ***the*** mouth of a lion. **18** And the Lord will deliver me from every evil deed and will save ***me*** into His heavenly kingdom; to whom ***be*** the glory to the ages of the ages. Amen. **19** Greet Prisca (Priska) and Aquila (Akylas), and the house of Onesiphorus (Onesiphoros). **20** Erastus (Erastos) remained in Corinth (Korinthos), but Trophimus (Trophimos) I left in Miletus (Miletos) sick. **21** Be diligent to come before winter. Eubulus (Euboulos) greets you, and Pudens (Poudes) and Linus (Linos) and Claudia (Klaudia) and all the brothers. **22** The Lord Jesus Christ ***be*** with your spirit. Grace ***be*** with you. Amen.

4:14 2 Sam 3:39; Ps 62:12; 1 Tim 1:20
4:15 2 Tim 3:8; Matt 10:16,17; Phil 3:2
4:16 Acts 7:60; Acts 22:1; Acts 25:16
4:17 Ps 22:21; Acts 9:15; Dan 6:22,27
4:18 Ps 121:7; Rom 11:36; Matt 6:13
4:19 Acts 18:2,18,26; Rom 16:3,4; 1 Cor 16:19
4:20 Acts 20:4; Acts 19:22; Acts 21:29
4:21 2 Tim 4:9,13; 2 Tim 1:4; Rom 16:21-23
4:22 Gal 6:18; Phlm 1:25; Col 4:18

4:14 *Alexander the coppersmith showed me much evil; may the Lord repay him according to his deeds* A coppersmith was a metalworker. He may be the Alexander of 1 Tim 1:20, though we cannot be sure. Perhaps he testified against Paul or helped have him arrested. Paul is not taking revenge but leaving it with God, who judges rightly (Rom 12:19; Ps 62:12). We need not pretend a deep wrong did not happen, but we can hand it to the Lord.
4:15 *he has exceedingly opposed our words* Alexander's hostility was against the gospel Paul's team preached, not only against Paul. Leaving vengeance to God does not mean being naive. We can forgive someone and still be careful around him, especially while he is still doing harm. Paul trusts God with Alexander's judgment and warns Timothy to protect himself.
4:16 *At my first defense no one stood with me, but all deserted me; may it not be charged to them* Many Bible teachers take this as a first hearing in Paul's trial, since a Roman case could be heard more than once before a verdict. Not one friend spoke for him. Yet Paul prays for them, as Jesus prayed for those who crucified Him and Stephen for those who stoned him (Acts 7:60). Paul once watched Stephen die; now he speaks like Stephen. That is what grace does over a lifetime.
4:17 *But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me* When everyone else left, the Lord did not (Heb 13:5). Even at his trial Paul preached, and the message reached the center of the Gentile world. "The mouth of a lion" may picture great danger, as in Ps 22:21. Some believe he was spared literal lions, others that he escaped death at that hearing, and others that it points to Nero or to Satan. Whichever it means, God rescued him for a time.
4:18 *the Lord will deliver me from every evil deed and will save me into His heavenly kingdom* Paul knows he will die soon (4:6). He means God will keep him from every evil that could destroy his soul or turn him from Christ. The Lord might not save him from the executioner, but He would save him through death. Death would be the door into the Lord's presence, and from a Roman dungeon Paul praises God.
4:19 *Greet Prisca and Aquila, and the house of Onesiphorus* Prisca is the short form of Priscilla. She and Aquila were tentmakers who worked with Paul in Corinth, risked their lives for him, and taught Apollos the way of God more accurately (Acts 18:1-3, 26; Rom 16:3-4). After all these years they were still faithful. Paul also remembers the family of the man who searched Rome to find him (1:16-18).
4:20 *Trophimus I left in Miletus sick* Erastus had traveled with Paul and Timothy (Acts 19:22); an Erastus was also city treasurer of Corinth (Rom 16:23), though we cannot be sure he is the same man. Trophimus was from Ephesus (Acts 21:29). Paul had healed many, yet he left Trophimus sick. Healing was not his to do whenever he wished. God does not always heal in this life, even faithful people, and that does not mean they lack faith.
4:21 *Be diligent to come before winter* Most ships stopped sailing the Mediterranean in winter because of the storms (Acts 27:9-12). If Timothy waited, he could not come until spring, and that might be too late. Eubulus, Pudens, Linus, and Claudia were believers in Rome who still cared for Paul. Some early writers name a Linus as an early leader of the church in Rome, but we cannot be certain he is the same man.
4:22 *The Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Grace be with you. Amen* As far as we know, these are the last words Paul wrote. The first blessing is for Timothy; in Greek the second "you" is plural, for the whole church with him. Paul's life began in hatred for Christ and ended with grace on his lips. Tradition says he was beheaded in Rome not long after. The race was over and the crown was waiting. The closing note that the letter was written from Rome when Paul stood before Nero the second time was added by later copyists.

TITUS

Introduction

Title

The letter is named for the man it is written to, "Titus, my true child according to our common faith" (1:4). It is the third of the Pastoral Letters, with 1 and 2 Timothy, and it is very close in subject to 1 Timothy. It is a short letter with one big idea: true teaching produces a godly life. Paul tells Titus to appoint faithful elders, to silence false teachers, and to teach every group in the church how to live in a way that makes the gospel look beautiful.

Author and Date

The letter opens with "Paul, a slave of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ" (1:1). As with the letters to Timothy, the early church received it as Paul's, and some modern scholars doubt it for the same reasons. I take the letter at its word. It names Paul, it names real coworkers and real travel plans (3:12-13), and it fits well with what we know of Paul's work with Titus.

Paul and Titus had worked together on Crete, and Paul left Titus there to finish the work (1:5). This fits best in the time after Paul's release from his first imprisonment in Rome. Paul planned to spend the winter in Nicopolis, most likely the city on the west coast of Greece (3:12). Most who hold that Paul wrote it date it about A.D. 62 to 64, around the same time as 1 Timothy.

Background and Setting

Titus was a Greek, a Gentile believer, and one of Paul's most trusted helpers. He went with Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem, where the apostles did not make him be circumcised (Gal 2:1-3). Later Paul sent him to Corinth to deal with problems there, and Titus came back with good news that comforted Paul (2 Cor 7:6-7). Titus is not named in the book of Acts. By the time of 2 Timothy he had gone to Dalmatia (2 Tim 4:10).

Crete is a large island in the Mediterranean Sea, south of Greece. Paul's ship passed along its coast on the way to Rome (Acts 27:7-13), but Acts has no record of Paul preaching there. Some people from Crete were in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:11), and they may have carried the gospel home. Cretans had a bad name in the ancient world, and Paul quotes one of their own writers: "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy bellies" (1:12). The young churches lacked leaders, and false teachers, "especially those of the circumcision" (1:10), were ruining whole households for money.

Themes

Paul wrote to set the churches of Crete in order by appointing elders in every city (1:5), to silence false teachers, to teach sound doctrine to each group in the church, older men and women, younger women and men, and slaves (chapter 2), and to remind believers that God saved them by His mercy so that they would devote themselves to good works (chapter 3). Good works run all through the letter. We are not saved by them, but we are saved for them.

Twice Paul stops to explain the gospel itself, and these two passages are among the clearest in the Bible. "The grace of God has appeared, which brings salvation to all men" (2:11). It trains us to live godly lives now and teaches us to wait for the blessed hope. And God saved us "not by works which we did in righteousness, but according to His mercy" (3:5), through the new birth the Holy Spirit gives.

Christ in Titus

Paul calls God "our Savior" and Christ Jesus "our Savior" side by side all through the letter (1:3-4; 2:10, 13; 3:4, 6), for the Father and the Son are one God. Titus 2:13 is one of the clearest statements in the Bible that Jesus is God: we are "awaiting the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ." The blessed hope is His coming for His church before the Tribulation, and after the Tribulation He will return visibly to the earth in glory to reign. He "gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all lawlessness" (2:14), and through Him the Spirit is poured out richly on us (3:6).

Hard Passages

"Husband of one wife" (1:6) is read in several ways, as in 1 Timothy 3:2, and "faithful children" may mean believing or well-behaved. The instructions for younger wives (2:4-5) and for slaves (2:9-10) need careful reading in their setting. "The washing of regeneration" (3:5) is read in different ways, and some take it of baptism. The notes name the main views.

Outline

I. Greeting (1:1-4)
II. Leaders for the Church (1:5-16)
  A. Elders for every city (1:5-9)
  B. False teachers to be silenced (1:10-16)
III. Sound Teaching for Every Age (2:1-15)
  A. Older and younger men and women (2:1-8)
  B. Slaves who adorn the teaching (2:9-10)
  C. The grace that trains us and the blessed hope (2:11-15)
IV. Saved by His Mercy to Do Good Works (3:1-15)
  A. Good citizens and gentle neighbors (3:1-3)
  B. Saved by His mercy (3:4-8)
  C. Avoiding quarrels and divisive men (3:9-11)
  D. Final instructions and greetings (3:12-15)

TITUS

TITUS 1

Greeting

1 Paul (Paulos), a slave of God and an apostle of Jesus (Iesous) Christ, according to ***the*** faith of God's elect and ***the*** knowledge of ***the*** truth which ***is*** according to godliness, **2** in hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before eternal times, **3** but in ***His*** own seasons He revealed His word in ***the*** proclamation with which I was entrusted according to ***the*** command of God our Savior; **4** to Titus (Titos), ***my*** true child according to ***our*** common faith: Grace, mercy, peace from God ***the*** Father and ***the*** Lord Jesus Christ our Savior.

Elders for Every City

5 For this reason I left you in Crete (Krete), so that you might set in order the things lacking and appoint elders in every city, as I directed you: **6** if anyone is blameless, a husband of one wife, having faithful children not under accusation of debauchery or insubordinate. **7** For the overseer must be blameless as God's steward, not self-willed, not
quick-tempered, not given to wine, not a striker, not greedy for shameful gain, **8** but hospitable, a lover of good, sensible, righteous, holy, self-controlled, **9** holding firmly to the faithful word according to the instruction, so that he may be able both to exhort in the sound teaching and to reprove those who contradict.

False Teachers on Crete

10 For there are many and insubordinate empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, **11** whom it is necessary to silence, who overturn whole households, teaching things which ***they*** ought not, for the sake of shameful gain. **12** One of them, their own prophet, said, "Cretans ***are***

1:1 Rom 1:1; 1 Tim 6:3; 2 Tim 2:23,25
1:2 2 Tim 1:1; Titus 3:7; 1 John 2:25
1:3 Isa 45:15; Isa 45:21; Ps 106:21
1:4 2 Tim 1:2; Jude 1:3; 2 Cor 2:13
1:5 Acts 14:23; 1 Tim 1:3; Acts 27:7,12,21
1:6 1 Tim 3:2-7; 1 Tim 3:12; Ezek 44:22
1:7 Luke 12:42; 2 Pet 2:10; 1 Pet 5:2
1:8 1 Tim 3:2; 1 Sam 18:1; 1 Kgs 5:1,7
1:9 1 Tim 1:10; 2 Thess 2:15; 2 Tim 1:13
1:10 Acts 20:29; Rom 16:17-18; 2 Cor 11:12-15
1:11 2 Tim 3:6; 1 Tim 6:5; Titus 1:9
1:12 Acts 17:28; Rom 16:18; 1 Tim 4:2

1:1 *Paul, a slave of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ* This is the only place Paul calls himself a slave of God. A slave belongs completely to his master, and Paul saw himself as God's property, there to do His will, and as an apostle sent with Christ's authority. His work was to bring God's chosen people to faith and the knowledge of the truth. That truth is "according to godliness": true doctrine always leads to a godly life, the theme of the whole letter.

1:2 *in hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before eternal times* In the Bible hope is not a wish but a certainty that has not yet arrived. Cretans were known as liars (1:12), but God cannot lie. It is not only that He does not; it would go against His very nature (Heb 6:18). Eternal life for His people was not a backup plan but His purpose from before the world began (2 Tim 1:9).

1:3 *in His own seasons He revealed His word in the proclamation with which I was entrusted* At the right time God made His promise known, not through a secret vision to a few but through public preaching. Paul did not choose this work; it was entrusted to him. Paul calls God "our Savior" here and Christ Jesus "our Savior" in 1:4, and he does this all through Titus. The Father and the Son are both our Savior, because they are one God.

1:4 *to Titus, my true child according to our common faith* Titus was a Greek, a Gentile, and Paul was a Jew, but they shared a common faith. In Christ the old wall between Jew and Gentile had come down (Eph 2:14). "My true child" likely means Paul led him to Christ and trained him, and it shows how Paul loved the men he worked with. Crete was a hard place to serve, and Titus needed the same grace, mercy, and peace as Timothy.

1:5 *I left you in Crete, so that you might set in order the things lacking and appoint elders in every city* To set in order is to straighten out what is still crooked or missing. The young churches on Crete lacked leadership above all. Elders are mature men who lead and shepherd a local church, and the plural shows each church was to have more than one. Titus was carrying out the apostle's directions, not his own plan. A church without godly leaders must be set right before it can grow strong.

1:6 *if anyone is blameless, a husband of one wife, having faithful children* Blameless means no charge can fairly be brought against him; not sinless, but no open, ongoing sin. As in 1 Tim 3:2, Bible teachers read "husband of one wife" as no polygamy, no divorce and remarriage, a man faithful to his wife whatever his past, or a man who must be married. All agree a married elder must be fully faithful to his wife. Some read "faithful" children as believing, others as trustworthy and well-behaved. Either way, his home should show that he leads well.

1:7 *the overseer must be blameless as God's steward* Paul uses elder (1:5) and overseer here for the same man: two names for one office. Elder points to maturity, overseer to the work of watching over the church. A steward managed a household for its owner. The church belongs to God, and the elder will answer to Him for it. He must not be stubborn, short-tempered, a drinker, violent, or in it for the money.

1:8 *hospitable, a lover of good, sensible, righteous, holy, self-controlled* Hospitable means a lover of strangers, with an open home. Sensible is a man who thinks clearly and acts wisely. Holy is devoted to God, and
self-controlled rules his desires instead of letting them rule him. Like the list in 1 Tim 3, most of this is everyday character, not great gifts. God cares more about what kind of man an elder is than how well he speaks.

1:9 *holding firmly to the faithful word according to the instruction* An elder must hold tight to the trustworthy gospel as the apostles taught it and not let go under pressure. He has two jobs with the Word: to exhort, building up the church with healthy teaching, and to reprove, refuting those who speak against the truth. A shepherd feeds the sheep and drives off the wolves, and he can do neither without knowing the Word well.

1:10 *many and insubordinate empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision* Crete needed strong elders because false teachers were many. They refused authority, were full of words with nothing in them, and led people astray. Those of the circumcision were likely Jewish professing believers who taught that Gentile Christians must be circumcised and keep the Law of Moses to be right with God. Paul fought this all his life (Gal 2:3-5; Acts 15:1-2). Salvation is by grace through faith in Christ.

1:11 *whom it is necessary to silence, who overturn whole households* To silence is to stop the mouth, like muzzling an animal. This does not mean force, but refusing them a platform and answering them with the truth. The churches met in homes, and these men were ruining whole families. Money was behind it, and false teachers have often been in it for the money, as they still are (1 Tim 6:5).

1:12 *One of them, their own prophet, said* Paul quotes, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy bellies." Many believe the words come from Epimenides, a poet and wise man of Crete who lived several hundred years before Paul and was looked on as a kind of prophet. The Greeks even made a verb meaning to lie from the name of Crete. Paul is not insulting every Cretan but showing the culture Titus worked in. The gospel can change any people, whatever their reputation.

always liars, evil beasts, lazy bellies." **13** This testimony is true. For which reason reprove them severely, so that they may be sound in the faith, **14** not giving heed to Jewish myths and commandments of men who turn away from the truth. **15** All things indeed ***are*** pure to the pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing ***is*** pure, but both their mind and conscience have been defiled. **16** They profess to know God, but by ***their*** works they deny ***Him***, being detestable and disobedient and disqualified for every good work.

TITUS 2

Sound Teaching for Every Age

1 But you, speak the things which are fitting for sound teaching: **2** older men ***are*** to be temperate, dignified, sensible, sound in the faith, in the love, in the endurance; **3** older women likewise ***are to be*** reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not enslaved to much wine, teachers of good, **4** so that they may train the young women to be lovers of ***their*** husbands, lovers of ***their*** children, **5** sensible, pure, keepers at home, good, being subject to ***their*** own husbands, so that the word of God may not be blasphemed. **6** Likewise exhort the younger men to be sensible, **7** in all things presenting yourself ***as*** a pattern of good works; in the teaching, uncorruptness, dignity, incorruption, **8** sound speech beyond reproach, so that the one from the opposing ***side*** may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say concerning you. **9** Slaves ***are*** to be subject to ***their*** own masters, to be well-pleasing in all things,

1:13 2 Cor 13:10; Titus 2:2; Titus 2:15
1:14 Col 2:22; 2 Tim 4:4; 1 Tim 1:4-7
1:15 Rom 14:20,23; Rom 14:14,20; 1 Cor 10:23,25,31
1:16 Isa 29:13; Ezek 33:31; 2 Tim 3:5-8
2:1 1 Tim 1:10; Titus 1:9; Titus 2:11-14
2:2 1 Pet 4:7; Titus 1:13; Lev 19:32
2:3 1 Tim 3:11; 1 Tim 2:9,10; 1 Pet 3:3-5
2:4 1 Tim 5:14; 1 Tim 5:2,11,14
2:5 1 Tim 6:1; Gen 3:16; Col 3:18
2:6 Eccl 12:1; Job 29:8; Ps 148:12
2:7 1 Tim 4:12; 1 Pet 5:3; 2 Thess 3:9
2:8 Isa 66:5; 1 Pet 2:12,15; 1 Tim 6:3
2:9 Eph 6:5-8; Col 3:22-25; 1 Tim 6:1,2

1:13 *reprove them severely, so that they may be sound in the faith* The false teachers showed these very traits, and Titus could not be soft with them. But the goal of a hard rebuke is not to crush people but to heal them and bring them back to healthy faith. Even the harshest correction in the church should aim at restoring someone. Sometimes love has to speak strongly.

1:14 *not giving heed to Jewish myths and commandments of men who turn away from the truth* The false teachers taught myths, perhaps legends built on Old Testament stories (1 Tim 1:4), and man-made rules about food, washing, and the like. Jesus warned against the Pharisees teaching the commands of men as if they were God's (Mark 7:7-8). Whenever people add their own rules to God's Word and call them holiness, they are turning from the truth.

1:15 *All things indeed are pure to the pure* The false teachers made rules about clean and unclean. For the person whose heart Christ has made pure, God's good gifts are pure. Jesus taught that what defiles a man comes out of his heart, not what goes into him (Mark 7:15, 19). The problem is not in the food but in the heart. These men kept their rules carefully, but their minds and consciences were stained.

1:16 *They profess to know God, but by their works they deny Him* They said the right things, but their lives said the opposite. Our lives show whether we really know God (1 John 2:4). Disqualified means tested and found worthless, like a coin that fails the test. This verse sets up chapters 2 and 3, where Paul shows that real faith shows up in good works. What do your works say about whether you know God?

2:1 *But you, speak the things which are fitting for sound teaching* "But" sets Titus against the false teachers of chapter 1. He is to teach not only sound doctrine but the things that fit it, the kind of life that matches it. Sound doctrine is not only a list of truths to believe; it is a way of life. Right belief and right living belong together, and the rest of the chapter shows what that looks like for every age and station.

2:2 *older men are to be temperate, dignified, sensible, sound in the faith, in the love, in the endurance* Temperate is sober and clear-headed; dignified is worthy of respect; sensible is wise and self-controlled. They are to be healthy in their trust in God, their love for others, and their ability to keep going when life is hard. Men can grow bitter or set in their ways as they age. Paul calls them to grow instead, and to show younger men what a lifetime of following Christ looks like.

2:3 *older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not enslaved to much wine, teachers of good* Their whole way of life should show reverence for God, as if serving in His temple. Slanderers is again diabolos, the devil's own name; gossip is his work, a special danger when people have time on their hands (1 Tim 5:13). Drunkenness seems to have been a real problem on Crete. Older women have a teaching ministry, not from a pulpit, but just as important. Their wisdom is a gift to the church.

2:4 *train the young women to be lovers of their husbands, lovers of their children* It may seem strange to teach a woman to love her husband and children. But real love is more than a feeling. It is a commitment that must be learned, especially when marriage and parenting get hard. Who better to teach it than women who have walked that road?

2:5 *sensible, pure, keepers at home, good, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God may not be blasphemed* Younger wives are to be wise, morally pure, busy caring for their homes, kind, and under their own husbands' leadership. On Crete these qualities would show the world that the gospel makes good families. The submission is to their own husbands, not all men, a willing choice made as to the Lord (Eph 5:22-24), and it never means a wife must accept abuse. Husbands are commanded to love their wives as Christ loved the church (Eph 5:25). Believers apply "keepers at home" in different ways today, but all agree the home is a high calling, not a lesser one. When believers live this way, the gospel is honored.

2:6 *exhort the younger men to be sensible* Only one word for the young men, but a big one: self-controlled, sound-minded, wise. Paul has used it for elders (1:8), older men (2:2), and younger women (2:5). Young men often struggle most with their tempers, desires, tongues, and impulses.
Self-control is part of the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:23). It does not come by willpower alone; it grows as we walk with God.

2:7 *in all things presenting yourself as a pattern of good works* Titus was likely a younger man himself. It was not enough to tell the young men to be self-controlled; he must show them how. His teaching must be pure, untainted by error or by mixed motives like money (1:11), and given with a seriousness that makes people take God's Word seriously. People learn more from watching how we live than from listening to what we say.

2:8 *so that the one from the opposing side may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say concerning you* A teacher will be criticized, but he should not give people a good reason. The enemies of the gospel were watching, and if they found nothing to attack they would be ashamed. Peter says the same: live such good lives that unbelievers see your good works and glorify God (1 Pet 2:12). Your life can answer critics better than any argument.

2:9 *Slaves are to be subject to their own masters* Many slaves were in the church. Roman slavery was not the race-based slavery of American history; people became slaves through war, debt, or birth, and some were teachers, doctors, and managers. But one person still owned another, often cruelly. These verses were later misused in America to defend slavery, while other Christians, reading the same Bible, saw every person made in God's image and fought to end it. Paul never blessed slavery. He told slaves to take their freedom if they could (1 Cor 7:21) and called slave traders lawless (1 Tim 1:10). These are instructions for believers caught in a system they did not create.

not contradicting, **10** not pilfering, but showing all good faith, so that they may adorn the teaching of God our Savior in all things.

The Grace That Trains Us

11 For the grace of God has appeared, which brings salvation to all men, **12** training us that, having denied ungodliness and worldly desires, we should live sensibly and righteously and godly in the present age, **13** awaiting the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus (Iesous) Christ, **14** who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all lawlessness and purify for Himself a special people, zealous for good works. **15** Speak these things, and exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no one despise you.

TITUS 3

Good Citizens

1 Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work, **2** to blaspheme no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all meekness toward all men. **3** For we also were once foolish, disobedient, being deceived, being slaves to various desires and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another.

Saved by His Mercy

4 But when the kindness and the love for mankind of God our Savior appeared, **5** not by works which we did in righteousness, but according to His mercy He saved us, through ***the*** washing of regeneration and renewal of ***the*** Holy Spirit, **6** whom He poured out on us richly through Jesus (Iesous)

2:10 Ps 106:21; Isa 43:3; Isa 43:11
2:11 1 Tim 2:4; Rom 11:5,6; 2 Thess 2:16
2:12 Rom 6:19; Isa 55:6,7; Ezek 33:14,15
2:13 Isa 43:3; Isa 43:11; Isa 45:21
2:14 Ps 130:8; Deut 14:2; Exod 19:5
2:15 2 Tim 4:2; Titus 1:13; Matt 7:29
3:1 Isa 43:26; Rom 13:1-7; Eccl 10:4
3:2 2 Tim 2:24,25; 1 Tim 3:3; Eph 4:31
3:3 Col 3:7; Eph 2:1-3; Col 1:21
3:4 Ps 106:21; Isa 43:3; Isa 43:11
3:5 Ezek 36:25; Ezek 36:27; 1 Cor 6:11
3:6 Ps 106:21; Isa 43:3; Isa 43:11

2:10 *not pilfering, but showing all good faith, so that they may adorn the teaching of God our Savior in all things* Pilfering is stealing small things on the side, and slaves who handled their masters' goods had many chances. To adorn is to make beautiful, like setting a jewel. A slave had no power in society, yet by honest work he could make the gospel beautiful. Today these verses apply to anyone who works for someone else. Honest, faithful work, even when no one is watching, makes the gospel look beautiful.

2:11 *the grace of God has appeared, which brings salvation to all men* Here is the reason behind everything Paul has said. God's grace appeared in Jesus, in His birth, life, death, and resurrection. Salvation is offered to every kind of person: old and young, men and women, slave and free, Jew and Gentile. Paul has just spoken to slaves, the lowest people in Roman society, and God's grace reaches them too. No one is outside its reach.

2:12 *training us that, having denied ungodliness and worldly desires, we should live sensibly and righteously and godly in the present age* Grace does not only save us; it trains us, like a parent raising a child or a coach an athlete. Some think grace means we can live however we want. Paul says the opposite. Grace teaches us to say no to living as if God does not matter and to the cravings of a world turned from Him. It teaches us to say yes: sensibly toward ourselves, righteously toward others, godly toward God, here and now.

2:13 *awaiting the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ* Believers are people who are waiting. The blessed hope is the coming of Jesus for His church. I believe Christ will come for His church before the seven-year Tribulation, catching up living believers to meet Him in the air and raising the dead in Christ (1 Thess 4:13-18; 1 Cor 15:51-52). That is why it is blessed. We are not waiting for the Tribulation or the Antichrist; we are waiting for Jesus. After the Tribulation He will return visibly to the earth in glory to reign (Rev 19:11-16). "Our great God and Savior Jesus Christ" is one of the clearest statements in the Bible that Jesus is God.

2:14 *who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all lawlessness and purify for Himself a special people, zealous for good works* Jesus gave not something but Himself, on the cross. To redeem is to set free by paying a price, from sin's power as well as its penalty. Special means His very own, a treasured possession, as God said of Israel (Exod 19:5). Now He has a people from every nation, but the church has not taken Israel's place; God still has a future for the nation (Rom 11:25-29). We are not saved by good works but for them (Eph 2:8-10).

2:15 *Speak these things, and exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no one despise you* Titus was to teach what Paul had written, encourage people to live it, and correct them when they did not, with the authority of God's Word, not his own. Paul told Timothy nearly the same (1 Tim 4:12). Titus might be young and the Cretans hard, but he need not back down. The way to keep others from despising you is to teach the truth and live it.

3:1 *Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work* Cretans had a reputation for rebellion, and Crete was under Roman rule. Believers were to be good citizens, as Paul and Peter both taught (Rom 13:1-7; 1 Pet 2:13-17). This does not mean obeying a ruler who commands sin; the apostles said they must obey God rather than men (Acts 5:29). But otherwise Christians should keep the law, pay their taxes, respect authority, and be eager to do good in their communities.

3:2 *to blaspheme no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all meekness toward all men* To blaspheme here is to speak evil of someone. Believers should tear down no one with their words, not even rulers they disagree with or neighbors who mistreat them. Peaceable is not looking for a fight; gentle is fair and willing to yield; meekness is strength under control. And it is toward all men, not only believers or people we like. Think about how you speak of people online, at work, or at home.

3:3 *For we also were once foolish, disobedient, being deceived, being slaves to various desires and pleasures* Here is why we should be gentle with unbelievers: we used to be just like them, and Paul includes himself. We thought we were free, but we were slaves. Without Christ the human heart is full of ill will, jealousy, and hatred. When we remember where we came from, there is no room for pride. The only difference between us and the worst sinner we know is the grace of God.

3:4 *But when the kindness and the love for mankind of God our Savior appeared* What a turn. Verse 3 shows us at our worst; verse 4 shows God at His best. Kindness is His goodness toward those who do not deserve it. Love for mankind is philanthropia, which gives us philanthropy. God loves people. These appeared when Jesus came into the world. God did not wait for us to clean ourselves up; He came to us while we were still in our sin (Rom 5:8).

3:5 *not by works which we did in righteousness, but according to His mercy He saved us* This is as clear as the Bible gets. We are not saved by our good deeds, not even the best ones, but because God is merciful and does not give us the punishment we deserve. Salvation is all God's work. Regeneration is new birth, being born again (John 3:3-8), and renewal is being made new. Both are the work of the Holy Spirit.

3:5 *through the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit* Bible teachers read "the washing of regeneration" in different ways. Many believe it is the inner cleansing the Spirit does in new birth (Ezek 36:25-27). Others see baptism as the outward picture of that cleansing. Some churches teach that baptism itself brings new birth. But Scripture plainly teaches salvation by grace through faith (Eph 2:8-9), and this verse says "not by works which we did." Repentance and faith come first; baptism is the believer's obedient public step that follows.

3:6 *whom He poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior* The Spirit was not given in drops but poured out, a flood, richly. This happened first at Pentecost (Acts 2:17, 33), and it happens to every believer at faith in Christ (Rom 8:9). Jesus promised to send the Spirit (John 16:7), and He did. Notice the Trinity in verses 4-6: God our Savior, the Holy Spirit, and Jesus Christ our Savior all work together in our salvation.

Christ our Savior, **7** so that, having been justified by the grace of that One, we might become heirs according to ***the*** hope of eternal life. **8** Faithful ***is*** the word, and concerning these things I want you to affirm confidently, so that those who have believed God may take care to devote themselves to good works. These things are the good and profitable ***things*** for men. **9** But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and strifes and fights about ***the*** law; for they are unprofitable and futile. **10** Reject a factious man after one and a second admonition, **11** knowing that such a one has been perverted and is sinning, being self-condemned.

Final Instructions and Greetings

12 When I send Artemas to you, or Tychicus (Tychikos), be diligent to come to me at Nicopolis (Nikopolis), for I have decided to winter there. **13** Diligently send Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on ***their*** way, so that nothing may be lacking for them. **14** And let our ***people*** also learn to devote themselves to good works for the necessary needs, so that they may not be unfruitful. **15** All who ***are*** with me greet you. Greet those who love us in ***the*** faith. Grace ***be*** with you all. Amen.

3:7 Isa 53:11; Rom 8:17,23,24; Titus 1:2
3:8 1 Tim 1:15; Titus 2:14; Rom 4:5
3:9 2 Tim 2:14; 2 Tim 2:23; Titus 1:14
3:10 Rom 16:17; 2 John 1:10; 2 Tim 3:5
3:11 Acts 15:24; 1 Tim 1:19,20; 2 Tim 2:14
3:12 Acts 20:4; 2 Tim 4:12; 2 Tim 4:9,21
3:13 Acts 18:24; Matt 22:35; Luke 7:30
3:14 Phil 1:11; Col 1:10; Phil 4:17
3:15 Rom 16:1-20; Gal 5:6; Eph 6:23

3:7 *having been justified by the grace of that One, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life* To be justified is to be declared righteous by God, as a judge declares someone not guilty, by grace and not by anything we did (Rom 3:24; 4:5). We are not only forgiven but made heirs (Rom 8:17). The letter began with the hope of eternal life (1:2), and it returns here. Our past is forgiven, our present is filled with the Spirit, and our future is secure. That is the gospel.
3:8 *Faithful is the word* The fifth and last faithful saying in the Pastoral Letters points back to the gospel of verses 4-7. Titus was to teach it with confidence, over and over, so that believers would devote themselves to good works. We are not saved by good works (3:5), but those who are saved will do them. Grace is the root and good works are the fruit, and they bless families, churches, and towns.
3:9 *avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and strifes and fights about the law* The false teachers on Crete, like those in Ephesus, loved to argue about family trees and fine points of the Law of Moses (1 Tim 1:4, 7). Such arguments produce nothing good. Bible study that leads to endless arguing instead of godly living has missed the point. There is a place to defend the truth (1:9), but not for arguments that only stir up fights.
3:10 *Reject a factious man after one and a second admonition* A factious man causes divisions, forming a party around himself or his ideas. The Greek hairetikos gives us heretic, though here it means mainly a divisive person. Warn him once, then twice; if he still will not listen, have nothing more to do with him and refuse him a place in the fellowship, much like the steps in Matt 18:15-17. The church should be patient, but not endlessly.
3:11 *such a one has been perverted and is sinning, being self-condemned* Perverted means twisted, turned inside out. A man who keeps causing division after two warnings shows something is twisted inside. He was warned and chose not to listen, so he has passed judgment on himself. When the church separates from him, it is not condemning him; he has condemned himself. Even then, the hope is always that he will repent and return (2 Tim 2:25-26).
3:12 *be diligent to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to winter there* Paul planned to send Artemas or Tychicus to take Titus's place so he could come. We know nothing else of Artemas; Tychicus was one of Paul's most trusted helpers (2 Tim 4:12). Nicopolis means city of victory. Several cities had that name, but most believe this was the one on the west coast of Greece. Sea travel stopped in winter, and Paul planned to spend it there, likely preaching.
3:13 *Diligently send Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way, so that nothing may be lacking for them* Zenas may have been an expert in the Law of Moses or a Roman lawyer. Apollos was the gifted preacher from Alexandria who served in Ephesus and Corinth (Acts 18:24-28). The two may have carried this letter. Titus and the church were to supply what they needed for the journey. Helping traveling servants of God is an important ministry (3 John 5-8), and those who support them share in their work.
3:14 *let our people also learn to devote themselves to good works for the necessary needs, so that they may not be unfruitful* This is the third call for good works in this chapter (3:1, 8, 14), and helping Zenas and Apollos was a good place to start. Believers should meet real needs of travelers, the poor, the sick, and their own families. Cretans were known as "lazy bellies" (1:12); believers were to be the opposite, hard-working and generous. A life without good works is like a tree without fruit (Matt 7:17-20).
3:15 *Grace be with you all. Amen* Their bond was not family or nation but shared faith in Christ. Paul ends with grace as he began (1:4), and "you all" is a blessing on the whole church on Crete. The letter has called for blameless leaders, godly lives in every group, and devotion to good works, but none of it is possible without God's grace. Grace saves us, trains us, and will carry us until Jesus comes. The closing note that the letter was written from Nicopolis of Macedonia was added by later copyists.

PHILEMON

Introduction

Title

The letter is named for the man it is written to, "Philemon our beloved and fellow worker" (1). It is the shortest of Paul's thirteen letters and one of the four Prison Letters, written at the same time as Colossians and carried to the same town. Unlike Paul's letters to churches, it is personal. It is written to one man about one problem: a slave named Onesimus, who had wronged his master and left, has become a believer, and Paul is sending him home.

Author and Date

The letter opens, "Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy the brother" (1). Paul names himself three times (1, 9, 19) and writes part of it with his own hand (19). Very few scholars, even among those who doubt some of Paul's letters, doubt that he wrote Philemon. Its names match the end of Colossians, and it was accepted early as Paul's.

Paul was a prisoner (1, 9, 10, 13, 23). Most believe he wrote from Rome during his house arrest, about A.D. 60 to 62 (Acts 28:16, 30-31), at the same time as Colossians and Ephesians. Some suggest an earlier imprisonment in Ephesus, much closer to Colosse. Onesimus carried the letter home, traveling with Tychicus (Col 4:7-9).

Background and Setting

Philemon was a believer of some means who owned at least one slave and had a house large enough for the church to meet in. He seems to have come to Christ through Paul (19), most likely during Paul's years in Ephesus. Apphia was most likely his wife, and Archippus may have been their son. Since Colossians places Onesimus and Archippus in Colosse (Col 4:9, 17), most believe Philemon lived there too.

Onesimus, whose name means useful, had wronged his master, perhaps by stealing or by running off and leaving his work undone (18). Somehow he came to Paul in prison and there came to faith (10). Most believe he was a runaway who fled to Rome to get lost in the crowds. Some suggest he went to Paul on purpose, looking for a friend of his master to plead for him. Either way, he was a new man, and Paul was sending him back.

Roman slavery was not the same as race-based American slavery. People became slaves through war, debt or birth, and some held skilled jobs. But it was still one person owning another, and often cruel. A runaway could be beaten, branded, or even put to death. This letter was later misused in America to argue that runaway slaves must be returned. That reading turns it upside down. Paul was not hunting a runaway. He was pleading for one and calling his master to treat him as family.

Themes

The theme is the gospel at work in a broken relationship. Paul asks Philemon to forgive Onesimus and receive him "no longer as a slave, but above a slave, a beloved brother" (16). He appeals in love rather than command (8-9), so that Philemon's good deed would be willing, not forced (14). Paul does not attack slavery head on, but he cuts at its roots. Once master and slave see each other as brothers who answer to the same Lord, slavery cannot stand for long. Paul hints that he would like Onesimus back to serve with him (13, 21) but leaves the choice to Philemon.

Scripture does not tell us how Philemon answered. That the letter was kept and shared suggests he did what Paul asked. About fifty years later Ignatius wrote to the church in Ephesus and named its bishop Onesimus. Some believe this was the same man, but we cannot be sure.

Christ in Philemon

Philemon is a living picture of what Christ has done for us. Onesimus had wronged his master and owed a debt he could not pay. Paul stepped in and said, "receive him as me" (17), and "if he has wronged you in anything, or owes you, charge this to me" (18). That is substitution, one standing in the place of another. We owed God a debt we could never pay, and Jesus took it on Himself (Col 2:14). Our sins were put on His account, and His righteousness was put on ours (2 Cor 5:21). God receives us as He receives His own Son, because we are in Christ (Eph 1:6).

Hard Passages

Verse 6 is hard to put into plain English, and Bibles word it differently. Whether Paul is quietly asking for Onesimus's freedom (16, 21) is a hint many see, not a direct command. "An old man" (9) is very close in Greek to the word for ambassador, and some Bibles read it that way. The notes name the main views.

Outline

I. Greeting and Thanks for Philemon (1-7)
  A. Greeting (1-3)
  B. Thanks for Philemon's love and faith (4-7)
II. Paul's Appeal for Onesimus (8-21)
  A. An appeal of love (8-11)
  B. Receive him as a brother (12-16)
  C. Charge it to me (17-21)
III. Closing Words and Greetings (22-25)

PHILEMON

PHILEMON 1

Greeting

1 Paul (Paulos), a prisoner of Christ Jesus (Iesous), and Timothy (Timotheos) the brother, to Philemon our beloved and fellow worker, **2** and to Apphia the beloved, and to Archippus (Archippos) our fellow soldier, and to the church at your house: **3** Grace to you and peace from God our Father and ***the*** Lord Jesus Christ.

Philemon's Love and Faith

4 I thank my God, always making mention of you in my prayers, **5** hearing of your love and the faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus and toward all the saints, **6** so that the fellowship of your faith may become effective in ***the*** knowledge of every good ***thing*** which ***is*** in you toward Christ Jesus. **7** For we have much joy and encouragement over your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, brother.

Paul's Appeal for Onesimus

8 Therefore, having much boldness in Christ to command you what is fitting, **9** for the sake of love I rather appeal ***to you***, being such a one as Paul, an old man, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ. **10** I appeal to you for my child, whom I have begotten in my chains, Onesimus (Onesimos), **11** who once ***was*** useless to you, but now ***is*** useful to you and to me, **12** whom I have sent back; and you, receive him, that is, my own heart, **13** whom I was wishing to keep with myself, so that on your behalf he might serve me in the chains of the gospel. **14** But apart from your consent I wished to do nothing, so that your good ***deed*** might not be as according to necessity, but according to willingness. **15** For perhaps for this reason he was separated ***from you*** for an hour, so that you might have him back eternally, **16** no longer as a

1:1 2 Cor 1:1; Eph 3:1; Col 1:1
1:2 Col 4:17; Phil 2:25; Rom 16:5
1:3 Rom 1:7; 2 Cor 13:14; Eph 1:2
1:4 Rom 1:8; Eph 1:16; Phil 1:3
1:5 Eph 1:15; Col 1:4; Gal 5:6
1:6 Phil 1:9-11; 2 Cor 9:12-14; Titus 3:14
1:7 2 Cor 7:13; Phlm 1:20; 2 Tim 1:16
1:8 2 Cor 3:12; 2 Cor 10:1,2; 2 Cor 11:21
1:9 Eph 4:1; Rom 12:1; 2 Cor 5:20
1:10 Col 4:9; 1 Cor 4:15; Gal 4:19
1:11 2 Tim 4:11; Luke 17:10; Rom 3:12
1:12 Matt 6:14,15; Matt 18:21-35; Mark 11:25
1:13 1 Cor 16:17; Phil 2:30; Phlm 1:1
1:14 Phlm 1:8,9; 2 Cor 1:24; 1 Chr 29:17
1:15 Gen 50:20; Gen 45:5-8; Acts 4:28
1:16 Matt 23:8; 1 Tim 6:2; Col 3:22

1:1 *Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus* In most letters Paul opens as an apostle. Here he is about to ask a favor, not give an order, so he calls himself a prisoner. Philemon could hardly refuse a man in chains for Christ. Rome held the chains, but Paul saw himself as Christ's prisoner. Philemon was more than a host. He worked beside Paul for the gospel.

1:2 *to Apphia the beloved, and to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church at your house* Apphia was most likely Philemon's wife. She ran the household, and her welcome of Onesimus would matter too. Archippus may have been their son (Col 4:17). The church met in Philemon's home, so this private matter would be known to all who gathered there. Our faith is never only a private matter.

1:3 *Grace to you and peace* Paul's usual greeting fits this letter well. He is about to ask Philemon to show grace to someone who did not deserve it and make peace with one who had wronged him. God gave us grace when we did not deserve it, and He asks us to pass it on.

1:5 *hearing of your love and the faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus and toward all the saints* Paul prayed for Philemon by name, with thanks (1:4). Love comes first here, perhaps because love is what he is about to ask for. Paul is about to add one more saint to that list. Real love for all the saints has to include the ones who have hurt us.

1:6 *that the fellowship of your faith may become effective* A hard verse to put into plain English, and Bibles word it differently. The fellowship of faith is the sharing that comes from belonging to Christ together. Paul prays it would get to work in action and lead to fuller knowledge of every good thing we have in Christ. Faith shared and lived out grows. Philemon was about to have a chance to put his faith to work.

1:7 *the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, brother* Refreshed was used for rest given a tired traveler or a soldier after a march. Hearts is the word for the inner parts, the deepest feelings, and Paul uses it again in verses 12 and 20. Philemon had refreshed many saints. Now Paul asks him to refresh one more. Notice the word brother. It will matter in this letter.

1:8 *having much boldness in Christ to command you what is fitting* As an apostle, Paul could have ordered Philemon. For love's sake he appeals instead (1:9). Love does not force, and a forced kindness is not much of a kindness. Paul wanted Philemon to act from his heart.

1:9 *being such a one as Paul, an old man* Paul was probably in his late fifties or early sixties, old for a man beaten, stoned and shipwrecked (2 Cor 11:23-27). The Greek for old man is very close to the word for ambassador, and some Bibles read it that way. Either way, he comes not as a boss but as a worn-out old friend in chains.

1:10 *my child, whom I have begotten in my chains, Onesimus* Paul calls him my child before he names him, so by the time Philemon reached the name, he knew this man was dear to Paul. Paul led him to Christ in prison and often called his converts his children (1 Cor 4:15; Gal 4:19). The gospel was not chained (2 Tim 2:9). God can use you right where you are.

1:11 *who once was useless to you, but now is useful to you and to me* A play on words, for Onesimus means useful. He had not lived up to his name, but Christ changes people. The change was real enough that Paul staked his own name on it. Many who are written off are one encounter with Jesus away from becoming useful to God.

1:12 *receive him, that is, my own heart* Under Roman law a runaway slave could be harshly punished, and Onesimus was going home to face the man he had wronged. Becoming a believer does not erase our responsibilities. Real repentance faces the people we have hurt. Paul was sending a piece of himself.

1:13 *so that on your behalf he might serve me in the chains of the gospel* Onesimus had become a real help in prison, and Paul would have liked to keep him. On your behalf gently suggests that his service would count as Philemon's own, and Philemon owed Paul much (1:19). But Paul would not make that choice for him.

1:14 *so that your good deed might not be as according to necessity, but according to willingness* Keeping Onesimus would have taken a decision that belonged to Philemon. Paul wanted his goodness free, not forced. God does not want grudging obedience. He loves a cheerful giver (2 Cor 9:7). When we lead others, we should give them the same respect.

1:15 *he was separated from you for an hour, so that you might have him back eternally* Notice perhaps. Paul does not claim to know God's every purpose. He does not say he ran away but he was separated, as if God had a hand in it. The sin was real, yet God used it to bring him to Christ (Gen 50:20; Rom 8:28). Philemon lost a slave for a while and got back a brother forever.

1:16 *no longer as a slave, but above a slave, a beloved brother* The heart of the letter. He would be a brother to Philemon both in the flesh, in daily life in the same house, and in the Lord. Paul does not order his release, but many see a strong hint in these words and in verse 21. A master who sees his slave as a beloved brother cannot treat him as property. The gospel planted a seed that would help bring down the whole system. This was never a blessing on slavery.

slave, but above a slave, a beloved brother, especially to me, but how much more to you, both in ***the*** flesh and in ***the*** Lord.

Charge It to Me

17 If then you consider me a partner, receive him as me. **18** But if he has wronged you ***in*** anything, or owes ***you***, charge this to me. **19** I, Paul, wrote with my own hand, I will repay ***it***; that I may not say to you that you owe me even your own self besides. **20** Yes, brother, may I have benefit from you in ***the*** Lord; refresh my heart in ***the*** Lord. **21** Having been persuaded of your obedience, I wrote to you, knowing that you will do even beyond what I say.

Final Greetings

22 And at the same time also prepare a lodging for me; for I hope that through your prayers I will be granted to you. **23** They greet you: Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, **24** ***as do*** Mark (Markos), Aristarchus (Aristarchos), Demas, Luke (Loukas), my fellow workers. **25** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ ***be*** with your spirit. Amen.

1:17 2 Cor 8:23; Matt 10:40; Acts 16:15
1:18 Isa 53:4-7
1:19 Gal 5:2; 1 Cor 16:21,22; Gal 6:11
1:20 Phlm 1:7,12; 2 Cor 2:2; 2 Cor 7:4-7,13
1:21 2 Cor 2:3; 2 Cor 7:16; 2 Cor 8:22
1:22 Phil 2:24; 2 Cor 1:11; Acts 28:23
1:23 Col 1:7; Rom 16:7; Col 4:12
1:24 Col 4:14; Col 4:10; 2 Tim 4:10
1:25 2 Tim 4:22; Rom 16:20,24

1:17 *If then you consider me a partner, receive him as me* If Paul came to the door, Philemon would give him the best room. That is how he is to receive a slave who wronged him. God receives us as He receives His own Son because we are in Christ (Eph 1:6), and He calls us to receive one another the same way (Rom 15:7).
1:18 *if he has wronged you in anything, or owes you, charge this to me* Forgiveness is not pretending. There was a real wrong and a real debt. Charge this to me means put it on my account. That is the gospel. We owed a debt we could never pay (Col 2:14). Our sins were put on Christ's account and paid in full, and His righteousness was put on ours (2 Cor 5:21). That is substitution, one standing in another's place.
1:19 *I, Paul, wrote with my own hand, I will repay it* Paul takes the pen and writes like signing a promise to pay. Then a gentle reminder: Philemon came to Christ through Paul and owed him his very soul. Paul says he will not mention it, and mentions it. There may be a smile here, but the point is serious. Remembering how much we have been forgiven makes forgiving easier (Matt 18:21-35).
1:20 *may I have benefit from you in the Lord; refresh my heart in the Lord* Benefit is related to the name Onesimus, another play on words. Philemon had refreshed many (1:7). Now Paul asks him to refresh Paul's own heart. Forgiving others brings joy to all who love us both, and above all to the Lord.
1:21 *knowing that you will do even beyond what I say* Paul has asked, not commanded, but he trusts Philemon will obey the Lord. Paul does not say what lies beyond receiving him as a brother. Many believe he hinted at freedom for Onesimus, or sending him back to help Paul. When God's people forgive, the best of them go further than they were asked.
1:22 *prepare a lodging for me* A guest room. Paul hoped to be released and come, and he would see for himself how Onesimus was treated. Prayer is not a formality. God uses it. Many believe Paul was released, traveled a few more years, and was later arrested again (2 Tim 4:6-8, 16-17). Scripture does not say whether he reached Colosse.
1:23 *Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus* Epaphras started the church in Colosse (Col 1:7; 4:12). He may have been arrested or chose to share Paul's imprisonment. The others appear in Colossians 4:10-14: Mark, who failed and was restored, Aristarchus, who stayed close through riot and shipwreck, Demas, who would later desert Paul (2 Tim 4:10), and Luke. A whole team was watching and praying.
1:25 *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit* The letter begins and ends with grace. Philemon could show grace to Onesimus only by Christ's grace working in him. We cannot forgive in our own strength, but the grace that forgave us can work in us. Your is plural in Greek. The last word is for the whole church in Philemon's house, and for us.

HEBREWS

Introduction

Title

The title To the Hebrews was added early, and it fits the letter well. The readers were Jewish believers who knew the Law of Moses, the priests and the sacrifices, and the writer argues from the Old Testament on almost every page. Hebrews sits right after Paul's thirteen letters and before James. Unlike most letters, it opens with no name and no greeting. It begins with God Himself, speaking.

Author and Date

Hebrews does not name its writer. We know he was a man, that he knew Timothy (13:23), and that he heard the gospel from those who had heard the Lord Himself (2:3). Paul is the oldest suggestion, and some early churches in the east placed Hebrews among his letters. Others have named Barnabas, a Levite called "Son of Encouragement" (Acts 4:36), Luke, a careful writer of Greek, and Apollos of Alexandria, "mighty in the Scriptures" (Acts 18:24). Those who doubt Paul wrote it note that the Greek differs from his letters, that Paul always gives his name, and that Paul received the gospel straight from Jesus (Gal 1:11-12), while this writer says it was confirmed to him by others. The early teacher Origen is remembered for saying that only God knows who wrote it. That is still the honest answer. The letter's place in Scripture has never depended on knowing his name. The church received it because it teaches the same Christ the apostles preached.

Hebrews was most likely written before A.D. 70, when the Romans destroyed the temple. The writer speaks of the priests and their sacrifices as still going on (8:4; 10:1-2, 11), and if the temple had already fallen he would surely have mentioned it, since it proved his point. Most who hold this view date the letter in the 60s A.D. Some scholars date it later, in the 80s or 90s. Scripture does not give the date.

Background and Setting

The readers had been believers for some time (5:12). In their early days they suffered for Christ, lost property and stood by those in prison (10:32-34), but they had not yet faced death for their faith (12:4). Now they were growing tired. Some had stopped meeting with the other believers (10:25), and some were tempted to turn back to the temple and its sacrifices to escape pressure and shame. Scripture does not say where they lived. Some think of Jerusalem or Judea, near the temple. Others think of Rome, because the writer sends greetings from "Those from Italy" (13:24), and an early letter from the church in Rome, usually dated about A.D. 95, uses words from Hebrews.

The writer calls his letter "the word of exhortation" (13:22). It reads like a sermon written down. Teaching and warning go hand in hand all the way through.

Themes

God's last and greatest word is His Son, and the Son is better than everything that came before Him. The word better runs all through the letter: a better hope (7:19), a better covenant and better promises (8:6), better sacrifices (9:23), a better possession (10:34), a better country (11:16) and a better resurrection (11:35). Jesus is better than the prophets and the angels, better than Moses, and better than Joshua, who could not give Israel the true rest (4:8). He is a better High Priest than Aaron, after the order of Melchizedek, with a better tabernacle in heaven and a better sacrifice, His own blood, offered once for all. The old things were not bad. God gave them. But they were shadows, and Jesus is the real thing they pointed to.

Because the Son is so much greater, the writer keeps calling his readers to hold on. Do not drift away. Do not harden your hearts. Go on to maturity. Draw near and hold fast. Run the race, looking to Jesus. Five warning passages (2:1-4; 3:7-4:13; 5:11-6:12; 10:26-39; 12:14-29) stand beside strong promises (6:9-20; 7:25; 10:14, 39). Chapter 11 shows what living faith looks like, from Abel to the martyrs, and chapters 12 and 13 show how it runs, endures the Father's discipline, loves and worships.

Christ in Hebrews

No book of the Bible says more about who Jesus is and what He does now. He is the Son through whom God made the ages, "the radiance of the glory and the exact representation of His substance" (1:3). He is called God (1:8) and Lord of creation (1:10). He became fully human, sharing our blood and flesh, so that through death He might break the devil's power and set us free from the fear of death (2:14-15). He is the faithful Son over God's house (3:6), the greater Joshua who brings us into God's rest, and our great High Priest who was tempted in all things yet without sin (4:15). He offered Himself once for all (7:27), entered heaven itself by His own blood (9:12, 24), and sat down at God's right hand (10:12). He always lives to intercede for us (7:25), He is the mediator of the new covenant (8:6), the great Shepherd of the sheep (13:20), and He "will appear a second time" for those who eagerly await Him (9:28). "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" (13:8).

Hard Passages

Who is in danger in the five warning passages, and what is the danger (2:1-4; 3:7-4:13; 6:4-8; 10:26-31; 12:14-29)? Good Bible teachers read them four ways: true believers facing God's discipline and loss of reward; people in the church who professed faith but never truly believed; true believers who can lose salvation; or the writer describing what would happen if a believer could fall away, to stir his readers up. The notes give these views fairly at each warning and do not settle the question. All agree the warnings are meant to be taken seriously, and the writer puts strong assurance right beside them.

Who was Melchizedek (7:1-3)? Most see a real king-priest whom Genesis presents without a family line, as a picture of Christ. Others see an appearance of the Son of God before His birth. The notes name the views.

How does the new covenant, promised to the house of Israel and the house of Judah (8:8-12), apply to the church? The notes explain that believers share its blessings now through the blood of Jesus, while God will keep His promise to Israel as a nation when Christ returns (Rom 11:25-29). The church has not replaced Israel.

Smaller questions, such as the Sabbath rest of 4:9, the altar of incense in 9:4, the word covenant or will in 9:16-17, and "our body washed with pure water" in 10:22, are treated in the notes with the main views named.

Outline

I. The Son Better Than the Prophets and the Angels (1:1-2:18)
- A. God has spoken in His Son (1:1-4)
- B. The Son above the angels (1:5-14)
- C. Do not drift away (2:1-4)
- D. The Son made like His brothers (2:5-18)

II. The Son Better Than Moses and Joshua (3:1-4:13)
- A. Faithful over God's house (3:1-6)
- B. Do not harden your hearts (3:7-19)
- C. A rest for the people of God (4:1-13)

III. The Son Our Better High Priest (4:14-7:28)
- A. A High Priest who sympathizes (4:14-5:10)
- B. Go on to maturity (5:11-6:12)
- C. God's sure promise and oath (6:13-20)
- D. Melchizedek greater than Levi (7:1-10)
- E. A Priest forever (7:11-28)

IV. A Better Covenant and a Better Sacrifice (8:1-10:39)
- A. The new covenant (8:1-13)
- B. The earthly tabernacle (9:1-10)
- C. Once for all by His own blood (9:11-28)
- D. One sacrifice for all time (10:1-18)
- E. Draw near and hold fast (10:19-25)
- F. Do not shrink back (10:26-39)

V. The Life of Faith (11:1-13:25)
- A. Faith from Abel to Noah (11:1-7)
- B. The faith of the patriarchs (11:8-22)
- C. The faith of Moses and Israel (11:23-31)
- D. Faith that conquered and suffered (11:32-40)
- E. Run the race, looking to Jesus (12:1-3)
- F. The Father's discipline (12:4-13)
- G. Do not refuse Him who speaks (12:14-29)
- H. Love and holy living (13:1-6)
- I. Outside the camp (13:7-19)
- J. Blessing and greetings (13:20-25)

HEBREWS

HEBREWS 1

God Has Spoken in His Son

1 In many portions and in many ways God, having spoken
long ago to the fathers in the prophets, **2** has in these last
days spoken to us in a Son, whom He appointed heir of all
things, through whom also He made the ages; **3** who, being
the radiance of the glory and ***the*** exact representation of His
substance, and upholding all things by the word of His
power, having made purification of our sins through Himself,
sat down at ***the*** right ***hand*** of the Majesty on high, **4** having
become so much better than the angels, as He has inherited a
more excellent name than they.

The Son Above the Angels

5 For to which of the angels did He ever say, "You are My
Son; today I have begotten You"? And again, "I will be to Him
a Father, and He will be to Me a Son"? **6** And when He again
brings the Firstborn into the world, He says, "And let all ***the***
angels of God worship Him." **7** And regarding the angels He
says, "He who makes His angels spirits, and His ministers a
flame of fire." **8** But to the Son: "Your throne, O God, ***is*** to the
age of the age; a scepter of uprightness ***is*** the scepter of Your
kingdom. **9** You have loved righteousness and hated lawless-
ness; because of this God, Your God, has anointed You with
the oil of exultation above Your companions." **10** And: "You,
Lord, in ***the*** beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and
the heavens are ***the*** works of Your hands. **11** They will per-
ish, but You remain; and they all will grow old like a gar-
ment, **12** and like a robe You will roll them up, and they will
be changed. But You are the same, and Your years will not
fail." **13** But to which of the angels has He ever said, "Sit at
My right ***hand*** until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your
feet"? **14** Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth for
service for the sake of those who are about to inherit salva-
tion?

1:1 Gen 6:3; Gen 28:14; 2 Pet 1:20,21
1:2 1 Cor 8:6; Num 24:14; Deut 4:30
1:3 Ps 110:1; 1 Chr 29:11; Job 37:22
1:4 Gen 32:1; Ps 45:2; Eph 1:21
1:5 2 Sam 7:14; 1 Chr 17:13; Ps 2:7
1:6 Deut 32:43; Ps 97:7; Prov 8:25
1:7 Ps 104:4; Ezek 1:13; Dan 7:10
1:8 Ps 45:6-7; Isa 9:6; Zech 9:9
1:9 Isa 61:3; Isa 61:1; Ps 23:5
1:10 Ps 102:25-27; Gen 1:1; Deut 4:19
1:11 Isa 51:6,8; Isa 34:4; Heb 12:27
1:12 Heb 13:8; Exod 3:14; James 1:17
1:13 Ps 110:1; Matt 22:44; Heb 1:3
1:14 Ps 91:11; Ps 91:12; Ps 34:7

1:1 *In many portions and in many ways God, having spoken long ago to the fathers in the prophets* The letter opens with God, not with a greeting. God is a God who speaks. He gave His truth a piece at a time over more than a thousand years, through Moses, David, Isaiah and many others, in visions, laws, songs and history. The writer does not run down the Old Testament. It was God speaking, and every piece pointed forward to Someone.

1:2 *has in these last days spoken to us in a Son* "These last days" is the age that began when Jesus came (Acts 2:16-17). Then, through the prophets. Now, in One who is a Son, not a servant. A prophet carried God's word. The Son is God's Word (John 1:1, 14).

1:2 *through whom also He made the ages* The Son was not made. He was there at the beginning, and the Father made everything through Him (John 1:3; Col 1:16). "The ages" covers the whole universe and all its history.

1:3 *the radiance of the glory and the exact representation of His substance* Radiance is the brightness that shines out from a light. You cannot have the sun without its light. The Greek word charakter is the mark a stamp leaves pressed into wax, matching the stamp exactly. If you want to know what God is like, look at Jesus (John 14:9).

1:3 *having made purification of our sins through Himself, sat down* The Creator became the sacrifice. That is the heart of the whole letter. The priests in the temple never sat down, because their work was never done (10:11). Jesus sat down because His work was finished (Ps 110:1).

1:4 *having become so much better than the angels* The first use of the word "better," which runs all through the letter. The Son became better as the One who came down, became a man, died, rose and was exalted (Phil 2:8-9). Jewish teachers held that angels had a part in giving the Law at Sinai (2:2; Acts 7:53), so the readers held them in high honor.

1:5 *You are My Son; today I have begotten You* Psalm 2:7, where God sets His King on Zion. Paul applied this "today" to the resurrection (Acts 13:33). The second quote is God's promise to David about his royal son (2 Sam 7:14). Solomon was the first fulfillment, but a throne forever finds its full meaning only in Jesus, the Son of David.

1:6 *when He again brings the Firstborn into the world* Firstborn here is not the first one created. It is the son with the place of honor and the right to inherit (Ps 89:27). "Again" may point to Christ's return to the earth in glory, or it may simply bring in another quote. Good teachers hold both. The quote follows the Greek Old Testament of Deuteronomy 32:43 (compare Ps 97:7). Angels refuse worship (Rev 22:8-9). They worship the Son, because He is God.

1:7 *He who makes His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire* Psalm 104:4. God uses His angels the way He uses wind and fire. They are mighty and fast, but they are servants. To the angels He says, you are My servants. To the Son He says, "Your throne, O God."

1:8 *Your throne, O God, is to the age of the age* From Psalm 45:6-7, a royal wedding song. The Father speaks to the Son and calls Him God, one of the clearest places in the New Testament where Jesus is called God. "To the age of the age" is a Greek way of saying forever. A scepter is the rod a king held as a sign of his authority.

1:9 *God, Your God, has anointed You* The Son is called God, and yet He has a God. That is no contradiction. It is the Trinity, one God in three Persons, and the Son as Messiah and as a man honors His Father.

1:10 *You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth* Psalm 102:25-27. In the psalm these words are spoken to the LORD, the God of Israel. The writer says they are spoken of the Son. So the Son is the Lord who made the heavens and the earth.

1:12 *But You are the same, and Your years will not fail* The world looks solid, but it is wearing out like old clothes, and one day He will roll it up and change it (2 Pet 3:10-13; Rev 21:1). Jobs, health and friends come and go. The One we trust does not change (13:8).

1:13 *Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet* Psalm 110:1, the Old Testament verse quoted most often in the New. Jesus used it to show the Messiah is David's Lord (Matt 22:41-46). A footstool means total victory. Jesus is seated now, waiting for the day every enemy is put down (10:12-13; 1 Cor 15:25). No angel was ever told to sit on God's throne.

1:14 *ministering spirits, sent forth for service for the sake of those who are about to inherit salvation* Every angel, even the mighty ones, is a servant sent out to serve God's people (Ps 91:11; Acts 12:7-11). We are not told to pray to them or worship them. "About to inherit" looks ahead to the whole of salvation we will receive when Jesus comes for His own.

HEBREWS 2

Do Not Drift Away

1 Because of this we must give heed more abundantly to the
things which have been heard, lest we drift away. **2** For if the
word spoken through angels was firm, and every transgres-
sion and disobedience received a just recompense, **3** how will
we escape, having neglected so great a salvation, which,
having received a beginning by being spoken through the
Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard, **4** God bearing
witness with ***them***, both by signs and wonders and various
miracles, and by distributions of ***the*** Holy Spirit according to
His will?

The Son Made Like His Brothers

5 For He did not subject to angels the world to come, con-
cerning which we speak. **6** But someone has solemnly testi-
fied somewhere, saying, "What is man, that You are mindful
of him, or a son of man, that You care for him? **7** You made
him a little lower than ***the*** angels; You crowned him with
glory and honor, and appointed him over the works of Your
hands; **8** You put all things in subjection under his feet." For
in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing unsubjected to
him. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him.
9 But we see Him who was made a little lower than ***the***
angels, Jesus (Iesous), because of the suffering of death
crowned with glory and honor, so that by ***the*** grace of God He
might taste death for everyone. **10** For it was fitting for Him,
because of whom ***are*** all things and through whom ***are*** all
things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make perfect the
founder of their salvation through sufferings. **11** For both
the One who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified
are all of one; for which reason He is not ashamed to call
them brothers, **12** saying, "I will declare Your name to My
brothers; in ***the*** midst of ***the*** assembly I will sing praise to
You." **13** And again, "I will be trusting in Him." And again,
"Look, I and the children whom God has given Me." **14** Since
therefore the children have shared in flesh and blood, He
Himself also likewise partook of the same, so that through
death He might render powerless the one who holds the
power of death, that is, the devil, **15** and might set free those
who through fear of death were subject to slavery through-
out all ***their*** life. **16** For surely He does not take hold of
angels, but He takes hold of ***the*** seed of Abraham (Abraam).

2:1 Heb 1:1,2; Luke 8:15; 2 Pet 3:1
2:2 Exod 32:27; Num 14:28; Num 16:31
2:3 Isa 62:11; Isa 20:6; Ezek 17:18
2:4 Dan 4:35; Ezek 4:3; Dan 4:3
2:5 Heb 6:5; 2 Pet 3:13; Rev 11:15
2:6 Ps 8:4-6; Ps 144:3; Job 7:17
2:7 Gen 1:26
2:8 Gen 1:26; 1 Cor 15:27; John 13:3
2:9 Isa 53:2; Ps 8:4-5; Isa 53:3
2:10 Luke 24:26,46; Rom 11:36; Heb 6:20
2:11 Ps 22:22; Heb 10:10,14; Heb 13:12
2:12 Ps 22:22; Ps 40:10; Ps 111:1
2:13 Isa 8:17; Isa 8:18; Gen 33:5
2:14 Gen 3:15; Isa 7:14; Isa 53:12
2:15 Rom 8:15,21; 2 Tim 1:7; Ps 55:4
2:16 Heb 6:16; Heb 12:10; Rom 2:25

2:1 *lest we drift away* The first warning in Hebrews, and the writer includes himself. The word was used of a ship drifting past the harbor, or a ring slipping off a finger. Drifting takes no effort. A believer stops reading the Word, stops praying, stops meeting with other believers, and slowly floats away. The answer is to pay close attention to what we have heard.

2:2 *the word spoken through angels was firm* The Law given at Sinai. Stephen and Paul both say angels had a part in delivering it (Acts 7:53; Gal 3:19; compare Deut 33:2). A transgression is stepping over a line. Disobedience here is refusing to listen. The punishment always fit the sin.

2:3 *how will we escape, having neglected so great a salvation* From the lesser to the greater: if the message brought by angels carried such weight, how much more the message brought by the Son? Many will be lost not because they fought the gospel but because they never took it seriously. The writer counts himself among those who received it from the apostles, one reason many think he was not Paul.

2:4 *by signs and wonders and various miracles* God backed up the apostles' preaching (Acts 2:43; 5:12; 14:3). The Spirit gives gifts as He chooses (1 Cor 12:11). Whether sign gifts continue the same way today, teachers answer differently. Teachers also read the warnings of Hebrews four main ways: true believers facing discipline and loss of reward, people in the church who never truly believed, true believers losing salvation, or a case put to stir the readers up. All agree the gospel is too great to neglect.

2:5 *the world to come* The age when Christ reigns and the kingdom promised in the prophets fills the earth. The future does not belong to the angels. It belongs to the Son and to the people He brings with Him.

2:6 *What is man, that You are mindful of him* Psalm 8:4-6. "Somewhere" does not mean the writer is unsure. He stresses what was said, not who said it. David looked at the night sky and felt small. Yet God gave man rule over the earth (Gen 1:26-28). A "son of man" here means a human being.

2:8 *But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him* That is honest. Man does not rule the world as God first intended. Sin broke it (Gen 3:17-19). Is the psalm wrong, then? No. Notice the word "yet." God's plan is waiting for the One who will fulfill it.

2:9 *But we see Him who was made a little lower than the angels, Jesus* The first time the name Jesus appears in the letter. When the Son became a man, He took the lower place Psalm 8 gives to man. What Adam lost, Jesus won back, and one day He will share His rule with His people (Rev 20:4-6). To "taste death" is to really die. He did it by grace, and for everyone.

2:10 *to make perfect the founder of their salvation through sufferings* The founder is a pioneer, a leader who goes first and opens the way. "Make perfect" does not mean Jesus had sin to fix. He was made complete for His work as our Savior. He could not lead us through suffering if He had never suffered. God's goal is "bringing many sons to glory."

2:11 *He is not ashamed to call them brothers* To sanctify is to set apart as holy for God. The Son of God, the One the angels worship, is not ashamed of His family, though we often give Him reasons. After His resurrection He called His disciples His brothers (Matt 28:10; John 20:17).

2:12 *I will declare Your name to My brothers* Psalm 22:22, where the psalm turns from suffering to victory. Psalm 22 begins with the cry Jesus prayed on the cross (Matt 27:46). The writer puts these words in the mouth of the risen Jesus. "Assembly" is ekklesia, the New Testament word for the church.

2:13 *I will be trusting in Him* From Isaiah 8:17-18. In a dark time Isaiah chose to wait for the LORD. In His life on earth Jesus lived by trust in His Father, which shows He was truly human. We are the children the Father has given into His care (John 6:37; 17:6).

2:14 *so that through death He might render powerless the one who holds the power of death, that is, the devil* Jesus had real blood and flesh. He got hungry and tired, wept and died. The devil held sin and judgment over people's heads. Jesus took that weapon away by paying for sin. The devil is still active (1 Pet 5:8), but his power over death is broken for every believer.

2:15 *through fear of death were subject to slavery throughout all their life* The fear of death shapes what people chase and what they run from. For the believer, death is the doorway home (2 Cor 5:8; Phil 1:21). We may still feel sad or afraid, but fear no longer has the last word.

2:16 *He takes hold of the seed of Abraham* To take hold is to grab someone in order to help, like rescuing someone drowning. Jesus did not come to rescue fallen angels. The readers were Jewish, and the Messiah came for them as God promised Abraham. All who believe are counted Abraham's seed by faith (Gal 3:7, 29), without erasing God's promises to Israel.

17 Therefore He was obligated to be made like the brothers in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. **18** For in that He Himself has suffered, having been tempted, He is able to help those who are being tempted.

HEBREWS 3

Jesus Greater Than Moses

1 Therefore, holy brothers, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider carefully the apostle and high priest of our confession, Christ Jesus (Iesous), **2** who was faithful to the One who appointed Him, as also Moses ***was*** in all His house. **3** For this One has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, by as much as he who built the house has more honor than the house. **4** For every house is built by someone, but the One who built all things ***is*** God. **5** And Moses indeed ***was*** faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of the things which would be spoken, **6** but Christ as a Son over His house, whose house we are, if indeed we hold fast the boldness and the boast of the hope firm until ***the*** end.

Do Not Harden Your Hearts

7 Therefore, just as the Holy Spirit says, "Today, if you hear His voice, **8** do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, in the day of the testing in the wilderness, **9** where your fathers tested Me, proved Me, and saw My works forty years. **10** Therefore I was angry with that generation, and said, 'They always go astray in the heart, and they have not known My ways'; **11** so I swore in My wrath, 'They shall not enter into My rest.'" **12** Take heed, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in falling away from ***the*** living God. **13** But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "Today," so that no one of you may be hardened by ***the*** deceitfulness of sin. **14** For we have become partakers of Christ, if indeed we hold fast the beginning of the assurance firm until ***the*** end, **15** while it is said, "Today, if you hear His

2:17 Phil 2:7,8; Dan 9:24; Heb 2:11,14
2:18 Isa 63:9; Heb 5:2,7-9; Heb 4:15,16
3:1 2 Tim 1:9; Phil 3:14; Heb 2:17
3:2 Num 12:7; 1 Sam 12:6; Exod 39:32
3:3 Exod 40:33; Num 12:7; Deut 34:5
3:4 Heb 1:2; Esth 2:10; Esth 3:9
3:5 Num 12:7; Exod 14:31; Deut 34:5
3:6 Isa 9:6; Num 12:7; Deut 34:5
3:7 Ps 95:7-11; Isa 55:3; Heb 4:7
3:8 Exod 17:7; Num 14:22; 2 Chr 30:8
3:9 Num 14:33; Deut 8:2; Deut 8:4
3:10 Ps 78:8; Ps 147:20; Hos 4:12
3:11 Num 14:20; Num 14:27; Num 14:35
3:12 Jer 17:9; Deut 4:23; Deut 11:16
3:13 Heb 10:24,25; Ps 95:7; Ps 95:8
3:14 Heb 3:6; Rom 11:17; 1 Pet 4:13
3:15 Ps 95:7-8; Heb 3:7,8; Heb 10:38,29

2:17 *a merciful and faithful high priest* The first time Jesus is called high priest, the great theme of chapters 4 to 10. A high priest had to be one of the people he represented, so the Son became like us "in all things." Propitiation is a sacrifice that satisfies God's just anger against sin and turns it away. On the Day of Atonement the high priest sprinkled blood on the mercy seat, the gold lid of the ark (Lev 16). Jesus did it once for all by His own blood (Rom 3:25; 1 John 2:2).
2:18 *He is able to help those who are being tempted* Jesus was really tempted and never gave in, so He felt the full weight of temptation longer than anyone who gives in (Matt 4:1-11). "Help" means to run to the aid of someone who cries out. When you are tempted, take it to Him (4:15-16).
3:1 *consider carefully the apostle and high priest of our confession, Christ Jesus* They are holy brothers because Jesus set them apart, not because they are better than others. Fix your mind on Him. Jesus is called an apostle only here in the New Testament. An apostle is sent from God to us; a high priest goes to God for us. Moses was God's messenger and Aaron the high priest. Jesus is both, and better than both.
3:2 *who was faithful to the One who appointed Him, as also Moses was in all His house* The words come from Numbers 12:7, where God defended Moses against Aaron and Miriam. "His house" is God's household, His people. The writer is about to say Jesus is greater, but he will not say a bad word about Moses.
3:3 *by as much as he who built the house has more honor than the house* People admire a fine house, but they give more credit to the builder. Moses was part of the house God was building. Jesus is the Builder. Moses belongs to the creation. Jesus is the Creator (1:2, 10).
3:4 *the One who built all things is God* In verse 3 Jesus builds the house. Here the builder of all things is God. The writer does not stop to explain, because chapter 1 already showed it. Jesus is God. A house points to a builder, and a world this ordered points to a Maker (Rom 1:20).
3:5 *as a servant, for a testimony of the things which would be spoken* The word is not slave but a trusted attendant, a servant with honor. The tabernacle, priests, sacrifices and feasts were pictures of what God would show later in Christ. Moses wrote about Him (John 5:46). Moses was a witness, not the final word.
3:6 *but Christ as a Son over His house, whose house we are* A servant works in the house. The son owns it and runs it. God's house is His people (1 Pet 2:5; Eph 2:19-22). The "if" here returns in verse 14, where the main readings are given.
3:7 *just as the Holy Spirit says, "Today, if you hear His voice* Psalm 95:7-11, and the Holy Spirit is the speaker. Notice "says," not said. God's Word still speaks today.
3:8 *do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion* At Massah and Meribah the people complained there was no water and tested God, asking whether He was with them (Exod 17:1-7). Over and over in the wilderness they grumbled and refused to trust Him.
3:9 *saw My works forty years* They saw the plagues, the Red Sea, the manna every morning and the water from the rock. Still they did not trust. Seeing miracles does not make a person believe.
3:10 *they have not known My ways* God's anger was not unreasonable after forty years of care. They knew His works, but not His ways. They saw what He did, but never came to trust who He is.
3:11 *They shall not enter into My rest* This happened at Kadesh, when the people refused to go into the land after the spies came back (Num 14:20-35). The rest in the psalm was Canaan. That whole generation, except Joshua and Caleb, died in the wilderness. Chapter 4 shows God's rest means more than the land.
3:12 *an evil heart of unbelief in falling away from the living God* He speaks to "any of you." Each must look to his own heart. We treat unbelief as a lack of information. Scripture calls it evil, because it calls God a liar (1 John 5:10). The Greek word gives us apostasy, turning away from what one once professed. For these readers, going back to the temple system after hearing the gospel would be turning from the living God.
3:13 *exhort one another every day* God's answer to drifting is other believers. To exhort is to come alongside and urge someone on, and once a week is not enough for a battle that goes on every day. Sin lies. Each time we say no to God, it gets easier to say no again. Who speaks into your life, and whose life are you speaking into?
3:14 *For we have become partakers of Christ, if indeed we hold fast the beginning of the assurance firm until the end* Partakers are sharers, companions. Good teachers read this "if" and the whole warning of 3:7-4:13 four ways. Holding fast shows we have become partakers, and true believers who drift face discipline and loss of reward, like the generation saved out of Egypt who lost the land. Or those who fall away professed faith but never truly believed. Or a true believer can lose his share in Christ. Or it is a real call that describes what unbelief would bring, while the writer expects his readers to endure (6:9). All agree real faith keeps going.
3:15 *Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion* We cannot answer yesterday, and we are not promised tomorrow (James 4:13-14). Putting off obedience is the first step toward a hard heart.

voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion." **16** For who, having heard, rebelled? But ***was it*** not all who came out of Egypt (Aigyptos) through Moses? **17** And with whom was He angry forty years? ***Was it*** not with those who sinned, whose corpses fell in the wilderness? **18** And to whom did He swear that they would not enter into His rest, except to those who disobeyed? **19** And we see that they were not able to enter in because of unbelief.

HEBREWS 4

A Rest for the People of God

1 Let us fear therefore, lest, while a promise of entering into His rest is left remaining, any of you should seem to have fallen short. **2** For indeed we have had the gospel preached ***to us***, just as they also ***did***; but the word of hearing did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard. **3** For we who have believed enter into the rest, just as He has said, "As I swore in My wrath, 'They shall not enter into My rest,'" although the works were finished from ***the*** foundation of ***the*** world. **4** For He has spoken somewhere concerning the seventh ***day*** in this way: "And God rested on the seventh day from all His works"; **5** and in this ***place*** again, "They shall not enter into My rest." **6** Since therefore it remains ***for*** some to enter into it, and those who formerly had the gospel preached ***to them*** did not enter because of disobedience, **7** again He appoints a certain day, "Today," saying through David (Dabid) after so long a time, just as it has been said, "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts." **8** For if Joshua (Iesous) had given them rest, He would not have been speaking about another day after these ***things***. **9** So then there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God. **10** For the one who has entered into His rest has also himself rested from his works, just as God ***did*** from His own. **11** Let us therefore be diligent to enter into that rest, so that no one may fall by the same example of disobedience. **12** For the word of God ***is*** living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and penetrating as far as ***the*** division of both soul and spirit, of both joints and marrows, and able to judge ***the*** thoughts and intentions of ***the*** heart. **13** And there is no creature hidden before Him, but all things ***are*** naked and laid bare to the eyes of Him to whom our account ***is to be given***.

3:16 Num 14:2; Num 14:4; Josh 14:7
3:17 Num 14:29; Ps 95:10; Jude 1:5
3:18 Ps 95:11; Deut 1:34,35; Heb 3:11
3:19 Mark 16:16; John 3:18,36; Jude 1:5
4:1 Heb 12:15,25; Prov 28:14; Heb 4:9
4:2 1 Thess 2:13; 1 Tim 4:8; Heb 4:6
4:3 Ps 95:11; Heb 3:11; Matt 11:28,29
4:4 Gen 2:2; Exod 20:11; Exod 31:17
4:5 Ps 95:11; Num 10:33; Mic 2:10
4:6 Ezek 20:38; Heb 3:18,19; Heb 4:9
4:7 Ps 95:7-8; 2 Sam 23:1; Num 10:33
4:8 Josh 23:1; Josh 11:23; Exod 17:9
4:9 Gen 2:3; Exod 31:15; Ezek 46:1
4:10 Gen 2:3; Rev 14:13; Heb 4:3,4
4:11 Luke 13:24; Heb 3:12,18,19; Acts 26:19
4:12 Isa 55:11; Jer 23:29; Isa 49:2
4:13 Job 26:6; 1 Chr 28:9; 2 Chr 16:9

3:16 *was it not all who came out of Egypt through Moses* Three questions in verses 16-18, each answered from Numbers. The rebels were the very people who put the blood on their doors at Passover and walked through the Red Sea. Being among God's people and seeing His works does not mean a person cannot harden his heart.
3:17 *whose corpses fell in the wilderness* The word is blunt. Their bodies fell just as God said (Num 14:29, 32). For forty years He was patient, feeding and leading them and keeping their clothes from wearing out (Deut 8:4). But the judgment was real.
3:18 *except to those who disobeyed* The Greek words for unbelief and disobedience are closely related. Unbelief shows itself in disobedience, and disobedience grows out of unbelief. God's promise did not fail. They did not trust the God who made it.
3:19 *they were not able to enter in because of unbelief* Not the giants, the walls or the armies. The problem was unbelief, and it still is. For believers, unbelief in God's promises keeps us from the peace and joy He wants us to have.
4:1 *Let us fear therefore* The promise of rest is "left remaining." God did not take it back when the wilderness generation failed. This is not a slave's fear of a beating but a healthy fear of missing what God offers. "Fallen short" pictures a runner who drops out before the finish line.
4:2 *not being mixed with faith in those who heard* Israel heard good news too, a land and rest. Hearing alone did not help them. Many sit under gospel preaching for years and it does them no good, because they never trust it for themselves. The word received by faith saves.
4:3 *For we who have believed enter into the rest* The rest is entered by faith, and the tense is present: we enter now. God's rest is not new. He finished His work of creation, and His rest has been waiting ever since for His people to share it.
4:4 *And God rested on the seventh day from all His works* Genesis 2:2. God did not rest because He was tired but because His work was complete. The seventh day has no evening and morning at its end, which many have taken as a picture of a rest that has no end. The rest offered Israel was a share in God's own peace.
4:6 *it remains for some to enter into it* When people refuse God's offer, He does not cancel it. He extends it to others (Matt 22:1-10). The door is still open. The question is whether we will go in.
4:7 *saying through David after so long a time* David wrote Psalm 95 hundreds of years after Joshua led Israel into the land. If the land were all God meant by rest, why was He still calling people to enter in David's day? Every generation hears God's call in its own Today.
4:8 *For if Joshua had given them rest* The land had rest from war for a time (Josh 21:44; 23:1), but Israel still faced enemies, sinned and later went into exile. Joshua and Jesus are the same name, Hebrew and Greek, meaning the LORD saves. The first Joshua brought Israel into the land. The greater Joshua brings His people into God's true rest.
4:9 *So then there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God* Sabbatismos, a keeping of the Sabbath, is used only here in the New Testament. Teachers see this rest as salvation rest now (Matt 11:28-30), the future rest of heaven or Christ's kingdom (Rev 14:13), or most often both: begun now by faith and entered fully when we are with Him. This verse does not settle whether Christians must keep a weekly Sabbath, and believers disagree on that (Rom 14:5-6; Col 2:16-17).
4:10 *has also himself rested from his works, just as God did from His own* We stop working to earn what God has already done. Jesus finished the work (John 19:30), and we rest in it (Rom 4:5). Believers still do good, but we stop trusting our works to make us right with God. Are you still trying to earn a gift?
4:11 *Let us therefore be diligent to enter into that rest* Be diligent to rest? Trusting Christ day by day takes effort when everything in us wants to take control or turn back. The wilderness generation is a warning sign put up for us (1 Cor 10:6, 11).
4:12 *For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword* God's Word is not a dead letter. It cuts through our excuses and reaches places no one else can, the deep parts of body and inner man. Teachers discuss how soul and spirit differ, but that is not the point here. "Judge" gives us our word critic. We read the Word, and it reads us.
4:13 *all things are naked and laid bare to the eyes of Him to whom our account is to be given* Adam and Eve tried to hide among the trees (Gen 3:8). People still hide behind busy lives, religion or excuses. "Laid bare" pictures a neck bent back and exposed. Every person will give an account (Rom 14:12; 2 Cor 5:10). For the believer, the next verse shows what to do with that fear.

Our Great High Priest

14 Having therefore a great high priest who has passed
through the heavens, Jesus (Iesous) the Son of God, let us
hold firmly to the confession. **15** For we do not have a high
priest who is not able to sympathize with our weaknesses,
but ***one*** who has been tempted in all things according to like-
ness, without sin. **16** Let us therefore come with boldness to
the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find
grace for timely help.

HEBREWS 5

1 For every high priest being taken from among men is
appointed on behalf of men ***in*** the ***things*** relating to God, so
that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins, **2** being
able to deal gently with those who are ignorant and going
astray, since he himself also is encompassed by weakness;
3 and because of this he is obligated, just as for the people, so
also for himself, to offer for sins. **4** And no one takes the
honor for himself, but the one being called by God, just as
also Aaron ***was***. **5** So also the Christ did not glorify Himself to
become a high priest, but the One who said to Him, "You are
My Son; today I have begotten You"; **6** just as also in another
place He says, "You ***are*** a priest forever according to the
order of Melchizedek (Melchisedek)." **7** ***He***, in the days of His
flesh, having offered up both prayers and supplications with
loud crying and tears to the One being able to save Him from
death, and having been heard because of ***His*** reverence,
8 although being a Son, He learned obedience from the
things which He suffered; **9** and having been perfected, He
became to all those who obey Him ***the*** source of eternal sal-
vation, **10** having been designated by God a high priest
according to the order of Melchizedek,

Go On to Maturity

11 concerning whom our word ***is*** much and hard to interpret
in speaking, since you have become sluggish in ***your*** hearing.
12 For indeed, though you ought to be teachers by this time,
you again have need ***for someone*** to teach you which ***are*** the
principles of the beginning of the oracles of God, and you
have become ***those*** having need of milk and not of solid food.
13 For everyone who partakes of milk ***is*** inexperienced in ***the***

4:14 Num 35:25; Heb 6:20; Heb 2:17
4:15 2 Cor 5:21; Heb 2:17,18; Num 35:25
4:16 Eph 3:12; Heb 13:6; Heb 10:19-23
5:1 Heb 8:3; Heb 10:11; Heb 2:17
5:2 Num 15:27; Num 15:28; Num 15:29
5:3 Lev 9:7; Lev 16:6; Heb 7:27
5:4 Exod 28:1; Num 16:40; 1 Chr 23:13
5:5 Ps 2:7; Mic 5:2; Isa 55:5
5:6 Ps 110:4; Gen 14:18; Gen 14:19
5:7 Ps 22:24; Ps 40:1; Ps 88:1
5:8 Isa 50:5; Phil 2:8; John 4:34
5:9 Heb 2:10; Heb 12:2; Ps 68:18-20
5:10 Gen 14:18; Heb 5:5,6; Heb 6:20
5:11 2 Pet 3:16; Matt 13:15; John 6:6
5:12 Heb 6:1; 1 Pet 2:2; 1 Cor 3:1-3
5:13 1 Pet 2:2; 1 Cor 14:20; Isa 28:9

4:14 *a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God* Israel's high priest passed through the curtain into the Most Holy Place once a year. Jesus has passed into the very presence of God. He is human, Jesus, and divine, the Son of God. Why would you leave the One who is already in heaven for you?

4:15 *one who has been tempted in all things according to likeness, without sin* Jesus can feel with us. He knows weakness from the inside: hunger, loneliness, pain, rejection, and the pull to take an easier path than the cross. He never gave in. Fully man and yet sinless, He can both understand us and help us.

4:16 *Let us therefore come with boldness to the throne of grace* Even Queen Esther feared for her life going in to the king uninvited (Esth 4:11). Boldness is not carelessness. It is confidence that we will not be turned away. Mercy is God not giving us what we deserve; grace is God giving us what we do not deserve. Do not run from God when you fail. Run to Him.

5:1 *every high priest being taken from among men is appointed on behalf of men in the things relating to God* A high priest is human, stands for the people, and deals with God for them. Gifts were offerings of thanks; sacrifices for sins dealt with guilt. His greatest work came on the Day of Atonement (Lev 16). Sin separates us from God, and we need someone to stand between.

5:2 *being able to deal gently with those who are ignorant and going astray* Neither too hard nor too soft. He did not excuse sin, but he did not crush the sinner. The Law set apart sins of weakness or ignorance from sins done with a high hand in open defiance (Num 15:27-31). He was wrapped in weakness himself, like a heavy coat.

5:3 *so also for himself, to offer for sins* Before Aaron offered the goat for the people, he offered a bull for himself and his family (Lev 16:6, 11). Here Jesus is unlike every other high priest. He had no sins of His own (4:15; 7:26-27).

5:4 *no one takes the honor for himself, but the one being called by God, just as also Aaron was* God chose Aaron and his sons (Exod 28:1). Korah tried to take the priesthood and God judged him (Num 16). King Uzziah burned incense in the temple and was struck with leprosy (2 Chr 26:16-21). The priesthood was God's to give.

5:5 *So also the Christ did not glorify Himself to become a high priest* Even the Son waited on His Father's call (John 8:54). The God who declared Him Son (Ps 2:7) appointed Him High Priest. He is not a priest who happens to be the Son. He is the Son, and that is why He is the perfect Priest.

5:6 *You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek* Psalm 110:4, the same psalm that says, "Sit at My right hand" (1:13). Kings came from Judah and priests from Levi, and no one could be both. Psalm 110 speaks of a King who is also a Priest, after the king-priest who met Abraham (Gen 14:18-20). Aaron's priests died and were replaced. This Priest lives "forever."

5:7 *with loud crying and tears to the One being able to save Him from death* This sounds most like Gethsemane (Matt 26:36-44; Luke 22:41-44), and may include His cries on the cross. How was He heard, when He still died? God saved Him out of death by raising Him. "Reverence" is His godly fear and full surrender to the Father's will.

5:8 *although being a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered* Jesus was never disobedient. As a man He learned by experience what obedience costs, step by step, until it led Him to the cross (Phil 2:8). If the Son learned obedience through suffering, we should not be surprised when God uses suffering in our lives (12:7-11).

5:9 *He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation* "Perfected" means made complete and fully fit for His work, as in 2:10. The old priests' work had to be repeated every year. His salvation lasts forever. Obeying the gospel means believing it (Rom 1:5; 10:16; Acts 6:7). Trusting Christ is the first act of obedience, and a life of obedience follows real faith.

5:10 *having been designated by God a high priest* God Himself gave Jesus this title. The writer wants to explain Melchizedek, but first he must deal with readers not ready for it, the third warning (5:11-6:12).

5:11 *since you have become sluggish in your hearing* The problem was not mainly the hard subject. "Sluggish" means slow, dull, lazy. They "have become" this way over time. Spiritual growth does not happen on its own. If we stop listening, even good teaching bounces off us.

5:12 *though you ought to be teachers by this time* Not everyone should teach in church (James 3:1), but every mature believer should be able to explain the faith (1 Pet 3:15). "The principles of the beginning" are the ABCs. Milk is fine for a newborn, but a grown man who can only drink milk has a problem.

5:13 *inexperienced in the word of righteousness, for he is an infant* This may mean the teaching about how God makes us right and how we live right, or mature speech that is right. Being a new believer is no sin. Everyone starts as an infant. The problem is staying there.

word of righteousness, for he is an infant. **14** But solid food is for ***the*** mature, for those who through practice have the senses trained for discernment of both good and evil.

HEBREWS 6

1 Therefore, having left the word of the beginning of the Christ, let us be carried on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, **2** of ***the*** teaching of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of ***the*** dead, and of eternal judgment. **3** And this we will do, if indeed God permits. **4** For ***it is*** impossible ***for*** those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of ***the*** Holy Spirit, **5** and have tasted the good word of God and ***the*** powers of ***the*** coming age, **6** and have fallen away, to renew ***them*** again to repentance, since they are crucifying again for themselves the Son of God and putting ***Him*** to open shame. **7** For land that has drunk the rain often coming upon it, and produces vegetation useful for those for whose sake it is also tilled, partakes of blessing from God; **8** but ***if it is*** bringing forth thorns and thistles, ***it is*** worthless and near to a curse, whose end ***is*** for burning. **9** But concerning you, beloved, we have been persuaded of the better ***things*** and ***things*** accompanying salvation, even if we speak in this way. **10** For God ***is*** not unjust, to forget your work and the labor of love which you have shown toward His name, having ministered to the saints and ***still*** ministering. **11** And we desire each of you to show the same earnestness toward the full assurance of the hope until ***the*** end, **12** so that you may not become sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

God's Sure Promise

13 For when God made the promise to Abraham (Abraam), since He had no one greater by whom to swear, He swore by Himself, **14** saying, "Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you." **15** And thus, having waited patiently, he obtained the promise. **16** For men indeed swear by the greater ***one***, and in all their dispute the oath ***is*** an end

5:14 1 Cor 2:6; Eph 4:13; Eph 1:18
6:1 Heb 5:12-14; Heb 9:14; Ezek 18:30-32
6:2 Acts 6:6; Acts 17:31; Acts 17:18,31,32
6:3 Acts 18:21; 1 Cor 16:7; Rom 15:32
6:4 2 Pet 2:20-22; Heb 10:26-29; Heb 10:32
6:5 1 Pet 2:3; 2 Pet 2:20; Heb 2:5
6:6 Zech 12:10; Heb 10:29; Heb 6:4
6:7 Deut 28:11,12; Ps 65:9-13; Ps 104:11-13
6:8 Gen 3:18; Gen 3:17,18; Deut 29:28
6:9 Heb 6:4-6,10; Heb 10:34,39; Phil 1:6,7
6:10 Matt 10:42; Prov 14:31; 1 Thess 1:3
6:11 Heb 3:6,14; 1 Cor 15:58; Heb 10:22
6:12 Heb 13:7; Heb 10:36; Prov 24:30-34
6:13 Gen 22:15; Ps 105:9; Isa 45:23
6:14 Gen 22:17; Gen 17:2; Gen 48:4
6:15 Heb 6:12; Gen 12:2,3; Gen 15:2-6
6:16 Exod 22:11; Heb 6:13; Gen 14:22

5:14 *those who through practice have the senses trained for discernment of both good and evil* "Mature" means full-grown. "Trained" gives us our word gymnasium. Maturity does not come from hearing more but from using what we hear again and again. The result is discernment that sees through false teaching and smart-sounding temptation.

6:1 *let us be carried on to maturity* Leaving the first lessons does not mean throwing them away. A builder builds on the foundation. "Carried on" is passive: we do our part, but God carries us forward. The foundation comes in three pairs. First, repentance, a change of mind that turns from sin, and faith toward God. Dead works cannot give life, whether sins or rituals done to earn God's favor (9:14).

6:2 *of the teaching of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment* The second pair is outward acts. Baptisms is plural: the readers knew the washings of the Law (9:10), John's baptism and Christian baptism. Hands were laid on to bless, to set apart for service, and at times when the Spirit was given (Acts 6:6; 8:17; 13:3). The third pair is the future (John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15). All true, and all only the beginning.

6:3 *if indeed God permits* Not a pious phrase tacked on. We cannot make ourselves grow any more than a farmer can make a seed sprout (1 Cor 3:6-7; James 4:15).

6:4 *For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened* One of the most debated passages in the Bible. These people had the light of the gospel shine on them, tasted the heavenly gift, shared in the Spirit's work, tasted God's word, and saw miracles that gave a foretaste of the kingdom (2:4). Then they fell away. Who are they? See the note at 6:6.

6:6 *and have fallen away, to renew them again to repentance, since they are crucifying again for themselves the Son of God* For these readers, going back to the temple sacrifices meant siding with the crowd that cried out to crucify Him. Some read the Greek as meaning while they keep on doing this. Others read "impossible" as final. Good teachers hold four views. They are true believers facing loss of reward and severe discipline (1 Cor 3:12-15), like the wilderness generation. They were in the church but never truly believed, like Judas (1 John 2:19). They are true believers who lose salvation with no return. Or the writer describes what cannot happen to a true believer to show how serious it would be, and verse 9 shows he did not expect it of them. I do not settle it here. If you fear you have fallen beyond hope, that worry is itself a sign God is at work in you. Come. He will not cast out anyone who comes (John 6:37).

6:7 *land that has drunk the rain often coming upon it* The rain is like the gospel and the Spirit's work falling on those who hear. Good land bears a useful crop. The same rain brings different results, and what we produce shows what we are (Matt 13:3-23).

6:8 *it is worthless and near to a curse, whose end is for burning* Farmers sometimes burned off a field full of weeds. The four views read the burning as the loss of worthless works, as final judgment on those who never truly believed, or as the loss of one who fell away. The writer stops at "near to a curse" and then turns to hope.

6:9 *But concerning you, beloved, we have been persuaded of the better things and things accompanying salvation* The tone changes. "Things accompanying salvation" are the fruit that shows the root is alive. A pastor warns because he loves his people, and he speaks hope because he sees God's work in them. When we warn others, we should do it the same way.

6:10 *For God is not unjust, to forget your work and the labor of love* God keeps a record of every kindness. Nothing done for Him is wasted (Matt 10:42; 1 Cor 15:58). Caring for His people is caring for Him (Matt 25:40). Real faith works through love (Gal 5:6).

6:11 *the full assurance of the hope until the end* God wants "each of you" to be fully sure of what He promised. Assurance is not for a few super-Christians. It is His will for every believer who trusts Him (1 John 5:13).

6:12 *imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises* The same word "sluggish" as in 5:11. Faith trusts God's promises; patience waits for them. Faith without patience gives up too soon. Look for people in Scripture and in your church who have trusted God for the long haul, and follow them.

6:13 *since He had no one greater by whom to swear, He swore by Himself* From warning to assurance. After Abraham offered Isaac, God swore an oath (Gen 22:16-18). People swear by someone greater. There is no one greater than God, so He put His own name on the line.

6:14 *Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you* Genesis 22:17. The repeated words are a Hebrew way of saying something strongly. Through Abraham's Seed, Christ, blessing has come to the nations (Gal 3:8, 16), and God is still keeping His promises to Israel (Rom 11:28-29).

6:15 *having waited patiently, he obtained the promise* Abraham waited twenty-five years for Isaac (Gen 12:4; 21:5), then passed the test of offering him (11:17-19). He did not see all of the promise in his lifetime, but he saw enough to know God was faithful. God's timing is never wrong.

6:16 *the oath is an end for confirmation* An oath settled disputes then, as a witness in court swears today. If an oath settles things among men, how much more does God's oath settle things for us?

for confirmation. **17** In which God, desiring more abundantly to show to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, guaranteed ***it*** by an oath, **18** so that through two unchangeable things, in which ***it is*** impossible ***for*** God to lie, we who have fled for refuge may have strong encouragement to take hold of the hope being set before ***us***, **19** which we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and firm, and entering into that within the veil, **20** where Jesus (Iesous) has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek (Melchisedek).

HEBREWS 7

Melchizedek the King-Priest

1 For this Melchizedek (Melchisedek), king of Salem, priest of God Most High, who met Abraham (Abraam) returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, **2** to whom also Abraham apportioned a tenth of all, ***being*** first, when translated, king of righteousness, and then also king of Salem, which is king of peace, **3** without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, remains a priest perpetually. **4** Now consider how great this ***one was***, to whom even Abraham the patriarch gave a tenth out of the best spoils. **5** And those indeed from the sons of Levi (Leui) who receive the priestly office have a commandment to collect a tenth from the people according to the law, that is, from their brothers, though they have come out of the loins of Abraham. **6** But the one whose ancestry is not traced from them has collected a tenth from Abraham, and has blessed the one having the promises. **7** Now apart from all dispute, the lesser is blessed by the better. **8** And here indeed dying men receive tithes, but there ***one receives them*** of whom it is testified that he lives. **9** And, so to speak, through Abraham even Levi, the one receiving tithes, has paid tithes, **10** for he was still in the loins of ***his*** father when Melchizedek met him.

A Priest Forever

11 If then indeed perfection were through the Levitical priesthood, for the people had received the law upon it, what further need ***was there*** for another priest to arise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not to be named according to the order of Aaron? **12** For when the priesthood is being changed, of necessity a change of law also takes place. **13** For ***He*** concerning whom these things are spoken has belonged to another tribe, from which no one has served at the altar.

6:17 Isa 14:24; Prov 19:21; Ps 36:8
6:18 Num 35:11; Isa 64:7; Num 35:12
6:19 Lev 16:2; Lev 16:15; Rom 8:28-39
6:20 Ps 110:4; Gen 14:18; Heb 4:14
7:1 Ps 76:2; Ps 57:2; Ps 78:35
7:2 Isa 9:6; Ps 76:2; Ps 110:4
7:3 Ps 110:4; Exod 6:18,20-27; 1 Chr 6:1-3
7:4 Gen 17:5; Acts 2:29; Gen 14:20
7:5 Num 18:21; Num 16:10; Num 17:3
7:6 Gen 12:2; Gen 17:5; Rom 4:13
7:7 Gen 47:7; Gen 14:19; Gen 14:20
7:8 Heb 5:6; Heb 6:20; Rev 1:18
7:9 Heb 7:4; Gen 14:20; Rom 5:12
7:10 Gen 14:18; Heb 7:5; Gen 35:11
7:11 Ps 110:4; Gen 14:18; Exod 29:9
7:12 Isa 66:21; Jer 31:31-34; Ezek 16:61
7:13 Num 16:40; 1 Chr 6:49; Num 17:5

6:17 *the unchangeableness of His purpose, guaranteed it by an oath* God's word alone is enough. He added an oath because He knows how weak our faith can be and wanted His children to be sure. "The heirs of the promise" are Abraham and all who share his faith.
6:18 *in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge* The two unchangeable things are His promise and His oath (Titus 1:2). In 6:4 it was impossible to renew those who fall away. Here it is impossible for God to lie. Set the two side by side. The picture is the cities of refuge, where a man who killed by accident could run and be safe (Num 35:9-15).
6:19 *an anchor of the soul, both sure and firm, and entering into that within the veil* An anchor keeps a ship from drifting (2:1). A normal anchor goes down into the sea. This one goes up, behind the veil into the Most Holy Place where God's presence was. Our hope is fastened to God's own throne.
6:20 *where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us* Israel's high priest went behind the veil alone, and no one could follow. A forerunner runs ahead to prepare the way for others. We will follow Him there (John 14:2-3). Our hope is as secure as Jesus Himself, and He lives forever.
7:1 *this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of God Most High* From Genesis 14:17-20. Abraham had rescued Lot by defeating four kings, and on his way home Melchizedek brought out bread and wine and blessed him. A king who was also a priest of the true God, long before Moses or Levi. Salem is most likely the early name of Jerusalem (Ps 76:2).
7:2 *king of righteousness, and then also king of Salem, which is king of peace* Abraham gave a tenth, a tithe, freely, hundreds of years before the Law required it. Melchizedek means king of righteousness, and Salem is close to shalom, peace. Righteousness first, then peace: God makes us right with Him, and then we have peace with Him (Rom 5:1; Isa 9:6-7).
7:3 *without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life* A priest in Israel had to prove his line from Aaron (Ezra 2:61-62). Genesis gives Melchizedek no family line, birth or death. Most teachers hold he was a real king-priest whom that silence makes a type, or picture, of Christ, since he was "made like the Son of God." Others see an appearance of the Son of God before Bethlehem. An old Jewish tradition named him Shem, though few hold that today. Each view honors Christ, the real eternal Priest.
7:4 *Now consider how great this one was* To a Jewish reader there was no greater man than Abraham the patriarch, the father of the nation. Yet he gave Melchizedek a tenth "out of the best spoils," honoring him as the greater.
7:5 *have a commandment to collect a tenth from the people according to the law* The people tithed to the Levites, and the Levites tithed to the priests (Num 18:21-28), since they had no land like the other tribes. They took tithes from their own brothers only because the Law gave them that right.
7:6 *has blessed the one having the promises* Melchizedek was not a Levite, nor even a son of Abraham. He needed no law to give him the right. Abraham, who carried the blessing for the world (Gen 12:2-3), bowed to receive a blessing from this priest-king.
7:7 *the lesser is blessed by the better* When a priest blesses in God's name, the one blessing holds the higher place. This is no put-down of Abraham, but God had a priest whose order stood above the father of the nation, and so above the Levites who came from him.
7:8 *there one receives them of whom it is testified that he lives* Levi's priests served, took tithes and died. Scripture records no death for Melchizedek. The silence of Genesis pictures the Priest who really does live forever (7:16, 24-25).
7:9 *And, so to speak, through Abraham even Levi, the one receiving tithes, has paid tithes* "So to speak" shows this is a way of putting it. Levi was Abraham's great-grandson. In the Bible's way of thinking a man's descendants are counted as in him (7:10), so every priest from Levi in effect paid tithes to Melchizedek.
7:11 *If then indeed perfection were through the Levitical priesthood* Perfection is bringing people fully to God, sins dealt with and conscience clean (9:9; 10:1, 14). The Law and the priesthood went together. David wrote Psalm 110 long after Aaron's priesthood was set up. If it were enough, why promise a priest of a different order?
7:12 *of necessity a change of law also takes place* A big step for Jewish readers. God's moral standards do not change. But the priests, sacrifices and rituals given at Sinai were a temporary arrangement that has served its purpose. The Law was a guardian until Christ came (Gal 3:24-25).

14 For ***it is*** evident that our Lord has sprung out of Judah (Ioudas), as to which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood. **15** And it is yet more abundantly evident if another priest arises according to the likeness of
Melchizedek, **16** who has become ***such*** not according to a law of a fleshly commandment, but according to ***the*** power of an indestructible life. **17** For He testifies that, "You ***are*** a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek." **18** For indeed there is a setting aside of ***the*** preceding commandment because of its weakness and uselessness, **19** for the law perfected nothing; but ***there is*** the bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God. **20** And inasmuch as ***it was*** not apart from an oath **21** (for they indeed have become priests without an oath, but He with an oath through the One saying to Him, "***The*** Lord has sworn and will not change His mind, 'You ***are*** a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek'"), **22** by so much Jesus (Iesous) has become ***the*** guarantee of a better covenant. **23** And they indeed have become many priests because they are prevented by death from continuing; **24** but He, because He abides forever, holds the priesthood permanently.
25 Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through Him, always living to intercede for them. **26** For such a high priest was fitting for us: holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners, and
having become higher than the heavens; **27** who does not have need every day, as the high priests ***do***, to offer up sacrifices first for ***their*** own sins, then for those of the people; for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. **28** For the law appoints men ***as*** high priests having weakness, but the word of the oath, which ***came*** after the law, ***appoints*** a Son, perfected forever.

HEBREWS 8

The Mediator of a Better Covenant

1 Now the main point of the things being spoken ***is this***: we have such a high priest, who sat down at ***the*** right ***hand*** of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, **2** a minister of the holy places and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. **3** For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices; therefore ***it was*** necessary ***for*** this ***One*** also to have something that He may offer. **4** For if indeed He were on earth, He would not even be a priest, since there are the priests who offer the gifts according to

7:14 Gen 49:10; Jer 23:5; 1 Chr 6:49
7:15 Ps 110:4; Gen 14:18; Heb 7:3,11,17-21
7:16 Rev 1:18; Heb 9:9,10; Heb 10:1
7:17 Ps 110:4; Gen 14:18; Heb 5:6,10
7:18 Rom 8:3; Heb 7:11,12; Heb 8:7-13
7:19 Heb 4:16; Heb 9:9; Acts 13:39
7:21 Ps 110:4; Heb 7:17; Heb 6:16-18
7:22 Gen 43:9; Gen 44:32; Prov 6:1
7:23 Num 20:26; Heb 7:8; 1 Chr 6:3-14
7:24 John 12:34; Rev 1:18; Heb 7:8-25,28
7:25 Isa 53:12; Job 23:3; Isa 59:16
7:26 Num 35:25; Heb 8:1; 2 Cor 5:21
7:27 Lev 4:3; Lev 4:21; Lev 4:22
7:28 Ps 110:4; Heb 2:10; Heb 7:21
8:1 1 Chr 29:11; Ps 110:1; Job 37:22
8:2 Exod 28:35; Exod 26:1; Exod 26:30
8:3 Zech 6:12; Heb 5:1; Heb 9:14
8:4 Exod 40:15; Lev 6:20; Heb 7:11-15

7:14 *our Lord has sprung out of Judah* Everyone knew Jesus came from David's line in Judah (Matt 1:1-3; Rev 5:5). "Sprung" is used for the sun rising and for a plant springing up, and the prophets use it of the Branch from David (Jer 23:5). The Law gave no priests from Judah, so His priesthood belongs to another order.
7:16 *but according to the power of an indestructible life* Levi's priests got their place by birth. Jesus is a priest because of who He is. He died, but death could not hold Him, and He can never die again (Rom 6:9).
"Indestructible" means it cannot be broken up or dissolved.
7:17 *You are a priest forever* The third time the writer quotes Psalm 110:4 (5:6; 6:20). People we rely on move away, grow old and die. Our High Priest will never leave His post.
7:18 *there is a setting aside of the preceding commandment because of its weakness and uselessness* The law of the priesthood and its system has been put out of force. The Law is holy and good (Rom 7:12), but it could not do what we most needed. It could show sin but not take it away.
7:19 *but there is the bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God* The Law kept people at a distance. Only the high priest went into the Most Holy Place, and only once a year. Through Christ every believer can draw near.
7:21 *The Lord has sworn and will not change His mind* Levi's priests took office by birth with no oath. God swore an oath to His Son, and when God swears the matter is settled forever (6:17-18). He will never regret it or reverse it.
7:22 *Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant* A covenant is a binding agreement. The better covenant is the new covenant of Jeremiah 31, explained in chapter 8. "Guarantee" is used only here in the New Testament, of one who put up his own life or property to back a promise, like a cosigner. As long as He lives the covenant stands, and He lives forever.
7:23 *they are prevented by death from continuing* Aaron died and Eleazar took his place (Num 20:23-28), and so on down the generations. However good a priest was, death stopped him, and there was always a break in the work.
7:24 *holds the priesthood permanently* He will never have a successor. The priesthood cannot pass to another. The same Jesus who prayed for Peter (Luke 22:31-32) prays for you, and He will never stop.
7:25 *Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through Him, always living to intercede for them* "To the uttermost" means completely, all the way and for all time. He does not save part way and leave the rest to us. To intercede is to speak to God on someone's behalf (Rom 8:34; 1 John 2:1). His death paid for our sins once for all, and His life in heaven keeps us. If you belong to Christ, the Son of God is praying for you today.
7:26 *holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners* He lived among sinners, ate with them and touched them, but was never one of them in character. Now He is separated in place too, seated at God's right hand. A sinful priest could only offer for others what he needed himself. Ours is spotless.
7:27 *for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself* Jesus was both Priest and sacrifice. He did not bring a lamb. He was the Lamb (John 1:29). "Once for all" returns in chapters 9 and 10. Nothing can be added to His sacrifice.
7:28 *the word of the oath, which came after the law, appoints a Son, perfected forever* The oath of Psalm 110:4 came centuries after the Law, showing God was replacing the old order. The Law gave weak men. God's oath gave His perfect Son.
8:1 *Now the main point of the things being spoken is this: we have such a high priest* After all the detail about Melchizedek, here is the point. There was no chair in the tabernacle, and the priests never sat while they served. Jesus sat down because His sacrifice was finished, and at the right hand of the throne. Our High Priest is also the King (1:3, 13; 10:12; 12:2).
8:2 *the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man* A minister here is one who serves in worship. "True" does not mean the earthly tent was false. God commanded it. True means real, the original, compared to a copy. Moses and the people built the earthly tent of gold, wood and cloth. The real one is God's own presence.
8:3 *it was necessary for this One also to have something that He may offer* A priest without an offering is not a priest. Jesus offered Himself and brought His own blood, not the blood of animals (7:27; 9:12). His work in heaven rests on that one offering.
8:4 *For if indeed He were on earth, He would not even be a priest* Jesus was from Judah, not Levi (7:14). The present tense, "there are the priests who offer," is one reason many believe Hebrews was written before A.D. 70, when Rome destroyed the temple and the sacrifices stopped.

the law, **5** who serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly ***things***, just as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to complete the tabernacle; for "See," He says, "***that*** you make all things according to the pattern which was shown to you on the mountain." **6** But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also ***the*** mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises. **7** For if that first ***covenant*** had been faultless, a place would not have been sought for a second. **8** For finding fault with them, He says, "Look, days are coming, says ***the*** Lord, and I will complete with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah (Ioudas) a new covenant, **9** not according to the covenant which I made with their fathers in ***the*** day of My taking hold of their hand to lead them out of ***the*** land of Egypt (Aigyptos); because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says ***the*** Lord. **10** For this ***is*** the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says ***the*** Lord: putting My laws into their mind, I will also inscribe them on their hearts; and I will be to them for God, and they will be to Me for a people. **11** And they shall certainly not teach each his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' because all will know Me, from ***the*** least of them to ***the*** greatest of them. **12** Because I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will certainly not remember any more." **13** In saying "new," He has made the first obsolete; and what is growing obsolete and aging ***is*** near vanishing.

HEBREWS 9

The Earthly Tabernacle

1 Therefore indeed even the first ***covenant*** had regulations of worship and the earthly holy place. **2** For a tabernacle was prepared, the first, in which ***were*** both the lampstand and the table and the presentation of the bread, which is called ***the*** Holy Place. **3** And behind the second veil ***was*** a tabernacle which is called ***the*** Holy of Holies, **4** having a golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold, in which ***was*** a golden jar having the manna, and the staff of Aaron which budded, and the tablets of the covenant; **5** and above it ***were the*** cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat; concerning which ***things*** it is not ***the time*** now to

8:5 Exod 25:40; Exod 26:30; Exod 27:8
8:6 Isa 59:21; Heb 7:22; Heb 12:24
8:7 1 Kgs 8:13; 2 Chr 5:10; 2 Chr 34:31
8:8 Jer 31:31-34; Isa 55:3; Jer 23:5
8:9 Deut 5:2; Exod 19:4; Exod 32:8
8:10 Ezek 36:26; Jer 31:33; Ezek 11:19
8:11 2 Kgs 17:27; Ezra 7:25; Jer 6:13
8:12 Isa 43:25; Rom 11:27; Jer 50:20
8:13 2 Cor 5:17; Heb 7:11,12,18,19; Heb 9:9,10
9:1 Exod 25:8; Heb 9:10; Heb 8:2
9:2 Exod 40:4; Exod 26:35; Lev 24:5
9:3 Exod 26:31; Exod 40:3; Exod 40:21
9:4 Num 17:10; Exod 26:33; Exod 40:3
9:5 Lev 16:2; Exod 25:17; Exod 37:6

8:5 *who serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things* A shadow has the shape of what casts it, but you cannot shake hands with a shadow. God gave Moses exact directions (Exod 25:9, 40), because the tabernacle was a picture of heaven and of Christ's work. The ark, the altar, the lampstand and the veil all pointed to Him.
8:6 *He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises* A mediator is a go-between who brings two sides together. Moses mediated the old covenant at Sinai. Jesus mediates the new by His own blood (9:15; 1 Tim 2:5). The old covenant depended on the people keeping their side (Deut 28). The new rests on what God promises He will do (8:10-12).
8:7 *if that first covenant had been faultless* The first covenant was not evil. It showed God's holiness, revealed sin and pointed to Christ, but it could not change the human heart. God's promise of a new one shows the old was never meant to be the last word.
8:8 *For finding fault with them* The fault was with the people, not God's side. The quote is Jeremiah 31:31-34, spoken near the fall of Jerusalem to Babylon. The kingdom had split, and God promised the new covenant to "the house of Israel and with the house of Judah," the whole nation brought back together. God has not forgotten that promise.
8:9 *in the day of My taking hold of their hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt* A tender picture, like a father leading a child. Israel worshiped idols, ignored the prophets and broke the covenant again and again, so God let them go their own way and sent them into exile. People cannot keep God's Law in their own strength.
8:10 *putting My laws into their mind, I will also inscribe them on their hearts* The old Law was written on stone. The new is written on the heart, so we want to do God's will (Ezek 36:26-27). "I will be to them for God" is the heart of every covenant God makes, a real and lasting relationship.
8:11 *because all will know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them* This does not mean no teachers (Eph 4:11). Knowing God will not be for a few. Under the old covenant many had to be told to know Him. Do you know God that way, not just know about Him?
8:12 *their sins and their lawless deeds I will certainly not remember any more* Notice "because." All the rest rests on forgiveness. God does not forget as we do. He will never bring our sins up against us again. The old sacrifices reminded people of their sins every year (10:3). Under the new covenant they are gone (10:17).
8:13 *In saying "new," He has made the first obsolete* If the letter was written in the 60s, the temple fell only a few years later, in A.D. 70. Jesus called the cup the new covenant in His blood (Luke 22:20), so believers today, Jew and Gentile, share its blessings now: forgiveness, a new heart and knowing God. But the church has not replaced Israel. God will keep this promise to the house of Israel and Judah, and all Israel will be saved when Christ returns (Rom 11:25-29).
9:1 *regulations of worship and the earthly holy place* The writer is not mocking the old worship. God set it up, with rules about how to approach Him. He speaks of the tabernacle rather than the temple because it was the pattern God gave Moses (8:5), and the temple followed the same plan. Everything about it taught that God is holy and sinful people cannot just walk into His presence.
9:2 *the lampstand and the table and the presentation of the bread, which is called the Holy Place* The tent had two rooms. In the first, seven lamps burned every night (Exod 25:31-40; 27:20-21), and twelve loaves, one for each tribe, were set before the LORD and replaced every Sabbath (Lev 24:5-9). Both point to Jesus, the Light of the world and the Bread of life (John 8:12; 6:35).
9:3 *behind the second veil was a tabernacle which is called the Holy of Holies* A thick curtain woven with cherubim separated the inner room (Exod 26:31-33). "Holy of Holies" is a Hebrew way of saying the holiest place of all, where God's presence dwelt. When Jesus died, the temple veil was torn from top to bottom (Matt 27:51). God Himself opened the way.
9:4 *having a golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant* The incense altar stood just before the veil (Exod 30:6), but its work belonged to the inner room. On the Day of Atonement the high priest carried coals and incense from it inside (Lev 16:12-13; 1 Kgs 6:22). Some take the word as a golden censer. The ark was a gold-covered chest (Exod 25:10-16). The manna, Aaron's staff and the tablets reminded Israel that God fed them, chose the priest and gave the Law (Exod 16:33; Num 17:8-10; Deut 10:5).
9:5 *the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat* The gold lid of the ark, with two cherubim spreading their wings over it, where God met with Moses (Exod 25:17-22). Below it was the broken Law, above it God's glory, and between them the blood (Lev 16:14-15). That is a picture of the gospel. The Greek word for mercy seat is the word Paul uses for Jesus as our propitiation (Rom 3:25).

speak in detail. **6** Now these things having been thus prepared, the priests enter continually into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the services; **7** but into the second the high priest alone ***enters*** once in the year, not without blood, which he offers for himself and for the sins of ignorance of the people; **8** the Holy Spirit signifying this, that the way into the holy places has not yet been made manifest while the first tabernacle still has standing, **9** which ***is*** a symbol for the present time, in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered which are not able to make the one who worships perfect in regard to conscience, **10** ***being*** only in foods and drinks and various washings, and regulations of ***the*** flesh imposed until a time of reformation.

Once for All by His Own Blood

11 But Christ, having appeared ***as*** high priest of the coming good things, through the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made by hands, that is, not of this creation, **12** nor through blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, entered once for all into the holy places, having obtained eternal redemption. **13** For if the blood of bulls and of goats and ***the*** ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctifies for the purification of the flesh, **14** how much more will the blood of the Christ, who through ***the*** eternal Spirit offered Himself unblemished to God, purify your conscience from dead works to serve ***the*** living God? **15** And because of this He is ***the*** mediator of a new covenant, so that, a death having taken place for redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. **16** For where ***there is*** a covenant, ***there is*** necessity for the death of the one who made ***it*** to be established. **17** For a covenant ***is*** firm over dead ***ones***, since it never has force while the one who made ***it*** is living. **18** Therefore not even the first ***covenant*** has been inaugurated apart from blood. **19** For when every commandment according to ***the*** law had been spoken by Moses (Moyses) to all the people, having taken the blood of the calves and of the goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, he sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, **20** saying, "This ***is*** the blood of the covenant which God commanded to you." **21** And likewise he sprinkled with the blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry. **22** And almost all things are purified with blood according to the law, and apart from shedding of

9:6 Exod 40:33; Num 28:3; Exod 27:21
9:7 Lev 16:34; Exod 30:10; Lev 5:18
9:8 Exod 26:35; John 14:6; Heb 3:7
9:9 Heb 5:1; Heb 9:24; Heb 11:19
9:10 Col 2:16; Heb 7:16; Lev 11:2-47
9:11 Exod 38:21; Num 10:17; Num 35:28
9:12 Lev 16:15; Heb 10:4; Heb 10:9-14
9:13 Num 19:2; Num 19:9; Num 19:18
9:14 1 Pet 3:18; Ps 51:7; Heb 1:3
9:15 Jer 31:31; Heb 12:24; 1 Tim 2:5
9:17 Gal 3:15; Gen 48:21; John 14:27
9:18 Exod 24:3; Exod 24:4; Exod 24:5
9:19 Num 19:6; Num 19:18; Exod 12:22
9:20 Exod 24:8; Zech 9:11; Exod 24:7
9:21 Lev 8:15; Lev 8:19; Exod 29:12
9:22 Lev 17:11; Lev 4:26; Lev 5:10

9:6 *the priests enter continually into the first tabernacle* Lamps trimmed, incense morning and evening, bread changed every Sabbath. Their work never stopped, and they could never say, It is finished. The present tense fits a date before A.D. 70.

9:7 *the high priest alone enters once in the year, not without blood* One man, one room, one day a year, and only with blood (Lev 16:2, 34). Everyone else stayed outside. The way to God was narrow and mostly closed.

9:8 *the Holy Spirit signifying this* The Spirit designed the tabernacle to teach. As long as the old system stood, the way into God's presence was not yet open. The veil said, Keep out. The old covenant could show the problem but not solve it. Only Christ opened the way (10:19-20).

9:9 *which is a symbol for the present time* Parabole, the word that gives us parable. The conscience is the inner sense of right and wrong that accuses us when we sin. A man could bring his offering and go home still guilty. Rituals may cover guilt for a while. Only the blood of Christ removes it (9:14).

9:10 *imposed until a time of reformation* Rules about food, drink and washings taught that God is holy and kept Israel separate from the nations, but they could not change the heart (Mark 7:18-23). They were given for a set time, until God would set things right, and that time came with Christ.

9:11 *But Christ, having appeared as high priest of the coming good things* The turning point. The old system was a shadow of good things to come (10:1). Christ brings the things themselves: forgiveness, a clean conscience, access to God. He serves in God's real presence, which no human hand built.

9:12 *but through His own blood, entered once for all into the holy places, having obtained eternal redemption* The high priest brought the blood of a bull and a goat (Lev 16:14-15), once a year, every year. Jesus brought His own, once for all. Redemption is setting free by paying a price. The old sacrifices covered sin for a year. His redemption never wears off and never needs renewing.

9:13 *the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled* The ashes of a red heifer mixed with water cleansed anyone who touched a dead body (Num 19:1-22). These did work in their own way, making a person outwardly clean to share in worship again, but they reached only the flesh.

9:14 *who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself unblemished to God, purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God* All three Persons of the Trinity are here. Unblemished like the lambs the Law required, but perfectly so (1 Pet 1:19), and no one forced Him (John 10:18). We are made clean not just to feel better but to serve. Do you carry guilt you have already confessed? His blood is enough.

9:15 *a death having taken place for redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant* Christ's death reaches back. Abraham, David and the prophets were saved by faith, and the price for their sins was paid at the cross (Rom 3:25-26). Canaan could be lost. The eternal inheritance cannot (1 Pet 1:4). The church shares this new covenant now, and Israel as a nation will receive all of it when He returns (8:13 note).

9:16 *where there is a covenant, there is necessity for the death of the one who made it* Diatheke, covenant, was also the normal word for a last will, and many Bibles read "will" in verses 16-17. A will takes effect only when its maker dies. Others read covenants in general, sealed by the death of an animal standing in for the one who made it (Gen 15:9-18). Either way, Jesus had to die for the promises to come into force.

9:18 *not even the first covenant has been inaugurated apart from blood* The Sinai covenant was sealed with the blood of sacrifices (Exod 24:3-8). Blood stands for life given up in death (Lev 17:11). A relationship with God, for sinners, can only be made through a death.

9:19 *with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, he sprinkled both the book itself and all the people* Hyssop was a small-leaved plant good for sprinkling. The writer adds details Exodus 24 does not record. Water, scarlet wool and hyssop were used together in other cleansings (Lev 14:4-7; Num 19:6, 18).

9:20 *This is the blood of the covenant which God commanded to you* Close to the words Jesus spoke over the cup at the Last Supper (Matt 26:28). His death would seal the new covenant as the blood at Sinai sealed the old.

9:21 *he sprinkled with the blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry* Why cleanse a holy place built at God's command (Exod 40:9-11; Lev 8:10-15, 30)? It stood among a sinful people. Sin affects not just what we do but where we live and what we use.

9:22 *apart from shedding of blood there is no forgiveness* "Almost" is honest: a very poor person could bring flour (Lev 5:11-13), and some things were cleaned by water or fire (Num 31:22-23). One of the key verses in the Bible. Sin brings death (Rom 6:23), and forgiveness requires a death. It shows how serious sin is, how holy God is, and how deep His love is.

blood there is no forgiveness. **23** ***It was*** necessary therefore ***for*** the copies of the things in the heavens to be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. **24** For Christ has not entered into holy places made by hands, copies of the true ***ones***, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; **25** nor that He should offer Himself repeatedly, just as the high priest enters into the holy places every year with blood of another; **26** otherwise it would have been necessary for Him to suffer repeatedly since ***the*** foundation of ***the*** world; but now once, at ***the*** consummation of the ages, He has been revealed for ***the*** putting away of sin through the sacrifice of Himself. **27** And inasmuch as it is appointed to men to die once, and after this judgment, **28** so the Christ also, having been offered once to bear ***the*** sins of many, will appear a second time, apart from sin, to those who eagerly await Him for salvation.

HEBREWS 10

One Sacrifice for All Time

1 For the law, having a shadow of the coming good things, not the very image of the things, can never with the same sacrifices which they offer continually every year perfect those who draw near. **2** Otherwise, would they not have ceased being offered, because those serving, once purified, would no longer have any conscience of sins? **3** But in these ***there is*** a reminder of sins every year. **4** For ***it is*** impossible ***for the*** blood of bulls and of goats to take away sins. **5** Therefore, coming into the world, He says, "Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but a body You prepared for Me; **6** in burnt offerings and ***offerings*** for sin You did not delight. **7** Then I said, 'Look, I have come (in ***the*** scroll of ***the*** book it has been written of Me) to do Your will, O God.'" **8** Saying above, "Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and ***offerings*** for sin You did not desire nor delight in" (which are offered according to the law), **9** then He has said, "Look, I have come to do Your will, O God." He takes away the first so that He may establish the second. **10** By which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus (Iesous) Christ once for all. **11** And every priest indeed stands every day ministering and repeatedly offering the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; **12** but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at ***the*** right ***hand***

9:23 Heb 8:5; Heb 9:9,10,24; Heb 10:1
9:24 Heb 8:2; Heb 1:3; Mark 16:19
9:25 Heb 9:7,14,26; Heb 10:10; Heb 9:12
9:26 Dan 9:24; Isa 53:10; Isa 53:12
9:27 2 Cor 5:10; Eccl 12:14; Jude 1:15
9:28 Isa 25:9; Isa 53:4; Isa 53:12
10:1 Heb 8:5; Col 2:17; Heb 7:18,19
10:2 Ps 103:12; Isa 43:25; Isa 44:22
10:3 Heb 9:7; Exod 30:10; Lev 16:6-11,21,22,29,30,34
10:4 Isa 1:11; Heb 10:11; Heb 9:9,13
10:5 Ps 40:6-8; Isa 1:11; Ps 50:8
10:6 Lev 4:29; Lev 5:7; Lev 9:16
10:7 1 Sam 15:22; Ezek 2:9; Mic 6:6
10:8 Ps 40:6; Exod 29:18; Lev 1:3
10:9 Ps 40:7-8; Ps 40:6; Mic 6:6
10:10 Heb 13:12; Heb 9:12,26,28; Heb 2:11
10:11 Heb 10:4; Num 28:3,24; Heb 7:27
10:12 Ps 110:1; Heb 1:3; Heb 9:12

9:23 *but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these* Heaven is not dirty with sin. Many think the way into God's presence had to be opened and set apart for sinners. Others think of Christ's cleansing reaching all creation (Col 1:20). "Better sacrifices" points to the one sacrifice of Christ, better than all the old ones.
9:24 *but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us* The high priest stood before God for a few minutes each year. Right now the Son of God stands in the Father's presence on your behalf, if you belong to Him (7:25).
9:25 *nor that He should offer Himself repeatedly* The high priest went in year after year "with blood of another." Jesus offered His own blood, once. To say His sacrifice must be repeated or added to is to say it was not enough.
9:26 *but now once, at the consummation of the ages, He has been revealed for the putting away of sin through the sacrifice of Himself* The consummation of the ages is the end point all earlier ages pointed to (Gal 4:4). The old sacrifices covered sin. Christ put it away, cancelled it.
9:27 *it is appointed to men to die once, and after this judgment* No second chance after death and no reincarnation. Death, then judgment. For those without Christ that means the great white throne (Rev 20:11-15). For believers, the judgment seat of Christ, for rewards, not salvation (2 Cor 5:10). Are you ready to meet God?
9:28 *will appear a second time, apart from sin, to those who eagerly await Him for salvation* He bore our sins on the cross (Isa 53:12; 1 Pet 2:24). The picture is the high priest coming back out of the Most Holy Place while the people waited to know the sacrifice was accepted. I believe Christ comes first for His church before the seven-year Tribulation (1 Thess 4:13-18; John 14:1-3), then returns visibly in glory at its end (Matt 24:29-31; Rev 19:11-16). Pre-tribulation teachers differ on whether this verse points mainly to the rapture or to His return as a whole. Are you waiting for Him?
10:1 *having a shadow of the coming good things, not the very image of the things* The Law had the outline of what Christ would bring, but not the reality itself (8:5). "The same sacrifices," "continually," "every year": the repetition proved they were not enough to bring worshipers fully and finally to God.
10:2 *would they not have ceased being offered* You do not keep paying a debt that has been paid in full. Cleansed once for all, worshipers would no longer carry a guilty conscience. The present tense again points to a date before A.D. 70.
10:3 *But in these there is a reminder of sins every year* The Day of Atonement brought sin back to mind. Under the new covenant God remembers sins no more (8:12; 10:17). Many believers still live as if under the old system, reminding themselves of sins God has forgiven (1 John 1:9). Live as one forgiven.
10:4 *it is impossible for the blood of bulls and of goats to take away sins* An animal cannot pay for a person's sin. It did not know right from wrong or choose to die for anyone. Old Testament believers were saved by faith in God's promise, and the payment was made later by Christ (9:15; Rom 3:25).
10:5 *a body You prepared for Me* Psalm 40:6-8, put in the mouth of Christ as He came into the world. God wanted obedience and a loving heart, not sacrifices for their own sake (1 Sam 15:22). The Greek Old Testament reads "body." The Hebrew speaks of ears God has opened. Both point to a servant ready to obey, and God prepared a body for His Son to offer as the true sacrifice.
10:7 *Look, I have come to do Your will, O God* The Old Testament scroll was written about Him (Luke 24:27, 44).
10:9 *He takes away the first so that He may establish the second* God commanded the sacrifices, but He took no pleasure in them apart from the hearts of the people or the Christ they pointed to. The first is the old system. The second is God's will done by Christ in His sacrifice.
10:10 *we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all* Here to be sanctified is to be set apart as holy for God, something He has done for us. Not through our works, feelings or religious efforts, but through His body offered once.
10:11 *every priest indeed stands every day* The priests never sat down. The same animals, the same blood, the same smoke rising from the altar, year after year, and it never took away one sin. That is not a criticism of the priests but the honest limit of a shadow.
10:12 *having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God* The priests stand; Christ sat. They offered many; He offered one. He now waits, seated in victory, for every enemy to be put under His feet when He returns to reign (1 Cor 15:24-26; Rev 19:11-16). He is not rushing. The outcome is certain.

of God, **13** from then on waiting until His enemies are placed ***as*** a footstool for His feet. **14** For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified. **15** And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after having said before, **16** "This ***is*** the covenant which I will make with them after those days, says ***the*** Lord: putting My laws on their hearts, I will also inscribe them on their minds," **17** ***He then says***, "and their sins and their lawless deeds I will certainly not remember any more." **18** Now where ***there is*** forgiveness of these, ***there is*** no longer an offering for sin.

Draw Near and Hold Fast

19 Having therefore, brothers, confidence for the entrance into the holy places by the blood of Jesus, **20** by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, **21** and ***having*** a great priest over the house of God, **22** let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having ***our*** hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and ***our*** body washed with pure water. **23** Let us hold fast the confession of ***our*** hope without wavering, for He who promised ***is*** faithful; **24** and let us consider one another for stirring up of love and of good works, **25** not forsaking the assembling together of ourselves, as ***is the*** custom of some, but encouraging ***one another***, and so much the more as you see the day drawing near.

Do Not Shrink Back

26 For if we sin willingly after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, **27** but a certain fearful expectation of judgment and a fury of fire about to devour the adversaries. **28** Anyone who has set aside ***the*** law of Moses dies without mercies on ***the testimony of*** two or three witnesses. **29** How much worse punishment, do you think, will he be considered worthy of who has trampled on the Son of God, and has regarded as common the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace? **30** For we know Him who said, "Vengeance ***is*** Mine; I will repay, says ***the*** Lord." And again, "***The*** Lord will judge His people." **31** ***It is*** a fearful ***thing*** to fall into ***the*** hands of ***the*** living God. **32** But remember the former days in which, having been enlightened, you endured a great

10:13 Heb 1:13; Ps 110:1; Luke 20:43
10:14 Heb 10:1; Rom 15:16; Jude 1:1
10:15 Heb 3:7; Heb 2:3,4; Heb 9:8
10:16 Jer 31:33-34; Heb 8:8-12; Rom 11:27
10:18 Heb 10:2,14
10:19 Heb 4:16; Eph 2:18; Heb 12:28
10:20 Exod 26:31; Lev 16:2; Lev 16:15
10:21 Gen 28:17; Heb 2:17; 1 Tim 3:15
10:22 Exod 29:4; Ezek 36:25; Heb 7:19
10:23 Heb 3:6,14; 1 Cor 1:9; Heb 11:11
10:24 1 Thess 5:11; Heb 13:1; 1 John 3:18
10:25 Heb 3:13; Matt 18:20; 1 Thess 5:11
10:26 2 Pet 2:20-22; Heb 6:4-6; John 9:41
10:27 Heb 2:3; Heb 12:25; Ezek 36:5
10:28 Deut 19:15; Num 15:36; Deut 17:2
10:29 Heb 2:3; Heb 13:20; Heb 9:13
10:30 Deut 32:35; Deut 32:36; Rom 12:19
10:31 Isa 33:14; Heb 12:29; Matt 10:28
10:32 Heb 6:4; Gal 3:3,4; Phil 1:29,30

10:14 *For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified* One of the great assurance verses. "He has perfected" is done, and nothing can add to it or undo it. At the same time believers are being made holy in daily life. Our standing is complete; our growth is in progress. Your standing does not rise on good days and fall on bad ones.
10:15 *And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us* The Spirit who spoke through Jeremiah. The writer quotes Jeremiah 31 again (8:8-12) for one line: God will not remember sins any more. Believers share this forgiveness now, and Israel as a nation will receive all of it when Christ returns (Rom 11:26-27).
10:18 *there is no longer an offering for sin* The conclusion of the teaching half of the letter. Going back to the temple meant going from what had already helped them to what could not. No religious act adds to Christ's work. "It has been finished" (John 19:30).
10:19 *confidence for the entrance into the holy places by the blood of Jesus* "Therefore" points back to chapters 7-10 as the writer turns to living. Only the high priest went in, once a year, trembling. Now every believer may go in boldly.
10:20 *by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh* New, never open before. Living, because the way is a living Person. When His body was torn on the cross, the temple veil was torn too (Mark 15:37-38).
10:22 *let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith* The first of three "let us" commands. The priests were sprinkled with blood and washed before they served (Exod 29:4, 21). Many see "our body washed with pure water" as baptism, the outward sign of inward cleansing. Others see the cleansing of the Spirit and the Word (Eph 5:26; Titus 3:5).
10:23 *Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful* The readers were under pressure to let go. Our holding fast rests on His faithfulness (1 Thess 5:24). Our hope does not depend on how strong our grip is but on the One we hold.
10:24 *let us consider one another for stirring up of love and of good works* Think about one another the way you would work on a problem you want to solve. "Stirring up" usually meant provoking in a bad sense. Here we provoke one another to love. You cannot stir up someone you never see.
10:25 *not forsaking the assembling together of ourselves, as is the custom of some* Some had stopped meeting, perhaps from fear, coldness, or thinking they did not need it. Church is where we encourage and are encouraged, hear the Word, worship, pray and serve. A coal pulled out of the fire soon goes out. Most read "the day" as Christ's return (1 Thess 5:2-4; Rom 13:12). Some think it includes the coming fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.
10:26 *For if we sin willingly after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins* The fourth warning (10:26-39). "Willingly" means deliberately, and the tense points to going on in it. In context the sin is rejecting Christ's sacrifice (10:29). Reject the one sacrifice that saves and there is no other. This does not mean every believer who sins knowingly is lost (1 John 1:9; 2:1).
10:27 *a fury of fire about to devour the adversaries* Adversaries are those who set themselves against God. For those who reject Christ, nothing is left but judgment.
10:28 *Anyone who has set aside the law of Moses dies without mercies on the testimony of two or three witnesses* Turning to idols brought death when proven by two or three witnesses (Deut 17:2-7). "Set aside" is open, deliberate rejection, not ordinary failure.
10:29 *has regarded as common the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace* To trample is to treat as something to walk on. "By which he was sanctified" is part of why this passage is debated. It may mean set apart by his link with God's people or by his claim, or it may mean truly saved.
10:30 *Vengeance is Mine; I will repay, says the Lord* Deuteronomy 32:35-36. Paul uses the same words to tell believers not to take revenge (Rom 12:19). In the song of Moses, "The Lord will judge His people" means God judges between the faithful and the faithless among them (1 Pet 4:17).
10:31 *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God* God is not an idol of wood or stone. He sees, acts and judges. Teachers read this warning the same four ways: true believers facing severe discipline, even death, and loss of reward; those who professed but never truly trusted; loss of salvation; or what would happen if a believer could turn away. Read it with verse 39. David chose to fall into the LORD's hands because His mercies are great (2 Sam 24:14). The hands that judge were pierced for us.
10:32 *remember the former days in which, having been enlightened, you endured a great conflict of sufferings* After warning comes encouragement, as in chapter 6. Remembering how God carried us before helps us keep going now. What has God brought you through?

conflict of sufferings, **33** partly being made a spectacle both by reproaches and by tribulations, and partly having become partners of those who were treated so. **34** For you both sympathized with my bonds and accepted with joy the plundering of your possessions, knowing that you have in yourselves a better and abiding possession in ***the*** heavens. **35** Therefore do not throw away your boldness, which has a great reward. **36** For you have need of endurance, so that having done the will of God you may receive the promise. **37** "For yet a very little while, ***and*** the One who is coming will come and will not delay. **38** But the righteous will live by faith; and if he shrinks back, My soul takes no pleasure in him." **39** But we are not of ***those who*** shrink back to destruction, but of ***those who have*** faith to ***the*** preserving of ***the*** soul.

HEBREWS 11

Faith from Abel to Noah

1 Now faith is ***the*** assurance of ***things*** hoped for, ***the*** conviction of things not seen. **2** For by this the elders were commended. **3** By faith we understand the ages to have been formed by ***the*** word of God, so that the things which are seen have not come into being out of things that are visible. **4** By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain (Kain), through which he was commended as being righteous, God bearing witness about his gifts; and through it, having died, he still speaks. **5** By faith Enoch (Henoch) was taken up so as not to see death, and he was not found, because God had taken him up; for before his taking up he has been commended ***as*** having pleased God. **6** And without faith ***it is*** impossible to please ***Him***; for the one who draws near to God must believe that He is, and ***that*** He becomes a rewarder to those who earnestly seek Him. **7** By faith Noah (Noe), having been divinely instructed concerning the things not yet seen, moved with reverent fear, prepared an ark for ***the*** salvation of his household, through which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which ***is*** according to faith.

The Faith of the Patriarchs

8 By faith Abraham (Abraam), being called, obeyed to go out into the place which he was going to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going. **9** By faith he sojourned in the land of the promise as in a foreign ***land***, having dwelt in tents with Isaac (Isaak) and Jacob

10:33 1 Cor 4:9; Phil 4:14; 1 Thess 2:14
10:34 1 Pet 1:4; 2 Tim 1:16; Acts 21:33
10:35 Heb 3:6,14; Heb 11:26; Gal 6:8-10
10:36 Luke 21:19; Heb 12:1; Heb 6:15
10:37 Hab 2:3; Isa 26:20; Isa 10:25
10:38 Hab 2:4; Rom 1:17; Gal 3:11
10:39 1 Sam 15:11; Ps 44:18; Prov 14:14
11:1 2 Cor 4:18; Rom 8:24,25; Heb 11:7,27
11:3 Ps 33:6; Gen 1:1; Gen 1:3
11:4 Gen 4:3; Gen 4:25; Prov 21:27
11:5 Gen 5:21; 2 Kgs 2:11; Gen 5:24
11:6 1 Chr 28:9; Prov 8:17; Jer 29:13,14
11:7 Ezek 14:14; Ezek 14:20; Gen 6:13
11:8 Gen 12:1; Ps 105:9; Gen 26:3
11:9 Gen 12:8; Gen 35:27; Gen 17:8

10:33 *being made a spectacle both by reproaches and by tribulations* Some were mocked in public like people in an arena. Others stood with them and shared their shame.
10:34 *For you both sympathized with my bonds* The SLB follows the Greek text that reads "my bonds," the writer's own imprisonment. Many older copies read the prisoners. They took the seizing of their property with joy, because what they lost on earth could not touch what they had in heaven (Matt 6:19-20).
10:35 *do not throw away your boldness, which has a great reward* Like a soldier throwing away his shield to run. God rewards those who hold on.
10:36 *For you have need of endurance* Staying under a load without giving up. They had started well. Now they needed to finish well. The Christian life is a long race (12:1).
10:37 *the One who is coming will come and will not delay* Habakkuk 2:3-4, with words from Isaiah 26:20. From God's view it is "a very little while," and He counts time differently than we do (2 Pet 3:8-9). Live every day ready for Him.
10:38 *But the righteous will live by faith* Quoted three times in the New Testament (Rom 1:17; Gal 3:11). Here the point is living by faith while waiting. To shrink back is to pull away in fear, like a soldier backing from the battle line.
10:39 *But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction* He ends the warning with confidence and counts himself and his readers among the faithful. "The preserving of the soul" is the final salvation of the whole person. Faith keeps going, and God keeps those who trust Him. This leads into chapter 11.
11:1 *Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen* Not a full definition but a description of what faith does. "Assurance" is the word used of God's "substance" in 1:3, a solid foundation that holds up. "Conviction" is proof, being convinced. Faith is not wishful thinking. We cannot see God, heaven or Christ's return, but faith takes God at His word and lives as if they are real, because they are.
11:2 *For by this the elders were commended* The elders are the people of the Old Testament. God bore witness to them, not for perfect lives, since many were far from perfect, and not for keeping the Law, since some lived before it. By faith. That has always been the way people please God (Rom 4:1-5).
11:3 *By faith we understand the ages to have been formed by the word of God* God spoke, and it was (Gen 1:3; Ps 33:6, 9). He did not make the world from something already there. No one saw it happen. Before we trust God for anything else, we must believe He is the Creator.
11:4 *By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain* Cain brought fruit of the ground; Abel brought the firstborn of his flock and the fat portions (Gen 4:3-5). Abel's heart trusted God, and his offering showed it (1 John 3:12; Matt 23:35). He was the first man to die, killed by his brother, but his faith "still speaks." What will your life say when you are gone?
11:5 *By faith Enoch was taken up so as not to see death* In a chapter that keeps saying and he died, Enoch walked with God, and God took him (Gen 5:21-24). Only Elijah went the same way (2 Kgs 2:11). His going is often seen as a picture of believers alive at Christ's coming for His church, caught up without dying (1 Thess 4:17).
11:6 *And without faith it is impossible to please Him* Faith is not a nice extra. No works, religion or effort can take its place. We must believe that God exists, the living God who has made Himself known, and that He is good and rewards those who seek Him. He is not a God who hides or teases. Are you seeking Him?
11:7 *By faith Noah, having been divinely instructed concerning the things not yet seen* God told Noah a flood was coming (Gen 6:13-22). Some think it had never rained before, though Scripture does not say so plainly (Gen 2:5-6). His faith led to years of work on a huge boat on dry ground. His obedience left the world without excuse. He was counted righteous because he believed God.
11:8 *and he went out, not knowing where he was going* Called, then obeyed (Gen 12:1-4). At about seventy-five Abraham left Haran with no map, only a promise. God often shows us the next step, not the whole road.
11:9 *By faith he sojourned in the land of the promise as in a foreign land* To sojourn is to live as a stranger without settling down. The only land Abraham ever owned was a burial cave he bought (Gen 23). Three generations lived in tents that could be packed up and moved.

(Iakob), the fellow heirs of the same promise; **10** for he was awaiting the city having the foundations, whose architect and builder ***is*** God. **11** By faith even Sarah (Sarra) herself received power for ***the*** conception of seed, and gave birth beyond the time of age, since she considered Him faithful who had promised. **12** Therefore also from one ***man***, and that one as good as dead, were born ***descendants*** just as the stars of heaven in multitude, and as the countless sand which ***is*** by the shore of the sea. **13** These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them from afar, and having been persuaded ***of them***, and having embraced ***them***, and having confessed that they are strangers and sojourners on the earth. **14** For those who say such things make it manifest that they are seeking a homeland. **15** And if indeed they had been remembering that ***homeland*** from which they came out, they would have had opportunity to return. **16** But now they stretch out for a better ***one***, that is, a heavenly ***one***. Therefore God is not ashamed of them, to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them. **17** By faith Abraham, being tested, has offered up Isaac; and the one who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten ***son***, **18** as to whom it was said, "In Isaac your seed will be called," **19** having reasoned that God ***was*** able to raise even from ***the*** dead, from where he also received him back in a figure. **20** By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. **21** By faith Jacob, dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph (Ioseph), and worshiped ***leaning*** on the top of his staff. **22** By faith Joseph, dying, made mention concerning the exodus of the sons of Israel, and gave instructions concerning his bones.

The Faith of Moses

23 By faith Moses, having been born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw ***that*** the child ***was*** beautiful; and they did not fear the edict of the king. **24** By faith Moses, having become great, refused to be called ***the*** son of Pharaoh's daughter, **25** having chosen rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to have ***the*** temporary enjoyment of sin, **26** having esteemed the reproach of the Christ greater wealth than the treasures in Egypt (Aigyptos); for he was looking toward the reward. **27** By faith he left Egypt, not having feared the anger of the king; for he endured as seeing the Invisible ***One***. **28** By faith he has kept the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood, so that the one destroying the firstborn might not touch them. **29** By faith they passed through the Red Sea as through dry ***land***, which the Egyptians, having attempted, were swallowed up. **30** By faith the walls of Jericho (Hiericho) fell, having been encir-

11:10 Heb 13:14; Heb 12:22,28; Rev 21:2,10-27
11:11 Gen 18:11; Gen 17:17; Gen 21:1
11:12 Gen 22:17; Gen 15:5; Deut 28:62
11:13 Gen 23:4; Gen 47:9; Ps 119:19
11:14 Gen 23:4; Gen 47:9; 2 Cor 4:18
11:15 Gen 23:4; Gen 47:9; Gen 24:6-8
11:16 Exod 3:6; Gen 23:4; Gen 47:9
11:17 Gen 22:1-2; Gen 22:16; Gen 22:3
11:18 Gen 21:12; Gen 17:19; Gen 21:3
11:19 Gen 22:4; Gen 22:12-13; Gen 22:3
11:20 Gen 27:27; Gen 27:33; Gen 27:39
11:21 Gen 47:31; Gen 48:5; Gen 48:20
11:22 Gen 50:24; Exod 13:19; Josh 24:32
11:23 Exod 1:22; Exod 2:2; Exod 2:3
11:24 Exod 2:10; Exod 2:11; Acts 7:21-24
11:25 Ps 84:10; Job 20:5; Job 36:21
11:26 Heb 13:13; Heb 2:2; Heb 10:35
11:27 Exod 2:14; Exod 14:10; Exod 4:19
11:28 Exod 12:21; Exod 12:3; Exod 12:27
11:29 Ps 106:9; Neh 9:11; Josh 2:10
11:30 Josh 6:3; Josh 6:15; Josh 6:20

11:10 *for he was awaiting the city having the foundations, whose architect and builder is God* Abraham looked beyond the land to the heavenly Jerusalem (12:22; Rev 21:2, 10-14). God's promise of the land to Abraham's descendants also still stands, and it will be kept to Israel in Christ's kingdom (Gen 17:8; Ezek 37:21-28).
11:11 *since she considered Him faithful who had promised* Sarah was about ninety (Gen 17:17; 18:11-14) and at first she laughed (Gen 18:12). In the end she trusted. Faith is not faith in faith. It is faith in God's faithfulness.
11:12 *and that one as good as dead* From an old man came a nation like the stars and the sand (Gen 15:5; 22:17). Nothing is too hard for God (Gen 18:14).
11:13 *These all died in faith, not having received the promises* Like travelers who see home from a distance, they saw what was coming and welcomed it. Abraham called himself a stranger and sojourner (Gen 23:4), and Jacob called his life a pilgrimage (Gen 47:9).
11:15 *they would have had opportunity to return* Abraham could have gone back to Ur or Haran. He did not. He was seeking a homeland.
11:16 *Therefore God is not ashamed of them, to be called their God* God calls Himself the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Exod 3:6). Jesus has gone to prepare a place for us (John 14:2-3). Do you live like a stranger here, or as if this world is all there is?
11:17 *By faith Abraham, being tested, has offered up Isaac* The greatest test of Abraham's life (Gen 22:1-19). Everything God promised was tied to Isaac. If Isaac died, how could God keep His word?
11:19 *having reasoned that God was able to raise even from the dead* Abraham's faith worked it through. God promised, God cannot lie, so God would raise Isaac. He told his servants they both would come back (Gen 22:5). God provided a ram, and in a figure Abraham received Isaac back from the dead. The picture points to Christ, the only Son, really offered and really raised.
11:20 *By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come* The blessing did not go as Isaac planned (Gen 27:27-40), but he trusted God's word would come true.
11:21 *worshiped leaning on the top of his staff* Jacob blessed Ephraim and Manasseh near death in Egypt (Gen 48:1-20). The staff follows the Greek Old Testament of Genesis 47:31, where the Hebrew speaks of the head of his bed. The wanderer ended his life worshiping.
11:22 *gave instructions concerning his bones* Joseph had all the power of Egypt, but Egypt was not home (Gen 50:24-25). Israel carried his bones out (Exod 13:19; Josh 24:32). Isaac, Jacob and Joseph all looked ahead at life's end to what God would do after they were gone.
11:23 *they did not fear the edict of the king* Pharaoh ordered every Hebrew boy thrown into the Nile (Exod 1:22). Amram and Jochebed hid Moses (Exod 2:1-3; 6:20). "Beautiful" means well-formed (Acts 7:20). Sometimes faith says no to those in power when they order us to do wrong (Acts 5:29).
11:25 *than to have the temporary enjoyment of sin* Moses grew up in the palace with wealth, learning and power (Acts 7:22). Sin does bring pleasure, but it does not last.
11:26 *having esteemed the reproach of the Christ greater wealth than the treasures in Egypt* Centuries before Jesus, Moses suffered for the same hope, the promised Messiah, and for standing with God's people. Looking toward the reward is not selfish. It is faith (11:6).
11:27 *for he endured as seeing the Invisible One* Moses left Egypt twice. Many think the Exodus is meant, since he did fear when he fled to Midian (Exod 2:14-15). He kept going because he kept his eyes on the God whom faith sees.
11:28 *By faith he has kept the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood* The blood of a lamb on the doorposts on the night of the last plague (Exod 12:1-13, 21-23). A picture of Christ our Passover Lamb (1 Cor 5:7).
11:29 *By faith they passed through the Red Sea as through dry land* The same sea that saved Israel destroyed Egypt (Exod 14:21-31). The difference was faith in the God who opened the way.
11:30 *By faith the walls of Jericho fell* Marching around a city for seven days made no military sense (Josh 6:1-20). They obeyed, and the walls fell.

cled for seven days. **31** By faith Rahab (Hraab) the prostitute did not perish with those who disobeyed, having received the spies with peace.

Faith That Conquered and Suffered

32 And what more shall I say? For the time will fail me telling of Gideon (Gedeon), and Barak and Samson (Sampson) and Jephthah (Iephthae), and David (Dabid) and Samuel
(Samouel) and the prophets, **33** who through faith conquered kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, shut ***the*** mouths of lions, **34** quenched ***the*** power of fire, escaped ***the*** mouths of ***the*** sword, out of weakness were made strong, became mighty in war, put to flight armies of foreigners. **35** Women received their dead by resurrection; and others were tortured, not having accepted the release, so that they might obtain a better resurrection. **36** And others received trial of mockings and of scourgings, and in addition of chains and imprisonment. **37** They were stoned, they were sawed in two, they were tested, they died by slaughter of ***the*** sword; they went about in sheepskins, in goatskins, being destitute, being oppressed, being mistreated, **38** of whom the world was not worthy, wandering in deserts and mountains and caves and the holes of the earth. **39** And these all, having been commended through faith, did not receive the promise, **40** God having planned something better for us, so that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

HEBREWS 12

Run the Race, Looking to Jesus

1 Therefore we also, having so great a cloud of witnesses encompassing us, having laid aside every weight and the sin that easily entangles, let us run with endurance the race lying before us, **2** looking to the founder and perfecter of the faith, Jesus (Iesous), who for the joy lying before Him endured ***the*** cross, having despised ***the*** shame, and sat down at ***the*** right ***hand*** of the throne of God. **3** For consider Him who has endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, so that you may not grow weary, fainting in your souls.

The Father's Discipline

4 You have not yet resisted to ***the point of*** blood, struggling against sin; **5** and you have forgotten the exhortation which addresses you as sons: "My son, do not regard lightly ***the*** discipline of ***the*** Lord, nor faint when you are reproved by Him; **6** for whom ***the*** Lord loves He disciplines, and He scourges every son whom He receives." **7** If you endure discipline, God is dealing with you as with sons; for what son is there whom

11:31 Josh 6:22; Josh 2:1; Josh 6:25
11:32 1 Sam 1:20; 1 Sam 16:1; 1 Sam 16:13
11:33 Dan 6:22; 1 Sam 17:34; 1 Sam 17:35
11:34 1 Sam 17:51; Ps 144:10; Judg 15:14
11:35 1 Kgs 17:22-23; 2 Kgs 4:35-37; 1 Kgs 17:24
11:36 Jer 20:2; Dan 11:33; Gen 39:20
11:37 2 Chr 24:21; 2 Kgs 1:8; 1 Kgs 18:4
11:38 1 Kgs 18:4; 1 Kgs 19:9; 1 Sam 22:1
11:39 Heb 11:2,13; 1 Pet 1:12; Luke 10:23,24
11:40 Rev 6:11; Heb 7:19,22; Heb 8:6
12:1 1 Cor 9:24-27; 2 Tim 4:7; Luke 21:34
12:2 Isa 53:3; Ps 110:1; Isa 8:17
12:3 1 Sam 12:24; Isa 53:3; Gal 6:9
12:4 Heb 10:32-34; Heb 12:2; Matt 24:9
12:5 Prov 3:11-12; Ps 118:18; 1 Chr 15:13
12:6 Ps 32:3; Ps 32:4; Rev 3:19
12:7 Prov 19:18; Prov 29:15,17; Prov 13:24

11:31 *By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who disobeyed* A Canaanite woman with a sinful past who believed Israel's God was the true God (Josh 2:9-11; 6:22-25). She became part of Israel and an ancestor of Jesus (Matt 1:5). God's grace reaches anyone who believes.
11:32 *Gideon, and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, and David and Samuel and the prophets* Not perfect people. Gideon was fearful, Barak hesitant, Samson ruled by his desires, Jephthah rash in his vow, David guilty of great sin. Each, at a key moment, trusted God. God uses people who trust Him.
11:33 *shut the mouths of lions* Daniel in the lions' den (Dan 6:22). David and others conquered kingdoms, and judges and kings worked righteousness.
11:34 *quenched the power of fire* Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego came out of the furnace (Dan 3:27). Elijah, Elisha and David escaped those trying to kill them. God makes weak people strong (2 Cor 12:9-10).
11:35 *Women received their dead by resurrection; and others were tortured, not having accepted the release* The widows of Zarephath and Shunem received their sons back (1 Kgs 17:17-24; 2 Kgs 4:32-37). Then the chapter turns. Not every person of faith was delivered. Some refused release bought by denying God, looking for a better resurrection than coming back to this life. Jewish history tells of faithful people before Christ who died this way.
11:36 *chains and imprisonment* Jeremiah was beaten, put in stocks and thrown into a pit (Jer 20:2; 37:15; 38:6).
11:37 *They were stoned, they were sawed in two* Zechariah son of Jehoiada was stoned in the temple court (2 Chr 24:20-21). An old Jewish tradition says Isaiah was sawn in two under King Manasseh. Elijah wore a garment of hair (2 Kgs 1:8).
11:38 *of whom the world was not worthy* The world treated them as worthless. God says the world was not worthy of them. Obadiah hid a hundred prophets in caves (1 Kgs 18:4). Faith does not always lead to escape in this life, but it always leads to God's approval.
11:39 *did not receive the promise* Every person in this chapter was approved for faith, yet none received the full promise in his lifetime.
11:40 *so that apart from us they should not be made perfect* The "better" theme one more time. The Old Testament saints and believers today will be made complete together through Christ's work and share in the resurrection and the kingdom He brings. They ran their race. Now it is our turn.
12:1 *having so great a cloud of witnesses encompassing us* "Therefore" points back to chapter 11. Are they watching from heaven like fans in a stadium? Some teachers think so. Others think the point is that they are witnesses to us, lives that testify faith is worth it. Some weights are not sin but slow us down. Sin wraps around our feet like a long robe and trips us. This is a long-distance race, and God has set the course.
12:2 *looking to the founder and perfecter of the faith, Jesus* Not at ourselves, others or our problems. He is the pioneer who opened the way (2:10) and the One who completed the race perfectly. His joy was doing the Father's will, being raised and exalted, and bringing many sons to glory. He counted the shame as nothing beside it, and He will finish what He started in us (Phil 1:6).
12:3 *consider Him who has endured such hostility from sinners against Himself* He was hated, mocked, beaten, spit on and crucified by the people He came to save, and He was sinless. When we think about what He endured, our troubles take their right size. When you feel like giving up, stop and consider Him.
12:4 *You have not yet resisted to the point of blood* They had suffered loss, mockery and prison (10:32-34), but none had yet been killed. This does not make their suffering small. It gives it perspective. You have not reached the limit, and God will give strength.
12:5 *My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor faint when you are reproved by Him* Proverbs 3:11-12. Two wrong responses: shrug it off and learn nothing, or give up and think God has turned against us.
12:6 *for whom the Lord loves He disciplines* Discipline is child training, the whole work of raising a child, teaching and correction. "Scourges" is strong. God's training can hurt, but it is always the work of a loving Father, never an enemy.
12:7 *for what son is there whom a father does not discipline* Their hardships, persecution included, were not signs God had left them. Not every hardship is punishment for a specific sin. Sometimes it is (1 Cor 11:30-32), but often it is training to make us more like Christ (James 1:2-4). Endure it and ask what God is teaching.

a father does not discipline? **8** But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. **9** Furthermore, we indeed had the fathers of our flesh as correctors, and we respected ***them***; shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? **10** For they indeed disciplined ***us*** for a few days according to what seemed good to them, but He for ***our*** benefit, so that ***we may*** share His holiness. **11** Now all discipline for the present does not seem to be of joy, but of grief; but afterward it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. **12** Therefore lift up the hands that hang down and the weakened knees, **13** and make straight paths for your feet, so that the lame may not be turned aside, but rather be healed.

Do Not Refuse Him Who Speaks

14 Pursue peace with all, and the holiness without which no one will see the Lord, **15** watching lest anyone fall short of the grace of God, lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and through this many be defiled; **16** lest ***there be*** any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one meal sold his birthright. **17** For you know that even afterward, when he wished to inherit the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place of repentance, although he sought it with tears. **18** For you have not come to a mountain that can be touched and that has been kindled with fire, and to blackness and darkness and storm, **19** and to ***the*** sound of a trumpet and to a voice of words, which those who heard begged that no word be added to them. **20** For they could not bear what was being commanded: "If even a beast touches the mountain, it will be stoned or shot down with an arrow." **21** And so fearful was the sight ***that*** Moses said, "I am terrified and trembling." **22** But you have come to Mount Zion (Sion) and to ***the*** city of ***the*** living God, ***the*** heavenly Jerusalem (Hierousalem), and to myriads of angels, **23** to ***the*** festal gathering and church of ***the*** firstborn who are enrolled in ***the*** heavens, and to God, ***the*** judge of all, and to ***the*** spirits of righteous ***men*** made perfect, **24** and to Jesus, ***the*** mediator of a new covenant, and to ***the*** blood of sprinkling that speaks better ***things*** than ***that of*** Abel. **25** See that you do not refuse the One speaking. For if they did not escape who refused the

12:8 Heb 12:6; Ps 73:1,14,15; 1 Pet 5:9,10
12:9 Num 16:22; Exod 20:12; Lev 19:3
12:10 Ps 118:18; 2 Pet 1:4; Lev 11:44,45
12:11 Ps 118:18; Isa 32:17; James 3:17,18
12:12 Isa 35:3; Heb 12:3,5; Job 4:3,4
12:13 Prov 4:26; Isa 35:3; Gal 6:1
12:14 2 Cor 7:1; Isa 35:8; 1 Pet 1:15,16
12:15 Deut 29:18; Gal 5:4; Heb 3:12
12:16 Gen 25:31; Gen 25:33; Gen 25:34
12:17 Gen 27:30; Gen 27:34-38; Gen 27:31
12:18 Deut 4:11; Exod 20:18; Exod 19:18
12:19 Deut 4:12; Exod 19:16; Deut 5:24
12:20 Exod 19:12-13; Deut 33:2; Rom 3:19,20
12:21 Exod 19:16; Deut 9:19; Exod 19:19
12:22 Ps 48:2; 2 Kgs 19:4; Deut 5:26
12:23 Gen 18:25; Deut 21:17; Ps 50:5
12:24 Gen 4:10; Exod 24:8; Jer 31:31
12:25 Exod 16:29; Isa 30:15; Heb 8:5

12:8 *then you are illegitimate children and not sons* A father might not bother training a child born outside marriage, who would not be his heir. If someone claims to be God's child but God never corrects him, something is wrong. God shaping you through hardship is evidence He loves you as His own.

12:9 *shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live* God gives us spiritual life. Some had fathers who were harsh, cruel or absent. God is not like that. His discipline is never abuse. Where an earthly father failed, the heavenly Father does not.

12:10 *so that we may share His holiness* Our fathers trained us for a short time, as best they knew, sometimes right and sometimes not. God never makes a mistake, and His goal is the highest there is, that we become like Him (Rom 8:28-29).

12:11 *but afterward it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it* Scripture never asks us to pretend pain does not hurt. "Afterward" is the key word, like a farmer waiting for harvest. "Trained" is the athlete's word (5:14). Discipline bears fruit in those who let it train them.

12:12 *lift up the hands that hang down and the weakened knees* Tired runners let their arms drop and knees go weak. The words echo Isaiah 35:3, a promise of God's coming salvation.

12:13 *make straight paths for your feet, so that the lame may not be turned aside* Echoing Proverbs 4:26. When we run straight, weaker believers who are limping can follow. When we wander, others fall. Who is watching how you run?

12:14 *Pursue peace with all, and the holiness without which no one will see the Lord* The fifth and last warning (12:14-29). Pursue means to chase hard (Rom 12:18). Some take the holiness as what God gives every believer in Christ (10:10, 14), which always shows in a changing life. Others stress practical holiness needed to see and know the Lord in fellowship now. Either way, holiness is not optional.

12:15 *lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and through this many be defiled* "Watching" is the root of the word for overseer. Believers watch out for one another. The picture is Deuteronomy 29:18, a root bearing poison among God's people. Bitterness starts small and hidden, then spreads. One bitter person can poison a whole church.

12:16 *any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one meal sold his birthright* Profane means treating holy things as ordinary. Some read both words of Esau. Others apply only the second to him. He traded the rights of the firstborn for a bowl of stew (Gen 25:29-34). Are you trading something eternal for something gone tomorrow?

12:17 *for he found no place of repentance, although he sought it with tears* Jacob got the blessing and Esau could not get it back (Gen 27:30-40). Some say Isaac would not change his mind. Others say Esau found no real change of heart and wept over what he lost, not his sin. Some choices cannot be undone, even with tears. The four views of the warnings given at chapter 6 apply to 12:14-29 as well.

12:18 *a mountain that can be touched and that has been kindled with fire* Mount Sinai, with darkness, thunder, a trumpet growing louder, and God's own voice (Exod 19:16-25; Deut 4:11-12). The people begged Moses to speak instead (Exod 20:18-19). Sinai showed God's holiness and how far sinners are from Him.

12:20 *If even a beast touches the mountain, it will be stoned or shot down with an arrow* God's presence was so holy that no one could come near (Exod 19:12-13).

12:21 *I am terrified and trembling* Even Moses, who spoke with God face to face, was afraid (Deut 9:19). The old covenant's mountain is a place of fear and distance, and the readers were tempted to go back to it.

12:22 *But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem* Believers have already come by faith to God's dwelling, the city Abraham looked for (11:10, 16). This does not cancel God's promises for the earthly Jerusalem, the capital of Christ's kingdom on earth (Isa 2:2-4; Zech 14:4, 16). The heavenly city will one day come down (Rev 21:2, 10). At Sinai angels were present in terror. At Zion they gather in joy.

12:23 *the festal gathering and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in the heavens* A joyful assembly like a great feast. Firstborn speaks of their rights as heirs, and their names are written in God's book (Luke 10:20; Rev 21:27). "The spirits of righteous men made perfect" are believers who have died, now complete in His presence. Our loved ones who died in Christ are part of this gathering.

12:24 *the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel* Jesus is why we can come to God the Judge without fear (8:6; 9:15). Abel's blood cried from the ground for justice (Gen 4:10). Abel's blood said, Guilty. Jesus' blood says, Forgiven. Why would anyone go back to Sinai?

12:25 *See that you do not refuse the One speaking* The God who spoke in His Son (1:1-2). If refusing the message at Sinai brought judgment, refusing the One who speaks from heaven brings greater (2:2-3; 10:28-29).

One who instructed ***them*** on earth, much more ***will*** we ***not escape*** who turn away from the One ***who speaks*** from heaven, **26** whose voice shook the earth at that time; but now He has promised, saying, "Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven." **27** Now this, "Yet once more," signifies the removal of the things being shaken, as of things that have been made, so that the things not being shaken may remain. **28** Therefore, receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us have grace, through which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear; **29** for our God ***is*** also a consuming fire.

HEBREWS 13

Love and Holy Living

1 Let brotherly love continue. **2** Do not forget hospitality, for through this some have entertained angels without knowing it. **3** Remember the prisoners as bound with ***them***, ***and*** those being mistreated, as being yourselves also in ***the*** body. **4** Marriage ***is to be*** honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterers. **5** ***Let your*** way of life ***be*** without love of money, being content with the things present; for He Himself has said, "I will certainly not leave you, nor will I ever forsake you," **6** so that we, being confident, say, "***The*** Lord ***is*** my helper, and I will not be afraid; what will man do to me?"

Outside the Camp

7 Remember those who lead you, who spoke the word of God to you; considering the outcome of their way of life, imitate ***their*** faith. **8** Jesus (Iesous) Christ ***is*** the same yesterday and today and forever. **9** Do not be carried about by various and strange teachings; for ***it is*** good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods, by which those who walked ***in them*** were not profited. **10** We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no authority to eat. **11** For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy places by the high priest for sin are burned outside the camp. **12** Therefore Jesus also, so that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered outside

12:26 Hag 2:6; Exod 19:18; Isa 13:13
12:27 Hag 2:6; Isa 13:13; Ps 102:26,27
12:28 Dan 2:44; Isa 56:7; Heb 5:7
12:29 Deut 4:24; Isa 10:17; Heb 10:27
13:1 1 Pet 1:22; 2 Pet 1:7; 1 Pet 2:17
13:2 Gen 18:1; Gen 18:2; Gen 19:1
13:3 Heb 10:34; Matt 25:36,43; 1 Cor 12:26
13:4 1 Cor 6:9; Prov 5:15-23; Gal 5:19,21
13:5 Deut 31:6; Deut 31:8; Josh 1:5
13:6 Ps 118:6; Isa 41:10,14; Ps 27:1-3,9
13:7 Heb 6:12; Heb 13:17,24; Acts 14:23
13:8 Mal 3:6; James 1:17; Heb 1:12
13:9 Eph 4:14; Acts 20:30; Eph 5:6
13:10 Num 3:7; Exod 40:6; Exod 40:29
13:11 Lev 16:27; Lev 9:11; Lev 6:30
13:12 Heb 2:11; Eph 5:26; Mark 15:20-24

12:26 *Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven* At Sinai the mountain quaked (Exod 19:18). Haggai 2:6 promises a final shaking of all creation.
12:27 *so that the things not being shaken may remain* When God shakes heaven and earth, all that can be shaken will be removed (1:10-12; 2 Pet 3:10-13). That shaking is still future, at the end of this age when Christ returns to judge and reign. Only what is built on Christ will stand.
12:28 *receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us have grace* Christ's kingdom will never be overthrown (Dan 2:44; 7:14). Charis means both grace and thanks, and both fit. "Serve" is to worship as a priest does. God is our Father, but He is not our buddy. Worship should be joyful and never careless.
12:29 *For our God is also a consuming fire* Deuteronomy 4:24. The God who burned on Sinai has not changed. For those who refuse Him, that is terrifying. For those who come through Jesus, the fire that consumes sin purifies His people (1 Pet 1:7), because Jesus took the fire of judgment for us. Grace and awe go together.
13:1 *Let brotherly love continue* Philadelphia, love for brothers and sisters in the faith. They already had it (6:10; 10:33-34). Love grows cold under pressure or when people disappoint us, and it takes choosing again and again. All the deep teaching about Christ's priesthood should lead here (John 13:35).
13:2 *through this some have entertained angels without knowing it* There were few safe inns, and traveling believers depended on other believers. Abraham welcomed three visitors (Gen 18:1-8; 19:1), and Lot took in two angels (Gen 19:1-3). We never know how God may use a simple welcome (Matt 25:35, 40).
13:3 *Remember the prisoners as bound with them* Prisoners often depended on friends for food and care (10:34). "In the body" may mean still in this life, open to the same suffering, or part of one body in Christ (1 Cor 12:26). Believers around the world are in prison for their faith today. Do you remember them in prayer?
13:4 *Marriage is to be honorable among all, and the bed undefiled* God designed marriage, and sexual union within it is pure and good, kept only between husband and wife. Sexual sin outside marriage and adultery against one's spouse God takes seriously. It is a warning, and a call to come to Christ for a fresh start. No sin is beyond His cleansing for those who repent (1 Cor 6:9-11).
13:5 *I will certainly not leave you, nor will I ever forsake you* The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil (1 Tim 6:10), and these readers had lost property (10:34). From Deuteronomy 31:6, 8 and Joshua 1:5. The Greek stacks up its negatives, I will never, ever leave you. Contentment comes from knowing we have God.
13:6 *The Lord is my helper, and I will not be afraid; what will man do to me* Psalm 118:6. Faith hears God's promise and answers it. People may take our property or worse, but they cannot take God from us (Rom 8:31-39). Say this verse out loud, and believe it.
13:7 *considering the outcome of their way of life, imitate their faith* The leaders who first taught them, some perhaps already dead as faithful witnesses. Not their personality or every habit, but their faith. Who has finished well for you? Thank God for them.
13:8 *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever* The center of the chapter, tying the letter together. Teachers come and go; Jesus remains. The same Christ who died and rose, our living High Priest now (7:25), forever unchanged (1:12). The readers did not need new teachings. They needed the same Jesus.
13:9 *it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods* Strange teachings pushed them around like a boat in the wind (Eph 4:14). Some seem to have been about Jewish food laws or meals tied to the temple. The heart is strengthened by grace, not diet (Col 2:20-23).
13:10 *We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no authority to eat* Priests could eat parts of many sacrifices (Lev 6:16, 26). Most teachers take the altar as the cross, Christ Himself and His sacrifice, which believers feed on by faith (John 6:51-56). Some take it as the Lord's Supper, and some churches teach the Supper is itself a sacrifice. On any reading the point rests on Christ's once-for-all sacrifice (10:10-14), received by faith.
13:11 *are burned outside the camp* On the Day of Atonement the bodies of the bull and goat were not eaten. They were carried outside and burned (Lev 16:27). The great sin offering was never the priests' food.
13:12 *Therefore Jesus also, so that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered outside the gate* Jesus was crucified outside Jerusalem's walls (John 19:17, 20). Outside the camp was the place of lepers and the unclean (Lev 13:46) and of executions (Lev 24:14). He was cast out so we could be brought in.

the gate. **13** Therefore let us go out to Him outside the camp,
bearing His reproach. **14** For here we do not have an abiding
city, but we are seeking the one to come. **15** Through Him
then let us offer up a sacrifice of praise to God continually,
that is, ***the*** fruit of lips confessing His name. **16** And do not
forget doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is
well pleased. **17** Obey those who lead you and submit ***to***
them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will
give an account, so that they may do this with joy and not
groaning, for this ***would be*** unprofitable for you. **18** Pray for
us; for we trust that we have a good conscience, desiring to
conduct ourselves well in all things. **19** And I exhort ***you***
more abundantly to do this, so that I may be restored to you
more quickly.

Blessing and Greetings

20 Now may the God of peace, who brought up from ***the*** dead
the great Shepherd of the sheep by ***the*** blood of ***the*** eternal
covenant, our Lord Jesus, **21** equip you in every good work to
do His will, working in you what ***is*** well pleasing before Him,
through Jesus Christ, to whom ***be*** the glory to the ages of the
ages. Amen. **22** And I exhort you, brothers, bear with the
word of exhortation, for indeed I have written to you in few
words. **23** Know that the brother Timothy (Timotheos) has
been released, with whom, if he comes soon, I will see you.
24 Greet all those who lead you and all the saints. Those from
Italy (Italia) greet you. **25** Grace ***be*** with you all. Amen.

13:13 Heb 11:26; 1 Cor 4:10-13; Heb 12:3
13:14 Heb 12:22; Phil 3:20; Mic 2:10
13:15 Hos 14:2; Ps 50:14; Ps 69:30
13:16 Phil 4:18; Rom 12:13; Gal 6:10
13:17 Heb 13:7; 1 Tim 5:17; 1 Pet 5:2,3
13:18 1 Thess 5:25; 2 Thess 3:1; Acts 23:1
13:19 Phlm 1:22; Rom 1:10-12; Rom 15:31,32
13:20 Ps 23:1; Ps 80:1; Rom 15:33
13:21 1 Kgs 8:58; Ps 72:19; 2 Thess 2:17
13:22 1 Pet 5:12; Heb 3:1,12,13; Heb 13:1-3,12-16
13:23 1 Thess 3:2; Acts 16:1-3; Phlm 1:1
13:24 Heb 13:7,17; Acts 18:2; Rom 16:1-16
13:25 Rom 1:7; Rom 16:20,24; Eph 6:24

13:13 *let us go out to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach* Leave the comfort of the old religion and the respect of your people, and stand with Jesus. It may cost the approval of family, friends or culture, as Moses chose the reproach of Christ (11:26). Are you willing?
13:14 *For here we do not have an abiding city* Jerusalem, with its temple and history, was destroyed by the Romans in A.D. 70, most likely only a few years later. We seek the city whose builder is God (11:10, 16; 12:22). We still care about this world, but hold it loosely (Phil 3:20).
13:15 *let us offer up a sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of lips confessing His name* Animal sacrifices ended in Christ, but believers offer spiritual sacrifices through Him (1 Pet 2:5). The phrase echoes Hosea 14:2. Not just on Sunday. Praise is a choice we make, not only a feeling we wait for.
13:16 *for with such sacrifices God is well pleased* Real worship is also in how we treat people (Phil 4:18). Who could you do good to or share with this week?
13:17 *Obey those who lead you and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account* Not blind obedience. No leader may command what God forbids (Acts 5:29), and this never means staying silent about abuse. Where leaders are faithful to the Word, support them. They watch like shepherds awake at night over the flock and will answer to God (James 3:1). Resisting good leaders wears them down and hurts the church.
13:18 *Pray for us* Even the writer of this deep letter needed prayer. A good conscience is God's gift, cleansed by Christ's blood (9:14; 10:22) and kept by honest living. Pray for your pastor and leaders.
13:19 *so that I may be restored to you more quickly* Something kept him away, but Scripture does not say what. He believed prayer would make a difference (James 5:16; Phlm 22). Do you believe your prayers matter?
13:20 *who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep by the blood of the eternal covenant* God made peace with us through Christ (Rom 5:1). The only plain mention of the resurrection in Hebrews, though it has been under the surface all along. The Good Shepherd laid down His life (John 10:11) and the Chief Shepherd will appear (1 Pet 5:4). The resurrection was God's stamp of approval on the sacrifice.
13:21 *equip you in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing before Him* Equip is to put in order, like setting a broken bone or mending a net. God does not just tell us what to do. He works in us to do it (Phil 2:13), as the new covenant promised (8:10).
13:22 *bear with the word of exhortation* Hebrews reads like a sermon written down, strong in places, and he asks them to take it in with patience. For all he could have said about Christ, he kept it brief (9:5; 11:32).
13:23 *the brother Timothy has been released* Paul's young co-worker (1 Tim 1:2). No other New Testament passage tells of this arrest. The writer belonged to the circle of Paul and Timothy, one reason some have thought Paul wrote the letter. Hebrews was a real letter to real people with names and travel plans.
13:24 *Those from Italy greet you* Either believers in Italy greeting readers elsewhere, or believers from Italy with the writer greeting home. So some think it went to Rome, others that it was written from Italy. Scripture does not say for sure.
13:25 *Grace be with you all* The Christian life begins and continues with grace. No one is left out, not the weak, the weary, or those tempted to turn back (2 Cor 12:9). Everything we need is found in Jesus.

JAMES

Introduction

Title

The letter is named for its writer, "James, a slave of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ" (1:1). It is the first of the seven General Letters (James, 1 and 2 Peter, 1, 2 and 3 John, and Jude), called general because most of them were written not to one city or one person but to believers spread over a wide area.

Author and Date

Several men in the New Testament are named James. James the son of Zebedee was put to death early, about A.D. 44 (Acts 12:1-2). Little is known of James the son of Alphaeus (Matt 10:3). The early church held that this letter came from James the brother of the Lord, the leader of the church in Jerusalem, and I take it that way. He is the only James who could write with this much authority to Jewish believers everywhere without needing to explain who he was. Jesus' brothers were the sons of Joseph and Mary, born after Jesus (Matt 1:25; 13:55-56). Some churches hold they were Joseph's sons by an earlier marriage or cousins. During Jesus' ministry His brothers did not believe in Him (John 7:5). After the resurrection the risen Lord appeared to James (1 Cor 15:7). He became a pillar of the Jerusalem church (Gal 1:19; 2:9), spoke the deciding words at the Jerusalem council (Acts 15:13-21), and was remembered in early tradition as James the Just. Yet he opens his letter calling himself a slave of the Lord Jesus Christ, not His brother. Some modern scholars think a later writer used his name, pointing to the letter's good Greek. But a Galilean who led a church for many years could well write good Greek, and the simple, early, Jewish setting fits James himself.

James most likely wrote from Jerusalem. Many date the letter about A.D. 45 to 49, which would make it perhaps the first New Testament book written. The church still meets in a "synagogue" (2:2), and James never mentions the debate over circumcising Gentile believers, settled at the Jerusalem council about A.D. 49. Others date it about A.D. 60 to 62. Early writers, Josephus among them, say James was put to death in Jerusalem about A.D. 62, so the letter came before then.

Background and Setting

James writes "to the twelve tribes which are in the dispersion" (1:1), the common name for Jewish people living outside the land of Israel. Read plainly, these are Jewish believers in Jesus scattered from their homes, many of them by the persecution that followed Stephen's death (Acts 8:1; 11:19). Some read the twelve tribes as a picture of the whole church, but the Jewish flavor of the letter fits the plain sense. Many readers were poor. Some were cheated by rich landowners and dragged into court (2:6; 5:4). Some were showing favor to the rich in their own meetings.

James writes like the wisdom books of the Old Testament. He uses short, strong sayings and pictures from everyday life: waves, flowers, mirrors, horses, ships, fire, springs, fig trees, farmers and rust. And he sounds a great deal like Jesus. He hardly ever quotes Him word for word, but the Sermon on the Mount echoes all through the letter: asking for wisdom (Matt 7:7), hearing and doing (Matt 7:24-27), mercy (Matt 5:7), moth and rust (Matt 6:19), and oaths (Matt 5:33-37). The man who grew up in the same house as Jesus had clearly listened to Him.

Themes

James is short, but it gives more than fifty commands in 108 verses. He is a pastor who wants his readers' faith to be real, and his theme is plain: "But be doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves" (1:22). He asks the same question again and again: does what you say you believe show up in how you live? He asks it about trials and temptation, about the poor and the rich, about the tongue, about wisdom, about plans for tomorrow, and about prayer.

Real faith counts trials as joy because God uses them to make us mature (1:2-4). It asks God for wisdom (1:5). It shows no favoritism (2:1). It works, because "the faith, if it does not have works, is dead by itself" (2:17). It bridles the tongue (3:2-12) and shows wisdom from above (3:17). It humbles itself before God (4:6-10), plans with "If the Lord wills" (4:15), waits patiently for the coming of the Lord (5:7-8), and prays (5:13-18). The letter ends with a call to turn back a brother who wanders (5:19-20).

Christ in James

James names Jesus only twice, but each time with great honor. He is "the Lord Jesus Christ" whom James serves as a slave (1:1), and "the Lord of glory" (2:1). James, who once did not believe in his brother, now sets Him beside God the Father. He calls believers to wait for "the coming of the Lord" (5:7-8), the Judge who "stands before the doors" (5:9). Prayer and anointing are done "in the name of the Lord" (5:14), and the good name of Jesus is the name called upon believers (2:7). Behind nearly every chapter stands the teaching of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount, lived out.

Hard Passages

Does James 2:14-26 contradict Paul, who says a man is justified by faith apart from works of law (Rom 3:28)? No. Paul answers how a guilty sinner is made right with God, and his answer is by faith alone. James answers how you can tell whether faith is real, and his answer is by its works. The notes explain that James uses justified of being shown righteous, and name the view that both men mean being declared righteous before God, with James speaking of the final verdict that weighs the evidence. Both readings agree that works never earn salvation.

What does 4:5 mean? It is one of the hardest verses in James to translate. It may speak of our fallen human spirit leaning toward envy, or of God jealously yearning over the spirit He made to dwell in us. The notes give both.

What is the oil of 5:14, and does 5:15 promise that every sick believer will be healed? The notes give the main views of the oil (medicine, a symbol of setting apart to God, and the Roman Catholic sacrament) and show from Scripture that God heals according to His will. The notes also name the views on oaths (5:12), on confession (5:16), and on the death a wanderer is saved from (5:20).

Outline

I. Faith Tested and Real (1:1-27)
  A. Greeting and joy in trials (1:1-12)
  B. Where temptation comes from (1:13-18)
  C. Doers of the word (1:19-27)
II. Faith Without Favoritism (2:1-13)
III. Faith That Works (2:14-26)
IV. The Tongue and True Wisdom (3:1-18)
  A. Taming the tongue (3:1-12)
  B. Wisdom from above (3:13-18)
V. Humility Before God (4:1-17)
  A. Friendship with the world (4:1-10)
  B. Do not judge a brother (4:11-12)
  C. If the Lord wills (4:13-17)
VI. Patience Until the Lord Comes (5:1-20)
  A. Warning to the rich (5:1-6)
  B. Patience in suffering (5:7-12)
  C. The prayer of faith (5:13-18)
  D. Turning back a wanderer (5:19-20)

JAMES

JAMES 1

Joy in Trials

1 James (Iakobos), a slave of God and of ***the*** Lord Jesus (Iesous) Christ, to the twelve tribes which ***are*** in the dispersion: greetings. **2** Consider ***it*** all joy, my brothers, whenever you fall into various trials, **3** knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. **4** And let the endurance have a perfect work, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. **5** And if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask from God, who gives to all generously and does not reproach, and it will be given to him. **6** But let him ask in faith, doubting nothing; for the one who doubts is like a wave of ***the*** sea, being blown by the wind and being tossed. **7** For let that man not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; **8** ***he is*** a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways. **9** But let the humble brother boast in his exaltation, **10** and the rich ***one*** in his humiliation, because like a flower of grass he will pass away. **11** For the sun rose with the scorching heat and withered the grass, and its flower fell, and the beauty of its appearance perished; so also the rich ***man*** will fade away in his pursuits. **12** Blessed ***is the*** man who endures trial, because having become approved he will receive the crown of life, which the Lord promised to those who love Him.

Where Temptation Comes From

13 Let no one say when he is being tempted, "I am being tempted by God"; for God is unable to be tempted by evils, and He Himself tempts no one. **14** But each one is tempted by ***his*** own desire, being drawn away and being enticed. **15** Then the desire, having conceived, gives birth to sin; and the sin, having been brought to completion, brings forth death. **16** Do not be led astray, my beloved brothers. **17** Every good

1:1 Jude 1:1; 1 Pet 1:1; Gal 2:9,12
1:2 1 Pet 1:6-8; James 1:12; Matt 5:10-12
1:3 Rom 5:3,4; Heb 10:36; 2 Cor 4:17
1:4 Matt 5:48; Hab 2:3; Luke 21:19
1:5 Prov 2:3-6; John 15:7; Prov 3:5-7
1:6 Eph 4:14; Mark 11:22-24; Heb 11:6
1:7 James 4:3; Prov 15:8; Prov 21:27
1:8 1 Kgs 18:21; James 4:8; Isa 29:13
1:9 Jer 9:23,24; James 2:5,6; Ps 62:9
1:10 Isa 40:6-7; 1 Pet 1:24; 1 John 2:17
1:11 Isa 28:1; Isa 28:4; Isa 40:8
1:12 1 Cor 9:25; Exod 20:6; Isa 64:4
1:13 Gen 3:12; Gen 22:1; Rom 9:19,20
1:14 Gen 22:1; Eph 4:22; Isa 44:20
1:15 Isa 59:4; Ps 7:14; Job 15:35
1:16 Gal 6:7; James 1:19; James 2:5
1:17 Mal 3:6; John 3:27; Gen 1:14

1:1 *James, a slave of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ* James the brother of the Lord, leader of the church in Jerusalem. He could have opened with his family tie to Jesus. Instead he calls himself a slave, one who belongs to a master. He once doubted his brother (John 7:5). Now he calls Him Lord and sets Him beside God as the One he serves.

1:1 *to the twelve tribes which are in the dispersion: greetings* Jewish believers scattered outside the land of Israel, many of whom had lost homes and jobs for following Jesus. The Greek greeting is close to the word for joy, and joy is where James starts.

1:2 *Consider it all joy, my brothers, whenever you fall into various trials* Not that the trial itself is a joy or that we pretend it doesn't hurt. "Consider" means to think it through and decide how we will see it. "Whenever," not if. "Various" means many colors and kinds: sickness, money trouble, loss, persecution. He means hard things that come as we follow Christ, not trouble we bring on ourselves by sin (Matt 5:10-12).

1:3 *the testing of your faith produces endurance* The word was used for putting metal in the fire to prove it real and burn away what was not (1 Pet 1:6-7). God does not test to find out whether our faith is real. He tests to make it stronger. Endurance is staying under a heavy load without giving up, still trusting God. You can't build muscle without lifting anything.

1:4 *so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing* "Let" means we can cut the process short by grumbling or quitting. Perfect here is mature, full-grown, not sinless. God is using the trial to make us like His Son (Rom 8:28-29). Ask not only how to get out of this, but what God is building in you through it.

1:5 *And if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask from God, who gives to all generously and does not reproach* Wisdom is seeing life as God sees it and knowing how to live it out. To reproach is to throw something in your face. God never says, You again? He is glad when His children come (Matt 7:7).

1:6 *the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea* Not a passing question in the mind, but a heart that can't decide whether to trust God. A wave goes wherever the wind pushes it, like a person who prays one day and leans on his own plans the next.

1:8 *he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways* Prayer is not a way of keeping our options open. Double-minded means having two souls, one wanting God and one wanting its own way. Divided inside shows up everywhere outside. James returns to this word in 4:8.

1:9 *let the humble brother boast in his exaltation* The poor believer, low in the world's eyes, a theme all through the letter. In Christ he is a child of God, an heir of the kingdom (2:5), rich in faith. God has lifted him up.

1:10 *and the rich one in his humiliation, because like a flower of grass he will pass away* At the cross the rich believer learned money could not save him. He stands before God as a beggar like everyone else, and that keeps him from trusting what won't last. The picture is Isaiah 40:6-8: wildflowers bloom bright in spring, then the hot sun and dry east wind take them in days.

1:11 *so also the rich man will fade away in his pursuits* He may die in the middle of his busy plans. Riches are not evil, but they are short-lived.

1:12 *Blessed is the man who endures trial, because having become approved he will receive the crown of life* Blessed is the Beatitudes word (Matt 5:3-12). Approved is metal that passed the test. The crown was the winner's wreath, and here it is life in its fullness. We are saved by grace through faith, not by enduring. But those who truly belong to God keep going, and they endure because they love Him.

1:13 *Let no one say when he is being tempted, "I am being tempted by God"* The same Greek word can mean trial or temptation. People have blamed God for their sin since Adam said, "The woman whom You put with me" (Gen 3:12). God tests us to make us stand. Satan and our flesh tempt us to make us fall.

1:14 *But each one is tempted by his own desire, being drawn away and being enticed* The bait only works because something in us wants it. These are fishing words: a fish pulled from its hiding place, a worm on a hidden hook. Temptation shows the pleasure and hides the cost.

1:15 *Then the desire, having conceived, gives birth to sin* When we welcome desire instead of turning away, sin is born, grows up, and brings death (Rom 6:23). The opposite of verses 2-4. The best time to stop the chain is at the very beginning.

1:16 *Do not be led astray, my beloved brothers* Right after a hard warning, tenderness. A pastor warns people he loves. The lie to guard against is that God is the source of evil.

1:17 *Every good giving and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning* Every meal, friend, breath and spiritual blessing. God made the sun, moon and stars (Gen 1:14-18), but they change, and shadows move across the ground all day. God does not change (Mal 3:6).

giving and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. **18** Having willed ***it***, He brought us forth by ***the*** word of truth, for us to be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.

Doers of the Word

19 So then, my beloved brothers, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; **20** for the anger of a man does not produce the righteousness of God. **21** Therefore, having put aside all filthiness and excess of wickedness, receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. **22** But be doers of ***the*** word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. **23** Because if anyone is a hearer of ***the*** word and not a doer, this one is like a man observing the face of his birth in a mirror; **24** for he observed himself and has gone away, and immediately he forgot what he was like. **25** But the one who looked intently into ***the*** perfect law, the ***law*** of freedom, and continued ***in it***, this ***one***, having become not a forgetful hearer but a doer of work, this one will be blessed in his doing. **26** If anyone seems to be religious among you, not bridling his tongue but deceiving his heart, the religion of this one ***is*** worthless. **27** Religion pure and undefiled before the God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their tribulation, ***and*** to keep oneself unstained from the world.

JAMES 2

No Favoritism

1 My brothers, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus (Iesous) Christ, ***the Lord*** of glory, with partiality. **2** For if a man with a gold ring, in splendid clothing, comes into your synagogue, and a poor ***man*** in filthy clothing also comes in, **3** and you look upon the one wearing the splendid clothing and say to him, "You sit here in a good ***place***," and to the poor ***man*** you say, "You stand there," or "Sit here under my footstool," **4** were you not divided among yourselves, and did you ***not*** become judges with evil reasonings? **5** Listen, my beloved brothers: did not God choose the poor of this world ***to be*** rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him? **6** But you dishonored the poor ***man***. Are not the rich oppressing you, and ***are*** they themselves dragging you into courts? **7** Are they not themselves blaspheming the good name which was called upon

1:18 Lev 23:10; Ps 119:43; 1 Pet 1:23
1:19 Prov 10:19; Prov 17:27; Prov 21:23
1:20 Ps 37:8; 2 Tim 2:24,25; James 3:17,18
1:21 Eph 4:22; Eph 1:13; Col 3:5-8
1:22 Rom 2:13; John 13:17; Luke 6:46-48
1:23 Matt 7:26,27; James 2:14-26; Ezek 33:31,32
1:24 2 Pet 3:11; Judg 8:18; Matt 8:27
1:25 Luke 11:28; 1 Pet 2:16; John 13:17
1:26 Ps 141:3; Eph 4:29; 1 Pet 3:10
1:27 Isa 1:16; Ps 68:5; 1 John 3:17-19
2:1 Lev 19:15; Prov 24:23; 1 Cor 2:8
2:2 Esth 3:10; Esth 8:2; Luke 15:22
2:3 2 Cor 8:9; Luke 7:44-46; Jude 1:16
2:4 John 7:24; Job 34:19; Mal 2:9
2:5 Exod 20:6; Judg 9:7; Matt 5:3
2:6 1 Cor 11:22; Acts 17:6; Ps 14:6
2:7 Phil 2:9-11; Rev 13:5,6; Ps 111:9

1:18 *Having willed it, He brought us forth by the word of truth* Another birth word, the opposite of verse 15. Desire gives birth to death. God gives birth to new life by His own will (John 1:12-13), through the gospel (1 Pet 1:23). The first part of the harvest belonged to God and promised the rest was coming (Lev 23:10). One day He will make all creation new (Rom 8:19-23).
1:19 *let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger* About receiving God's Word, but it fits how we treat people too. Most of us have it backward. Anger often comes when we talk before we have listened (Prov 10:19; 17:27).
1:20 *the anger of a man does not produce the righteousness of God* Not all anger is sin (Mark 3:5; Eph 4:26). But most of ours is about our pride, rights and plans. When it rises, ask whose cause you are really defending.
1:21 *receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls* "Put aside" is taking off dirty clothes. Meekness is a teachable spirit that welcomes God's Word instead of arguing. The Word was planted like a seed at our new birth, and it keeps working in us until we see Christ.
1:22 *But be doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves* The theme verse. Most people then heard Scripture read aloud and could think listening was enough. To deceive here is to reason falsely, to talk ourselves into a lie. The test of a good Bible study is not how much we enjoyed it but what we do with it.
1:24 *immediately he forgot what he was like* Mirrors were polished metal, and a man had to look closely. He sees the dirt on his face and walks away doing nothing. God's Word shows us what we really are. Seeing our sin and walking away unchanged misses the point.
1:25 *But the one who looked intently into the perfect law, the law of freedom, and continued in it* "Looked intently" is the word for John bending to look into the empty tomb (John 20:5). The Law at Sinai showed sin but could not change the heart. In Christ God writes His word on our hearts (Jer 31:33), and obeying it is freedom. The blessing comes in the doing.
1:26 *not bridling his tongue but deceiving his heart, the religion of this one is worthless* Religious means outward worship: services, prayers, fasting. A bridle guides a horse. An unbridled tongue runs into gossip, harsh words, lies and complaining. James says much more in chapter 3.
1:27 *to visit orphans and widows in their tribulation, and to keep oneself unstained from the world* Orphans and widows had no provider and were easily cheated. God is the Father of the fatherless and defender of widows (Ps 68:5). To visit is to look after and care for. The world is the way of life that leaves God out. Many of us are good at one of these and weak at the other. James calls us to both.
2:1 *do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with partiality* Partiality is judging by the outside: money, clothes, looks, place in society. The word pictures receiving someone by his face. Next to the Lord of glory every human difference is small, and rich and poor need the same Savior. James does not call favoritism a minor flaw. It does not fit with faith in Jesus at all.
2:2 *if a man with a gold ring, in splendid clothing, comes into your synagogue* Wealthy Romans sometimes wore several gold rings to show their status. The poor man may own one set of clothes, dirty from work. "Synagogue" means a gathering, and these Jewish believers still used the word for their church meeting, one sign the letter was written early.
2:3 *You sit here in a good place* The rich man gets noticed and the best seat. The poor man is told to stand aside or sit on the floor. Many have walked into a church and felt unwanted, and some never came back. How does your church greet the person who has nothing to give?
2:4 *did you not become judges with evil reasonings* "Divided" has the same root as doubting in 1:6, a divided heart. They judged who was worth honoring by asking who could help them. That is how the world thinks.
2:5 *did not God choose the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom* Being poor does not make anyone holy or saved. But God has often chosen the poor (1 Cor 1:26-29). Jesus was laid in a manger (Luke 2:7) and most of His first followers were fishermen and common people. In God's eyes the poor believer in the back row is royalty.
2:6 *Are not the rich oppressing you, and are they themselves dragging you into courts* Wealthy landowners and lenders often dragged the poor into court over debts, and courts usually sided with the rich. Not every rich person is wicked, but it made no sense to flatter the class pushing them around while shaming the people God chose.
2:7 *blaspheming the good name which was called upon you* The name of Jesus, called upon believers when they came to faith and were baptized, like a bride taking her husband's name. Honoring people for their money can mean honoring those who dishonor our Lord.

you? **8** If indeed you fulfill ***the*** royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing well. **9** But if you show partiality, you are committing sin, being convicted by the law as transgressors. **10** For whoever keeps the whole law but stumbles in one ***point***, he has become guilty of all. **11** For He who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." Now if you do not commit adultery but murder, you have become a transgressor of ***the*** law. **12** So speak and so act, as being about to be judged through ***the*** law of freedom. **13** For the judgment ***will be*** merciless to the one who has not shown mercy; and mercy triumphs over judgment.

Faith Without Works Is Dead

14 What ***is*** the profit, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Surely the faith is not able to save him? **15** And if a brother or a sister is naked and lacking daily food, **16** and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and be filled," but you do not give them the things needed for the body, what ***is*** the profit? **17** So also the faith, if it does not have works, is dead by itself. **18** But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. **19** You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe, and shudder. **20** But do you want to know, O empty man, that the faith apart from the works is dead? **21** Was not Abraham (Abraam) our father justified by works, having offered Isaac (Isaak) his son on the altar? **22** You see that the faith was working together with his works, and by the works the faith was perfected. **23** And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "And Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness," and he was called a friend of God. **24** You see then that a man is justified by works and not by faith only. **25** And likewise also Rahab (Hraab) the prostitute, was she not justified by works, having received the messengers and having sent ***them*** out by another way?

2:8 Lev 19:18; Lev 19:34; 2 Kgs 7:9
2:9 Lev 19:15; Job 13:10; John 8:9,46
2:10 Ps 119:34; Gal 3:10; Deut 27:26
2:11 Exod 20:13-14; Deut 5:17-18; Matt 5:21-28
2:12 James 1:25; James 2:8; Phil 4:8
2:13 Prov 21:13; Matt 5:7; Matt 6:15
2:14 James 1:22-25; Matt 7:21-23,26,27; 2 Pet 1:5
2:15 Luke 3:11; James 2:5; Job 31:16-21
2:16 Prov 3:28; Matt 25:42-45; Rom 12:9
2:17 James 2:14,19,20,26; 1 Tim 1:5; 2 Pet 1:5-9
2:18 James 3:13; Titus 2:7,11-14; James 2:14,22
2:19 Deut 6:4; Luke 4:34; Matt 8:29
2:20 Prov 12:11; Rom 1:21; James 1:26
2:21 Gen 22:9; Josh 24:3; Isa 51:2
2:22 Gen 22:10; Heb 11:17-19; James 2:18
2:23 Gen 15:6; 2 Chr 20:7; Isa 41:8
2:24 James 2:15-18,21,22; Ps 60:12
2:25 Josh 2:1; Josh 2:4; Josh 2:15-16

2:8 *If indeed you fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself,"* Leviticus 19:18, the second great commandment (Matt 22:37-40). Royal because it is the law of the King and rules over the others (Gal 5:14). Your neighbor includes the poor man at the door.
2:9 *But if you show partiality, you are committing sin* Not bad manners. Sin. A transgressor steps over a line God has drawn, and the same law forbids partiality in judgment (Lev 19:15).
2:10 *For whoever keeps the whole law but stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all* God's law is one whole, like a pane of glass. Crack it in one place and the whole pane is broken. That is why no one can be saved by keeping the law (Gal 3:10-11). We have all stumbled and all need a Savior.
2:11 *Do not commit adultery* The same God gave every command. Readers proud of keeping the big ones still sinned against Him by favoritism. There is no sin that does not matter to God.
2:12 *So speak and so act, as being about to be judged through the law of freedom* Believers will give an account (Rom 14:10-12; 2 Cor 5:10). That judgment does not decide heaven or hell, settled at the cross. It evaluates how we lived. The law of freedom (1:25) is God's Word written on a heart Christ has set free.
2:13 *and mercy triumphs over judgment* A person who never shows mercy shows he has never really received it (Matt 18:23-35). At the cross mercy triumphed over the judgment we deserved, and our mercy shows His has changed us (Matt 5:7).
2:14 *if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Surely the faith is not able to save him* Notice "says." The question is whether the claim is real. The Greek expects the answer no. That kind of faith, which only talks and never acts, is not the faith the Bible calls saving.
2:16 *Go in peace, be warmed and be filled* It sounds kind, even spiritual. The brother walks away still cold and hungry. Love is in deed and truth, not just word (1 John 3:17-18).
2:17 *So also the faith, if it does not have works, is dead by itself* James does not say faith plus works earns salvation. He says faith with no works is dead. A dead body looks like a person but cannot breathe or help anyone. Living things move and grow.
2:18 *Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works* The objector treats faith and works as separate gifts. No one can see faith directly. Works are how faith becomes visible. Where the objector's words end in this verse is debated, but the point is the same.
2:19 *Even the demons believe, and shudder* Every Jewish believer said daily that the LORD is one (Deut 6:4). Demons knew Jesus was the Son of God when the crowds did not (Mark 1:24; 5:7). Their belief is correct but only makes them tremble. Saving faith is more than agreeing with the truth. It rests our whole weight on Christ.
2:20 *O empty man* Hollow, like a pot with nothing inside. James turns to the Old Testament to show this is how faith has always worked. The SLB reads "dead" here. Many older copies read a word meaning useless or idle. The point is the same.
2:21 *Was not Abraham our father justified by works, having offered Isaac his son on the altar* In Romans, Paul uses "justified" for a sinner declared righteous before God. James uses it here for being shown or proven righteous. God declared Abraham righteous by faith in Genesis 15:6, many years before Genesis 22. Offering Isaac did not make him right with God. It proved he already was. Some teachers hold both men mean declared righteous before God, with James speaking of the final verdict that takes account of the evidence. Both readings agree works do not earn salvation.
2:22 *You see that the faith was working together with his works, and by the works the faith was perfected* Partners, not rivals. Abraham climbed the mountain because he trusted God to keep His promise, even by raising Isaac (Heb 11:17-19). A seed is real before it sprouts, but you see what it is when it becomes a tree.
2:23 *And Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness* Genesis 15:6, the verse Paul uses in Romans 4:3 and Galatians 3:6. Genesis 22 "fulfilled" it by showing that what God said of Abraham was true. God called him His friend (Isa 41:8; 2 Chr 20:7). Real faith is not cold agreement but trust that walks with God.
2:24 *You see then that a man is justified by works and not by faith only* Does James contradict Paul (Rom 3:28)? No. Paul answers how a guilty sinner is made right with God: by faith alone (Rom 4:5; Eph 2:8-9). James answers how you can tell faith is real: by its works. "Not by faith only" means the dead, talking faith of verses 14-20. Paul adds that we are "created in Christ Jesus for good works" (Eph 2:10). Paul fought those who added works to faith. James fought those who thought faith needed no works. Both guard the same gospel from two sides.
2:25 *Rahab the prostitute, was she not justified by works* She hid the spies because she believed the LORD had given Israel the land (Josh 2:9-11). The opposite of Abraham, a Gentile and a prostitute, yet both showed real faith (Heb 11:31). God saved her and placed her in the line of Jesus (Matt 1:5).

26 For just as the body apart from ***the*** spirit is dead, so also the faith apart from the works is dead.

JAMES 3

Taming the Tongue

1 Let not many ***of you*** become teachers, my brothers, knowing that we will receive greater judgment. **2** For we all stumble in many ***ways***. If anyone does not stumble in word, this ***one is*** a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body also. **3** Look, we put the bits of the horses into the mouths for them to obey us, and we also turn about their whole body. **4** Look, also the ships, being so great and being driven by strong winds, are turned about by a very small rudder wherever the impulse of the one steering wills. **5** So also the tongue is a small member and boasts great things. Look, how great a forest a small fire kindles! **6** And the tongue ***is*** a fire, the world of unrighteousness. So the tongue is set among our members, defiling the whole body and setting on fire the wheel of birth, and being set on fire by Gehenna. **7** For every kind of beasts and of birds, of creeping things and of sea creatures, is tamed and has been tamed by the human kind. **8** But no one of men is able to tame the tongue; ***it is*** an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. **9** With it we bless the God and Father, and with it we curse men who have been made according to ***the*** likeness of God. **10** Out of the same mouth come forth blessing and cursing. These things ought not, my brothers, to be so. **11** Surely the spring does not pour forth from the same opening the sweet and the bitter? **12** Surely a fig tree is not able, my brothers, to produce olives, or a vine figs? So no spring ***is able*** to produce ***both*** salty and sweet water.

Wisdom from Above

13 Who ***is*** wise and understanding among you? Let him show out of his good conduct his works in ***the*** meekness of wisdom. **14** But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not boast and lie against the truth. **15** This wisdom is not coming down from above, but ***is*** earthly, natural, demonic. **16** For where jealousy and selfish ambition ***are***,

2:26 Eccl 12:7; Ps 104:29; Ps 146:4
3:1 2 Tim 1:11; 1 Pet 5:3; Matt 23:8-10,14
3:2 James 1:26; Matt 12:37; 1 Pet 3:10
3:3 Ps 32:9; James 1:26; Ps 39:1
3:4 Ps 107:25-27; Jonah 1:4; Matt 8:24
3:5 Prov 18:21; Jer 9:3-8; Ps 17:10
3:6 Prov 16:27; Mark 7:15,20-22; Matt 15:11-20
3:7 Gen 1:26; Mark 5:4
3:8 Ps 140:3; Rom 3:13; James 3:6
3:9 Gen 1:26; Gen 5:1; Gen 1:27
3:10 1 Pet 3:9; 1 Cor 3:3; Ps 50:16-20
3:12 Luke 6:43,44; Matt 7:16-20; Jer 2:21
3:13 James 2:18; 1 Pet 2:12; Ps 107:43
3:14 James 3:16; 2 Cor 12:20; Phil 2:3
3:15 Jude 1:19; James 3:17; James 1:5,17
3:16 1 Cor 3:3; James 3:14; Gal 5:20

2:26 *For just as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also the faith apart from the works is dead* Works are not the life of faith, and works do not save. Christ saves through faith. But real faith is alive, and life always shows. The question is not, Did I ever say I believe? It is, Is my faith alive?
3:1 *Let not many of you become teachers, my brothers, knowing that we will receive greater judgment* In church as in synagogue, men could stand and teach, and a teacher was honored. Some wanted the title for the wrong reasons. James says "we," putting himself under the warning. God gives teachers to His church (Eph 4:11). Take the job seriously and teach with fear and care.
3:2 *If anyone does not stumble in word, this one is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body also* We all stumble, and most often with words. Perfect is mature, as in 1:4. The tongue is the hardest part to master. Only Jesus did it fully (1 Pet 2:22). The more God has our tongue, the more He has the rest of us.
3:3 *we put the bits of the horses into the mouths for them to obey us* The first of three pictures of a small thing steering a big one. A small pull on the reins turns a thousand-pound horse. The same word "bridle" as in 1:26 and 3:2.
3:4 *are turned about by a very small rudder* Some ships carried hundreds of people (Acts 27:37) and were driven by strong winds, yet a small rudder steered them. One sentence can start a friendship or end one, lead a person toward Christ or push him away. Who is steering your tongue?
3:5 *Look, how great a forest a small fire kindles* Dry hillsides catch fire, and one spark burns for miles. One piece of gossip can spread through a church or family and do damage that takes years to repair (Prov 18:21).
3:6 *being set on fire by Gehenna* The tongue can hold a whole world of evil: lies, gossip, slander, cursing, boasting, flattery. Like smoke staining a house, it stains the whole person. "The wheel of birth" is the whole course of life turning like a wheel. Gehenna was the Valley of Hinnom outside Jerusalem, where children had once been burned to idols (Jer 7:31), and Jesus used the name for hell.
3:7 *is tamed and has been tamed by the human kind* God gave man rule over the animals (Gen 1:26-28). People have trained horses, elephants, falcons, dogs, even lions and snakes. That makes the next verse all the more striking.
3:8 *But no one of men is able to tame the tongue; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison* Unruly means restless, always ready to strike, like a snake (Ps 140:3). No man can tame it, but God can. The Spirit produces self-control (Gal 5:22-23). Ask God every day to guard your mouth (Ps 141:3).
3:9 *and with it we curse men who have been made according to the likeness of God* We bless God in prayer and song, then use the same tongue to tear people down. Every person bears God's image (Gen 1:26-27). We cannot truly honor God while we treat the people He made with contempt.
3:10 *These things ought not, my brothers, to be so* Praise on Sunday, temper at home or in traffic on Monday. James does not say everybody does it. It is a sign the heart still needs to change (Matt 12:34).
3:11 *Surely the spring does not pour forth from the same opening the sweet and the bitter* Springs near the Dead Sea gave bitter, salty water. One spring does not give both. What comes out shows what is underneath.
3:12 *Surely a fig tree is not able, my brothers, to produce olives* A tree bears fruit by what it is (Matt 7:16-20). We all stumble (3:2), but the pattern of our words over time shows what kind of tree we are. To change your words, ask God to change your heart.
3:13 *Let him show out of his good conduct his works in the meekness of wisdom* Back to the would-be teachers who thought themselves wise. Wisdom is not measured by how much you know or how well you argue, but by how you live, with a humble spirit that does not need to win. True wisdom has a gentle face.
3:14 *But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart* Bitter jealousy is the sour feeling when someone else gets the attention or position we want. Selfish ambition was a word for one who campaigned by stirring up groups against each other. Such a person is not wise, however many verses he can quote.
3:15 *earthly, natural, demonic* It looks only at this life, comes from the human soul without God's Spirit (1 Cor 2:14), and is the kind of thinking the devil loves. Pride and selfish ambition were Satan's own sins. The world calls it smart and driven. James calls it what it is.
3:16 *there is disorder and every evil thing* God is not the author of disorder but of peace (1 Cor 14:33). People take sides, talk behind backs, and every decision becomes a fight. Many church splits and family breakups trace back to these two sins hidden under the surface (Ps 139:23-24).

there ***is*** disorder and every evil thing. **17** But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and of good fruits, impartial, and without hypocrisy. **18** And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

JAMES 4

Draw Near to God

1 From where ***come*** wars and fightings among you? ***Is it*** not from here, out of your pleasures that are waging war in your members? **2** You desire and do not have; you murder and are jealous and are not able to obtain; you fight and wage war. But you do not have because you do not ask. **3** You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, so that you may spend ***it*** on your pleasures. **4** Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that the friendship of the world is hostility ***with*** God? Whoever therefore chooses to be a friend of the world is made an enemy of God. **5** Or do you think that the Scripture speaks in vain? Does the spirit which dwelt in us yearn with envy? **6** But He gives greater grace. Therefore it says, "God opposes ***the*** proud, but gives grace to ***the*** humble." **7** Be subject therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. **8** Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you. Cleanse ***your*** hands, ***you*** sinners, and purify ***your*** hearts, ***you*** double-minded. **9** Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned to mourning and the joy to gloom. **10** Be humbled before the Lord, and He will exalt you.

Do Not Judge Your Brother

11 Do not speak against one another, brothers. The one who speaks against a brother and judges his brother speaks against ***the*** law and judges ***the*** law; but if you judge ***the*** law, you are not a doer of ***the*** law but a judge. **12** There is one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy. But you, who are you who judge the other?

If the Lord Wills

13 Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a city and will spend one year there and will trade and will make a profit"; **14** you who do not know the ***things*** of tomorrow. For what ***is*** your life? For it is a vapor that appears for a little ***while*** and then vanishes.

3:17 1 Cor 2:6,7; Rom 12:9; James 1:5,17
3:18 Amos 6:12; Matt 5:9; Phil 1:11
4:1 1 Pet 2:11; Gal 5:17; James 1:14
4:2 James 1:5; John 16:24; Matt 7:7,8
4:3 1 John 5:14; 1 John 3:22; Ps 18:41
4:4 John 15:19,23; 1 John 2:15,16; Rom 8:7
4:5 Num 11:29; Gen 6:5; John 7:42
4:6 Prov 3:34; Dan 4:37; Isa 57:15
4:7 1 Pet 5:8,9; Eph 4:27; Eph 6:11,12
4:8 2 Chr 15:2; Zech 1:3; Hos 6:1
4:9 Prov 14:13; Jer 31:18; Job 30:31
4:10 Matt 23:12; James 4:6,7; Job 22:29
4:11 1 Pet 2:1; Ps 140:11; Matt 7:1,2
4:12 Isa 33:22; Rom 14:4,13; Matt 10:28
4:13 Gen 11:3; Prov 27:1; Gen 11:7
4:14 Ps 102:3; Prov 27:1; Ps 90:10

3:17 *But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and of good fruits, impartial, and without hypocrisy* Pure first: clean, with no hidden motives. Reasonable means willing to listen and be persuaded. Impartial means no favorites (2:1). Without hypocrisy, the same inside as outside. The list sounds like Jesus Himself and like the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23).
3:18 *And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace* A farmer sows and later reaps. Peacemaking is not avoiding every conflict but bringing people together in truth and love (Matt 5:9). Every day, with tongue and actions, we sow disorder or peace. What harvest are you sowing?
4:1 *From where come wars and fightings among you* Not wars between nations but quarrels inside the church. "Pleasures" gives us hedonism, selfish desires camped inside us like an army. The fight outside starts with a fight inside. Before we blame the other person, we should look at our own hearts.
4:2 *But you do not have because you do not ask* We want, we can't get, so we fight. "Murder" may mean bitter fights that turned violent, and Jesus taught that hate is the root of murder (Matt 5:21-22). How many fights could be avoided if we prayed first?
4:3 *You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly* With evil motives, treating God like a vending machine. Prayer brings our will in line with His (Matt 6:10). He loves to give good gifts (1:17) but will not feed our selfishness. When prayers seem unanswered, ask what you are really asking for and why.
4:4 *Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that the friendship of the world is hostility with God* The prophets called Israel's idolatry adultery against her Husband (Jer 3:20; Hos 1:2). The world here is not the people God loves (John 3:16) but the way of living that leaves Him out, its pride, greed and lusts (1 John 2:15-17). Notice "chooses." We cannot be best friends with both.
4:5 *Does the spirit which dwelt in us yearn with envy* One of the hardest verses in James to translate. James gives the sense of many Scriptures, not one exact verse. Some read it of our fallen human spirit leaning toward envy, which explains verses 1-2. Others read it of God jealously yearning over the spirit He caused to dwell in us. He will not share His people with the world (Exod 20:5). Either way, the next verse answers.
4:6 *But He gives greater grace. Therefore it says, "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble."* Grace greater than our sin, pride and the pull of the world. Proverbs 3:34 in the Greek Old Testament, also quoted in 1 Peter 5:5. "Opposes" is a military word, to line up against in battle. Grace flows downhill to the low places.
4:7 *Be subject therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you* The first of ten commands calling us back to God. To be subject is to place yourself under authority like a soldier under his captain. First submit, then resist. We stand against the devil by standing under God (1 Pet 5:8-9), and he will run.
4:8 *Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you* God does not stand with arms crossed. Like the prodigal's father, He runs to meet us (Luke 15:20). Priests washed their hands before coming to the altar (Exod 30:19-21). Hands stand for what we do, hearts for what we want. The double-minded (1:8) try to love God and the world at once.
4:9 *let your laughter be turned to mourning and the joy to gloom* Not against joy (1:2). Some were laughing off their sin while living as friends of the world. Godly sorrow leads to repentance (2 Cor 7:10; Matt 5:4), and then God turns mourning into real joy.
4:10 *Be humbled before the Lord, and He will exalt you* The proud lift themselves up and God brings them down (Matt 23:12; 1 Pet 5:6). God's way up is always down. We don't have to fight for our place. He will give it in His time.
4:11 *Do not speak against one another, brothers* Talking someone down, often behind his back, is another kind of pride. The law says love your neighbor (2:8), and slander acts as if it doesn't apply to us. James is not forbidding calling sin what it is, but setting ourselves up as final judge over others.
4:12 *There is one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy* Only God knows every heart and judges with perfect fairness. We don't know all the facts (Matt 7:1). Believers still correct one another (Gal 6:1), and churches deal with sin (1 Cor 5), but we never take God's seat.
4:13 *Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a city* Many Jews of the dispersion were traders who traveled city to city. Nothing is wrong with planning, business or profit. The problem is what's missing. "We will" over and over, and God is not in the plan at all.
4:14 *For it is a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes* "Do not boast yourself about the day of tomorrow" (Prov 27:1). Like steam over a cup of coffee or your breath on a cold morning. Not meant to scare us, but to humble us and teach us to depend on God for each day.

15 Instead of your saying, "If the Lord wills, we will both live and do this or that." **16** But now you boast in your arrogant claims; all such boasting is evil. **17** Therefore to one who knows to do good and does not do ***it***, to him it is sin.

JAMES 5

Warning to the Rich

1 Come now, ***you*** rich, weep, wailing over your miseries that are coming upon ***you***. **2** Your riches have rotted, and your garments have become moth-eaten. **3** Your gold and silver have corroded, and their rust will be for a testimony against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have stored up treasure in ***the*** last days. **4** Look, the wage of the workers who mowed your fields, which has been fraudulently kept back by you, cries out, and the cries of those who reaped have entered into the ears of ***the*** Lord of armies. **5** You lived in luxury on the earth and lived in self-indulgence; you fed your hearts as in a day of slaughter. **6** You condemned, you murdered the righteous ***one***; he does not resist you.

Patience Until the Lord Comes

7 Be patient therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. Look, the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient over it until it receives ***the*** early and late rain. **8** You also be patient; strengthen your hearts, because the coming of the Lord has drawn near. **9** Do not groan against one another, brothers, so that you may not be condemned; look, the Judge stands before the doors. **10** Take ***as*** an example, my brothers, of suffering hardship and of patience, the prophets who spoke ***in*** the name of ***the*** Lord. **11** Look, we count blessed those who endure. You have heard of the endurance of Job (Iob), and you have seen the outcome of ***the*** Lord, that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful. **12** But above all, my brothers, do not swear, neither ***by*** heaven nor ***by*** the earth nor ***by*** any other oath; but let your yes be yes, and ***your*** no ***be*** no, so that you may not fall under judgment.

4:15 Acts 18:21; Prov 19:21; Heb 6:3
4:16 1 Cor 5:6; James 3:14; Ps 52:1,7
4:17 John 9:41; John 13:17; John 15:22
5:1 Isa 13:6; Gen 11:3; Eccl 2:1
5:2 Matt 6:19,20; Job 13:28; Isa 50:9
5:3 Rom 2:5; 2 Tim 2:17; Gen 31:48,52
5:4 Lev 19:13; Mal 3:5; Gen 4:10
5:5 Jer 12:3; 1 Tim 5:6; Luke 16:19,25
5:6 Luke 22:51-53; James 2:6; Matt 21:38
5:7 Deut 11:14; Ps 37:7; Isa 35:4
5:8 1 Pet 4:7; Ps 130:5; Phil 4:5
5:9 James 4:11; 1 Cor 4:5; Matt 24:33
5:10 2 Chr 36:16; Isa 39:8; Jer 26:16
5:11 Job 1:21; Job 2:10; Job 42:10
5:12 Gen 42:15; Mal 3:5; Matt 5:33-37

4:15 *If the Lord wills, we will both live and do this or that* James does not say don't plan. Plan with God in it. Paul lived this way (Acts 18:21; 1 Cor 4:19). Not a phrase to tack on, but a heart that says, Lord, my time is in Your hands.
4:16 *all such boasting is evil* "Arrogant claims" was used of one who brags about what he can't deliver, like a traveling salesman. Boasting about tomorrow claims what only God has (1 Cor 4:7).
4:17 *Therefore to one who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin* Sin is also failing to do what is right. Back to the theme: doers, not hearers only (1:22). What good thing has God shown you to do that you have been putting off?
5:1 *Come now, you rich, weep, wailing over your miseries that are coming upon you* The same "Come now" as in 4:13. Most likely not believers. James speaks as the prophets spoke to the nations, as if they stood in the room (Isa 13:6; Amos 6:1). He does not call them brothers or call them to repent. He warns of judgment, and that comforted the poor believers. God sees, and He will set it right.
5:2 *Your riches have rotted, and your garments have become moth-eaten* Wealth was kept in grain, oil and fine clothing, and grain rots and moths eat clothes. James speaks as if it has already happened, as the prophets did, because it is that certain (Matt 6:19-20).
5:3 *You have stored up treasure in the last days* Gold and silver do not really rust, but even the most lasting wealth loses its value. The rust is a witness in court that the money sat unused while others went hungry. The last days began with Christ's first coming (Heb 1:2). What folly, to stockpile for a world that is passing away.
5:4 *the cries of those who reaped have entered into the ears of the Lord of armies* Day laborers were paid each evening and needed that money to feed their families that night. The Law forbade holding wages overnight (Lev 19:13; Deut 24:14-15). The wages cry out like Abel's blood (Gen 4:10). The poor have no defender on earth, but the God of heaven's armies hears. A warning to every employer today.
5:5 *you fed your hearts as in a day of slaughter* Like the rich man who feasted while Lazarus starved at his gate (Luke 16:19-25). Cattle keep eating, not knowing the day of slaughter has come. The rich were fattening themselves for their own destruction.
5:6 *You condemned, you murdered the righteous one; he does not resist you* The rich used power and courts to crush the poor (2:6), and some died of it. Most read "the righteous one" as the righteous poor in general. Some also see a pointer to Jesus, the Righteous One (Acts 3:14), who was condemned and did not resist.
5:7 *Be patient therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord* God will judge, so His people need not take revenge. Patient means long-tempered. The early rain came in the fall to soften the ground for planting, and the late rain in spring to fill out the grain. A farmer cannot make it rain. He works and waits.
5:8 *strengthen your hearts, because the coming of the Lord has drawn near* Make your heart firm and steady. Was James wrong, writing nearly two thousand years ago? No. Near means His coming could happen at any time, with nothing else on God's calendar required first. I believe Jesus will come for His church before the seven-year Tribulation (John 14:1-3; 1 Thess 4:13-18), and after it He will return visibly to judge and reign (Matt 24:29-31; Rev 19:11-16). James does not separate the stages, and pre-tribulation teachers apply these verses to one or the other. Every generation is called to live ready.
5:9 *Do not groan against one another, brothers* Under pressure people turn on each other, grumbling under their breath (4:11). The Judge stands at the courtroom door. Believers will stand at the judgment seat of Christ, not to decide salvation but for how we lived and the rewards He gives (2 Cor 5:10).
5:10 *the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord* Jeremiah was thrown into a muddy pit (Jer 38:6), and Elijah ran for his life (1 Kgs 19:1-3; Matt 5:12). They suffered while doing what God told them. Suffering does not always mean we have done wrong. Sometimes it means we are doing exactly what is right.
5:11 *You have heard of the endurance of Job, and you have seen the outcome of the Lord* Job lost his children, wealth and health, asked hard questions and struggled, but did not turn from God. God restored him with twice as much (Job 42:10-17). We may not see the end of our story yet, but we know the heart of the One writing it.
5:12 *But above all, my brothers, do not swear* Not foul language but oaths, calling on heaven, earth or Jerusalem to back a word, sometimes with clever loopholes (Matt 23:16-22). Almost the same as Jesus' words (Matt 5:33-37). Many hold James forbids casual or evasive oaths, not a solemn oath in court, since God swore by Himself (Heb 6:13) and Paul called God as witness (Rom 1:9). Others, including some church groups, hold all oaths are forbidden. Be a person of your word.

The Prayer of Faith

13 Is anyone among you suffering hardship? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise. **14** Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, having anointed him with oil in the name of the Lord. **15** And the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up; and if he has committed sins, it will be forgiven him. **16** Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous ***man***, being at work, prevails much. **17** Elijah (Helias) was a man of like nature to us, and he prayed with prayer that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the earth ***for*** three years and six months. **18** And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth sprouted its fruit.

Turning Back a Wanderer

19 Brothers, if anyone among you is led astray from the truth and someone turns him back, **20** let him know that the one who turns back a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

5:13 1 Chr 16:9; Ps 95:2; Ps 105:2
5:14 2 Kgs 5:11; Mark 6:13; Mark 16:18
5:15 Ps 103:3; James 5:13,16; James 1:6
5:16 John 9:31; 1 John 3:22; Ps 34:15
5:17 1 Kgs 17:1; 1 Kgs 18:1; 1 Kgs 18:37
5:18 1 Kgs 18:42; 1 Kgs 18:45; 1 Kgs 18:43
5:19 Gal 6:1; Matt 18:15; Ps 119:21,118
5:20 Ps 32:1; Prov 10:12; 1 Pet 4:8

5:13 *Is anyone among you suffering hardship? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise* Not grumbling (5:9), not giving up. Prayer for hard times, praise for good times. Many psalms begin with tears and end in praise.
5:14 *Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, having anointed him with oil in the name of the Lord* Elders are the shepherds of a local church (Acts 20:17, 28; 1 Pet 5:1-2), and the sick person takes the first step. Some see the oil as medicine, a common treatment then (Luke 10:34), so the verse means care plus prayer. Others see a symbol of setting apart to God, as the apostles anointed the sick (Mark 6:13). The Roman Catholic Church bases its sacrament of the anointing of the sick on this verse. The power is "in the name of the Lord."
5:15 *And the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up* Save here means make well. The prayer of faith trusts God and leaves the outcome to Him. Not every sick believer is healed: Paul left Trophimus sick (2 Tim 4:20) and kept his thorn (2 Cor 12:7-9). Some read a general promise that God often heals, always by His will (1 John 5:14). Others include the spiritually weary. "If" shows not all sickness comes from sin (John 9:1-3), though some does (1 Cor 11:30).
5:16 *Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed* God forgives when we confess to Him (1 John 1:9), but there is healing when we bring sin into the light with a trusted believer who prays with us. Roman Catholic teaching links this to confession to a priest. Most Protestants read believers confessing to each other. Not every sin needs telling to everyone, but secrets kept in the dark tend to grow. A righteous man is not a perfect one but one walking with God.
5:17 *Elijah was a man of like nature to us* He called down fire (1 Kgs 18:36-38), then ran in fear and asked to die (1 Kgs 19:3-4). God shut the sky over Israel's idolatry (1 Kgs 17:1). Jesus also gives "three years and six months" (Luke 4:25). The word came to Elijah "in the third year" (1 Kgs 18:1), most likely counting from when Elijah went into hiding.
5:18 *And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain* On Carmel he bowed with his face between his knees and sent his servant seven times until a small cloud rose (1 Kgs 18:41-45). His prayer was powerful not because he was special but because his God is, and He is our God.
5:19 *if anyone among you is led astray from the truth and someone turns him back* Someone in the church who drifted in belief or life. Not the elders or pastor only. "Someone." It takes love, courage and humility (Gal 6:1). It is easier to talk about a wanderer than to him. James calls us to go.
5:20 *will save a soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins* The wanderer's soul, and his sins covered (Ps 32:1; 1 Pet 4:8). Some take the death as physical death under God's discipline (1 Cor 11:30). Others take eternal death, either because one who wanders away completely never truly belonged (1 John 2:19) or because a believer can be lost. Good teachers have long disagreed on that wider question. Love does not let a brother walk away without trying to bring him home.

1 PETER

Introduction

Title

The letter is named for its writer, "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ" (1:1). It is the first of two letters from him in the New Testament and one of the seven General Letters, written to a wide group of believers rather than to one church or one person.

Author and Date

Peter's given name was Simon. He was a fisherman from Galilee, the brother of Andrew, and Jesus named him Peter, which means rock (John 1:40-42). He was one of the three closest to Jesus. He denied Him three times on the night of His arrest, and after the resurrection Jesus restored him and told him to feed His sheep (John 21:15-17). In this letter he calls himself "the fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ" (5:1). The early church accepted Peter as the author. Some modern scholars doubt it, saying the Greek is too polished for a Galilean fisherman. But Peter says he wrote "through Silvanus" (5:12), who may have helped him write it down, and by then Peter had preached for about thirty years, much of it among Greek-speaking people. I take the letter at its word.

Silvanus is the Silas of Acts, Paul's partner on his second journey (Acts 15:22, 40). Mark is John Mark, whom Peter calls "my son" (5:13). Early church writers said Mark's Gospel records Peter's preaching. Peter sends greetings from "She who is in Babylon" (5:13). Most teachers take this as the church in Rome, since Babylon was the great city of exile and Revelation uses the name for a world city set against God (Rev 17-18). Others take it as the old city in Mesopotamia. Early writers say Peter ministered in Rome and died there under Nero. If he wrote from Rome, the letter dates to about A.D. 64, shortly before Nero's persecution.

Background and Setting

Peter writes "to the elect exiles of the dispersion" in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia (1:1), Roman provinces in what is now Turkey. Dispersion was the word for Jews living outside Israel, and some teachers believe Peter wrote mainly to Jewish believers. But he says his readers once lived in "ignorance" (1:14), were redeemed from ways handed down from their fathers (1:18), and used to do "the will of the Gentiles" (4:3). Most believe the churches were mostly Gentile, with Jewish believers among them, and that Peter uses Israel's words to describe their place as strangers in this world.

The letter shows no government campaign to wipe them out yet. Peter still says to honor the king (2:17). Their suffering came from slander, scorn, unfair masters and unbelieving husbands, and the pressure of being different (2:12, 18-20; 3:1, 16; 4:4, 14). Peter warns that a "burning" trial was coming (4:12), and he wants them ready.

Themes

The key verse holds the whole letter: God "begot us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1:3). Our hope is alive because Jesus is alive. The words suffer and suffering run all through these five chapters, but so do hope, grace and glory. Trials test our faith like fire tests gold (1:7). They last "a little while" (1:6; 5:10). Christ suffered first and left us an example (2:21), and His path went through the cross to the crown.

Believers are a chosen and holy people, living stones in God's house and a royal priesthood (2:4-10), called to be holy as He is holy (1:15-16). Peter gives some of the most practical teaching in the New Testament: how to live under a government that does not honor God, how to work for a harsh master, how to live with an unbelieving spouse, how to answer those who ask about our hope (3:15), how to suffer as a Christian without shame (4:16), and how elders should shepherd God's flock (5:1-4). His purpose is plain: "this to be the true grace of God, in which you stand" (5:12).

Christ in 1 Peter

Christ is the Lamb without blemish whose precious blood redeemed us (1:18-19), foreknown before the foundation of the world (1:20). The Spirit of Christ spoke through the prophets of His sufferings and the glories after them (1:11). He is the living Stone the builders rejected, now the chosen cornerstone (2:4-8). He suffered for us, leaving us an example, and "Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree" (2:21-24), the Servant of Isaiah 53. He "suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, so that He might bring us to God" (3:18). He is risen, at God's right hand, with every power subject to Him (3:22). He is the Shepherd and Overseer of our souls (2:25) and the Chief Shepherd who will appear (5:4).

Hard Passages

What does foreknowledge mean in 1:2? Teachers have long disagreed whether God chose those He knew would believe, or whether His foreknowing is His prior choosing love. The notes name both views and leave the question open.

How should the words to servants (2:18-25) and to wives and husbands (3:1-7) be read today? The notes explain Roman household slavery plainly, name the misuse of these verses, and apply them to work today. They teach the words to wives and husbands as written, say plainly that submission never means accepting abuse or following a husband into sin, and note that teachers differ on how the passage is lived out.

Who are "the spirits in prison" (3:19), and what does it mean that "the gospel was preached also to the dead" (4:6)? These are among the hardest verses in the New Testament. The notes give the main views without a verdict and show that Scripture does not teach a second chance after death (Heb 9:27).

Does "baptism now saves us" (3:21) mean the water saves? The notes show Peter's own explanation, the pledge of a good conscience through the resurrection of Jesus, and name the sacramental view fairly. Salvation is by grace through faith, and baptism follows faith.

Does 2:9-10 mean the church has replaced Israel? No. The church shares Israel's spiritual blessings through Christ, while God's promises to the nation of Israel stand (Rom 11:1-2, 26-29).

Outline

I. Our Living Hope (1:1-2:10)
  A. Greeting to the elect exiles (1:1-2)
  B. A living hope and tested faith (1:3-12)
  C. Called to be holy (1:13-21)
  D. Born again by the living Word (1:22-2:3)
  E. Living stones and a royal priesthood (2:4-10)
II. Living Well Among Unbelievers (2:11-3:12)
  A. Good conduct among the Gentiles (2:11-12)
  B. Submitting to rulers (2:13-17)
  C. Servants following Christ's steps (2:18-25)
  D. Wives and husbands (3:1-7)
  E. Blessing instead of revenge (3:8-12)
III. Suffering for Doing Right (3:13-4:19)
  A. Ready to give an answer (3:13-17)
  B. Christ's suffering and victory (3:18-22)
  C. Living for the will of God (4:1-6)
  D. Serving as the end draws near (4:7-11)
  E. Suffering as a Christian (4:12-19)
IV. Shepherds and the Flock (5:1-14)
  A. Shepherd the flock of God (5:1-4)
  B. Humble yourselves and stand firm (5:5-11)
  C. Final greetings (5:12-14)

1 PETER

1 PETER 1

Greeting to the Elect Exiles

1 Peter (Petros), an apostle of Jesus (Iesous) Christ, to ***the*** elect exiles of ***the*** dispersion of Pontus (Pontos), Galatia, Cappadocia (Kappadokia), Asia, and Bithynia, **2** according to ***the*** foreknowledge of God ***the*** Father, in sanctification of ***the*** Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of ***the*** blood of Jesus Christ: may grace and peace be multiplied to you.

A Living Hope

3 Blessed ***be*** the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy begot us again to a living hope through ***the*** resurrection of Jesus Christ from ***the*** dead, **4** to an inheritance imperishable and undefiled and unfading, reserved in ***the*** heavens for you, **5** who are being guarded by ***the*** power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in ***the*** last time. **6** In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if it is necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, **7** so that the testing of your faith, much more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire, may be found for praise and honor and glory at ***the*** revelation of Jesus Christ; **8** whom, not having seen ***Him***, you love; in whom, now not seeing ***Him*** but believing, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and glorified, **9** receiving the outcome of your faith, ***the*** salvation of souls. **10** Concerning this salvation, ***the*** prophets who prophesied of the grace toward you sought out and searched out diligently, **11** searching into what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating, as He testified beforehand the sufferings for Christ and the glories after these. **12** To them it was revealed that not to themselves but to us they were ministering these things, which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by ***the*** Holy Spirit sent from heaven, ***things*** into which angels desire to look intently.

Called to Be Holy

13 Therefore, having girded up the loins of your mind, being sober, hope fully on the grace that is being brought to you at

1:1 Acts 16:6; James 1:1; Matt 4:18
1:2 Exod 24:8; Isa 52:15; Rom 11:2,5-7,28
1:3 1 Kgs 8:15; 1 Chr 29:10; Ps 41:13
1:4 1 Pet 5:4; Col 1:5; 2 Tim 4:8
1:5 Eph 2:8; Rom 8:31-39; Phil 1:6
1:6 Dan 11:35; James 1:2,9; Rom 5:2,11
1:7 Isa 48:10; Job 23:10; Prov 17:3
1:8 Judg 5:31; Ps 145:20; Isa 11:10
1:9 Rom 6:22; James 1:21; Heb 11:13
1:10 Matt 13:17; Luke 10:24; Gen 49:10
1:11 Dan 2:44; Dan 12:8; 2 Pet 1:21
1:12 Dan 8:13; Dan 12:9; Prov 1:23
1:13 Exod 12:11; 1 Kgs 18:46; 2 Kgs 4:29

1:1 *Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ* An apostle is one sent with the authority of the one who sent him. This is the Peter who once said he did not know Jesus (Luke 22:57). Grace made the man who denied Him into His messenger.
1:1 *to the elect exiles of the dispersion* Elect means chosen. Exiles are temporary residents in a land not their own. The dispersion was the word for Jews scattered outside Israel, and Peter uses it for believers in five Roman provinces in what is now Turkey. If you feel out of place in this world, that is a reminder of where you belong.
1:2 *according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ* All three Persons at work. Moses sprinkled blood on the people when they promised to obey the covenant (Exod 24:7-8). Some teachers take foreknowledge as God knowing ahead who would believe and choosing them in Christ (Rom 8:29). Others note that in Scripture "to know" often means to set one's love on someone, and the same word is used of Christ in verse 20. I leave that open, as in my Romans and Ephesians studies. Both agree salvation is God's work and everyone is called to repent and believe. These sufferers were not an accident. Grace is not just given but multiplied.
1:3 *who according to His great mercy begot us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead* The new birth Jesus told Nicodemus about (John 3:3-7). Biblical hope is a sure promise not yet arrived. It is living because it rests on a living Savior. When Jesus died, Peter's hope died too. When he saw the empty tomb (Luke 24:12) and ate with the risen Lord (John 21:12-15), it came back to life.
1:4 *to an inheritance imperishable and undefiled and unfading, reserved in the heavens for you* Three words that each begin with "not" in Greek. It cannot perish like a city, be polluted like land, or wilt like a flower. For people losing jobs, friends and good name for their faith, this was comfort (Matt 6:19-20). It has your name on it, kept in the safest place there is.
1:5 *who are being guarded by the power of God through faith* The word was used of soldiers standing watch over a city. God's power is the guard, and faith is how we rest under it. We are saved now from sin's penalty, and the rest comes when Jesus returns and we receive new bodies (Rom 8:23; 1 John 3:2). That salvation is "ready." God waits only for the right time.
1:6 *though now for a little while, if it is necessary, you have been grieved by various trials* Peter does not pretend the pain isn't real. "Various" means many-colored. Even a long trial is short beside eternity (2 Cor 4:17), and God allows it only "if it is necessary." Suffering is never meaningless for the believer.
1:7 *much more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire* Gold was heated until impurities rose and were skimmed off. Even gold will be gone one day. Tested faith lasts forever and brings praise when Jesus is revealed. Your trials are not proving God has left you. They are proving your faith is real.
1:8 *whom, not having seen Him, you love* Peter had seen Jesus. His readers had not, yet they loved Him (John 20:29). "Joy inexpressible" already has a taste of heaven in it. It does not come from circumstances, so it does not depend on them.
1:10 *the prophets who prophesied of the grace toward you sought out and searched out diligently* Isaiah wrote of the Servant pierced for our sins (Isa 53:5), David of pierced hands and feet (Ps 22:16), and they searched their own writings. We have what they longed to see (Matt 13:17).
1:11 *the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating, as He testified beforehand the sufferings for Christ and the glories after these* The prophets did not make up their message (2 Pet 1:21), and Christ existed before Bethlehem. They saw the cross and the crown, but not always the time between. Peter once tried to talk Jesus out of the cross (Matt 16:21-23). Suffering comes before glory.
1:12 *things into which angels desire to look intently* The prophets served people they would never meet, and the same Spirit spoke through the apostles. The word is the one used of Peter stooping into the empty tomb (Luke 24:12). Angels have never been redeemed, and they watch grace at work in sinners with wonder. How much more should we treasure it?
1:13 *having girded up the loins of your mind, being sober* Men wore long robes and tucked them into the belt before running or working so they would not trip. Do that with your mind. Sober means clear-headed, not drunk on this world. Set your hope all the way on what is coming, not half on Jesus and half on this world.

the revelation of Jesus Christ, **14** as children of obedience, not conforming yourselves to the desires ***that were*** formerly in your ignorance, **15** but as the One who called you ***is*** holy, you yourselves also be holy in all ***your*** conduct, **16** because it has been written, "Be holy, because I am holy." **17** And if you call on ***as*** Father the One who judges impartially according to the work of each one, conduct yourselves in fear ***during*** the time of your sojourning, **18** knowing that you were redeemed not with perishable things, silver or gold, from your futile conduct handed down from ***your*** fathers, **19** but with ***the*** precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, **20** ***who was*** foreknown indeed before ***the*** foundation of ***the*** world, but was made manifest in the last of the times for your sake, **21** who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from ***the*** dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

Born Again by the Living Word

22 Having purified your souls in the obedience of the truth through ***the*** Spirit for sincere brotherly love, love one another fervently out of a pure heart, **23** having been begotten again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through ***the*** word of God, living and abiding forever.

24 Because "All flesh ***is*** like grass, and all ***the*** glory of man like ***the*** flower of grass. The grass withered, and its flower fell off, **25** but the declaration of ***the*** Lord abides forever." And this is the declaration which was preached as the gospel to you.

1 PETER 2

1 Therefore, having put aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisies and envies and all slanders, **2** like newborn babies, long for the pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow, **3** if indeed you have tasted that the Lord ***is*** kind.

Living Stones and a Royal Priesthood

4 Coming to Him, a living stone, rejected indeed by men but chosen ***and*** precious in the sight of God, **5** you yourselves also, as living stones, are being built up, a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus (Iesous) Christ. **6** Therefore also it is contained in the Scripture: "Look, I lay in Zion (Sion) a stone, a cornerstone, chosen, precious, and the one who believes on

1:14 Rom 12:2; 1 Pet 4:2,3; Eph 4:18-22
1:15 2 Cor 7:1; Lev 11:44; Matt 5:48
1:16 Lev 11:44; Lev 11:45; Lev 19:2
1:17 2 Chr 19:7; Job 34:19; Jer 3:19
1:18 Jer 16:19; Isa 52:3; 2 Sam 21:4
1:19 Exod 12:5; Isa 53:7; Gen 22:8
1:20 Eph 1:4; Col 1:26; 2 Tim 1:9,10
1:21 Ps 42:5; Ps 2:12; Lam 3:24
1:22 Heb 13:1; 1 Pet 3:8; John 13:34,35
1:23 Heb 4:12; 1 Pet 1:3; John 3:5
1:24 Isa 40:6-8; Ps 103:15; 2 Kgs 19:26
1:25 Isa 40:8; 1 John 1:1,3; 1 Pet 1:23
2:1 Eph 4:31; James 1:21; James 4:11
2:2 Heb 5:12,13; Eph 4:15; Ps 34:8
2:3 Ps 34:8; Ps 9:10; Ps 24:8
2:4 Ps 118:22; Isa 42:1; 1 Pet 2:7
2:5 Eph 2:20-22; 1 Pet 2:9; Isa 61:6
2:6 Isa 28:16; Zech 10:4; Isa 42:1

1:14 *not conforming yourselves to the desires that were formerly in your ignorance* A child takes after his father. To conform is to be pressed into a mold (Rom 12:2). "Ignorance" of God is one reason most teachers believe many readers were Gentiles who grew up without knowing the true God.

1:15 *but as the One who called you is holy, you yourselves also be holy in all your conduct* Holy is set apart, different, belonging to God. Not just on Sunday but at home, at work and where no one sees. God said it to Israel (Lev 11:44-45; 19:2). Holiness is not rules to earn God's love but what happens when we belong to a holy God and His Spirit lives in us.

1:17 *the One who judges impartially according to the work of each one* We call Him Father (Rom 8:15), but He does not wink at sin. For believers this is not a judgment of whether we are saved but of how we lived (2 Cor 5:10). Fear here is reverence, and our time here is a temporary stay.

1:18 *knowing that you were redeemed not with perishable things, silver or gold* To redeem is to buy back by paying a price, as a ransom freed a slave. Silver could buy a slave's freedom but never a sinner's. Many readers had been raised in idol worship passed down for generations, empty and going nowhere.

1:19 *but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot* The Passover lamb had to be perfect, and its blood on the doorposts protected God's people (Exod 12). Jesus is "the Lamb of God" (John 1:29). Nothing on earth is worth more than that blood, and it was shed for you.

1:20 *who was foreknown indeed before the foundation of the world, but was made manifest in the last of the times for your sake* The cross was not God's backup plan (Rev 13:8). The last times began at His first coming, and we live in them now. God's eternal plan had you in mind.

1:21 *so that your faith and hope are in God* The resurrection and ascension are the Father's stamp of approval on all Jesus did. Not in ourselves, our circumstances, the government or the economy. Then trials cannot take them away.

1:22 *love one another fervently out of a pure heart* Sincere means without a mask, like the actors' masks in Greek theater. Fervently means stretched out, like a runner straining for the line. Love takes effort, especially when people are hard to love. When the world is against us, we need each other.

1:23 *having been begotten again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the word of God, living and abiding forever* Every human life starts from a seed that will die. God uses His Word to give new birth (James 1:18), and because the seed lasts, so does the life. Same Father, same seed. That is why we are family.

1:24 *All flesh is like grass* Isaiah 40:6-8. Grass grew green after the rains and dried up fast under the sun. Wealth, fame, beauty and power bloom and fall.

1:25 *but the declaration of the Lord abides forever* Everything else passes, but God's Word will not (Matt 24:35). The persecutors would wither like grass. The Word that saved these believers would stand forever. Building on anything else is building on grass.

2:1 *having put aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisies and envies and all slanders* Because we are born again and called to love (1:22-23), some things must go. Malice wishes harm. Deceit says one thing and means another. Hypocrisy wears a mask. Envy resents what others have. Slander tears down with words. Take them off like dirty clothes. They choke out new life.

2:2 *like newborn babies, long for the pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow* A hungry newborn wants nothing else. Some milk then was watered down, but God's Word never is. Many Greek copies, including the oldest, add words meaning to salvation. A believer not taking in the Word is like a baby not eating. How hungry are you for it?

2:3 *if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is kind* An echo of Psalm 34:8. "If" here means since. Once you taste something good, you want more, and the craving grows from the first taste.

2:4 *Coming to Him, a living stone, rejected indeed by men but chosen and precious in the sight of God* Living because He rose. Israel's leaders threw Him out, and Peter told them so to their faces (Acts 4:10-11). "Coming" is present tense: once for salvation, then day by day. If you have felt rejected, so was He, and God's opinion is the one that counts.

2:5 *as living stones, are being built up, a spiritual house, a holy priesthood* God's house was once a temple of cut stones. Now it is His people (Eph 2:19-22). In Israel only priests went near the altar. Now every believer has access to God through Jesus and offers spiritual sacrifices: praise, doing good, sharing, giving our whole selves (Rom 12:1; Heb 13:15-16). Imperfect offerings are accepted because of Him.

2:6 *Look, I lay in Zion a stone, a cornerstone, chosen, precious* Isaiah 28:16. The cornerstone was laid first and every other stone lined up by it. The Greek doubles its negative: you will never be put to shame. People may mock now, but on the last day no one who trusted Him will be ashamed.

Him will by no means be put to shame." **7** To you therefore who believe ***is*** the preciousness; but to those who are disobedient, "The stone which the builders rejected, this has become ***the*** head of ***the*** corner," **8** and "A stone of stumbling and a rock of offense"; who stumble at the word, being disobedient, to which they also were appointed. **9** But you ***are*** a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for ***His*** possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; **10** who once ***were*** not a people, but now ***are the*** people of God; who had not received mercy, but now have received mercy.

Good Conduct Among the Gentiles

11 Beloved, I urge ***you*** as sojourners and exiles to abstain from fleshly desires, which wage war against the soul, **12** keeping your conduct among the Gentiles good, so that in that in which they slander you as evildoers, they may, observing ***your*** good works, glorify God in ***the*** day of visitation.

Submitting to Rulers

13 Be subject therefore to every human institution for the Lord's sake, whether to ***the*** king as being supreme, **14** or to governors as being sent through him for vengeance on evildoers and praise of those who do good. **15** Because so is the will of God, ***that*** by doing good ***you*** put to silence the ignorance of foolish men; **16** as free, and not having the freedom as a covering for malice, but as slaves of God. **17** Honor everyone, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king.

Following Christ's Steps

18 Household servants, ***be*** subject in all fear to the masters, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the crooked. **19** For this ***is*** favor, if because of conscience toward God someone endures griefs, suffering unjustly. **20** For what credit ***is it*** if, when you sin and are beaten, you endure? But if, when you do good and suffer, you endure, this ***is*** favor before God. **21** For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, so that you may follow His steps; **22** who committed no sin, nor was deceit

2:7 Ps 118:22; Isa 28:5; Zech 4:7
2:8 Isa 8:14; Isa 28:13; Isa 28:16
2:9 Exod 19:5-6; Deut 7:6; Isa 61:6
2:10 Hos 1:9-10; Hos 2:23; Rom 9:25,26
2:11 1 John 2:15-17; 1 Pet 4:2; Heb 11:13
2:12 Matt 5:16; Phil 2:15,16; 2 Cor 8:21
2:13 Rom 13:1-7; Titus 3:1; 1 Tim 2:1,2
2:14 Rom 13:3,4
2:15 1 Thess 4:3; 1 Pet 2:12; 1 Thess 5:18
2:16 1 Cor 7:22; James 1:25; John 8:32-36
2:17 Prov 24:21; Exod 20:12; Rom 13:7
2:18 Col 3:22-25; 1 Tim 6:1-3; Titus 2:9,10
2:19 Rom 13:5; Luke 6:32; Acts 11:23
2:20 Gen 39:14; Matt 26:67; 1 Pet 3:14
2:21 1 John 2:6; Matt 16:24; Acts 14:22
2:22 Isa 53:9; 2 Cor 5:21; Heb 4:15

2:7 *The stone which the builders rejected, this has become the head of the corner* Psalm 118:22, which Jesus quoted of Himself (Matt 21:42). The builders were the religious leaders who should have known Him. Every person chooses: precious cornerstone or rejected stone.
2:8 *A stone of stumbling and a rock of offense* Isaiah 8:14. A large rock in the path holds you up if you build on it and trips you if you ignore it. No neutral ground. Some read "to which they also were appointed" as God appointing these people to stumble. Others read that God appointed the stumbling as the sure result for anyone who disobeys. Either way, Peter places the blame on their disobedience.
2:9 *But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His possession* Israel's titles from Sinai and Isaiah (Exod 19:5-6; Isa 43:20-21), now used of believers, Jew and Gentile, grafted in (Rom 11:17). This does not mean the church has replaced Israel. God has not rejected His people (Rom 11:1-2), "all Israel will be saved" (Rom 11:26), and His promises of land and kingdom stand. Covenant theology reads these titles as the church becoming the new Israel. We are saved to proclaim what He has done. Who in your life needs to hear it?
2:10 *who once were not a people, but now are the people of God* From Hosea 1:9-10 and 2:23, where Hosea's children were named no mercy and not My people. Paul applies Hosea to Gentiles (Rom 9:24-26). Some believe the church has received Hosea's promise to Israel. I believe Peter uses the words because God showed these believers the same mercy, while the promise still belongs to Israel, kept when Israel turns to Christ at His return and He reigns a thousand years.
2:11 *I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from fleshly desires, which wage war against the soul* A sojourner lives somewhere without citizenship. Ours is in heaven (Phil 3:20). Fleshly desires are not harmless fun but soldiers trying to destroy the soul. A traveler need not adopt a foreign land's worst habits.
2:12 *keeping your conduct among the Gentiles good* Gentiles here means unbelievers. Christians were slandered as disloyal for refusing to worship the emperor and as haters for skipping pagan feasts. Peter's answer is not to argue louder but to live better (Matt 5:16). "The day of visitation" is when God comes, in mercy when they turn to Him or in judgment.
2:13 *Be subject therefore to every human institution for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as being supreme* Not because rulers are always right, but because it honors the Lord. The emperor was most likely Nero, who would later kill many Christians (Rom 13:1-7). When man's law and God's clash, "It is necessary to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29). Otherwise, believers should be the best citizens in the land.
2:14 *for vengeance on evildoers and praise of those who do good* Governors like Pontius Pilate were sent by the emperor. God set up government to restrain evil and reward good (Rom 13:3-4), and even a bad one usually does some of it. That holds whether those in charge belong to our political party or not.
2:15 *that by doing good you put to silence the ignorance of foolish men* Part of God's will, written plainly. It is hard to keep calling someone an evildoer when he is the best neighbor on the street and the first to help. Our lives can answer what our words cannot.
2:16 *not having the freedom as a covering for malice, but as slaves of God* We are free in Christ (John 8:36; Gal 5:1). Freedom used as an excuse is just sin with a nice label. Real freedom is being free to do what we should.
2:17 *Honor everyone, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king* Every person bears God's image. Believers are family. Only God gets fear. The king gets honor, on the same level as "everyone." The early Christians honored the emperor but would not call him lord or burn incense to him.
2:18 *Household servants, be subject in all fear to the masters, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the crooked* Oiketai, household slaves. Many in the empire, and in the church, were slaves through war, debt or birth, some working as teachers, doctors and managers. It was not the race-based slavery of American history, but it was still one person owning another and often cruel. These verses were later misused to defend slavery, while other Christians saw every person as made in God's image and fought to end it. Peter gave instructions for believers caught in a system they did not create. Today: be a good worker even under a bad boss. That never means staying quiet about abuse.
2:19 *For this is favor, if because of conscience toward God someone endures griefs, suffering unjustly* Charis, usually grace, here something God finds pleasing. The servant endures because he thinks about God, who sees and will make it right.
2:20 *But if, when you do good and suffer, you endure, this is favor before God* Taking punishment you earned is nothing special. Not looking for suffering, but how we respond when unfair suffering finds us.
2:21 *Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, so that you may follow His steps* "Example" was the letters a teacher wrote at the top of a child's slate for the child to trace. Peter walked in those footprints for about three years. If He suffered unjustly and trusted God, we can too.
2:22 *who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth* Isaiah 53:9. Peter lived with Jesus day and night. If anyone would have seen a flaw, it was Peter. His suffering was completely unjust, and only a sinless man could die for others' sins (2 Cor 5:21).

found in His mouth; **23** who, being reviled, did not revile in return; suffering, He did not threaten, but He kept handing ***Himself*** over to the One who judges justly; **24** who Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, so that, having died to sins, we might live to righteousness; by whose wound you were healed. **25** For you were like sheep going astray, but you have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

1 PETER 3

Wives and Husbands

1 Likewise, wives, ***be*** subject to ***your*** own husbands, so that even if any are disobedient to the word, through the conduct of the wives they may be won without a word, **2** having observed your pure conduct in fear. **3** Whose adorning, let it not be the outward ***adorning*** of braiding of hair and of putting around of gold ***ornaments*** or of putting on of garments, **4** but ***let it be*** the hidden man of the heart, in the imperishable ***quality*** of the gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth before God. **5** For in this way formerly also the holy women who hoped in God were adorning themselves, being subject to ***their*** own husbands, **6** as Sarah (Sarra) obeyed Abraham (Abraam), calling him lord, whose children you have become, doing good and not fearing any terror. **7** Husbands, likewise, dwelling with ***them*** according to knowledge, as with a weaker vessel, the female ***one***, rendering honor ***to them*** as also co-heirs of ***the*** grace of life, so that your prayers may not be cut off.

Blessing Instead of Revenge

8 Now finally, all ***of you be*** like-minded, sympathetic, loving as brothers, tender-hearted, courteous, **9** not repaying evil for evil or insult for insult, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that to this you were called, so that you may inherit a blessing. **10** For the one desiring to love life and to see good days, let him keep his tongue from evil, and his lips not to speak deceit; **11** let him turn away from evil and let him do good; let him seek peace and let him pursue it. **12** Because the eyes of the Lord ***are*** on ***the*** righteous, and His ears toward their supplication; but ***the*** face of the Lord ***is*** against those doing evil.

2:23 Ps 37:5; Isa 53:7; Heb 12:3
2:24 Isa 53:5; Isa 53:4; Isa 53:11
2:25 Isa 53:6; Ps 80:1; Ezek 34:6
3:1 Col 3:18; 1 Cor 7:16; Gen 3:16
3:2 1 Pet 2:12; Phil 1:27; 1 Pet 1:15
3:3 Gen 24:47; Isa 3:21; Isa 3:22
3:4 Isa 3:21; Rom 2:29; Rom 7:22
3:5 1 Tim 5:5; Titus 2:3,4; Prov 31:10,30
3:6 Gen 18:12; Gen 18:15; Rom 9:7-9
3:7 Col 3:19; Mal 2:14-16; Eph 5:25-28,33
3:8 Rom 12:10; Eph 4:31,32; 1 Pet 1:22
3:9 Rom 12:14,17,19-21; Prov 20:22; Matt 5:39,44
3:10 Ps 34:12-16; Prov 3:2; James 1:26
3:11 Ps 37:27; Matt 5:9; Ps 34:14
3:12 Prov 15:3; Deut 11:12; Zech 4:10

2:23 *who, being reviled, did not revile in return* They spat on Him, struck and mocked Him (Mark 14:65), and He prayed for them (Luke 23:34). He kept handing Himself over to the Father who judges justly. When wronged, we do not have to take revenge (Rom 12:19).
2:24 *who Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree* From example to Savior. The tree is the cross. He took what we deserved so we could receive what He deserved. The cross does not only forgive us. It changes us. "By whose wound you were healed" is Isaiah 53:5, and in context this is first the healing of our souls from sin. Some teachers also see physical healing in the atonement, received in full in our new bodies (Rom 8:23). Beaten slaves heard that Jesus was beaten too.
2:25 *For you were like sheep going astray, but you have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls* Isaiah 53:6. Sheep don't mean to get lost. They follow the next patch of grass. Jesus is the Good Shepherd (John 10:11), and He told Peter three times to feed His sheep (John 21:15-17). You have a Shepherd who will never mistreat you.
3:1 *Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands* "Likewise" ties back to citizens and rulers (2:13) and servants and masters (2:18), each "for the Lord's sake." Submission does not mean a wife is worth less. Jesus is equal with the Father yet submitted to His will (John 6:38; 1 Cor 11:3). It is about role, not worth, to "your own" husband, and it is her choice in her own walk with God. A Roman wife was expected to follow her husband's religion, so a believer with a pagan husband was in a hard place. Her life can do the talking.
3:2 *having observed your pure conduct in fear* He may not listen to sermons, but he watches how she lives. Her respect grows out of reverence for the Lord. Submission never means accepting abuse, threats or control, and never means following a husband into sin (Acts 5:29). If you are being hurt or are afraid in your own home, tell a pastor or a believer you trust and get to a safe place. Teachers differ on how this is lived out: a lasting pattern of the husband's loving leadership, or living within that day's household customs without needless offense.
3:3 *let it not be the outward adorning of braiding of hair and of putting around of gold ornaments or of putting on of garments* Not a ban on braids or jewelry, or the list would forbid clothes too. Wealthy Roman women spent hours on hairstyles woven with gold and pearls, and the culture said a woman's value was in her looks. Real beauty is not put on from outside, and that is true for men as well.
3:4 *the hidden man of the heart, in the imperishable quality of the gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth before God* Who we are when no one is looking. Outward beauty fades. This never does. Gentle is strength under control, as in Jesus (Matt 11:29). Quiet is a calm, settled spirit, not anxious or quarrelsome. Which gets more of your time, the outside or the inside?
3:5 *the holy women who hoped in God* Their beauty came from trust in God. They were not trusting their husbands to be perfect.
3:6 *as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord* A common word of respect, like calling a man sir (Gen 18:12). Sarah was not perfect. She laughed at God's promise. But she followed Abraham when he left home at God's call. Faith lets a woman do right without being ruled by fear.
3:7 *Husbands, likewise, dwelling with them according to knowledge, as with a weaker vessel* Peter does not let husbands off easy. Know her, study her, care what she thinks and feels. "Weaker" most likely means less physical strength and, in Peter's world, much less power in society, not weaker in mind, spirit or worth. Never use your strength against her. Handle her like fine china. They are equal heirs of life, and a man who mistreats his wife cannot expect God to hear his prayers.
3:8 *all of you be like-minded, sympathetic, loving as brothers, tender-hearted, courteous* Like-minded is sharing the same goal, not thinking alike on every small thing. Sympathetic is feeling with others (Rom 12:15). Many Greek copies read a word meaning humble-minded instead of courteous. It starts with each of us choosing to live this way.
3:9 *not repaying evil for evil or insult for insult, but on the contrary blessing* Jesus did neither (2:23). To bless is to speak well of someone and ask God to do him good (Luke 6:28). That is not natural. It is supernatural. We do not earn salvation this way, but God rewards children who live like His Son.
3:10 *let him keep his tongue from evil, and his lips not to speak deceit* Psalm 34:12-16, written after David escaped danger by pretending to be insane before a Philistine king. It starts with our words (James 3:5-6).
3:11 *let him seek peace and let him pursue it* It is not enough to stop doing wrong. Start doing right. Chase peace like a hunter chasing game.
3:12 *Because the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and His ears toward their supplication* When we suffer for doing right, it can feel like no one notices. God does. He is not neutral about evil. Peter quotes only the first half of Psalm 34:16, leaving out the cutting off of the wicked, which leaves room for repentance, but the warning stands.

Ready to Give an Answer

13 And who ***is*** he who will harm you, if you become imitators of that which ***is*** good? **14** But even if you should suffer because of righteousness, ***you are*** blessed. And do not fear their fear, nor be troubled; **15** but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and ***be*** ready always for a defense to everyone who asks you an account concerning the hope in you, with gentleness and fear, **16** having a good conscience, so that in that in which they speak against you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be put to shame. **17** For ***it is*** better, if the will of God wills ***it***, to suffer doing good than doing evil.

Christ's Suffering and Victory

18 Because Christ also suffered once for sins, ***the*** righteous for ***the*** unrighteous, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death indeed in ***the*** flesh, but having been made alive in the spirit, **19** in which also, having gone, He preached to the spirits in prison, **20** who formerly disobeyed, when once the patience of God was waiting in ***the*** days of Noah (Noe), while ***the*** ark was being prepared, into which few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water; **21** to which also an antitype, baptism, now saves us (not a putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the pledge of a good conscience toward God), through ***the*** resurrection of Jesus (Iesous) Christ, **22** who is at ***the*** right ***hand*** of God, having gone into heaven, angels and authorities and powers having been subjected to Him.

1 PETER 4

Living for the Will of God

1 Therefore, Christ having suffered for us in ***the*** flesh, you also arm yourselves with the same mind, because the one who has suffered in ***the*** flesh has ceased from sin, **2** so as no longer to live the remaining time in ***the*** flesh for ***the*** desires of men, but for ***the*** will of God. **3** For the past time of life ***is*** sufficient for us to have carried out the will of the Gentiles, having walked in sensualities, lusts, drunkenness, orgies, carousings, and abominable idolatries; **4** in which they think it strange, your not running with ***them*** into the same over-

3:13 Prov 16:7; Rom 8:28; Ps 38:20
3:14 Isa 8:12-13; 1 Pet 2:19,20; 1 Pet 4:13-16
3:15 Col 4:6; 2 Tim 2:25; Luke 21:14,15
3:16 1 Pet 2:12; Heb 13:18; 1 Pet 2:19
3:17 1 Pet 4:19; 1 Pet 3:14; Matt 26:39,42
3:18 1 Pet 4:1; Heb 9:26,28; Titus 2:14
3:19 Gen 6:3; 1 Pet 4:6; Isa 61:1
3:20 Gen 6:3; Gen 8:18; Gen 7:13
3:21 Mark 16:16; Gal 3:27; 1 Pet 1:3
3:22 Ps 110:1; Isa 49:5; Mark 16:19
4:1 1 Pet 3:18; Gal 5:24; Rom 13:12-14
4:2 Titus 3:3-8; Rom 14:7; Eph 2:3
4:3 1 Thess 4:5; Eph 5:18; Ezek 44:6
4:4 1 Pet 3:16; Jude 1:10; 2 Pet 2:22

3:13 *And who is he who will harm you, if you become imitators of that which is good* Many Greek copies read zealous for what is good. Living well keeps us out of much harm. And no one can do lasting harm to our inheritance or souls (1:4-5; Matt 10:28).
3:14 *But even if you should suffer because of righteousness, you are blessed* Doing good sometimes brings suffering (Matt 5:10). From Isaiah 8:12-13. When we fear God, we need not be ruled by fear of people.
3:15 *but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and be ready always for a defense* Many Greek copies read sanctify Christ as Lord. To sanctify here is to set apart as holy, to give Him first place, as Isaiah 8:13 says to regard the LORD as holy. Defense is apologia, a lawyer's answer in court. We need not be scholars, but we should know what we believe and why, and share it "with gentleness and fear." We want to win people, not debates.
3:16 *having a good conscience* If we defend our hope but live like hypocrites, our answer means nothing. Our good conduct flows from union with Christ. Our job is not to defend our reputation but to live so their words are proved false.
3:17 *it is better, if the will of God wills it, to suffer doing good than doing evil* Suffering is not outside God's control. If it comes, it comes for a purpose. Suffering for wrong is the result of sin. Suffering for right is following Jesus.
3:18 *Because Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, so that He might bring us to God* "Once," never repeated (Heb 9:26-28; 10:10). The righteous for the unrighteous is substitution, the heart of the gospel. "Made alive in the spirit" is read as the Holy Spirit who raised Him (Rom 8:11), or as Jesus' own spirit or the realm of the spirit. Either way, death could not hold Him.
3:19 *He preached to the spirits in prison* One of the hardest verses in the New Testament. Some believe Christ preached in the spirit through Noah, "a herald of righteousness" (2 Pet 2:5), to people who rejected it and are now held for judgment. Some believe He proclaimed His victory, like a herald announcing a king's triumph, to fallen angels held in prison (2 Pet 2:4; Jude 6; Gen 6:1-4). Some believe that between His death and resurrection He went to the dead of Noah's day. A few hold He offered them salvation, but judgment follows death (Heb 9:27). I leave this open. Christ is Lord over every spirit, human or angel.
3:20 *while the ark was being prepared, into which few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water* God waited patiently the many years the ark took to build. People kept eating, drinking and marrying to the day of the flood (Matt 24:37-39). Only eight. Being few does not mean being wrong. God's patience is great, but it has an end (2 Cor 6:2).
3:21 *to which also an antitype, baptism, now saves us* An antitype is what an earlier picture pointed to. Noah passed through the water and came into a new world. Churches with a sacramental view believe God uses baptism to bring new birth. Most Bible-teaching Protestants see it as the outward sign and public pledge of salvation through faith. Peter explains: not washing the body, but "the pledge of a good conscience toward God," and saved "through the resurrection of Jesus Christ." Cornelius received the Spirit before baptism (Acts 10:43-48), and the thief was promised paradise without it (Luke 23:42-43). Repentance and faith come first. Baptism is the fruit, not the root (Matt 28:19).
3:22 *angels and authorities and powers having been subjected to Him* The hard passage ends where it was heading, with Jesus on the throne. Every spiritual power, whatever the spirits in prison were, and whatever stands behind the persecutors, is under His feet (Eph 1:20-22). Through the cross to the crown (Rom 8:17).
4:1 *you also arm yourselves with the same mind, because the one who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin* "Arm" is a soldier's word. Take up Christ's attitude like weapons. The phrase most likely means one who has chosen to suffer for doing right rather than give in has broken with sin's control. Some read it of our union with Christ, who died, so that we died to sin (Rom 6:6-7). Either way, a believer ready to suffer for Christ is done living for sin.
4:2 *so as no longer to live the remaining time in the flesh for the desires of men, but for the will of God* None of us knows how long our remaining time is. There are only two ways to live. The time you have left is a gift. Don't spend it on what will not last.
4:3 *having walked in sensualities, lusts, drunkenness, orgies, carousings, and abominable idolatries* Gentiles here means unbelievers. Roman social life centered on pagan festivals, with temple meals, heavy drinking and sexual sin as part of worship. That list could describe many parties today. The gods' names have changed, but the sins have not.
4:4 *in which they think it strange, your not running with them into the same overflow of debauchery* Old friends were surprised and offended, because a changed life makes others feel guilty. The picture is a crowd rushing headlong into a flood. Believers are not the strange ones. The strange thing is running toward your own destruction.

flow of debauchery, blaspheming ***you***; **5** who will give an account to Him who is ready to judge ***the*** living and ***the*** dead. **6** For to this ***end*** the gospel was preached also to ***the*** dead, so that they might be judged indeed according to men in ***the*** flesh, but live according to God in ***the*** spirit.

Serving as the End Draws Near

7 But the end of all things has drawn near; therefore be of sound mind and be sober for the prayers. **8** And above all things, having fervent love among yourselves, because love will cover a multitude of sins; **9** ***be*** hospitable to one another without grumbling; **10** each one, as he has received a gift, serving it among yourselves, as good stewards of ***the*** manifold grace of God. **11** If anyone speaks, ***let him speak*** as oracles of God; if anyone serves, ***let him serve*** as from ***the*** strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus (Iesous) Christ, to whom is the glory and the power to the ages of the ages. Amen.

Suffering as a Christian

12 Beloved, do not think it strange at the burning among you, which is taking place for a trial for you, as though a strange thing were happening to you; **13** but insofar as you share in the sufferings of Christ, rejoice, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice, exulting. **14** If you are insulted in ***the*** name of Christ, ***you are*** blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified. **15** For let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or an evildoer, or as a meddler in other people's matters; **16** but if ***anyone suffers*** as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this respect. **17** For ***it is*** the time for the judgment to begin from the house of God; and if ***it begins*** first from us, what ***will be*** the end of those disobeying the gospel of God? **18** And if the righteous ***one*** is saved with difficulty, the ungodly and sinner, where will he appear? **19** Therefore also those suffering according to the will of God, let them commit their own souls in doing good, as to a faithful Creator.

4:5 Acts 10:42; 2 Tim 4:1; James 5:9
4:6 Titus 3:3-7; Eph 2:3-5; Rom 8:9-11
4:7 1 Pet 1:13; James 5:8,9; 1 Pet 5:8
4:8 Prov 10:12; Col 3:14; Prov 17:9
4:9 Heb 13:2,16; Phil 2:14; Rom 12:13
4:10 1 Cor 12:4-11; 1 Cor 4:1,2; Luke 19:13
4:11 1 Cor 10:31; Acts 7:38; Rom 3:2
4:12 1 Thess 3:2-4; 2 Tim 3:12; 1 Pet 5:9
4:13 Rom 8:17; James 1:2,3; 2 Cor 4:10
4:14 Isa 11:2; 1 Pet 3:14,16; 1 Pet 3:16
4:15 1 Thess 4:11; 2 Thess 3:11; 1 Tim 5:13
4:16 Acts 5:41; 2 Tim 1:12; Phil 1:29
4:17 Ezek 9:6; 2 Thess 1:8; Gen 28:17
4:18 Prov 11:31; Luke 23:31; Ezek 18:24
4:19 Isa 40:28; 1 Pet 3:17; Ps 31:5

4:5 *who will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead* Jesus is the Judge (John 5:22; Acts 10:42), and He is "ready." We do not need to take revenge on those who mock us. God will make everything right.
4:6 *For to this end the gospel was preached also to the dead* Another hard verse. Many believe it means people now dead who heard the gospel while alive. They died, as all do, perhaps condemned by men, but "live according to God in the spirit." Others link it to 3:19, or take "the dead" as the spiritually dead (Eph 2:1). The first fits Peter's flow, but good teachers hold each. In every view the gospel gives life death cannot destroy, and there is no second chance after death (Heb 9:27).
4:7 *But the end of all things has drawn near; therefore be of sound mind and be sober for the prayers* Was Peter wrong? Near means the next great event on God's calendar could come at any time. Nothing else must happen before Jesus comes for His church (Titus 2:13). Not a call to quit our jobs and wait on a mountaintop, but to pray clearly. Peter fell asleep in Gethsemane when told to watch and pray (Mark 14:37-38).
4:8 *because love will cover a multitude of sins* Above all, love. From Proverbs 10:12. Love does not pay for sin. Only Christ's blood does. Love forgives and keeps no record of wrongs (1 Cor 13:5). It lets the small offenses go. That does not mean ignoring serious sin or abuse.
4:9 *be hospitable to one another without grumbling* Inns were few, dirty and dangerous, so traveling believers depended on Christian homes, and churches met in homes. Hospitable means a lover of strangers. It costs time, food and space. Today it may be dinner, a ride, or making a newcomer at church feel welcome.
4:10 *as good stewards of the manifold grace of God* Every believer has at least one gift (Rom 12:6-8; 1 Cor 12:7), for others' good, not our glory. A steward managed his master's property and answered for it. Manifold is the many-colored word from 1:6. Trials come in many colors, and so does grace. What gift has God given you?
4:11 *If anyone speaks, let him speak as oracles of God; if anyone serves, let him serve as from the strength which God supplies* Speakers handle God's truth, not their opinions. Servers work in God's strength, not their own. Not us, not our church, not our ministry: "so that in all things God may be glorified."
4:12 *do not think it strange at the burning among you* A tender word for a hard subject. The burning is the refiner's furnace (1:7). Many believers think following Jesus should make life go well, but He said we would have trouble (John 16:33). Expect it, and you will not be thrown off when it comes.
4:13 *but insofar as you share in the sufferings of Christ, rejoice* Our suffering does not pay for sin. When we suffer for following Him, we walk where He walked (John 15:18-20). After being beaten, Peter and the apostles left rejoicing (Acts 5:41).
4:14 *because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you* Jesus said the same (Matt 5:11-12). God's glory rested on the tabernacle as a cloud. Now His Spirit rests on His people, and many who suffered for Christ say they never felt Him nearer. The last sentence of the verse is in many Greek copies, though not all.
4:15 *or as a meddler in other people's matters* Not all suffering is for Christ. Breaking the law and being punished is justice. Busybodies are listed with murderers and thieves. Some believers bring trouble on themselves by being pushy or nosy and then call it persecution.
4:16 *but if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed* The name appears only three times in the New Testament (Acts 11:26; 26:28), most likely given first by outsiders, maybe as an insult. Many Greek copies read in this name. Peter once denied Jesus three times in a courtyard (Mark 14:66-72). Grace changed him.
4:17 *For it is the time for the judgment to begin from the house of God* God's house is His people (2:5). Not condemnation (Rom 8:1) but testing and purifying, like a father's discipline (Heb 12:6-11). Peter may have Ezekiel 9:6 in mind. If God's children go through the refining fire, what will happen to those who reject Him?
4:18 *And if the righteous one is saved with difficulty* Proverbs 11:31 in the Greek Old Testament. Not that God barely saves us, but that the road to final salvation passes through many trials (Acts 14:22). God brings every one of His people through. Pray for those you love who do not know Jesus.
4:19 *let them commit their own souls in doing good, as to a faithful Creator* To commit is to hand over for safekeeping, like a deposit in a bank, the word Jesus used on the cross (Luke 23:46). Suffering is no excuse to stop doing good. The God who made the universe can keep your soul safe.

1 PETER 5

Shepherd the Flock of God

1 ***The*** elders among you I exhort, ***I*** the fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, the one also a partaker of the glory about to be revealed: **2** shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion but willingly, nor for shameful gain but eagerly; **3** nor as exercising lordship over the portions ***allotted to you***, but becoming examples to the flock. **4** And when the Chief Shepherd has been manifested, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

Humble Yourselves and Stand Firm

5 Likewise, younger ***ones***, be subject to ***the*** elders. And all ***of you***, being subject to one another, clothe yourselves with humility, because God opposes ***the*** proud, but gives grace to ***the*** humble. **6** Therefore be humbled under the mighty hand of God, so that He may exalt you in ***due*** time, **7** having cast all your anxiety on Him, because He cares about you. **8** Be sober, be watchful, because your adversary, ***the*** devil, walks around as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. **9** Resist him, firm in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are being accomplished in your brotherhood in the world. **10** And the God of all grace, the One who called us to His eternal glory in Christ Jesus (Iesous), you having suffered a little, may He Himself perfect, establish, strengthen, settle you. **11** To Him ***be*** the glory and the power to the ages of the ages. Amen.

Final Greetings

12 Through Silvanus (Silouanos), the faithful brother, as I regard ***him***, I have written to you through few ***words***, exhorting and testifying this to be ***the*** true grace of God, in which you stand. **13** She who ***is*** in Babylon, chosen together ***with you***, greets you, and Mark (Markos) my son. **14** Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace ***be*** to you all who ***are*** in Christ Jesus. Amen.

5:1 Luke 24:48; Acts 11:30; Rom 8:17,18
5:2 Titus 1:7,11; Acts 20:26,27; 1 Tim 3:3,8
5:3 Phil 3:17; 2 Thess 3:9; Titus 2:7
5:4 Ps 23:1; Ps 80:1; 1 Cor 9:25
5:5 Prov 3:34; James 4:6; Eph 5:21
5:6 James 4:10; Matt 23:12; Prov 29:23
5:7 Ps 55:22; Ps 37:5; Phil 4:6
5:8 Eph 6:11; James 4:7; 1 Pet 1:13
5:9 James 4:7; Acts 14:22; 1 Cor 10:13
5:10 2 Cor 4:17; 2 Thess 3:3; Deut 28:9
5:11 1 Pet 4:11; Rev 1:6; Rev 5:13
5:12 Heb 13:22; 2 Cor 1:19; 1 Cor 15:1
5:13 Ps 87:4; Acts 12:12,25; Rev 17:5
5:14 Song 1:2; Rom 16:16; Eph 6:23

5:1 *The elders among you I exhort, I the fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ* An elder (presbyteros) was a mature believer chosen to lead a local church, also called overseer and shepherd (Acts 20:17, 28; Titus 1:5-7), names for the same office. Peter does not call himself chief apostle or head of the church but "fellow elder," beside them, not above. He saw the arrest, trial and cross, and had a preview of the glory on the mountain (2 Pet 1:16-18).
5:2 *shepherd the flock of God among you* What Jesus told Peter by the Sea of Galilee (John 21:16). The church belongs to God, who bought it with His Son's blood (Acts 20:28), not to the pastor. Elders may be paid (1 Tim 5:17-18), but money must never be the reason. A hireling runs when the wolf comes (John 10:12-13).
5:3 *nor as exercising lordship over the portions allotted to you, but becoming examples to the flock* Rulers of the Gentiles lord it over people, but not so among you (Mark 10:42-45). A good elder does not bully or control. People forget sermons but remember how their pastor treated his wife, handled money and responded when wronged. That goes for parents, bosses and Sunday school teachers too.
5:4 *And when the Chief Shepherd has been manifested, you will receive the unfading crown of glory* Every elder is an under-shepherd. Winners of the games got a crown of leaves that wilted in days. This one never fades, given at the judgment seat of Christ (2 Cor 5:10), which follows His coming for His church before the Tribulation. Many faithful pastors serve small churches for little pay. The Chief Shepherd sees.
5:5 *And all of you, being subject to one another, clothe yourselves with humility* Younger may mean in age or those who are not elders. Not blind obedience, since erring elders must be corrected (1 Tim 5:19-20). "Clothe" pictures a servant tying on an apron. Peter may have remembered Jesus tying on a towel and washing his feet (John 13:4-5). Proverbs 3:34 again: pride puts us in a fight with God.
5:6 *Therefore be humbled under the mighty hand of God, so that He may exalt you in due time* The hand that brought Israel out of Egypt (Deut 26:8) and also disciplines. Accept what He allows, trust His timing, stop fighting Him. Joseph waited years in slavery and prison before God raised him (Gen 41:39-41).
5:7 *having cast all your anxiety on Him, because He cares about you* Tied to verse 6. Pride says I can handle it. Humility admits I can't. "Cast" is the word for throwing cloaks onto the colt (Luke 19:35). All of it, not just the big things. Not one sparrow falls without the Father knowing (Matt 10:29-31). What do you need to throw onto Him?
5:8 *your adversary, the devil, walks around as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour* Peter knew what it was to sleep when he should have watched (Mark 14:37-38). Adversary is an opponent in court; devil means slanderer. He is a real fallen angel, not a cartoon with a pitchfork. A lion looks for the weak, the young and the one wandered from the herd. Stay close to the flock and the Shepherd.
5:9 *Resist him, firm in the faith* We stand our ground (James 4:7) on what God has said, as Jesus answered every temptation with Scripture (Matt 4:1-11). The devil wants us to think no one understands. Believers in many countries face prison and death today. Pray for them.
5:10 *And the God of all grace* Compared to eternal glory our suffering is short and small (Rom 8:18). "Perfect" is to repair or restore, like mending a torn fishing net, and Peter knew about nets. Establish, strengthen, settle: make firm, give power, set on a foundation. "He Himself" does it.
5:11 *To Him be the glory and the power to the ages of the ages. Amen* The devil prowls, persecutors seem strong, but their power is short-lived. God reigns and will have the last word.
5:12 *Through Silvanus, the faithful brother, as I regard him* Silas, Paul's partner on his second journey (Acts 15:40). "Through" may mean he wrote the letter down as Peter's helper, carried it, or both. Their trials did not mean they had missed God's grace. They were standing in the middle of it.
5:13 *She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, greets you, and Mark my son* Most teachers take "she" as the church and Babylon as Peter's name for Rome. Old Babylon took God's people into exile, and Revelation uses the name for a world city set against God (Rev 17-18). Others take it as the old city in Mesopotamia. John Mark once left Paul and Barnabas (Acts 13:13; 15:37-39) and later was useful again (2 Tim 4:11). A person who fails can be restored, and Peter knew that better than anyone.
5:14 *Greet one another with a kiss of love* A kiss on the cheek was a common family greeting, and in the church it showed one family (Rom 16:16). A warm handshake or hug may serve today. Peter began with grace and peace (1:2) and ends with a peace no persecutor could take (John 14:27).

2 PETER

Introduction

Title

The letter is named for its writer, "Simon Peter, a slave and apostle of Jesus Christ" (1:1). It is his second letter (3:1) and his last word to the church. He knows "the putting off of my tent is soon" (1:14), and like a father whose time is short, he spends his last letter reminding his children of what matters most.

Author and Date

The writer was with Jesus "on the holy mountain" and heard the Father's voice (1:16-18), which points to the transfiguration (Matt 17:1-8). He says Jesus had shown him that his death was near (1:14; John 21:18-19), and he calls Paul "our beloved brother" (3:15). Of all the New Testament books, 2 Peter is the one most doubted, in the early church and today. Some early writers were slow to accept it, though in time the whole church received it as Scripture. Many modern scholars believe someone wrote it in Peter's name after his death, pointing to Greek that differs from 1 Peter, its likeness to Jude, and its mention of Paul's letters as a group. But a man can write differently with a different helper or none, and 1 Peter names Silvanus as a helper (1 Pet 5:12) while this letter names no one. The letter claims Peter again and again and warns hard against deceivers. It is hard to believe a deceiver wrote it. I take it at its word.

Early church writers say Peter was put to death in Rome under Nero, who died in A.D. 68. So the letter most likely dates to about A.D. 67 to 68, shortly before Peter's death, probably from Rome, a few years after 1 Peter. Some place it about A.D. 65.

Background and Setting

Peter writes "to those who have obtained a faith equally precious with ours" (1:1). Since he calls this his second letter to them (3:1), most teachers believe the readers are the same believers in Asia Minor who received 1 Peter. In the first letter the danger came from outside, from neighbors and rulers. Here it comes from inside. False teachers had slipped into the churches, promising freedom while living in sin, exploiting believers for money, and mocking the promise of Christ's return (2:1-3, 19; 3:3-4).

Much of chapter 2 is close to Jude 4-18. Both warn of false teachers, use the angels who sinned and Sodom as examples, mention Balaam, and call the teachers waterless and dark. Some think Peter used Jude, some that Jude used Peter (compare Jude 17-18 with 2 Pet 3:3), and some that both drew on common teaching. Scripture does not say, and it does not change the meaning.

Themes

The words know and knowledge run through this short letter. The answer to false teaching is not a new secret knowledge but "the full knowledge" of Jesus Christ (1:2-3, 8; 2:20). God's power has already given us everything for life and godliness (1:3), and real faith grows, adding virtue, knowledge, self-control, endurance, godliness, brotherly affection and love (1:5-7).

The gospel rests on eyewitness testimony and on the sure word of Scripture, for "prophecy was never borne by the will of man, but being borne by the Holy Spirit, holy men of God spoke" (1:21). God knows how to rescue the godly and how to keep the unrighteous for judgment (2:9). The Lord is not slow about His promise but patient, "not wishing any to perish, but all to come to repentance" (3:9). The day of the Lord will come like a thief, and we look for new heavens and a new earth where righteousness dwells (3:10-13). Peter's last words sum it up: "grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (3:18).

Christ in 2 Peter

Peter calls Jesus "our God and our Savior Jesus Christ" (1:1), one of the plainest statements of His deity in the Bible. He is Lord and Savior again and again (1:11; 2:20; 3:2, 18). Peter saw His majesty on the holy mountain and heard the Father call Him "My Son, the beloved" (1:17). He is "the Master who bought them" (2:1), the One whose coming the scoffers deny (3:4), and "the morning star" who will rise when the day dawns (1:19). The letter ends with glory to Him forever (3:18).

Hard Passages

Who are the angels cast into Tartarus (2:4)? Some take them as the sons of God of Genesis 6:1-4, others as angels who fell with Satan in his first rebellion. The notes give both.

What does "denying the Master who bought them" (2:1) say about whom Christ died for? The notes give the main readings without settling the question.

Who are those whose last state is worse than the first (2:20-22)? Teachers read them as true believers who lose salvation, true believers who lose fellowship and reward, or people never truly born again. The notes name all three and leave the wider question of eternal security open.

How does the day of the Lord in 3:10-13 fit with Christ's return and His kingdom? The notes place it in the pre-tribulation view of the series: Christ comes for His church, the day of the Lord begins with the Tribulation, Christ returns visibly and reigns a thousand years, and the burning of the present heavens and earth comes after the thousand years (Rev 20:11; 21:1). The amillennial view and the view that fire renews rather than destroys are named fairly. The notes also give the two readings of "not wishing any to perish" (3:9).

Outline

I. Grow in the Truth (1:1-21)
  A. Greeting (1:1-2)
  B. Add to your faith (1:3-11)
  C. Peter's reminder before his death (1:12-15)
  D. Eyewitnesses and the sure prophetic word (1:16-21)
II. False Teachers and Their End (2:1-22)
  A. False teachers will come (2:1-3)
  B. God judges the ungodly and rescues the godly (2:4-9)
  C. The character of the false teachers (2:10-16)
  D. Empty promises of freedom (2:17-22)
III. The Day of the Lord Will Come (3:1-18)
  A. Scoffers in the last days (3:1-7)

B. The Lord is patient, and the day will come (3:8-13)
C. Be diligent and grow (3:14-18)

2 PETER

2 PETER 1

Greeting

1 Simon Peter (Petros), a slave and apostle of Jesus (Iesous) Christ, to those who have obtained a faith equally precious with ours in ***the*** righteousness of our God and our Savior Jesus Christ: **2** May grace and peace be multiplied to you in ***the*** full knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord,

Add to Your Faith

3 as His divine power has given to us all things pertaining to life and godliness, through the full knowledge of Him who called us through glory and virtue, **4** through which He has given to us the precious and very great promises, so that through these you may become partakers of ***the*** divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world in lust. **5** And for this very ***reason*** also, having brought in all diligence, supply in your faith virtue, and in virtue knowledge, **6** and in knowledge self-control, and in self-control endurance, and in endurance godliness, **7** and in godliness brotherly affection, and in brotherly affection love. **8** For these things, being in you and abounding, make ***you*** neither idle nor unfruitful toward the full knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. **9** For he in whom these things are not present is blind, being short-sighted, having taken forgetfulness of the purification of his former sins. **10** Therefore, brothers, be diligent rather to make your calling and election sure; for doing these things, you will by no means ever stumble. **11** For in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be richly supplied to you.

Peter's Reminder Before His Death

12 Therefore I will not neglect to remind you always concerning these things, though ***you*** know ***them*** and have been established in the present truth. **13** And I consider ***it*** right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by a reminder, **14** knowing that the putting off of my tent is soon, as also

1:1 Titus 2:13; Rom 3:21-26; 1 Pet 1:1
1:2 Num 6:24; Dan 4:1; Dan 6:25
1:3 1 Pet 5:10; Eph 1:19-21; Rom 8:28-30
1:4 Heb 12:10; 1 John 3:2; Ezek 36:25-27
1:5 2 Pet 1:10; Phil 4:8; 2 Pet 1:2
1:6 Rom 5:3,4; Heb 10:36; 2 Pet 1:3
1:7 Rom 12:10; Heb 13:1; John 13:34,35
1:8 Col 3:16; John 15:2,6; Titus 3:14
1:9 Eph 5:26; James 2:14-26; 1 John 2:9-11
1:10 2 Pet 3:17; Heb 6:11,19; 1 John 3:19-21
1:11 Matt 25:34; 2 Cor 5:1; 2 Tim 4:8
1:12 1 John 2:21; Rom 15:14,15; Phil 3:1
1:13 2 Pet 3:1; 2 Cor 5:1-4,8; Heb 13:3
1:14 2 Tim 4:6; John 21:18,19; Deut 4:21,22

1:1 *Simon Peter, a slave and apostle of Jesus Christ* The name he was born with and the name Jesus gave him, the rock (John 1:42). Many Greek copies read Simeon, the Hebrew form James used (Acts 15:14). Slave first, then apostle. Before he speaks with authority, he bows as a servant.
1:1 *to those who have obtained a faith equally precious with ours in the righteousness of our God and our Savior Jesus Christ* Every believer's faith is as precious as the apostles'. Same Savior, same salvation. In Greek one article covers both titles, and the grammar most naturally calls Jesus both God and Savior. A Jewish man who prayed to the one true God all his life calls Jesus God (Titus 2:13; John 20:28).
1:2 *in the full knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord* Epignosis, full personal knowledge, the knowledge of a friend, not a stranger reading a biography. The word runs through the letter (1:3, 8; 2:20). The false teachers claimed special knowledge. The knowledge that matters is knowing Jesus.
1:3 *His divine power has given to us all things pertaining to life and godliness* We need no new experience, secret teaching or special ceremony. God called us by showing His glory and goodness, which Peter saw (1:16-18). Many believers live as spiritual beggars when they are rich in Christ.
1:4 *so that through these you may become partakers of the divine nature* God's promises are the channel through which His power reaches us. We do not become God or little gods. We remain creatures. Through new birth we share His moral character, His life in us by His Spirit (2 Cor 3:18). The world is rotting from the inside through sinful desire, and the false teachers would lead people back into it (2:19).
1:5 *supply in your faith virtue, and in virtue knowledge* God's gift does not make us lazy. It makes us eager. "Supply" was used of a wealthy man who paid for a city's play or choir, going above and beyond. Salvation is by grace through faith alone (Eph 2:8-9), but real faith grows. Virtue is moral excellence. This is not a checklist but a whole life growing together.
1:6 *and in knowledge self-control, and in self-control endurance, and in endurance godliness* Self-control is mastering desires instead of being mastered, and the false teachers lacked it (2:10, 14). Knowledge without it becomes pride. Endurance is steady patience under trial. Godliness is living with God in view in everything.
1:7 *and in godliness brotherly affection, and in brotherly affection love* Philadelphia, family love among believers (1 John 4:20), then agape, the self-giving love God showed in sending His Son (John 3:16), reaching even enemies. The list begins with faith and ends with love (1 Cor 13:13). Which do you most need God to grow in you?
1:8 *make you neither idle nor unfruitful* Not just present but abounding (John 15:5, 8). Idle is a tool sitting in a shed. Unfruitful is a tree with no apples. The more we know Christ, the more these grow, and the more they grow, the better we know Him.
1:9 *having taken forgetfulness of the purification of his former sins* He sees today's pleasures and worries but not eternity. When we forget how much God forgave us, we get careless and comfortable. The one forgiven much loves much (Luke 7:47). Do you remember what God saved you from?
1:10 *be diligent rather to make your calling and election sure* Not making ourselves saved. God's calling and election are His work (1 Pet 1:1-2). We confirm it, show it to be real. If you wonder whether you are saved, don't look for a feeling. Look at whether your faith is growing. Never stumbling does not mean never sin (1 John 1:8) but never falling away into ruin.
1:11 *the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be richly supplied to you* The same word "supply" as in verse 5. Every believer will enter, but not all the same way (1 Cor 3:12-15). Peter wants a rich welcome, like an athlete coming home to cheering crowds. How we live does not earn salvation, but it shapes our rewards (2 Cor 5:10).
1:12 *Therefore I will not neglect to remind you always concerning these things* We forget and drift. A good pastor does not chase new ideas to entertain. The false teachers came with new teachings. Peter came with old truths.
1:13 *as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by a reminder* A tent is a temporary home, easily taken down (2 Cor 5:1-4). "Stir up" is to wake someone from sleep, like shaking a friend awake.
1:14 *knowing that the putting off of my tent is soon, as also our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me* Jesus told Peter by the Sea of Galilee how he would die (John 21:18-19). Early church writers say Peter was crucified in Rome under Nero. He had known for over thirty years and did not live in fear. These are his last words to the church.

our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. **15** And I will also be diligent ***that*** at every time after my departure you may have ***the means*** to make remembrance of these things.

Eyewitnesses and the Sure Word

16 For not having followed cleverly devised myths did we make known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but having become eyewitnesses of His majesty. **17** For having received from God ***the*** Father honor and glory, such a voice having been borne to Him by the Majestic Glory, "This is My Son, the beloved, in whom I was well pleased," **18** and this voice we heard borne from heaven, being with Him on the holy mountain. **19** And we have the prophetic word ***as*** more sure, to which you do well taking heed, as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until day dawns and ***the*** morning star rises in your hearts; **20** knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from private interpretation; **21** for prophecy was never borne by ***the*** will of man, but being borne by ***the*** Holy Spirit, holy men of God spoke.

2 PETER 2

False Teachers Will Come

1 But there were also false prophets among the people, as also among you there will be false teachers, who will secretly bring in heresies of destruction, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing on themselves swift destruction. **2** And many will follow their ***ways of*** destruction, because of whom the way of the truth will be blasphemed. **3** And in covetousness they will exploit you with fabricated words; for whom the judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction does not slumber.

God Judges the Ungodly and Rescues the Godly

4 For if God did not spare angels who sinned, but having cast ***them*** into Tartarus, delivered ***them*** to chains of gloom, having been reserved for judgment; **5** and did not spare ***the*** ancient world, but preserved Noah (Noe), ***the*** eighth ***person***, a herald of righteousness, having brought a flood on ***the*** world of ***the*** ungodly; **6** and having reduced ***the*** cities of Sodom (Sodoma) and Gomorrah (Gomorra) to ashes, He condemned ***them*** with an overthrow, having set ***them as*** an example to those about to live ungodly; **7** and rescued righteous Lot, being distressed by the conduct of the lawless in sensuality

1:15 Ps 71:18; Deut 31:19-29; Josh 24:24-29
1:16 John 1:14; 1 Cor 1:17,23; 1 John 4:14
1:17 Mark 9:7; Matt 17:5; Matt 3:17
1:18 Matt 17:6; Josh 5:15; Gen 28:16,17
1:19 Ps 119:105; Isa 8:20; Isa 41:26
1:20 Eccl 8:1; 2 Pet 3:3; Rom 6:6
1:21 2 Sam 23:2; Num 11:25; Ps 89:19

2:1 Deut 13:1; 1 Kgs 18:19; Isa 9:15
2:2 Isa 35:8; Jer 6:16; Deut 31:29
2:3 1 Kgs 18:22; Eccl 8:13; Mic 2:11
2:4 Jude 1:6; Ezek 5:11; Matt 25:41
2:5 Gen 6:1; Gen 7:1; Gen 7:13
2:6 Deut 29:23; Gen 19:24; Gen 19:28
2:7 Gen 19:29; Gen 13:13; Gen 19:22

1:15 *after my departure* Exodus in Greek, the word used for Jesus' coming death when Moses and Elijah spoke with Him on the mountain (Luke 9:31), and Peter heard it. For a believer, death is an exodus to the promised land. Early writers say Mark's Gospel preserves Peter's preaching, so some think Peter had it in mind too.
1:16 *For not having followed cleverly devised myths* The false teachers called the apostles' teaching of Christ's coming a made-up story. The Greek world was full of myths of gods coming down to earth. The gospel rests on what real people saw and heard (1 John 1:1-3). "Power and coming" most likely means His return in glory, of which Peter saw a preview.
1:17 *This is My Son, the beloved, in whom I was well pleased* The transfiguration (Matt 17:1-8; Mark 9:2-8; Luke 9:28-36). "The Majestic Glory" is a reverent way of naming God. Peter wanted three shelters as if Jesus, Moses and Elijah were equals (Matt 17:4). The Father's voice set him straight.
1:18 *being with Him on the holy mountain* "We heard," three men, the same voice, the same time. Holy because God revealed Himself there. Some think it was Mount Hermon near Caesarea Philippi (Matt 16:13), others Mount Tabor. Scripture does not say.
1:19 *And we have the prophetic word as more sure* Some read that the transfiguration made the prophecies more sure by showing a preview of their fulfillment. Others read that Scripture is more sure than Peter's own experience. Either way, it is a firm foundation. This world is a dark place, and Scripture is a lamp that shows where to step (Ps 119:105). Jesus is "the bright and morning star" (Rev 22:16). When He comes, we will no longer need a lamp.
1:20 *that no prophecy of Scripture comes from private interpretation* Not that believers cannot read the Bible for themselves. Nor mainly a warning against twisting it, though that is true (3:16). Verse 21 shows Peter means where prophecy came from. No prophet came up with his own explanation and called it God's Word.
1:21 *for prophecy was never borne by the will of man, but being borne by the Holy Spirit, holy men of God spoke* "Borne" is the word for a ship carried by the wind (Acts 27:15, 17), the Spirit filling the sails. They used their own words and styles; Isaiah does not sound like Jeremiah. But they wrote exactly what God wanted. All Scripture is God-breathed (2 Tim 3:16), and Peter tells us how. It is not man's opinion about God but God's Word through men.
2:1 *as also among you there will be false teachers, who will secretly bring in heresies of destruction* Israel had false prophets who told people what they wanted to hear (Jer 23:16-17; Deut 13:1-5), and the church will have false teachers from inside. A heresy departs from the core truth of the faith. They slip it in quietly, mixed with some truth.
2:1 *even denying the Master who bought them* Some read this as showing Christ's death paid for all people, even those who finally reject Him. Others take it as the teachers' own claim that Christ had bought them, or of Christ as Master who owns all people by right. Either way they deny Him with their teaching and their lives.
2:2 *And many will follow their ways of destruction, because of whom the way of the truth will be blasphemed* Not a few, but many (Matt 24:11). Error spreads fast when it lets people live as they please. When people who claim Christ live immoral lives, unbelievers mock the Way (Acts 9:2; 19:9).
2:3 *And in covetousness they will exploit you with fabricated words* Behind the false teaching is greed. "Fabricated" is like something molded out of plastic. Some today promise health and wealth if you send money, or invent new revelations. Watch anyone more interested in your wallet than your soul. God's judgment may seem slow, but it is wide awake.
2:4 *For if God did not spare angels who sinned, but having cast them into Tartarus* The first of three examples. In Greek stories Tartarus was the deepest pit of the underworld, below even Hades. Peter uses the word for a real place where God holds these angels bound for the final judgment. Some believe they are the sons of God of Genesis 6:1-4 who sinned with women before the flood, since Jude 6-7 seems to link their sin with Sodom's and Peter mentions the flood next. Others believe they fell with Satan in his first rebellion, some bound now while others roam as demons. Good teachers hold both.
2:5 *but preserved Noah, the eighth person, a herald of righteousness* The whole world before the flood was destroyed (Gen 6:5-7), and eight were saved (1 Pet 3:20). Noah warned people while he built, and they did not listen. Now Peter adds that God also rescues the godly, even when the whole world goes the wrong way.
2:6 *having reduced the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes* Destroyed by fire from heaven (Gen 19:24-25) for sexual immorality (Jude 7) and for pride, plenty and refusing to help the poor (Ezek 16:49-50). Jesus pointed to Sodom as a warning of judgment to come (Luke 17:28-30).
2:7 *and rescued righteous Lot* In Genesis 19 Lot does not look very righteous. He chose Sodom's good land (Gen 13:10-13), offered his daughters to a mob, and hesitated to flee. Yet Peter calls him righteous three times. He believed God, and God counted him righteous.

8 (for by seeing and hearing, that righteous ***man***, dwelling among them, day after day tormented ***his*** righteous soul with ***their*** lawless works), **9** ***the*** Lord knows ***how*** to rescue ***the*** godly out of trials, and to keep ***the*** unrighteous for ***the*** day of judgment, being punished,

The Character of False Teachers

10 and especially those who walk after ***the*** flesh in ***the*** lust of defilement and despise lordship. Bold, self-willed, they do not tremble, blaspheming glorious ones, **11** whereas angels, being greater in strength and power, do not bring a blasphemous judgment against them before ***the*** Lord. **12** But these, like irrational animals, natural ***creatures*** born for capture and corruption, blaspheming in ***things*** of which they are ignorant, will utterly perish in their corruption, **13** being about to receive ***the*** wage of unrighteousness, considering the self-indulgence in ***the*** daytime ***as*** a pleasure, blots and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions while feasting with you, **14** having eyes full of an adulteress and unceasing from sin, enticing unstable souls, having a heart trained in covetousness, children of a curse; **15** having forsaken the straight way, they went astray, having followed the way of Balaam the ***son*** of Beor (Bosor), who loved ***the*** wage of unrighteousness, **16** but he had a rebuke for ***his*** own lawbreaking: a mute donkey, having spoken with a man's voice, restrained the madness of the prophet.

Empty Promises of Freedom

17 These are springs without water, clouds driven by a storm, for whom the gloom of the darkness has been reserved forever. **18** For speaking arrogant ***words*** of futility, they entice by ***the*** lusts of the flesh, by sensualities, those who truly escaped from those who live in error,
19 promising them freedom, themselves being slaves of corruption; for by what anyone has been overcome, by this also he has been enslaved. **20** For if, having escaped the defilements of the world through ***the*** full knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus (Iesous) Christ, and having been entangled again in these, they are overcome, the last ***state*** has become worse for them than the first. **21** For it would have been better for them not to have fully known the way of righteousness, than having fully known ***it***, to turn from the holy

2:8 Gen 13:12-13; Prov 25:26; Ps 119:136,139,158
2:9 1 Cor 10:13; Ps 34:15-19; Jude 1:14,15
2:10 Exod 22:28; Rom 1:24-27; Luke 19:14
2:11 Jude 1:9; Ps 103:20; Ps 104:4
2:12 Jude 1:10; Jer 12:3; Ps 49:10
2:13 Rom 13:13; Rom 2:8,9; 1 Pet 4:4
2:14 Eph 2:3; 2 Pet 2:3; 2 Pet 2:18
2:15 Num 22:5; Deut 23:4; Num 31:16
2:16 Num 22:21; Num 22:30; Num 22:22
2:17 Hos 6:4; Exod 10:21; Ps 105:28
2:18 Dan 11:36; Deut 14:7; Ps 52:3
2:19 John 8:34; Gal 5:1,13; 1 Pet 2:16
2:20 Heb 10:26,27; Heb 6:4-8; 2 Pet 2:18
2:21 Prov 16:31; Ezek 18:24; Luke 12:47

2:8 *day after day tormented his righteous soul with their lawless works* He did not approve of their sin. It hurt him. Yet he paid a heavy price for living so close to it: his wife, his home and much of his family. God rescues His own even when they have chosen poorly. Does the sin around you still bother you, or have you grown used to it?
2:9 *the Lord knows how to rescue the godly out of trials, and to keep the unrighteous for the day of judgment* The point of all three examples. Noah was shut in the ark before the rain, and Lot brought out before the fire (Gen 19:22). Some teachers see a picture of God keeping His church from the hour of trial on the whole world (Rev 3:10; 1 Thess 1:10). Others say Peter simply means God cares for His people in every age, and note that Noah was kept safe through the flood. I believe Christ will come for His church before the Tribulation, but that rests on the passages that speak of it directly (John 14:1-3; 1 Thess 4:13-18; 5:9), not on this picture.
2:10 *and despise lordship. Bold, self-willed, they do not tremble, blaspheming glorious ones* They live for sinful desire and reject the authority of Christ, Scripture and church leaders. The glorious ones are most likely angelic beings, possibly fallen ones. They talk big about the devil and the spiritual world with no idea what they are dealing with.
2:11 *whereas angels, being greater in strength and power, do not bring a blasphemous judgment against them before the Lord* Michael the archangel would not slander the devil but left the rebuke to the Lord (Jude 9). Believers resist the devil with real authority in Christ (James 4:7), but humbly, in the Lord's name. Pride in spiritual things is a dangerous sign.
2:12 *like irrational animals, natural creatures born for capture and corruption* Wild animals act on instinct and follow their appetites into the hunter's trap. They claim special knowledge yet are ignorant of what they mock. The sin they love will destroy them (Gal 6:7-8).
2:13 *blots and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions while feasting with you* Sin pays its wages (Rom 6:23). Even pagans thought partying in broad daylight shameful. Christ wants His church without spot (Eph 5:27), and these men are the spots. The church shared meals, often with the Lord's Supper, which Jude calls love feasts (Jude 12). They sat at those tables deceiving believers.
2:14 *having eyes full of an adulteress and unceasing from sin, enticing unstable souls* Adultery of the heart (Matt 5:28) is where they live. "Enticing" is a fishing word, baiting a hook, and they target new believers not grounded in the Word, which is why Peter keeps urging growth (1:5-8; 3:17-18). "Trained" gives us gymnasium. They exercised their greed until it was strong.
2:15 *having followed the way of Balaam the son of Beor, who loved the wage of unrighteousness* Balak of Moab offered Balaam money to curse Israel, and God made him bless instead (Num 22-24). He still wanted the money and later taught Balak to lead Israel into idolatry and sexual sin (Num 31:16; Rev 2:14). He knew about God but loved money more.
2:16 *a mute donkey, having spoken with a man's voice, restrained the madness of the prophet* An angel stood in the road with a sword, the donkey saw him, and Balaam beat her until God opened her mouth (Num 22:21-35). A dumb animal had more spiritual sense than the prophet. We take the story plainly, as Peter does.
2:17 *These are springs without water, clouds driven by a storm* In a dry land, finding an empty spring could mean death. The farmer hopes for rain and the wind drives the clouds away. They promise much and deliver nothing. Many Greek copies read mists. The same gloom that holds the fallen angels (2:4) waits for them.
2:18 *those who truly escaped from those who live in error* Big, empty talk, baited with sinful pleasure, because it lets people sin without guilt. Many Greek copies read those barely escaping. Their targets had just turned from the pagan life. New believers need to be protected and taught well.
2:19 *promising them freedom, themselves being slaves of corruption* The great lie: you are free, so do what you want. Whatever controls you is your master, whether alcohol or pornography or anything else. The Son sets us free (John 8:34-36). True freedom is not freedom to sin but freedom from sin.
2:20 *the last state has become worse for them than the first* Among the most serious words in the New Testament. Some believe these are true believers who lose salvation. Others believe true believers who fall into sin and lose fellowship and reward, facing God's discipline. Others believe they were never truly born again, cleaned up for a time but never changed (Matt 12:43-45). I leave open, as in my other studies, whether a true believer can lose salvation. Turning back after knowing the truth is a terrible thing.
2:21 *For it would have been better for them not to have fully known the way of righteousness* Knowledge brings responsibility (Luke 12:47-48). Sodom never heard what these heard (Matt 11:23-24). The holy commandment is the whole teaching of Christ handed down by the apostles.

commandment delivered to them. **22** But the ***thing*** of the true proverb has happened to them: "A dog having returned to its own vomit," and, "A sow having washed, to wallowing in ***the*** mire."

2 PETER 3

Scoffers in the Last Days

1 This ***is*** now, beloved, a second letter I am writing to you, in which I stir up your pure mind by a reminder, **2** to remember the words spoken beforehand by the holy prophets, and the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior, **3** knowing this first, that in the last of the days scoffers will come, walking according to their own lusts, **4** and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For from ***the time*** the fathers fell asleep, all things continue in this way from ***the*** beginning of creation." **5** For this is hidden from them willingly, that ***the*** heavens existed long ago, and ***the*** earth, having been formed out of water and through water by the word of God, **6** through which the world at that time, having been flooded with water, perished. **7** But the present heavens and the earth, by the same word, have been stored up for fire, being kept for ***the*** day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.

The Day of the Lord Will Come

8 But do not let this one thing be hidden from you, beloved, that one day with ***the*** Lord ***is*** like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day. **9** The Lord is not slow concerning the promise, as some consider slowness, but is patient toward us, not wishing any to perish, but all to come to repentance. **10** But the day of the Lord will come like a thief in ***the*** night, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar, and ***the*** elements, burning with heat, will be dissolved, and ***the*** earth and the works in it will be burned up. **11** Then, all these things being dissolved, what sort ***of people*** ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, **12** looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which ***the*** heavens, being set on fire, will be dissolved, and ***the*** elements, burning with heat, melt? **13** But according to His promise we look for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.

2:22 Prov 26:11
3:1 2 Tim 1:6; 2 Pet 1:12; 1 Pet 1:1,2
3:2 Deut 8:2; Zech 1:5; Jude 1:17
3:3 Jude 1:18; Isa 5:19; Deut 31:29
3:4 Jer 17:15; Mal 2:17; Isa 5:19
3:5 Gen 1:9; Gen 1:6; Ps 136:6
3:6 Gen 7:11; Gen 7:19; Gen 7:12
3:7 Gen 9:11; Ps 119:90; 2 Pet 3:10
3:8 Ps 90:4; Rom 11:25; 1 Cor 10:1
3:9 1 Tim 2:4; Hab 2:3; Gen 15:16
3:10 Isa 34:4; Isa 51:6; Ps 102:26
3:11 1 Pet 1:15; Ps 75:3; Isa 14:31
3:12 Isa 34:4; 2 Pet 3:10; Mic 1:4
3:13 Isa 65:17; Isa 66:22; Rev 21:1,27

2:22 *A dog having returned to its own vomit* Proverbs 26:11, and a common saying about a washed sow. Neither animal changed its nature, and many teachers see support for the view that these were never changed inside. Others see a vivid picture of the shame of going back. Do not return to what God rescued you from. If you have drifted, the door of repentance is still open (1 John 1:9).
3:1 *This is now, beloved, a second letter I am writing to you* Most teachers take the first letter as 1 Peter, so these are the same believers in Asia Minor. "Beloved" four times in this chapter after the hard words of chapter 2. Even a sincere, clear mind needs to be stirred up and reminded.
3:2 *the words spoken beforehand by the holy prophets, and the commandment of us, the apostles* The prophets spoke often of the day of the Lord (Isa 13:9-11; Joel 2:1-2; Zech 14:1-9). Peter sets the apostles' teaching beside them with the same authority, the foundation of the church (Eph 2:20). We test every new idea by what they wrote.
3:3 *in the last of the days scoffers will come, walking according to their own lusts* The last days began at Christ's first coming (Heb 1:2; Jude 18). Their problem is not the evidence but their desires. If Jesus is coming to judge, they must answer for how they live. It is easier to mock His coming than to change.
3:4 *Where is the promise of His coming* "The fathers" may be the patriarchs or the first generation of believers who had died. Nothing changes, they say. The world runs on natural laws and God never steps in. Many say the same today.
3:5 *For this is hidden from them willingly* They choose to ignore it. God made the world by His word (Gen 1:3; Ps 33:6, 9; Heb 11:3) and made dry land appear out of the waters (Gen 1:6-10). A God who made it all by His word can step in whenever He chooses.
3:6 *the world at that time, having been flooded with water, perished* The water God used to form the earth became the means of destroying it (Gen 7:11-12, 21-23). All things did not continue as they were. The days before His coming will be like Noah's (Matt 24:37-39). Judgment can come suddenly on a world that thinks it is safe.
3:7 *But the present heavens and the earth, by the same word, have been stored up for fire* God promised never again to destroy the earth by flood (Gen 9:11). He never promised it would not be judged by fire. He is keeping this world for a set day, and the scoffers laugh at the judgment waiting for them.
3:8 *that one day with the Lord is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day* An echo of Psalm 90:4. God does not experience time as we do. Two thousand years to Him are like a couple of days. This is not a formula for dating the end, and date-setters have always been wrong (Matt 24:36).
3:9 *The Lord is not slow concerning the promise, as some consider slowness, but is patient toward us, not wishing any to perish, but all to come to repentance* Not late, but waiting on purpose. Repentance is a change of mind that leads to a change of direction. Many read "any" and "all" as God's sincere desire that every person be saved (1 Tim 2:4; Ezek 33:11). Others read "us" as the elect, with God waiting until every one has come. Both agree no one who comes is turned away (John 6:37). Do not mistake God's waiting for God's approval.
3:10 *But the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night* Suddenly, on a world not ready (Matt 24:43; 1 Thess 5:2-4). In the Old Testament it is God stepping in to judge His enemies and set up His rule (Isa 2:12; Joel 2:31; Zeph 1:14-18). In its future sense it is a long period. Christ first comes for His church (1 Thess 4:16-17). Then the day of the Lord begins with the seven-year Tribulation, Christ returns visibly at its end (Rev 19:11-16) and reigns a thousand years (Rev 20:1-6). The burning Peter describes comes after the thousand years, when the present heavens and earth flee away (Rev 20:11; 21:1). Many Greek copies read that the earth and its works will be found, laid bare before God. Amillennial teachers see the return, judgment and new creation as one event, and some see a renewal by fire rather than destruction (Rom 8:19-22).
3:11 *what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness* Peter does not give this teaching to scare us or feed our curiosity. Our houses, money, cars and stuff will all be dissolved. Why live for them? What are you investing in that will last?
3:12 *looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God* How do we hurry it? Some point to prayer (Matt 6:10), some to spreading the gospel, since God waits for people to repent (Matt 24:14), some to holy living. Others take hastening as eagerly desiring. Isaiah spoke of the heavens rolled up like a scroll (Isa 34:4).
3:13 *But according to His promise we look for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells* The scoffers asked where the promise is. Here it is (Isa 65:17; 66:22; Rev 21:1-5). "Dwells" is to settle down and be at home. Here righteousness is a stranger and believers are exiles. There no more sin, death, tears or false teachers, and God lives with His people forever.

Be Diligent and Grow

14 Therefore, beloved, looking for these things, be diligent to be found by Him without blot and without blemish, in peace; **15** and consider the patience of our Lord ***to be*** salvation, as also our beloved brother Paul (Paulos), according to the wisdom given to him, wrote to you, **16** as also in all the letters, speaking in them concerning these things, among which are some things hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable distort, as also the other Scriptures, to their own destruction. **17** You therefore, beloved, knowing ***this*** beforehand, guard yourselves so that you do not, having been led away with the error of the lawless, fall from ***your*** own steadfastness, **18** but grow in grace and in ***the*** knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus (Iesous) Christ. To Him ***be*** the glory both now and to ***the*** day of eternity. Amen.

3:14 1 Cor 15:58; 1 Thess 3:13; 1 Thess 5:23
3:15 Ezra 7:25; 2 Pet 3:9; Acts 15:25
3:16 2 Kgs 1:6; 2 Kgs 1:7; 2 Pet 2:14
3:17 Heb 3:14; Matt 7:15; Col 2:8
3:18 Col 1:10; Eph 4:15; Isa 43:11

3:14 *be diligent to be found by Him without blot and without blemish, in peace* The false teachers were "blots and blemishes" (2:13). Christ is the Lamb without blemish (1 Pet 1:19). Salvation is a gift, but holy living takes effort. Everyone with this hope purifies himself (1 John 3:3).
3:15 *consider the patience of our Lord to be salvation, as also our beloved brother Paul* If Jesus had come back the day before you believed, where would you be? Paul once corrected Peter to his face (Gal 2:11-14), but there was no lasting grudge. Paul wrote of God's patience and Christ's coming (Rom 2:4; 1 Thess 4:13-5:11). They preached the same gospel.
3:16 *among which are some things hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable distort, as also the other Scriptures* Even Peter found some of Paul hard. If you struggle with Romans, you are in good company. The false teachers twisted grace into a license to sin (Rom 6:1-2). "Distort" is the word for stretching someone on a rack. Peter puts Paul's letters with "the other Scriptures," one of the clearest places the New Testament calls New Testament writings Scripture (1 Tim 5:18).
3:17 *guard yourselves so that you do not, having been led away with the error of the lawless, fall from your own steadfastness* Forewarned is forearmed. The false teachers enticed unstable souls (2:14). "Led away" is like a swimmer pulled out by the tide. Not necessarily losing salvation, but losing stability, joy and usefulness to God. Who are you listening to?
3:18 *But grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ* The best protection against error is growing in what is true. A healthy, growing tree is hard to uproot. Peter's last recorded words are praise to Jesus. The man who once denied Him gives Him glory to "the day of eternity," a day that never ends.

1 JOHN

Introduction

Title

The letter carries no name and no greeting. The early church called it John's first letter because it is the longest of the three letters written by the apostle John. It reads more like a pastor's message to churches he knows and loves than a normal letter. Again and again he calls his readers "little children."

Author and Date

The letter does not name its writer, but the early church was united in saying John the apostle, the son of Zebedee, wrote it. The writer heard, saw, and touched "the Word of life" (1:1), so he was an eyewitness of Jesus. His style and words are very close to the Gospel of John: light and darkness, truth and lies, love, abiding, eternal life, and being born of God. Some modern scholars believe a circle of John's students wrote these letters, and some point to Papias, who seems to mention a second man known as John the elder. I take the letter at its word. The writer claims to be an eyewitness, speaks with an apostle's authority (4:6), and sounds just like the Gospel the early church said John wrote.

Early Christian writers say John lived in Ephesus late in his life. Most date the letter to about A.D. 85 to 95, written from Ephesus. John was then an old man, probably the last of the apostles still living.

Background and Setting

John does not name the churches, but most believe he wrote to the churches in and around Ephesus, in the Roman province of Asia, likely the same area as the seven churches of Revelation 2 and 3. The readers knew John well and had been taught the truth from the beginning (2:24).

Some men had left the church and were spreading a teaching that denied Jesus Christ had come in the flesh (2:19, 22; 4:2-3). Many in the Greek world believed the body was bad and only the spirit was good. One form of this teaching, later called Docetism, said Jesus only seemed to have a body. A teacher in Ephesus named Cerinthus taught that the Christ came on the man Jesus at His baptism and left before He died. Irenaeus tells how John once ran out of a public bathhouse in Ephesus because he heard Cerinthus was inside. We cannot be sure John had these exact men in mind, but their ideas fit what he fights against. These teachers also claimed special knowledge of God and seem to have said that sin in the body did not matter.

Themes

John tells us his purpose plainly: "These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life" (5:13). He gives simple tests that show who truly knows God: believing that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God come in the flesh; keeping His commandments; and loving one another.

John does not write in a straight line. He circles back to the same themes of truth, obedience, and love, each time going a little deeper. "God is light, and darkness is not in Him at all" (1:5), so we walk in the light and confess our sins. "God is love" (4:8), so His children love one another. And "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous so that He may forgive us the sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1:9). John also writes so that his readers' joy may be full (1:4), so that they will not sin (2:1), and to warn them about those who were deceiving them (2:26).

Christ in 1 John

Jesus is "the Word of life" whom the apostles heard, saw, and touched (1:1). He is "an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous One" and "the propitiation for our sins" (2:1-2). He came in the flesh (4:2), and "the Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world" (4:14). He was revealed to take away sins and to destroy the works of the devil (3:5, 8). When He is revealed, "we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is" (3:2). The one who has the Son has life (5:12).

Hard Passages

Does 1:9 apply to unbelievers coming to salvation or to believers keeping fellowship with God? The notes give both readings.

What does it mean that Christ is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world (2:2)? The notes name the main views.

How can John say the one born of God does not sin (3:6-9) when he also says we all sin (1:8)? Most teachers understand John to mean the settled habit of a life, not a single act. The notes name the other readings.

Who are the antichrists, and how do they relate to the coming antichrist (2:18-22; 4:3)? The notes place the coming antichrist in the series' pre-tribulation, future view.

The words "in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit" (5:7-8) are printed in the SLB but absent from almost all Greek copies before the late Middle Ages. The notes explain this plainly and point to the passages that teach the Trinity clearly.

What is the sin to death (5:16-17)? The notes name three views. They also give the two readings of "keeps himself" (5:18) and of "This is the true God" (5:20).

Outline

I. Fellowship With the God Who Is Light (1:1-2:29)
  A. The Word of life (1:1-4)
  B. Walking in the light (1:5-10)
  C. Our Advocate with the Father (2:1-6)
  D. The old and new commandment (2:7-14)
  E. Do not love the world (2:15-17)
  F. Warning about antichrists (2:18-29)
II. Living as Children of the God Who Is Love (3:1-4:21)
  A. Children of God (3:1-10)
  B. Love one another in deed and truth (3:11-24)
  C. Test the spirits (4:1-6)
  D. God is love (4:7-21)
III. Sure of Eternal Life (5:1-21)
  A. Faith that overcomes the world (5:1-12)
  B. That you may know (5:13-21)

1 JOHN

1 JOHN 1

The Word of Life

1 That which was from ***the*** beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our eyes, that which we looked upon and our hands handled, concerning the Word of life— **2** and the life was manifested, and we have seen and bear witness and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us— **3** that which we have seen and heard we proclaim to you, so that you also may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship ***is*** with the Father and with His Son Jesus (Iesous) Christ. **4** And these things we write to you so that your joy may be made full.

Walking in the Light

5 And this is the message which we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is light, and darkness is not in Him at all. **6** If we say that we have fellowship with Him and walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. **7** But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. **8** If we say that we do not have sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. **9** If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous so that He may forgive us the sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. **10** If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.

1 JOHN 2

Our Advocate with the Father

1 My little children, these things I write to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus (Iesous) Christ ***the*** Righteous ***One***; **2** and He Himself is ***the*** propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the whole world. **3** And by this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments. **4** The one saying, "I have come to know Him," and not keep-

1:1 John 20:27; Acts 4:20; 1 John 4:14
1:2 John 1:4; 1 John 5:20; 1 John 3:5,8
1:3 1 John 1:1; 1 Cor 1:9,30; Phil 2:1
1:4 John 15:11; John 16:24; Hab 3:17,18
1:5 John 8:12; Dan 2:22; James 1:17
1:6 Isa 9:2; 1 John 4:20; 1 John 1:10
1:7 Ps 89:15; Isa 2:5; Rom 13:12
1:8 1 John 2:4; James 3:2; Job 15:14
1:9 Ps 32:5; Prov 28:13; Ps 51:2-5
1:10 Josh 7:19; 1 Chr 15:13; Dan 9:4
2:1 Rom 8:34; 1 Tim 2:5; Isa 53:11
2:2 Isa 53:4; 1 John 4:10; 1 John 4:14
2:3 John 14:15,21-24; John 15:10,14; 1 John 4:13
2:4 1 John 1:6,8,10; James 2:14-16; Titus 1:16

1:1 *That which was from the beginning* Straight back to John 1:1. John means Jesus, the eternal Son who existed before anything was made. Then he piles up proof: heard, seen, looked upon, handled. He walked with Jesus about three years, leaned on Him at the Last Supper (John 13:23), and touched Him after He rose (Luke 24:39; John 20:27).
1:1 *our hands handled, concerning the Word of life* The false teachers said Jesus only seemed to have a real body. John answers them on the first line. The eternal Word became real flesh, and John touched Him.
1:2 *and the life was manifested* To be manifested is to be made visible, brought into the open. A witness tells what he knows firsthand. Eternal life is not only a length of time. It is a Person, and to have Jesus is to have that life (5:12).
1:3 *so that you also may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ* Koinonia, sharing something in common, partners in it. Far more than coffee after church. The false teachers claimed a special closeness to God. Real fellowship with God comes only through the Son, shared with all who hold to what the apostles taught.
1:4 *so that your joy may be made full* Not a thin, partial joy. Things, success and feelings never fill us. Jesus spoke so His joy would be in His disciples and their joy full (John 15:11). John heard that and passes it on.
1:5 *that God is light, and darkness is not in Him at all* The first great statement about God here. Later, "God is love" (4:8), and we need both. Light stands for truth and holiness, darkness for lies and sin. A few Greek copies read promise instead of "message." Good news, because God can be fully trusted. Hard news, because sin cannot hide from Him.
1:6 *If we say that we have fellowship with Him and walk in the darkness, we lie* The first of three "If we say" claims (1:6, 8, 10). Some said what you did with your body did not matter if your spirit knew God. To walk is a way of life, not one slip. Truth is something we do, not only believe.
1:7 *the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin* Walking in the light is not never sinning, since cleansing is promised. It is living honestly before God, out in the open. Honest with God, we can be honest with each other. "Cleanses" keeps on cleansing, and it covers "all sin."
1:8 *If we say that we do not have sin, we deceive ourselves* Every believer still has a sin nature in this body (Rom 7:14-25). Becoming a Christian makes us forgiven, with new life and power to fight sin, not sinless. Be careful with any teacher who says he has arrived.
1:9 *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous so that He may forgive us the sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness* To confess is to say the same thing as God about it, no excuses, no blaming. How is it right for a holy God to forgive? Jesus already paid (2:2), so God is just to His Son. Many read this as written to believers for daily fellowship, like a child who still belongs but needs to make it right. Others see a call to anyone, saved or not. Both agree confession does not earn forgiveness. When you have confessed, believe what God says.
1:10 *If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar* Verse 8 denied a sin nature. This denies ever sinning. God says all have sinned (Rom 3:23). The way into the light starts with admitting the truth about ourselves. That is where the Christian life begins.
2:1 *My little children, these things I write to you so that you may not sin* An old man writing like a loving grandfather. Forgiveness is never a license to sin. It is a reason to stop. An advocate stands beside you and speaks for you, like a lawyer for the defense. Parakletos is the word Jesus used for the Spirit (John 14:16). The Spirit helps us on earth. Jesus is our Advocate in heaven. He does not plead our innocence. He pleads His own righteousness and blood, and that case never loses.
2:2 *And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the whole world* Propitiation is a sacrifice that satisfies God's just anger against sin and turns it away. Jesus did not only offer the payment. He is it. Many believe He died for every person, enough for all and offered to all, received by those who believe (John 3:16; 1 Tim 2:6). Others believe "the whole world" means people from every nation, with His death aimed at those who would believe (John 11:51-52). Both agree no one is saved apart from faith and the gospel goes to everyone.
2:3 *And by this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments* The first test of real faith, not how to get saved but how to know we are. The false teachers claimed special knowledge. Real knowledge of God shows up in life. Not perfection (2:1), but direction.
2:4 *is a liar, and the truth is not in him* Blunt but honest. A person can know all the right words and songs and not know Jesus (Matt 7:21-23). A man who says he loves his wife but never comes home has empty words.

ing His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; **5** but whoever keeps His word, truly in him the love of God has been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him. **6** The one saying ***he*** abides in Him ought, just as that One walked, himself also to walk in this way.

The Old and New Commandment

7 Brothers, I am not writing a new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you had from ***the*** beginning. The old commandment is the word which you heard from ***the*** beginning. **8** Again, a new commandment I am writing to you, which is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining. **9** The one saying ***he*** is in the light and hating his brother is in the darkness until now. **10** The one loving his brother abides in the light, and a stumbling block is not in him. **11** But the one hating his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness blinded his eyes. **12** I write to you, little children, because the sins have been forgiven you on account of His name. **13** I write to you, fathers, because you have come to know Him who ***is*** from ***the*** beginning. I write to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil ***one***. I write to you, young children, because you have come to know the Father. **14** I have written to you, fathers, because you have come to know Him who ***is*** from ***the*** beginning. I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil ***one***.

Do Not Love the World

15 Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him; **16** because all that ***is*** in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boasting of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. **17** And the world is passing away, and its lust; but the one doing the will of God abides forever.

Warning About Antichrists

18 Young children, it is ***the*** last hour; and as you heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have arisen; from which we know that it is ***the*** last hour. **19** They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but ***they went out*** so that they might be manifested that they all are not of us. **20** And you have an anointing from the Holy ***One***, and you

2:5 Ps 119:2; 1 John 4:12,18; John 14:21,23
2:6 1 Pet 2:21; Ps 85:13; John 13:15
2:7 Lev 19:18; 1 John 3:11; 2 John 1:5
2:8 Rom 13:12; Eph 5:8; John 13:34
2:9 1 John 2:4; 1 John 2:11; 1 Cor 13:1-3
2:10 1 John 3:14; Hos 6:3; 2 Pet 1:10
2:11 Eccl 2:14; Isa 59:10; John 12:35
2:12 Acts 10:43; Acts 13:38; Luke 24:47
2:13 Ps 37:40; John 14:7; Luke 10:22
2:14 Ps 37:40; Prov 20:29; Eph 6:10
2:15 James 4:4; Rom 12:2; Matt 6:24
2:16 Gen 3:6; Prov 17:24; Eccl 11:9
2:17 Ps 90:9; Ps 102:26; 1 Cor 7:31
2:18 1 John 4:3; 1 John 2:22; 2 John 1:7
2:19 1 Cor 11:19; Acts 20:30; Deut 13:13
2:20 Ps 71:22; Isa 43:3; 1 John 2:27

2:5 *but whoever keeps His word, truly in him the love of God has been perfected* Perfected is brought to its goal. God's love is meant to produce obedience. "His word" is wider than commands, everything Jesus taught. Being "in Him" is John's way of speaking of union with Christ.
2:6 *just as that One walked, himself also to walk in this way* To abide is to stay, remain, live in, the vine and branches word (John 15:4-7). Jesus walked in obedience, love, truth, humility and prayer. Does my life look more like Jesus than it did a year ago?
2:7 *I am not writing a new commandment to you, but an old commandment* The command to love (2:9-11), heard when they first learned of Jesus and as old as Leviticus 19:18. The false teachers liked fresh secrets. We need to obey what we have already heard.
2:8 *Again, a new commandment I am writing to you* Old and new. Jesus gave it a new standard, His own love at the cross (John 13:34). A new day dawned when He came, and every time a believer loves as He loved, its light shines brighter.
2:9 *The one saying he is in the light and hating his brother is in the darkness until now* Some claimed to be enlightened. Hate gives them away. Not a passing disagreement but ongoing bitterness, contempt, wishing harm. We can be right on doctrine and still be in the dark if we hate the people sitting near us.
2:10 *The one loving his brother abides in the light, and a stumbling block is not in him* A stumbling block trips you or makes another fall. Hate always makes someone fall. Much trouble in families and churches comes from bitterness no one deals with.
2:11 *because the darkness blinded his eyes* A bitter person often cannot see how far he has gone and thinks everyone else is the problem. The longer he stays, the less he sees. Deal with bitterness quickly (Eph 4:26-27, 31-32).
2:12 *I write to you, little children, because the sins have been forgiven you on account of His name* Most likely all his readers, as in 2:1 and 2:28. Before he warns, he assures. Before we can obey, love or resist the world, we need to know we are forgiven.
2:13 *I write to you, fathers* Some see three age groups in the church. Others see stages of growth every believer moves through. Fathers know Jesus deeply after years. Young men are in the thick of the battle and winning by God's strength. Even the newest believer knows God as Father.
2:14 *you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one* Repeating was a way to underline. Jesus beat Satan in the wilderness with Scripture (Matt 4:1-11). There is no shortcut. Read it, think on it, memorize it, obey it.
2:15 *Do not love the world nor the things in the world* Not the planet or its people, whom God loves (John 3:16), but the whole system of life that leaves God out (James 4:4). Not a call to leave society or hate good things God made, but to check what we are living for.
2:16 *the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boasting of life* Craving what feels good, wanting what we see, and pride in what we have and have done. Eve saw the fruit was good for food, pleasing to the eyes and desirable to make wise (Gen 3:6). Satan tempted Jesus the same three ways (Luke 4:1-13). Eve fell. Jesus stood.
2:17 *but the one doing the will of God abides forever* Money, status and pleasure are already on their way out. What we do for God is never wasted.
2:18 *Young children, it is the last hour; and as you heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have arisen* The last days began when Jesus went back to heaven (Acts 2:17; Heb 1:2). Antichrist means one against Christ and one who sets himself in Christ's place. Paul calls him "the lawless one" (2 Thess 2:8). Daniel 9:27 tells of a seven-year covenant, and Revelation 13 shows him as the beast. I believe that after Christ takes His church, he will rise during the seven-year Tribulation until Jesus destroys him (Rev 19:20). The false teachers were previews.
2:19 *They went out from us, but they were not of us* They sat in the meetings, maybe taught, then left. Their leaving made plain they never truly belonged. Teachers discuss how far to apply this to others who walk away, and the wider question of eternal security I leave open. It comforts those who stayed. God knows His own.
2:20 *And you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things* Kings and priests were anointed, and Christ means anointed one. This anointing is the Spirit given to every believer. Most take the Holy One as Jesus, who promised the Spirit (John 14:26; 16:13); some take the Father. They were not missing anything they needed.

know all things. **21** I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and because no lie is of the truth. **22** Who is the liar except the one denying that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one denying the Father and the Son. **23** Everyone denying the Son does not have the Father either; the one confessing the Son has the Father also. **24** You therefore, what you heard from ***the*** beginning, let it abide in you. If what you heard from ***the*** beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father. **25** And this is the promise which He Himself promised us: the eternal life. **26** These things I have written to you concerning those deceiving you. **27** And as for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him. **28** And now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He is manifested we may have boldness and not be ashamed before Him at His coming. **29** If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness has been begotten of Him.

1 JOHN 3

Children of God

1 See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we may be called children of God! Because of this the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. **2** Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we will be. But we know that when He is revealed, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is. **3** And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure. **4** Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness. **5** And you know that He was revealed so that He might take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin. **6** Everyone who abides in Him does not sin; everyone who sins has not seen Him, nor has he known Him. **7** Little children, let no one lead you astray; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. **8** The one who practices sin is of the devil, because the devil sins from ***the***

2:21 1 Kgs 17:24; 2 Pet 1:12; Prov 9:8,9
2:22 2 John 1:7; 1 John 4:3; 1 John 2:18
2:23 1 John 4:15; John 8:19; Matt 11:27
2:24 Prov 3:21; John 14:23; 1 John 1:3,7
2:25 1 John 1:2; 1 John 5:11-13,20; Dan 12:2
2:26 Ezek 13:10; 2 John 1:7; 1 John 3:7
2:27 Lev 8:30; Num 18:8; John 14:26
2:28 Isa 25:9; Isa 45:17; Mal 3:2
2:29 Zech 9:9; Ps 112:4; Ezek 14:20
3:1 John 1:12; Gal 3:26,29; Gal 4:5,6
3:2 2 Cor 3:18; Job 37:19; Isa 33:17
3:3 2 Cor 7:1; 1 John 2:6; Col 1:5
3:4 1 John 5:17; 2 Cor 12:21; Rom 3:20
3:5 Isa 53:4; Hos 14:2; Isa 53:5
3:6 3 John 1:11; 1 John 2:4; 1 John 4:8
3:7 Rom 2:13; 1 John 2:26,29; 1 John 2:1
3:8 Gen 3:15; John 8:44; Heb 2:14

2:21 *no lie is of the truth* Much of what we need is reminding, not new information (2 Pet 1:12-13). Truth and lies do not mix. A teaching that denies who Jesus is cannot come from God, however much else it gets right.
2:22 *Who is the liar except the one denying that Jesus is the Christ* The core lie. Some seem to have taught that "the Christ" was a spirit that came on the man Jesus and left before the cross. The early writer Irenaeus tells of Cerinthus in Ephesus teaching something like that. We cannot be sure he is the one John meant. To reject the Son is to reject the Father who sent Him.
2:23 *Everyone denying the Son does not have the Father either* No having God without Jesus. Some religions honor Jesus as a prophet or good teacher but deny He is God's Son. No one comes to the Father but through Him (John 14:6). This is not narrow-mindedness. It is the truth.
2:24 *what you heard from the beginning, let it abide in you* Hold on to the original gospel the apostles preached. When the truth lives in us, we live in God. Sound teaching is not dry religion. It keeps us close to God Himself.
2:25 *And this is the promise which He Himself promised us: the eternal life* What is at stake (John 3:16; 10:28; 17:2-3). Not just endless life but the life of God, knowing the Father and the Son, beginning now. Why trade it for a teacher's clever ideas?
2:26 *concerning those deceiving you* Not just mistaken but actively leading believers off the path. Deception rarely announces itself. It sounds spiritual, smart and kind. Be anchored, not suspicious of everyone.
2:27 *and you have no need that anyone teach you* Not that Christians need no teachers. God gave them (Eph 4:11), and John is teaching right here. They needed no false teacher or new revelation to add to what they had. The Spirit always points to Jesus and agrees with the Word He inspired.
2:28 *so that when He is manifested we may have boldness and not be ashamed before Him at His coming* Parousia, His arrival or presence. I believe this points to His coming for His church before the Tribulation (1 Thess 4:16-17; John 14:1-3). Then every believer stands at the judgment seat of Christ for rewards, not salvation (2 Cor 5:10). Abiding now is how we get ready for then.
2:29 *everyone who practices righteousness has been begotten of Him* Children share their father's nature. Doing right does not make us God's children. Being born of God makes us start doing right (John 3:3-7). A new birth always shows up in a new life.
3:1 *See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we may be called children of God* "What kind of" carries surprise: where did a love like this come from? He did not just forgive us and leave us outside the house. He brought us in and gave us His name (Eph 1:5). If the world does not understand you, it did not understand Jesus either.
3:2 *But we know that when He is revealed, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is* Children now, not someday. We do not know every detail of what we will be. I believe this looks to the rapture, when Jesus comes for His church and changes our bodies in a moment (1 Cor 15:51-52; Phil 3:20-21), free from sin and death. When you are discouraged with yourself, remember God is not finished with you.
3:3 *And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure* Hope is a sure expectation of what God promised. If an important guest were coming, you would clean up first. If Jesus could come at any moment, we want Him to find us living for Him. This is not saving ourselves but taking part in what God is doing in us.
3:4 *and sin is lawlessness* Not just mistakes or falling short of potential, but rebellion, living as if God's law did not apply. "Practices" is present tense, to keep on doing as a way of life, and it is the key to the verses that follow.
3:5 *He was revealed so that He might take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin* The first reason He came. The Lamb of God takes away sin (John 1:29). Only a spotless sacrifice could take our place (2 Cor 5:21; 1 Pet 2:22-24). If He came to take sin away, how can His people be comfortable in it?
3:6 *Everyone who abides in Him does not sin* With verse 9, one of the hardest sayings in the letter, since 1:8 says we all sin. Most read the present tense as a settled habit of life: the believer does not keep on sinning as a way of life. Others say John describes the new nature, which does not sin though the old still does. Others think he means the open lawlessness the false teachers excused. All reject sinless perfection in this life (1:8-10).
3:7 *let no one lead you astray; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous* Someone was saying you can be righteous without living it. Doing right does not make us right with God (Rom 3:22-24), but real righteousness shows, as a good tree bears good fruit (Matt 7:17-18). Believe the life, not the words.
3:8 *For this purpose the Son of God was revealed, so that He might destroy the works of the devil* The devil has sinned since his first rebellion. The second reason Jesus came: to break sin, lies, death and bondage. He defeated Satan at the cross (Col 2:15; Heb 2:14-15) and will throw him into the lake of fire (Rev 20:10). Why would God's child keep doing the works Jesus came to destroy?

beginning. For this ***purpose*** the Son of God was revealed, so that He might destroy the works of the devil. **9** Everyone who has been born of God does not practice sin, because His seed abides in him; and he is not able to sin, because he has been born of God. **10** By this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: everyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, and ***neither is*** the one who does not love his brother.

Love One Another in Deed and Truth

11 For this is the message that you heard from ***the*** beginning, that we should love one another, **12** not as Cain (Kain) ***who*** was of the evil ***one*** and slaughtered his brother. And because of what did he slaughter him? Because his works were evil, but those of his brother ***were*** righteous. **13** Do not marvel, my brothers, if the world hates you. **14** We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. The one who does not love the brother abides in death. **15** Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. **16** By this we have known the love of God, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down ***our*** lives for the brothers. **17** But whoever has the goods of the world and sees his brother having need and shuts his compassion from him, how does the love of God abide in him? **18** My little children, let us not love in word nor in tongue, but in deed and in truth. **19** And by this we know that we are of the truth, and before Him we will assure our hearts, **20** that if our heart condemns ***us***, God is greater than our heart and knows all things. **21** Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God, **22** and whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do the ***things*** pleasing before Him. **23** And this is His commandment, that we should believe in the name of His Son Jesus (Iesous) Christ and love one another, just as He gave ***the*** commandment to us. **24** And the one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given to us.

1 JOHN 4

Test the Spirits

1 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits ***to see*** whether they are of God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. **2** By this you know the Spirit of

3:9 John 1:13; 1 John 2:29; 1 John 5:1,4,18
3:10 1 John 4:8,21; 1 John 4:3,4,6; 3 John 1:11
3:11 2 John 1:5; 1 John 1:5; John 15:12
3:12 Gen 4:4; Gen 4:25; Gen 4:8
3:13 John 17:14; John 15:18,19; Eccl 5:8
3:14 John 5:24; 1 John 5:2,13,19,20; John 13:35
3:15 Matt 5:21,22,28; Rev 21:8; Prov 26:24-26
3:16 John 3:16; 1 John 4:9,10; John 13:34
3:17 1 John 4:20; Prov 19:17; Isa 58:7-10
3:18 Rom 12:9; James 2:15,16; Matt 25:41-45
3:19 Job 31:37; Prov 14:31; Dan 6:22
3:20 Job 33:12; Jer 17:10; 1 Cor 4:4
3:21 1 John 2:28; Job 22:26; 2 Cor 1:12
3:22 Isa 55:6; Ps 145:18; Ps 145:19
3:23 John 13:34; John 15:12; John 6:29
3:24 1 Cor 3:16; John 17:21; 1 John 3:22
4:1 Deut 13:2; Deut 13:3; Deut 13:4
4:2 Deut 18:21; Zech 13:2; 1 Cor 12:3

3:9 *because His seed abides in him; and he is not able to sin, because he has been born of God* Sperma, the new life God plants at new birth (1 Pet 1:23). The same readings as verse 6 apply. Most say the believer cannot go on sinning as the settled pattern of his life, because God's life in him will not let him rest in it. A real child of God in sin is miserable there. If you hate your sin and long to be free, that is a sign of God's life in you.
3:10 *By this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest* Only two families, with two marks, righteousness and love. Some are strict about right and wrong but cold. Some are warm but careless about holiness. A child of God has both.
3:11 *that we should love one another* Agape is not a feeling that comes and goes but a choice to seek another's good at cost to ourselves (John 13:34-35; 15:12). Fellow believers are often hardest to love, because we know each other's faults up close.
3:12 *not as Cain who was of the evil one and slaughtered his brother* The first murder (Gen 4:1-8). God accepted Abel's offering, and instead of turning to God, Cain turned on his brother out of jealousy and guilt. A good life can make an evil person angry because it shows up what he is.
3:13 *Do not marvel, my brothers, if the world hates you* If the world hated Jesus, it will hate His people (John 15:18-19). Not an excuse to be unkind and call it persecution. But when we are mocked for following Him, we should not be shocked.
3:14 *We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers* A test of assurance. We do not pass to life because we love. We love because we have passed to life (John 5:24). Love is one of the clearest signs of spiritual life.
3:15 *Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer* Anger in the heart is the root of murder (Matt 5:21-22), murder in seed form. A murderer can be forgiven, as Paul was, but settled hatred and eternal life cannot live in the same heart. Bring it to the cross.
3:16 *By this we have known the love of God, that He laid down His life for us* Love is not first a feeling. It is Jesus giving up His life for those who did not deserve it. For most of us laying down our lives means giving up time, comfort, money and rights for others, a little at a time.
3:17 *sees his brother having need and shuts his compassion from him* Love opens the wallet. He has the means, he sees the need, and he closes his heart on purpose (James 2:15-16). Real love does not look away.
3:18 *let us not love in word nor in tongue, but in deed and in truth* Kind words are part of love, but love that is only words is not love. "In truth" means sincerely, not for show. Who have you helped lately? Love that never costs anything is probably not the kind John describes.
3:20 *God is greater than our heart and knows all things* Loving in deed assures our hearts. Many sincere believers still feel accused after they have confessed and turned. God is greater than our feelings. He knows our failures and the real faith He put in us. Our hearts can be wrong. He never is (1:9; 2:1-2).
3:21 *Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God* Walking honestly with nothing hidden, we come to Him like a child to a loving father.
3:22 *and whatever we ask we receive from Him* Not a blank check, and obedience does not earn answers. One who lives to please God asks for what pleases Him, so his prayers line up with God's will (5:14-15; John 15:7).
3:23 *that we should believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another* All the commands in one, with two parts. Faith aims up toward Jesus, love aims out toward others. "The name" is everything He is: Son, Christ, Savior.
3:24 *by the Spirit whom He has given to us* The two-way abiding of John 15:4. The first time John names the Spirit outright, though he spoke of the anointing (2:20, 27). The Spirit is God's presence in the believer and gives assurance (Rom 8:16).
4:1 *do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are of God* Behind every teacher is a spirit, the Holy Spirit or a spirit of error (4:6). To test is to examine, as a jeweler tests gold, as the Bereans checked Paul by the Scriptures (Acts 17:11). A believer who believes everything is not open-minded. He is unprotected.
4:2 *every spirit that confesses Jesus Christ having come in the flesh is of God* The test is what a teacher says about Jesus. The false teachers said Jesus only seemed to have a body, an early form of what was later called Docetism, from dokeo, to seem. They thought the physical world evil, so God could never truly take on flesh. To confess is to openly agree and stand on it: fully God and fully man, born, crucified and risen in a real body.

God: every spirit that confesses Jesus (Iesous) Christ having
come in ***the*** flesh is of God, **3** and every spirit that does not
confess Jesus Christ having come in ***the*** flesh is not of God.
And this is the ***spirit*** of the antichrist, which you have heard
that it is coming, and now it is already in the world. **4** You
are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because
greater is the ***One*** in you than the ***one*** in the world. **5** They
are of the world; because of this they speak from the world,
and the world listens to them. **6** We are of God; the one who
knows God listens to us; he who is not of God does not listen
to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of
error.

God Is Love

7 Beloved, let us love one another, because love is of God, and
everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.
8 The one who does not love has not known God, because
God is love. **9** By this the love of God was revealed among us,
that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so
that we might live through Him. **10** In this is love, not that
we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son ***as*** a pro-
pitiation for our sins. **11** Beloved, if God so loved us, we also
ought to love one another. **12** No one has ever seen God; if we
love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected
in us. **13** By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us,
because He has given to us of His Spirit. **14** And we have seen
and testify that the Father has sent the Son ***as*** Savior of the
world. **15** Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God,
God abides in him, and he in God. **16** And we have known and
have believed the love that God has in us. God is love, and the
one who abides in love abides in God, and God ***abides*** in him.
17 By this love has been perfected with us, so that we may
have confidence in the day of judgment, because just as He is,
so also are we in this world. **18** There is no fear in love, but
perfect love casts out fear, because fear has punishment, and
the one who fears has not been perfected in love. **19** We love
Him because He first loved us. **20** If anyone says, "I love God,"
and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not
love his brother whom he has seen, how is he able to love

4:3 Deut 18:21; 1 John 2:18,22; 2 John 1:7
4:4 1 John 5:4; John 12:31; 2 Chr 32:7
4:5 John 8:23; John 17:14,16; John 3:31
4:6 1 Kgs 22:22; John 14:17; John 10:27
4:7 1 John 4:20,21; 1 John 2:29; 1 John 2:10
4:8 1 John 1:5; 2 Cor 13:11; Ps 86:5,15
4:9 John 3:16; 1 John 5:11; Ps 34:8
4:10 Eph 2:4,5; 1 John 2:2; 1 John 3:1
4:11 1 John 3:16,17,23; Matt 18:32,33; Luke 10:37
4:12 John 1:18; 1 John 2:5; 1 John 4:20
4:13 1 John 3:24; 1 John 4:15,16; John 14:20-26
4:14 Isa 43:11; Isa 63:8; John 4:42
4:15 Rom 10:9; 1 John 4:2; 1 John 3:24
4:16 1 John 3:1,16; Isa 64:4; 1 John 4:8,12,13
4:17 1 John 4:12; 1 John 2:5; 1 John 2:28
4:18 2 Tim 1:7; Rom 8:15; 1 John 4:12
4:19 Deut 10:12; Judg 5:31; 1 John 4:10
4:20 1 John 3:17; 1 John 4:12; 1 John 2:4

4:3 *And this is the spirit of the antichrist* The final Antichrist has not yet come. He will be revealed after the church is taken up, during the Tribulation (2 Thess 2:3-8). But the spirit behind him shows itself every time someone denies who Jesus is. A group may use Jesus' name and still not be of God.
4:4 *because greater is the One in you than the one in the world* After warning, comfort. The One in you is the Spirit. The one in the world is Satan, "the ruler of this world" (John 12:31), real and strong but a created being, not God's equal. You do not win by your strength. You win because God lives in you.
4:5 *and the world listens to them* They speak the world's language and tell people what they want to hear (2 Tim 4:3-4). A message with no repentance and no cross will always be popular. A big crowd does not prove a message true.
4:6 *the one who knows God listens to us* "We" most likely means the apostles, eyewitnesses who taught with Christ's authority, whose teaching we now have in the New Testament. The second test: does a teaching agree with the Word they gave? Any message that contradicts Scripture is from the spirit of error.
4:7 *let us love one another, because love is of God* From testing teachers to loving one another. Truth and love belong together. All real love has its source in God, and new birth gives us His nature. A believer who loves shows the family likeness.
4:8 *because God is love* Not only that God loves, but that love is what He is. Everything He does is loving, even judgment, and since He is also light (1:5), His love is never soft on sin. Love is not God, as if any feeling we call love were divine. The Bible defines love by God, not God by our ideas of love.
4:9 *God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him* Not by looking at our circumstances but at what He did. Only begotten means one of a kind (John 3:16). We were dead in sin. When you wonder whether God loves you, look at the manger and the cross.
4:10 *not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as a propitiation for our sins* Love did not start with us (Rom 5:8). God's own love provided the sacrifice His own justice required (2:2). A gift that cost the Father His Son.
4:11 *Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another* "If" means since. God loved you when you were hard to love and did not wait for you to deserve it. When we struggle to love, look again at how much God loved us.
4:12 *No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us* The Son has made Him known (John 1:18). The invisible God becomes visible, in a way, when His people love one another. His love reaches its goal when it flows through us to others.
4:13 *because He has given to us of His Spirit* Every believer receives the Spirit when he believes (Rom 8:9; Eph 1:13). His work shows in faith in Christ, love for others, hunger for the Word and a growing hatred of sin. These tests are meant to give confidence, not anxiety.
4:14 *the Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world* An eyewitness speaking. The Samaritans used the same title (John 4:42). A Savior rescues, and we could not save ourselves from sin, death and judgment.
4:15 *Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God* Even demons know who Jesus is (James 2:19). To confess is to agree with God about Him and trust Him (Rom 10:9). "Whoever" is a wide door.
4:16 *And we have known and have believed the love that God has in us* Known because God showed it at the cross. Believed because we trust what He says even when we do not feel it. To abide in love is a place we live, receiving it and passing it on.
4:17 *so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment, because just as He is, so also are we in this world* God sees us in His Son. Jesus took the judgment, so there is no condemnation for those in Him (Rom 8:1). For believers it is the judgment seat of Christ, for rewards, not salvation (2 Cor 5:10). Boldness, not dread.
4:18 *There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear, because fear has punishment* Not the healthy fear of the Lord, which is reverence (Prov 9:10), but a criminal's terror before a judge. Many believers live with a low-grade dread that God is angry with them. The answer is not to try harder but to look at the cross. Jesus took the punishment.
4:19 *We love Him because He first loved us* Our love is always a response, so we cannot boast. If your love feels small or cold, do not try to work it up. Go back to His love for you, and it will grow.
4:20 *for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how is he able to love God whom he has not seen* If we fail the easier test, how can we claim the harder? Our love for God is tested in the kitchen, at the office and in the church parking lot.

God whom he has not seen? **21** And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also.

1 JOHN 5

Faith That Overcomes the World

1 Everyone who believes that Jesus (Iesous) is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the ***One*** who begot also loves the ***one*** who has been begotten of Him. **2** By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. **3** For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome. **4** For everything that has been born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world: our faith. **5** Who is the one who overcomes the world, except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? **6** This is the ***One*** who came through water and blood, Jesus the Christ; not by the water only, but by the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the ***One*** who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. **7** For there are three who testify in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one. **8** And there are three who testify on earth: the Spirit and the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement as one. **9** If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater; for this is the testimony of God which He has testified concerning His Son. **10** The one who believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself; the one who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has testified concerning His Son. **11** And this is the testimony, that God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. **12** The one who has the Son has life; the one who does not have the Son of God does not have life.

That You May Know

13 These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life, and so that you may believe in the name of the Son of God. **14** And this is the confidence that we have toward Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. **15** And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked

4:21 Judg 5:31; Prov 14:31; 1 John 3:11,14,18,23
5:1 John 1:12,13; 1 John 2:22,23; 1 John 5:4
5:2 1 John 3:22-24; John 13:34,35; 1 John 4:21
5:3 Deut 30:16; Josh 22:5; John 14:15
5:4 1 Cor 15:57; 1 John 4:4; 1 John 3:9
5:5 1 John 4:15; 1 John 5:1
5:6 John 15:26; John 16:13; John 14:17
5:7 Matt 28:19; 2 Cor 13:14; Isa 48:16,17
5:8 Matt 26:26-28; 1 Pet 3:21; 1 John 5:6
5:9 Matt 3:16,17; John 10:38; Acts 17:31
5:10 Ps 25:14; Rom 8:16; John 3:33
5:11 1 John 2:25; John 1:4; 1 John 4:9
5:12 John 3:36; John 1:12; John 5:24
5:13 John 20:31; Prov 22:21; John 1:12
5:14 1 John 3:21; Job 34:28; John 14:13
5:15 1 Sam 1:27; 1 Kgs 3:12; Job 22:27

4:21 *that the one who loves God should love his brother also* A command, not a suggestion. Jesus joined the two great commandments (Mark 12:29-31). Separate them and both die. Who is God calling you to love right now?
5:1 *Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God* Notice the tense. Believing is the evidence that new birth has already happened. God gives the new life, and faith is its first sign. To believe that Jesus is the Christ is to believe that the man Jesus is the promised Messiah and Son of God, exactly what the false teachers denied (2:22).
5:1 *everyone who loves the One who begot also loves the one who has been begotten of Him* If you love a father, you will love his children. Loving God means loving everyone He has brought into His family. Faith and love go together again.
5:2 *By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments* In 4:20 love for God was shown by love for the brothers. Here John turns it around. Real love for people is not going along with whatever they want. Love for God's children never asks us to disobey God.
5:3 *His commandments are not burdensome* Obedience is not a crushing load for the one who has been born of God, because He gives a new heart that wants to please Him. Jesus said, "My yoke is easy and My burden is light" (Matt 11:30).
5:4 *this is the victory that has overcome the world: our faith* The world here is the whole system set against God, with its lies and its pull. We do not win by trying harder but by trusting the One who said, "I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). Our faith joins us to His victory.
5:5 *the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God* The overcomer is not a special class of super Christians. Every true believer overcomes, because faith rests on who Jesus is.
5:6 *This is the One who came through water and blood, Jesus the Christ* Many understand the water as Jesus' baptism and the blood as His death. The false teachers said the Christ came on Jesus at baptism and left before the cross. John insists the same Jesus Christ came through both. Others connect the words with the water and blood from His side (John 19:34).
5:6 *the Spirit is the One who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth* The Holy Spirit bears witness to Jesus, inside the believer and through the Word He inspired. He cannot lie, so His testimony settles the matter.
5:7 *For there are three who testify in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one* The Father, the Word (the Son, John 1:1), and the Spirit agree in one testimony about Jesus. These words are absent from almost all Greek copies before the late Middle Ages. They came from Latin sources, and Erasmus added them in his third edition (1522), so many modern Bibles omit them or give them in a footnote. Nothing rests on this verse alone. The Trinity is taught plainly elsewhere (Matt 28:19; 2 Cor 13:14).
5:8 *the Spirit and the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement as one* The Law required two or three witnesses (Deut 19:15). God gives three that agree: the Spirit, Jesus' baptism, and His death all point to the same Son of God.
5:9 *If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater* We accept human witnesses every day in court and in ordinary life. How much more should we trust God when He speaks about His own Son.
5:10 *the one who does not believe God has made Him a liar* Unbelief is not a neutral position. To refuse God's testimony about Jesus is to call God a liar. That is why rejecting Christ is so serious.
5:11 *God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son* Eternal life is not a reward we earn or a thing apart from Jesus. It is found in Him. God gives it as a gift.
5:12 *The one who has the Son has life* It is that simple. Life is not about how good you are, but whether you have the Son. You receive Him by believing in His name (John 1:12).
5:13 *so that you may know that you have eternal life* John wrote his Gospel so that people would believe (John 20:31). He wrote this letter so that believers would know. God wants His children to have assurance, not to live in fear about where they stand with Him.
5:14 *if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us* Prayer is not a way to bend God to our will but to line ourselves up with His. Jesus prayed, "not My will, but Yours be done" (Luke 22:42). When we pray what God wants, we can pray with confidence.
5:15 *we know that we have the requests that we have asked from Him* The answer may not come at once, but it is as good as given. We can thank God ahead of time for what He has promised.

from Him. **16** If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin not to death, he will ask, and He will give him life, for those who sin not to death. There is a sin to death; I do not say that he should make request concerning that. **17** All unrighteousness is sin, and there is a sin not to death. **18** We know that everyone who has been born of God does not sin; but the one who was born of God keeps himself, and the evil ***one*** does not touch him. **19** We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies in the evil ***one***. **20** And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know the ***One who is*** true; and we are in the ***One who is*** true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and the eternal life. **21** Little children, guard yourselves from idols. Amen.

5:16 1 Sam 2:25; Gen 20:7; Exod 32:31
5:17 1 John 3:4; James 1:15; Ezek 18:26-32
5:18 Jude 1:21,24; 1 John 3:9; James 1:27
5:19 Gal 1:4; 1 John 4:4-6; 2 Cor 4:4
5:20 Isa 54:5; Jer 10:10; John 17:3,14,25
5:21 1 Cor 10:7,14; 1 John 2:1; Exod 20:3,4

5:16 *There is a sin to death* Good teachers hold different views. Some see physical death as God's discipline on a believer who keeps sinning (Acts 5:1-11; 1 Cor 11:30). Some see a settled rejection of Christ like the false teachers who left (2:19, 22). Some link it with blasphemy against the Spirit (Mark 3:28-29). If you are worried you have committed it, your concern is a good sign. Jesus said, "the one coming to Me I will certainly not cast out" (John 6:37).
5:16 *he will ask, and He will give him life* We are to pray for a brother caught in sin, not gossip about him. God answers such prayer with restoration.
5:17 *All unrighteousness is sin, and there is a sin not to death* No sin is small, but most sin is not the final kind. That should keep us from both taking sin lightly and giving up hope for a brother.
5:18 *the one who was born of God keeps himself, and the evil one does not touch him* As in 3:9, John means the habit of a life, not a single act. The SLB reads "keeps himself," so the believer guards his own life. Many copies read "keeps him," which points to Jesus, the One born of God, keeping the believer safe. Both are true: Satan cannot lay hold of one who belongs to God.
5:19 *the whole world lies in the evil one* The world system is in Satan's grip, lying in his lap. He is the one who "has blinded the minds of the unbelieving" (2 Cor 4:4). We belong to God, so we should not be surprised when the world thinks differently.
5:20 *the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know the One who is true* We could never find God by our own reasoning. Jesus came and opened our minds to know Him. Knowing God is personal, not just knowing facts about Him.
5:20 *This is the true God and the eternal life* Many read "This" as Jesus Christ, the nearest name, which makes this one of the clearest statements of His deity. Others read it as the Father, the One who is true. Either way, John has just said we are in the Father by being in His Son.
5:21 *Little children, guard yourselves from idols* Ephesus was home to the great temple of Artemis (Acts 19:23-27), and idols were everywhere. But an idol is anything that takes God's place, including a false Jesus like the one the false teachers preached. John ends with a father's warning: keep yourselves for the true God.

2 JOHN

Introduction

Title

The letter is named for its writer, who calls himself simply "the elder" (1:1). It is one of the shortest books in the Bible, short enough to fit on a single sheet of papyrus. Only 3 John is shorter in the Greek.

Author and Date

The early church held that "the elder" was John the apostle, the same man who wrote 1 John and the Gospel of John. The words and themes are the same: truth, love, the commandment from the beginning, Jesus Christ coming in the flesh, the antichrist, and joy made full. By the time he wrote, John was an old man and the last living apostle, and the churches knew who "the elder" was without being told his name.

Most date 2 John to about A.D. 85 to 95, written from Ephesus, around the same time as 1 John.

Background and Setting

John writes "to the elect lady and to her children" (1:1). Some believe she was a real Christian woman, perhaps one who opened her home to the church, and her children were her family. Others believe the elect lady is a way of speaking of a local church, with her children as its members and "your elect sister" (1:13) as John's own church. John moves between singular and plural "you," and the commands fit a congregation, but the letter also reads naturally as a note to a real person. Scripture does not settle it, and the message is the same either way.

In the first century, teachers and missionaries went from town to town and depended on believers for food and a place to stay. That was good, but it also opened the door to false teachers. A church that welcomed a teacher into the home where it met gave him a platform.

Themes

The theme of 2 John is walking in truth and love together. John reminds his readers of the command they have had from the beginning, "that we love one another" (1:5), and then warns them about deceivers who deny that Jesus Christ came in the flesh (1:7). Love does not mean opening the door to everyone. "This is love, that we walk according to His commandments" (1:6). John writes to encourage the lady and her children to keep walking in the truth, to warn them not to welcome such teachers, and to tell them he hopes to visit soon.

Christ in 2 John

Grace, mercy, and peace come "from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father" (1:3), the two named side by side as equals. The deceivers deny "Jesus Christ coming in flesh" (1:7), but the true Jesus is the eternal Son who became a real man. And "the one who abides in the teaching of Christ, this one has both the Father and the Son" (1:9).

Hard Passages

Who is the elect lady (1:1)? The notes give both the woman view and the church view.

What does John mean by "do not receive him into your house, and do not say to him, Greetings" (1:10)? The notes apply it to welcoming and supporting teachers who deny Christ came in the flesh, not to ordinary kindness toward people in error or toward unbelieving family.

Outline

I. Walk in Truth and Love (1:1-6)
  A. Greeting in truth (1:1-3)
  B. Walking in truth and love (1:4-6)
II. Guard Against Deceivers (1:7-13)
  A. Do not welcome the deceivers (1:7-11)
  B. Closing (1:12-13)

2 JOHN

2 JOHN 1

Greeting in Truth

1 The elder, to ***the*** elect lady and to her children, whom I love in truth, and not I only, but also all those who have known the truth, **2** because of the truth that abides in us and will be with us forever: **3** Grace, mercy, ***and*** peace will be with you from God ***the*** Father and from ***the*** Lord Jesus (Iesous) Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.

Walking in Truth and Love

4 I rejoiced greatly that I have found ***some*** of your children walking in truth, just as we received commandment from the Father. **5** And now I ask you, lady, not as writing to you a new commandment, but ***the one*** which we have had from ***the*** beginning, that we love one another. **6** And this is love, that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, just as you heard from ***the*** beginning, that you should walk in it.

Guard Against Deceivers

7 For many deceivers have entered into the world, those who do not confess Jesus Christ coming in flesh; this is the deceiver and the antichrist. **8** Watch yourselves, so that we do not lose the things we have worked for, but receive a full reward. **9** Everyone who transgresses and does not abide in the teaching of Christ does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching of Christ, this ***one*** has both the Father and the Son. **10** If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into ***your*** house, and do not say to him, "Greetings"; **11** for the one who says to him,
"Greetings," shares in his evil works.

Closing

12 Having many things to write to you, I did not want ***to do so*** with paper and ink; but I hope to come to you and to speak mouth to mouth, so that our joy may be made full. **13** The children of your elect sister greet you. Amen.

1:1 John 8:32; 1 Pet 5:1; 2 John 1:5,13
1:2 1 Cor 9:23; 2 Cor 4:5; John 15:7
1:3 Rom 1:7; 1 Tim 1:2; 1 John 2:23,24
1:4 3 John 1:3,4; Phil 4:10; 1 Thess 2:19,20
1:5 1 John 3:11; John 13:34,35; John 15:12
1:6 1 John 5:3,15; 1 John 2:24; John 14:15,21
1:7 2 Pet 2:1-3; 1 John 2:18-22; 1 John 4:1
1:8 Rev 3:11; 1 Cor 3:8,14; Heb 12:15
1:9 1 John 2:22-24; John 15:6; John 7:16,17
1:10 Titus 3:10; Gal 1:8,9; Rom 16:17,18
1:11 1 Tim 5:22; Eph 5:11; Ps 50:18
1:12 3 John 1:13; John 15:11; John 16:24
1:13 2 John 1:1; 1 Pet 5:13

1:1 *The elder* John does not give his name. An elder is an older man and also a leader who shepherds God's people, and Peter called himself a fellow elder (1 Pet 5:1). By this time John was the last living apostle, and the churches knew exactly who "the elder" was.
1:1 *to the elect lady and to her children* There are two main views. Some believe she was a real Christian woman, perhaps one who hosted a church in her home, with her own family as her children. Others see a picture of a local church and its members, pointing to John's shift between singular and plural "you" and to "your elect sister" in verse 13. Both views fit the message.
1:2 *because of the truth that abides in us and will be with us forever* Truth is the key word of this letter, five times in the first four verses. In John's writing truth is tied to Jesus Himself, "the way and the truth and the life" (John 14:6). It lives in believers, it does not wear out, and it makes us family.
1:3 *Grace, mercy, and peace will be with you* Grace is God's favor we did not earn. Mercy is God not giving us the punishment we did deserve. Peace is what comes when grace and mercy have done their work. John's greeting is also a promise: these "will be" with every believer who walks in the truth.
1:3 *from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love* John sets the Father and the Son side by side as equals, the same point he made against the false teachers in his first letter. Truth and love are the two great themes of the letter.
1:4 *I rejoiced greatly that I have found some of your children walking in truth* Not money, numbers, or success made John glad, but people living out the truth. To walk in truth is to live by it every day. "Some" may mean only those he had met, or it may hint that not all were walking in truth.
1:5 *that we love one another* This is no new command but the one Jesus gave the night before He died (John 13:34), the same one John wrote about in his first letter (1 John 2:7-8; 3:11). A church fighting false teaching can grow harsh. It is possible to defend the truth and lose our love. John wants both.
1:6 *this is love, that we walk according to His commandments* Love means keeping His commandments, and His commandment is to love. The two cannot be pulled apart. Love is not a warm feeling that ignores what God says. Real love wants what God wants for a person, and His commands are always for our good.
1:7 *many deceivers have entered into the world, those who do not confess Jesus Christ coming in flesh* Traveling false teachers denied that the eternal Son of God truly became a man, the same error John fought in 1 John 4:2-3. They carry the spirit of the Antichrist who is still to come in the Tribulation. A wrong view of Jesus goes to the heart of the gospel.
1:8 *Watch yourselves, so that we do not lose the things we have worked for, but receive a full reward* Be on guard about what you believe and who you listen to. Salvation is a free gift, but believers will receive rewards from Christ for faithful service, and rewards can be gained or lost (1 Cor 3:12-15; 2 Cor 5:10). John wants them to receive a full reward.
1:9 *Everyone who transgresses and does not abide in the teaching of Christ does not have God* To transgress here is to go beyond, to run ahead. The false teachers claimed to move on to something deeper. Going beyond the teaching of Christ, both the teaching about Him and the teaching He gave, is not progress. It is leaving God behind. Stay with what you received, and you have both the Father and the Son.
1:10 *do not receive him into your house, and do not say to him, "Greetings"* Traveling teachers depended on believers for food and a place to stay, and churches met in homes, so welcoming a teacher gave him a platform. This is about people spreading a false gospel that denies Christ came in the flesh, not about being rude to a neighbor or an unbelieving family member. We can show kindness and share the gospel. We must not help error spread.
1:11 *shares in his evil works* The word is related to koinonia, fellowship. Helping a false teacher's work makes you a partner in it. Whose teaching do we support with our money and invite into our homes and churches? Sometimes the loving thing is to keep the door shut to those who deny Christ.
1:12 *I hope to come to you and to speak mouth to mouth, so that our joy may be made full* The paper was papyrus and the ink was soot and gum. Some things are better said face to face. John used the same words in 1 John 1:4. Fellowship in person brings a fullness of joy that letters and screens cannot.
1:13 *The children of your elect sister greet you* If the lady is a church, her sister is another church, probably John's own. If she is a woman, these are her sister's children. Either way, believers are family across the miles.

3 JOHN

Introduction

Title

The letter is named for its writer, who again calls himself "the elder" (1:1). It is the shortest book in the Bible in the Greek, a personal note to one man, Gaius.

Author and Date

As in 2 John, the writer calls himself "the elder." The early church held that he was John the apostle, and the style, the words, and the love for truth all match 1 and 2 John. Most date 3 John to about A.D. 85 to 95, around the same time as 1 and 2 John, and most believe John wrote it from Ephesus.

Background and Setting

The letter is addressed to "Gaius the beloved" (1:1). Gaius was a very common name in the Roman world, and the New Testament mentions several men by that name (Acts 19:29; 20:4; Rom 16:23; 1 Cor 1:14). We do not know whether this Gaius was any of them. He was a believer whom John loved, who walked in truth, and who opened his home to traveling workers. John may have led him to faith, since he counts him among "my children" (1:4).

Diotrephes was a leader in the church Gaius knew, a man "who loves to be first" (1:9). He refused John's letter and the traveling brothers, spread evil talk about John, and put out of the church those who wanted to welcome them. Demetrius had a good report from everyone (1:12), and he may have carried this letter.

Themes

John writes to thank Gaius for his hospitality to the traveling workers and to urge him to keep supporting them, so that "we may become fellow workers for the truth" (1:8). He deals openly with the pride of Diotrephes, commends Demetrius, and tells Gaius he hopes to see him soon. The key verse sets two examples side by side: "do not imitate what is evil, but what is good" (1:11). Walking in truth, faithful hospitality, and humble leadership run through the letter, and John's greatest joy is to "hear of my children walking in truth" (1:4).

Christ in 3 John

The missionaries went out "on behalf of His name" (1:7), the name of Jesus Christ. Supporting them is serving Him.
Diotrephes, who loved to be first, stands against the One who said the one who wants to be great must be a servant (Mark 10:42-45).

Hard Passages

Does 1:2 promise wealth and health to every believer? The notes read it as a customary wish for a friend's well-being, the way people open a letter by hoping all is well, and not as a promise of riches.

Outline

I. Gaius Praised (1:1-8)
  A. Greeting and prayer (1:1-4)
  B. Faithful hospitality (1:5-8)
II. Diotrephes Rebuked (1:9-11)
III. Demetrius Commended and Closing (1:12-14)

3 JOHN

3 JOHN 1

Greeting to Gaius

1 The elder, to Gaius (Gaios) the beloved, whom I love in truth. **2** Beloved, concerning all things I pray that you prosper and be in health, just as your soul prospers. **3** For I rejoiced greatly when brothers came and testified to your truth, just as you walk in truth. **4** I have no greater joy than these things, that I hear of my children walking in truth.

Faithful Hospitality

5 Beloved, you do faithfully whatever you do for the brothers and for the strangers, **6** who testified of your love before ***the*** church. You will do well to send them forward in a manner worthy of God. **7** For on behalf of His name they went out, taking nothing from the Gentiles. **8** We therefore ought to receive such ***men***, so that we may become fellow workers for the truth.

Diotrephes Rebuked

9 I wrote to the church; but Diotrephes, who loves to be first among them, does not receive us. **10** Because of this, if I come, I will bring to remembrance his works which he does, talking nonsense against us with evil words; and not being content with these, neither does he himself receive the brothers, and those who want ***to*** he forbids and casts ***them*** out of the church. **11** Beloved, do not imitate what ***is*** evil, but what ***is*** good. The one who does good is of God; but the one who does evil has not seen God.

Demetrius Commended

12 Demetrius (Demetrios) has been testified to by all, and by the truth itself; and we also testify, and you know that our testimony is true. **13** I had many things to write, but I do not want to write to you with ink and pen; **14** but I hope to see you soon, and we will speak mouth to mouth. Peace to you. The friends greet you. Greet the friends by name.

1:1 Rom 16:23; 1 Cor 1:14; 1 John 3:18
1:2 2 Pet 1:3-9; James 5:12; 2 Pet 3:18
1:3 2 John 1:4; Eph 1:15,16; 2 John 1:2,4
1:4 Gal 4:19; Phlm 1:10; 1 Kgs 2:4
1:5 Matt 24:45; Luke 12:42; Luke 16:10-12
1:6 1 Thess 2:12; Acts 15:3; Titus 3:13
1:7 Acts 8:4; 2 Cor 4:5; Col 1:24
1:8 3 John 1:10; Matt 10:14,40; Luke 11:7
1:9 Matt 20:20-28; Matt 23:4-8; Mark 9:34
1:10 Isa 66:5; 1 Cor 5:1-5; 2 Cor 10:1-11
1:11 Isa 1:16,17; Ps 37:27; 1 John 2:29
1:12 1 Tim 3:7; John 21:24; John 19:35
1:13 2 John 1:12
1:14 Gen 43:23; Dan 4:1; Gal 5:16

1:1 *to Gaius the beloved, whom I love in truth* Gaius was a common Roman name. The New Testament mentions a Gaius in Corinth (Rom 16:23; 1 Cor 1:14), one from Macedonia (Acts 19:29), and one from Derbe (Acts 20:4). We do not know if this is any of them. We do know John loved him with a real love rooted in their shared faith, and calls him "beloved" three more times (verses 2, 5, 11).
1:2 *I pray that you prosper and be in health, just as your soul prospers* A warm, normal prayer for a friend, like opening a letter by hoping all is well. Notice the standard: John prays that body and circumstances would do as well as Gaius' soul already did. Some use this verse to promise wealth and health to every believer. That stretches it too far. It shows God cares about our whole lives, but it is not a promise of riches.
1:3 *testified to your truth, just as you walk in truth* Gaius did not just hold the truth. He lived it, and others could see it. If other believers spent time with us and reported back, what would they say?
1:4 *I have no greater joy than these things, that I hear of my children walking in truth* "My children" probably means people John led to Christ or taught in the faith. Any parent understands this. Our greatest joy is not our children's paycheck or house but seeing them walk with God. Pray that your spiritual children would walk in truth.
1:5 *you do faithfully whatever you do for the brothers and for the strangers* Inns were few, unsafe, and often known for bad behavior, so traveling missionaries depended on believers for a bed and food. Gaius welcomed even ones he had never met, and kept doing it. Hospitality is not small in the Bible (Heb 13:2).
1:6 *You will do well to send them forward in a manner worthy of God* To send forward meant giving what they needed for the next part of the journey: food, money, supplies, maybe a guide (Rom 15:24; Titus 3:13). When we help God's servants, we should treat them in a way that honors the God who sent them, not grudgingly or cheaply but generously.
1:7 *For on behalf of His name they went out, taking nothing from the Gentiles* They went for the name of Jesus Christ. Here Gentiles means the unbelievers they were trying to reach. They did not want anyone to think the gospel was for sale, as Paul also refused support in Corinth and Thessalonica (1 Cor 9:12-18; 1 Thess 2:9). So the church had to provide for them.
1:8 *so that we may become fellow workers for the truth* Not everyone is called to go, but everyone can share the work by giving, praying, and opening a home. The missionary's fruit becomes ours. This is the opposite of 2 John 10-11: welcoming a false teacher makes you a partner in evil, and welcoming a true servant makes you a partner in the truth.
1:9 *Diotrephes, who loves to be first among them, does not receive us* Diotrephes blocked John's letter to the church. John does not say he taught false doctrine. His problem was pride and a love of control. Jesus said the one who wants to be great must be a servant (Mark 10:42-45). Diotrephes had it backwards.
1:10 *talking nonsense against us with evil words* Diotrephes spread malicious gossip about John, refused hospitality to the traveling workers, and put out of the church anyone who wanted to welcome them. This is what a leader who loves to be first does. John will not ignore it. If he comes, he will bring it into the open and deal with it truthfully.
1:11 *do not imitate what is evil, but what is good* The key verse of the letter. We all imitate someone. John sets Diotrephes and Demetrius side by side. "The one who does evil has not seen God" echoes 1 John 3:6-10. A person's life shows his true family, whatever position he holds in the church.
1:12 *Demetrius has been testified to by all, and by the truth itself* Demetrius may have carried this letter. He had three witnesses: the believers who knew him, the truth itself because his life matched it, and John's own word. The world's praise can be flattery, but when the truth backs up your life, that is a good name worth having (Prov 22:1).
1:13 *I do not want to write to you with ink and pen* Almost the same words as 2 John 12. Hard things like the trouble with Diotrephes are better handled in person, where tone is not lost. When there is conflict in a church or a family, it is usually better to sit down and talk than to send a letter, an email, or a text.
1:14 *Peace to you. The friends greet you. Greet the friends by name* A fitting blessing for a man in a church conflict. Calling believers "the friends" is unusual in a New Testament greeting, but Jesus called His disciples His friends (John 15:14-15). In God's family no one is just a face in the crowd.

JUDE

Introduction

Title

The letter is named for its writer, "Jude, a slave of Jesus Christ, and brother of James" (1:1). In Greek the name is Judas, the same as Judah, a very common Jewish name. It is the last letter before the Bible's final book, short but one of the most urgent letters in the New Testament.

Author and Date

Bible teachers have long held that the writer is the Jude, or Judas, named with James as one of the brothers of Jesus (Matt 13:55; Mark 6:3). The James he names is most likely the leader of the church in Jerusalem (Acts 15:13; Gal 1:19). Jesus' brothers were the sons of Joseph and Mary, born after Jesus (Matt 1:25; 13:55-56), so Jude was His half-brother. Some churches hold that the brothers were Joseph's sons by an earlier marriage or cousins. Like James in his letter, Jude does not call himself the brother of the Lord but a slave of Jesus Christ. That humble way of speaking fits a man who once did not believe in Jesus (John 7:5) and later worshiped Him as Lord (Acts 1:14).

Jude does not give a date. Most place it between about A.D. 65 and 80, and many narrow it to about 68 to 80. Verse 17 speaks of the apostles' words as something the readers had heard earlier. Jude does not mention the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, and some take that as a hint he wrote before it.

Background and Setting

Jude writes "to those who are called, sanctified in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ" (1:1), with no city or region named. His many examples from the Old Testament and from Jewish writings suggest readers who knew the Jewish Scriptures well, so many believe they were mostly Jewish believers. Jude had wanted to write about the salvation all believers share, but ungodly men had crept into the church, turning God's grace into an excuse for sin and denying Jesus Christ as Master and Lord (1:3-4).

Much of Jude is very close to 2 Peter 2 and 3:1-3. Teachers do not agree whether Jude used 2 Peter, Peter used Jude, or both drew on a common warning. Scripture does not tell us, and the message is the same. Jude also mentions Michael's dispute over the body of Moses (1:9), which early writers linked to a Jewish book called the Assumption of Moses, and a prophecy of Enoch (1:14-15) that closely matches a line in a Jewish book called 1 Enoch. Neither book is part of the Bible. Jude was led by the Holy Spirit to record these things as true, but quoting a true line does not make a whole book Scripture, as Paul's quotes from Greek poets show (Acts 17:28; Titus 1:12).

Themes

The theme of Jude is standing firm for the truth while staying close to God. The key verse is his call "to contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the saints" (1:3). Jude gives example after example of how God judges those who turn from Him: Israel in the wilderness, the angels who sinned, Sodom and Gomorrah, Cain, Balaam, and Korah. Then he tells the faithful to remember what the apostles foretold, to build themselves up, to pray in the Holy Spirit, to "keep yourselves in the love of God" (1:21), and to reach out with mercy to those who are wavering. The letter that begins with believers "kept for Jesus Christ" (1:1) ends with one of the best-known blessings in the Bible.

Christ in Jude

Jesus Christ is "the only Master, God, and our Lord Jesus Christ" (1:4), whom the false teachers deny by how they live. Believers are kept for Him (1:1) and wait "for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life" (1:21). The Lord will come "with His holy myriads" to judge the ungodly (1:14-15). And God our Savior, through Him, "is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you blameless before the presence of His glory with exultation" (1:24).

Hard Passages

What does "written beforehand for this judgment" (1:4) mean? The notes give two readings: foretold in Scripture and prophecy, or God's eternal plan.

Who are the angels who left their own dwelling (1:6)? The notes give both main views: the sons of God of Genesis 6:1-4, or angels who fell with Satan.

How should we understand Michael and the body of Moses (1:9) and the prophecy of Enoch (1:14-15)? The notes explain Jude's use of these Jewish writings. They place the coming of the Lord with His holy myriads at the Second Coming after the Tribulation, when the church, taken up before it, returns with Him.

What is praying in the Holy Spirit (1:20)? The notes read it as Spirit-led prayer and mention the reading that connects it with tongues.

Outline

I. Contend for the Faith (1:1-4)
  A. Greeting (1:1-2)
  B. The reason for the letter (1:3-4)
II. God's Judgment on the Ungodly (1:5-16)
  A. Examples of judgment (1:5-7)
  B. The character of the false teachers (1:8-13)
  C. Enoch's prophecy (1:14-16)
III. Keep Yourselves in the Love of God (1:17-23)
IV. Doxology (1:24-25)

JUDE

JUDE 1

Greeting

1 Jude (Ioudas), a slave of Jesus (Iesous) Christ, and brother of James (Iakobos), to those who are called, sanctified in God ***the*** Father and kept for Jesus Christ: **2** Mercy to you and peace and love be multiplied.

Contend for the Faith

3 Beloved, while making all diligence to write to you concerning our common salvation, I had necessity to write to you, exhorting ***you*** to contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the saints. **4** For certain men have crept in unnoticed, those who long ago were written beforehand for this judgment, ungodly ***men***, changing the grace of our God into sensuality and denying the only Master, God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

God's Judgment on the Ungodly

5 But I want to remind you, though you once knew this, that the Lord, having saved a people out of ***the*** land of Egypt (Aigyptos), afterward destroyed those who did not believe. **6** And angels who did not keep their own domain, but left their own dwelling, He has kept in eternal chains under darkness for ***the*** judgment of ***the*** great day, **7** just as Sodom (Sodoma) and Gomorrah (Gomorra) and the cities around them, having in the same manner as these indulged in sexual immorality and gone after other flesh, are set forth ***as*** an example, undergoing ***the*** penalty of eternal fire. **8** Yet in the same way these dreamers also defile the flesh, and set aside authority, and blaspheme glorious ***ones***. **9** But Michael the archangel, when he was disputing with the devil, arguing about the body of Moses, did not dare to bring against ***him*** a judgment of blasphemy, but said, "May ***the*** Lord rebuke you!" **10** But these blaspheme whatever things they do not know; and whatever things they understand naturally, like the irra-

1:1 John 14:22; 1 Pet 1:5; Rom 1:1
1:2 2 Pet 1:2; 1 Pet 1:2; Rev 1:4-6
1:3 1 Tim 6:12; Titus 1:4; Phil 1:27
1:4 Ps 62:2; Gal 2:4; 2 Pet 2:1,2
1:5 Num 14:22; Exod 14:30; Num 14:35
1:6 2 Pet 2:4; Job 4:18; Lam 3:2
1:7 Deut 29:23; Gen 19:5; Gen 19:24
1:8 Heb 13:17; 1 Pet 2:17; Jer 38:25-28
1:9 Zech 3:2; Dan 10:13; Dan 10:21
1:10 2 Pet 2:12; Rom 1:21,22

1:1 *Jude, a slave of Jesus Christ, and brother of James* Jude does not boast of his family ties to Jesus. He calls himself a slave who belongs to his Master. Most believe this James is the leader of the Jerusalem church (Acts 15:13; Gal 1:19), the brother of the Lord. That makes Jude one of the brothers of Jesus (Matt 13:55; Mark 6:3), a son of Joseph and Mary born after Jesus.

1:1 *called, sanctified in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ* Three things are true of every believer. We are called by God, set apart for Him, and kept, guarded by God for Jesus. Jude comes back to the word "kept" at the end (verses 21, 24).

1:2 *Mercy to you and peace and love be multiplied* Mercy is God's compassion holding back the judgment we deserve, peace the calm of being right with God, and love His self-giving care. Before he writes about judgment, Jude prays that his readers would have more and more of all three. That is the place to stand when we face hard truth.

1:3 *to contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the saints* Jude planned a letter about "our common salvation," but something urgent came up. To contend earnestly is the word for an athlete straining or a soldier fighting. The faith is the body of apostolic truth, handed down one time, complete. We do not add to it. We guard it and pass it on. That does not mean fighting with people. It means standing firm.

1:4 *certain men have crept in unnoticed, those who long ago were written beforehand for this judgment* The danger was inside the church; these men slipped in quietly, like spies. Teachers read this two ways. Some see it as their judgment foretold long ago in Scripture and in prophecy like Enoch's (verses 14-15). Others see God's eternal plan. Either way, God was not surprised by them.

1:4 *changing the grace of our God into sensuality and denying the only Master, God, and our Lord Jesus Christ* Two marks of the false teachers. They treated grace as permission to sin, and they denied the Lord, not always in words but by how they lived.

1:5 *having saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe* The first of three examples of judgment. God brought Israel out with great power, yet most of that generation died in the wilderness for unbelief (Num 14:26-35; Heb 3:16-19). Being in the crowd that came out of Egypt did not protect those who did not believe. Being in the church did not make the false teachers safe.

1:6 *angels who did not keep their own domain, but left their own dwelling* There are two main views. Many believe they are the sons of God of Genesis 6:1-4, angels who left heaven and took human women, pointing to verse 7, which says Sodom sinned "in the same manner as these." Others see angels who fell with Satan, some now bound while others roam free. Peter writes of the same angels (2 Pet 2:4). Notice the play on words: they did not keep their domain, so God has kept them in chains.

1:7 *Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them* The third example (Gen 19). Gone after other flesh means flesh not theirs to have. The men of Sodom tried to force themselves on the two visitors in Lot's house, who were angels (Gen 19:4-9). Scripture names their sin plainly, including the sexual sin of men with men, and also their pride and neglect of the poor (Ezek 16:49-50).

1:7 *set forth as an example, undergoing the penalty of eternal fire* The fire that fell on them pictures a judgment that does not end. God's patience is real, but so is His judgment. The answer for any sinner, of any kind, is to turn to Christ, who forgives all who come to Him (1 Cor 6:9-11).

1:8 *these dreamers also defile the flesh, and set aside authority, and blaspheme glorious ones* They may have claimed dreams to back their teaching, or they lived in a dream world. Like Sodom they defile the flesh. Like the angels they reject the Lord's rule. And they speak with contempt of angelic beings. Pride that mocks what it does not understand always comes before a fall.

1:9 *Michael the archangel, when he was disputing with the devil, arguing about the body of Moses* Michael is the chief angel (Dan 10:13; 12:1; Rev 12:7). God buried Moses and no one knows his grave (Deut 34:5-6), but the Old Testament does not tell of this dispute. Early writers said Jude drew on a Jewish book called the Assumption of Moses, though the surviving copies lack the scene. Jude records the event as true. That does not make the source book Scripture, just as Paul quoted pagan poets (Acts 17:28; Titus 1:12).

1:9 *May the Lord rebuke you* Even Michael, the greatest of the angels, did not speak against the devil on his own authority. He left judgment to the Lord, using the words spoken to Satan when he accused Joshua the high priest (Zech 3:2). If Michael was that careful, how foolish were men who mocked spiritual powers.

1:10 *like the irrational animals, in these things they are corrupted* They claimed deep spiritual insight but understood spiritual things no better than an animal. The only things they did understand were bodily appetites, and in those very things they were destroying themselves.

tional animals, in these things they are corrupted. **11** Woe to them! For they went in the way of Cain (Kain), and rushed into the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the rebellion of Korah (Kore). **12** These are hidden reefs in your love feasts, feasting together with you without fear, shepherding themselves; clouds without water, carried about by winds; autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, uprooted; **13** wild waves of ***the*** sea, foaming up their own shame; wandering stars, for whom the gloom of darkness has been kept forever. **14** And Enoch (Henoch), the seventh from Adam, also prophesied about these, saying, "Look, ***the*** Lord came with His holy myriads, **15** to execute judgment against all, and to convict all the ungodly among them concerning all their works of ungodliness which they have done in an ungodly way, and concerning all the harsh ***things*** which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him." **16** These are grumblers, complainers, walking according to their lusts, and their mouth speaks arrogant ***words***, flattering faces for the sake of profit.

Keep Yourselves in the Love of God

17 But you, beloved, remember the words that were spoken beforehand by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, **18** that they were saying to you that in ***the*** last time there will be scoffers, walking according to their own lusts of ungodliness. **19** These are the ones who separate themselves, natural ***men***, not having ***the*** Spirit. **20** But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith, praying in ***the*** Holy Spirit, **21** keep yourselves in ***the*** love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life. **22** And on some have mercy, making a distinction; **23** but others save with fear, snatching ***them*** out of the fire, hating even the tunic stained by the flesh.

Doxology

24 Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present ***you*** blameless before the presence of His glory

1:11 Gen 4:3; Num 16:1; Num 26:9
1:12 Prov 25:14; Ezek 34:8; Ezek 34:2
1:13 Isa 57:20; Phil 3:19; 2 Pet 2:17
1:14 Zech 14:5; Gen 5:18; Gen 5:24
1:15 1 Sam 2:3; Exod 16:8; Ps 31:18
1:16 Ps 73:9; 1 Sam 2:3; 2 Chr 18:11
1:17 2 Pet 3:2; Acts 20:35; Eph 2:20
1:18 2 Pet 3:3; Acts 20:29; 2 Tim 4:3
1:19 Isa 65:5; Num 11:17; 1 Cor 2:14
1:20 Eph 6:18; Col 2:7; 1 Cor 14:15
1:21 2 Pet 3:12; 1 John 4:16; Rev 12:11
1:22 1 John 5:16-18; Jude 1:4-13; Ezek 34:17
1:23 Amos 4:11; Zech 3:2; Rev 3:4,18
1:24 Job 9:4; Eph 3:20; 2 Cor 4:14

1:11 *they went in the way of Cain, and rushed into the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the rebellion of Korah* Cain murdered his brother and would not listen to God (Gen 4:3-8; 1 John 3:12). Balaam would curse Israel for money and later taught her enemies to lead her into sin (Num 22-24; 31:16; Rev 2:14). Korah rose against Moses and Aaron and was swallowed by the earth (Num 16). Hatred, greed, and pride: the false teachers showed all three.
1:12 *hidden reefs in your love feasts* The love feasts were shared church meals, often with the Lord's Supper. A hidden reef tears open a ship from beneath the water. These men sat at the table looking harmless and wrecked people's faith, caring only for themselves, not the flock (Ezek 34:2). They are clouds that promise rain and give nothing, and trees with no fruit at harvest, dead at the root and pulled out of the ground.
1:13 *wild waves of the sea, foaming up their own shame; wandering stars* The sea throws foam and trash on the beach (Isa 57:20), and these men left only the mess of shameful living. Sailors steered by the stars, but a wandering star could guide no one. Air, land, sea, and sky: wherever you look, the false teachers are empty and dangerous, and their end is certain.
1:14 *Enoch, the seventh from Adam, also prophesied about these* Enoch walked with God and was taken up without dying (Gen 5:21-24; Heb 11:5), the seventh counting Adam. Jude's words closely match a line in a Jewish writing called 1 Enoch, put together long after Enoch lived. Neither the Jewish people nor almost all of the church accepted it as Scripture. Jude records this prophecy as true by the Holy Spirit, which gives it God's stamp without making the whole book part of the Bible.
1:14 *Look, the Lord came with His holy myriads* A myriad is ten thousand, a word for a countless number. I believe this points to the Second Coming of Christ at the end of the Tribulation, when He returns to the earth with His saints and His angels to judge (Zech 14:5; Matt 25:31; Rev 19:11-16). The church, taken up to be with Him before the Tribulation, returns with Him then.
1:15 *to convict all the ungodly among them concerning all their works of ungodliness which they have done in an ungodly way* The word ungodly, in one form or another, appears four times in this verse. Jude wants us to hear it. The Lord's coming judgment reaches deeds and words alike.
1:16 *grumblers, complainers, walking according to their lusts* Like Israel in the wilderness, never satisfied with what God gave. They boasted with big words and flattered the rich and powerful for gain. Grumbling, boasting, and flattery all come from a heart that lives for itself. A godly person is content, humble, and honest in speech.
1:17 *remember the words that were spoken beforehand by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ* "But you" sets the faithful apart. When false teaching comes, we should not be shaken as if God had lost control. The apostles told us ahead of time, as Paul warned the Ephesian elders of savage wolves (Acts 20:29-30).
1:18 *in the last time there will be scoffers, walking according to their own lusts of ungodliness* A scoffer mocks God's truth and those who believe it. Peter gives almost the same warning (2 Pet 3:3), and much of Jude is close to 2 Peter 2. Teachers do not agree whether Jude used Peter, Peter used Jude, or both drew on a shared warning. Scripture does not say, and it does not change the message. The last time is the age since Jesus came.
1:19 *These are the ones who separate themselves, natural men, not having the Spirit* They drew lines in the church, probably claiming to be more spiritual than others. The irony is that they were natural men, Paul's word for one who does not receive the things of the Spirit (1 Cor 2:14). Everyone who belongs to Christ has His Spirit (Rom 8:9). Whatever they claimed, they were not believers.
1:20 *building yourselves up in your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit* The first two of four commands. We build on the faith once delivered by learning, obeying, and growing in God's Word together. Praying in the Spirit means prayer with His help and guidance, in line with His will (Rom 8:26-27; Eph 6:18). Some connect it with tongues, but most read it as all Spirit-led prayer. The false teachers did not have the Spirit. The faithful pray in Him.
1:21 *keep yourselves in the love of God* God's love is steady. Jude means stay in the place where His love is enjoyed, as Jesus said to abide in His love (John 15:9-10). In verse 1 we are kept by God. Here we keep ourselves. God holds us, and we stay close to Him.
1:21 *waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life* The believer lives looking ahead. When Jesus comes for His church, His mercy will bring us into the fullness of eternal life. That is our blessed hope (Titus 2:13).
1:22 *on some have mercy, making a distinction* Some who are wavering under the false teachers need gentle care. Not everyone is in the same place, and the faithful must discern who needs what.
1:23 *others save with fear, snatching them out of the fire, hating even the tunic stained by the flesh* Others need urgent rescue, like pulling someone from a burning house (Amos 4:11; Zech 3:2). The tunic was the garment next to the skin. Love the sinner, but hate the sin so much you will not touch what it has stained. Rescue people without being pulled into their sin (Gal 6:1).
1:24 *to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you blameless before the presence of His glory with exultation* A letter that began with "kept" ends with the One who keeps. Only God can keep us on our feet. One day we will stand blameless before Him, not in our own goodness but because of Christ, with overflowing joy. The God who saved you is able to finish what He started (Phil 1:6).

with exultation, **25** to ***the*** only wise God our Savior, ***be*** glory and majesty, dominion and authority, both now and to all the ages. Amen.

1:25 Isa 45:21; Ps 72:19; Isa 43:3

1:25 *to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and authority, both now and to all the ages* Glory is His shining greatness, majesty His royal greatness, dominion His might, and authority His right to rule. His glory is not only future but right now. A letter about false teachers ends in worship. We do not fight for the truth to win arguments, but because the God of truth deserves all glory.

REVELATION

Introduction

Title

The book names itself in its first words: "The revelation of Jesus Christ" (1:1). Revelation means an unveiling, the pulling back of a curtain. This book unveils Jesus Christ and the finishing chapter of God's plan for mankind. It is the only book in the Bible that opens with a promised blessing on those who read it, hear it, and keep it (1:3).

Author and Date

The writer calls himself John four times (1:1, 4, 9; 22:8). Tradition holds that he is John the apostle, one of the twelve, who also wrote the Gospel of John and the three letters of John. He wrote while he was exiled on the island of Patmos, in the Aegean Sea off the coast of Asia Minor, "because of the word of God and because of the testimony of Jesus Christ" (1:9). Rome punished those who spread the teachings of Christ as it tried to stamp out the worship of anyone but the emperor.

Most interpreters date the book about A.D. 95, during the reign of the emperor Domitian. Some hold an early date of A.D. 64 to 68, under Nero.

Background and Setting

Revelation was written to seven real churches in the Roman province of Asia, in what is now western Turkey: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea (1:11). Some were faithful under persecution, and some were growing cold or compromising with the world. The risen Christ appeared to John and gave him a message for each church and a series of visions about the future.

Revelation draws on the whole Bible, especially Daniel, Ezekiel, Isaiah, and Zechariah, and Jesus' own teaching on the Mount of Olives (Matt 24-25). I read it the way I read the rest of Scripture, by what Dr. David L. Cooper called the Golden Rule of Interpretation: when the plain sense of Scripture makes common sense, seek no other sense. Prophecy that has been fulfilled came true exactly as written, and I expect the rest to be fulfilled the same way. Revelation explains many of its own symbols, and the notes point those out.

This edition takes the dispensational premillennial view. The church is caught up to be with Christ before the Tribulation begins (3:10; 1 Thess 4:16-17), and it is not seen on the earth from chapter 4 until it returns with Him (19:14). The Tribulation is Daniel's seventieth seven (Dan 9:24-27), seven years whose two halves Revelation measures as 1,260 days, 42 months, and "a time and times and half a time" (12:14). Christ then returns in glory, reigns on the earth for a thousand years, and fulfills His promises to Israel. Where good teachers disagree, the notes name the main views and say which one I hold.

Themes

Jesus Christ will return and win. Chapter 1 records what John saw, chapters 2 and 3 "the things which are," and chapters 4 to 22 "the things which are about to take place after these" (1:19). God is on His throne before any judgment falls (chapter 4), and only the Lamb is worthy to open the scroll (chapter 5).

The judgments come in three series of seven, seals, trumpets, and bowls, each growing out of the one before. Between them Revelation pauses to show God's people: the 144,000 and the great multitude (chapter 7), the little scroll and the two witnesses (chapters 10 and 11), and the woman, the dragon, and the two beasts (chapters 12 to 14). Babylon falls (chapters 17 and 18), Christ returns (chapter 19), Satan is bound and Christ reigns a thousand years (chapter 20), and God makes all things new (chapters 21 and 22).

I often call Revelation a book of love. God shows us how the story ends so that we can prepare and not come under His wrath. It brings hope to believers and a strong warning to those who do not believe, and it ends with an open invitation: "let the one who thirsts come" (22:17). Seven blessings run through the book (1:3; 14:13; 16:15; 19:9; 20:6; 22:7; 22:14). No one knows the day or the hour of Christ's coming, and every date ever set has failed, but we are to watch and be ready.

Christ in Revelation

Revelation is about Jesus from its first verse to its last. He is "the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth" (1:5). He walks among His churches (1:13). He is the Lion of the tribe of Judah and "a Lamb standing as having been slain" (5:5-6), the only One worthy to take the title deed to the earth. He returns on a white horse as "King of kings and Lord of lords" (19:16), and He reigns on the earth. At the end He says, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last" (22:13), and His last words are, "Yes, I am coming quickly" (22:20).

Hard Passages

Revelation has more disputed passages than any other book, and the notes name the main views on each. Among them: who the twenty-four elders are (4:4); who rides the white horse of the first seal (6:2), which I take as the Antichrist; who the great multitude are (7:9-14); whether the trumpets are literal or symbolic (8:6-12); who the two witnesses are (11:3); who the woman clothed with the sun is (12:1), which I take as Israel; what the beast's healed death wound and the number 666 mean (13:3, 18); and who Babylon the great is (17:18).

The notes on 3:10 and 4:1 explain why I believe the church is taken up before the Tribulation, and the notes on 7:9 and 11:12 name the mid-tribulation reading. The notes on 20:1-6 take the thousand years as a literal reign of Christ on the earth and name the amillennial and postmillennial views. The 144,000 (7:4) are taken as Jewish believers, and the notes decline readings that move God's promises to Israel over to the church (1:6; 5:10; 21:3).

Outline

I. The Things John Saw: The Risen Christ (1:1-20)
  A. Prologue and blessing (1:1-3)
  B. Greeting and doxology (1:4-8)
  C. The vision of the Son of Man (1:9-20)
II. The Things Which Are: Letters to Seven Churches (2:1-3:22)
  A. To Ephesus (2:1-7)
  B. To Smyrna (2:8-11)

C. To Pergamum (2:12-17)
D. To Thyatira (2:18-29)
E. To Sardis (3:1-6)
F. To Philadelphia (3:7-13)
G. To Laodicea (3:14-22)
III. The Things After These: The Throne and the Lamb (4:1-5:14)
A. The throne in heaven (4:1-11)
B. The scroll and the Lamb (5:1-14)
IV. The Seven Seals (6:1-8:5)
A. The four horsemen (6:1-8)
B. The fifth and sixth seals (6:9-17)
C. The 144,000 sealed (7:1-8)
D. The great multitude (7:9-17)
E. The seventh seal (8:1-5)
V. The Seven Trumpets (8:6-11:19)
A. The first four trumpets (8:6-13)
B. The fifth trumpet: locusts from the abyss (9:1-12)
C. The sixth trumpet: the army from the Euphrates (9:13-21)
D. The angel and the little scroll (10:1-11)
E. The two witnesses (11:1-14)
F. The seventh trumpet (11:15-19)
VI. The Woman, the Dragon, and the Two Beasts (12:1-14:20)
A. The woman and the dragon (12:1-6)
B. War in heaven (12:7-12)
C. The dragon pursues the woman (12:13-17)
D. The beast out of the sea (13:1-10)
E. The beast out of the earth (13:11-18)
F. The Lamb and the 144,000 (14:1-5)
G. The three angels (14:6-13)
H. The harvest of the earth (14:14-20)
VII. The Seven Bowls (15:1-16:21)
A. Prelude to the bowls (15:1-8)
B. The first five bowls (16:1-11)
C. The sixth and seventh bowls (16:12-21)
VIII. The Fall of Babylon (17:1-18:24)
A. The great prostitute (17:1-18)
B. Babylon has fallen (18:1-8)
C. The world mourns Babylon (18:9-24)
IX. The Return of Christ (19:1-21)
A. Hallelujah in heaven (19:1-10)
B. The Rider on the white horse (19:11-21)
X. The Thousand-Year Reign and the Final Judgment (20:1-15)
A. Satan bound and the saints reign (20:1-6)
B. Satan's final doom (20:7-10)
C. The Great White Throne (20:11-15)
XI. The New Heaven and the New Earth (21:1-22:21)
A. All things new (21:1-8)
B. The New Jerusalem (21:9-27)
C. The river of life (22:1-5)
D. Jesus is coming (22:6-21)

REVELATION

REVELATION 1

Prologue and Blessing

1 ***The*** revelation of Jesus (Iesous) Christ, which God gave to Him to show to His slaves what things must take place quickly; and He signified ***it*** by sending through His angel to His slave John (Ioannes), **2** who testified to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all things that he saw. **3** Blessed ***is*** the one who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy and keep the things written in it; for the time ***is*** near.

Greeting and Doxology

4 John, to the seven churches that ***are*** in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is coming, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne, **5** and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His blood, **6** and made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him ***be*** the glory and the dominion to the ages of the ages. Amen. **7** Look, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, and those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will wail because of Him. Yes, amen. **8** "I am the Alpha and the Omega, ***the*** beginning and ***the*** end," says the Lord, "who is and who was and who is coming, the Almighty."

The Vision of the Son of Man

9 I, John, who ***am*** also your brother and fellow partaker in the tribulation and in the kingdom and endurance of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos because of the word of God and because of the testimony of Jesus Christ. **10** I was in ***the*** Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like that of a trumpet, **11** saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last"; and, "What you see, write in a book and send ***it*** to the seven churches that ***are*** in Asia: to Ephesus (Ephesos) and to Smyrna and to Pergamum (Pergamos) and to Thyatira (Thyateira) and to Sardis (Sardeis) and to Philadelphia (Philadelphia) and to

1:1 Ps 25:14; Rev 22:6; Dan 2:28,29
1:2 John 19:35; 1 Cor 1:6; Rev 1:9
1:3 Prov 8:34; Dan 12:12; Jer 51:61
1:4 Zech 3:9; Isa 57:15; Rev 3:1,7,14
1:5 Ps 89:27; Isa 55:4; Deut 7:8
1:6 Exod 19:6; Ps 72:18; Dan 4:34
1:7 Zech 12:10; Dan 7:13; Judg 5:31
1:8 Gen 49:25; Exod 6:3; Isa 44:6
1:9 Acts 14:22; John 16:33; Phil 4:14
1:10 Ezek 3:12; Rev 17:3; Rev 21:10
1:11 Isa 44:6; Rev 1:4; Rev 3:1,7,14

1:1 *The revelation of Jesus Christ* This book unveils Jesus Christ. It is the finishing chapter of God's plan from the beginning of time, delivered to John by Jesus' angel, the last recorded message God sent to give us hope.
1:1 *what things must take place quickly* This phrase gives the book urgency. More than 1,900 years have passed, but we still need to stay alert and ready, because God's timing is not the same as ours (2 Pet 3:8).
1:2 *who testified to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all things that he saw* John was given the responsibility and the privilege of witnessing the events of the end times and writing them down, so followers of Christ would know what to look for in the last days.
1:3 *Blessed is the one who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy and keep the things written in it* Revelation is the only book in the Bible that opens with a promised blessing for those who read, hear, and keep it. The blessing is not ours just for reading or hearing. We have to take the words to heart and live every day expecting Jesus. This is the first of seven blessings in the book (1:3; 14:13; 16:15; 19:9; 20:6; 22:7; 22:14).
1:4 *to the seven churches that are in Asia* Each church was chosen because it represented a particular situation or problem (chapters 2 and 3). Seven appears again and again in Revelation, 54 times in all. In Scripture it generally stands for completion, fulfillment, and perfection.
1:4 *the seven Spirits who are before His throne* Many understand the seven Spirits as the Holy Spirit, not seven separate spirits but the one perfect Spirit of God in His fullness (4:5; 5:6). Isaiah 11:2 describes the Spirit's sevenfold nature.
1:5 *the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth* Jesus is King over all, ruling over death and the whole earth. Firstborn from the dead means He is first in rank and the first to rise never to die again (Ps 89:27).
1:5 *To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His blood* This puts the whole book in context: it is about the redemption of mankind. The blessing of eternal life comes only to those who accept Christ as Lord and Savior and truly turn from their sins.
1:6 *made us kings and priests to His God and Father* As kings we have overcome the world and conquered Satan, and as priests we have access to God's holiest place. God first called Israel "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Exod 19:6). Some teachers read this verse to mean the church has taken Israel's place, but I take it plainly: everyone washed in Christ's blood serves God as a priest, and God's calling and promises to Israel still stand for Israel.
1:7 *Look, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him* This is Jesus' actual Second Coming, not the rapture of the church. He will come down from above (Matt 24:30; Acts 1:9-11). We do not know whether every eye sees Him through technology or by His own power, but no one will miss it.
1:7 *and those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will wail because of Him* This points back to Zechariah 12:10, where the people of Jerusalem will look on Him whom they pierced and mourn. Everyone will realize He is holy and that we have sinned against Him. Every knee will one day bow (Rom 14:11), and those who rejected Him will face Him at the Great White Throne a thousand years after His return (20:11-15).
1:8 *I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end* Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. He existed before time began and will exist after time has stopped. And this eternal Lord came down to live among us, because He wants us with Him forever.
1:9 *your brother and fellow partaker in the tribulation and in the kingdom and endurance of Jesus Christ* John is a member of the church like us and knows the same trials. The tribulation here is not the Tribulation described later in Revelation but the everyday struggles all believers face (John 16:33).
1:9 *was on the island that is called Patmos because of the word of God and because of the testimony of Jesus Christ* Patmos is a small Aegean island south of Samos where Roman authorities exiled prisoners. John was there because of his ministry, as Rome tried to stamp out the worship of anyone but the emperor. Here he wrote Revelation, most likely between A.D. 93 and 96.
1:10 *I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day* The Lord's day has historically meant the first day of the week, Sunday, the day Jesus rose. In the Spirit describes the state John was in when he received the vision. A voice like a trumpet speaks of the Lord's authority.
1:11 *send it to the seven churches that are in Asia* Some say the seven churches represent seven stages of church history. I do not necessarily agree with that view. I believe they represent different phases a Christian can go through. I would not say the whole world is now in the lukewarm phase of Laodicea when Christians are being persecuted all over the world in Jesus' name.

Laodicea (Laodikeia)." **12** And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned, I saw seven golden lampstands, **13** and in ***the*** midst of the seven lampstands ***One*** like a son of man, clothed ***in a robe*** reaching to the feet, and girded around at the breasts with a golden sash. **14** And His head and hair ***were*** white, like white wool, like snow; and His eyes ***were*** like a flame of fire; **15** and His feet ***were*** like fine bronze, as refined in a furnace; and His voice ***was*** like ***the*** sound of many waters; **16** and having in His right hand seven stars, and out of His mouth a sharp two-edged sword going forth; and His face ***was*** like the sun shining in its strength. **17** And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. And He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, "Do not fear; I am the First and the Last, **18** and the Living ***One***; and I was dead, and look, I am living to the ages of the ages. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death. **19** Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which are about to take place after these. **20** The mystery of the seven stars which you saw on My right ***hand***, and the seven golden lampstands: the seven stars are ***the*** angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands which you saw are seven churches."

1:12 Zech 4:2; Exod 25:37; Ezek 43:5,6
1:13 Dan 7:13; Dan 10:5; Dan 10:6
1:14 Dan 7:9; Dan 10:6; Dan 10:5
1:15 Ezek 43:2; Ezek 1:7; Ezek 40:3
1:16 Isa 49:2; Judg 5:31; Heb 4:12
1:17 Isa 44:6; Isa 41:4; Isa 48:12
1:18 Rom 6:9; Ps 72:19; Jer 28:6
1:19 Jer 30:2; Hab 2:2; Rev 4:1-22

REVELATION 2

To Ephesus

1 "To the angel of the Ephesian church write: These things says the ***One*** who holds the seven stars in His right ***hand***, who walks in ***the*** midst of the seven golden lampstands: **2** I know your works and your labor and your endurance, and that you are not able to bear evil ***men***; and you have tested those who claim to be apostles and are not, and you have found them false; **3** and you have borne up, and you have endurance, and for the sake of My name you have labored and have not grown weary. **4** But I have ***this*** against you, that you have left your first love. **5** Remember therefore from where you have fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I am coming to you quickly and will remove your lampstand out of its place, unless you repent. **6** But this you have, that you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. **7** The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who overcomes, I will give to him to eat of the tree of life, which is in ***the*** midst of the paradise of God."

1:20 Rev 2:1,8,12,18; Zech 4:2; Rev 3:1,7,14
2:1 Rev 1:16,20; Rev 1:11; Rev 3:1,7,14
2:2 1 John 4:1; 2 Pet 2:1-3; 1 Thess 5:21
2:3 Heb 10:36; Luke 14:27; 1 Cor 13:7
2:4 Matt 24:12,13; Jer 2:2-5; Heb 6:10,11
2:5 Rev 2:16,21,22; Rev 2:19; Rev 3:2,3
2:6 Rev 2:14,15; 2 Chr 19:2; Ps 26:5
2:7 Gen 2:9; Rev 2:11,17,29; Gen 3:22

1:12 *I saw seven golden lampstands* Verse 20 explains these as the seven churches. A church is a lampstand because it carries the light of the gospel.
1:13 *One like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded around at the breasts with a golden sash* Jesus stands among His churches, as He promised (Matt 28:20). The long robe is priestly, and the golden sash speaks of readiness for His work. In Daniel 7:13 "one like a son of man" is a heavenly figure who receives an everlasting kingdom, and the Son of Man was Jesus' favorite name for Himself.
1:14 *His head and hair were white, like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire* The white hair is a crown of glory, like the Ancient of Days in Daniel 7:9. His blazing eyes see into every heart. It is hard to look at purity when our lives are full of sin.
1:15 *His feet were like fine bronze, as refined in a furnace; and His voice was like the sound of many waters* Feet like bronze show Him standing firm in the midst of His enemies. His voice like rushing waters will be heard by everyone. He will make His presence and His will known at the appointed time (Ezek 43:2).
1:16 *out of His mouth a sharp two-edged sword going forth* The sword is His Word, which both destroys and gives life (Heb 4:12). The seven stars in His hand are the messengers of the churches, held under His direction (verse 20). His face shone too bright for mortal man to look at.
1:17 *I fell at His feet as dead. And He laid His right hand on me* John, who once leaned on Jesus at supper, fell as if dead before His glory, as Daniel did (Dan 10:9). Jesus reassured him with a touch and a word. The same hand that holds the stars rests on His servant.
1:18 *I was dead, and look, I am living to the ages of the ages. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death* Jesus removes all fear from John. He is the Living One who died and now lives forever. The keys show His ultimate authority over life and death. Only He can open doors no one else can open and shut doors no one else can shut.
1:19 *Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which are about to take place after these* This verse gives the outline of the whole book: what John has seen (chapter 1), the things that are, the letters to the churches (chapters 2 and 3), and the things that will take place after these (chapters 4 to 22).
1:20 *the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches* The word angel means messenger. These are His angels, or messengers, sent to watch over His churches, and Christ holds them in His hand. The lampstands are the churches themselves, whose purpose is to spread the gospel and carry Christ's light.
2:1 *To the angel of the Ephesian church write* Paul founded the church in Ephesus (Acts 19), the leading city of the province. Christ comes to it as the One who holds the messengers and walks among the churches. He is not far off. He is present with every church and sees what is happening in it.
2:2 *you have tested those who claim to be apostles and are not, and you have found them false* Christ knows both the good and the bad, so the church must listen. He commends their hard work, their patience, and their hatred of sin. They tested false teachers and proved them liars, just as Paul had warned (Acts 20:29-30).
2:3 *for the sake of My name you have labored and have not grown weary* They endured hardship in His name and never grew tired of His Word.
2:4 *you have left your first love* They had not abandoned Christ, but they had lost their passionate desire for Him. Their faith had grown cold and stale. A church can have sound doctrine and busy hands and still have a cold heart.
2:5 *Remember therefore from where you have fallen, and repent, and do the first works* Three steps back: remember how you loved Him at first, repent, and do again what you did then. If they do not, He will remove their lampstand, His blessing and their witness, from its place.
2:6 *you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate* We do not know much about the Nicolaitans. Early church writers describe them as a group inside the church who taught that Christians could take part in pagan feasts and sexual sin. The name comes from the Greek words for conquer and people. Christ hates what they do, and so did the Ephesians.
2:7 *To the one who overcomes, I will give to him to eat of the tree of life* Each letter is for every church, and each promises a reward to the one who overcomes. The Christian life is a fight against sin, Satan, the world, and the flesh. The tree of life, lost to mankind after the fall (Gen 3:22-24), will be given back to the faithful (22:2).

To Smyrna

8 "And to the angel of the church of ***the*** Smyrnaeans write:
These things says the First and the Last, who became dead
and came to life: **9** I know your works and tribulation and
poverty (but you are rich), and the blasphemy of those who
say that they themselves are Jews and are not, but ***are*** a syn-
agogue of Satan. **10** Fear nothing of what you are about to
suffer. Look, the devil is about to cast ***some*** of you into
prison, so that you may be tested, and you will have tribula-
tion ten days. Be faithful to death, and I will give you the
crown of life. **11** The one who has an ear, let him hear what
the Spirit says to the churches. The one who overcomes will
by no means be harmed by the second death."

To Pergamum

12 "And to the angel of the church in Pergamum (Pergamos)
write: These things says the ***One*** who has the sharp
two-edged sword: **13** I know your works, and where you
dwell, where the throne of Satan ***is***; and you hold fast My
name and did not deny My faith, even in the days in which
Antipas ***was*** My faithful witness, who was killed among you,
where Satan dwells. **14** But I have a few things against you,
because you have there ***some*** who hold the teaching of Bal-
aam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling block before the
sons of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit
sexual immorality. **15** So you also have ***some*** who hold the
teaching of the Nicolaitans, which I hate. **16** Repent; or else I
am coming to you quickly, and I will make war against them
with the sword of My mouth. **17** The one who has an ear, let
him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one
who overcomes, I will give to him to eat of the hidden
manna, and I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a
new name written, which no one knew except the one who
receives ***it***."

To Thyatira

18 "And to the angel of the church in Thyatira (Thyateira)
write: These things says the Son of God, who has His eyes like
a flame of fire, and His feet ***are*** like fine bronze: **19** I know
your works and love and service and faith and your
endurance, and your works, and the last ***are*** more than the
first. **20** But I have a few things against you, that you allow
the woman Jezebel (Iezabel), who calls herself a prophetess,
to teach and to lead astray My slaves to commit sexual
immorality and to eat things sacrificed to idols. **21** And I gave
her time that she might repent of her sexual immorality, and
she did not repent. **22** Look, I am casting her into a bed, and
those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation,
unless they repent of their works. **23** And I will kill her chil-
dren with death; and all the churches will know that I am the

2:8 Isa 44:6; Isa 48:12; Isa 41:4
2:9 Isa 66:18; Rev 3:9; James 2:5,6
2:10 Dan 1:12-14; Hab 2:3; Matt 10:22
2:11 Ps 49:1; Isa 28:23; Mic 1:2
2:12 Isa 49:2; Judg 3:16; Rev 1:16
2:13 Isa 66:18; Dan 11:33; 1 Tim 5:8
2:14 Num 31:16; Num 25:1-2; Josh 24:9
2:15 Rev 2:6
2:16 Rev 2:5,21,22; 2 Thess 2:8; Rev 1:16
2:17 Isa 62:2; Isa 65:15; Isa 56:4
2:18 Prov 5:21; Jer 7:11; Rev 1:11
2:19 2 Thess 1:3; 1 Tim 1:5; 2 Pet 1:7
2:20 1 Kgs 16:31; 2 Kgs 9:7; 1 Kgs 21:23
2:21 Rev 9:20,21; Rom 2:4,5; 2 Pet 3:9,15
2:22 Rev 17:2; Rev 18:3,9; Ezek 16:37-41
2:23 Ps 7:9; Ps 62:12; Jer 17:10

2:8 *the First and the Last, who became dead and came to life* Smyrna is now the city of Izmir in Turkey. To a church facing death, Jesus introduces Himself as the One who has already passed through death and lives.
2:9 *I know your works and tribulation and poverty (but you are rich)* This persecuted church endured much and stayed faithful. They had little money but were rich in spiritual blessing, the opposite of Laodicea (3:17).
2:9 *those who say that they themselves are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan* These men claimed the name but did not share the faith of Abraham (Rom 2:28-29). This describes specific opponents of the church in Smyrna, people opposed to the gospel who wanted worldly power, and it must never be used against Jewish people as a whole.
2:10 *you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful to death, and I will give you the crown of life* Christ does not promise to spare them, but He tells them not to fear. Not all would be imprisoned, and the suffering would last only a short time. If faithfulness leads to death, they receive the crown of life, promised to those who stay faithful under trial (James 1:12).
2:11 *The one who overcomes will by no means be harmed by the second death* The second death is not the death of the body but eternal death, complete separation from God in the lake of fire (20:14). It has no power over those who take part in the first resurrection (20:6).
2:12 *the One who has the sharp two-edged sword* Pergamum, about 60 miles north of Smyrna, was a Roman capital of Asia and a center of pagan worship. Christ comes with the sword of His Word to a church where pagan practices were creeping in.
2:13 *where the throne of Satan is* Pergamum was a hotbed of pagan worship and worldly sin. Yet the church held fast His name under pressure and persecution. Antipas died for his love of Christ. We know little else about him; his name is a short form of Antipater, meaning like the father.
2:14 *some who hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling block before the sons of Israel* When Balaam could not curse Israel, he taught Balak to draw Israel into idol feasts and sexual sin (Num 25:1-3; 31:16). Some in Pergamum were doing the same thing, eating food sacrificed to idols and practicing sexual immorality.
2:15 *some who hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans, which I hate* Christ takes doctrine seriously and hates any compromise with immorality. Doctrinal purity should never be traded for political or social acceptance, as was happening in Pergamum.
2:16 *I will make war against them with the sword of My mouth* Christ calls them back to the truth that comes from His Word, not from the world. He fights error with His Word.
2:17 *the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written* The hidden manna pictures communion with Christ, the true bread from heaven (John 6:32-35). In that day a white stone was given to those acquitted at trial and a black stone to those found guilty, so the white stone pictures being cleared of the guilt of sin. The new name is our adopted identity in Christ's kingdom.
2:18 *the Son of God, who has His eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet are like fine bronze* His blazing eyes show His piercing, perfect knowledge. His bronze feet show His steadfastness, purity, and holiness.
2:19 *the last are more than the first* Unlike Ephesus, Thyatira was doing more now than when it began. Our love for Christ should grow and become more visible in our lives as the years go on.
2:20 *you allow the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess* Like Ahab's queen who led Israel into Baal worship (1 Kgs 16:31), this woman led believers into sexual immorality and idol feasts, the same sin Christ named in Pergamum (2:14). The church's sin was tolerating her teaching.
2:21 *I gave her time that she might repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent* God is patient and gives time to repent, but that time does not last forever.
2:22 *I am casting her into a bed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent* The bed of sin becomes a bed of suffering. Christ will bring tribulation and pain on her followers unless they repent and turn back to God.
2:23 *I am the One who searches minds and hearts* Her children are those who follow her teaching, and their death points to the second death, being cut off from God forever. Christ knows the condition of every heart and will judge each one by his works (Jer 17:10).

One who searches minds and hearts; and I will give to each one of you according to your works. **24** But to you I say, and to the rest in Thyatira, as many as do not have this teaching, and who have not known the depths of Satan, as they say: I will not put on you any other burden. **25** Nevertheless, what you have, hold fast until I come. **26** And the one who overcomes and keeps My works until ***the*** end, I will give him authority over the nations; **27** and he will shepherd them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to pieces, as I also have received from My Father. **28** And I will give him the morning star. **29** The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

REVELATION 3

To Sardis

1 "And to the angel of the church in Sardis (Sardeis) write: These things says the ***One*** who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: I know your works, that you have the name that you are alive, and you are dead. **2** Be watching, and strengthen the things that remain, which are about to die; for I have not found your works completed before God. **3** Remember therefore how you have received and heard, and keep ***it***, and repent. If therefore you do not watch, I will come upon you like a thief, and you will by no means know at what hour I will come upon you. **4** You have a few names even in Sardis who did not defile their garments, and they will walk with Me in white, because they are worthy. **5** The one who overcomes, this one will be clothed in white garments, and I will by no means blot out his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels. **6** The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

To Philadelphia

7 "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia (Philadelpheia) write: These things says the Holy ***One***, the True ***One***, the ***One*** who has the key of David (Dabid), the ***One*** who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens: **8** I know your works. Look, I have set before you an opened door, and no one is able to shut it; because you have little power, and you kept My word and did not deny My name. **9** Look, I am giving ***some*** of the synagogue of Satan, of those who say they themselves are Jews and are not, but lie; look, I will make them come and worship before your feet, and know that I loved you. **10** Because you kept the word of My endurance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing which is about to come upon the whole inhabited world, to

2:24 Acts 15:28; 2 Cor 11:3,13-15; Rev 12:9
2:25 Rev 3:3,11; Rom 12:9; 1 Thess 5:21
2:26 Ps 2:8; Rev 3:21; Rev 20:4
2:27 Ps 2:9; Ps 2:8; Rev 12:5
2:28 Rev 22:16; 2 Pet 1:19; Luke 1:78,79
2:29 Ps 49:1; Isa 28:23; Jer 13:15
3:1 Rev 1:4; 1 Tim 5:6; Rev 1:16,20
3:2 Rev 16:15; Acts 20:28-31; 1 Pet 4:7
3:3 Rev 2:5; 2 Pet 3:10; Rev 16:15
3:4 Rev 6:11; Rev 7:9,13; Jude 1:23
3:5 Ps 69:28; Rev 17:8; Matt 10:32
3:6 Mic 1:2; Rev 2:7
3:7 Isa 22:22; Job 12:14; Isa 41:14
3:8 Prov 30:9; Josh 24:27; 1 Cor 16:9
3:9 Isa 49:23; Isa 60:14; Exod 11:8
3:10 2 Pet 2:9; Rev 1:9; Matt 24:14

2:24 *who have not known the depths of Satan, as they say* The false teachers boasted of deep secrets, but they were the depths of Satan. Christ will not punish those who have not followed these pagan ways, and He lays no other burden on them.
2:25 *what you have, hold fast until I come* Remain steadfast and hold true to Jesus' teaching. Every believer is to live with His coming in view.
2:26 *the one who overcomes and keeps My works until the end, I will give him authority over the nations* Overcomers are those who rise above the problems in their local church to live a life pleasing to Jesus. They will have a place of rule in His kingdom.
2:27 *he will shepherd them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to pieces* Jesus quotes Psalm 2:9, where God tells His King, "You will break them with a rod of iron; like a vessel of a potter You will smash them" (Ps 2:9). The Father gave that rule to the Son, and the Son will share it with those who overcome when He comes back to reign on the earth (20:4-6).
2:28 *I will give him the morning star* Christ Himself is the morning star (22:16). To receive the morning star is to receive Him, and with Him knowledge and wisdom.
2:29 *let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches* Those who hear and live by His Word will overcome this world and live with Him forever. Christ wants us to listen and take heed.
3:1 *I know your works, that you have the name that you are alive, and you are dead* Five of the seven letters open with praise before correction. Sardis and Laodicea are different. Christ, who holds the seven Spirits, the Holy Spirit in His fullness, says in effect, I know your reputation for being alive, but you are dead. A church can look busy and successful and have no life of the Spirit in it.
3:2 *strengthen the things that remain, which are about to die* The few in that church who still had faith were in danger of losing it. Something was missing in the deeds they were doing. Their works were not completed before God.
3:3 *If therefore you do not watch, I will come upon you like a thief* They needed to remember how they first received His mercy, hold on to it, and repent. If they did not wake up, Christ would come on them in judgment when they least expected it. A sleeping church is never ready for Him.
3:4 *You have a few names even in Sardis who did not defile their garments* Even in a dead church a faithful few stayed true. White pictures purity. No one gets into heaven by being good enough. We are made pure by Christ's blood (1:5; 7:14), and that is what lets us stand in His presence.
3:5 *I will by no means blot out his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father* This includes those who sinned, saw their error before it was too late, and turned to Christ. They too are clothed in white, their names stay in the book of life, and Jesus Himself will announce their names before God and His angels (Matt 10:32).
3:6 *let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches* Sardis had a reputation for being alive, so this church above all needed to stop and actually listen.
3:7 *the One who has the key of David, the One who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens* Philadelphia means brotherly love. The key of David speaks of authority over the house and kingdom (Isa 22:22). Christ controls who can enter His kingdom, and only those made righteous through faith in Him can come in.
3:8 *I have set before you an opened door, and no one is able to shut it; because you have little power* Christ is pleased with this church. They had little strength, but their faith was genuine, they kept His Word, and they did not deny His name. We should not settle for a little strength but keep growing through God's Word and fellowship with other believers.
3:9 *I will make them come and worship before your feet, and know that I loved you* Those who called themselves Jews but twisted God's Word were blind to who Jesus is. Christ will show His favor to His people so clearly that their enemies must acknowledge it, and some may soften and accept Christ. The words echo Isaiah 60:14. Some teachers say the church now takes over that promise, but I read Isaiah 60 as a promise to Israel still waiting for the kingdom, and here Jesus borrows its picture to encourage a faithful church.
3:10 *I also will keep you from the hour of testing which is about to come upon the whole inhabited world, to test those who dwell on the earth* This is one of the main verses behind the pre-tribulation view I hold. Christ promises to keep His church not through the hour but from it, the seven-year Tribulation described in chapters 6 to 19 that comes on the whole world. Others believe the promise was only for the church in Philadelphia, which went through its own persecution after these letters were written.

test those who dwell on the earth. **11** Look, I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, so that no one may take your crown. **12** The one who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will by no means go out anymore; and I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem (Hierousalem), which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name. **13** The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

To Laodicea

14 "And to the angel of the church of ***the*** Laodiceans (Laodikeis) write: These things says the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: **15** I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were cold or hot. **16** So, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I am about to vomit you out of My mouth. **17** Because you say, 'I am rich, and I have become rich, and I have need of nothing,' and you do not know that you are the wretched ***one*** and miserable and poor and blind and naked, **18** I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined by fire, so that you may become rich, and white garments, so that you may be clothed and the shame of your nakedness may not be made manifest; and anoint your eyes ***with*** eye salve, so that you may see. **19** As many as I love, I rebuke and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent. **20** Look, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. **21** The one who overcomes, I will give to him to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. **22** The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

REVELATION 4

The Throne in Heaven

1 After these things I saw, and look, a door opened in heaven, and the first voice which I heard, like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after these things." **2** And immediately I was in ***the*** Spirit; and look, a throne was set in heaven, and ***One*** sitting on the throne. **3** And the One sitting was in appearance like a jasper stone and a sardius; and ***there was*** a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like emeralds. **4** And around the throne ***were*** twenty-four thrones; and on the thrones I saw the twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white

3:11 Rev 2:10; James 1:12; Rev 1:3
3:12 Ezek 48:35; Rev 22:4; Rev 14:1
3:13 Mic 1:2; Rev 2:7
3:14 Isa 65:16; Prov 8:22; Isa 55:4
3:15 Hos 7:8; Rev 2:4; Matt 24:12
3:16 Lev 18:28; Rev 2:5; Jer 14:19
3:17 Hos 12:8; Zech 11:5; Prov 13:7
3:18 Isa 55:1; Prov 19:20; Isa 46:12
3:19 Prov 3:12; Hos 7:12; Rev 2:5,21,22
3:20 John 14:21-23; Luke 12:36; Rev 19:9
3:21 Ps 91:15; Hos 11:12; Matt 19:28
3:22 Mic 1:2; Rev 2:7,11,17; Rev 3:6,13
4:1 Exod 24:12; Prov 25:7; Rev 1:10
4:2 Isa 6:1; Dan 7:9; Rev 1:10
4:3 Ezek 1:28; Gen 9:13; Ezek 1:26
4:4 Rev 11:16; Matt 19:28; Rev 4:10

3:11 *I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, so that no one may take your crown* Hold on to your faith, truth, zeal, and love, because He is coming soon. Do not let anyone take away your faith in Christ or the reward of faithful service.
3:12 *I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will by no means go out anymore* A pillar speaks of permanence and stability in God's kingdom. Philadelphia was shaken by earthquakes, but the overcomer will never have to leave. God's name, the name of the new Jerusalem (21:2), and Christ's new name written on him mark him as belonging to God's family.
3:14 *the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God* Amen means firm and faithful. Christ is the faithful and true witness, and the Beginning means the source and ruler of creation, not the first thing created, for all things came into being through Him (John 1:3).
3:15 *you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were cold or hot* Their works were neither on fire for the gospel nor openly cold. Christ would rather they were one or the other.
3:16 *because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I am about to vomit you out of My mouth* Christ detests lukewarmness. It bears no fruit and hurts those seeking a real relationship with Him, because lukewarm Christians tend to make those around them lukewarm too.
3:17 *you do not know that you are the wretched one and miserable and poor and blind and naked* Laodicea was a wealthy city, and the church lived by the world's standards instead of God's. Its people would not admit that they were lost, wretched, poor, blind, and naked.
3:18 *buy from Me gold refined by fire, so that you may become rich, and white garments* True riches come from Christ. Gold refined by fire keeps its purity after the flames. White garments are the righteousness He gives, so we are clothed in His purity and not left in shame. The eye salve opens our eyes to see right from wrong and come out of darkness.
3:19 *As many as I love, I rebuke and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent* These hard words come from love (Heb 12:6). Christ corrects His people so that they will repent and not face His wrath.
3:20 *I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him* By nature our hearts are shut against Him through ignorance, unbelief, and sin. He wants in, and He waits patiently for us to open. Eating together is a sign of being welcomed into His family and sharing fellowship with Him.
3:21 *I will give to him to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne* Christ faced temptation and was victorious. Those who remain faithful and committed to Him will share His rule.
3:22 *let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches* The last of the seven letters closes with the same reminder: listen and apply what you hear. Notice that after this chapter the church is not seen on the earth again until it returns with Christ (19:14).
4:1 *After these things I saw, and look, a door opened in heaven* Now begins the third part of the book, "the things which are about to take place after these" (1:19). The trumpet-like voice is the same one John heard in 1:10, the voice of Jesus Christ, inviting him up to see the future.
4:1 *Come up here* Scripture speaks of three heavens: the sky (Deut 11:11), outer space (Ps 19:6), and the place where God Himself dwells, which Paul calls the third heaven (2 Cor 12:2). John is called up into God's presence, much as the church will be caught up before the Tribulation begins (1 Thess 4:16-17).
4:2 *immediately I was in the Spirit; and look, a throne was set in heaven, and One sitting on the throne* Many believe John was raptured for this vision. Whether in the body or out of it, we do not know, but he was in the Lord's presence and his vision was divinely given. The throne speaks of honor, judgment, and authority. Before any judgment falls on the earth, John is shown that God is on His throne.
4:3 *like a jasper stone and a sardius; and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like emeralds* This is not a picture of physical features but of likeness and splendor. Jasper is a clear stone shining with color, for God is light. The red sardius speaks of His justice. The emerald rainbow recalls His covenant with Noah (Gen 9:16), a reminder of mercy even as judgment comes.
4:4 *the twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white garments; and they had golden crowns on their heads* Some suggest the twelve tribal leaders and twelve apostles, Old and New Testament together. Others point to the twenty-four divisions of priests David appointed (1 Chr 24). They sit, showing honor and closeness to God. White robes show they are pure in His sight, and crowns show the authority He has given. This signals that the church has triumphed and mankind has been welcomed into heaven.

garments; and they had golden crowns on their heads. **5** And out of the throne proceed lightnings and thunders and voices; and seven lamps of fire ***were*** burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. **6** And before the throne ***was*** a sea of glass, like crystal; and in ***the*** midst of the throne and around the throne ***were*** four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind. **7** And the first living creature ***was*** like a lion, and the second living creature like a calf, and the third living creature having the face as a man, and the fourth living creature like a flying eagle. **8** And the four living creatures, each one by itself, had six wings apiece; around and within ***they are*** full of eyes; and they have no rest day and night, saying, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who was and who is and who is coming." **9** And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanksgiving to the One sitting on the throne, who lives to the ages of the ages, **10** the twenty-four elders will fall down before the One sitting on the throne, and they worship the One who lives to the ages of the ages, and they cast their crowns before the throne, saying, **11** "Worthy are You, Lord, to receive the glory and the honor and the power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they are and were created."

REVELATION 5

The Scroll and the Lamb

1 And I saw on the right ***hand*** of the One sitting on the throne a scroll written inside and on ***the*** back, sealed with seven seals. **2** And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?" **3** And no one in heaven nor on the earth nor under the earth was able to open the scroll nor to look at it. **4** And I was weeping much, because no one was found worthy to open and to read the scroll, nor to look at it. **5** And one of the elders says to me, "Do not weep; look, the Lion who is of the tribe of Judah (Ioudas), the Root of David (Dabid), has overcome, to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals." **6** And I saw, and look, in ***the*** midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in ***the*** midst of the elders, a Lamb standing as having been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God which have been sent out into all the earth. **7** And He came and took the scroll out of the right ***hand*** of the One sitting on the throne. **8** And when He took the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each one having harps and golden bowls full of incense, which are the

4:5 Exod 19:16; Zech 4:2; Ezek 1:13
4:6 Ezek 10:12; Ezek 1:4; Ezek 1:5
4:7 Ezek 1:10; Ezek 10:14; Gen 49:9
4:8 Isa 6:2-3; Ezek 10:21; Ezek 1:6
4:9 Rev 5:13,14; Rev 15:7; Rev 7:11,12
4:10 1 Chr 29:11; Rev 4:4; Rev 5:8,14
4:11 Col 1:16,17; Gen 1:1; Rev 10:6
5:1 Ezek 2:9-10; Isa 29:11; Dan 12:4
5:2 Isa 29:11; Ps 103:20; Job 41:15
5:3 Isa 40:13; Isa 29:11; Ezek 2:9
5:4 Isa 29:11; Ezek 2:9; Zech 5:1
5:5 Isa 11:1; Isa 11:10; Jer 23:5
5:6 Zech 4:10; Isa 53:7; Gen 22:8
5:7 Rev 5:1; Rev 4:2,3
5:8 Ps 141:2; Exod 12:3; Lev 4:32

4:5 *seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God* The lightning, voices, and thunder are God's declarations of His will, as at Sinai (Exod 19:16). The seven lamps are the Holy Spirit (1:4). Isaiah 11:2 describes His sevenfold nature: the Spirit of the Lord, of wisdom, of understanding, of counsel, of power, of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord.
4:6 *before the throne was a sea of glass, like crystal* Some say the sea of glass represents the calm and peace of heaven, in contrast to the turmoil on earth. Others say it represents God's Word, the foundation of heaven.
4:6 *four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind* Many believe they are seraphim like those in Isaiah 6:1-3, who also have six wings and cry "Holy, holy, holy." Others believe they are cherubim as in Ezekiel 1:5-14. Their eyes show wisdom and constant alertness.
4:7 *like a lion, and the second living creature like a calf, and the third living creature having the face as a man, and the fourth living creature like a flying eagle* Early writers linked the four with the four Gospels in different ways. The pairing most used, from Jerome, is Matthew the man (Christ's humanity), Mark the lion (His power and royalty), Luke the ox (His sacrifice and service), and John the eagle (His soaring majesty as the Word). The lion is noblest, the ox tireless, the eagle swift and sharp-sighted, and man the wisest of creation.
4:8 *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who was and who is and who is coming* They never stop praising God, day or night. Some believe each "holy" is directed at one Person of the Trinity. Their endless praise also reminds us that the One who is coming will surely come (Acts 1:9-11).
4:10 *cast their crowns before the throne* The elders throw down their crowns in reverence and humility, showing that His crown is far more glorious than theirs. Whatever honor we receive from Him, we will gladly lay at His feet.
4:11 *Worthy are You, Lord, to receive the glory and the honor and the power; for You created all things* Everything exists because of God's will and for His pleasure. By praising Him as Creator, the elders acknowledge His sovereignty over all things, including our lives.
5:1 *a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals* Written on both sides means the scroll is full and complete, needing nothing added. Seven seals show its importance, and someone with real authority must open it. This is a rolled papyrus scroll, not a bound book.
5:2 *Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?* The mighty angel calls on all creation to find someone worthy, someone sinless and given authority by God to open it.
5:3 *no one in heaven nor on the earth nor under the earth was able to open the scroll* Not God's angels, not His prophets, not the living or the dead, and not the fallen angels. No created being is worthy.
5:4 *I was weeping much, because no one was found worthy* John knew this scroll was the title deed to the earth. As long as it stayed sealed, Satan would remain in control, and God's plan to take back the earth would not go forward.
5:5 *the Lion who is of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome* The Lion of Judah points to Jesus' human ancestry and Jacob's prophecy (Gen 49:9). The Root of David means He is both David's descendant and the source of his royal line (Isa 11:1-10). Only Jesus has overcome, so only He is worthy to break the seals.
5:6 *a Lamb standing as having been slain* John expected a lion and saw a Lamb, killed but now alive forever, still bearing the marks of His suffering. Isaiah pictured the Messiah as a lamb led to the slaughter (Isa 53:7), and John the Baptist called Jesus "the Lamb of God" (John 1:29). He is called the Lamb 28 times in Revelation, His signature title in this book.
5:6 *having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God* A horn in Scripture signals strength (Zech 1:18; Dan 7:24), so seven horns picture perfect power. The seven eyes are the Holy Spirit, God's complete Spirit sent out over the whole earth.
5:7 *He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of the One sitting on the throne* God now hands authority over the earth and mankind to His Son, the only One worthy of it (Dan 7:13-14).
5:8 *harps and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints* The harps are instruments of praise, and the incense is the prayers of God's people. Praise and prayer belong together. Not one prayer of His people is forgotten. They are kept before His throne and answered as the Lamb takes back the earth.

prayers of the saints. **9** And they sing a new song, saying, "Worthy are You to take the scroll and to open its seals; for You were slain, and You purchased us for God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, **10** and You have made us kings and priests to our God, and we will reign on the earth." **11** And I saw, and I heard ***the*** voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, **12** saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive the power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing!" **13** And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth, and those which are on the sea, and all the things in them, I heard saying, "To the One sitting on the throne and to the Lamb ***be*** the blessing and the honor and the glory and the might to the ages of the ages!" **14** And the four living creatures were saying, "Amen." And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped ***the One*** who lives to the ages of the ages.

REVELATION 6

The Four Horsemen

1 And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures saying, as ***with*** a sound of thunder, "Come and see." **2** And I saw, and look, a white horse, and the one sitting on it having a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out overcoming and so that he might overcome. **3** And when He opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, "Come and see." **4** And another horse went out, fiery red; and to the one sitting on it, it was given to him to take the peace from the earth, and that they should slay one another; and a great sword was given to him. **5** And when He opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature saying, "Come and see." And I saw, and look, a black horse, and the one sitting on it having a pair of scales in his hand. **6** And I heard a voice in ***the*** midst of the four living creatures saying, "Approximately a quart (a choenix) of wheat for a denarius, and approximately three quarts (three choenixes) of barley for a denarius; and do not harm the oil and the wine." **7** And when He opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, "Come and see." **8** And I saw, and look, a pale horse, and the one sitting on it, his name ***was*** Death, and Hades follows with him. And authority was given to them over the fourth of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and with death and by the beasts of the earth.

The Fifth and Sixth Seals

9 And when He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar

5:9 Isa 42:10; Ps 96:1; Deut 32:43
5:10 Exod 19:6; Dan 7:18; Ps 37:9
5:11 Dan 7:10; Heb 12:22; Rev 4:4,6,9,10
5:12 Gen 22:8; Exod 12:3; Rev 4:11
5:13 1 Chr 29:11; Exod 12:3; Ps 150:6
5:14 Ps 41:13; Jer 28:6; Hab 3:3
6:1 Rev 5:5-7; Rev 4:5; Rev 10:3,4
6:2 Zech 6:2-3; Rev 19:11,14; Rev 14:14
6:3 Rev 4:7; Rev 6:1
6:4 Zech 1:8; Zech 6:2; Rev 12:3
6:5 Zech 6:2,6; Rev 6:1; Rev 4:6,7
6:6 2 Kgs 7:1; Rev 9:4; Ps 76:10
6:7 Rev 4:7; Rev 6:1,3,5
6:8 Jer 15:2; Ezek 14:21; Jer 15:3
6:9 Isa 26:21; Rev 20:4; Rev 14:18

5:9 *You purchased us for God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation* The new song declares Jesus worthy because He was slain. His blood bought people from every corner of the earth. Heaven will be filled with every kind of people.
5:10 *You have made us kings and priests to our God, and we will reign on the earth* We are born into God's kingdom when we believe, and as priests we have access to Him. This echoes God's call to Israel (Exod 19:6). Some teachers read it to mean the church has replaced Israel and is already reigning in its place, but I read it plainly: the redeemed will reign with Christ on the earth in the thousand-year kingdom still to come, and God's promises to Israel are not moved to the church.
5:11 *the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands* A staggering, uncountable number of angels, the attendants of God's throne, join the praise (Dan 7:10).
5:12 *Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive the power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing!* God is worshiped as Creator in chapter 4, and Jesus is worshiped as Redeemer in chapter 5. Heaven gives the Lamb the same worship it gives the Father. Jesus is God.
5:13 *every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth* All creation cries out that blessing, honor, glory, and might belong to God and the Lamb forever. One day every created thing will recognize Christ, even those who denied Him in life, the fallen angels, and Satan himself (Phil 2:10-11).
5:14 *the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped* Just before Christ begins breaking the seals, heaven gives one final confirmation that Jesus alone is worthy of this praise. Worship comes before judgment.
6:1 *when the Lamb opened one of the seals* The judgments of the Tribulation begin, and they begin with the Lamb. Nothing falls on the earth that Christ Himself has not released. John is looking down from heaven, watching God's purpose for the world unfold.
6:2 *a white horse, and the one sitting on it having a bow; and a crown was given to him* There are three main views. Some believe the rider is Jesus Christ, since He returns on a white horse (19:11). A third view sees mankind's last attempt to bring peace while still rejecting Christ. I believe he is the Antichrist, later called the beast (13:1-18; 19:19-21). This rider carries a bow, while Jesus fights only with the sword from His mouth (19:15). His crown is a stephanos, a victor's wreath, while Jesus wears royal diadems (19:12). Besides the color of the horse, nothing else matches. He is an impostor.
6:2 *he went out overcoming and so that he might overcome* The Antichrist comes on the scene as a conqueror, apparently bringing peace, in line with the covenant of Daniel 9:27. His peace will not last.
6:4 *another horse went out, fiery red* Red is the color of war and bloodshed. The rider is given power to take peace from the earth so that people kill one another. His great sword unleashes conflict, civil war, and death.
6:5 *a black horse, and the one sitting on it having a pair of scales in his hand* Black pictures famine (Lam 4:8-9), and famine follows war. This famine will be worldwide. The scales show that food will have to be carefully measured out.
6:6 *do not harm the oil and the wine* A denarius was a day's wages, and it buys only enough wheat for one meal. The poor will struggle badly while the oil and wine, the luxuries of the wealthy, remain untouched. The rich will not go without, but ordinary people will suffer.
6:8 *a pale horse, and the one sitting on it, his name was Death, and Hades follows with him* The word for pale is a pale green, the color of a corpse. Only this rider is named. He carries no weapon because he needs none. Hades follows behind, gathering what Death leaves.
6:8 *authority was given to them over the fourth of the earth* A fourth of the earth's people die through sword, famine, plague, and wild beasts, the same means named in the earlier seals, showing that the four seals are connected (Ezek 14:21). Notice the words "was given." Even these riders act only under God's authority.
6:9 *the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and because of the testimony which they held* These martyrs died for their faith during the Tribulation. Some believe they are Jewish believers who came to faith after the rapture. Others believe they are a mix of Jews and Gentiles who turned to Jesus after the rapture. Either way, people will still be saved in those days, at a great cost.

the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and because of the testimony which they held. **10** And they were crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Until when, O Master, the Holy and the True, do You not judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" **11** And white robes were given to each; and it was said to them that they should rest yet a little time, until both their fellow slaves and their brothers, who are about to be killed even as they ***were***, shall be completed. **12** And I saw when He opened the sixth seal, and look, a great earthquake occurred; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood; **13** and the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree, being shaken by a great wind, casts its unripe figs. **14** And heaven departed like a scroll being rolled up, and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. **15** And the kings of the earth and the great ones and the rich and the commanders and the mighty and every slave and every free ***man*** hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains; **16** and they say to the mountains and to the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from ***the*** face of the One sitting on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb; **17** for the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"

REVELATION 7

The 144,000 Sealed

1 And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, so that no wind might blow on the earth nor on the sea nor on any tree. **2** And I saw another angel ascending from ***the*** rising of ***the*** sun, having ***the*** seal of ***the*** living God; and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was given to harm the earth and the sea, **3** saying, "Do not harm the earth nor the sea nor the trees until we seal the slaves of our God on their foreheads." **4** And I heard the number of those who were sealed: one hundred forty-four thousand sealed out of every tribe of ***the*** sons of Israel. **5** Out of ***the*** tribe of Judah (Ioudas), twelve thousand ***were*** sealed; out of ***the*** tribe of Reuben (Hrouben), twelve thousand sealed; out of ***the*** tribe of Gad, twelve thousand sealed; **6** out of ***the*** tribe of Asher (Aser), twelve thousand sealed; out of ***the*** tribe of Naphtali, twelve thousand sealed; out of ***the*** tribe of Manasseh (Manasses), twelve thousand sealed; **7** out of ***the*** tribe of Simeon (Symeon), twelve thousand sealed; out of ***the*** tribe of Levi (Leui), twelve thousand sealed; out of ***the*** tribe of Issachar (Isachar), twelve thousand sealed; **8** out of ***the*** tribe of Zebulun (Zaboulon), twelve thousand sealed; out of ***the*** tribe of Joseph (Ioseph), twelve thousand sealed; out of ***the***

6:10 Ps 79:10; Ps 94:3; Dan 8:13
6:11 Rev 7:9,14; Heb 11:40; Rev 14:13
6:12 Joel 2:10; Isa 50:3; Isa 13:10
6:13 Isa 34:4; Dan 8:10; Isa 13:10
6:14 Ezek 38:20; Rev 16:20; Isa 34:4
6:15 Isa 2:19; Isa 24:21; Josh 10:16
6:16 Hos 10:8; Luke 23:30; Rev 4:2,5,9
6:17 Joel 2:11; Mal 3:2; Zeph 1:14

7:1 Dan 7:2; Jer 49:36; Ezek 7:2
7:2 Deut 5:26; 1 Sam 17:26; 1 Sam 17:36
7:3 Ezek 9:4; Rev 14:1; Rev 13:16
7:4 Exod 1:1; Exod 28:21; Num 1:46
7:5 Exod 1:2; Num 13:4; Gen 35:22
7:6 Gen 48:5; Num 1:34; Luke 2:36
7:7 Gen 35:23; Gen 29:34; Gen 30:18
7:8 Gen 30:24; Judg 1:22; 1 Chr 2:1

6:10 *Until when, O Master, the Holy and the True, do You not judge and avenge our blood* The martyrs ask when their deaths will be avenged. Judgment will come from Jesus Himself, who will give perfect justice to those who denied Him and killed His followers. The church today is told to pray for its enemies. These saints pray for justice because the day of wrath has come.

6:11 *white robes were given to each; and it was said to them that they should rest yet a little time* The white robes show their acceptance into His kingdom, made possible only by faith in Christ. They are told to wait until a number known only to God is complete, the believers still to be killed. God knows every name.

6:12 *a great earthquake occurred; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood* Some take this at face value, a worldwide earthquake and real changes in the sun and moon showing God's wrath. Others see a massive breakdown of society and collapse of earthly authority. Joel 2:31 foretold the sun turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the day of the Lord.

6:13 *the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree, being shaken by a great wind, casts its unripe figs* Some take this at face value as a shower of meteors striking the earth. Others see the downfall of religious leaders, drawing on Daniel 8:10.

6:14 *heaven departed like a scroll being rolled up, and every mountain and island were moved out of their places* Some read this as real physical changes from the earthquake (Isa 34:4). Others connect it to the world's religions collapsing, paving the way for the one-world religion of the false prophet (13:13; 19:20).

6:15 *hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains* Everyone tries to hide, from kings to slaves. Wealth and power cannot protect anyone from God's judgment (Isa 2:19). Even then, hardened hearts refuse to call out to Him for mercy.

6:16 *Fall on us and hide us from the face of the One sitting on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb* They know this is God's judgment, but they would rather be crushed by rocks than turn to Him (Hos 10:8; Luke 23:30). The wrath of the Lamb is a startling phrase. The gentle Lamb who died for sinners is also the Judge of those who refuse Him.

6:17 *the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?* The people of the earth recognize that the day of wrath has come. This wrath is not for the church, for "God did not appoint us for wrath" (1 Thess 5:9). Still, many remain hard and proud, choosing their own way over the One who gave His life for them.

7:1 *four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth* Chapter 7 is a pause between the sixth and seventh seals. The four corners are the four directions. The winds are not ordinary weather but the great forces that drive nations and people: political, religious, economic, and military power. God's angels hold them back until His appointed time.

7:2 *another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, having the seal of the living God* A seal is a mark of ownership and protection. This is God's mark, not the mark of the beast (13:16). Those who carry it are set apart from harm, as God marked the faithful in Jerusalem before judgment (Ezek 9:4).

7:3 *until we seal the slaves of our God on their foreheads* The word for slaves, doulos, is the same word Paul and James used of themselves as bond-servants of Jesus Christ. These sealed ones are servants of Christ with work to do.

7:4 *one hundred forty-four thousand sealed out of every tribe of the sons of Israel* I take this as it reads: 12,000 from each of the twelve tribes of Israel, a remnant of Jewish believers sealed during the Tribulation. They are not the church. They will be witnesses for Christ, spreading God's Word through the world. God has not forgotten His promises to Israel (Rom 11:25-26).

7:5 *Out of the tribe of Judah, twelve thousand were sealed* Judah, the tribe of the Messiah (5:5), is named first. Dan is left off the list, possibly because of that tribe's history of idol worship (Judg 18:30). Manasseh takes Dan's place, and Joseph stands in for Ephraim. God knows each tribe even when the world has lost track of them.

tribe of Benjamin (Beniamin), twelve thousand sealed.

The Great Multitude

9 After these things I saw, and look, a great multitude which no one was able to number, out of every nation and tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches in their hands; **10** and crying out with a loud voice, saying, "The salvation ***is*** to our God, to the One sitting on the throne, and to the Lamb!" **11** And all the angels were standing around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell before the throne on their face and worshiped God, **12** saying, "Amen! The blessing and the glory and the wisdom and the thanksgiving and the honor and the power and the strength ***be*** to our God to the ages of the ages. Amen." **13** And one of the elders answered, saying to me, "These who are clothed in the white robes, who are they, and from where did they come?" **14** And I said to him, "Sir, you know." And he said to me, "These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation, and they washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. **15** Because of this they are before the throne of God, and they serve Him day and night in His temple; and the One sitting on the throne will tabernacle over them. **16** They will not hunger anymore, nor will they thirst anymore, nor will the sun by any means fall on them, nor any scorching heat; **17** because the Lamb who ***is*** in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and will lead them to living fountains of waters; and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

REVELATION 8

The Seventh Seal

1 And when He opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. **2** And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them. **3** And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and much incense was given to him, so that he might give ***it*** with the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar which ***is*** before the throne. **4** And the smoke of the incense went up with the prayers of the saints out of ***the*** hand of the angel before God. **5** And the angel took the censer and filled it from the fire of the altar and cast ***it*** to the earth; and there were voices and thunders and lightnings and an earthquake.

The First Four Trumpets

6 And the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves so that they might sound. **7** And the first angel sounded, and there was hail and fire mixed with blood,

7:9 Exod 12:3; Isa 61:10; John 12:13
7:10 Exod 12:3; 1 Chr 29:11; Isa 53:11
7:11 Rev 4:10; Rev 4:6; Rev 5:11-13
7:12 Ps 41:13; Ps 72:19; Ps 89:52
7:13 Zech 1:19; Rev 7:9; Rev 4:4,10
7:14 Isa 1:18; 1 John 1:7; Rev 1:5
7:15 Isa 53:11; Rev 22:3; Isa 4:5,6
7:16 Isa 49:10; Isa 65:13; Matt 5:6
7:17 Isa 25:8; Rev 21:4; Ps 23:2
8:1 Ps 62:1; Rev 6:1,3,5,7,9,12; Zech 2:13
8:2 Rev 11:15; Luke 1:19; Rev 15:1
8:3 Ps 141:2; Num 16:47; 2 Chr 26:18
8:4 Ps 141:2; Rev 15:8; Exod 30:1
8:5 Ezek 10:2; Exod 19:16; Rev 4:5
8:6 Rev 8:2
8:7 Ezek 38:22; Exod 9:23; Exod 9:24

7:9 *a great multitude which no one was able to number, out of every nation and tribes and peoples and tongues* Some see this as a mid-tribulation rapture of the church. Others see Gentiles who come to faith in Christ during the Tribulation itself. The elder's answer in verse 14 points to the second view, which I hold. Palm branches were waved at victory celebrations (John 12:13).

7:10 *The salvation is to our God, to the One sitting on the throne, and to the Lamb!* They did not save themselves. Their cry is a clear declaration that they have trusted Christ as Savior.

7:12 *The blessing and the glory and the wisdom and the thanksgiving and the honor and the power and the strength be to our God* Everyone in the throne room, the living creatures, the elders, and all the angels, falls down and joins the praise. Seven words of praise, perfect and complete.

7:13 *These who are clothed in the white robes, who are they, and from where did they come?* John does not know, which tells us they are not the Old Testament saints or the church of his own day.

7:14 *These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation, and they washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb* These are the Tribulation saints, people saved during that terrible time and washed clean by Christ's blood. Many will die for their faith (6:9). Even in the darkest days of the world, God will save a multitude, and they are saved the same way we are, by the blood of the Lamb.

7:15 *the One sitting on the throne will tabernacle over them* They serve Him day and night in joyful fellowship. God spreading His tent over them means full shelter and acceptance in His presence.

7:16 *They will not hunger anymore, nor will they thirst anymore* Some see this as reflecting what they went without during the Tribulation, connecting back to the famine of the third seal (6:5-6). Every need will be fully met (Isa 49:10).

7:17 *the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them* The Lamb becomes the Shepherd (Ps 23:1). He is the living water, and His presence will satisfy every need.

7:17 *God will wipe away every tear from their eyes* Think about what made you cry this year. None of it follows you into heaven, because heaven is where God dwells, and suffering does not live there (21:4).

8:1 *when He opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour* The last seal on the title deed is broken. The silence may be the calm before the storm, or it may parallel Temple worship, where solemn silence was kept while incense was offered and people prayed (Ps 62:1). Either way, all heaven falls silent to see what comes next.

8:2 *the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them* The seventh seal does not unleash anything by itself. It opens into the seven trumpet judgments. Gabriel is thought to be one of these angels, since he stands before God (Luke 1:19). The trumpets are often compared to the trumpets that brought down Jericho's walls (Josh 6).

8:3 *another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer* Many commentators believe this angel is Jesus Christ Himself, since He alone, our one mediator (1 Tim 2:5), is worthy to present the prayers of the saints to God. Others see a created angel serving at the altar.

8:4 *the smoke of the incense went up with the prayers of the saints* A beautiful picture: our prayers are always heard by God, including the prayers of those persecuted for their faith all through history.

8:5 *the angel took the censer and filled it from the fire of the altar and cast it to the earth* The prayers of the saints have been heard, and now they will be answered. Thunder, lightning, and an earthquake announce the next wave of judgment.

8:6 *the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves so that they might sound* Some read the trumpets as real events, pointing to the plagues of Egypt (Exod 7-11), where five of the same plagues appear as real events. Others read them as symbols explained elsewhere in Scripture. As I said in the introduction, I take the text at its plain, literal meaning unless it tells me otherwise. Both readings are given below.

8:7 *hail and fire mixed with blood, and it was cast to the earth; and a third of the trees was burned up, and all green grass was burned up* Read at face value, this is massive destruction of plant life, whether God's direct judgment or perhaps a limited nuclear exchange. Read symbolically, grass is mankind's frailty (Isa 40:6) and trees human pride (Dan 4). I read this as real fire on real land, like the hail and fire on Egypt (Exod 9:23-25). Either way, this is judgment on people who turned down the gospel.

and it was cast to the earth; and a third of the trees was burned up, and all green grass was burned up. **8** And the second angel sounded, and ***something*** like a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea; and a third of the sea became blood; **9** and a third of the creatures which ***were*** in the sea, those having life, died; and a third of the ships was destroyed. **10** And the third angel sounded, and a great star fell out of heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of waters. **11** And the name of the star is called Wormwood; and a third of the waters becomes wormwood, and many men died from the waters, because they were made bitter. **12** And the fourth angel sounded, and a third of the sun was struck, and a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them might be darkened, and the day might not shine ***for*** a third of it, and the night likewise. **13** And I saw, and I heard one angel flying in mid-heaven, saying with a loud voice, "Woe, woe, woe to those who dwell on the earth, because of the remaining voices of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!"

REVELATION 9

The Fifth Trumpet: Locusts from the Abyss

1 And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star that had fallen out of heaven to the earth; and the key of the pit of the abyss was given to him. **2** And he opened the pit of the abyss; and smoke went up out of the pit like ***the*** smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by the smoke of the pit. **3** And out of the smoke locusts came out onto the earth, and authority was given to them, as the scorpions of the earth have authority. **4** And it was said to them that they should not harm the grass of the earth, nor any green thing, nor any tree, except only the men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. **5** And it was given to them that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months; and their torment ***was*** like ***the*** torment of a scorpion when it strikes a man. **6** And in those days men will seek death and will not find it; and they will long to die, and death will flee from them. **7** And the likenesses of the locusts ***were*** like horses prepared for battle; and on their heads ***were*** as ***it were*** crowns like gold, and their faces ***were*** like ***the*** faces of men. **8** And they had hair like ***the*** hair of women, and their teeth were like ***those*** of lions. **9** And they had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings ***was*** like ***the*** sound of chariots of many horses running into battle. **10** And they have tails like scorpions, and stings were in their tails; and their authority ***was*** to harm men five months. **11** And they have as king over them the angel of the abyss; his name in Hebrew ***is*** Abaddon, and in the Greek he has ***the*** name Apollyon. **12** The first woe has passed; look, two woes are still coming after these things.

8:8 Jer 51:25; Exod 7:20; Mark 11:23
8:9 Rev 8:7,10,12; Isa 2:16; Zech 13:8
8:10 Rev 16:4; Rev 9:1; Isa 14:12
8:11 Jer 9:15; Jer 23:15; Deut 29:18
8:12 Isa 13:10; Ezek 32:7; Ezek 32:8
8:13 Jer 13:27; Hos 7:13; Rev 11:14
9:1 Rev 8:10; Luke 8:31; Rev 1:18
9:2 Gen 19:28; Exod 19:18; Joel 2:2,10
9:3 Exod 10:4; Exod 10:14; Exod 10:5
9:4 Exod 10:14; Rev 6:6; Rev 8:7
9:5 Exod 10:14; Rev 9:10; Rev 9:3
9:6 Job 3:21; Exod 10:14; Jer 8:3
9:7 Joel 2:4; Nah 3:17; Dan 7:4,8
9:8 Joel 1:6; 1 Pet 3:3; 2 Kgs 9:30
9:9 Joel 2:5; Job 39:25; Rev 9:17
9:10 Rev 9:3,5
9:11 Eph 2:2; Rev 12:9; John 12:31
9:12 Rev 11:14; Rev 8:13; Rev 9:1,2

8:8 *something like a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea; and a third of the sea became blood* Taken at face value, this could be a large meteor striking the earth. Symbolically, the mountain may be a powerful idol-worshiping nation (Jer 51:25) and the sea godless humanity (Isa 57:20). Either way, massive destruction follows in the world's waters and shipping, as Egypt's waters turned to blood (Exod 7:20-21).
8:10 *a great star fell out of heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of waters* Taken at face value, this could be another meteor. Symbolically, some connect this star to Satan's fall in chapter 12 and his bitterness spreading to a third of mankind.
8:11 *the name of the star is called Wormwood* Wormwood is a bitter plant, and the name means bitter. A third of the fresh water is poisoned, and many die (Jer 9:15).
8:12 *a third of the sun was struck, and a third of the moon, and a third of the stars* Taken at face value, daylight and night light are cut by a third, like the darkness over Egypt (Exod 10:21-23). Symbolically, sun, moon, and stars often stand for ruling powers, so the old order of the world breaks down as darkness spreads.
8:13 *Woe, woe, woe to those who dwell on the earth* The SLB reads angel, and some Greek manuscripts read eagle. The three woes are the last three trumpets still to come. As terrible as the first four were, what follows will be worse. The warning is aimed at those who dwell on the earth, people whose hearts are set on this world.
9:1 *I saw a star that had fallen out of heaven to the earth; and the key of the pit of the abyss was given to him* There are three main views. Some believe this is the same angel as in 20:1, given the key as a position of trust. Others see a false leader who has abandoned the faith. I believe this star is Satan himself, already fallen (Luke 10:18), permitted by God to open the abyss and release what has been locked inside. Notice the key "was given." Even Satan can act only by God's permission.
9:2 *smoke went up out of the pit like the smoke of a great furnace* This could be literal smoke darkening the air. It could also picture false teaching blotting out the light of God's truth, or a horde of demons bringing spiritual darkness on the earth.
9:3 *out of the smoke locusts came out onto the earth, and authority was given to them, as the scorpions of the earth have authority* Old Testament locust plagues were among the worst disasters people faced (Exod 10:1-20; Joel 1-2). These may be literal creatures, spiritual deception clouding minds, or demonic beings inflicting anguish.
9:4 *except only the men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads* Ordinary locusts eat plants, but these are forbidden to touch them. They may harm only people without God's seal. The 144,000 sealed in chapter 7 are protected. God knows His own and guards them even in judgment.
9:5 *they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months* God limits their power. Five months is about the life span of a locust in nature. The torment is real but bounded.
9:6 *men will seek death and will not find it* The suffering will be so intense that people want to die and cannot. Yet even this does not bring most of them to repentance (verses 20-21).
9:7 *the likenesses of the locusts were like horses prepared for battle* John describes monstrous creatures as best he can. Read symbolically: horses ready for battle, golden crowns as false teaching accepted, human faces as proud human wisdom, women's hair as seductive appeal, lion's teeth as cruelty, iron breastplates blocking the truth, and chariot-like wings as the speed of their conquest. Either way, be grateful God limits them to five months.
9:11 *his name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in the Greek he has the name Apollyon* Both names mean Destroyer. Many believe this is Satan himself, though some think it is a fallen angel locked in the abyss. Satan destroys, but Jesus came to give life (John 10:10).
9:12 *The first woe has passed; look, two woes are still coming after these things* One woe is done, and two more are coming. God's judgments are going forward in order, just as He planned.

The Sixth Trumpet: the Army from the Euphrates

13 And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard one voice from
the four horns of the golden altar which ***is*** before God,
14 saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release
the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates."
15 And the four angels were released, who had been pre-
pared for the hour and day and month and year, so that they
might kill a third of men. **16** And the number of the armies of
the cavalry ***was*** two myriads of myriads; and I heard their
number. **17** And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and those
sitting on them, having breastplates fiery and hyacinth and
sulfurous; and the heads of the horses ***were*** like heads of
lions, and out of their mouths proceed fire and smoke and
sulfur. **18** By these three a third of men were killed: by the
fire and by the smoke and by the sulfur which proceeds out
of their mouths. **19** For their authority is in their mouth and
in their tails; for their tails ***are*** like serpents, having heads,
and with them they harm. **20** And the rest of men, who were
not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of
their hands, so that they should not worship the demons and
the idols of gold and of silver and of bronze and of stone and
of wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk. **21** And
they did not repent of their murders nor of their sorceries
nor of their sexual immorality nor of their thefts.

REVELATION 10

The Angel and the Little Scroll

1 And I saw another strong angel coming down out of
heaven, clothed with a cloud, and a rainbow ***was*** on ***his*** head,
and his face ***was*** like the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire;
2 and he had in his hand a little scroll opened. And he placed
his right foot on the sea, and the left on the land; **3** and he
cried out with a loud voice, as a lion roars. And when he
cried out, the seven thunders spoke their own voices. **4** And
when the seven thunders spoke their voices, I was about to
write; and I heard a voice out of heaven saying to me, "Seal
up what the seven thunders spoke, and do not write these
things." **5** And the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and
on the land lifted up his hand to heaven, **6** and swore by the
One who lives to the ages of the ages, who created heaven
and the things in it, and the earth and the things in it, and
the sea and the things in it, that time will be no longer; **7** but
in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he is
about to sound, then the mystery of God should be finished,
as He preached the gospel to His own slaves the prophets.
8 And the voice which I heard out of heaven was speaking
with me again, and saying, "Go, take the little scroll which ***is***
opened in the hand of the angel who stands on the sea and
on the land." **9** And I went to the angel, saying to him, "Give

9:13 Rev 8:3-5; Rev 9:1; Heb 10:21
9:14 Gen 2:14; 2 Sam 8:3; Jer 51:63
9:15 Rev 9:18; Rev 8:7,9,11,12; Rev 9:5,10
9:16 Rev 7:4; Ps 68:17; Dan 7:10
9:17 Rev 14:10; Rev 21:8; Rev 19:20
9:18 Rev 9:15,17
9:19 Rev 9:10; Isa 9:15; Eph 4:14
9:20 Dan 5:23; Ps 115:4-5; 2 Chr 34:25
9:21 Rev 21:8; Rev 17:2,5; Rev 22:15

10:1 Ezek 1:28; Dan 10:6; Matt 17:2
10:2 Ezek 2:9,10; Rev 10:5,8; Rev 5:1-5
10:3 Isa 31:4; Joel 3:16; Amos 1:2
10:4 Dan 12:4; Dan 12:6; Dan 8:26
10:5 Dan 12:7; Deut 32:40; Gen 14:22
10:7 Eph 3:3-9; Rom 16:25; Acts 3:21
10:8 Ezek 2:9; Zech 5:1; Rev 10:4,5
10:9 Ezek 3:1-3; Ezek 2:8; Ezek 3:14

9:13 *I heard one voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God* This is the same altar where the prayers of the saints were offered (8:3). The sixth trumpet comes in answer to those prayers.
9:14 *Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates* The Euphrates was the boundary between Israel's land and the great eastern empires (Gen 15:18). Some believe these are angels of God restrained there to hold back evil forces. Others believe they are demonic beings tied to the empires of Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome. Bound angels in Scripture are usually fallen ones (Jude 6).
9:15 *prepared for the hour and day and month and year, so that they might kill a third of men* Nothing about this is random. God has set the exact hour. Together with the fourth seal (6:8), half the earth's population will have died.
9:16 *the number of the armies of the cavalry was two myriads of myriads* Two hundred million mounted troops. Some believe this army comes from the east, the same direction as the kings of the east (16:12). Others believe it is a spiritual army. John heard the number, so it is a real count.
9:17 *out of their mouths proceed fire and smoke and sulfur* This may be a literal modern army with devastating weapons, described by a first-century man the only way he could, or a spiritual force of destruction. Either way, this army does not come to call people to repentance. It comes to kill.
9:20 *the rest of men, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands* Even after all this, the survivors keep worshiping demons and lifeless idols that "can neither see nor hear nor walk." Psalm 115:4-7 mocks such idols. Judgment alone does not change a heart. Only God's grace does.
9:21 *they did not repent of their murders nor of their sorceries nor of their sexual immorality nor of their thefts* The word for sorceries is pharmakeia, which includes drug use tied to the occult. Their hearts remain hard, proud, and unwilling to recognize God as their Creator. Do not wait for a crisis to turn to God. Hearts can grow too hard to turn.
10:1 *another strong angel coming down out of heaven, clothed with a cloud, and a rainbow was on his head* Chapter 10 begins a pause between the sixth and seventh trumpets. Some believe this is a created angel. Many believe it is Jesus Christ Himself, appearing as He did to Israel in the Old Testament, since the description so closely matches 1:15-16. The cloud speaks of divine glory, the rainbow of covenant mercy, and the sun-bright face and fiery feet echo the earlier picture of Christ.
10:2 *he placed his right foot on the sea, and the left on the land* If this is Jesus, the little scroll is likely the scroll of chapter 5, the title deed to the earth, now opened. Standing on sea and land shows His ownership of the whole earth and His authority over everyone on it. He is claiming His rightful inheritance.
10:3 *he cried out with a loud voice, as a lion roars* Fitting for the Lion of Judah (5:5; Hos 11:10). Some connect the seven thunders with the sevenfold voice of the Lord in Psalm 29:3-9. Others see a warning of judgment for those without Christ.
10:4 *Seal up what the seven thunders spoke, and do not write these things* These may be judgments so terrible that God, in His mercy, chose to withhold them from us. God has told us all we need, but not all there is (Deut 29:29).
10:6 *that time will be no longer* The angel swears by the Creator of all things that there will be no more delay. This answers the cry of the martyrs who were told to wait a little longer (6:10-11). The waiting is over.
10:7 *then the mystery of God should be finished, as He preached the gospel to His own slaves the prophets* A mystery in Scripture is a truth once hidden and now revealed. Many understand this mystery as salvation itself, how a holy God could love sinners enough to send His only Son. Others see the fuller mystery of all things, sin, good and evil, and creation. Either way, God will finish what He promised through the prophets.
10:9 *Take and eat it up; and it will make your stomach bitter, but in your mouth it will be sweet as honey* This echoes Ezekiel 3:1-3, where Ezekiel eats a scroll sweet as honey. We are to take God's Word fully into ourselves before we share it with others. The sweetness is the joy of His Word, and the bitterness is the grief of the suffering and judgment still to come.

me the little scroll." And he says to me, "Take and eat it up; and it will make your stomach bitter, but in your mouth it will be sweet as honey." **10** And I took the little scroll out of the hand of the angel and ate it up; and it was sweet as honey in my mouth; and when I had eaten it, my stomach was made bitter. **11** And he says to me, "You must prophesy again concerning peoples and nations and tongues and many kings."

REVELATION 11

The Two Witnesses

1 And a reed like a staff was given to me, and the angel stood, saying, "Rise and measure the temple of God and the altar and those who worship in it. **2** And leave out the court which ***is*** outside the temple, and do not measure it, because it has been given to the nations; and they will trample the holy city ***for*** forty-two months. **3** And I will give to My two witnesses, and they will prophesy ***for*** one thousand two hundred sixty days, clothed in sackcloth." **4** These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands which stand before the God of the earth. **5** And if anyone desires to harm them, fire goes out of their mouth and devours their enemies; and if anyone desires to harm them, thus he must be killed. **6** These have authority to shut heaven, so that no rain may fall in ***the*** days of their prophecy; and they have authority over the waters to turn them into blood, and to strike the earth with every plague as often as they desire. **7** And when they have finished their testimony, the beast which comes up out of the abyss will make war with them, and will overcome them and kill them. **8** And their dead bodies ***will be*** on the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom (Sodoma) and Egypt (Aigyptos), where also our Lord was crucified. **9** And ***those*** from the peoples and tribes and tongues and nations will look at their dead bodies three days and a half, and will not allow their dead bodies to be put into tombs. **10** And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them and will celebrate, and will send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth. **11** And after the three days and a half, a spirit of life from God entered upon them, and they stood on their feet, and great fear fell on those who were watching them. **12** And they heard a loud voice out of heaven saying to them, "Come up here." And they went up to heaven in the cloud, and their enemies watched them. **13** And in that hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell; and seven thousand names of men were killed in the earthquake; and the rest became terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven.

10:10 Ps 119:103; Prov 16:24; Ezek 2:10
10:11 Jer 25:15; Jer 25:13; Jer 25:17
11:1 Ezek 40:3; Rev 21:15; Ezek 42:15-20
11:2 Dan 7:25; Dan 12:7; Dan 12:11
11:3 Dan 12:7; Dan 7:25; Rev 12:6
11:4 Zech 4:3-14; Ps 52:8; Jer 11:16
11:5 Jer 5:14; 2 Kgs 1:10; Num 16:28-35
11:6 1 Kgs 17:1; Exod 7:17; 1 Kgs 8:35
11:7 Dan 7:21; Dan 8:23,24; Luke 13:32
11:8 Jer 23:14; Gen 13:13; Gen 19:24
11:9 Ps 79:2,3; Rev 10:11; Rev 13:7
11:10 Esth 9:19; Ps 13:4; Ps 35:19
11:11 Gen 2:7; Jer 33:9; Ezek 37:10
11:12 2 Kgs 2:11; Exod 14:25; 2 Kgs 2:1
11:13 Josh 7:19; 1 Sam 6:5; Jer 13:16

10:10 *it was sweet as honey in my mouth; and when I had eaten it, my stomach was made bitter* The bitterness may also reflect the painful break from worldly things that comes with truly accepting Christ, or the heavy weight of knowing what is coming for those who reject Him. Every faithful preacher of prophecy knows both tastes.
10:11 *You must prophesy again concerning peoples and nations and tongues and many kings* John's work is not finished. The rest of the book carries God's Word to every nation, tribe, and person.
11:1 *Rise and measure the temple of God and the altar and those who worship in it* This vision involves a temple standing in Jerusalem during the Tribulation (2 Thess 2:4). Measuring in Scripture usually signals that God is marking off what belongs to Him (Ezek 40-42; Zech 2:1-5).
11:2 *they will trample the holy city for forty-two months* The outer court is given to the nations for 42 months, three and a half years, the same half of Daniel's seventieth week (Dan 9:27; 12:7). Some believe those in the outer court picture people with false or hypocritical faith. Jesus foretold Jerusalem "trampled by the nations until the times of the nations are fulfilled" (Luke 21:24).
11:3 *I will give to My two witnesses, and they will prophesy for one thousand two hundred sixty days, clothed in sackcloth* Some think they picture a faithful remnant of Judah, and others believe they are two new prophets of the last days. Many believe they are Moses and Elijah returning, since both appeared with Jesus at the transfiguration (Matt 17:1-5) and Malachi 4:5 promises Elijah before the day of the Lord. They prophesy 1,260 days, 42 months of 30 days, in the sackcloth of prophets calling people to repent.
11:4 *These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands which stand before the God of the earth* This draws on Zechariah 4, where two olive trees supply oil, a picture of the Holy Spirit, for the lampstand: "Not by strength and not by power, but by My Spirit" (Zech 4:6). Some see the lampstands as Jewish and Gentile believers together. These witnesses shine by the Spirit's power.
11:5 *fire goes out of their mouth and devours their enemies* For the full three and a half years they cannot be harmed. Elijah called down fire on those sent to seize him (2 Kgs 1:10-12).
11:6 *These have authority to shut heaven, so that no rain may fall* Elijah stopped the rain for three and a half years (1 Kgs 17:1; James 5:17), and Moses turned water to blood and struck Egypt with plagues (Exod 7:17-21). Their miracles closely mirror those two men.
11:7 *the beast which comes up out of the abyss will make war with them, and will overcome them and kill them* The first mention of the beast in Revelation, the Antichrist described fully in chapter 13. Rising from the abyss points to his demonic origin. He can kill them only when they have finished their testimony. God's servants are untouchable until their work is done.
11:8 *the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified* This is Jerusalem, called Sodom for its wickedness and Egypt for its idolatry and oppression in those days (Isa 1:10).
11:9 *will look at their dead bodies three days and a half, and will not allow their dead bodies to be put into tombs* Peoples from every nation look on. In John's day this would have seemed impossible, but today the whole world can watch an event in Jerusalem as it happens.
11:10 *will celebrate, and will send gifts to one another* The world throws a party over the death of God's prophets, relieved that their plagues have ended. Their joy lasts only three and a half days.
11:11 *a spirit of life from God entered upon them, and they stood on their feet* God breathes life back into them, as He first breathed life into Adam (Gen 2:7). Great fear falls on the watchers, much like the guards at Jesus' empty tomb (Matt 28:4).
11:12 *Come up here. And they went up to heaven in the cloud, and their enemies watched them* Mid-tribulation teachers point to this verse as the moment the church is called up. In the pre-tribulation view I hold, the church has already been taken up before the Tribulation began (4:1), so I read this as the two witnesses' own resurrection and ascension, in full view of their enemies.
11:13 *the rest became terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven* A great earthquake destroys a tenth of Jerusalem and kills 7,000 people. The survivors give glory to God out of terror, which does not necessarily mean their hearts have truly turned to Him.

14 The second woe has passed; and look, the third woe is coming quickly.

The Seventh Trumpet

15 And the seventh angel sounded, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of the world have become ***those*** of our Lord and of His Christ, and He will reign to the ages of the ages." **16** And the twenty-four elders who sit before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God, **17** saying, "We give thanks to You, Lord God Almighty, who is and who was and who is coming, because You have taken Your great power and have begun to reign. **18** And the nations were enraged, and Your wrath came, and the time of the dead to be judged, and to give the reward to Your slaves the prophets and to the saints and to those who fear Your name, to the small and to the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth." **19** And the temple of God in heaven was opened, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple; and there were lightnings and voices and thunders and an earthquake and great hail.

REVELATION 12

The Woman and the Dragon

1 And a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars; **2** and having ***a child*** in ***her*** womb, she cries out, being in labor and in pain to give birth. **3** And another sign appeared in heaven; and look, a great fiery red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads seven diadems. **4** And his tail drags a third of the stars of heaven, and he cast them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth he might devour her child. **5** And she gave birth to a son, a male, who is about to shepherd all the nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne. **6** And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, so that there they might nourish her one thousand two hundred sixty days.

War in Heaven

7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels warred against the dragon; and the dragon and his angels warred, **8** and they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them any longer in heaven. **9** And the great dragon was thrown down, the ancient serpent, who is called ***the*** devil and Satan, who deceives the whole inhabited world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. **10** And I heard a loud voice in heaven saying, "Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ, because the accuser

11:14 Rev 8:13; Rev 9:12; Rev 15:1
11:15 Dan 7:14; Dan 7:27; Exod 15:18
11:16 Rev 4:4,10; Rev 5:5-8,14; Rev 7:11
11:17 Gen 17:1; Rev 1:8; Rev 19:6,11-21
11:18 Ps 2:1; Ps 115:13; Ps 85:9
11:19 Exod 25:21; Num 4:5; Num 10:33
12:1 Rev 12:3; Rev 11:19; Rev 15:1
12:2 Isa 66:7; Mic 5:3; Isa 66:8
12:3 Dan 7:20; Dan 7:7; Dan 7:8
12:4 Dan 8:10; John 8:44; Rev 9:10,19
12:5 Ps 2:9; Rev 2:26,27; Rev 19:15
12:6 Dan 12:11; Rev 11:2,3; Rev 12:4,14
12:7 Dan 12:1; Dan 10:13; Dan 10:21
12:8 Rev 12:11; Ps 13:4; Ps 118:10-13
12:9 Gen 3:1; Isa 14:12; Gen 3:13
12:10 Zech 3:1; Rev 11:15; Luke 22:31

11:14 *The second woe has passed; and look, the third woe is coming quickly* The sixth trumpet is finished. The seventh trumpet, the third woe, brings the bowl judgments of chapter 16.
11:15 *The kingdoms of the world have become those of our Lord and of His Christ, and He will reign to the ages of the ages* The seventh trumpet sounds, and heaven announces the result before the bowls are poured out: the world's kingdoms now fully belong to Christ (Dan 2:44; 7:14). Heaven speaks of it as already done because it is certain.
11:17 *because You have taken Your great power and have begun to reign* The elders give thanks that God has reclaimed His power over the earth. He always had it. Now He uses it openly.
11:18 *the time of the dead to be judged, and to give the reward to Your slaves the prophets and to the saints* This verse previews the rest of the book: wrath on the raging nations (Ps 2:1-5), the judgment of the dead, the reward of the righteous, and the destruction of the beast, the false prophet, and the dragon.
11:19 *the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple* Heaven's temple opens, and the ark appears, a powerful sign of God's faithfulness to His covenant with His people. It closes the trumpet judgments and sets the stage for chapters 12 and 13, which focus on God's faithfulness to Israel.
12:1 *a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars* There are three main views: the virgin Mary, the church, or Israel. The most likely view is Israel, which gave birth to the Messiah and had been preparing since Abraham to bring forth the child who would bless the world. The picture comes from Joseph's dream, where sun, moon, and stars stand for Jacob, Rachel, and the sons of Israel (Gen 37:9-10). The twelve stars are the twelve tribes.
12:2 *being in labor and in pain to give birth* Israel is often pictured as a woman in labor (Isa 26:17; 66:7-8; Mic 5:3). The pains picture Israel's long national struggle and the line leading to the Messiah.
12:3 *a great fiery red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads seven diadems* The dragon is Satan (verse 9). Scripture teaches that he is a real being, not a symbol for human evil, an angel who rebelled against God out of pride. His seven heads picture his grip on the world's authorities, his ten horns the ten kings who will rule in the Tribulation, and his diadems his authority. The images come from Daniel 7:7-8, 20-24. Satan is the power behind the Antichrist's final kingdom.
12:4 *his tail drags a third of the stars of heaven, and he cast them to the earth* His deception led a third of the angels to follow him out of heaven. These fallen angels are the demons.
12:4 *the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth he might devour her child* Satan stood ready to kill the Messiah from His birth. Herod's slaughter of the infants of Bethlehem (Matt 2:16) was an attack led, ultimately, by Satan.
12:5 *she gave birth to a son, a male, who is about to shepherd all the nations with a rod of iron* This can only be Jesus Christ (Ps 2:9). In one verse John moves from His birth to His ascension. "Caught up to God and to His throne" points to Luke 24:51. The cross and resurrection lie between, the very victory Satan could not stop.
12:6 *the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God* Here John jumps ahead to the second half of the Tribulation. Israel flees to a place God has already prepared, where she will be protected and fed for 1,260 days. Jesus warned those in Judea to flee to the mountains when they see the abomination of desolation (Matt 24:15-21).
12:7 *there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels warred against the dragon* Michael is the archangel who stands guard over Israel (Dan 12:1). Satan still has access to heaven as accuser (Job 1:6), but at the midpoint of the Tribulation he and his demons lose that war and lose their place there.
12:9 *the ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole inhabited world* This verse names the dragon plainly. He is the serpent of Eden (Gen 3:1), the devil, which means slanderer, and Satan, which means adversary. He is cast down to the earth with his angels.
12:10 *the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them before our God day and night* Satan accuses believers before God, but we have an Advocate with the Father (1 John 2:1). Heaven celebrates that the accuser has been removed and God's kingdom is near.

of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them before our God day and night. **11** And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life until death. **12** Because of this rejoice, O heavens and you who tabernacle in them! Woe to those who dwell ***on*** the land and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great fury, knowing that he has a short time."

The Dragon Pursues the Woman

13 And when the dragon saw that he had been thrown down to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male ***child***. **14** And the two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman, so that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished there a time and times and half a time, from ***the*** face of the serpent. **15** And the serpent cast water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, so that he might cause her to be carried away by the river. **16** And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the river which the dragon had cast out of his mouth. **17** And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and went away to make war with the rest of her seed, who keep the commandments of God and hold the testimony of Jesus (Iesous) Christ.

REVELATION 13

The Beast out of the Sea

1 And I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on its horns ten diadems, and on its heads a name of blasphemy. **2** And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and its feet like ***those of*** a bear, and its mouth like ***the*** mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave it his power and his throne and great authority. **3** And I saw one of its heads as having been slain to death, and the wound of its death was healed; and all the earth marveled after the beast. **4** And they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who ***is*** like the beast? Who is able to make war with it?" **5** And a mouth was given to it speaking great things and blasphemies; and authority was given to it to act ***for*** forty-two months. **6** And it opened its mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle and those who tabernacle in heaven. **7** And it was given to it to make war with the saints and to overcome them; and authority was given to it over every tribe and tongue and nation. **8** And all who dwell on the earth will worship it, whose names have not been written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from ***the*** foundation of ***the*** world. **9** If anyone has an ear, let him hear. **10** If anyone gathers ***into*** captivity, into captivity he goes; if anyone will kill with the sword, he must be killed with the sword. Here is the endurance and the faith of the saints.

12:11 John 16:33; 2 Cor 10:3-5; Luke 14:26
12:12 Isa 49:13; Rev 18:20; Rev 8:13
12:13 Gen 3:15; Ps 37:12-14; John 16:33
12:14 Exod 19:4; Dan 7:25; Dan 12:7
12:15 Isa 27:1; Isa 59:19; Rev 17:15
12:16 Num 16:32; Exod 12:35,36; 1 Kgs 17:6
12:17 Gen 3:15; Rev 14:12; Rev 11:7
13:1 Dan 7:7; Dan 7:19; Rev 12:3
13:2 Dan 7:4-6; Ps 22:21; 1 Sam 17:35
13:3 Rev 13:1,2,14; Rev 17:10; Ezek 30:24
13:4 Rev 18:18; Rev 13:2; Rev 9:20
13:5 Dan 7:8; Dan 11:36; Dan 7:11
13:6 Dan 7:8; Rev 12:12; Job 3:1
13:7 Dan 8:24; Rev 11:7; Dan 7:21,25
13:8 1 Pet 1:19,20; Eph 1:4; Rev 17:8
13:9 Rev 2:7,11,17,29
13:10 Jer 15:2; Jer 43:11; Judg 1:7

12:11 *they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life until death* Believers overcome Satan not by their own strength but by Christ's blood, which answers every accusation, and by a faithful witness that holds firm even in the face of death.
12:12 *the devil has come down to you, having great fury, knowing that he has a short time* Heaven rejoices that Satan is gone, but this is bad news for the earth. He knows his time is short, only three and a half years, and he pours out his rage there.
12:13 *he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child* Unable to reach heaven, Satan turns his anger on Israel. Hatred of the Jewish people has always had Satan behind it.
12:14 *the two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman* God gives Israel a supernatural way to escape, as He once said, "I carried you on the wings of eagles" (Exod 19:4). She is protected for "a time and times and half a time," three and a half years (Dan 7:25).
12:15 *the serpent cast water like a river out of his mouth after the woman* Some see literal flooding. Others see a flood of false teaching or armies meant to sweep Israel away. Either way, the earth itself swallows up the threat. God protects what He has promised to preserve.
12:17 *went away to make war with the rest of her seed, who keep the commandments of God and hold the testimony of Jesus Christ* Unable to destroy Israel, Satan turns his rage on believers, both Jewish and Gentile, who keep God's commandments and hold to their faith in Jesus during the Tribulation.
13:1 *I saw a beast rising out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns* Having failed to destroy Jesus at His birth, Satan now raises the final empire that will resist Christ's taking of the earth. The sea pictures the nations of the world (17:15). Many futurist teachers believe this beast is the Antichrist and tie him to a revived form of the Roman Empire, the little horn of Daniel 7:8. The heads and horns are kings and kingdoms who give him their power (17:9-13).
13:2 *like a leopard, and its feet like those of a bear, and its mouth like the mouth of a lion* These recall Daniel 7:2-7: Babylon the lion, Medo-Persia the bear, and Greece the leopard. Rome, the fourth empire in Daniel's vision, combined elements of all three, and so will the beast's kingdom. The dragon gives him his power, the same power Satan offered Jesus and Jesus refused (Matt 4:8-10).
13:3 *one of its heads as having been slain to death, and the wound of its death was healed* Some see the fall and miraculous revival of a kingdom, like Rome. Others see a literal healing of the Antichrist himself after a mortal wound (verse 14). Either way, it is Satan's counterfeit of the resurrection, and the world is stunned into worship.
13:4 *Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with it?* The world worships both the dragon and the beast because no one seems able to defeat him. The question mocks the praise of God, "Who is like You among the gods, O LORD?" (Exod 15:11).
13:5 *authority was given to it to act for forty-two months* He speaks arrogant blasphemies, like the little horn of Daniel 7:8, 20, for 42 months, the last three and a half years. Notice again the words "was given." His time is set by God and cannot be stretched by one day.
13:7 *it was given to it to make war with the saints and to overcome them* Those who come to faith during the Tribulation will not receive blanket protection from him. Many will die for their faith (Dan 7:21).
13:8 *all who dwell on the earth will worship it, whose names have not been written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world* Everyone on earth will worship him except those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life, and they will not take his mark. The cross was God's plan before the world began (1 Pet 1:19-20).
13:10 *Here is the endurance and the faith of the saints* Some Tribulation believers will face captivity and others death. Those in captivity are called to endure, and those facing death to keep faith. God will judge their persecutors in the end, so believers are not to take up the sword.

The Beast out of the Earth

11 And I saw another beast rising out of the earth, and it had two horns like a lamb, and it was speaking like a dragon. **12** And it exercises all the authority of the first beast before it, and it makes the earth and those who dwell in it worship the first beast, whose wound of death was healed. **13** And it performs great signs, so that it even makes fire come down out of heaven to the earth before men. **14** And it deceives those who dwell on the earth because of the signs which were given to it to perform before the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast which has the wound of the sword and lived. **15** And it was given to it to give breath to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast might even speak, and might cause that as many as do not worship the image of the beast should be killed. **16** And it causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free and the slaves, that it should give them a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, **17** and that no one should be able to buy or to sell except the one who has the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of its name. **18** Here is the wisdom. The one who has understanding, let him calculate the number of the beast, for it is a man's number; and its number ***is*** six hundred sixty-six.

REVELATION 14

The Lamb and the 144,000

1 And I saw, and look, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion (Sion), and with Him one hundred forty-four thousand, having the name of His Father written on their foreheads. **2** And I heard a voice out of heaven like ***the*** sound of many waters and like ***the*** sound of loud thunder; and I heard a voice of harpists harping with their harps. **3** And they sing as ***it were*** a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders; and no one was able to learn the song except the one hundred forty-four thousand, who had been purchased from the earth. **4** These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were purchased from among men, firstfruits to God and to the Lamb. **5** And in their mouth no deceit was found, for they are blameless before the throne of God.

The Three Angels

6 And I saw another angel flying in mid-heaven, having an eternal gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth, and to every nation and tribe and tongue and people, **7** saying with a loud voice, "Fear God and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come; and worship the One who

13:11 Dan 7:8; Dan 7:24; Dan 7:17
13:12 Rev 13:3,14-17; Rev 17:10,11; 2 Thess 2:4
13:13 2 Kgs 1:12; 2 Kgs 1:13; 2 Kgs 1:14
13:14 Exod 20:4; Rev 12:9; Rev 19:20
13:15 Dan 3:6; Rev 16:2,5; Rev 19:20
13:16 Rev 19:18; Rev 20:4; Rev 7:3
13:17 Rev 14:11; Rev 15:2; Rev 3:12
13:18 Rev 17:9; Rev 15:2; Rev 21:17

14:1 Ps 2:6; Joel 2:32; Ps 132:13
14:2 Ezek 43:2; Exod 19:16; Exod 20:18
14:3 Ps 149:1; Isa 42:10; Ps 96:1
14:4 Amos 6:1; Exod 13:13; Lev 2:12
14:5 Zeph 3:13; Ps 32:2; John 1:47
14:6 Rev 8:13; Matt 10:27; Rev 13:7
14:7 Exod 20:11; Ps 33:6; Josh 7:19

13:11 *another beast rising out of the earth, and it had two horns like a lamb, and it was speaking like a dragon* This second beast is the false prophet (16:13; 19:20), who leads a false religious system to deceive the world. He looks like a lamb, gentle and harmless, but speaks like the dragon. The devil, the Antichrist, and the false prophet form a false trinity.
13:12 *it makes the earth and those who dwell in it worship the first beast* The false prophet works wholly under the authority of the Antichrist. His one purpose is to turn the world's worship toward him, a counterfeit of the Holy Spirit, who points to Christ (John 16:14).
13:13 *it even makes fire come down out of heaven to the earth before men* He performs real signs, even copying Elijah (1 Kgs 18:38). Jesus warned that false prophets would show great signs and lead many astray (Matt 24:24). A miracle by itself does not prove a message is from God. It must be tested by His Word.
13:14 *telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast* The world builds an image to honor the Antichrist, like the golden image of Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 3. This is likely the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place (Matt 24:15; 2 Thess 2:4).
13:15 *it was given to it to give breath to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast might even speak* The image is somehow made to speak, likely blasphemy like the beasts themselves, and anyone who refuses to worship it will be killed, as with the three Hebrews before Nebuchadnezzar's image (Dan 3:6).
13:16 *that it should give them a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads* Every person, regardless of wealth or status, must take a visible mark, an unmistakable counterfeit of God's seal on His people (7:3). If you are a believer and worry that you could take this mark by accident, look at what the text says. The mark goes together with worshiping the beast (14:9-11). It is a deliberate choice to give him your loyalty, not something done to a person without knowing it.
13:17 *no one should be able to buy or to sell except the one who has the mark* Without the mark, no one can buy food or sell anything. Refusing it will cost everything in this life, but taking it costs everything forever (14:11).
13:18 *its number is six hundred sixty-six* Many have tried to calculate who this number identifies, from ancient emperors to modern figures. Since these days have not yet come, every guess so far has been wrong. Six is the number of man in Scripture, one short of God's perfect seven, since man was created on the sixth day. Three sixes may point to the full expression of mankind's pride, humanity's last attempt to claim divinity for itself and rob God of His glory.
14:1 *a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred forty-four thousand* After the dark picture of the beast, John sees the Lamb standing on Mount Zion, God's earthly city, with the same 144,000 sealed Jewish believers of 7:4. Not one is missing. Now we learn what their seal was: the name of His Father written on their foreheads, in contrast to the mark of the beast.
14:3 *no one was able to learn the song except the one hundred forty-four thousand, who had been purchased from the earth* A heavenly choir sings a new song that only the 144,000 can learn, a song born of what they lived through. They are purchased, redeemed by the Lamb, the firstfruits of the salvation God has promised to Israel.
14:4 *These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins* They kept themselves sexually pure in a world given over to immorality. They follow the Lamb wherever He goes. They are firstfruits, a term for a first group with more still to come (Rom 8:23; 1 Cor 15:20), pointing to the day when all Israel will be saved (Rom 11:26).
14:5 *in their mouth no deceit was found, for they are blameless before the throne of God* In a world ruled by the lie of the beast, they told the truth. This closely echoes Zephaniah 3:13, which describes the faithful remnant of Israel who speak no lies.
14:6 *another angel flying in mid-heaven, having an eternal gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth* Even in judgment God calls people to Himself. This angel brings a final, worldwide call to every nation and tongue. No one will be able to say they never heard.
14:7 *Fear God and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come* The call is to fear Him, give Him glory, and worship Him as the Creator, the same truth Paul preached to pagans (Acts 14:15).

made the heaven and the earth and the sea and springs of waters." **8** And another angel followed, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon, the great city, because she has made all the nations drink of the wine of the fury of her sexual immorality." **9** And a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and its image, and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, **10** he himself also will drink of the wine of the fury of God, which has been mixed undiluted in the cup of His wrath; and he will be tormented with fire and sulfur before the holy angels and before the Lamb. **11** And the smoke of their torment goes up to ages of ages; and they have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and its image, and if anyone receives the mark of its name." **12** Here is ***the*** endurance of the saints; here ***are*** those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus (Iesous). **13** And I heard a voice out of heaven saying to me, "Write: Blessed ***are*** the dead who die in ***the*** Lord from now on." "Yes," says the Spirit, "so that they may rest from their labors; and their works follow with them."

The Harvest of the Earth

14 And I saw, and look, a white cloud, and on the cloud ***One*** sitting like a son of man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle. **15** And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to the One sitting on the cloud, "Send in Your sickle and reap, because the hour to reap has come for You, because the harvest of the earth has become dry." **16** And the One sitting on the cloud cast His sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped. **17** And another angel came out of the temple which ***is*** in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. **18** And another angel came out from the altar, having authority over the fire; and he called with a loud cry to the one having the sharp sickle, saying, "Send in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, because its grapes are fully ripe." **19** And the angel cast his sickle to the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast ***it*** into the great winepress of the fury of God. **20** And the winepress was trodden outside the city, and blood came out of the winepress up to the bridles of the horses, for approximately 180 miles (1,600 stadia).

REVELATION 15

Prelude to the Bowls

1 And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous: seven angels having seven plagues, the last ***ones***, because in them the fury of God is finished. **2** And I saw ***something*** like a sea of glass mixed with fire, and those who are victorious over the beast and over its image and over its mark ***and*** over the number of its name, standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God. **3** And they sing the song of Moses the slave of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, "Great and marvelous ***are*** Your works, Lord God Almighty! Righteous and true ***are***

14:8 Isa 21:9; Jer 51:7; Dan 4:30
14:9 Rev 14:11; Rev 14:6-8; Jer 44:4
14:10 Ps 11:6; Gen 19:24; Ps 75:8
14:11 Isa 34:10; Rev 19:3; Rev 18:18
14:12 Rev 13:10; Rev 12:17; Rev 3:8,10
14:13 Hab 2:2; Rev 20:6; 1 Cor 15:18
14:14 Dan 7:13; Rev 1:13; Rev 6:2
14:15 Joel 3:13; Jer 51:33; Rev 14:18
14:16 Rev 14:14; Matt 16:27; John 5:22,23
14:17 Rev 14:14,15,18; Rev 15:5,6; Rev 16:1
14:18 Joel 3:13; Rev 16:8; Rev 6:9,10
14:19 Isa 63:3; Rev 19:15-21; Deut 32:32,33
14:20 Isa 34:3; Lam 1:15; Rev 11:8
15:1 Rev 21:9; Rev 15:6; Rev 12:1-3
15:2 Rev 4:6; Rev 5:8; Rev 12:11
15:3 Ps 111:2; Ps 145:17; Exod 15:1

14:8 *Fallen, fallen is Babylon, the great city* The second angel announces Babylon's fall as already certain, though chapters 17 and 18 describe it in full. Whether a literal city or a corrupt world system, Babylon has spread spiritual immorality across every nation like wine that leads people into passion for sin (Jer 51:7-8).
14:9 *If anyone worships the beast and its image, and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand* The third angel warns the whole world of what the mark costs before anyone takes it. God does not judge without warning.
14:10 *he himself also will drink of the wine of the fury of God, which has been mixed undiluted in the cup of His wrath* Undiluted means God's wrath with no mercy mixed in. Those who drank Babylon's wine will drink God's. Jesus drank the cup of wrath for all who trust Him (Matt 26:39), so that we never have to.
14:11 *the smoke of their torment goes up to ages of ages; and they have no rest day and night* This is not stated because there is doubt that people will do this. It is said to make clear how serious the consequences are. Torment that lasts to the ages of ages is eternal. Contrast the rest promised to those who die in the Lord (verse 13).
14:12 *Here is the endurance of the saints* The warning comes just before the bowl judgments and Armageddon. It is aimed at the wicked, but its purpose is to encourage believers to remain faithful, whatever it costs.
14:13 *Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on* The second of seven blessings in Revelation (1:3). Those who die in the Lord from this point on, likely the martyrs, are blessed at once with rest from their labors, and their faithful works go with them. Nothing done for Christ is wasted.
14:14 *on the cloud One sitting like a son of man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle* This echoes Daniel 7:13 and the vision of Christ in 1:13. He wears a victor's crown and holds a sickle, ready for harvest. Harvest in Scripture is a picture of judgment at the end of the age (Matt 13:39).
14:15 *Send in Your sickle and reap, because the hour to reap has come for You* The angel announces that the harvest, judgment, has come because the earth's wickedness has ripened. Joel 3:13 combines a grain harvest and a grape harvest, and here they are two separate scenes.
14:18 *gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, because its grapes are fully ripe* A second harvest begins, the grape harvest, again from Joel 3:13. The wicked are ripe for judgment and receive what they have chosen.
14:19 *cast it into the great winepress of the fury of God* Grapes were trampled in a winepress until the juice ran out. The picture is of the wicked crushed under God's wrath, the same picture used of Christ's return (19:15; Isa 63:1-6).
14:20 *blood came out of the winepress up to the bridles of the horses* The winepress is trodden outside the city, almost certainly Jerusalem. Blood as high as a horse's bridle for 1,600 stadia, about 180 miles, is a figure of speech, but it points to a massive, devastating judgment, the battle of Armageddon (16:16; 19:17-21).
15:1 *seven angels having seven plagues, the last ones, because in them the fury of God is finished* The third great sign in this part of the book (12:1, 3). These are the bowl judgments, the last, because after them God's wrath is complete. Jesus "is delivering us from the wrath that is coming" (1 Thess 1:10). These bowls fall on those who took the mark and worshiped the image (16:2).
15:2 *those who are victorious over the beast and over its image and over its mark and over the number of its name* These refused to bow to the beast. Many paid with their lives, yet heaven calls them victorious. They stand on the sea of glass, now mixed with fire, the fire of judgment about to fall, holding harps to praise God.
15:3 *they sing the song of Moses the slave of God, and the song of the Lamb* Moses led Israel in song after God brought them through the sea and judged Egypt (Exod 15). This song is not a direct quote from any song of Moses and may be new. It praises God for His great works and His just, true ways. The deliverance of the exodus and the deliverance of the cross are one story.

Your ways, O King of the saints! **4** Who will not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For ***You*** alone ***are*** holy; for all the nations will come and worship before You, because Your righteous acts have been made manifest." **5** And after these things I saw, and look, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened. **6** And the seven angels who had the seven plagues came out of the temple, clothed in pure and bright linen, and girded around the chests with golden sashes. **7** And one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the fury of God, who lives to the ages of the ages. **8** And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power, and no one was able to enter into the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were finished.

REVELATION 16

The First Five Bowls

1 And I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, "Go and pour out the bowls of the fury of God into the earth." **2** And the first went away and poured out his bowl on the earth; and a bad and evil sore came on the men who had the mark of the beast and who worshiped its image. **3** And the second angel poured out his bowl into the sea, and it became blood as of a dead ***man***, and every living soul died in the sea. **4** And the third angel poured out his bowl into the rivers and into the springs of waters, and they became blood. **5** And I heard the angel of the waters saying, "You are righteous, O Lord, who is and who was and who shall be, because You judged these things; **6** because they poured out ***the*** blood of saints and of prophets, and You gave them blood to drink; for they are worthy." **7** And I heard another out of the altar saying, "Yes, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous ***are*** Your judgments." **8** And the fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and it was given to it to scorch men with fire. **9** And men were scorched ***with*** great heat, and they blasphemed the name of God, who has authority over these plagues; and they did not repent to give Him glory. **10** And the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and its kingdom became darkened; and they were gnawing their tongues because of the pain, **11** and they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and because of their sores, and they did not repent of their works.

The Sixth and Seventh Bowls

12 And the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, so that the way of the kings from ***the*** rising of ***the*** sun might be prepared. **13** And I saw out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet three

15:4 Ps 86:9; Jer 10:7; Jonah 1:9
15:5 Num 1:50; Exod 38:21; Num 1:53
15:6 Dan 10:5; Rev 1:13; Rev 15:1
15:7 Rev 5:8; Rev 4:6-9; Rev 16:2-21
15:8 Isa 6:4; Exod 40:35; 2 Chr 5:14
16:1 1 Sam 15:18; Ezek 10:2; Ezek 9:7
16:2 Exod 9:10; Exod 9:9; Exod 9:11
16:3 Exod 7:20; Exod 7:17-21; Rev 8:8
16:4 Rev 8:10,11; Rev 14:7; Exod 8:5
16:5 Rev 11:17; Rev 1:4,8; Rev 15:3
16:6 Isa 49:26; Deut 32:42; Jer 26:16
16:7 Ps 19:9; Job 8:3; Ps 119:137
16:8 Jonah 4:8; Ps 79:6; Nah 1:6
16:9 Josh 7:19; Jer 5:3; Gen 1:16
16:10 Exod 10:21-22; Rev 9:2; Rev 11:2,8
16:11 Isa 8:21; Rev 16:9,21; Rev 16:2,9
16:12 Isa 11:15; Isa 41:25; Jer 50:38
16:13 Exod 8:6; Rev 19:20; Rev 20:10

15:4 *Who will not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name?* A question that answers itself. No one who truly sees God could refuse Him. Yet, as the next chapter shows, the beast's followers will still try. One day all the nations will come and worship before Him (Ps 86:9).
15:5 *the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened* The tabernacle of Moses was a copy of this heavenly one (Heb 8:5). The testimony is God's law kept in the ark. His judgments come from the place where His holy law is kept.
15:6 *clothed in pure and bright linen, and girded around the chests with golden sashes* The seven angels come out dressed like priests, a picture of purity and high honor. Their task is to carry out God's final judgments.
15:7 *seven golden bowls full of the fury of God* A bowl empties quickly. These judgments will come fast, one after another.
15:8 *no one was able to enter into the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were finished* Smoke is a sign of God's glory and power throughout the Bible (Exod 40:34-35; Isa 6:4). No one can enter, and there is no room left to plead for mercy. The time for appeal has passed. That door is still open today: "look, now is a day of salvation" (2 Cor 6:2).
16:1 *Go and pour out the bowls of the fury of God into the earth* No one could enter the temple (15:8), so this voice must be God Himself. The timing of these final judgments is entirely in His hands.
16:2 *a bad and evil sore came on the men who had the mark of the beast and who worshiped its image* Painful, festering sores, much like the boils on Egypt (Exod 9:9-11). This judgment falls only on those who took the mark and worshiped the beast.
16:3 *the second angel poured out his bowl into the sea, and it became blood as of a dead man* Every ocean turns to blood like that of a corpse, and all sea life dies. Under the second trumpet a third of the sea died (8:9). Now it is all.
16:4 *into the rivers and into the springs of waters, and they became blood* Now all the world's water, salt and fresh, has become undrinkable blood, as the Nile did in Egypt (Exod 7:20-21).
16:6 *because they poured out the blood of saints and of prophets, and You gave them blood to drink* The angel of the waters defends God's justice. These people shed the blood of God's saints and prophets, so now they are given blood to drink. The punishment matches the crime.
16:7 *Yes, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are Your judgments* The voice from the altar, where the martyrs' cry was heard (6:9-10), affirms that God's judgments are completely fair and true. Their prayer has been answered.
16:9 *they blasphemed the name of God, who has authority over these plagues; and they did not repent to give Him glory* The fourth bowl turns up the sun's heat until people are scorched. You would think pain like that would drive them to their knees. It does not. That shows how hard a heart can get when it keeps telling God no.
16:10 *poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and its kingdom became darkened* The fifth bowl strikes the beast's own throne and plunges his kingdom into darkness, like the darkness on Egypt (Exod 10:21-23). The one the world worshiped cannot protect his own capital.
16:11 *they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and because of their sores, and they did not repent of their works* They bite their own tongues in pain, yet still curse God instead of turning to Him. Three times this chapter says they blasphemed and did not repent (verses 9, 11, 21).
16:12 *the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, so that the way of the kings from the rising of the sun might be prepared* The mighty Euphrates dries up, clearing a path for the kings of the east to march to the final battle. This suggests nations east of Israel will still be organized under kings at this point in history.
16:13 *three unclean spirits like frogs* The frogs echo the plague of Egypt (Exod 8:2-6). They come from the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet, the unholy trinity.

unclean spirits like frogs; **14** for they are spirits of demons performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole inhabited world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God the Almighty. **15** "Look, I am coming like a thief. Blessed ***is*** the one who watches and keeps his garments, so that he may not walk naked and they see his shame." **16** And they gathered them to the place which is called in Hebrew Armageddon. **17** And the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air; and a loud voice came out from the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, "It is done!" **18** And there were voices and thunders and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as had not been since men were on the earth, so mighty an earthquake, so great. **19** And the great city ***was split*** into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell; and Babylon the great was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of the fury of His wrath. **20** And every island fled, and mountains were not found. **21** And great hail, weighing approximately 75 pounds (a talent), comes down out of heaven on men; and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, for its plague is exceedingly great.

REVELATION 17

The Great Prostitute

1 And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke with me, saying to me, "Come, I will show you the judgment of the great prostitute who sits on the many waters, **2** with whom the kings of the earth committed sexual immorality, and those who dwell on the earth were made drunk with the wine of her sexual immorality." **3** And he carried me away into a wilderness in ***the*** Spirit; and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. **4** And the woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and gilded with gold and precious stone and pearls, holding a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and uncleanness of her sexual immorality. **5** And on her forehead a name ***was*** written, Mystery, Babylon the Great, the mother of the prostitutes and of the abominations of the earth. **6** And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus (Iesous). And having seen her, I marveled ***with*** a great marvel. **7** And the angel said to me, "Why did you marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns.

16:14 Ezek 38:11; Ezek 38:12; 1 Tim 4:1
16:15 Matt 24:42; Rev 3:3; 1 Thess 5:2,3
16:16 Judg 5:19; Zech 12:11; Rev 9:11
16:17 Rev 21:6; Eph 2:2; John 19:30
16:18 Dan 12:1; Rev 4:5; Rev 8:5
16:19 Jer 25:15; Dan 4:30; Jer 51:6
16:20 Rev 6:14; Rev 20:11; Isa 2:14-17
16:21 Exod 9:24; Rev 11:19; Rev 16:9,11

17:1 Jer 51:13; Rev 21:9; Rev 19:2
17:2 Jer 51:7; Isa 23:17; Rev 14:8
17:3 Dan 7:20; Rev 12:3; Rev 12:6,14
17:4 Jer 4:30; Jer 51:7; Dan 11:38
17:5 Jer 51:47; Deut 7:25; Deut 27:15
17:6 Prov 5:3; Isa 49:26; Ezek 24:8
17:7 Dan 7:7; Zech 1:9; Zech 5:7

16:14 *spirits of demons performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth* Demonic signs persuade the world's kings to gather for one final war against God. They think they are coming to fight. God is gathering them to judgment (Joel 3:2; Zech 14:2).

16:15 *Look, I am coming like a thief. Blessed is the one who watches and keeps his garments* In the middle of this terrifying scene, Jesus interrupts with a warning, echoing His own words (Matt 24:43-44; 3:3; 1 Thess 5:2). This is the third of the seven blessings in Revelation. Here it is spoken to those living through the Tribulation, but the message is for us too: stay ready, stay faithful, because there will be no warning before He comes.

16:16 *they gathered them to the place which is called in Hebrew Armageddon* Har-Magedon means the hill of Megiddo, and this is the only place in the Bible where the name appears. Megiddo stood on the southwest edge of the Valley of Jezreel in northern Israel, near Mount Carmel, a real, literal place where many battles were fought. Here the armies gather for the final battle described in chapter 19.

16:17 *the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air; and a loud voice came out from the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, "It is done!"* The seventh bowl is poured into the air itself. God's own voice declares, "It is done!" On the cross Jesus said, "It has been finished" (John 19:30), and salvation was complete. Here God's wrath is complete. Chapters 17 to 19 fill in the details.

16:18 *there was a great earthquake, such as had not been since men were on the earth* An earthquake unlike any in human history, greater than all the earthquakes earlier in the book.

16:19 *the great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell* The great city is Jerusalem (11:8). Zechariah 14:2-5 describes something similar happening to Jerusalem in the last days, when the Lord's feet stand on the Mount of Olives. Cities all over the world collapse.

16:19 *Babylon the great was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of the fury of His wrath* God has not forgotten Babylon. She finally receives the full cup of His wrath, described in detail in chapters 17 and 18.

16:21 *great hail, weighing approximately 75 pounds* A talent weighed about 75 pounds. Islands and mountains vanish, and then giant hailstones fall from the sky. Even then people respond not with repentance but with more cursing of God.

17:1 *the judgment of the great prostitute who sits on the many waters* One of the bowl angels shows John the judgment announced under the seventh bowl (16:19). The many waters are "peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues" (verse 15), so this harlot has influence over huge numbers of people. In Scripture spiritual unfaithfulness to God is often pictured as prostitution (Jer 3:6-9; Hos 1:2).

17:2 *with whom the kings of the earth committed sexual immorality* She leads the kings of the earth into corruption and makes the rest of the world drunk, spiritually speaking, on her influence. Power and false religion have always found each other useful.

17:3 *a woman sitting on a scarlet beast full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns* The beast matches the dragon of chapter 12 and the beast of chapter 13, tying him to the same evil power structure. The woman riding him shows she is partnered with his agenda and carried by his power, for a time.

17:4 *clothed in purple and scarlet, and gilded with gold and precious stone and pearls* Purple and scarlet were the colors of royalty and wealth. She is dripping with riches, but her golden cup is full of abominations. Beautiful on the outside and corrupt at the core.

17:5 *Mystery, Babylon the Great, the mother of the prostitutes and of the abominations of the earth* The name is called a mystery, meaning it is symbolic and needs to be explained, not a literal name. Babylon goes back to Babel, where man first united against God (Gen 11:1-9). She is the source of the world's false worship.

17:6 *I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus* She is responsible for the deaths of many believers. John is stunned by what he sees, and the angel is about to explain who she is.

8 The beast which you saw was, and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss and to go into destruction. And those who dwell on the earth will marvel, whose names have not been written in the book of life from ***the*** foundation of ***the*** world, ***when*** they see the beast that was, and is not, though it is. **9** Here ***is*** the mind which has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sits. **10** And they are seven kings: the five have fallen, and the one is, the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must remain a little while. **11** And the beast which was, and is not, is himself also an eighth, and is of the seven, and goes into destruction. **12** And the ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but they receive authority as kings for one hour along with the beast. **13** These have one purpose, and they will give their own power and authority to the beast. **14** These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those with Him ***are*** called and chosen and faithful." **15** And he says to me, "The waters which you saw, where the prostitute sits, are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues. **16** And the ten horns which you saw on the beast, these will hate the prostitute, and will make her desolate and naked, and will eat her flesh and burn her up with fire. **17** For God has put into their hearts to do His purpose, and to do one purpose, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled. **18** And the woman whom you saw is the great city which has kingship over the kings of the earth."

REVELATION 18

Babylon Has Fallen

1 And after these things I saw another angel coming down out of heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated from his glory. **2** And he cried out in might, with a loud voice, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, and she has become a dwelling place of demons and a prison of every unclean spirit and a prison of every unclean and hated bird. **3** For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the fury of her sexual immorality, and the kings of the earth committed sexual immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth became rich from the power of her luxury." **4** And I heard another voice out of heaven, saying, "Come out of her, My people, so that you may not share in her sins, and so that you may not receive of her plagues; **5** for her sins have reached as far as heaven, and God has remembered her unrighteous deeds. **6** Pay back to her as she also paid back to you, and double to her double according to her works; in the

17:8 Dan 7:7; Dan 7:11; Dan 11:45
17:9 Rev 13:18; Matt 24:15; Rev 17:3,7,18
17:11 Rev 17:8
17:12 Dan 7:24; Dan 7:20; Dan 7:7
17:13 Rev 17:17; Phil 1:27; Phil 2:2
17:14 Deut 10:17; Ps 98:1; Isa 40:10
17:15 Jer 51:42; Num 24:7; Isa 8:8
17:16 Lev 21:9; Ezek 23:45; Dan 7:5
17:17 Ezra 7:27; Jer 27:6; Jer 32:40
17:18 Dan 2:40; Dan 7:23; Isa 51:23
18:1 Ezek 43:2; Rev 17:1; Rev 21:23
18:2 Jer 51:37; Jer 51:8; Isa 34:11
18:3 Jer 51:7; Ezek 27:33; Rev 14:8
18:4 Jer 51:45; Isa 48:20; Isa 52:11
18:5 Jer 51:9; Rev 16:19; Gen 18:20,21
18:6 Ps 137:8; Jer 50:15; Jer 50:29

17:8 *The beast which you saw was, and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss and to go into destruction* This echoes the beast's apparent death and return in chapter 13, Satan's counterfeit of the One "who is and who was and who is coming" (1:8). The world marvels, but his final destination is destruction in the lake of fire (19:20).
17:9 *The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sits* This calls for careful, wise reading. The seven heads stand for seven mountains, and also for seven kings or kingdoms. Rome was known in John's day as the city on seven hills.
17:10 *the five have fallen, and the one is, the other has not yet come* Five kingdoms had already fallen in history, one existed when John wrote, and one more is still to come, though its reign will be brief.
17:11 *the beast which was, and is not, is himself also an eighth, and is of the seven, and goes into destruction* The beast is an eighth king who is also, in some sense, one of the seven: a final ruler closely tied to this long line of kingdoms, and destined for the same defeat.
17:12 *the ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom* These ten future kings are tied to the ten toes and ten horns of Daniel's visions (Dan 2:41-44; 7:24). They rule with the beast for one hour, a short, God-appointed time.
17:13 *they will give their own power and authority to the beast* They are united by a single goal: handing their power over to him.
17:14 *the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings* The ten kings and the beast make war against Jesus, and Jesus wins. The same title appears at His return (19:16). Those with Him are called, chosen, and faithful, the saints who come with Him (19:14).
17:16 *these will hate the prostitute, and will make her desolate and naked, and will eat her flesh and burn her up with fire* A surprising turn. The kings who once worked with the harlot turn on her and destroy her completely. Even evil turns against itself in the end. Many see this as the beast doing away with the false religious system so that he alone is worshiped (13:15).
17:17 *God has put into their hearts to do His purpose* Even this destruction happens under God's sovereign control. Their unity and their betrayal of the harlot are part of God's plan, whether they realize it or not.
17:18 *the woman whom you saw is the great city which has kingship over the kings of the earth* Based on the seven mountains of verse 9, I believe this points to the city of Rome and an end-times system of false religion and political power headquartered there. Many students of Revelation still debate her exact identity, so I hold that identification with humility. The larger point is clear: any power, political or religious, that leads people away from God toward the beast will be destroyed by the very forces it once used.
18:1 *another angel coming down out of heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated from his glory* Chapter 17 announced Babylon's judgment, and chapter 18 shows it happening. An angel of unusually high rank comes down, so glorious that his presence lights up a darkened earth (16:10).
18:2 *Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, and she has become a dwelling place of demons* The angel repeats the announcement of 14:8. What was once a place of glory becomes a haunt of demons and unclean creatures, as the prophets foretold of ancient Babylon (Isa 13:19-22; Jer 51:37).
18:3 *the merchants of the earth became rich from the power of her luxury* Every nation was swept up in her influence. Kings joined her corruption, and merchants grew rich from her. Babylon is a system of commerce as well as false worship.
18:4 *Come out of her, My people, so that you may not share in her sins, and so that you may not receive of her plagues* A voice, likely Christ's own, calls God's people out before judgment falls, as Jeremiah called Israel out of ancient Babylon (Jer 51:45). Staying close to her sin means being swept up in its punishment. The call is for every generation: do not love the world (1 John 2:15-17).
18:5 *her sins have reached as far as heaven, and God has remembered her unrighteous deeds* Like the tower of Babel, her sins are piled up to heaven. God had not forgotten before. His patience has now reached its limit.

cup in which she mixed, mix double for her. **7** As much as she glorified herself and lived in luxury, so much torment and mourning give to her; because in her heart she says, 'I sit ***as*** queen, and I am not a widow, and I will by no means see mourning.' **8** Because of this, in one day her plagues will come, death and mourning and famine; and she will be burned up with fire, because strong ***is the*** Lord God, the One who judges her.

The World Mourns Babylon

9 And the kings of the earth, who committed sexual immorality and lived in luxury with her, will weep ***for*** her and will wail over her when they see the smoke of her burning, **10** standing from afar because of the fear of her torment, saying, 'Woe, woe, the great city, Babylon, the strong city! For in one hour your judgment has come.' **11** And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn over her, because no one buys their cargo any longer: **12** cargo of gold and silver and precious stone and pearl and fine linen and purple and silk and scarlet, and all citron wood and every article of ivory and every article of most precious wood and of bronze and iron and marble, **13** and cinnamon and incense and ointment and frankincense and wine and oil and fine flour and wheat and cattle and sheep, and of horses and of chariots and of bodies, and souls of men. **14** And the ripe fruit of the desire of your soul departed from you, and all the sumptuous things and the splendid things departed from you, and you will by no means find them any longer. **15** The merchants of these things, who became rich from her, will stand from afar because of the fear of her torment, weeping and mourning, **16** and saying, 'Woe, woe, the great city, which was clothed in fine linen and purple and scarlet, and gilded with gold and precious stone and pearls! **17** For in one hour such great wealth was laid waste.' And every shipmaster, and all the crowd on the ships, and sailors, and as many as work the sea, stood from afar, **18** and were crying out, seeing the smoke of her burning, saying, 'What ***city is*** like the great city?' **19** And they threw dust on their heads, and were crying out, weeping and mourning, saying, 'Woe, woe, the great city, in which all who had ships in the sea became rich from her costliness! For in one hour she was laid waste.' **20** Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you holy apostles and you prophets, because God has judged your judgment against her." **21** And one strong angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw ***it*** into the sea, saying, "Thus with violence Babylon the great city will be thrown down, and will by no means be found any longer. **22** And ***the*** sound of harpists and musicians and flute players and trumpeters will by no means be heard in you any longer; and any craftsman of any craft will by no means be found in you any longer; and ***the*** sound of a millstone will by no means be heard in you any longer; **23** and ***the*** light of a lamp will by no means shine in you any longer; and ***the*** voice of a bridegroom and of a bride will by no means be heard in you any longer; for your merchants were the great men of the earth, because by your sorcery all the nations were deceived. **24** And in her was found ***the*** blood of prophets and of saints, and of all who have been slain on the earth."

REVELATION 19

Hallelujah in Heaven

1 And after these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Hallelujah! The salvation and the glory and the honor and the power ***belong*** to the Lord our

18:7 Zeph 2:15; Isa 47:7-8; Ps 45:9
18:8 Jer 50:34; Jer 50:31; Isa 47:9
18:9 Ezek 26:16; Jer 50:46; Gen 19:28
18:10 Isa 21:9; Jer 51:8; Num 24:24
18:11 Isa 47:15; Isa 23:9; Rev 18:3,9,15,20,23
18:12 2 Chr 2:8; Ezek 27:13-16; Rev 17:4
18:13 Ezek 27:13; Isa 50:1; Amos 2:6
18:14 Num 11:4,34; Ps 78:18; Ps 106:14
18:15 Rev 18:3,11; Acts 19:24-27; Ezek 27:31
18:16 Rev 17:4; Rev 18:10,11; Luke 16:19-31
18:17 Ezek 27:29-30; Jonah 1:6; Rev 18:10
18:18 Ezek 27:32; Rev 13:4; Rev 18:9
18:19 Job 2:12; Zeph 2:15; Josh 7:6
18:20 Deut 32:42; Ps 48:11; Ps 58:10
18:21 Jer 51:63-64; Ezek 26:21; Exod 15:5
18:22 Jer 25:10; Ezek 26:13; Eccl 12:4
18:23 Isa 23:8; Nah 3:4; Jer 7:34
18:24 Jer 51:49; Jer 2:34; Ezek 22:27
19:1 Rev 11:15; Jer 51:10; 1 Chr 29:11

18:7 *in her heart she says, 'I sit as queen, and I am not a widow, and I will by no means see mourning.'* She believed herself untouchable, the same boast as ancient Babylon (Isa 47:7-9). Her arrogance becomes the measure of her punishment. Pride always comes before a fall (Prov 16:18).
18:8 *in one day her plagues will come, death and mourning and famine* Her downfall comes swiftly, in a single day, a sharp contrast to her boast of endless security. She thought her position made her untouchable, but God is stronger than all her defenses.
18:9 *the kings of the earth, who committed sexual immorality and lived in luxury with her, will weep for her* The kings who benefited from Babylon watch from a safe distance, terrified that the same fate awaits them. Their grief is not really for her. It is fear for themselves.
18:11 *the merchants of the earth weep and mourn over her, because no one buys their cargo any longer* The merchants mourn not her sins but their lost profits. Everything they built their fortunes on vanishes in an instant.
18:13 *and of horses and of chariots and of bodies, and souls of men* The long list of luxury goods ends with the most tragic cargo of all, human beings. Babylon traded in people, treating souls as goods to be bought and sold. God sees every person exploited for profit.
18:17 *For in one hour such great wealth was laid waste* Three groups, kings, merchants, and sailors, all keep their distance and grieve the same loss. What the world spends its life chasing can be gone in an hour. Only treasure in heaven lasts (Matt 6:19-21).
18:20 *Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you holy apostles and you prophets, because God has judged your judgment against her* In stark contrast to the mourning on earth, heaven is told to celebrate. Those who suffered at Babylon's hands finally see justice done.
18:21 *one strong angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea* A millstone big enough to grind grain for a whole village is thrown into the sea. It sinks, and no one ever sees it again. That is how Babylon will fall. Not damaged, not weakened. Gone (Jer 51:63-64).
18:22 *the sound of harpists and musicians and flute players and trumpeters will by no means be heard in you any longer* Music, craftsmanship, daily work, the light of a lamp at night, even the joy of a wedding all disappear from this once-thriving city.
18:23 *by your sorcery all the nations were deceived* The reason for her fall is made plain. She deceived the nations through her influence and corruption.
18:24 *in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all who have been slain on the earth* Babylon is condemned because she was responsible for the deaths of God's faithful people, prophets and ordinary believers alike.
19:1 *Hallelujah! The salvation and the glory and the honor and the power belong to the Lord our God* Hallelujah means praise the Lord, and this chapter is the only place in the New Testament where the word appears. The great multitude, likely the redeemed of all the ages, praises God because His judgment of Babylon was completely fair.

God, **2** because true and righteous ***are*** His judgments;
because He has judged the great prostitute who was corrupting the earth with her sexual immorality, and He has avenged the blood of His slaves from her hand." **3** And a second time they said, "Hallelujah! And her smoke goes up to the ages of the ages." **4** And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down, and they worshiped God who sits on the throne, saying, "Amen. Hallelujah!" **5** And a voice came out from the throne, saying, "Praise our God, all you His slaves and you who fear Him, and the small and the great." **6** And I heard as ***it were*** a voice of a great multitude, and as a sound of many waters, and as a sound of strong thunders, saying, "Hallelujah! For ***the*** Lord God the Almighty has reigned. **7** Let us rejoice and exult, and let us give the glory to Him, because the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." **8** And it was given to her that she should clothe herself in fine linen, pure and bright; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. **9** And he says to me, "Write: Blessed ***are*** those who have been called to the supper of the marriage of the Lamb." And he says to me, "These are the true words of God." **10** And I fell before his feet to worship him. And he says to me, "See ***that you do*** not! I am a fellow slave of yours and of your brothers who have the testimony of Jesus (Iesous). Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

The Rider on the White Horse

11 And I saw heaven opened, and look, a white horse, and the One sitting on it ***is*** called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. **12** And His eyes ***are*** like a flame of fire, and on His head ***are*** many diadems, having a name written which no one knows except He Himself, **13** and clothed with a garment dipped in blood; and His name is called The Word of God. **14** And the armies in heaven were following Him on white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and pure. **15** And out of His mouth goes forth a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike the nations; and He Himself will shepherd them with a rod of iron; and He Himself treads the press of the wine of the fury and of the wrath of God the Almighty. **16** And He has on the robe and on His thigh a name written: "King of kings and Lord of lords." **17** And I saw one angel standing in the sun, and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in mid-heaven, "Come and be gathered to the supper of the great God, **18** so that you may eat ***the*** flesh of kings and ***the*** flesh of commanders and ***the*** flesh of strong ***men*** and ***the*** flesh of horses and of those sitting on them, and ***the*** flesh of all, free and slave, and

19:2 Ps 48:11; Rev 6:10; Rev 15:3
19:3 Isa 34:10; Rev 14:11; Rev 19:1
19:4 Ps 106:48; 1 Chr 16:36; Neh 5:13
19:5 Ps 135:1; Ps 150:6; Ps 115:13
19:6 Ezek 1:24; Ezek 43:2; Rev 14:2
19:7 Hos 2:19; Rev 21:2,9; Ps 45:11
19:8 Isa 61:10; Prov 31:22; Hos 2:19
19:9 Isa 8:1; Hab 2:2; Isa 25:6
19:10 Exod 34:14; Dan 7:10; Exod 20:3
19:11 Ps 96:13; Ps 50:6; Isa 32:1
19:12 Isa 9:6; Dan 10:6; Deut 9:3
19:13 Isa 63:1-3; Isa 9:5; John 1:1,14
19:14 Ps 98:1; Prov 31:22; Eccl 9:8
19:15 Ps 2:9; Isa 11:4; Isa 49:2
19:16 Dan 2:47; Deut 10:17; Ezra 6:12
19:17 Jer 12:9; Ezek 39:17-18; Isa 56:9
19:18 Jer 34:20; Ps 110:5; Josh 8:29

19:2 *He has avenged the blood of His slaves from her hand* God keeps His promise to the martyrs who cried out, "Until when?" (6:10). Justice delayed is not justice denied when God is the Judge.
19:3 *her smoke goes up to the ages of the ages* The same phrase is used for God's own eternal reign (11:15). Babylon's judgment is permanent and will never be undone. The elders and the living creatures, who appear whenever heaven bursts into worship, join in.
19:6 *Hallelujah! For the Lord God the Almighty has reigned* A voice from the throne calls all God's servants to praise, and an enormous chorus, as loud as rushing water and rolling thunder, gives the reason: God now reigns openly over the earth.
19:7 *the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready* All through the Bible God's people are pictured as His bride (Hos 2:19-20; Eph 5:25-32). The church, taken up before the Tribulation, has been in heaven with Christ. Now the marriage is announced, just before He returns to the earth with her.
19:8 *the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints* The bride's bright, clean linen pictures the righteous deeds of God's people. Even these are not something we earned on our own. Notice it "was given to her" to wear it. Christ's righteousness is a gift, and He works in us what pleases Him (Phil 2:13).
19:9 *Blessed are those who have been called to the supper of the marriage of the Lamb* The fourth of seven blessings in Revelation. Those invited to this wedding feast are blessed, and John is assured that these are the true words of God. Jesus spoke of this feast in His parables (Matt 22:1-14).
19:10 *See that you do not! I am a fellow slave of yours* Overwhelmed, John starts to worship the angel, and the angel stops him at once. Worship belongs to God alone. Angels are fellow servants, not objects of worship (Col 2:18).
19:10 *For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy* The whole point of prophecy, everything written in this book, is to point to Jesus. If we study prophecy and do not come away loving Jesus more, we have missed it.
19:11 *I saw heaven opened, and look, a white horse, and the One sitting on it is called Faithful and True* This is the Second Coming of Christ to the earth at the end of the Tribulation, foretold in 1:7. Unlike the deceptive rider of the first seal (6:2), this Rider is genuinely Faithful and True, and He comes to bring righteous judgment.
19:12 *His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems* His blazing eyes echo the vision of Christ in 1:14 and 2:18. The beast's horns wore ten diadems (13:1), but Christ wears many, showing His supreme authority. His secret name tells us there is more to Him than we will ever fully know.
19:13 *clothed with a garment dipped in blood; and His name is called The Word of God* His robe is stained with blood before the battle begins, the blood of His enemies foretold in Isaiah 63:1-3. He is the Word of God (John 1:1, 14), God's will and message fully revealed and acted out.
19:14 *the armies in heaven were following Him on white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and pure* Their linen matches what the bride wears in verse 8, "the righteous acts of the saints." I believe this army includes the church, taken up before the Tribulation and now returning with Christ, and it may include angels as well (Matt 25:31; Jude 14). Notice they carry no weapons. They do not fight.
19:15 *out of His mouth goes forth a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike the nations* Christ fights with no physical weapon. His Word is the sword. He speaks, and the nations fall (2 Thess 2:8). Then He will rule with unbreakable authority, a rod of iron (Ps 2:9), and He alone treads the winepress of God's wrath (14:19-20).
19:16 *King of kings and Lord of lords* His ultimate title is written plainly for all to see. No earthly or spiritual power comes close to His authority (17:14; 1 Tim 6:15).
19:17 *Come and be gathered to the supper of the great God* In jarring contrast to the wedding supper, an angel invites birds of prey to a very different feast, the aftermath of the battle (Ezek 39:17-20). Everyone will attend one supper or the other. The choice is made in this life.
19:18 *the flesh of all, free and slave, and small and great* No one who opposes Christ at this battle, whatever his rank or status, will escape.

small and great." **19** And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to make war with the One sitting on the horse and with His army. **20** And the beast was captured, and with this ***one*** the false prophet who did the signs before it, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worship its image. The two were thrown living into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur. **21** And the rest were killed with the sword of the One sitting on the horse, which went forth out of His mouth. And all the birds were filled with their flesh.

REVELATION 20

Satan Bound and the Saints Reign

1 And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. **2** And he seized the dragon, the ancient serpent, who is ***the*** devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, **3** and threw him into the abyss, and shut him ***in***, and sealed ***it*** over him, so that he would not deceive the nations any longer until the thousand years were completed; and after these things he must be released for a little time. **4** And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them; and the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus (Iesous) and because of the word of God, and who did not worship the beast nor its image, and did not receive the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. **5** But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were completed. This ***is*** the first resurrection.
6 Blessed and holy ***is*** the one having a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death does not have authority, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and will reign with Him a thousand years.

Satan's Final Doom

7 And when the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released out of his prison, **8** and will go out to deceive the nations which ***are*** in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for war, whose number ***is*** like the sand of the sea. **9** And they went up over the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city; and fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them. **10** And the devil who deceives them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet ***are***; and they will be tormented day and night to the ages of the ages.

19:19 Dan 7:21; Dan 11:40; Exod 15:3
19:20 Dan 11:45; Rev 20:10; Dan 7:11
19:21 Isa 34:2; Isa 66:24; Rev 19:11-15
20:1 Rev 1:18; Rev 10:1; 2 Pet 2:4
20:2 Isa 27:1; Job 1:7; Job 2:1
20:3 Isa 65:25; Dan 6:17; Rev 12:9
20:4 Dan 7:27; Dan 7:9; Dan 7:22
20:5 Isa 26:19; Rev 20:8,9; Rev 19:20,21
20:6 Isa 61:6; Dan 12:12; Isa 26:19
20:7 Job 2:6; Rev 20:2
20:8 Judg 7:12; 1 Sam 13:5; Isa 10:22
20:9 Ezek 39:6; 2 Kgs 1:10; Gen 19:24
20:10 Gen 3:15; Rev 19:20; Matt 25:41,46

19:19 *the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to make war with the One sitting on the horse* This is Armageddon (16:16). The armies of the earth, led by the beast, gather in one final, doomed attempt to fight Christ (Ps 2:1-3).
19:20 *The two were thrown living into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur* The beast and the false prophet are the first to be thrown into the lake of fire, still alive. There is no later trial for them. A thousand years later they will still be there (20:10).
19:21 *the rest were killed with the sword of the One sitting on the horse, which went forth out of His mouth* The rest of the armies are struck down by His spoken word. The battle is over almost as soon as it begins, and the grim supper of verse 17 takes place exactly as promised.
20:1 *an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand* The key and the chain are signs of God's total authority over evil. It takes only one angel to bind Satan. He is not God's equal rival. He is a creature, and God has the key.
20:2 *he seized the dragon, the ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years* Satan, named plainly with all his titles, is locked away. The thousand years, the millennium, is mentioned six times in verses 2 to 7. I take it at face value, a real thousand-year reign of Christ on the earth after His return, when the Old Testament promises to Israel will be fulfilled (Isa 2:4; 11:6-9). Amillennial teachers read it as a picture of the present church age, and postmillennial teachers as a golden age brought in by the church before Christ returns.
20:3 *so that he would not deceive the nations any longer until the thousand years were completed* Satan is sealed in the abyss and can no longer deceive anyone. Unlike the beast and false prophet, his sentence here is temporary. God still has one final purpose for him before his permanent judgment.
20:4 *I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them* Believers are given the right to judge, likely the faithful of past ages already glorified with Christ, the church among them (1 Cor 6:2-3; Matt 19:28).
20:4 *the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and who did not worship the beast* Alongside them is the group martyred for refusing the beast and his mark during the Tribulation (6:9; 13:15). They lost their heads but not their lives. Both groups live and reign with Christ for a thousand years.
20:5 *But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection* Unbelievers who died through history remain in death until the thousand years are over. The first resurrection is the resurrection of believers, which takes place in stages: Christ the firstfruits, the church at the rapture, and the Tribulation martyrs here (1 Cor 15:23). Jesus spoke of a resurrection of life and a resurrection of judgment (John 5:29), and here we learn a thousand years lie between them.
20:6 *Blessed and holy is the one having a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death does not have authority* The fifth of seven blessings in Revelation. Anyone who shares in the first resurrection has nothing to fear from the second death, the lake of fire (verse 14). They serve as priests of God and reign with Christ.
20:7 *when the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released out of his prison* After a thousand years, Satan is set free and returns at once to his old pattern of deception.
20:8 *to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for war, whose number is like the sand of the sea* The names Gog and Magog come from Ezekiel 38 and 39, where they represent Israel's enemies. People born during the millennium, living under Christ's perfect rule, will still need to choose Him. Even a perfect world cannot change a heart that does not want God. Only new birth can.
20:9 *surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city; and fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them* The army marches against Jerusalem, the beloved city, and God's people. The battle is over instantly. There is no fight. Fire falls from heaven and consumes them.
20:10 *the Devil who deceives them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet are* Satan finally joins the beast and false prophet. That they are still there after a thousand years confirms that this judgment is truly eternal, not a temporary punishment. Hell was "prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt 25:41).

The Great White Throne

11 And I saw a great white throne and the One sitting on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled, and no place was found for them. **12** And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the ***book*** of life. And the dead were judged out of the things written in the books, according to their works. **13** And the sea gave up the dead who ***were*** in it, and Death and Hades gave up the dead who ***were*** in them; and they were judged, each one according to their works. **14** And Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death. **15** And if anyone was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

REVELATION 21

All Things New

1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and the sea is no longer. **2** And I, John (Ioannes), saw the holy city, new Jerusalem (Hierousalem), coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. **3** And I heard a loud voice out of heaven, saying, "Look, the tabernacle of God ***is*** with men, and He will tabernacle with them, and they will be His peoples, and God Himself will be with them, their God. **4** And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death will not be any longer, nor mourning nor crying nor pain will be any longer, because the first things passed away." **5** And the One sitting on the throne said, "Look, I make all things new." And He says to me, "Write, because these words are true and faithful." **6** And He said to me, "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life freely. **7** The one who overcomes will inherit all things, and I will be God to him, and he will be the son to Me. **8** But for ***the*** cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and sexually immoral and sorcerers and idolaters and all the liars, their part ***is*** in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is ***the*** second death."

The New Jerusalem

9 And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came to me and spoke with me, saying, "Come here, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb." **10** And he carried me away in ***the*** Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy

20:11 Dan 2:35; Job 9:6; Rev 21:1
20:12 Dan 7:10; Ps 28:4; Ps 62:12
20:13 Isa 26:19; Prov 24:12; Isa 59:18
20:14 1 Cor 15:26,53; Rev 20:6; Rev 19:20
20:15 Dan 12:1; Ps 69:28; Isa 4:3
21:1 Isa 66:22; Isa 65:17; 2 Pet 3:13
21:2 Isa 61:10; Isa 52:1; Heb 11:10
21:3 Lev 26:11; Ezek 37:27; Isa 12:6
21:4 Isa 25:8; Isa 35:10; Isa 60:20
21:5 Isa 43:19; Isa 42:9; 2 Cor 5:17
21:6 Isa 55:1; Ps 36:9; Isa 12:3
21:7 Zech 8:8; Isa 65:9; Exod 6:7
21:8 1 Cor 6:9,10; Lev 11:10; Lev 13:57
21:9 Rev 19:7; Rev 21:2; Rev 15:1-7
21:10 Ezek 40:2; Ezek 40:3; Rev 1:10

20:11 *I saw a great white throne and the One sitting on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled* The Great White Throne is distinct from every other throne in Revelation. Its appearance marks the end of the old creation and sets the stage for the new heaven and new earth (2 Pet 3:10). The Judge is Jesus, to whom the Father has given all judgment (John 5:22).
20:12 *I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life* Everyone who died without Christ now stands before God. Books recording their deeds are opened alongside the book of life, and each is judged by what he did. This is not the judgment of believers, whose works are judged for reward at the judgment seat of Christ (2 Cor 5:10). No one at this throne is saved by his works.
20:13 *the sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them* No one escapes this judgment, no matter where or how he died. Every person will be judged fairly.
20:14 *Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death* Death itself is finally thrown away. "The last enemy is brought to nothing: death" (1 Cor 15:26). From here on, death is gone for good.
20:15 *if anyone was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire* If there is one verse in this chapter to sit with, it is this one. At this throne there is one question: is your name written in the book of life? If it is, you have nothing to fear. If it is not, the lake of fire is what is left. If you are not sure where you stand, settle it with God today. "if you confess with your mouth Lord Jesus, and believe in your heart that God raised Him out of the dead, you will be saved" (Rom 10:9).
21:1 *I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away* After the millennium and the Great White Throne comes a completely new creation (Isa 65:17; 2 Pet 3:13). The old heaven and earth, which fled from God's face (20:11), are gone.
21:1 *the sea is no longer* The sea, present through the millennial kingdom, is not part of the new creation. In the Bible the sea often stood for danger, separation, and the restless nations (Isa 57:20). None of that remains.
21:2 *the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband* The city comes down beautifully prepared, like a bride on her wedding day. It stands in deliberate contrast to the harlot of chapter 17. One pictures everything false and self-serving, the other everything pure and devoted. Jesus promised to prepare a place for us (John 14:2-3).
21:3 *Look, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will tabernacle with them* What humanity has waited for since Eden: God Himself living among His people. The promise was first spoken to Israel: "My tabernacle shall be over them; and I will be God to them, and they shall be a people to Me" (Ezek 37:27). Some teachers read this chapter as proof that the church has taken Israel's place, but I believe God keeps that promise to Israel in the thousand-year kingdom and carries it into the new earth, where Israel and the redeemed from every nation live with Him forever.
21:4 *God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death will not be any longer, nor mourning nor crying nor pain* Every source of grief disappears for good, fulfilling promises like Isaiah 25:8, 35:10, and 65:19. The first things, the whole order of sin and the curse, have passed away.
21:5 *Look, I make all things new* God on the throne speaks directly, one of the few times in Revelation. He is not just repairing the old but making all things new. He tells John to write, because these words are faithful and true, a statement that covers the whole book.
21:6 *I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life freely* God declares His new creation complete. He is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and end of all things, and He offers eternal life as a free gift to anyone who is thirsty (Isa 55:1; John 4:14).
21:7 *The one who overcomes will inherit all things, and I will be God to him, and he will be the son to Me* Those who overcome by faith in Christ inherit everything and become God's own children (1 John 5:4-5).
21:8 *for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers* Two destinies stand side by side. The cowardly are those who would not stand for Christ, and the list begins with unbelief, the root of the rest. This verse closes the storyline of Revelation. Eternity has arrived, and both God's promises and His warnings stand fulfilled. Paul named the same kinds of sinners and then said, "such were some of you" (1 Cor 6:11). Christ washes sinners clean.
21:9 *Come here, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb* One of the angels who poured out the bowls of wrath, as in 17:1 where one showed John the harlot, now shows him the bride. As the next verses make clear, the bride is pictured in the New Jerusalem, the home of God's people.

Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, **11** having the glory of God. And its radiance ***was*** like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal; **12** having a great and high wall, having twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names inscribed, which are ***those*** of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel: **13** on ***the*** east three gates, on ***the*** north three gates, on ***the*** south three gates, and on ***the*** west three gates. **14** And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. **15** And the one speaking with me had a golden reed so that he might measure the city and its gates and its wall. **16** And the city lies square, and its length is as great as the breadth also. And he measured the city with the reed at approximately 1,400 miles (twelve thousand stadia); the length and the breadth and the height of it are equal. **17** And he measured its wall, approximately 216 feet (one hundred forty-four cubits), a measure of a man, that is, of an angel. **18** And the structure of its wall was jasper, and the city ***was*** pure gold, like pure glass. **19** And the foundations of the wall of the city ***were*** adorned with every precious stone. The first foundation ***was*** jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald; **20** the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, carnelian; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst. **21** And the twelve gates ***were*** twelve pearls; each single one of the gates was of one pearl. And the street of the city ***was*** pure gold, like transparent glass. **22** And I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty is its temple, and the Lamb. **23** And the city has no need of the sun nor of the moon, that they should shine in it; for the glory of God illuminated it, and its lamp ***is*** the Lamb. **24** And the nations of those being saved will walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it. **25** And its gates will by no means be shut by day; for night will not be there. **26** And they will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it. **27** And there will by no means enter into it anything that defiles, and that practices abomination and a lie, except those written in the book of life of the Lamb.

REVELATION 22

The River of Life

1 And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, flowing out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. **2** In the middle of its street, and of the river, on this side and on that, ***was*** a tree of life producing twelve fruits, yielding its fruit according to each single month; and the leaves of the tree ***are*** for the healing of the nations. **3** And ***there*** will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb

21:11 Rev 22:5; Rev 4:6; Ezek 1:26
21:12 Ezek 48:31-34; Num 2:2; Exod 28:21
21:13 Ezek 48:31-34
21:14 Heb 11:10; Eph 2:20; Rev 21:19-21
21:15 Ezek 40:3; Rev 11:1,2; Ezek 41:1-5
21:16 Exod 38:1; 1 Kgs 6:2; Ezek 41:4
21:17 1 Kgs 6:2; Ezek 42:20; Rev 7:4
21:18 Rev 21:11,19
21:19 Isa 54:11-12; Exod 28:17-20; Exod 39:10
21:21 Rev 21:18; Rev 17:4; Rev 22:2
21:22 Gen 28:3; Ruth 1:20; John 4:23
21:23 Isa 60:19-20; Isa 24:23; Rev 21:11
21:24 Isa 60:3; Ps 89:27; Ps 102:15
21:25 Isa 60:11; Zech 14:7; Rev 22:5
21:26 Rev 21:24
21:27 Isa 52:1; Isa 35:8; Zech 14:21
22:1 Zech 14:8; Ps 46:4; Ezek 47:1
22:2 Gen 2:9; Prov 3:18; Gen 3:22
22:3 Zech 14:11; Isa 64:4; Matt 25:21

21:11 *having the glory of God. And its radiance was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal* From a high mountain, John watches the city come down, radiant with God's own glory, shining like the One on the throne (4:3).
21:12 *twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names inscribed, which are those of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel* Twelve gates named for Israel's twelve tribes show that Israel's promised place in God's plan is fully honored, forever (Ezek 48:31-34).
21:14 *the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb* Twelve foundations named for the apostles tie the church just as firmly into this eternal city (Eph 2:20). Together, gates and foundations picture the full sweep of God's redeemed people from every era, Israel and the church, distinct yet united in one place.
21:16 *the length and the breadth and the height of it are equal* Twelve thousand stadia is about 1,400 miles in each direction, a perfect cube, roughly the distance from New York City to Dallas, in every direction. The Holy of Holies in the temple was also a perfect cube (1 Kgs 6:20). The whole city is the place of God's presence, with more than enough room for every believer in history.
21:17 *he measured its wall* The wall is 144 cubits, about 216 feet high, measured by a man's measure, which the angel was using.
21:18 *the city was pure gold, like pure glass* Walls of jasper, foundations set with twelve kinds of precious stone, and gold so pure it looks like glass. Every detail points to a city of unimaginable beauty and worth.
21:21 *the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each single one of the gates was of one pearl* Each gate is carved from a single enormous pearl. A pearl is formed through suffering in the oyster, a fitting picture for the entrance to a city opened by Christ's suffering.
21:22 *I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty is its temple, and the Lamb* A temple helps people worship a God they cannot see directly. Here God and the Lamb are present in person, so no such building is needed.
21:23 *the glory of God illuminated it, and its lamp is the Lamb* The city needs no sun or moon. God's own glory, with Christ as its light, lights everything (Isa 60:19-20; John 8:12).
21:24 *the nations of those being saved will walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it* The nations live on the new earth and walk by the city's light. The new creation is not a cloud and a harp but a real world with real people and nations serving God.
21:25 *its gates will by no means be shut by day; for night will not be there* The gates never close, a picture of complete safety and peace. There is no threat left to guard against.
21:27 *there will by no means enter into it anything that defiles, and that practices abomination and a lie, except those written in the book of life of the Lamb* Only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life will ever enter. Nothing evil or deceitful will ever be allowed inside.
22:1 *a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, flowing out of the throne of God and of the Lamb* The river flows straight from the throne, echoing Jesus' promise of living water (John 4:14) and Ezekiel's river from the temple (Ezek 47:1-12). It pictures the eternal life that flows from God Himself, pure and never ending.
22:2 *a tree of life producing twelve fruits, yielding its fruit according to each single month* The tree of life, closed to Adam and Eve after the fall (Gen 3:22-24), is open again. The Bible begins and ends with this tree. What was lost in Eden is restored, and more.
22:2 *the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations* Not that anyone will be sick, but that the nations live in complete wholeness and unity, with none of the sickness, strife, or brokenness of the old creation.
22:3 *there will no longer be any curse* The curse placed on creation in Genesis 3:14-19 is finally and completely lifted (Rom 8:21). God's own throne stands in the city, and His people serve Him directly.

will be in it, and His slaves will serve Him. **4** And they will see His face, and His name ***will be*** on their foreheads. **5** And night will not be there, and they have no need of a lamp and of light of the sun, because ***the*** Lord God illuminates them; and they will reign to the ages of the ages.

Jesus Is Coming

6 And he said to me, "These words ***are*** faithful and true; and ***the*** Lord, the God of the holy prophets, sent His angel to show to His slaves the things which must take place quickly. **7** Look, I am coming quickly. Blessed ***is*** the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book." **8** And I, John (Ioannes), ***am*** the one seeing these things and hearing. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. **9** And he says to me, "See ***that you do*** not! For I am a fellow slave of yours and of your brothers the prophets and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God!" **10** And he says to me, "Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near. **11** The one who is unrighteous, let him be unrighteous still; and the one who is filthy, let him be filthy still; and the one who ***is*** righteous, let him be justified still; and the one who ***is*** holy, let him be sanctified still. **12** And look, I am coming quickly, and My reward ***is*** with Me, to give to each one as his work will be. **13** I am the Alpha and the Omega, ***the*** Beginning and ***the*** End, the First and the Last." **14** Blessed ***are*** those who do His commandments, so that the right to the tree of life will be theirs, and they may enter by the gates into the city. **15** But outside ***are*** the dogs and the sorcerers and the sexually immoral and the murderers and the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices a lie. **16** "I, Jesus (Iesous), sent My angel to testify these things to you for the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David (Dabid), the bright and morning star." **17** And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come." And let the one who hears say, "Come." And let the one who thirsts come; and the one who wishes, let him take the water of life freely. **18** For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues which have been written in this book; **19** and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from ***the*** book of life and out of the holy city, and ***from*** the things written in this book. **20** The One who testifies these things says, "Yes, I am

22:4 Isa 33:17; Ps 11:7; Matt 5:8
22:5 Dan 7:18; Isa 60:19; Isa 30:26
22:6 Dan 3:28; Dan 6:22; Rev 1:1
22:7 Deut 5:29; Rev 3:11; Rev 1:3
22:8 Gen 24:40; Josh 5:14; Ps 95:6
22:9 Josh 5:14; Rev 19:10; Col 2:18,19
22:10 Dan 8:26; Ezek 12:23; Dan 12:4
22:11 Dan 12:10; Ezek 3:27; Ps 69:27
22:12 Isa 62:11; Isa 40:10; Matt 16:27
22:13 Isa 44:6; Isa 48:12; Isa 41:4
22:14 Dan 12:12; Ps 106:3; Gen 2:9
22:15 Rev 21:8,27; Gal 5:19-21; Phil 3:2
22:16 Num 24:17; Isa 11:10; 1 Kgs 15:4
22:17 Isa 55:1; Isa 2:3; Jer 50:5
22:18 Deut 4:2; Prov 30:6; Deut 12:32
22:19 Ps 69:28; Exod 32:33; Exod 32:32
22:20 Ps 41:13; Ps 72:19; Jer 28:6

22:4 *they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads* No one has ever seen God (John 1:18), and Moses was told no man could see His face and live (Exod 33:20). Now His people will. As the 144,000 were marked with His name (14:1), all of God's people now carry His name openly, belonging to Him forever.
22:5 *the Lord God illuminates them; and they will reign to the ages of the ages* Night disappears, because God's presence gives all the light anyone needs. His people will reign with Him forever, in a role Scripture does not fully spell out, but one worth looking forward to with confidence in His good plan.
22:6 *These words are faithful and true* This statement covers the whole book. Everything in Revelation comes from God and can be fully trusted, from the same Lord who spoke through the holy prophets.
22:7 *Look, I am coming quickly. Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book* The first of three times in this chapter that Jesus says, "I am coming quickly" (verses 7, 12, 20), with the sixth of the seven blessings. Quickly means His coming is next on God's calendar and will be sudden when it comes. The church is to live looking for Him at any moment (Titus 2:13).
22:8 *I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things* John names himself once more as the eyewitness. Overwhelmed, he makes the same mistake again (19:10), and again the angel redirects him. Worship belongs to God alone.
22:10 *Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near* Daniel was told to seal up his prophecy until the time of the end (Dan 12:4, 9). John is told to leave Revelation open. Its message is meant to be read and understood now. I believe God means these things to become clearer as the time draws near.
22:11 *The one who is unrighteous, let him be unrighteous still* This describes two settled paths, not a command to keep sinning. By this point in the story, hearts have become fixed in one direction or the other. God still wants everyone to live righteously, but some will never change. Now is the time to turn.
22:12 *I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to each one as his work will be* Jesus brings rewards with Him. Believers are saved by grace, but our works will be rewarded at His judgment seat (1 Cor 3:12-14; 2 Cor 5:10).
22:13 *I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last* Jesus takes the same title used by God on the throne (1:8; 21:6). He has always existed and always will. He is God.
22:14 *Blessed are those who do His commandments, so that the right to the tree of life will be theirs* The seventh and final blessing in Revelation. The SLB reads "those who do His commandments," and some other Bibles follow manuscripts that read those who wash their robes. Either way, the people meant are those made clean through faith in Jesus, whose lives show it. Only they have access to the tree of life and the city.
22:15 *But outside are the dogs and the sorcerers and the sexually immoral and the murderers and the idolaters* Dogs was a term for the shameless and impure. Those who never turned from sin remain permanently outside. There are only two places in eternity, inside and outside.
22:16 *I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright and morning star* Jesus speaks in His own name with full authority. He is both the source of David's line and David's descendant (Isa 11:1; Matt 22:42-45). The morning star appears just before dawn, and His coming will bring the dawn of a new day (2 Pet 1:19).
22:17 *the Spirit and the bride say, "Come."* The Holy Spirit and the church join in one invitation. Anyone who is thirsty, anyone at all, is welcome to come and take the water of life freely. The last invitation in the Bible is open to whoever wants it (Isa 55:1).
22:18 *if anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues which have been written in this book* A solemn warning closes the book. Do not tamper with its message. Moses gave a similar warning about God's law (Deut 4:2).
22:19 *if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the book of life* Taking away from God's Word is just as serious as adding to it. The consequences are severe and permanent. We are to handle this book with reverence, not to twist it to fit our ideas.
22:20 *Yes, I am coming quickly. Amen. Yes, come, Lord Jesus!* For the third time, Jesus promises to return soon. John answers with the prayer of every believer. The early church prayed "Maranatha," Our Lord, come (1 Cor 16:22). Is that the prayer of your heart?

coming quickly." Amen. Yes, come, Lord Jesus! **21** The grace
of our Lord Jesus Christ ***be*** with you all. Amen.

22:21 Jer 28:6; 2 Thess 3:18; Rom 16:20,24

22:21 *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen* Revelation closes not with fear but with a blessing, a prayer that God's grace would rest on everyone who reads it. The last word of the Bible is grace.

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